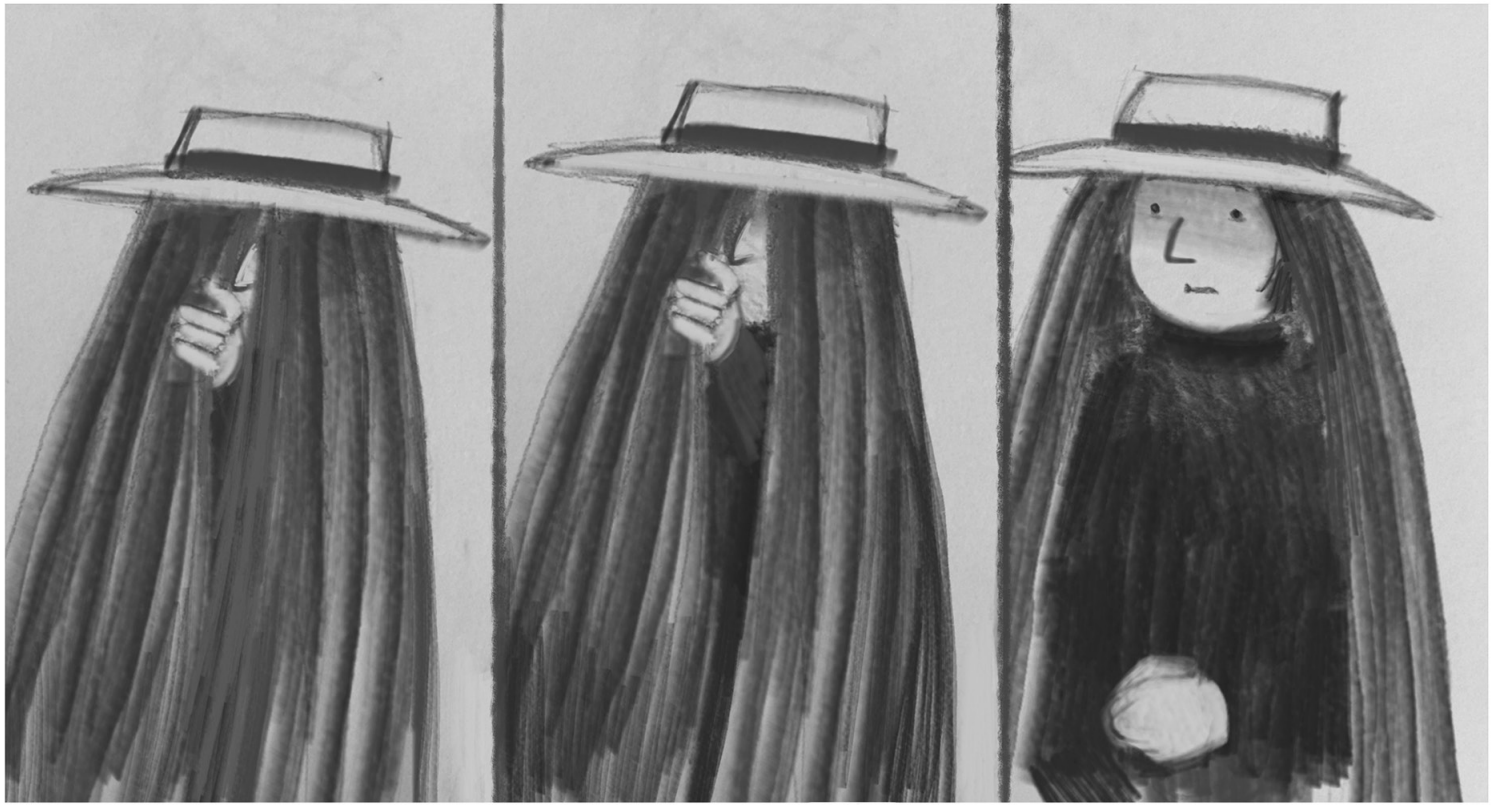
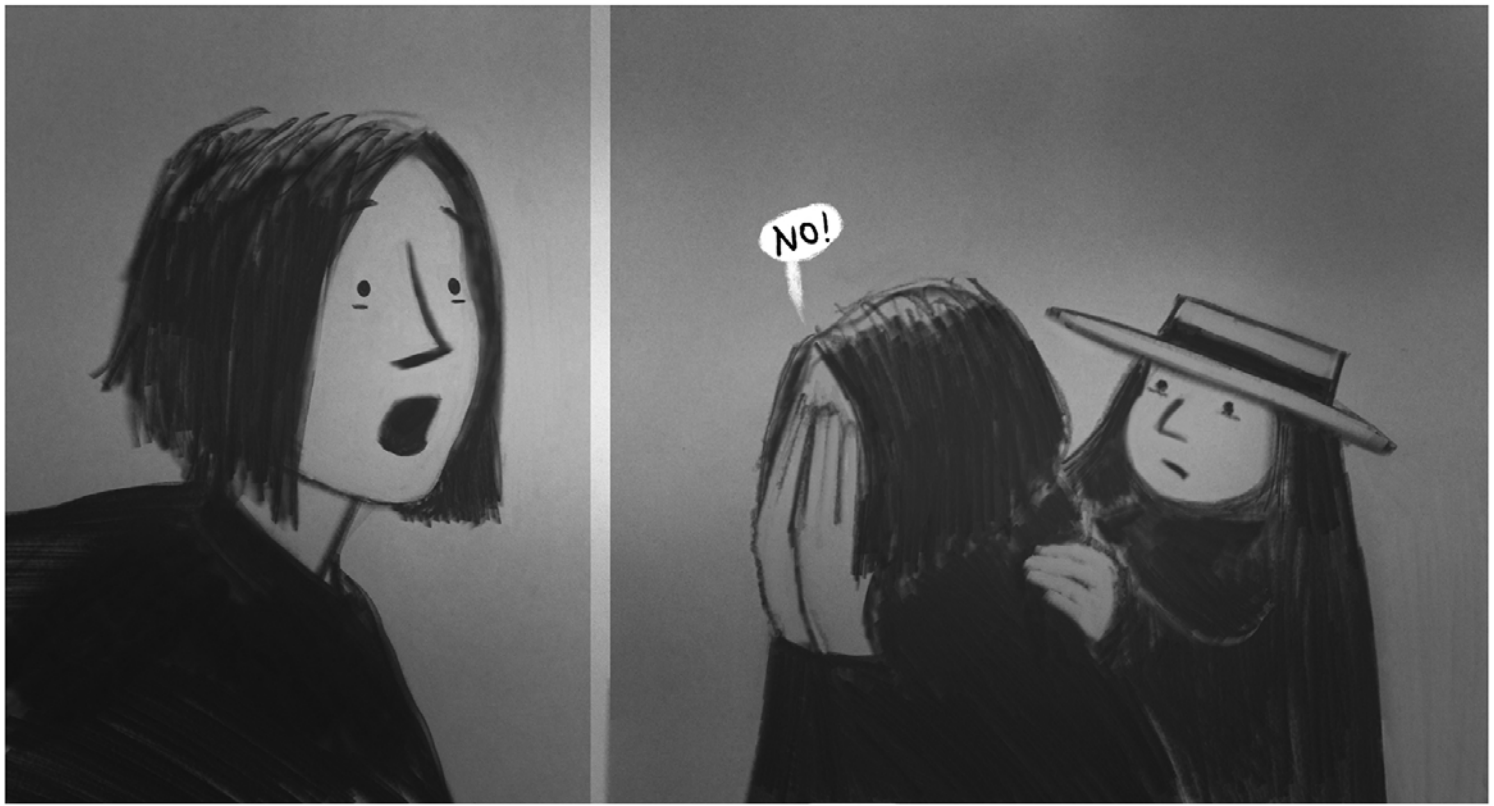
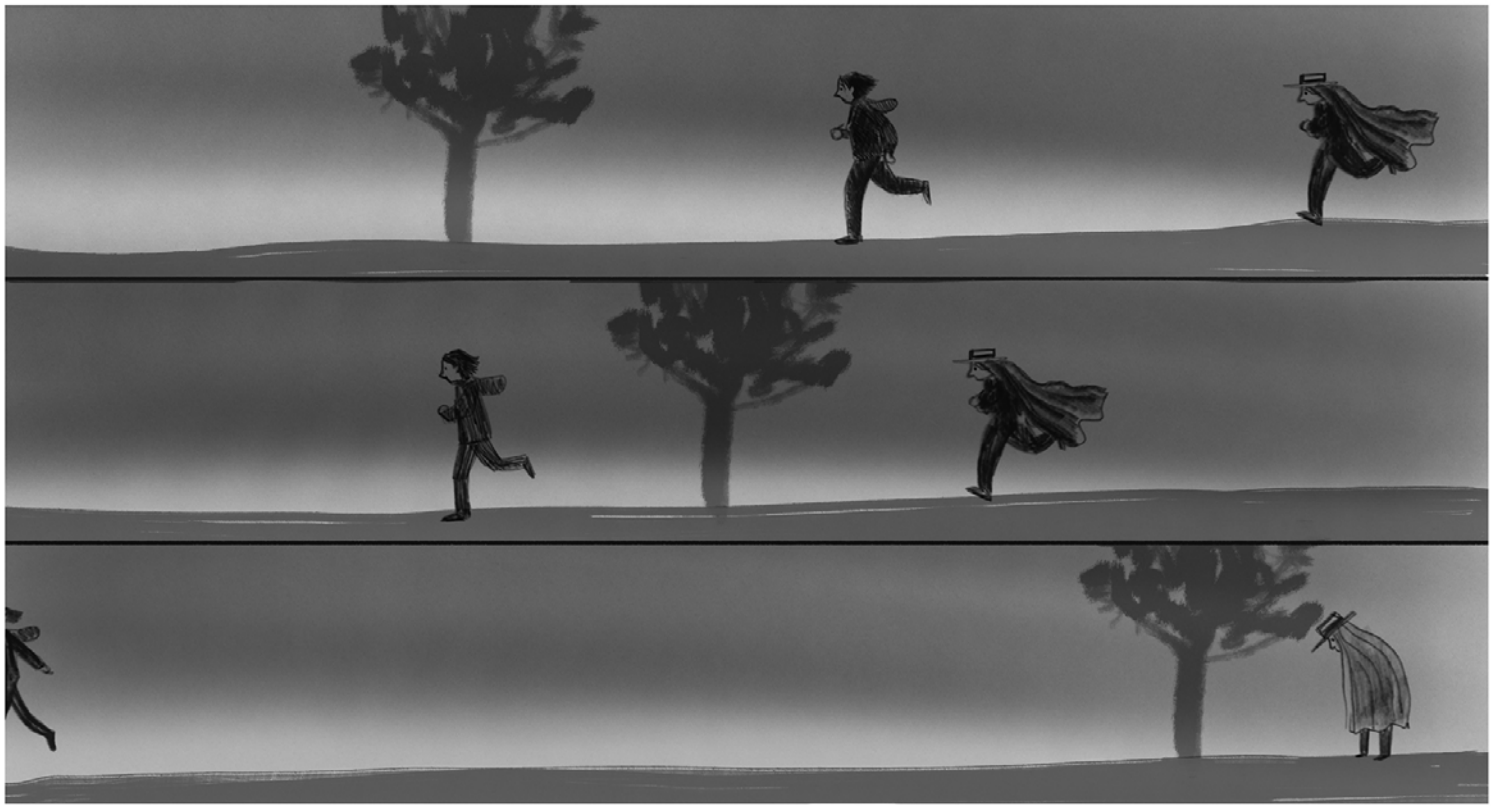
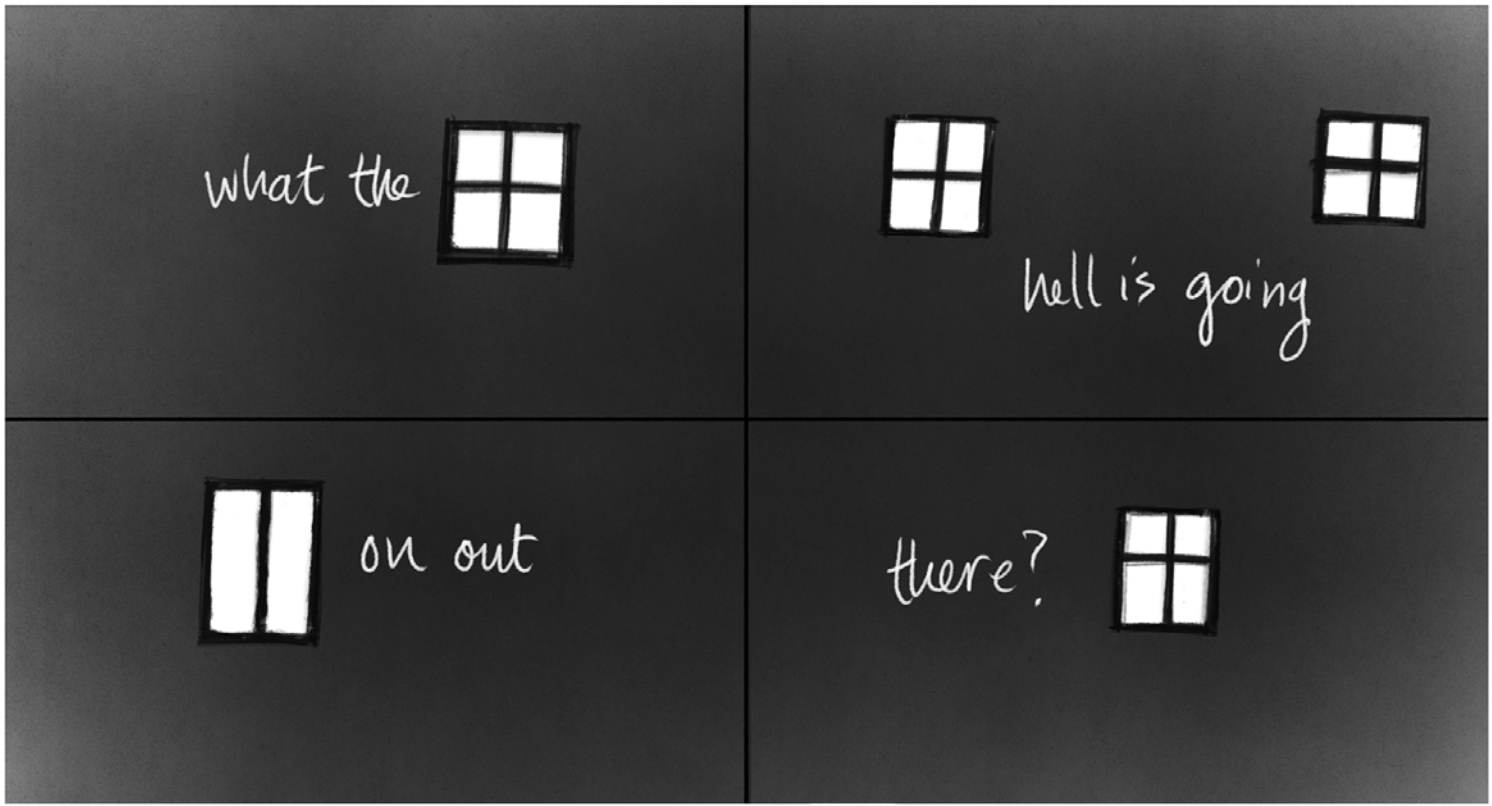
The Village – PART SIX

