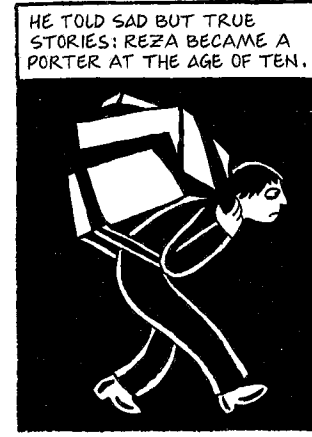
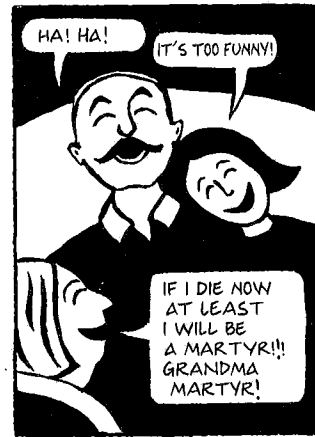
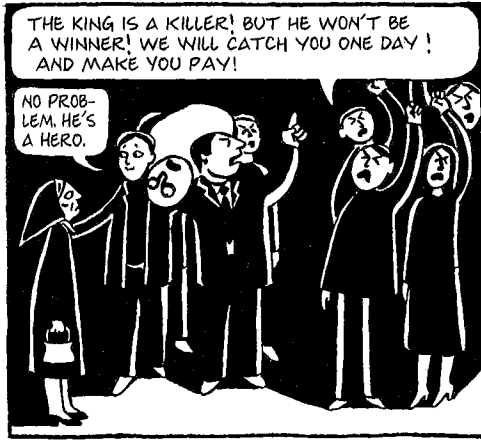
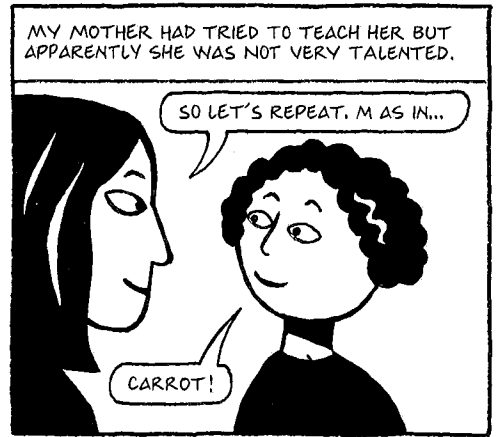


THE LETTER





MEHRI HAD A REAL SISTER, ONE YEAR YOUNGER, WHO WORKED AT MY UNCLE'S HOUSE.

YOU KNOW, I HAVE A FIANCE.

OH REALLY, WHO?



IT'S HIM! IN FRONT OF THE TV. ISN'T HE HANDSOME?

NOT BAD!

AFTER A FEW VISITS, SHE FELL IN LOVE WITH HIM TOO.



DO YOU WANT TO CONTINUE SEEING HER?

EHH...

WITHOUT ANY HESITATION, HOSSEIN GAVE ALL THE LETTERS HE HAD RECEIVED TO MY FATHER!

BUT THIS IS MARJI'S HAND-WRITING!



HER JEALOUSY WAS MORE THAN SHE COULD BEAR AND SHE TOLD MEHRI'S STORY TO MY UNCLE, WHO TOLD IT TO MY GRANDMA, WHO TOLD IT TO MY MOM. THAT IS HOW THE STORY REACHED MY FATHER...



TELL ME WHAT THESE ARE!
LETTERS!

WHY DIDN'T YOU TELL US ANYTHING?



YOU MUST UNDERSTAND THAT THEIR LOVE WAS IMPOSSIBLE.



WHY IS THAT?

BECAUSE IN THIS COUNTRY YOU MUST STAY WITHIN YOUR OWN SOCIAL CLASS.

...WHO DECIDED TO CLARIFY THE SITUATION.

WHO'S THERE?

I AM YOUR NEIGHBOR. I WOULD LIKE TO HAVE A FEW WORDS WITH YOUR SON.



OK, I'LL GET STRAIGHT TO THE POINT: I KNOW THAT MEHRI PRETENDS SHE IS MY DAUGHTER. IN REALITY SHE IS MY MAID.

