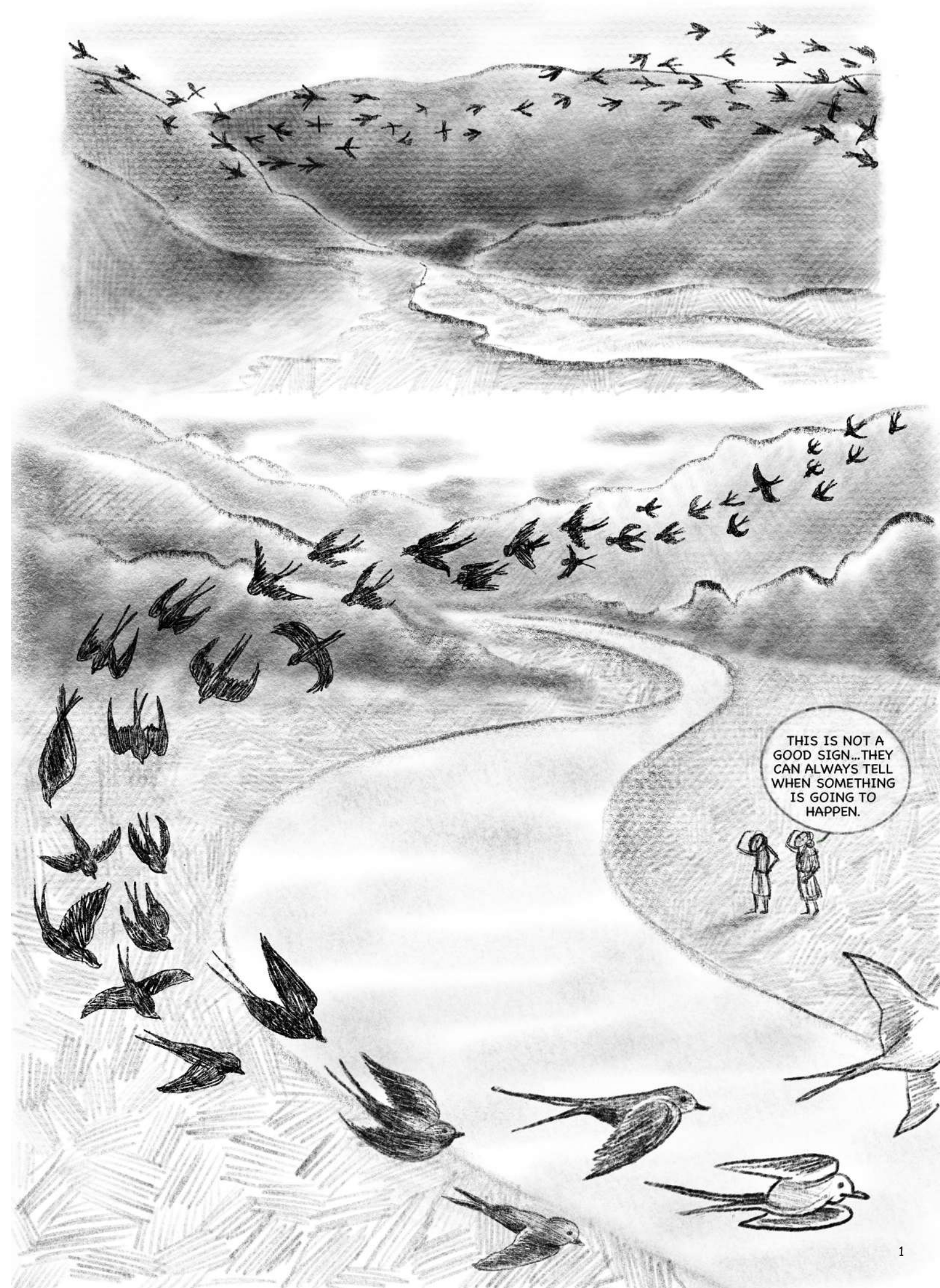
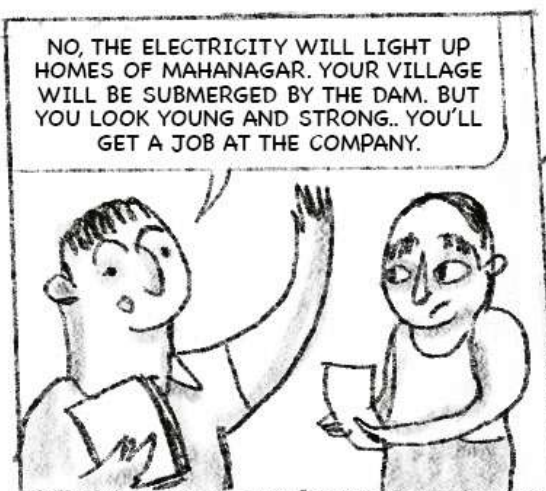
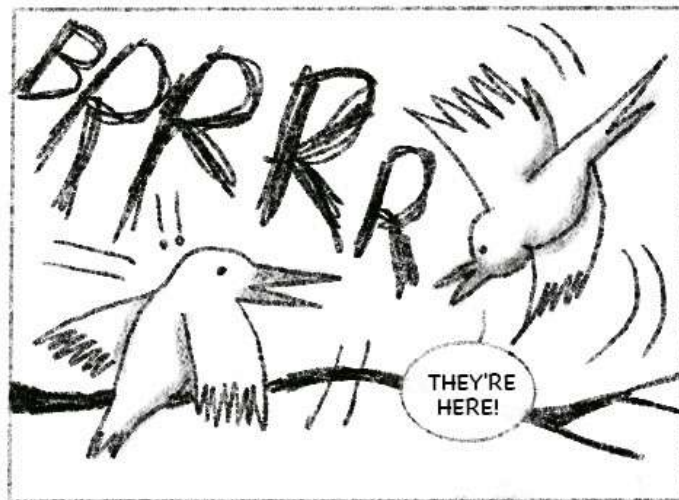


