

FROM DARKNESS TO HOPE

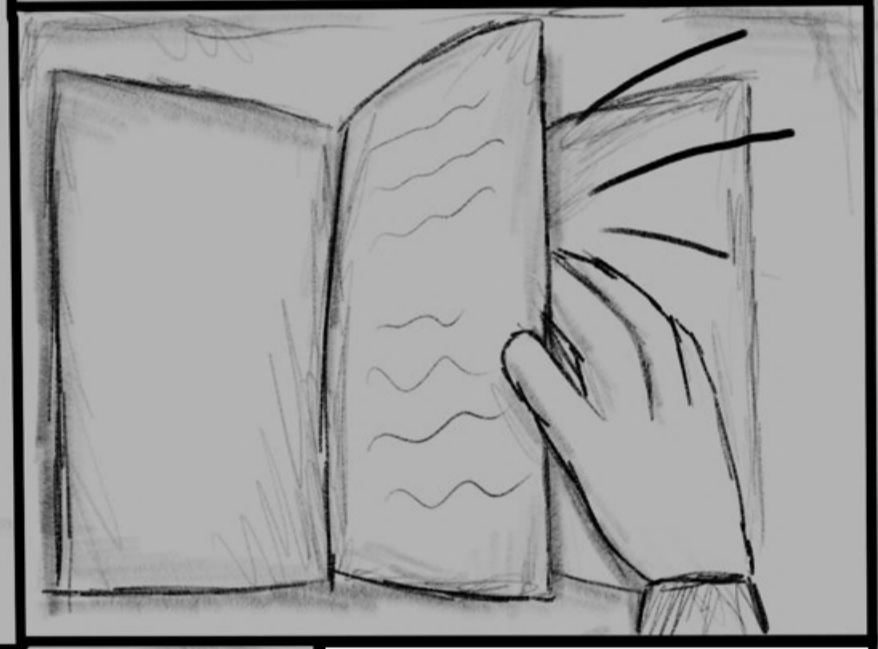
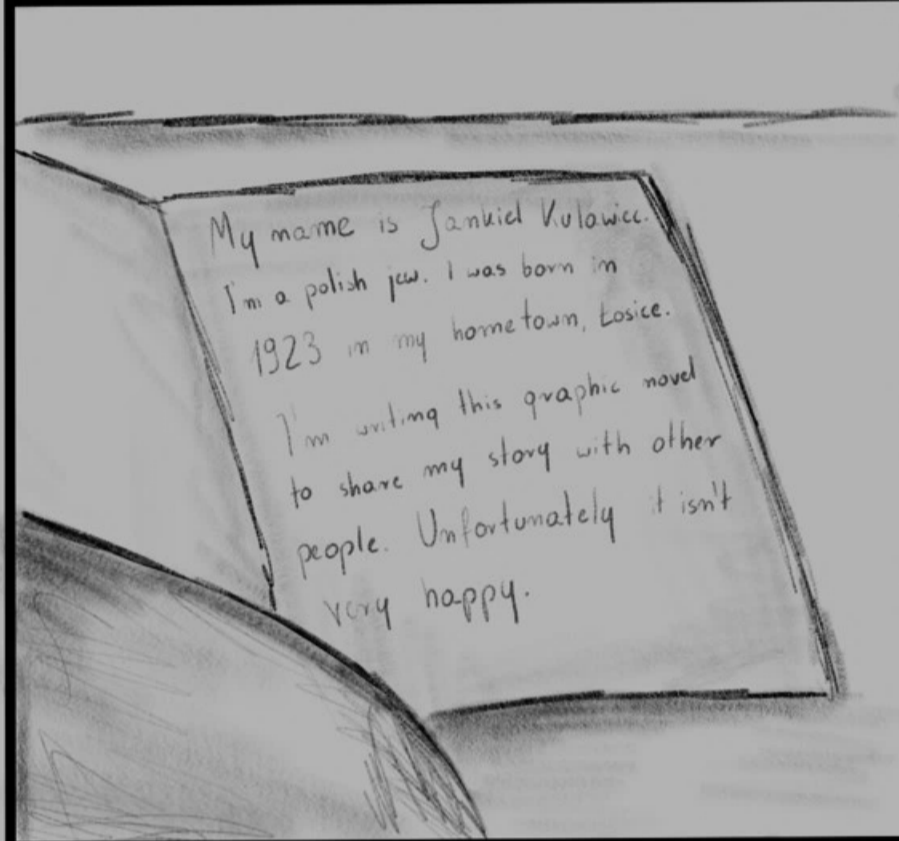
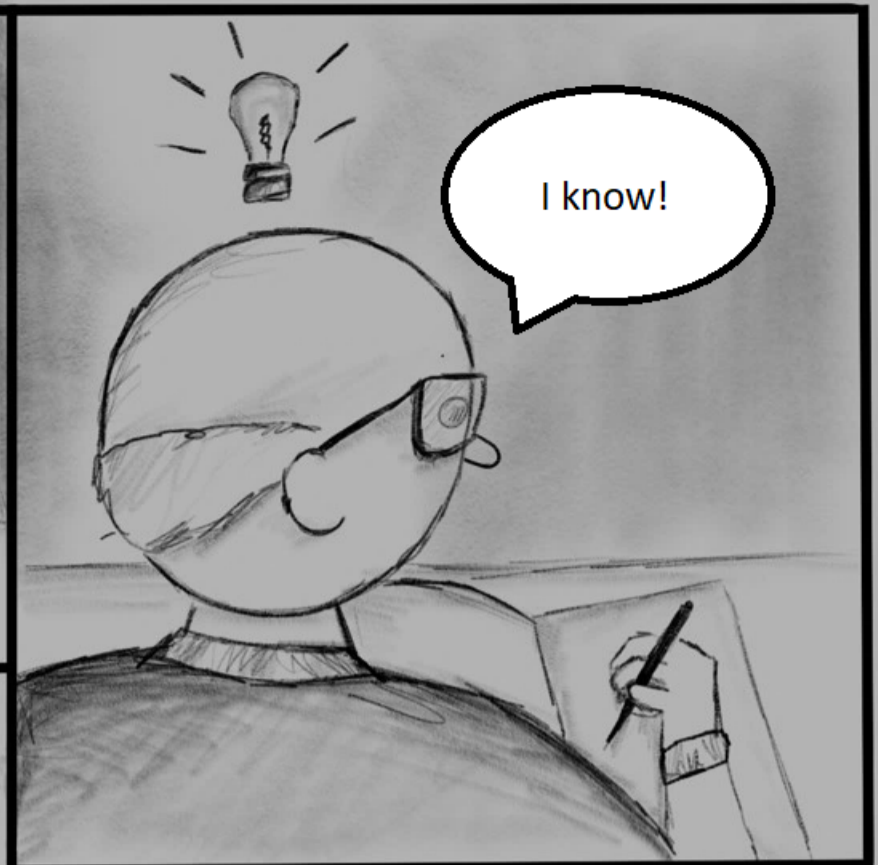
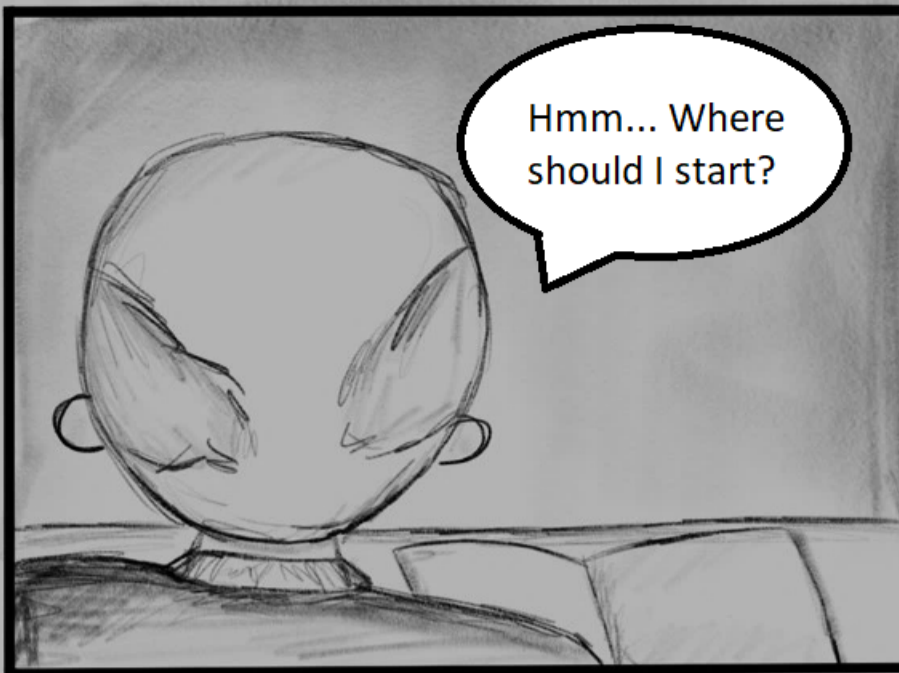
- a Jewish struggle for freedom

Authors: Julia Dmowska
and Olgierd Baran

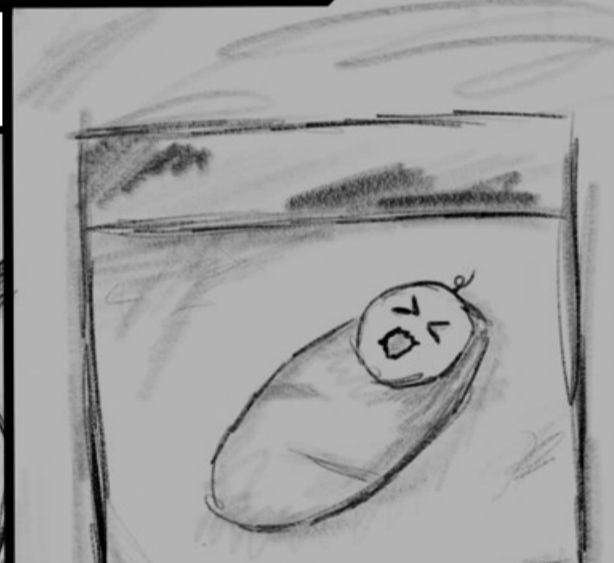
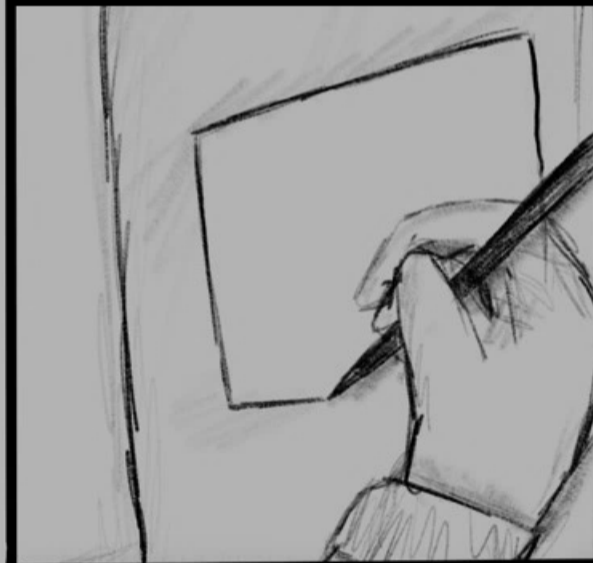
School: II Liceum
Ogólnokształcące im. Św.
Królowej Jadwigi w Siedlcach

