

SHIRLEY BONES

A GRAPHIC NOVEL WRITTEN AND ILLUSTRATED BY GILLIAN GOERZ

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OVERVIEW

Shirley Bones transplants the story of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle’s Sherlock Holmes to present-day Toronto, Ontario through the adventures of two nine-year-old girls: the stoic self-styled detective Shirley Bones, and her new neighbour Jalaa Waheed—the basketball-loving tomboy daughter of conservative Pakistani parents. Shirley and Jalaa meet at a garage sale at the beginning of summer and soon join forces in order to make the most of their respective summer vacations. Jalaa is desperate to spend time at a basketball court larger than her driveway, and the independent Shirley longs to have free reign to pursue her crime-solving. Away from their parents’ protective eyes, the girls begin to forge a new relationship with the multi-cultural city they belong to, all while solving mysteries. They also begin to forge a connection that will be transformative for both of them: in Shirley, Jalaa finds adventure, agency and a world away from the increasing pressure to align herself with her parents’ ideas of how a young girl should behave; in Jalaa, Shirley finds a conspirator, a voice of reason and an unexpected friend.

Shirley Bones recasts Sir Arthur Conan Doyle’s characters in a modern-day, multicultural city. It will overwrite the racism, classism and sexism that marked Doyle’s work and times, and through its female, multicultural and queer characters bring to life a true and inclusive picture of our world today.

Like Sherlock’s London, Shirley’s Toronto features a dense epicentre, with countryside communities on its periphery. Instead of Sherlock’s homeless network, Shirley gleans information through the neighborhood children in daycare who have a ready supply of insider information their parents share freely, having deemed them “too young to understand.” Young readers of *Shirley Bones* will relate to these stories that reflect the powerlessness and invisibility of childhood, and at the same time will feel entertained and comforted by the problem-solving ability and adventurous spirits of Shirley and Jalaa.

Shirley Bones is intended to be the first in a series of middle grade graphic novels. Over the course of the series, in addition to solving mysteries in each book, we will watch the friendship between the two girls deepen, as they each broaden the world for the other, and give to one another something that they each need. It will speak to readers of Cece Bell’s *El Deafo*, Raina Telgemeier’s *Ghost* and Victoria Jamieson’s *Rollergirl*—and all the young and grown-up readers out there who are hungry for more graphic novels produced by and aimed at girls and women. It will also

speak to mystery fans eager to find the next Nancy Drew, Encyclopedia Brown or (more recently) Friday Barnes.

This 200-page graphic novel is part mystery, part coming of age story as Jalaa (like Doyle's Dr. John Watson before her) narrates her experiences in finding balance between her family, faith, and sense of self, while finally experiencing the adventure she's been craving through her growing friendship with the enigmatic Shirley Bones.

A final manuscript can be completed within 12 months of signing a contract. While the attached sample art is black and white, I can envision this project as working in black and white, 2-color or even full-color and am happy to make a final decision in conversation with a prospective editor and publisher.



PROPOSED SPECS:

LENGTH: 200 pages

DIMENSIONS: 6" x 9"

COLOUR: Up for discussion

AGE GROUP: Middle grades

DETAILED PLOT SUMMARY

As in the original Sherlock Holmes books, Jalaa Waheed will be our narrator.

ACT I

In the midst of a crowded garage sale her mother has dragged her to, Jalaa spots Shirley digging through a clothing rack. As the two speak, it becomes obvious to Jalaa that Shirley is unique: with few clues, Shirley reveals personal details about Jalaa's mother and brothers - in fact about the whole neighborhood! Both girls despair of a summer spent according to their parents' design: deemed too young to be out alone, both will be sent to dreaded summer camps if they don't find some alternative. The milling neighbors, the clutter of knick knacks and household items, and the interactions of the adults around them fade away as the two girls take each other in, each seeming to recognize the significance of this moment and the possibility of friendship. This story will be about the clarity the two friends find and bring out in each other.

We back up a few days to breakfast on the morning of Jalaa's last day of school. Her mother is pressing her to agree to attend a summer camp (which is more like summer school) at their mosque, which will limit her freedom to pursue her number one ambition for the summer: playing basketball. Jalaa's mother Sahar makes it clear that Jalaa won't be allowed to spend the summer alone and underfoot. She should have an occupation like her older brothers (who are introduced into the breakfast melee, along with their father).

We return to the present: After the garage sale, Sahar gets a phone call from Shirley's mother, and suddenly Jalaa is allowed to skip the camp at the Mosque as long as she spends her days with Shirley, at the basketball courts. Just meeting Shirley has already moved Jalaa closer to the life she wants for herself.

At the basketball courts, Jalaa practices in pure bliss, while Shirley sits on a bench and occupies herself with different articles and objects that she has brought from home. Jalaa starts to notice that different kids, of all ages, are meeting Shirley at the court. Some stay longer, and some come and go quickly. One day her visitor is a young boy, in an advanced state of agitation. Jalaa has minded her own business before, but the boy is really upset. She asks Shirley what's going on. Shirley tells Jalaa that John's beloved pet went missing at the swimming pool, but since Jalaa's

mother insisted they stay together at the basketball courts, Shirley has refused to help. Jon is getting frantic, while Shirley seems cold and unemotional. Jalaa is shocked by Shirley's matter-of-fact response, and moved by John's pleas. Something needs to be done, and apparently, she'll have to do it. Jalaa steps forward and announces that all three of them will go to the pool at once. Shirley points out they'll still be breaking the rules by leaving the basketball courts, but Jalaa insists. In a situation with no good choices, she lets her curiosity about Shirley, her desire to help someone in need, and her thirst for adventure take the lead. On the way to the pool, with Jon impatiently jog-running ahead, Jalaa finally gets some details about Shirley's enigmatic behaviour: Shirley is a detective. She's always seen more than other kids, and usually more than the adults around her. After predicting pop quizzes at school, the word began to spread, and now kids often come to Shirley for help with their problems. Jalaa is properly impressed. As she speaks, Shirley seems genuinely surprised at Jalaa's interest, while Jalaa's awe of Shirley is only increasing.

ACT 2

Shirley and Jalaa follow the boy to the local swimming pool. Apparently Jon, who is 8, and his 12-year-old sister Maggie go to the pool everyday. But lately, their things have begun to go missing. It's been happening for the past few weeks and they've suspected that someone is stealing them but today, they know they're not imagining things: their lizard Enoch (whom they snuck into the pool) is gone. Maggie is immediately skeptical of Shirley and her ability to help out. Shirley's brusque manner is not helping. Jalaa watches as Shirley investigates the scene and conducts interviews with the teen lifeguards, Toby Gregson and Lestrade, local loner Wakumi Okada, and various other child witnesses. As Shirley deftly manipulates arrogant Lestrade into giving her information, with Jalaa's subtle interference, Maggie starts to warm up to Shirley. As she's wrapping up her questions to Maggie and John, a nearby woman angrily shushes them. Jalaa is again wowed by Shirley's powers of deduction.

At home later that afternoon, Jalaa's mother notices she smells like chlorine. Jalaa admits she was at the pool with Shirley. Sahar is furious, and forbids Jalaa from spending any more time with Shirley. Summer camp at the mosque is back on the table. Jalaa is chastened and doesn't protest.

Alone in her room, Jalaa recalls her walk home from the pool with Shirley: After a block or two of quiet walking, Shirley asked Jalaa why she decided to come along

to the pool rather than stay behind or even go home. Jalaa described something of her homelife: everyone in her family has something in mind for her. Her mother wants her to stay close, and stay safe. Her father and her oldest brother are on the same page: Naveed is a know-it-all and nags her like a parent to “succeed” in Canada - good grades at school, exemplary behaviour at the Mosque, the Perfect Immigrant Girl. If there was a good way for her to earn money at her age, he’d be all for it. Farooq, her 16-year-old brother, is a funny, easy going basketball star at his school (and her favourite brother), but as he’s become popular he’s been keeping his Muslim identity very low-key. He’d love for Jalaa to keep her head down, to tell everyone what they want to hear, and not kick up a fuss. In all of this noise, there’s no room for Jalaa to decide how she even wants to be. When Shirley offered her the unfair choice of staying or going, where both options break the rules, in a way, she was free to decide without her family’s influence. She was curious about what Shirley was up to and here was her chance to find out more. Jalaa, back in her bedroom, can’t stop thinking about Shirley, the case of the stolen lizard, and the thrill she felt hurrying to the scene of the crime.

