

THE COMPLETE  
**PERSEPOLIS**

MARJANE SATRAPI



PANTHEON  
2004

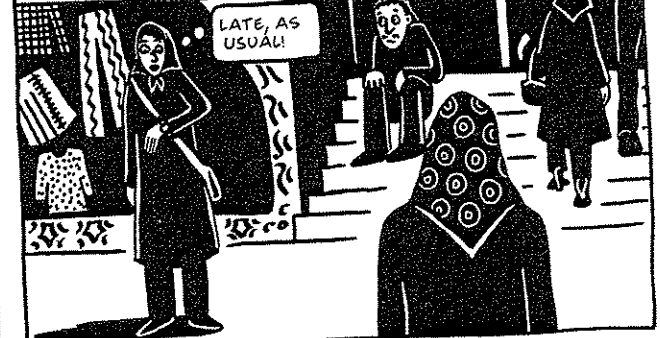
# THE MAKEUP

OUR SUCCESS ON THE EXAM MADE REZA AND ME MORE CALM ABOUT OUR SHARED FUTURE. NOW WE WERE ABLE TO STAY TOGETHER, BECAUSE NEITHER OF US WAS GOING TO LEAVE IRAN WITHOUT THE OTHER. FROM THEN ON, WE BECAME A REAL COUPLE, WHICH NATURALLY MEANT THAT WE BEGAN TO PICK ON EACH OTHER. I REPROACHED HIM FOR NOT BEING



ACTIVE ENOUGH. HE CHOSE TO CRITICIZE MY PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS: NOT ELEGANT ENOUGH, NOT MADE-UP ENOUGH, ETC., ETC., ...

AT THE TIME, I THOUGHT I SHOULD MAKE SOME EFFORTS... ONE DAY, WHEN WE HAD A RENDEZVOUS IN FRONT OF THE SAVAFIEH BAZAAR,\* I ARRIVED VERY MADE-UP TO GIVE HIM A SURPRISE.



\* NAME OF A SHOPPING CENTER

SUDDENLY, FROM THE OTHER SIDE OF THE STREET, I SAW A CAR FULL OF GUARDIANS OF THE REVOLUTION ARRIVE, FOLLOWED BY A BUS. WHEN THEY CAME WITH THE BUS, IT MEANT A RAID.



THIS CALLED FOR ACTION.



THAT'S IT! I'VE GOT IT!



I HAD TO DISTRACT THEM. I HAD TO GO SEE THEM BEFORE THEY SAW ME.

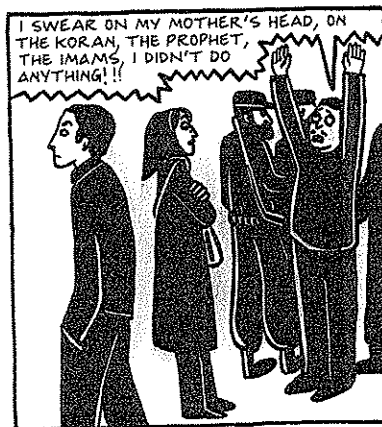


YES MY SISTER!



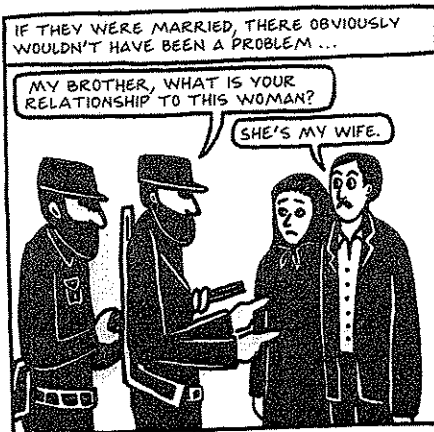
WHERE'S THE BASTARD, I'LL SHUT HIM UP ONCE AND FOR ALL!







IT MUST BE SAID THAT DURING THIS PERIOD, YOUNG COUPLES WHO SHOWED THEMSELVES IN PUBLIC WERE RUNNING A RISK.



IF THEY WERE MARRIED, THERE OBVIOUSLY WOULDN'T HAVE BEEN A PROBLEM...

MY BROTHER, WHAT IS YOUR RELATIONSHIP TO THIS WOMAN?

SHE'S MY WIFE.



BUT IT WAS PREFERABLE TO HAVE A PHOTOCOPY OF YOUR MARRIAGE CERTIFICATE ON YOU.

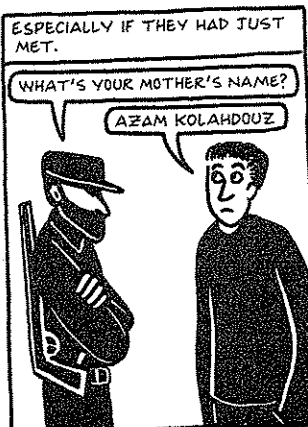
OKAY, IT'S FINE!



