

A stylized, graphic illustration of two women in traditional Indian attire. The woman on the left is wearing a green sari with a blue blouse and is holding a dark blue bowl. The woman on the right is wearing a pink sari with a large pink bow at the waist and a black strap over her shoulder. The background is a solid orange color. The text 'AFTERWARDS' is written in large, white, bold, sans-serif capital letters across the upper middle of the image.

AFTERWARDS

GRAPHIC NARRATIVES OF DISASTER RISK AND RECOVERY FROM INDIA

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To all disaster-affected people in Odisha, Tamil Nadu, and Kerala

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All our contributors.

FOREWORD

Afterwards presents graphic narratives of disaster impacts and recovery from the Indian states of Odisha, Tamil Nadu, and Kerala. At the heart of this anthology lies the idea of 'representation': how disaster-affected people, communities, and places are portrayed by the media, government, non-government organisations, and policy documents. Post-disaster portrayals often standardise the experiences of disaster-affected people and paint them all as helpless victims. They also construct and promote ideas of recovery that are more 'visible' and tangible – such as housing and other physical infrastructure – thereby eclipsing other important recovery needs of those affected. Given that experiences of disaster impacts vary depending on existing social and economic conditions of communities, such portrayals can influence ideas on recovery priorities, and therefore determine the support they receive from government and aid agencies.

Over three years (2018-21), the 'Recovery with Dignity' project team, with researchers from the Indian Institute for Human Settlements (IIHS) and the University of East Anglia (UEA), have worked to better understand experiences of post-disaster recovery. Our multiple visits to flood- and cyclone-affected settlements in the three states gave us several opportunities to interact with disaster-affected communities, government stakeholders, social entrepreneurs, academics, journalists, and theatre artists who shared their experiences of disasters and their views on recovery. Through interviews, conversations, focus group discussions, and surveys, we sought to understand how disaster-affected people have been impacted, how their voices and needs have been represented by themselves and by different actors, and the implications of these representations on their actual recovery.

When it comes to representing research, we find that grey literature and academic outputs rarely manage to capture the varied narratives of everyday risks and vulnerabilities. Individual experiences are often reduced to 'data' or 'evidence'

intended to feed larger arguments. While such representations of research are valuable in that they contribute to theory and inform policy and practice, they target a niche audience. Frequent disaster events in recent years and the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic have meant that experiences of these realities are becoming more widespread and universally relevant. This prompted us to create this anthology – where we have aimed to make personal and community-led narratives of disaster experiences and recovery accessible to a larger audience.

Through the project, we continued to communicate our research using videos, photo exhibitions, and essays. This graphic anthology goes a step further in how it represents the wide range of stories we encountered in our fieldwork and provides a platform for these narratives to be heard. We believe these graphic narratives offer a creative, non-academic portrayal that could promote wider public engagement and provide an alternative way to understand recovery needs and thus enable better recovery support. This book is also translated into the local languages of our fieldwork areas (Odiya, Tamil, and Malayalam), printed, and shared with the communities who have shared their experiences with us.

The Process

The stories illustrated in the anthology revolve around two focus areas:

1. *Accounts of disaster impacts and recovery told through the voices of those affected* – here we present stories that shed light on everyday struggles, how they are worsened in the aftermath of a disaster, and accounts of exclusion from post-disaster processes.
2. *External voices and their impacts on recovery and the support they receive* – here we present how official narratives influence state priorities and the action they take, and how these impact the recovery of disaster-affected people.

Together with the contributing authors, we reviewed our field notes to identify narratives that align with these two focus areas. An important step in our editorial process was to examine how our selected set of testimonies from disaster-affected people could be depicted as stories that would engage a wide range of audiences. We then had to ensure that our depictions did justice to the deeply personal narratives that were shared with us.

Writing a script and storyboarding it was a strikingly different process from academic writing that we, as researchers, are trained to do. Hence, this was a collaborative process between the editors, contributing authors, and the illustrator. We first wrote an outline that had a clear narrative arc and, second, scripted it as an engaging comic while retaining the essence of the story. At this stage, working closely with the illustrator was critical to understand the landscape of illustrated storybooks and how best to structure our narratives across the pages of the book. What followed was an iterative process of editing, storyboarding, and illustrating to bring the book to its current form.

Reflections on the Process and Limitations

While this anthology aims to forefront personal and community stories of impacts and recovery, we acknowledge that these narratives have been mediated by the researcher. We were careful to check our biases to honestly communicate these stories in an attempt to do justice in our portrayals of the narratives. Given the sensitive nature of working with disaster-affected communities and the importance of maintaining confidentiality and protecting privacy, all names and locations have been carefully de-identified and anonymised. Only the district within the state from where the story originated has been disclosed. Extensive media documentation during our fieldwork has enabled us to study the locations carefully and present an authentic representation of the contexts in each narrative while continuing to maintain anonymity.

In this project, we have consciously refrained from illustrating the experiences of living through a disaster event. We have instead focused on the events that happened after, i.e. the impacts of the disaster and the paths to recovery. We have also sought to avoid speaking on behalf of the disaster-affected people. Rather, our aim was to diversify the means for their experiences to be shared.

This proved to be rather challenging. Ideally, stories that are true representations of the people's experiences would be directed by the people themselves. All the narratives presented in this anthology were derived from field interviews and focus group discussions, or are representational stories that capture the voices of different households or communities while preserving the authenticity of their expressed struggles and needs. As such, all the narratives are inevitably mediated by us. Here,

we have experimented with two forms of representation:

1. In one form, we have distilled the experiences of disaster-affected people into cohesive story arcs. While their voices have been presented in the form of dialogues between 'fictional' characters, the experiences and events told are true and drawn from the interviews, field notes, and videos documented during fieldwork. To reiterate, we also carefully anonymised these retellings to protect their privacy.

2. In the other, we also place ourselves- as researchers- within the stories. Rather than conversations between disaster-affected people, here we illustrate the multiple interviews and interactions with affected people on the field. Again, we have extracted views from different conversations and woven them into a single narrative for the purpose of telling these stories clearly.

With the increasing frequency of disasters across the globe, we believe that front-line accounts of disaster impact and experiences of recovery from those that are most and frequently affected can lead to more humane and dignified recovery strategies. What we present here is the product of one such experiment and a proposal for future endeavours.

- Vineetha Nalla & Nihal Ranjit

BATYA GHAR



Vineetha Nalla & Nihal Ranjit

MAY 2019

EXTREMELY SEVERE CYCLONIC STORM FANI MADE LANDFALL IN ODISHA'S PURI DISTRICT.

COASTAL DISTRICTS OF PURI, KHORDHA, CUTTACK, JAGATSINGHPUR, AND GANJAM WERE DECLARED AS SEVERELY AFFECTED AREAS.

MORE THAN A MILLION PEOPLE WERE EVACUATED FROM THESE DISTRICTS PRIOR TO THE CYCLONE. THE FOLLOWING ARE SOME OF THE EXPERIENCES REPORTED FROM CYCLONE SHELTERS, ALSO KNOWN AS **BATYA GHAR** (BATYA- CYCLONE; GHAR- HOME) IN THESE REGIONS.



KHORDHA

BRAHMAPUR

GOPALPUR



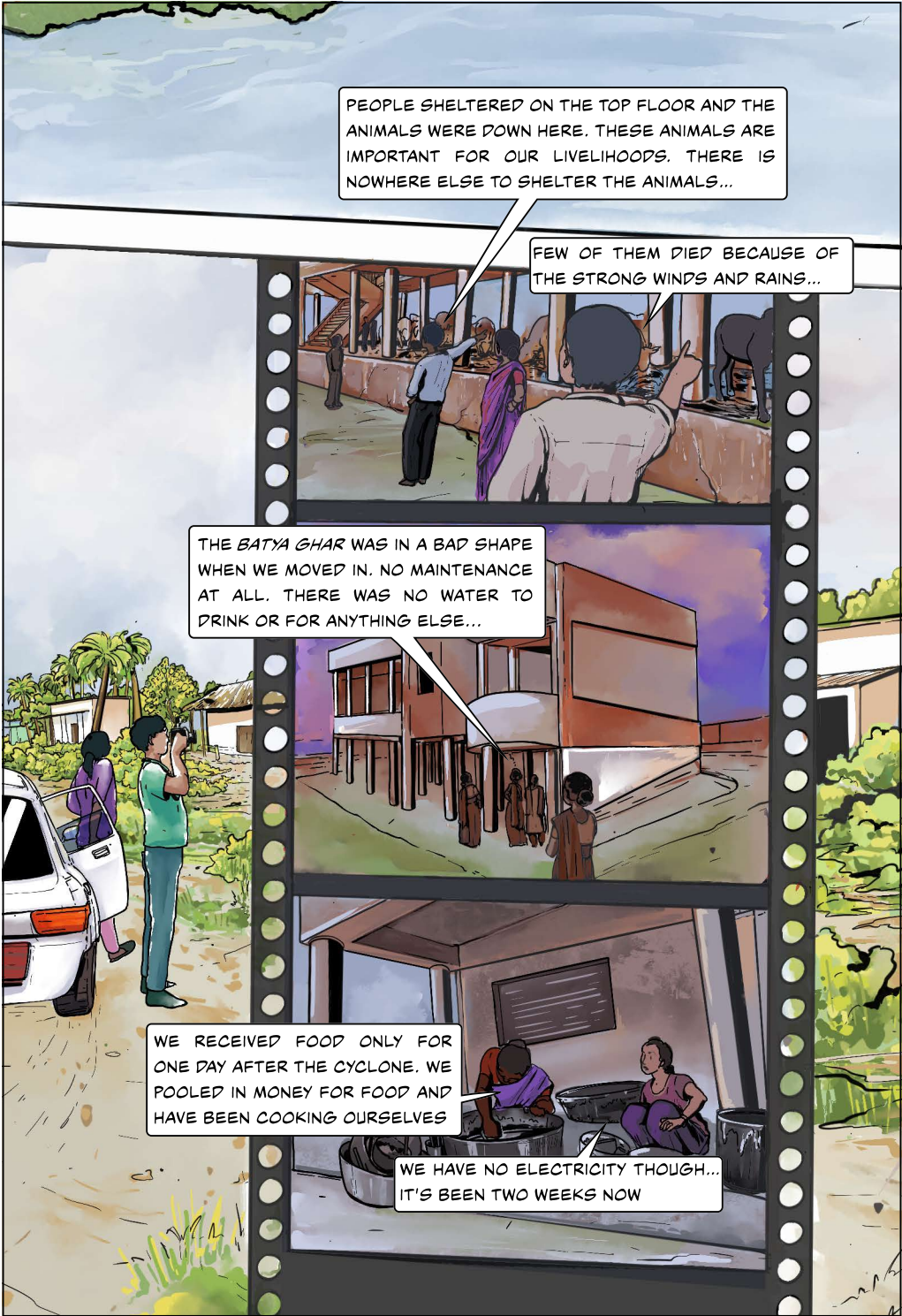
A WEEK AFTER CYCLONE FANI...

WE WERE EVACUATED A DAY BEFORE THE CYCLONE. PEOPLE FROM THREE VILLAGES CAME HERE SO THERE WAS A LOT OF CROWDING...

THERE WERE MORE THAN 1500 PEOPLE HERE... AND THEN MORE PEOPLE CAME AT NIGHT

WE STOOD FOR THE ENTIRE TIME WE WERE HERE. WE HAD NO OTHER OPTION... THE WASHROOMS WERE QUITE DIRTY AND POORLY MAINTAINED SO WE HAD TO GO OUTSIDE TO RELIEVE OURSELVES. SOME PEOPLE EVEN USED THE STAIRWELL AND SPACES ON THE TERRACE TO RELIEVE THEMSELVES

WE DON'T BELONG TO THE SAME COMMUNITY AS THE REST OF THE VILLAGE, SO WE KNEW WE WON'T BE ALLOWED IN THE BATYA GHAR. WE STAYED IN OUR NEIGHBOUR'S HOUSE INSTEAD. THEY HAVE A PUCCA HOUSE



PEOPLE SHELTERED ON THE TOP FLOOR AND THE ANIMALS WERE DOWN HERE. THESE ANIMALS ARE IMPORTANT FOR OUR LIVELIHOODS. THERE IS NOWHERE ELSE TO SHELTER THE ANIMALS...

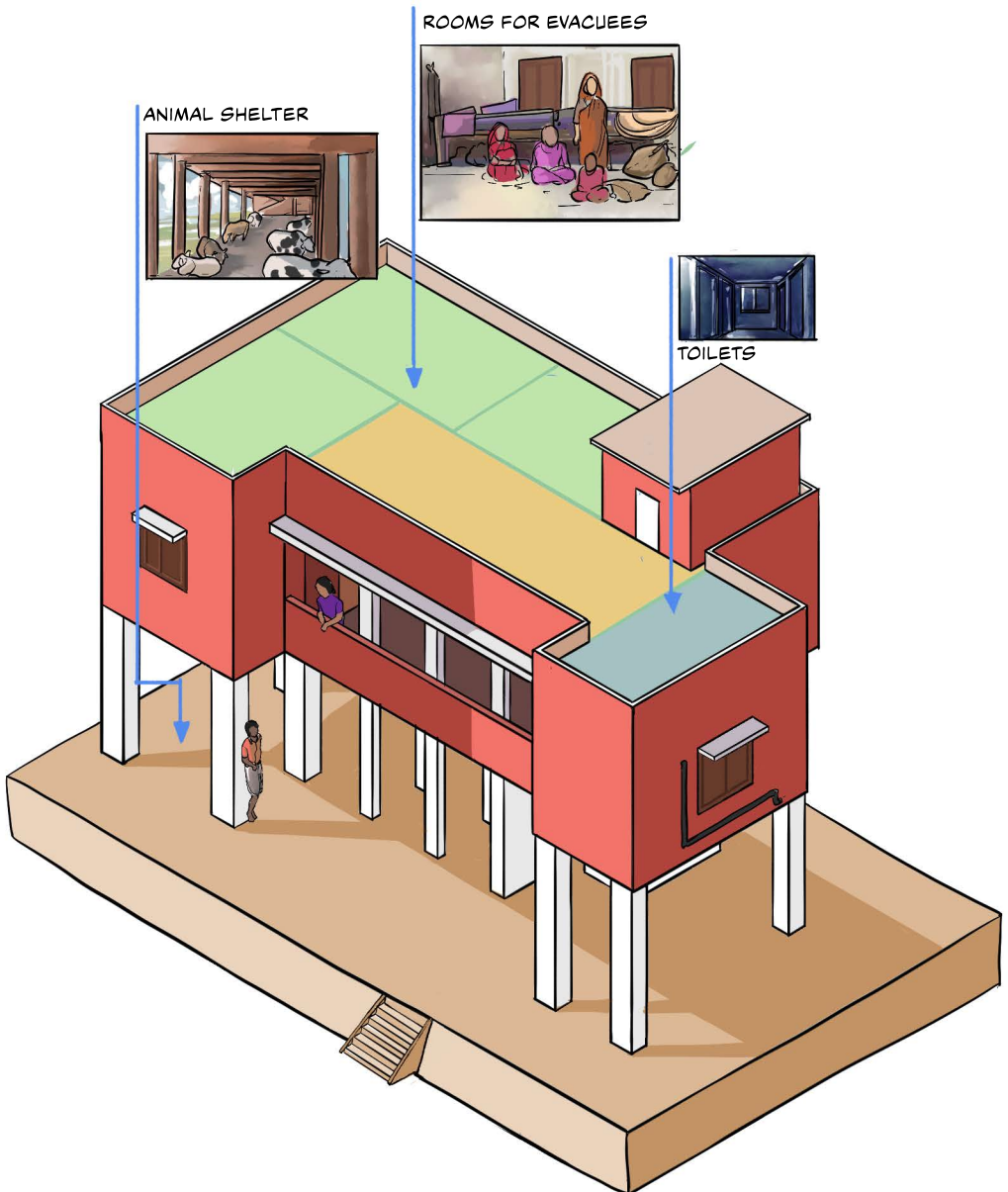
FEW OF THEM DIED BECAUSE OF THE STRONG WINDS AND RAINS...

THE BATYA GHAR WAS IN A BAD SHAPE WHEN WE MOVED IN. NO MAINTENANCE AT ALL. THERE WAS NO WATER TO DRINK OR FOR ANYTHING ELSE...

WE RECEIVED FOOD ONLY FOR ONE DAY AFTER THE CYCLONE. WE POOLED IN MONEY FOR FOOD AND HAVE BEEN COOKING OURSELVES

WE HAVE NO ELECTRICITY THOUGH... IT'S BEEN TWO WEEKS NOW

DRAWING OF A TYPICAL CYCLONE SHELTER



CYCLONE SHELTERS WERE FIRST BUILT IN THE 90'S AND EARLY 2000'S IN THE RURAL AREAS OF COASTAL ODISHA TO COMPENSATE FOR THE LACK OF ADEQUATE Pucca STRUCTURES FOR PEOPLE TO EVACUATE TO IN THE EVENT OF A CYCLONE. THESE SHELTERS DETERIORATED RAPIDLY DUE TO THE SALINE ENVIRONMENT OF THE COAST.

THEN, IN THE LATE 2000'S AND EARLY 2010'S MULTI-PURPOSE CYCLONE SHELTERS WERE CONCEIVED. THESE - SUCH AS THE ONE ILLUSTRATED HERE - WERE MEANT TO SERVE AS COMMUNITY CENTRES OR SCHOOLS DURING NON-EMERGENCY TIMES TO ENSURE ITS PROPER MAINTENANCE.

SOMEWHERE IN THE CHILIKA REGION...



WE ARE RESEARCHERS FROM BANGALORE CONDUCTING A STUDY ON THE IMPACTS OF CYCLONE FANI AND THE EXPERIENCES OF PEOPLE.

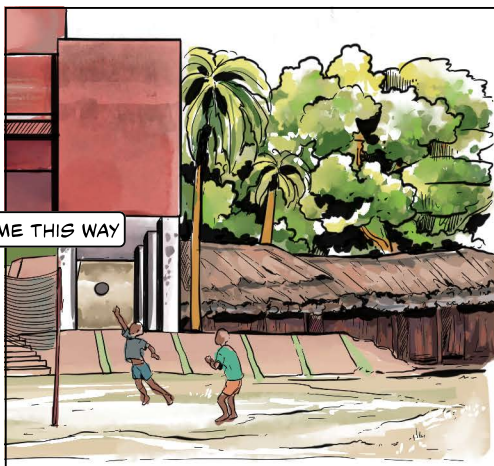
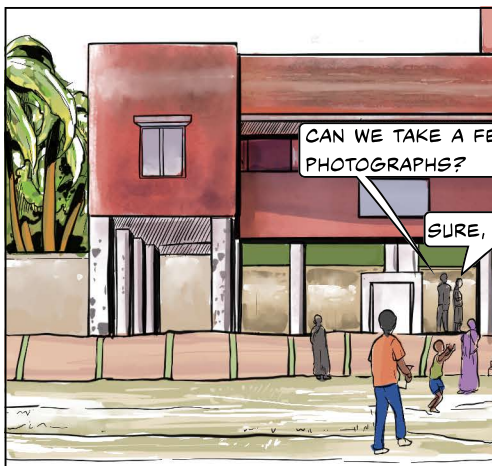


...DID YOU STAY HERE DURING THE CYCLONE?



CAN WE TAKE A FEW PHOTOGRAPHS?

SURE, COME THIS WAY

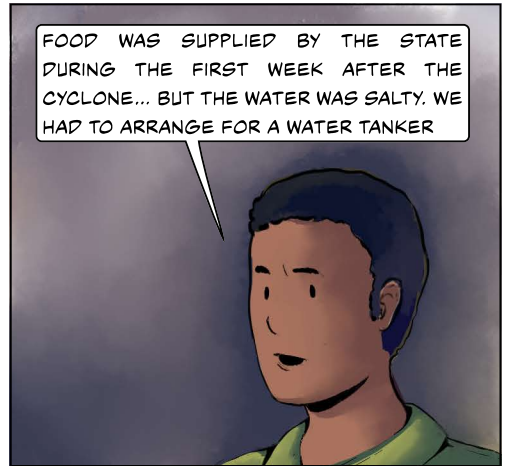




DURING THE CYCLONE, THERE WERE OVER 200 HOUSEHOLDS STAYING IN THIS BATYA GHAR. IT WAS VERY CROWDED...



MEN AND WOMEN WERE DIVIDED BETWEEN THE ROOMS HERE. FAMILIES WERE NOT STAYING TOGETHER...



FOOD WAS SUPPLIED BY THE STATE DURING THE FIRST WEEK AFTER THE CYCLONE... BUT THE WATER WAS SALTY. WE HAD TO ARRANGE FOR A WATER TANKER



BUT, IT HAS BEEN TWO WEEKS SINCE THE CYCLONE, THERE ARE PEOPLE STILL STAYING HERE?!

WHERE ELSE CAN WE GO? OUR HOMES WERE COMPLETELY DESTROYED...

SOME FAMILIES USED THE TARPAULIN THE GOVERNMENT GAVE TO COVER THEIR PARTIALLY BROKEN ROOFS. BUT, IN OUR CASE, EVEN THE WALLS HAVE BROKEN DOWN.



IF WE COULD GET SOME SUPPORT FROM THE GOVERNMENT, WE COULD REBUILD OUR HOMES



NOPE?

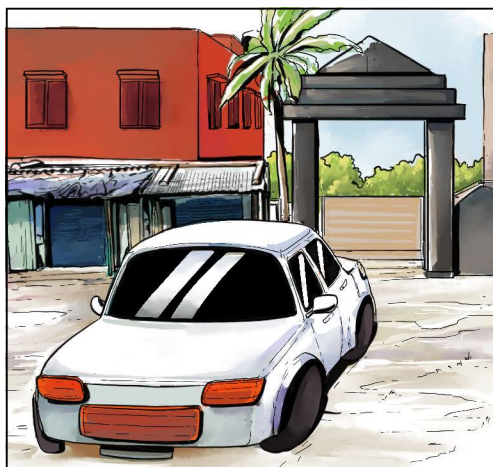


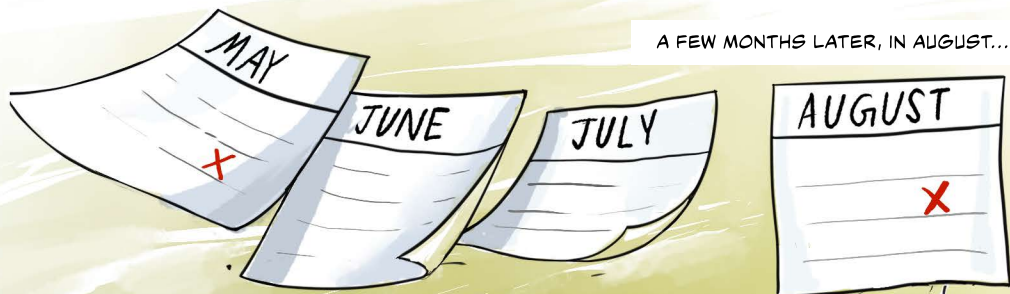
WE ARE FISHERS, OUR BOATS AND NETS WERE DAMAGED DURING THE CYCLONE. WE HAVEN'T BEEN ABLE TO FISH. IT'S BEEN 2 WEEKS SINCE WE EARNED ANYTHING.

HOPEFULLY WE CAN LEAVE SOON



THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR TALKING TO US AND SHOWING US AROUND





A FEW MONTHS LATER, IN AUGUST...



CYCLONE SHELTER



SETTLEMENT

THE VILLAGE IS A BIT FURTHER UP FROM THE CYCLONE SHELTER WE VISITED IN MAY...



SETTLEMENT

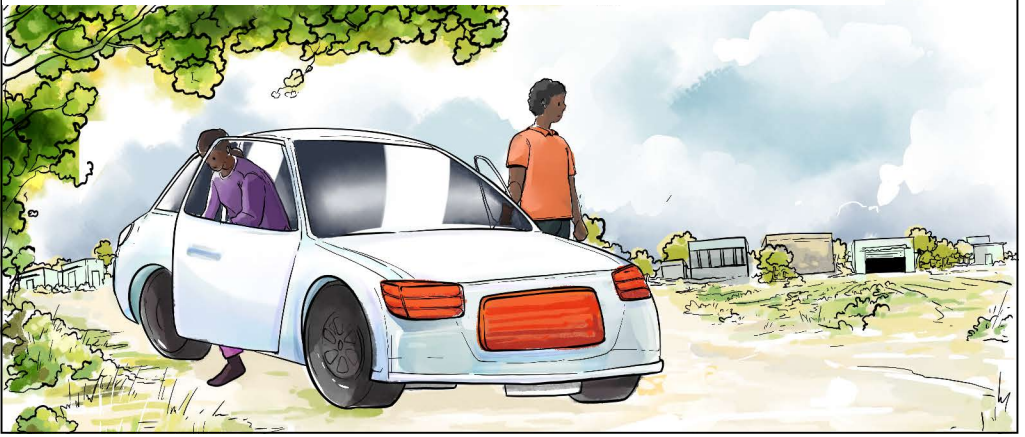


SETTLEMENT



SETTLEMENT

WE CONTACTED THE SARPANCH AND TOOK PERMISSION TO CONDUCT INTERVIEWS HERE.