REAL- LY?

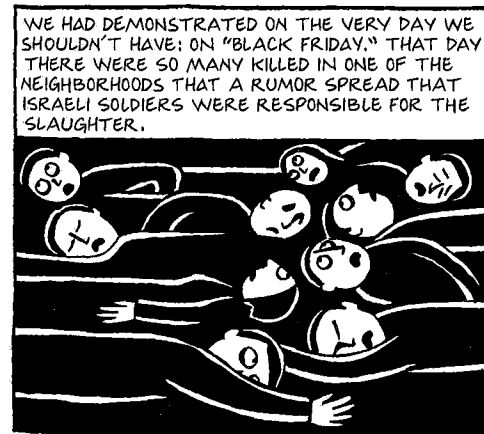
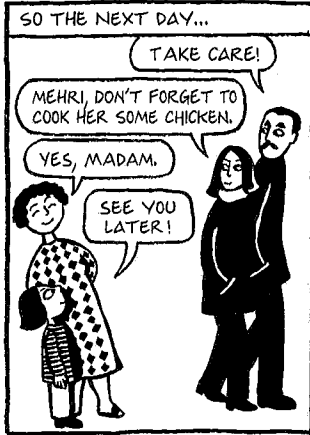


BUT IS IT HER FAULT THAT SHE WAS BORN WHERE SHE WAS BORN???

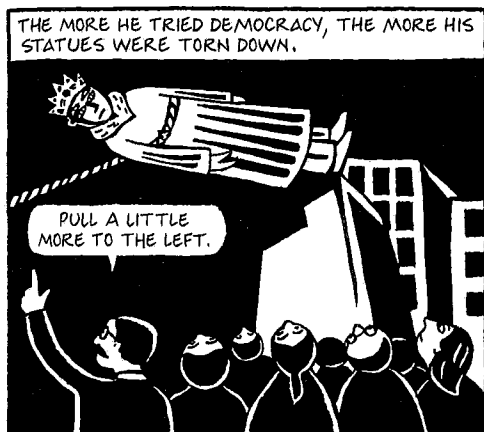
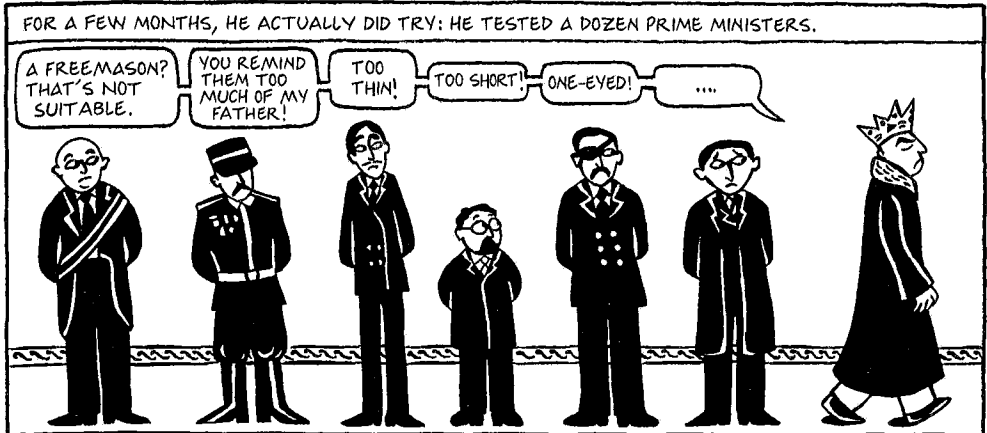
DAD, ARE YOU FOR OR AGAINST SOCIAL CLASSES?

WHEN I WENT BACK TO HER ROOM SHE WAS CRYING. WE WERE NOT IN THE SAME SOCIAL CLASS BUT AT LEAST WE WERE IN THE SAME BED.