THE RIGHT OF PASSAGE

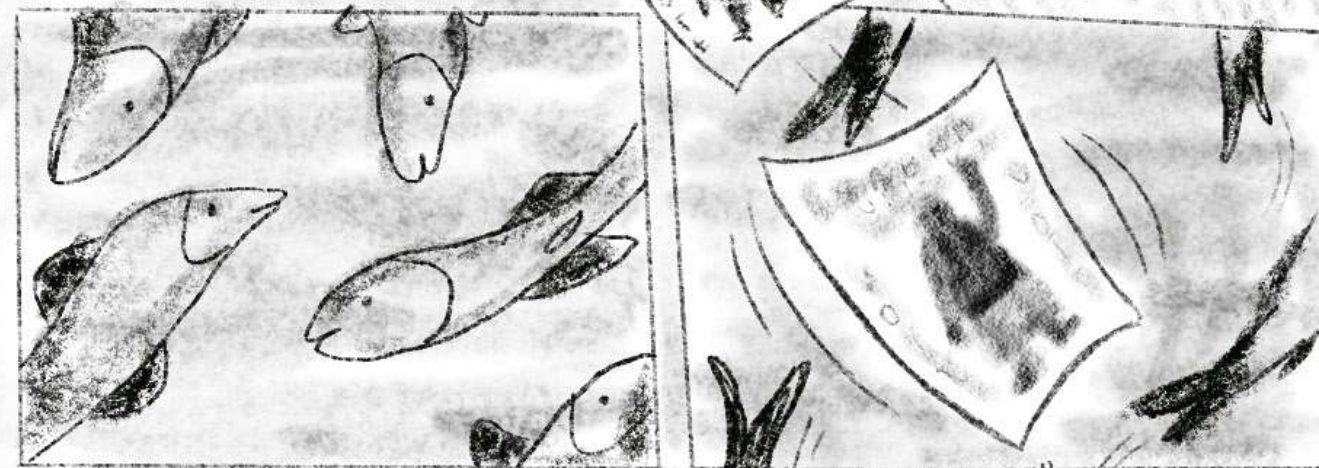
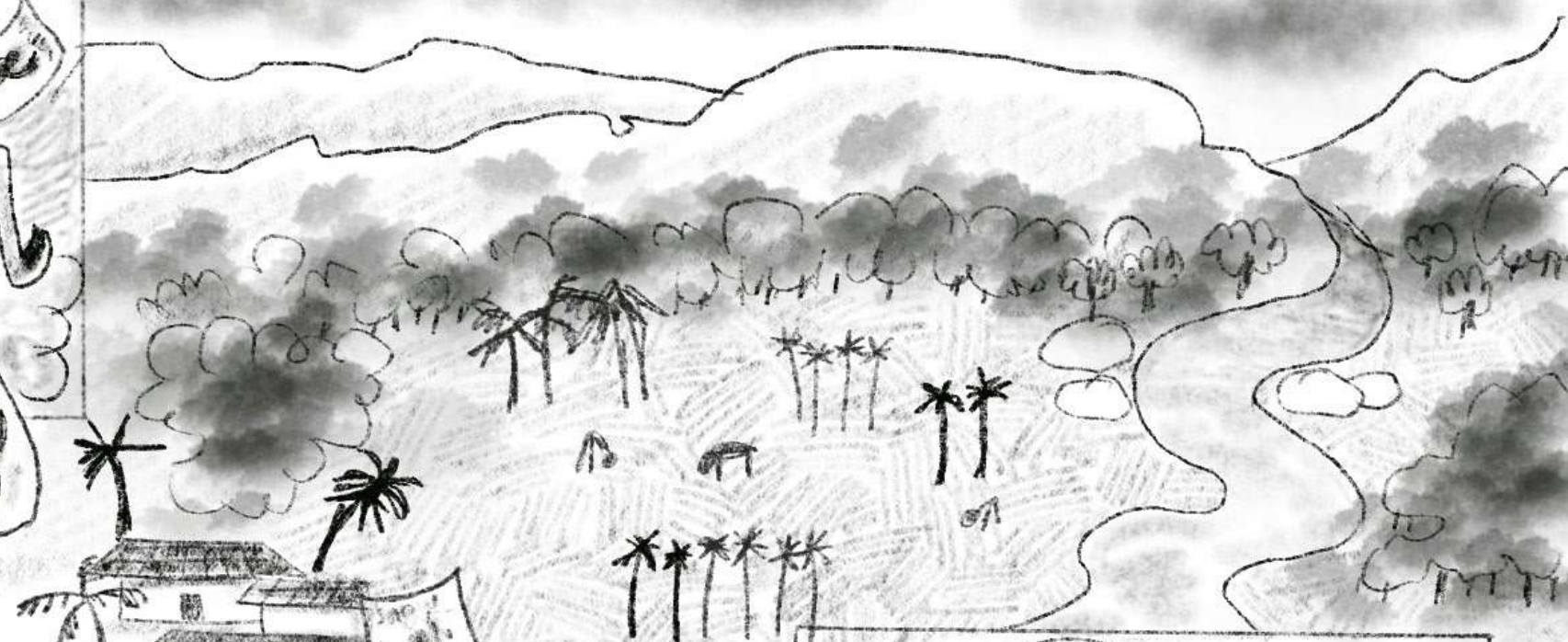
POORVA GOEL
ASHISH KOTHARI





THEY'RE BUILDING A DAM HERE TO GENERATE ELECTRICITY.