A FEW OF THE VILLAGERS WHO COULD SPARE TIME ARE GATHERED AT THE LOCAL SCHOOL TO TALK TO US...



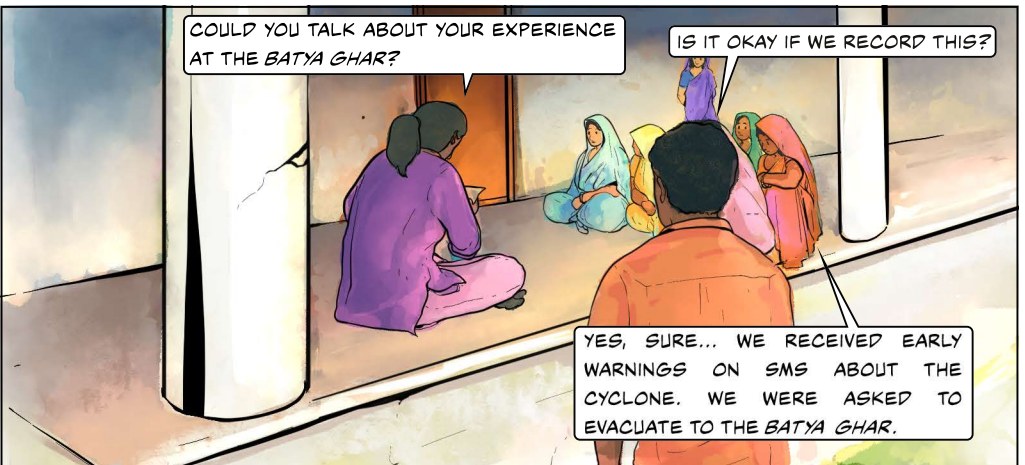
HELLO, WE ARE RESEARCHERS FROM BANGALORE. AS THE SARPANCH WOULD HAVE INFORMED YOU, WE WANTED TO TALK TO YOU ABOUT THE RECENT CYCLONE FANI.

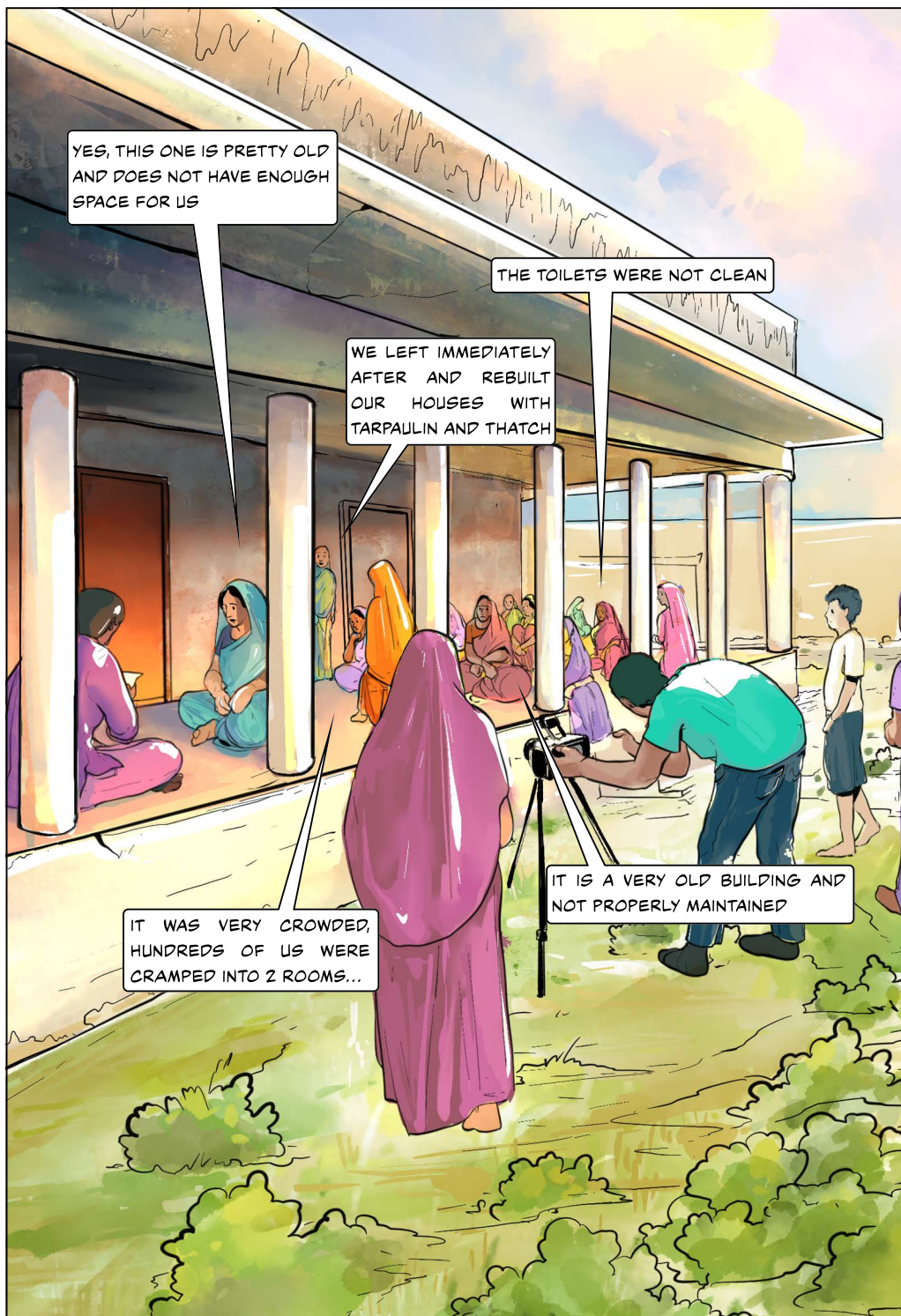


COULD YOU TALK ABOUT YOUR EXPERIENCE AT THE BATYA GHAR?

IS IT OKAY IF WE RECORD THIS?

YES, SURE... WE RECEIVED EARLY WARNINGS ON SMS ABOUT THE CYCLONE. WE WERE ASKED TO EVACUATE TO THE BATYA GHAR.





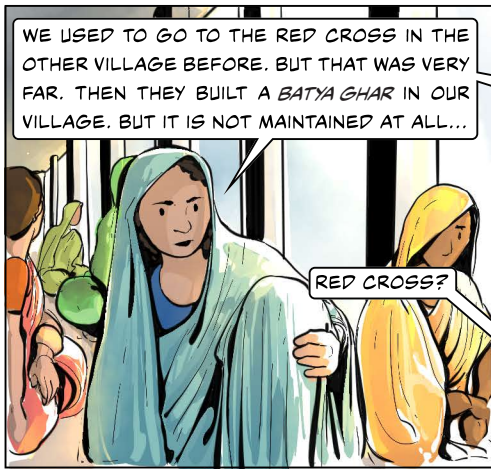
YES, THIS ONE IS PRETTY OLD
AND DOES NOT HAVE ENOUGH
SPACE FOR US

THE TOILETS WERE NOT CLEAN

WE LEFT IMMEDIATELY
AFTER AND REBUILT
OUR HOUSES WITH
TARPAULIN AND THATCH

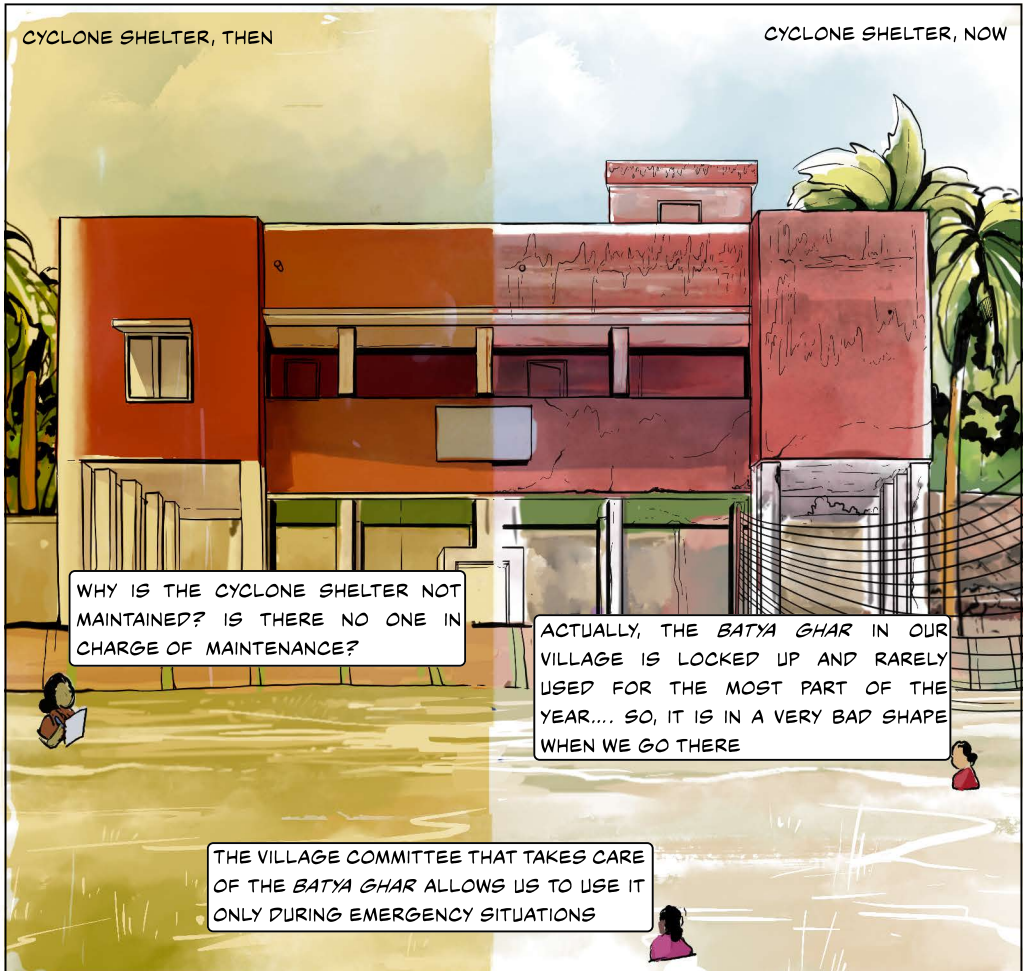
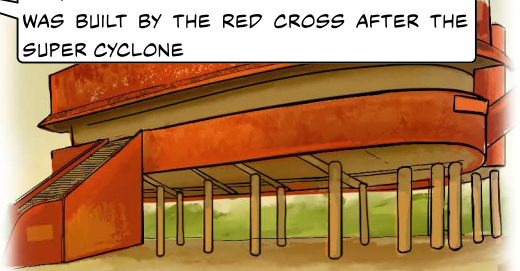
IT IS A VERY OLD BUILDING AND
NOT PROPERLY MAINTAINED

IT WAS VERY CROWDED,
HUNDREDS OF US WERE
CRAMPED INTO 2 ROOMS...



POST-1999 SUPER CYCLONE

YES, THE BATYA GHAR IN THE OTHER VILLAGE WAS BUILT BY THE RED CROSS AFTER THE SUPER CYCLONE

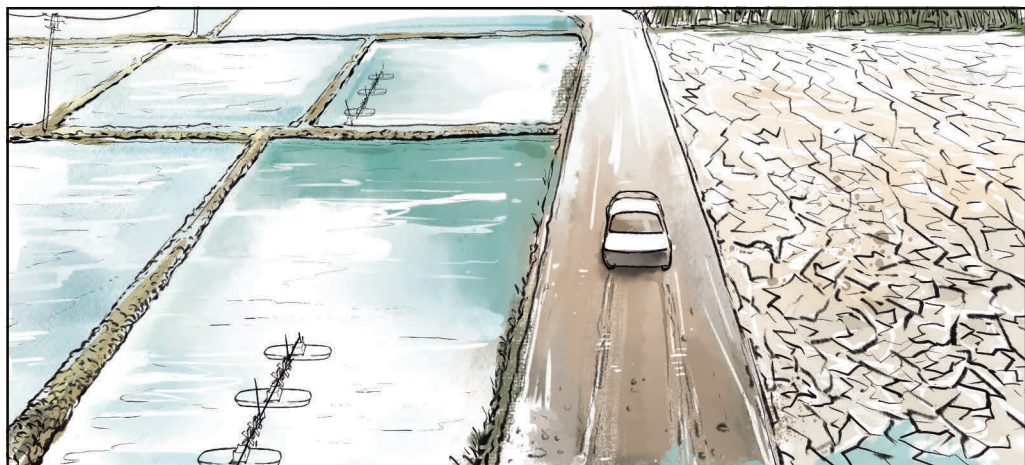




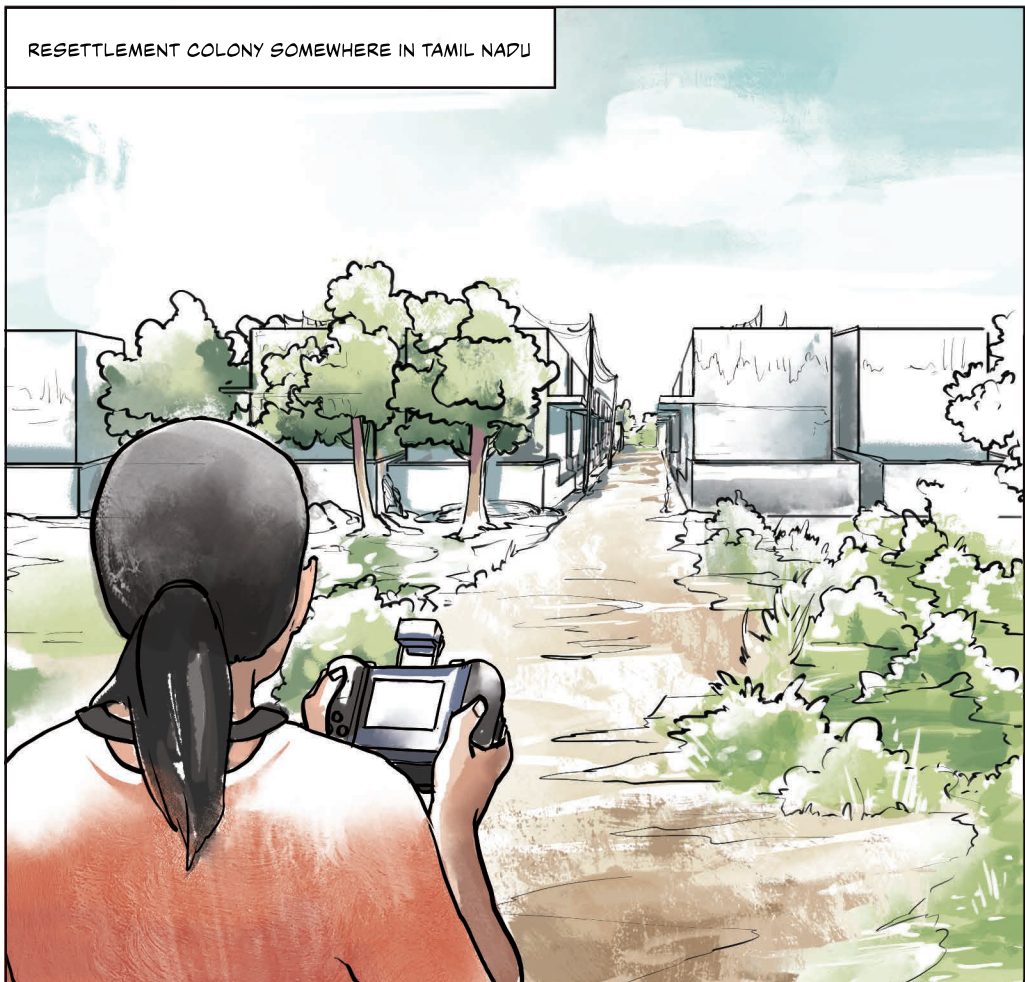
WAITING

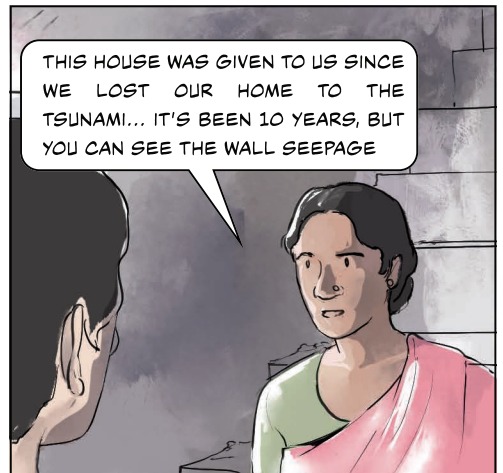
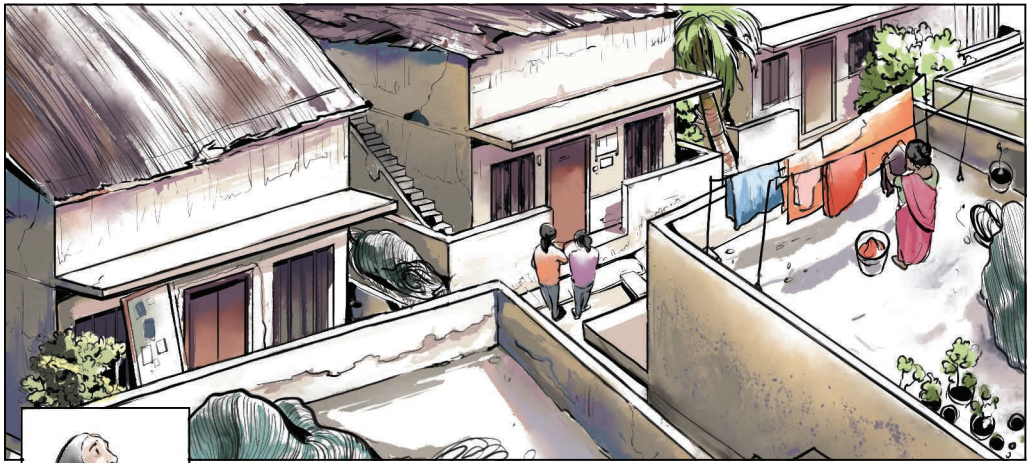


Yashodara Udupa



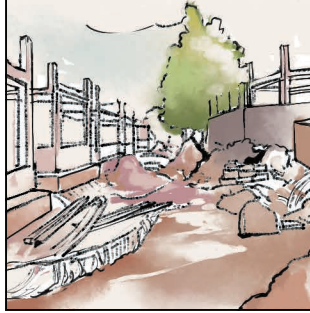
RESETTLEMENT COLONY SOMEWHERE IN TAMIL NADU







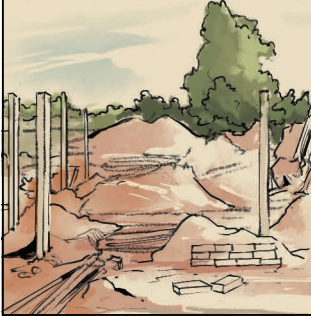
WE LEARNT THAT ALL THESE HOUSES WERE CONSTRUCTED IN A HURRY THROUGH CONTRACTS AND SUBCONTRACTS.



BACK THEN, THERE WAS HUGE DEMAND FOR BUILDING MATERIALS LIKE BRICKS AND CONCRETE



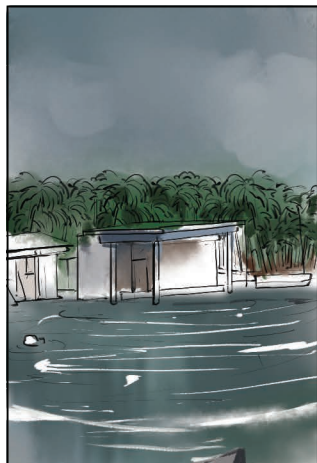
SO THE COSTS SHOT UP. BUILDERS WERE UNABLE TO COMPLETE THE WORK WITH THE ALLOTTED MONEY, SO THEY CUT CORNERS



MY HUSBAND ANANDAVEL, IS A FISHERMAN. MANY YEARS AGO, BEFORE THE TSUNAMI, WE LIVED IN A HUT BESIDE THE SEA...



THEN, IN DECEMBER 2004



A FEW WEEKS LATER

AN NGO BUILT TEMPORARY SHELTERS MADE OF BAMBOO AND TARPULIN SHEETS FOR THOSE WHO HAD LOST THEIR HOMES AND OUR FAMILY ALSO GOT ALLOTTED ONE

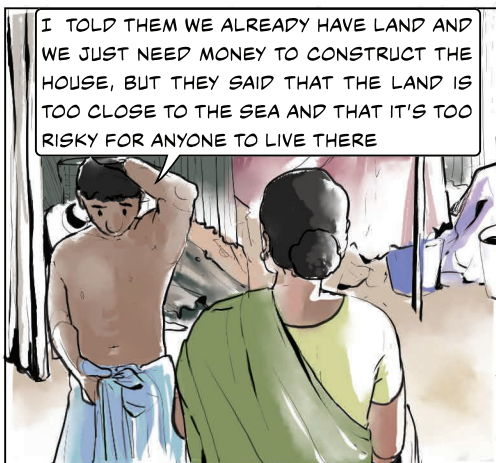
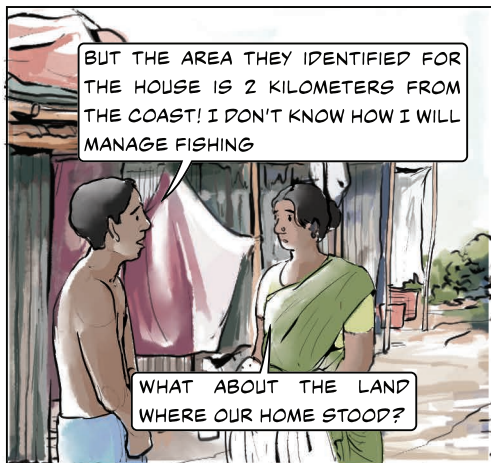
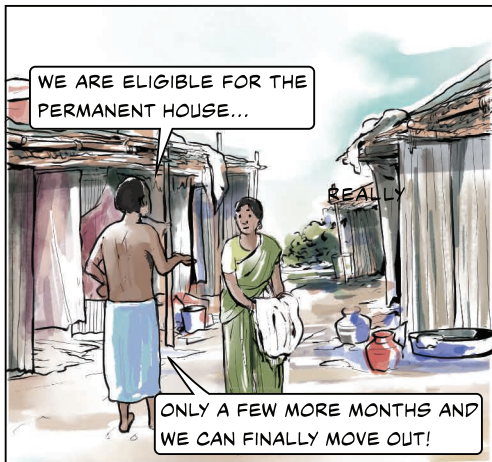
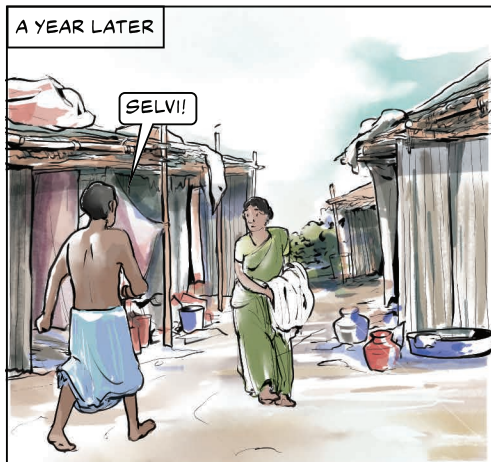


GOVERNMENT NOTICE: WE WILL CONSTRUCT PERMANENT HOUSES FOR ALL OF YOU, WHICH WOULD BE ABLE TO WITHSTAND SUCH DISASTERS IN THE FUTURE.

