

ENKI BILAL

# THE NIKOPOL TRILOGY

the carnival of immortals - the woman trap - equator cold



Bilal

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## **the carnival of immortals**

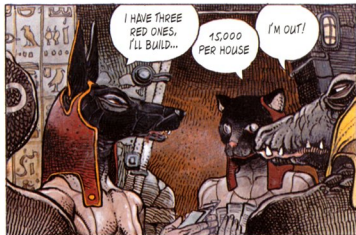
“ Immortality is a form of dictatorship of life over death. Since I am a dictator and alive, all that remains for me is to become immortal. And this I will become ! Even if it kills me !”

J. F. Choublanc (Miscellaneous writings, Paris 2023)

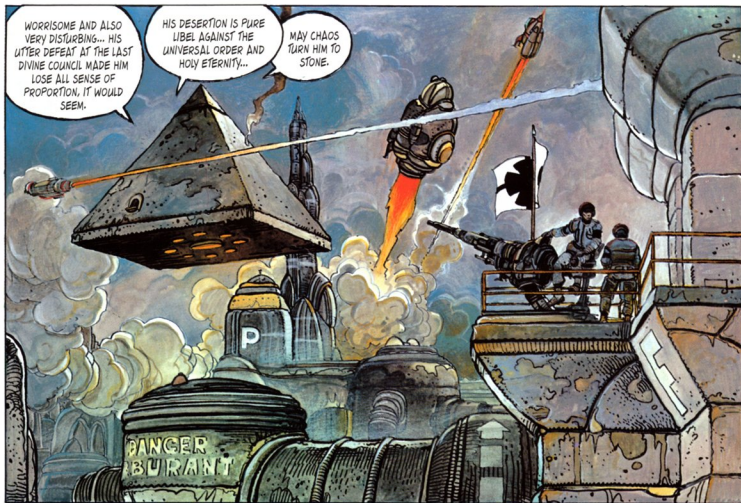


**PARIS** – EARLY MARCH 2023 – ON THE EVE OF A NEW BUT MEANINGLESS ELECTORAL MASQUERADE . . . NOTHING IS LIKELY TO CHANGE IN THE POLITICALLY AUTONOMOUS AND HOPELESSLY FASCIST GREATER PARIS. THE CITY IS DIVIDED INTO TWO COMPLETELY UNEQUAL SECTORS... THE FIRST, THE CENTRAL CITY, IS INHABITED BY A SOCIAL ELITE, A MASSIVE STANDING ARMY AND THE RULING CLASS. THE SECOND SECTOR, SURROUNDING THE FIRST AND EXTENDING AS FAR AS THE EYE CAN SEE, HAS BECOME THE CROSSROADS FOR ALL KINDS OF ADVENTURERS AND EXTRATERRESTRIALS EVER SINCE A LARGE ASTROPORT WENT INTO SERVICE. THE GOVERNMENT MILITIA PATROLS, BUT ONLY SECONDARILY ENSURES THE SECURITY OF THIS WORLD OF DEGENERACY, POVERTY AND FILTH. IN ADDITION TO THE FAKE HUBBUB OF THE IMPENDING ELECTIONS THERE IS A STRANGE MALAISE BECAUSE OF THE APPEARANCE OF A HUGE, ODDLY PYRAMID-SHAPED SPACESHIP HOVERING OVER THE ASTROPORT. PUBLIC UNREST IS ON THE UPSWING. RUMOR IS THAT THE OCCUPANTS OF THE FLYING PYRAMID ARE DEMANDING ASTRONOMICAL QUANTITIES OF FUEL FROM THE CITY OF PARIS. THE CAUTIOUS (AND SUSPICIOUS) SILENCE OF JEAN-FERDINAND CHOUBLANC, THE PRESENT GOVERNOR, IS NOT REASSURING.









WORRISOME AND ALSO VERY DISTURBING... HIS UTTER DEFEAT AT THE LAST DIVINE COUNCIL MADE HIM LOSE ALL SENSE OF PROPORTION, IT WOULD SEEM.

HIS DESERTION IS PURE LIBEL AGAINST THE UNIVERSAL ORDER AND HOLY ETERNITY...

MAY CHAOS TURN HIM TO STONE.

... UNIDENTIFIED FLYING OBJECT IN THE FORBIDDEN ZONE, COMMANDER... IT SEEMS TO BE HEADING TOWARD THE CITY CENTER... RADIO APPARENTLY DEAD...

DON'T LOSE SIGHT OF IT AND GET ME GENERAL VERTEGOUTE FAST!

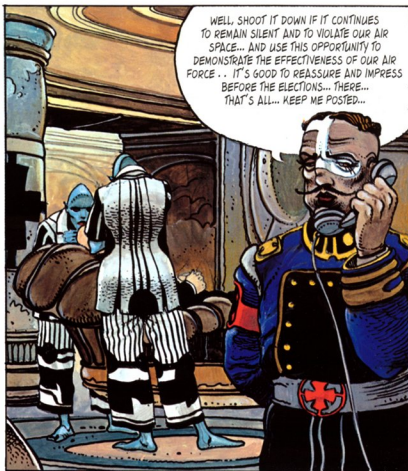


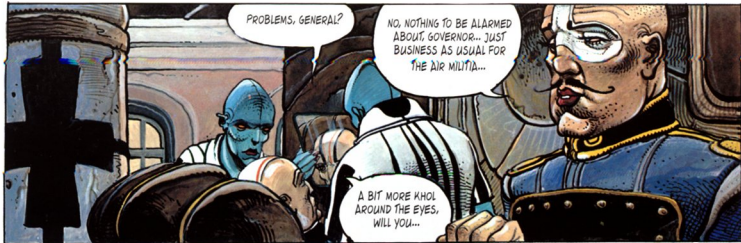
UH... THE GENERAL IS AT THE ELYSEE PALACE WITH THE GOVERNOR...

GET THROUGH TO HIM ANYWAY.



WELL, SHOOT IT DOWN IF IT CONTINUES TO REMAIN SILENT AND TO VIOLATE OUR AIR SPACE... AND USE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO DEMONSTRATE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF OUR AIR FORCE .. IT'S GOOD TO REASSURE AND IMPRESS BEFORE THE ELECTIONS... THERE... THAT'S ALL... KEEP ME POSTED...





PROBLEMS, GENERAL?

NO, NOTHING TO BE ALARMED ABOUT, GOVERNOR... JUST BUSINESS AS USUAL FOR THE AIR MILITIA...

A BIT MORE KHOL AROUND THE EYES, WILL YOU...



LIKE THIS?

HMM... PERFECT, PERFECT... NOW LEAVE US, GIRLS...



WELL, I AM WAITING FOR YOUR CONCLUSIONS, MY FRIEND!



THE MINISTER FOR FINANCIAL COORDINATION HAS ARRIVED... HE WAS SCHEDULED TO MEET WITH YOU, I BELIEVE...

QUITE SO, MY DEAR, HAVE HIM COME IN... AND YOU, GENERAL, TAKE CARE OF MY DEAR BROTHER, HIS HOLINESS THEODDULE!... I WON'T BE LONG...



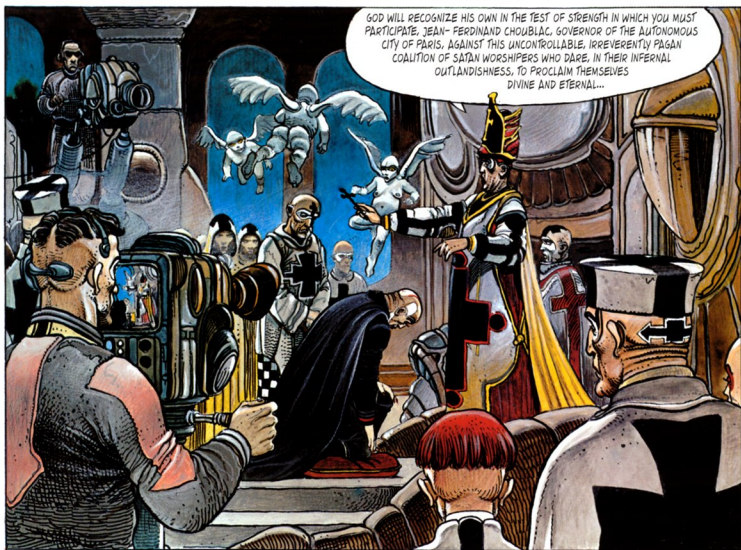
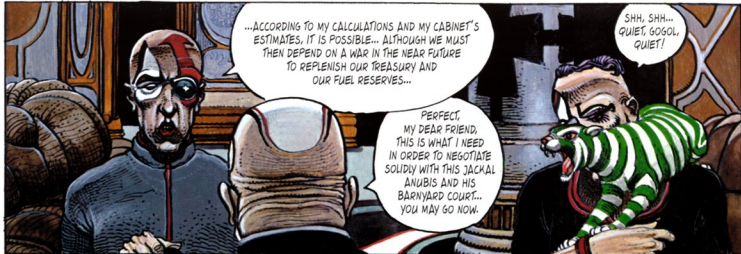
I AM NOT GOING TO HIDE FROM YOU, GOVERNOR, THE FACT THAT THIS BUSINESS LOOKS RATHER UNFAVORABLE... THE FUEL NEEDS OF THESE...UH... OF THESE BEINGS ARE MUCH TOO VAST AND THE LACK OF ANY COMPENSATION, FINANCIAL OR OTHERWISE, MAKES THIS DEAL BIZARRE AND DANGEROUS AT BEST...

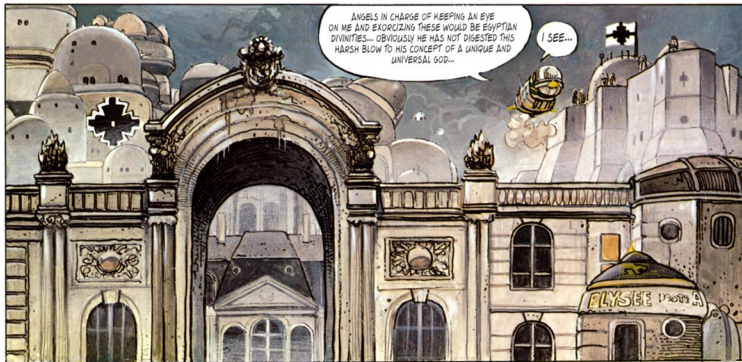
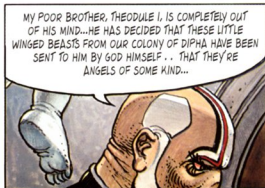
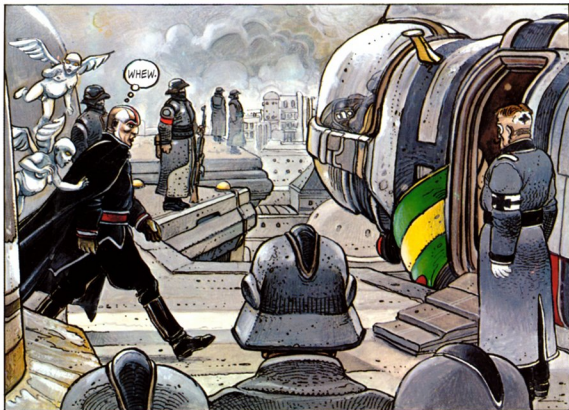
LISTEN TO ME, THE NATURE OF THIS DEAL, AND WHAT I INTEND TO GET IN EXCHANGE ARE MY BUSINESS! AS FOR THE FINANCIAL LOSS YOU SEEM TO BE AFRAID OF THERE ARE DOZENS OF WAYS OF MAKING IT UP... NEW TAXES ON THE ZONES ADJACENT TO THE SECOND SECTOR, DECLARING WAR ON THE WEALTHY BUT MILITARILY VULNERABLE CITIES IN THE EAST, AND THAT'S ONLY FOR STARTERS...

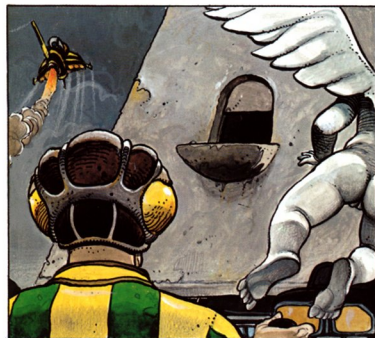
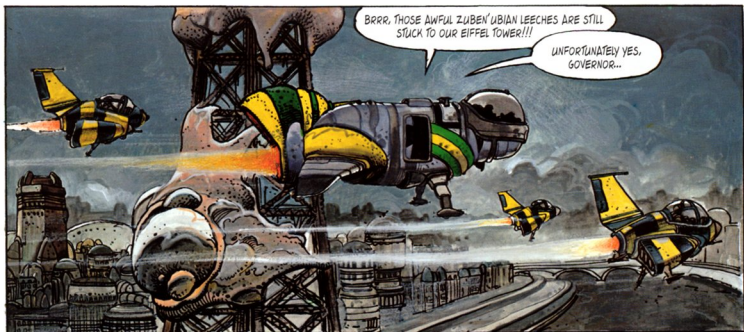


NO, WHAT I WANT TO KNOW RIGHT NOW IS WHETHER OR NOT SUCH A DRAIN ON OUR PRESENT FUEL SUPPLIES IS POSSIBLE.









MEANWHILE, 9,000  
TO 12,000 FEET  
ABOVE...

OBJECT  
SKIPPED AIR  
12,000 ...

LOOK AT THE THING...  
A KIND OF TENSORIC  
SPARK CLASSE...

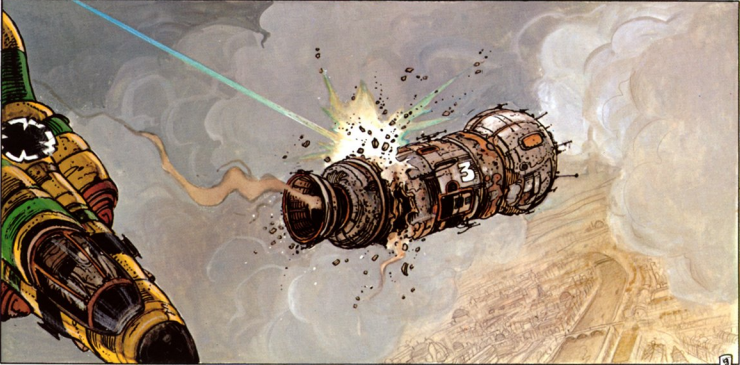


YEAH... AND STILL  
NOT A SOUND OUT  
OF IT.

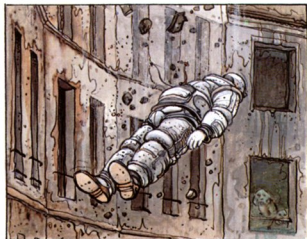


WATCH OUT.  
I'M GOING TO  
FIRE!

GO  
HEAD!







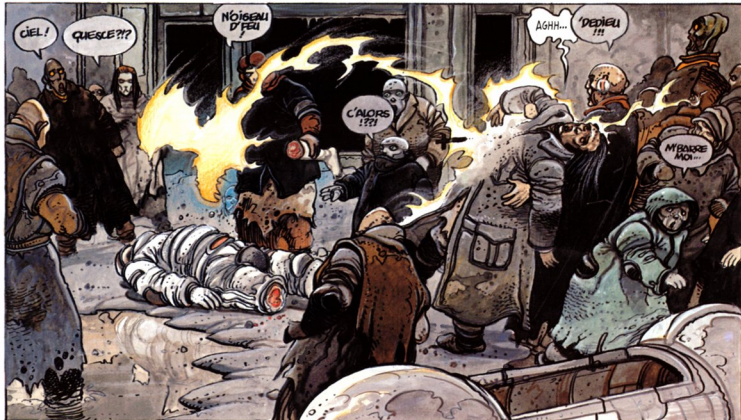


IL CATANIC PRODUCT!  
CHIERE DU DIABLE!!!  
VADE RET...



ROMAARCH

IT SADRAC PRODUCT! SHITTING FROM DEVIL!!! UOBE GET...



CJEL!

QUESQUE???

NOISEUM  
D'FEU

C'ALORS  
!???

AGHH...

'DEDIU  
!!!

MYBASSE  
DOA...

HEBREW WINDS???? SA FINE BAW! WIND??? S'COOT! ME SPILT...



VLOUFF



GADZOOKS!  
DIS IS  
MIRACLE!!!  
I NOT BELIEVE  
MY EYE!



SA FLAP  
SA FIV!

S'NOT  
TRUE!!!

WATCH! DA MILIT'S  
COMIN!!!





LET'S BE REASONABLE. I'M NOT GOING TO BLEED THE ECONOMY OF MY CITY DRY WITHOUT BEING PAID FOR IT! I'M READY TO LET YOU HAVE ALL THE FUEL YOU NEED (AND THAT'S EXPENSIVE) BUT ONLY ON CONDITION THAT YOU GRANT ME IMMORTALITY. FUEL IS GETTING RARER AND RARER, YOU KNOW THAT BETTER THAN I DO! YOU CAN'T LOSE IN THE DEAL. BELIEVE ME...



ENOUGH, JEAN-FERDINAND CHOUBLANC! IT IS OUT OF THE QUESTION TO GO AGAINST THE UNIVERSAL ORDER.

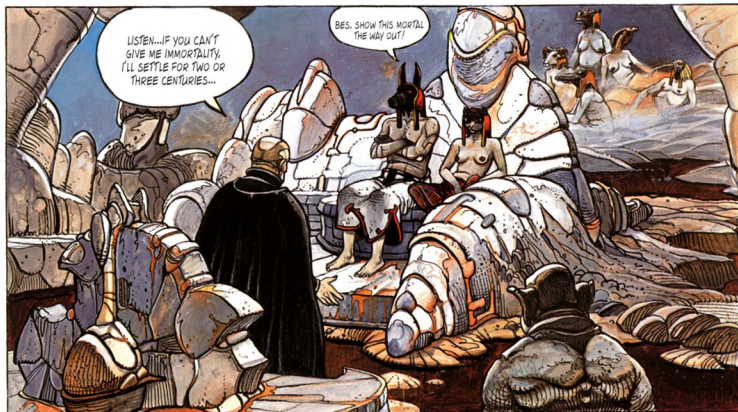


IT IS EQUALLY OUT OF THE QUESTION TO GRANT A HUMAN, ONE MISERABLE ENTITY AMONG MANY, THE ULTIMATE AND SUPREME STATE OF IMMORTALITY OF THE POWERFUL!

YOU MAY GO! AND DON'T FORGET THAT IT IS WE WHO HAVE ALL THE TIME IN THE WORLD!