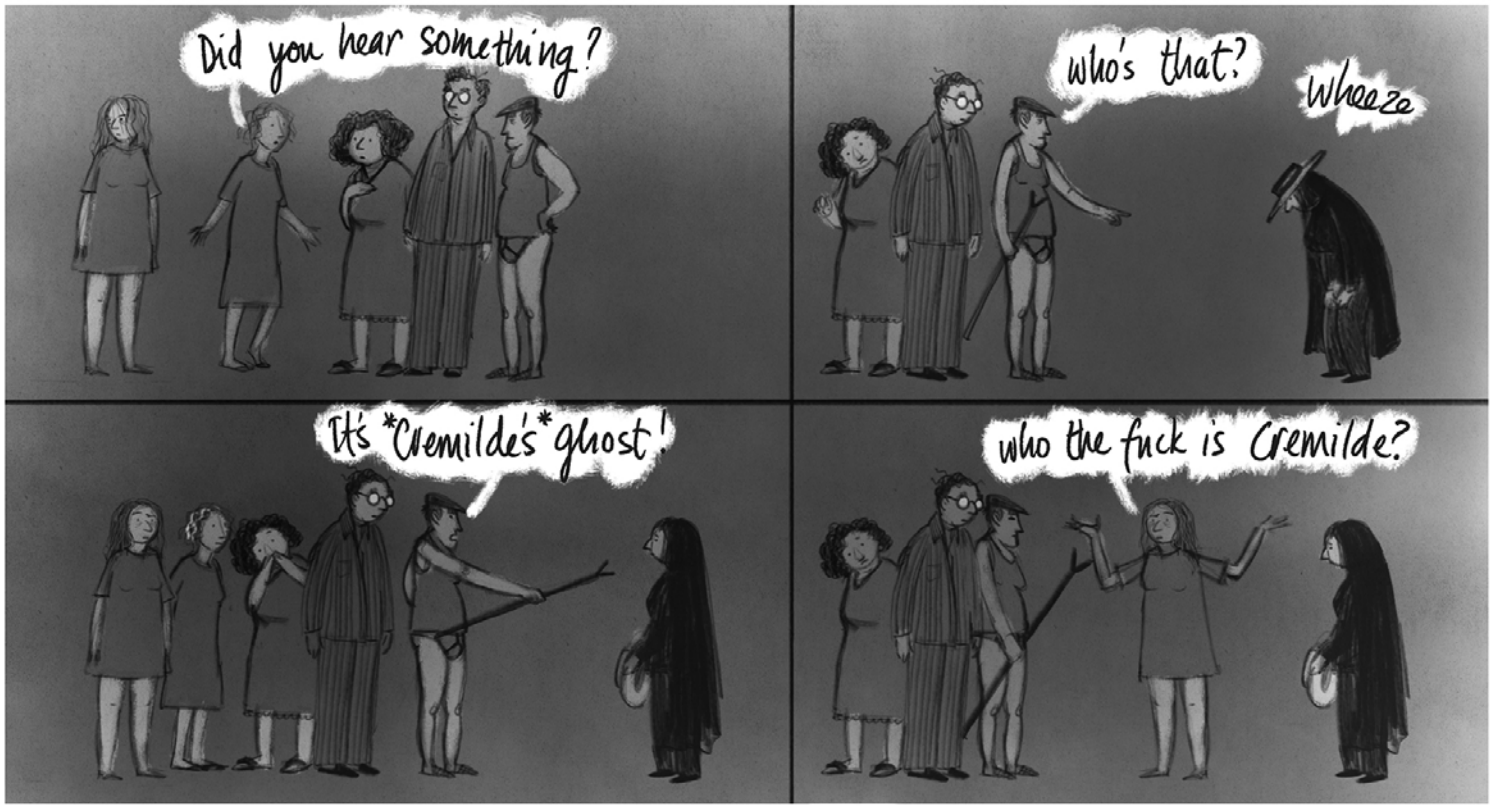
Who ARE you?




No!




what the
hell is going
on out
there?

