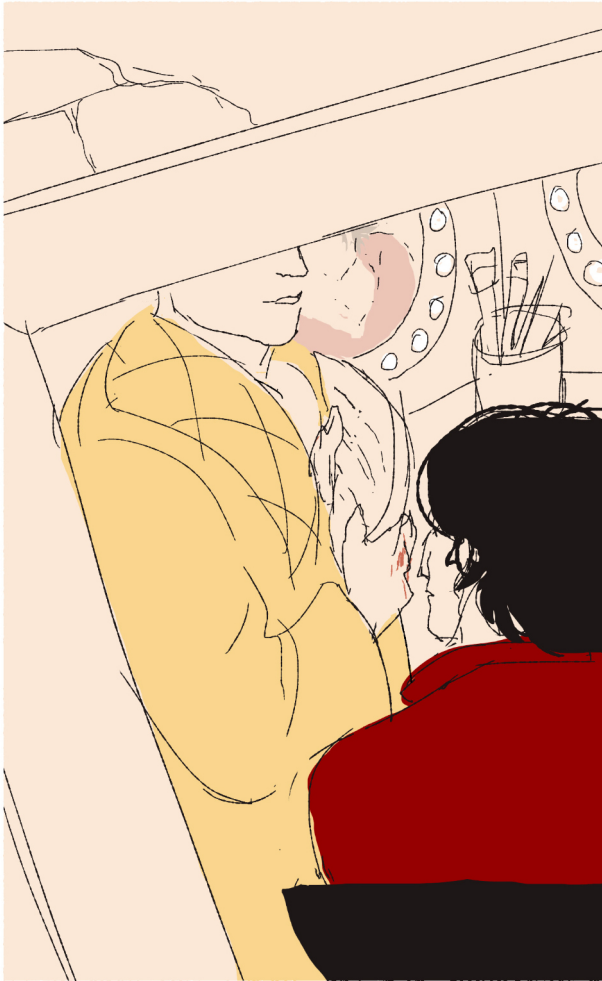


# Rephrasing



## Process Book

Max Banshees, Fall 2022

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## About

This is a process book for the work done in Maura Smyth's "Making a Comic Book" class at MassArt. The comic ties in with my thesis project on the Persian literary character Farhad.

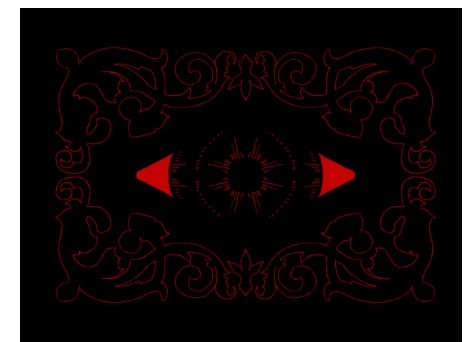
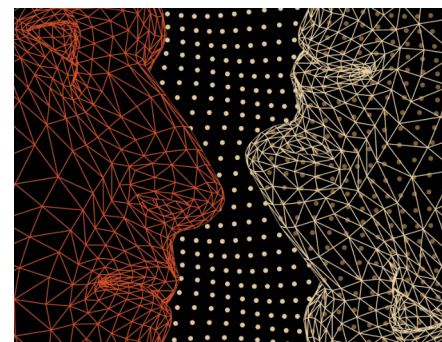
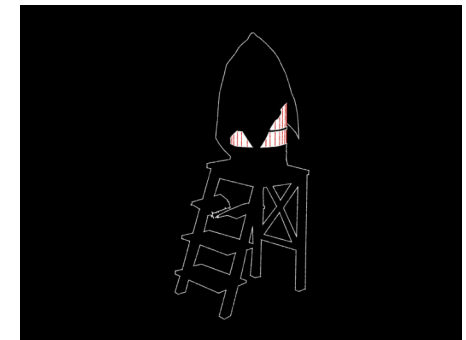
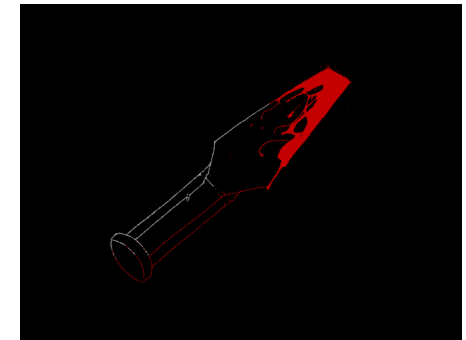
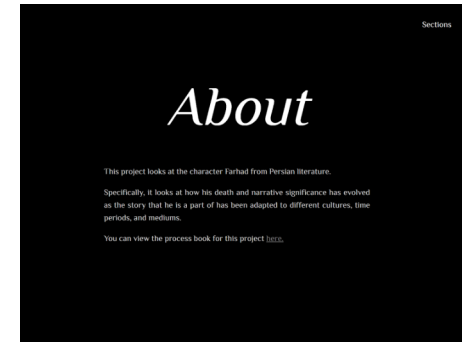
In the thesis project, three distinct adaptations featuring this character– and his death– are considered. This comic serves as supplementary material to two of the adaptations that prominently feature theatre and the creation of art [*Pathologic* and *Haematopoetry*.]

## Original Thumbnails

This project was a rework of an older comic. The original thumbnails for this comic were finished before the start of class, and were inspired by a project finished around that time [turning Judas' playscript *Haematopoetry* into a comic. The playscript itself is a fanwork for *Pathologic*, based on Patrick Hamilton's play *Rope*.]

## Goals

My main goals with the rework were to add color, flesh out the setting and character designs, and improve the lettering in order to better convey tone. Research, feedback from classmates, assigned readings from the professor, and visual influence from thesis helped me accomplish this.



**“Farkhad exits the stage too soon.  
The Bachelor faces a terrible choice.”**

A Pathologic fanwork.

Loosely based on *Rope*,  
the 1929 play by Patrick Hamilton.

Essentially... What if Farkhad had died while still  
in the Capital, and the Bachelor got involved?

## CAST

**Daniil Dankovsky**

A Bachelor of Medicine  
(and excellent shot)

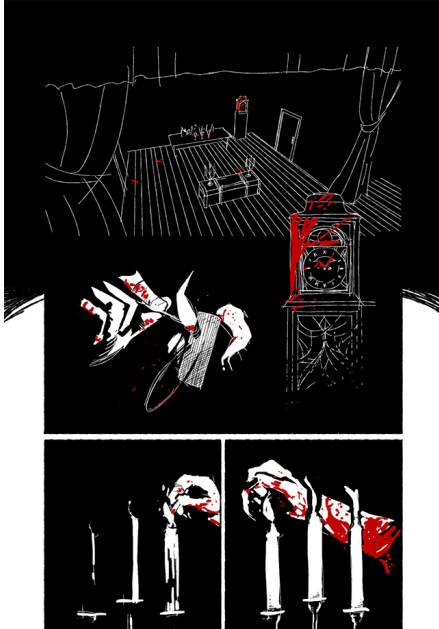
**Andrey Stamatín**

A Renaissance Man  
(and *Bon Vivant*)

**Peter Stamatín**

An Architect  
(and Artist)

*farkhad*  
a talented corpse.



## Haematopoetry

OfTheRiot

### Summary:

Farkhad exits the stage too soon. The Bachelor faces a terrible choice.

Loosely based on *Rope*, the 1929 play by Patrick Hamilton.

