

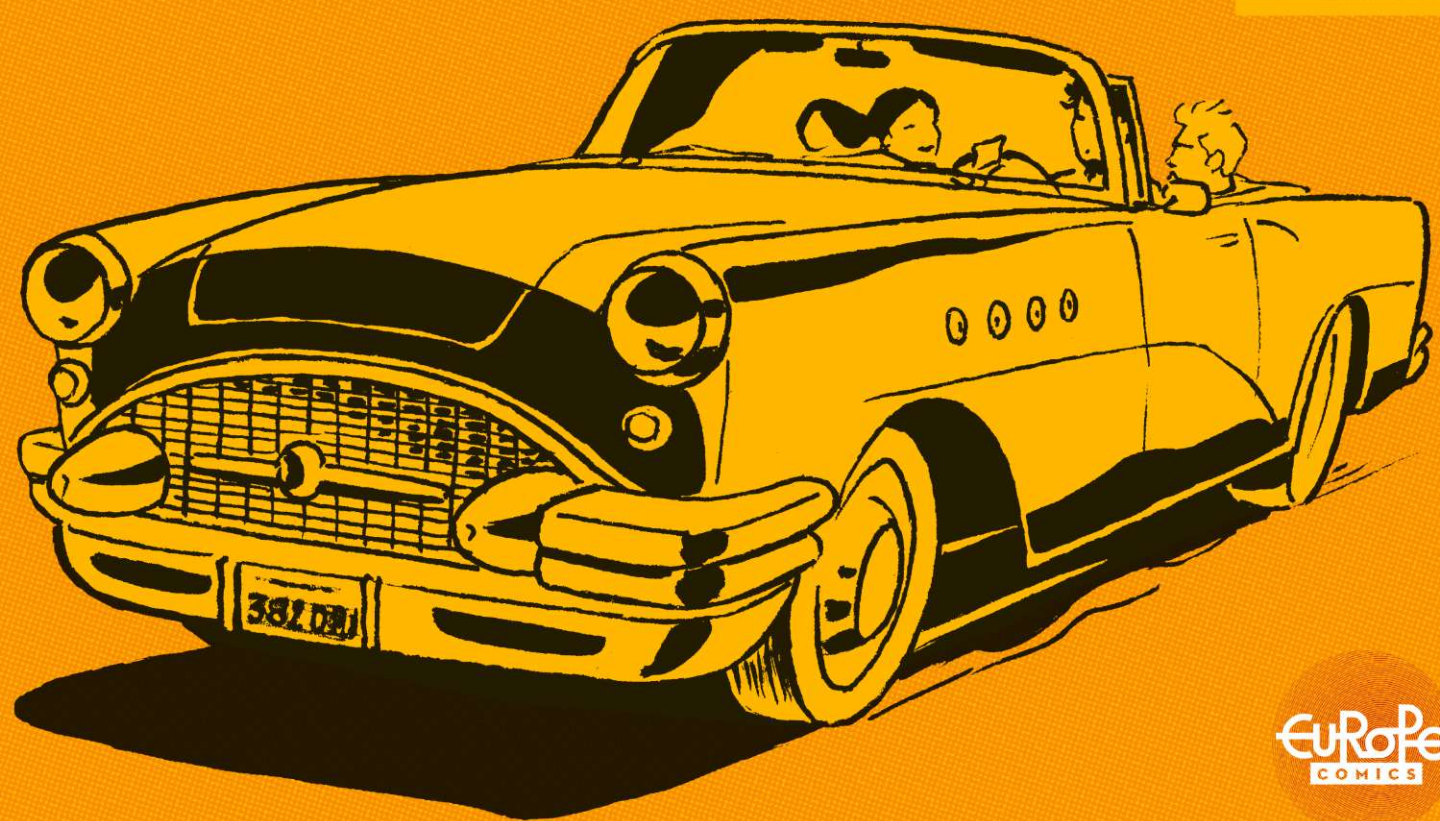
PERICO

PHILIPPE
BERTHET
&
RÉGIS
HAUTIERE



PERICCO

PHILIPPE
BERTHET
&
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HAUTIERE





CUBA
JUNE 1958

GOODBYE,
SEÑOR CASTIGLIA.
SAFE TRAVELS.



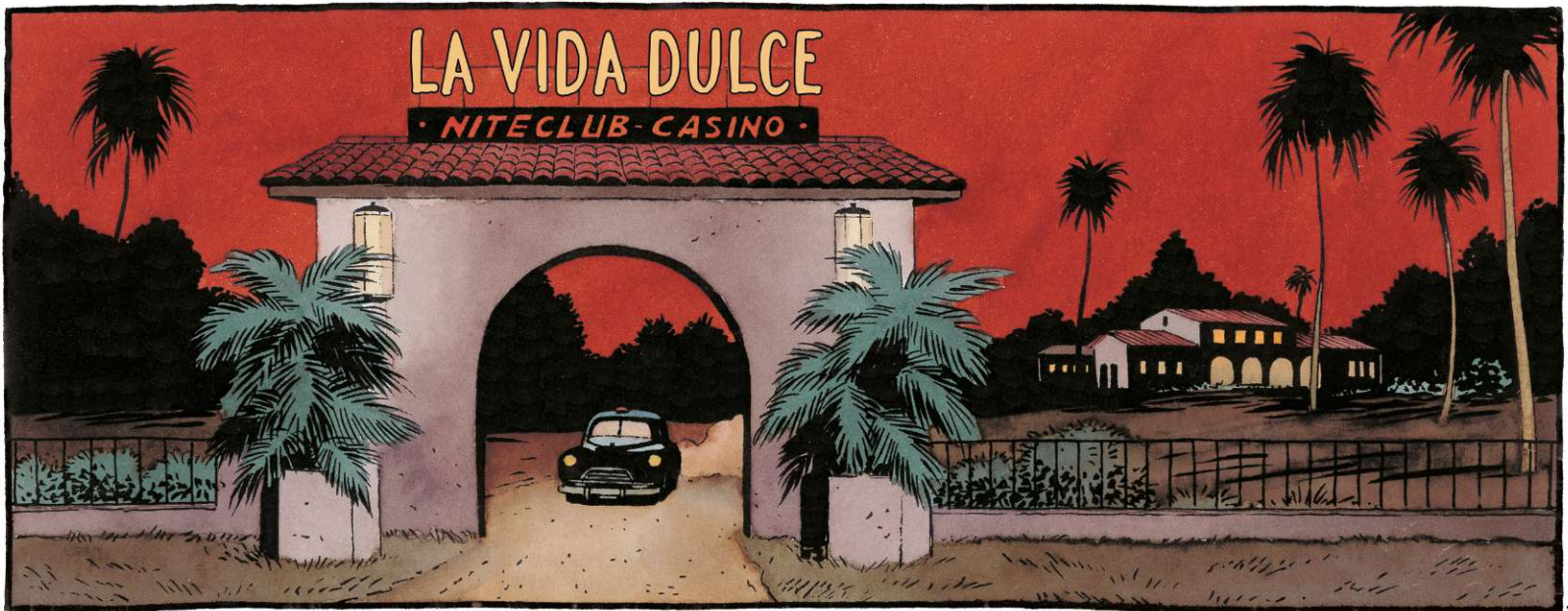
GOOD EVENING,
SEÑOR. SHALL I PUT
YOUR BRIEFCASE IN
THE TRUNK?

NO.
I'LL KEEP IT
WITH ME.



TO THE HARBOR,
SEÑOR?

THE
AIRPORT.



LA VIDA DULCE
NITECLUB-CASINO



DON'T STOP.
KEEP GOING!

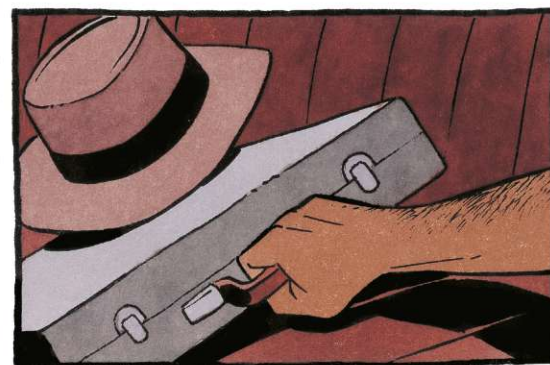
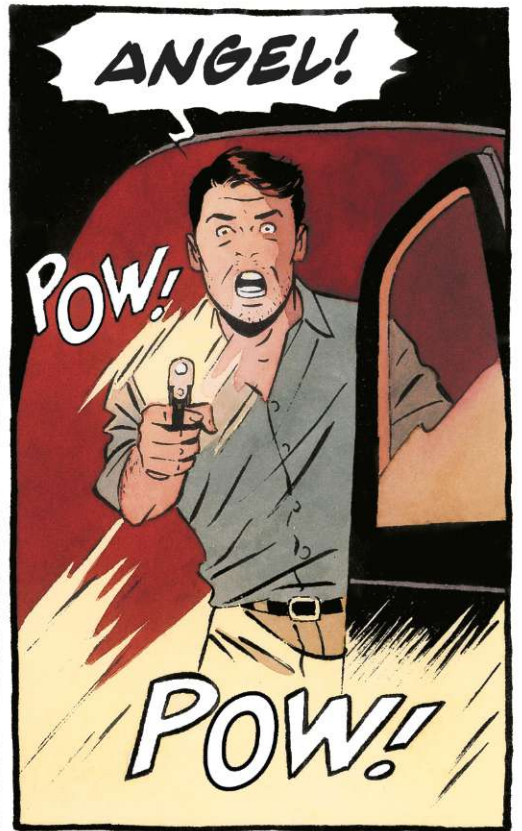
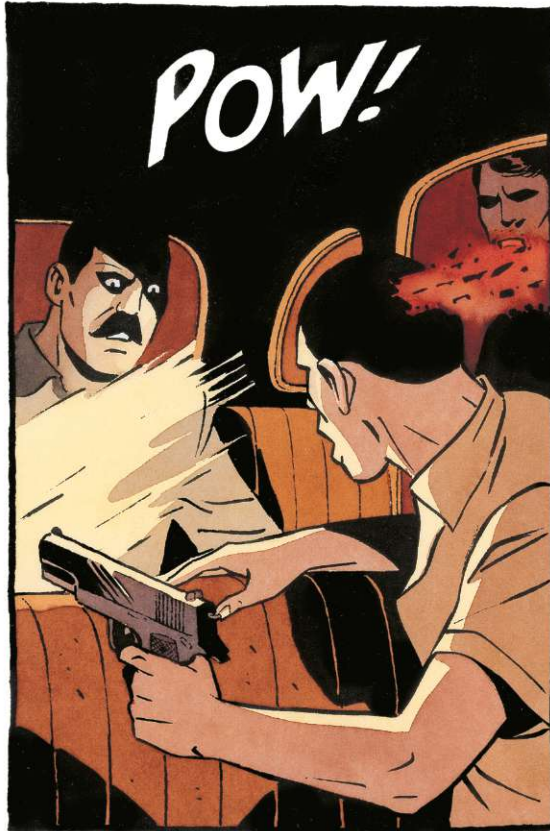


BUT SEÑOR...
SOMEONE MIGHT
BE HURT.



I'M JUST
GOING TO MAKE
SURE EVERYTHING
IS OKAY.

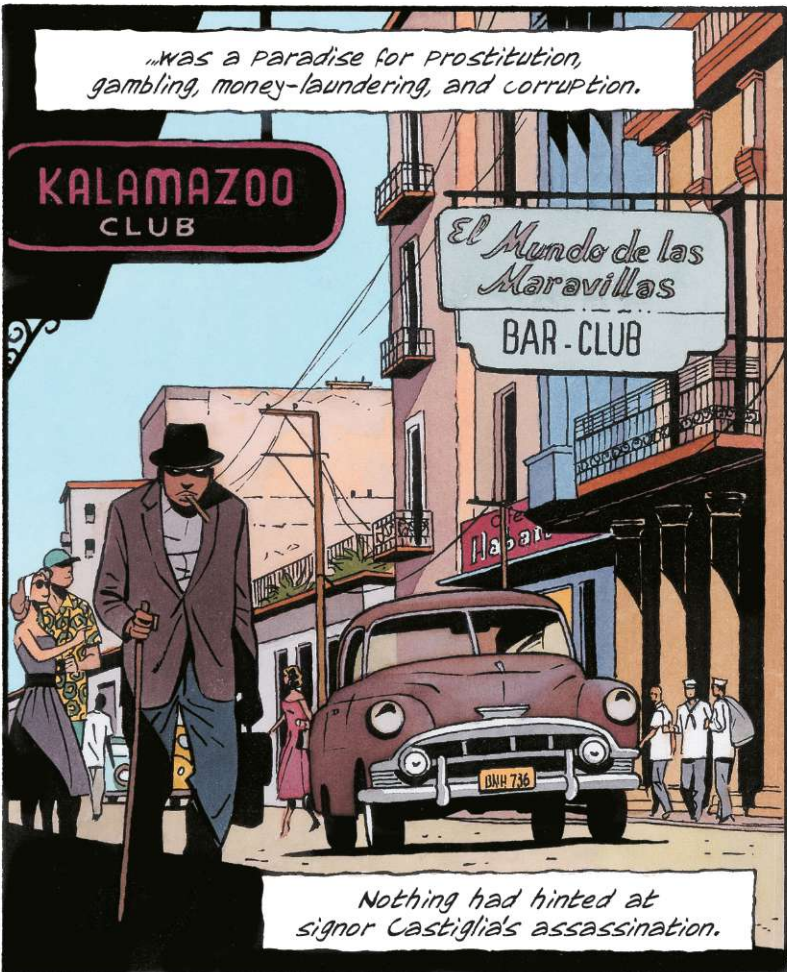
DON'T
WORRY ABOUT
YOUR FLIGHT. THE
NEXT PLANE TO NEW
YORK DOESN'T LEAVE
FOR ANOTHER
HOUR.





A few days earlier,
all was quiet in Havana.

As quiet as you could expect,
at least, from a city that, behind
its charming exterior...



...was a Paradise for Prostitution,
gambling, money-laundering, and corruption.

KALAMAZOO
CLUB

El Mundo de las
Maravillas
BAR-CLUB

Nothing had hinted at
signor Castiglia's assassination.



It's not
that violent crime
wasn't as common
here as elsewhere.



On the contrary, in the
period I'm talking about,
before Castro and his
gang came to power, the
settling of scores by
cold-blooded execution
was common currency.



But there
were rules.

And when these rules were set
by Santo Trafficante Junior, you
just didn't break them. Unless
you were very courageous.



Or incredibly stupid.

YOUR
BROTHER'S
AN IDIOT!



INSTEAD OF JOINING CASTRO, HE SHOULD HAVE BEEN LOOKING FOR A JOB.

HE LOOKED, PAPÁ, YOU KNOW THAT.



BATISTA JUST SENT TEN THOUSAND SOLDIERS TO THE SIERRA MAESTRA TO KICK SOME GUERRILLA ASS.

TEN THOUSAND! AND THEY'RE, WHAT... THREE HUNDRED? FOUR HUNDRED?



EIGHT HUNDRED. MAYBE EVEN A THOUSAND. AND ALL THE PEOPLE IN THE COUNTRYSIDE SUPPORT THEM.

SO WHAT? WHAT CAN THEY DO WHEN IT'S TEN TO ONE?

THEY'LL FIGHT, THEY'LL DEFEND THEIR IDEALS.



THEIR IDEALS, ARE YOU SERIOUS?



YOU'VE SAID IT YOURSELF: BATISTA, THE GOVERNMENT, THE POLICE... THEY'RE ALL CORRUPT. IF WE EVER MANAGE TO GET RID OF THEM IT'LL BE THANKS TO PEOPLE LIKE CARLOS.



IF WE EVER MANAGE TO GET RID OF THEM, YOU CAN SAY GOODBYE TO YOUR JOB...

WE'LL SEE, PAPÁ, WE'LL SEE...

ANYWAY, SPEAKING OF WORK...



...IT'S ABOUT TIME I HEAD ON OVER.

JOAQUÍN! AT LAST!



HURRY UP! GET YOUR UNIFORM ON AND COME HELP ME, THE OWNER'S HERE!

THE OWNER? HAS HE BEEN HERE LONG?



BARELY TEN MINUTES, AND THIS TIME HE'S PLANNING ON STAYING AT LEAST FIFTEEN DAYS.



