

A child with dark hair, wearing a light-colored t-shirt, is seen from behind, opening a large cardboard box. The box is filled with various items, including a teddy bear, a doll, a robot, a camera, a bag, and several cans. The scene is set against a dark, starry night sky with silhouettes of evergreen trees. The overall color palette is dominated by dark blues and purples, with the child's shirt providing a bright contrast.

MY AUNT- MY 'TITA' -SENDS
HERSELF BACK TO US IN BOXES,

FROM FAR AWAY OVER STORMY SEAS
IN A COLD LAND OF BLACK FORESTS.



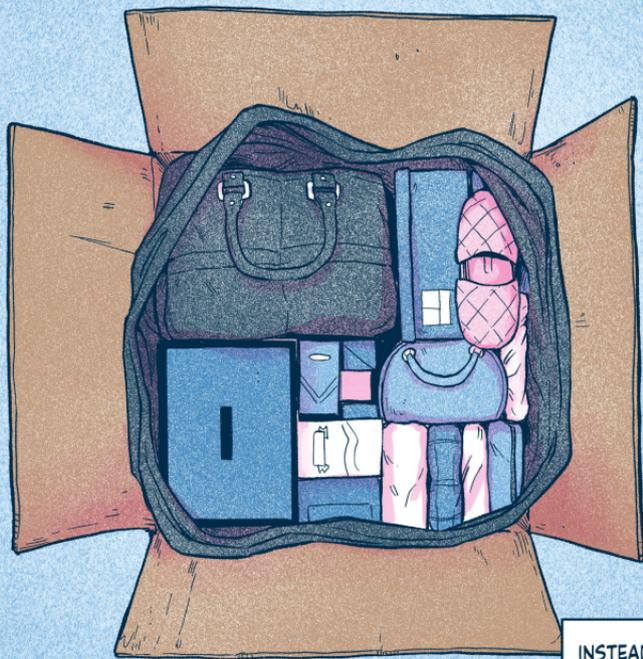
SHE'D LEFT WHEN I WAS TOO YOUNG TO REALLY KNOW HER.

SO NOW I MUST GET TO
KNOW HER IN FRAGMENTS.

