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# PERSEPOLIS

MARJANE SATRAPI

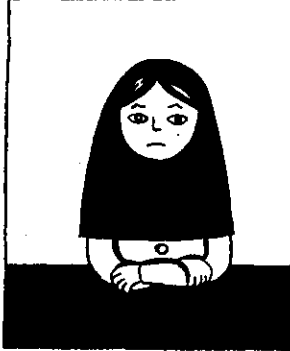


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# THE VEIL

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 1978 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.



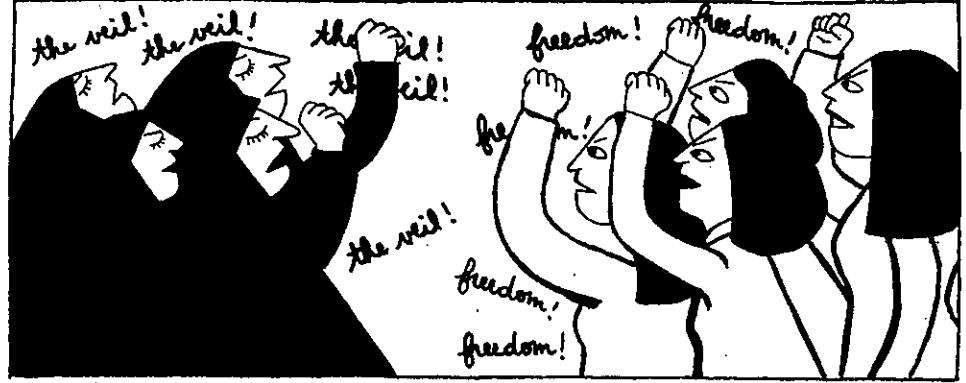
AND ALSO BECAUSE THE YEAR BEFORE, IN 1979, WE WERE IN A FRENCH NON-RELIGIOUS SCHOOL.



WHERE BOYS AND GIRLS WERE TOGETHER.



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



AND THEN SUDDENLY IN 1980...



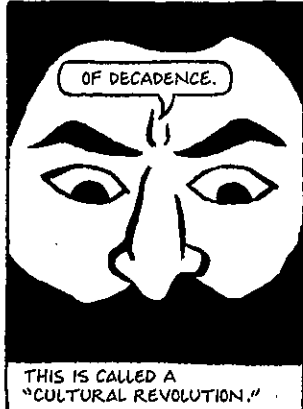
ALL BILINGUAL SCHOOLS MUST BE CLOSED DOWN.



THEY ARE SYMBOLS OF CAPITALISM.

BRAVO!

WHAT WISDOM!



OF DECADENCE.

THIS IS CALLED A "CULTURAL REVOLUTION."

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.



WE FOUND OURSELVES VEILED AND SEPARATED FROM OUR FRIENDS.



AND THAT WAS THAT...

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



HAVE YOU SEEN THIS?

DON'T WORRY, DARLING.

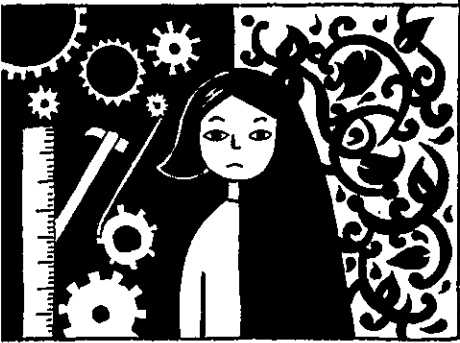


SHE DYED HER HAIR,

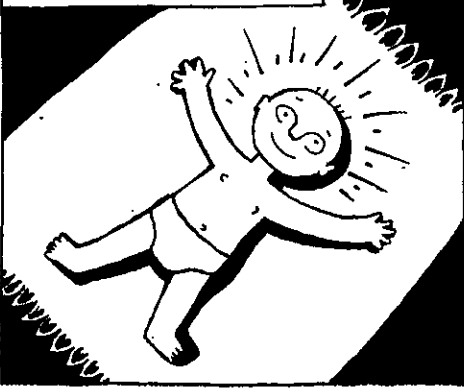
AND WORE DARK GLASSES FOR A LONG TIME.



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.



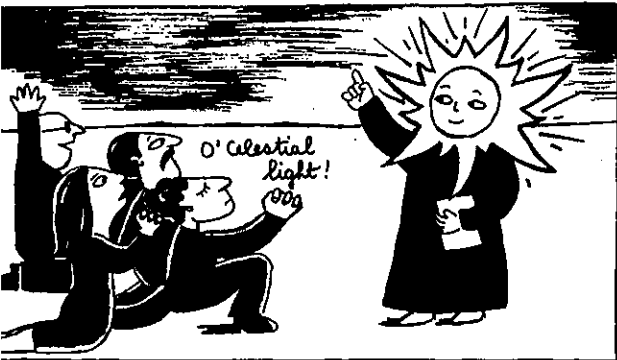
LIKE ALL MY PREDECESSORS I HAD MY HOLY BOOK.



