

Fatin had banged the door in her mother's face and emptied the rubbish bin on her.

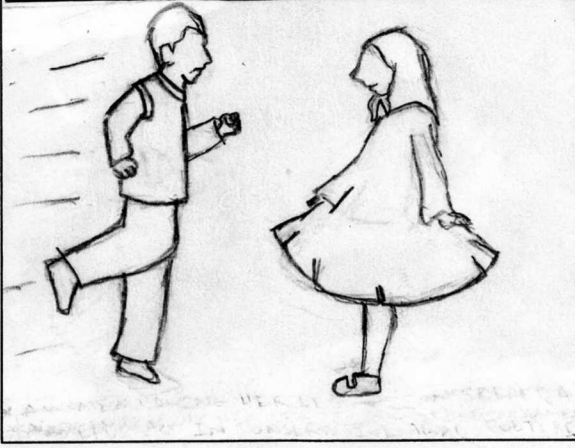


I scattered frangipani blossoms over her and sang to her.



\*SCARF CONTAINS HORSE-DRAWN CARRIAGES

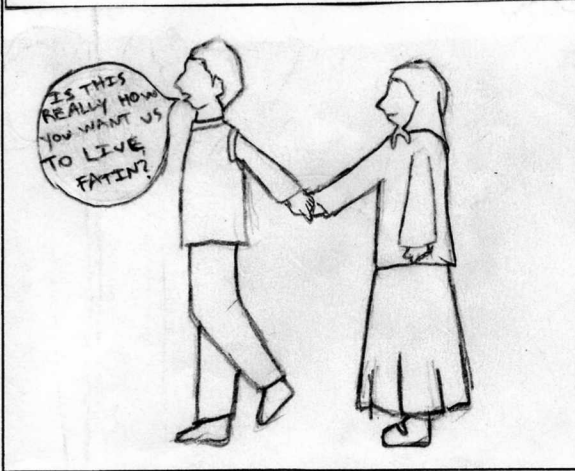
I stood holding out my skirt waiting for ice cubes to cool me down. My husband rushed over to pull my skirt over my bare legs.



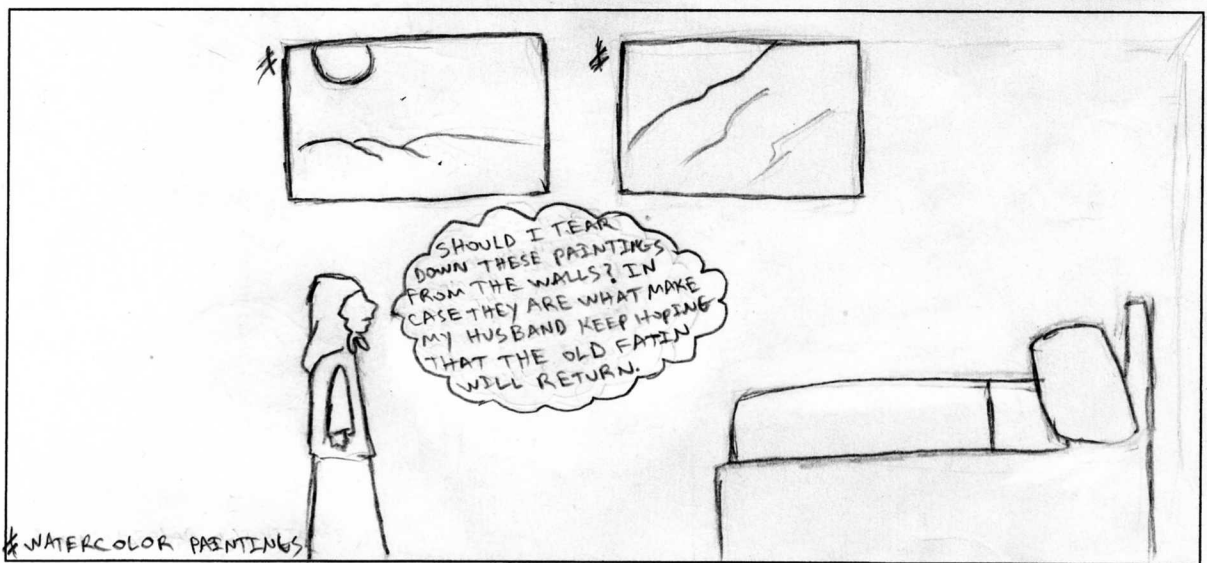
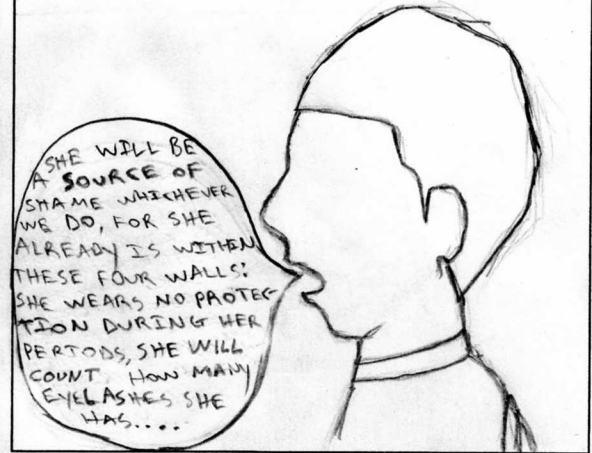
..we struggled and I bit his hand.