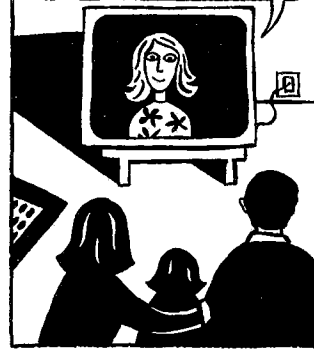
THE PARTY



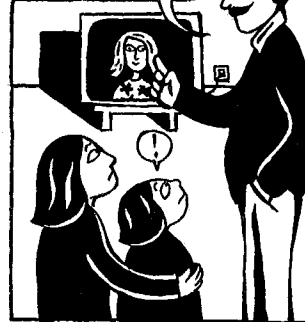
THE DAY HE LEFT, THE COUNTRY HAD THE BIGGEST CELEBRATION OF ITS ENTIRE HISTORY.



JIMMY CARTER, THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES, REFUSED TO GIVE REFUGE TO THE EXILED SHAH AND HIS FAMILY.



IT LOOKS LIKE CARTER HAS FORGOTTEN HIS FRIENDS. ALL THAT INTERESTS HIM IS OIL!



IT'S ANWAR AL-SADAT WHO WILL ACCEPT HIM IN HIS COUNTRY.



HE IS THE PRESIDENT OF EGYPT.

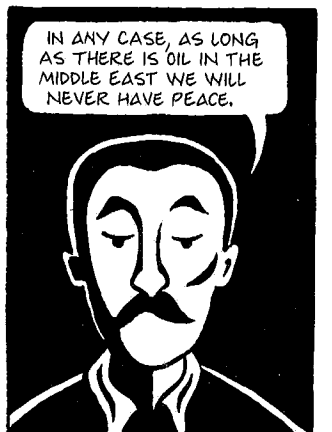


AND WHY IS HE TAKING IN THE SHAH?

THEY'VE BEEN FRIENDS FOR A LONG TIME. THEY BOTH BETRAYED THE COUNTRIES OF OUR REGION BY MAKING A PACT WITH ISRAEL.



IN ANY CASE, AS LONG AS THERE IS OIL IN THE MIDDLE EAST WE WILL NEVER HAVE PEACE.



LET'S TALK ABOUT SOMETHING ELSE. LET'S ENJOY OUR NEW FREEDOM!

NOW THAT THE DEVIL HAS LEFT!



MAYBE SADAT WELCOMED THE SHAH BECAUSE HIS FIRST WIFE WAS EGYPTIAN.

SURELY NOT! POLITICS AND SENTIMENT DON'T MIX.



AFTER ALL THIS JOY, A MAJOR MISFORTUNE TOOK PLACE: THE SCHOOLS, CLOSED DURING THIS PERIOD, REOPENED AND...



CHILDREN, TEAR OUT ALL THE PHOTOS OF THE SHAH FROM YOUR BOOKS.

BUT SHE WAS THE ONE WHO TOLD US THAT THE SHAH WAS CHOSEN BY GOD!



TEACHER! SHE SAYS THAT THE SHAH WAS CHOSEN BY GOD!!!
SATRAPI! YOU SHOULDN'T SAY THINGS LIKE THAT. STAND IN THE CORNER!



IN THE NAME OF THE DEAD MILLION, WE'LL TEACH RAMIN A GOOD LESSON. I HAVE AN IDEA...

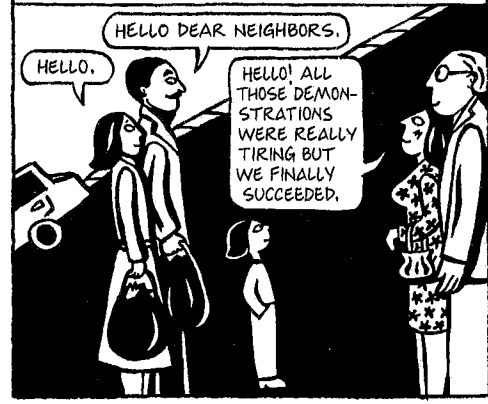


MY IDEA WAS TO PUT NAILS BETWEEN OUR FINGERS LIKE AMERICAN BRASS KNUCKLES AND TO ATTACK RAMIN.



RAMIN! RAMIN! COME OUT OF HIDING! DON'T BE A WIMP!

THESE STRANGE PHENOMENA WERE EVERYWHERE.



HELLO DEAR NEIGHBORS.

HELLO.

HELLO! ALL THOSE DEMONSTRATIONS WERE REALLY TIRING BUT WE FINALLY SUCCEEDED.

