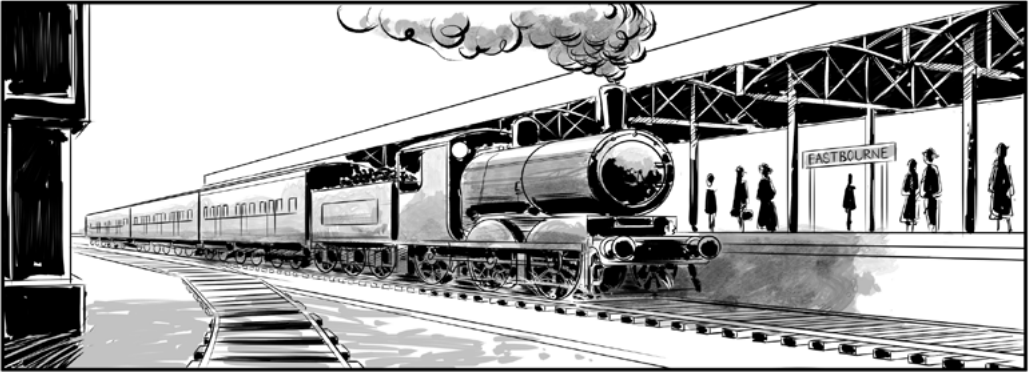
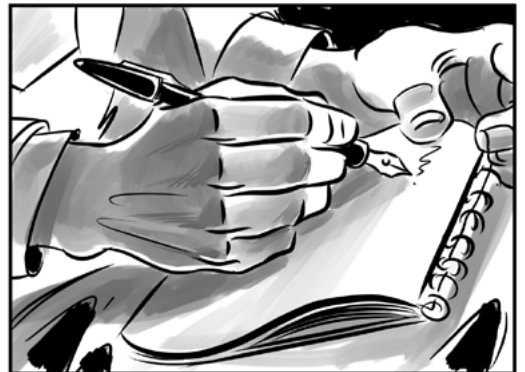
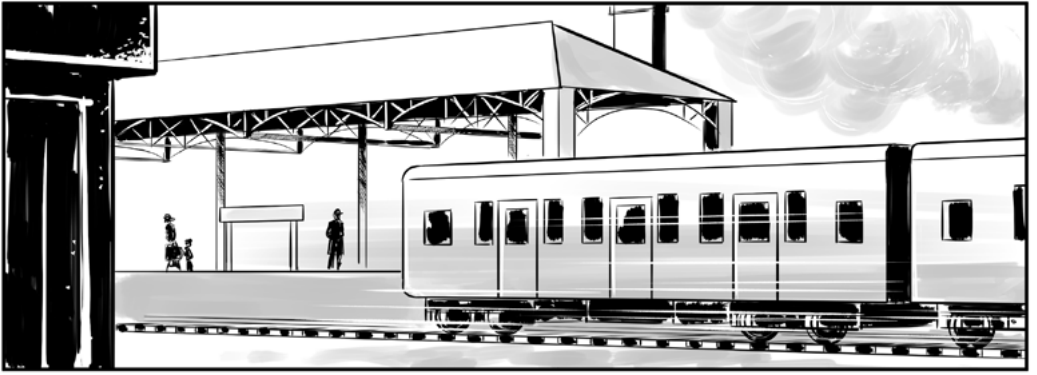


SOUTHERN ENGLAND, 1939.





ST CYPRIAN'S PREPARATORY SCHOOL, EASTBOURNE, 1911.



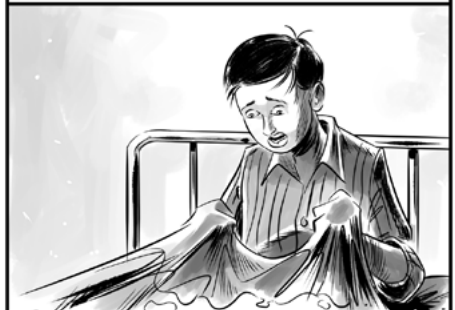
SOON AFTER I ARRIVED AT ST CYPRIAN'S I BEGAN WETTING MY BED.