When Shirley comes to pick up Jalaa the next day, Sahar tells Shirley that not only is she not spending time with Jalaa, but she is calling Mrs. Bones to let her know the girls disobeyed the rules by leaving the courts and not letting anyone know where they were going. In the face of her mother’s anger Jalaa is surprised to see a flash of panic in Shirley’s eyes, before they settle into a cold, strategic glare. With the backstory Jalaa shared the day before, Shirley is able to deduce that Sahar isn’t just afraid of Jalaa being safe, she’s afraid of Jalaa turning away from their family.

Shirley asks to speak to Sahar alone. When they come back, Sahar lets Jalaa go. As they leave, Sahar whispers to Jalaa that from now on, there is a perimeter they must stay within, and they must let her know when they change locations. She agrees to let Jalaa have her brother’s old cell phone (the same phone Jalaa has already been using in secret) to keep her in the loop. Jalaa is thrilled at her newfound freedom, but wonders what Shirley could have said to make her mother change her mind.

Jalaa is excited to get back to the mystery, but Shirley is closed off and uncommunicative, and refuses to give Jalaa information about why they are trotting all over the neighbourhood. At first she goes along with it, but by the second day she starts to get angry, and to miss her basketball practice. She confronts Shirley, calling her selfish. They fight and Jalaa goes home and refuses to spend any more time with Shirley (which forces Shirley inside, and potentially to dance camp, as well—the deal with both moms is that they go out together or not at all).

Jalaa spends a day inside by herself, sulking in her room. Her mother insists she can't go further than their driveway without Shirley, Jalaa responds that Shirley wasn't much of a friend after all. Sahar gets very angry about this turn of events, and yells that she should have insisted Jalaa go to camp—in fact she's calling about late enrollment first thing in the morning. Jalaa finally confronts her mother, saying she is sorry that she doesn't like the girly things her mother likes, and isn't the daughter her mother wanted, and she's sorry her mother misses Pakistan and hates Canada. She says she wishes she'd been born a boy so she could play basketball and go out on her own and so her mother could love her anyway. She throws herself onto her bed and sobs. Her mother leaves the room and closes the door.

Jalaa cries in her room all day. She hears the family's dinner sounds. It gets dark.

ACT 3

It is dark, but Jalaa can hear the TV in the living room. She hears a light knock at her door and her mother comes into the room with a plate for her. She tells her she loves her no matter what, but that it is hard for her here because the expectations are different. Canada is cold and uptight and it's gotten under her skin. Pakistan was lush and warm and although it wasn't safe for her family, it still feels like home. But her true home is with those she loves and that is Abu, Naveed, Farooq and especially her own loyal, adventurous Jalaa. Sahar tells Jalaa what Shirley said in their private meeting. In a flashback, we see Shirley approaching Sahar. Shirley admits she's never really had any real friends, and that Jalaa actually seems to like her company, not just to benefit from her freakish talents. Shirley expresses how she sees Jalaa as brave and confident in herself but still able to connect with other people and that's something Shirley can learn from. Sahar realizes that the friendship is a true exchange - that Shirley is learning as much, if not more from Jalaa, which reassures her. In her anxiety she'd forgotten that Jalaa casts her own light, which shines on, and affects the world around her.

Back in the present moment, Jalaa is surprised and pleased to hear Shirley's thoughts about her. Sahar tells Jalaa that she is important to this world, and Sahar can let her change and grow, but she hopes they'll go to the mosque together each week, as it's a special time for the two of them. Jalaa says it is special for her too. They hug.

Shirley comes to the door, not apologetic, but ready to deal. She agrees to a sched-

ule of half basketball, half mystery-solving if Jalaa can be flexible since crime knows no bounds. If a really juicy case comes up that takes over several days, Shirley will make up the time at the court. Jalaa admits she enjoys the case work when she is in on the plan. She tries to thank Shirley for what she said to her mother, but Shirley, immediately uncomfortable, tries to change the subject. Jalaa waits. Shirley reluctantly admits that Jalaa has become a necessary part of her crime-solving and that she's a better detective for it. Shirley agrees to let her in, "Starting next time though - for this one, let me have my reveal." They agree and leave with Sahar's (still concerned) blessing.

Bones and Waheed go to John and Maggie's house and take them around their block to a home they've never been to—even though its yard backs onto theirs. It belongs to the older women who shushed them at the pool. Shirley accuses the woman of stealing John and Maggie's lizard and other items from the pool and presents damning evidence. She confesses:

Her name is Ruta. She lives alone now, but she used to have a wife and daughter. Two summers ago their daughter Angie got very sick. No one knew what was making her sick, so despite Angie's pleading to be allowed to go swimming at the local pool, and her wife's disapproval, Ruta insisted she stay in. Their backyard-facing neighbours Maggie and John went to the pool everyday, while Angie watched from the window. The summer passed unhappily this way. On the last pool day of the summer, the family took Angie to a new specialist. Unlike the others who ran tests and made them wait and wait, this one immediately looked alarmed, and ordered Angie to hospital, citing very clear symptoms of a rare autoimmune disease. Angie never left the hospital. She died 2 months later. Ruta was filled with regret and grief—she shut down, and rarely left home. After 6 months of this, unable to break through, her wife Olivia left. This woke Ruta up: she stepped outside, realizing she'd done the same thing to herself that she'd done to Angie. She vowed to live the life Angie should have lived: she would go to the pool every day, all summer long.

Except she found she hated it. The sun was hot, flies landed on her skin, and she'd never much liked the water. And what was worse, every day she had to see those neighbour kids, having fun and being carefree in a way she couldn't—in a way Angie never got to experience. The first time she stole a toy, in a fit of annoyance, she felt like she'd avenged Angie. And it thrilled her, killing the boredom and shame she felt, sitting there all day long. When she got the lizard home, she realized she had crossed a line, and needed help. She saw a doctor the same day, who recommended a psychologist. She tells the kids she was sick, not in her body, but in her

mind. From sadness, shock, and too much time alone. She gives back the lizard (she's become fond of it despite herself) and apologizes, but John and Maggie are not upset - they remind Ruta that Angie would want her to enjoy her own life. Maybe she'd prefer some other outdoor activity—has she tried gardening?

Shirley and Jalaal are at the basketball courts. Jalaal asks, if Shirley knew from the beginning it was the lady, why didn't she tell John and Maggie the story herself? Shirley says when people tell their own story, it is easier to judge their motivations and decide on a fair response. The final frame cuts to Ruta in her garden, with John and Maggie eating raspberries from the shrub between their yards.



JALAA AND SHIRLEY'S FRIENDSHIP

At the onset, both Shirley and Jalaa are incredibly lonely. They are both past the initial thrill of summer vacation and the realization that summer can also be boring and full of parents, is setting in.

Meeting each other at the garage sale is thrilling to both girls: For Jalaa, Shirley is fascinating in her intelligence, but also in the ways she seems to know a lot about Jalaa. Since she's moved to the neighbourhood, she hasn't made many friends and having someone know something, anything about her feels unexpectedly good. She's initially skeptical that Shirley can actually help her (Shirley seems like no match for her mother Sahar), but the fact she thinks she can is novel. For Shirley, Jalaa is unique in that she actually listens to her and believes her theories. Most people, adults and children alike, assume she's lying, a weirdo, or just don't care. Jalaa seems to be genuinely interested, and Shirley immediately sees a window for the two to help each other. Friendship is not at all on her mind, since she's never experienced it before.

The first real connective threads of friendship are formed during the walk to the pool with John.

