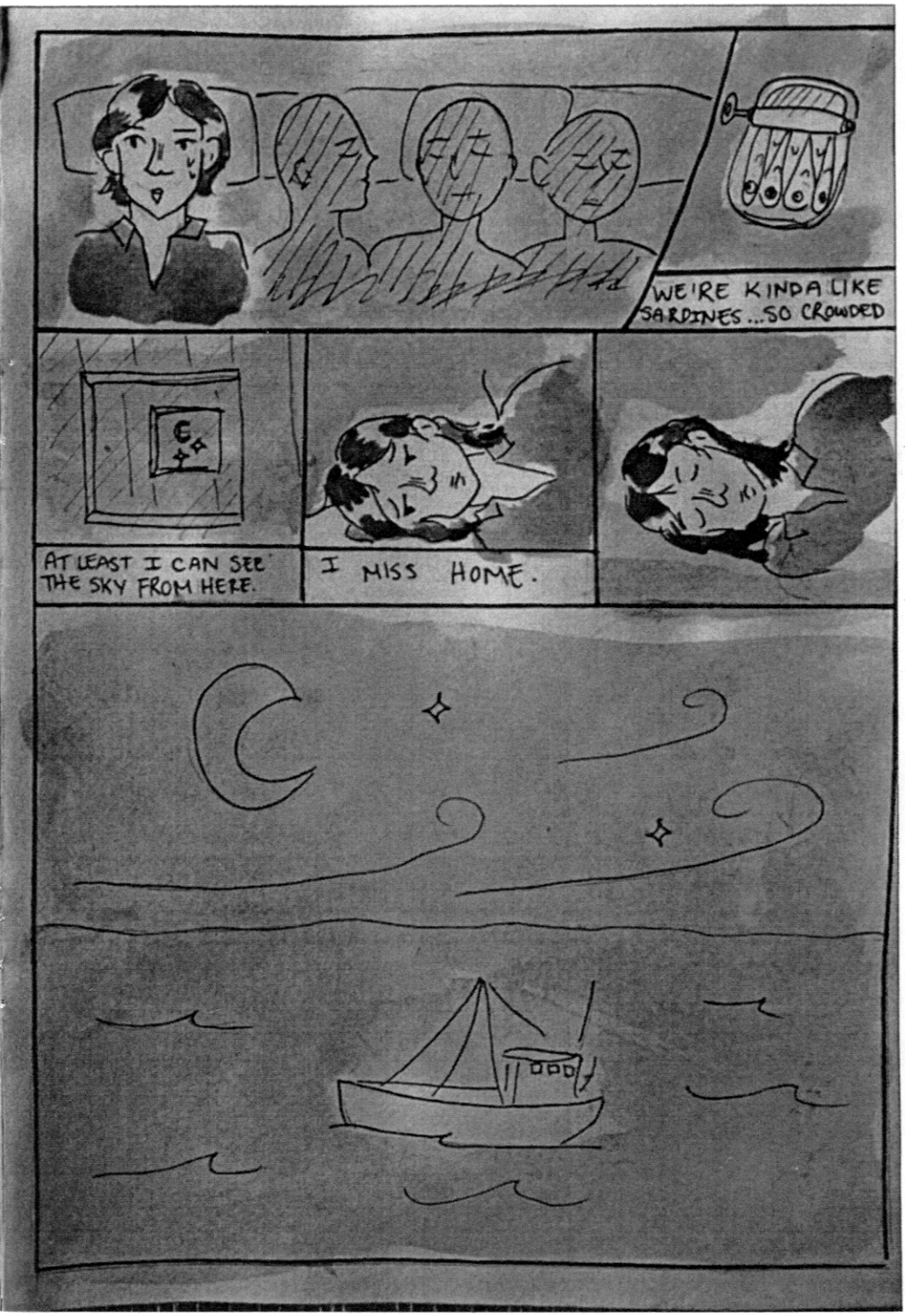
