

IDEA AND DESIGN BY ERSH

# MAKKA KAKKALA



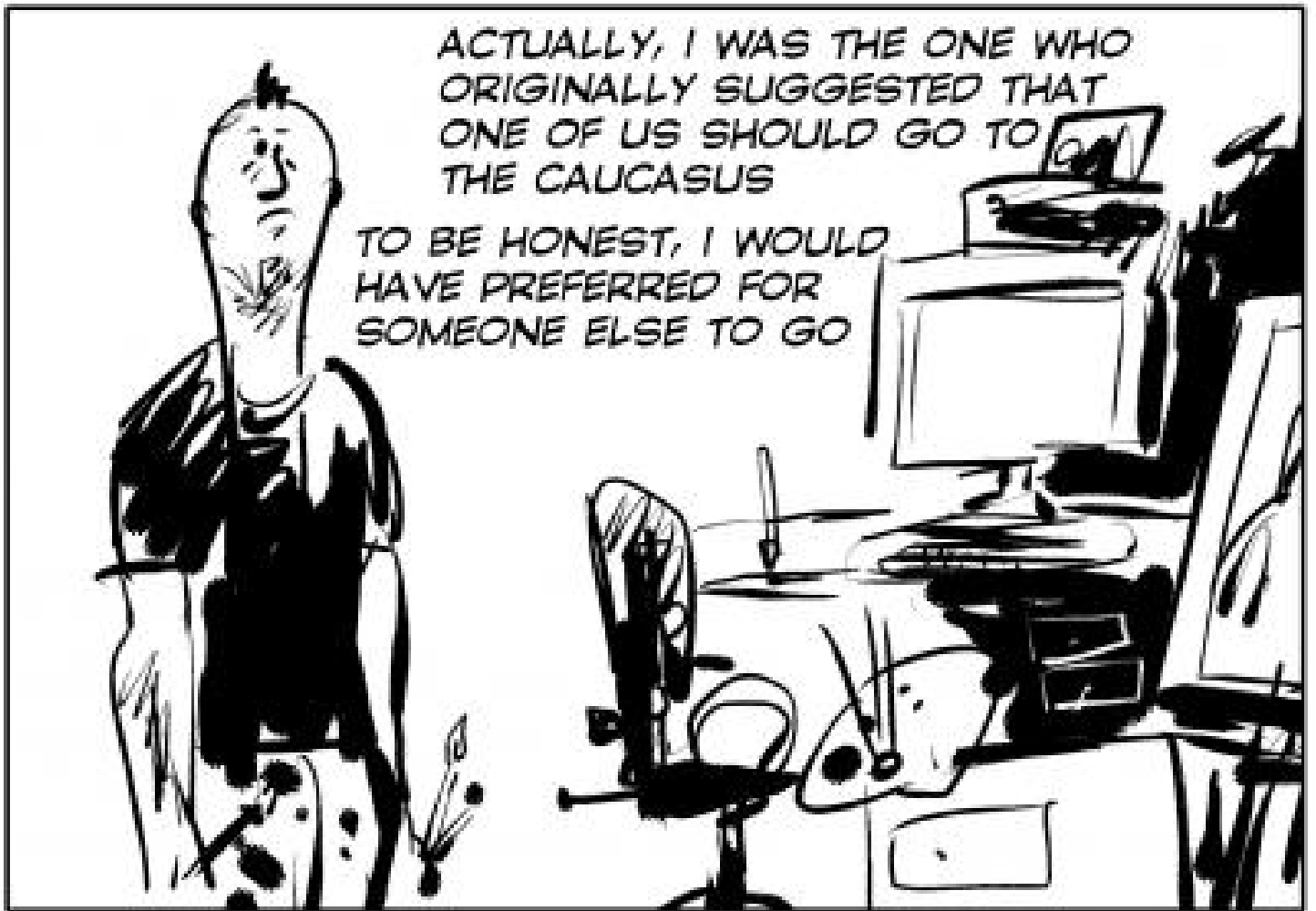


ANYA IS THE COORDINATOR OF OUR PROJECT "RESPECT: COMICS FOR RESPECT AND UNDERSTANDING". WE PRODUCE COMICS ABOUT HOW PEOPLE SHOULD RESPECT EACH OTHER, AND WE TRAVEL ALL OVER RUSSIA WITH EXHIBITIONS AND PRESENTATIONS ABOUT COMICS



