

**American University of Beirut**

**It's Yours Anyways**

**Wadih El Haddad, Bachelor of Fine Arts**

**Department of Architecture and Design  
Maroun Semaan Faculty of Engineering  
and Architecture, ArD, May 14 2020**

**Appendix 3: GDRP Thesis Approval Form**

AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF BEIRUT  
UNDERGRADUATE SENIOR PROJECT  
IN  
GRAPHIC DESIGN  
SUBMITTAL FORM

IT'S YOURS ANYWAYS

by  
WADIH EL HADDAD

FINAL YEAR THESIS PROJECT – 407 GD 2020  
SPRING 2020

ADVISOR: Fouad Mezher

Approved by Thesis Advisor:

*Fouad E. Mezher*

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Fouad Mezher, Part-Time Instructor  
Department of Architecture and Design  
(as listed in AUB Catalogue of current year)

Date of Thesis final presentation: May 14, 2020

**Appendix 1: Project Release Form**

**AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF BEIRUT**

**THESIS, DISSERTATION, PROJECT RELEASE FORM**

Student Name: El Haddad Wadih Hani  
Last First Middle

- ArDT Project (Architecture Design Thesis)  
 GDRP Project (Graphic Design Research Project)

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 **Two years from the date of submission of my capstone project.**  
 **Three years from the date of submission of my capstone project.**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature Date

This form is signed when submitting the thesis, dissertation, or project to the University Libraries.

# Thank you

Fouad, my advisor with whom I have shared many helpful and enjoyable evening conversations.

To the teachers of my department who've guided me and set me straight when I needed it.

To the classes of GD 2020, 2019 and 2018, that have all been like families to me through and through.

## Abstract

Wadih Haddad passed away in 1978 when my father was 14. I had originally planned to write that history, but instead it gradually became obvious that the topic at hand was my own search for the man I never met but was named after. I was gathering facts and stories from family and online depictions of him but I also started to make comparisons and found myself tempting fate. This train of thought turned into an essay, a discussion over how I came to know aspects of my grandfather, and in turn expanded my understanding of my relationship with my father.

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**It's**

**Yours**

**Wadih El Haddad**

**Anyways**



Hala, whose company is irreplaceable. Randa and Hani, who've brought me here with their lessons and unconditional love. To my closest friends, all of whom without their night long conversations this book would not be possible. To the family that stood resilient in the face of the struggle when my parents were not yet born and all those that have fought for the Palestinian right to return.



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مكتوب إسراء عليك  
It's Yours Anyways


I am erratic at this very moment while writing segments because ideas are all over.

My back and skin is itching uncontrollably in random succession, and I have been shaking profusely for the last 20 minutes. Deep breaths are aiding me through and a bowl of cornflakes is keeping my senses busy while I type this out.

Thoughts about the first page ensue to suggest that I'm taking a course on geology at the time of writing. If I were to picture this book it would either be a planetary cross-section with a chronological ascension to the surface from my grandfather to myself or a histogram of my collisions with family members' planets.







Most of my childhood came from entertainment. I was shown everything possible by a mother and father that cared deeply for me and my sister. We went to London countless times as kids. Days and nights spent in London were recorded on my mother's panoramic camera or my dad's old videocam. Our trips were full of plays, movies, orchestral performances, museums, documentaries, science books, etc. I'm already running lists on the tip of my tongue for things that I've been exposed to. However, this abundance allowed highlights as well as recognizing the wide amount of choice before us. I liked gaming alot, if everyone in my household had a specialty, gaming was mine.



I spent 4-5 years involved in a community of creators and artists enamored by this creature-creation game. It was the first time I felt like I belonged to a group. I would not stop talking about it to friends and showing-off my latest work. I doodled concepts for it, and I participated in create-offs. I even used to wake up at 4 AM on school days to play before the bus would arrive.

After that, the Spore community began to die down. Before then I had relied on terrible retailers like the Virgin Megastore and the Sony Store which were usual stops during most family outings. My dad's judgement also meant receiving game/movie tie-ins like Shrek 2, Madagascar, Peter Jackson's King Kong, and the Harry Potter series. Everything else I discovered was at a friend's house whose uncle got him pirated copies of a wide range of games.

**Octopus sandwich**  
By catoonworks 



 DOB: 6/24/2010



Having unlimited choices at my disposal did evolve into an overwhelming force of distraction that I was often allowing myself to indulge in.

After changing schools grades began slipping, and I was no longer feeling as confident or as successful as before. Socially anxious and neither smart nor sociable left me somewhat alienated from the new crowd. A new stressor. Gaming was an important hobby to me, but without a relatable community it was an isolating activity. The isolation made success feel personal and validated. So, when I was introduced to actual competitive gaming at the age of 14, I remember getting into my first fights over losing to smug players. For once since my football practice days, I had to realize that I was being irrational in my defensive nature. Nothing happens overnight, as most of us know. Definitely, over a year or two though. I was more often open to loss in competitive gaming afterwards, just not when others were rubbing it in. So if I lost I did not question it, or reflect, I was just bitter about it. Allowing myself to return to isolated games where winning wasn't the objective made me care less about what was beginning to seem like harder chances at success in school.



# American University of Beirut

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FEA Undergraduate - Extension of Incomplete			
Student Full Name	Moadh El Haddad	Student ID Number	201502734
Class Faculty	Graphic Design 6,7,8 Maroun Semaan Fac of Eng&Arch	Student Box Number Major	ALU B.0
Earned Credits	151	Overall Average	77.5
GPA Hours	121	Cumulative Average	76.5
First Term Enrolled	Fall 2014-2015	Last Term Enrolled	Spring 2017-2018
Course Semester	Spring 2017- 2018		
Exam Course	GRDS 305 - Graphic Design V (6)		
Justification	I am asking for a chance to work properly on the projects that have an unusual drop in productivity. The cause of which is related to my mental health which was in poor shape at the start of the semester and has not improved. I visited the counseling center and Dr Nacous it appears that I am suffering from depression. I hope that I may have the opportunity to resubmit my work from this and that it can be reassessed.		

Failure isn't easy to meet, nor is it usually sought out. On first encounters it's met as an antagonist; something that will plague you for having stumbled into it. The only thing taught from it before was to put more stress on one's next attempt. Of course, that never resulted in any change. Only until I failed a number of courses [major and minor] in university did I begin to understand that certain things can be addressed and that there's no need for a total completion of things. A quote for Salvador Dali was painted on the first-year-studio wall: "Have no fear of perfection - you'll never reach it."

I developed panic attacks. I still do, and rather than pulling away from them I've become more entangled in the practice than ever before and worried that not enough is going to be done at all. I chased after time-management courses and techniques for the first two years before giving up fully on it.

Failure wasn't telling me that I had to acquire new skills. It was telling me to take a breather and to recognize it for the naturally occurring phenomenon that it is. I wasn't listening.

## Reviewers

Instructor





Priorities changed.



Pissed  
Yourself. It

Had's what I said to

I know

I know

but please



The first design course I failed caught me over a 0.5 difference by the end of my second academic year. I did not tell my parents. I went to Italy with the Architecture history class in hopes that it would help provide some clarity on what to do next. Luckily, I had begun journaling, and also found that I was not the only one on the trip trying to make sense of their predicament.

A number of architecture students were also pondering over the extra year they'll have to take on. I had to tell my dad. He had no idea. I told my mother first when I returned. I delivered the news along with the fact that I had met someone across the last four-five months. I thought one positive secret would help lighten the more devastating news.

Telling my mother I had failed a course did not mean that she'd keep it to herself. My father came into my room on a Saturday morning and asked if there was anything I wanted to tell him. I was huddled up in my bed and, although the sun shone brightly through my window that day, I felt like I was in mourning. I didn't know what to say because he already knew. I didn't want to apologize for it either. I didn't want to trash myself further than I had already. I wanted to do better, to process, and to move on. I wanted to let time do what it needed to.

Eventually my father showed up again. This time with a quote from Samuel Beckett:

"Ever tried. Ever failed. No matter. Try Again. Fail again. Fail better."

I held onto this quote dearly. It resonated and was one of the more hopeful statements my dad had been known to dispense. Often you'd be met with a self-deprecating reprisal of Sinatra's "I did it my way" after dropping a plate or exiting an argument dissatisfied.



A lot was neglected while I let singular tasks dominate my life.

Even the Samuel Beckett quote came to its own sad conclusion. When I took a second extension for submission after failing a second course, I was asked not to take the quote too literally.

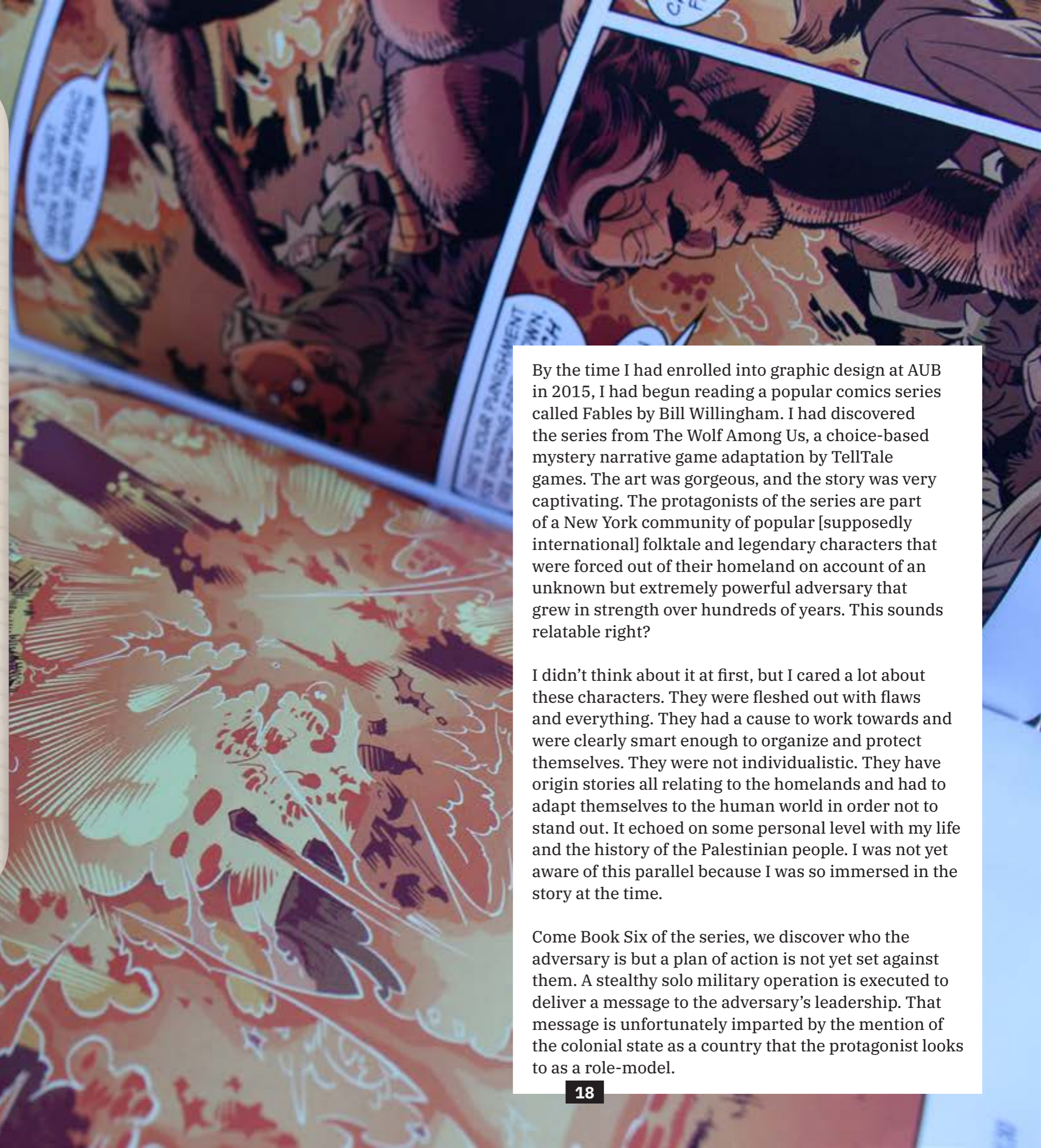


I decided to make meaning out of what mattered to me. I began to look to other things like stories and talks about history and my grandfather's life.

