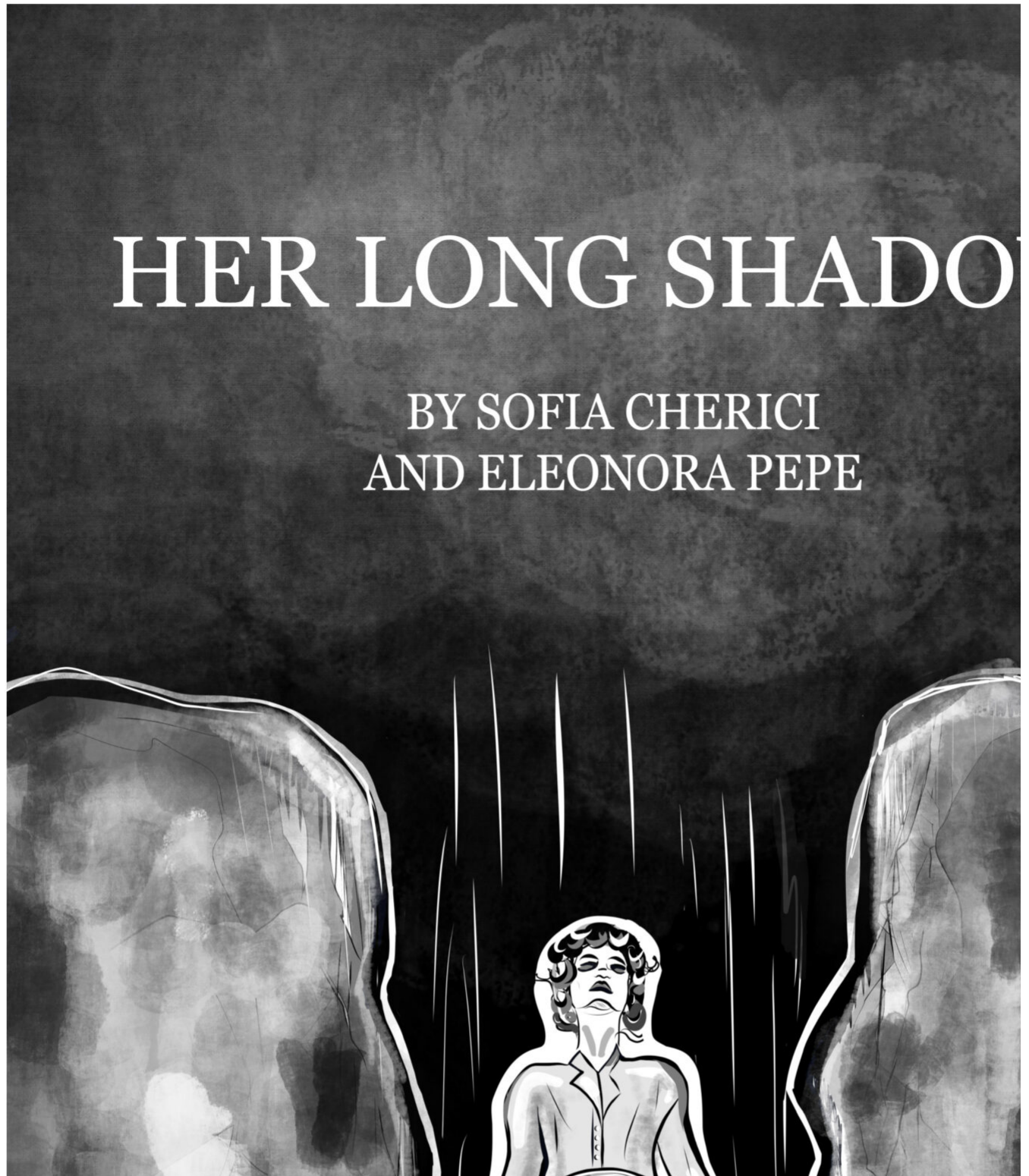
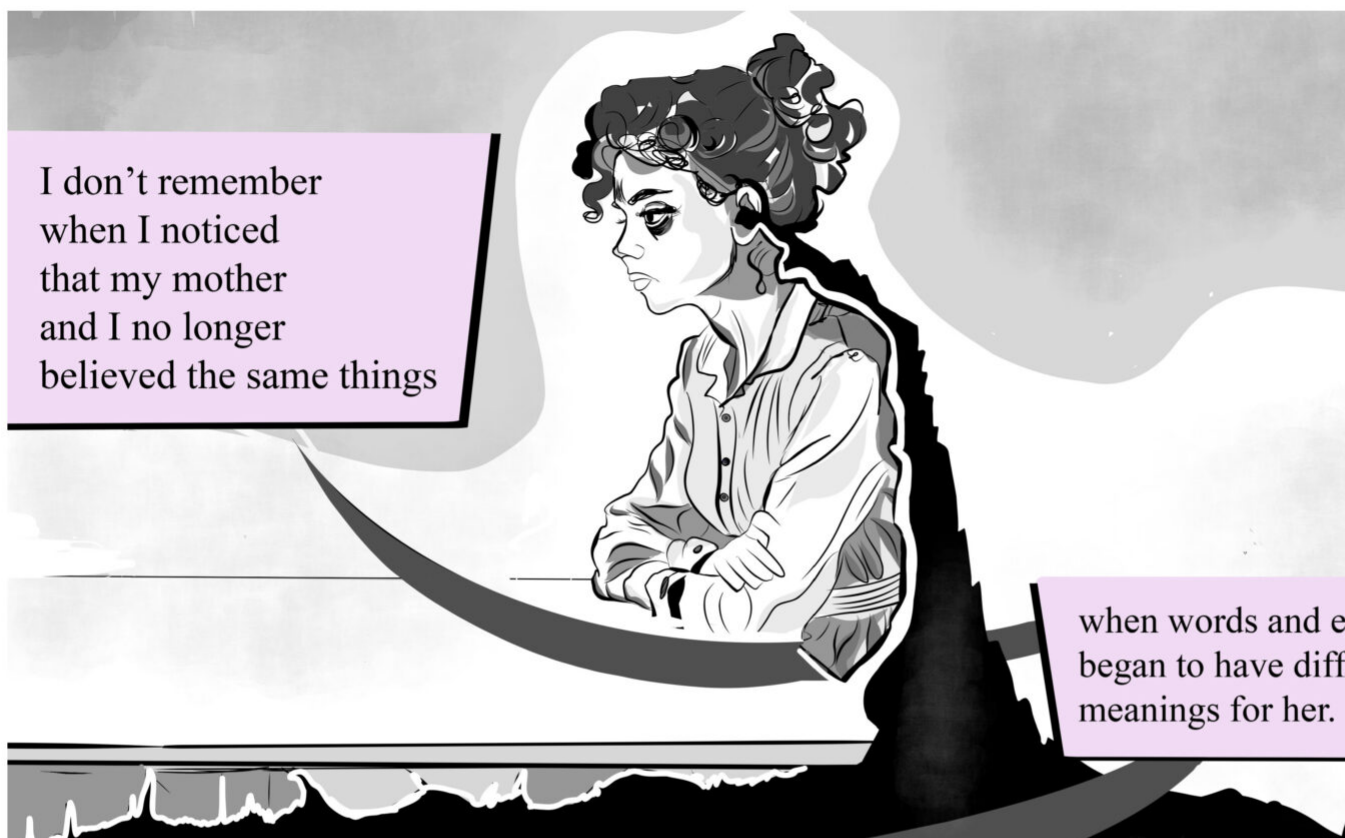