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



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



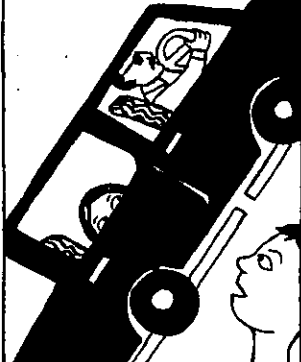
BEFORE THE PERSIAN NEW YEAR, NOROUZ, ON MARCH 21ST, THE FIRST DAY OF SPRING.



I WANTED TO BE A PROPHET...



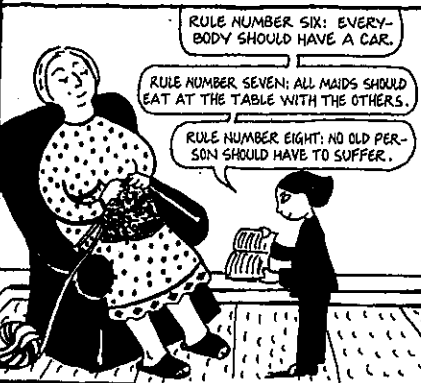
BECAUSE MY FATHER HAD A CADILLAC.

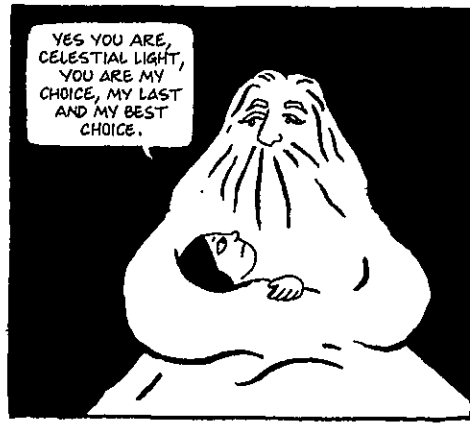


AND, ABOVE ALL, BECAUSE MY GRANDMOTHER'S KNEES ALWAYS ACHED.



ONLY MY GRANDMOTHER KNEW ABOUT MY BOOK.





# THE TRIP



OH SHIT!



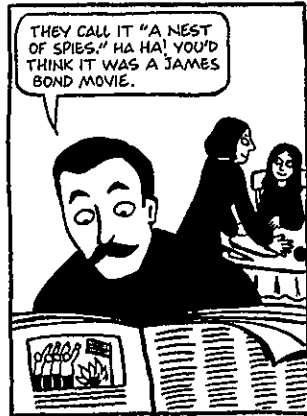
THEY'VE OCCUPIED THE U.S. EMBASSY!!

WHO'S "THEY"?



WHO DO YOU THINK? THE FUNDAMENTALIST STUDENTS HAVE TAKEN THE AMERICANS HOSTAGE!!

REALLY?



THEY CALL IT "A NEST OF SPIES." HA HA! YOU'D THINK IT WAS A JAMES BOND MOVIE.



YOU'RE NOT INTERESTED?

I COULDN'T CARE LESS.



ANYWAY, THE AMERICANS ARE DUMMIES.

MAYBE, BUT NOW NO ONE CAN GO TO THE UNITED STATES.



WHY'S THAT??

THINK ABOUT IT. NO EMBASSY, NO VISA!



SO, MY GREAT DREAM WENT UP IN SMOKE. I WOULDN'T BE ABLE TO GO TO THE UNITED STATES.

KAVEH, THEY CLOSED THE U.S. EMBASSY TODAY. I WON'T BE ABLE TO COME AND SEE YOU...

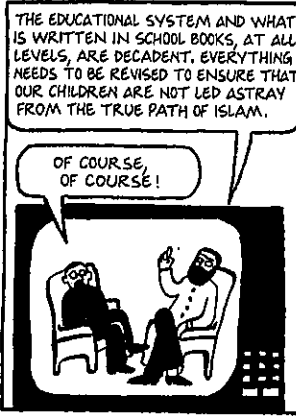
THE DREAM WASN'T THE USA. IT WAS SEEING MY FRIEND KAVEH, WHO HAD LEFT TO GO LIVE IN THE STATES A YEAR EARLIER.



AND THEN SOME DAYS LATER...

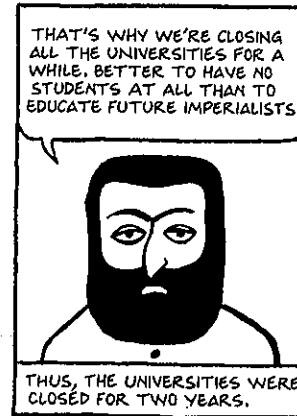
OH NO!

THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION HAS DECREED THAT UNIVERSITIES WILL CLOSE AT THE END OF THE MONTH.



THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM AND WHAT IS WRITTEN IN SCHOOL BOOKS, AT ALL LEVELS, ARE DECADENT. EVERYTHING NEEDS TO BE REVISED TO ENSURE THAT OUR CHILDREN ARE NOT LED ASTRAY FROM THE TRUE PATH OF ISLAM.

OF COURSE, OF COURSE!



THAT'S WHY WE'RE CLOSING ALL THE UNIVERSITIES FOR A WHILE, BETTER TO HAVE NO STUDENTS AT ALL THAN TO EDUCATE FUTURE IMPERIALISTS.

THUS, THE UNIVERSITIES WERE CLOSED FOR TWO YEARS.



YOU'LL SEE. SOON THEY'RE ACTUALLY GOING TO FORCE US TO WEAR THE VEIL AND YOU, YOU'LL HAVE TO TRADE YOUR CAR FOR A CAMEL. GOD, WHAT A BACKWARD POLICY!

A CAMEL?



NO MORE UNIVERSITY, AND I WANTED TO STUDY CHEMISTRY. I WANTED TO BE LIKE MARIE CURIE.



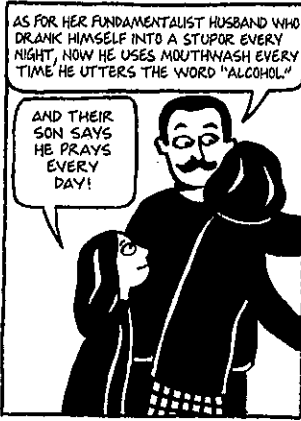
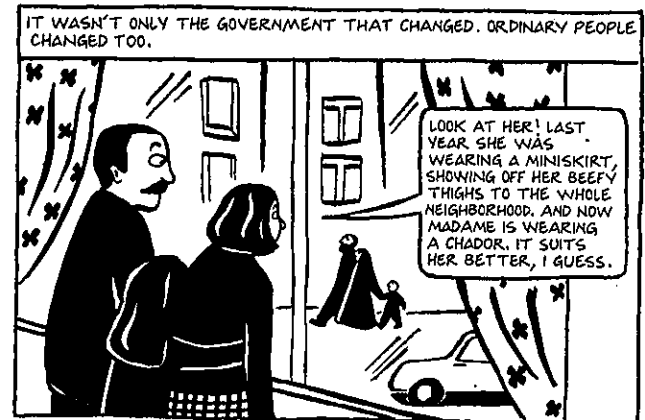
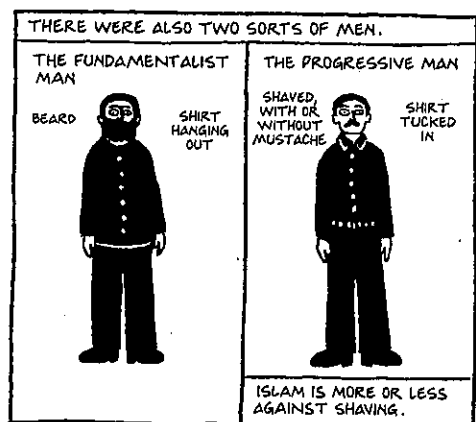
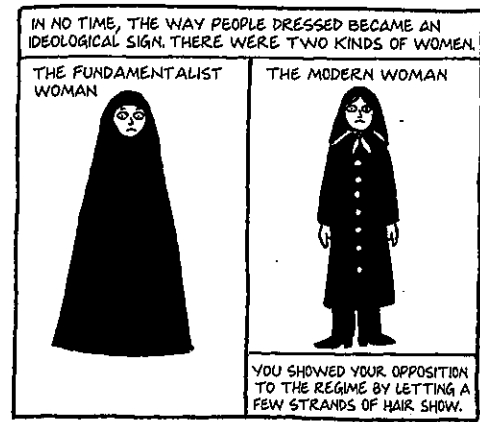
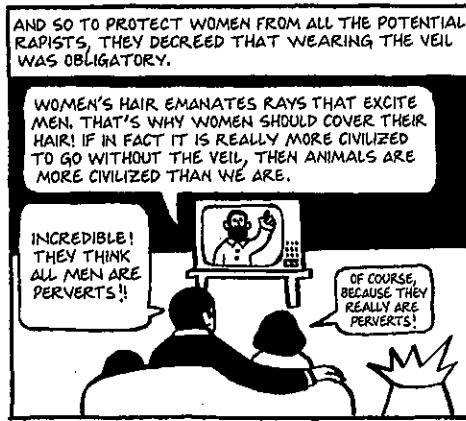
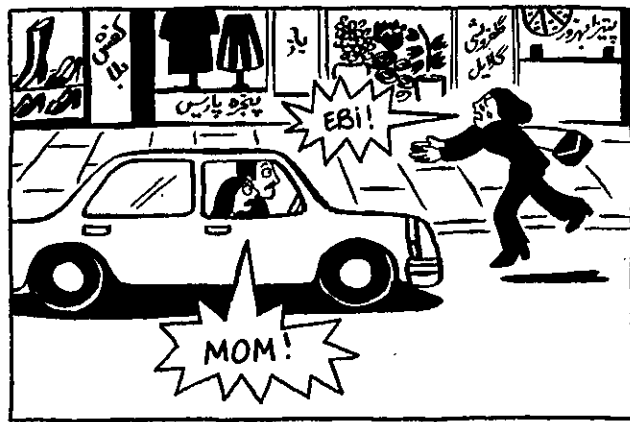
I WANTED TO BE AN EDUCATED, LIBERATED WOMAN, AND IF THE PURSUIT OF KNOWLEDGE MEANT GETTING CANCER, SO BE IT.