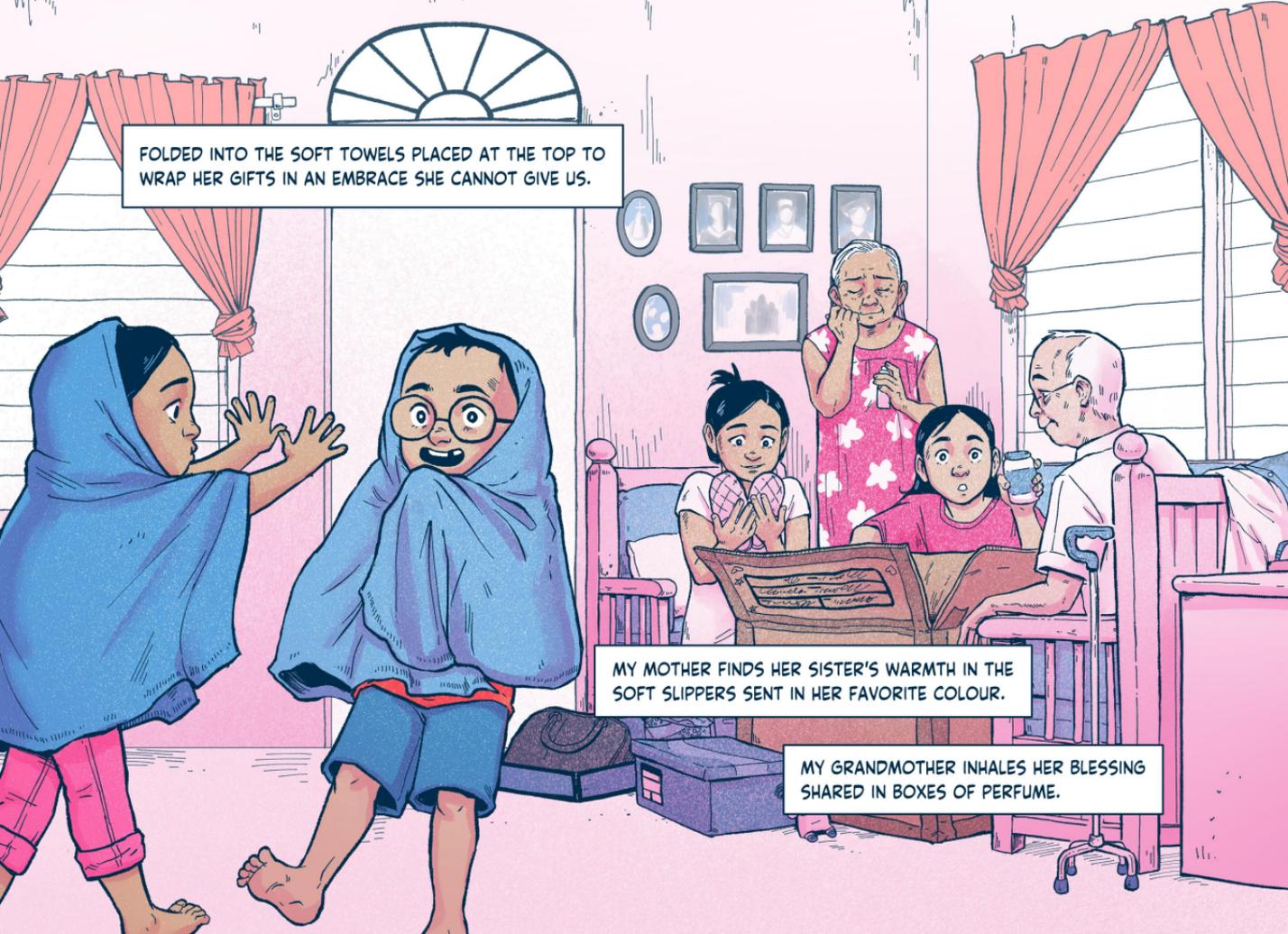


SHE SENDS US THESE BOXES BECAUSE FOR NOW SHE MUST WORK AWAY FROM HOME.





INSTEAD, SHE SENDS US HER HEART.



FOLDED INTO THE SOFT TOWELS PLACED AT THE TOP TO
WRAP HER GIFTS IN AN EMBRACE SHE CANNOT GIVE US.

MY MOTHER FINDS HER SISTER'S WARMTH IN THE
SOFT SLIPPERS SENT IN HER FAVORITE COLOUR.

MY GRANDMOTHER INHALES HER BLESSING
SHARED IN BOXES OF PERFUME.

SHE IS LIVING THERE SO THAT WE
CAN HAVE A BETTER LIFE HERE.