**Her Long Shadow**

Article by Eleonora Pepe, Sofia Cherici  
December 5, 2024

There are no fixed coordinates in the underworld of conspiracies. A graphic story by Sofia Cherici and Eleonora Pepe.





It wasn't some sudden leap into the void.


In terms of movement,  
it would most resemble  
crawling, into  
clandestine secrecy

A private procession  
through the world's  
underbelly.

A descent, cer  
but not a plum

Our household  
has lived  
with this secret  
for years now.

We know that when  
she disappears into  
her room for hours  
with her phone,  
or travels overseas,  
it is to descend deeper  
into the abyss



but peace demands  
that we stay silent



The house is full of fetishes,  
obscure totems of some  
faith we don't belong to.

They live with us,  
but we don't understand them.



We have to watch out:  
it is our presence  
that is precarious

it is we who are  
the excess tenants.

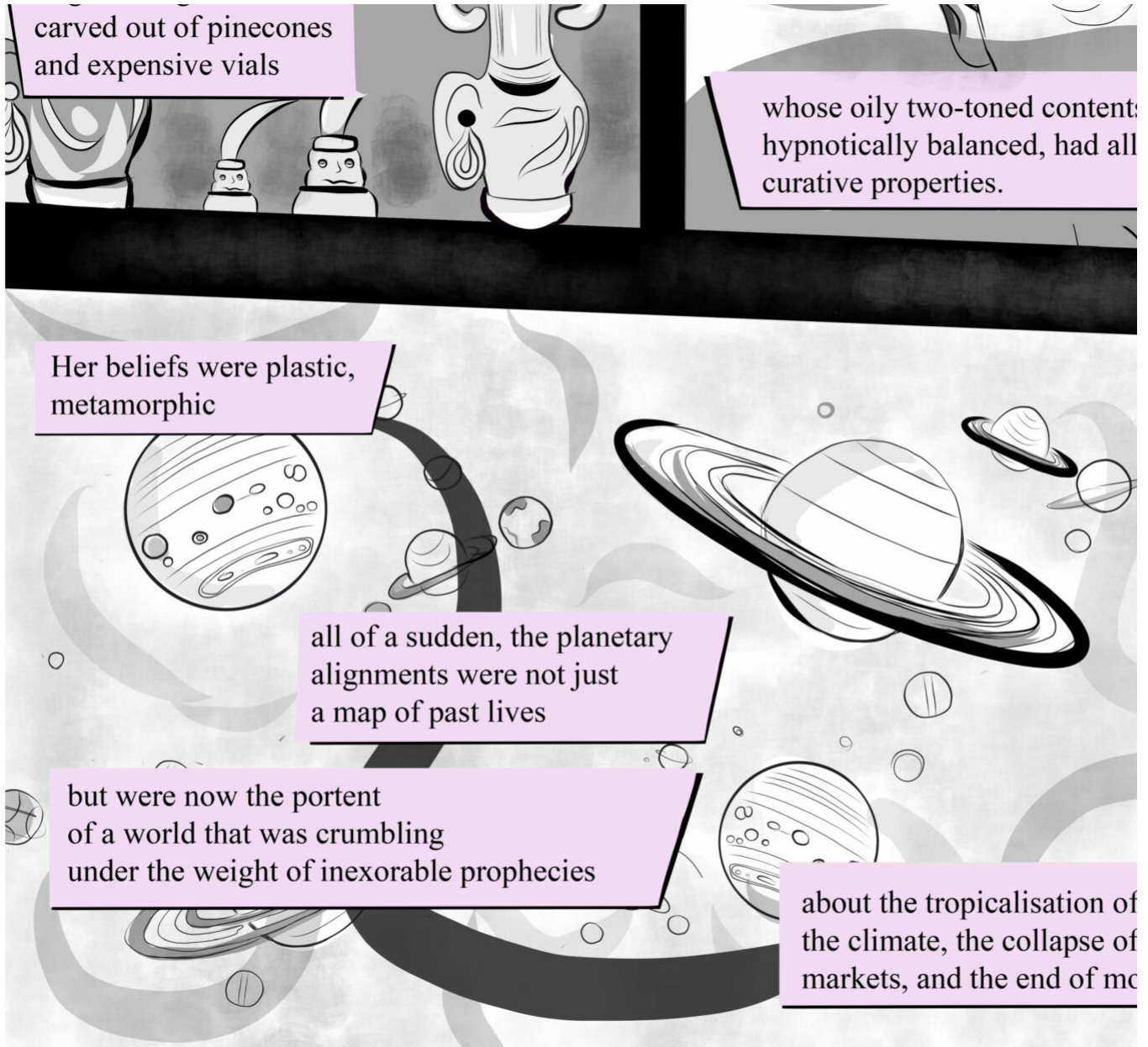


Ever since she became  
disillusioned with  
the orthodoxy of the church,

my mother  
has sought  
spirituality elsewhere.

When  
she w  
along  
servi

or give me gnomes





implanted via vaccines.

