

BOISSERIE | GUILLAUME | JUSZEZAK

DANTES

2. Six Years in Hell





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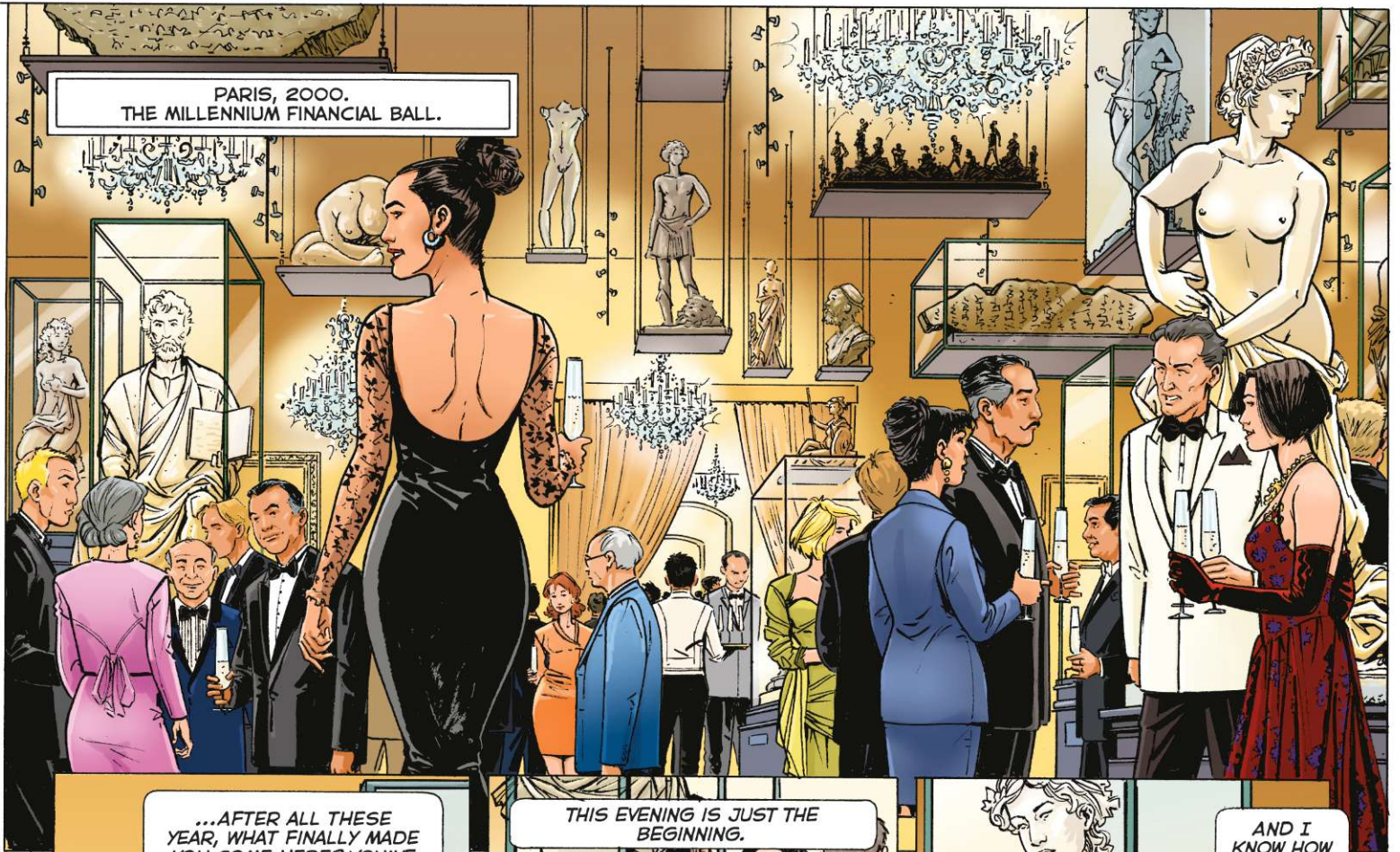
Juliette Nardin



PREVIOUSLY IN DANTE:

Paris, May 2000. An enigmatic businessman, Christopher Dantes, makes his first public appearance at the Millennium Financial Ball, coming face to face with the key players in a drama that took place 12 years earlier. Indeed, it all seemed to begin back in 1988. Alexandre, a young trader working for the BGCI, is promoted to the head of the operations department of the Matif in spite of his lack of experience and the reluctance of his boss, Sancier. But the director of the BGCI, Jean Saint-Hubert, is determined to have his young protégé rise through the ranks. What's behind this sudden promotion? Little by little, Alexandre begins to realize that a number of questionable transactions are putting him and the bank in jeopardy. Sancier warns him and informs him that he is merely a pawn in this financial game of chess in which considerable sums of money have been swallowed up. No sooner has this warning been made than Sancier is assassinated and Alexandre, accused of his murder, is arrested. His trial awaits...

PARIS, 2000.
THE MILLENNIUM FINANCIAL BALL.

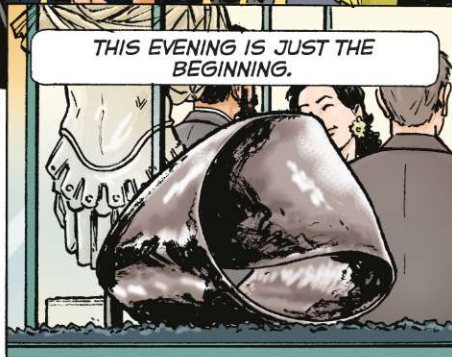


...AFTER ALL THESE YEAR, WHAT FINALLY MADE YOU COME HERE? YOU'VE BEEN WAITING FOR THIS MOMENT FOR SO LONG!



NOTHING IN PARTICULAR.

THIS EVENING IS JUST THE BEGINNING.



AND I KNOW HOW TO BE PATIENT. YOU SEE, SARAH, FOR ME, THEY'RE JUST LIKE THESE STATUES IN GLASS CAGES.



I'M GOING TO LOCK THEM IN CAGES THAT THEY CAN'T SEE YET.

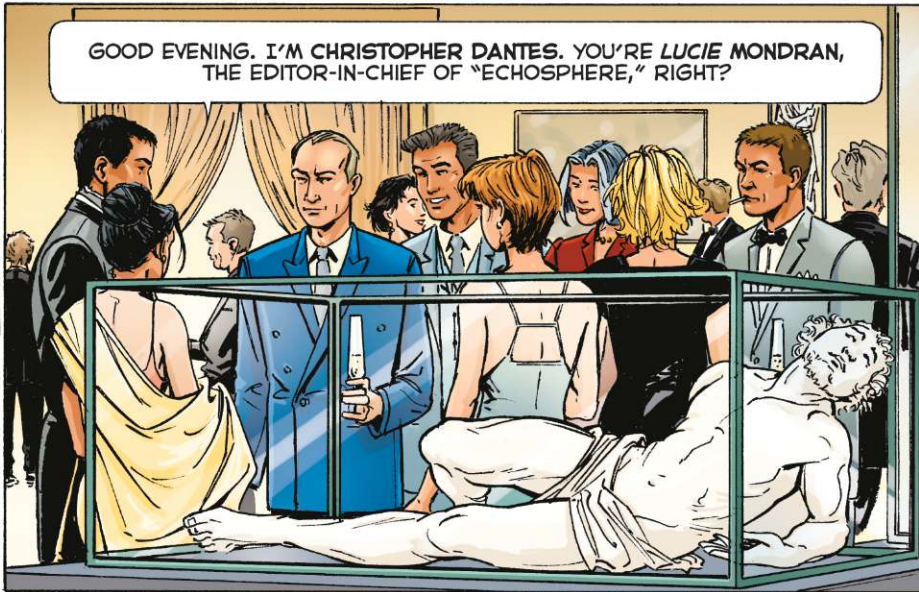


IT ALL BEGINS NOW!

AND THEY'LL ONLY DISCOVER THEM WHEN IT'S TOO LATE TO ESCAPE!



LET'S GO!



GOOD EVENING. I'M CHRISTOPHER DANTES. YOU'RE LUCIE MONDRAN, THE EDITOR-IN-CHIEF OF "ECHOSPHERE," RIGHT?



THAT'S RIGHT! IT'S A PLEASURE TO FINALLY MEET YOU. WE'VE BEEN WAITING SO LONG FOR THIS MOMENT.



THE PLEASURE'S ALL MINE.

ALLOW ME TO INTRODUCE MY PARTNER, SARAH LEVI.



A PLEASURE!



I THINK I'M NOT THE ONLY WHO WHO'S ITCHING TO MEET YOU.



I'D LIKE TO INTRODUCE JEAN SAINT-HUBERT, FROM THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE.



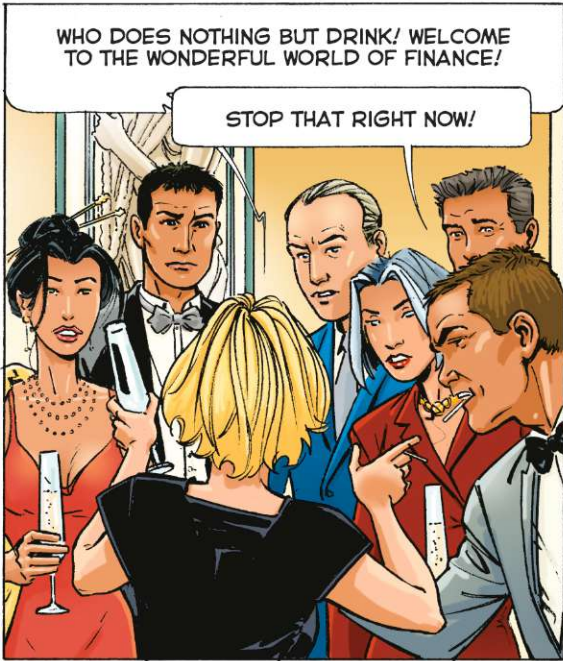
SYLVIE FONTAINE, THE DIRECTOR OF THE AUDITING AND CONSULTANCY FIRM FONTAINE PARTNERS.



MICHEL BONNEFOND, WHO YOU'VE UNDOUBTEDLY HEARD OF, THE CEO OF MILLENIA.



THIERRY MINEZ, THE DIRECTOR OF THE AGENCY COM IMAGIS... AND HIS WIFE MARION MINEZ--



WHO DOES NOTHING BUT DRINK! WELCOME TO THE WONDERFUL WORLD OF FINANCE!

STOP THAT RIGHT NOW!



FORGIVE HER... ANTIDEPRESSANTS AND ALCOHOL AREN'T A GOOD MIX.



EXCUSE US, THIS WASN'T A GOOD TIME... WE'LL LEAVE YOU.

GOODBYE!

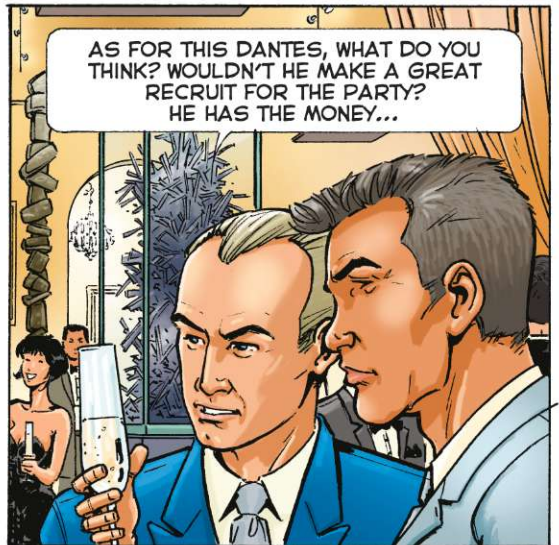


THAT MINEZ IS A REAL LIABILITY. WE'LL HAVE TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT HIM ONE DAY, NOT TO MENTION HIS WIFE...



THE PRESIDENT DOESN'T WANT US TO GET INVOLVED.

BUT I REALLY DON'T KNOW WHY.



AS FOR THIS DANTE, WHAT DO YOU THINK? WOULDN'T HE MAKE A GREAT RECRUIT FOR THE PARTY? HE HAS THE MONEY...



I DON'T KNOW. WE'LL HAVE TO SEE.

THE WAY HE LOOKED AT US PUT ME ON EDGE.



AND NOW?

NOW? THEY'RE HOOKED! I JUST NEED TO LET THEM COME TO ME.

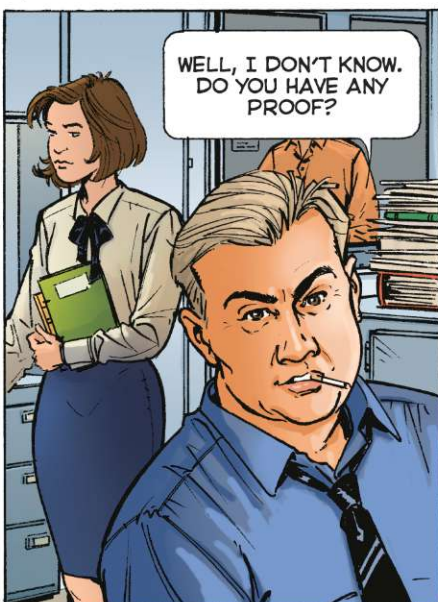
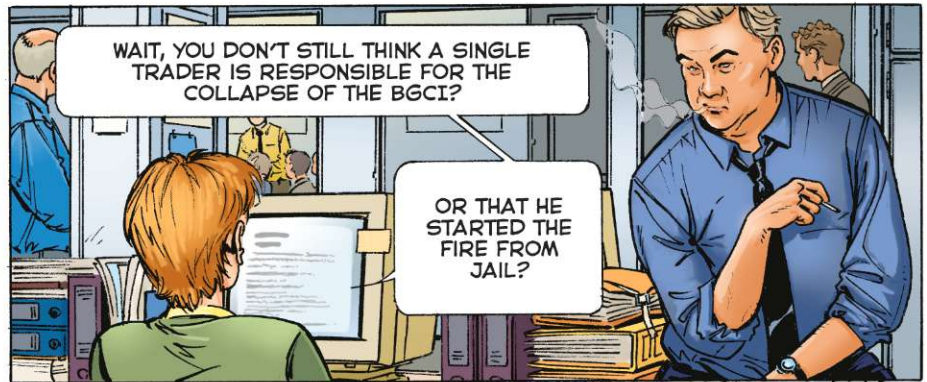
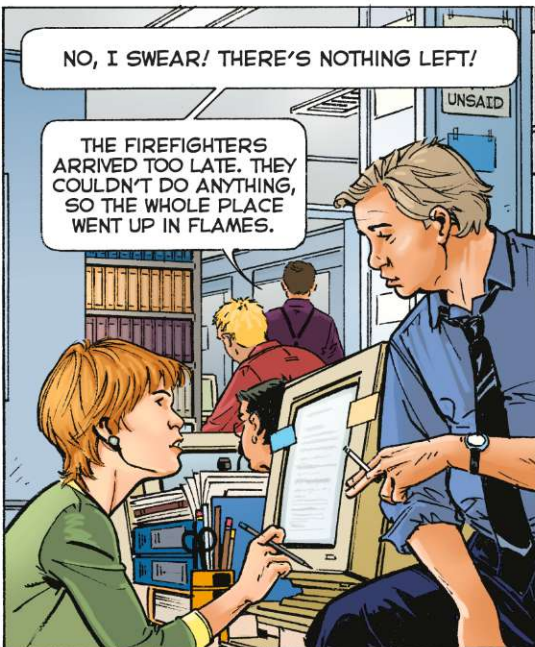
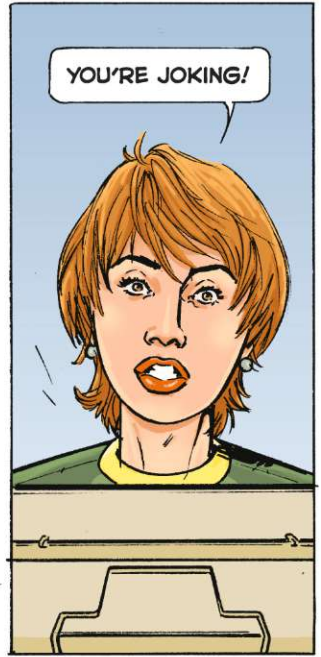
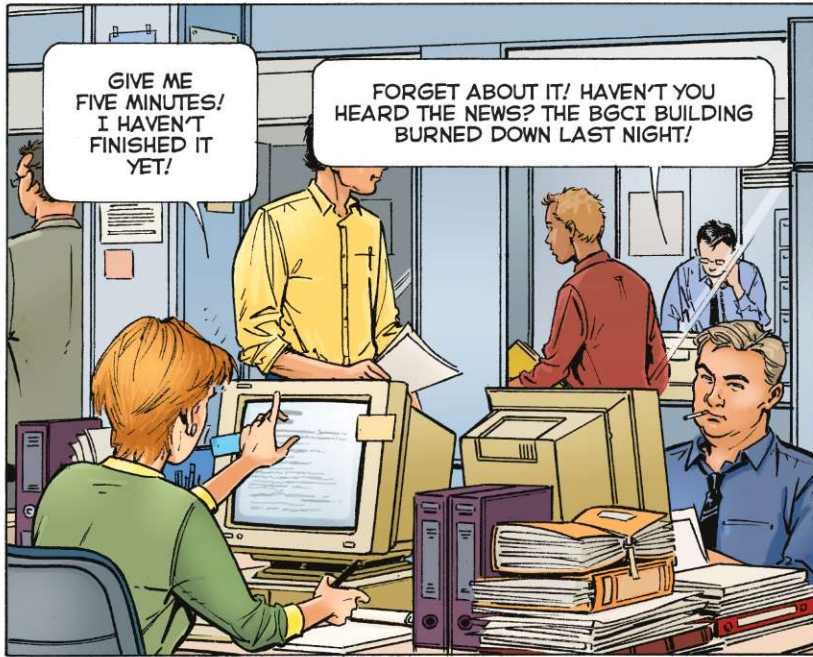


LUCIE MONDRAN, TOO?



NO. I'M GOING TO HAVE TO GO TO HER. SHE'S A BUSYBODY AND KNOWS WAY TOO MUCH ABOUT ALEXANDRE...

Paris, May 7, 1990. While the investigation into the BGCi affair is only just beginning, examining the case, far from clarifying things, merely raises additional questions. Indeed, how are we to believe that a single trader, the young Alexandre





ISN'T THAT MORE AN ABSENCE OF PROOF?

NO SMOKE WITHOUT FIRE...



AHA!
YOU SEE!

YOU'RE SUSPICIOUS TOO! BECAUSE THE BOSS IS ON THE VERGE OF DECLARING ME INSANE!

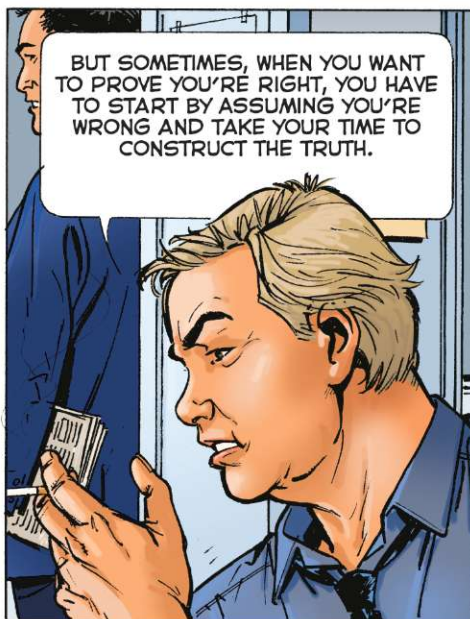
AH, MY DEAR, YOU'RE GOING TO HAVE TO LEARN TO COMPROMISE WITH AUTHORITY IF YOU WANT TO GET ANYWHERE.



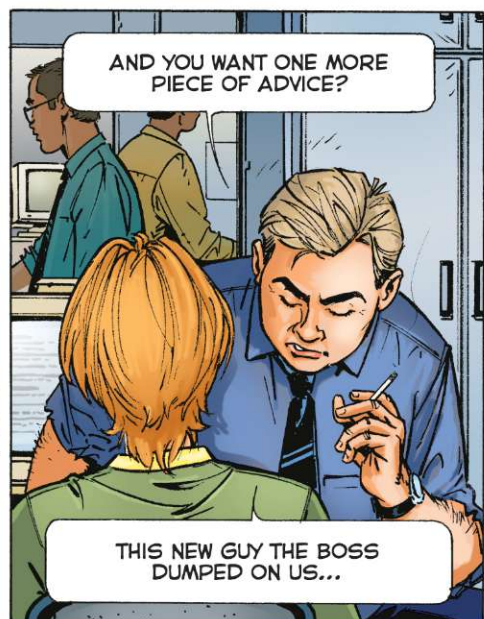
BUT I'M RIGHT!
AND HE KNOWS
I'M RIGHT!

OF
COURSE!

IN FACT, NOBODY'S
DOUBTING IT!



BUT SOMETIMES, WHEN YOU WANT TO PROVE YOU'RE RIGHT, YOU HAVE TO START BY ASSUMING YOU'RE WRONG AND TAKE YOUR TIME TO CONSTRUCT THE TRUTH.



AND YOU WANT ONE MORE
PIECE OF ADVICE?

THIS NEW GUY THE BOSS
DUMPED ON US...

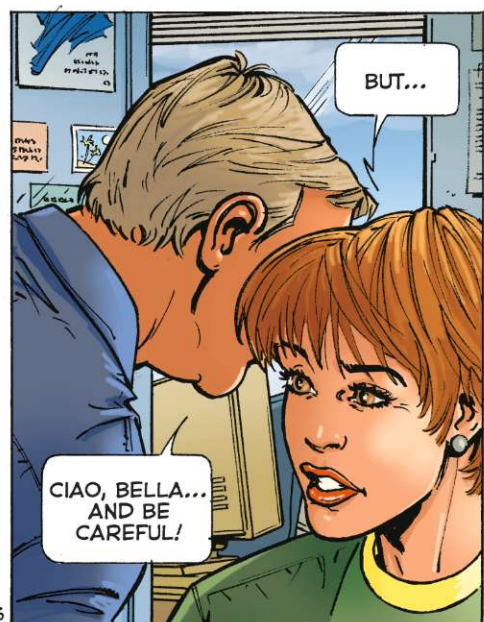


IF YOU WANT MY TWO CENTS,
IF HE'S REALLY A JOURNALIST
I'LL EAT MY HAT.

BUT HE SPENDS A LOT OF TIME
WATCHING YOU AND HANGING
AROUND YOU.

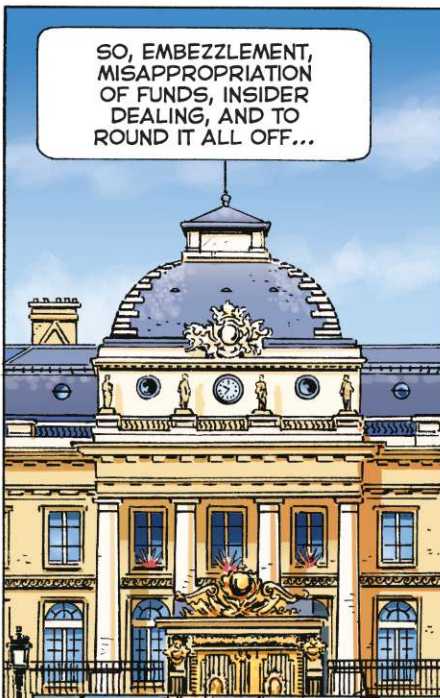


IF I WERE YOU, I'D WATCH
MY STEP AROUND HIM.

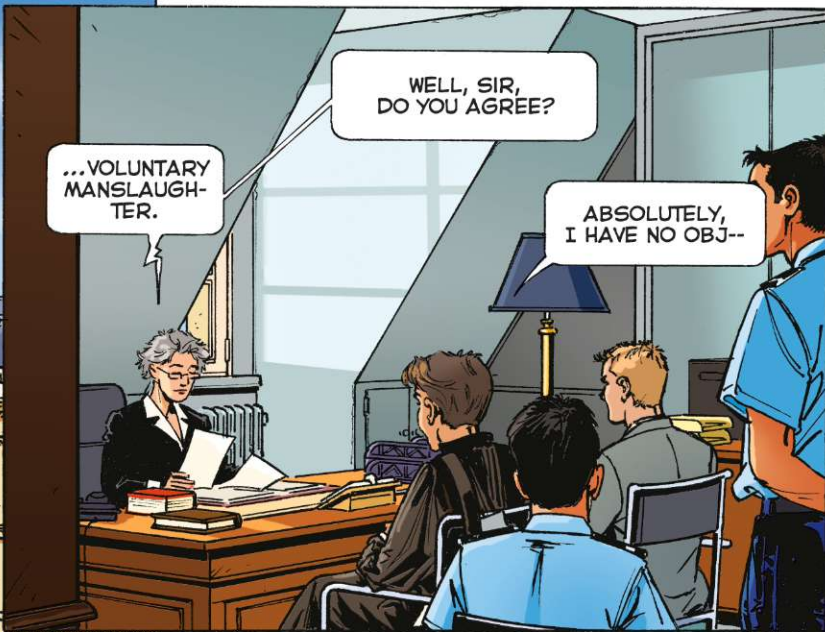


BUT...

CIAO, BELLA...
AND BE
CAREFUL!



SO, EMBEZZLEMENT, MISAPPROPRIATION OF FUNDS, INSIDER DEALING, AND TO ROUND IT ALL OFF...



...VOLUNTARY MANSLAUGHTER.

WELL, SIR, DO YOU AGREE?

ABSOLUTELY, I HAVE NO OBJ--



NO!



EXCUSE ME?



I DON'T AGREE.

EMBEZZLEMENT, FINE. INSIDER DEALING, FINE. MISAPPROPRIATION OF FUNDS, FINE, ALTHOUGH IT WAS NEVER FOR PERSONAL GAIN. BUT I'M NOT THE ONE WHO KILLED PATRICK SANCIER.

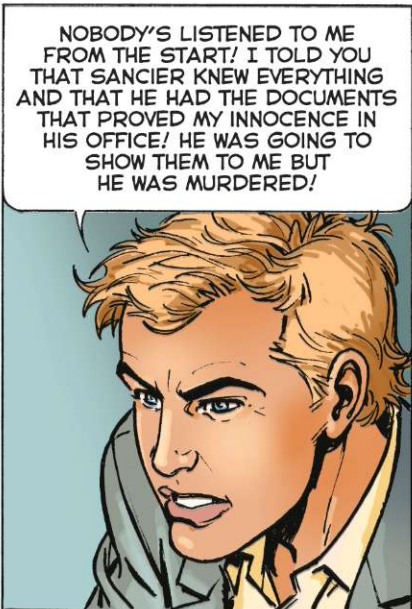


YES, I--

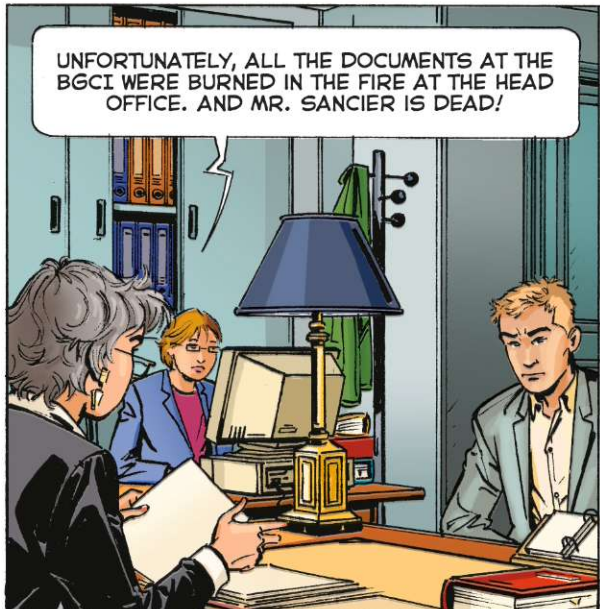
IT STILL CONCERNS ME, DOESN'T IT?



SIR, HAVE YOU INFORMED YOUR CLIENT THAT HE IS NOT SUPPOSED TO SPEAK DURING HIS PRELIMINARY HEARING. THIS ISN'T AN INTERROGATION.



NOBODY'S LISTENED TO ME FROM THE START! I TOLD YOU THAT SANCIER KNEW EVERYTHING AND THAT HE HAD THE DOCUMENTS THAT PROVED MY INNOCENCE IN HIS OFFICE! HE WAS GOING TO SHOW THEM TO ME BUT HE WAS MURDERED!



UNFORTUNATELY, ALL THE DOCUMENTS AT THE BGCJ WERE BURNED IN THE FIRE AT THE HEAD OFFICE. AND MR. SANCIER IS DEAD!



WHICH ALL SUGGESTS THAT YOU KILLED HIM YOURSELF!



