

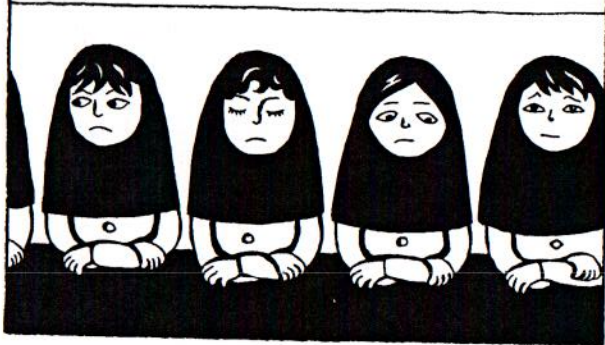


THE VEIL

THIS IS ME WHEN I WAS 10 YEARS OLD. THIS WAS IN 1980.



AND THIS IS A CLASS PHOTO. I'M SITTING ON THE FAR LEFT SO YOU DON'T SEE ME. FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: GOLNAZ, MAHSHID, MARINE, MINNA.



IN 1979 A REVOLUTION TOOK PLACE. IT WAS LATER CALLED "THE ISLAMIC REVOLUTION".



THEN CAME 1980: THE YEAR IT BECAME OBLIGATORY TO WEAR THE VEIL AT SCHOOL.



WE DIDN'T REALLY LIKE TO WEAR THE VEIL, ESPECIALLY SINCE WE DIDN'T UNDERSTAND WHY WE HAD TO.



AND ALSO BECAUSE THE YEAR BEFORE, IN 1979, WE WERE IN A FRENCH NON-RELIGIOUS SCHOOL.



WHERE BOYS AND GIRLS WERE TOGETHER.



AND THEN SUDDENLY IN 1980...

ALL BILINGUAL SCHOOLS MUST BE CLOSED DOWN.

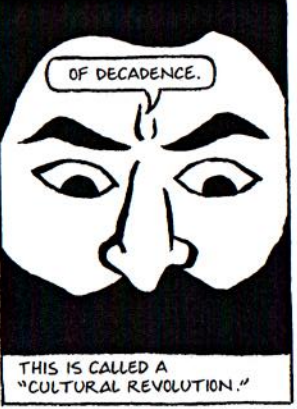


THEY ARE SYMBOLS OF CAPITALISM.



BRAVO!

WHAT WISDOM!



OF DECADENCE.

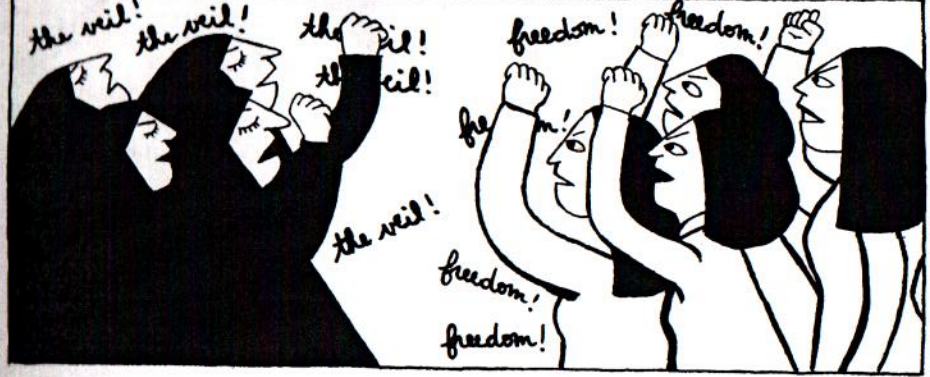
THIS IS CALLED A "CULTURAL REVOLUTION."

WE FOUND OURSELVES VEILED AND SEPARATED FROM OUR FRIENDS.



AND THAT WAS THAT...

EVERYWHERE IN THE STREETS THERE WERE DEMONSTRATIONS FOR AND AGAINST THE VEIL.



AT ONE OF THE DEMONSTRATIONS, A GERMAN JOURNALIST TOOK A PHOTO OF MY MOTHER.



I WAS REALLY PROUD OF HER. HER PHOTO WAS PUBLISHED IN ALL THE EUROPEAN NEWSPAPERS.



AND EVEN IN ONE MAGAZINE IN IRAN, MY MOTHER WAS REALLY SCARED.



SHE DYED HER HAIR,



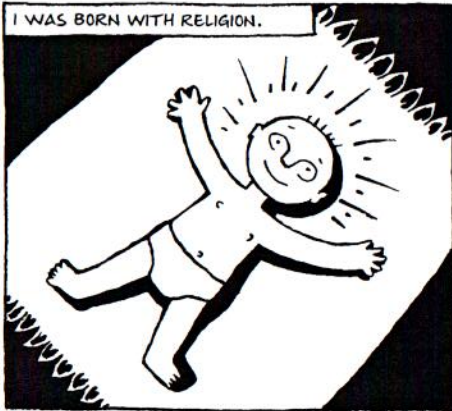
AND WORE DARK GLASSES FOR A LONG TIME.



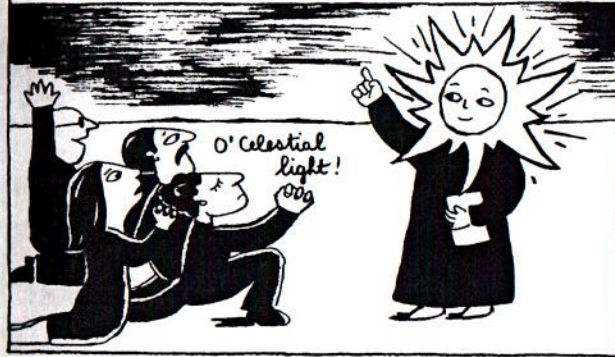
I REALLY DIDN'T KNOW WHAT TO THINK ABOUT THE VEIL. DEEP DOWN I WAS VERY RELIGIOUS BUT AS A FAMILY WE WERE VERY MODERN AND AVANT-GARDE.



I WAS BORN WITH RELIGION.



AT THE AGE OF SIX I WAS ALREADY SURE I WAS THE LAST PROPHET. THIS WAS A FEW YEARS BEFORE THE REVOLUTION.



BEFORE ME THERE HAD BEEN A FEW OTHERS.