### HAEMATOPOMETRY

#### SETTING

*There is a large wooden chest in the center of the stage, the kind used to store books or sheets —reminiscing of a coffin. Two brass candelabra sit on top. At the back, a high table full of liquor bottles and three glasses. Next to it, a grandfather clock stained with blood.*

*The room is dark. ANDREY lights a match, and with it the two candelabra. He is perfectly calm. The growing candlelight reveals the bloodstains on his arms, clothes and face. PETER stands with his back turned.*

PETER STAMATIN.— You can't hold your liquor nor your tongue.

ANDREY STAMATIN.— I can hold a knife well enough.

PETER STAMATIN.— Did you see his hands?

ANDREY STAMATIN.— What of them?

PETER STAMATIN.— They contorted in a curious way. I could swear he was gripping a pen, trying to note something down. A last impulse to correct us. I bet he disapproved of the angle you chose to stab him.

ANDREY STAMATIN.— He was a coward. We've done him a favor; cowards embarrass themselves when times change. Now he'll have a chance to retain what's left of his glory. Death has shrouded him; he cannot show fear.

PETER STAMATIN.— No... No. I see him clearer than ever. He's still here, waiting for silence.

ANDREY STAMATIN.— Drink some more to calm your nerves. You'll be drunk when Daniil arrives. I'll do the talking.

*The doorbell rings. THE TWINS share an alarmed glance.*

PETER STAMATIN.— It's not yet midnight. What is he doing here?

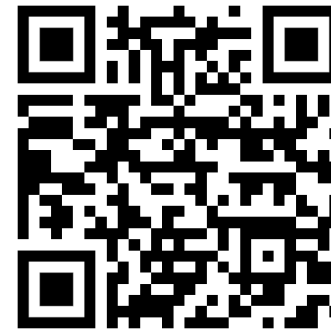


**“Death of Farhad”**  
Project



<https://maxbanshees.com/thesis/farhad.html>

**“Death of Farhad”**  
Process Book



<https://maxbanshees.com/thesis/processbook.html>

## Blurb

By looking at example blurbs, as well as receiving feedback from classmates, I was able to turn my original summary into a more robust and accurate representation of the story.

Specifically, a classmate noted that the most important aspect of the story is the boundary dissolution between the reader and the play format, and not the debate itself.

## Original version

“Three artists take different positions on the creation and criticism of art as they wait for their patron to arrive.”

## Workshopped version

“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/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?”

## Example: Emil Ferris, *My Favorite Thing is Monsters*

Set against the tumultuous political backdrop of late '60s Chicago, *My Favorite Thing Is Monsters* is the fictional graphic diary of 10-year-old Karen Reyes, filled with B-movie horror and pulp monster magazines iconography. Karen Reyes tries to solve the murder of her enigmatic upstairs neighbor, Anka Silverberg, a holocaust survivor, while the interconnected stories of those around her unfold. When Karen's investigation takes us back to Anka's life in Nazi Germany, the reader discovers how the personal, the political, the past, and the present converge.

## Example: Frank Miller, *The Dark Knight*

Writer/artist Frank Miller completely reinvents the legend of Batman in this saga of a near-future Gotham City gone to rot, 10 years after the Dark Knight's retirement. Forced to take action, the Dark Knight returns in a blaze of fury, taking on a whole new generation of criminals and matching their level of violence. He is soon joined by a new Robin—a girl named Carrie Kelley, who proves to be just as invaluable as her predecessors.

Can Batman and Robin deal with the threat posed by their deadliest enemies, after years of incarceration have turned them into perfect psychopaths? And more important, can anyone survive the coming fallout from an undeclared war between the superpowers—or the clash of what were once the world's greatest heroes?

## Research Summaries

Across two assignments, we researched and presented (or otherwise summarized) at least three different topics.

**The first research assignment** was a comic report. In it, we looked at a comic that could meaningfully influence our work in this class. I chose Judas Salieri's comic *Sui Generis*, as this work [and *Haematopoetry*] had greatly impacted me as a reader and artist in a way I couldn't quite explain, and wanted to take the time to look at it more formally.

In that assignment, as well as in parts of the second research assignment, I focused on *Sui Generis'* pacing, environment design, and use of lettering and color. The way color sets mood in this comic, as well as the expressive and idiosyncratic lettering, ended up influencing my work greatly.

**The second research assignment** had us consider what two topics we could research in order to improve our comic—that is, the topics would somehow make the world richer, or the visual techniques more effective, etc. We could even research even something niche, like a character's regional slang. Additionally, choosing only two topics would help streamline our research efforts.

The two topics I chose [based on feedback from classmates on what needed the most work in my thumbnails] were:

**1. Conveying tone through lettering.**

**2. The environment as a stand-in for a character that never appears.**

## Research sources for Assignment 1

*Sui Generis* [comic] by Judas Salieri

<https://twitter.com/inexorableangst/status/1462124558140518405>

## Research sources for Assignment 2

*Above Snakes* #3 Variant Cover by Hassan Otsmane-Elhaou

<https://imagecomics.com/comics/releases/above-snakes-3>

*Morphine* [2008]'s 19th Century Interior Design

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EeeGMdRdH5I>

Self-Reflexive Style in *Asterios Polyp* [comic] by David Mazzucchelli

<https://www.nytimes.com/2009/07/26/books/review/Wolk-t.html>

*Rope* [1929 & 1948]'s stage design and character chemistry  
*[Paperback copy of script, and digital copy of movie]*



We'll never agree. I resent flesh, he thinks it clay.

Andrey builds himself. But he does what the flesh wants, not the other way around.



Ha! Call me crazy, but if I was of my own design I wouldn't choose flesh. I'd rather be made of marble.



What kind of marble?



How are you feeling?

Spare me your concern, Burakk. Save it for the town.



Damn Dankovsky!

Stop that.

Nice weight on the tongue.



Expelled?

Yes, for stealing drugs.

# SEAN LEWIS HAYDEN SHERMAN ABOVE SNAKES

HASSAN OTSMANE-ELHAOU

No. 3 \$3.99 US

Tell me the story again. OKAY.

And this time do the voices. YES, YES, OKAY.

LEAHEM

IT WAS A GOLD NIGHT AND I WAS SAT IN OLD JOHN'S SALOON PLAYING POKER

...RIGHT, I HAD A GOOD HAND, SO AS I THREW DOWN MY THREE ACES, I HEARD A WHERE WAS I... Hey! Get outta my head, Speck. You know I can hear your thoughts, right? No, wait. Was it poker? Or was it blackjack?

THE DOORS FLUNG OPEN, AND IN WALKED THE MEANEST, BLINNIEST, GNAULIEST

Oh!

SLAM!

AND HE BELLOWED:

AND HE PUFFED UP HIS CHEST, HE WAS BIG SCARY, BASICALLY.

Whoa? Hey, Dirt, I don't think we can print that on a cover.

IS THAT YOU, SON? COMIN' IN HERE AND CRYIN' LIKE THAT? YOU GOT SOME NERVE.

SO THIS BIG GUY WITH A SCAR ACROSS HIS RIGHT EYE STOOD UP AND SAID: I like when you tell it. Carry on.

YOU WERE THERE TOO, SPECK. Was he actually crying? HAH HA!

ALL I SAW WAS THE SWIFTING OF A FIST AND A KASH

WHAT YOU NEED IS A LESSON.

SO THE SCAR-GUY FLIPPED THE TABLE AND CHARGED RIGHT AT HIS SON. YOU GOTTA TOUGHEN UP!