Teacher: Ewa
Kamińska-Kuć

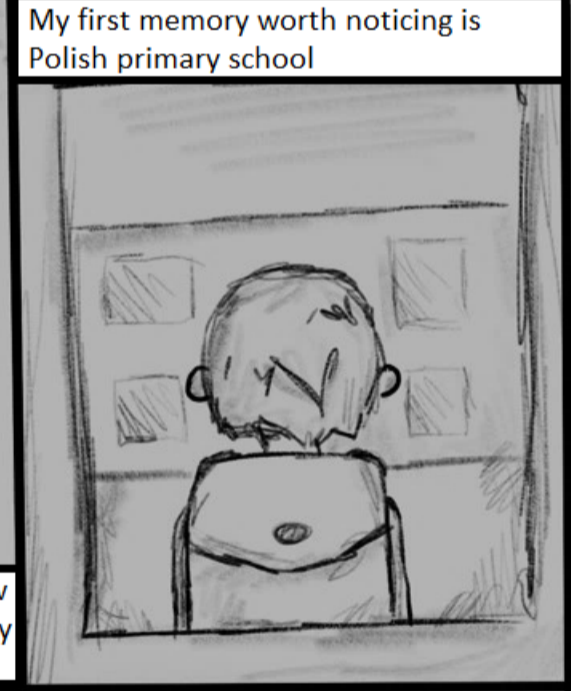




As I have mentioned, my story starts in 1923.



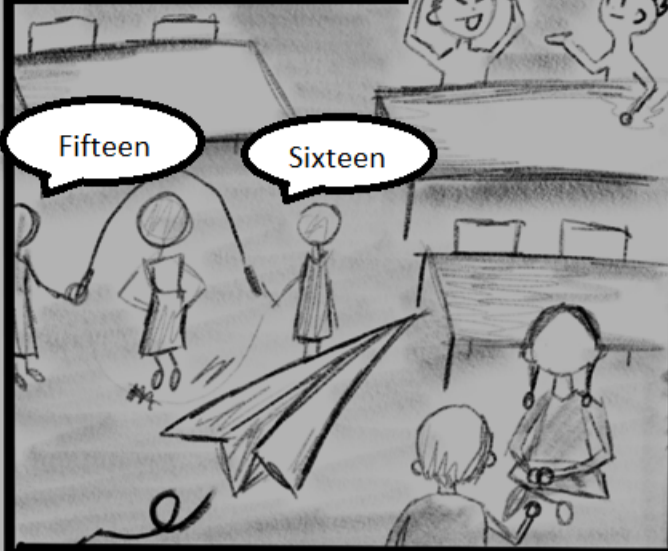
There is no reason to talk about my first few years on this world, hence even I don't really remember it.



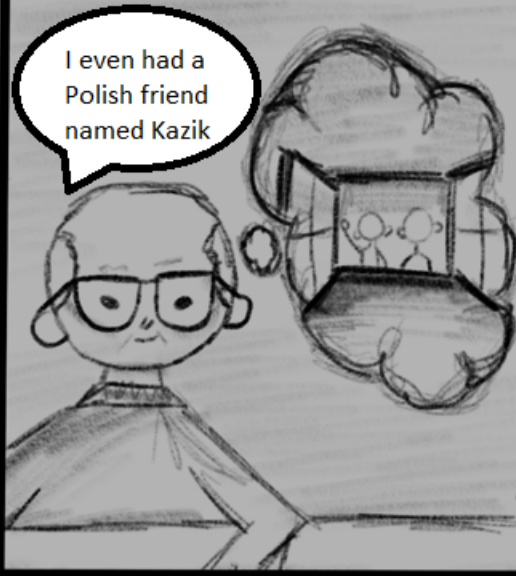
During lessons Jewish children were separated from Polish



However, there was no conflict between us. We were getting on pretty well.



I even had a Polish friend named Kazik



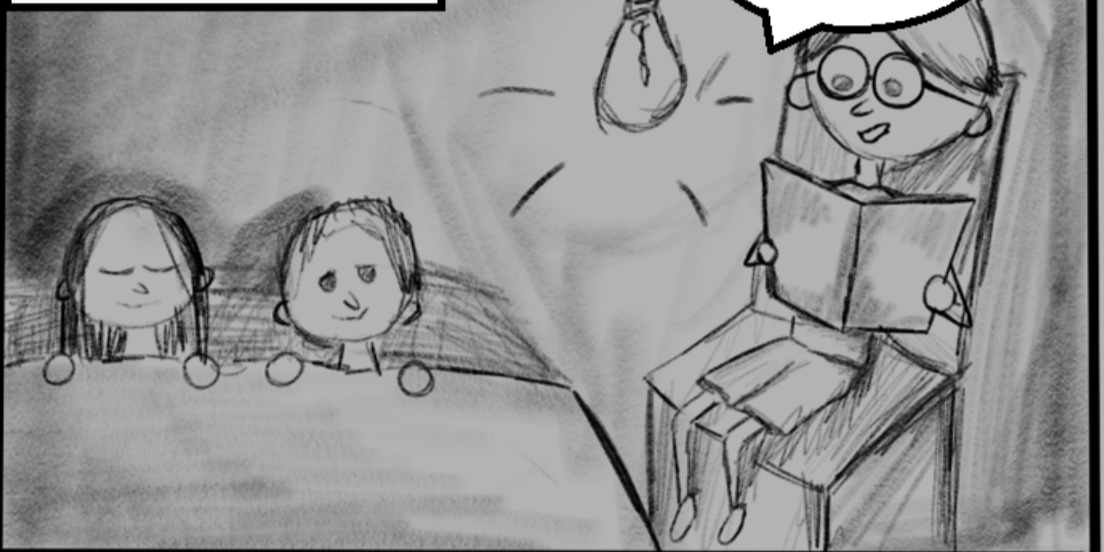
We usually went home together.



We both loved geography. I really liked to draw maps. I think that there is still something left from that fascination.



When it comes to my family life, I often spent time with my younger siblings.



...and they lived happily ever after.

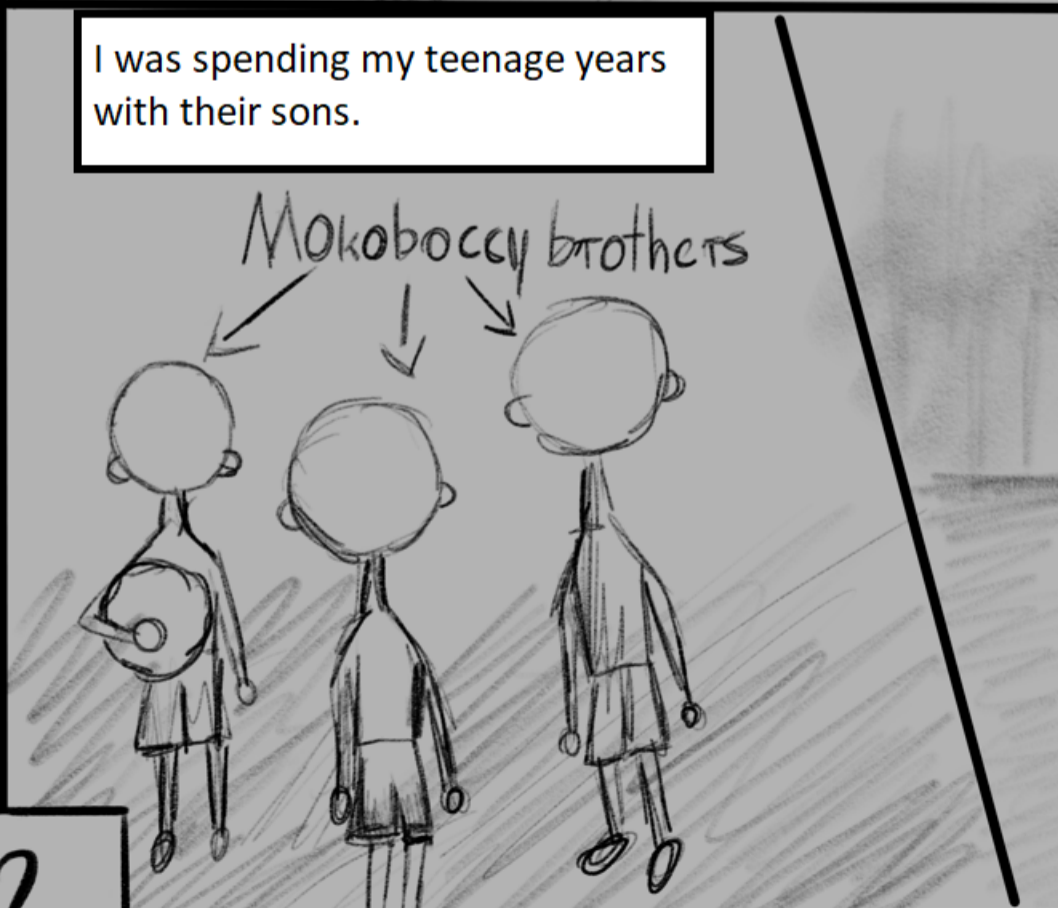
I regularly walked with them to school or take care of them in my free time. Everything to help my parents.



As I grew older I had more responsibilities. In the meantime I was also helping my cousins-Mokoboccy.



I was spending my teenage years with their sons.