OH GOOD, OUR VILLAGE WILL FINALLY HAVE ELECTRICITY.

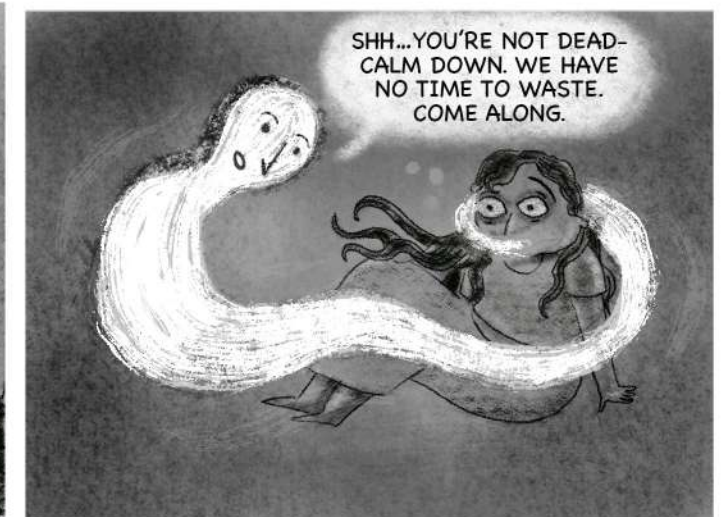
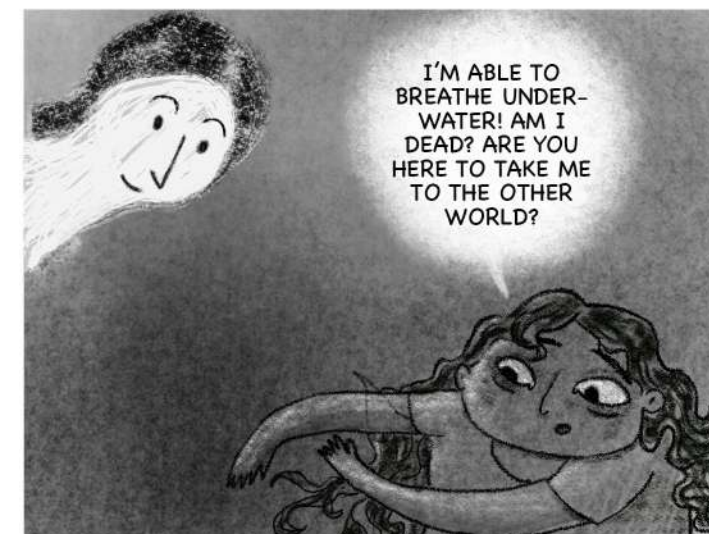
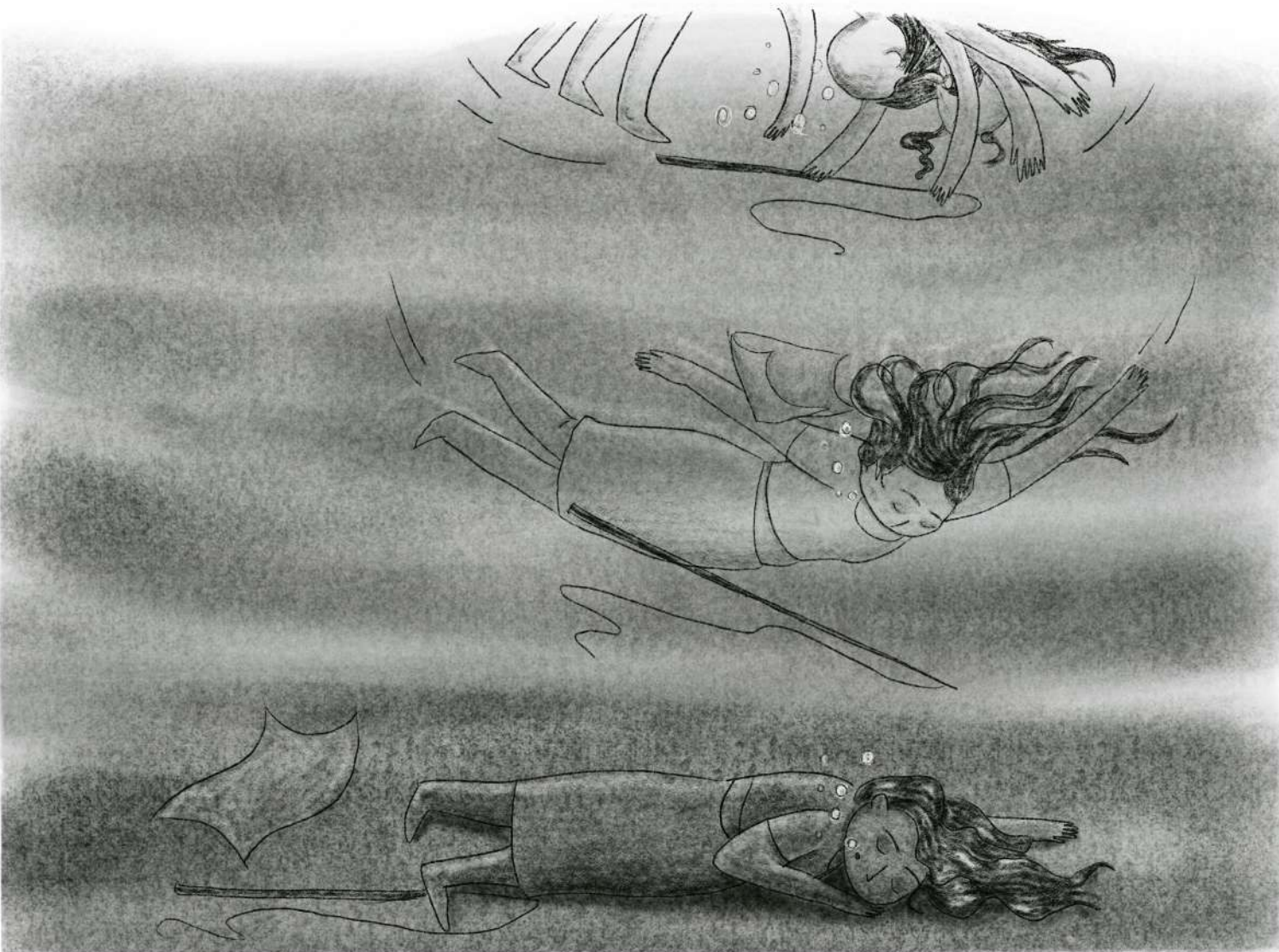