THEY'RE PLANNING A DINNER TONIGHT TO CELEBRATE HIS RETURN. BATISTA WILL BE THERE.

HERE, GRAB THOSE BAGS THERE, AND TAKE THEM UP TO ROOM 8.

SEÑOR TRAFFICANTE HAS A GUEST?



A PRETTY ONE.

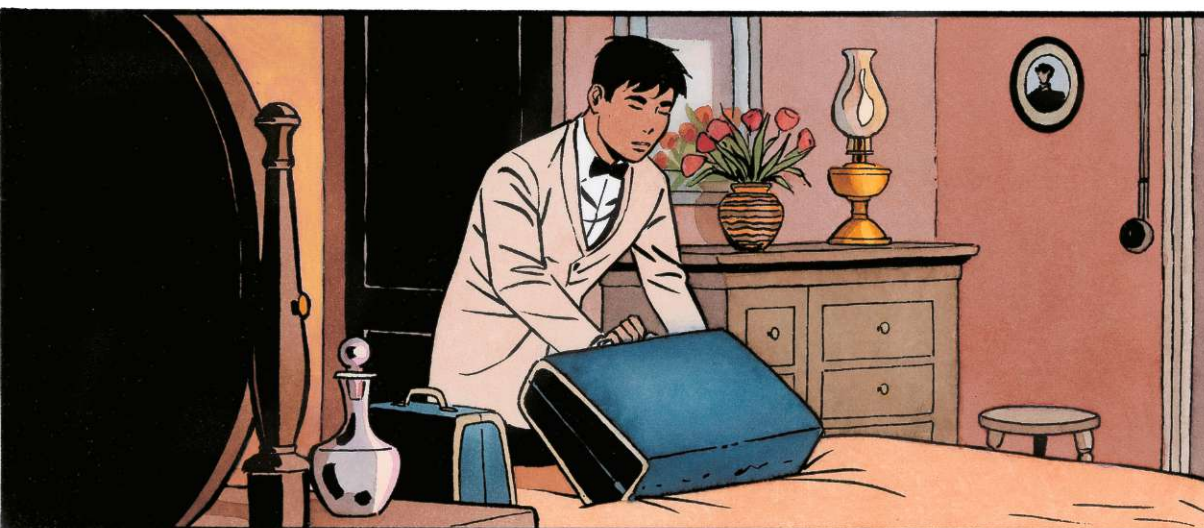
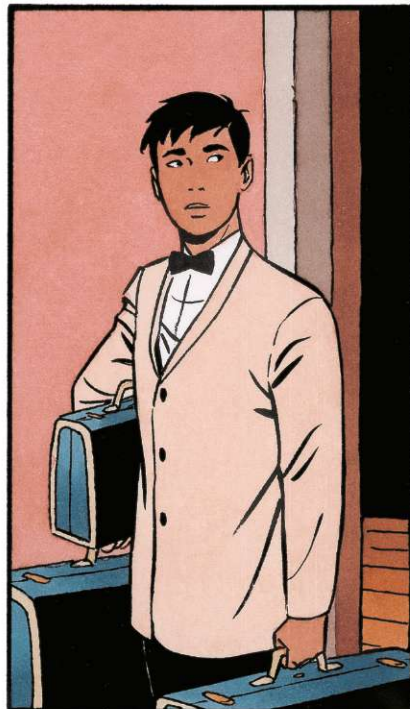
GO ON, HURRY! THERE'S A LOT TO DO.

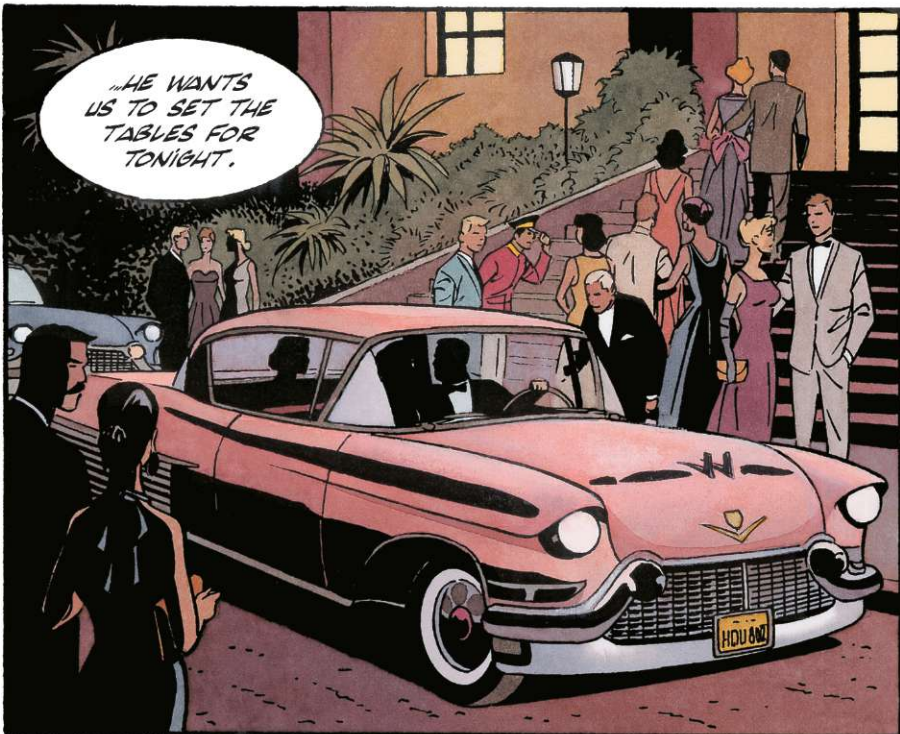


KNOCK!
KNOCK!



SEÑORA?







BAH... JUST A FEW MINOR SETBACKS. THOSE COMMIE CROOKS ARE LIKE WORMS: THEY'RE EASY ENOUGH TO KILL BUT A LITTLE TOUGH TO TRACK DOWN.

WHEN MY MEN FINALLY DIG THEM UP THEY'LL CRUSH THOSE VERMIN ONCE AND FOR ALL. IT'S MERELY A MATTER OF DAYS, A WEEK AT THE MOST.



WELL... I ONLY MENTION THE SUBJECT, MISTER PRESIDENT, BECAUSE MY ASSOCIATES ARE WORRIED ABOUT THEIR INVESTMENTS. POLITICAL INSTABILITY IS BAD FOR BUSINESS...



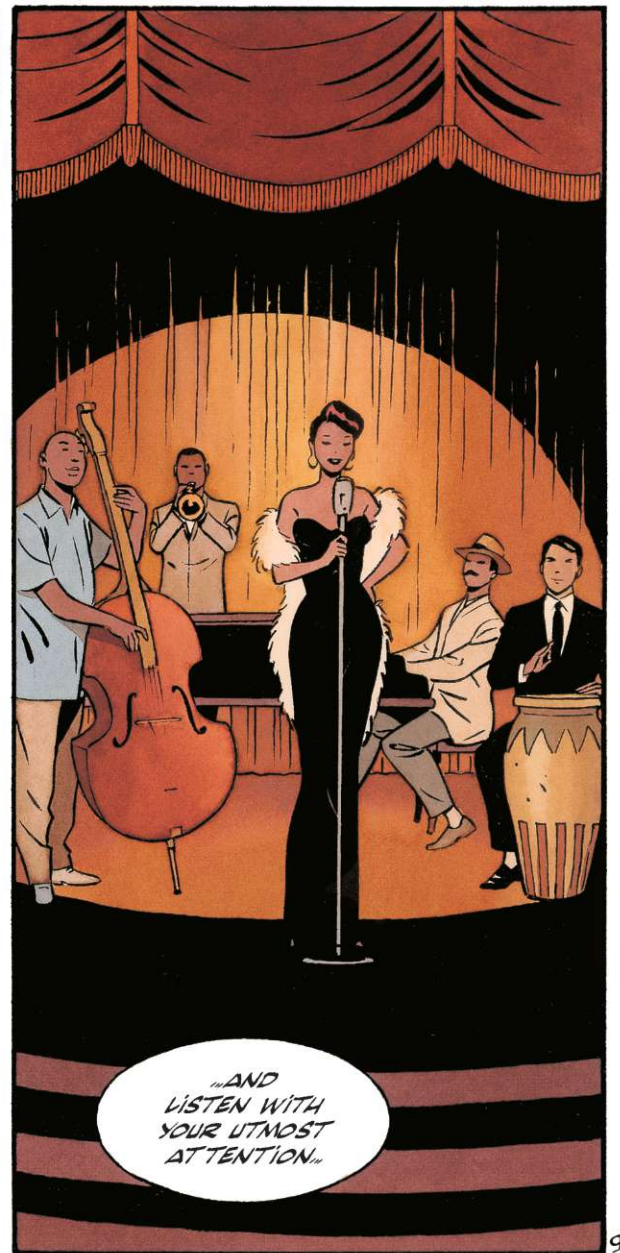
REASSURE YOUR FRIENDS! THEIR INTERESTS ARE WELL-PROTECTED. IT'LL TAKE MORE THAN SOME RILED-UP PEASANTS TO EMPTY HAVANA'S CASINOS.



I HOPE YOU'RE RIGHT...



AH! MY DEAR FRIENDS!... THE YOUNG LADY WHO IS ABOUT TO SING IS MAKING HER STAGE DEBUT TONIGHT. I HOPE YOU WILL ALL GIVE HER A WARM RECEPTION...



...AND LISTEN WITH YOUR UTMOST ATTENTION...



*Estoy en el baile exbrño
De polaina y casaquin...*



*Que dan, del año hacia el fin,
Los cazadores del año...*

WHO IS THAT?



DON'T YOU RECOGNIZE HER? I FOUND YOU IN HER ROOM EARLIER THIS AFTERNOON...



SHE'S SANTO TRAFFICANTE'S LATEST DISCOVERY. ACCORDING TO RODRIGUEZ, THE PRESIDENT OF THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC GAVE HER TO HIM AS A TOKEN OF GRATITUDE FOR A SMALL FAVOR.



APPARENTLY ALL YOU NEED TO DO IS GET RID OF ONE OF HIS OPPONENTS. HE HAS A FEW MORE IN EXILE IN THE U.S. YOU WANT TO TAKE CARE OF THE NEXT ONE?

VERY FUNNY...

*Marca un vizconde pintado
El tiempo en la pandereta...*



WHAT DO YOU NEED TO DO FOR TRUVILLO TO DESERVE A GIFT LIKE THAT?

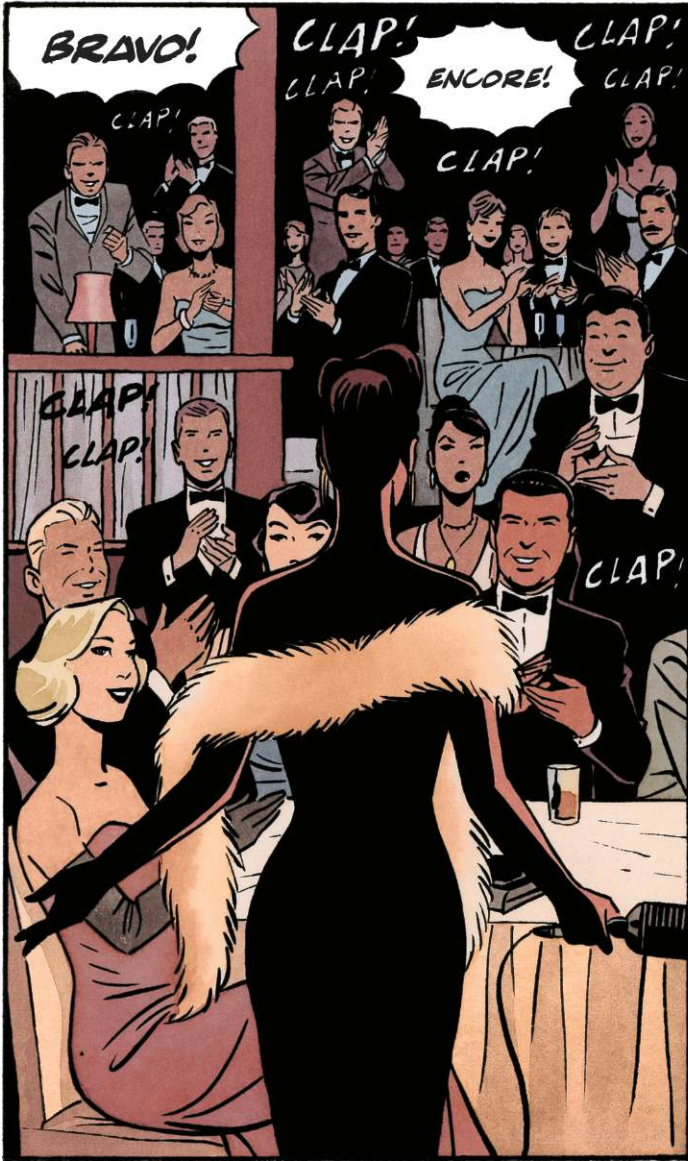


*Y pasan las chupas rojas,
Pasan los tules de fuego...*



WHAT'S HER NAME?

*Como delante de un ciego
Pasan volando las hojas.*







HEY, HERMANITO!
HOW'D YOU LIKE TO
GRAB A DRINK
WITH ME?

CARLOS?!?
YOU'RE IN HAVANA?!



YEAH, BUT KEEP IT TO YOUR-
SELF. NO ONE CAN KNOW
I'M HERE. ESPECIALLY
NOT PAPÁ, GOT IT?

GOT IT.

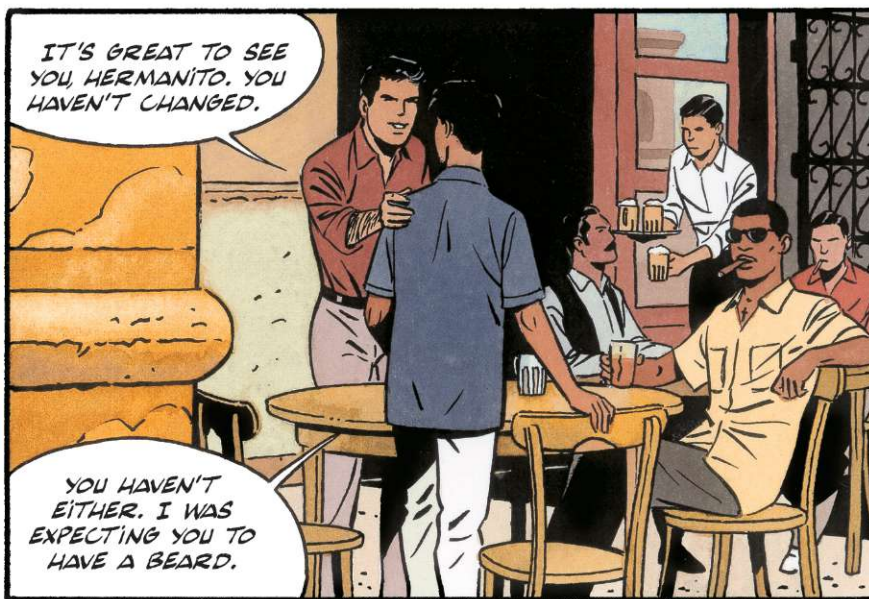


LOOK, YOU
KNOW THE CASA
CABRERA?

IN HAVANA
VIEJA? SURE..



WELL, MEET
ME THERE TOMOR-
ROW, AROUND ELEVEN.
WE'LL CELEBRATE
MY RETURN.



IT'S GREAT TO SEE
YOU, HERMANITO. YOU
HAVEN'T CHANGED.

YOU HAVEN'T
EITHER. I WAS
EXPECTING YOU TO
HAVE A BEARD.

