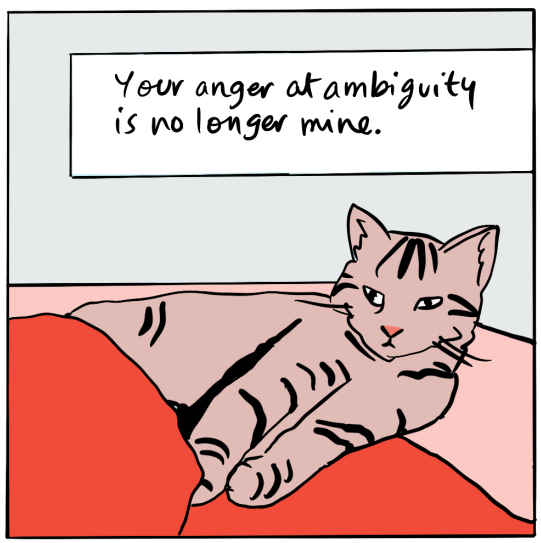
O' Brother
Léna Merhej

O' brother,
your anger at death
is no longer mine.

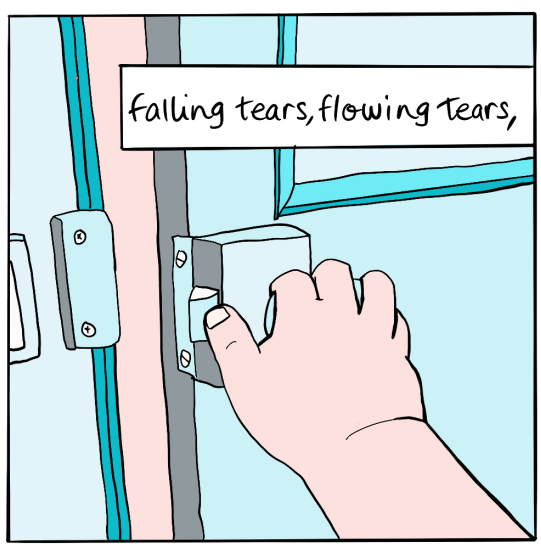
your anger at men
is no longer mine.

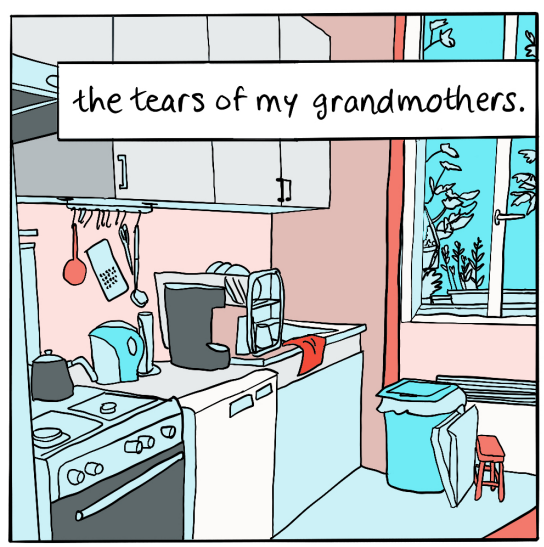

Your anger at ambiguity
is no longer mine.

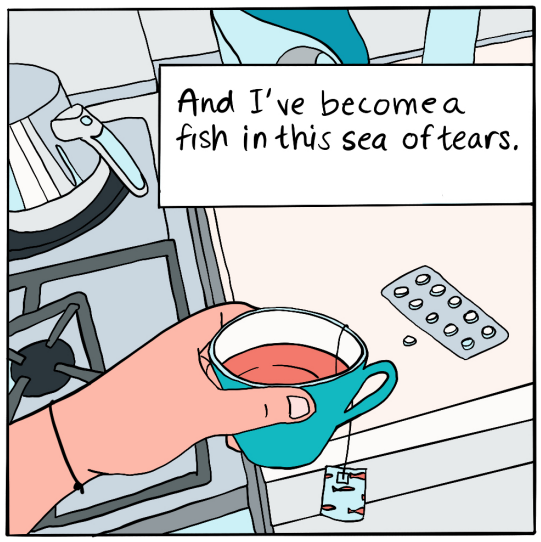
And your anger at reality
is no longer mine.

I've replaced this anger
with sadness and tears
that've lasted for hours,
days, and months.

Tears at the market,
at the cafés, and in
treatment centres.