LISTEN...IF YOU CAN'T GIVE ME IMMORTALITY, I'LL SETTLE FOR TWO OR THREE CENTURIES...

BES, SHOW THIS MORTAL THE WAY OUT!



WELL, GOVERNOR?

BACK TO THE EYSESE PALACE, GENERAL! QUICKLY AND QUIETLY...



**"LA VOIX LÉGALE"**  
DIFFUSION OFFICIELLE  
TIRAGE 75 000 EX.

**"L'ORDRE"**  
DIFF. OFFICIELLE  
TIRAGE 60 000 EX.

# AN ENEMY SHIP SHOT DOWN

Yesterday, March 2, late afternoon, a foreign and apparently hostile ship was masterfully destroyed by two stridents of the Air Militia, flown by pilot commanders Jules Bourdonner and Arthur Deslors. The occupant of the machine managed to parachute out at the last minute, but was welcomed by the ground militia forces, and quickly put out of commission.

It should be noted that this hateful character, most likely a spy from the cities of the East, lost a leg in the fall. The militia, in a spirit of generosity, left this leg out for food for the miserable creatures of the second sector South, who had swarmed like so many hungry flies around the scene of action.

Militia General Vertegoutte, on his return from the Pyramid, where he had accompanied Governor Choublanc, expressed his deep satisfaction with "this remarkable joint action taken by the air and ground militia forces".

# PYRAMID: NEGOTIATIONS RESUME

After receiving a special papal blessing in the holy chapel of the Elysee palace, the governor of the city of Paris, Jean-Ferdinand Choublanc, accompanied by Militia General Vertegoutte, went to the flying pyramid which has been parked for nearly two weeks now over the Paris-South astropost. This resumption of negotiations (the 3rd) is once again due to the efforts of our beloved governor whose will to safeguard the interests of our city and whose diplomatic finesse grows more forceful as problems continue... problems which in this instance are shown to be especially thorny. After three hours of heated discussions with the mysterious occupants of the pyramid whose nature and identity have been kept secret for obvious reasons of national security, Jean-Ferdinand Choublanc returned to the governmental Elysee palace, where he made the statement: "I have no statement to make just have confidence in me!" We do, dear Governor.

# EFFICIENCY OF AIR MILITIA

A mysterious flying object which violated our air space was brilliantly intercepted by two Air Militia fighters yesterday, March 2, late in the afternoon. The Air Militia is constantly on the alert for our security.

# DA MYSTERIOUS FALLING

DA MYSTERIOUS FALLING HAS HAPPEN IN OUR TOWN ON EVENING MARCH 2 DA MAN PARACHUTED FREEZED SOLID HE WAS SO MUCH SO HE LEG BROKEN CLEAN WHEN HE HIT. THEY FILTHY CHOUBLANC MILITIA (LATE LIKE USUAL) GOT FUCKED CAUSE DA FREEZED MYSTERY MAN FLAPPED OFF BEFORE ARRIVAL OF THEM.

HA HA HA

**"A RESISTANCE POPULIERE"**  
DIFE MARGINALE  
ET HIRREGLIERE  
TIRAGE MITSANAL  
10 A 50 EX.



AAAAH!

SORTIE

CALM DOWN!



MY LEG!!! GOD, WHERE'S MY LEG!??



WHO'D YOU SAY?

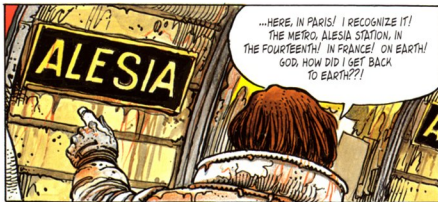
**HORUS!** THE ONE TO WHOM YOU OWE THE EXTENSION OF YOUR MISERABLE MORTAL LIFE... THE ONE WHO IS GOING TO GIVE YOU THE HONOR OF LIVING IN YOUR BODY, THE ONE WHO KNOWS ALL ABOUT YOUR POOR PATHETIC LIFE AS A DESERTER, **ALCIPE NIKOPOL!**



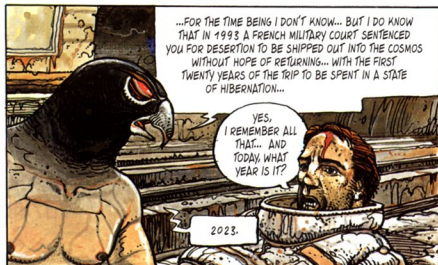
I SAID, CALM DOWN, YOU PITIFUL HUMAN, AND LISTEN TO WHAT I, HORUS, GOD AMONG THE GODS, IMMORTAL AMONG THE IMMORTALS, HAVE TO SAY TO YOU...



NIKOPOL...  
ALCIDE NIKOPOL?  
HEY, THAT'S MY  
NAME!!! WHO ARE  
YOU FOR GOD'S  
SAKE, AND HOW  
DID I GET  
HERE?!!!



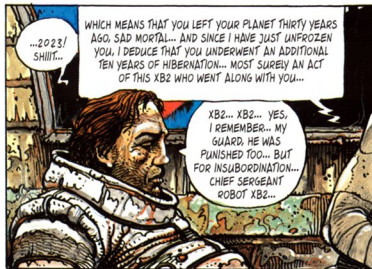
...HERE, IN PARIS! I RECOGNIZE IT!  
THE METRO, ALESIA STATION, IN  
THE FOURTEENTH! IN FRANCE! ON EARTH!  
GOD, HOW DID I GET BACK  
TO EARTH?!!



...FOR THE TIME BEING I DON'T KNOW... BUT I DO KNOW  
THAT IN 1993 A FRENCH MILITARY COURT SENTENCED  
YOU FOR DESERTION TO BE SHIPPED OUT INTO THE COSMOS  
WITHOUT HOPE OF RETURNING... WITH THE FIRST  
TWENTY YEARS OF THE TRIP TO BE SPENT IN A STATE  
OF HIBERNATION...

YES,  
I REMEMBER ALL  
THAT... AND  
TODAY, WHAT  
YEAR IS IT?

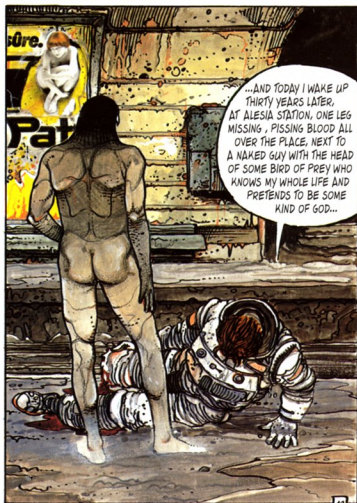
2023.



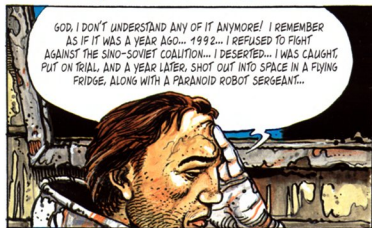
...2023!  
SHIT!

WHICH MEANS THAT YOU LEFT YOUR PLANET THIRTY YEARS  
AGO, SAD MORTAL... AND SINCE I HAVE JUST UNFROZEN  
YOU, I DEDUCE THAT YOU UNDERWENT AN ADDITIONAL  
TEN YEARS OF HIBERNATION... MOST SURELY AN ACT  
OF THIS XB2 WHO WENT ALONG WITH YOU...

XB2... XB2... YES,  
I REMEMBER... MY  
GUARD, HE WAS  
PUNISHED TOO... BUT  
FOR INSUBORDINATION...  
CHIEF SERGEANT  
ROBOT XB2...

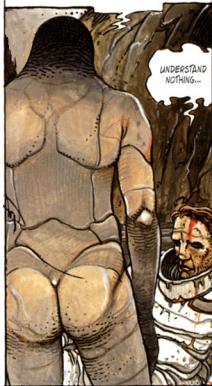


...AND TODAY I WAKE UP  
THIRTY YEARS LATER,  
AT ALESIA STATION, ONE LEG  
MISSING, PISSING BLOOD ALL  
OVER THE PLACE, NEXT TO  
A NAKED GUY WITH THE HEAD  
OF SOME BIRD OF PREY WHO  
KNOWS MY WHOLE LIFE AND  
PRETENDS TO BE SOME  
KIND OF GOD...



GOD, I DON'T UNDERSTAND ANY OF IT ANYMORE! I REMEMBER  
AS IF IT WAS A YEAR AGO... 1992... I REFUSED TO FIGHT  
AGAINST THE SINO-SOVIET COALITION... I DESERTED... I WAS CAUGHT,  
PUT ON TRIAL, AND A YEAR LATER, SHOT OUT INTO SPACE IN A FLYING  
FRIDGE, ALONG WITH A PARANOID ROBOT SERGEANT...

I CAN IMAGINE YOUR CONFUSION AND TAKE INTO ACCOUNT YOUR INTELLECTUAL LIMITS UNDER THESE CIRCUMSTANCES, POOR NIKOPOL... I THINK YOU CAN THANK ME, HORUS, GOD OF HIERKOANOPOLIS, SON OF ISIS AND OSIRIS, MIGHTY AND UNIVERSAL CREATOR, FOR TAKING CHARGE OF YOU...



UNDERSTAND NOTHING...



I MUST SAY, HOWEVER...

DOO!

HEY, WHERE ARE YOU GOING?

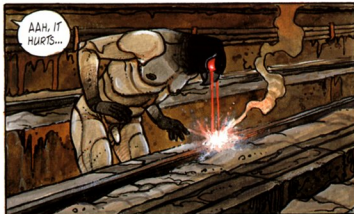
...THAT DURING THE SHORT EXCURSION TAKEN IN YOUR BODY BETWEEN THE PLACE WHERE YOU FELL AND HERE, I WAS ABLE TO MAKE A QUICK PHYSICAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL EXAMINATION OF YOUR PERSON... APART FROM THE USUAL DEFECTS OF THE HUMAN RACE, THE RESULTS SEEMED TO ME QUITE SATISFACTORY...



SATISFACTORY!!! ARE YOU SHITTING ME!!!? MAIMED, ONE-LEGGED FOR LIFE, AND YOU FIND THAT SATISFACTORY!!!?



COMPLETELY SATISFACTORY... YOUR BODY IS IN PERFECT CONDITION COMPARED TO THE BODIES OF THE WRETCHES I HAVE HAD TO INHABIT THESE PAST FEW DAYS... SICKNESS AND MUTATIONS ARE EATING AWAY THE QUARTERS ADJACENT TO THIS CITY... HEALTHY BODIES ARE RARE... THE ONE I LEFT FOR YOURS BELONGED TO A FANATIC WHO BELIEVED IN ONE GOD... HIS BRAIN BECAME UNCONTROLLABLE... YOUR ARRIVAL WAS PROVIDENTIAL, BELIEVE ME...



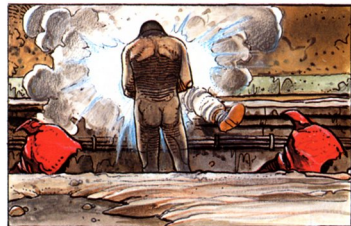
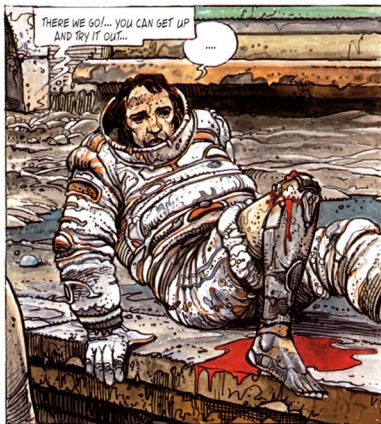
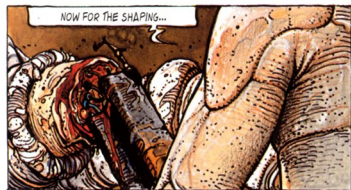
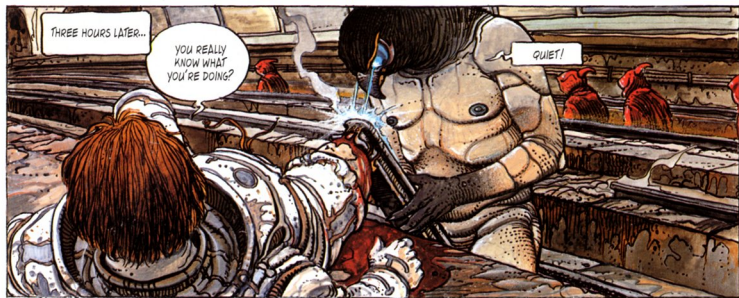
AHH, IT HURTS...

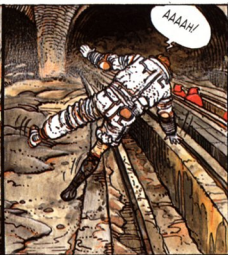
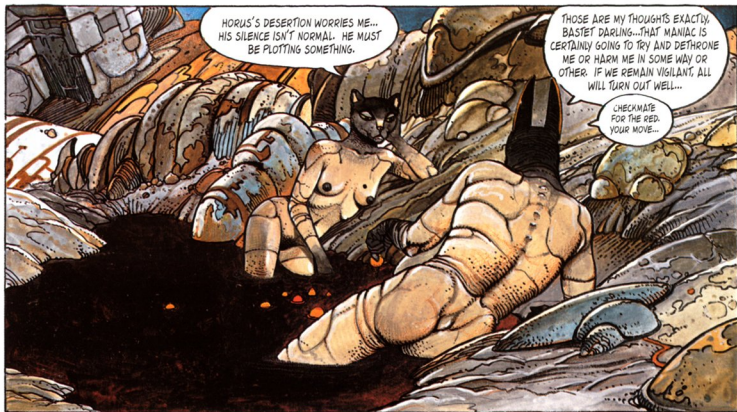


AS FOR THE PROBLEM OF YOUR LEG, I AM GOING TO FIX THAT RIGHT NOW...

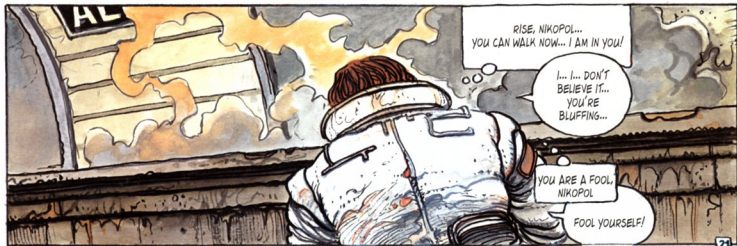
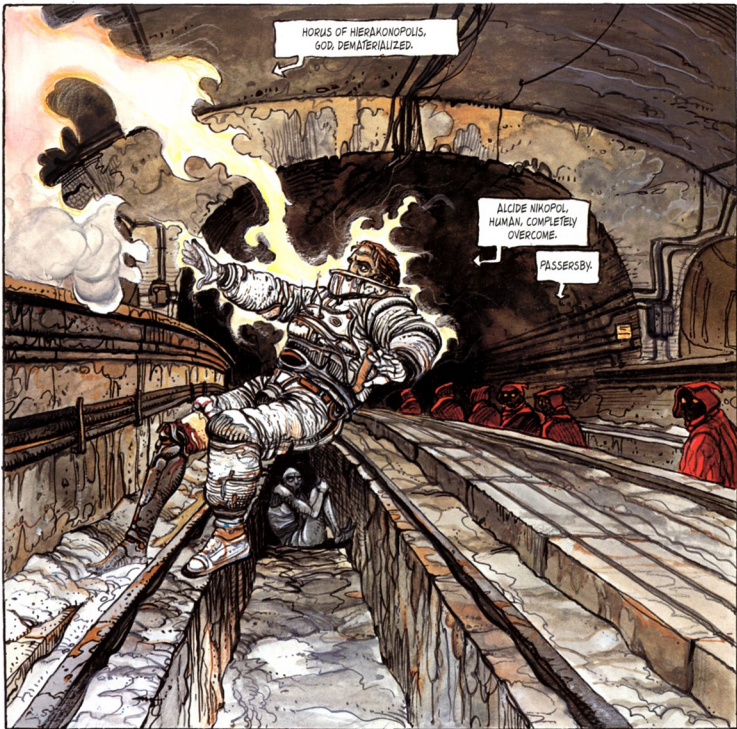
AARR... THE PAIN IS GETTING WORSE AS IT THAWS... DO SOMETHING... QUICK!

QUICK!





THUS ON MARCH 3, 2023, AT METRO STATION ALESIA, TOOK PLACE THE POSSESSION OF THE BODY OF ALCIDE NIKOPOL BY HORUS OF HIERAKONOPOLIS.







EVERYTHING IS READY, GENERAL. THE GOVERNOR'S ARMCHAIR WILL EXPLODE THIS EVENING AT EXACTLY 9 PM., JUST BEFORE HALF TIME...

VERY GOOD, MY FRIEND... YOU HAVE OF COURSE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT MY PRESENCE BESIDE THE GOVERNOR AT THE MOMENT OF THE EXPLOSION!?



REST ASSURED, GENERAL. IT WILL NOT REALLY BE AN EXPLOSION... I HAVE BEEN ABLE TO OBTAIN FROM ONE OF THE ALPHERATZJEN HANDLERS AT THE ASTROPORT OF VARECH OF FOMALH-AUT... A SIMPLE ELECTRIC SPARK SUFFICIENT TO TURN THIS SUBSTANCE INTO A DEADLY HIGH-ENERGY ONE... THE GOVERNOR WILL BE SEATED THIS EVENING ON A KIND OF ELECTRIC CHAIR... YOU WILL BE IN NO DANGER, GENERAL...

GOOD.



MY OFFICERS AND THEIR MEN WILL BE READY AS WELL... AND FROM

THIS EVENING ON POWER WILL HAVE CHANGED HANDS... MY FRIEND, THIS CALLS FOR A CELEBRATION! A DROP OF OLD COGNAC?

HE IS TRULY PRECIOUS TO ME, BUT GOD, IS HE WORTHY...

NO THANK YOU, I NEVER TOUCH ALCOHOL.

