Relationally situated selves and abuse within the family: An ecological community psychology perspective

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PREFACE

This Counselling Psychology DPsych portfolio comprises three parts: A research project, a publishable paper and a clinical case study. Threaded through all three components are a number of common strands, namely the fluid, dynamic and relational constructions of self, the impact of the wider familial, societal, cultural and structural context on experience, the disempowerment and abuse taking place within the family and, the redundancy of the theoretical divide between 'public' and 'private' space. Firstly, introducing each aspect of this portfolio, I will then go on to discuss the three elements in relation to my training to become a counselling psychologist.

In the first part, the research project explores the role played by space in the lives of women who have suffered domestic abuse. The way in which this research came together reminds me of the weaving of a tapestry: There were so many different and separate strands of interest which somehow led to my feeling that space was inseparable from lived experience and that, threaded together, as an organising conceptual framework, it could help depict, give colour and texture to the experiences of everyday terror, which themselves appeared inherently spatialised. Thus, as a result of a research project I had conducted in relation to low mood, supervised by my current supervisor, Paula Reavey, at London South Bank University (where the emphasis was entirely on situating subjectivity and mental distress within the broader socio-economic and cultural context), I had already observed how space could be implicated in recovery, agency and wellbeing. I started to wonder whether similar strategies of coping were employed in other areas of distress. Meanwhile, through the cases I had prosecuted as a criminal barrister, I had grown very familiar with the plight of victims of domestic violence and had seen first-hand how easily they could be undermined by the perpetrators in court and how little they could be protected by institutions and those empowered to help. In another twist, having been introduced to the work of Bank and Nissen (2017) by Paula, before they published their government funded research into the reconfiguration of counselling space, I had started to wonder how their findings might be adapted if the participants were not substance abusers but victims of other societal epidemics, especially those who also very rarely accessed therapy. Finally, I had always been fascinated by the alleged separation between public and private, ever since I studied Politics, Philosophy and Economics at Oxford University. I don't even know why it had stuck in my mind but I suppose I was a feminist at heart and just couldn't quite reconcile myself to such a division when so many of the dangers women face are in that latter domain, governed only by trust and free will.

Whilst my aim was never to attempt to ground theory, once I had commenced the analysis, and recognised that there was a kind of piecemeal resistance operating beneath the surface of these women's narratives, I started to want to do more with the research and be able to influence the spaces which seemed to be adding to their troubles. This all coincided with my final year of the doctoral programme and a module taught by Dr. Deborah Rafalin, which helped me to work out what kind of counselling psychologist I wanted to be. I had succumbed to the notion that nobody's distress appears in isolation and that it is unrealistic to ask a person experiencing low mood, for example, to just sit with a therapist, do some worksheets and interrupt their negative automatic thoughts, if they are currently unemployed, living with 3 children and no support in a one-bedroom flat, also occupied by two other families, unable to claim benefits because they have overstayed on their visa, whilst being racially discriminated against, sexually demeaned or victimised and abused in some other way. An ecological or community psychology perspective (e.g. Kelly, 1970; 2006), on the other hand, takes into consideration the wider context and a social constructionist approach forces us to understand that everything, including a person's predisposition, problems and predicaments, are partly the responsibility of society and the discourses it spreads.

This realisation changed everything about the way I practised – as a community psychologist and advocate for social justice – as well as the way I wanted to research, and indeed the way I wanted to be with my friends and those I didn't know but sometimes met on the street. This can be seen in the publishable paper which forms part two of this portfolio and which collates these women's stories into a story about a struggle against a patriarchal system, the 'quiet politics of activism' (Askins, 2011) and a widespread but tentative resistance against those who use space to subjugate.

The final component of this portfolio is a humanistic case study which I believe represents the work I do with my clients. This young man came to me from an abusive family, with a mother who had taught him that he needed to be somebody else in order to satisfy her conditions for his worth (Rogers, 1959). As a result, he developed different configurations of self (Mearns & Thorne, 2013) so that he could be one person for her, another for himself and another both for his lovers and for his friends. I helped him to understand the fluidity and dynamism of these different parts of self and to facilitate their engagement with one another, so all could be recognised as necessary and valuable and as part of his holistic self, a self which was merely doing its best to survive. This story became increasingly familiar as I interviewed the women for my research project, most of whom also said that they had struggled with their identity after having to stifle their own needs and wants for so many years, in order to appease their abusers, and become something they barely even recognised anymore.

The idea that identity is so transient, that the self is a product of our societal and cultural context and that the systems and power differentials which govern all the spaces of our lives, including within the family, was so overwhelming that I felt I needed to incorporate these pieces of work together and to explore this subject in a way that wasn't already inevitably tied to the publicly available discourses perpetuated by these very systems themselves. As such, I looked for a methodology that could help me accomplish this and realised that this was part and parcel of the community psychology approach. I felt like I had finally arrived.

Thus, I am nearly at the end of my training and en route to becoming an accredited counselling psychologist. My passion for equality, for justice, for the reversal of discrimination, for congruence, for integrity, for kindness continues. I think about all of these things every day as I toil with the difficulties of being a working mother and a not-very-wifely wife but know that my clients will forever benefit from the work that has gone into completing this portfolio, even if my family has had to suffer a little along the way, in order to make that happen.

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Spaces of Subjugation, Complicity and Resistance: Negotiating Subjectivity, Power and Agency in the Environments and Contexts of Everyday Terror

Verity Buchanan

ABSTRACT

This research is multi-dimensional. In view of the role shown to be played by environmental context on psychological processes in a wide-ranging body of evidence (e.g. Tucker, 2010; McGrath, Reavey, Weaver & Brown, 2018; Goodings & Tucker, 2018; Liddicoat & Forster, 2018; Freeman & Akhurst, 2018), a topological approach (Lewin, 1936; Goodings & Tucker, 2014; Tucker & Smith, 2014; Reavey, Brown, Kanyeredzi, McGrath & Tucker, 2019; McGrath & Reavey, 2018) was taken to explore the various spaces in which domestic abuse and resistance are situated and lived. Both visual and verbal data were collected from 11 women who commented in semi-structured interviews about the photographs they produced of spaces associated with wellbeing during 'everyday terror' (Pain, 2014a, see below). The social constructionist thematic analysis suggests that abusive men use tactics of invasion and occupation through space in order to subjugate their victims, gradually isolating, alienating and annihilating them in the process. Moreover, this weakened subject position appears to be compounded by the wider community, with the structural spaces of society, institutional settings, service providers, increased digitalisation and the public being somehow complicit in their abuse. Finally, the analysis suggests that space is used by women to cope with, mitigate and actively resist domestic abuse, supporting the contention that abused women are agentically engaged in a 'quiet politics of activism' (Askins, 2011). Drawing upon these themes, practitioners are invited to consider reconfiguring counselling space in ways which both leverage the spatio-relational conceptualisations underpinning this thesis, as well as take account of the stated preferences of abuse victims (Bank & Nissen, 2017) who inevitably face significant restrictions on their ability to freely engage in space, to ensure they can access counselling safely and without incurring additional, unnecessary anxiety, alienation, humiliation, objectification or loss of self-esteem.

For such an undertaking to be effective, I argue that we need to draw on the combined efforts of both psychology and geography, locating power, agency and resistance in the day-to-day spaces associated with distress and its management. Moreover, I argue that counselling psychologists are ideally positioned to take on such a task, with their training in the recognition and appreciation of difference, the multiple causes and constructions of social and systemic problems, and the uneven distribution of power throughout society (Kagan, 2007). Thus, it is an important part of this research project, and its spatial conceptual framework, that the focus is not only on the individuals directly involved in everyday terror but is broadened to encompass the wider structures of society, enabling it is suggested an exploration of power, difference, and discrimination in both the manifestation and perpetuation of mental distress.

TERMINOLOGY

For the purposes of this research, I have decided to use the term 'everyday terrorism' (Pain, 2014a) in place of 'domestic abuse' or 'domestic violence', except where the sense of the sentence precludes it, where there is a danger of it becoming exceptionally repetitive, or when quoting someone else. The reason for this, as Hammer (2002; 2003) points out, is that 'domestic abuse' appears to connote a much tamer, less drastic form of violence and many of the other terms commonly employed (e.g. intimate partner violence, spouse abuse, conjugal violence) seem to imply dual responsibility, thus arguably neutralising the devastation and negating its complexity in the process. Whilst I agree with hooks (2000) that terms such as 'patriarchal violence' help to signify its causality, I believe that everyday terrorism suffices to signpost the dynamics, brutality and impact of the abuse, whilst simultaneously emphasising its role as a form of gendered power relations (Pain, 2014a; 2014b).

In addition, I typically use the terms 'abuse' and 'violence' interchangeably. In line with Pain and Staeheli (2014), I understand violence of any kind "as a multi-faceted and multi-sited force – interpersonal and institutional, social, economic and political, physical, sexual, emotional and psychological – violence is endemic, and intimately interwoven with other sorts of relations" (p.344). As such, its overlap with abuse is self-evident and, together with the more recent focus on coercive control (Starks, 2007) in everyday terrorism, I suggest that both terms can be justifiably used to describe what is a complex, multi-dimensional force, operating at all levels of society.

For similar reasons, I also believe that it is important to challenge and interrupt normative assumptions that suggest that everyday terrorism only takes place in domestic or home spaces; that it is "a privatised problem" (Duncan, 1996, p.132). Not only does this imply that abuse can never take place outside of the house (whereas all forms of intimate partner abuse, especially coercive control, are prevalent in every space, even more so since the digital revolution) but also maintaining an irrelevant and artificial distinction between public and private and restricting everyday terrorism to the 'private' sphere unnecessarily (or some would argue, purposefully) curbs the jurisdiction of law-enforcement and the helping professions in ways which could not be justified were it admitted that everyday terrorism is rife throughout all spaces of society. Moreover, I would argue that there is no clear delineation between domestic and non-domestic or between private and public and that previous separations are artificial, porous, fluid and muddied. This thesis rests on a view of nature as changing, not fixed, of manner, not matter, of becoming, not being, and of space as in movement; and argues that fluidity and movement help us to conceptualise subjectivity and distress. For similar reasons, therefore, I use terms such as 'victims' and 'survivors' relatively interchangeably and deliberately inconsistently because ascribing such an identity in any kind of fixed manner suggests that status is permanent and immutable, whereas underlying this research project is the philosophical view that we are all in process, not fixed, nor unchanging; an important foundation for conceptualising mental distress, responsibility, accountability and change.

RESEARCH STUDY INTRODUCTION

Counselling psychologists are often concerned with the exploration of lived experience (Douglas, Woolfe, Strawbridge, Kasket & Galbraith, 2016) but, arguably, frequently overlook the spaces in which those experiences take place (Moller, 2011). Drawing upon Lewin's (1936) work, I posit lived experience as constituted through relationships – both to others and to the socio-material environment – as opposed to it comprising only some kind of innate or internal, subjective type of representation: "Experience is a 'more than cognitive' phenomenon, which is relationally constituted through the embodied engagement of persons with their social and material worlds" (Reavey et al, 2019). As such, I argue that subjectivity is played out across all the spaces of our lives, and space, therefore, plays an integral role in our experiences. Thus, in this research project, I set out to explore the specificity of relations and practices in the different locations and spaces of domestic abuse and propose that space itself is an essential concept in lived experience: Lived experience *is* this located dynamic, relational set of practices. By exploring these spaces, we can not only learn more about lived experience but we can also understand how to influence or reconfigure setting and context to help people suffering mental distress, by meeting them in the actual spaces they have to contend with on an everyday basis.

Moreover, I argue that space is critical to explorations of everyday terror because it is in the specifics of these different spaces, and the relations and practices surrounding them, that you can see how power, subjectivity, experience, agency, activism and resistance all *move*. Whilst space is not a pre-existing entity, an empty static container with distinct properties, predetermining specific ways of being to anyone and anything engaged within them, the physicality of the space is still important because of the way that it *affords* different conceptualities and abilities to think or act in certain ways, to facilitate different emotional engagements: It's the specific set of practices or relations that a spatial analysis can allow us to conceive of more readily, and through this an ability to interrogate how factors external to the individual – those in society, government, normative discourse, the media, our families and friends etc. – contribute to psychological phenomena and to distress. Indeed, I suggest that it is in the relational specifics of space that power, subjectivity and experience can all be seen to *move* and that it is this movement across different locations, the flow across space, which enables us to recognise the dispersal of power inherent to abuse, changes in agency and subjectivity, and the 'quiet politics' (Askins, 2011) of its resistance. For example, if we think of power, we understand that power does not operate in the same way across locations but ebbs and flows according to setting. It is this movement across space, which is *where* we should understand lived experience; it is not just *when* we do something. Indeed, I argue that it is this flow through everyday locations that actually enables us to understand the dispersal of power because it is not only the abuser who enacts domestic abuse, for example; other structural spaces of society (e.g. the courts, the medical and mental health systems, the arrangement of public space, media, digital media, knowledge, discourse etc.) also appear to be implicated in everyday terror, and women describe navigating all of these different relational spaces on a daily basis.

Moreover, I argue that a spatial analysis of the experience and mitigation of everyday terror can help counselling psychologists better configure therapy to meet the needs of their clients: Not only may reconceptualising space to include its relational dynamism and inherent flux help therapists to facilitate awareness in their clients of the possibility of change, of movements in subjectivity, of expanded relating and heightened agency, and of tentative activism and piecemeal resistance (whilst also providing alternative ways to facilitate connections at depth within the therapeutic relationship itself) but, in addition, the information drawn from abused women as to their preferred locations and engagements in space might also help psychologists restructure the counselling space and the parameters of the experience of therapy so that it is safer, more relevant, convenient and less upsetting to access. Thus,

instead of being positioned as someone who just sits in a room and talks to people (Nissen, 2018), individuals who narrate their stories in return, rarely ever attended by women currently subjected to domestic abuse, counselling psychologists could try to engage women in more spatial ways because this better reflects their actual dealings in day to day life – the way they use space to navigate their freedoms and agencies.

This is not to suggest of course that counselling psychologists – and those across the discipline, more broadly – are not adequately concerned with meeting their clients openly, congruently, equally, and at therapeutic and relational depth. No, emphatically not. There are clearly many for whom the relational and/or broader socio-economic and cultural systems are already an integral part of their psychological theory and therapeutic practice. For example, the healing power of a good relationship is of central importance in humanist psychologies, with many in addition (e.g. Mearns, 2002; Mearns & Thorne, 2000; Mearns & Cooper, 2018; van Kalmthout, 1998; 2007) now recommending that subjectivity also be conceptualised as multiple, fluid, and in process, as the self arguably tends towards augmented agency and actualisation (see for a clinical example the client case study in part 3 of this portfolio). Meanwhile, those taking a systemic approach place the network of interrelationships between people, as opposed to the individual as atom, at the heart of their theory and, in therapy, foreground the role played by relational-systemic factors in the manifestation of psychological distress (e.g. Hedges, 2005; Dallos & Draper, 2005; Stratton, 2011). Similarly, and viewed as intricately tied to the current approach and adopted hereon in, those within the field of community psychology (e.g. Kelly, 1970; 2006; Kagan, 2007; Walker, 2017) readily challenge the dominant and normative discourse, keen to advance new ways of conceptualising the role played by society's structures in facilitating inequality, discrimination, violence, poverty etc., and those practicing from this point of view place at the helm of their approach the need to act affirmatively for social justice, to truly *be* with their clients and to meet them there – where their clients actually *are* (thus, in the actual spaces of their lived experience).

In other words, for all within the discipline of counselling psychology, the individual, their relational interactions and their socio-cultural influences are of keen importance but I propose that there are still many (e.g. women currently subjected to everyday terror) who feel that therapy is not always, or even often, configured to take account of the limitations and constraints placed on their actual lived experience, and there are some who feel that counselling is irrelevant, objectifying and far too distantly removed from the realities of the problems they face in 'real' life. As I learned from my clinical placement in a secure in-patient forensic psychiatric setting, it is vital to adapt therapy to the needs of its users (and indeed this pluralism is a central tenet of the counselling psychology perspective). For some people, it is simply not practical or realistic to meet therapists at the same time, for the same duration, each and every week. For some, it is dangerous, difficult and expensive to travel. For others (including the s.37/41 Mental Health Act (1983) detained patients I worked with in placement), it appears to be an essential part of their therapy that they believe their therapist truly understands the realities of their lived experience, sees for themselves the impact and conditions of their subjectivity, diagnostic consequence, perceived inequality, discrimination or disadvantage; and, as such, it is essential to the quality of their therapeutic relationship that counsellors are truly prepared to leave the safety of the office and meet their clients *there* – in those spaces that they have to contend with and struggle to navigate on a daily basis. This is what I suggest the current approach may bring to counselling psychology. The idea is to open up more broadly what it means to do therapy and to expand the repertoire of those in the field, who are already vastly concerned with the relational self and the difficulties of negotiating complex and demanding living conditions, and who wish to incorporate novel explorations of subjectivity as the self 'unfolds' through different relational spaces and changing socio-material-relational practices, and to understand how this conceptualisation may help or hinder their clients in the quest to survive and grow.

Thus, drawing on Bank and Nissen (2017), my intention is to use spatial explorations of the experience of living with and contesting everyday terror in order to find new ways of relating with our clients and conceptualising the manifold difficulties they face, and it is this that I hope to contribute to the practice and theory of counselling psychology, in particular. As Goodings and Tucker (2018) observed in relation to the use of social media to alleviate mental distress, Liddicoat and Forster (2018) on the role of the home in self-harm, and Freeman and Akhurst (2018) regarding the impact of walking through nature and eco-therapy on everyday distress, the reconfiguration of care spaces can be extremely important in cultivating mental wellbeing. This has also been demonstrated in a number of different studies investigating the impact of counselling space design, more generally, on therapeutic efficacy (e.g. Liddicoat, 2015; 2016; Pearson & Wilson, 2012; Ulrich et al., 2008). Therefore, in the same way that Bank and Nissen (2017) succeeded in engaging significantly more substance abusers in therapy by researching user preferences and offering services in convenient, hospitable places specifically approved by their clients, I aim to explore those places which abused women manage to access on a daily basis so that counselling for everyday terrorism could also be offered in ways which are relatively free from danger and fear of judgement.

Indeed, I argue that spatial explorations of lived experience can achieve more across the board, not only in domestic abuse. The idea is to open up a debate about how we 'do' counselling psychology; an invitation to reinvigorate counselling psychology using a spatialized framework (e.g. Nissen, 2018). This includes a refocus on the way we do research. Whilst counselling psychologists certainly prioritise subjectivity and difference, and aim for diversity and re-empowerment through the use of semi-structured interview techniques, for example, we need to think about how to engage participants in more co-productive ways to generate 'knowledge'. Although clearly committed to exploring lived experience, many research methodologies appear to expect this to simply emerge from sitting people in a room and interviewing them (note that action research, ethnography and visual research methods are clear exceptions to this), whereas the approach I have adopted has deliberately been selected in order to emphasise the spatiality of participants' experience. For example, in liaising with VOICES, I tried to develop a way of undertaking research that was very much about working with the service, working with the women, and finding out from them what they wanted. I wanted the women to 'show me' their stories, not just tell me their stories (Reavey, 2011), and the request for photographs was essential in this regard. Thus, if we take lived experience seriously, I argue that we need to do as Bank and Nissen (2017) and McGrath and Reavey (2018) suggest and prioritise the spatial aspects of participants' experience to generate shared ideas about how to configure therapy and even better engage our clients in the future.

1   CHAPTER ONE – CRITICAL LITERATURE REVIEW

The current UK cross-government definition of everyday terrorism is: Controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between intimate partners or family members over the age of 16, encompassing but not limited to psychological, physical, sexual, financial and emotional abuse. Although it is acknowledged that domestic violence can be committed by either partner (e.g. Whitaker, Haileyesus, Swahm & Saltzman, 2007), research reveals that women experience domestic abuse at an alarmingly higher rate and suffer considerably more serious consequences than men (Hien & Ruglass, 2009; World Health Organisation, 2013), with 1 in 3 women currently found to be a victim of physical or sexual violence by an intimate partner at some stage in their life time (World Health Organisation, 2017) and 95 out of 100 domestic abuse survivors reporting a history of coercive control.

The consequences for women's health are well documented (Coker, Smith, Bethea, King & McKewown, 2000; Campbell, 2002): Negative mental health sequelae comprise depression (Hegarty, Gunn, Chondros & Small, 2004), anxiety and PTSD, with studies suggesting that between 31% and 84% of sufferers meet the criteria for this diagnosis (Pill, Day & Mildred, 2017). Research also suggests that victims of domestic abuse will be more likely to experience emotional distress, suicidal ideation and attempts (Ellsberg, Jansen, Heise, Watts & Garcia-Moreno, 2008; McLaughlin, O'Carroll & O'Connor, 2012), report alcohol and drug abuse (Bonomi et al, 2006; Tolman & Rosen, 2001) and, in extreme cases, suffer death (Dobash & Dobash, 2015) as a result. According to a 2018 United Nations report, over half of the 87,000 women murdered in 2017 were killed within the family.

Despite this, uptake of counselling services remains relatively low (Taft et al., 2013; Hegarty et al., 2013) and informal support is much more likely to be drawn upon (Barrett & St Pierre, 2011; Clark & Hamby, 2011; Stanko, 2006). Typically, the low engagement in therapy tends to be accounted for by the risks women – and their children – face from the abuser, and even from family and friends, *after* they disclose abuse (Reisenhofer & Taft, 2013; Dobash & Dobash, 2015), whereas a growing body of research suggests that it is non-violent, *pre-disclosure* factors which overwhelmingly prevent abused women from accessing help (Fugate, Landis, Riordan, Naureckas & Engel, 2005). For example, Feder, Hutson, Ramsay and Taket (2006) identify abused women's diminishing self-efficacy, their perceived shame, their frequent desire to maintain the relationship, the potential for isolation (Hendy, Eggen, Gustitus, McLeod, & Ng, 2003), homelessness (Baker, Billhardt, Warren, Rollins & Glass, 2010) and financial hardship (Anderson et al., 2003) and the potential loss of children (Peckover, 2003), social status and family support as contributory factors that together combine to discourage

women from disclosing abuse and seeking assistance (Arriaga & Capezza, 2005). The situation is compounded in cases where women suffer low self-esteem (Bliss, Ogley-Oliver, Jackson, Harp & Kaslow, 2008) or have mental health difficulties (Edwards et al., 2006), with Foa, Cascardi, Zoellner and Feeny (2000), suggesting that the relationship between mental health difficulties and domestic abuse is circular; whilst violence can create psychological problems for the woman, their manifestation puts her at greater risk of ongoing abuse. Indeed, Reavey, Ahmed and Majumdar (2006) describe their concern with the way that understandable feelings of shame, anxiety and depression are all too often translated into psychiatric symptomatology by family members and mental health professionals, eliciting an immediate medicalised response involving prescription drugs without practical or emotional support. Meanwhile, Francis, Loxton and James (2016) point to the perceived loss of identity, autonomy, certainty and reality, as a result of the abuse, thereby making disclosure and possible therapeutic engagement even less likely.

Alarmingly, Fugate, Landis, Riordan, Naureckas and Engel (2005) interviewed women in a public health setting and found that 82% of those suffering abuse had chosen not to access counselling, believing that their situation did not merit it or that counselling services were powerless to help. They cited issues such as lack of money, insurance or time, and ignorance of therapeutic interventions as further barriers to help-seeking. Moreover, it seems that women are reluctant to 'get their partner into trouble' and often wish to preserve the relationship. It is suggested that the idea of attending counselling is typically more horrifying than helpful; on the whole, therapy is deemed objectifying, alienating (Warner, 2000) and often irrelevant. Most women believe that counselling is too impractical, frequently humbling and that talking to someone in lofty authority is akin to some sort of confession in church; as if they themselves have something to be ashamed about. In addition, they worry that they will be discredited or reported if they stay with the abuser and, especially, if they have children who remain in close proximity to him (Kelly, Sharp & Klein, 2014; Bostock, Plumpton & Pratt, 2009).

The problem, suggests Fugate et al. (2005), derives from the way in which the domestic violence movement first emerged, tending mainly to focus on safety and practical matters through the provision of shelter accommodation (Dobash & Dobash, 1979; Tierney, 1982) and simultaneously prioritising the involvement of the criminal justice system, whilst deemphasising counselling and less politicised, official forms of help-seeking. Policies were introduced compelling legal interventions, such as compulsory arrests and victimless prosecutions, which Fugate et al. (2005) suggest don't necessarily accord with the preference of many victims themselves. They argue that victims of domestic abuse avoid speaking to counsellors precisely because they believe that the police or child protective services will

inevitably become involved and because they will be required to end the partnership (Kelly, Sharp & Klein, 2014). Not only may they feel themselves powerless or incapable of living alone (Bostock et al., 2009) but victims of domestic abuse have often been manipulated by their abusers into believing that, in the event of disclosure, they will lose their children, financial security and housing and immigration status (Bostock et al., 2009) or, indeed, they still profess to be in love with them (Peled, Eisikovits, Enosh & Winstock, 2000; Hendy et al, 2003). The lack of therapeutic engagement is unfortunate because research suggests that providing domestic abuse victims with access to counselling services typically serves to protect and enhance safety over time (Bybee & Sullivan, 2002) and, ultimately, increases the likelihood of change within the abusive relationship (Reisenhofer & Taft, 2013; Shorey, Tirone, Nathanson, Handsel & Rhatigan, 2013).

However, whilst an abundance of research exists, both in relation to the experience and consequences of domestic abuse and the obstacles *preventing* engagement in therapy, there appears to be a paucity of literature exploring victims' preferences for the *configuration* of counselling services and only negligible consideration of alternative arrangements to better meet user's needs. Thus, scarcely any research explores the specific impact that location has had on therapeutic success, although those few studies which have done so all point to the same conclusion: Venue may be critical to client commitment. O'Doherty, Taket, Valpied and Hegarty (2016), for example, found that counselling services accessed via GP surgeries were described as 'safer' and more discrete, with follow-up texts or telephone calls attracting significantly less interest from abusive partners than contact made by non-medical professionals. They conclude that increased flexibility in the configuration of counselling space would lead to better engagement by service users and, ultimately, to the provision of a higher quality service and experience across the board (McFarlane, Groff, O'Brien & Watson, 2006; Tiwari et al., 2012). Meanwhile, Bair-Merritt et al. (2014) found that successful therapeutic treatment in cases of everyday terror was often linked to less formalised settings, such as counselling home visits or telephone exchanges (McFarlane, Socken & Wiist, 2000); a finding supported by Howell et al. (2015), whose research demonstrated that effective therapeutic interventions in domestic abuse were more likely to take place in community settings, such as education centres or shelter outreach sites, than in places associated with office and authority.

Developing this argument, Bank and Nissen (2017), commissioned by the Danish government to discover why adolescent substance abusers are so disinclined to access therapy, conclude that when counselling is reconfigured to take place in normalised spaces which mirror users' preferred, everyday engagement in space, as opposed to those more stereotypical psychotherapy venues, therapeutic commitment significantly increases, clients 'open up', and

are more likely to recover. On the other hand, traditional counselling spaces are portrayed as either 'disciplinary' or 'pastoral' (Foucault, 1977; 1982) and, in either case, are seen by participants as alienating, objectifying and stigmatising, apparently affording them little prospect of improvement and even less privacy or dignity.

1.1. LIVING IN SPACE: THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SPACE AND DISTRESS

How, then does the arrangement of space affect us so? According to a rapidly growing body of research, spread across different disciplines, space and the material environment play a significant role in the manifestation, mediation and mitigation of emotions and distress. Indeed, human geographers and social psychologists have, for some time, been working together to promote an understanding of the important links between our spatial environments and psychological life and to reduce the relative scarcity of 'space' as a topic in mental health research (Tucker, 2011); a move which has arguably engendered gradual shifts in global mental health policy so that the material precursors of mental health experience are now more widely recognised. Perhaps the least contestable evidence for this supposition is the numerous studies which show that mental health is consistently better or worse in some places over others. Research, for example, confirms there to be a clear difference in mental health outcomes according to an individual's living situation and socio-economic status, with poorer neighbourhoods exhibiting heightened distress and richer localities attracting better mental health (e.g. Friedli, 2009).

Moreover, at the macro level, community life predictors of positive mental health have been found to include spatialized phenomena, such as economic equality, civic participation, social cohesion and political efficacy (McGrath, Griffin & Mundy, 2015), indicating that feeling valued, heard and connected are important aspects of municipal life. At the micro level, on the other hand, significant improvements in mental wellbeing have been found in country over urban living (Weich, Twigg & Lewis, 2006), in suburban over inner city dwelling (Lewis, David, Andreassson & Allbeck, 1992), in single story over high-rise occupancy (Evans, 2003), in leafy over barren spaces (Berg, Hartig & Staats, 2007) and in rural versus urban living (Little, 2017). Similarly, those living lower down in tower blocks (Freeman, 2008) and those with closed corridors, as opposed to open deck access (Weich et al., 2002), are less likely to feel depressed.

Moreover, Montgomery (2015) shows how policies which engender a sense of increased cohesion and egalitarianism, such as the move towards car-less cities to promote walking and social interaction, also foster conditions for improved mental health. Meanwhile, Evans (2003)

observes that built spaces which stimulate social connection and generate feelings of agency and control over the environment are reliably correlated with superior psychological wellbeing. In addition, Segrott and Doel (2005) point to the integral role played by space and setting in general on those suffering from obsessive compulsive disorder, Davidson (2000a; 2000b) on those experiencing agoraphobia, McGrath, Reavey and Brown (2008) on those distressed by anxiety and psychosis and Buchanan (2014) on those struggling with depression and low mood. There is, therefore, an enormous body of evidence spread across different disciplines that suggest that space and the material environment play a significant role in the manifestation, mediation and mitigation of mental distress.

In addition, many authors, particularly within human geography, have sought to demonstrate the ways in which the relocation of mental health care into the community are inherently spatial (e.g. Davidson, 2000a; 2000b; 2001; 2003; Parr, 1997; 1999; 2008; Parr & Philo, 1995). For example, documenting the history and closure of the asylum system, with its sequestration of distress (Porter, 2004; 2008), concurrent moves towards 'social inclusion' (Spandler, 2007), and mental distress – and care – 'relocated' into the community (Wolch & Philo, 2000), there is a wealth of literature which lends weight to the argument that psychological experience and spatial environment are intrinsically connected. These observations themselves inspired a surge of 'spatialised' (Bank & Nissen, 2017) theories which distinguish between public spaces (Parr, 1997; Sibley, 1995) and private 'safe havens' (Pinfold, 2000; Twigg, 2000) or between 'exclusive and 'inclusive geographies' (Parr, 2008), where overriding concerns surround the propriety or impropriety of particular codes of behaviour, according to locality (Parr, 2000), and which suggest that place is essential to the permissibility or intolerability of specific manifestations of being. Similarly, Sibley (1995) infers that 'public space' itself is deliberately 'purified' of the homeless (Knowles, 2000a; 2000b) and those deemed unfit to participate in rational, political life, pointing to the role played by prisons (Priebe et al., 2005), hospitals, psychiatric spaces and supported housing (Priebe & Turner, 2003) in segregating the apparent well from the unwell. Thus, Parr (1997) actually defines bodily behaviours as "complex spatial expressions of private and public identities and social norms in which different configurations of the private self emerge in public or semi-public space" (p.231).

1.2.   SPACES OF THE HOME

All these examples encompass only some of the ways in which we can think of environments as 'getting under the skin', or becoming entrenched in subjective experience, and they illustrate the ways in which psychology is always an embedded phenomenon, lived through the everyday spaces, relationships, and structures through which we negotiate our lives. Thus, it seems that there is a trend emerging in the literature for mental health to be increasingly

delineated and defined through "changing spatial practices" (McGrath & Reavey, 2018) and a heightened interest in the role played by the home, in particular, arguably strengthens the case for seeing space and psychological experience as intrinsically related. McGrath, Reavey and Brown (2008), for example, emphasize the importance of the home for alleviating distress in those diagnosed with anxiety disorders, Buchanan (2014) in those suffering from depression and Davidson (2000a; 2000b; 2001; 2003) in those coping with agoraphobia, with the home typically thought of as a safe space to retreat to; a "haven in a heartless world (McDowell, 1997, pg. 13). In general, therefore, explorations of the home tend to portray it as a space where agency can be renegotiated and power restored; being private, safe, associated with emotion, family, autonomy and a sense of self (Curtis, 2010; Mallet, 2004; Morley, 2000), the home is believed to be free from external surveillance (Saunders & Williams, 1988) and is understood to be protected by familiar, non-transgressible boundaries (McDowell, 1997). As Twigg (2000) argues, the privacy of the home "rests on a material affordance… the ability to shut the door on the outside world" (p.384).

On the other hand, it would be naïve to conceive of the home as a space necessarily associated with agency and freedom (Sibley, 1995). Wardhaugh (1999) reminds us that such a conceptualization, conjuring up an image of the stereotypical White, middle class, Western, heterosexual family, implicitly overlooks both those who don't fit within this model and those for whom the home is less a place of safety and sanctuary than threat and danger. Precisely because the home is thought of as 'private', immune from external surveillance, it is also, in many ways, beyond the reach of those in authority (Warrington, 2001). Thus, instead of avowing the home as safe haven, Duncan (1996) deconstructs this thesis, describing it as a place "where aggressive forms of misogynous masculinity are often exercised with impunity" (pg. 131). Gregson and Lowe (1995) argue in a similar vein: "We need to think of home in terms of dominance and resistance; to consider how and why a particular ideology of home maintains its hegemonic position and how this might be contested through alternative interpretations" (p. 226).

This notwithstanding, and whilst constructions of the home appear relatively commonly in feminist literature, it is curious that geography and psychology have paid so little attention to the relationship between everyday terrorism and living space – both domestic and non-domestic – especially when compared to other types of violence; an observation perhaps even more surprising in view of the intrinsically spatial nature of the term 'domus' (Meth, 2003) and the paradox and implications its supposedly 'private' nature carries for women abused there. One leading geographer, Warrington (2001), sought to address this issue by looking at the experience of home in everyday terror, and emphasising the disjuncture between

perceptions of it as safe and the home's inherently spatial restrictions on victims' experiences of both evading violence and escaping abusive partners. Indeed, Little (2017) points out that the link between violence and space is especially important in everyday terror since the home space itself serves both to conceal the abuse and simultaneously renders it entirely unavoidable. She reminds us that explorations of the home typically identify entrapment as integral to the lived reality of abused women and Pain (2014a; 2014b), challenging the assumptions around the settings of violence more generally, compellingly contests associations between the domestic spaces of home and abused women's feelings of safety and wellbeing.

Away from the physicality of the home, on the other hand, the critical role played by space in everyday terror has also been demonstrated by research into rural areas. Edwards (2015), for example, depicts the exacerbation of remoteness and isolation on social and physical entrapment (Panelli, Kraack & Little, 2005; Pruitt, 2008; Wendt & Cheers, 2003) and flags the ease with which strategies of surveillance can be enforced in country spaces (Little, 2017). As Pain (2014a) surmises, everyday terror "works through fear, shame and entrapment" (pg. 541) and Little (2017) suggests that certain dimensions of domestic abuse, such as coercive control, which are implicated in the production and performance of non-agentic female subjectivities, are especially impacted by rural living, where very traditional constructions of gender and identity tend to be maintained. The situation is aggravated by general interpretations of the countryside as safe and harmonious (Benson & Jackson, 2013), rendering the commission of everyday terror commanding even less public or political interest. Indeed, Little (2017) argues that the logistical difficulties preventing victims either accessing therapeutic help or escaping the relationship might even be compounded by a lack of worldliness apparently characteristic of deep rural living (Little, 2017).

Finally, the link between space and everyday terror is advanced by a more theoretical engagement with the subject. Since domestic abuse, like all types of violence, is argued to be "an unfolding process" (Tyner et al., 2014), not an isolated or contained incident, Springer (2011) maintains that it must inevitably be fashioned by "broader geographical phenomenon and temporal patterns of the social world" (pg. 91), localised and embodied and unable to be separated from the sites of its occurrence. How then do spatial constructions manifest as experience? How do they translate into feelings of safety and fear of violence, control and abuse? Accepting that space and setting do affect us – our experience, our feelings and our mental distress and wellbeing – as the evidence outlined above clearly shows, what does that mean for how we understand space and what space represents for us?

1.3. THEORISING SPACE

Space itself is a nebulous concept and can mean a variety of things to different people at different times. For example, whilst it is often used to distinguish between public and private areas, people increasingly talk about institutional (e.g. the medical profession, courts, social care community and mental health services) and virtual, online or digital space (e.g. the internet, social media and telecommunications). The word 'space' can also be used metaphorically; when referring to what's going on in our minds, for example, people often use terms such as 'head space', 'my space' or 'personal space'. More typically, however, the word 'space' is used in the geographic, physical or cartographic sense; it tends to be equated with place – a fixed landscape which can be accurately and definitively *mapped*. Social and cultural geographers, on the other hand, have been at pains to move away from this latter depiction and prefer to portray space as something *created* or *made,* not as a stable entity or reified *thing*, with inherent properties which transfer onto those existing within it.

1.4. RELATIONS IN SPACE

Such a notion of space is not radical or even pioneering, as such. Lefebvre (1991), for example, distinguished between "logico-mathematical space" – space as an empty vessel to contain life – and the "practico-sensory realm of social space" (p. 15), which sees space as socially produced and relational. Since the former could not, he argued, explain how different spaces originated or manifested, a theory of space was required that understood different spaces to be reflecting disparate 'spatial practices', which themselves must be, inherently, active or constructive. Massey (1994) traces a similar notion of space from the work of Lefebvre through both Marxist and feminist geography, explaining that the spaces of capitalism – the slums and factories of industrial Britain, for example – though *produced by* capitalist economies still thoroughly affect or *produce* social processes, community and individual experience, notwithstanding their closure in the interim. Similarly, they suggest that the gendered division of space, assigning women to atomised, private sites of reproduction and men to communal, public spaces of production serves to further isolate and disempower women (McDowell, 1983). As such, the relationship between space and social relations is reciprocal; space is both 'produced by' (e.g. capitalism and patriarchy) and 'productive of' social relations (the spatial form of capitalism and patriarchy serving to propagate and embed both class and gendered power imbalances; Massey, 1994; Lefebvre, 1991). Thus, this relationship is complex, indeterminate (Reavey, 2010), unpredictable and fluid, emerging from dynamic, situated interactions (Lefebvre, 1991), modified over time, according to the shifting nature of our relationships (Jones, 2009), rules, morals, fashions and technologies. In

essence, according to Lefebvre (1991), Ingold (2000; 2011), McGrath and Reavey (2018), Tucker (2011) and others, we can only experience space through the relationships that comprise it and which are themselves fashioned by and within it.

Ingold (2000; 2011) captures this view by pointing out that when we engage with the world, we necessarily leave traces of ourselves behind. Giving the example of a mound, a naturally occurring material object, he points out that its shape and form are ever-changing as a result of its relationship with humans; thus, we project our own particular spatial orientation on the world, its configuration determined by our actions, interactions and moods (Merleau-Ponty, 1962). The world meanwhile also changes us; it affords us the ability to think and act in certain ways. This is well summed up by Gibson (1979), in his ecological approach to perception and action, where he describes as an 'affordance' that which cuts across the "dichotomy of subjective-objective… It is equally a fact of the environment and a fact of behaviour… An affordance points both ways, to the environment and to the observer" (p.129). As dispositional properties (or 'behavioural invitations') of the environment, Gibson (1979) used the term affordances to describe the "organism-scaled action relevant properties of the environment and changes in the layout of the organism's environment [as] ecological events" (Golonka & Wilson, 2012, p.42). In this way, Gibson's (1979) ecological approach to perception and behaviour moves the psychological beyond the bounds of the individual and into the relationships between people and their environment. Thus, according to this view, space should be conceived not as a neutral backdrop, but as an information-rich constellation of 'action-possibilities'.

Inspired by Heidegger (1971), Ingold (2000) agrees that we cannot, therefore, in any meaningful sense, be separated from our context because it is the environment in which we live which shapes us, our encounters, our actions, our potentials and our futures: "This tangle is the texture of world […] beings do not simply occupy the world, they inhabit it, and in so doing - in threading their own paths through the meshwork - they contribute to the ever-evolving weave" (Ingold, 2000, p. 66-7). He explicates, "people do not import their ideas, plans or mental representations into the world, since that very world, to borrow a phrase from Merleau-Ponty (1962, p. 24), is the homeland of their thoughts. Only because they already dwell therein can they think the thoughts they do" (p.186).

This approach to space, as the afforder of opportunities and potentials for behaviour, action and encounter, is predicated on social constructionist views of the self, where the self is seen as produced and constructed by its socio-cultural context (Gergen, 1991; Harré, 1979; 1983), the hub of a myriad of intersecting relations, developed organically (Gergen, 2009), fluidly, indefinitely, and multiply realised across a plethora of spatial settings over time (Dixon &

Durrheim, 2004; Massey, 2005). Importantly, the self is interminably fluctuated, its shape moulded according to, composed of, and differentially achieved by and within the spaces we engage with and which themselves comprise experience (Latour, 2005; Reavey, 2010). Consequently, identity itself should be viewed as a product or achievement, not as something which pre-exists, awaiting interpretation. Since the self is intimately bound by the spaces and material it occupies, ever-adapting to the experiences those spaces generate, it follows that space must be understood as an integral part of those relations that converge on the self and constitute or define selfhood over time. The self is inherently processual, engaged in an act of 'becoming', as opposed to just 'being'; subjectivity is not fixed but fluid, unfolding across the different relationships through which space and the self are reciprocally produced or created.

Moreover, as Tucker (2011) argues, since psychological life is formed *as* relations and because relationality always occurs somewhere, "formed in and as the terrains that form our social world, psychological phenomena are [always] consequentially spatialized" (p.234). This does not mean that Tucker (2011) denies the cognitive basis of individual psychological activity but he proposes that these building blocks "are not stable entities that form the world, but are themselves *products* of relational processes that come to bear externally" (p.234). He argues that, instead of attempting to explore "the links between psychological phenomena and space as if they exist in separate realms" (2010, p.526), experience itself ought to be considered as spatialized and space as something "far more bound up in what we understand as experience" (2010, p.529).

1.5. LIFE SPACE

The idea that psychological experience is spatially distributed derives from Lewin's (1936) 'The principles of topological psychology', an ecological approach which is arguably broader than Gibson's (1979) approach to perception and action, and in which his 'affordances' are conceptualised more behaviourally, in terms of the possibilities for action offered by the environment, and thereby not immediately able to "capture the dynamic interrelationship *between persons*" (Brown & Reavey, 2017, p.5). In contrast, Lewin's (1936) ecological approach is fundamentally relational – and arguably conceptually richer – prioritising as it does the relationships between individuals, as well as between individual, object and environment, and in particular the *psychological* phenomena (emotion, imagination, relationships etc.) which constitutes an individual's psychological 'life space'. Thus, Lewin's (1936) life space "is a relational nexus that at any given moment constitutes the psychological as a 'manifold' of potential actions" (Brown & Reavey, 2017, p.5). Lewin (1936) argues that "every psychological event depends upon the state of the person and at the same time the state of the environment" (1936, p.12) and these two – external and internal – are constantly and dynamically shaping

one another. The concern is to move away from a carving up of perception, thinking and human action into entitative segments, without understanding how each really 'work' 'move' and 'flow' together in an ecological context.

At pains to avoid dichotomous thinking in psychology between subject-object, mind-body, individual-social, for example, Lewin (1936) proposes a spatial and *relational distribution of psychological experience*, thereby offering a thoroughly social perspective not reliant on traditional notions of internalised psychological states: "Crucially, [in Lewin's topology] there is no pre-figured theoretical distinction made between the individual and environment… [Thus], not having pre-defined properties means being subject to the potential for context-dependent formation, in which "the centre of interest shifts from objects to processes" (Lewin, 1936, p.16)" (Tucker & Smith, 2014, p.177). As such, Lewin (1936) was interested in the "whole psychological situation" (p.12), "in which 'person' and 'environment' are understood as co-constituents of a given situation" (Tucker & Smith, 2014, p.177), and in which space is defined by relations, instead of something more measureable or proximal (McGrath & Reavey, 2018). For Lewin, life space is the "coming together of the person and the environment" (Goodings & Tucker, 2018, p.202), although this isn't contingent on any 'immediate' physical reaction, between for example a person and their contextual surroundings, but incorporates the 'connecting' of many diverse spaces.

For Lewin, then, analysis of physical space alone is never sufficient; consideration must also be given to the relational spaces that we inhabit, unbounded by space and time. This means that, according to Lewin (1936), life space must be topologically organised, in that it consists of the totality of possible relations (which could be either physical or mental, near or far, past, present or future) that we are a part of at any given moment and which shape our behaviour and experience. As such, proposing a 'Field Theory' approach, Lewin (1936) argues that the potential for an individual to act is bound up with the configuration of physical life space: "The two forms of experience are intertwined in movement through a field" (Goodings & Tucker, 2018, p.202). The fundamental principle is that without exploring the relational connections that bind the immediate scene to other settings and to the people within them, we cannot truly understand psychological experience. As individuals, "our lives are structured within fields of intersecting forces that impel us towards certain goals, creating pathways within social channels. Inevitably these 'force fields' overlap with one another, resulting in conflicts with competing tendencies for movement" (Brown & Reavey, 2017, p.19). The wider implication of this is that if we aim to disrupt a psychological process, for example everyday terror, we need to identify first the forces that work together to stabilise such a phenomenon, and to "consider the social life there as something which *flows* through certain channels" (1997, p. 300),

scrutinising the role played by these social channels in the proliferation, propagation and perpetuation of the psychological problem.

Thus, acknowledging the centrality of this movement to Lewin's approach, Goodings and Tucker (2018) propose: "This is fundamentally a dynamic framing of space in which any given situation is analysed in terms of possibilities for action" (p.202). For Lewin, then, life space is a relationally structured field of potentialities, defined by the movements that comprise lived experience, since "every movement through the psychological field that constitutes life space has an effect back upon the field, [which thus] shapes the possibilities for further movement at each point… What this means in methodological terms is that understanding behaviour requires a mapping of the totality of relationships that are in play, not simply those that are in immediate spatial proximity" (Reavey, Brown, Kanyeredzi, McGrath & Tucker, 2019, p.274) and, moreover, since there is no prefigured differentiation between individual and environment or between subjects and objects in Lewin's (1936) topology, the interrelationships between humans, objects and materiality may also play an important part in the constitution of psychological life space. As Latour (1996; 2005) argues, material objects are integral to social interaction; instead of being thought of as mere accessories to social life, they are 'non-human' participants that play an active and pivotal role in the production of human experience. Serres (2005), too, also posits the social nature of objects and the material nature of the social, intending to avoid any duality between the two, and proposes that objects mediate relationships, slow down culture and history, as well as anchor or stabilise experience and human interactions.

Returning to Lewin (1936) then, since "there is no preconceived distinction between subjects or objects [in his topology], subjects and qualities emerge from within the relational gathering, rather than underpin its processual development or becoming" (Brown & Reavey, 2019, p.135). Not only may this have important ramifications for how we understand subjectivity and perceive the impact of the broader socio-economic and cultural environment on the manifestation and mediation of distress but, in addition, conceptualising space relationally, as *created*, "flows down to the practices that enact different spaces… [which themselves] … are always subject to shifts in the relations through which they are formed" (Tucker, 2011, p.234). In other words, if a space is produced by the activities and relationships within it, then it can be made differently if and when these components change. The emphasis on movement and flow opens up "the present, the places and spaces in which our everyday lives are formed, to flux, which means nothing is foundational or pre-existing manifestation in the present. If nothing exists outside of the relational practices that form it in the present, the past cannot be

seen to have a predeterminate effect on the present" (Tucker, 2010, p.532), and this may feel important for conceptualising both subjectivity and mental distress.

1.6. SPACE AS THE *FORM* THAT PSYCHOLOGICAL EXPERIENCE TAKES

Thus, the approach to space adopted hereon in is one attuned to notions of flux and fluidity, movement and difference. Rather than seeing the spaces of everyday life as having distinct properties, which afford specific modes of being to anyone engaged within them, these spaces themselves are *the way* that experienced is produced. This means that every different space can afford a different experience for any or every person at any or every time. This departure from notions of space as structural and containing (Tucker, 2010) to conceptualizations that emphasise its relational fluidity and its role in the production of psychological experience has alerted us to the difference between those spaces which reinforce feelings of passivity, powerlessness, isolation and stigma (Tucker & Smith, 2014) and those which afford activity, agency, movement and connectivity (McGrath, 2012; Buchanan, 2014). As Lewin proposed, relational properties are far more important than spatial boundaries in explaining psychological phenomena. It is the manifold of relations which define the action-possibilities available "to us at each moment, irrespective of whether the entities concerned are distal or proximal… and the life space which constitutes our ongoing experience is at every moment assembled out of a diverse range of relationships, which provide both material and conceptual affordances and constraints… [Thus] our unfolding experience is of the behavioural options afforded by the world to which we are immediately spatially present and the broader relations that conceptually inhere in that world" (Brown & Reavey, 2017, p.17-22).

The value of this approach is that it changes the focus from the individual to the relations between people and their environments and it encourages an exploration of wider social, material and cultural factors which intertwine to produce psychological phenomena. Conceptualising, as Lewin (1936), Ingold (2000; 2011), McGrath, Reavey and Brown (2008), Tucker (2011) and Tucker and Smith (2014) have previously done, psychological experience as produced spatially enables us to turn our attention away from the individual, biological or cognitive factors which are commonly thought to underpin mental distress and examine more closely the wider social, material and cultural practices which surround psychological difficulties and their mediation or mitigation, and in so doing comprehend their inherently relational nature.

Moreover, it could be suggested that Lewin's (1936) life space provides us with another, potentially valuable tool to illuminate the importance of certain factors within the therapeutic

relationship, such as inter-subjectivity, relational connecting and the co-creation of meaning, to the principles of counselling psychology and to the spaces of its therapy. Indeed, it could be argued that there are already many within the discipline who recognise and acknowledge the centrality of Lewin's notion of life space to their theoretical underpinning and champion its significance to their respective therapeutic approach (e.g. Gestalt therapy, systemic therapy, community psychology and even phenomenology; Fuchs, 2007). Since a primary focus of modern-day psychotherapy is the way in which a person connects with his environment and the way he lives in his world, the notion of life space is arguably essential to such theoretical or therapeutic undertakings. Instead of separating out subject and object, and looking inside the person to explain subjective experience, we know that Lewin (1936) posits that psychological phenomena (e.g. emotion) belongs not, in any kind of atomistic or mechanistic sense, to the individual – isolated, entitative and disconnected from its object, or indeed projected only onto others – but emerges from within the relationships and the spaces in which the person is specifically and contemporaneously engaged, including of course those within therapy. This means that, according to Lewin, both therapist and client are reciprocally engaged in constituting and configuring one another's life space. In other words, since life space is structured according to our relationships with others, objects and environment, the therapeutic relationship must also be important to a client's psychological life space and to their relationally structured field of possibilities. Indeed, it could be argued that the therapeutic relationship itself offers a clear depiction of the workings of Lewin's topology, as a snapshot of the constellation of dynamic relational forces, possibilities and agency which help to frame subjectivity and co-create life space.

In addition, one could suggest that Lewin's notion of life space also helps to explain the role and impact of a good therapeutic relationship on perceived success within therapy. For, whereas our lives are normally structured "within the fields of intersecting forces that impel us towards certain goals, creating pathways within social channels… [and whereas] inevitably these 'force fields' overlap with one another, resulting in conflicts with competing tendencies for movement" (Brown & Reavey, 2017, p. 19), the nature of the therapeutic relationship, on the other hand, in which therapist typically brackets off their preconceptions, may help clients to recognise their relatively stabilised relational patterns, likely reenacted within the therapeutic relationship itself, whilst also enabling an experience of different kinds of relational engaging, facilitating access to enhanced relational possibilities, and opening up new potentials for movement, change and difference. Arguably, the overriding goal of therapy is to help clients explore and understand the relationality and dimensions of their psychological life space in order to expand agency and increase their horizon of possibilities. Indeed, there are many within counselling psychology who argue that the primary agent in this regard is the

therapeutic relationship itself, which in Lewin's terms is conceptualised as the interactive field, constituted by the coming together of therapist and client, in a "fusion of horizons" of both client's and therapist's worlds (Fuchs, 2007, p. 437), and the movements within their own relational fields of possibility.

1.7.   SPACES OF AGENCY

Indeed, if experience is indeed constituted by relationships – both to others and to the individual's social and material world (see Bell et al, 2017; Cromby, 2015; Brown & Reavey, 2015) – as opposed to being a matter of mere cognition or of subjective perception, then this also has ramifications for how we understand and interpret agency. Drawing upon Lewin (1936), McGrath and Reavey (2018; p.24) suggest that "a working definition of agency can be formulated as the expansion and contraction of life space (Brown & Reavey, 2015)". Thus, if life space is the totality of actual and potential relations – both physical and mental – existing at any one time, then agency depends on the extent to which that space expands and contracts. Our competence to think and to act develops out of the same nexus of relationships we have to the world and our agency is therefore dependent on the freedoms and restrictions placed on our ability to relate to others (to people, objects and things). Agency is about the psychological field of possibility, which itself is constituted by the relations afforded by space.

How then does this effect domestically abused women? If their potential psychological field and their consequent agency is dependent on the relations within their life space, and that life space is controlled and contracted by their abuser, how is it possible for their agency ever to expand? What possibilities are there for agency to be enacted at all, and how are the relations within wider society and the structures of government and institutions implicated in this? In addition, if psychological life space is indeed subject to continuous movement and flux, according to the way that dynamic relationships and social activities make and remake space, what does this mean for how we understand subjectivity, agency and the potential for change? And, importantly, how might counselling psychologists harness this conceptualisation of space within their therapy to help facilitate and expand connection to a broader range of relationships – to those that are spatially remote, to different aspects of the past as well as to possibilities for the future – to augment a sense of agency and re-empowerment for their clients in the present?

1.8.   EVERYDAY TERROR AND PUBLIC/ PRIVATE SPACE

According to Pain (2014a; 2014b; 2009), the spatial patterns of women's fear of abuse in general are essential to understanding their descriptions and explanations, yet she recognises

that geography rarely focuses on the spaces of everyday terror, as opposed to more public forms of violence. Apart from constructions of the home as a site for domestic abuse, entrapment and surveillance (e.g. Warrington, 2001; Bowstead, 2011), there appears to be surprisingly little research conducted into the way that abusers use space to carry out violence and coercion. Even Warrington (2001) says that "domestic violence… by its very nature, takes place within the confines of private space, and is therefore seen as outside the concerns of wider society" (p.365). Thus, geography tends to be preoccupied with everyday terrorism being a private phenomenon, a notion which surely overlooks both the intrusion into the 'private' space of the home in many cultures by wider family members (Ahmed, Reavey & Majumdar, 2008) and the accounts of domestic violence and coercive control being frequently played out in public, community spaces; both topics overwhelmingly neglected in the domestic abuse literature. It also entirely ignores the impact of non-physical, structural spaces of society, culture, government, the media, public institutions, professional bodies and community groupings on the proliferation, propagation and perpetuation of everyday terror (Bostock et al., 2009), a topic which unfortunately attracts even less scrutiny than those highlighted above.

Indeed, it could be argued that the scarcity of research around the spaces of everyday terror arises precisely because of this common misconception, that it is "a privatised" issue (Duncan, 1996). Capturing the dangerous circularity of this picture, Ahmed et al. (2008) propose that "because the home space is relatively immutable to public intervention, domestic abuses are often viewed and experienced… as a private or psychological issue … [meaning that victims] maintain the belief that they do not have access to their public/civil rights and that their problem is their own. These problems (which have a social origin) can then too easily be attributed to… 'mental health' problems… [and are] too often retranslated into psychiatric terms such as depression and anxiety" (p.50), and medicated (Reavey, Ahmed & Majumdar, 2006), or treated only at the individual level, instead of at the collective (Cromby, Harper & Reavey; 2013).

The likely impact of this is, therefore, a reinforcement of societal attitudes which locate the 'cure' (and often the cause) for mental health difficulties in the individual suffering them (Bentall, 2003; 2009; Smail, 2005), as opposed to the recognition that everyday terror should be more of a societal or public concern. In addition, feminists argue that this rests on and perpetuates an artificial, unhelpful and unnecessary demarcation between public and private, associated with 'male' and 'female', respectively, which deliberately compounds and entrenches the gender inequalities that prevail across the purportedly public/private dimensions of organized space (Duncan, 1996). Indeed, Ahmed et al. (2009) argue that the

home space itself mirrors these broader social, political and economic gender struggles, which themselves directly impact male and female subjectivity, rendering the experiences of dominance and subjugation in the home even more of a political issue. Meanwhile, the attention paid to the structural spaces of society, through which these systemic inequalities emerge and are maintained, has been only peripheral, notwithstanding the critical role assigned by the government to these services for the provision of help and support for victims of everyday terror. Except for Bostock et al. (2009), who argue persuasively that these institutions often intensify the experience of distress for domestically abused women, the theoretical literature and wider research has all but ignored the ways in which the structural *spaces* of wider society, and the discourses they protect and disseminate, are mobilised, manipulated or exploited to extend the power and reach of the abuser. Indeed, Armstrong (1990) has written cogently of the ways in which everyday terror and child sexual abuse are translated by society into psychological symptoms 'belonging to' the individual and/or to the family, as opposed to the culture or collective.

Thus, warning of the limitations of such traditional approaches to geographic enquiry, whereby the physical is prioritised over more symbolic or relational spaces, Pain (2009; 2014a; 2014b) highlights the importance of attending to the ways in which space is *constructed*, what these spaces represent and how they are implicated in abused women's experiences of distress. For example, building on Valentine's (1989) ground-breaking work, which concludes that threats of violence are deliberately intended to inhibit women's use of public space, Pain (2009) argues the need for a more empowering framework through which to understand fear; one which "is far more attentive to what is happening on 'the ground' in the places and lives that people inhabit" (p.467), and which challenges the paradoxical division of public and private space. Whilst much of her work focuses on challenging constructions of fear assumed by the new geopolitics of fear literature, which presuppose an artificial binary between global and local, Pain (2009) sets out to map instead the 'true' geographies and textures of violence against women and to understand the way that emotion is deliberately deployed by social and political structures to reinforce male hegemony.

Thus, highlighting the role played by government and the mass media in the apparent prioritisation of more 'public' forms of violence over domestic abuse, Pain (2014a) points to the way in which rare and random incidences of terrorist violence are somehow turned into an everyday dreaded phenomenon, uniting even the most disparate groups in the West against a common enemy. She argues that where those in power are motivated, it is possible to somehow, notwithstanding its rarity, whip the collective mind-set into a frenzy of fear and panic against global terror, yet next to nothing is done to provoke public outrage against the crippling,

daily occurrences of everyday terrorism against women, committed on our doorstep. Indeed, she points out the paradox at play, that despite the 'everywhereness' of domestic abuse ("here is a crime as close to home as it gets", 2014a, p.532), it tends largely to be hidden or excused, whereas despite the extreme uncommonness of terrorism, it commands an enormous literature... "to the point of being fetishized" (p.542). She argues, "rather than fears taking shape through spatial fetishism, the threat of [domestic abuse] is barely represented in space, but covered up, hidden, invisible. Rather than collective grief that takes diverse forms, individual pain is often gagged by collective silence" (2014a, p.542).

In other words, according to Pain (2014a) and Springer (2011) – as well as a number of other feminist, political geographic or socio-structuralist theorists – it is power that defines which violence matters. The relative overemphasis on terrorism, at the cost of its private, less spectacular domestic cousin, reflects decidedly delineated and politically motivated discourses of danger, as opposed to representing the actual experience of the violence itself. Since both domestic abuse and terrorism are characterised by their ability to impart fear through coercive control, buttressing "wider political relations just as other forms of violent terror attempt to do" (p.143), Pain (2014b) argues that both are inherently and equally political. Drawing upon the long-standing feminist view of domestic abuse, Pain (2014b) suggests that everyday terrorism is just another form of political oppression, an exertion of power by men over women. Although Pain acknowledges, like most contemporary feminists, that patriarchy is intersected by race, religion, ethnicity, class, sex, ability and other forms of oppression to produce wide varieties of violence, including domestic abuse (Pain, 2014b; 2015; Harne & Radford, 2008; hooks, 2000; Mama, 1996; Menjı́var & Salcido 2002; Sokoloff & Dupont, 2005), she argues that "it is important to state that domestic violence is a gendered phenomenon, in its incidence and prevalence but also its social and political dynamics" (2014b, p.129) and, as such, the traditional framing of domestic abuse as non-political compounds (and is compounded by) the belief that it is a private or personal issue and should not be interfered with (Duncan, 1996).

Moreover, Hammer (1978) argues that everyday terrorism is *the* "structural underpinning of hierarchical relations" (p.229), possibly even essential to patriarchy and, as such, its relegation and confinement to the spaces of the private sphere is just as much by design as by geographical accident (Duncan, 1996, p.132). It does not appear, according to this view, to be in the interests of the ruling male elite to make domestic abuse a growing public concern and Pain (2014a) highlights the role of structural space in perpetuating this impression and the consequent low profile it carries in wider society. She argues that representations of both global and everyday terrorism operate in the same way: To "obscure and mystify the social,

cultural and political-economic relations" that underpin them (Katz, 2007, p.352). Posing the rhetorical question, therefore, "where is the war on everyday terror?" (p.542), she (2014a) highlights the absence of public memorials dedicated to the pain and suffering of victims of domestic violence, relative to those honouring victims of global terror.

1.9.   SPACES OF RESISTANCE

Inevitably, this paradoxical distancing tends also to be represented in societal attitudes to everyday terrorism. In the same way that the law permits and arguably promotes everyday terrorism as "a privatised problem" (Duncan, 1996, p.132), Pain (2014b) points out the tendency in wider society to assume those who have been domestically abused are passive, somehow responsible for the abuse by not leaving or standing up to their abusers (Dobash & Dobash, 1992; Enadner & Holmberg, 2008; INCITE!, 2006; Wilson, 1983). Many feminists fiercely contest this construction, however, arguing that abused women do actively resist oppression, notwithstanding, and in spite of, their disadvantaged position. Indeed, they suggest that it is yet another aspect of male supremacy that activism is framed in masculine terms and is "conceived of as political action through formal public arenas reflecting the practices of elite men". Not only does this definition imply that women cannot be activists but also that the "agent of change is normatively fixed in the formal sphere" (Askins, 2011, p.531; Horton & Kraftl, 2009; Staeheli & Cope, 1994) or, in other words, the domain typically associated with men. The feminist literature, on the other hand, has been instrumental in reconceptualising activism so that it does not implicitly preclude women, defining it as "a type of human behaviour rather than as an arena", and thereby opening it up to "illuminate the political activities of most people; for example, those who are not elite actors, those who are not visible in the formal governmental system, and those who are not formally identified with a social movement" (Abrahams, 1992, p.329).

As such, we are implored to acknowledge that political action also takes place in the spaces of everyday and, instead of continuing to relegate women and their suffering to the private sphere, whilst reserving the public for rational, politically active men, Abrahams' (1992) approach shifts our attention to an appreciation of the great many (albeit disorganised, fragmented and constrained; Pain, 2014b) ways in which women resist abuse, the ways in which power relations are negotiated in the 'private' sphere and the way these interconnect with more 'public' struggles. Thus, Abrahams' (1992) work identifies a number of different spaces and degrees of political activity, illustrating the development of new geographies of resistance and political potentials (Martin, Hanson & Fontaine, 2007; Staeheli, 1994), and demonstrating the sexually discriminatory, increasingly porous and nonsensical nature of the traditional public private divide.

Where then do the 'quiet politics' of this activism in everyday terrorism take place (Askins, 2011)? How do abused women manage to exert "power, resistance and agency… from such disadvantaged positions" (Hammer, 2002, p.124) and how does their agency depend on space and setting? Whilst geographers have been prominent in distinguishing between mainstream organised activism and more banal or spontaneous activity, there is very little research exploring the *actual* spaces and sites of that resistance (Warrington, 2011), despite activism being thoroughly embodied within space and place (Brown & Pickerill, 2009; van Wijnendaele, 2011) and despite these everyday geographies being central to psychological distress. For example, Warrington (2001) herself focuses predominantly on entrapment within the home, the constraints women face in leaving the abusive relationship and the disruption of moving to a place of refuge. She does not even attempt to consider the spatial manoeuvring of women on a day-to-day basis to avoid, cope with or resist domestic abuse.

Paradoxically, even within human and political geography, let alone psychology, the spatial aspects of living and coping with abuse are often overlooked, and the way in which relationships – at a structural, institutional and personal level – fashion these spaces is consequently left entirely neglected. Bowstead too, albeit incorporating "the geographies of domestic violence" into the title of her 2017 paper, completely disregards the actual day-to-day geographies of managing domestic abuse and focuses only on the migration of women already leaving their abusers. Even Pain (2014b) chooses not to focus on the actual sites of resistance, notwithstanding her recommendation (2015) that a focus on everyday terrorism is needed to draw attention to the *everyday spaces* of violence, as opposed to only those associated with its more public forms. She does (2014b), however, at least point to the agency afforded by space more generally, arguing that the context of that agency is critical since its existence and constraints are determined by space and setting (Pile & Keith 1997; Sharp, Routledge, Philo & Paddison 2000). Again, omitting to examine the specific sites of their opposition, she (2014b) affirms the agency inherent in abused women's acts and interventions to manage and contest violence, highlighting the diverse strategies (Enadner & Holmberg, 2008; Zosky, 2011) used by them to counter, reduce or "cope with" violence (p.136). Meanwhile, Kelly, Sharp and Klein (2014), in a report for Solace Women's Aid, graphically plot the number of 'spaces for action' available to abused women attempting to rebuild and recover their lives after leaving an abusive relationship and compare them with the levels prior to departure. Although suggesting that these spaces for action provide the potential for enhanced autonomy and the enactment of agency, Kelly et al. (2014) do not go into any substantive detail as to the specific constitution of these spaces, other than through the 'Spaces for action scale', which asks questions only about participants' psychological experience of self, parenting, community, friends and family during and after leaving the relationship.

On the other hand, Stark's (2007) 'safety zones' – defined as the "moments of autonomy found in the struggle between agency and victimisation" (Kelly et al., 2014, p.12) – are more explicitly spatial, albeit focused more on the physical places where victims of everyday terrorism can generally access support or maintain relationships and on objects which impart meaning than on the actual day-to-day spaces of that resistance. This notwithstanding, Stark (2007) at least recognises the power of these 'safety zones' to augment physical and emotional wellbeing and to offer abused women an alternative to the unrelenting coercive control characterising everyday terrorism. Either way, these rare moments of autonomy between agency and subjugation attribute the spatial context with the ability to afford agency and a degree of resistance (Madhok, Philips & Wilson, 2013) and their importance has been acknowledged by the Home Office who suggest that 'thinking time' provided by Domestic Violence Protection Orders (Kelly et al., 2014) may give victims space to reflect on alternatives to staying with their abusers. What is entirely missing, however, from Stark's (2007) analysis, bearing in mind the spatial strategies found employed by victims of everyday terrorism navigating daily distress, is an exploration of the potential reconfiguration of counselling space made possible by such findings: Nowhere does Stark (2007) put forward a recommendation for the reconceptualization of therapy to take account of the zones abused women deem 'safe', in order to reach them, lend support and aid resistance. Little (2017) does briefly allude to the possibility that spatial understandings of everyday terrorism could help counsellors restructure therapy but she is more concerned with overcoming the particular logistical difficulties posed by domestic abuse occurring in rural areas than in restructuring counselling in line with the needs, preferences and current coping mechanisms of victims themselves.

1.10. CONTRIBUTIONS OF THIS RESEARCH

As has been demonstrated, research which places at its heart the everyday spaces of coping with distress and resistance to everyday terrorism has mostly been lacking. To begin to address this, it is proposed that we can learn and extrapolate from geographical analyses of other experiences of trauma. Willis, Prior and Canavan (2016), for example, show how important it is for female victims of childhood sexual abuse to regain a sense of control over space, citing the spatial manifestations of becoming a 'moving target' (by perpetually moving, never staying still) or hiding in spaces deemed safe and bounded (a cupboard, for example) or constantly monitoring boundaries and decontaminating space (by obsessively washing and engaging in housework). The authors agree that, whilst a number of researchers have investigated the relationship between fear and everyday terrorism, the actual geographies of coping on a day-to-day basis have been largely left forgotten.

Although resistance to everyday terrorism does take place predominantly in private and alone, practices of endurance, forbearance and challenge rarely remain completely isolated: Victims are inevitably "in and of the world, sometimes changing it" (Katz, 2004, p.152) and seldom acting entirely unaided. Whilst, of course, it is advisable not to overstate the potential of these implicit activisms, given their constrained and risky nature (Pain, 2014b), it is important to remember that much of political life is comprised of seemingly private actions which are not overtly related to broader socio-political movements (Horton & Kraftl, 2009). Individual opposition and politicking are often aspects of larger social change, meaning that an exploration of the many small scale, multi-sited, tentative, constrained and disorganised acts of resistance implicit in surviving everyday terrorism may well hold the potential to "nudge established patterns of control and authority" (Staeheli, Ehrkamp, Leitner & Nagel, 2012, p.630) in the much-needed direction.

As such, and in order to explore this complex web of spatial activisms, affordances, practices and restrictions, I propose to adopt Lewin's topological framework through which to organise the data and direct attention to the many ways in which space, both relational and unbounded by measurements of distance or time, is implicated in all aspects of everyday terror: Used by abusers in their more or less direct subjugation of women, by women as a resource to cope with, challenge and defy abuse, and through the impact of structural space on emotion and subjectivity, the principles of topology ensuring the analytical spotlight is finally shone on the role played by wider society, institutions and the public in day-to-day psychological phenomena. With this is mind, I explore the 'life spaces' (Lewin, 1936) and socio-spatial relational practices (McGrath & Reavey, 2018) implicit in everyday terrorism; the spaces of its commission, its exacerbation through wider society and its resistance. My research, thus, asks the question "How is space implicated in domestically abused women's experience and mitigation of distress?".

1.11. THE PURPOSE OF THIS RESEARCH

Thus, the focus of this research is on the day-to-day spaces of living with everyday terrorism which, I argue, is a timely response to calls by proponents linking space with subjectivity to reject abuse as natural and locate "it [instead] within embedded subjectivities and socio spatial relations" (Little, 2017, p.485); foregrounding its centrality in explorations of the experience of violence and abuse. As Springer (2011) argues, "violence sits in places" (p.90) and since both violence and domestic abuse are "not pre-given… neither transhistorical [nor] transgeographical… [having] no pre-social existence but coming into being through political practice" (Tyner & Inwood, 2014, p.774), I approach the topic from a social constructionist perspective and am concerned with elucidating the political, economic and gendered power

relations which shape and collude in its commission and experience, whilst simultaneously shaping its resistance.

By means of a topological approach to psychological experience, I aim to explore the life spaces (Lewin, 1936) of domestically abused women and to attain an appreciation of the complex way in which emotions and subjectivity are played out across every space of society, especially those spaces which are irreducible to units of measurement, temporal or geometric. As Tucker and Goodings (2014), Tucker and Smith (2014), Tucker (2017), Reavey et al. (2019) and McGrath and Reavey (2018) have similarly shown, topology provides a coherent and powerful framework through which to explore the relations, agencies and affordances made possible by space and in order to demonstrate the important link between psychological phenomena and subjectivity. I argue that space and setting underlie not only the manifold emotional experiences of force and coercion but also the behaviours, practises and social structures through which it is both exercised and mediated. Moreover, I argue that the use of space as a means by which to mediate fear and misery and to increase agency and autonomy supports and extends the existing literature describing the significant reliance on non-therapeutic coping strategies in everyday terrorism (Rizo, Givens & Lombardi, 2017; Krause, Kaltman, Goodman & Dutton, 2008; Lee, Pomeroy & Bohman, 2007) and, together, these lines of enquiry help us to understand how abusers use space to enact their 'reign of terror' (Pain, 2014; 2015), as well as facilitate an understanding of how women cope with stress and violence, seeing as they are not passive but "resilient and strategic" in contesting abuse (Fugate, Landis, Riordan, Naureckas & Engel, 2005, p.307).

By means of a topological (Lewin, 1936) approach, the intention is to illuminate the impact of wider society on everyday terror, thus broadening the focus from the individuals directly involved in abuse to the role played by political practice, power, difference and the public, in its propagation and perpetuation. Moreover, it is argued that by engaging with such issues we are compelled to ask the following questions: How can we reconfigure therapy so that it actually meets domestic abuse victims' needs? How can we let victims of everyday terrorism know that we understand the complexity of having to navigate across all of their different spatial locations? How can we show abused women that counselling psychology is more than talking, narrating (Nissen, 2018; Hage et al., 2007); that we understand that the lived experience is not just inside their skull, as opposed to lived out in these various environments, these spaces and locations, with all their different practices, which they have to navigate on a daily basis? Can we not think about how to engage domestically abused women in ways that are much more spatial because this better reflects the way they have to live their lives and the ways in which they are forced to navigate their freedoms and agencies?

As such, drawing on Bank and Nissen's (2017) research, it is proposed that we look for ways to restructure the counselling experience so as to better entice, reassure and incite women to report and seek help at earlier points in the abuse trajectory.

1.12. A MORE ACTIVE ROLE FOR COUNSELLING PSYCHOLOGISTS?

As for counselling psychologists, how are they implicated in this mission? Since the philosophical underpinning of counselling psychology, according to van Duerzen-Smith (1990), lies "in the immense gap left open by a psychology too devoted to narrow scientific principles to pay proper attention to what it means to be human" (p.9), there are many who argue that it is not enough to just sit in the therapy room and talk to clients ("you can talk the talk but can you walk the walk?"; Hage et al., 2007); a counselling psychologist needs to be actively involved in social action, putting into practice what they preach, acting affirmatively to prevent injustice and discrimination in society, working towards transformative radical social, political, economic and cultural change (Walker, 2017). This isn't a choice: By virtue of their qualification, counselling psychologists have taken on the responsibility to use their power for the greater good. They are not just objective rational observers but must advocate for people, desire to transform the world that they are a part of (Kagan, 2007). Indeed, Kelly (1970) argues, the definition of psychology should be extended to automatically incorporate the ideas and principles of community psychology (Walker, 2017): We aren't separate from our communities and every single movement we make at any and every time has an impact on someone, somewhere. Since people and social processes cannot be understood apart from their context (Kagan, 2007), it is proposed that we need a holistic, *ecological* analysis of people in the context of their multiple social systems, from the micro-systems of the family and work to the macro-socio-political structures of gender, age, culture and ethnicity; in other words, we require an exploration of structural space as well.

Drawing upon these ideas, I propose that counselling psychologists should endeavour to hear and place at the top of their agenda – both clinically and in their research – the preferences and needs of service users, recognising the strengths and potentials of those they seek to help, whilst committing themselves to work towards long-lasting change, not short-term therapeutic fix (Kagan, 2003). Indeed, by virtue of The Equality Act (2010), counselling psychologists, as public servants or private bodies carrying out public functions, are under a general duty to act affirmatively to advance equality and to eliminate discrimination – whether this involves everyday terrorism or any other kind of domination, prejudice or abuse. In taking an ecological approach, I suggest that counselling psychologists are more likely to think systemically, recognise the multiple causes of social problems, appreciate the roles of all society's stakeholders in prejudice and abuse, and evaluate and analyse the relevant power

dynamics involved (Kagan, 2007), as well as remain open to contributions from those outside the profession and engage in important collaborative cross-discipline and inter-professional work. As Kagan (2007) describes it, operating at the intercept, at the 'edge', counselling psychologists are perfectly placed to work with others to prevent and resolve injustice. They should use their position and their relative power, not just in the therapy room but wherever it is necessary, to work with abused women, with governments, with institutions, to put an end to everyday terror. Indeed, I argue that they are under a transformative duty to do so, and should never cease asking themselves, when they hold a mirror up to their profession, are they proud or embarrassed by what they see (Verducci & Gardner, 2005)?