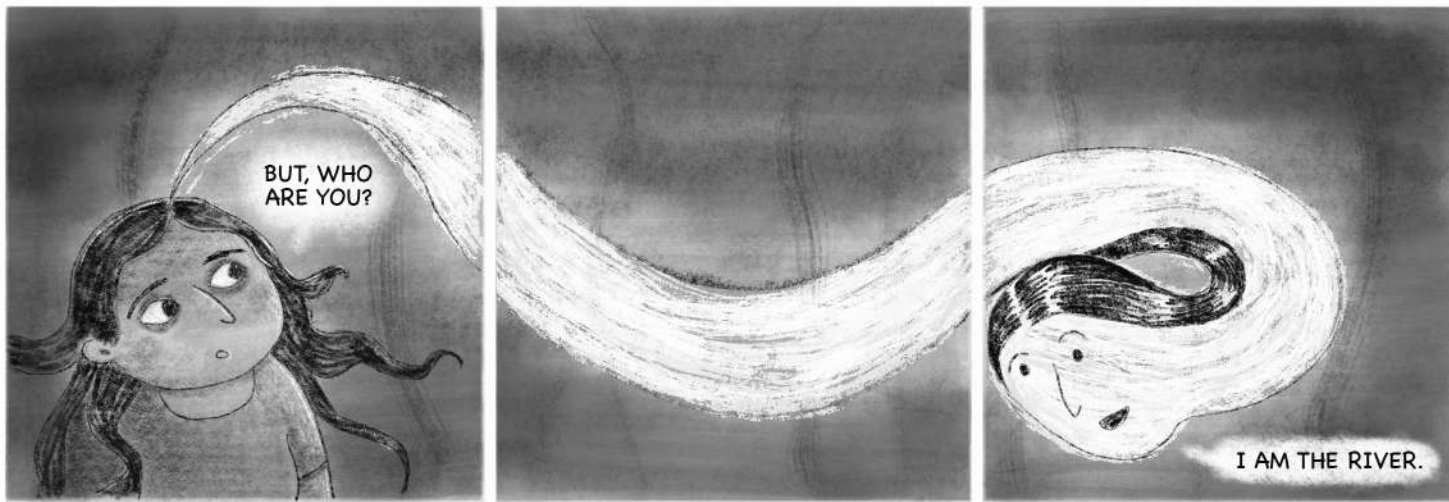
SABKA VIKAS

WHAT'S ALL
THE FUSS
ABOUT THIS
VIKAS
FELLOW?

SHRI!

I DON'T KNOW. BUT,
MY COUSIN IN THE
NEXT VALLEY WAS EX-
PECTING VIKAS LAST
YEAR, AND THAT WAS
THE LAST I HEARD
FROM HER.





BUT, WHO ARE YOU?

I AM THE RIVER.