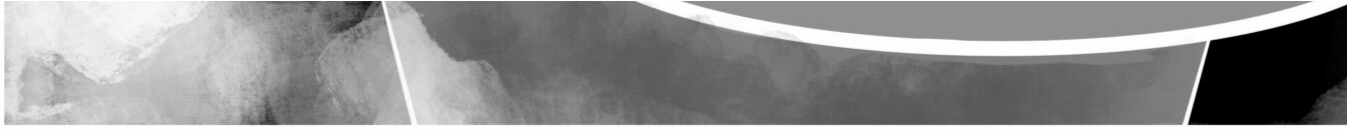
This world too far from she had de to inhabit.

2020 was when the abyss emerged between our planets. I remember a conversation I had with my father during the pander

I made an appointment for vaccination. Don't tell your mother.

She can't find out Forget I said it.

Hopefully I don't get sick or come down with a fever. I'll have to make something up



But she did find out,  
and for months she refused  
to share a bed with my father.

She slept in my room  
and barely spoke to him.

I could only find out  
was going on by talk  
with him on the phone.



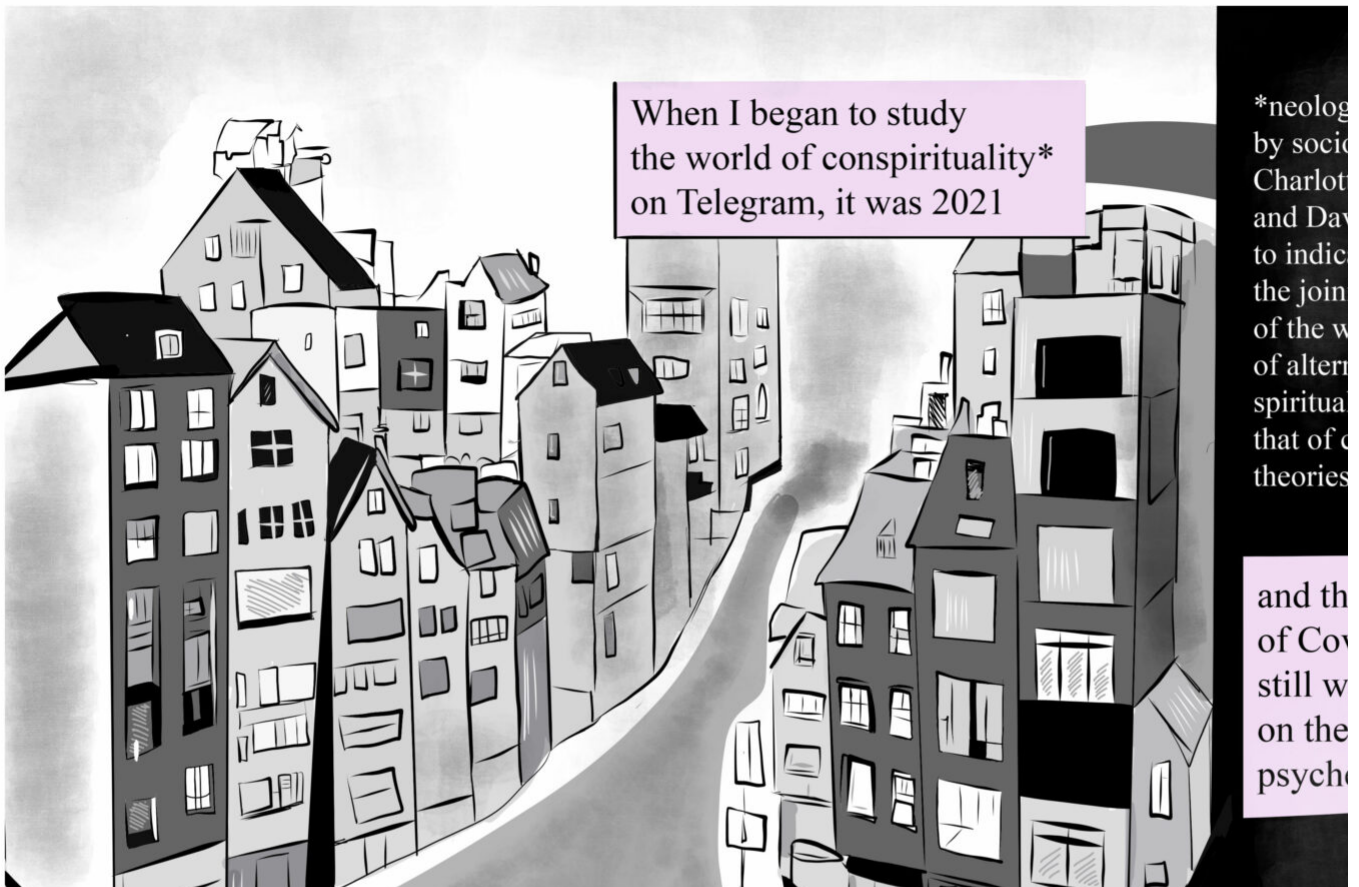
Though I had left  
my mother's shrine  
as soon as I could,  
something remained  
from her altars  
and fetishes.



A sort of fas  
– or perhaps  
regarding a v  
of the plots c  
and winter fl  
herald misfo