THE TROUBLES BEGAN IF THE TWO YOUNG PEOPLE WERE NOT UNITED BY SACRED TIES.

WHAT IS YOUR RELATIONSHIP TO THIS MAN?

HE'S MY COUSIN.



ESPECIALLY IF THEY HAD JUST MET.

WHAT'S YOUR MOTHER'S NAME?

AZAM KOLAHDOUZ



WHAT'S HIS MOTHER'S NAME?

I FORGOT.

WHAT'S THAT? HE'S YOUR COUSIN, RIGHT? YOU MUST KNOW THE NAME OF YOUR AUNT!



COME ON, GET IN THE CAR!

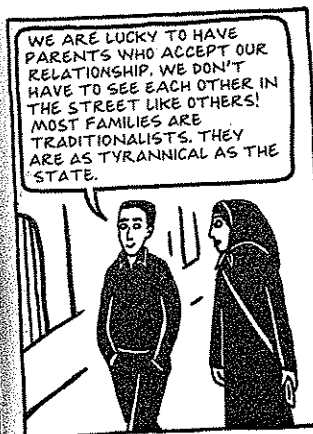


THEY TOOK THEM TO THE COMMITTEE.\* THEN THEY CALLED THEIR PARENTS WHO CAME TO FREE THEIR CHILDREN, BY PAYING A FINE.

SIR, YOUR DAUGHTER IS AT THE COMMITTEE OF SAAD ABAD, ACCOMPANIED BY A YOUNG MAN... A CERTAIN SAID! THEY WERE WALKING TOGETHER IN THE PARK. IT'S AN ACT AGAINST THE RELIGIOUS MORAL CODE AND THE VALUES OF OUR REPUBLIC. YOU CAN COME GET HER IN EXCHANGE FOR 20,000 TUMANS\*\* IN CASH, OTHERWISE SHE WILL BE WHIPPED.

SORRY! SORRY!

SORRY



WE ARE LUCKY TO HAVE PARENTS WHO ACCEPT OUR RELATIONSHIP. WE DON'T HAVE TO SEE EACH OTHER IN THE STREET LIKE OTHERS! MOST FAMILIES ARE TRADITIONALISTS. THEY ARE AS TYRANNICAL AS THE STATE.



IN ANY CASE, IF THEY ARREST US, ALL WE HAVE TO SAY IS THAT WE'RE ENGAGED. IT DOESN'T MATTER. IN THE WORST CASE, WE PAY AND IT'S FINE!

EXCEPT WE SHOULDN'T GIVE A CENT TO THOSE ASSHOLES!

WHAT INGRATITUDE! THOSE ASSHOLES JUST PROTECTED YOU FROM A PERVERT.



STOP... ACTUALLY, WHAT ARE THEY GOING TO DO TO HIM?

TO WHO?

TO THE POOR GUY THEY JUST ARRESTED INSTEAD OF ME!

NOTHING! HE'LL GET A FEW SLAPS! THAT'S ALL!



THOUGH, THEY'RE SO SICK THAT IT'S POSSIBLE THEY'LL HANG HIM. YOU REMEMBER MY FRIENDS DARIUS AND NADER?

YES?

WELL, THEY WERE COMING HOME FROM A PARTY LATE ONE NIGHT, WHEN THE GUARDIANS OF THE REVOLUTION STOPPED THEM.



AT FIRST, THEY THOUGHT THAT IT WAS SIMPLY A ROUTINE CHECK, BUT AFTER HAVING INSPECTED THEIR PAPERS, THE BEARDED GUY ASKED THEM:

WHAT'S YOUR RELATIONSHIP TO THIS MAN?

HE'S MY FRIEND.