SUNDAY  
March  
6

## The Palestine Analogy: a necessary correction to Bigby's Israel Analogy

I find it necessary to point out that for the most part, I was able to connect with the fables, as people, and as the products of a society ousted from their homelands by an adversary who is a) of their kind and acting amidst their community, b) <sup>appears to be</sup> a sudden emergence but is in fact one that took years of plotting and careful execution c) and one that is causing ~~the loss of their~~ <sup>my</sup> thoughts for a re-growth or resurgence by those it has attacked. Meanwhile the society is left to deal with the a) assimilation and adapting to a new community and lifestyle, b) where their <sup>full</sup> potentials can't be reached, and c) ~~where~~ they are scattered among different communities, some remaining in their homelands.



By the time I had enrolled into graphic design at AUB in 2015, I had begun reading a popular comics series called Fables by Bill Willingham. I had discovered the series from The Wolf Among Us, a choice-based mystery narrative game adaptation by TellTale games. The art was gorgeous, and the story was very captivating. The protagonists of the series are part of a New York community of popular [supposedly international] folktale and legendary characters that were forced out of their homeland on account of an unknown but extremely powerful adversary that grew in strength over hundreds of years. This sounds relatable right?

I didn't think about it at first, but I cared a lot about these characters. They were fleshed out with flaws and everything. They had a cause to work towards and were clearly smart enough to organize and protect themselves. They were not individualistic. They have origin stories all relating to the homelands and had to adapt themselves to the human world in order not to stand out. It echoed on some personal level with my life and the history of the Palestinian people. I was not yet aware of this parallel because I was so immersed in the story at the time.

Come Book Six of the series, we discover who the adversary is but a plan of action is not yet set against them. A stealthy solo military operation is executed to deliver a message to the adversary's leadership. That message is unfortunately imparted by the mention of the colonial state as a country that the protagonist looks to as a role-model.



Finding out a character that I'd been following excitedly for the last 5 books had decided to take a stance on real world politics felt like I got handed a rock that weighs 20 kilograms while swimming in the Mediterranean. I was forced to dissociate from what I was relating to for the last year and a half. I went straight to the internet to find out more hoping there was some misunderstanding or that the writer wasn't actually one to look up to the Zionist entity. I found his response to interviewers asking him about the controversy surrounding the statement and how he allowed his own personal views to permeate the character. He claimed that it had nothing to do with his views on the matter. This made me worry more.

Prior to this incident I had only briefly encountered the politics of what I'd inherited within my media. I never intended to engage those on the ends of the comment sections on 9Gag pages, because it took effort and was not worth the energy. This chapter of a book was done intentionally. It was thought out. The word hegemony finally earned its meaning in my book. Palestine wasn't mentioned in cartoons, or in games, or in books for entertainment! I already knew my stance, and I knew why. I was furious. I finished reading the comic and stopped buying any more issues. A summer later, I drafted an email to the author that I did not send. Only until last year did I go searching for pirated PDFs to find closure in the story. The fables return to their homeland after a brutal sacrifice of some of their best main characters and the fall of the adversary.

NEAR OF  
COUNTRY CALLED  
ISRAEL?

WHO KNOWS?  
MAYBE. WHY'S THAT  
IMPORTANT?

HERE'S WHAT  
YOU NEED TO KNOW  
ABOUT IT.

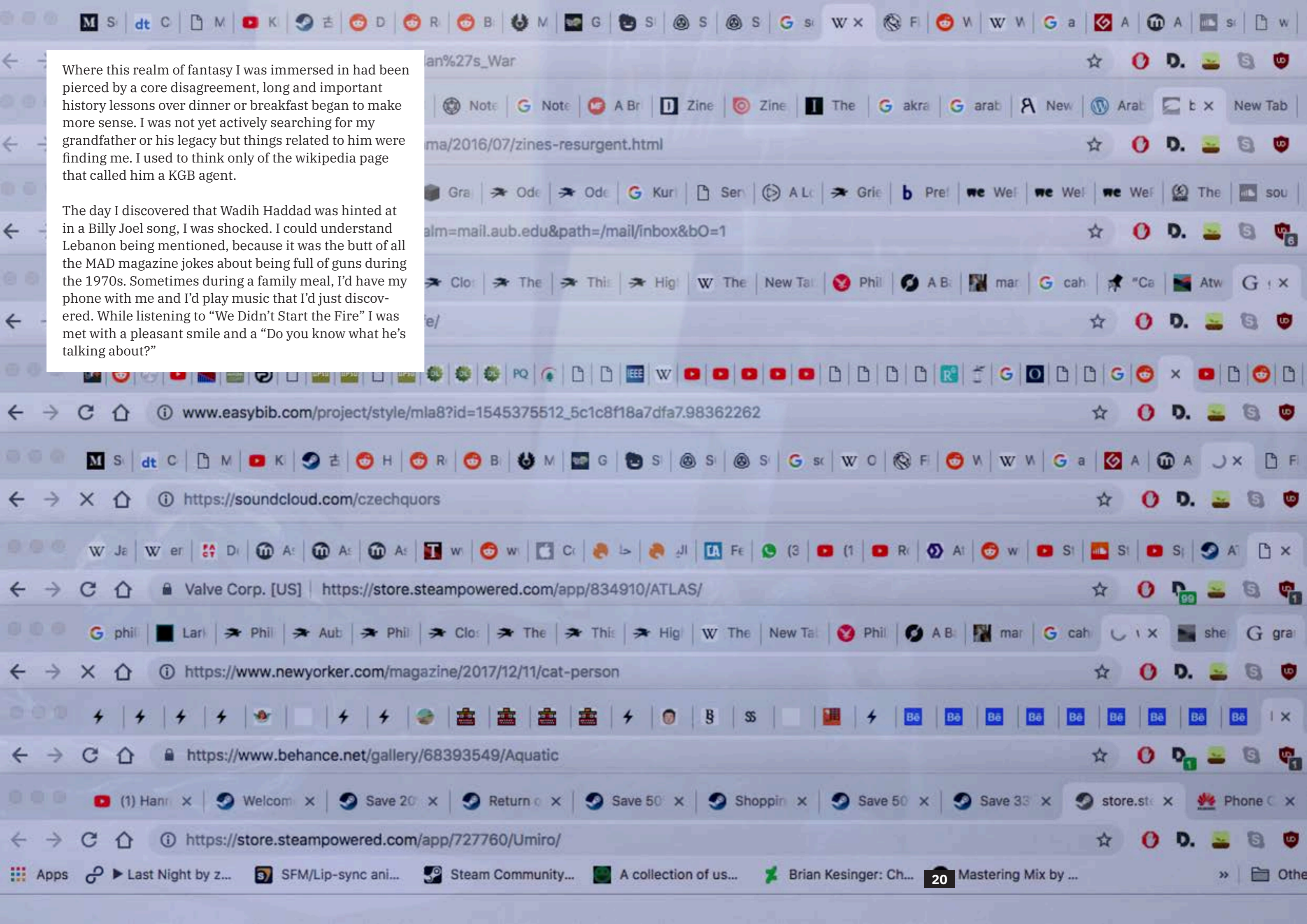
THEY'RE ALL  
JUST PEOPLE  
TRYING TO  
GET BY.

SOME IN THE MIDDLE  
WORLD CONSTANTLY  
WAIL AND MOAN ABOUT  
THE ENDLESS AND  
OF REFUGEE.

BECAUSE THEY STAY ALIVE  
THEY STAY ALIVE  
TOUGH  
TO MAKE  
DEARLY  
BECAUSE A BUNCH WHO MAKE  
BY BEING A BUNCH WHO MAKE  
LITTLE BAR GUYS THEY DO  
THE OTHER TIME AGAINST  
THE EVERYTHING AEL.

Where this realm of fantasy I was immersed in had been pierced by a core disagreement, long and important history lessons over dinner or breakfast began to make more sense. I was not yet actively searching for my grandfather or his legacy but things related to him were finding me. I used to think only of the wikipedia page that called him a KGB agent.

The day I discovered that Wadiah Haddad was hinted at in a Billy Joel song, I was shocked. I could understand Lebanon being mentioned, because it was the butt of all the MAD magazine jokes about being full of guns during the 1970s. Sometimes during a family meal, I'd have my phone with me and I'd play music that I'd just discovered. While listening to "We Didn't Start the Fire" I was met with a pleasant smile and a "Do you know what he's talking about?"



Searching up one of the most important hijackings he was involved in, I came upon the Dawson's field hijacking. My dad would call it operation Matar el Thawra. The planes were landed in an abandoned British landing field in Jordan. People commenting on an AP archived video of the event were asking why everyone was smiling [hostages included]. I felt like I should have commented.





All this time, his history and his consequences had butterflied their way into mine. There was obviously something I wasn't paying attention to. For one thing, this meant it was no longer his and my father's history but mine too now. I began to actively seek out my grandfather after I began to take comfort in the things I had learned about him. Learning that I was now spending and ending my undergraduate degree at 6 years convinced me that if I'd spent any less time, I probably wouldn't have figured out what I needed to about relationships, politics and myself. It's true that he graduated as a medical professional while I'm exiting as a graduate of graphic design but that's not the point.

What distinguished his scenario further from mine was that he was denied entry to AUB because he was still too young at one point, and this meant that he was an over-achiever. Where I had stumbled into design as a consequence of being forced into Economics and Sociology in my final year of highschool (I had an interest in genetics that was rooted in Spore and the mad-scientist control over nature. I recognized soon enough though that I probably would've hated the whole process of learning and to end up making karyotypes for people. So design was the right place).

