1. Explanation: In Iran, social class is very important. Those who are in lower social classes (poorer people) have to do hard physical labor and do jobs that would be considered lower or “beneath” people who are of a higher social class. Marjane is confused about this because although she is of a higher social class, her family has a live in maid and she treats their maid like family and is very close to her.
2. Marjane’s family takes a young girl, Mehri (Mary), into their home to take care of her and be their maid. Why did the young girl’s family have to send her to another family?
3. Mehri falls in love with Marjane’s neighbor’s son and the two become engaged after a time. The neighbor’s son believes that Mehri is Marjane’s sister but when Marjane’s father finds out Mehri is engaged to his neighbor’s son, he asks if the neighbor’s son still wants to see Mehri. The neighbor’s son does not. Why doesn’t he? (It doesn’t say it in the book. Figure out why based on context clues.)
4. After Mehri’s engagement is ended, Mehri and Marjane go to a demonstration. When they get home Marjane’s mother is furious, not only because they went to a demonstration without permission, but because a lot of people were killed for being at another demonstration. Which group killed the people at the demonstration?
5. After the Black Friday massacre, many more massacres occur and eventually the Shah (king) says that he understands why they are revolting and promises to try democracy. The Shah then tests many Prime Ministers, but he always finds a problem with them. What does this say about the Shah’s true intentions?
6. A little while after the Shah is out of the country and government, the political prisoners are released. How many were there?
7. Mohsen and Siamak (the two prisoners who were freed and know Marjane’s family) talk about some of the torture they underwent. What were two of the torture methods?
8. After the removal of the Shah and the release of the prisoners, it became popular for people to say they were heroes who fought in the revolution or were injured. A lot of these people are lying, such as one of Marjane’s neighbors who says the spot on her cheek is actually a bullet wound. With this, Marjane starts to tell stories about her father, but why is she telling stories about him?
9. When Marjane meets her uncle Anoosh, Marjane loves him instantly. But why does she like him so much?
10. Explanation: From pages 62-65 in the book, we see Marjane’s father (Eby) talking with Anoosh and they are discussing how their country has changed after the Shah has been kicked out. Since the removal of the Shah, a new religious lead government has come into power, called the Islamic Republic. This government is run by the religious leaders who are extremists and they’re lying to people by saying that almost everyone in the country (99.99%) voted for this government. This is why people are leaving the country for America and why on page 65 Mohsen is found drowned in his own bathtub. Pay attention to how Anoosh’s opinion on things changes. He is being used to show just how bad things are becoming.
11. Like Mohsen, a group of people come to kill Siamak but he is not home at the time, so they kill his sister in his place. How do Siamak and his family escape after they are attacked?
12. If you remember back to when we saw a man imprisoned and about to be executed, his fiancée came to him before he was going to be executed and asked him to give her a child, so that she would have a living memory of him. When Marjane visits Anoosh while he is in prison, what does he give her to remember him by?
13. Like Anoosh, after his execution, Marjane says “everything will be alright” but she’s also clearly very upset. When God comes to see her, what does she tell him and why would she say that?
14. On page 71, Marjane is shown as drifting through outer space, showing us that she is feeling completely lost and alone. She asks what could be worse than that, but then something worse does happen. What is it?