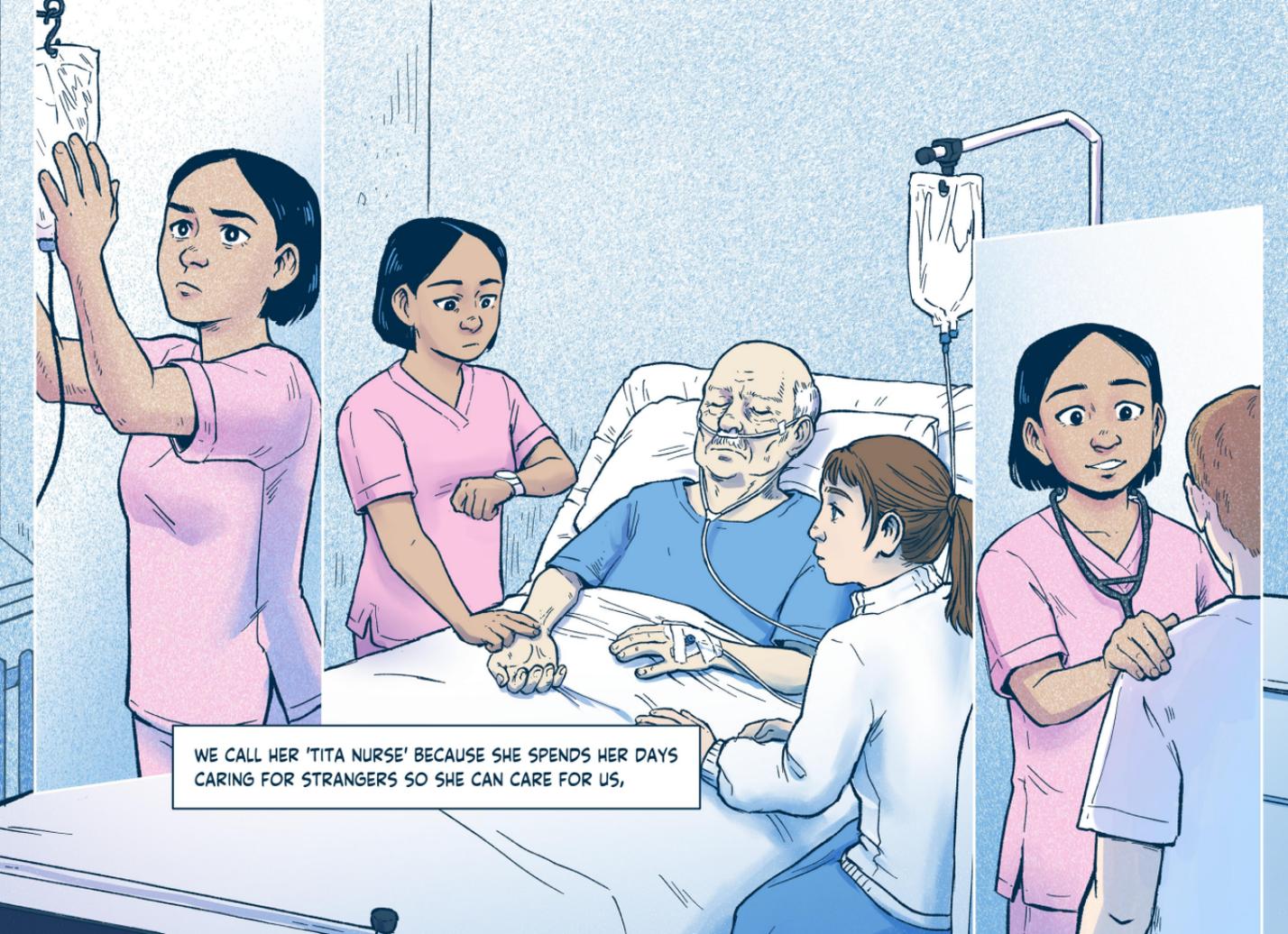


WHEN SHE WAS A CHILD, HER PARENTS WORKED HARD TO PROVIDE FOR THE FAMILY, MOVING FROM THE PROVINCE TO METRO MANILA.





BUT THEN MY GRANDFATHER GOT SICK
AND MY AUNT KNEW SHE COULD BETTER
SUPPORT US ALL WITH A JOB ABROAD.