By conspiring together to break the rules of their agreement, they are bonded. When John's problem requires immediate action, Shirley realizes she would need to break their agreement in order to help. So she turns him down. Her matter-of-fact refusal shocks Jalaa. She can't see how Shirley can be so cold in the face of Jon's emotional pleas. After a moment of consideration, Jalaa steps up and suggests they all go together. Shirley points out they will still be breaking the rules by leaving the basketball courts, but Jalaa insists. Breaking a rule in order to help someone out can be worth it... plus, secretly, this will be a long-awaited chance to satisfy her curiosity about Shirley Bones, and get a small taste of adventure.

On the walk there and back they share some of their back stories for the first time. Shirley is unaccustomed to being asked about herself - the people that tolerate her do so because she can help them. They don't want to be friends.

When Sahar threatens to end the friendship after they broke the rules and went to the pool, Shirley faces real panic - in their short time together, she's come to rely on the familiarity of Jalaa, on her calming influence, and on their burgeoning friendship. Panic flips into steely determination and looking into the Waheed home she sees the demarcation of the kid's things: Farooq's college applications, basketball magazines and toys, Jalaa's comics; and the adult's things, which all ref-

erence Pakistan, and the life they had there. Remembering Jalaa's words, Shirley is able to see that Sahar is really afraid of Jalaa growing up and becoming unfamiliar to her mother - by being more into boy's things than girl's things, by being more familiar with Canadian life than Pakistani life, by having a new friend whose impact and influence is totally unknown.

Shirley realizes she needs to make herself more KNOWN to Sahar in order to keep Jalaa's company. In a flashback during Sahar and Jalaa's big talk, Sahar reveals what passed: Shirley came to Sahar, and admitted she's never really had any real friends, and that Jalaa actually seems to like her company, not just to benefit from her freakish talents. Shirley expresses how she sees Jalaa as brave and confident in herself but still able to connect with other people and that's something Shirley can learn from. Sahar realizes that the friendship is a true exchange - that Shirley is learning as much, if not more from Jalaa, which reassures her. In her anxiety she'd forgotten that Jalaa casts her own light, which shines on and affects the world around her.

Shirley's ego is fed by Jalaa's awe over her talent, and as they get to know each other, she sees that Jalaa has gumption, bravery and people skills. Shirley comes to care about Jalaa and form her first friendship.

WHY THE WAHEEDS LEFT PAKISTAN

In Lahore, in Pakistan, there were four Waheeds: Bilal, his wife Sahar and their sons Naveed (the oldest) and Farooq (the baby). Bilal had been wanting to move the family out of Pakistan for some time... it was Sahar that held him back. As members of a persecuted Muslim sect, Ahmadis, their family and community hadn't been safe in years. Violence in the street, harassment, arson... people were being killed, but Sahar held firm. Lahore was her home. She was born there and lived there her entire life - it was a part of her. Besides, she and Bilal were planning on having another baby, and the idea that her next child might never know Pakistan was shattering. How could this child really know her? Bilal had studied in London—he didn't care about the country in the same way she did. She did not want to be forced out by religious extremists. Then in 2000, masked gunmen opened fire at a prayer meeting in the nearby city of Sialkot—and Sahar gave in. She called Bilal at work and said, "Start the paperwork. We're leaving." By 2005, Bilal, Naveed, Farooq and a pregnant Sahar were on a plane for Toronto.

MORE ON SAHAR, JALAA'S MOTHER

Sahar Waheed (née Habib), was born to a fairly wealthy family in Lahore in the early 1970s. Her parents were both educated and they had servants and cooks in their home. She grew up speaking Urdu, Punjabi, English, and was learning Russian with her father (a scientist and professor) who was developing an interest in Russian literature. Sahar finished school and went to University, studying a little of this, a little of that - she didn't take to a particular field of study, prior to her marriage, after which she gave up school to start a family and devote more time to the community.

Sahar's marriage to Bilal was arranged - Bilal and his father were in the business of owning property - they would buy and sell buildings, and it made them a lot of money. Sahar's family money had been dwindling, and her parents were eager for her to be financially secure. Bilal's parents were planning on leaving Lahore once Bilal was married, to be closer to his older brother who had settled abroad, so Bilal moved in with Sahar's family in her beautiful childhood home. After they were married Sahar was secretly disappointed to find that despite his having studied abroad, her new husband's world view was fairly narrow - making money was his chief interest. Used to more intellectual discourse, Sahar sometimes found herself bored with him, although her loyal and somewhat private nature prevented her from sharing this with anyone. Her close ties to her parents kept her going during the early years, until they were killed in a car accident when she was pregnant with her first child. Sahar felt abandoned, especially to find herself alone in her home with Bilal. The death of her parents, conversely, had a positive effect on Bilal, and left him feeling more confident in his role as the man of the house.

When her children were born, Sahar found life more interesting. Naveed, the oldest, was studious and smart, and Farooq who came a few years later was hearty and hilarious - their unique personalities challenged and entertained her and she took joy in raising them and teaching them the world she knew. Bilal made good money and they were able to keep a cook, a driver and a gardener to maintain the lush grounds that she, and now Farooq and Naveed grew up playing in. Sahar was busy and happy. The violence was omnipresent, but most days her family life and responsibilities occupied her mind.

Bilal had a different take on the violence against their sect. His work took him further into Lahore than Sahar ever had occasion to go, and he saw and heard of violence (torture, the burning of libraries, mosques, and homes, killings) that often didn't make the news - or had become such a steady drone it was often ignored.

Because they were wealthy, they were protected to some extent, but he had no illusions. He had lost cousins and friends. If he wanted his sons to grow and thrive, the family had to get out of Pakistan. He knew a lot of people who had moved to Canada - to Toronto in particular, and it seemed like a place with more opportunities for his family. Especially if they had daughters—Sahar wanted a daughter terribly. When Sahar finally agreed, Bilal—usually practical and unemotional—went to the bathroom and wept with relief.

Sahar was a different person in Canada. She hated the weather, the cold drabness of the buildings, the beige paint on the boring walls of their home. The physical safety they'd gained was countered by a new looming feeling of undetermined threat. She felt watched and monitored in a way she'd never felt in Lahore. Here she felt like a minority - she felt pressure to perform for the other Muslims they met, and to be a Perfect Immigrant Family to their mostly-white neighbours. Sahar was pregnant and emotional when she arrived in Canada, and once she gave birth to the daughter she'd been dreaming of, her first thought was to worry for her, growing up in this cold, uptight country.

She got joy from raising Jalaa, but the truth is that the mother Jalaa experienced was different from the one Farooq, and especially Naveed (who was 12 when they moved) had known.

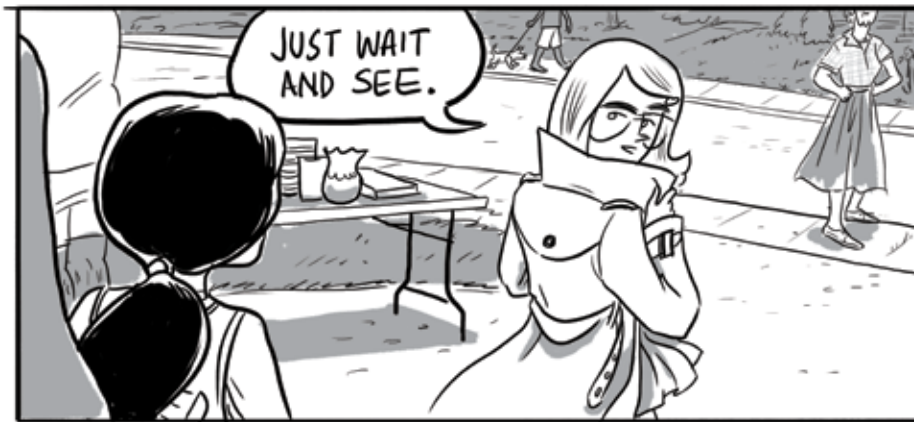
Jalaa picked fights: about what she wore, and how she would spend her time. She seemed disinterested in her lessons at the Madrasa (the Islamic school at their Mosque), and more interested in playing sports with Farooq. If Sahar had attended the Madrasa with Jalaa she would have found herself equally disinterested by the boring and dogmatic teacher. Sahar's father had a vibrant way of teaching and a deep love for Islam that was passed along to Sahar. Their conversations had been part discussion, part debate, intersecting culture, suras, and history with their daily experiences. Sahar does what she can, but in Canada she also works and is forced to leave a lot of the faith instruction in the hands of the Madrasa.

