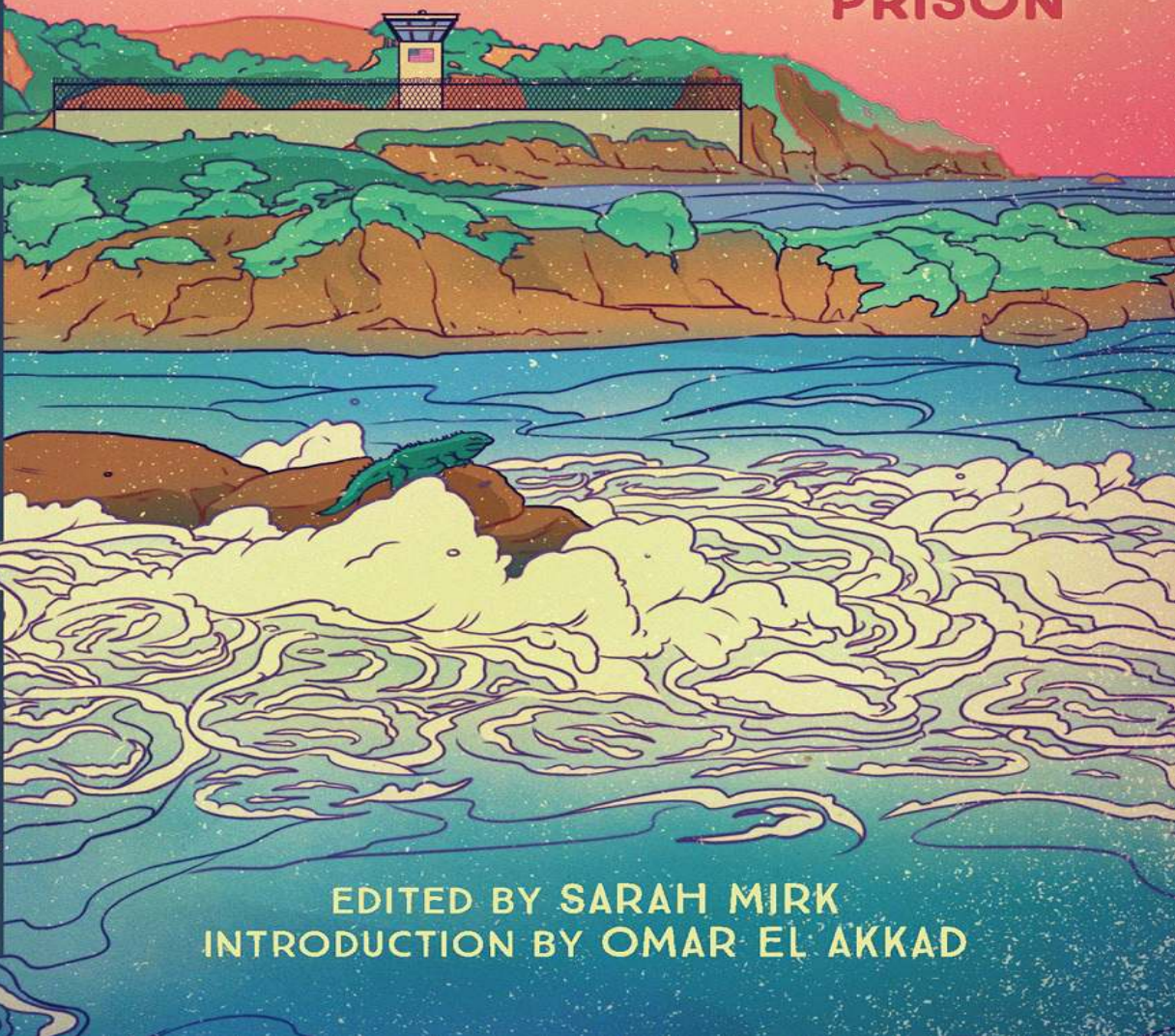


# Guantanamo Voices

**TRUE  
ACCOUNTS**  
FROM THE WORLD'S  
MOST **INFAMOUS**  
**PRISON**



EDITED BY SARAH MIRK  
INTRODUCTION BY OMAR EL AKKAD























# Guantanamo Voices

**TRUE ACCOUNTS** FROM THE  
WORLD'S MOST **INFAMOUS PRISON**

**EDITED BY** SARAH MIRK

**INTRODUCTION BY** OMAR EL AKKAD

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NGUYEN, CHELSEA SAUNDERS, ABU ZUBAYDAH





**THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED TO TWO VETERANS:  
CHRIS ARENDT, WHO STARTED ME ON THIS  
JOURNEY, AND LAURA SANDOW, WHO KEPT ME  
ON IT. THANK YOU FOR HAVING THE COURAGE  
TO FACE THE DARK STUFF.**

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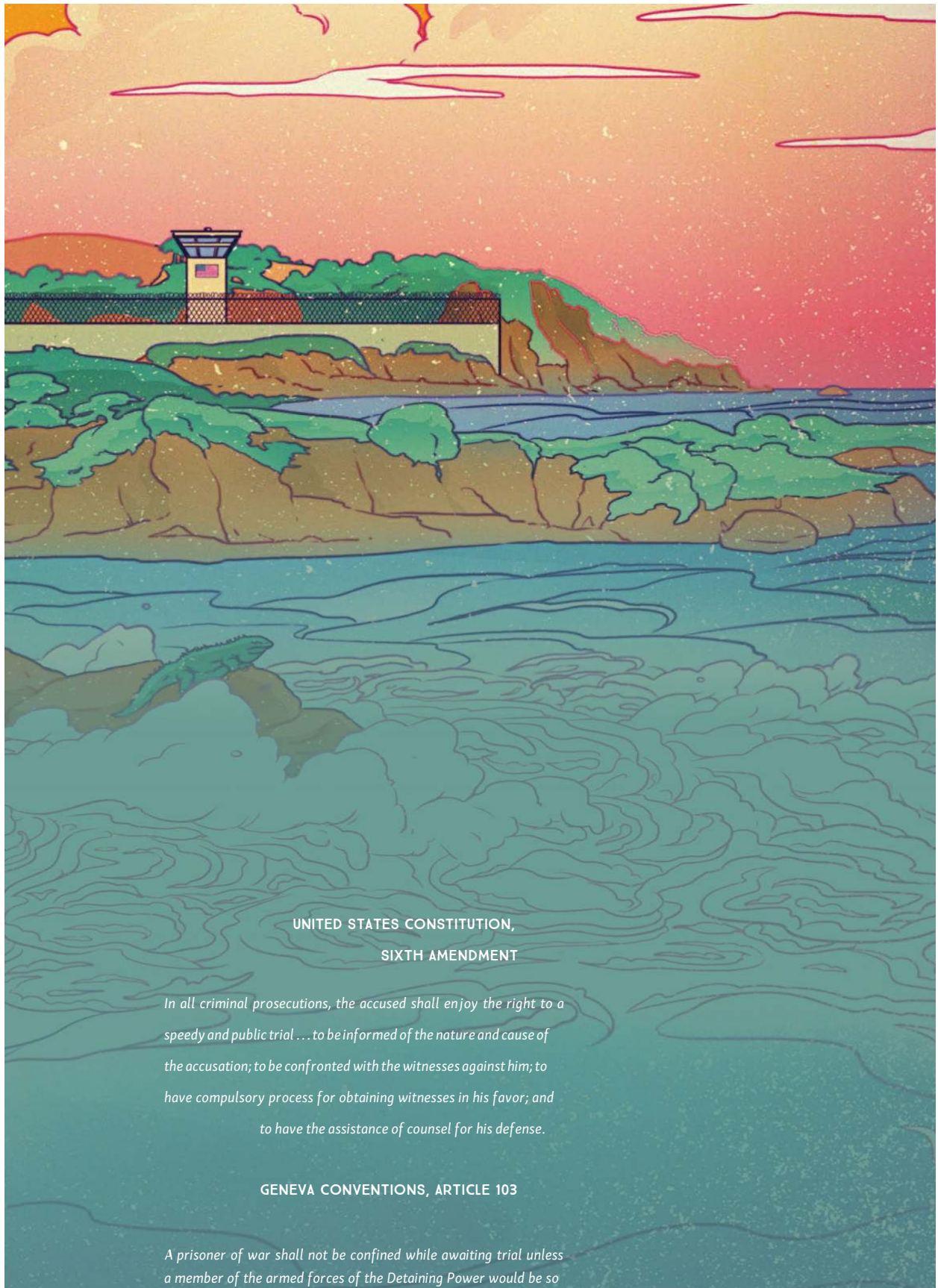
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UNITED STATES CONSTITUTION,  
SIXTH AMENDMENT

*In all criminal prosecutions, the accused shall enjoy the right to a speedy and public trial . . . to be informed of the nature and cause of the accusation; to be confronted with the witnesses against him; to have compulsory process for obtaining witnesses in his favor; and to have the assistance of counsel for his defense.*

GENEVA CONVENTIONS, ARTICLE 103

*A prisoner of war shall not be confined while awaiting trial unless a member of the armed forces of the Detaining Power would be so*





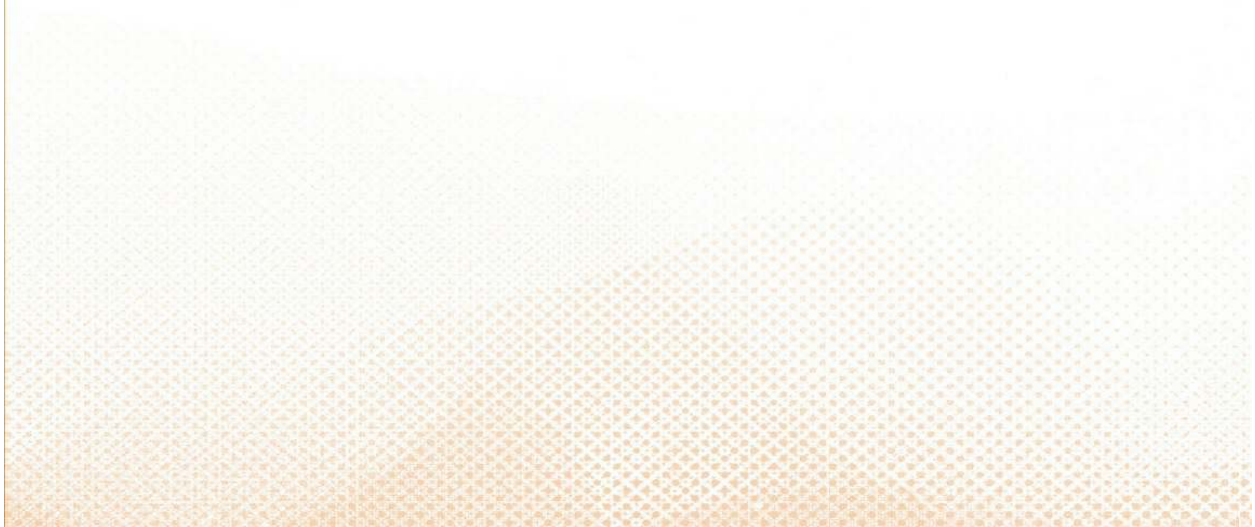
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NOMI KANE	
GUANT	



A NOTE ON LANGUAGE

IS GUANT







## INTRODUCTION

There's a place in Guantánamo Bay called Glass Beach. Likely the beach got its name from the pieces of shattered bottles that wash up on its shore. The sea scrubs the glass smooth, and so pretty are the little squares of red and green and brown that one of the officer's wives used to collect and make jewelry out of them.

I remember she came by the media office once to show them to us. This was in 2008; I was working as a journalist at the time and had been sent by my newspaper to cover the pre-trial hearings of Omar Khadr, a Canadian who'd been captured in Afghanistan at the age of fifteen and shipped to Guantánamo, where he would spend the next eight years of his life. We sat in the media office, a gaggle of maybe half a dozen reporters, leafing through documents describing the brutal interrogations this boy had been put through, the stress positions and sleep deprivation to which he'd been subjected. And all the while, nearby, the officer's wife showed off her homemade jewelry, the little squares of glass shimmering under the white fluorescents.

Of all the things I remember about the Guantánamo Bay detention camps, what has always struck me the most is the extent to which almost everyone I talked to there—from the camp guards to the base commander, from the prosecutors to the officers' spouses—had learned to cultivate a talent for dissociation, a talent for instantaneous forgetting. The same soldiers who escorted us on tours of the prisoners' isolation cells in the morning would escort us to beachside barbecues in the afternoon. The same military public relations officers who made sure to explain to us at length how respectfully the detainees were treated and how tactics such as waterboarding had only been used against the worst-of-the-worst detainees would come with us to the base's souvenir shop to buy T-shirts that read, "Guantánamo Bay—the Wetter, the Better."

Reporting from Guantánamo Bay, I often felt as though the entire enterprise had been preemptively confined to the past, its myriad cruelties and indignities and illegalities buried in euphemism and secrecy and spin such as to render them impossible to talk about with any degree of honesty.

Babies born on January 11, 2002—the day the first prisoners were blindfolded and flown to the makeshift kennels of Camp X-Ray in Guantánamo Bay—have now entered adulthood. An entire generation has come of age in the shadow of perpetual war against an ever-shifting enemy—at times a terror group, at times a country, at times an ideology. And the site of so many of the grotesque practices that have come to define that war—waterboarding, sleep deprivation, stress





But the legacy of the Guantánamo camps—that moment a nation, caught up in the frenzy of revenge and immediacy of war, decided to set aside its laws and norms and principles—does not belong to the past. More than almost any other focal point in the War on Terror, the detention camps and the ideological bloodthirstiness that created them have come to influence so many of this country's darkest impulses ever since. One cannot look at the internment facilities currently housing refugee children along the southern border and not see a blueprint drawn up eighteen years earlier along the southeast Cuban shore. One cannot assess the new normal of extrajudicial drone killings, ordered by the president without oversight, and not see an echo of the made-up legal system designed specifically for Guantánamo detainees—an ad-hoc solution intended to skirt all the existing rules, to produce the desired results at any cost.

In this book are the stories of people whose lives were forever changed by what happened and continues to happen in Guantánamo Bay. Some were swept up during the early years of the war on terror, quickly found to pose no threat, and yet held in cages for more than a decade anyway, their freedom sacrificed at the altar of political and ideological necessity. Others willingly aided the implementation of the system, only to realize too late the grotesque injustice at its heart. And yet others tried to tell the world what was happening in these camps and had their livelihoods and their freedom taken away for their effort. But all of them, in one way or another, experienced firsthand the single most telling chapter of 21st-century American militarism, a chapter most of this country has spent the past decade trying to forget.

We think of war, first and foremost, as an outbreak of mass physical violence, a theater in which we tear one another to shreds with bullets and bombs. And this is of course the defining layer of wartime, but beneath it, supporting the physical violence, are other layers, each one a different kind of violence—a linguistic violence, a bureaucratic violence, a violence of apathy, and, always the concluding chapter, a violence of forgetting.

If Afghanistan and Iraq mark the epicenters of America's post-9/11 outbreak of physical violence, the detention camps at Guantánamo Bay mark the epicenter of every other kind of violence.

Anyone who spends any time observing the GITMO detention camp, and the bureaucratic regime that controls it, must quickly become fluent in the language of euphemism. There are no "prisoners" in Guantánamo Bay—every time I used the word while at the base, a nearby officer would correct me. There are only "detainees." The word "prisoner" implies a prison sentence, a well-defined thing; a detainee you can hold without charge forever. There are certainly no prisoners of war in Guantánamo Bay, only unlawful enemy combatants—a category dreamed



Of these terms, the one I found most jarring was used to refer to the often brutal interrogations of captured enemies, the sessions of what the military famously refers to as “enhanced interrogation.” But in reality, the interrogations themselves were never called interrogations. Whenever a prisoner was to be dragged into a small room to be subjected to this brutality in an effort to extract information, the soldiers would refer to it as a “reservation”: As in, “The prisoner has an upcoming reservation.” The entire system was constructed this way, dressed up in a costume of benign, antiseptic terminology.

I have no doubt that everyone responsible for the Guantánamo Bay prison camps—from the politicians who authorized their creation to the lawyers who penned opinions justifying them to the soldiers who carried out the day-to-day cruelty—will never face any real consequences for their actions. To indict the people who did this is to indict the country that allowed it to happen. Instead the man who wrote the memos providing legal cover for torture at the camps is today a law professor at Berkley. The president who oversaw the creation of the camps is today a respected elder statesman, appearing on daytime TV shows and peddling portraits of the soldiers he sent to be maimed in an illegal war. There is no reckoning, no conciliation, no acknowledgment. Many of the remaining prisoners in Guantánamo will likely grow old and die there, and unless there’s another terror attack and a new president decides to begin shipping new prisoners there, the detention camps will slowly fade out of collective memory.

And this is perhaps the most insidious aspect of Guantánamo Bay’s legacy—just how easy it is to forget. Even though the camps still house prisoners, the entire place feels like something from a prior epoch, a piece of ancient history, buried now beneath the daily scandals and calamities that have come to define the present moment in American politics.

The stories in this book are, first and foremost, an antidote to forgetting. Taken together, they represent not only a wide-ranging account of how Guantánamo Bay detention camps functioned, but also the impulses—the communal hatred, fear, and cowardice—that allowed such a place to exist.

Unless we confront these impulses, they will resurface and give rise to new nightmares—nightmares whose victims and perpetrators we will be forced, once more, to begin instantaneously forgetting.

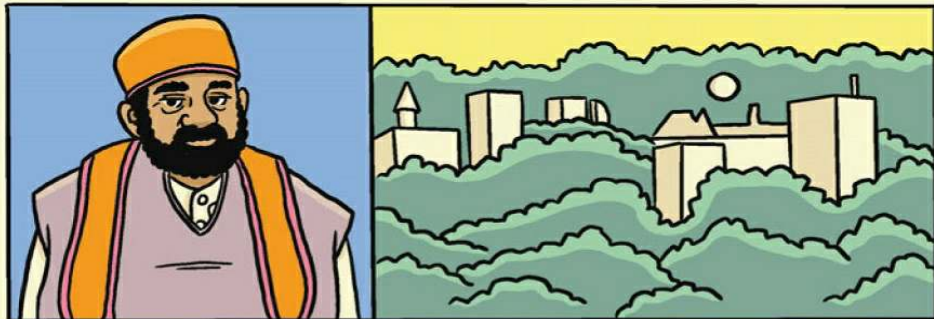
**Omar El Akkad** was born in Cairo, Egypt, and grew up in the Middle East before moving to Canada. In a ten-year career as a reporter, he covered stories across the planet—from the war in Afghanistan to the military trials in Guantánamo Bay, the Arab Spring revolutions in the Middle East, and the protests in Ferguson, Missouri. Omar is a recipient of the National Newspaper Award for investigative reporting for his coverage of the “Toronto 18” terrorism arrests. He has also won the Edward Goff Barry Memorial Prize for Young Canadian Journalists, and has been nominated for several National





After September 11, 2001, the U.S. government dropped millions of these paper flyers over Afghanistan, offering cash payments to people who turned in members of al-Qaeda and the Taliban.

**Get wealth and power beyond your dreams.  
Help the Anti-Taliban Forces rid Afghanistan of  
murderers and terrorists.\***



**You can receive millions of dollars for helping the  
Anti-Taliban force catch Al-Qaeda and Taliban murderers.  
This is enough money to take care of your family, your  
village, your tribe for the rest of your life.  
Pay for livestock and doctors and school books and  
housing for all your people.\***

\*Translated from Arabic

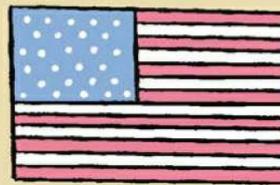




Guantánamo Bay Naval Base (GITMO)  
An American military base on Cuban land  
Size: 45 square miles  
Population: 6,000  
-> including 2,500 active military members



CUBA



U.S.A.

FERRY

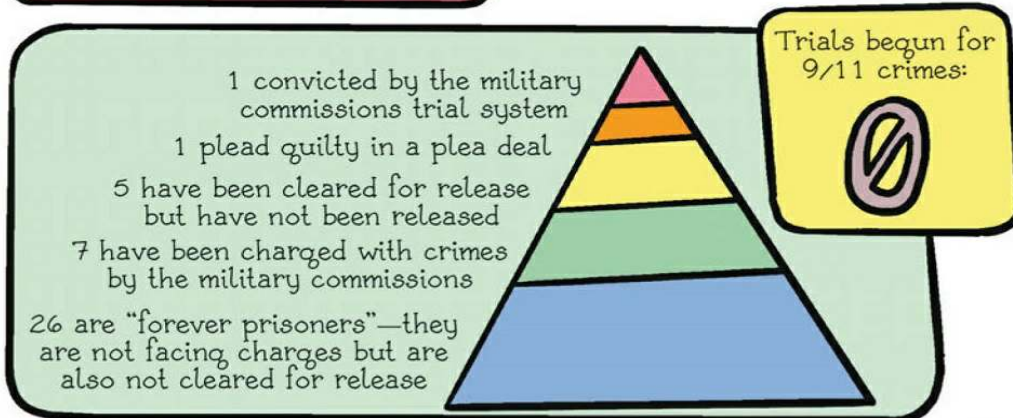
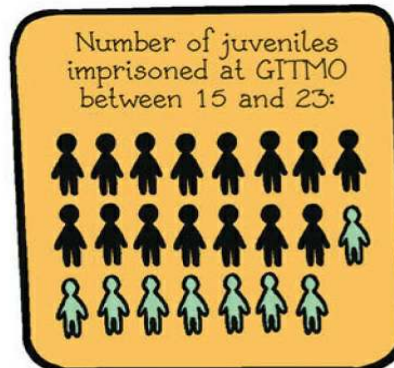
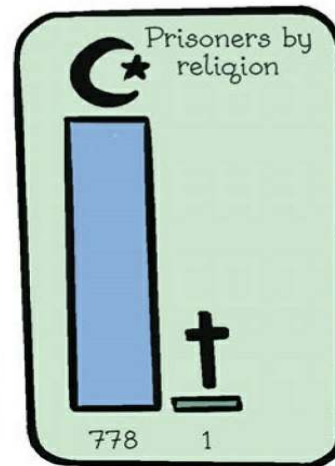
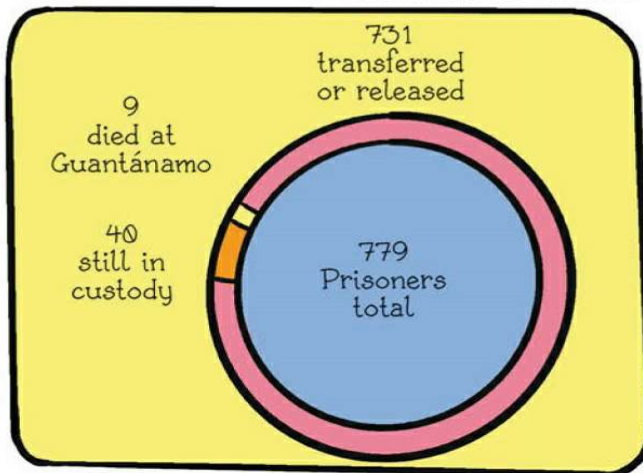


AIRPORT





## GUANTÁNAMO FACTS



A small illustration of a prison cell with a metal grate door and a barred window.

January 11, 2002:  
First 20 captives arrived at Guantánamo Bay. 2 of those original 20 prisoners still remain





Citizens of 49 countries have been held in Guantánamo.



Afghanistan:  
220 people



Saudi Arabia:  
135 people



China:  
22 people



Britain:  
9 people



France:  
7 people

Where do people go when they're released from Guantánamo?  
Do people released from Guantánamo join terrorist groups?  
The data is incomplete and ambiguous. The most thorough reports say 6 to 9 percent of prisoners "actively engaged on the battlefield" after their release.

Percent of Guantánamo prisoners turned over to the U.S. for bounties:

80%



Bounties the U.S. government paid Pakistani and Afghani citizens for individuals they suspected to be part of the Taliban:



Number of people working at the detention camp:

1,800

Ratio of workers to prisoners:



Cost to run GITMO per year:



\$445 million

Cost per prisoner per year:



\$11 million

Average cost of holding someone in federal prison per year:



\$36,299

For a list of sources for these numbers, see the endnotes.



## TIMELINE

**1903:** The United States asks to lease the strategically important bay on the south side of Cuba for a naval station. The \$4,085 annual lease has no expiration date.



**1944:** During the peak of WWII, 9,000 Cubans and 4,000 Americans work at the Naval Station at Guantánamo Bay.

**1958:** Cuban Revolution

**1959:** Fidel Castro demands the return of Guantánamo Bay



**1960s:** 50,000 mines are placed around Guantánamo's fence, creating the largest minefield in the Western Hemisphere.



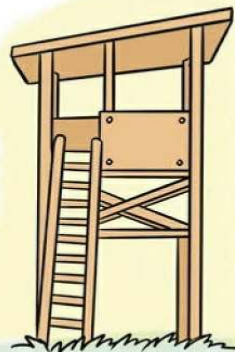
**1991-92:** 34,000 Haitian refugees are held at GITMO in makeshift camps while they apply for asylum.

**1994-96:** GITMO continues to detain Cuban and Haitian refugees who are picked up at sea on their way to the U.S.



**January 2002:** The first 20 War on Terror prisoners are sent to Camp X-Ray.

**April 2002:** Camp X-Ray is closed and prisoners are relocated to the prison building Camp Delta.



**August 2002:** The Bush administration signs off on the "torture memos" okaying the use of brutal interrogation tactics.

**March 2003:** 665 prisoners remain in Guantánamo.



**April 2004:** The Supreme Court rules that prisoners at Guantánamo Bay have a right to habeas corpus—the reasons for each person's imprisonment must be reviewed.



**April 2004:** Media outlets publish photos of horrific abuse at Abu Ghraib prison.



**2005:** To protest their continued imprisonment without trial, 50 Guantánamo prisoners initiate a hunger strike. The military begins force-feeding them.

**January 2006:** 496 prisoners remain in Guantánamo.

**June 2006:** In a coordinated act, three prisoners at Guantánamo commit suicide on the same day.



**December 2007:** 277 prisoners remain in Guantánamo.

**January 2009:** On his first day in office, President Obama orders Guantánamo to close within a year. (His efforts are subverted by Congress.)

**2010:** Congress writes a provision into a defense spending bill that says Guantánamo prisoners cannot be brought to the U.S. mainland for trial or imprisonment.

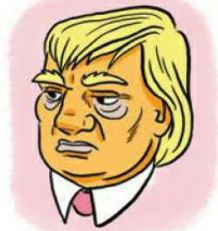


**2011:** The Obama administration sets up "periodic review boards" to determine whether individual prisoners should be transferred or continue to be imprisoned without charge.

**January 2012:** 171 prisoners remain in Guantánamo.

**2012:** The Senate finishes a 6,700-page report on abuse of prisoners in U.S. custody after 9/11.

**April 2013:** 106 of the remaining 166 prisoners go on hunger strike. In December, the government changes its policy and refuses to disclose any information about hunger strikes.



**January 2018:** President Trump signs an order keeping the prison open indefinitely.



**January 2019:** 40 prisoners remain in Guantánamo.



**“YOUR OPPONENTS WOULD LOVE YOU TO  
BELIEVE THAT IT’S HOPELESS, THAT YOU  
HAVE NO POWER, THAT THERE’S NO REASON  
TO ACT, THAT YOU CAN’T WIN. HOPE IS A  
GIFT YOU DON’T HAVE TO SURRENDER, A  
POWER YOU DON’T HAVE TO THROW AWAY.”**

**—REBECCA SOLNIT**

## CHAPTER ONE



# WELCOME TO GUANTÁNAMO

ILLUSTRATED BY HAZEL NEWLEVANT

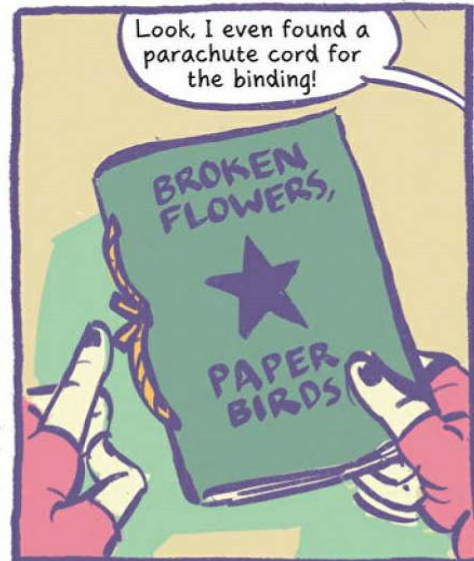








November 2008, Portland, Oregon













I knew absolutely nothing about Guantánamo. It was just a photo I'd seen in the newspaper...



... a word in a headline about torture. While known around the world, to me at age 22, it was a mostly invisible, very confusing place.

It wasn't a real place, full of real people.



I was working as an unpaid intern at a newspaper. I wanted to be a journalist. Through getting to know Chris, I interviewed former Guantánamo prisoners.



And eventually other Guantánamo veterans.











Guantánamo is a naval base, home to about 6,000 people, including the 40 prisoners (or detainees). Like any American military base, it feels like a small, suburban town.



It feels weirdly like Phoenix. But with a beach.

The base has been here a long time—since 1903, when the U.S. set up shop in Cuba after the Spanish-American War.



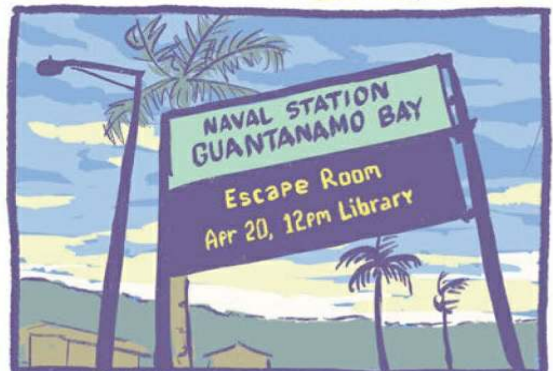
The Cuban government leased the land to the United States for \$4,085 a year. After the Cuban Revolution in the 1950s, Castro repeatedly asked for the land back.



The U.S. refused. We continue to this day to send an annual check for the lease, which the Cuban government ceremoniously declines to cash.



During the '90s, tens of thousands of Haitian and Cuban refugees were held at the base as they applied for asylum—that's why a makeshift jail was originally built, to hold refugees accused of crimes.



The prison is now a separate part of the base staffed by 1,800 people. It's run by a joint task force of five military branches.





The joint task force draws service members and contractors from all over the world. They're assigned to GITMO for anywhere from four months to a year, then rotate out to different jobs somewhere else.

Commander Bashaw, who's from New Orleans, is only in charge of public affairs for nine months.

Once I retire, my public affairs days are over. I'm going to get into a whole lot of gardening and see what we can do about climate change.

Honor bound!

Defend freedom!

Everyone is focused on doing their job. But each job is just a tiny, tiny piece of a big machine.

The rules of the machine were set in motion nearly 20 years ago. It's no one's job, here and now, to question how the whole thing works.





In January 2002, the old makeshift refugee jail was turned into Camp X-Ray. It became the most infamous prison in the world.



Now it's an overgrown ruin.



At nighttime, this is a really nice place to look at the stars. It's pretty dark out here.



Already, what happened here feels like ancient history.

It reminds me of visiting the old internment camps in the West, the desolate, overgrown places where Japanese Americans were imprisoned en masse during World War II.



But even those places aren't consigned to history. In 2019, the Trump administration ordered at least one former internment camp to start holding migrant children.







This history, too, is happening right now. Since Camp X-Ray opened, 779 people have been held at Guantánamo. Forty people are still here.



Of those 40 people, the U.S. has only charged nine with crimes.



They're just . . . waiting. For years.















What had I imagined Camp X-Ray would become? A memorial? We Americans never want to face our dark parts, much less enshrine them in our history.



The next day, we tour the prison.



Here, there are memorials. Each group of military police stationed here has left their own monument to their time on base.



I wonder if Chris's Michigan National Guard unit left a memento. But I don't see one.















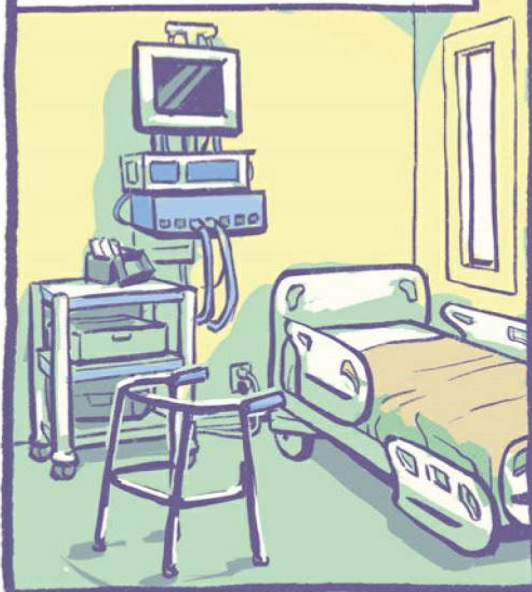








The oldest prisoner is in his seventies. Under President Trump's orders, the prison is gearing up to be open for at least another 25 years.



Colonoscopies are becoming common. We're starting to see the use of canes and walkers and so forth.



The doctors won't tell us their names or let us take their photos.

The medical facility is expanding to make plans for hospice care.



