

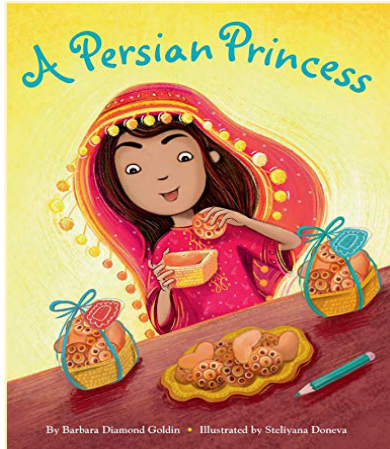
# A Persian Princess

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{ How do we keep our traditions alive? }

## Party Time

Raya loves Purim — and who could blame her? This holiday, which celebrates the biblical Queen Esther’s bravery, is especially fun for kids. She and Maman joon take part in many classic Purim activities: they bake special Purim treats (in their case, Persian koloocheh), give away Purim baskets, dress in costume, put on a Purim play, and shake noisemakers when they hear the villainous Haman’s name. The kids in this story dress up as characters from the story of Purim. For a child-friendly version of the story of Purim, visit [pjlibrary.org/purim](http://pjlibrary.org/purim).

## The Name Game

Raya calls her grandma Maman joon, Farsi for “grandmother.” Jewish children around the world have countless forms of address for their grandparents. Some common Jewish words for “grandmother” include bubbe (Yiddish), nona (Ladino), and savta (Hebrew), along with nana, oma, abuela, baba, and of course, grandma! Regardless of where we live and what language we speak, the connection between grandparent and grandchild is highly prized in Jewish tradition. The concept of *l’dor vador* refers to the importance of passing traditions from one generation to the next — and no one’s better at that than grandparents, no matter what they are called.

## Here and There

Raya’s Maman joon grew up in Iran, which was once home to one of the world’s oldest Jewish communities, dating back more than 2,500 years. As the story of Purim suggests, the Jewish community’s roots in this area — once known as Persia — grew deep. The Persian Jewish community thrived until the late 1970s, when the political climate in Iran became unsafe for Jews. The majority of Persian Jews left Iran around four decades ago and settled in various places around the globe, but they still remember with great fondness the rich and storied community of their youth.

## HANDS ON!

### Upcycle Gift Boxes for Purim

Raya and Maman joon make small Purim gift boxes of food for their friends and neighbors. In Hebrew, these are called *mishloach manot*. Make your own gift boxes with things you have around the house already. You can . . .

. . . decorate a small paper bag with markers and stickers.

. . . wash out a large yogurt container and cover the exterior with washi tape.

. . . wash out and reuse a cardboard Chinese takeout container as-is.

. . . use an old newspaper to fashion a cone.

Get creative! No matter how you present them, *mishloach manot* are a great way to share the fun of Purim.

## TALK IT OVER WITH YOUR KIDS

**RAYA’S** mood changes many times throughout this story. Look at the illustrations — how do you think she’s feeling on each page? Why?

**RAYA’S** grandmother, Maman joon, grew up in Iran. Do you know any stories about the places where one of your grandparents lived when they were children?

**WHAT** would you like to dress up as for Purim? Do you have anything in your closet that you could use to make a costume?