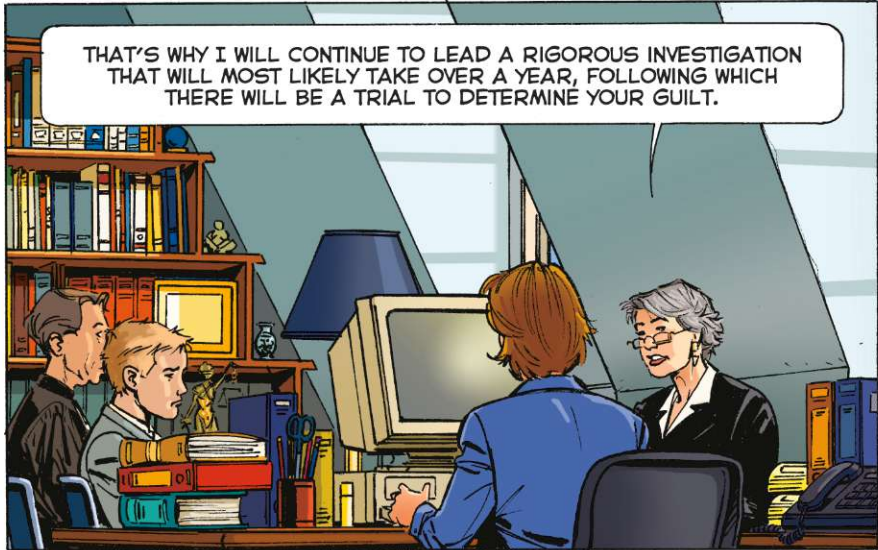
SUGGESTS?! EXACTLY! THERE'S NO PROOF! EVEN THOUGH MY ATTORNEY DOESN'T SEEM TO GIVE A SHIT, THERE'S NO MATERIAL PROOF!



CALM DOWN, OTHERWISE I WILL HAVE YOU RETURNED TO YOUR CELL IMMEDIATELY!



I'M WELL AWARE THAT THIS CASE HAS SOME GRAY AREAS, BOTH WITH REGARD TO THE MURDER AND THE FINANCES.



THAT'S WHY I WILL CONTINUE TO LEAD A RIGOROUS INVESTIGATION THAT WILL MOST LIKELY TAKE OVER A YEAR, FOLLOWING WHICH THERE WILL BE A TRIAL TO DETERMINE YOUR GUILT.



BUT SEEING AS YOU MENTIONED PROOF...



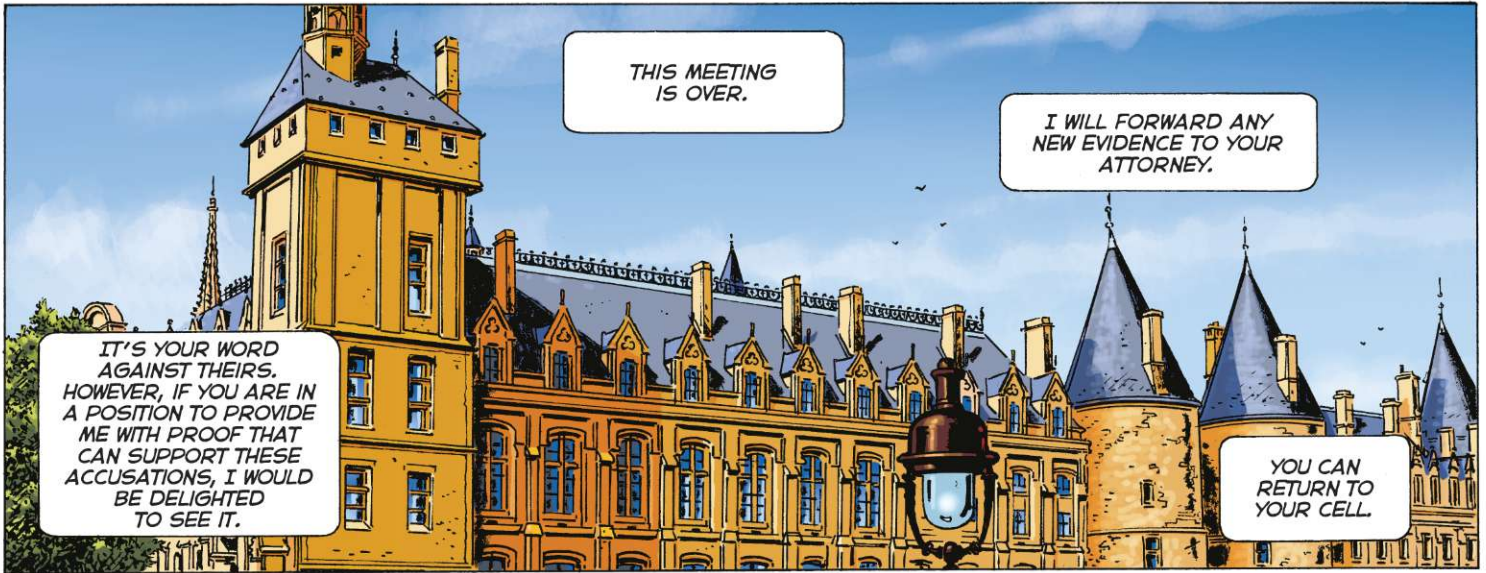
...I'VE JUST INFORMED YOUR ATTORNEY THAT MY INVESTIGATORS HAVE DISCOVERED AN OFFSHORE ACCOUNT IN YOUR NAME...



THOSE BASTARDS. THEY THOUGHT OF EVERYTHING...



...THAT HAS RECEIVED FUNDS REDIRECTED FROM THE BGC I ACCOUNTS.



THIS MEETING IS OVER.

I WILL FORWARD ANY NEW EVIDENCE TO YOUR ATTORNEY.

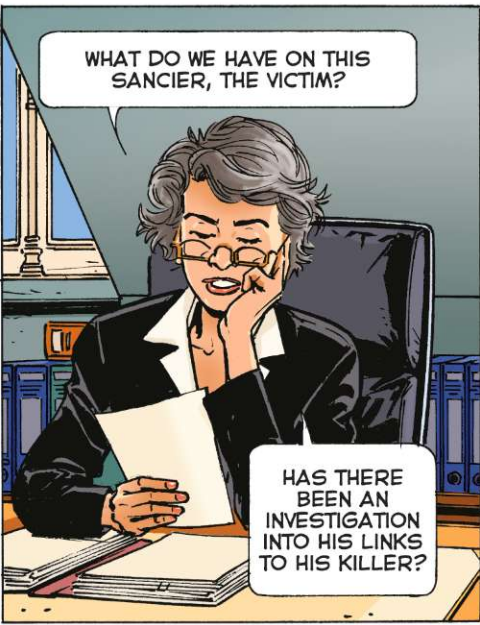
IT'S YOUR WORD AGAINST THEIRS. HOWEVER, IF YOU ARE IN A POSITION TO PROVIDE ME WITH PROOF THAT CAN SUPPORT THESE ACCUSATIONS, I WOULD BE DELIGHTED TO SEE IT.

YOU CAN RETURN TO YOUR CELL.



ANNIE?

YES, MA'AM?

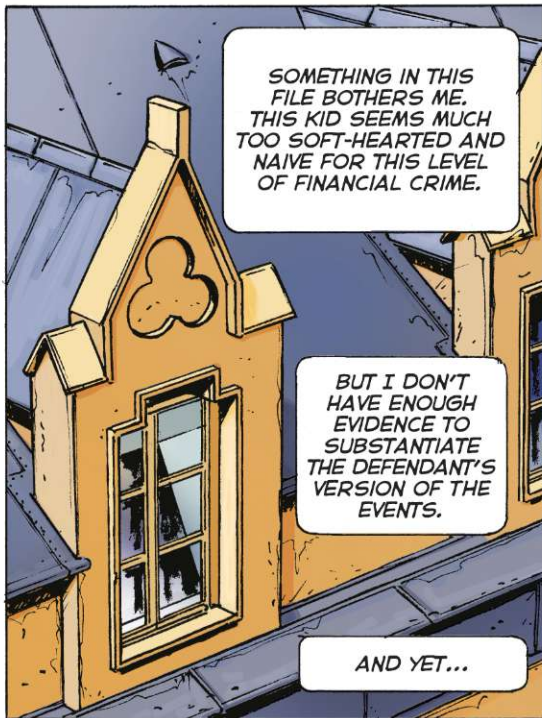


WHAT DO WE HAVE ON THIS SANCIER, THE VICTIM?

HAS THERE BEEN AN INVESTIGATION INTO HIS LINKS TO HIS KILLER?



NO, SOMEONE HAD BEEN TO HIS APARTMENT BEFORE THE POLICE SEARCHED IT AND NOTHING WAS FOUND, REMEMBER?



SOMETHING IN THIS FILE BOTHERS ME. THIS KID SEEMS MUCH TOO SOFT-HEARTED AND NAIVE FOR THIS LEVEL OF FINANCIAL CRIME.

BUT I DON'T HAVE ENOUGH EVIDENCE TO SUBSTANTIATE THE DEFENDANT'S VERSION OF THE EVENTS.

AND YET...



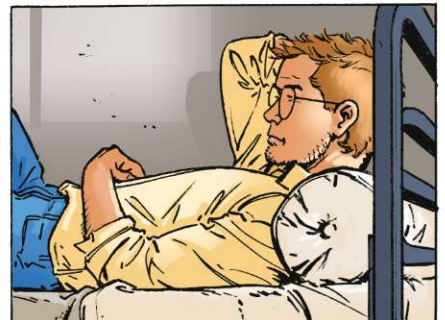
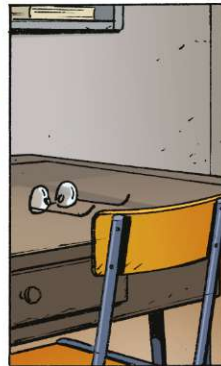
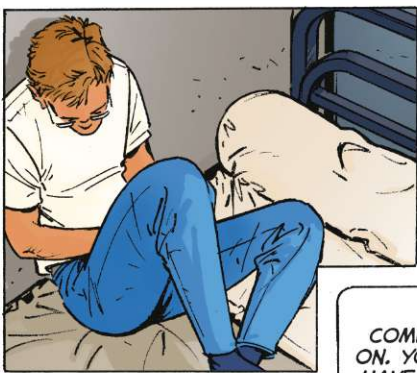
IF YOU DON'T NEED ME FOR ANYTHING ELSE, I'LL BE GOING.

THANK YOU, ANNIE.



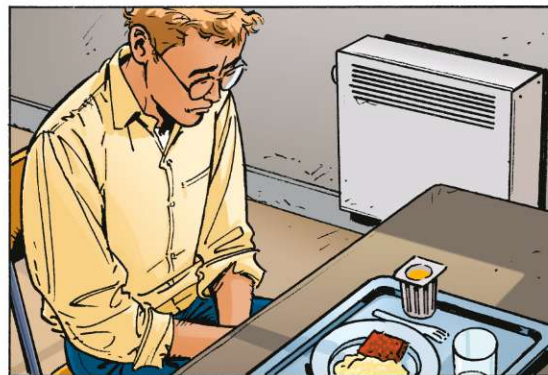
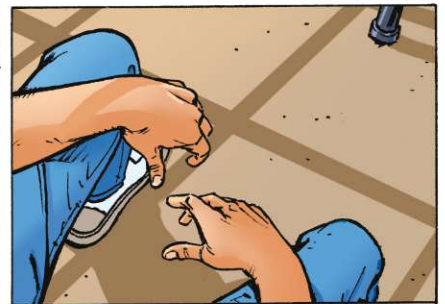
I'M GOING TO REVIEW ALL THE EVIDENCE BEFORE REQUESTING FURTHER INVESTIGATION.

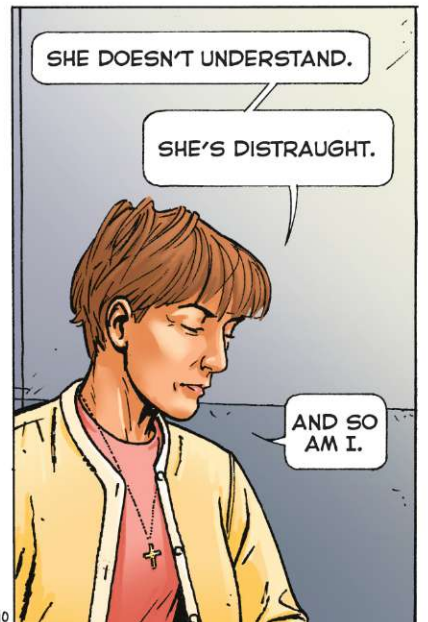
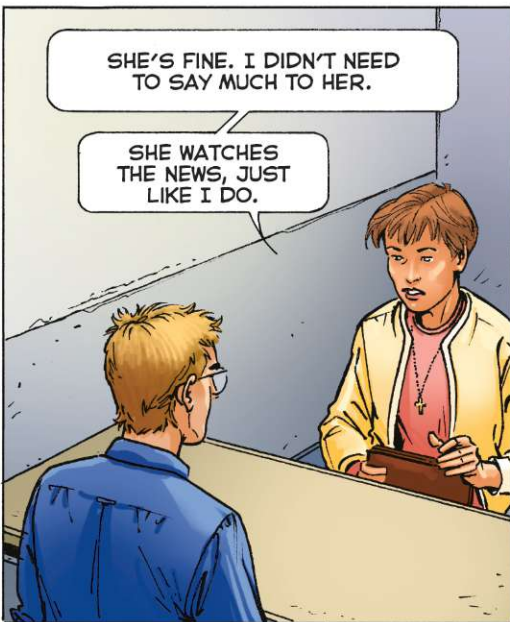
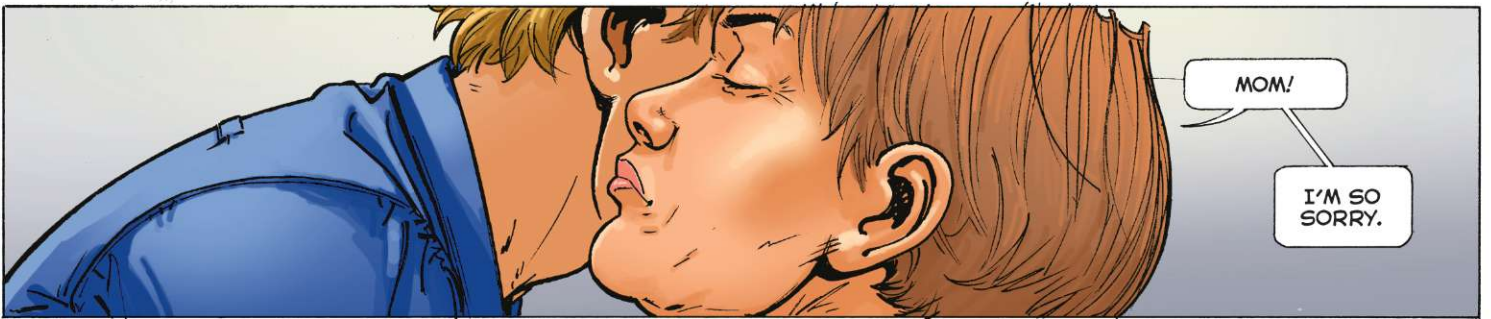
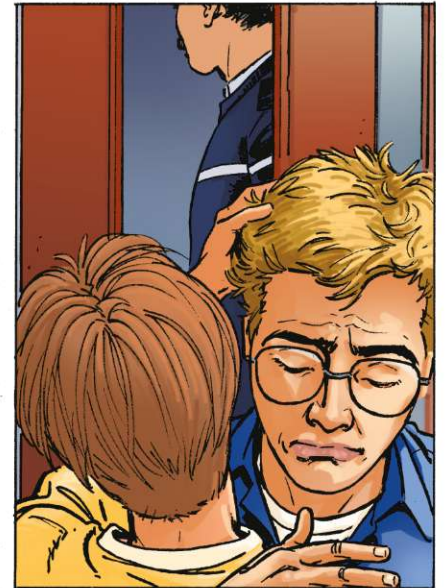
BUT I'M AFRAID I'M WASTING MY TIME...



COME ON. YOU HAVE A VISITOR.

TAKAK





LISTEN, MOM, I KNOW THAT THIS WHOLE BUSINESS LOOKS SORDID FROM THE OUTSIDE...

...BUT YOU KNOW ME. YOU KNOW THAT I COULD NEVER KILL ANYONE.

IT'S CRAZY!

THAT'S JUST IT. I'M STARTING TO WONDER WHETHER I REALLY KNOW YOU AT ALL.

THE BANK GOING BUST, THAT WAS REAL.

YES, BUT IT'S NOT WHAT YOU THINK.

I CAN EXPLAIN WHY I HAD TO DO ALL THAT.

DON'T BOTHER, MARION'S ALREADY TOLD ME EVERYTHING.

BUT WHY? YOU HAD EVERYTHING IN FRONT OF YOU. IT WAS JUST A MATTER OF TIME!

THAT'S NOT HOW I RAISED YOU!

SHE'S LIKE US. VERY DISAPPOINTED. SHE WON'T COME TO SEE YOU. IT'S BEYOND HER.

YOU DESTROYED HER FAIRY TALE.

FORTUNATELY SHE'S HERE TO HELP US, BUT YOU KNOW, WITHOUT YOUR MONEY, I WON'T BE ABLE TO KEEP THE APARTMENT FOREVER.

MARION? YOU'VE SEEN HER? HOW IS SHE?

HOW DO YOU EXPECT HER TO BE?

NO, MOM.

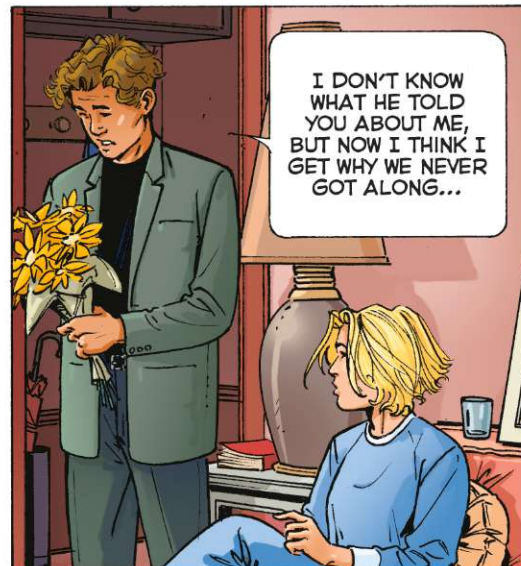
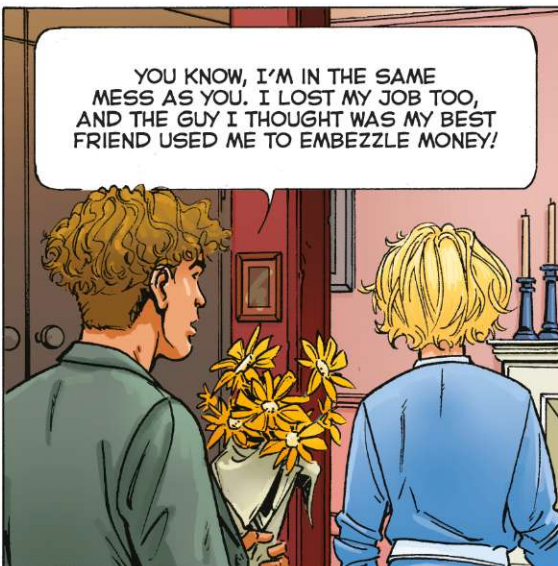
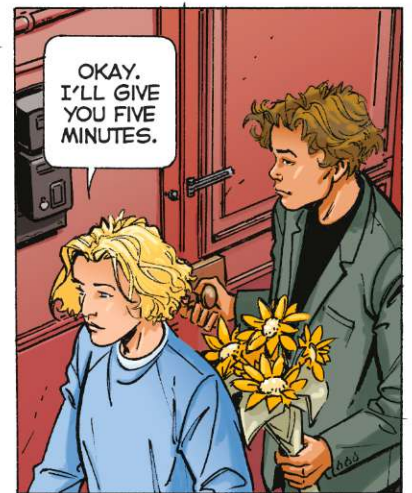
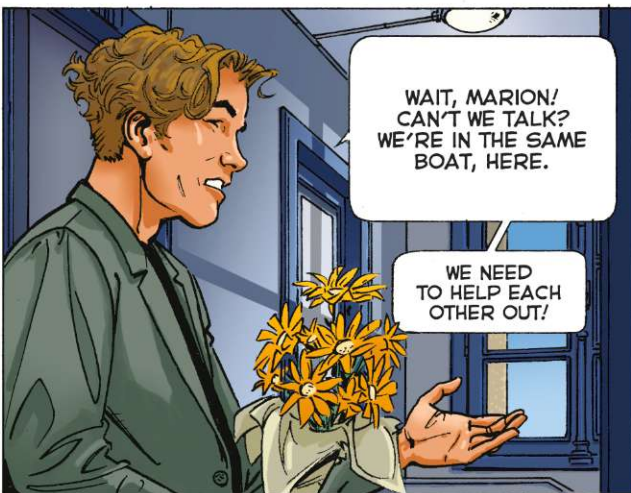
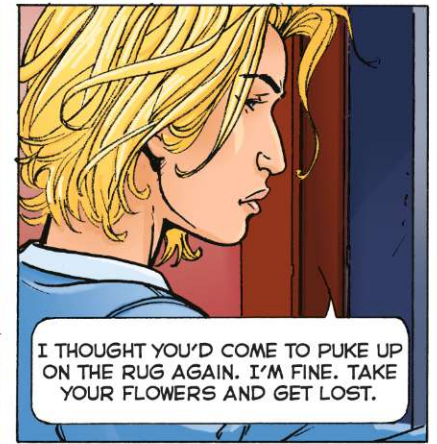
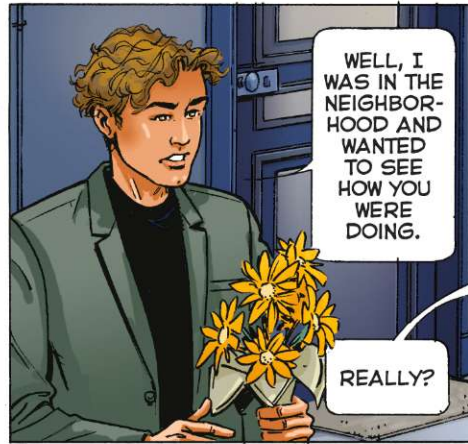
PLEASE, DON'T...

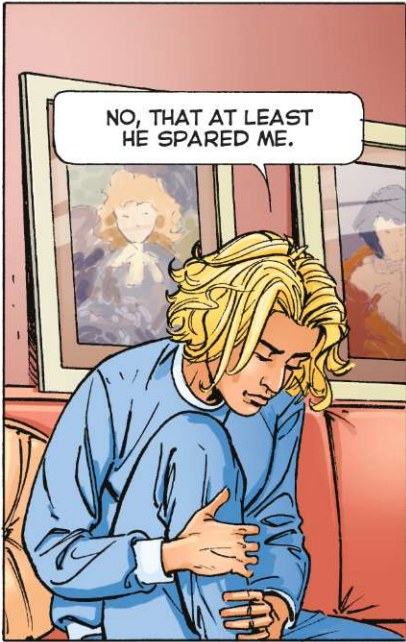
NOT YOU TOO.

YOU KNOW, ALEXANDRE, IF IT WERE JUST ME, I COULD ACCEPT A LOT OF THINGS, BUT WHAT YOU'VE DONE TO YOUR SISTER...

...I CAN NEVER ACCEPT THAT. NEVER.

MOM... NO...





NO, THAT AT LEAST HE SPARED ME.



WHAT? YOU DON'T KNOW?



DON'T KNOW WHAT?
WHAT IS IT?



IT'S FINE, NOW GO ON, TELL ME!



THIS HAS BEEN GOING AROUND THE STOCK EXCHANGE. I HONESTLY THOUGHT YOU HAD ALREADY SEEN THEM.



NO...

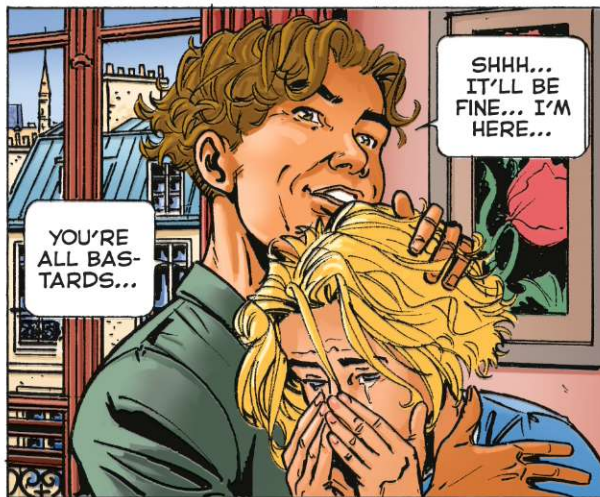


I'M SORRY, I--
BASTARD!



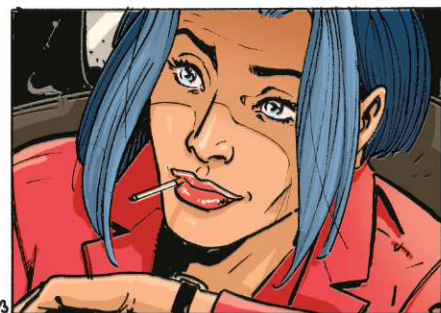
BASTARD!

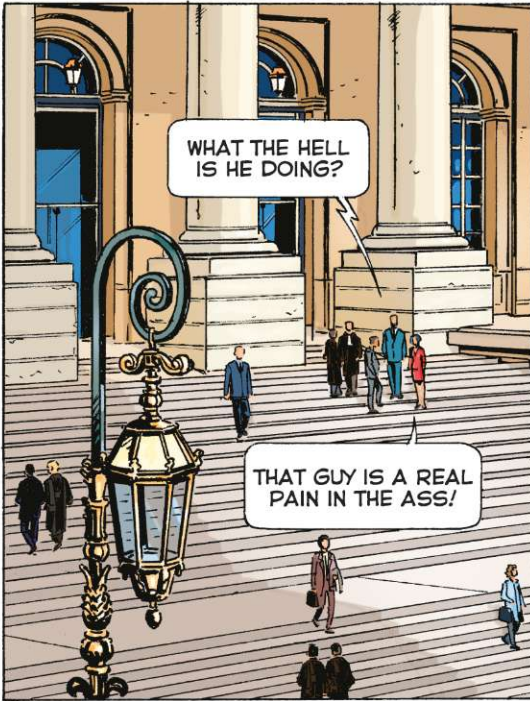
NO, MARION!



YOU'RE ALL BASTARDS...

SHHH... IT'LL BE FINE... I'M HERE...





WHAT THE HELL IS HE DOING?

THAT GUY IS A REAL PAIN IN THE ASS!



IT'S TRUE, BUT WITHOUT HIM WE WOULDN'T HAVE BEEN ABLE TO SEE THIS BUSINESS THROUGH.

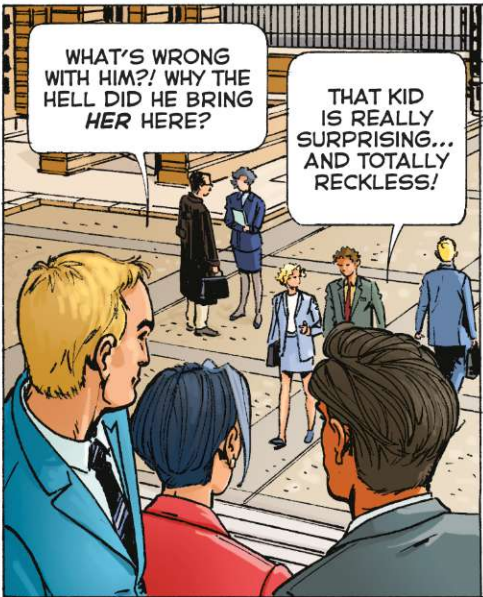


YES, WELL, HE'S BEEN PAID FOR THAT. WE DON'T NEED HIM ANYMORE. I DON'T SEE WHY WE NEED TO PUT UP WITH HIM FOR MUCH LONGER.



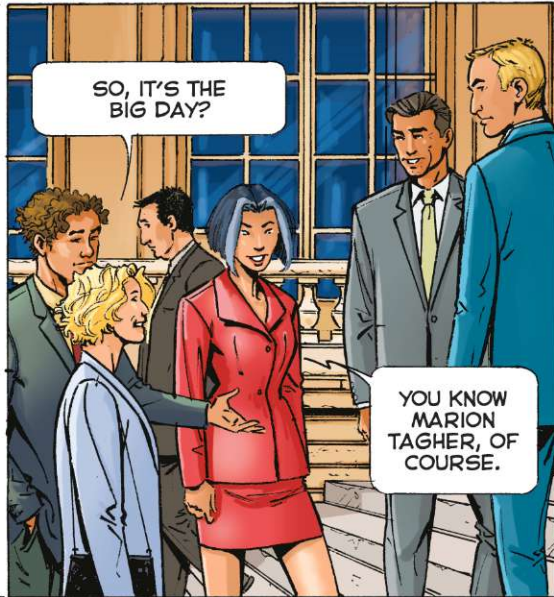
I KNOW IT'S NOT UP TO US, BUT STILL!