HOPEFULLY, THESE PERMANENT HOUSES WILL BE THE END OF OUR TROUBLES

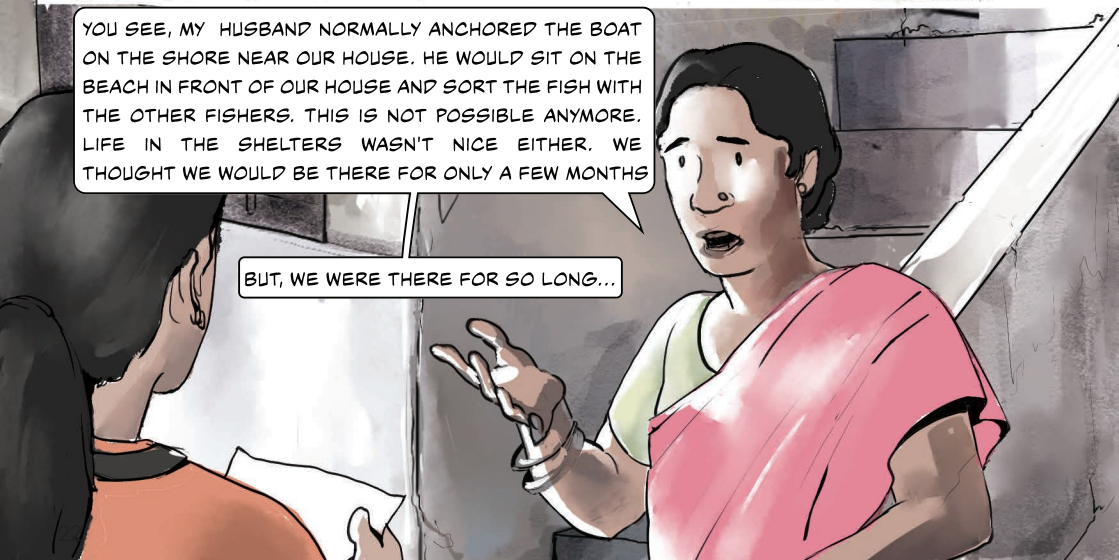


A YEAR LATER

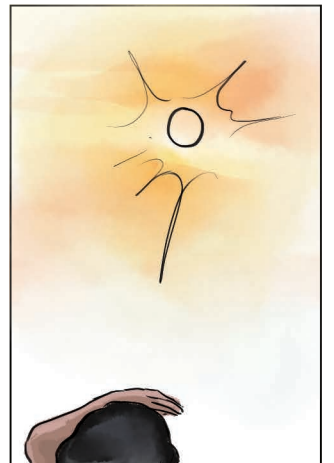
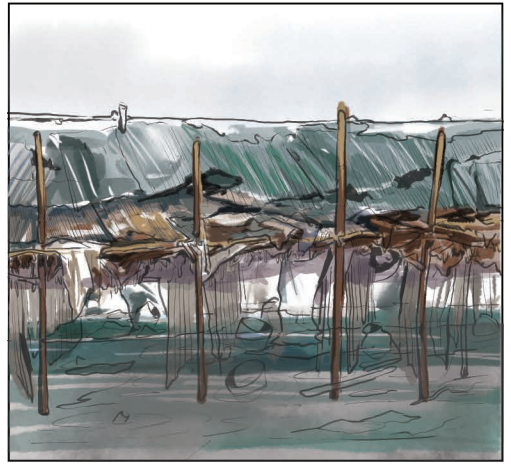


YOU SEE, MY HUSBAND NORMALLY ANCHORED THE BOAT ON THE SHORE NEAR OUR HOUSE. HE WOULD SIT ON THE BEACH IN FRONT OF OUR HOUSE AND SORT THE FISH WITH THE OTHER FISHERS. THIS IS NOT POSSIBLE ANYMORE. LIFE IN THE SHELTERS WASN'T NICE EITHER. WE THOUGHT WE WOULD BE THERE FOR ONLY A FEW MONTHS

BUT, WE WERE THERE FOR SO LONG...

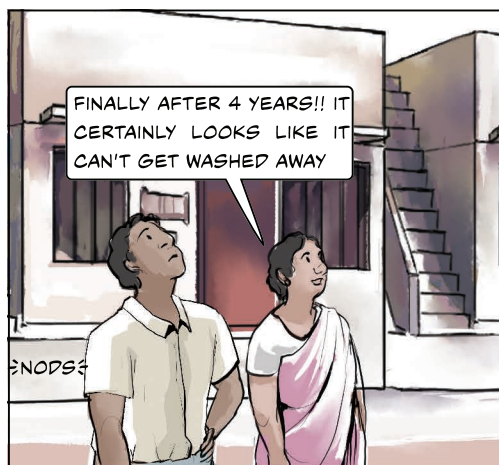
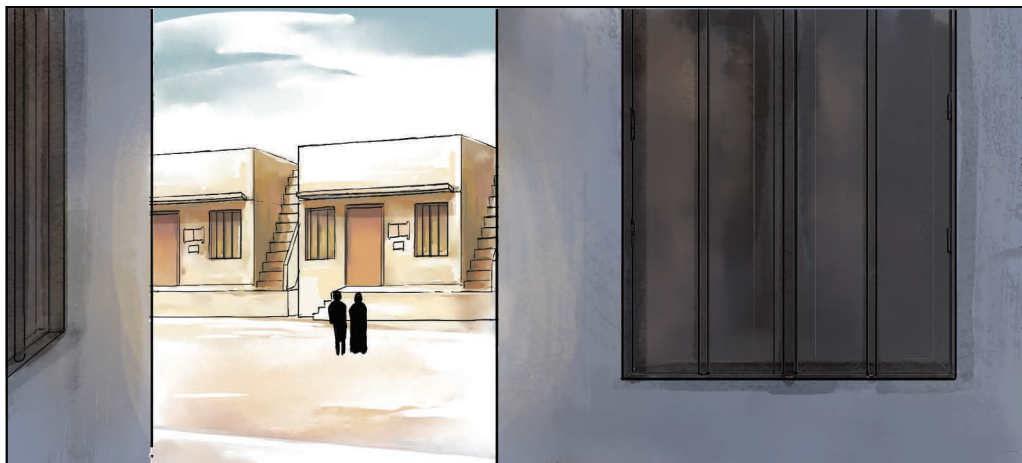
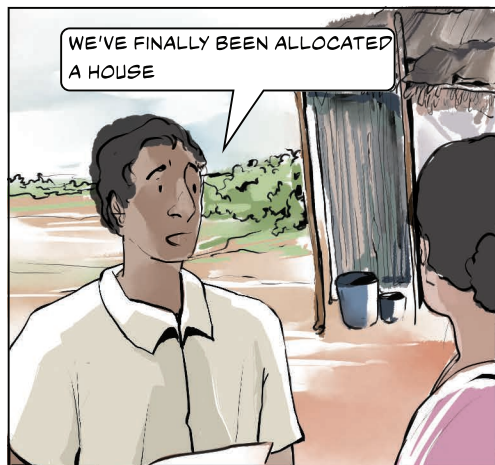


2 MORE YEARS GO BY



TIME PASSES BY...





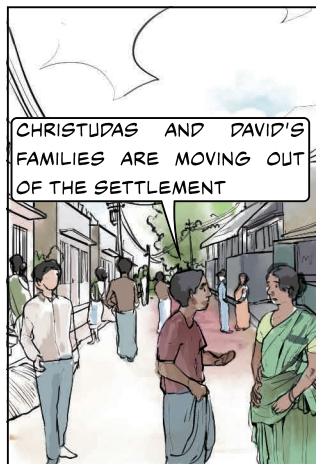
THE NEW SETTLEMENT,
2008



SELVI, DID
YOU HEAR?



CHRISTUDAS AND DAVID'S
FAMILIES ARE MOVING OUT
OF THE SETTLEMENT



THEY DECIDED TO RENT
OUT THIS HOUSE AND
MOVE CLOSER TO THE
SEA



MORE FAMILIES LEAVE
THE SETTLEMENT

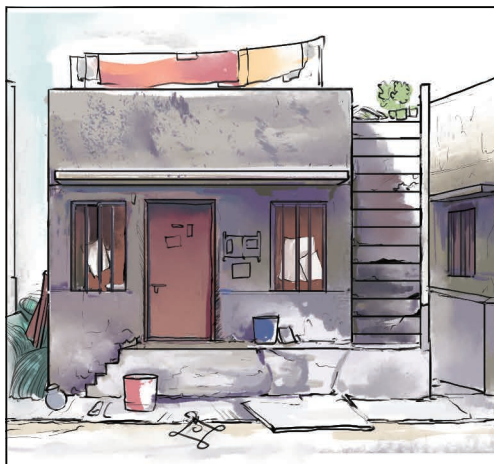


THE SETTLEMENT, 2018



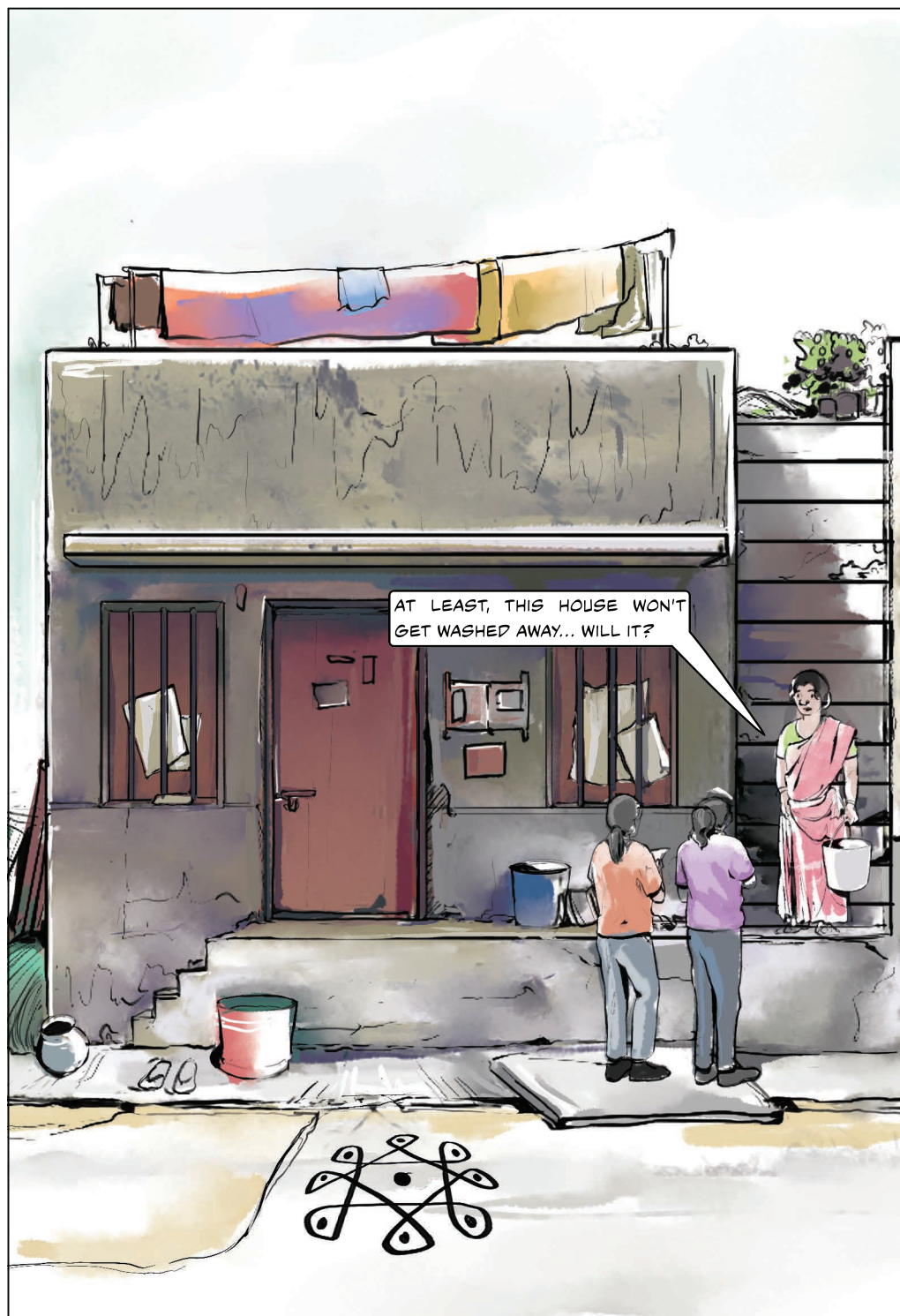
SEVERAL PEOPLE LEFT, YOU
CAN SEE MANY EMPTY
HOUSES, THEY LIVE IN HUTS
NEAR THE SEA

SELVI AND
ANANDAVEL'S HOUSE
IN 2018



MY HOUSE ALSO HAS
CRACKS AND IT'S VERY
HOT IN THE SUMMER

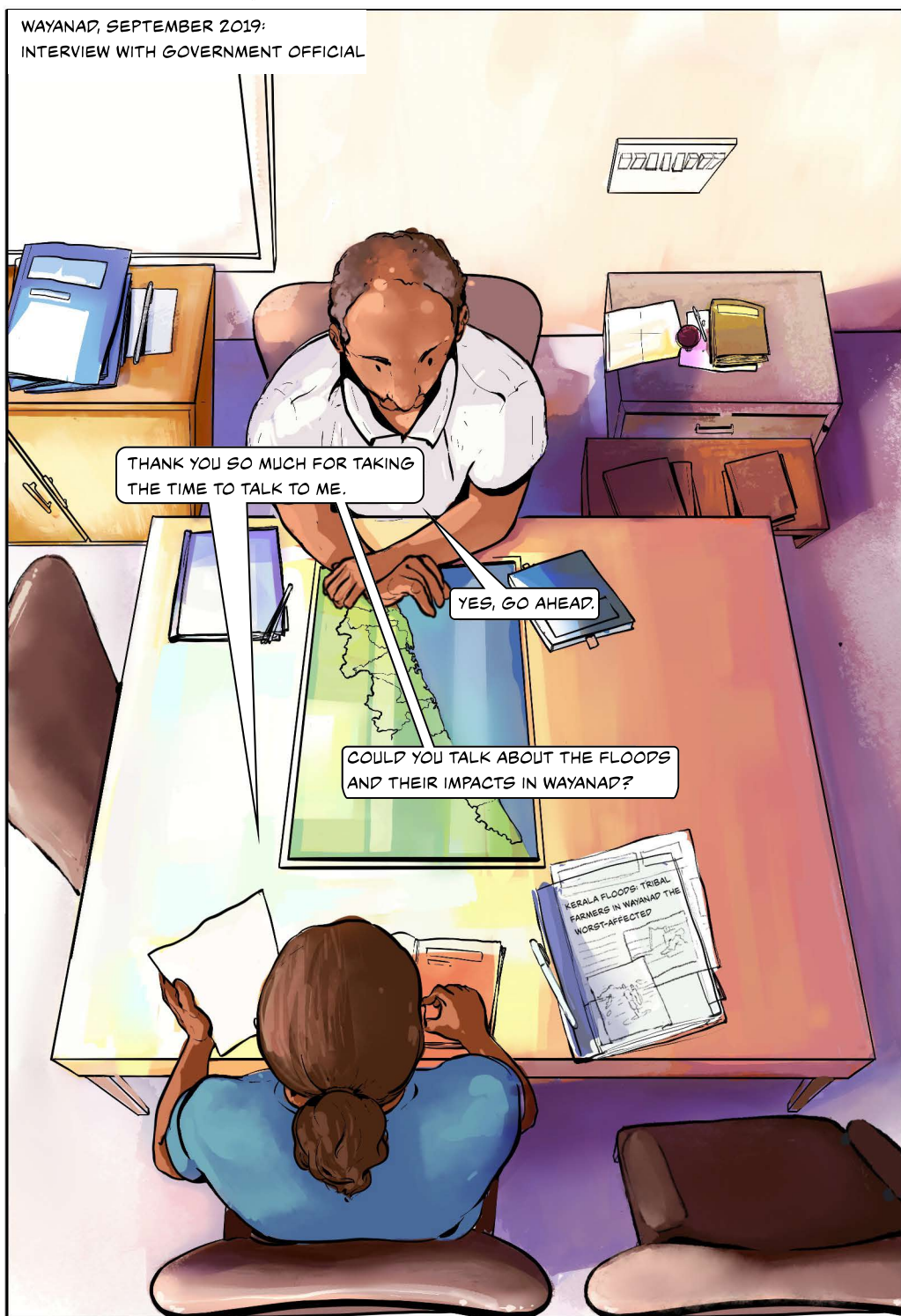
BUT...



MOVING TO SURVIVE



Mythili Madhavan



THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR TAKING
THE TIME TO TALK TO ME.

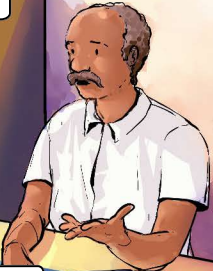
YES, GO AHEAD.

COULD YOU TALK ABOUT THE FLOODS
AND THEIR IMPACTS IN WAYANAD?

KERALA FLOODS: TRIBAL
FARMERS IN WAYANAD THE
WORST-AFFECTED




WHEN COMPARED TO OTHER
AFFECTED DISTRICTS, THE LOSS
OF LIFE WAS HIGHER IN WAYANAD



THE 2018 FLOODS WERE SEEN AS A ONE-OFF EVENT,
BUT WITH THE RECENT FLOODS AND LANDSLIDES,
PEOPLE HAVE REALISED THAT THESE WILL BECOME
MORE FREQUENT IN THE FUTURE

YES...



I'VE ALSO READ A FEW
REPORTS THAT SAY THAT TRIBAL
COMMUNITIES WERE SEVERELY
AFFECTED BY THE FLOODS

WHAT MEASURES WERE
TAKEN TO ADDRESS THEIR
PROBLEMS?

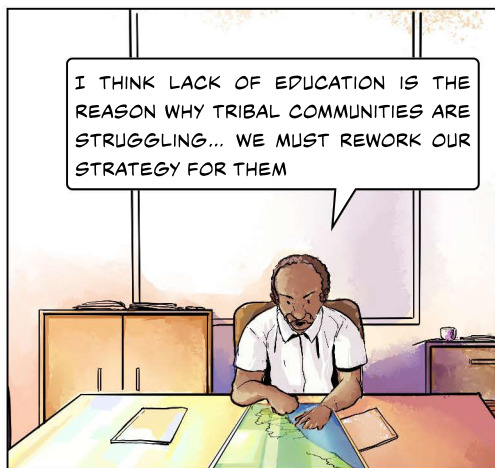
ACTUALLY, THE DISTRICT OF
WAYANAD HAS THE HIGHEST
TRIBAL POPULATION IN KERALA...



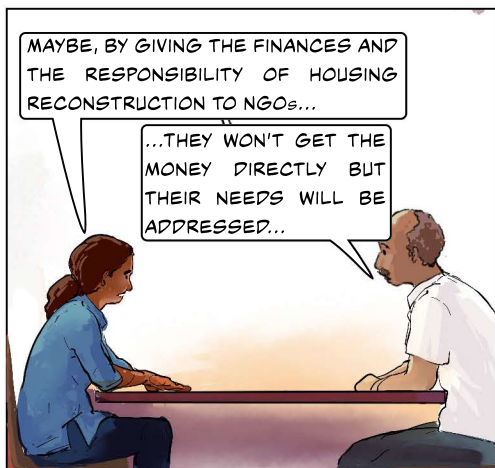
TRIBAL HOUSEHOLDS WHO LOST THEIR HOMES TO THE FLOODS WERE PROVIDED WITH A COMPENSATION OF 6 LAKH RUPEES, AS OPPOSED TO 4 LAKH RUPEES FOR OTHER COMMUNITIES



BUT FROM OUR EXPERIENCE, WE SAW THAT SOME PEOPLE HAD MISUSED THE MONEY GIVEN TO THEM

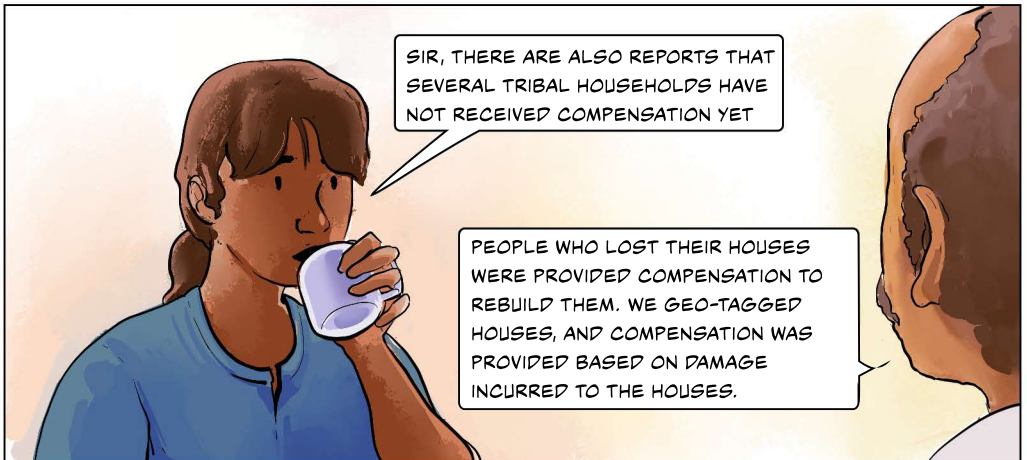
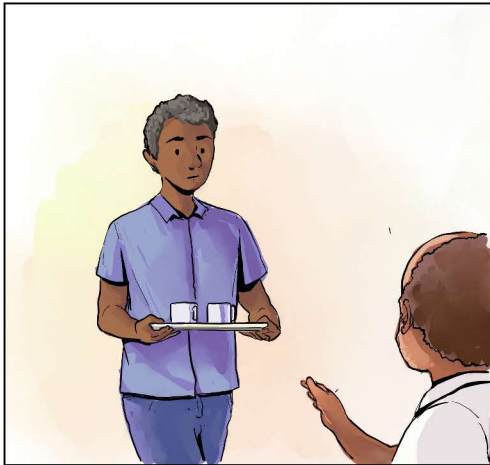
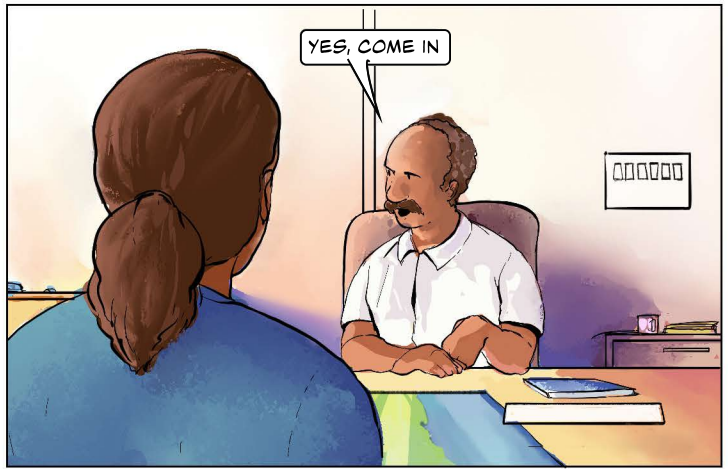


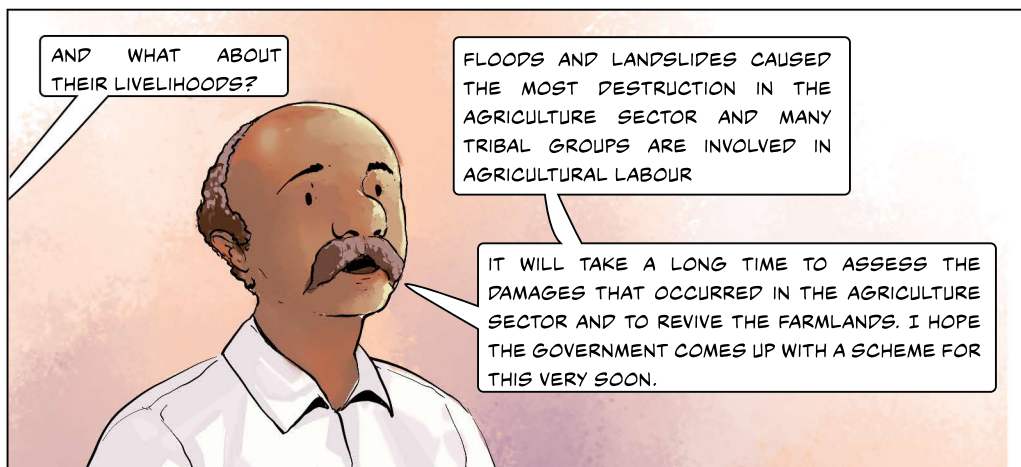
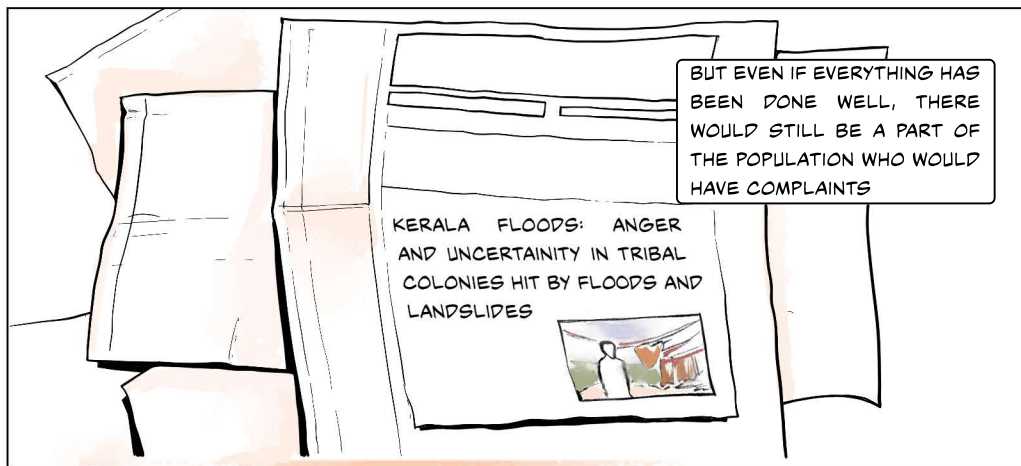
I THINK LACK OF EDUCATION IS THE REASON WHY TRIBAL COMMUNITIES ARE STRUGGLING... WE MUST REWORK OUR STRATEGY FOR THEM