ACTUALLY, I WAS THE ONE WHO  
ORIGINALLY SUGGESTED THAT  
ONE OF US SHOULD GO TO  
THE CAUCASUS

TO BE HONEST, I WOULD  
HAVE PREFERRED FOR  
SOMEONE ELSE TO GO



I HAD SERIOUS REASONS FOR NOT WANTING TO GO  
THERE; I KNEW A LOT ABOUT DAGESTAN FROM THE  
INTERNET AND TV





IT'S ALL UNDER SHARIA LAW; WOMEN AREN'T ALLOWED OUT WITHOUT A HIJAB

THE MOUNTAINS ARE FULL OF TERRORISTS AND THE FEDERAL ARMY SOLDIERS WHO ARE AFTER THEM. THERE ARE CHECKPOINTS EVERYWHERE AND PEOPLE CARRY WEAPONS



SHARIA IS THE SET OF LAWS BY WHICH EVERY MUSLIM SHOULD LIVE. THERE ARE SPECIAL SHARIA COURTS PRESIDED OVER BY EXPERTS ON RELIGIOUS WRITINGS



ACCORDING TO SHARIA LAW, A MUSLIM SHOULD DRESS TIDILY AND MODESTLY



THE HIJAB IS A DRESS WHICH COVERS THE HEAD. IT IS NOT ESSENTIAL TO COVER THE FACE

I DIDN'T FEEL LIKE GOING FROM AN INTERESTING CITY LIKE MOSCOW TO A PLACE WHERE SOLDIERS CHASE THROUGH THE MOUNTAINS AFTER MEN WITH BEARDS

MY FAMILY WERE WORRIED

BUT I HAD ALREADY COMMITTED MYSELF TO THE PROJECT, AND IT SEEMED COWARDLY TO BACK OUT

YES, DAD. TO DAGESTAN, DAD. NO, EVERYTHING IS FINE THERE, DAD



AND SO WE FOUND OURSELVES AT KASPIYSK AIRPORT, DAGESTAN. AS WE LEFT THE BUILDING, OUT OF THE WARM, SOUTHERN NIGHT LOOMED A CROWD OF MOUSTACHED MEN IN WHITE SHIRTS. THAT'S IT, I THOUGHT, THEY'RE GOING TO KIDNAP US

BUT WHERE ARE THE BEARDS?



ELBOWING HIS WAY THROUGH THE CROWD OF MOUSTACHES CAME THE CLEAN-SHAVEN JAMAL. HE WOULD TAKE US TO MAKHACHKALA, WHERE THE NEXT DAY WE WOULD SET UP OUR EXHIBITION AND LEAD SCHOOL WORKSHOPS



WE SPED THROUGH THE NIGHT. SOMEWHERE ON THE HORIZON WERE THE MOUNTAINS WHICH WERE, NO DOUBT, TEEMING WITH BANDITS. WE EXPECTED TO START SEEING CHECKPOINTS AT ANY MOMENT, SOLDIERS WITH GUNS AND SO ON

ON THE WAY WE DISCUSSED WHAT PEOPLE SAY ABOUT DAGESTAN IN MOSCOW

I'VE HEARD THAT WOMEN AREN'T ALLOWED TO GO OUT BY THEMSELVES AT NIGHT

AND WHAT DO YOU SEE OUT OF THE WINDOW?



