

# KIM WILDE

A YEAR AFTER MY UNCLE DIED, THE BORDERS WERE REOPENED. MY PARENTS RAN TO GET PASSPORTS.

LOOK AT THE LAST PAGE: "IT IS STRICTLY FORBIDDEN TO TRAVEL IN OCCUPIED PALESTINE WITH THIS DOCUMENT."

MY GOD. JUST LOOK AT ME IN THIS PICTURE, WITH THE SCARF ON MY HEAD.

CAN I SEE?

SHE SURE DIDN'T LOOK VERY HAPPY. IN FACT, SHE WAS UNRECOGNIZABLE.

NAME: CHALISE  
TAXI  
DATE OF BIRTH: 12.03.1947  
IRAN

FIRST THING AFTER THEY GOT TO ISTANBUL, THEY WENT TO BUY THE POSTERS.

ROLLING STONES  
IRON MAIDEN

AS SOON AS I GET MY PASSPORT, WE'LL GO ON A BIG TRIP!

WELL, ACTUALLY...

WE WANT TO SPEND SOME TIME TOGETHER, JUST THE TWO OF US, FOR A FEW DAYS.

WHERE?

TURKEY.

BAH...TURKEY'S FOR THE BIRDS. ONLY UNCOOL PEOPLE GO TO TURKEY. IF YOU'RE TAKING A TRIP, WHY NOT GO TO EUROPE OR THE UNITED STATES?!

I'M GLAD WE FOUND JUST WHAT SHE WANTED!

ABSOLUTELY! IT'S SO HARD FOR KIDS IN IRAN, THE POOR THINGS.

TELL ME THE TRUTH, YOU REALLY LIKE IRON MAIDEN?

ABSOLUTELY!

YOU HYPOCRITE!

I WONDER HOW WE'RE GOING TO GET THEM PAST CUSTOMS!

I'VE BEEN WONDERING MYSELF. THEY'RE ENORMOUS.

IF YOU WANT US TO BRING YOU BACK SOME PRESENTS, JUST ASK.

WHAT CAN YOU BRING ME BACK FROM TURKEY? SHISH-KEBABBS?

LISTEN MARJI, WHERE DO YOU THINK ALL THE HIP STUFF YOU LIKE COMES FROM?

DURING THE WAR, THERE WERE NO IMPORTS FROM THE WEST.

A DENIM JACKET, CHOCOLATE, A POSTER, NO, TWO POSTERS. ONE OF KIM WILDE AND ONE OF IRON MAIDEN.

IRON MAIDEN? THOSE FOUR BRUTES?

THEY'RE NOT BRUTES. I REALLY LIKE WHAT THEY DO.

YOU LIKE THAT?

I LOVE IT.

SEE, MOM?

AS SOON AS THEY WERE IN THE HOTEL, THEY SET TO FINDING A WAY. WE COULD FOLD THEM AND HIDE THEM IN THE LINING OF THE SUITCASE!

FOLD THEM? THAT WILL LEAVE MARKS. SHE'LL BE DISAPPOINTED.

WE COULD JUST CARRY THEM UNDER OUR ARMS AND ACT NATURAL.

UNDER OUR ARMS? COME ON!

AND THEN MY MOTHER HAD A GREAT IDEA...

TAKE OFF YOUR COAT.



HEY, WHAT ARE YOU DOING?  
WAIT, YOU'LL SEE.

CRRRAK

SHE TORE OUT THE LINING.



THEN, SHE PLACED THE TWO POSTERS BEHIND IT...



...AND THEN SEWED IT BACK IN.



YOU'RE SURE I LOOK NORMAL?

YOU JUST LOOK LIKE YOU'RE WEARING SHOULDER PADS. IT'S STYLISH.



ARRIVING AT TEHRAN'S MEHRABAD AIRPORT...

I'M WALKING LIKE FRANKENSTEIN.  
NO YOU'RE NOT, YOU LOOK COMPLETELY NATURAL.