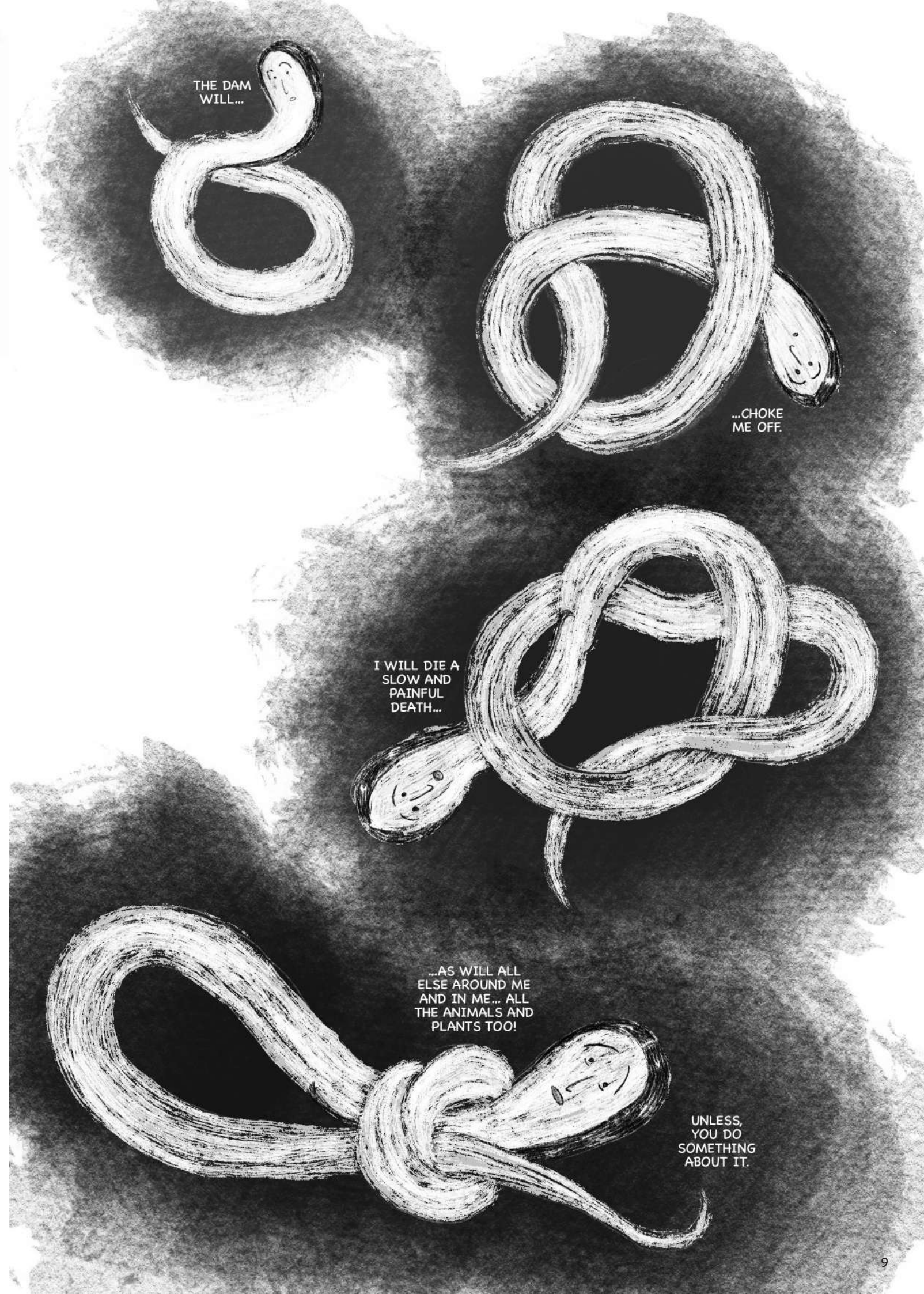


I HAVE FLOWED FREELY FOR MILLIONS OF YEARS.

SCULPTING AND CARVING THE EARTH'S TOPOGRAPHY.

NURTURED BILLIONS OF CREATURES.

I AM THE PLANET'S LIFELINE.



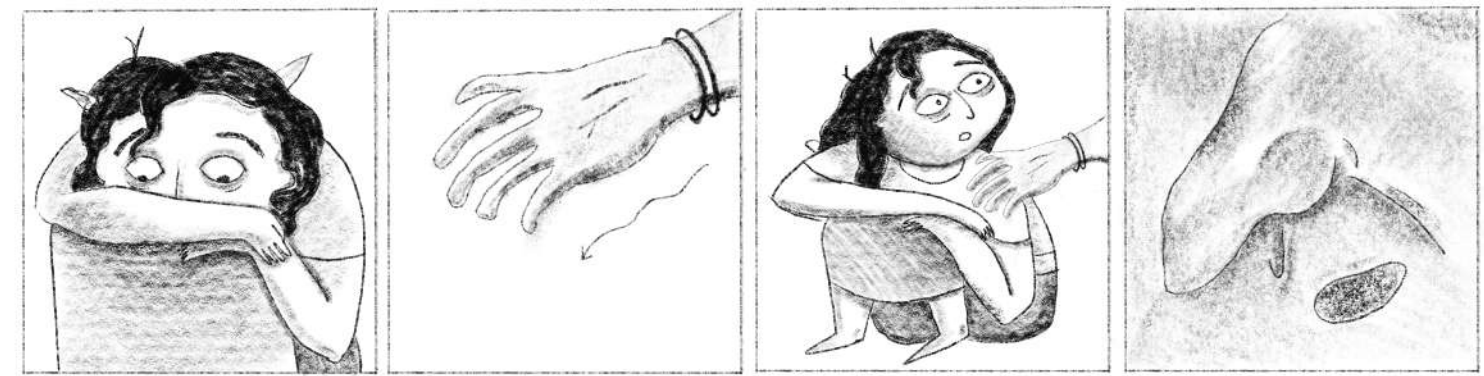
THE DAM WILL...