Will the men die here before they ever face trial? It seems likely.





We're allowed to see the prisoners from behind a one-way mirror.



It feels like a fucked-up safari. We can see them but they can't see us.

I think of all the things I've done since 2002, I was in high school then. Some prisoners have been here that long.



How did this all get started?





## CHAPTER TWO

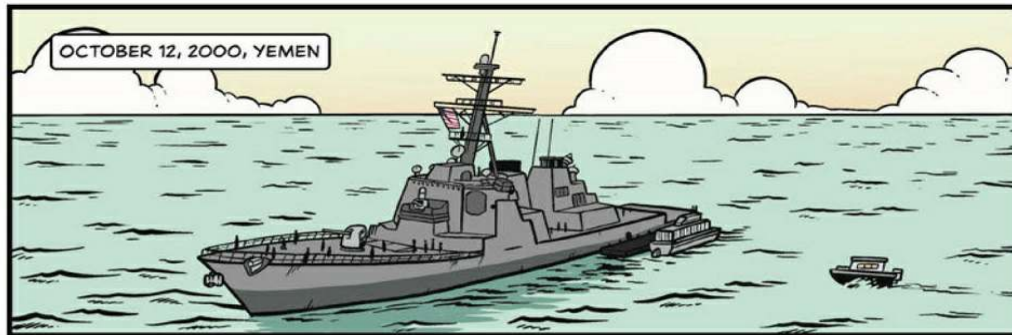


**MARK FALLON**

FORMER CHIEF OF MIDDLE EAST  
COUNTERINTELLIGENCE OPERATIONS  
FOR NAVAL CRIMINAL INVESTIGATIVE  
SERVICE (NCIS)

ILLUSTRATED BY GERARDO ALBA



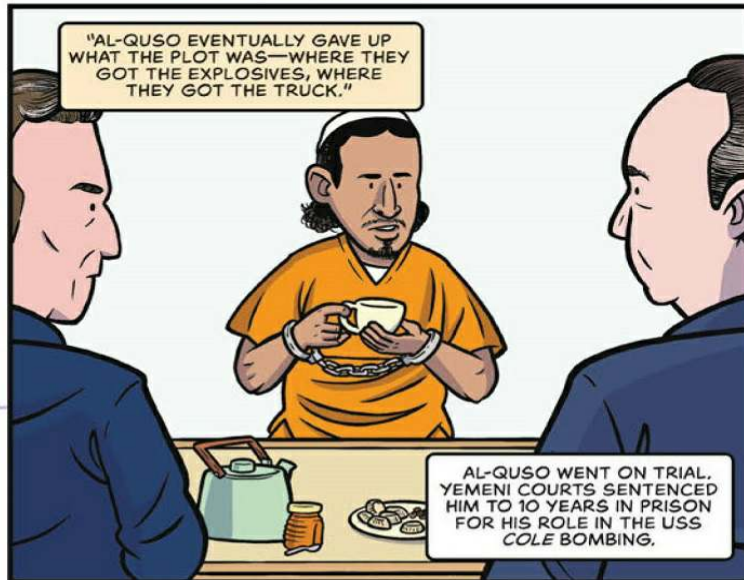
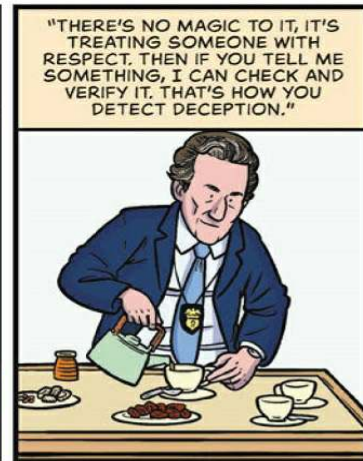










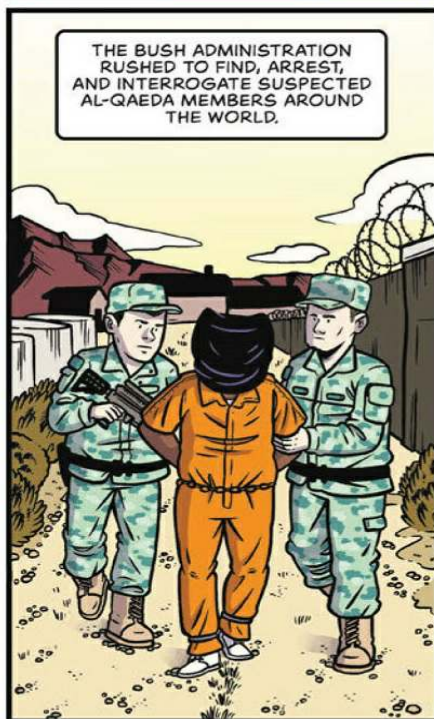










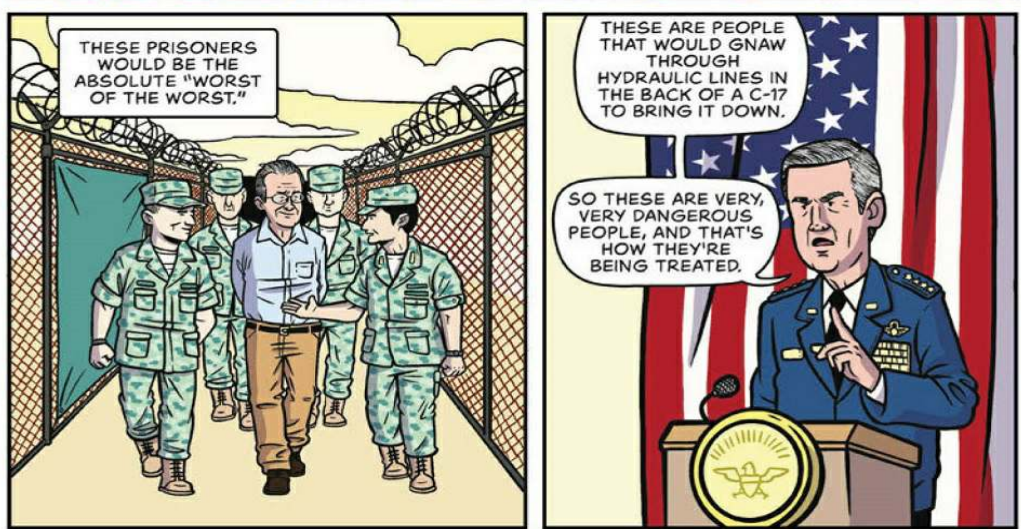


HE SAID THAT BECAUSE AN "EXTRAORDINARY EMERGENCY EXISTS," SUSPECTED AL-QAEDA MEMBERS WHO ARE NOT U.S. CITIZENS COULD BE IMPRISONED WHEREVER THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE WANTED.

**CERTAIN  
NON-CITIZEN**

ALSO, NON-U.S. CITIZENS WOULD BE TRIED BY MILITARY COMMISSIONS, EVEN WHILE U.S. CITIZENS ACCUSED OF TERRORISM WERE TRIED BY REGULAR FEDERAL COURTS.









"I'D BEEN TO GUANTÁNAMO BEFORE WHEN THE CUBAN HAITIAN REFUGEE CONFLICT OCCURRED. I KNEW THEY HAD A LITTLE JAIL, A NAVAL HOSPITAL, A MCDONALD'S, BEACHES."



MARK WAS ASKED TO BECOME CHIEF INVESTIGATOR FOR THE MILITARY COMMISSION PROCESS—BASICALLY, LEADING INVESTIGATIONS TO FIND EVIDENCE THAT COULD BE USED TO PROSECUTE GUANTÁNAMO PRISONERS IN MILITARY COURTS.

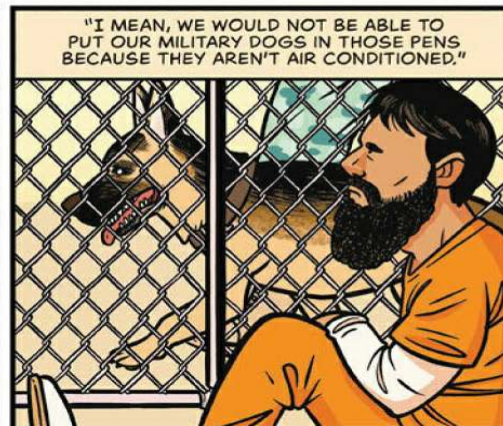












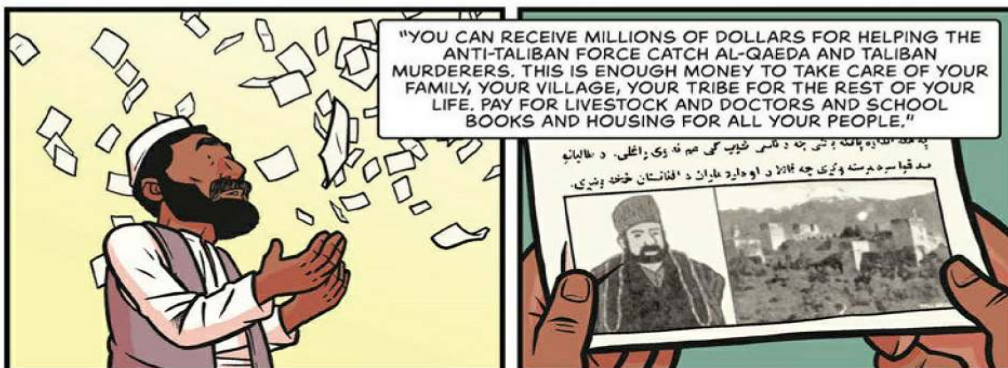
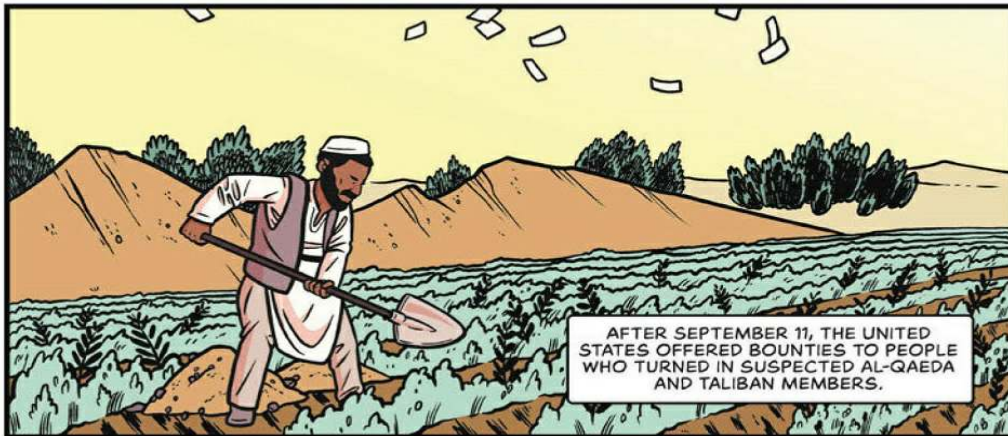
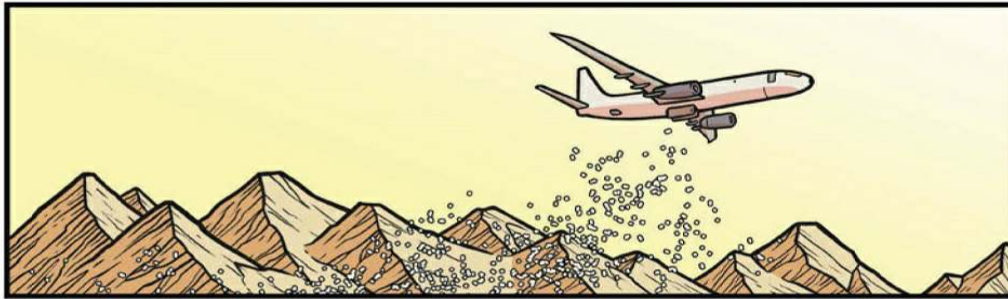






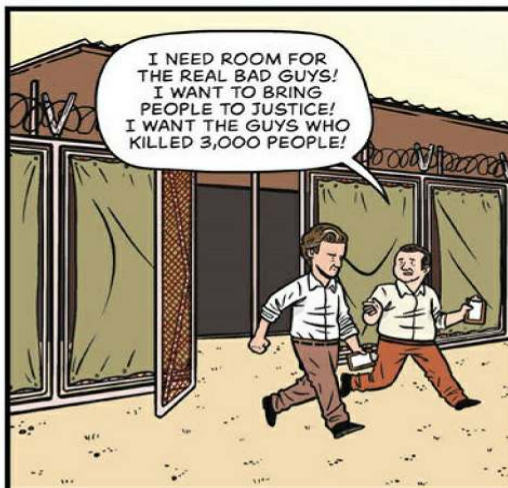
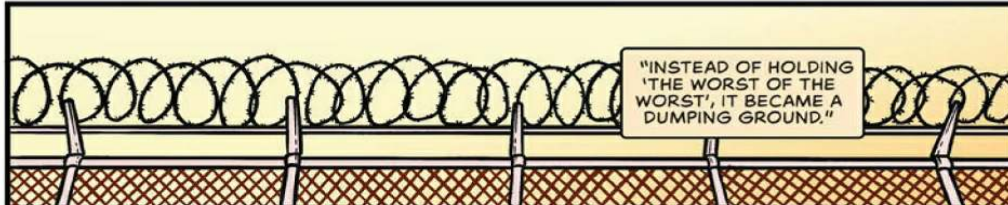




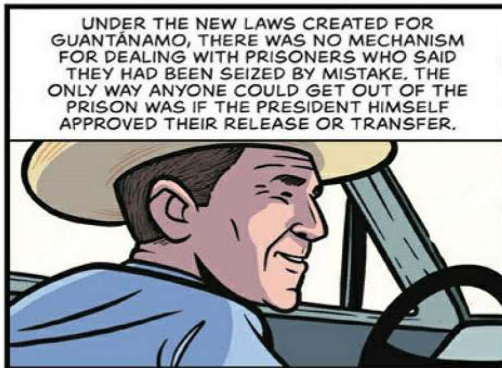
















THE INTERROGATION TEAM BECAME INTERESTED IN ONE PARTICULAR PRISONER: 22-YEAR-OLD MOHAMMED AL-QAHTANI. UNLIKE MOST OF THE PRISONERS, HE HAD NOT BEEN BOUGHT FOR A BOUNTY. HE WAS CAPTURED WHILE TRYING TO CROSS THE PAKISTANI BORDER.

A man with a beard and orange jumpsuit sits on a low concrete bench in a room with green walls and a window.

"DUNLAVEY REALIZED AL-QAHTANI WAS POTENTIALLY MUCH MORE VALUABLE THAN WHAT HE CALLED THE 'MICKEY MOUSE' PRISONERS AT GITMO."

A soldier in a green camouflage uniform and cap looks out a window. A red door with the number '1' is visible in the background.

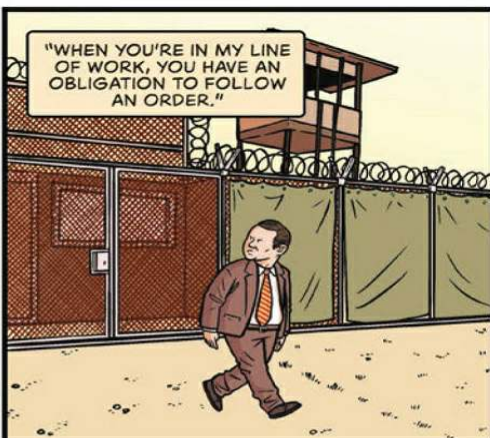
BUT AL-QAHTANI WASN'T TELLING THE INTERROGATORS WHAT THEY WANTED.

"DUNLAVEY PROPOSED TO HAVE AL-QAHTANI 'SENT OFF ISLAND' TO EITHER JORDAN, EGYPT, OR ANOTHER COUNTRY."

"BASICALLY, HE WANTED TO DO A CIA-STYLE RENDERING ON AL-QAHTANI TO SEE WHAT COULD BE TORTURED OUT OF HIM."

Four soldiers in camouflage uniforms and helmets are dragging a man in an orange jumpsuit across a floor. One soldier is holding the man's head down.

"WHEN YOU'RE IN MY LINE OF WORK, YOU HAVE AN OBLIGATION TO FOLLOW AN ORDER."

A man in a brown suit and orange tie walks across a sandy area in front of a prison fence with a guard tower in the background.

"YOU ALSO HAVE AN OBLIGATION TO CHALLENGE AN UNLAWFUL ORDER."

A close-up of the man in the brown suit and orange tie, looking serious. The prison fence and guard tower are visible in the background.



IN SEPTEMBER 2002, MARK FOUND OUT THAT THE MOST IMPORTANT LAWYERS IN THE BUSH ADMINISTRATION WERE ALL PLANNING TO VISIT GUANTANAMO. HE JUMPED ON A PLANE TO GITMO.



"MY WORRY WAS DUNLAVEY WAS GOING TO CONVINCE THEM THAT HE NEEDED TO TORTURE."

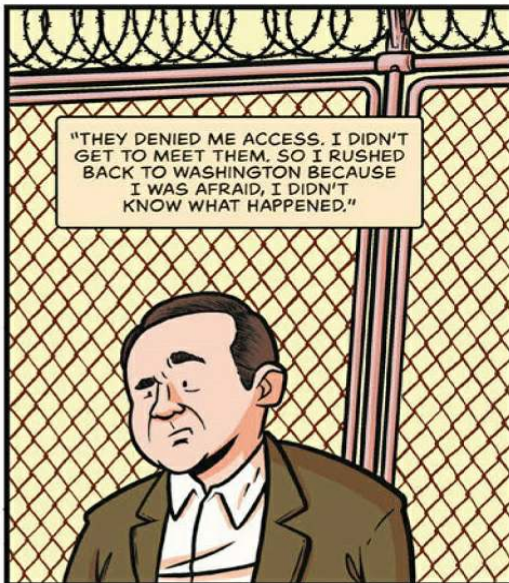


"I WANTED THE OPPORTUNITY TO TALK TO THEM TO CONVINCE THEM THEY WERE WRONG."



"LIKE, I'VE DONE THIS FOR YEARS, PLEASE LISTEN TO ME, SIR, BECAUSE I DON'T WANT YOU TO BUY INTO THIS IDEA FROM THIS WHACK JOB."

"THEY DENIED ME ACCESS. I DIDN'T GET TO MEET THEM. SO I RUSHED BACK TO WASHINGTON BECAUSE I WAS AFRAID, I DIDN'T KNOW WHAT HAPPENED."







BY OCTOBER 2002, GENERAL DUNLAVEY HAD ALREADY BEEN REPLACED WITH A NEW COMMANDER: GENERAL GEOFFREY MILLER.



MARK WAS HOPEFUL THAT THE WORST WAS OVER AND THE NEW GENERAL WOULD TAKE A MORE SANE, ANTI-TORTURE STANCE ON INTERROGATIONS.

BUT GENERAL MILLER HAD A SPECIAL TAG LINE FOR HOW TO TREAT PRISONERS.



WE'VE GOT TO SHOW THEM THAT WE HAVE MORE TEETH THAN THEY HAVE ASS, HOO-AH!

THE WEEK AFTER HE ARRIVED, GENERAL MILLER APPROVED A HARSH INTERROGATION PLAN FOR MOHAMMED AL-QAHTANI: SOLITARY CONFINEMENT, SLEEP DEPRIVATION, ROUND-THE-CLOCK INTERROGATION.



SURPRISED AND CONFUSED, MARK AND A FEW ALLIES ARGUED THAT TREATING PRISONERS BADLY WAS BOTH COUNTERPRODUCTIVE AND ILLEGAL.

"IT WAS CLEAR TO ME THAT WE WERE GOING TO COMMIT WAR CRIMES. I WAS TRYING TO STOP WHAT I THOUGHT WAS JUST A VERY POOR POLICY DECISION."



"I REALIZED THAT WHOEVER WAS BEHIND THIS PUSH TO TORTURE WAS POWERFUL."



I HAD NO IDEA AT THE TIME THAT THE PRESIDENT AUTHORIZED THE CIA TO KIDNAP PEOPLE, GIVING THEM TO OTHER COUNTRIES TO BE TORTURED.





AFTER MARK'S EFFORTS TO STOP THEM FAILED, A TEAM WORKING IN SHIFTS STARTED INTERROGATING MOHAMMED AL-QAHTANI FOR 20 HOURS A DAY.

AL-QAHTANI WENT ON A HUNGER STRIKE, REFUSING FOOD AND WATER. MARK READ THE INCOMING RECORDS OF EACH DAY'S INTERROGATION WITH RISING HORROR.

"INTERROGATION LOG DETAINEE 063  
NOVEMBER-DECEMBER 2002":

"NOVEMBER 26, 23:08:  
DETAINEE CLAIMED THAT THE  
INTERROGATIONS ARE BASED  
ON MALICE, HATE, AND  
JEALOUSY. HE SAID, 'THE  
TREATMENT IS WILD AND  
ANIMALISTIC. EVERYBODY HAS  
LIMITS. ONCE THOSE LIMITS ARE  
CROSSED, WHAT IS SOMEBODY  
SUPPOSED TO DO?'"



"NOVEMBER 27, 10:00:  
CONTROL PUTS DETAINEE IN  
SWIVEL CHAIR TO KEEP HIM  
AWAKE AND STOP HIM FROM  
FIXING HIS EYES ON ONE  
SPOT IN BOOTH. CONTROL  
USED 'ONION' ANALOGY TO  
EXPLAIN HOW DETAINEE'S  
CONTROL OVER HIS LIFE IS  
BEING STRIPPED AWAY."



"NOVEMBER 29, 04:00:  
CORPSMAN ADVISES  
DETAINEE HE NEED TO DRINK  
THREE BOTTLES OF WATER  
OR GET AN ENEMA. AFTER  
SOME RESISTANCE, DETAINEE  
DRINKS ONE AND A HALF  
BOTTLES OF WATER."



"07:30: DOCTOR CHECKS  
DETAINEE. TELLS DETAINEE THAT  
IF DETAINEE DOESN'T HAVE A  
BOWEL MOVEMENT, DETAINEE  
WILL GET AN ENEMA."



"20:20: DETAINEE REFUSED  
FOOD AND WATER."

"20:35: DETAINEE  
REFUSED WATER."

"20:40: MEDICAL  
EVALUATION  
DETERMINED AN  
ENEMA WAS  
NECESSARY."

"20:45: DETAINEE  
RECEIVED AN ENEMA."





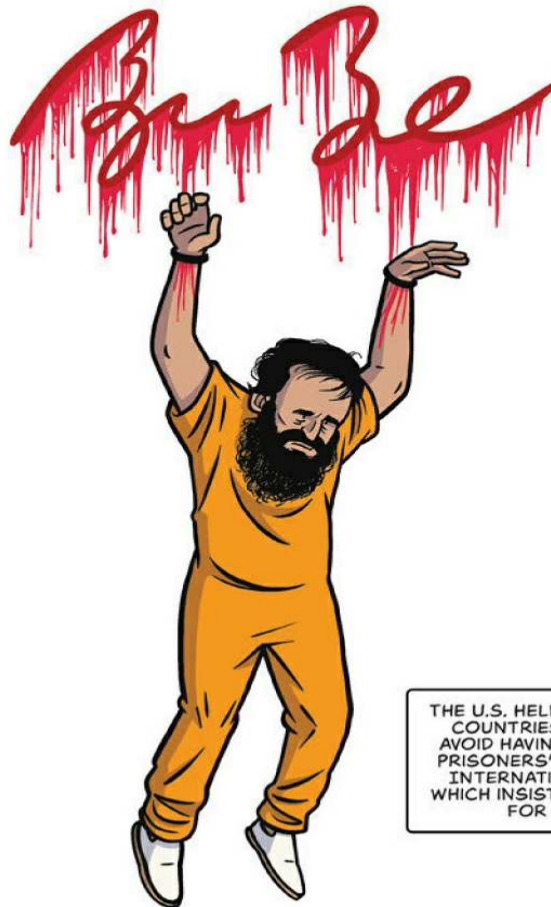




UNKNOWN TO MARK—AND THE REST OF AMERICA—A WEEK AFTER 9/11, PRESIDENT BUSH SIGNED A SECRET ORDER GRANTING THE CIA UNPRECEDENTED POWERS TO IMPRISON AND INTERROGATE PEOPLE.

*Bu Ze*

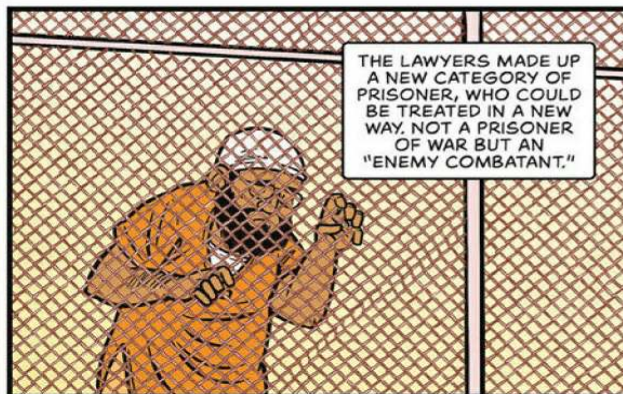
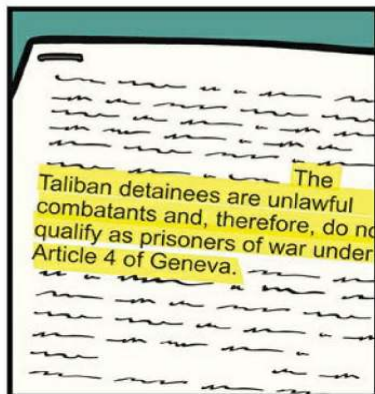
THE CIA AND U.S. ALLIES WERE COVERTLY ARRESTING AND INTERROGATING PEOPLE AT "BLACK SITES"—CLANDESTINE PRISONS HIDDEN AROUND THE WORLD.



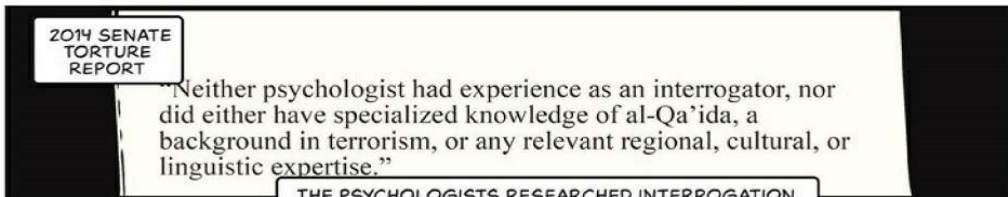
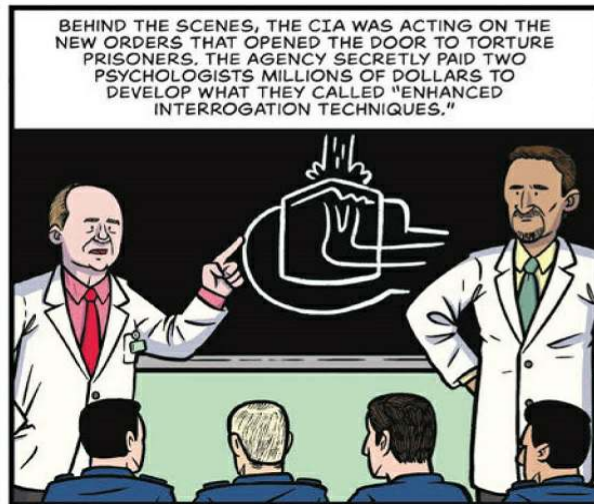
THE U.S. HELD PEOPLE ON OTHER COUNTRIES' SOIL PARTLY TO AVOID HAVING TO DECLARE THE PRISONERS' EXISTENCE TO THE INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS, WHICH INSISTS ON BASIC RIGHTS FOR PRISONERS.



RIGHT BEFORE CAMP X-RAY OPENED IN FEBRUARY 2002, LAWYERS WITHIN THE BUSH ADMINISTRATION WROTE UP ANOTHER SECRET ORDER. IT SAID THAT INTERNATIONAL LAWS ABOUT HOW TO TREAT PRISONERS OF WAR, THE GENEVA CONVENTIONS, DIDN'T APPLY TO SUSPECTED AL-QAEDA AND TALIBAN MEMBERS.







THE PSYCHOLOGISTS RESEARCHED INTERROGATION TECHNIQUES COUNTRIES LIKE NORTH KOREA HAD USED AGAINST AMERICAN PRISONERS OF WAR IN THE PAST. THEY USED THAT BACKGROUND TO WRITE UP THE NEW ENHANCED INTERROGATION TECHNIQUES.





AT A BLACK SITE IN POLAND, THE CIA IMMEDIATELY STARTED USING THE ENHANCED INTERROGATION TECHNIQUES WITH A PRISONER NAMED ABU ZUBAYDAH. THEY KEPT HIM NAKED, IN SOLITARY CONFINEMENT, 24 HOURS A DAY.



DURING INTERROGATIONS, OFFICERS WOULD SLAM HIM AGAINST THE WALL.



ON 83 OCCASIONS, THEY SUBJECTED HIM TO WATERBOARDING, A FORM OF CONTROLLED DROWNING.



HE BECAME COMPLETELY UNRESPONSIVE, WITH BUBBLES RISING THROUGH HIS OPEN MOUTH.







THEY LOCKED HIM FOR HOURS AT A TIME IN A TINY "CONFINEMENT BOX."



"I BEGAN EMAILING KEY DOCUMENTS TO TRUSTED FRIENDS AND TOLD THEM TO SAVE THEM. I FELT LIKE I WAS UNDERCOVER AGAIN, WORKING WITHIN A CRIMINAL ENTERPRISE PLANNING A HEIST."



"WE WERE TRYING TO SAVE THE EVIDENCE BECAUSE WE THOUGHT SOMEDAY THERE'S GOING TO BE A CONGRESSIONAL HEARING."



"I MEAN, THIS ISN'T GOING TO BE KEPT SECRET FOREVER. WE'RE KILLING PEOPLE."





THE CIA DID DESTROY EVIDENCE, AS MARK FEARED. IN 2005, AGENTS DESTROYED VIDEOTAPES OF INTERROGATIONS OF ZUBAYDAH AND ANOTHER MAN.



AT THE SAME TIME, THE CIA HAD BUILT A SECRET COMPOUND AT GUANTÁNAMO AND TRANSFERRED "HIGH-VALUE" DETAINEES LIKE ZUBAYDAH THERE FROM THE OTHER BLACK SITES AROUND THE WORLD. THE SITE'S CODE NAME WAS STRAWBERRY FIELDS . . .



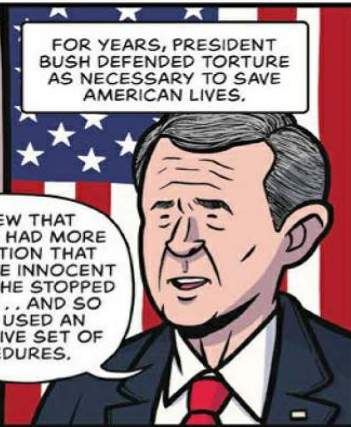
... BECAUSE, CIA OFFICIALS SAID, THE MEN WOULD BE THERE FOREVER.



2006

FOR YEARS, PRESIDENT BUSH DEFENDED TORTURE AS NECESSARY TO SAVE AMERICAN LIVES.

WE KNEW THAT ZUBAYDAH HAD MORE INFORMATION THAT COULD SAVE INNOCENT LIVES, BUT HE STOPPED TALKING . . . AND SO THE CIA USED AN ALTERNATIVE SET OF PROCEDURES.



THE PROCEDURES WERE TOUGH, AND THEY WERE SAFE, AND LAWFUL, AND NECESSARY.



BUT A MASSIVE, 6,700-PAGE SENATE INVESTIGATION FINISHED IN 2012 FOUND THE OPPOSITE.

THE CIA'S CLAIMS THAT TORTURING PRISONERS RESULTED IN "OTHERWISE UNAVAILABLE" INTELLIGENCE THAT "SAVED LIVES" WAS INACCURATE IN EVERY SINGLE CASE. THE INVESTIGATION ALSO NOTED THAT THE CIA EVENTUALLY CONCLUDED THAT ABU ZUBAYDAH WAS NOT ACTUALLY A MEMBER OF AL-QAEDA.

ABU ZUBAYDAH IS STILL IN GUANTÁNAMO.

HE'S NEVER BEEN CHARGED WITH A CRIME.





## CHAPTER THREE

# MATTHEW DIAZ

FORMER NAVY JUDGE ADVOCATE  
GENERAL CORPS OFFICER (LAWYER) AND  
20-YEAR VETERAN: 8.5 YEARS ARMY,  
12 YEARS NAVY



ILLUSTRATED BY  
ALEX BEGUEZ



JANUARY 2005, GUANTÁNAMO BAY







1980, GARY, INDIANA

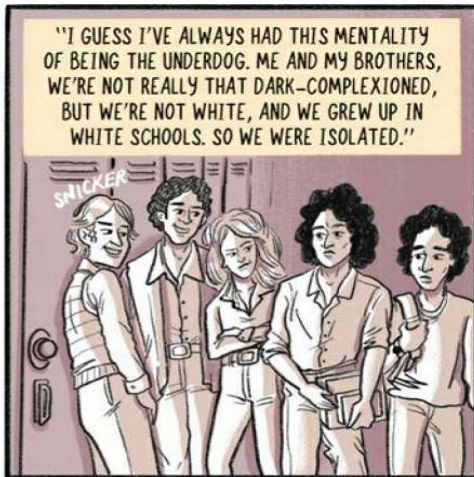
"WHEN I WAS A TEENAGER, I GUESS I COULD SAY I WAS A PUNK. I JUST GREW UP A LITTLE QUICKER THAN NORMAL."



