



Ibis Reproductive Health

Dreams. Fears. and Friendship:

An ~~Abortion~~ **LOVE** Story

Written by Paromita Vohra

Illustrated by Anshumaan Sathe



I don't know if I dream a lot because my parents named me Sapna, or they named me Sapna because they knew I'd dream a lot!



SAPNA!! Stop dreaming!

Shh! Don't talk so loudly. What if one of my neighbours is passing by?

Arre why will they be passing by so far away from home. We're safe from their gossip here.



This is my boyfriend Anand. He wants to be a DJ, but right now he works in a mobile phone company.

Which means we get some free data! I think he is dreamy.



And here's my story of dreams and reality.

Happy Journey Tours & Travels

So cute!



I wonder if her parents know? Girls nowadays want freedom, but what about consequences!

When they get married they will be straightened out.



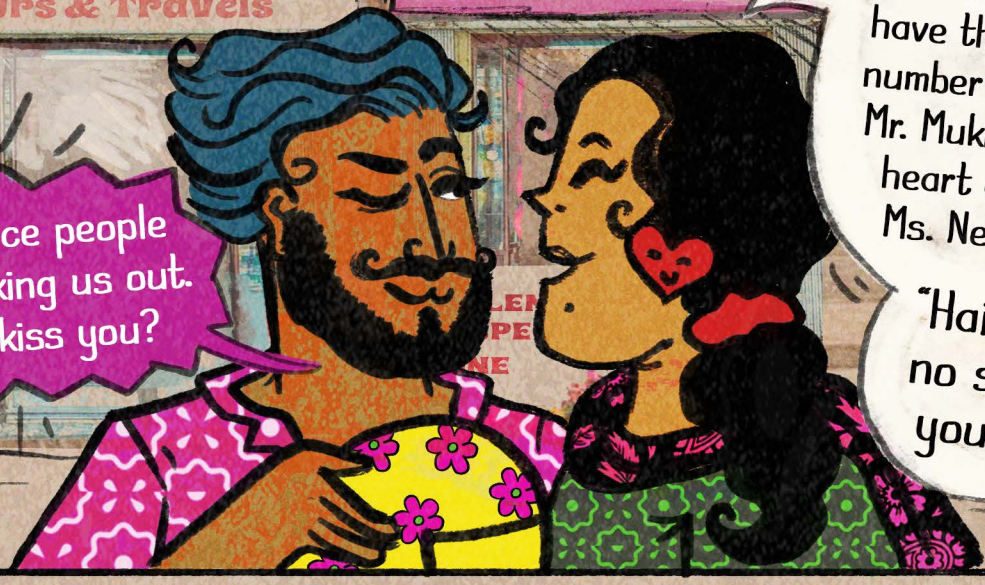
Well, IF they marry!

Happy Journey Tours & Travels

Your office people are checking us out. Shall I kiss you?

Let me check if I have the ambulance number first, in case Mr. Mukherjee has a heart attack and Ms. Neelam says

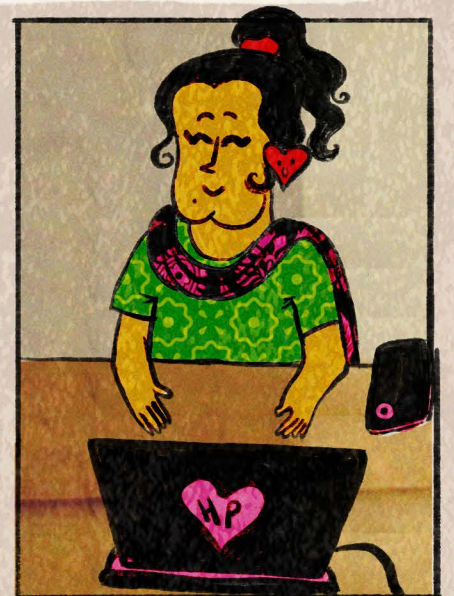
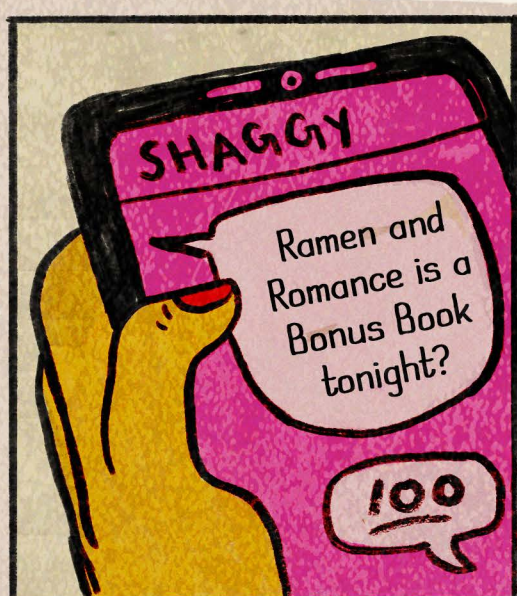
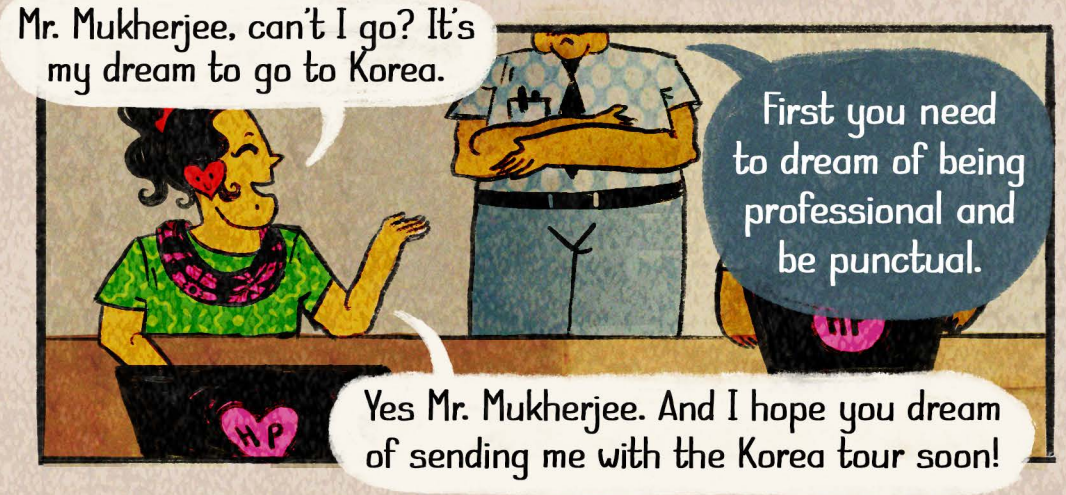
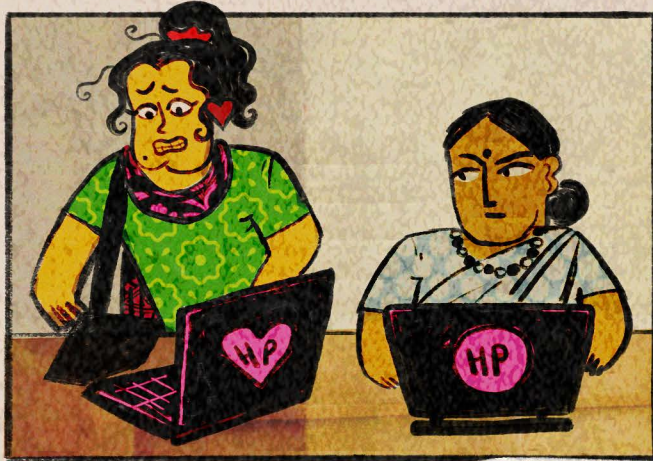
"Hai, sarvanash, no shame these young people!"