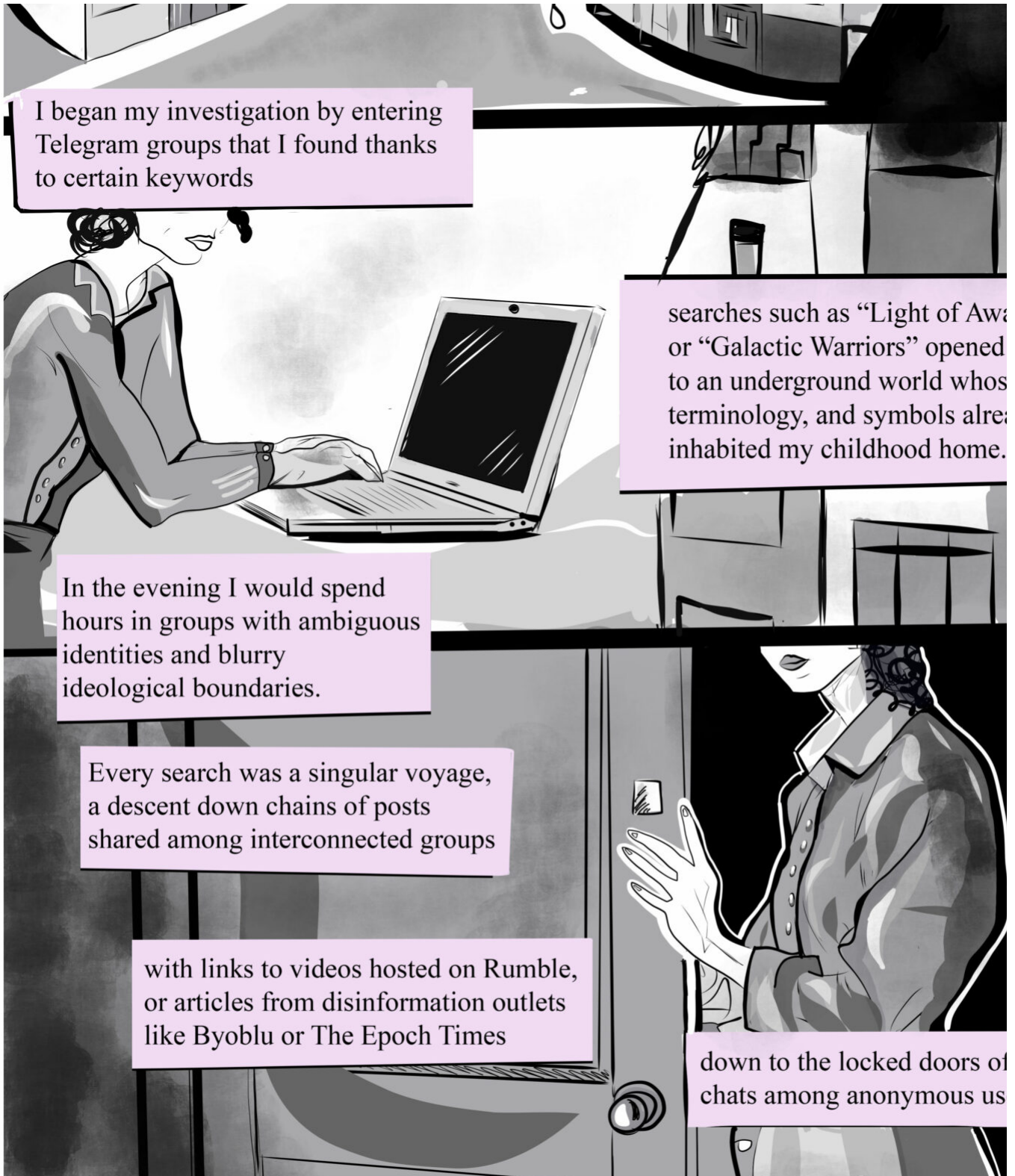
Influenced by my mo  
long shadow, I immer  
myself in the underbe  
of online group chats  
alternative spirituality  
blends with conspirac  
and where something  
far more sinister was



When I began to study  
the world of consp  
on Telegram, it was 2021

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I began my investigation by entering Telegram groups that I found thanks to certain keywords

searches such as “Light of Awa or “Galactic Warriors” opened to an underground world whose terminology, and symbols already inhabited my childhood home.

In the evening I would spend hours in groups with ambiguous identities and blurry ideological boundaries.

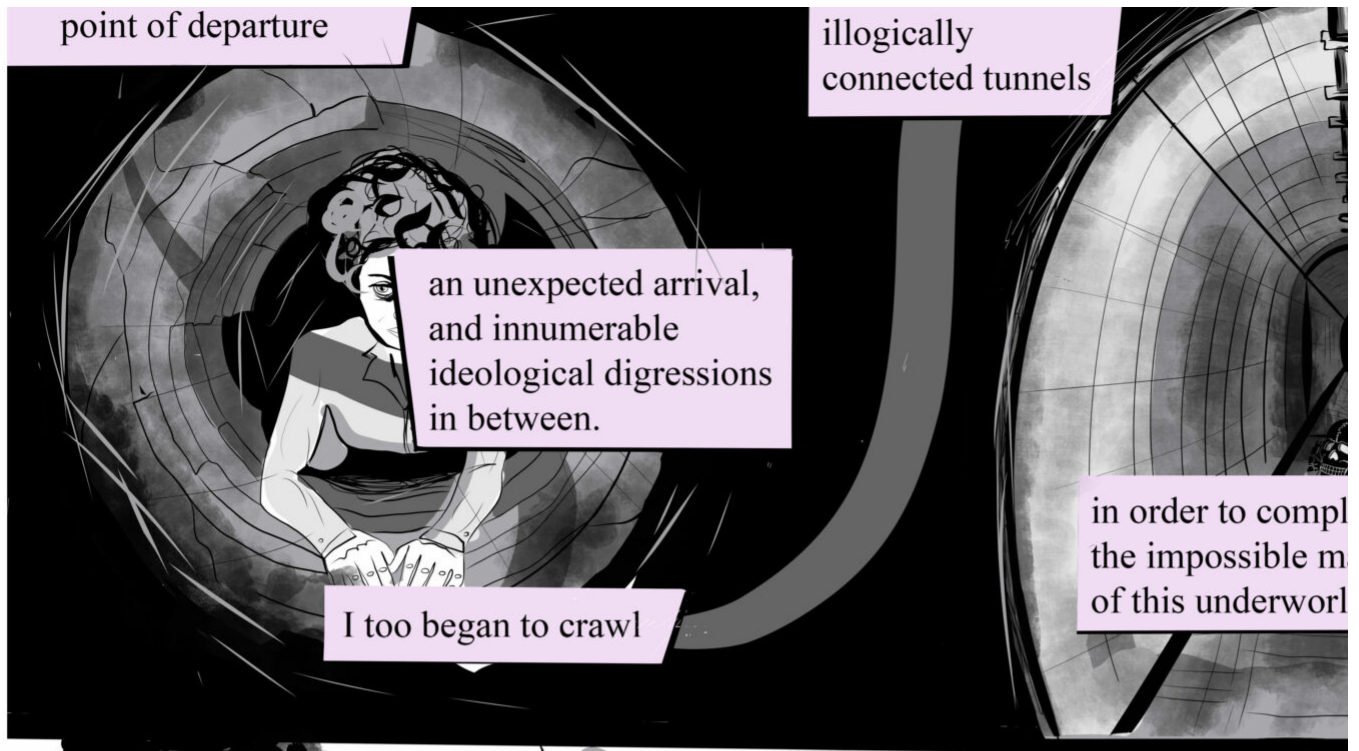
Every search was a singular voyage, a descent down chains of posts shared among interconnected groups

with links to videos hosted on Rumble, or articles from disinformation outlets like Byoblu or The Epoch Times

down to the locked doors of chats among anonymous us

Every underground journey had a defined

through tight, uneven and



point of departure

illogically  
connected tunnels

an unexpected arrival,  
and innumerable  
ideological digressions  
in between.