PLACE YOUR BAGS ON THE TABLE.

STAY CALM!



SO, WHAT HAVE YOU GOT WITH YOU? ALCOHOL? PLAYING CARDS? MUSIC? FILM? CHESS SET? MAGAZINES?...

NOTHING, JUST PERSONAL AFFAIRS.



YOU'RE SURE YOU'VE GOT NOTHING ILLEGAL?

NOPE. NO, NO.



YOU REALIZE THAT IF I FIND ANYTHING ILLEGAL, I'LL...

SIR, PLEASE, DO WE REALLY LOOK LIKE SMUGGLERS?



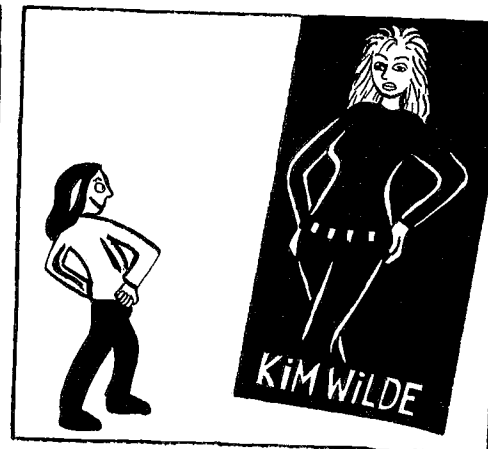
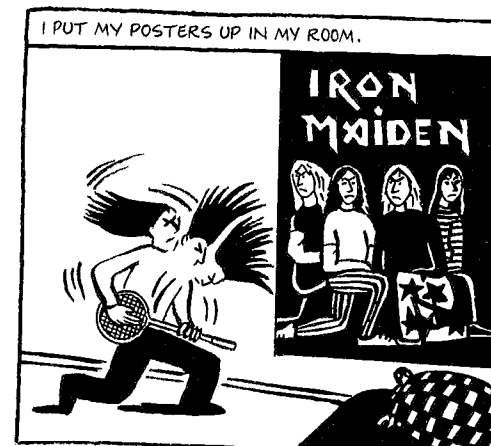
...ALRIGHT. TAKE YOUR LUGGAGE AND GO!



CUSTOM رُك

EXIT خروج →

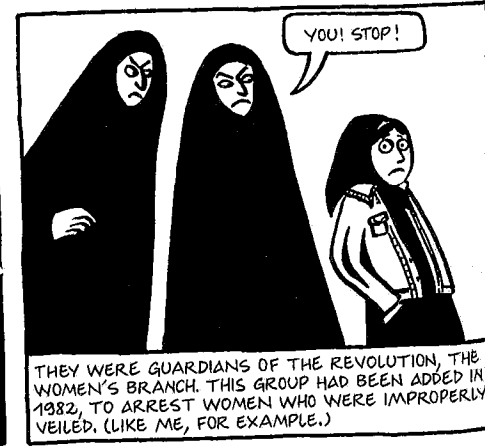
MOM!  
DAD!



FOR A YEAR NOW, THE FOOD SHORTAGE HAD BEEN RESOLVED BY THE GROWTH OF THE BLACK MARKET. HOWEVER, FINDING TAPES WAS A LITTLE MORE COMPLICATED. ON GANDHI AVENUE YOU COULD FIND THEM SOMETIMES.



I BOUGHT TWO TAPES: KIM WILDE AND CAMEL.



THEIR JOB WAS TO PUT US BACK ON THE STRAIGHT AND NARROW BY EXPLAINING THE DUTIES OF MUSLIM WOMEN.



THOSE! BUT THESE ARE SNEAKERS!



IT WAS OBVIOUS THAT SHE HAD NO IDEA WHAT PUNK WAS.

THERE WAS NO ALTERNATIVE. I HAD TO LIE.