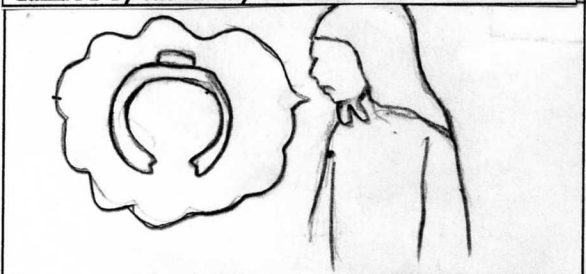
He was not in a good mood afterwards.



Later, I heard them debating over the state of the house, his bad luck in marriage, and the family's distress seeing me go mad.

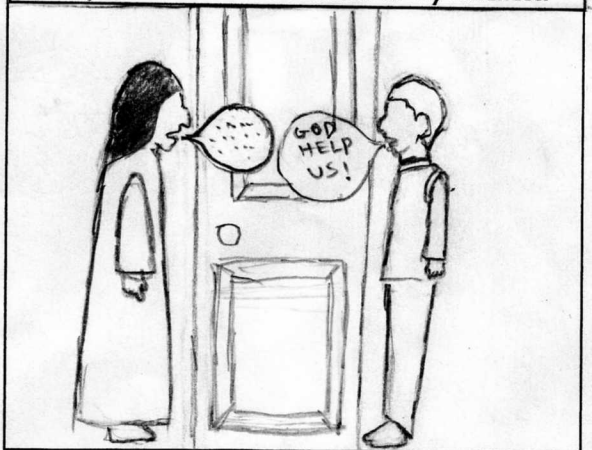


I was the girl who could not say yes when he proposed simply because I was shy and dazzled by his family's wealth



I never gave marriage any serious thought. When I finally had said yes, it was probably because I had been distracted by his mother's gleaming gold bracelet.

Now, all I could hear was my mother-in-law questioning, scolding and complaining. Neither her nor my husband knew a solution to my madness.



I felt hopeful when the doctor arrived.



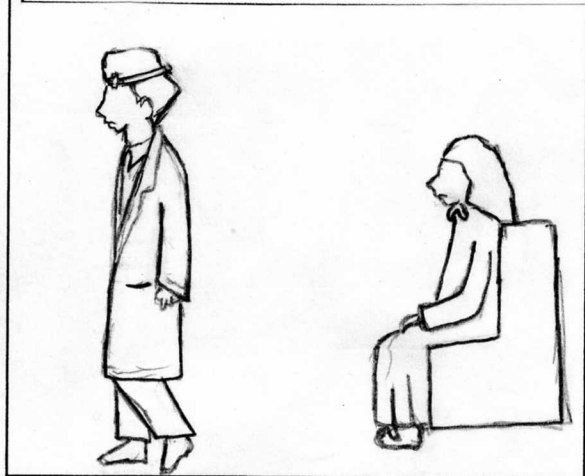
The doctor was concerned if a certain incident sparked my madness. "The sea," mother answered. "It began on a rainy day."



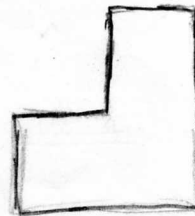
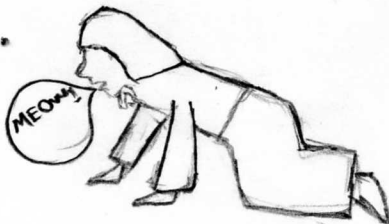
Then I saw an opportunity to explain my illness to the doctor.