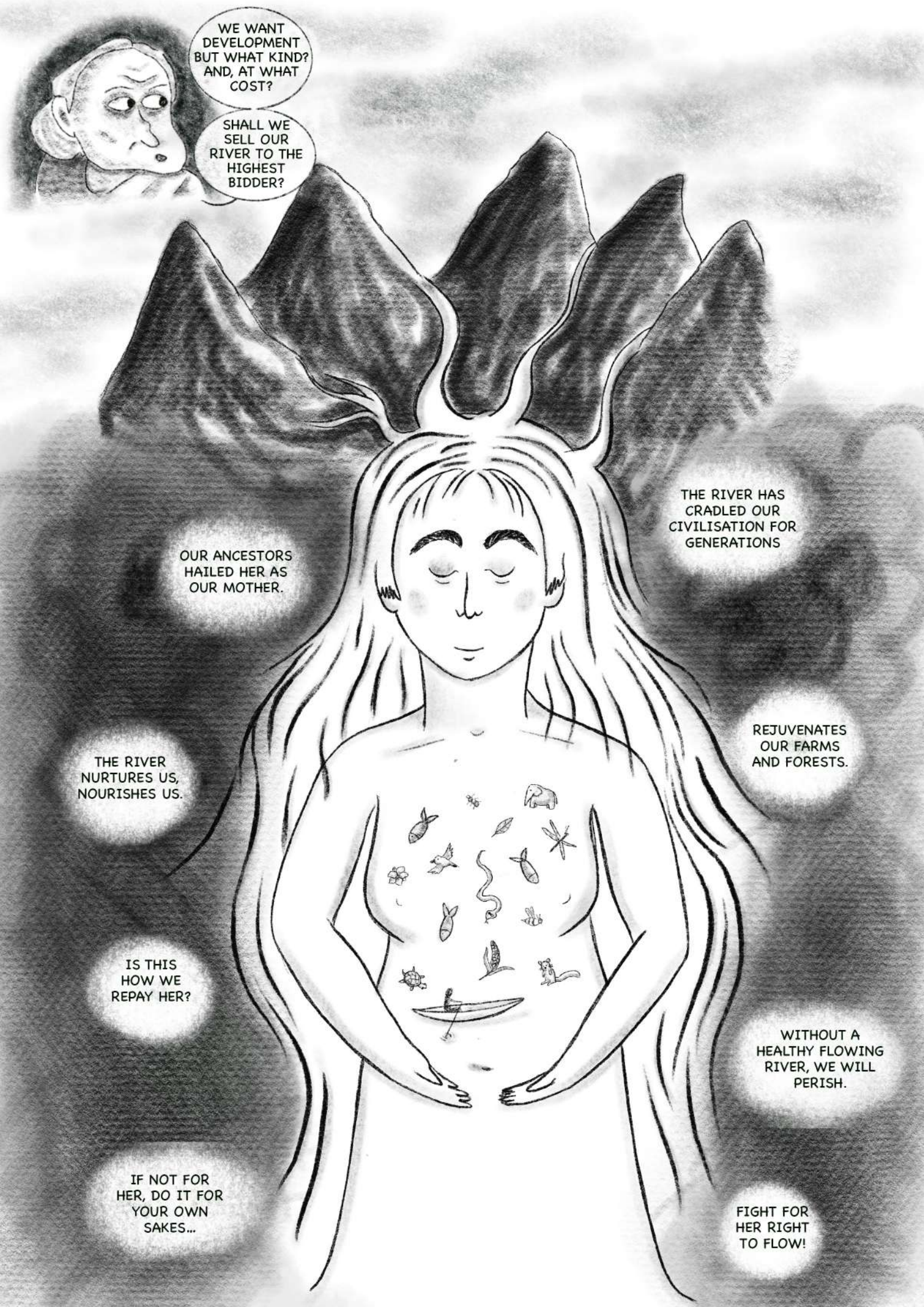
...CHOKE ME OFF.

I WILL DIE A SLOW AND PAINFUL DEATH...

...AS WILL ALL ELSE AROUND ME AND IN ME... ALL THE ANIMALS AND PLANTS TOO!

UNLESS, YOU DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT.





WE WANT DEVELOPMENT BUT WHAT KIND? AND, AT WHAT COST?

SHALL WE SELL OUR RIVER TO THE HIGHEST BIDDER?

OUR ANCESTORS HAILED HER AS OUR MOTHER.

THE RIVER NURTURES US, NOURISHES US.

IS THIS HOW WE REPAY HER?

IF NOT FOR HER, DO IT FOR YOUR OWN SAKES...

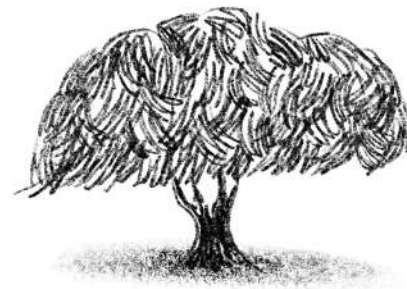
THE RIVER HAS CRADLED OUR CIVILISATION FOR GENERATIONS

REJUVENATES OUR FARMS AND FORESTS.

WITHOUT A HEALTHY FLOWING RIVER, WE WILL PERISH.

FIGHT FOR HER RIGHT TO FLOW!

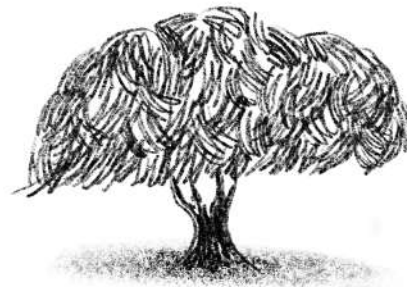
WITH THE SUPPORT OF THE SARPANCH, DEEPU IS ABLE TO GATHER ENOUGH HELP TO GET THE BALL ROLLING.



AND EVERYDAY, THE MOVEMENT GROWS....



...AND GROWS.



WHERE'S DEEPU TODAY? SHE NEVER MISSES OUR MEETINGS...

SHE'S GONE TO SPEAK WITH AN NGO, IN THE TOWN, TO GET LEGAL HELP.



OH LOOK-THERE SHE IS...

WHAT DID THEY SAY?

THEY AGREED TO HELP US!



RIGHTS FOR RIVER TAMA

: LOCALS MOVE HIGH COURT

DON'T WORRY! IT'S NOT GOING TO WORK. WORST CASE SCENARIO THEY WIN, THE PROJECT WILL PREVAIL- I'LL MAKE SURE OF IT!



GOVT. IGNORES HC ORDERS

: PUSHES FOR DAM ON RIVER TAMA

I DON'T KNOW WHY THEY SAY THAT POLITICIANS NEVER KEEP THEIR PROMISES. YOU ALWAYS KEEP THE ONES YOU MAKE TO ME!