AND YOU WEAR THIS JACKET FOR BASKETBALL TOO??



NO, IT'S MALCOLM X, THE LEADER OF BLACK MUSLIMS IN AMERICA.



BACK THEN, MICHAEL JACKSON WAS STILL BLACK.

LOWER YOUR SCARF, YOU LITTLE WHORE!



AREN'T YOU ASHAMED TO WEAR TIGHT JEANS LIKE THESE??



GO ON, GET IN THE CAR. WE'RE TAKING YOU DOWN TO THE COMMITTEE.



AT THE COMMITTEE, THEY DIDN'T HAVE TO INFORM MY PARENTS. THEY COULD DETAIN ME FOR HOURS, OR FOR DAYS. I COULD BE WHIPPED. IN SHORT, ANYTHING COULD HAPPEN TO ME. IT WAS TIME FOR ACTION.

I'M SORRY MA'AM! I'LL NEVER DO IT AGAIN...

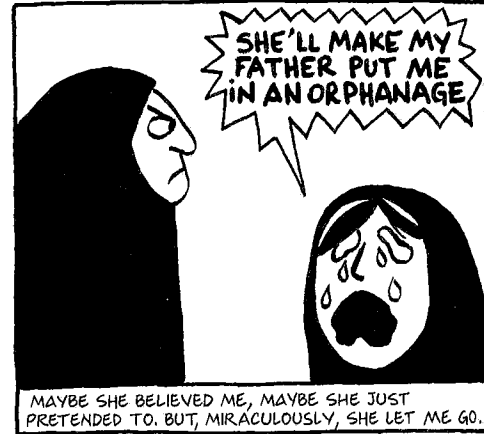
GET IN THE CAR!



MA'AM, MY MOTHER'S DEAD. MY STEPMOTHER IS REALLY CRUEL AND IF I DON'T GO HOME RIGHT AWAY, SHE'LL KILL ME...



SHE'LL BURN ME WITH THE CLOTHES IRON!



SHE'LL MAKE MY FATHER PUT ME IN AN ORPHANAGE

MAYBE SHE BELIEVED ME, MAYBE SHE JUST PRETENDED TO. BUT, MIRACULOUSLY, SHE LET ME GO.



BACK HOME...

MARJI! WHAT HAPPENED? HAVE YOU BEEN CRYING?

NO MOM, I'M JUST TIRED. I'M GOING TO MY ROOM.

THERE WAS NO WAY I COULD TELL THE TRUTH. SHE NEVER WOULD HAVE LET ME GO OUT ALONE AGAIN.



I GOT OFF PRETTY EASY, CONSIDERING. THE GUARDIANS OF THE REVOLUTION DIDN'T FIND MY TAPES.



WE'RE THE KIDS IN AMERICA WHOAO

TO EACH HIS OWN WAY OF CALMING DOWN.

# THE SHABBAT



TO KEEP US FROM FORGETTING THAT WE WERE AT WAR, IRAQ OPTED FOR A NEW STRATEGY...

I HEARD THEY'RE GOING TO USE BALLISTIC MISSILES AGAINST US.

WHAT ARE YOU SAYING? WE'RE NOT AT WAR WITH THE SOVIET UNION. I DON'T BELIEVE THE IRAQIS HAVE WEAPONS LIKE THAT.



FROM THE IRAQI BORDER TO TEHRAN IT'S THOUSANDS OF MILES. MISSILES THAT CAN GO THAT FAR COST A FORTUNE!

WELL, THAT'S WHAT THE RUMORS SAY!

WE IRANIANS ARE OLYMPIC CHAMPIONS WHEN IT COMES TO GOSSIP.



SHE'S RIGHT. WE LOVE TO EXAGGERATE.



YOU SEEM TO HAVE THE OPPOSITE SYMPTOM.

WHY DO YOU SAY THAT?