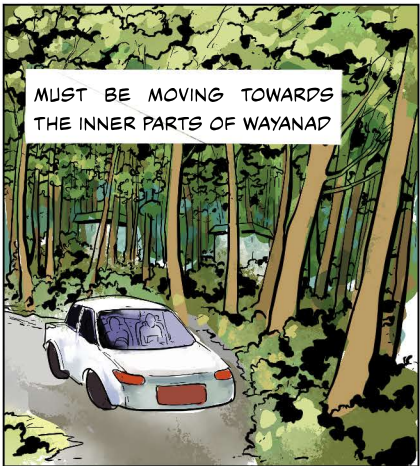
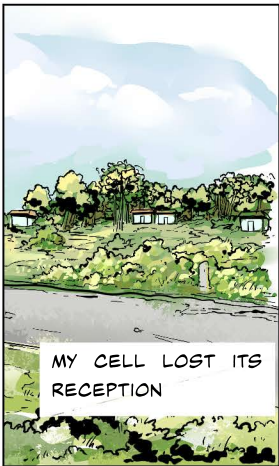
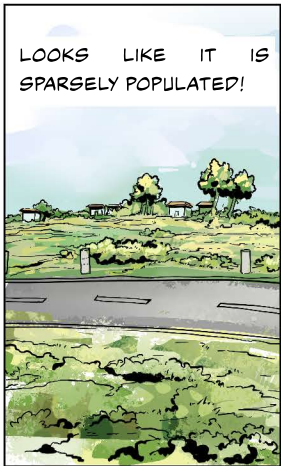
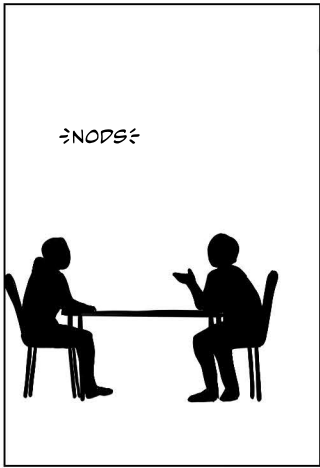


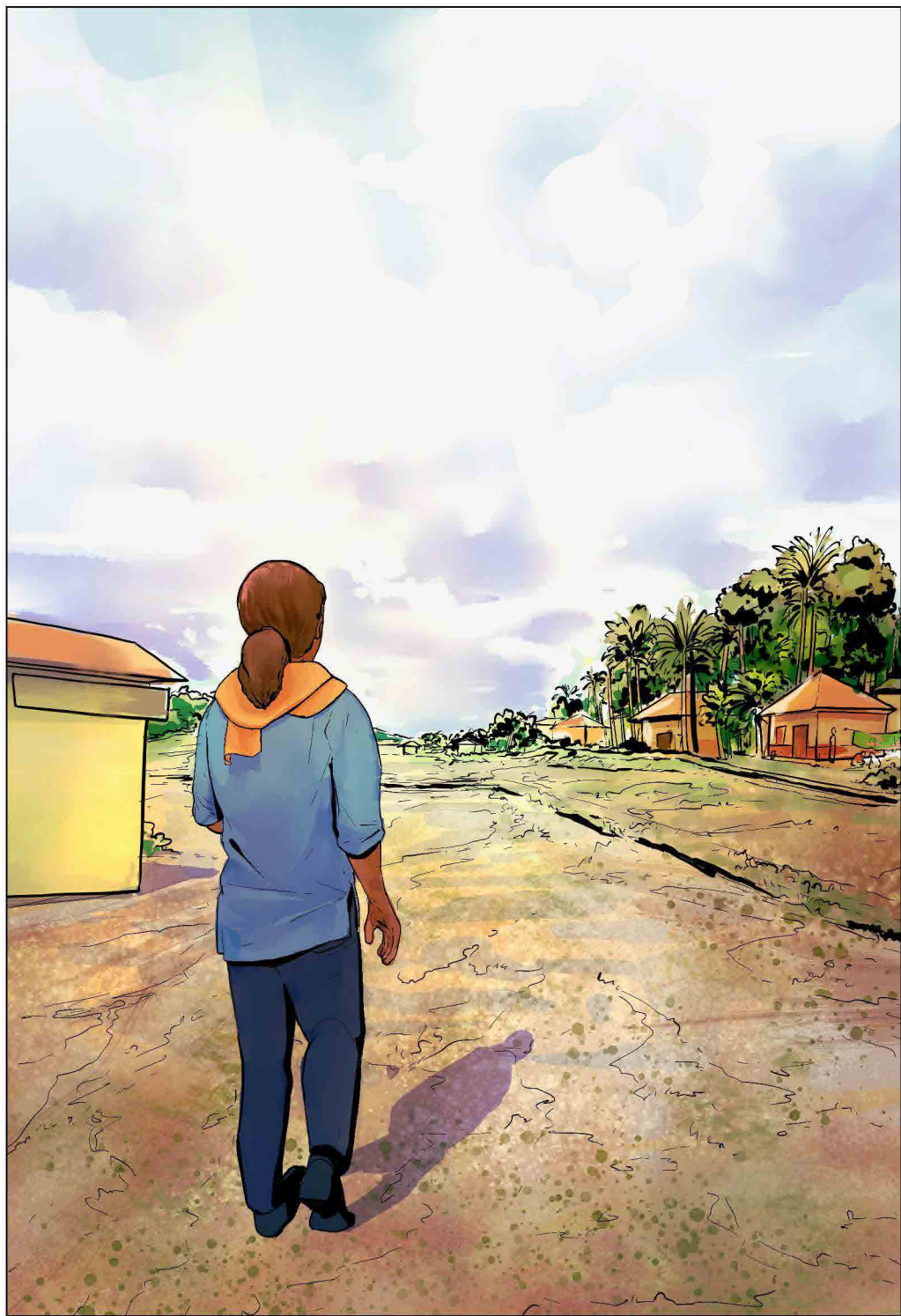
MAYBE, BY GIVING THE FINANCES AND THE RESPONSIBILITY OF HOUSING RECONSTRUCTION TO NGOs...

...THEY WON'T GET THE MONEY DIRECTLY BUT THEIR NEEDS WILL BE ADDRESSED...










HELLO, I AM GITA AND I HAVE COME FROM BANGALORE. I AM CONDUCTING A STUDY ON THE FLOODS. DO YOU HAVE SOME TIME TO TALK TO ME?



HELLO, YES WE ARE A GROUP OF 17 HOUSES, WE ALL WORK AS AGRICULTURAL LABOURERS. I'M KUNJI AND I LIVE WITH MY HUSBAND, OUR DAUGHTER AND MY MOTHER

COULD YOU TELL ME YOUR EXPERIENCES DURING THE FLOODS?





DURING THE FLOODS, WE WERE RESCUED IN BOATS BY THE PANCHAYAT MEMBERS. EVERYTHING IN THE CAMP WAS GREAT...

WE WERE GIVEN ALL THE NECESSITIES; BEDS, BLANKETS AND PILLOWS ETC. WE RECEIVED FOOD ON TIME AND WERE TAKEN CARE OF BY EVERYONE

WE GOT RS 20,000 WHEN WE LEFT THE CAMPS WHICH WAS USEFUL TO BUY IMMEDIATE NECESSITIES. BUT THAT WASN'T ENOUGH TO REVIVE OUR FIELDS

MOST OF OUR HOUSES WERE FINE, BUT SOME WERE DAMAGED



THE GOVERNMENT CAME HERE TO CHECK FOR THESE DAMAGES AND SOME PEOPLE GOT MONEY FOR REPAIRS

WE GOT HELP FROM THE GOVERNMENT AND OTHERS, BUT...



...WE ARE LEFT WITHOUT A MEANS OF INCOME EVEN AFTER 9 MONTHS NOW!

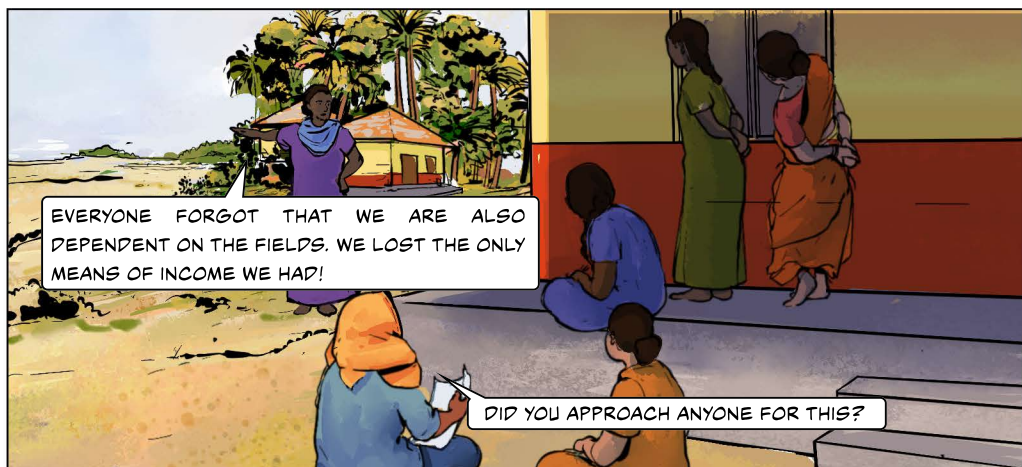
WHY IS THAT?

BEFORE THE FLOODS, ALL OF US WORKED FOR THE SAME LANDLORD IN THE FIELDS YOU SEE THERE...



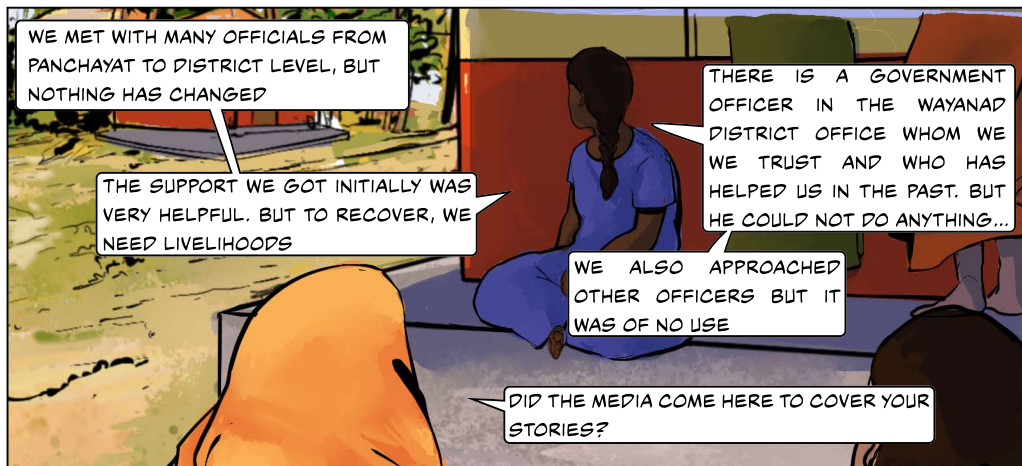
YOU PROBABLY NOTICED THAT THE LAND IS BARREN RIGHT NOW. THE FLOODS BROUGHT IN A LOT OF SAND MAKING IT UNFIT FOR CULTIVATION

THE LANDLORD GOT SOME COMPENSATION FOR THE CROPS THAT WERE DESTROYED. BUT, THE FIELDS ARE STILL UNCULTIVABLE



EVERYONE FORGOT THAT WE ARE ALSO DEPENDENT ON THE FIELDS. WE LOST THE ONLY MEANS OF INCOME WE HAD!

DID YOU APPROACH ANYONE FOR THIS?



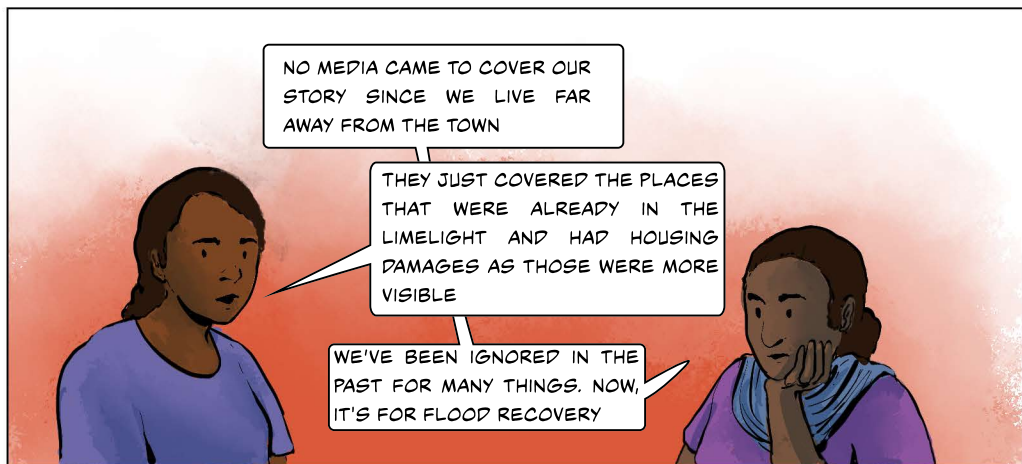
WE MET WITH MANY OFFICIALS FROM PANCHAYAT TO DISTRICT LEVEL, BUT NOTHING HAS CHANGED

THE SUPPORT WE GOT INITIALLY WAS VERY HELPFUL. BUT TO RECOVER, WE NEED LIVELIHOODS

THERE IS A GOVERNMENT OFFICER IN THE WAYANAD DISTRICT OFFICE WHOM WE TRUST AND WHO HAS HELPED US IN THE PAST. BUT HE COULD NOT DO ANYTHING...

WE ALSO APPROACHED OTHER OFFICERS BUT IT WAS OF NO USE

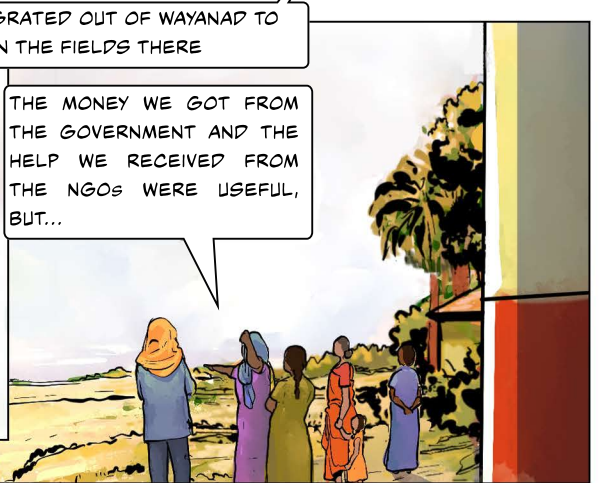
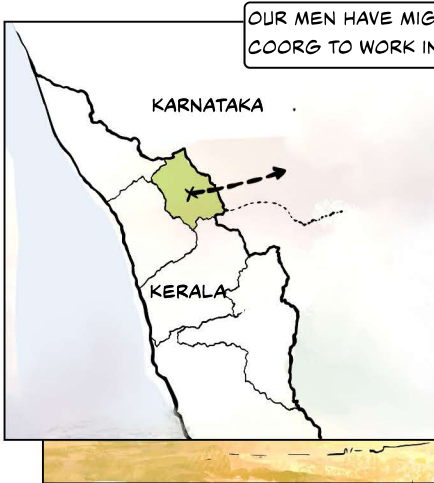
DID THE MEDIA COME HERE TO COVER YOUR STORIES?



NO MEDIA CAME TO COVER OUR STORY SINCE WE LIVE FAR AWAY FROM THE TOWN

THEY JUST COVERED THE PLACES THAT WERE ALREADY IN THE LIMELIGHT AND HAD HOUSING DAMAGES AS THOSE WERE MORE VISIBLE

WE'VE BEEN IGNORED IN THE PAST FOR MANY THINGS. NOW, IT'S FOR FLOOD RECOVERY

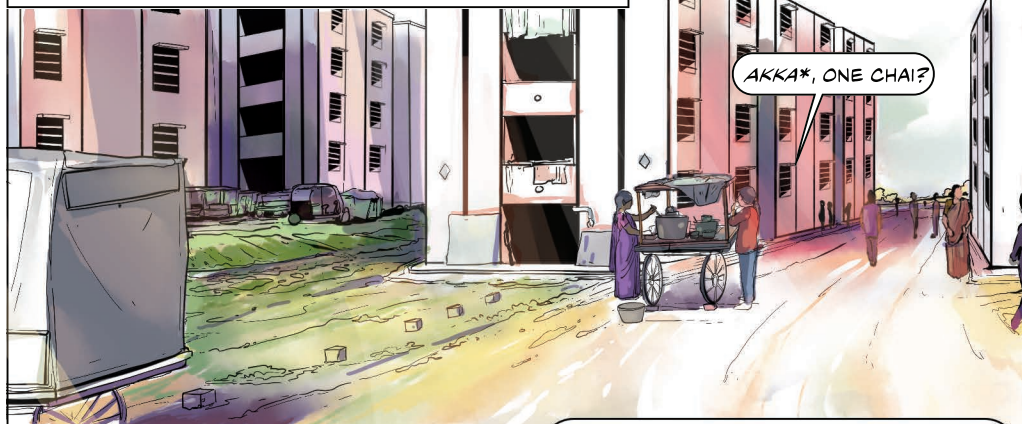


A NEW PLACE TO PLAY

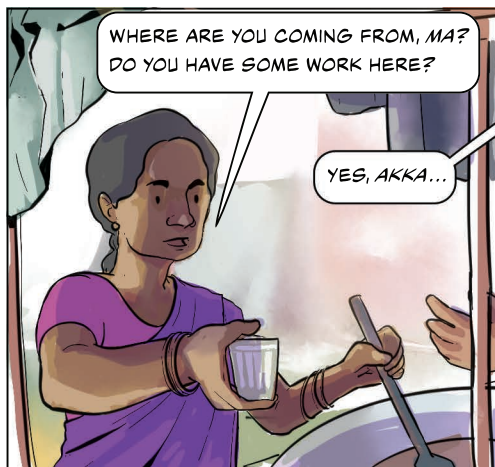


Jasmitha Arvind

A RESETTLEMENT COLONY ON THE OUTSKIRTS OF CHENNAI...

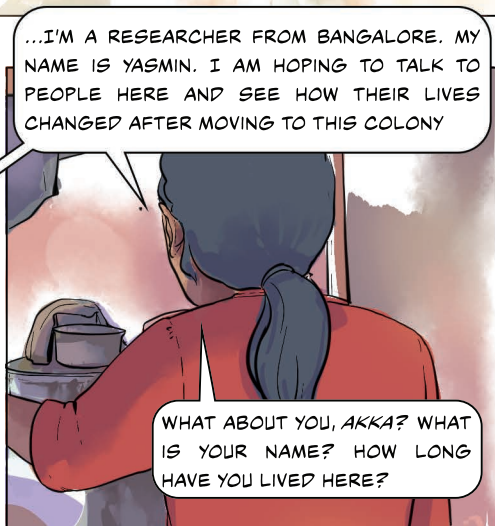


AKKA*, ONE CHAI?



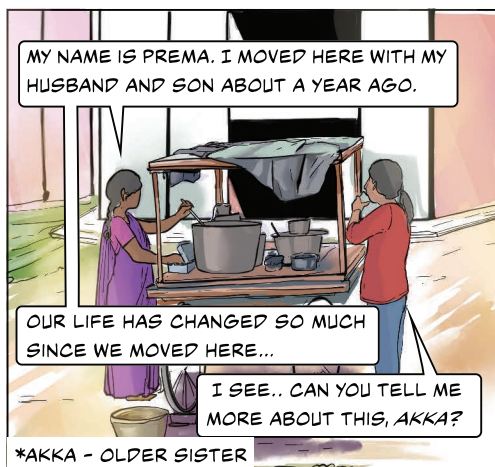
WHERE ARE YOU COMING FROM, MA?
DO YOU HAVE SOME WORK HERE?

YES, AKKA...



...I'M A RESEARCHER FROM BANGALORE. MY
NAME IS YASMIN. I AM HOPING TO TALK TO
PEOPLE HERE AND SEE HOW THEIR LIVES
CHANGED AFTER MOVING TO THIS COLONY

WHAT ABOUT YOU, AKKA? WHAT
IS YOUR NAME? HOW LONG
HAVE YOU LIVED HERE?

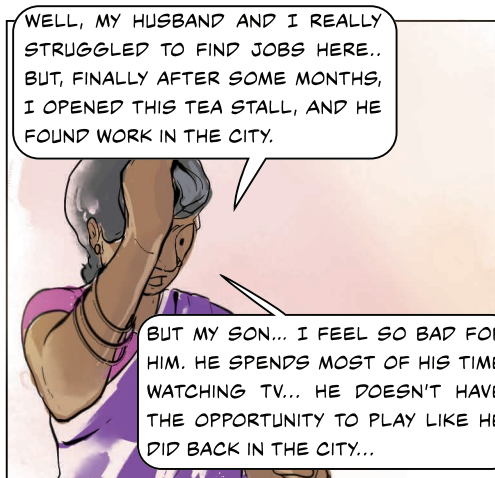


MY NAME IS PREMA. I MOVED HERE WITH MY
HUSBAND AND SON ABOUT A YEAR AGO.

OUR LIFE HAS CHANGED SO MUCH
SINCE WE MOVED HERE...

I SEE.. CAN YOU TELL ME
MORE ABOUT THIS, AKKA?

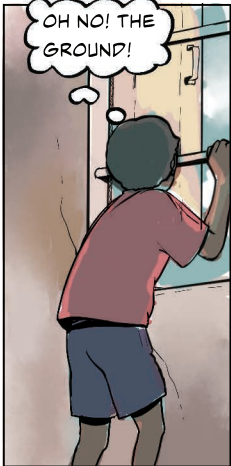
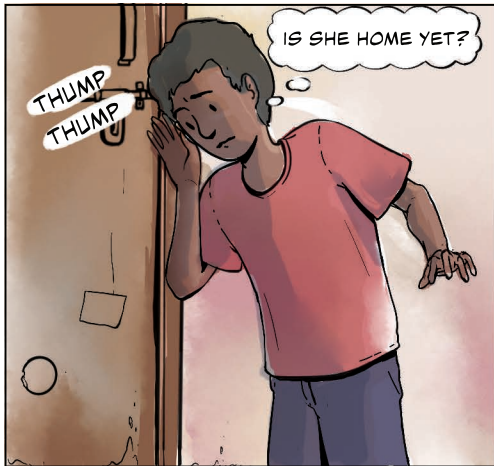
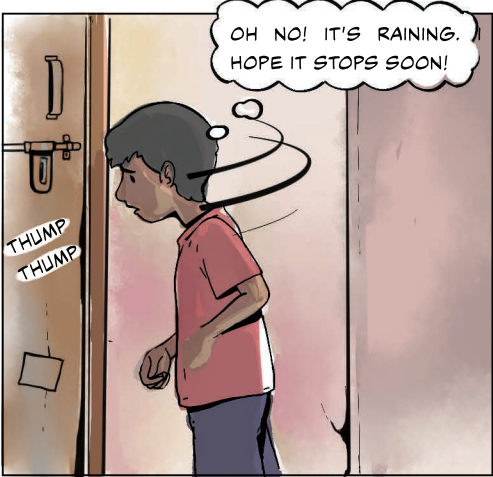
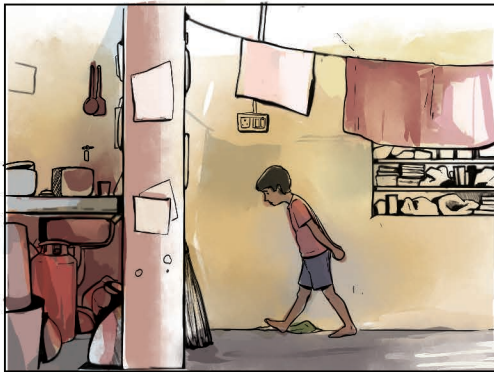
*AKKA - OLDER SISTER

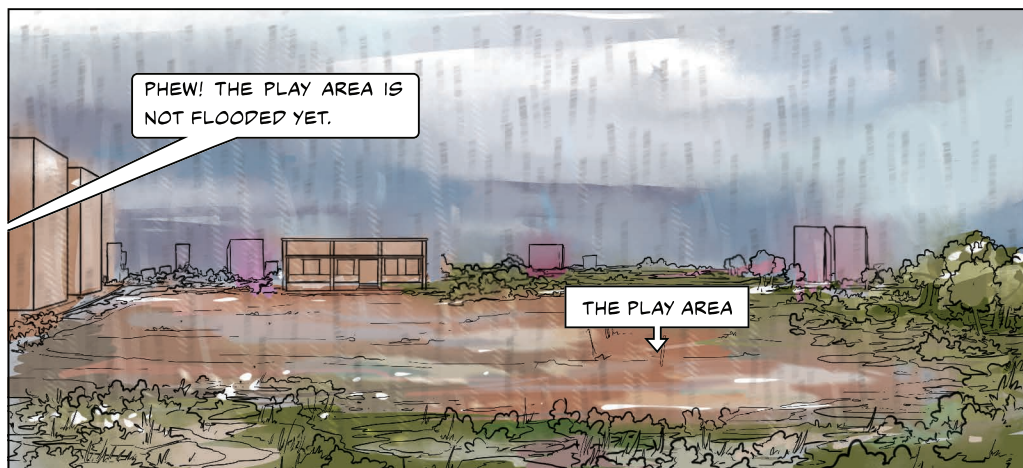


WELL, MY HUSBAND AND I REALLY
STRUGGLED TO FIND JOBS HERE..
BUT, FINALLY AFTER SOME MONTHS,
I OPENED THIS TEA STALL, AND HE
FOUND WORK IN THE CITY.