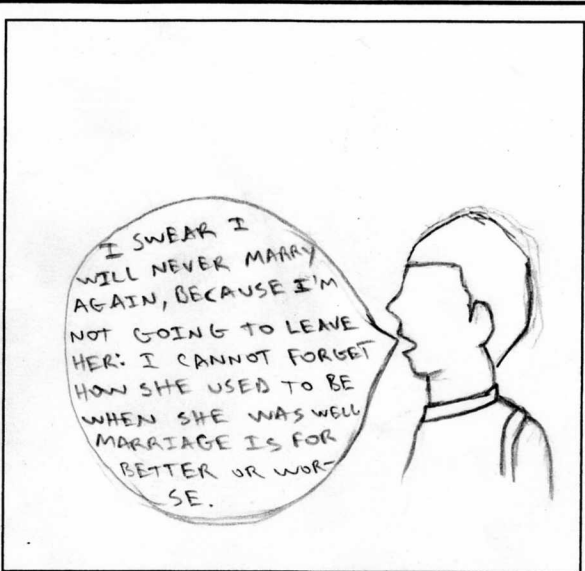


That was the last time he addressed me. Before he left, he confirmed my insanity.



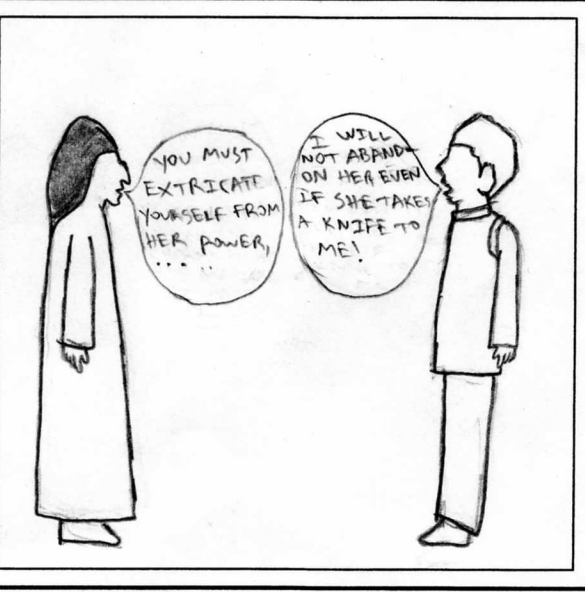
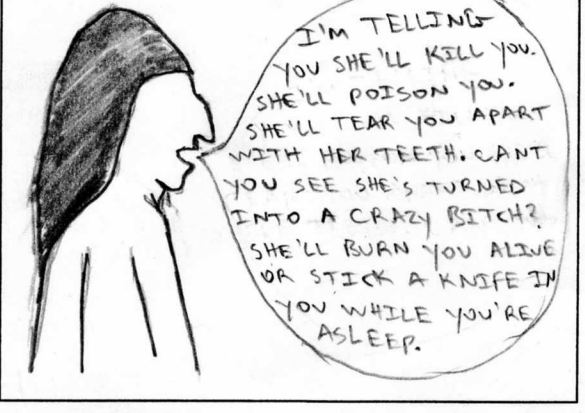
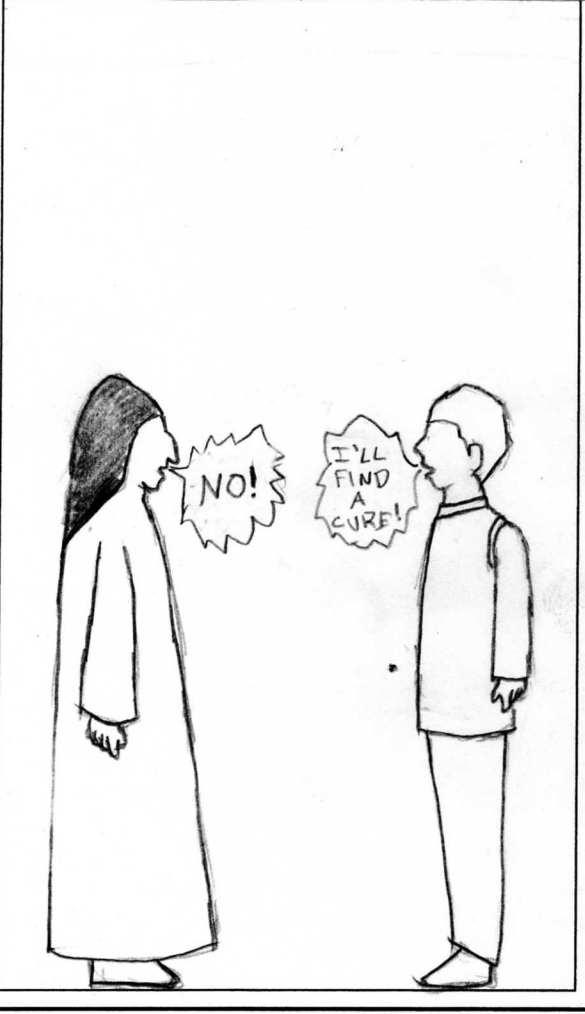
I renewed my efforts at madness. I screamed and howled and meowed and brayed and struck my own face and banged on the window tirelessly.





