

I REMEMBER SITTING THERE IN THE COMPUTER LAB AT SCHOOL



MY SISTER SENT ME AN EMAIL



### Trinitron

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**YAHOO!**  
MAIL

Welcome,

Date: 11 September 2001

From: ☺ "Linda"

Subject: Shave...

To: "Toufic"

Hey man you better shave...

IN THE HOURS AFTER THE ATTACKS A SPONTANEOUS DEMONSTRATION OF "PATRIOTISM" BROKE OUT IN BRIDGEVIEW IL, A SUBURB OF CHICAGO WITH A LARGE ARAB AND MUSLIM POPULATION



THE MOSTLY WHITE CROWD MARCHED TOWARD THE LOCAL MOSQUE, IT WAS UNCLEAR WHAT THEY WOULD DO IF THEY REACHED IT BECAUSE THE POLICE STOPPED THEM.



ONE OF THE MARCHERS TOLD THE PRESS:

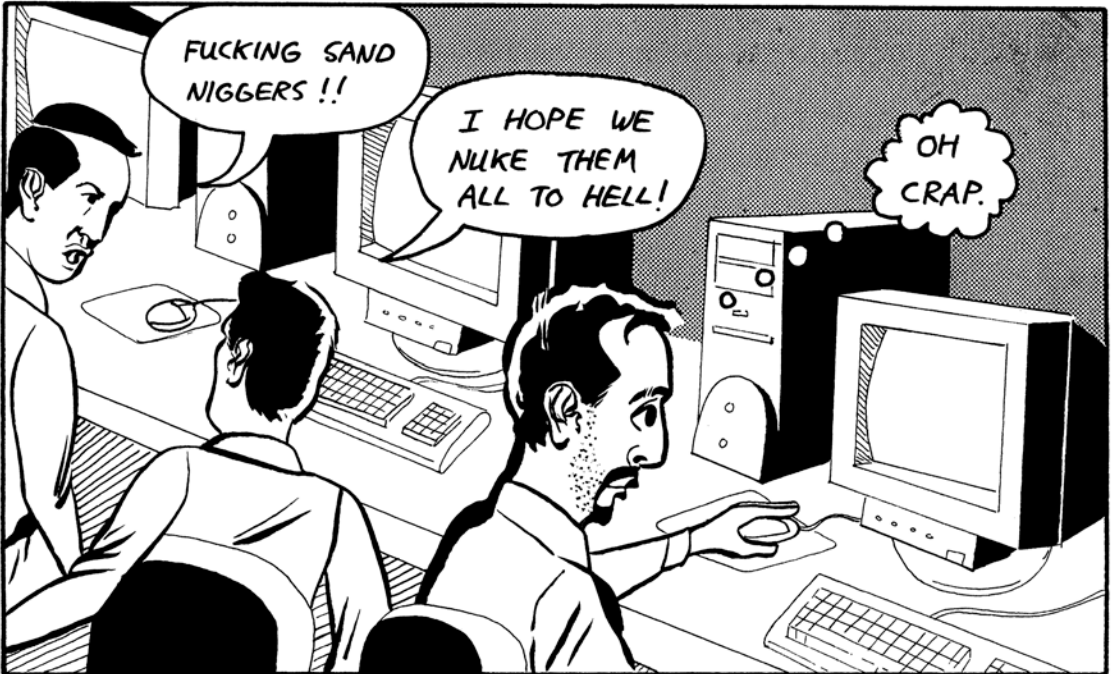
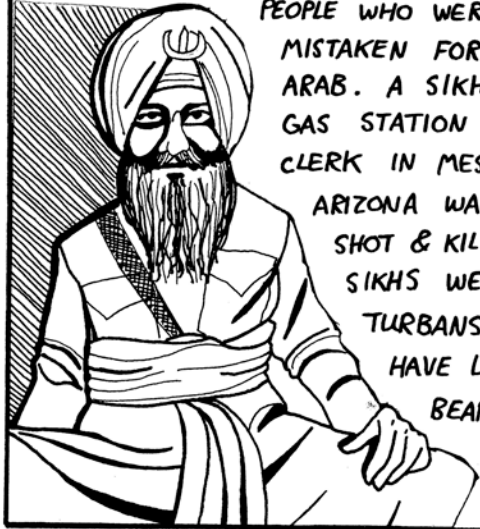
I'M PROUD TO BE AN AMERICAN AND I HATE ARABS AND I ALWAYS HAVE.