AND SCAR-GUY TOOK A GOOD LOOK AT THE GUY UNDER HIM, AND HE SAID: WE ALL RAN OVER TO CHECK THE DAMAGE, AND THEY'RE OUT IN THE STREET, COVERED IN MUD, BLOOD, AND BEER.

"Wait-- you're not Carl." YES. Happy now? Very.

OUCH. (Do the scream.)

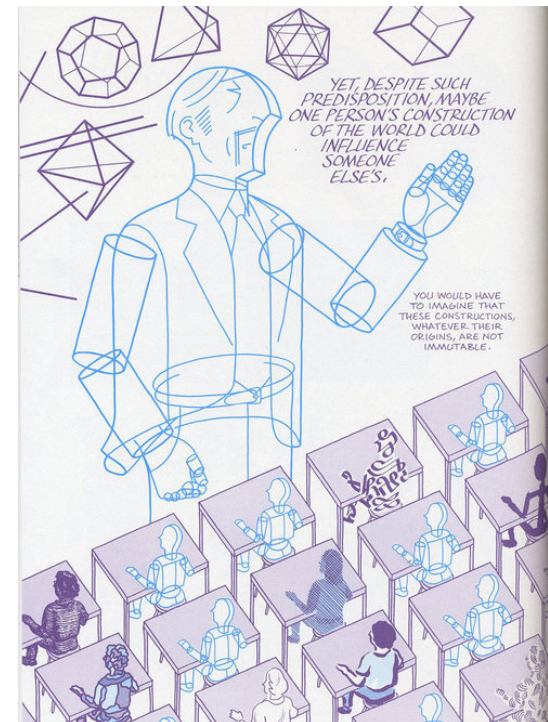
THROUGH A WALL

30 EST. 1982 Image





- Wolves?  
- Our dear doctor nearly died!





*The light goes out again and GRANILLO re-enters the room, shutting the door. He takes his seat again. Slight pause.*

GRANILLO. Well, go on.

BRANDON. There are then Kenneth Raglan and Leila Arden. They have been asked for their youth, innocence, and good spirits alone. Also, in Raglan, who went to the same school and is at the same University as ourselves, you have about the most perfect specimen of ordinary humanity obtainable, and therefore a suitable witness to this so extraordinary scene. Unintellectual humanity is represented. The same applies to Leila, his female counterpart. . . . We then come to Rupert. . . . Now in Rupert, Granno, we have a very intriguing proposition. Rupert, in fact, is about the one man alive who might have seen this thing from our angle, that is, the artistic one. You will recall that we even contemplated, at one time, inviting him to share our dangers, and we eventually turned the notion down, not necessarily because it would have been too much for him to swallow intellectually, but simply because he would not have had the nerve. Rupert is a damnably brilliant poet, but perhaps a little too fastidious. . . . He could have invented and admired, but he could not have acted. So he is in the same blissless ignorance as the rest. Nevertheless he is intellect's representative, and valued at that. *(Pause.)* Granno . . . *[No answer.]* Granno.

GRANILLO. Yes.

BRANDON. What's the time?

GRANILLO *(going up to the clock with a lighted match)*. Ten to.

BRANDON. Sabot will be here in five minutes.

GRANILLO. I know.

BRANDON. May I put on the light?

GRANILLO. Must you? Can't you go on talking?

BRANDON. No, I can't, I'm afraid.

[ 14 ]



## “REPHRASING” COMIC SCRIPT

### 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 3 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.*

\*\*\*

**ACTOR IN BLACK--** There was never a kitchen. There are no plates. The critic has set a table of memory for himself.

**ACTOR IN BLACK--** The critic puts on an elaborate disguise, and lays himself on the table. The audience disrobes and consumes him. Throughout this, the critic believes that he is in a conversation with the audience, or the artist, or the work, or that he is the work itself.

**ACTOR IN BLACK--** That belief is insulting.

**ACTOR IN RED--** I don't agree with how you're approaching this. Criticism can be a companion to artistry. Plenty of critics are artists themselves...

**ACTOR IN RED--** In fact, criticism can be an artform in and of itself.

*A pause. The ACTOR IN BLACK sizes up the ACTOR IN RED, and then leans across the table, into the ACTOR IN RED's personal space.*

**ACTOR IN BLACK--** No. Artistry and criticism are entirely incompatible.

**ACTOR IN RED--** Well, let's be clear that you'd rather have the two be separate. It's more dynamic this way. We can agree on that, at least.

**ACTOR IN BLACK--** Agree? I hate pleasantries, and I'll never compromise. I'd never insult a colleague by acting that meek. We are colleagues, aren't we?

**ACTOR IN RED--** You're funny. Your motives are unclear– or maybe it's that they're so clear that they become deceptively deep.

**ACTOR IN RED--** Our patrons respect this– or, more exactly, they wish 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.



*The ACTOR IN GOLD steps in through the door, and places hands on top of the back of the empty chair. His face is not shown in the panel.*

**ACTOR IN GOLD-** You're funny.

*The ACTOR IN BLACK leans back in their chair. The ACTOR IN GOLD's hands are bruised and red at the knuckles.*

**ACTOR IN GOLD-** I like your sense of humor!

**ACTOR IN GOLD-** Pushing, pulling, and attempts at flight. Holding hands, letting go, laughing- I like it all.

**ACTOR IN GOLD-** Do you see your role as necessary?

**ACTOR IN RED-** ...Yes. Do you?

**ACTOR IN GOLD-** Yes. I'm happy we agree on this.

*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 whole 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...

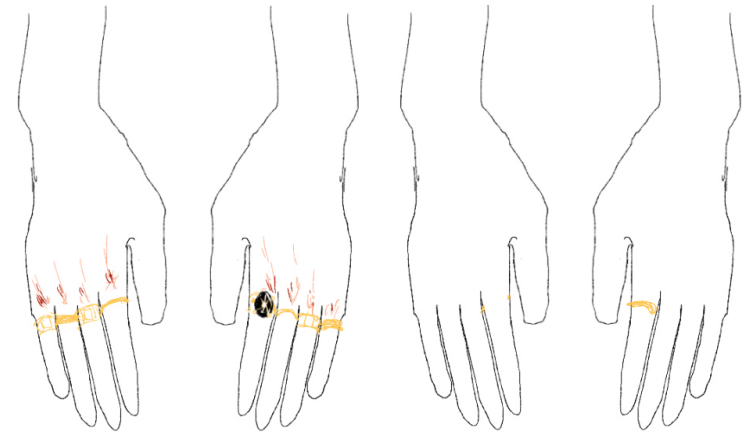
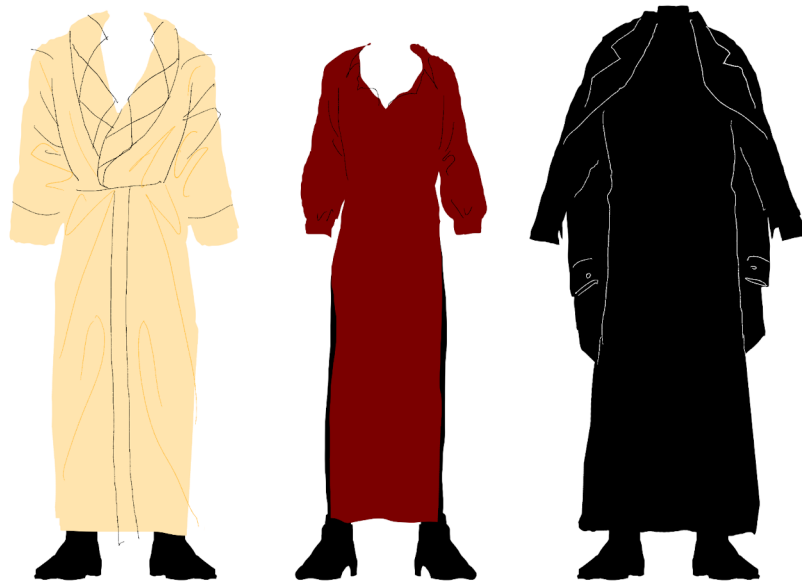
*Unspecified dialogue in blank speech bubbles between the ACTOR IN GOLD and the ACTOR IN RED, with focus on the ACTOR IN BLACK looking away.*