LOOK! A BULLET ALMOST HIT MY WIFE'S CHEEK. LIBERTY IS PRICELESS.



OH!

BUT MY MOTHER ARRIVED IN THE MIDDLE OF OUR EUPHORIA...



SO KIDS, WHAT ARE YOU UP TO?

MARJI FOUND SOME NAILS!!!

WE ARE GOING TO BEAT UP RAMIN!

HIS FATHER HAS KILLED A MILLION PEOPLE!

SO THAT'S WHAT YOU WANT, TO NAIL RAMIN? GET INTO THE CAR, I HAVE A BETTER SOLUTION.



REALLY? WHAT'S THAT?

WHAT NERVE! SHE ALWAYS HAD THAT NASTY SPOT. IF WE WEREN'T NEIGHBORS, HE WOULD HAVE SAID SHE'S A MARTYR RAISED FROM THE DEAD.



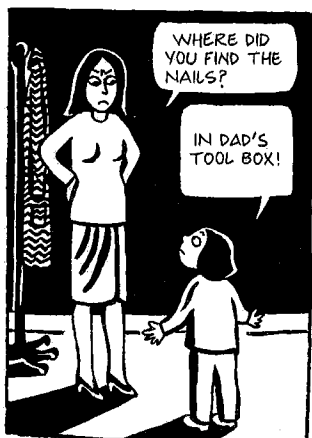
IT IS NOT IMPORTANT.

THE BATTLE WAS OVER FOR OUR PARENTS BUT NOT FOR US.



MY FATHER SAYS RAMIN'S FATHER WAS IN THE SAVAK*, HE KILLED A MILLION PEOPLE.

A MILLION?



WHERE DID YOU FIND THE NAILS?

IN DAD'S TOOL BOX!

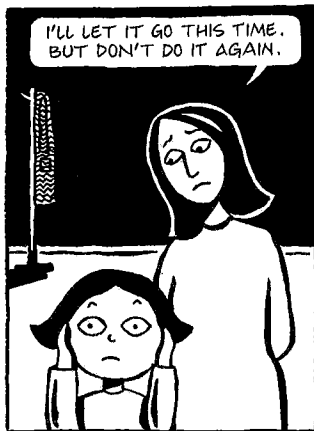


WHAT WOULD YOU SAY IF I NAILED YOUR EARS TO THE WALL?



WOW! IT WOULD HURT A LOT.

* SECRET POLICE OF THE SHAH'S REGIME.



I'LL LET IT GO THIS TIME. BUT DON'T DO IT AGAIN.



BUT MOM, RAMIN'S FATHER KILLED...

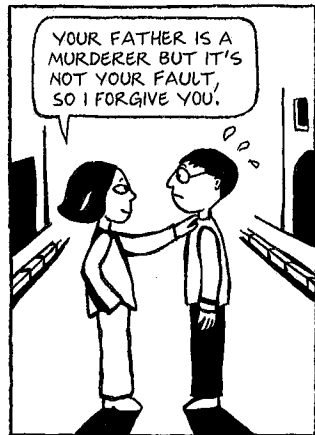
I KNOW.



HIS FATHER DID IT. BUT IT'S NOT RAMIN'S FAULT.



ANYWAY IT IS NOT FOR YOU AND ME TO DO JUSTICE. I'D EVEN SAY WE HAVE TO LEARN TO FORGIVE.



YOUR FATHER IS A MURDERER BUT IT'S NOT YOUR FAULT, SO I FORGIVE YOU.



HE IS NOT A MURDERER! HE KILLED COMMUNISTS AND COMMUNISTS ARE EVIL.



MOM, I SPOKE TO RAMIN. HE SAYS HIS FATHER DID THE RIGHT THING IN KILLING COMMUNISTS.

MY GOD! HE REPEATS WHAT THEY TELL HIM. HE WILL UNDERSTAND LATER...



YOU HAVE TO FORGIVE!

YOU HAVE TO FORGIVE!

I HAD THE FEELING OF BEING SOMEONE REALLY, REALLY GOOD.