Raymond Abu-Haydar

Zayen Adroni

Abdul-Aziz al-Asadi

Shawki Azzar

Wadi Atyyab

Henry A...

Ohannes Der-Ohannesian

Marc Donikian

Hayat Ghaur

Mustafa Ghaur

Najla Ghazi

Wadi Elachri

# SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

A. U. B.

CLASS OF 1952

Jawad Idris

Sayyid Ziya Imam

Khayr-ud-Din Im

Sa'd Hasan

Shawki Hital

Rubi al-Hindawi

Munir Jabbar

Yoris Jenevjian

Shahar Ka Kajon

Ahmad Al-Khatib

Araf Khuri

Amal Kurban

Charles Matesich

Robert Matossian

Jacob Murnai



This highshot of The Big W was softened by both of my parent's retellings of their own academic experiences. My dad never completed his Masters in Political Science at the London School of Economics while my mother struggled heartbreakingly through engineering until she graduated with the first batch of computer science students AUB had rolled out. My mother did not continue working in her newfound passion when she got married and had me (Well, fuck, realizing only now how often I don't acknowledge that). My dad graduated while AUB was being bombed before jumping late into his Master's at LSE. He stopped for a number of reasons. I don't attribute this as failure, but honestly, life and free will can be confusing to a man in his mid 20s [1986-1988] (Why are my teeth clenching so tightly while I read over these again).



My experience becomes a web of all these meanings that I've decided to entangle. I had my first romantic relationship and breakup during 3 of these university years. I connect this mental node to my mother's own wounds of the heart and her experience with a trashy (in my opinion) boyfriend. My fear of finishing and my academic paralysis related to the weight of what it means "to not finish my education" resting with my father. My grandfather's example offers that in all cases, I am more like my parents than I am like him [and his siblings]. So, fuck that.

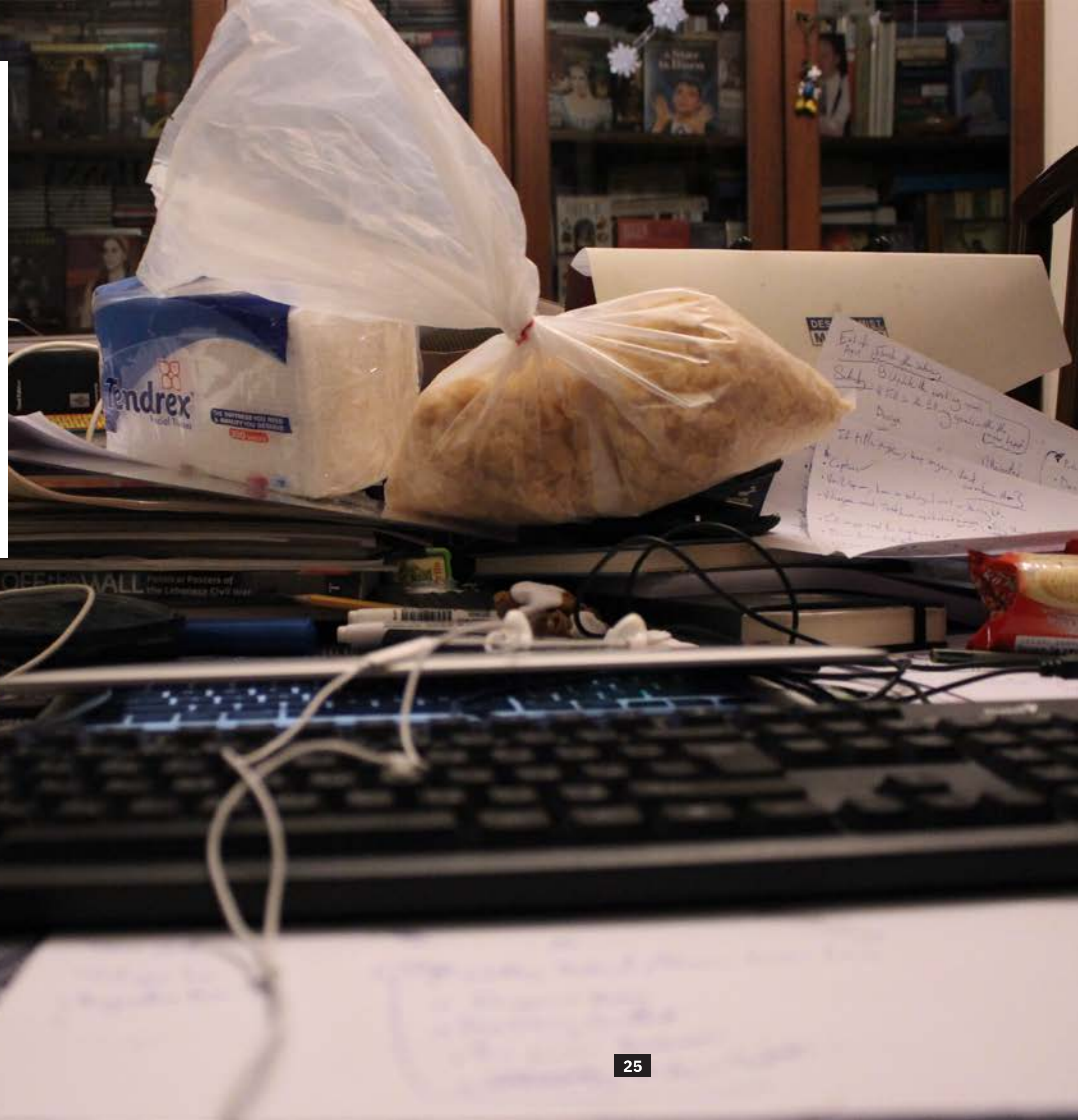
Fuck that, until I realize he finished what his parents wanted from him and then as often described " he threw the (teeth loosened, shoulders locking, a quick arm stretch and a beat of the chest, and we're back) diploma in their faces and went straight to work on what he wanted with George Habash. They headed for Jordan and set up an infirmary ward/education camp to receive Palestinians who were residing there and to begin making contact with the communities of people necessary. This was the understanding I needed.

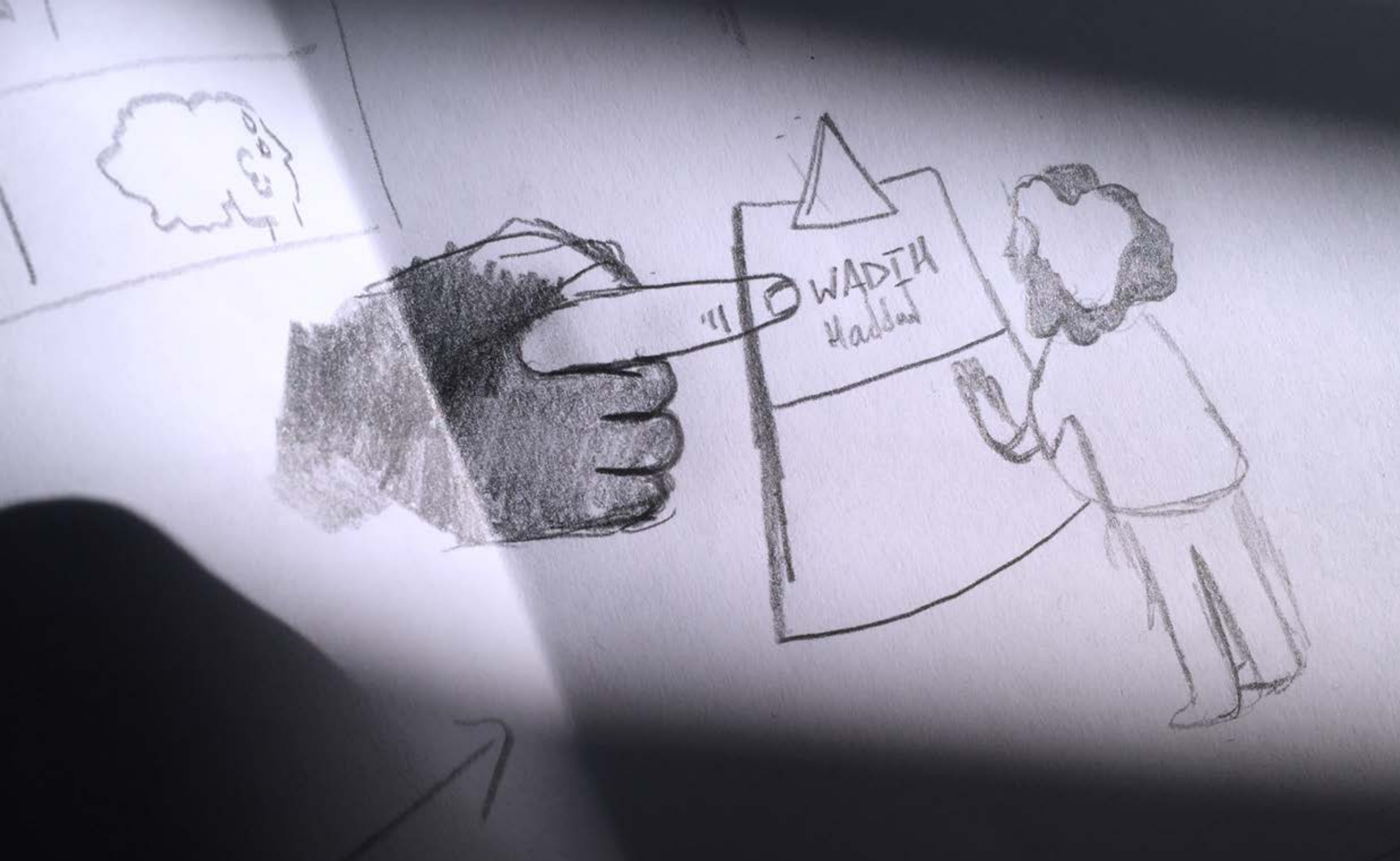
No longer is the art or design aspect here for me to doodle and draw my catastrophic critters and fantastic ferocities. It was here for me to channel an idea forward. Passing over Lissitzky's work later in poster class, I saw that character that married ideas and design, and I thought: Great. I'm actually still on track, then.

His father wanted him and his siblings to be doctors. My father wants me to get a degree and further myself as much as possible [be good (wanna say perfect) at what I choose to do, basically] . One [George] ran away before doing agricultural engineering, the other [Racheed] ended at a biology degree before following his unquenchable desire for mathematics, and Wadih, the youngest, (back to cornflakes. Poppins btw, because fuck Kelloggs. three spoonfuls, now I can continue) got the desired degree but continued with the issues at hand and his community's interests.

What I've learned this far is not for the novelty of ideas (through the earphone: The light humor of "idiot of a father" continues), it is now for the translation of those ideas and allowing them back into the general sphere of discussion for the communities concerned.

That's not to say I'm going to be churning things out on the daily. I'm still a master procrastinator that needs to sort out their work ethic and other anxieties that are also now newly and constantly recognized.





Recognizing this new purpose. What's holding me back?  
What am I up against? (The degree first, but that seems  
to be sorting itself out now as we go along).