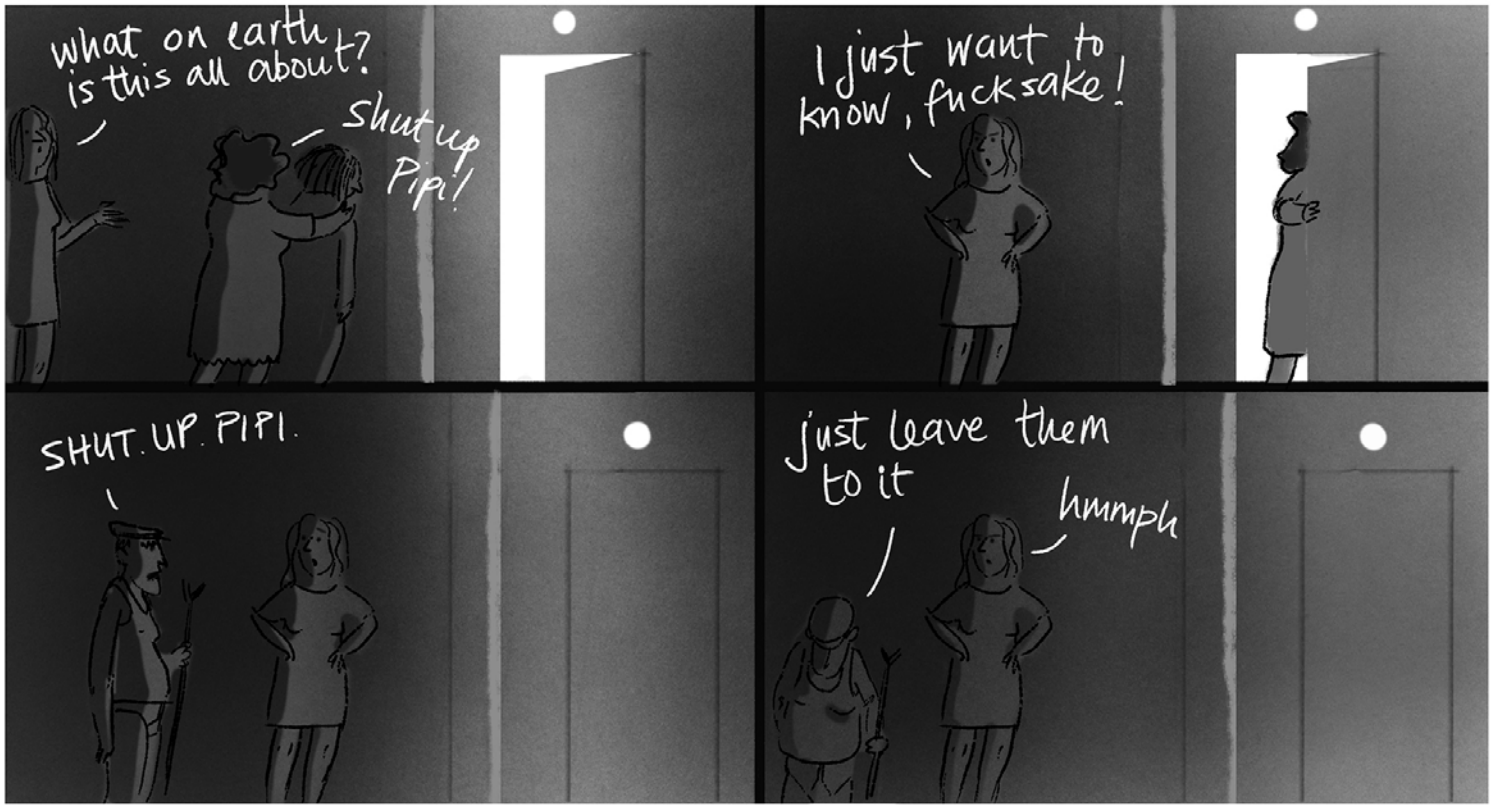

Did you hear something?
who's that?
Wheeze
It's *Cremilde's* ghost!
who the fuck is Cremilde?

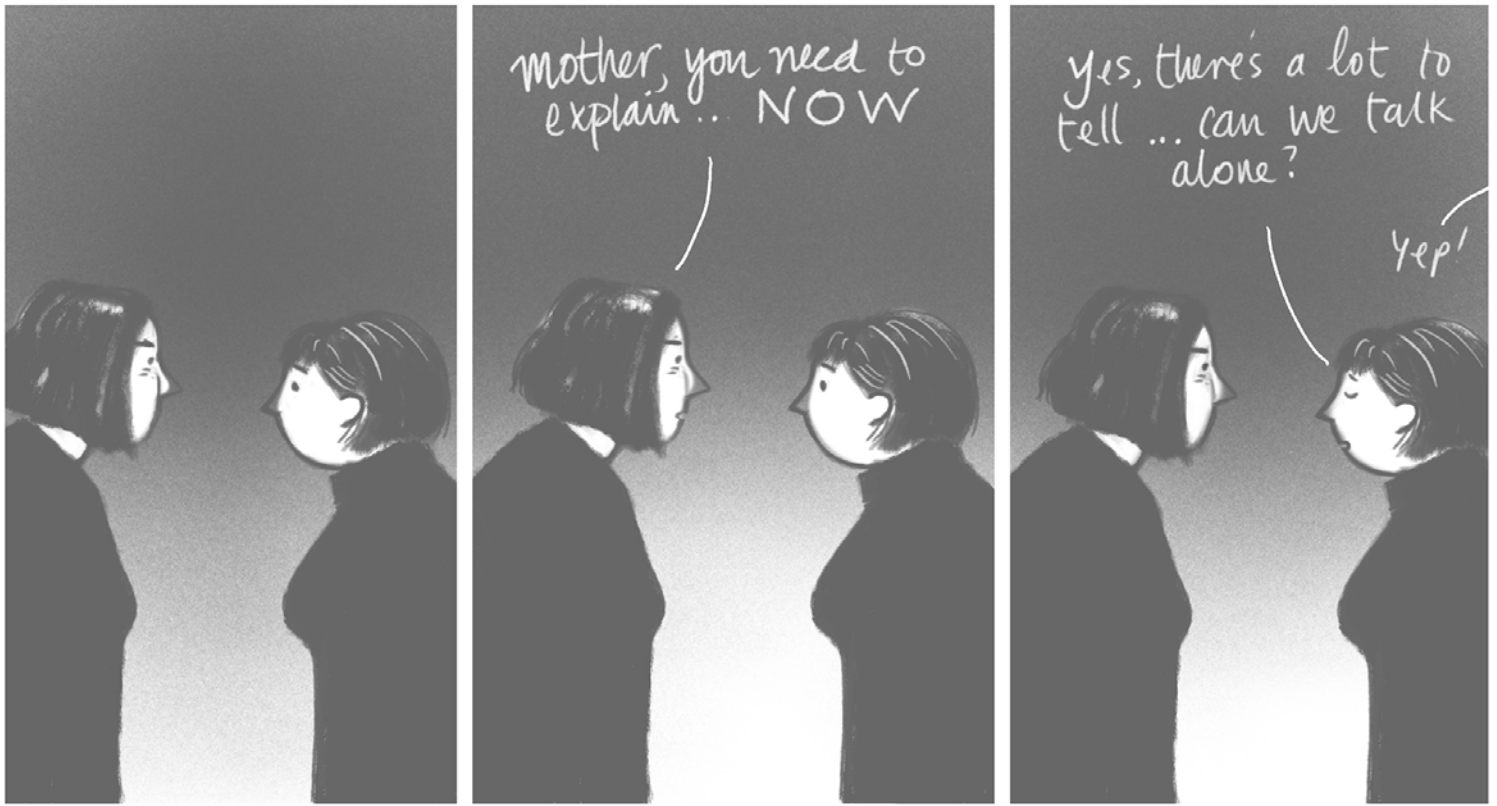
Cremilde Esteves....
she's Ana's..
..mother

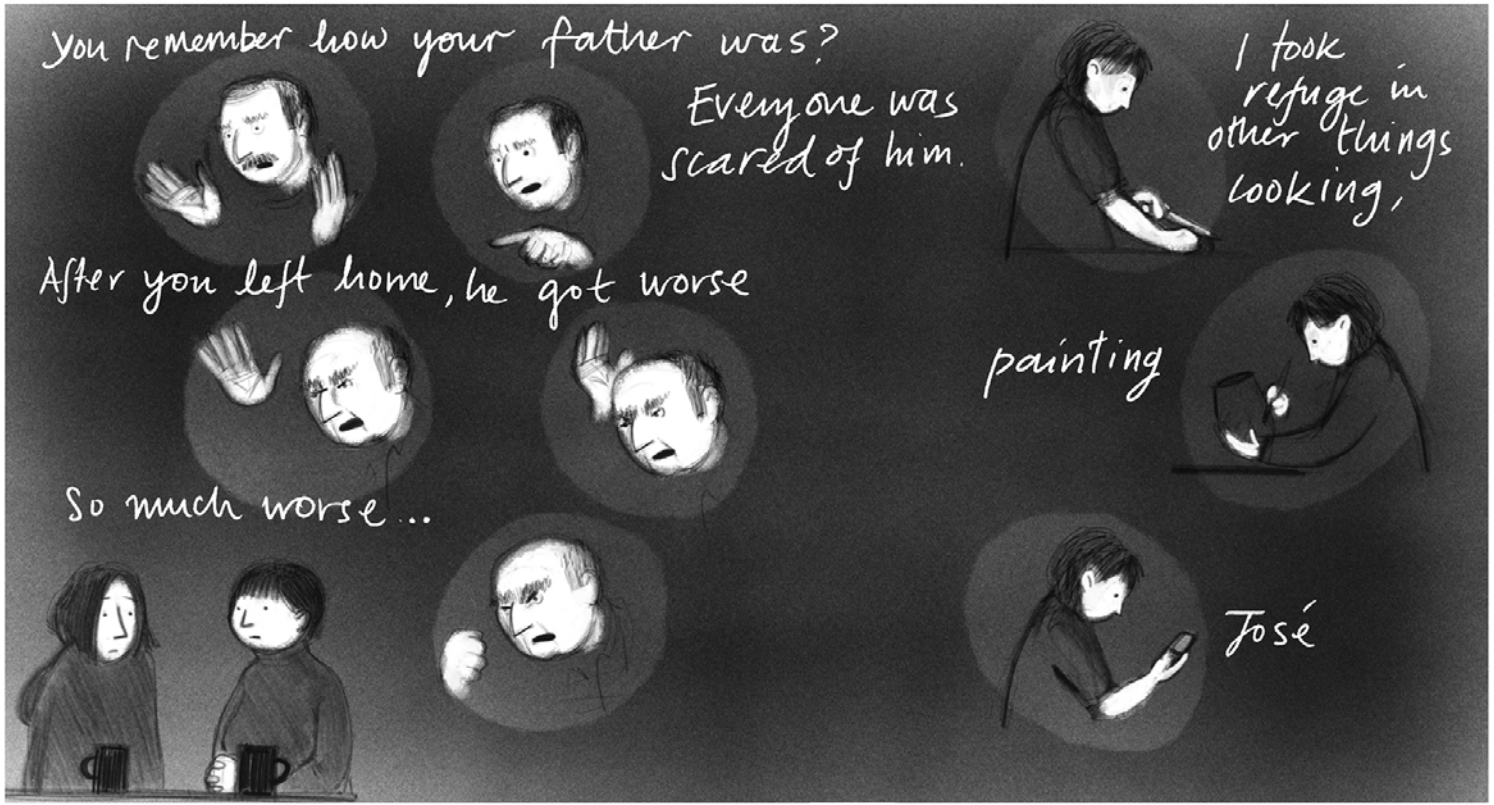
What? How? Why?
mummy, what's wrong?
It's my mother.... your grandma, she's... not dead

