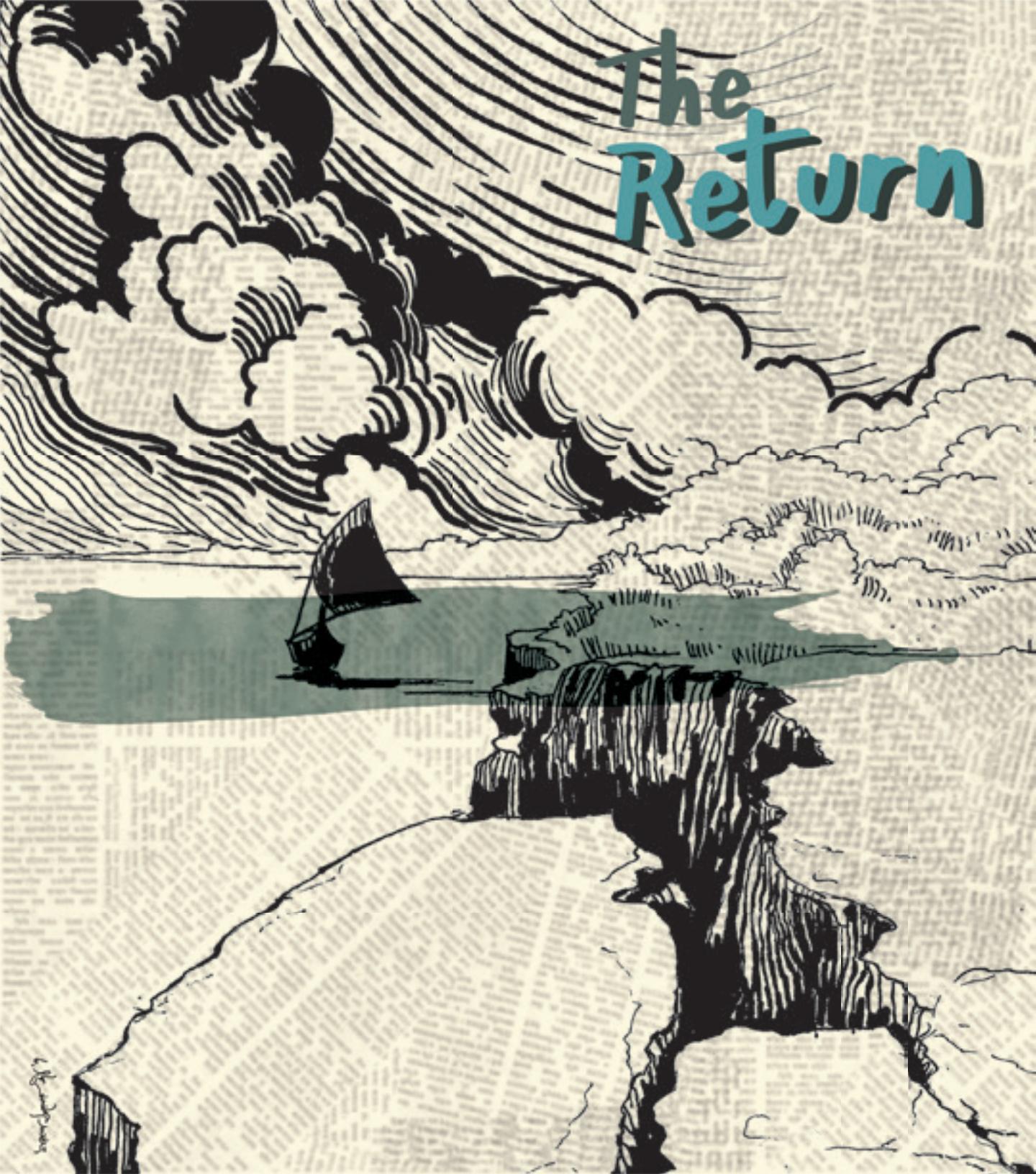


The Return



Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was assassinated on August 15, 1975. His daughter Sheikh Hasina was not allowed to return to her country.

She was forced to live in political asylum in Europe and India for six years. Sheikh Hasina returned to Bangladesh in 1981 as the leader of the Awami League. Since her return, she has grown into a national leader and dedicated herself to guiding her country towards progress.

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The Return

Illustrated By: Farhana Sarwar

Sheikh Hasina leaves Bangladesh on 30 July, 1975. For some reason, she hesitates to leave the country. Mrs. Mujib cries a lot that day. Perhaps she senses that she is seeing her daughter for the last time.



Hasina and her mother have their final conversation on 13 August. Mrs. Mujib tells Hasina that they have a lot to discuss after Hasina returns. Hasina never learns what her mother wishes to tell her.