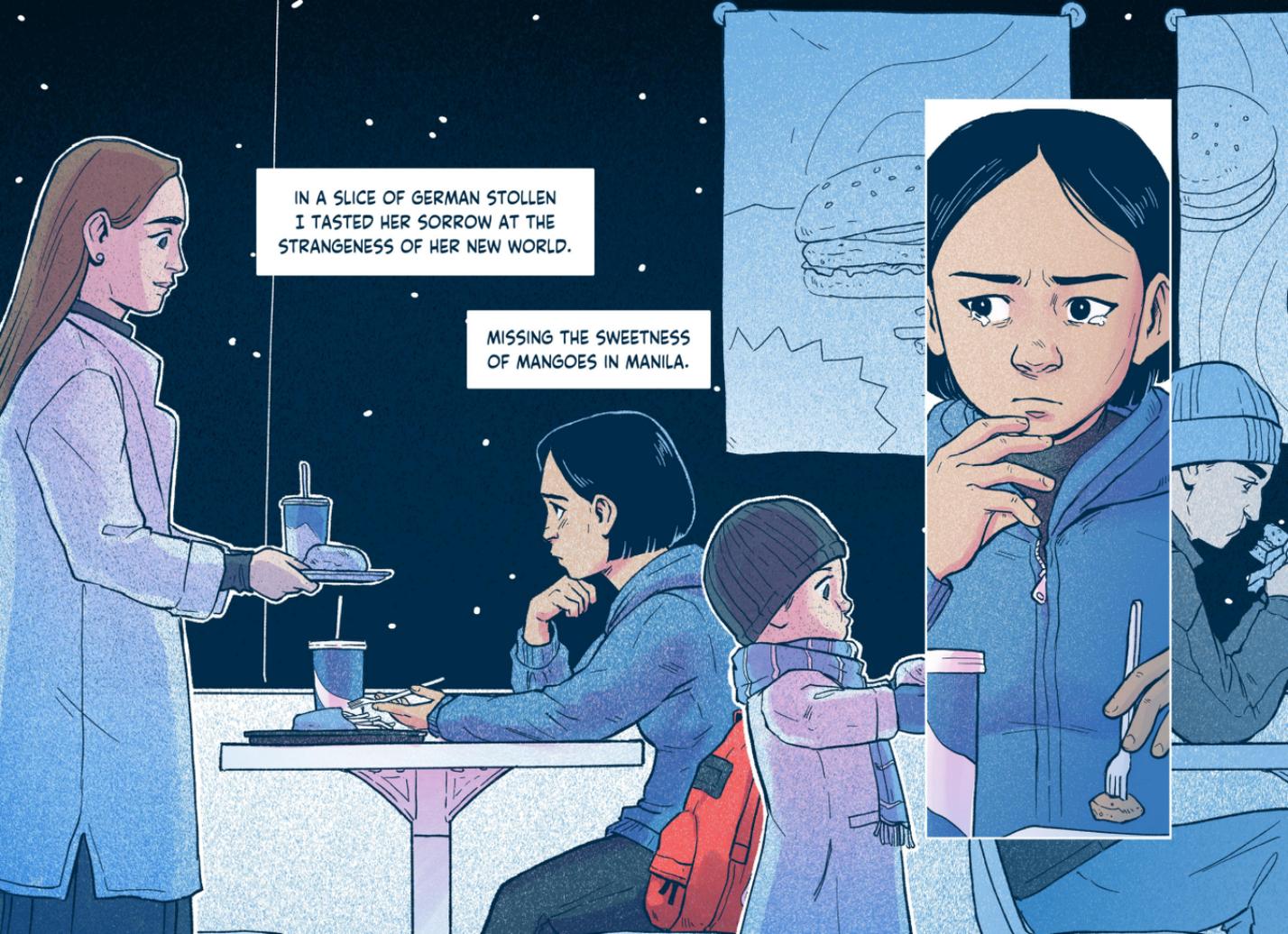
WE CALL HER 'TITA NURSE' BECAUSE SHE SPENDS HER DAYS CARING FOR STRANGERS SO SHE CAN CARE FOR US,



SENDING REMITTANCES BACK
FOR MY GRANDFATHER,

AND BABY CLOTHES
FOR MY NEW COUSIN.

ME AND MY COUSINS HAD NEVER BEFORE SEEN SUCH
A BOX OF TREASURES FROM THIS FOREIGN LAND.