I too began to crawl

in order to compl  
the impossible m  
of this underworld



Among posts that  
“resonate with the soul”

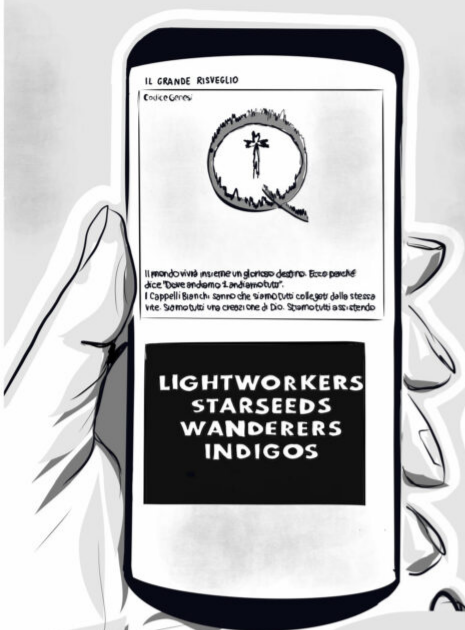
and those calling  
for the arrival  
of saviour-like  
spacecraft

it didn't take much  
time to observe  
a series of disorderly



unlabelled reference  
to skewed and extreme  
ideologies and realities

The content of these chats rarely  
dealt with purely spiritual matters



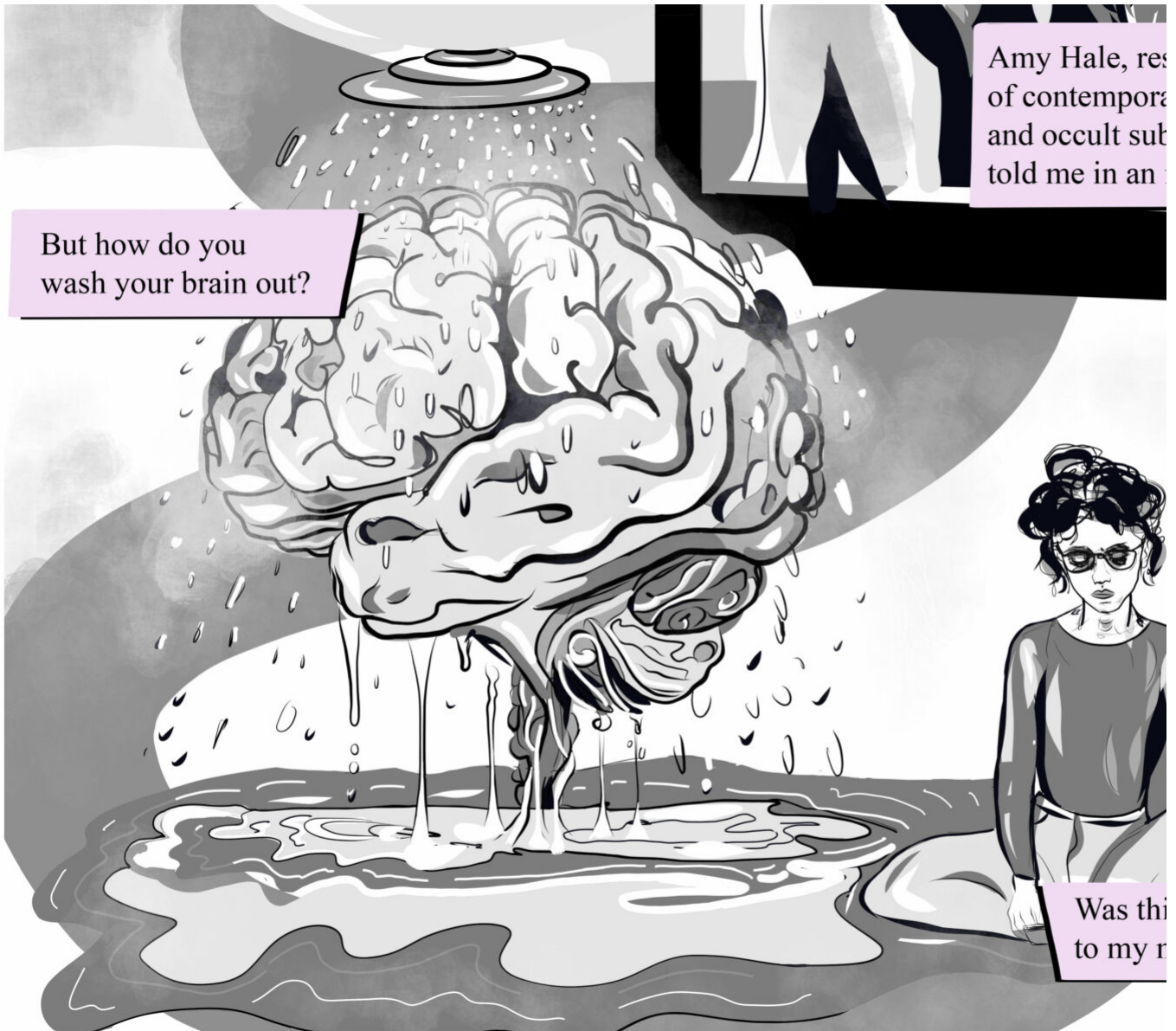
there were all too  
many references  
to Donald Trump  
or Matteo Salvini,  
chosen as QAnon\*  
patriots