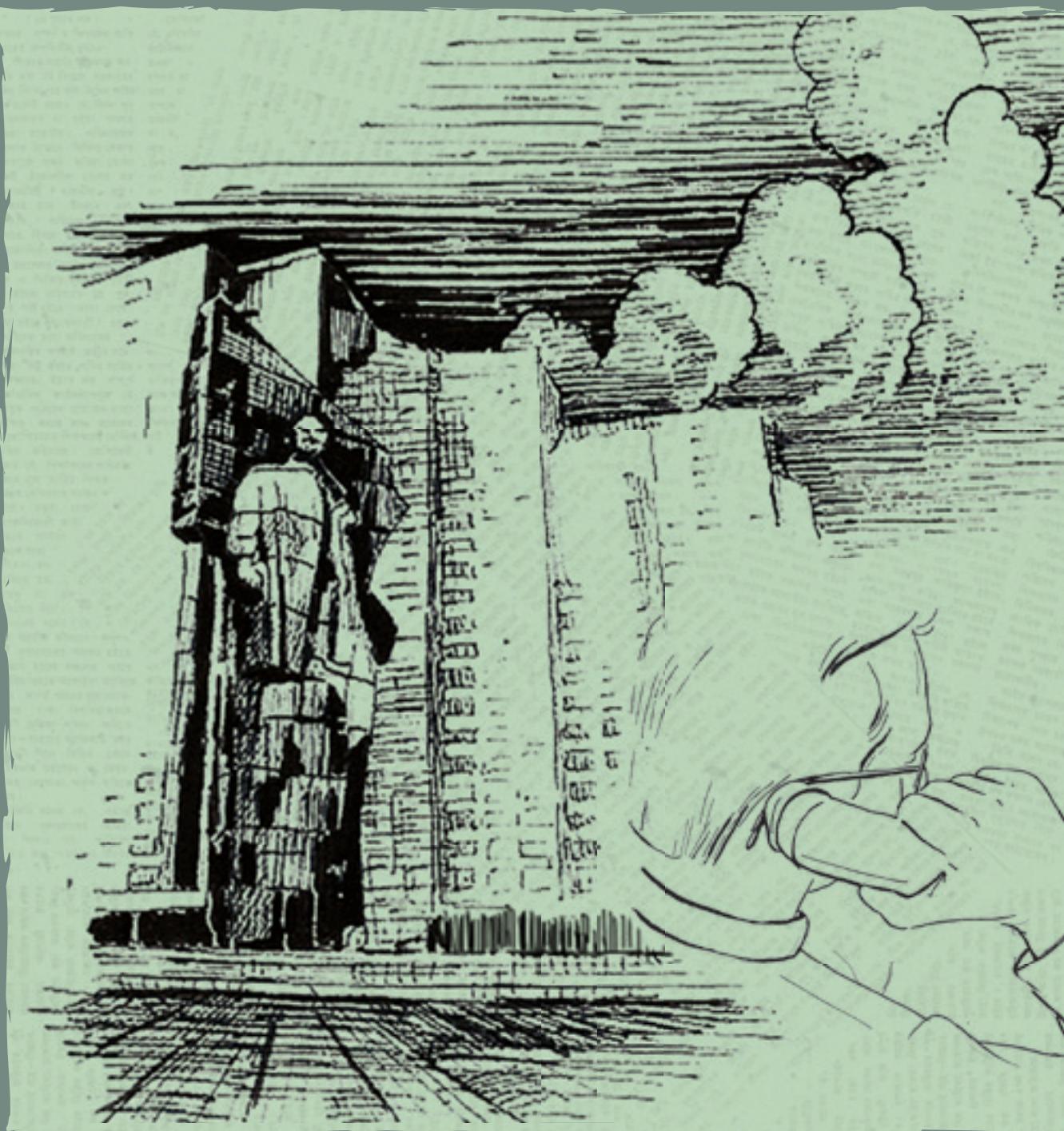
On 15 August, Hasina receives news about the coup in Bangladesh.





But that means nobody
is alive," she
immediately responds.