I WANTED TO BE A PROPHET...



BECAUSE OUR MAID DID NOT EAT WITH US.

BECAUSE MY FATHER HAD A CADILLAC.



AND, ABOVE ALL, BECAUSE MY GRANDMOTHER'S KNEES ALWAYS ACHED.



COME HERE MARJI! HELP ME TO STAND UP.

DON'T WORRY. SOON YOU WON'T HAVE ANY MORE PAIN. YOU'LL SEE.

LIKE ALL MY PREDECESSORS I HAD MY HOLY BOOK.



THE FIRST THREE RULES CAME FROM ZARATHUSTRA. HE WAS THE FIRST PROPHET IN MY COUNTRY BEFORE THE ARAB INVASION.



YOU MUST BASE EVERYTHING ON THESE THREE RULES: BEHAVE WELL, SPEAK WELL, ACT WELL.

I ALSO WANTED US TO CELEBRATE THE TRADITIONAL ZARATHUSTRIAN HOLIDAYS. LIKE THE FIRE CEREMONY,



BEFORE THE PERSIAN NEW YEAR, NOROUZ, ON MARCH 21ST, THE FIRST DAY OF SPRING.



ONLY MY GRANDMOTHER KNEW ABOUT MY BOOK.



RULE NUMBER SIX: EVERYBODY SHOULD HAVE A CAR.

RULE NUMBER SEVEN: ALL MAIDS SHOULD EAT AT THE TABLE WITH THE OTHERS.

RULE NUMBER EIGHT: NO OLD PERSON SHOULD HAVE TO SUFFER.



IN THAT CASE, I'LL BE YOUR FIRST DISCIPLE.

REALLY?

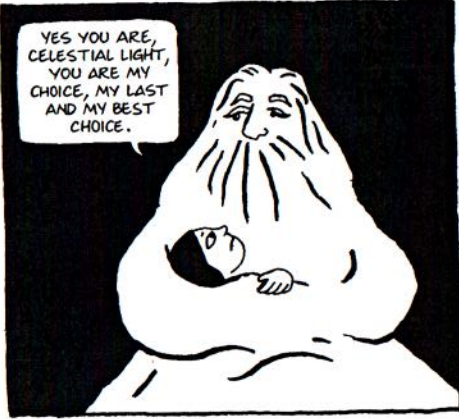
BUT TELL ME HOW YOU'LL ARRANGE FOR OLD PEOPLE NOT TO SUFFER?

IT WILL SIMPLY BE FORBIDDEN.

EVERY NIGHT I HAD A BIG DISCUSSION WITH GOD.



GOD, GIVE ME SOME MORE TIME. I AM NOT QUITE READY YET.



YES YOU ARE, CELESTIAL LIGHT, YOU ARE MY CHOICE, MY LAST AND MY BEST CHOICE.

EXCEPT FOR MY GRANDMOTHER I WAS OBVIOUSLY THE ONLY ONE WHO BELIEVED IN MYSELF.



WHAT DO YOU WANT TO BE WHEN YOU GROW UP?



Prophet A-a

I'll be a prophet.



HAHA! HAHA! HAHA!

SHE'S CRAZY.

MY PARENTS WERE CALLED IN BY THE TEACHER.



YOUR CHILD IS DISTURBED. SHE WANTS TO BECOME A PROPHET.



WHAT ABOUT IT?

DOESN'T THIS WORRY YOU?



NO! NOT AT ALL!

NONETHELESS, MY PARENTS WERE PUZZLED.



SO TELL ME, MY CHILD, WHAT DO YOU WANT TO BE WHEN YOU GROW UP?

A PROPHET.



I WANT TO BE A DOCTOR.



THAT'S FINE MY LOVE. THAT'S FINE.



I FELT GUILTY TOWARDS GOD.

YOU WANT TO BE A DOCTOR? I THOUGHT THAT...



NO, NO, I WILL BE A PROPHET BUT THEY MUSTN'T KNOW.

I WANTED TO BE JUSTICE, LOVE AND THE WRATH OF GOD ALL IN ONE.



THE SHEEP

DURING THE TIME ANOOSH STAYED WITH US I HEARD POLITICAL DISCUSSIONS OF THE HIGHEST ORDER.

IT'S INCREDIBLE. THE REVOLUTION IS A LEFTIST REVOLUTION AND THE REPUBLIC WANTS TO BE CALLED ISLAMIC.



IT'S NOT IMPORTANT. EVERYTHING WILL TURN OUT FINE. IN A COUNTRY WHERE HALF THE POPULATION IS ILLITERATE YOU CANNOT UNITE THE PEOPLE AROUND MARX. THE ONLY THING THAT CAN REALLY UNITE THEM IS NATIONALISM OR A RELIGIOUS ETHIC...



SOMETIMES I EVEN TOLD THEM MY OPINION...

ON TV THEY SAY THAT 99.99% OF THE POPULATION VOTED FOR THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC.



BUT THE RELIGIOUS LEADERS DON'T KNOW HOW TO GOVERN. THEY WILL RETURN TO THEIR MOSQUES. THE PROLETARIAT SHALL RULE! IT'S INEVITABLE!!! THAT'S JUST WHAT LENIN EXPLAINED IN "THE STATE AND THE REVOLUTION."



DID YOU HEAR THAT, ANOOSH? DO YOU REALIZE HOW IGNORANT OUR PEOPLE ARE? THE ELECTIONS WERE FAKED AND THEY BELIEVE THE RESULTS: 99.99%!! AS FOR ME, I DON'T KNOW A SINGLE PERSON WHO VOTED FOR THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC. WHERE DID THAT FIGURE COME FROM? FROM THEIR ASSES, THAT'S WHERE!



BUT IT'S NOT MY FAULT! IT'S THE TV!! BOO HOO!!!

CALM DOWN EBY, SHE'S JUST A CHILD WHO REPEATS WHAT SHE HEARS!



HEY, WANT TO PLAY?



HE'S GOING TO THE UNITED STATES!

TO THE UNITED STATES? WHY?



MY PARENTS SAY IT'S IMPOSSIBLE TO LIVE UNDER AN ISLAMIC REGIME, IT'S BETTER TO LEAVE.

BUT THE RELIGIOUS LEADERS ARE VERY STUPID, THEY WON'T LAST.

YEAH!