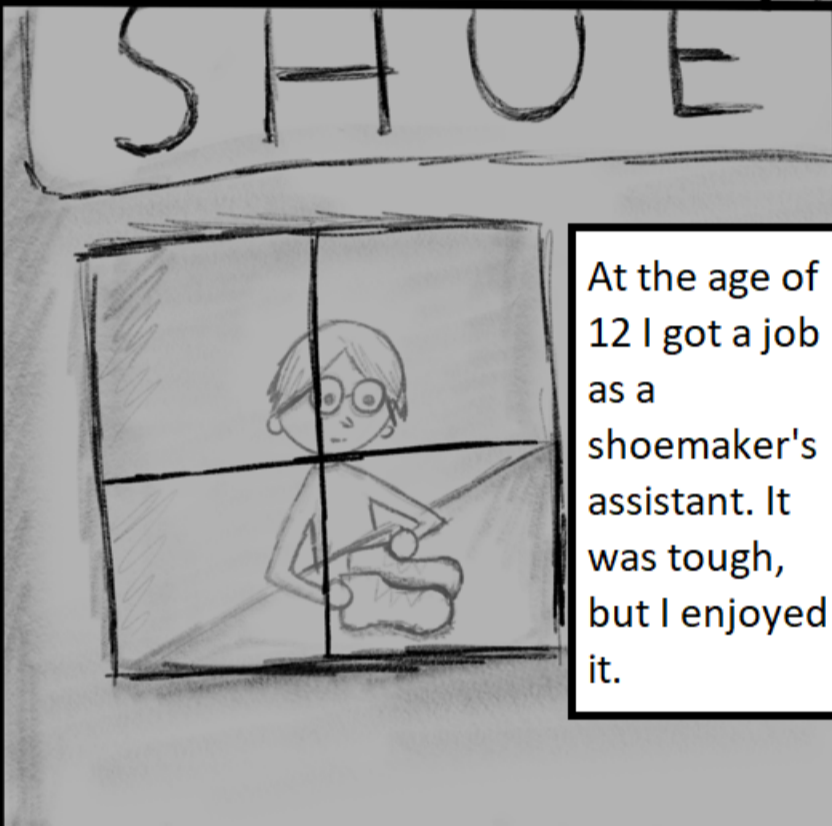


We were playing football and overall having a great time.

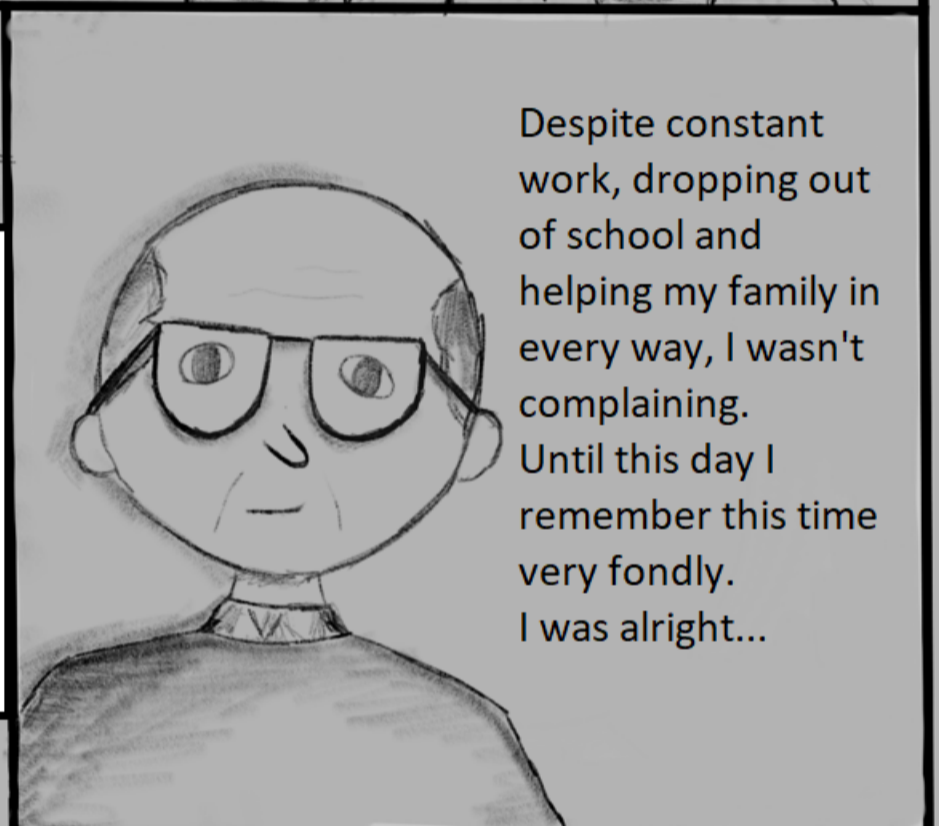


As I grew older I was taking simple jobs to help my family. I often cut wood out.

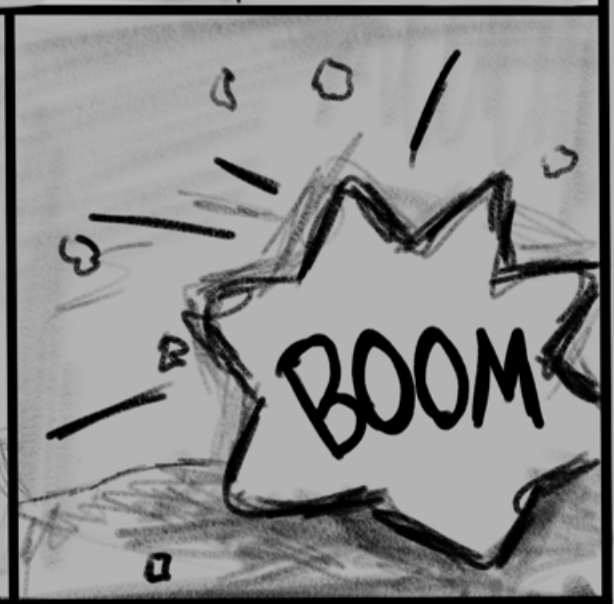
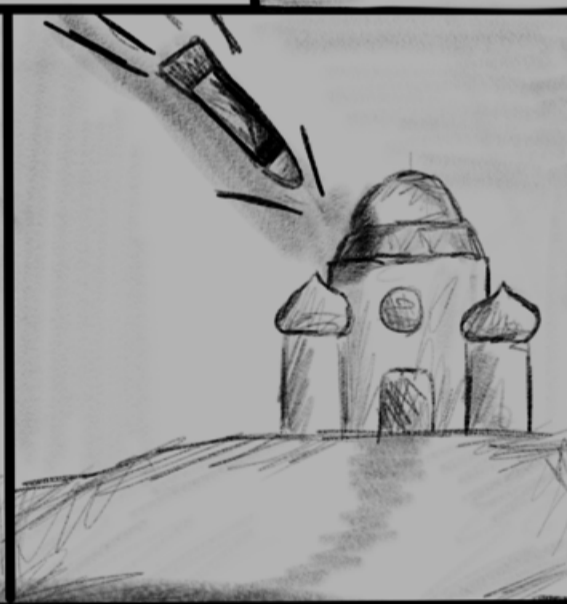
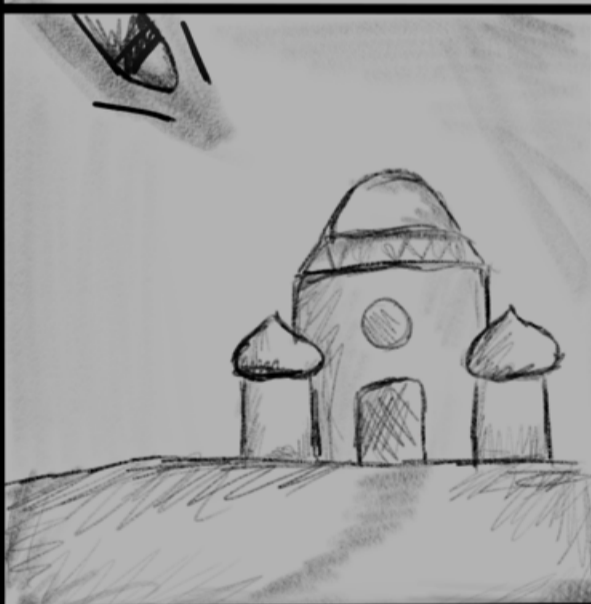
Or carry water.



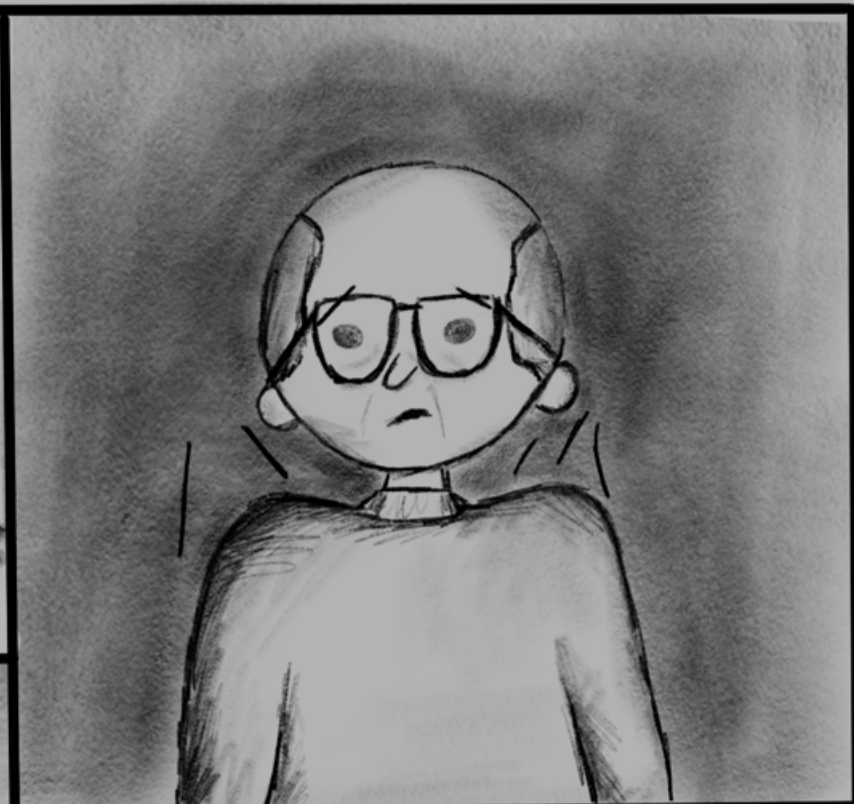
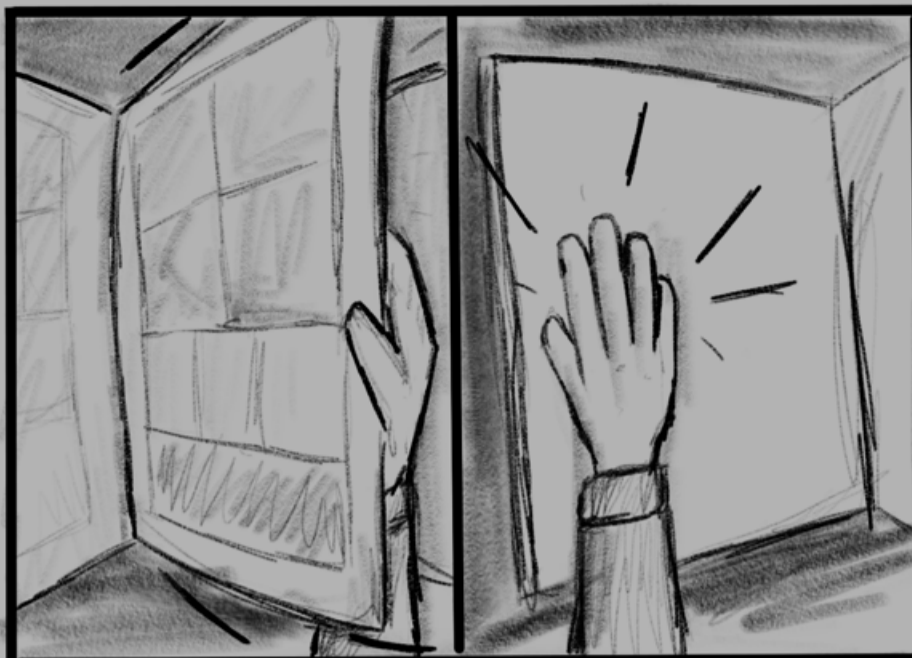
At the age of 12 I got a job as a shoemaker's assistant. It was tough, but I enjoyed it.