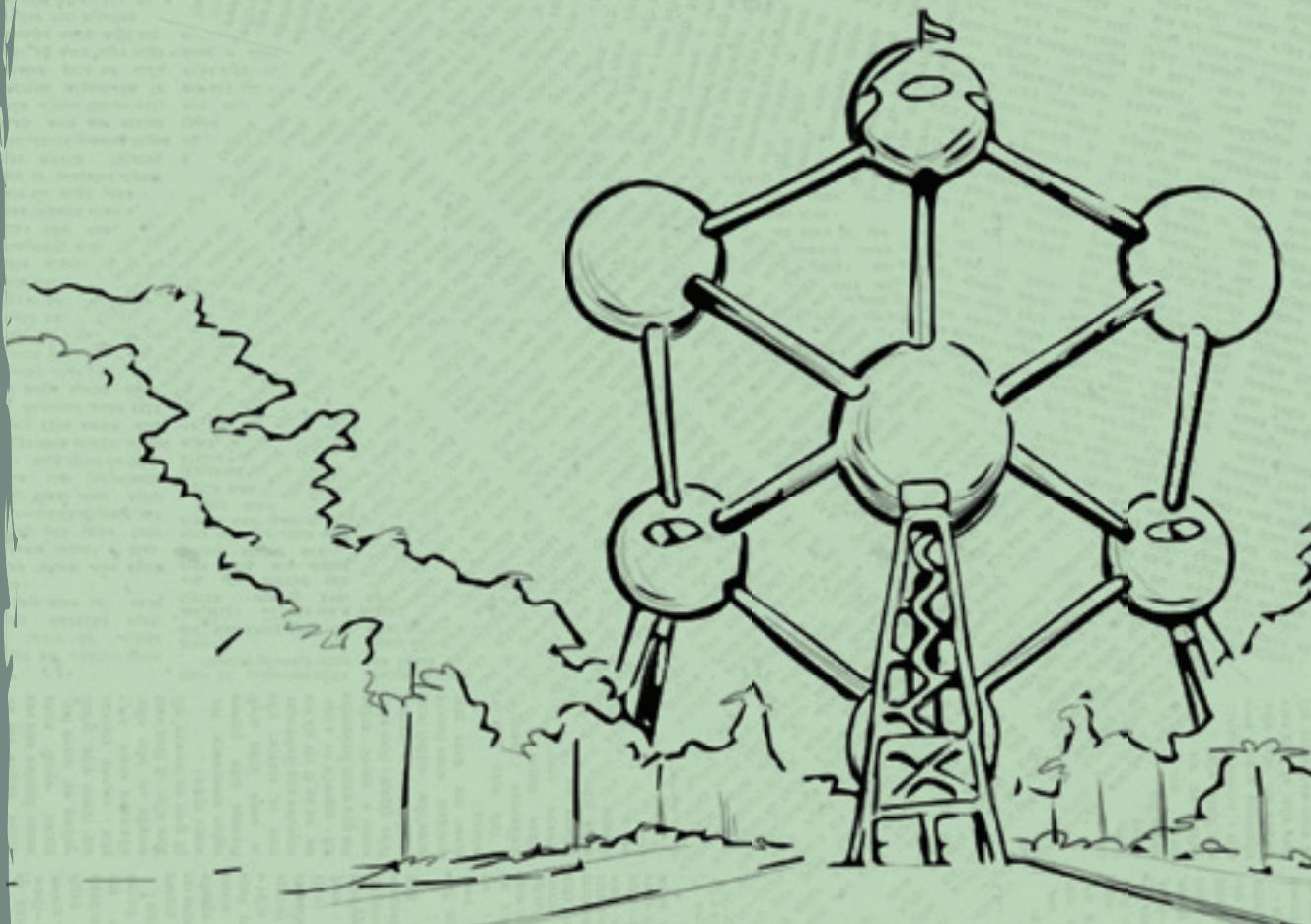






Humayun Rashid Choudhury, the Bangladeshi ambassador to Germany, calls Hasina's husband Dr. Wajed after hearing the news.

He advises Dr. Wajed to avoid telling Hasina and Rehana anything until he confirms the details of the incident





Hasina and Dr. Wajed are staying in the city of Brussels, in Belgium.

Mr. Choudhury decides that Hasina and Rehana will stay at his own house in Germany. But the ambassador in Belgium refuses to even send the sisters to the German border with his own car.





On 15 August, the two sisters arrive in Germany in a car arranged by Mr. Choudhury

He wonders how
he will explain
what has
happened.