Ana, this is all so confusing, I know, but she wants to talk to you. She won't speak to anyone else

Ok


what on earth is this all about?
shut up Pipi!
I just want to know, fucksake!
SHUT. UP. PIPI.
just leave them to it
hmmph

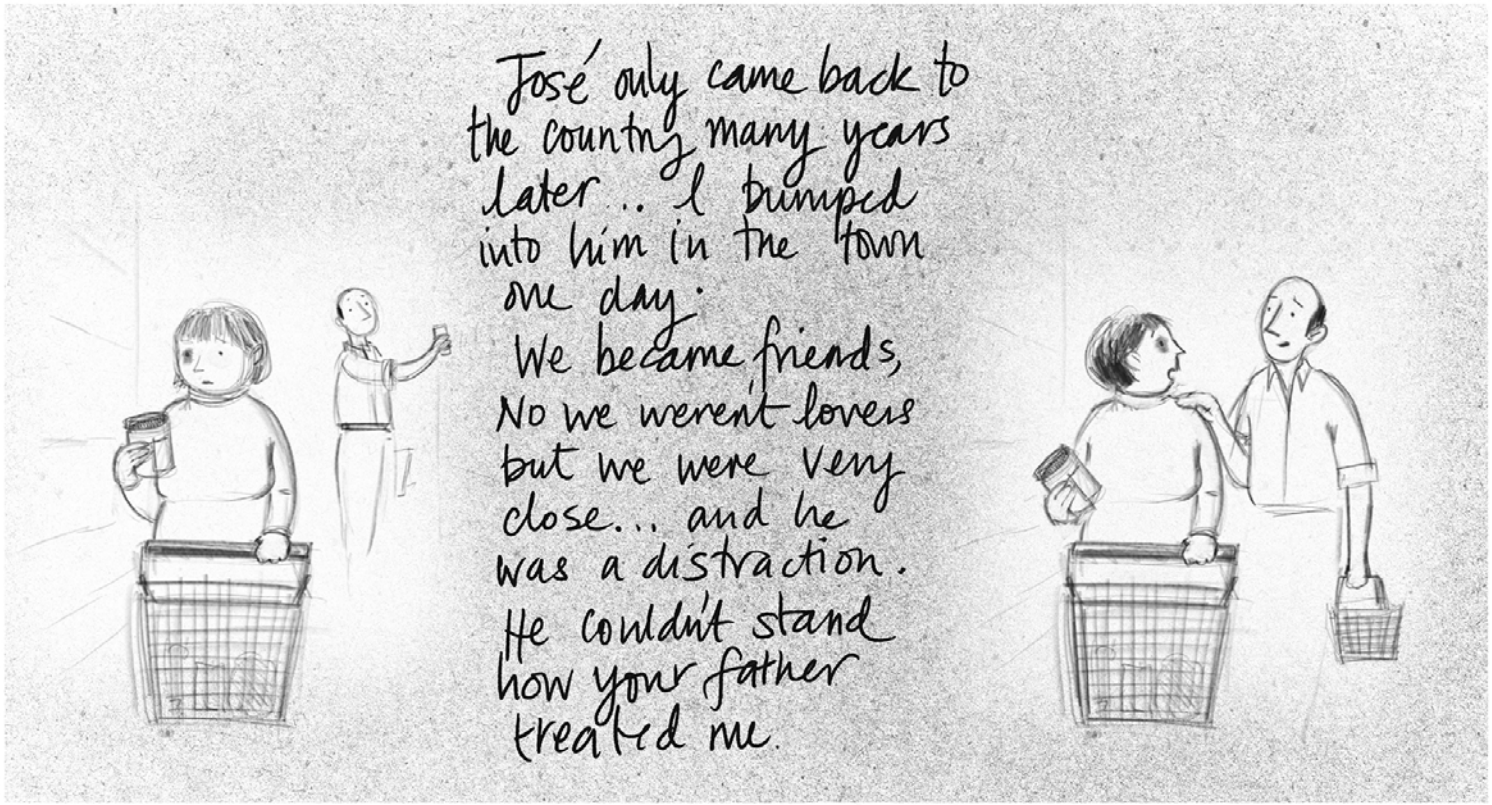

mother, you need to explain... NOW
yes, there's a lot to tell ... can we talk alone?
yep!

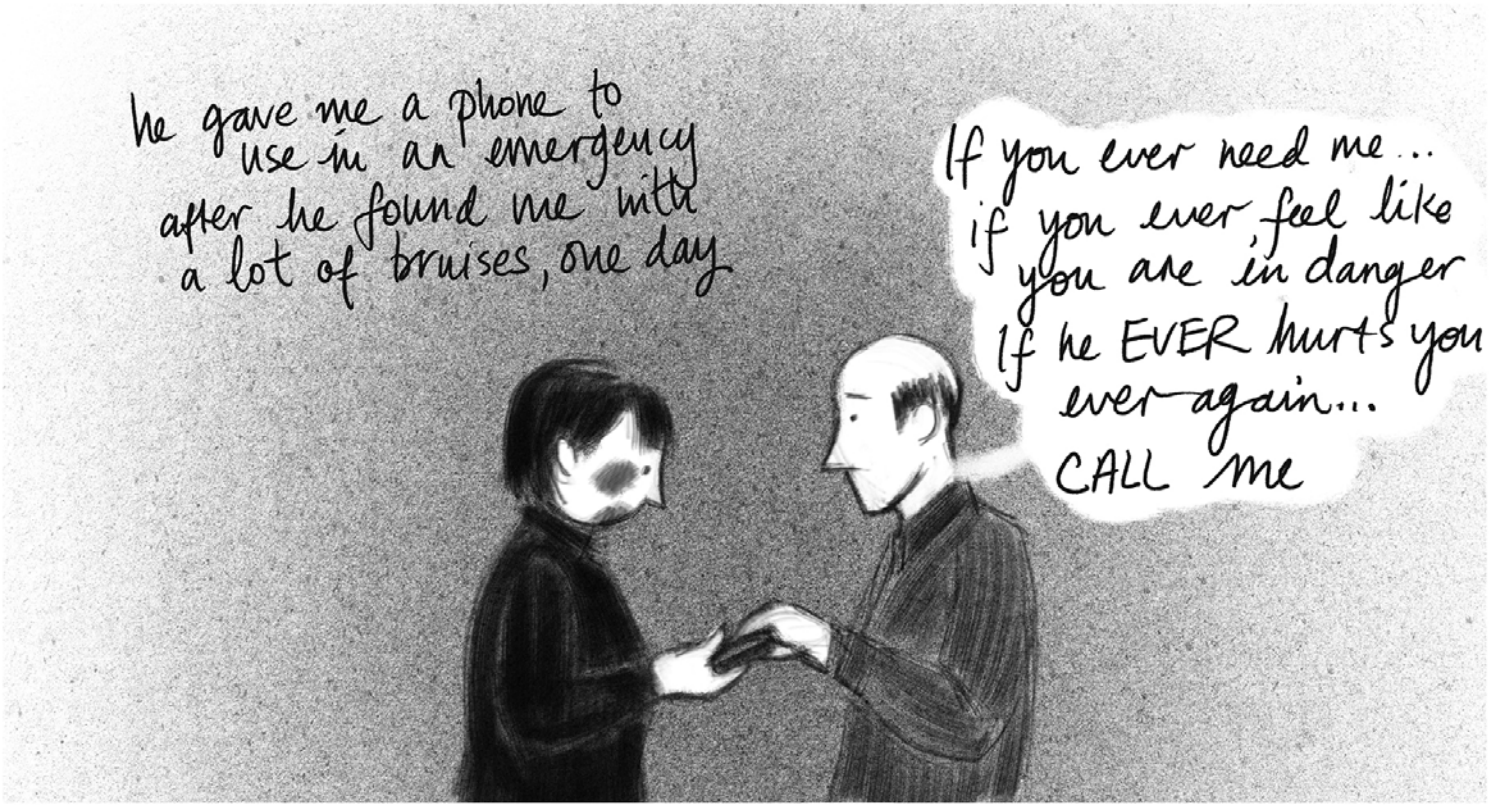

You remember how your father was?
Everyone was scared of him.
After you left home, he got worse
So much worse...
I took refuge in other things
cooking,
painting
José

er... who?

