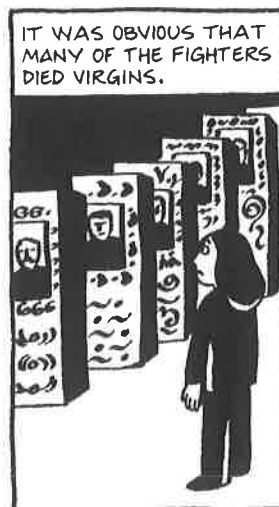
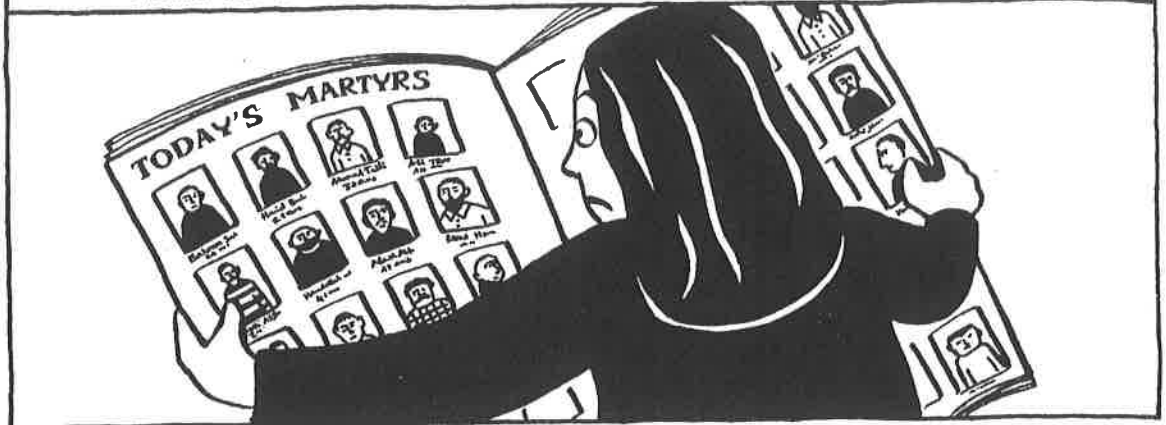
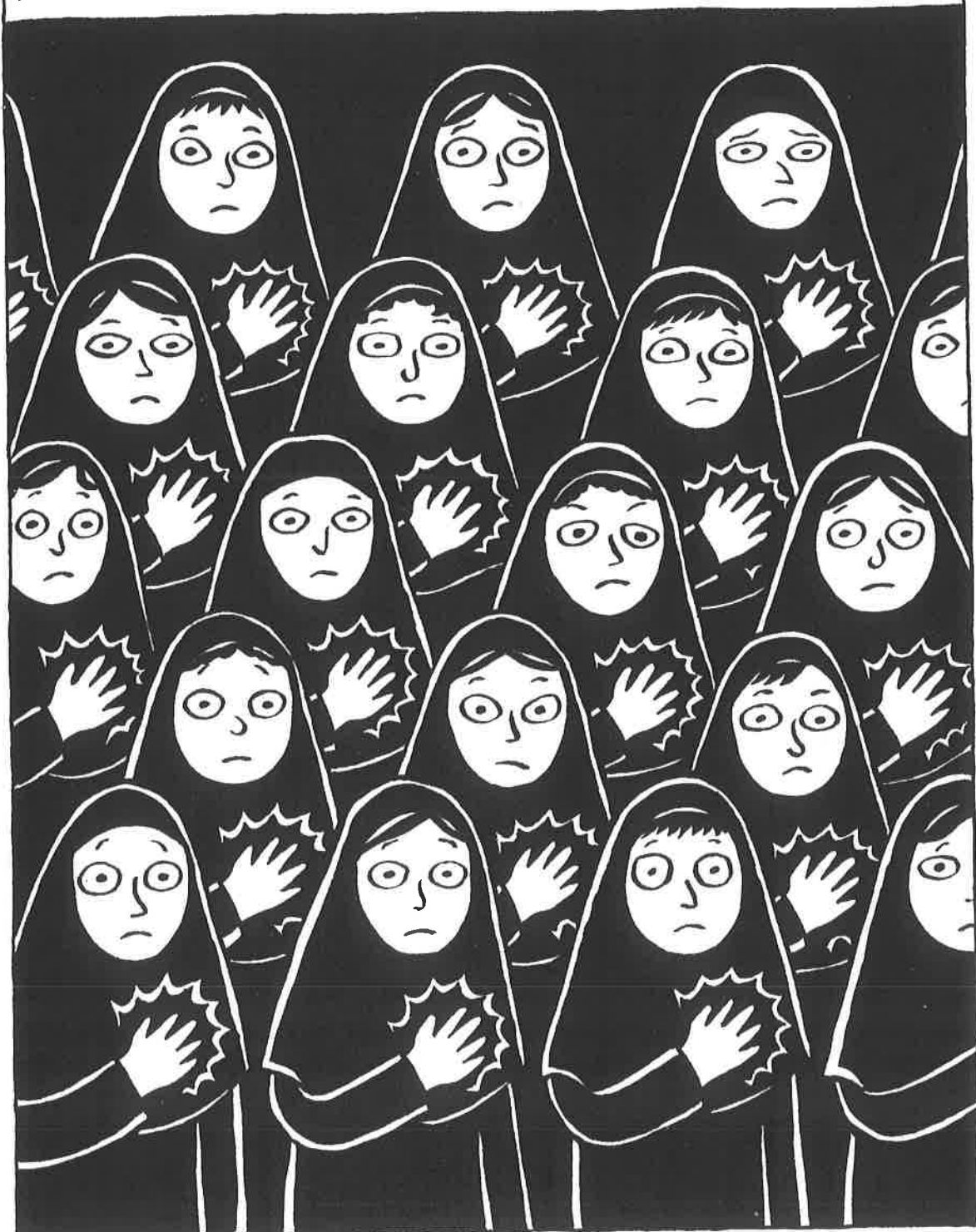


# THE KEY

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.