IN AN ABC NEWS/WASHINGTON POST POLL 43% OF AMERICANS RESPONDED THAT THE ATTACKS MADE THEM "PERSONALLY MORE SUSPICIOUS" OF PEOPLE WHO APPEAR MIDDLE EASTERN.



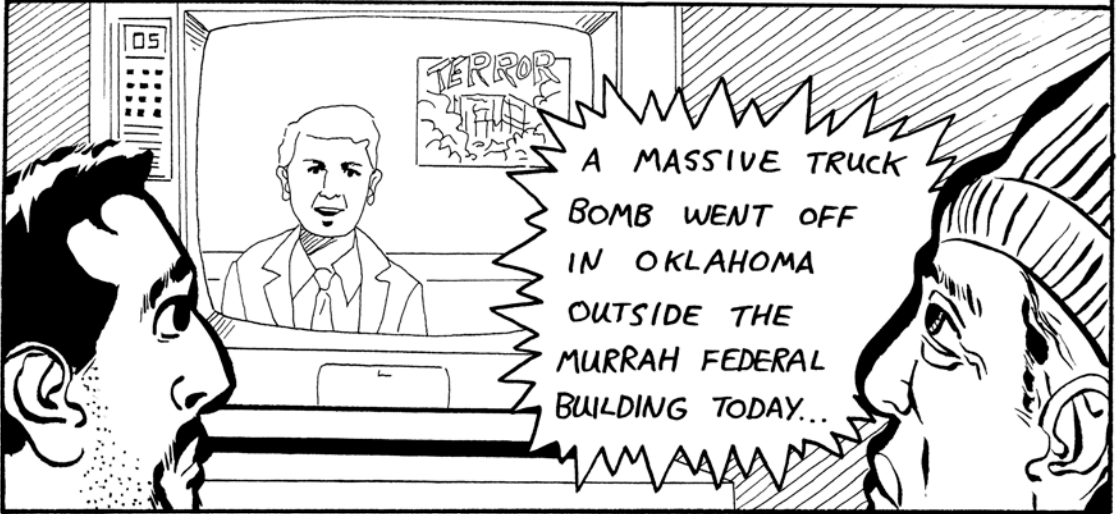
THERE WERE ATTACKS AGAINST PEOPLE WHO WERE MISTAKEN FOR ARAB. A SIKH GAS STATION CLERK IN MESA ARIZONA WAS SHOT & KILLED. SIKHS WEAR TURBANS & HAVE LONG BEARDS.



IT WAS A STRANGE, FAMILIAR SENSATION. I REMEMBER FEELING THE SAME WAY AFTER THE OKLAHOMA CITY BOMBING YEARS AGO...



APRIL 19, 1995, AROUND 9:00 AM.



THE BOMB WAS IN A RENTED TRUCK AND IT WENT OFF AFTER PARENTS DROPPED THEIR KIDS OFF FOR DAY-CARE. WE ALL WATCHED THE AFTERMATH ON T.V. AS BODIES OF MEN, WOMEN, AND CHILDREN WERE PULLED FROM THE RUBBLE. 168 PEOPLE DIED IN THE WORST TERRORIST ATTACK ON U.S. SOIL UNTIL 9/11.



WHEN THE BOMBING HAPPENED, EVERYONE ASSUMED ARAB TERRORISTS WERE RESPONSIBLE. IT WAS LATER DISCOVERED THAT THE REAL CULPRIT WAS A CLEAN-CUT, WHITE, GULF WAR VETERAN FROM MIDDLE AMERICA NAMED TIMOTHY MCVEIGH.





I KNEW WHAT MY DAD MEANT AND IT WAS NOT THE FIRST TIME I HAD THE DESIRE TO CONCEAL OR OBSCURE MY ETHNICITY, ESPECIALLY SINCE I WENT TO MOSTLY WHITE, MIDDLE OR UPPER CLASS SCHOOLS WHERE I TRIED DESPERATELY TO FIT IN AND BE ACCEPTED. IT WAS VERY DIFFICULT THOUGH BECAUSE I HAVE PRONOUNCED SEMITIC FEATURES COUPLED WITH DARK SKIN.



THERE EXISTS THE STEREOTYPE OF THE HIRSUTE ARAB WHICH HAS (LIKE MANY STEREOTYPES) A BASIS IN REALITY. I WAS IN 8TH GRADE WHEN MY BEARD GREW IN.



OBVIOUSLY THIS MADE ME A TARGET OF MUCH RIDICULE AMONG MY WHITE, ROSY-CHEEKED PEERS...

HEY!  
BEARDO!

HA HA  
HA HA!