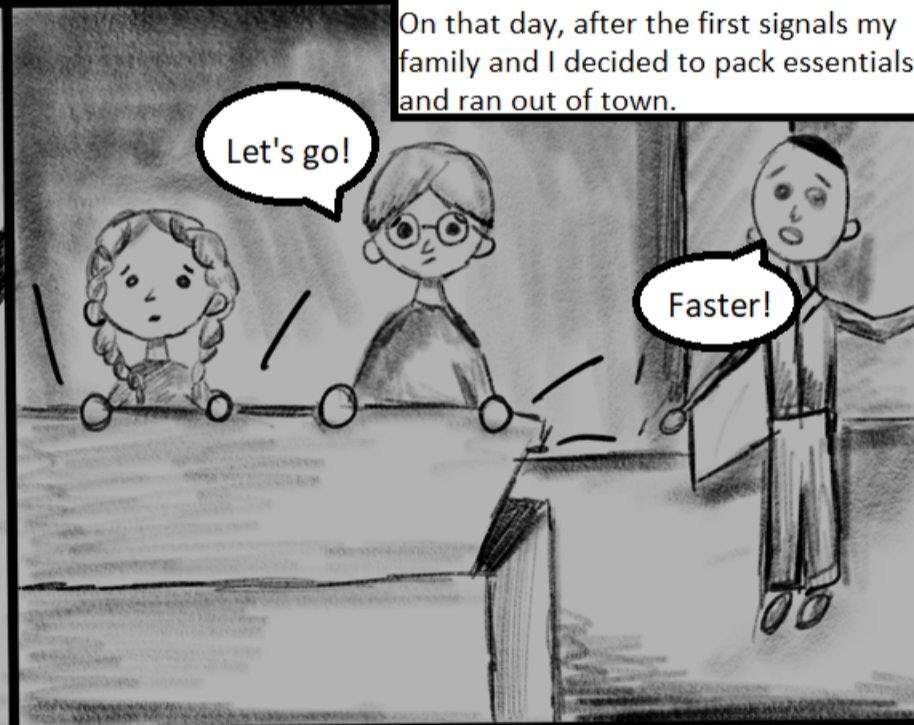
Despite constant work, dropping out of school and helping my family in every way, I wasn't complaining. Until this day I remember this time very fondly. I was alright...



...Until...



On September 9th 1939 Germans started to bomb Łosice. Their target was the synagogue..



Unfortunately, some people didn't make it...

When we got out I was devastated. It was too much, too soon for my 15-year-old brain.



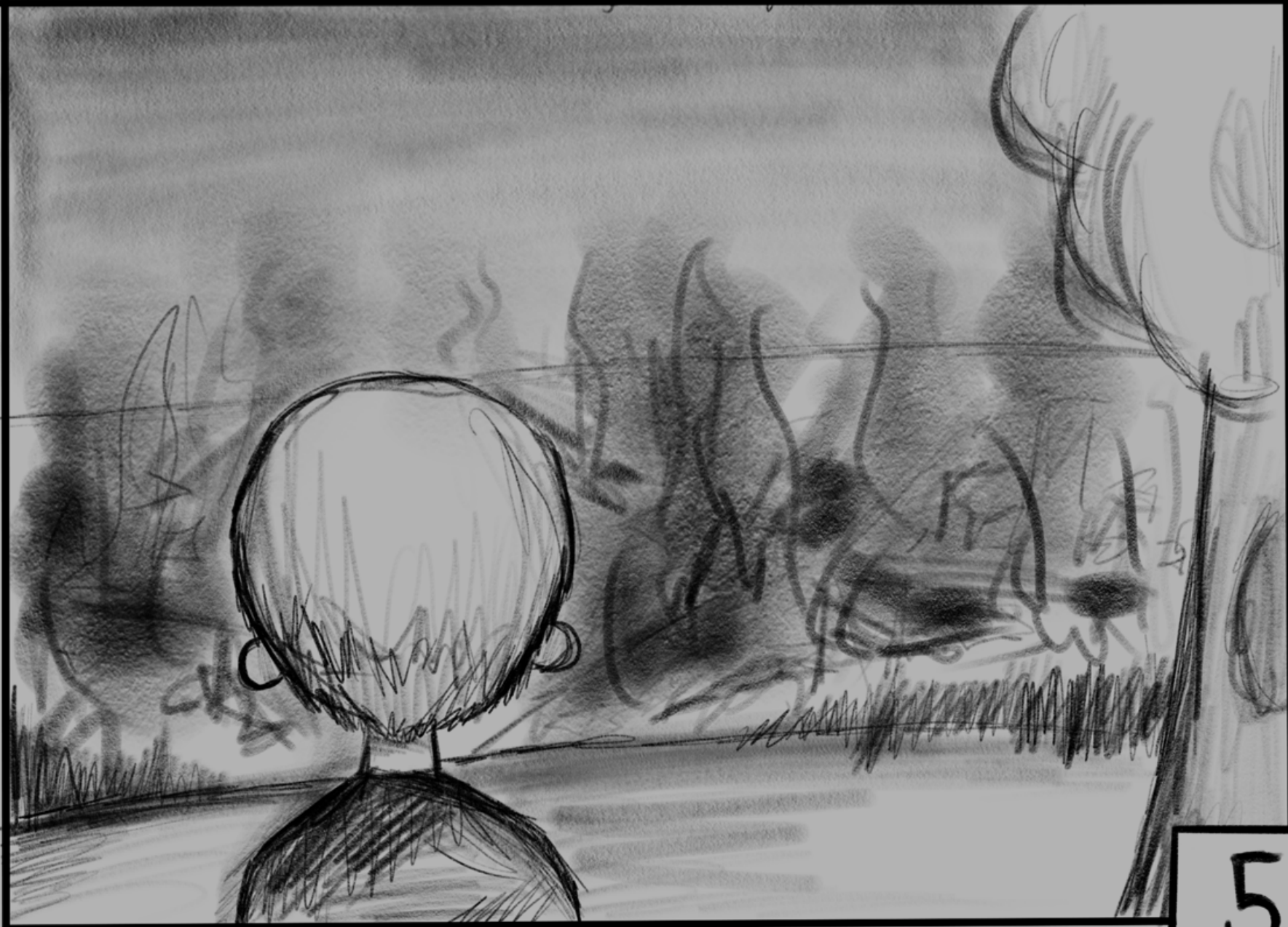
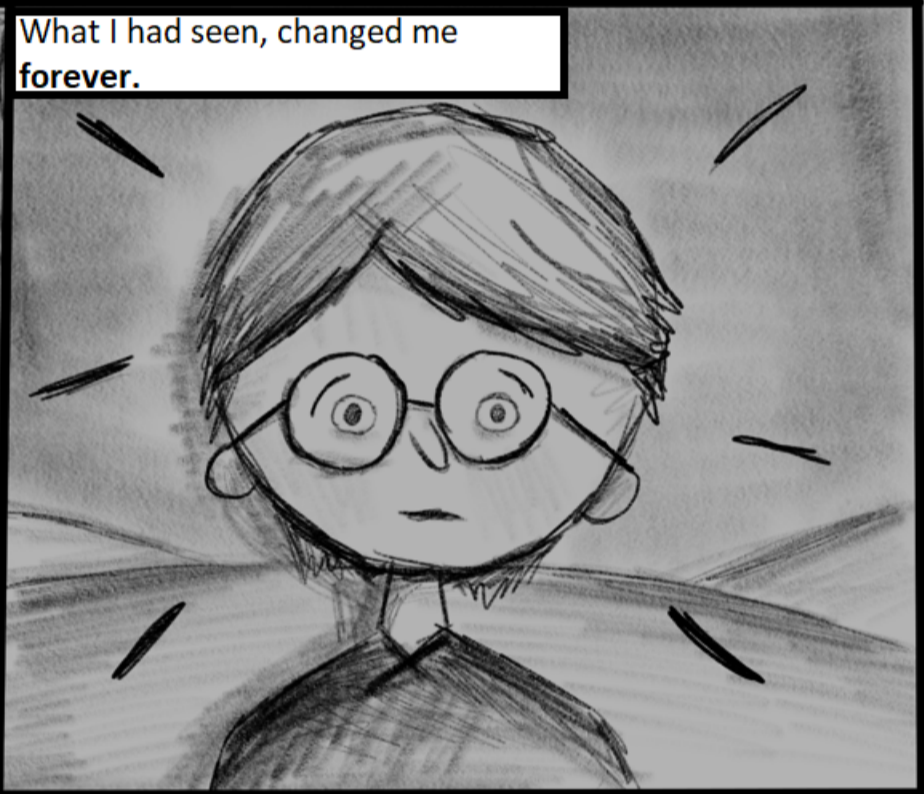
Despite this I was curious...