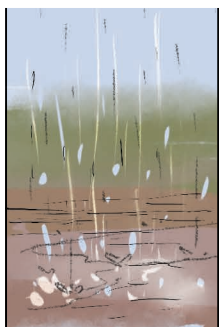
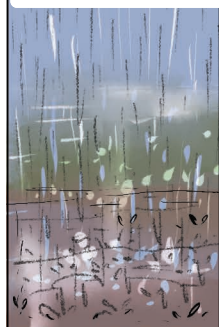
BUT MY SON... I FEEL SO BAD FOR
HIM. HE SPENDS MOST OF HIS TIME
WATCHING TV... HE DOESN'T HAVE
THE OPPORTUNITY TO PLAY LIKE HE
DID BACK IN THE CITY...

HE PLAYS WITH HIS FRIENDS EVERY EVENING AFTER I GO BACK HOME, AND HE DESPERATELY WAITS FOR THAT TIME! HE WILL BE PACING THE ROOM IN THE EVENING TILL I GET BACK... POOR BOY, HE'S ONLY 7...

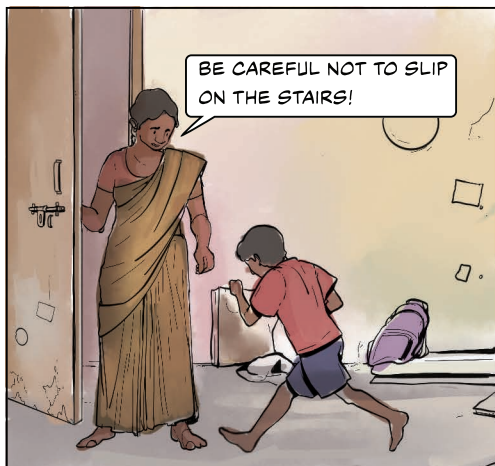




IT IS ESPECIALLY BAD IN THE RAINY SEASON, WHEN HE IS STUCK INSIDE.. THE CHILDREN USUALLY PLAY IN AN OPEN SPACE IN FRONT OF THIS COMMUNITY CENTRE. IT OFTEN GETS FLOODED DURING THE RAINS.



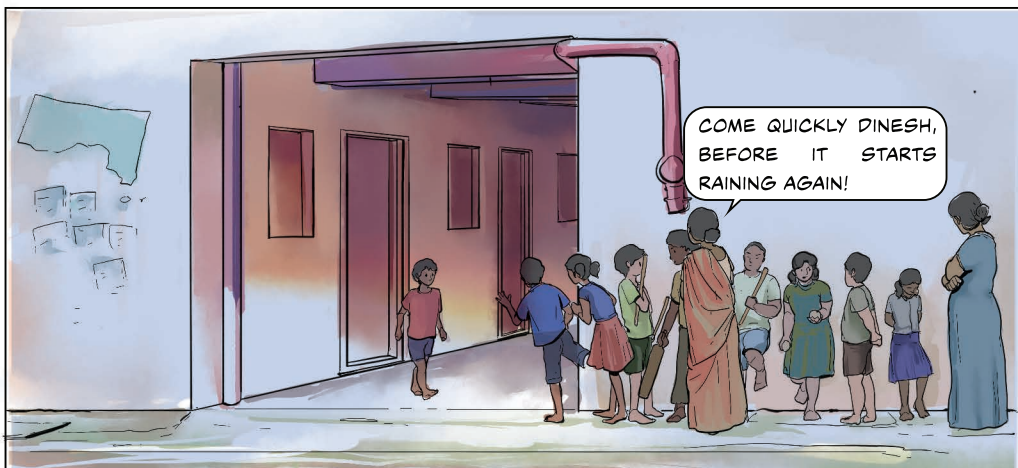
USUALLY ONE OR TWO MOTHERS ACCOMPANY THE CHILDREN WHEN THEY PLAY...

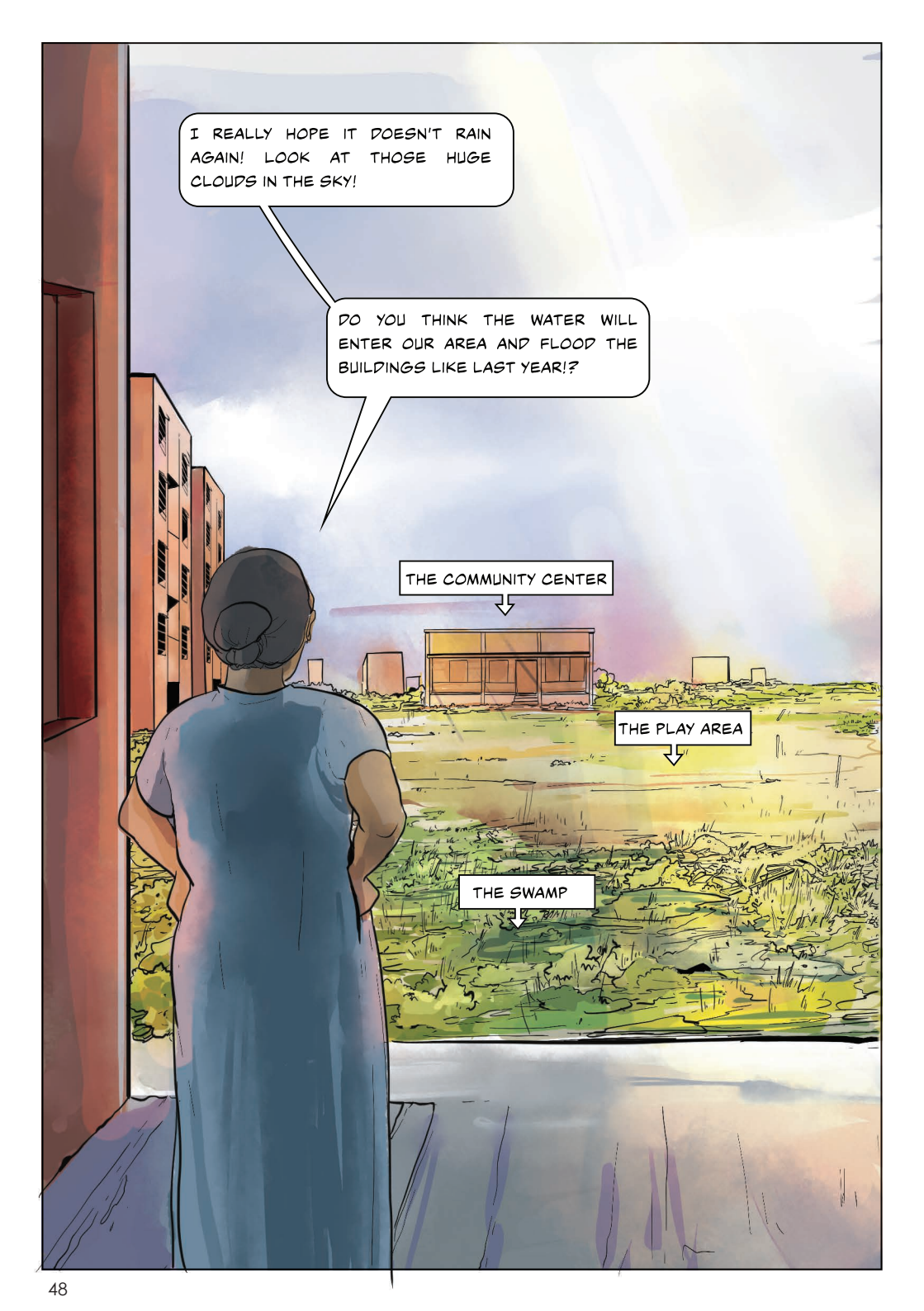


I FEEL REALLY SCARED WHEN HE GOES TO PLAY. EVEN WALKING DOWN THE STAIRS IN THE BUILDING IS DANGEROUS... I HAVE WARNED HIM MANY TIMES, AND SO HAS HIS FATHER



DINESH, BE CAREFUL WHEN YOU WALK DOWN THE STAIRS. YOU KNOW HOW DARK AND NARROW IT IS. THE OTHER DAY A 6-YEAR-OLD GIRL FELL AND BROKE HER LEG





I REALLY HOPE IT DOESN'T RAIN AGAIN! LOOK AT THOSE HUGE CLOUDS IN THE SKY!

DO YOU THINK THE WATER WILL ENTER OUR AREA AND FLOOD THE BUILDINGS LIKE LAST YEAR!?

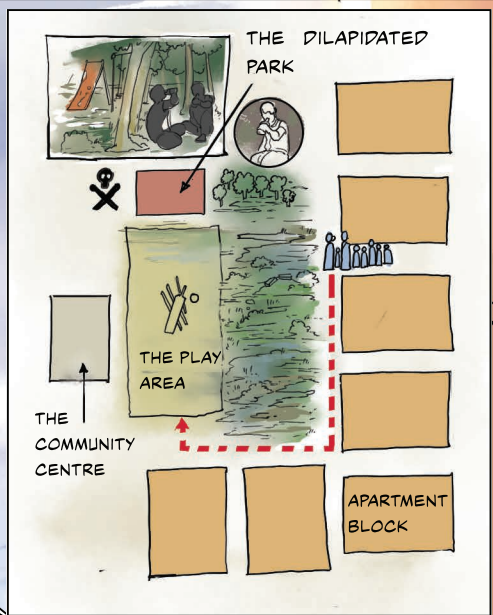
THE COMMUNITY CENTER

THE PLAY AREA

THE SWAMP

LET'S WALK THROUGH THIS PATH,
WE DON'T WANT TO WALK PAST
THOSE MEN IN THE PARK.

I WONDER WHY THEY BUILT
THE PLAYGROUND IN THE
DARK CORNER, HOW ARE WE
SUPPOSED TO FEEL SAFE
SENDING OUR CHILDREN
TO PLAY ALONE HERE?



THE DILAPIDATED PARK

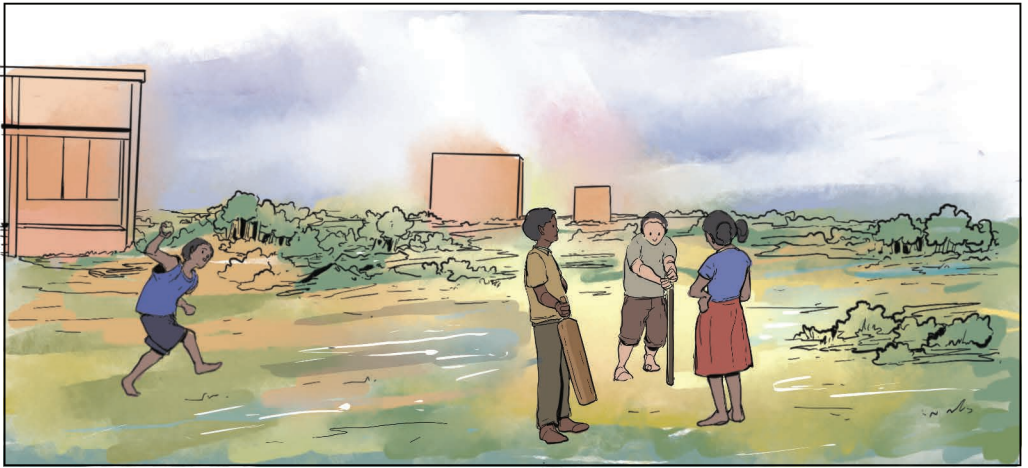
I STILL REMEMBER WHEN WE LIVED IN THE CITY... THE CHILDREN COULD JUST RUN FROM OUR HOUSE TO THE BEACH IN FIVE MINUTES... NO OBSTACLES IN THE WAY...

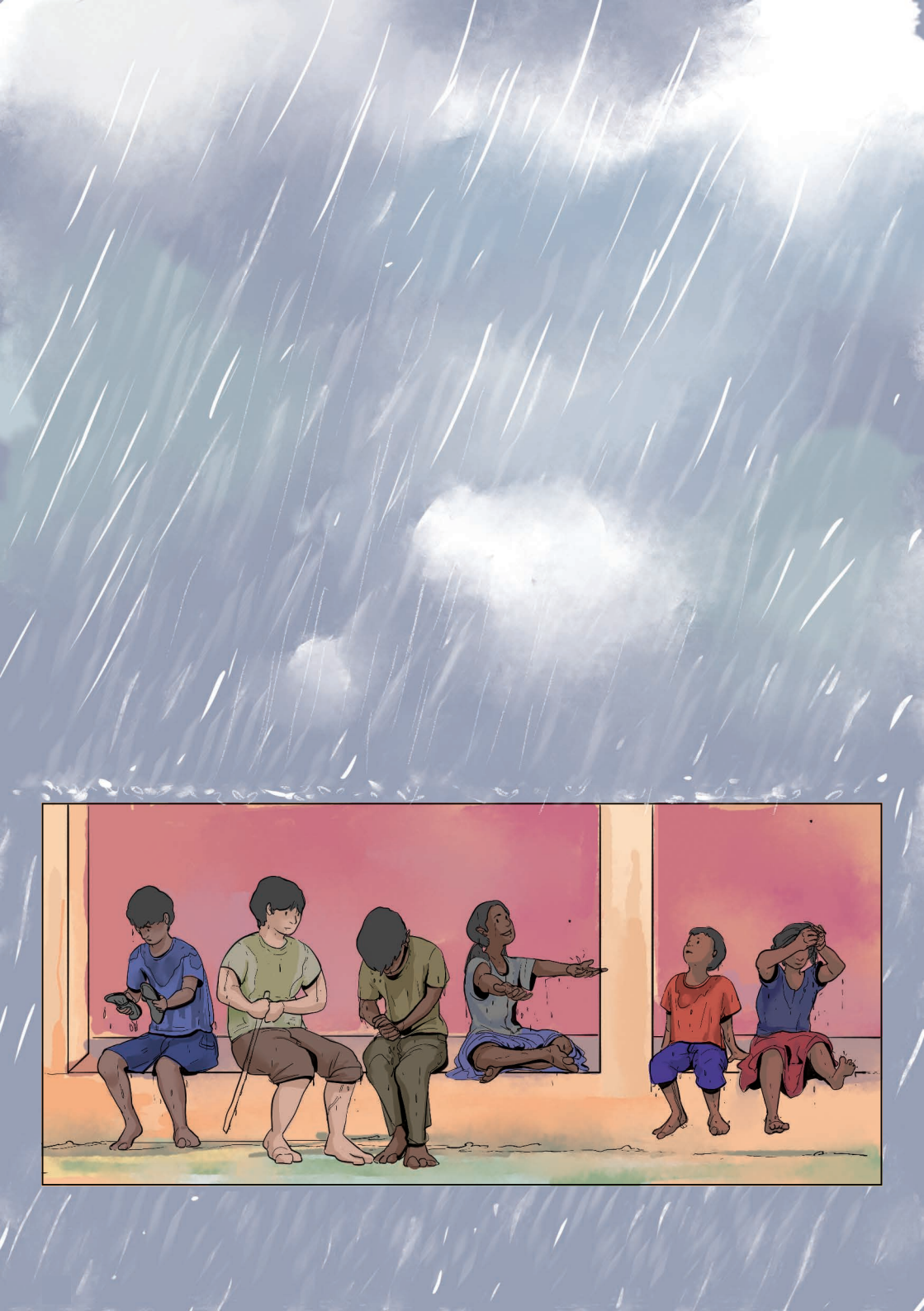


...WE COULD WATCH THEM FROM OUR HOUSES AND NOT HAVE TO ACCOMPANY THEM. IT WAS SUCH A RELIEF TO KNOW EVERYONE IN THE AREA...

I OFTEN WATCH THE CHILDREN PLAYING FROM MY WINDOW, JUST TO MAKE SURE THEY ARE SAFE AND THERE ARE ADULTS WITH THEM







POOR KIDS, IT REALLY IS SO BORING HERE FOR THEM... THEY USED TO HAVE SO MUCH FUN IN THE CITY... EVEN DURING THE RAINS.

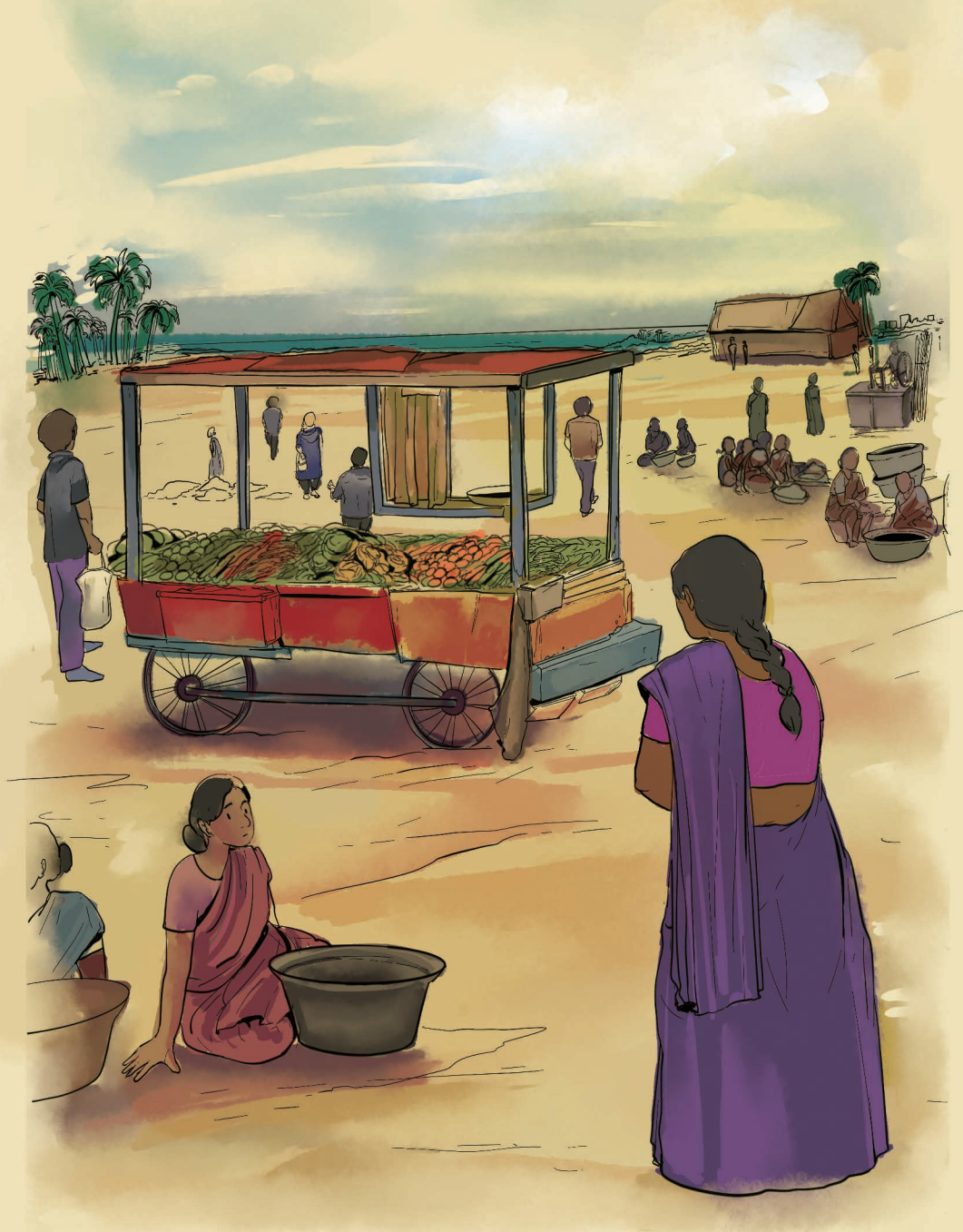
THE SEA WOULD BE FILLED WITH BOATS
RETURNING TO SHORE AND THEY WOULD
WATCH THEM FROM THE WINDOW OF MY
HOUSE. EVEN AT NIGHT, YOU COULD SEE
SO MANY BOATS, BIG AND SMALL - WITH
ALL THEIR LIGHTS BOBBING AND IT WAS
SO BEAUTIFUL!

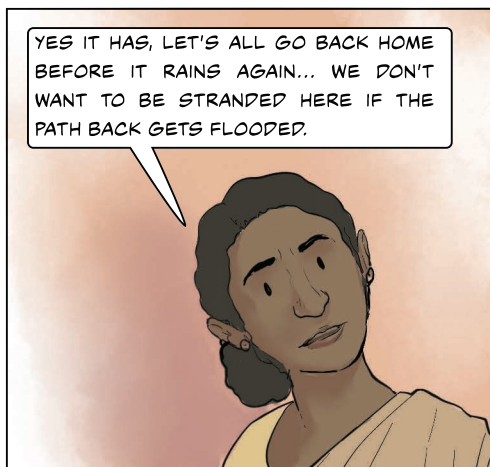
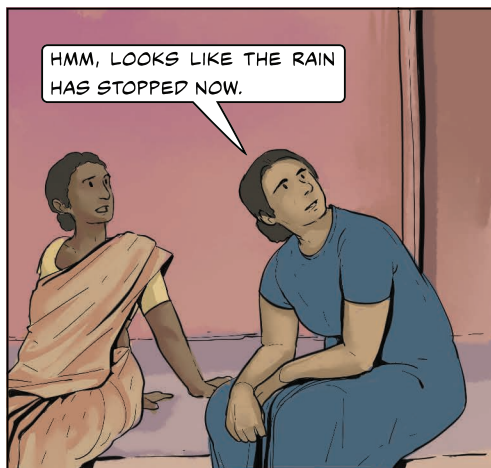


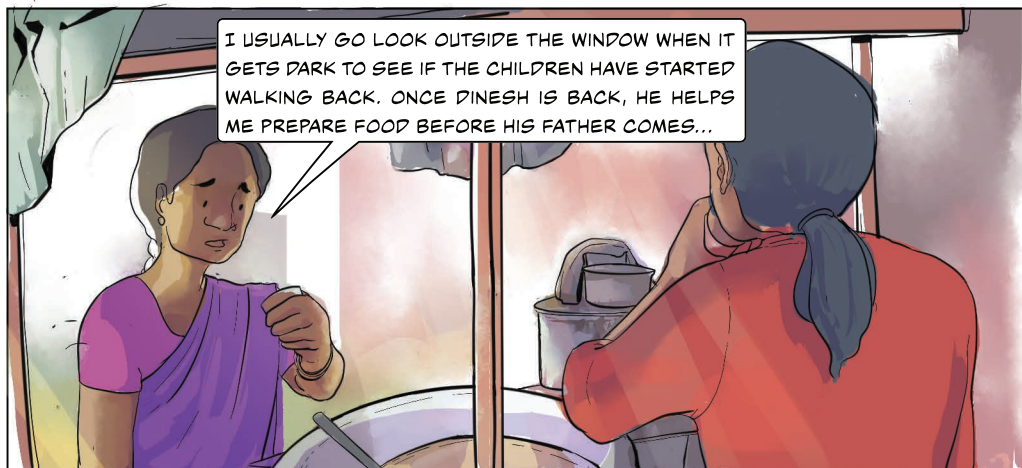
THERE WERE SO MANY EXCITING SOUNDS
TOO...THEY COULD HEAR THE PEOPLE ON THE
BEACH, THE SEA BREEZE, THE WAVES...



