

## Freestanding Comic

# A Reflection on #Metoo, a Story of Sexual Assault and Victimhood in India

Shromona Das <sup>1\*</sup>

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## ABSTRACT

This work contains illustrations of Shromona Das, who was seven when she was sexually abused by her uncle. Years later suffering silently with the burden of keeping her trauma a secret, Shromona has finally gathered the strength to call out her abusers via her powerful illustrations.

**Keywords:** naming and shaming, #MeToo, sexual abuse

All illustrations are from the collection: 'Naming and shaming' by Shromona Das. © Shromona Das.

## REFERENCES

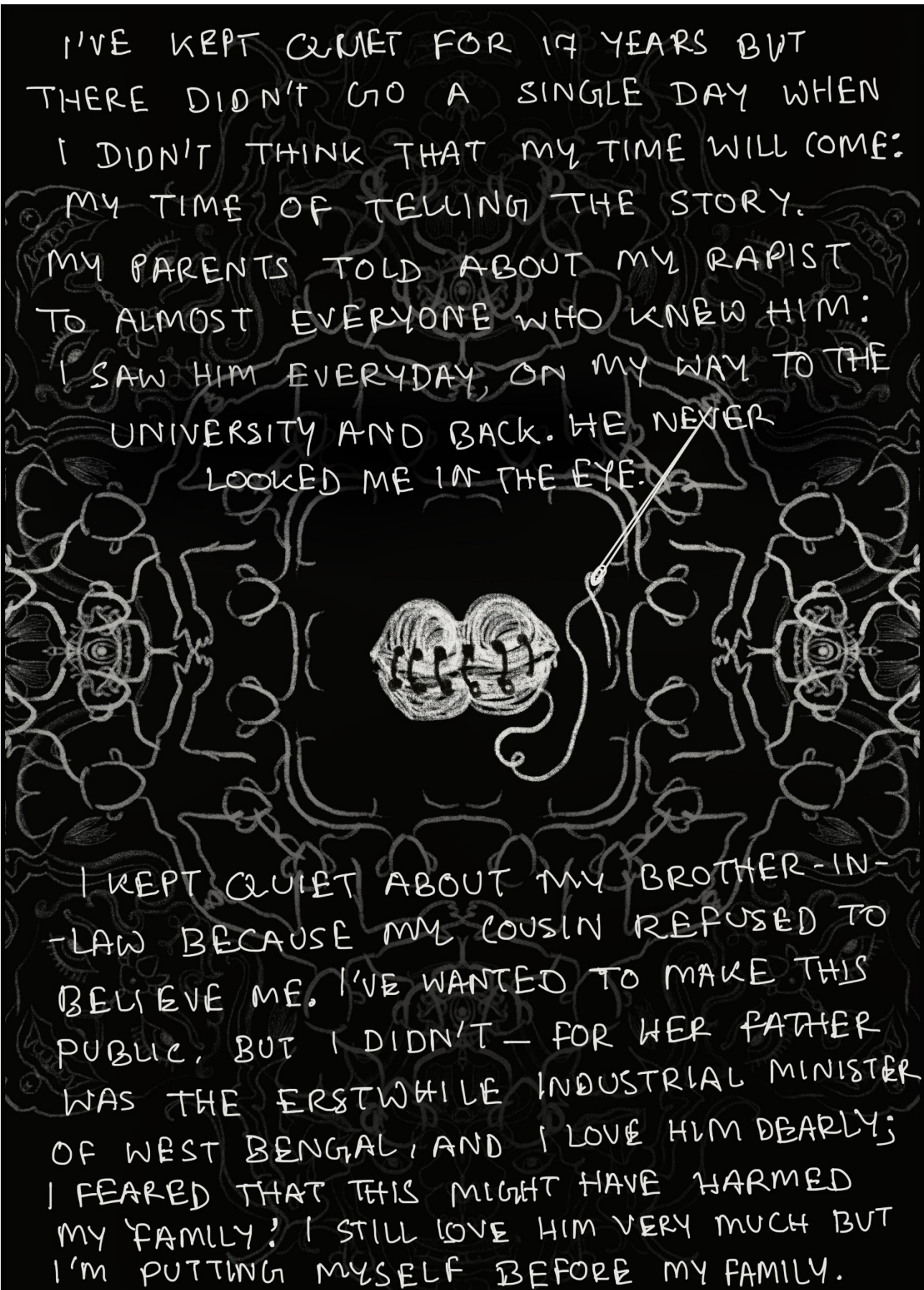
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<sup>1</sup>JNU, INDIA