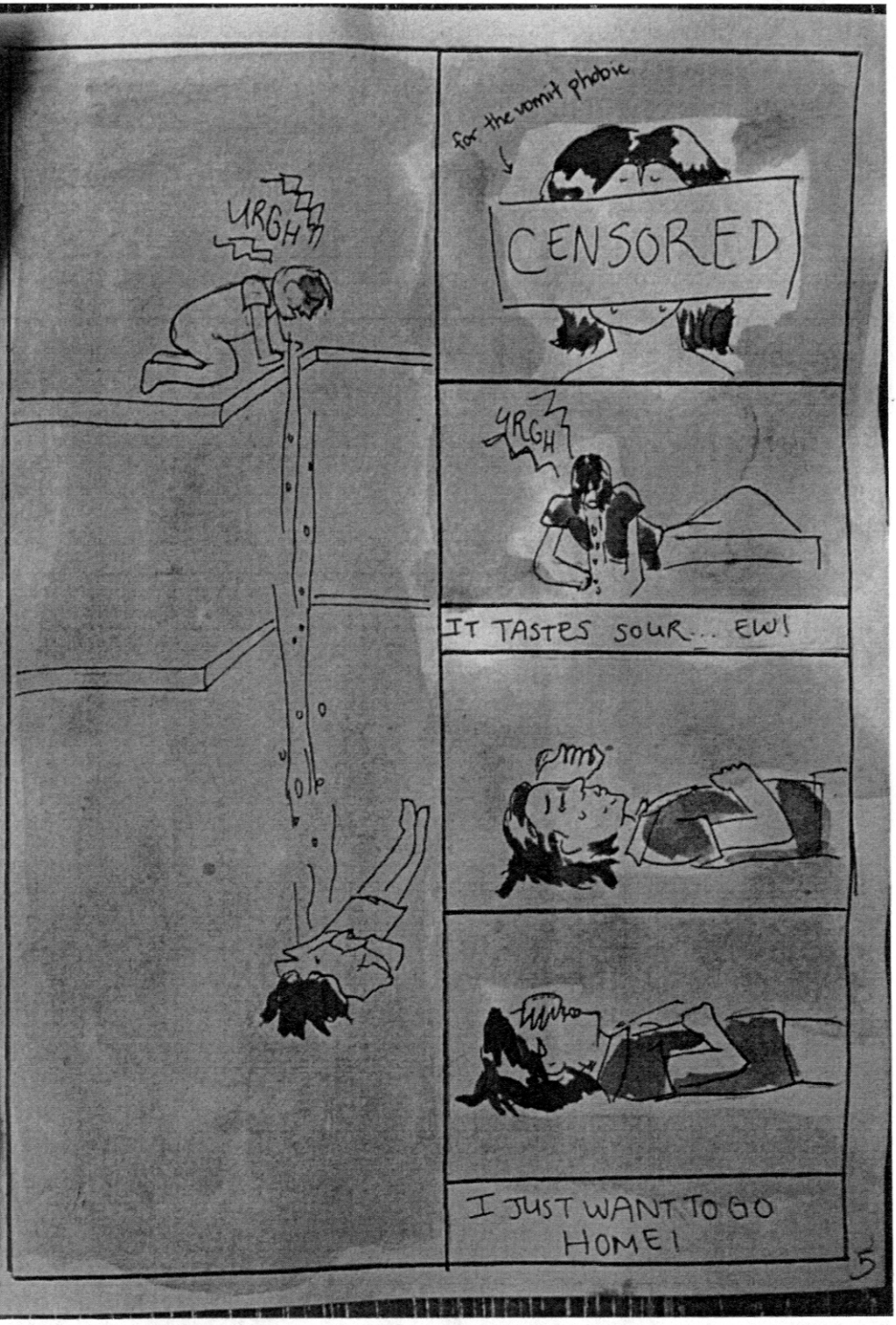
THE JOURNEY
ILL BY KAYLEE LÂM
ORY