2   CHAPTER TWO – METHODOLOGY AND PROCEDURES

2.1   FEMINIST QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

As can be seen from the proceeding chapter, any consideration of female domestic abuse victims' accounts of distress is likely to invoke conceptualisations of inequality, disempowerment and resistance (Pain, 2014a; 2014b; Hammer, 2002) and are, therefore, well accommodated, it is suggested, by feminist psychological research, which is designed to enhance women's voice and influence in the community and to explore novel ways of conceptualising the world through their experiences (Kanyeredzi, 2019; Gergen, 2017; Clarke, 2012). For the following reasons, therefore, a feminist qualitative approach was taken to the research question and concerns with voice and power were paramount, influencing at all times its overall design and the data collection methods employed.

Firstly, qualitative research methods have frequently been utilised to explore some of the issues surrounding gendered abuse and the cultural 'scaffolding' which perpetuates unequal distributions of power (Gavey, 2005). Secondly, whereas quantitative methods place power to define the parameters of the project in the hands of the researcher (Willig, 2001), qualitative methods highlight the importance of participant understandings of the subject matter and are non-leading and exploratory, serving to reduce, it is suggested, the differentials of power characterising so much of the experience of domestically abused women (Pain, 2014a; 2014b; Sharp et al., 2000). Thirdly, since the aim of the research is to explore the role that space plays in the experience and mitigation of domestic abuse, it is imperative that the methods adopted enable this and that space be allowed to emerge as conjointly constituting psychological life. As will be demonstrated, qualitative methods have proven invaluable in previous research (e.g. on embodiment; Knowles, 2000a; 2000b; Radley & Taylor, 2003; and on space; Silver & Reavey, 2010) to ensure the focus remains on those dimensions of participants experience that typically elude quantitative – and even some qualitative or more discursive – approaches.

2.2   THEORETICAL POSITION

Drawing on the combined approach of human geography, social psychology, counselling and social work (Bank & Nissen, 2017) to matters such as post-structuralism, embodiment, culture, gender and political and economic theory, space is seen as playing a critical role in the production of "social, economic and political phenomena… [it is] the articulation of inter-relations [that] brings space into being" (Hubbard, Kitchin & Valentine, 2004, p.2). As described in chapter 1, this relational and dynamic view of space stands in contrast to the

more typical, cartographical view which tends to perceive space as 'absolute'; an empty static container to be 'filled' by life (Lefebvre, 1991). Even though Lefebvre, in his work 'The Production of Space' (1991), acknowledged that "to speak of 'producing space' seems bizarre" (p. 15), he demonstrated the limitations of the 'logico-mathematical' approach to space when attempting to capture the differences between different spaces, how space operates and how it comes into being. He argued that Euclidean geometry was insufficient to this task and proposed instead an understanding of space tied to the uses and practices performed within. Differences between spaces, he proposed, can therefore be conceptualised as emanating from divergent 'interrelationships' or 'spatial practices', thereby reinforcing their inherently active, relational and productive nature. Massey (1994) argues that this perception of space reflects an engagement with early 20th century shifts from Newtonian to quantum physics, whereby instead of "orderly, stable and equilbrial, [space and objects are] seething and bubbling with change, disorder, and process" (Prigogine & Stengers, 1984), p. xv). Space is unpredictable, fluid and dynamic, formed by its interrelationships and characterised by its potentials for action and agency (Massey, 1994). As an 'assemblage' – defined as the "relational nexus of bodies, materials, affects and signs which are gathered into an ongoing process of 'arranging'" (Brown & Reavey, 2019, p.135) – there are no preconceived distinctions between subjects or objects, between material or symbolic spaces, and "'subjects' and 'qualities' therefore emerge from within the relational gathering, rather than underpin its processual development (or 'becoming')" (Brown & Reavey, 2019, p.135). Such a topological, relational view of space, it is argued, provides us with a neat theoretical framework for organising the data, through which the embedded stories of abused women can be illuminated, as they move through ever-changing relational assemblages of space (Brown & Reavey, 2019; Tucker et al., 2019).

2.3   ONTOLOGY AND EPISTEMOLOGY

It is suggested that the centrality attributed here to space and relations in the production of psychological experience (Burr, 2003; Henriques, Hollway, Urwin, Venn & Walkerdine,1984; Parker, 1992; Potter & Wetherell, 1987; Gergen, 1994) requires certain assumptions to be made, both about the nature of existence and reality and about the nature of knowledge itself. Thus, instead of objects and individuals, space, relational practices and processes within space are repositioned as ontologically primary: They exist independently of the way in which they come to be known by us or come to be understood (Willig, in press). In fact, it could be argued that "asking research questions about what people think, feel, experience or say to each other attributes a certain 'out-thereness' to those processes" (Willig, in press, para. 6) and that an individual's interpretations and social practices themselves may be deemed to

comprise some kind of 'reality' that itself exists independently of what the researcher may have to say about it. Such an ontology does not preclude there being vastly different subjective interpretations of what is 'out there'; and it is suggested that there are multiple dimensions or 'layers' to reality (Willig, in press). In addition, the approach acknowledges that our interpretations and social processes are a part of that 'reality' (or realities), interacting with one another and with broader social conditions to give rise to the precise phenomena that researchers are attempting to make sense of. Meaning is negotiated and constructed in, and by means of, the social context to which we are inevitably bound and it is *this* that we are trying to 'know' through research.

Therefore, whilst I am interested in the subjective experience of the individual, I recognise that in order to understand it, I need to look beyond the phenomenological to the wider social conditions and context that are enmeshed in its production. As such, the ontological approach is critically realist; indeed, Willig (in press) argues that ontological relativism is unlikely to be compatible with undertaking research in the first place, since any "ambition to develop 'plausible accounts', to 'strengthen our grasp of empirical worlds', and to 'find out' what our participants' worlds 'are like' presupposes that there is something 'out there', beyond ourselves and our own constructions of meaning, which we can aspire to grasp and understand, even though it is acknowledged that we can never have direct, unmediated access to it" (para. 11). Meanwhile, since I appreciate that there are as many different interpretations and perspectives on reality as there are individuals, I incline to a relativist position epistemologically. All knowledge is partial, situated and subjective: Nothing can be known objectively or exactly or, as Willig (in press) puts it, there can be no direct, one-to-one correspondence between aspects of objective reality and our knowledge of it" (para. 6) Moreover, since this epistemological position dictates that all theorising must necessarily be interpretative, it means that the researcher must automatically be implicated in negotiating and co-creating meaning, thereby adding additional layers to the reality they help to fashion, and existing independently of the things that may be said about it.

2.4 SOCIAL CONSTRUCTIONISM

Such a theoretical position shares a number of features with social constructionist paradigms which posit that "the world we experience and the people we find ourselves to be are first and foremost the product of social processes" (Cromby & Nightingale, 1999, p. 4). Thus, both the current approach and social constructionism prioritise relational processes, concur in their view of the individual, emphasise historical and cultural specificity and see human experience as socially produced. In addition, social constructionists hold that our experienced realities are constructed through our interactions with others – in conversation and through culture – and

similarly suggest that it is not possible to know anything objectively, nor lay claim to absolute knowledge, per se. Constructionist approaches are particularly popular with feminist psychologists (and those representing other 'marginal' interests) who propose that gender (or race, class, sexuality etc.) is also socially constructed – an enactment of social convention – thus making social constructionism, on the face of it at least, a potentially suitable framework through which to tackle the research question.

On the other hand, in a departure from the current approach, most social constructionists believe that language itself is constitutive of 'reality' and generally claim that "what is attended to as 'real' is dependent upon the relational processes of groups in *naming*, *defining* and acting it" (Gergen, 2017, p. 299, emphasis added). Moreover, they suggest, in contrast to the theoretical position underpinning this research, that language is itself something we can claim knowledge of. By extension, drawing on post-structuralist theories of language and, heavily influenced by Foucault (1965; 1970; 1973), discourse analysts, a branch of social constructionism, argue that "language produces regimes of truth which regulate social practices" (Henriques et al., 1984, p. 280). This emphasis on the productive power of discourse has proven extremely popular with feminist psychologists (e.g. Gavey, 1989), who argue that the way in which people represent their experience is constrained by the fact that only certain, normative or dominant, discourses are available for use in its elucidation (Potter & Wetherell, 1987; Edwards, 1997; Wetherell, Taylor & Yates, 2001). In the context of the current research, they would argue that abused women, already disempowered, automatically repeat practiced narratives when asked to expound their individual experience, thus perpetuating hegemonic masculine power differentials and preventing the emergence of alternative ways of conceptualising female suffering.

Therefore, whilst parallels can certainly be drawn between social constructionism and the current approach, an important difference pertains to the ontological primacy the former attributes to language. The current approach, whilst interested in general in the way that language is constructed and the function it plays in relational contexts, is more concerned by the way that space is constructed and the role and meaning of space in distress. As Brown and Stenner (2009), Reavey and Warner (2003), and Cromby and Nightingale (1999) argue, the social constructionist preoccupation with language neglects non-discursive elements of experience, such as space, embodiment and materiality, that traditional constructionists perceive as important only in regards their discursive construction. The current project, on the other hand, proposes that material and spatial context are directly implicated in the production of experience (Lefebvre, 1991; Massey, 1994).

Indeed, it is suggested that the theoretical emphasis on space over language cannot easily be married with any method developed from a purely linguistic position, rendering both narrative and discourse analyses also unsuitable to address the research question. Moreover, in Foucauldian Discourse Analysis, which is an approach that initially appears well-suited to explorations of gendered power differentials in abuse, it is argued that the attention given to discursive fields somehow manages to "de-emphasize the subject as agent… the loss of the subject 'woman' reduc[ing] the potential of women to act politically" (Gergen, 2017, p. 297; Willig, 2004), whilst possibly serving only to perpetuate, rather than challenge, normative, masculine ways of understanding distress. As a result, it was decided that any methodology which tends to produce accounts of experience which discount specific and detailed depictions of spatial experience, whilst privileging language and chronology, would be too narrowly focused for the purposes of answering this research question.

2.5   ALTERNATIVE METHODOLOGIES

For broadly similar reasons, a number of alternative methodologies were similarly dismissed. For example, 'constructivist grounded theory' (Charmaz, 2006), a light-touch social constructionist approach also popular with feminist psychologists (Gergen, 2017), concerns itself with basic social processes; and whilst there are certainly some parallels, the current research requires an exploration of the *spatial* context in which these social processes are occurring and not just an exploration of the activities themselves. Clarke (2012), therefore, acknowledging the limitations of grounded theory, proposes an extension which could potentially broaden its focus to incorporate the more spatial and material aspects of research data. Thus, 'situational analysis', instead of focussing only on the common social processes of human action, abstracts all elements of the situation, including the non-human (e.g. space, materiality, discourse, embodiment etc.), and maps them into a more complex set of pictorial analyses. She argues for the inherent feminism for such an approach, which enables the heterogeneity of positions in the data to be foregrounded, especially those voices on the boundary and not just those in the centre and in power, whereas other analyses, even those primarily concerned with power (e.g. Foucauldian Discourse Analysis), serve only to analytically recapitulate the power relations of hegemony.

On the other hand, the basic premise of both grounded theory and situational analysis is that it is the data which drives theory and not the other way around; allowing the findings to emerge only inductively from the data is believed to prevent any 'premature' notions influencing results. Therefore, whilst situational analysis has come some way to resolving the limitations of grounded theory's preoccupation with social processes as opposed to spatial context, and appears to satisfy feminist psychologists' quest for the "disrupt[ion of] the representational

hegemony that usually privileges some [knowledge] and erases others" (Clarke, 2012, p. 396), it is difficult to reconcile with the current theoretical position; with its overriding emphasis on space and relations and the need for theory to oftentimes drive interpretation.

2.6   RATIONALE FOR THEMATIC ANALYSIS

To summarise, therefore, a methodology was sought which could explore the perspectives of different participants, emphasising similarities and differences, and generating unexpected insights (King, 2004), whilst also directing the accounts of participants to less discursive aspects of their experience. Importantly, this methodology needed to be capable of providing a sufficiently broad framework to enable an exploration of the role of space as part of a group of interlocking processes, including language, in the construction of experience, whilst simultaneously allowing for constructionist, latent and deductive analyses to be drawn from the data. As such, Braun and Clarke (2006) recommend thematic analysis as a methodology which can be extrapolated to a number of different epistemological and ontological positions (Willig, 2013); its broad applicability lending itself well to the data collected for this research, enabling the exploration of those spatial dimensions of participants' accounts that typically elude other approaches. Thus, Liddicoat (2015) used thematic analysis of semi-structured interviews and design initiatives to explore preferable counselling spaces for clients who self-harm, whilst McGrath and Reavey (2013) utilised a social constructionist thematic analysis, with participatory mapping (Herlihy & Knapp, 2003) to look at the experience of service users in community care spaces, and McGrath, Reavey, Weaver and Brown (2018) employed thematic analysis with photograph elicitation methods for exploring the impact of space on those newly homeless. Meanwhile, Reavey (2011; McGrath & Reavey, 2013; Tucker et al., 2019; Reavey et al., 2019) has used thematic analyses with photographs, maps, drawings and diary studies to explore the lived experience of a diverse range of psychological phenomena, including psychosis, body dysmorphia, marriage and close relationships, and the various different spaces of psychiatric care.

Moreover, since there is no definitive ontology required by thematic analysis, the research question determining "what the themes identified in a thematic analysis are supposed to represent" (Willig, 2013, p.66), any assumptions made about the world depend entirely upon the question asked. As laid out above, the current research question presumes that space exists independently of what we can ask or 'know' about it and, similarly, assumes that it has the potential to play an active role in social and relational processes. However, in terms of epistemology, the 'knowledge' produced is always partial, perspectival and subjective, and axiologically, the researcher is thus positioned as inevitably part of the research process (Ponterotto, 2005; Willig, in press), meaning that they help to construct both the data and the

outcomes, as well as driving the choice of research topic and the direction itself (McGrath & Reavey, 2013; Reavey & McGrath, 2018).

2.7   REFLEXIVITY

Reflexivity involves the critical reflection of the way in which the researcher is implicated in the construction of knowledge both from and throughout the research process. Willig (2013) reminds us that the researcher is always implicated in shaping the research, informing its interpretation and constructing meaning throughout the process. As such, reflexivity "requires an awareness of the researcher's contribution to the construction of meanings throughout the research process, and an acknowledgement of the impossibility of remaining 'outside of' one's subject matter while conducting research" (p.10). Moreover, the process of reflexivity also provides researchers with a tool to explore how subjective and intersubjective factors influence both data collection and analysis. In qualitative research, it is assumed that knower and known cannot be separated, and asserted that 'findings' are produced in specific historical and cultural circumstances, so reflect both the context as well as the beliefs and values of the researcher.

Whereas qualitative researchers legitimately differ as to the extent that reflexivity is emphasised within their research, it is a critical component of the current project and so I attend to it throughout this report and focus more specifically on it, in accordance with the structure proposed by Finlay (2002), at the pre-research, data collection and data analysis stages below. As Cromby and Nightingale (1999) urge us to do, I explore, throughout this report, "the ways in which [my] involvement with [the] study influences, acts upon and informs such research" (p.228). Thus, scrutinising tirelessly the authenticity and origins of each interpretation from the data, I engage in an ongoing process involving the "thoughtful, self-aware analysis of the intersubjective dynamics between researcher and researched", for example in relation to bias, power and 'knowledge' assumption and production (Finlay & Gough, 2003, p.ix; see below).

Suggesting that there are two main functions of reflexivity, Finlay (2002) distinguishes between reflecting about the impact of the position, perspective and presence of the researcher and evaluating research decisions to ensure the integrity and trustworthiness of the process. In line with Willig's (2013) distinction between personal (or descriptive) and epistemological (or analytic) types of reflexivity, Finlay (2002) argues that by means of a methodological log of questions, answers and research decisions, methodological reflexivity helps others to evaluate the research process, its methods and outcomes, to ensure rigour and thereby improve quality, validity and accountability. Personal reflexivity, on the other hand,

"involves reflecting upon the ways in which our own values, experiences, interests, beliefs, political commitments, wider aims in life and social identities have shaped the research. It also involves thinking about how researchers shape the ongoing research and how the research may have affected and possibly changed us, as people and as researchers" (Willig, 2013, p.10). Finlay (2002) adds that this exploration empowers others through the opening up of a more radical consciousness. However, there may also be a danger of personal reflexivity becoming 'self fascinated observation' (May, 1999) and the infinite regress of excessive self-analysis at the expense of the very topic itself.

2.8   PERSONAL REFLEXIVITY (pre-research stage[1])

Thus, ensuring that the focus does not shift from subject to researcher, I would like to contribute in brief my initial reflections on how my experience as a criminal barrister, of prosecuting and defending domestic abuse crimes, might have influenced both the choice and direction of this research. Over the decade that I was involved in these cases, it was extremely distressing to see how difficult it was to persuade victims to come to court and give evidence and how easy it was to weaken their testimony through cross-examination. The nature of the spaces of the witness area and courtroom were, to my mind, vital to the quality of their evidence and, in speaking to countless victims, police officers and domestic violence unit team members, it became very clear that arrest and prosecution were a matter of last resort, once the abuse had grown so bad that it could no longer be overlooked. Once I converted to counselling psychology, I started to wonder whether it would not be feasible to somehow restructure therapeutic assistance so that help could be obtained more safely and earlier on in the abuse trajectory, thus possibly preventing the hopeless situation I so often witnessed in court.

At a similar time, the work I had done in my Psychology Master's degree around space and depression made me realise that by exploring where victims of everyday terror feel safe and the ways in which certain places serve, albeit temporarily, to alleviate distress, it might be possible to build on this and conceive of counselling interventions which could safely take place in more convenient, less clinical or disempowering locations, and at earlier points in the abuse timeline. This line of enquiry is not unprecedented but is fully informed by, and forms part of, a broader movement to increase engagement with therapy through an understanding, and reconfiguration, of the spaces in which counselling services take place. As described in the preceding chapter, Bank and Nissen (2017) and others (e.g. Goodings & Tucker, 2018; Liddicoat & Forster, 2018; McGrath et al., 2018; Freeman & Akhurst, 2018; Liddicoat, 2015;

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[1] Finlay (2002)

2016; Pearson & Wilson, 2012; Ulrich et al., 2008) have shown how certain spaces are more or less likely to affect therapeutic engagement, and Bank and Niseen (2018), in particular, warn of the dangers of traditional counselling spaces, which are seen by some users as either disciplinary (akin to "schoolmasters' offices… and being observed, assessed, corrected and marginalised"; p. 14) or pastoral (akin to "catholic practices of confession… mediated by an authority… the submission to certain moral or ethical standards" (p. 7)).

In both cases, I am aware that my interest in this topic is highly subjective and that I am directly implicated, in line with my theoretical position, in helping to construct the 'knowledges' that emerge from the research process. In addition, I am aware that this is an active ongoing process and, looking back at my research journal (see Appendix A), I can read how aware of my personal involvement I was at every stage (Finlay, 2002) and what steps I took to improve the quality and validity of the analytic endeavour, to ensure reflexive rigour and to recognise the limitations of the 'knowledge' produced. Meanwhile, I take reassurance in Willig's (2013) endorsement that far from amounting only to bias, this involvement is what actually facilitates insight and understanding in the first place (although I am conscious that my Western position and privilege somewhat compounds matters).

2.9   EPISTEMOLOGICAL REFLEXIVITY

Analytical reflexivity, on the other hand, describes the intellectual and methodological processes, as opposed to just the end product. Willig (2013) advises that epistemological reflexivity "requires us to engage with questions such as: How has the research question defined and limited what can be 'found'? How have the design of the study and the method of analysis 'constructed' the data and the findings? How could the research question have been investigated differently? To what extent would this have given rise to a different understanding of the phenomenon under investigation?" (p.10). In so doing, Willig (2013) recommends that we ask ourselves what assumptions we have made about the world and about knowledge in conducting this research project and what the implications of this might be? What findings might other methodologies have 'constructed'? In particular, we need to be clear about the responsibility we take for our interpretations of data or accounts of events, rather than appear to be claiming that we are somehow 'presenting' the views of participants. As Mason (2002) recommended, the researcher should constantly take stock of their actions and their role in the research process, and subject these to the same critical scrutiny as the rest of their 'data'.

Therefore, as outlined above, I brought with me a number of assumptions to this research. In terms of ontology, it is my philosophical position that there are some things out there to 'know' or, less contentiously, to talk about. Indeed, the role attributed by this research to the social

and spatial structures, the processes and relational context of which we are inherently a part, means that I believe there must be somethings which exist independently of what can be 'known' about them. In other words, subjective experience may well be located within and constructed by the spaces and contexts of society but this does not equate to it being ontologically relativist. Indeed, I agree with Willig (2016) that it does not make sense for research to be conducted about something which does not exist at all, and which means nothing to anyone else reading it. However, I also make assumptions about knowledge, which have significant implications for this research project. As has been argued previously, it is my position that people interpret the world differently and that there can be no direct, one-to-one correspondence between what exists and what can be said about it. Although, as Willig (2016) makes clear, this does not mean that I believe an independent reality cannot exist; only that it is not possible to produce an objective or impartial account of it: All 'knowledge' is always situated.

Moreover, the research question also makes certain assumptions and arguably limits the scope of the analysis to those issues driven by the theory laid out in chapter 1 (see below). Similarly, the chosen methodologies also impact and shape the kind of data that might be collected; a focus on the role of space in domestic abuse and the use of visual research methods undoubtedly – and intentionally – invites participant accounts that are more attuned than would be typical to setting and locality. It was never the intention, however, to extrapolate from this and to attempt to ground theory. Thus, the data is taken to represent only one (or as many as there are participants) subjective viewpoint on the spatial construction of everyday terror, and it is not suggested that this amounts in any way to the establishment of any objective 'truth' or 'truths'. It is also acknowledged that other methodologies, in so far as any could reasonably enable the focus to remain on matters of space over language, would invariably draw different conclusions to those generated here. In either case, this means that someone else interviewing the exact same participants would have made some very different interpretations.

For all these reasons, I kept a research journal to diarise my thoughts, feelings and actions, as well as the additional research and advice these engendered, from others, from supervision, and from my personal therapist, in order to log every decision and reason for each decision to ensure accountability and integrity at all stages. Moreover, it should be noted that reflexivity is inherently bound up with ethics in practice (Guillemin & Gillam, 2004): In constant reflection and scrutiny about every aspect of the process (data, researcher, participants, public, power etc.), as well as in attending to the role played by the socio-historical-cultural context and the researcher in the co-construction of 'knowledge', I would

argue that reflexivity and ethics are inseparable and that together both can expose and rebalance power relations between researcher and participant and indeed, through dissemination, between society and the individual (Etherington, 2007).

2.10   ETHICS AND PROCEDURE

Ethical research involves a continual attention to the processes, values and consequences of ethical engagement, from the planning stage right through to the dissemination stage (Thompson & Russo, 2012). In accordance with the British Psychological Society ethical guidelines, this research complied with the four ethical principles of qualitative research; respect, competence, responsibility and integrity. Prioritising the need for the relationship at the core of qualitative research to be marked by trust (Haverkamp, 2005), the following is an account of how any practical, procedural and ethical concerns raised by the study were confronted, with the structure borrowed from Thompson and Russo's (2012) table of recommendations for ensuring ethical research.

2.10.1 RESEARCH PLANNING PHASE – and throughout the project

During the planning phase, appropriate supervision was sought from a research supervisor who has previously engaged in multiple research projects involving similarly vulnerable populations; someone, in addition, who is very experienced in utilising visual methodologies (e.g. Reavey, 2011). This meant that at all stages, I was able to ensure discussion of ethical dilemmas and challenges, particularly those presented by my difficulty with dual roles of researcher and therapist. My supervisor suggested that I use a reflective journal to record every ethical concern, so that reflection could be systematic as well as properly documented. She also helped me to think through the potential problems of participants being followed or surveilled and how to ensure that any risk in that regard was eliminated.

As part of the planning phase, ethical issues arose at the time that the inclusion criteria were first under consideration. Thus, recruitment expressly invited only adult female participants who were no longer in an abusive relationship, with that relationship having ended a minimum of 12 months before first contact. In addition, participants must have had no contact deemed threatening with the abuser, or anyone on his behalf, within the same timeframe. To assist with this, an assessment tool was used to screen for current risk (The Women's Experience with Battering Scale; Smith, Tessaro & Earp, 1995; Appendix D), to ensure there was no danger of participants being exposed to harm as a result of taking part. However, this cut-off felt a little arbitrary and I was concerned that many women, who's pain was arguably more current, were therefore not being represented by the study. Whilst there were no other

exclusion criteria, except for this being a study of the experience of women and not men, it was perhaps concerning that the sample did not include any ethnic minorities or transgender participants (see concluding remarks). This may partly be attributable to the location of the charity concerned, a large affluent city in the South West of the United Kingdom, where minorities are perhaps less represented in general, or it may have more systemic origins, of which space unfortunately does not permit a detailed exploration (e.g. see hooks (1981), Kanyeredzi (2019) and other intersectionalists; also concluding remarks).

2.10.2 RECRUITMENT PHASE

Participants were recruited by means of advertising and chain sampling. Following a formal written approach to the service managers of a number of different domestic abuse organisations, including two charities with which the researcher and her supervisor already hold relationships, a series of telephone conversations took place to introduce the research and to request permission for recruitment posters to be displayed and/or for the topic to be referenced in the charity weekly meetings (see Appendix B). Advertisements did not contain the researcher's contact details and anyone interested in participation was invited to arrange a first meeting through the charity itself, to take place in suitable rooms on their premises. This way, it could be ensured that interested parties applying to participate would not be at risk of detection from anyone monitoring their communication channels. In actual fact, it was decided that a presentation to all those interested in taking part would be more appropriate than a series of individual meetings, in order to satisfy potential participants of the relevance of the research and to ensure that the research was conducted in ways which met their own personal needs. Thus, no contact details were ever exchanged between the researcher and any participant, potential or actual, and all contact took place through the designated person at the charity concerned.

At this initial presentation (see Appendix C), I brought with me a copy of my previous dissertation in a related area to show potential participants how the information they would bring to the interview would appear in a final write-up, to ensure they were satisfied as to confidentiality and privacy. We agreed that the name of the charity could appear and the town of its location, since the charity was a matter of public record and could be found on internet searches. I also took the time, in person, to explain the difference between the work I do as a trainee therapist and as a trainee researcher, so that there could be no confusion as to dual roles, nor expectation as to therapeutic intervention. At the conclusion of this initial meeting, an electronic information sheet (see Appendix F) was sent to each participant who had expressed interest in taking part, via the designated person at the charity. This indicated that

follow-up would take place seven days later to ensure the content was properly digested and to enable participants to make an informed decision.

2.10.3 DATA COLLECTION PHASE – and securing informed consent

A range of research tools were utilised within the research, reflecting the pluralist stance of counselling psychology, whilst also enabling a kind of 'theoretical triangulation' (Frost & Nolas, 2011) through convergence of themes and, thereby, facilitating credibility. Thus, adopting both visual and verbal methods, Reavey (2011) argues that *seeing* is one of the principal senses through which we interrelate with the world and suggests that the visual is a vital modality through which we engage with, comprehend and represent the world. As such, visual methods are increasingly employed by social scientists and psychological researchers and, importantly, this allows participants to reflect on atypical aspects of their experience prior to interview and to produce a visual record around which to structure the discussion. Centring interviews around participant-generated material is likely to engender more participant-led results than traditional techniques (Reavey, 2011), helping to address inherent power differentials in research, and giving participants an opportunity to reflect on the space, setting and context of their experience – details which might otherwise be lost – in terms not wholly linguistic or temporally ordered (Reavey & Johnson, 2017). This arguably widens the focus of participants' descriptions – since seeing is always contingent upon one's position in social and cultural context (Hall, 1997) – and ensures that language and chronology do not entirely subsume space and context.

I would argue that this is particularly important in cases of everyday terror where "for victims, any retelling of violence [or abuse] is necessarily riddled with inconsistency and confusion. The inability to convey agony and humiliation with any sense of clarity is part of the trauma of a violent [or abusive] event" (Springer, 2011, p.92). Indeed, as Scarry (1985) argues, "pain does not simply resist language but actively destroys it, bringing about an immediate reversion to a state anterior to language, to the sounds and cries a human being makes before language is learned" (p.4). As such, it is not only extremely difficult to describe in the words we have available what the experience of violence and abuse is like ("without being overwhelmed by its unnerving horror and incapacitated by the fear it instils"; Springer, 2011, p.92) but any understanding of it is also bewilderingly illusive. This may be especially problematic when the abuse is of a less direct than structural or institutional nature. As Benjamin (1986) highlighted, human beings are perpetually inclined to obscure abuse in its institutionalised forms, and owing to this opacity, we tend to regard abuse exclusively as something we can observe only through its direct expression.

On the other hand, research suggests that visual methods can help capture non-discursive aspects of experience that are less accessible, or less tangible (e.g. space, Knowles, 2000a; 2000b; Radley & Taylor, 2003; and embodiment, Gillies et al., 2004; Silver & Reavey, 2010), assisting participants with the expression of complex emotions which might otherwise remain unarticulated (Brown, Reavey, Cromby, Harper & Johnson, 2008; 2011). Reavey (2011) argues that the use of visual interviews and memory work, both of which encourage participants to produce rich accounts of specific experiences, effectively 'punctures' normative descriptions of experience, enabling the consideration of its less easily accessible facets. Indeed, visual materials are typically thought to provide more effective prompts for participants to discuss the settings and context of their experiences, since they contain clear spatial cues to help scaffold discourse (Reavey et al., 2019). For these reasons, participants in the current study were invited to reflect on the spatial aspect of their experience by means of photographs and website printouts of spaces associated with wellbeing[2], which they brought with them to interview, and which acted to ground and prompt the conversations. These visual materials were therefore given meaning by the participant in the context of the interview, rather than treated as data to be analysed independently (Tucker et al., 2019).

'Spatial interviews' were thus specifically developed to explore the spatial aspects of participants' experiences. All visual methods produced were then discussed with participants in the context of their interviews. This meant that the research was both participant-led, whilst simultaneously focused on specific issues of space. In order to ensure that the methods I was proposing to employ were appropriate for the collection of the kinds of data necessary to answer the research question, and in order to practice the interview schedule, I conducted two pilot interviews with fellow students on the doctoral programme. These were not people who met the research criteria, in that they had never been subjected to everyday terror. However, it was still a very useful exercise because I realized, on reflection, that asking participants to draw maps or pictures of spaces they associated with wellbeing was found to be anxiety-producing, and not soothing, as I had intended. In contrast to the many studies (e.g. McGrath & Reavey, 2013; 2018) which successfully rely on visual methodologies, involving "participatory mapping" (Herlihy & Knapp, 2003), in qualitative research, the pilot participants remarked that it was difficult to draw plans of spaces of wellbeing, since these were typically vague and non-specific, for example, a beach, a random supermarket, church or car. Unlike those plans of the built environment in mental health care, the requirement that the space be conducive to wellbeing – and not distress – rendered it much more difficult to produce a map

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2 This is why visual data is predominantly only included in the analysis of theme 3 – Spaces of Resistance: Movement, Connection and Agency – the other themes only being concerned with distress and not wellbeing. Thus, although the photographs helped to focus the interviews on space, overall, photographic analysis only assisted in the interpretation of data compiled in the third theme, since participants were expressly asked not to bring material which was related to distress (interpreted as belonging to themes 1 and 2).

or plan, as opposed to a child-like drawing of a sea, mountains, car or rainbow, which meant very little apparently and only served to increase anxiety in regards to artistic skills deficiencies! As such, this component was withdrawn from the substantive interviews.

The interview schedule itself (see Appendix E) was thoroughly guided by my research question and, of course, was devised in accordance with my ontological and epistemological stance, to address the gaps found in the theoretical literature. As such, questions needed to be open and to permit a wide variety of different answers and participant positioning, whilst prioritizing the existence of relations in space. It was important that I should not be perceived as someone trying to elicit report or witness-statement type answers and that I might be understood as inviting many different versions of reality. I felt that the pilot interviews helped me in this regard because, whilst the responses told a wonderfully detailed, emotional story, one of the participants told me that she could not detect my epistemological position from the way I had asked my questions, advising that instead of asking a tentative, open question about one aspect of her experience, I seemed to be searching for confirmation in the reactions she told me of her contemporaries within the story, as if I were trying directly to access her experience in some kind of more objectively knowable sense. Although it was not strictly necessary for the participants in the substantive interviews to appreciate my theoretical stance, I realized that I must be able to observe it myself from replaying the recordings and listening to the questions. This experience helped me reword some of those less tentative questions and ensured I stayed faithful to my epistemology. In a similar vein, I have made sure to adopt terminology consistent with my theoretical positioning when writing up this report, and rely on terms such as 'analysis', instead of 'findings', and 'concluding remarks' in place of 'conclusion'.

On the day of the main interviews, formal written and signed consent was obtained and participants were reminded of their right to refuse to answer any question and their right to withdraw at any time, up until one month after the interview had been concluded. The language in the consent form (see Appendix G) reiterated that it was the participants' power to choose whether to take part and the time given between meetings was to ensure that there could be no duress felt. In the meantime, discussions between the researcher and the staff at the charity elicited that potential participants understood what was meant by informed consent. It was felt to be important that a third party, the person at the charity through whom contact was initially being made, would act as a go-between so that there was no risk of the potential participants' feeling pressurised to take part in the research. Participants were also advised that they would be given adequate time for discussion and questions at the end of the interview and were given information as to the plans for dissemination and their rights in respect of that. In

addition, they were offered access to the transcripts of their interview and the return of hard-copy photographs and printouts.

For the substantive interview, participants were invited to a room at the domestic abuse centre they were engaged with. Since every participant was already an established member and visitor of that centre, it was felt that proposing to meet there posed no greater threat to their safety than they had already faced in attending the site for previous, non-research purposes. In addition, it was agreed with the service managers that appropriate rooms would be made available for the duration of the interviews and that the site would be manned at all times. Flexibility in location and timing was a key aspect of ensuring that participants felt contained in the research process. Finding a place where participants felt comfortable seemed especially important considering the focus of the research question on space. I therefore spent a considerable amount of time boarding and disembarking from trains, as well as staying in a small hotel, in Bath, over the Summer of 2018.

Eleven one-to-one interviews were carried out with women who have suffered and survived male partner 'domestic abuse'. I sat opposite each woman in a small warmly lit room with two equal height, comfortable chairs and no table between us. Posters of surviving everyday terror adorned the walls. Every interview was recorded by means of a Shusons USB digital audio voice recorder. Due to the sensitive nature of the research, there was a potential risk that participants might become distressed either during or after the interview. I made sure there were tissues and a glass of water to hand. As mentioned above, to help minimise this risk, two pilot interviews were conducted at City University with my colleagues from the doctoral programme, to ensure that the interview schedule served to guide, rather than force, discussion and disclosure. In addition, participants were reminded that they could withdraw at any time from the interview and could refuse to answer questions that they perceived as intrusive or at will. Interviews lasted approximately 90 minutes and centred on the schedule of interview provided and on the photographs and printouts the participants themselves produced. Most participants commented that the participatory design of the interview meant that they felt they had more control over the direction of the conversation (Pain & Francis, 2003; Reavey, 2011).

In the event of distress being caused in the interview, a 'distress protocol' (see Appendix R) was in place which distinguished between mild, moderate and severe distress and appropriate measures to pause or terminate the interview, or involve other services where necessary. When some of the participants grew upset and started to cry, they were immediately asked if they wanted to stop the interview. This offer was not taken up by any participant but two happily changed subjects at my invitation. Finally, all participants were given ample time at

the end of the interview – after the recorder was switched off – for discussion and questions, and also a debrief form (see Appendix H), stipulating the rationale for the study and providing the numbers of relevant helplines in case of distress inadvertently caused.

Every participant said that they had enjoyed the interview and had found it somewhat therapeutic. In addition, they all remarked that they hadn't ever appreciated how intricately linked to space their experiences of everyday terror had been. There were certainly times when one or two participants grew quite upset during the interview but by maintaining warmth and eye contact, legitimizing their distress and asking if they would like to change the subject, the challenges were all successfully overcome (Roulston, 2010). Those participants who had not brought with them any photographs, believing that there had been no safe space during the abuse, now revealed that midway through the interview they realised that there were indeed some occasional places of respite. All thanked me and asked whether the research could help them with their ongoing battles with the institutions vested with the power to help. Many seemed excited at the idea that counselling might one day be reconfigured to take account of the permitted engagements of victims of everyday terror within daily life. In one interview, the discussion which followed provided some detail which seemed extremely relevant. Lucy[3] had started to talk about her husband resuming contact via Facebook some years later and so we agreed to turn on the recorder once again so that she could summarise this and have it included. She subsequently produced a digital printout to represent this space. Following the debrief, the resources in Appendix H were provided to all participants, ensuring that if there were any unfortunate consequences of the interview procedure, they would be able to access psychological support.

In terms of my own safety, considering that I had to travel to a different city to conduct the interviews (see Appendix Q), I ensured that my supervisor was at all times informed of my whereabouts and my anticipated finishing time. She was contacted as soon as the interview was concluded and after I had left the participant. In addition, it was agreed with the domestic abuse charities and service providers that appropriate rooms would be provided for meeting with participants and that staff would be on hand throughout. In any event, my personal welfare was protected by an undertaking to make use of appropriate psychological counselling and supervision throughout.

2.10.4 ANALYSIS PHASE[4]

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3 All names, place names and other identifying details have been changed to ensure anonymity

4 The analysis will be described in detail in a subsequent section

After every interview, the audio file was transferred immediately (before leaving VOICES) onto my password-protected computer. I found iTunes easiest to play, rewind and fast-forward the recordings so used my computer, in my Banham-alarmed home to transcribe the data, and deleted the original files. The photographs and printouts presented at interview were also scanned on my home scanner and uploaded onto my computer. Hard copy was similarly secured and all non-published data will be destroyed within five years of the conclusion of the research process.

Participants were allocated a random pseudonym to protect their identity and immediately thereafter, their identifying information was discarded, with no record retained of how the pseudonym relates to the identifiers, so that it would not be possible to identify the individual to whom the data relates. In addition, identifying features of those sites and services involved in recruitment were also disguised so that, although the name of the service may appear, the address or location of any meeting place is kept concealed. In the event that visual data presented a challenge for securing anonymity, participants were advised that only photos of a generic, non-specifiable nature would be included within the report and that any names of places or people would be edited out of the transcript and write-up. In addition, participants were expressly asked only to produce photographs which excluded the depiction of other people.

As a matter of course, throughout the analysis, all interpretations were grounded in the accounts given by participants, whilst also being theoretically driven. This raised some ethical concerns as I wondered how participants would feel about certain aspects of their narrative being left to one side, if not helping to answer the research question. This constant consideration of the feelings of participants as they would receive the thesis once completed helped me to remain faithful to their accounts, even though I was prioritising space and not so much their phenomenological experience in all its many guises. As such, I also decided to include a short biography on each participant (see Appendix S), to ensure that they did not feel their stories had been in any way glazed over or filtered out for details which seemed to me to be of more interest. In this way, I kept to the forefront of my mind at all times how participants might feel about the way they had previously been treated by those in power or authority – and by members of the public more generally – and was resolved not to be perceived as someone colluding in their disempowerment once again.

For similar reasons, I decided to refrain from including theory in the analysis. Whilst the analysis was partly driven by theory, I was extremely reluctant to intertwine theoretical literature with the deeply personal and oftentimes anguished accounts of everyday terror. Whenever I made an attempt to combine them in the write-up, I found that on re-reading those

paragraphs, the rawness of the narrative was significantly impaired by the interspersion of theory and referencing. I have been determined throughout to give power to these women and did not want to undermine or detract from their accounts by potentially overshadowing their stories by intricate, complex theory. For this reason, I have separated out the theory and included it at the end of each theme, so that it can be referred to before the next theme begins and to ensure completeness, but specifically not within the body of the analysis.

2.10.5 DISSEMINATION PHASE[5]

It was agreed with participants at the outset, via the consent form, that they would be entitled to receive a summary of analysis at the end of the procedure, provided that the thesis was not unexpectedly interrupted. To this end, we agreed that the point of contact at the charity would forward this to anyone interested, as it was safer than my collecting all of their individual email addresses or being in direct contact with anybody participating. Similarly, it was agreed with the domestic abuse services involved in recruitment that the researcher would present in person at a mutually agreeable time. Research suggests that individuals are more likely to wish to participate, notwithstanding the potential pain involved in disclosing distress (Harper & Thompson, 2012), if they believe that their contributions will help to further discussions around the topic.

2.11 DATA COLLECTION REFLEXIVITY[6]

At this stage, Willig (2013) recommends that we ask ourselves a number of questions. Thus, hoping to find out what role space plays in the experience and mitigation of everyday terror, have I used the best methods to obtain the kind of data to facilitate an answer to that research question? Are there alternative ways of producing this data, and what are the main advantages and challenges associated with this method of data collection? It is important to reflect on the fact that every chosen method will somehow influence which phenomena will be seen, as well as the way that people themselves construct the data we collect (Charmaz, 2006). Moreover, what we as researchers bring also influences what we can see, so that we are sensitised to certain concepts, above others (Blumer, 1969). As such, it is essential that we scrutinise how we collect the data and which data we obtain helps to place the analysis in context. In order to ensure the quality and credibility of our study, we need to start with rich, substantial and

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5 Whilst dissemination chronologically follows analysis, this paragraph is positioned at this point, instead of after the analytic process, because it forms part of Thompson and Russo's (2012) ethics table of recommendations and so, for the sake of completeness, is contained after his other headings within the ethics and procedures section

6 Finlay (2002)

relevant data. Although little research exists specifically in this area, I was guided by other thematic analyses I had read.

Therefore, during the first interview, I noticed that I felt quite unsettled as I observed a tension between my role as researcher and my natural inclination to perform a more therapeutic function in a 1-1 encounter, and was later concerned about the possibility of inconsistencies both within and across different interviews. Whilst it is very important to be clear about the role the researcher plays and to ensure that participants do not hope for a therapeutic encounter, Coyle and Wright (1996) suggest that interviewers should use counselling skills where appropriate within the interview context. In response to the feedback I received in the debrief after this interview, therefore, I approached the remainder with more confidence, recognizing that warmth, acceptance and empathy were just as necessary to establishing a good rapport as effective, open questioning. As such, I proceeded with the remainder of the interviews, in a way which felt more natural and reflective of the skills I had developed on the doctoral programme. When interviewees stumbled across high emotion, for example, I stayed with their feeling, sometimes paraphrasing, summarizing and pausing to encourage deeper unprompted reflection and elaboration.

Another area of concern emerged as I listened to the recording of that first interview and, as I wrote up my notes that night, ahead of the second participant's interview the following day, I immediately observed that I appeared too fixated on following the interview schedule, rushing on to the next question, and that this sometimes stopped me from staying with something important that the participant had brought. It was of course obvious that, in the same way that I manage to lay the foundations for the free flow of clients' ideas in therapy, I needed to establish an excellent, trusting rapport with participants, in order to collate meaningful, rich data. Only by demonstrating congruence and respect for them, could I be sure that the data gathered would be fertile and detailed. Thus, for the second interview, I learned the interview schedule off by heart so that I could make sure I was more present for the participants and in tune with them, and soon found that participants were providing very rich descriptions, articulating their own views and perspectives, whilst staying focused on the more spatial aspects of their experience.

The advantage of semi-structured interviews as a data collection method is that they tap into natural inconsistencies, ambiguity and complexity in people's accounts (Marks & Yardley, 2011), which is consistent with my theoretical position that people, ideas, beliefs and attitudes are inconsistent, in flux and not fixed. In particular, interviews help to follow emotional over rational pathways of thought, with many participants in this research project apologising for 'going off-piste' or getting lost in their recollections, all of which helps to provide rich data. On

the other hand, it must be remembered that interviews are extremely contextual, situated and negotiated, meaning that the interviewer has significantly more control over the construction of the data than in other methods (Charmaz, 2006). For example, it could be argued that the focus on space meant that a lot of the data was governed and predetermined by questions which specifically required spatial reflections. As Gergen (2017) warns of the constructing capacities of researchers: "There could be other ways of asking the questions, defining the terms, interpreting the findings, and presenting it to the reader, so one might ask why a particular approach has been taken" (p.10). Moreover, the way that an interview positions both researcher and participant could be argued to reinforce the power differential between them; the researcher has all the benefit of knowing what is going to happen whereas the participant is often uncertain and feeling vulnerable and exposed. Thus, it could be suggested that the interview structure only serves to reinforce feelings of victimhood and disempowerment, which is expressly what the current research sets out to overturn.

A viable alternative proposed by Potter and Hepburn (2005) might see data collected in more 'naturalistic settings' such as by means of personal diaries or, as Charmaz (2006) recommends, the production of written data by participants in response to a researcher's request. Whilst this may allay concerns about the way that the interview questions specifically tap into participants' more spatial recollections of everyday terror, it could not, however, help to resolve the concerns I have been grappling with throughout this process about the roles played both by the way that I had come to be introduced to VOICES and by the presentation I was asked to give as a way of introducing my research. For example, many of the participants in their interviews seemed to volunteer accounts which explicitly refer to space, even without my asking questions directly concerned with it. Whilst this provided, of course, wonderfully rich data to help me answer the research question, requiring significantly less deductive coding and interpretation, it did leave me wondering how much of the data was inspired either by myself or by the particular work and focus of the charity concerned.

Reflecting on the recruitment and interview process now, I can see how the way that I was first introduced to VOICES and to the research participants might possibly have influenced the data and subsequent analysis. I first came to hear about VOICES through another much larger, nationwide, designated domestic abuse charity, SafeLives, and it was a matter of pure coincidence that the person I was in contact with at SafeLives knew that VOICES had an interest in the impact of space on the experiences of women subjected to everyday terror. Indeed, my contact there had already been engaged in some arts-based methodological research on 'the creation of safe spaces and the gap between the family court system and professional services and survivors'. Therefore, by the time I came to present, at her invitation,

to potential participants, it is hard to say what they might already have been told and come to understand about the connection between space and experience. In addition, during that initial presentation, I wonder whether I could be understood to have focused too heavily on the issue of space and, therefore, have unduly influenced the way participants were thinking about their histories of abuse, and thereby artificially shaping the data. I was extremely careful, however, in conducting this presentation not to say anything which could direct the flow of data collected in any particular direction, except to say that I was interested in spaces of wellbeing and the way in which this might impact future therapy. This notwithstanding, after the opening paragraph, I abandoned the presentation and talked more generally about everyday terror and let the audience tell me what they wanted me to know, as I realized that the purpose of the meeting was more about ensuring their comfort than enabling mine. In any event, and for all these reasons, I made sure to write personal reflexivity notes (see Appendix A) before and after every interview, as well as during every stage of the analysis, reflecting my impressions and later incorporating them into the write-up (Smith, Flowers & Larkin, 2009). As such, I believe that the integrity and trustworthiness of the analysis did not suffer as a result and am confident, on reflection, that my choice of data collection methods and analytic strategy allowed me to answer my research question appropriately.

2.12 ANALYTIC PROCESS

Braun and Clarke (2006) identify several main components that differentiate thematic analyses from one another and separate them into two distinct clusters. On the one hand, those studies that aim for broad descriptions of an entire data set tend to reflect realist epistemologies and are usually marked by inductive and semantic analytic approaches; the data is seen to represent a relatively stable reality and hence enables straightforward descriptive analyses without significant reliance on initial theory. On the other hand, constructionist analyses tend to emphasise one particular aspect of the data, consistent with the researcher's overriding theoretical framework, exploring latent or underlying meanings, and less concerned with individual psychologies than seeking "to theorize the sociocultural contexts, and structural conditions, that enable the individual accounts" to be provided (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p.85).

The analysis for the current study falls broadly within the latter constellation of thematic approaches, prioritising as it does the role of space in the lives of domestically abused women, although excepting its departure from strict social constructionism on the primacy afforded language. Thus, instead of attempting a catch-all description of the dataset, coding from the outset concentrated on participant's understandings and involvement with space. Although based on careful reading and immersion in the data, the specific issue of space was at all

times the focus of its arrangement and interpretation. I call this an 'analytical directive'. Since theory is especially fundamental to the development of this project, explicitly informing all aspects of its process, the analysis was on the whole deductive (Willig, 2013), in that the data was initially organised into categories and coded to attune theoretical interpretation to spatial context (Tucker, 2010).

This theoretically driven approach therefore also lends itself to a more latent than semantic style of interpretation (Braun & Clark, 2006), with meaning informed by the theoretical or broader contextual connotations of the data and not governed by strictly descriptive coding. It is argued, however, that this does not amount to theoretical imperialism, with inductive meanings disregarded in favour of unrelenting adherence to pre-determined theory. Rather, the data has been approached on the basis of certain ontological and epistemological assumptions and these directives have helped to drive interpretation and analysis. On the other hand, the approach might also be described as 'inductive', in the bracketing off of preconceptions, the cultivation of an open mind and the themes being also grounded in, and derived directly from, participants' accounts. Indeed, Henton (2016) suggests that good thematic analyses tend to bridge inductive and deductive, descriptive and interpretative content, with such a 'hybrid' approach profiting from both data-driven and theory-driven coding (Willig, 2013). Thematic analysis encourages a constant back and forth, between the literature and the data, so that as themes are constructed they become integrated into theory whilst new ideas are subsequently incorporated as data.

Finally, a constructionist epistemology was adopted, albeit without the priority afforded language (McGrath & Reavey, 2013), to reflect the importance of the social context and the role of the researcher in co-creating meaning. In practice, this translated to a change in emphasis in the research from how language is used performatively (Billig, 1987; Billig et al, 1988; Edwards, 1997; Parker, 1992; Potter & Wetherell, 1987) to a focus on the wider context of the experiences depicted by the data; with equal attention required to be paid to both the way that experience is socially constructed and to the participation of the spatial environment in participants accounts. It was therefore decided that certain analytical directives would be used to guide the reading, interpretation and coding of the data, in such a way as to aid the exploration of those spatial aspects of participants' accounts, at both a micro, more detailed level and at a broader, macro level. The four directives were:

1) What type of space is being conjured?

2) How do the spaces described exacerbate or alleviate distress, engendering feelings of fear or safety?

3) How do the non-physical aspects of space (e.g. their ability to convey a sense of shame, power or agency) mediate the experience of domestic abuse?

4) How are the experiences interdependent with space?

I conducted the analysis in accordance with the guidance issued by Nowell, Norris, White and Moules (2017), to meet the trustworthiness criteria in thematic analysis. Lincoln and Guba (1985) define trustworthiness in research as credible, transferable, dependable and confirmable, with Nowell et al. (2017) recommending that an audit trail, with reflexivity as central, may help to demonstrate adherence to each of these four criteria. Incorporating the well-regarded analytical approach recommended by Braun and Clarke (2006), Nowell et al. (2017) propose that thematic analysis needs to be "conducted in a precise, consistent and exhaustive manner through recording, systematizing, and disclosing the methods of analysis with enough detail to enable the reader to determine whether the process is credible" (p.1). In contrast to Braun and Clarke (2006), however, they propose that thematic analysis is more of an iterative, ongoing process than a distinct, linear method. As such, I will set out each of the six steps as if separate but emphasise that this is part of an enduring process, involving movement backwards and forwards between each phase.

In phase 1, I familiarized myself with the entire data set, including the visual images which helped to prompt participants' verbal accounts. Since participant data was largely interactive, I already came to the analysis with some initial thoughts after conducting the interviews and transcription (see Appendix I), and my immediate documentation of these marked the start of the analytic procedure. Reading through the data set before beginning any coding, I was able to ensure a full immersion in the data and the attainment of a holistic view of the research in its entirety. During this active reading, I took notes to see if anything stood out, bearing in mind the analytical directives set out above. I was particularly looking for ideas of patterns and themes which might be gathering, regardless of my research question, aims or design.

Phase 2 involved the preliminary production of codes from the verbal data, which involved a constant backwards and forwards with the data set (see Appendix J). By reflecting, interacting with and dwelling upon the data, I was able to narrow in on certain of its characteristics. This stage involved the identification of key portions of the text and a process of labelling and indexing. Whereas Braun & Clarke (2006) differentiate between inductive and theoretical coding, the current process involved a combined approach: Codes were inductive because they were grounded in the data whilst also theoretical in that they were being driven by the analytical directives above. This created different types of codes: Those related to the type of space (e.g. head space, spiritual space, courts space); those suggesting an interaction

between spatial practice and experience (e.g. movement, routine, activity); and those depicting an interdependence between space and experience (e.g. distress in institutional space, ability to express feelings). Boyatzis (1998) described a good code as one which captures the qualitative richness of the account; it must be clear, concise, exclusive, easy to define and easy to recognize. Braun and Clarke (2006), meanwhile, suggest that researchers should attend systematically to the entire data set, giving equal consideration to all items, ensuring that codes have clear boundaries, and are not interchangeable or redundant (Attride-Sterling, 2001). As such, I codified space according to the directives laid out above, exploring the various spaces depicted by participants, albeit in relation to the type, the interaction between practice and experience, and interdependence between both, as opposed to in relation to their direct references only. Throughout this process, I aimed for a thoroughly consistent approach to each layer of coding and kept up my reflective journal to document how my thoughts and ideas evolved – and how they related to one another – as I engaged more intensely with the data. At this point, I also used Microsoft Word to tabulate the different excerpts from the text and to log each of the initial codes to which they related in the column to the right-hand side of the page (see Appendix K).

In phase 3, I sorted and collated all of the potentially relevant coded data excerpts into themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006). How I identified something as a theme was driven by the guidance of DeSantis and Ugarriza (2000), who defined a theme as "an abstract entity that brings meaning and identity to a recurrent experience and its variant manifestations. As such, a theme captures and unifies the nature or basis of the experience into a meaningful whole" (p.362). Now linking together substantial parts of the text, these themes depicted significant concepts which were generated both deductively from my theoretical research and inductively from the raw data itself. In so doing, I continued to use tables but as a more complex picture started to emerge, and in line with the spatial theme underpinning this research, I found it helpful to use a series of pencil and paper thematic maps (Braun & Clarke, 2006; see Appendix N). During this process, I had in mind King's (2004) advice that to start with a few predefined codes can help guide the analysis and since I had already begun with the directives, this appeared to facilitate the process. On the other hand, I paid heed to King's (2004) warning that an analysis should not begin with so many predefined codes that it precludes the deliberation of any data which diverges from these assumptions. Thus, his recommendation is that the research question should guide the process only but not be so overwhelmingly determinative that other seemingly less relevant themes might be overlooked. As part of this process, I therefore started a 'miscellaneous' theme to store those codes which didn't seem to fit within any main theme. One example of this was the code 'family space' because participants often alluded to their wider families being part of the abuse. Whilst this is certainly, from a topological point of

view, potentially very relevant, it did not appear to fit within any of the initial themes (although the code was reintegrated at a later point to help elucidate the second order theme, 'spaces of subjugation', and the implication that the intrusion into the home by the wider family may carry for the purported distinction between public and private; Ahmed et al., 2008). During this process, I also used diagrams as a way of making sense of the connection between themes and of visualizing the way that they fit together, so that they could be better and more creatively interrogated (see Appendix M).

Once a set of themes had been developed, I started to refine them during phase 4. This involved a thorough review of every coded extract relating to each theme to ensure they formed a coherent pattern and to verify that the themes correctly reflected the meanings of the data set in its entirety. At this stage, I found that I needed to insert another code to represent the issue of connectivity which appeared to be relevant but was not yet covered by an existing code. Similarly, I found that 'digital space' was a little light and could not stand on its own. I also broke down two themes into different, separate themes because I felt that they weren't fitting with the rest of the data, with the theoretical literature and with the thrust of the emerging argument. Thus, whilst 'his use of space' and 'her use of space' seemed very relevant to describe the way that a lot of the codes were grouping together, I was reluctant to allow the abusive male to take anything more from these women than they had already suggested he had, including their chance to have their story analysed and written up from their own points of view. Instead, I collapsed these themes back into the data set and started all over again.

At many points in this process, I had to go back to the literature to theoretically support what I was beginning to observe in the developing themes and then return to the data again to check that the theory accurately reflected and connected with participants' accounts. For example, every participant spoke unanimously about the way that society and the 'helping' professions had let them down, suggesting that the abuse had somehow continued, long after the relationship had ended, as a result of the way they were treated by those in authority – either unwittingly, purposefully or at the perpetrator's behest. Whilst I was somewhat reluctant to persist with this line of enquiry, this aspect of the data simply could not be ignored and, having previously been unanticipated, it meant that I had to return to the literature to explore the theory in relation to what I have now come to describe as structural space (Springer, 2011). This process was ongoing and iterative and meant continuously going back to the tables and diagrammatic representations I had been working on to compare the data with the developed themes so that I could be assured that each theme was demonstrably grounded in the data and, simultaneously, to consider whether the data was in line with the theory.

During phase 5, I examined each theme and produced a written analysis of what aspect of the data it represented and why it was of interest. I was also keen to explore and write down how the different themes came together to tell the overall story of the data, in regards to the research question. Whilst I felt at this point that I could possibly continue to further modify and refine the themes, I was aware of the dangers of doing so (King, 2004) and so decided to consult a peer on the doctoral programme to consider whether there were any sections of text left unaccounted for by the existing themes and to check for coherence and clarity. I have kept notes of every occasion on which I utilized peer debriefing to serve as a reference and provide an audit trail for methodological completeness (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). I also revisited the titles of each theme multiple times, so that I could be sure that the actual terms used by participants were included within the headings. For example, using the word 'subjugation' instead of 'entrapment'. Feeling satisfied at the end of this stage that I could clearly describe the scope and content of each theme and depict how they related to one another, I decided that I could now progress to the final phase.

The last phase began once I was ready to write up the report. Referring back to my reflective journal, I was able to remind myself of why I had made certain interpretations or research decisions over others. Again, this meant reconsidering the theoretical literature to check that it supported the findings and, if it didn't, to ascertain what this could possibly mean. Nowell et al. (2017) recommend that "ideally, as researchers engage in the analytic process, they will progress from description, where the data have simply been organized and summarized to show patterns, to interpretation, where researchers attempt to theorise the significance of the patterns and their broader meanings and implications, often in relation to literature" (p.11). Since the analytic integrity of the research largely depends on the coherence of the argument in relation to the research question, I used the data to ground and support the main points, building up to a logical and persuasive explanation (Starks & Trinidad, 2007). As Braun and Clarke (2006) suggest, the final analysis should portray an overall narrative about what the different themes reveal about the topic.

In the discussion, I referred back to the original theoretical literature relied upon to inform the study. I also reread the research and other literature that supported my argument and looked for additional theory to help ground the more unexpected themes. For example, I had not anticipated the issues of war, invasion, occupation and land-grab arising in the data and I needed to understand whether this was supported by the theory of space literature – and if it were not, how else I could use it to answer the research question. At this point, I became especially interested in the way that abusers were depicted as military war mongers waging terror whilst participants appeared to be engaged in some kind of pragmatic activism. After

further reading, I recognized the similarities proposed by Pain (2014a; 2015) and Hammer (2002) and started to appreciate that whilst no participant had believed themselves to have been strong or brave during the course of the abuse, even their most seemingly passive acceptances of abuse appeared to constitute a kind of resistance, seeing as it all culminated in escape and eventual liberty. After further reading, I started to see another pattern in the data. In the same way that public and private could not be so artificially divided, it was not possible to separate the actions of abusers from the wider spaces of society. This recognition left me wondering what the purpose of the individual/collective distinction served and why it is that so much of mental health and distress focuses only on the individual and not the systems of which we are inherently a part. Thus, in adopting an ecological approach (Kagan, 2003; 2007) to the analysis, starting from scratch, I began to see abused women, their perpetrators and wider society as all engaged in an ongoing relational interchange which meant that, instead of remaining focused only on the individual and their distress, a more convoluted picture emerges of a systemic societal issue (Kagan, Lawthom, Duckett & Burton, 2006) with subjugation – and resistance – at every level; whilst men must be held responsible for the abuse they subject women to, the role of wider society, normative discourse and the public in enabling this abuse – or in creating the conditions through which poverty, powerlessness, marginalization and anger inevitably prevail – or in neglecting to recognize suffering and provide financial and emotional support for abused women – means that accountability and change need to be addressed at all levels, not just at the individual. Meanwhile, resistance and the quiet politics of activism (Askins, 2011) are also seen to be taking place at every altitude, with women perpetually struggling to breathe and avoid suffocation by the enormous weight of so much combined power being wielded in their direction.

2.13 DATA ANALYSIS REFLEXIVITY[7]

This realization helped assuage one of my main concerns I had felt in conducting this thematic analysis. Throughout this process, I had felt quite uncomfortable about a significant proportion of participants' distress being left to one side because it did not lend itself well to answering the research question and because the approval of the Ethics Committee (see Appendices N and O) had been contingent on the focus being only on spaces associated with wellbeing, and specifically not distress. Therefore, whenever participants strayed into the more harrowing parts of their stories of violence and abuse, I tried to gently steer them back to less distressing spatial reflections. Writing each day, after the interviews, I noted how difficult it was and spoke to my supervisor about how to manage this tension. It was agreed that, so long as I wasn't purposefully directing the discussion towards distressing topics, both my role as researcher

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7 Finlay (2002)

and my aim to listen to and empower participants required me to stay with whatever they brought, as long as it helped to answer the research question. However, once I had come to the realization, after conducting the thematic analysis, that theirs were stories of resistance, and not only of subjugation, I felt a great deal more comfortable in being prohibited by my research question from including every detail of their alleged degradation and misery. Finally, I could accurately represent what the participants had told me in ways which captured their accounts as stories of survival, not as passivity or 'learned helplessness' (Maier & Seligman, 1976).

2.14 VALIDITY AND EVALUATION

Validity in research refers to the extent to which the research describes, measures or explains what it has set out to do. Measures of validity are needed both to ensure good quality research (to justify any claims made) and for research evaluation purposes (to maintain or improve standards). Since my theoretical position is that "our knowledge and experience of the world cannot consist of an objective appraisal of some external reality but is profoundly shaped by our subjective and cultural perspective and by our conversations and activities" (Yardley, 2000, p. 217), it is difficult to establish validity and rigour. Thus, determining the validity of a piece of qualitative research is unlikely to be straightforward: If there is no single 'objective' truth, as is my philosophy, then how do we ensure validity and rigour in qualitative research and how can we evaluate qualitative research in general?

Recognising the role of the researcher in actively managing data means that qualitative research is necessarily subjective and the idea of systematic evaluation somewhat problematic. Whilst Yardley (2000; 2008) recommends four criteria for assessing quality and validity (sensitivity to context, commitment and rigour, transparency and coherence, and impact and importance), Henwood and Pidgeon (1992) propose seven attributes (the importance of fit, integration of theory, reflexivity, documentation, theoretical sampling and negative case analysis, sensitivity to negotiated realities and transferability). In a similar vein, Elliot, Fischer & Rennie (1999) identify seven criteria to guide evaluation of qualitative research: Owning ones' perspective, situating the sample, grounding examples, providing credibility checks, coherence, accomplishing general versus specific research tasks and resonating with readers. Clearly, there is some considerable overlap between all these sets of criteria, which in general require firstly, a systematic, methodical and rigorous contextualisation of interpretations in both data and theory; and secondly, transparency through full disclosure and reflexivity. Willig (2013) adds that, in addition, standards of excellence require an "awareness of the contextual and theoretical specificity and the limitations that this imposes upon its relevance and applicability" (p.171).

Whilst I believe that my research can demonstrate adherence to each and every one of these proposed criteria, I am persuaded by authors such as Madill et al. (2000) and Reicher (2000) that since no unified qualitative research paradigm exists, there can be no generalised recipe to guide the evaluation of any or all pieces of qualitative research. As Willig (2013) writes, "qualitative research can be conducted from within different epistemological and ontological frameworks that require different standards of excellence. This is because different methodological approaches are based upon different assumptions about the nature of the world, the meaning of knowledge and the role of the researcher in the research process" (p.171). In short, the research must be consistent with the underlying philosophical position; thus, different epistemological and ontological frameworks should carry different quality criteria and these criteria should be tailored to the method (what its objectives are and what kind of knowledge it aims to produce). Thus, Madill et al. (2000) propose that evaluation of qualitative research depends on where on the continuum between realist, contextual constructionist and radical constructionist the research positions itself.

In this regard, the current research fits within the contextual constructionist epistemological paradigm, since it assumes that all knowledge is situated and subjective: Different perspectives engender different perceptions of the exact same phenomenon. As such, its evaluation will depend less on the accuracy of its representations than on its completeness and all "accounts need to be demonstrably grounded in the (e.g. situational, personal, cultural, social etc.) conditions within which they were produced. This applies to both participants' accounts (e.g. of their experiences, of their thoughts and feelings) and researchers' accounts (i.e. their analyses and interpretations of data). Thus, an important criterion for evaluation within this context is reflexivity" (Willig, 2013, p.172). It follows then that to enable readers to adjudicate quality, I need to be clear about exactly what it is I hope to learn about and what status I believe that 'knowledge' has. In addition, I need to be sure that the methods adopted are appropriate to the research question and are matched to my epistemological position. This is why I have set out in such meticulous (pain-staking!) detail my theoretical perspective. Moreover, in order to demonstrate both transparency in my relationship to the material and the grounding of analysis in participants' accounts, I have attempted to show my working at all times and have ensured that the interpretation is constantly 'methodical' (Willig, 2013), with a perpetual commitment to disclose perspectives and procedures and to locate interpretations in both the data and theoretical literature. As Nowell et al. (2017, p.2) emphasise, in qualitative research, "the researcher becomes the instrument for analysis, making judgments about coding, theming, decontextualizing, and recontextualising the data (Starks & Trinidad, 2007)" and as such, being able to evaluate the trustworthiness of a report is highly contingent on the

clear depiction of the many steps taken in relation to the data and the multiple assumptions which inform the analysis.

3   CHAPTER THREE – ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

> Because of geography, [my husband] was able to present a completely different picture to me (Lucy, p.14, l.263-264) … he'd use spaces as well to present a completely different reality to people… So, for us, space was… really important and became a big thing, really (Lucy[8], p.16, l.288-292).

In order to enable me to answer the research question, "How is space implicated in domestically abused women's experience and mitigation of distress?", this analysis will address the following questions: In relation to everyday terror, how are power dynamics co-constructed by and played out differentially through space; and how does the specificity of *located* relational practices enable us to understand lived experience? To help capture the idea that lived experience *is* this located dynamic set of relational practices, I have included a diagram I drew which attempts to locate the experience of women subjected to everyday terror as they try to navigate the many problematic spaces of their lives, doing their upmost to survive. It is hoped that this visual embodiment will help to contextualise the relationships between each component part of the analysis.

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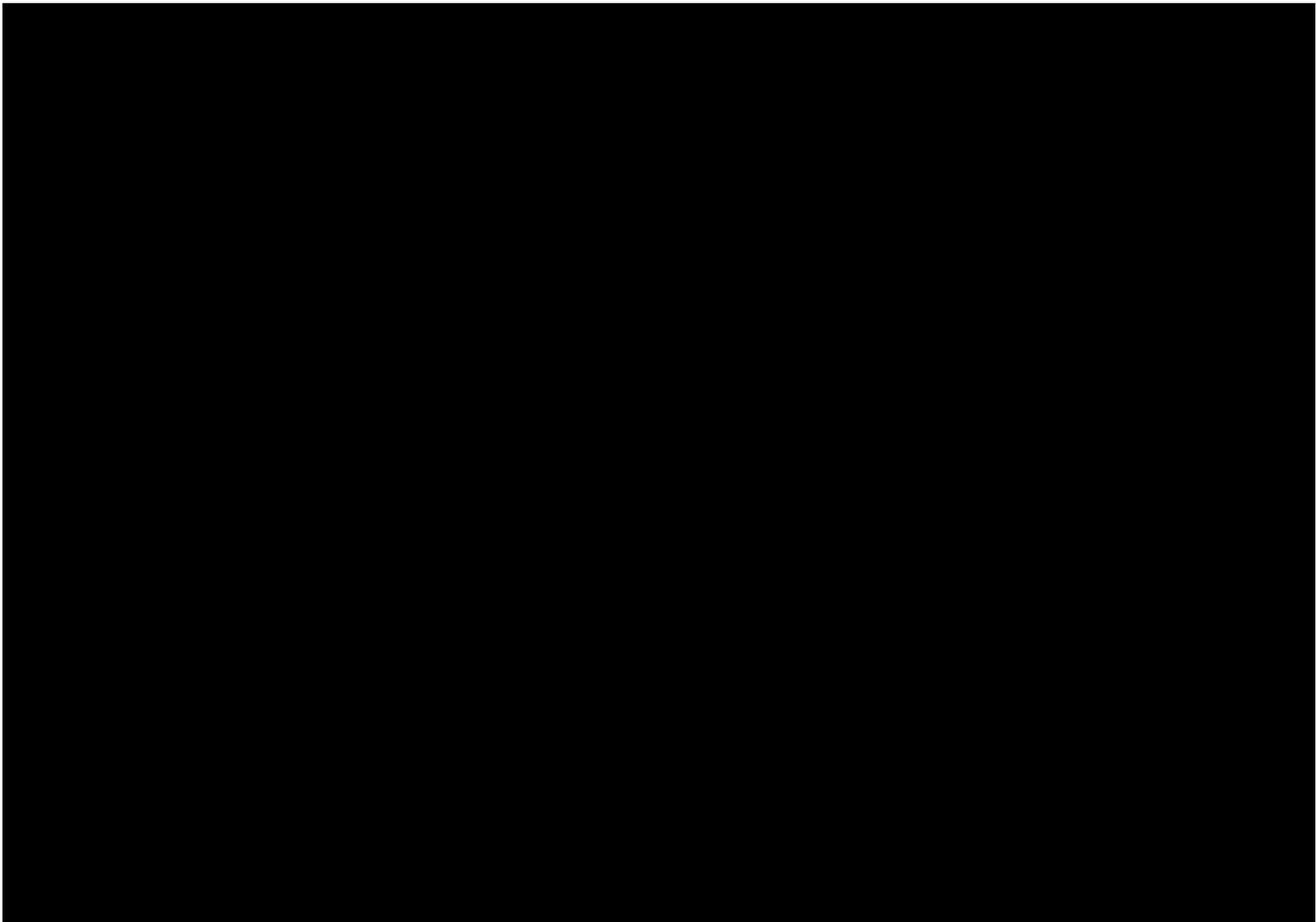
8 All names, place names and other identifying details have been changed to ensure anonymity.

Analysed in theme 1 – 'Spaces of Subjugation: Invasion, Alienation and Annihilation' – the data has been interpreted as suggesting that everyday space is used by men to subjugate women; a coercion and control achieved through invasion *of* space, alienation *in* space and annihilation *through* space. Drawing on research (e.g. Pain, 2015; 2014a) which lays out the numerous similarities between war and everyday terror, argued to be both equally intimate and political, both dynamics made and lived, theme 1 suggests that men use spatialized tactics akin to military invasion and occupation (Harker, 2011; Marshall, 2014) to ensure their victims are left isolated, psychologically overpowered and entirely dependent (Stark, 2007). This analysis also highlights the use of objects and materiality in this regard, argued by Latour (2005) to "authorise, allow, afford, encourage, permit, suggest, influence, block, render possible, forbid" (p.72) different actions, relationships and experiences and, thereby, 'stabilising' (Serres, 1995) their victim subjectivity.

Theme 2 – 'Structural spaces of Complicity: Public, Institutional and Digital Space' – focuses on data which suggests that structural space – institutional service providers, the public and digital technologies – may somehow be complicit in everyday terror. Drawing on relational approaches to space (Massey, 2005; Lewin, 1936), it is argued that whilst everyday terror may appear localised and embodied, it should also be understood as part of an "unfolding process, derived from the broader geographical phenomena and temporal patterns of the social world" (Springer, 2011, p.90). As such, no longer restricted to physical space, the analytical spotlight can turn to the broader, *structural*, socio-spatial and political patterns which manifest as local, seemingly *direct* expressions of, domestic abuse. In particular, building on feminist theory, the data is analysed and interpreted as suggesting that "domestic violence [resistance and escape] is heavily influenced by the social, and gendered context in which it occurs" (Bostock et al., 2009, p.96); in other words, by the patriarchal structures and dominant discourses of society.

The focus of theme 3 – 'Spaces of Resistance: Movement, Connection and Agency' – on the other hand, is the way that space is used by women to cope with, mitigate and actively resist domestic abuse. Again, the arrangement of objects and socio-material practices are interpreted as performing active functions; helping women to attain a modicum of stability (Brown & Reavey, 2015), agency (McGrath & Reavey, 2018), and order (Tucker, 2010), and making possible important changes to their subjectivity and empowerment. Thus, the data can be interpreted as suggesting that these participants use space to connect with spirituality, with community and with nature, as well as to achieve greater agency through movement, through the performance of 'imagined', productive identities (Soja, 1996) and through the spaces dedicated to exercise and employment.

3.1 SPACES OF SUBJUGATION: INVASION, ALIENATION AND ANNIHILATION

References to space and spatial practice are conspicuous throughout the data, with most participants suggesting explicitly ("I was held in a turkey shed for two years and sodomised"; Sukie, p.6, l.133), and others more implicitly ("he would interject and sort of give me a completely different feeling about interactions or places… he'd always be on the lookout for people who might be going to cheat him"; Lucy, p.18-20, l.341-379), how they experience spatiality in domestic abuse. In particular, participants talked about how the relationships they were either permitted or not permitted to engage in influenced the spaces they occupied or they talked about how the space somehow contributed to their psychological experience. Moreover, every participant described specific ways in which their abusers would *use* space to dominate, manipulate, subjugate, restrict or oppress them, with Lucy suggesting that it is important "to understand that a person's lack of safety around space can be related to the abusive person's *manipulation* of space" (p. 68, l.1282-1283).

Whilst many participants talk about how their partners typically use spaces of the home to disempower them (it "is about subjugating you and making you comply"; Sukie, p.36, l.838), others describe non-domestic spaces as being far more likely to entail suppression. For example, Polly said that her husband would hide in "places and then leap out at [her]" (p.41, l.779), using the control she portrayed him holding over all the spaces of her life to enact his "reign of terror" (Betty, p.37, l.854). Powerfully, the data suggests a number of different component stages to this subjugation, which can broadly be encapsulated by three sub-themes: 'Invasion', 'Alienation' and 'Annihilation'; stages which don't necessarily appear linear or discrete but seem to be woven together, sometimes blended, sometimes sequential.

3.1.1. Invasion

> When we did couples' therapy, which we did for about two sessions, we were asked to do something in the sandpit, and create something about homes. I was homeless, and he'd built a castle. And I think that says quite a lot (Lucy, p.68, l.1288-1290).