EVEN WHEN YOU SEE SOMETHING WITH YOUR OWN EYES, YOU NEED CONFIRMATION FROM THE BBC.

MY NATURAL OPTIMISM JUST LEADS ME TO BE SKEPTICAL.

MOM'S PESSIMISM SOON WON OUT OVER DAD'S OPTIMISM. IT TURNED OUT THAT THE IRAQIS DID HAVE MISSILES. THEY WERE CALLED "SCUDS" AND TEHRAN BECAME THEIR TARGET.



WHEN THE SIRENS WENT ON, IT MEANT WE HAD THREE MINUTES TO KNOW IF THE END HAD COME.

WE'RE NOT GOING TO THE BASEMENT?

IT WOULDN'T MAKE ANY DIFFERENCE!!



CONSIDERING THE DAMAGE THEY DO, WHETHER WE'RE IN THE BASEMENT OR ON THE ROOF, IT'S THE SAME THING.



THE THREE MINUTES SEEMED LIKE THREE DAYS. FOR THE FIRST TIME, I REALIZED JUST HOW MUCH DANGER WE WERE IN.



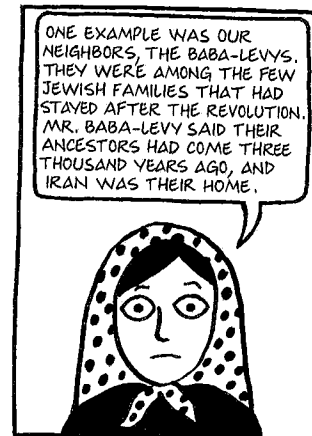
I DON'T WANT TO DIE!

YOU WON'T DEAR. I PROMISE YOU!

NOW THAT TEHRAN WAS UNDER ATTACK, MANY FLED. THE CITY WAS DESERTED. AS FOR US, WE STAYED. NOT JUST OUT OF FATALISM. IF THERE WAS TO BE A FUTURE, IN MY PARENTS' EYES, THAT FUTURE WAS LINKED TO MY FRENCH EDUCATION. AND TEHRAN WAS THE ONLY PLACE I COULD GET IT.



SOME PEOPLE, MORE CIRCUMSPECT, TOOK SHELTER IN THE BASEMENTS OF BIG HOTELS, WELL-KNOWN FOR THEIR SAFETY. APPARENTLY, THEIR REINFORCED CONCRETE STRUCTURES WERE BOMBPROOF.



ONE EXAMPLE WAS OUR NEIGHBORS, THE BABA-LEVYS. THEY WERE AMONG THE FEW JEWISH FAMILIES THAT HAD STAYED AFTER THE REVOLUTION. MR. BABA-LEVY SAID THEIR ANCESTORS HAD COME THREE THOUSAND YEARS AGO, AND IRAN WAS THEIR HOME.

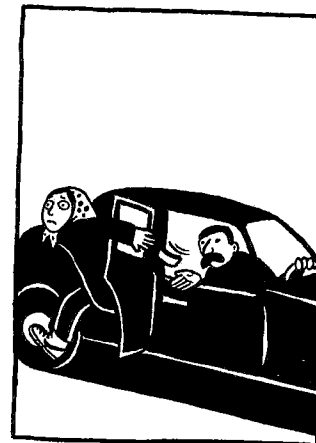
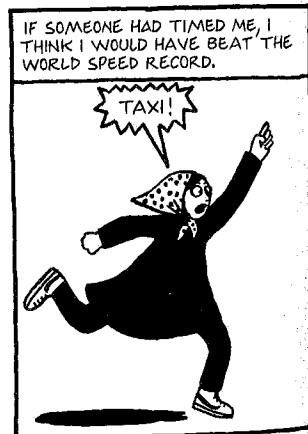