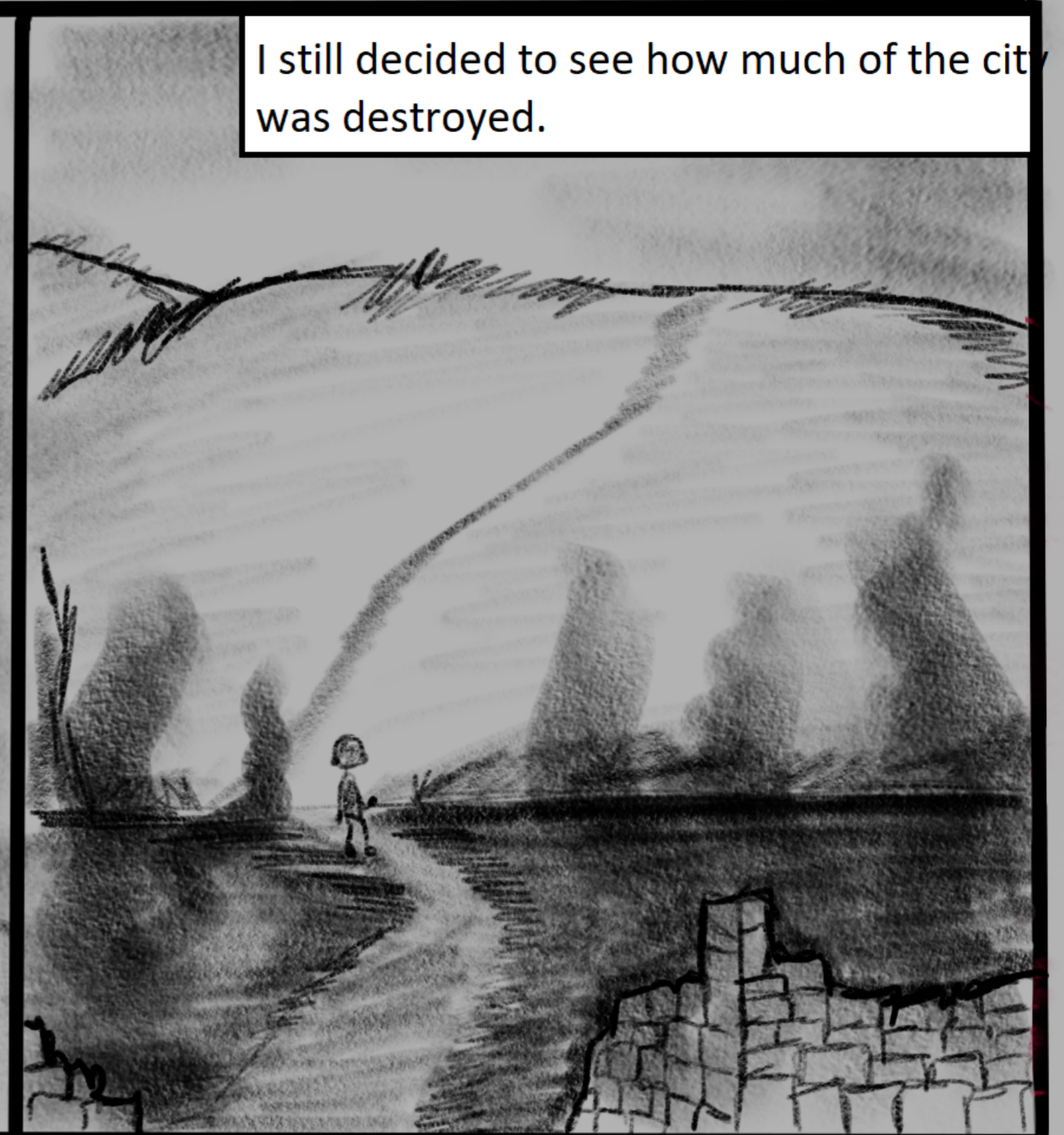
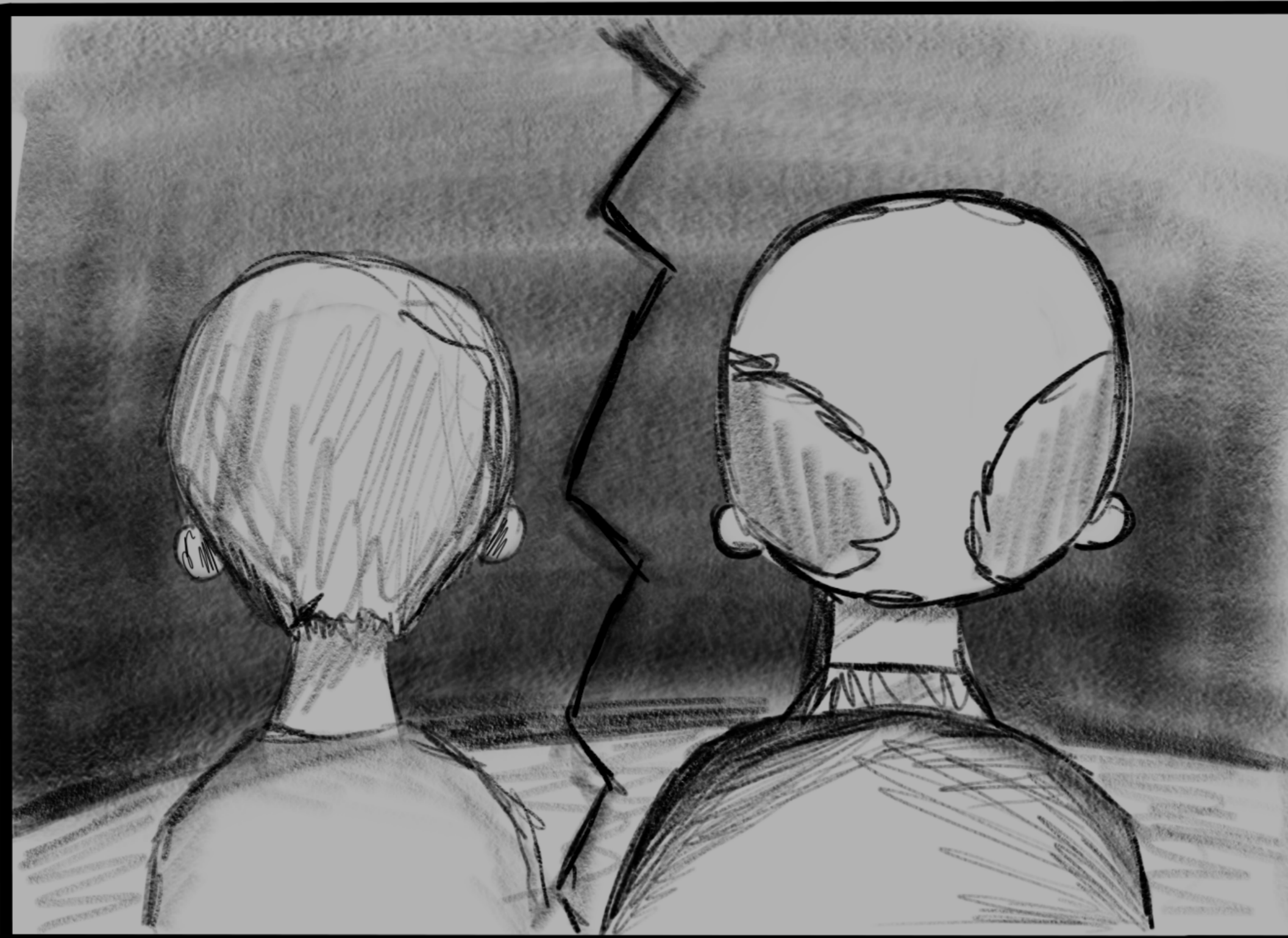


...So I went to see the damages.



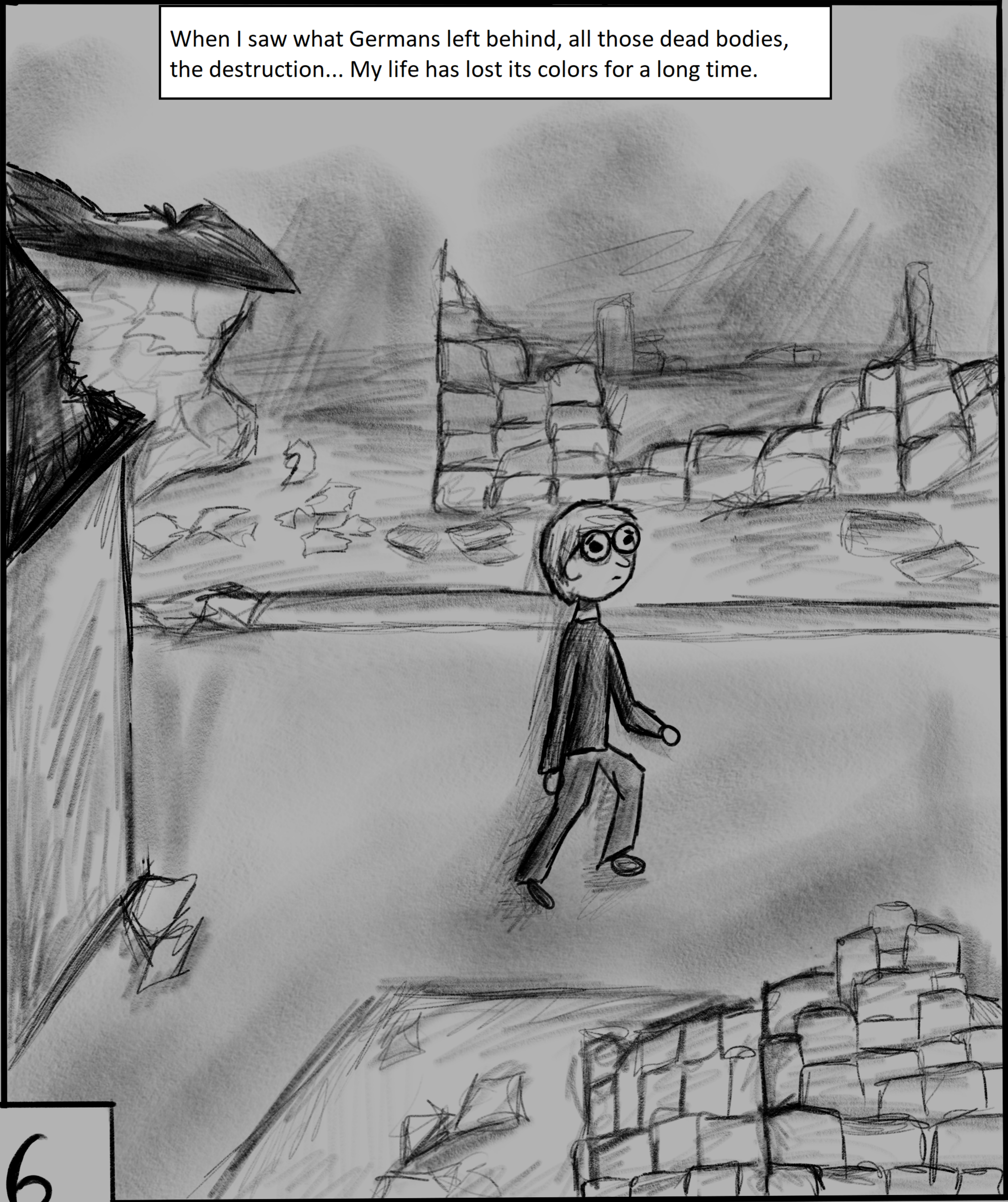
What I had seen, changed me forever.