**END**

## Character Design

My aim with the character designs for this comic was to transform the characters into *emblems* of sort. Maybe not straightforward representations of a school of thought, or recognizable archetypes like the brute or jokester or intellectual, but they have at least been made unrealistic. Another way of putting it is that they are not people with histories or futures– they are only alive for the duration of the play, in order to fulfill their roles.

Besides the lack of names [in the script and workshop sessions, the characters are simply named “Actor in Red”, “Actor in Black”, and “Actor in Gold”], their outfits are nearly solid colored blocks. My inspiration for this came from how theatre costume designs are meant to be legible from a distance, and from the flat visual style from thesis.

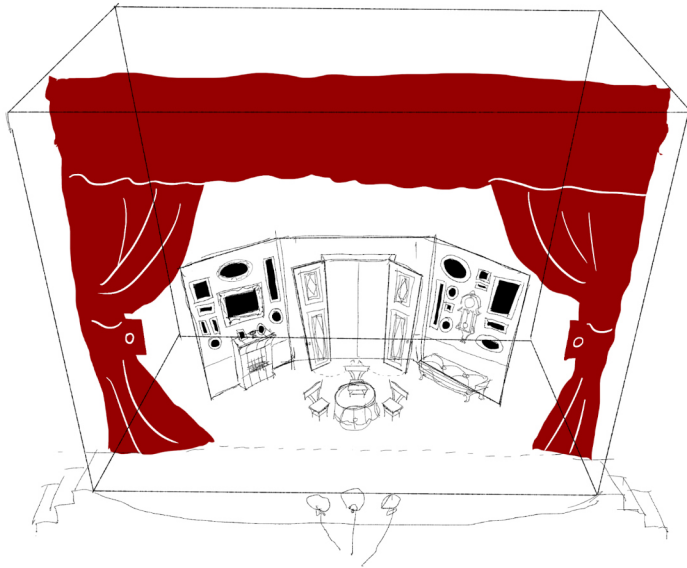


## Stage Design

As the the events of the comic happen as a play, the environment that these characters exist in also becomes abstracted.

I modelled the stage backdrop after an upper-middle class 19th century drawing room, and kept the colors in the background minimal in order to emphasize the artificial and constructed feeling.

Additionally, I chose this time period as it puts some distance between us and the characters- the historical buffer, along with the abstraction of character and environment, lets them speak in the grand and vague manner that they do.



## Lettering

An aspect that I had neglected in the past as a comic artist was lettering, and specifically how it could be used to convey tone. My view was that if the writing was good enough, it did not need frills. Even if more inventive lettering could improve the reader's experience, I believed that the effort put into it would have diminishing returns, especially with larger, more time sensitive projects.

While meaningful writing can overcome its more humble form, I'd be remiss to ignore the power of lettering, especially in the context of a comic that is fashioned after a play. Comics are silent and static, yet they move through time and have a voice- however, this is not achieved through actors delivering their lines, but rather, through a comic's lettering and panelling.

*Sphinx of black quartz, judge my vow.*

*Blowzy red vixens fight for a quick jump.*

**THE QUICK HINDU BAT  
WAS HAPPILY MUNCHING  
ON GOLDEN THISTLE  
AND KIWI...**

*... and the zealous stork was  
playing saxophone jazz solos  
behind the very full arena.*

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.

*creeak...*

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.

PUSHING AND PULLING AND ATTEMPTS AT FLIGHT.

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

DO YOU SEE YOUR ROLE AS NECESSARY?

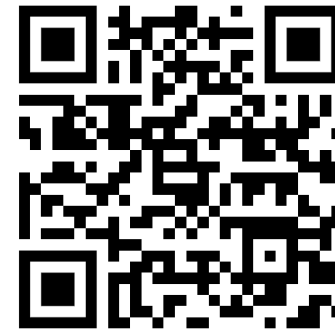
...Yes. Do you?

YES.

I'M HAPPY THAT WE AGREE ON THIS.

# Final Comic

**"Rephrasing"**  
Comic



<https://maxbanshees.com/page/rephrasing2.html>

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.



a comic by  
max banshees

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?

