

A hand with a ring on the ring finger, pointing to the right. The hand is rendered in a light, almost white color against a black background.

Rephrasin

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a comic by
max banshees

"REPHRASING"

A comic by Max Banshees.

Done in conjunction with the project "Death of Farhad", which looks at three stories-- Nizami's Khamsa, Pathologic, and Haematopoetry-- featuring the Persian literary character Farhad.

CAST

ACTOR IN BLACK

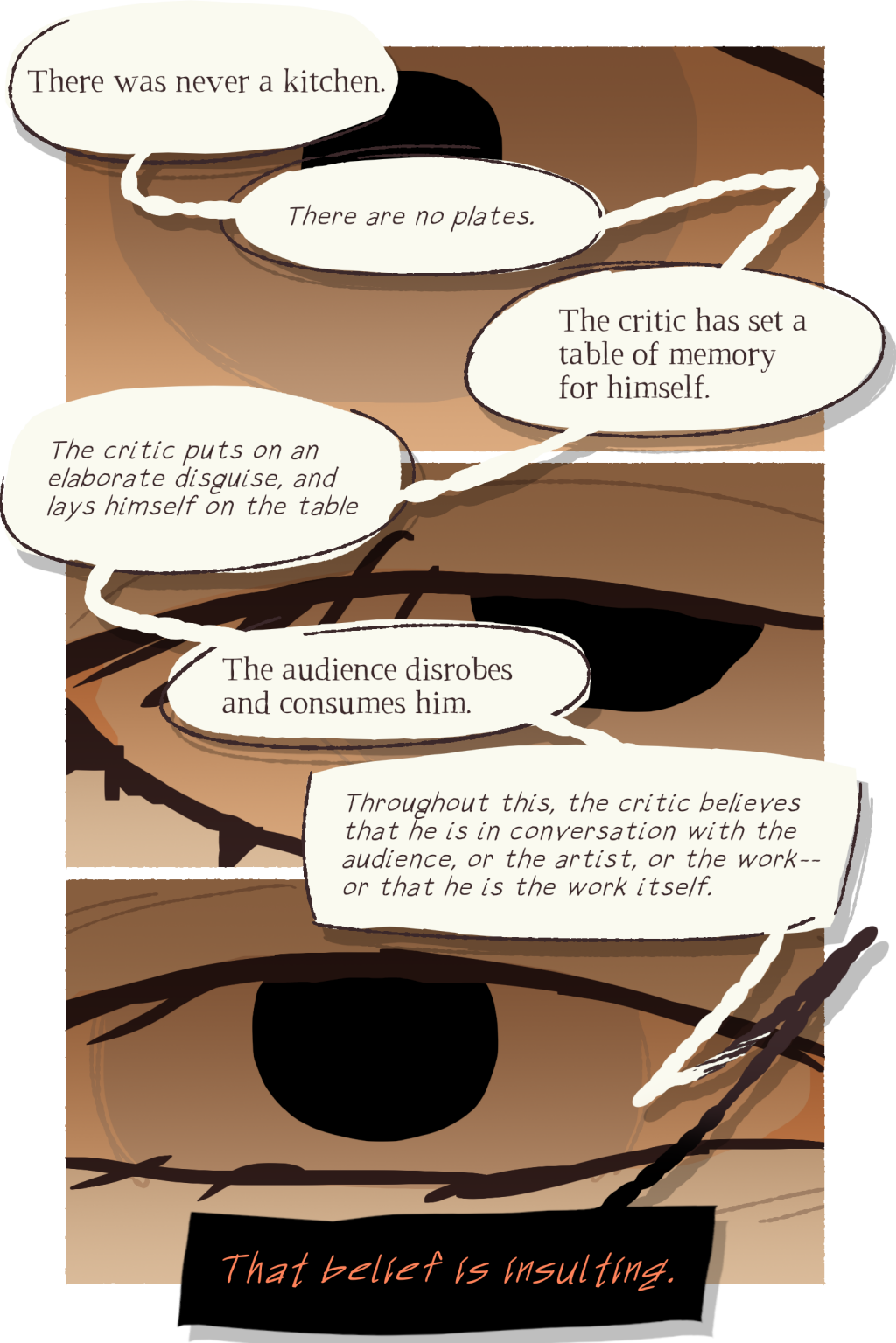
ACTOR IN RED

ACTOR IN GOLD

SETTING

A theatre stage. Set is a late 19th century middle-to-upper class drawing room. There is a small round table with 2 seats at the center. Two performers sit at the table, with an empty seat between them.