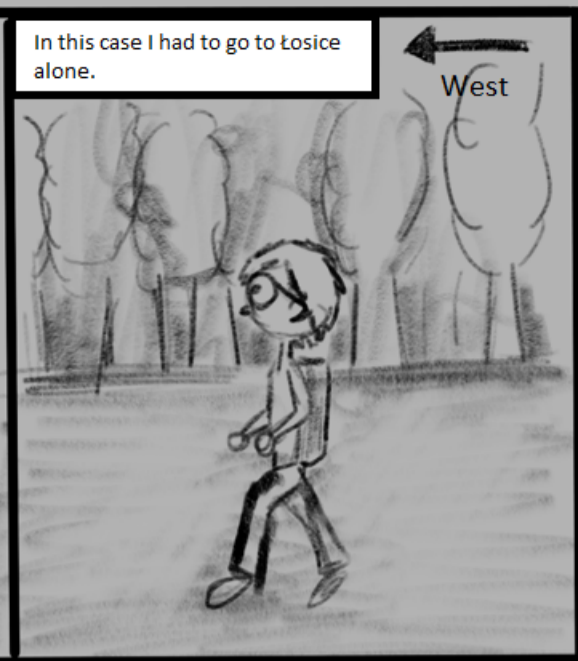
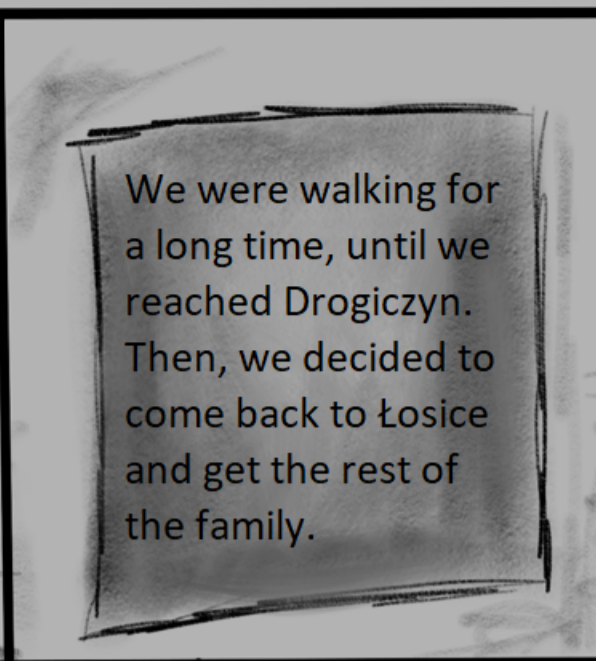
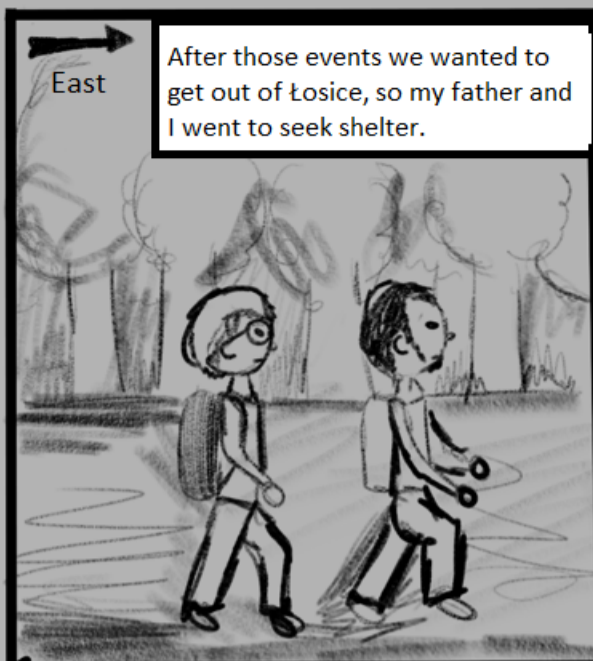




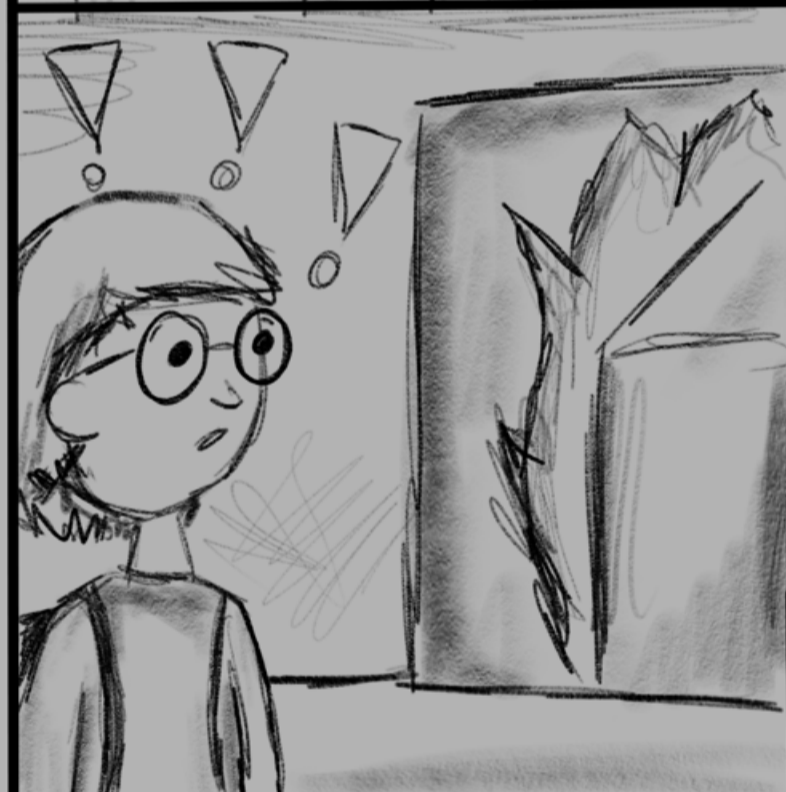
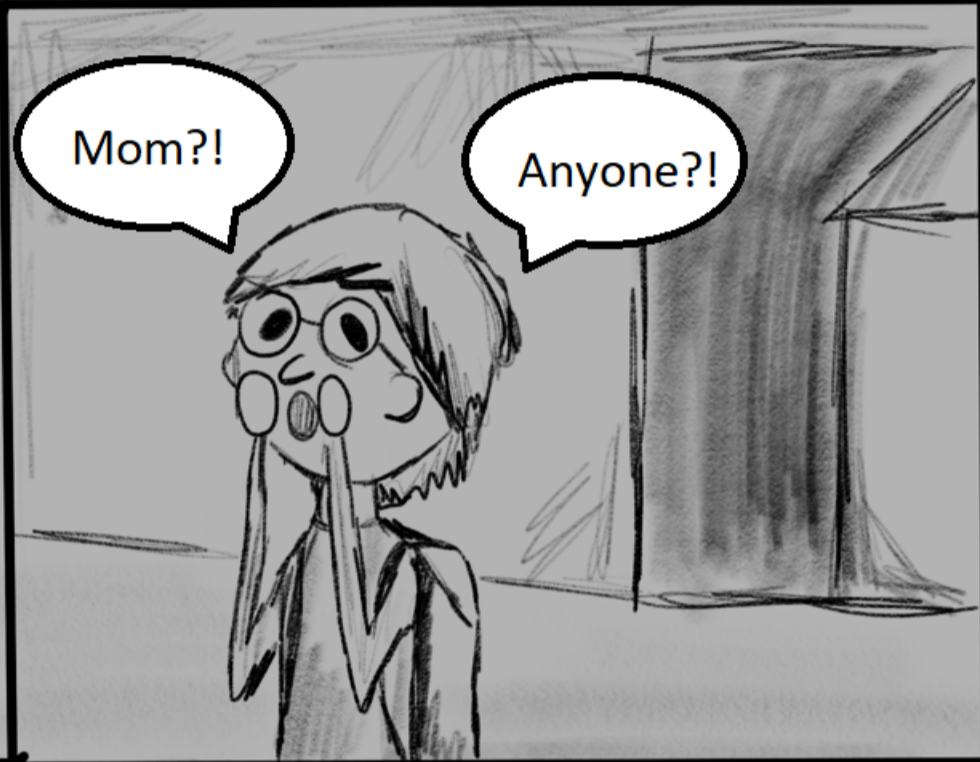
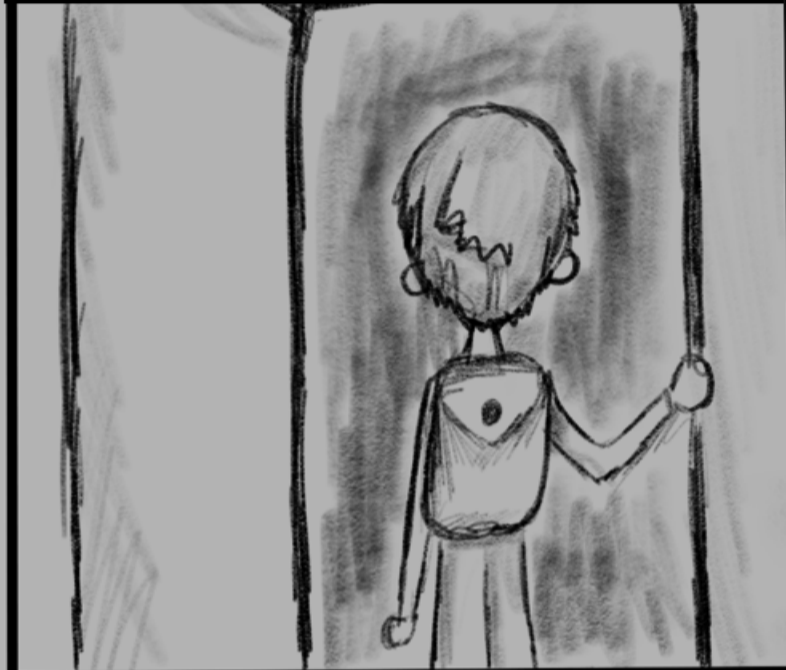
I still decided to see how much of the city was destroyed.

When I saw what Germans left behind, all those dead bodies, the destruction... My life has lost its colors for a long time.