My name is the prime issue.



If the 2010s and onwards were the beginning of the 3D remakes, and eventually, moving towards 2020, the rise of franchise reboots and the return of things people were long nostalgic for, then I sure as hell shouldn't seem like that (haha, another cultural parallel). Point is, my name has proven to turn some heads at meetings or encounters with random strangers who are involved or interested in the history of the Popular front for the Liberation of Palestine. Eyes widen, smiles open up, they know how sinisterly badass this man was. "Israel only feared two things, Arab unity and Wadih Haddad", damn, why wasn't my granddad immortal. Fuck Cancer. Fuck Cancer twice. and more so for every family member it took.

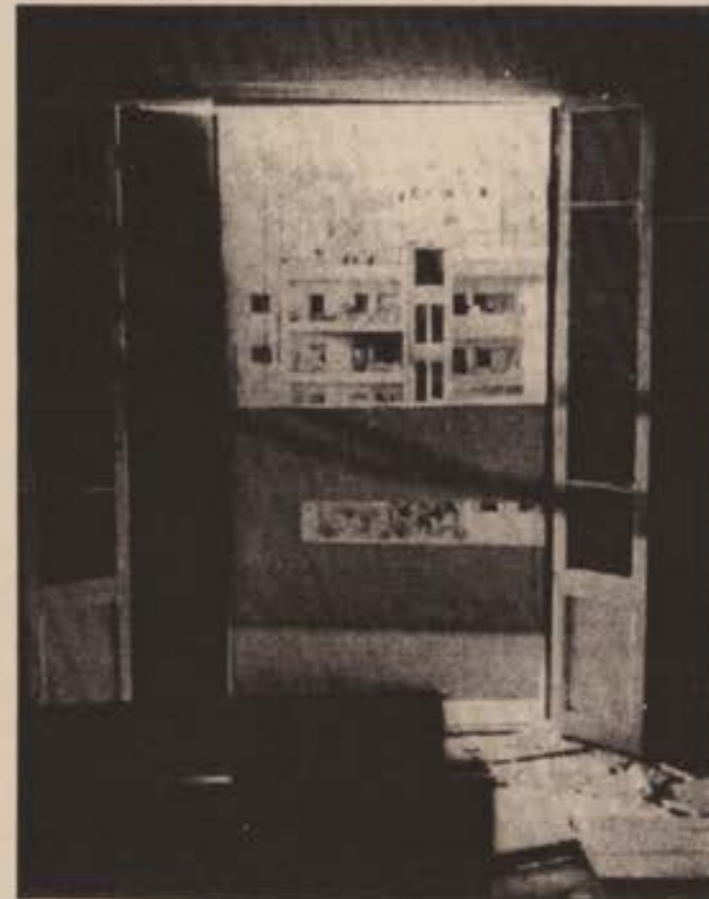
When I went to do my official Brevet exams for our lousy post-colonial French education system (I'll be bitter to anyone who thinks they can thank the French for anything we have here, the French only brought Pheonician brain worms (Even this comment makes me worry I've attached a triggering sentiment to aggressors)), the soldier who officiated my papers read my name as I walked into the building and gave me this life defining dilemma: "Your name's dangerous!"

What's the point of hiding if everyone knows who you probably might be related to? Lebanon's a small country, I have a hard time attaching faces to names and otherwise (I'm still getting acquainted with names of politicians and movie stars, let alone my family history. I guess the room reflects the mindset fatherly critique is true. I remember discovering a break on this but I can't remember it. Less about damning the self and more about if the room's a mess then you need help, not shame... okay, moving on). If I'm figured out, and I can't figure out others, then I'm in danger if I don't know who I'm interacting with. In most cases, I am playing a fool. But also, assuming that everyone in 2020 is going to remember someone from the 70s is a stretch. Wadih worked hard on hiding, and the proof is in the pudding [a dad statement, usually used for exams].

# الدكتور وديع حداد يتهم الصهيونية العالمية والجيبة الشعبية بتهم الاستخبارات ايراني مزعوم يحمل اسماً مستعاراً أطلق الصواريخ المتقدمة روسية الصنع ومن النوع الذي قصفت به مكاتب منظمة



قاعة الاستقبال ولفرة النوم في منزل الدكتور حداد .



من هنا أطلقت الصواريخ على النابيه المقابلة .



أحد الصواريخ وعليه كتابة صينية .

**توشيبا**

مسجل كاسيت نقال  
يعمل على البطارية العادية  
بطارية السيارة / وكهرباء  
٢٢٠/١١٠ فولت .

KT - 20 P

**Toshiba**

راديو مسجل كاسيت  
يعمل على البطارية



**رايتس يصفه**  
**الأطباء**



**مجان**  
مع كل شامبو  
صابون رايتس  
الطبيبي

الوكيل تلفون ٢٤٧٠٢٢٢

يسمى الدكتور وديع حداد ، أحد عناصر الجبهة الشعبية لتحرير فلسطين ، بأصابت أربعة صواريخ منها بسكته ، ونجح عن ذلك إصابة طفله (٨ سنوات) وزوجته بجروح .

ان الجبهة الشعبية لتحرير فلسطين يهبطها لهذه المناسبة تأكيد ما يأتي :  
١ - انها تعتبر هذا الاعتداء الهجومي على منزل سكني من عسكرة ماهولة بالعائلات من منطقة سكنية ليس فقط دليلا على السلوك الوحشي غير المسؤول للقائمين ، بل أيضا إشارة الى التخطيط الذي يتنبأ بمخططات الجهات المعادية في محاولاتها التصدي للمقاومة .

٢ - انها تلاحظ ان المعتدين الذين سلكوا الأسلوب السذي مارسوه في اعتدائهم الآثم على منطقة التحرير في تشرين الأول الماضي قد استفادوا من عدم جدية التحقيقات والإجراءات التي اعقبت الاعتداء على المنظمة ، تلك التحقيقات والإجراءات التي لو عولجت بحزم لما كانت تكررت بهذا الشكل .

٣ - انها تنبه السى ان أية محاولة لاستغلال هذا الاعتداء الآثم في طريق الدعوة السى تقيد نشاط المقاومة وتغند حركتها وحركة عناصرها لا بشكل الا رضوخا جيبا لمخططات امبرائيل والامبريالية من مثل هذه الاعتداءات . وان مثل هذا الحادث السذي تعتبره  
- التتعة في الصفحة ٨ -

## ايراني مزعوم يحمل اسما مستعاراً

ونبين ان محمد علي تركسي كان استغرى الشقة من بناية الحمصري واجراها بواسطة محمود جمعه والتصاحب خليل قلعه لشخص زعم انه ايراني الجنسية وديعي «أحمد نصرت» وذلك في اواخر نيسان الماضي . ودفع «أحمد نصرت» بدل الإيجار سلفا عن ثلاثة اشهر ونقل السى الشقة الحقيقتين وتقبلا من الاسواقى المتزلية . وكان يحضر الى الشقة في الليل ويضع نظارتين سوداوين وهو شاب اسير البشرة في العقد الثالث من عمره يحمل القامة وله شاربسا دوللاس . وكان يتظاهر بأنه لا يحسن اللغة العربية ويتخاشى المرور امام الناس . وفي المدة الاخيرة شوهد يتنقل بسيارة فولكسفاك كان يقودها بنفسه .

ووجدت في الشقة رسائل واسماء وارقام هاتف وتقطع نقدية معدومة ومفاتيح وكتاب عن تحسين نسل الجواد العربي وسلسلة من روايات الجيب . وفي المطبخ علبة نايك وسكر وبن ومعلبات مختلفة .

واستمع المحقق السى الدكتور وديع حداد السذي اعاد ان وراء محاولة قلعه بنسب منزله بالصواريخ الصهيونية العالمية . كما استمع السى بعض الشهود .  
واصدر المحقق استنابة السى رجال

شيدت حدادا وكانت تباع شققا او بؤجر . واطلقت الصواريخ من شقة في طبقها الخامسة .  
ودهم رجال الأمن بحضور المدعي العام والمحقق هذه الشقة معثروا على صاروخين لم يتلفا بسبب عطل فسي طرا عليهما فنولى الخبير العسكري تفكيكهما .

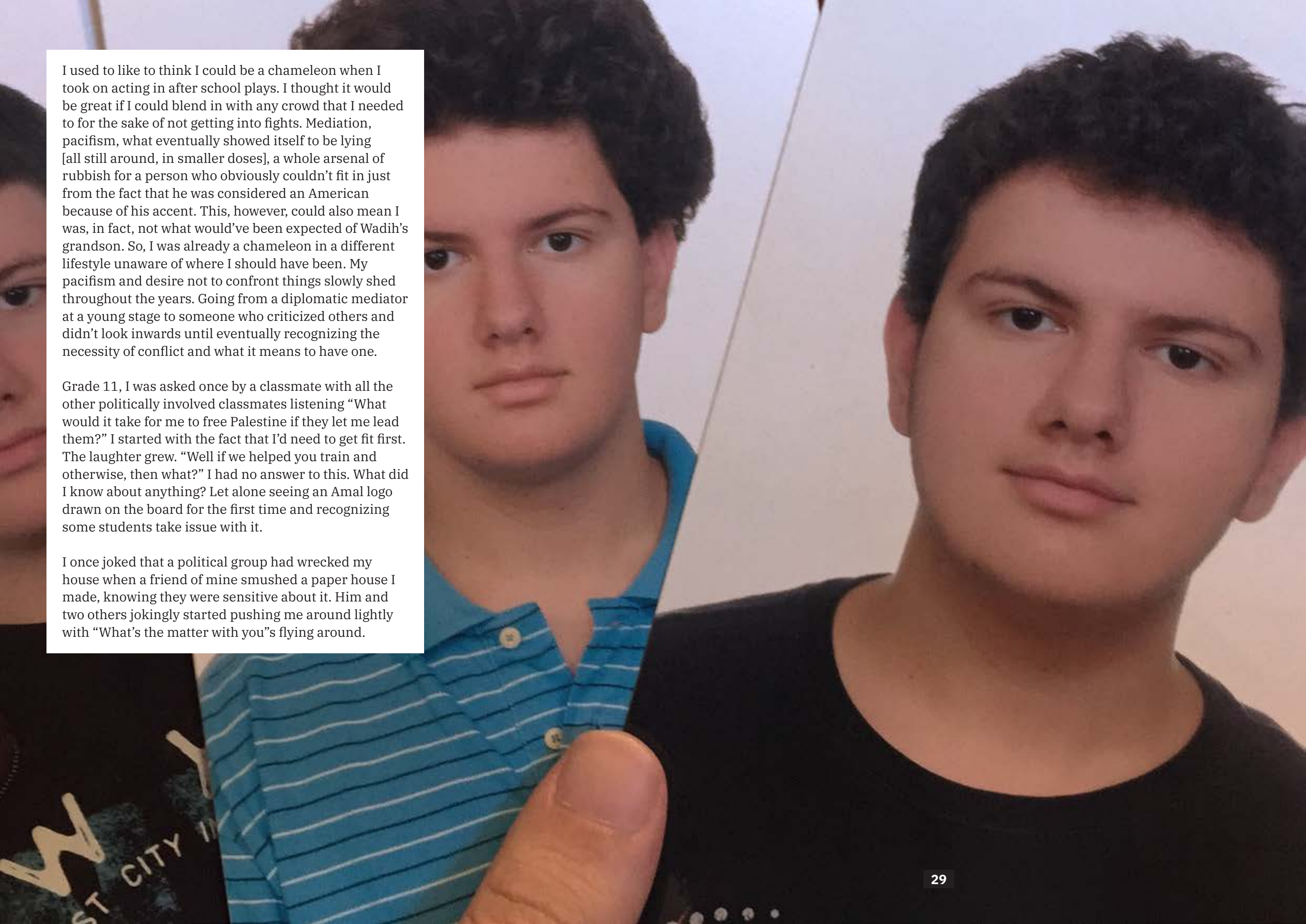
والصواريخ روسية الصنع من نوع « آر . بي . جي » وتسمية بالتي اطلقت على مكاتب منظمة التحرير الفلسطينية في كورنيتش المزرعة لكنها تختلف عنها في ان مداها يبلغ نحو ٧٠٠ متر في حين ان مدى الصواريخ الاخرى يبلغ نحو ٣٠٠ متر .