## "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

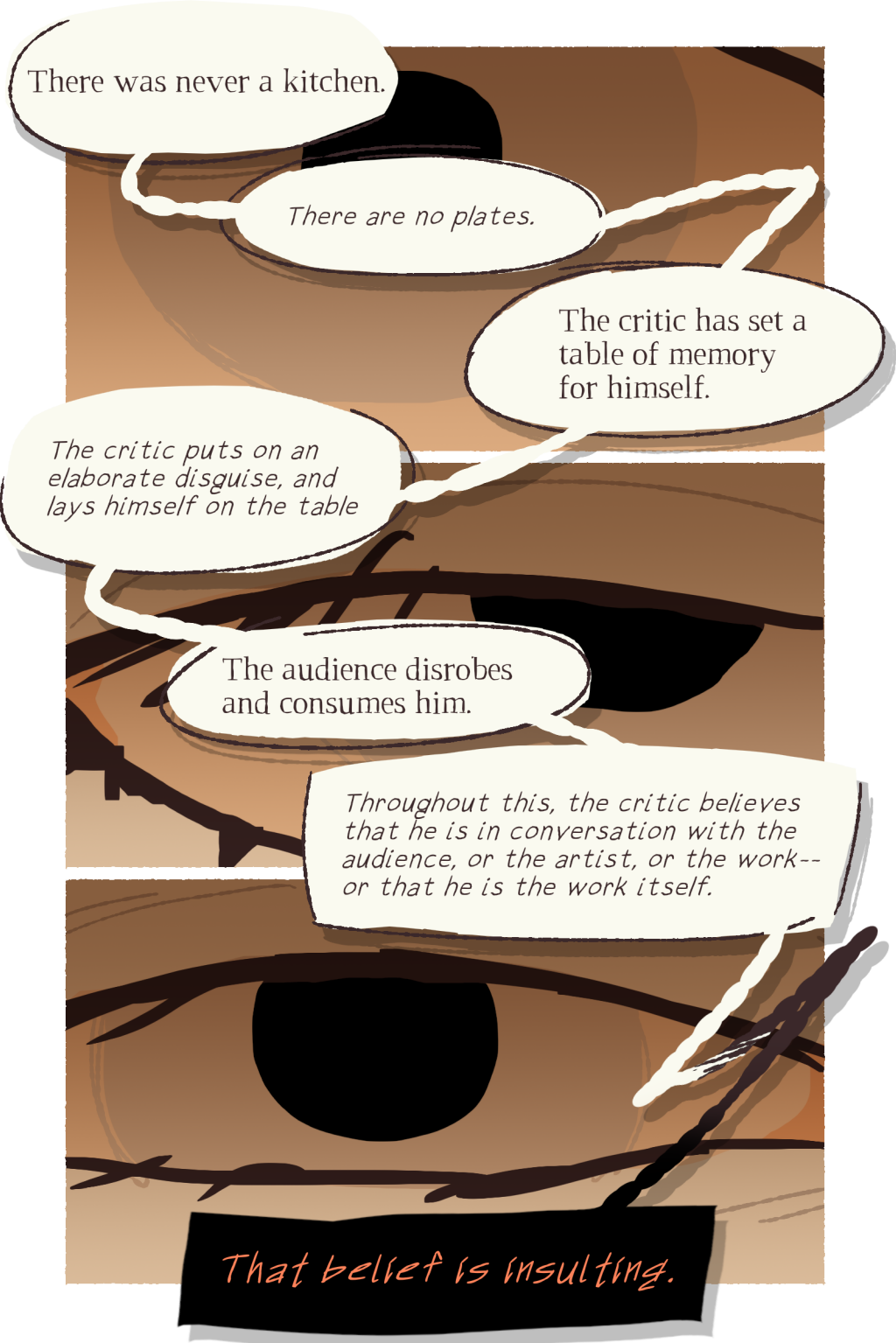
ACTOR IN GOLD

### 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.





There was never a kitchen.

*There are no plates.*

The critic has set a table of memory for himself.

*The critic puts on an elaborate disguise, and lays himself on the table*

The audience disrobes and consumes him.

*Throughout this, the critic believes that he is in conversation with the audience, or the artist, or the work-- or that he is the work itself.*

*That belief is insulting.*



I don't agree with how you're approaching this.

Criticism can be a companion to artistry--



-- It can be even be an artform in and of itself.





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.

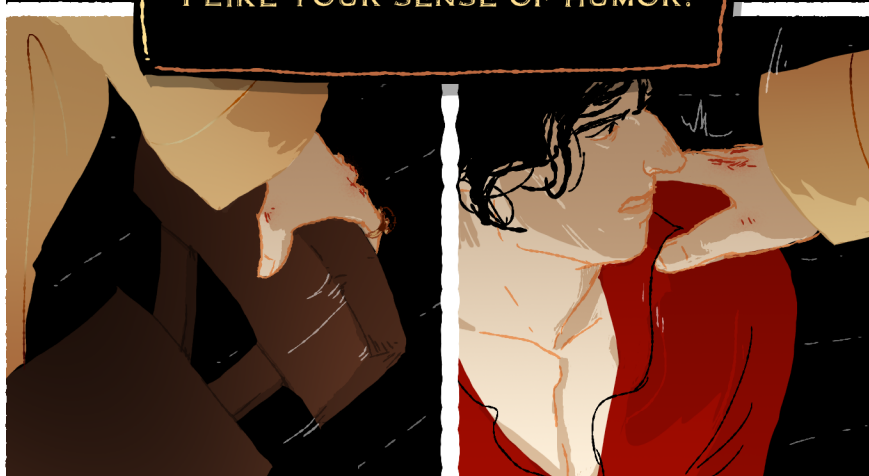




YOU'RE FUNNY.



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.

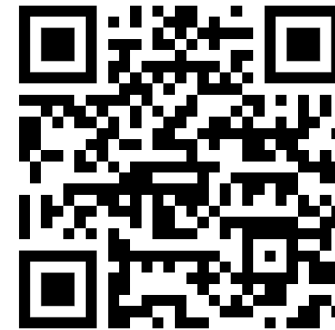
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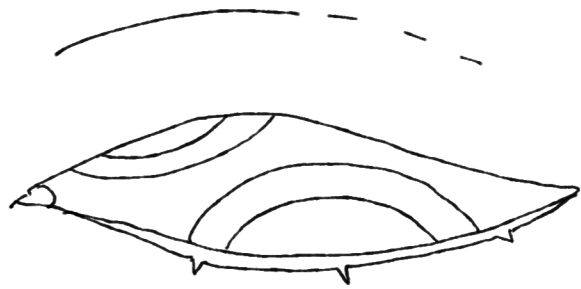
END