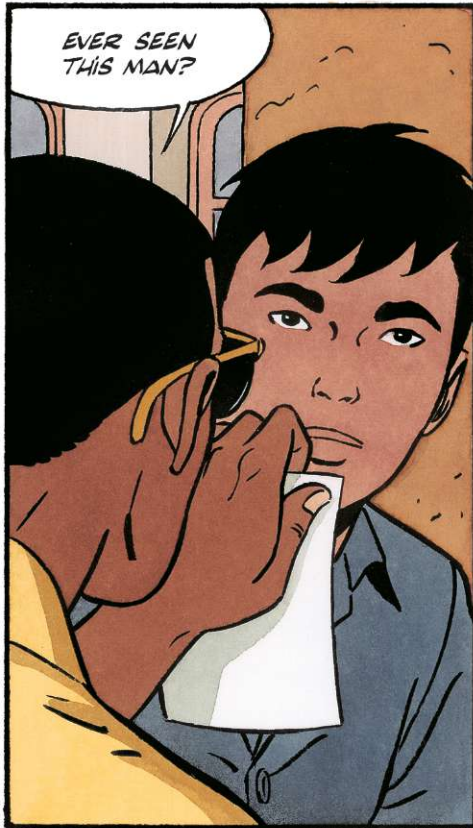
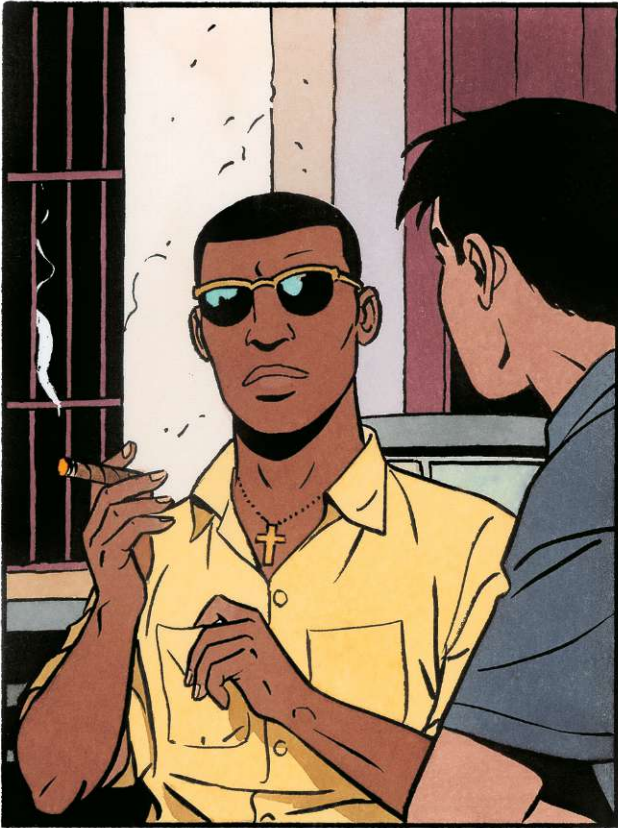


WE BOTH HAD ONE BUT
BATISTA'S POLICE ISN'T REAL FOND
OF BEARDED TYPES. SO ANGEL AND
I DECIDED IT WOULD BE A GOOD IDEA
TO SHAVE THEM OFF BEFORE WE
CAME BACK TO TOWN.

CARLOS TOLD
ME YOU WORK AT
LA VIDA DULCE...?



WHAT
ABOUT IT?



EVER SEEN THIS MAN?



SURE, HE COMES IN REGULARLY. HE'S A FRIEND OF SENOR TRAFFICANTE'S. HE'S AN AMERICAN.



WHAT DO YOU WANT FROM HIM?

THAT'S OUR BUSINESS.

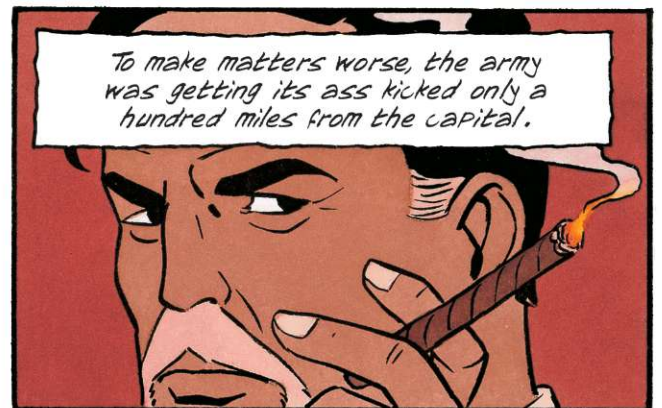
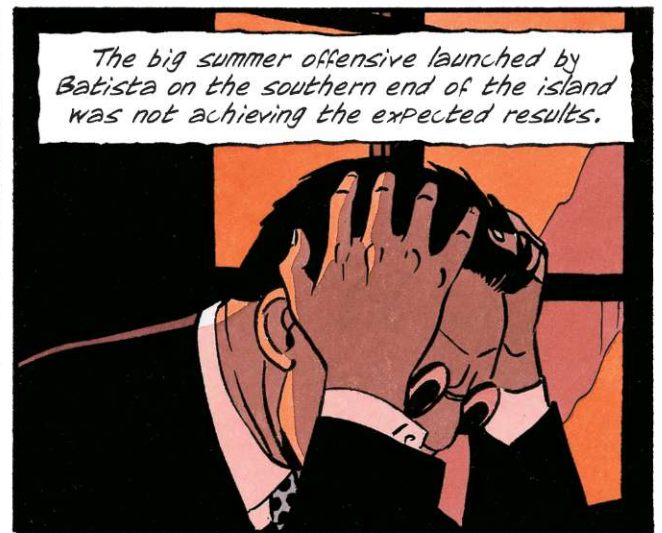
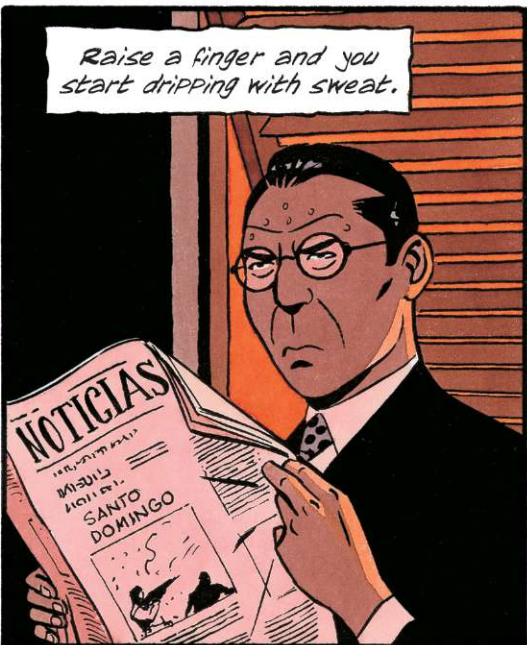


WE'D JUST LIKE YOU TO LET US KNOW THE NEXT TIME HE SHOWS HIS FACE.

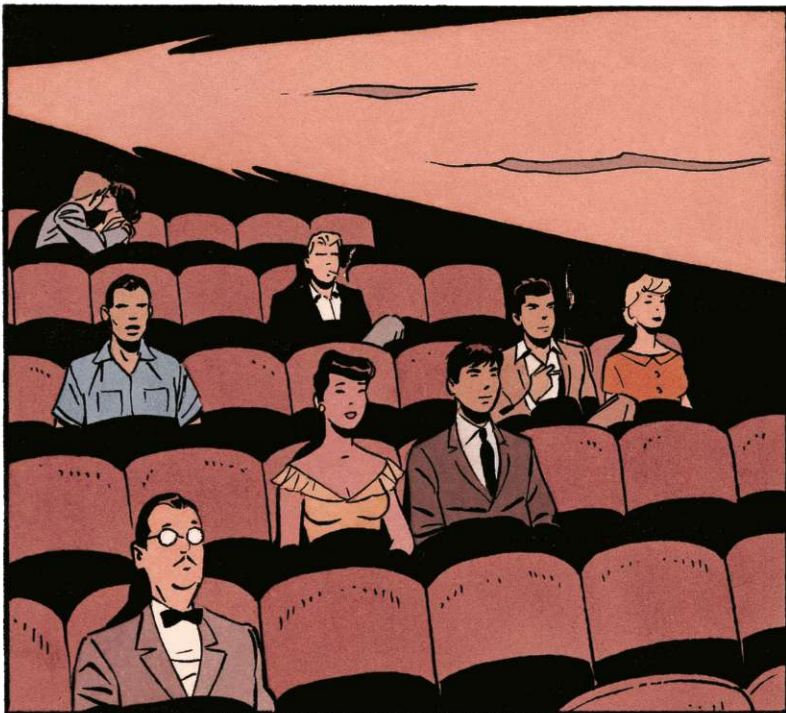
THERE'S A PHONE NUMBER ON THE BACK OF THE PHOTO. AS SOON AS YOU SEE THIS GUY, CALL IT AND TELL WHOEVER ANSWERS THAT THE PACKAGE HAS ARRIVED. THAT'S ALL.



CAN YOU DO THAT FOR ME?

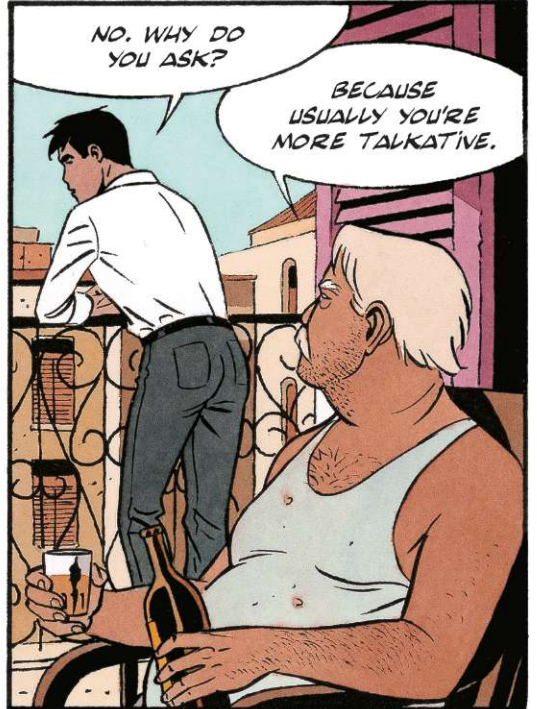








TROUBLE AT WORK?



NO. WHY DO YOU ASK?

BECAUSE USUALLY YOU'RE MORE TALKATIVE.



DID YOU AND MAMÁ GO TO THE MOVIES A LOT?



FROM TIME TO TIME. YOUR MOTHER DIDN'T LIKE THEM MUCH. I THINK SHE WAS A LITTLE JEALOUS OF THOSE AMERICAN ACTRESSES.

SHE ALWAYS PREFERRED TO GO DANCING. THERE, SHE WAS THE STAR. ALL EYES WERE ON HER. EVERY SUNDAY I WOULD TAKE HER DANCING AT THE PLAZA DE LA FLOR AND WE WOULD DANCE UNTIL WE DROPPED.



BUT THAT WAS BEFORE THE DAMN ACCIDENT.



IS THAT WHEN SHE STARTED SINGING, AFTER THE ACCIDENT?



IN NIGHT CLUBS, YOU MEAN? YEAH, WITH TWO KIDS TO FEED SHE DIDN'T HAVE MUCH CHOICE.

AT THE SAME TIME, I DON'T THINK SHE DISLIKED IT. SHE EVEN SEEMED HAPPY ON STAGE. YOU'D HAVE THOUGHT SHE'D BEEN DOING IT HER WHOLE LIFE.



AND IN SOME SENSE THAT WAS KIND OF TRUE.

EXCEPT THAT BEFORE, THE SHOW WAS JUST FOR ME.



WHEN YOU FIND YOURSELF A WIFE, HIND DON'T LET HER SING. WHEN GIRLS SING, THEY START BELIEVING THEY'RE BIRDS AFTER A WHILE...



...AND THEN ONE DAY, THEY FLY AWAY.





NO. SOME DAY I HOPE THAT I'LL BE ALLOWED TO RUN ONE OF THE CARD TABLES AT THE CASINO.

TO DO THAT, I HAVE TO SHOW SEÑOR TRAFICANTE THAT I'M TRUSTWORTHY.

I SEE.



YOU CAN MAKE GOOD MONEY AS A CROUPIER, YOU KNOW. YOU GET GOOD TIPS, ESPECIALLY AT ROULETTE.



AND YOU, SEÑORITA, DO YOU HAVE... DREAMS?

DREAMS? NO... WHAT KIND OF DREAMS COULD I HAVE?

I DON'T KNOW. WOULDN'T YOU LIKE TO BE IN THE MOVIES, SAY? LIKE LIZ TAYLOR?



HA HA HA! THAT WOULD BE WONDERFUL! BUT I'M NOT GOING TO MAKE IT AS AN ACTRESS LIVING IN CUBA.

JOAQUÍN!



COME HERE! I NEED YOU.



WHAT ARE YOU PLAYING AT? WHAT IF IT WAS TRAFICANTE INSTEAD OF ME WHO'D FOUND YOU WITH THAT GIRL?

SO WHAT? WE WERE ONLY TALKING.



I KNOW PEOPLE WHO'VE GOTTEN IN TROUBLE FOR LESS THAN THAT.

?!









THE GUN WE FOUND ON HIS BODY IS OF A DIFFERENT CALIBER THAN THE ONE USED TO KILL SEÑOR CASTIGLIA. THAT MEANS THERE MUST'VE BEEN A THIRD MAN ON THE SCENE...

AND THAT MAN MUST HAVE BEEN WOUNDED IN THE GUNFIGHT. WE FOUND TRACES OF BLOOD OUTSIDE THE CAR.



WE'VE IDENTIFIED THE TAXI DRIVER. HE WAS A COMMIE TERRORIST OUR MEN HAVE BEEN LOOKING FOR.



VERY WELL. THANK YOU FOR THIS INFORMATION, OFFICERS.



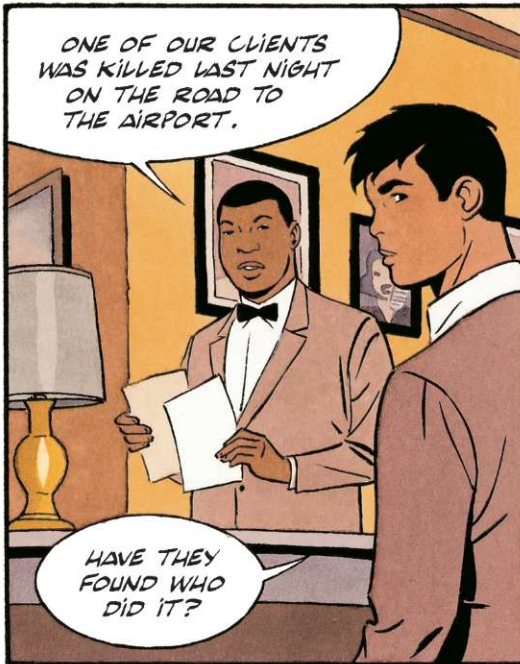
KEEP ME UP TO DATE ON THE PROGRESS OF YOUR INVESTIGATION. IF I LEARN ANYTHING AT ALL ON MY END THAT COULD BE OF USE TO YOU, I WILL BE SURE TO LET YOU KNOW.



TAKE TWO MEN AND GO FIND THE HINO DE PUTA WHO DID THIS.



WHAT WERE THE POLICE DOING IN SEÑOR TRAFFICANTE'S OFFICE?



ONE OF OUR CLIENTS WAS KILLED LAST NIGHT ON THE ROAD TO THE AIRPORT.

HAVE THEY FOUND WHO DID IT?



NOT YET, BUT YOU CAN BE SURE THE POLICE ARE GOING TO BEND OVER BACKWARDS TO FIND HIM. THE VICTIM WAS A FRIEND OF TRAFFICANTE'S.



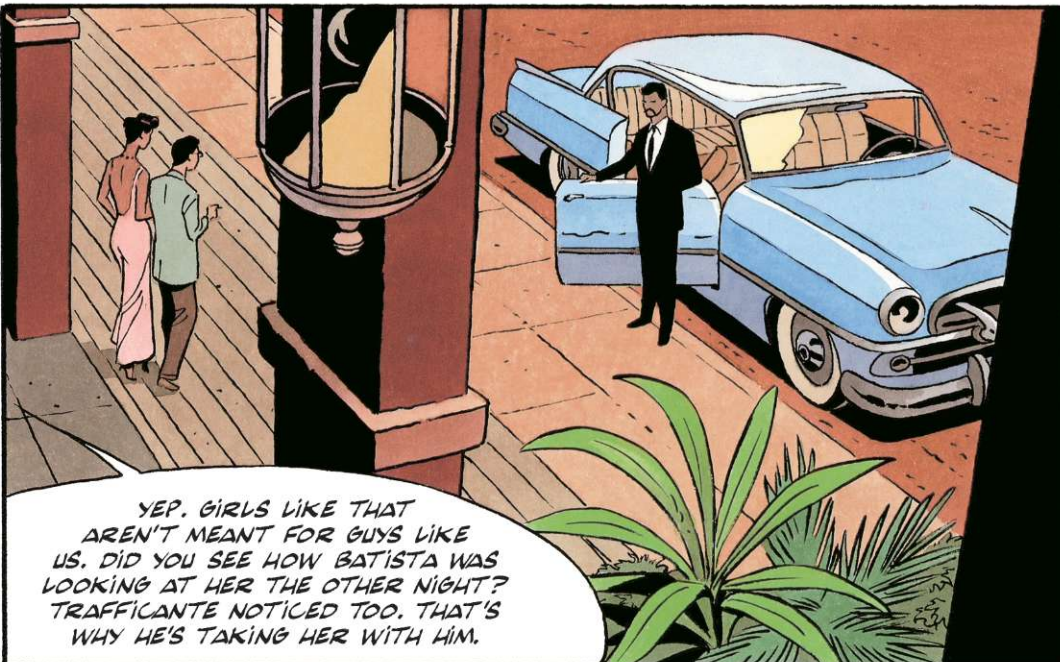
YOU TWO! TELL RODRÍGUEZ I'LL BE GONE FOR THE DAY. I'M HAVING LUNCH WITH BATISTA.

