

CITY OF OPPORTUNITIES:

MUMBAI



I AM MUMBAI, CITY
OF OPPORTUNITIES.

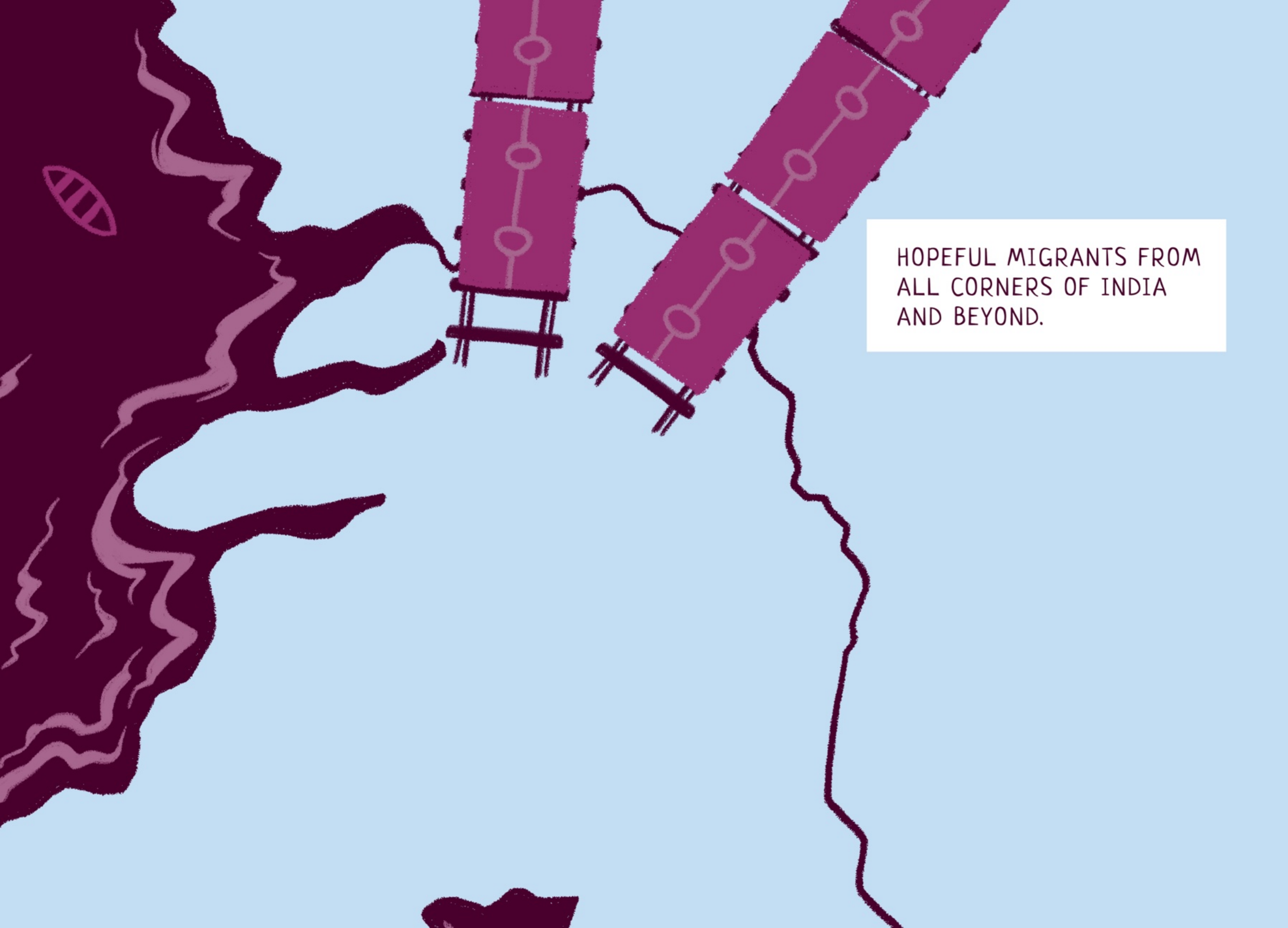




WHERE YOU CAN RISE TO
DIZZYING HEIGHTS OR
PLUMMET TO DESPERATE
LOWS.