JUNE



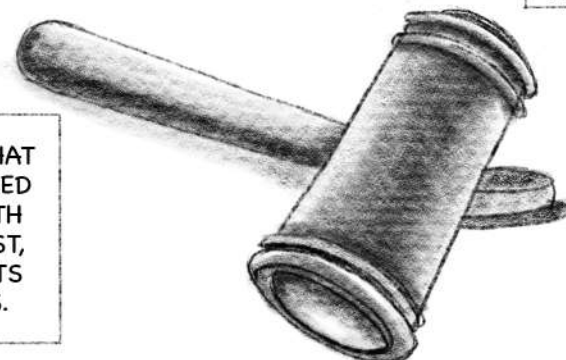
SEPTEMBER



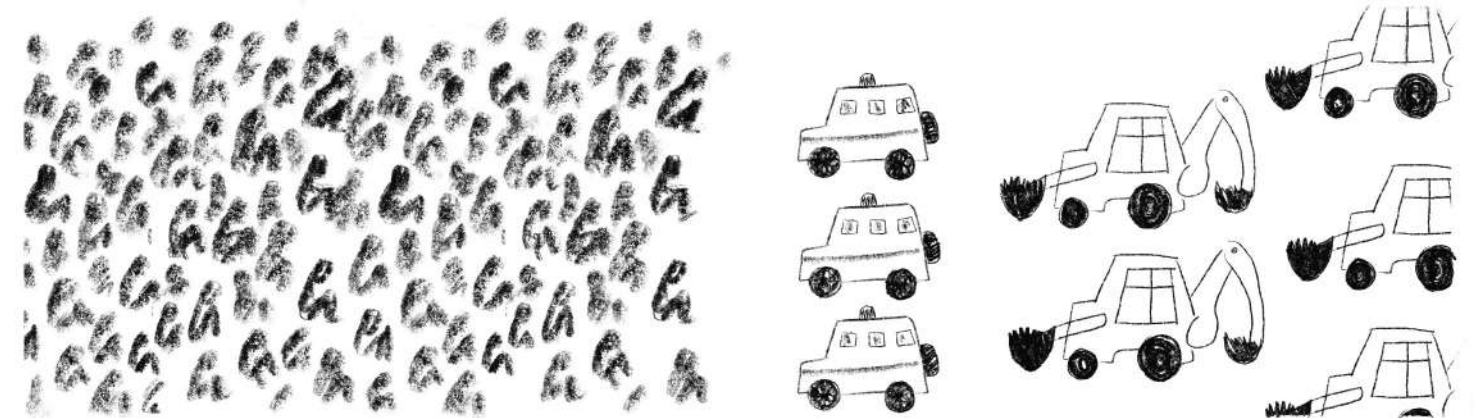
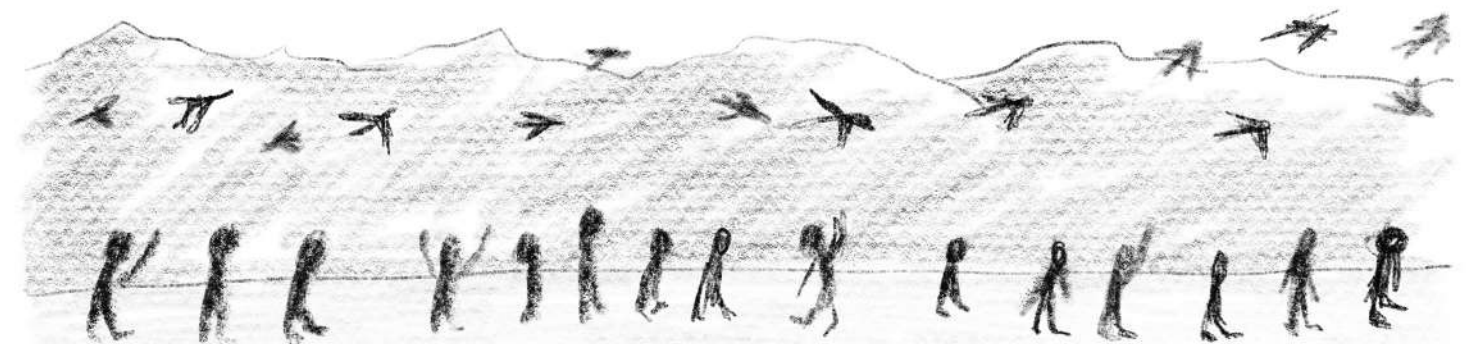
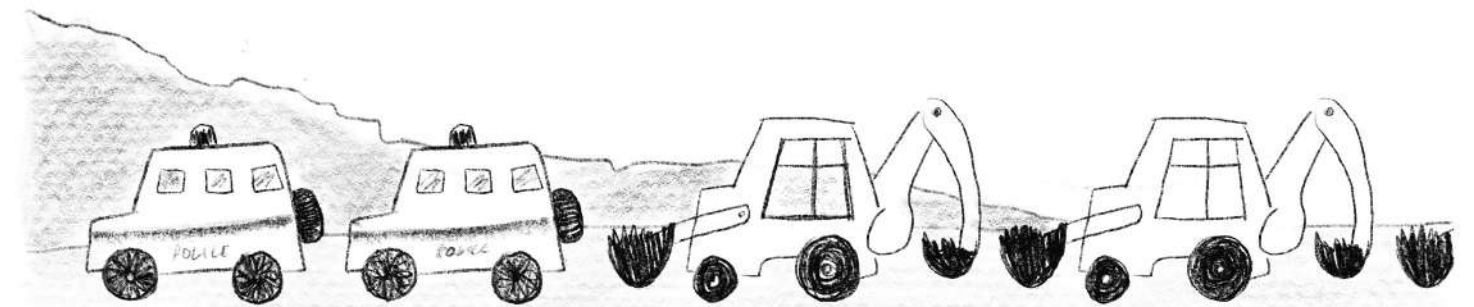
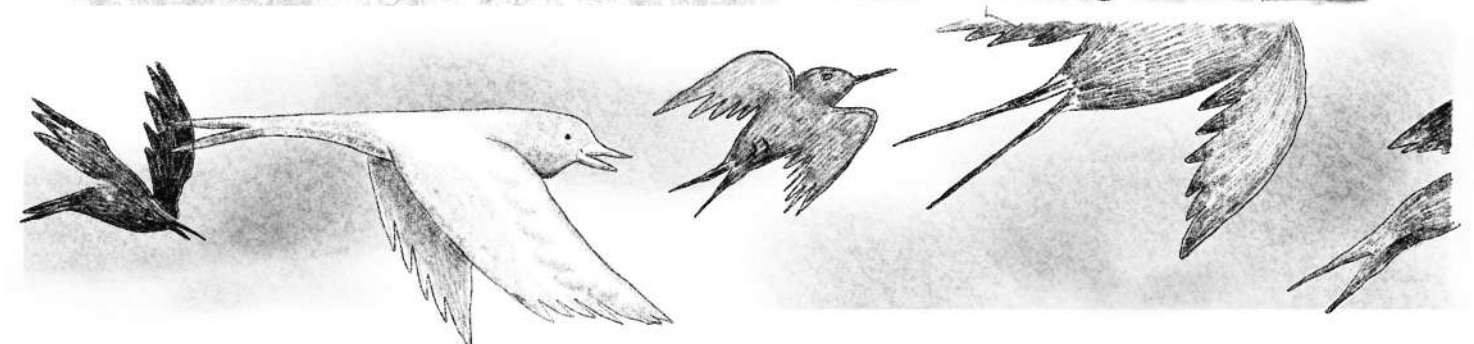
JANUARY