واشار الخبير العسكري ان الصواريخ جهزت بقواعد ثلاث مع الات للوهيت وانطلقت من اعلى السى اسفل وفق المخطط الذي وضع لها واصابت منزل الدكتور حداد .

وعثر ايضا في الشقة على جهاز ارسال واوراق وحقيقتين الاولى لونها بني لصفحت عليها علامة تابعة للخطوط الجوية الفرنسية والاخرى سوداء لصفحت عليها علامات لتركسي ك.ل.م . ولوغتها ترا . وهاتان الحقيقتان مزودجنا القعر والجوانب ويعتقد انه نسج بواسطتها ادخال الصواريخ السى بيروت عن طريق المطار . وتطفي القهران الاسفلان بكلمة من الالبسة للتمليل .

## عرفات يتهم الذين اغتالوا خالد يشريطي بإطلاق الصواريخ على منزل الدكتور حداد





I used to like to think I could be a chameleon when I took on acting in after school plays. I thought it would be great if I could blend in with any crowd that I needed to for the sake of not getting into fights. Mediation, pacifism, what eventually showed itself to be lying [all still around, in smaller doses], a whole arsenal of rubbish for a person who obviously couldn't fit in just from the fact that he was considered an American because of his accent. This, however, could also mean I was, in fact, not what would've been expected of Wadih's grandson. So, I was already a chameleon in a different lifestyle unaware of where I should have been. My pacifism and desire not to confront things slowly shed throughout the years. Going from a diplomatic mediator at a young stage to someone who criticized others and didn't look inwards until eventually recognizing the necessity of conflict and what it means to have one.

Grade 11, I was asked once by a classmate with all the other politically involved classmates listening "What would it take for me to free Palestine if they let me lead them?" I started with the fact that I'd need to get fit first. The laughter grew. "Well if we helped you train and otherwise, then what?" I had no answer to this. What did I know about anything? Let alone seeing an Amal logo drawn on the board for the first time and recognizing some students take issue with it.

I once joked that a political group had wrecked my house when a friend of mine smushed a paper house I made, knowing they were sensitive about it. Him and two others jokingly started pushing me around lightly with "What's the matter with you"s flying around.



*Film screening*

**Laila's Birthday**

Thursday, April 12th, 6PM,  
Auditorium C

*Performance*

**Ayouba**

by Ismail Khalidi

Tuesday April 17th, 8PM,  
Auditorium B

*Lecture*

**The Role of Media and Social  
Media in advocating the  
Palestinian Cause**

by Khodor Salameh and Rabie  
Barakat, Thursday April 19th, 7PM,  
Auditorium B

*Souk*

**Palestinian food and artifacts  
and BDS awareness**

Monday April 16th till Wednesday  
18th, in front of Physics

*Exhibition*

**Drawings of Palestinian artists**

Monday April 16th till Friday 20th,  
in front of Physics

For a long while, I hadn't recognized that my entire lifestyle was supposed to help cover us as being different than what was before (Even if as a consequence of my father's own unintentional desires and worries).

One moment that was to my benefit was when some students approached me to design a poster for Israel Apartheid Week. This was it. This was going to be my entry point for designing for my politics. I found the group I was interested in because they were interested in taking my work and not being as critical about the concepts. I was not worried about grades and I found a place to exercise this marriage of desires. A year later I became a regular member of this club of leftists and activists, designing some posters and posts for them as well as other student groups they were in contact with.



By Fall 2018, I was part of The Red Oak club, a student activist club; I was introduced to members of the Palestinian Cultural Club. My sister, now graduating before me after a 3 year journey, was taking part in student elections with the Secular Club as well. I supported her as I found that the Secular Club and the Red Oak had similar interests. It was important to me that whatever student activism existed worked unanimously, while recognizing and being wary of the differences in their behavior.

Two months after my second major course holdback, design as a major was beginning to seem not worth all the trouble anymore. Repeating a course was great when I felt engaged and willing to shape up and ask the right questions and the feedback reflected this ( 68 in the first run to an 80 in the second). But this time around, academia was becoming convincingly pestering from whatever I intended to work on in my free time. Gaming had already become muted as a hobby. I did not want my design work with the club to meet the same fate. Balance had to be met.



In the coming weeks, the university hosted a professor of policy who normalized relations with an Israeli institute. Students gathered at his talk to protest it and shut him down. The koofiyyeh [Wikipedia's telling me Keffiyeh] was being distributed among those who intended to go to the protest and in general as keepsakes for on-campus solidarity. A friend of mine offered me and my sister one that he had gotten from near his home. You'd notice it was being worn regularly for the remainder of the week among others. Eventually, I decided it shouldn't be a problem if I were to wear it and swung it around my neck while walking to classes, clumsily tying it like some sophisticated article of clothing. It felt good.

For the coming few days, I'd try different and more comfortable configurations; I'd wear it only folded from one corner to the other over my shoulders. Felt like both a grandmother and a baron with a shoulder cape simultaneously. Again, the sense of attention began to both worry me and encourage me. Walking through Hamra's streets with the koofiyyeh gliding along with me, I felt like I was asking to have something happen to me while I walked on. This, paired with my long hair, felt like I was agitating whatever onlookers decided to spot me. I was once called a sheep for stopping a car too long while crossing the street. On another occasion, a child called out to me from a neighborhood balcony as "you with the scrunched hair".

The worse, however, was definitely when some ass of a soldier decided he needed to warn me that I should look out for myself because I look like "the third sex". Now that this comes up, a more recent incident involved a group of teenagers in tight shirts and tank tops who waited in line behind me at bliss house to make chomping noises and then fake sneezing to spray me with water. These last two incidents could have gone better. I could've responded to either situation, but I just said whatever was necessary to move out of the situation. I laughed along with the soldier's suggestion, and I only gave the boys accusatory stares before they feigned apologies and dumped the blame on the clowning friend. These incidents are the most I've dealt with and I've seen worse happen to others. During the beginning of the October 17 protests, a long-haired 20 year old also wearing a koofiyyeh was dragged and beaten up. It felt daring to be outside with this identity on the front. Knowing that this is barely even daring relative to other people's experiences.

So wearing this necessary accessory began to feel like a request to join a group. I should at least know how to defend this identity once it is out there. It would stir up conversations for some. When I'd gone to a bar I frequent, someone that knew my name asked me "So when are you freeing Palestine?". This was all positive and fun, and those that I knew who talk ill of the matter also poked and grinned but no trouble arose. No escalation was immediate. It felt safe.



My father finally saw me wearing the koofiyyeh proudly when I came home after he had returned from work around 6 one day. His glass in hand, he had begun his almost daily preparation for dinner which consisted of alcohol, a salty snack, the news, and his sorrow. His flame burns differently each day depending on a myriad of things; between a date held in memory, global ongoings, and more personal issues with family members that have stressed him out (me included). Sometimes it's as simple as asking him not to drink for that particular day even when he wasn't going to and this would prompt him to do it.

He was not stressed today, in fact, I'd say his flame was a mellow yellow. He was happy to see me wearing the koofiyyeh, it came as a bit of a surprise to him. As I went and poured lunch to sit with him, we began a long conversation that segued into talking about the differences between groups like that of the PFLP and others in how they operated. He did not bother with their beginnings or their benefactors. Rather, he delved deeper into discussion about how Wadih and his group worked on dealing with the zionist state as a military.