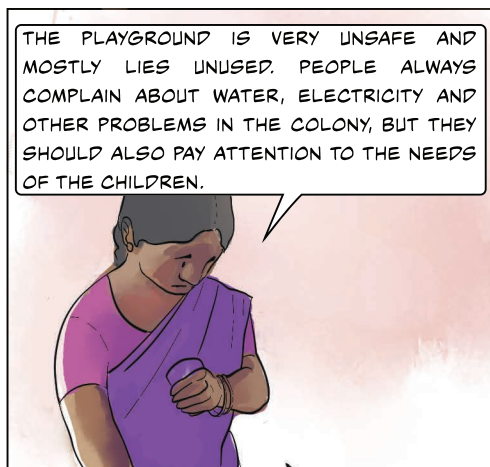
...THE SOUNDS OF DOGS AND CATS AND THE HENS, ALL THE HAWKERS SELLING
THEIR WARES AND THE MUSIC OF THE MERRY-GO-ROUND ON THE BEACH... OVER
HERE THEY CAN ONLY HEAR THE SOUND OF THE TRAFFIC







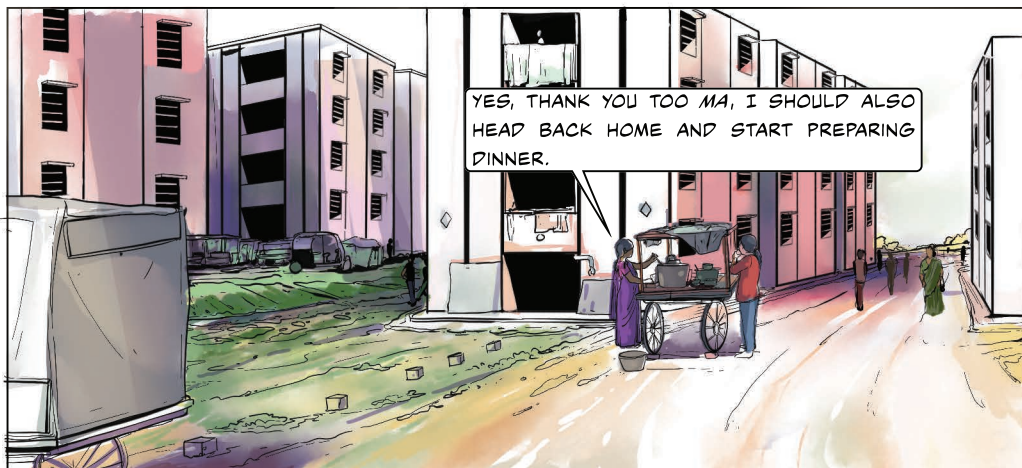
I USUALLY GO LOOK OUTSIDE THE WINDOW WHEN IT GETS DARK TO SEE IF THE CHILDREN HAVE STARTED WALKING BACK. ONCE DINESH IS BACK, HE HELPS ME PREPARE FOOD BEFORE HIS FATHER COMES...



THE PLAYGROUND IS VERY UNSAFE AND MOSTLY LIES UNUSED. PEOPLE ALWAYS COMPLAIN ABOUT WATER, ELECTRICITY AND OTHER PROBLEMS IN THE COLONY, BUT THEY SHOULD ALSO PAY ATTENTION TO THE NEEDS OF THE CHILDREN.



YOU'RE RIGHT, AKKA. I ALSO TEND TO OVERLOOK HOW IMPORTANT PARKS AND SAFE PUBLIC PLACES ARE FOR A COMMUNITY. THANK YOU FOR SHARING YOUR STORY WITH ME.



YES, THANK YOU TOO MA, I SHOULD ALSO HEAD BACK HOME AND START PREPARING DINNER.

KEEPING OUT



Garima Jain

SOMEWHERE ALONG THE COAST OF ODISHA, 2010



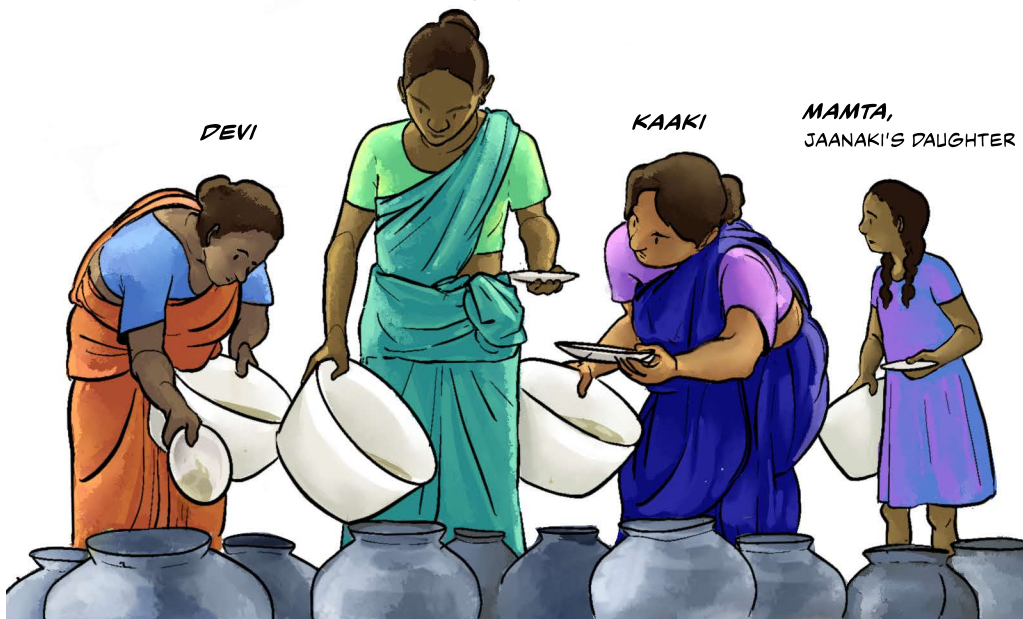


JAANAKI

DEVI

KAAKI

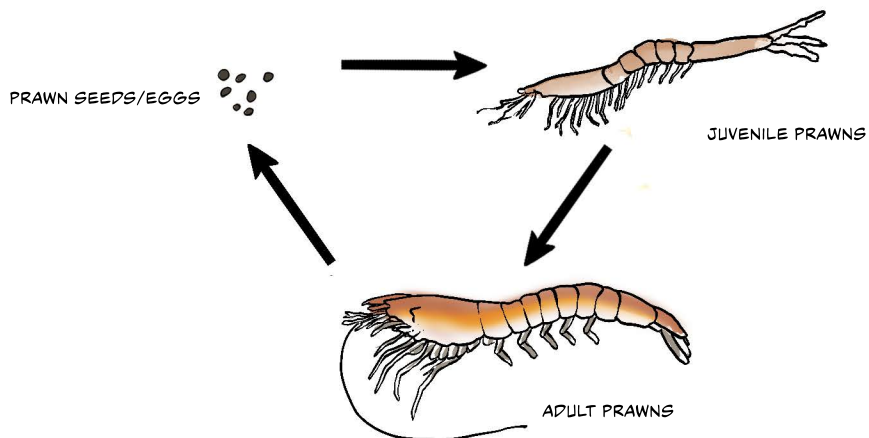
MAMTA,
JAANAKI'S DAUGHTER

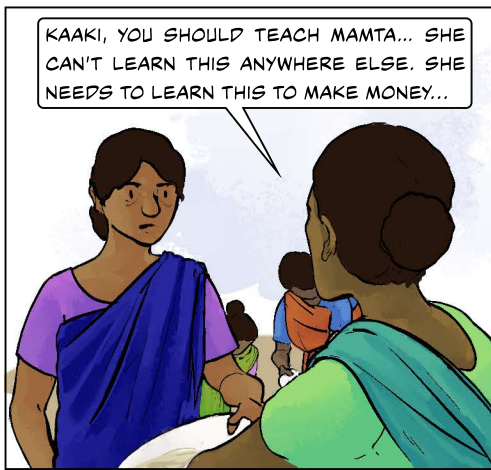


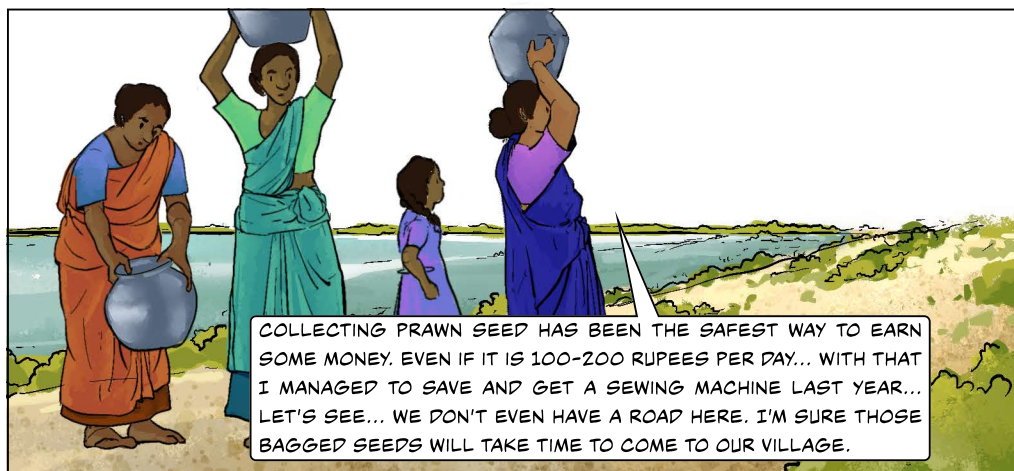
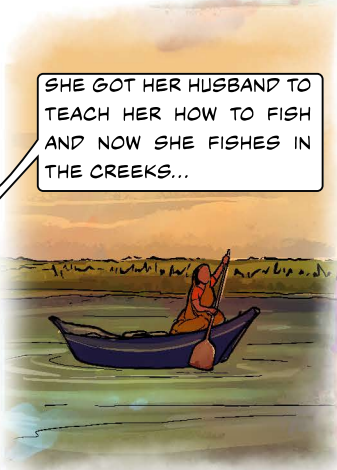
KAAKI



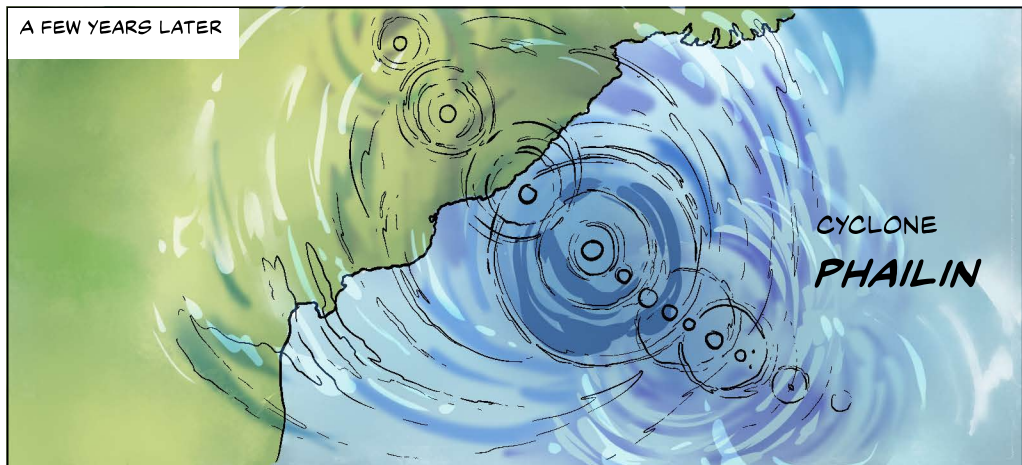
THE PRAWN SEEDS CAUGHT BY THE WOMEN ARE SOLD TO THOSE WHO CULTURE PRAWNS



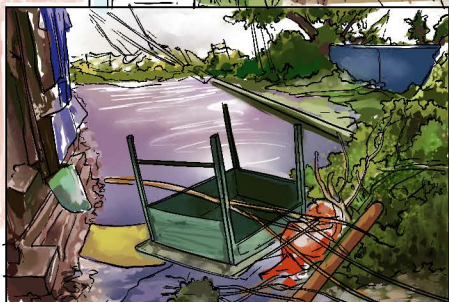




A FEW YEARS LATER



**CYCLONE PHAILIN HITS 90 LAKH PEOPLE;
23 DEAD, LAKHS OF HOMES DAMAGED**

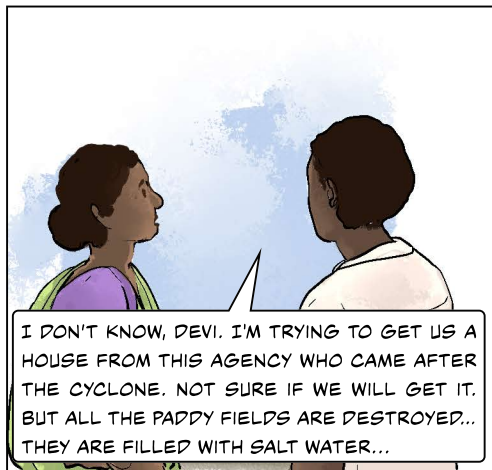




DEVI



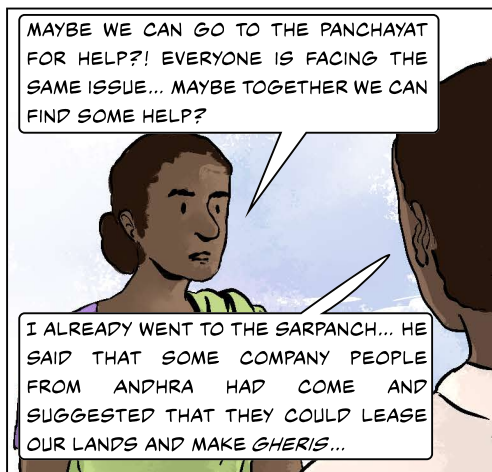
WHAT DO WE DO NOW? WE
LOST BOTH OUR HOUSES
AND FIELDS!



I DON'T KNOW, DEVI. I'M TRYING TO GET US A
HOUSE FROM THIS AGENCY WHO CAME AFTER
THE CYCLONE. NOT SURE IF WE WILL GET IT.
BUT ALL THE PADDY FIELDS ARE DESTROYED...
THEY ARE FILLED WITH SALT WATER...

EVEN IF THE WATER RECEDES, I'M NOT SURE IF
WE CAN GROW PADDY OR ANYTHING ANYTIME
SOON

**GHERI- A POND
FOR AQUACULTURE**



MAYBE WE CAN GO TO THE PANCHAYAT
FOR HELP?! EVERYONE IS FACING THE
SAME ISSUE... MAYBE TOGETHER WE CAN
FIND SOME HELP?

I ALREADY WENT TO THE SARPANCH... HE
SAID THAT SOME COMPANY PEOPLE
FROM ANDHRA HAD COME AND
SUGGESTED THAT THEY COULD LEASE
OUR LANDS AND MAKE **GHERIS**...

THE COMPANY WILL GIVE US THEIR OWN PRAWN
SEEDS IN BAGS AND WILL ALSO PAY US
SALARIES... THEY WILL SELL THE PRAWNS IN
THE MARKET AND MAKE MONEY



OK, ATLEAST WE GET PAID SOMETHING! MAYBE
WE CAN GET BACK TO PADDY IN A FEW YEARS...

JAANAKI & MAMTA

A FEW MONTHS LATER, IN
JAANAKI'S HOUSE



JAANAKI, I'M SORRY I
COULDN'T COME TO HELP YOU
AFTER YOU LOST YOUR
HUSBAND IN THE CYCLONE.
HOW ARE YOU MANAGING?

I UNDERSTAND, DEVI. EVERYONE
HAS THEIR OWN TROUBLES TO
DEAL WITH RIGHT NOW

I TRIED EVERYTHING.
I WENT AROUND
LOOKING FOR WORK,
BUT NO PADDY FIELDS
ARE FUNCTIONAL IN
THE NEARBY AREAS...

BUT...



I FOUND SOMEONE WHO HAD GONE
TO COIMBATORE SOMETIME BACK,
AND THEY HAVE A COMPANY THERE
WHERE THEY KEEP 14-15-YEAR-OLD
GIRLS IN TEXTILE FACTORIES, TAKE
CARE OF THEIR FOOD AND SHELTER,
AND IN RETURN FOR THEIR WORK,
GIVE THEM A FIXED AMOUNT FOR
THEIR DOWRY WHEN THEY TURN 18

I'M THINKING OF SENDING MAMTA THERE...
BUT DON'T TELL ANYONE... YOU KNOW HOW
THE OTHER VILLAGERS MIGHT THINK
ABOUT SENDING A GIRL SO FAR. NO ONE
WILL MARRY HER IF THEY FIND OUT

=NODS=



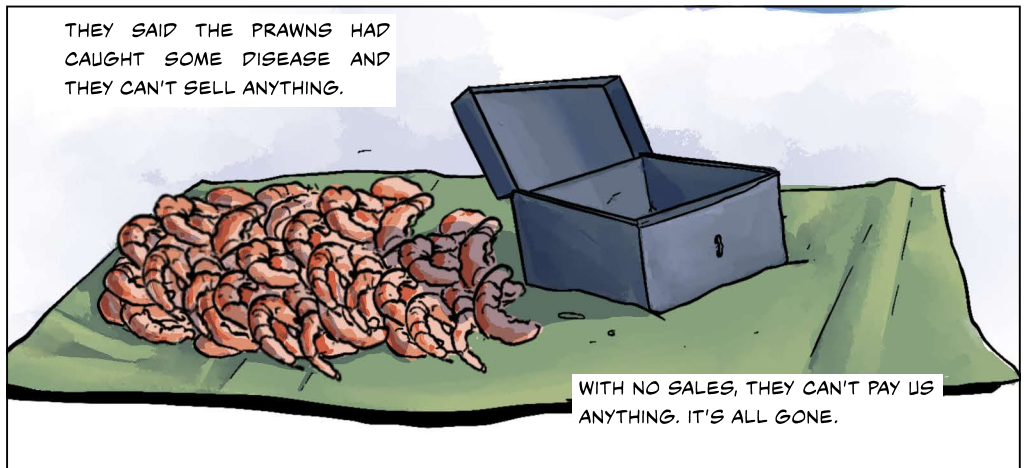
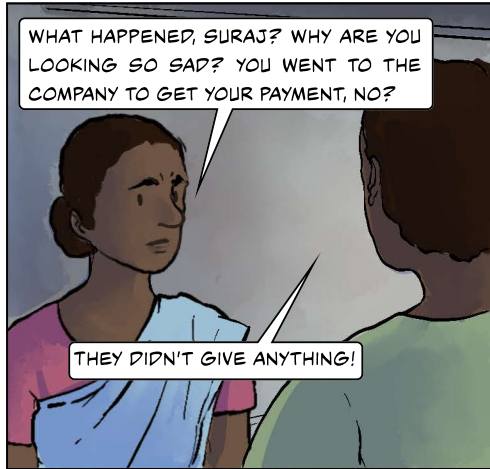
OH, BUT WON'T THEY NOTICE WHEN SHE IS
NOT AROUND? WHAT WILL YOU TELL THEM?

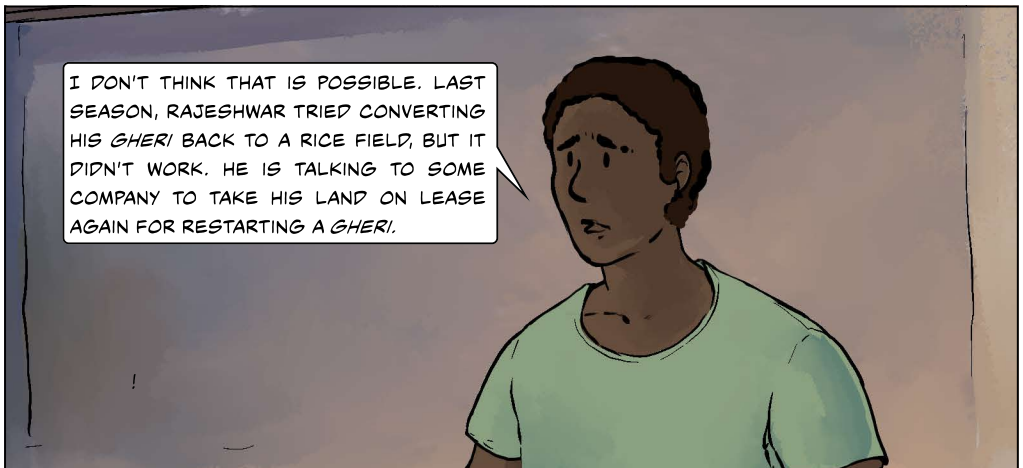
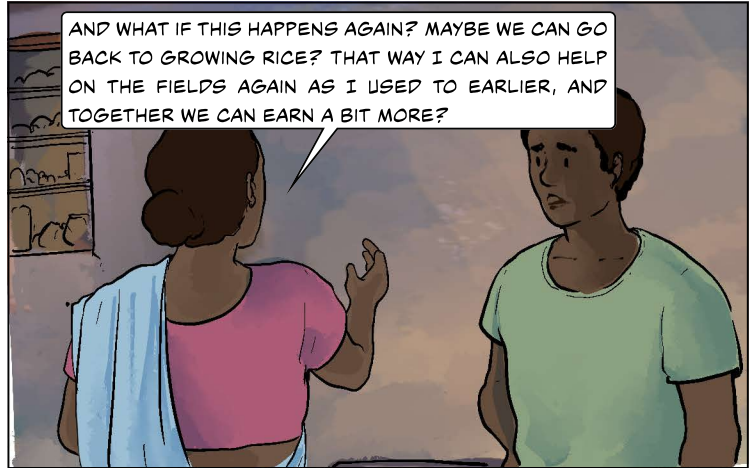
I'LL JUST TELL THEM
I'VE SENT HER TO HER
MAMA'S* HOUSE

*MAMA- UNCLE

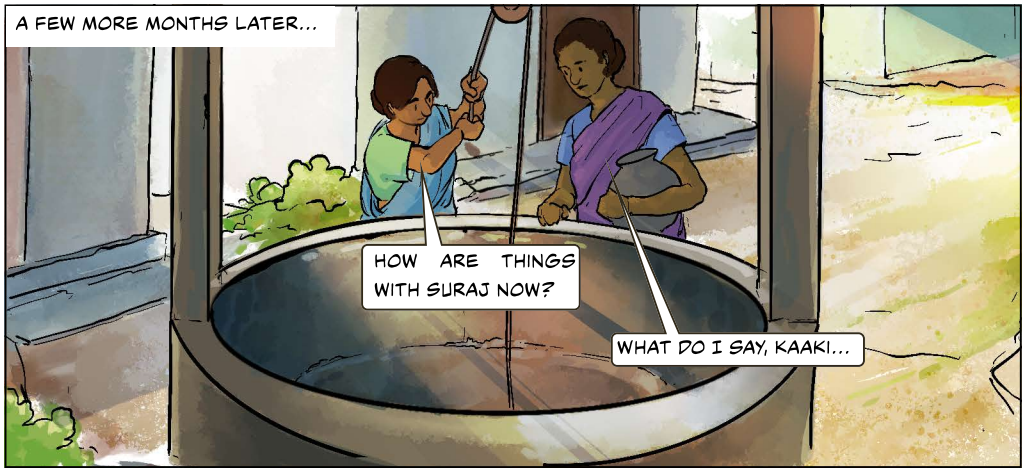


A FEW WEEKS LATER, BACK IN DEVI'S HOUSE





A FEW MORE MONTHS LATER...



WITH THESE CONSTANT UPS AND DOWNS AT THE GHERI, HE OFTEN COMES HOME DRUNK...



WHEN I SAY ANYTHING, HE FIGHTS AND BEATS ME.



I CAN'T REASON WITH HIM AT ALL...



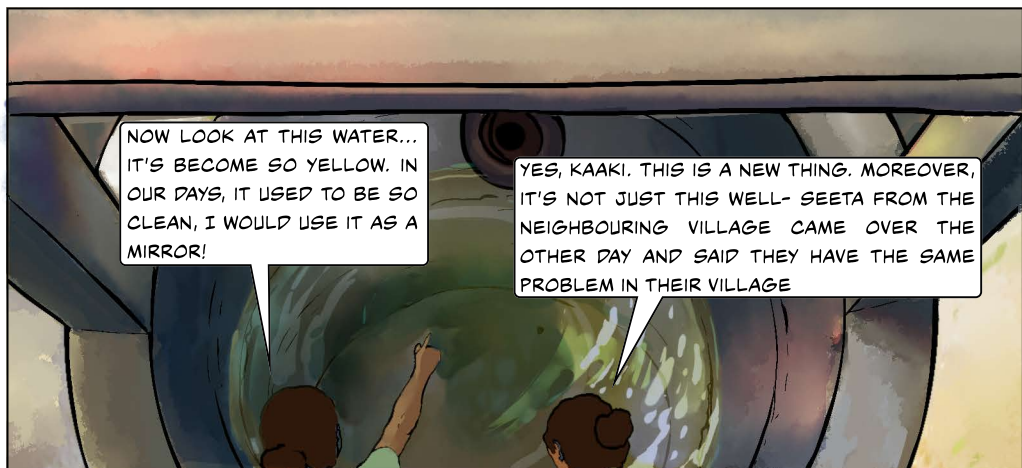
YOU SHOULD JUST FOCUS ON SUNIL. HE SHOULDN'T FALL IN THE SAME LINES AS HIS FATHER. PUSHPA'S SON HAD ALSO TAKEN AFTER HIS FATHER AND STARTED DRINKING.

YES, KAAKI. I DON'T LIKE SUNIL WATCHING ALL THIS, SO I'M THINKING OF SENDING HIM TO HIS NANA'S* HOUSE. HE CAN GO TO SCHOOL THERE. AT LEAST HE CAN GET SOME EDUCATION, AND LATER GO TO THE CITY AND WORK. NOT LIKE US, STUCK HERE.

THAT WILL BE GOOD. WE ARE OLD NOW, AND HAVE LIVED OUR LIVES. AT LEAST OUR KIDS WILL HAVE A BETTER LIFE.



* NANA- GRANDFATHER



NOW LOOK AT THIS WATER...
IT'S BECOME SO YELLOW. IN
OUR DAYS, IT USED TO BE SO
CLEAN, I WOULD USE IT AS A
MIRROR!