MY DAD SAYS NOBODY REALIZES THE DANGER.

SO WHEN ARE YOU LEAVING?



IN ABOUT A MONTH.

OH.

I THINK I REALLY LIKED THIS BOY...



BUT THE UNITED STATES IS TERRIFIC! YOU'LL FINALLY SEE BRUCE LEE IN PERSON!

YEAH... THAT WOULD BE NICE.



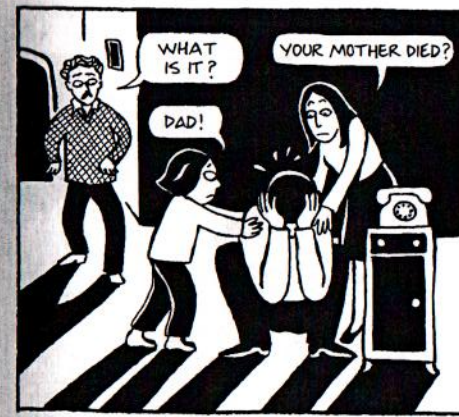
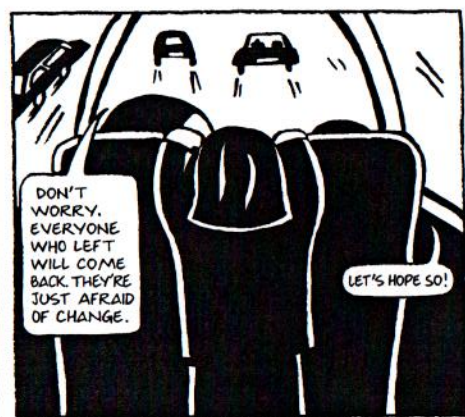
BRUCE LEE IS DEAD...

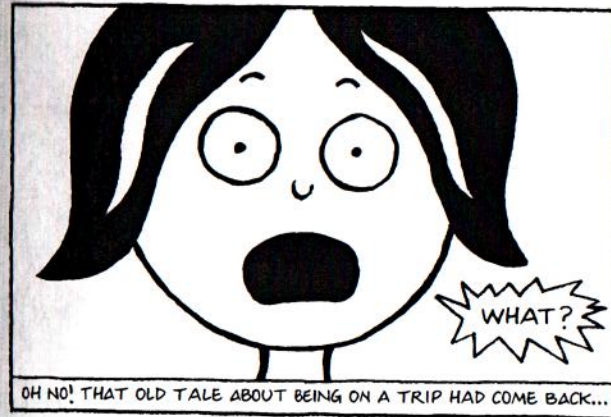
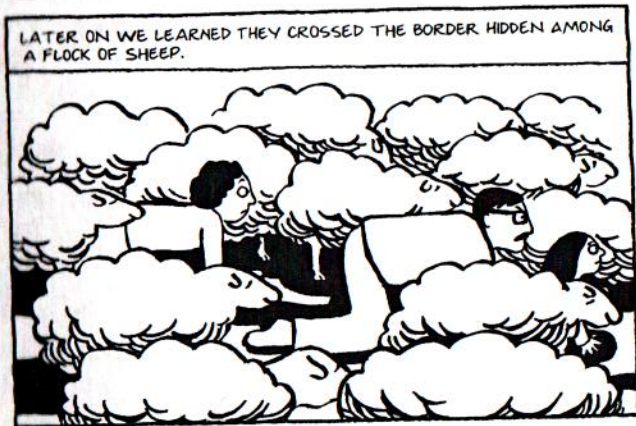
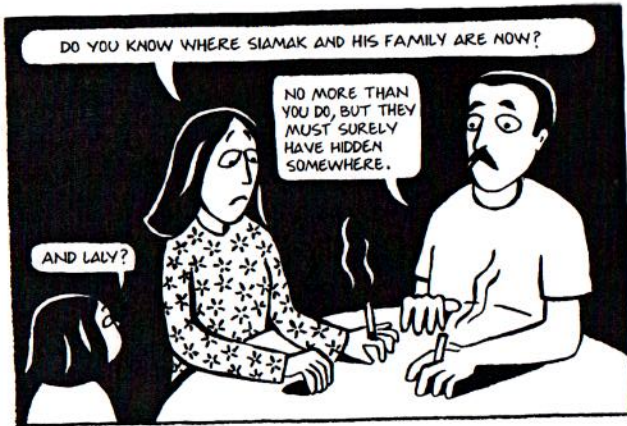


ACTUALLY I LIKED HIM VERY, VERY MUCH.



IT WAS THE END OF THE WORLD!...







THAT WAS MY LAST MEETING WITH MY BELOVED ANOOSH...



AND SO I WAS LOST, WITHOUT ANY BEARINGS... WHAT COULD BE WORSE THAN THAT?



IT WAS THE BEGINNING OF THE WAR.

IT REMINDED ME OF THE DAY, EIGHT YEARS BEFORE, IN THE CAR WITH MY DAD.

DAD! WHAT ARE BALLS?
WHAT? WE SAY TESTICLE. A MAN'S SEX IS MADE OF TWO BALLS AND A PENIS. THESE BALLS ARE CALLED TESTICLES.



BALLS? BALLS, LIKE THESE?



AND, A LITTLE RED, MY FATHER ANSWERED SERIOUSLY.

NO, MORE LIKE THIS. THEY'RE NOT TENNIS BALLS. THEY'RE MORE LIKE PING-PONG BALLS.



AH, PING-PONG BALLS! HA! HA! HA! HA! HA! HA!



I DON'T BELIEVE IT. YOU... YOU... YOU'RE STONED!!!



BUT THAT'S SO COOL!



SHE'S TRIPPING. GO ON WOLFY, WHY DON'T YOU PUT SOME MUSIC ON?

WOLFY?



SO HE WASN'T ERNST, THE OWNER OF CAFÉ SCHELTER! JULIE HAD JUST SLEPT WITH HER NINETEENTH GUY.

THAT NIGHT, I REALLY UNDERSTOOD THE MEANING OF "THE SEXUAL REVOLUTION."