The notion that abusers use space to strengthen and fortify their positions whilst simultaneously robbing participants of theirs was endemic to every account. Some described this fortification as a kind of 'territorialisation' (e.g. Mary – he was "marking his territory"; p.44, l.837), whilst one participant likened it to a sort of "colonial land grab" (Betty, p.19, l.356). Whichever way it was being conjured, the impression was of a 'battle' or 'war' over space ("[they] will target your space… there's [constantly] a battle going on" (Mary, p.45, l.856)), to

which nobody – apart from the abusers – seemed to know or understand the rules. Mary even suggested that the need to acquire, possess and control space was at the heart of domestic abuse:

> The root of domestic violence is about territory. Because the perpetrator, his entire mission in life is to secure territory, and I see this like a dog peeing in places and marking his territory. So, whether he's marking you, your body, sexually, or with wounds or with abuse, it's used as a possession. It's a possession. And space is about finding territory (p.44, l.835-839).

The idea that abusers need space to create the conditions required for abuse is shared by Lucy, who says: "I think he saw every space as his own kind of castle, to make himself feel safe, he wanted everything to be exactly… he had things that would make him feel okay" (Lucy, p.11, l.197-199). Participants differed as to whether this desire to own and control space was used only as a tactic to subjugate or whether this was somehow incidental to their craving for security and power. Lucy, for example, said of her husband,

> I'm not saying we couldn't sit on the sofa but we just had to know it was his. And it was just very much the feeling that the space was all his. He wouldn't let me put pictures on the wall that he hadn't chosen (p.11, l.189-191).

On the other hand, some participants portrayed the manipulation of space as something much more intentional, with many echoing Georgie's view that moving into their homes early in the relationship was a strategy to "claim" her (p.20, l.454-455); he "was invading my space", she proposes (p.7, l. 141).

Sukie describes a number of different men who she says were abusive to her, four of whom apparently either moved themselves into her apartment, or persuaded her to move into theirs, within a very short time of knowing each other. She suggests that this encroachment into her personal space is tantamount to a violation: "You just feel violated, without being violated… just coming into your home and just… he literally moved himself in" (p.10, l.221-229). She says that another one of her partners "push[ed] for us to move in with him" and then "kick[ed] me out the day I got rid of the last thing" (p.19, l.429-431), meaning that she felt forced to beg for 'forgiveness' or be homeless, her abuser again using space, it seems, to control: "I had no choice because I had nowhere else to go" (p.23, l.530-531).

Important to these accounts appears to be some of the objects apparently used by abusers to ensure fear and perpetual subjugation. Every participant refers to the materiality of the space to portray their entrenched vulnerable subject position, as Sukie did above, when she realised

that her partner made her homeless on the very day that she had sold or given away her last item of furniture. Jill, for example, spoke of the

> kitchen… cupboards being smashed, and drawers being pulled out and thrown around, and … the table [being thrown] … into the wall, and then, [he] threw the table over, and he got a bottle … smashed [it]… and was holding this bottle, "I'm going to kill you" (p.42, l.980-992).

A duvet, meanwhile, seemed to be absolutely fundamental to Georgie's narratives of rape and sexual violence, somehow 'stabilising' her weakness and desperate need to survive, for the sake of her son:

> I had my boy next door, so I couldn't make any noise. So, I'm just basically shoved into the duvet. I can't do anything. You just, literally, fall into that fight or flight. You turn into that limp deer, that just goes, you just have to accept it because you can't get out of this (p.9, l.209-212).

Later, the duvet reappears in another important account:

> He's got a massive knife over me and he's like, "How much is a duvet? How much is a duvet?" I'm just like, "What are you talking about?" Are you going to slash through the duvet? Are you going to kill me? What are you doing to do? (p.22, l.507-510).

For Arabella, it was a

> briefcase full of pornography magazines… "That's what you've driven me to because you're so frigid, you're so boring… If you want me to stay with you then you have to change."… I thought up until then... as I say, he was always what I would call aggressive sexually but … in those six months, I learned what perversion [really] was (p.7-8, l.137-144).

For many of the participants, it was their bank cards, identity documents and car which apparently helped to ensure their invasion was complete. Thus, the control and use of material objects seems somehow to be key to the abuser's ability to invade and territorialise every space of the participants' lives, frightening them and ensuring confusion and uncertainty in the process.

Meanwhile, in the same way that invaders are believed to require a stronghold, Lucy likened home for her husband to a "fortress, and it's a place that [he was] secure" (p.34, l.642), whereas, according to Sukie, her partners all had to be seen by others as "king of the castle

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or the one who owns the house" (p.73, l.1711). Throughout these accounts, it seems as if invading space is key and the need to occupy more and take more from the participants is somehow integral to that abuse. Lucy goes on to say that her husband "took that fortress everywhere with him. It's absolutely in his head" (p.35, l.645), meaning that territorialising the home alone, she says, was never sufficient. Only absolute invasion would do, ensuring, she says, that they were left entirely "space-less": As she explains, "that was also the thing about him, he just occupied every, there was never any space for me" (p.9, l.149-150).

Many of the participants also portray non-domestic spaces as 'invaded' by their abusers. For example, Mary says the control started when her husband stopped her from driving, saying that he was happy to drop her and pick her up. After initially believing that he was only interested in her welfare, she describes soon understanding it as something non-negotiable. Having previously loved the liberty that her car afforded and considering herself to be a good driver, she recalls she was soon refused a car and persuaded of her incompetence behind the wheel: For her, the physical space of a car "signifies freedom, independence. But all that was taken away from me and I didn't know it" (p.40, l.761). She suggested it was "an invasion; a wall around [her] freedom because I had to wait for him to fetch me or drop me. And psychologically, I became incompetent" (p.39, l.754-755). The physical and psychological spaces can be seen to act in concert, one mirroring the other; whilst Mary suggests she was physically restrained by her husband's refusing to allow her to drive, she was apparently also psychologically beaten by being told that she was 'incompetent' and dangerous on the roads. She sums up her thoughts: "Because what they do is, they bombard you and your whole life is saturated. So even in your head space and everywhere round, they're marking territory" (Mary, p.56, l.1071-1073).

3.1.2. Alienation

Every participant also depicted a process of ongoing isolation which was allegedly forced upon them. This appeared to take the form of a multi-pronged attack, with combined forced social withdrawal, physical separation and alienation from the self; all undertaken it seems through manipulation of space. By gradually restricting the spaces in which they engaged, Georgie, for example, recalled living "a secret life" (p.7, l.151), withdrawing into spaces only occupied by her partner, because she felt she could not admit to others that she had taken him back once again. She suggests, "slowly but surely I didn't have any friends. I was in a very lonely place because I couldn't talk" (p.36, l.850-851). Indeed, participants suggest that this is part of the perpetrators' modus operandi – "they don't want you to be near anyone that might see that side of [them]" (Georgie, p.38, l.885) – which is why they believe that space is vital to their partners' continued dominance, isolating them from friends and

family. Arabella believes that her husband forced the family to constantly move around different parts of the country, suggesting "I can see now, looking back, that he would, as soon as I began to make friends, he'd be talking about going. He was forever dragging me off" (p.9, l.179-182). Lucy says something similar: "The day that we signed the contract on somewhere to live he would announce that he'd taken a new job in XXXX" (p.55, l.1038-1039).

The use of space to control and isolate reappears in every account, with most participants alleging that perpetrators restrict their access to certain areas, where social or familial interaction might develop. For example, Polly talks about her husband using the layout of the house to seclude her, apparently telling the children not to bother her because she was ill or tired; and telling Polly to lie down, saying she didn't look well, ordering her to go to bed. She describes being confined to the bedroom for days or weeks at a time, unable to see her family, who in the meantime she believes were constantly told of her 'madness' and stupidity, all apparently jeering at her behind her back. Indeed, Polly said that her husband controlled the spaces of her wardrobe to such an extent that he confiscated her clothes, and the spaces of the doorway so that, answering the door only in his boxer shorts, she believed he would ensure she never felt sufficiently assured to make use of the opportunity to engage with others, report him or leave. Even in the space of the garden, when using the washing line, for example, Polly says that her husband ran out to stop her from talking to a neighbour and forced her back indoors. She said, "even if I wanted to hang washing out, he would come with me or I'd have to ask permission. He put big fences up, he grew a huge hedge… And I just thought he was being really caring" (p.13, l. 246-250). This compulsory, spatial, isolation continued even with her own family who she alleged she was not allowed to see and with his own, to whom she was apparently not allowed to speak. If anyone visited the house, she said that her husband would order her to make tea in the kitchen, whilst they sat in another room: Again, using the separation of spaces to perpetuate alienation.

Other participants suggested that their partners made the home space completely unwelcoming, stomping around, slamming doors and shouting rude things, which they believed was to ensure nobody would wish to revisit. Mary said she was trapped in the house; physically trapped by her injuries (and the stairs up to the room on the second floor where she was made to sleep) and psychologically trapped by her husband: "Everything else was closed off to me" (p.4, l.57). She said that her husband also insisted on speaking in a foreign language at home, which neither she nor her daughter understood, ensuring she believes that she was alienated even within the house. To further isolate her there, her husband and mother-in-law apparently refused to allow her to breastfeed, so that her newborn son was bottle-fed, intended she believed to prevent mother-baby bonding and easier to take him away from her. Space

was, therefore, very important in her experience of abuse and she says that the layout of the house, in addition, meant that it was difficult for her, with the injuries she had sustained, to get out, entailing further isolation and inability to seek help or recover efficiently. Indeed, Mary's husband was apparently even able to use the distance between spaces to increase Mary's sense of alienation because she said that her family lived on the other side of the world and she had no legal status in the UK except through him. She suggests that he made sure that all benefits, credit cards and mobile telephone contracts were in his name, in order to complete her isolation:

> You can't escape and you can't get out of it… I couldn't even get a £5 note… because… I'd been in the country for… seventeen, eighteen years but… I was almost like a nonentity. Because I didn't have a credit history (p.7, l.117-119).

Arabella's second abusive husband also allegedly used space to alienate her from her family. After initially inviting her son from her first abusive husband to stay in their home, she suggests that he then used his control over that space to prevent her from seeing him more than three times in 24 years: "You're not having him here again. You don't talk to him, you don't nothing" (p.25, l.513-514). Again, using space to affect total isolation, Polly tells this story about her birthday one year: "Nobody had been allowed, none of my children had been allowed to acknowledge me that day, not to speak to me, not to look at me. Not to be in the same room, so if I came in, they'd left" (p. 42, l.798-800).

Similarly, most participants talk about having their access to public space severely restricted, with Sukie's partner apparently feigning epileptic seizures every time she said she was intending to go out. If they were in public spaces, Polly says her husband would take her by the elbow and put a hand on her shoulder to guide her and stop her from talking. She suggests he would never leave her side unless he knew she was alone and confined to the house or bedroom. She believes that he also refused to allow her to work, impregnating her time and time again, whilst pretending to be infertile so that she would not use protection, and – she feels – ensuring she could never leave him. Neither was she permitted apparently to take her children to nursery, having convinced the authorities to send someone to walk the children to school on the basis that Polly was too unwell, so she suggests this possible space was also closed off to her. On the very few occasions that Polly says she was ever able to enjoy the space of a car alone, which happened only towards the end of their marriage when she said the doctor had insisted on Polly's husband allowing her to attend appointments, he always followed her in his van.

In addition, all the participants suggest that their abusers made efforts to humiliate them, further entrenching their isolation, with Bo believing that her husband had had affairs with the women she worked with in order to ensure that the work space also felt alienating and judging. Margarie also talked about how her abuser would use public spaces to humiliate, isolate and subjugate her: Not only did he "run every aspect of [my] life, from what I ate to what I drank and when I could eat, when I could drink… he brushed my hair, he chose my clothes, everything" (p. 51, l.1201-1203) but she also believes he controlled where she stood and where she sat – if at all: "I wasn't allowed to do anything. If he took me somewhere, I would be put in a chair and be made to face the wall, while he socialised" (p.51, l.1203-1205). In this way, space appears integral to the alienation she says she suffered.

3.1.3. Annihilation

Finally, permeating every account was a sense of annihilation; participants suggest that their abusive partners used space to destroy them, erase them, dissipate any sense of self or identity and reduce them to a being in body only. For example, Arabella talks about her husband using the separate, hidden space of the bedroom to violate her so terribly each night that she felt unable to be there, except in the physical sense, for her children during the day: "They hadn't got the mum they used to have because I was hanging on, trying to get through each day, knowing the night time was going to bring whatever" (p.12, l.236-237). She says she became an expert "human chameleon" (p.42, l.875), knowing exactly how to avoid upsetting anyone because "you don't know what the repercussions are going to be… That's how I lived my life for 55 years" (p.42, l.876-878).

Lucy, meanwhile, talks about how her husband apparently used space – and spatial manoeuvring – to obliterate psychological wellbeing. For example, she says that he arranged, in secret, for extensive building works to be commenced in their house, ensuring weeks of dust and mayhem permeated every living space, and plummeting the family into further debt. By this means, he would apparently use space to deliberately 'engineer crisis', obviate 'balance' or 'calmness', and ensure "he would always have the initiative… [and be] one step ahead of me. He would be planning something crazy or unbelievable for tomorrow, that I wouldn't yet know about so I was always reactive rather than proactive" (Lucy, p.45, l. 834-838).

Common to practically all participants was the suggestion that their abusive partners tried to make them "feel like I'm losing my mind" (Arabella, p.13, l.267). This practice was typically spatialised, in that it apparently relied on the position of a tea cup, key, shoe, furniture or other object in a room which the perpetrator then moved, so that when the participant asked for it,

he alleged he had never seen it in the first place. In time, driven they say by comments from the abusers, the victims started to wonder if they were "mad" (Jill, p.28, l.525) or "crazy" (Polly, p.21, l.413). In addition, Mary says that her husband switched on and off lights, whilst lying about it, and would apparently come into the room, claiming she had called for him when she had not, then declaring she must be "insane, you need to go and get help, you need to ask somebody for tablets, you need to get medicated" (p.12, l.222-224).

Polly says that her husband took this 'gaslighting' so far that he even manipulated the space of the doctor's surgery, allegedly claiming that Polly was being irrational, over-emotional, forgetful and incapable of independent living, in order to convince medical staff that she needed medicating at all times, so that – in the end – she says she "really didn't know what was going on" (p.21, l.400-401) and would therefore be even less likely to leave or be believed if she ever reported him. She says he also manipulated the space of the house at night, waking her to tell her the baby was crying (when it apparently wasn't) or putting a pillow over her head, she believes, just to keep her from being properly rested so he could then keep her locked away in the bedroom, under the guise of being ill and needing sleep. She suggests that he also controlled the use of the door, apparently never giving Polly keys so that she wasn't even in charge of leaving or entering, nor for the letterbox, supposedly telling her that it was necessary to have an outdoor box to stop the dog eating the post, when it never did. This meant, she says, that she would frequently miss appointments and would appear forgetful, incompetent and irrational, annihilating the very essence of human being.

Meanwhile, Mary says her husband was also intent on using the spaces of the home to overwhelm the core of her; repetitively undermining and taunting her for the weakness his violence had inflicted upon her: "He was constantly saying to me 'oh, look at you, you're this, you're that, you can't even walk, you can't do this, look at your legs wasting away', so he was psychologically and mentally breaking me down" (p.12, l.215-218). She says that if she ever asked him for help to go to the toilet, which was some distance away from the bedroom she was confined to, he would refuse and mock her whilst she tried

> to roll up in this big bump, crawl to the toilet and just come close enough and then wet myself… And then he'd call my little daughter in, who was about 3 or 4 at the time, 'look at Mummy, look at her, she can't even walk, look at her, she's wet herself. You don't do that, you go to the toilet, she can't even do that', so it was constant psychological abuse (p.12-13, l.232-236).

Using space to enact further abuse and to destroy her safe space she had found in Jesus, Arabella says that her husband, reminding her of a quote she had once read from a book

about someone kept warm in the snow by their faith, forced her to "lie on the bedroom floor, no nightie, nothing, there was snow outside and he said 'Let your saviour keep you warm'" (p.31, l.646-647).

Lucy, expanding more on the impact of space on the destruction and annihilation of self, puts it in terms which suggest the complete engulfment of her by her husband: "I think by that time I was living so much in his world, I felt as though I was living in his head. Because I had to try and work out what was going on in his head so much of the time… In order to second-guess him" (p.49-50, l.924-928). She later describes how she believed her partner sought to "erase" (p.61) her from his life and how he apparently used the family home space to achieve his objective, using space to destroy her. After she and the children had finally left him, she says he

> completely obliterated all traces of us from the apartment… he just had our things scattered and broken on the floor… he had his girlfriend's things in our house, and he'd given away a lot of my son's toys… Yes, he'd thrown my daughter's stuff on the floor (Lucy, p.59, l.1106-1114).

She suggests he even had

> painters in to paint over everything. They were completely repainting the flat. And he'd chosen builders who only spoke XXXX, so I couldn't talk to them. And I remember, it was one of my lowest moments, being in my own home with builders who aren't listening to me because they don't know who I am… And don't understand me… And just him looking at me and sort of smiling (Lucy, p.60, l.1124-1131).

She described this eradication of herself as him saying, "'I'm completely removing you from this landscape, and everything about you and our children will be gone'" (p.61, l.1136-1139).

In conclusion, these accounts suggest that abusive partners use space and spatial practice to subjugate their victims, by means of sometimes blended, sometimes processual, strategies of invasion, alienation and annihilation. The impact of the abuse on every participant appears to have been, in spatial terms, profound. For example, even today, Margarie engages in a multitude of apparently obsessive behaviours (Segrott & Doel, 2005) to reinforce and strengthen her spatial boundaries, using wedges and pieces of wood throughout the house to secure doors and barricade windows or to enable swift escape if necessary. Lucy concludes that she "gradually realised… that unsafe space was wherever he was, and also was within his mindset" (p.49, l.919-920). Suddenly grasping the extraordinary contributions of space to

her experiences of domestic abuse, she is now aware that "I've had a very odd relationship with space, really, ever since" (p.49, l.908-909).

3.1.4. Theoretical Discussion

"The root of domestic violence is about territory" (Mary, p.44, l.835); "[abusers] will target your space… there's [constantly] a battle going on" (Mary, p.45, l.856). The argument that everyday terror and war are part of a single, but two-way, carriageway of violence is not new (Pain, 2015). Feminists have been arguing for decades that domestic abuse is both political (Pain, 2014b; Hammer, 2002) and warlike; it arises out of the wish to exercise control, overpower others, subsume territories, and its intimate undercurrents reflect wider societal power dynamics, including gender and patriarchy, class, race and religion, as well as sexuality and heterosexism (Dobash & Dobash, 1992; Holmes, 2009; Sokoloff & Dupont, 2005). As Pain (2015) argues, in the same way that war is typically thought of as a continuation of politics by non-discursive means, domestic abuse extends the politics of subjugation. The interweaving of military terms throughout most of the participants' accounts supports the notion that domestic abuse parallels some of the patterns of warfare. Thus, when referring to the *need* for abusers to "invad[e] my space" (Georgie, p.7, l. 141) and for "every space [to be their] own kind of castle, to make [them] feel safe" (Lucy, p.11, l.197), this might be seen as supporting Sjoberg's (2013) contention that military strategies emerge naturally from pervasive cultures of macho aggression, protection and domination.

Most participants describe their homes being infiltrated by their abusers, in ways which initially appeared to reflect a desire to share and commit but soon started to look more like 'invasion' (Lucy), 'territorialisation' (Mary) or 'land grab': "He always had to have somewhere else to go" (Lucy, p.18, l.342-343). Either way, it could be argued that abusers purposefully use these spaces to commit and perpetuate abuse, in order to invade and occupy, thereby ensuring the removal of any advantage typically associated with the home for the management and expression of distress. Indeed, privacy, agency and safety are described by every participant as being inverted by the spaces of the home and the embodied activities practiced there. Rather than the benefit of privacy being materially afforded these participants, therefore, it was apparently the ability of their abusers to invade and "shut the door" (Twigg, 2000, p.384) on the outside world which meant that violence and subjugation could continue in the home undetected.

Moreover, many of the participants appeared to hold the view that other family members were actively involved in the abuse and that the home, far from being a private 'safe haven' (Pinfold, 2000), constituted more of a 'public forum' (Ahmed et al., 2008). For example, Lucy spoke

about her mother-in-law humiliating her, speaking degradingly about her in front of other people, and calling her patronising names: "She completely took over… her first present to me was a mop" (p.25, l.466-467). According to Georgie, her partner's family were thoroughly aware of the abuse but instead of reprimanding or reporting their son for threatening her with a knife, they just remarked "that was a silly thing to do or that was a silly thing to say. Then [they would] reward him with things" (p.23, l.523-524). Meanwhile, Mary's mother-in-law apparently moved in to their home, demanding complete obedience from her and seemed to be positively complicit in the violence, colluding to remove Mary's baby boy, a sex apparently prized in their culture, from her immediately after delivery. In all cases, it seems as if the wider family act to strengthen and reinforce the abuse, enabling its concealment and persistence, and ensuring that any support these participants tried to seek outside the home could be physically overridden. Ahmed et al. (2008) suggest that this enforced physical closeness might even be a way of the "in-laws taking away the responsibility of the violence from their son… and this physical spacing... directly disrupts any notion of the 'private', transforming violence into a 'publicly dynamic' problem – a problem that the family and community, and not only the couple, must resolve" (p.52-53).

Importantly, the role played by objects, such as the lock of the turkey shed (Sukie), the duvet (Georgie), kitchen furniture (Jill), pornographic magazines (Polly), boxer shorts and letter box (Polly) and the cups, keys and light switches in all these accounts resonates with the work of Latour (2005), who said "[material] things might authorise, allow, afford, encourage, permit, suggest, influence, block, render possible, forbid" (p.72) different actions, relationships and experiences. For example, the enclosed home space in each of these narratives, with its door firmly 'shut on the world' (Twigg, 2000) might be seen as 'blocking' (Latour, 2005) interaction with anyone outside that space, ensuring social isolation and feelings of imprisonment. Thus, a Latourian approach perceives objects and artefacts as somehow mediating experience, lending stability and anchorage, translating and participating in the production and embodiment of human experience. For example, in Polly's account, she describes the layout of the garden with the hedges and garden fence her husband erected, which could be seen as "blocking" embodied engagement with her neighbours, whilst simultaneously "allowing" uninterrupted surveillance from the house. Meanwhile, the boxer shorts he required her to wear might also be understood as "blocking" relational interaction with the outside world and "participating" (Latour, 1996; 2005) in her sense of being constantly imprisoned and coerced: As Sukie summarised, "he was using the intrusion into… space to control [me]" (p.13, l.292).

For Lucy, the control was less overt and more nuanced. The way that her home and the spaces of their excursions outside of the home are described, it seems that her abuser

consistently used objects and materiality to remind her of her lesser subject position. In Serres' (1995) conceptualisation, the materiality of these rooms might be seen as 'stabilising' Lucy's victim subject position, so that as soon as she enters the particular space her husband so emphatically and restrictively controls, she is inevitably placed into a subjugated non-autonomous position, perfectly aware of her need to suppress her own thoughts and ideas and prioritise his.

Thus, seen as co-participating (Latour, 2005) in the construction of this experience are the material objects and layout of the space used by abusers to enact the abuse. The lock on the turkey shed door, for example, literally encloses Sukie in the space dedicated to abuse, dividing her from a world where freedom of movement and legal and ethical boundaries are meant to prevail. Since the material spaces of the home, assigned bedroom spaces and lockable doors, are typically thought to manifest as one of the key ways in which an array of activities, including the negotiation of agency, are conceptualised and played out in relationships (Ahmed et al., 2008), this can be seen as robbing Sukie of her autonomy and reinforcing the differences in her and her partner's respective subject position. It might even be argued that locks and barriers facilitate a feeling of criminality and imprisonment, such that many of the participants describe being too disgusted by what they believe they have become to ever tell anyone ("so filthy after all I'd been coerced into, filthy, humiliated", (Arabella, p.9, l.172)), meaning that their abuse and victim identity is even further reinforced and entrenched. As Sukie's mother allegedly reacted, after being told of her daughter's 'gang rape': "Well, everybody has been the party entertainment before" (p.60, 1399-1400).

Returning to invasion, Hennessy (2012) argues that domestic abusers utilise their intimate knowledge of their victims and manoeuvre in such a way as to gain and retain psychological, physical and emotional control. This is illustrated by every participant, some of whom spoke about their abusers using the knowledge, for example, of previous abuse, against them; taunting them, threatening them that they will tell others or will commit the same degrading acts as the previous abuser had done (Arabella). As Pain (2015) suggests, the psychological impact of long term manipulation and invasion is much more likely to oppress and overpower than short intermittent bursts of violence: "When they are emotionally abusing you, they get in so much deeper… and they are already causing you damage, before you have even noticed it's happening" (Sukie, p.12, l.265-271). If long-term subjugation is what is required for an abuser to feel safe (Lucy) and empowered, then a gradual loss of self-esteem, normal psychological functioning and increased self-doubt will be more effective and harder to resist than shorter-term displays of force or intimidation.

Such an 'annihilation' of self is described by Pain (2015) as 'psychological occupation' and appears to be adjunct to the abuser's tactics of 'territorialisation' over the material environment; through a multifaceted approach, combining invasion with isolation and alienation, they apparently manage to take ownership and control over all aspects of the participants' lives, including the psychological, ideological and political. As Said (1993, p.7) argues, "just as none of us is outside or beyond geography, none of us is completely free from the struggle over geography. That struggle is complex and interesting because it is not only about soldiers and cannons but also about ideas, about forms, about images and imaginings". By constantly trying to alter Lucy's thoughts and perceptions of everyday situations, for example, forcing her not to trust, always to suspect and fear, her husband might be thought of as attempting to cast doubt on both herself (self-alienation) and others (social alienation). In fact, every participant spoke about their partners attempting to use 'evidence' of their poor mental health as a way to isolate and discredit them, from friends, family and from the authorities, meaning that they were even less likely to disclose their abuse (Reavey et al., 2006) or receive psychological support (Pill, Day & Mildred, 2017).

Therefore, in suggesting that Mary, Arabella, Polly, Bo, Alice and Betty had moved or lost household objects, such as cups and keys, letters or light switches, when they had not, Pain (2015) would argue that this long-term, subtle, beneath-the-surface psychological "victimization works to hold targets in place" (p.68). Almost all of the participants describe their husbands using the configuration of space and materiality to 'gaslight' (Georgie); for example, moving cups, hiding objects or turning on and off light switches and then denying the relevant involvement, in order to make participants believe that they were going 'mad'. The association between such actions and mental distress is key to the argument put forward by authors such as Segrott and Doel (2005), who highlight the material dimension to the behaviours associated with Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD). Thus, in the same way that OCD sufferers are engaged in the ritual re-ordering of objects in material space, many of the participants above describe their abusers reconfiguring materiality and space in analogous ways. This 'psychological occupation' and 'annihilation' can also be seen in the many accounts of participants who are led to believe that they are at fault and must be to blame for their abusive partners' behaviour (Jones, 2004; Stark, 2007) and their confusion, as encapsulated by Arabella and Polly, is apparently exacerbated through the perpetrator's perpetually inconsistent behaviour and self-justification (Herman, 1997; Pain, 2014a).

Thus, invasion and occupation rarely only comprise physical activity to control space and oppress (Pain, 2015): In both war and everyday terror, more can arguably be gained by channelling the "intimate cultural knowledge that [the perpetrator has] to divorce a people from

the land, and that [he has] acquired in order to survive" (p.69), or in other words, to alienate them. As such, much of the aggression of invasion is carried out through intimate spatial practices (Harker, 2011) and is enabled by the prevailing political and economic infrastructures which subdue potential resistance. For example, as with military occupation, the reliance of the target on the invader is reinforced by their ability to control finances, monitor their behaviours and interactions, isolate them from third-party sources of support, and threaten them with violence to avoid potential opposition. In each of the participants' accounts, such tactics typically used in military invasion and occupation are apparently routinely incorporated into the everyday strategies of abusive partners. Moreover, there are many, such as Lucy, who suggest that their abusers took so much from them that they were left effectively 'space-less'.

Mary's description of her abuser refusing to allow her to take out mobile phones or credit cards so that she was "a non-entity", rendered entirely dependent on him, without credit history, even after living in the UK for nearly two decades, resonates with military tactics devised to deprive people of their basic human rights and annihilate their existence. As Cowen and Gilbert (2008) describe, citizenship is always key to war: Ultimately, it is about who is entitled to which rights and freedoms and of what jurisdiction. Similarly, Giles and Hyndman (2004) and Hays-Mitchell (2008) talk about the way in which nationalism, ethnicity and gender overlap in war: Accordingly, those with less straightforward claims to citizenship are much more likely to fall victim to gender-based aggression (Cowen & Gilbert, 2008; Sokoloff & Dupont, 2005) and, as can be seen from Mary's account above, abused women of lower socioeconomic class or of ethnic minorities are at significantly higher risk of forced migration after leaving their partners than their counterparts (Bowstead, 2015; Hans, 2004; Hyndman, 2000).

The alienation depicted above is itself thoroughly spatialized and, drawing on feminist geographical explorations of the composition of urban space, it could also be argued that abused women are deliberately separated from public, productive spaces to ensure their atomisation, subjugation and powerlessness (for example, Polly being prohibited from working or leaving the house alone). Forcing women to become alienated, assigned to the private 'reproductive' spaces of the home (Polly was impregnated six times, whilst her husband pretended to be infertile), means that their opportunities to gather and nurture social connections (Hanson & Pratt, 1995; McDowell, 1983) is undeniably and inevitably restricted. Thus, according to research investigating the effects of forced relocations in the 1950s, women in particular require home space to be configured in such a way that it promotes regular interaction with neighbours, especially where relational connection previously existed (Halpern, 1995), whereas in all the accounts above, domestically abused women are banned

from regular social activities and disallowed friends and confidantes. Indeed, research suggests that living environments associated with societal withdrawal and limited social support are more likely to lead to feelings of helplessness and a lack of control over the environment (Gifford, 2007; Churchman & Ginsberg, 1984), which can clearly be seen throughout these stories. Meanwhile, a perceived loss of influence or control over one's life and living situation has also been linked to feelings of entrapment and are said to incur almost treble the likelihood of anxiety and depression (Brown & Harris, 1978); entrapment, anxiety and depression being prevalent throughout all these participants' experiences. Thus, there is a wealth of data suggesting that both social (e.g. Warner, 2000) and cultural (Bhugra & Jones, 2001; Bhugra, 2004; Bhugra & Arya, 2005; Halpern & Nazroo, 2000) isolation are key to the development of distress and it is suggested from the accounts of these participants that low mood and anxiety are in part produced by, and simultaneously producing, the individual material environments in which these social and cultural interactions take place (Evans, 2003). Indeed, it could be argued that the social and material converge to manifest experiences of distress for all participants, simultaneously intensifying and fuelling one another.

3.2 STRUCTURAL SPACES OF COMPLICITY: PUBLIC, INSTITUTIONAL AND DIGITAL SPACE

3.2.1. Public Space

Every participant talked about a constellation of factors within public space which they suggest combined to make them believe that abuse was normal and that help was neither necessary nor available. Recurring throughout the accounts is a notion of ignorance; most of the participants say they didn't realise that what they were being subjected to was everyday terror: Even as a social worker, "it sounds ridiculous but I had no notion that I was a victim" (Bo, p.20, l.458-459). Whether this lack of awareness related to the apparent prevalence of domestic abuse -

> it seemed so normal… it happened to everybody around me. I had a friend who… worked in a bank so that was a good job… she sat behind the desk in the bank with a black eye every week (Bo, p.15-16, l.354-364)

- or whether it was due to the lack of open discussion, every participant suggested that the clear separation apparently upheld by their families between private and public contributed to the ignorance surrounding the subject and facilitated its commission. According to Betty, it was

> just brushed under the table… [because]… its men who make up the rules and… [although] I'm not saying that all men are doing it just because some are, men who make the laws and in government and whatever, or do the punishing, they don't want to rock the boat, you know? It's just easier that way… it's a club, [they all] just stick together (p.10, l.226-230).

The separation depicted by these participants – the idea that everyday terror is rife throughout 'private' space but ignored in 'public' (it is a "privatised problem"; Duncan, 1996) – appears throughout every account. Moreover, most participants imply that the public/private dichotomy was deliberately constructed and perpetuated by men, serving to maintain and enforce the patriarchal regime (Kaufman, 1992) and supporting Hammer's (1978) contention that everyday terror is the structural underpinning of patriarchy.

Indeed, participants suggest that all aspects of public space – from the schools, the universities, the shopping malls, the churches, the buses, trains and the car parks to the spaces of advertising and media are implicated in perpetuating this smokescreen ("they never make boxsets out of domestic violence… [audiences only] seem interested in terrorists or

serial killers"; Alice, p.46, l.1052-1056), with Bo saying that she had never even heard the term 'domestic violence' until very recently; she hadn't even been taught it as part of her syllabus. Moreover, she suggests – as do a number of other participants – that she was embarrassed about what was happening to her and implies that this also colluded in preventing her reporting the abuse. Indeed, when Sukie apparently tried to talk to people about what was happening to her, she was usually told "it's in [your] head, or it's not as bad as it is" (p.59, l.1397).

Bo says her neighbours were also complicit in the abuse. If they heard shouting and violence, she believed they would only telephone the police if it constituted a "noise nuisance… they didn't like the noise… I don't think they were rescuing me" (p.11, l.258-260). Even when they moved to a more privileged neighbourhood, Bo says she refused to call the police when her husband was violent, believing that her neighbours would have been upset by a repeated police presence and suggesting that she did not want to run the risk that she would be removed and rehoused as a consequence. Margarie says that the violence she sustained was oftentimes in public spaces, such as at the train station, pub or on the street, and suggests that nobody seemed interested or tried to get involved. None of these spaces, she said, were safe for her and, therefore, seemed complicit in what was being done.

Sukie talks about what it might be about public spaces that makes them so dangerous. Whereas the home for her is entirely filled with fear and trepidation, public spaces are apparently far more difficult to navigate. At least when she is at home, she says she knew when the abuse may come and, normally, what form it would take. She recalls trying her best to understand what may cause it and treading with extreme caution around issues she believes may be provocative. When she is in public spaces, however, she says she doesn't know what will happen: She doesn't know who she will bump into, how this will be interpreted and by whom. She goes to some lengths to identify the danger posed by the 'eyes' on the street: Talking about why it is so hard to find spaces she associates with safety, she says it is "because you have got to find somewhere where there aren't eyes, and by eyes, I mean anybody" (Sukie, p.77-78, l.1827-1830). She implies that it is easy for her partners to enlist their friends and even random members of the public to report back about what she is doing. All the abuser apparently needs to do is show a 'picture' of her and suggest that she is being unfaithful; and as the apparent injured party, and as a male, she believes that other men will collude to prevent that perceived injustice to their sex being committed. On the other hand, according to many of the participants, it is not just people in public space who pose a risk. As the accounts of Mary, Lucy and Georgie suggest, the families of the perpetrators are sometimes portrayed as heavily implicated in the abuse within the home, with Ahmed at al. (2008) arguing that this supposedly 'private' space, subsumed by members of the extended

family, is thereby rendered 'public'; thus, serving again to highlight the inadequacy of normative distinctions between public and private.

Meanwhile, talking about the view of domestic abuse she believes is taken by the Church, Arabella suggests that they are taught to "keep the family unit complete no matter what. Its horrendous" (p.22, l.433-434) … "you've got to forgive… [and are then] sent straight back into [the] abusive relationship" (p.19, l.388-394). As a result, she says that her children now believe the church to be "a place that hides abusers" (p.40, l.817). Even the space of the children's school and around the school gates is described as dangerous by some of the participants, echoing Sukie's fears about how any interaction could be interpreted. If someone did come up to talk to them and this was reported, they say that the abuser would think she was "playing away" (Sukie, p.79, l.1872) or that the children had been in trouble, meaning either may receive a beating that evening. Save for Betty, who apparently used her supermarket visits as an opportunity to connect with anyone receptive, most of the other participants said that the spaces of the shopping mall were also threatening. If they were seen talking to someone unknown and it was reported back to the abuser, many suggest that he would conclude they were "fucking [him] over" (Sukie, p.80, l.1879) or shoplifting and either would result in punishment. Sukie made the point that her partners would have wanted to know with what funds she was going shopping and, if he hadn't expressly authorised the outing, she would allegedly be beaten for accessing or hiding money.

Not only did most participants give the impression that public spaces were complicit in their abuse but they also seemed to suggest that these spaces somehow promoted an attitude of uncaring. For example, even though – from what Polly said – it must have been obvious to people that she was always accompanied by her husband and never allowed out alone, with his hand firmly placed around her neck, nobody apparently mentioned anything until after she had left him. When Margarie said she was forced to sit with her back to a group socialising in the pub, nobody apparently spoke out. And even when she said she was being kicked around the street, her partner allegedly told her, "You're a woman, not a child; no-one will give a fuck, they won't care" (p.11, l.261) and, indeed, nobody ever intervened.

3.2.2. Institutional Space

Once they're in the court system… they are once again being manipulated and controlled … The governments … [are] trying to squash women who have come through abuse and their children through the same channels, although it's called family court, as they would... if they were going to court for a criminal offence... It's so wrong…. We would be greeted with… 'You can't even talk to your own family members

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about this. The children must know nothing about it'. The mothers aren't allowed to tell their children... What society threatens a mother with taking away her children if she doesn't get out from under this abusive person and, the minute she's out, tell her, 'If you don't allow this person access to these children, they will be taken away from you'? (Arabella, p.44-45, l. 914-935)

As the above extract illustrates, a substantial portion of the data revolves around the alleged impact of institutional spaces – such as the courts, social services, child support agencies, medical profession and mental health services – on participants, both during the course of their abuse and afterwards (thereby apparently prolonging it). Most of the participants talked about how believing their children would be 'taken away' from them stopped them from seeking help:

All of us say that. That's what can sometimes keep you in it. [The abusers] know that they've got that hold over you because you will not go anywhere because you don't want your children to be taken away from you [or left alone with the abuser] (Georgie, p.13, l.292-295).

Arabella suggested that victims typically think,

'I might as well stay because he's going to have [the children] anyway. At least I'll have some control. I can try to manage it, even if it means I get hurt'… I have no faith in our British court system anymore whatsoever (Arabella, p.44-45, l.914-935).

Whilst it is inevitable that in multi-agency solutions there will undoubtedly be errors made, most participants seemed to hold the very decided view that these institutional spaces were actually complicit in their abuse and oftentimes made it substantially worse.

[the] thing is, abuse is everywhere… It's not just [the abusers] doing it to us… no, that would be manageable [if it were just that] … no, it's everywhere. They're all at it… [It's] the law, the police, the courts, the judges, the doctors and hospitals, the church, it's CAFCASS… thing is, they all support the abuser, it's sick really (Betty, p.32, l.747-753).

In many cases, participants suggest that their abusers knew the inner workings of, for example, the courts space and mental health services and used this to their advantage. Thus, Georgie says that her partner told her that their son would be taken into care if she reported the abuse, having never removed him previously from the physical spaces of violence and danger: "Oh, he knows all of that, doesn't he? Within that care system, he knows full well"

(p.34, l.798). Meanwhile, Sukie argued that her abusive partners used their intimate knowledge of her mental health difficulties against her:

> the problem is, when you don't feel safe anyway, and then you have the extra complications that I have with my mental health, you don't feel safe in your own head, let alone in an actual place (p.49, l.1155-1157).

This is why creating a space where abused women do feel safe to engage in counselling is felt to be so important, as proposed in the concluding chapter. Indeed, participants suggest that perpetrators understand that, if their victims are deemed mentally unwell, they will not be held credible – either as witnesses or as mothers – and therefore they apparently premeditatedly engage in 'gaslighting' (Georgie), with the intention of using medical notes to undermine complainants in court and in therapy (Reavey et al, 2006). Arabella argues that

> mental health issues [are] used against them by their perpetrator so that other people don't believe them, especially if there's children involved, to get the children away. But if anyone develops mental health issues as a result of what they're experiencing, then that goes against them because once its acknowledged they've got mental health issues, there's a doubt on their testimony over what's happened (p.29, l.596-601).

Moreover, perpetrators allegedly use their more credible, public standing to ensure continued subjugation. For example, Jill says that her partner, during one incident of violence, told her "I lied to the CPS before [and got away with it] and I'll do it again. And I'm going to destroy you in court and I'm going to take the children away and you're going to regret it" (p.19, l.435-437). He apparently taunted her, "No one will ever believe you. Literally, it's my word against yours. Its beyond reasonable doubt" (p.25, l.575-577).

This threat – that nobody will believe them – is depicted by many of the women I spoke to, with abusers apparently relying on their professional position in public and institutional space – such as the social care system and medical profession (Bo and Arabella, respectively) – to demonstrate their own relative importance and, therefore, believability; thus, providing another example of how participants suggest their abusers employ structural spaces to help facilitate their abuse. Indeed, Arabella suggests that her husband's spatial manoeuvring of keys and other items ('gaslighting') derived from the knowledge he had acquired of mental health diagnostics, on account of the work he did at the hospital. Georgie also alleges that abusers who work within institutional spaces explicitly use the knowledge they acquire there in order to enact abuse: Her partner worked in a care home and apparently, learning from victims of

sexual abuse all the terrible things that "growing up [were being] done to them, … he would implement that within my home, to me" (p.32, l.756-757). She suggests,

> he wanted rods in my urethra. He wanted to use a penis enlarger on my vagina. It was just like … he wanted to turn my rectum inside out. It was just, my body was falling apart. He wanted anal sex all the time... He wanted to hear pain (p.50, l.1171-1174).

In other cases, participants suggest that abusers – owing to the unfair advantage attributable to uneven resources – have the ability to pay representatives who could help exploit these institutional spaces for them. Mary believes, for example, that her husband's lawyers used the family court space to obtain computers and mobile phones confiscated as evidence in the criminal trial for rape and grievous bodily harm, so that they could undermine her testimony in the ongoing custody battle.

More frequently, however, participants suggest that the spaces of the social services, of CAFCASS, of the medical profession and of the courts were more *actively* complicit in their suffering. For example, even though it was apparently proved by a fact-finding court that Polly's husband had tampered with the gas in their home in order to endanger lives, the police allegedly didn't even question him. She says that there was no prosecution forthcoming, nor any punishment for what he had done. Similarly, when police attended the scenes of Bo's abuse, she says their only interest was in having the noise kept down, instead of making arrests; and this only because the county council were apparently worried about collateral criminal damage not being compensated.

For Mary, there were countless ways in which she believes structural space had collaborated in her abuse. Mary provides a catalogue of examples of midwives, nurses and doctors who she believes failed to do their jobs properly, allowing the abuse to go unnoticed, and then apparently covering up their mistakes. Even within the space of the hospital room where she gave birth to her son, she says her husband used the layout of the ward to ensure she was unable to call for help whilst she was haemorrhaging blood:

> I was bleeding out. I can't explain it to you, I was covered in blood and I was screaming frantically, and no-one heard. He wouldn't go. I was screaming until my voice was going hoarse… And he just stood over the bed, smiling and laughing at me (p.16, l.306-312).

Mary suggests that her husband then ripped away her crutches and the call bell, telling her that she would die in childbirth and he would take the children away. She blames the spaces of the hospital for breaching their duty of care:

Nobody wanted to acknowledge that anything was wrong. I mean, I wasn't even off the bed when they stripped the sheets and ran out of the room with them, so that no one walks in and sees it. So, you could see the cover up tactics, they didn't even question him (Mary, p.17, l.327-330).

The hospital staff, she claims, lied about it at the criminal trial and, trying to cover up their failures, said she was fine and that they regularly checked on her. Throughout the pregnancy and the multiple injuries she says she sustained during the abuse, medical professionals allegedly failed to notice that Mary's husband policed her every move and didn't even document the abuse when Mary did have an opportunity to disclose it, and even when he admitted it in part to the doctor. Even Arabella, who's doctor had seemed really concerned by the sexual abuse she disclosed, said that she found out many years later, when asking to see her notes, that none of what she had revealed had ever been recorded: "She had been wonderful to me, so supportive and [yet] there was not a mention of domestic abuse in my notes" (p.13, l.256-257).

Meanwhile, Mary was apparently told by the courts that she had to compel her children to go and stay with her abuser, otherwise they would be taken away from her. Moreover, if the children spoke about the abuse, it was assumed she said that the mother was poisoning them against their father and they, again, would be taken away. Therefore, she says, she had to avoid projecting that fear onto them, pretending it hadn't happened and that they must have misremembered. As a result, Mary says she is petrified of the school space, public space, family space – in case her children talk to her teachers or to strangers or anyone else about what they saw or heard. Lucy, similarly, was apparently told that she shouldn't "leave the family home because if you do you will lose custody of your children. Because it'll be seen as family abandonment" (p.35, l.650-652), notwithstanding the abuse she described being subjected to there.

According to Mary, the courts even compelled her to go on dates with her abusive husband and pretend that everything was fine, even though her daughter had apparently reported all the violence she had witnessed at her father's hands. Then, having complied with the court orders, Mary says that it was put to her that she must have been lying about what she says he did to her "because you wouldn't have gone if you were so scared of him" (p.48, l.913-914). She says the courts then lost all the reports – with the medical profession and social services claiming they didn't have the funding to assist – and so, together with the apparent concealment by hospital staff, Mary said she wasn't believed at trial. She deems none of these spaces – supposedly appointed to help redress power imbalances – as safe. Of all these institutional spaces, Mary says instead, "so, constant manipulation… So, where's my safe

space? There's no safe space because now, who do you have? You don't have any, you've got no protection" (p.48, l.916-917).

Meanwhile, Bo describes the difficulties she believed she faced in regard to her husband and shared custody. Despite suspecting that something was very wrong with him (she says she was later told that he had become addicted to heroin), the courts allegedly would not listen to her concerns for the safety of her children. "Fathers for Justice had told him how to manipulate the system… I was getting more and more worried [and was told by my solicitor] you can't [stop contact] because you are in breach of a court order" (p.82, l.1950-1956). Because he was a social work manager, Bo says that he managed to convince the court that she had been malicious and was not telling the truth. "CAFCASS got involved. Again, there was no evidence. CAFCASS are bloody useless" (p.83, l.1964).

Relatedly, Margarie suggested that the 'help' she received after she had left her abuser was so inadequate that she sometimes wished she hadn't left him. She says that, after she had managed to get away from him, after she had had her fingers cut off, her ribs broken, her knees shattered, her teeth knocked out, her eye socket stabbed, had been raped, imprisoned for six days and had been beaten with a sledge hammer, the police apparently refused to put her in a refuge, saying that she was too "high-risk" for the other women inhabitants. She talks in very spatial terms about how she feels the authorities exacerbated the abuse by

> dragg[ing me] around the housing, after I got out of hospital. I had my hand in a brace so I couldn't wash myself, dress myself, do anything and they found me a bed & breakfast. So, I was dumped on the top floor, with all my suitcases and 160 quid and told, "We'll be in touch" (p.5, l.110-114).

Margarie implied that it was

> better being at home rather than being somewhere, just dumped, with your bruises and your bad thoughts… after you've been attacked like that, you can't be on your own. I'd rather go back, rather than being by myself… So, I went back to the house that I nearly died in (Margarie, p.5-6, l.118-121).

She recalls that, after becoming addicted to drugs and having had a child born of her abuser in the meantime, she sought help in institutional space once again. Living on the streets, homeless, and always on the move to avoid recapture, she says that the authorities wouldn't pay for a mother and baby rehabilitation clinic and only offered up a mother and baby unit, which didn't help. So, in the end, she felt compelled, she said, to put her baby up for adoption. This 'woeful' spatial inadequacy of the refuges available to those leaving abusers is repeated

throughout every account, with most suggesting that hostels are lonely, scary, dangerous and frightening:

> It *is* prison, it *is* a prison. It's like being stuck in the Isolation. You're sent down the Block, to think about it like a petulant child. You know, "Go and sit in that room. Go and stand in that corner." That's what it feels like. It's horrid and it's evil and it's wrong, it's wrong (Marjarie, p.15, l.360-363)

Indeed, several participants, such as Sukie, appeared very distressed about the refusal of their local authority to move them, even after Sukie had apparently disclosed that she had been abused by four different partners over seven years in the same house:

> There is just no help for you… they will not help you, because you are not classed as being at risk and volatile if you have managed to get yourself out of it, despite the fact that you have all the evidence, holes in the walls, dents, or just the memories (p.4, l.86-90).

The alleged manipulation by abusers and possible complicity of institutional spaces is summed up by Mary, who argues that,

> what I suffered through the injustice of the system, where I almost had my children taken away from me… Because of the systemic problems and everyone covering each other's tracks, and the manipulation and the injustice you suffer… they made mistakes and the system is very broken… Had I known that, I would probably have stuck it out… what I went through because of the midwives, the court system, seven years of absolute hell, what I suffered made what my husband did to me look okay (Mary, p.26, l.496-503).

3.2.3. Digital Space

Meanwhile, every participant, whose experiences were within the last decade or two, also spoke of suffering abuse online and by digital means and appeared to blame the expansion of digital space for colluding in their distress. Most suggested that the explosion in digital technologies had caused the artificial separation between public and private space to be increasingly blurred and porous, with Mary opining that "there's no boundaries. There's absolutely… in this day and age, at the moment, there's absolutely no boundary between private and public" (p.50, l.956-57): "It was just an extra online platform to get hold of me" (Georgie, p.44, l.1037); to "monitor everything I did" (Sukie, p.20, l.460).
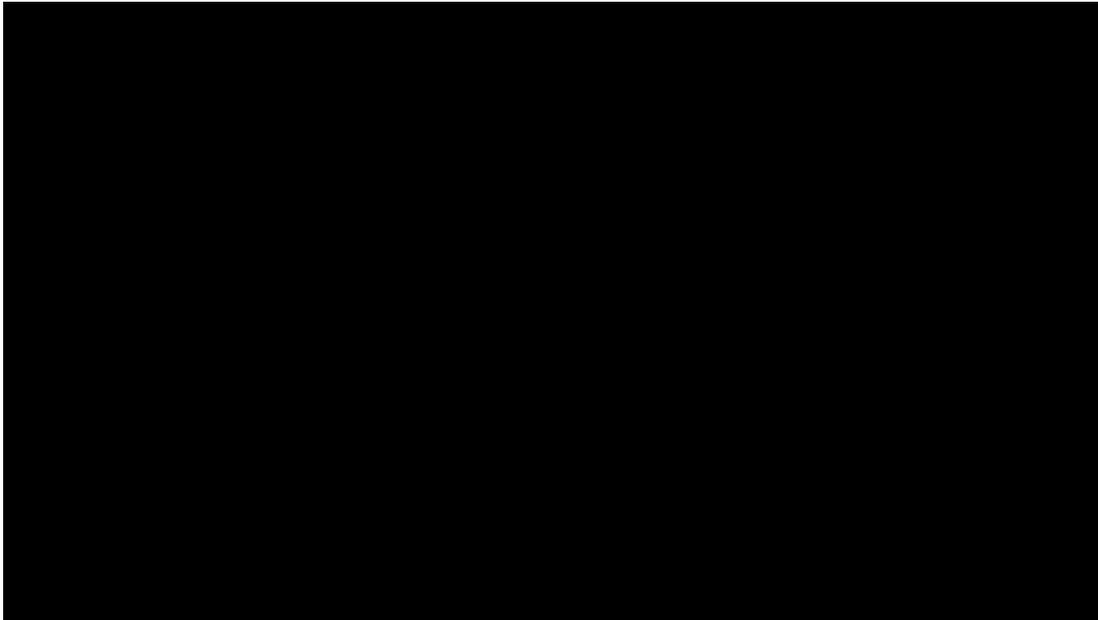
(produced by Lucy, after her interview)

Jill says that her partner "broke into" her email and social media accounts, sending messages to people, such as "she's a thieving slut, she's a terrible mother" (p. 23, l. 527). In this way, she suggests he knew exactly what she was doing and where, so that she could never get away from him. Sukie recalls her partner hacking both her phone and computer, so that he could watch everything she did, making her feel "violated, worse than any other way, because you have no sense of privacy" (p.71, l.1671). Mary says her husband used the virtual arena – and his knowledge of her email and banking passwords – to ensure that she did nothing without him knowing about it first.

The supra penetration of digital space into the private sphere is identified as a huge concern for participants, who suggest numerous examples of their abusers using that space to violate them and continue their subjugation. Jill talks about it as just "another way to control somebody, isn't it? It's another way of knowing what they're doing, of trying to dictate who they talk to" (p.45, l.1061-1062). Through emails, social media, phones, "it was just relentless… it's just an extra way, whereas 20 years ago, he would've been able to go to my grandparents' house and write letters. That would've been it. Whereas now, there's so many more tools" (p.47, l.1095-1102).

One of Sukie's abusive partners allegedly used digital space to force her to show him who she was with at any given time, as he telephoned at unpredictable intervals to check up on her. Often, she claims she was instructed to put on all the lights at 3am and use the telephone's "webcam to prove that nobody was in the flat" (p.11, l.241-243). Meanwhile, others describe thousands of text messages being sent (Georgie, p. 16) and complain of incessant phone calls (Jill, p.33). Jill remembers her partner stealing her mobile phone every time he attacked her and suggests that she had eight different numbers in the last year of their relationship

because of his insistence on removing all potential channels of communication to the outside world (p.22). The importance of a mobile telephone, both to the victim and to the abuser, can be seen across participants' accounts for clear topological reasons: When their partners confiscate their ability to connect with other people – families, friends, work, the police etc. – the digitally mediated relational possibilities likely relied upon for decades, this is a very obvious restriction of a participant's life space, and therefore, an undeniable contraction of their sense of agency.

In addition, some participants described sex tapes that they were apparently presented with when they tried to end the relationships. Georgie suggests that these were yet another way to manipulate her: "I've got this on you, if you think you are going anywhere this could be exposed" (p.40, l.946-947) and, by means of social media, this could "publicly be put out because… there's no privacy with YouTube" (Mary, p.5, l.964-965). Even those who say they left their abusers long before the heights of the digital boom suggest that, by means of digital space, they were suddenly forced to face them again. Lucy talks about her ex-husband using Facebook to open an account under a false persona, posting private photos of their daughter, and "grooming men to use this, to follow the Facebook page. And then he was channelling them to a business he had in XXX" (p.66, l.1242-1243).
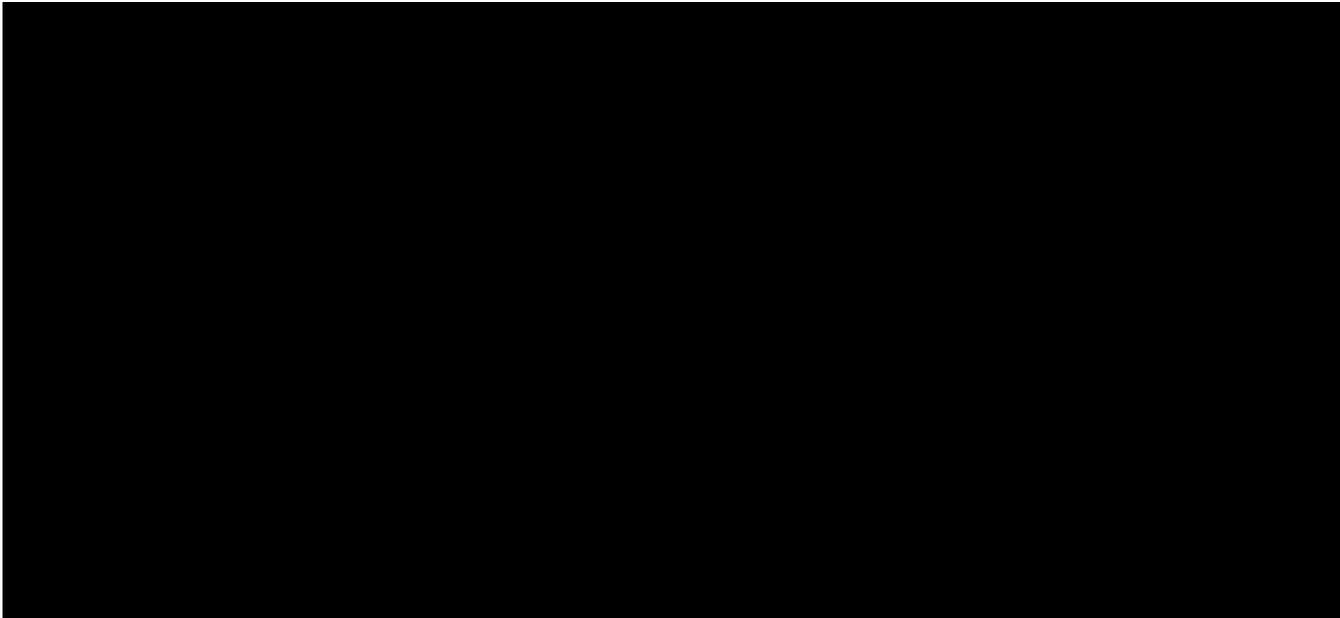
(produced by Alice, after her interview)

On account of the unparalleled extension of reach made possible by digital space, participants suggest never really feeling safe. Thus, whilst being online and offline is conceptualised no differently by Lewin's (1936) topology, since both provide the setting and context for the

experience of mediated relational connecting, unbounded by space or time, it can be seen in these accounts that abusers utilise social and digital media to form real 'boundaries' (Lewin, 1936) in a victim's psychological life space due to the way that the potential for connectedness is negatively impacted. Thus, regardless of where they might be in the world, Georgie, for example, presents a picture of never being free from her abuser and the anxiety he created. She says that because of this constant infiltration of space,

> it's all in the head. You can't get away from it. Wherever you go… you've still got things that are going through your head. You are still trying to filter it through and you are still trying to analyse it. There just seems no way out (Georgie, p.7, l.158-162).

The only space Georgie felt she could go to was "time" (p.53, l.1247). Lucy sums up the problem, as she sees it, for women posed by digital space:

> That's the trouble, it's between places. He's managed to finally exploit places so much that he's managed to commit abuse, almost, in the space between countries…. I mean, he's an absolutely classic exploiter of space so it's the distance between things. He does it all the time (Lucy, p.68, l.1276-1281).

Her conclusion is that she "gradually realised… that unsafe space was wherever he was, and also was within his mind-set" (p.49, l.919-920).

3.2.4. Theoretical Discussion

As can be seen from Betty's comments above ("they're all at it"), the impression given by each participant is of everyday terror being played out *in* and *throughout* every realm of society, not just in concrete physical spaces. This illustrates the point made by Massey (2005) and Lewin (1936), that space is not a static container, nor even measureable, per se, but is defined by the *totality* of our possible *relations* (to others, to objects, to places, to thoughts, to experience) that we are a part of and which therefore inevitably shape us, our behaviour and our experience. In terms of everyday terror, this behaviour and experience is of violence and coercion, meaning that abuse must have inherently spatial dimensions and be reciprocally constructed by space (Springer & Le Billon, 2016).

In relation to topology, as Springer and Le Billon (2016) argue, such an integrative conceptualisation of violence and abuse manages to succeed in integrating and incorporating all the different *relational* connections between its various expressions: "Even the most seemingly place-bound expressions of violence are mediated through and integrated within the *wider assemblage of space*" (2016, p.2; Springer, 2011, italics added). As the participants

above describe, it is rarely the space itself which affords any kind of experience, so much as the way that the people and objects within the space are configured and relate or interact with one another. Therefore, whilst it may be true that "violence sits in places, in terms of the way in which we perceive its manifestation as a localized and embodied experience" (p.90), Springer (2011) argues that when place is reconceptualised as a 'relational assemblage' (Massey, 2005; Tucker et al, 2019; Brown & Reavey, 2019), this very notion is contested.

Indeed, it is argued that re-theorising place so as to take account of its fluid, changing and diffuse nature, co-constructed and mediated by our broader experiences of space, necessarily alters how we think about violence and abuse. No longer narrowed by its material expression as an isolated act, event or outcome (Springer, 2012), violence and abuse are understood as part of an "unfolding process, derived from the broader geographical phenomena and temporal patterns of the social world" (Springer, 2011, p.90). In this way, Springer and Le Billon (2016) suggest that a way of thinking about violence is opened up that moves beyond the typical conceptualisation as exclusively place-based (Tyner & Inwood, 2014) and is, therefore, more in line with theorists who, like Pain (2015; 2014a; 2014b) and Koskela (Koskela & Pain, 2000), appreciate the relational geographies of both space and abuse and who reject the traditional distinction between its 'public' and 'private' manifestations (Brickell, 2008).

Indeed, by highlighting the spatiality of violence in a special issue of 'Political Geography', Springer and Le Billon (2016) encourage us to consider more emphatically the ways in which violence and abuse are interwoven throughout every domain of our lives, and particularly in our encounters with institutional space and the many structures which shape our societal arrangement. The scarcity of research into the impact that structural, societal or institutional factors have on everyday terrorism is, they argue, "typical of psychological research into violence against women" (Salazar & Cook, 2002; Bostock et al., 2009, p.96) and, as can be seen from every participants' account, the spaces of the medical and mental health services, the criminal and family courts, the police, the quasi-governmental bodies, the help-seeking services and child and social care community, are all allegedly implicated in the abuse victims suffer. The typical framing of everyday terrorism as being particular to a certain space, place or person, as opposed to acknowledging the complex relational assemblies which everywhere facilitate and prolong its expression through the arrangement of structural space, is therefore intensely problematic. Indeed, it is argued that without recourse to Lewin's (1936) topological approach to psychological experience, the impact of these non-proximal, non-containing and immeasurable spaces on human suffering might well have evaded exploration.

On the other hand, a 'relational' (Massey, 2005) reinterpretation of space enables us to start questioning how "seemingly local expressions of violence are instead always imbricated within wider socio-spatial and political economic patterns" (Springer, 2011, p.91). Although specifically proposing that neoliberal reforms and their associated political and institutional structures engender poverty and inequality to produce violence and abuse, especially in relation to minorities (Chatterjee, 2009; Harvey 2005; Hugill & Brogan 2011), Springer's (2011) argument could be adapted to fit the structures which, according to Mary, Arabella, Polly, Margarie and the others, prop up and help to perpetuate everyday terrorism. Indeed, it could be argued that domestic abuse facilitated and (re)produced by the systems and institutions which comprise patriarchy, as well as the discourses surrounding and perpetuated by them, is 'structural' violence (Galtung, 1969), as opposed to the 'direct' violence every participant alleges that the abuser enacted himself (Springer & Le Billon, 2016). Alternatively, as Mary describes it, 'systemic violence': "Because again, the system was set up [by men], it's just, it's almost like the systemic flow that's integrated in everything across the board, where … safeguarding [institutions] comes first" (p.51, l.972-974).

Structural violence is arguably even more dangerous than direct violence, on account of both our unrelenting inclination to obscure abuse in its institutional forms and our tendency to regard violence, due to its opacity, as only ever directly expressed (Benjamin, 1986). As Betty proposed:

> [the] problem is that nobody ever thinks to blame them [the courts and helping professions] … people rarely see what's really going on behind the scenes, the bruises and broken ribs seem more damaging but they're not… The rest of it is worse, more hidden, more secret, much more oppressive (p.43, l. 824-827).

According to Gregory and Pred (2006, p.6), violence and abuse compress "the sometimes forbiddingly abstract spaces of geopolitics and geo-economics into the intimacies of everyday life and the innermost recesses of the human body", whereas structural abuse, and the violence produced as a result of the dominant normative discourse, is arguably just as perilous, if not more so, than that which we observe through direct expression. As Springer (2011) argues, because of its sheer pervasiveness, systematisation, and ordinariness, we are habitually blinded from seeing the impact that structural violence and abuse have on our society. For example, most of the participants suggested that they originally believed that the police, doctors and courts would help them, whereas "what I went through because of the midwives, the court system, seven years of absolute hell, what I suffered then made what my husband did to me look okay" (Mary, p.26, l.496-498). This means that abused women feel as if they are constantly let down by "the system… the manipulation and the injustice" (Mary,

p.26, l.500-503); it is "an absolute false sense of security. Had I known [about the structural abuse], I would have most probably stuck it out" (Mary, p.26, l.494-495).

Feminist geographers have been arguing in a similar vein for decades; that landscapes of fear are inherently gendered and produced through violence (Katz, 2007; Mehta, 1999) and there are many who attribute this to the deliberate intentions of patriarchal society, through the constructions of institutional space: "Ours is a hierarchical, heterosexist, and white-male-dominated society. What [is]… constantly obscured is how that social organization is maintained. What should be obvious is that all oppressed peoples struggle to rise... That means that the relations society deems appropriate - that is, white heterosexual male dominance and the concomitant subordination of women, people of color, homosexuals, and the poor - can only be maintained by constant assertion and enforcement of that regime" (Kaufman, 1992, p.236). As Bostock et al. (2009) argue, "many of [the] systems of support may have perpetuated practices or views that reinforced the tactics of abuse, particularly by allowing the exertion of male privilege (such as not challenging the economic costs carried by women in leaving their relationships and homes, or by normalizing violence against women) or supporting views that women carry the responsibility for relationships, and for ending the abuse perpetrated against them" (p.106-107).

Indeed, some feminist and other structuralist critiques have been at pains to highlight the underlying social, political and economic institutions which are invested in breeding fear, suggesting that, in contrast to the privatisation of everyday terror, 'global terror' is deliberately manufactured and reproduced on a national scale in order to generate unity and opposition for political ends (Pain, 2009), whereas despite the 'everywhereness' of domestic abuse, it tends largely to be hidden or excused (Pain, 2014a). That so many of the participants above comment that, in general, there was a relative lack of awareness and discourse in public space, or indeed online, surrounding everyday terror suggests that where those are motivated, it is possible to keep such apparently 'private' issues an "inconvenient and potentially embarrassing secret" (Alice, p.44, l.837). This secrecy, or lack of knowledge, helps to explain why so many participants didn't appreciate that help might be available and paves the way for O'Doherty, Taket, Valpied and Hegarty's (2016) findings that recognition of a partner's abusive behaviours is a pre-requirement for therapy in the first place.

Moreover, it is argued that "what is counted, classified and criminalised as" abuse reflects the way in which "power and difference are sedimented into society… [abuse] is not pre-given, neither transhistorical or transgeographical: it has no pre-social existence but comes into being through political practice" (Tyner & Inwood, 2014, p. 774) and is therefore intimately linked to the "modes of production that both constitute, and are constituted by, society" (Tyner

& Inwood, 2014, p. 772). Indeed, Smail (2001) suggests that all mental distress is related to imbalances in power, from the intimate power dynamics of everyday life to broader societal power inequalities, subjugation and injustice and, in support of this, Cromby, Harper and Reavey (2013) point out that all oppressed groups, including women, tend to suffer greater incidences of mental distress overall. Thus, Kearney (2001) argues that everyday terrorism is inherently linked to a cultural context which normalises abuse in relationships and encourages idealised romance, whilst feminists argue that the power to depict and condemn certain forms of abuse while legitimising others rests on an authority afforded the political structures of our society built by and for men, as well as on the dominant discourses handed down by a traditionally male elite, both of which could be seen as explaining why, until as late as 2003, husbands were exempt from prosecution under U.K. statutory law for raping their wives (Sexual Offences Act, 2003).

Meanwhile, Pain (2015) proposes that all distributions of power are essentially related to intimacy and deems the tendency in political geography to overlook intimate struggles somewhat peculiar, given its principal interest in the way that space, place and scale "produce and reproduce a whole range of social and political phenomena" (2015, p.64). Thus, proposing that war and domestic violence are strands of a single complex of aggression, Pain (2014a, 2014b; 2015) argues that both are equally intimate and political, both "made and lived" (p.64) through space. Indeed, she sees it as concerning that domestic violence is rarely framed as political, despite its systemic nature, the fact that it is motivated by a desire to exercise control, and the way in which it maps onto wider social and cultural power structures, such as patriarchy, class, race and sexuality (Dobash & Dobash, 1992; Holmes, 2009; Sokoloff & Dupont, 2005). Similarly hooks (2000), using the term 'patriarchal terrorism' to highlight its causality, signifies the role it plays in female subordination by men. Indeed, most feminists argue that the conceptualisation of domestic abuse as intimate or non-political is deliberately intended to ensure that domestic abuse remains a 'privatised' problem (Duncan, 1996) and therefore beyond the scope of the authorities, in a similar way to the steadfast determination to protect privacy as one of our most fundamental human rights is arguably related less to concerns over the freedom of the individual than to perpetuating a broader system of gendered power relations (Hammer, 2002).

Similarly, threaded through every participants' account is an emphasis on the unhelpful, unnecessary nature of the traditional distinction between public and private space in everyday terror. Whether this conclusion is founded on the basis of the marital home being subsumed by others and rendered public, as in Lucy's and Mary's accounts (Ahmed et al., 2008), or whether it derives from recollections of abuse being played out in public spaces, as in

Margarie's and Georgie's stories, or whether it is drawn from the alleged complicity of structural spaces of care and law-enforcement in participants' ongoing abuse, the claim seems to be unanimous that "there's absolutely no boundary between private and public" (Mary, p.50, l.957). This response is particularly acute when participants discuss the effect of digital technologies on their experience of abuse and subjugation, with most describing the internet and social media as providing yet another platform through which their abusers can monitor, threaten and violate them. Thus, whereas Goodings and Tucker (2018) promote the benefits of social media as a therapeutic tool, the participants above describe it in terms of its ability to terrorise, whilst still assigning agency to the men who use it in this regard. In this way, distinctions between public and private are seen to further disintegrate whilst the divide appears increasingly fluid, porous and muddied.

Perhaps, then, the common understanding of domestic abuse as occasioned only in private, individualised space mirrors and maintains its conceptualisation as non-political, whereas in fact everyday terrorism, like war, is multiply situated (Pain, 2015; 2014a; 2014b). As the stories of the participants above suggest, domestic abuse seeps out everywhere and spreads from the home, through family and friends, into community settings and the structures of wider society (Jones, 2010). Moreover, those spaces are described by every participant as somehow perpetuating the abuse they suffered. They suggest that the actions, and sometimes inactions, of the authorities tasked with protecting victims of intimate partner violence often appear to make their situation significantly worse. As Bostock et al. (2009) found, the services and systems accessed by participants often reinforce the abuse by failing to protect victims and their children, failing to speak openly about the abuse epidemic, failing to name and shame abuse, failing to appreciate the risks and dangers of escaping, and failing to remedy the substantial costs of the victim leaving. Worse, Bostock et al. (2009) found that women also believed that they would be judged and blamed by public and other service providers, especially if they had unwittingly exposed their children to abuse or had found it difficult to leave. Similarly, all of the participants above describe a system which is at best inefficient and cumbersome, easy to exploit by the abuser, and at worst a space which actually serves to reinforce and prolong the abuse. As Fugate et al. (2005) suggest, mandatory prescriptive policies which require female complainants to report abuse and prosecute their intimate partners are too tightly wedded to enforced relocation to hostels ill-equipped for purpose and typically far from the victim's family, friends and work, as per Margarie's account.

Thus, not only are the spaces of 'care' for victims of domestic abuse an important aspect of their abuse but it can also be argued that changes in the settings allocated for distress and recovery are an integral part of their ongoing terror (Pain, 2015). As the accounts of the

participants above suggest, the opportunities and resources to contest violence, to access institutional sources of support, and to attain a modicum of safety during or after the abuse is highly contingent on the particular socio-political context (Sokoloff & Dupont, 2005). As Giles and Hyndman (2004) argue, in the context of international warfare, similar geographically situated intersecting structures of gender, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, religion and sexuality determine who is most likely to lose. Analogously, for the women participating in this research, those whose citizenship was less secure ("I was a nonentity"; Mary, p.7, l.119) and those of lower economic class ("I was broken financially"; Mary, p.44, l.848) describe finding the repercussions of reporting abuse much harder to bear. This accords with Pain's (2015) argument that "appraisal of the economic and social consequences of leaving – future security in its widest sense – is an important part of the complex risk assessments undertaken as people plan from the rocky ground of violent relationships" (p.71).

3.3 SPACES OF RESISTANCE: MOVEMENT, CONNECTION AND AGENCY

So it's, again, space, isn't it? And space, you see space ties in indirectly with freedom, it ties in with your identity, it ties in with, well, everything, everything about you (Mary, p.39, l.749-751).

Whilst not necessarily immediately aware of how space was used by survivors as a strength, to affect some kind of tentative, incremental resistance during the currency of the abuse, over the duration of every interview, each participant started to suggest that certain spaces had somehow helped in their resistance. Those who started out by saying that there was no space they associated with safety or wellbeing during the abuse soon volunteered accounts which contained examples of space and spatial practice that appeared to enable survival. Some suggest that this resistance takes the form of mere endurance, by becoming "a human chameleon" (Arabella, p.42, l.875) or, as Lucy puts it, an "expert in him" (p.54, l.1016), in order to keep their heads down and incite less rage. Other participants portray resistance as much more active, much more strategic – albeit perhaps subconsciously – involving the recruitment of the spaces of their everyday lives to help mobilise and shape that opposition. Thus, this theme is broken into three subthemes, with both verbal and visual data interpreted to suggest that certain spaces enable movement, connection with others, with nature, and with spirituality, and an augmented agency produced by engagement in work, in exercise and in household routines and rituals, which combine to marginally alleviate distress.

3.3.1 Movement

I think for me, it was the fact I could still move. Even if I had nowhere else to go, I could still go somewhere. Does that make any sense?... Even if nobody knew or helped me, I could pretend I was free… I think he felt the same. He seemed happier on that boat because it was constant movement… and in the next place, we could pretend that it was a different person… [and the violence] would never happen again (Alice, p.15, l.301-314).
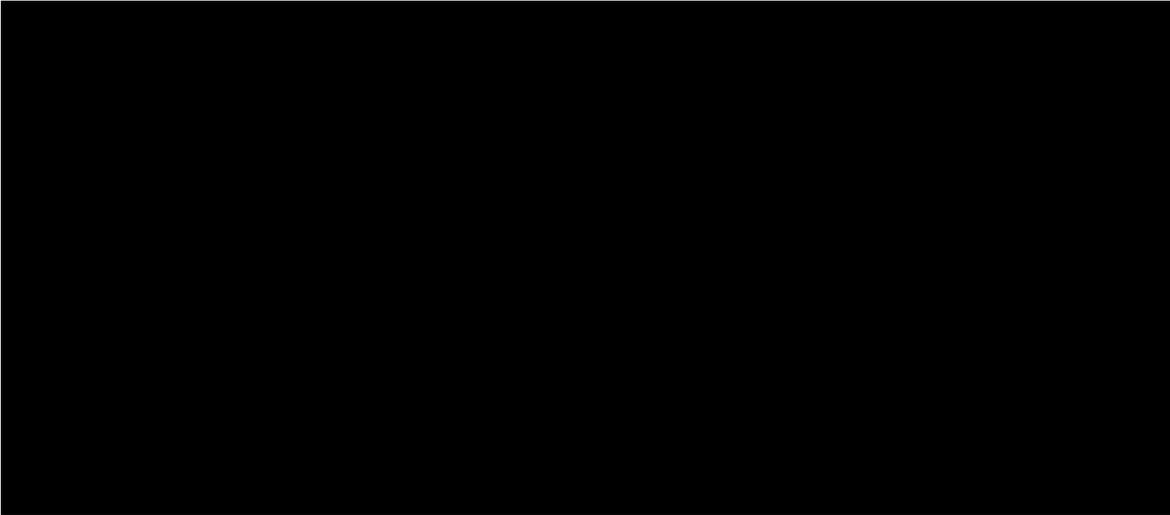
(produced by Betty)

For every participant, apart from Polly who says she was either confined to the house or perpetually accompanied by her husband, the car and the relative freedom – in terms of movement – that it afforded, was deemed their "saving grace" (Betty, p.7, l.124). Thus, even for Bo, who begun her story by saying there was absolutely nowhere safe to go, the car implied a place of respite. She described using the car as a means by which to escape, albeit temporarily, from the abuse she said she encountered at home. She recalls driving to the side of the road when things were heating up, taking her daughter with her, to give her

time to think and time to plan how I was going to go back in… How, just plan like whether I was going to go in the back door, the front door, or [whispers] gosh, sorry [crying]… I think how stupid I was but sometimes I would just sit there and plan my next move, do you know what I mean, and how I would diffuse it (p.28-29, l.668-686).

