

On that page is a painting of a naked, pink-skinned man and woman, side by side. Each of their body parts is labelled with a number that matches the appropriate French name, typed beside the image. But we don't see numbers or words. We are even indifferent to the man's penis, though the busy patch of hair surrounding it is a little startling. We are solely fixated on what hangs between her legs.

She has a penis, too. But hers has a giant hole at the end.

It looks like a garden hose!

Yeah, it does!

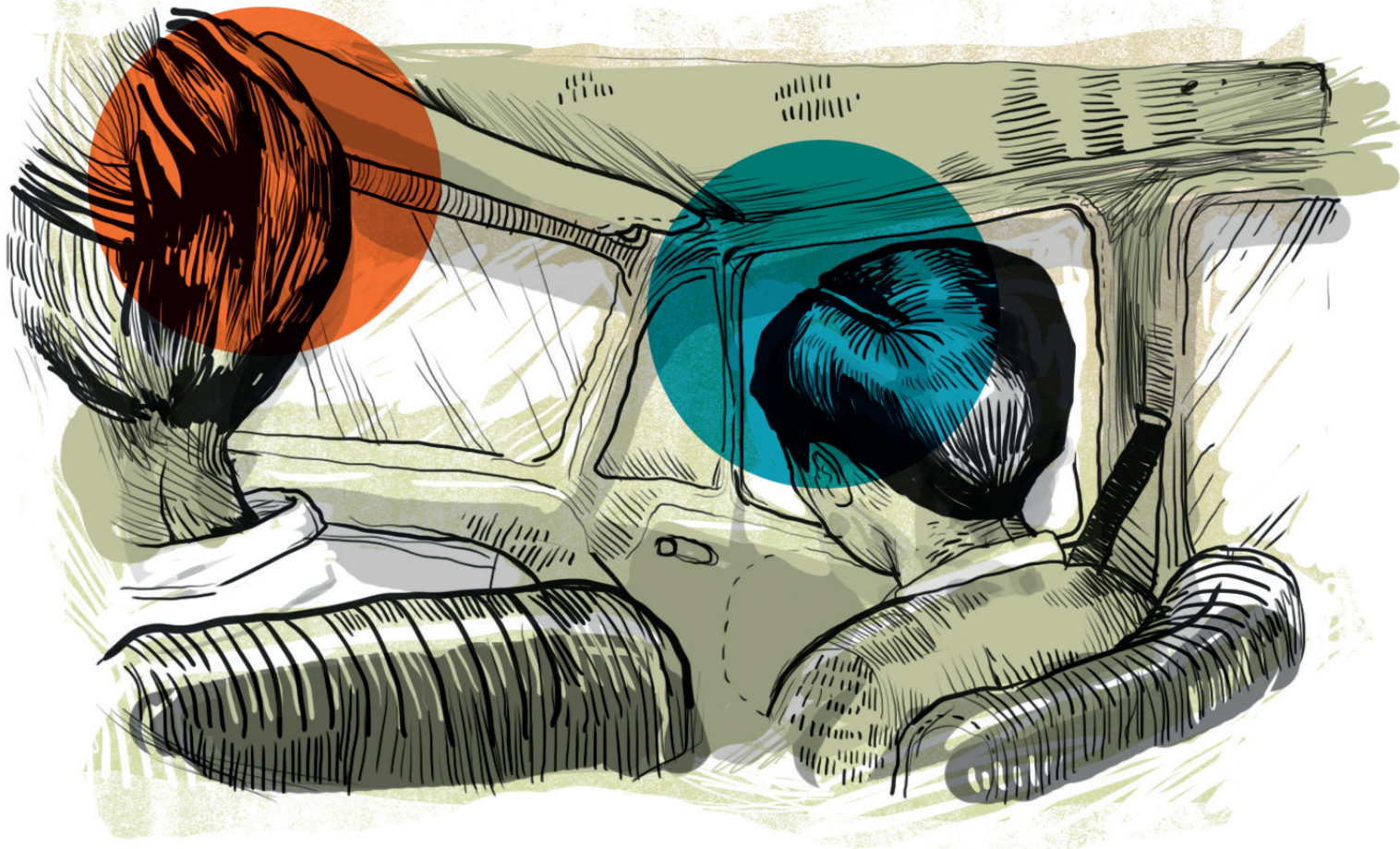
Don't you know that's how babies are made?

Reeeeeaaally? How?

The man's hose goes inside the woman's hose!

A few years later, Nevin and I are studying the Playboy magazine he stole from his older brother while we wait for the bus. The women in the photographs are smiling attentively, and their legs are stretched wide. But none of them has a hose! In fact, there isn't anything dangling between their legs! Instead, they each have a pink, fleshy, mouth-like opening, yawning.

Maybe women's private parts look different in different countries.



GIRLS ARE DANGEROUS

My dad and I are looking out at the chaos of students ahead. This is no Mill Woods Elementary. I am wearing my brand-new sneakers from Kmart, my hair is neatly combed with Amla oil, and my knapsack is stuffed with school supplies, pencils, and duo-tangs all individually labelled with my name. But I am not ready.