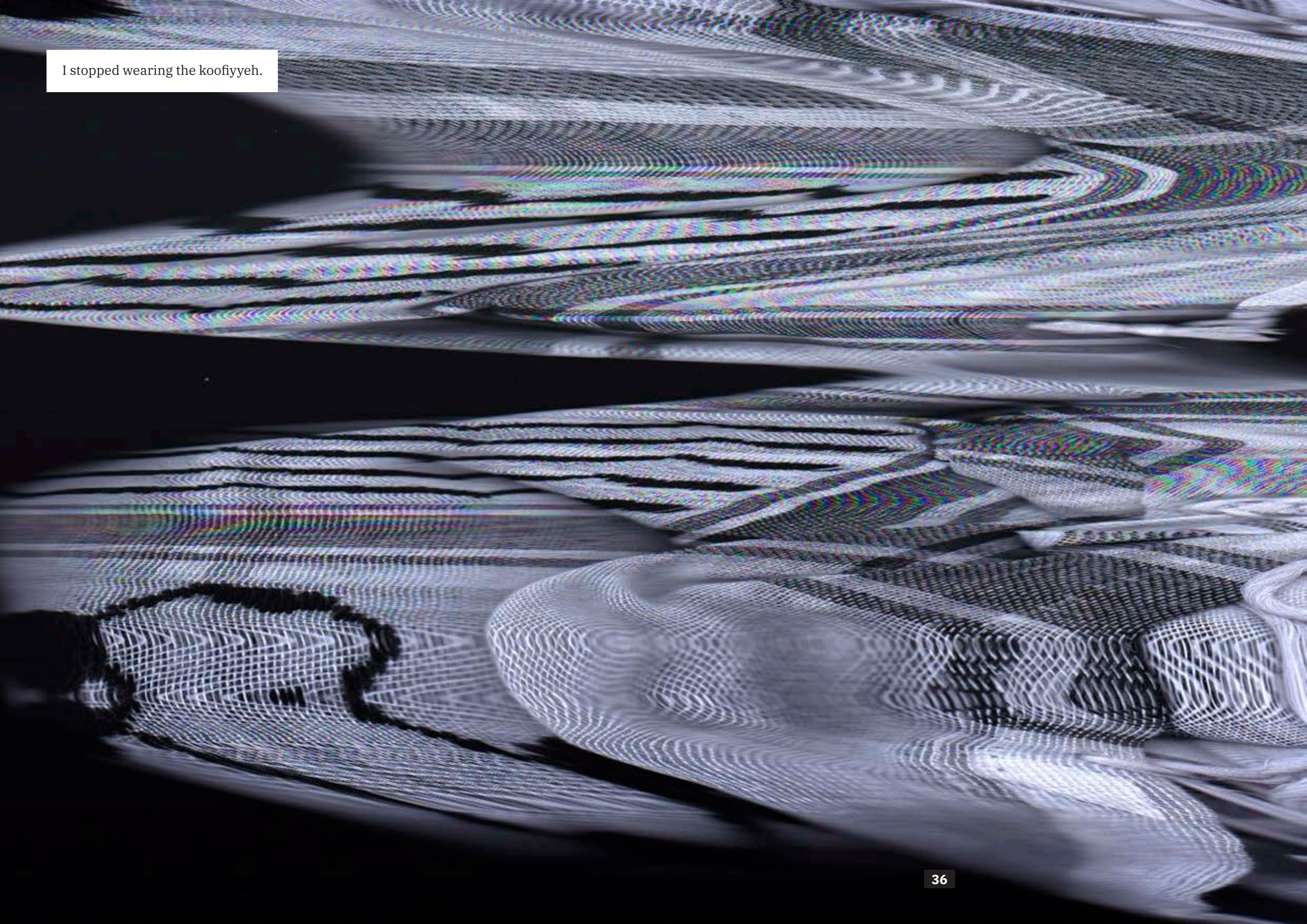


Whether my dad drinks or doesn't, his lectures on political histories always have an emotional build-up to a single or multitude of points. He was still the tour guide at this point, very calm and collected. To my grandfather, the apartheid state was not a force to be fought against in traditional army-based combat. They were funded and supported by countries with technology, wealth, and power. The best way to beat them was through non-traditional means in the spirit of the PFLP's politics, with the group's global solidarity.

He paused, then critiqued the military exhibitionism: unlike what we see today where some groups call for martyrs by the hundreds because the population is dense and plenty enough, Wadih stressed the importance of the individual. That was the second lesson he was imparting. For that. Freezing for a beat, my dad now sat closer to the edge of his couch, his tipsy slouch now supported by the firm grasp he has on the empty glass set on the table. His finger now pointed at the koofiyyeh hanging lowly by my shoulders, and for that reason, he did not want media coverage. Hiding mattered. And that's why my grandfather would have disapproved of "actions like this."



I stopped wearing the koofiyeh.



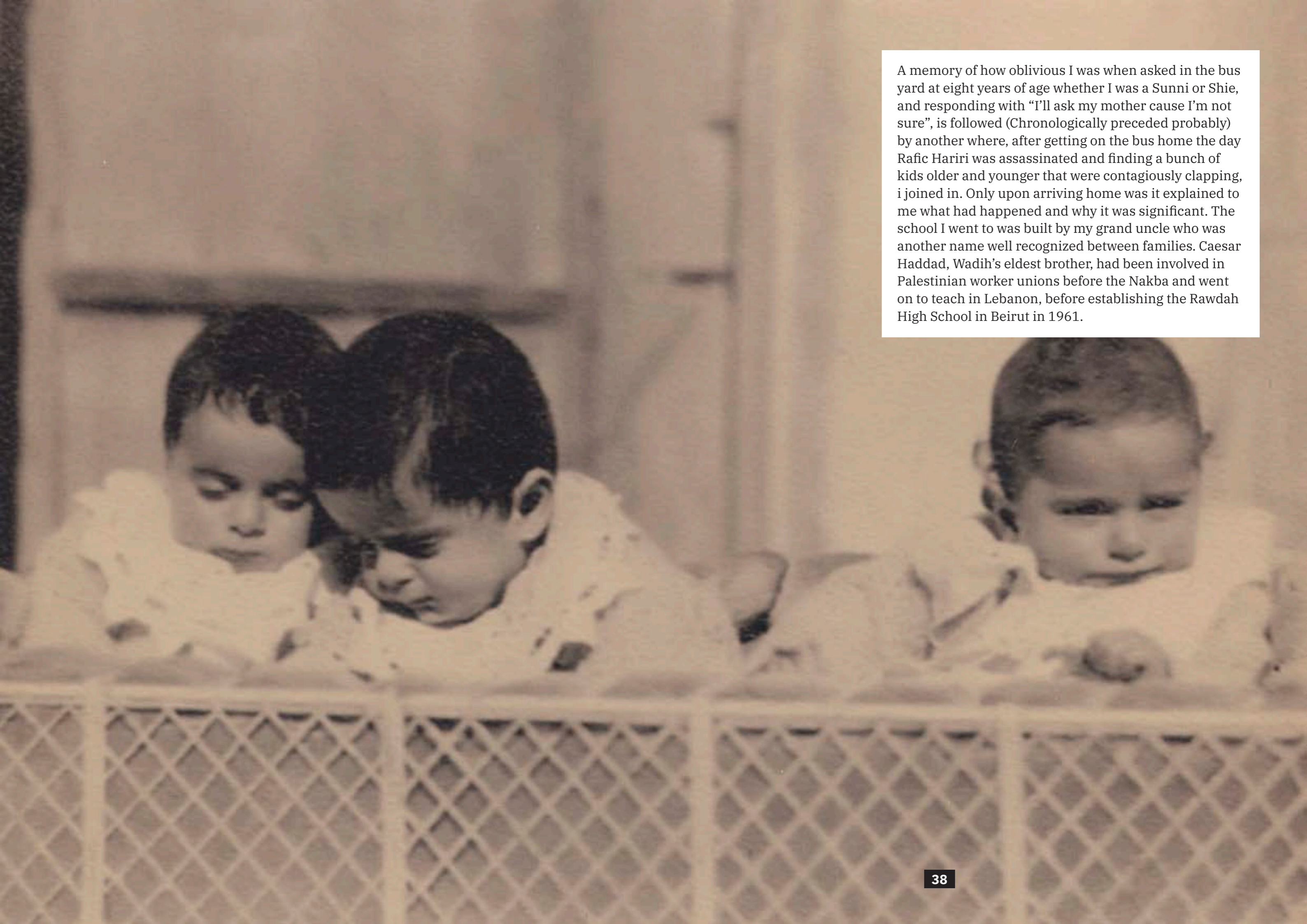
I wasn't happy about it. I felt like I'd been disapproved of continuing with that activity cause I now knew better. I didn't stop going to related events however. Things that were outside of my father's radar of cultural activities stood out. If hidden identity was a rule to maintain then fine, but seeking out allies and existing communities was also important to gain more familiarity and not remain in complete solitude. Meeting people through student-led initiatives was the safest thing I could do.

People that recognized who I was would either ask me about what he did or whether I was looking forward to anything similar. I realized this was a space I could be flexible with on how much I divulged. More often telling people close to nothing and others getting into the details of one story that's well-known. I tried to maintain that my main importance was my design learning and that I wasn't very-well politically versed. I was curious, which was good, but I was also intimidated and overwhelmed.



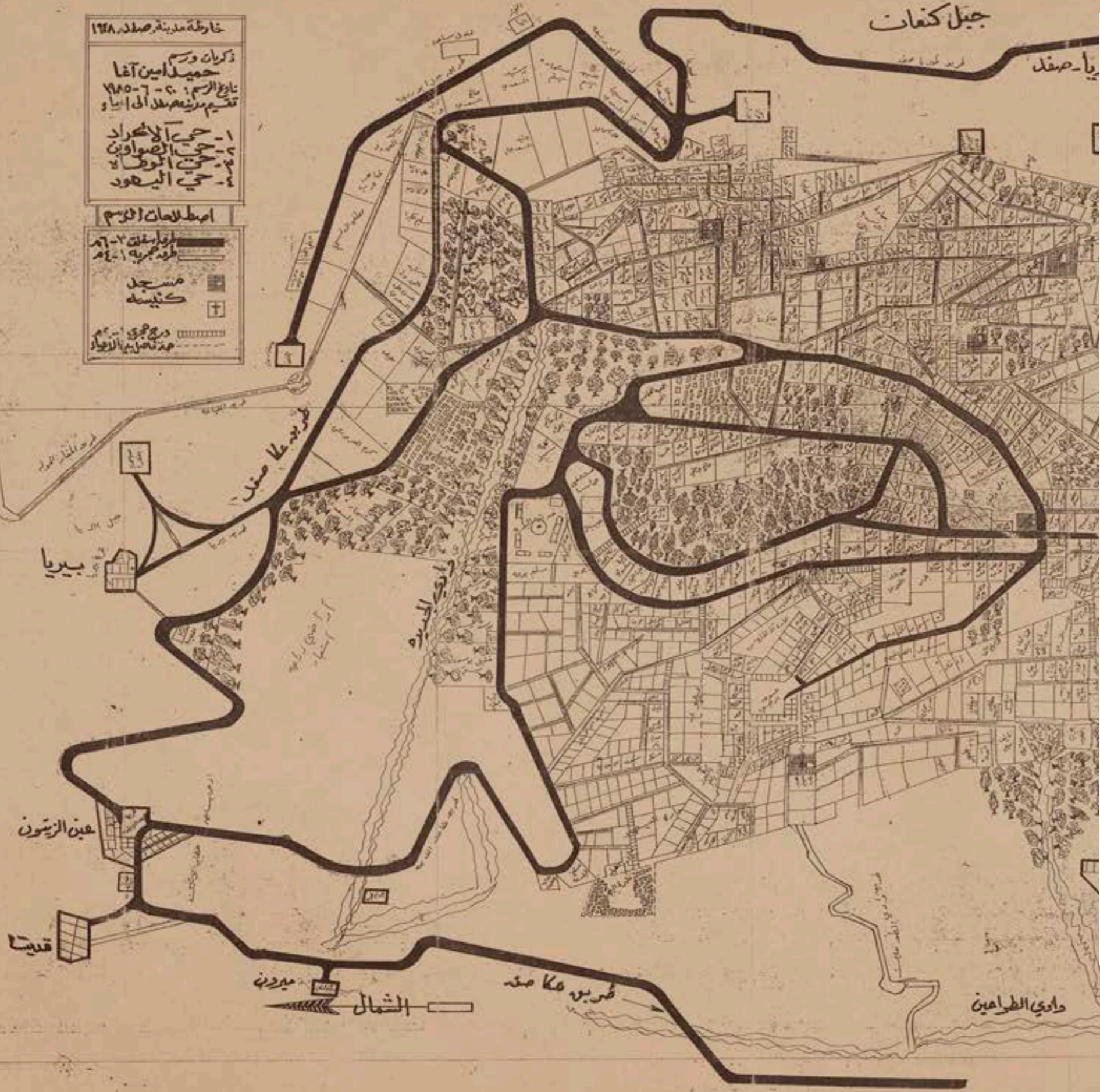


A memory of how oblivious I was when asked in the bus yard at eight years of age whether I was a Sunni or Shie, and responding with “I’ll ask my mother cause I’m not sure”, is followed (Chronologically preceded probably) by another where, after getting on the bus home the day Rafic Hariri was assassinated and finding a bunch of kids older and younger that were contagiously clapping, i joined in. Only upon arriving home was it explained to me what had happened and why it was significant. The school I went to was built by my grand uncle who was another name well recognized between families. Caesar Haddad, Wadih’s eldest brother, had been involved in Palestinian worker unions before the Nakba and went on to teach in Lebanon, before establishing the Rawdah High School in Beirut in 1961.