SÍ, SEÑOR TRAFFICANTE.



YOU SEE HOW YOUR GIRL GAVE US THE COLD SHOULDER? DIDN'T EVEN LOOK AT US! I'D SAY SHE'S LOST INTEREST IN YOU!

SO WHAT? THAT'S WHAT YOU WANTED, RIGHT?



YEP. GIRLS LIKE THAT AREN'T MEANT FOR GUYS LIKE US. DID YOU SEE HOW BATISTA WAS LOOKING AT HER THE OTHER NIGHT? TRAFFICANTE NOTICED TOO. THAT'S WHY HE'S TAKING HER WITH HIM.



HE MUST HAVE A FAVOR TO ASK OF SEÑOR PRESIDENTE...



The main advantage of a corrupt government is that money gives you quick and privileged access to all kinds of information.



On July 6th, an informant let the Cuban police know that a wounded man had burst into a café in Havana Vieja the night of the hit on Castiglia.



As soon as Batista caught wind of this, he sent word to Santo Trafficante and gave him a three-hour head start before sending the cops to the café in question.



UNNNH...



HE'S TOLD US EVERYTHING HE KNOWS. WE WON'T GET ANYTHING MORE OUT OF HIM. HE DOESN'T EVEN KNOW WHAT THE BRIEFCASE LOOKS LIKE.



WHICH MEANS THIS ONE DIDN'T HAVE IT ON HIM WHEN HE CAME INTO THE BAR.



THAT MATCHES UP WITH WHAT THE SNITCH TOLD THE COPS.

HE MUST'VE HIDDEN IT SOMEWHERE BEFORE COMING HERE.



OR ELSE HE LEFT IT WITH AN ACCOMPLICE.



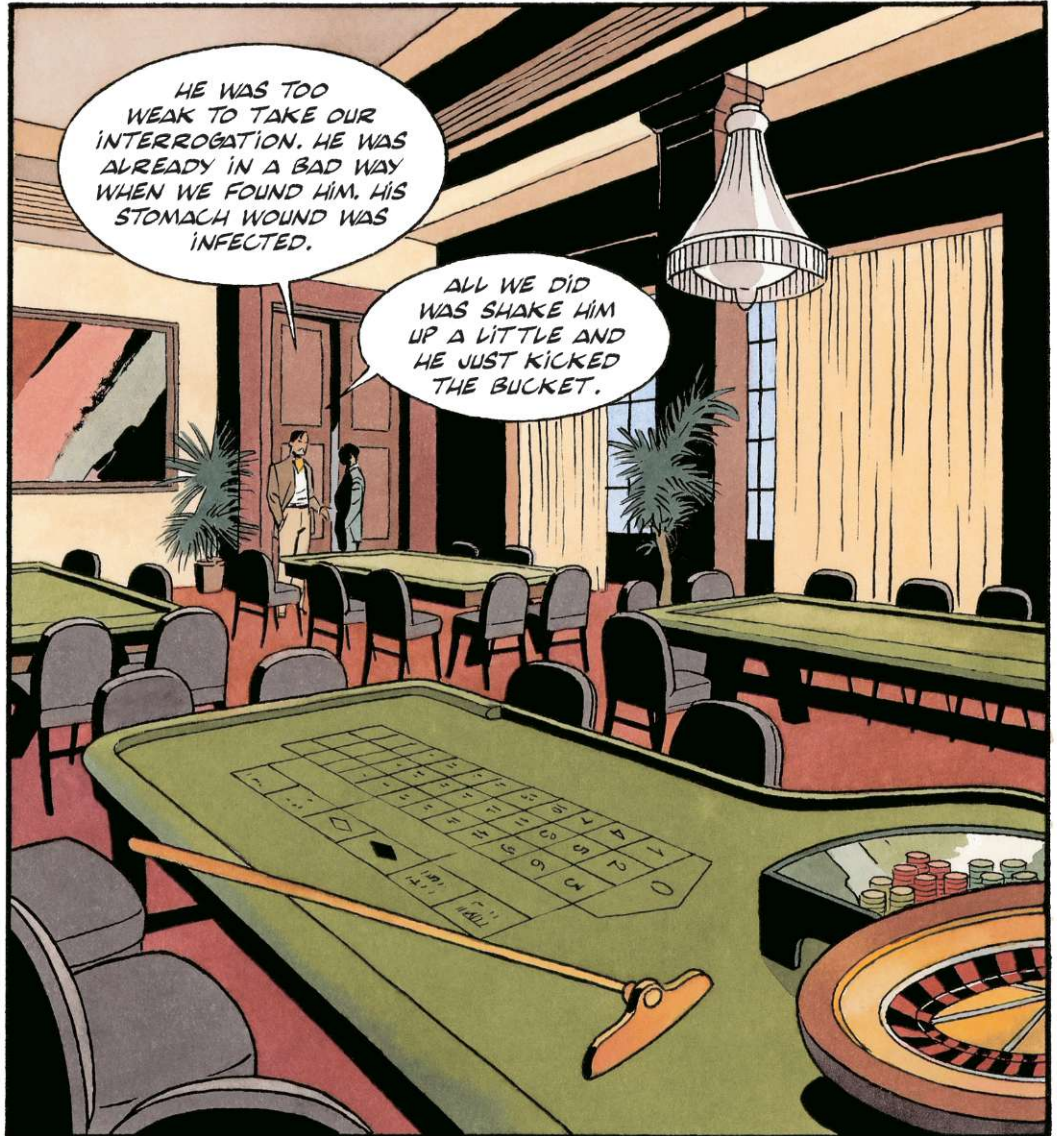
ALL WE NEED TO DO IS ASK HIM. I'M SURE HE'LL TELL US WHAT WE WANT TO KNOW...



...AS LONG AS WE ASK NICELY.

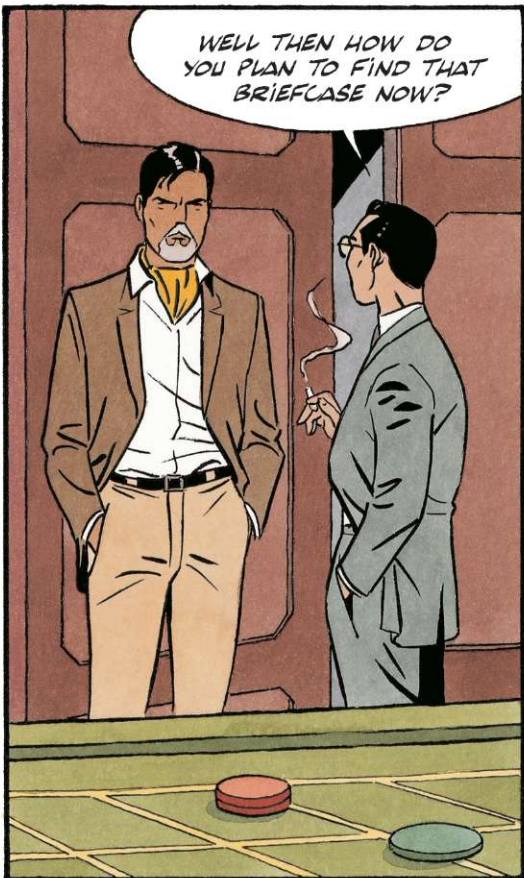


WHAT DO YOU MEAN HE DIED BEFORE HE COULD TALK?!



HE WAS TOO WEAK TO TAKE OUR INTERROGATION. HE WAS ALREADY IN A BAD WAY WHEN WE FOUND HIM. HIS STOMACH WOUND WAS INFECTED.

ALL WE DID WAS SHAKE HIM UP A LITTLE AND HE JUST KICKED THE BUCKET.



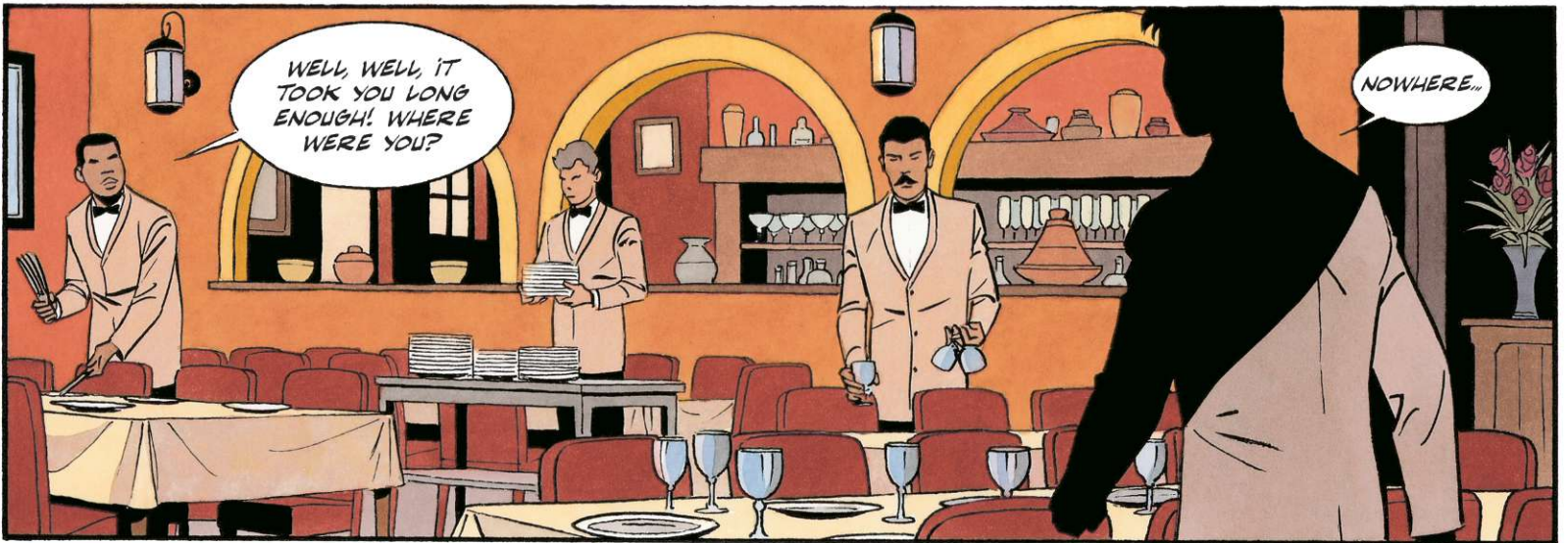
WELL THEN HOW DO YOU PLAN TO FIND THAT BRIEFCASE NOW?



WE TOOK A PHOTO OF THE GUY. WE'RE GOING TO PASS IT AROUND TOWN. EVENTUALLY SOMEONE WILL RECOGNIZE HIM, AND ONCE WE HAVE HIS IDENTITY...

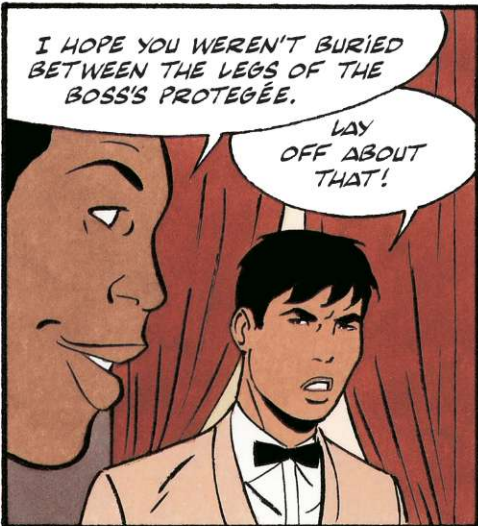


...WE'LL GO VISIT HIS FRIENDS AND FAMILY.



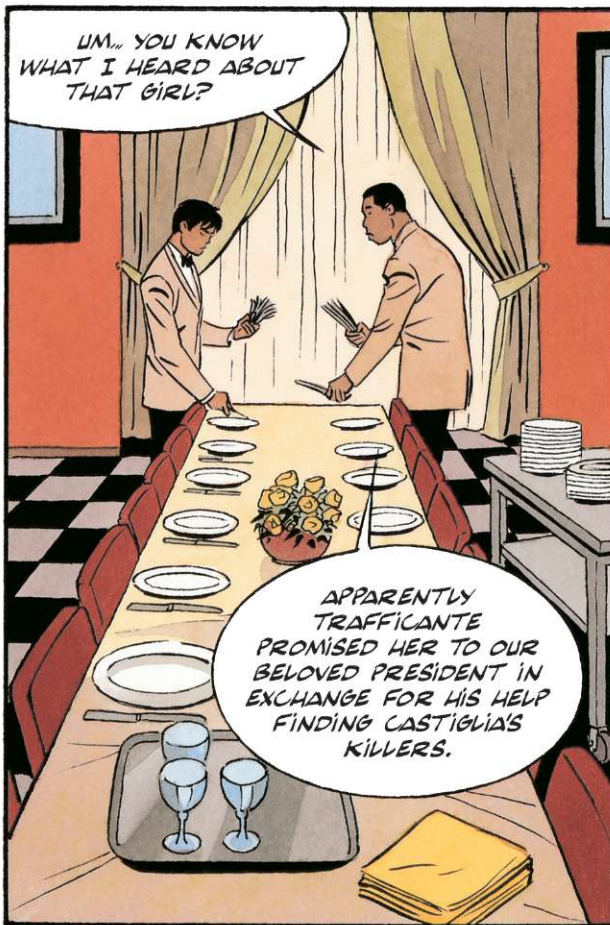
WELL, WELL, IT TOOK YOU LONG ENOUGH! WHERE WERE YOU?

NOWHERE...



I HOPE YOU WEREN'T BURIED BETWEEN THE LEGS OF THE BOSS'S PROTEGÉE.

LAY OFF ABOUT THAT!



UM... YOU KNOW WHAT I HEARD ABOUT THAT GIRL?

APPARENTLY TRAFFICANTE PROMISED HER TO OUR BELOVED PRESIDENT IN EXCHANGE FOR HIS HELP FINDING CASTIGLIA'S KILLERS.



BATISTA RESERVED THIS TABLE FOR TONIGHT. HOW MUCH YOU WANNA BET HE'S COMING TO CLAIM HIS PRIZE?



HEY! RELAX, I WAS JUST KIDDING.