FOR CENTURIES, I'VE DRAWN
DREAMERS TO MY SHORES,

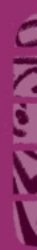




HOPEFUL MIGRANTS FROM
ALL CORNERS OF INDIA
AND BEYOND.

An illustration of a train traveling through a landscape. The train consists of several red and blue cars. The background features rolling green hills, a winding river, and a utility pole with power lines. The sky is a light blue. The train cars have windows showing people inside. The overall style is a flat, graphic illustration.

TO BUILD THEIR FUTURES THROUGH
STUDY OR WORK. THEY COME FROM
THE FERTILE PLAINS OF THE NORTH,



THE SLEEPY COASTS OF THE SOUTH,





AND FROM TINY TOWNS IN THE EAST,

THEY ARRIVE ON THE TRAINS
THAT RUN THROUGH MY VEINS.

CARRYING MILLIONS ACROSS ME EACH DAY.





WITH MILLIONS RETURNING
EACH NIGHT.



AMONG THEM IS RAHUL - A YOUNG
MAN WITH A BROKEN HEART. AND HOPE
FOR A FRESH START.

IN HIS HANDS HE CLUTCHES
ALL HE CAN CARRY.



A BAG OF BELONGINGS AND A
GRADUATION CERTIFICATE.

AN EDUCATION ENCOURAGED BY
HIS MOTHER AND GIFTED FROM
HIS HARDWORKING PARENTS.

GIVING HIM THE SELF BELIEF, TO
MAKE THE IMPULSIVE DECISION
TO TRY HIS LUCK WITH ME.

RAHUL CALLS A BROKER ON THE JOURNEY, WHO HOLDS THE KEY TO AN OVERPRICED FLAT.



A BASE FOR HIM TO GROW
HIS FREELANCE WORK.



RAHUL WILL SOON GET WISE AND LEARN
THAT HE MUST SHARE HIS ACCOMMODATION
TO SURVIVE LIFE WITHIN ME.

SLEEPING IN SHARED ROOMS,
THEN SHARED HOUSES.



BUT SHARING ONLY HOMESICKNESS
WITH THE STRANGERS HE LIVES WITH.

UNTIL HE FINALLY FINDS A CIRCLE OF
FRIENDS AND A COMMUNITY WITHIN
MY SPRAWLING METROPOLIS.



TO MAKE MY VASTNESS LESS LONELY.





FOR I AM ALSO MUMBAI,
CITY OF SOLITUDE.

IT IS EASY TO LOSE YOURSELF IN MY MAZES.

LIKE VARSHA, ARRIVING WITH HER NEW
HUSBAND.