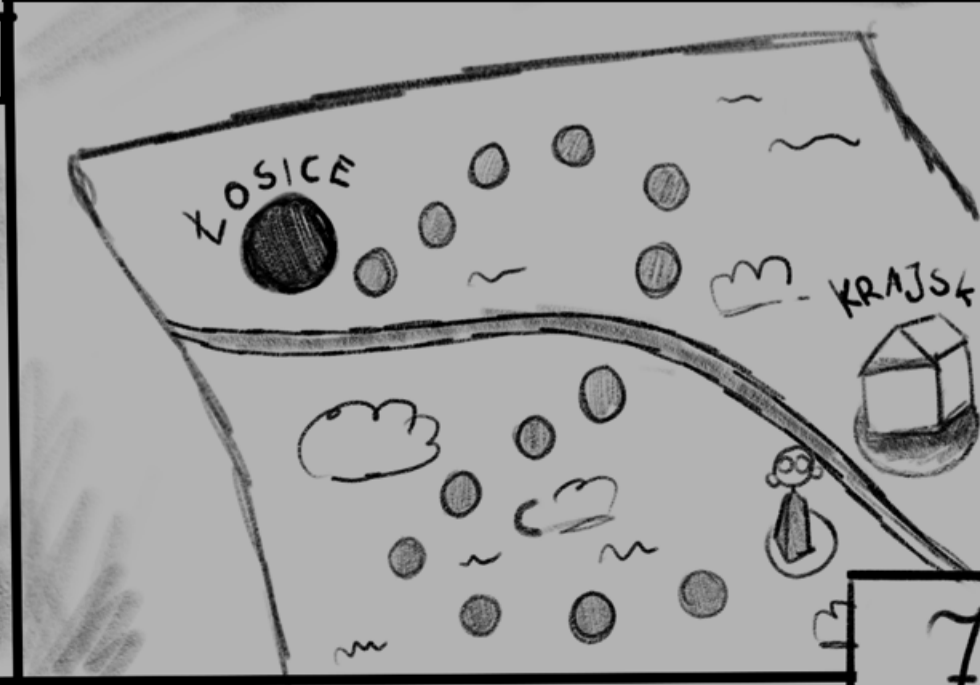
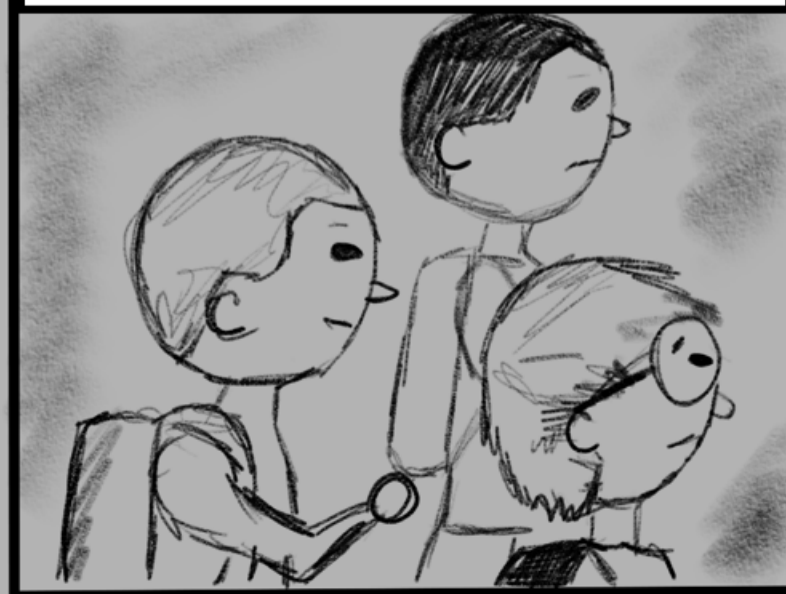


When I got home, nobody was there anymore...



We had been walking through a lot during our journey. After many days I've managed to find my family.

I managed to escape with other Poles in spring 1940.



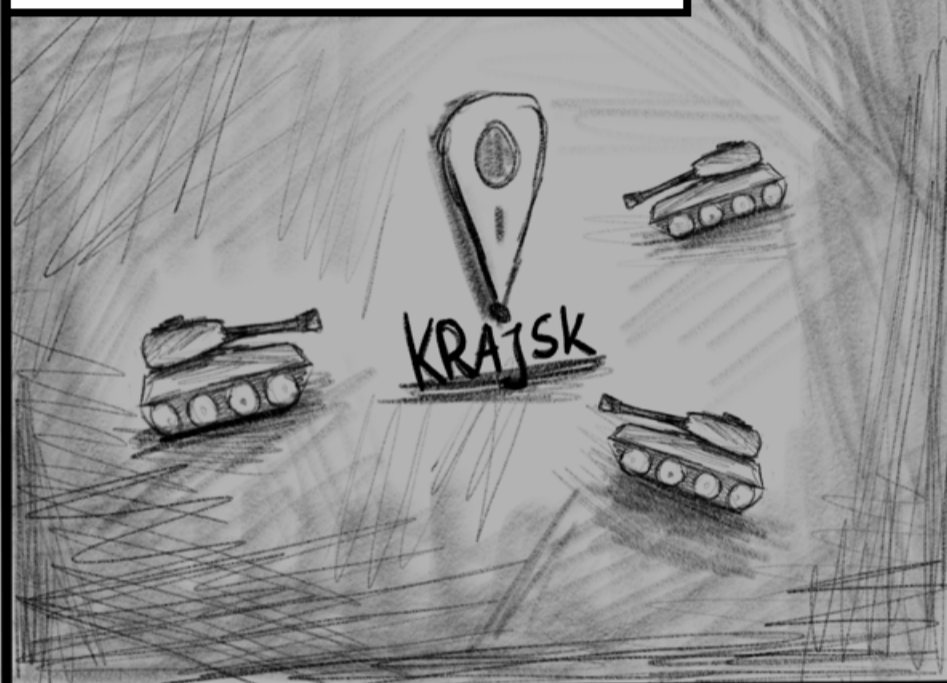
I stayed with them for a while . Our life got a little easier.



Until the German attack on USSR...



On this day Germans attacked a small Belarussian village we lived in.



They surrounded us in a way so none can get out.

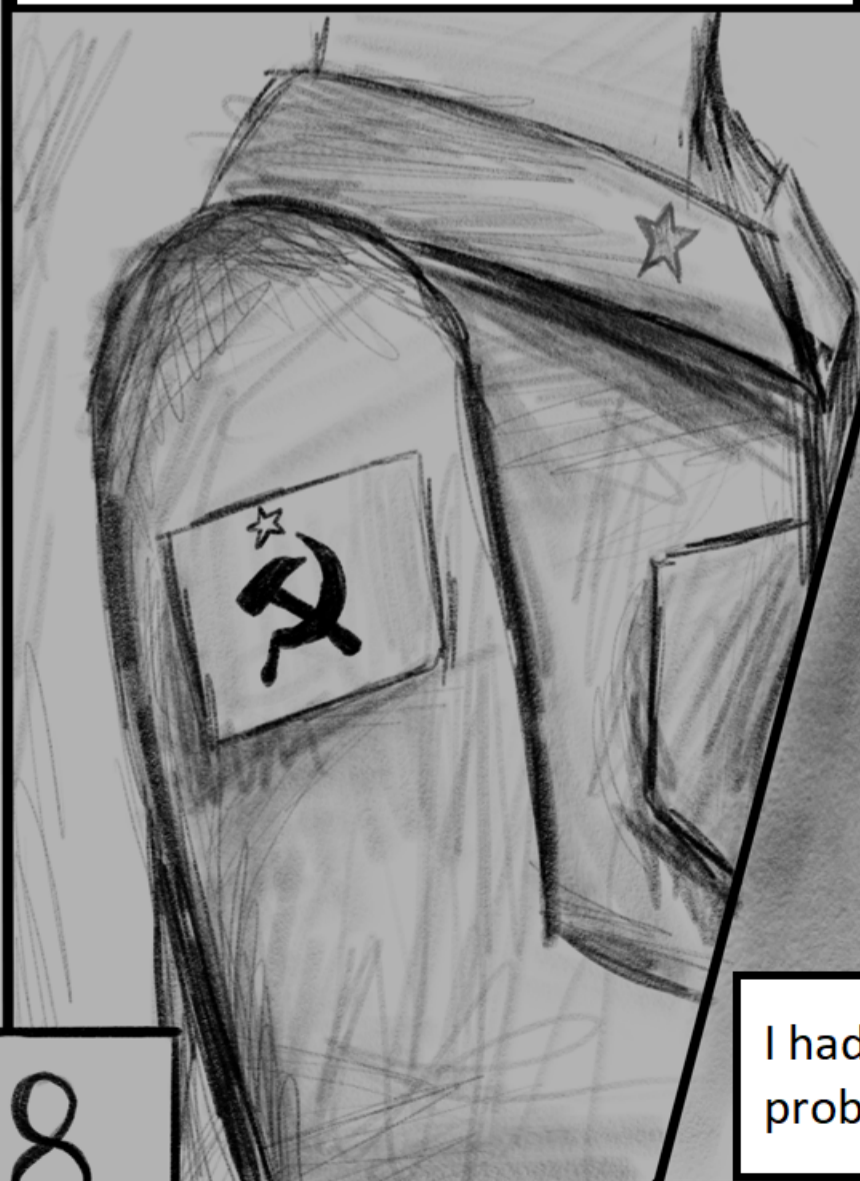


However, I managed to escape...

...but not for long.

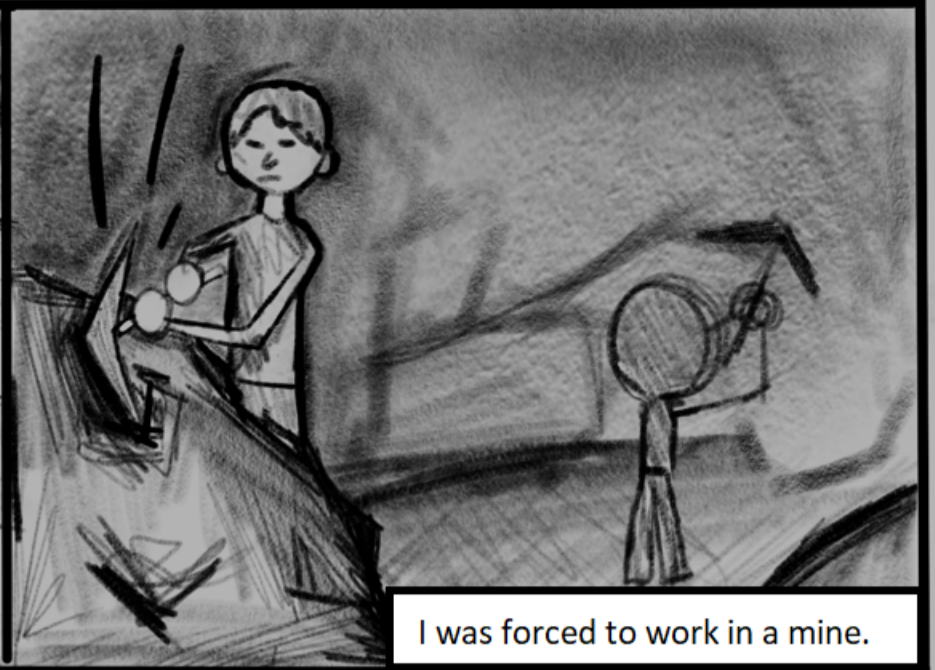


I was quickly caught by the Russians.



I had no documents on me, so they probably assumed I was German.

I was sent to Uzbekistan.