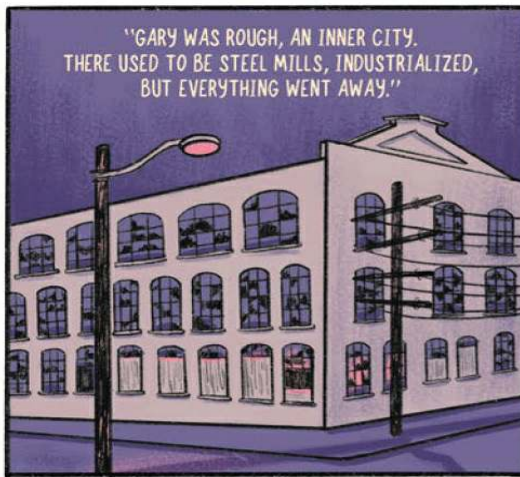
"MY PARENTS HAD SPLIT UP. I LIVED WITH MY SISTER PRIMARILY, AND HER BOYFRIEND. SHE WAS JUST FOUR YEARS OLDER THAN ME, SO NOT REALLY A LOT OF ADULT GUIDANCE OR SUPERVISION."



"I GUESS I'VE ALWAYS HAD THIS MENTALITY OF BEING THE UNDERDOG. ME AND MY BROTHERS, WE'RE NOT REALLY THAT DARK-COMPLEXIONED, BUT WE'RE NOT WHITE, AND WE GREW UP IN WHITE SCHOOLS. SO WE WERE ISOLATED."



"GARY WAS ROUGH, AN INNER CITY. THERE USED TO BE STEEL MILLS, INDUSTRIALIZED, BUT EVERYTHING WENT AWAY."



"A LOT OF CRIME, A LOT OF POVERTY, A LOT OF ABANDONED BUILDINGS."

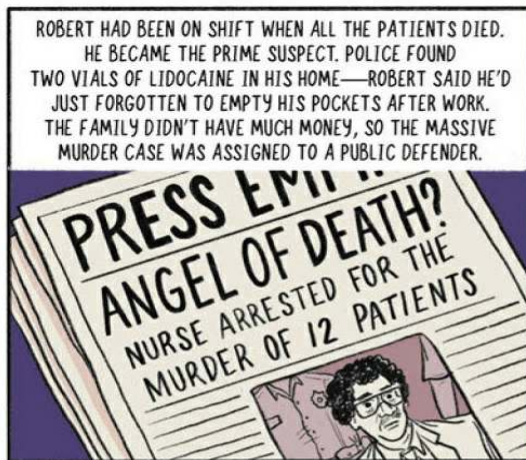
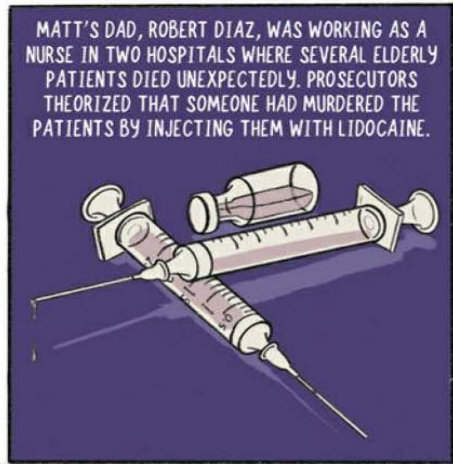


"WE DID A LOT OF CRUISING AND DRINKING. GETTING HIGH. ALMOST GETTING CAUGHT, BUT NOT GETTING CAUGHT. DODGED THE COPS. NOT A GOOD PATH, THAT'S FOR SURE."



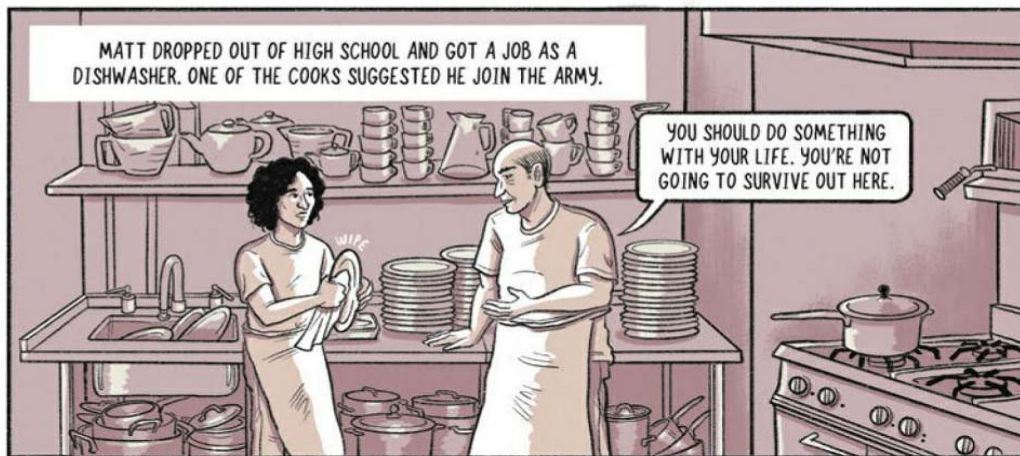














"IT WAS JUST A HORRIBLE SITUATION. MY DAD HAD PUBLIC DEFENDERS, AND OFTEN IT WAS IN TOTAL DISARRAY. HE KEPT GOING THROUGH DIFFERENT LAWYERS."



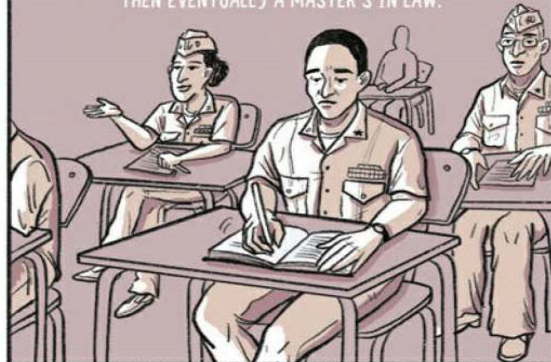
"THAT KINDA HELPED SPUR MY INTEREST IN GETTING A LAW DEGREE."



ROBERT'S EXECUTION WAS STAYED, AS HIS LAWYER FILED A HABEAS CORPUS PETITION THAT TOOK YEARS TO WORK ITS WAY THROUGH THE COURTS. MATT HAULED HIS DAD'S CASE FILES FROM BASE TO BASE.



MEANWHILE, THE MILITARY HELPED PAY FOR MATT TO GET A BACHELOR'S DEGREE IN CRIMINOLOGY, THEN EVENTUALLY A MASTER'S IN LAW.



"I WAS ACTUALLY IN CLASS ON 9/11, PROBABLY LEARNING ABOUT INTERNATIONAL LAW AND THE GENEVA CONVENTION."




"THAT COURSE HAD ALL SORTS OF DISCUSSIONS ON MILITARY LAW. THE CORE OF WHO I AM IS A DEFENSE ATTORNEY. I WAS LOOKING AT IT FROM A DEFENSE PERSPECTIVE AND SEEING HOW THEY INTENDED THIS TO PLAY OUT WITH THE PRISONERS THEY WERE HOLDING."







WHEN HE GRADUATED, MATT TOOK A JOB DEFENDING SERVICE MEMBERS WHO WERE STANDING TRIAL IN MILITARY COURT. THEIR CRIMES RANGED FROM MARIJUANA USE TO SEXUAL ASSAULTS.



IN SPRING 2004, MATT GOT THREE CHOICES FOR WHERE TO BE DEPLOYED FOR A NEW JOB.

IRAQ, AFGHANISTAN, OR GUANTÁNAMO?



HE CHOSE GUANTÁNAMO.


"I HAD BEEN THERE BACK IN 1998 AND WAS VERY FAMILIAR WITH THE BASE. BUT I DIDN'T KNOW THE DETAILS OF JTF (JOINT TASK FORCE) OPERATION. I WAS LOOSELY FOLLOWING THE NEWS."

HMM




THEN THE ABU GHRAIB SCANDAL CAME TO LIGHT.

ABU GHRAIB WAS ONE OF IRAQI DICTATOR SADDAM HUSSEIN'S MOST INFAMOUS PRISONS. UNDER HUSSEIN'S RULE, PRISONERS WERE OFTEN TORTURED AND KILLED IN ABU GHRAIB. WHEN THE U.S. INVADIED IRAQ AND OVERTHREW HUSSEIN IN 2003, THE U.S. MILITARY TOOK OVER THE PRISON.



AFTER HIS TOUR IN GUANTÁNAMO, WHERE HE PUSHED TO TORTURE MOHAMMED AL-QAHTANI, GENERAL MILLER WAS ASSIGNED TO VISIT ABU GHRAIB AND ADVISE ON HOW TO INTERROGATE DETAINEES.





HIS ADVICE WAS TO USE THE TORTURE TACTICS THAT HE'D PUSHED FOR AT GUANTÁNAMO.

INSTEAD OF COMING TO GIVE US SUPPORT, HE WAS SENT SPECIFICALLY TO WORK WITH THE MILITARY INTELLIGENCE INTERROGATORS TO TEACH THEM THE HARSHER TECHNIQUES THAT WERE BEING USED DOWN IN GUANTÁNAMO.

FORMER ARMY COLONEL  
JANIS KARPINSKI

I WAS DEFINITELY DISGUSTED. HOW WOULD WE WANT OUR FOLKS TO BE TREATED AS POWs, YOU KNOW? WE WOULDN'T WANT THEM MISTREATED.

IT WASN'T JUST ON THE ACTUAL PEOPLE THAT WERE IN THOSE PICTURES. THE LEADERSHIP AND DIRECTION THEY WERE GIVEN OBVIOUSLY CONTRIBUTED TO A LOT OF THEIR WRONGDOING.

THE MENTALITY AND DIRECTION COMING FROM THE TOP WAS BASICALLY TO TRY TO GET ANY INFORMATION ANY WAY THEY CAN. I THINK A LOT WAS DRIVEN BY MILLER.







THEN, ONE WEEK BEFORE MATT STARTED HIS NEW JOB, THE SUPREME COURT HANDED DOWN TWO MAJOR DECISIONS ABOUT GUANTÁNAMO PRISONERS.

INDEFINITE DETENTION FOR THE PURPOSE OF INTERROGATION IS NOT AUTHORIZED.

JUSTICE SANDRA DAY O'CONNOR

IN THE *RASUL V. BUSH* CASE, THE COURT RULED THAT FOREIGNERS IMPRISONED IN GUANTÁNAMO HAD THE RIGHT TO HABEAS CORPUS—THEY HAD THE RIGHT TO CHALLENGE THEIR DETENTION BEFORE A JUDGE. IN *HAMDJ V. RUMSFELD*, THE COURT APPLIED THIS RIGHT TO THE SOLE U.S. CITIZEN HELD AT GUANTÁNAMO.

HISTORY AND COMMON SENSE TEACH US THAT AN UNCHECKED SYSTEM OF DETENTION CARRIES THE POTENTIAL TO BECOME A MEANS FOR OPPRESSION AND ABUSE OF OTHERS.

BUT THERE WAS A HITCH. THE BUSH ADMINISTRATION REFUSED TO REVEAL WHO WAS IMPRISONED IN GUANTÁNAMO. LAWYERS COULDN'T FILE SUIT ON BEHALF OF A PRISONER WITHOUT KNOWING HIS NAME.

MATT LANDED IN GUANTÁNAMO'S LEGAL OFFICE AMID ALL THIS.



"THERE WERE 10 OF US IN THE LEGAL OFFICE. GENERALLY WE'D WORK FIVE AND A HALF TO SIX DAYS A WEEK, 12 HOURS A DAY."



"THAT'S GOOD, BECAUSE THERE WASN'T REALLY MUCH TO DO WITH YOUR FREE TIME."

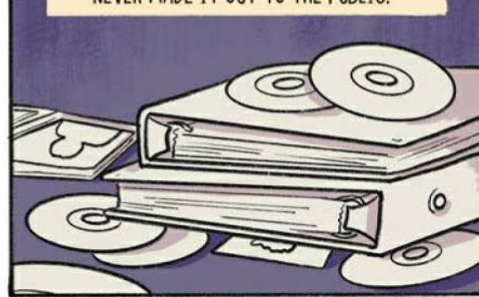




"THERE WERE A LOT OF PRESS INQUIRIES ABOUT THE TREATMENT OF DETAINEES. I WAS TASKED WITH INVESTIGATING ALL OF THE ALLEGATIONS OF MISTREATMENT AND COMPILING THEM."



"I WAS REPORTING IT UP THE CHAIN [OF COMMAND]. OBVIOUSLY THE VAST MAJORITY NEVER MADE IT OUT TO THE PUBLIC."



"IT DEFINITELY WEIGHED ON ME."



"YOU'D GET STATEMENTS FROM THE GUARDS IN QUESTION [ABOUT] BEING SPIT ON OR HAVING SOMETHING THROWN AT THEM."



"I MEAN, HOW WOULD I RESPOND IF THAT HAPPENED TO ME? BUT IN THE END IT DIDN'T JUSTIFY GOING THAT FAR."



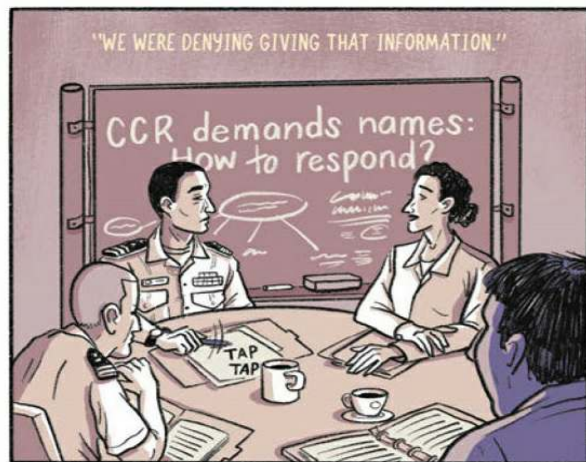
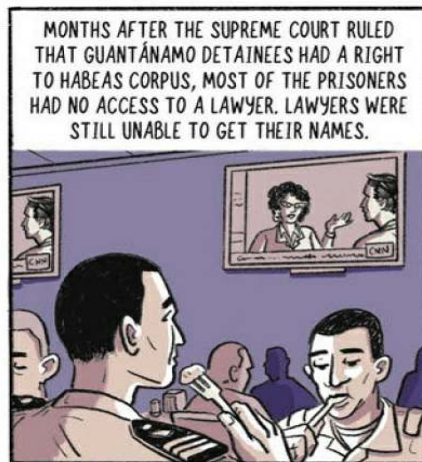
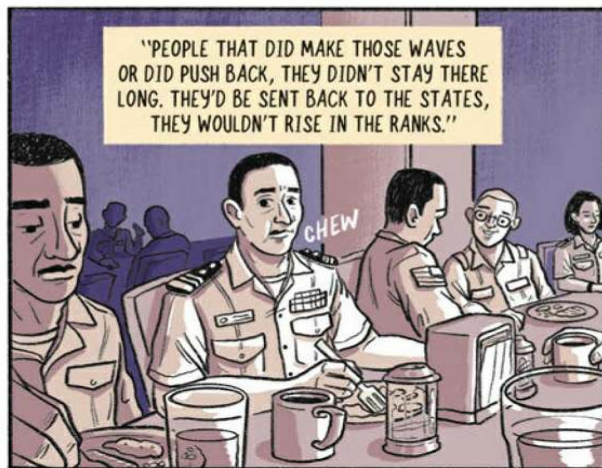
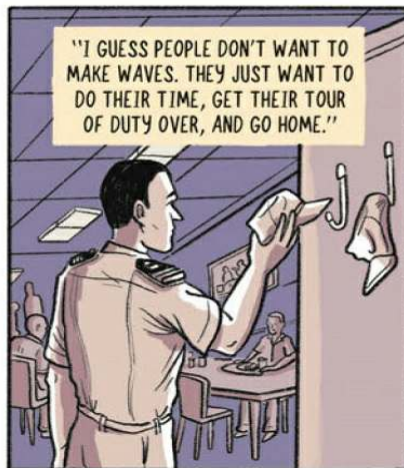






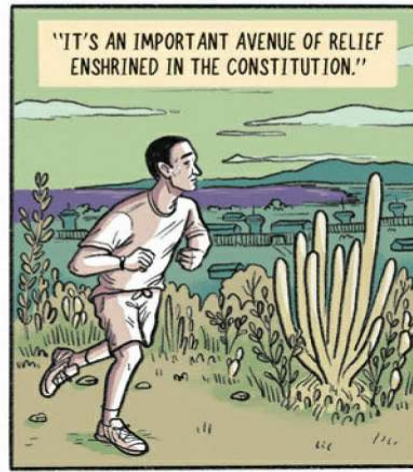
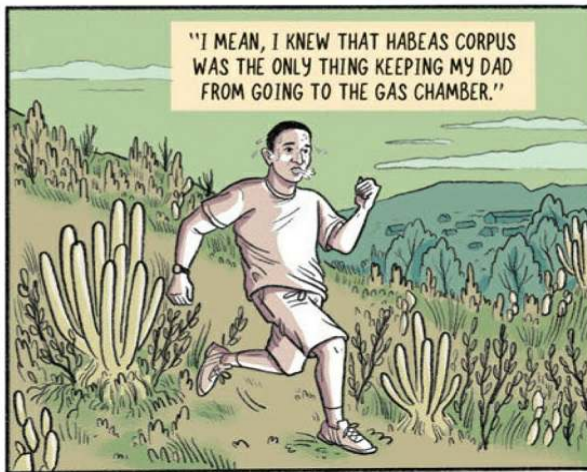
















"I HAD A SEARCHABLE DATABASE."



"IT HAD THEIR NAMES, COUNTRY OF ORIGIN, AND INFORMATION THAT I COULDN'T MAKE SENSE OF AT THE TIME BUT THAT I LATER LEARNED WAS THEIR ID CODES."



DETAINEES	
NAMES	ID NUMBER
Mr. Miller	024135900
Mr. Miller	0013596010
Mr. Miller	01400320
Mr. Miller	03059120
Mr. Miller	00230549
Mr. Miller	013401550

"SHOULD I DO IT?  
HOW WOULD I DO IT?"



"IN THE EVENT THAT YOU'RE LEAVING THE ISLAND, THEY DO SEARCH YOU. SO I COULDN'T JUST CARRY IT OFF WITH ME."



"AND I DIDN'T TRUST EMAILING IT, BECAUSE THAT WAS ALL MONITORED."

Don't be a  
soft target!



REMEMBER  
OPSEC

Don't be a soft target!



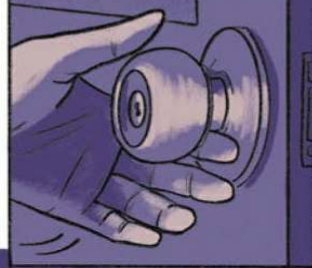








"ON MY LAST DAY THERE, RIGHT BEFORE OUR VERY LAST ROUND OF DRINKS, I WENT BACK TO THE OFFICE TO GRAB IT."

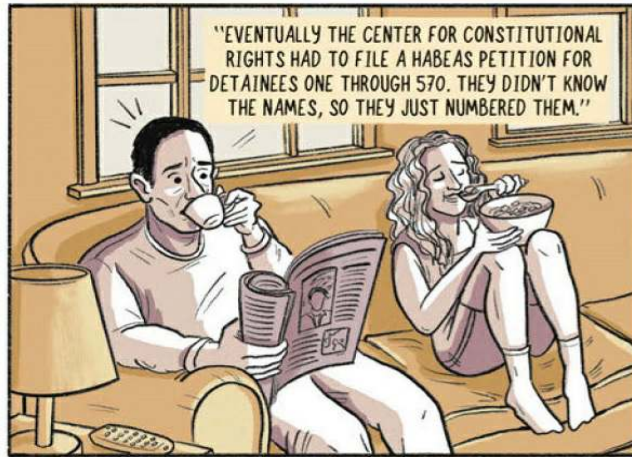
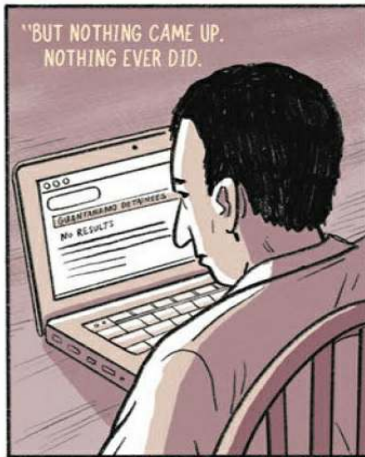
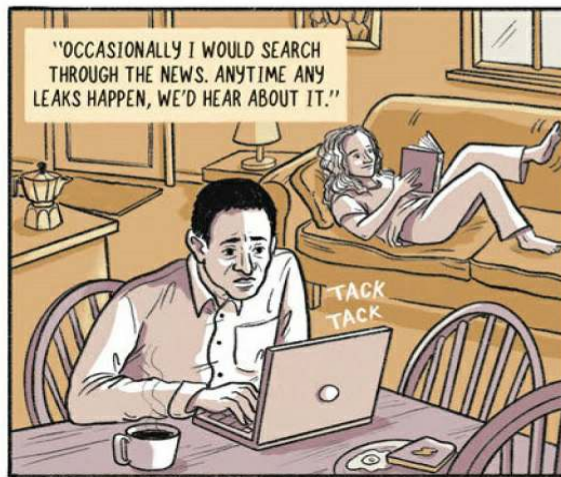


"I PAUSED FOR A LITTLE BIT AS I WAS HOLDING IT THERE AT THE MAILBOX. I WASN'T SURE I WAS GONNA LET GO AND LET IT SLIDE DOWN."



















WHEN BARBARA OLSHANSKY, THE CENTER FOR CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHTS ATTORNEY, HAD RECEIVED THE LIST IN THE STRANGE CARD WITH NO NOTE OR EXPLANATION, SHE THOUGHT IT MIGHT BE A JOKE.



OR WORSE,  
A TRAP.



SOME CENTER FOR CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHTS COLLEAGUES TOOK TO WRITING NOTES TO EACH OTHER ABOUT THE MYSTERIOUS CARD, WORRIED THAT THEIR OFFICE HAD BEEN BUGGED.



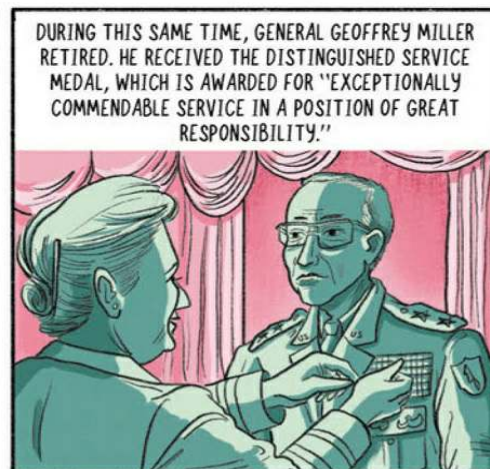
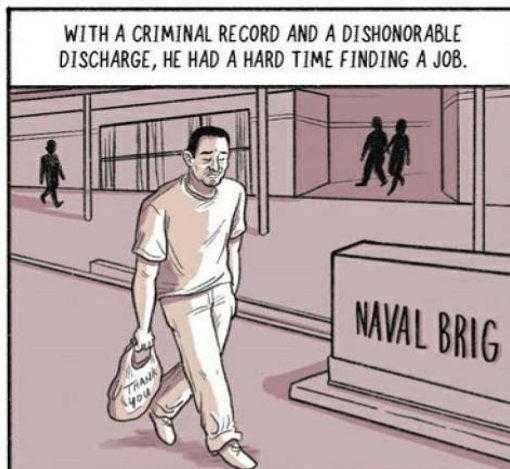
AFTER AGONIZING OVER WHAT TO DO, OLSHANSKY TOLD THE JUDGE OVERSEEING GUANTÁNAMO CASES THAT SHE'D RECEIVED SOME INFORMATION RELEVANT TO THE CASE. THE JUDGE THEN ORDERED HER TO TURN THE LIST OVER TO THE JUSTICE DEPARTMENT.



THE INVESTIGATION TOOK A YEAR, BUT MATT HADN'T COVERED HIS TRACKS VERY WELL.

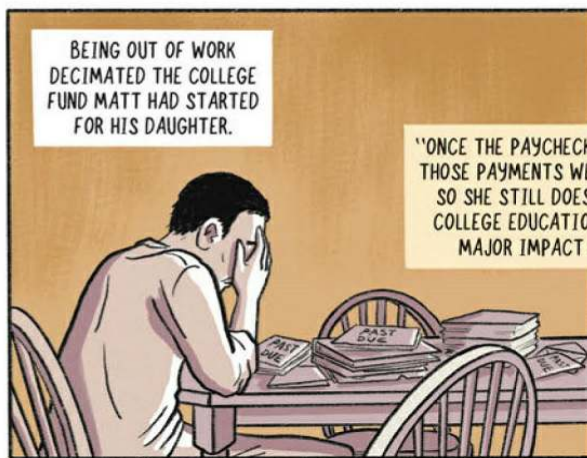












BEING OUT OF WORK  
DECIMATED THE COLLEGE  
FUND MATT HAD STARTED  
FOR HIS DAUGHTER.

"ONCE THE PAYCHECK WENT AWAY,  
THOSE PAYMENTS WENT AWAY...  
SO SHE STILL DOESN'T HAVE A  
COLLEGE EDUCATION. IT HAD A  
MAJOR IMPACT ON HER."



"BUT, I MEAN, SHE'S NOT  
BITTER, SHE'S PROUD."

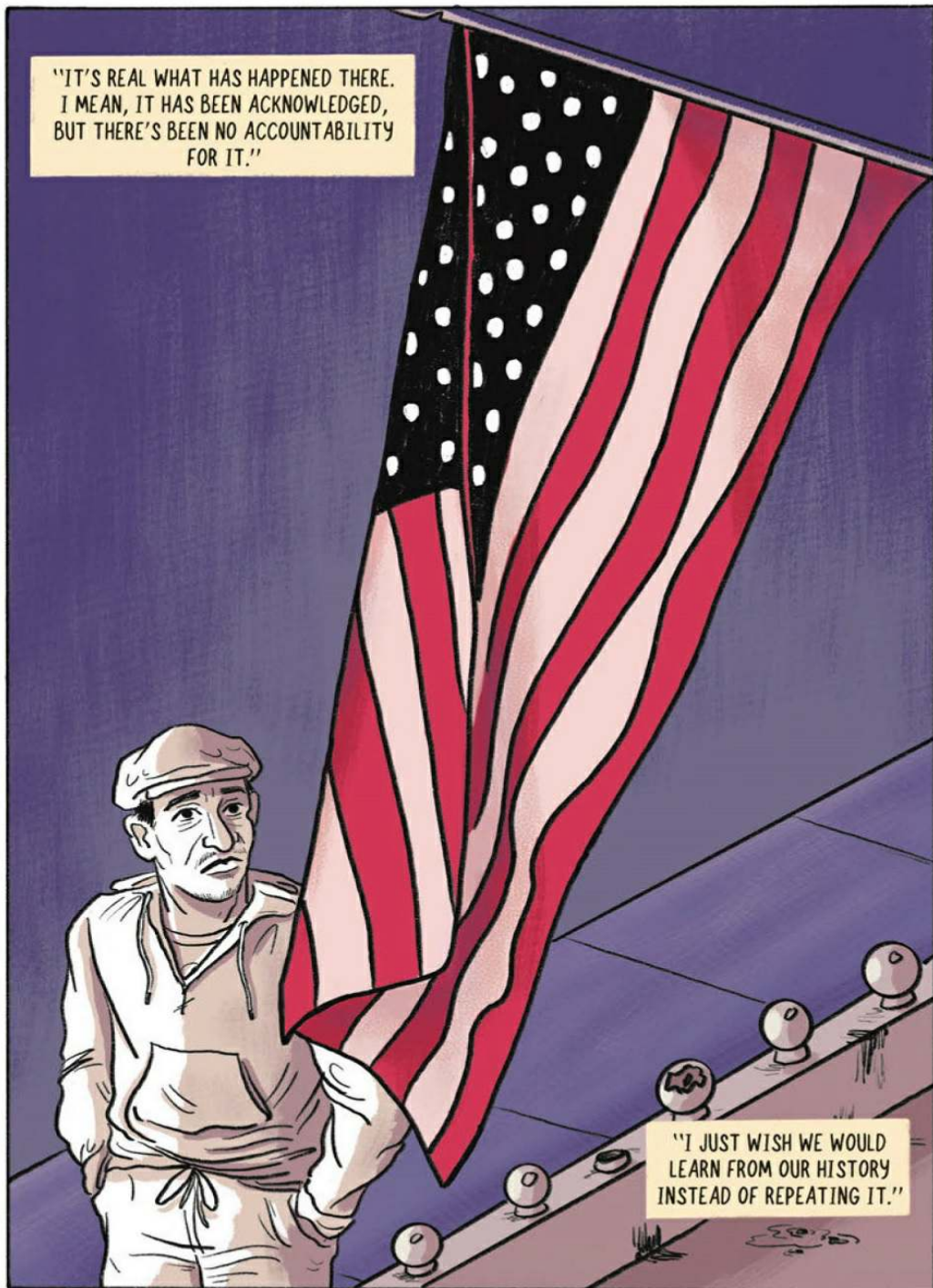
"SHE GOT IN TROUBLE AT SCHOOL A  
COUPLE TIMES FOR REFUSING TO STAND  
FOR THE PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE."



FINALLY, A PUBLIC DEFENDER'S OFFICE IN THE  
BRONX HIRED MATT TO DO CLIENT INTAKE.



"IT'S REAL WHAT HAS HAPPENED THERE.  
I MEAN, IT HAS BEEN ACKNOWLEDGED,  
BUT THERE'S BEEN NO ACCOUNTABILITY  
FOR IT."



"I JUST WISH WE WOULD  
LEARN FROM OUR HISTORY  
INSTEAD OF REPEATING IT."