José was my boyfriend before I met your father, but he had to go away to France to work. I was terribly depressed and... your father swooped in on me... quite forcefully.

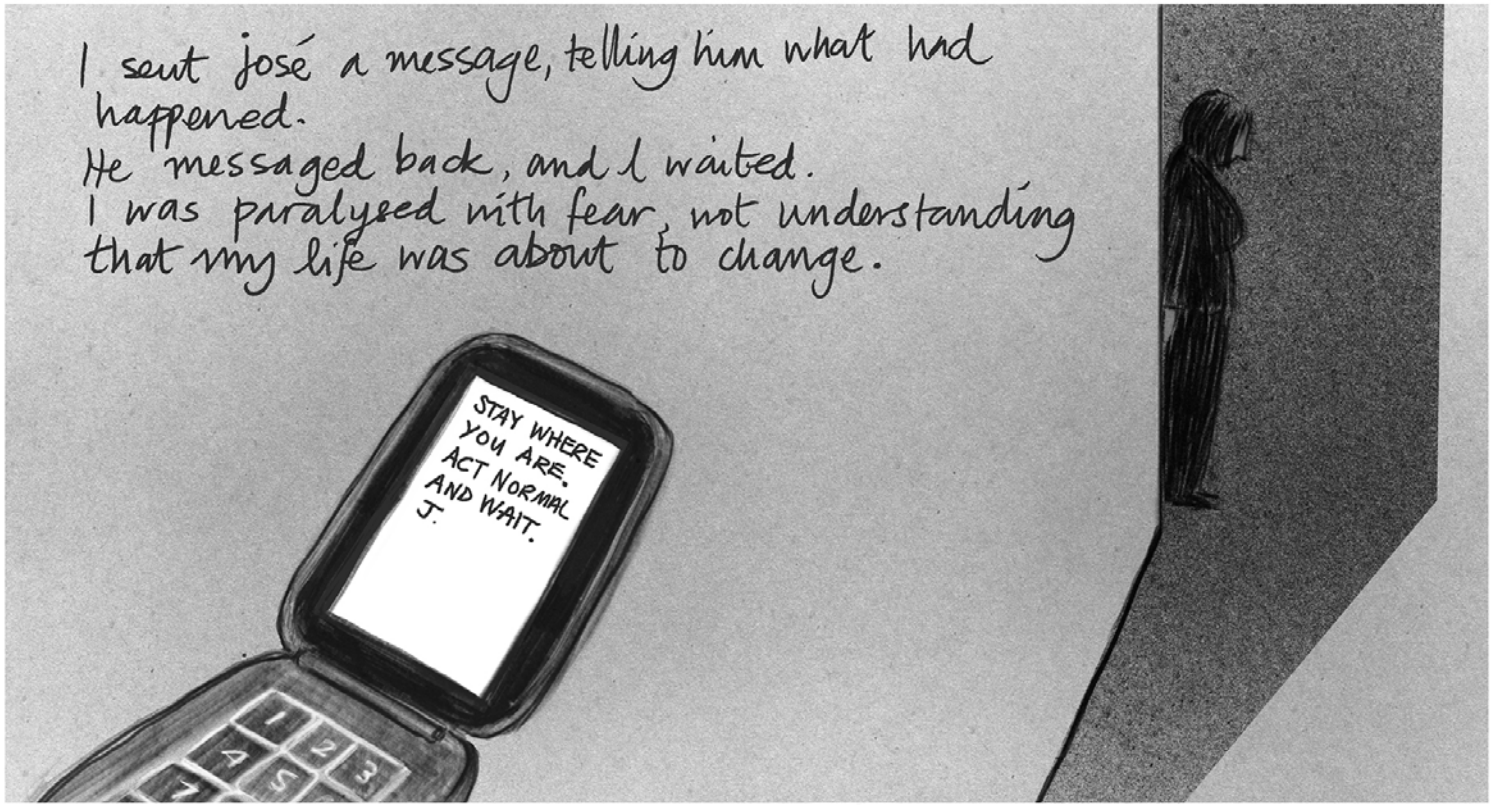
I wrote to José to tell him I was going to marry Esteves... I was pregnant with you, Ana, and things were different back then. José didn't come back to the village, not even in the Summers

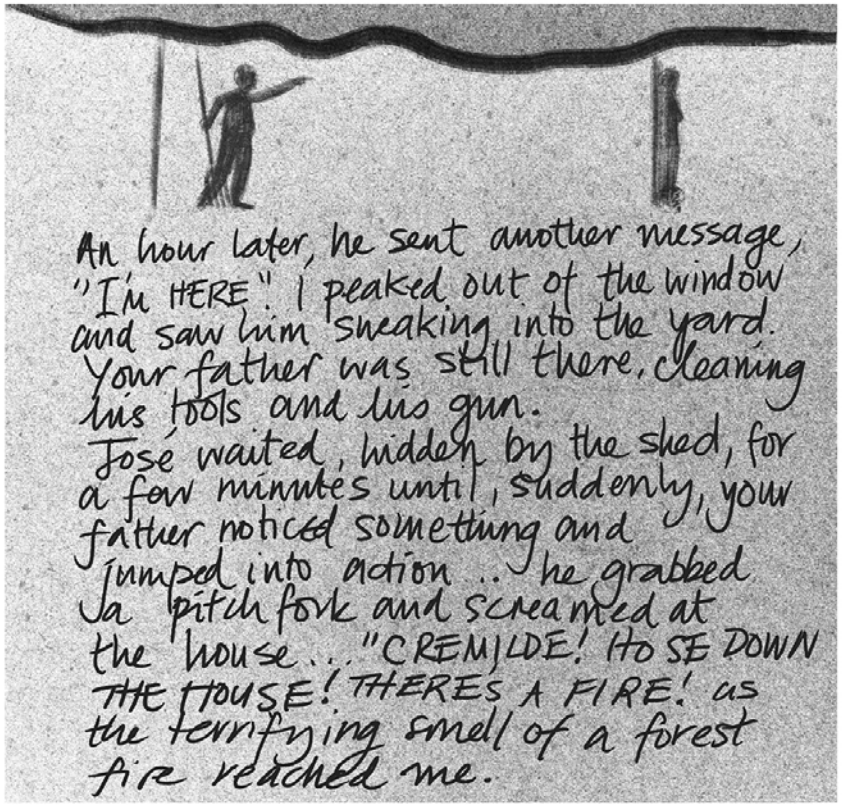

José only came back to the country many years later.. I bumped into him in the town one day.
We became friends, No we weren't lovers but we were very close... and he was a distraction.
He couldn't stand how your father treated me.

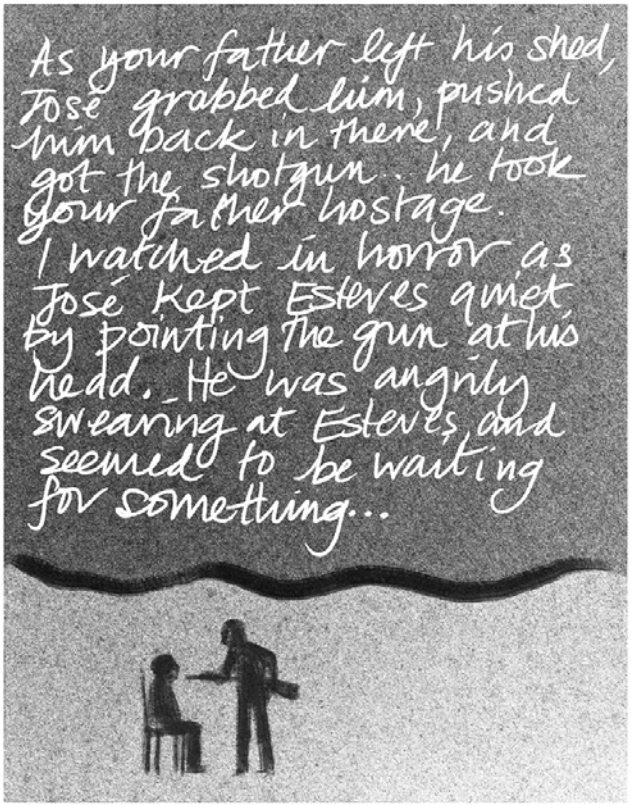

he gave me a phone to use in an emergency after he found me with a lot of bruises, one day.
If you ever need me... if you ever feel like you are in danger If he EVER hurts you ever again... CALL me