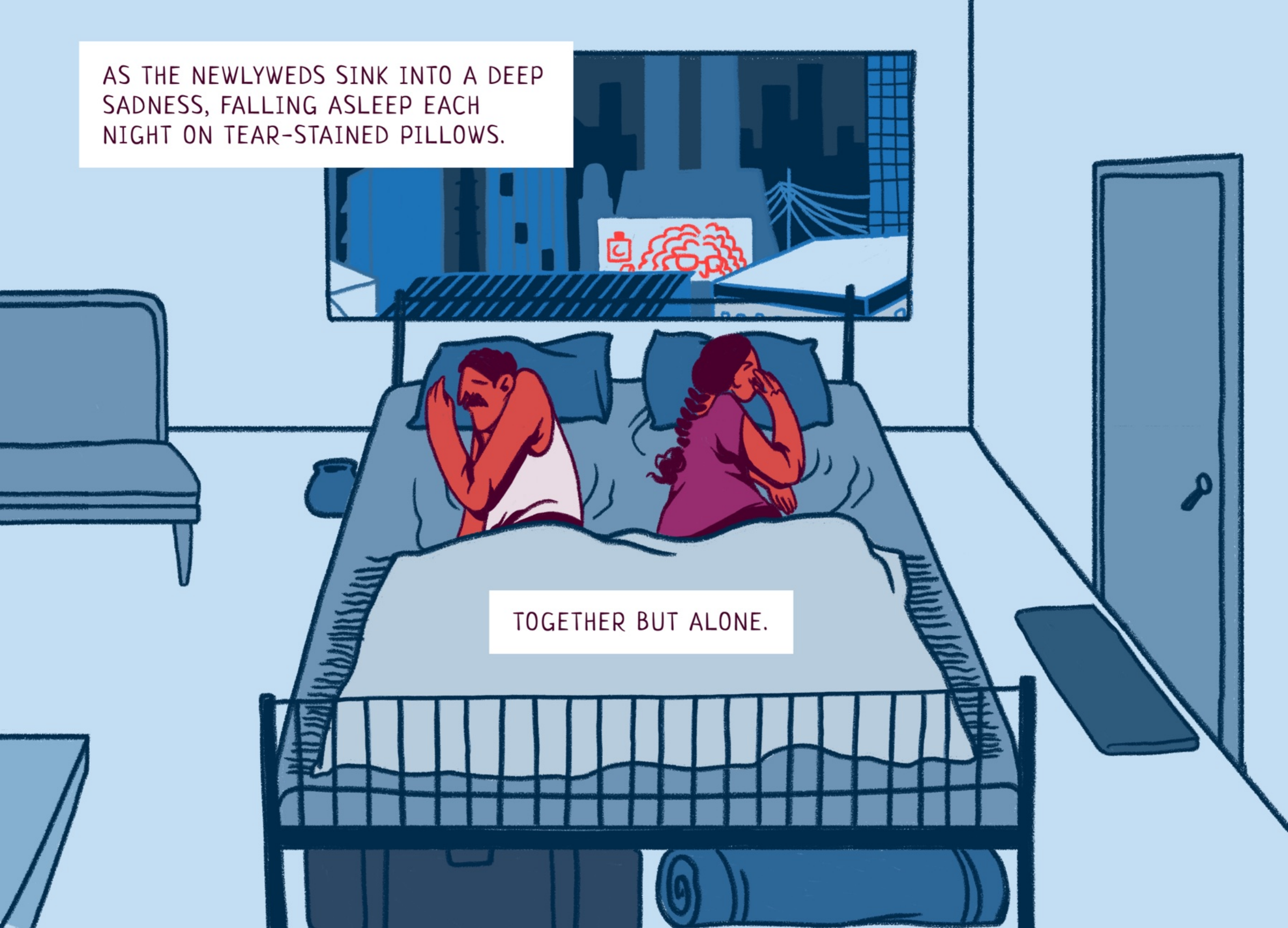
IN HER ARMS SHE CARRIES A COOKING
POT GIVEN BY HER MOTHER.

BUT WHEN HER HUSBAND LEAVES FOR WORK
EACH DAY, SHE IS ALONE IN THE FLAT.



AND IN THE MONTHS THAT FOLLOW, EVEN
THIS POSSESSION WILL OFTEN GO UNUSED.

AS THE NEWLYWEDS SINK INTO A DEEP
SADNESS, FALLING ASLEEP EACH
NIGHT ON TEAR-STAINED PILLOWS.



TOGETHER BUT ALONE.

VARSHA DREAMS OF THE VILLAGE
WHERE HER FAMILY STILL LIVES.