HOLD ON, THERE HE IS... AND HE'S NOT ALONE!



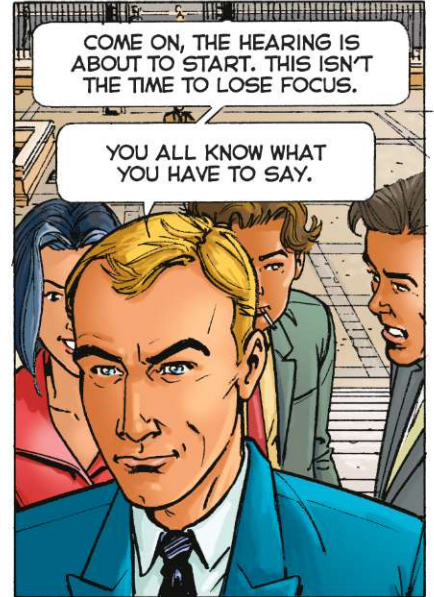
WHAT'S WRONG WITH HIM?! WHY THE HELL DID HE BRING HER HERE?

THAT KID IS REALLY SURPRISING... AND TOTALLY RECKLESS!



SO, IT'S THE BIG DAY?

YOU KNOW MARION TAGHER, OF COURSE.



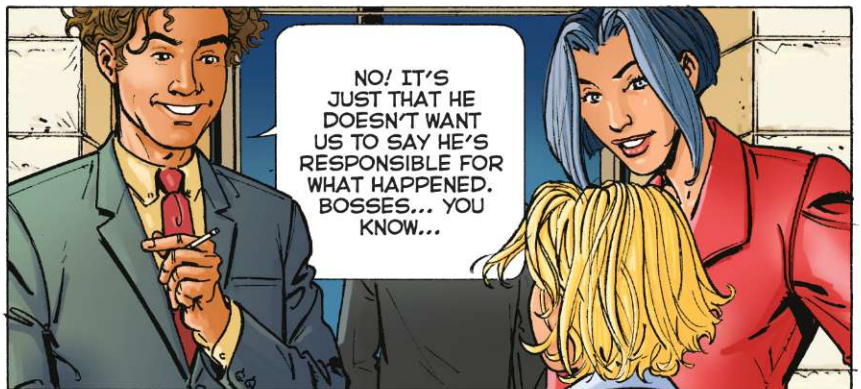
COME ON, THE HEARING IS ABOUT TO START. THIS ISN'T THE TIME TO LOSE FOCUS.

YOU ALL KNOW WHAT YOU HAVE TO SAY.



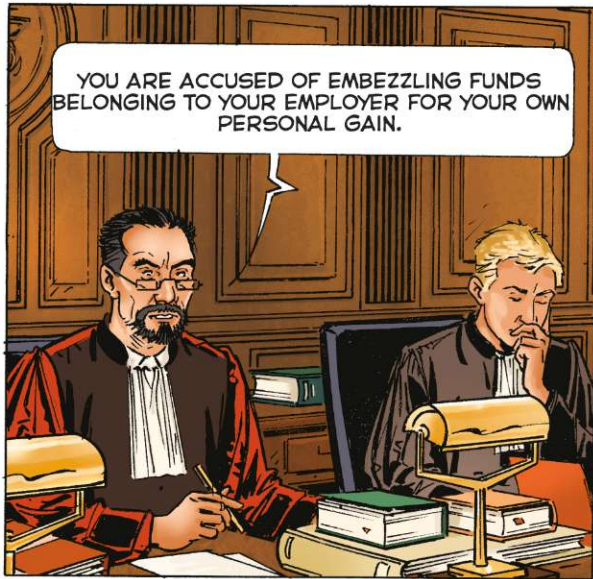
WHAT DID HE MEAN?

YOU ALL KNOW EACH OTHER?



NO! IT'S JUST THAT HE DOESN'T WANT US TO SAY HE'S RESPONSIBLE FOR WHAT HAPPENED. BOSSES... YOU KNOW...





YOU ARE ACCUSED OF EMBEZZLING FUNDS BELONGING TO YOUR EMPLOYER FOR YOUR OWN PERSONAL GAIN.



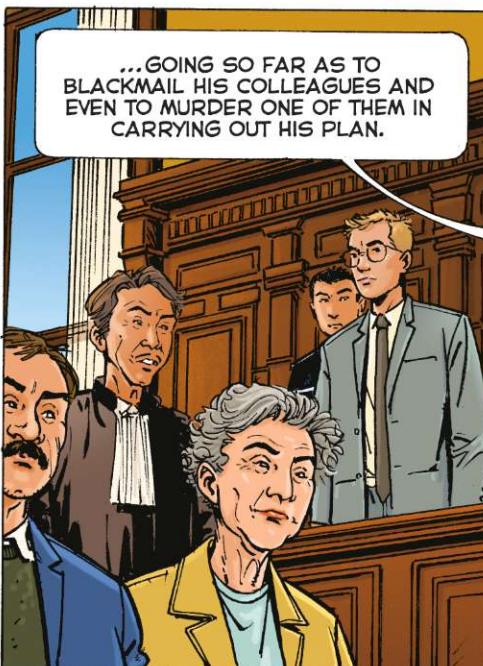
AS WELL AS VOLUNTARY HOMICIDE WITH MALICE AGAINST PATRICK SANCIER.



OPENING STATEMENT FOR THE PROSECUTION.



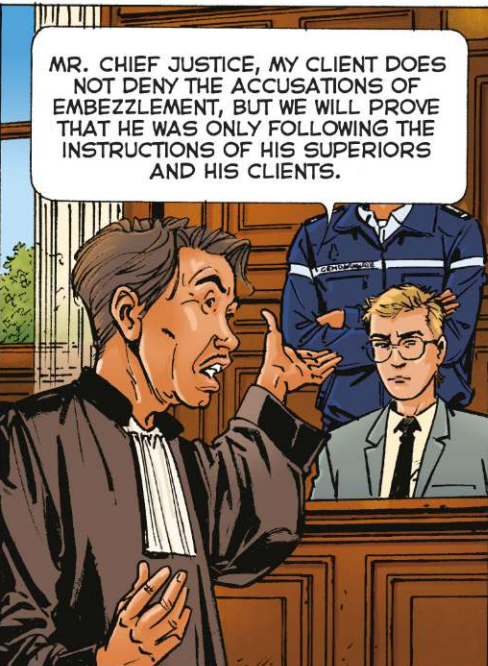
MR. CHIEF JUSTICE, WE ARE NOW GOING TO PROVE OVERWHELMINGLY THAT THE ACCUSED SKILLFULLY PLANNED AND ORGANIZED THE BANKRUPTCY OF HIS EMPLOYER...



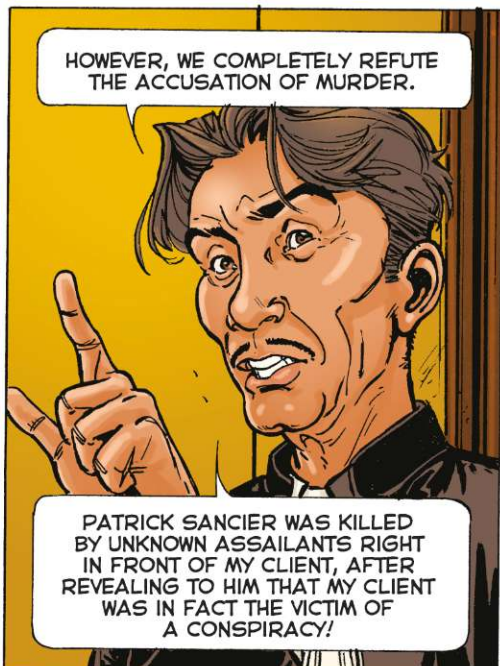
...GOING SO FAR AS TO BLACKMAIL HIS COLLEAGUES AND EVEN TO MURDER ONE OF THEM IN CARRYING OUT HIS PLAN.



THE DEFENSE, YOUR OPENING STATEMENT.



MR. CHIEF JUSTICE, MY CLIENT DOES NOT DENY THE ACCUSATIONS OF EMBEZZLEMENT, BUT WE WILL PROVE THAT HE WAS ONLY FOLLOWING THE INSTRUCTIONS OF HIS SUPERIORS AND HIS CLIENTS.



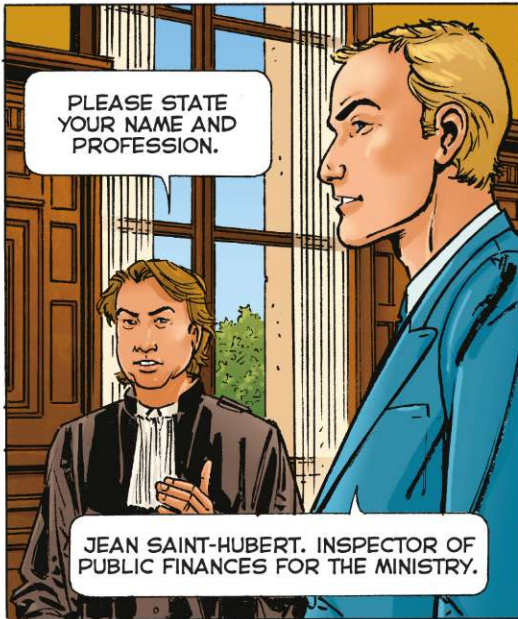
HOWEVER, WE COMPLETELY REFUTE THE ACCUSATION OF MURDER.

PATRICK SANCIER WAS KILLED BY UNKNOWN ASSAILANTS RIGHT IN FRONT OF MY CLIENT, AFTER REVEALING TO HIM THAT MY CLIENT WAS IN FACT THE VICTIM OF A CONSPIRACY!



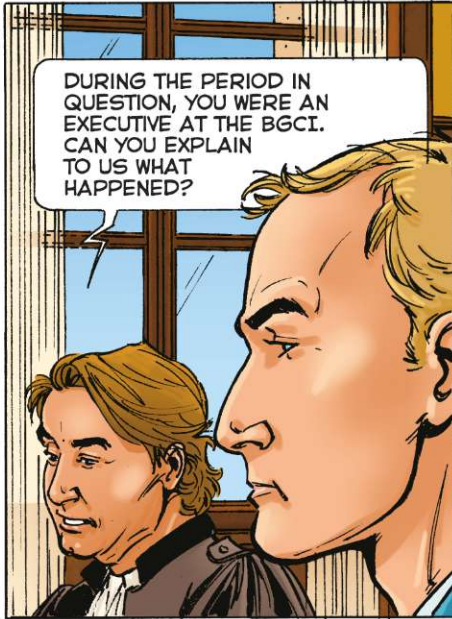
THE ATTORNEY FOR THE DEFENSE IS GOING TO MAKE OUR JOB A LOT EASIER WITH SUCH A HAREBRAINED THEORY!

I CALL MY FIRST WITNESS: JEAN SAINT-HUBERT.



PLEASE STATE YOUR NAME AND PROFESSION.

JEAN SAINT-HUBERT. INSPECTOR OF PUBLIC FINANCES FOR THE MINISTRY.



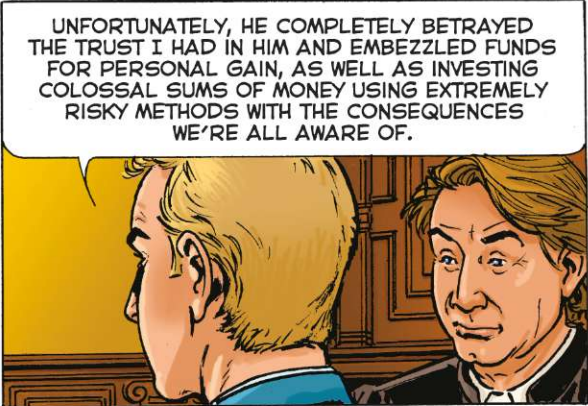
DURING THE PERIOD IN QUESTION, YOU WERE AN EXECUTIVE AT THE BGC I. CAN YOU EXPLAIN TO US WHAT HAPPENED?



WELL, AT THE TIME I WAS REGIONAL DIRECTOR AT THE BGC I, THAT IS, I WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE HEAD OFFICE IN PARIS.



MY JOB WAS TO SET UP THE NEW EMERGING MARKETS. THAT'S WHY I WENT TO ALEXANDRE, WHO SEEMED, AT THE TIME, THE MOST QUALIFIED TO CARRY OUT THIS ROLE.



UNFORTUNATELY, HE COMPLETELY BETRAYED THE TRUST I HAD IN HIM AND EMBEZZLED FUNDS FOR PERSONAL GAIN, AS WELL AS INVESTING COLOSSAL SUMS OF MONEY USING EXTREMELY RISKY METHODS WITH THE CONSEQUENCES WE'RE ALL AWARE OF.



I'M SURE YOU'RE AWARE THAT I WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN ABLE TO MONITOR THE COMINGS AND GOINGS OF EVERY EMPLOYEE AT THE BGC I.



I'M ASTONISHED, ALL THE SAME, THAT NO MONITORING PROCEDURES WERE PUT IN PLACE TO TRACK MY CLIENT'S ACTIONS.

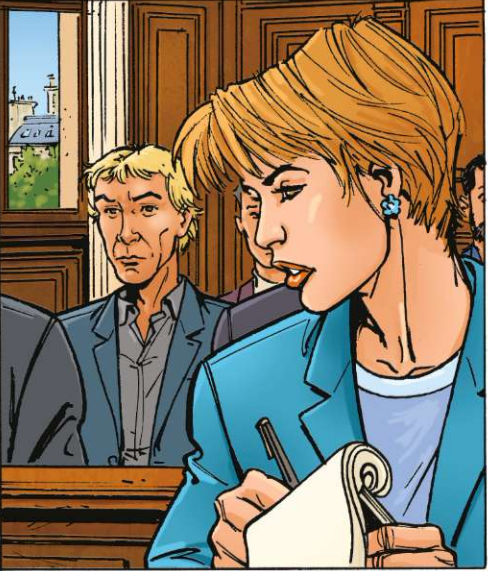
THAT WAS THE JOB OF PATRICK SANCIER, WHO CARRIED IT OUT SO WELL THAT IT COST HIM HIS LIFE.



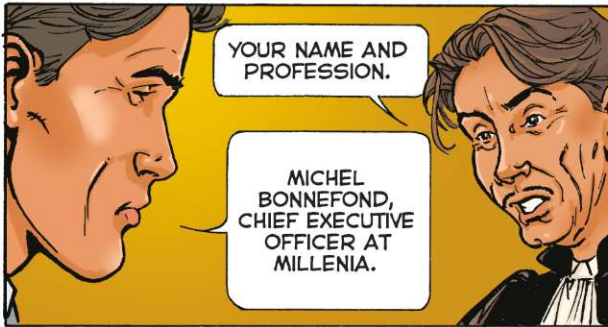
THAT'S A LIE!
IN FACT, SANCIER WANTED TO WARN ME THAT I WAS BEING MANIPULATED AND THAT--



SIR! CONTROL YOUR CLIENT OR I WILL HAVE HIM REMOVED FROM THE ROOM!



I CALL TO THE STAND MR. MICHEL BONNEFOND.

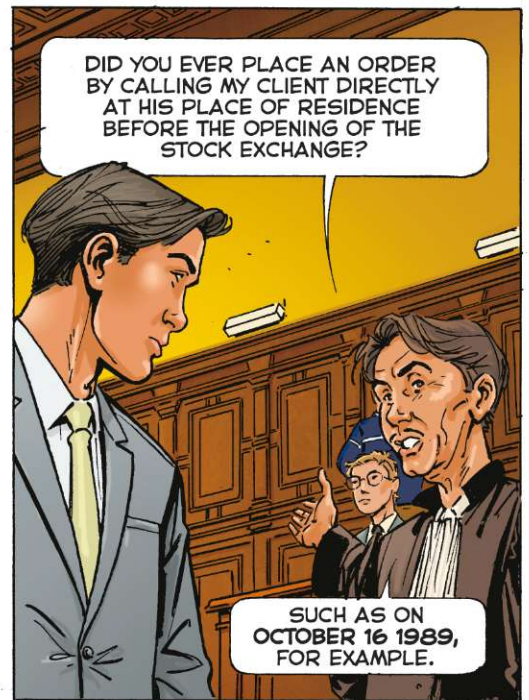


YOUR NAME AND PROFESSION.

MICHEL BONNEFOND, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER AT MILLENIA.

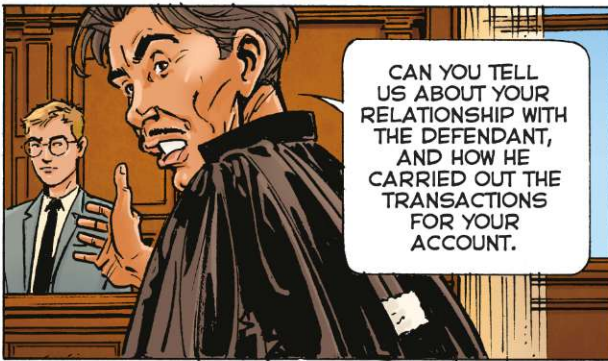


THE SAME WAY AS FOR ALL BGGI CLIENTS, I ASSUME. I GAVE MY ORDERS TO HIM DIRECTLY AND HAD COMPLETE FAITH IN HIM TO CARRY OUT THE TRANSACTIONS.

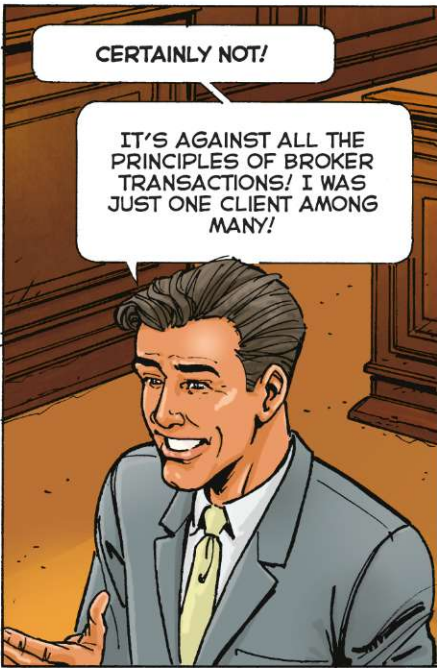


DID YOU EVER PLACE AN ORDER BY CALLING MY CLIENT DIRECTLY AT HIS PLACE OF RESIDENCE BEFORE THE OPENING OF THE STOCK EXCHANGE?

SUCH AS ON OCTOBER 16 1989, FOR EXAMPLE.



CAN YOU TELL US ABOUT YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH THE DEFENDANT, AND HOW HE CARRIED OUT THE TRANSACTIONS FOR YOUR ACCOUNT.



CERTAINLY NOT!

IT'S AGAINST ALL THE PRINCIPLES OF BROKER TRANSACTIONS! I WAS JUST ONE CLIENT AMONG MANY!

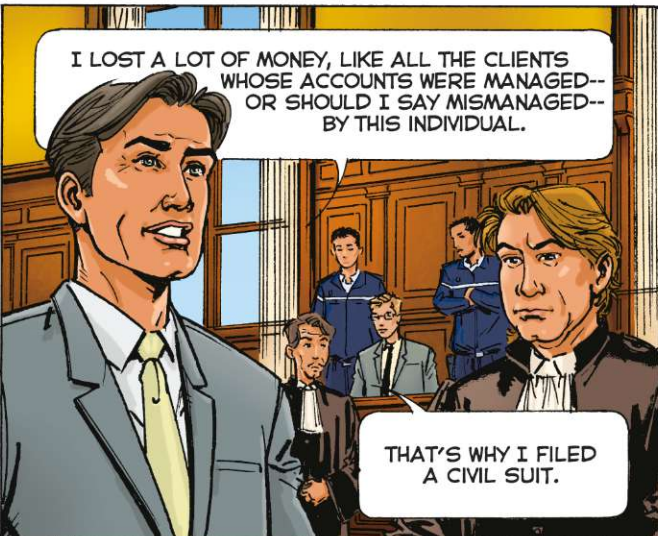


AND THAT CERTAINLY WASN'T THE COMMON PRACTICE AT THE BGGI, WHICH WAS A TRUSTWORTHY ESTABLISHMENT.

BUT PERHAPS NOT EVERYONE HAD BEEN MADE AWARE OF THAT...



WHAT WERE THE CONSEQUENCES OF THE BGGI GOING BANKRUPT ON YOUR PERSONAL FINANCES?



I LOST A LOT OF MONEY, LIKE ALL THE CLIENTS WHOSE ACCOUNTS WERE MANAGED--OR SHOULD I SAY MISMANAGED--BY THIS INDIVIDUAL.

THAT'S WHY I FILED A CIVIL SUIT.



THANK YOU. YOU CAN TAKE YOUR SEAT.

WE WOULD NOW LIKE TO CALL UPON MRS. SYLVIE FONTAINE.



STATE YOUR NAME AND YOUR PROFESSION.

SYLVIE FONTAINE. AUDITOR.



AT THE TIME OF THE EVENTS, YOU WERE WORKING IN-HOUSE AT THE BGCI, IS THAT CORRECT?

WHAT WERE THE RESULTS OF THE AUDIT YOU CARRIED OUT ON THE ACCOUNTS MANAGED BY THE DEFENDANT?



CATASTROPHIC. I QUICKLY EXPOSED THE IRREGULARITIES THAT HAD BEEN GOING ON FOR SEVERAL MONTHS AND WHICH SOMEONE HAD ATTEMPTED TO HIDE IN AN ERROR ACCOUNT, TO NO AVAIL.



AND WHY DIDN'T YOU NOTIFY YOUR SUPERIORS OF THIS IMMEDIATELY?



I WAS THREATENED, PHYSICALLY...

IS THE PERSON WHO THREATENED YOU IN THIS ROOM TODAY?

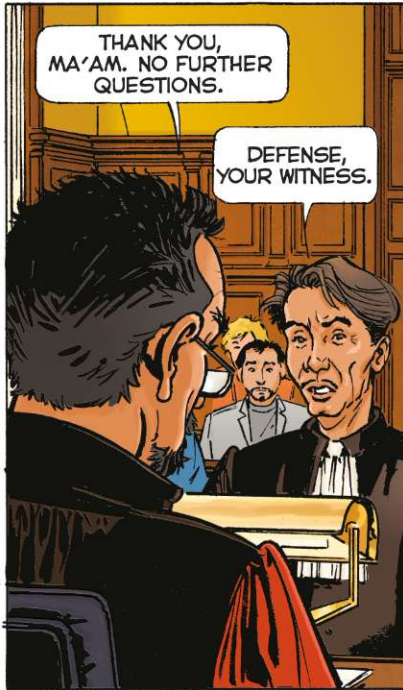
IF SO, CAN YOU POINT THEM OUT?



NO QUESTIONS.



YES. IT'S HIM. THAT'S THE MAN.



THANK YOU, MA'AM. NO FURTHER QUESTIONS.

DEFENSE, YOUR WITNESS.



WHAT? BUT I TOLD YOU THAT SHE WAS THE ONE WHO THREATENED ME AND FORCED ME TO--

THAT WON'T STAND UP. SHE FILED A COMPLAINT FOR PHYSICAL INJURIES AT THE TIME.



I WILL NOW CALL THIERRY MINEZ TO THE STAND.

THIERRY? BUT HE WASN'T SUPPOSED TO BE A WITNESS!



OH, YES, I FORGOT TO TELL YOU...



STATE YOUR NAME AND YOUR PROFESSION.

THIERRY MINEZ. UNEMPLOYED.



HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN UNEMPLOYED, MR. MINEZ?

AND FOR WHAT REASON?

SINCE THE BGCI WENT BUST.



I WAS WORKING IN THE FUTURES MARKETS DEPARTMENT. AND I REALLY SUFFERED THE CONSEQUENCES OF MY COLLEAGUE'S ACTIONS.



WERE YOU AWARE OF THESE ACTIONS?



LET'S JUST SAY I WAS AWARE THAT THINGS WEREN'T RUNNING SMOOTHLY.

BUT WHEN I TRIED TO SPEAK TO HIM, HE THREATENED TO FIRE ME.



AND SINCE THEN, MR. MINEZ HAS BEEN RECEIVING TREATMENT FOR SEVERE DEPRESSION AND HASN'T BEEN ABLE TO RETURN TO WORK.

YOUR WITNESS.



MR. MINEZ, HAVE YOU EVER BEEN ARRESTED FOR THE POSSESSION AND USE OF COCAINE?



LET'S JUST SAY THAT DURING THIS TIME, TO DEAL WITH THE PRESSURE I WAS FACING AT WORK, I NEEDED SOMETHING TO KEEP ME GOING.



IN FACT IT WAS THE SAME COLLEAGUE WHO GOT ME INTO IT AND SUPPLIED ME, BUT THAT'S ALL BEHIND ME NOW!



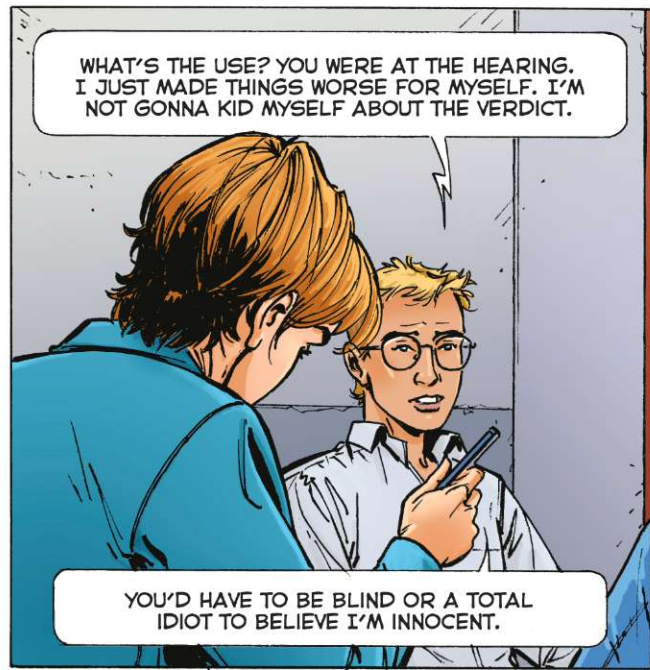
I THINK WE HAVE A PRETTY COMPLETE PICTURE NOW!

THE HEARING IS ADJOURNED!



IF YOU CAME TO TELL ME YOU WERE RIGHT, THEN FINE, YOU WERE RIGHT.

BUT I DIDN'T KILL SANCIER.



WHAT'S THE USE? YOU WERE AT THE HEARING. I JUST MADE THINGS WORSE FOR MYSELF. I'M NOT GONNA KID MYSELF ABOUT THE VERDICT.

YOU'D HAVE TO BE BLIND OR A TOTAL IDIOT TO BELIEVE I'M INNOCENT.



I DON'T DOUBT THAT FOR A SECOND. AND I NEED YOU TO HELP ME TO PROVE IT.



MAYBE I'M BOTH?

THANKS FOR THE COMPLIMENT.



SORRY, THAT'S NOT WHAT I MEANT. FORGIVE ME.

IT HAS TO BE SAID, YOUR ATTORNEY REALLY ISN'T UP TO THE TASK.

I SUPPOSE HE'S UP TO THE TASK FOR WHAT I'M PAYING HIM.



LOOK, I'M WELL AWARE THE BGGI GOING BUST DIDN'T HELP THE COMPETITION THAT MUCH, BUT THAT MONEY STILL DEFINITELY WENT SOMEWHERE!

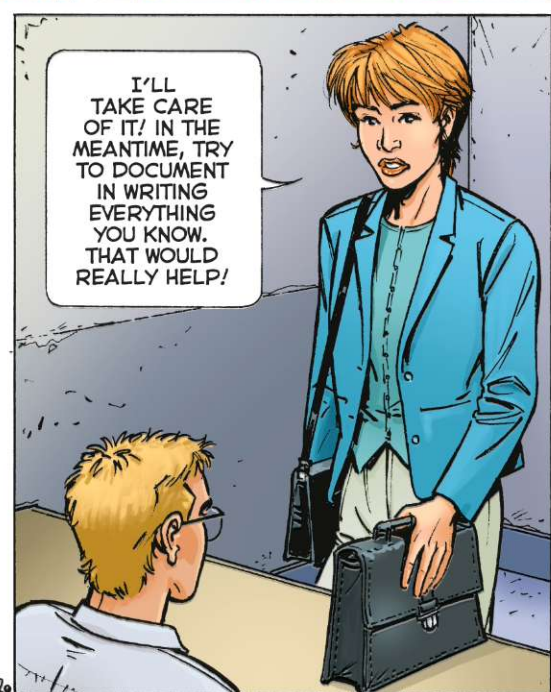


THAT'S WHAT SANCIER WAS TRYING TO TELL ME WHEN HE WAS KILLED! HE'D COLLECTED A FOLDER OF EVIDENCE!