THE HEROES

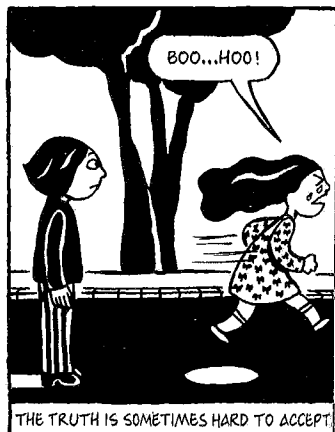


THE POLITICAL PRISONERS WERE LIBERATED A FEW DAYS LATER. THERE WERE 3000 OF THEM.

WE KNEW TWO OF THEM.

SIAMAK JARI
 BORN FEBRUARY 20, 1945
 IN LURISTAN
 PROFESSION: JOURNALIST
 CRIME: WROTE SUBVERSIVE ARTICLES IN THE KEYHAN
 DATE OF IMPRISONMENT: JULY 1973
 RELEASED: MARCH 1979
 POLITICAL CONVICTION: COMMUNIST

MOHSEN SHAKIBA
 BORN NOVEMBER 22, 1947
 IN RACHT
 PROFESSION: REVOLUTIONARY
 CRIME: REVOLUTIONARY
 DATE OF IMPRISONMENT: APRIL 1971
 RELEASED: MARCH 1979
 POLITICAL CONVICTION: COMMUNIST





MOHSEN! FOR GOD'S SAKE! I THOUGHT YOU WERE DEAD.

ME DEAD? WHAT A JOKE! IN PRISON THEY CALLED ME THE MAN WITH SEVEN LIVES.

?!



YOU KNOW EACH OTHER?



IN PRISON, WE ALL KNEW EACH OTHER.

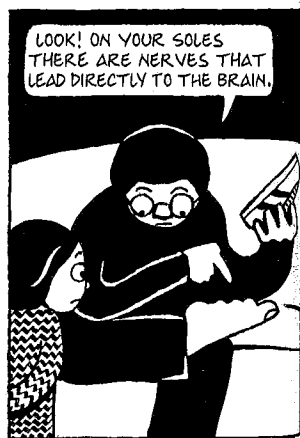


YOU REMEMBER THE DAY THEY PULLED OUT MY NAILS? THEY HAVE GROWN BACK SINCE. NOT IN A NORMAL WAY... BUT AT LEAST I HAVE THEM.



OUR TORTURERS RECEIVED SPECIAL TRAINING FROM THE C.I.A.

REAL SCIENTISTS!!! THEY KNEW EACH PART OF THE BODY, THEY KNEW WHERE TO HIT!



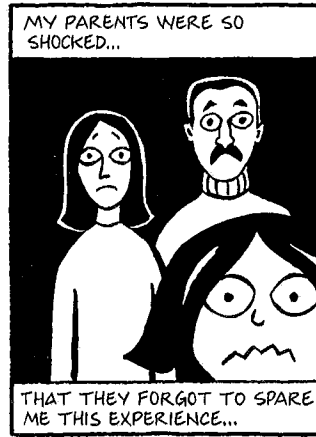
LOOK! ON YOUR SOLES THERE ARE NERVES THAT LEAD DIRECTLY TO THE BRAIN.



THEY WHIPPED ME WITH THICK ELECTRIC CABLES SO MUCH THAT THIS LOOKS LIKE ANYTHING BUT A FOOT.



NOT TO MENTION PUTTING OUT THEIR CIGARETTES ON OUR BACKS AND THIGHS...



MY PARENTS WERE SO SHOCKED...

THAT THEY FORGOT TO SPARE ME THIS EXPERIENCE...



ANY NEWS OF AHMADI?

AHMADI... AHMADI WAS ASSASSINATED. AS A MEMBER OF THE GUERRILLAS, HE SUFFERED HELL. HE ALWAYS HAD CYANIDE ON HIM IN CASE HE WAS ARRESTED, BUT HE WAS TAKEN BY SURPRISE AND UNFORTUNATELY HE NEVER HAD A CHANCE TO USE IT... SO HE SUFFERED THE WORST TORTURE...