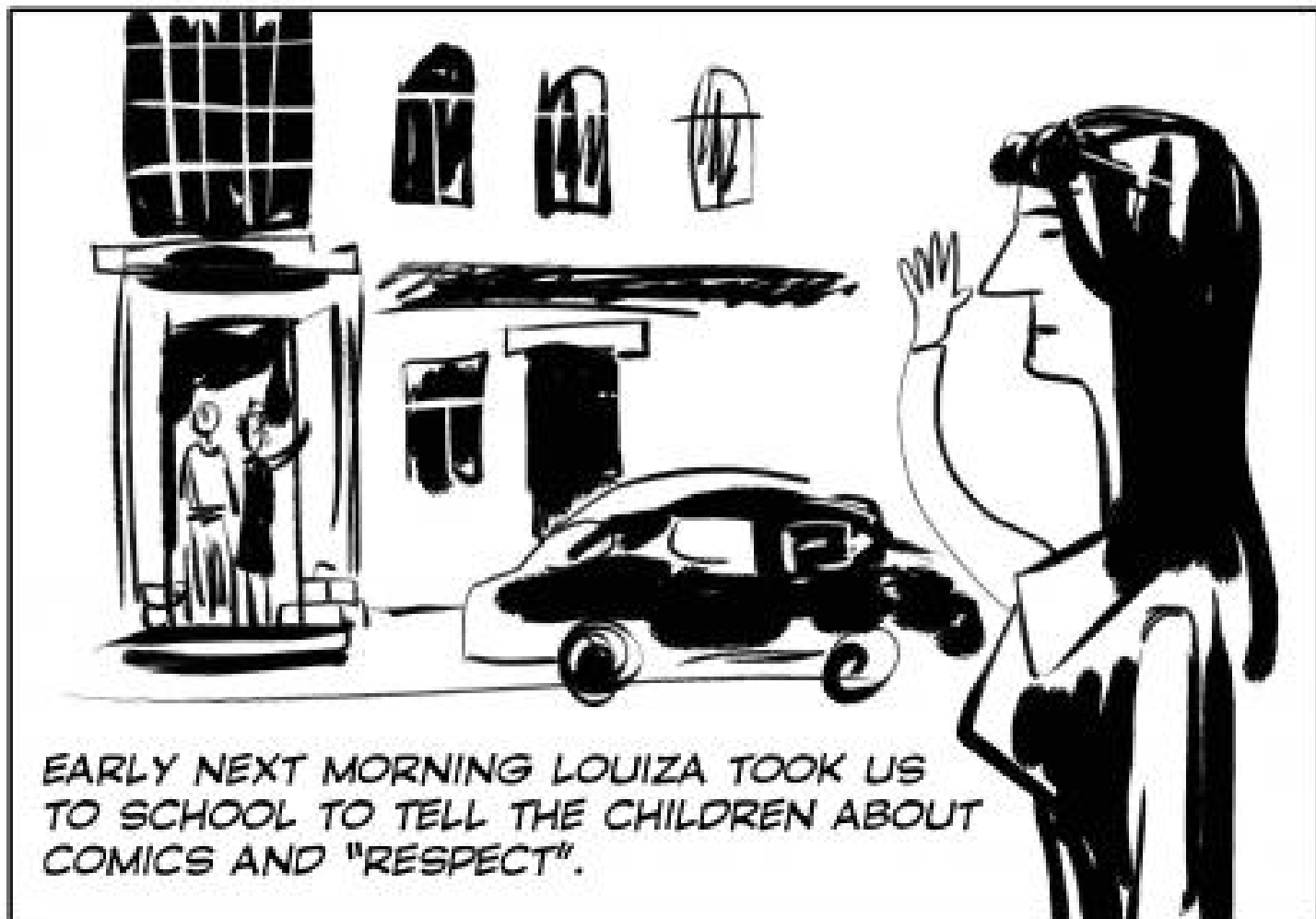
ONE STEREOTYPE LESS...