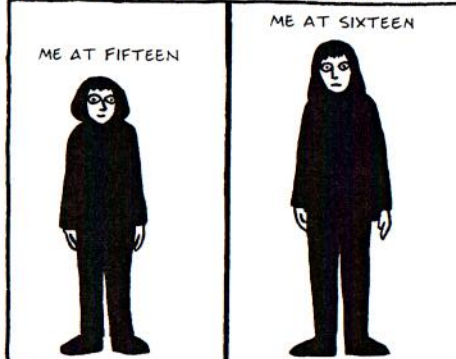
IT WAS MY FIRST BIG STEP TOWARD ASSIMILATING INTO WESTERN CULTURE.

THE VEGETABLE

MY MENTAL TRANSFORMATION WAS FOLLOWED BY MY PHYSICAL METAMORPHOSIS.



BETWEEN THE AGES OF FIFTEEN AND SIXTEEN, I GREW SEVEN INCHES. IT WAS IMPRESSIVE.



MY HEAD ALSO CHANGED IN ITS OWN WAY. FIRST, MY FACE GOT LONGER.



THEN MY RIGHT EYE GREW,



FOLLOWED SWIFTLY BY MY CHIN WHICH DOUBLED IN LENGTH.



THEN IT WAS MY MOUTH,



MY RIGHT HAND,



MY LEFT FOOT.



OF COURSE MY NOSE TRIPLED ITS SIZE.



AND WAS DECORATED BY A LARGE BEAUTY MARK.



THEN MY CHIN ADVANCED MATERIALLY,



ONLY TO RETREAT TO ITS ORIGINAL POSITION SEVERAL MONTHS LATER.



FINALLY MY CHEST DEVELOPED



AND MY CENTER OF GRAVITY WAS BALANCED OUT BY THE POUNDS ON MY BUTT.



IN SHORT, I WAS IN AN UGLY STAGE SEEMINGLY WITHOUT END.

AS IF MY NATURAL DEFORMITY WASN'T ENOUGH, I TRIED A FEW NEW HAIRCUTS. A LITTLE SNIP OF THE SCISSORS ON THE LEFT.



AND A WEEK LATER, A LITTLE SNIP OF THE SCISSORS ON THE RIGHT.



I LOOKED LIKE COSETTE IN "LES MISERABLES."



SO I COATED MY HAIR WITH GEL,



I ADDED A THICK LINE OF EYELINER,



A FEW SAFETY PINS,



WHICH WERE REPLACED BY A SCARF. IT SOFTENED THE LOOK.



IT WAS BEGINNING TO LOOK LIKE SOMETHING.



HAVE YOU SEEN HOW BEAUTIFUL SHE IS NOW?

... UH ...



TO MY ENORMOUS SURPRISE, MY NEW LOOK EVEN PLEASSED THE HALL MONITORS. IT SHOULD BE SAID THAT THEY WERE VERY YOUNG.

YOU CHANGE YOUR HAIRSTYLE EVERY DAY. WHO CUTS YOUR HAIR?

I DO.

IF I PAY YOU, WILL YOU CUT MY HAIR, TOO?



THAT'S HOW I BECAME THE SCHOOL'S OFFICIAL HAIRCUTTER.

IT HELPED ME EARN A LITTLE SPENDING MONEY.



MY RELATIONSHIP WITH THE SCHOOL'S LACKEYS DIDN'T PLEASE MY FRIENDS MUCH.

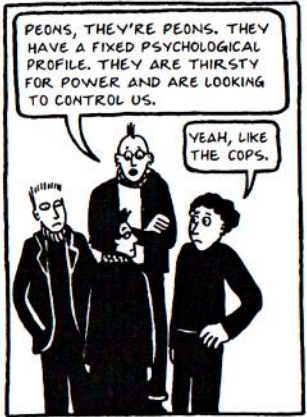
... YOU SEEM TO BE ON AWFULLY GOOD TERMS WITH THE PEONS.

... NOT REALLY! I JUST CUT THEIR HAIR.



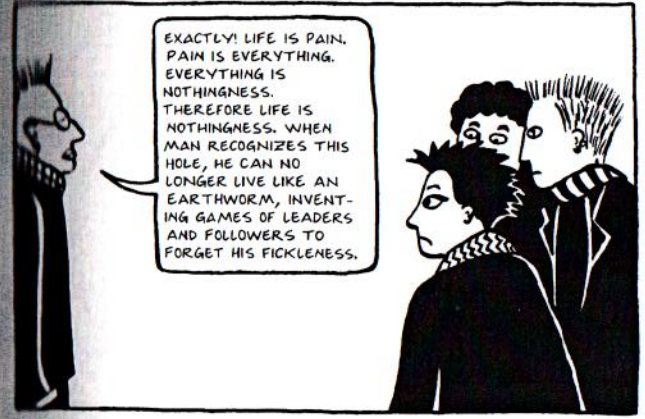
THAT'S NOT ALL YOU DO FOR THEM. YOU KISS THEIR ASSES FROM TIME TO TIME.

I DO NOT. I THINK THEY'RE NICE, THAT'S ALL.



PEONS, THEY'RE PEONS. THEY HAVE A FIXED PSYCHOLOGICAL PROFILE. THEY ARE THIRSTY FOR POWER AND ARE LOOKING TO CONTROL US.

... YEAH, LIKE THE COPS.



EXACTLY! LIFE IS PAIN. PAIN IS EVERYTHING. EVERYTHING IS NOTHINGNESS. THEREFORE LIFE IS NOTHINGNESS. WHEN MAN RECOGNIZES THIS HOLE, HE CAN NO LONGER LIVE LIKE AN EARTHWORM, INVENTING GAMES OF LEADERS AND FOLLOWERS TO FORGET HIS FICKLENESS.



WHATEVER! EXISTENCE IS NOT ABSURD. THERE ARE PEOPLE WHO BELIEVE IN IT AND WHO GIVE THEIR LIVES FOR VALUES LIKE LIBERTY.

WHAT RUBBISH! EVEN THAT, IT'S A DISTRACTION FROM BOREDOM.



... SO MY UNCLE DIED TO DISTRACT HIMSELF?

FOR MOMO, DEATH WAS THE ONLY DOMAIN WHERE MY KNOWLEDGE EXCEEDED HIS. ON THIS SUBJECT, I ALWAYS HAD THE LAST WORD.



NOBLE COMBAT, BLAH BLAH BLAH ...

SURE!

OK! ARE WE GOING TO SMOKE A JOINT?