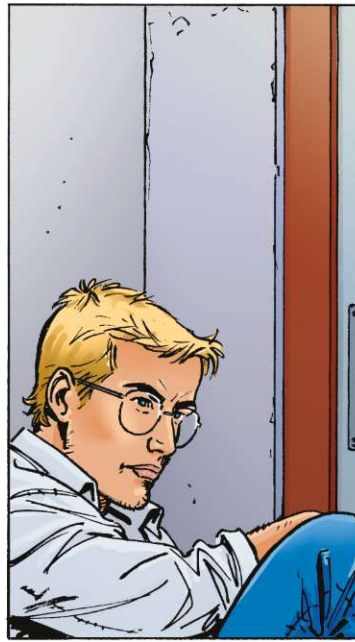
IT WOULD HAVE CLEARED ME, BUT GOD KNOWS WHERE IT IS NOW.

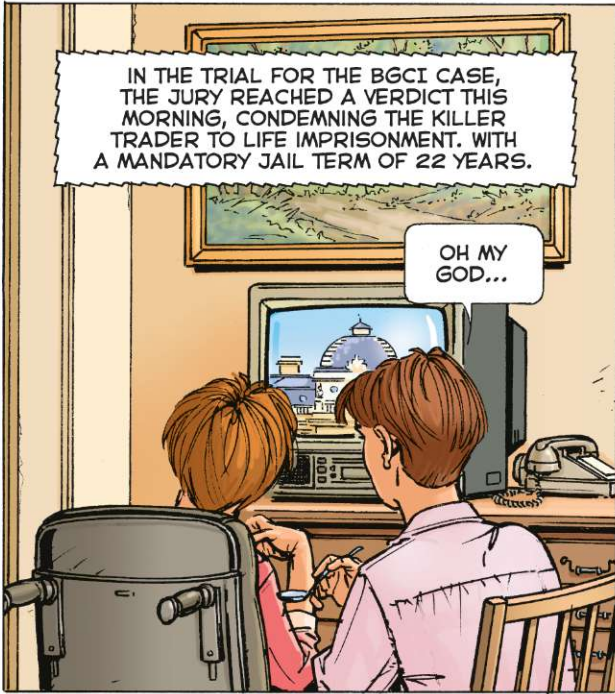


ALL YOU CAN DO TO HELP ME NOW IS FIND THAT FOLDER, BUT I FEAR IT'S MUCH TOO LATE.



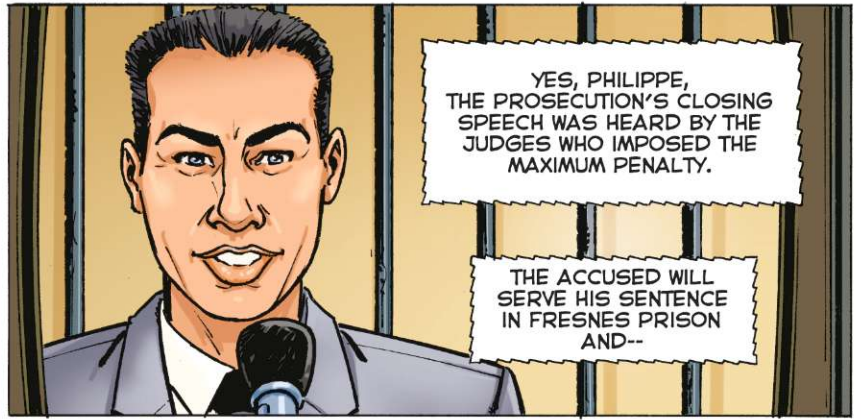
I'LL TAKE CARE OF IT! IN THE MEANTIME, TRY TO DOCUMENT IN WRITING EVERYTHING YOU KNOW. THAT WOULD REALLY HELP!





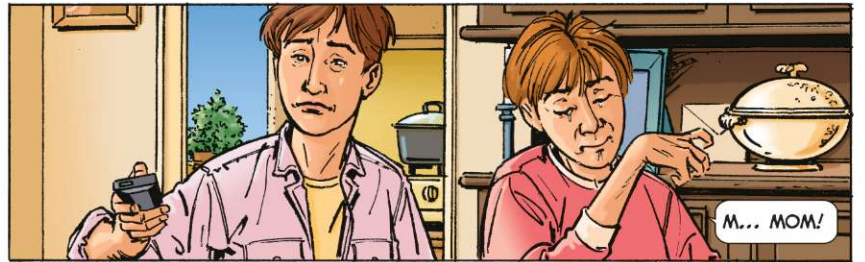
IN THE TRIAL FOR THE BGCI CASE, THE JURY REACHED A VERDICT THIS MORNING, CONDEMNING THE KILLER TRADER TO LIFE IMPRISONMENT. WITH A MANDATORY JAIL TERM OF 22 YEARS.

OH MY GOD...

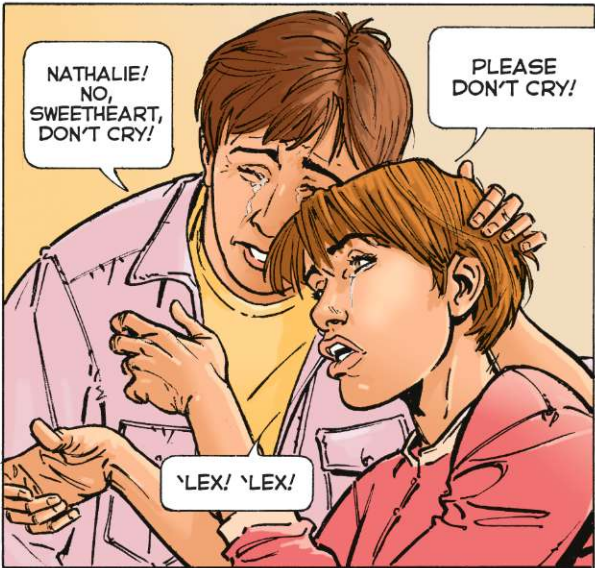


YES, PHILIPPE, THE PROSECUTION'S CLOSING SPEECH WAS HEARD BY THE JUDGES WHO IMPOSED THE MAXIMUM PENALTY.

THE ACCUSED WILL SERVE HIS SENTENCE IN FRESNES PRISON AND--



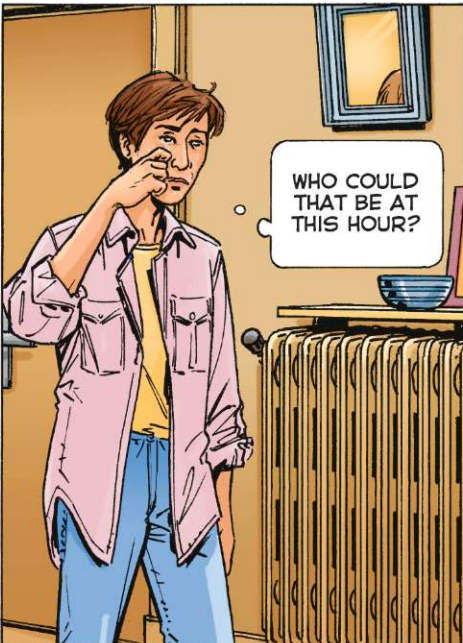
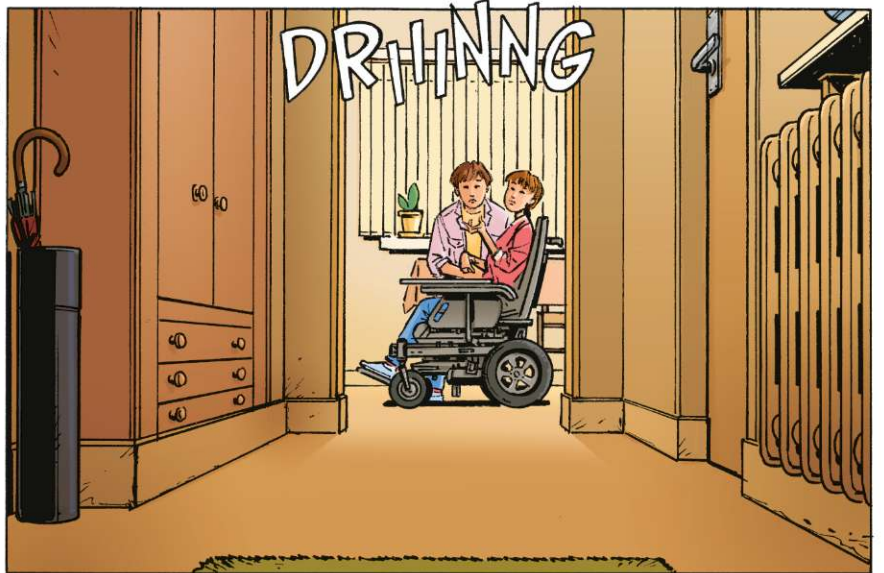
M... MOM!



NATHALIE! NO, SWEETHEART, DON'T CRY!

PLEASE DON'T CRY!

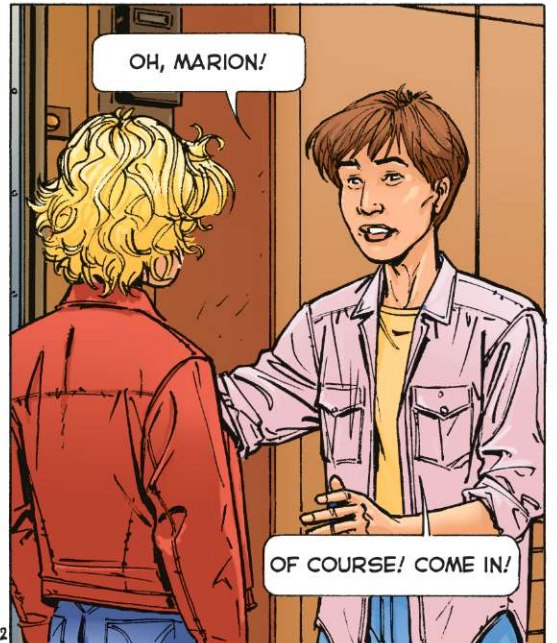
'LEX! 'LEX!



WHO COULD THAT BE AT THIS HOUR?



SUZANNE, I CAME AS SOON AS I HEARD THE NEWS. MAY I COME IN?



OH, MARION!

OF COURSE! COME IN!

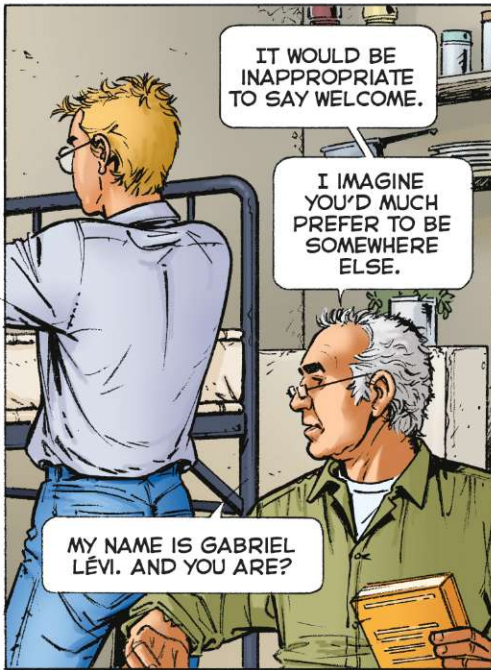


HERE YOU ARE. GO IN.



YOU CAN TAKE THE TOP BUNK, IF YOU DON'T MIND. AT MY AGE, I'D LIKE TO AVOID CLIMBING AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE.

OKAY.



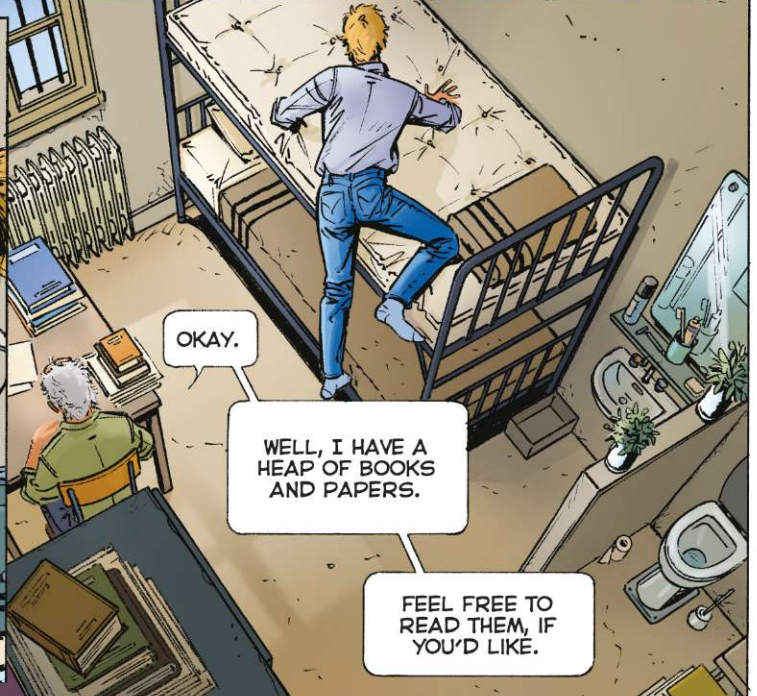
IT WOULD BE INAPPROPRIATE TO SAY WELCOME.

I IMAGINE YOU'D MUCH PREFER TO BE SOMEWHERE ELSE.

MY NAME IS GABRIEL LÉVI. AND YOU ARE?



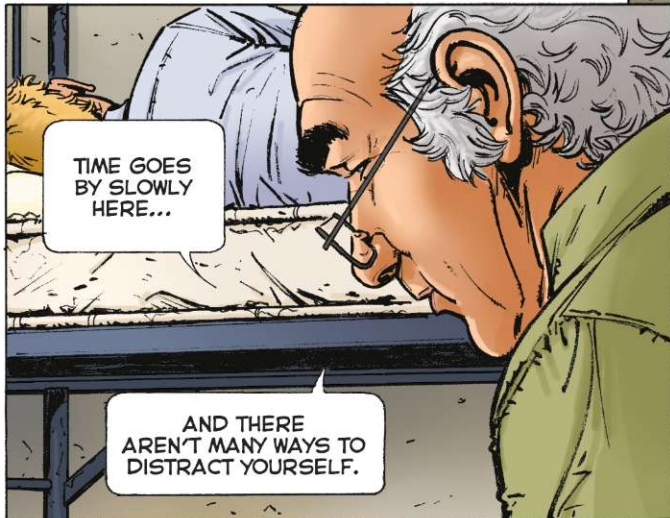
ALEXANDRE.



OKAY.

WELL, I HAVE A HEAP OF BOOKS AND PAPERS.

FEEL FREE TO READ THEM, IF YOU'D LIKE.



TIME GOES BY SLOWLY HERE...

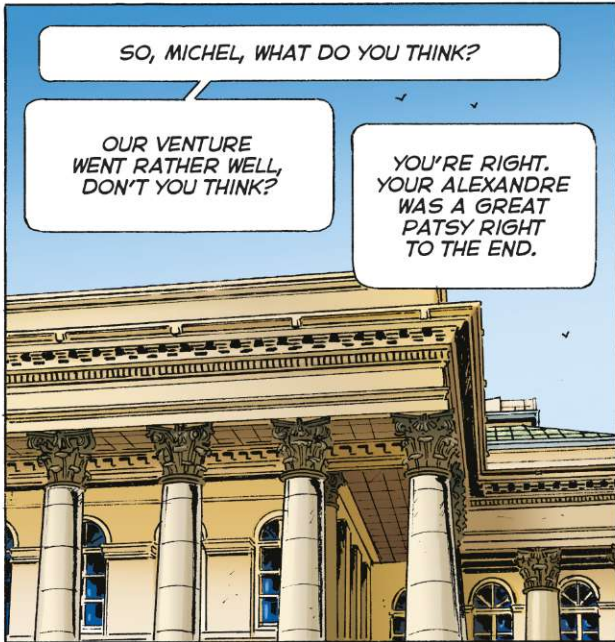
AND THERE AREN'T MANY WAYS TO DISTRACT YOURSELF.



THANKS.

THAT'S GREAT.

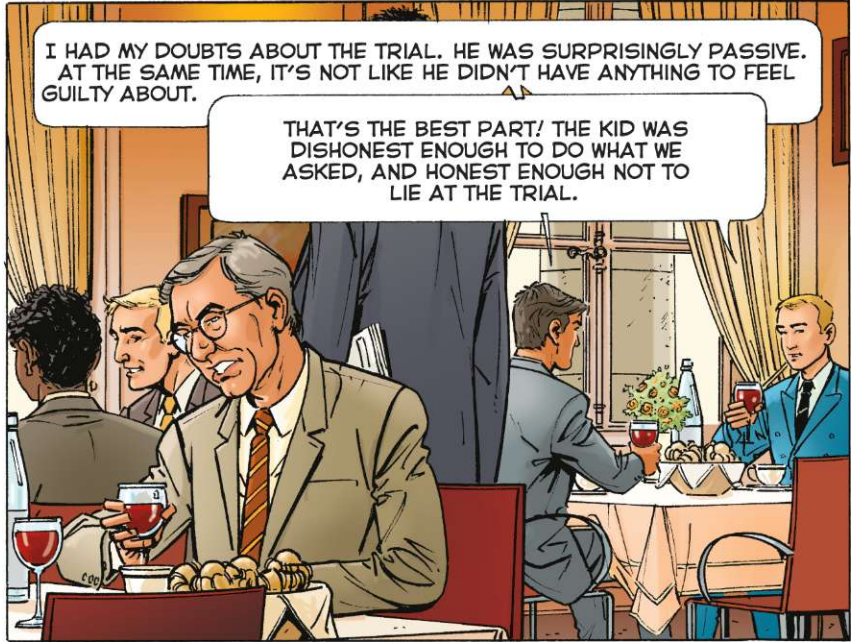




SO, MICHEL, WHAT DO YOU THINK?

OUR VENTURE WENT RATHER WELL, DON'T YOU THINK?

YOU'RE RIGHT. YOUR ALEXANDRE WAS A GREAT PATSY RIGHT TO THE END.



I HAD MY DOUBTS ABOUT THE TRIAL. HE WAS SURPRISINGLY PASSIVE. AT THE SAME TIME, IT'S NOT LIKE HE DIDN'T HAVE ANYTHING TO FEEL GUILTY ABOUT.

THAT'S THE BEST PART! THE KID WAS DISHONEST ENOUGH TO DO WHAT WE ASKED, AND HONEST ENOUGH NOT TO LIE AT THE TRIAL.



WELL, NOW THAT HIS FATE HAS BEEN DECIDED, WE NEED TO AGREE ON HOW TO MANAGE OUR CAPITAL.

WHAT EXACTLY DID YOU PROMISE TO THE PRESIDENT FOR THE PARTY?



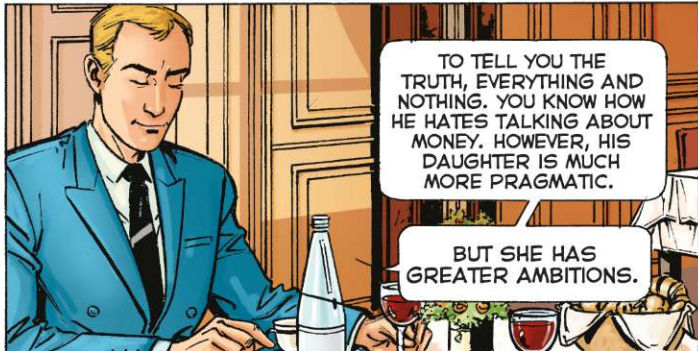
I SEE. HAVE YOU BROUGHT THEM UP TO DATE FOR OUR RUSSIAN FRIENDS?

WE ARE GOING TO HAVE TO PAY THEM BACK BEFORE ANYTHING ELSE.



I DON'T THINK SO. AFTER ALL, IT WAS THE BGCJ WHO OWED THEM, NOT US.

NO MORE BANK, NO MORE DEBT...

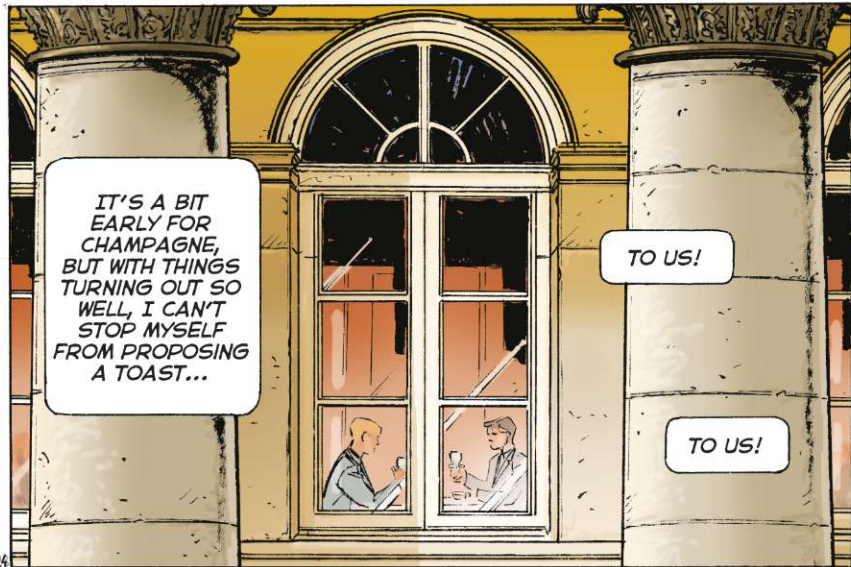


TO TELL YOU THE TRUTH, EVERYTHING AND NOTHING. YOU KNOW HOW HE HATES TALKING ABOUT MONEY. HOWEVER, HIS DAUGHTER IS MUCH MORE PRAGMATIC.

BUT SHE HAS GREATER AMBITIONS.



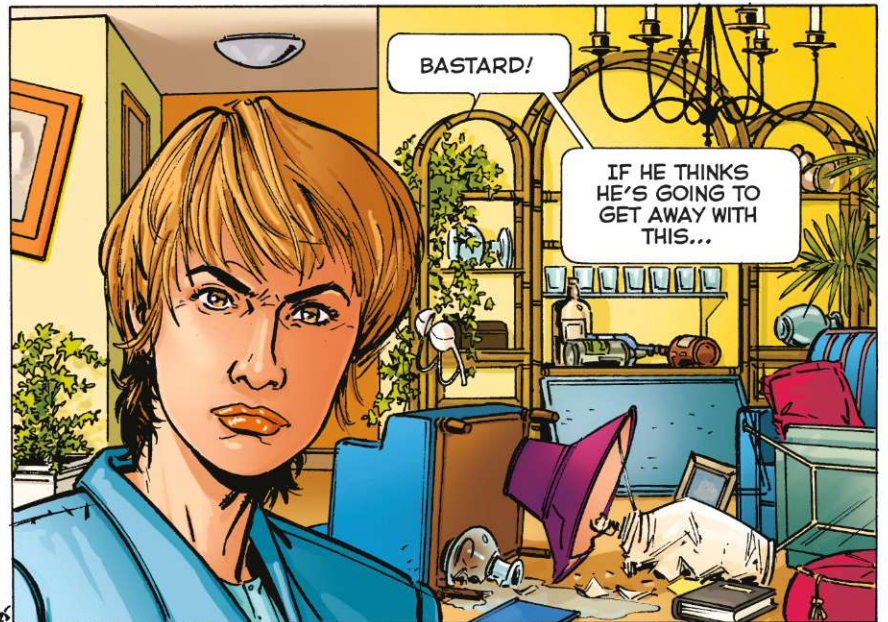
I DIDN'T THINK OF THAT... IT'S RISKY, BUT WHY NOT, AFTER ALL. WE'LL NEED TO PLAY IT SHREWDLY TO ABSOLVE OURSELVES OF ANY LIABILITY. BUT FOR THIS AMOUNT, IT SEEMS WORTHWHILE.



IT'S A BIT EARLY FOR CHAMPAGNE, BUT WITH THINGS TURNING OUT SO WELL, I CAN'T STOP MYSELF FROM PROPOSING A TOAST...

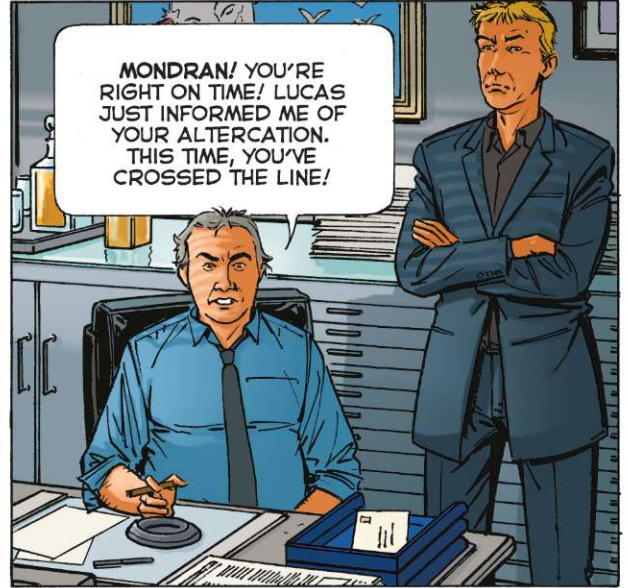
TO US!

TO US!





BOSS! WE NEED TO TALK! THAT LUCAS IS A--

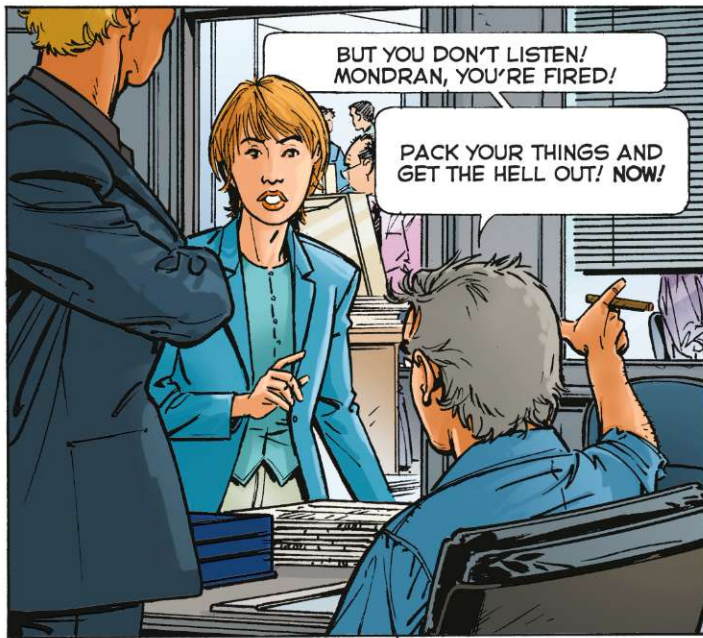


MONDRAN! YOU'RE RIGHT ON TIME! LUCAS JUST INFORMED ME OF YOUR ALTERCATION. THIS TIME, YOU'VE CROSSED THE LINE!



WHAT?! BUT HE'S THE ONE WHO--

QUIET! I TOLD YOU TO DROP IT!



BUT YOU DON'T LISTEN! MONDRAN, YOU'RE FIRED!

PACK YOUR THINGS AND GET THE HELL OUT! NOW!



DON'T CRY, MY DEAR. IT'S NOT WORTH IT.



THAT FAT ASSHOLE FIRED ME!

I KNOW, BUT ALSO, YOU DIDN'T LISTEN TO ME!