AUGUST



THE HIGH COURT RULES THAT RIVER TAMA IS RECOGNISED AS A 'LEGAL PERSON' WITH THE RIGHT TO FLOW, EXIST, PERSIST AND PERFORM ITS ECOLOGICAL FUNCTIONS.



CHALO,
TIME TO
PACK
UP!



RIVER TAMA HAS THE RIGHT TO FLOW, PLAY AND FEED.

SIR...THEY
WON'T
BUDGE, SIR.

WAIT
HERE

IN RETURN I
ASK YOU OF
ONE THING...

BROTHERS AND
SISTERS, I HAD
MADE A PROMISE TO
YOU AND TODAY I AM
HERE TO DELIVER
THAT PROMISE-
VIKAS

YOU MUST BE
PREPARED TO
SACRIFICE FOR
THE NATIONAL
INTEREST!



YOU'LL BE COMPENSATED
FOR YOUR SACRIFICE-
JOBS, ROADS, FARM-
LAND...YOU WILL HAVE
MORE THAN YOU COULD
HAVE IMAGINED.



WE HAVE SEEN HOW
THAT PANNED OUT FOR
DISPLACED PEOPLE IN
OTHER PARTS OF THE
COUNTRY.

NOTHING CAN
COMPENSATE FOR
OUR LAND.

HOW CAN YOU SUB-
MERGE OUR HOLY
LAND? CHOKO OUR
MOTHER?



OUR LAND IS EXTREMELY
PRODUCTIVE. THE RIVER
IRRIGATES OUR LAND
NATURALLY. THE FOREST
FEEDS US.

WE WANT
DEVELOPMENT
BUT NOT AT THE
COST OF OUR
ANCESTRAL
HOMES AND
TRADITIONAL
WAYS OF LIFE.

YOU SEE THE
RIVER AS RUPEES
PER CUBIC
METER. WE SEE
HER AS OUR
MOTHER.

WE WILL NOT
ALLOW IT!

YOU AND THE INDUSTRIALIST SOUGHT TO
GROW FAT ON EXTINGUISHING WICK LAMPS
IN THOUSANDS OF RURAL HOMES TO LIGHT
UP THE HOMES OF MAHANAGAR!

THE VILLAGERS BLOCKADE THE ROAD LEADING UP TO THE DAMSITE. THE GOVERNMENT AND THE VILLAGE ARE AT A STALEMATE. THE VILLAGE CONTINUES TO DO SATYAGRAHA, SPEAKING TRUTH TO POWER.

SIMILAR MOVEMENTS CROP UP ACROSS THE COUNTRY, AND COMBINE INTO NATIONAL ALLIANCE OF PEOPLE'S MOVEMENTS. MEANWHILE ANOTHER NETWORK, VIKALP SANGAM, DOCUMENTS AND PROMOTES ALTERNATIVE, ECOLOGICALLY SENSITIVE WAYS OF PRODUCING POWER AND IRRIGATION, CONTROLLED BY GRAM SABHAS. AND TAMA CONTINUES TO FLOW FREELY...

ILLUSTRATED BY
POORVA GOEL

STORY BY
ASHISH KOTHARI AND POORVA GOEL

SPECIAL THANKS
RIGHTS OF RIVERS SOUTH ASIA ALLIANCE
KALPAVRIKSH
SHRISHTEE BAJPAI
NAMRATA KABRA
KK CHATRADHARA
GLOBAL GREEN GRANTS FUND
MISEREOR
[HTTPS://RADICALECOLOGICALDEMOCRACY.ORG](https://radicalecologicaldemocracy.org)