Her relationship with Jalaa now, feels strained. When she had a daughter, she'd expected someone more like herself, who liked the things she liked (literature, science, good food). Instead she got a tiny jock, who eats for sustenance so she can get back outside, who climbs trees that look unsafe, who has a smelly 16 year old brother as her idol. How can she manage this girl without setting rules? And when Jalaa rebels against the rules, what happens then?

SECOND BOOK CONCEPT

September has finally arrived and Jalaa and Shirley take their new partnership (and friendship?) back to school. New characters—teachers, classmates, school administrators—emerge and Jalaa is faced even more starkly with how her new companion is seen by others. The politics and problems of school (and by association the world they’ll both grow up into) may prove to be just as challenging as the rules they both deal with at home.

When the pair encounters a secret clique that’s been receiving anonymous emails with dirt on one of the school’s teachers, Shirley and Jalaa find themselves embroiled in school politics in a way they’d never imagined possible.



BROAD VISION FOR THE WORLD

Shirley and Jalaa’s Toronto is made up of tree-lined streets and messy bedrooms. They’re always finding ways to make a playground a secret meeting place, or their school’s equipment room into an impromptu office, laboratory or courtroom.

The more crimes they solve, the more their circle grows. Shirley’s limited interest in people (who can’t help her), and Jalaa’s limited exposure to life outside of her family shift as the books continue. On a grocery shopping trip, Sahar notices an older woman (Ruta from book 1) give Jalaa a smile and a small wave. Two kids Sahar has never seen at Jalaa’s school say “hi” when they walk by the house. Their world becomes bigger as they grow together.

We’ll also meet Shirley’s sister Myla, a 16-year-old high school student who is far too interested in student government and her academic clubs to care about her little sister’s hobby of “getting into other people’s business.” But her Work Experience internship at City Hall gives her access to information, blueprints and resources that Shirley and Jalaa will come to need. Her authority as a teenager is also a useful asset for two girls who are firmly below the puberty line.

Jalaa’s family dynamics will also unfold: Jalaa’s 16-year-old brother Farooq (the middle child, and her favorite brother) often takes Jalaa’s side in disagreements with her mother. He is funny and popular—the goof-ball of the family. Her father Bilal and her oldest brother Naveed are another story—Naveed is 20, in business school and is almost entirely aligned with Bilal in their practical nature, business-savvy, and firm ideas about the way things should be. While Bilal is frequently too busy with work to be heavily involved in family drama, Naveed sees himself as an important voice in Jalaa’s upbringing. Farooq and Naveed often butt heads—over everything, but especially Jalaa. Their mother Sahar is the arbiter and final judge in these debates, and her opinions are not predictable when it comes to Jalaa.



AUTHOR/ARTIST BIOGRAPHY



Gillian G. (Goerz) is a Canadian illustrator, writer and cartoonist. Her illustrations can be found in books such as Ryan North's choosable path adventures *To Be or Not to Be* (Breadpig & Riverhead) and *Romeo and/or Juliet* (Riverhead). Her comics have been seen in *The Walrus*, *Descant Magazine*, and the *Humber Literary Review* with frequent collaborator and award-winning author Mariko Tamaki (*Skim*, *This One Summer*). CBC Books named Gillian's autobiographical comic "a highlight" of the anthology *The Secret Loves of Geek Girls* (Bedside Press & Dark Horse

Comics) alongside Margaret Atwood's first published comics. Gillian is the recipient of both Toronto and Ontario Arts Council grants supporting *Shirley Bones*, her graphic novel-in-progress.

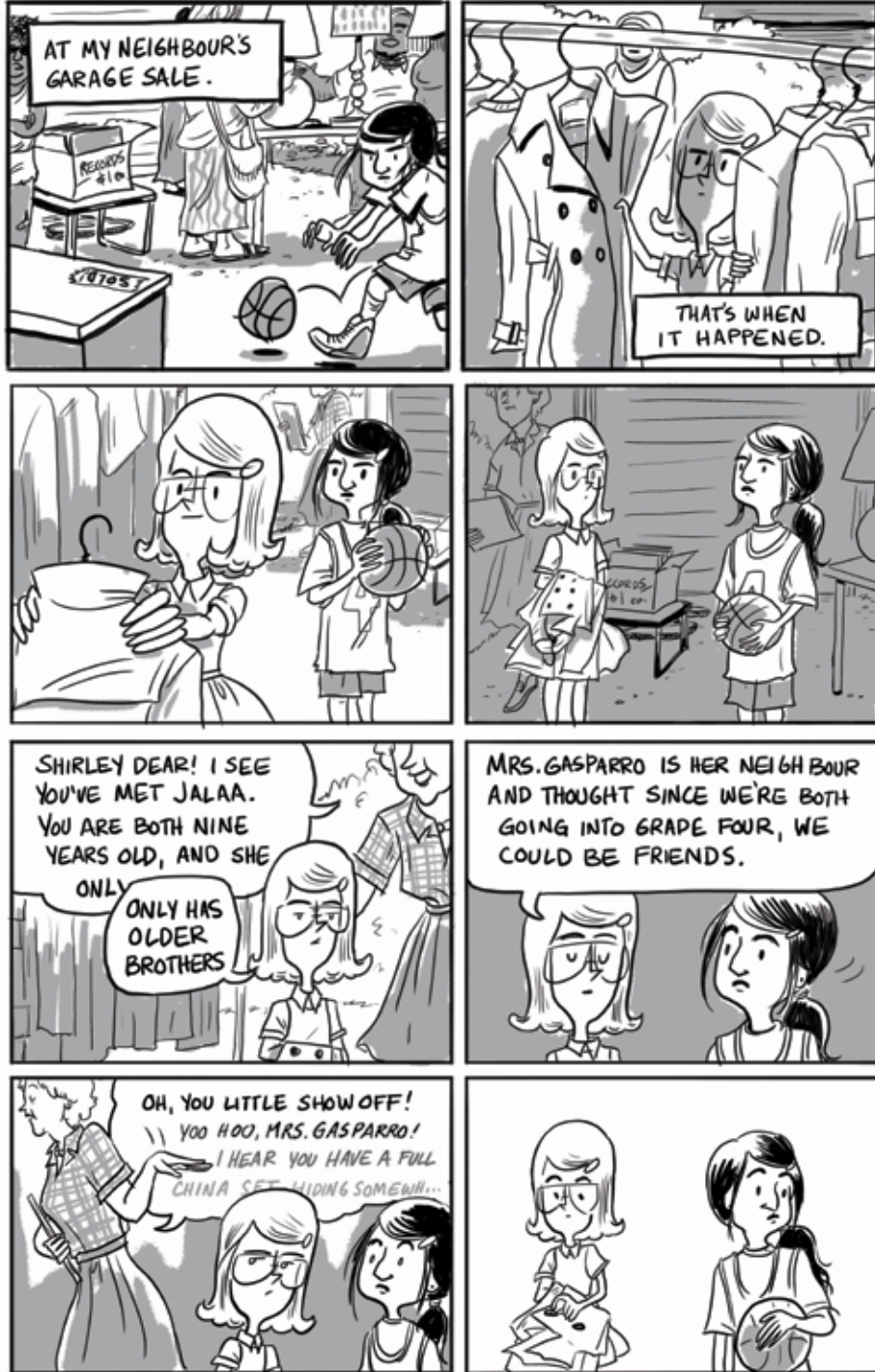
Gillian's Mennonite upbringing informs her interest in the intersections of family, friendship and faith, as well as the unique cultures that exist inside every complicated home. She currently lives and works in Toronto.