This 'thinking time' would apparently enable her to create

a bit of space in my own head, where he wasn't able to get at me for just a second or two… I got quite good at sort of manoeuvring around situations… like I would say I was going shopping, he couldn't drive so I had the trump card there… it was massive. My car was my safe place (p.30, l.696-711).

The car appeared to have a different but equally special meaning for Mary, too. She, who had once so enjoyed the freedom made possible by being able to drive, said she was soon prohibited from doing so and, in the process, was convinced of her incompetence behind the wheel. Whereas her husband allegedly used it to 'imprison' her and to exacerbate pain, as he drove to hospital whilst she was in labour, purposefully using the bumps in the road to increase the enduring 'agony' from a previous attack, she says it soon became absolutely critical to her that she learn to drive again after she had left her husband, because this breakdown in her confidence was symbolic of the entrapment she said she experienced and the incompetent identity that still clung to her. She describes

> the boundaries I had to break to bring myself to the place where I felt confident enough to drive the car… and now, getting back into my space and owning my confidence again, the car has become a space of confidence for me… it's now my space… it's become a space I've wanted (p.40, l.765-772).

In this extract, the car could be seen as extending Mary's thinking from her head to the world, to objects and space (see Clark & Chalmers, 1998). As such, whether it was access to a car that enabled movement – and thereby facilitated, albeit temporary, escape – or some other way of moving through space, notions of movement were threaded throughout most of the accounts. Many of the participants talked about the ability to get away – for work (Sukie), university (Bo and Jill) or even to do the shopping (Betty) – and how this change of space apparently enabled a temporary change and lift in subject position.
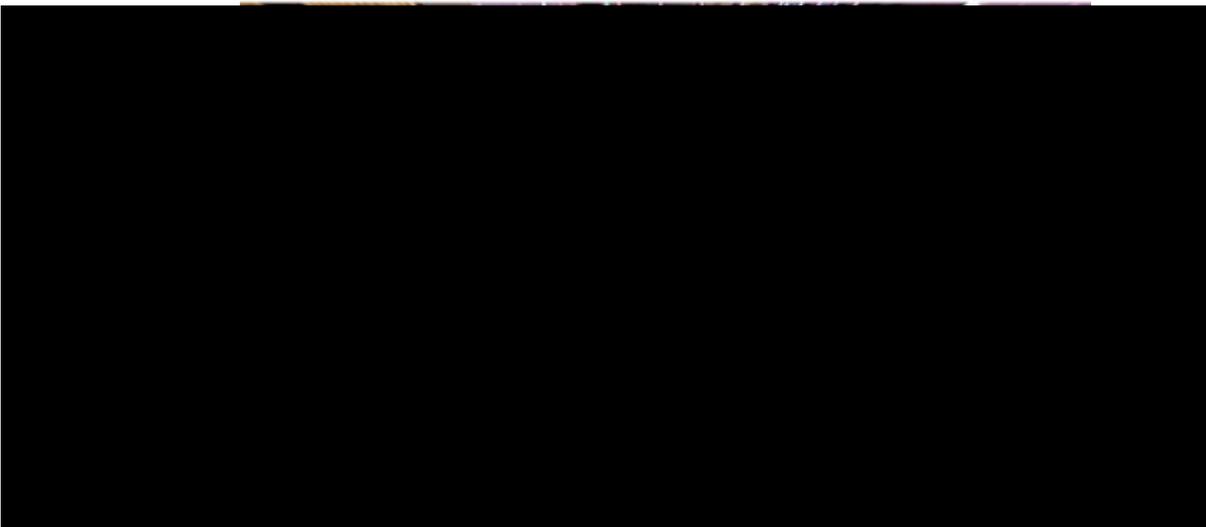
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Again, certain objects were highlighted as being key to this potential freedom of movement; Jill talked about how she had hidden her bag and her phone whenever an attack appeared imminent, as well as keeping a ready-prepared "rucksack [packed] and hid[den] in the bushes at the front of the house" (p.29, l.677).

For Margarie, whose account suggested absolutely no safe space during the relationship, the active resistance seemed to come later – when she was trying to hide from her abuser. She says she chose to live "on the streets, just constantly running… five years I lived on the streets… I never stayed in one place long enough for him to find me" (p.4-5, l.86-128). She describes it as moving "to different areas, and with my drug addiction, I just didn't want to stay in one place for long. You don't want to think, you don't want to feel" (p.17, l.391-393). Thus, movement for Margarie was key to her survival: "I've been moving ever since my attack, continuously" (p.29, l.676).

(contributed by Lucy}

Similarly, a number of participants talked about how physical exercise and movement through town and cities (when running or walking, for example) or through the water of the sea or swimming pool contributed to a much more positive outlook and helped them to stay strong during the abuse. Lucy likened it to feeling revitalised and said that it gave her the energy to carry on. She talked about how doing lengths of the swimming pool was "like I was swimming away from my marriage" (p.4, l.68-69) and was itself a form of 'resistance' – her limbs pushing against the water, in the same way that "autistic children [need something to resist against] when they feel a lot of sensory overload" (p.7, l.111-112). Margarie said that running always gave her the feeling of being able to breathe again, even though she may actually be out of breath at the time.

For Betty, who said she went running as often as she could get away from her abuser, it was the knowledge that every step she took without him was a gradual piece of movement away from him. She said,

I felt as though, being able to move away from him… [even just] for a little while or a minute or whatever meant that I was strong enough… could be as strong as an athlete… and that maybe one day I could use that movement and make it longer, or make it last forever, maybe (p.65, l.1220-1225).

Alice suggests that movement was really important to both her and her husband during the abuse. She says he, also, seemed to hate that part of himself which was angry and violent and, as a result, they both sought out adventure together, leaving places they associated with rage and unhappiness and "moving to new places to find another, better way of living" (p.3, l.48). She gave the example of their happiest time together being on a sailing boat, where they would live and work, both moving through space and leaving something of the past always just that little way behind them. She contributed the following photograph which she described as crystalising that memory for her.
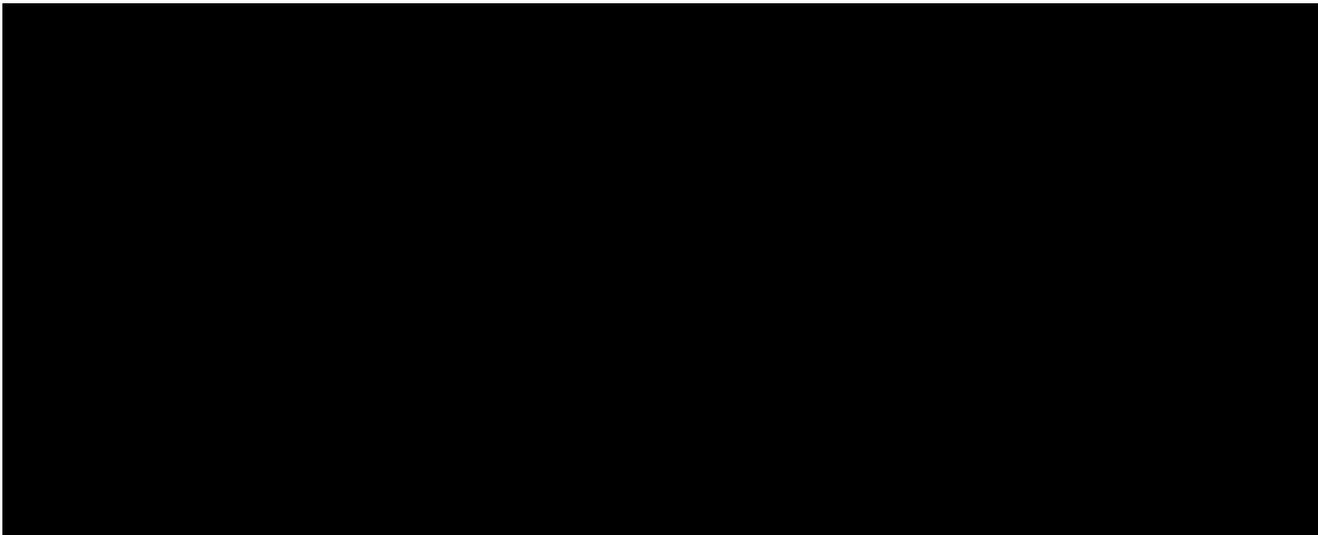
(contributed by Alice)

3.3.2 Connection

So, after you've been attacked like that, you can't be on your own… You need company after you've been through something like that… you need to have someone that you can go to… to talk, to cry… You can't be left to sit in silence. Bad things happen and that's when depression really, really kicks in and that's probably when you're most suicidal (Marjarie, p.14-15, l.324-347)

Spaces of connectivity appear critical to every participant's struggle with abuse. Whether these were spaces through which participants formed relationships or connected with their faith or whether they were places that helped them feel more connected to nature and to the universe, participants unanimously talked about how connecting with something, with someone, or feeling as if they were a smaller part of something much larger, made them feel stronger somehow and more alive.
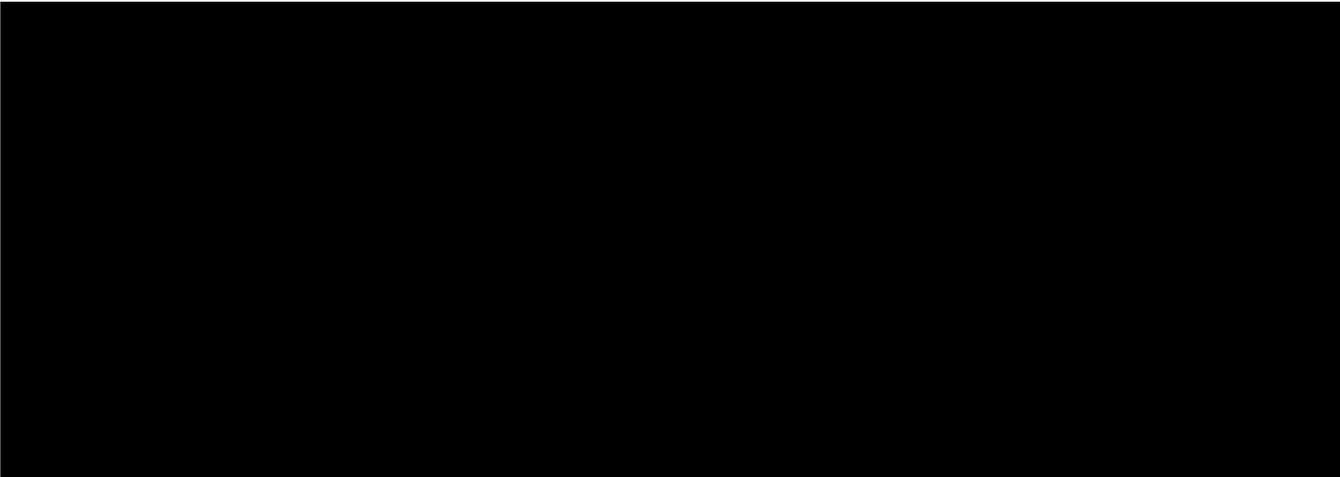
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Mary, for example, talks about the only place that she could escape to was her faith and her belief in Jesus, which gave her the strength to carry on. This also provided some kind of relief from the isolation she said she was forced to endure because, being far from home, "the only thing that I really connected with was in my Mass, the church. And being Catholic, its universal… so it's the only place that I found, like, home away from home" (p.10, l.185-188). Whilst simultaneously providing her some, limited, access to the outside world and thereby reducing her isolation, she recalls her faith also providing her with a psychological space of safety: She describes her faith as being 'inside' her, as an antidote to the physical entrapment by her abuser. Mary talks a lot about how, instead of being able to find any geographical place of safety, she had to create a safe space inside her:

> So you're not even thinking about safe spaces, you're just thinking of preservation in your mind, sanctuary up there in your head, because the safe space is inside your head, because you've got to tell yourself, "I can seek…" Because the pain is so blinding in itself that you have to find a place where you're feeling loved, because you can't feel the love anywhere else" (p.13, l.237-241).

Connecting to a higher power in that space was, according to Mary, vital for her continued survival.
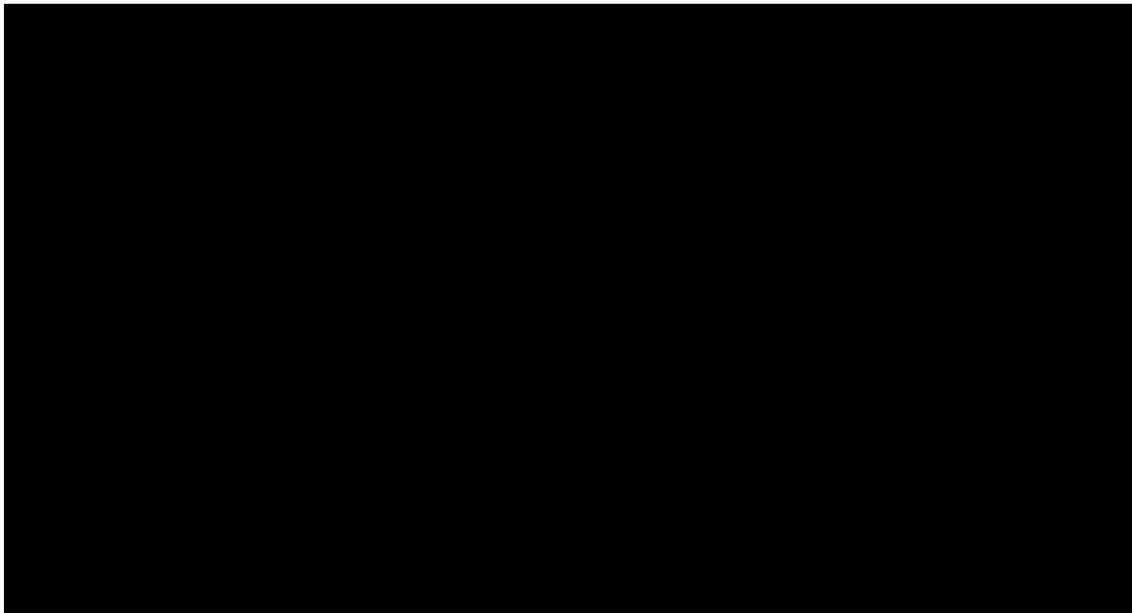
(produced for Arabella)

For Arabella, too, "since that moment on the XXX date" (p.2, l.24), when she said she first felt the "pull" to walk to the village church at 3am, after yet another night of degrading sexual abuse, she felt instantly connected – to God, to her faith and to nature. She said that she realised that she would be safe because God had a plan; connecting to Him in this way and to the universe that she was an infinitesimal part of gave her the strength to resist. Meanwhile, the space of the church itself was also described as a place where Arabella could form relationships and feel like she was connected to others. Although it was a long time before she spoke freely of what was happening to her at home, the first person she said she told was the deacon in the church. She recalls how members of the congregation

> took us under their wing and would invite us to church picnics, stuff like that, or just family things… I had such a supportive group of people that I met through the church. The young women of the village took me to their hearts (p.15-16, l.301-314).

The way Polly described her abuse made it appear quite different in nature, permeating every realm, being mostly confined to the house, rarely allowed out and only ever with her abuser standing over her. As such, she says it was almost impossible to find a space to connect with anyone at all. However, on account of her fibromyalgia, she remembers being able to get to a doctor and, although always accompanied, the doctor apparently insisted one day that her husband let her come in alone and that he wait outside. She says he then told her husband that he wanted to see her weekly, rather than monthly, and insisted that her husband leave her there and return later. Whenever she turned up, however, she recalls being told to wait in the waiting room and not being seen by the doctor until the very end of the hour – and then only just for a few minutes. She believes that the doctor could sense the abuse she was suffering and so determined to create a safe space for her for an hour in the surgery where

she could connect with others and reconnect with herself: "and that was the only break I had from [the abuse]" (p.23, l.426).
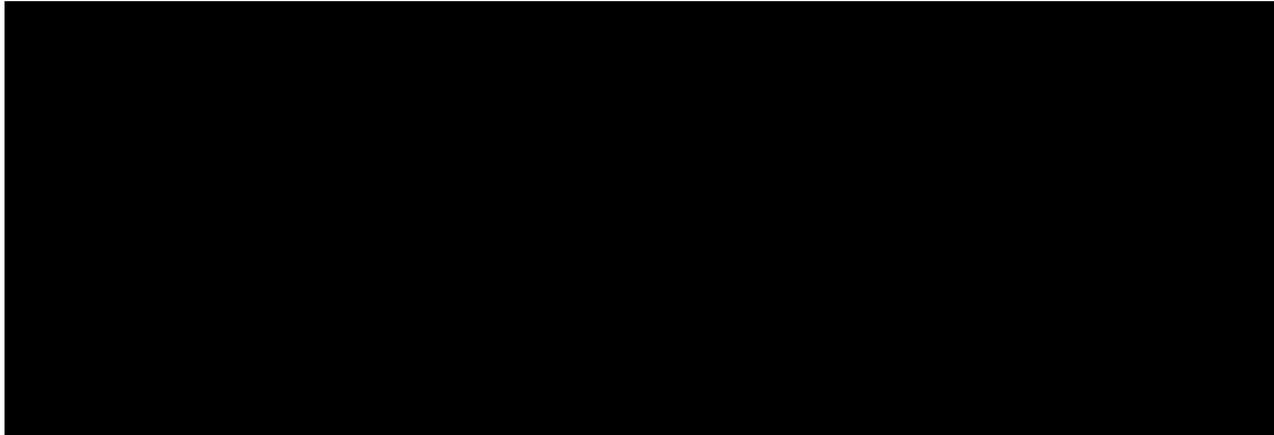
(contributed by Betty)

For Betty, too, it was the ability to connect with others that she says gave her some temporary respite from her partner. She describes how even a short trip to the shopping mall or the supermarket, speaking freely to the cashiers and strangers on the escalators or in the aisles, would renew her faith in humankind:

> I just thought that by talking to normal people and seeing that they didn't think I was stupid and needed punishing… I would remember that there was another way, something else… I could choose anything. This may be my life now but not everyone is like XXX… There was hope (p.54, l.1261-1265).

She goes on to describe the desperation she felt when she had to spend 10 days with her partner in XXX, with no way to leave the house, unable to speak to a "normal human being" who wouldn't beat her at will. It seems from her account as if those connections she made in the mall and supermarket were absolutely vital to her sense of self and, during the interview, she laughs at what strangers must have thought of her, as she determinedly stopped them and made eye contact, willing them to acknowledge her and exchange some pleasantries; to give her just a few minutes of innocent, meaningless conversation.

Repeated through most of the accounts is the idea that certain spaces afforded participants the ability to 'breathe' ("space where I could breathe"; Lucy, p.9, l.151) and that getting air, unfettered or tainted by abuse ("the stench of fear"; Mary, p.43, l.824) seemed really important to how they managed to maintain their resistance for so long. For Lucy, who said she feared her husband's inevitable disapproval as soon as she made friends, it was easier to connect with nature:

Because everything that destroys that manipulative nonsense that was always about things… I [needed] to get away from the city world because… you can't manipulate [nature]. And you can't change it… And I remember a very strong sense of healing being there… and I think, again, it was just that feeling of the unchangingness and something in harmony. I know it's in my head but I mean that's just how it was, in harmony with nature. It was very important to me to be grounded… [nature is] bigger than us and our manipulations. And I just, it felt very freeing (Lucy, p.63-64, l.1187-1206).

Almost every participant emphasised the feeling of being connected to something bigger when they were in green spaces and the therapeutic effect that parks, hills and the 'endless scenery' had on them.
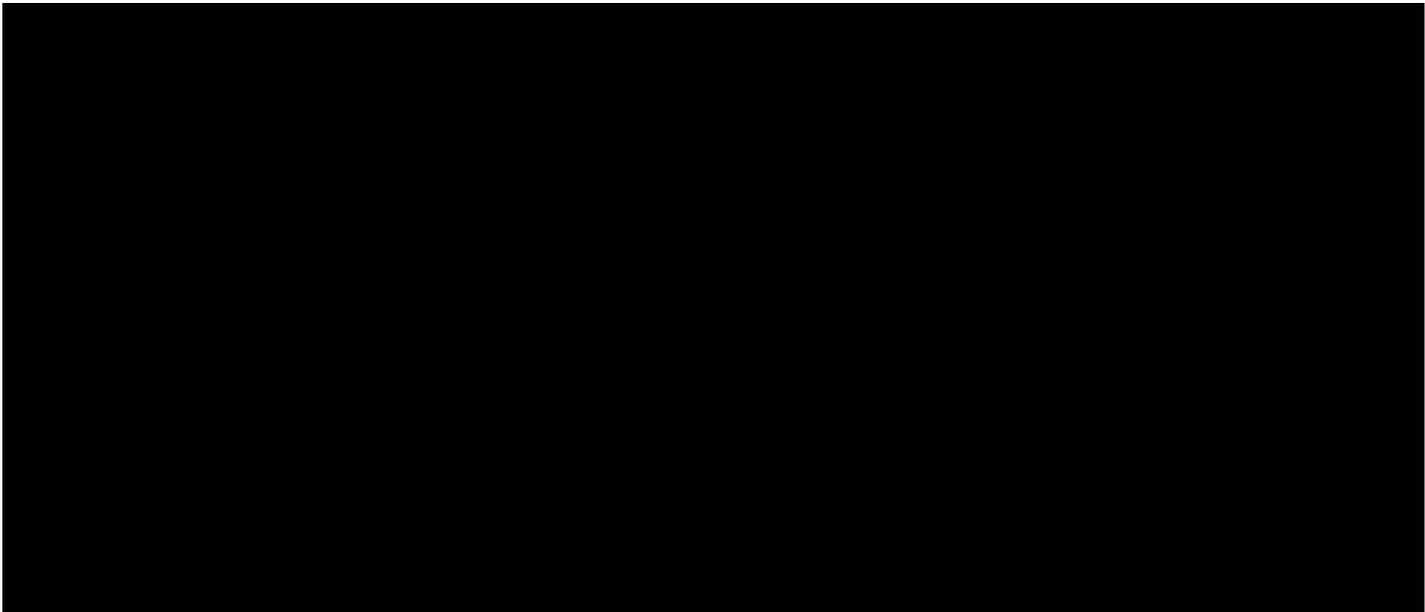
(produced by Lucy)

The idea that nature somehow connects us to others, people we don't know and might never meet, seems to be a powerful reassurance for most participants. In the same way that Mary and Arabella suggest that the spaces of their faith connect them with some place inside themselves and with others, those who seek harmony appear to find it in spaces of nature: They both share a common thread – the idea that the terrible things that are happening to them are only a tiny part of something much bigger and more profound, some higher purpose, and that, by connecting with others, with the world – through faith and through nature – they will never be alone. As Betty says,

that's the thing… it's so much bigger than us and it's been around for millions of years, so I feel like what I'm going through I can survive… And he'll never be as powerful as [the universe] (p.62, l.1163-1169).
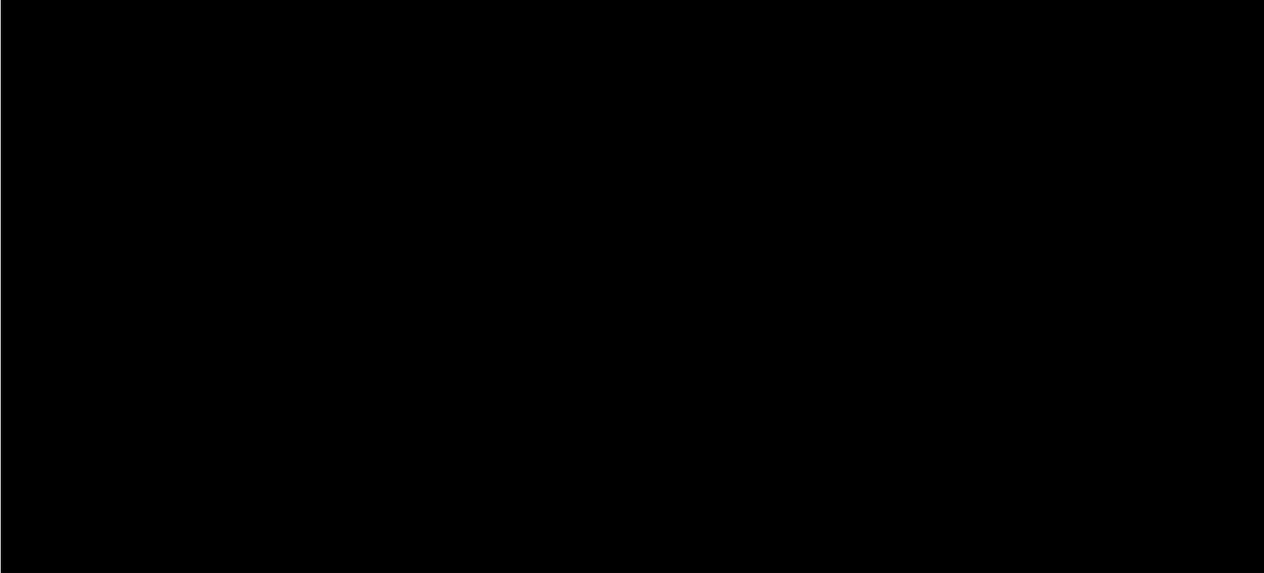
(produced for Sukie)

Most of the participants highlighted spaces close to water as somewhere they could feel more connected. In addition to its 'calming' properties, Sukie talks about its potential to just wash away her problems. In addition, more often than not, participants would single out the contribution of the sea to feelings of wellbeing. The attraction is explained by Sukie, who says it is

> unpredictable and nothing controls it… A river is controlled, a river can be moved where it needs to be moved, or stopped where it needs to be stopped. You can't stop the sea… you can't control it. You can guide it but you can't stop it. It takes down oil ships and destroys lives. There is no controlling that, and that is amazing, the thought of being taken into that freedom (p.51-52, l.1201-1218).

On the "rough water, with the wind… I felt freer there than I do anywhere else" (Sukie, p.63, l.1488-1489). Alice suggests that it might be because the sea appears "endless and yet the horizon is so near… [it] makes me feel like there's a whole new world waiting, just for me, and it's so very close; if only I could get there" (p.51, l.953-957).

3.3.3 Agency

> I was a channel, really, you become a conduit, it's true, you do become that helper because you become a conduit for all that feeling… [and in order to dissipate that] I

had to [go to XXX to] get in touch with the previous me… [and to] remind myself where I came from (Lucy, p.63, l.1183-1185).

Another salient aspect of the resistance is the way that participants discuss their attempts to use space to achieve a more agentic subject position and to dispel their victim identities, using a number of spatial practices to promote and support agency. This can be seen throughout the participants' accounts in the way that they tried to manage and order the home space, and to ensure the children respected the boundaries of the relevant rooms, so as to soothe and manage their abusive partners' tempers. Most participants describe their attempts to cook appropriate meals, clean and tidy the house ("he had me believe that I was filthy and the house was too"; Betty, p.7, l.142), let their abusers "do anything [they] wished to me in the bedroom" (Arabella, p.9, l.164), as well as arranging and decorating the space in ways which they believed were conducive to the good mood of their partners:

> I arranged [the house] just as he liked it… every day checking the chairs and table perfectly lined up with the tiles on the floor, straightening the pictures, ironing the bed, making certain that our daughter's toys couldn't be seen… [it was as if] he wanted to believe [that] his life wasn't really there or [that] maybe ours wasn't (Alice, p.37, l.694-696).

A similar point is made by Lucy, who suggests that

> it always had to be like a bachelor pad, he always wanted to just have a sofa and a huge music system and big pictures… He didn't ask me what I wanted to have… You got the feeling that he just put up with [us] in a space he wanted to be different (p.45-46, l.843-850).

After escaping the abuse, even though their subjectivity was still so tied to the abuser as a result of legal proceedings, many of the participants seem to attain increased agency by redefining their relationship with the home space; rearranging, reordering and reclaiming it. Mary describes how, after the abuse, she had to 'reclaim' (p.41, l.782) the house and turn it into a safe space: "I had to make it, I had to re-own it, I had to make it my safe space because I didn't have another choice" (p.31, l.589-590). In particular, the

> room that I suffered the most in, that was horrific, I mean, real awful stuff, psychologically, mentally, emotionally. I turned it into my sanctuary… I got myself, I cleared it, took the bed out, took everything out, and I made a little sanctuary table, got a little sanctuary light. I've got candles in there. And a big photo of Jesus which I knew I wouldn't be allowed to use before (p.42, l.795-800).

Mary goes on to describe how she has transformed the worst of the house – "the room that was such a violation of everything about me into something supremely good" (p.42, l.805-806). She also talks about how she changed the lighting, since she couldn't afford to repaint everywhere, in order to breathe new life into the darkness and overcome the "stench of fear" (p.43, l.824). In the same way that her husband apparently used the assemblage of space to mark territory, Mary said she used paint to redact the fear and pain she associated with the rooms: "And sort of put my mark in places" (p.44, l.830). This need to purify the home of the abuse it allegedly paid host to is captured by Jill, who says she took part in a cleansing ritual after ending the abusive relationship, pouring salt and burnt, dried sage throughout, whilst also including the children: "Its putting an end to it, isn't it? That kind of, it's a new beginning" (p.40, l.947). This 'wiping away' (Mary, p.43, l.812) the abuse was also deemed a necessary part of Mary's cleansing process, to repair the space she so associated with violence and degradation.

The work space also seems to help in the reassertion of an agentic sense of self, with Georgie talking about how she "started getting [her] esteem back up. I felt that I had a bit of support from the people I was working with" (p.30, l.708-709). For Bo, too, work was described as her safe place (until her husband started to encroach on it by apparently sleeping with her colleagues). At work, not only could she connect with others but she also said she regained some of the relative power that was knocked out of her at home. At work, she recalls being respected and listened to and was not constantly diminished and humiliated. Meanwhile, Sukie described in detail how she could be different people in different places and how she used this as a way of feeling, albeit temporarily, safe again. For work, she says she is a professional submissive and this apparently gives her unusual license to become somebody else for a time. She describes how she managed to retake control at a time when she had no control over her life with her abuser:

> Everything was out of my control, so I had to take control of something, but not have control, if that makes sense. So, within the dungeon, although you are vulnerable, you are still very much in control of that session. If you say, 'Stop, that is it', it is… And what I say goes. And people self-harm, or, like I have got tattoos… It is like replacing pain with pain. By doing this, I get a release from pain that is inflicted, especially with the mental abuse that was going on… I get to be somebody else. I am not this scared little girl that I am at home, but I am a different person. It is like an alter-ego (p.40-41, l.929-947… whereas, back home, you don't get that choice (p.41, l.967-969).

Paradoxically, this type of work often finds Sukie, she says, in someone else's house, yet she is not afraid, whereas in her own home she is not in control and never feels safe: "I feel much

safer in their homes with them than I do in my own" (p.56, l.1314). "And it's like … It is a huge power trip… because [sex is for once] not being taken from me" (Sukie, p.55, l.1280-1288). The ability of her clients' houses to afford Sukie a sense of control is reminiscent of the feeling suggested by 'Steve' in Tucker and Smith's (2014) analysis of a service user's home: "The topological point is that we need to analyse, in concert with [Sukie's} narrative, the psychological events made possible in the relations between the objects, [Sukie] and the regions and boundaries formed" (p.180).

Moreover, the impact of space on identity and agency – and through this, resistance – is also poignant in Polly's account, who recalls the time she says she first realised that she didn't actually need to be constantly medicated and begun to suspect her husband of being somewhat less than caring. She describes a camping holiday in XXX, where she lived in a field for six weeks. During that time, she said she contracted swine flu and was sick daily. As a result, she believes that the drugs she had been 'forced' to take were vomited out of her system and, although she experienced withdrawal symptoms, she soon realised that she didn't feel "any sadder without [the antidepressants]" (p.21, l.390). This 'realisation' enabled her, she said, to start questioning everything her husband did under the guise of her ill health and his need to constantly watch over her; demonstrating the importance of space to a changing identity and to resistance.
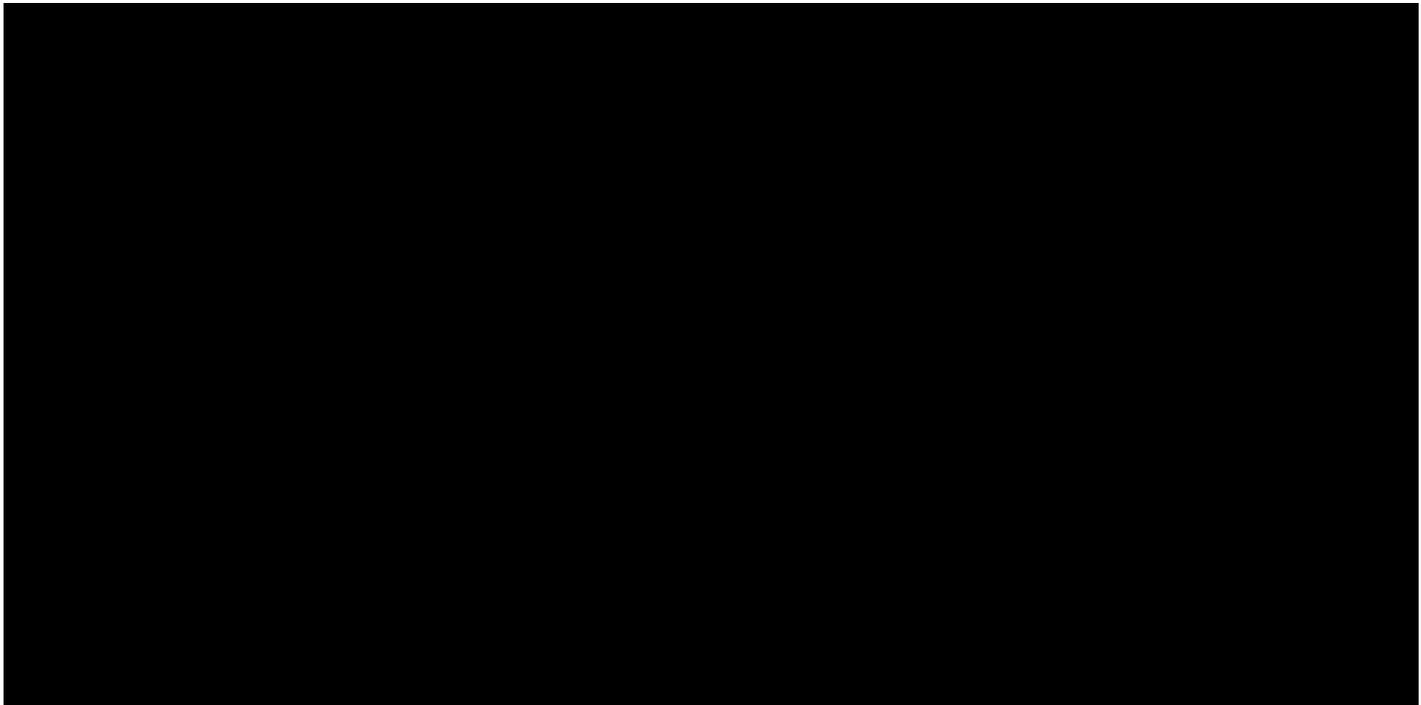
(produced for Bo)

For Bo, an important space affording agency was the shed in the garden with its tiny window, where she said she could hide for hours at a time with her daughter, "planting pots and bedding

plants, seeds and things" (p.31, l.737-738). Importantly, it seems as if it was the distance between the shed and the house which made it possible to feel 'safe'. She remembers being able to cry there, bolting herself in from the inside: "I meant that's the only place that I felt, I'm not sure I felt safe… but it just gave me a chance to sort of, just think really" (p. 34-35, l.810-816). Key to this place of respite seems to be the activity of planting. Bo talks about "producing something" (p.35, l.829) and it seems as if this ability to make something grow has reassuring qualities; whilst constantly being told how 'rubbish' and how useless you are, knowing that you have managed to tend to something and to give it life entails a far less pliable identity. In many ways, it is empowering to be able to produce something and, whereas the ability to have children takes two – both the participant and their abuser – bedding seeds, feeding and watering a growing plant is an activity which can be done independently, without any input from him, with the notion of new life sometimes symbolising hope.

It could be said that by engaging with spaces dedicated to work, to sport and to gardening – places which conjure normative associations of productivity and autonomy, to independence and value – that participants are breaking the chains of subjugation and can be regarded as accessing a more agentic subject position than the passive one they seemingly, or perhaps purposefully, adopted in order to survive the abuse. These spaces appear to afford participants new potentials for action and being and it seems from these accounts that different spaces help them to remember who they were, even if only fleetingly, before they met their abusers: As Lucy puts it, these spaces help "to get in touch with the previous me… reminding myself where I came from" (p.63, l.1184-1185). Through interacting with these spaces, participants seem able to reassert their agentic self, the self they were before they say they were subjugated and forced into compliance, and it is this brief reminder which helps to reassure them that there is some hope; some hope of a day when they can harness that strength – the strength they may intuitively know still resides within – to get up and leave. And all of this, including the necessary and seemingly dependent identity, culminates as resistance and, when the time is right, enables women to finally draw on that agentic self they have been practicing accessing, which they have been reminded still dwells inside, in order to say "no, no more… I've had enough" (Betty, p.45, l.836).

3.3.4 Theoretical Discussion

Although most of the participants initially found it difficult to identify spaces which had afforded more active, autonomous subject positions during the course of the abuse, by the end of their interviews, many had remembered certain places where their victim identity could momentarily lift. Whilst the home was, for every participant, filled with anxiety, dread, fear and pain, there were some participants (e.g. Sukie) who felt that the home at least provided some

greater predictability as to the type, manner, 'provocation' and 'justification' for the kinds of abuse likely to be sustained. Moreover, the home space enabled some participants the vague potentiality to create order and stability through the arrangement of its material objects and socio-material practices (Tucker & Smith, 2014; Tucker, 2010). Thus, most of the participants portray inherently spatial ways in which they tried to organise the home and ensure its smooth running; cooking, cleaning, arranging and rearranging furniture, decorating and engaging in sexual activity, in order to obviate potential rage and recrimination. Domestic practices, in particular, seem to play a role in order-creation (Tucker, 2010) and can be seen as a means by which participants seek to regain a degree of control over their space.

The rituals of cooking, cleaning, washing and ironing could be seen as unconscious attempts by participants to produce a more stable and secure home space, such that the home space itself might be interpreted as evolving from the ongoing socio-material practices engaged within, and thereby reflecting Brown and Reavey's (2015) contention that, "relationships … are stabilized and rendered durable by marking and arranging the material features of the environment" (p.8). Moreover, it could be said that the arrangement of this environment and engagement in these domestic practices has an impact on perceptions of the home space as personal, as a resource in the construction of identity (Darke, 1994; Dupius & Thorns, 1996; Madigan et al., 1990; Mallet, 2004; Morley, 2000). In this way, it could be argued that the 'safety' of the home (Davidson, 2000a; 2000b; Pinfold, 2000) is confluent with the possibility of agency and not as something 'given' or pre-ordained (Tucker, 2010; Tucker & Smith, 2014).

Similarly, for those participants who did not have the remotest ability to order their home as 'safe' (Pinfold, 2000), it appears that other non-domestic environments were sought. Bo, for example, after being convinced that there was absolutely no safe space, suddenly recalled the shed in her garden where she lovingly cared for her plants, read and played games with her daughter. She emphasised the lockable door, the tap and water hose which enabled them to escape, share meals and wait out her husband's violent temper, whilst also permitting her to fulfil her motherly duties and feel momentarily useful and productive. This account points to the participation (Latour, 2005) of material objects in the creation of a safe and nurturing space, whilst resonating with Serres' (1995) argument that material objects have the ability to 'stabilise' our shared relations (Brown & Stenner, 2009; Reavey & Brown, 2009) through the meanings afforded experience over time (Latour, 2005). In analogous ways, throughout all the accounts, abused women appear to act to offset enduring instability in their lives and, by means of objects and materiality, attempt to produce certainty and order amidst chaos, and thereby enact personal agency.

This notwithstanding, once they had finally managed to leave their abusive partners, most participants developed an entirely different relationship with their home space. For example, Mary turned the parts of the house where she had suffered the most degradation and violence into a "sanctuary", a term frequently used by participants implicitly suggestive of refuge from danger (Harding, 2014), and Jill talked about the material configuration of her home space as critical to her sense of wellbeing (which she cleansed with salt and burned herbs). Meanwhile, for Sukie, it was constant redecorating and moving furniture around "to reclaim [it]… to feel safe" (p.5, l.103) and for Margarie, it was the ability to agentically arrange the items, perpetually cleaning and tidying, in her house and in others', which facilitated the production of an environment conducive to relief and "free-breathing" (Betty, p.42, l.780). Describing the work which went into repainting it (Mary), cleaning it (Margarie), rearranging it (Sukie) and reenergising it (Jill), it seems that the production of an ordered, peaceful space had more to do with the ability to style the home in ways which were previously thought impossible. Thus, contrary to Pinfold (2000), it seems that the perception of the home as a 'safe haven' (Pinfold, 2000) during domestic abuse relies less on any abstract cultural connotation of 'home' – or on its capacity to enclose and preclude interactions with others (Harding, 2014) – and more on the participants' ability to agentically order or style it.

Moreover, it is suggested that every participant, whether consciously or not, utilised any space they had available to survive and contest their abuse. As Pain and Scottish Women's Aid (2012, p.23) have argued, some victims of everyday terror – perhaps fewer and further between – fight back physically whereas others "gather resources and develop numerous strategies to try to cope and deal with the abuse (Harne & Radford, 2008; McCue, 2008; Williamson, 2010)". These strategies can inevitably be topologically conceptualised (Lewin, 1936) and every single act is cumulatively part of what Askins (2011) has termed the 'quiet' politics of activism. In the above accounts, key to these quiet politics – both during the currency of the abuse and after – are the psychological and emotional spaces involved in their unconscious attempts to resist. For example, spaces such as the university for Bo, Lucy and for Jill, work for Georgie and for Bo, the 'dungeon' for Sukie, the swimming pool for Lucy, the street for Marjarie, and the church for Mary and Arabella might be thought of as safety zones (Stark, 2007) or spaces for action (Kelly, 2003), which provide abused women with an opportunity to dispel their victim identity and reconstruct or forge a different subjectivity for a period of time. Thus, Kelly et al. (2014), in Solace Woman's Aid, cite the empowerment of abused women through the opening up and rediscovery of spaces where they can be autonomous and enact agency. The recognition that these spaces for action augment physical and emotional wellbeing appears to support Stark's (2007) theory that certain safety zones sometimes offer abused women a substitute to subjugation. These zones may consist of

physical spaces – at home, the gym, the playground, the office – or the refuge may be more abstract, hidden, psychological or internal, as the coercion becomes ever more comprehensive. For example, this may be their determination to split off from their experience, fixing their stare on a point on the wall or on the ceiling, unwavering, during abuse or, for Alice, it was putting sand into her husband's shoes as a small token of her resistance.

In the same way that Pinfold (2000) observed service users integrating into community spaces in Nottingham in order to promote social participation, many of the participants talk about the visits they routinely made to municipal localities such as the doctor's surgeries (Polly) and shopping centres (Betty), with the subconscious intention of negating some of their subjugation and isolation. Thus, in terms of resistance, Pain (2014a, p.540) has argued, borrowing from Tamas (2011), that "the subject positions of abusers and abused may be multiple, messy and shifting… Power does not solely lie with the abuser - power and resistance are not coherent or stable, but entangled together (Sharp et al., 2000). Changes in subjectivity, therefore, in agency and resistance, are linked to the spaces in which abused women negotiate power and abuse and we, therefore, need topological analyses to conceptualise both "how men use violence to control women and… how women… manage to exert power in extreme situations. This is all the more impressive because this exertion of power, resistance and agency emanates from such disadvantaged positions" (Hammer, 2002, p.124).

Thus, Brown, Lemyre and Bilfulco (1992) argue that the best predictor of recovery from psychological distress is the degree to which a person feels 'anchored' (finding stability amidst uncertainty), whereas experiences of fear are commonly associated with negative mental health outcomes (Finlay-Jones & Brown, 1981). McGrath and Reavey (2018) suggest that this anchorage is most likely to be experienced in spaces where a sense of community or harmony in nature prevails and where social unrest, crime and fear are uncommon (Wanderman & Nation, 1998; Green, Gilbertson & Grimsley, 2002). Similarly, environmental psychologists have consistently demonstrated the role that proximity to green spaces plays in mental wellbeing, with people more likely to recover efficiently from surgery (Ulrich, 1984), students more likely to maintain attention (Tennessen & Cimprich, 1995) and women more likely to perform better on attention measures (Kuo, 2001) if they have a view of nature and greenery. Importantly, Kuo (2001) found that women without immediate access to green spaces are more likely to procrastinate in dealing with crisis and making difficult life decisions, which is why perhaps so many of the participants, all of whom had succeeded in leaving abusive relationships, spoke so emphatically about their need to visit parks and observe wildlife during the currency of their abuse.

Meanwhile, Sukie says that as she crosses the bridge over [an estuary], she "feels the sense of calm coming over [her], like [she is] home" (p.52, l.1228) and in every account, nature and green spaces appear to provide the potential to unveil a more congruent self-concept and a space through which participants' 'real' selves can be allowed to unfold (Mallet, 2004; Tucker, 2010). Through nature, it seems that they are made more autonomous and less disempowered, able to express themselves more openly, connecting with the world and others, to remind them that they can still be 'free' (Sukie), and not entirely alone (Parr, 2007): They are "in harmony with nature" (Lucy, p.64, l.1200). Indeed, those accounts which prioritise water and the sea, in particular, appear to portray an idea of nature as greater, more open, and more potent than manmade objects and architecture, combining to foster an impression of the participant's relative triviality in a world order utterly transcendent of the usual hierarchies, and related concerns, of everyday life. Similarly, Arabella and Mary's accounts suggest that this experience of connectivity, of stability and congruency, can reach beyond the spaces of nature to other points of anchorage; to the church, for example, where participants describe feeling united with a higher power, providing them with an alternative perspective and a deeper understanding of their relative place in the pyramid of life (Koenig & Larson, 2001; King et al., 2013).

Throughout these stories, movement appears to be key (Del Busso & Reavey, 2013); whether this is running to hide under the beds of the children (Jill), to the church (Arabella), shed (Bo) or car (Jill/Georgie/Bo/Betty) to escape enclosed and hostile home spaces or simply moving out of doors to mediate experiences of deep distress and fear elsewhere, the evolution of a more positive outlook and enhanced connectivity appears to be essential to the renegotiation of subjectivity. This can be seen in Lucy's, Betty's and Margarie's description of their unrelenting impulse to run outside, engaged in embodied movement across and through open, free space, as opposed to feeling as if imprisoned within the restricted space of the home. Whilst this may arguably be attributable to the benefits of aerobic exercise in mental health (e.g. Salmon, 2001), every participant spoke more concretely about the feeling of augmented *control* occasioned by movement.

Alternatively, participants' accounts might be interpreted as portraying agentic movement across outdoor space, relative to the confined nature of the home, as facilitating the production of differences in power; whilst Betty, for example, is thoroughly disempowered within the home, as soon as she leaves that space – and with each step she takes away from it – she manages to escape the control her husband has over her and become momentarily agentic and autonomous. Similarly, Lucy can be thought of as describing movement out of doors as a strategy or coping mechanism to manage distress and avoid conflict. Compared to being

continuously forced to be "responsible for him not feeling upset, tired, needing to sulk, angry, failing in his job" (p.12, l.214-215), Lucy can be interpreted as describing a distribution of interpersonal experiences, which help to regain some sense of self, some recaptured power and autonomy, which is lost within the enclosed space of the home. Thus, it could be argued that agentic movement through outside space enables a different engagement with the world; a means by which to achieve a reassertion of power and the production of a mediated subjectivity: It appears to temporarily modulate, alleviate or reverse the experience of powerlessness for those participants who primarily locate experiences of victimhood in domestic space. As McGrath and Reavey (2015) have proposed, people are not merely passive recipients of power dynamics: Those in distress are likely to use movement through and within everyday space as a means by which to modulate agency and negotiate difficult emotions. It might be suggested, therefore, that the participants above describe momentarily swapping a position of subjugation for one of freedom as they move across normative communal space and, for many, the apparent liberty provided by a car (e.g. Bo, Georgie, Jill and Betty), not just as a means of transport or evacuation, but as a moveable bubble of safe space (Bull, 2004) helps in this regard: "I mean talk about space, the biggest thing I had was being able to drive. He couldn't do that" (Bo, p.72, l.1071-1073).

An individual's competence to move freely through the world serves to remind us also of the fluidity of space and the person's activity, over passivity, their power and adaptability (Del Busso, 2007; Del Busso & Reavey, 2013), their permeability to change (Tucker & Smith, 2014). Moreover, it throws open alternative potentials for action, agency and being. These experiences of an agentic, productive subjectivity are understood as being fashioned both by the embodied activities achieved in these spaces and by their broader social and cultural meaning.

The geographer, Soja (1996), refers to 'imagined spaces', arguing that central to the understanding of any particular place is its associated conjured meaning. A church, for example, as mentioned by Mary and Arabella, is made meaningful by the generic notion of what we believe a church to represent, in terms of its adherence to religion and provision of community, as well as being a particular, specific locality and space. Alice and Lucy, talking about their experience of sailing and swimming lengths of the local pool, respectively, can be seen to be drawing on the 'imagined' qualities of a boat and of exercise space, so as to enact a more agentic subjectivity; the types of spaces described by them could be seen as linked to activity, agency and usefulness. Similarly, work, a space designated as a site of productivity (Dale & Burrell, 2008), can be seen in many accounts as a place in which the subjugated self momentarily lifts and Sukie even describes in detail how the dungeon allows her to achieve

different identities, accessing alternative self-concepts (Higgins, 1987; Fuchs, 2007) or 'communities of selves' (Mair, 1977). Engaging in the workplace, whatever the specifics of the space, therefore appears to act as an 'anchor', creating a semblance of stability in an otherwise uncertain and fluid existence, and can be seen as a way through which participants try to expel their abuse victim subjectivities (Campbell, 1996; Link, Cullen, Struening, Shrout & Dohrenwend, 1989; Scheff, 1999) and perform more productive identities.

Thus, in taking part in the embodied activities of work and exercise, in inferring from the 'imagined' (Soja, 1996) properties of those spaces, these participants can all be interpreted as attempting to access a different 'imagined' subjectivity based on the normative conjured meanings of those spaces – functionality, productivity and maturity (Crawford, 1984; Lupton, 1995; Warner, 2000; Walker & Fincham, 2011), as opposed to the subjectivity perpetuated through everyday terror: Instead of continued subjugation, they are momentarily free to be active, productive, and in control of their own bodies. It seems, therefore, that active participation in exercise or movement through outdoor space (McGrath, 2012), as well as access to nature, to community, to sport, to work and to certain spaces of action renders everyday life marginally more manageable and that, in general, the specifics of how spaces are arranged significantly impacts, mediates, shapes and defines the nature and type of social exchanges that take place therein.

4   CHAPTER FOUR: CONCLUDING CHAPTER

4.1.   SUMMARY OF ANALYSIS

This research project has explored the role of space in abused women's experience of everyday terror and the preceding chapter provided an interpretation of the spatial aspects of participants' experiences of distress and its mitigation. In theme 1 – 'Spaces of Subjugation: Invasion, Alienation and Annihilation' – it was argued that abusive men use tactics of invasion and occupation through space in order to subjugate their victims, gradually isolating, alienating and annihilating them in the process. As Pain (2014b) proposes, everyday terror can be "understood as closely connected to other hegemonic forms of violence and militarism (Eisenstein, 2007; INCITE!, 2006; Moser, 2001)", arguing that domestic abuse, "as violence that attempts political influence or control through instilling fear, works as a form of terrorism" (Pain, 2014b, p.128). In addition, the material facets of these spaces of everyday terrorism can be viewed as making visible and 'stabilising' (Serres, 1995; Reavey & Brown, 2009) their subjugation.

In theme 2 – 'Structural spaces of Complicity: Public, Institutional and Digital Space' – this weakened subject position was argued to be compounded by the wider community, with the structural spaces of institutions and service providers, and the public, being somehow complicit in their abuse, through an ongoing process of increased surveillance and extension of reach of the perpetrator (Bostock et al., 2009). Moreover, it was suggested that this landscape is rendered significantly more complex as a result of the relational connections made possible be an ever-encroaching digital network (Goodings & Tucker, 2018). The picture of structural space serving to reinforce and exacerbate an abused woman's victimhood, even after participants have left the relationship, neatly captures the idea that domestically abused women, already forced to navigate their distress through everyday life, are compelled to negotiate ever more difficult and differing contexts and environments than might previously have been understood.

In theme 3 – 'Spaces of Resistance: Movement, Connection and Agency' – the spaces associated with wellbeing were explored in depth. Movement was found to be key to abused women's ability to manage everyday terror, especially if participants had access to a car, but for those who did not, a pull to be out of doors appeared to present an opportunity to temporarily modulate their victim subjectivity. Nature, in particular, and spaces which enabled some kind of relational connection with others, with religion, and with spirituality were also seen to enable a temporary lift in subjectivity, from passivity and disempowerment to agency and usefulness. Perhaps unsurprisingly, the home was experienced by all as dangerous and

imprisoning and participants could be seen engaging in a variety of spatial practices to try to (re)gain some kind of control over their domestic environment. Indeed, the notion of the home as 'safe haven' (Pinfold, 2000), far from being portrayed as an inevitable feature of that space, appeared contingent on the ability to locate agency there (Mallet, 2004; Tucker, 2010; Wise, 2000).

In this endeavour, I argue that Lewin's (1936) topology has provided a suitable theoretical framework through which to approach the data, in view of the emphasis it places on both the relations which produce - and are produced by - space, and its ability to explore the conceptual affordances and interactions of all its actors, unbounded by geometric or temporal dimensions. Thus, life space (Lewin, 1936) was used as a conceptual scaffolding to structure and support the analysis, with its foundations built upon the embedded stories of domestically abused women as they move through ever-changing relational assemblages of space (Brown & Reavey, 2019; Tucker et al., 2019). Indeed, by means of a sustained engagement with the specific use of day-to-day space in the experience of everyday terror and associated mental distress, I argue that the principles of topology and life space helped to draw attention to the role played by wider, structural (institutional and public) spaces on psychological phenomena, and the ways in which space, so defined, was used by victims of everyday terror as a resource to manage, contest and resist abuse, to enable survival and engender emotional wellbeing.

As such, by means of this theoretical engagement with the data, I have been able to explore women's rituals of coping and resistance and, perhaps surprisingly (to them), I suggest that these combine to constitute a certain type of activism. As Pain (2014a; 2014b) has argued, the fact that much of this resistance appears to take place in the 'private' sphere, within intimate partnerships, which themselves engender a degree of spatial entrapment, as well as being significantly impacted by the wider structural and cultural impediments to contesting abuse, means that this activism is somewhat fragmented and haphazard, and its effectiveness oftentimes obscure and opaque.

4.2.   RETURNING TO THE RESEARCH QUESTION AND RATIONALE

To return to the question posed in the introductory chapter, "How is space implicated in domestically abused women's experience and mitigation of distress?", it can be seen from the summary above that space was portrayed by participants as playing a vital role in their experiences of distress and its management. In support of Massey (1994) and Lefebvre (1991), their accounts suggest that space is indeed dynamic and relational, not a pre-existing empty container, pre-determining experience but positively contributing to that experience in an ongoing co-participation (Latour, 2005) between individual and environment (Lewin, 1936).

It was also argued that material objects, including duvets, clothes, locks and other household items, could be interpreted as 'stabilising' (Serres, 1995) and 'participating' (Latour, 2005) in relational dynamics and implied relative subjectivities. Similarly, it was suggested that space, material objects and spatial practices are used by abused women as a resource to actively modulate their subjectivity. This can be seen in the examples of active participation in work spaces, in daily routines and rituals, and in attempts to order the home environment or engage in useful, productive domestic practices. As Massey (1994) has argued, all of these spaces are both socially produced and productive; both experience and identity are negotiated and distributed through space, whilst space also contributes to their ongoing formation of identity.

Whilst the role played by space in violence and distress, in general, has increasingly come to be represented in the geographical literature, it is suggested that there has been little sustained engagement with the specific use of space in the enactment of everyday terror, nor within the wider remit of structural (institutional, public and digital) space, and negligible interest paid to the way that space is used by its victims as a resource to manage, contest and resist that abuse. This research project, on the other hand, responds to calls made by Tyner and Inwood (2014) to reject explanations of violence as 'natural' and to locate abuse "within embedded subjectivities and socio spatial relations" (Little, 2017, p.485). As they write: "When we consider the reality of violence, of what is counted, classified and criminalized as violence, we must do so through an understanding of how power and difference are sedimented into society... Violence is not pre-given, violence is neither transhistorical or transgeographical: it has no pre-social existence but comes into being through political practice" (Tyner & Inwood, 2014, p.774).

4.3.   VALUE OF THIS APPROACH

Thus, by means of a topological (Lewin, 1936) retheorisation of space and psychological experience, it is possible to look beyond the individual to the relations within society and across public and political space. As Tucker (2011) makes clear, it is not the case that a person's cognitive processes, for example, are not relevant to his or her behaviour but since these themselves are the product of relational processes, borne externally, we must look beyond the individual to the wider social and cultural factors which combine to engender psychological phenomena. Inevitably this invites a more ecological (Kagan, 2003; 2007) or community psychological approach (Kelly, 1970; 2006) to the problems normally associated with individuals and should mean that, instead of looking to apportion blame, offer redress and/or rehabilitation, only between perpetrator and victim, a broader exploration of the structures of society and the way that inequality, discrimination and disempowerment further entrench abuse will be called for. And by this means, I argue that it should be possible to both influence

public policy and the way that counselling psychologists 'do' therapy: As Bank and Nissen (2017), Liddicoat (2015; 2016), Pearson and Wilson (2012), Ulrich et al. (2008), Goodings and Tucker (2018), Liddicoat and Forster (2018) and Freeman and Akhurst (2018) have all shown, understanding users' preferences around space can be essential to the effective reconfiguration of counselling space and experience. Instead of just sitting victims of everyday terror in a room and hoping they talk (Nissen, 2018), therapy should be tailor-made to incorporate the spaces that abused women have demonstrated they find safer to access – through the photographs they have produced and the accounts given in interview – as part and parcel of their established, and relatively safe, engagement with space, and in order to avoid alerting their abusive partners and incurring potential recrimination. In this way, as per Bank and Nissen's (2017) seminal research, it is hoped that counselling psychologists might better entice, reassure and incite abused women to report and seek help at earlier points in their abuse trajectory.

4.4.   RECONFIGURATION OF THERAPY

Indeed, what this approach has enabled me to do is to encourage women to think or reflect about everyday terror in more spatial ways. Instead of feeling entirely disenfranchised and powerless as they look back on their experiences of abuse, participants started to realise during their interviews that they had been stronger and braver than they had imagined. Whereas previously many did not believe that there had ever been any spaces of either safety or wellbeing, and certainly not of resistance, every participant by the end of the interview had managed to recall some space in (and through) which they had contested abuse. Whilst it was only after I had started the analysis that I came to perceive this as some kind of tentative, piecemeal, disorganised resistance, the acknowledgement of these places of respite mid-interview afforded me the opportunity of asking whether the participant could conceive of any possibility of being able to meet a therapist in one of these spaces – even if only occasionally – during the course of abuse, without incurring suspicion and retribution. I was gratified to find that even those who describe the most serious kinds of everyday terror managed to think of some way to reconfigure therapy so that it might be safer for them to access and would appear less hostile and alienating. For example, some suggested that the space of their car might occasionally have been safe to meet someone, whereas others thought that counselling could take place in either the supermarket, public gym or shopping mall, so long as nobody saw them going into back rooms or spending too long there. For some, work or university was a relatively unregulated space and it might have been possible to meet therapists there without causing the perpetrator to notice. For others, the children's school might provide a safe place to receive counselling, provided that this did not arise suspicion from other parents. In addition,

the church was deemed relatively safe for most participants, not just for those who felt particularly connected to religion, and children centres, mother and baby groups and nurseries or creches within community spaces, meanwhile, appeared to satisfy almost every participant, so long as therapy was flexible, ad hoc, and easy to cancel or postpone.

This ties in with research conducted by Hegarty, Taft, James-Hanman, Johnson and Feder (2015) who suggest that counsellors need to "tailor interventions to the trajectory of abuse" (p.111) and by Tamas (2011) who writes that abused women resent having their experiences "located on a linear timescale by psychotherapeutic intervention… Recovery is not tidy and sequential, but circular and zigzagging" (Pain, 2014b, p.142). Thus, Hegarty et al. (2013) recommend multiple points of entry to therapy, an increase in therapeutic training and further *customised* interventions to meet abused women's disparate experience. This bespoke approach to the configuration of therapy is also substantiated, of course, by Bank and Nissen's (2017) research which found that when counselling space itself was changed in accordance with the preference of users, it is significantly more likely to engage clients and invite therapeutic commitment.

Less tied to the physical or logistical reconfiguration of counselling space, two potentially important avenues might also be opened up as a result of utilising a research methodology underpinned by a theory of space as relationally produced, created differently according to the continuous movement and flow of changing relationships (people, objects and environment) and their associated spatio-material and relational practices. Firstly, since most of the participants told me that they had found the interview procedure curiously therapeutic, specifically remarking that they hadn't ever appreciated how intricately linked to space their experiences of everyday terror had been, I started to wonder how useful such a novel exploration of the spaces implicated in everyday terror might be for victims of domestic abuse, outside of the research setting, and within therapy perhaps. It appears that the ways in which the research interviews may have helped participants to appreciate the significance and relevance to their accounts of the framing of relationality through space, together with the sudden and surprise acknowledgement that there may actually have been some occasional spaces of respite invested in and discretely occupied by them in their unplanned strategies to cope with and counter oppression, may have felt reassuring and empowering, notwithstanding these observations emerging from a research, as opposed to therapeutic, context. This has left me wondering whether this process and conceptualisation in itself might provide a potential tool for therapeutic intervention? Could such a way of thinking and talking about space, could what I have learned from doing these sorts of interviews, with this sort of population, be helpful to counsellors, who may wish to harness and foreground the sense of space explored here

with these women, so that we can engage with it in therapy? In other words, could counselling psychologists leverage this conceptualisation of space – as safe or unsafe – manifesting as spatialized ways to augment agency, to enact activism and mount resistance – and draw from my research experience and what I have learned in interview, and use this in the therapy space with their clients, and not only with those suffering everyday terror?

Secondly, what might be the potential impact on a client's subjectivity of such a re-theorisation of space, as an ever-moving, ever-changing and thereby differentially constituted constellation of dynamic relational forces and practices, which expand or contract human agency? If relational practices and social processes precede individuality, and individuals are, therefore, a socio-cultural nexus of constantly changing relationships, what does this mean for autonomy and accountability? How is it useful to think of the fluid self or subjectivity situated in different spaces or subjectivity as a spatial kind of event or process? I would argue that such conceptualisations inevitably require us to rethink both what we mean by subjectivity and by mental distress. I suggest that, as lived experience, subjectivity and distress must always be subject to change, depending on the nature of the relational possibilities between individuals and their environmental context (or in other words, their psychological life spaces). I argue that this means that we are not fixed, bounded as substance, as separate entities, but in process (which is certainly not to suggest that there is no continuity of self or that we are a different self at all times but its speaking to this idea that the self unfolds in different ways, in different spaces and in different relations). We are not cut off, living atomistically but are part of an infinite network of relationships, all of which are in constant flux, and which are therefore subject to change.

As Tucker (2010, p.532) argues, since "nothing exists outside of the relational practices that form it in the present", this means that we cannot surely have been predetermined by our past or, indeed, our future by our present. I would recommend, again, that this might feel very important and powerful as a therapeutic principle to take to our clients. Moreover, as McGrath and Reavey (208) propose, if counselling psychologists can enable their clients to become more sensitive to the possible relational connections in their life space, also to the past, present and future, this should serve to expand their clients' sense of agency. In a similar vein, if our clients can be helped to better recognise that we are all fashioned by the relationships (to others, to objects and to context, including the politico-economic and cultural structures of society) that we are a part of, and to be reminded that these relational practices play a critical role in the manifestation of psychological phenomena, then this may help to reassure and enable our clients to recognise that they are indeed separate to their psychological distress, and not defined by it (or, worse, by any 'related' diagnostic categorisation). Certainly, such an

approach as this should also help all those concerned with mental health to recognise that, instead of trying to locate psychological 'problems' and the cure within the individual (as some medical models provide, suggesting that mental distress results from cognitive processing errors located *within* the person (e.g. Bentall, 2003; 2009)), we need to look to the wider relations across society to explain these phenomena and to take some responsibility for both its prevalence and its resolution.

4.5.   FINAL REFLEXIVITY

As discussed in chapter 2, I have struggled throughout data gathering, selection and analysis, with the impact of my role in the research process. From the first point at which I went to VOICES to outline my research, I felt somewhat intimidated. I had brought with me a pre-prepared presentation and, although it seemed to be striking a chord, I could see an expression on many faces which appeared doubtful and ambivalent. Putting away my notes after the first paragraph (see Appendix C), I started again. I spoke from my heart about some of the work I had been involved with in both the criminal and family courts, in relation to everyday terror. I remember saying something akin to "I know some of you are looking at me and wondering what on earth I could know about this subject", to which one of the women (Georgie) said, quite forcefully, "yes, as soon as you arrived, I just thought 'here's yet another person come to 'help us' who has no clue what we have actually gone through'". I agreed that I couldn't even imagine what it must be like to live with abuse by someone who is supposed to love you but that what I suspected was that there might be another story for them to tell, and that I wanted to help them speak out, so they could find help at an earlier stage and to prevent the kinds of serious damage they had been describing. I told them that I admired them and thought they were strong, and guessed that they might be stronger than they imagined. This is what Mary said to me, afterwards in her interview, about that response:

> Oh, you should have seen the look on all their faces. They all went [bang bang] when you said that. All the women sitting in that circle went, because it's like you dropped a penny, and it's not to do with the head... because it's going into the spirit, into the other space (p.46-47, l.885-893).

Starting to feel as if I could very easily let these women down, if I didn't do something to help them – something more than they were used to receiving from the 'helping' profession – I endeavoured from that moment to ensure not only that my research stayed entirely faithful to their accounts but to represent their interests in all my work going forward. However, owing to the concerns of the Ethics Committee (as discussed in chapter 2), I had specifically devised an interview schedule focusing only on those spaces associated with experiences of safety or

wellbeing during the abuse. Therefore, my intention being to avoid topics which might be distressing, whenever participants started to volunteer more detailed accounts of substantive abuse, I tried, at least initially, to subtly digress and return to the spaces of safety. Whilst this reluctance to pry into the more harrowing details might stem in part from my determination to limit distress arising in the interviews, it also may have been owing to my desire to distinguish the interviews from a more therapeutic encounter.

This notwithstanding, it soon became clear that space was so inherently bound up in all of the participants' experience of abuse that I could not restrict their flow to its mitigation and thereby circumvent their revelation of the more specific origins of distress. As such, I found that my interview schedule, which specified more general terms, such as distress, safety and wellbeing, deliberately skirting more in-depth discussions of pain and degradation, might have appeared a little vague and off-point. Thus, I quickly changed tack and, as soon as someone had raised the specifics of the abuse, I maintained their language and allowed them full reign to stay on the subject. I wonder, on reflection, had I not changed tack, whether this might have proved an impediment to building a good rapport; when participants are used to being ignored and their accounts glazed over, it seems likely that they would hope to be able to tell their stories in full, without someone seemingly in power deciding which aspects are interesting and worth listening to, which parts serve their needs, and which parts are superfluous. Perhaps in determining my own credentials as a boundaried and ethical researcher, I could have missed an important opportunity to establish a trusting connection with people who, more than anything, need to feel heard. Indeed, as Johnstone (2011) and others have ably argued, the sanitisation and purification (Sibley, 1995) of experiences of distress through the use of vague terminology perpetuated through service use often serves to further mask both the context and the particulars of psychological difficulties.

4.6. LIMITATIONS

Moreover, again as disclosed in chapter 2, my focus on space, over the more substantive details of distress, meant that I could not include in my analysis most of the more disturbing details of violent, sexual and coercive control committed against these women. When I reread the interviews, as I did even after I had completed and written up the analysis, I became ever more aware that so much of the sadness, hopelessness and destitution of these women's stories is largely absent in my analysis. As such, I have been endlessly concerned that my focus on space and on reconfiguring therapy to meet their everyday, relatively safe engagement with space may be construed by these participants as missing the point. That is why I felt I could not overlook the very large proportion of the data which was concerned with the role played by institutional space in their abuse, even though I am not perfectly comfortable

in suggesting any complicity, in circumstances where there is no opportunity for those concerned to defend themselves. That having been said, the specific philosophical position and epistemology underlying this research makes it clear that any 'knowledge' elicited has no objective validity, per se, and that these accounts amount to subjective viewpoints on what took place.

This, again, though is not without its difficulties. As a researcher, and as a trainee counselling psychologist, I will rigorously uphold the rights of people to be heard, whereas by taking a social constructionist approach to knowledge, I am conscious that this may make people feel as if they are not entirely trusted or believed. Writing up the analysis and being careful to always position every account as subjective and constructed according to the particular social context, as opposed to reporting what participants have said in witness statement form, can feel very suspicious and doubting, not to mention potentially robbing them (again) of agency. The same could be said for my choice of terminology, using 'analysis' instead of 'findings' and 'concluding remarks' in place of 'conclusions', to demonstrate that my approach to the data is constructionist and not positivist/realist. However, my role – in terms of my theoretical position – in the research process meant that I had to take a certain view of the data, whereas another researcher taking a more realist perspective, perhaps, might have 'concluded' something rather different. I found this tension, especially in the analysis, very difficult to bear, particularly as I felt I was already letting participants down by being unable to include most of the shocking and disturbing details they alleged of violence and sexual degradation. This is something that Willig (2004) writes about in relation to other social constructionist methodologies, such as discourse analysis. Indeed, she says that discursive psychologies tend to silence speakers, denying them "the right to author their account" (p.167) and thereby potentially appearing unethical for application to first-person accounts of distress. Although implying that Foucauldian Discourse Analysis might be more compatible with compassionate approaches to suffering, Willig (2004) suggests that agency is still under threat and summarises that any theoretical perspective which prioritises the discursive construction of individual experience may entail ethical difficulties for the simple reason that the individual and his pain are not the centre of enquiry. In consultation with my supervisor about this quandary, I was reminded that my constructionist approach was 'light-touch', with a critical realist ontology (so not denying the existence of the relational processes of which these women so emphatically speak), and was advised to include biographies of each participant (see Appendix S), so that the enormity of their individual struggles could be fully heard and appreciated, and in order to capture the complexity, as well as the bravery, of these women's stories. It is hoped that this will give some sort of context, to add weight to the texture and specifics of their accounts in interview, and so that their lived experience might fully shine through.

On a similar note, again as referenced in chapter 2, I was reluctant to include theory in the analysis and went backwards and forwards on this a number of times. Whilst my analysis was very much driven by theory and should, therefore, have been included in the write-up, I felt that the interspersion of sometimes complex literature might detract from participants' accounts and the power of their own chosen words. Since it is an important aspect of my research to ensure that participants' voices are heard, and thereby have a degree of power restored to them, I chose not to trample through their accounts with my own theoretically based views. Meanwhile, the utilisation of visual methodologies had a somewhat comparable foundation, in that I was determined to avoid analytically recapitulating the prevailing power relations and masculinist dominant discourses: Instead of centring on the analysis of those already in power, I wanted to "turn up the volume on lesser but still present discourses, lesser but still present participants, the quiet, the silent, and the silenced… Such analyses can amplify not only differences but also resistances, recalcitrance, and sites of rejection" (Clarke, 2012, p,408). This is particularly relevant to my topic since one of the overriding objectives in my choice of methodological approach has been to make more visible and more analytically central a population so frequently subjugated, disempowered and side-lined. As such, I have been vehement, whilst remaining theory-driven, to interpret faithfully and be open, honest and ethical at all times, constantly reminding myself not to fall into the trap, by virtue of my role as researcher and 'knowledge' creator, of further perpetuating the inequalities in power already so familiar and threatening to these women.

4.7. FUTURE RESEARCH

This too did not come without its complications. Whereas visual methods have the ability to crystalise accounts of the phenomenological details of material space and objects, approximately half the participants did not bring with them any photographs or printouts. Since the approval of the Ethics Committee was contingent on participants being asked only about spaces associated with safety and wellbeing, and not distress, many arrived at the interview saying the production of pictures was impossible; there was nowhere they could think of that seemed safe during the course of the abuse. Whilst this could have proven problematic to the analytic endeavour, since the benefit of visual methodologies is arguably in the ability of a photograph or printout to frame a participant's account in more spatial and less typically discursive ways, using the spatial cues within the picture to prompt and ground discussion, those participants who did not bring visual images still spoke in inherently spatial terms, possibly as a result of the photo-production request and the reasons being offered by them for not feeling able to comply at that time. On the other hand, whilst the methodology utilised in this project tried to overcome the shortcomings of purely discursive approaches, by

introducing such visual stimuli, even spatial interviews are ultimately fashioned out of verbal accounts which are inevitably structured according to the publicly available discourses. This means that, notwithstanding the care taken to enable participants to access more spatialized memories, the way in which they represent their accounts is still inhibited by the discourses already available around everyday terror (Edwards, 1997; Potter & Wetherell, 1987; Parker, 1992; Wetherell et al., 2001), thus "analytically recapitulating the power relations of domination" (Clarke, 2012, p.408). Indeed, many feminists argue that thematic analyses preclude the researcher from making claims about discourse or the use of language (Braun & Clarke, 2006) in how everyday terror is thought and talked about, and it could be argued that even with the benefit of photographs and printouts, the data gathered in interview still potentially carries the risk of merely reproducing accepted, normalised discourses around concepts such as public/ private, male/female, danger/safety, as well as gender stereotypes and entrenched societal attitudes about the respective roles of abuser and victim in everyday terror. Future studies might, therefore, like to explore this data from either a strict social constructionist or discourse analytical perspective.

Moreover, since even 'spatial interviews' are reliant on only one encounter, and are therefore just a snapshot of a person's experience, whereas experience itself is unending and unfolding through infinite sets of relational processes, it might be preferable in future to expand this research by employing methods better able to convey ongoing experiences, for example, through diary studies (Latham, 2002; Laurenceau & Bolger, 2005). In view of the success of visual research methods for eliciting accounts focused on the context of participants' experiences (Bolton, Pole & Mizen, 2001; Knowles, 2000a; 2000b; Majumdar, 2011; Radley & Taylor, 2003; Reavey, 2011), it is suggested that a video diary might help capture the dynamic, relational and reciprocal nature of space mediating experience. Indeed, an ongoing narrative or reflective diary could help address the shortcomings that are an inevitable consequence of the study being concerned with retrospective accounts of women who have all managed to overcome everyday terror. Indeed, since it was part of the exclusion criteria that no woman currently in an abusive relationship could apply, this means that the data might arguably be skewed to reflect only those perspectives of individuals with either sufficient personal autonomy or inner strength to stand up to their abusers, leave and report. In future research of this kind, it would be interesting to hear from women who are still experiencing ongoing abuse, subject to the methodological advances proposed pursuant to this research, or who have not yet made their victimhood public or whose domestic situation has been resolved in some other way, which did not involve self-identification as a person subjected to everyday terror.