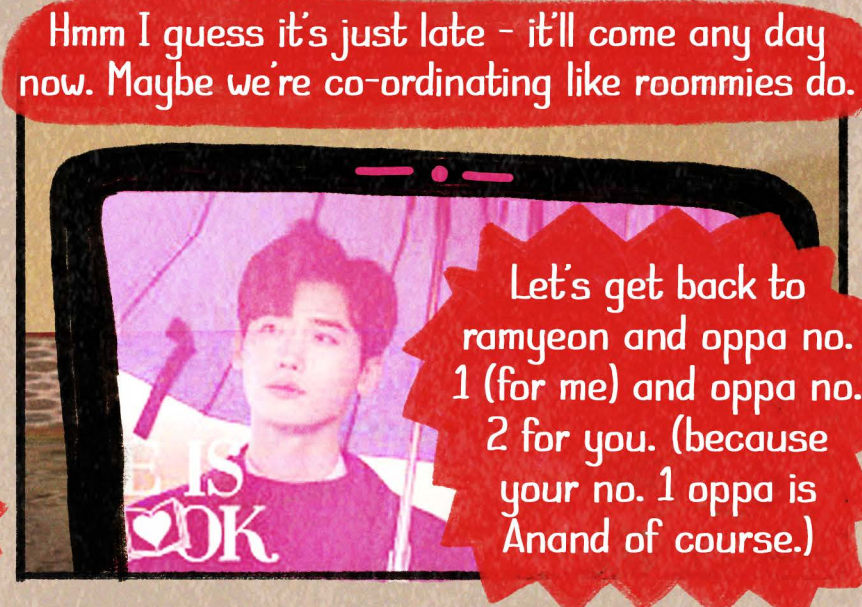
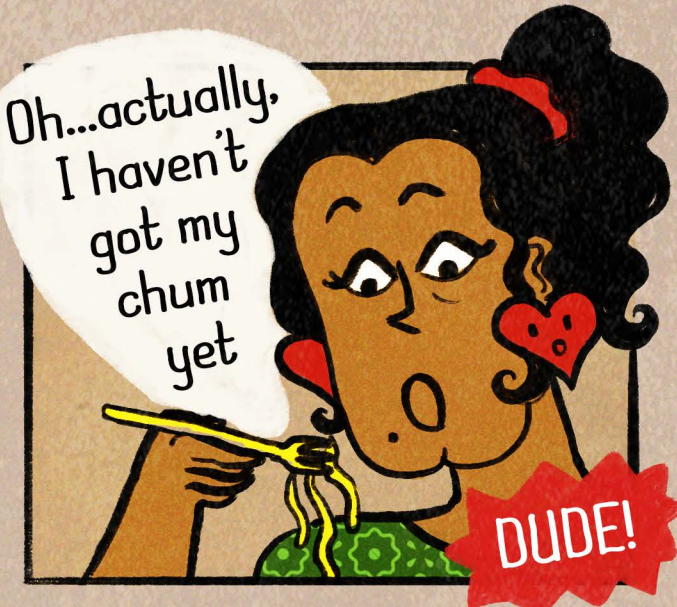
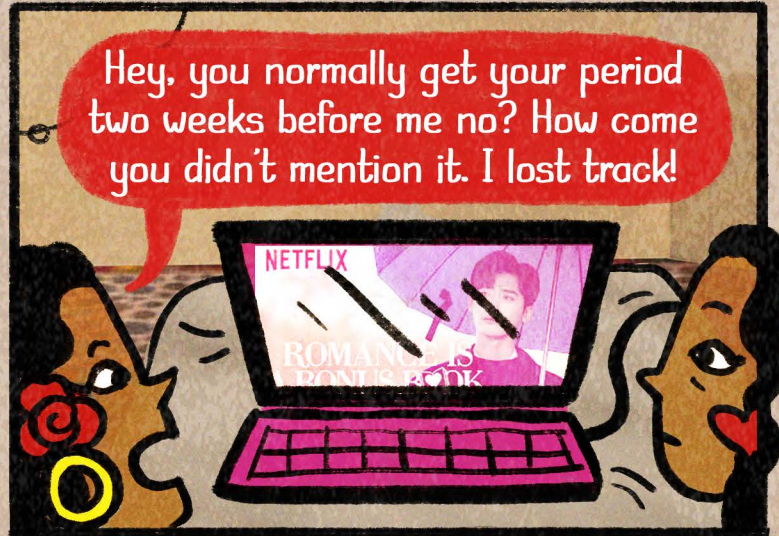
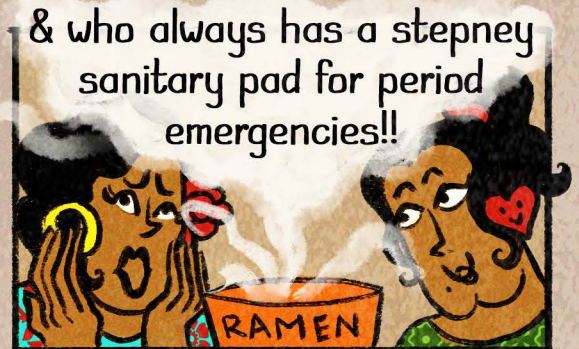
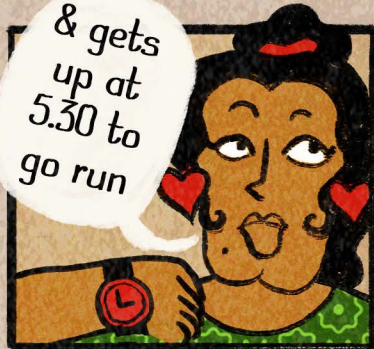
They are right. I am shameless.

Happy Journey Tours & Travels





That's my roomie Shaghufta. She's a journalist, We call her Shaggy.



Later that night...

Could it have been we forgot?

No no, can't be

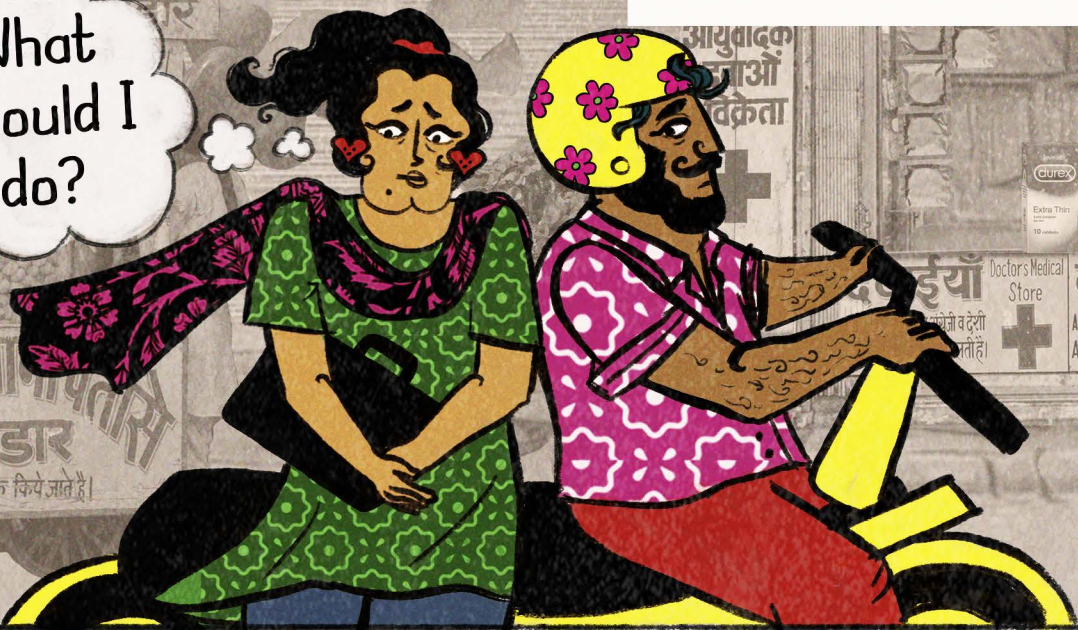
I'm sure
my chum
will come

We're always
careful.
I'm sure
it's fine.



The next morning...

What
should I
do?



Hey, will you drop me here today? I have a meeting this side.

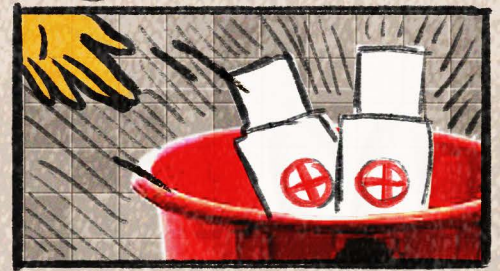
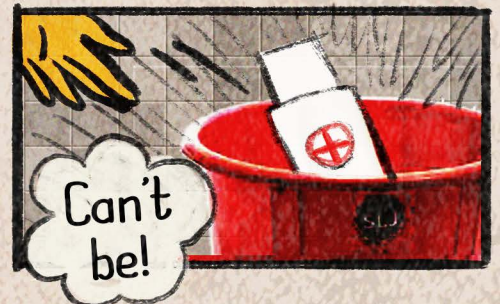
Ok, do your meeting and come. I'll wait for you.