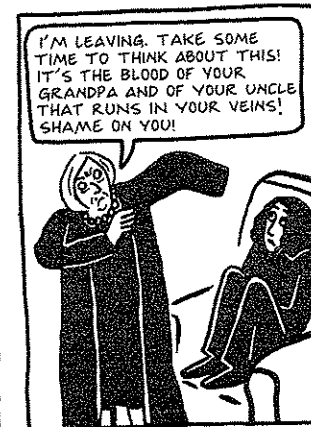
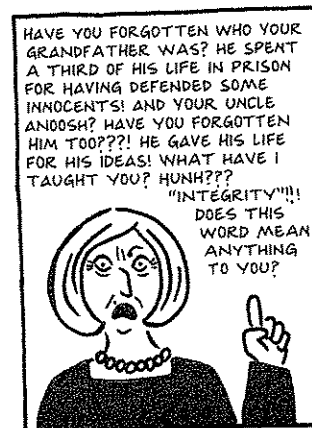
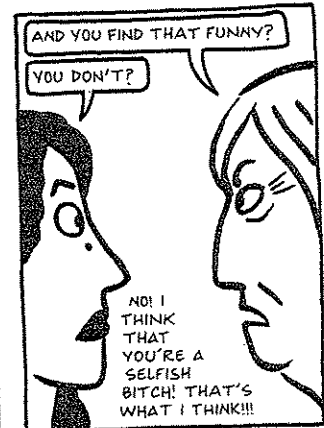
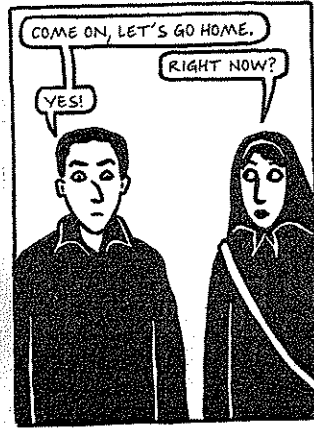
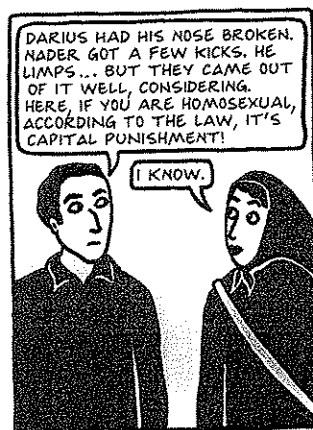
...THEY THOUGHT THEY'D HAVE A LITTLE FUN.

WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY "FRIENDS"? THAT WE GO OUT TOGETHER!



DIRTY FAG!

\*THE COMMISSARIAT OF THE GUARDIANS OF THE REVOLUTION.  
\*\*AT THE TIME, THE MONTHLY SALARY OF A GOVERNMENT WORKER.





# THE CONVOCATION

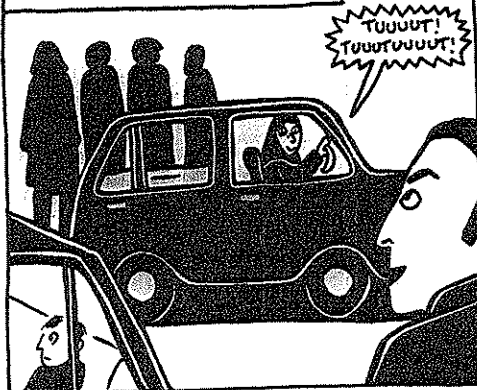
SEPTEMBER 1983. I WAS FINALLY A STUDENT.



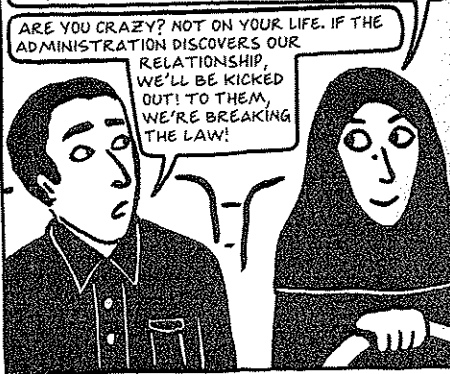
THE BREAKFAST THAT MY MOTHER HAD PREPARED JUST LIKE SHE USED TO, THE MELANCHOLY ATMOSPHERE OF THE BEGINNING OF AUTUMN, MY UNIFORM ... EVERYTHING REMINDED ME OF THE BEGINNING OF SCHOOL.



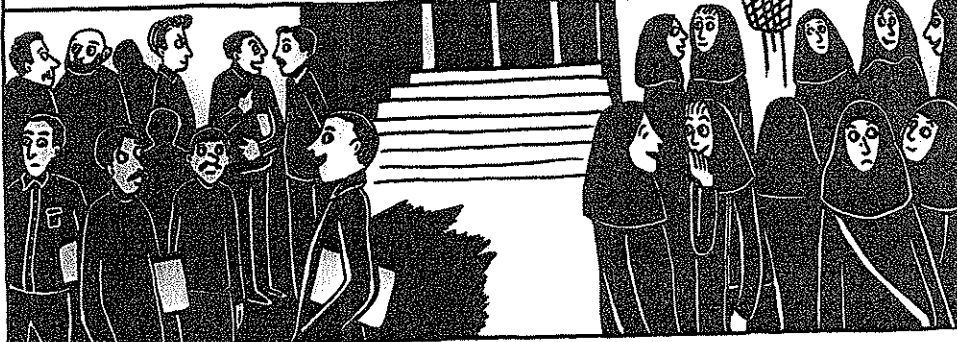
REZA FOUND ME ON THE WAY.



DO YOU THINK THAT WE CAN TELL PEOPLE WE'RE TOGETHER?