A number of other methodological limitations could also be addressed in future research. Most critically, whilst the participants in this research project come from a broad demographic of ages, socio-economic classes and Western cultures, I was unable to recruit any women who identify themselves as coming from non-Western, Black or ethnic minority backgrounds. Although the purpose of this thesis is certainly not to generalise 'findings' or to generate theory, the lack of cultural diversity across the participant group might be considered a shortcoming of this project. According to Ahmed, Reavey and Majumdar (2009), there may well be interesting cultural differences in the way that everyday terror is enacted and experienced across context. We already understand that space plays out differently according to culture (Hassan, Fatimilehin & Kagan, 2018) and so it follows that it is likely that participants from non-Western countries or ethnic minorities within Western populations might feel differently about the settings of everyday terror. Indeed, arguing that many cultures have been overlooked in conceptualisations of gender violence, Ahmed et al. (2008; 2009) point out that most of the domestic abuse literature assumes Western models of patriarchal distributions of power and familial dynamics that are not necessarily relevant to non-Western populations. Moreover, Black feminists have traditionally maintained that globalisation, institutional and societal racism, as well as structural and political violence emanating from the state, shape even more dramatically the experiences of everyday terror in these populations (Crenshaw, 1991; hooks, 2000; Hammer, 2003; Kanyeredzi, 2019).

Similarly, it could be argued that the focus of most Western research on the individual and, specifically, the way that the woman experiences abuse as if disconnected from the family and wider society is problematic for cultures which do not fit within the normative, White, 4-person family stereotype. Potter and Hepburn (2012) describe some of the challenges for interviews in qualitative research, suggesting that both cognitive and individualistic assumptions are often presupposed. Even within the current work, it seemed as if the wider family played an important part for some participants in the continuation of abuse and its concealment within the home; and Ahmed et al. (2008) affirm that in non-Western societies experiences of the home space are always more public than "private, or situated in a couple dynamic only" (p.50). As Ahmed et al. (2008) argue, the spaces of domestic abuse are far from private, with many women living with extended family who monitor and police their every engagement. Indeed, they suggest that the "recognition of broader familial dynamics should result in a more dispersed reading of power that pays specific attention to intergenerational conflict as well as dyadic gender relations (husband and wife)" (p.45). This carries significant implications for both the value of research, its transferability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985), and for the prospect of reconfigured therapy. For example, therapeutic models which focus on the individual are well known to be problematic for non-Western cultures, where women subjected

to everyday terror are often concerned that by naming abuse they will bring disrepute onto their wider family and community (Reavey et al., 2006).

Another area for future research arises out of the observation that participants appeared particularly keen to establish the importance of everyday terror being more widely recognised in 'public' space and its unacceptability being an immediate part of that discourse; research should focus on all spaces and aspects of society, including socio-structural and political. As Bostock et al. (2009) argue, the current research demonstrates the absolute necessity of situating domestic abuse within context, not as something that conceptually exists in the abstract, in a socio-political vacuum, but as a crime against women that is committed in "a societal and institutional context which normalises and tolerates violence" (p.108). In a similar vein, Bostock et al.'s (2009) research also depicts the numerous "ways in which institutions and informal networks are active in supporting… the abuse [and which therefore have] a significant impact on prolonging [it]" (p.107). The notion that systemic and structural space can be thought of as being exploited, or worse complicit, in everyday terror will undoubtedly warrant further consideration, especially in relation to the ways in which organisations might be restructured to bring about more equality, increased proactivity and prevention of abuse. Either way, there is a need for the dissemination of more powerful messaging, throughout all public spaces (including structural, institutional and digital), broadcasting the intolerability of everyday terror and the need for more concerted political and societal action to prevent further injustice and loss to victims.

Indeed, whilst the scope of this project has been restricted to experiences of everyday terror, future studies might look at the relationship between space, subjectivity and power more generally and within broader, less localised or specific manifestations of distress. Thus, it is my contention that the picture of distress and its mitigation being a thoroughly contextualised, enduring process (Brown & Stenner, 2009; Stenner, 2007; 2008; Whitehead, 1978), both mediated by and mediating the socio-material environment, could be seen as a clear and discerning lens through which to capture more systemic power differentials and their everyday resistance. Relatedly, this might involve closer scrutiny of the way that gender is constructed differently according to the broader social and cultural context and future research may wish to explore how this may serve to perpetuate domestic abuse, particularly in respect of the typical financial disadvantage of female victims and societal attitudes which imply that women might be responsible for the everyday terror waged against them.

4.8. CONCLUDING REMARKS

This project has examined the role played by space in abused women's experiences of distress and its mitigation, arguing for a complex, systemic, dynamic, relational and ongoing intersect between space and experience. As such, experiences of everyday terror have been argued to be intimately contextualised, incomprehensible away from the spaces of their occurrence, and space itself is used as a resource both to enact abuse and to actively intervene in and temper distress. These 'conclusions' have been drawn from interpretations of both visual and spoken data and it could be argued that this combined dataset provides a necessary balance to ensure that both time and space, chronology and environmental context, are appropriately attended to and that unchallenged, masculinist, normative discourses aren't simply reiterated, perpetuated and even further entrenched by attending only to linguistic data forms.

4.9.   A PSYCHOLOGY OF THE COMMUNITY[9]

As set out in the introduction, counselling psychology is marked by its commitment to an honest, realistic and pluralistically oriented applied psychology, not just in its practice but in its research. It is my contention that counselling psychologists should continue to research and to question the way that individuals are treated by others and by society. This research needs to explore the lived experience, and the spaces of people's lives are where that lived experience plays out. Indeed, counselling psychology specifically prioritises context, discourse, philosophy and power, seeking to apply humanist values and ethics, welcoming the 'other' (Cooper, 2009); it engages critically with subjectivity and is always open to possibility, uncertainty and to a between-ness (Kasket, 2012; Henton, 2016). Moreover, it is suggested that counselling psychological research should be defined by methodological pluralism and a tolerance for contradiction. It prioritises the participants' experience in all parts of the research process, including dissemination, and is committed to a democratic, non-hierarchical relationship between researcher and participant, in the co-production of knowledge. Importantly, it is my belief that counselling psychological research must apply to everyday practice, empowering others, and making a positive contribution to society (Rafalin, 2010). Thus, counselling psychologists are ideally placed to be able to promote the best interests of those less visible in society and should lobby parliament to ensure that their rights are equally protected. It is critical that, as counselling psychologists (in training), we listen to people and, when things do not appear to be working, we do something different. Indeed, I would argue that it is an important part of our identity that we set out to act affirmatively for the 'other' (Soja, 1996).

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[9] Kelly, 1970

This social justice angle means that we as researchers should be preoccupied by ethics throughout the process, not just in ensuring appropriate consent and confidentiality, but in the proper involvement of participants at all stages of the process. In line with Rafalin (2010), I propose that as counselling psychologists (in training), we should all aim to alleviate human suffering through improved understanding. We are all too aware of the link between poor mental health and social disadvantage to ignore the duty we are under to attend to social processes, and to challenge established political and cultural discourses. Indeed, qualitative research provides us with the exact 'tools to engage' with the social justice agenda and is, moreover, required by the Division of Counselling Psychology's focus on 'social context and discrimination'. Indeed, it is my conclusion that power and deprivation are rightly an integral part of our work as (trainee) counselling psychologists.

4.10. IMPLICATIONS FOR MY PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE

As I approach the end of the doctoral programme, I am determined not to allow my research to "simply sit on the shelf at the university gathering dust" (Agaoglu, 2013, p. 1). Not only do I intend to return to VOICES to present my analysis but I have been invited by them to take part in some further research which looks at the spaces of the helping professions, in relation to the involvement of the courts and family services with women who have left abusive relationships. I hope that by publishing my research, this may encourage others to come forward and to look more closely at the matters I have raised. Specifically, I hope that the movement to reconfigure counselling spaces – as demonstrated by the government funded work of Bank and Nissen (2017), Liddicoat (2015; 2016), Pearson and Wilson (2012), Ulrich et al. (2008), Goodings and Tucker (2018), Liddicoat and Forster (2018) and Freeman and Akhurst (2018) – will take heed of the views I have collected and act to improve upon the way counselling psychologists 'do' therapy, not just in relation to victims of everyday terror, but across the board, possibly leveraging the current reconceptualization of space also to facilitate different ways of therapeutic engaging and to open up discussions about the impact of such a retheorisation on subjectivity, agency, social accountability and change. Whilst suggesting that I hope to influence policy development in both therapy and qualitative research, more generally, and in the area of everyday terror, more specifically, feels a little grandiose, in view of the obvious scale and limitations of the current research, I would argue that this project itself comprises one of those small scale political actions which take place across everyday life, and that I might be one of those 'most people' that Abrahams (1992) is specifically referring to, helping to "nudge established patterns of control and authority" (Staeheli, Ehrkamp, Leitner & Nagel, 2012, p.630) in the right direction. Thus, with this research and through my intentions to take affirmative action to improve the lives of those being side-lined, I hope to be able to

one day look at myself in the mirror – when I qualify as a counselling psychologist – and declare that I am proud of what I see (Rafalin, 2010; Verducci & Gardner, 2005).

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Appendix A: Segment from Reflective Diary

14th July 2018

Having spent another couple of weeks in Bath, doing the interviews, I realise again that it has been impossible to steer clear of distress in participants' accounts. Its incredibly hard to ignore it and feels very false to try to revert to subjects of space and wellbeing, when these women are telling me about some of the more horrific parts of their abuse. It is a similar story when I ask whether they have photographs to show me or the spaces they associate with wellbeing. I'm often being told 'no, because there was nowhere safe during the abuse'. Certainly, once we go into more detail, I can detect that there were some occasional places of respite and that often these might appear less spatial to participants – because they are more relational, perhaps – and accord more with my own relational view of space, and not the cartographic view of space as place-specific. For example, today one of the participants was talking about how she made sure she cooked healthy meals and engaged in sex routinely, and without necessarily realising it, these are both spatial practices – undertakings which produce the spaces of the home. However, until they come into have their interviews, I can see why a lot of these women didn't feel that they could bring photographs as they just didn't believe that there was anywhere safe and, until probed, they had perhaps never thought of what they did to survive as in any way spatial? Either way, it means that a lot of what I was hoping to achieve by doing combined verbal and visual methodologies may not be effective.

Perhaps if I had been able to ask for photographs and accounts which help to depict the distress that women felt as they navigated their abusive relationships, then the combined verbal and visual methodologies might have been more productive? On the other hand, just because some of these women prefer to talk about distress doesn't mean that I can't include it in my analysis. The approval of the Ethics Committee surely only turned on me, myself, not raising the issues (so as to avoid upsetting them). If the participants themselves want to talk about the worse aspects of their abuse, then I am not doing anything wrong in allowing them to control the direction of the conversation. Indeed, it might even be thought of as unethical to stop them from deciding on the subject matter of our interactions. Similarly, it is surely not unethical for me to be able to include this in the analysis? My research question does not specify only spaces of wellbeing – but says 'experience of distress and its mitigation'. So, in other words, both distress and wellbeing are covered. This is something I think I need to clarify with my supervisor and my internal supervisor at City. Meanwhile, the fact that some of these women didn't bring photographs – because they initially believed there was nowhere associated with safety – has not prevented the focus being on space. By asking for these photographs, and ensuring the interview turned on space, it seems to have (so far) proven sufficient – everyone is talking about the spaces of their experience notwithstanding the

Appendix B: Research Flyer

Appendix C: Initial Presentation to VOICES

<u>Introduction to Research</u>

For my doctoral thesis, which is the 80,000-word piece of research I am producing to prove myself capable of becoming a fully qualified psychologist, I have chosen to look at the role of space in domestic abuse. For those of you who are all too familiar with the subject of domestic abuse, you may be wondering what space has got to do with it. I should explain that, in coming to this research question, I followed 2 paths which just happened to meet in the middle and, fortuitously, here I now am.

Firstly, I was a criminal barrister for nearly a decade and in that time, I prosecuted countless men for battery, assault, ABH, GBH, harassment and even attempted murder – all committed against their partners. Whilst I feel that the legal service was actually doing its best, under very challenging circumstances and with incredibly limited resources, I was constantly disappointed and – to be honest – very frustrated with how difficult it was to prosecute these perpetrators. Leaving aside for 1 minute the very high standard of proof (where I would need to convince the judge or jury that the defendant was guilty beyond any reasonable doubt – when it is typically 1 word against another, so 50% probability, not 99% which is what I needed) and merely focusing on the difficulty with getting a victim to come to court and give evidence, it was rare that I could even begin the trial in the first place. In many many cases, I would have to try to speak to a witness about her testimony before the hearing whilst she was sat accompanied by the mother or sister of the defendant. Often with interpreters who seemed biased and not properly interpreting everything I was saying. Often, we were sat in witness waiting rooms which were noisy, busy and disturbing and with open doors to corridors where the defendant and his barrister sat waiting. Extremely frequently, I would have a witness who no longer wished to participate and I would either have to apply for the court to have her summoned and brought to court (by the police, which as you can imagine didn't go down brilliantly or make for a willing witness) or would have to make (later in my career after changes came in with the CJA 2005) applications to read her evidence aloud or even treat her as a hostile witness and cross-examine her on her previous witness statements.

THIS IS THE POINT AT WHICH I ABANDONED MY PRESENTATION AND PROVIDED A MORE AD HOC Q&A FOR PARTICIPANTS TO GUAGE WHETHER THEY WANTED TO TRUST ME WITH THEIR STORIES

What did all this tell me? That – at the time, and it may well be a lot better now (I left the Bar in 2012) – that waiting until the relationship was over and the police and courts were involved was the wrong time for me to be helping – or trying to help. What do I mean by this? I realised that victims of domestic abuse needed to come forward earlier, so that the help they so clearly needed was available in an appropriate format at the appropriate time in the course of their abuse, not just after. Maybe this would be before the violence, control and abuse had got so bad that she had felt compelled to leave – or before the police and courts had had to step in – or before she had been forced to leave the marital home, taking her children out of their schools and leaving her friends and family and often her job and access to benefits. What if she had been able to access therapy earlier – at a time when things were becoming bad but weren't necessarily so bad that report, arrest and escape were the only options available to her? What if she had been able to see a counsellor who had helped her to realise the enormous strength and inner resources that she clearly had available to her to draw on (in managing to survive her nightmare already for far too long)? What if she could have

seen that counsellor in places where she felt safe to visit and for periods of time that didn't arouse suspicion and reprisal from her partner? Like near the supermarket or on the school run? If this had been possible, could this have enabled her to stand up to her abuser? Or at least, could it have helped her to stand up and report the abuse before things had got even worse? Could she have told her family and friends, so that they could have tried to intervene? Could she have gotten her children out before they maybe saw and heard some of the terrible things that were going on? I don't know the answers to these questions but I think it's possible that you might. And I'd like to hear from you about it.

The second route to the crossroads that has grown into my research topic is this: For my previous psychology degree, I became interested in the nature of space in the experience of misery and wellbeing. For years – hundreds of years actually, psychologists and historians and just about everybody had only really focused on the when, not the where. We talk about what we did 'yesterday' and what we will do 'tomorrow' or 'next year' but we very rarely talk about who we were or how we felt when we were 'somewhere' – at work, at home, in the pub, in the gym for example. There is – as a result – a growing movement in psychology to become interested in questions around space and setting and how these things help to form who we are at any one time. For example, you may think of yourself differently as you sit here in this meeting listening to me drone on, when compared to who you are when you're outside the school gates or at work or at home or in the job centre or in the police station or court or when you're out walking the dog.

My previous research asks how different places impact mood. For example, there are links between depression and living in high-rise buildings, in inner city areas, far away from green spaces and nature – and on the non-sunny side of the road, versus the illuminated one. Moreover, psychologists and social geographers have been able to demonstrate real connections between a number of mental health problems and where people spend their time. This is probably pretty obvious when we think about people with conditions like depression and agrophobia (fear of crowds) but perhaps less obvious when we think of how different spaces impact people with anxiety, OCD, schizophrenia and BPD. But they do seem to!

So, I started to think about how people who are domestically abused think about space. I mean, even the word domestic sounds like it has intrinsically spatial connotations. It means home. Whereas – according to the research – the home for most women is a symbol of harmony – a safe haven – I very much doubt it feels safe for victims of domestic abuse. How then do they feel about the home? Where do they go to escape feelings of fear, threat and danger? Which places do they associate with safety, if it isn't the home? Where can they go to run away – albeit temporarily – from the coercion, control and aggression they so often encounter? And how do they feel when they go there? How do they feel when they return?

And whilst this, in itself, is all very interesting – to me at least(!) – I started to wonder what we can learn from this? And then it hit me! By exploring which places abused women go to to feel better – where they feel safe and temporarily free from surveillance – this might be where we could position counselling services so that women could meet therapists as part of their daily routine, to avoid feeling exposed, humiliated and different. Because this is the other really important fact – very few women engage with counselling services until after they have escaped their partners, after the abuse and control have ended. This is something, I – as a trainee counselling psychologist – find really disturbing. When domestic abuse is so alarmingly common - with 1 in 3 women victimised by an intimate partner at some stage in their lifetime – why do they not want to see counsellors?

Research suggests that many abused women find therapy humiliating and objectifying and this seems to compound their lack of engagement. In order to remedy this – and to encourage abused women to seek help at earlier stages – we need to find ways of developing therapy which hold greater appeal, are more dignifying and are simpler and safer to access.

One way of going about this is to change the nature of the counselling space itself, so that it better reflects the needs and preferences of victims. This is an idea borrowed from Denmark, whose government commissioned research to investigate the apparent reluctance of young drug addicts to engage in therapy. They discovered that, whereas adolescents often found counselling too burdensome to attend, too out of touch with reality and too alienating or humiliating, they could inspire commitment and therapeutic alliance by making improvements to the counselling space - in line with the stated preference of its users. Thus, on the basis of photographs of spaces deemed by participants to be comfortable, accessible and conducive to therapy, they restructured the entire counselling experience; counselling now takes place in 'chill-out zones', music studios, shopping malls and in youth centres, for example.

In support, domestic abuse charities have already indicated that their clients find therapy shaming and often impractical. They suggest that clients need to be able to meet counsellors in safe and discrete places, which engender a feeling of wellbeing, whilst also deterring suspicion from abusers. And we need to be able to convince the local councils of this fact, so that they make appropriate space available for these purposes.

Extrapolating from this, the current research aims to channel the experience of abused women into counselling practice; integrating therapy into everyday life, with counselling sessions arranged to take place in low-risk, easy-to-access localities, based on the inclinations of users. Again, drawing on the Danish experience, these preferences will be illustrated by participant-produced photographs of places associated with safety and wellbeing, so that therapy can be reconfigured to take place in spaces that victims already safely and easily access, without risk of detection and reprisal.

For all these reasons, I'm hoping to recruit 12 female survivors of domestic abuse to take part in some informal interviews. These women will take photos of spaces they find reassuring. They will also talk about websites which they use to feel better. On the basis of these visual tools, we will talk about their experience. And hopefully from this, we will draw some tentative conclusions which may help us to persuade those who matter that counselling can and should be different.

Appendix D: Assessment Tool

Women's Experience with Battering (WEB) Scale

The following are a number of statements that women have used to describe their relationships with their "male partners". Please read each statement and then circle the answer that best describes how much you agree or disagree in general with each one as a description of your relationship with your partner. If you do not now have a partner, think about your last one. There are no right or wrong answers; just circle the number which seems to best describe how much you agree or disagree with it.

			Agree Strongly	Agree Somewhat	Agree a little	Disagree a little	Disagree Somewhat	Disagree strongly
1. He makes me feel unsafe even in my own home.			6	5	4	3	2	1
2. I feel ashamed of the things he does to me.			6	5	4	3	2	1
3. I try not to rock the boat because I am afraid of what he might do.			6	5	4	3	2	1
4. I feel like I am programmed to react in a certain way to him.			6	5	4	3	2	1
5. I feel like he keeps me prisoner.			6	5	4	3	2	1
6. He makes me feel like I have no control over my life, no power, no protection.			6	5	4	3	2	1
7. I hide the truth from others because I'm afraid not to.			6	5	4	3	2	1
8. I feel owned and controlled by him.			6	5	4	3	2	1
9. He can scare me without laying a hand on me			6	5	4	3	2	1
10. He has a look that goes straight through me and terrifies me.			6	5	4	3	2	1

The WEB can be self-administered or used during face-to-face assessment by a provider. A series of 10 statements ask a woman how safe she feels, physically and emotionally, in her relationship. The respondent is asked to rate how much she agrees or disagrees with each of the statements on a scale of 1 to 6 ranging from disagree strongly (1) to agree strongly (6). The numbers associated with her responses to the 10 statements are summed to create a score for the WEB. A score of 20 points or higher on the WEB is considered positive for IPV.

Appendix E: Interview Schedule

Ethics approval code: PSYETH (P/F) 17/18 41

1) Can you begin by telling me a little bit about yourself, including your age, nationality and where you currently live (not your name or address)?

Photographs/ Drawings

2) Can you tell me something about the place(s) in the photograph(s) and what it/they mean(s) or meant to you?
3) Can you suggest what it is about these places and/or the material objects within them that causes or caused you to feel the way you do?
4) Can you tell me why you visit or visited these places, what you do/did there, who else you may possibly encounter/ have encountered there and how that makes/made you feel?

Website printouts/ Discussion over phone/ email/ text/ chat rooms/ social media

5) Can you tell me something about the website(s) in the printout(s) and what it/they mean(s) to you? /Do you use phone/ email/ text/ social media/ online chat rooms?
6) How do you feel about them? Now? At the time of the abuse?
7) Can you suggest what it is about these sites or IT exchanges that causes or caused you to feel the way you do?
8) Can you tell me why you visit or visited these websites, what you do/did there, who else you are likely to encounter/ have encountered there and how that makes/made you feel?
9) What would you consider to be the most significant similarities or differences between virtual spaces and those places represented by the photographs, for you and in your experience?

General distress

10) Do you believe there is a distinction between public and private and, if so, how do you think this played out in your experience of domestic abuse? Is it relevant at all?
11) How do you think internet use and technology impacts any separation/ divide?
12) Could you tell me how you feel about the relationship between space and distress or wellbeing? At the time of the abuse or now or whenever?
13) Have you ever thought about how different spaces might affect your distress around domestic abuse? The home, gym, school run, job centre, shopping mall, for example?
14) Have you been aware of any differences in your relationship with each of these spaces at times when you have been distressed and when you have not been distressed?
15) Can you describe any ways in which you feel these spaces might be a reflection of your emotional experiences and, in general, how important you think your whereabouts might be to your mood?
16) Are there ways in which you feel that certain spaces reflect a sense of who you are or how you identify with yourself or help you express your emotions?
17) Could you tell me whether you sought counselling or therapy at the time of the abuse and, if not, why not? How might therapy be structured to be more attractive to you?
18) Are there places where you could imagine feeling more or less safe when meeting a therapist? What would that encounter look or feel like? For how long? How often?

Appendix F: Participant Information Sheet

We would like to invite you to take part in a research study. Before you decide whether you would like to take part, it is important that you understand why the research is being done and what it would involve for you. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Ask us if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information.

What is the purpose of the study?
For my Professional Doctorate in Counselling Psychology Thesis, I am interested in learning how women who have experienced domestic abuse feel about different places, especially public, private and online spaces and how these spaces might have impacted the experience of mental and emotional distress during the abuse. To aid my investigation, I would like you to bring in one or more pictures depicting places in which, at the time of the abuse, you felt safe or which contributed to feelings of wellbeing, as well as one or more printouts from your most frequently visited websites. The screenshots may be taken from any website that you prefer, whether related to domestic abuse or otherwise. Please do not take pictures of other people; if you do, they will have to be discarded.

Why have I been invited?
You have been invited because you are female, aged over 18 and have survived domestic abuse from a male partner. You have confirmed that you are no longer in an abusive relationship and that any abusive relationship ended over 12 months ago. You have also confirmed that you have not experienced fear from the abuser or from anyone acting on his behalf within the last 12 months.

Do I have to take part?
It's up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you decide to take part, please let XXX (contact at VOICES) know. We will then arrange an interview at a time that is convenient for you. Participation in the project is voluntary, and you can choose not to participate in part or all of the project. Before starting the study, you will sign a consent form, which you should keep a copy of. If you decide to participate, you can withdraw at any stage of the project (up until 1 month after the interview) without being penalised or disadvantaged in any way and without any need for explanation. Such a decision, or one not to participate, will not affect the standard of care you will receive.

What will happen if I take part?
You have already met the researcher to establish your suitability for participation. If you decide to take part, you will let the researcher know (via the Domestic Abuse centre you are engaged with). You will then arrange a time to be interviewed. Prior to the interview, you will be asked to compile some photographs and/or printouts to bring with you. The interview will take place at the domestic abuse charity that you are working with. The interview will last approximately 90 minutes and will be semi-structured. During the interview, we will look in some detail at your experiences and how you have managed them over the years. I will also make an audio-recording of the interview so that I can later transcribe it accurately. Some short extracts from the transcript will then be used in the final report, in order to illustrate your views or experiences. To protect your confidentiality, no personally identifying information will be used in any write-up of this research, or in any later journal publication. At the end of our interview, you will have the opportunity to ask questions, and I will have the chance to ask you about your experience as a participant. I will finish the interview by giving you some further information on how to get support should you want it.

Expenses and Payments
You will be compensated for your public transport travel and/or car mileage to and from the interview.

What do I have to do?
The study will involve a single semi-structured interview, lasting no more than 90 minutes. During this interview, you will talk about your photographs and your webpage printout(s). The interview
will be tape-recorded. After the interview, you will be given a short debrief.

What are the possible disadvantages and risks of taking part?
Please be advised that some questions may require you to reflect on sensitive topics of a personal nature. The interview procedure is not harmful, although it is possible that you may feel upset talking about living with domestic abuse. I will, however, try to keep any distress to a minimum and ensure that my questions focus on spatial qualities, as opposed to your historical experiences, of domestic

abuse. If you are caused any distress, you can refuse to answer any question at will, ask for any answer to be stricken from record or ask that the interview be concluded. Afterwards, you will be given details of any relevant bodies who may be able to assist you in the event of distress.

What are the possible benefits of taking part?
This study has no intended clinical benefits but I hope that the information gathered will help counselling psychologists to structure therapy in ways and in places which will encourage more people living with domestic abuse to come forward, earlier in their journeys. In addition, participants often report that having a place to talk freely about their distress helps in some way to alleviate it, albeit temporarily.

Will my taking part in the study be kept confidential?
The results will be kept strictly confidential. You will not be identified by name in any report concerning the study and will be randomly allocated a non-identifying code and then name. There will be no record kept of how the code or name relates to participants. The audio recordings will also be encrypted when uploaded and the originals deleted. Only pictures which do not depict people or recognisable places will be uploaded and all original photographs and pictures will be destroyed. Only I will be involved in the transcription and you can ask for the interview transcript to be shown to you and amended if appropriate, up until the point at which it is analysed. Any uploaded information will be kept on my personal computer at my home which is Banham-alarmed and will be destroyed within 5 years. If the project is for any reason abandoned before completion, the data will all be destroyed within 3 months.

What will happen to the results of the research study?
The overall 'findings' will be published within my thesis and will be disseminated across the Psychology Department but, again, no identifying details will be made available. A shortened version will be published in psychology journals but all participant information will be anonymised. In addition, you will be able to request a copy of the thesis or a summary of the analysis and a copy will be shared with the domestic abuse charities which help to arrange recruitment. A face-to-face presentation to the charities may also follow.

What will happen if I don't want to carry on with the study?
You are entitled to withdraw from the study at any point up to 1 month after the interview.

What if there is a problem?
If you have any problems, concerns or questions about this study, you should ask to speak to a member of the research team. If you remain unhappy and wish to complain formally, you can do this through the University complaints procedure. To complain about the study, you need to phone ███ ██████. You can then ask to speak to the Secretary to Senate Research Ethics Committee and inform them that the name of the project is: Rethinking public and private: The implications of space in domestic abuse victims' experience and mitigation of psychological distress.

You could also write to the Secretary at:
██████████
Secretary to Senate Research Ethics Committee
Research Office, E214
City University London
Northampton Square
London
EC1V 0HB
████████████████████████

City University London holds insurance policies which apply to this study. If you feel you have been harmed or injured by taking part in this study you may be eligible to claim compensation. This does not affect your legal rights to seek compensation. If you are harmed due to someone's negligence, then you may have grounds for legal action.

Who has reviewed the study?

This study has been approved by City University London Psychology Research Ethics Committee, PSYETH (P/F) 17/18 41.

Further information and contact details
Verity Buchanan, ████████████████████
Department of Psychology, City University of London, London EC1V 0HB

████████████████████████████████████

Department of Psychology, London South Bank University, 103 Borough Road, London SE1 0AA
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████████████████████████████████████

Department of Psychology, City University of London, London EC1V 0HB
████████████

Thank you for taking the time to read this information sheet.

Appendix G: Informed Consent

Ethics approval code: PSYETH (P/F) 17/18 41

Please initial box

1.	I agree to take part in the above City University London research project. I have had the project explained to me, and I have read the participant information sheet, which I may keep for my records. I understand this will involve: • being interviewed by the researcher • allowing the interview to be audiotaped • taking or collating photographs and/or website printouts to bring with me to interview	
2.	This information will be held and processed for the following purpose: To answer the research question. I understand that any information I provide is confidential, and that no information that could lead to the identification of any individual will be disclosed in any reports on the project, or to any other party. No identifiable personal data will be published. The identifiable data will not be shared with any other organisation.	
3.	I understand that my participation is voluntary, that I can choose not to participate in part or all of the project, and that I can withdraw up until 1 month after interview without being penalized or disadvantaged in any way.	
4.	I agree to City University London recording and processing this information about me. I understand that this information will be used only for the purpose set out in this statement and my consent is conditional on the University complying with its duties and obligations under the Data Protection Act 1998.	
5.	I would like to request access to the completed thesis (provided that it is not interrupted for any reason) or a summary of analysis (please delete).	
6.	I agree to take part in the above study.	

_____   _____ _____

Name of Participant   Signature   Date

_____   _____   _____
Name of Researcher   Signature   Date

When completed, 1 copy for participant; 1 copy for researcher file.

Note to researcher: to ensure anonymity, consent forms should NOT include participant numbers and should be stored separately from data.

Appendix H: Debrief Information

Thank you for taking part in this study. Now that it's finished we'd like to tell you a bit more about it. The things we have talked about today will be analysed to help further an understanding of how women who suffer domestic abuse feel about the different spaces in their lives and, in particular, how their distress is experienced in both public and private and whether online space changes any of this.

If there is anything that came up in the interview that you feel concerned or upset about or you would like more information or to talk with someone further, you can contact:

SafeLives, www.safelives.org.uk

National Domestic Violence Helpline, http://www.nationaldomesticviolencehelpline.org.uk

Refuge, http://www.refuge.org.uk

Women's Aid, https://www.womensaid.org.uk

Please also see the sheet entitled 'Counselling and Psychotherapy Services in London, Bath and Bristol'.

We hope you found the study interesting. If you have any other questions please do not hesitate to contact us at the following:
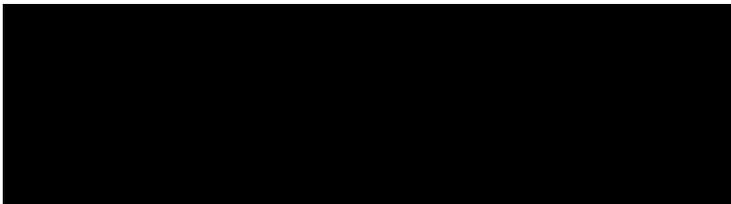
Ethics approval code: PSYETH (P/F) 17/18 41

Counselling and Psychotherapy Services in London, Bath and Bristol

NHS 111

Telephone: 111
Website: www.nhs.uk

Bristol Against Violence and Abuse

Website: bava.org.uk

Bristol Women's Voice

Telephone: 0117 916 6555
Website: https://www.bristolwomensvoice.org.uk/safety/

British Psychological Society

Telephone: 0116 254 9568
Website: http://www.bps.org.uk/psychology-public/find-psychologist/find-psychologist

British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy

Telephone: 0145 5883 316
Website: www.bacp.co.uk

Julian House, Bath

Telephone: 01225 354650
Website: https://www.julianhouse.org.uk

Mind, The Mental Health Charity, London

Telephone: 020 8519 2122
Website: www.mind.org.uk

Refuge (Nationwide)

Telephone: 0808 2000 247
Website: https://www.refuge.org.uk

SafeLives, London

Telephone: 0207 922 7891
Website: www.safelives.org.uk

SafeLives, Bristol

Telephone: 0117 403 3220

Website: www.safelives.org.uk

Southside, Bath

Telephone: 01225 331243
Website: http://www.south-side.org.uk

Survive, Bristol

Telephone: 0117 961 3065
Website: http://survivedv.org.uk

The Awareness Centre, London

Telephone: 078 502 2495
Website: www.theawarenesscentre.com

VOICES Charity, Bath

Telephone: 01225 429 249
Website: www.voicescharity.org

Woman's Trust, London

Telephone: 020 7034 0303
Website: www.womanstrust.org.uk

Women and Girls Network, London

Telephone: 020 7610 4678
Website: www.wgn.org.uk

Women's Aid (Nationwide)

Telephone: 0808 2000 247
Website: www.womensaid.org.uk

Women's Therapy Centre, London

Telephone: 020 7263 7860
Website: www.womenstherapycentre.co.uk

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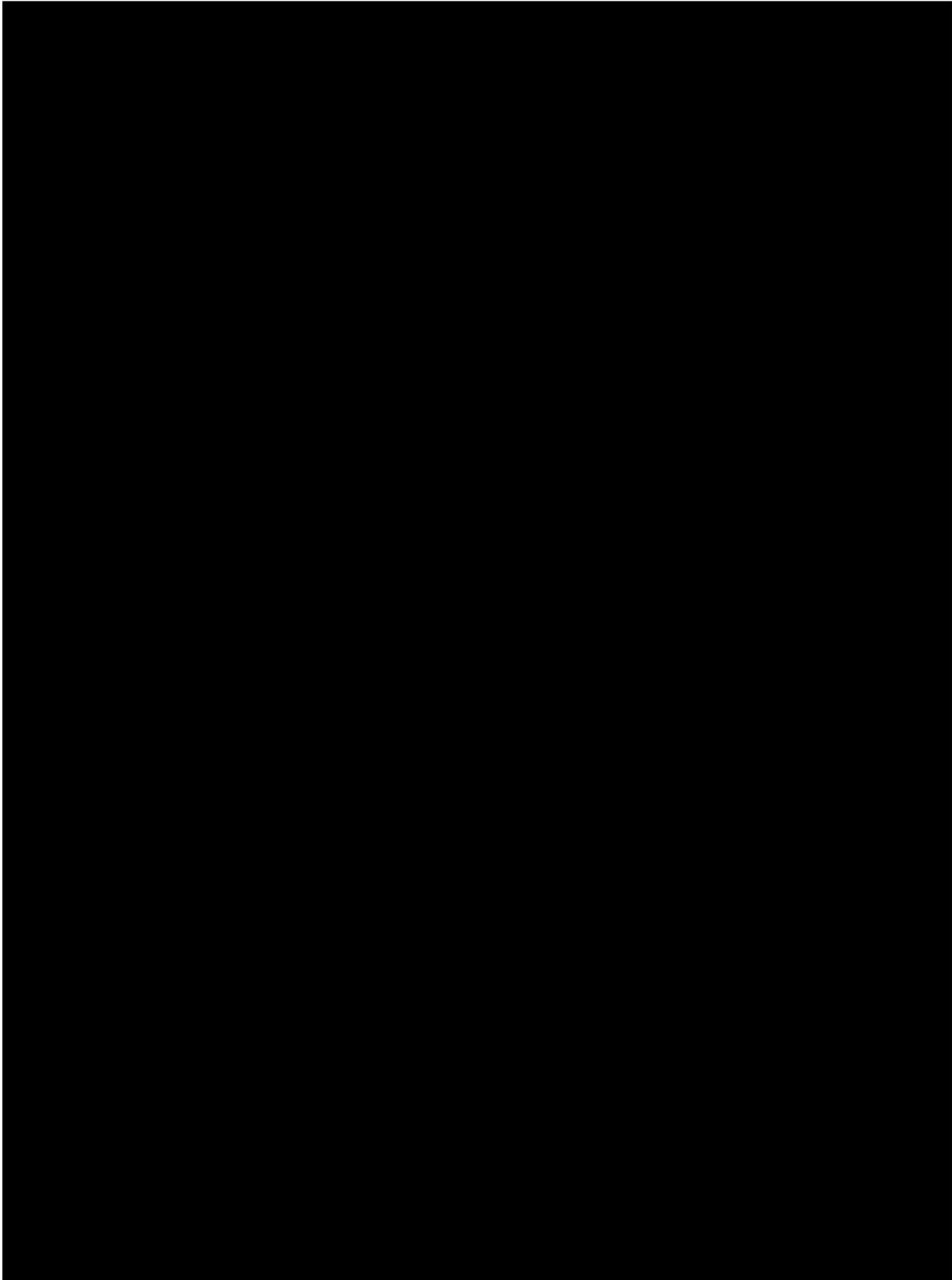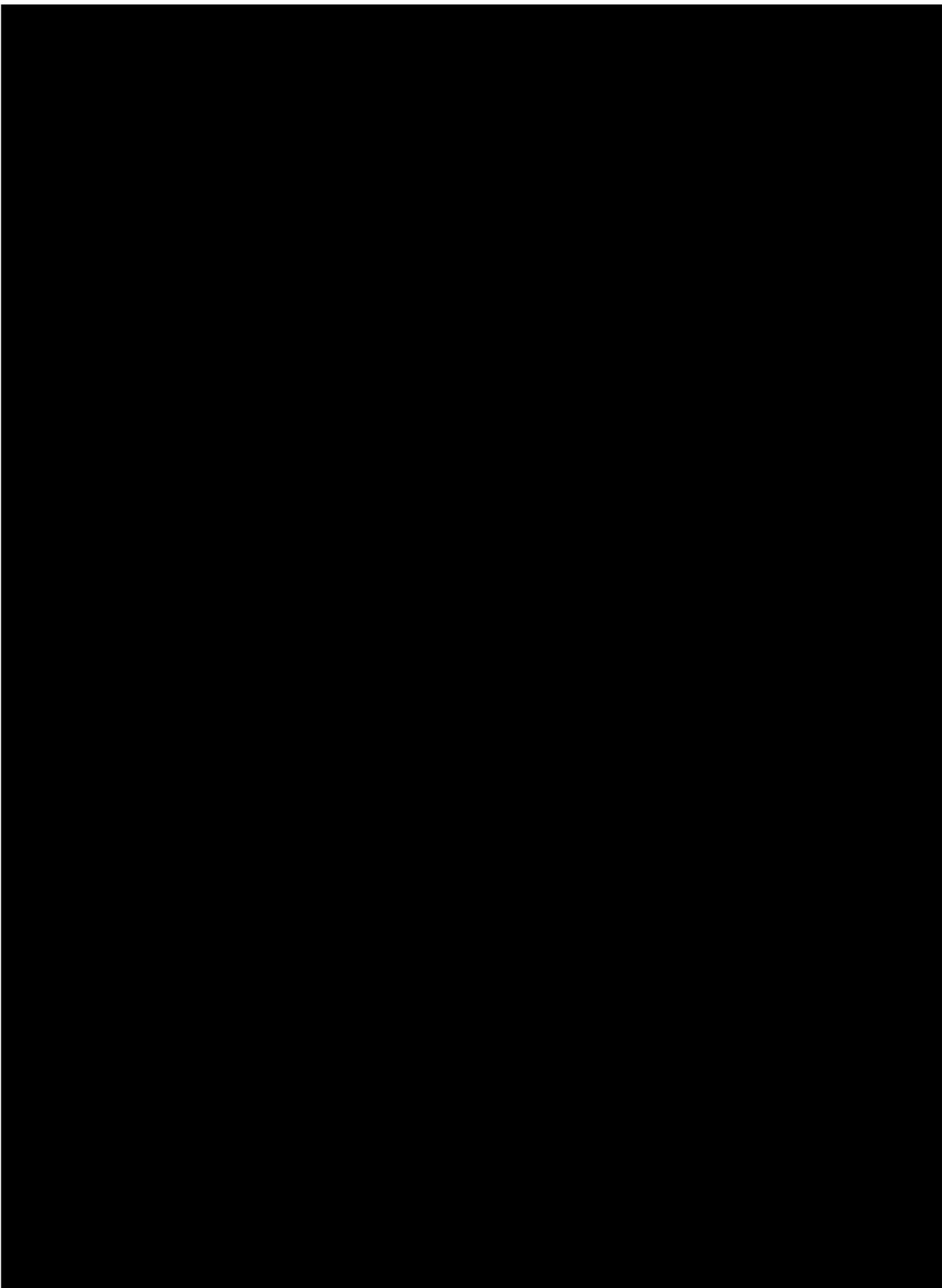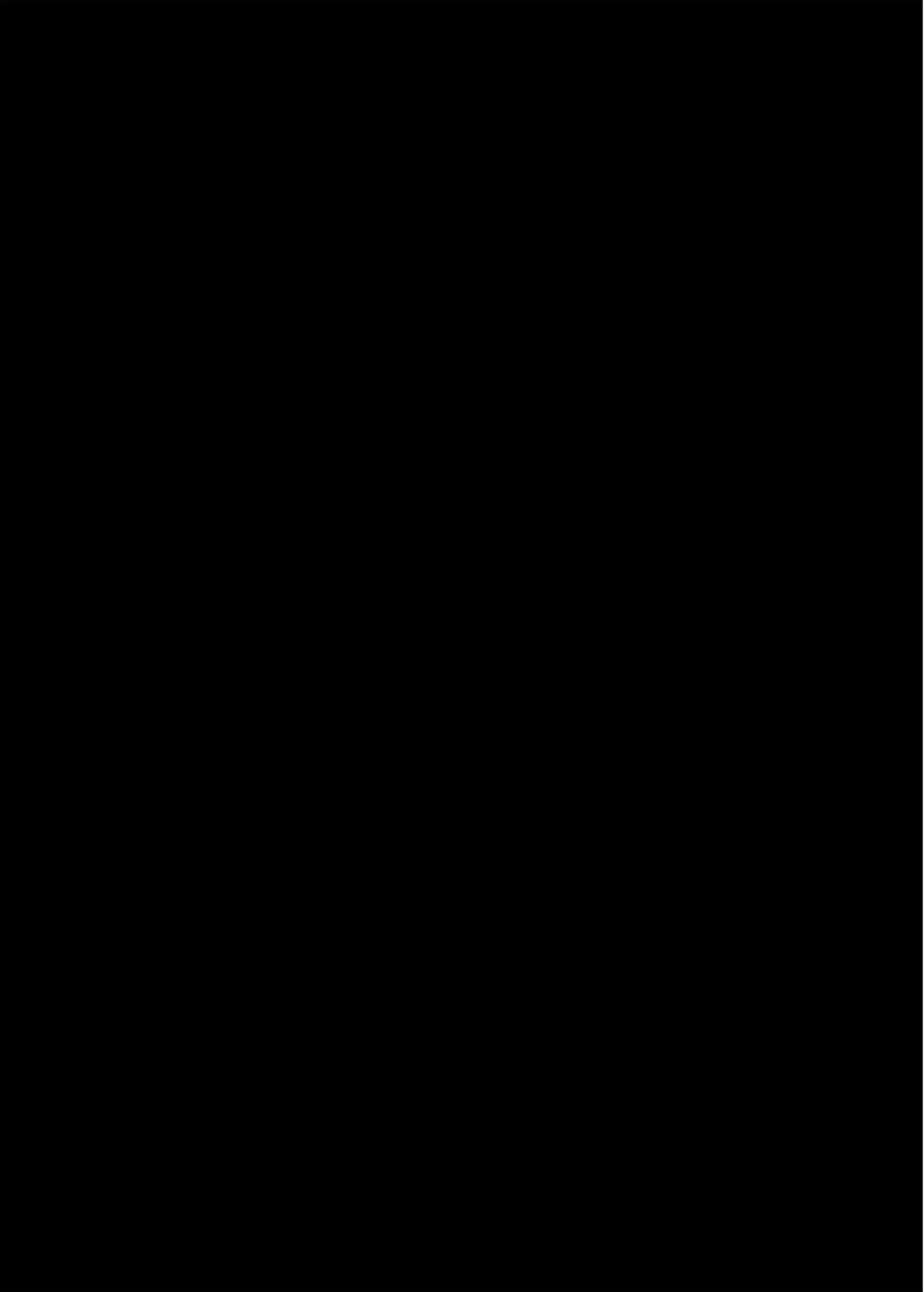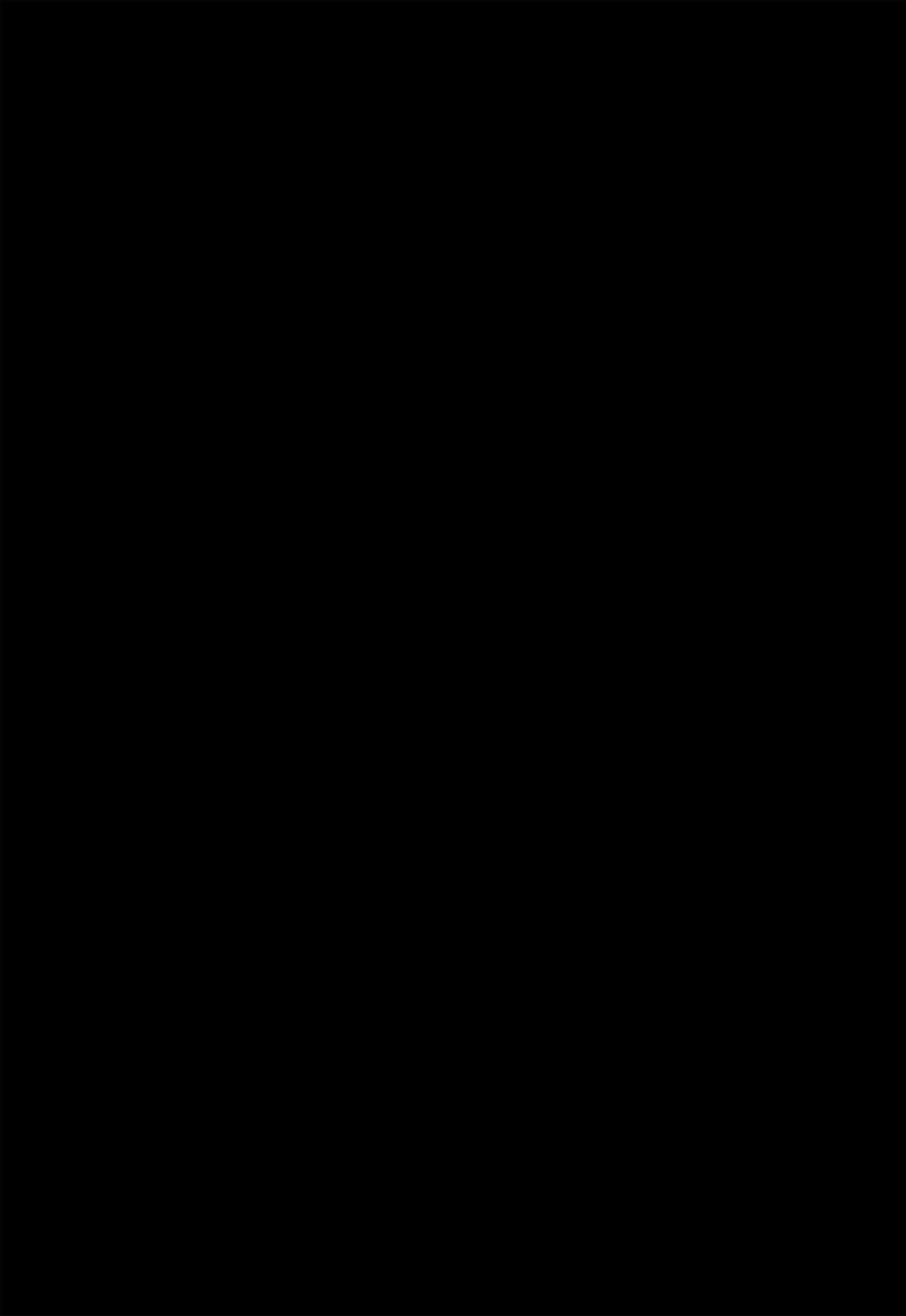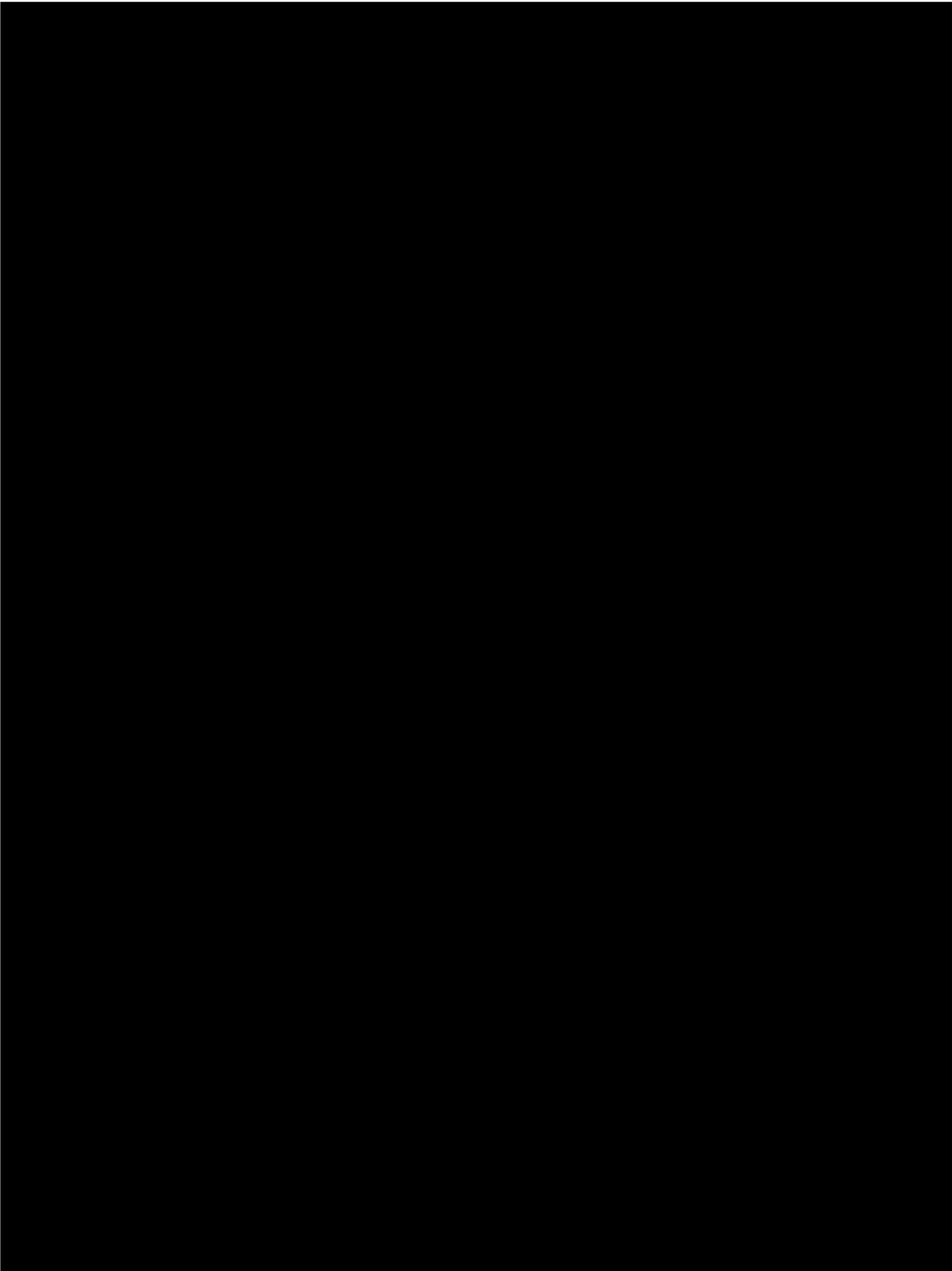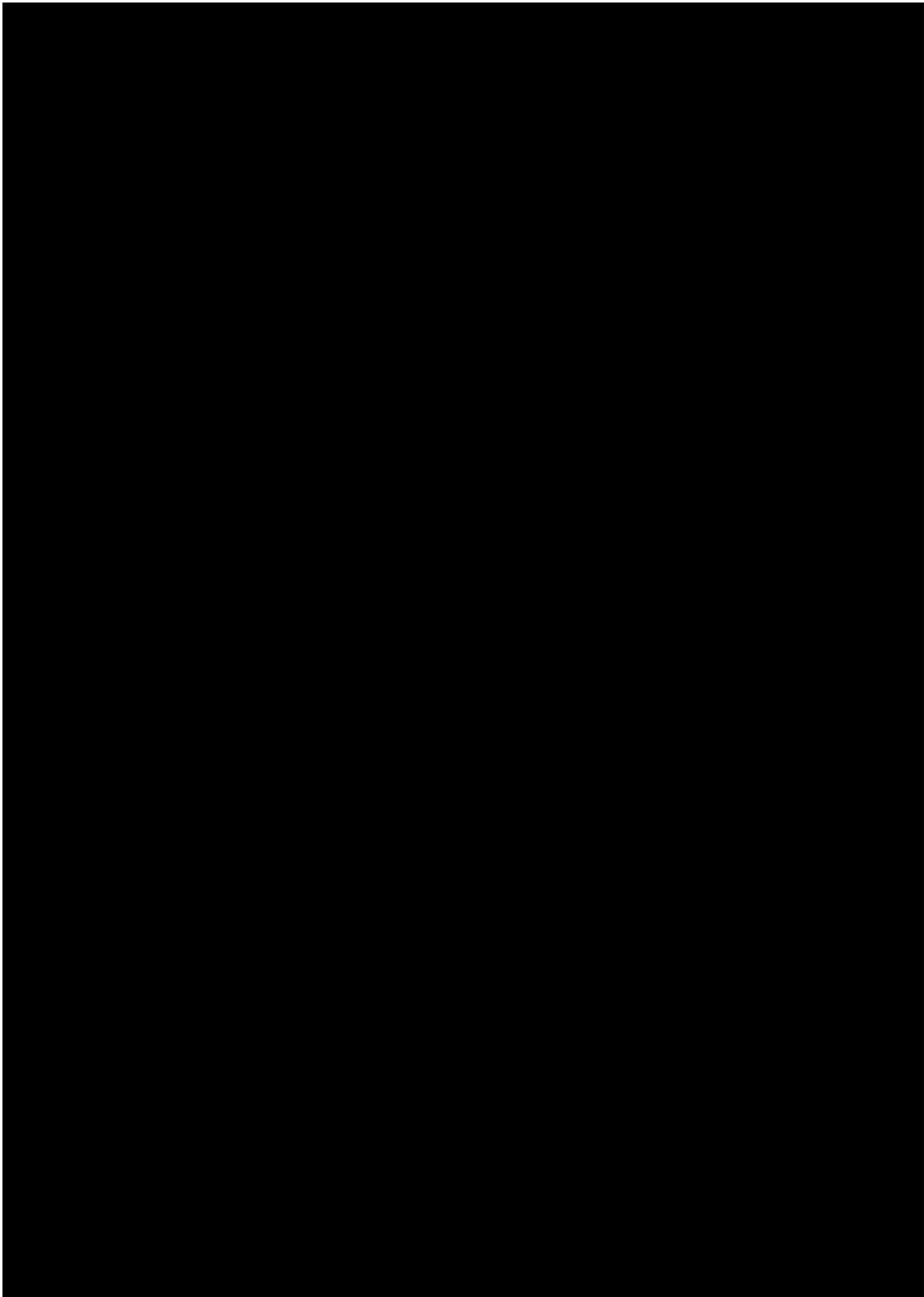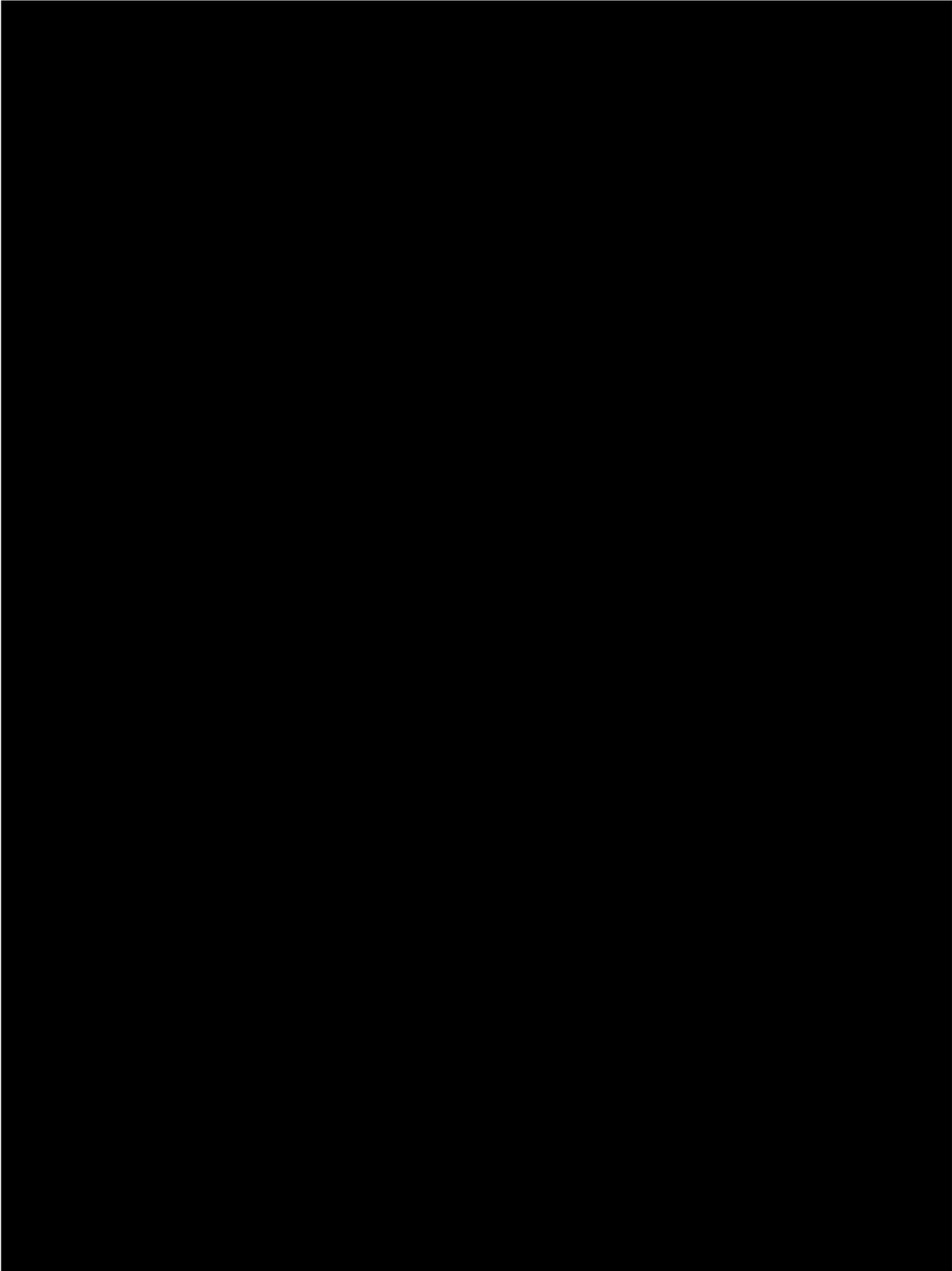
Appendix K: Table of Coded Extracts (Marjarie)

7) Accommodation inadequate Importance of homemaking/routine Distress related to living situation	I have to go down six flights of stairs to go to the kitchen… You know, seven flights to do my washing and haul everything back upstairs. It's pretty miserable	Marjarie, p. 3, l. 48-53
8) Impact of space on emotion	Of course [the space effects my mood]. It makes me really narky at my daughter	Marjarie, p. 3, l. 57
9) Capacity of rooms to enable freedom	[In my previous place] if I hadn't left she would have had room to play and I would have had room to breathe.	Marjarie, p. 3, l. 61-62
10) Hostels revert to childhood rules	I wouldn't have to go to bed when she goes to bed	Marjarie, p. 3, l. 61-62
11) Restrictions required by hostel Swapping rules of abuser for rules of another	Seven o'clock I have to turn the telly off, and everything off, until she sleeps and then I have to sit quietly while she sleeps.	Marjarie, p. 3, l. 66-68
12) Safety equated with loneliness 13) Space being marked by relational possibilities/ curtailment	So, it's very lonely, it's very miserable and I think it's very unfair	Marjarie, p. 3, l. 66-68
14) Abuser can use rules of prisons to continue abuse, despite lock up 15) Secure detention still affording abilities to communicate/ threaten	He held me for six days; I'd left him. He was released and I was too frightened to press charges because he rang me from when they arrested him, from jail, saying, "I didn't rape you." So, I thought, "He can get to me now."	Marjarie, p. 4, l. 83-85
16) Safety swapped for freedom, movement	So, I ended up living on the streets, just constantly running.	Marjarie, p. 4, l. 85-86
17) Swapping one kind of abuse for another 18) Matter of freedom of choice	Five years I lived on the streets and I ended up a junky and I had to give the baby up for adoption, due to all of that	Marjarie, p. 4, l.90-91
19) Irony that the worse the abuse, the less the authorities can/will help 20) The impact of the severest abuse on space 21) Previously dragged through housing by him, now by the police 22) Despite injuries, just confined to another space of abuse 23) Idea that money somehow pays off guilt 24) The apparent lack of interest and responsibility taken by society, those empowered to help	He cut off my fingers, broke my ribs, my breast plate, shattered my knees, knocked out all my teeth, stabbed me in the eye socket and then decided to rape me and he hit me with a sledge hammer a couple of times. So, yes, he left me in a really bad way; a really, really bad way… So, the Police couldn't find a refuge that would take me. No, I was too high risk from the other women. Because of the amount of damage that was done. So, I was dragged around the Housing, after I got out of hospital. I had my hand in a brace so I couldn't wash myself, dress myself, do anything and they found me a bed & breakfast. So, I was dumped on the top floor, with all my suitcases and 160 quid and told, "We'll be in touch."	Marjarie, p. 5, l. 98-114
25) Contrast between the rooms in prison where the abuser is 26) Abilities of space to afford/restrict freedom 27) Choice inherently spatial	So, I couldn't hack being in one room by myself. No telly, no radio, no nothing, no support. I couldn't wash myself, I couldn't do anything. So, I went back to the house that I nearly died in…	Marjarie, p. 5-6, l. 118-127
28) Support only in hospital, not once out of sight (out of mind)	I wasn't supported. Sapphire came to visit me in hospital; Victims Support sent me leaflets	Marjarie, p. 5-6, l. 118-127
29) Swapping different kinds of dangers	…and I just ended up using drugs and hitting the streets.	Marjarie, p. 5-6, l. 118-127
30) Ability of 'dangerous' environment to grant safety/ freedom 31) Freedom = movement	I could run around then and I never stayed in one place long enough for him to find me. He eventually did find me.	Marjarie, p. 6, l. 127-129
32) Public spaces which are threatening on account of people within them	He went to the places where someone would grass me up.	Marjarie, p. 6, l. 133

Appendix L: Table of Themes (Lucy)

	Second Order Codes	Initial Themes	Page
1.	Swimming clears head	Exercise/ movement/ agency	4
2.	Unmonitored space	Miscellaneous	4
3.	Swimming away from marriage	Escape/ movement/ agency	4
4.	Water as therapeutic	Nature/ connectivity	5
5.	Relaxation in water	Nature	5
6.	Intrusion into psychological space	Intrusion/ invasion/ control/ conquering	6
7.	Disembodiment	Psychological destruction	6
8.	Water revitalised	Agency/ identity	6
9.	Physical activity – movement through space	Movement/ activity/ agency	6
10.	Floating on surface	Miscellaneous	7
11.	Resistance	Feeling/ identity	7
12.	Physiology and psychology	Miscellaneous	7
13.	Body betraying emotion	Miscellaneous	7
14.	Encroaching on safe space	Intrusion/ invasion/ encroachment	7
15.	Preventing separation	Invasion	8
16.	Telecoms to oppress	Collapse of separate spaces	8
17.	Encroaching on private space	Collapse of separate spaces/ extrusion	8
18.	Guilt over leaving home space	Encroaching on private space	8
19.	Use of space to manipulate	Use of space to manipulate	8
20.	Territorialisation	Competition and conquering space	8
21.	Invasion of space	Invasion	8
22.	Competition over space	Competition/ control	8
23.	Possessiveness	Lack of separation	8
24.	Totalitarian occupation	Elimination of me	9
25.	No space left for me	Invasion/ psychological destruction	9
26.	My home not mine	Invasion/ control	9
27.	No space between work and children	Encroachment	9
28.	Social isolation	Isolation and entrapment	9
29.	Punished for breaking space	Invasion	9
30.	House as place of guilt, obligation and payback	Entrapment	10
31.	Study undermined as time off	Psychological space	10
32.	Home as punishment	Home as imprisoning	10
33.	Forced to account for breaking space	Entrapment	10
34.	Left spaceless	Spacelessness	10
35.	Ownership of space	Encroachment/ lack of separation	10
36.	Use of space to isolate	Isolation/ Elimination of self	10
37.	Objects to make space hostile/ to control space	Objects – control	11
38.	Possessing/ controlling space	Invasion	11
39.	Use of space to communicate hierarchy	Conquest/ control/ subordination	11
40.	Territorialisation	Conquering	11
41.	Space as his castle	Ownership	11
42.	Safe space for him	Barriers/ fortress	11
43.	Control of space	Control of space	11
44.	Collapse of psychological separation	Annihilation, extrusion	12
45.	Extrusion into psychological space	Enmeshment/ infiltration	12
46.	Monopoly on space	Conquering space	13
47.	Dividing space	Controlling space	13
48.	Conquering space	Controlling	13
49.	Use of space to recreate the self/ manipulate	Using space in identity/ to manipulate	14
50.	His control of space	Using space to control/ control of space	15
51.	Financial space	Miscellaneous	15
52.	Use of space to create alternative reality	Space in identity creation	16

53.	Invasion of space/ constriction	Constraining space	16
54.	Use of me to extend territory	Annihilation, subjugation	16
55.	Mother in law as part of abuse	Family	17
56.	Unsafe places	His use of space	18
57.	Destroy safe places	Use space to control	18
58.	Control feeling about spaces	Use space to control	18
59.	Space as agentic	Space as agentic	18
60.	Running from space	Space to escape	18
61.	Space as part of his past	Identity and space	20
62.	Space as repellent	Miscellaneous	20
63.	Territorialisation	Ownership, control	20
64.	Defending territory	Ownership of space	20
65.	Transform enjoyable spaces into spaces of shame/ power/ worry	Encroachment, annihilation, control	21
66.	Isolation	Alienation, isolation	21
67.	Psychological space invaded	Annihilation	21
68.	Social isolation	Isolation	22
69.	Social/public space threatening	Isolation	23
70.	Home as unsafe	Home as oppressive	23
71.	Home as inhospitable	Home as inhospitable	24
72.	Use of space to restrict/ alienate/ divide	Space to alienate/ divide	24
73.	Undermine health	Encroachment/ infringe psychological/ personal space	25
74.	Childbirth/ pregnancy	Illness as a narrative	25
75.	Mother in law taking over home	Private space infringed/ invaded	25
76.	Object as reinforcing power dynamic in the home	Objects to oppress/ bully	25
77.	Moving space to improve conditions	Space to break free	26
78.	Use of space to isolate	Alienation, isolation, entrapment	26
79.	Language as tool	Alienation, isolation	26
80.	Language to isolate in the home	Alienation, isolation	27
81.	Humiliation in the home	Alienation, isolation	27
82.	Isolation	Isolation, alienation	28
83.	Home not as mine	Alienation	28
84.	Letters in abuse	Isolation	30
85.	Use of objects	Objects to oppress/ bully	31
86.	Home as a fortress	Bolster identity/ security	34
87.	Fortress in his head	Conquer and subjugate	35
88.	Use of home space to fight back	Space as retaliation/ space as power	35
89.	Counselling space	Configuration of therapy	35
90.	Felt I wasn't coping	Illness as a narrative/ disempowering	36
91.	Undermining psychological space	Disempowering/ invading personal space	36
92.	Invading head space	Overpower the mind	36
93.	Isolated	Isolation	36
94.	Isolation	Isolation	37
95.	Him as a barrier	Loss of identity	38
96.	Financial space threatened	Disempowered	38
97.	Financial space to control, manipulate	Miscellaneous	39
98.	Online space used for further oppression	Breakdown of separation between public and personal	40
99.	No separation between spaces	Extrusion of public into private	40
100.	His life was separate	Conquering, subjugating, identity	40
101.	Marriage as partnership	Miscellaneous	42
102.	Control over home	Space to control	43
103.	Control over financial space	Disempowerment	44
104.	Control over decisions	Disempowerment	44
105.	Engineer crisis eg. debt on house	Use of space to threaten, psychological space invaded	44
106.	Calmness as balance	Use of space to threaten, psychological space invaded	45

Appendix M: Diagrammatic linking of Themes

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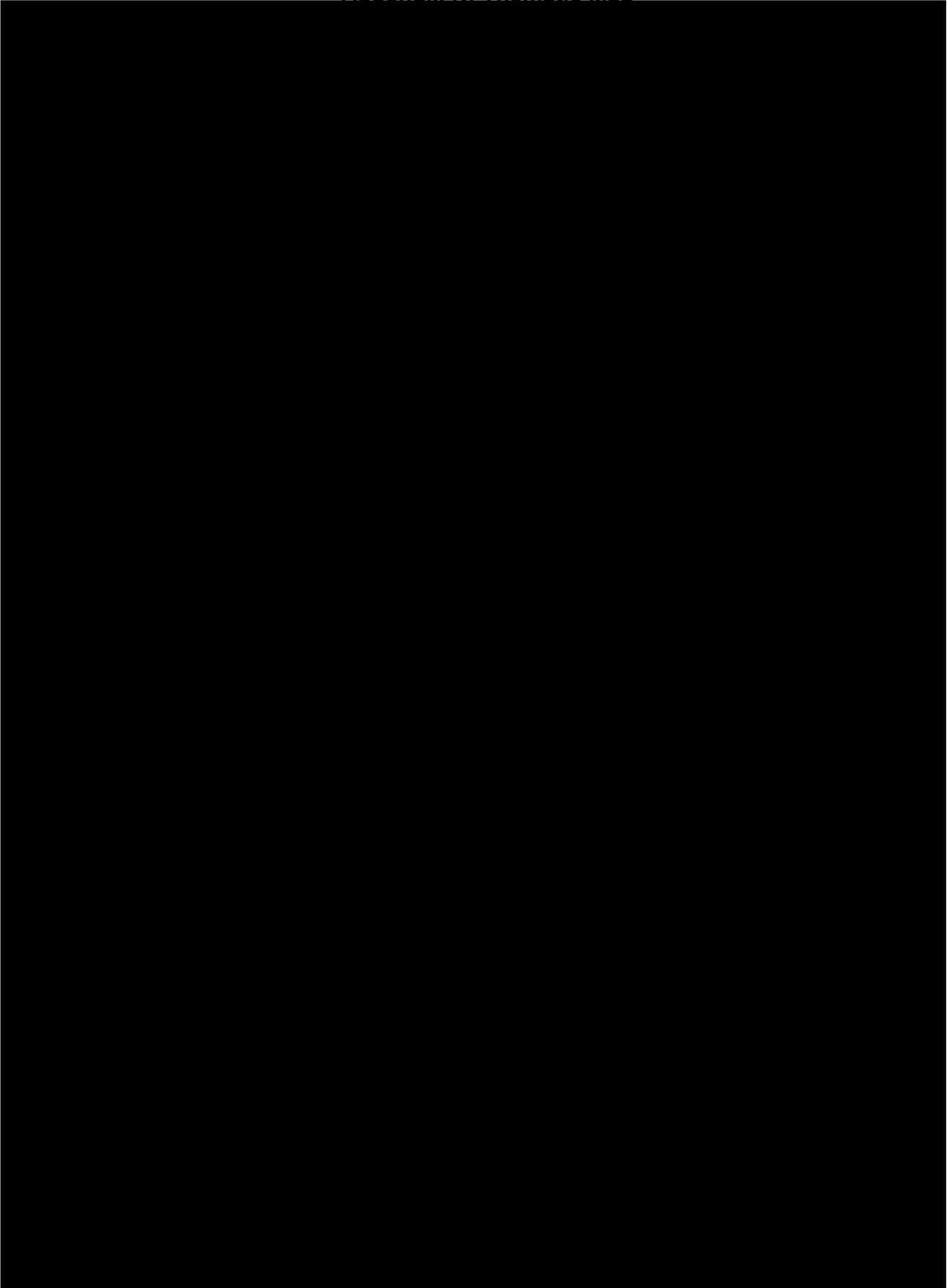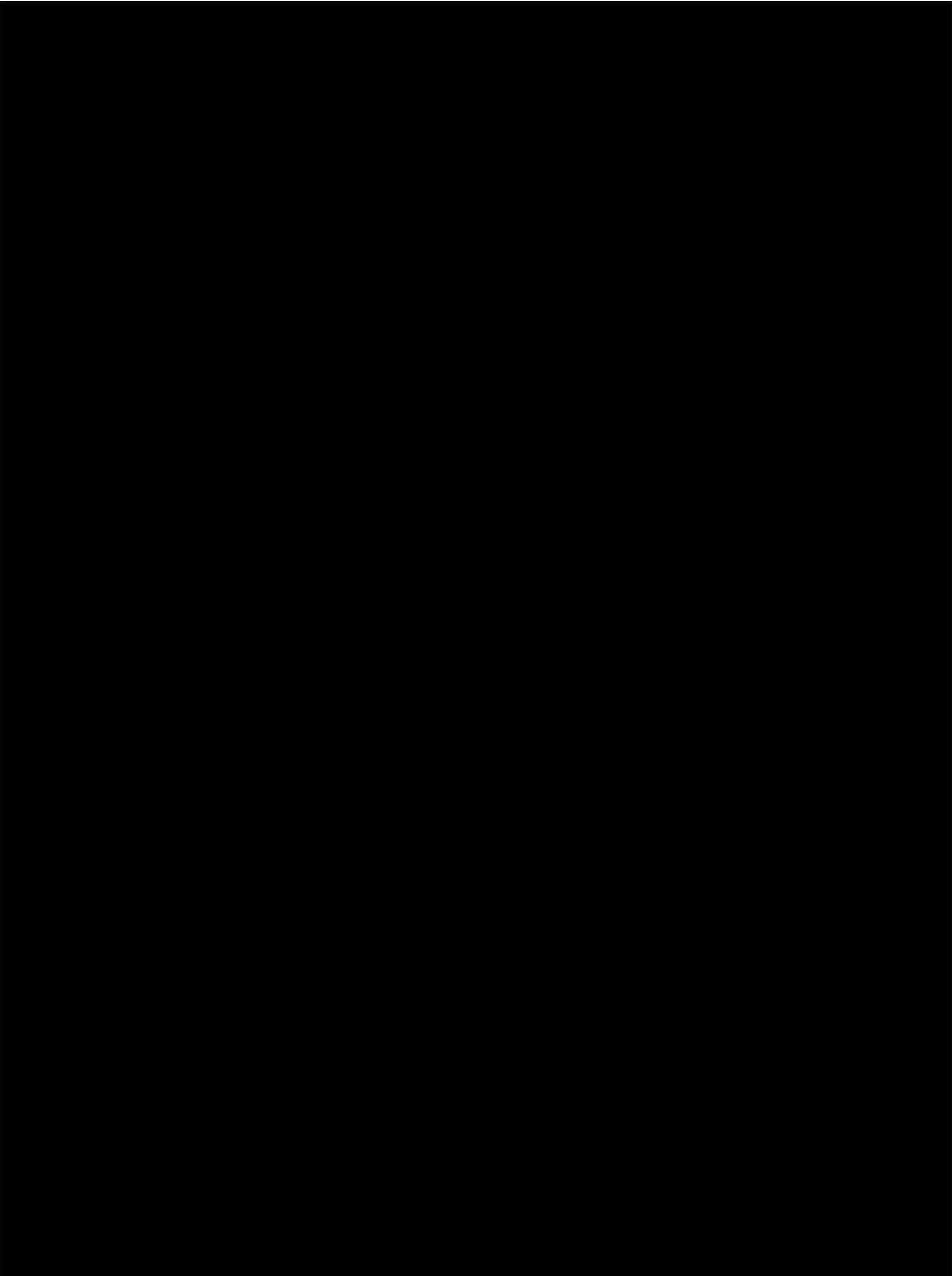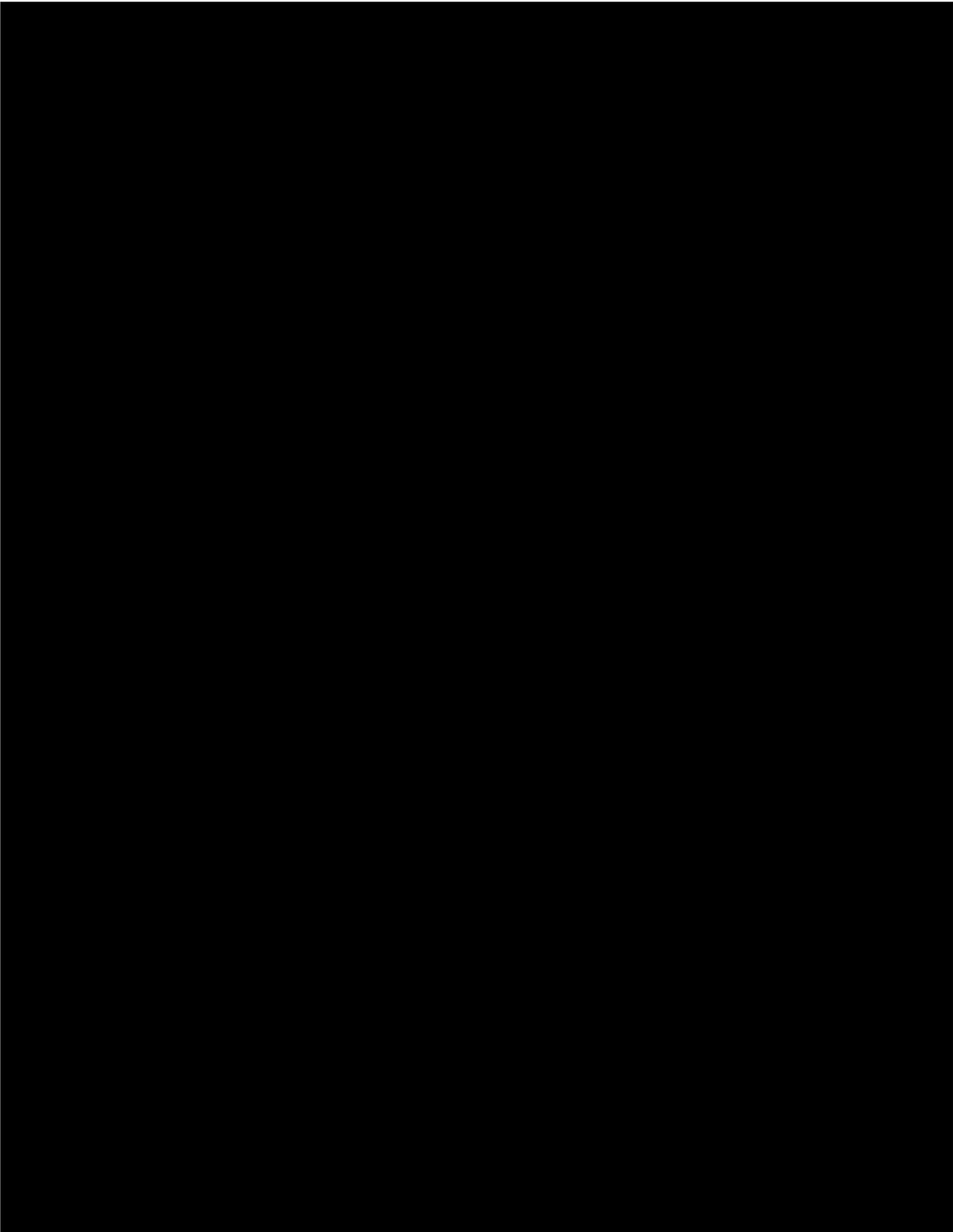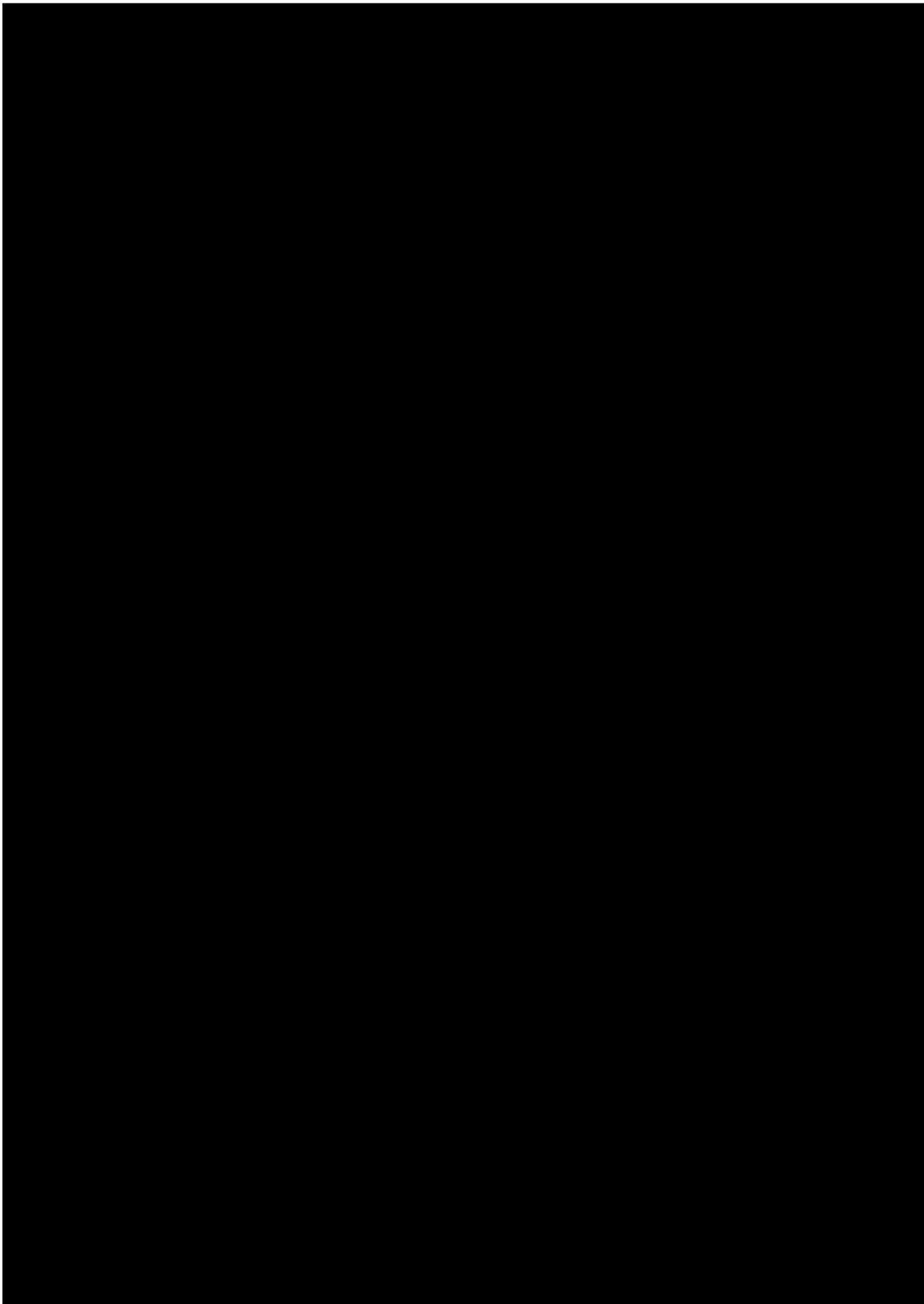
Appendix O: Ethics Approval

Psychology Research Ethics Committee
School of Arts and Social Sciences
City University London
London EC1R 0JD

14 May 2018

Dear ███████████

Reference: PSYETH (P/F) 17/18 41
Project title: Rethinking public and private: Implicating space in domestic abuse victims' experience and mitigation of psychological distress

I am writing to confirm that the research proposal detailed above has been granted approval by the City University London Psychology Department Research Ethics Committee.