JAMAL TOOK US DOWN TO THE KASPIAN SEA. SOMEONE WAS SWIMMING; NEARBY WAS A 24-HOUR FOOD STAND



CLEARLY, THINGS WERE NOT SO BAD AFTER ALL





EARLY NEXT MORNING LOUIZA TOOK US TO SCHOOL TO TELL THE CHILDREN ABOUT COMICS AND "RESPECT".

BEFORE MEETING THE CHILDREN, WE HAD A CHAT WITH THE SCHOOL DIRECTOR



RELIGIOUS PROPAGANDA IS FORBIDDEN IN OUR SCHOOL

THEY WERE ORDINARY SCHOOL CHILDREN: THE BOYS - MISCHIEVOUS; THE GIRLS - NEAT AND ATTENTIVE. THE BOYS AND THE GIRLS SAT APART. I SHOWED THEM HOW TO DRAW COMICS



ONE GIRL, RABIAT, WAS FROM A RELIGIOUS FAMILY, AND WORE A HIJAB

WE DISCUSSED THE ISLAMIC POSITION ON DRAWING PEOPLE AND ANIMALS



DRAWING REAL PEOPLE IS FORBIDDEN IN ISLAM. FIGURES CAN ONLY BE DRAWN INCOMPLETE - WITHOUT A FACE, OR JUST THE HEAD - TO AVOID PRODUCING A LIKENESS OF AN ACTUAL EXISTING BEING, AND PREVENT THE CREATION OF IDOLS



IN THE PERSIAN,  
SHIITE TRADITION  
THERE WAS  
A WONDERFUL  
SCHOOL OF  
ILLUSTRATION

THE LAWS  
WERE  
EXTREMELY  
STRICT,  
BUT THE  
SCHOOL OF  
ISLAMIC  
CALLIGRAPHY  
BLOSSOMED

THE NEXT DAY WE COLLECTED THEIR WORK. THE GIRLS DREW ABOUT RELATIONSHIPS, THE BOYS ABOUT FOOTBALL AND THEIR HOMETOWN.



AND WHAT ABOUT RABIAT? WOULD SHE REALLY NOT DRAW ANYTHING?

HOORAY! IT TURNED OUT THAT RABIAT HAD FOUND A WAY TO RESPECT THE BOUNDARIES OF ISLAM, AND HAD DRAWN HER STORY IN A VERY SYMBOLIC WAY. THE PEOPLE IN HER COMIC STRIP WERE STICK MEN!