The backdrop contains an unlit fireplace to the left, a door in the center, and a wall-mounted pendulum clock and upholstered bench to the right. Empty gilded frames decorate the walls.





No.



Artistry and criticism are entirely incompatible.

Well, let's be clear that this is *your* opinion.



It's more dynamic this way. We can agree on that, at least.

Agree?

*I hate pleasantries, and I'll **never** compromise.*

I wouldn't insult a colleague by acting that meek.

*We **are** colleagues, aren't we?*

You're funny.

Your motives are unclear--

--or maybe it's that they're so clear that they become deceptively deep.

Our patron respects this-- or, more precisely, he wants to nurture this in us.

We can be like rowers, or better yet, a pendulum--

-- or, what about the propellers of a plane?

You will be the push to my pull, which will lead to our flight.

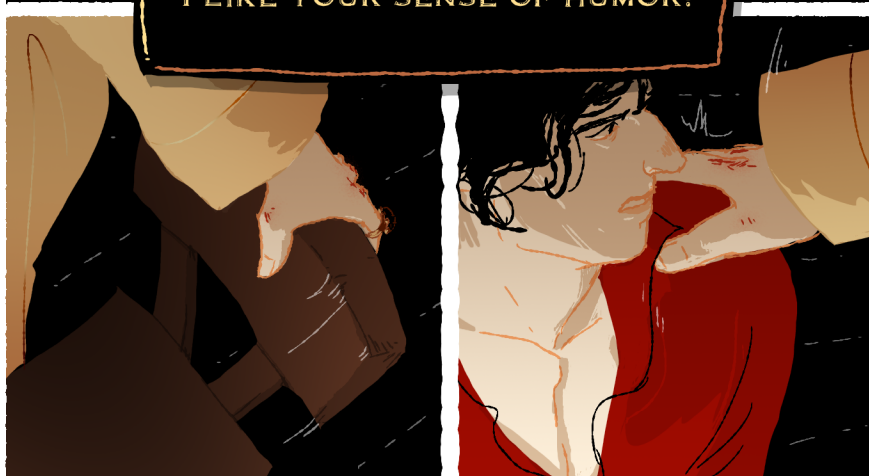




YOU'RE FUNNY.



I LIKE YOUR SENSE OF HUMOR!



PUSHING AND PULLING
AND ATTEMPTS AT FLIGHT.

HOLDING HANDS, LETTING GO,
LAUGHING-- I LIKE IT ALL.



DO YOU SEE YOUR
ROLE AS **NECESSARY**?

...Yes. Do you?

YES.

I'M HAPPY THAT WE
AGREE ON THIS.





IT'S A PLEASURE TO MEET YOU, COLLEAGUE.

Ah, I thought you were our patron for a second.

He didn't tell me that there were two of you.

...AND HE DIDN'T TELL US THAT THERE WAS ONLY ONE OF YOU!

HE MADE YOU SOUND LIKE A WORKSHOP, NOT A SOLE MAN.

SO MUCH ENTHUSIASM, SO MANY BRILLIANT IDEAS!

The **ACTOR IN GOLD** leans down to shake the **ACTOR IN RED**'s hands.

ACTOR IN GOLD— It's a pleasure to meet you, colleague.

ACTOR IN RED— Ah, I thought you were our patron for a second. He didn't tell me that there were two of you.

ACTOR IN GOLD— ...and he didn't tell us that there was only one of you! He made you sound like a ~~work~~ workshop, not a sole man. So much enthusiasm, so many brilliant ideas!

The **ACTOR IN BLACK** is distracted, looking away from the other two actors.

ACTOR IN GOLD— It's freezing. Let me light the fireplace...

Unspecified dialogue in blank speech bubbles between the **ACTOR IN GOLD** and the **ACTOR IN RED**, with focus on the **ACTOR IN BLACK** looking away.

END

Set against the theatrical backdrop of a 19th century drawing room, "Rephrasing" captures the debate between three artists on the creation and criticism of art as they wait for their patron to arrive.



Weaving reality with metafiction, professionalism with intimacy, and good-natured banter with an undercurrent of danger, writer and artist Max Banshees creates a world where the boundaries between the audience, the actors, and the stage are blurred. Can these artists come to an agreement before the start of their joint project-- and, more importantly, should they?