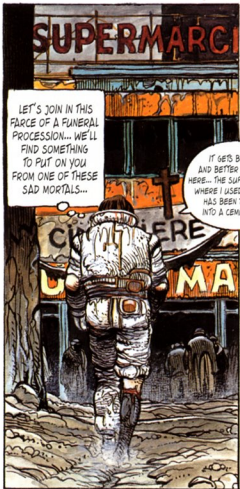
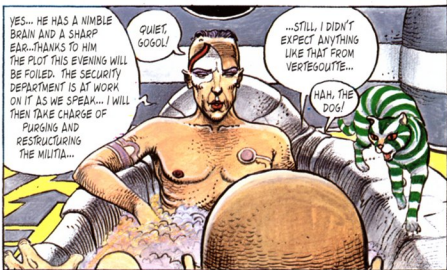


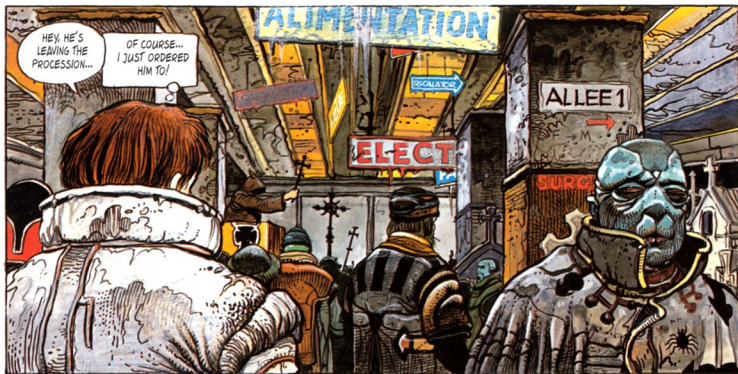
WE MUST QUICKLY FIND SOME NEW CLOTHES... YOU WILL BE SPOTTED AND PICKED UP WITH THIS SUIT ON...

GOOD LORD, HAS PARIS CHANGED...

NORMAL, AFTER 30 YEARS AND TWO NUCLEAR WARS...

STILL... WHAT A SHOCK...





HEY, HE'S LEAVING THE PROCESSION...

OF COURSE... I JUST ORDERED HIM TO!



AB05



GO AHEAD. IT'S OKAY.



I FEEL YOU'RE ON EDGE, NIKOPOL... YOU'RE AFRAID OF ME, AREN'T YOU?

I DON'T APPRECIATE YOUR POWERS OR YOUR WAYS... AND STILL LESS HAVING YOU INSIDE ME...

AND THEN THE GUY WHOSE CLOTHES I'M WEARING WAS COVERED WITH RED SORES... I'M NOT CRAZY ABOUT CATCHING SOME INCURABLE DISEASE.



THANKS, OLD BOY!

YOU SEE, NIKOPOL, ALL NICE AND FRIENDLY... NO VIOLENCE AND NOT A DROP OF BLOOD...

DID YOU HYPNOTIZE HIM?

SORT OF...



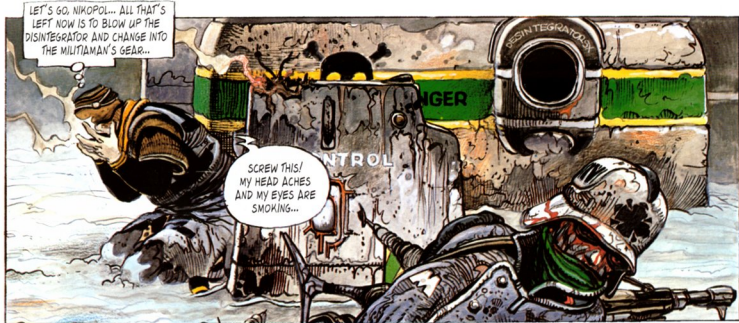
NIGHT FELL VERY FAST AS IT ALWAYS DID IN MARCH FOR SOME YEARS NOW... A SAD, PAINFUL NIGHT WITH A STRANGE, HEAVY DUMPING OF GREENISH SNOW... ALCIDE NIKOPOL'S CONFUSION WAS GREATER THAN EVER...

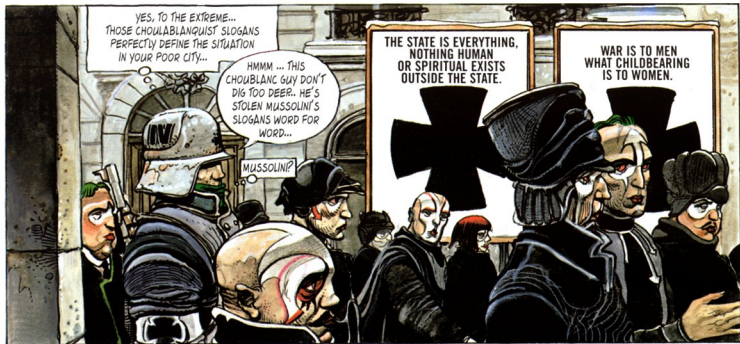
THIS IS THE BORDER POST... BEYOND IS THE FIRST SECTOR... THE SECTOR OF PRIVILEGE AND LAW...

DON'T GIVE A SHIT...

NOT ME, NIKO-POL! NOT ME...







YES, TO THE EXTREME...  
THOSE CHOUABLANQUIST SLOGANS  
PERFECTLY DEFINE THE SITUATION  
IN YOUR POOR CITY...

HMMM ... THIS  
CHOUABLANC GUY DON'T  
DIG TOO DEER. HE'S  
STOLEN MUSSOLINI'S  
SLOGANS WORD FOR  
WORD...

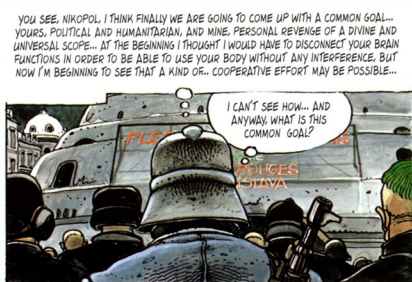
MUSSOLINI?

THE STATE IS EVERYTHING,  
NOTHING HUMAN  
OR SPIRITUAL EXISTS  
OUTSIDE THE STATE.

WAR IS TO MEN  
WHAT CHILDBEARING  
IS TO WOMEN.

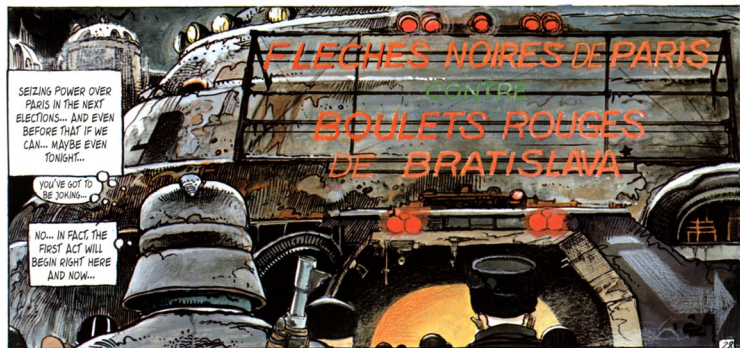


YES... A DICTATOR FROM  
THE LAST CENTURY... I CAN  
STILL REMEMBER  
MY COLLEGE EXAM  
ESSAY QUESTION FROM  
1980... "THE RISE OF  
FASCISM IN ITALY"...  
A COMPLETE MESS...



YOU SEE, NIKOPOL, I THINK FINALLY WE ARE GOING TO COME UP WITH A COMMON GOAL...  
YOURS, POLITICAL AND HUMANITARIAN, AND MINE, PERSONAL REVENGE OF A DIVINE AND  
UNIVERSAL SCOPE... AT THE BEGINNING I THOUGHT I WOULD HAVE TO DISCONNECT YOUR BRAIN  
FUNCTIONS IN ORDER TO BE ABLE TO USE YOUR BODY WITHOUT ANY INTERFERENCE, BUT  
NOW I'M BEGINNING TO SEE THAT A KIND OF... COOPERATIVE EFFORT MAY BE POSSIBLE...

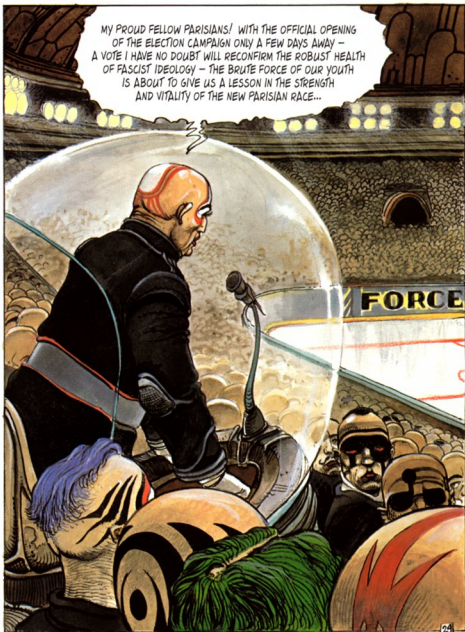
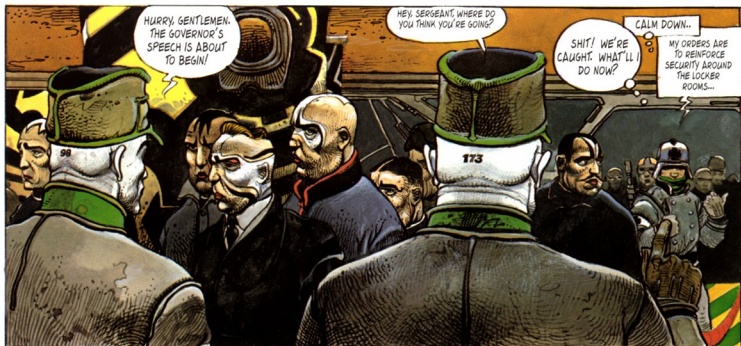
I CAN'T SEE HOW... AND  
ANYWAY, WHAT IS THIS  
COMMON GOAL?



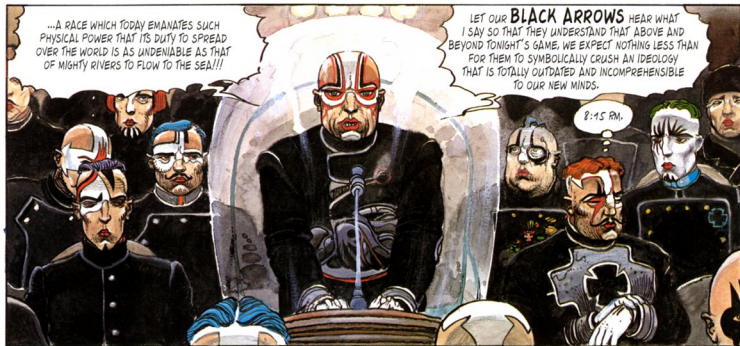
SEIZING POWER OVER  
PARIS IN THE NEXT  
ELECTIONS... AND EVEN  
BEFORE THAT IF WE  
CAN... MAYBE EVEN  
TONIGHT...

YOU'VE GOT TO  
BE JOKING...

NO... IN FACT, THE  
FIRST ACT WILL  
BEGIN RIGHT HERE  
AND NOW...







...A RACE WHICH TODAY EMANATES SUCH PHYSICAL POWER THAT ITS DUTY TO SPREAD OVER THE WORLD IS AS UNDENIABLE AS THAT OF MIGHTY RIVERS TO FLOW TO THE SEA!!!

LET OUR **BLACK ARROWS** HEAR WHAT I SAY SO THAT THEY UNDERSTAND THAT ABOVE AND BEYOND TONIGHT'S GAME, WE EXPECT NOTHING LESS THAN FOR THEM TO SYMBOLICALLY CRUSH AN IDEOLOGY THAT IS TOTALLY OUTDATED AND INCOMPREHENSIBLE TO OUR NEW MINDS.

8:15 PM.



...AND NOW LET THE GAMES BEGIN.

THIS BARGAIN BASEMENT DICTATOR HAS BORROWED IT ALL... WORD FOR WORD FROM IL DUCE...

WHO?

THE SAME ONE I MENTIONED BEFORE...



WATCH OUT, I THINK THEY'RE COMING...

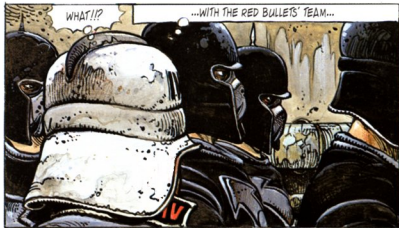
THEY WHO?

THE BLACK ARROWS...



GOD, IS THAT IT? HOCKEY PLAYERS? WE'RE GOING TO WATCH A HOCKEY GAME?

WE'RE EVEN GOING TO PLAY, NIKOPOD...



WHAT!?

...WITH THE RED BULLETS' TEAM...



BUT THAT'S CRAZY!!! I DON'T KNOW HOW TO PLAY OR EVEN SKATE... AND AFTER SPENDING THIRTY YEARS ON ICE I'M NOT EXACTLY CRAZY ABOUT...

QUIET, NIKOPOL! HERE THEY COME...



A STRAGGLER... PERFECT...

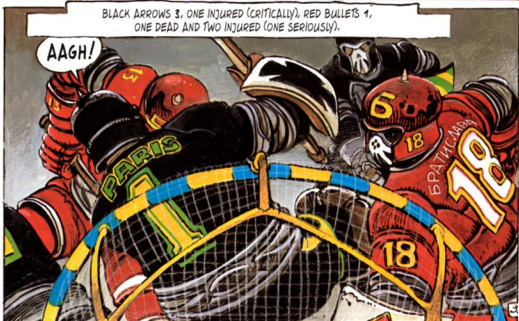
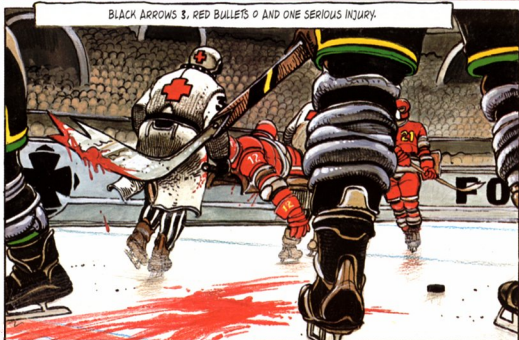
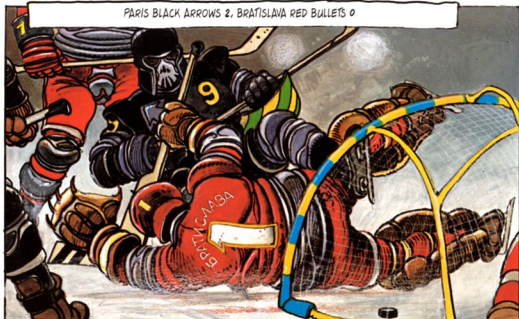


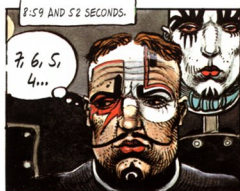
ЧТО ЭТ...



NOW YOU KNOW WHAT YOU HAVE TO DO...

WHEW...





9:19 PM. A COMPLETE REVERSAL OF THE SITUATION AND THE SCORE IN AN ATMOSPHERE OF STUPIFIED, ICY SILENCE.

THAT 23 FUCK!! HE'S GOT TO BE SHOT DOWN!!!

F.N. PARIS 3 --- B.R. BRATISL. 4

BUTEURS: N° 12-9-9  
BIENNES: N° 17-11-8-4  
PERCEPES: N° 13-6-10-4

BUTEURS: N° 11-23 2323  
BIENNES: N° 6 11-11-5-21  
PERCEPES: N° 15-15-15-15

DEAD!



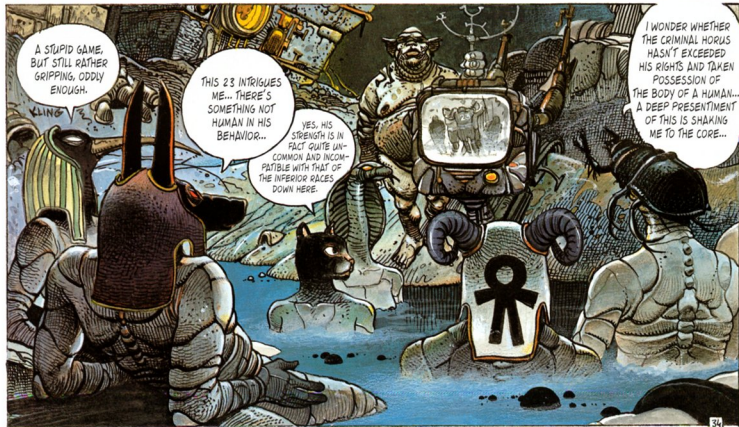
BUT HOW DO YOU SHOOT DOWN A GOD ENDOWED WITH SUPER POWERS, SPECIALLY ONE WITH A LEG OF HEAVY STEEL...

A STUPID GAME, BUT STILL RATHER GRIPPING, ODDLY ENOUGH.

THIS 23 INTRIGUES ME... THERE'S SOMETHING NOT HUMAN IN HIS BEHAVIOR...

YES, HIS STRENGTH IS IN FACT QUITE UNCOMMON AND INCOMPATIBLE WITH THAT OF THE INFERIOR RACES DOWN HERE.

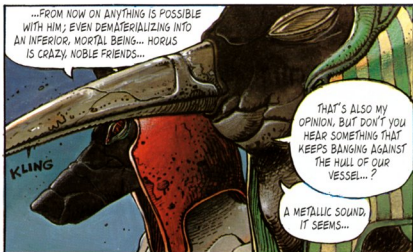
I WONDER WHETHER THE CRIMINAL HORUS HASN'T EXCEEDED HIS RIGHTS AND TAKEN POSSESSION OF THE BODY OF A HUMAN... A DEEP PRESENTATION OF THIS IS SHAKING ME TO THE CORE...





COME NOW, KHEPRI, UNLESS HIS REASON HAS TOTALLY MALFUNCTIONED, HE CAN NOT HAVE VIOLATED THE ETHICS OF THE MIGHTY TO THIS EXTENT.

IN ANY CASE, THIS WOULD BE AN EVENT WITHOUT PRECEDENT IN THE UNFATHOMABLE HISTORY OF ETERNITY...



...FROM NOW ON ANYTHING IS POSSIBLE WITH HIM; EVEN DEMATERIALIZING INTO AN INFERIOR, MORTAL BEING... HORUS IS CRAZY, NOBLE FRIENDS...

THAT'S ALSO MY OPINION, BUT DON'T YOU HEAR SOMETHING THAT KEEPS BANGING AGAINST THE HULL OF OUR VESSEL...?

A METALLIC SOUND, IT SEEMS...

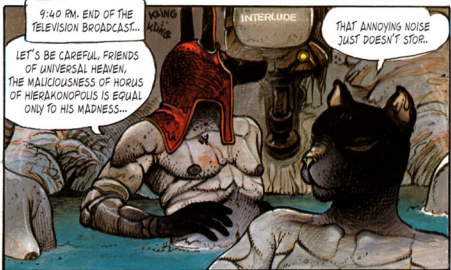


9:32 PM... TIME CALLED, GAME OVER... THE SCORE 7 TO 4 IN FAVOR OF THE CZECHOSLOVAKS...