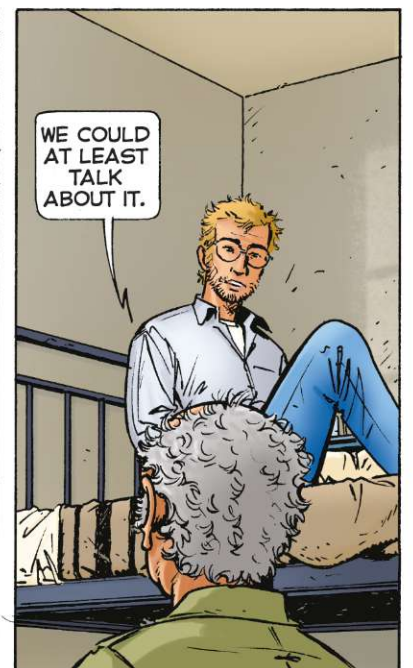
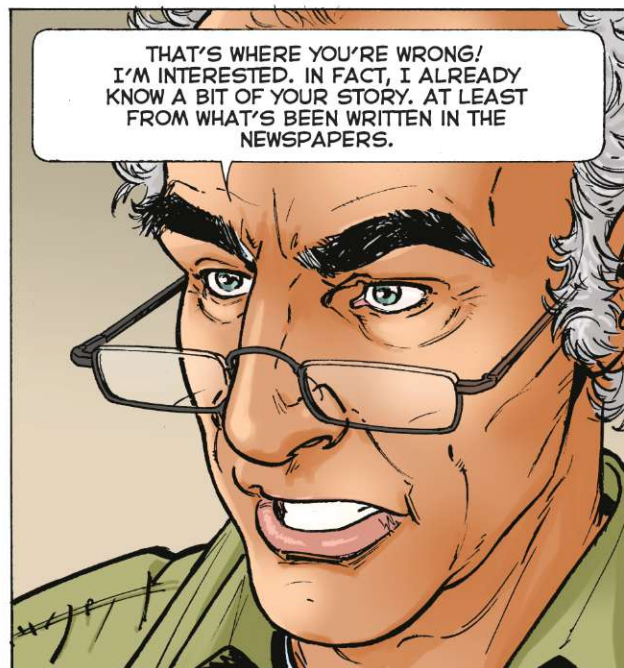
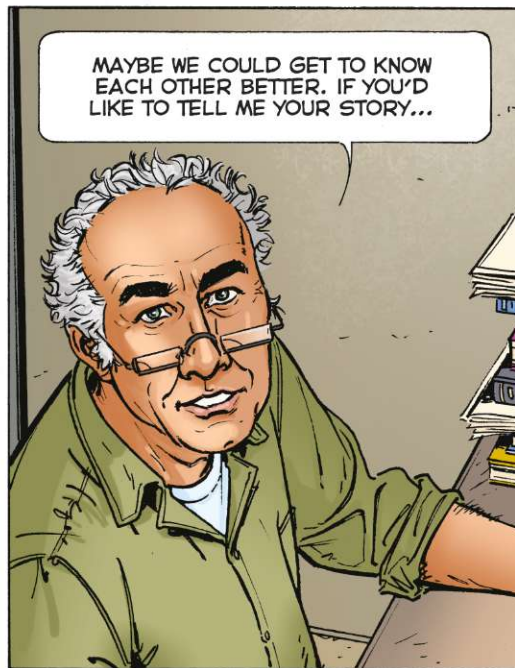
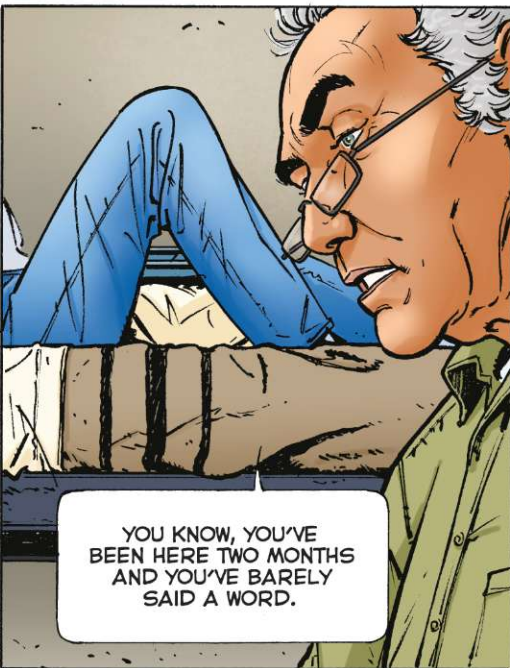
I TOLD YOU TO BE PATIENT. TWO YEARS IS NOTHING IN THIS KIND OF CASE. BUT YOU RUSHED IT.

DON'T WORRY, YOU'RE YOUNG, YOU'RE A GOOD JOURNALIST, YOU'LL BOUNCE BACK!



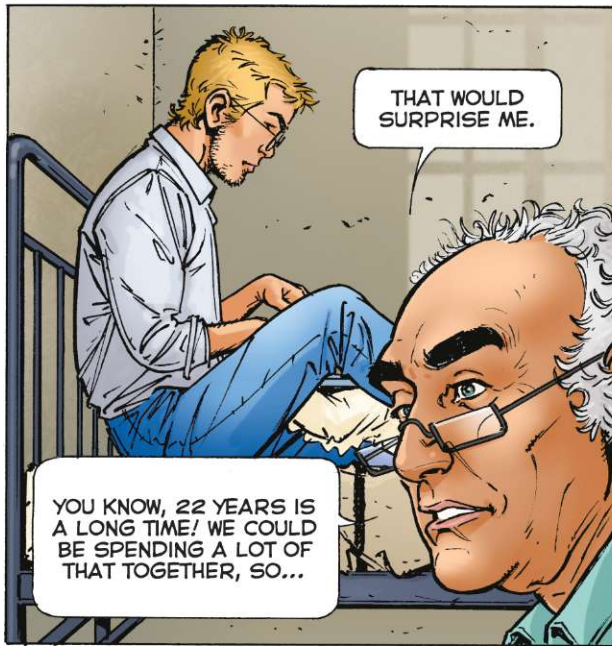
MAYBE. IN THE MEANTIME, I'M DONE HERE.

BUT I PROMISE I WON'T DROP THIS CASE JUST LIKE THAT! I'LL DO WHATEVER IT TAKES FOR ALEXANDRE!





THERE'S NO POINT. YOU KNOW EVERYTHING THERE IS TO KNOW. I HAVE NOTHING MORE TO ADD.



THAT WOULD SURPRISE ME.

YOU KNOW, 22 YEARS IS A LONG TIME! WE COULD BE SPENDING A LOT OF THAT TOGETHER, SO...



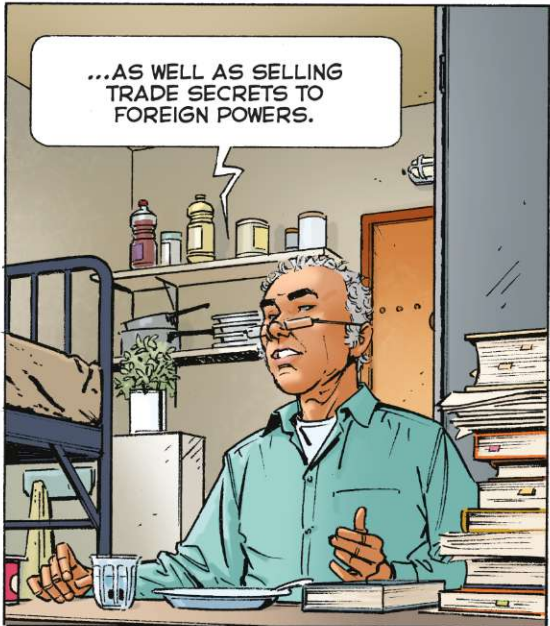
OH YEAH? YOU'RE IN HERE FOR A LONG TIME, TOO?

WHAT DID YOU DO?

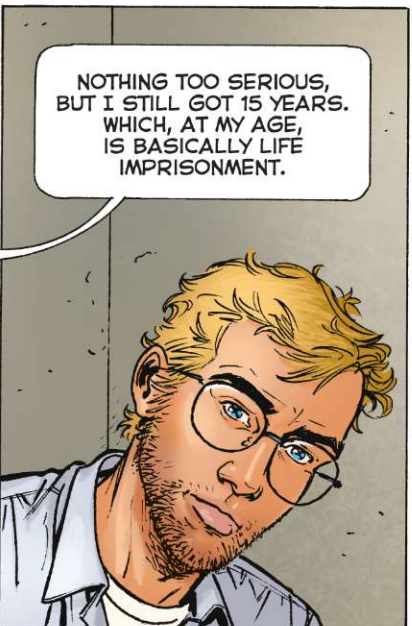


AH, YOU SEE, WE'RE GETTING SOMEWHERE!

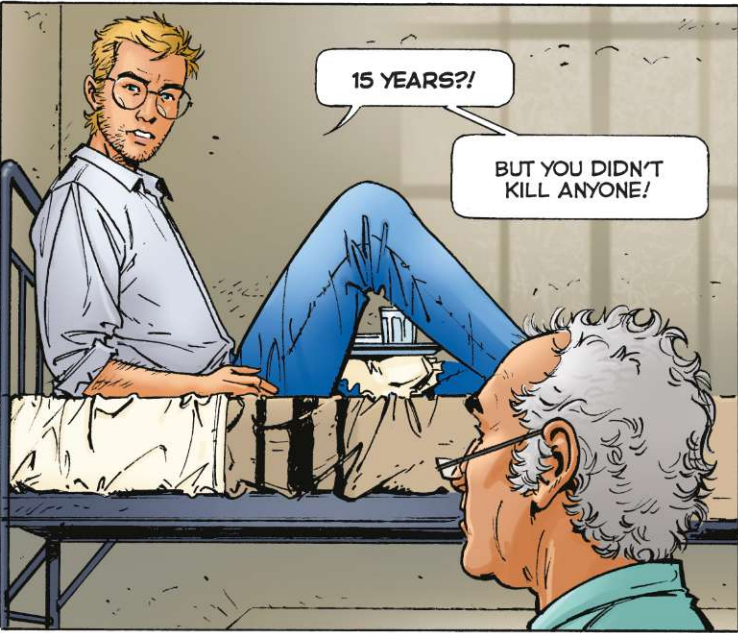
THEY ACCUSED ME, AMONG OTHER THINGS, OF EMBEZZLING PUBLIC RESEARCH FUNDS...



...AS WELL AS SELLING TRADE SECRETS TO FOREIGN POWERS.

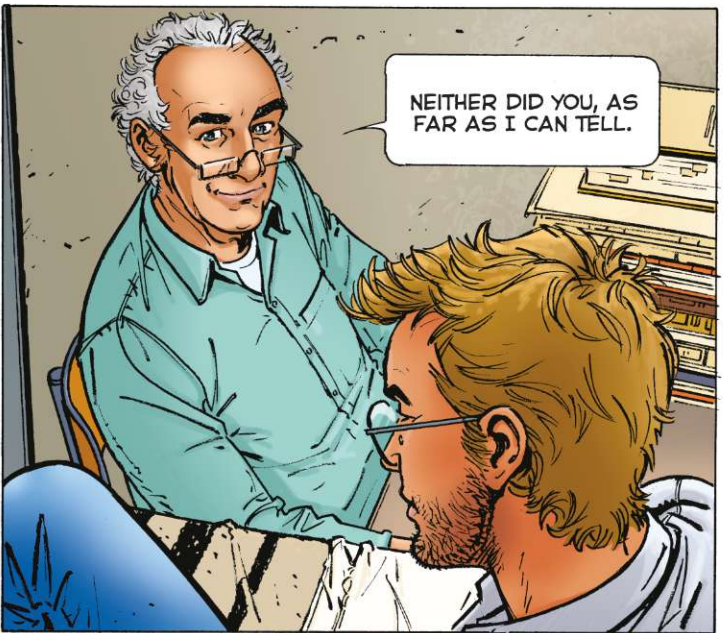


NOTHING TOO SERIOUS, BUT I STILL GOT 15 YEARS. WHICH, AT MY AGE, IS BASICALLY LIFE IMPRISONMENT.



15 YEARS?!

BUT YOU DIDN'T KILL ANYONE!



NEITHER DID YOU, AS FAR AS I CAN TELL.



HERE, THIS IS THE STUFF I BOUGHT YESTERDAY. IT'S INCREDIBLE.



SO, WHAT ABOUT MARION? YOU HAVEN'T TOLD ME ANYTHING ABOUT HER!

WHAT'S SHE LIKE?

NOT BAD AT ALL. I'M STILL GOING SUPER GENTLE WITH HER, BUT I HAVE THE FEELING I'LL BE BORED OF HER SOON.



NOT BAD, HUH?



BUT I'D STILL LIKE TO KEEP HER. SHE'S A PRETTY TROPHY, DON'T YOU THINK?

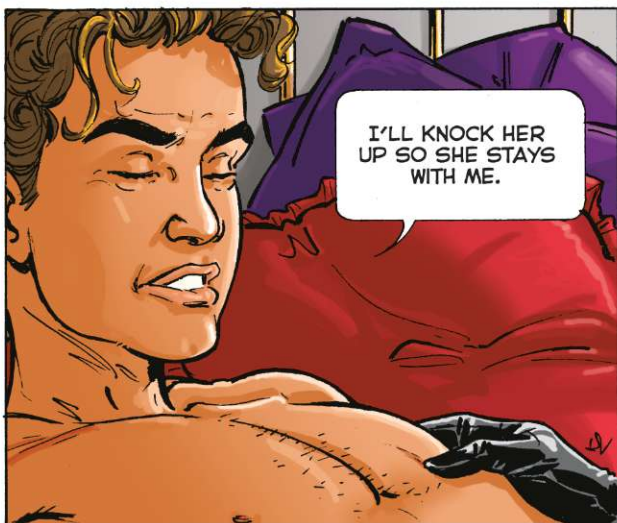


DEFINITELY... SO ARE YOU GOING TO TELL HER ABOUT THE MONEY?

NO WAY! BESIDES, SHE DOESN'T ASK ANY QUESTIONS. SHE'S USUALLY OUT OF IT.



AND WHAT DO YOU PLAN TO DO?



I'LL KNOCK HER UP SO SHE STAYS WITH ME.

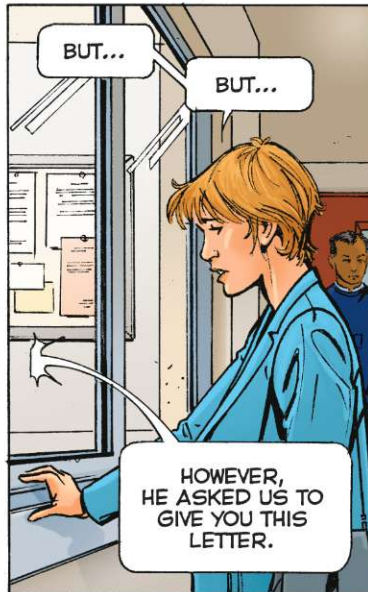
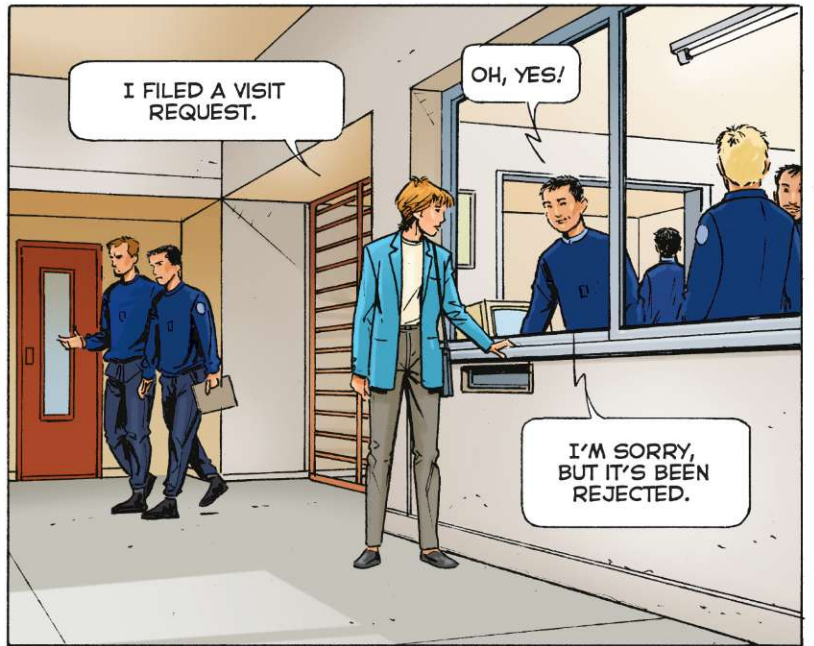


AS FOR MONEY, I THINK I'LL DO... OH... WHAT YOU DO...

I'LL... OH...

SET UP... MY OWN... BUSINESS...

OH... DON'T STOP...



MISS MONDRAN,
PLEASE STOP COMING TO
VISIT ME IN JAIL. I'VE BEEN
TRIED AND FOUND GUILTY.
NOW I HAVE TO SERVE MY
SENTENCE.

THANK YOU FOR TRYING
TO HELP ME, BUT GIVEN
THE THREATS THAT HAVE
BEEN MADE AGAINST YOU
AND WHAT YOU'VE TOLD ME,
IT'S NOT WORTH THE
TROUBLE.



SO PLEASE STOP YOUR
INVESTIGATION INTO THIS CASE.
I'VE LOST EVERYTHING AND
I DON'T WANT THE SAME THING
TO HAPPEN TO YOU.

YOU'RE FREE.
KEEP IT THAT WAY.

I DOUBT WE'LL SEE
EACH OTHER IN 22 YEARS,
IF THEY EVEN FREE
ME THEN.



ALL THE BEST.

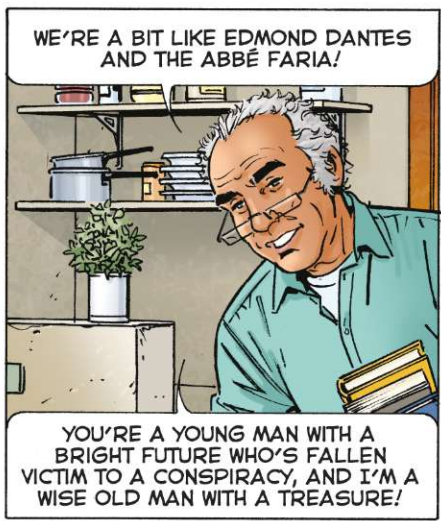


WHERE ARE YOU UP TO?

THE BIT WHERE MONTE-CRISTO MAKES HIS FIRST APPEARANCE AT THE PARTY HE'S THROWN.

OH, YES, THAT'S ONE OF MY FAVORITE SCENES!

YOU KNOW, IF YOU THINK ABOUT IT...

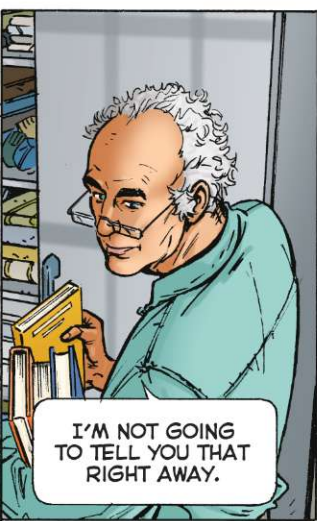


WE'RE A BIT LIKE EDMOND DANTES AND THE ABBÉ FARIA!

YOU'RE A YOUNG MAN WITH A BRIGHT FUTURE WHO'S FALLEN VICTIM TO A CONSPIRACY, AND I'M A WISE OLD MAN WITH A TREASURE!



A TREASURE! THAT TAKES THE CAKE! AND WHICH ISLAND HAVE YOU HIDDEN IT ON?

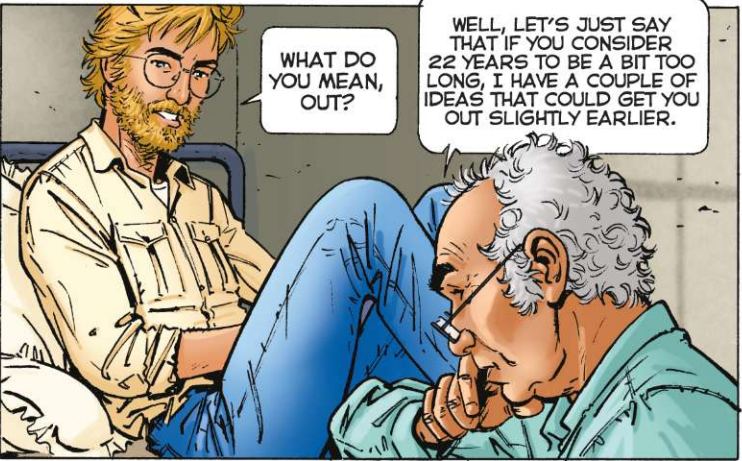


I'M NOT GOING TO TELL YOU THAT RIGHT AWAY.



BUT, YOU KNOW, IF YOU'D LIKE, I COULD TEACH YOU A LOT OF THINGS, EDUCATE YOU, LIKE FARIA DID FOR DANTES!

THAT WAY, ONCE YOU'RE OUT--



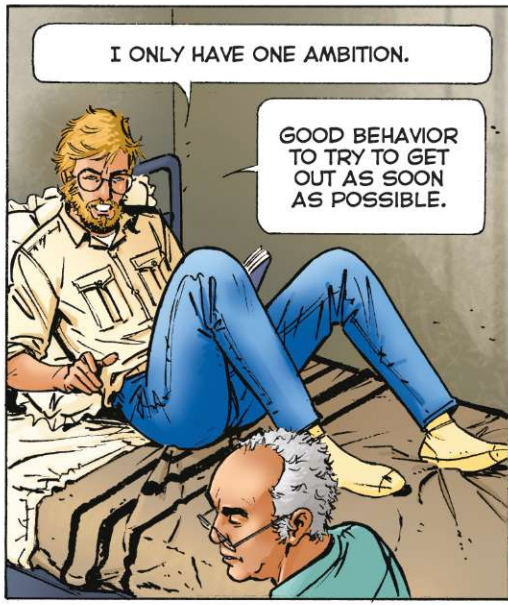
WHAT DO YOU MEAN, OUT?

WELL, LET'S JUST SAY THAT IF YOU CONSIDER 22 YEARS TO BE A BIT TOO LONG, I HAVE A COUPLE OF IDEAS THAT COULD GET YOU OUT SLIGHTLY EARLIER.



STOP! WE'RE GOING TO PRETEND THAT I DIDN'T HEAR THAT!

I'VE ALREADY GIVEN IN TO HALF-BAKED PLANS THAT CAME BACK TO BITE ME ON THE ASS. SO DON'T THINK I'LL BE GOING BACK DOWN THAT ROAD ANY TIME SOON.

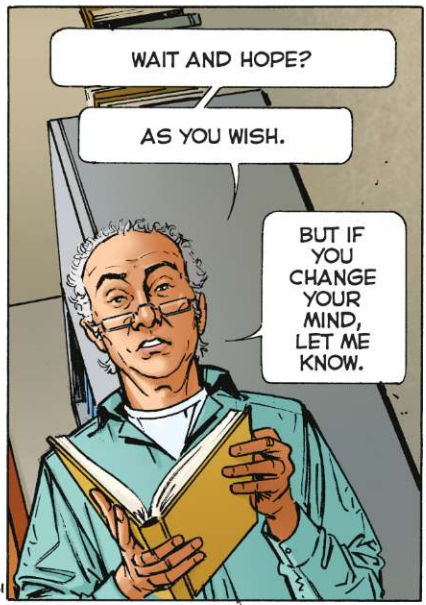


I ONLY HAVE ONE AMBITION.

GOOD BEHAVIOR TO TRY TO GET OUT AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.



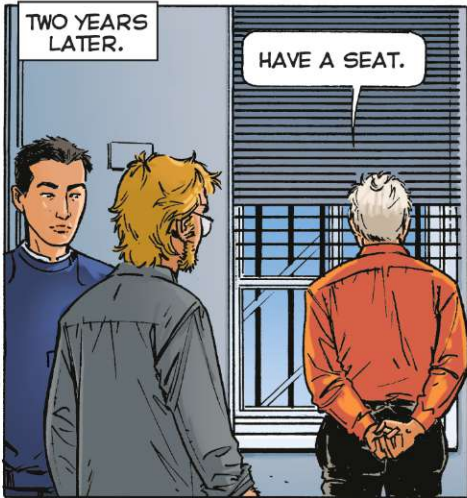
I'LL WAIT AS LONG AS IT TAKES, BUT I WON'T LEAVE HERE WITHOUT FIRST PAYING MY DEBT TO SOCIETY.



WAIT AND HOPE?

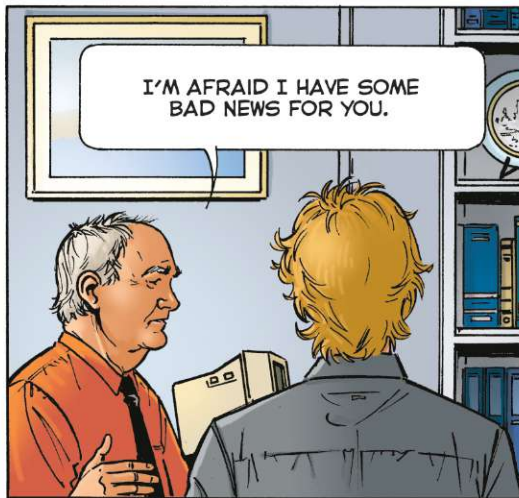
AS YOU WISH.

BUT IF YOU CHANGE YOUR MIND, LET ME KNOW.

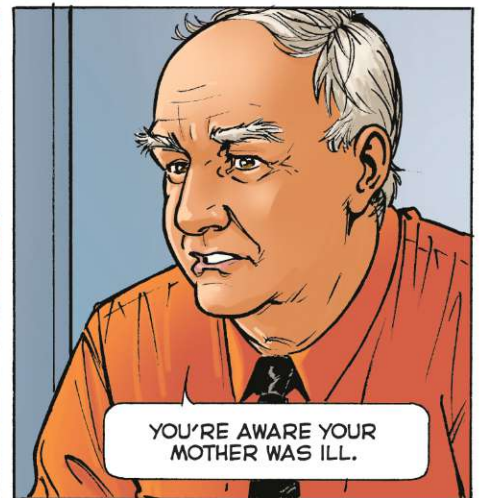


TWO YEARS LATER.

HAVE A SEAT.



I'M AFRAID I HAVE SOME BAD NEWS FOR YOU.



YOU'RE AWARE YOUR MOTHER WAS ILL.

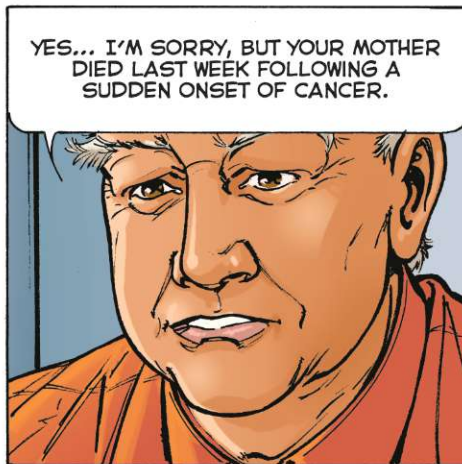


NO...

WELL, YES...

I...

...WAS ILL?

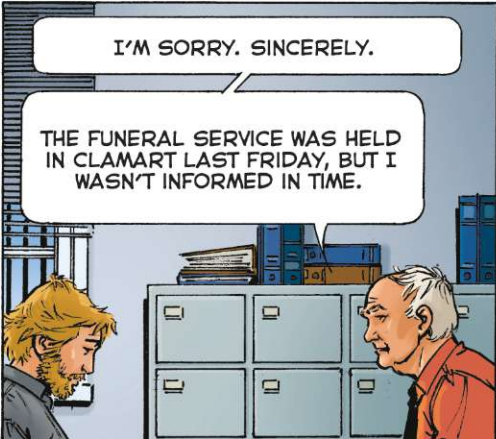


YES... I'M SORRY, BUT YOUR MOTHER DIED LAST WEEK FOLLOWING A SUDDEN ONSET OF CANCER.



NO...

NO! THAT'S NOT POSSIBLE!



I'M SORRY. SINCERELY.

THE FUNERAL SERVICE WAS HELD IN CLAMART LAST FRIDAY, BUT I WASN'T INFORMED IN TIME.



YOU DON'T HAVE ANY OTHER FAMILY MEMBERS, DO YOU?



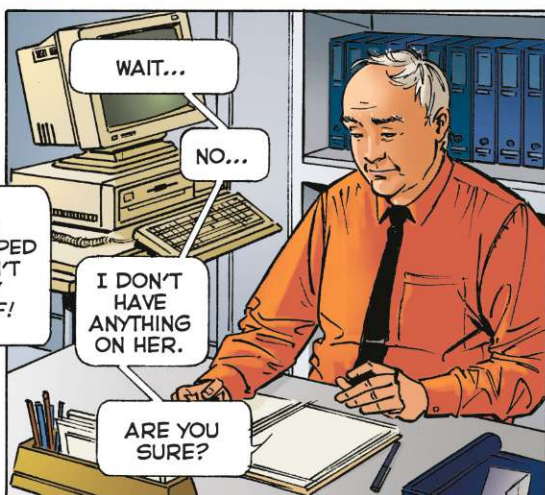
YES!

MY SISTER!



WHAT'S GOING TO HAPPEN TO HER?!

SHE'S HANDICAPPED AND CAN'T LIVE BY HERSELF!



WAIT...

NO...

I DON'T HAVE ANYTHING ON HER.

ARE YOU SURE?



BASTARD!