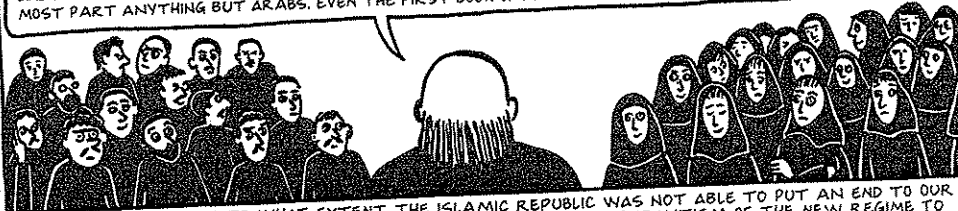
HE WAS EXAGGERATING A LITTLE. FROM THE MOMENT WE ARRIVED AT UNIVERSITY, ALTHOUGH BOYS AND GIRLS DIDN'T MIX, THIS DIDN'T STOP THEM FROM THROWING EACH OTHER FLIRTATIOUS LOOKS.



NATURALLY! AFTER ALL, LAW OR NO LAW, THESE WERE HUMAN BEINGS.

MANY OF THE STUDENTS KNEW ONE ANOTHER ALREADY. IN LISTENING TO THEM, I UNDERSTOOD THAT THEY'D TAKEN THE PREPARATORY CLASSES TOGETHER. OUR FIRST LESSON WAS "ART HISTORY."

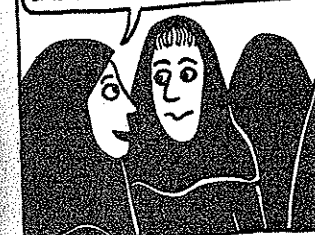
WHAT IS GENERALLY KNOWN AS ARAB ART AND ARCHITECTURE SHOULD IN FACT BE CALLED THE ART OF THE ISLAMIC EMPIRE, WHICH STRETCHED FROM CHINA TO SPAIN. THIS ART IS A CROSS BETWEEN INDIAN, PERSIAN, AND MESOPOTAMIAN ART. THOSE WHOM WE CONSIDER, LIKE AVICENNA, TO BE "ARAB SCHOLARS" ARE FOR THE MOST PART ANYTHING BUT ARABS. EVEN THE FIRST BOOK OF ARABIC GRAMMAR WAS WRITTEN BY AN IRANIAN.



IT WAS FUNNY TO SEE TO WHAT EXTENT THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC WAS NOT ABLE TO PUT AN END TO OUR CHAUVINISM. TO THE CONTRARY! PEOPLE OFTEN COMPARED THE OBSCURANTISM OF THE NEW REGIME TO THE ARAB INVASION. ACCORDING TO THIS LOGIC, "BEING PERSIAN" MEANT "NOT BEING A FANATIC," BUT THIS PARALLEL WENT ONLY SO FAR CONSIDERING THE FACT THAT OUR GOVERNMENT WASN'T COMPOSED OF ARAB INVADERS BUT PERSIAN FUNDAMENTALISTS.

AT LUNCH TIME.

THE PROFESSOR IS VERY INTERESTING, BUT OH MY! DOES HIS MOUTH SMELL. EVEN THIRTY FEET AWAY YOU CAN SMELL HIS JACKAL'S BREATH!



DESPITE THEIR UPTIGHT APPEARANCE, THE GIRLS IN MY CLASS SEEMED TO BE QUITE THE COMEDIANS.

AMONG THE GUYS, A FEW EVEN HAVE HAIR CUTS!! MY GOD!

HA! HA! HA!

HEY! LOOK, THE GUY IN THE BLUE SHIRT... HE'S REALLY NOT BAD!



THEY WERE TALKING ABOUT REZA. I SUDDENLY FOUND THEM A LOT LESS FUNNY.

HI, I'M SHOUKA.

AND I'M NIYOOSHHA.

NICE TO MEET YOU. I'M MARJANE.

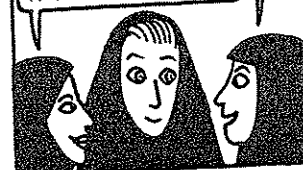


NIYOOSHHA HAD VERY GREEN EYES WHICH MADE HER THE MOST SOUGHT AFTER GIRL AT THE COLLEGE. (THE MAJORITY OF IRANIANS HAVE BLACK EYES.)

YOU'VE LIVED ABROAD?

YES, HOW DID YOU KNOW?

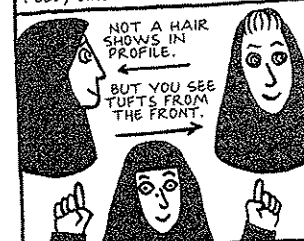
BECAUSE OF YOUR MAGHNAEH! YOU WEAR IT LIKE A BEGINNER.



SHOUKA WAS VERY FUNNY. UNFORTUNATELY, WHEN SHE GOT MARRIED TWO YEARS LATER, HER HUSBAND FORBODE HER FROM ASSOCIATING WITH ME. TO HIM, I WAS AN AMORAL PERSON.