HER STORY WAS ABOUT TREATING PEOPLE WITH RESPECT



LOOK, I DREW SOMETHING

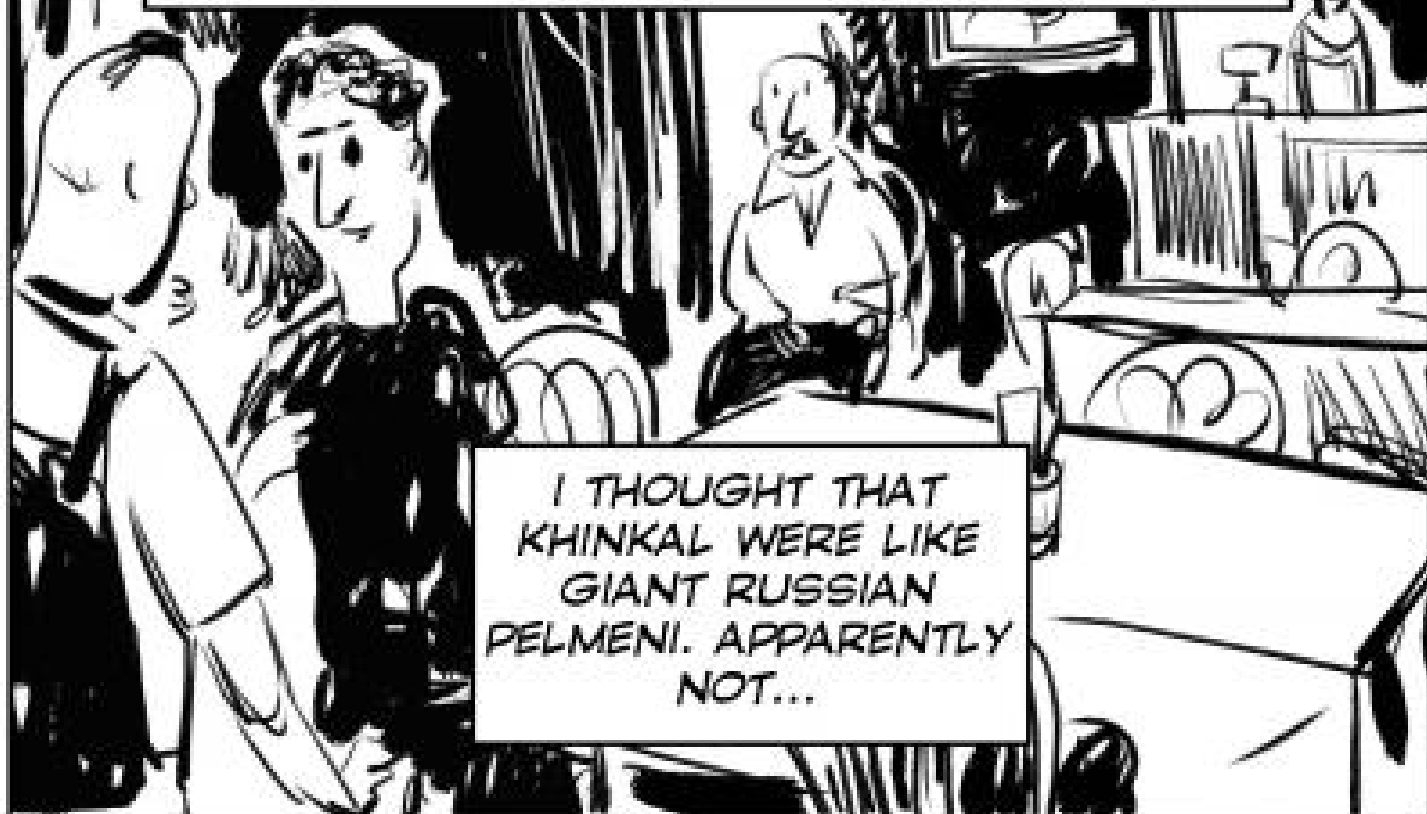
AFTERWARDS WE WANDERED THROUGH THE OLD CITY. LOUIZA ENDLESSLY SUGGESTED WE EAT IN A CAFE "LIKE IN MOSCOW". SHE WANTED US TO FEEL AT HOME

WOW!  
YOU COULD TURN  
THIS INTO A EURO-  
PEAN-STYLE  
RESORT!



BUT MURAD, WHO HAD LIVED IN FINLAND FOR A LONG TIME, UNDERSTOOD WHAT WE WERE LOOKING FOR AND TOOK US TO EAT DAGES-TANI KHINKAL IN A SIMPLE CAFE

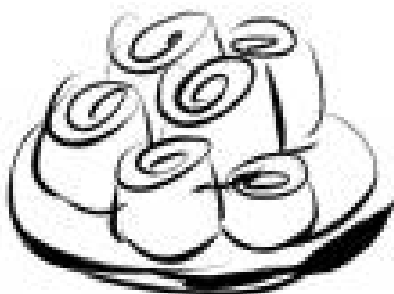
I THOUGHT THAT  
KHINKAL WERE LIKE  
GIANT RUSSIAN  
PELMENI. APPARENTLY  
NOT...





THESE ARE KHINKALI,  
LIKE BIG PELMENI.