خارطة مدينة صيدا ١٦٤٨  
 ذكران ورسم  
 حميد امين آغا  
 تاريخ الرسم: ١٦٥٠-٦-١٨٥٠  
 تقسيم المدينة الى احياء و  
 ١- حي الاحمراد  
 ٢- حي الصواوين  
 ٣- حي الوسط  
 ٤- حي اليهود

اصطلاحات الرسم  
 احياء  
 مسجد  
 كنيسة  
 درج حجري  
 حد تقسيم الارض



With that recognition of political literacy in mind, the day I decided to go to a mapping workshop in Trablous's Baddawi camp was one of the first times I was testing how I'd manage far off from Beirut without any friends or contacts of comfort nearby. I started my journey on a Connex bus from Charles Helou on a Sunday at noon. I reached Trablous and then took a "service" to the camp. I got lost for around 20 minutes before talking to some men in military uniforms. I could feel like I stood out and I was slightly worried that I was in the wrong place. After a few jokes about joining them in training they put me on a motorcycle with one of their friends who knew what I was talking about and sent me on my way. Everyone was friendly.

Reaching the workshop studio, I walked into a room full of young adults and people in their late twenties. I took a seat straight away. After learning how to use the Palestine Open Maps website, I was invited up to the hosts' family house for a small meal. I was asked about my whereabouts and how I got here. I was worried that once they'd hear my full name they'd react but, to my surprise, they had no clue who my grandfather was. The second conversational bump was realizing that they thought I came from a camp in Beirut. I had to explain that my granddad's family was able to get the Lebanese nationality because it was being offered to Palestinian Christians at the time of the Nakba.

I was no longer tense or fumbling with my Arabic. I was comfortable listening to this crowd of people that were gathered for dinner in this humble home. I was glad I felt like I wasn't here representing anyone or anything. I was here for me. I lingered in Trablous with one of the organizers and ran into Samir Mahmoud at a cafe to my pleasant surprise. Shortly after, I was in a van hurtling back to Beirut past midnight.

This whole adventure put me into new understandings. My dad's continued insistence on this need to hide or blend in now seemed to me a more personal matter. And rightly so! My father, as part of the generation that was brought up witnessing the loss of Ghassan Kanafani, Naji Al Ali, Jamal Abd-El Naser and many other iconic figures [he met or knew growing up], was probably convinced of a hopelessness and defeat from an early age. His house was shelled before he was 7. A scar from a grafting surgery and shard parts still in his chest outline that event.

I played a video directed by Shady Habash at dinner time the other day because news of his passing in jail had come up. By the end of the video my dad let out a furious "fuck" and I realized I may have distressed his day further.

My father's sorrow comes gleefully in song and rhyme, as he beats on the nearest derbakkeh he can find at family gatherings or dinner, in immersive story-tellings of memories and histories told while laughing, coughing or red-facedly tempered. It shows its vast oblivious depth in his cultural interests, where he entertains a multidisciplinary of topics from Egyptian cinema, that now lives poorly cut and preserved on Rotana, to works from the National Theatre in London, Attenborough's narrated documentaries, and Steve Bell's toons back to illustrated books by Mohieddine el-Labbad, Helmi el Touni and Ihab Shaker. It resists defeat and resurrects through collective socialization where he will reminisce with those closest to him on life in Iraq, Syria, Yemen, Lebanon, and even Palestine. None of those memories remain except a handful of people and documents.



On the other hand, being born past all this suffering and not being witness unto it means I have only his trauma as my first testimony. I cannot memorize all his facts but I can hear his pain. I don't always accept it, but I recognize it.

غسان كنفاني

عصر المآثر السيام للبحر

أجرت على الاعتقاد بأن كتاباتي انطلقت  
دائماً من الايمان بأن الانسان هو المسؤول  
عن مصيره، وهو القادر على اجتراحه أو  
تغييره.. وفي أحيان كثيرة قادر على احراز  
شرف الموت في سبيله..

غسان كنفاني

« اتحاد الشباب الديمقراطي اللبناني »



I just knew now that I should value balance between where and when I appear like an open book. I need to know who is worth arguing with on the matter of accepting my identity's presence. And certainly that wasn't gonna be the public always. I wasn't ready. Evidenced by the people I sit with that still hold some antagonistic reservations towards Palestinians and other nationalities or sects and my unwillingness to admit adversity as instantly or plainly to them. There's a social game that I'd still been playing a safe route with. Maybe that was the better route though. First impressions with most people often ended with one of three feedbacks: cute, interesting, or friendly. The people pleaser was the dominant force. I'd only ever cut out one or two people from my life. The second relation now even reconciled. Every other communication I've lost has been more of their own accord or as a result of slow drifting apart.

Not wearing the kooffiyeh felt like a blow to the ego which had been building up since my breakup. Small decisions that became hardwired but remained subtle, like refusing Nestle products as often as possible, were beginning to solidify. That one protects themselves from strangers with unknown intentions and known adversaries with ill intentions was becoming apparent.

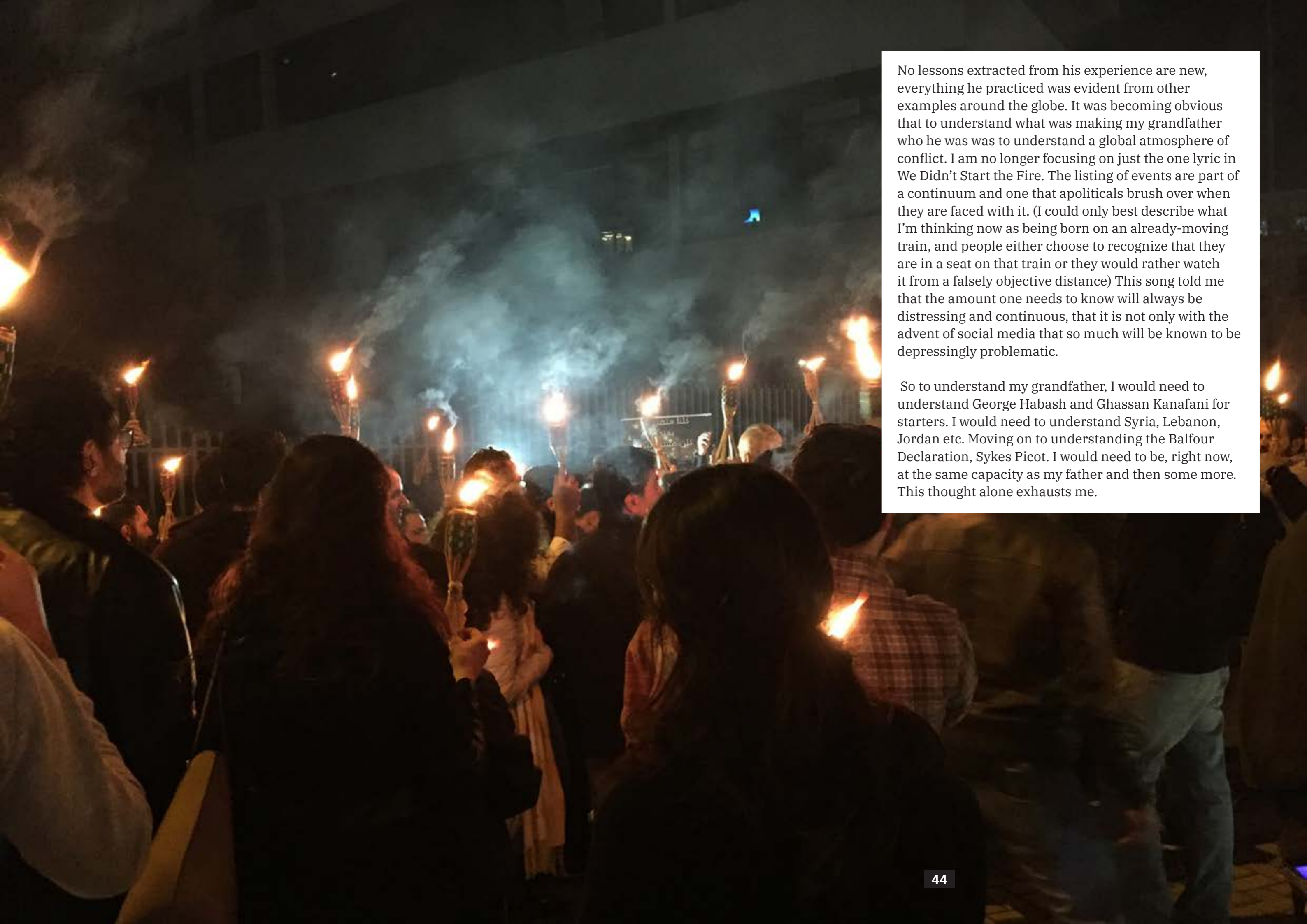
Would changing my name benefit my survival? I think it's all the same now. I think changing it now would not spare me any differently from the consequences of my own actions. If someone recognizes my name then it tells me about them as much as they probably have to assume about me.

Now convinced that a significantly larger number of people don't know who my grandfather is than those who do, I was now equipped with a new filter. Those that knew him were either inspired by his story or thought he was an enemy/opportunity. Those that do not know him but respect people similar to him or his values are people I can consider allies, cementing further my intention to adopt some of his values. It now matters more to me to let people know who he was and what he did and why he did it. What he lived through was not a time as complacent as ours. It was before the 90s. He died while the USSR still stood and while leftist entities still operated more openly and outwardly than they do now. When people bring up pictures of Che Guevara and Castro and France's guillotines or Marx's Communist Manifesto, a lot of them are convinced that that's all the examples out there for the kind of history of this oppositional force.

I find myself trusting the people I follow on social media more closely than I do the television and the news because they show me that work is ongoing still, that activism doesn't come only in the form of institutional charities or NGOs with funding from the rich. Activism comes from communal action and education.



Catchme  
Applicat  
Apar M  
Th...



No lessons extracted from his experience are new, everything he practiced was evident from other examples around the globe. It was becoming obvious that to understand what was making my grandfather who he was was to understand a global atmosphere of conflict. I am no longer focusing on just the one lyric in We Didn't Start the Fire. The listing of events are part of a continuum and one that apoliticals brush over when they are faced with it. (I could only best describe what I'm thinking now as being born on an already-moving train, and people either choose to recognize that they are in a seat on that train or they would rather watch it from a falsely objective distance) This song told me that the amount one needs to know will always be distressing and continuous, that it is not only with the advent of social media that so much will be known to be depressingly problematic.