# Original Thumbnails

**"Rephrasing"**  
Thumbnails

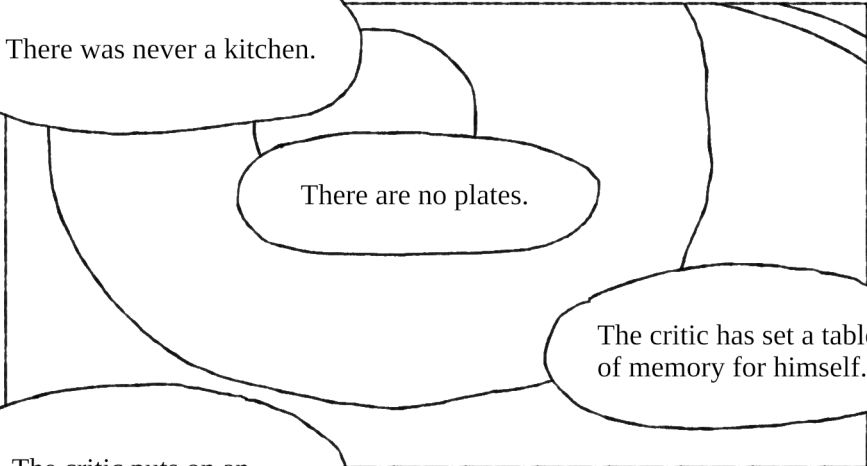


<https://maxbanshees.com/page/rephrasing.html>



*rephrasing*

a pathologic fancomic  
featuring  
the stamatis & farkhad

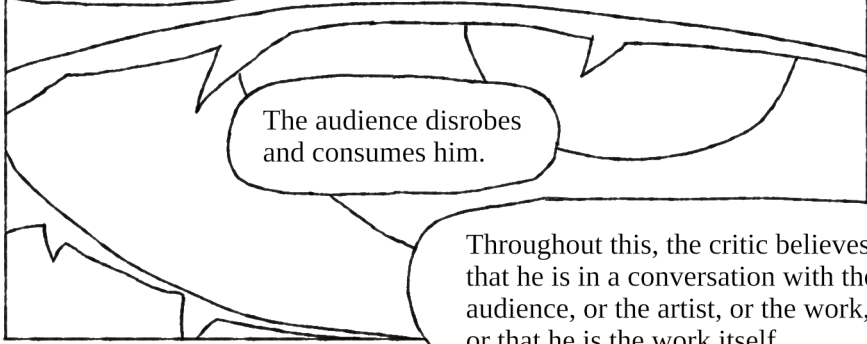


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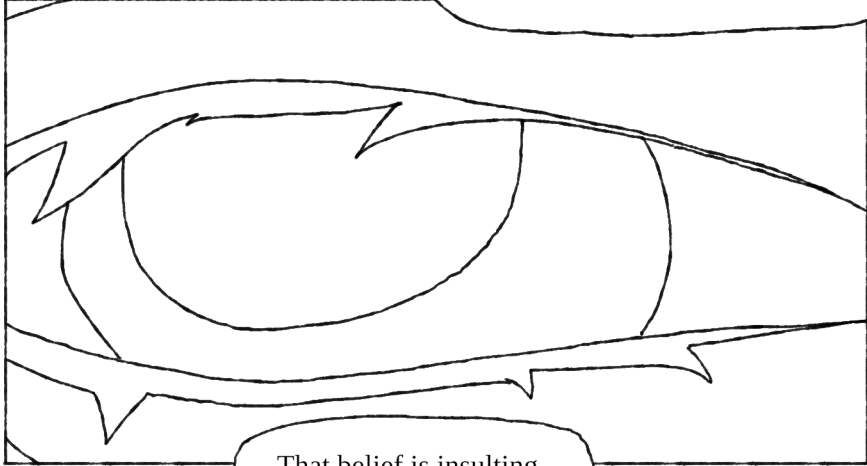
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The critic puts on an  
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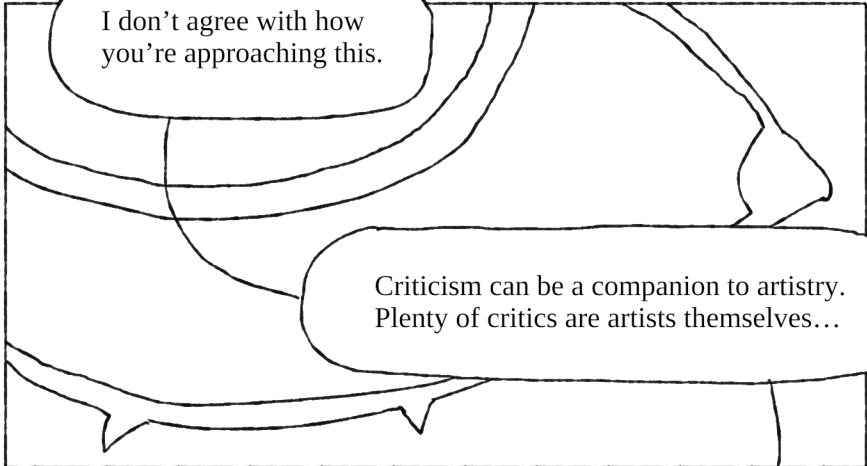


The audience disrobes  
and consumes him.

Throughout this, the critic believes  
that he is in a conversation with the  
audience, or the artist, or the work,  
or that he is the work itself.

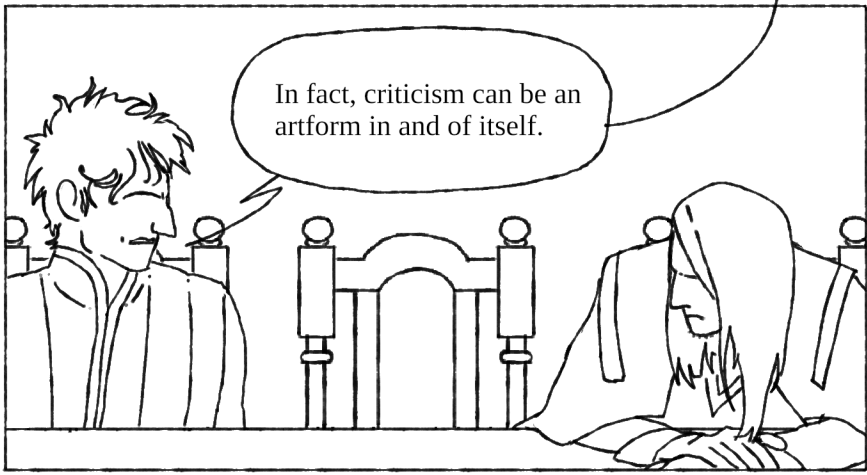


That belief is insulting.

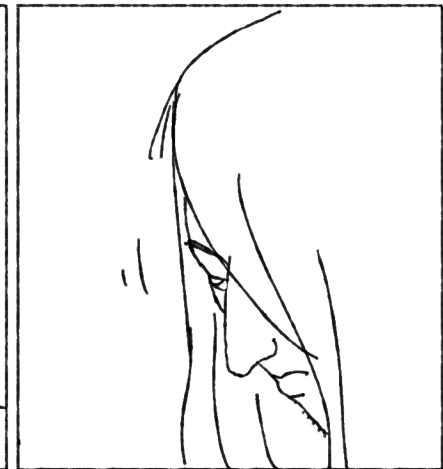
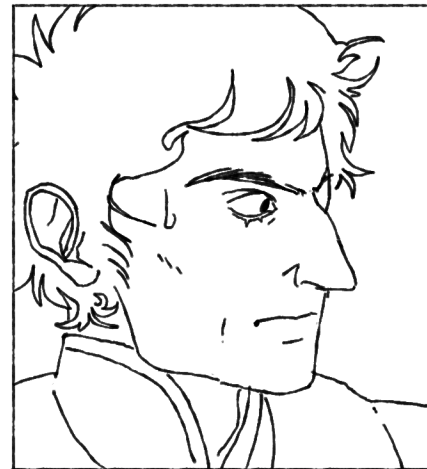


I don't agree with how  
you're approaching this.

Criticism can be a companion to artistry.  
Plenty of critics are artists themselves...



In fact, criticism can be an  
artform in and of itself.



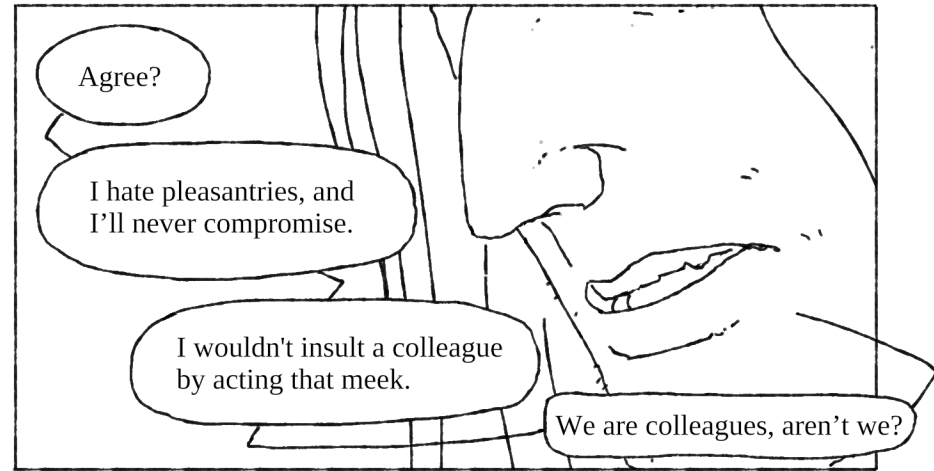




No. Artistry and criticism are entirely incompatible.

Well, let's be clear that you'd rather have the two be separate.

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

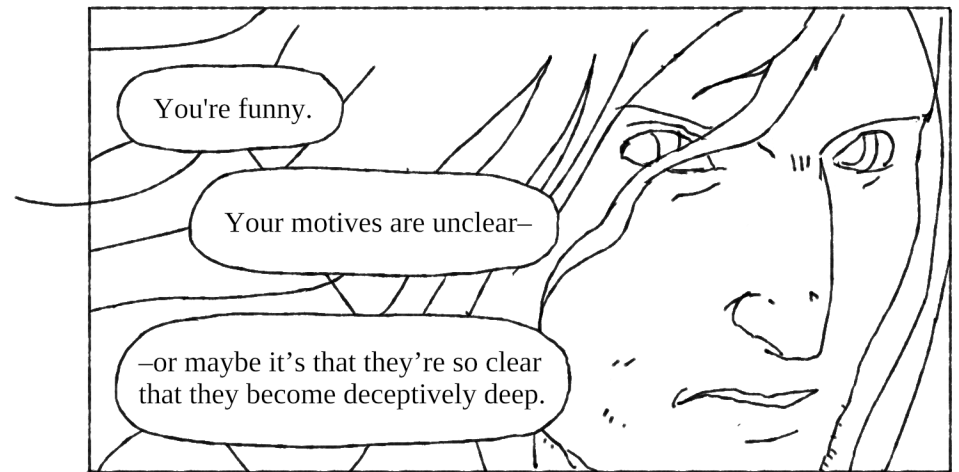


Agree?