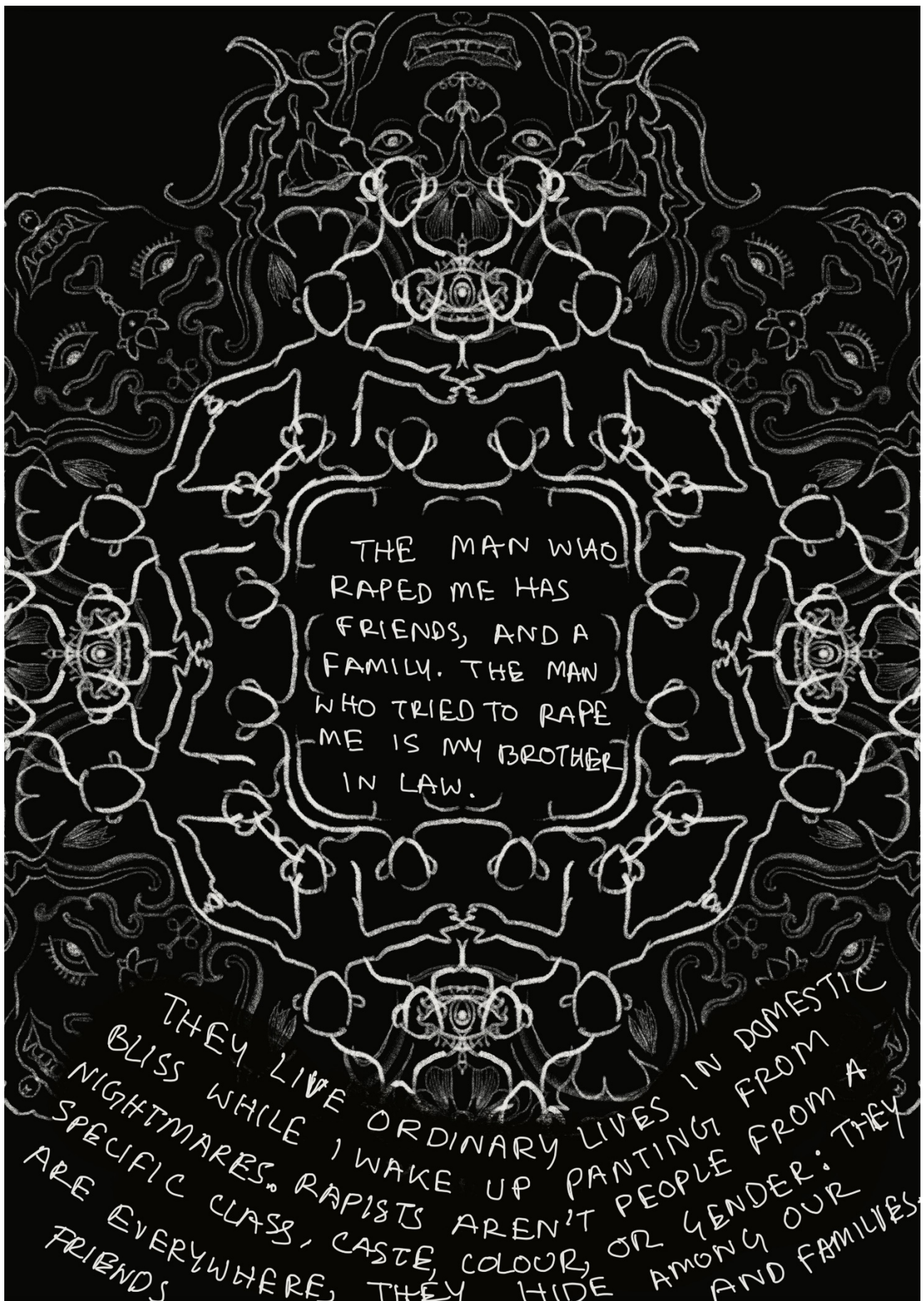
\*Corresponding Author: Shromona Das



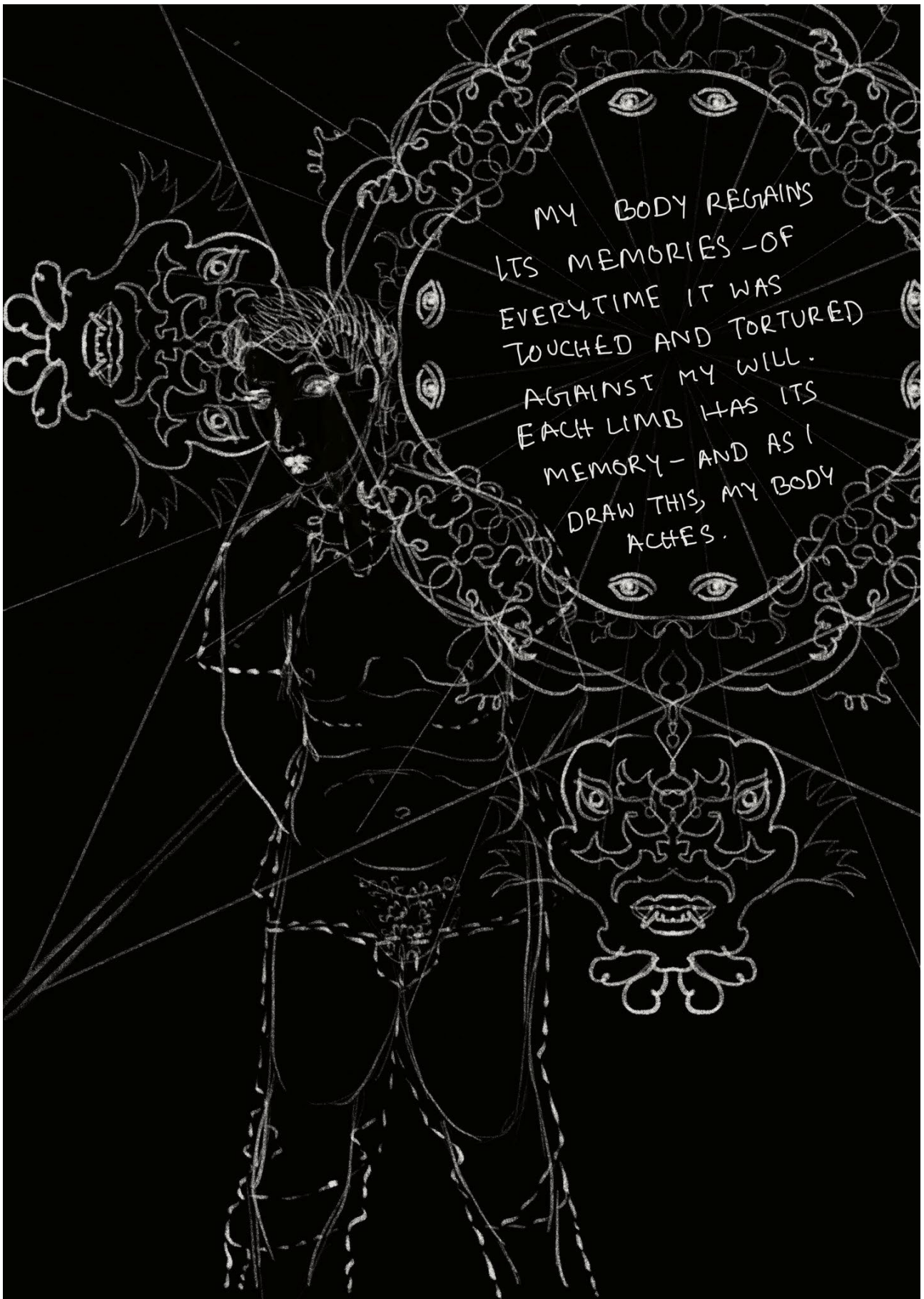
I'VE KEPT QUIET FOR 17 YEARS BUT THERE DIDN'T GO A SINGLE DAY WHEN I DIDN'T THINK THAT MY TIME WILL COME: MY TIME OF TELLING THE STORY. MY PARENTS TOLD ABOUT MY RAPIST TO ALMOST EVERYONE WHO KNEW HIM: I SAW HIM EVERYDAY, ON MY WAY TO THE UNIVERSITY AND BACK. HE NEVER LOOKED ME IN THE EYE.

I KEPT QUIET ABOUT MY BROTHER-IN-LAW BECAUSE MY COUSIN REFUSED TO BELIEVE ME. I'VE WANTED TO MAKE THIS PUBLIC, BUT I DIDN'T — FOR HER FATHER WAS THE ERSTWHILE INDUSTRIAL MINISTER OF WEST BENGAL, AND I LOVE HIM DEARLY; I FEARED THAT THIS MIGHT HAVE HARMED MY FAMILY! I STILL LOVE HIM VERY MUCH BUT I'M PUTTING MYSELF BEFORE MY FAMILY.