THEY'VE PAID YOU OFF! I'M GOING TO--

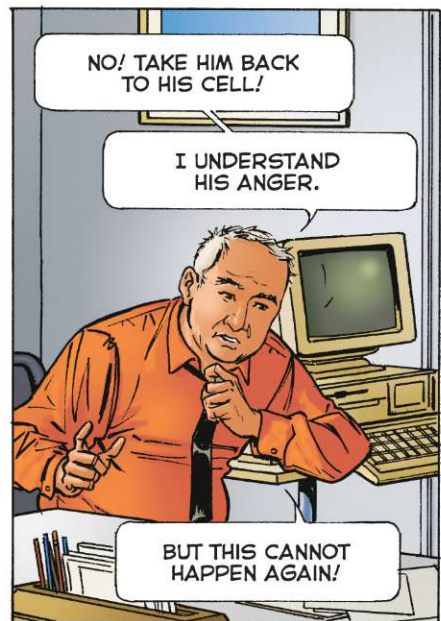


STOP HIM!



CALM DOWN, ALEXANDRE!

OTHERWISE IT'S SOLITARY!



NO! TAKE HIM BACK TO HIS CELL!

I UNDERSTAND HIS ANGER.

BUT THIS CANNOT HAPPEN AGAIN!

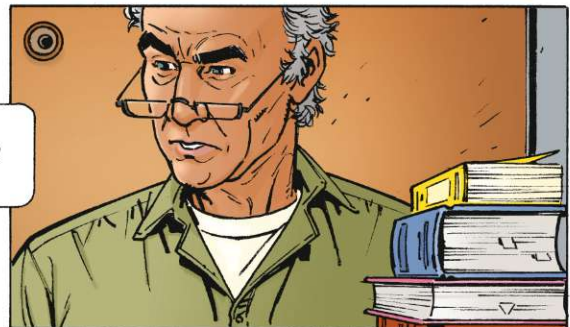


LET GO OF ME, YOU BASTARD!



THAT'S ENOUGH!

DON'T FORCE US TO PUT YOU DOWNSTAIRS!



NOW CALM DOWN!



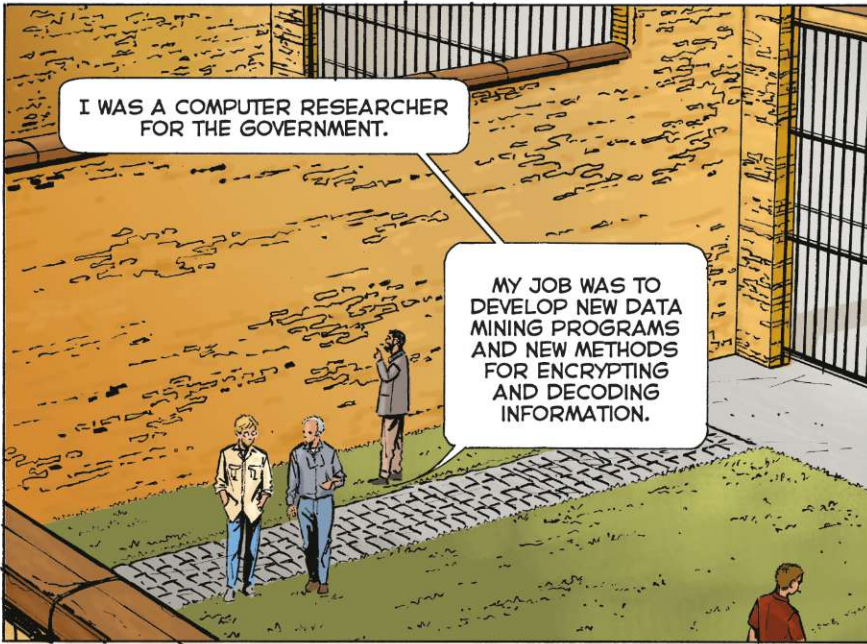
WHAT HAPPENED?

THAT'S THE FIRST TIME I'VE EVER SEEN YOU IN SUCH A STATE!



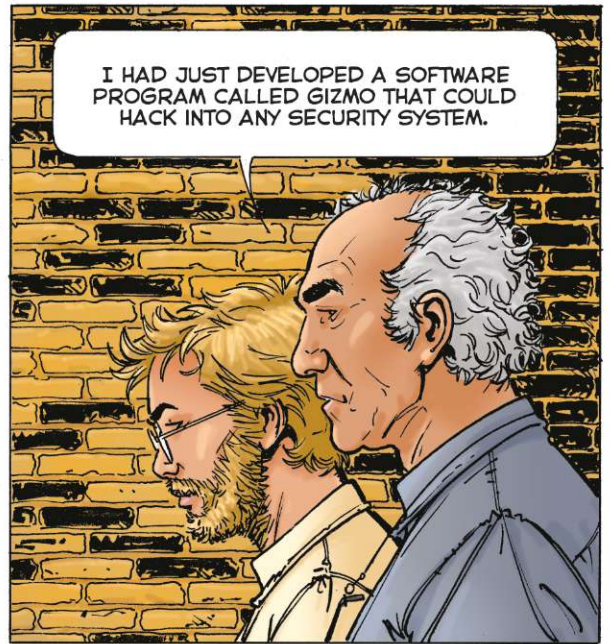
YOUR ABBÉ FARIA STORY, IS IT STILL GOOD?

I'LL DO WHATEVER YOU NEED IF YOU CAN GET ME OUT OF HERE!



I WAS A COMPUTER RESEARCHER FOR THE GOVERNMENT.

MY JOB WAS TO DEVELOP NEW DATA MINING PROGRAMS AND NEW METHODS FOR ENCRYPTING AND DECODING INFORMATION.

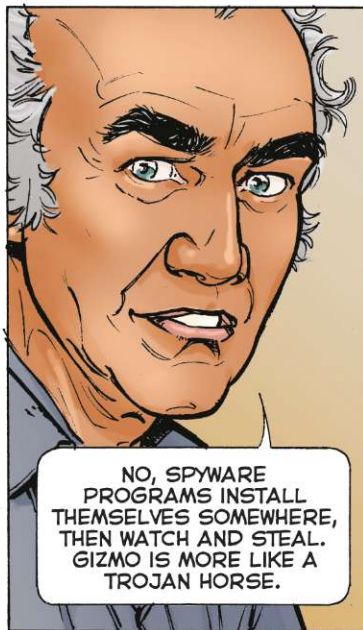


I HAD JUST DEVELOPED A SOFTWARE PROGRAM CALLED GIZMO THAT COULD HACK INTO ANY SECURITY SYSTEM.



IT CAN PENETRATE ANY OPERATING SYSTEM AND THEN ADAPTS TO BECOME THIS SYSTEM, ALL WITHOUT MODIFYING IT OR DESTROYING IT.

SPYWARE?



NO, SPYWARE PROGRAMS INSTALL THEMSELVES SOMEWHERE, THEN WATCH AND STEAL. GIZMO IS MORE LIKE A TROJAN HORSE.



IT TRANSFORMS, ABSORBS, AND BECOMES THE SYSTEM IT HAS HACKED WITHOUT ANYONE REALIZING...

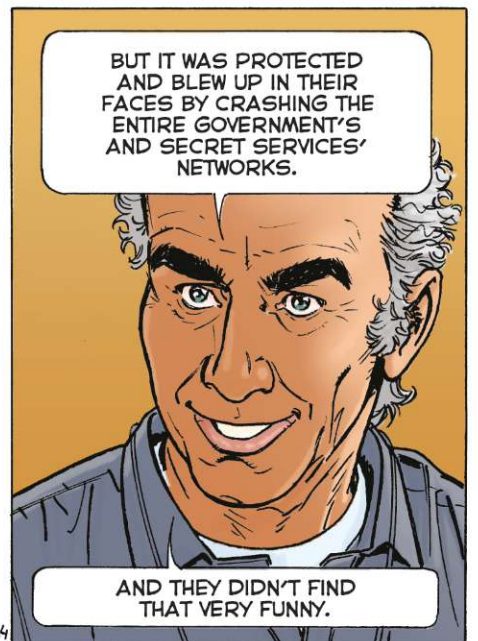
...GIVING ME TOTAL CONTROL OF THE SYSTEM.



SO, HOW DID YOU WIND UP HERE?

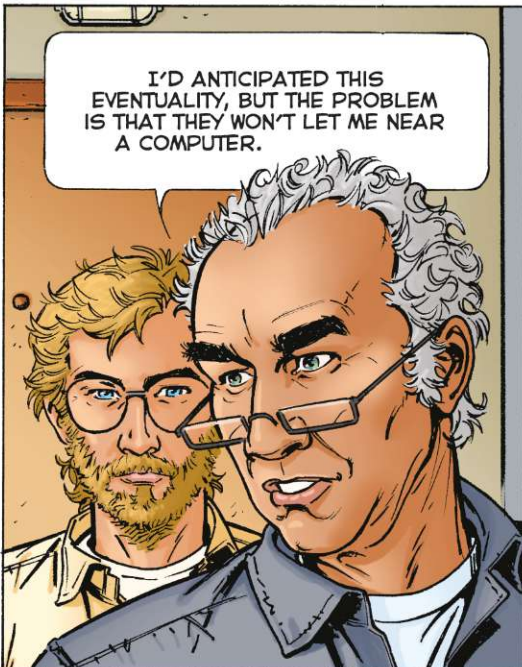
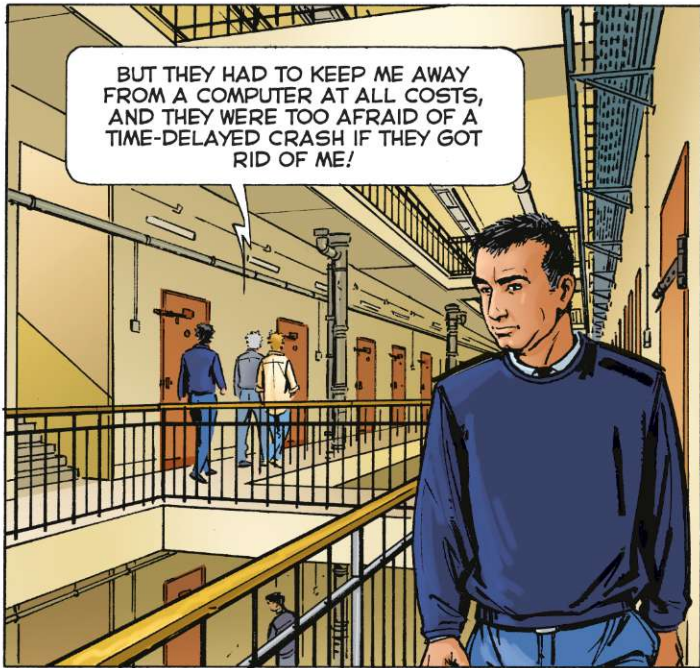


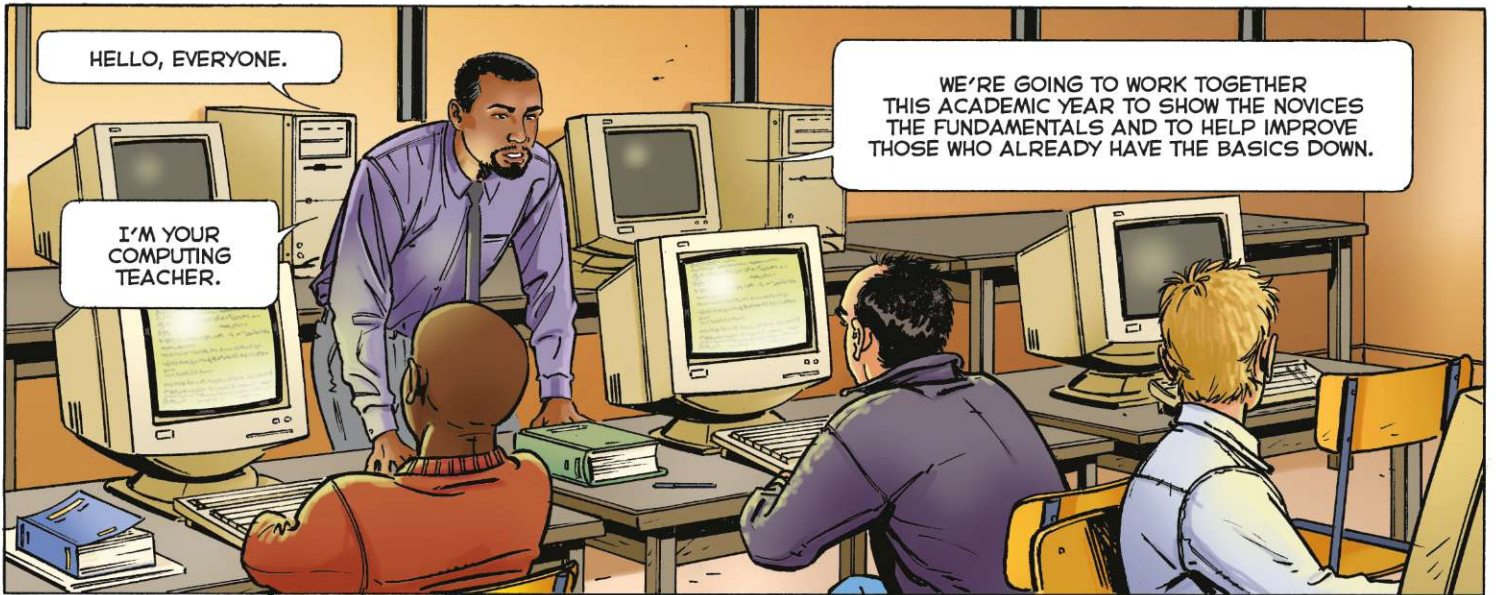
LET'S JUST SAY THAT SOME OF MY EMPLOYERS THOUGHT THEY COULD SELL GIZMO TO A DUBIOUS BUYER, WHO TRIED TO USE IT WITHOUT MY KNOWLEDGE BY DRIVING ME OUT.



BUT IT WAS PROTECTED AND BLEW UP IN THEIR FACES BY CRASHING THE ENTIRE GOVERNMENT'S AND SECRET SERVICES' NETWORKS.

AND THEY DIDN'T FIND THAT VERY FUNNY.





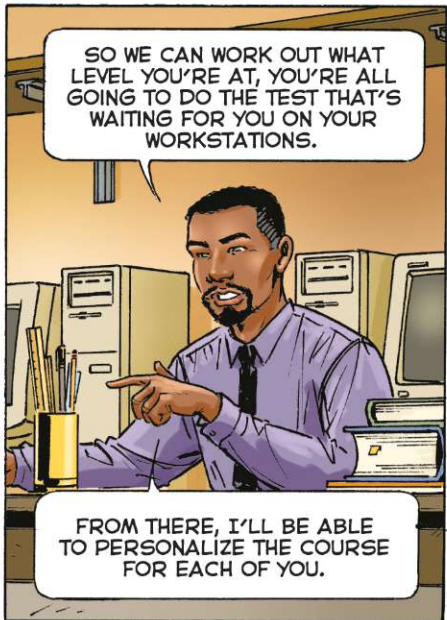
HELLO, EVERYONE.

WE'RE GOING TO WORK TOGETHER THIS ACADEMIC YEAR TO SHOW THE NOVICES THE FUNDAMENTALS AND TO HELP IMPROVE THOSE WHO ALREADY HAVE THE BASICS DOWN.

I'M YOUR COMPUTING TEACHER.



COMPUTING WILL BE AN EXCELLENT REHABILITATION TOOL FOR YOU ALL.



SO WE CAN WORK OUT WHAT LEVEL YOU'RE AT, YOU'RE ALL GOING TO DO THE TEST THAT'S WAITING FOR YOU ON YOUR WORKSTATIONS.

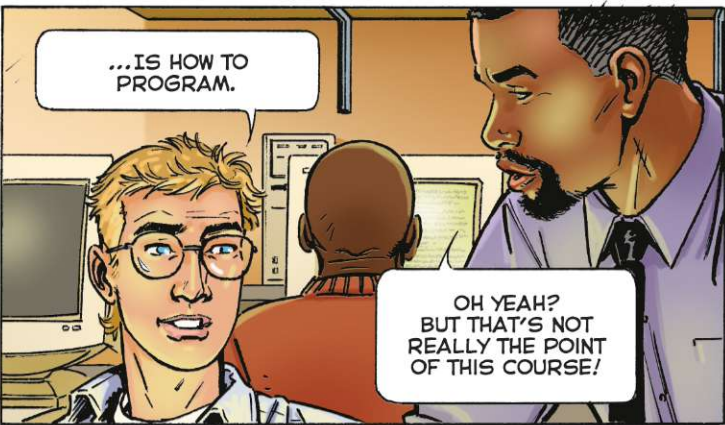
FROM THERE, I'LL BE ABLE TO PERSONALIZE THE COURSE FOR EACH OF YOU.



FINISHED ALREADY?

YOU'VE ALREADY GOT SOME COMPUTING EXPERIENCE?

ONLY AS A USER. WHAT I'M INTERESTED IN NOW...



...IS HOW TO PROGRAM.

OH YEAH? BUT THAT'S NOT REALLY THE POINT OF THIS COURSE!



MAYBE, BUT IT'S IN YOUR SKILL SET, RIGHT?



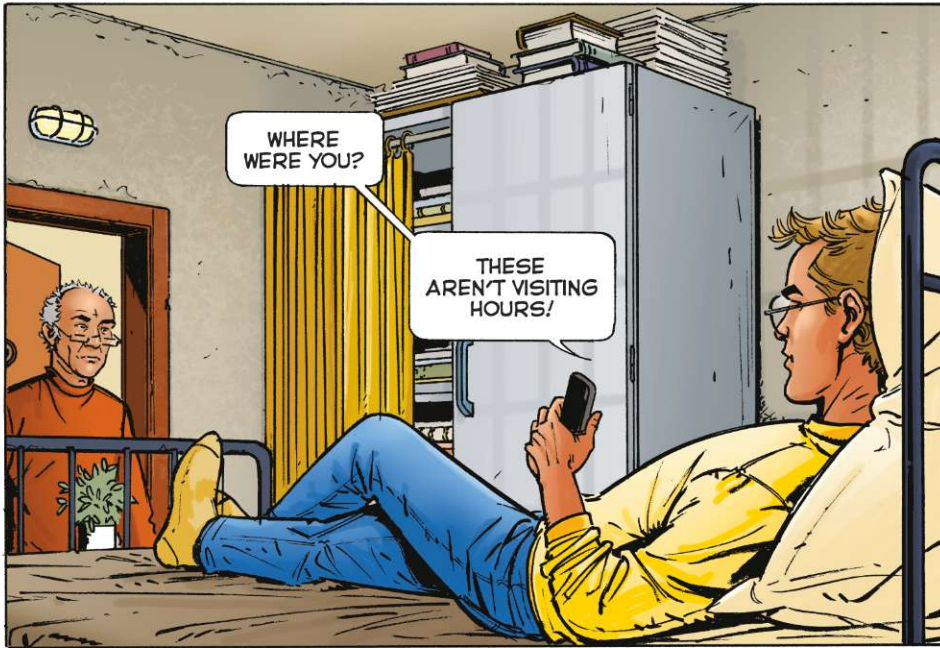
YES, OF COURSE.

OK, LET'S SEE HOW IT GOES...

...AND WE'LL ADJUST!

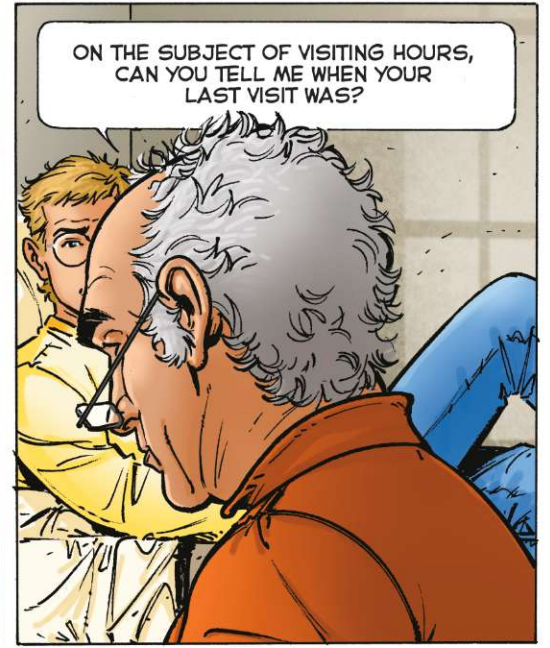


SO, LET'S START BY SEEING WHAT A SOURCE CODE IS...



WHERE WERE YOU?

THESE AREN'T VISITING HOURS!



ON THE SUBJECT OF VISITING HOURS, CAN YOU TELL ME WHEN YOUR LAST VISIT WAS?



AT LEAST THREE YEARS, RIGHT?

WHAT HAVE YOU DONE IN ALL THAT TIME? NOTHING!

YOU HAVEN'T EVEN TRIED TO FIND OUT WHERE YOUR SISTER IS!



WHAT'S UP WITH YOU?

AND, MORE IMPORTANTLY, WHO TOLD YOU ABOUT MY SISTER?



ALEX! YOUR FACE!

WHAT HAPPENED TO YOU? WHO DID THAT?

IT'S NOTHING.

BUMPED INTO THE WRONG GUY... NOTHING MAJOR. YOU DIDN'T ANSWER MY QUESTION. WHO TOLD YOU--



FORGIVE ME, I SHOULD NEVER HAVE... I'M TIRED. I WAS AT THE HOSPITAL FOR SOME TESTS.

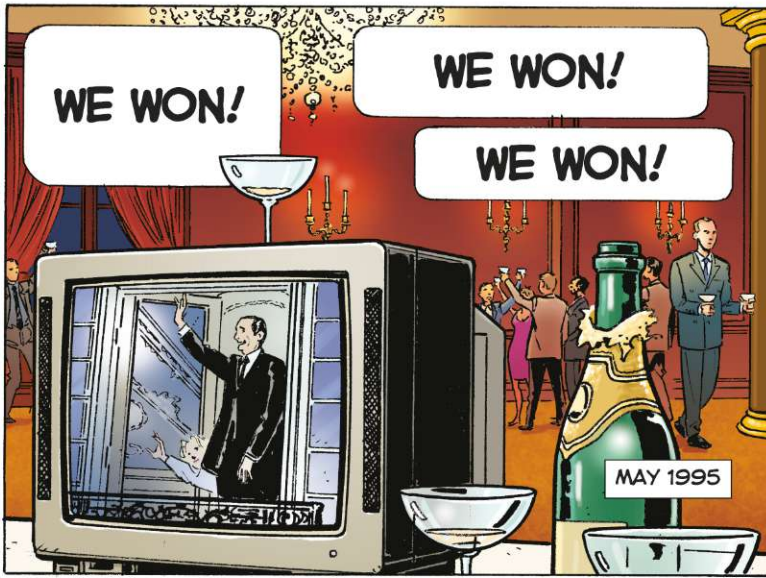
WHAT DO YOU MEAN? YOU NEVER TOLD ME ABOUT THAT! WHAT'S WRONG? NOTHING SERIOUS, RIGHT?



IT'S KIND OF YOU TO WORRY, BUT IT'S NOTHING MAJOR. JUST A BIT OF OLD AGE.



IT'S MY HEART. I'M GOING TO NEED SOME NEW MEDICATION.



WE WON!

WE WON!

WE WON!

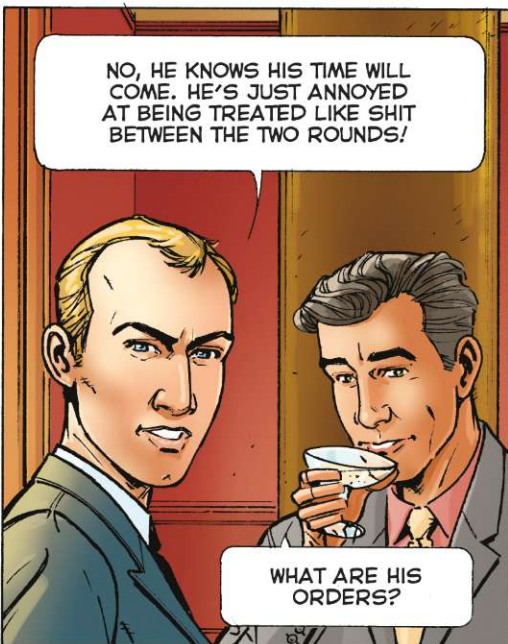
MAY 1995



WELL, DID YOU GET IT?

JUST THIS SECOND.

HE'S NOT TOO DISAPPOINTED?



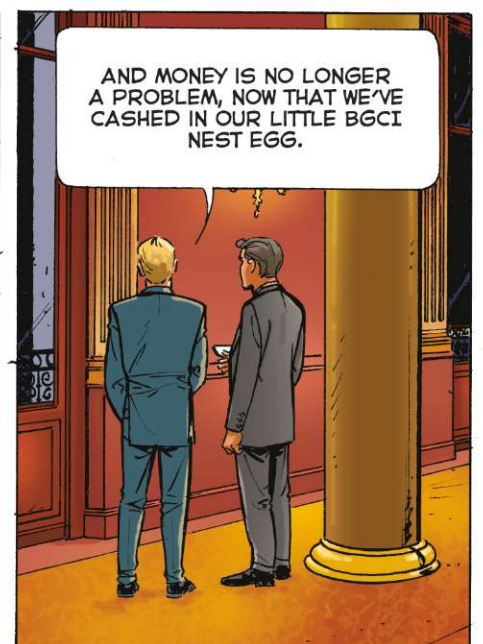
NO, HE KNOWS HIS TIME WILL COME. HE'S JUST ANNOYED AT BEING TREATED LIKE SHIT BETWEEN THE TWO ROUNDS!

WHAT ARE HIS ORDERS?

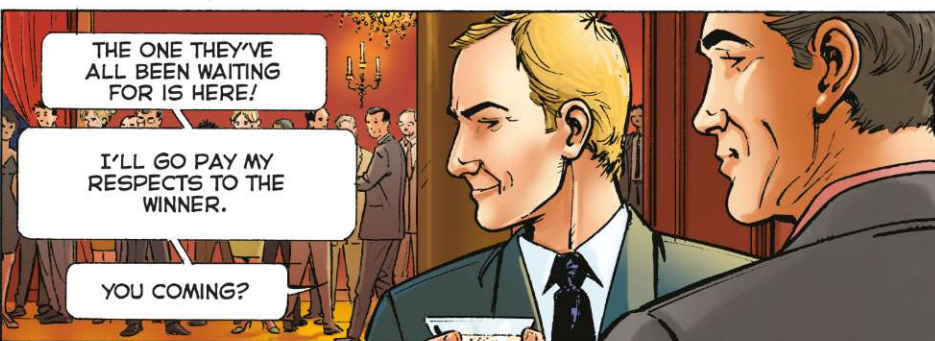


HE'S ASKED US NOT TO CHANGE OUR PLANS AT ALL.

MY BOSS WILL BE PLACED IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE AND I'LL BE HIS CHIEF OF STAFF, WHICH WILL BE AN EXCELLENT POST FOR ORGANIZING OUR RESEARCH.



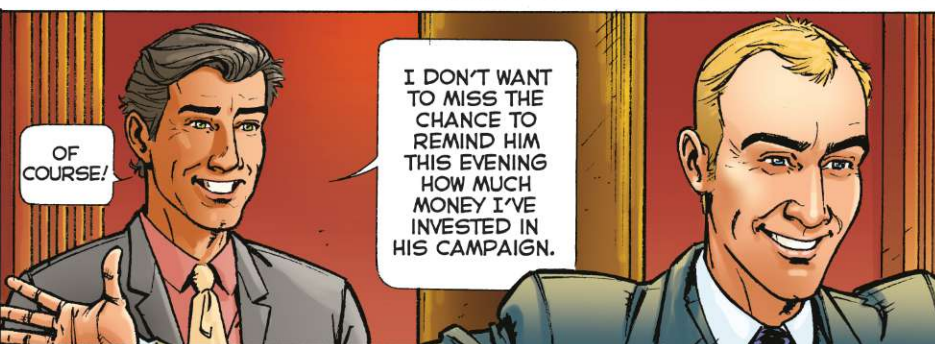
AND MONEY IS NO LONGER A PROBLEM, NOW THAT WE'VE CASHED IN OUR LITTLE BGC I NEST EGG.



THE ONE THEY'VE ALL BEEN WAITING FOR IS HERE!

I'LL GO PAY MY RESPECTS TO THE WINNER.

YOU COMING?