IT WAS ALWAYS THIERRY WHO ROLLED THE JOINTS WHILE WE KEPT AN EYE OUT FOR THE MONITORS SO WE WOULDN'T BE CAUGHT BY SURPRISE.



I DIDN'T LIKE TO SMOKE, BUT I DID IT OUT OF SOLIDARITY. AT THE TIME, TO ME, GRASS AND HEROIN WERE THE SAME THING.

EACH TIME I WAS OFFERED A JOINT, I REMEMBERED THIS CONVERSATION MY PARENTS HAD ABOUT MY COUSIN KAMRAN.



POOR BOY, HE'S STUCK HIMSELF SO MANY TIMES HE'S BEGUN TO LOOK LIKE A VEGETABLE.

THIS KIND OF THING ALWAYS HAPPENS TO THE MOST FRAGILE ONES.

BECOMING A VEGETABLE WAS OUT OF THE QUESTION.



SO I PRETENDED TO PARTICIPATE, BUT I NEVER INHALED THE SMOKE.



AND AS SOON AS MY FRIENDS' BACKS WERE TURNED, I STUCK MY FINGERS IN MY EYES TO MAKE THEM GOOD AND RED.

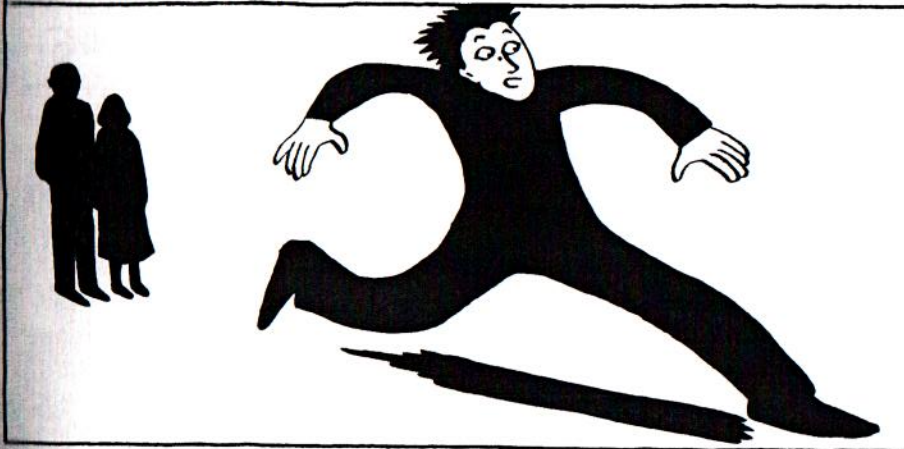


THEN, I IMITATED THEIR LAUGHTER.



I WAS QUITE BELIEVABLE.

THE HARDER I TRIED TO ASSIMILATE, THE MORE I HAD THE FEELING THAT I WAS DISTANCING MYSELF FROM MY CULTURE, BETRAYING MY PARENTS AND MY ORIGINS, THAT I WAS PLAYING A GAME BY SOMEBODY ELSE'S RULES.



EACH TELEPHONE CALL FROM MY PARENTS REMINDED ME OF MY COWARDICE AND MY BETRAYAL. I WAS AT ONCE HAPPY TO HEAR THEIR VOICES AND ASHAMED TO TALK TO THEM.

- YES, I'M DOING FINE. I'M GETTING GOOD GRADES.
- FRIENDS? OF COURSE, LOTS!
- DAD ...
- DAD, I LOVE YOU!

- YOU HAVE SOME GOOD FRIENDS?
- THAT DOESN'T SURPRISE ME, YOU ALWAYS HAD A TALENT FOR COMMUNICATING WITH PEOPLE!
- EAT ORANGES. THEY'RE FULL OF VITAMIN C.
- US TOO, WE ADORE YOU. YOU'RE THE CHILD ALL PARENTS DREAM OF HAVING!



IF ONLY THEY KNEW ... IF THEY KNEW THAT THEIR DAUGHTER WAS MADE UP LIKE A PUNK, THAT SHE SMOKE JOINTS TO MAKE A GOOD IMPRESSION, THAT SHE HAD SEEN MEN IN THEIR UNDERWEAR WHILE THEY WERE BEING BOMBED EVERY DAY, THEY WOULDN'T CALL ME THEIR DREAM CHILD.

I FELT SO GUILTY THAT WHENEVER THERE WAS NEWS ABOUT IRAN, I CHANGED THE CHANNEL.



IT WAS TOO UNBEARABLE.



DID YOU WATCH TV YESTERDAY? YOU MUST BE WORRIED. NO, IT'S OKAY! I TALKED TO MY PARENTS. THEY'RE FINE.



I WAS LYING. I KNEW NOTHING AND I DIDN'T WANT TO KNOW MORE.

I WANTED TO FORGET EVERYTHING, TO MAKE MY PAST DISAPPEAR, BUT MY UNCONSCIOUS CAUGHT UP WITH ME.



I EVEN MANAGED TO DENY MY NATIONALITY.



DURING A PARTY AT SCHOOL.



HI, I'M MARC. I GRADUATED LAST YEAR. YOU'RE NEW! WHAT'S YOUR NAME?

MARTANE, I'VE BEEN HERE A YEAR.

AND WHERE ARE YOU FROM MARIE-JEANNE?



I'M FRENCH.

OH REALLY? YOU HAVE A FUNNY ACCENT FOR A FRENCH GIRL.

OH! I HAVE TO FIND MY FRIENDS. BYE.

I SHOULD SAY THAT AT THE TIME, IRAN WAS THE EPITOME OF EVIL AND TO BE IRANIAN WAS A HEAVY BURDEN TO BEAR.



IT WAS EASIER TO LIE THAN TO ASSUME THAT BURDEN.

WHO'S THAT GUY?



MARC? HE'S ANNA'S BROTHER, THE GIRL IN THE STRIPED SWEATER. HE'S A JERK FROM BOURGE. YOU SHOULDN'T TALK TO THOSE PEOPLE.

AND WHEN I GOT BACK THAT NIGHT, I REMEMBERED THAT LINE MY GRANDMOTHER TOLD ME: "ALWAYS KEEP YOUR DIGNITY AND BE TRUE TO YOURSELF!"



OH GRANDMA ...



UNFORTUNATELY, IT ALL CAME OUT IN THE END. A FEW DAYS LATER IN A CAFE NEAR SCHOOL.