No no, it'll take time. I'll take a rick to work.

यहाँ सभी प्रकार की अद्यतन व देश एवं पशुओं की दवाईयों मिलती हैं।



Two pregnancy tests pls bhaiyya



Came in a rickshaw today.

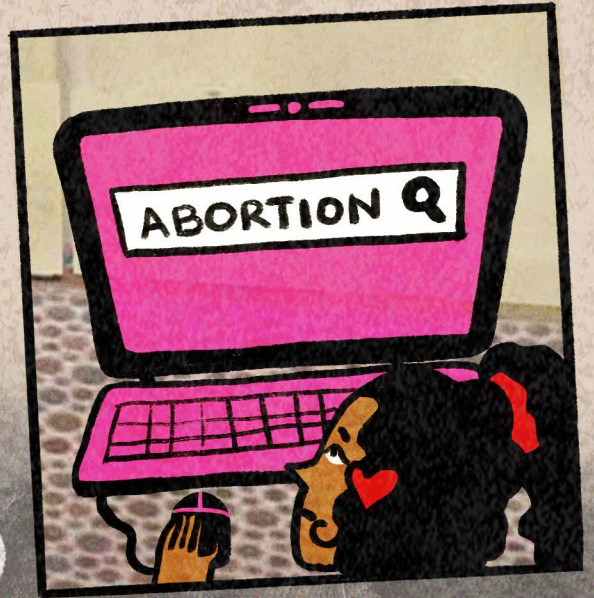
Looks like he has dumped her!



We are going to Brijwasi for chhole bhature. Do you want to come?



No ma'am I have to finish some bookings for the Japan group. You carry on.



WIFE PRISTONE

ABORTION 🔍

- Is abortion legal in India
- Can I have an abortion without doctor
- Abortion cost in Madanpur
- Abortion process
- Abortion symptoms
- Punishment for abortion

CONTRA CEPTION

MISOPROSTOL

MISSION FAILED
ABORT!
ABORT!
ABORT!

THE TIMES OF INDIA

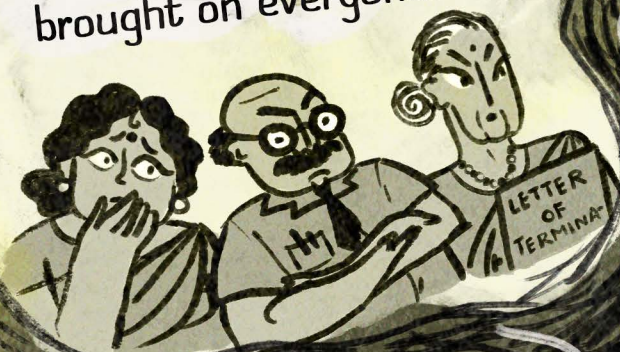
Pregnant girl DIES
Family Scandalized



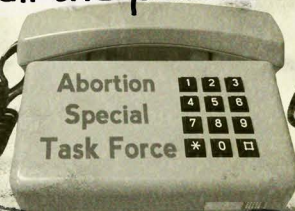
Don't lie. I don't want anything to do with this shit, man!



This girl thinks she is very cool and independent. But look at the shame she has brought on everyone!



Are you married? If not, bring your parents, otherwise I'll call the police



Is this how you pay us back for trusting you?



Class, study this reproduction chapter at home. Anyway these indecent questions won't come in the exam.



I'm moving out. I don't want to stay with a scandal-person like you



SAPNA, YOU OK?

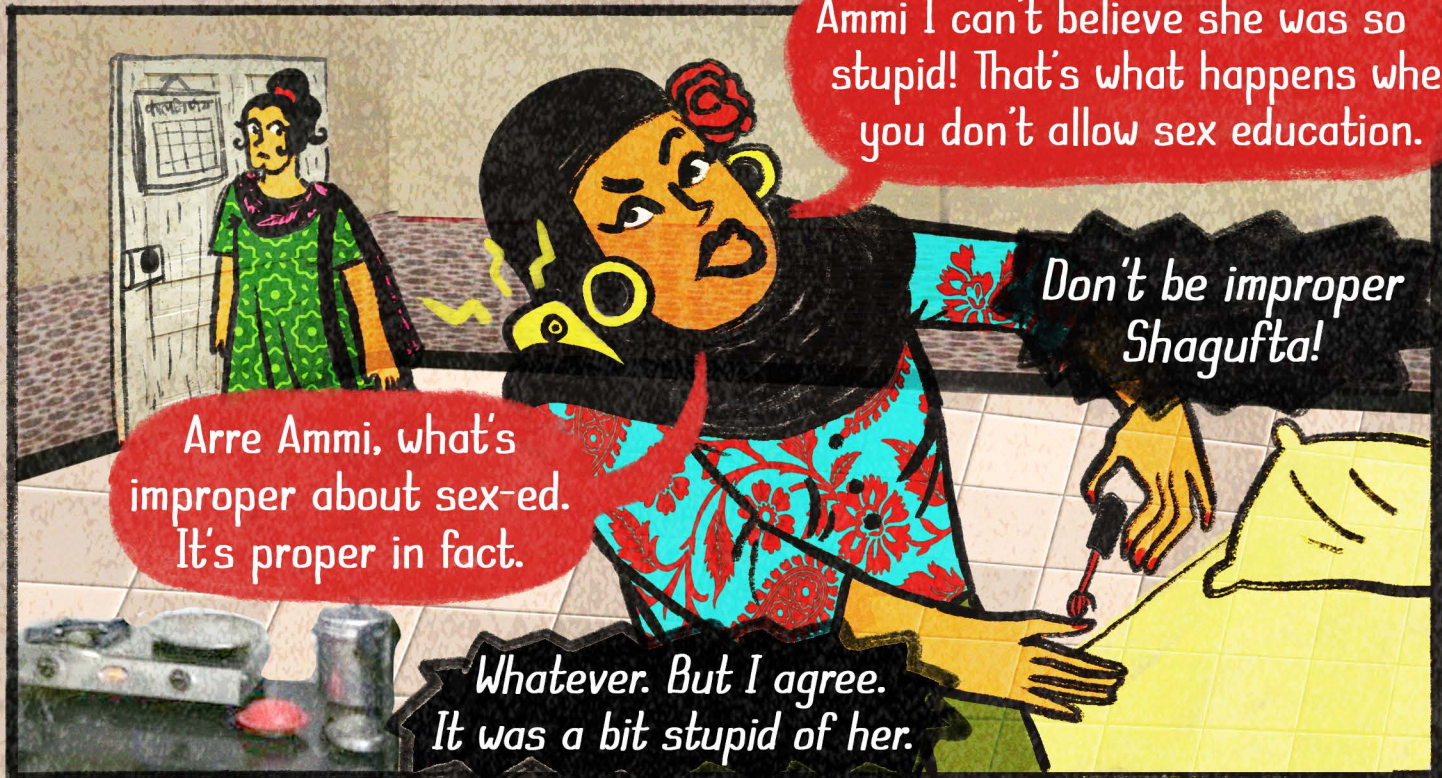
Yes! Sorry...





Do you want to go eat some Chinese?

No, I don't feel well



Ammi I can't believe she was so stupid! That's what happens when you don't allow sex education.

Arre Ammi, what's improper about sex-ed. It's proper in fact.

Don't be improper Shagufta!

Whatever. But I agree. It was a bit stupid of her.

You remember my neighbour Rashmi who was our senior who had that very stupid boyfriend Romy who we used to call Romeo?

yeah?

She's such a fool. She and Romeo got married last year and they were using - wait for it - pull out method. So of course she got preggers right away.

Does Shaggy have no other topic to discuss!



And on top of it that silly fool did not realise it for three months. She's having a baby now - rather sooner than she planned. What a goose.