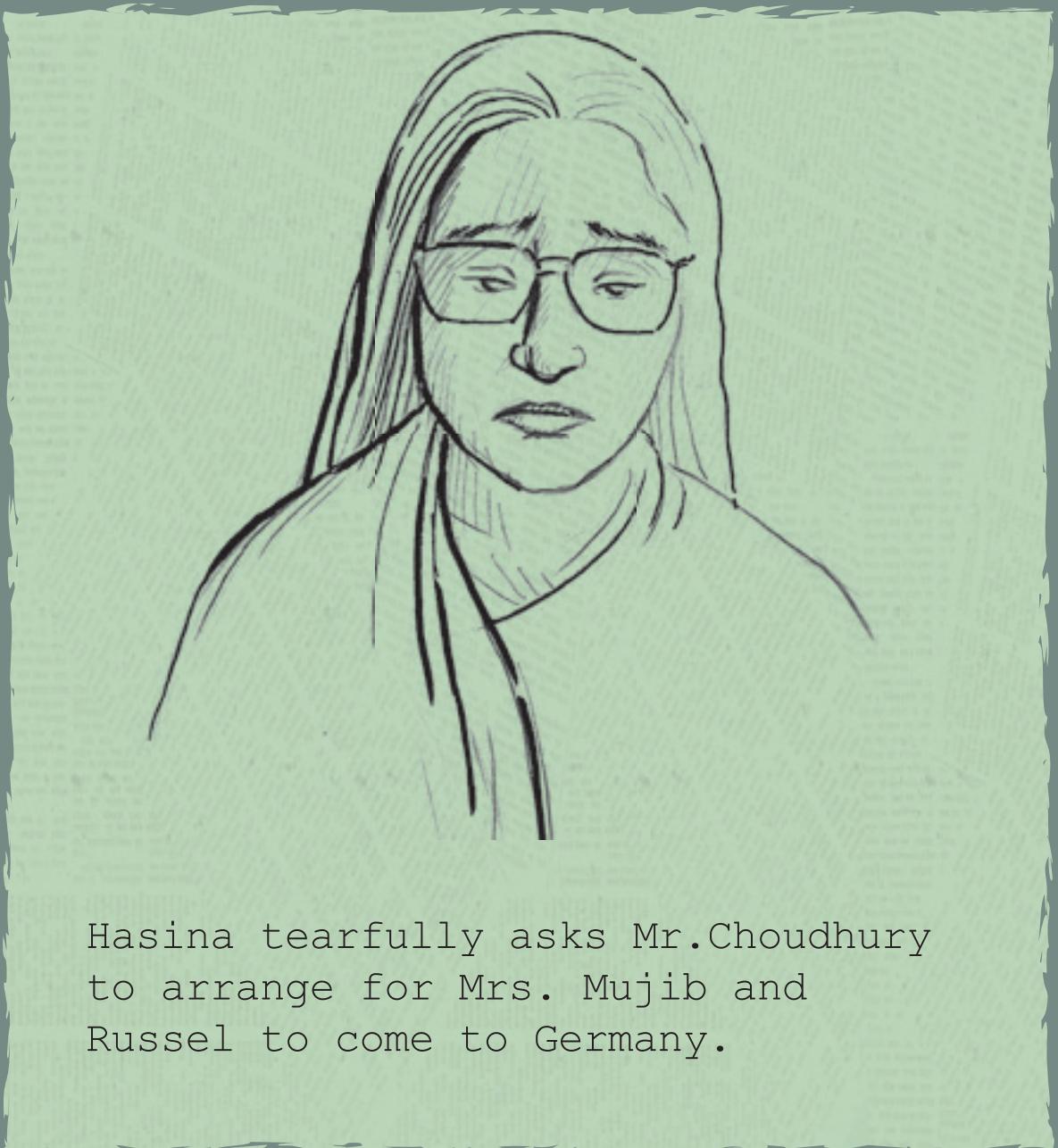




Mr. Choudhury has three radios in his house. He leaves one out and locks the other two in a cupboard.

At one point, Hasina and Rehana learn that Bangabandhu is dead. They break down in tears.





Hasina tearfully asks Mr. Choudhury
to arrange for Mrs. Mujib and
Russel to come to Germany.

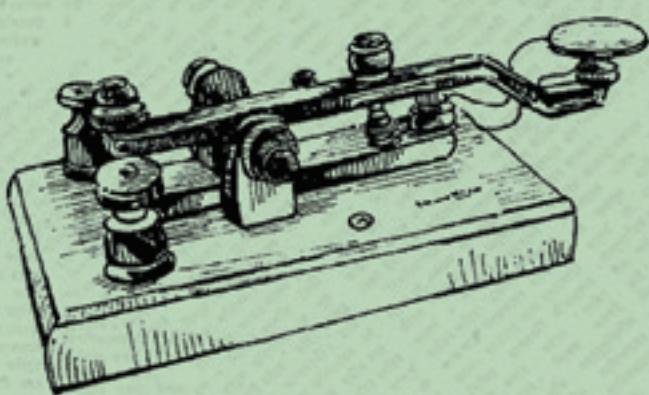


Mr. Choudhury already knows that Mrs. Mujib has been killed.

Eventually, Hasina and Rehana also become aware of her death.

At Hasina's request, Mr. Choudhury sends a telegram to Dhaka asking for Sheikh Russel to be sent to Germany.

He cannot imagine that even such a young child can be killed.



No answer comes from Dhaka.



Mr. Choudhury informs Hasina that according to radio reports, Khondaker Mostak is the instigator of the coup. Hasina refuses to believe him. Khondaker Mostaq is so close to her family!