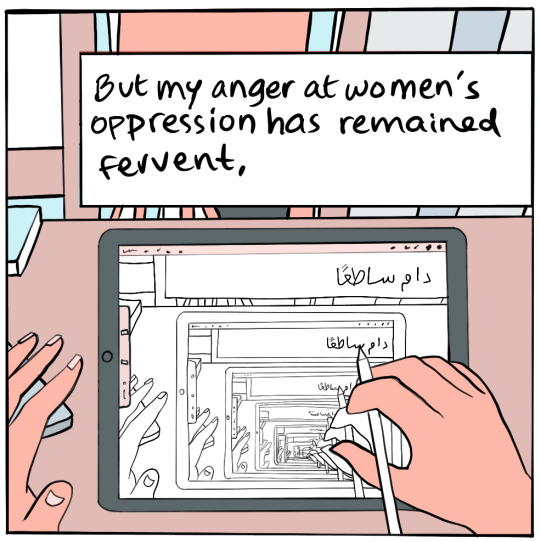

falling tears, flowing tears,

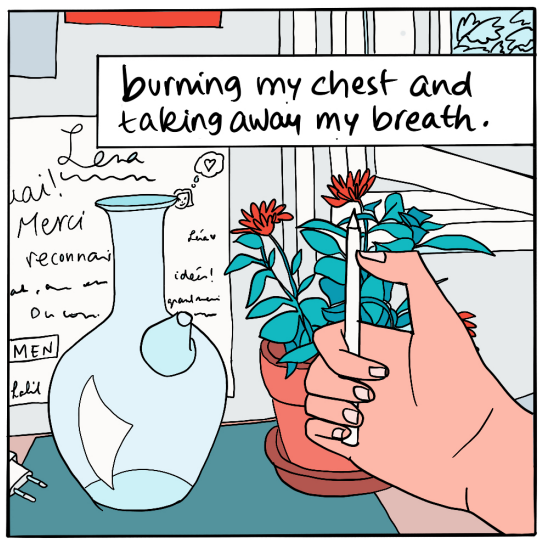

the tears of my grandmothers.

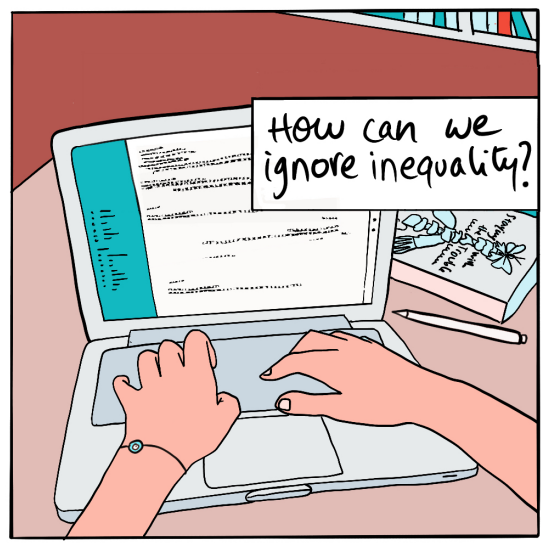

And I've become a fish in this sea of tears.

At times it's a calm clear sea, and at times it's wavering and turbulent.

And the stretch of days between them has grown longer.


But my anger at women's oppression has remained fervent,

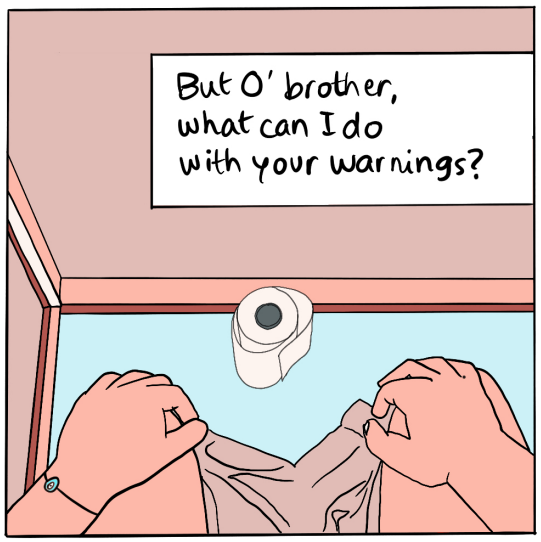

burning my chest and taking away my breath.

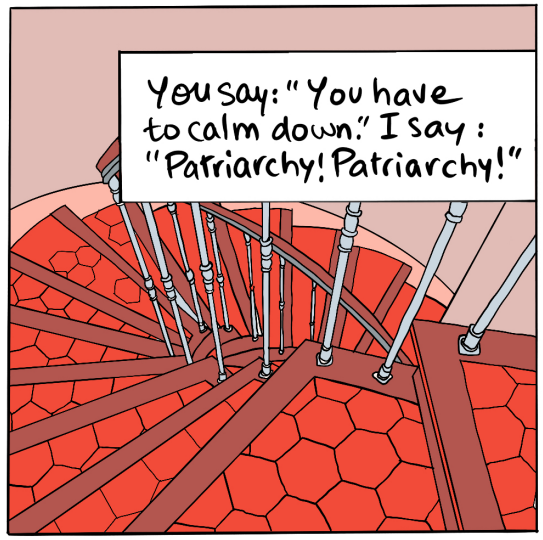

How can we ignore inequality?