VIETNAM WATERS, 1979
WHY ARE WE HERE?
OH YEAH
BECAUSE OF THAT
AFTER THE WAR, VIETNAM-CHINA RELATIONS GREW TENSE.
THAT INCLUDED MY FAMILY
AND SO, CHINESE COMMUNITIES IN VIETNAM WERE PRESSURED TO LEAVE.

THE WATER IS SO STILL. IT'S LIKE A MIRROR.
OI, QUANG GO TO SLEEP!
OK, OK...
SINCE YOU'RE YOUNG, YOU'LL SLEEP AT THE LOWEST LEVEL
my spot
DANG, IT'S PACKED.

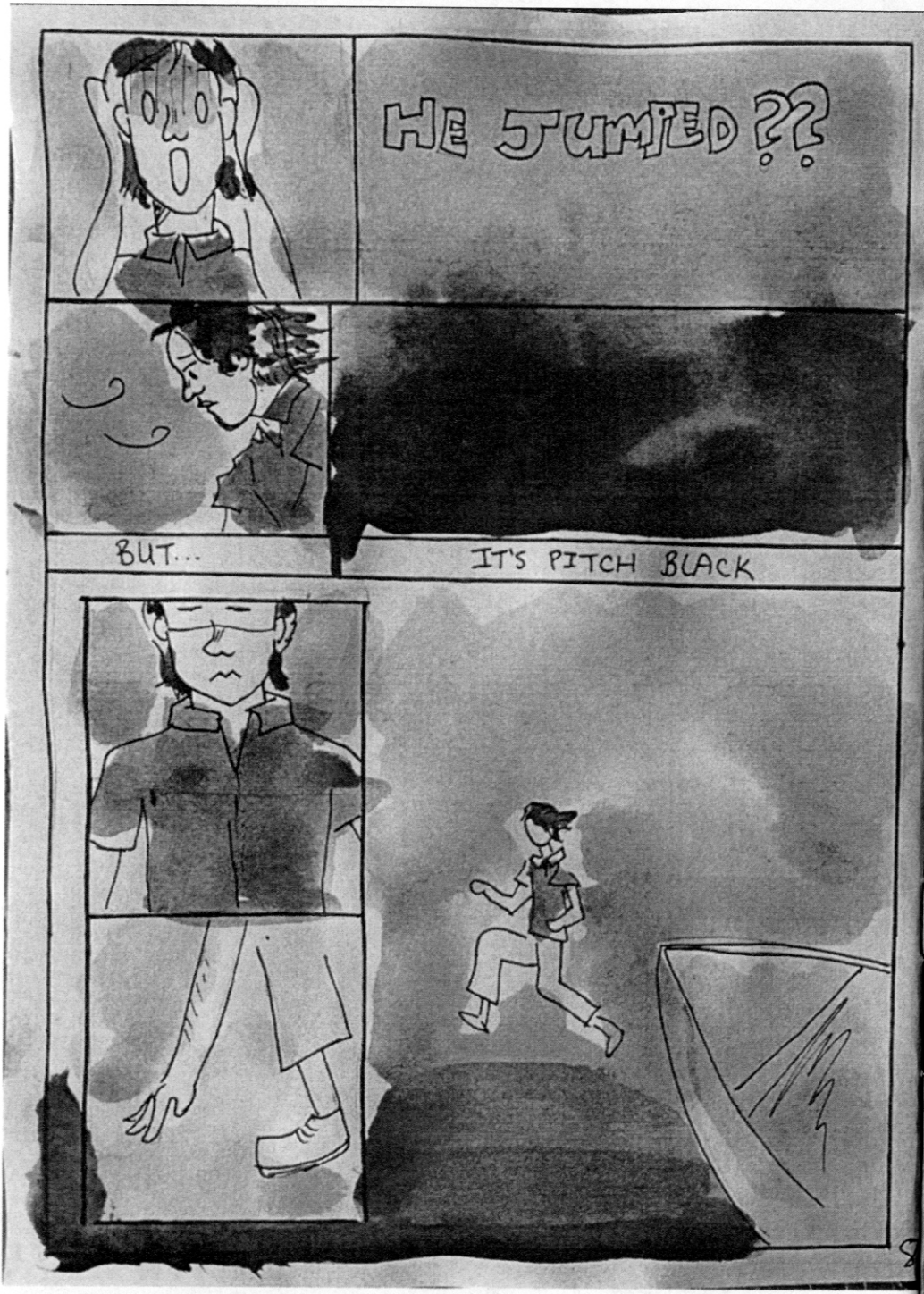

WE'RE KINDA LIKE SARDINES...SO CROWDED
AT LEAST I CAN SEE THE SKY FROM HERE.
I MISS HOME.