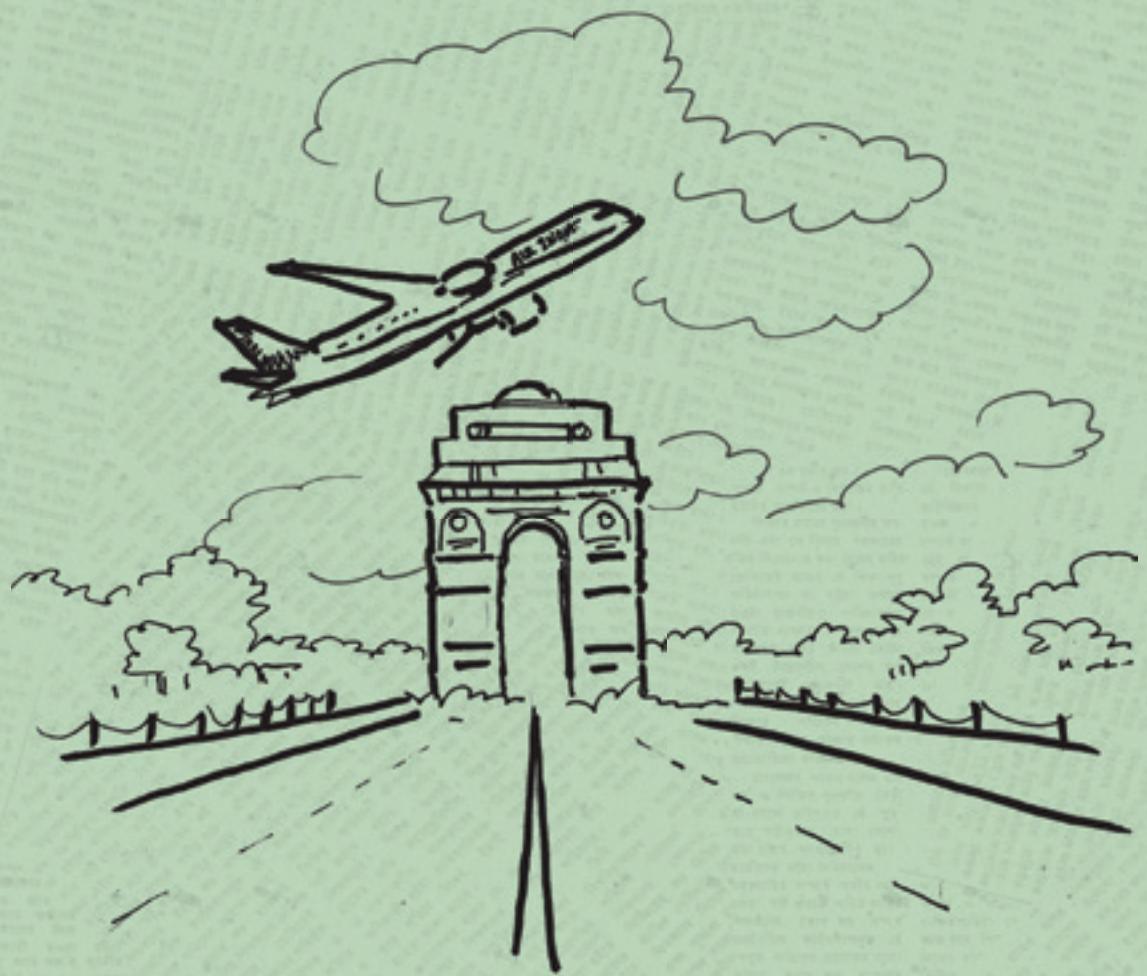


Mr. Choudhury receives phone calls from all over the world about the coup in Bangladesh. Crowds gather in front of the Bangladeshi embassy in Germany.

A German woman walks into the embassy and begins to call Bangladeshis uncivilised.



Some Bangladeshi youth living in Germany demand for Mr. Choudhury to send Sheikh Mujib's daughters away from his house. They wish to put pakistan style emblem on their Bangladeshi passports



Indira Gandhi offers Hasina political asylum. On 24 August, she lands in Delhi with her family.