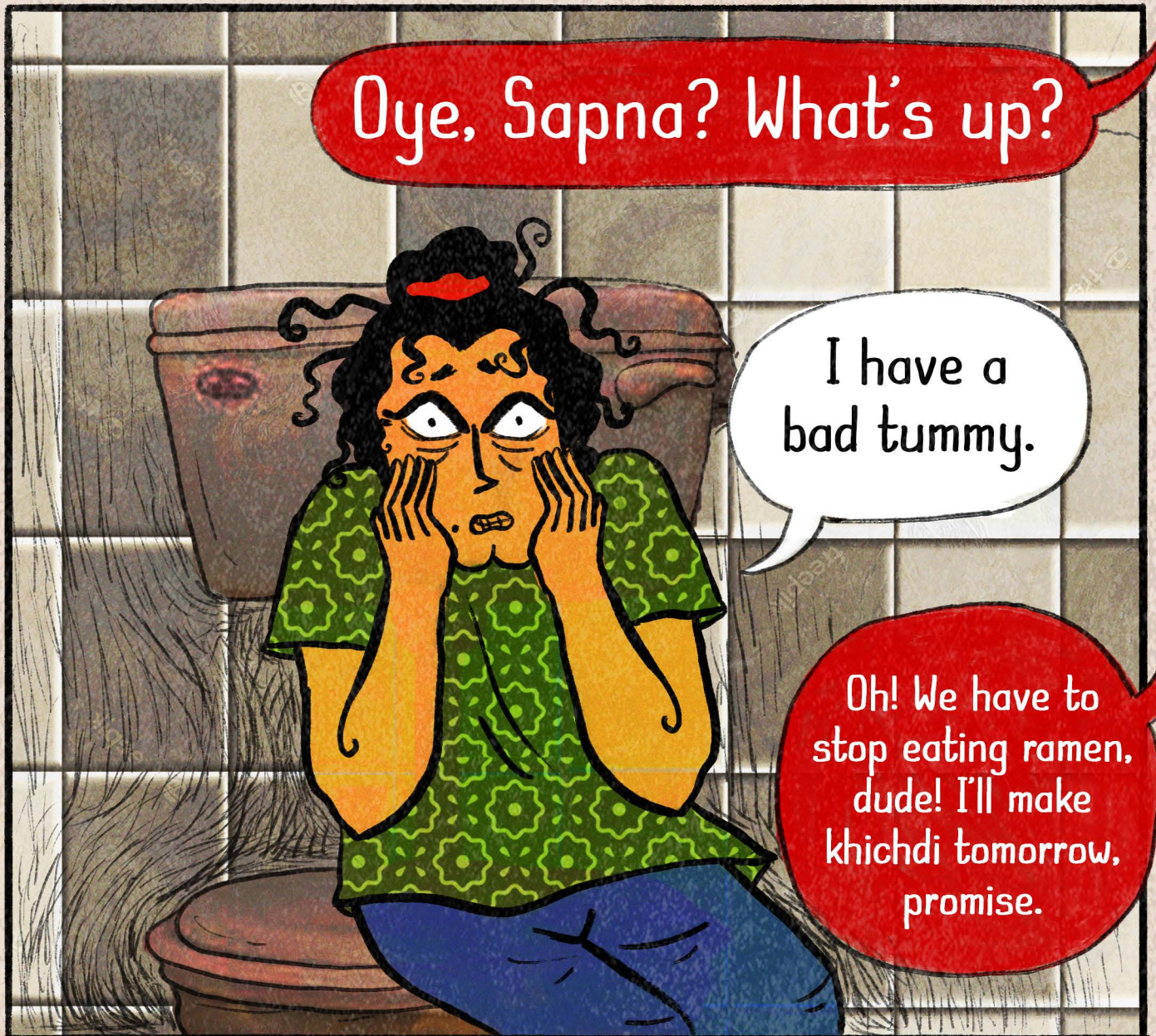
SLAM

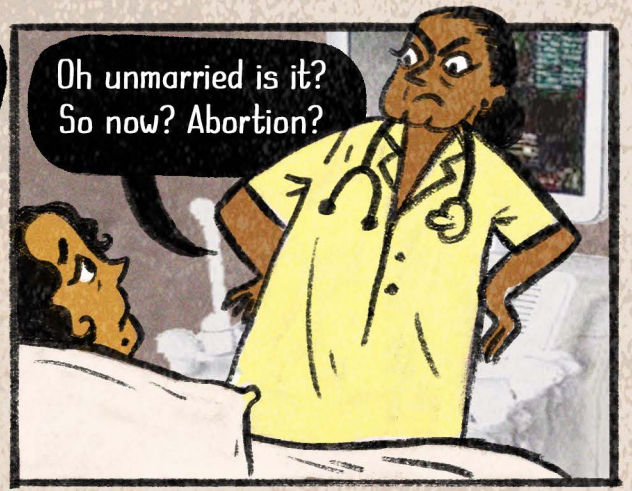
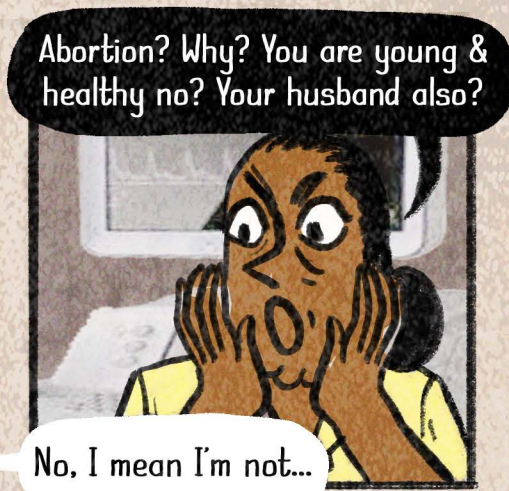


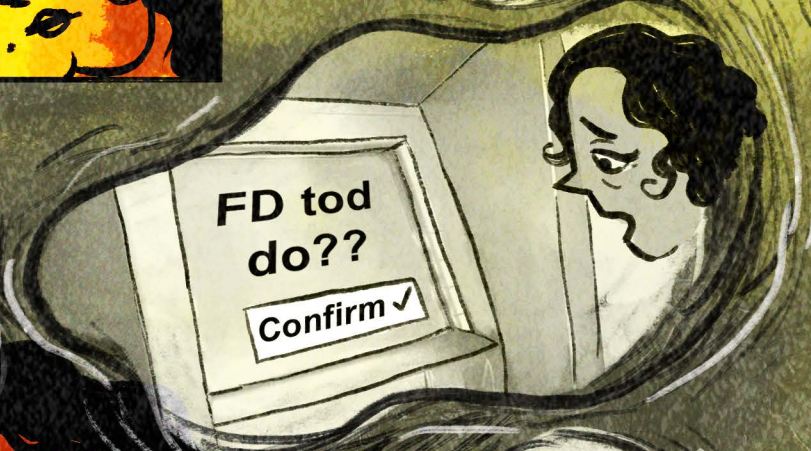
Oye, Sapna? What's up?

I have a bad tummy.

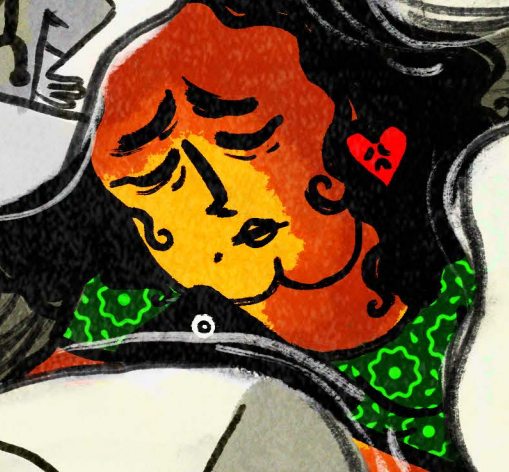
Oh! We have to stop eating ramen, dude! I'll make khichdi tomorrow, promise.