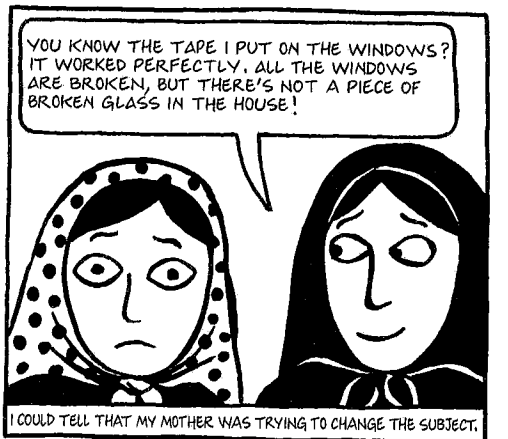
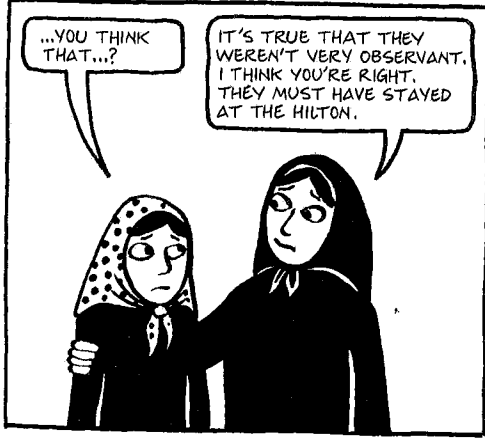
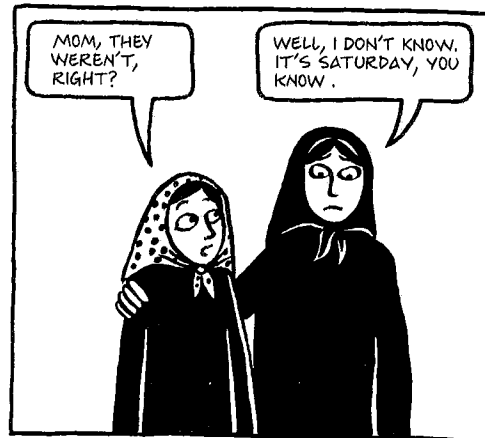
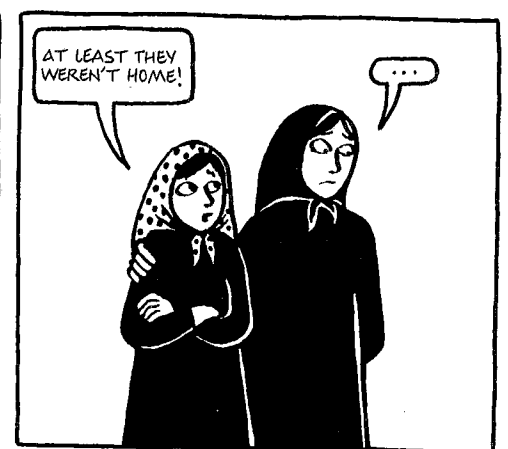
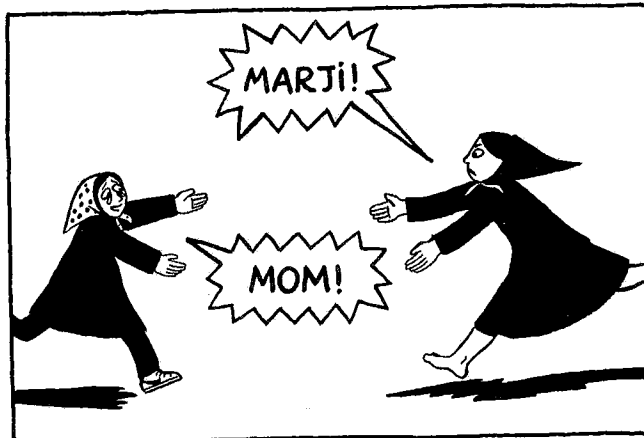
...THEIR DAUGHTER NEDA WAS A QUIET GIRL WHO DIDN'T PLAY MUCH, BUT WE WOULD TALK ABOUT ROMANCE FROM TIME TO TIME.