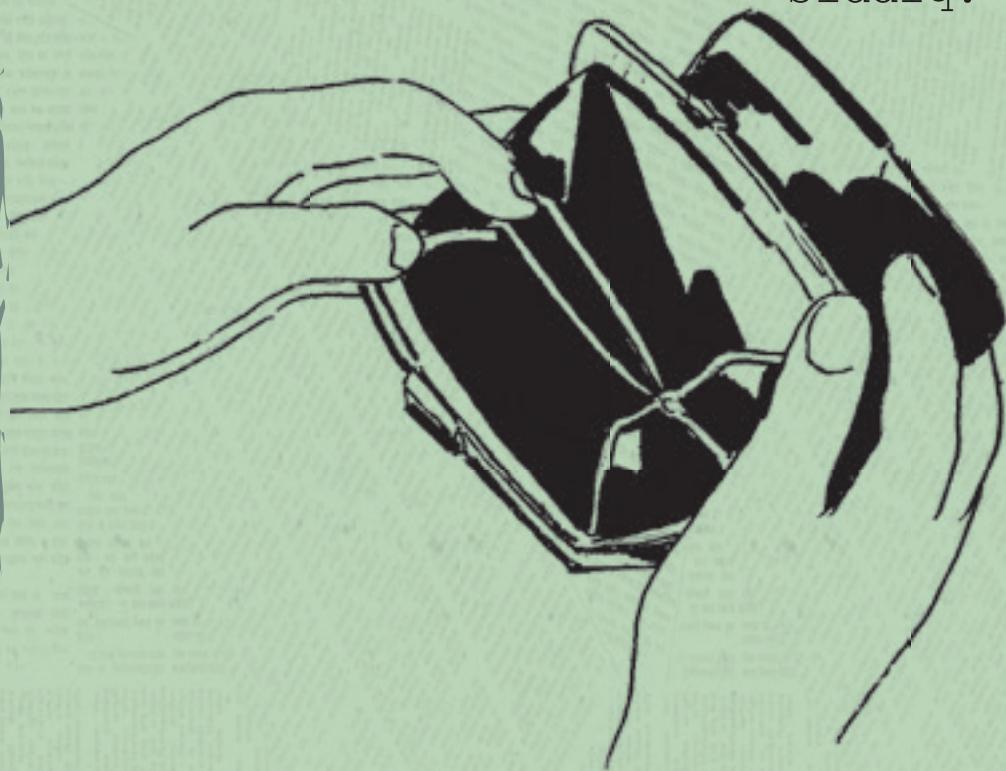


They are first kept in a 'safe house. Later, they are moved to a house in Defence Colony.

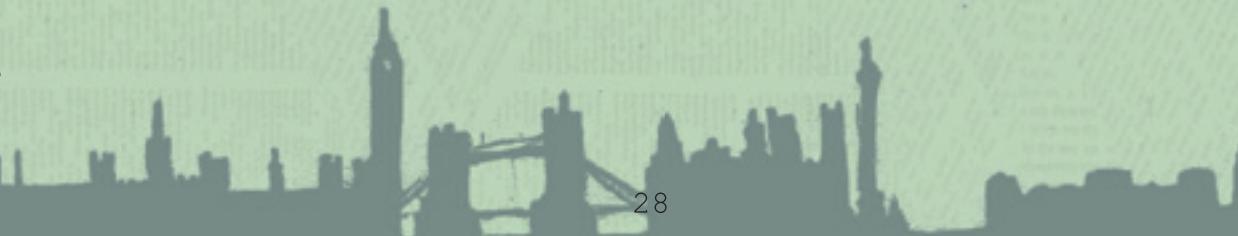
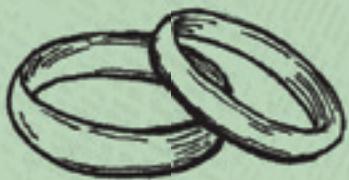


An Indian official informs Hasina that none of her family members survived the coup. Indira Gandhi embraces Hasina and tries to comfort her. She tells Hasina to think of her son and daughter as her parents.

On 24 July 1976,
Sheikh Rehana
marries British
resident Shafiq
Siddiq.



Rehana is Hasina's only sister and surviving family member. Yet, Hasina and her husband cannot attend the wedding. She has little money now.



The Indian government instructs Hasina to avoid leaving the house or talking to anyone. She receives a television set to pass her time.



Meanwhile in Bangladesh, Khondaker Mostaq becomes the president on August 1975.