Authors' Note

I am very aware of the perils of appropriation and have given a lot of thought to what it means to give voice to a character whose life experiences are so different from my own. I felt it was important in recasting the work of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle to truly reflect the conflicts and diversity of our times, and of Toronto-- and that if it was important to this story to have a Muslim and female character, as I felt it was, then I would undertake to portray Jalaa, her family, and their experiences as respectfully and honestly as possible--by doing my research and asking for the input of Pakistani friends and members of Toronto's Pakistani community.

I work out of a studio on Toronto's West end, full of interdisciplinary artists across a broad spectrum. In our studio alone, I share space with an Afghani filmmaker, a Pakistani conceptual artist, and a handful of creatives with backgrounds from across the globe. The experience of Toronto is in the mingling of people from across the world, finding ways to work side by side. I have access to resources in terms of research, sensitivity readers, and character-inspiration reflecting Toronto multiculturalism within arm's reach of my desk, and limitless access in the city outside of my door.

SAMPLE CHAPTER





IF YOU HAD SISTERS YOUR MOM WOULD MAKE THEM PLAY WITH YOU OR MAKE YOU BABYSIT THEM. EITHER WAY, YOU WOULDN'T BE HERE ALONE WITH HER.

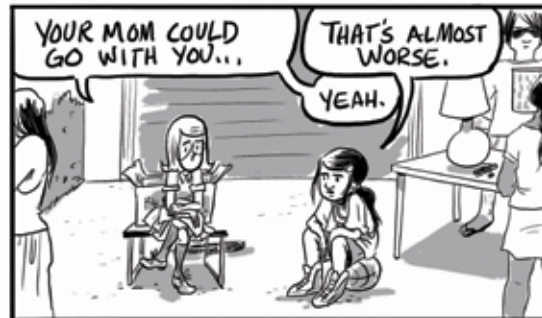
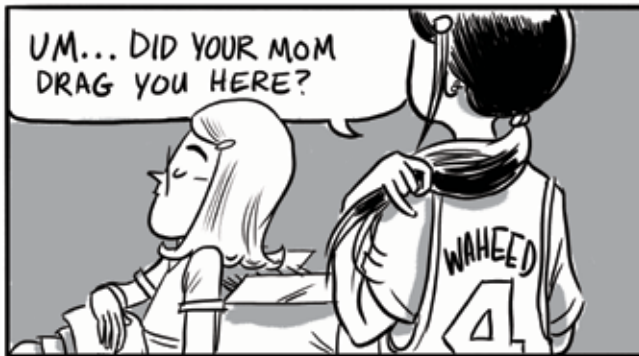
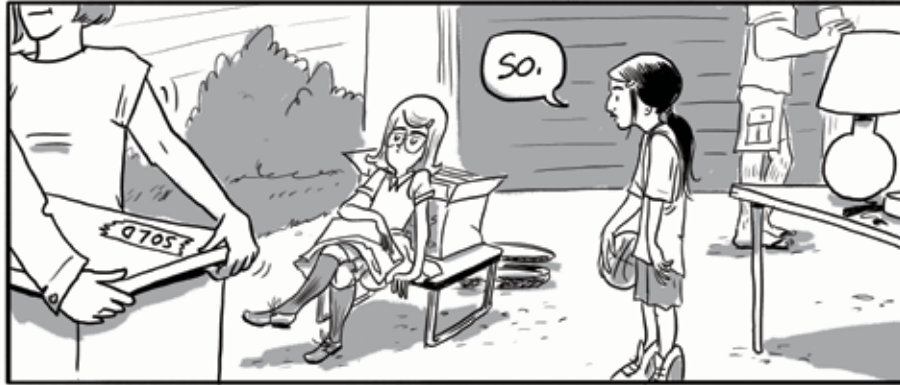


YOU HAVE AT LEAST TWO OLDER BROTHERS.



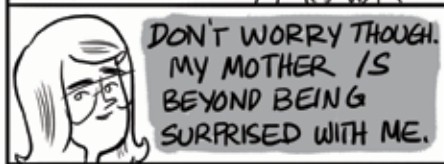
FROM HOW SHE'S FROWNING AT YOUR OUTFIT, I'D SAY SHE'S PRETTY TRADITIONAL... PAKISTANI, IF I'M GUESSING RIGHT (THAT'S YOUR LAST NAME ON THE BALL). SO,

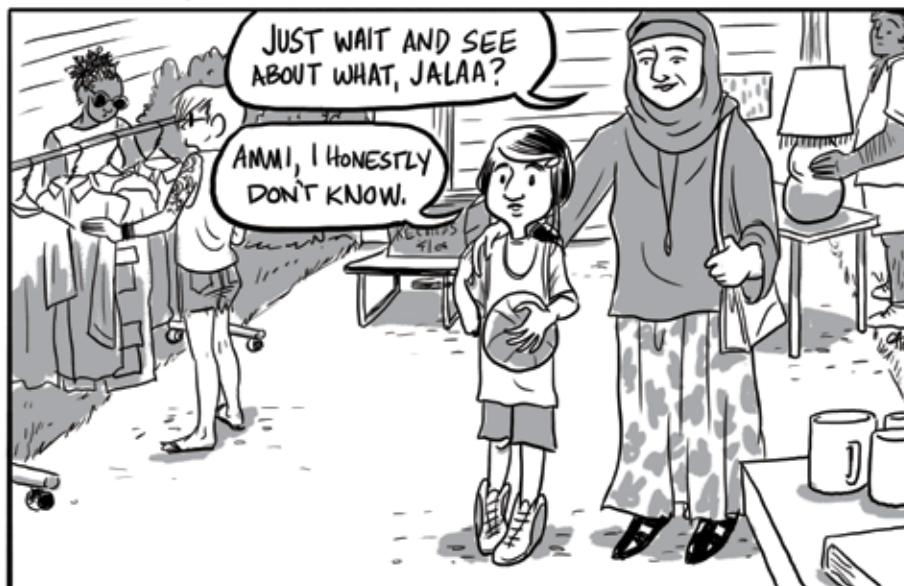
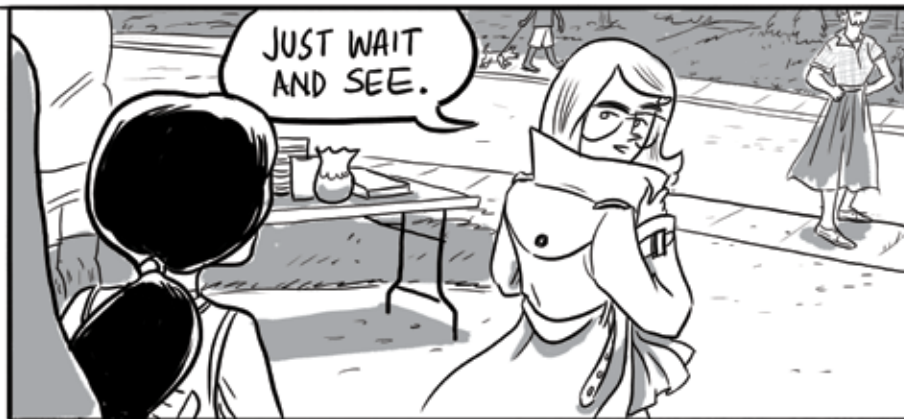