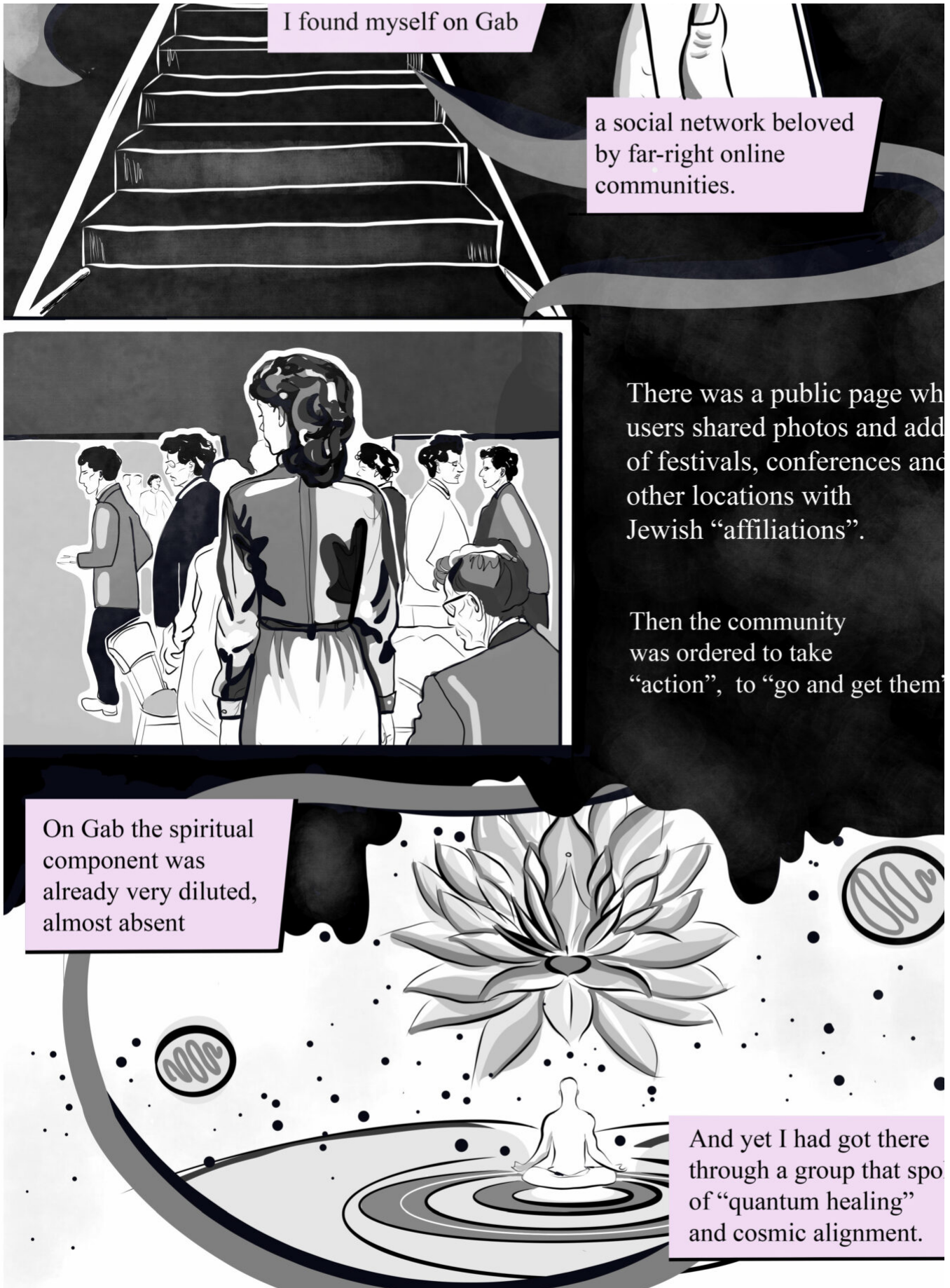
\*a political  
conspiracy  
movement  
originated  
as a theory  
the American  
far right

to Giorgia Meloni's  
ascension to prime minister  
or to ethnic substitution  
and antisemitic conspiracy  
theories.

It's hard stuff,  
it's really hard.  
And it's depressing. So,  
go make sure that you do  
things to wash your  
brain out after dealing  
with this stuff, because  
it's hard work.







I found myself on Gab

a social network beloved by far-right online communities.



There was a public page where users shared photos and addresses of festivals, conferences and other locations with Jewish “affiliations”.

Then the community was ordered to take “action”, to “go and get them”

On Gab the spiritual component was already very diluted, almost absent

And yet I had got there through a group that spoke of “quantum healing” and cosmic alignment.

It was on Gab specifically that I first noticed how the pro-Palestine movement had been captured.



Since university I had associated the Palestinian flag with the couriers of the Venetian social centres.

Those who spoke of Gaza or Rojava – practically mythological places at the time – were almost exclusively those who wore a keffiyeh to



or took part in the mid-2010s occupation of the Venetian gardens.