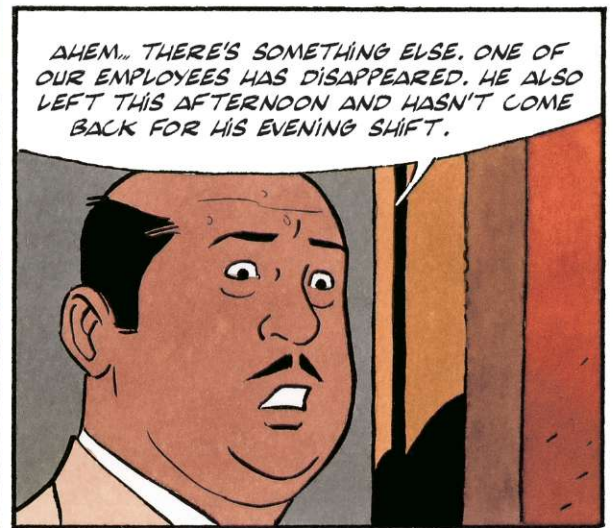
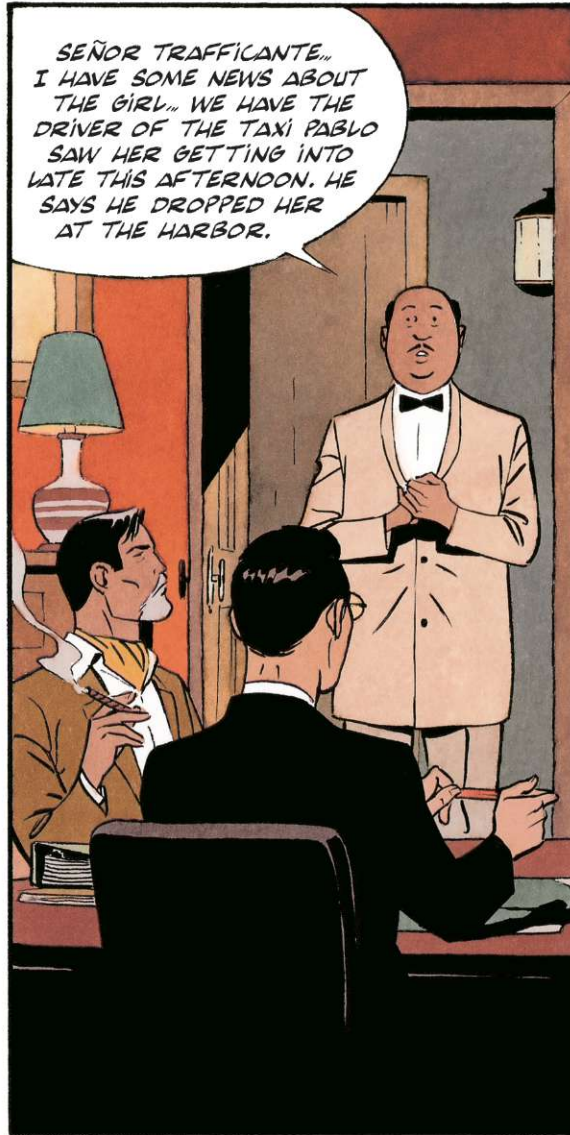
JOAQUIN!

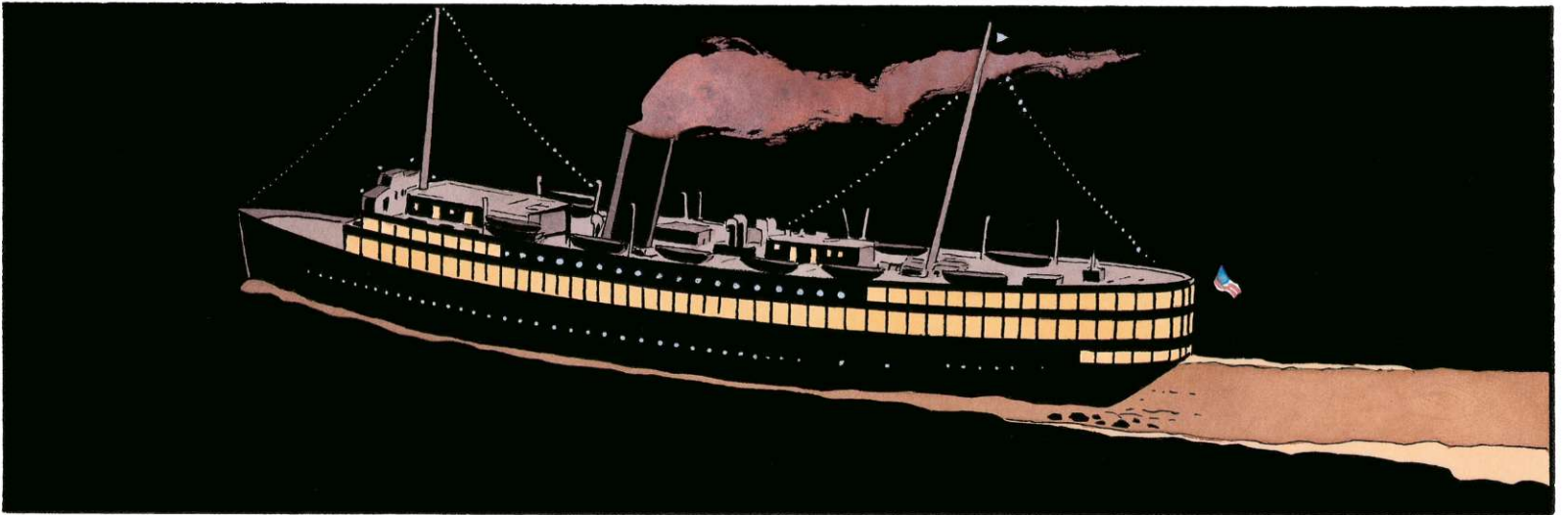














MY NAME IS LIVIA HEREDIA.

ELENA DE LA LUZ IS A MADE-UP NAME. IT'S WHAT THAT PIECE OF TRASH TRUJILLO NAMED ME BEFORE GIVING ME TO YOUR BOSS.



UH, LIVIA, I--



TRAFFICANTE ISN'T MY BOSS ANYMORE.

GOOD.



STOP IT!



LET ME MAKE SOMETHING CLEAR: YOU'RE CUTE AND YOU'RE NICE, BUT I HAVE NO FEELINGS FOR YOU BEYOND FRIENDSHIP!

YOU SAID YOU WOULD TAKE ME TO HOLLYWOOD AND I AGREED TO FOLLOW YOU. THAT'S ALL. I DIDN'T SIGN ON FOR ANYTHING ELSE. OKAY?



WAIT! THAT'S NOT... I DIDN'T MEAN TO--

OKAY?

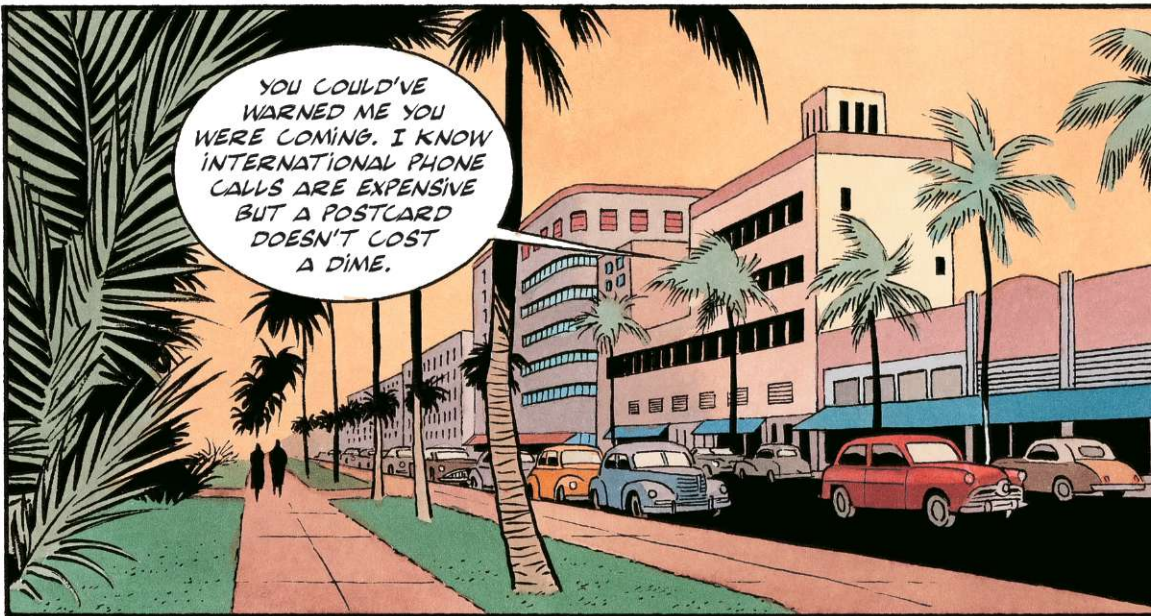


OKAY.



I KNOW I'M SORRY. IT WAS A LAST-MINUTE DECISION.

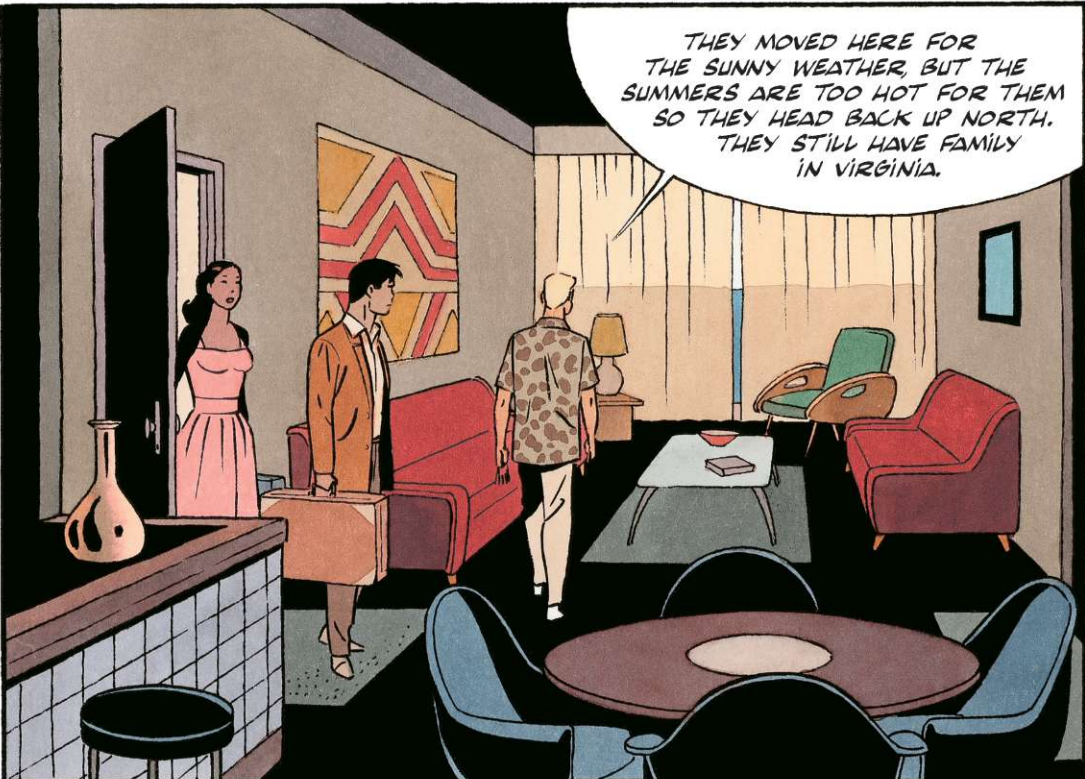
LAST-MINUTE... YOU'RE JUST LIKE YOUR MOTHER. I MEAN...



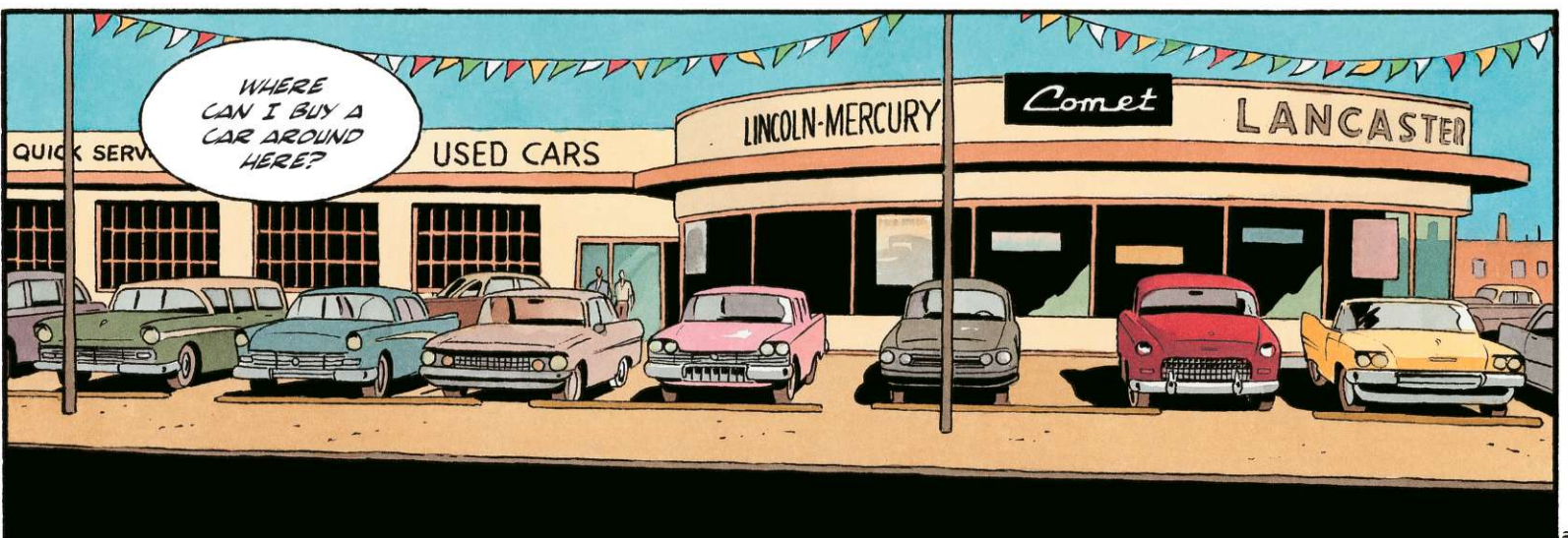
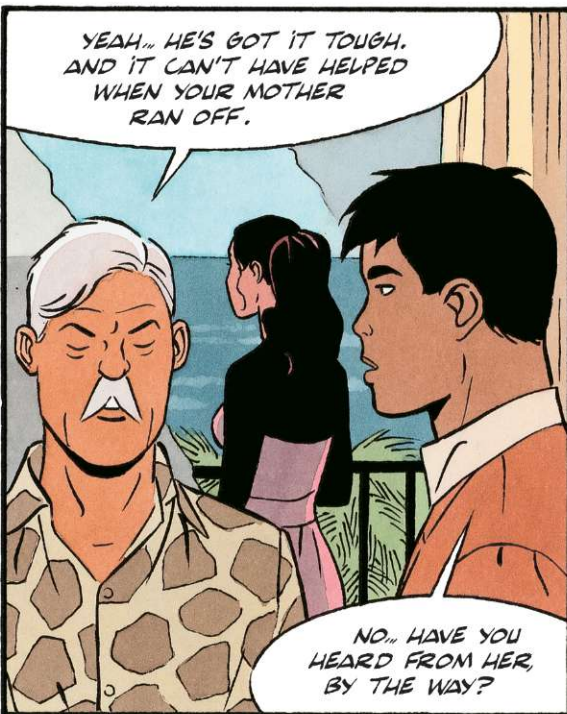
YOU COULD'VE WARNED ME YOU WERE COMING. I KNOW INTERNATIONAL PHONE CALLS ARE EXPENSIVE BUT A POSTCARD DOESN'T COST A DIME.

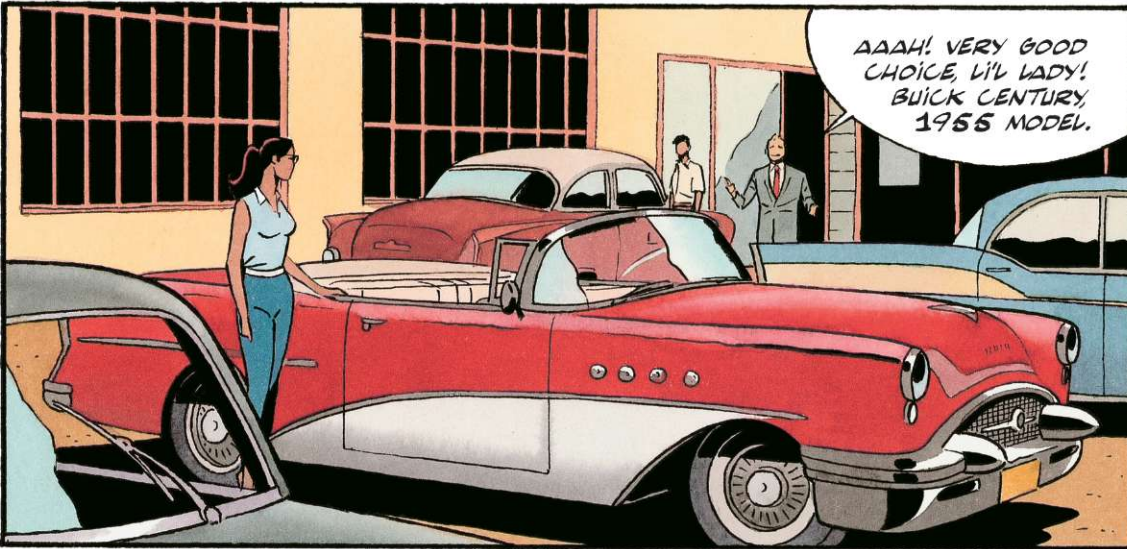


WELL, HERE IT IS. IT'S AN APARTMENT THAT BELONGS TO A RETIRED COUPLE.