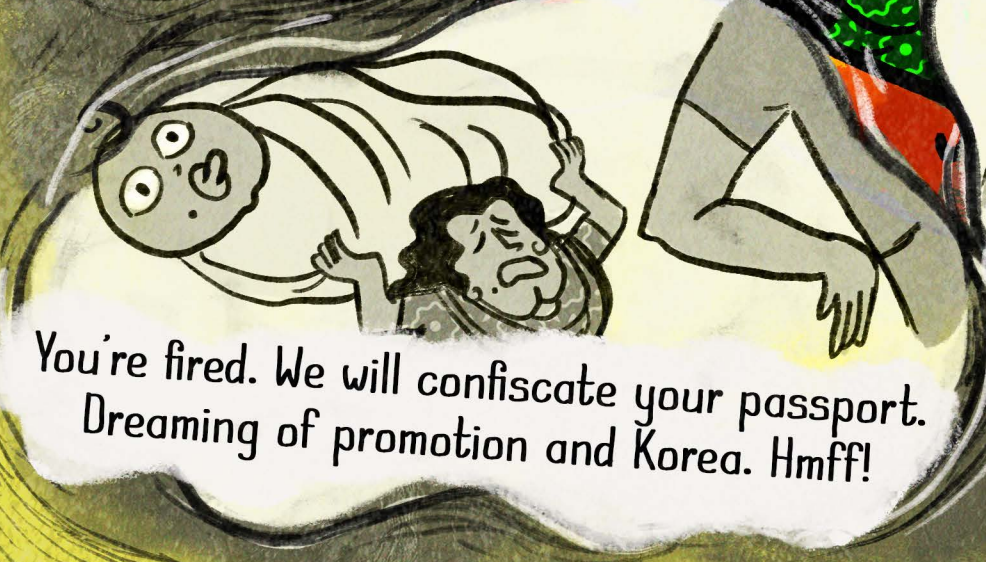




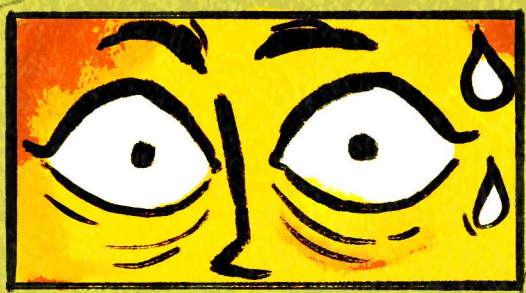
This isn't enough money. Nurse, call the police!



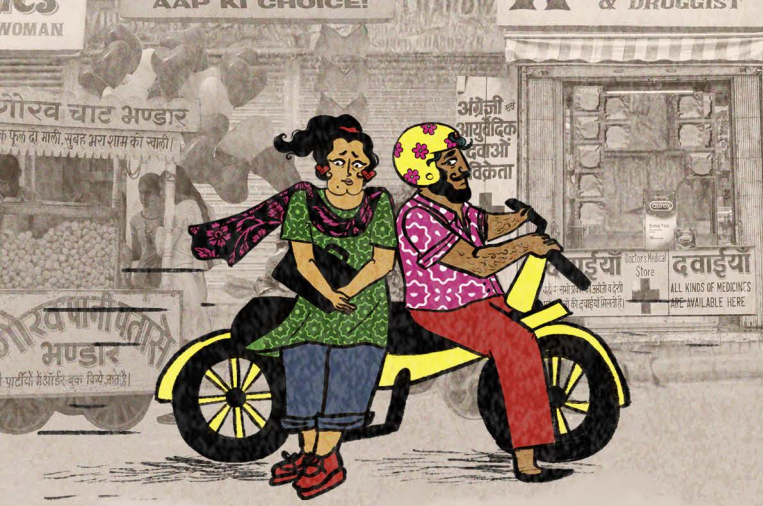
We should not have agreed to let you live away from home. You think this is America?



You're fired. We will confiscate your passport. Dreaming of promotion and Korea. Hmfff!



I've never had so many bad dreams. What do I do!



Why didn't you tell me as soon as you came to know?

I thought you will judge me

Why! If I judge you I have to judge me too no

We always use condoms, so I thought you will blame me

But sometimes, they say condoms can tear. Maybe we didn't realise.



What do you want to do? Do you... want to I mean... get married and all?



Married? No!

I mean...

We are so young, we don't even know what will happen next year. I want to...but I mean.

Whatever you need, tell me, we will do it together

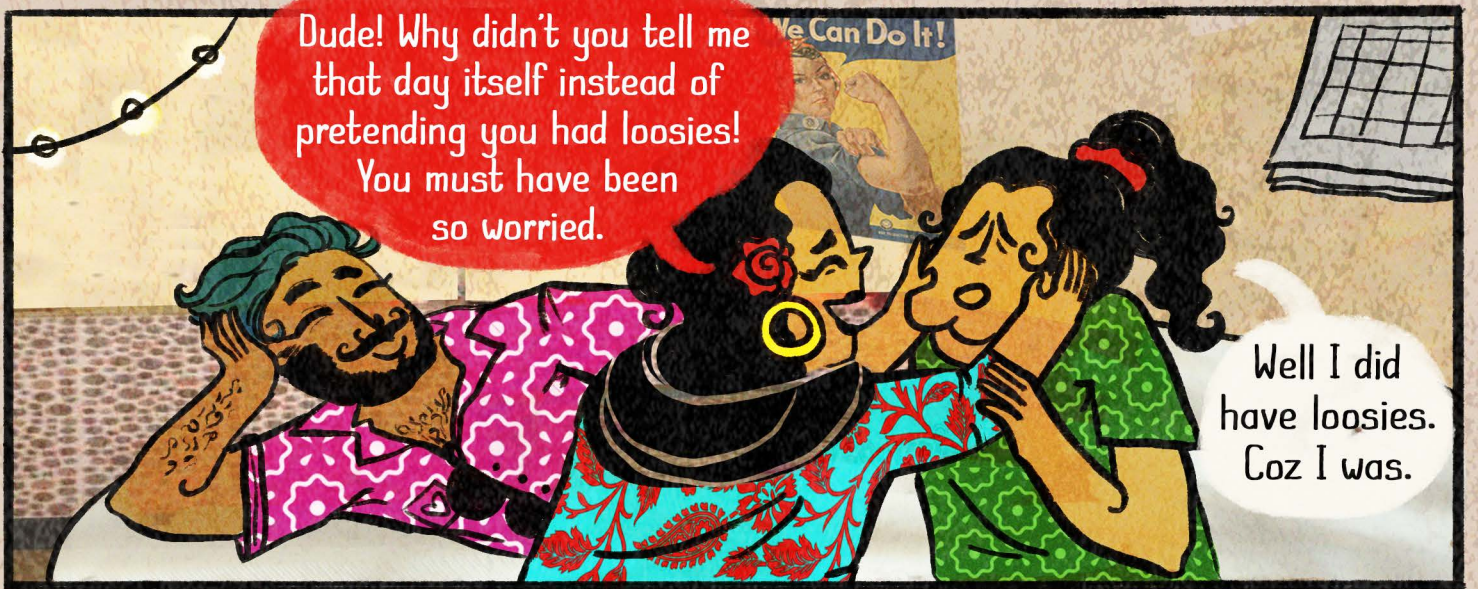
I read there is something like abortion pills, but, I mean, I am scared. Is it legal?

Let's ask Shaggy no? She is a journalist, they know stuff na

I feel awkward.

Don't feel awkward. I'm quite clueless too. Let's ask her together. She is your friend. She will help us figure it out.





Dude! Why didn't you tell me that day itself instead of pretending you had loosies! You must have been so worried.

Well I did have loosies. Coz I was.



HAHAHA

Don't laugh!



OK. You know my cousin Fatima whose husband is building a townhall in Vayupuri village?

She missed a couple of her birth control pills and didn't realise and got pregnant.



So she got the abortion pills - in the village, not even like she's in Bombay or something!

They call it self - managed abortion. Let's self-manage your abortion. Let's call her and ask.



Really!

See? Told you, Shaggy knows stuff.





Naina didi, remember I called you yesterday about my friends from Madanpur? They are coming to meet you. Please do guide them.



ASHA clinic

Yes you can do this with pills as it's not yet 12 weeks since your last period. You are not anaemic no? IUD?



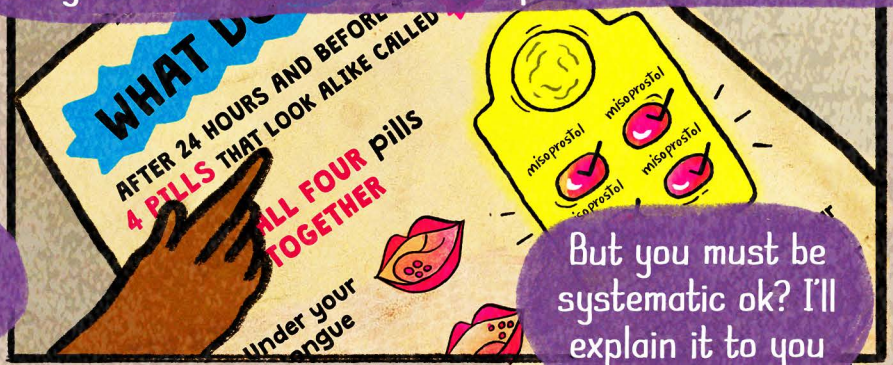
Don't look so worried. It will be fine. I just checked on a woman who got pregnant for the fourth time.

She just did not want a baby. She is using abortion pills.