Period of approval
Approval is valid for a period of three years from the date of this letter. If data collection runs beyond this period you will need to apply for an extension using the Amendments Form.

Project amendments
You will also need to submit an Amendments Form if you want to make any of the following changes to your research:
  (a) Recruit a new category of participants
  (b) Change, or add to, the research method employed
  (c) Collect additional types of data
  (d) Change the researchers involved in the project

Adverse events
You will need to submit an Adverse Events Form, copied to the Secretary of the Senate Research Ethics Committee ███████████████████ in the event of any of the following:
  (a) Adverse events
  (b) Breaches of confidentiality
  (c) Safeguarding issues relating to children and vulnerable adults
  (d) Incidents that affect the personal safety of a participant or researcher
Issues (a) and (b) should be reported as soon as possible and no later than 5 days after the event. Issues (c) and (d) should be reported immediately. Where appropriate the researcher should also report adverse events to other relevant institutions such as the police or social services.

Should you have any further queries then please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Kind regards
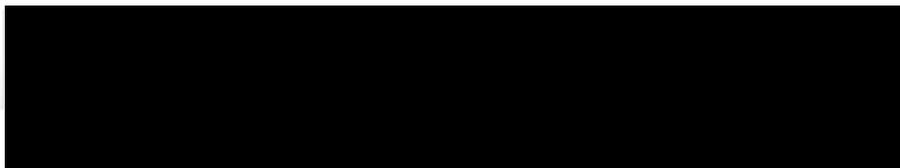
Appendix P: Ethics Application Form and Feedback

Psychology Department Standard Ethics Application Form:
Undergraduate, Taught Masters and Professional Doctorate Students

This form should be completed in full. Please ensure you include the accompanying documentation listed in question 20.

Does your research involve any of the following? *For each item, please place a 'x' in the appropriate column*	Yes	No
Persons under the age of 18 *(If yes, please refer to the Working with Children guidelines and include a copy of your DBS)*		X
Vulnerable adults (e.g. with psychological difficulties) *(If yes, please include a copy of your DBS where applicable)*		X
Use of deception *(If yes, please refer to the Use of Deception guidelines)*		X
Questions about topics that are potentially very sensitive *(Such as participants' sexual behaviour, their legal or political behaviour; their experience of violence)*		X
Potential for 'labelling' by the researcher or participant (e.g. 'I am stupid')		X
Potential for psychological stress, anxiety, humiliation or pain	X	
Questions about illegal activities		X
Invasive interventions that would not normally be encountered in everyday life (e.g. vigorous exercise, administration of drugs)		X
Potential for adverse impact on employment or social standing		X
The collection of human tissue, blood or other biological samples		X
Access to potentially sensitive data via a third party (e.g. employee data)		X
Access to personal records or confidential information		X
Anything else that means it has more than a minimal risk of physical or psychological harm, discomfort or stress to participants.		X

If you answered 'no' to all the above questions your application may be eligible for light touch review. You should send your application to your supervisor who will approve it and send it to a second reviewer. Once the second reviewer has approved your application they will submit it to psychology.ethics@city.ac.uk and you will be issued with an ethics approval code. You cannot start your research until you have received this code.

If you answered 'yes' to any of the questions, your application is NOT eligible for light touch review and will need to be reviewed at the next Psychology Department Research Ethics Committee meeting**.** You should send your application to your supervisor who will approve it and send it to psychology.ethics@city.ac.uk. The committee meetings take place on the first Wednesday of every month (with the exception of January and August). Your application should be submitted at least 2 weeks in advance of the meeting you would like it considered at. We aim to send you a response within 7 days. Note that you may be asked to revise and resubmit your application so should ensure you allow for sufficient time when scheduling your research. Once your application has been approved you will be issued with an ethics approval code. You cannot start your research until you have received this code.

Which of the following describes the main applicant? *Please place a 'x' in the appropriate space*	
Undergraduate student	
Taught postgraduate student	
Professional doctorate student	X
Research student	
Staff (applying for own research)	
Staff (applying for research conducted as part of a lab class)	

1. Name of applicant(s). (All supervisors should also be named as applicants.)

Verity Buchanan

2. Email(s).

3. Project title.

Rethinking public and private: Implicating space in domestic abuse victims' experience and mitigation of psychological distress

4. Provide a lay summary of the background and aims of the research. (No more than 400 words.)

Domestic abuse is an alarmingly common phenomenon, with 1 in 3 women victimised by an intimate partner at some stage in their lifetime. As such, it is disturbing that so few abused women engage in counselling services, with most women perceiving therapy as too dangerous or difficult to access until the abuse and control have ended. In addition, research suggests that many abused women find therapy humiliating and objectifying and this seems to compound their lack of engagement. In order to remedy this – and to encourage abused women to seek help at earlier stages – we need to find ways of developing therapy which hold greater appeal, are more dignifying and are simpler and safer to access.

One way of going about this is to change the nature of the counselling space itself, so that it better reflects the needs and preferences of victims. This is an idea borrowed from Denmark, whose government commissioned research to investigate the apparent reluctance of young drug addicts to engage in therapy. They discovered that, whereas adolescents often found counselling too burdensome to attend, too out of touch with reality and too alienating or humiliating, they could inspire commitment and therapeutic alliance by making improvements to the counselling space - in line with the stated preference of its users. Thus, on the basis of photographs of spaces deemed by participants to be comfortable, accessible and conducive to therapy, they restructured the entire counselling experience; counselling now takes place in 'chill-out zones', music studios, shopping malls and in youth centres, for example. In support, domestic abuse charities (e.g. VOICES and SafeLives) have already indicated that their clients

find therapy shaming and often impractical. They suggest that clients need to be able to meet counsellors in safe and discrete places, which engender a feeling of wellbeing, whilst also deterring suspicion from abusers.

Extrapolating from this, the current research aims to channel the experience of abused women into counselling practice; integrating therapy into everyday life, with counselling sessions arranged to take place in low-risk, easy-to-access localities, based on the inclinations of users. Again, drawing on the Danish experience, these preferences will be illustrated by participant-produced photographs of places associated with safety and wellbeing (e.g. church/community centres, libraries, cafes, shops, launderettes, walking the dog or travelling to/from school), so that therapy can be reconfigured to take place in spaces that victims already safely and easily access, without risk of detection and reprisal.

5. Provide a summary of the design and methodology.

This will be a qualitative study, adopting a social constructionist thematic analysis. Data will be collected in the form of semi-structured interviews, which will explore participants' feelings about the places in which they feel safe and/or where they go to feel better. Participants will be asked to bring in photographs or representations of places they find comfortable or reassuring, as well as screenshots or printouts of the websites which they most frequently use. Neither photographs, nor printouts, need be directly related to domestic abuse and must not contain identifying information or depict real people. In addition, paper and writing materials will be provided so that participants may draw pictures or maps of these places instead.

My supervisor, Paula Reavey, has done a vast amount of work in this area and has found visual techniques to be very successful with victims of sexual violence and child sexual abuse, for example, aiding participants in the elicitation of their stories, helping to elicit less discursive aspects, and assisting in the articulation of those more distressing parts, of experience (Brown, Reavey, Cromby, Harper & Johnson, 2008). In combining verbal and visual material, participants will be given an opportunity to reflect on the locations and settings of experience in terms not wholly linguistic and temporally ordered (Reavey & Johnson, 2008), but by grounding the experiences in the particular spatial contexts of their production (Reavey, 2011).

Prior to the substantive interview, the researcher will present to potentially interested participants. This will be arranged between the researcher and the domestic abuse charity. The domestic abuse charity will act as the go-between so that no contact details are exchanged between the researcher and the participants. At the initial presentation, participants will be informed of the purpose and requirements of participation, and will be given a chance to ask questions.

Participants who express an interest in taking part will be given an information sheet at the end of this initial meeting. The information sheet will focus mainly on the aims of the research project and will provide information as to data collection and the rights of participants. It will also enquire whether participants would like to receive a copy of the thesis or a summary of findings, after its completion.

On the day of the substantive interview (some weeks later), participants will be screened to ensure that they meet the inclusion criteria. This will include an assessment tool - the Women's Experience with Battering Scale (Smith, Tessaro & Earp, 1995; see Appendix) - to ensure that potential participants are not at risk of domestic abuse and a series of questions to exclude anyone currently in an abusive relationship or anyone in an abusive relationship within the proceeding 12 months or anyone experiencing fear or threats in relation to domestic abuse within the same timeframe. If participation is appropriate, participants will be asked to sign a consent form, in which confidentiality and other important points will be reviewed and in

which they can request receipt of the findings. Each participant will then be interviewed for approximately 90 minutes and these interviews will later be audio-recorded and subsequently transcribed verbatim. The researcher will allocate a random 6-digit number to each participant, prior to transcription, so that there can be no possible way of the participant's identity becoming known. The researcher will separately and securely store a key to identify how the number relates to the participant for use in the event of participants subsequently wishing to withdraw from the research. Once the month is over, this will be discarded and then names will be allocated at random to the numbers.

6. Provide details of all the methods of data collection you will employ (e.g., questionnaires, reaction times, skin conductance, audio-recorded interviews).

Photo elicitation (Del Busso, 2011; Silver & Reavey, 2010) and photo-production (Radley & Taylor, 2003; Radley & Taylor, 2003) techniques will be employed, as well as semi-structured, audio-recorded interviews, to help facilitate access to affective and embodied memories (Harper, 2002) and to encourage participant involvement in determining the research process (Radley & Taylor, 2003). Data will be in the form of photographs and website printouts or screenshots, depicting the spatial environments in the participants' lives which alleviate distress around domestic abuse, as well as pictures or drawings as appropriate. These visual methods of data collection will serve as prompts to help elicit accounts from participants which pay particular heed to the spatial aspect of their experience and are not intended to constitute the major focus of the research.

7. Is there any possibility of a participant disclosing any issues of concern during the course of the research? (e.g. emotional, psychological, health or educational.) Is there any possibility of the researcher identifying such issues? If so, please describe the procedures that are in place for the appropriate referral of the participant.

Whilst participants will not expressly be asked about their substantive experiences of abuse, with the focus being placed on the spatial environment, setting and context which mitigates distress, it is still possible that distress might arise either in the interview or after its conclusion. In the event that distress arises within the interview, a 'distress protocol' will be in place which distinguishes between mild, moderate and severe distress and appropriate measures to pause or terminate the interview, or involve other services where necessary (see Appendix). Participants will also be reminded that they need not answer the question or continue discussing that aspect of their experience which is upsetting and will of course be reminded that they need not continue with the interview at all. In addition, the researcher, whilst keeping in mind the possible tensions around her dual role, will make use of counselling and therapeutic skills throughout. Finally, all participants will be given ample time at the end of the interview for discussion and questions, and also a debrief form, stipulating the rationale for the study and providing the numbers of relevant helplines in case of distress inadvertently caused. In addition, the participant will be given details of the researcher and her supervisor to discuss any aspects of the experience and any distress unwittingly caused.

8. Details of participants (e.g. age, gender, exclusion/inclusion criteria). Please justify any exclusion criteria.

Only adult women are invited to take part. They must have experienced domestic abuse in any form (physical, sexual, coercive, psychological, emotional, financial etc.) from a male intimate partner at any time, subject to the following exclusion criteria: They must not currently be in a relationship with the abuser (or any abuser) and must have ended the abusive relationship a minimum of 12 months previously. In addition, they must not have experienced any fear from the abuser or on his behalf in the proceeding 12 months, prior to first responding to the recruitment notice.

9. How will participants be selected and recruited? Who will select and recruit participants?

Participants will be recruited by means of advertising only. Following a formal written approach to the service managers of a number of different domestic abuse organisations, including two charities (SafeLives and VOICES) with which the researcher and her supervisor already hold relationships, it is proposed that the researcher will introduce the research project to the charity by telephone and will request permission for recruitment posters to be displayed within the relevant centres. Potential participants will be invited to express their interest, in person, to the domestic abuse service, who will then liaise with the researcher to arrange a suitable time for a presentation to take place. Participants will not have access to the researcher's contact details, nor be in direct contact with her, at any time. This presentation will take place in appropriate rooms at the relevant domestic abuse centre.

10. Will participants receive any incentives for taking part? (Please provide details of these and justify their type and amount.)

No incentives or inducements will be offered, except that the researcher will offer to reimburse the costs of travel on public transport and/or car mileage to and from the interviews.

11. Will informed consent be obtained from all participants? If not, please provide a justification. (Note that a copy of your consent form should be included with your application)

Yes, informed consent will be obtained prior to commencement of the substantive interview. After participants express their initial interest in the research, in person to the relevant domestic abuse service, a preliminary presentation will be arranged, so that the researcher can meet the potential participants to ensure that the inclusion criteria are satisfied. Prior to that first meeting, the researcher will have no identifying details, nor any means by which to communicate with the potential participant, and the potential participant will have no identifying or contact details for the researcher. Thereafter, all contact will continue with the charity acting as go-between, so that at no time will the researcher or the participant be able to contact one another. Interested participants will be provided with an information sheet, which provides a clear description of the study and of what participants can expect from it, and will be given up to one week to digest its contents before any response falls due. This breathing space should ensure that participants are able to make an informed decision. The information sheet will also outline participants' rights in regards to confidentiality and withdrawal; matters which will, in addition, be verbally emphasised both before, and if appropriate during, the interview. They will also be informed that they can request access to the finished thesis or to a statement of analysis and will be advised that the research is intended to be used for dissemination amongst the particular domestic abuse charities which help to secure participant access. If they wish to go ahead, the charity liaison person will then be in contact with the researcher and an interview will be arranged. This will take place at the domestic abuse centre again. The charity will ensure that the room provided is appropriate and that there will be staff

on hand at all times. On the day of the main interview, an assessment will take place to screen for possible exclusion criteria, formal written and signed consent will be obtained at commencement and participants will be reminded of their right to refuse to answer any question and their right to withdraw at any time, up until one month after the interview has been concluded. They will also be advised that they will be given adequate time for discussion and questions at the end of the interview.

12. How will you brief and debrief participants? (Note that copies of your information sheet and debrief should be included with your application)

Participants will be briefed with an information sheet (see Appendix) as soon as their interest in taking part has been acknowledged after the initial presentation. The information sheet will invite participants to take part in the research study and will explain its purpose. It will also state the requirements, advantages and disadvantages of taking part and how participants' information will be used. Again, the information sheet will advise participants as to their rights to confidentiality and to withdrawal. They will be given one week to consider the information before deciding whether to proceed, at which time arrangements to come in for the main interview will be made.

At the end of the main interview, participants will be thoroughly debriefed (see Appendix). They will be asked about their experience in taking part in the interview and of any negative consequences or impact. They will be reminded of their right to withdraw from the study at any point, up to one month after the interview has taken place. Participants will also be given the chance to ask questions of the researcher and will be given a post interview participant information sheet, along with a resource list (see Appendix). This resource list will contain relevant numbers of third parties who may be able to assist, in the event of any distress having arisen as a result of the research procedure.

13. Location of data collection. (Please describe exactly where data collection will take place.)

Data collection will all take place in the UK.

13a. Is any part of your research taking place outside England/Wales?

No	X	
Yes		If 'yes', please describe how you have identified and complied with all local requirements concerning ethical approval and research governance.

13b. Is any part of your research taking place <u>outside</u> the University buildings?

No		
Yes	X	If 'yes', please submit a risk assessment with your application or explain how you have addressed risks. Participants will be invited to meet the researcher visit at the domestic abuse centre they are currently engaged with. Likely domestic abuse charities include SafeLives in London and Bristol and Voices in Bath, since these are services with which the researcher and supervisor already hold relationships (please see Appendix for detailed off-site risk assessments). Since every participant will already be accessing that particular domestic abuse service, it is suggested that proposing to meet there will pose no greater threat to their safety than they would have already faced in attending the site previously. This notwithstanding, the recruitment posters will not display telephone or contact details of the domestic

abuse service and will invite potential participants to present in person at the relevant centres to express their interest in taking part.

In addition, it will be agreed with the domestic abuse service managers that appropriate rooms will be made available for the duration of the interviews and that the site will be manned at all times. Flexibility in location and timing is a key aspect of ensuring that participants feel contained in the research process. Finding a place where participants feel comfortable seems especially important considering the focus of the research question on space.

13c. Is any part of your research taking place <u>within</u> the University buildings?		
No		
Yes	X	If 'yes', please ensure you have familiarised yourself with relevant risk assessments available on Moodle.

14. What potential risks to the participants do you foresee, and how do you propose to deal with these risks? These should include both ethical and health and safety risks.

Since recruitment is going to take place only through dedicated domestic abuse centres and charities, risk to potential participants is reduced by the fact that potential participants are already engaged with the organisation and have established safe means of contact. At no time will the researcher give out her contact details but will invite potential participants to contact the relevant domestic abuse service in person to express interest in the research. Those services will then liaise with the researcher to arrange the meetings. This means that any risk that could arise if participants' emails or calls were still being monitored will be avoided. Thus, it is proposed that the researcher will come into contact with potential participants only through the relevant domestic abuse organisation and will have no direct contact with participants at any time.

It is likely that before any recruitment posters are distributed, the researcher will go to the domestic abuse charity to present the research, so that potential participants can see for themselves what the research is about and whether participation might be appropriate for them. If they wish to take part, they will then contact in person the liaison person at the charity who will contact the researcher and arrange a meeting at the relevant site. Since each applicant is already engaged with the charity, it is felt that this way of establishing contact would not expose them to any greater risk than they would already be exposed to as a result of their ordinary and continued interactions with the organisation in question.

After the initial presentation, if satisfied that the participant meets the inclusion criteria, then participants will be given an information sheet explaining the purposes and requirements of the research. After a week has passed so that the information sheet can be fully digested, participants will be contacted. If they confirm they are still interested in taking part, an interview will be arranged at their convenience. This will either take place at the same domestic abuse centre where the initial presentation took place, in dedicated rooms with staff members on site at all times.

At the substantive interview, the researcher will ask the potential applicants questions around their current situation and will provide an adapted assessment tool to complete, to ensure that they are not currently at risk or in abusive relationships (see Appendix). Each participant will be asked to confirm that they are not in an abusive relationship and have not been so for the proceeding 12 months, nor have they experienced fear in relation to that abuse within the same timeframe. The domestic violence charity liaison person can attest to this, if there are any concerns arising from this initial screening process.

In terms of the process itself, I see minimal risk involved in the collation and production of photographic or pictorial evidence, ahead of the interview, owing to the exclusion criteria and to the requirement to take images of places which engender feelings of safety and wellbeing, not of those which produce distress.

There is more significant risk of distress arising, however, from the interview itself, necessitating, it is proposed, a distress protocol (see Appendix). Although it is not intended that participants will be asked any questions directly pertaining to the facts of the abuse or to any spaces likely to engender distress, per se, it is possible that the discussion will spark memories of distressing events or a distressing period in the participant's life. At all times, the researcher will endeavour to bring the conversation back to the spaces which participants go to when they want to feel better and to the places where they feel safest, and will focus on how these spaces are arranged, and how they might contribute to improve the distress, thoughts and feelings of participants around their experience.

In the event that distress still arises, a distress protocol will be in place which distinguishes between mild, moderate and severe distress and appropriate measures to pause or terminate the interview, or involve other services where necessary. In addition, the researcher, whilst keeping in mind the possible tensions around her dual role, will make use of counselling and therapeutic skills throughout. Finally, all participants will be given ample time at the end of the interview for discussion and questions, and also a debrief form, stipulating the rationale for the study and providing the numbers of relevant helplines in case of distress inadvertently caused.

The researcher has considered whether there is the possibility or danger of labelling arising out of participation in this project. In particular, the recruitment advert specifically refers to 'survivors', whereas much of this Ethics form describes the participants as 'victims'. This is because, in order to ensure appropriate and rigorous ethical standards are met, participants are excluded if they are still enduring domestic abuse. Thus, they are 'survivors'. On the other hand, the research subject is about the spatial experience of individuals actually suffering abuse, hence the term 'victim'. Whilst there is a clear conflict between these two terms, it is intended that no participant will ever directly be referred to as a 'victim' and that, in the event that participants do ask for the report to be disseminated, the thesis will uphold the distinction and explain any reference to 'victims' at all times.

15. What potential risks to the researchers do you foresee, and how do you propose to deal with these risks? These should include both ethical and health and safety risks.

There is some potential risk, given that some of the interviews are to be conducted in different cities outside of London (e.g. Bath and Bristol). As such, a risk assessment protocol (see Appendix) has been developed to ensure that the supervisor is aware of the researcher's whereabouts and anticipated finishing time at all times. She will be contacted as soon as the interviews are concluded and after the researcher has left the participant. In addition, it will be agreed with the domestic abuse charities and service providers that appropriate rooms will be provided for meeting with participants and that staff will be on hand throughout.

In addition, the researcher may possibly experience distress during the interview process and so will have access to the same numbers and websites of Helplines to deal with any difficulties that may arise. The researcher will also be in personal therapy and supervision throughout and can avail herself of this specialist assistance should it be required.

16. What methods will you use to ensure participants' confidentiality and anonymity? (Please note that consent forms should always be kept in a separate folder to data and should NOT include participant numbers.)

Please place an 'X' in all appropriate spaces

Complete anonymity of participants (i.e. researchers will not meet, or know the identity of participants, as participants are a part of a random sample and are required to return responses with no form of personal identification.)	
Anonymised sample or data (i.e. an *irreversible* process whereby identifiers are removed from data and replaced by a code, with no record retained of how the code relates to the identifiers. It is then impossible to identify the individual to whom the sample of information relates.)	
De-identified samples or data (i.e. a *reversible* process whereby identifiers are replaced by a code, to which the researcher retains the key, in a secure location.)	**X**
Participants being referred to by pseudonym in any publication arising from the research	
Any other method of protecting the privacy of participants (e.g. use of direct quotes with specific permission only; use of real name with specific, written permission only.) ***Please provide further details below.***	

Participants will be provided with a random 6-digit code and this will be used throughout the interview and analysis. There will be a key to identify how the codes relate to the participants which will be kept separately and securely, encrypted, on a password protected computer in the researcher's Banham alarmed house. This is to ensure that if a participant wishes to withdraw their data, the researcher is able to do so. In addition, a pseudonym or code will also be provided by the researcher for any domestic violence charity's address or place of meeting, so that their whereabouts are kept concealed. If appropriate, the name of the charity will also be disguised (if appropriate and not already publicly available).

17. Which of the following methods of data storage will you employ?

Please place an 'X' in all appropriate spaces

Data will be kept in a locked filing cabinet	
Data and identifiers will be kept in separate, locked filing cabinets	
Access to computer files will be available by password only	X
Hard data storage at City University London	
Hard data storage at another site. *Please provide further details below.*	X

The data and the identifying key will be encrypted and then stored on the researcher's private computer. The photographs and drawings expressly exclude the depiction of other people and will not be accepted if they do contain identifiable persons. Hard copy will be uploaded also to the same computer and the originals destroyed. The researcher's computer is kept at her home, which is triple locked and Banham alarmed, with direct links to the police in case of break-in. There are security cameras on the door of the property (which are visible to the outside) and cameras in the office where the computer is kept. There are also safety metal gates on every glass door and shatterproof glass on the lower ground and ground floor levels.

18. Who will have access to the data?

Please place an 'X' in the appropriate space

Only researchers named in this application form	X
People other than those named in this application form. *Please provide further details below of who will have access and for what purpose.*	

19. Conflicts of Interest

19a. Do any of the investigators listed have any direct personal involvement (e.g. financial, share holding, personal relationship etc.) in the organisations sponsoring or funding the research that may give rise to a possible conflict of interest?

N/A	X	
No		
Yes		If yes, please provide details below and attach the supporting correspondence.

19b. Will any of the investigators receive any personal benefits or incentives, including payment above normal salary, from undertaking the research or the results of the research above those normally associated with scholarly activity?

No	X	
Yes		If yes, please provide details below and attach the supporting correspondence.

20. Attachments checklist. *Please ensure you have referred to the Psychology Department templates when producing these items. These can be found in the Research Ethics page on Moodle.

Please place an 'X' in all appropriate spaces

	Attached	Not applicable
*Text for study advertisement	X	
*Participant information sheet	X	
*Participant consent form	X	
Questionnaires to be employed		
Debrief	X	
Copy of DBS		
Risk assessments	X	
Others (please specify, e.g. topic guide for interview, confirmation letter from external organisation)	X	
Interview Schedule	X	
Distress Protocol	X	
Assessment Tool	X	
Initial face-to-face interview	X	

21. Information for insurance purposes.

(a) Please provide a brief abstract describing the project

The aim of this study is to explore the impact of certain spaces on the lives of female victims of domestic abuse. Through semi-structured interviews and consideration of certain photographs, drawings and website printouts, depicting the spaces and places that abused women associate with safety and wellbeing, the researcher hopes to explore the role that space plays in mediating and mitigating distress. Approximately 12 adult women will be recruited by means of advertisements in charities, two of which the researcher and her supervisor already hold relationships. Participants will only be invited to discuss the spatial

aspects of their experience of domestic abuse and will not be asked questions directly about their substantive experiences of abuse.

It is hoped that the data collected will inform counselling psychology of the different strategies abused women already use to manage distress and that this will help therapists to structure counselling in ways that are considered safe to access and relevant or helpful during the currency of the abuse and after. Thus, drawing on work already being done in this field, in relation to drug and alcohol abuse, if counselling sessions can be arranged to take place in comfortable and easy-to-access places, or spaces which empower and dispel feelings of judgement and shame, it is proposed that abused women might engage in counselling more willingly and, critically, interventions can take place at earlier points in the abuse trajectory.

	Please place an 'X' in all appropriate spaces	
(b) Does the research involve any of the following:	**Yes**	**No**
Children under the age of 5 years?		X
Clinical trials / intervention testing?		X
Over 500 participants?		X
(c) Are you specifically recruiting pregnant women?		X
(d) Excluding information collected via questionnaires (either paper based or online), is any part of the research taking place outside the UK?		X

If you have answered 'no' to all the above questions, please go to section 21.

If you have answered 'yes' to any of the above questions you will need to check that the university's insurance will cover your research. You should do this by submitting this application to ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮ <u>before</u> applying for ethics approval. Please initial below to confirm that you have done this.

I have received confirmation that this research will be covered by the university's insurance.

Name …………………………………………. Date……………………………

22. Information for reporting purposes.		
	Please place an 'X' in all appropriate spaces	
(a) Does the research involve any of the following:	**Yes**	**No**
Persons under the age of 18 years?		X
Vulnerable adults?		X
Participant recruitment outside England and Wales?		X
(b) Has the research received external funding?		X

23. Declarations by applicant(s)			
Please confirm each of the statements below by placing an 'X' in the appropriate space			
I certify that to the best of my knowledge the information given above, together with accompanying information, is complete and correct.			X
I accept the responsibility for the conduct of the procedures set out in the attached application.			X
I have attempted to identify all risks related to the research that may arise in conducting the project.			X
I understand that **no** research work involving human participants or data can commence until ethical approval has been given.			X
	Signature (Please type name)		**Date**
Student(s)	VERITY BUCHANAN		14.4.18
Supervisor	███████████		14.4.18

Reviewer Feedback Form

Name of reviewer(s).	
████████ **(on behalf of the psychology research ethics committee)**	
Email(s).	
██████████████	

Does this application require any revisions or further information?			
Please place an 'X' the appropriate space			
No Reviewer(s) should sign the application and return to ████████████████ ccing to the supervisor.		**Yes** Reviewer(s) should provide further details below and email directly to the student and supervisor.	**x**

Revisions / further information required
To be completed by the reviewer(s). PLEASE DO NOT DELETE ANY PREVIOUS COMMENTS.

Date: 6th December 2017
Comments:

The committee had significant concerns about this application in its current form, and we agreed that it was necessary to ask you to completely overhaul and streamline the entire application and re-submit for re-consideration by the committee at another meeting.

> The application and attachments were extremely difficult to understand, even for psychologists. It needs to be re-written in a more intelligible style, eliminating (or at least clearly explaining) jargon such as "spatial experiences", "spatial ontology", and "DPsych thesis", which are meaningless to non-experts. You need to be much clearer about your rationale and what you hope to achieve. What is the purpose of the study? What kinds of useful outcomes could this research realistically have?

>The committee was also very concerned about the proposed methods of recruitment, which could put extremely vulnerable women at great risk. Inviting members of the public (who you cannot guarantee are currently safe from their abuser) to contact you by email or phone is very risky. It may expose them to retaliation, if their abuser monitors their email address or phone. You need to establish a much safer way for them to initiate first contact with you. The committee recommends that first contact should occur in person. This will allow you to establish their current situation and level of risk before deciding whether it is safe for them to participate, communicate by phone/email etc.

> You state that participants *"must not currently be living with the abuser or in a relationship with the abuser and the abuse must already have been reported to the police and/or to the relevant authorities."* However, members of the committee rightly pointed out that even if abusers have been reported to the police, it does not mean the women are

safe from them. You need to consider a more rigorous way of ensuing that any participants are completely safe. Also, who are "the relevant authorities"?

> We were also concerned about the lack of clarity about how the photos will be used/stored. Does the researcher keep them (as suggested in the information sheet)? Will they be made public/only be seen by the researcher/destroyed after the interview?

> More generally you need to think more carefully about confidentiality. Are you anonymising or de-identifying your data?

> Why does the interview schedule refer to "infertility distress"?

> We recommend you encrypt electronic data if possible. Please see the university's data storage/retention guidance: https://www.city.ac.uk/research/about-our-research/research-integrity/research-data-management/preserve-and-store

Date: 4th April 2018

The committee agreed that this revised application was a considerable improvement on the original. However, they still had some significant concerns that need to be addressed before the application can be approved. Members unanimously agreed that the second revision should be discussed at another committee meeting.

Section 4/5

> The committee are yet to be convinced that the anticipated benefits of this research warrant the possible risks (notably distress caused by reliving trauma) to participants. Please can you add further justification and explain the importance of the study more clearly?

You pose the question, *'how do we restructure counselling services so that they are safer to access, less humbling, and engaged earlier on in the course of abuse?'* The committee queried whether it would be possible to address this question by asking participants to bring and discuss only images of places they feel comfortable? Is it really necessary to use images of distressing places? Please consider this possibly. If it is absolutely necessary, please justify this more explicitly.

> There is ambiguity about exactly how many interviews with the researcher there will be and at what stage the researcher will have contact with the participants. In section 5, you say, *"Prior to the substantive interview, participants will engage in a preliminary face-to-face meeting with the researcher"* (this concurs with what you say in Appendix 2: Initial face to face interview) but, in section 9, you say *"Potential participants will not be in contact directly with the researcher until after an initial interview has taken place, arranged by the domestic abuse charity at their offices. Only after initial screening has taken place and it has been possible to establish that given methods of communication are safe and secure will the researcher be able to contact the potential participant, or vice versa."* Please clarify this across sections.

Section 10:

Why not offer to reimburse car mileage too?

Section 11 and Information Sheet:

Are you sure you want to allow participants 6 months to withdraw their data? This means you won't be able to write up your data until after this point, significantly delaying the research. Would 1 month be a better option?

Section 13:

More detail is needed about where the data collection will take place (which domestic abuse centres?), and appropriate risk assessments should be included

Section 14

> The committee welcomed the inclusion of a 'distress protocol' but wanted detailed information on what this would involve, given the high likelihood of participants becoming distressed in the course of the interviews. The committee felt the risk of this was underplayed in the application and should be amended accordingly.

> You mention a pilot study in this section but if you intend to do this, further detail is needed, including in section 8.

Section 15

Here, you mentioned that testing might take place outside London. In which case, your list of counselling services needs to extend to these geographical areas – at present it is restricted to London.

Section 16

The committee did not think it was appropriate for participants to choose their own pseudonyms because (a) they may inadvertently choose a name that makes them identifiable and (b) it may not be appropriate for them to be able to identify themselves in any published work. We recommend you use numbers or names of your choosing (that you don't share with the participants) and securely store an identifying key (i.e., use 'de-identified samples' rather than 'anonymised samples'). This will also allow you to withdraw participant data should they request this.

Section 17

The committee thought it important that you do not include any of the photos in your thesis or publically available document, as they could potentially identify participants. The committee, instead, recommended using verbal descriptions of the images.

Section 20

Attachments checklist needs to be completed in full.

Reviewer feedback form

>In your response to our original comments you say *"it is now proposed that photographs and pictures (which do not contain people or recognisable places) will be returned to the participant or destroyed"* but this does not seem to be reflected in the application documents. Please amend.

> Supervisor needs to sign

Advert

It would be a wise precaution not to include phone or email contact details on the advert. Participants should be asked to enquire in person.

Appendix 2: Face to face interview

Is there any need to email the information sheets/consent forms to participants if you are meeting them in person? Why not give them hard copies?

Information sheet

> Details of exclusion criteria should be added to the why have I been invited section.

> Data should be kept for at least 10 years as per City's policy.

https://www.city.ac.uk/research/about-our-research/research-integrity/research-data-management/preserve-and-store

> Email addresses as the only contact details are insufficient. Please add phone and postal addresses. Presumably you have an internal second supervisor? In which case, you should include them on the application so they can be the contact point at City.

Debrief

The following paragraphs are unsuitable for the debrief (they already have this information in the information sheet).

The interview will be transcribed and used as part of my Doctorate in Counselling Psychology Thesis at City University. The transcript of our interview will remain confidential and anonymous – identifiable only by a pseudonym of your choice. Although it will be one of twelve transcripts seen by myself and my Supervisor, Professor Paula Reavey, only I, no one else, will be able to identify you as the participant concerned and there will be no record kept of how the pseudonyms relate to each participant.

You are reminded that you are free to withdraw from this study at any time, up until 6 months after interview. You are also at liberty to request a copy of the transcript and to have amended any parts of the interview which you feel do not accurately reflect your views or opinions on the matter at issue. In addition, you can request a copy of the thesis or a summary of findings after its completion (provided that it is not interrupted for any reason).

Please delete.

> Personal mobile phone numbers are inappropriate. If you have an internal second supervisor, you should include them on the application so they can be the contact point.

Date: 4th May 2018

This is a massively improved application.   Thank you for your careful attention to the committee's feedback.

There is just one final suggestion for a change to the advert. Please consider changing "improve your distress" to "reduce your distress"

Applicant response to reviewer comments

To be completed by the applicant. Please address the points raised above and explain how you have done this in the space below. You should then email the entire application (including attachments), **with changes highlighted** directly back to the reviewer(s), ccing to your supervisor.

Date: 4.5.18

Response: I have replaced 'improve' with 'distress', which sounds much neater. Thank you!

Date: 14.4.18

Response: This was another very useful piece of feedback which I hope has helped me to make the benefits to counselling psychology even clearer. In particular, I think it was a really valuable piece of insight to draw attention and query the need for participants to bring and describe images of places which caused distress. I thought a lot about that particular aspect and realised that, in order to achieve the aims of the research (to find ways to structure therapy which are more appropriate and user-friendly), it was not necessary to ask participants to dwell on the more distressing aspects of their experience. Initially, I had thought that it provided a greater degree of depth and colour but after I tried to justify it more explicitly, I realised I couldn't – or at least not sufficiently to ensure that the anticipated benefits would definitely outweigh the potential risks to participants. For this reason, the research is now limited to asking participants to take photographs or images which help them discuss those places which engender feelings of safety or wellbeing, where they may go to to avoid distress or where they feel safe and secure.

Section 4/5
I have addressed the first amendments, above. The 3rd paragraph asks for clarification about the exact number of meetings with participants and when exactly contact with the researcher will take place. I have addressed this throughout but to clarify, I am proposing that the domestic abuse charity arranges the initial face-to-face presentation between the researcher and the potential participants. Contact will only be indirect, via the charity. Thus, there will be a total of 2 face-to-face meetings and neither of these will be initiated by direct contact between the researcher and participant.

Section 10
Car mileage now included

Section 11 and Information sheet
Participants will now be given 1 month to opt to withdraw, so that the analysis isn't delayed.

Section 13
Additional details have been provided for both SafeLives and VOICES. Risk assessments for off-site research have been included in the appendix.

Section 14
I did not mean to underplay the likelihood of distress arising as a result of the interview but see how that can have been interpreted in that way. I have amended it by changing the scope of the research to exclude any focus on distress, per se, and have also rewritten these paragraphs acknowledging the possibility of distress. There is now a full distress protocol in the appendix.

In regards to the pilot study, I have decided to run a pilot with colleagues from the doctoral programme.

Section 15
The list of counselling services has now been amended to include nationwide services, as well as those in London, Bath and Bristol, where the participants are likely to live.

Section 16
This is a very good point. Pseudonyms may well give interested parties a clue to the identity of the participant, particularly if the name chosen is similar to a pet name or nick name. Participants will now be given random codes with a safely stored identifier, so that I can more easily extricate their data in the event of a wish to withdraw. After the 1 month period has elapsed, the identifier will be destroyed and they will be given random names, chosen by me.

Section 17
Again, another very valid point. It is possible that if an ex-partner or friend saw the published document which contained copies of photographs submitted by participants, they may recognise the place and from that be able to identify the participant. Photographs and images will only be included in the final document if they are generic and have no identifying possibility.

Section 20
The checklist is completed in full

Review feedback form
I have dealt with this point. Hard copy photographs and pictures will be destroyed after they have been uploaded to my computer. They will not be returned to participants. Since they don't contain pictures of people or identifiable places, it was decided that they would not be so meaningful to participants that they would be required to be returned.

Supervisor has signed the review feedback form.

Advert
There are now no phone numbers or emails on the recruitment poster. Participants are asked to present in person to express interest in taking part. It has been made clear that I am only asking about places which are associated with safety and wellbeing.

Face to face interview
The hard copy information sheet will be given directly to participants at the initial meeting

Information sheet
Details of exclusion criteria have been added.

Data will be kept for 10 years.

Phone numbers and postal addresses have been added. I have not been given an internal second supervisor so can't include them in the application but have added my personal tutor, with her permission.

Debrief
The highlighted paragraphs have been deleted.

No personal numbers are included. Again, I have not been given an internal second supervisor so can't include them in the application but have added my personal tutor, with her permission.

Date: 20.2.18
Response: Thank you for the feedback. I have rewritten the entire application form and, in particular, have rewritten the summary so that it is more suitable for lay people. Firstly, in regards to the exclusion criteria, I have amended this so that only those who have terminated the abusive relationship a minimum of 12 months prior to first contact can participate and, further, they must have received no threatening contact from the abuser or from anyone on his behalf within that time.
Secondly, I have amended the methods of recruitment so that recruitment can only take place with the assistance of designated domestic abuse charities and not through snowballing or Facebook, which should go some way to ensuring that they are currently safe.
Thirdly, first contact will be face-to-face, not by phone, and will be arranged through the domestic abuse charities which agree to assist with recruitment. This way, no potential participant can even attempt to contact me or my supervisor and I can be sure that they are not at risk of abuse or recrimination and that their elected communication channels are safe and not being monitored. I have, therefore, removed any recruitment means which do not take place through the charities that the participant is already engaged with. This means that there is no greater risk for the potential participant than they would already have faced in previously contacting the charity for purposes separate to the current research. The liaison person at the charity will have my availability so that a presentation can be scheduled. At the interview, they will be given an assessment tool to complete, which is used in primary care settings to screen for possible domestic abuse. The information sheet will then be sent to them via the contact at the charity and they will have 1 week to consider participation. The next meeting will be the substantive interview. This will take place at the same domestic abuse centre they are already engaged with. My supervisor has worked with some charities already who are likely to want to help with my research and have indicated that appropriate rooms would be made available for the purposes of interviews. These centres are manned at all times.
Finally, all the points regarding data storage have been addressed and accommodated and it is now proposed that photographs and pictures (which do not contain people or recognisable places) will be returned to the participant or destroyed. Uploaded data will be

encrypted. There will be no record kept of how any pseudonym relates to any participant so it is not possible for anyone to ever identify someone taking part.

Reviewer signature(s) To be completed upon FINAL approval of all materials.		
	Signature (Please type name)	**Date**
Supervisor	███████████	**14.4.18**
Second reviewer	███████████	**04/05/18**

Appendix Q: Risk Assessments

Psychology Department Risk Assessment Form

Please note that it is the responsibility of the PI or supervisor to ensure that risks have been assessed appropriately.

Date of assessment: 15.4.18   Assessor(s): Verity Buchanan

Activity: Doctorate   in   Counselling   Date of next review (if applicable):
Psychology – Lone working

Hazard	Type of Injury or Harm	People affected and any specific considerations	Current Control Measures already in place	Risk Level Med High Low	Further Control Measures required	Implementation date and person responsible	Completed
Lone working (Locations will include designated rooms at domestic abuse charities, such as SafeLives and VOICES in order to conduct the preliminary and substantive research interviews).	Personal security/ safety compromised Violent or threatening persons	Researcher	- The researcher's mobile number will be given to her supervisor. - The researcher will notify her supervisor of the date, time and location of every meeting with every participant, as well as the participant's name. - The researcher will call the supervisor before and after each meeting to ensure the supervisor knows the researcher is safe. - The researcher will be seated closest to the exit should they need to exit in an emergency. - The relevant centres will be appropriately manned at all times. All meetings will take place within ordinary working hours and there will be at least 2 members of staff on site at all times. - The researcher will be up-to-date with the safety evacuation protocols of every relevant centre and will know where the alarms, emergency kits and fire extinguishers are kept. -The researcher will have the relevant local emergency telephone numbers on speed dial.	Low	If the researcher's feels that her safety is at risk, the interview will be terminated immediately and she will remove herself from the situation. The researcher will at all times have in place the distress protocol to ensure that interviews are halted before undue distress may arise.	Verity Buchanan	
Premises where the lone worker is working out of sight or hearing range of colleagues (e.g. if allocated rooms are not close to the working space of on-site staff)	Aggressive or threatening external persons Theft of personal property An accident such as a trip, slip or fall or a personal injury item, such as a cut or bruise	Researcher & Participant	- A fully administered visitor control system is in place at each of the domestic abuse centres the researcher proposes to recruit from. - Effective communication systems are also in place for the researcher to summon help or to raise an alarm. - CCTV systems operate in each of the relevant centres. - There exists ample internal and external lighting.	Low	If the researcher feels that her safety or the participant's safety is at risk, the interview will be terminated immediately. She will remove herself from the situation or call for help, if either she or the participant is at risk.	Verity Buchanan	

	Fire risk		- The researcher will avoid carrying or lifting heavy items.		
			- The researcher will ensure all wired or electronic equipment on site will be placed so as to avoid trip hazards and will provide enough space to work comfortably.		
			- The researcher will not take unnecessary or expensive equipment or valuables into the meeting rooms.		
			- The relevant centres will be appropriately manned at all times. All meetings will take place within ordinary working hours and there will be at least 2 members of staff on site at all times.		
			- The researcher will be up-to-date with the safety evacuation protocols of every relevant centre and will know where the alarms, emergency kits and fire extinguishers are kept.		
			- The researcher will have the relevant local emergency telephone numbers on speed dial.		
Desktop computers and other electrical equipment, such as mobile phones or recording devices	Electric shock	Researcher & Participant	- All electrical equipment will be visually checked for signs of damage or overheating prior to each use.	Low	Verity Buchanan
			- Ventilation/ cooling vents on electrical equipment will not be obstructed.		

Contacts

School Safety Liaison Officer: ███████████████████

University Safety Manager: ████████████████████

Appendix R: Distress Protocol

Adapted from Draucker, Martsolf and Poole (2009); and Haigh and Witham (2015)

	Mild	Moderate	Severe
Indications of distress during the interview	-Participant looks distressed but this appears relatively minor	-Participant indicates they are experiencing distress -Participant starts to cry or seems jumbled in her account and can't focus as well as she had done up until this point	-Participant is uncontrollably crying, shaking, seems to have difficulty breathing, has incoherent speech or appears to be experiencing flashbacks -Indicates that they are thinking of hurting themselves or another or indicates that they are likely to be hurt as a consequence of something they have revealed/taking part
Initial response	-Ask if the question is too distressing to answer -Offer a glass of water -Ask if changing topics might be preferable -Ask another question designed to move topics -Refer back to the images/ photographs/ drawings to refocus the interview back on spaces of safety and wellbeing	-Offer a tissue/ glass of water -Ask if participant wants a break -Ask if she wants the interview to be terminated and the data destroyed or for the interview to be postponed -If the participant continues crying but stays within moderate distress, consider returning to the images/ photographs/ drawings but only after she has told you she wants to continue and you are satisfied that by continuing and moving onto a different topic area, the distress will dissipate	-Stop the interview immediately -Offer emotional support and allow the participant to regroup -Assess mental status: -Tell me what thoughts you are having? -Tell me what you are feeling right now? -Do you feel you are able to go on about your day? -Do you feel safe? -Determine if the person is having acute emotional distress beyond what might normally be expected in an interview about a sensitive topic -If presenting risk, conduct safety risk assessment to assess intention, plan and means and determine if participant is an imminent danger to self or to others -If presenting as in danger or potential danger from others, conduct safety risk assessment to ascertain if the participant is experiencing a safety concern
Stage 2 response (post review)	-Ask if participant wants a break -Ask if she wants the interview to be terminated and data destroyed or if she would prefer to be re-interviewed at a later date -If the participant continues crying but stays within moderate distress, consider returning to the images/ photographs/ drawings but only after she has told you she wants to continue and you are satisfied that by continuing and moving onto a different topic area, the distress will dissipate	-Stop the interview immediately -Offer emotional support and allow the participant to regroup -Assess mental status: -Tell me what thoughts you are having? -Tell me what you are feeling right now? -Do you feel you are able to go on about your day? -Do you feel safe? -Determine if the person is having acute emotional distress beyond what might normally be expected in an interview about a sensitive topic. If so, move onto discontinuing the interview and associated steps	-Discontinue the interview -Encourage the participant to contact their GP or mental health provider -Offer, with participant's consent, to contact their GP or a friend/relative -With participant's consent, contact psychologist or explain that a psychologist will be contacting them -Notify the GP/ psychologist of these steps -Consider calling emergency services or, if suicidal ideation, ask family member to attend A&E with them -Follow up with courtesy email, subject to obtaining the participant's consent -Encourage the participant to email or call the researcher if she experiences increased distress in the hours or days following the interview.

Appendix S: Biographies
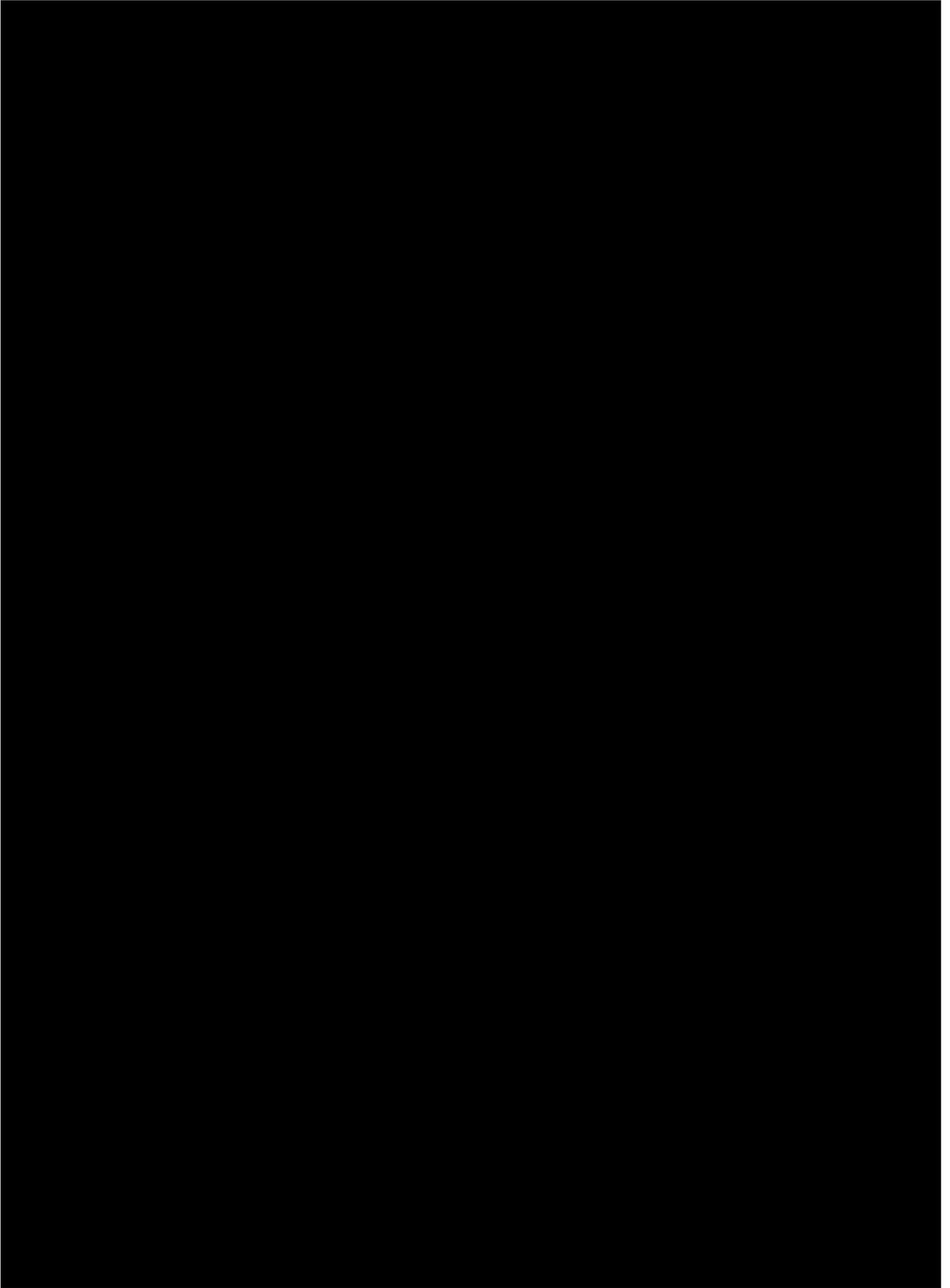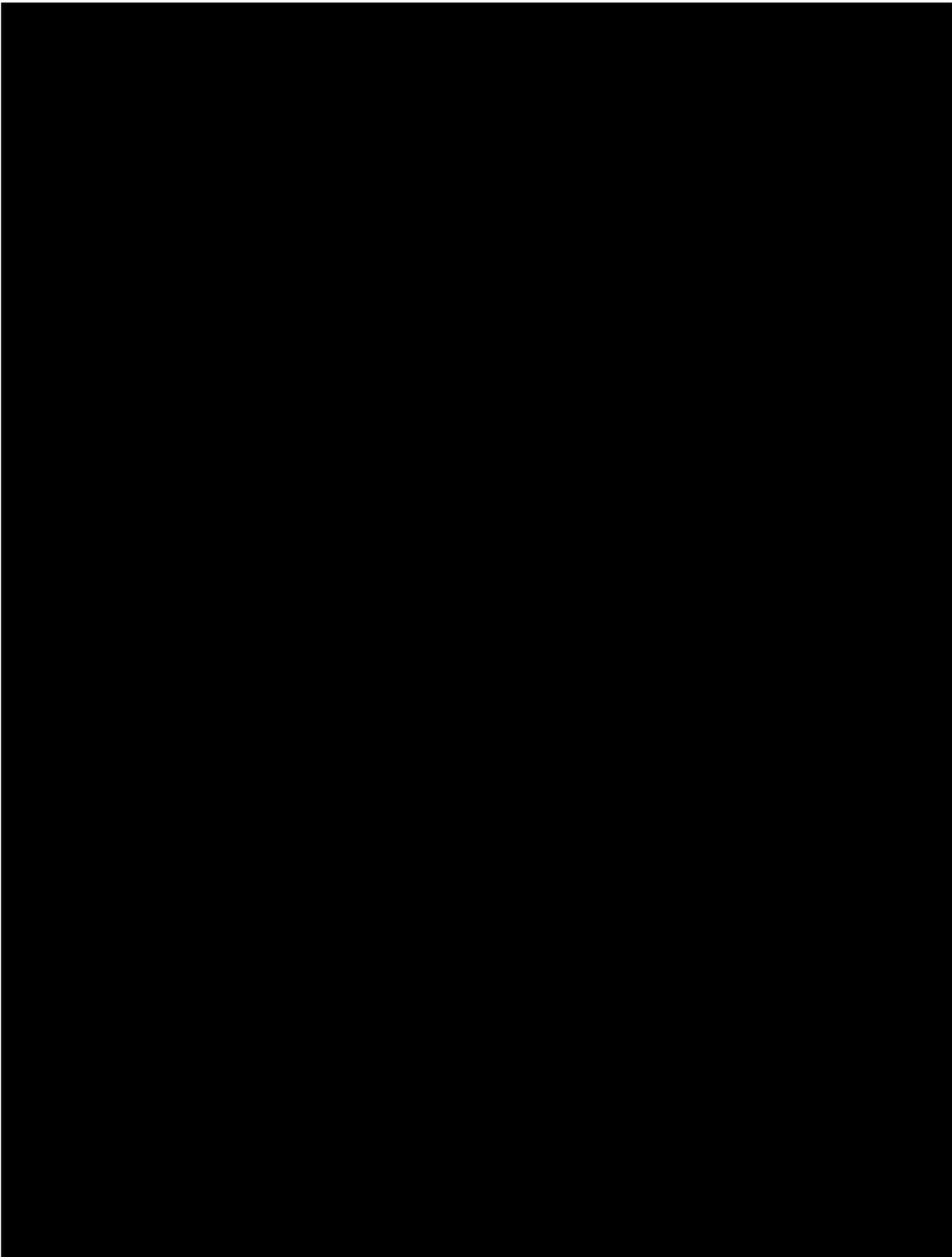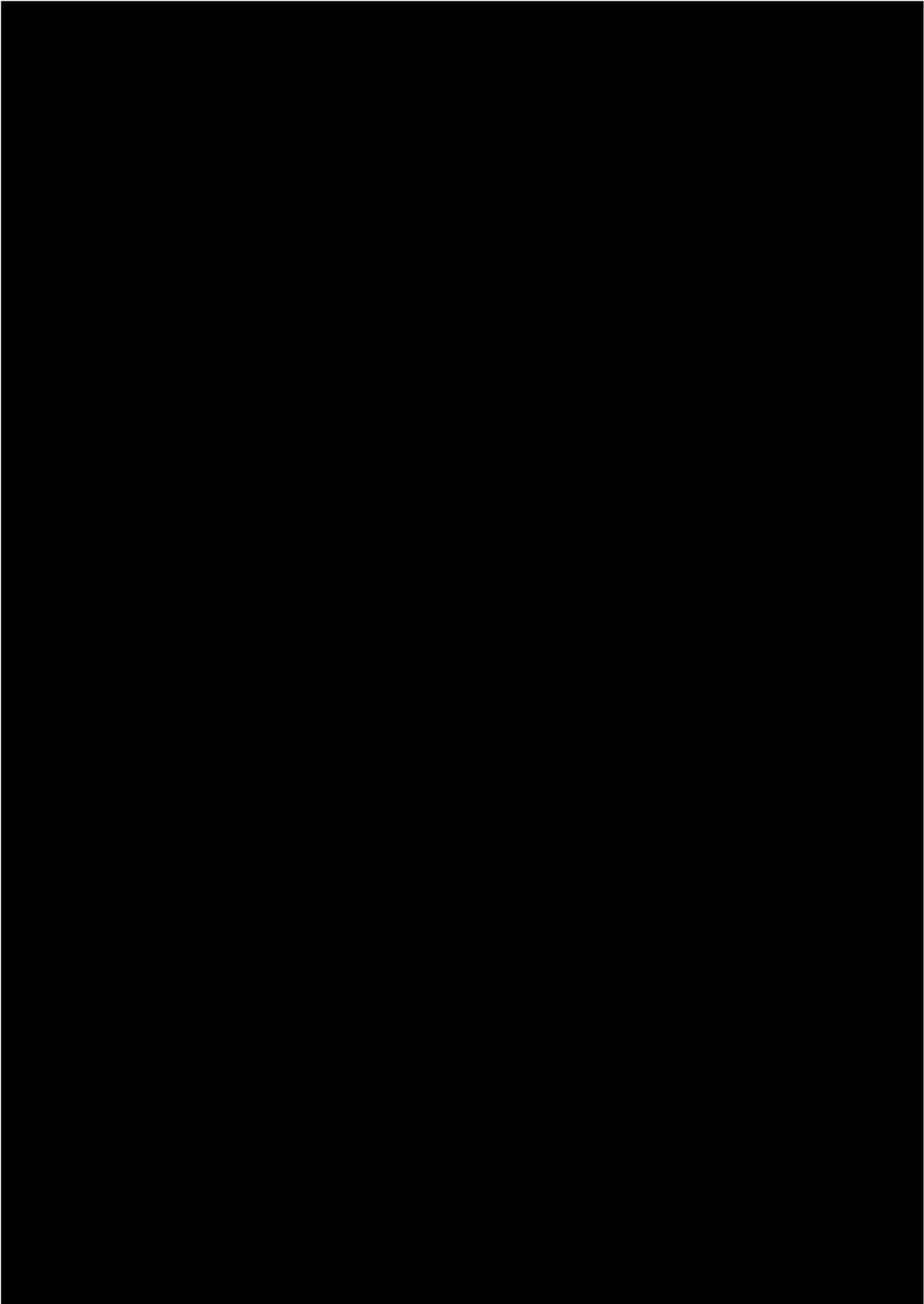
Appendix T: Emotion, Space and Society Submission Guidelines

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5 PART TWO: PUBLISHABLE PAPER