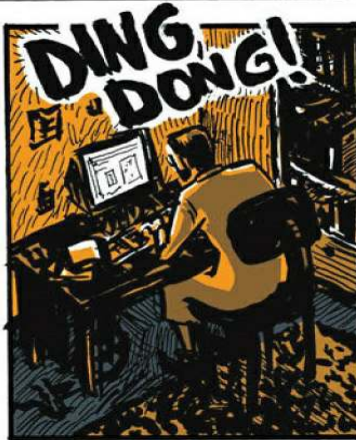
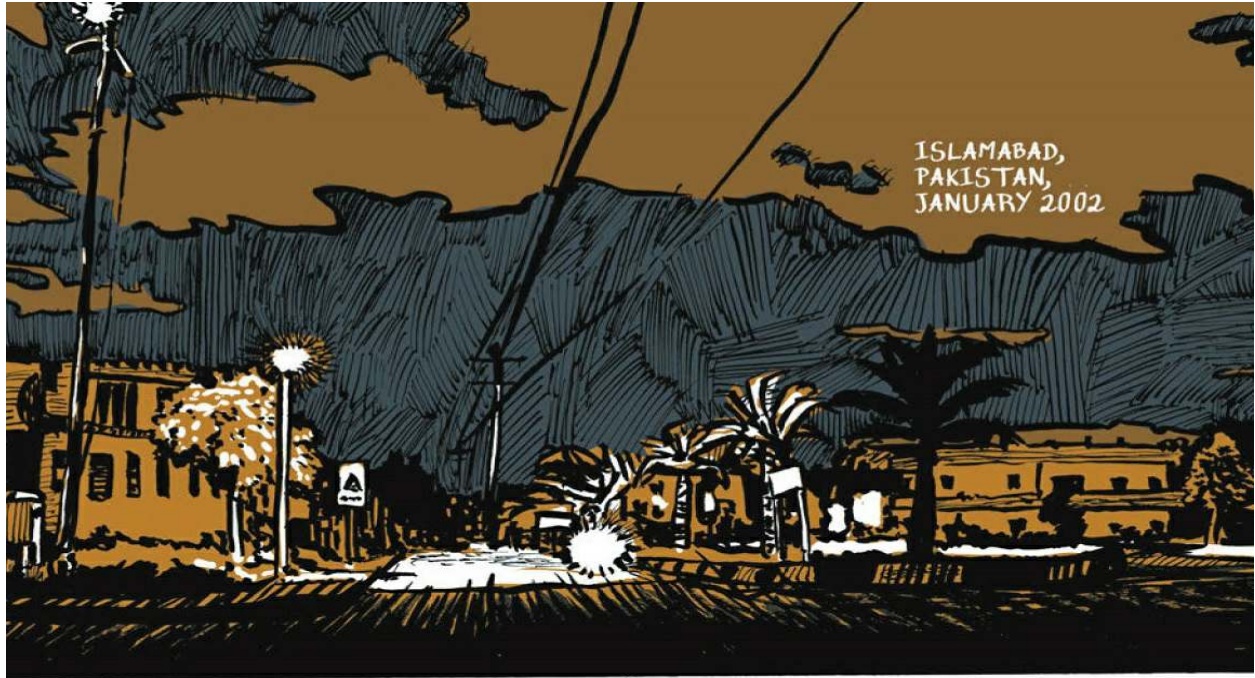


## CHAPTER FOUR



**MOAZZAM BEGG**  
EDUCATOR AND  
GUANTÁNAMO PRISONER 558,  
FEBRUARY 2003 TO JANUARY 2005

ILLUSTRATED BY  
OMAR KHOURI



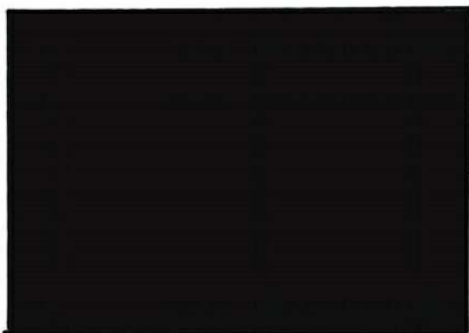






















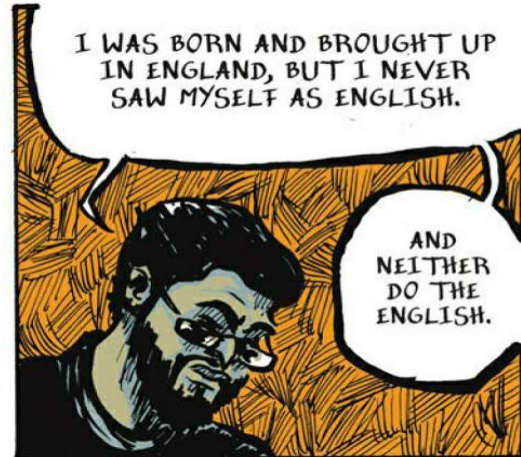
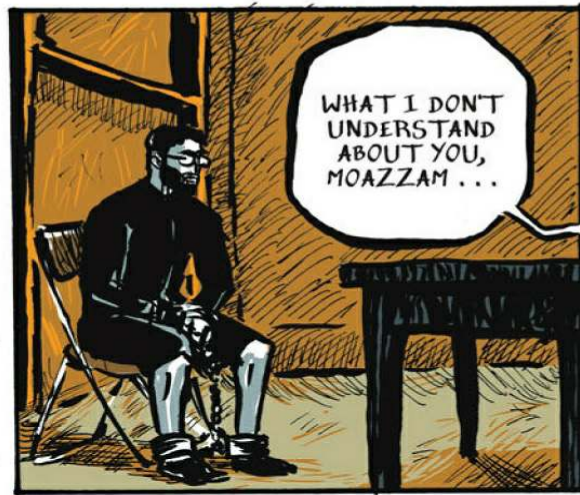






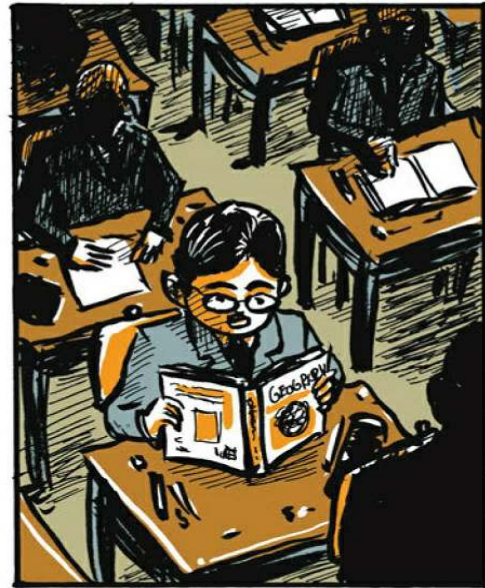
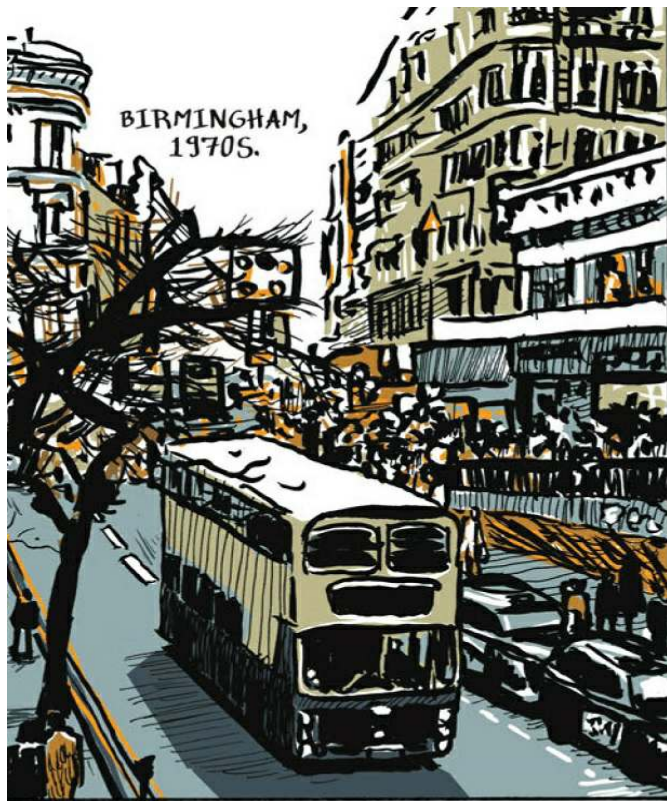












AS A KID, MOAZZAM ATTENDED  
A JEWISH PUBLIC SCHOOL ...



UNITED KINGDOM -  
LONDON. UNITED  
STATES -  
WASHINGTON, D.C.  
USSR - MOSCOW.  
URUGUAY -  
MONTEVIDEO.



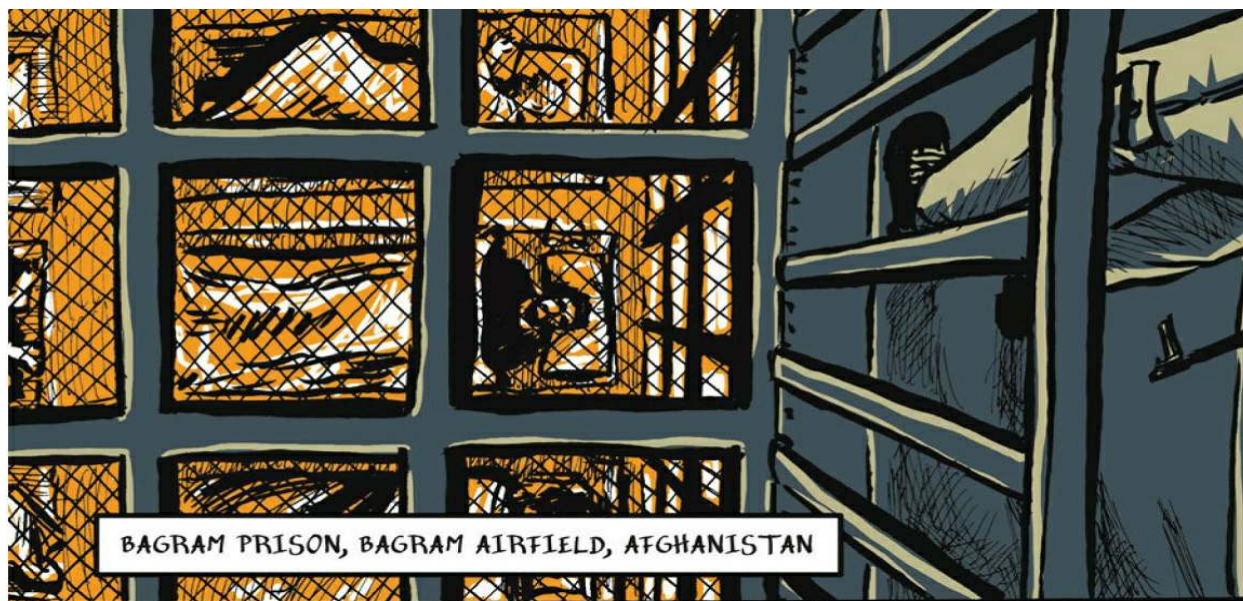
OH, YOU WHO  
BELIEVE, UM ...  
SEEK HELP  
THROUGH, UM,  
PATIENCE AND  
PRAYER. ALLAH IS  
WITH THOSE WHO  
ARE PATIENT.

... AND AFTER SCHOOL, HE ATTENDED  
LESSONS ON THE QURAN.









BAGRAM PRISON, BAGRAM AIRFIELD, AFGHANISTAN



"WE DIDN'T KNOW WHETHER IT WAS LIGHT OR DARK. IT WAS FLOODLIT ALL THE TIME."



"MOSTLY, I REMEMBER HEARING THE SOUNDS OF PRISONERS SCREAMING IN INTERROGATION ROOMS. DEATH METAL MUSIC BEING PLAYED TO TRY TO BREAK THEM."



"OTHER THAN THAT, IT WAS PRETTY QUIET."

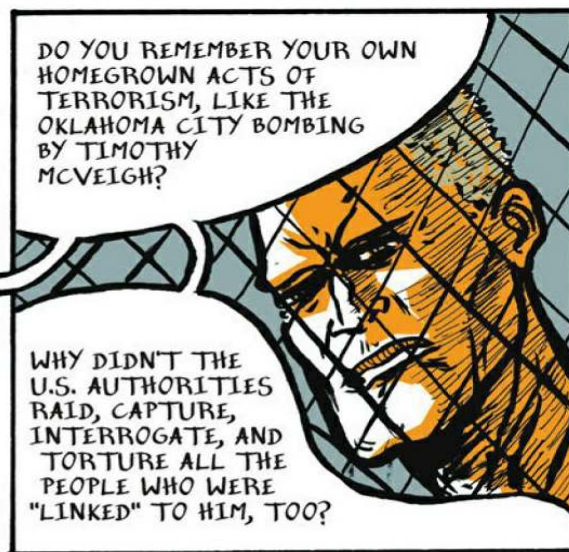
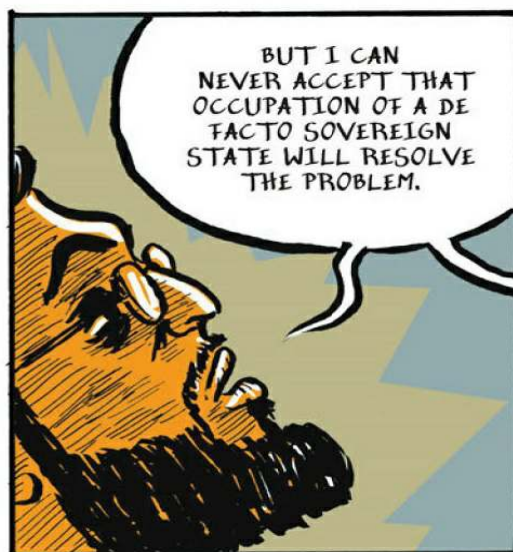
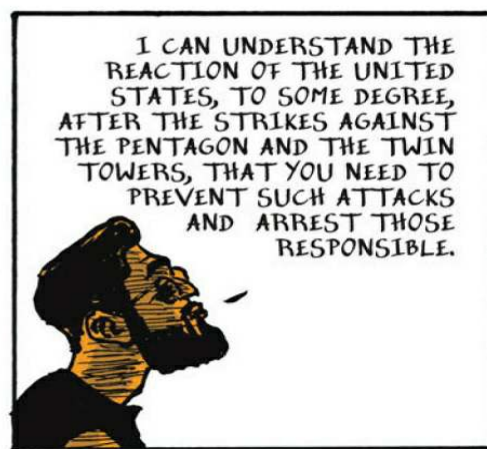


COME GET YOUR QURANS.

COME AND GET YOUR QURANS, COME AND LEARN HOW TO KILL AMERICANS.

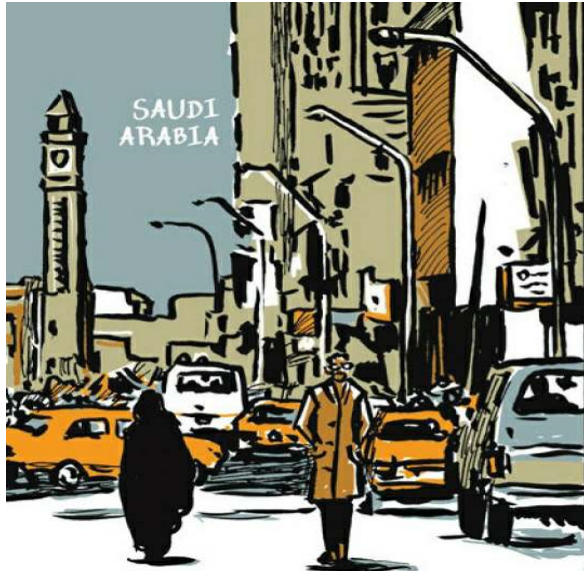




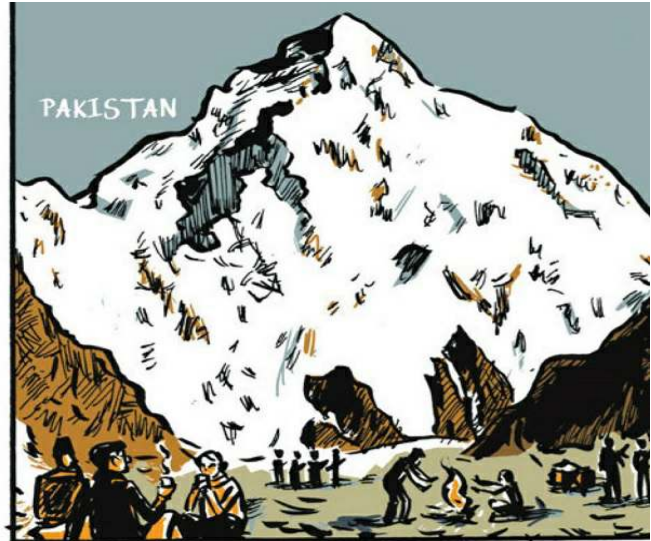








DURING THE '90S, MOAZZAM TRAVELED WHENEVER HE COULD.



HE AND SOME YOUNG PAKISTANIS VISITED A TRAINING CAMP RUN BY MEN WHO FOUGHT AGAINST THE SOVIET OCCUPATION OF AFGHANISTAN IN THE 1980S. HE MET WITH KASHMIRIS



HE DONATED MONEY TO MUSLIM CAUSES AND DID CHARITY WORK WITH MUSLIM GROUPS.



IN 1998, HE AND A FORMER STOCKBROKER FRIEND OPENED UP AN ISLAMIC BOOKSTORE IN THE BIRMINGHAM SUBURB OF SPARKHILL.



A YEAR LATER, POLICE AND M15 AGENTS INVESTIGATING ISLAMIC TERRORISM RAIDED THE BOOKSHOP.



MOAZZAM WAS ARRESTED, THEN RELEASED. HE WAS NEVER CHARGED.





IN 2001, MOAZZAM AND HIS WIFE ZAYNAB  
DECIDED TO TRAVEL AGAIN ...



... TO KABUL, AFGHANISTAN. THEY  
WANTED TO START A SCHOOL



WHEN MOAZZAM WAS TAKEN INTO CUSTODY,  
ZAYNAB WAS THREE MONTHS PREGNANT.



ENGLISH 558! YOU  
HAVE A MESSAGE!

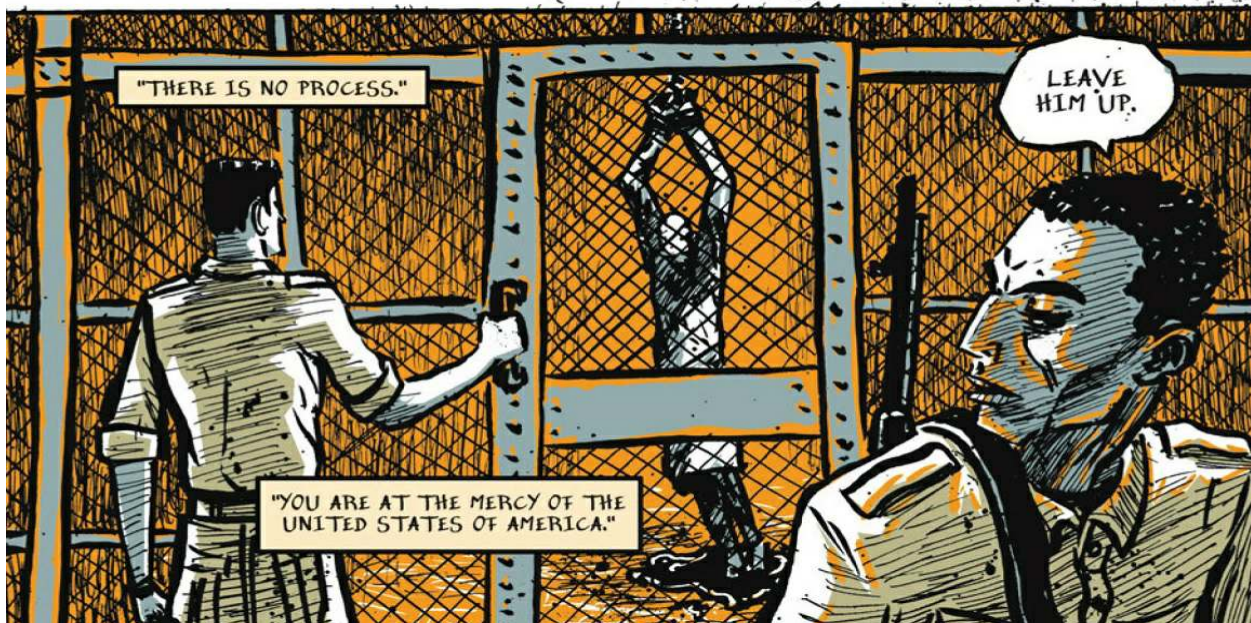
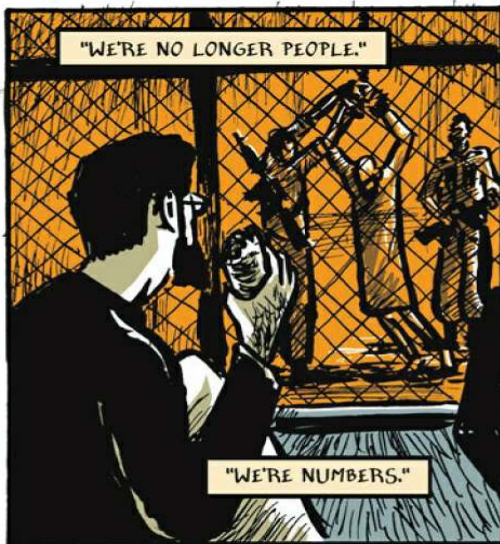


MALE CHILD BORN ON  
JUNE 28. MOTHER AND  
BABY WELL.



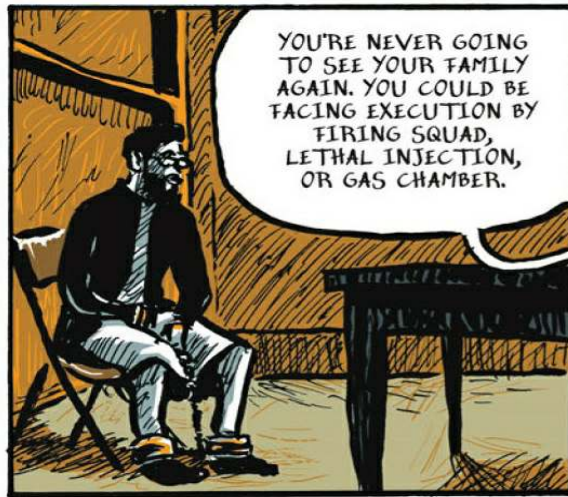




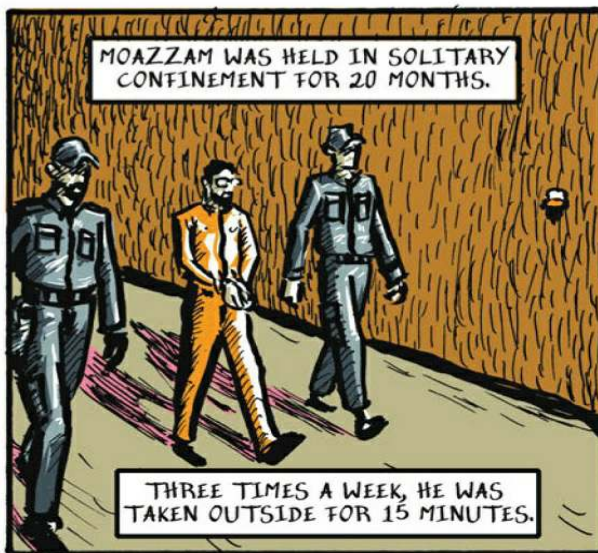












"CATCHING A GLIMPSE OF SOMETHING LIKE THAT, EVEN FOR TWO SECONDS, IT LEFT A MARK."



"IT LEFT AN IMAGE IN MY HEAD THAT I STILL HAVE."









I DON'T SEE ANY BATTLE-  
FIELDS AROUND HERE,  
AND I WASN'T PICKED  
UP ON ONE!



WELL, HOW CAN I GET  
LEGAL REPRESENTATION?  
OR EVEN APPLY  
FOR IT?!



CAN YOU, AS THE BRITISH  
CONSULAR REPRESENTATIVE,  
INSTRUCT MY FAMILY TO  
BEGIN PROCEEDINGS IN U.S.  
COURTS?



I'M SURE I  
CAN CONVEY  
YOUR WISHES.



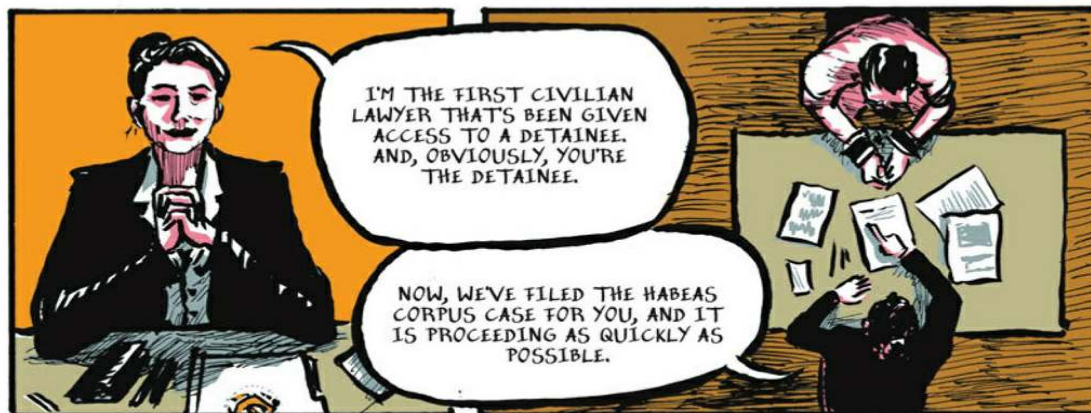
CHIN UP, MOAZZAM.



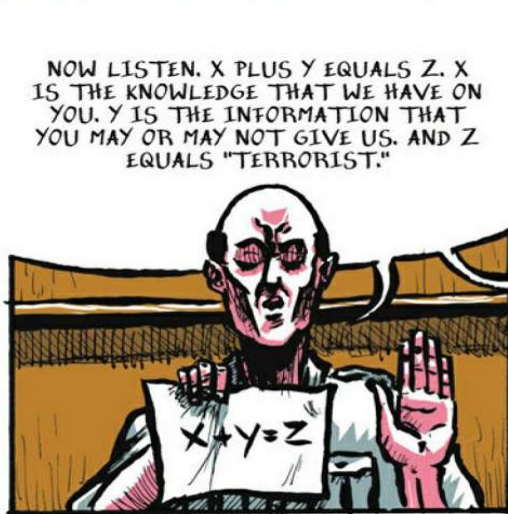
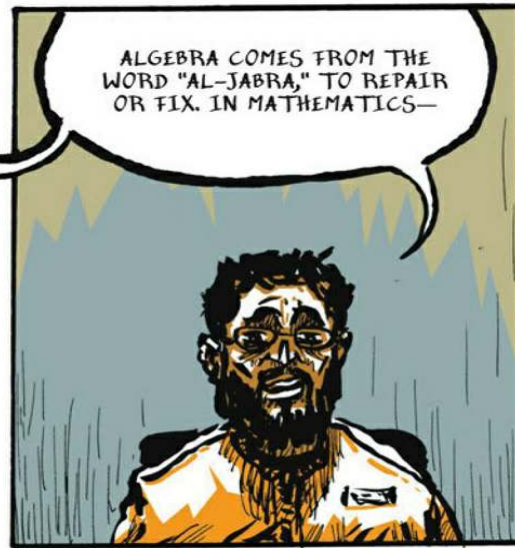
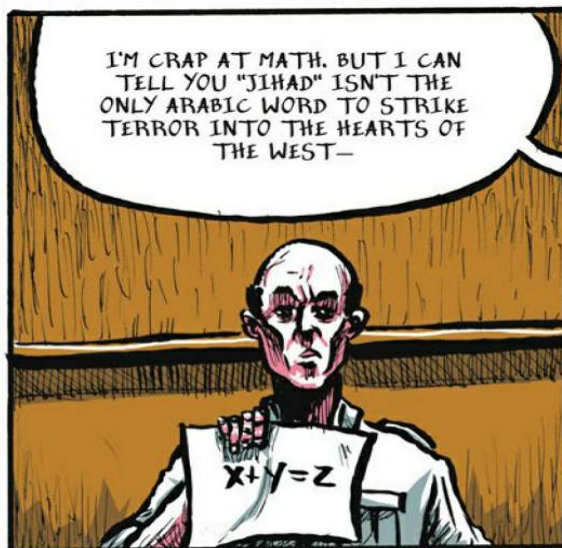




THE LETTER SAID THAT A GROUP OF ATTORNEYS HAD FILED A HABEAS CORPUS LAWSUIT ON HIS BEHALF IN WASHINGTON, D.C. TWO LAWYERS WOULD SOON BE COMING TO MEET HIM.

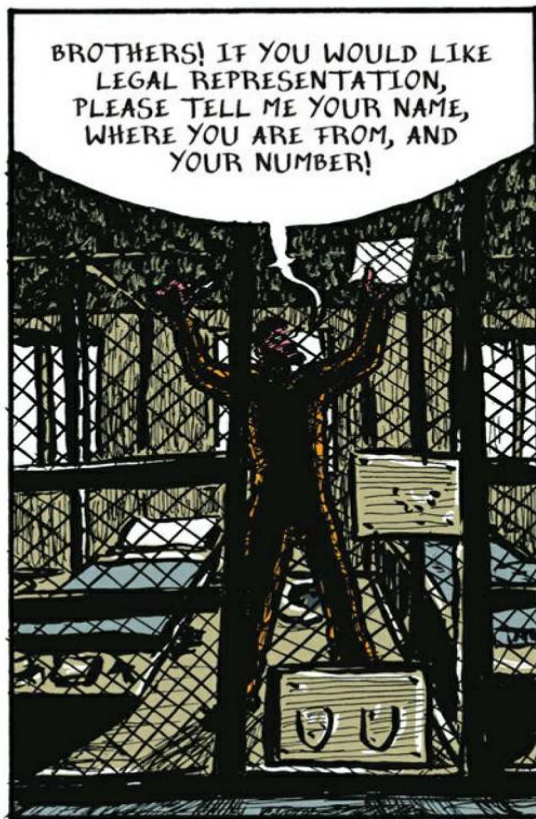






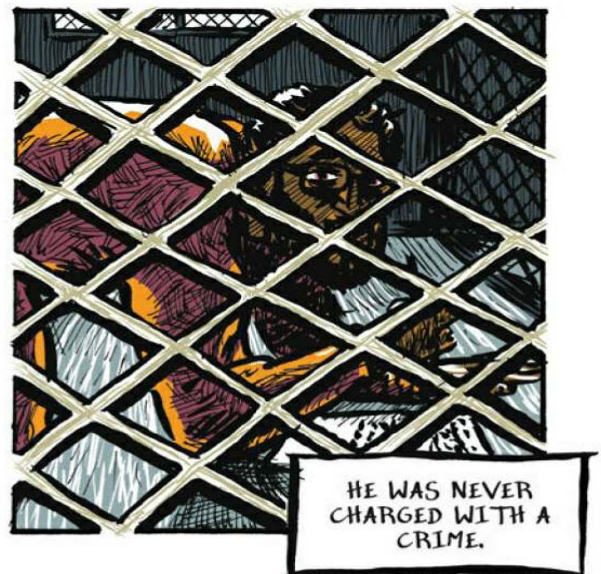
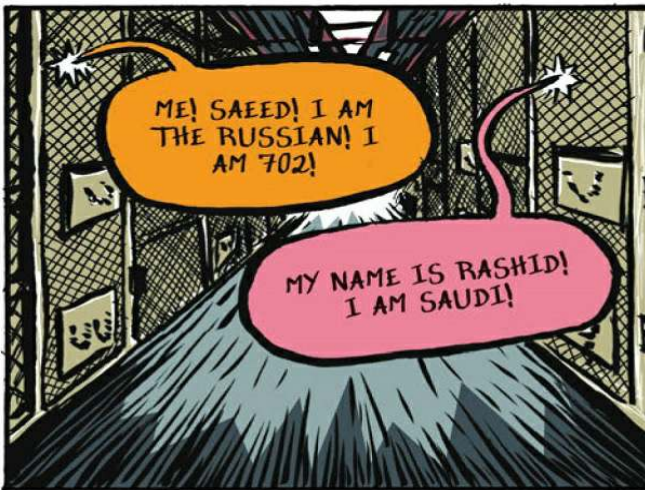
















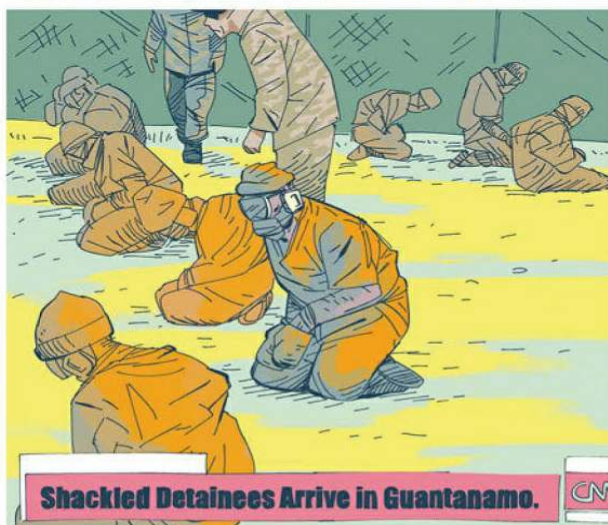
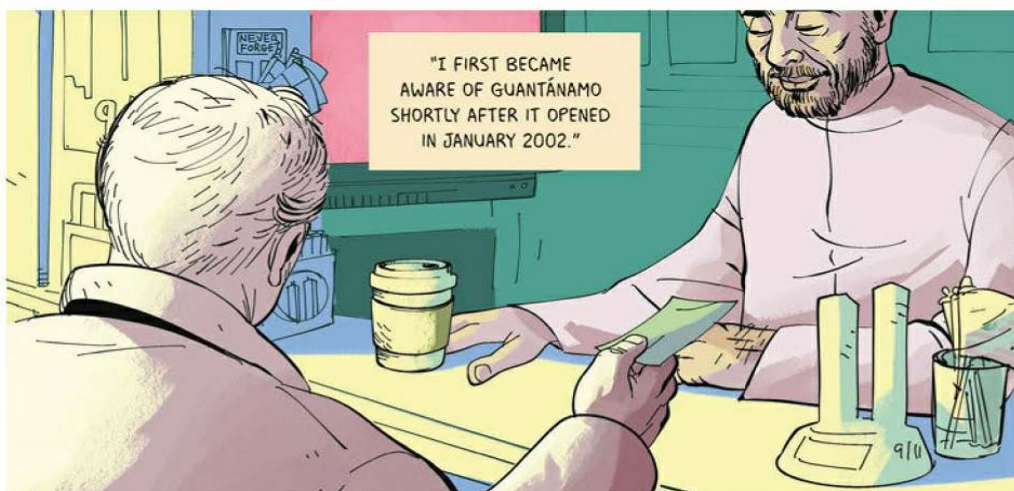
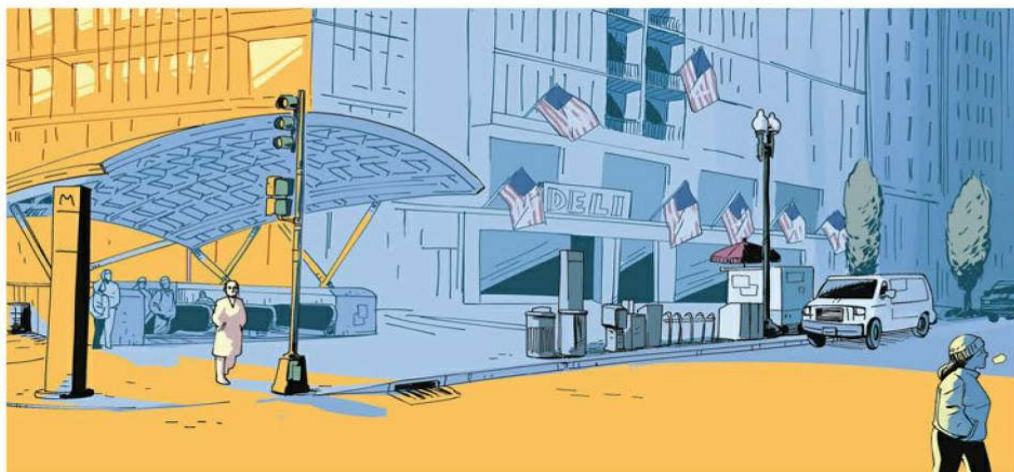
## CHAPTER FIVE



**THOMAS WILNER**

ATTORNEY REPRESENTING  
GUANTÁNAMO PRISONERS

ILLUSTRATED BY MAKI NARO



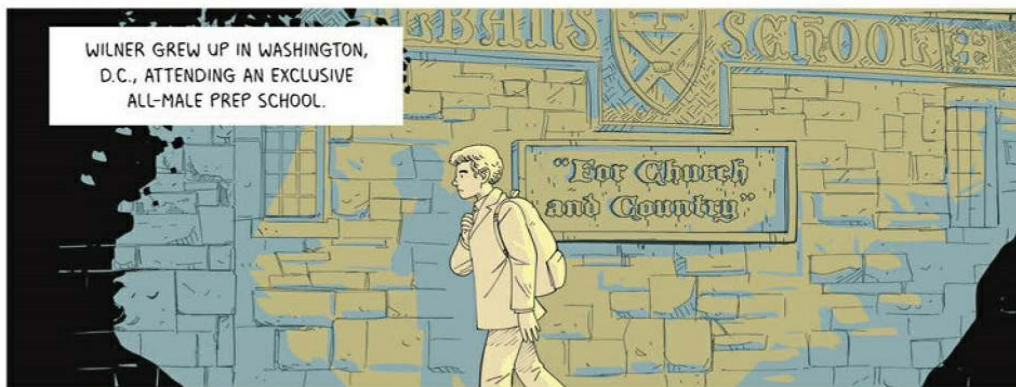




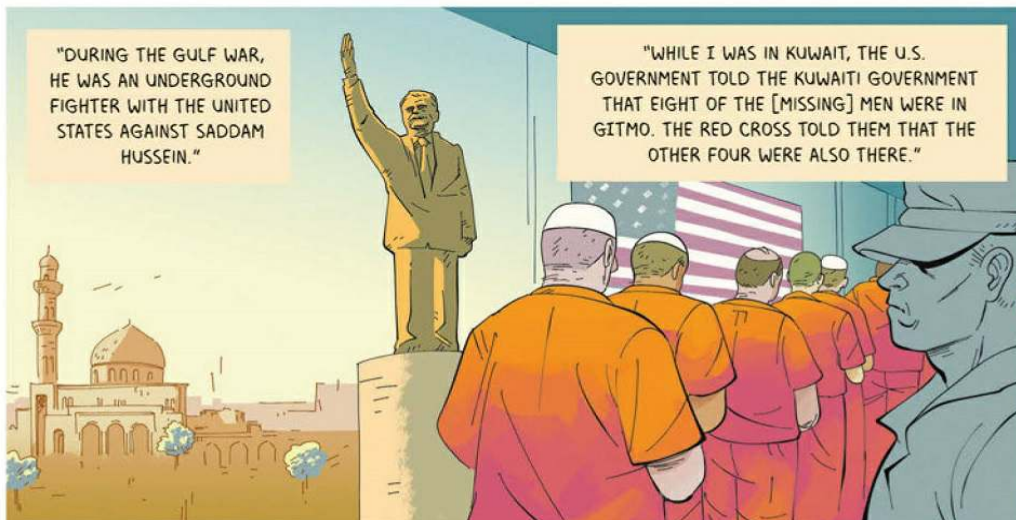
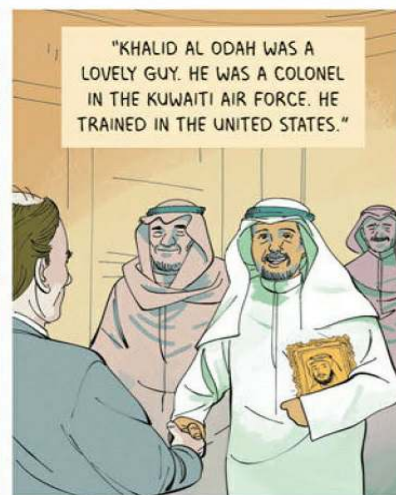
















"SOMEBODY HAD CALLED IN FROM PAKISTAN AND SAID THAT THREE OR FOUR OF THESE PEOPLE WERE SOLD FOR BOUNTIES."