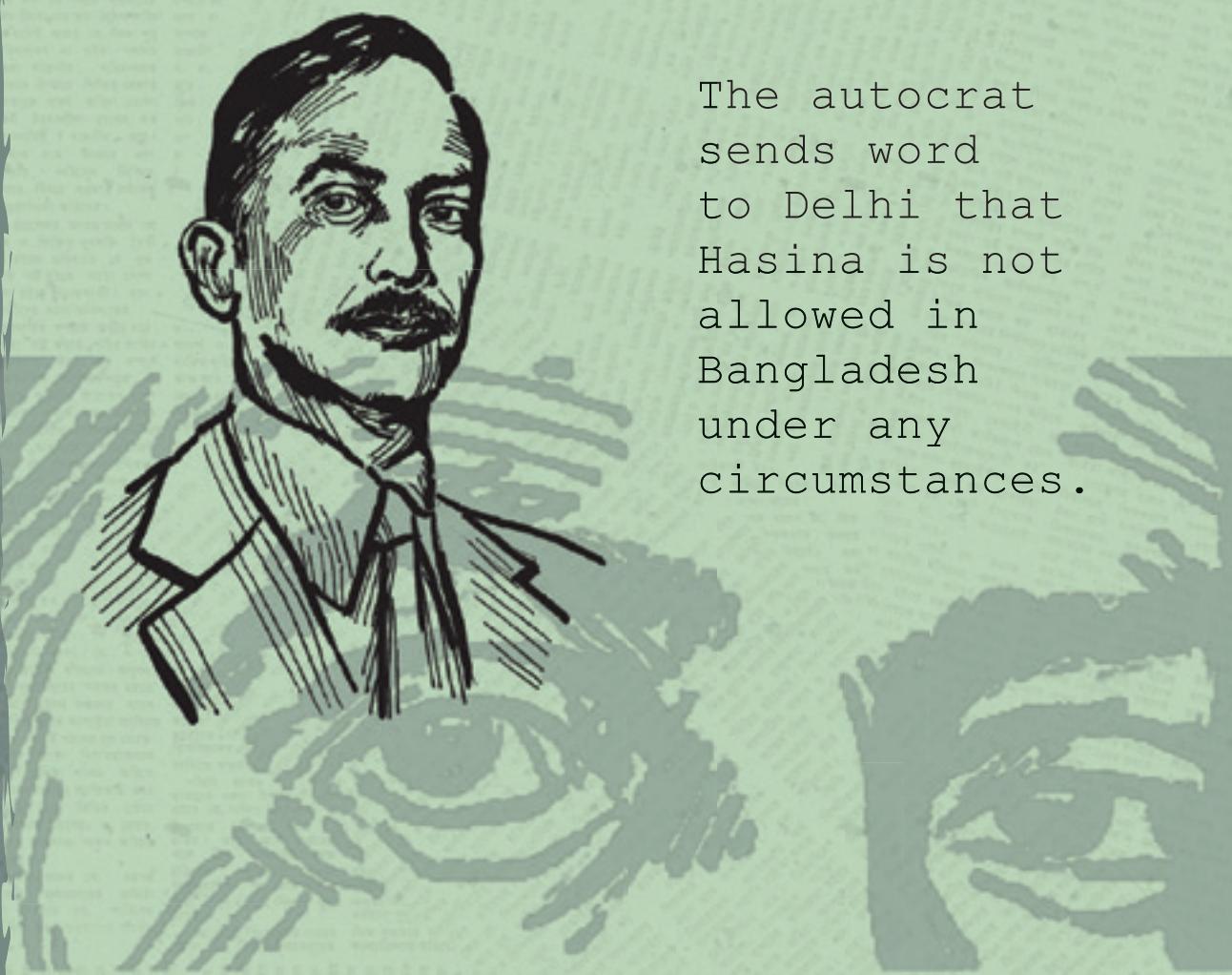


On 3 November 1975, Tajuddin Ahmed, Syed Nazrul Islam, A H M Qamaruzzaman and Muhammad Mansur Ali are killed in prison.



Meanwhile, Bangabandhu's killers escape to foreign countries.

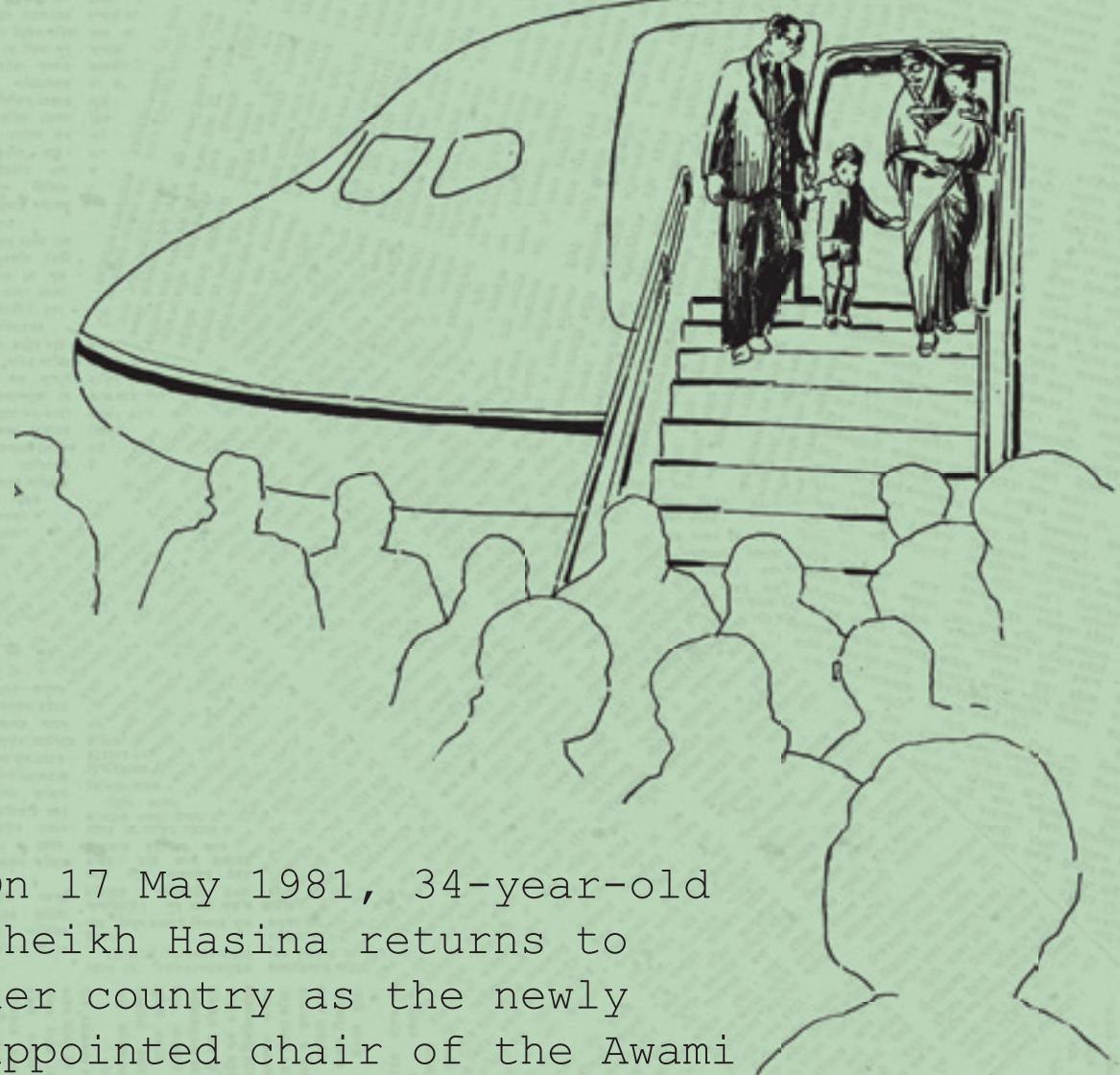
Ziaur Rahman illegally grabs state power.