SHE TOLD MY BROTHER THAT SHE WAS FRENCH.

AND YOUR BROTHER BELIEVED HER?



WHAT DO YOU THINK? HAVE YOU HEARD THE WAY SHE TALKS?

HAVE YOU SEEN HER FACE?



YOU ARE GOING TO SHUT UP OR I AM GOING TO MAKE YOU!
I AM IRANIAN AND PROUD OF IT!



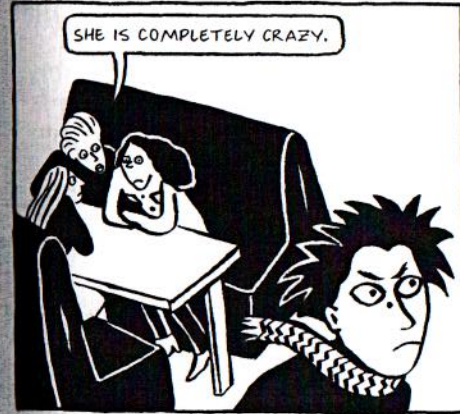
BUT YOUR BROTHER WAS HITTING ON HER OR WHAT?

OF COURSE NOT!!

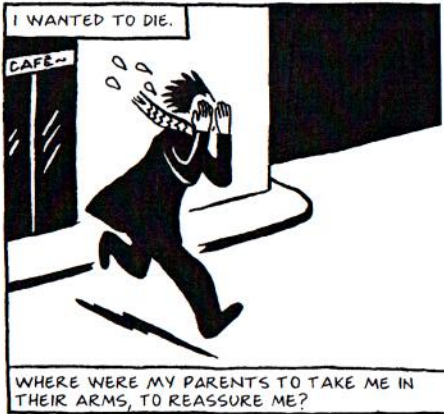
AH, THAT'S A RELIEF. CONSIDERING HOW UGLY SHE IS, IT WOULD BE REALLY UNFAIR IF SHE GOT A GUY LIKE MARC.



HA, HA, HA! I WOULD COMMIT SUICIDE IF MY BROTHER WAS GOING OUT WITH A GUY LIKE THAT!



SHE IS COMPLETELY CRAZY.



I WANTED TO DIE.

WHERE WERE MY PARENTS TO TAKE ME IN THEIR ARMS, TO REASSURE ME?



I DON'T KNOW IF YOU'VE NOTICED, BUT SHE NEVER TALKS ABOUT EITHER HER COUNTRY OR HER PARENTS.

WELL, OF COURSE! SHE LIES WHEN SHE SAYS THAT SHE'S KNOWN WAR. IT'S ALL TO MAKE HERSELF SEEM INTERESTING.



ANYWAY, HER PARENTS CLEARLY DON'T CARE ABOUT HER, OR THEY WOULDN'T HAVE SENT HER ALONE.

THAT WAS TOO MUCH. I SAW RED.



BUT REALLY, I HAD NOTHING TO CRY ABOUT.



I HAD JUST REDEEMED MYSELF.



FOR THE FIRST TIME IN A YEAR, I FELT PROUD.

I FINALLY UNDERSTOOD WHAT MY GRANDMOTHER MEANT. IF I WASN'T COMFORTABLE WITH MYSELF, I WOULD NEVER BE COMFORTABLE.



THE JOKE

I HAD BEEN IN TEHRAN FOR TEN DAYS. DESPITE MY RELUCTANCE, IN THE END MY ENTIRE FAMILY CAME TO SEE ME. I DIDN'T KNOW WHETHER OR NOT THEY KNEW ABOUT MY EUROPEAN FAILURE. I WAS SCARED THAT THEY WOULD BE DISAPPOINTED.



YOU MUST SPEAK GOOD GERMAN NOW.

I KNOW HOW TO SAY "ICH LIEBE DICH" HEE HEE!

YES, I SPEAK A LITTLE.

THANK YOU FOR THE FLOWERS.

THIS IS UNCLE ARDESHIR, MY MOTHER'S UNCLE. HE'S RETIRED FROM THE NATIONAL EDUCATION SYSTEM.



WHEN I THINK OF VIENNA, I IMMEDIATELY THINK OF SISSI. YOU MUST HAVE SEEN THE FILM STARRING ROMY!

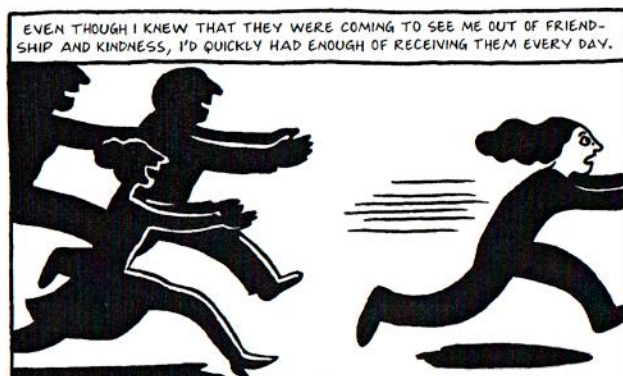
YES.

THAT'S MINA, MY FIRST COUSIN. SHE'S AN IMBECILE. SHE TALKS ABOUT ROMY SCHNEIDER AS IF SHE WERE HER BEST FRIEND.



MARJANE, THE STARS SHINE IN THE SKY AND YOU IN MY HEART ...

THESE ARE OUR NEIGHBORS. THEY'RE THE INCARNATION OF THE PERFECT FAMILY.



EVEN THOUGH I KNEW THAT THEY WERE COMING TO SEE ME OUT OF FRIENDSHIP AND KINDNESS, I'D QUICKLY HAD ENOUGH OF RECEIVING THEM EVERY DAY. BUT THERE WAS NOTHING TO BE DONE, THE VISITS CONTINUED . . .



ASIDE FROM MY PARENTS, THE ONLY PERSON TO WHOM I REALLY WANTED TO TALK WAS MY GRANDMOTHER. BUT SHE CAME AFTER EVERYONE ELSE.

GRANDMA, WHERE WERE YOU?

I WAS WAITING FOR THE TRIBE TO GO FIRST! OH MY! HOW YOU'VE GROWN SOON YOU'LL BE CATCHING THE LORD'S BALLS.

SHE WAS STILL HER OLD SELF.