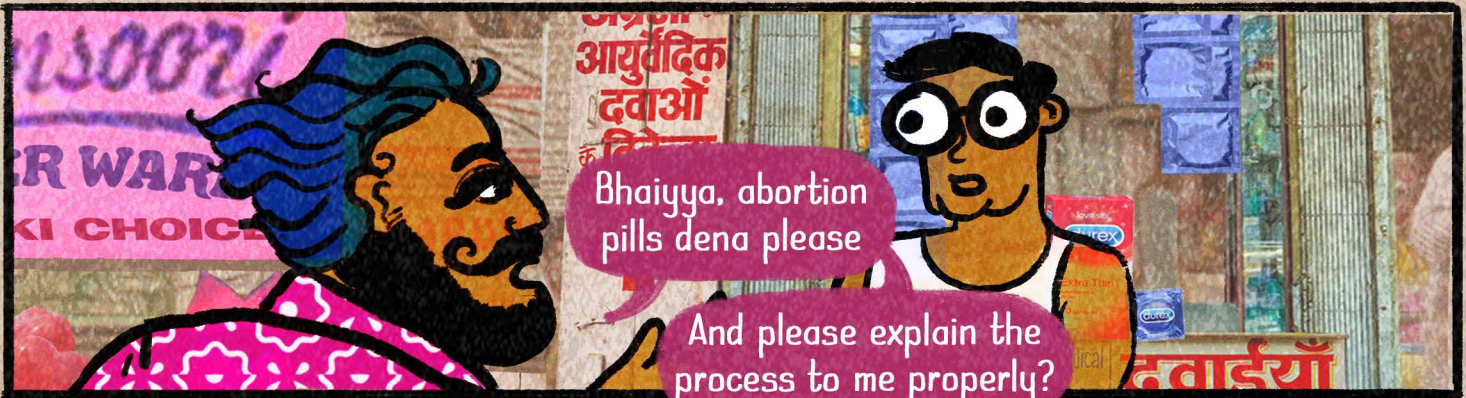
See - you can go to a doctor for a termination. But you can also use abortion pills and do it at home.



I can tell you so many stories.



But you must be systematic ok? I'll explain it to you



Bhaiyya, abortion pills dena please

And please explain the process to me properly?



See this big fat pill on top - Mifepristone - take that first. Nothing much will happen. Once in a while people get a little spotting or slight cramps. But not usually.



Then after 24 hours, and before 48 hours, these four pills should be taken together. After few days, it will be fine. You can see the instructions in this leaflet.

That night I took the first tablet. I dreamt of all the women whose stories the ASHA didi told me.



As a single woman I was hesitant to go to the chemist. So my friend and I went to a chemist in another locality. Why should they be mean to us - it's just medicine. Once I had taken the pill everything was fine. I was relieved. I thought I would tell you - you can go ahead and take abortion pills. You will be fine.

My husband was really mean. When I got pregnant he shouted at me, as if it was my fault. My mother-in-law took care of me though, and looked after me when I took abortion pills.



I felt fine taking the medicine. I hardly felt anything. I love kids, but I wanted to have a baby when I am ready. I was happy afterwards.

I did have pain and bleeding but luckily I could take two days off from work and hug a hot water bag. After that I was bleeding but I just had to wear pads at work and I was ok.

I was a little bit sad, to be honest. I wished that this had not happened to me. But then, I know I did what is right for me right now.



Everyone goes on and on about motherhood as if everyone wants to be a mother. Some people don't. They aren't unnatural. They are just themselves. We don't need to carry the burden of other people's vague stereotypes, right?



We didn't have proper income. I need to accumulate money for my daughter's future. I have thyroid issue too... I was afraid and that is why also we decided not to have baby right now at least.

I was doing the thing which I haven't done before, so it is natural to feel scared.

Women suffer because of how people look at them, if they make a choice for themselves. But why should we?



36 hours later...



Ok, Sapna! take the Misoprostol pills!



Don't swallow them. Keep them in your cheek and let them dissolve.



She's not a baby, yaar. She knows what to do.



Let's watch one ep of Zindagi Gulzar Hai - in 30 min they should be over.



Fawad Khan is just too sexy yaar.

And so is Sanam Saeed!



Ok enough. 30 minutes are over. You can swallow the rest.



Oh I think someone is jelly of Fawaad

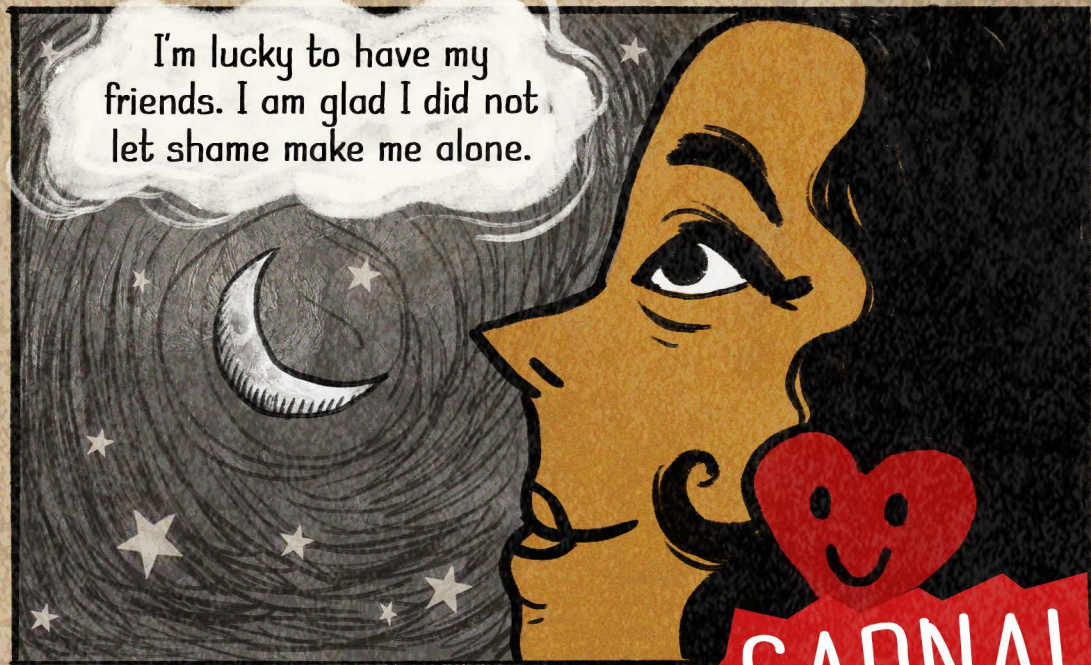


No, I'm too good-looking to care. And I'm caring for my good looking girlfriend.



CLICK

oho-hoho



I'm lucky to have my friends. I am glad I did not let shame make me alone.

SAPNA!

Ok, we have Shin Yeon Kim Chi Ramyeon.

Very hot kachoris.

Lots of chips and ketchup.



And the whole ice-cream shop: chocolate, butterscotch and my favourite - cassatta, the ice-cream of small-town queers! Satrangi re!

We are having a self-managed abortion pyjama party Sapna!





I feel so cool you trusted me like this and called me for the party!

By the way I got you some extra pads. I've kept them in the loo

I can't believe you got cassatta ice-cream Shaggy. Haven't eaten it in ages.

LET'S EAT!



Wait let me go change my pad



It's so nice to have everyone here.

I'm missing you! And the fun.

I'll save some ice-cream for you



You need...



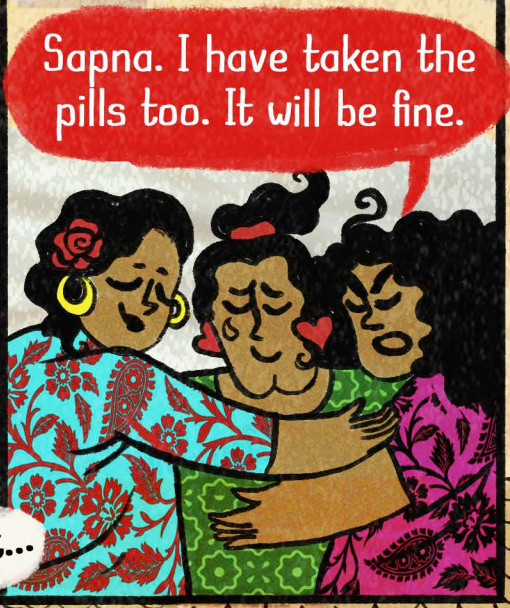
You need fat friends, thin friends, shy friends, bossy friends...



