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population. The graffiti-covered park was one of the only places in the city of more than 8 million that had skateboarding terrain. Moradpour would watch the boys skate; they talked about rock music and illicit drugs as they smoked cigarettes and shared joints.

Years later, one of Moradpour's longtime acquaintances, Obash Karampour, described Frog Park as "the Haight-Ashbury of Tehran" in an interview with *Vanity Fair*.

Four of the Frog Park kids made headlines in 2013 when they were killed in a murder-suicide in Brooklyn. Three were members of a punk-rock band called Yellow Dogs. They moved to the U.S. in their pursuit of creative freedom, according to reports in *The Guardian*. Their killer, who turned the gun on himself after shooting the band mates, was a former member of another Iranian rock group, Free Keys.

Moradpour fondly remembers listening to the Yellow Dogs' band practices in a makeshift rooftop attic.

"We all wanted to go somewhere as teenagers," remembered Moradpour, now 25 and living near Hillsdale in Southwest Portland. "The frog kids aren't there anymore; they're in the U.S. and Canada, in Uruguay and Europe."

In Iran, they were often targeted and arrested by the authorities for minor and sometimes imagined infractions.

Of her group of about 40 friends, she said, five committed suicide and two others died of drug overdose — speedballs and tramadol. She attributes the high death rate to the hopelessness, general fatigue and state of depression that permeated the clique.

In 1990, Moradpour was born in Sharake Gharb, an upscale neighborhood in northwest Tehran. Her parents were conservative — her mother a deeply religious Muslim and her father a traditionalist who believed in "the dignity of the family and female modesty," she said.

She often attended "chic parties" with female relatives — one of her favorite memories. Forty or more women would gather, first to listen to a religious lecture and read the Quran for about an hour, and then to eat, dance and socialize the night away.

It was where Iranian women cut loose, wearing scandalously revealing outfits and talking about sex. Describing the parties, Moradpour said she was reminded of the smell of cucumbers, cookies and Esfand, a perennial plant burned to create a cleansing smoke.

Her parents were financially stable and were able to send her to some of the best private academies in Tehran. In Iran, schools are segregated by gender, and Moradpour didn't fit in with the other girls.

"I got bullied," she said. "I kept changing schools."

Most of her classmates came from wealthier families, but they stole from her — school supplies, even her swimsuit.

Her taste in music also contributed to her status as an outsider. When she was 5 years old, her older cousins introduced her to heavy metal, and she was hooked.

She was listening to Sepultura, Ghost Brigade and Persian metal bands while her



PHOTO COURTESY OF DELARAM MORADPOUR

Dela Moradpour, left, sits with a group of friends in Frog Park, a green space in northwest Tehran, Iran. Her group of about 40 friends would become internationally known as having been one of the first groups of Iranian teenagers to challenge traditional Iranian culture.

classmates were either listening to Persian pop or P. Diddy, Eminem and Britney Spears, she said.

"Anytime I listen to Britney Spears, when I hear her voice, I just imagine myself with a chainsaw. It makes me so angry," Moradpour said in a serious tone. "I find Britney Spears to be more vulgar and scary than this Tool and Metallica."

It wasn't until a boyfriend introduced her to the kids in Frog Park when she was 14 that she felt at home with a group of friends. The boyfriend didn't last, but she remained a member of the Frog Park clique through high school and into college.

In 2008, Moradpour began to study monumental sculpture at the Art University of Tehran, although she remained in her parents' home, as Iranian men and women typically do until marriage.

Two semesters into her first year of college, she ventured off to Isfahan to sightsee with four friends. One frigid evening during this vacation, the Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps, or Revolutionary Guard, approached the students as they stood looking out over the city from an iconic bridge in a strictly conservative neighborhood.

The Revolutionary Guard is separate from Iran's police forces but can also make arrests. According to a *New York Times* report, it has grown from its origin "as an ideologically driven militia" to "assume an increasingly assertive role in virtually every aspect of Iranian society."

The guardsmen asked the students for identification.