I WAS NOW EIGHT, SO THIS WAS A REVERSION TO A HABIT WHICH I HAD HAD GROWN OUT OF FOUR YEARS EARLIER. NOWADAYS, BED-WETTING IN SUCH CIRCUMSTANCES IS TAKEN FOR GRANTED. IN THOSE DAYS IT WAS LOOKED ON AS A DISGUSTING CRIME WHICH THE CHILD DID ON PURPOSE. FOR MY PART I DID NOT NEED TO BE TOLD IT WAS A CRIME.



PLEASE GOD, DO NOT LET ME WET MY BED! OH, PLEASE GOD, DO NOT LET ME WET MY BED!

SOME NIGHTS THE THING HAPPENED, OTHERS NOT. THERE WAS NO VOLITION ABOUT IT. YOU DID NOT REALLY DO THE DEED: YOU MERELY WOKE UP IN THE MORNING AND FOUND THAT THE SHEETS WERE WRINGING WET.



AFTER THE SECOND OR THIRD OFFENCE I WAS WARNED THAT I SHOULD BE BEATEN NEXT TIME, BUT I RECEIVED THE WARNING IN A CURIOUSLY ROUNDABOUT WAY.



MRS WILKES WAS NICKNAMED FLIP (OFFICIALLY SHE WAS ADDRESSED AS MUM, PROBABLY A CORRUPTION OF THE 'MA'AM' USED BY PUBLIC SCHOOLBOYS TO THEIR HOUSEMASTERS' WIVES.)

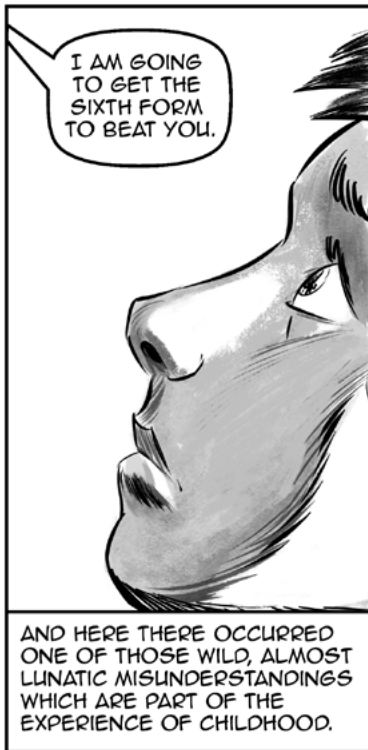


SHE WAS A STOCKY WOMAN WITH DEEP-SET EYES THAT NEVER LOST THEIR ANXIOUS, ACCUSING LOOK. IT WAS VERY DIFFICULT TO LOOK HER IN THE FACE WITHOUT FEELING GUILTY, EVEN AT MOMENTS WHEN ONE WAS NOT GUILTY OF ANYTHING.

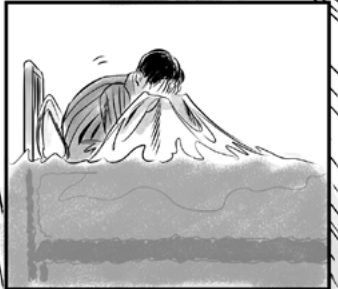
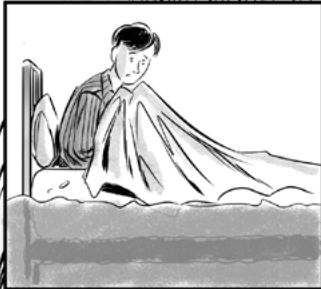


ON THIS OCCASION SHE WAS WITH A LADY VISITOR - AN INTIMIDATING, MASCULINE-LOOKING PERSON WEARING WHAT I TOOK TO BE A RIDING-HABIT.





BUT MY DOMINANT FEELING WAS NOT FEAR OR EVEN RESENTMENT: IT WAS SIMPLY SHAME BECAUSE ONE MORE PERSON, AND A WOMAN, HAD BEEN TOLD OF MY DISGUSTING OFFENCE.



I CANNOT REMEMBER WHETHER IT WAS THAT VERY NIGHT THAT I WET MY BED AGAIN, BUT AT ANY RATE I DID WET IT AGAIN SOON. OH, THE DESPAIR, THE FEELING OF CRUEL INJUSTICE, AFTER ALL MY PRAYERS AND RESOLUTIONS, AT ONCE AGAIN WAKING BETWEEN THE CLAMMY SHEETS!