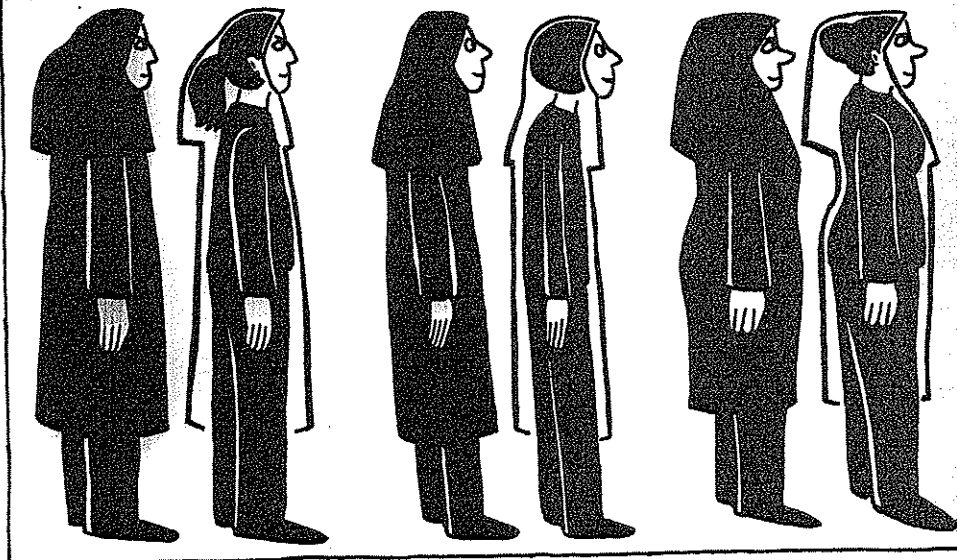
\*HOODED HEAD-SCARF

IT'S TRUE THAT WEARING THE VEIL WAS A REAL SCIENCE. YOU HAD TO MAKE A SPECIAL FOLD, LIKE THIS:



NEVERTHELESS, THINGS WERE EVOLVING... YEAR BY YEAR, WOMEN WERE WINNING AN EIGHTH OF AN INCH OF HAIR AND LOSING AN EIGHTH OF AN INCH OF VEIL.

WITH PRACTICE, EVEN THOUGH THEY WERE COVERED FROM HEAD TO FOOT, YOU GOT TO THE POINT WHERE YOU COULD GUESS THEIR SHAPE, THE WAY THEY WORE THEIR HAIR AND EVEN THEIR POLITICAL OPINIONS. OBVIOUSLY, THE MORE A WOMAN SHOWED, THE MORE PROGRESSIVE AND MODERN SHE WAS.

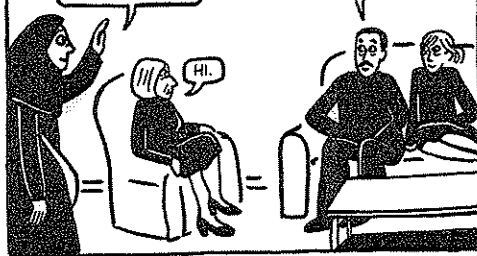


COMING HOME THAT EVENING.

HI EVERYONE!

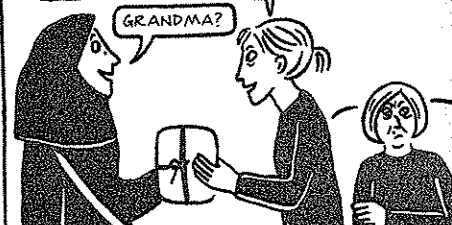
SO, HOW WAS YOUR FIRST DAY?

HI.



LOOK WHAT GRANDMA BROUGHT FOR YOU.

GRANDMA?



EVER SINCE MY COWARDLY ACT MY GRANDMA HADN'T BEEN SPEAKING TO ME.

... WHEW! SHE HAD FORGIVEN ME.

OH, GRANDMA! THANK YOU!!

FINE, FINE, IT'S OKAY!



I HAD FORGOTTEN HER EXTREME INTRANSIGENCE.

WHAT'S THIS?

IT'S A COTTON HEAD-SCARF!

THIS WAY YOUR HEAD CAN BREATHE. OTHERWISE YOU'LL BE BALD IN NO TIME.



SHE HAD GIVEN ME A GIFT, SHE HAD THOUGHT OF MY HAIR, SHE WAS TALKING TO ME ...

ONE WEEK LATER.

THE CLEAN-SHAVEN GUY, RIGHT OVER THERE, WHAT'S HIS NAME...? REZA, YES, REZA, DO YOU KNOW HIM?

NO, WHY?

WELL, HE CAN'T STOP OALING YOU, HEE! HEE! HEE! HEE!



NO, NO, I HADN'T EVEN NOTICED HIM!

YOU'RE RIGHT, HE'S NOT THAT GREAT.