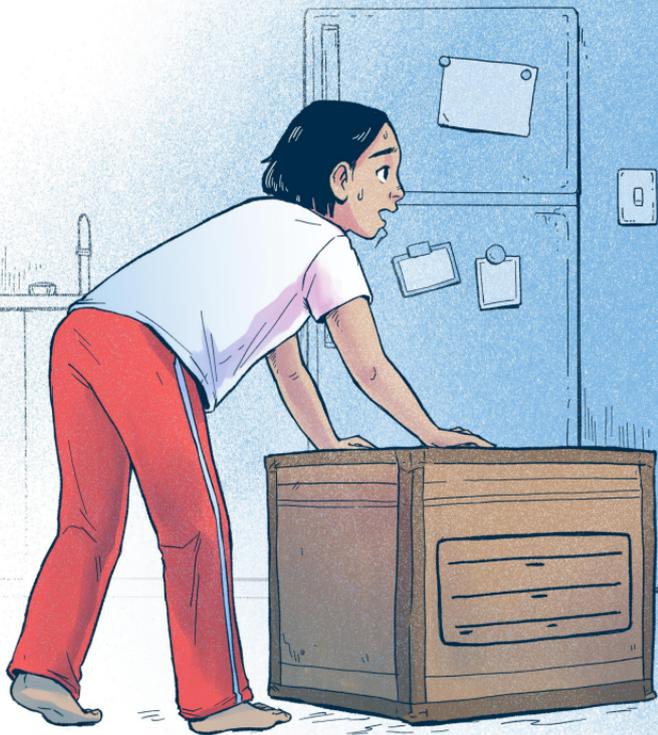


IN A SLICE OF GERMAN STOLLEN
I TASTED HER SORROW AT THE
STRANGENESS OF HER NEW WORLD.

MISSING THE SWEETNESS
OF MANGOES IN MANILA.



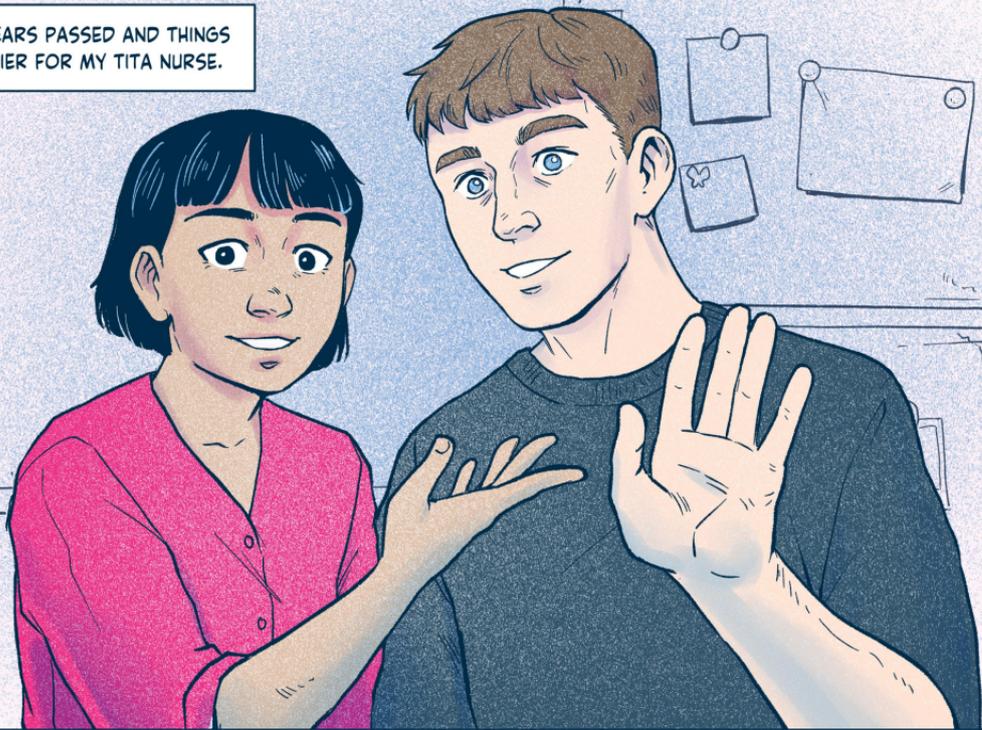
IN THE HEAVINESS OF THE BOX I FELT THE WEIGHT OF RESPONSIBILITY IN CARRYING US ALL ON HER SHOULDERS.