NOW FOR THE SECOND PHASE.



9:39 PM. JEAN-FERDINAND CHOUBLANC, ANGRY AND BITTER, SUDDENLY LEAVES HIS OFFICIAL BOX...



9:40 PM. END OF THE TELEVISION BROADCAST...

LET'S BE CAREFUL FRIENDS OF UNIVERSAL HEAVEN, THE MALICIOUSNESS OF HORUS OF HIERAKONPOLIS IS EQUAL ONLY TO HIS MADNESS...

INTERLUDE

THAT ANNOYING NOISE JUST DOESN'T STOP.



BES! GO FIND OUT WHAT THAT NOISE IS!...

NIGHT CAME DOWN HEAVY AND IMPENETRABLE... SWEEPED HERE AND THERE BY SULFURIOUS WINDS...

10:01 AM.

FLASH  
SPECIAL

PROUD PARISIANS, GOOD EVENING! A DRAMATIC TURN OF EVENTS OCCURRED AT THE END OF THE PARIS-BRATISLAVA HOCKEY MATCH... A POLITICALLY DRAMATIC TURN WHICH REFLECTS HONOR ON OUR FASCIST IDEOLOGY AND OUR GOVERNOR JEAN-FERDINAND CHOUBIANC.



KLING

MR. MINISTER, YOU WERE PRESENT AT THIS UNPRECEDENTED EVENT. CAN YOU GIVE US THE FACTS OF WHAT HAPPENED?

WELL, IT'S QUITE SIMPLE... BOTH TEAMS STARTED TO RETURN TO THEIR LOCKER ROOMS WHEN ONE OF THE CZECHOSLOVAKS MANAGED TO GET FREE OF HIS TEAM AND GRABBED HOLD OF A MICROPHONE FROM OUR SECURITY PERSONNEL... HE USED IT TO ASK FOR POLITICAL ASYLUM FROM THE GOVERNMENT OF PARIS...

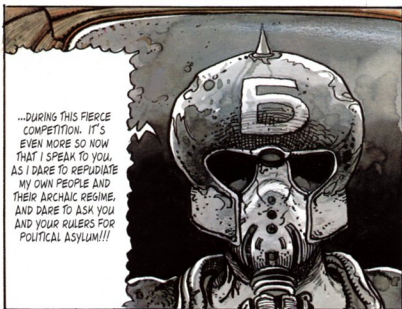
J. R. PHORMHOLTZ  
MINISTRE A LA JEUNESSE  
ET A LA PROPAGANDE

I SUGGEST, MR. MINISTER, THAT WE TAKE A LOOK NOW AT THE FIRST VIDEOTAPE OF THIS EXTRAORDINARY TURNAROUND...

PARISIANS FRIENDS, LISTEN TO ME!!!  
I CONTRIBUTED TO THE DEFEAT OF YOUR TEAM  
AND YOUR DISAPPOINTMENT MUST BE GREAT...  
WELL, AS STRONG AS MY WILL TO WIN...



...DURING THIS FIERCE COMPETITION, IT'S EVEN MORE SO NOW THAT I SPEAK TO YOU, AS I DARE TO REPUDIATE MY OWN PEOPLE AND THEIR ARCHAIC REGIME, AND DARE TO ASK YOU AND YOUR RULERS FOR POLITICAL ASYLUM!!!

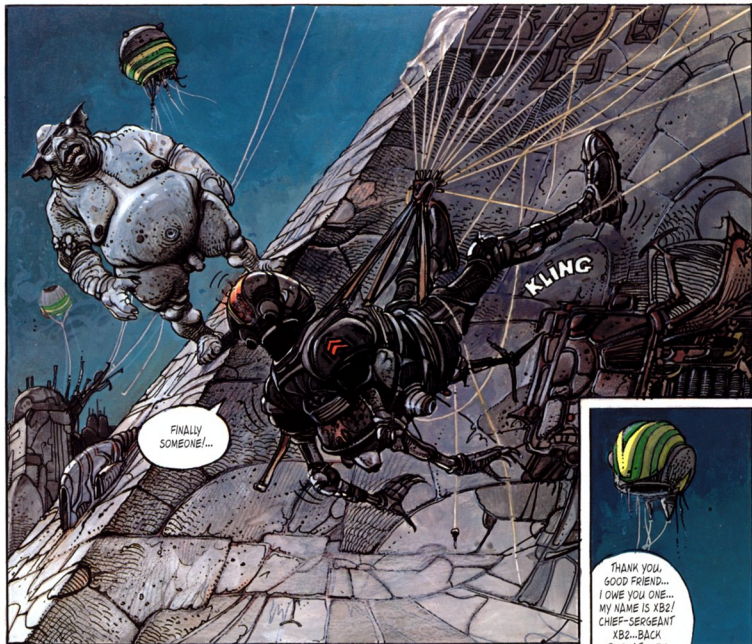


DID YOU HEAR THAT?

YES...  
THIS BEHAVIOR  
ONLY CONFIRMS  
OUR SUSPICIONS...

AND BES WHO  
HASN'T COME  
BACK YET...





FINALLY  
SOMEONE!...



THANK YOU,  
GOOD FRIEND...  
I OWE YOU ONE...  
MY NAME IS XB2!  
CHIEF-SERGEANT  
XB2...BACK  
PREMATURELY  
FROM A MISSION...



I WAS BEGINNING  
TO GIVE UP  
HOPE...



**L'ORDRE**  
RESOUNDING POLITICAL K.O.  
TWO MAJOR VICTIMS/ THE TRAITOR  
VERGOUTTE AND CSECHOSVIETISM!!!

# CHOUBLANQUISM TRIUMPHANT

**"LA VOIX  
LÉGALE"**

Extraordinary night at the sports and convention center, where, despite a relative athletic defeat for our team, Choublanquism came up politically stronger and ideologically greater due to two astounding events:

- the death of the dirty traitor Vergoutte in his attempt on the governor's life
- the demand for political asylum and rejection of the "archaic" regime by a czechosoviet hockey player.

story and photos  
on pages 2 and 3

## SENSE OF HONOR

Pierre-Hubert Burburtz, head coach of the Paris Black Arrows, committed suicide yesterday evening in the locker room lavatory of the sports and convention center... before impaling himself on a crucifix, he declared: "better death than defeat." Pierre-Hubert Burburtz was 33 years old.

## NEWS ITEM

### MILITAMAN EATEN BY RAW MENKAR EGG

An accident which was both stupid and dramatic took place in a Menkar hard-boiled egg warehouse, rue de Théatin, in the second sector.  
Either on purpose or accidentally, one of the eggs (6 feet high) had not been hard-boiled, and suddenly hatched. Quickly alerted, a detachment of Militaman engaged the hideous beast, now freed from its shell, in a fierce order was given alive.  
In record time, the horrible monster claimed 26 victims, one of whom was the brave corporal Escroc Robolides. An inquiry has been opened to determine clearly who are responsible for this infortunate affair.

Photos of the scenes on page 10.



GOOD NEWS, NIKOPOL... DON'T YOU THINK?



LOOK WE'VE MADE FRONT PAGE HEADLINES IN EVERY PAPER... A PERFECT SPOT FOR CARRYING OUT THE REMAINDER OF OUR PLANS... SOMETHING TO CELEBRATE, HUH?

THAT'S RIGHT, LIFE IS BEAUTIFUL...



YOU TURN ME OFF AND ON LIKE SOME DAMN LIGHT BULB, YOU USE AND ABUSE MY BODY LIKE SOME ROBOT TOY AND, WORSE STILL, YOU MAKE ME ACT POLITICALLY IN TOTAL CONTRADICTION TO MY BELIEFS... SO WHAT'S TO CELEBRATE...



I'M TELLING YOU ONCE AND FOR ALL... YOU'RE WORSE THAN ALL THE MUSSOLINIS, HITLERS, STALINS AND CHOUBLANCS PUT TOGETHER... YOU'RE NOTHING BUT A TOTALITARIAN, AMBITIOUS, PARANOID, BLOODTHIRSTY, INHUMAN EGOMANIAC.



OF COURSE I AM!!!! I AM INHUMAN, BY DEFINITION AND IN ESSENCE... I AM AN ALL-POWERFUL BEING RULED BY UNIVERSAL LAWS WHICH ARE BEYOND MORTAL UNDERSTANDING... AND YOU'RE LUCKY, NIKOPOL, THAT YOU INSPIRE IN ME MORE SYMPATHY THAN REVULSION...



LISTEN CLOSELY, NIKOPOL... WE ARE GOING TO SEIZE TOTAL POWER IN THIS CITY... AND WE WILL SHARE THIS POWER... YOU WILL GOVERN YOUR FELLOW HUMANS AS YOU SEE FIT... IN ADDITION, YOU WILL BE ABLE TO COUNT ON AND USE SOME OF MY POWERS... AND I WILL TAKE CARE OF THE PROBLEM OF THE PYRAMID, SOMETHING WHICH IS IN THE EXCLUSIVE DOMAIN OF THE DIVINE AND CONCERNS ME PERSONALLY...

IS THAT CLEAR?



...NOT REALLY... MAYBE I'M BEING NOSEY, BUT JUST WHAT IS THIS PYRAMID PROBLEM ALL ABOUT ANYWAY?

WHAT YOU ARE ASKING OF ME, NIKOPOL, TOUCHES ON UNIVERSAL VALUES WHICH EARTHLY WORDS WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO EXPRESS...

IN ANY CASE, I CAN TELL YOU THAT DEEP DIFFERENCES, A SAVAGE HATRED OF MY RACE, AND UNBRIDLED AMBITION, WITH WHICH I AM BLESSED, LEAD ME TO BREAK WITH MY PAST... FROM NOW ON I AM WORKING FOR MYSELF AGAINST THE UNIVERSAL ORDER AND HOLY ETERNITY...



SEIZING POWER IN PARIS WILL ABOVE ALL, MEAN CONTROLLING THE FUEL SUPPLY... WITH THAT POWER, I WILL HAVE WHAT I NEED TO BRING ANUBIS AND HIS CLIQUE OF SLUGGISH HOMEBODIES TO THEIR KNEES...



PRETTY GROTESQUE FOR GODS TO BE DEPENDENT ON AN OIL PIPELINE, ISN'T IT?

THE TECHNOLOGY OF OUR VESSEL (OF THEIRS I SHOULD SAY) IS VERY ARCHAIC... I ALWAYS WAS IN FAVOR OF ATOMNIONIC EFFICIENCY WHEN IT COMES TO PROPULSION... LET THEM BITE THEIR NAILS NOW...



BUT I'M AFRAID THAT AN AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE GOVERNOR AND ANUBIS WILL OCCUR BEFORE WE ARE MASTERS OF THE CITY...



SHIT!!!! SOMEONE'S KNOCKING!...

QUIET... I AM GOING BACK INTO YOUR BODY...



HIDE YOUR LEG!!!

TOC TOC TOC

UH, COME IN!!!



...YOU WERE TALKING TO YOURSELF?

UH... NO... I WAS RECITING A POEM BY BAUDELAIRE... I LIKE THAT STUFF A LOT, DON'T YOU?



"REMEMBER, MY SOUL, THE THING WE SAW THAT LOVELY SUMMER MORNING, OFF THE PATH A FOUL CARCASS LAY ON A BED STREWED WITH..."

THAT'S ENOUGH!!! CLEAN UP SHAVE AND PUT ON THESE CLOTHES. THE GOVERNOR WANTS TO INTRODUCE YOU TO THE PRESS...

WELL DONE, NIKOPOL!



MEANWHILE, 2ND SECTOR, ALESIA QUARTER, CEMETARY SUPERMARKET...

SAY THERE, YOU AGAIN, MISTAH NIKOPOL?!?

?



WHAT DO YOU MEAN, ME AGAIN?



YA BEN HERE YEZADAY, MISTAH NIKOPOL, YA DON'T REMEMBER?

NO! NO, I DON'T REMEMBER BEING HERE YESTERDAY. GORGON, MY POOR OLD FRIEND...



MEANWHILE, BACK IN THE PYRAMID...

...AND WHY RETURN TO EARTH AGAINST THE ORDERS OF YOUR SUPERIORS, XB2?

RADIO CONTACT HAD BEEN CUT FOR OVER 18 YEARS... THE "NIKOPOL-HIBERNATION" EXPERIMENT HAD FALLEN TO PIECES AGES AGO ...

THEN TOO, 30 YEARS OF SOLITUDE IN THE EMPTINESS OF SPACE MAKES ANY NORMALLY CONSTRUCTED BEING ASK HIMSELF FUNDAMENTAL QUESTIONS ABOUT HIS CONDITION AND HIS EXISTENCE...



THAT'S HOW I DISCOVERED THE UNIQUE AND INTOXICATING FEELING OF PERSONAL AMBITION... THIS RETURN TO EARTH IS A NEW START FOR ME AND A NEAR DEFINITIVE BREAK WITH MY FORMER MILITARY VALUES OF THE DUTY-COUNTRY KIND...

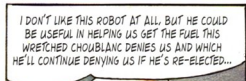


WHAT ABOUT THIS NIKOPOL?

... A HARMLESS BEING WITHOUT MUCH SCOPE... HE SHOULD BE DEAD BY NOW...



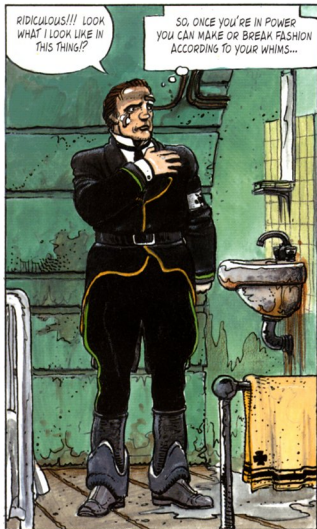
THAT WILL BE ALL FOR NOW... BES, TAKE CARE OF XB2, WILL YOU?



I DON'T LIKE THIS ROBOT AT ALL, BUT HE COULD BE USEFUL IN HELPING US GET THE FUEL THIS WRETCHED CHOUBLANC DENIES US AND WHICH HE'LL CONTINUE DENYING US IF HE'S RE-ELECTED...

HOW'S THAT BASTARD, DARLING?

BY HAVING XB2 ELECTED GOVERNOR!



RIDICULOUS!!! LOOK  
WHAT I LOOK LIKE IN  
THIS THING!?

SO, ONCE YOU'RE IN POWER  
YOU CAN MAKE OR BREAK FASHION  
ACCORDING TO YOUR WHIMS...



FASTER! THE GOVERNOR  
DOES NOT LIKE TO BE  
KEPT WAITING!



"LEGS IN THE AIR, LIKE A WHORE,  
BURNING AND SWEATING POISONS,  
STRETCHING OUT CASUALLY, CYNICALLY,  
HER BELLY SWOLLEN WITH FOUL GAS..."



...YET YOU WILL COME TO THIS OFFENSE,  
LIKE THIS FILTHY DECAY,  
STAR OF MY EYES, SUN OF MY SOUL,  
YOU, MY ANGEL, MY PASSION..."



NOW COMES THE SERIOUS PART, NIKOPOL...

I'VE GOT A HEADACHE...



A STROKE OF FATE, THIS DISSIDENT... I MUST GET THE MOST OUT OF THIS AFFAIR, CREATE AN EVENT AROUND THIS ACT OF HIS AND THE POLITICS WHICH ACCOMPANY IT... WE COULDN'T HAVE DREAMED UP A BETTER THEME FOR MY CAMPAIGN...

EVERYTHING HAS BEEN PLANNED WITH THIS IN MIND... ALSO, YOUR BROTHER, HIS HOUNLESS THEODALE I, WILL BE BACKING YOU... IN A SPECTACULAR WAY, HE'S TOLD ME... THE WAY THINGS ARE GOING NO ONE WILL DARE ENTER THE RACE AGAINST YOU...



HMMM... THAT WOULD MAKE THINGS A LOT SIMPLER... I'VE GOT OTHER IRONS IN THE FIRE, YOU KNOW...

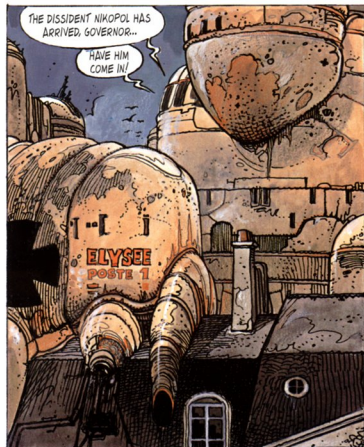
QUIET, GOGOL. QUIET...



THAT ANUBIS AND HIS ADVISORS ARE THE ONES WHO'LL BE DISAPPOINTED WHEN I'M RE-ELECTED... I'VE GOT A HUNCH THAT THEIR SITUATION IS NOT QUITE AS COMFORTABLE AS THEY WOULD HAVE ME BELIEVE... THEY'LL BE THE FIRST TO GIVE IN...

...AND WILL MAKE ME IMMORTAL (IF GOD WILLS)

I SO HOPE FOR YOU...





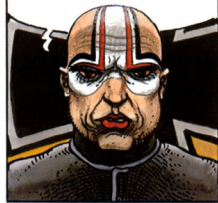


(BE VERY CAREFUL... GOGOL SEEMS ABNORMALLY DISTURBED BY THIS NIKOPOL... HE FINDS HIM TO BE AN ODDLY AMBIGUOUS DUAL PERSONALITY, SEETHING WITH UNBRIDLED AMBITION...)

(I DON'T LIKE HIM EITHER... BUT DON'T BE AFRAID HE WON'T GET A WORD IN...)

THEY'RE ON THEIR GUARD... THE TELEPATHIC CAT HAS ALERTED THEM... BUT TOO LATE, I FEAR, FOR THEM...

PROUD PARISIAN FRIENDS, AS YOU KNOW, THE ELECTION IS CLOSE AT HAND. YOU ALSO KNOW HOW GREAT MY EXPANSIONIST AMBITION IS, AND HOW THIS IS A FACTOR IN THE WELL-BEING OF OUR ENTIRE RACE IN THE CHAOTIC ANARCHY OF THIS SAD WORLD...



IT IS FROM THIS TROUBLED POLITICAL CONTEXT THAT POIGNANT FLASHES OF TRUTH MAY ARISE, FROM NOBLE CONSCIENTIOUS INDIVIDUALS... THIS IS WHY I WISH TO INTRODUCE YOU TODAY TO ONE OF THESE... HIS NAME IS ALCIDE NIKOPOL AND HE...