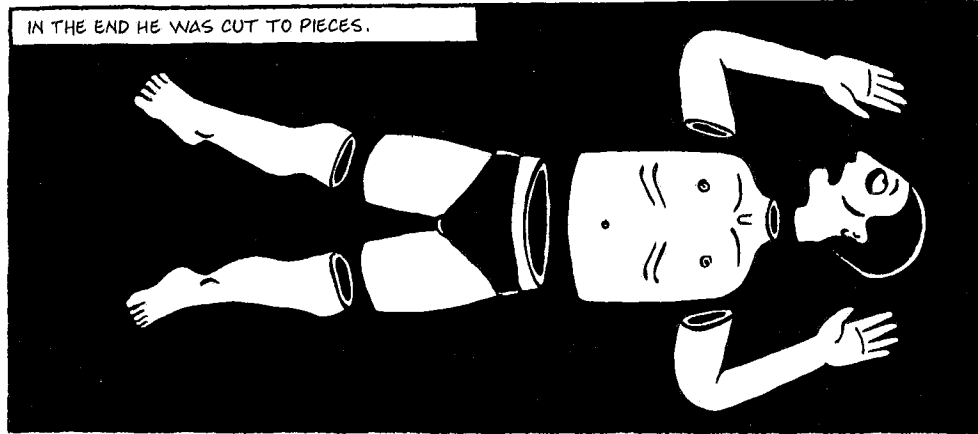
CONFESS! WHERE ARE THE OTHERS!

HOW DO YOU LIKE THIS?

THEY BURNED HIM WITH AN IRON.



I NEVER IMAGINED THAT YOU COULD USE THAT APPLIANCE FOR TORTURE.





MOSCOW

SO MY FATHER WAS NOT A HERO.

IS EVERYTHING ALL RIGHT, MARJI?

YEAH, SURE...

IF ONLY HE HAD BEEN IN PRISON.

THEY CUT MY DAD'S LEG OFF, BUT HE STILL DIDN'T CONFESS!... SO THEY CUT OFF AN ARM AS WELL.

TOO MUCH!

LUCKILY, ONE DAY THEY TOLD ME ABOUT MY UNCLE ANOOSH.

THE ONLY ONE OF MY FATHER'S BROTHERS I HAD NEVER MET, BECAUSE HE HAD BEEN IN PRISON. AND NOW, FOR THE FIRST TIME IN 30 YEARS, MY GRANDMA WAS REUNITED WITH HER SIX CHILDREN.

AND I HAD A HERO IN MY FAMILY... NATURALLY I LOVED HIM IMMEDIATELY.

WHY DON'T YOU COME AND LIVE WITH US?

SUCH A SWEET CHILD! I'LL SLEEP HERE TONIGHT AND TELL YOU STORIES.

ARE YOU MARRIED? DO YOU HAVE CHILDREN? HOW OLD ARE YOU?

LATER, MARJI, LATER.

DON'T BOTHER HIM TOO MUCH, HE'S TIRED.

GOOD NIGHT.

DON'T WORRY, WE'RE FINE.

OK, HERE GOES: I WAS 18 YEARS OLD WHEN MY UNCLE FERREYDOON AND HIS FRIENDS PROCLAIMED THE INDEPENDENCE OF THE IRANIAN PROVINCE OF AZERBAIJAN...

WOW!

FERREYDOON ELECTED HIMSELF MINISTER OF JUSTICE OF THIS NEW LITTLE REPUBLIC.

GENTLEMEN, JUSTICE IS THE BASIS OF DEMOCRACY. ALL MEN SHOULD BE EQUAL IN THE EYES OF THE LAW.

MY IDEAS WERE THE SAME AS HIS BUT YOUR GRANDFATHER REMAINED FAITHFUL TO THE SHAH.

MY SON, A TRAITOR! GO AWAY AND JOIN UP WITH MY IDIOTIC BROTHER!

YOU'LL BOTH END UP BEING EXECUTED! DO YOU HEAR ME? EXECUTED!

I BECAME FERREYDOON'S SECRETARY. IT WAS A TIME OF DREAMS AND ENTHUSIASM.

AZERBAIJAN IS ONLY THE BEGINNING. WE ARE GOING TO FREE IRAN PROVINCE BY PROVINCE!!

I'M CERTAIN YOU'RE RIGHT, UNCLE.

ONE NIGHT I HAD A TERRIBLE NIGHTMARE: DEAD PEOPLE, BLOOD...

THE NEXT MORNING, I WAS SO TORMENTED. I HAD TO SEE FERREYDOON.