The autocrat
sends word
to Delhi that
Hasina is not
allowed in
Bangladesh
under any
circumstances.



In 1980, some leaders of the Awami League visit Delhi to meet Hasina. They try to convince her to return to Bangladesh.



On 17 May 1981, 34-year-old Sheikh Hasina returns to her country as the newly appointed chair of the Awami League.

On that day, crowds of people gather at the airport to welcome her despite the heavy rainfall.

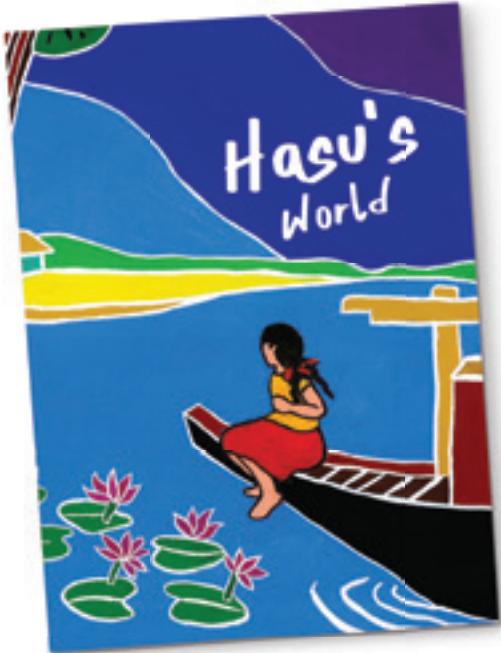


From the airport, Hasina goes to her family's house on Dhanmondi Road 32. But a heavy lock hangs from the gate. Ziaur Rahman has denied Hasina entry to her home.



After returning to Bangladesh, Sheikh Hasina has helped restore parliamentary democracy by resisting the military dictator Ershad. She has been elected prime minister three times. As prime minister, she has arranged the trials for Bangabandhu's killers. She has brought the war criminals of 1971 to justice. She has vowed to build a Digital Bangladesh and dedicated herself to the nation's progress.





Many years back there was a little kid in a lovely village far from the hustle and bustle of our great cities. This is the tale of her childhood. And at the end, you can surely say who she is today. A small hint: she is a global leader who speaks for our rights. She has devoted all her life for the progress of our nation.



Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was the leading figure of the Liberation War of 1971. Bangabandhu and his family went through many trials and sufferings in order to create an independent Bangladesh. This is the story of Bangabandhu's daughter Sheikh Hasina during the war. Just like her father, Sheikh Hasina dedicated herself to the vision of an independent Bangladesh. Today, she continues to work towards a better future for her country.



In the 1950s, Sheikh Hasina was a young girl attending school. Like any schoolgirl, she enjoyed playing around with her friends. But even at such a young age, she had the makings of a great leader. She made her own contribution to national politics. Just like her father, she fought tirelessly against injustice.