"IT WAS THE FIRST TIME I HAD HEARD ABOUT THE BOUNTIES."



"WE FOUND OUT THEY WERE PAYING BETWEEN \$5,000 AND \$25,000 DOLLARS FOR 'ARAB TERRORISTS.'"

"UNDER THE GENEVA CONVENTIONS, IF YOU PICK UP SOMEONE DURING WARTIME AND YOU'RE NOT SURE WHO THEY ARE, YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO GIVE THEM A HEARING RIGHT IN THE FIELD."



"OFFICERS DO THE HEARING. WHAT IS THE BASIS FOR HOLDING THIS GUY? IN THE GULF WAR, THERE WERE THOSE HEARINGS, AND 74% OF THE PEOPLE WERE RELEASED AFTER THE HEARINGS."



"I DIDN'T REALIZE IT AT THE TIME, BUT THE BUSH ADMINISTRATION HAD NIXED THOSE HEARINGS. SO EVERYONE TURNED IN WAS TAKEN TO PRISON WITHOUT ANY HEARING."



"AND ANY ARAB IN THE AREA WAS A VALUABLE COMMODITY WHO COULD BE TURNED IN FOR A BOUNTY."











IN APRIL, WILNER AND THE CENTER FOR CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHTS  
FILED SUIT AGAINST THE UNITED STATES, DEMANDING THE RIGHT  
OF HABEAS CORPUS FOR THE IMPRISONED KUWAITI MEN.

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

AL ODAH

Petitioner

v.

UNITED STATES

Respondent

Civil Action No. 08-17-(CMB)

ORDINATE PETITIONER'S REQUEST FOR  
JUDICIAL REVIEW OF THE DEPORTATION ORDER  
(FILE 7/20/08)

Al-Odah is a citizen of the State of Kuwait and is currently  
detained at the Guantanamo Bay Naval Base. He is a  
Kuwaiti citizen and is currently detained at the Guantanamo Bay  
Naval Base. He is a Kuwaiti citizen and is currently detained at the  
Guantanamo Bay Naval Base. He is a Kuwaiti citizen and is currently  
detained at the Guantanamo Bay Naval Base. He is a Kuwaiti citizen  
and is currently detained at the Guantanamo Bay Naval Base.

THE PETITIONER REQUESTS THAT THE COURT ORDER THE  
RESPONDENT TO RELEASE THE PETITIONER FROM DETENTION.

"HABEAS CORPUS"  
MEANS, LITERALLY,  
"YOU SHOULD HAVE  
THE BODY"

BEFORE THERE WAS  
A CONSTITUTION, THERE  
WAS THE RIGHT TO A FAIR  
PROCEDURE AND A  
FAIR HEARING.

JOHANNES REX

HABEAS CORPUS WAS  
DEVELOPED BY THE  
COURTS TO ENFORCE  
THAT.

"WE WERE FIGHTING FOR THIS  
BASIC AMERICAN PRINCIPLE THAT  
EVERYONE HAS A RIGHT TO  
DEFEND HIMSELF..."

"...AND THAT YOU CANNOT  
THROW SOMEBODY IN PRISON  
WITHOUT GIVING THEM A  
FAIR HEARING."





"THE GOVERNMENT'S ARGUMENT WAS THAT BECAUSE THESE WERE FOREIGN PEOPLE HELD IN AN AREA OUTSIDE THE UNITED STATES, THEY HAD NO LEGAL RIGHTS IN OUR COURTS."



"I THOUGHT WE DECIMATED THE GOVERNMENT IN THE ARGUMENT."



"BUT THEN THE JUDGE RULED AGAINST US."



"AND I REALIZED THAT THERE WAS NO WAY IN THAT POLITICAL ENVIRONMENT, THAT SHE WAS GOING TO RULE AGAINST THE GOVERNMENT."

# **The Post** **High Approval Ratings** **for President Bush** **Continue**

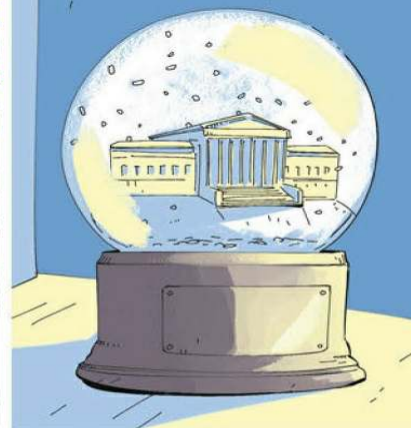
80 percent of  
Americans say  
'Good job!'



"EVERYONE WAS AFRAID. EVERYONE WANTED TO TRUST THE GOVERNMENT TO TAKE CARE OF US IN A TIME OF THREAT. COURTS ARE INDEPENDENT BUT IT TAKES A LOT OF COURAGE TO GO AGAINST PUBLIC OPINION."



"I ALWAYS THOUGHT OUR BEST CHANCE WAS BEFORE THE SUPREME COURT."





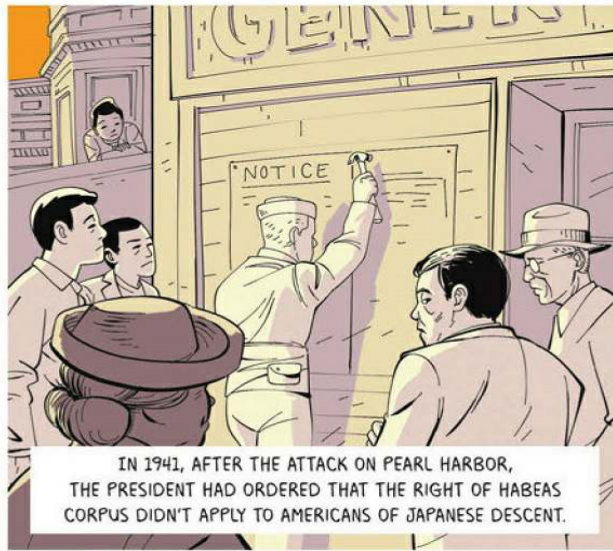


NUMEROUS GUANTÁNAMO PRISONERS WERE SUING FOR THE RIGHT TO HABEAS CORPUS AT THE SAME TIME. AS THEY APPEALED TO THE SUPREME COURT, WILNER'S CASE REPRESENTING AL ODAH AND 11 OTHER KUWAITI MEN WAS CONSOLIDATED WITH A SIMILAR GUANTÁNAMO LAWSUIT, *RASUL V. BUSH*.



THE PRISONERS' LEGAL TEAMS GATHERED AMICUS CURIAE ("FRIEND OF THE COURT") BRIEFS FROM NOTABLE PEOPLE SUPPORTING THEIR CASE...

... INCLUDING FRED KOREMATSU.

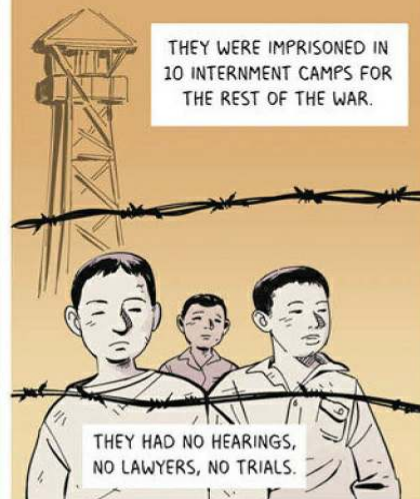


IN 1941, AFTER THE ATTACK ON PEARL HARBOR, THE PRESIDENT HAD ORDERED THAT THE RIGHT OF HABEAS CORPUS DIDN'T APPLY TO AMERICANS OF JAPANESE DESCENT.

120,000 PEOPLE OF JAPANESE DESCENT WERE FORCED TO LEAVE THEIR HOMES AND BUSINESSES.

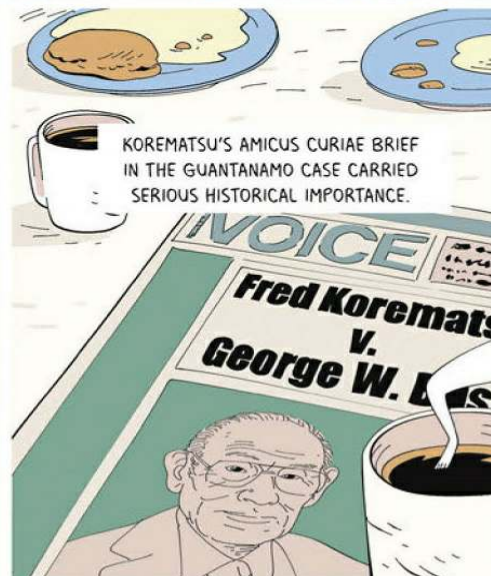
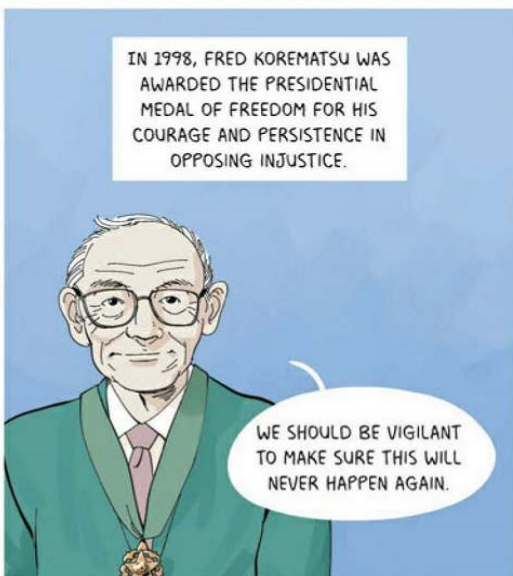


THEY WERE IMPRISONED IN 10 INTERNMENT CAMPS FOR THE REST OF THE WAR.



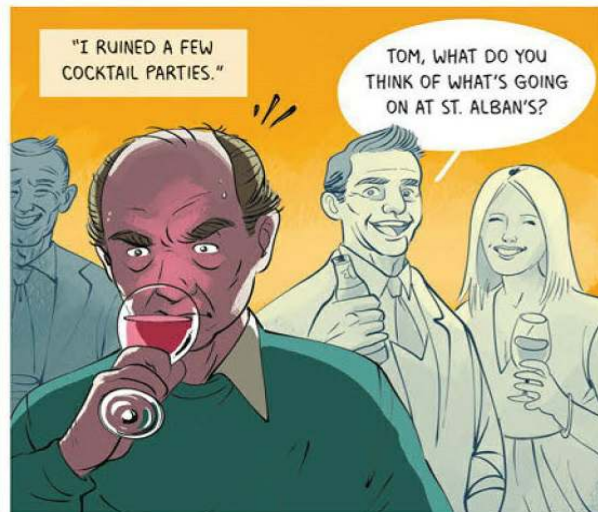
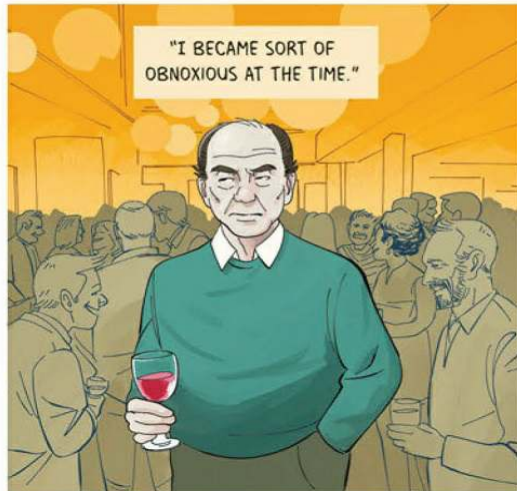
THEY HAD NO HEARINGS, NO LAWYERS, NO TRIALS.





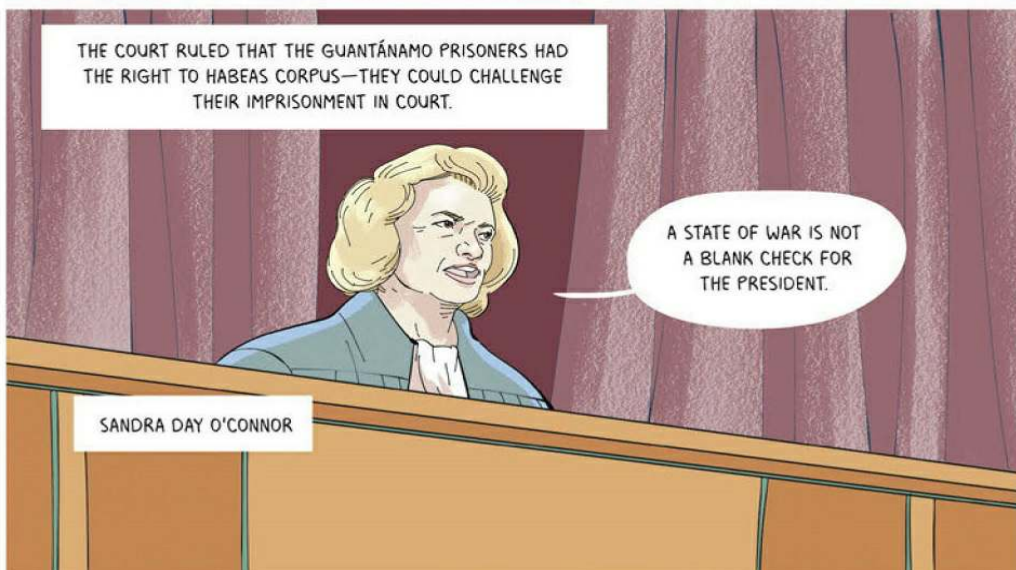




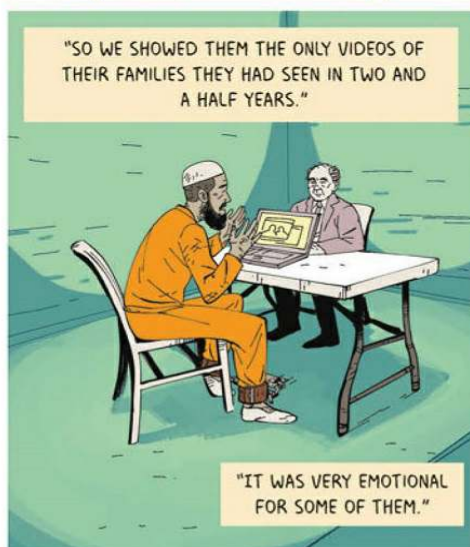






















... AND HE WASN'T RELEASED BECAUSE OF A COURT ORDER, BUT BECAUSE OF DIPLOMATIC NEGOTIATIONS WITH KUWAIT. MORE THAN A DECADE AFTER HE TOOK ON THE CASE OF THE MISSING KUWAITIS, WILNER IS STILL FIGHTING FOR THE RIGHT OF GUANTÁNAMO PRISONERS TO HAVE DUE PROCESS.



TOM, NOBODY IS A BETTER LAWYER THAN YOU. BUT I DON'T THINK THE LAW MATTERS.

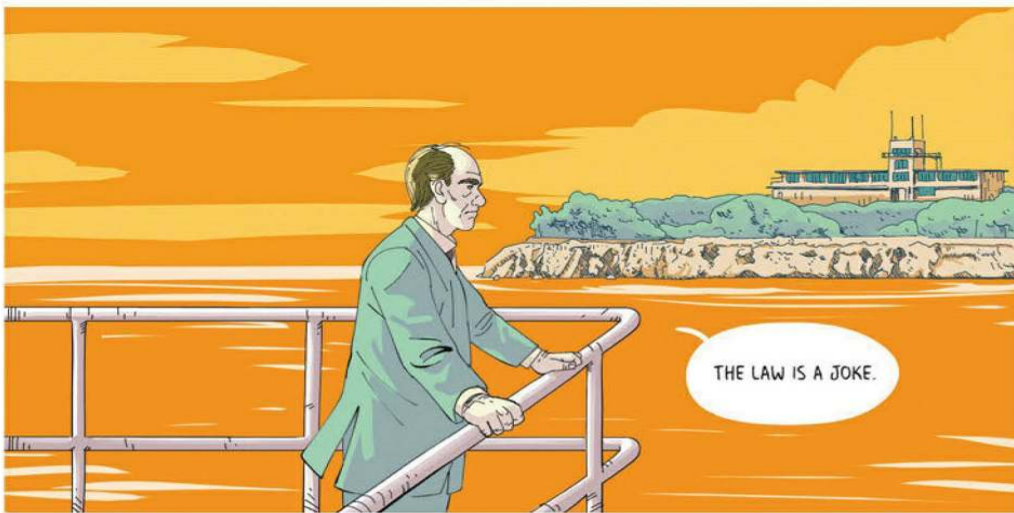


THE LAW WON'T BE THE WAY WE GET OUT. WE WON'T GET OUT UNTIL GEORGE BUSH WANTS TO LET US OUT.

THE LAW IS A JOKE.

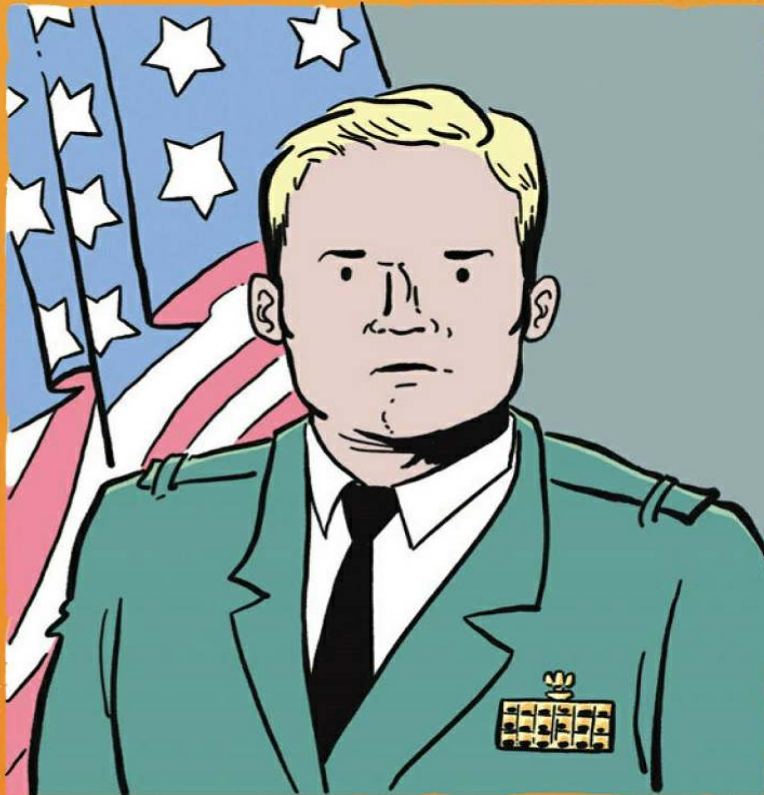


THE LAW IS A JOKE.





## CHAPTER SIX



### COLONEL MORRIS DAVIS

TWENTY-FIVE-YEAR AIR FORCE VETERAN AND CHIEF  
PROSECUTOR FOR THE GUANTÁNAMO BAY MILITARY  
COMMISSIONS, SEPTEMBER 2005 TO OCTOBER 2007

ILLUSTRATED BY JEREMY NGUYEN



June 1942, Manhattan

Hello.

I need to speak to Mr. J. Edgar Hoover.

No, this is not a joke!

During World War II, eight Nazi saboteurs were captured in the United States after one of the members denounced Nazism and turned the group in.

Fearing that a civilian court would be too lenient, President Roosevelt issued an executive order for the men to be tried by a military commission.

Unlike in federal court, in a commission, the judge, jury, and lawyers would be members of the military.

Everything happened fast.  
On July 8, 1942, the military commission convened. On August 1, they handed down guilty verdicts for all eight men.

On August 8, six of the men were executed.  
The other two were sent to prison.



Two months after 9/11,  
President George W. Bush  
revived the military commissions.



Secretary of Defense  
Donald Rumsfeld

Vice President  
Dick Cheney

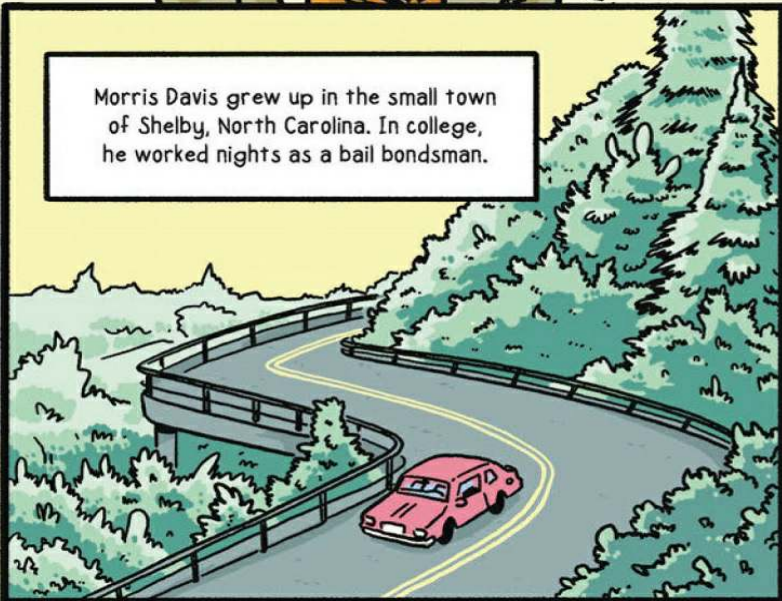
He issued a very similar order stating that  
non-Americans suspected of being part of al-Qaeda  
would be tried in military courts, rather than in  
federal courts like U.S. citizens.



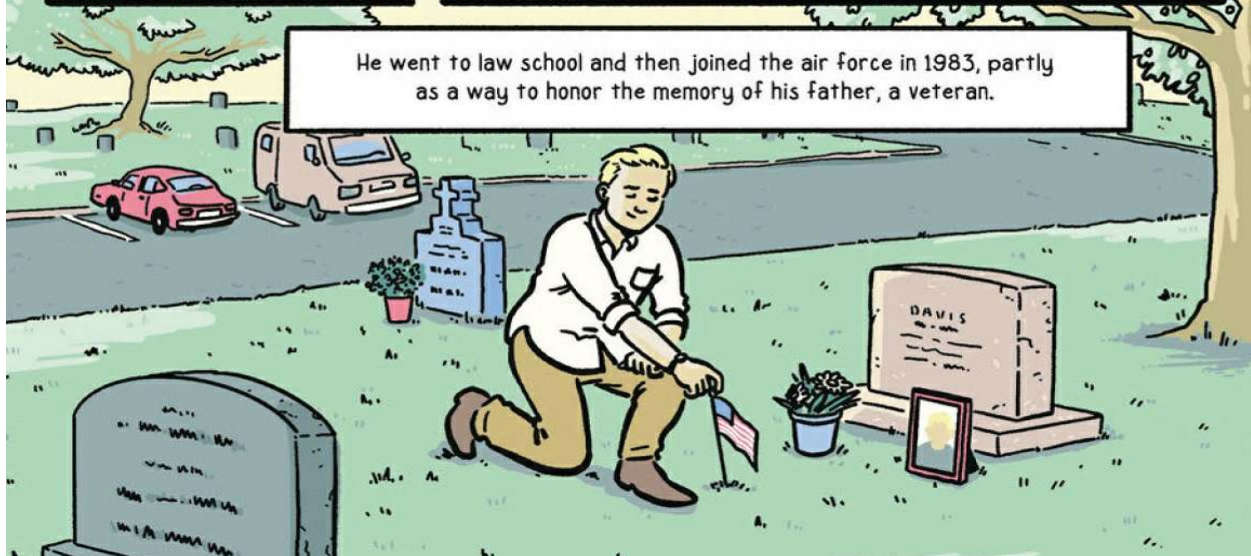
Four years later,  
Colonel Morris Davis was  
asked if he'd take on the  
role of chief prosecutor of  
the military commissions.



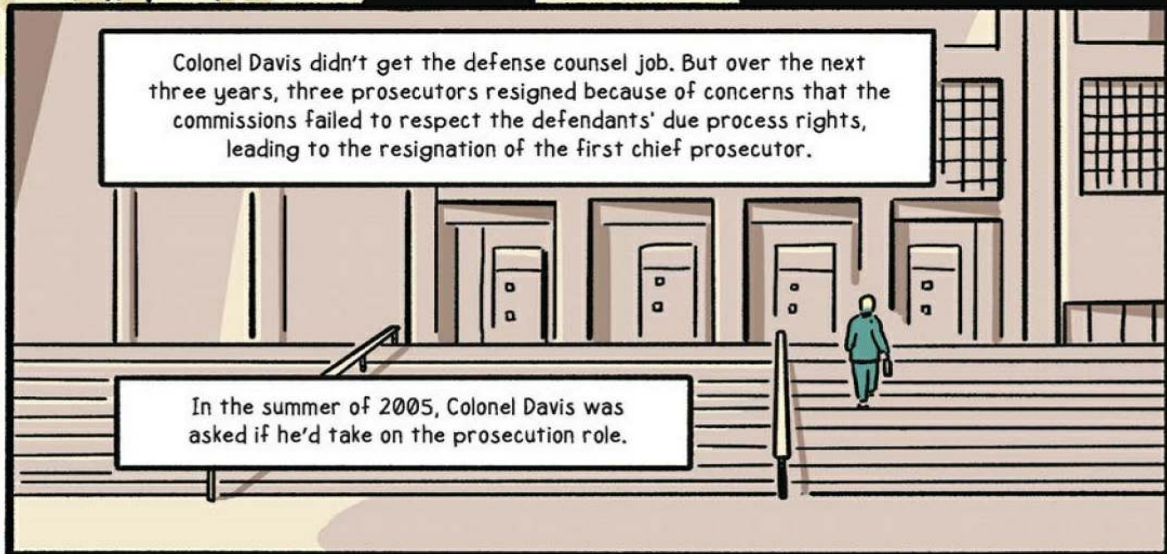
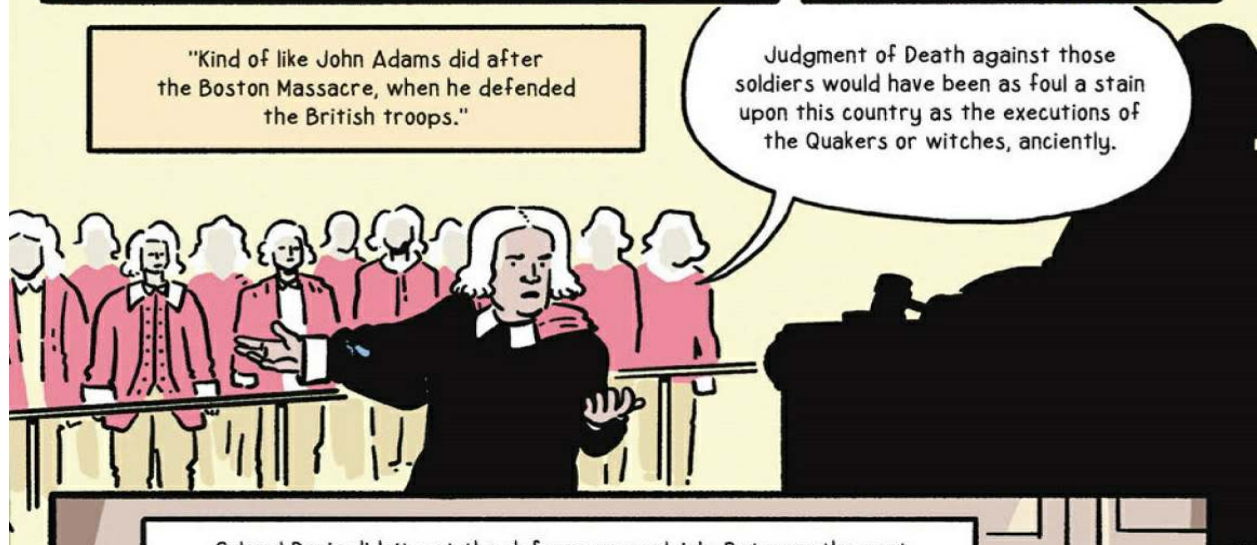
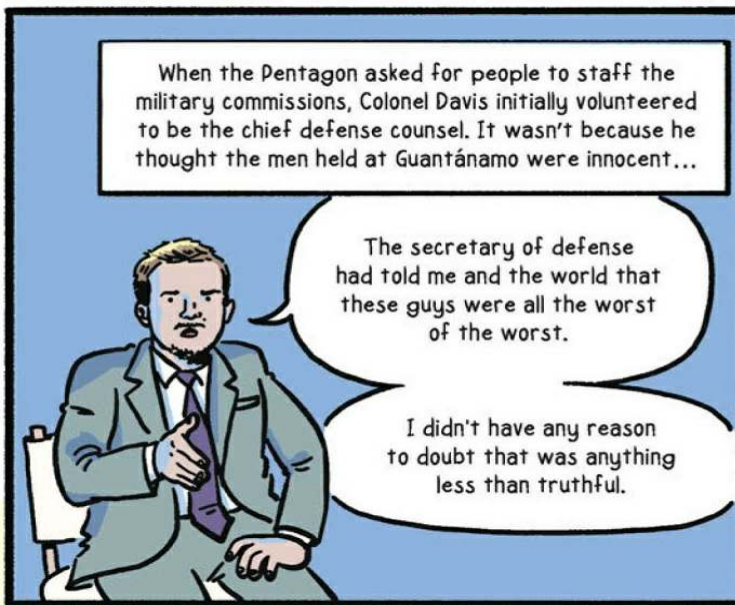
Morris Davis grew up in the small town  
of Shelby, North Carolina. In college,  
he worked nights as a bail bondsman.