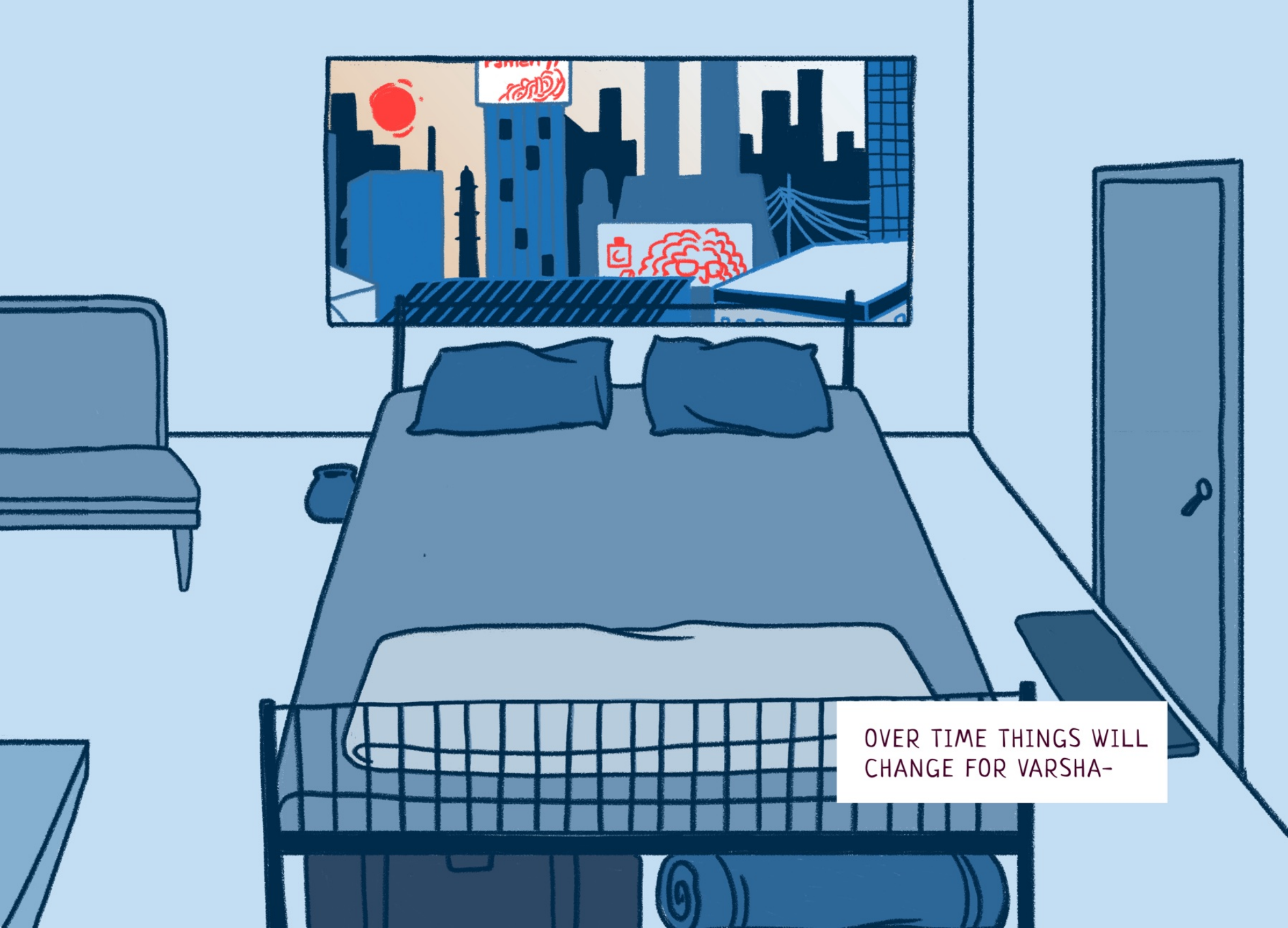
WITHIN ME SHE IS CUT LOOSE
FROM HER COMMUNITY.

FREEWHEELING INTO
MY VAST CHAOS.

An illustration of a city at night. In the background, a city skyline is visible with a fire burning in a building, indicated by orange flames and a fire alarm icon. In the foreground, a man and a woman are lying in bed, looking distressed. The man is on the left, wearing a white tank top, and the woman is on the right, wearing a purple shirt. They are both holding their hands to their faces, suggesting they are crying or in pain. The scene is set in a room with a striped blanket and a window looking out onto the city.

OUTSIDE TRAINS CLATTER, HORNS
BEEP, NEIGHBOURS ARGUE—

—BUT THE SILENCE BETWEEN HER
AND HER HUSBAND IS DEAFENING.