"Of course I was the only one that was refusing," Moradpour said. "We were so young and naïve. We didn't know how to handle police."

One guardsman was particularly offended by their street-punk style and attitude.

"I'm pretty sure he has like Oedipus complex or something," Moradpour said. "I'm telling you, a true sociopath."

Before arresting them and transporting them to a nearby police station, he told the teenagers they would be "executed in the morning."

At the station, a police officer told the guardsman his captives were a problem for the Revolutionary Guard, not the police. He then assured Moradpour the guard's station was closed and they'd be released. This was true, but the guardsman insisted the teenagers first sign an affidavit admitting they were Satan worshipers. All but

Moradpour signed the document.

"Aren't they a bunch of idiots?" Moradpour said as she recalled the story. "Why would you sign a paper saying you committed a crime if you didn't?"

Although she was released without charge, Moradpour feared the stigma attached to the arrest would anger and embarrass her family.

"I felt so poorly about myself that I didn't want to face my parents after that," she said. "I was both terrified and ashamed."

She didn't return home for an entire year after the arrest. Instead, she moved in with her sketching instructor, a man 20 years her senior who was also her boyfriend. This move would further stigmatize her.

Moradpour's affair with her teacher ended, and she returned home. Despite their traditional values, her parents continued to love and support their daughter.

Over the next four years, Moradpour estimates, she was arrested about 14 times for hijab-related offenses and for sporting a manto, like a parka, that was too short.

"I got desensitized to it after a while. I was like, OK, here we go again," she said. "It was becoming a hobby for me."

The police would take her down to the station, where they would typically bully her for a few hours and then make her call someone who could bring her more modest clothing to change into.

"My whole life has been a complication of bad stigmas, so I'm not afraid of it anymore," she said. "I openly had boyfriends, I openly smoked, and I was openly drinking. I was openly doing pretty much everything."

Despite the arrests, she said, "I had a very fun life. It was trouble every single day; I had to run away. Once I ran, and I ran, and I ran, and I passed out because I ran so much, and I was a heavy smoker, so you can imagine what kind of a burden it was to run away from police."

"In many cases, I smoked with police officers. I got friendly with them. It's just a different way of life; it's a different way of living."

As she continued her studies, unrest was growing in Iran. In 2009, the controversial re-election of Mahmoud Ahmadinejad sparked what would become known as the Green Movement. Protests began peacefully, with much of the organization

and communication happening on social media.

Moradpour's father warned her to steer clear of areas of Tehran where there were protests, which were escalating from peaceful to violent. Moradpour began to hear stories of arrests at protests from students whose voices were strained from shouting.

She was intrigued and started going to protests in support of Mir Hossein Mousavi.

Even today, she said, her heart is with the Green Movement, although it was suppressed as quickly as it began.

"No European or American country could ever experience what we experienced in (the) Green Movement, because nobody cares that much," she said. "People are comfortable. They don't have the problem of freedom of speech. They don't have the problem of human rights, and you know, if they want something for other people, just have fundraising and everything. But we had the problem of freedom of speech and human rights, so Green Movement was necessary."

On Feb. 14, 2011, a student at her university, Sane Jaleh, was shot and killed at a Green Movement protest. His friends and classmates say the Revolutionary Guard was responsible for his death, although government-issued statements claimed otherwise.

Moradpour, along with most other university students, attended his funeral. Afterward, the Revolutionary Guard careened hundreds of mourners into an auditorium at the school. When Moradpour was handed an opportunity to slip out, she and her friend took it and ran to a nearby coffee shop.

"We just started crying and crying," she said, "because we felt so bad about ourselves that we ran away."

Her father called her as she sat in the coffee shop, wanting to know if she was OK.

Shortly after she hung up the phone, she heard a voice. "Miss, could you come with us for a second?"

One of the officers kicked her U.S. Army boot and accused her of speaking on the phone with the "Cia." What he meant was CIA.

She told them it was her father on the other end of the line, but they persisted. "I know you're a U.S. spy. What is this you're wearing? You're a U.S. soldier."