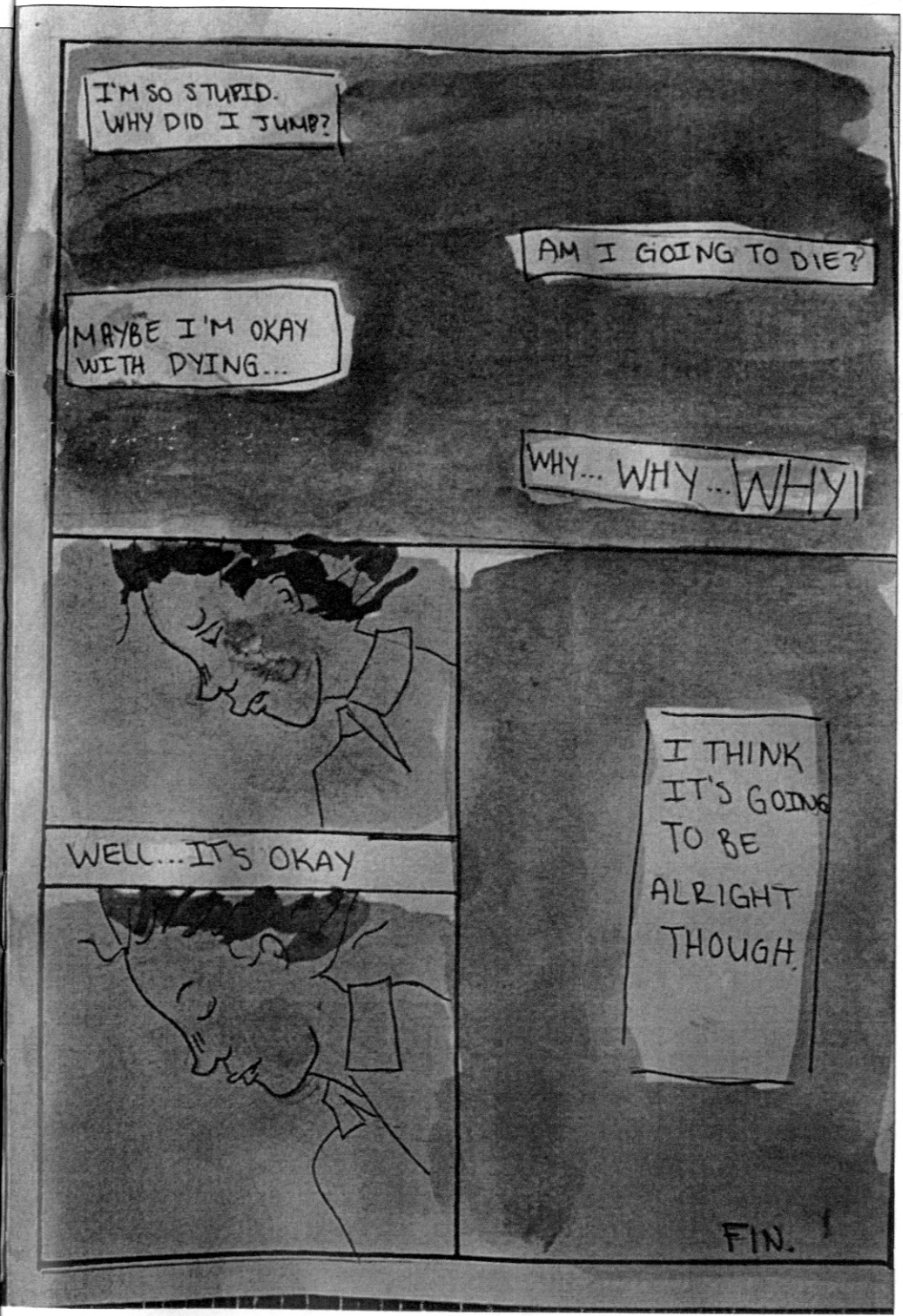
Nam Mô...
Oh god...
WHY IS EVERYONE PRAYING?
I GUESS I'LL PRAY TOO...
WAIT, WHAT...
THE BOAT'S ROCKING SO MUCH...
MAYBE LYING DOWN WILL HELP...
THE SKY IS STILL THE SAME AS HOME...
OI, WHAT'S HAPPENING?
OH YEA, THERE'S PEOPLE UP THERE, TOO.


for the vomit phobic
CENSORED
URGH
URGH
IT TASTES SOUR... EW!
I JUST WANT TO GO HOME!

DAYS PASSED AND THE STORM EVENTUALLY WENT AWAY...
I'm SO HUNGRY AND TIRED... I'M LUCKY I GOT A SPOT UP HERE...
I'm SO HUNGRY...
AM I GONNA DIE?
IT'S SO DARK...

Crk...
Crk...
HEY, I THINK WE'RE ON LAND!!
RIGHT, THIS GUY WAS A SAILOR...
HEY, YOU COULD EVEN JUMP!


HE JUMPED ??
BUT...
IT'S PITCH BLACK


I'M SO STUPID. WHY DID I JUMP?
AM I GOING TO DIE?
MAYBE I'M OKAY WITH DYING...
WHY... WHY... WHY!
WELL... IT'S OKAY
I THINK IT'S GOING TO BE ALRIGHT THOUGH.
FIN.

My grandpa was Chinese-Vietnamese, so my dad's family was labeled a "Chinese Family" under the lenses of the government. My dad, Quang, was born in 1963, during the Vietnam War. Soon after the war, an armed conflict between the new Vietnam and China arose and the Vietnamese government started deporting Chinese communities living in Vietnam. My dad's family decided to leave for Hong Kong. This is where my dad's boat journey began.

The part of my dad's journey that touched me the most was when he jumped off the boat. My dad always cries out, "Why did I jump?". I've always wondered why. Maybe he felt like he had nothing to live for. Or maybe it was courage.

Fortunately my dad's feet touched sand and his family eventually made it to Hong Kong, where he lived for a year until he moved to Washington.

In the U.S., whenever we talk about the Vietnam War, it largely focuses on the American experience during the war. This isn't bad, but we should also discuss the population most affected during the war, the Vietnamese people who had no choice but to live under a communist regime. My parents both were deeply affected by the Vietnam War. My dad had to leave his home and my mom had to marry a random guy she only knew for three months to find a better life for me and my sisters. This story is a tribute to my parents and the sacrifices they made for me.