OVER TIME THINGS WILL
CHANGE FOR VARSHA-



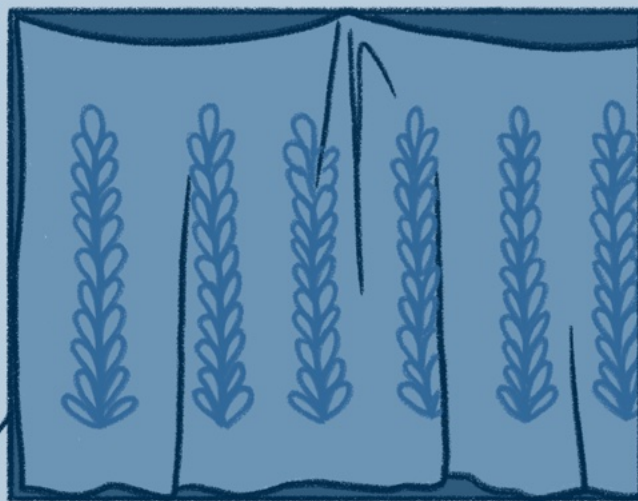
-AND THE POT WILL BE
USED ONCE AGAIN-

A stylized illustration of a woman with dark skin and short dark hair, wearing a purple top and a pink skirt with a zigzag pattern. She is leaning over a large pink bowl, mixing a thick, orange-red substance with a long wooden spoon. She has a bindi on her forehead and large yellow hoop earrings. In the background, there are two red beaded garlands hanging on the left, a blue folding chair, a blue door, and a framed portrait of a man with a mustache wearing a pink garland on the right wall.

-AS SHE MIXES STICKY KALA JAMUN AS
A GIFT FOR SOME KIND WOMEN SHE
MEETS AT THE LOCAL GURUDWARA.

BONDING FRIENDSHIPS AND
BUILDING CONNECTIONS.

FOR I AM MUMBAI, CITY OF CONTRADICTIONS.