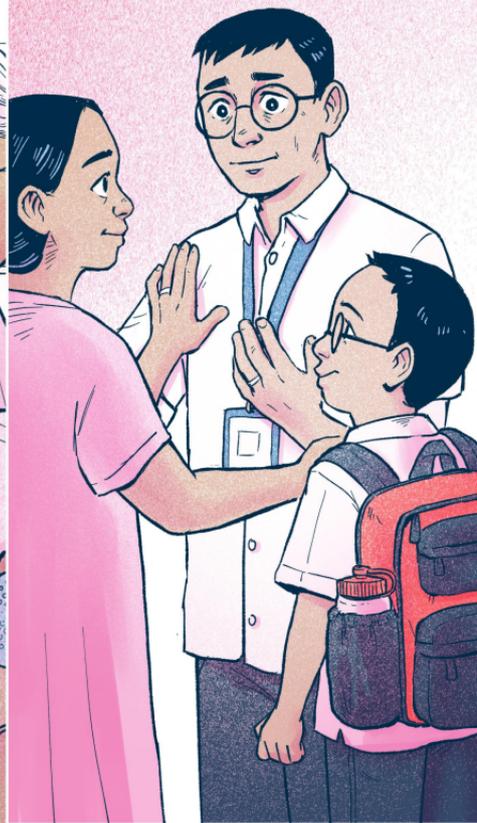


DEEP IN THE BOTTOM OF AN ELEGANT HANDBAG I FOUND HER PRIDE AT BEING ABLE TO SPOIL US.

MORE YEARS PASSED AND THINGS
GOT EASIER FOR MY TITA NURSE.



AND FOR OUR FAMILY TOO, AS OUR
HARD WORK ALSO BEGAN TO PAY OFF.





TITA NURSE ENCOURAGED OUR STUDIES, SENDING US HER HOPES, ENCLOSED IN A LAPTOP.

SHE SENDS US HER DREAMS THAT ONE DAY WE CAN HELP HER PROVIDE FOR THE FAMILY.



BUT OVER THE YEARS MY UNCLE WAS ALWAYS QUICK TO ASK FOR MORE.

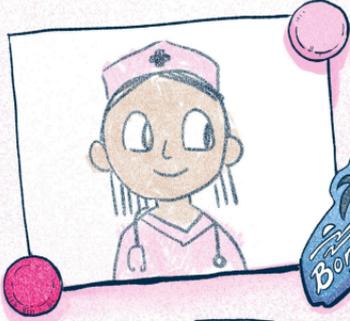


FOR A MOTORBIKE, TO COVER HIS DEBTS, TO PAY HIS UTILITIES.

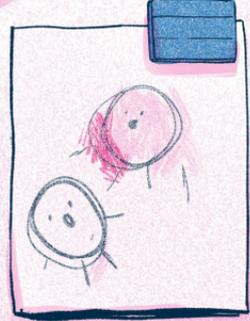
AND EVENTUALLY MY TITA NURSE HAD
NEW RESPONSIBILITIES OF HER OWN.

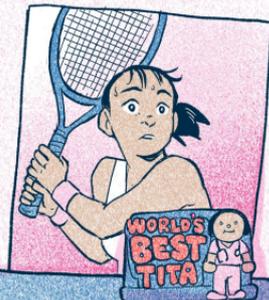


IN A BOX TO MY UNCLE I SAW HER
ANGER AT BEING TREATED LIKE AN ATM.



EVEN THOUGH I FELT THE DISTANCE FROM MY TITA NURSE, I HAD BEGUN TO KNOW HER LOVE THROUGH THESE BOXES.