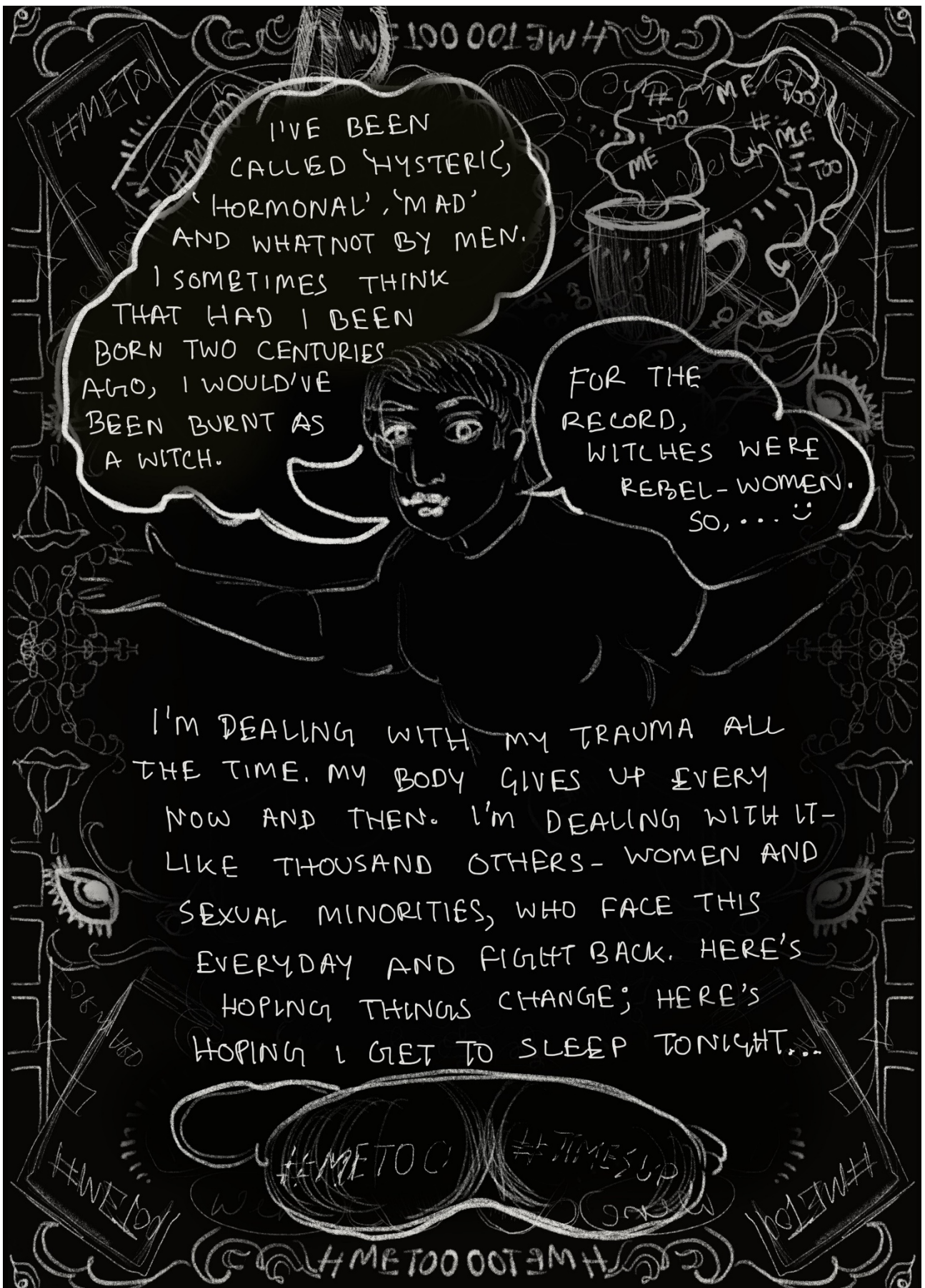


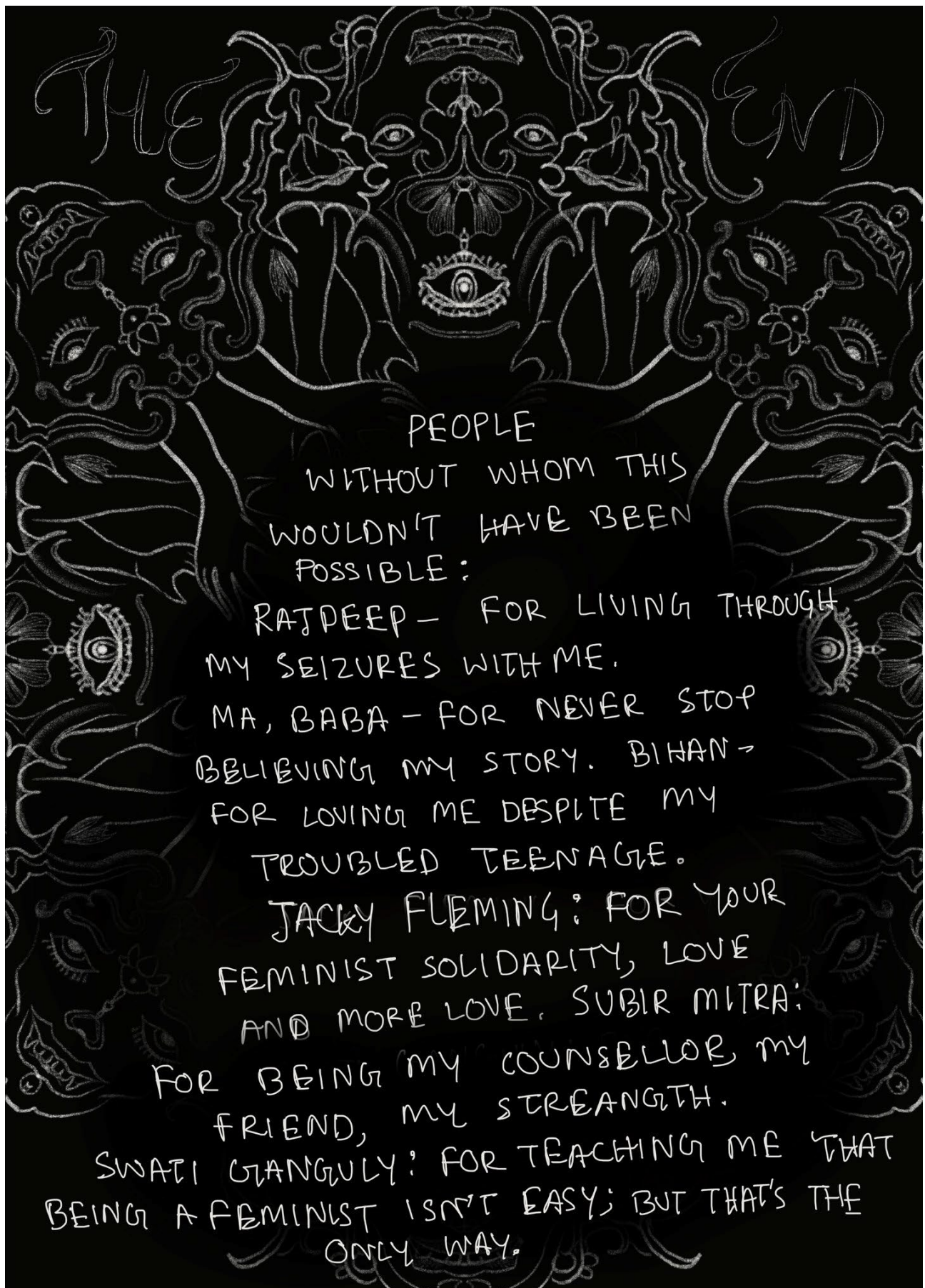


THEY LIVE ORDINARY LIVES IN DOMESTIC  
BLISS WHILE I WAKE UP PANTING FROM A  
NIGHTMARE. RAPISTS AREN'T PEOPLE FROM A  
SPECIFIC CLASS, CASTE, COLOUR, OR GENDER: THEY  
ARE EVERYWHERE, THEY HIDE AMONG OUR  
FRIENDS AND FAMILIES.