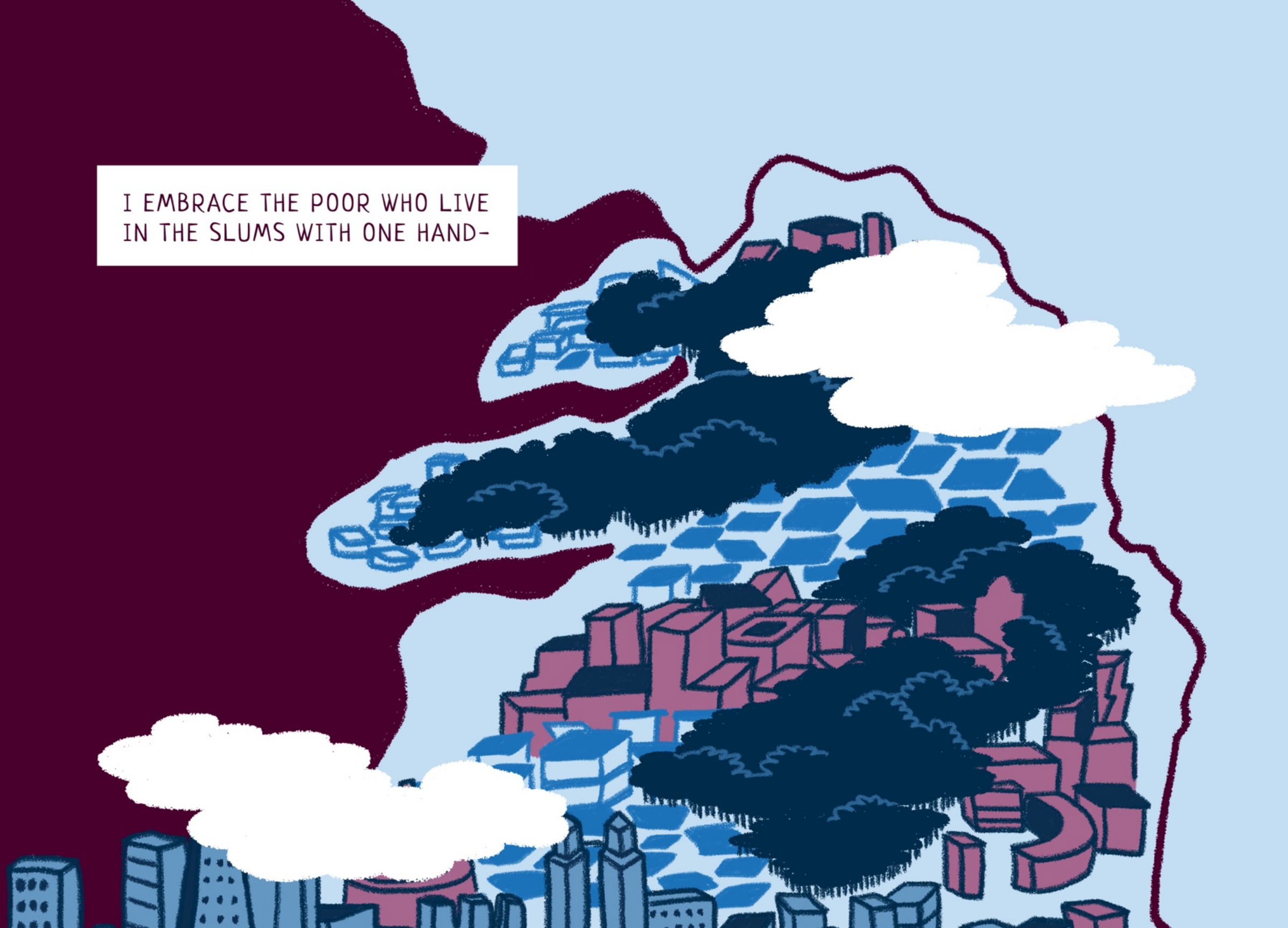


WHERE YOUR LUCK CAN CHANGE-



-ON THE FLIP OF A RUPEE.

I EMBRACE THE POOR WHO LIVE
IN THE SLUMS WITH ONE HAND-





-WHILE ON THE OTHER SIDE I
EMBRACE THE RICH, LIVING IN
TOWERS OF SHINING GLASS.

SHANKAR LIVES SOMEWHERE
IN THE MIDDLE.



HE NO LONGER FEARS ME.

Gaikwad
जायकवाड PRINTER

DTP | DTDC | PHOTO



FROM THE MOMENT HE
ARRIVED FROM RATNAGIRI
TO LIVE WITH RELATIVES.

Gaikwad
जायकवाड PRINTER

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HE BUILT ON THE TIRELESS
WORK OF HIS ENGINEER FATHER
AND FARMER GRANDFATHER.





THE FIRST IN THE FAMILY TO
START HIS OWN BUSINESS.

BRINGING MANGOES FROM HIS
VILLAGE TO TURN INTO JUICE-



-TO QUENCH THE THIRST OF THE
HARD-WORKING MUMBAIKARS.



SENDING MONEY BACK TO HIS
PARENTS, THEN SECURING HIS
PLACE IN THE MIDDLE CLASS,



AL CONVENTION CENTER



THROUGH MARRIAGE TO A BRIDE WITH
ROOTS IN HIS HOMETOWN, WHOSE FAMILY
HAD MOVED TO LIVE WITH ME WHEN HER
FATHER GOT A JOB.



BUT LIKE THE SMOG THAT
SETTLES OVER ME-

-FUMES OF SUCCESS CAN
POLLUTE THE MINDS OF
THOSE WHO SEEK WEALTH.

AND SHANKAR'S BUSINESS PARTNER
SUCCUMBS TO THIS GREED,



CUTTING HIM OUT OF THE BUSINESS
AND LOSING HIM 85 LAKHS.

DOWN SHANKAR PLUMMETS,



SAVED ONLY BY THE SAFETY NET OF HIS
WIFE WHOSE FAMILY HAVE PROPERTY AND
A PLACE FOR THEM TO LIVE AS THEY
REBUILD THEIR LIVES.

TODAY SHANKAR HAS ACHIEVED
STABILITY ONCE MORE.



AND A HOME FROM WHICH HIS
CHILDREN CAN GO OUT IN THE
WORLD TO STUDY AND WORK.





RAHUL STILL WATCHES THE
TRAINS DEPARTING.

HE TIRES OF THE HUSTLE AND
YEARNs FOR A SLOWER LIFE.