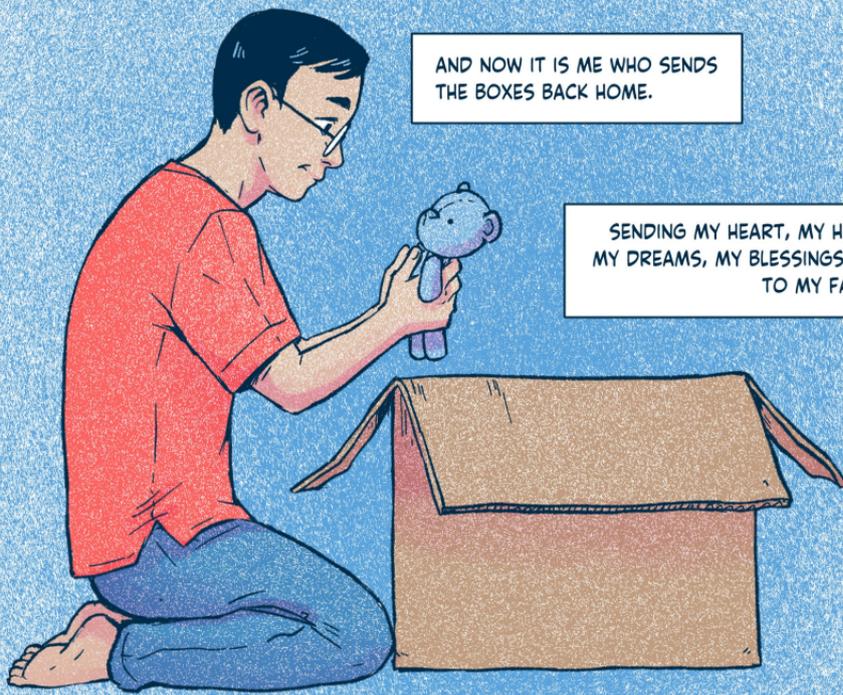


AND SO WHEN WE WERE OLD ENOUGH WE SENT HER OUR OWN GIFTS.