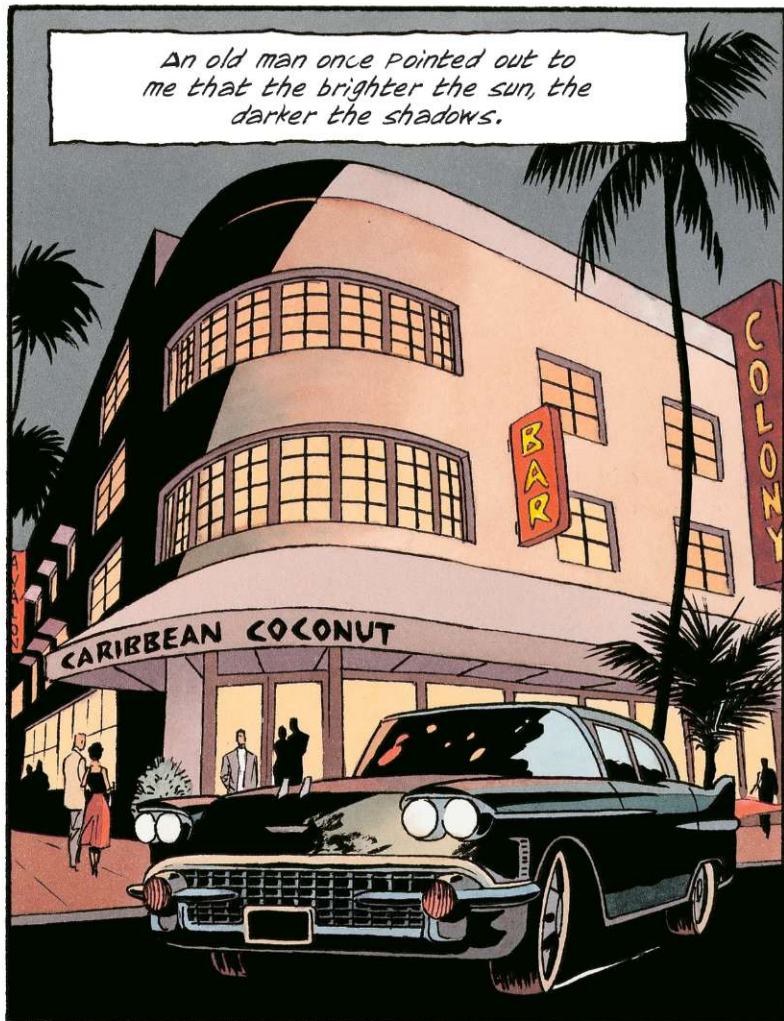


THEY MOVED HERE FOR THE SUNNY WEATHER, BUT THE SUMMERS ARE TOO HOT FOR THEM SO THEY HEAD BACK UP NORTH. THEY STILL HAVE FAMILY IN VIRGINIA.



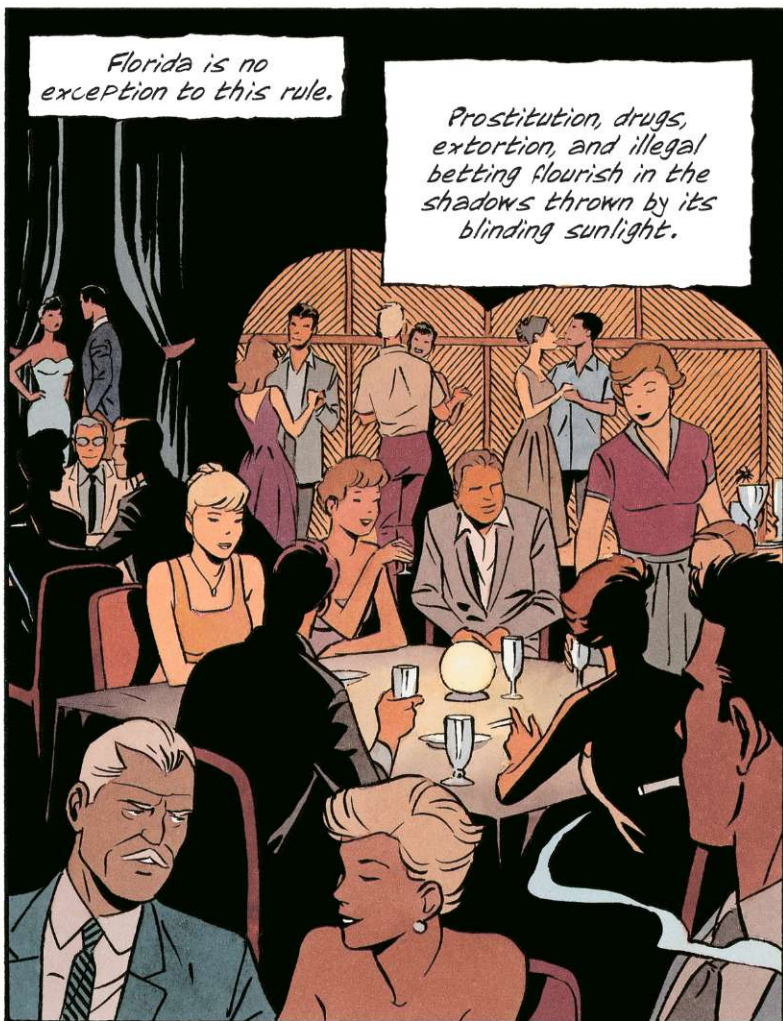


An old man once pointed out to me that the brighter the sun, the darker the shadows.



Florida is no exception to this rule.

Prostitution, drugs, extortion, and illegal betting flourish in the shadows thrown by its blinding sunlight.



A lucrative underground economy administered from New York by the Gambino, Bonnano, Profaci, Lucchese, and Genovese crime families.



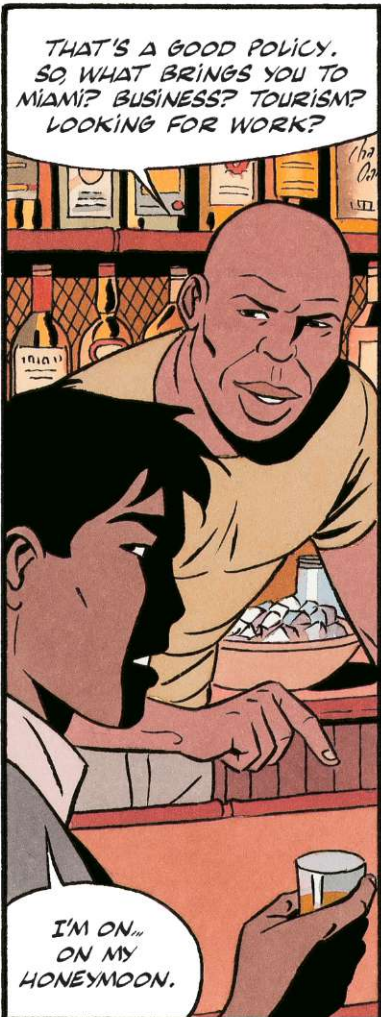
Only two cities in the state are outside the direct control of those five families: Tampa and Miami.



These are Trafficante's private hunting ground.

YOU OKAY, MAN? YOU LOOK A LITTLE GLOOMY...







WHEN YOU SPEND YOUR DAYS AND MOST OF YOUR NIGHTS RUNNING A BAR, YOU SEE AND HEAR ALL KINDS OF THINGS.



YESTERDAY I HEARD A RUMOR FROM HAVANA, IN FACT. MAYBE YOU COULD LET ME KNOW IF IT'S TRUE OR NOT?

IT'S ABOUT A GUY WHO GOT KNOCKED OFF IN A TAXI EARLY LAST WEEK.



PEOPLE DIE EVERY DAY IN HAVANA.



TRUE ENOUGH... BUT THIS WASN'T JUST ANYONE. FOR STARTERS, HE WAS AMERICAN.

WHAT'S MORE, THEY SAY HE WAS A COURIER FOR THE LEADERS OF THE NEW YORK MAFIA. EVERY MONTH, HE WAS BRINGING A LARGE NUMBER OF BILLS TO CUBA TO BE LAUNDERED IN THE ISLAND'S CASINOS.

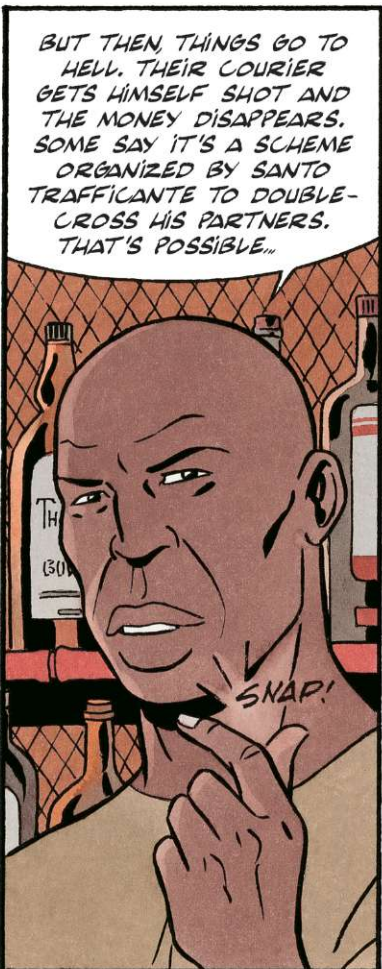


ACCORDING TO WHAT I'VE HEARD, THE DAY HE WAS OFFERED HE WAS CARRYING A HUGE AMOUNT OF CASH. BIGGER THAN USUAL.

WHY?



BECAUSE OF WHAT'S GOING ON IN THE SIERRA MAESTRA. EVEN THE MAFIA IS STARTING TO WONDER WHETHER BATISTA WILL BE ABLE TO PUT DOWN CASTRO'S REVOLUTION. SO THEY DECIDED TO WITHDRAW PART OF THEIR FUNDS IN CASE THINGS TAKE A TURN FOR THE WORSE.



BUT THEN THINGS GO TO HELL. THEIR COURIER GETS HIMSELF SHOT AND THE MONEY DISAPPEARS. SOME SAY IT'S A SCHEME ORGANIZED BY SANTO TRAFFICANTE TO DOUBLE-CROSS HIS PARTNERS. THAT'S POSSIBLE...

SNAP!



ESPECIALLY AS HE WAS THE ONE WHO ADVISED THEM TO REPATRIATE THEIR MONEY.

AND WHY ARE YOU TELLING ME ALL THIS?





SHE WENT TO THE BATHROOM, BUT --



HEY!



Ladies



WE'RE LEAVING!



HANG ON...



HEY! WHAT'S YOUR PROBLEM?

WE'RE NOT SAFE HERE. WE'VE GOT TO GO. FAST!

Ladies



?

NOW!



LET ME GO!





I'M WIPED OUT... I'M TAKING THE BEDROOM.



HERE, YOU TWO CAN SLEEP IN THE LIVING ROOM.

SUCH A BIG BED ALL FOR YOURSELF?



GOOD-NIGHT.



YOUR SISTER'S COOL.

MY SISTER?



LIVIA, SHE TOLD ME YOU WERE HER BROTHER.

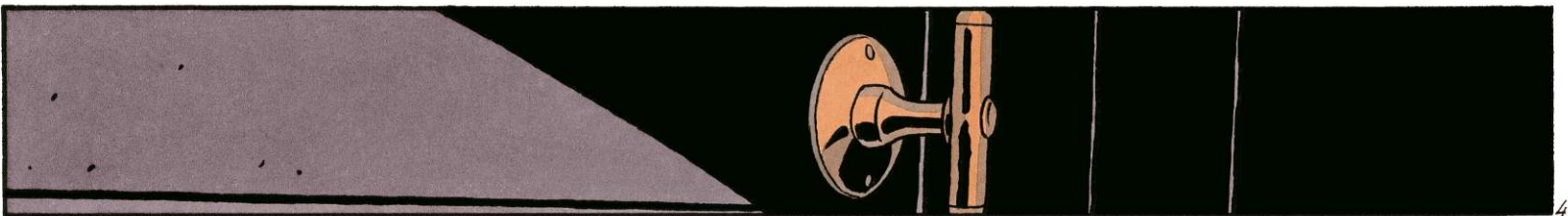
OH... RIGHT... HALF-BROTHER, REALLY. I'M TAKING THE SOFA.



CLACK!



OKAY.







YOU LOOKING FOR ME? I WAS SMOKING A CIGARETTE ON THE BALCONY.

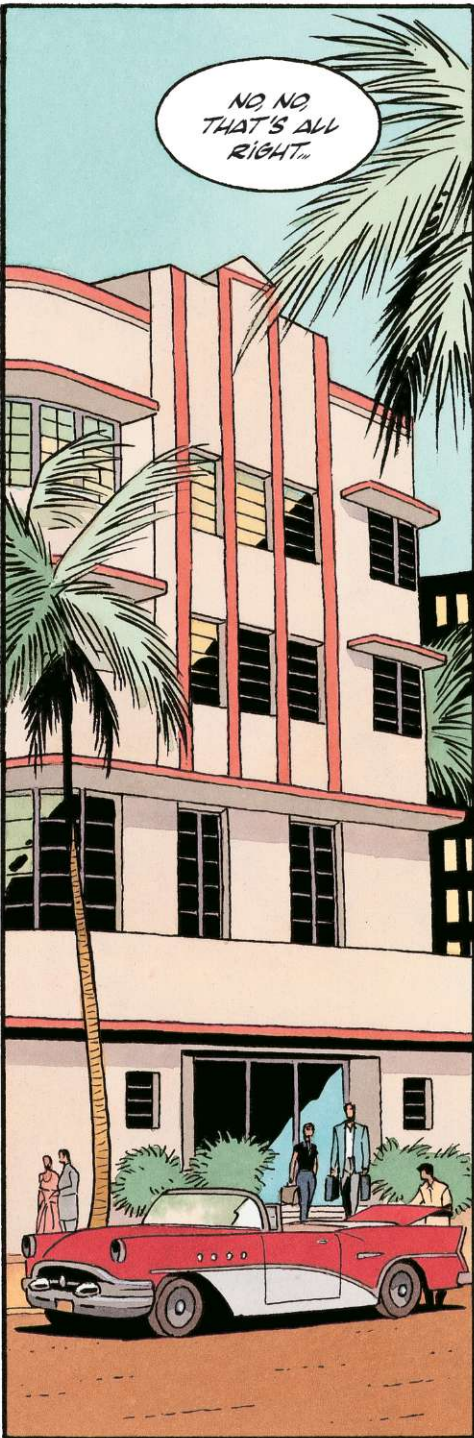


I--I JUST WANTED TO LET YOU KNOW THAT I'M GOING TO PICK UP THE CAR. YOU NEED TO BE READY TO LEAVE AS SOON AS I GET BACK.

OKAY! WE'LL GET PACKED, THEN. YOU WANT ME TO COME WITH YOU?



GREAT! CAN WE STOP BY THE TRAIN STATION? I LEFT MY BAGS IN A LOCKER THERE.



NO, NO, THAT'S ALL RIGHT...

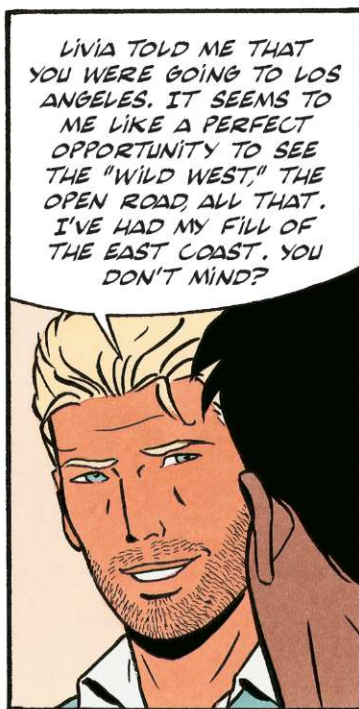


SEAN'S COMING WITH US.