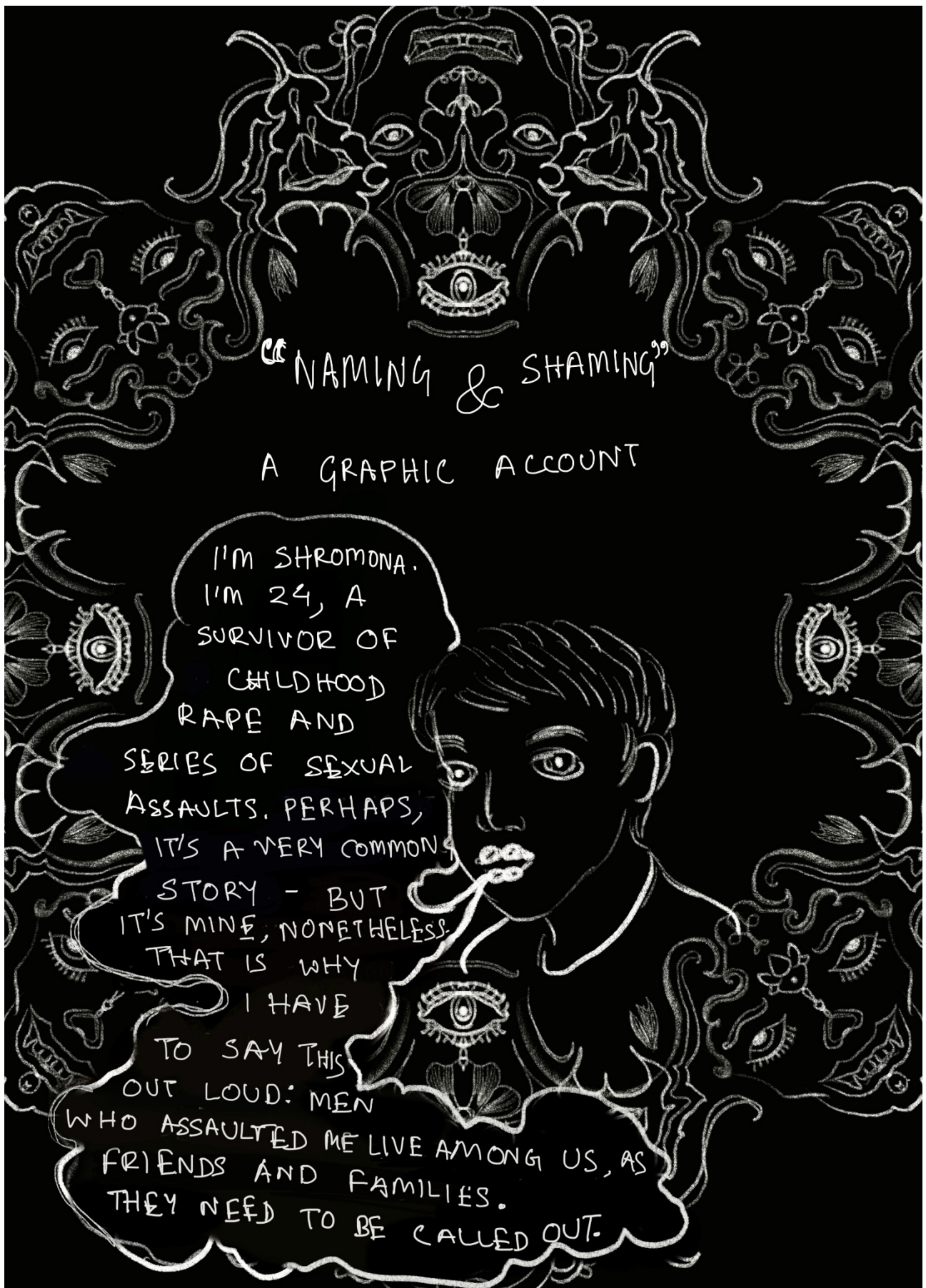




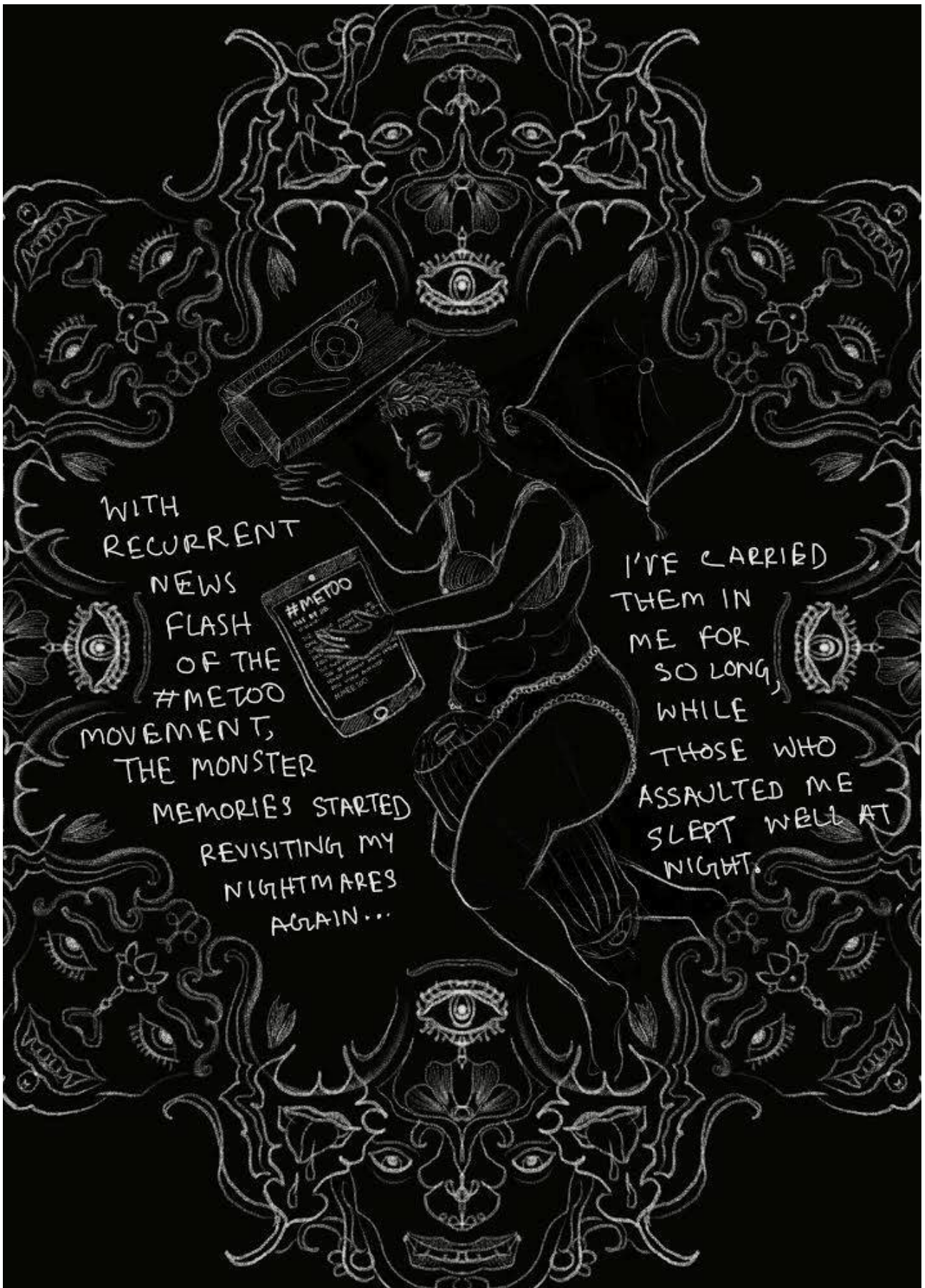








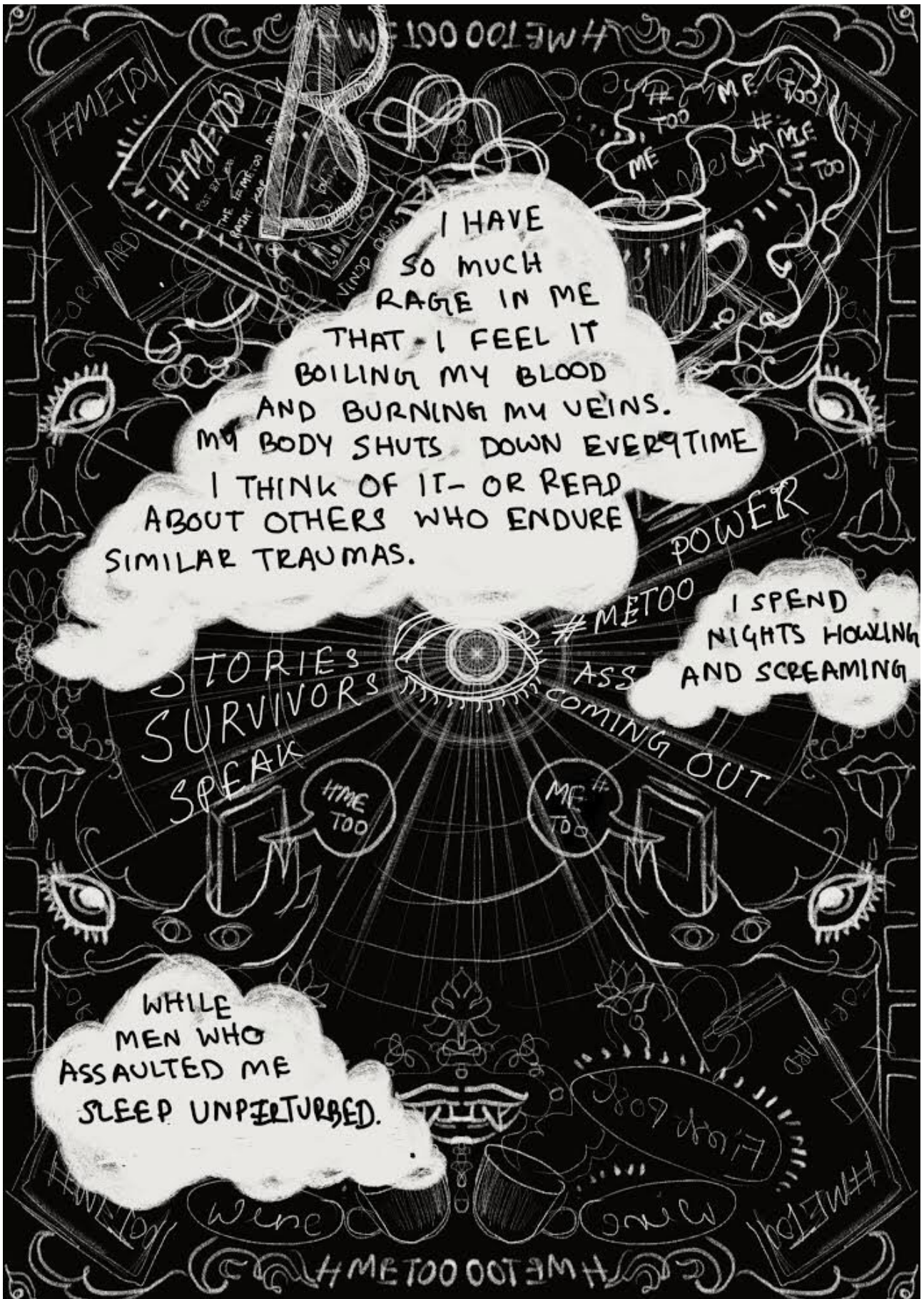




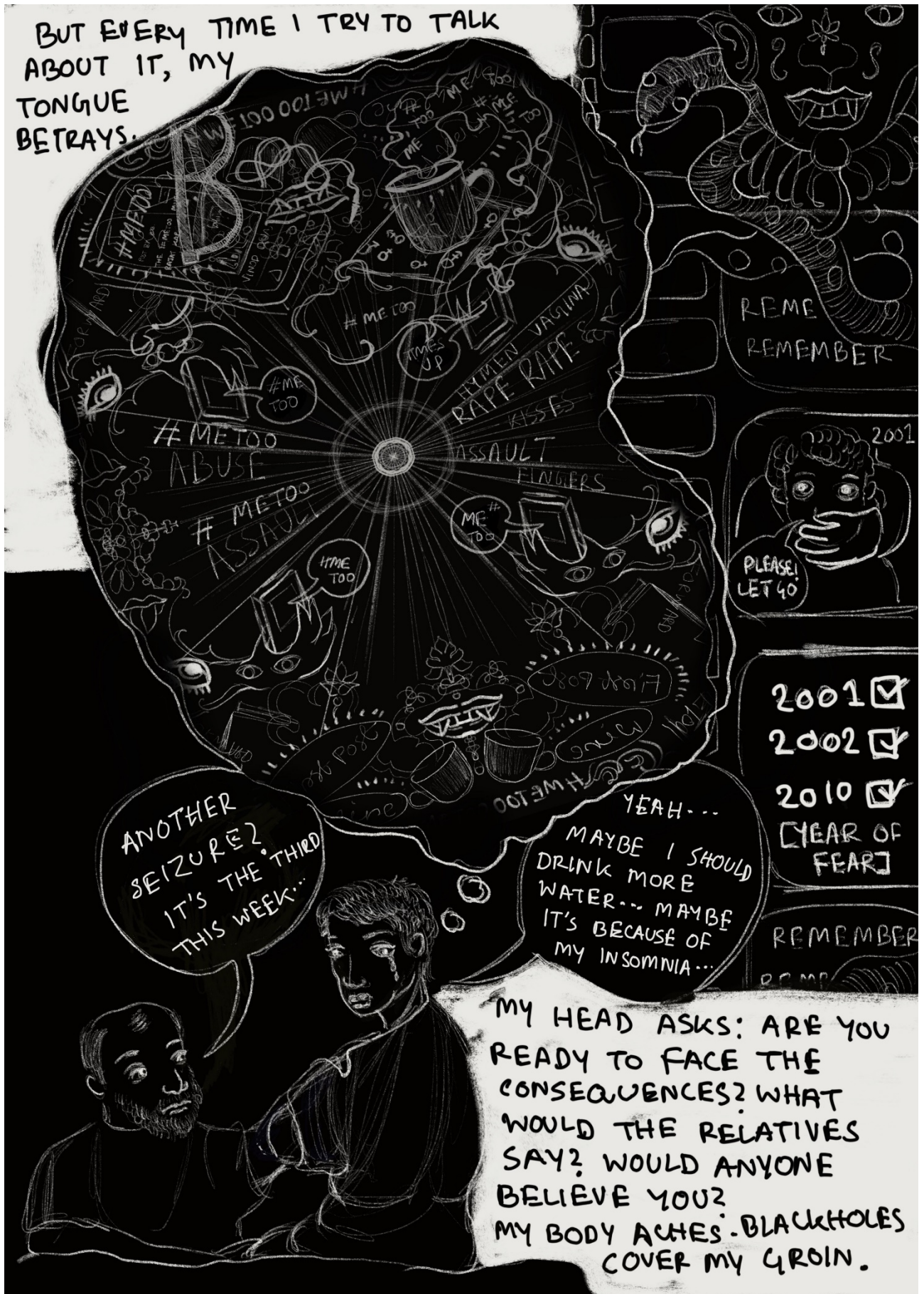








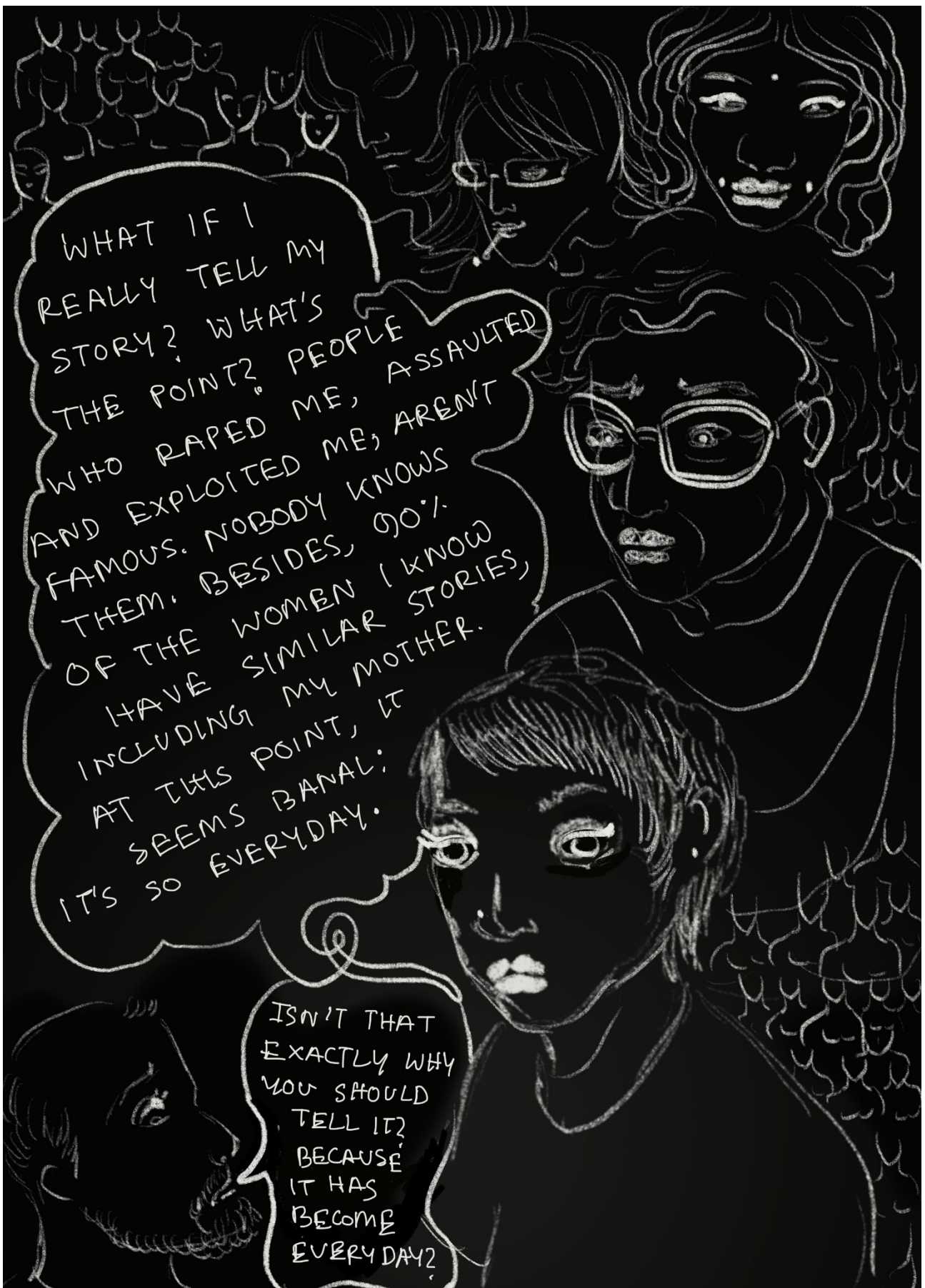


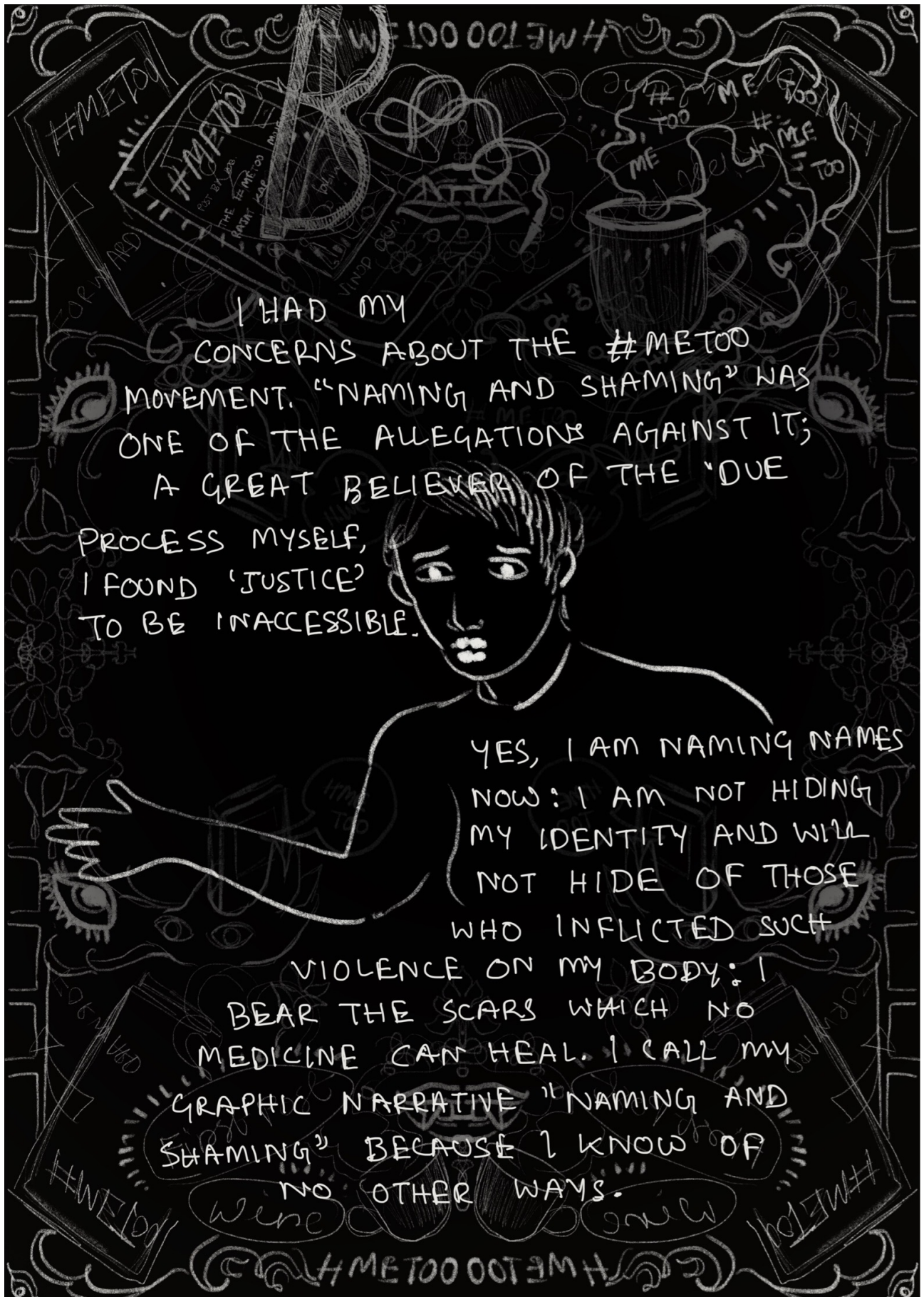




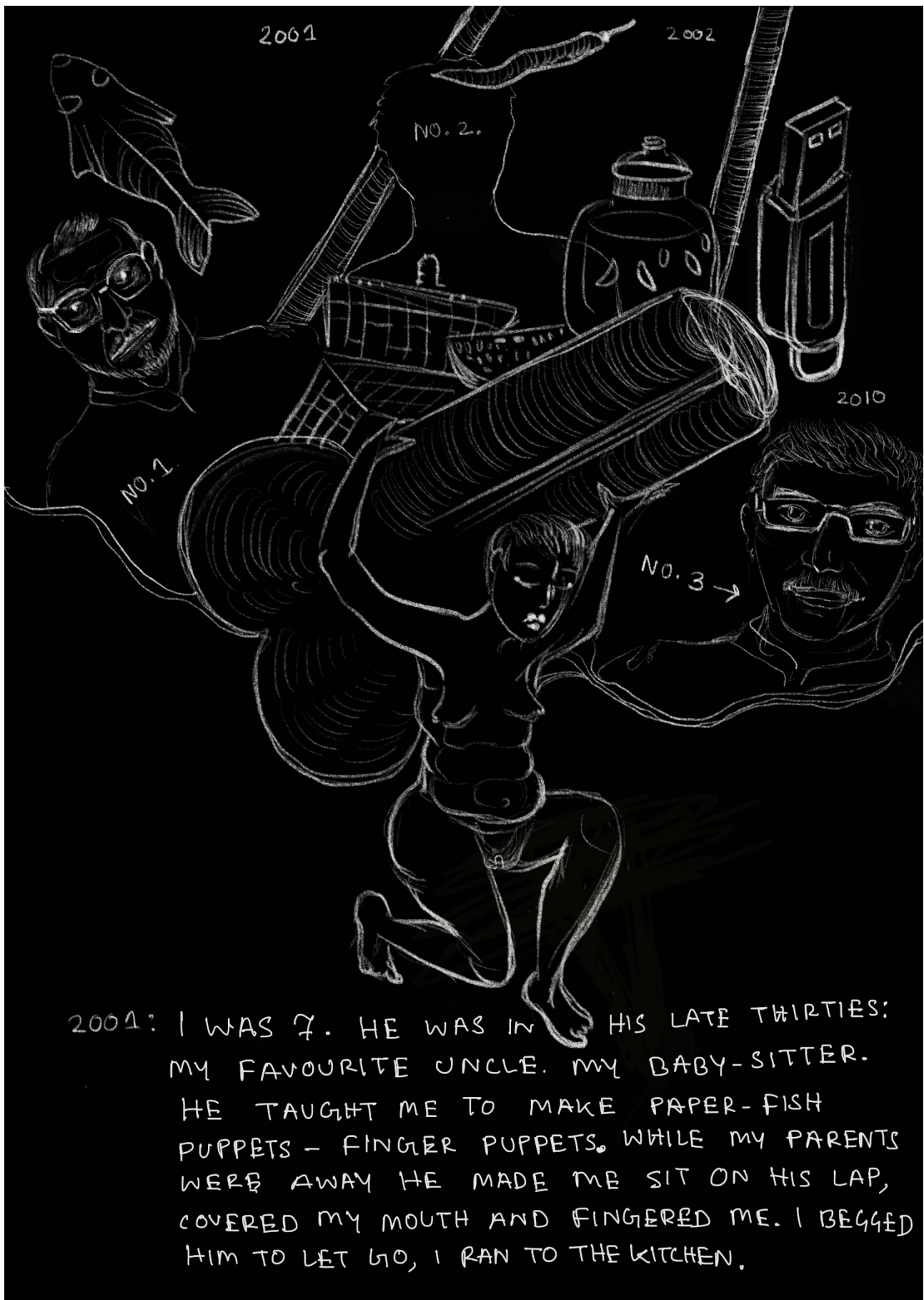




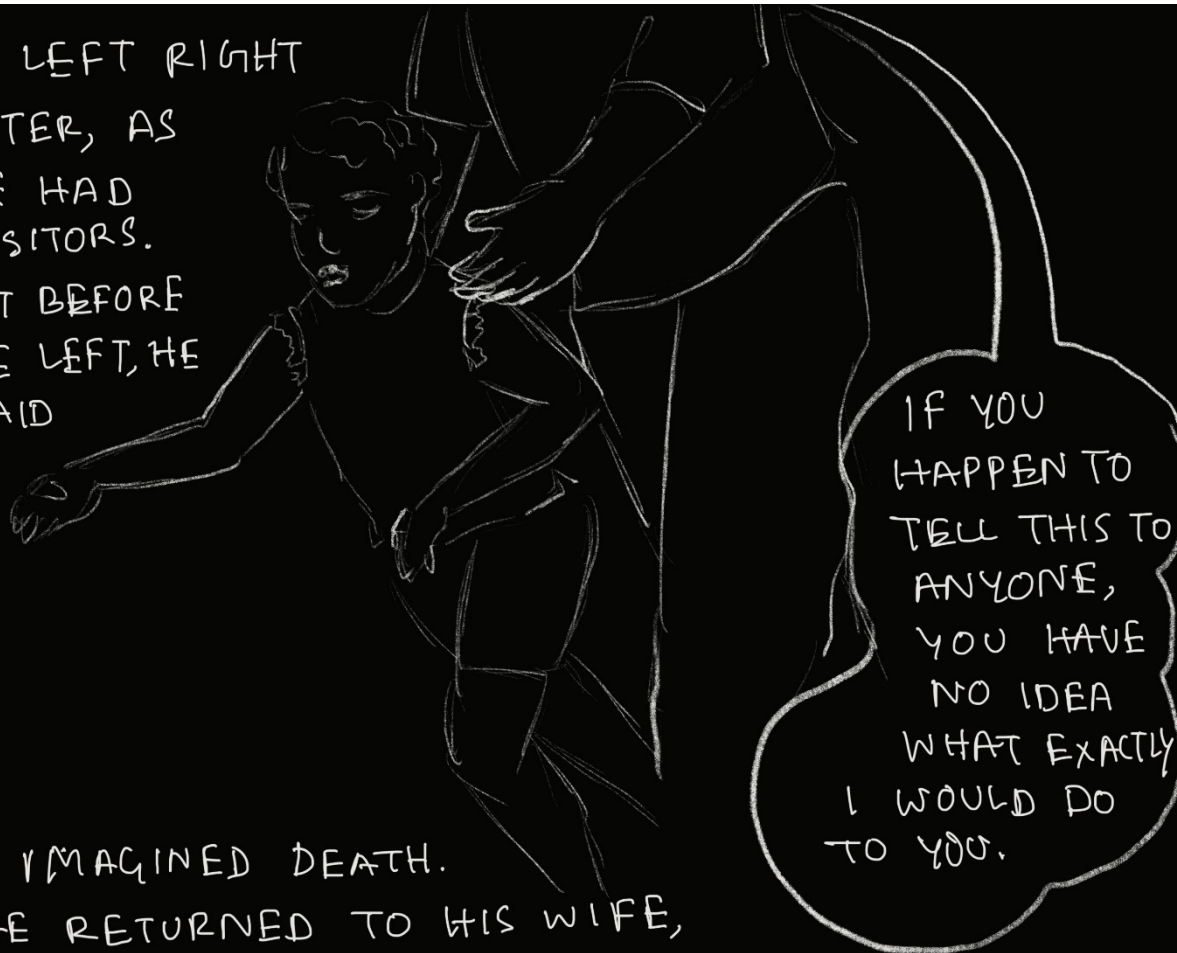








HE LEFT RIGHT  