HA HA

...HE REPRESENTS THE FUTURE OF OUR DEEPEST HOPES... SO IT IS IN THE INTEREST OF ALL OF US THAT I SOLEMNLY ANNOUNCE TO YOU, PARISIAN CITIZENS, MY ABDICATION IN HIS FAVOR AND MY UNCONDITIONAL SUPPORT FOR HIS CANDIDACY!



SHIT! HE'S GONE OUT OF HIS MIND! CUT!!!





LET HIM COME IN

## SHOCK! J.F. CHOUBLANC ABDICATES!!!

Political event without precedent. The sitting governor, the much respected Jean-Ferdinand Choublanc, abdicated in favor of a foreigner of doubtful background and highly suspect behavior.

During the course of a brief televised speech, intended to inaugurate the opening of the electoral campaign, Jean-Ferdinand Choublanc announced his resignation in favor of an undesirable, disturbing individual. 24 hours before the solemn presentation of the candidates (by his Holiness Pope Theodule I in the Church of Notre Dame of Paris) and 8 days before the governmental election, this irrational act throws into certain mayhem

«LA VOIX  
LEGALE»

## AURELIEN BURNOLDZ-MORTIER SPEAKS OUT FORCEFULLY

Ex-governor Choublanc's right-hand man, Aurelien Burnoldz-Mortier, has heatedly denounced "the teleguided intrusion by the cities of the East" of a slimy, evil Czechosoviet into the command post of our city. The young, brilliant Saint Polycyrian also declared that he was convinced that Governor Choublanc had been "mentally coerced" and that his abdication occurred... under "hypnosis". These facts were corroborated by Gogol d'Algol, telepathic advisor to Burnoldz-Mortier.

POSTE 1

L'ORDRE

## NO TO THE "FAKE" GOVERNOR

The Choublanquist government has refused outright to serve the "fake governor Alcide Nikopol" and resigned en masse yesterday evening. In an official statement the members of the government have made known their intention of "rallying around one sole candidate so as to forge a new, inflexible spirit and to counter the ideological manipulations from outside, aimed at the very basis of fascism." It is believed that the sole candidate might well be Aurelien Burnoldz-Mortier,

ex-governor Choublanc's confidant. During the course of the afternoon, the supreme selection will validate or reject the We should be reminded that this committee, presided over by Pope Theodule I, will announce the chosen candidates at 1 p.m. in the holy church of Notre-Dame in Paris... Besides the sitting governor and most likely Aurelien Burnoldz-Mortier, a limited number, 2 or 3 at most, are expected to be selected as a result of the Choublanc affair and the current wave of solidarity.



NOT EXACTLY THE WARMEST WELCOME FROM THE PRESS, IS IT? THERE'S ONLY ONE WAY I CAN SEE THAT YOU CAN HOLD ONTO THIS POWER YOU SO CLEVERLY SEIZED... HYPNOTIZE THE ENTIRE VOTING POPULATION...

ENOUGH SARCASM, NIKOPOL! I HAVE MORE WAYS OF MAKING MORE MORTALS SEE REASON THAN EXIST IN THIS ENTIRE CITY... BUT I DON'T PLAN TO USE THEM EXCEPT AS A LAST RESORT...



FOR STARTERS, I'LL BE CONTENT JUST TO ELIMINATE THE ONE OR MORE CANDIDATES PHYSICALLY... ONCE ALONE ON THE BALLOT WE'LL BE SURE TO BE RE-ELECTED...



TOMORROW WE'LL KNOW MORE ABOUT OUR OPTIONS...

SAY YOU'VE GOT SO MUCH POWER, DON'T YOU HAVE ANYTHING FOR SPLITTING MIGRANES?



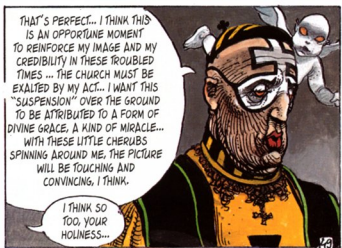
NEARBY IN THE SUITE OF HIS HOLINESS THEODULE I...

...HE SAYS THAT THE LEVITATOR IS READY AND THAT HE CAN GIVE YOU A DEMONSTRATION IF YOU WISH...

NO POINT... THE INSTRUCTIONS WILL BE ENOUGH...



YOUR HOLINESS WILL BE ABLE TO RISE NEARLY 24 FEET OFF THE GROUND. HE WANTS YOU TO KNOW, AND WITH NO RISK... TO GET DOWN, YOU ONLY HAVE TO PRESS A BUTTON ...



THAT'S PERFECT... I THINK THIS IS AN OPPORTUNE MOMENT TO REINFORCE MY IMAGE AND MY CREDIBILITY IN THESE TROUBLED TIMES ... THE CHURCH MUST BE EXALTED BY MY ACT... I WANT THIS "SUSPENSION" OVER THE GROUND TO BE ATTRIBUTED TO A FORM OF DIVINE GRACE, A KIND OF MIRACLE... WITH THESE LITTLE CHERUBS SPINNING AROUND ME, THE PICTURE WILL BE TOUCHING AND CONVINCING, I THINK.

I THINK SO TOO, YOUR HOLINESS...

BUT UH... IN FACT AS FAR AS THESE LITTLE...  
CHERUBS ARE CONCERNED, I MUST DRAW  
YOUR HONOLNESS'S ATTENTION TO  
THE WORRISOME RATE AT WHICH THEY ARE  
REPRODUCING AND...

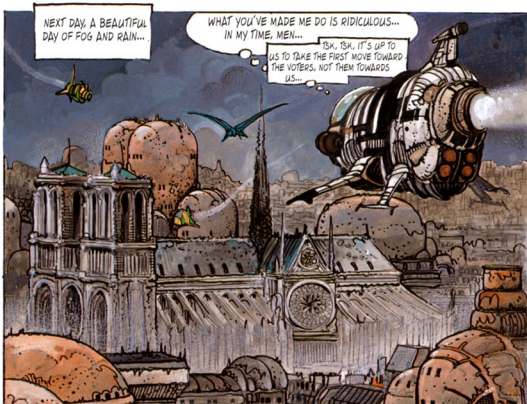
NOW, NOW, LET THESE HOLY  
CREATURES LEAD  
THEIR OWN LIVES.



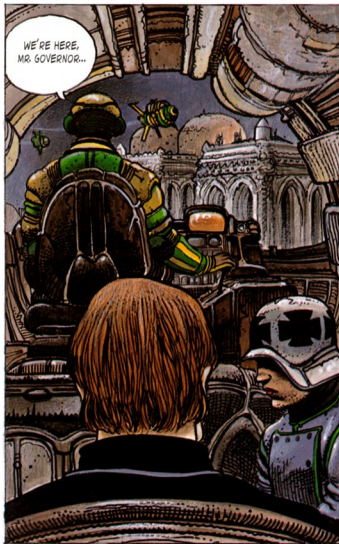
NEXT DAY, A BEAUTIFUL  
DAY OF FOG AND RAIN...

WHAT YOU'VE MADE ME DO IS RIDICULOUS...  
IN MY TIME, MEN...

ISH, ISH, IT'S UP TO  
US TO TAKE THE FIRST MOVE TOWARD  
THE VOTERS, NOT THEM TOWARDS  
US...



WE'RE HERE,  
MR. GOVERNOR...



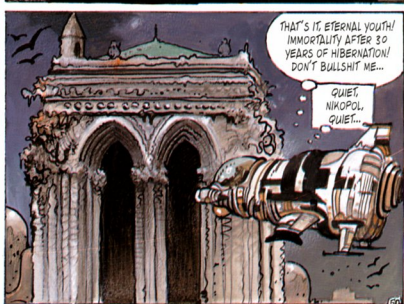
THE VOTERS DON'T GIVE  
A DAMN ABOUT OUR  
MOVES, JUST LIKE IN 1940...  
AND THE POWERS THAT  
BE, THE REAL ONES,  
WILL USE OUR LITTLE  
DIVERSION TO MAKE THEIR  
DICTATORSHIP EVEN MORE  
BRUTAL AND PUT NEW  
MEN FORWARD WHO WILL  
PUSH US ASIDE, THEN  
WIPE US OUT...

YOU'RE FORGETTING TWO  
THINGS, NIKOPOL! FIRST,  
THAT I HAVE THE POWERS  
NECESSARY TO MAINTAIN  
POWER AND, SECOND, THAT  
I AM IMMORTAL... AND YOU  
ARE AS WELL, AS LONG AS  
I LIVE IN YOUR BODY...



THAT'S IT, ETERNAL YOUTH!  
IMMORTALITY AFTER 30  
YEARS OF HIBERNATION!  
DON'T BULLSHIT ME...

QUIET,  
NIKOPOL,  
QUIET...







THAT'S ODD... I SENSE  
A MENTAL BARRIER ON  
EACH SIDE OF ME... THE  
TELEPATHIC CAT'S WAS  
TO BE EXPECTED...

...BUT I DON'T LIKE  
THE ROBOT'S  
AT ALL...

HEY NIMOPOL  
WAKE UR...

AAA AAH



...MY HEAD...

TAKE A DISCREET  
LOOK TO YOUR  
LEFT AND TRY  
TO STAY CALM...



SHIT!!!

STAY CALM  
I SAID...

XB2! CHIEF-  
SERGEANT  
XB2! WHAT  
THE HELL'S  
HE DOING  
HERE???

THAT'S WHAT I'D LIKE  
TO KNOW...



BUT NOW LET US RAISE  
OURSELVES UP TOGETHER  
IN FERVENT PRAYER  
FOR OUR GLORIOUS CITY  
AND THE ALMIGHTY,  
ITS PROTECTOR...

OOOOH!!!?

HURRAY!!!

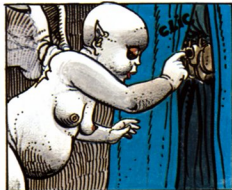
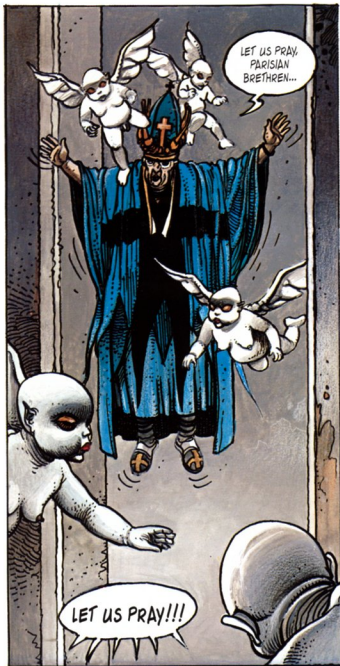
HE'S RISING!!!

IT'S A MIRACLE!!

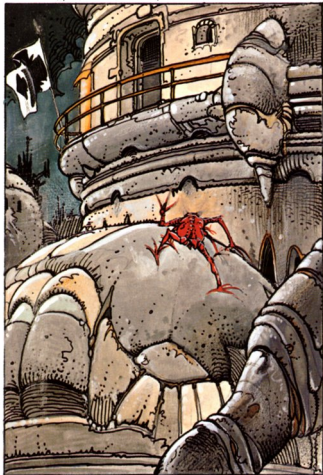
ANOTHER ONE!!!

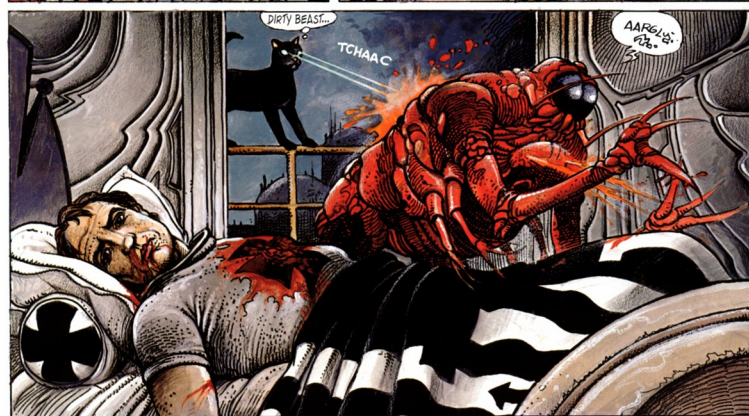
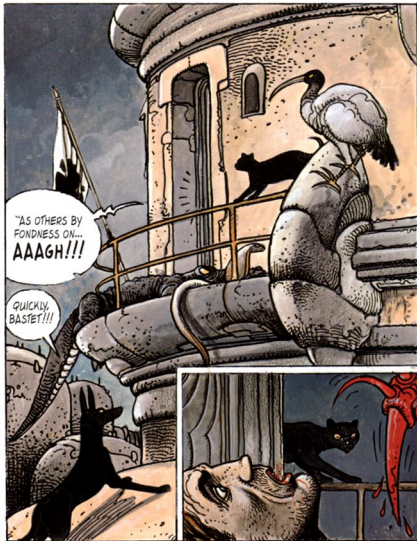
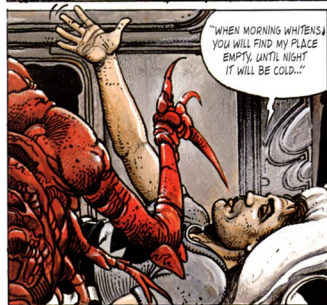


...SO IT IS IN THE NAME  
OF THE ALMIGHTY WHO GUIDES  
OUR HEALTHY AND HOLY CITY WITH  
HIS LIGHT THAT TODAY I AM CALLED  
UPON TO INTRODUCE TO YOU  
THE THREE CANDIDATES SELECTED  
TO RUN AGAINST EACH OTHER  
DURING THE UPCOMING  
ELECTORAL RACE...











A SUPERB NIGHT AHEAD OF US... SHALL WE DRINK TO YOUR SUCCESS, MY DEAR AURELIEN, AND TO A RENEWED ORDER?

CERTAINLY, NOBLE FRIEND... ALL I'M WAITING FOR NOW IS WORD THAT THERE ARE NO MORE "OBSTACLES" IN MY PATH...



THERE HE IS...

BY NOW GOGOL'S AL WAZORIAN GUARDS SHOULD HAVE ACCOMPLISHED THIS...

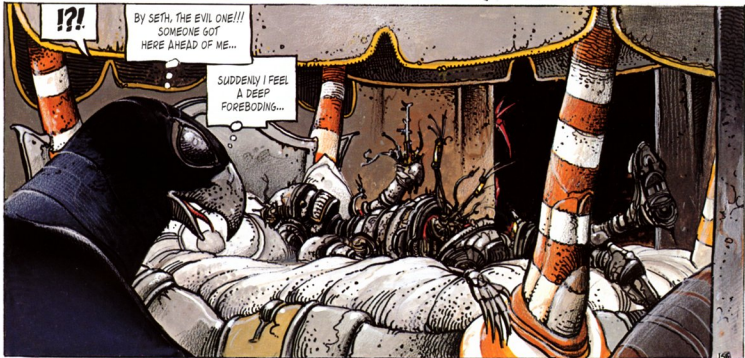


HA HA, ONE DOWN!!!

AAAA!!!



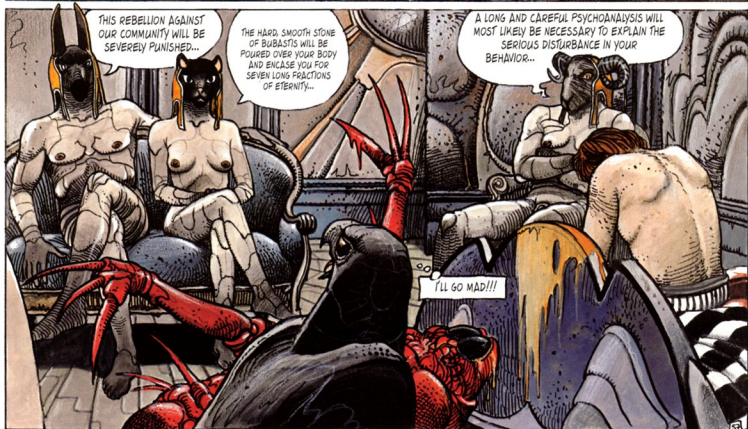
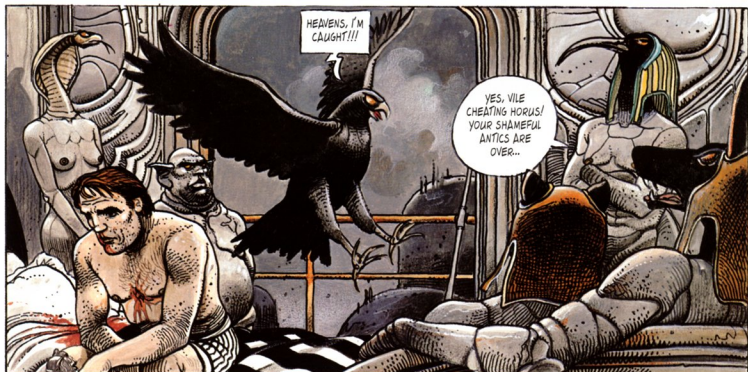
NOW THE OTHER ONE...



!?!

BY SETH, THE EVIL ONE!!! SOMEONE GOT HERE AHEAD OF ME...

SUDDENLY I FEEL A DEEP FOREBODING...



MOREOVER, WITH MY NIKOPOL PRESENT HERE, BEING OBLIGATED GIVEN THE CIRCUMSTANCES TO BRING HIM BACK TO THIS EARTHLY LIFE, WE HAVE JUST CONCLUDED AN ESPECIALLY EQUITABLE ARRANGEMENT... IN EXCHANGE FOR OUR BENEVOLENT AND DISCREET PROTECTION AND FOR A FEW OTHER APPROPRIATE MEASURES TAKEN TO PERMIT THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A NEW POLITICAL REGIME THE NATURE OF WHICH HE WILL DETERMINE HIMSELF MR. NIKOPOL AGREES TO GIVE US THOSE QUANTITIES OF FUEL WE DEEM NECESSARY WITHOUT ANY RESTRICTION... IS THAT NOT SO, MR. NIKOPOL?

"SOMETIMES I FEEL  
MY BLOOD SPILL OUT,

!?

IN SOBS, THE WAY  
A FOUNTAIN FLOWS,  
I KNOW I HEAR IT GUSHING  
A LONG GURGLE,  
BUT IN VAIN I SEARCH  
TO FIND THE WOUNDS"

PARIS, MARCH 23, 2023. PRESS CLIPPINGS.

**"L'AIR RÉVOLUTIONNAIRE"**

DIFFUSION LÉGALE - TIRAGE 160 000 ex.