SHIT! THE SHAH'S SOLDIERS!

GOOD GOD! FERREYDOON!

I WANTED TO DO SOMETHING... BUT THERE WAS NOTHING I COULD DO... THEY ARRESTED HIM AND I RAN AWAY.



WHAT A STORY!

FOR DAYS AND DAYS I WALKED THROUGH THE FALLING SNOW. I CROSSED THE ALBORZ MOUNTAINS TO FIND REFUGE AT MY PARENTS' HOUSE IN ASTARA.



YOU ALWAYS SAY THE RIGHT THING AT THE RIGHT TIME! HELP ME NOW!

OK, OK, CALM DOWN!



OH MY GOD... MY SON, MY DEAR SON...

IT'S A BIT LATE TO SHOW YOUR AFFECTION!!!



I WAS HUNGRY, I WAS COLD, BUT I CONTINUED.



I WAS NEARLY DEAD WHEN I ARRIVED.

BANG!
BANG!
BANG!



BUT THE SHAH'S POLICE WERE LOOKING FOR ME. I WAS NOT SAFE WITH MY PARENTS. SO I DECIDED TO GO INTO EXILE.



I SWAM ACROSS THE ARAS RIVER AND ARRIVED IN THE U.S.S.R.

HOLY SMOKE! LALY'S DAD HASN'T EVEN BEEN TO THE U.S.S.R.



WHAT HAPPENED TO YOUR UNCLE FERAYDOON?



MY GOD! ANOOSH!!!



WHAT'S GOING ON? WHO'S BOTHERING US AT THIS HOUR?

COME QUICKLY! IT'S OUR SON ANOOSH! HE HAS FAINTED!



WHAT IS HE DOING HERE? WHY DIDN'T HE STAY WITH HIS NICE UNCLE?

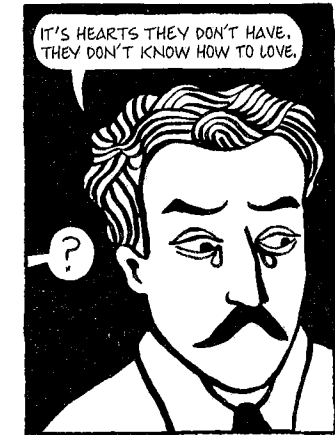
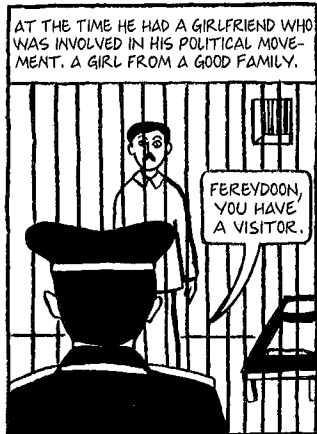


HE MET HIS DESTINY...



I LEARNED THAT HE KNEW THE SHAH'S ARMY WAS COMING TO ARREST HIM. HE COULD HAVE RUN AWAY LIKE MOST OF HIS FRIENDS DID. BUT HE DECIDED TO STAY.

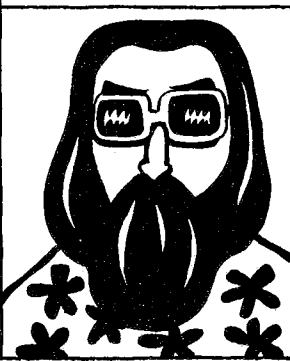
ALL IS LOST. I AM AT YOUR MERCY, GENTLEMEN.



AFTER THE SEPARATION, I FELT VERY LONELY. I MISSED MY COUNTRY, MY PARENTS, MY BROTHERS. I DREAMT ABOUT THEM OFTEN.



I DECIDED TO GO HOME. I GOT A FALSE PASSPORT AND DISGUISED MYSELF.



AND NOW IT'S TIME FOR BED!

WHAT? THE STORY'S FINISHED?



HERE, TAKE THIS SWAN I MADE IN PRISON. OUT OF BREAD.

IN PRISON?



PLEASANT DREAMS.

I GUESS I WASN'T VERY CONVINCING. THEY SOON RECOGNIZED ME.



THEY PUT ME IN PRISON FOR NINE YEARS.