KHINKAL IS MADE OF DOUGH, A BIT LIKE PASTA.



DARGINSKIY KHINKAL:  
CHUNKS OF LAYERED  
DOUGH



LAKSKIY KHINKAL:  
LIKE LITTLE EARS



AVARSKIY KHINKAL:  
DIAMONDS



LEZGINSKIY KHINKAL:  
SQUARES



KHINKAL SOUP: MEAT, STOCK, KHINKAL.  
SERVED WITH SAUCE

WE ALSO WENT TO THE CITY BEACH, WHERE WE SAW ARMED POLICEMEN



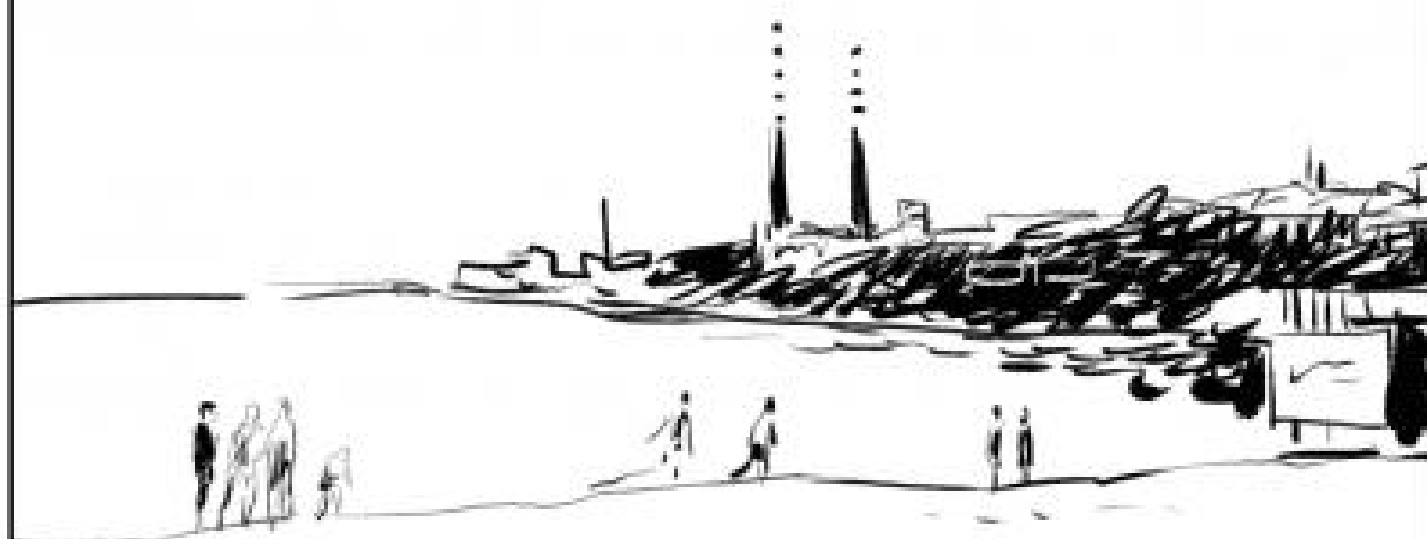
HOW'S IT GOING BIG BOY? FEELING BETTER?

THEY WERE BEING TEASED BY THE BEACH SELLERS

WE KNEW THEM AS BOYS

AND THERE IS SO MUCH MORE - THE MUSEUM, THE TRADITIONAL DANCING, OUR EXHIBITION

THE OLD CARPENTRY SHOP, WHICH MURAD TOOK ME TO, AND THE MYSTERIOUS "URBECH", A JAR OF WHICH I BROUGHT BACK TO MOSCOW...



BUT WE WILL STOP HERE ON THE SUN-WARMED BEACH, MAY 2012, IN MAKHACHKALA, REPUBLIC OF DAGESTAN