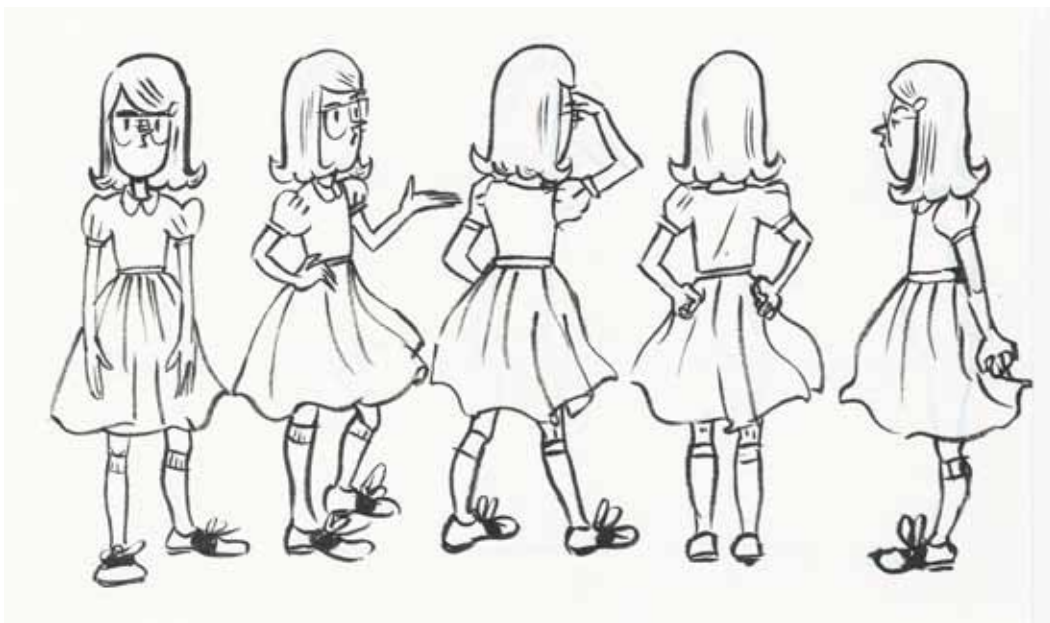




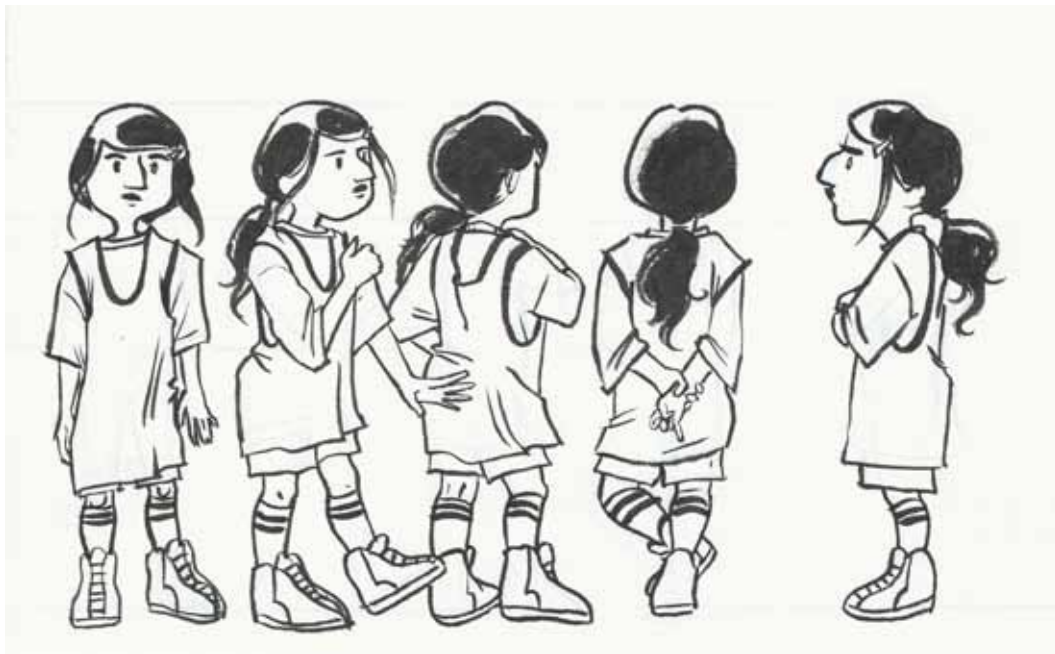




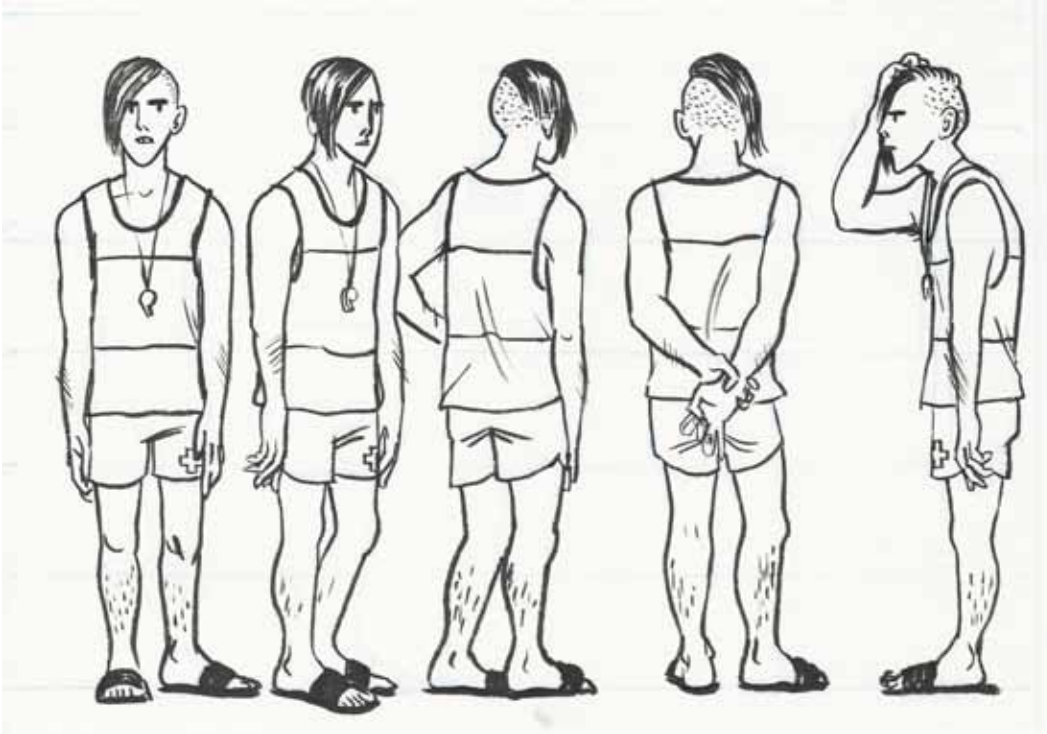
CHARACTER DESIGNS



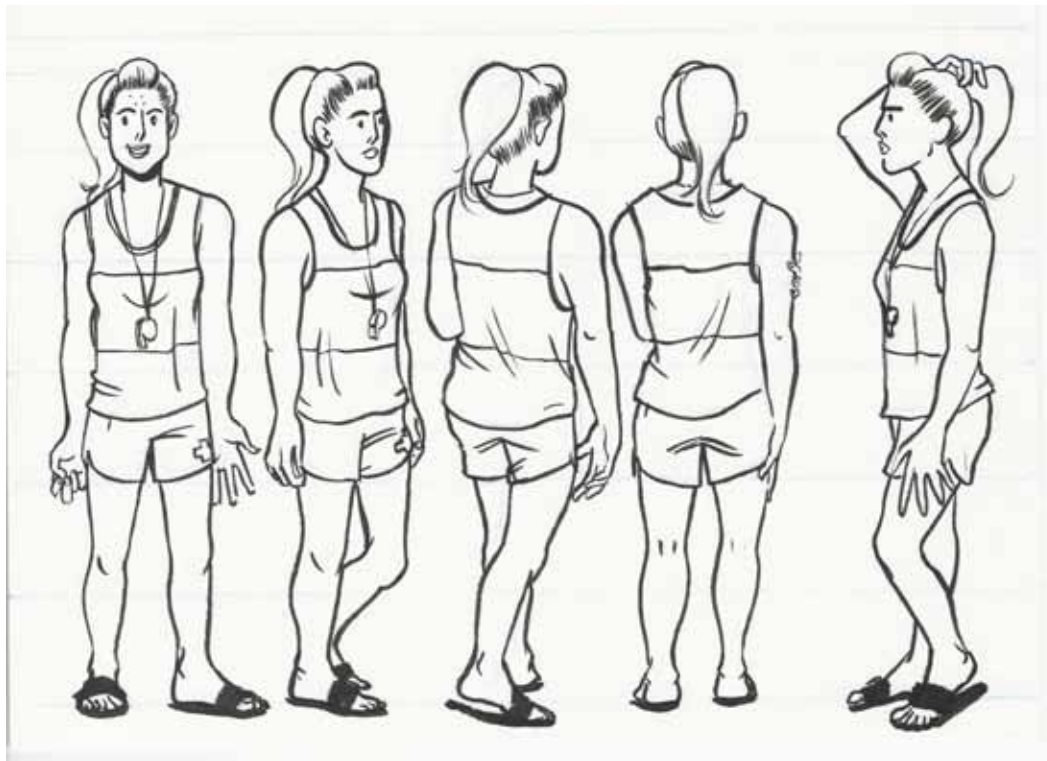