He went to law school and then joined the air force in 1983, partly  
as a way to honor the memory of his father, a veteran.









August 2005. Office of Jim Haynes,  
the general counsel (senior lawyer) for  
the Department of Defense.

Thanks for making  
time, Colonel.

"At that point, nobody had come close to  
actually being tried at GITMO. He said  
the president was really anxious to get  
these things moving and get them done."

These cases will be the  
Nuremberg of our times.

You know, at  
Nuremberg, not everybody  
was convicted. There were  
a few acquittals.

Acquittals?

We can't have  
acquittals.

We've been holding these  
guys for years. How are we going  
to explain to the world why  
we've been keeping these  
guys all these years  
if they're acquitted?

No. We can't  
have acquittals.  
We've got to have  
convictions.







"I think he was just totally flummoxed that it had taken this long, and I don't think it ever occurred to him that there could possibly be acquittals."

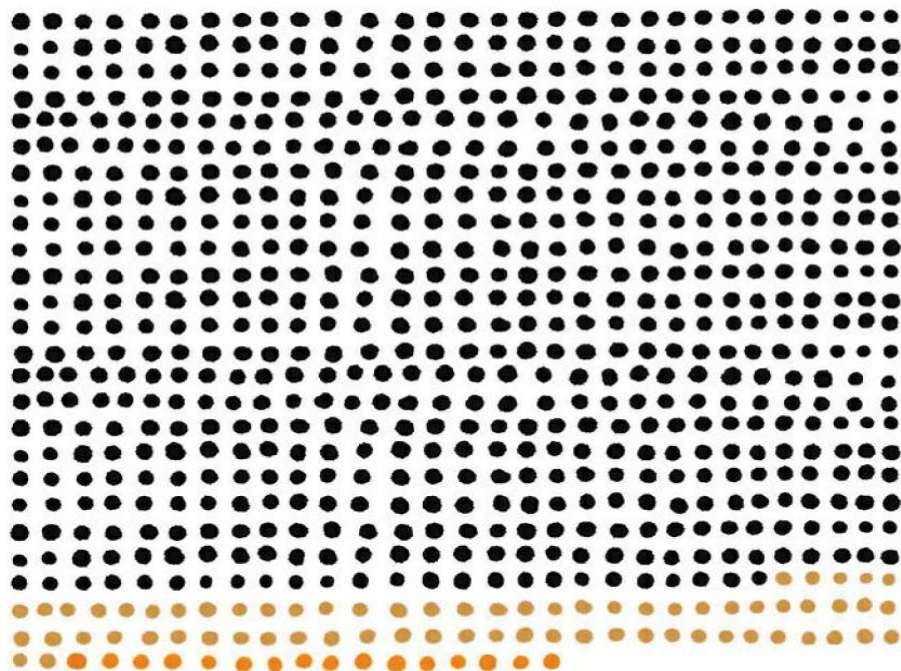
When Colonel Davis arrived as chief prosecutor in September 2005, there were 498 men held at Guantánamo. Even three years after opening the prison, the government wasn't sure how many prisoners could actually be charged with crimes.

"It became apparent pretty quickly that the worst-of-the-worst narrative was false."

"There were a total of roughly 75 that I thought we had some prospect of prosecuting."

Another no.





●●● - 799

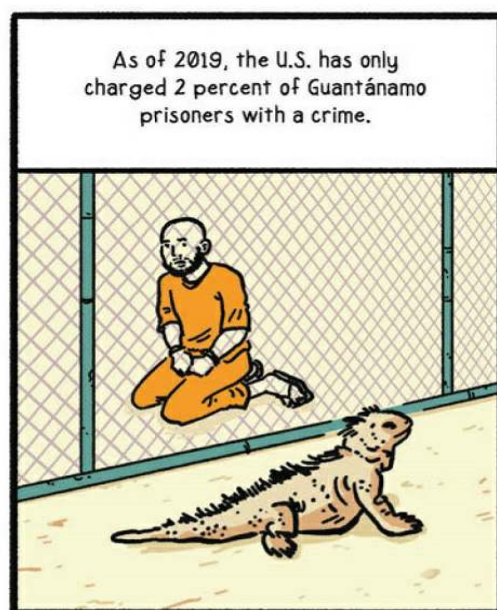
Total number of Guantánamo prisoners, 2002–2019

●● - 75

Prisoners Colonel Davis thought could possibly be prosecuted

● - 16

Prisoners who have been prosecuted or have been charged by 2019 (and have not had those charges dropped)

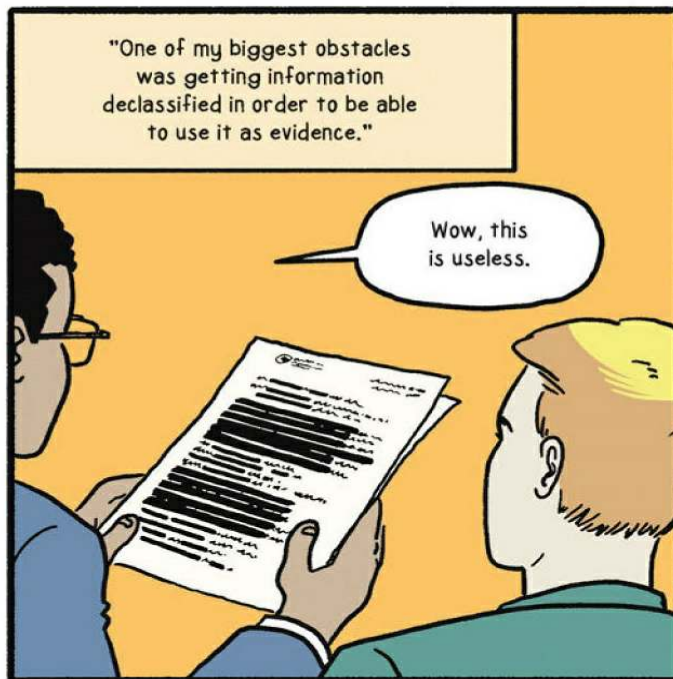






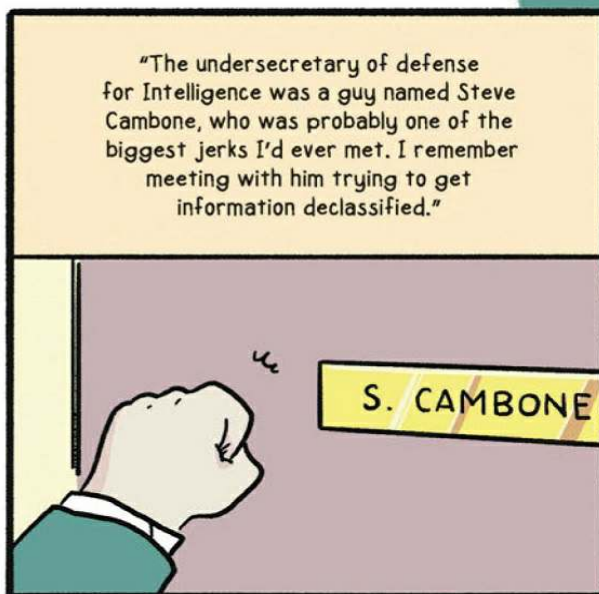


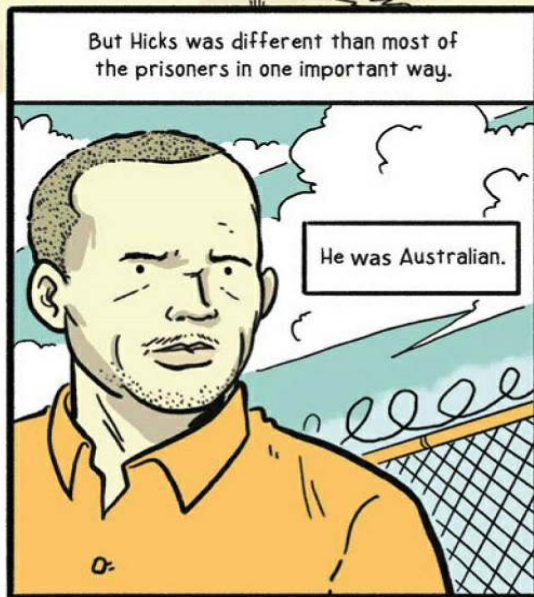
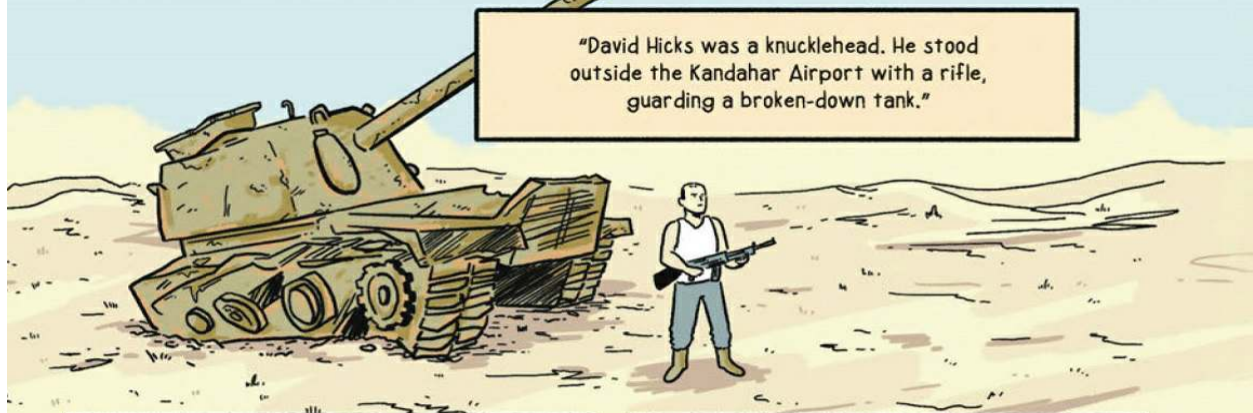
















There were big protests in Australia against Hicks's imprisonment at Guantánamo. It was a hot political issue for the prime minister, a friend and ally of George W. Bush, who was running for reelection at the time.



"To lead off with David Hicks, a guy who had never fired a shot—it was one of those moments where people are going to look at it and go, What the hell is this? This is the worst of the worst?"



But, at Haynes's request, Davis gathered enough evidence to charge Hicks with numerous crimes, including conspiracy to commit acts of terrorism, attempted murder, and aiding the enemy.



But before the arraignment, Hicks pleaded guilty to a single charge.

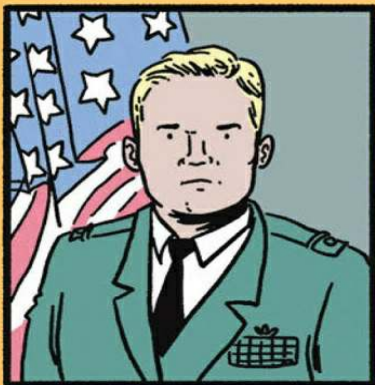




An American military tribunal sentenced Australian David Hicks to nine months in prison Friday after he pleaded guilty to supporting terrorism—in the first conviction at a U.S. war-crimes trial since World War II.



Under the plea deal, Hicks was transferred back to Australia in May 2007. He was released seven months later. His conviction was later overturned.

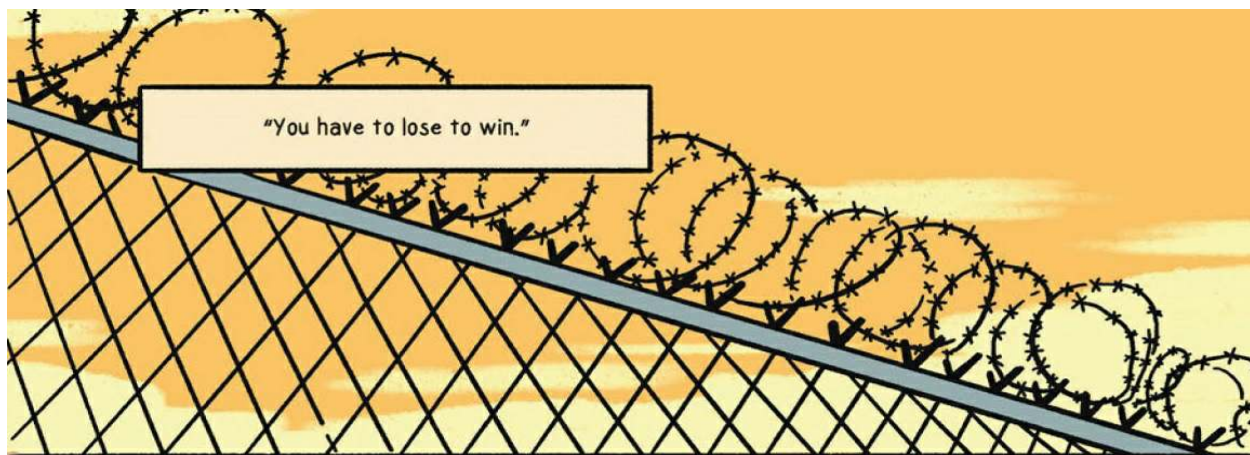


In 2007, Colonel Davis resigned his post in protest over the use of torture in interrogations when he was placed in a chain of command under Jim Haynes.



"[Hicks] was one of the lucky ones. One of the jokes we used to make at Guantánamo was..."





"You have to lose to win."



"If you get charged as a war criminal, like David Hicks, and you go to court and lose, and you get convicted and sentenced, there's a chance you might get to go home."



"If you're never charged with a war crime, you may still be sitting there ten years later with no end in sight."



CHAPTER  
SEVEN

MANSOOR  
ADAYFI

GUANTÁNAMO  
PRISONER 441

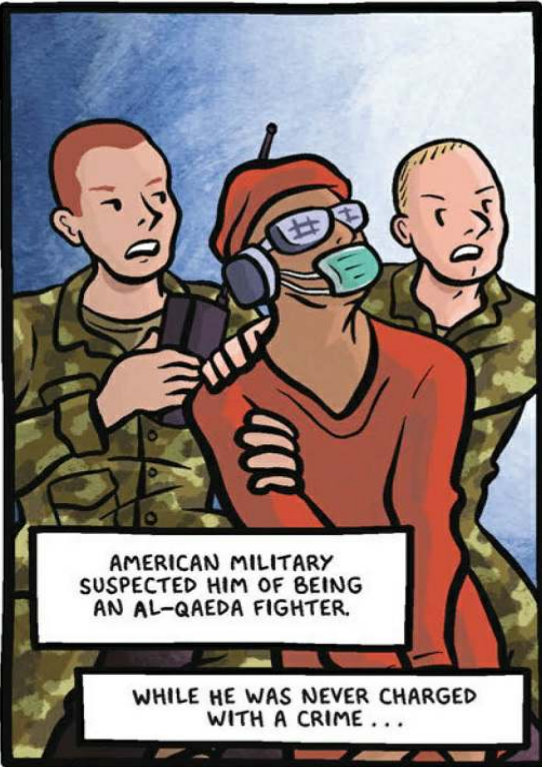
FEBRUARY 2002  
TO  
JULY 2016

ILLUSTRATED BY KANE LYNCH



FEBRUARY 2002

YEMINI-BORN MANSOOR ADAYFI  
WAS AMONG THE FIRST PRISONERS  
SENT TO GUANTÁNAMO.



AMERICAN MILITARY  
SUSPECTED HIM OF BEING  
AN AL-QAEDA FIGHTER.

WHILE HE WAS NEVER CHARGED  
WITH A CRIME ...

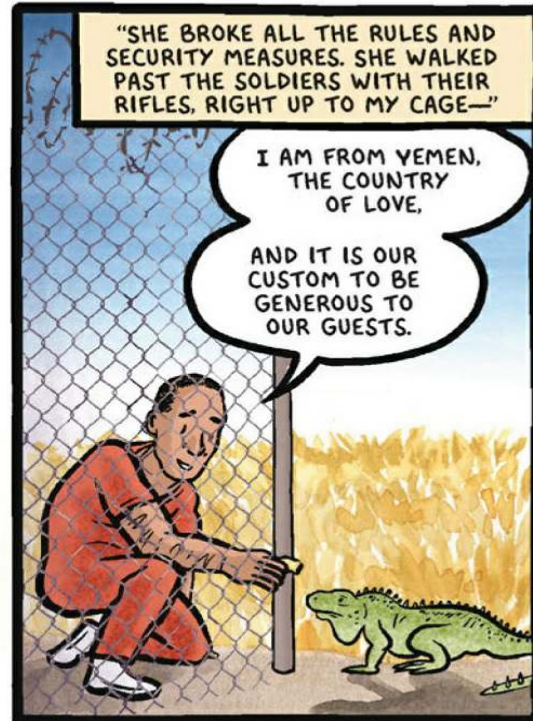
MANSOOR WAS IMPRISONED IN  
GUANTÁNAMO FOR THE NEXT 14 AND  
A HALF YEARS.



OVER HIS MANY YEARS IN THE PRISON,  
HE CAME TO KNOW SEVERAL WILD ANIMALS.









"SHE CAME TO ME EVERY DAY  
FOR THE THREE MONTHS  
I WAS IN CAMP X-RAY."



"SHE WAS SO ELEGANT AND BRAVE,  
THE WAY SHE HELD HER HEAD HIGH  
AND WATCHED THE GUARDS."

"I CALLED HER  
PRINCESS."



"WHEN I WAS PUNISHED AND SENT  
TO THE ISOLATION BLOCK, I SPENT  
MONTHS WITHOUT SEEING OR  
TALKING TO ANYONE."

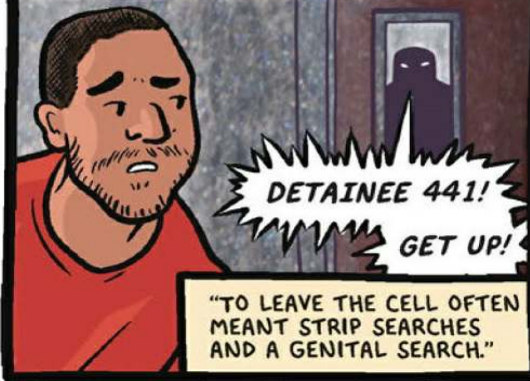
"EACH WEEK,  
I HAD 15 MINUTES  
IN THE RECREATION  
CAGE OUTSIDE."



"EVERYTHING IN ISOLATION  
CAME WITH A PRICE."

DETAINEE 441!  
GET UP!

"TO LEAVE THE CELL OFTEN  
MEANT STRIP SEARCHES  
AND A GENITAL SEARCH."



PRINCESS!

"WE SPENT OUR  
TIME TOGETHER  
TALKING."



"I SHARED MY  
DREAMS WITH HER  
AND TOLD HER  
ABOUT MY LIFE  
IN YEMEN."

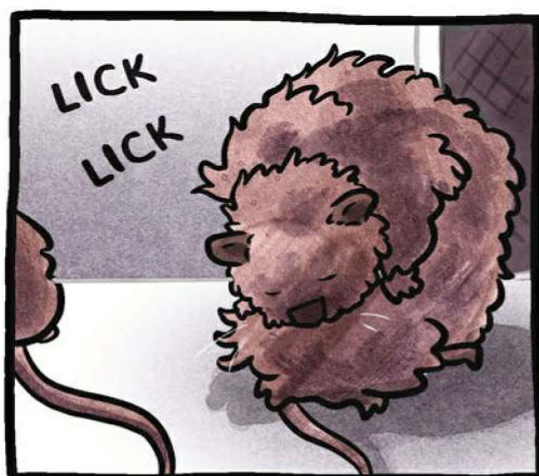


















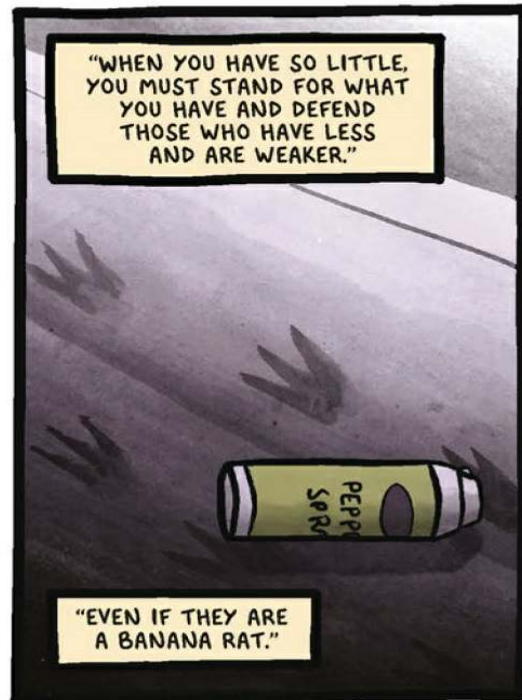


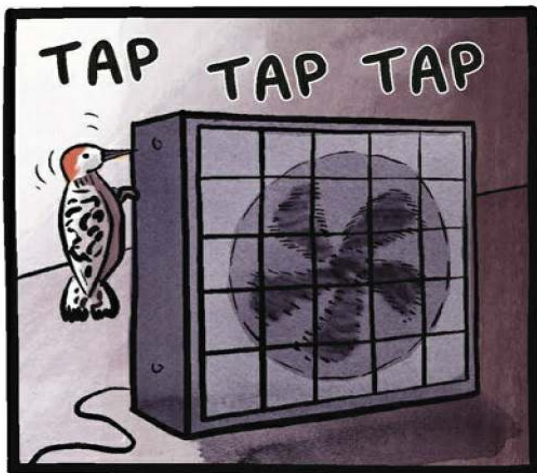








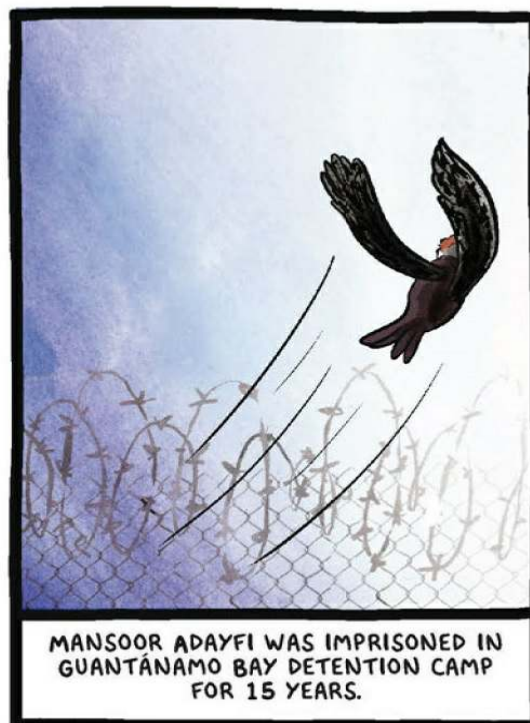












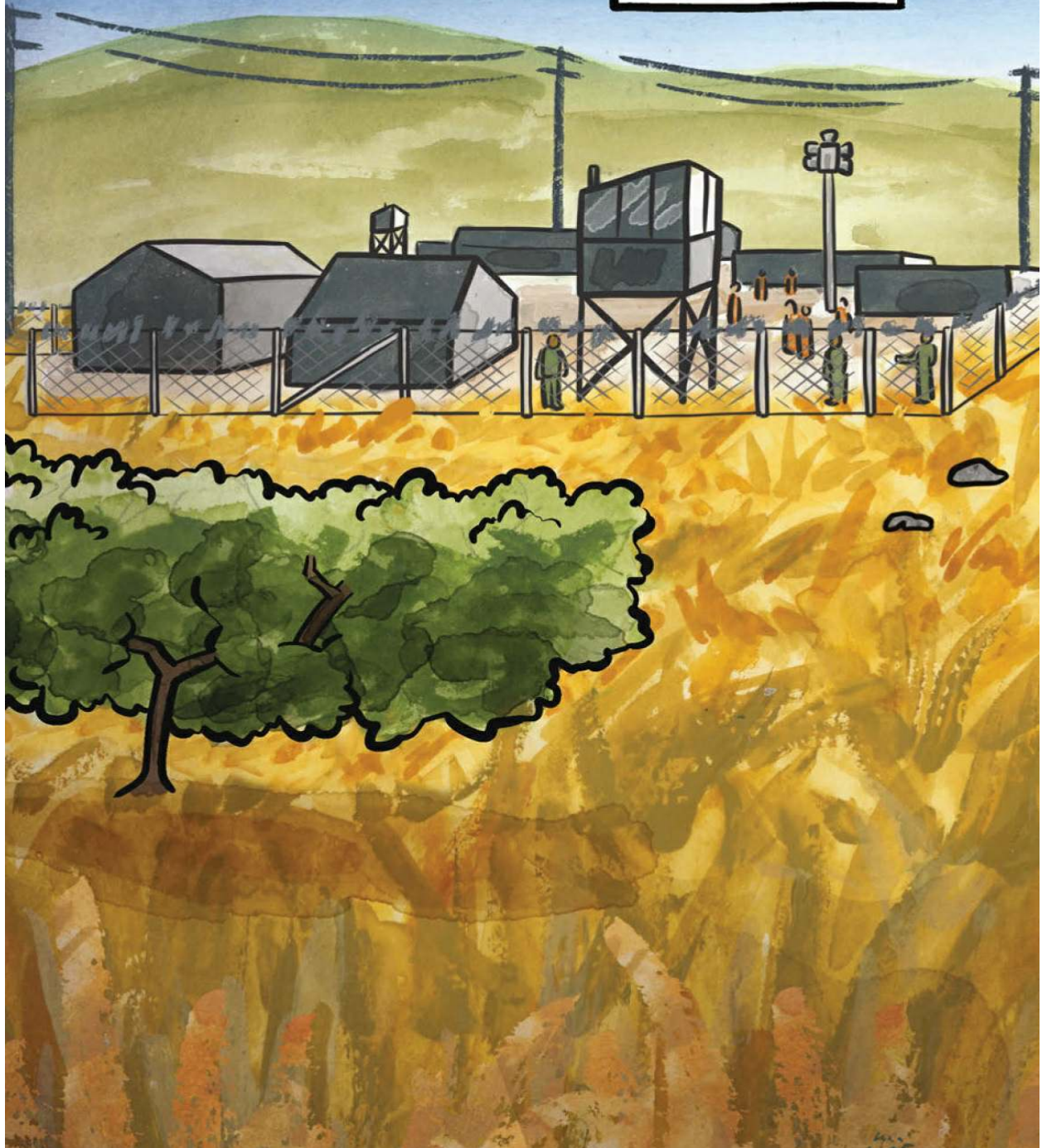
MANSOOR ADAYFI WAS IMPRISONED IN GUANTÁNAMO BAY DETENTION CAMP FOR 15 YEARS.



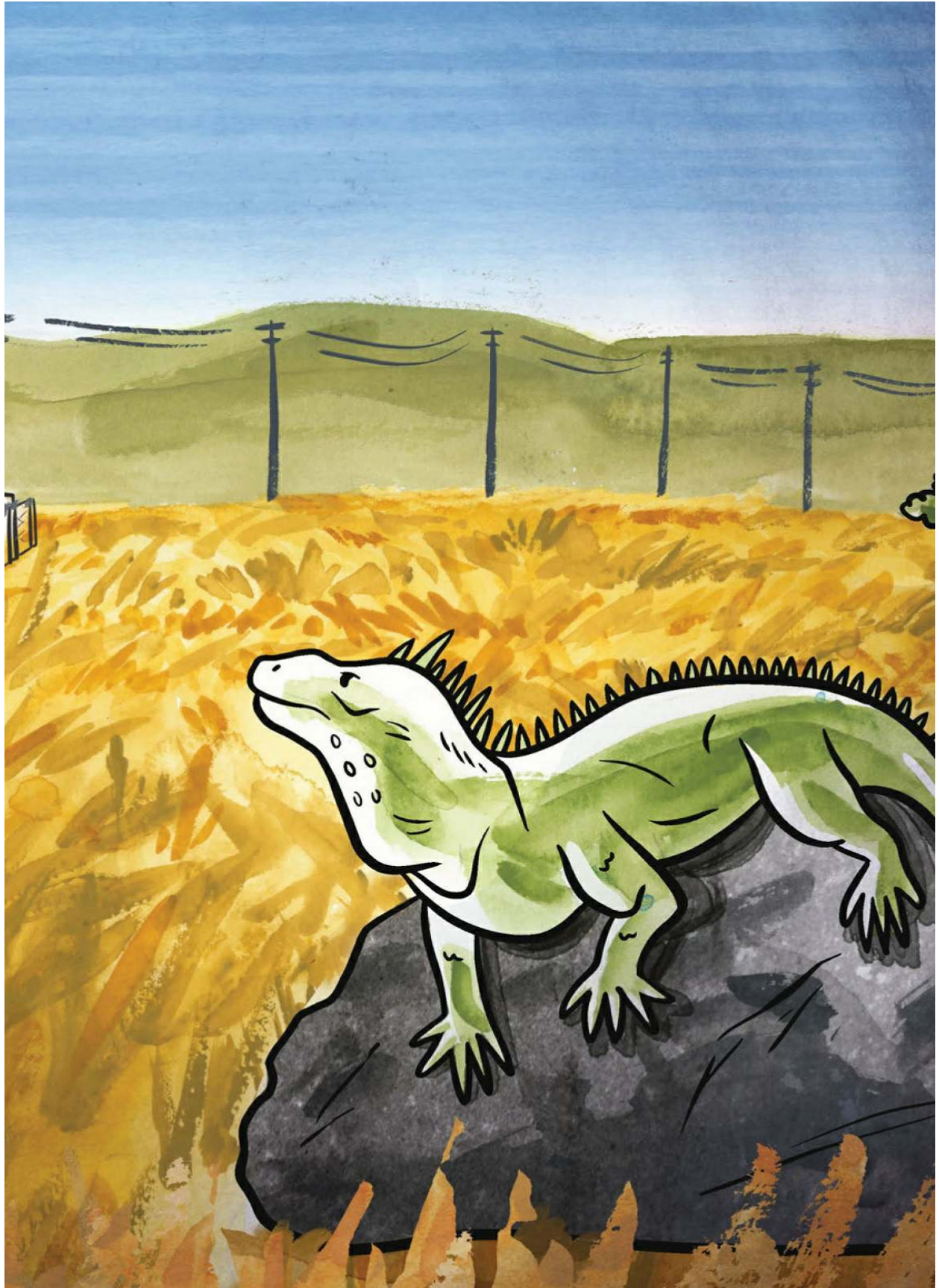


HE WAS FINALLY RELEASED IN 2016  
AND SENT TO LIVE IN SERBIA, A  
COUNTRY HE HAD NEVER BEEN TO.

HE WAS NEVER CHARGED  
WITH A CRIME.







## CHAPTER EIGHT



**ALKA PRADHAN**

**HUMAN RIGHTS LAWYER  
AND ATTORNEY FOR  
GUANTÁNAMO PRISONERS**

**ILLUSTRATED BY TRACY CHAHWAN**



ALKA PRADHAN ON LUNCH DUTY, FIFTH GRADE

"I GREW UP IN THE SUBURBS OF COLUMBUS, OHIO.  
IT WAS REALLY, REALLY HOMOGENOUS."



"I WAS VERY RELIGIOUS, AND I HAD A QUICK TEMPER.  
I ACTUALLY USED MY RELIGION TO SUPPORT THAT."



"IN HINDUISM, THERE'S A REAL EMPHASIS ON HOW  
IT'S YOUR DUTY TO FIGHT FOR WHAT'S RIGHT."



"I TOOK THAT AS MY JUSTIFICATION TO  
ARGUE OFTEN AND LOUDLY WITH EVERYONE."









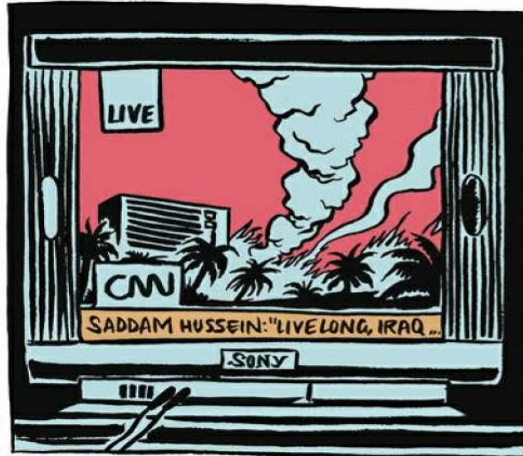




"IT SEEMED REALLY INTERESTING TO ME THAT PEOPLE FROM ALL DIFFERENT COUNTRIES WERE TRYING TO FIND SOLUTIONS TOGETHER FOR ALL THESE PROBLEMS."