...ONE DAY A BLOND PRINCE WITH BLUE EYES WILL COME AND TAKE ME TO HIS CASTLE...

OH YEAH! ME TOO!

SO LIFE WENT ON...









# THE DOWRY

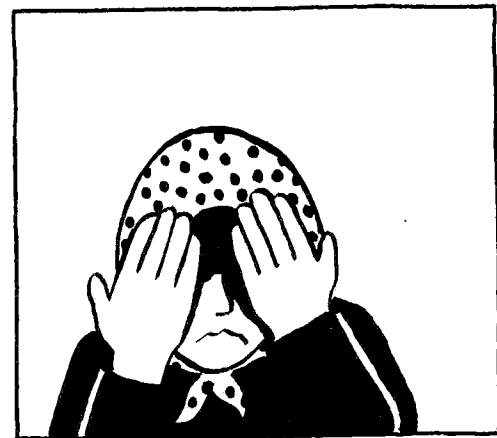
WHEN WE WALKED PAST THE BABA-LEVY'S HOUSE, WHICH WAS COMPLETELY DESTROYED, I COULD FEEL THAT SHE WAS DISCREETLY PULLING ME AWAY. SOMETHING TOLD ME THAT THE BABA-LEVYS HAD BEEN AT HOME. SOMETHING CAUGHT MY ATTENTION.



I SAW A TURQUOISE BRACELET. IT WAS NEDA'S. HER AUNT HAD GIVEN IT TO HER FOR HER FOURTEENTH BIRTHDAY...



THE BRACELET WAS STILL ATTACHED TO... I DON'T KNOW WHAT...



NO SCREAM IN THE WORLD COULD HAVE RELIEVED MY SUFFERING AND MY ANGER.

AFTER THE DEATH OF NEDA BABA-LEVY, MY LIFE TOOK A NEW TURN. IN 1984, I WAS FOURTEEN AND A REBEL. NOTHING SCARED ME ANYMORE.



I'VE TOLD YOU A HUNDRED TIMES THAT IT IS STRICTLY FORBIDDEN TO WEAR JEWELRY AND JEANS!

WHAT ARE YOU DOING WITH THAT BRACELET? GIVE IT TO ME RIGHT NOW!



OVER MY DEAD BODY! IT WAS A GIFT FROM MY MOM.

I HAD LEARNED THAT YOU SHOULD ALWAYS SHOUT LOUDER THAN YOUR AGGRESSOR.



IF YOU'RE STILL WEARING JEWELRY TOMORROW...

YEAH, I KNOW!

AND THE NEXT DAY...



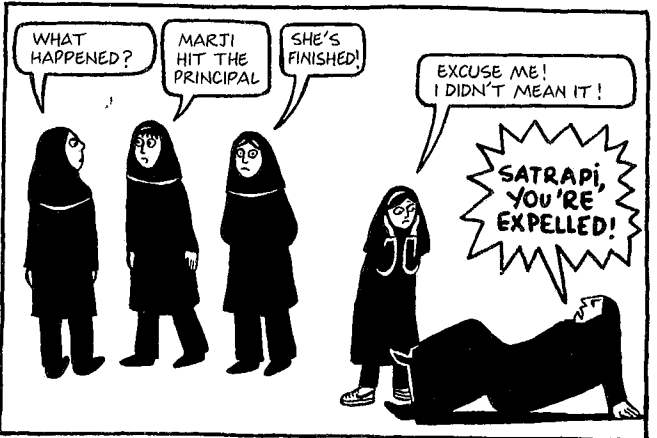
LET ME SEE YOUR WRIST.

WHAT FOR?

LET ME SEE IT, I'M TELLING YOU.