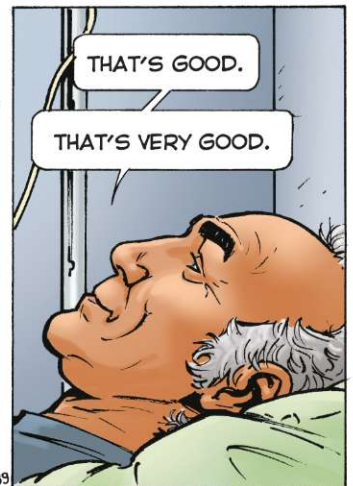
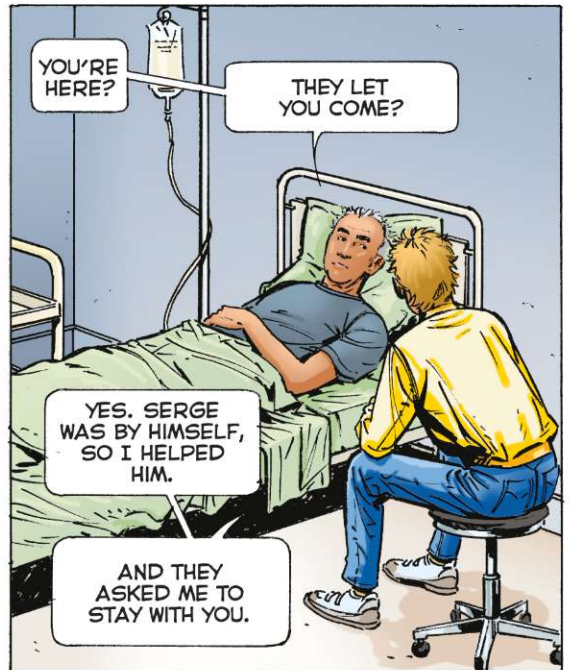


OF COURSE!

I DON'T WANT TO MISS THE CHANCE TO REMIND HIM THIS EVENING HOW MUCH MONEY I'VE INVESTED IN HIS CAMPAIGN.



MY DEAR FRIEND!



THE 10-YEAR ANNIVERSARY OF THE MATIF, THE PALACE OF VERSAILLES, JUNE 6 1996.

WELL, WELL! MICHEL AND SYLVIE!
WHAT A SURPRISE!

GOOD EVENING,
JEAN, GENEVIEVE.

IT'S BEEN SO LONG SINCE WE'VE SEEN YOU ARM-IN-ARM!

SYLVIE WILL ALWAYS BE THE PERFECT WOMAN FOR ME, EVEN THOUGH I'M WELL AWARE THAT ONE MAN ISN'T ENOUGH FOR HER.

SPEAKING OF WHICH, HERE'S ANOTHER...

GOOD EVENING!
WE FINALLY FOUND YOU!
LOOK, HONEY,
ALL OUR FRIENDS
ARE HERE!

NOT SURPRISING.
WE ALL KNOW HOW
MUCH WE OWE TO
THE MATIF!

MISSING ITS TENTH ANNIVERSARY
WOULD HAVE BEEN CRIMINAL!

HA HA HA!

IN ANY EVENT, THEY REALLY
WENT ALL OUT!

WHY DON'T WE RAISE A TOAST?

TO ALL THOSE
WHO, VOLUNTARILY OR
OTHERWISE, MADE OUR
GOOD FORTUNE!

AND MAY IT SPREAD
TO OUR FINE COUNTRY!

WELL, WELL, SUCH PLANS!

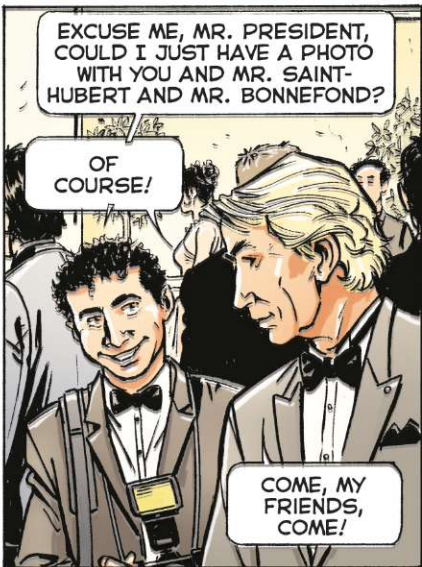
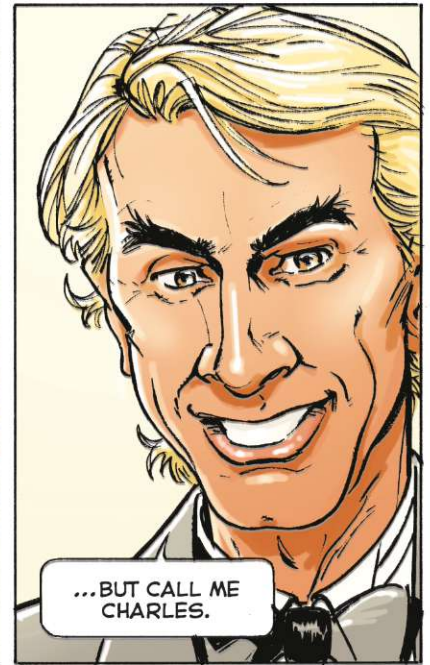
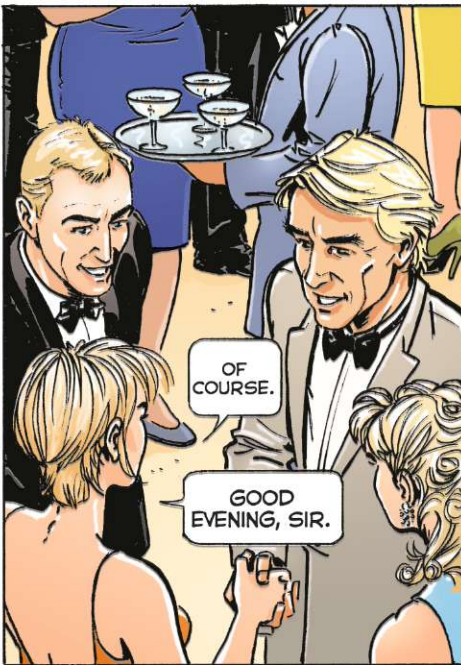
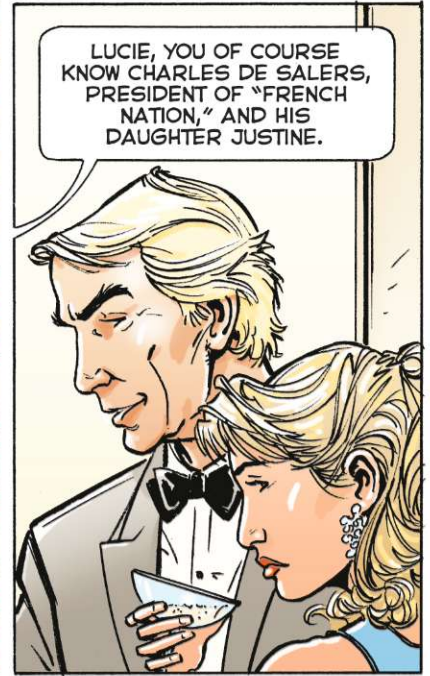
BUT I
DOUBT IT'S THE
GOVERNMENT'S
ECONOMIC POLICY
YOU'RE WORKING
ON!

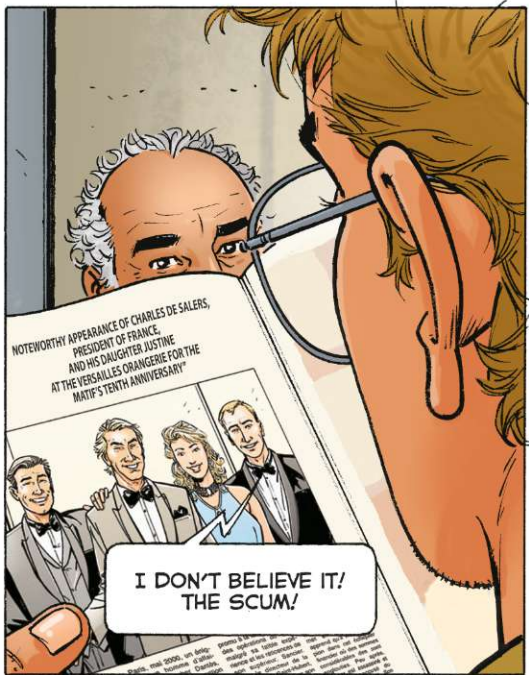
MISS
MONDRAN!

I SHOULD HAVE GUESSED
WE'D SEE YOU HERE. IN A SHORT
SPACE OF TIME, YOUR NEWSPAPER
HAS BECOME INDISPENSABLE IN
THE WORLD OF FINANCE!

I CAN ONLY RETURN
THE COMPLIMENT!

IT'S STRANGE TO SEE US ALL TOGETHER.
THE LAST TIME WAS FOR THE TRI--





I DON'T BELIEVE IT! THE SCUM!

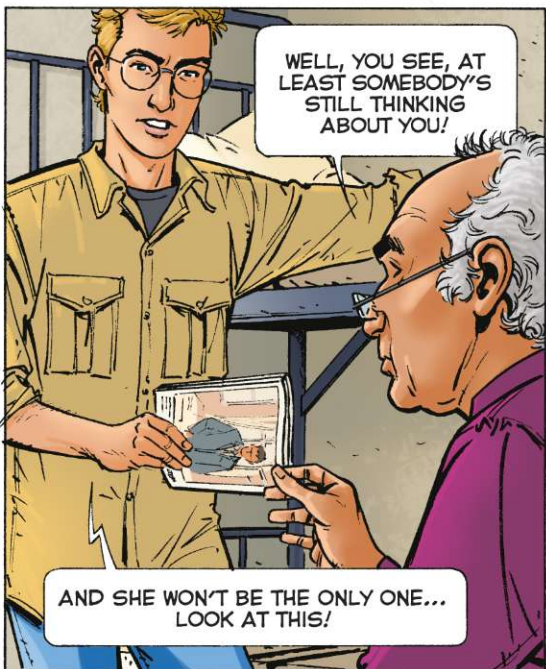


WHAT'S THAT YOU'RE READING?

YOU REMEMBER LUCIE MONDRAN, THE JOURNALIST WHO TRIED TO HELP ME DURING MY TRIAL?



SHE'S NOW THE EDITOR-IN-CHIEF FOR A WEEKLY FINANCIAL NEWSPAPER. SHE SENDS ME A COPY EACH WEEK.

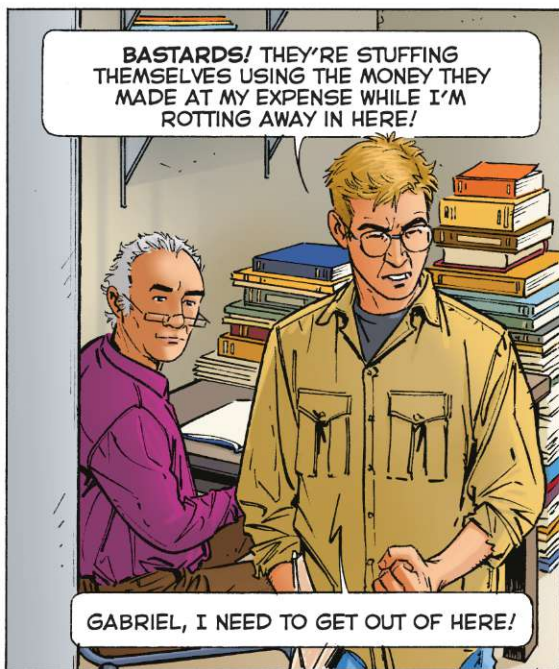


WELL, YOU SEE, AT LEAST SOMEBODY'S STILL THINKING ABOUT YOU!

AND SHE WON'T BE THE ONLY ONE... LOOK AT THIS!



WELL, MY FRIEND! THEY KEEP STRANGE COMPANY, YOUR TWO PALS.



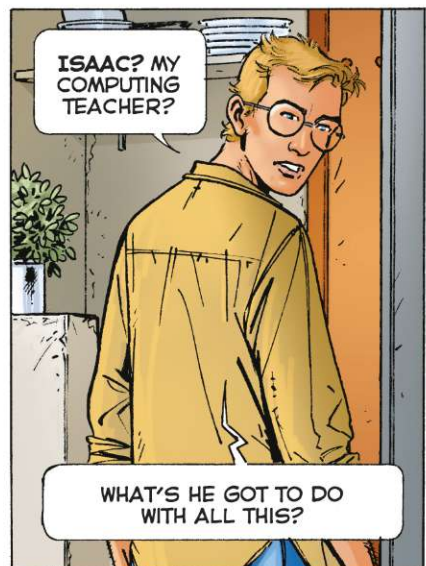
BASTARDS! THEY'RE STUFFING THEMSELVES USING THE MONEY THEY MADE AT MY EXPENSE WHILE I'M ROTTING AWAY IN HERE!

GABRIEL, I NEED TO GET OUT OF HERE!



OKAY!

WELL, LET'S ASK ISAAC TO HELP US!



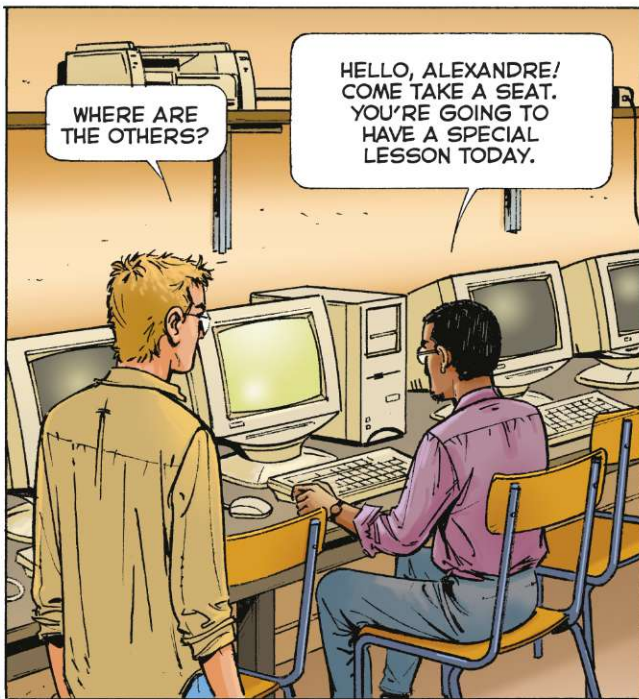
ISAAC? MY COMPUTING TEACHER?

WHAT'S HE GOT TO DO WITH ALL THIS?



LET'S SAY HE WERE TO HAVE AN UPDATED VERSION OF GIZMO IN HIS BAG...

...AND WHICH HE COULD USE ON THE JAIL'S COMPUTER NETWORK.



WHERE ARE THE OTHERS?

HELLO, ALEXANDRE!
COME TAKE A SEAT.
YOU'RE GOING TO
HAVE A SPECIAL
LESSON TODAY.



WE'RE GOING TO LEARN
ABOUT A NEW PROGRAMMING
INTERFACE.

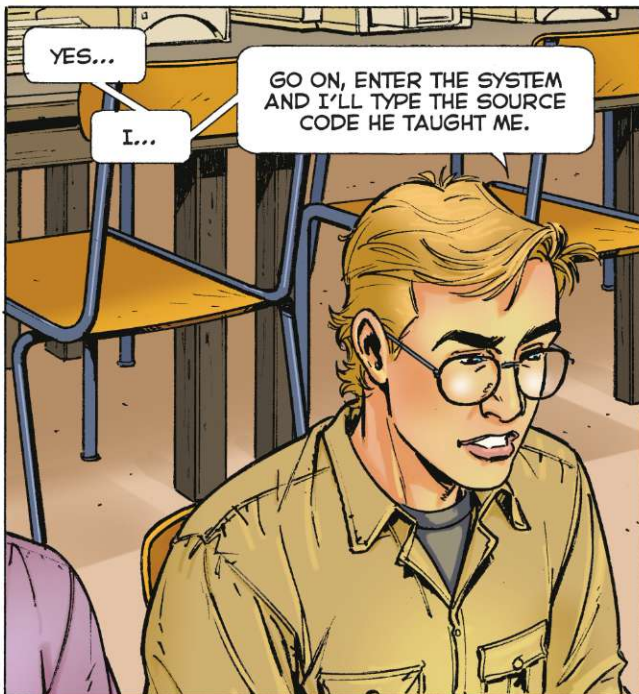
GIZMO?

I'VE INSTALLED A CONNECTION
THAT WILL ALLOW US TO TAKE
A LOOK AROUND.



AND YOU'RE
GOING TO BE
MY GUIDE.

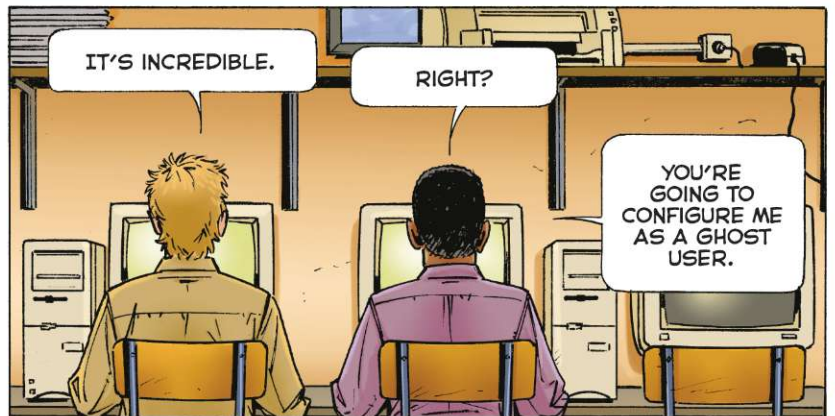
I CAN ONLY
INSTALL IT. AS FOR
THE REPROGRAMMING,
GABRIEL SHOULD HAVE
TAUGHT YOU WHAT
TO DO.



YES...

I...

GO ON, ENTER THE SYSTEM
AND I'LL TYPE THE SOURCE
CODE HE TAUGHT ME.



IT'S INCREDIBLE.

RIGHT?

YOU'RE
GOING TO
CONFIGURE ME
AS A GHOST
USER.



WHEN
YOU'RE READY,
I'LL BE ABLE
TO CONTROL
THE SYSTEM
FROM THE
OUTSIDE.

WHEN?



THAT'S
UP TO
YOU.

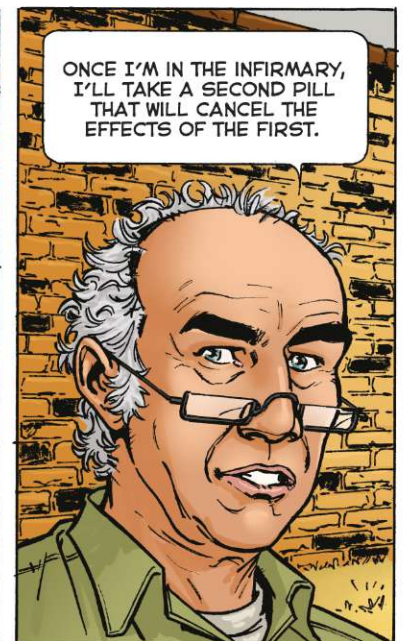
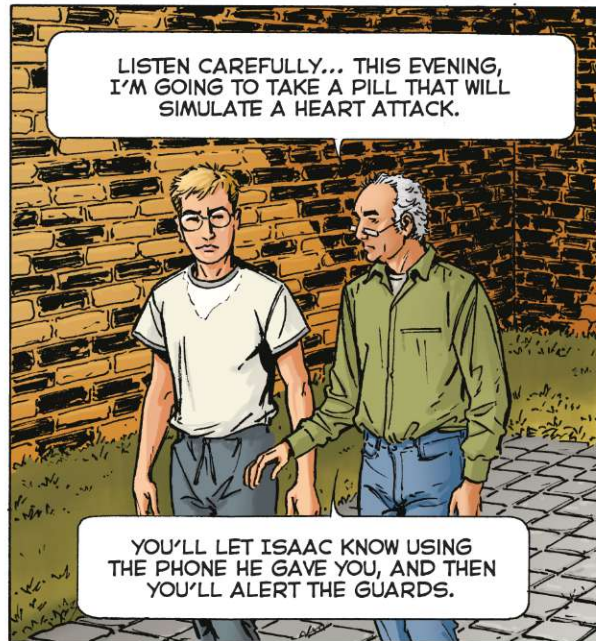
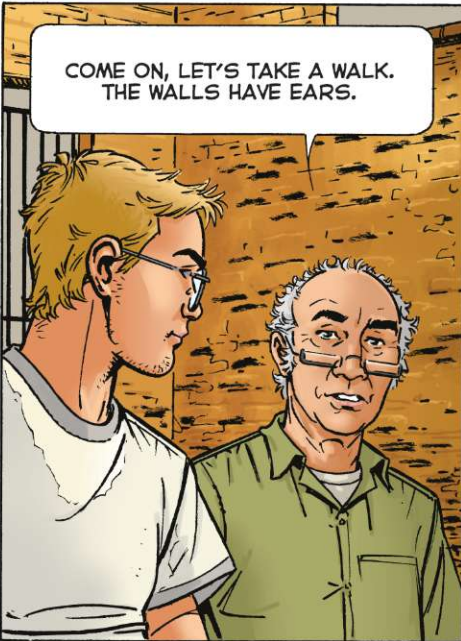
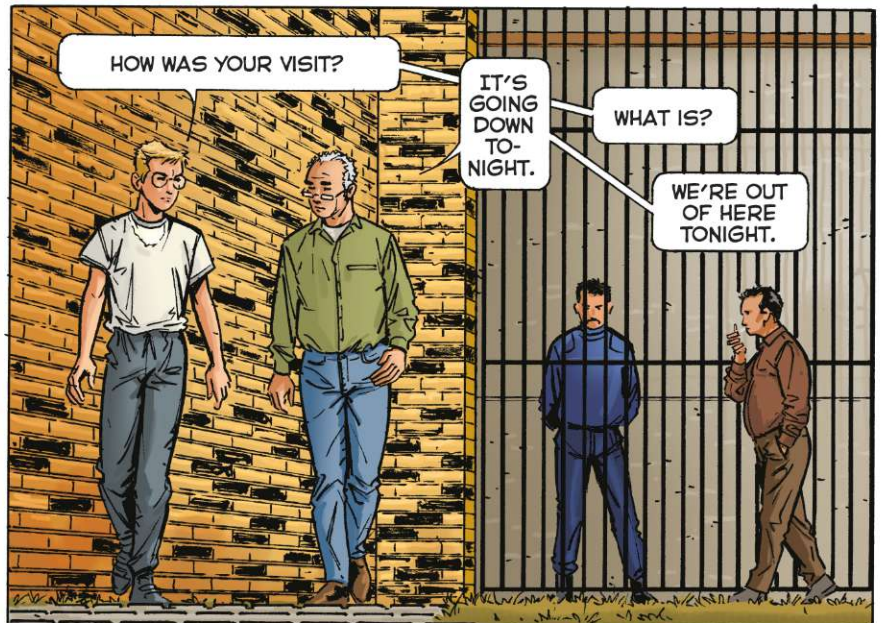
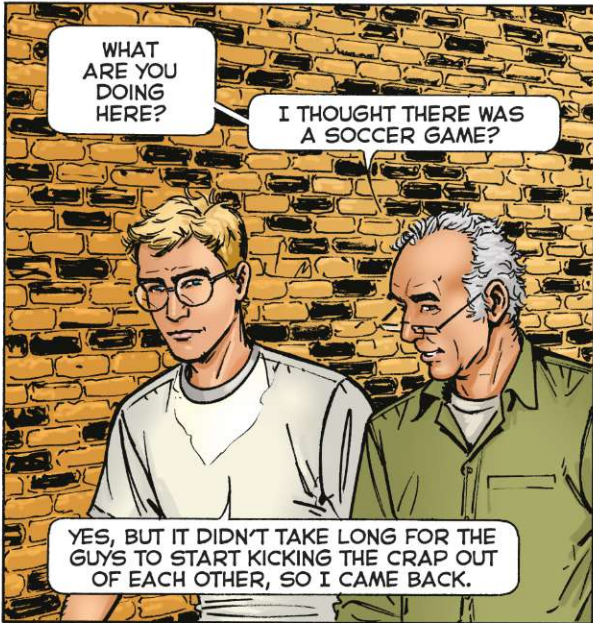
THERE'S A CELL PHONE
AND A HARNESS IN A SMALL
BAG UNDER YOUR CHAIR
WHICH YOU CAN TIE
TO YOUR ANKLE.

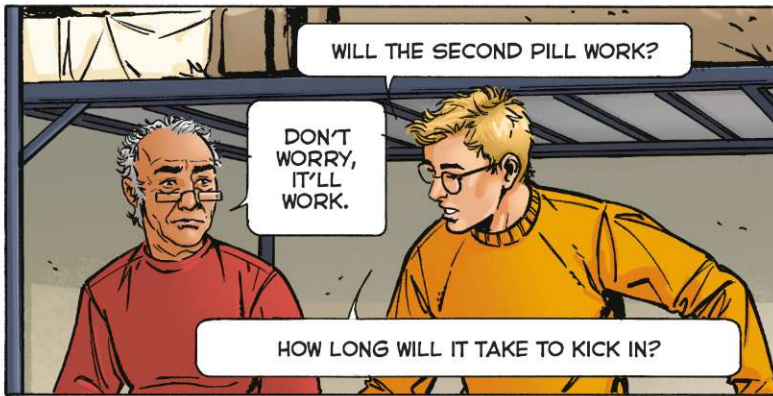


FOR THE REST,
SPEAK TO GABRIEL.



THANK YOU.





WILL THE SECOND PILL WORK?

DON'T WORRY, IT'LL WORK.

HOW LONG WILL IT TAKE TO KICK IN?



FIFTEEN MINUTES, GIVE OR TAKE. CALL ISAAC. HE HAS TO MOVE. AND NO NAMES ON THE PHONE.



IT'S ME.

IT'S DONE.

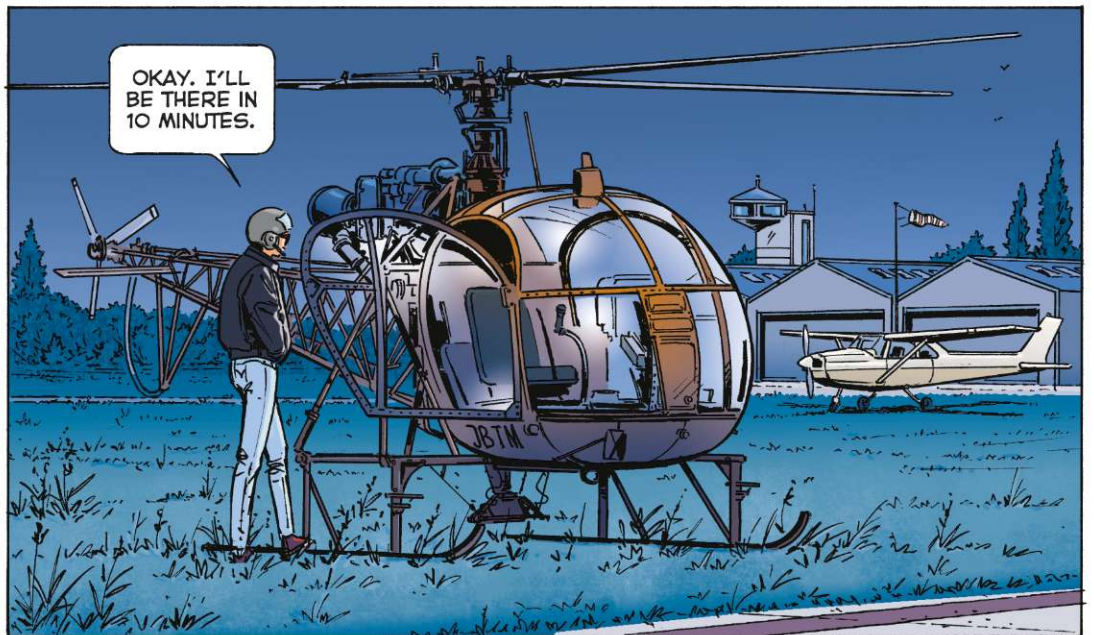


OKAY. I'LL FIRE UP GIZMO.

CALL ME BACK AS PLANNED.



IT'S ME. YOU CAN GO. THEY'RE READY.

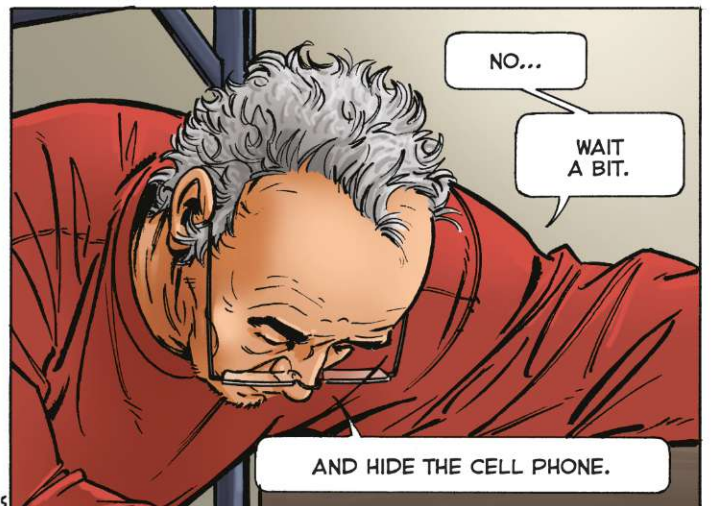


OKAY. I'LL BE THERE IN 10 MINUTES.