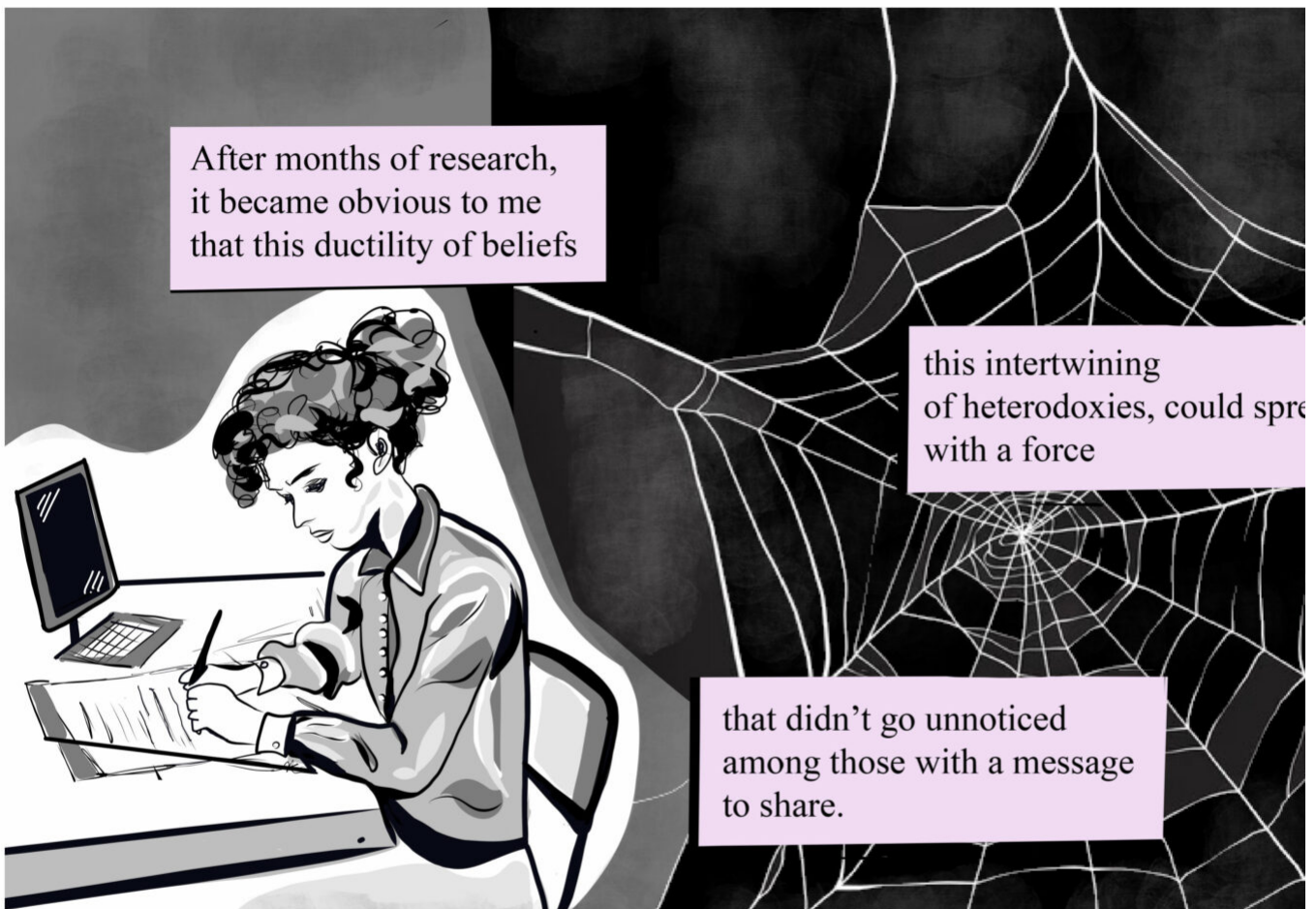


And yet, by a series of abstruse contradictions, that same movement for the self-determination of people was now being used and distorted by certain circles of the alt-right



Hale was right,  
it makes you sick.

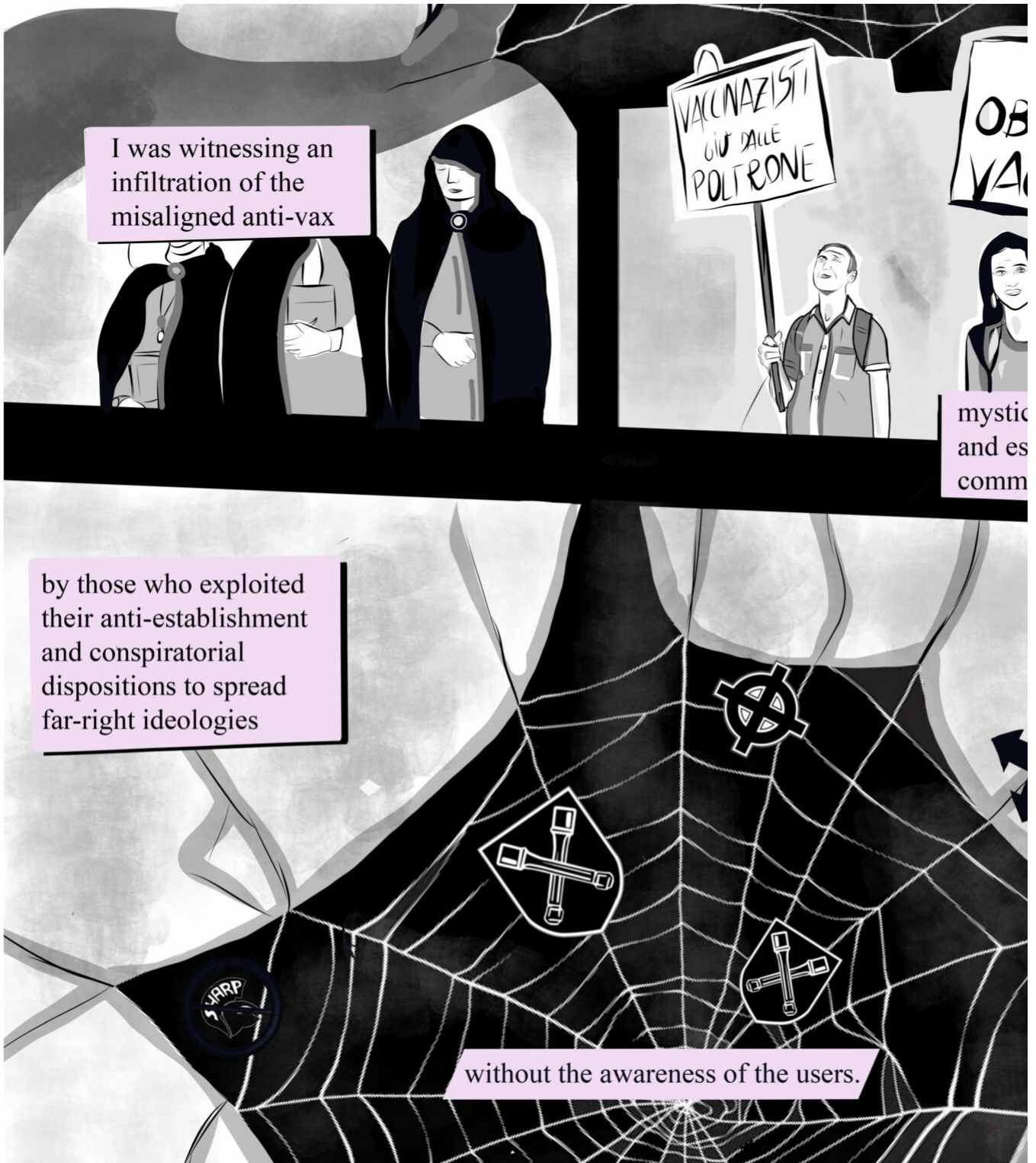
Also because everyth  
here can become its  
opposite, and there ar  
no fixed coordinates.