AFTER, AS  
WE HAD  
VISITORS.  
BUT BEFORE  
HE LEFT, HE  
SAID



IF YOU  
HAPPEN TO  
TELL THIS TO  
ANYONE,  
YOU HAVE  
NO IDEA  
WHAT EXACTLY  
I WOULD DO  
TO YOU.

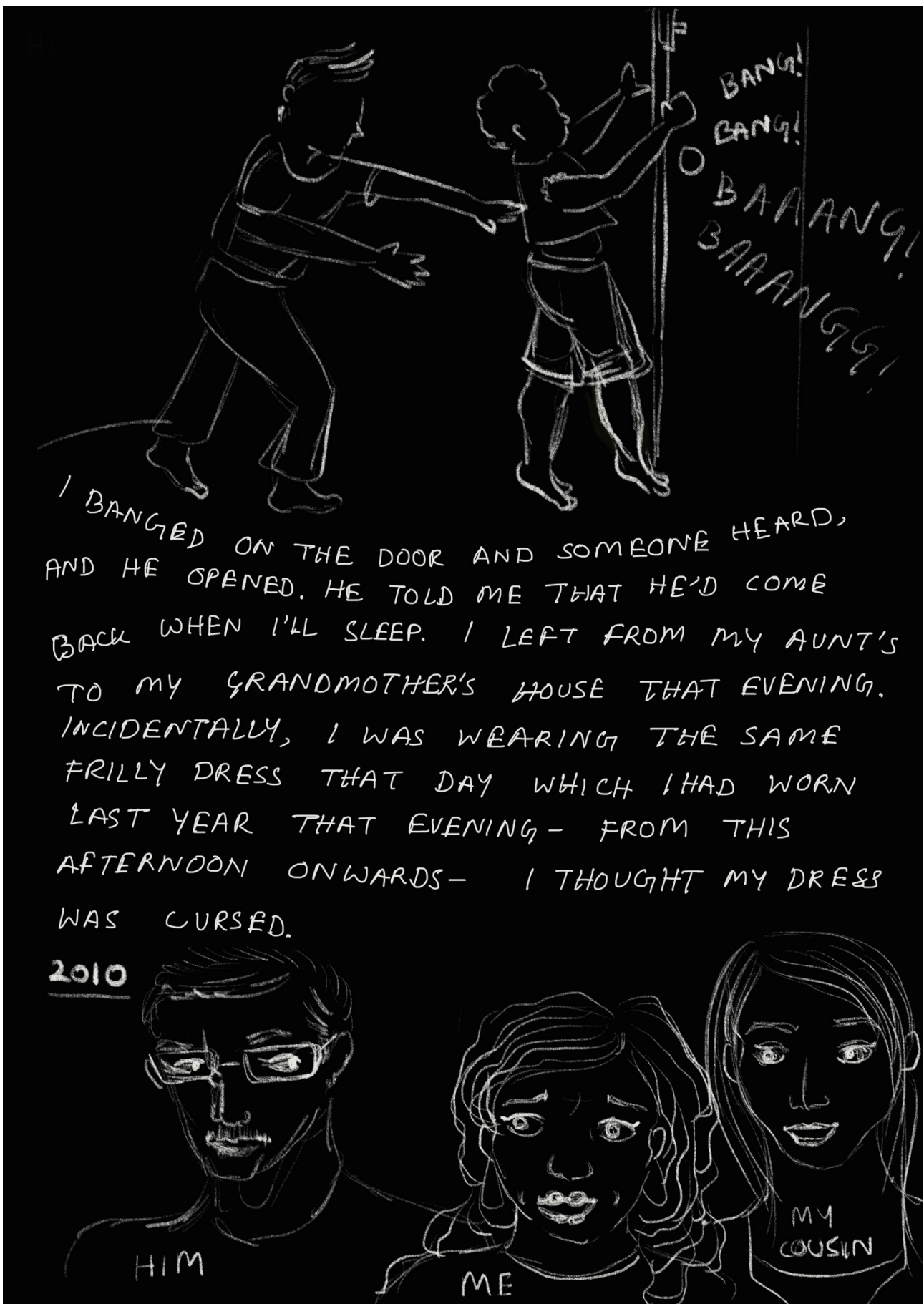
I IMAGINED DEATH.  
HE RETURNED TO HIS WIFE,  
THEN PREGNANT WITH THEIR  
DAUGHTER. FROM AGE 7, I GREW UP WITHOUT  
A HYMEN.

2002.



I CALLED HIM  
"TANA DADA". I WAS 8, HE MUST HAVE BEEN  