WHAT? BUT... DIDN'T YOU JUST GET TO MIAMI?

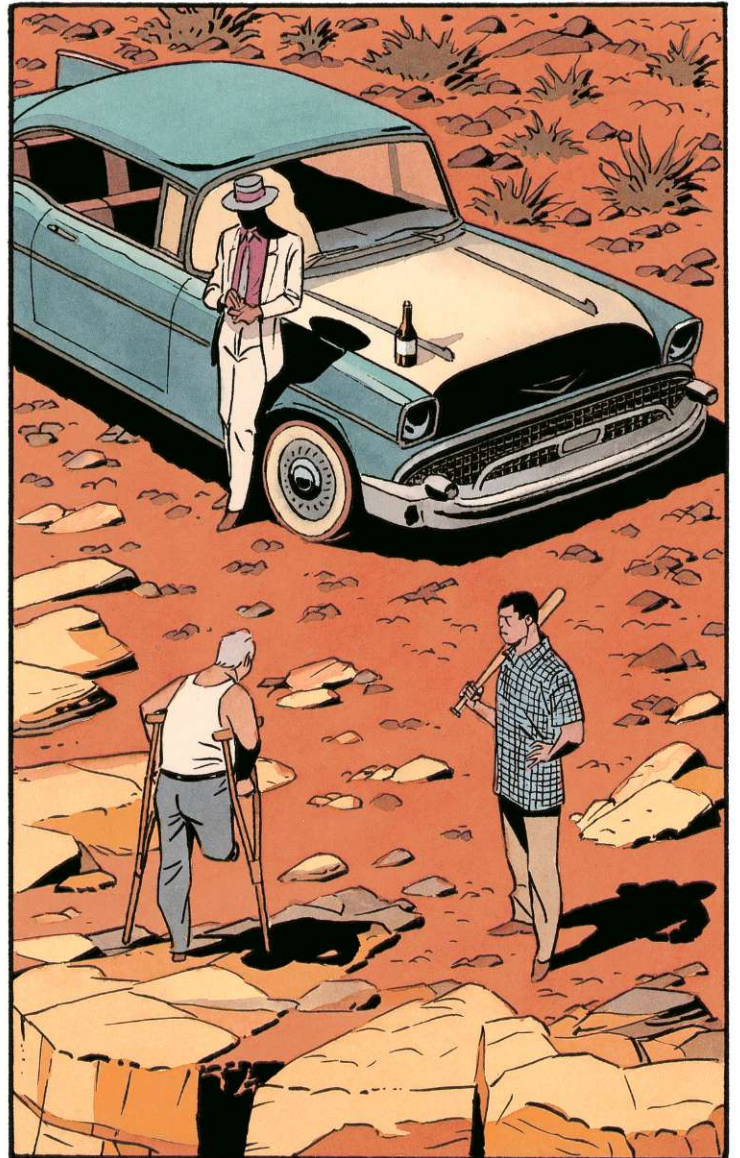
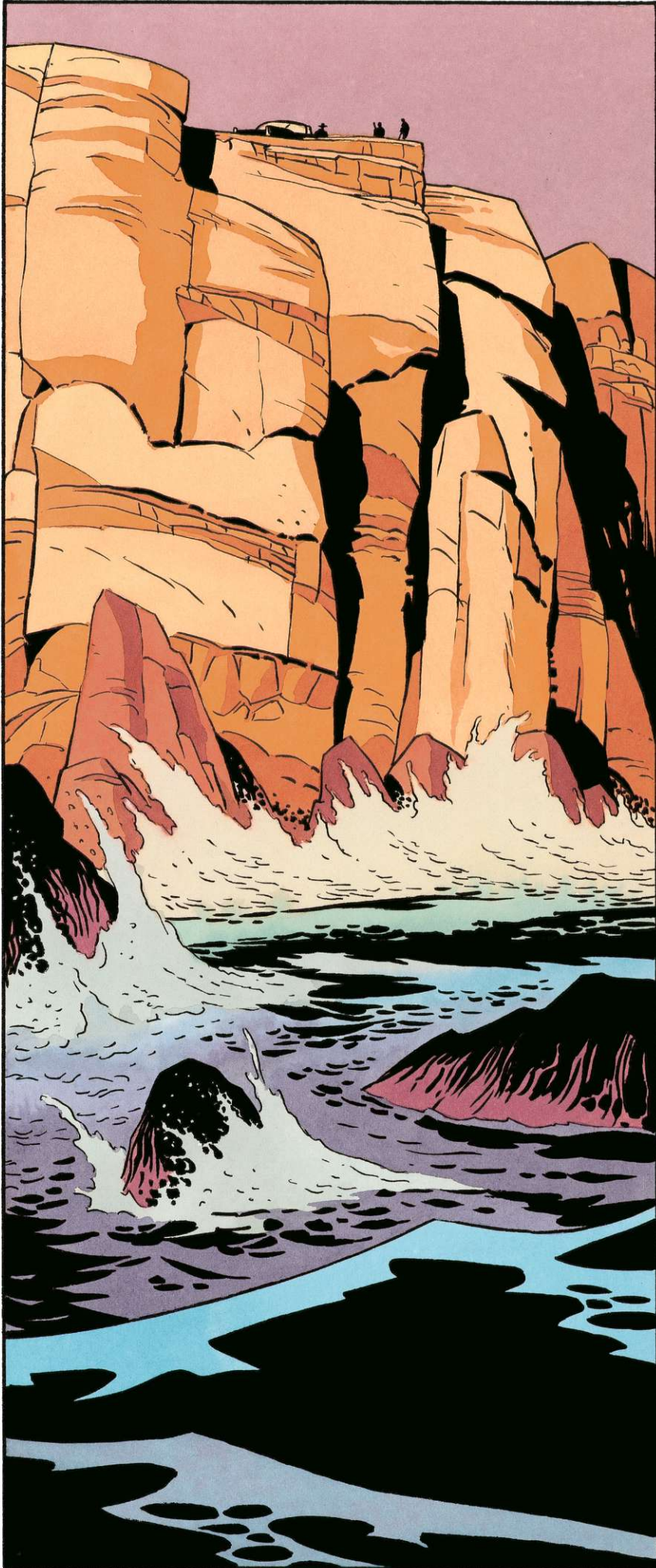
SO WHAT? SAME FOR US.



LIVIA TOLD ME THAT YOU WERE GOING TO LOS ANGELES. IT SEEMS TO ME LIKE A PERFECT OPPORTUNITY TO SEE THE "WILD WEST," THE OPEN ROAD, ALL THAT. I'VE HAD MY FILL OF THE EAST COAST. YOU DON'T MIND?



WHY WOULD HE MIND? SHALL WE GO?





I... I DON'T KNOW ANYTHING. I DON'T UNDERSTAND.



YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND... FINE. I'LL TRY TO EXPLAIN.



WHEN WE DROPPED IN ON YOU, WE FOUND THIS. REMEMBER? TWO THOUSAND DOLLARS IS A LOT OF MONEY FOR A POOR, UNEMPLOYED DRUNK...



I DON'T KNOW WHERE IT CAME FROM, I SWEAR! IT WAS THERE WHEN I WOKE UP.



SNAP!





THE NEXT SWING IS GONNA BE AIMED AT THE KNEE YOU HAVE LEFT.



I GET THE IMPRESSION YOU DON'T QUITE APPRECIATE THE GRAVITY OF THIS SITUATION, SO I'M GOING TO SUMMARIZE: WHEN SEÑOR TRAFFICANTE FOUND OUT THAT ONE OF THE TWO GUYS THAT STOLE HIS FRIENDS' DOUGH WAS THE BROTHER OF ONE OF HIS EMPLOYEES..



..AND THAT THIS EMPLOYEE HAD JUST RUN OFF WITH TRAFFICANTE'S PROTEGÉ, THAT MADE HIM ANGRY. AND EVEN AN IDIOT LIKE YOU MUST KNOW THAT YOU SHOULD NEVER PISS OFF SANTO TRAFFICANTE JUNIOR.



SO IT'S IN YOUR SON'S INTEREST THAT WE FIND HIM SOONER RATHER THAN LATER, GOT IT? FOR HIS OWN GOOD.

HE GIVES US THE MONEY, WE GET THE GIRL BACK, SANTO TRAFFICANTE CALMS DOWN, AND EVERYTHING GOES BACK TO NORMAL.

I--I DON'T KNOW WHERE JOAQUÍN IS. HE DIDN'T TELL ME ANYTHING.



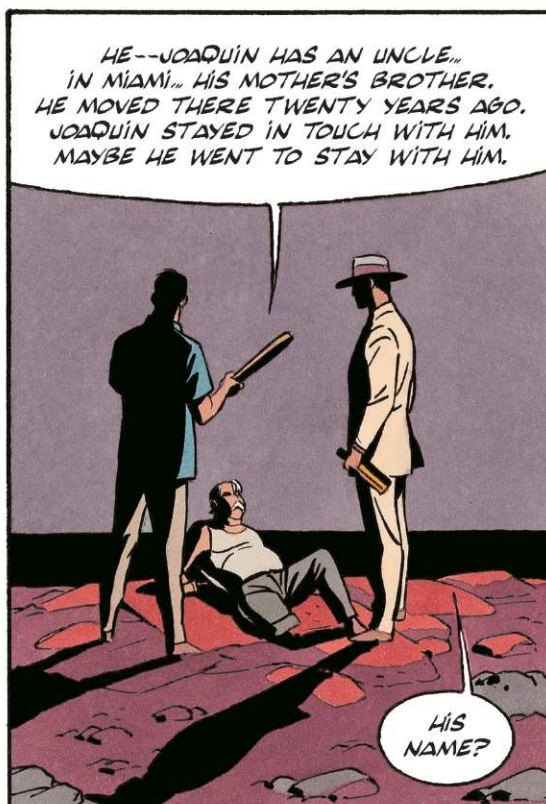
YOU DON'T KNOW.. THAT'S FINE. BUT MAYBE YOU CAN GUESS. HERE, I'LL HELP YOU OUT: WE KNOW THAT YOUR KID TOOK A BOAT TO THE U.S., MAYBE YOU HAVE AN IDEA OF WHERE HE MIGHT GO ONCE HE GETS THERE.



I.. I DON'T KNOW.



WAIT!



HE--JOAQUÍN HAS AN UNCLE.. IN MIAMI.. HIS MOTHER'S BROTHER. HE MOVED THERE TWENTY YEARS AGO. JOAQUÍN STAYED IN TOUCH WITH HIM. MAYBE HE WENT TO STAY WITH HIM.

HIS NAME?



P--PORTILLO... JOSÉ PORTILLO. HE'S THE CARETAKER AT AN APARTMENT COMPLEX FOR TOURISTS IN MIAMI BEACH.

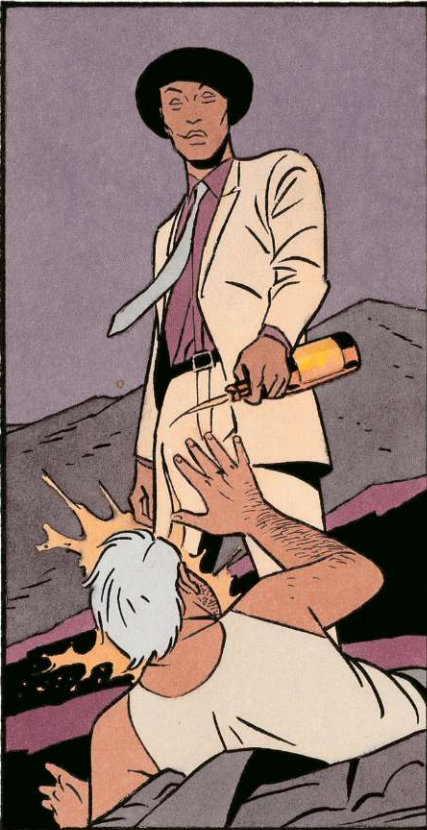
DON'T HURT JOAQUIN. HE'S A GOOD BOY.



HERE... FOR STARTERS, WE'LL DRINK A GLASS IN HIS HONOR.



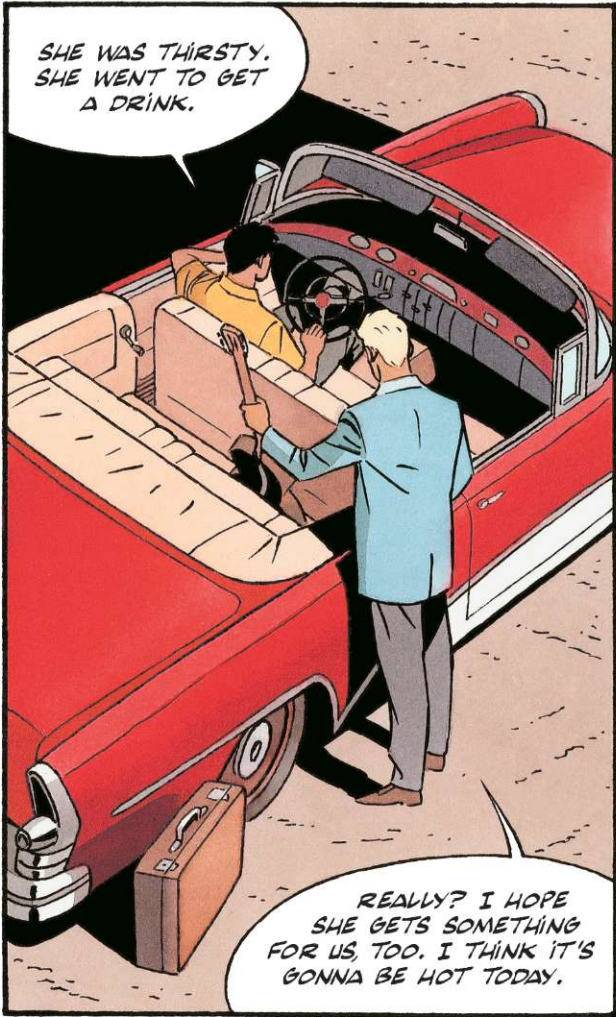
DON'T WORRY, GRANDPA. WE'LL TAKE GOOD CARE OF YOUR KID. WON'T WE, BOXER?



NOOOOO!!





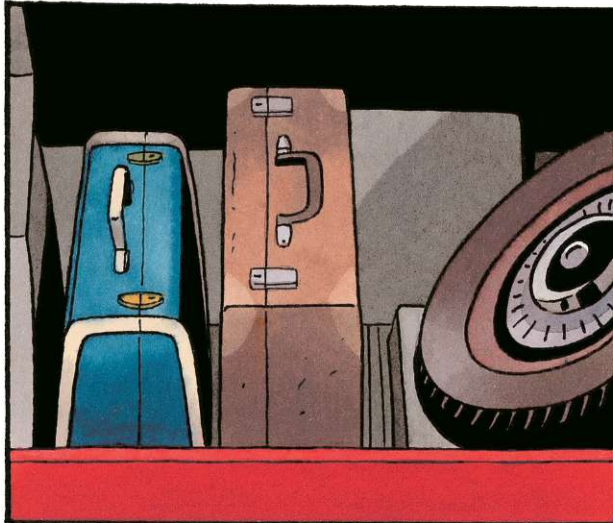


SHE WAS THIRSTY. SHE WENT TO GET A DRINK.

REALLY? I HOPE SHE GETS SOMETHING FOR US TOO. I THINK IT'S GONNA BE HOT TODAY.



I'M GONNA PUT MY BAG IN THE TRUNK.



LIVIA TOLD ME YOU WON SOME KIND OF JACKPOT...

JACKPOT?



AT THE CASINO. THAT'S WHY YOU'RE TAKING THIS TRIP, RIGHT?