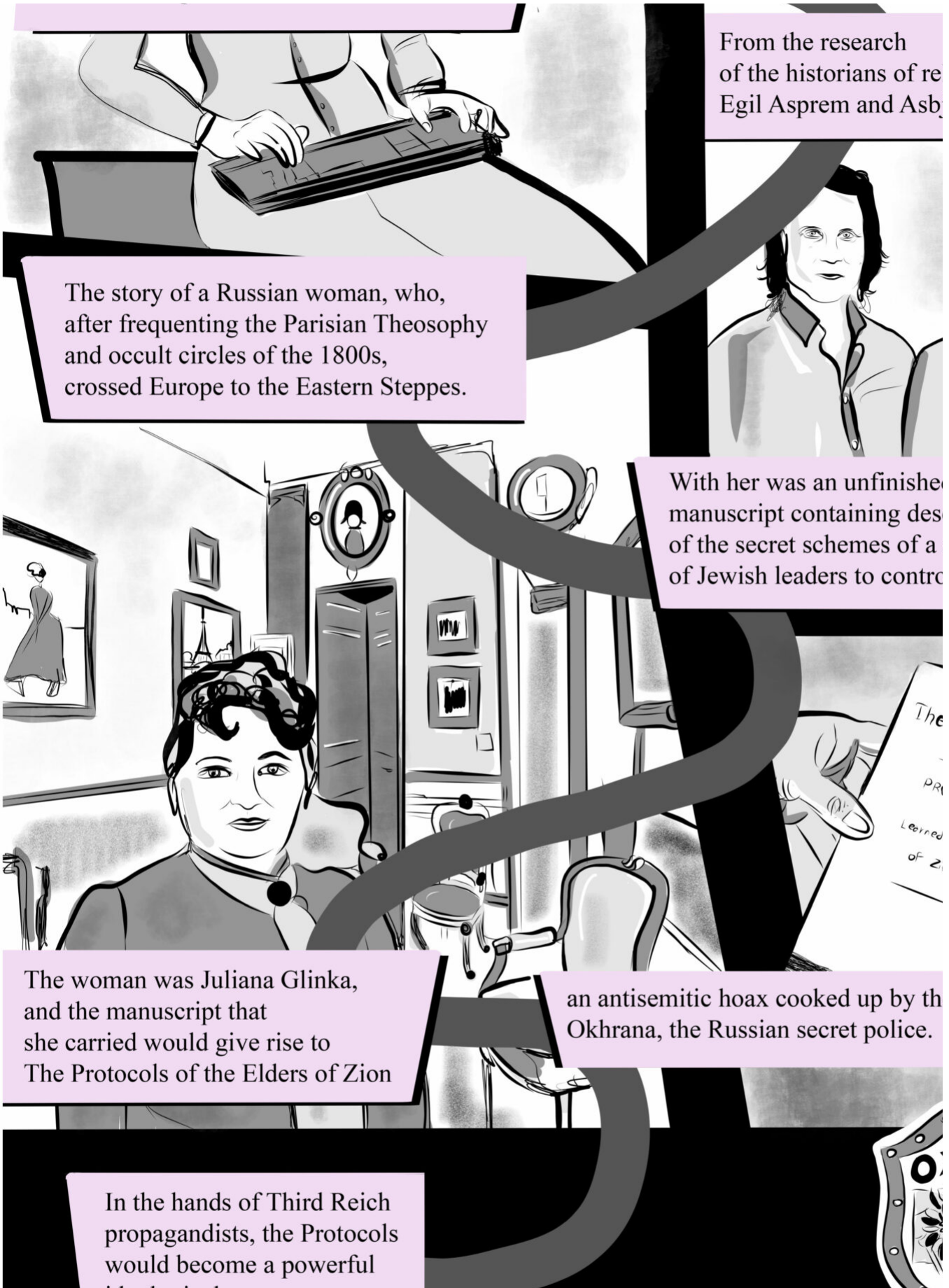


After months of research,  
it became obvious to me  
that this ductility of beliefs

this intertwining  
of heterodoxies, could spre  
with a force

that didn't go unnoticed  
among those with a message  
to share.





From the research of the historians of religion Egil Asprem and Asbjørn Sævi

The story of a Russian woman, who, after frequenting the Parisian Theosophy and occult circles of the 1800s, crossed Europe to the Eastern Steppes.

With her was an unfinished manuscript containing descriptions of the secret schemes of a group of Jewish leaders to control the world.

The woman was Juliana Glinka, and the manuscript that she carried would give rise to The Protocols of the Elders of Zion

an antisemitic hoax cooked up by the Okhrana, the Russian secret police.

In the hands of Third Reich propagandists, the Protocols would become a powerful tool for antisemitism.

Ideological weapon  
of mass conversion.

Juliana Glinka is proof, so to speak, of the subtle plot of history: a series of concealed events, linking conspiracy theories that traffic political ideologies to the sphere of heterodox spirituality. Today, part of modern history of the black wave advancing across Europe, is perhaps being made and unmade in the secrecy of the online communities on Telegram and Gab.

I don't discuss my worries  
about the future  
with my mother  
anymore.

Such events have  
a different meaning  
for her.

Today, I don't speak of the  
rent crisis, of dengue  
fever reaching Italy,  
or the massacre  
of civilians in Gaza.

I only wait for the day  
when she too,  
like Juliana Glinka,

will end  
inadvert  
transport  
someone  
message

Perhaps it has already  
happened, without her even knowing it.



Something we share:

for years she has awaited the end of the world, and now so do I.



Sofia Cherici is a freelance multimedia journalist and reporter. With a master's degree in international development from Sciences Po Paris, she has worked in Libya, Tunisia, and Turkey in the humanitarian and development sectors. Born in Italy, she is specialised in social policy and social justice in Europe and the Middle East and North Africa region.

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