IT'S I WHO DISCOVERED THE NEWEST RADIOACTIVE ELEMENT.



AND SO ANOTHER DREAM WENT UP IN SMOKE.

MISERY! AT THE AGE THAT MARIE CURIE FIRST WENT TO FRANCE TO STUDY, I'LL PROBABLY HAVE TEN CHILDREN...



IN SPITE OF EVERYTHING, THE SPIRIT OF REVOLUTION WAS STILL IN THE AIR. THERE WERE SOME OPPOSITION DEMONSTRATIONS.

TOMORROW THERE'S GOING TO BE A MEETING AGAINST FUNDAMENTALISM.



NO! IT'S TOO DANGEROUS. SHE'S COMING TOO.



SHE SHOULD START LEARNING TO DEFEND HER RIGHTS AS A WOMAN RIGHT NOW!



SINCE THE 1979 REVOLUTION, I'D GROWN OLDER (WELL, A YEAR OLDER) AND MOM HAD CHANGED.

SO I WENT WITH THEM. I PASSED OUT FLYERS...

GUNS MAY SHOOT AND KNIVES MAY CARVE, BUT WE WON'T WEAR YOUR SILLY SCARVES!



... WHEN SUDDENLY THINGS GOT NASTY.



FOR THE FIRST TIME IN MY LIFE, I SAW VIOLENCE WITH MY OWN EYES.



THAT WAS OUR LAST DEMONSTRATION.



THINGS GOT WORSE FROM ONE DAY TO THE NEXT. IN SEPTEMBER 1980, MY PARENTS ABRUPTLY PLANNED A VACATION. I THINK THEY REALIZED THAT SOON SUCH THINGS WOULD NO LONGER BE POSSIBLE. AS IT HAPPENED, THEY WERE RIGHT. AND SO WE WENT TO ITALY AND SPAIN FOR THREE WEEKS...



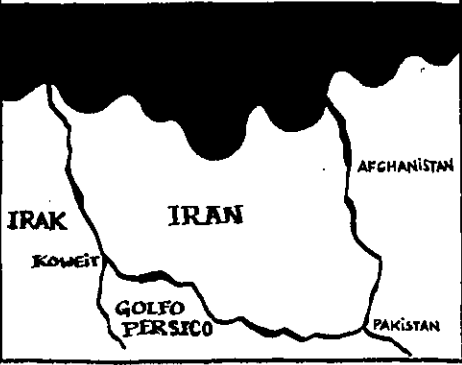
...IT WAS WONDERFUL.



RIGHT BEFORE GOING BACK, IN THE HOTEL ROOM IN MADRID.



THE TV SHOWED A MAP OF IRAN AND A BLACK CLOUD COVERING THE COUNTRY LITTLE BY LITTLE.



WHAT IN THE WORLD IS THIS?



MAYBE THEY'RE TALKING ABOUT POLLUTION. YOU KNOW, TEHRAN IS THE FOURTH MOST POLLUTED CITY IN THE WORLD.



IT LOOKS LIKE THEY'RE TALKING ABOUT THE WHOLE COUNTRY, NOT JUST THE CAPITAL.



THE NEXT DAY MY GRANDMOTHER CAME TO PICK US UP AT THE AIRPORT.



SHE LOOKED WORRIED.



OH! I'M TAKING THIS THING OFF. IT'S TOO HOT.



TRUE, BUT SOON THERE'LL BE NO HOME.



YOU HAVEN'T HEARD?



WE'RE AT WAR!



THE SECOND INVASION IN 1400 YEARS! MY BLOOD WAS BOILING. I WAS READY TO DEFEND MY COUNTRY AGAINST THESE ARABS WHO KEPT ATTACKING US.