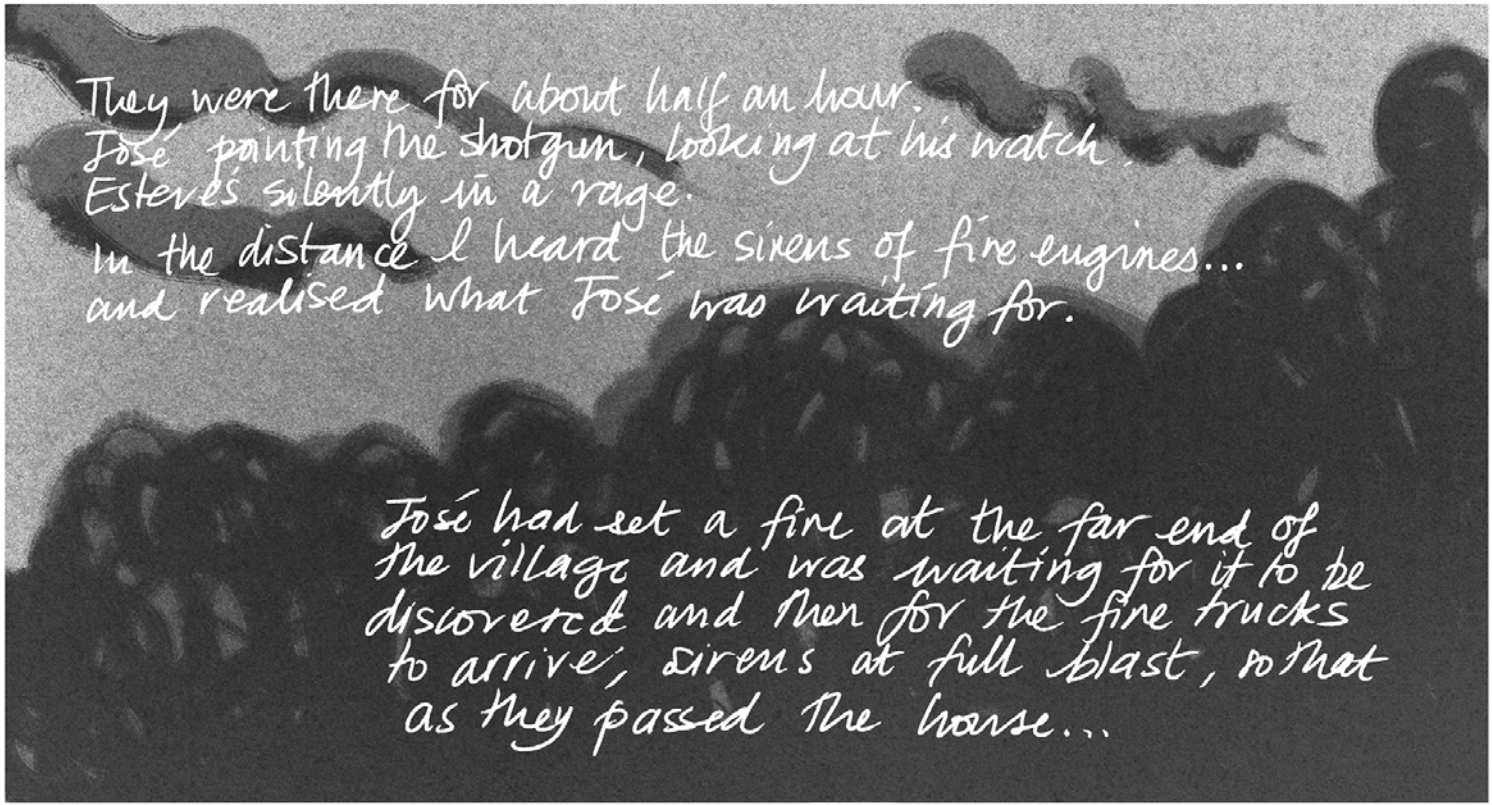
It didn't take long before I needed to call José

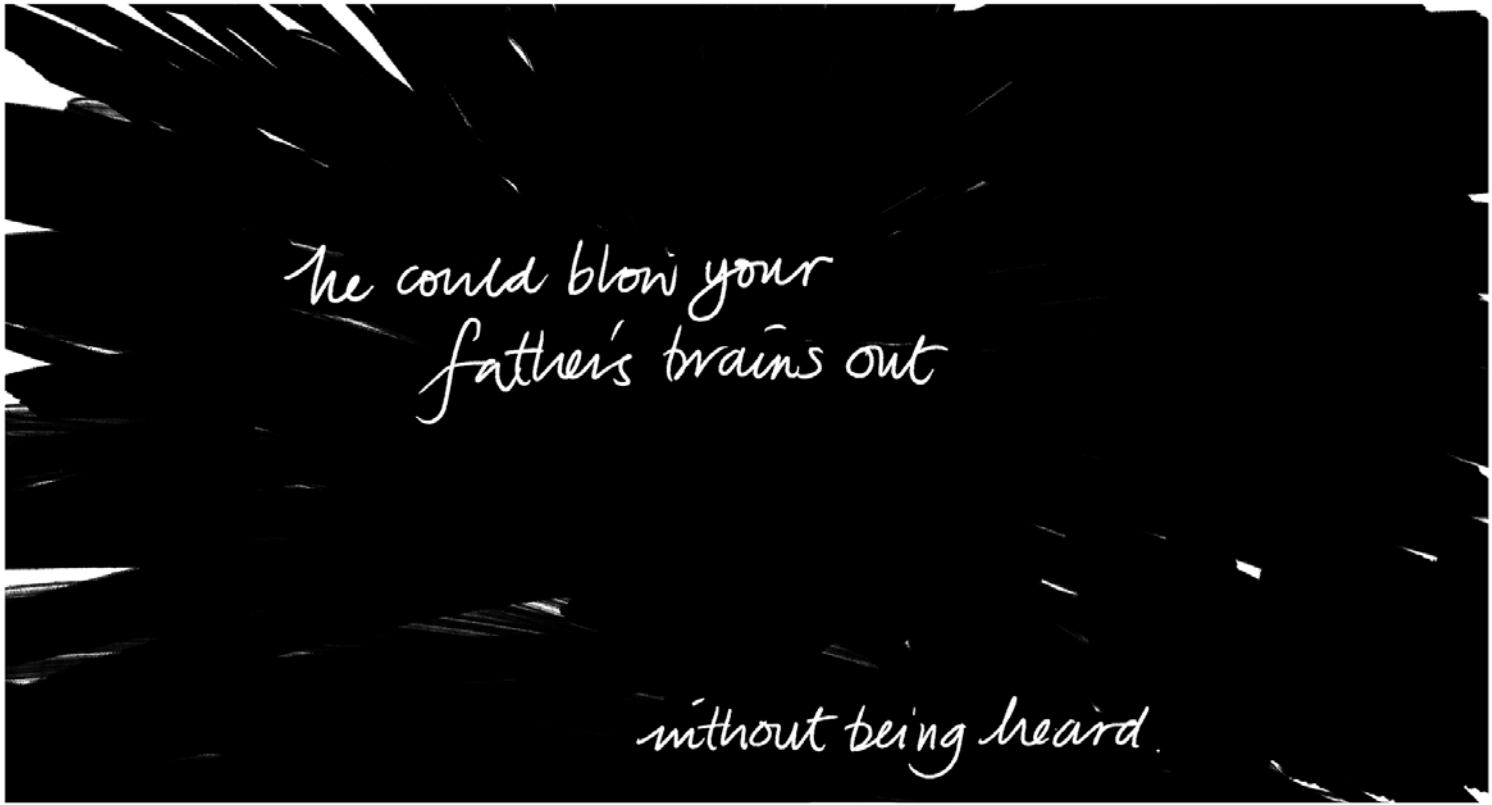
Your father was sick of me painting, HATED that it made me happy and that day, he stormed into the kitchen, where I painted, threatened me with his shotgun. Luckily, he put the gun down, but he still hit me and made my nose bleed, then went back to his shed...

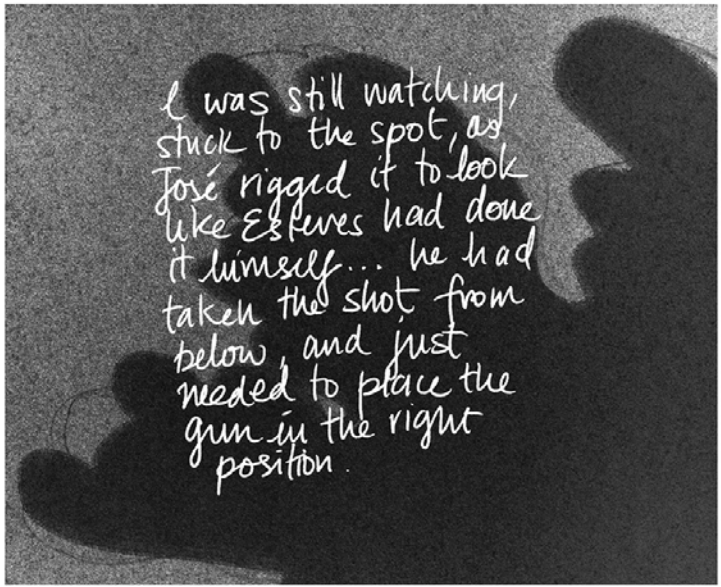

I sent José a message, telling him what had happened.
He messaged back, and I waited.
I was paralysed with fear, not understanding that my life was about to change.
STAY WHERE YOU ARE. ACT NORMAL AND WAIT. J.

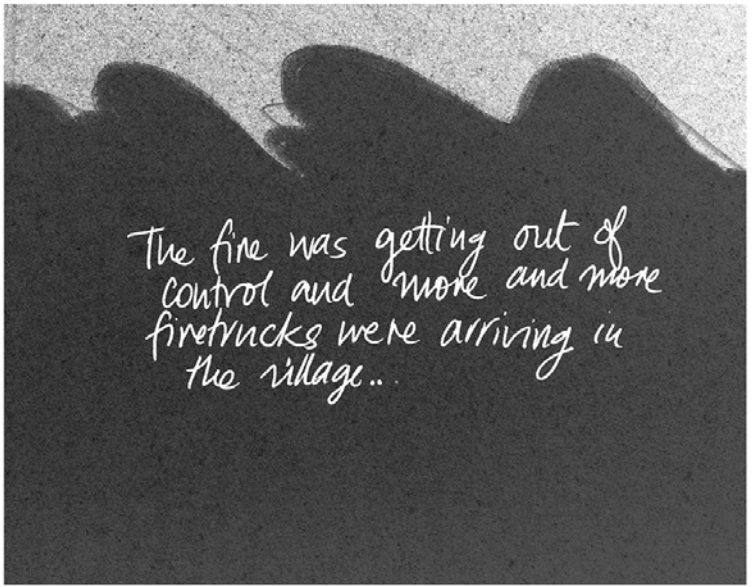

An hour later, he sent another message, "I'm HERE". I peaked out of the window and saw him sneaking into the yard. Your father was still there, cleaning his tools and his gun.
José waited, hidden by the shed, for a few minutes until, suddenly, your father noticed something and jumped into action .. he grabbed a pitch fork and screamed at the house... "CREMILDE! HOSE DOWN THE HOUSE! THERES A FIRE! as the terrifying smell of a forest fire reached me.