SHIRLEY BONES



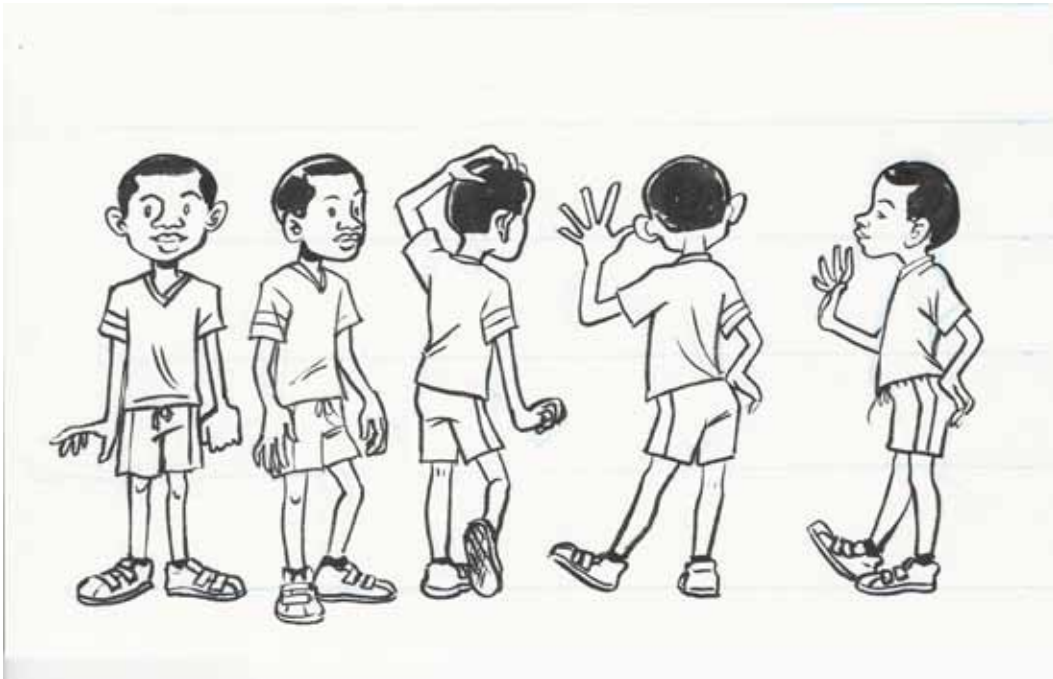
JALAA WAHEED



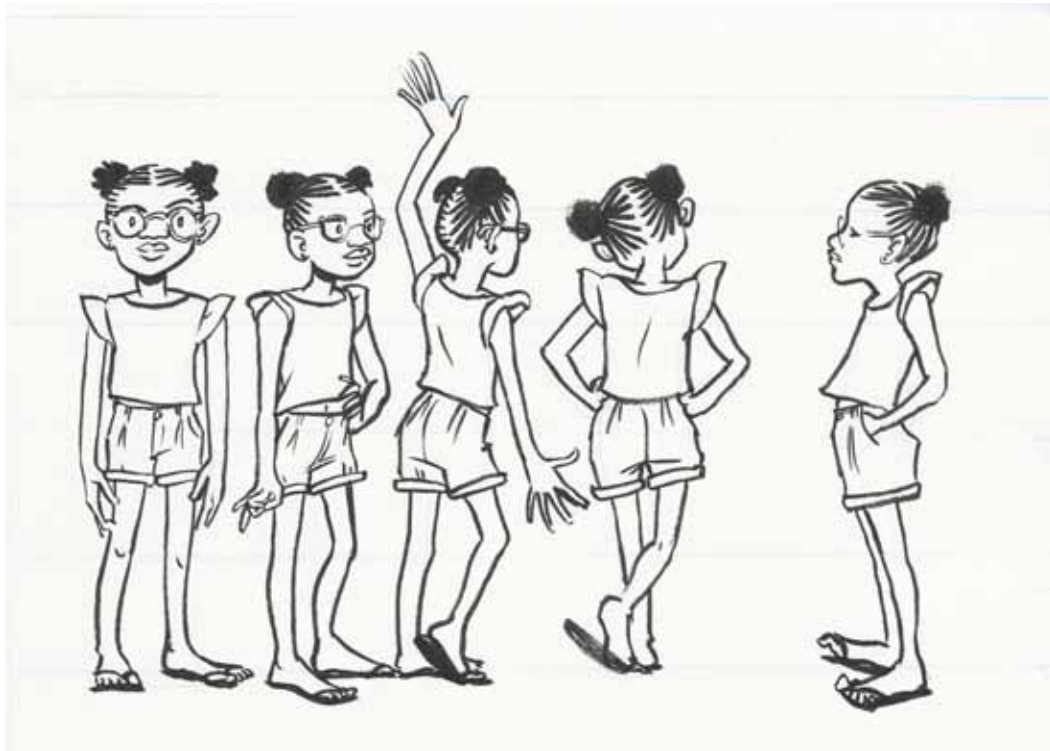
G. LESTRAD



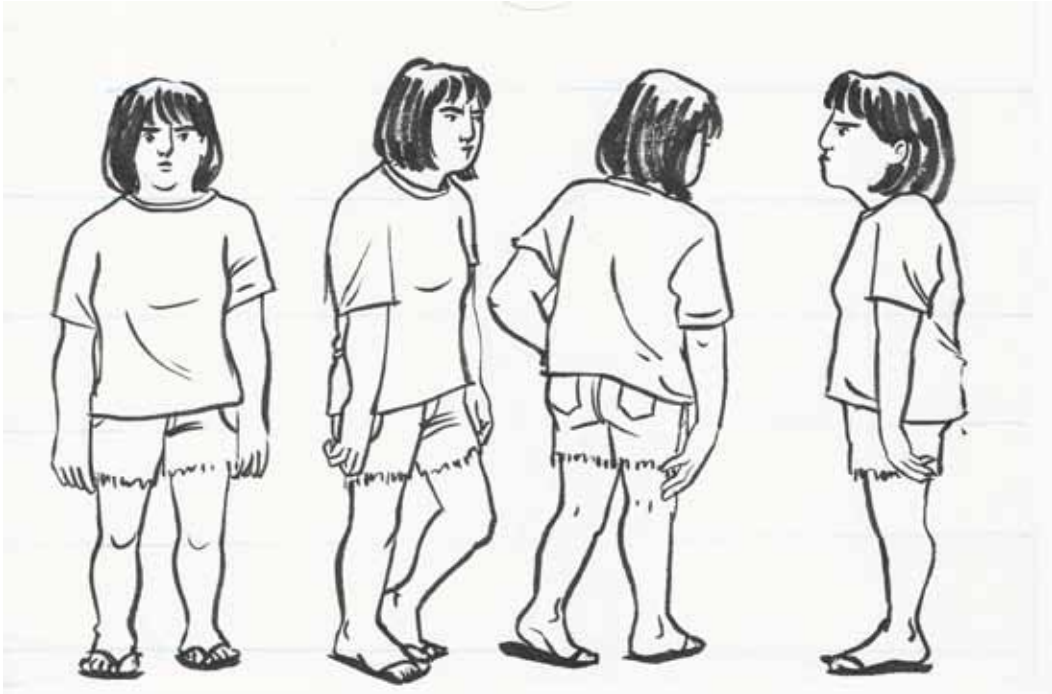
TOBY GREGSON