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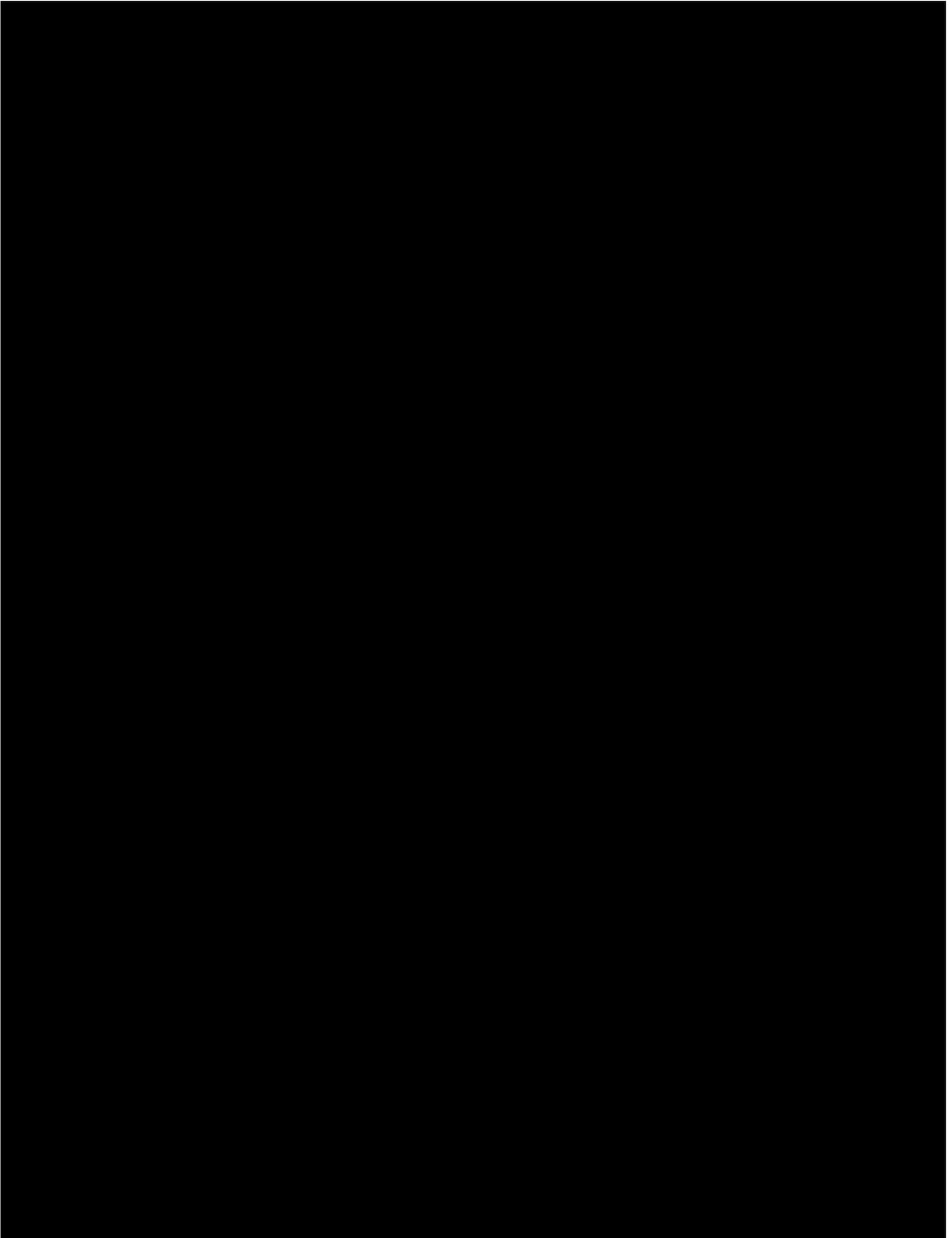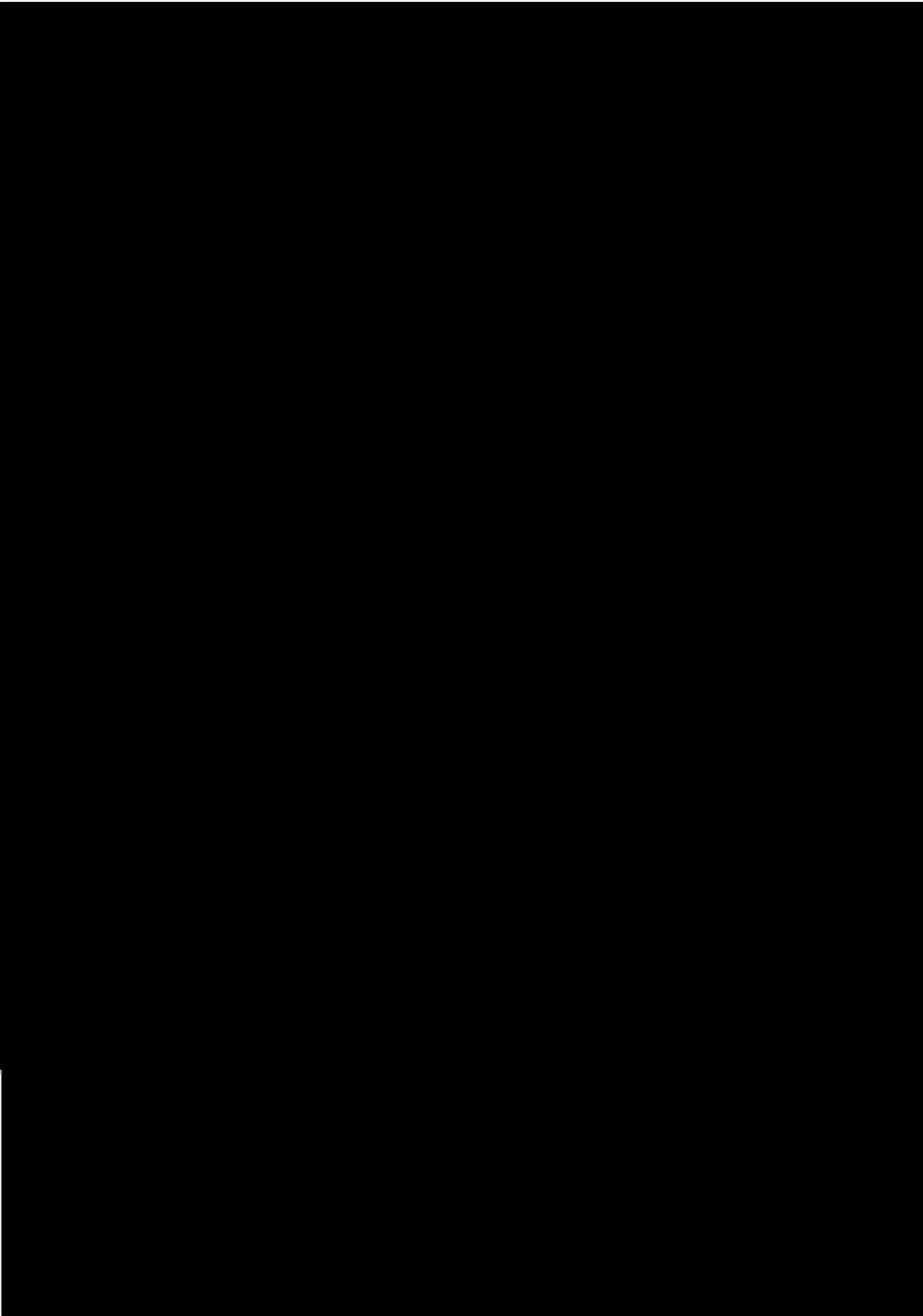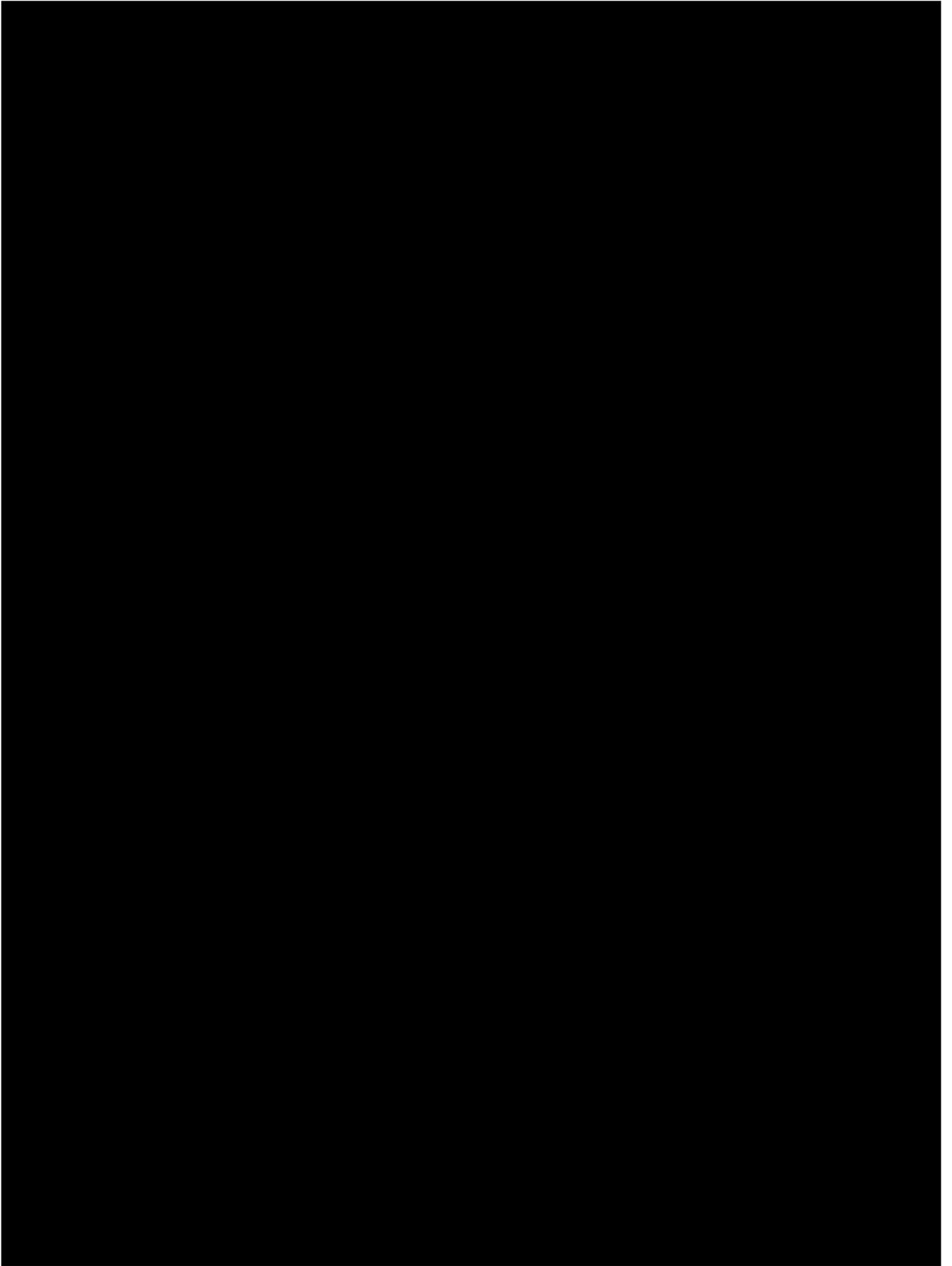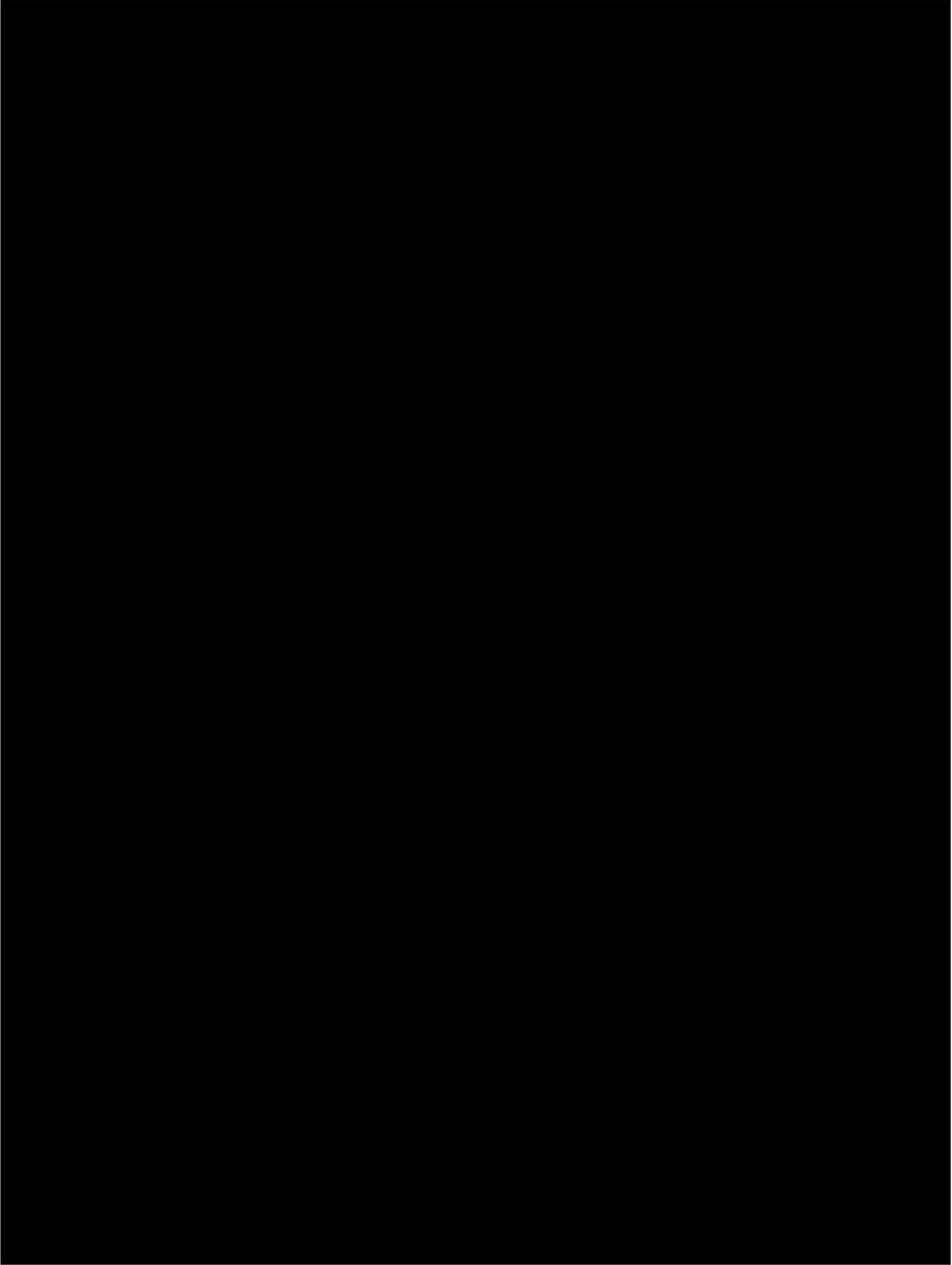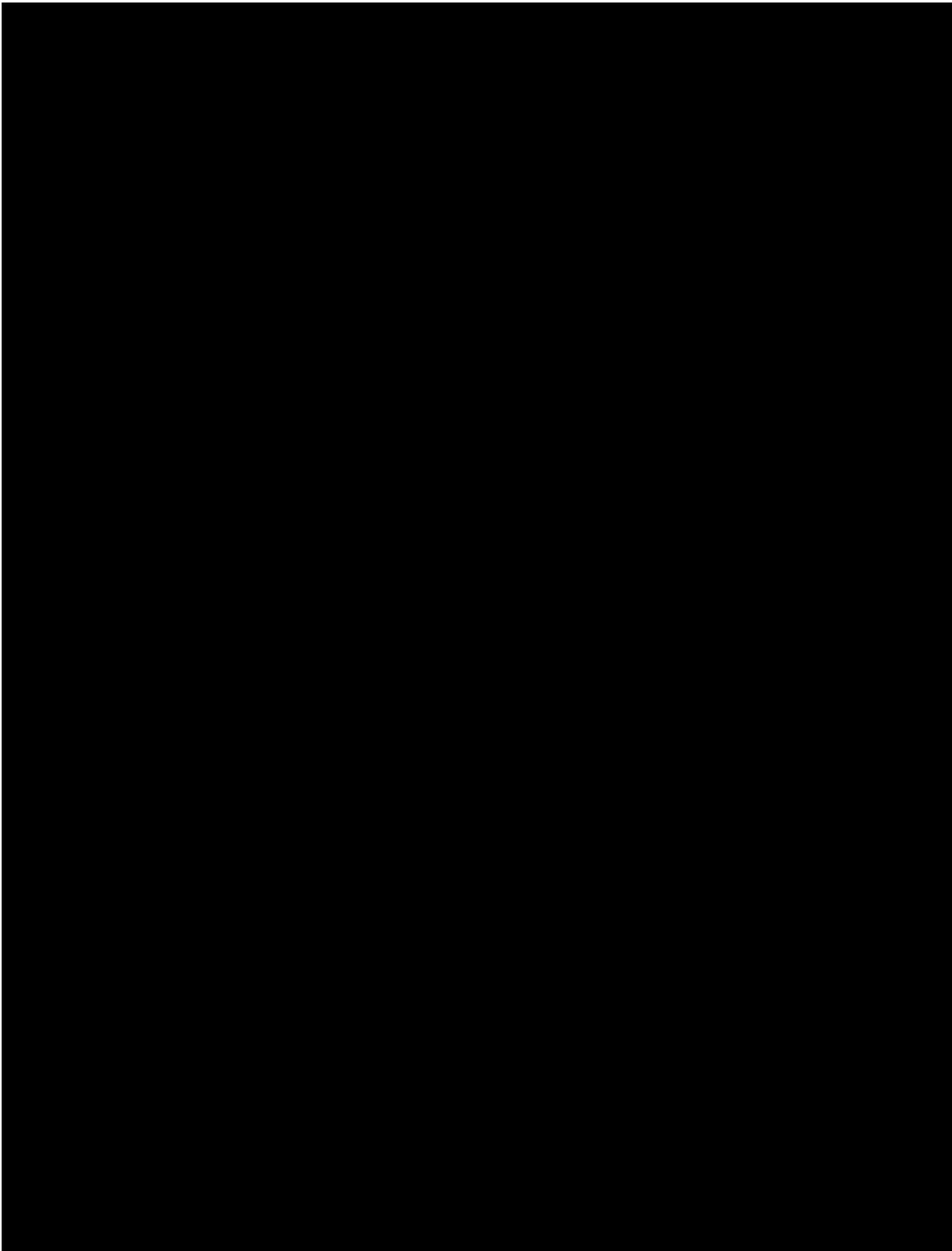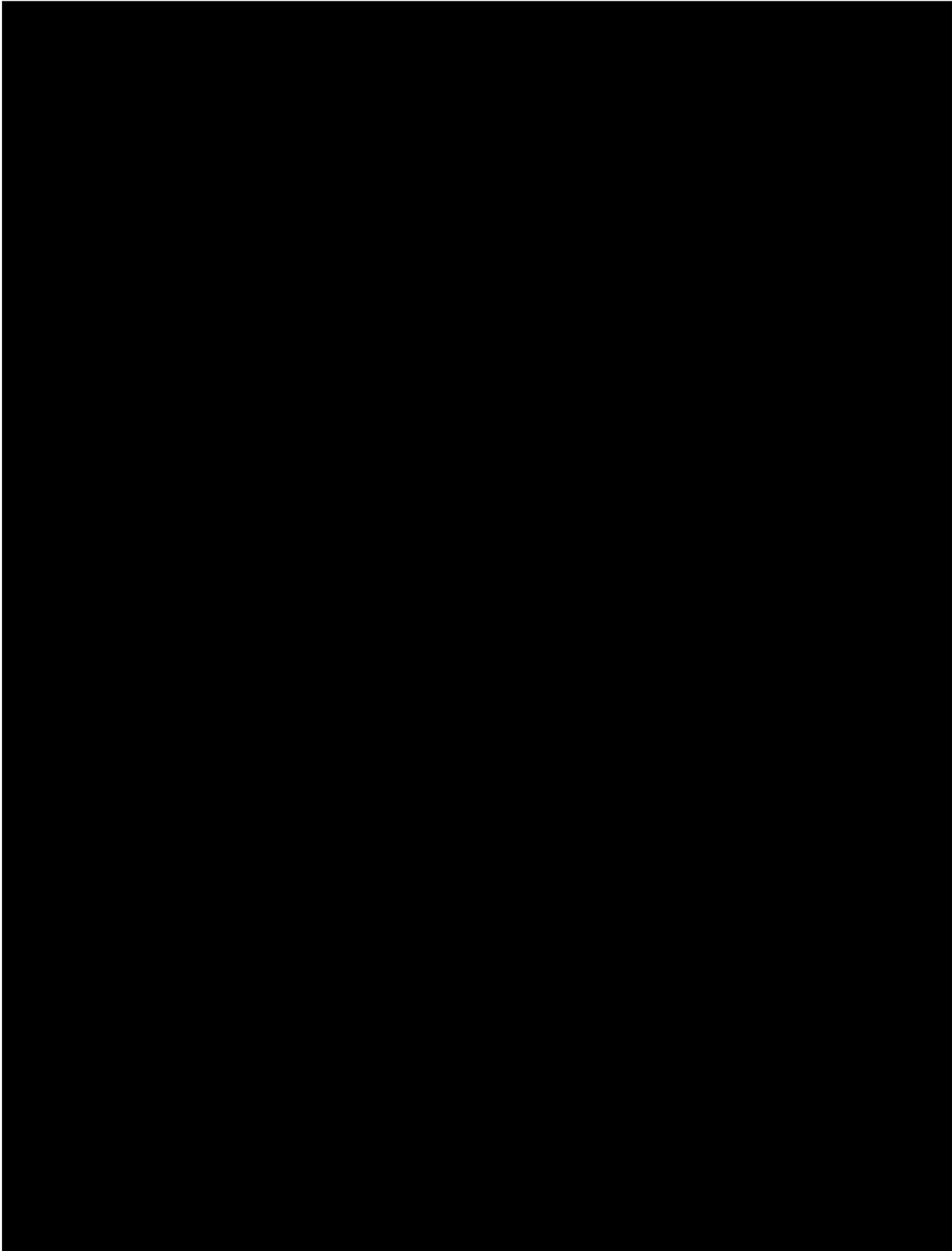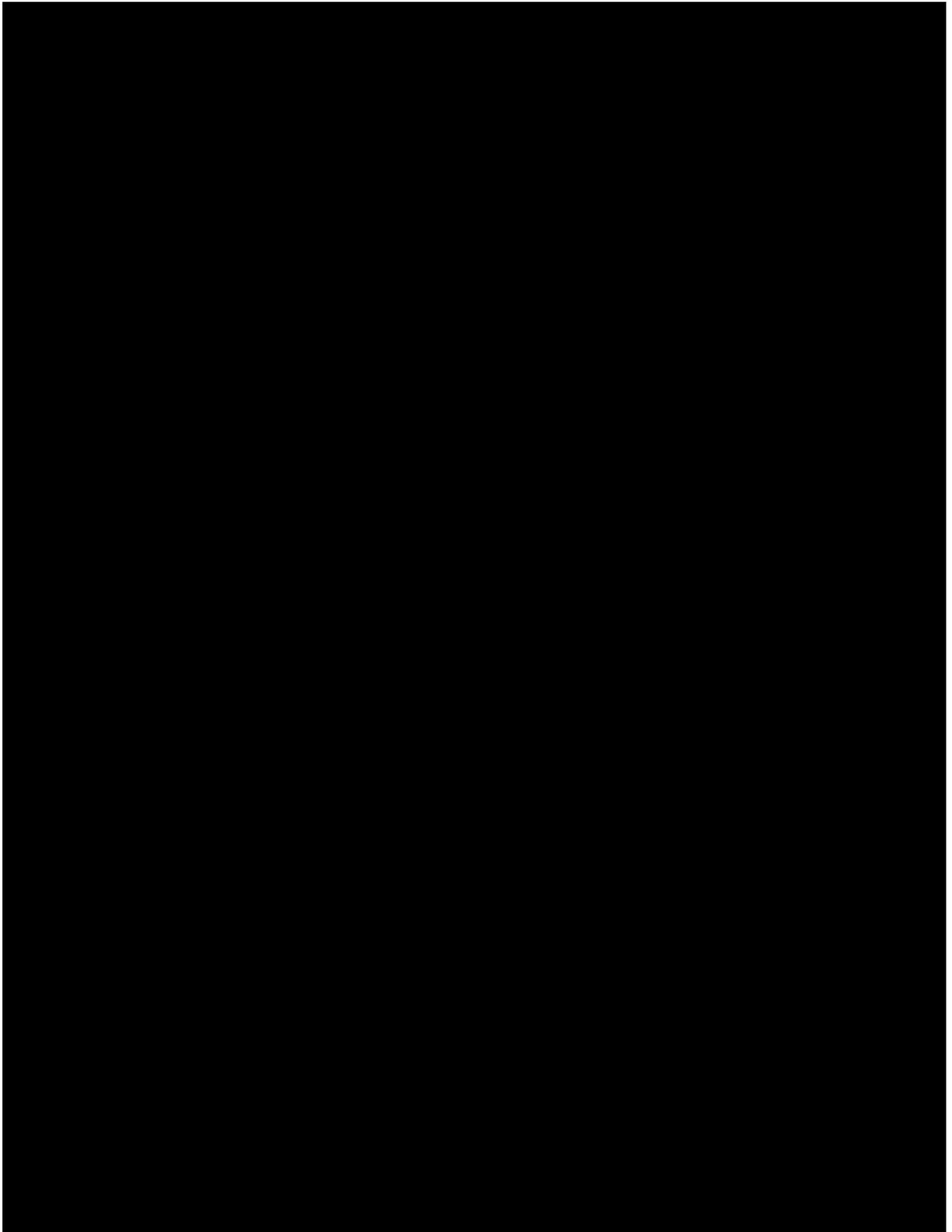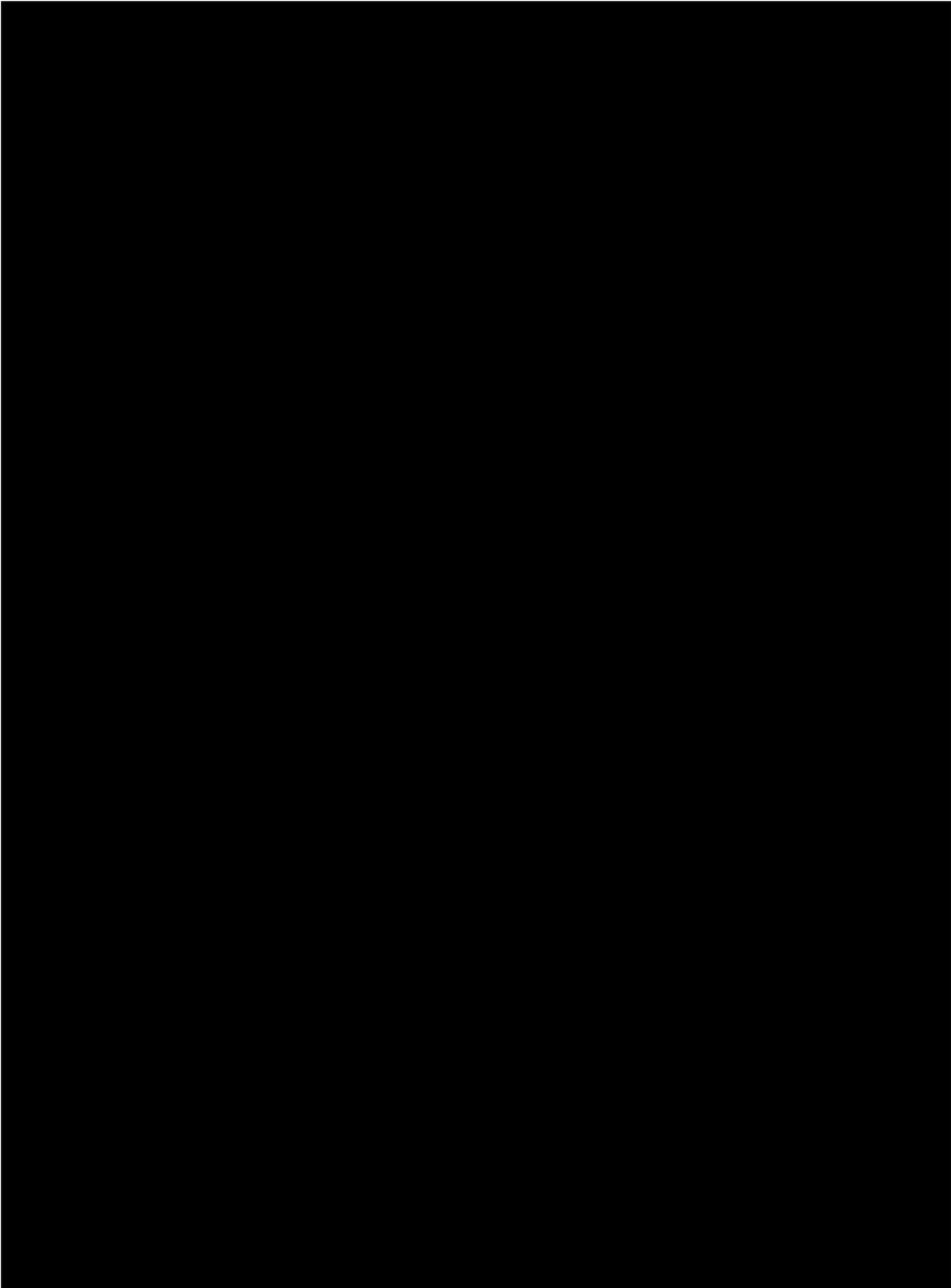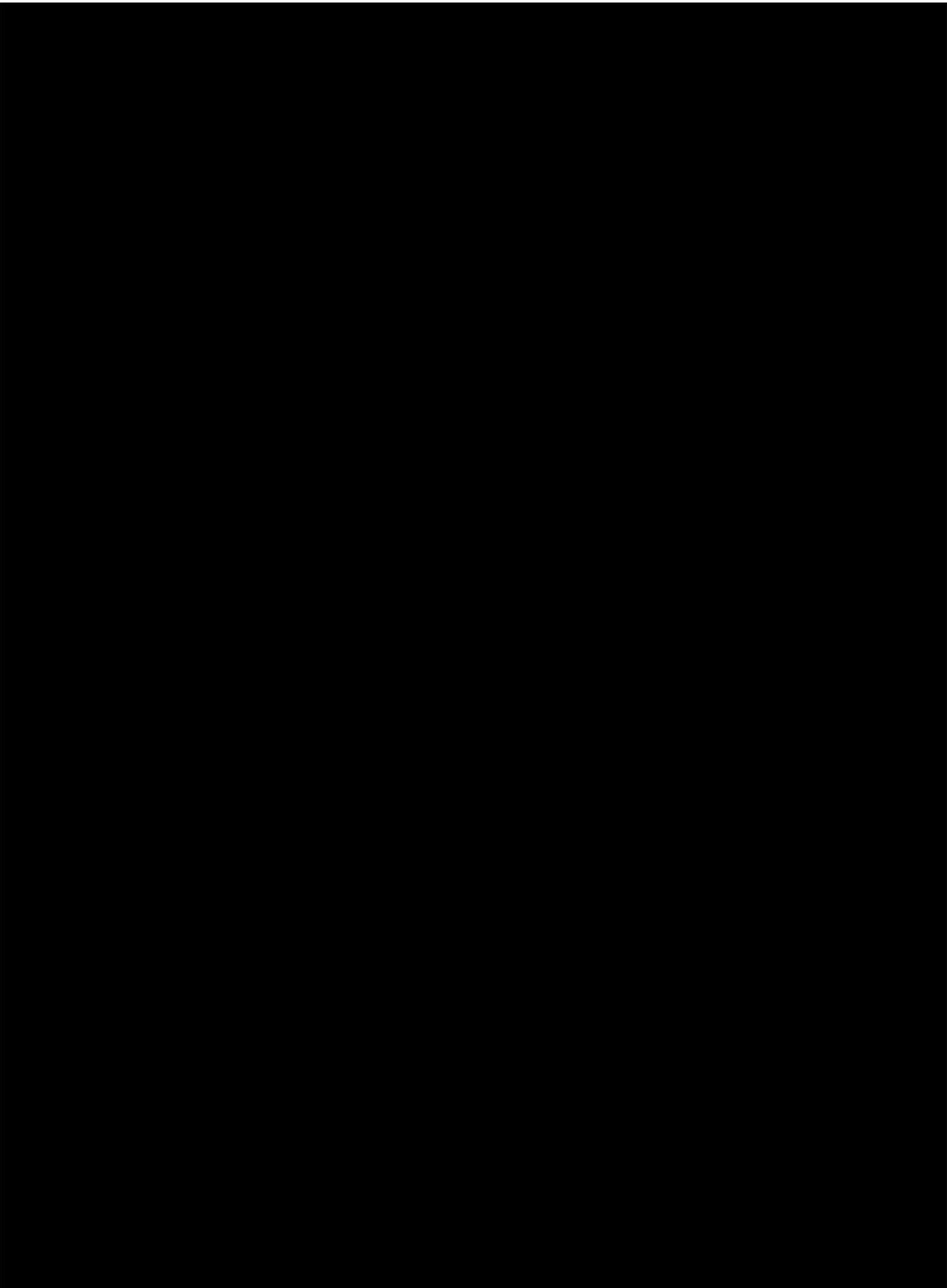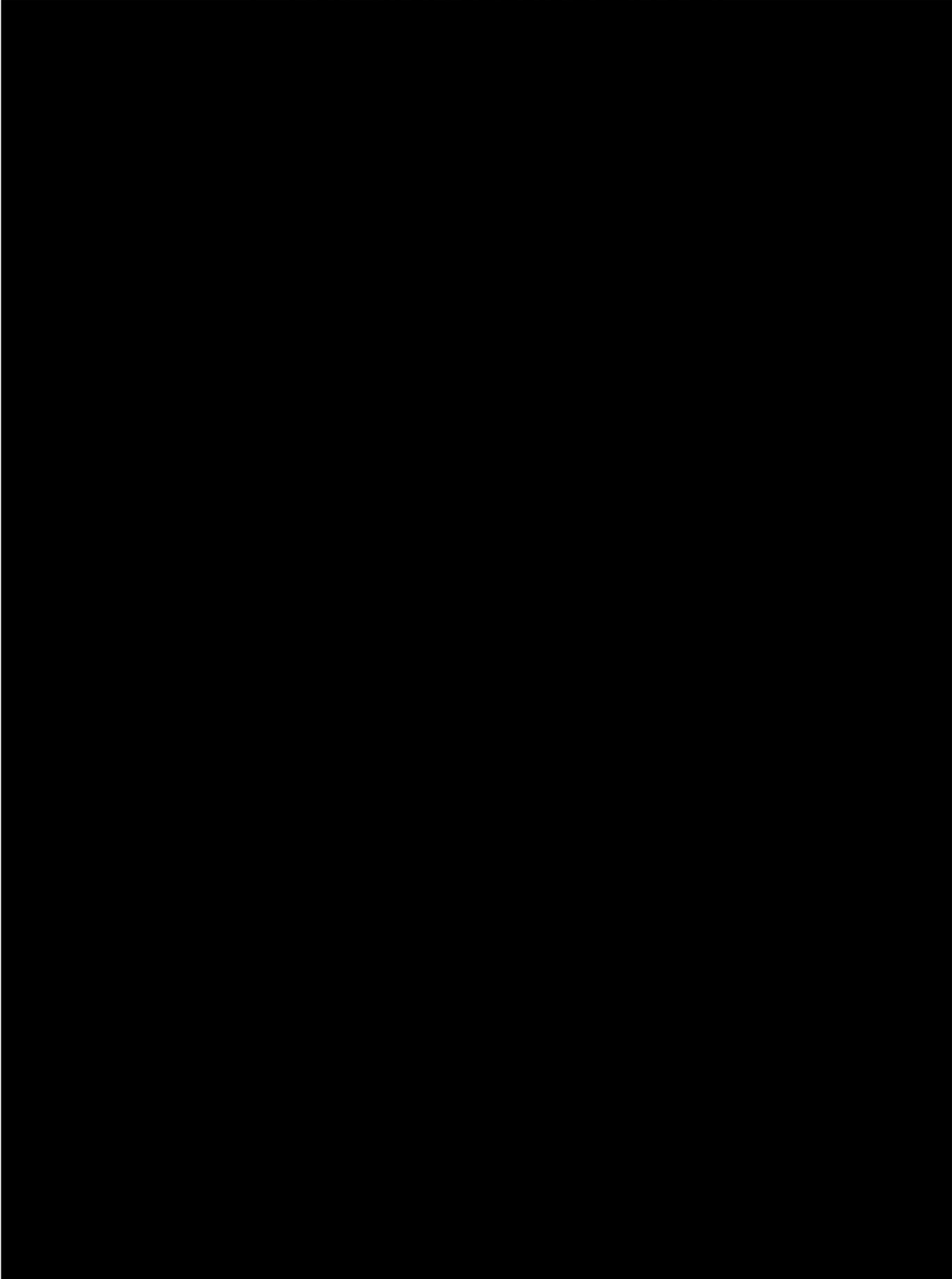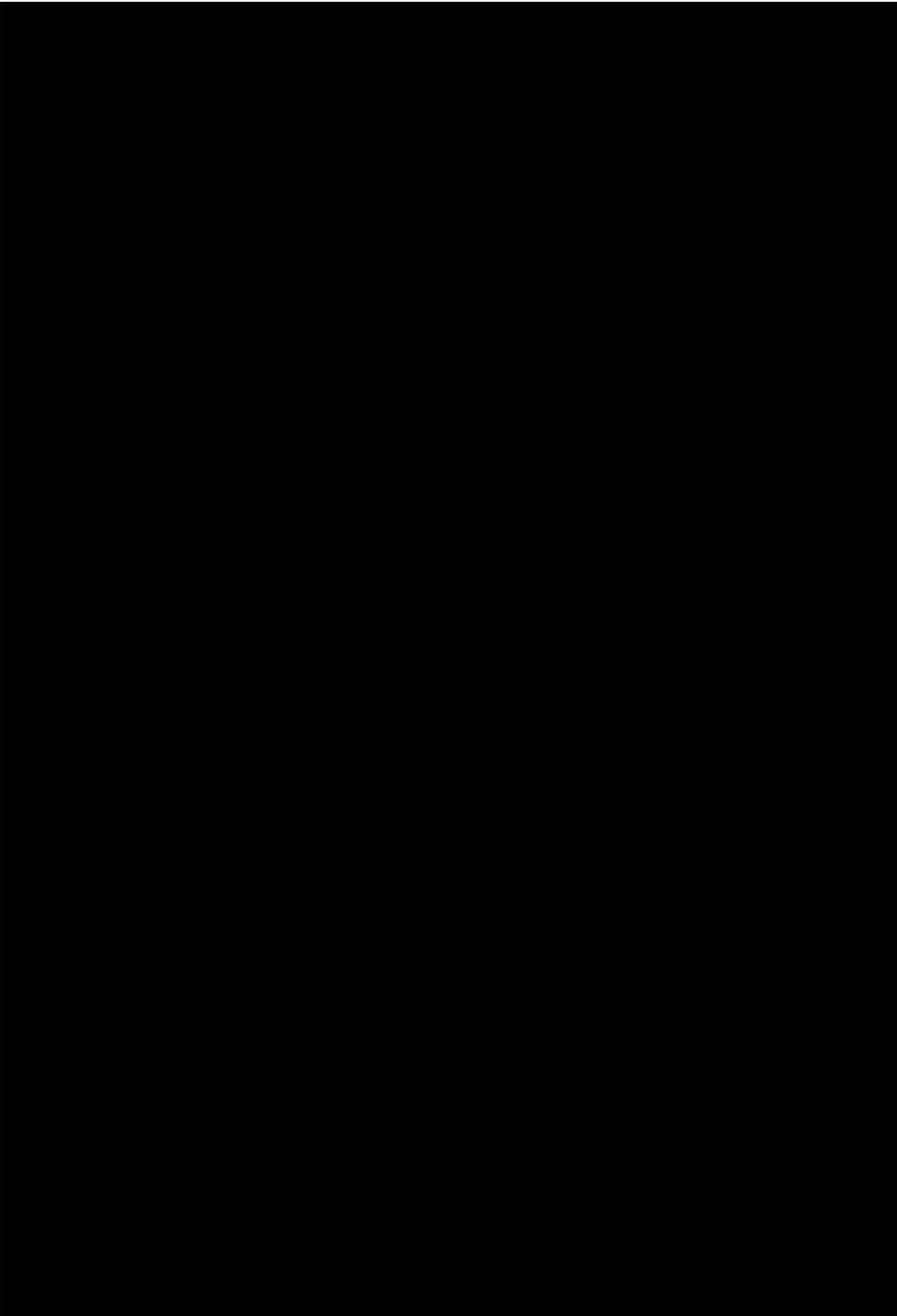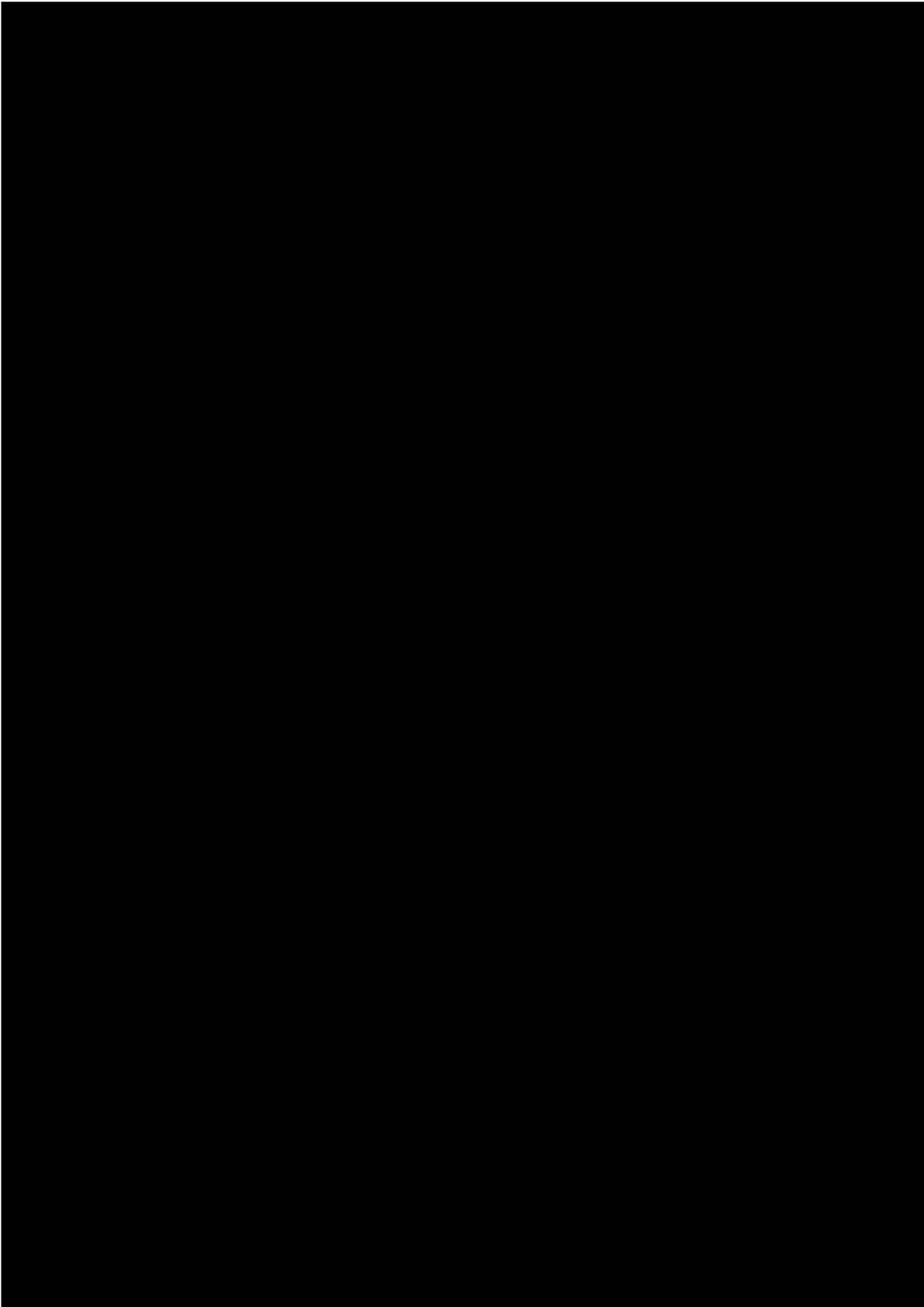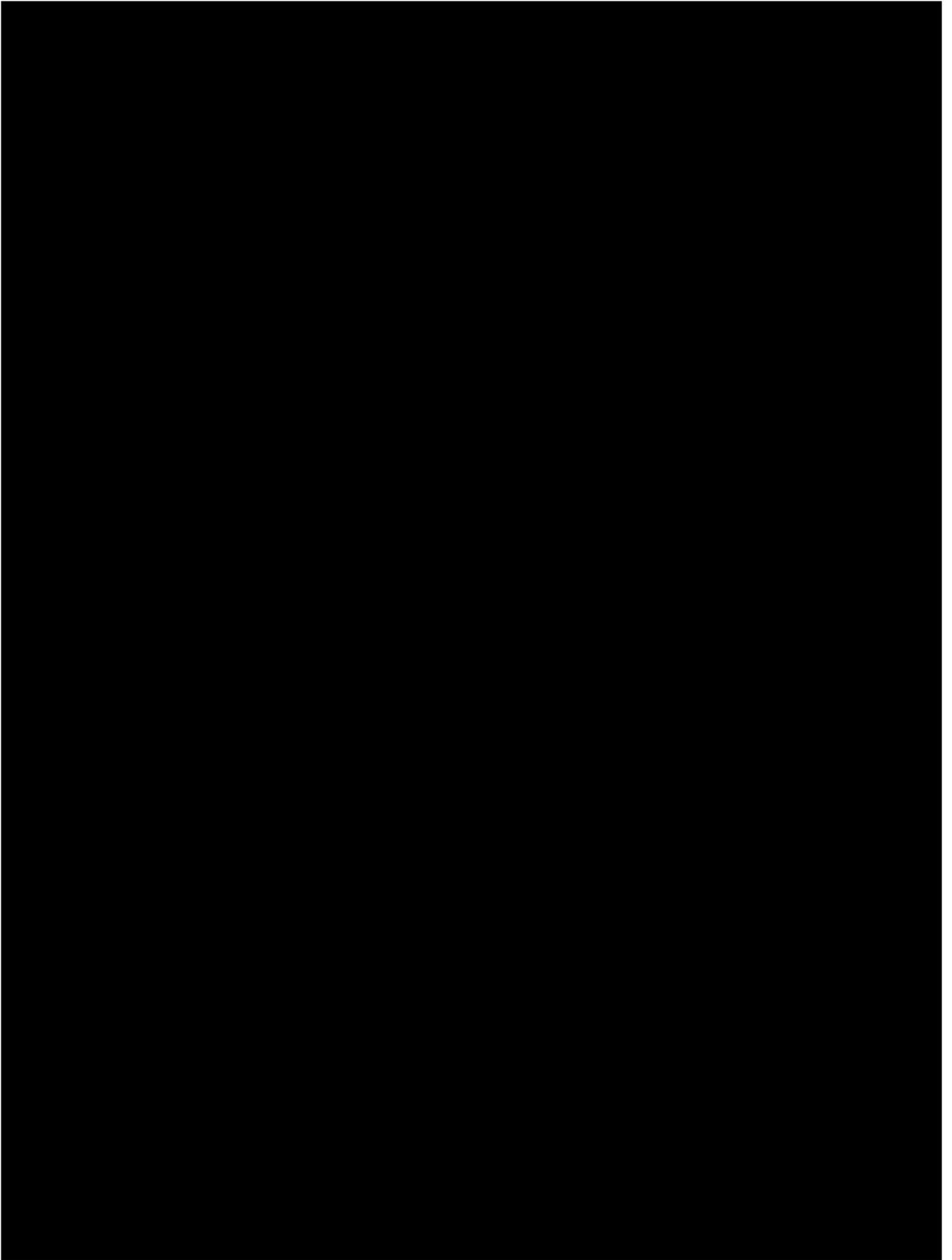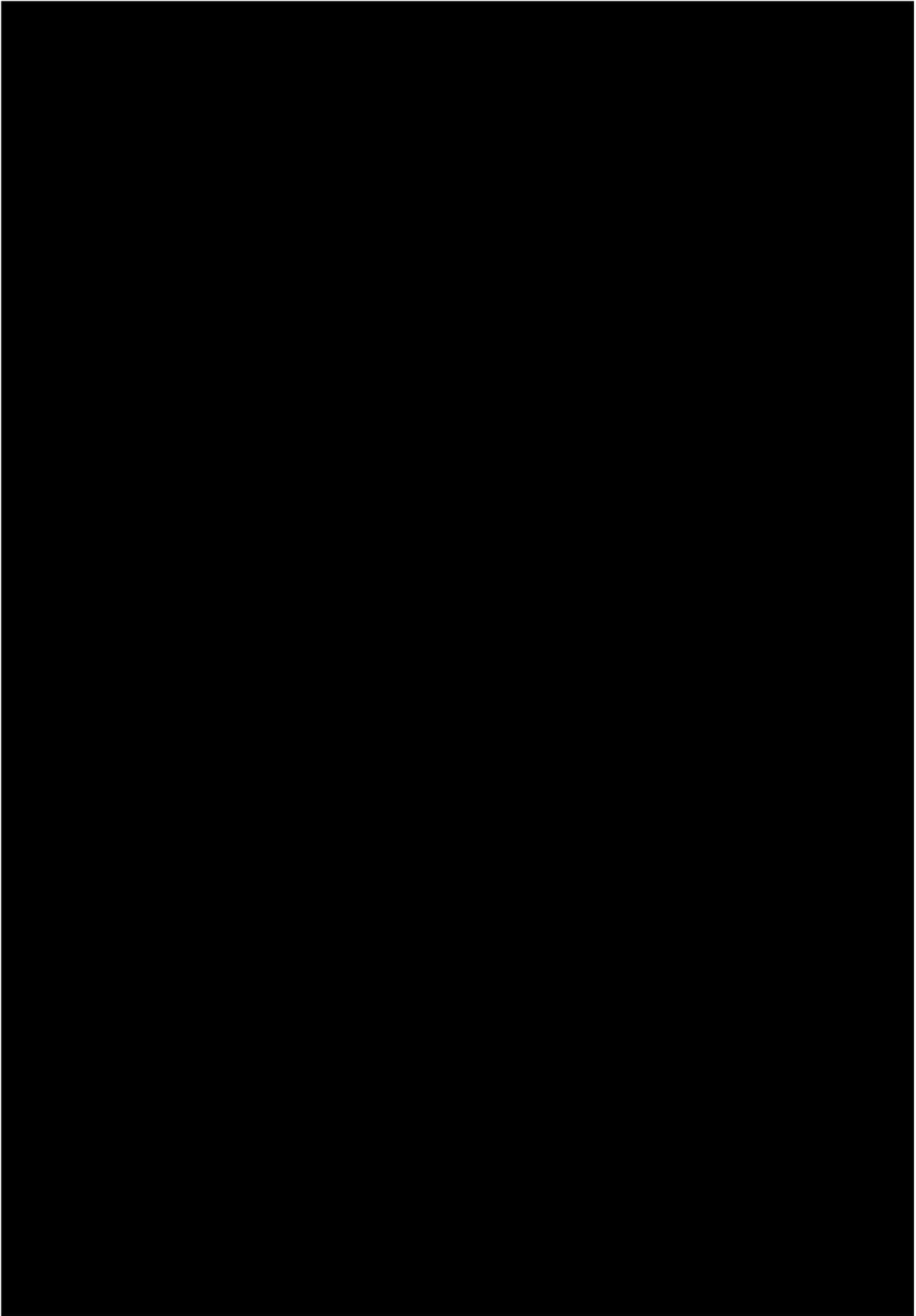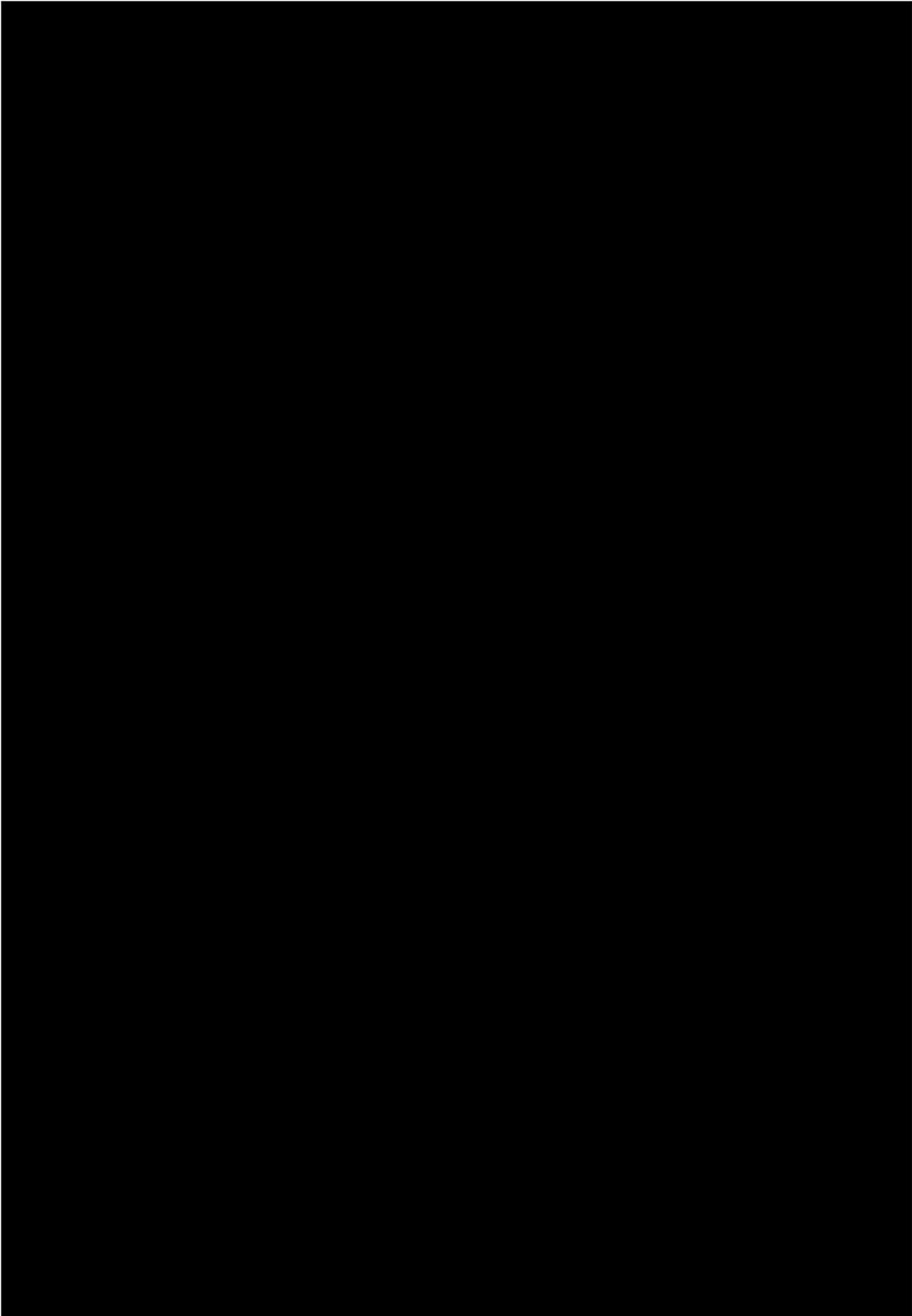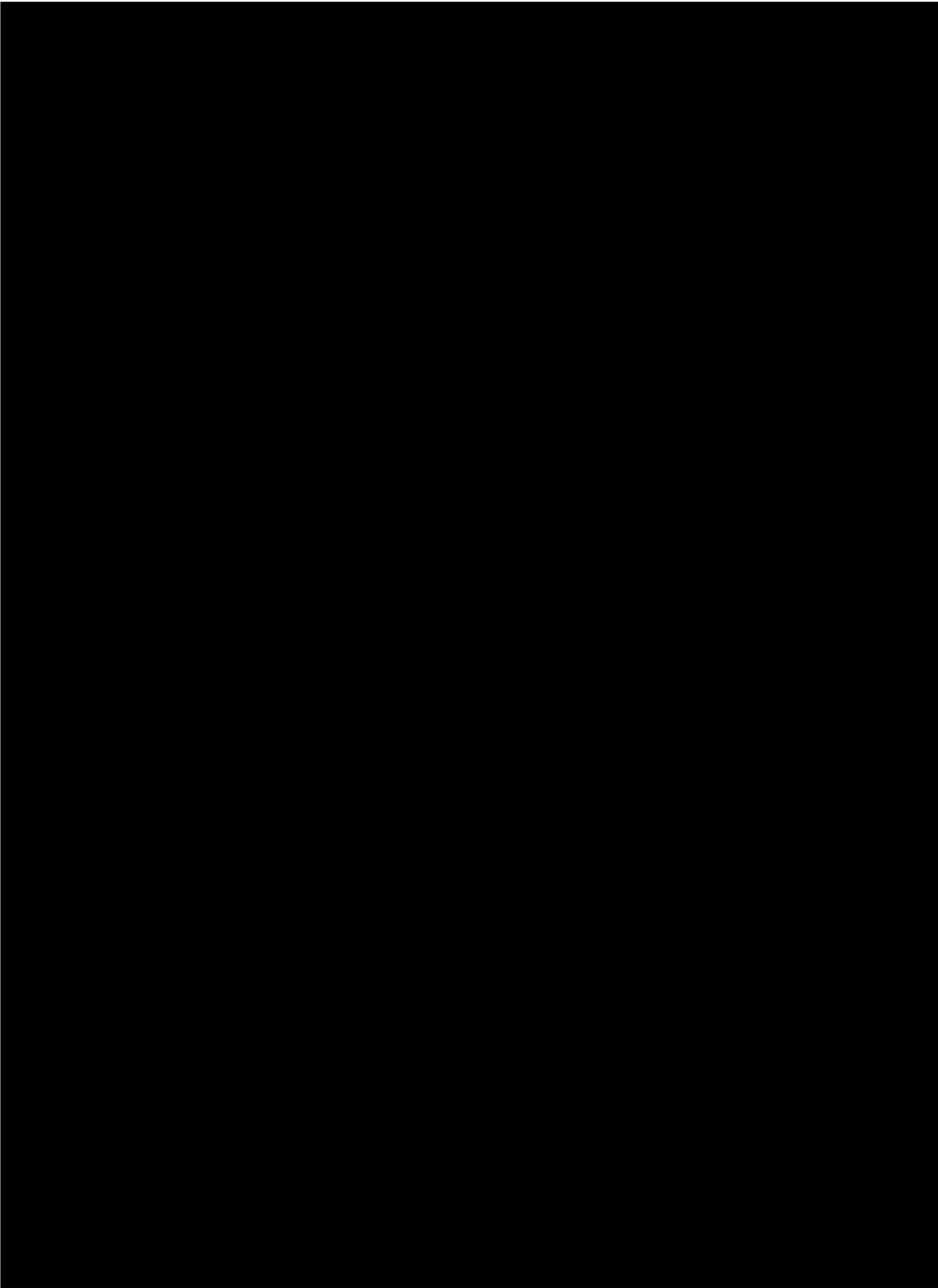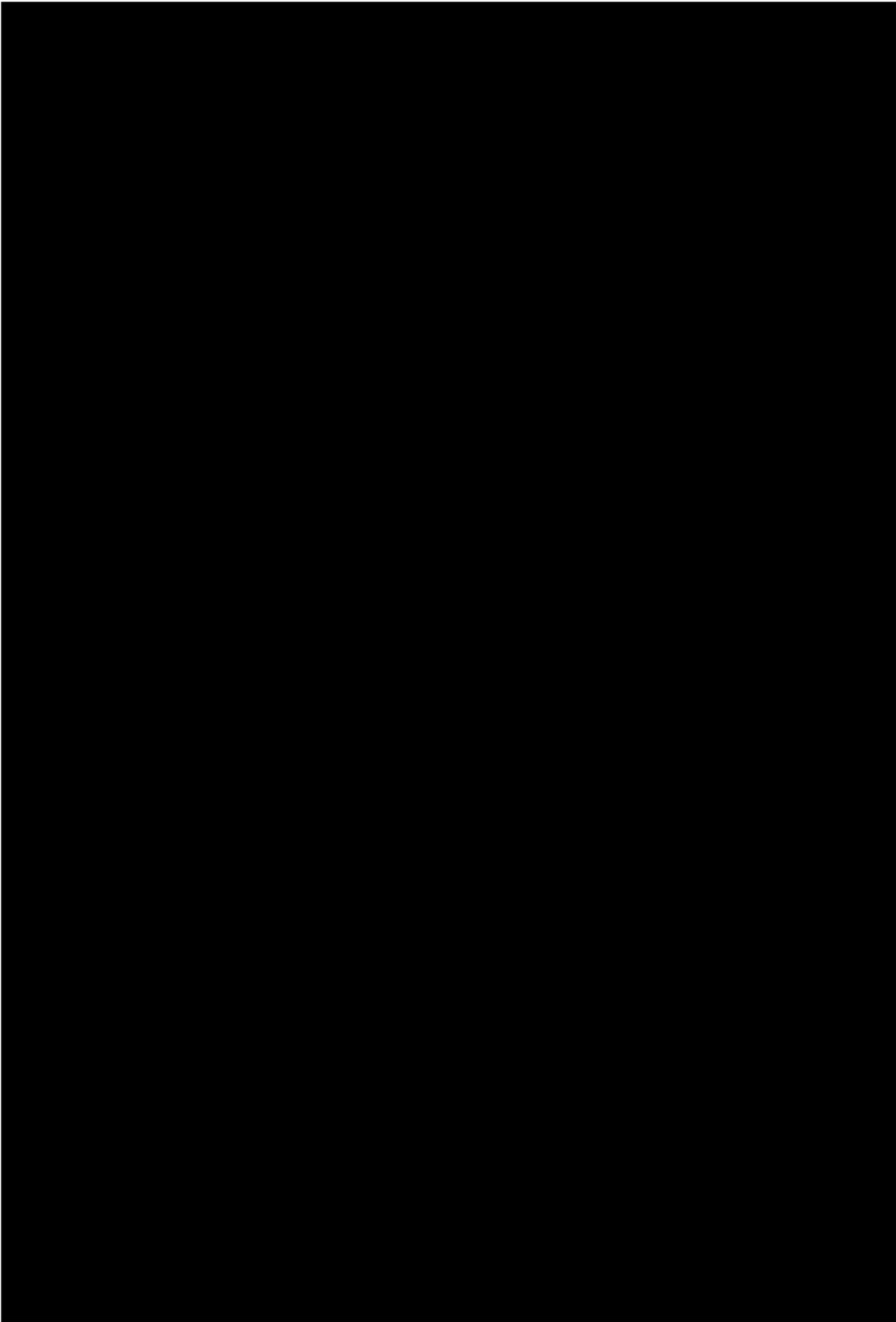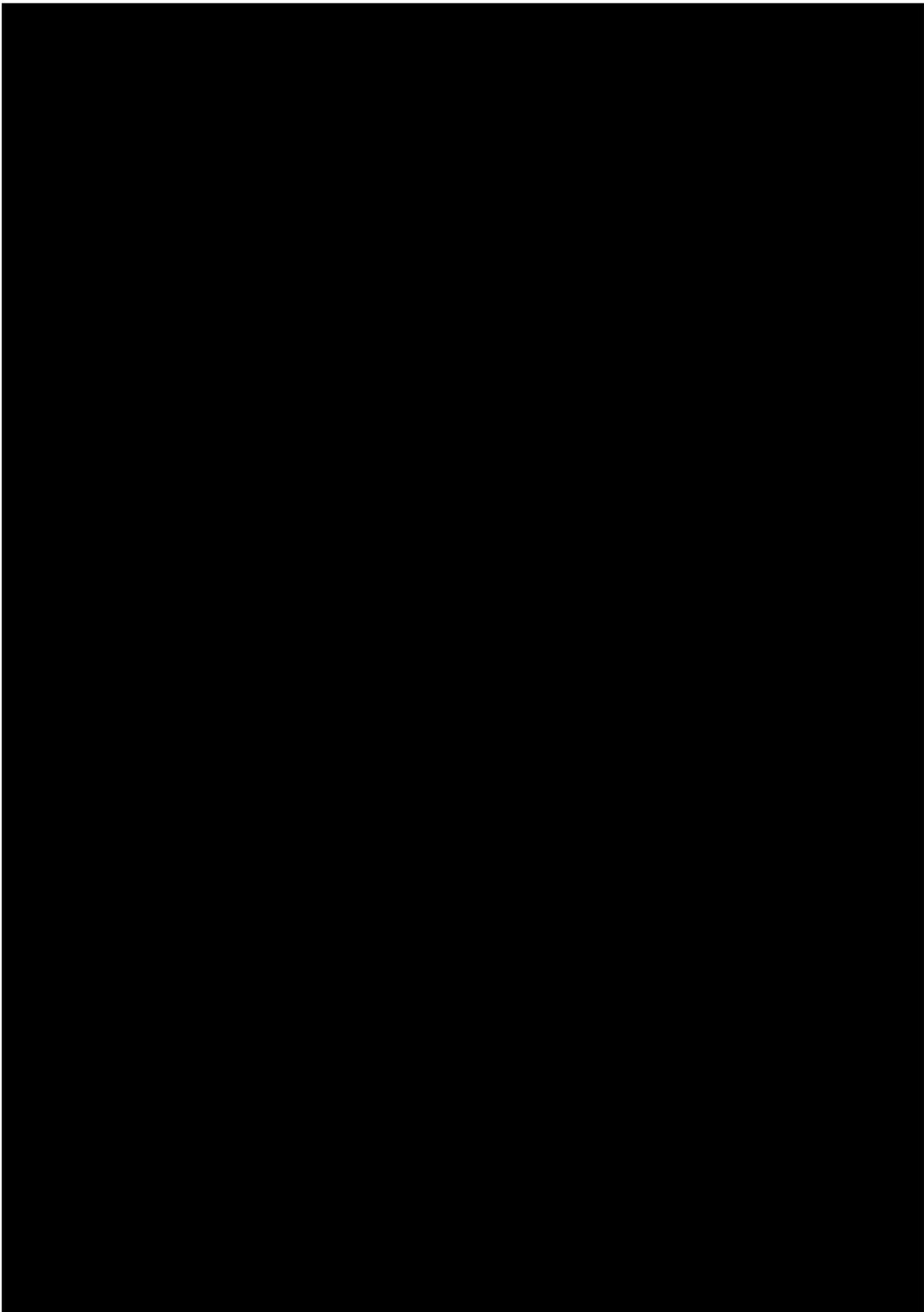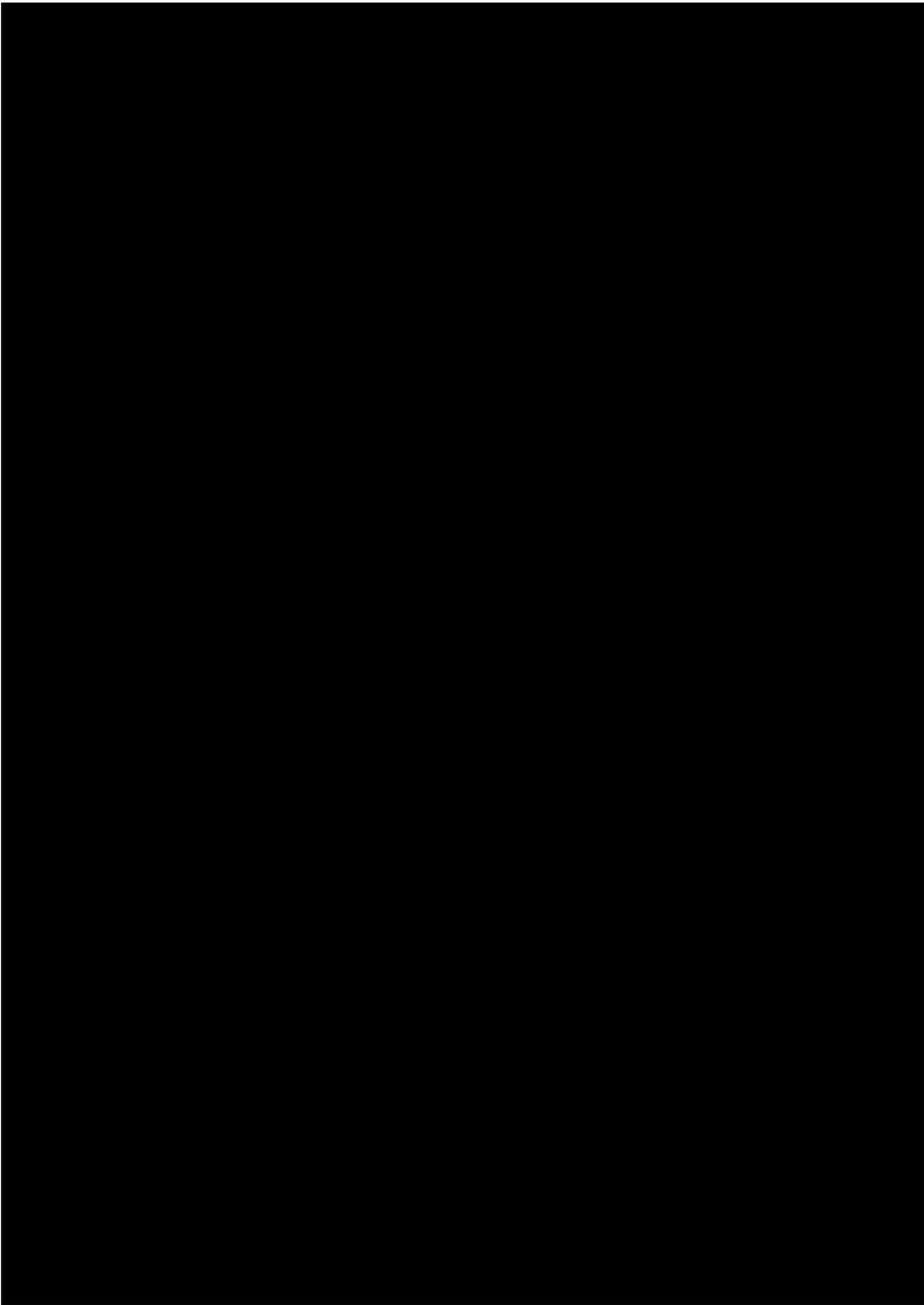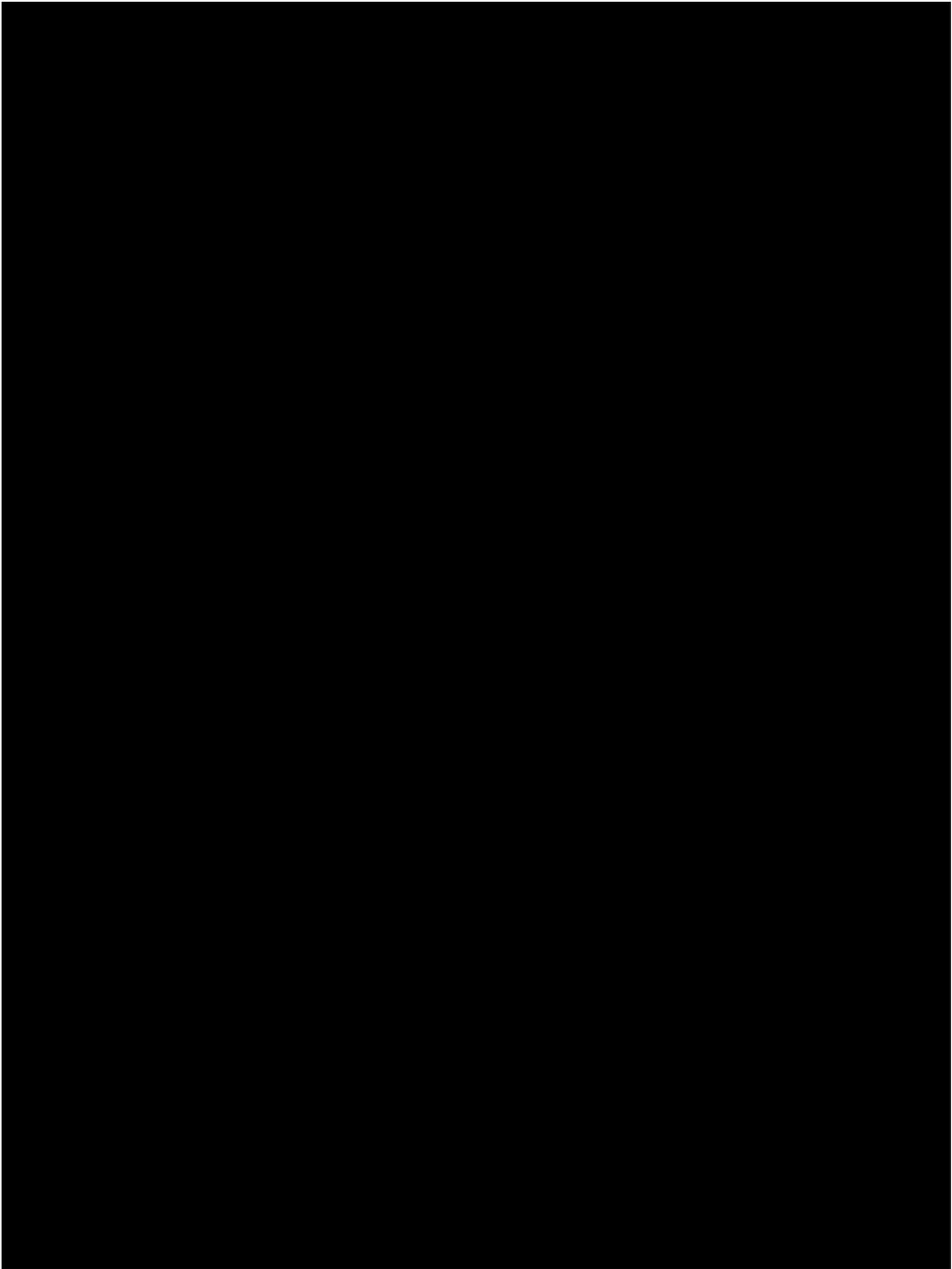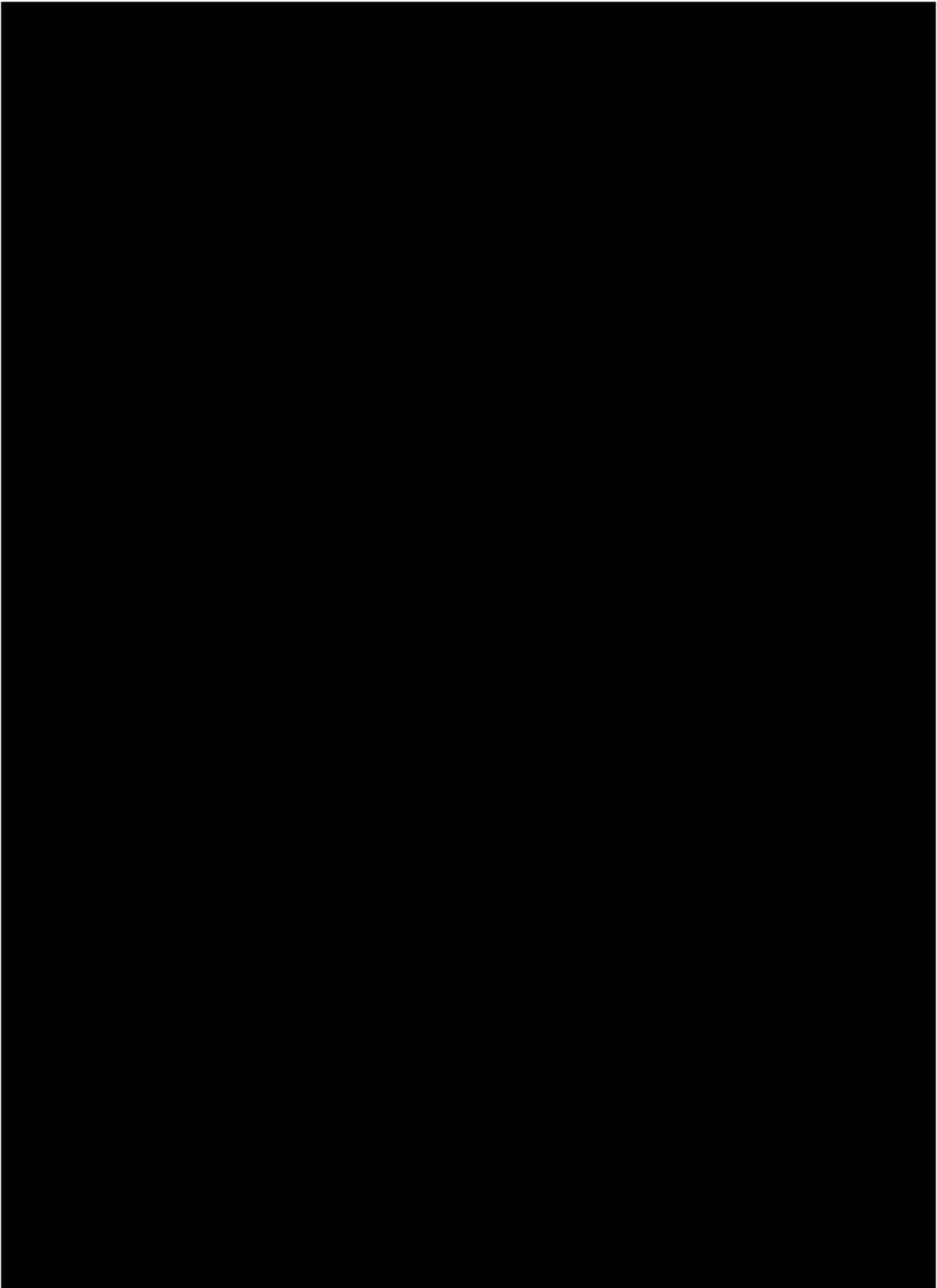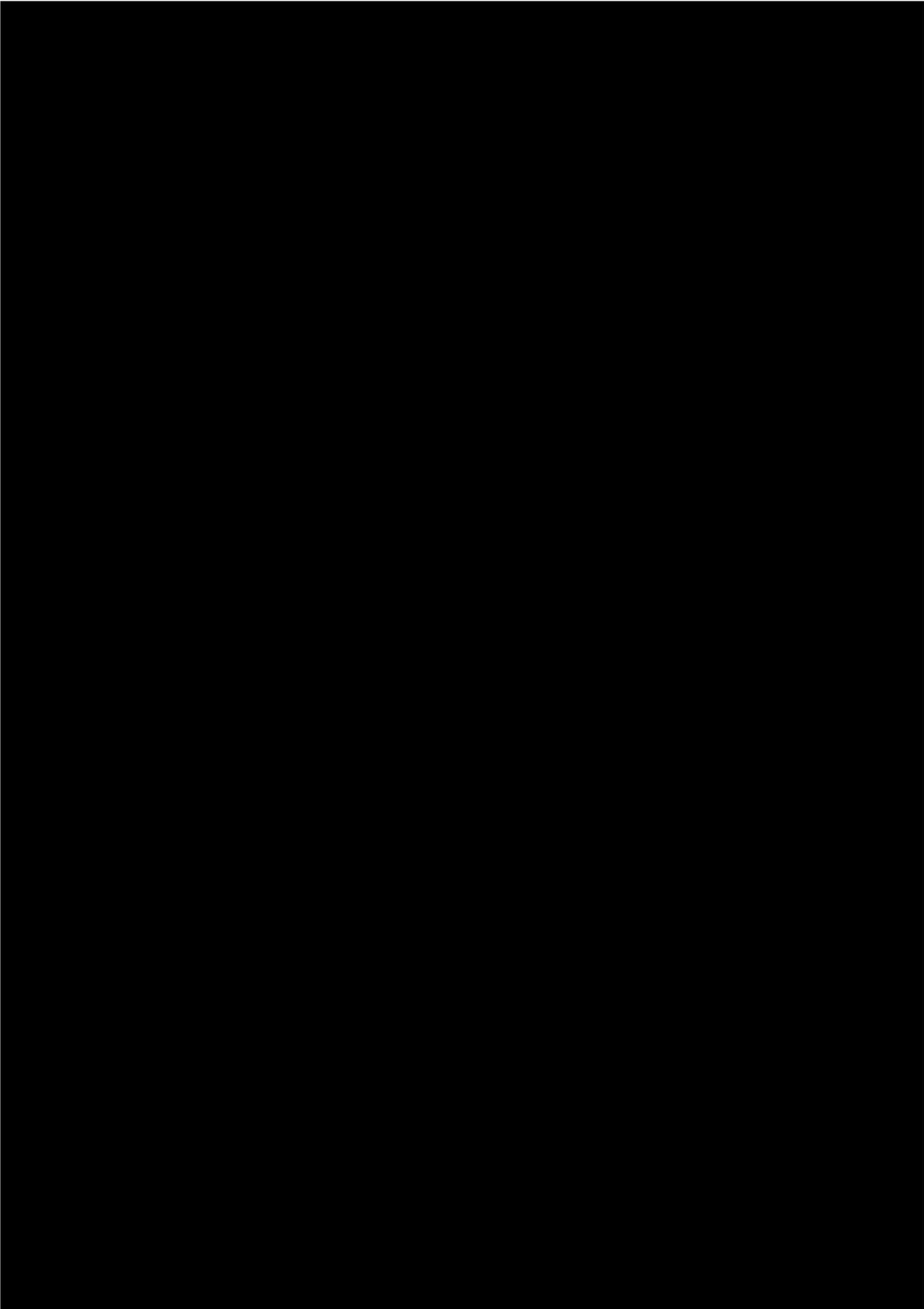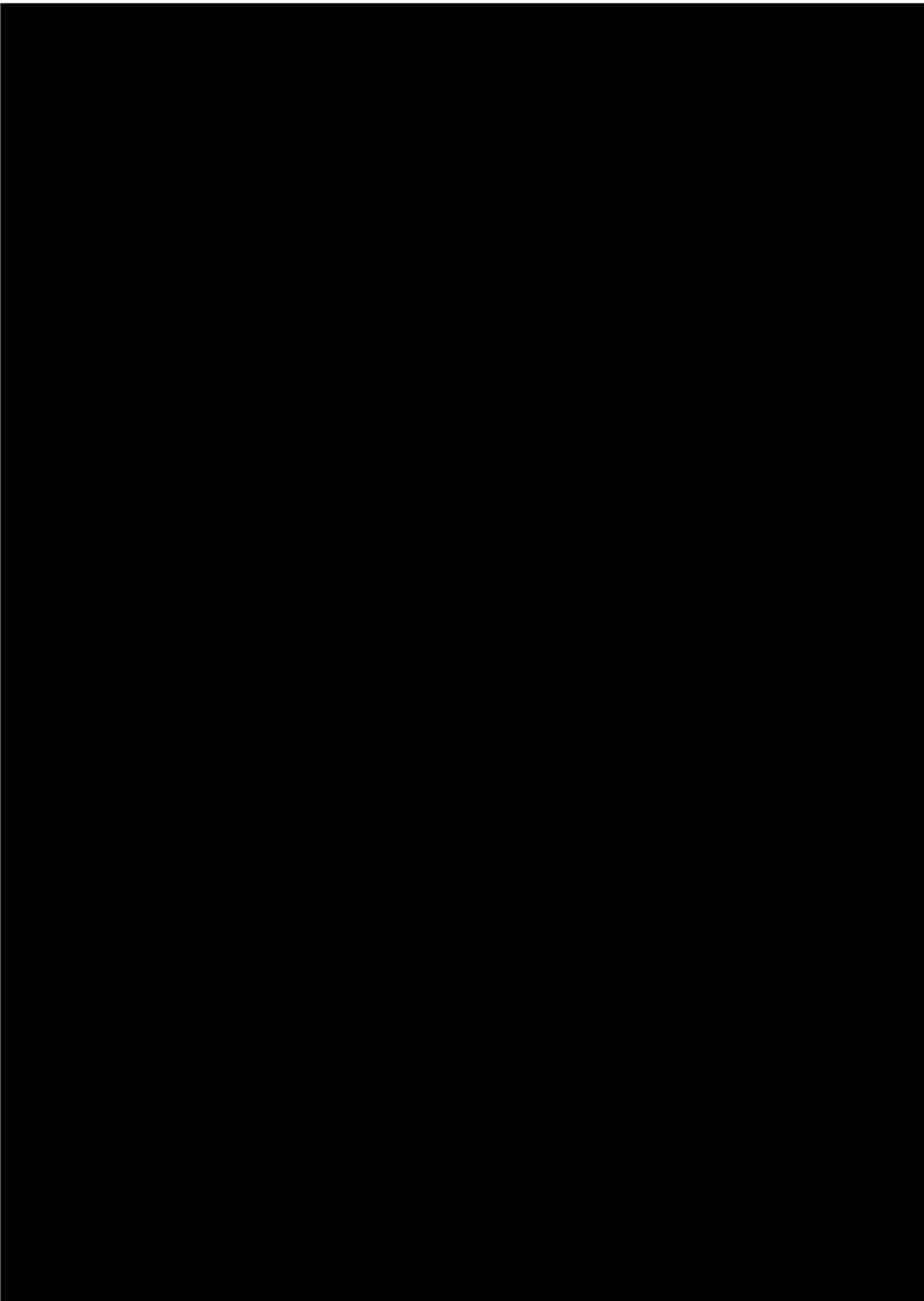