As your father left his shed, José grabbed him, pushed him back in there, and got the shotgun. he took your father hostage.
I watched in horror as José kept Esteves quiet by pointing the gun at his head. He was angrily swearing at Esteves, and seemed to be waiting for something...

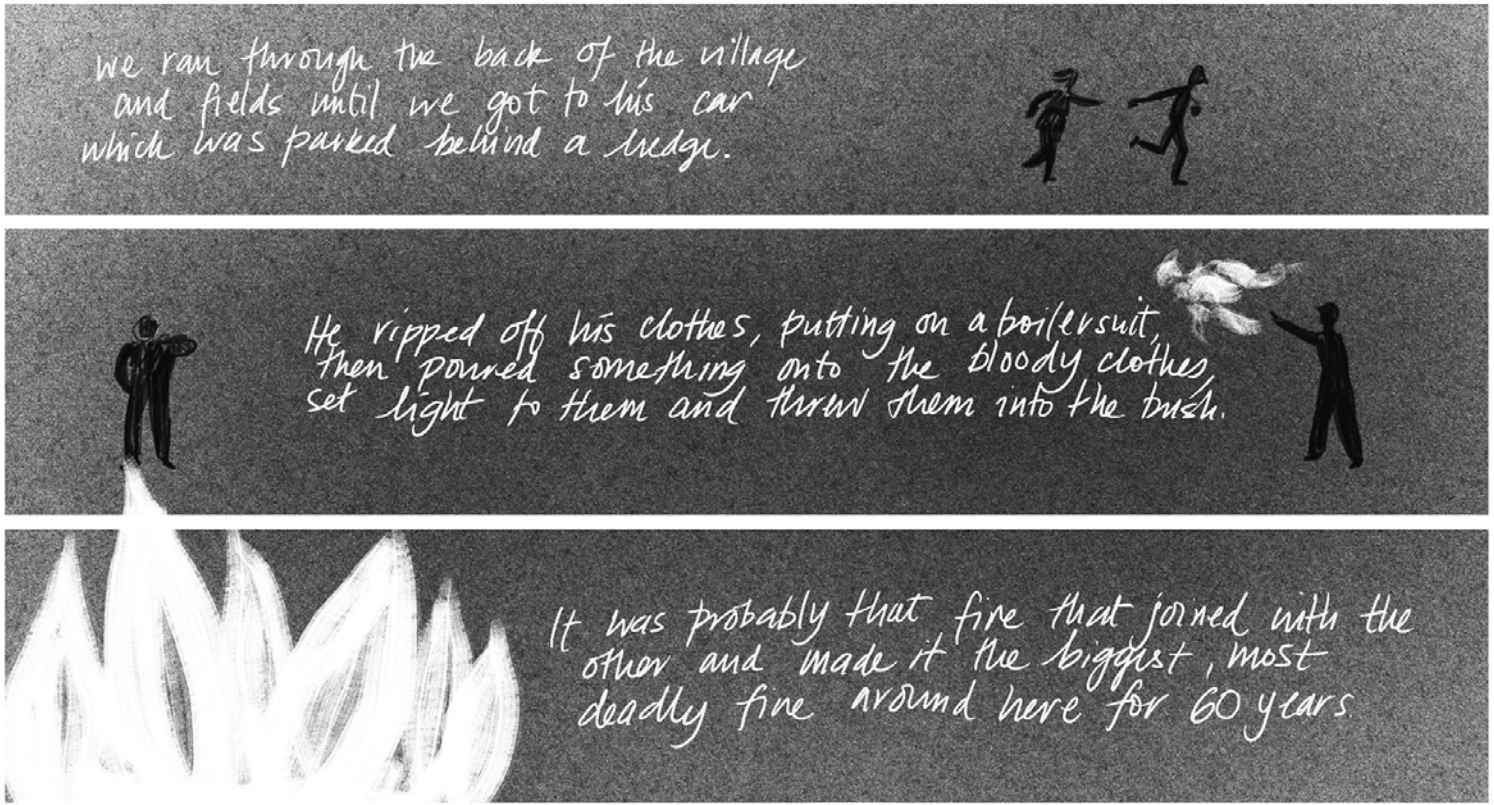

They were there for about half an hour.
José pointing the shotgun, looking at his watch.
Esteves silently in a rage.
In the distance I heard the sirens of fire engines...
and realised what José was waiting for.
José had set a fire at the far end of the village and was waiting for it to be discovered and then for the fire trucks to arrive, sirens at full blast, so that as they passed the house...

