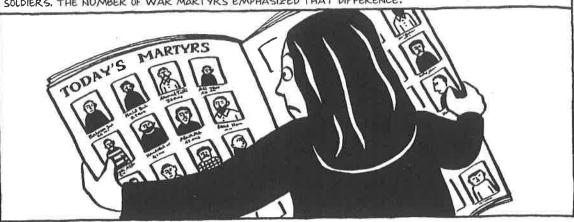
## O-THEKEY

THE IRAQI ARMY HAD CONQUERED THE CITY OF KHORRAMSHAHR. THEIR ARMS WERE MODERN, BUT WHERE IRAQ HAD QUALITY, WE HAD QUANTITY. COMPARED TO IRAQ, IRAN HAD A HUGE RESERVOIR OF POTENTIAL SOLDIERS. THE NUMBER OF WAR MARTYRS EMPHASIZED THAT DIFFERENCE.



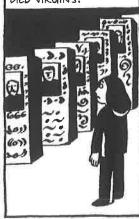




ACCORDING TO SHIITE TRADITION, WHEN AN UNMARRIED MAN DIES, A NOPTIAL CHAMBER IS BUILT FOR HIM. THAT WAY, THE DEAD MAN CAN SYMBOLICALLY ATTAIN CARNAL KNOWLEDGE.



IT WAS OBVIOUS THAT MANY OF THE FIGHTERS DIED VIRGINS.





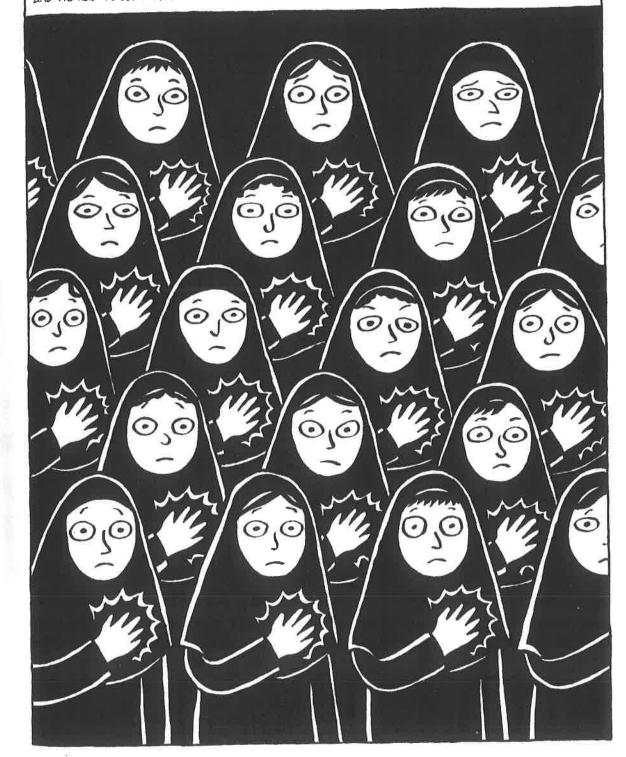


OUR COUNTRY HAS ALWAYS KNOWN WAR AND MARTYRS, SO, LIKE MY FATHER SAID: "WHEN A BIG WAVE COMES, LOWER YOUR HEAD AND LET IT PASS!"

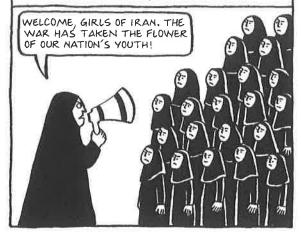


THAT'S VERY PERSIAN. THE PHILOSOPHY OF RESIGNATION.

ERE AL I AGREED WITH MY MOTHER. I TOO TRIED TO THINK ONLY OF LIFE, HOWEVER, IT WASN'T ALWAYS EASY: AT SCHOOL, THEY LINED US UP TWICE A DAY TO MOURN THE WAR DEAD. THEY PUT ON FUNERAL MARCHES, AND WE HAD TO BEAT OUR BREASTS.



THE TION. I REMEMBER MY INITIATION, IT WAS THE FIRST DAY OF CLASS AFTER SUMMER VACATION.









HITTING YOURSELF IS ONE OF THE COUNTRY'S RITUALS. DURING CERTAIN RELIGIOUS CEREMONIES, SOME PEOPLE FLAGELLATED THEMSELVES BRUTALLY.