OH, HE'S NOT SO BAD.

SEE, YOU DO KNOW HIM!



FACED WITH THE PERSPICACITY OF MY GIRLFRIENDS, I HAD NO CHOICE BUT TO ADMIT THE TRUTH.

STUDENTS, STUDENTS.

SUCH DISCERNMENT!

I CONFESS! I SAW HIM LAST NIGHT IN YOUR CAR.

DIRTY LIAR! YOU REALLY GOT ME!

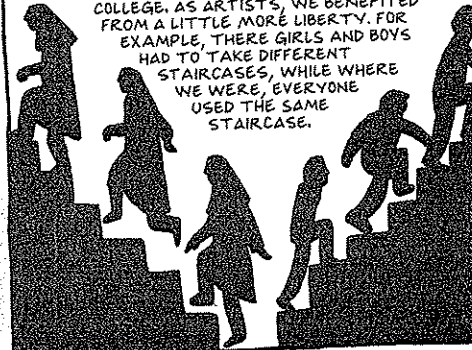


SHHH! LISTEN TO WHAT THE DIRECTOR IS SAYING!

YOUR PRESENCE IS REQUIRED AT 3 O'CLOCK AT THE MAIN CAMPUS! ALL THOSE WHO ARE ABSENT WILL BE BARRED FROM ATTENDING CLASSES FOR TWO WEEKS!



IT WAS AT THE MAIN CAMPUS THAT THE SUBJECTS COMMON TO ALL THE COLLEGES WERE TAUGHT. IT WAS MUCH MORE REPRESSIVE THAN OUR COLLEGE. AS ARTISTS, WE BENEFITED FROM A LITTLE MORE LIBERTY. FOR EXAMPLE, THERE GIRLS AND BOYS HAD TO TAKE DIFFERENT STAIRCASES, WHILE WHERE WE WERE, EVERYONE USED THE SAME STAIRCASE.



I DIDN'T GET THE STAIRCASE THING, BECAUSE IN ANY CASE, WE FOUND OURSELVES TOGETHER UPSTAIRS. BUT SHOUKA SAID THAT IT WAS TO KEEP THE BOYS FROM WATCHING OUR BUTTS WHILE WE CLIMBED.



I THINK SHE WAS RIGHT.

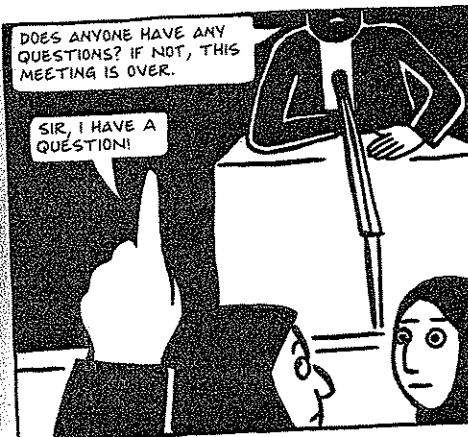
ONCE IN THE AMPHITHEATER, WE DISCOVERED THE REASON FOR OUR CONVOCAION: THE ADMINISTRATION HAD ORGANIZED A LECTURE WITH THE THEME OF "MORAL AND RELIGIOUS CONDUCT," TO SHOW US THE RIGHT PATH.

WE CAN'T ALLOW OURSELVES TO BEHAVE LOOSELY! IT'S THE BLOOD OF OUR MARTYRS WHICH HAS NOURISHED THE FLOWERS OF OUR REPUBLIC. TO ALLOW ONESELF TO BEHAVE INDECENTLY IS TO TRAMPLE ON THE BLOOD OF THOSE WHO GAVE THEIR LIVES FOR OUR FREEDOM. ALSO, I AM ASKING THE YOUNG LADIES PRESENT HERE TO WEAR LESS-WIDE TROUSERS AND LONGER HEAD-SCARVES. YOU SHOULD COVER YOUR HAIR WELL, YOU SHOULD NOT WEAR MAKEUP, YOU SHOULD...



DOES ANYONE HAVE ANY QUESTIONS? IF NOT, THIS MEETING IS OVER.

SIR, I HAVE A QUESTION!



YOU SAY THAT OUR HEAD-SCARVES ARE SHORT, THAT OUR PANTS ARE INDECENT, THAT WE MAKE OURSELVES UP, ETC., ...



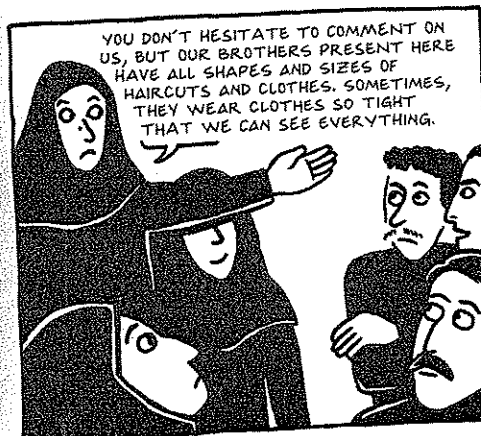
BUT AS A STUDENT OF ART, A GOOD PORTION OF MY TIME IS SPENT IN THE STUDIO. I NEED TO BE ABLE TO MOVE FREELY TO BE ABLE TO DRAW. A LONGER HEAD-SCARF WILL MAKE THE TASK EVEN MORE DIFFICULT.