My husband would have me cured. He loved me and would never ridicule me by sending me back to my family.

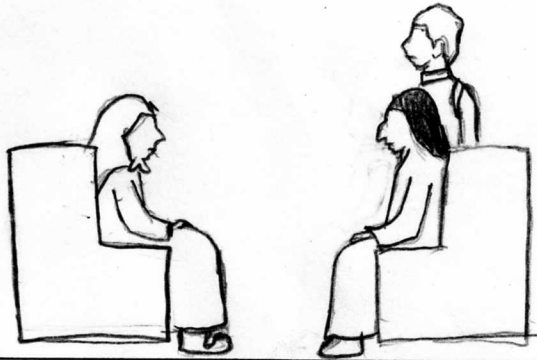
However, his mother was temporarily infected by madness and would not stop screaming at him.



I directed my energy toward calming myself down. I took the last escape route open to me: I wash my face, tied my hair...



I sat facing them, utterly composed, disregarding their eyes which stood out from their faces full of panic.



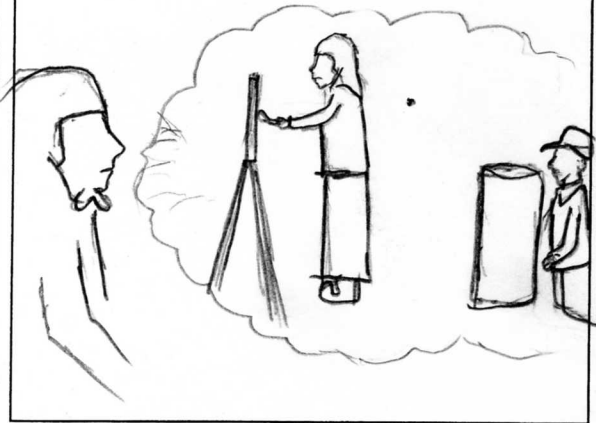
...I hesitated, not knowing where to start explaining.



I could feel that my life had changed and everything around me began to have meaning.



He watched me regularly, close but out of sight, as I struggled to transfer the colors of the sea onto the paper in front of me.



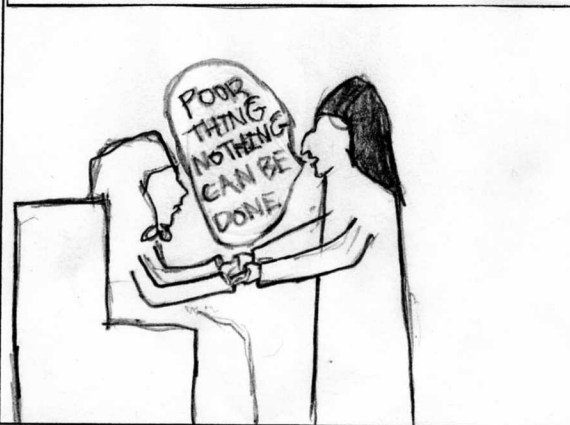
Without much effort, I turned myself into a human dustbin. Despite being allergic to milk, I drank it as if it were water... I swallowed garlic cloves... crunched onions... and then went to bed without brushing my teeth



I found myself confessing to them in a low voice, articulating very clearly that I was not mad, but afraid and ashamed because I had fallen in love with another man. I wanted a divorce...



Then his mother clasped my hand, twisting her mouth into a grimace of pity while murmuring...



My husband collapsed, burying his face in his hands and praying sadly.



Adapted from Hanan Al Shayk's

# A Season of Madness

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