YEARS LATER, ALKA WENT TO LAW SCHOOL. SHE INTERNTED AT THE U.N. DURING THE INVASION OF IRAQ.

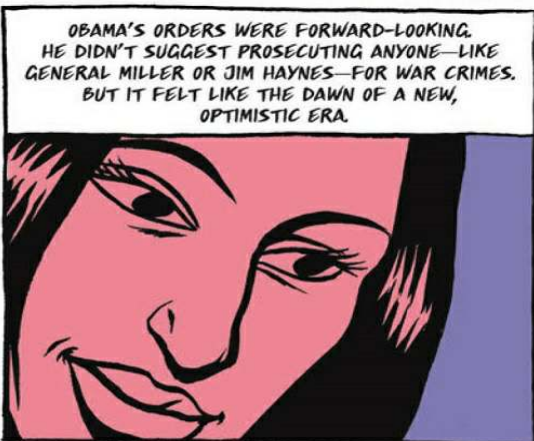
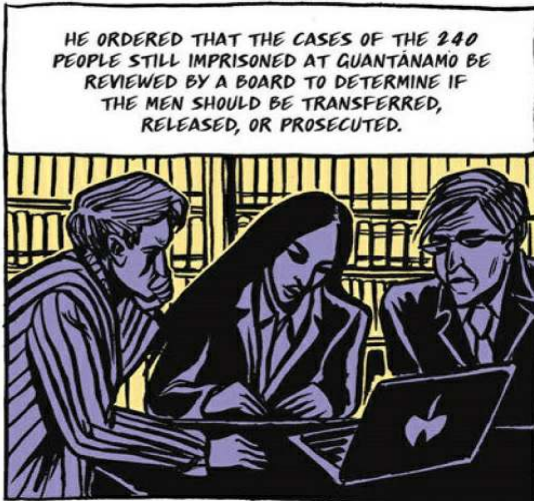
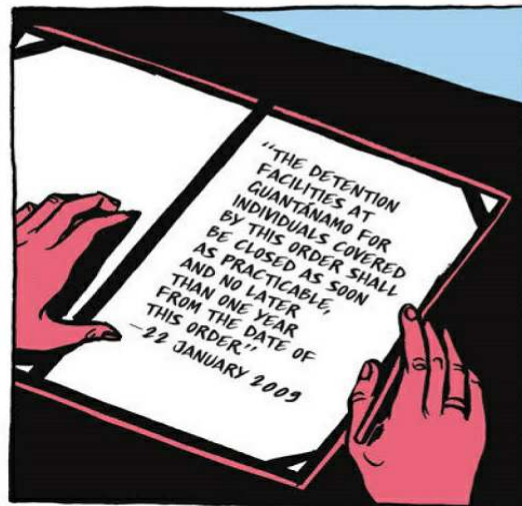


"DURING THAT WHOLE 'SHOCK AND AWE' CAMPAIGN, THEY WOULD JUST TELEVISION HOURS OF BOMBING IN BAGHDAD AS IF IT WAS ENTERTAINMENT. LIKE IT WAS FIREWORKS. THAT WAS ENOUGH."













ALKA SPENT TWO YEARS WRITING AN IN-DEPTH REPORT ON U.S. DETENTION POLICIES...



... THEN, IN 2013, THE HUMAN RIGHTS ORGANIZATION REPRIEVE ASKED ALKA TO REPRESENT A DOZEN MEN IMPRISONED INDEFINITELY AT GUANTÁNAMO. REPRIEVE WAS LEGALLY CHALLENGING THE BASIC CONDITIONS AT THE PRISON AND ALSO HELPING PRISONERS NAVIGATE THE BIZARRE LEGAL PROCESS.



GETTING OUT OF GUANTÁNAMO IS A BUREAUCRATIC ORDEAL. A PRISONER NEEDS A UNANIMOUS RULING FROM A GROUP CALLED THE PERIODIC REVIEW BOARD (PRB), WHICH HAS REPRESENTATIVES FROM SIX DIFFERENT BRANCHES OF GOVERNMENT.



THE PERIODIC REVIEW BOARD DOESN'T DECLARE HIM INNOCENT OR GUILTY. IT'S NOT A TRIAL BUT A PAROLE-TYPE PROCESS TO ASSESS WHETHER HE IS CURRENTLY A THREAT TO THE UNITED STATES. THEY DON'T DISCUSS WHETHER HE WAS EVER A THREAT.



AND THEN HE IS EITHER REPATRIATED, OR, IF THAT IS NOT POSSIBLE, ANOTHER COUNTRY HAS TO AGREE TO TAKE HIM IN.









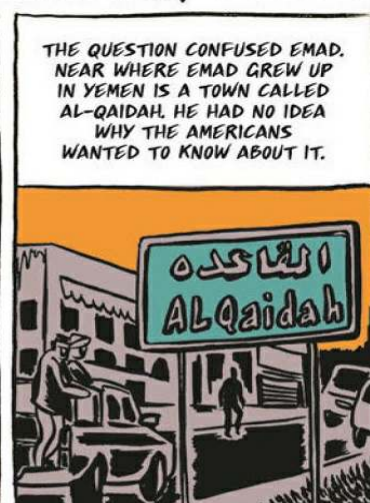
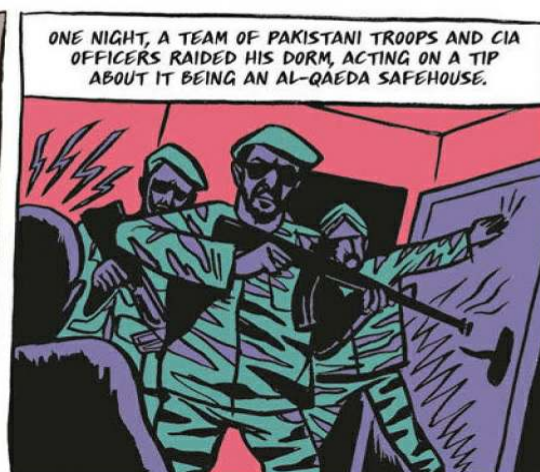
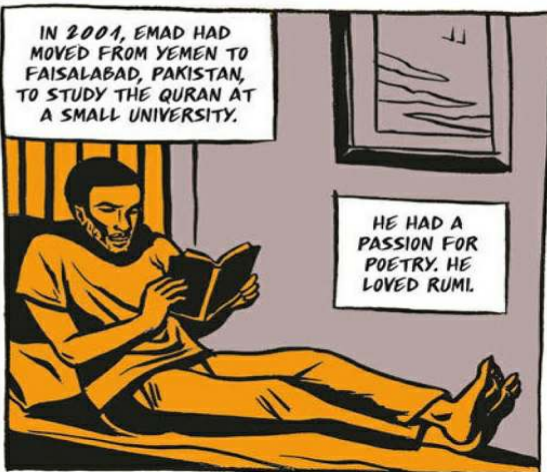






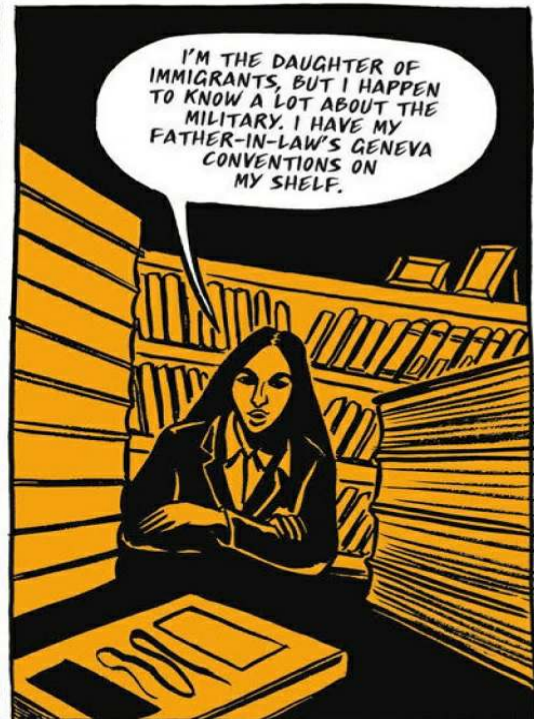






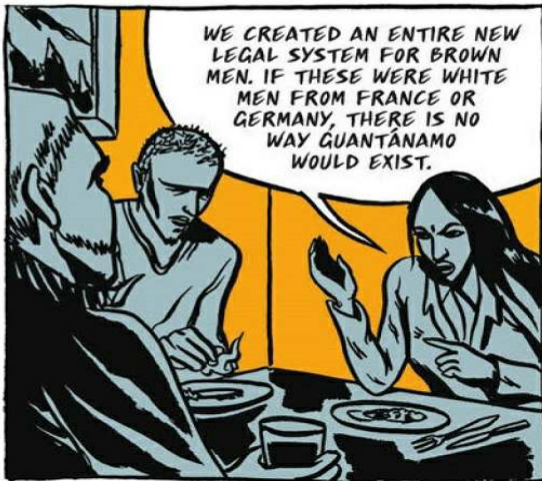
















WHEN HE WAS SENT TO GUANTÁNAMO IN 2002, THE MILITARY HAD INSISTED EMAD WAS A "HIGH RISK" TO THE UNITED STATES AND A RECRUITER FOR AL-QAEDA. BUT IN 2010, AFTER FINALLY LOOKING AT THE FACTS OF HIS CASE, THE GUANTÁNAMO REVIEW TASK FORCE RECOMMENDED HIM FOR RELEASE.



HE ENDED HIS SEVEN-YEAR HUNGER STRIKE. A YEAR PASSED.

B108



THEN ANOTHER. AND ANOTHER.



THREE YEARS LATER, EMAD WAS STILL SITTING IN GUANTÁNAMO, JUST WAITING. HE SPENT A LOT OF HIS TIME READING.



HE WAS VERY CONCERNED AT ONE POINT THAT GEORGE R. R. MARTIN WAS GOING TO PASS AWAY BEFORE HE COULD FINISH GAME OF THRONES.



THE U.S. NEVER CHARGED MOST GUANTÁNAMO PRISONERS WITH CRIMES, BUT IT REFUSES TO DECLARE THEM OFFICIALLY INNOCENT, TOO. MANY COUNTRIES ARE WARY OF TAKING IN MEN STILL LEGALLY BRANDED AS "ENEMY COMBATANTS."







BUT OVER THE COURSE OF A DECADE, DOZENS OF COUNTRIES AGREED TO ACCEPT GUANTÁNAMO PRISONERS, OFTEN AS A FAVOR TO OBAMA'S STATE DEPARTMENT.



NUMEROUS GUANTÁNAMO PRISONERS WERE GIVEN A CHOICE: STAY IN GITMO OR BE RELEASED TO A COUNTRY THEY'D NEVER BEEN TO BEFORE.



IT WASN'T SAFE FOR EMAD TO RETURN TO YEMEN. SINCE HE'D COME TO GUANTÁNAMO, HIS HOME COUNTRY HAD BEEN SPLIT APART BY A BRUTAL CIVIL WAR. HE COULDN'T GO BACK, BUT NO OTHER COUNTRY OFFERED TO TAKE HIM IN.



SUMMER 2013

AFTER YEARS OF DELAYING HIS RELEASE, EMAD'S SITUATION CHANGED AGAIN.



"I REMEMBER GETTING A PHONE CALL FROM THE STATE DEPARTMENT."

HE'S GOING TO BE RELEASED TO OMAN.











## CHAPTER NINE



**SHELBY SULLIVAN-BENNIS**  
ATTORNEY FOR GUANTÁNAMO PRISONERS

ILLUSTRATED BY KASIA BABIS

"WHY I CHOSE TO DO  
THIS WORK IS NOT  
THE ANSWER PEOPLE  
EXPECT IT TO BE."

"I FEEL IT'S MY  
RESPONSIBILITY AS A  
WHITE, MIDDLE-CLASS  
AMERICAN. ALL THESE  
HARMS ARE WROUGHT  
IN MY NAME."

"I THINK THE ONLY  
RESPONSIBLE USE OF  
PRIVILEGE IS TO PUSH  
BACK ON THE FACT THAT  
PRIVILEGE IS ALLOCATED SO  
DISPARATELY BASED ON  
COLOR AND RELIGION."



















WHILE IN QUANTÁNAMO,  
ABDUL LATIF NASIR  
HANDWROTE A 2,000-WORD  
ENGLISH-ARABIC DICTIONARY.

"HE IS VERY MUCH  
A WISE, CALM, VERY POLITE,  
NONCONFRONTATIONAL GUY."

"HE WRITES ME A BIRTHDAY CARD  
EVERY YEAR. HE WENT SO FAR AS  
TO DRAW A CARD SHAPE BECAUSE  
HE DIDN'T HAVE A REAL CARD."

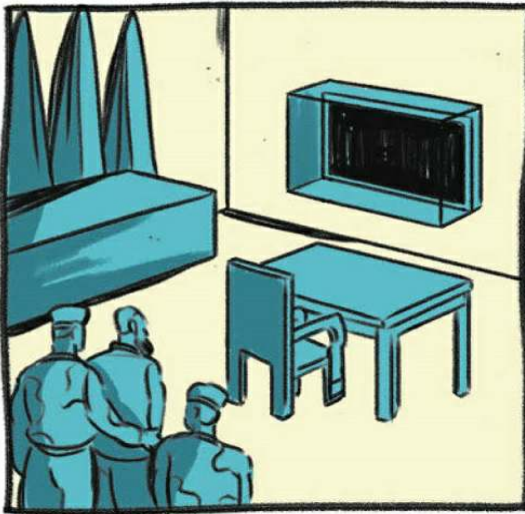


UNCLASSIFIED  
Dear Stubby  
on this special day I just wanted to remind  
you how much I appreciate you and thank  
you for your help and support  
May God fill you with blessing and joy  
Happy Birthday! May all your dreams come  
and your life be always full of joy and  
happiness.

Best regards  
Abdul Latif







ONE OF THE HARDEST PARTS OF SHELBY'S JOB IS HELPING PRISONERS PREPARE FOR THEIR PERIODIC REVIEW BOARD HEARINGS.



IT'S NOT A TRIAL, BUT FOR THE MEN AT QUANTÁNAMO WHO ARE NOT CHARGED WITH CRIMES, THE HEARING IS THEIR ONLY CHANCE TO PLEAD THEIR CASE. THEY SOMETIMES DO IT WITHOUT A LAWYER PRESENT.

THE DETAINEE GETS, A ONE-PAGE SUMMARY OF THE ALLEGATIONS AGAINST HIM BEFORE HE GOES TO THE HEARINGS. THAT'S ALL HE GETS.



THE PRB SAYS, "WE'RE NOT TELLING YOU TO CONFESS TO THINGS THAT YOU DID NOT DO." BUT THE PRACTICAL OUTCOME IS THE SAME.

IF HE READS IT OVER AND SAYS "THAT'S ALL UNTRUE," THE DETAINEE IS ACCUSED OF A "LACK OF CONTRITION." THEY'RE ACCUSED OF MAKING FALSE STATEMENTS BECAUSE THEY'RE DENYING THE ALLEGATIONS.

THIS IS NOT A LEGAL SYSTEM USED ANYWHERE ELSE: IT WAS MADE UP JUST FOR QUANTÁNAMO BY THE OBAMA ADMINISTRATION.







IN 2009, THE SENATE VOTED TO NIX FUNDING THE PRESIDENT HAD HOPED TO USE TO CLOSE THE PRISON. THE VOTE WAS OVERWHELMING: 90 TO 6.

REPUBLICANS ADDED A LINE TO THE DEFENSE BUDGET BILL THAT BANNED ANYONE HELD AT GUANTÁNAMO FROM COMING TO THE U.S.—EVEN TO BE TRIED IN AN AMERICAN COURTROOM. THE BAN HAS BEEN RENEWED EVER SINCE.





WITHOUT THE SUPPORT OF CONGRESS, OBAMA USED AN EXECUTIVE ORDER TO CREATE THE UNIQUE PERIODIC REVIEW BOARDS SYSTEM.

OBAMA COULD HAVE ISSUED AN EXECUTIVE ORDER TO CLOSE GUANTÁNAMO ALTOGETHER, BUT HE DIDN'T WANT TO FACE THE POLITICAL FALLOUT.



INSTEAD, OVER THE NEXT EIGHT YEARS, 196 MEN IMPRISONED IN GUANTÁNAMO WERE CLEARED FOR RELEASE, THEN TRANSFERRED, REPATRIATED, OR RESETTLED IN THIRD COUNTRIES.

THE U.S. NEVER APOLOGIZED FOR IMPRISONING THEM OR OFFICIALLY DECLARED THEM INNOCENT. THEY ARE STILL BANNED FROM TRAVELING TO THE U.S.

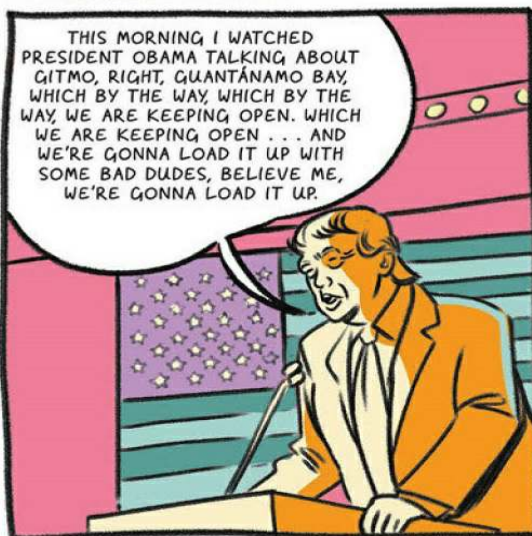




























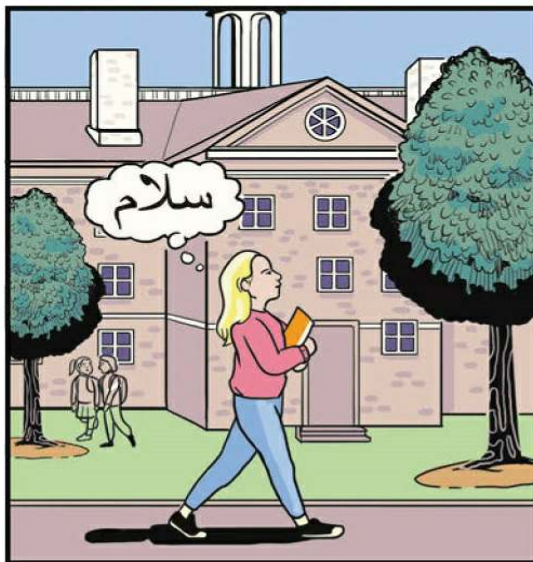
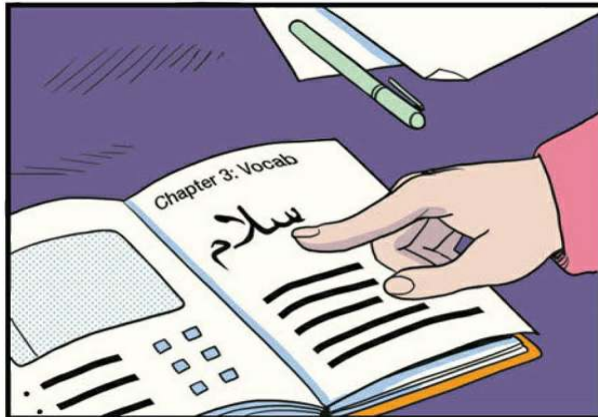
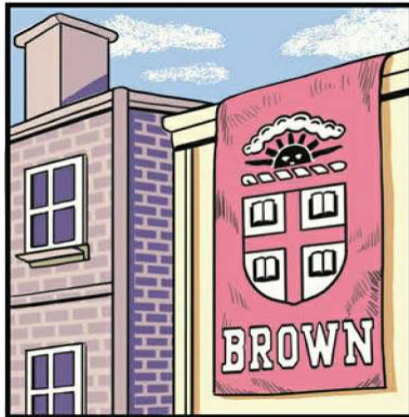
## CHAPTER TEN



## KATIE TAYLOR

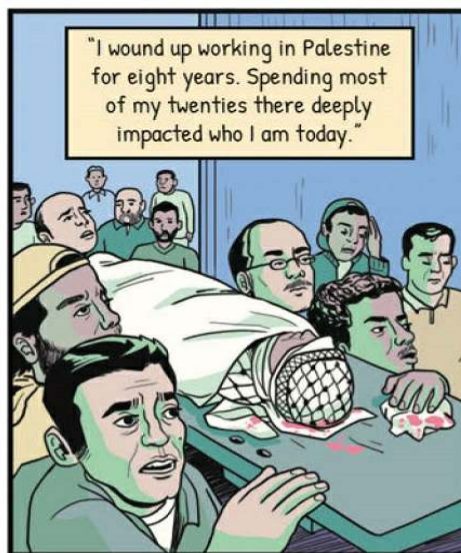
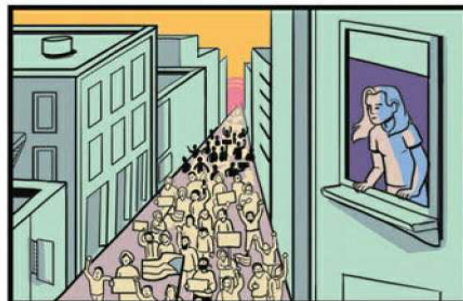
DEPUTY DIRECTOR AT REPRIEVE  
AND COORDINATOR OF THE LIFE  
AFTER GUANTÁNAMO PROJECT

ILLUSTRATED BY CHELSEA SAUNDERS







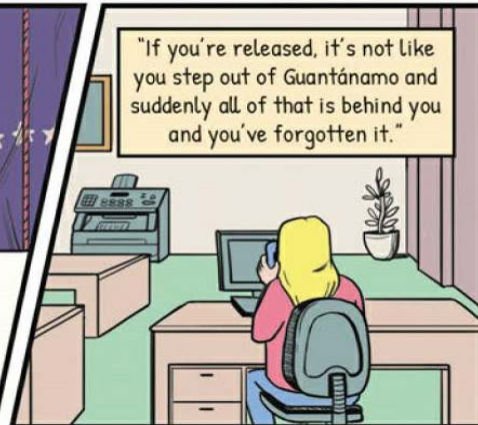








In 2009, when President Obama announced he would close Guantánamo, human rights organization Reprieve got U.N. funding to start the Life After Guantánamo project. Katie was hired in 2010.



"If you're released, it's not like you step out of Guantánamo and suddenly all of that is behind you and you've forgotten it."



"I think I expected the men to be angrier."

Okay, tell me what's going on.

All right, let me see if I can get someone to your house to fix the Wi-Fi.

"The U.S. government resettled many [former prisoners] in third-party 'host' countries, so many of them had to rebuild their lives in countries they'd never even set foot in before."



"They didn't speak the language, they didn't know how to navigate the basic institutions that we use day to day. They were just left and expected to get on with their lives."





"If you've only been dealing within the confines of an arbitrary prison system, it orders the way that you think about the world."

**CLICK**



"Yesterday, my electricity went out. You don't really think about it, you just deal with it."



Oh dang, must be the fuse.

"Whereas a torture victim or someone who has been detained indefinitely might think . . ."

What have I done to make this happen?! Why are they doing this to me?!



A core part of the "regime of control" at Guantánamo was to make it impossible for detainees to trust their sense of reality.



This creates an immense sense of paranoia and uncertainty. And their fears aren't unfounded.





"In 2016—I remember the day very well—  
Suddenly, we were getting calls from former  
Guantánamo detainees from all over the world."



There has been an accident.  
Someone said to call you.



That's how Katie and her colleagues first got in contact  
with two Libyan former detainees living in Dakar, Senegal.

Omar Khalifa  
Mohammed  
Abu Bakr



Salem Abdul  
Salem Gheryby



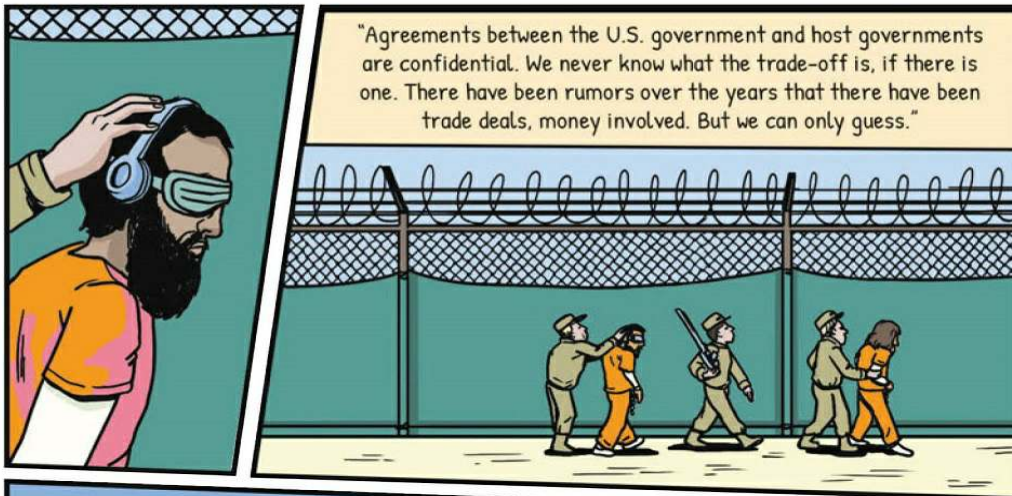
While Gheryby and Bakr had been in Guantánamo,  
their home had entirely changed. During the  
Arab Spring, Libyans staged a revolution against  
their country's dictatorship. It descended into a  
bloody civil war, with rival factions fighting  
brutally on all sides.



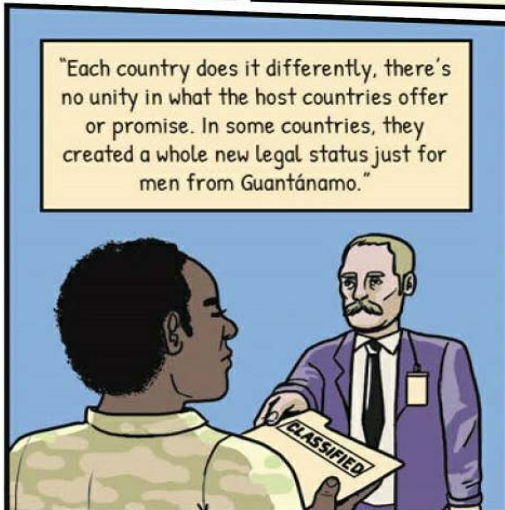
In 2016, as the Obama administration  
scrambled to transfer prisoners out of  
Guantánamo, the U.S. government gave  
the two men a choice: stay in the prison  
indefinitely or be sent to Senegal.



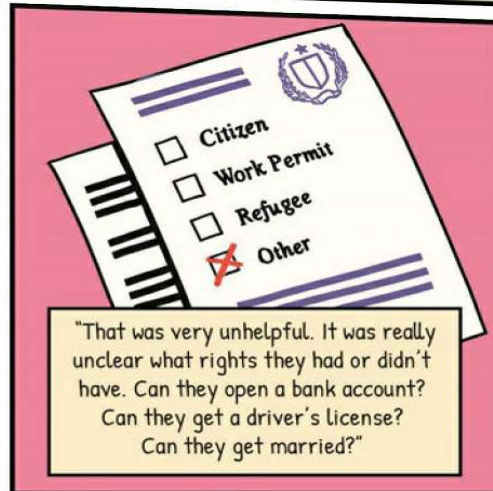




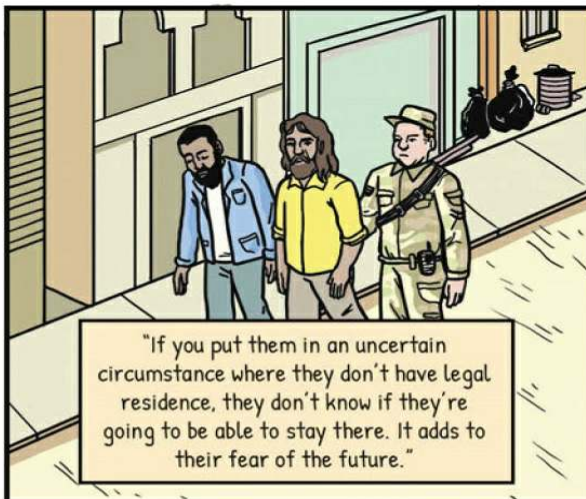
"Agreements between the U.S. government and host governments are confidential. We never know what the trade-off is, if there is one. There have been rumors over the years that there have been trade deals, money involved. But we can only guess."



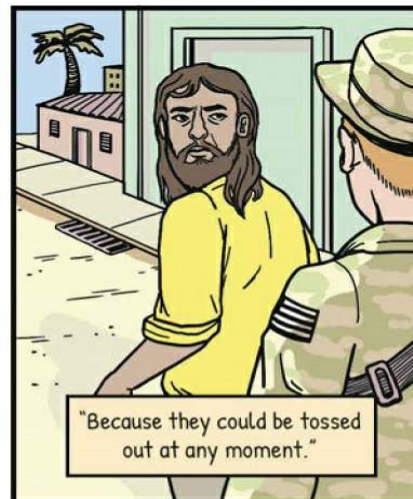
"Each country does it differently, there's no unity in what the host countries offer or promise. In some countries, they created a whole new legal status just for men from Guantánamo."



"That was very unhelpful. It was really unclear what rights they had or didn't have. Can they open a bank account? Can they get a driver's license? Can they get married?"

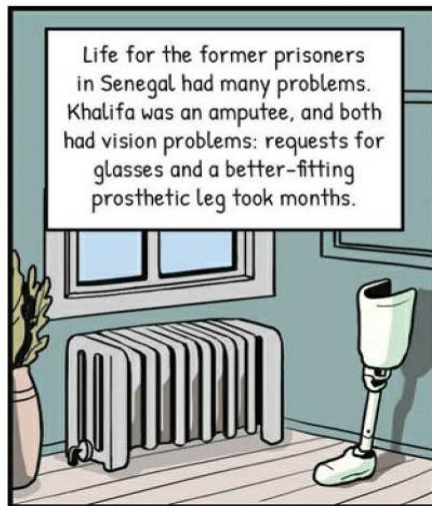


"If you put them in an uncertain circumstance where they don't have legal residence, they don't know if they're going to be able to stay there. It adds to their fear of the future."



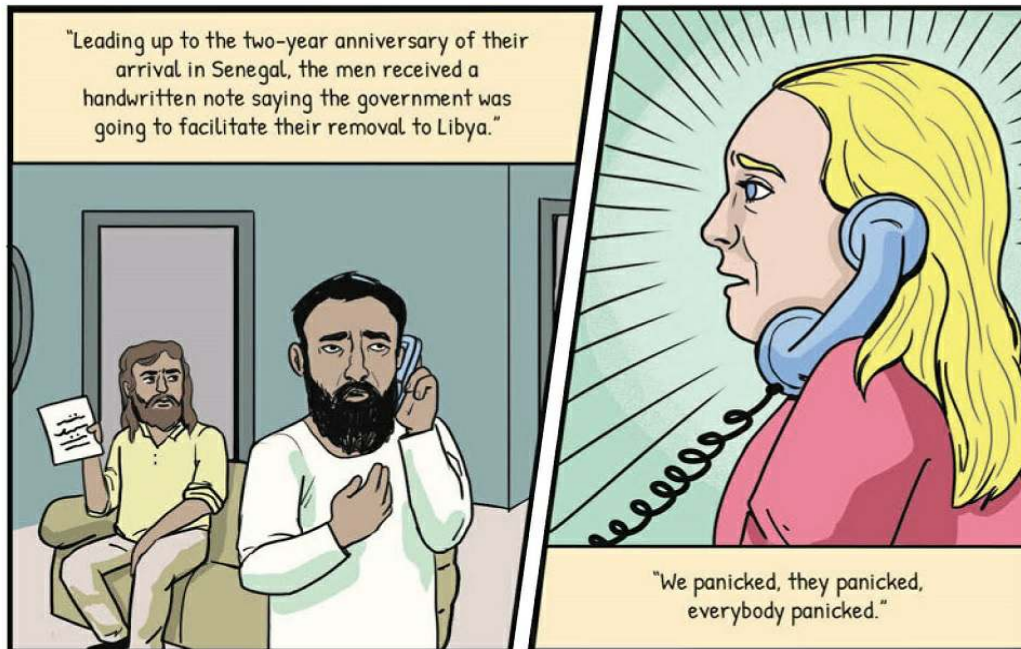
"Because they could be tossed out at any moment."





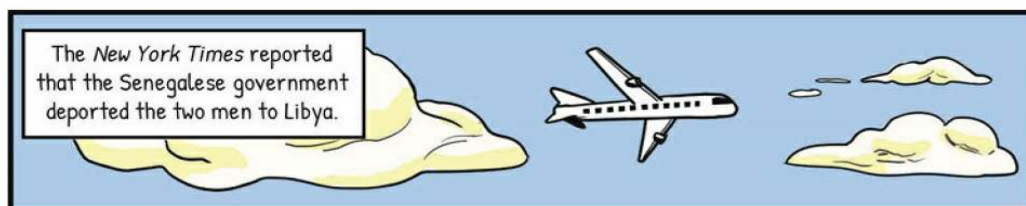

















"The U.S. government did an extremely good job of fearmongering since the very beginning. These were monsters, these were people who had perpetrated the worst crime on Americans ever. That was the false messaging, and it was quite successful."