AH! IT'S STARTING! IT HURTS LIKE HELL!

I'LL CALL THEM!



NO...

WAIT A BIT.

AND HIDE THE CELL PHONE.



OKAY, YOU CAN GO GET THEM.

IT WON'T BE LONG TILL I LOSE CONSCIOUS--



GABRIEL!



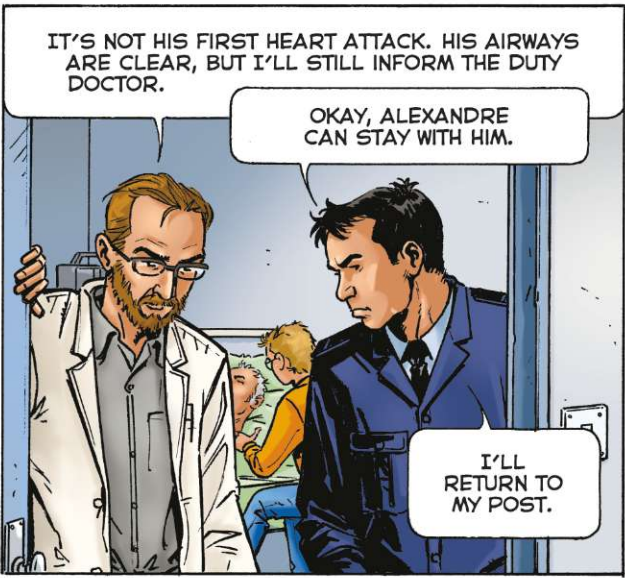
GUARD!
GUARD!
GABRIEL'S HAVING A HEART ATTACK!

COME QUICK!



WE'LL TAKE HIM TO THE INFIRMARY! BUT THERE'S NO DOCTOR AT THIS TIME!

IT'S GOING TO BE FINE... HOLD ON!



IT'S NOT HIS FIRST HEART ATTACK. HIS AIRWAYS ARE CLEAR, BUT I'LL STILL INFORM THE DUTY DOCTOR.

OKAY, ALEXANDRE CAN STAY WITH HIM.

I'LL RETURN TO MY POST.



LISTEN CAREFULLY... INFORM ISAAC AND GIVE ME THE SECOND PILL...

AFTER THAT, AS SOON AS YOU HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY, MAKE A BREAK FOR IT AS PLANNED.



IT'S ME. WE'RE IN THE INFIRMARY. YOU CAN CRASH IT ALL.

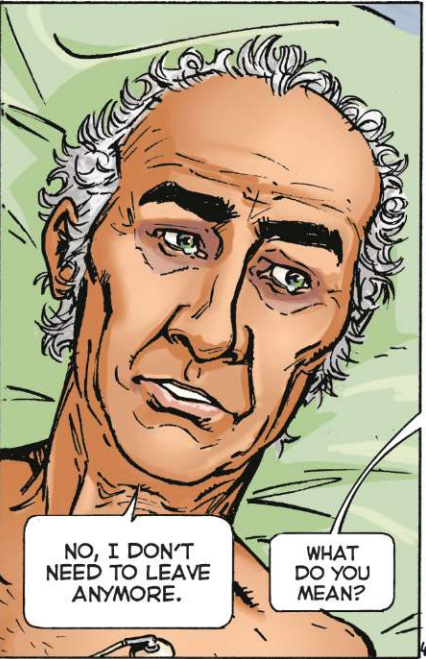


OKAY. I'M ALREADY INSIDE. I'M ACTIVATING GIZMO. AS SOON AS THE ALARM SOUNDS, FOLLOW THE PLAN AND GET OUT OF THERE.

I'LL UNLOCK THE DOORS AS YOU GO!



TAKE IT. THE ALARMS ARE ABOUT TO GO OFF. WE'LL BE ABLE TO LEAVE.



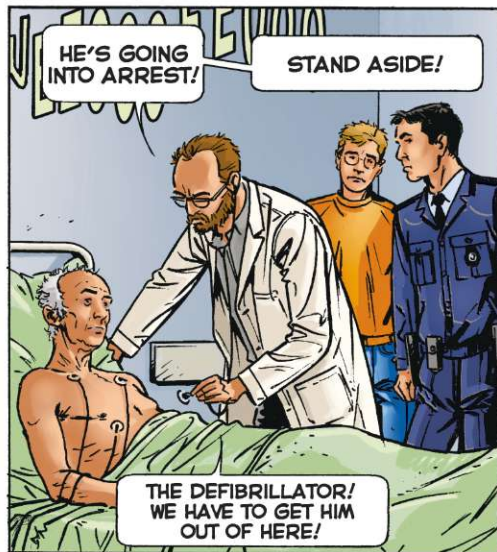
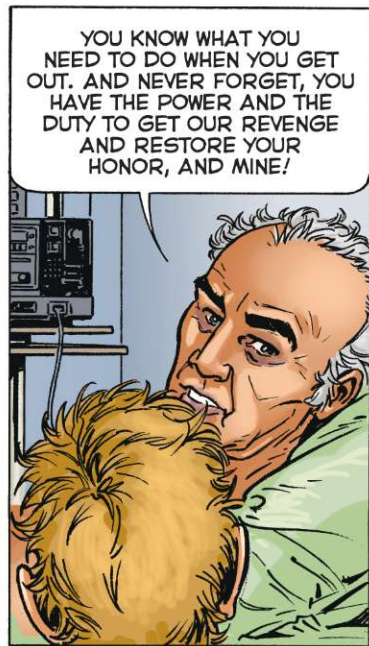
NO, I DON'T NEED TO LEAVE ANYMORE.

WHAT DO YOU MEAN?



I'M SORRY, BUT I LIED TO YOU AS WELL.

I DON'T HAVE AN ANTIDOTE.





I'M LOWERING THE ROPE!

OKAY, GET CLOSER. I'LL LET HIM KNOW.

ALEX, WE'RE GOING TO LOWER A ROPE WHICH YOU CAN ATTACH TO YOUR BELT BEFORE IT FLIES OFF.

GOOD GOD!

SOMEONE'S GETTING AWAY!

AND THE NETWORK'S DOWN!

I'VE GOT IT!

SHIT!

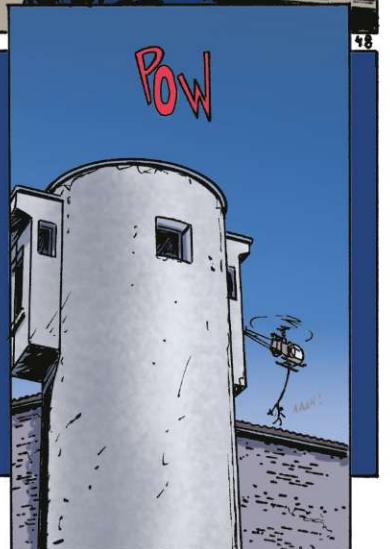
SPANG!

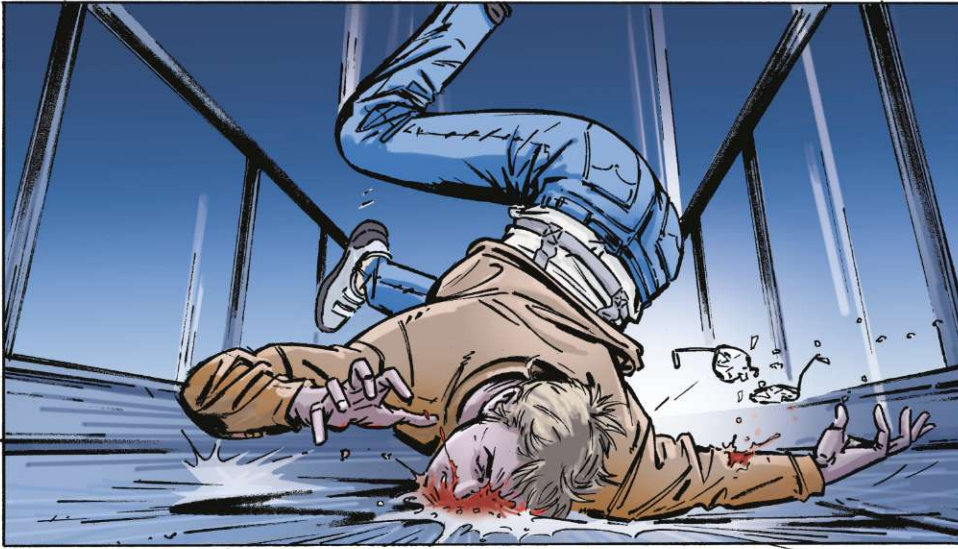
THEY'RE SHOOTING AT US!

I'M OUT OF HERE!

I HAVE TO TAKE HIM OUT NOW!

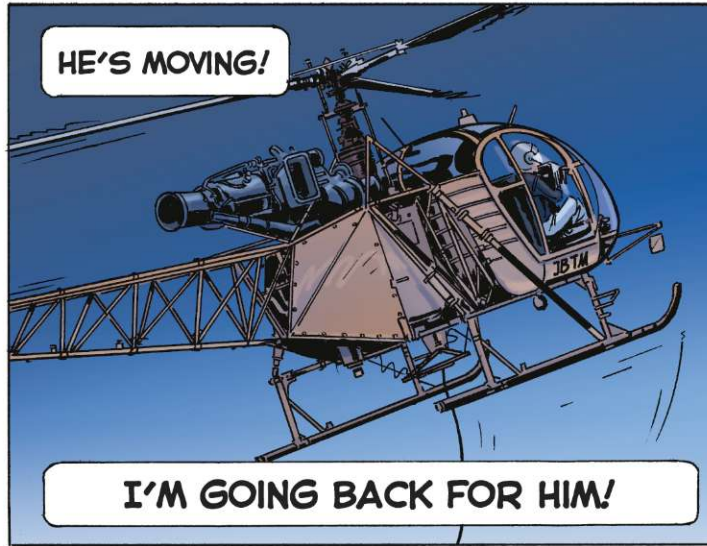
IF HE MAKES IT TO THE CHOPPER, IT'LL BE TOO LATE!





I LOST HIM!

HE FELL!



HE'S MOVING!

I'M GOING BACK FOR HIM!

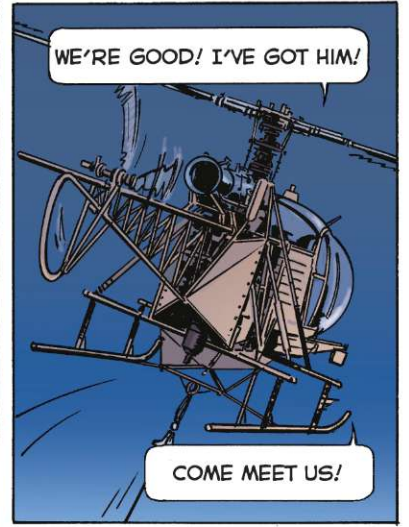


NO! THAT'S MADNESS!

GET OUT OF THERE!



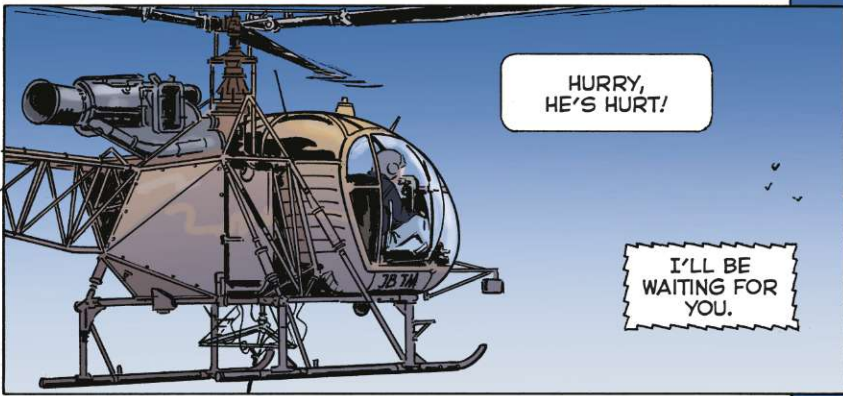
PAANG



WE'RE GOOD! I'VE GOT HIM!

COME MEET US!



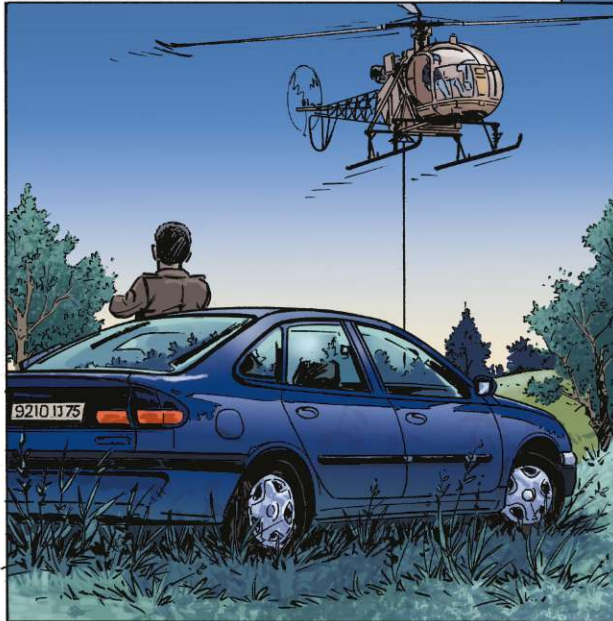


HURRY, HE'S HURT!

I'LL BE WAITING FOR YOU.



WE'RE GOOD! YOU CAN LAND!

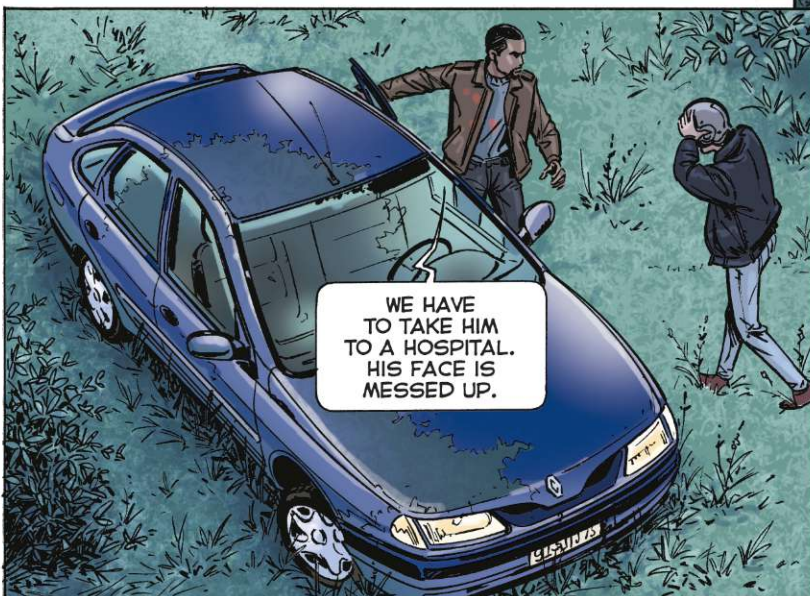


STAND OVER THERE. I'LL LOWER HIM DOWN CAREFULLY

OK, I'LL GRAB HIM!



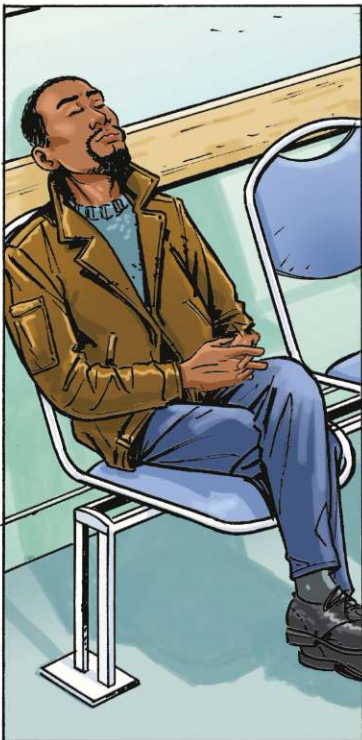
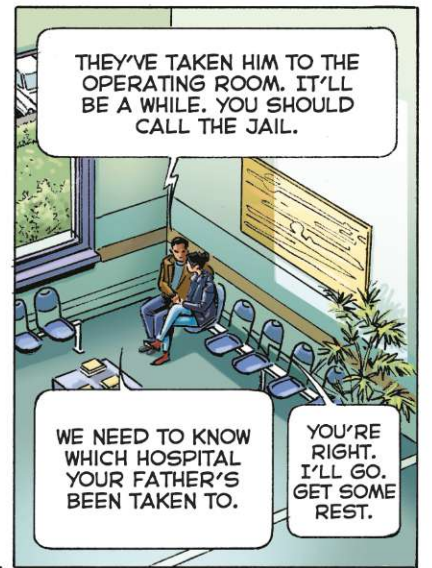
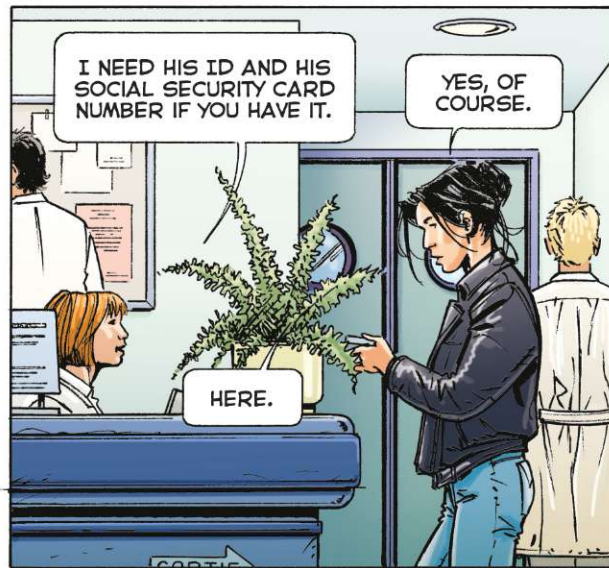
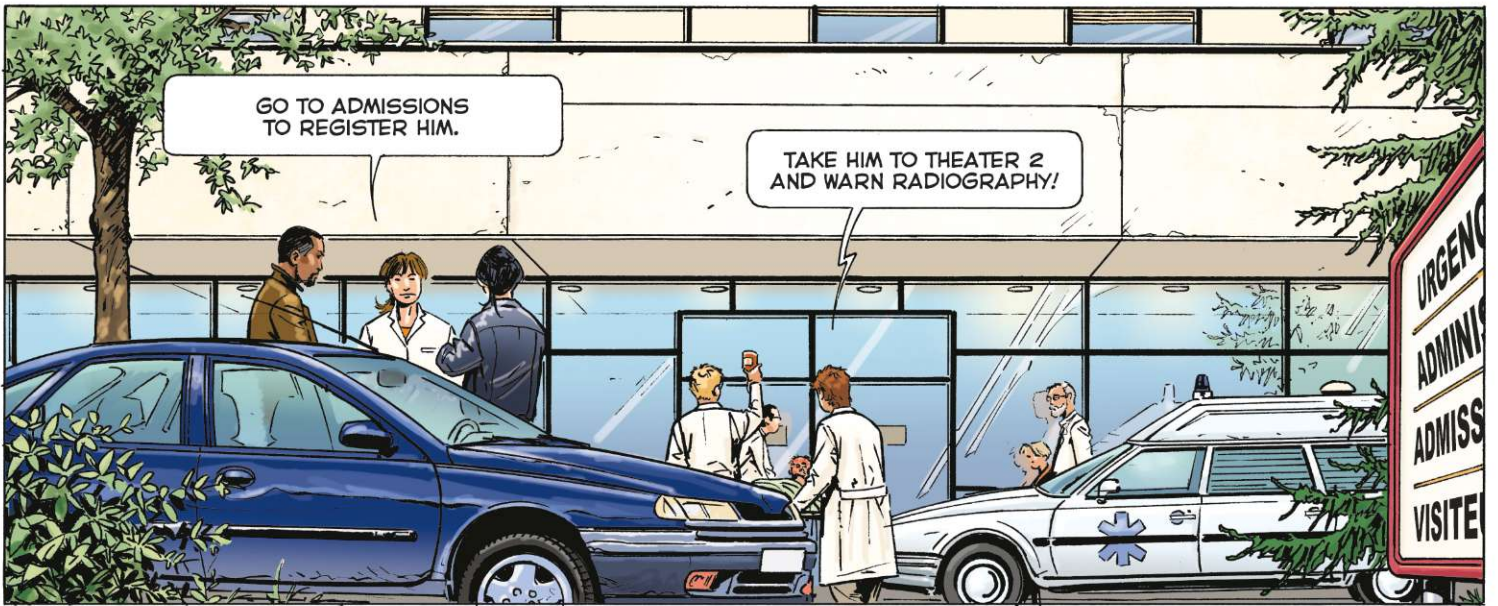
HOW IS HE?



WE HAVE TO TAKE HIM TO A HOSPITAL. HIS FACE IS MESSED UP.



YOU DRIVE. I'LL RIDE IN THE BACK WITH HIM. WE'LL TAKE HIM, BUT NOT HERE.



HE SHOULD REGAIN CONSCIOUSNESS SOON.

WE'VE KEPT HIM IN A COMA SO THAT HE DOESN'T SUFFER TOO MUCH FOLLOWING THE OPERATION ON HIS HEAD.

HOW'S HIS FACE?

HE'LL NEED RECONSTRUCTIVE SURGERY.

BUT HE'LL NEED TO SEE A SPECIALIST. AND IT COULD TAKE SOME TIME.

WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO? YOU STAYING?

OKAY. I'LL GO GET MY FATHER'S THINGS FROM JAIL.

GABRIEL...

THANK YOU, DOCTOR.

YES, I WANT TO BE HERE WHEN HE COMES TO.

THERE ARE QUITE A FEW FORMALITIES INVOLVED WITH THE WILL.

ALEXANDRE? CAN YOU HEAR ME?

IT'S ME, ISAAC.

TELL HIM QUICKLY, WHILE WE'RE ALONE.

LISTEN CAREFULLY. YOU'RE A FUGITIVE. THEY'RE LOOKING FOR YOU.

SO, FROM THIS POINT FORWARD, ALEXANDRE DOESN'T EXIST.

FROM NOW ON, YOUR NAME IS CHRISTOPHER.

CHRISTOPHER DANTES.

EVERYTHING'S FINE. YOU'RE IN A HOSPITAL.

DANTES...

PARIS, 2000.

COME ON, LUCIE, YOU MUST KNOW MORE THAN THAT ABOUT DANTES!

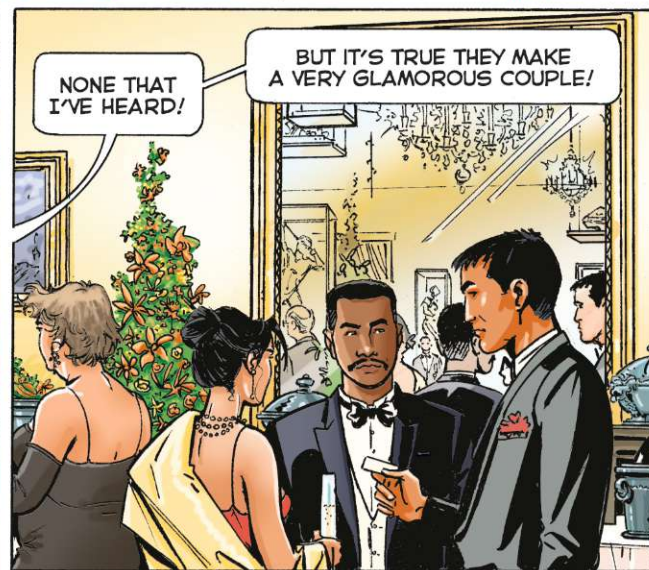
ALL WE KNOW IS THAT HE MADE HIS FORTUNE IN NEW TECHNOLOGIES ON THE NASDAQ.

BUT HE TOOK HIS MONEY OUT BEFORE THE DOT-COM BUBBLE BURST.



AND HER?

A WOMAN THAT BEAUTIFUL HAS TO HAVE A STORY!



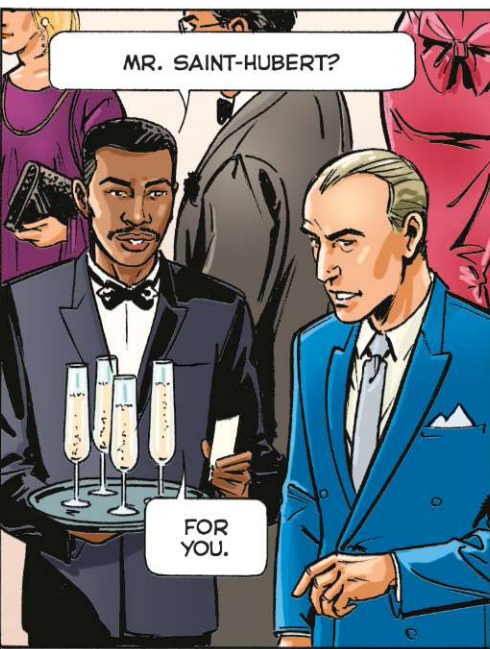
NONE THAT I'VE HEARD!

BUT IT'S TRUE THEY MAKE A VERY GLAMOROUS COUPLE!



A BIT LIKE US...

STOP, MARION. YOU'VE HAD TOO MUCH TO DRINK.



MR. SAINT-HUBERT?

FOR YOU.



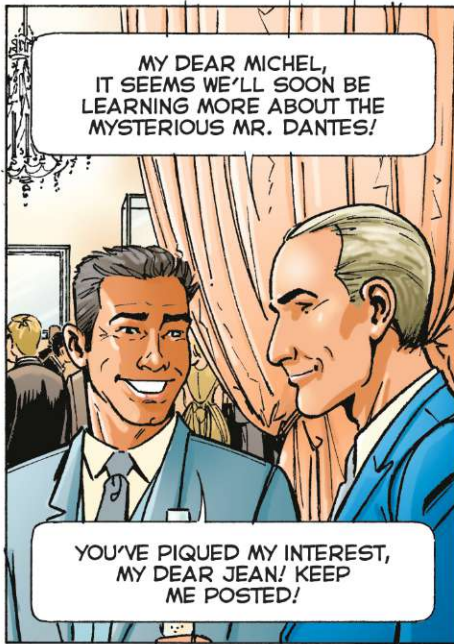
I would like to meet privately as soon as possible. Please call me on 0153 26 32. Christopher Dantes.



GOOD NEWS?



EXCELLENT!



MY DEAR MICHEL, IT SEEMS WE'LL SOON BE LEARNING MORE ABOUT THE MYSTERIOUS MR. DANTES!

YOU'VE PIQUED MY INTEREST, MY DEAR JEAN! KEEP ME POSTED!



DOESN'T HE LOOK LIKE A WONDERFUL PATSY?



I CAN HEAR THEM IMAGINING THE BEST WAY TO SCREW ME OVER FROM HERE.

SAINT-HUBERT IS THE MOST DANGEROUS OF THEM BY FAR. YOU NEED TO BE EXTRA CAREFUL WITH HIM.



IT'S KIND OF YOU TO WORRY ABOUT ME, BUT WE'RE PREPARED.

AND WE ALMOST HAVE THEM ALREADY.



I HOPE THINGS WILL BE THAT SIMPLE...



WE'RE DONE HERE... ONE LAST TOAST BEFORE WE LEAVE?



TO GABRIEL, AND TO ALEXANDRE!

TINKK



END OF SEASON

1. BOISSERIE, GUILLAUME, JUSZEZAK & NARDIN, 2008.

To my father, who gave me my passion for journalism and the comic book bug.
PhG

For Lily,
for Adèle,
for Maxime.

And a big thank-you to Christophe B. from Dargaud,
a talented and quiet keyboard wizard.

É.J.

A huge thank-you to all my friends for their support throughout this year.
J.N.

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DARGAUD





1988
SEASON 1

In the merciless world of the stock exchange, Alexandre, a young trader, finds himself caught in the middle of a game of scheming and manipulation that will lead to his downfall. Twelve years later, Christopher Dantes, a businessman as rich as he is mysterious, appears and encounters the people responsible for Alexandre's fall from grace.

2004
SEASON 2

One of Dantes's subsidiary companies is implicated in a shadowy affair in which toxic waste is being sent to Ebony Coast in Africa. This is a veritable time-bomb for the local population, and Dantes is compelled to visit the scene. A risky move in an unstable country, and all this while Pharaoh, his company, is facing a hostile takeover bid...

2005
SEASON 3

Alexandre's father resurfaces after abandoning his family many years earlier. His son's fortune has awakened the crook's rather limited paternal instincts. The reunion promises to be an unhappy one, especially as the man has demanded Dantes's help, threatening to reveal his past if he doesn't...



**VENGEANCE HAS NO PRICE,
BUT IT HAS A NAME: DANTE.**