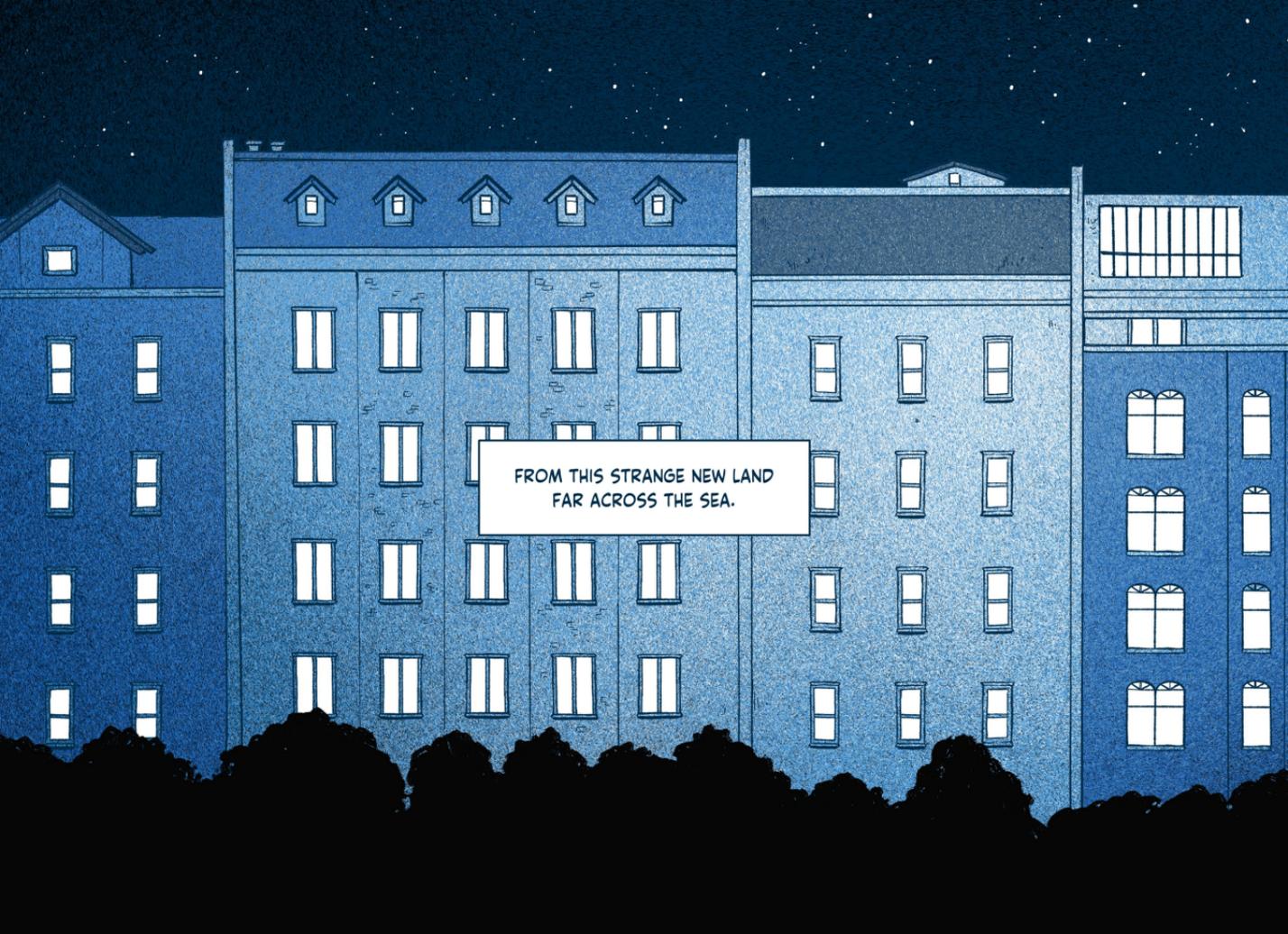
SIARCAO





AND NOW IT IS ME WHO SENDS
THE BOXES BACK HOME.

SENDING MY HEART, MY HOPES,
MY DREAMS, MY BLESSINGS BACK
TO MY FAMILY.



FROM THIS STRANGE NEW LAND
FAR ACROSS THE SEA.

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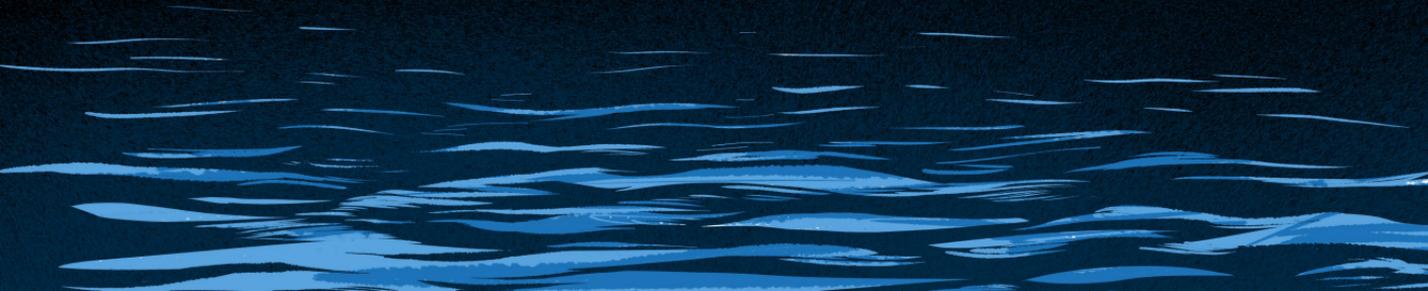
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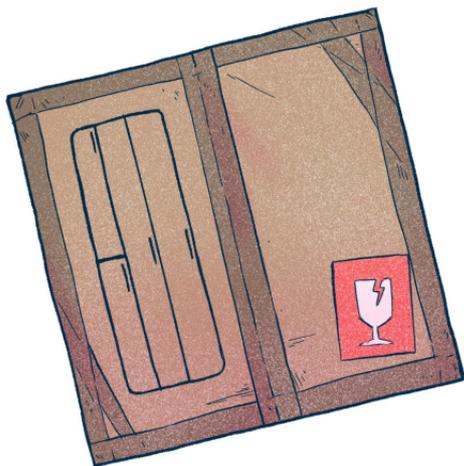
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The vast majority of the global increase in the size of middle classes occurs in Asia.

Migration Rhythms is a research project from Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIO) that explores trajectories of upward social mobility in Asia.

To find out more visit:
www.prio.org/migrationrhythms