SOMETIMES EVEN WITH CHAINS.

SOMETIMES IT WAS CONSIDERED A MACHO THING.

AFTER A LITTLE WHILE, NO ONE TOOK THE TORTURE SESSIONS SERIOUSLY ANYMORE. AS FOR ME, I IMMEDIATELY STARTED MAKING FUN OF THEM.

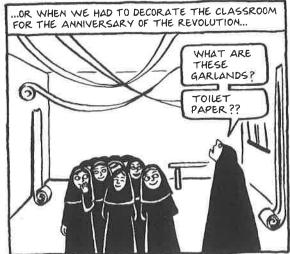






EVERY SITUATION OFFERED AN OPPORTUNITY FOR LAUGHS: LIKE WHEN WE HAD TO KNIT WINTER HOODS FOR THE SOLDIERS ...





YOU'RE AS WORTHLESS AS YOUR DECORATIONS! YOU'RE WORTHLESS! YOU HEAR ME ?! WORTHLESS !!...



WHO SAID THAT? WHO WAS IT? DOES SHE HAVE THE COURAGE TO STAND UP? IF NOT, YOU'LL ALL BE PUNISHED! WELL? WHO WAS IT ??!!!?



WE WERE COMPLETELY UNITED.



I THINK THAT THE REASON WE WERE SO REBELLIOUS WAS THAT OUR GENERATION HAD KNOWN SECULAR SCHOOLS, OBVIOUSLY, THEY CALLED OUR PARENTS IN.

YOUR CHILDREN HAVE NO RESPECT FOR ANYTHING. NO SELF-CONTROL! THE BASIS OF EDUCATION COMES FROM THE FAMILY!













GIRLS HAD TO MAKE WINTER HOODS FOR THE SOLDIERS, BUT BOYS HAD TO PREPARE TO BECOME SOLDIERS.

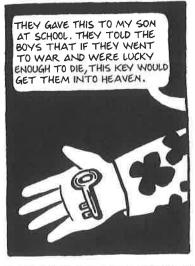
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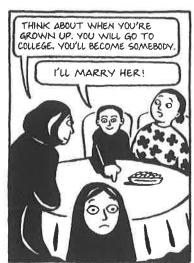
## HIGH SCHOOL MEDIA CENTER



















EAST GRAND RAPIDS SCHOOLS HIGH SCHOOL MEDIA CENTER





SHAHAB WAS ANOTHER COUSIN. HE HADN'T BEEN LUCKY: THE WAR STARTED JUST AS HE BEGAN HIS MILITARY SERVICE. THEY SENT HIM TO THE FRONT RIGHT AWAY.



I WAS JUST TALKING TO MY MAID. SHE SAID THEY'RE RECRUITING CHILDREN FOR THE FRONT. REALLY!!?





IT'S AWFUL. EVERY DAY I SEE BUSES FULL OF KIDS ARRIVING.



THEY COME FROM THE POOR AREAS, YOU CAN TELL...FIRST THEY CONVINCE THEM THAT THE AFTERLIFE IS EVEN BETTER THAN DISNEYLAND, THEN THEY PUT THEM IN A TRANCE WITH ALL THEIR SONGS...



IT'S NUTS! THEY HYPNOTIZE THEM AND JUST TOSS THEM INTO BATTLE. ABSOLUTE CARNAGE.



THE KEY TO PARADISE WAS FOR POOR PEOPLE. THOUSANDS OF YOUNG KIDS, PROMISED A BETTER LIFE, EXPLODED ON THE MINEFIELDS WITH THEIR KEYS AROUND THEIR NECKS.



MRS. NASRINE'S 50N MANAGED TO AVOID THAT FATE, BUT LOTS OF OTHER KIDS FROM HIS UEIGHBORHOOD DIDN'T.

ROCK WAS IN, MEANTILE, I GOT TO GO TO MY FIRST PARTY, NOT ONLY DID MY MOM LET ME GO, SHE ALSO RUITTED ME A SWEATER FULL OF HOLES AND MADE ME A NECKLACE WITH CHAINS AND MAILS. PUNK MEANWHILE, I GOT TO GO TO MY FIRST PARTY, NOT ONLY DID MY MOM LET ME GO, SHE ALSO