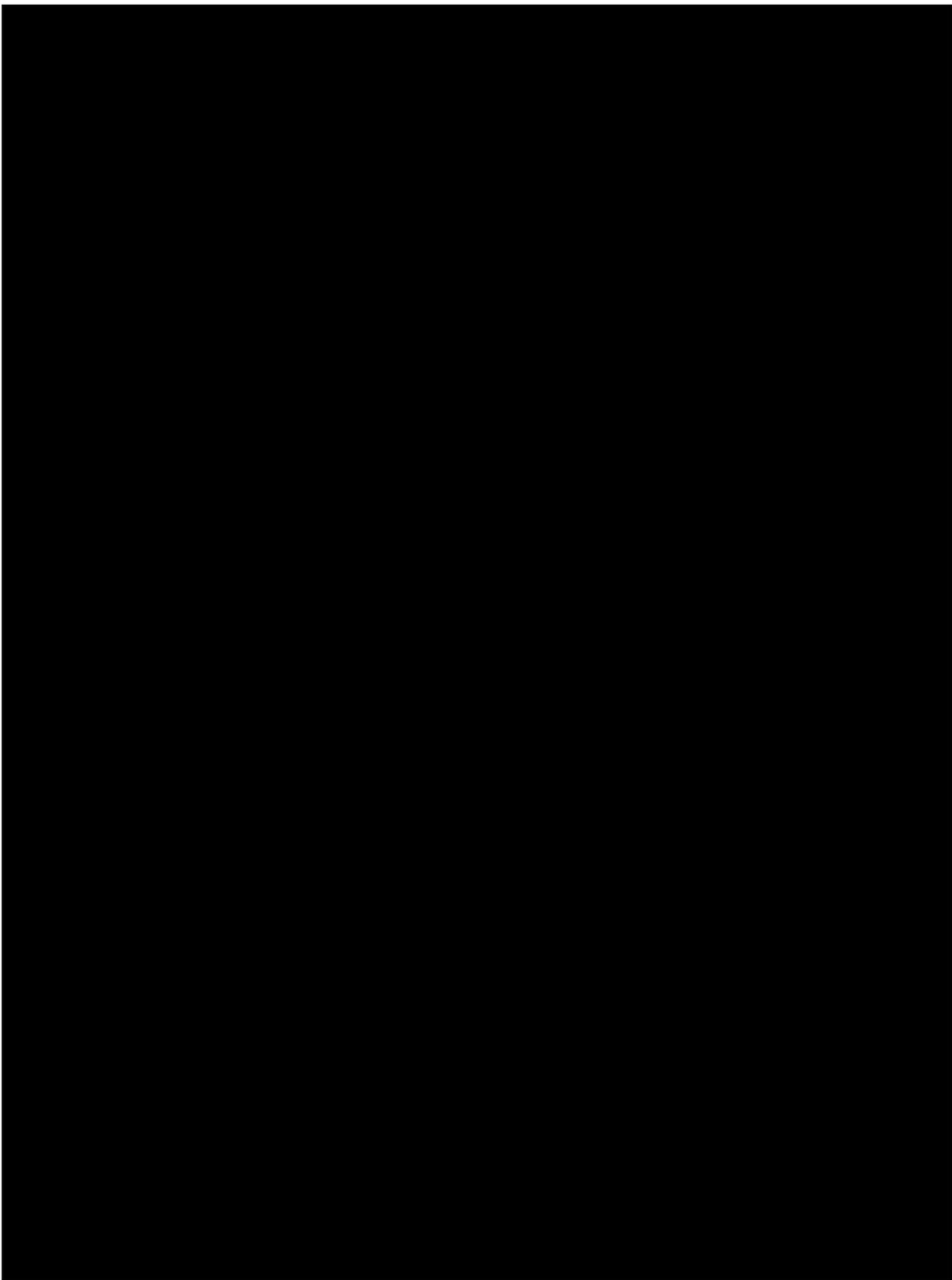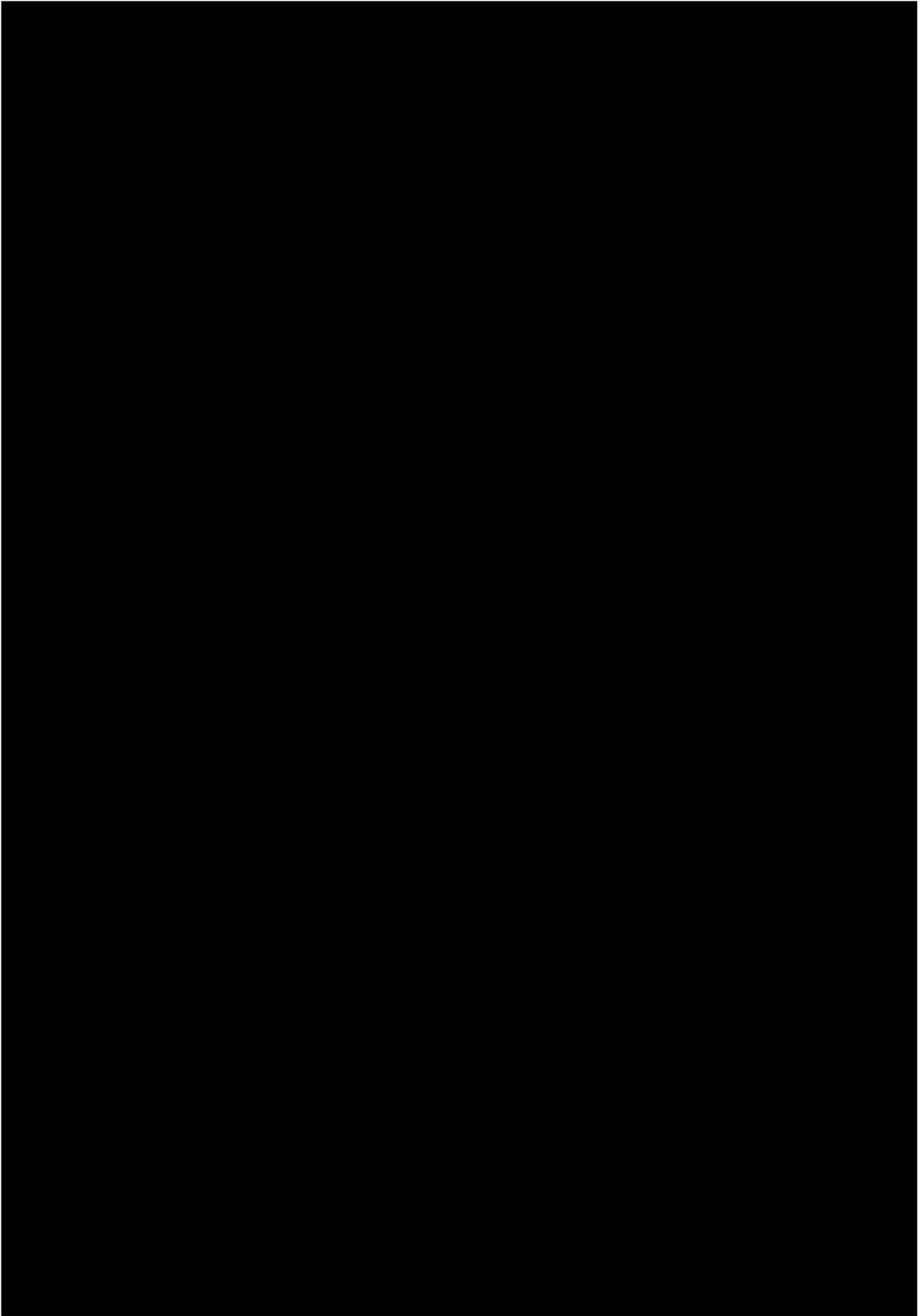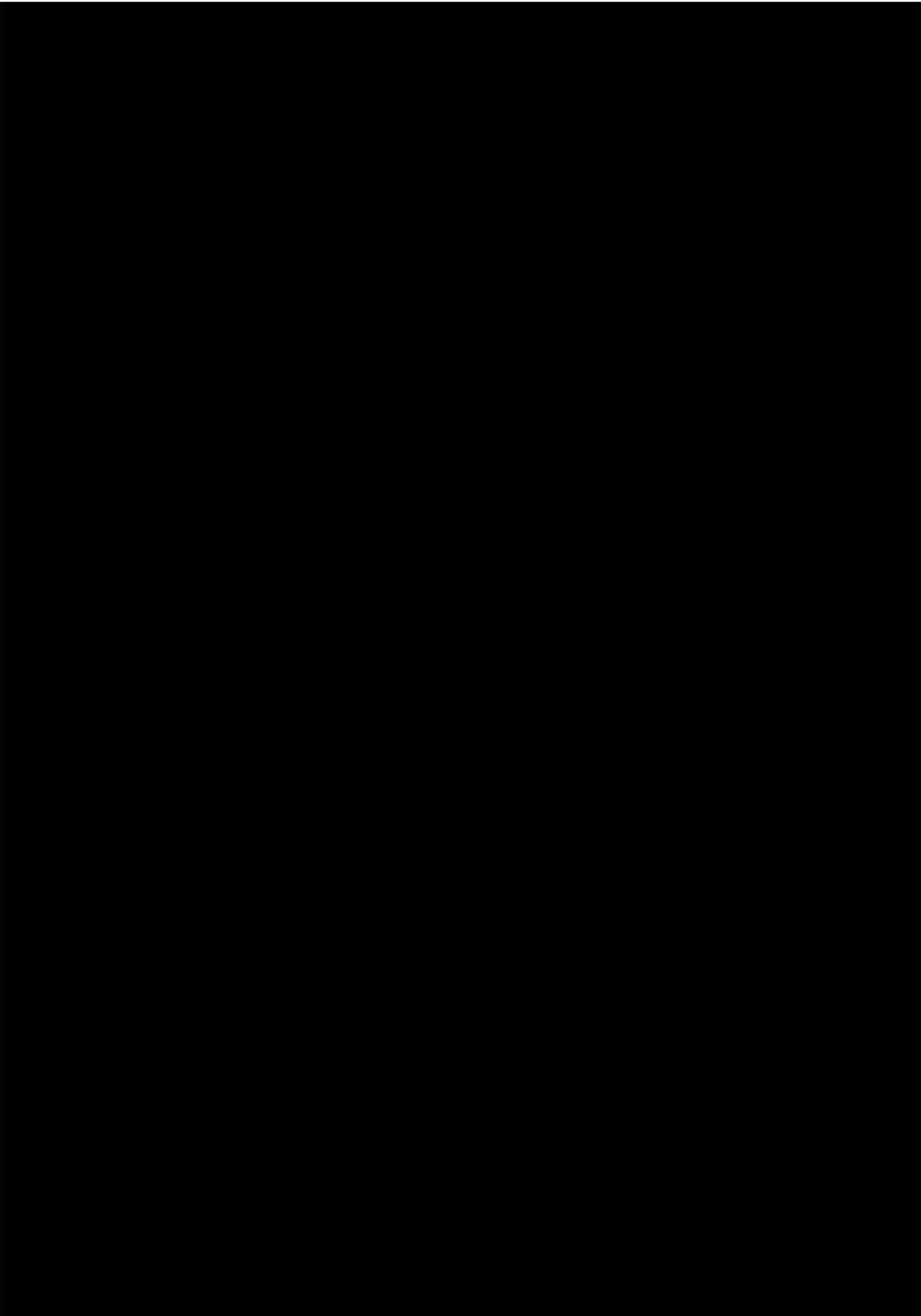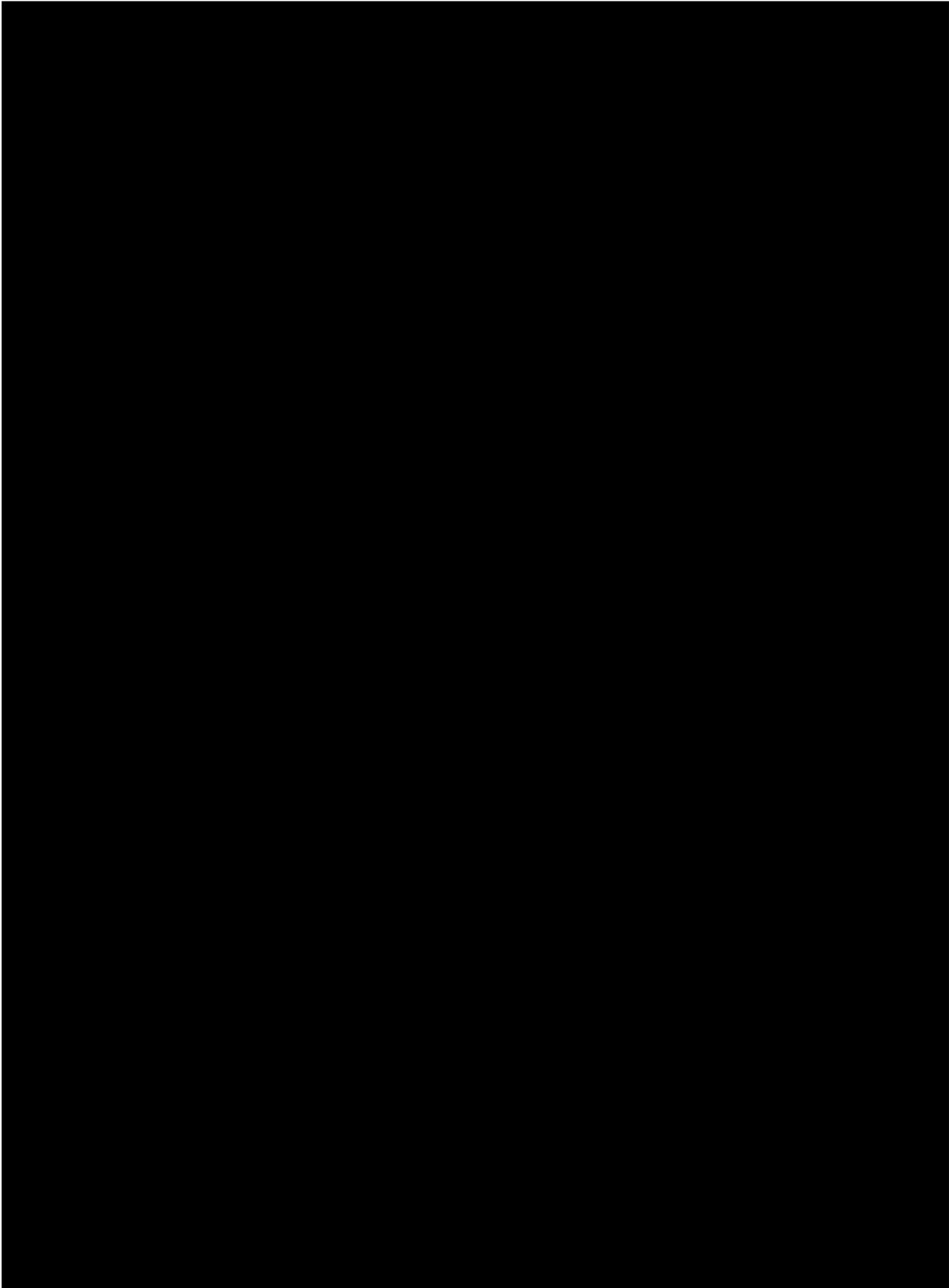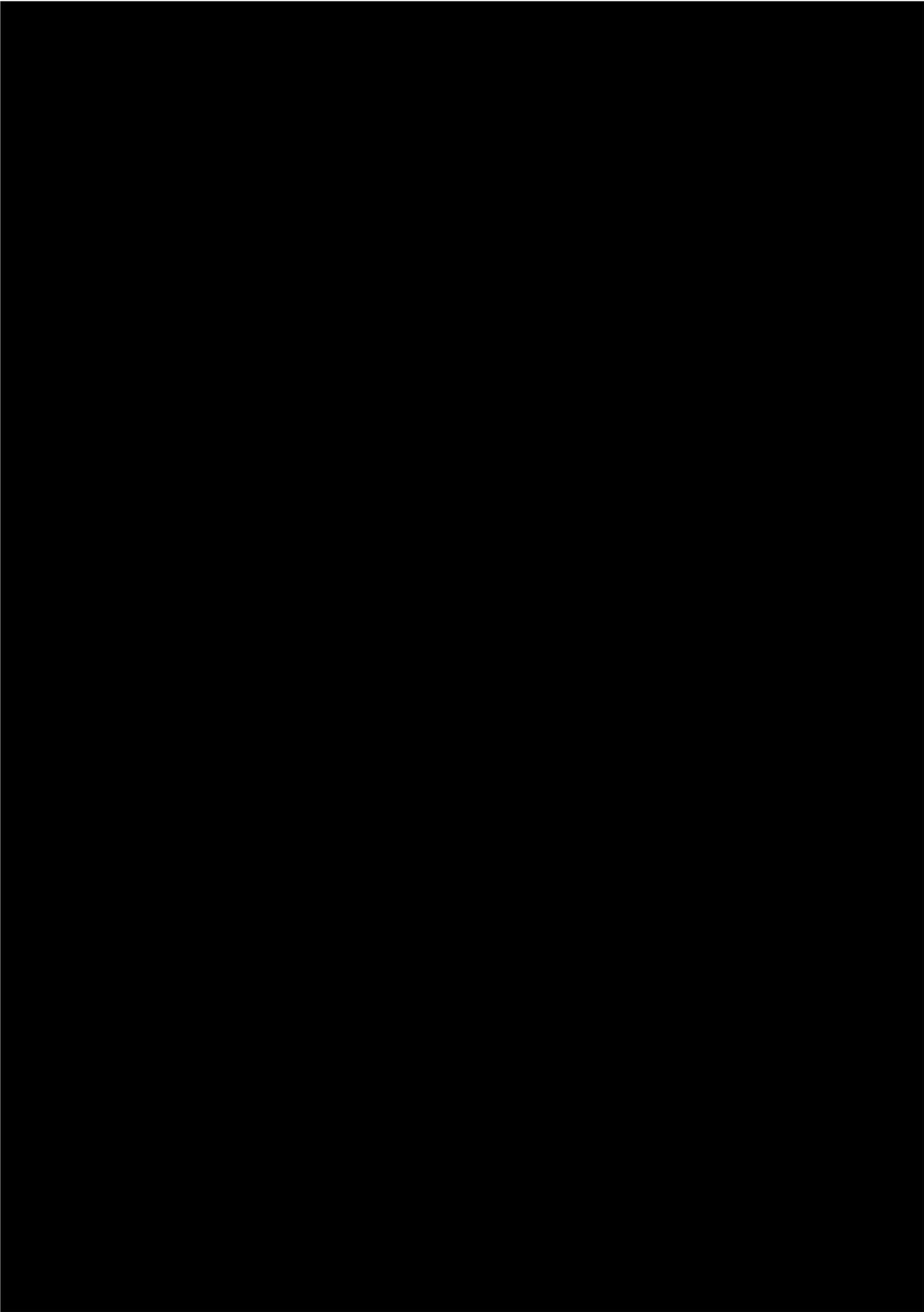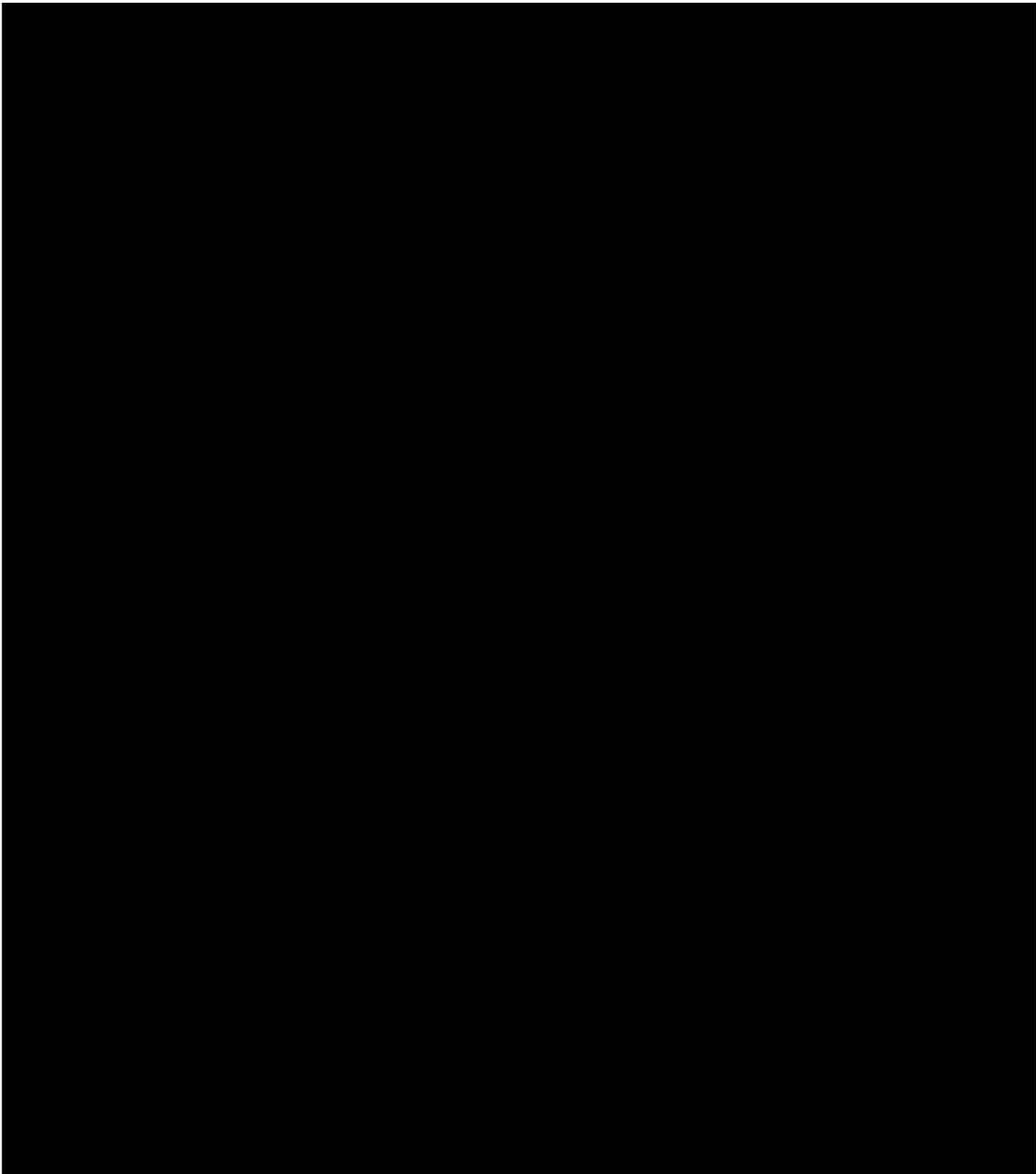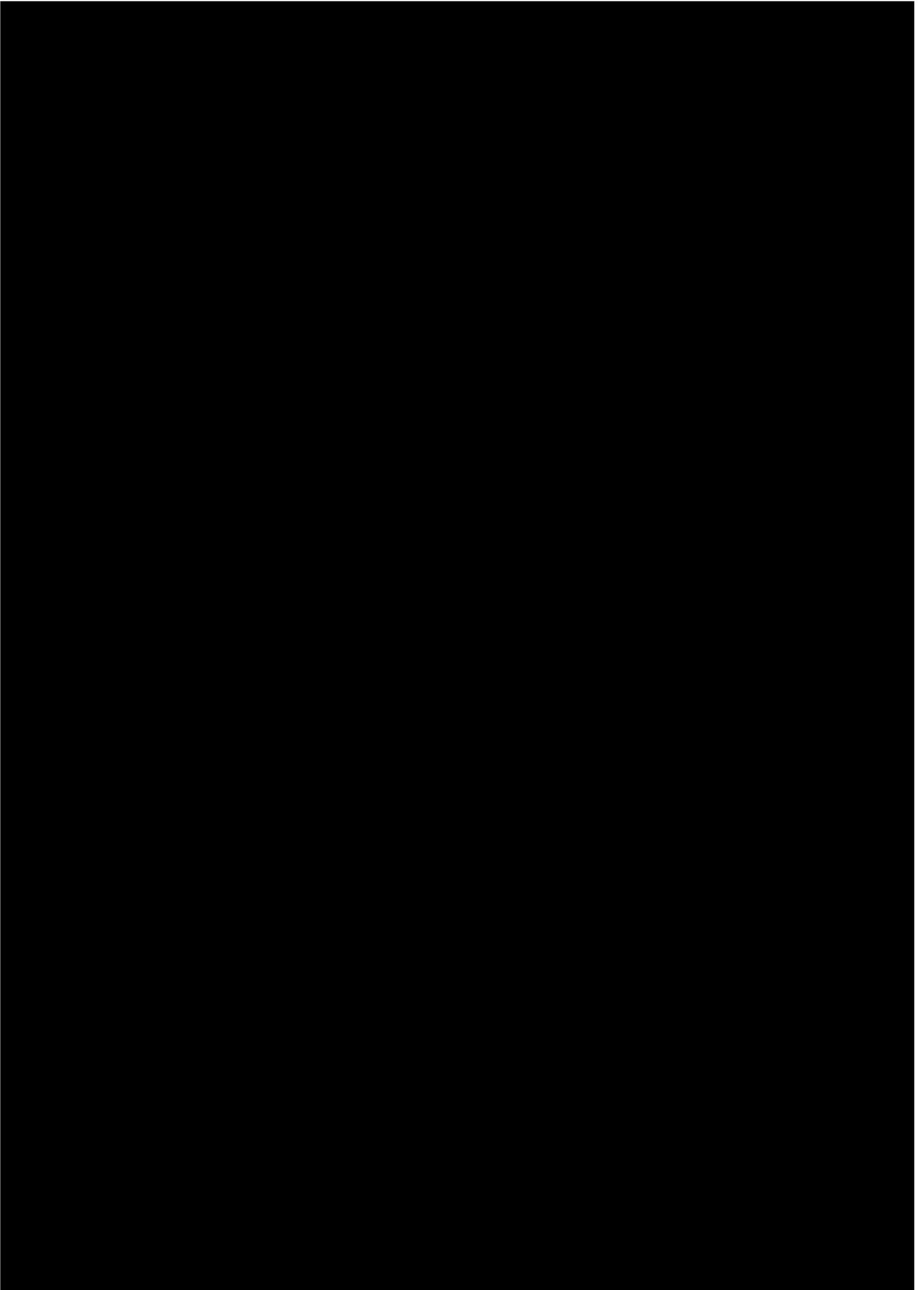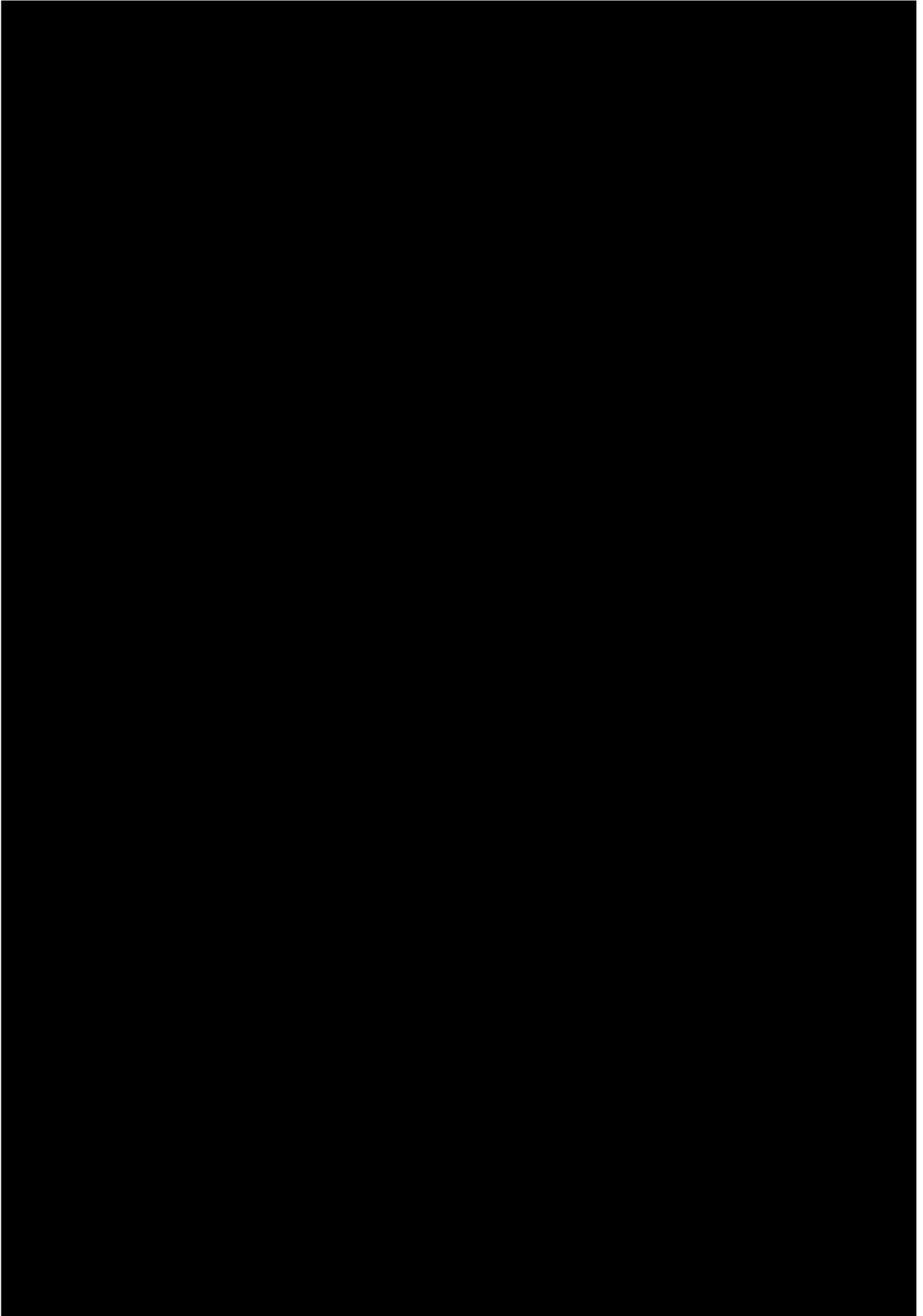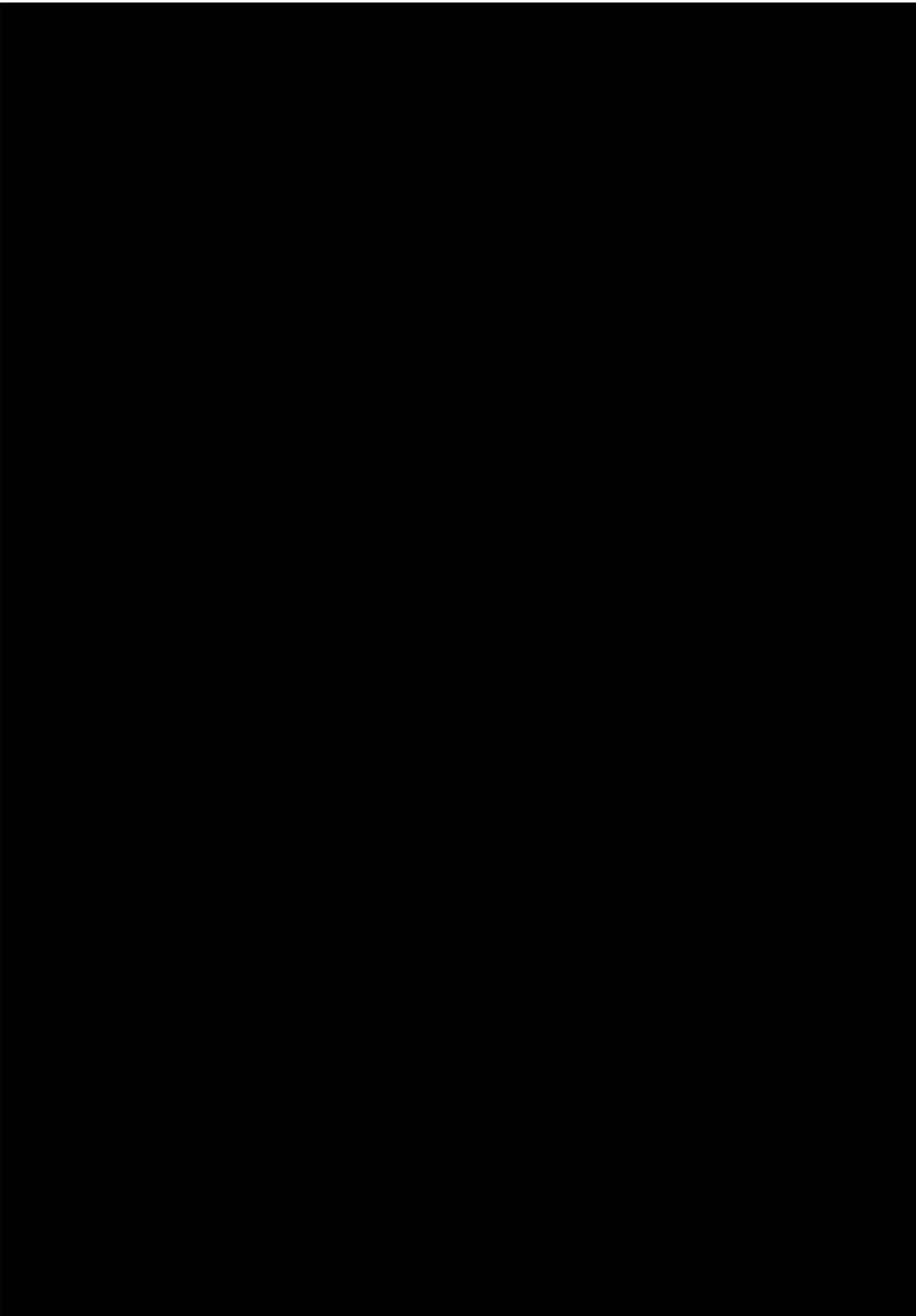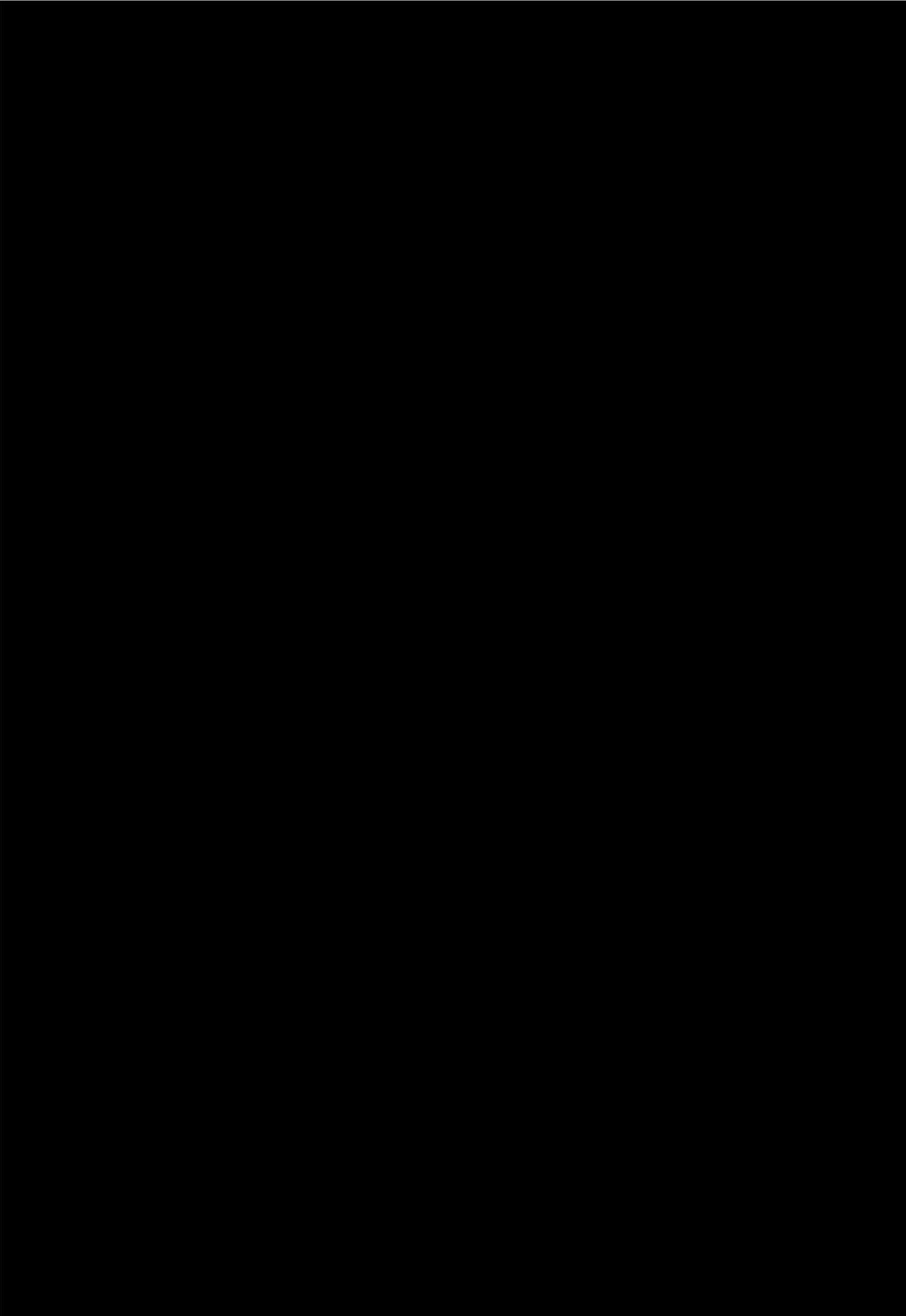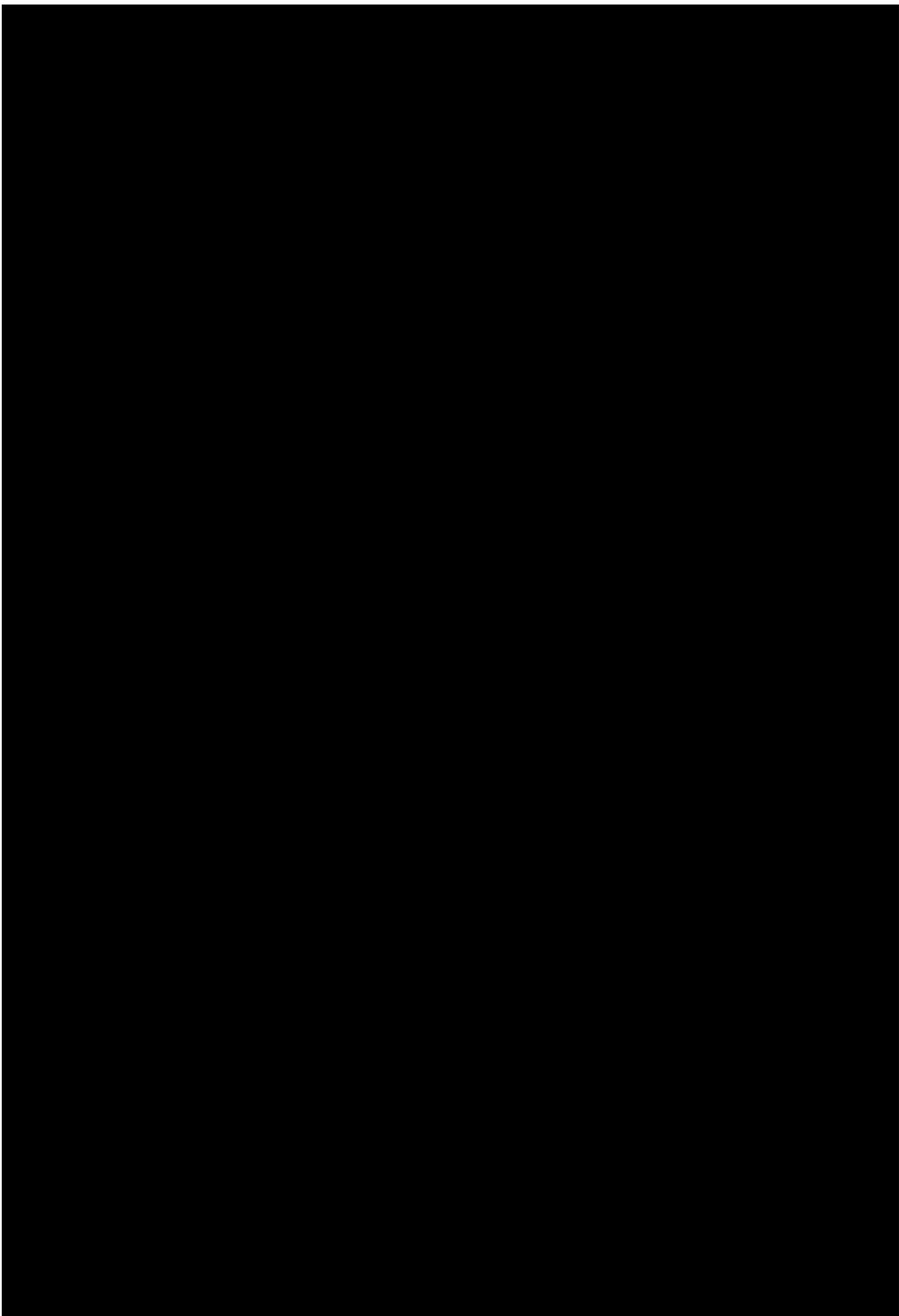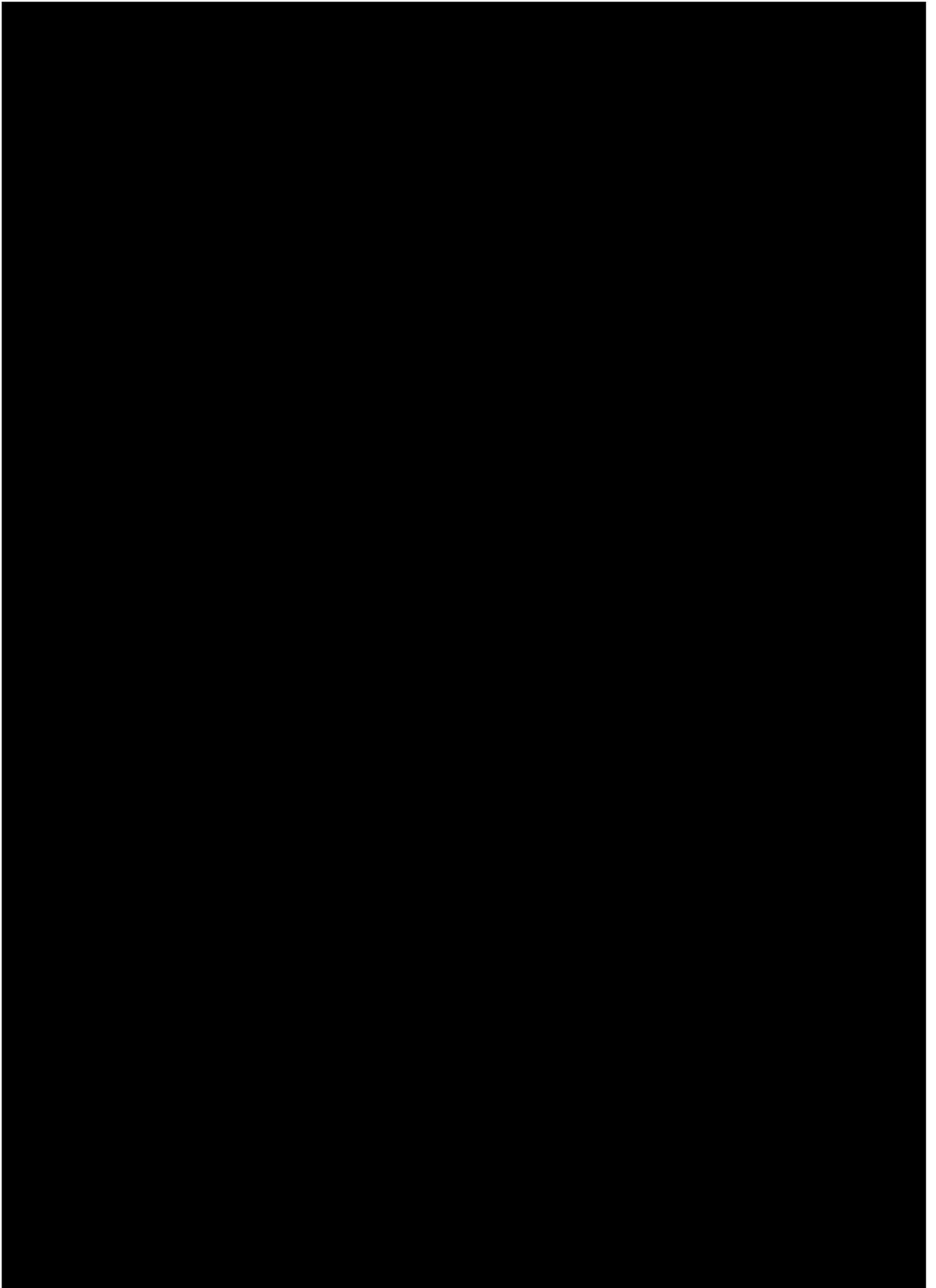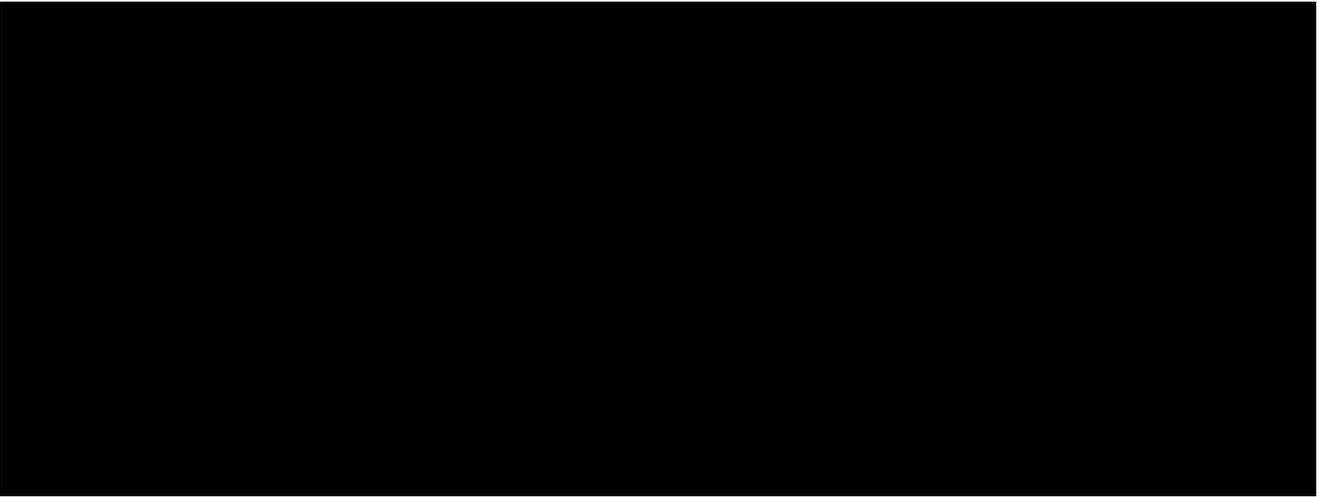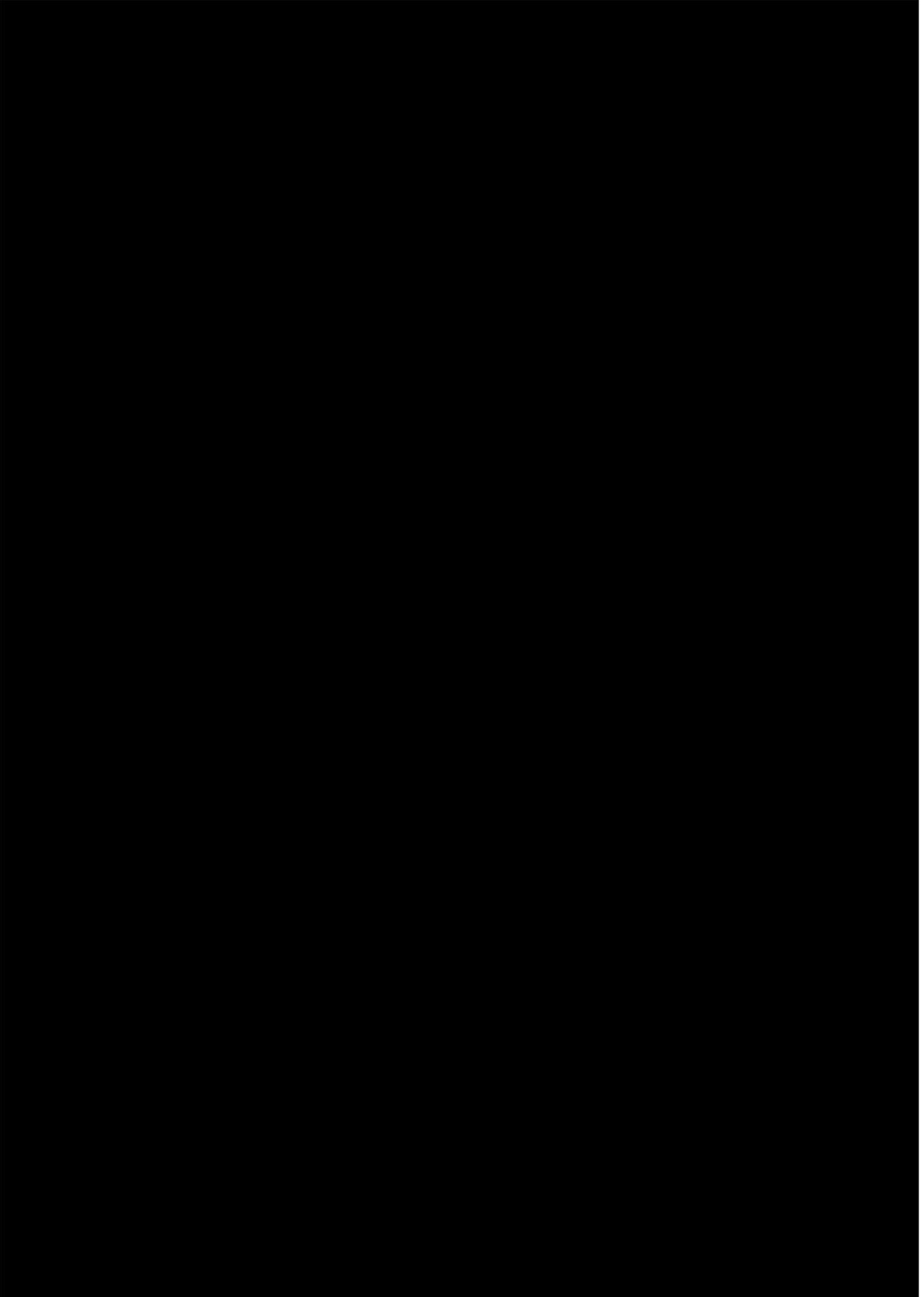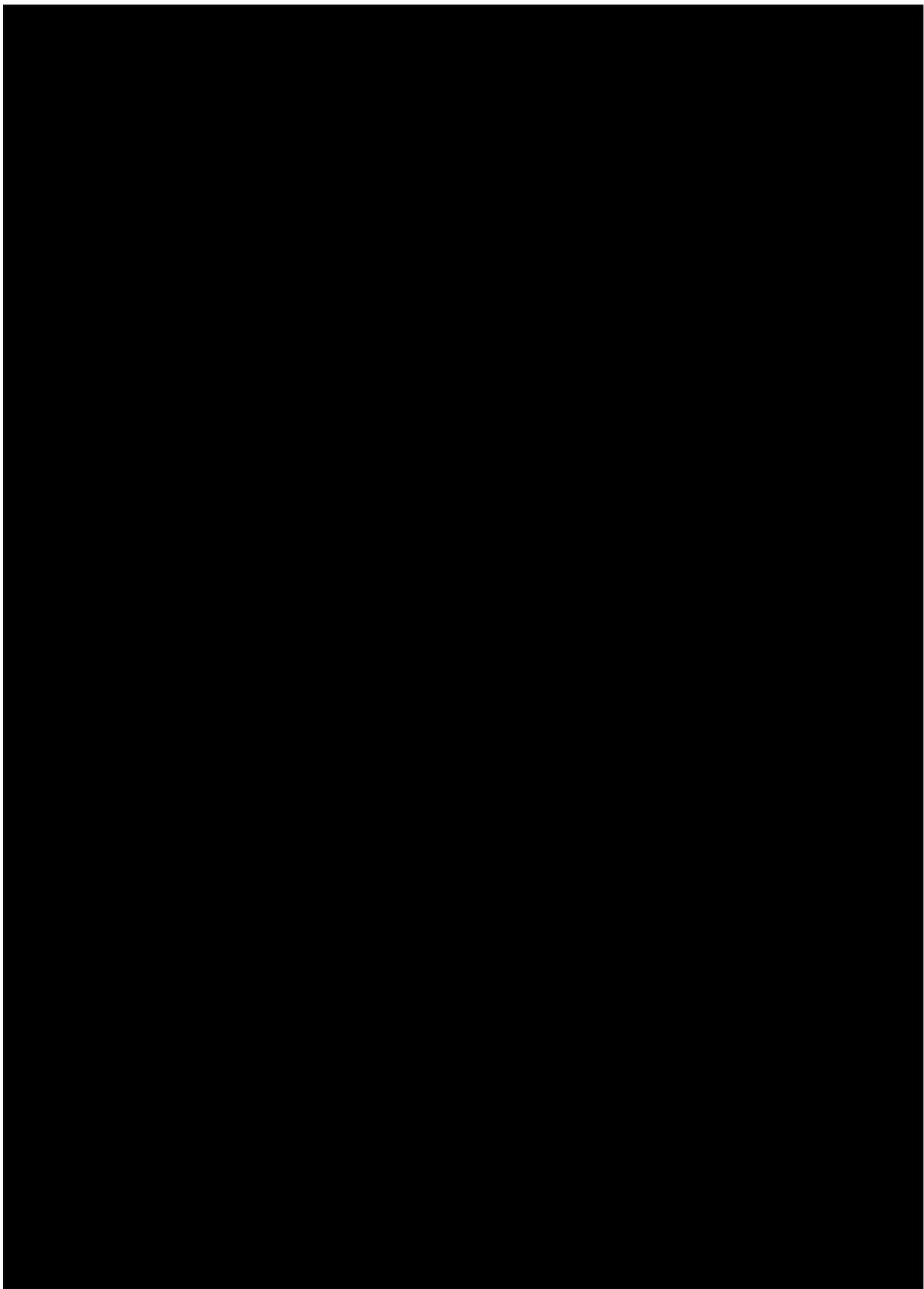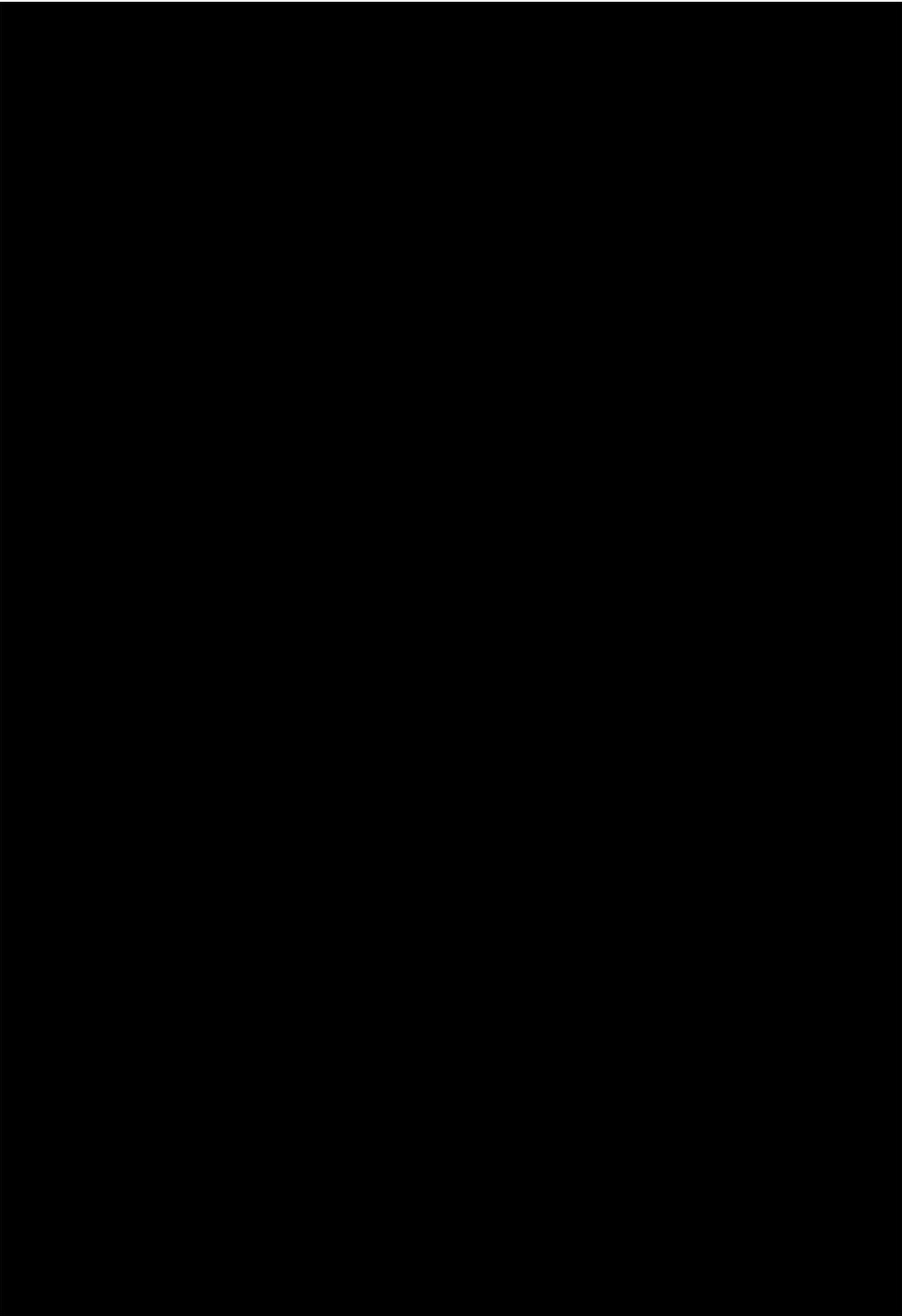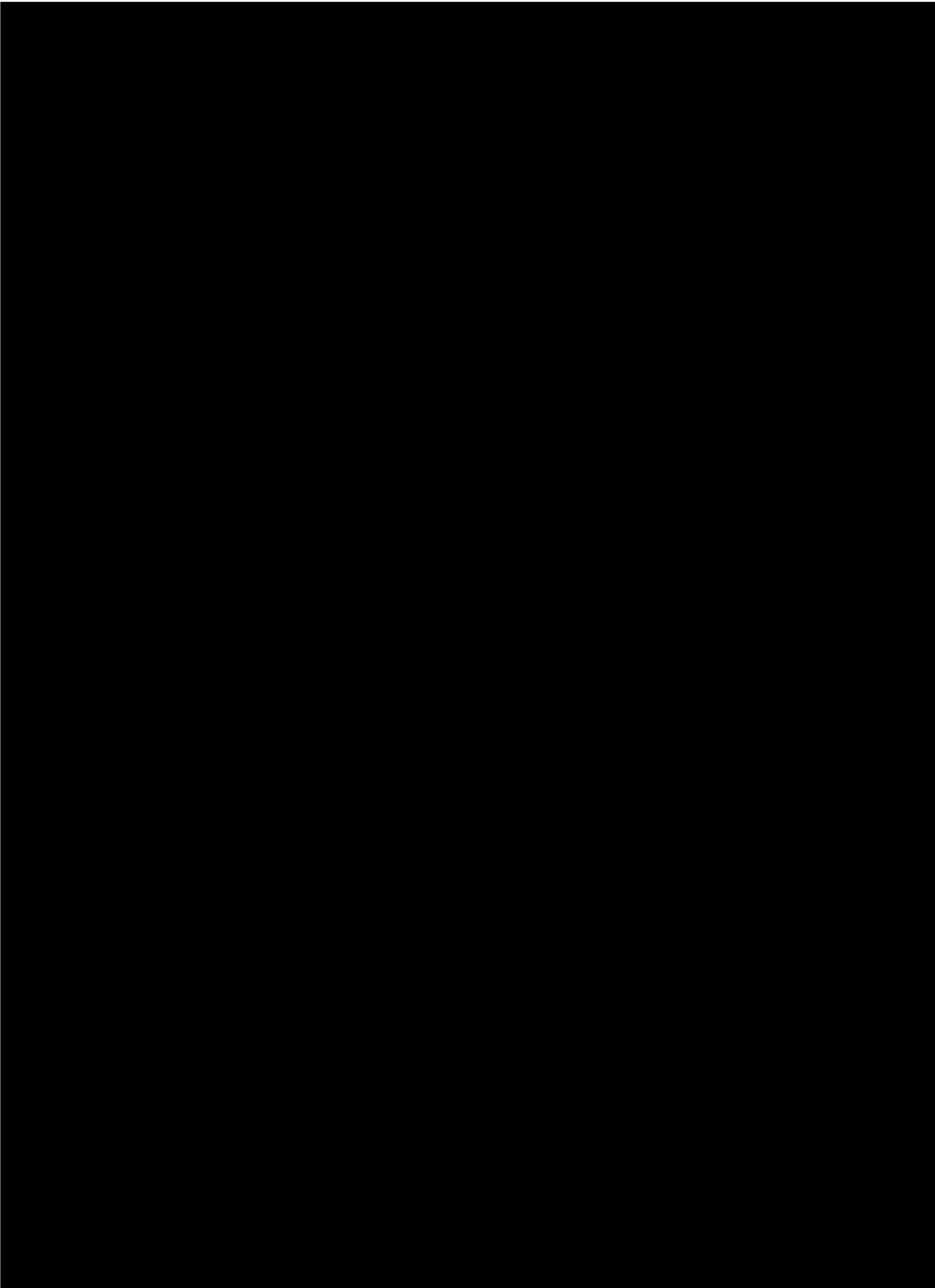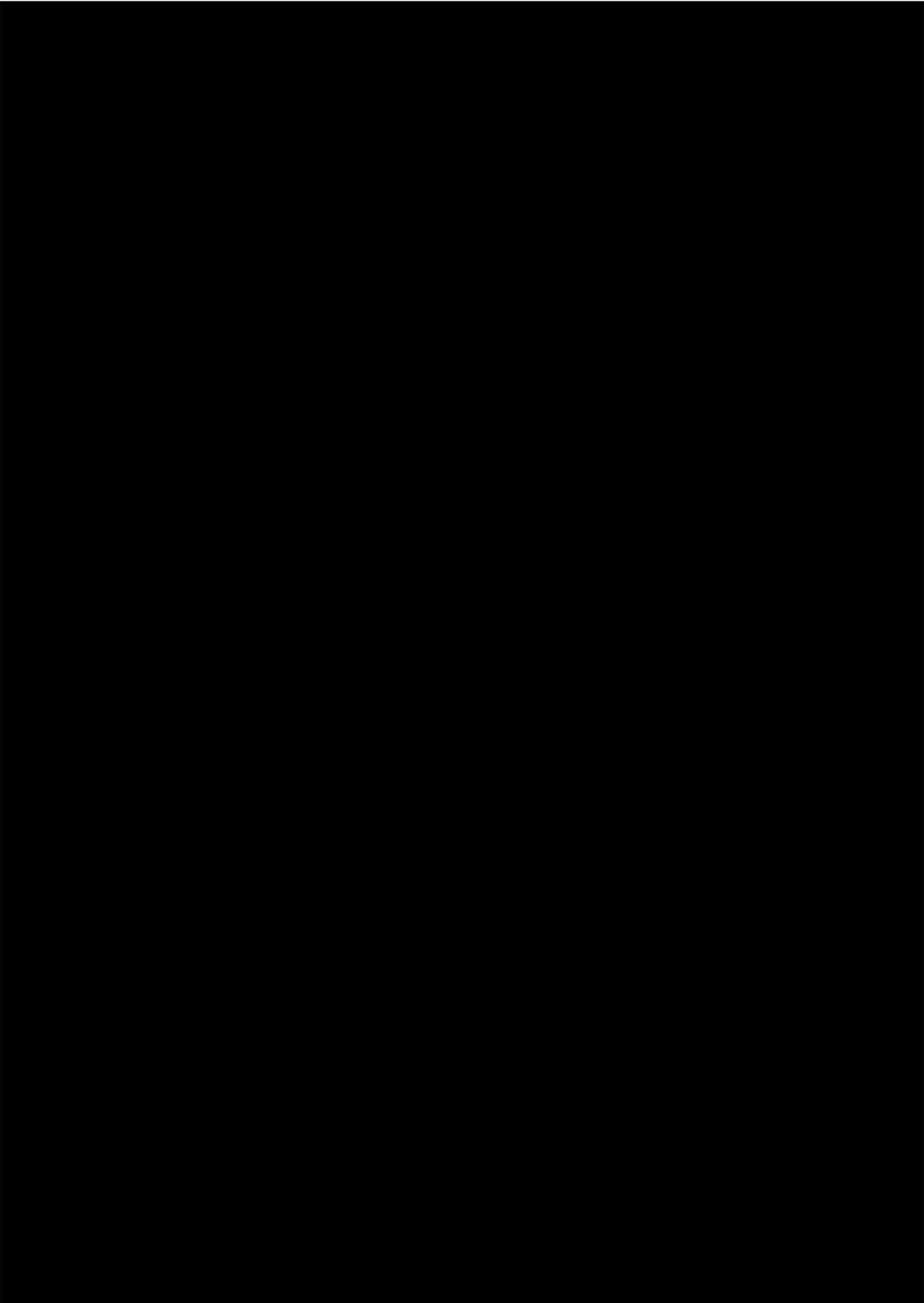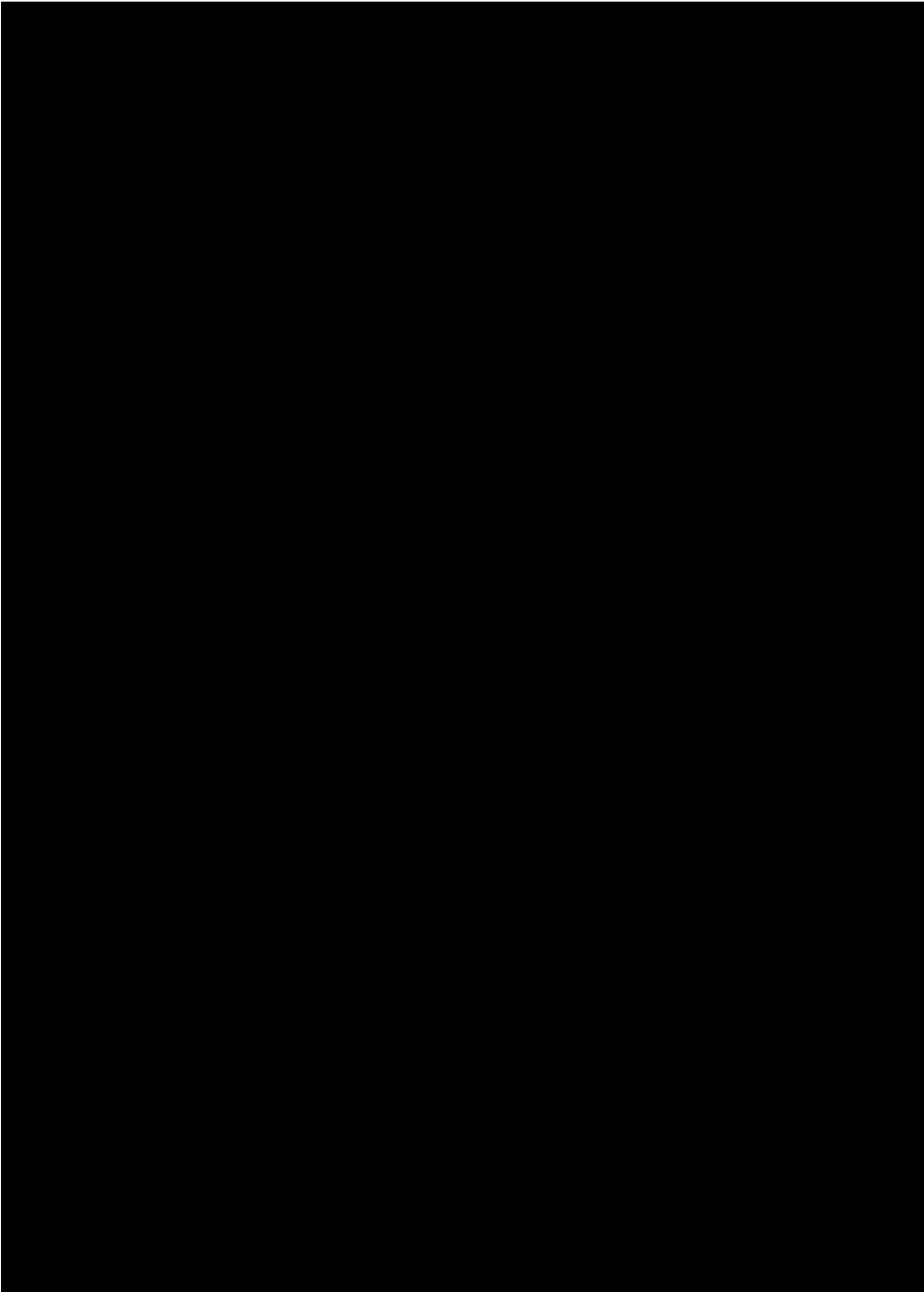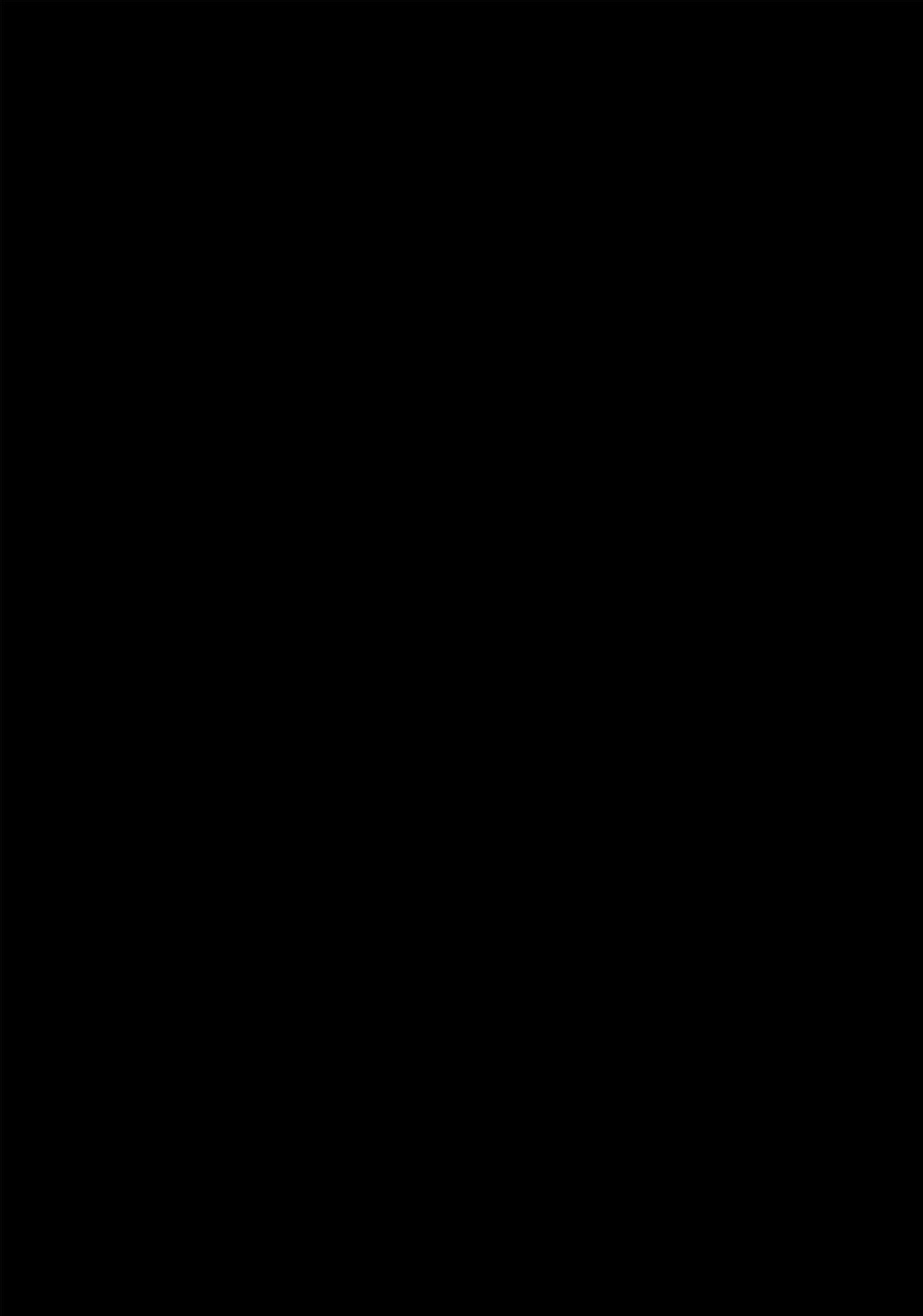
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6 PART THREE – CLIENT CASE STUDY

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