Girls, do you think it's ok?

What? Are you not feeling well?

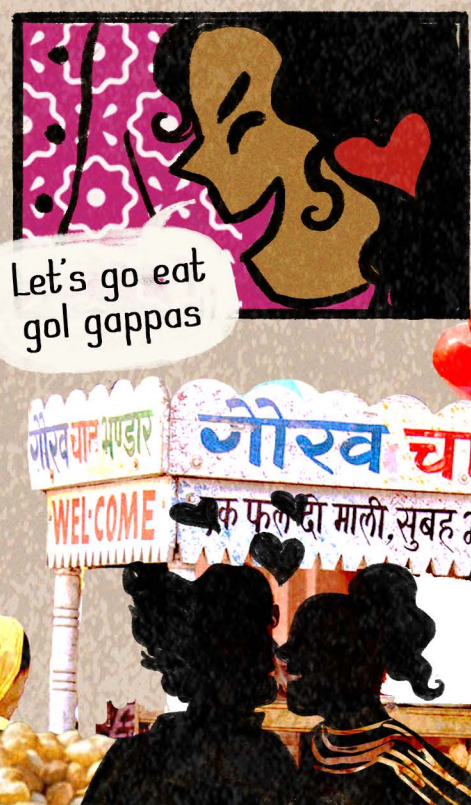
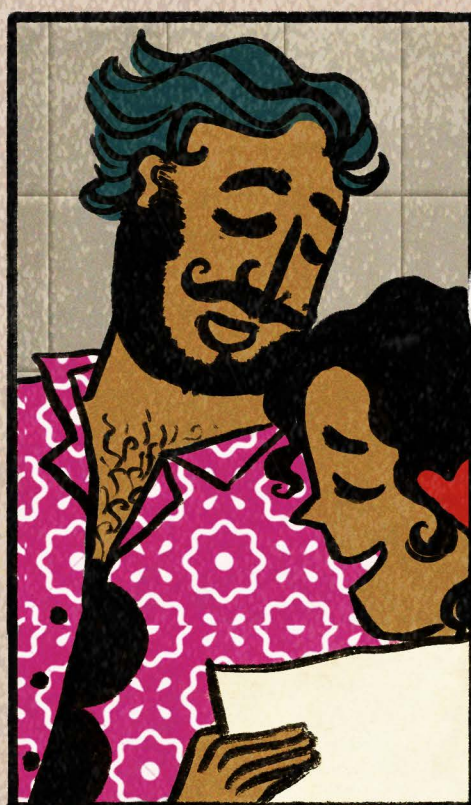
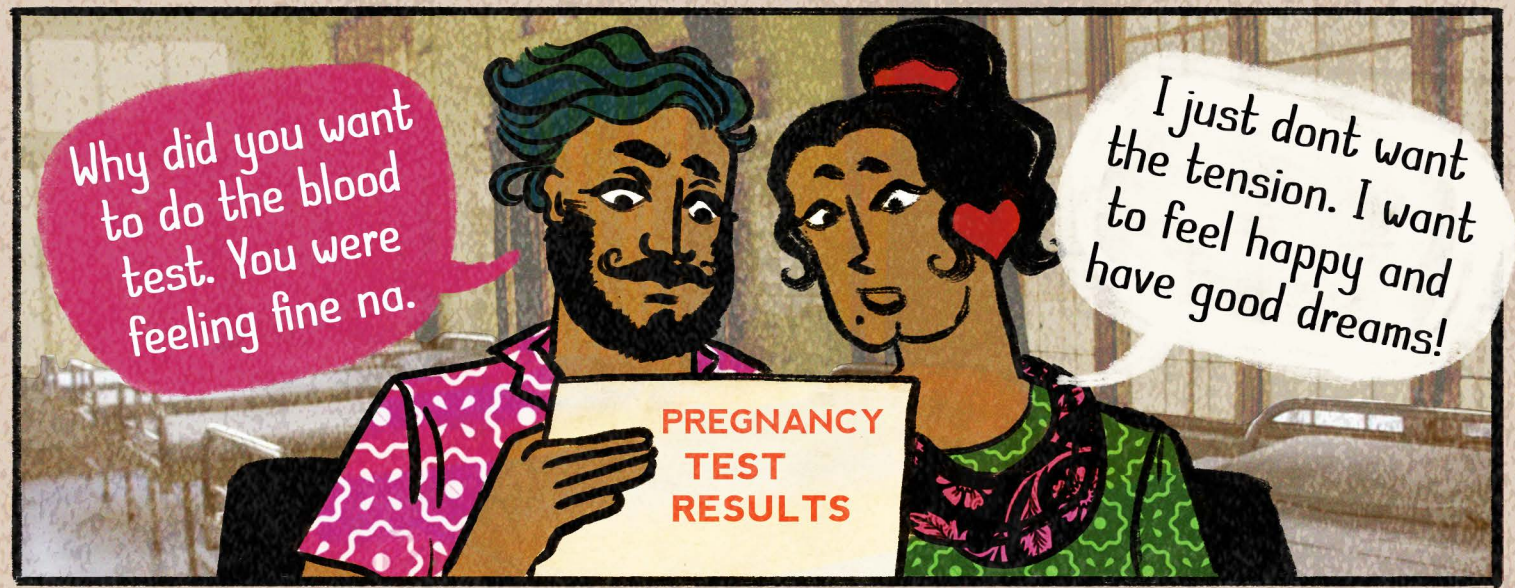
I am but...



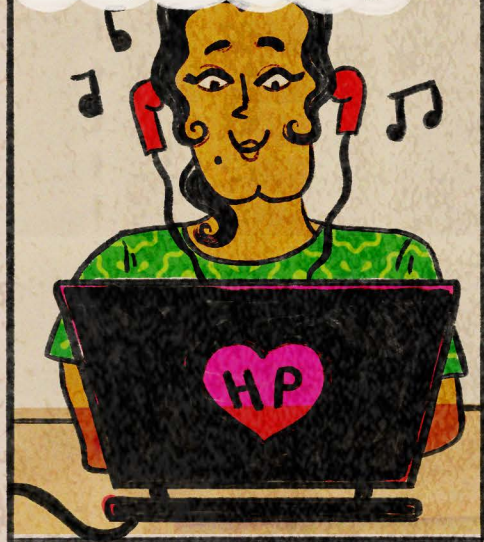
Sapna. I have taken the pills too. It will be fine.

You need fat friends, thin friends, shy friends, bossy friends And good-at-hugging wale friends!

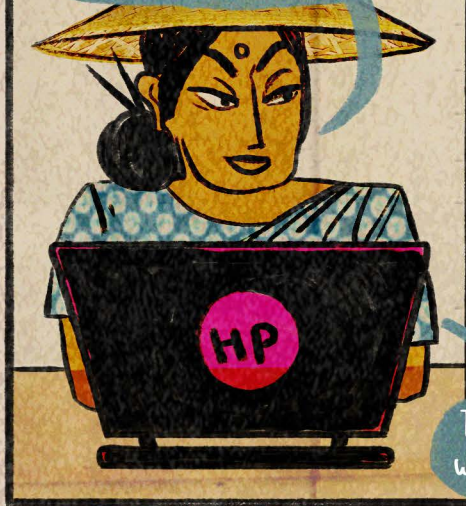




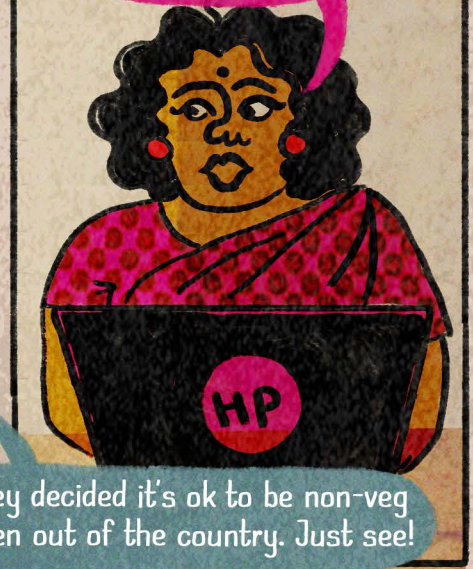
Those few short days helped me to see myself, my life, my dreams differently.



For vegetarians, must say Japan is hopeless. But they have a good drink called sake. So I had that and noodles and managed.



What about the tour group ladies?