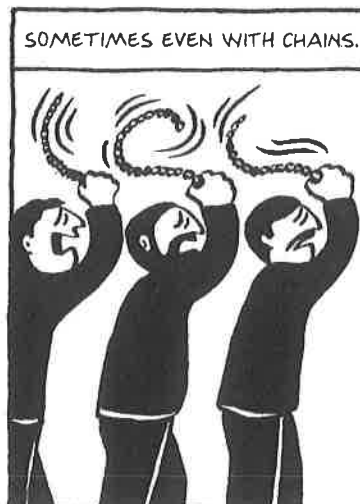
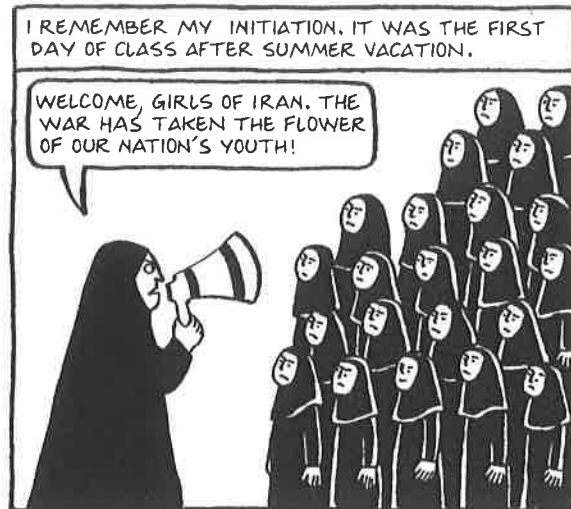
I AGREED WITH MY MOTHER. I TOO TRIED TO THINK ONLY OF LIFE. HOWEVER, IT WASN'T ALWAYS EASY:  
AT SCHOOL, THEY LINED US UP TWICE A DAY TO MOURN THE WAR DEAD. THEY PUT ON FUNERAL MARCHES,  
AND WE HAD TO BEAT OUR BREASTS.



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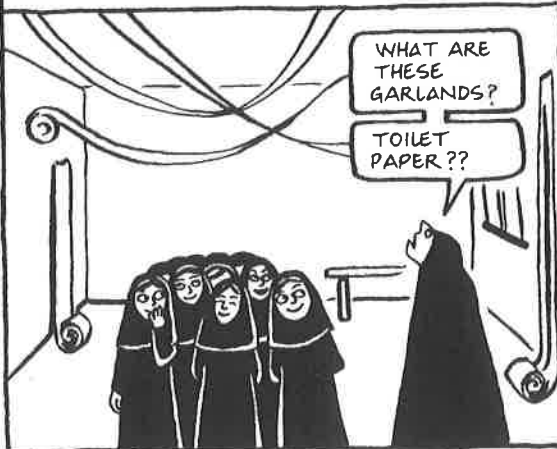
AFTER A LITTLE WHILE, NO ONE TOOK THE TORTURE SESSIONS SERIOUSLY ANYMORE. AS FOR ME, I IMMEDIATELY STARTED MAKING FUN OF THEM.



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



...OR WHEN WE HAD TO DECORATE THE CLASSROOM FOR THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE REVOLUTION...



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!

STOP RIGHT THERE. YOU'RE SAYING THAT WE DON'T KNOW HOW TO EDUCATE OUR CHILDREN?



LISTEN, WE'RE AT WAR. A LOT OF CHILDREN DON'T EVEN HAVE SCHOOL THESE DAYS. YOURS HAVE A RARE OPPORTUNITY. SO YOU SHOULD MAKE SURE THEY'RE WELL-BEHAVED!



WELL-BEHAVED? SO THEY CAN HIT THEMSELVES TWICE A DAY??

SO THEY CAN BE COVERED FROM HEAD TO TOE?

SO THAT THEY CAN BE FORBIDDEN TO PLAY LIKE THE KIDS THEY ARE ??

OH!



ANYWAY, THAT'S HOW IT IS! EITHER THEY OBEY THE LAW, OR THEY'RE EXPELLED!!



AND MAKE SURE THEY WEAR THEIR VEILS CORRECTLY...

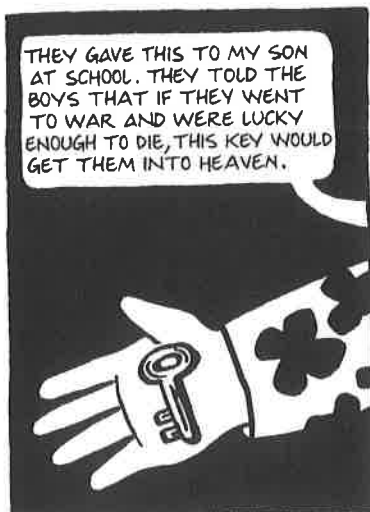


IF HAIR IS AS STIMULATING AS YOU SAY, THEN YOU NEED TO SHAVE YOUR MUSTACHE!



MY FATHER ACTUALLY SAID THAT.







HT  
N.  
EN.

MOM, PEYMAN INVITED ME  
TO A PARTY. CAN I GO?

DING  
DONG

OOOH! SHAHAB!

HEY!

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'M ON  
LEAVE.

COME IN,  
COME IN.  
I'LL MAKE  
SOME TEA.

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.

SHIT, YOU  
SEE THAT?

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.