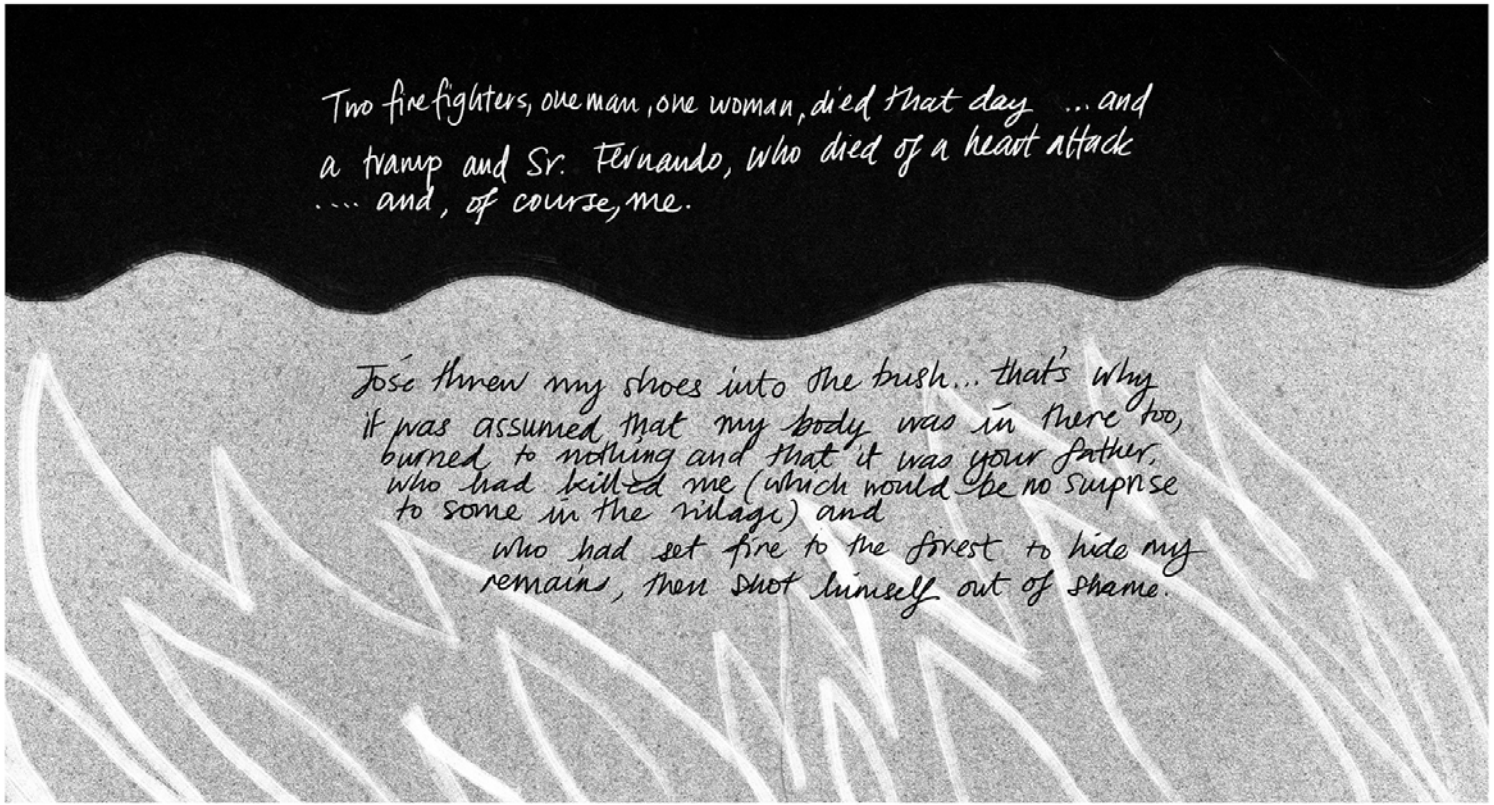

he could blow your
father's brains out
without being heard

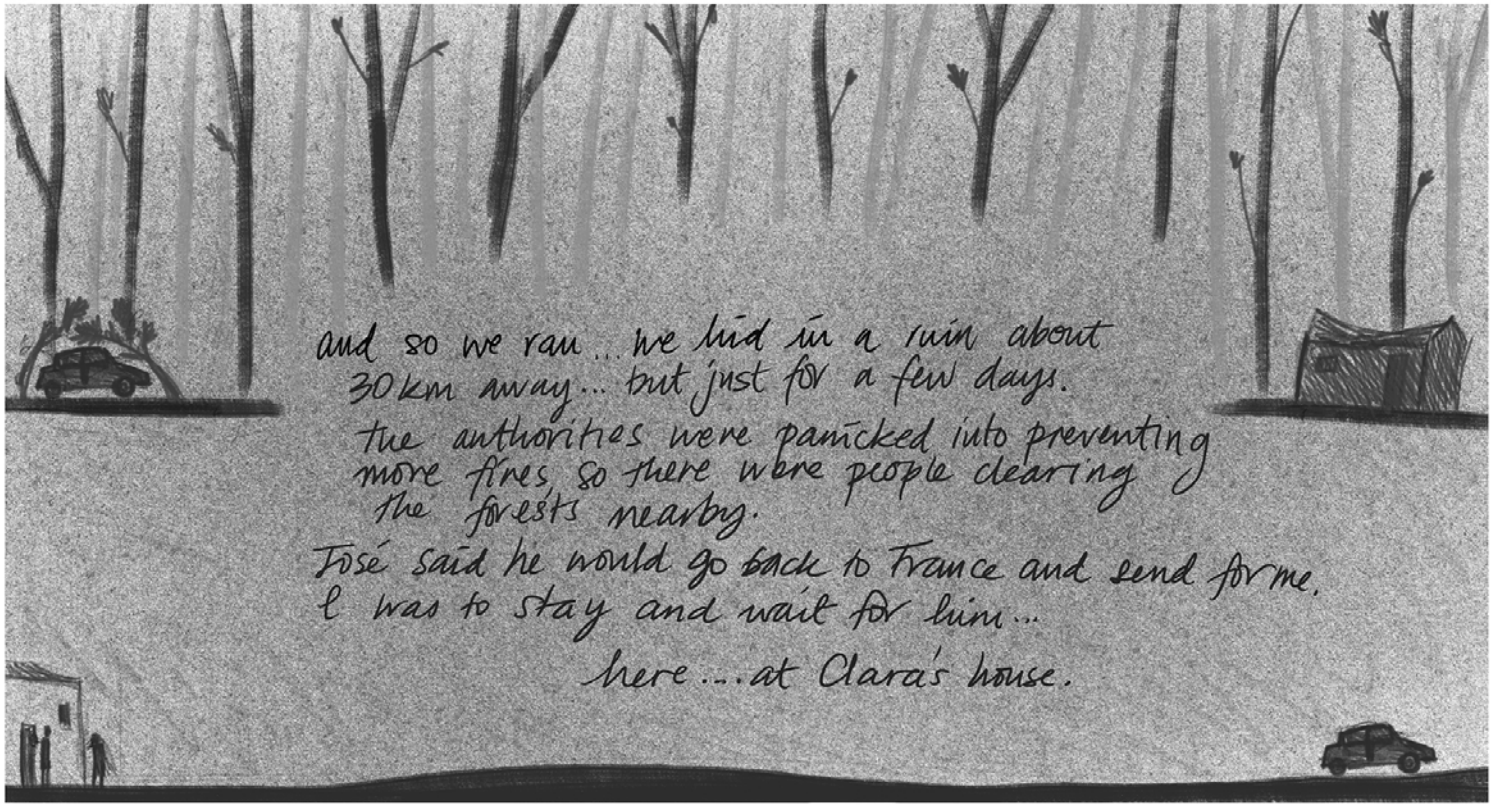

I was still watching, stuck to the spot, as José rigged it to look like Esteves had done it himself... he had taken the shot from below, and just needed to place the gun in the right position.


The fire was getting out of control and more and more firetrucks were arriving in the village...

José, covered in blood and brains, ushered me out of the house and we ran away... I was still in shock.


we ran through the back of the village and fields until we got to his car which was parked behind a hedge.
He ripped off his clothes, putting on a boilersuit, then poured something onto the bloody clothes set light to them and threw them into the bush.
It was probably that fire that joined with the other and made it the biggest, most deadly fire around here for 60 years.

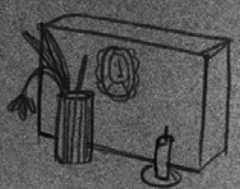

Two firefighters, one man, one woman, died that day ... and a tramp and Sr. Fernando, who died of a heart attack .... and, of course, me.
José threw my shoes into the bush... that's why it was assumed that my body was in there too, burned to nothing and that it was your father, who had killed me (which would be no surprise to some in the village) and who had set fire to the forest to hide my remains, then shot himself out of shame.


and so we ran... we hid in a ruin about
30 km away... but just for a few days.
the authorities were panicked into preventing
more fires, so there were people clearing
the forests nearby.
José said he would go back to France and send for me,
I was to stay and wait for him...
here... at Clara's house.

So... Clara knew where you were this whole time...
of coure she knew. She was my oldest friend, and was too scared to say no to José, now a murderer...
and so I stayed in her back room... and waited for José.

and waited
and waited.
and waited

but to this day, I never heard from him again

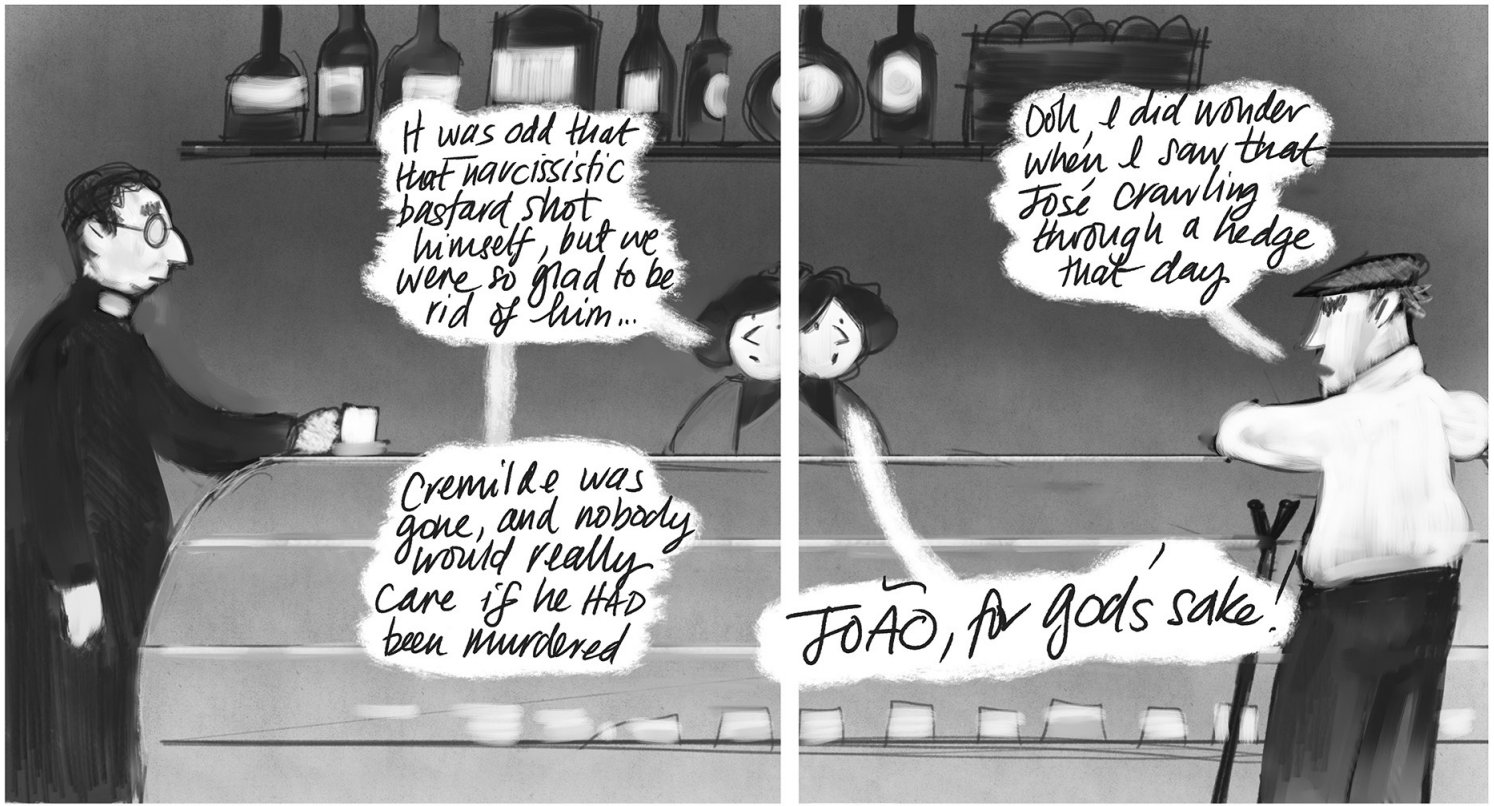


then Clara died.
5 years of the stress of hiding me
can't have helped her...
oh god...

five years, mum, jesus.
It's amazing how you get used to it... when she died there wasn't much food in the house, so I had to start going out.
I've been seeing you and the twins from inside.... with my heart breaking.

terrible to see you and not be with you
So, dammit, here I am now. I'm sorry Ana. I'm so sorry... but at least I can have some moments with you and the twins before I go to prison

Prison, mum?
Mum, you were horribly abused for years, by dad, THEN you were forced to witness his execution, lead into running away while you were in shock and then abandoned... then you had 5 years locked away with Clara!
I'm sure they won't send you to prison
I wish you'd come out earlier though, mum, I missed you so much
I can imagine
Yes dear... I was witness to a murder, faked my own death, and people died!
I'm sorry Ana... but I was so scared... especially with Clara's scaredy cat scare-mongering...


It was odd that that narcissistic bastard shot himself, but we were so glad to be rid of him...
Cremilde was gone, and nobody would really care if he HAD been murdered
Ooh, I did wonder when I saw that José crawling through a hedge that day.
JOÃO, for god's sake!

Hello Granny!
sssh... your mum's on the phone to your uncle
I'm sorry son
mummy, can we keep ghost granny?
eheheh
Yes son, see you tonight... I'm sorry
Of course we can
He was angry, of course. He's on his way up.

my brother's coming up tonight, then we'll see about talking to the police tomorrow
Welcome home Cremilde!
ooh, look at her tiny feet

the end
(for now)

The Village – EPILOGUE

know what you're doing with Claras house yet? We have been waiting a while...
OH DO SHUT UP, PIPI!
haha PIPI! rude