A TEENAGER. HE LOOKED ME IN ONE AFTERNOON,  
TRIED UNDRRESSING ME. I DIDN'T LET HIM. HE  
GRABBED ME AND TRIED TO MAKE ME TOUCH HIS  
PENIS. HE TRIED PULLING DOWN MY PANT.







SUBHRANGSHU  
CHAKRABORTY,  
MY "BHAIIYA",  
MY PRETTIEST  
COUSIN'S HUSBAND.  
THEY WERE  
THE IDEAL  
COUPLE:  
YOUNG,  
SWEET, LOVING.

I LOVED MY SISTER - TILL I BEFRIENDED HIM. HE TOLD ME HORROR STORIES ABOUT MY SISTER - THAT SHE WAS GREEDY, "DIFFICULT", "TOUGH TO BE WITH." HE WAS 35, I WAS 16; HE WAS THE PROTECTIVE BIG BROTHER, I WAS THE TROUBLED TEEN GOING THROUGH COUNSELLING SESSIONS, STILL HALLUCINATING OF PAST ASSAULTS. HE WAS MY BEST FRIEND. HE TOLD ME I COULD TRUST HIM. HE FONDLED, KISSED, GRABBED MY ASS, BIT MY EARS - AND TOLD ME THAT EVEN IF I TELL ANYONE - NO ONE WOULD BELIEVE A HORMONAL TEENAGER.



I TOLD MY COUNSELLOR, HE  
BEGGED ME TO TELL MY PARENTS.  
I REFUSED. I HAD LOST HOPE -  
SUBHRANGSHU TOLD ME THAT  
HE WILL DENY, OF COURSE, AND  
THAT MY COUSIN WILL NEVER  
QUESTION HIM. SHE KNEW.  
SHE TRUSTED HIM. BECAUSE  
SHE HAD A MARRIAGE TO  
KEEP.



WHEN I TOLD HIM THAT I'VE TOLD  
MY COUNSELLOR, HE THREATEND ME.  
AND SAID,