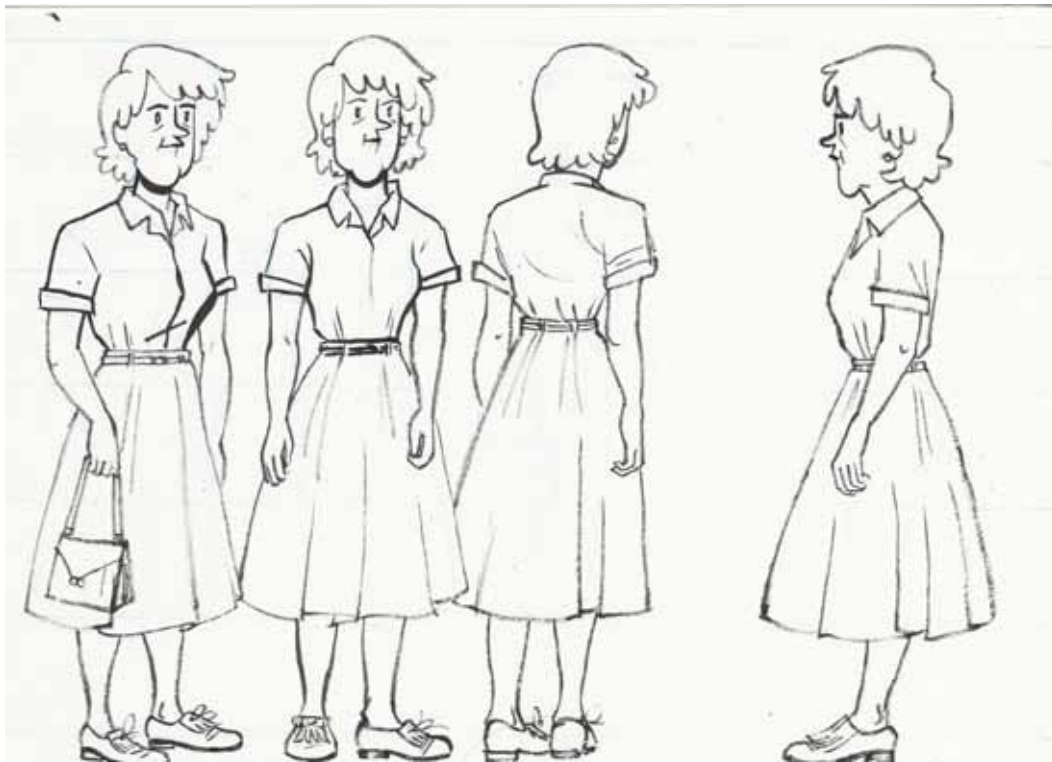
JON



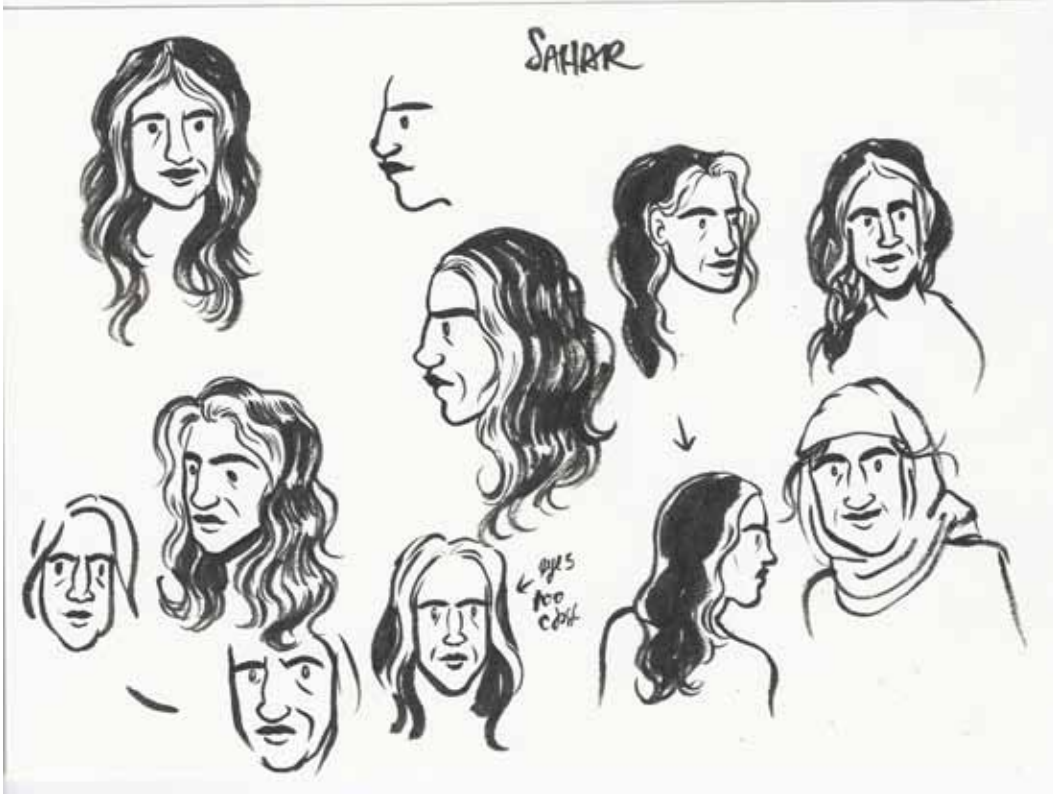
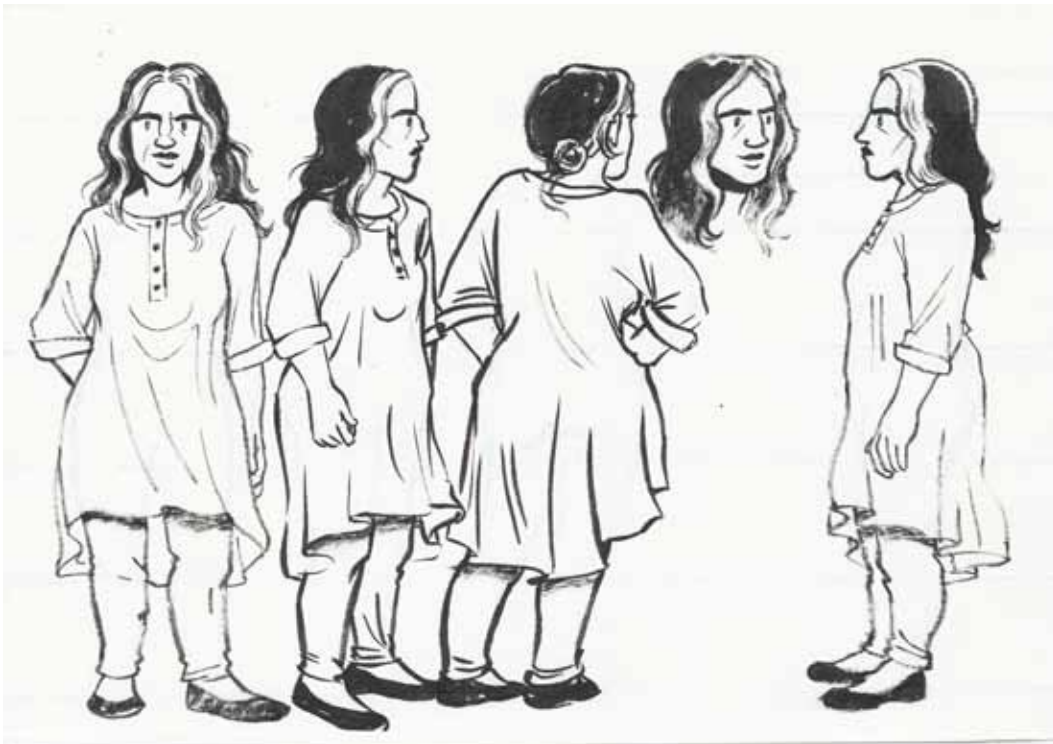
MAGGIE



WAKUMI



MRS. BONES



SAHAR WAHEED

SKETCHBOOK