LEGALLY DISTRIBUTED - 160,000 COPIES PRINTED

**FASCISM IS DEAD  
LONG LIFE NIKOPOL!**

TODAY, MARCH 23, 2023, A HISTORIC DATE, A NEW ERA OF EQUALITY AND REVOLUTIONARY HOPE BEGINS FOR ALL PARISIANS, UNITED AT LAST AS ONE. LET US THANK NIKOPOL, THE LIBERATOR OF PARIS, AND HOPE THAT THE STILL SMOLDERING ASHES OF THE CURSE OF FASCISM WILL BE SCATTERED IN THE WINDS OF HISTORY AND BE BLOTTED OUT FROM OUR TORTURED MEMORIES.

# "L'AIR RÉVOLUTIONNAIRE"

## WOMEN LIBERATED AT LAST

One of the first acts of the new revolutionary regime was to free some 25,000 unfortunate women called "reproducers" from the sinister Holy Savior Maternity Center. Women by right will now take a leading role in the construction of the new society, a right long denied by years under the yoke of phallogocratic fascism. For now we can announce that three women will have permanent seats on the coalition committee established by Alcide Nikopol. The coalition, including the handful of intellectuals who managed to survive the horrors of the fascist political prisons, will have as its task in the upcoming days, the job of broadly defining the future direction the new Parisian society will take.

### NEWS ITEM

## THE POPE IS DEAD!

Pope Theodule I (and last) is dead, not as a result of his grotesque fall, but, it seems, from a heart attack caused by the announcement of the change in regime.

## THE PYRAMID LEAVES US

The mysterious flying pyramid along with its still unknown inhabitants will be leaving the Paris-South Astroport today for an unknown celestial destination, according to reliable sources.

### FASHION NEWS

## MAKE-UP: NEW TRENDS

New trends in revolutionary make-up are necessary to sweep away the decadent painted clowns of fascism. Two vibrant colors: green for lips and red for hair, beards, mustaches and all other hair will adorn faces and bodies. Other shades themselves will be on the pale side.

*Details and photo p. 9.*

## NEWS FLASH

Alcide Nikopol, our savior, exhausted by his ruthless struggle against fascism, has decided to take a few days of well-deserved rest and so will not be appearing in public.

NO, FASCISM ISN'T DEAD!!!  
THERE IS ONLY ONE WAY OUT  
AGAINST THE RED NIKOPOL  
VERMIN: TERRORISM!!!

Gogol d'Algol

THE SAME DAY, ABOVE THE CITY...

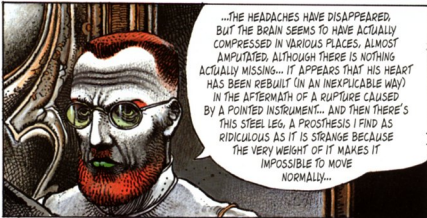
RUE DE  
LA PAIX!  
I'LL BUY!!!



...IN THE CHAMBERS OF THE ELYSEE  
PALACE WHERE THE NEWREVO-L  
UTIONARY POWER IS INSTALLED...

SO, WHAT ARE  
YOUR CONCLU-  
SIONS, COMRADE  
DOCTOR?

IN MY EXPERIENCE,  
THIS CASE IS WITHOUT  
PRECEDENT...



...THE HEADACHES HAVE DISAPPEARED,  
BUT THE BRAIN SEEMS TO HAVE ACTUALLY  
COMPRESSED IN VARIOUS PLACES, ALMOST  
AMPUTATED, ALTHOUGH THERE IS NOTHING  
ACTUALLY MISSING... IT APPEARS THAT HIS HEART  
HAS BEEN REBUILT (IN AN INEXPLICABLE WAY)  
IN THE AFTERMATH OF A RUPTURE CAUSED BY  
A POINTED INSTRUMENT... AND THEN THERE'S  
THIS STEEL LEG, A PROSTHESIS I FIND AS  
RIDICULOUS AS IT IS STRANGE BECAUSE  
THE VERY WEIGHT OF IT MAKES IT  
IMPOSSIBLE TO MOVE  
NORMALLY...

BUT THE MOST SERIOUS THING IS THE LOSS OF REASON BECAUSE I DON'T SEE  
ANY WAY OF RECOVERING THAT... THE POOR PATIENT SPENDS ALL DAY RECITING  
POETRY BY BAUDELAIRE, FLAT ON HIS BACK, STARING INTO SPACE, OR HE JUST  
BURSTS INTO LAUGHTER FOR NO REASON...

YEAH... HARD TO CREATE  
AN IDEOLOGICAL MODEL  
FOR THE PEOPLE...

HA HA  
HAHAHA  
HA

THERE HE GOES  
AGAIN...



WHAT ARE WE GOING TO DO? ALL PARIS  
LOOKS TO HIM AS A HERO,  
A SAVIOR, AND THAT  
CAN'T BE DENIED. HE WAS  
THE ONE WHO  
STARTED IT ALL,  
EVEN IF HIS  
BEHAVIOR MADE  
HIS DEEPER  
POLITICAL  
ASPIRATIONS  
QUESTIONABLE...



QUITE A MESS...

OUR POWER IS STILL TOO  
UNSTABLE TO...

LET ME THROUGH! I'M HIS SON, FOR  
GOD'S SAKE!

WHAT'S  
GOING ON?





A MADMAN WHO...

I AM NIKOPOL, ALCIDE NIKOPOL. ALCIDE NIKOPOL'S SON!

?!!



LISTEN, I KNOW IT MUST SOUND CRAZY THAT HE'S MY FATHER SINCE WE LOOK THE SAME AGE, BUT I CAN EXPLAIN EVERYTHING!

GO AHEAD, THEN...



IN 1993, BEFORE I WAS BORN, HE WAS SENTENCED BY A MILITARY COURT TO 20 YEARS OF HIBERNATION IN SPACE... LIKE MANY REBELS IN HIS DAY HE SERVED AS A GUINEA PIG FOR A REVOLUTIONARY FLYING HIBERNATION VESSEL... SINCE THE WARS THAT FOLLOWED PRETTY MUCH BROUGHT AN END TO SCIENTIFIC PROGRAMS, HE WAS EITHER FORGOTTEN OR GIVEN UP... ALL THIS TIME, OF COURSE, I WAS GROWING UP NORMALLY AND...

INTERESTING... ACCORDING TO SOME SOURCES IN THE MILITIA, THE MYSTERIOUS VEHICLE SHOT DOWN THREE WEEKS AGO OVER THE 2ND SECTOR WAS IN FACT A TURN OF THE CENTURY HIBERNATION MACHINE...

I THINK HE'S COME JUST IN TIME, COMRADES... WHAT DO YOU THINK?

HMMM... THE RESEMBLANCE IS STRIKING...



A FEW MINUTES LATER...

DAD?!

COMRADE NIKOPOL, HERE'S... UH, YOUR SON ALCIDE WHO'S AGREED TO TAKE YOUR PLACE WHILE YOU RECOVER SO THAT UH... YOUR PRESENCE BEFORE THE NEW PARISIAN PEOPLE WILL CONTINUE, IN A WAY...



... YOU PROBABLY DIDN'T EVEN KNOW I EXISTED... BUT I REALLY AM YOUR SON... YOURS AND CLEMENTINE MORANIDON'S...  
...

"OH YOU..."





"...OF THE WISEST AND MOST BEAUTIFUL OF ANGELS, GOD BETRAYED BY FATE AND ISOLATED BY PRAISE, OH SATAN, HAVE PITY ON MY LONG DISTRESS!"

DAD...

WEEKS LATER, THE NEW COALITION ORCHESTRATED BY AN UNUSUALLY DETERMINED ALDICE NIKOPOL, JR. WRESTLES FOR GOOD OR ILL WITH ITS NEW EGALITARIAN SOCIETY... ALONG WITH ECONOMIC AND ENERGY PROBLEMS HAVE COME THE THREATS OF INTER CITY WARS (ESPECIALLY WITH THE CITIES OF THE NORTH AND WEST). ALONG WITH PROBLEMS OF CO-EXISTENCE WITH EXTRATERRESTRIAL RACES (THE NUMBER OF DIPHDA CHERUBS OCCUPYING NOTRE-DAME OF PAIRS GROWS BY THE DAY) HAVE COME TERRORIST ATTACKS BY REGROUPING FASCIST FACTIONS. FINALLY, ALONG WITH THE PROBLEMS ARISING FROM JOINING TOGETHER THE TWO SECTORS HAVE COME TERRIBLE RISKS OF EPIDEMIC AND MUTATIONS (DESPITE THE CLOSING OF THE ASTROPORT AND THE PRAISEWORTHY DISINFECTANT CAMPAIGNS).

PARIS 2023, FRAGILE BUT FREE, PREPARES TO SAIL CLOSE TO THE ROCKS ON VERY TROUBLED WATERS WITHOUT ITS LIBERATOR, THE UNFORTUNATE, THE LUCKLESS, THE PITIFUL ALDICE NIKOPOL.

END.



COME NOW, MR. CHOUBLANC! GET DRESSED! YOU'RE GOING TO CATCH COLD!

"YOU WHO KNOW ALL, GREAT RULER OF THE EARTH BELOW, PATIENT HEALER OF HUMAN PAIN,..."



"OH SATAN, HAVE PITY ON MY LONG DISTRESS..."



HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA

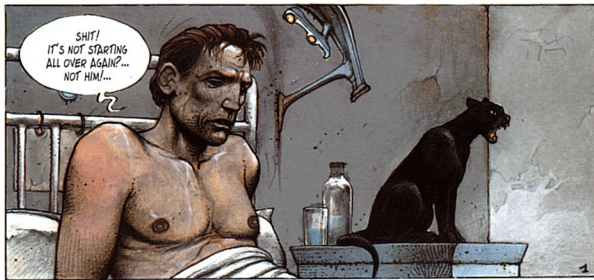
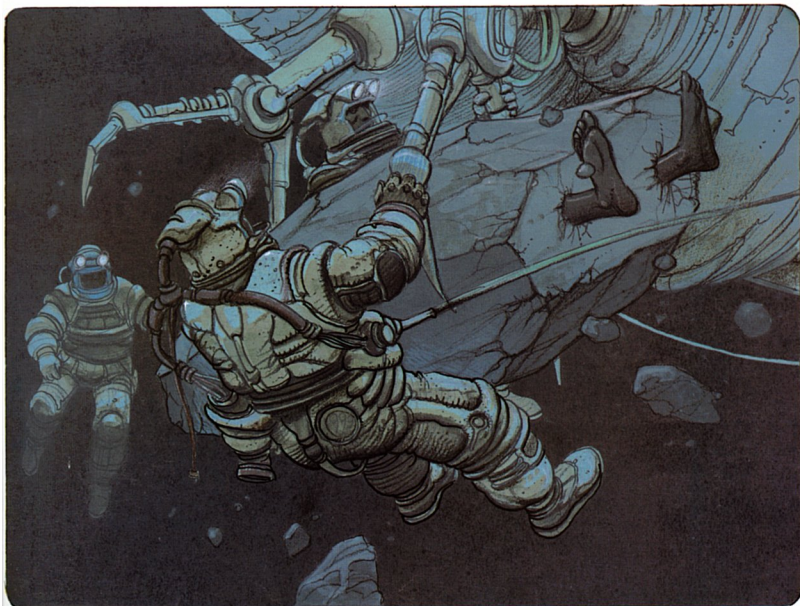
STORY ILLUSTRATION COLOR

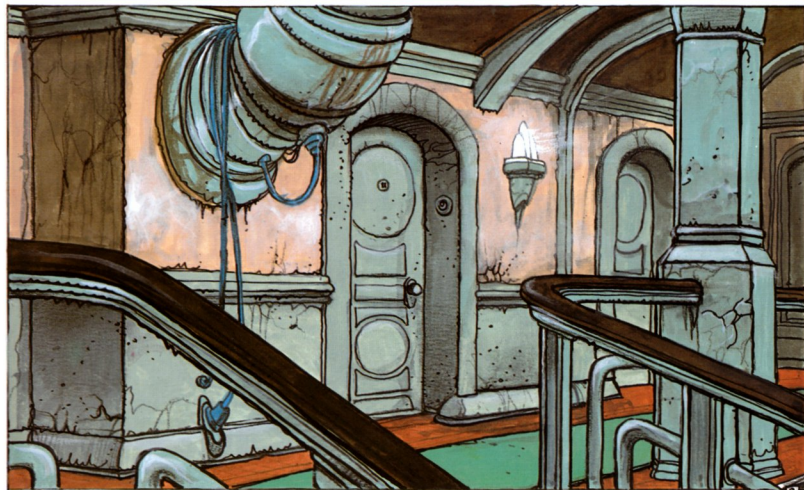
ESIAL


# **THE NIKOPOL TRILOGY**

**the woman trap**

TWO YEARS HAVE PASSED. ALCIDE NIKOPOL IS STILL IN THE CARE OF THE HOLY SAVIOR PSYCHIATRIC CENTER IN PARIS... THE POLITICAL SITUATION IN THE CITY IS OF NO INTEREST, AND TODAY'S DATE IS FEBRUARY 22, 2025







LONDON, FEBRUARY 22,  
2025...  
SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
JILL BIOSKOP...  
TRANSMISSION  
SCRIPTWALKER  
...




...FOLLOWING UP ON THE STORY...  
"FIGHTING BETWEEN AFRO-PAKISTANI  
AND ZUBEN UBIAN MINORITIES  
IN PARTS OF CHELSEA..."

...OF  
CHEL-SEA...



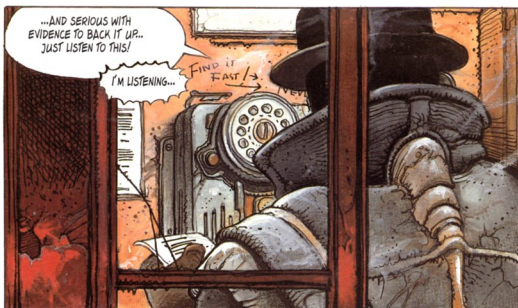
CHAPTER 3...

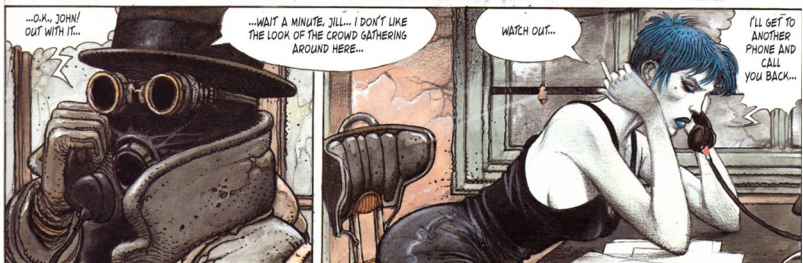


REPRISAL BY  
THE BENINO-TOGOLLO-  
GHANIAN COALITION...  
KING'S ROAD  
SEIZED. NERVE CENTER  
OF ZUBEN-

-UBIAN...

RILLING...





JOHN DIDN'T HAVE TIME TO GET TO ANOTHER PHONE..... DIDN'T EVEN HAVE TIME TO HANG UP..... I HEARD THE EXPLOSION... AND HIS SCREAM.... THAT ALPHERAZIAN SCREAM HE LET OUT SOMETIMES WHEN LIGHT HIT HIM, OR THE FIRST TIMES WE MADE LOVE.....



....JOHN DIED ON FEBRUARY 23, 2025....

JOHN...

HE'S DEAD, MISS...  
DONT STAY HERE...

...KILLED IN A ZUREM-UBIAN ATTACK, WITH FOUR AFRO-PAKISTANIS, ONE OF WHOM WAS A KEY PLAYER IN THE CONFLICT... I DECIDE HERE AND NOW NOT TO WRITE ANY MORE ABOUT THIS SYSTEMATIC SLAUGHTER... I'D MUCH RATHER TALK ABOUT JOHN... AND I'LL DO JUST THAT... THE SCRIPT-WALKER IS STILL WORKING. JOHN STILL HAS THE PROOF IN HIS HAND.....

I PICK IT UP....

....A STRANGE INDELIBLE  
WHITE LIQUID SEEPS FROM  
JOHN'S SHREDDED HOOD...  
COULD THAT BE HIS BLOOD?...

I HEAD HOME.





BACK AT THE SAVOY I COLLAPSE IN GRIEF. HOW CAN I EXPLAIN WHAT JOHN MEANT TO ME? ...YET I FEEL A REAL NEED TO WRITE... IMMEDIATELY... WITH THE SCRIPT-WALKER, SPREAD OUT OUR CRAZY STORY DEEP INTO THE PAST. EMPTY IT ALL OUT... HEAD AND HEART... AND TO FALL ASLEEP, TAKE H.L.V., JOHN'S DRUG, WHICH WILL MAKE ME FORGET HIM, ERASE HIM ONCE AND FOR ALL.....

IN THE BATHROOM, I FIND THE BOX... H.L.V.... I DON'T KNOW WHAT IT STANDS FOR. NOW I'LL NEVER KNOW. AND I DON'T GIVE A DAMN...



INSIDE ARE RED PILLS AND YELLOW PILLS....

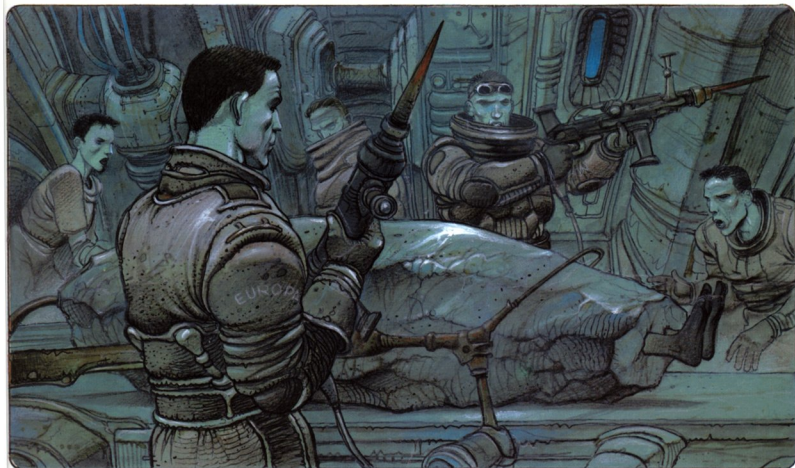
I HESITATE.



...FINALLY I SWALLOW ONE, THEN ANOTHER... BOTH RED... A SPLASH OF WATER AROUND MY EYES TO WIPE AWAY MY BLUE TEARS...



...THEN, NAKED, I SHUT MYSELF UP WITH THE SCRIPT-WALKER IN JOHN'S ROOM... THE DARK ROOM, NOT A TRACE OF LIGHT... I START TO WRITE... ONCE UPON A TIME, JOHN AND I...





LONDON, FEBRUARY 24  
CAMDEN TOWN...