WITH ALL THE JEWELRY YOU STEAL FROM US, YOU MUST BE MAKING A PILE OF MONEY.



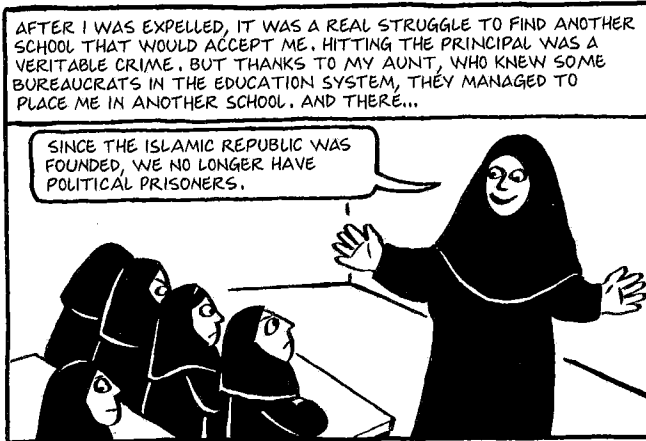
WHAT HAPPENED?

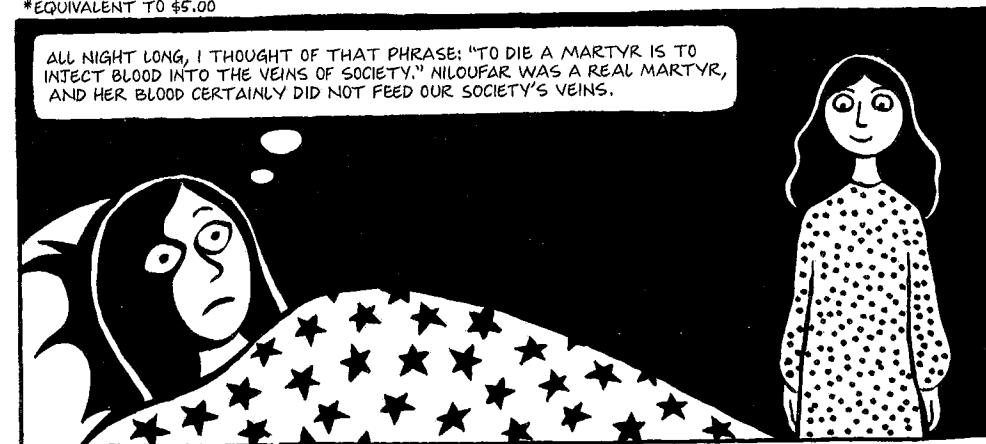
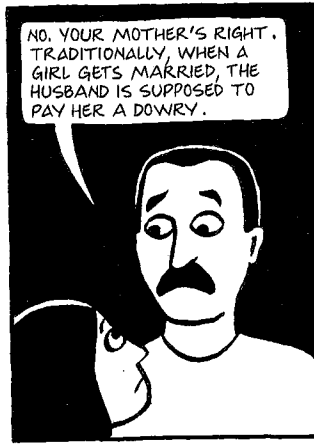
MARJI HIT THE PRINCIPAL

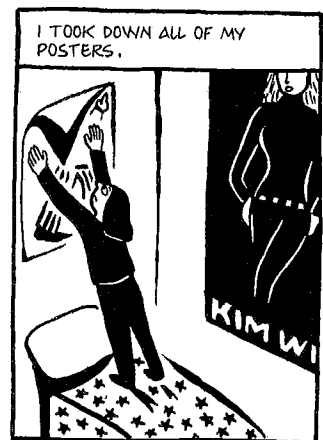
SHE'S FINISHED!

EXCUSE ME! I DIDN'T MEAN IT!