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.

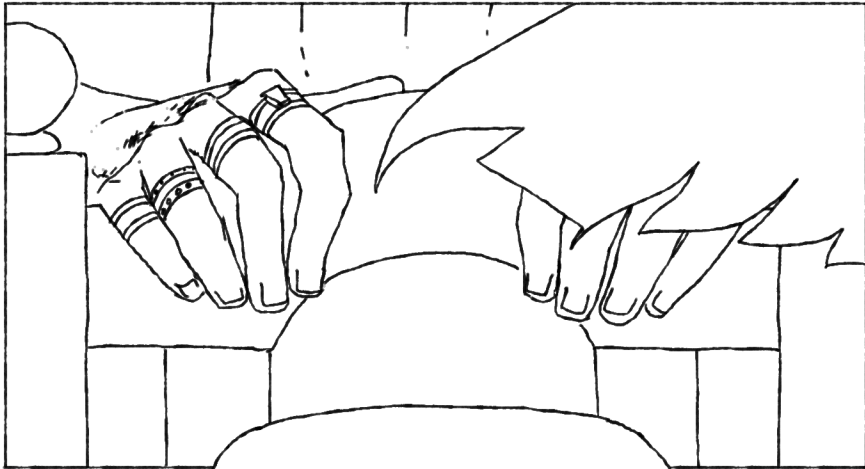
Your motives are unclear—

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

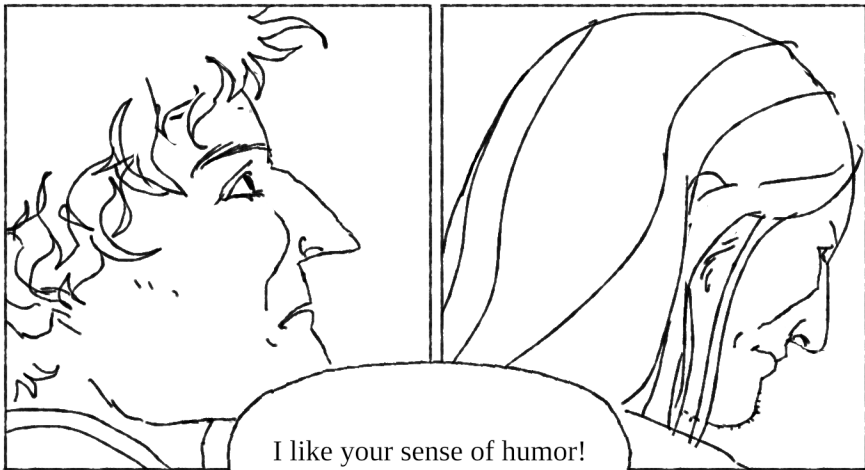
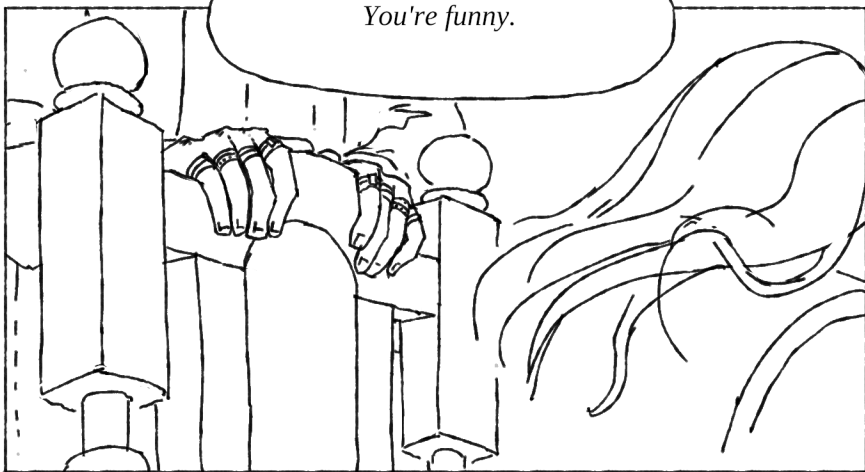
Our patrons respect this— or, more exactly, they wish to nurture this in us.

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.

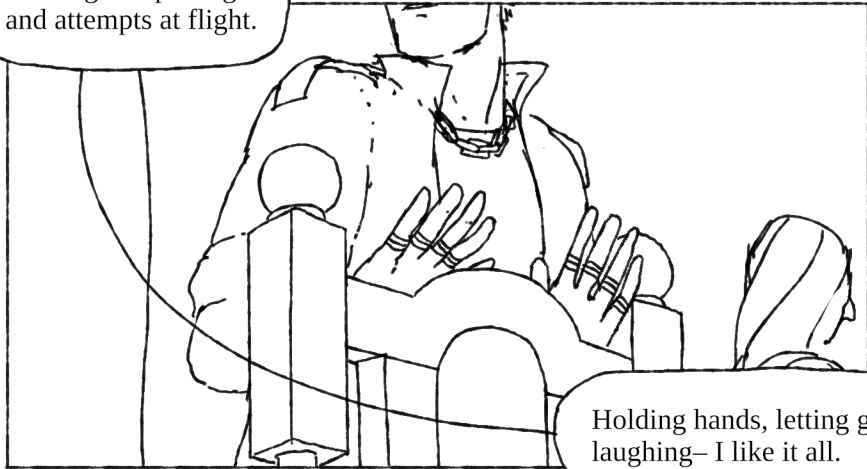


You're funny.



I like your sense of humor!

Pushing and pulling  
and attempts at flight.



Holding hands, letting go,  
laughing- I like it all.



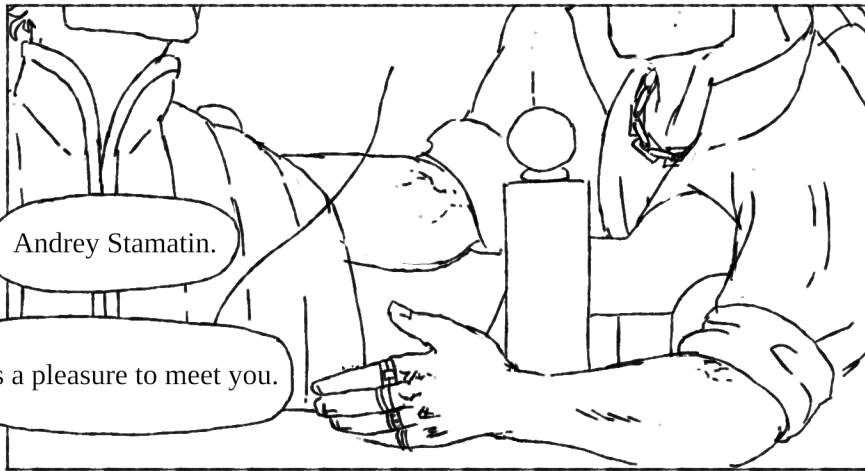
Do you see your role as necessary?



...Yes. Do you?