AS FOR OUR TROUSERS, YOU CRITICIZE THEM FOR BEING TOO WIDE EVEN THOUGH THEY EFFECTIVELY HIDE OUR SHAPE. KNOWING THAT THESE TROUSERS ARE IN VOGUE RIGHT NOW, I ASK THE QUESTION: IS RELIGION DEFENDING OUR PHYSICAL INTEGRITY OR IS IT JUST OPPOSED TO FASHION?



YOU DON'T HESITATE TO COMMENT ON US, BUT OUR BROTHERS PRESENT HERE HAVE ALL SHAPES AND SIZES OF HAIRCUTS AND CLOTHES. SOMETIMES, THEY WEAR CLOTHES SO TIGHT THAT WE CAN SEE EVERYTHING.

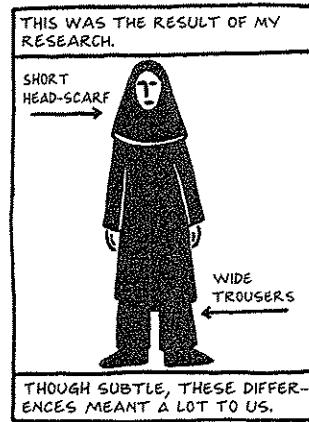
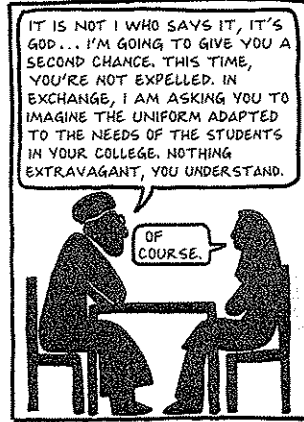


WHY IS IT THAT I, AS A WOMAN, AM EXPECTED TO FEEL NOTHING WHEN WATCHING THESE MEN WITH THEIR CLOTHES SCULPTED ON BUT THEY, AS MEN, CAN GET EXCITED BY TWO INCHES LESS OF MY HEAD-SCARF?

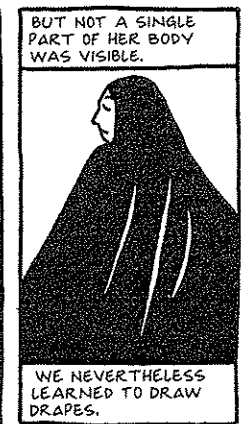
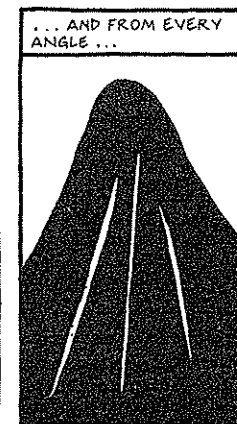
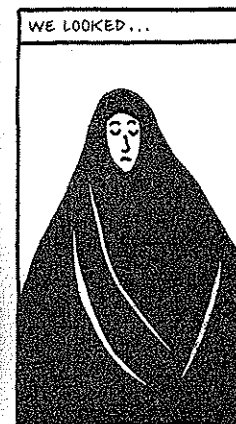
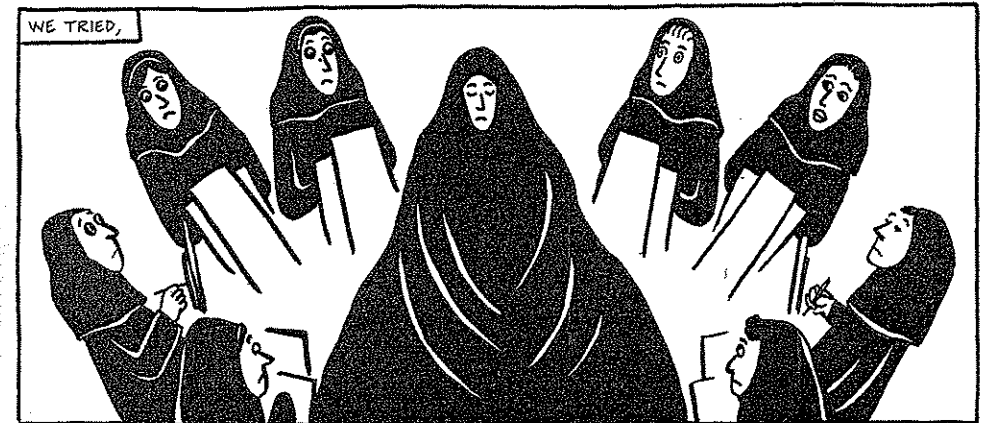
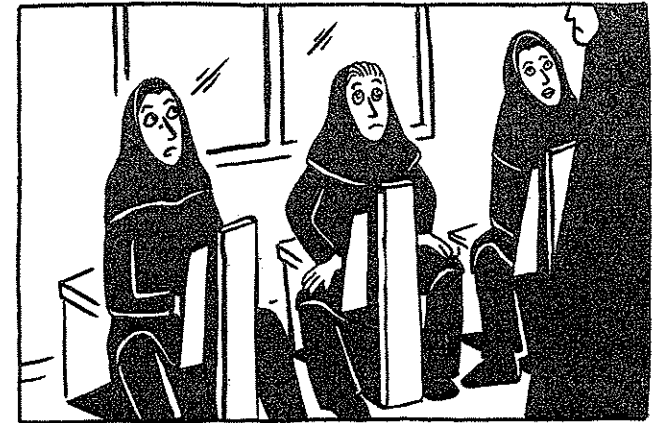
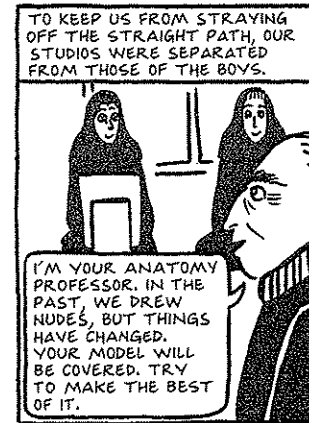