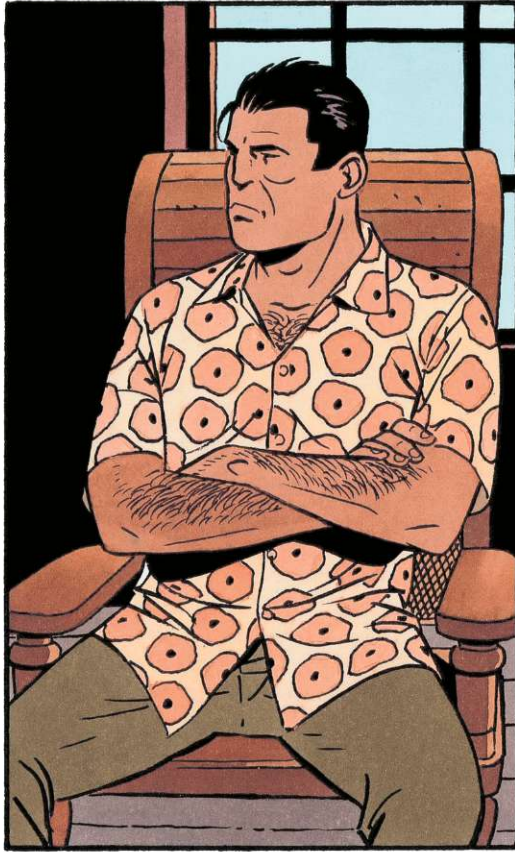


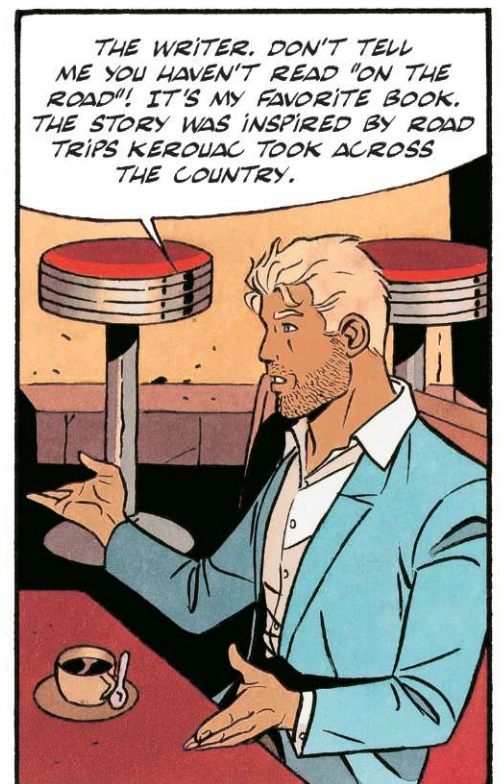
SHE SAID YOU HAVE A GIANT WAD OF CASH. SO BIG THAT A CAR LIKE THIS HARDLY PUT A DENT IN IT...



YEAH, SO WHAT'S IT TO YOU?







I KNOW THAT WE WON'T HAVE MUCH CHOICE. THERE'S ONLY ONE WAY TO HEAD WEST, UNLESS YOU WANT TO DETOUR UP NORTH, WHICH WOULD WASTE US A LOT OF TIME. THE ONLY THING TO DO IS TAKE ROUTE 90 ALONG THE MEXICAN BORDER.



AND DO YOU KNOW THAT ROUTE?

A BIT. I'VE NEVER TAKEN IT PAST THE MISSISSIPPI.

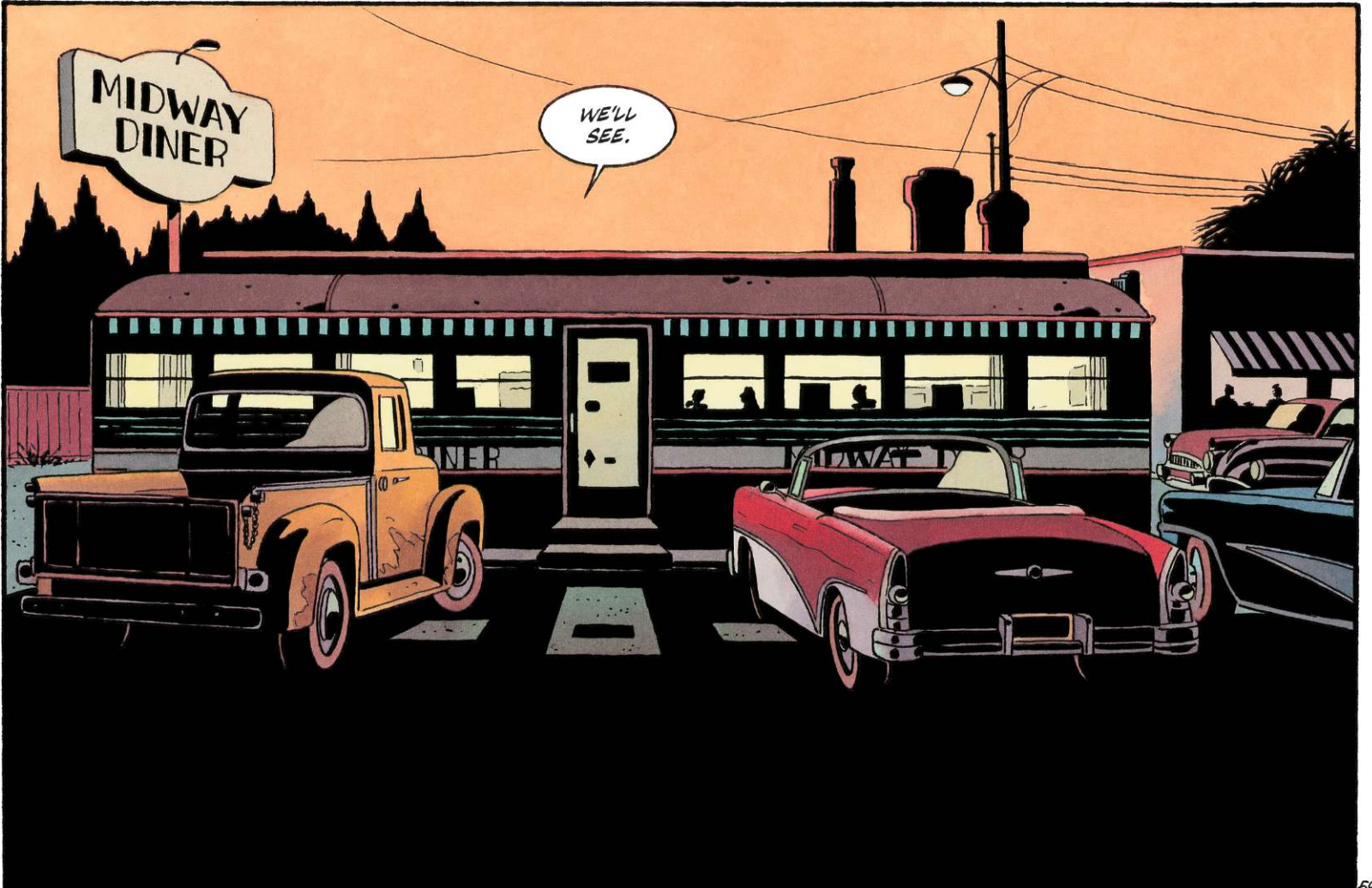
I'VE GOT FRIENDS IN LOUISIANA, ACTUALLY. WE COULD MAKE A PIT STOP THERE. IT'S ON THE WAY.

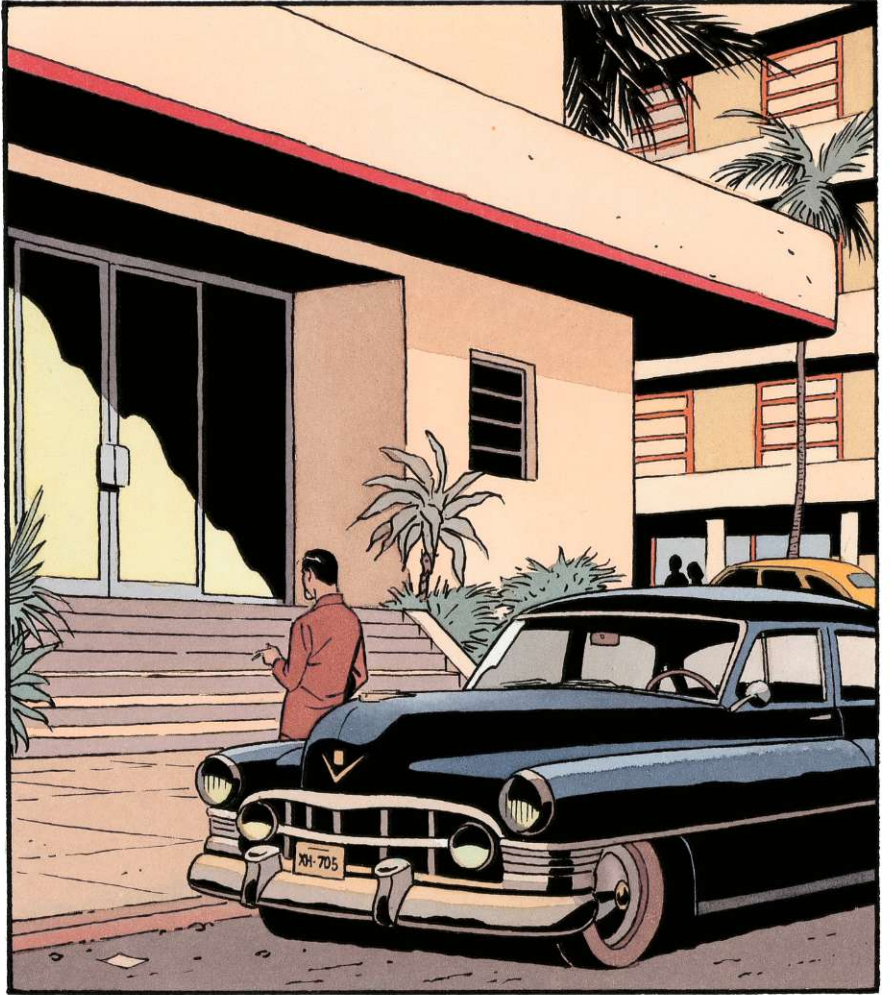
LET'S DO THAT! I'D LIKE TO MEET SOME NEW PEOPLE.

IT'S A BIG HOUSE, I'M SURE THEY CAN PUT US UP FOR A FEW NIGHTS.

WHAT DO YOU THINK, JOAQUÍN?

I DON'T KNOW.







YEAH, I REMEMBER THEM. YOU DON'T SEE A PRETTY DAME LIKE THAT EVERY DAY, EVEN IN MIAMI!

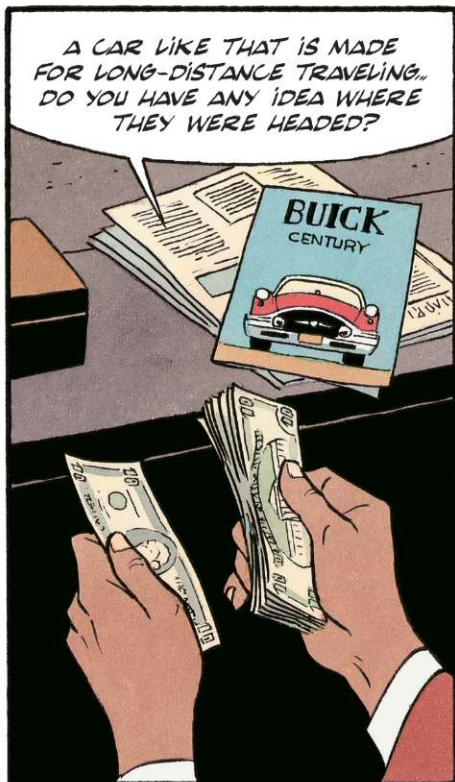


AND SHE SEEMED LIKE A TOUGH COOKIE. IT LOOKED LIKE SHE WAS WEARING THE PANTS IN THE RELATIONSHIP. SHE EVEN PICKED OUT THE CAR.

WHAT KIND?



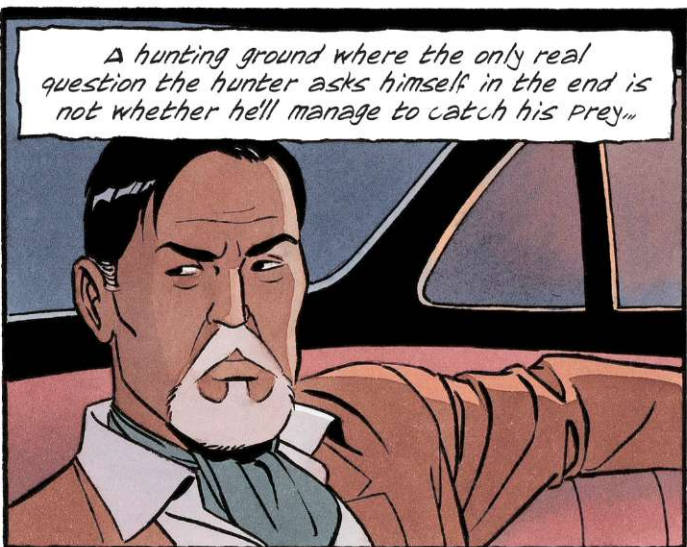
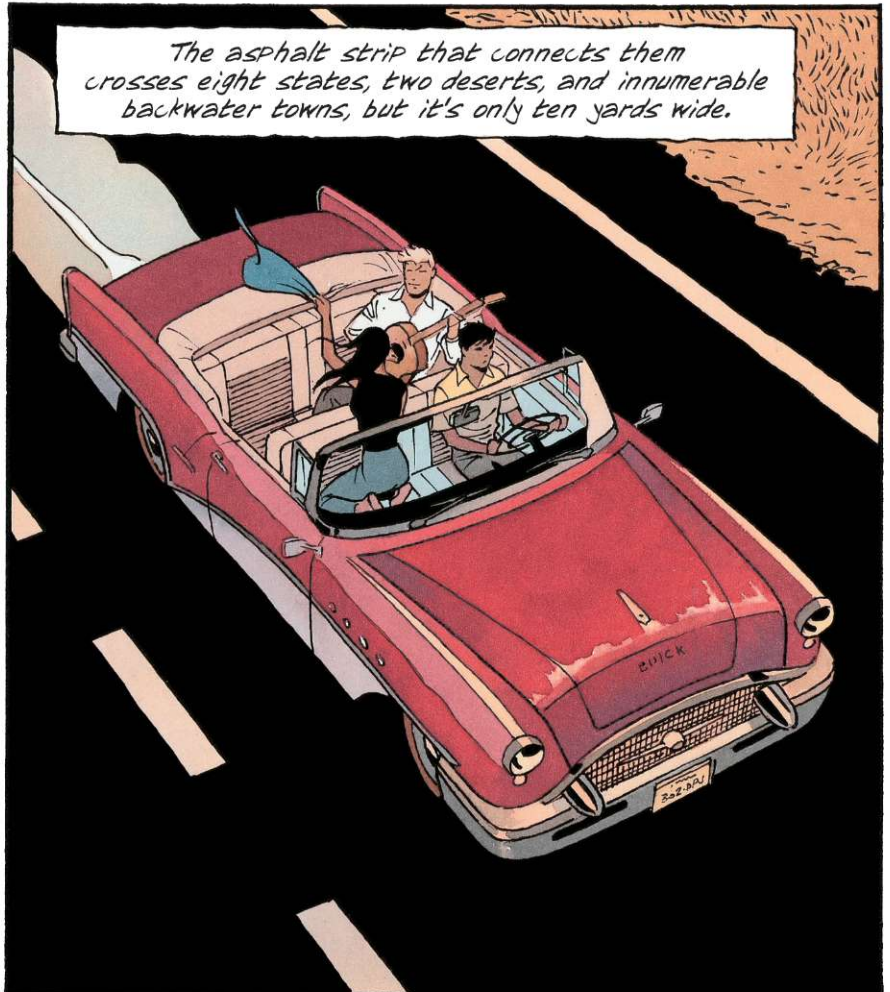
HANG ON... I MUST HAVE THE BROCHURE, HERE. I CAN EVEN GET YOU THE LICENSE PLATE NUMBER.



A CAR LIKE THAT IS MADE FOR LONG-DISTANCE TRAVELING... DO YOU HAVE ANY IDEA WHERE THEY WERE HEADED?



THE GIRL MENTIONED HOLLYWOOD.



PERICO

PARAKEET IN SPANISH, IT ALSO REFERS
TO COCAINE IN CUBAN SLANG.

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Joaquin is an ambitious young casino worker in Havana during the final days before Fidel Castro's coup to overthrow the corrupt Cuban government. Against this tense political backdrop, Joaquin finds himself holding a briefcase full of cash belonging to his gangster boss, stolen by Joaquin's own brother, a guerrilla working for the revolution. When he learns that a young woman he has taken a liking to will be prostituted by his boss to none other than President Batista, he convinces her to flee with him — and the stolen money — to the United States, where they buy a car and head across the country, with the Cuban mafia hot on their tails.