SOMETHING  
WRONG, JEFF?

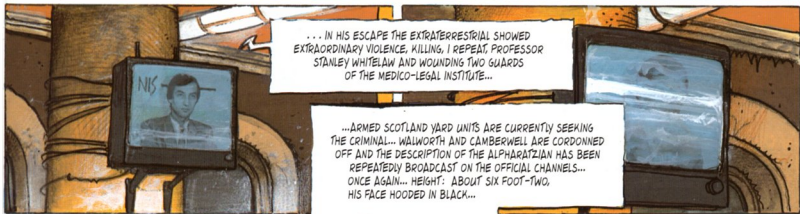
COULD  
WELL  
BE...

... IT HAPPENED JUST AS PROFESSOR STANLEY WHITELAW  
WAS PREPARING TO PERFORM AN AUTOPSY  
ON THE ALPHARATZIAN WHO HAD BEEN DECLARED  
CLINICALLY DEAD...



... IN HIS ESCAPE THE EXTRATERRESTRIAL SHOWED  
EXTRAORDINARY VIOLENCE, KILLING, I REPEAT, PROFESSOR  
STANLEY WHITELAW AND WOUNDING TWO GUARDS  
OF THE MEDICO-LEGAL INSTITUTE...

...ARMED SCOTLAND YARD UNITS ARE CURRENTLY SEEKING  
THE CRIMINAL... WALWORTH AND CAMBERWELL ARE CORDONNED  
OFF AND THE DESCRIPTION OF THE ALPHARATZIAN HAS BEEN  
REPEATEDLY BROADCAST ON THE OFFICIAL CHANNELS...  
ONCE AGAIN... HEIGHT: ABOUT SIX FOOT-TWO,  
HIS FACE HOODED IN BLACK...



NO DOUBT ABOUT  
IT, IT'S HIM...

WHO?  
THE ALPHARATZIAN?  
YOU KNOW HIM?

... LISTEN, I'M SORRY ABOUT  
OUR DATE TONIGHT...  
I'VE GOT TO LEAVE...  
IT'S IMPORTANT...

I'LL CALL YOU  
TOMORROW...





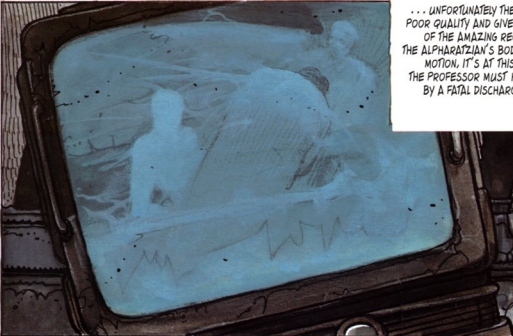
TAXI!



SAVOY HOTEL,  
FAST!



... PICTURES OF THE EVENT  
FROM ONE OF  
THE CAMERAS IN  
THE OPERATING ROOM...



... UNFORTUNATELY THE RECORDING IS OF  
POOR QUALITY AND GIVES LITTLE INDICATION  
OF THE AMAZING REGENERATION OF  
THE ALPHARATZIAN'S BODY... VIEWED IN SLOW  
MOTION, IT'S AT THIS MOMENT THAT  
THE PROFESSOR MUST HAVE BEEN STRUCK  
BY A FATAL DISCHARGE OF ENERGY...



...IT'S JEFF, JEFF WYNYATT, WHO WAKES ME 48 HOURS LATER, OUT OF WHAT HE, INSULTINGLY CALLS A "DEEP COMA"... . . . JEFF IS A FRIEND, A BLACK-LISTED JOURNALIST, A LONELY, DESTITUTE MAN I ONCE HAD A BRIEF FLING WITH A FEW YEARS AGO (THREE TO BE EXACT), JUST BEFORE I MET JOHN...



...TO BRING ME AROUND, JEFF SPRAYS MY BREASTS WITH ICE COLD WATER...



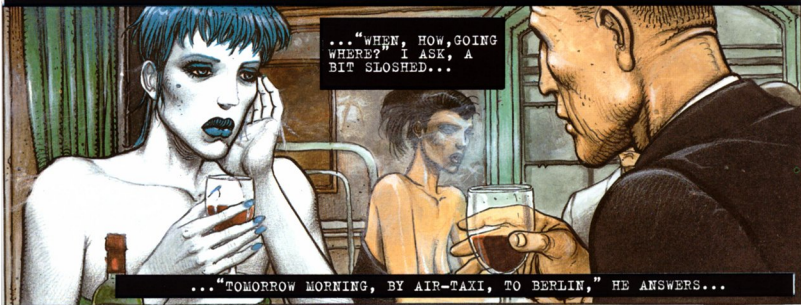
...THEN HE DRAGS ME, STILL STONED, TO THE SAVOY RESTAURANT...OUTRAGEOUSLY EXPENSIVE AND VERY BAD, YET I MANAGE TO STUFF MYSELF...

...DURING DESSERT I ASK HIM:





...WHAT JEFF SUGGESTS IS THAT I LEAVE LONDON... A PRETTY RARE THING THESE DAYS, RESERVED FOR THE KING'S CHOSEN FEW OF WHOM JEFF IS NOT ONE AND ME EVEN LESS...



... "WHEN, HOW, GOING WHERE?" I ASK, A BIT SLOSHED...

... "TOMORROW MORNING, BY AIR-TAXI, TO BERLIN," HE ANSWERS...



... A FRIEND OF MINE, NICK, WILL TAKE YOU THERE... I'VE GOT MONEY FOR YOU AND AN ORDER FOR PERMANENT ASSIGNMENT FROM THE N.I.S. ... IT'S PHONY, BUT IT'LL GET YOU OUT OF LONDON... ONCE YOU'RE IN BERLIN, YOU'LL STAY AT THE MAUER PALAST... IT'S THE ONLY PRIVATE HOTEL IN TOWN... VERY BEAUTIFUL AND VERY EXPENSIVE... YOU'LL LOVE IT...

... I'M COUNTING ON YOU TO COVER THE BERLIN NEWS IN GENERAL BUT ESPECIALLY THE EUROPA 1'S RETURN TO EARTH...

... "EUROPA 1", THE FIRST EUROPEAN INTERPLANETARY SPACE MISSION, LAUNCHED IN 1999 (THE YEAR I WAS BORN)... IT SEEMS THEY'RE EXPECTING IT BACK IN A FEW DAYS AT THE BERLIN-TEGEL/TREPTOW ASTROPORT...



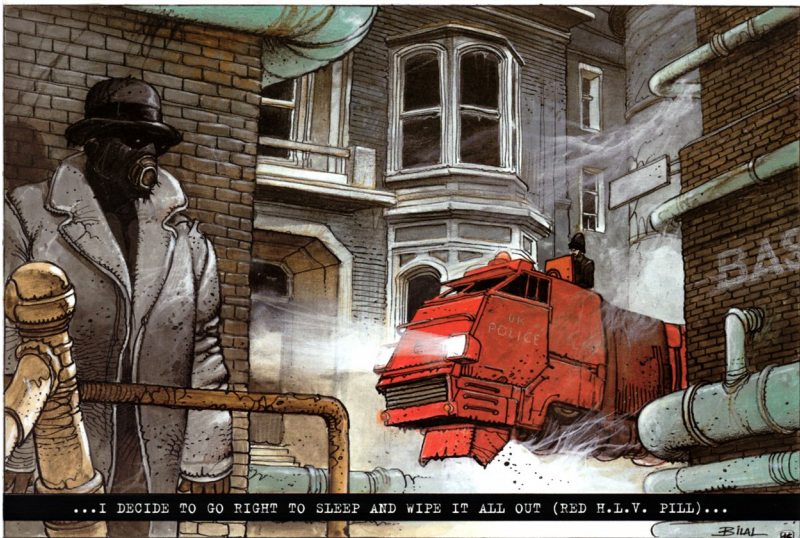
...AS FOR ME, I'LL BE LOOKING FOR A WAY TO SELL YOUR STORIES HERE... AND IN A WHILE, WHO KNOWS, MAYBE I'LL BE ABLE TO JOIN YOU IN BERLIN...

...JEFF NEVER SHOULD HAVE UTTERED THAT LAST SENTENCE...

...JUST AS HE SHOULD NEVER HAVE COME TO MY ROOM THAT NIGHT...



IT'S CRAZY HOW MUCH BLOOD HE LOSES ONCE I'VE STABBED HIM THROUGH THE HEART WITH THE SCRIPT-WALKER'S DETACHABLE ANTENNA... . FUNNY THING IS IT'S HARDER TO GET ALL THE BLOOD OFF MY HANDS AND BODY THAN IT IS GETTING RID OF HIS BODY...



...I DECIDE TO GO RIGHT TO SLEEP AND WIPE IT ALL OUT (RED H.L.V. PILL)...

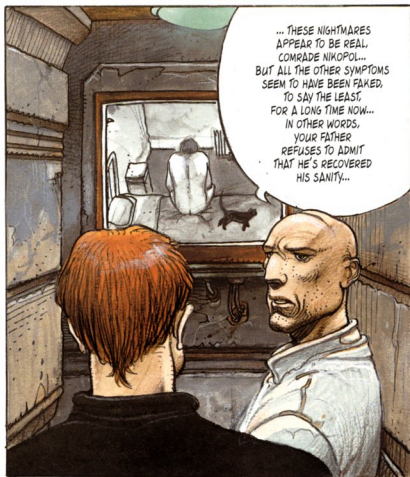


THAT NIGHT  
IN PARIS...

FUCKING  
FLYING SHIT...



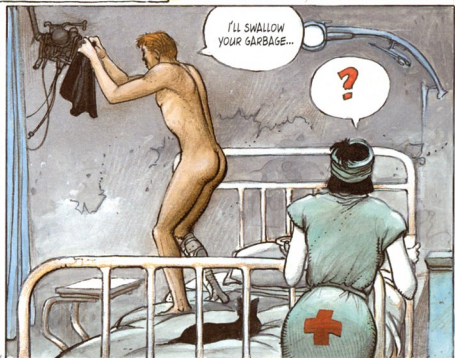
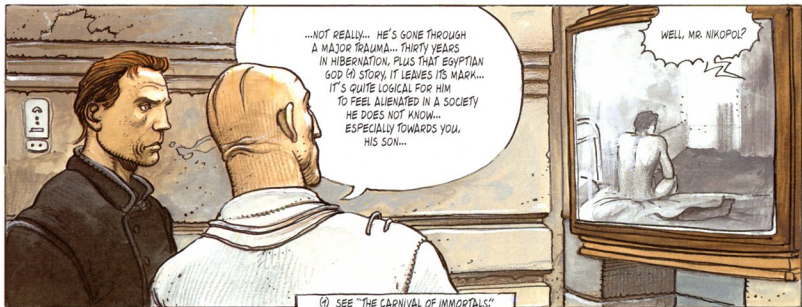
HE'S COMING.  
I CAN FEEL  
IT...



... THESE NIGHTMARES  
APPEAR TO BE REAL,  
COMRADE NIKOPOL...  
BUT ALL THE OTHER SYMPTOMS  
SEEM TO HAVE BEEN FAMED,  
TO SAY THE LEAST,  
FOR A LONG TIME NOW...  
IN OTHER WORDS,  
YOUR FATHER  
REFUSES TO ADMIT  
THAT HE'S RECOVERED  
HIS SANITY...



THAT'S  
RIDICULOUS...



THE NEXT DAY, NICK, THE FRIEND JEFF TOLD ME ABOUT, IS WAITING FOR ME IN THE LOBBY.



...HE'S VERY NERVOUS... BECAUSE OF THE COPS...



THEY'RE ALL OVER THE PLACE AND YOU'RE LATE...

I'M SORRY...



GET IN!

ARE THEY LOOKING FOR SOMEONE?



...THE GUY ISN'T VERY TALKATIVE... WHICH IS JUST AS WELL... THE EFFECTS OF H.L.V. ON ME AREN'T EXACTLY FLATTERING... ESPECIALLY PHYSICALLY... I HOPE I WON'T THROW UP DURING THE TRIP...



...BUT FROM A MEMORY STANDPOINT, IT'S BLOODY EFFECTIVE ...THE CRIME COMMITTED THAT NIGHT FADES QUICKLY, COLDLY, IN MY HEAD... JEFF GETS PUT THROUGH THE BUFFING PROCESS AND COMES OUT ERASED... JUST LIKE JOHN...



...FUNNY, THE FACT THAT AN IMPORTANT PART OF MY LIFE (JOHN IN PARTICULAR) HAS BEEN CUT OUT LEAVES ME TOTALLY NUMB... MAYBE THIS STRANGE FEELING THAT I'M BEING SUCKED FORWARD HAS FILLED UP THE VOID... SUCKED INTO THE IMMEDIATE FUTURE... BERLIN...



HAPPY TO LEAVE?

HEY, NICK CAN SPEAK...

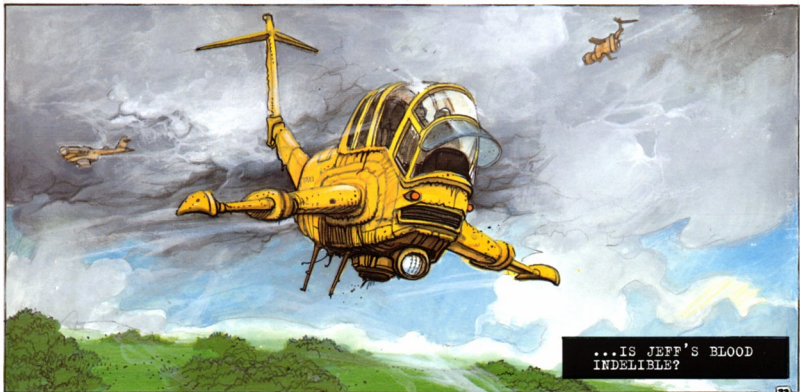
I DON'T ANSWER OR HARDLY... THE FACT THAT I'M LEAVING LONDON KNOWING I'LL NEVER BE BACK DOESN'T AFFECT ME ONE LITTLE BIT... THE CITY'S ALREADY FAR BEHIND... IN RETROSPECT IT SEEMS THAT I HARDLY NOTICED THE COLOR OF THE THAMES AS WE FLEW OVER THE RIVER AT TOWER BRIDGE...



...IT WAS RED...



...RED LIKE THE SPOT WHICH HAS JUST APPEARED IN THE PALM OF MY RIGHT HAND...



...IS JEFF'S BLOOD INDELIBLE?



...I QUICKLY SLIP ON A GLOVE TO MAKE IT GO AWAY ...IN MY POCKET I STUMBLE ACROSS THE PRESS CLIPPING JOHN HAD BEEN READING TO ME BEFORE HE DIED... WHAT I DISCOVERED IS THE CRUX OF EVERYTHING...



...THE PLANE IS ALREADY SOMEWHERE OVER THE CHANNEL... ABOUT TO FLY INTO A HUGE CLOUD MASS (RED)...I THINK OF WHAT MY READERS FROM 1993 MIGHT LOOK LIKE... HEY, WHY 1993 ANYWAY?... AND WHY A FRENCH NEWSPAPER? ...THE PROGRAMMING CHIP MUST HAVE GONE OFF ITS ROCKER... ANYWAY I DON'T GIVE A DAMN ABOUT THE DATE... THE IMPORTANT THING IS THAT IT WORKS...



... MEANWHILE... FAR AWAY...  
NEAR MARS...



YOU'RE SURE  
HE WAS THERE?

ABSOLUTELY  
SURE!

BAD NEWS... HORUS HAS DISAPPEARED... FOR AT LEAST A FRACTION OF ETERNITY...  
PROBABLY DURING A COLLISION WITH A FIELD OF METEORITES...



SO, ARE WE  
GOING BACK?

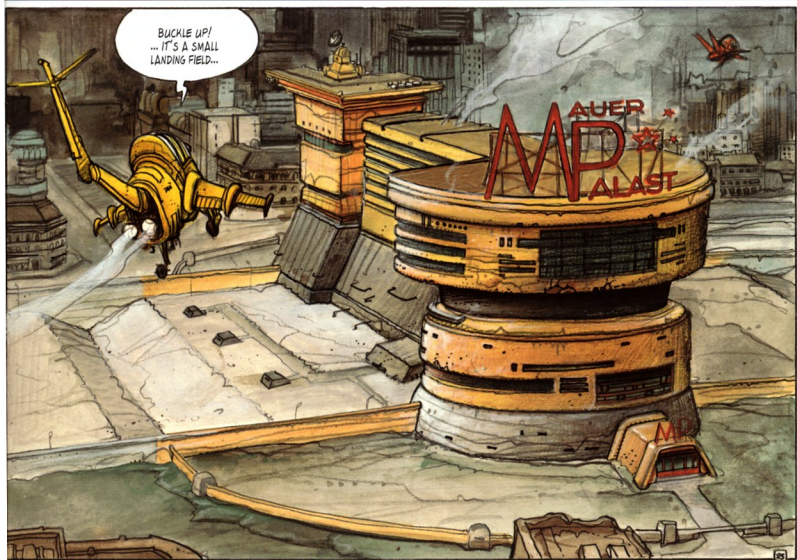
YES,  
ANUBAST,  
WE'RE TURNING  
BACK TO  
EARTH!

NEAT!





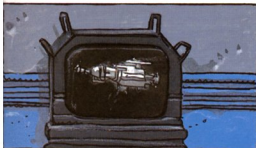
...AT THE END OF THE GREAT RED CLOUD TUNNEL AND AFTER SEVEN HOURS IN FLIGHT, THE CITY OF BERLIN FINALLY APPEARS BELOW, THE ONLY AUTONOMOUS ENCLAVE IN THE HEART OF THE CZECHOSLOVAK EMPIRE...





...SAYING GOODBYE TO NICK, I FEEL REALLY UNEASY... THE WAY HE SHAKES MY HAND... AND HIS ICY STARE FOLLOWS ME OUT OF SIGHT... A PERVERSE, HORRIBLY PENETRATING STARE... AIMED STRAIGHT AT THE SMALL OF MY BACK...

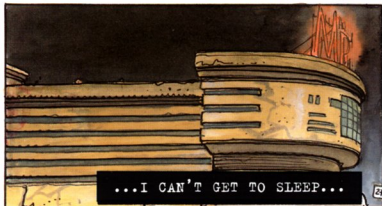
I SHUT MYSELF IN MY ROOM... I TAKE A SHOWER AND ORDER SOME FOOD...