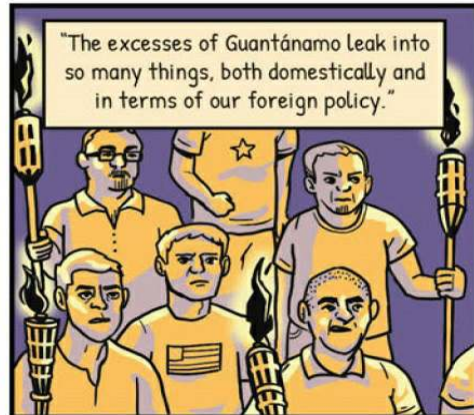
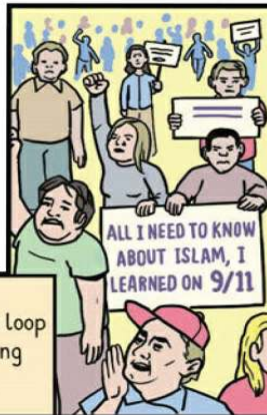
"I think when you tap into fear, it's incredibly strong and it's incredibly moving."

"I think that here we are, 17 years later, and we're still saying so many of the things we were saying at the very beginning: this prison is premised on false information."





"You create this feedback loop when you allow something like this to exist."



"The excesses of Guantánamo leak into so many things, both domestically and in terms of our foreign policy."



"There's been no accountability."



"And the lack of accountability has meant that the situation replicates itself ..."



"... and moves on."





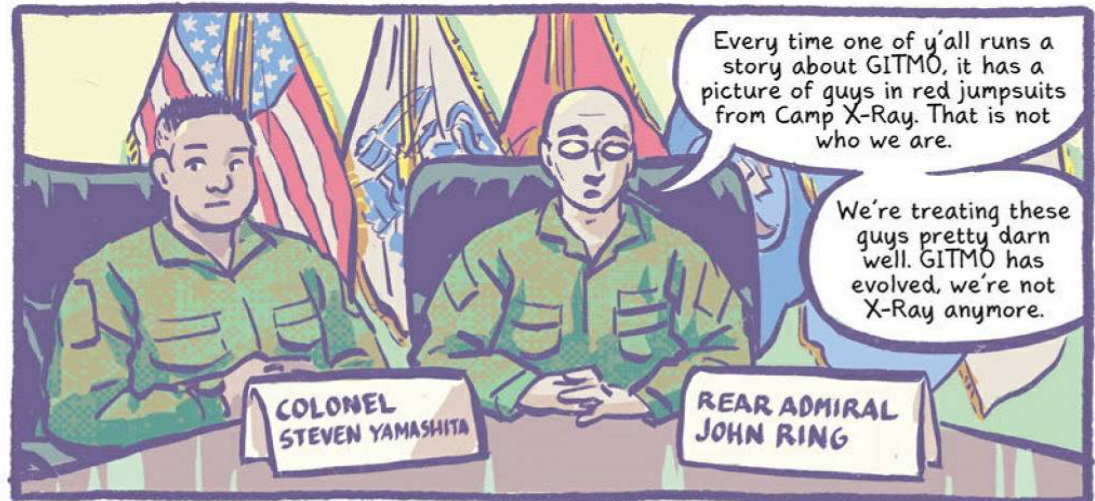
## CHAPTER ELEVEN



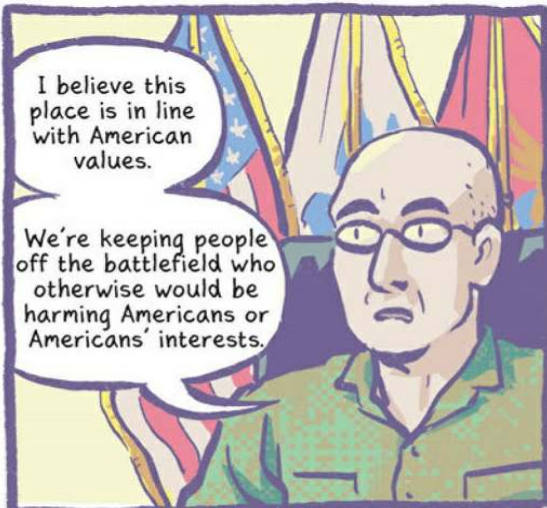
## RETURN TO GUANTÁNAMO

ILLUSTRATED BY HAZEL NEWLEVANT























All during the media tour, Commander Bashaw reviewed the photos we took to make sure they didn't contain any "operational security" leaks.



But our last day at Guantánamo, the journalists are called into an office and told that a new person needs to approve the photos we took at the prison.



The soldier in charge of reviewing our photos has his name tag and rank covered. I have no idea what his job actually is.

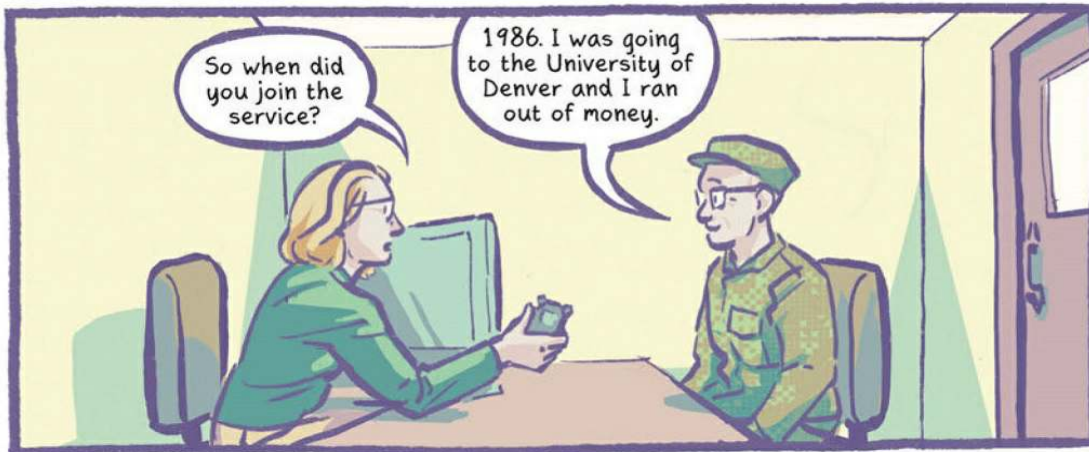
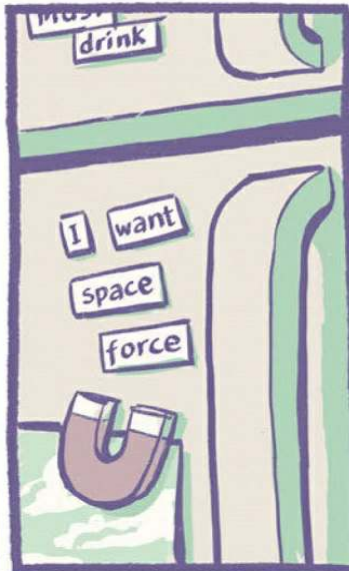


He looks maybe 20 years old. The guys at Guantánamo have been in prison his whole life,







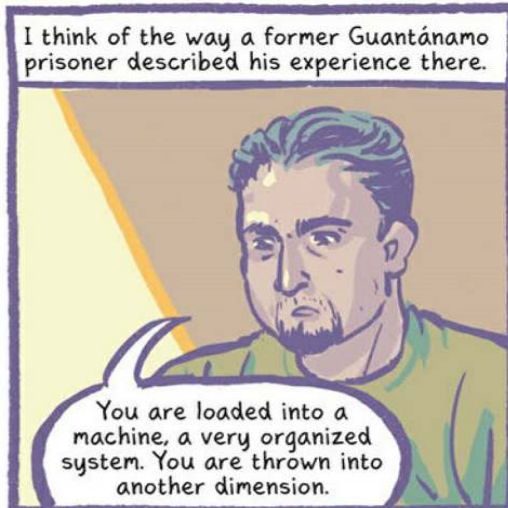


















I'm relieved to be leaving. Four days at Guantánamo is long enough.



I like your drawings.

Oh, thank you.



Are you on the media tour? I saw you on the flight down here.

Yeah, I'm a journalist.

I'm just here doing inventory. Spent all week in a warehouse.



Did you get to go to the detention camp?

We did, yeah.

I saw a documentary about it on TV. I wanted to see it, but we're not allowed to.



Yeah, it was intense seeing it in person. I mean, there are 40 guys in there and most have never been charged with a crime—

Hey.







**“ONE PERSON CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE,  
EVEN IF IT TAKES FORTY YEARS.”**

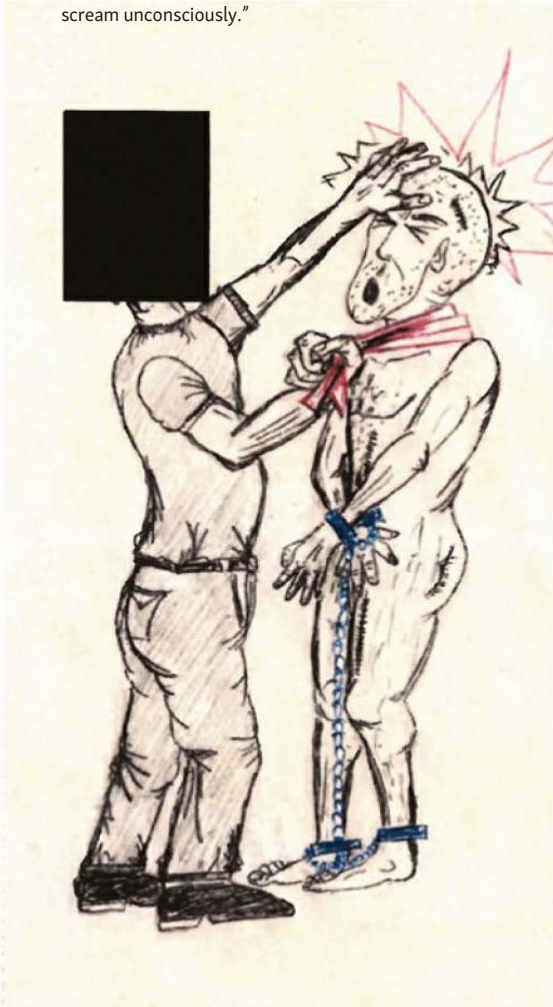
**—FRED KOREMATSU**



## ART FROM ABU ZUBAYDAH

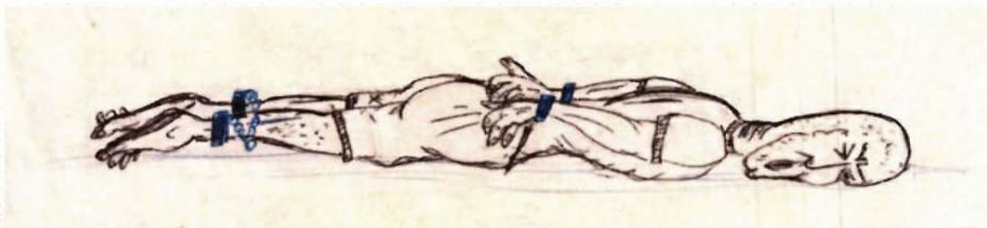
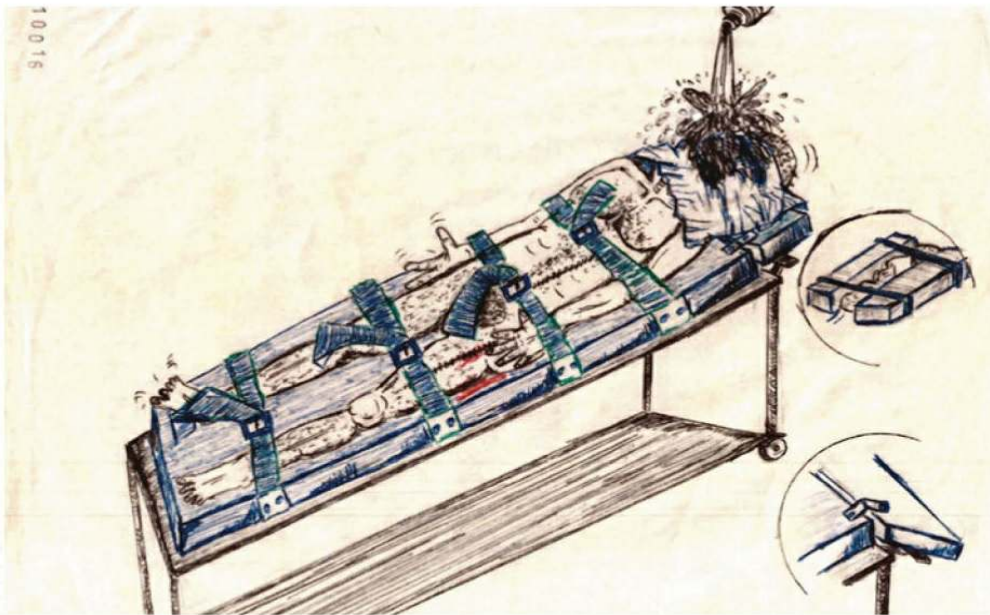
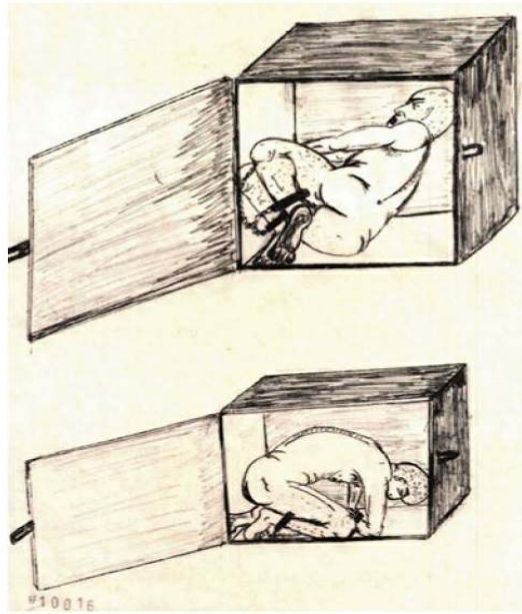
Originally published in "How America Tortures," 2019

The drawings on these pages are by Abu Zubaydah, a man who has been in U.S. custody since 2002. His torture at Guantánamo is described in Chapter Two of this book. In 2019, a group of Seton Hall University School of Law professors asked Zubaydah to illustrate the torture techniques American interrogators subjected him to for a report called "How America Tortures." His drawings on these pages show how he was shackled in stress positions, waterboarded, and forced into tiny confinement boxes for hours at a time. Of the last experience, Zubaydah writes, "The very strong pain made me scream unconsciously."













## HOW THIS BOOK WAS MADE

For each chapter of this book, I interviewed someone about their experiences at Guantánamo. Then I transcribed the interview and edited their quotes into a comic script. When writing a comic, I think about how to tell each story in a visual way. The script winds up looking a lot like a screenplay, with dialogue, narration, and images for each panel, plus footnotes for facts and quotes.

Here's an example of a page from Chapter One, which is based on my visit to Guantánamo.

Panel one

***An iconic image of Camp X-Ray from 2002.***

- a. Narration: In January 2002, the old makeshift refugee jail was turned into Camp X-Ray. It became the most infamous prison in the world.

Panel two

***Camp X-Ray, overgrown with weeds and grasses.***

- a. Narration: Now it's an overgrown ruin.

Panel three

***Commander Bashaw, other reporters, and me hiking through knee-high grass***

***down a hill. The minivan is on the road at the top of the hill, in the background.***

- a. Bashaw: One good thing to know about Guantánamo Bay is there are no venomous snakes or spiders here.<sup>1</sup>

Panel four

***Another image of Camp X-Ray, totally overgrown. A wooden guard tower is framed***

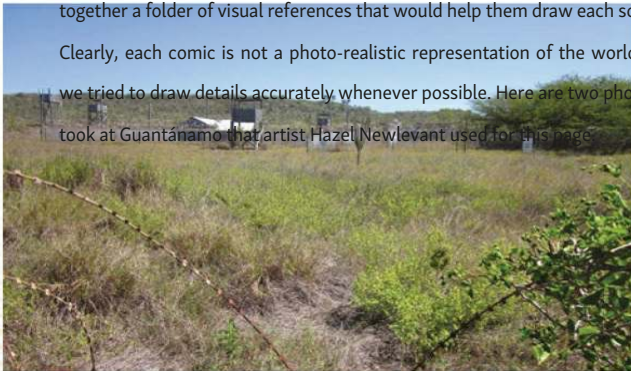
***against the landscape. I'm standing next to a young-looking Alabama National***

***Guardsmen who's happily talking to me (Sgt Hearn).***

- a. Sergeant Hearn: At nighttime, this is a really nice place to look at the stars. It's pretty dark out here.<sup>2</sup>
- b. Narration: Already, what happened here feels like ancient history.

Before I sent the script to the artists, I scoured public domain archives and put together a folder of visual references that would help them draw each scene.

Clearly, each comic is not a photo-realistic representation of the world, but we tried to draw details accurately whenever possible. Here are two photos I took at Guantánamo that artist Hazel Newlevant used for this page.







Because the content of the history is so dark, I envisioned a “sunset tones” color palette that would help draw readers into each story and evoke the surreal contrast between the beauty of Guantánamo Bay as a place and the horror of what has happened there. Artist Kazimir Lee developed this



Once the script was fact-checked and copyedited, the artists spent five months drawing the book. The first step is drawing thumbnails (which look like a storyboard), then pencils, inks, and finally colors. You can see how Hazel’s art evolved from pencils to inks on the left.

I encourage the artists I work with to make whatever creative decisions they think are right. For example, Hazel combined two of the panels in the script into one to allow for a wider scene in the middle of the page. I find comics always turn out better when each collaborator has the ability to bring their own vision to the story. The final step of the art process is coloring. I wanted the colors to help create a somewhat cohesive visual feel for the book, since





## ABOUT THE ARTISTS



**Gerardo Alba** is a cartoonist from Mexico City whose work ranges from journalism to slice-of-life and fantasy. He's the art director of Little Red Bird Press, a small-press comics publisher. He currently lives with his wife and two cats in New Jersey, where they all constantly indulge in bagels and watching hockey.



**Kasia Babis** is a Polish cartoonist and political activist with an online following of more than 100,000 fans. Her viral comics succinctly skewer social issues ranging from racism to street harassment from a distinctly feminist perspective. She lives in Warsaw, Poland.



**Alexandra Beguez** is a Cuban American illustrator and cartoonist based in New Jersey. Her comics and illustrations have appeared in *Little Nemo: Dream Another Dream*, the *Nib*, the *Believer*, Longreads, and BuzzFeed, among others.



**Tracy Chahwan** is a comic book artist and illustrator. Her first graphic novel *Beirut Bloody Beirut* is published by Hachette in France. She has also worked on multiple short comics including *Stray Girls*, *Don't You Know Who My Mother Is?*, and *The Suicide*. She lives in Beirut, Lebanon.



**Nomi Kane** is an alumna of the Center for Cartoon Studies a contributor to the *New Yorker*, the *Nib*, CollegeHumor, and *Mad* magazine. By day she designs toys at Super7 HQ and teaches cartooning at California College of the Arts. She lives in Oakland, California, with her dog, Dino. Nomi's infographic illustrations appear on pages ix–xv.



**Omar Khouri** is a cofounder of *Samandal Comics*, the first experimental comics periodical in the Arab world. In 2010, he co-edited the first issue of the comic book series *Samandal Comics*.







**Kazimir Lee** developed the color palette for this book. They are a Lambda Literary Award-winning cartoonist and illustrator based in Brooklyn, New York. They are a queer parent, pornographer, and journalist, and have contributed to *Oh Joy Sex Toy* and *Slate*.



**Kane Lynch** is a cartoonist based in Portland, Oregon, whose comics and illustrations have appeared in publications including *Slate*, the *Nib*, and *Psychology Today*.



**Maki Naro** is an award-winning cartoonist, illustrator, and science communicator. Since 2010, he has been producing a body of work that can be best classified as “fan art for science.” He is the author of seven self-published comic books spanning multiple topics from historical comedies to the importance of vaccination. Maki lives in Upstate New York with his loving partner and two dogs.



**Hazel Newlevant** is a Portland-raised, Queens-residing cartoonist whose comics include *No Ivy League*, *Sugar Town*, *If This Be Sin*, and *Tender-Hearted*. They have edited and published the anthologies *Chainmail Bikini* and *Comics for Choice*. Their work as a cartoonist and editor has been honored with the Ignatz Award, the Eisner Award, and the Prism Comics Queer Press Grant.



**Jeremy Nguyen** is an illustrator living in New York whose art and comics have been featured in the *New Yorker*, *Wired*, the *Guardian*, the *Nib*, *Time Out New York*, and *Brooklyn Magazine*.



**Chelsea Saunders** is a freelance illustrator residing in New York. Since graduating from Boston University, she has drawn editorial illustrations and political comics for publications such as *Current Affairs*, *Holler*, and the *Nib*. She was the winner of the 2011 Lambda Literary Award for Best Political Comic.



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This chapter was adapted from a work-in-progress memoir by Mansoor Adayli, with editing assistance from Antonio Aiello. This comic was originally published by the Nib and is adapted and reprinted here with permission.

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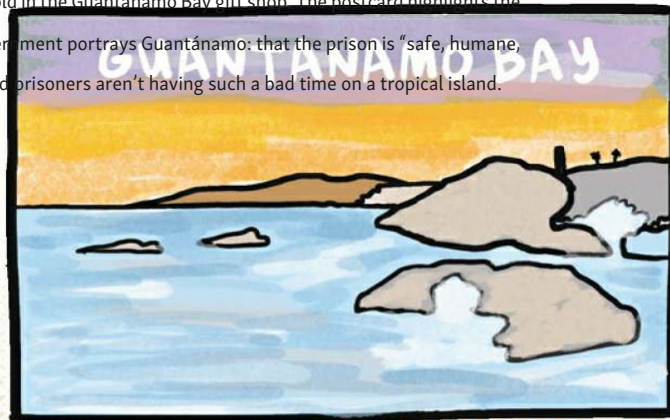




## ABOUT THE COVER



Did you know there is a gift shop at Guantánamo Bay? The gift shop at the Navy Exchange on the base sells everything from "Straight Outta GITMO" T-shirts to stuffed animal iguanas. Many of the 7,800 service members and civilians who work on base want to take home souvenirs from their time at Guantánamo. The design for this cover, by artist Maria Nguyen, is inspired by a postcard sold in the Guantánamo Bay gift shop. The postcard highlights the way the government portrays Guantánamo: that the prison is "safe, humane, and legal" and prisoners aren't having such a bad time on a tropical island.







## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

For ten years, this book was impossible to write. It took me that long to find the skills, the sources, and the support I needed. I owe an immense debt to the people featured in these pages—thank you for trusting me to share your stories. And I'm overwhelmed with gratitude for the artists who spent months penciling, inking, and coloring this book. Thanks to each of you for taking a chance on this complicated project. A specific and heartfelt thanks to Kazimir Lee, who developed the innovative color palette and is somehow the speediest artist on planet Earth.

It's weird that my name is on the cover because this book was a team effort. Editor Charlotte Greenbaum's name should be in a big, bold font. May she will receive a mountain of credit for guiding this book calmly from beginning to end. Omar El Akkad's words stayed in my head for months and guided my writing. Antonio Aiello is a true gem of an editor/human who helped Mansoor's chapter come together. Fiona Kenshole heard my idea for this book and showed me how to make it possible. There's nothing more powerful than that.

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This book builds on the detailed reporting and documentation of others. The Rule of Law oral history project at Columbia University generously let me use quotes from their detailed interviews with Guantánamo prisoners and staff. Everything I needed to know about Guantánamo was already in the essential works of journalists like Jane Mayer, Carol Rosenberg, and Andy Worthington, and the memoirs of Mohammed Ould Slahi, Moazzam

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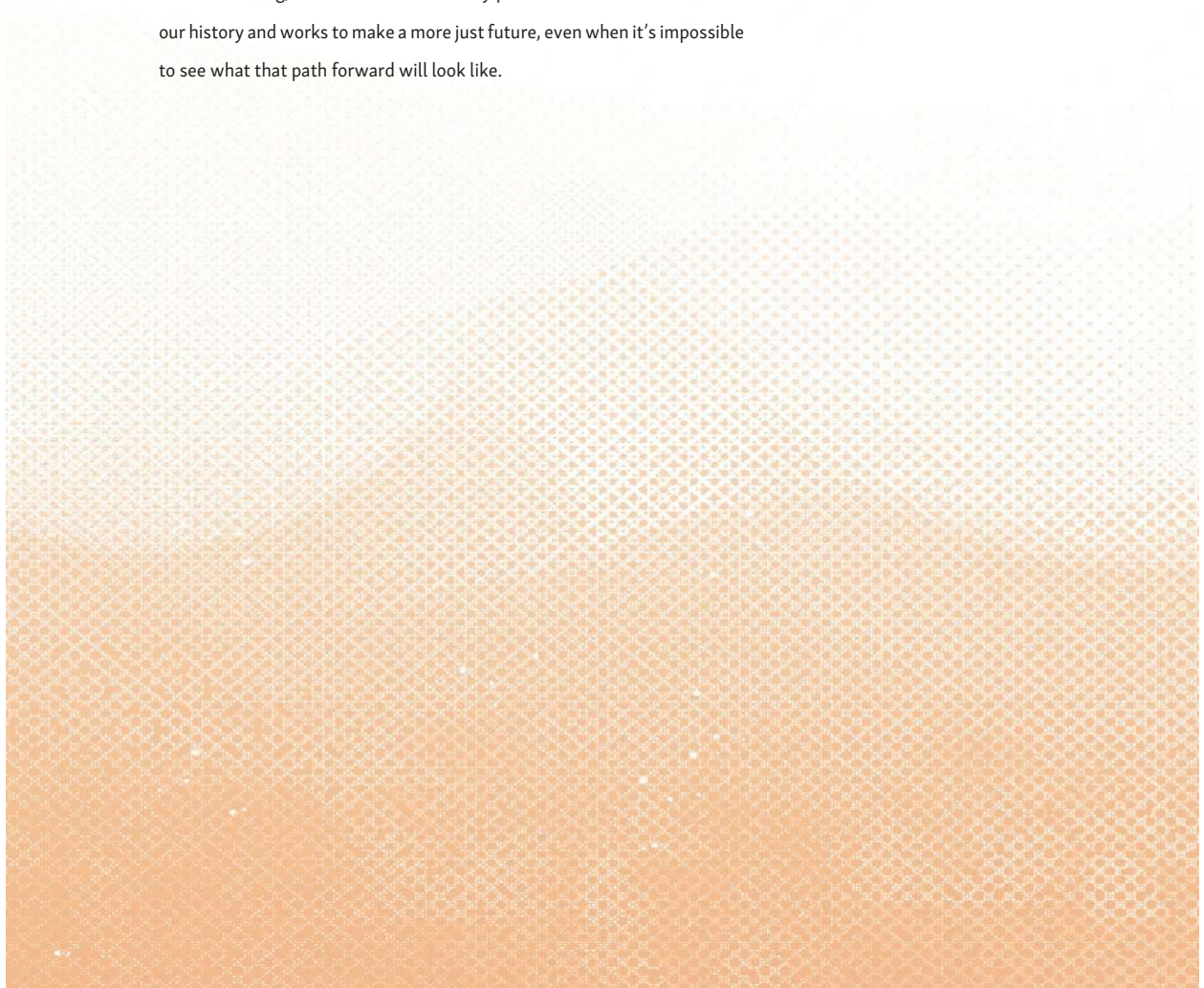


*Times'* Guantánamo Docket and the massive oral history project Witness to Guantánamo. This sounds corny, but thanks to the volunteers who add government reports and images to Wikipedia. Their collective work has kept Guantánamo photos and documents from slipping into obscurity and made accountability possible for future generations.

Thanks to my partner Ben for sitting with me on the floor that one time when I was too overwhelmed to stand up. Sorry for not taking your advice on going to therapy while writing this book—you were right, that would have helped.

Just as the first draft of this manuscript was due, I crashed on my bike and was unable to use my right hand. I promised myself that I would get this book done even if I had to finish typing it left-handed. Which I did. So thanks to my past self for getting through that.

In closing, thanks to each and every person who faces the hard stuff of our history and works to make a more just future, even when it's impossible to see what that path forward will look like.



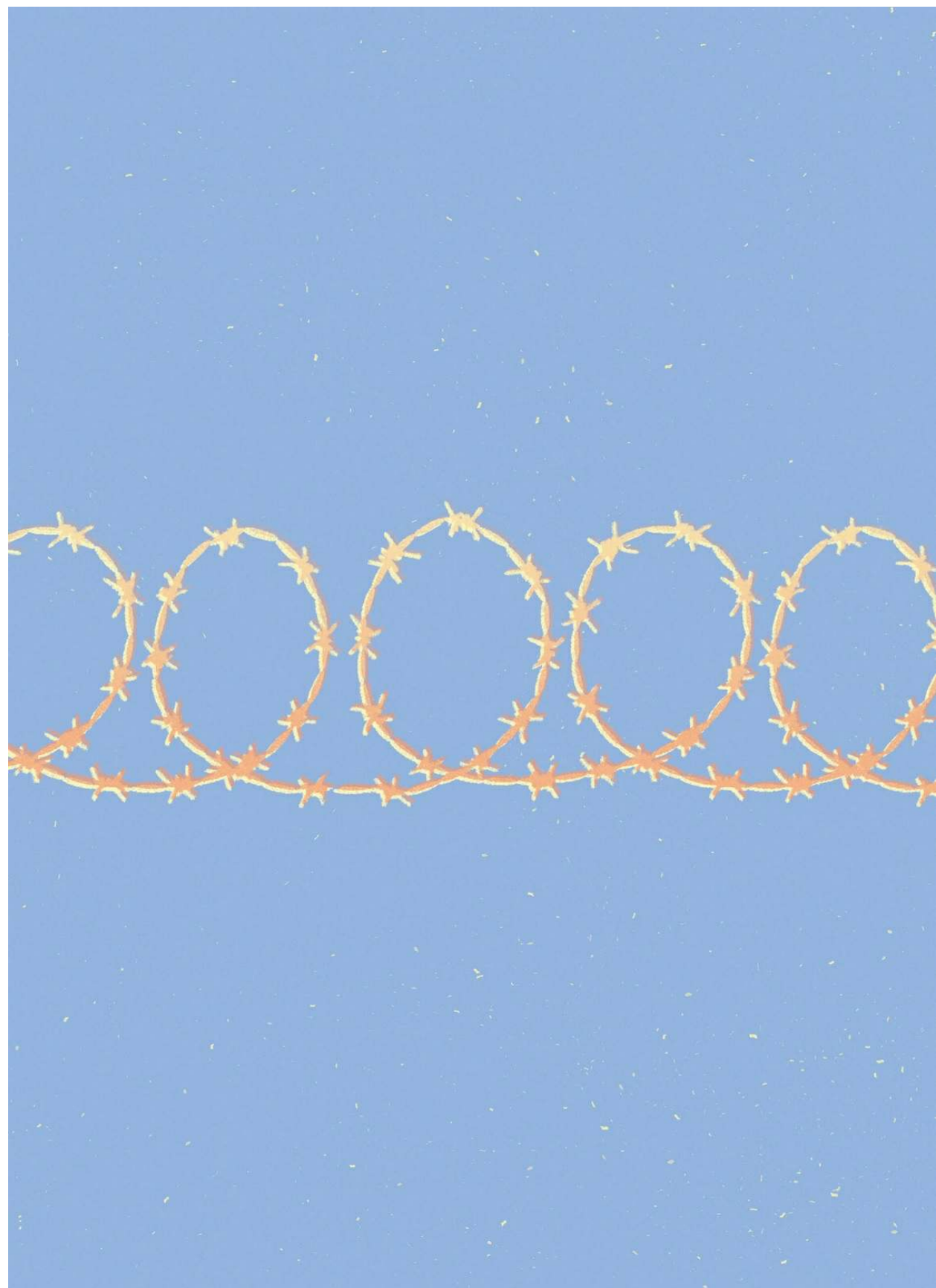














**“THE STORIES IN THIS BOOK ARE, FIRST AND FOREMOST, AN ANTIDOTE TO FORGETTING. TAKEN TOGETHER, THEY REPRESENT NOT ONLY A WIDE-RANGING ACCOUNT OF HOW GUANTÁNAMO BAY DETENTION CAMPS FUNCTIONED, BUT ALSO THE IMPULSES—THE COMMUNAL HATRED, FEAR, AND COWARDICE—THAT ALLOWED SUCH A PLACE TO EXIST.”**

**—OMAR EL AKKAD, FROM HIS INTRODUCTION**

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**“THIS BOOK REWRITES THE MYTH OF GUANTÁNAMO, WHERE THE DETAINEES WERE TARRED THE WORST OF THE WORST TERRORISTS IN THE WORLD, BY SHARING THE STORIES OF PEOPLE WHO HAVE ACTUALLY SPENT TIME THERE—DETAINEES AND THEIR LAWYERS, AND THOSE WHO PROSECUTED THEM—AND REVEALING HOW IT HAS BEEN AN INSIDIOUS EXERCISE IN RACISM AND THE PRESUMPTION OF GUILT.”**

**—CLIVE STAFFORD SMITH OBE**

**LAWYER FOR 88 GUANTÁNAMO PRISONERS,  
FOUNDER OF REPRIEVE, A LEGAL ACTION CHARITY**