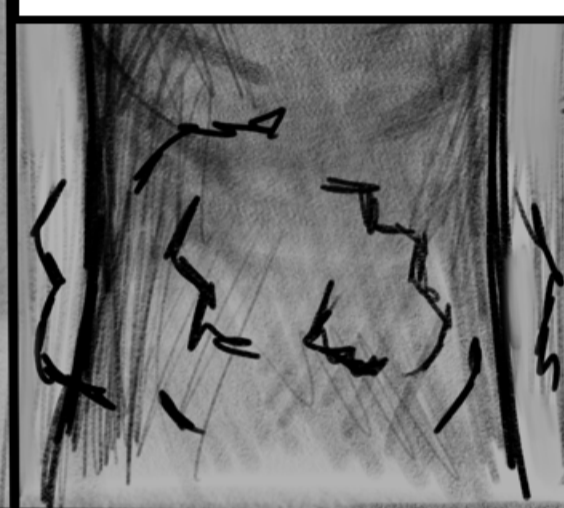


I was forced to work in a mine.

It was horrible.

My belly was always empty.

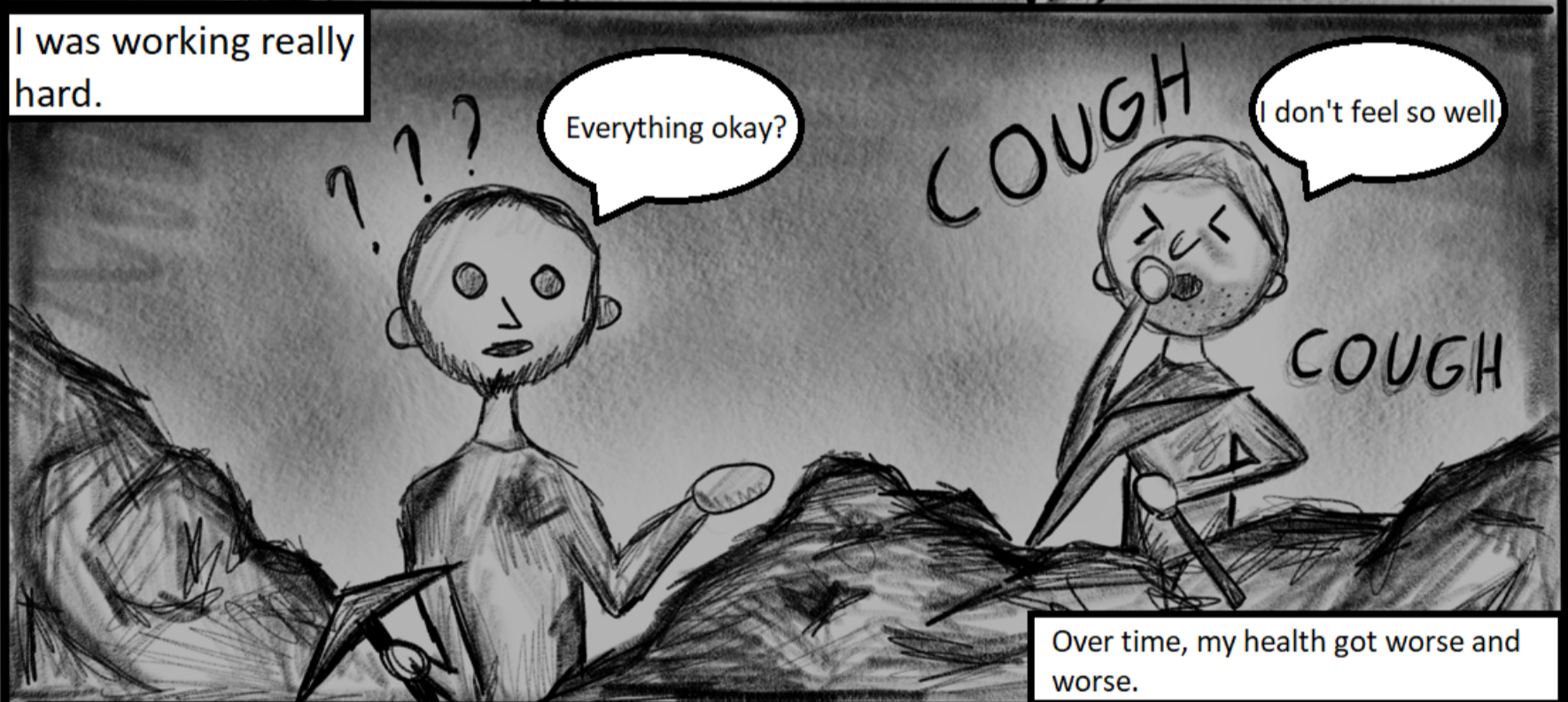
All miners had to sleep in one hut. It was cold and obscure.



I was working really hard.

Everything okay?

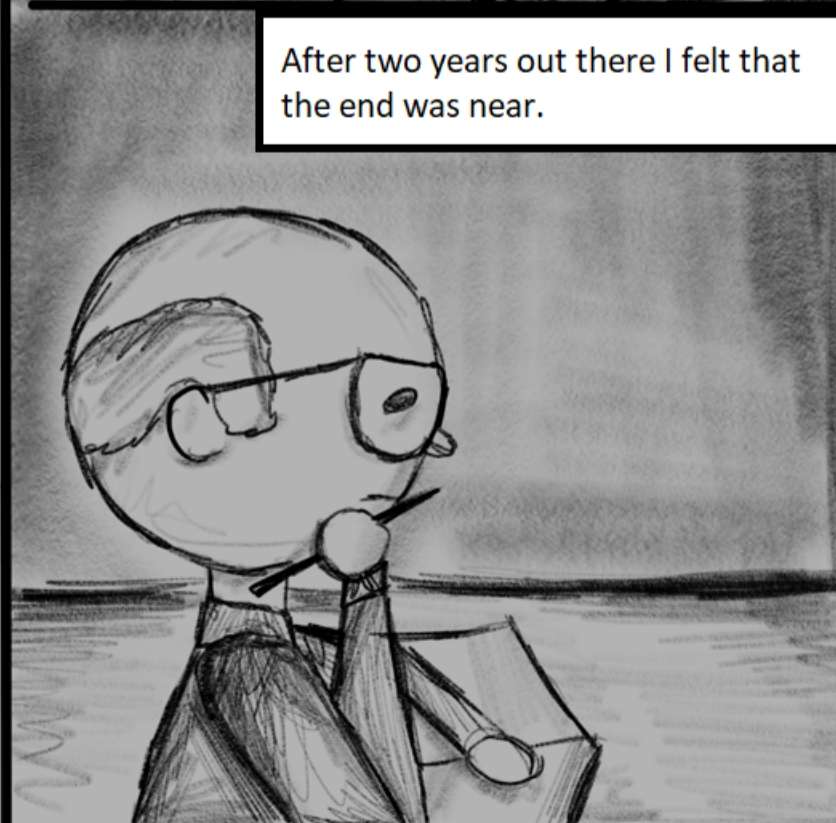
I don't feel so well



Over time, my health got worse and worse.

After two years out there I felt that the end was near.

I felt and looked miserably.



I got malaria.

Unfortunately, Russian soldiers didn't care how I felt and I had to work.



The conditions out there only made matters worse.



At one point, I was sure my life came to an end...

...But out of nowhere, she appeared.



Her name was Anna. She took care of me and helped treat my illness.

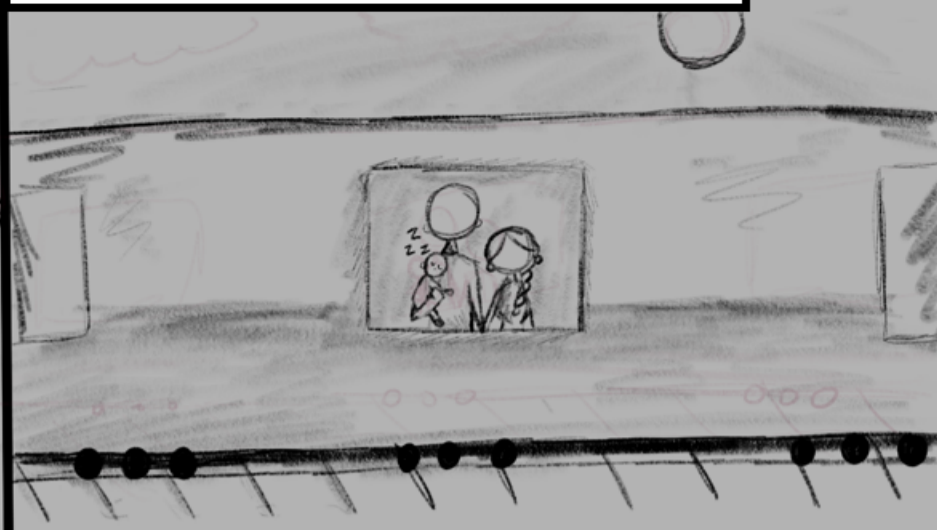


In '43 we got together and a year later our son was born.





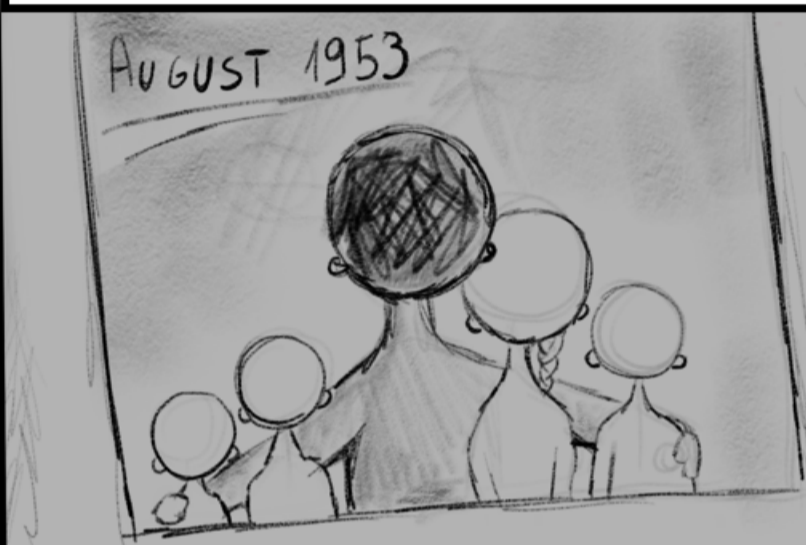
When we were released, we moved back to Poland.



We left Uzbekistan in June 1944.

We adapted really well into this new life. I got a stable job and a loving family. The terror also seemed to fade away.

However, the war has left a mark in my mind that I won't forget for the rest of my life. So yeah, this was my story...



The End

We chose the story of Jankiel Kulawiec to show that you didn't have to be special to experience very extreme things during the war. Also, even if you've suffered many times, there is still a chance things will get better.