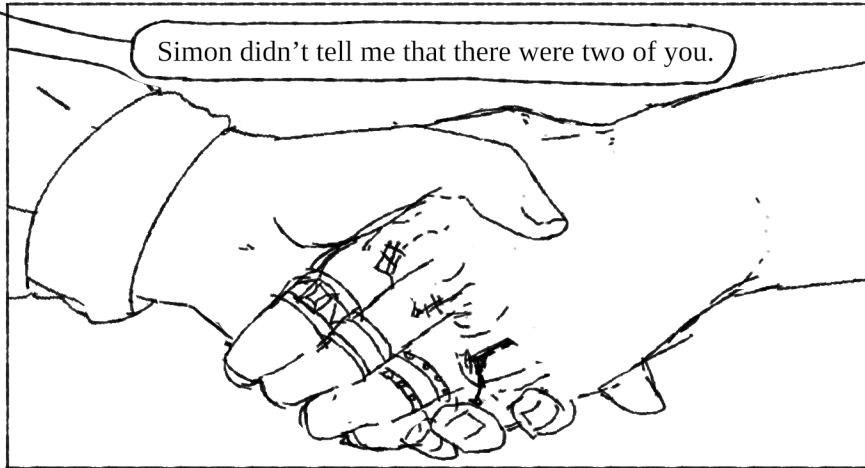
Yes.

I'm happy we agree on this.

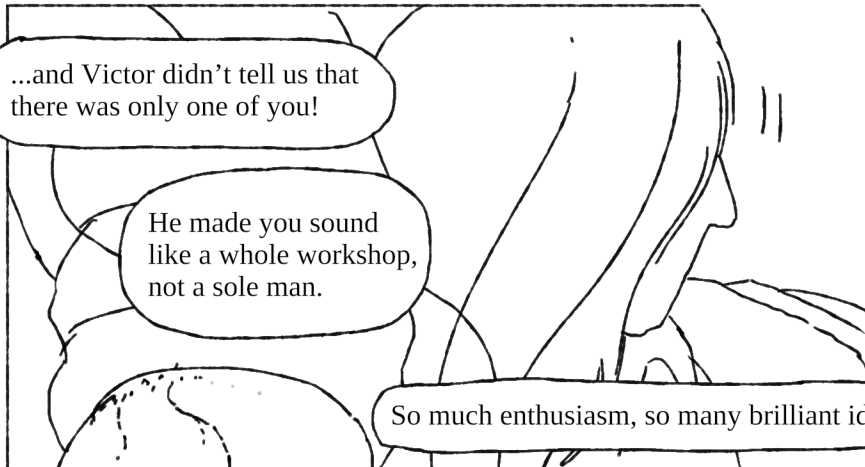


Andrey Stamatina.

It's a pleasure to meet you.



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



...and Victor didn't tell us that there was only one of you!

He made you sound like a whole workshop, not a sole man.

So much enthusiasm, so many brilliant ideas!

You've already met my brother, Peter.

That's good.

I look forward to seeing how our relationship will evolve.

...Where is your proposal?

Oh, we have a bit of an interesting approach to that. It's like... a play. I think you'll like it. In fact, it involves your participation.

That's... interesting, but you can't expect the Kains to place their money and trust on a fun presentation.

Why not?

We're architects! We design for towns and people! We're making works that will be inhabited by the very people who build them!

We have to make sure that these designs can be understood and manufactured by others *as they were intended to be*.

Like in any relationship, clear and honest communication at every step of the way can prevent undesired outcomes.

I agree wholeheartedly. Accidents stemming from miscommunication are a terrible thing.

I might just have to rethink this whole presentation, though...

...It would be nice to have a test audience.

There was never a kitchen.

There are no plates.

The critic has set a table of memory for himself.

The critic puts on an elaborate disguise, and lays himself on the table.

The audience disrobes and consumes him.

Throughout this, the critic believes that he is in a conversation with the audience, or the artist, or the work, or that he is the work itself.

That belief is insulting.

I don't agree with how you're approaching this.

Criticism can be a companion to artistry. Plenty of critics are artists themselves...

In fact, criticism can be an artform in and of itself.

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Agree?

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We are colleagues, aren't we?

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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.

Pushing and pulling and attempts at flight.

You're funny.

I like your sense of humor!

...Yes. Do you?

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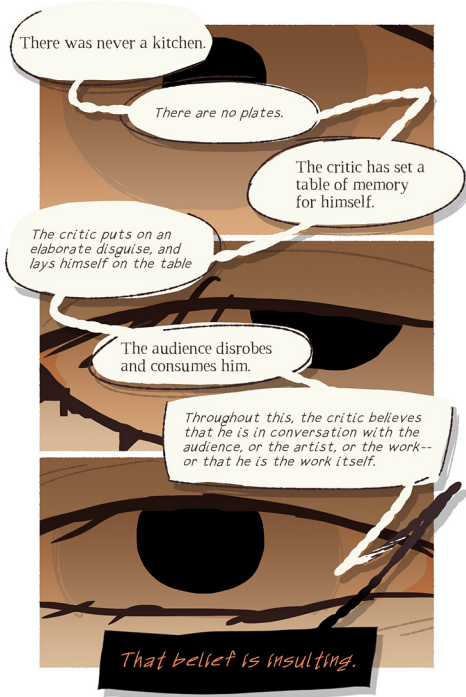
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The ACTOR IN GOLD leans down to shake the ACTOR IN RED's hands.

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 ~~workshop~~ 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.

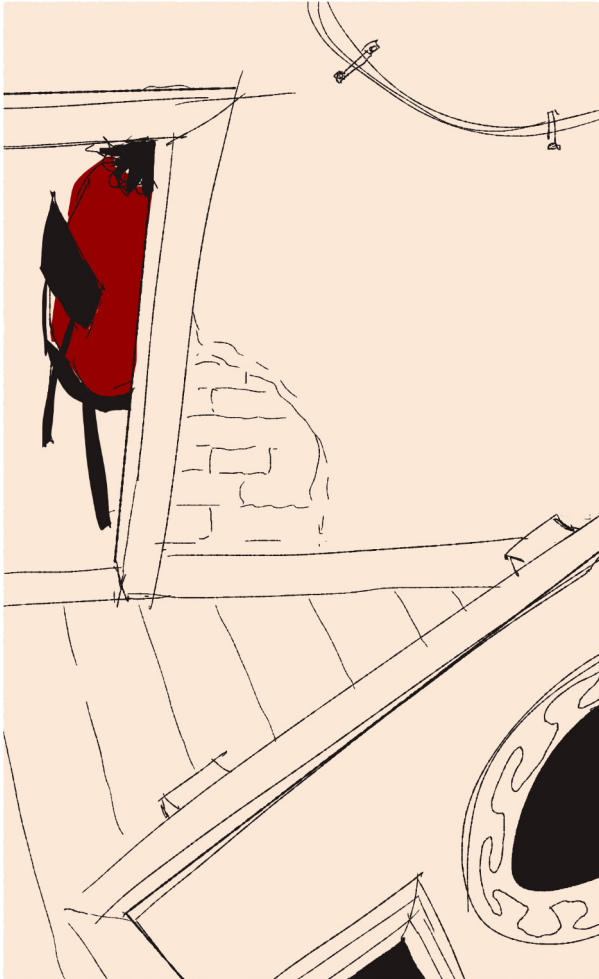
ACTOR IN GOLD-- It's freezing. Let me light the fireplace.

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/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?