They decided it's ok to be non-veg when out of the country. Just see!

Ms. Neelam, do we get discounts on air fares, as employees?



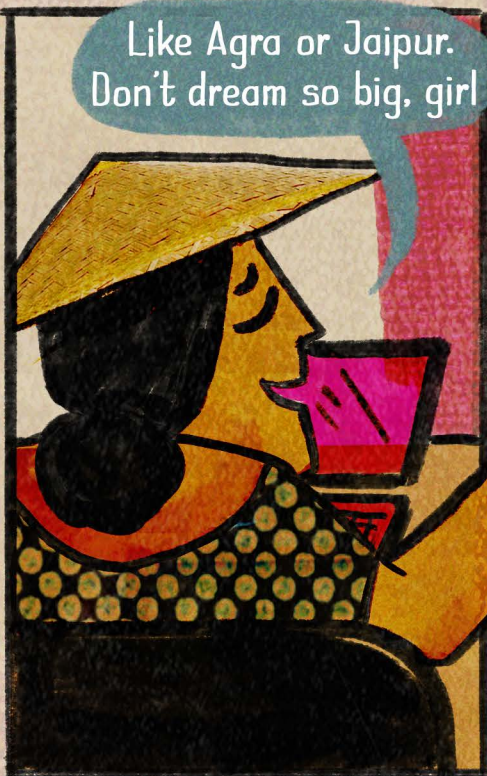
Depends on your performance. If it's good, then for Diwali bonus you might even get a ticket to somewhere



Like foreign??



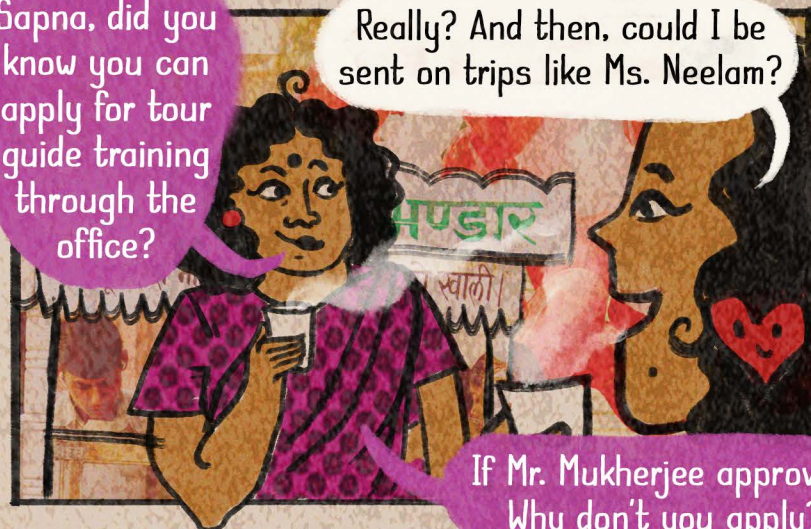
Like Agra or Jaipur. Don't dream so big, girl



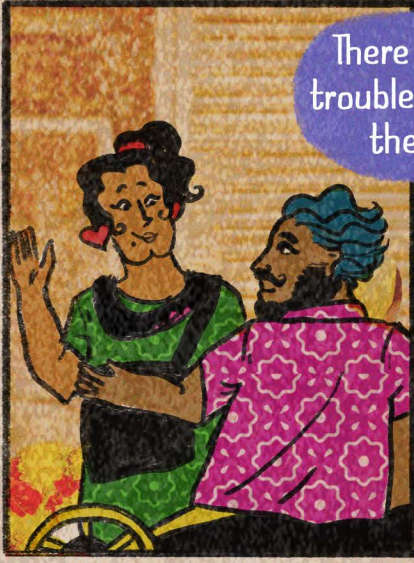
Its good to dream small and big Ms. Neelam - variety is the spice of life, you only said!

Sapna, did you know you can apply for tour guide training through the office?

Really? And then, could I be sent on trips like Ms. Neelam?

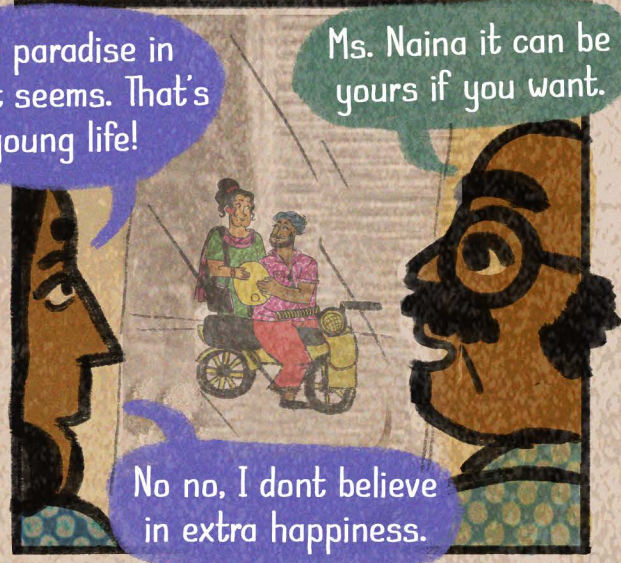


If Mr. Mukherjee approves. Why don't you apply?



There is paradise in trouble it seems. That's the young life!

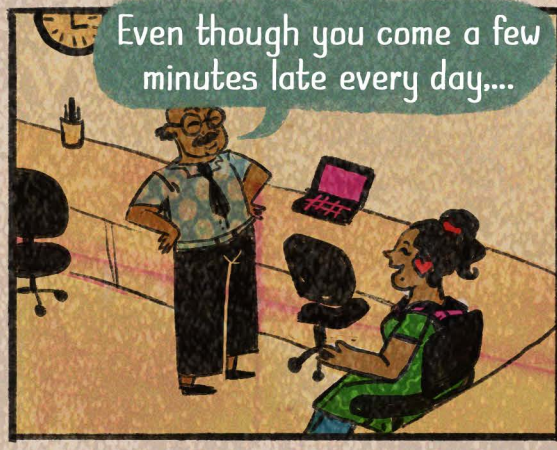
Ms. Naina it can be yours if you want.



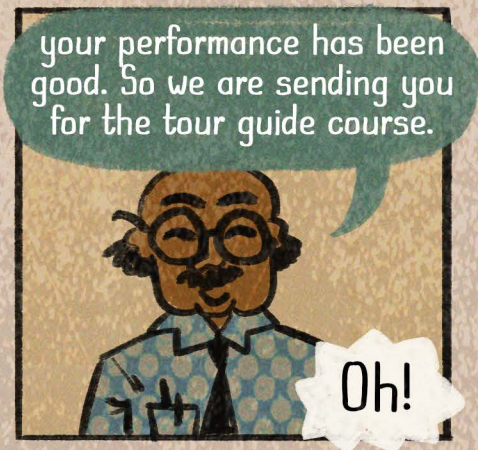
No no, I dont believe in extra happiness.



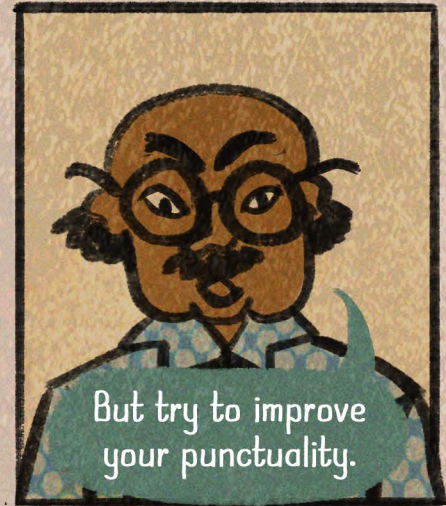
SAPNA!



Even though you come a few minutes late every day....



your performance has been good. So we are sending you for the tour guide course.



But try to improve your punctuality.



It's a dream come true for me!



MAIN CHALI
MAIN CHALI

MODE
STR
IE MODE

ivate L
WEAR & LIN

ENTINES
ECIAL!

Just a minute, let me
get the condom!

And a little reality in the dream is nice too, to
keep things dreamy! That's the story of my dreams and fears
and love and friendship. I wonder what yours is.

This comic was created drawing
on research insights from a study
conducted in India from January to
August 2022 by Ibis Reproductive
Health in partnership with
RUWSEC, SHRI and FPAI

Copyright:
Parodevi Pictures Pvt. Ltd. and
Ibis Reproductive Health