OH!!!





# THE SOCKS



AFTER A FEW WEEKS, WE DISCOVERED, ALONG WITH OUR PROFESSOR, THAT IT WAS PREFERABLE TO HAVE A MODEL ON WHOM YOU COULD AT LEAST DISTINGUISH THE LIMBS. OUR DIRECTOR APPROVED.



ONE EVENING, BEFORE THE COLLEGE CLOSED, ONE OF THE SUPERVISORS PAID ME A VISIT.



WHY ARE YOU LOOKING AT THIS MAN?



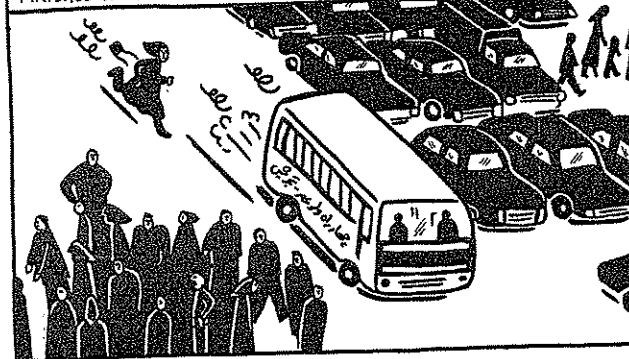
WHAT WOULD YOU HAVE ME DO? SHOULD I DRAW THIS MAN WHILE LOOKING AT THE DOOR???



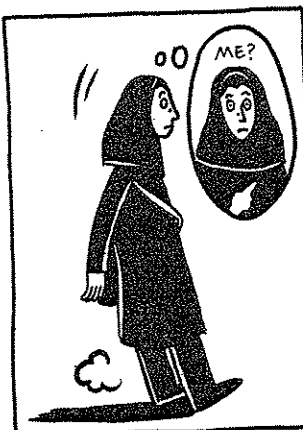
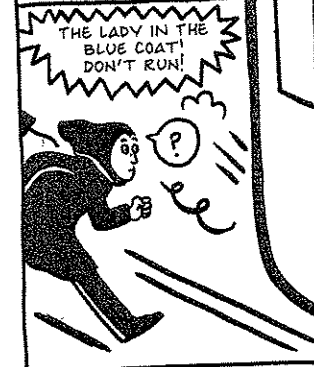
YES, BUT YOU'RE NOT ALLOWED TO LOOK AT HIM. IT'S AGAINST THE MORAL CODE.



THESE ABSURD SITUATIONS WERE QUITE FREQUENT. ONE DAY, FOR EXAMPLE, I WAS SUPPOSED TO GO SEE MY DENTIST, BUT CLASSES FINISHED LATER THAN EXPECTED.



SUDDENLY, I HEARD A VOICE OVER THE LOUDSPEAKER:



MADAM, WHY WERE YOU RUNNING?



YES ... BUT ... WHEN YOU RUN, YOUR BEHIND MAKES MOVEMENTS THAT ARE ... HOW DO YOU SAY ... OBSCENE!



WELL THEN DON'T LOOK AT MY ASS!



I YELLED SO LOUDLY THAT THEY DIDN'T EVEN ARREST ME.