AFTER MY FAMILY, IT WAS MY FRIENDS' TURN. I HAD FEWER APPREHENSIONS ABOUT THEM: WE WERE THE SAME AGE, WHICH SHOULD MAKE IT EASIER TO CONNECT.



I WAS WRONG. THEY ALL LOOKED LIKE THE HEROINES OF AMERICAN TV SERIES, READY TO GET MARRIED AT THE DROP OF A HAT, IF THE OPPORTUNITY PRESENTED ITSELF.



WHY DO YOU LOOK LIKE A NUN? NO ONE WOULD EVER GUESS THAT YOU'D LIVED IN EUROPE.

OH, REALLY?

COMPARED TO HER FASHIONABLE MAKEUP, I REALLY DID EXUDE ALL THE ALLURE OF A NUN.



COME ON, TALK TO US! YOU MUST HAVE A MILLION THINGS TO TELL US ABOUT.

I DON'T KNOW . . .

WELL, WHY DON'T YOU TELL US WHAT THE NIGHTCLUBS IN VIENNA WERE LIKE?

WHAT?



IT'S JUST THAT . . . I DIDN'T GO THAT OFTEN . . . I DON'T REALLY LIKE THEM MUCH.



OH STOP PRETENDING TO BE SO SHOCKED! DON'T YOU REMEMBER HOW SHE WAS? ALWAYS GIVING LESSONS!! SHE'S A "REBEL," THIS ONE!

IF THERE WERE STILL NIGHTCLUBS IN TEHRAN, I'D BE THERE EVERY NIGHT!

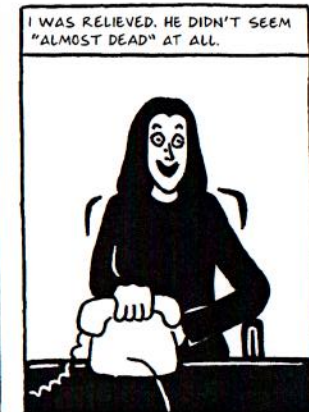
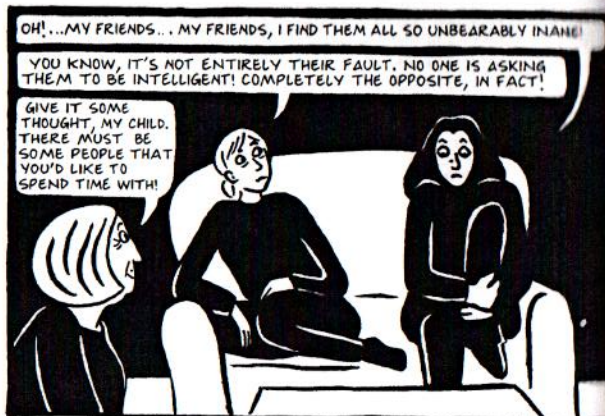
HEE! HEE! HEE! HEE! ME TOO!

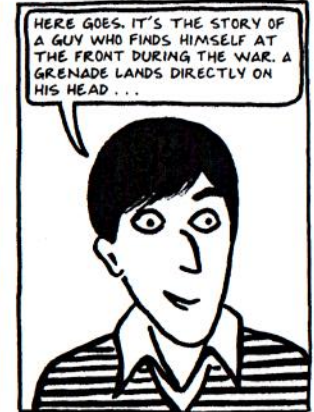
I HAD A HARD TIME REMEMBERING WHAT HAD BROUGHT US TOGETHER BEFORE.



A PART OF ME UNDERSTOOD THEM. WHEN SOMETHING IS FORBIDDEN, IT TAKES ON A DISPROPORTIONATE IMPORTANCE. MUCH LATER, I LEARNED THAT MAKING THEMSELVES UP AND WANTING TO FOLLOW WESTERN WAYS WAS AN ACT OF RESISTANCE ON THEIR PART.

NEVERTHELESS, I FELT TERRIBLY ALONE.

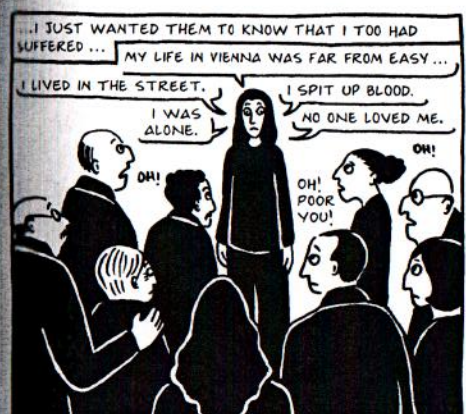






*IN IRAN, IT'S THE HUSBAND WHO MUST PAY HIS WIFE A DOWRY.

SKIING



I THOUGHT THAT BY COMING BACK TO IRAN, EVERYTHING WOULD BE FINE.



THAT I WOULD FORGET THE OLD DAYS.



BUT MY PAST CAUGHT UP WITH ME.



MY SECRETS WEIGHED ME DOWN.



TO LIFT ME OUT OF MY DEPRESSION, MY FRIENDS SUGGESTED TAKING ME SKIING. ONE OF THEIR PARENTS HAD A CHALET AT DIZIN.* I DIDN'T WANT TO GO, BUT MY MOTHER INSISTED SO MUCH THAT I ENDED UP ACCEPTING.



* A SKI RESORT ABOUT THIRTY MILES FROM TEHRAN.

I BECAME DEPRESSED.



MARJI, I'M GOING GROCERY SHOPPING. DO YOU NEED ANYTHING?
CIGARETTES, PLEASE.

I RENTED "LA DOLCE VITA." DON'T YOU WANT TO WATCH IT TOGETHER?



NO ...

EVEN MY GRANDMA COULD NO LONGER GET ME TO LAUGH.



...HE FARTED! IT SMELLED LIKE A DEAD RAT ...

I WAS ALWAYS IN FRONT OF THE TV. THERE WAS A JAPANESE SERIES, CALLED "OSHIN," THAT I WATCHED OFTEN. IT WAS THE STORY OF A POOR GIRL WHO CAME TO WORK IN TOKYO.



AT FIRST, SHE CLEANED HOUSES, THEN SHE BECAME A HAIRDRESSER AND MET A GUY WHOSE MOTHER WAS OPPOSED TO THEIR MARRIAGE.