So to understand my grandfather, I would need to understand George Habash and Ghassan Kanafani for starters. I would need to understand Syria, Lebanon, Jordan etc. Moving on to understanding the Balfour Declaration, Sykes Picot. I would need to be, right now, at the same capacity as my father and then some more. This thought alone exhausts me.

## بغايته

I am to understand, without all the details of the history, that he was not an individual on his own, my grandfather was engineered by his time. He had organized circles of support. Behind the Enemy at every Turn was a plausible and considerable goal to enact at the time. It still is in the realm of thought today, but definitely harder to convince people of.

Often quoted, Al-Fida'ee, by Ibrahim Touqan, still shocks me with how perfectly it describes what I imagine to be the ideal my grandfather followed or aspired to as it speaks of resolve without a voice, one only with action. This has eased my anxieties often when faced with the weight of the unknown information. This was applicable to design too.

I'm met with memories of a seventeen/eighteen year old self complaining insensitively to my father that I don't ever see him make anything of his time after work. I now like to believe my dad has done the mental load of carrying all the knowledge possible over to lay it before me and my sister, and anyone else that cares to listen. Gaps in his knowledge excite me because I'm given chances to go searching on my own and bring back things he hasn't discussed. I'm not left to pick up pieces of an all-around confusing puzzle in harsh circumstances. I've been sheltered and informed for most of my life.

يتلظى  
أضرمته  
طرفاً

والردي  
خجلاً

بين جنبيه خافق  
من رأى فحمة  
حماته جهنم


هو بالباب واقف  
فاهدأي عواصف



لفظ النار والد ما  
خلق الحزم أبكما  
يده تسبق الفما  
منهج الحق مظلماً

صامت لو تكلمما  
قل لمن عاب صمته  
وأخو الحزم لم تنزل  
لا تلوموه ، قد رأى

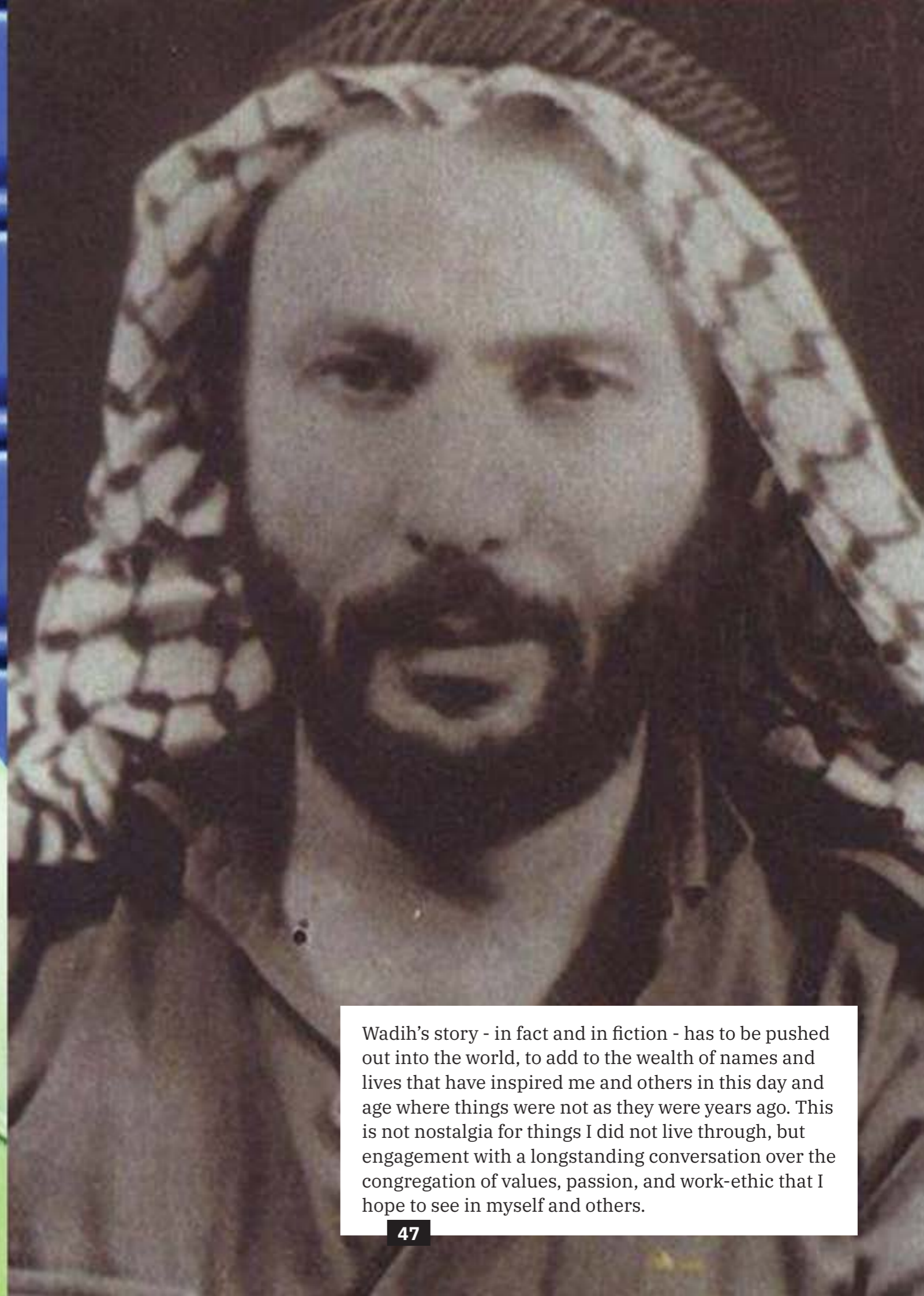




So much shared with me and I haven't even scratched the surface about my grandfather. It only seems that I continue to carry what I can take from what I've learned onwards. To introduce people to the ideas that pushed a person to work the way that was necessary for effective results. A manifesto derived from an identity of practice-based experiences. I've been more welcoming to these ideas than I have been critical of them, but that is where my readings online become of use. My own social circles become places where I practice sharing these stories and thoughts and only recently practices. I feel young but I also feel like time is already so quick that every moment forgone is only added at the expense of people I do not know. Then I must be a mix of sure and faithful that there is movement towards what I would like to see resurrected in a populace so determined of defeat in all directions. This is a song for the Palestinian people and in my eyes for any population marginalized and exploited.



As I write these final words, the semester comes to a close and the country's headed toward increasingly aggravated chaos. I find my surroundings to be more uncertain than I am, but with some self-validation in place, I'm now more certain that - similar to others before me - I have a desire to bridge this monumental history forward with all that I've learned and held onto from my time in university.

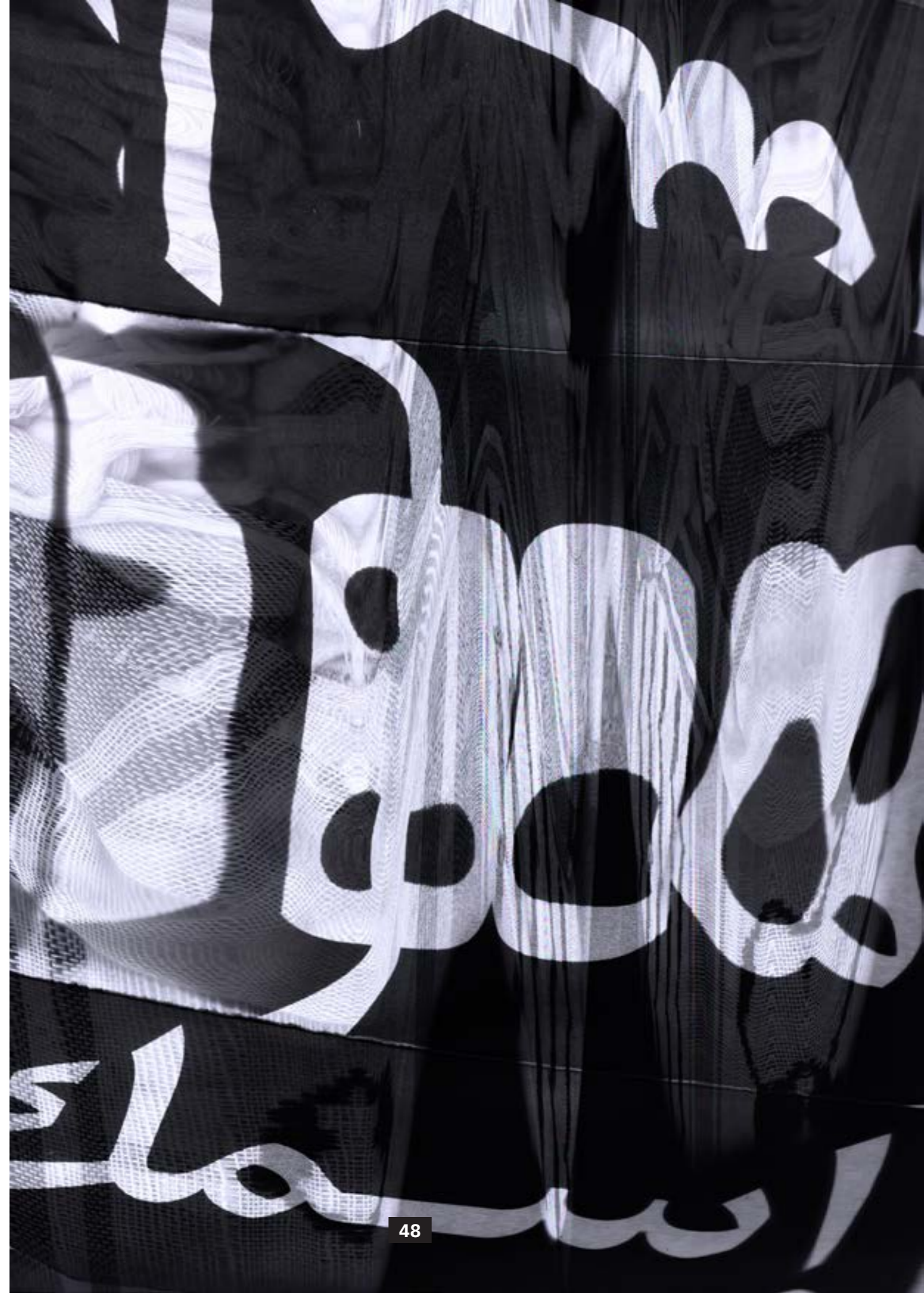


Wadih's story - in fact and in fiction - has to be pushed out into the world, to add to the wealth of names and lives that have inspired me and others in this day and age where things were not as they were years ago. This is not nostalgia for things I did not live through, but engagement with a longstanding conversation over the congregation of values, passion, and work-ethic that I hope to see in myself and others.

Words & Design by  
Wadih El Haddad

Images by  
Wadih El Haddad  
Hala El Haddad  
Christina Batrouni

Beirut, 2020







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