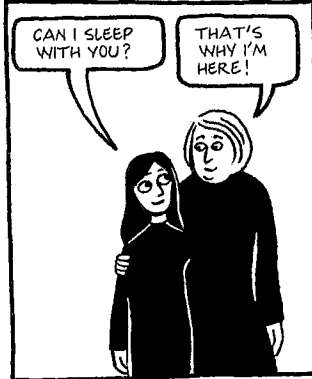
SATRAPI, YOU'RE EXPELLED!







ON THE EVE OF MY DEPARTURE, MY GRANDMOTHER CAME TO SPEND THE NIGHT AT OUR HOUSE.



I WATCHED MY GRANDMA UNDRESS. EACH MORNING, SHE PICKED JASMINE FLOWERS TO PUT IN HER BRA SO THAT SHE WOULD SMELL NICE. WHEN SHE UNDRESSED, YOU COULD SEE THE FLOWERS FALL FROM HER BREASTS.



IT WAS SOMETHING TO SEE.

GRANDMA, HOW DO YOU HAVE SUCH ROUND BREASTS AT YOUR AGE?



SHE ACTUALLY DID, AND I KNEW IT. I JUST WANTED TO HEAR HER SAY IT.

I'LL MISS YOU.

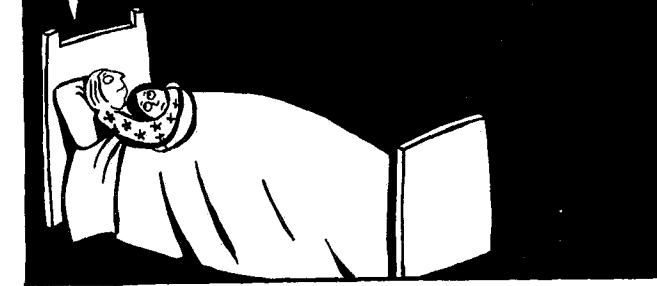


SHE TOO WAS LYING TO ME.

LISTEN, I DON'T WANT TO PREACH, BUT LET ME GIVE YOU SOME ADVICE THAT WILL ALWAYS HELP YOU.



IN LIFE YOU'LL MEET A LOT OF JERKS. IF THEY HURT YOU, TELL YOURSELF THAT IT'S BECAUSE THEY'RE STUPID. THAT WILL HELP KEEP YOU FROM REACTING TO THEIR CRUELTY. BECAUSE THERE IS NOTHING WORSE THAN BITTERNESS AND VENGEANCE... ALWAYS KEEP YOUR DIGNITY AND BE TRUE TO YOURSELF.

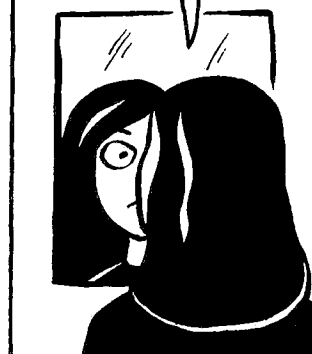


I SMELLED MY GRANDMA'S BOSOM. IT SMELLED GOOD. I'LL NEVER FORGET THAT SMELL.

AND THE NEXT MORNING.



I WILL ALWAYS BE TRUE TO MYSELF.



I'M NOT COMING ALONG.

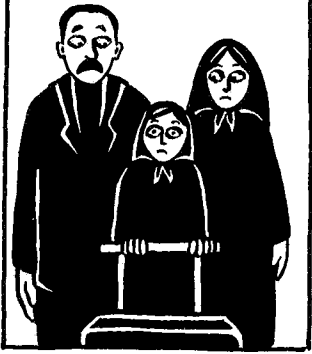


DON'T EVER FORGET WHAT I TOLD YOU.



HERE WE ARE!

THERE WAS A HUGE LINE. LOTS OF PEOPLE WERE LEAVING THE COUNTRY.



ESPECIALLY YOUNG BOYS. CONSIDERED FUTURE SOLDIERS, THEY WERE FORBIDDEN TO LEAVE THE COUNTRY AFTER THEY TURNED THIRTEEN.