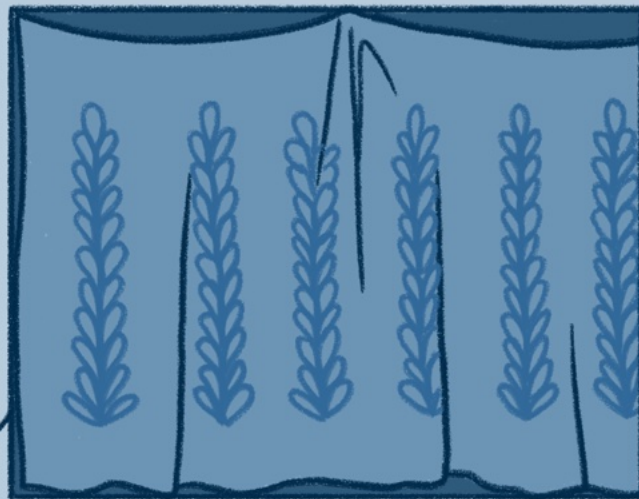
PERHAPS HE WILL LEAVE TO
STUDY IN ANOTHER TOWN?



HE'S YOUNG. HE CAN TAKE
RISKS.

BUT VARSHA WILL
STAY WITH ME.

SHE HAS NOW BUILT A LIFE FOR HERSELF
WITH A CHILD AND A CIRCLE OF FRIENDS.




SHE AND HER HUSBAND NO
LONGER STRUGGLE.

THEY DREAM OF MOVING
TO A NEW HOME.

NOTHING TOO FANCY, JUST
ONE ROOM AND A COURTYARD
TO LOOK OUT OVER.





FOR I AM MUMBAI, CITY OF CONTRASTS.

I GET KNOCKED DOWN, I GET BUILT UP.



I MAY KNOCK YOU DOWN, BUT
I CAN ALSO BUILD YOU UP.

SBS



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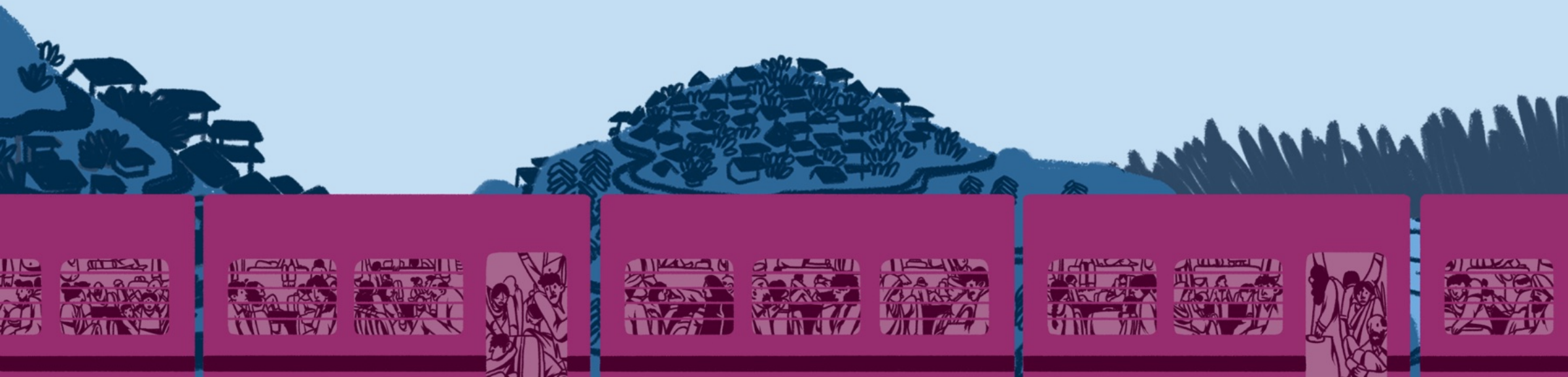
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FUNDED BY

THE MIGRATIONRHYTHMS PROJECT HAS RECEIVED FUNDING FROM THE EUROPEAN RESEARCH COUNCIL (ERC) UNDER THE HORIZON 2020 RESEARCH AND INNOVATION PROGRAMME (GRANT AGREEMENT NO. 948403. (2021-2026))



THANKS TO ALL OUR RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS WHO
GENEROUSLY SHARED THIER TIME AND STORIES, WHICH ARE
THE BASIS OF WHAT YOU HAVE SEEN HERE.



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.

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Funded by
the European Union



European Research Council
Established by the European Commission