YES, KAAKI. THIS IS A NEW THING. MOREOVER,
IT'S NOT JUST THIS WELL- SEETA FROM THE
NEIGHBOURING VILLAGE CAME OVER THE
OTHER DAY AND SAID THEY HAVE THE SAME
PROBLEM IN THEIR VILLAGE



THESE NEW *GHERIS* ARE THE PROBLEM, I
CAN TELL YOU THAT MUCH. THESE
COMPANIES ARE BRINGING ALL THESE
CHEMICALS AND SEEDS IN THESE BAGS.
WHO KNOWS WHAT IS IN THEM.

BUT, KAAKI, WITHOUT THOSE MEDICINES,
THE PRAWNS GET THE DISEASE. SO, IT IS
IMPORTANT TO USE THEM

WHAT GOOD HAVE THOSE
GHERIS BROUGHT US ANYWAY...

WHAT WE DON'T TALK ABOUT WHEN WE TALK ABOUT RECOVERY

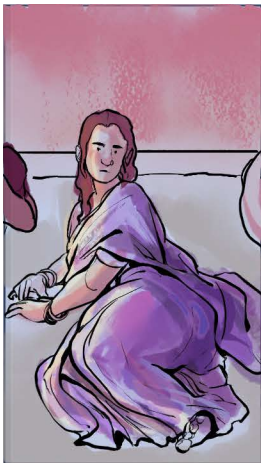


Teja Malladi & Nihal Ranjit

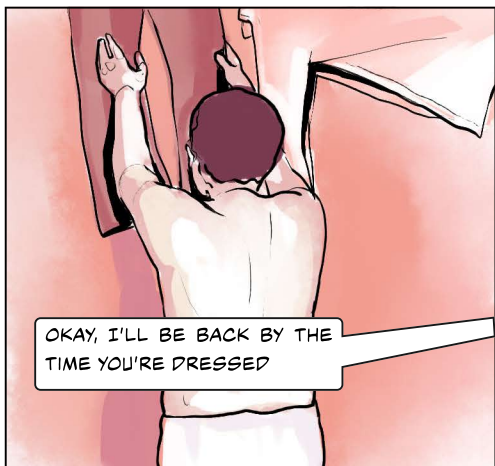
IN A RESETTLEMENT COLONY OUTSIDE CHENNAI...

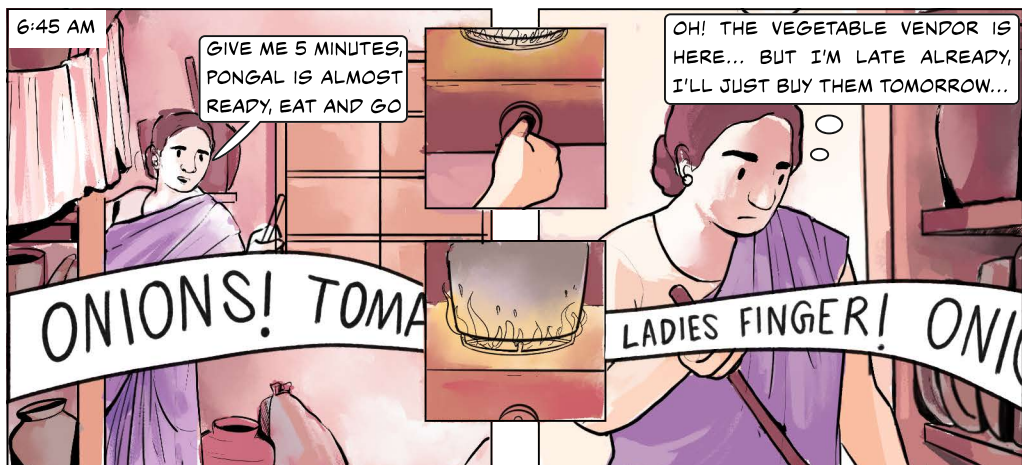
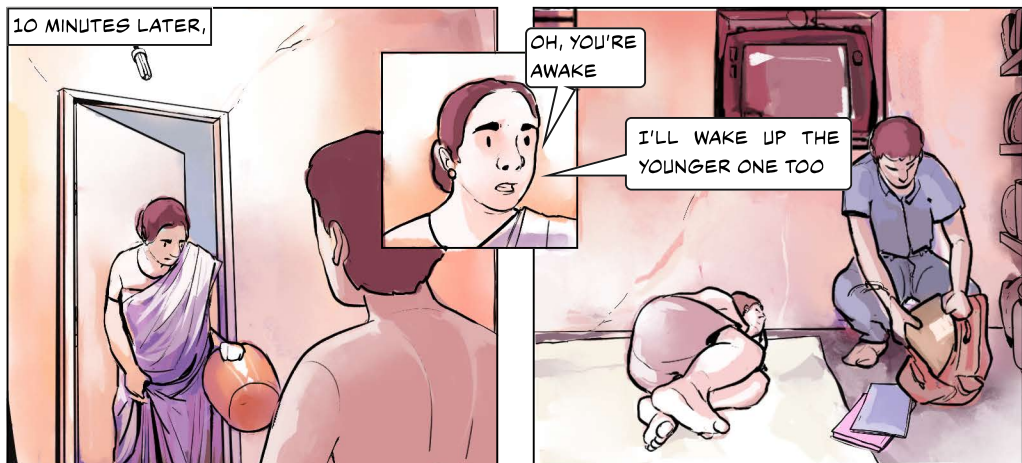


THENMOZHI'S HOUSE













OH GOD, THIS SMELL!

HOW MANY TIMES DO WE HAVE TO
TELL THEM TO DO SOMETHING
ABOUT THIS STAGNANT WATER!?



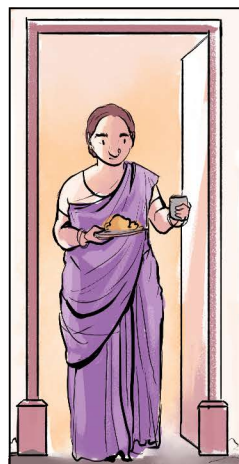
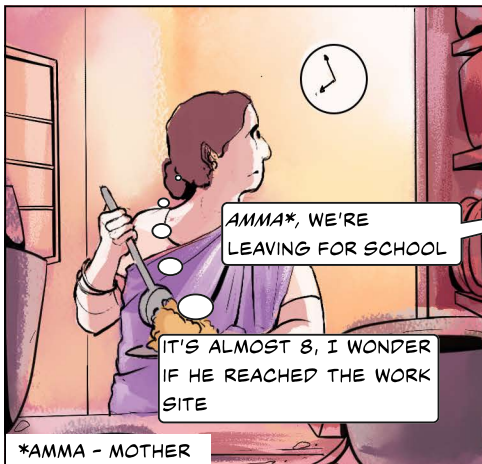
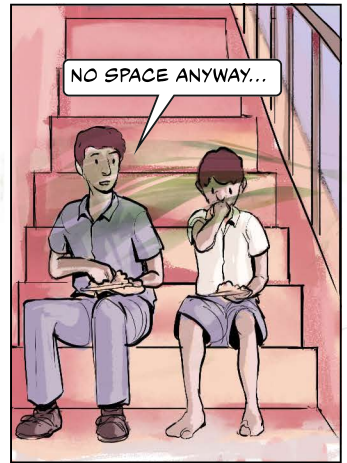
THEY'RE GOING TO
BE LATE IF THEY
DON'T HURRY UP!

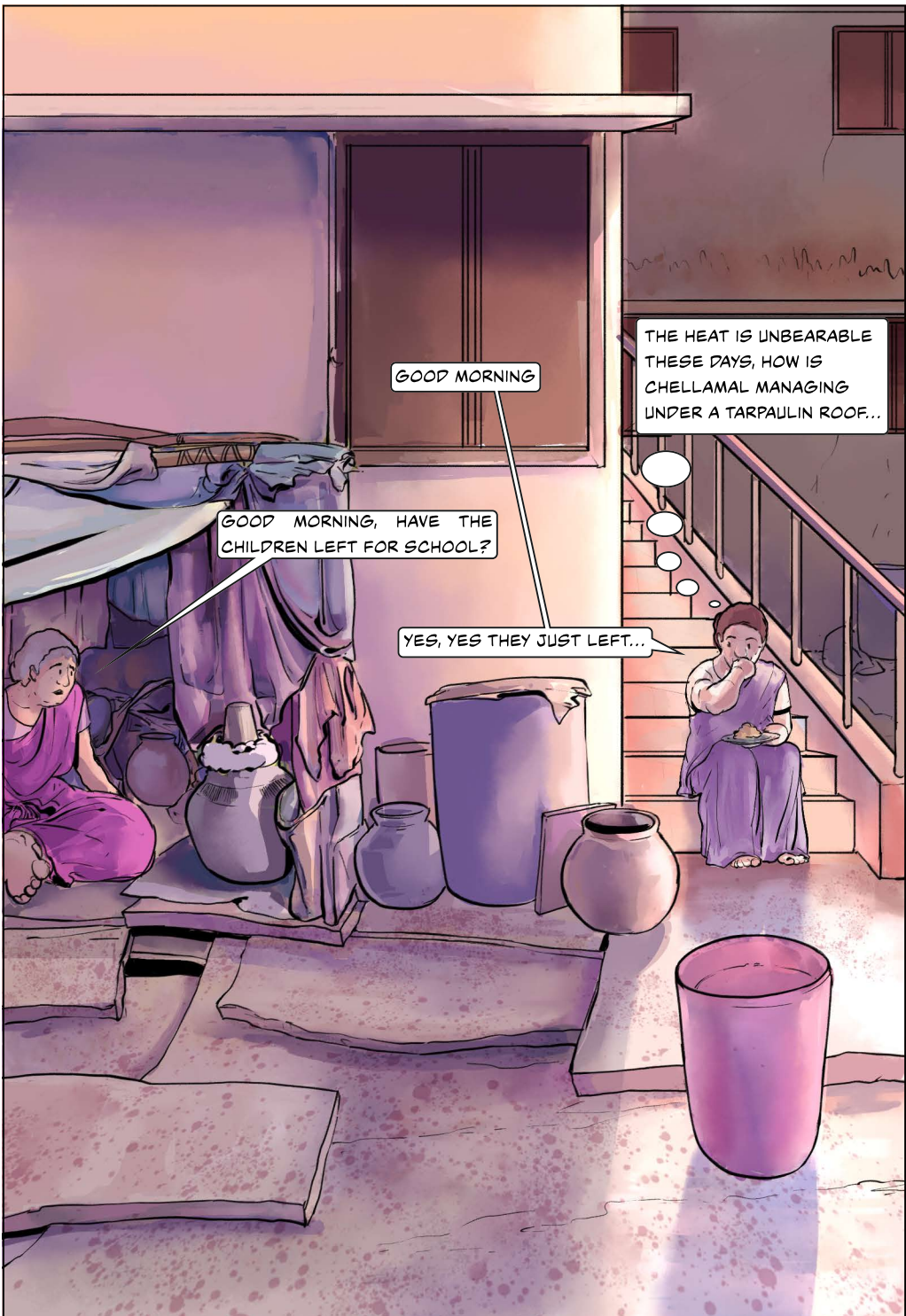


IS YOUR SCHOOL
BAG READY?



≥NODS≤





GOOD MORNING

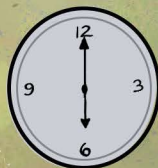
GOOD MORNING, HAVE THE CHILDREN LEFT FOR SCHOOL?

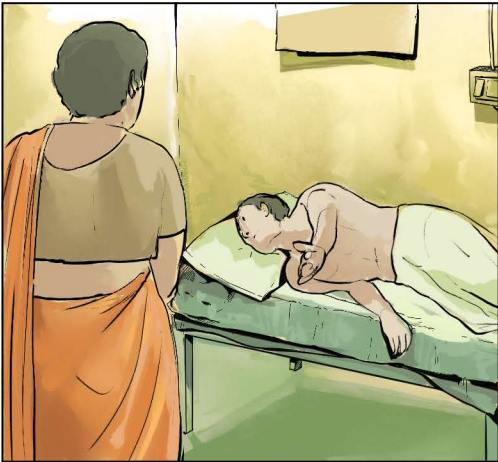
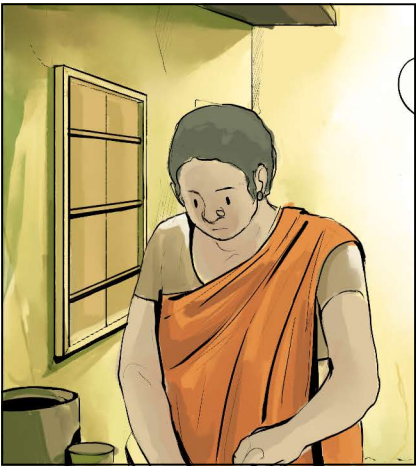
YES, YES THEY JUST LEFT...

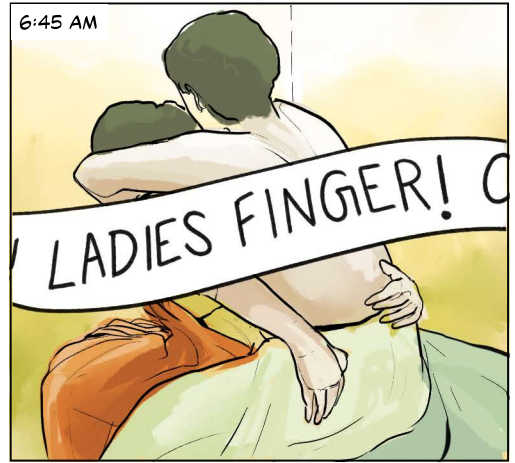
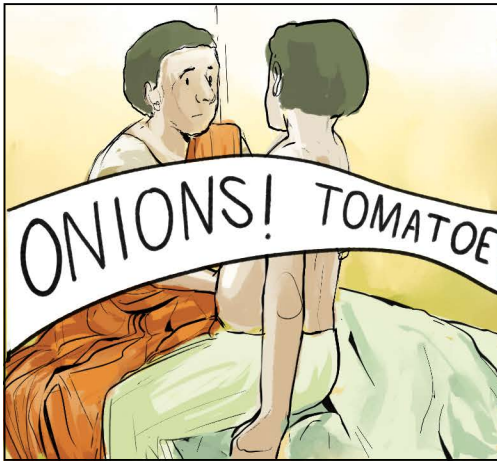
THE HEAT IS UNBEARABLE THESE DAYS, HOW IS CHELLAMAL MANAGING UNDER A TARPULIN ROOF...



**SHENBAGAVALLI'S
HOUSE**









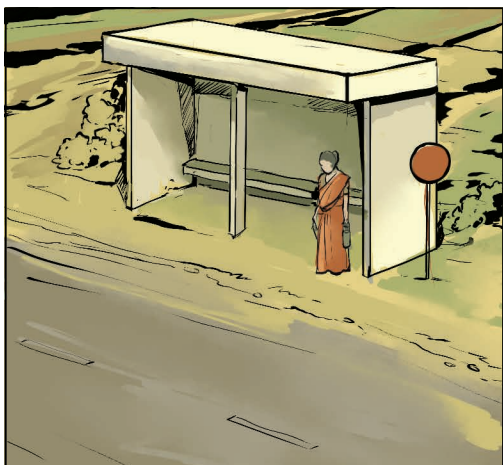
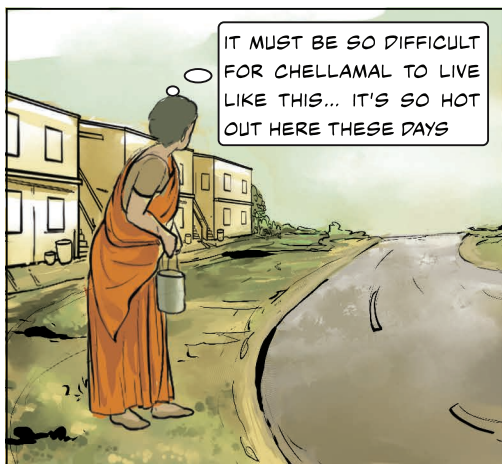
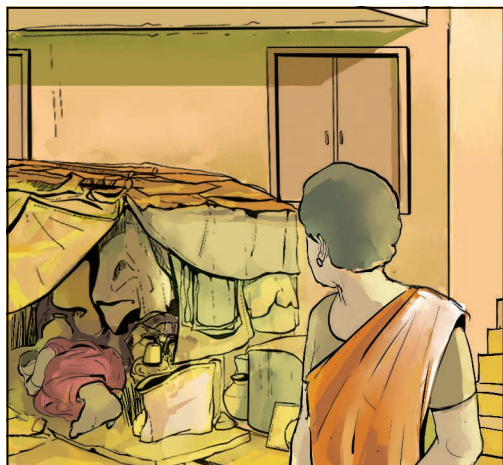
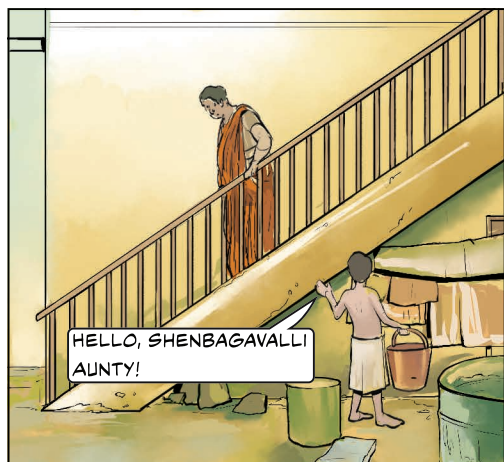
SO MANY STAIRS TO CLIMB UP AND DOWN EVERY DAY... IT IS BECOMING EVEN MORE DIFFICULT TO MANAGE SINCE HIS PARALYSIS WORSENER. HOW WILL I KEEP THIS UP AS I GROW OLDER?



I WILL ASK VIJI TO GIVE SOME IDLI FOR LUNCH. FINISH THE FOOD, OKAY?



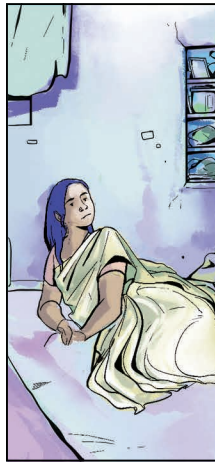
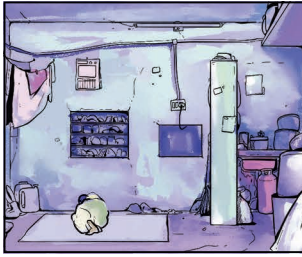
I WILL BE BACK BY 6



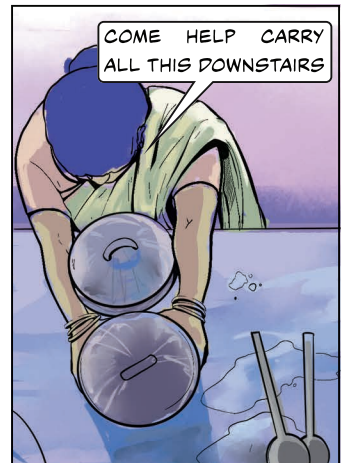


Viji's HOUSE

5:30 AM



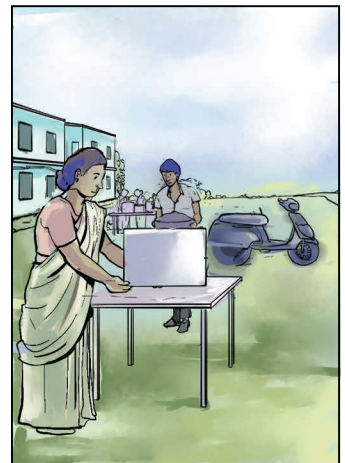
15 MINUTES LATER



COME HELP CARRY ALL THIS DOWNSTAIRS



6:45 AM

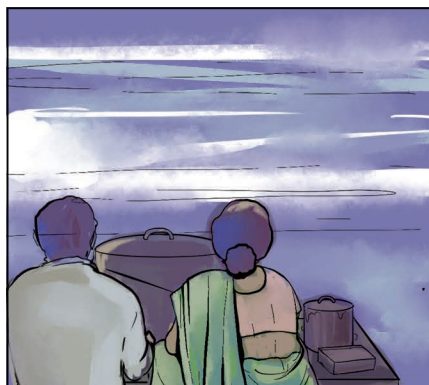
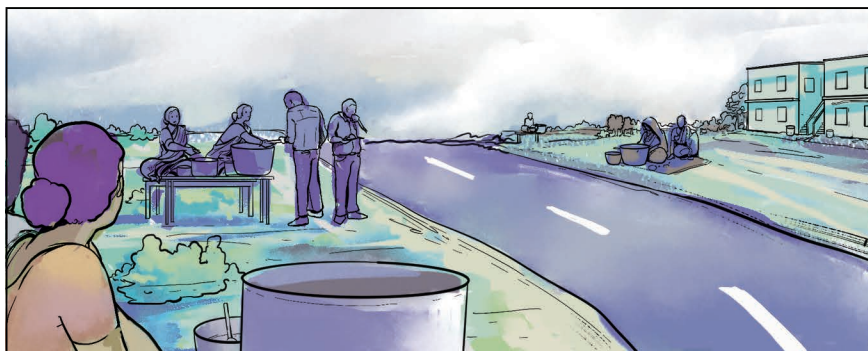


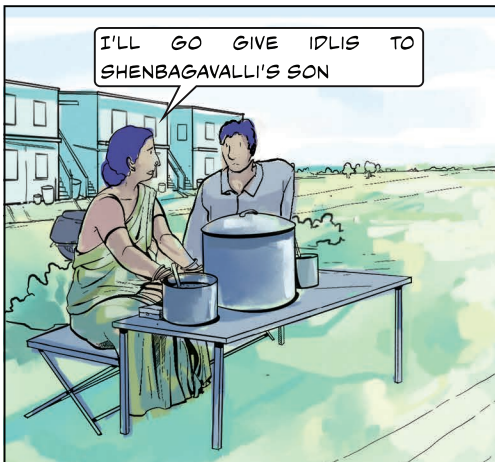
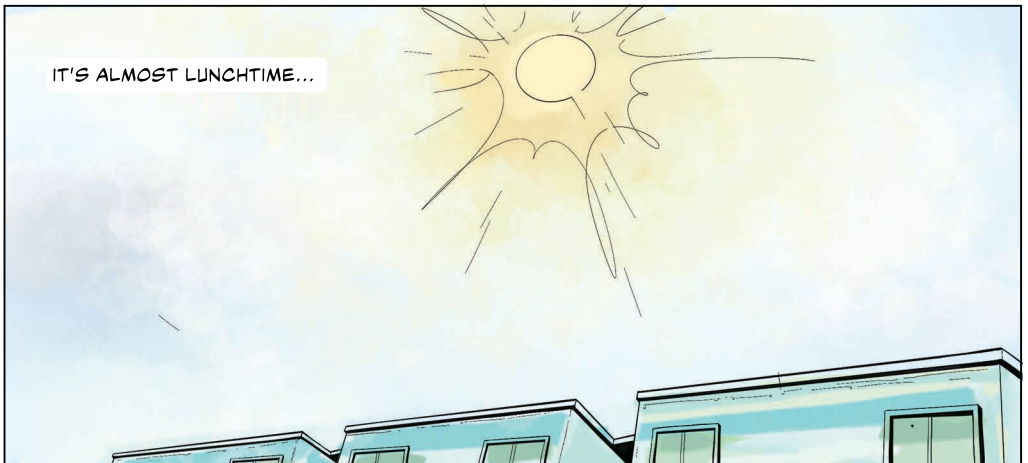
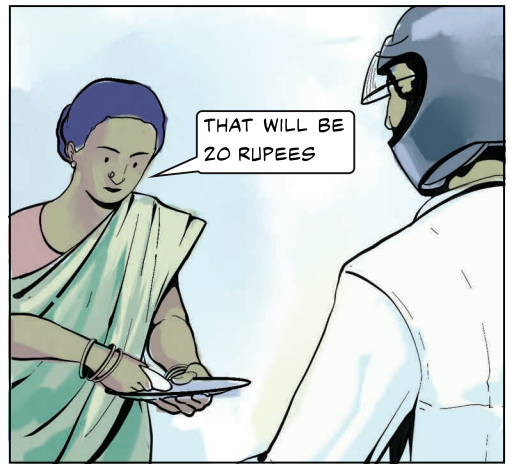
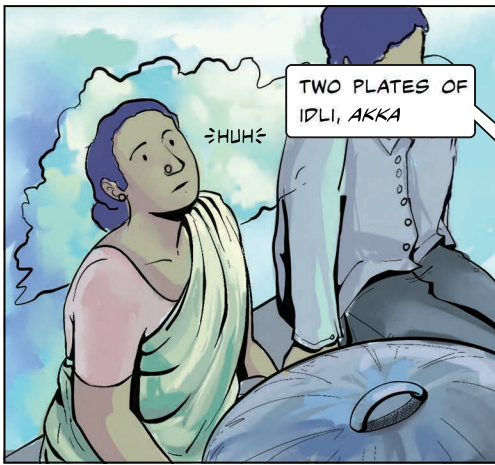


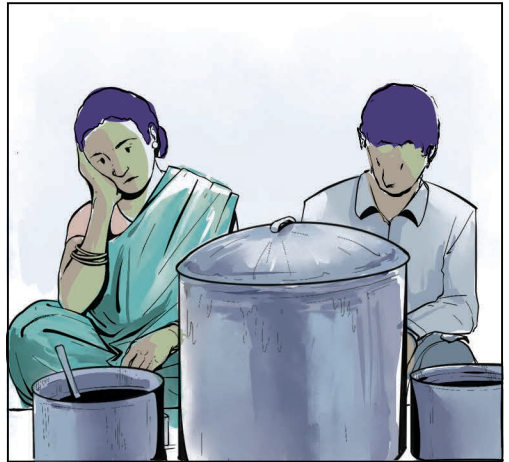
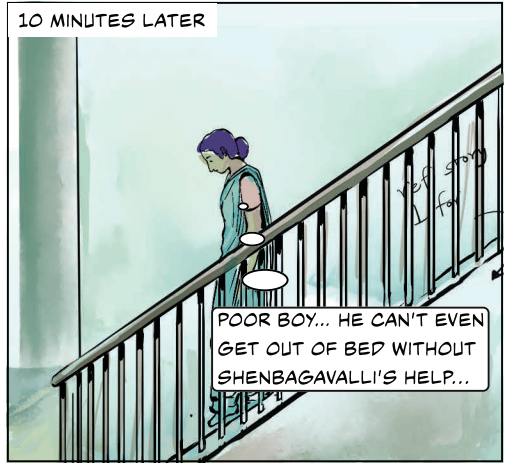
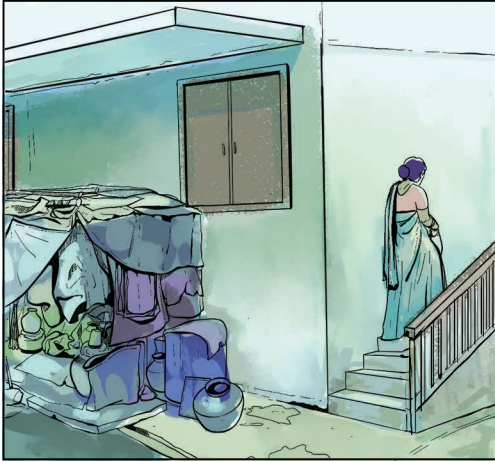
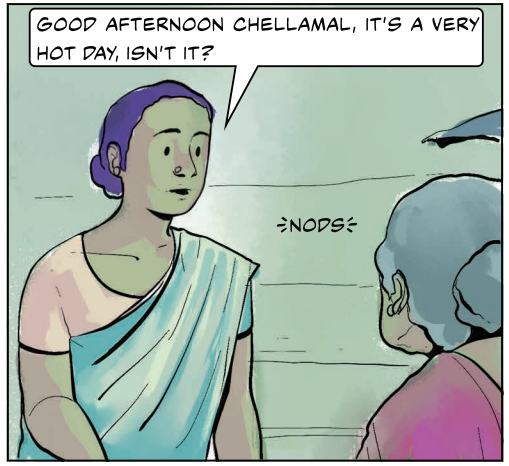
THERE IS NOT MUCH
DEMAND HERE...