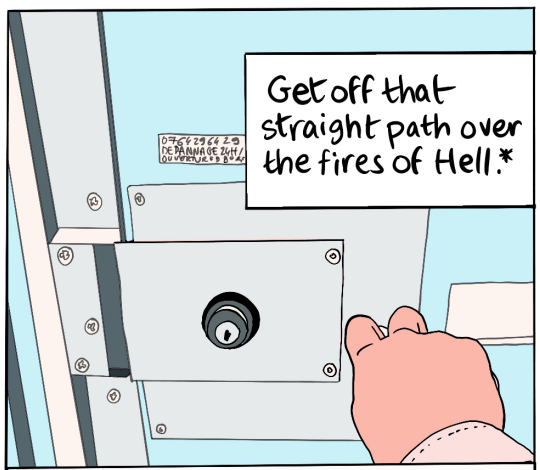
How can we ignore domestic violence?

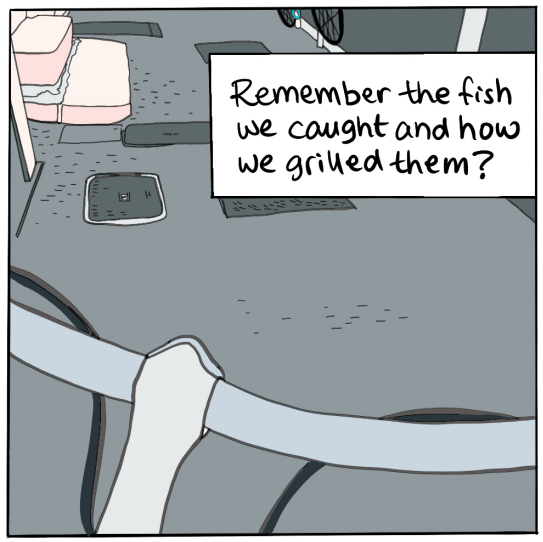
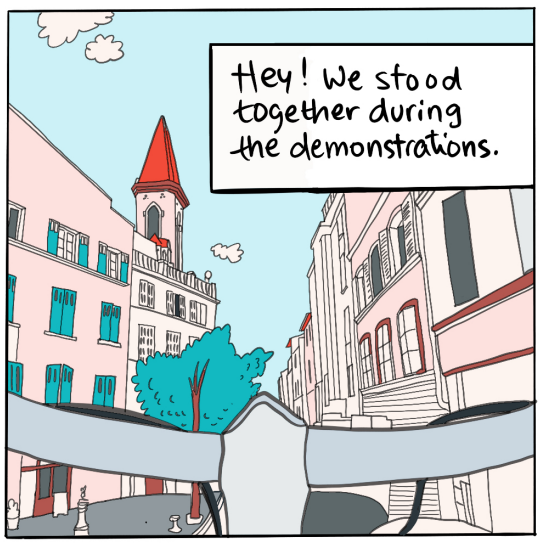
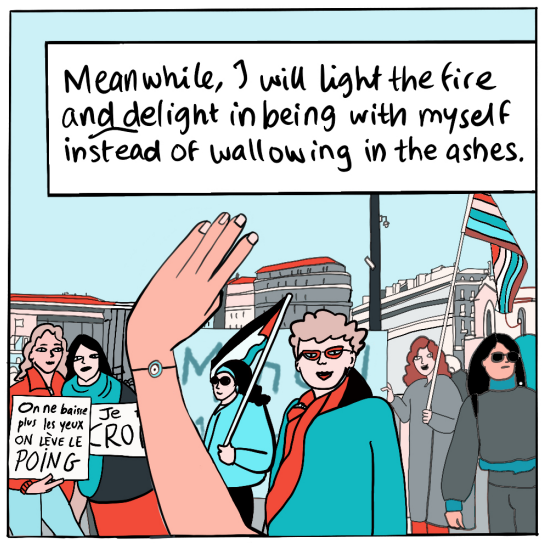
How can we ignore violence against foreign workers?

You add: And the issue of Lebanese nationality and preventing women from passing their nationality onto their husbands and children?







* الصراط المستقيم or al-sirat al-mustaqim in Arabic: Muslims cross this path on the Day of Judgment.

** two poets who wrote about Heaven and Hell.