YOU ARE NOTHING BUT A HAIRDRESSER, YOU AREN'T WORTHY OF MY SON! GET OUT, YOU ROTTEN GIRL!
NO! I LOVE HIM!

I DIDN'T UNDERSTAND WHY THE MOTHER-IN-LAW HATED HAIRDRESSERS SO MUCH.

MUCH LATER, I GOT TO KNOW A GIRL WHO DUBBED TELEVISION SHOWS. SHE TOLD ME THAT OSHIN WAS IN FACT A GEISHA AND SINCE HER PROFESSION DIDN'T SUIT ISLAMIC MORALS, THE DIRECTOR OF THE CHANNEL HAD DECIDED THAT SHE'D BE A HAIRDRESSER.



IT WAS BELIEVABLE BECAUSE OSHIN AND HER COURTESAN FRIENDS SPENT THEIR TIME MAKING CHIGNONS.

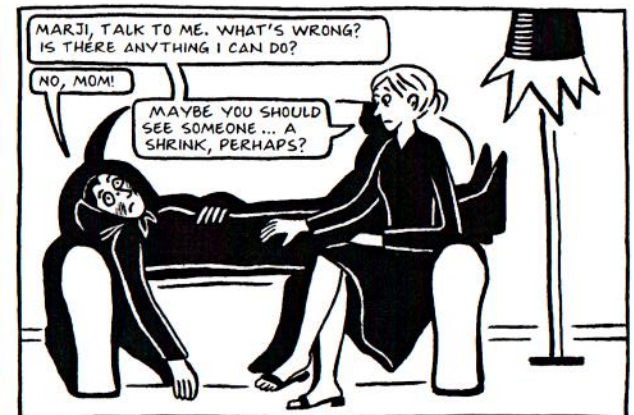
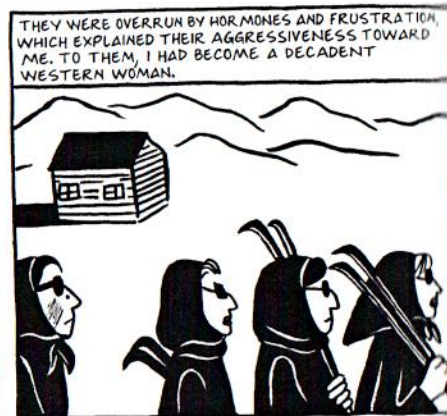


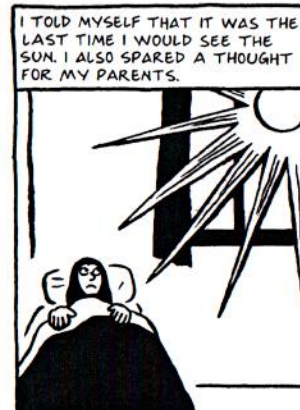
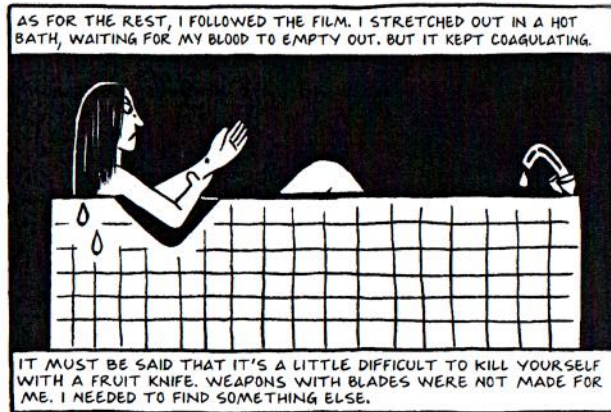
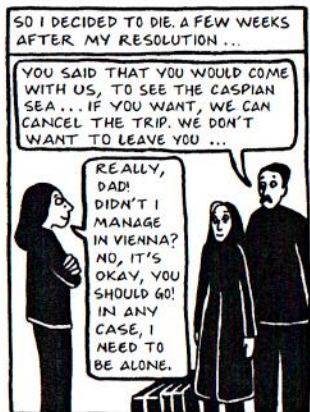
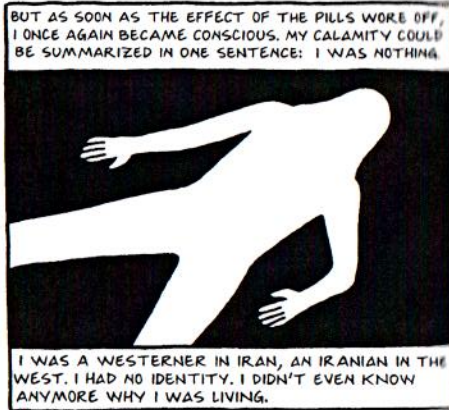
YOU KNOW, YOU CAN RENT EQUIPMENT. IF YOU WANT, WE CAN TEACH YOU HOW TO SKI.

NO, THANKS, I AM VERY HAPPY LIKE THIS.

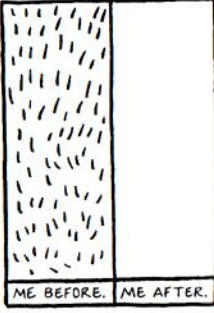
ACTUALLY, I FELT ON TOP OF THE WORLD. THE MOUNTAIN, THE BLUE SKY, THE SUN, ... ALL OF IT SUITED ME. LITTLE BY LITTLE MY HEAD AND MY SPIRIT TOOK ON SOME COLOR.







BODY HAIR BEING AN OBSESSION OF THE ORIENTAL WOMAN, I BEGAN WITH HAIR REMOVAL.



THEN I GOT RID OF MY OLD CLOTHES.



AND HAD SOME NEW CLOTHES MADE.



A MODERN WARDROBE.



ORIGINAL SHOES.



A FASHIONABLE HAIRCUT.



A PERMANENT.



I BECAME A SOPHISTICATED WOMAN ...



SHOPPING.



MAKEUP.



AND AS A HEALTHY MIND IS FOUND IN A HEALTHY BODY, I TOOK UP EXERCISE.



MORE AND MORE,



AND MORE AND MORE,



TO THE POINT WHERE I BECAME AN AEROBICS INSTRUCTOR.



STRONG AND INVINCIBLE LIKE THIS, I WAS GOING TO MEET MY NEW DESTINY.