...IN THIS 100-METRE STRETCH,
THERE ARE THREE PEOPLE SELLING
IDLIS. MY OLD STALL IN SAIDAPET
WOULD HAVE BEEN BUSTLING BY
NOW... I USED TO EARN 500 RUPEES
IN JUST HALF A DAY

HERE, I CAN'T MAKE THAT
MUCH EVEN IN 2-3 DAYS









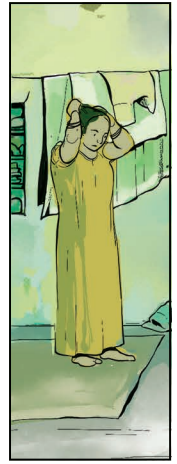
CHELLAMAL'S HOUSE



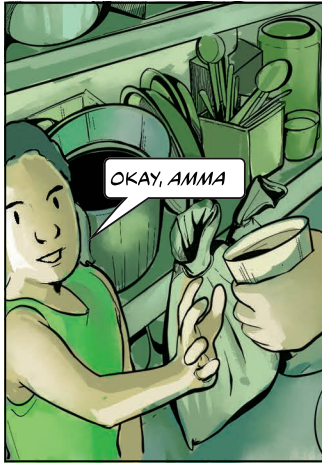
6:45 AM



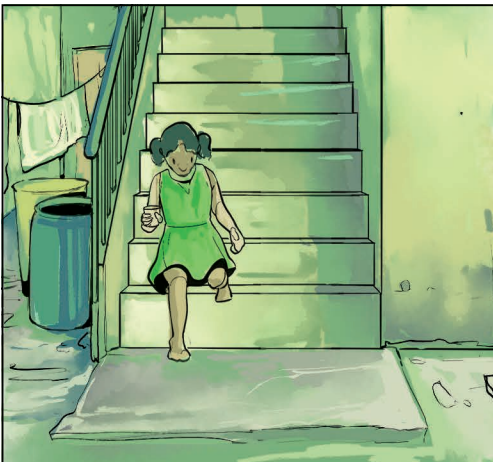
7:15 AM



GO GIVE YOUR GRANDMOTHER
SOME TEA

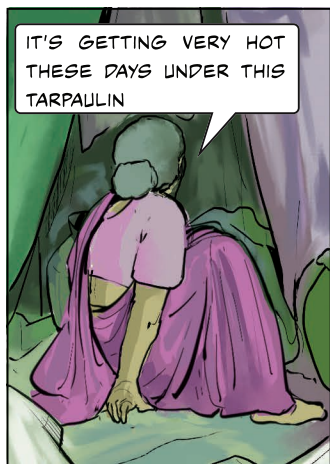


OKAY, AMMA



PAATTI*, TEA

*PAATTI - GRANDMOTHER



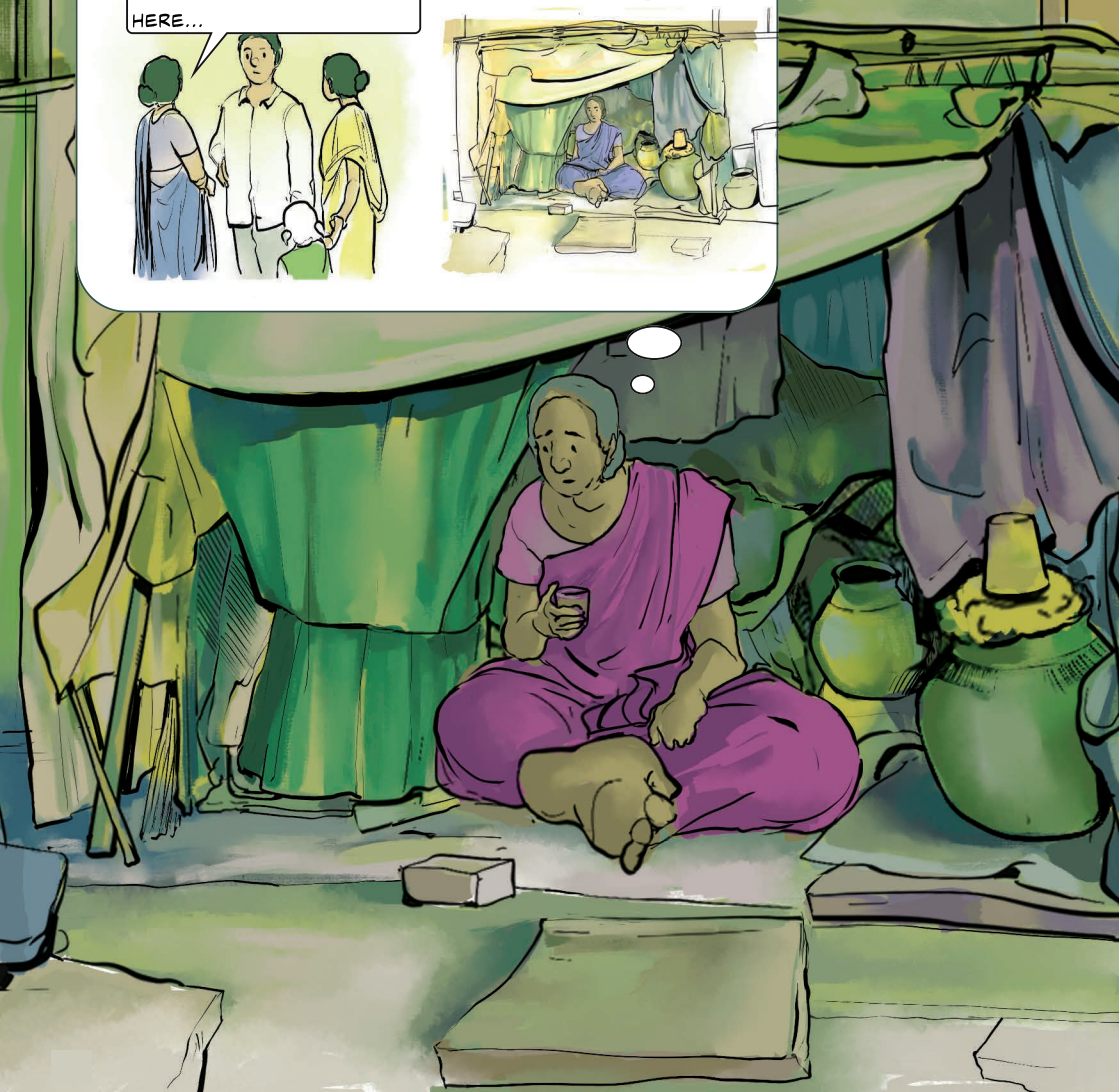
YOU HAVE BEEN ALLOTTED
THE TOP HOUSE



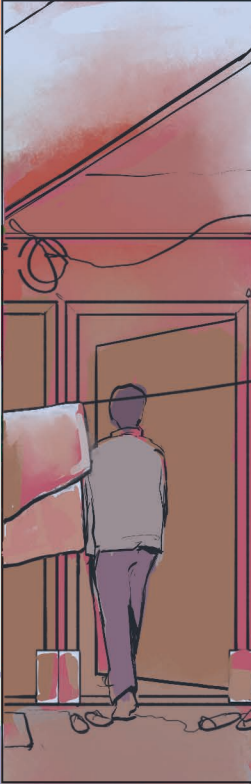
BUT I CAN'T CLIMB
STAIRS WITH THIS
LEG...

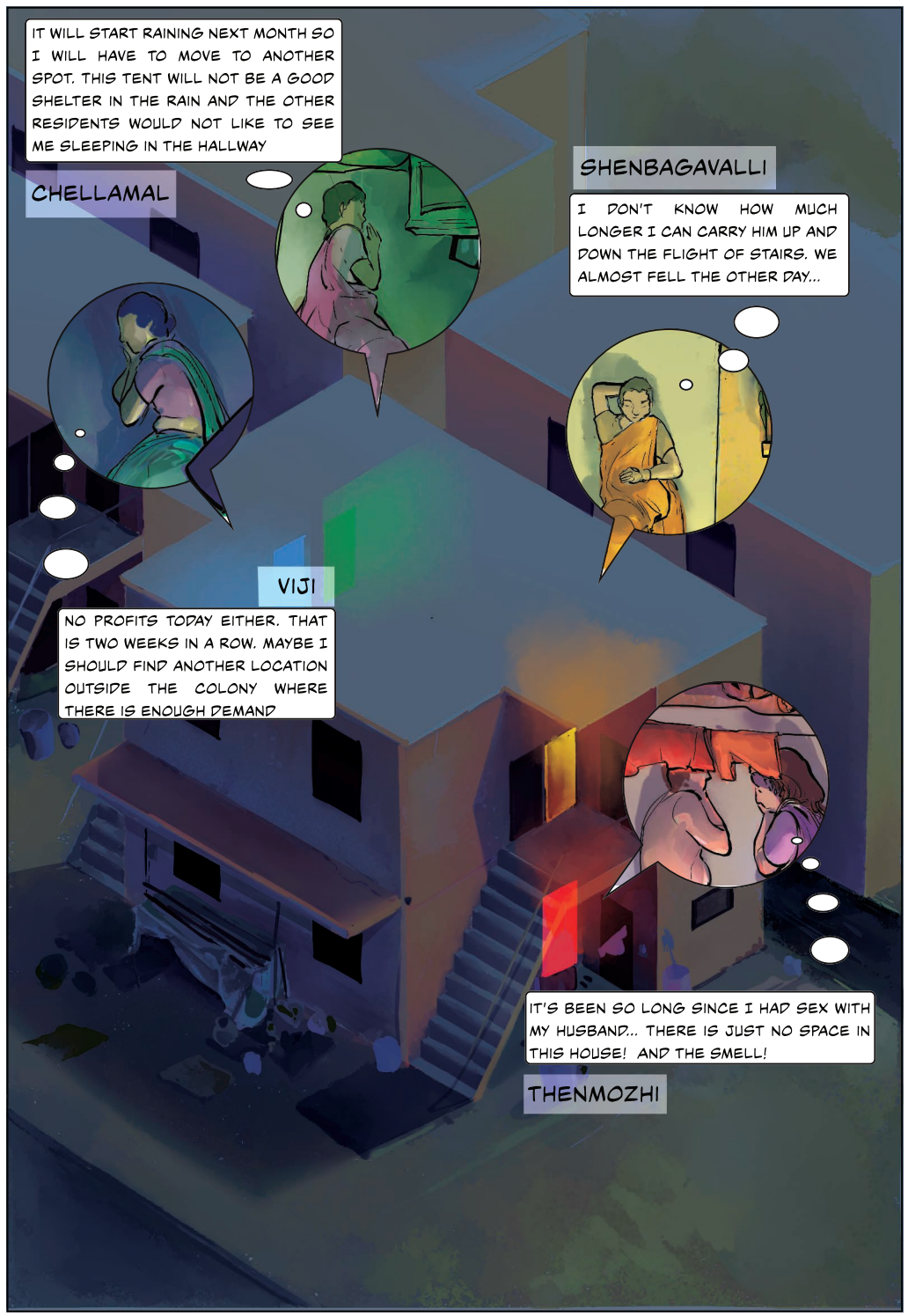


YOU SHOULD STAY IN THE
HOUSE. I WILL BUILD A HUT
HERE...



7:15 PM





IT WILL START RAINING NEXT MONTH SO I WILL HAVE TO MOVE TO ANOTHER SPOT. THIS TENT WILL NOT BE A GOOD SHELTER IN THE RAIN AND THE OTHER RESIDENTS WOULD NOT LIKE TO SEE ME SLEEPING IN THE HALLWAY

CHELLAMAL

SHENBAGAVALLI

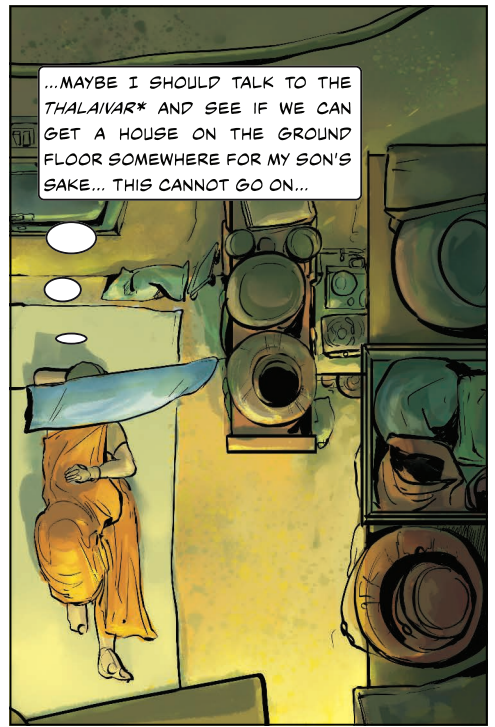
I DON'T KNOW HOW MUCH LONGER I CAN CARRY HIM UP AND DOWN THE FLIGHT OF STAIRS. WE ALMOST FELL THE OTHER DAY...

VIJI

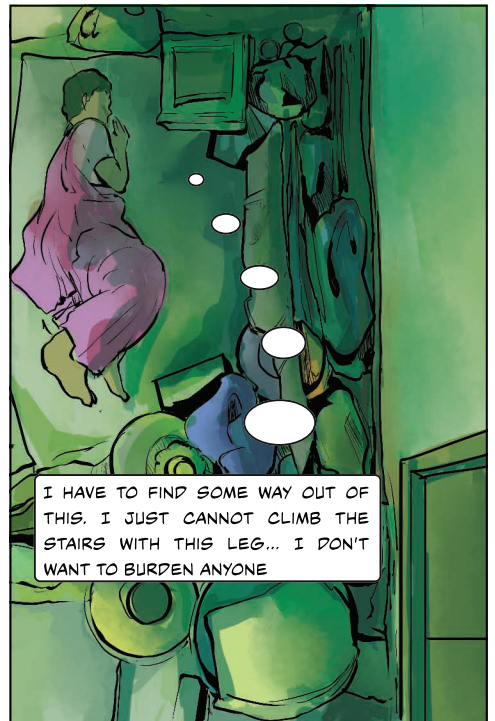
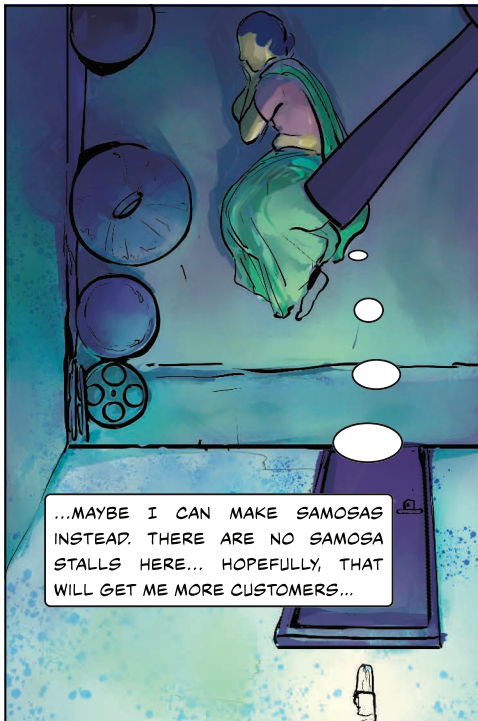
NO PROFITS TODAY EITHER. THAT IS TWO WEEKS IN A ROW. MAYBE I SHOULD FIND ANOTHER LOCATION OUTSIDE THE COLONY WHERE THERE IS ENOUGH DEMAND

IT'S BEEN SO LONG SINCE I HAD SEX WITH MY HUSBAND... THERE IS JUST NO SPACE IN THIS HOUSE! AND THE SMELL!

THENMOZHI



*THALAIVAR- LOCAL LEADER



AFTERWORD

by Roger Few

I am truly delighted to see this collection of graphic narratives coming into print. Researchers have conventional academic routes for disseminating their work, prizing the meticulous detail and rigid attention to methodology that is the norm in lengthy journal articles. This is of fundamental importance, and the team are busy working on such outputs. However, they are not, and should not, be the sole vehicle for conveying research work, and this is especially the case for the studies that we have been privileged to undertake in the prelude to this book. Perhaps more than any of our other written outputs, 'Afterwards' goes to the heart of what this work is about.

In the "Recovery with Dignity" project and associated studies, researchers from IIHS and UEA have been analysing the longer-term processes of recovery from disasters in Odisha, Tamil Nadu and Kerala. Drawing on multiple primary and secondary data sources, we have focussed especially on how different ideas around impacts, needs and recovery priorities emerge within society over time, and the implications of those representations for the success of recovery, especially for the more marginalised or low-income disaster-affected populations. The communities we worked with have faced successive disasters in recent times, mirroring the experiences of many people across hazard-prone regions of India. Support to strengthen their recovery and reduce their vulnerability to future hazards is crucial for many, yet the target groups we have been working with have faced multiple hurdles in meeting their housing, income-generating and wellbeing needs. Some of these hurdles have their roots in adverse representations of these groups by governmental and other actors and conflicting sets of priorities determined externally to the communities.

Through bringing stories from people across different communities together in a visibly engaging, accessible form, this book seeks to restore attention to the experiences and testimonies of those directly affected by disaster and still suffering

from its long-term impacts. The stories collected here convey many things, not just people's needs for assistance, but the uncertainty and dilemmas they face as they set about rebuilding their livelihoods and wellbeing. Above all, the collection seeks to convey the humanity that lies at the centre of recovery processes. Real people striving to find their individual way out of crisis, not simply an aggregation of beneficiaries. People claiming rights, not simply begging for charity. People with inherent capacities and agency, ready to take steps themselves but hoping for assistance to make those steps stronger. People who deserve always to be treated with dignity.

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CONTRIBUTING AUTHORS

Garima Jain

Garima Jain leads the urban risk and resilience team at the Indian Institute for Human Settlements (IIHS). Her research and practice lie at the interface of development and climate and disaster risks. She provides strategic advisory to the National Disaster Management Authority in India and has also been part of the Secretariat for the Sustainable Development Goals Agenda for Cities (SDG 11) for the UNSDSN. She recently co-edited the book 'Rethinking Urban Risk and Resettlement in the Global South' with Cassidy Johnson and Allan Lavell which collates the findings from urban areas across India, Uganda, Peru, Colombia, and Mexico.

Teja Malladi

Teja Malladi heads the Geospatial Lab and is part of the urban risk and resilience team at the Indian Institute for Human Settlements (IIHS). His research interests and practice areas are focused on addressing risks and vulnerabilities to natural hazards, examining links between urban morphology, disaster, and climate risks using geospatial technologies. Teja is a part of several research and practice projects notably the GWU-IFDR project 'Disaster Resilience Leadership Academy', CDKN project on 'Reducing Relocation Risks in Urban Areas' and IIED project on 'Long-term Impacts of Humanitarian Action in Chennai'.

Yashodara Udupa

Yashodara Udupa works in the Media Lab at the Indian Institute for Human Settlements (IIHS). Over the last several years she has worked as a researcher and video producer in collaboration with the urban risk and resilience team on projects including 'Recovery with Dignity', the GWU-IFDR project 'Disaster Resilience Leadership Academy' and the India Urban Policy Support Partnership looking at post-flood recovery in Srinagar, India.

Mythili Madhavan

Mythili Madhavan is a research associate and is part of the urban risk and resilience and climate change teams at the Indian Institute for Human Settlements (IIHS), Bangalore. Her research and practice interests are around climate adaptation, disaster resilience, and renewable energy. She is a Contributing Author on the IPCC's Assessment Report 6 Working Group II chapter on Asia. She is part of many practice projects such as 'Recovery with Dignity', 'Reconfiguring Energy for Social Equity'.

Jasmitha Arvind

Jasmitha Arvind is a researcher whose work focuses on issues of urbanisation and environmental politics. She has prior fieldwork experience in the fishing villages, resettlement colonies, and the beaches of Chennai, where she studied the impact of disasters such as the 2015 floods. She has previously worked on the project "Recovery with Dignity" at the Indian Institute for Human Settlements.

EDITORS

Vineetha Nalla

Vineetha Nalla is a researcher and part of the urban risk and resilience team at the Indian Institute for Human Settlements (IIHS). Her research interests and practice areas focus on disaster risk, recovery, climate justice, and affordable housing. Vineetha has been part of several research and practice projects at IIHS notably, the GWU-IFDR project 'Disaster Resilience Leadership Academy', the MHA- US-AID-UNDP partnership project 'Urban Resilience Baseline' study in India, and the 'Recovery with Dignity' Project with UEA focusing on post-disaster recovery. Her recent work assessed the role of litigation as a platform for participation in the context of representing the post-disaster recovery needs of communities.

Nihal Ranjit

Nihal Ranjit is a researcher who is part of the urban risk and resilience team at the Indian Institute for Human Settlements (IIHS). His research interests are focused around disaster risk, environmental justice, and questions pertaining to rights and identities. At IIHS, Nihal has been part of several research projects, notably, the Transforming Education for Sustainable Futures, which addresses the role of education in climate action, and the 'Recovery with Dignity' project focusing on post-disaster recovery. He was a contributing author on a study that assessed the role of litigation as a mode of participation to represent the recovery needs of disaster-affected communities.

ILLUSTRATOR

Swathi Alse

Swathi Alse is an illustrator and animator with a background in Computer Science Engineering as well as Animation. She primarily works with digital illustrations and has taken a course involving graphic narratives. She is currently working on graphic anthologies, short animated films, and trying to master the piano.



Afterwards is an anthology of graphic narratives of disaster impacts and the process of recovery that follows. These stories were drawn from the testimonies of disaster-affected individuals, households, and communities documented from the Indian states of Odisha, Tamil Nadu, and Kerala. They communicate challenges related to housing resettlement, loss of livelihoods, and gender-based exclusion among others. At the heart of this anthology lies the idea of 'representation': how are disaster-affected people portrayed by the media, state actors, and official documents; how are their needs represented and how do these portrayals impact the lives of those at risk and shape their recovery?

Graphically illustrating these themes provides a platform to relay personal experiences of disaster risk and recovery. This creative mode of representation aims to take such important narratives to a wider audience, beyond academia.