IT WOULD APPEAR THAT SOMETHING VERY SERIOUS IS ABOUT TO TARNISH THE RETURN OF EUROPA 1 TO EARTH... THE BERLIN ASTROPORT AUTHORITIES REFUSE FOR THE MOMENT TO MAKE ANY STATEMENT BUT DRACONIAN SECURITY MEASURES ARE NOW IN PLACE... THE LANDING, I REPEAT IS SCHEDULED IN LESS THAN 47 HOURS...



...IT'S NIGHT IN BERLIN... I'M READING BACK EVERYTHING I TYPED INTO THE SCRIPT-WALKER IN THE ORDER I WROTE IT... "FIGHTING AMONG THE MINORITIES IN LONDON" FIRST... KIND OF A DRAG... THEN THE STUFF ON JOHN... PRETTY WEIRD... ESPECIALLY IN HINDSIGHT... THE SEX MAKES ME SMILE... AS FOR THE REST, MY FEELINGS AND CONFESSING MY CRIME, I DON'T GIVE THIS A THOUGHT... TOMORROW, I'LL START WITH A SERIOUS REPORT ON THE MAUER PALAST AND ITS NEIGHBORHOOD...



...AND IT'S JUST AS WELL... THAT BASTARD NICK, SLIMY, DIRTY SNAKE THAT HE IS, MANAGES TO CRAWL UNDER MY SHEETS IN THE DEAD OF NIGHT...



...UP AGAINST MY SKIN...



THE CREEP!

...I WIPE OFF HIS BLOOD (THE COLOR OF THE THAMES) AND DRAG HIS BODY OVER TO THE WINDOW...



...I SHOVE IT OUT...

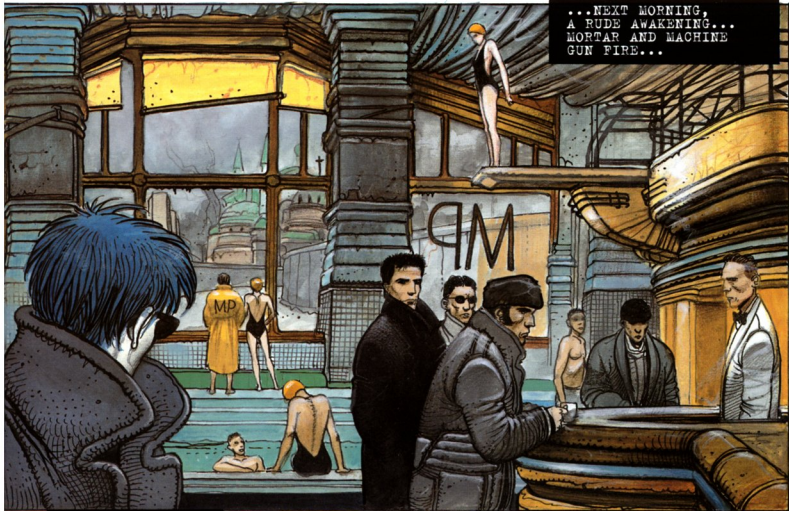


...NOT A TRACE ANYWHERE...

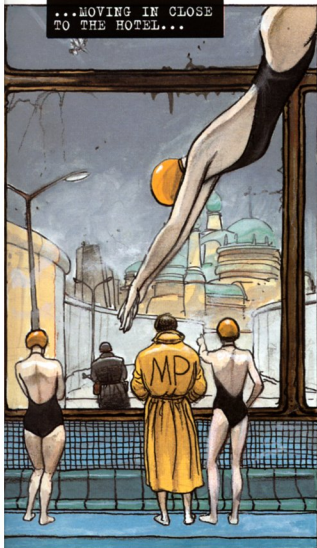


...NOT EVEN IN MY HEAD...

...NEXT MORNING,  
A RUDE AWAKENING...  
MORTAR AND MACHINE  
GUN FIRE...



...MOVING IN CLOSE  
TO THE HOTEL...



CAN I BUY YOU A COFFEE?



...THE ONE TRYING TO PICK ME UP SAYS HIS NAME  
IS IVAN VABEK, A YUGOSLOVAKIAN REPORTER...

... JILL BIOSKOP?  
BIOSKOP MEANS "MOVIE"  
IN MY LANGUAGE...  
I DON'T KNOW WHY,  
BUT IT FITS YOU LIKE  
A GLOVE...

"OH?!"  
I LET OUT  
...



...SPEAKING OF GLOVES,  
IT WAS GOOD I CHANGED  
MINE... RED ONES SEEM  
TO SOLVE THE PROBLEM...



...WHILE THE COFFEE BURNS DOWN MY THROAT, I CAN'T HELP  
TOING WITH THE IDEA... WOULD I BE UP TO KILLING  
THIS GUY LIKE I DID THE OTHER TWO...

...MY INDECISION EXCITES ME  
MORE AS I FIND MYSELF  
PHYSICALLY ATTRACTED TO HIM...



...ALL I CAN REMEMBER ABOUT THE LINE HE FEEDS ME ABOUT EUROPA I'S LANDING IS HIS PLAN  
TO GET INTO THE CONTROL TOWER OF THE ASTROPORT THAT NIGHT... AND THAT HE ASKS ME  
OUT TO DINNER THE FOLLOWING NIGHT...



...I ACCEPT... AS A ROCKET  
EXPLODES UP AGAINST THE HOTEL...

WHAT'S ALL THAT  
SHOOTING OUT  
THERE?

THAT'S THE CRAZIEST KIND OF  
FIGHTING I'VE EVER SEEN...  
EVERY REPORTER SHOULD COVER IT  
AT LEAST ONCE... THE BERLINERS CALL IT  
"EIERKRIEG"... EGG WAR... IF YOU'RE  
INTERESTED, I CAN GET YOU  
A FRONT ROW SEAT...



...OF COURSE I'M INTERESTED... I LEAVE THE YUGO AND HOTEL AT ONCE...

...DO YOU HAVE A PASS?

...PRESS CARD...

WATCH OUT... THE ISLAMO-CHRISTIANS ARE GOING HAWAII...



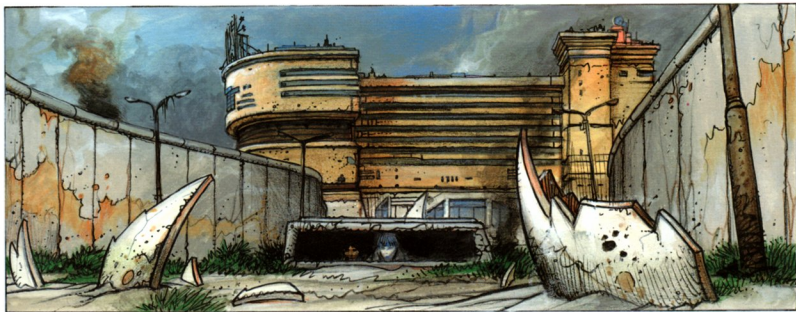
...FURTHER ON, I MEET MY "LEAD"... NAMED IBRAHIM... AGE 14...

REAL EXPENSIVE!

"HOW MUCH", I ASK...



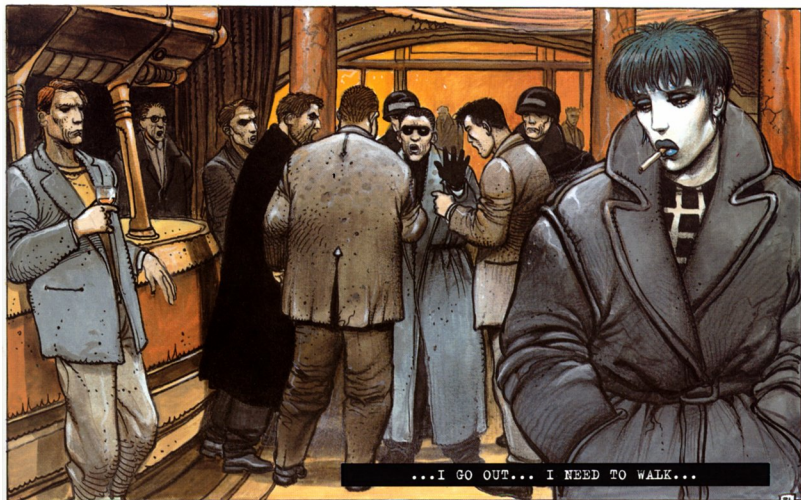




...THAT EVENING, BACK IN MY ROOM I DO A PIECE ON THE "BIERKRIEG". IT IS IN FACT THE CRAZIEST, MOST GROTESQUE KIND OF FIGHTING I'VE EVER SEEN... I THINK OF IBRAHIM... HE'S SCARY, BUT I WON'T FORGET HIM...

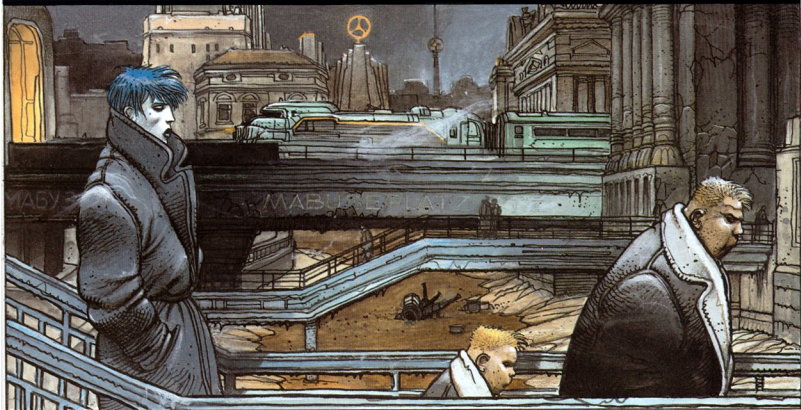


...THE INDELIBLE RED OF NICK'S BLOOD (MIXED WITH JEFF'S?) IS SPREADING OVER MY HAND... IT'S A DRAG... HAVE TO GET ANOTHER GLOVE... A LONGER ONE... AT THE BAR I LEARN THAT THE ASTROPORT IS SEALED AND OFF-LIMITS TO THE PRESS... "SECURITY MEASURE" SAYS A SPOKESMAN. THE REPORTERS RAISE HELL...



...I GO OUT... I NEED TO WALK...

...ANYHOW, STORIES ABOUT ROCKETS HAVE ALWAYS BORED ME STIFF... AND AS FAR AS EUROPA I GOES, I COULD GIVE A SHIT...



LATER THAT NIGHT, AN EAR SPLITTING ROAR, ALMOST UNBEARABLE, RIPS THROUGH BERLIN'S NIGHT SKY AND GIVES ME A CHANCE TO SCREAM MY LUNGS OUT FOR A FEW SECONDS... FROM DEEP INSIDE ME AND LEAVING ME FEELING REALLY GOOD AFTERWARDS...

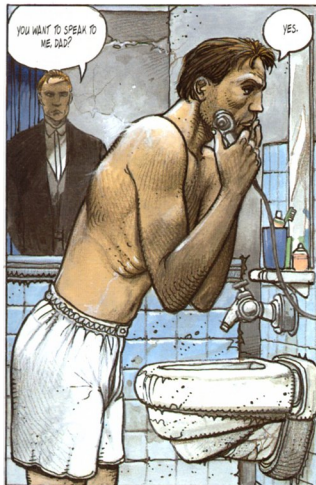


...THE ROAR DIES DOWN, THEN SILENCE... EUROPA I HAS JUST LANDED AT TEGEL/TREPTOW... I THINK OF IVAN VABEK WHO MUST HAVE MADE IT INSIDE... I TELL MYSELF IF HE COMES OUT WITH A SCOOP, I'LL KNOW HOW TO MAKE HIM TALK...



... WHAT ABOUT THE OTHERS? ...ALL DEAD... SHE'S THE ONLY SURVIVOR... CAN YOU HEAR ME?





YOU WANT TO SPEAK TO ME, DAD?

YES.



...WHAT I'VE GOT TO SAY IS IMPORTANT... PLEASE DON'T INTERRUPT ME OR CONTRADICT ME... I'LL KEEP IT SHORT...

I'M LISTENING...



...HORUS, THE PARANOID GOD, IS BACK ON EARTH... MEETING HIM IS GOING TO BE COMPLETELY UNAVOIDABLE... LEAVING TWO POSSIBILITIES... EITHER HE COMES TO ME OR I GO TO HIM...

?



...I CHOOSE TO GO TO HIM FOR TWO REASONS... FIRST OF ALL HE'S SLAUGHTERING EVERYONE IN SIGHT AND IT'S TIME HE'S STOPPED... SECOND, WHATEVER I DO...



... I'LL NEVER BE ABLE TO ADJUST TO THIS ERA AND ITS WAY OF LIFE... GOING BACK TO HORUS MEANS GETTING BACK ON THE TRACK OF THE ABSURD AND IRRATIONAL WHICH BROUGHT ME HERE IN THE FIRST PLACE, ON THAT MISERABLE DAY IN 1999 (?)... JUST AS WELL TO ACCEPT MY SOUL'S SICKNESS AND MY TEMPORAL DISORDER... AND GET ON WITH IT

ACTUALLY I FIND IT QUITE AMUSING.



...THAT'S WHY YOU'RE GOING TO GET A PLANE... FOR ME AND THE CAT, WE'RE LEAVING IMMEDIATELY...

...BUT DAD...



...I HARDLY EVER DO MY HAIR OR PUT ON REAL LIPSTICK... BUT TONIGHT I WANT TO...  
I'M ALSO STARVING...



...FORTUNATELY IVAN VABEK IS  
A PUNCTUAL GUY...

...BE THERE  
IN A MINUTE,  
IVAN...

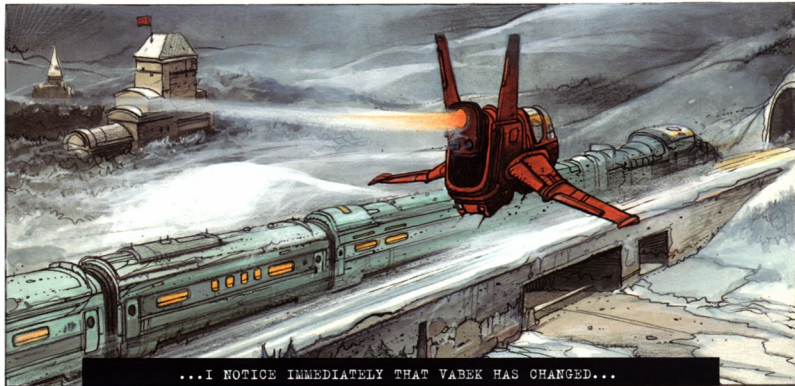
...PUNCTUAL  
BUT WEIRD...



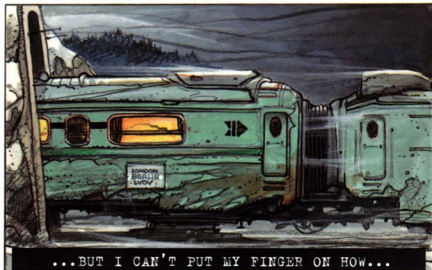
THERE...

...IT'S TIME TO PUT YOU TO THE TEST, VABEK.  
ALTHOUGH YOU SEEM ESPECIALLY NERVOUS TO ME...  
I HOPE YOU WILL BE ABLE TO BEAR MY PRESENCE INSIDE  
YOUR BODY AND THE INEVITABLE CEREBRAL PRESSURE  
THAT COMES WITH IT...



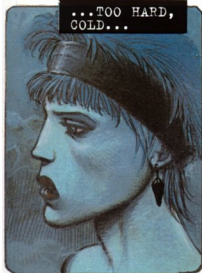


...I NOTICE IMMEDIATELY THAT VABEK HAS CHANGED...

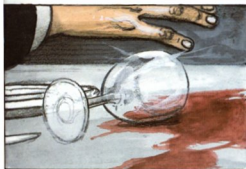


...BUT I CAN'T PUT MY FINGER ON HOW...





...THE FOOD IS AWFUL THAT NIGHT, AND WE HARDLY SPEAK... HE SAYS NOTHING ABOUT EUROPA I. DEAD END... AFTER THE FIRST COURSE HE STARTS TO SHAKE... HE LEAVES THE TABLE THREE TIMES, KNOCKS OVER HIS GLASS TWICE, AND SMASHES HIS PLATE ONCE WHEN HE CUT HIS MEAT TOO HARD...



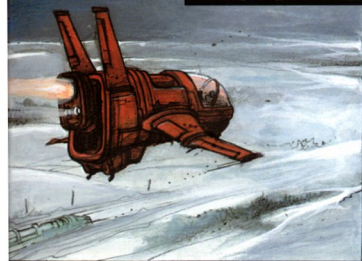
...LATER, HIS NOSE EVEN STARTS TO BLEED...

...HE LOSES HIS BALANCE IN MY ROOM WHILE OPENING THE CHAMPAGNE...

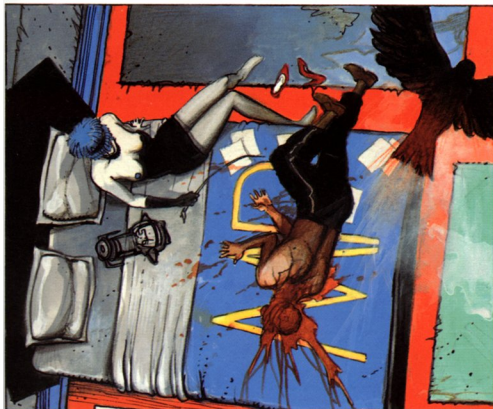


...AND THEN, I REALIZE, HIS MIND...

...I START GETTING SCARED...

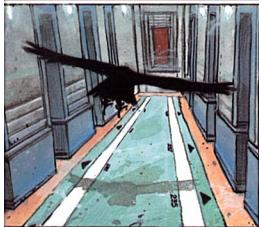


...VERY SCARED...



...WHAT HAPPENS THAT NIGHT IS COMPLETELY HORRIFYING... I NEED TO WRITE ABOUT IT... FOR MY READERS IN 1993... I RUN TO LOCK MYSELF INTO THE BATHROOM WITH THE SCRIPT-WALKER, TO GET AWAY FROM THE WAVES OF THE THAMES STAINING MY BED... I START TO WRITE... FIRST THE HEADLINE: "HORROR AT THE MAUER PALAST"...

...THE THREE MEN I HAVE KILLED ARE NAMED JEFF, NICK AND IVAN. THESE THREE MEN...



THESE THREE MEN ARE NAMED JEFF NICK AND IVAN AND THEIR NAMES ARE JEFF NICK AND IVAN THE FIR ST JEFF THE SECON NICK THE LAST IVAN THEY RE NICK JEFF AND IVAN JECK NIFF AND IVAN... JEN NIVE AND IVAF JIVE NECK AN IFFAN JEFF NICK N IV



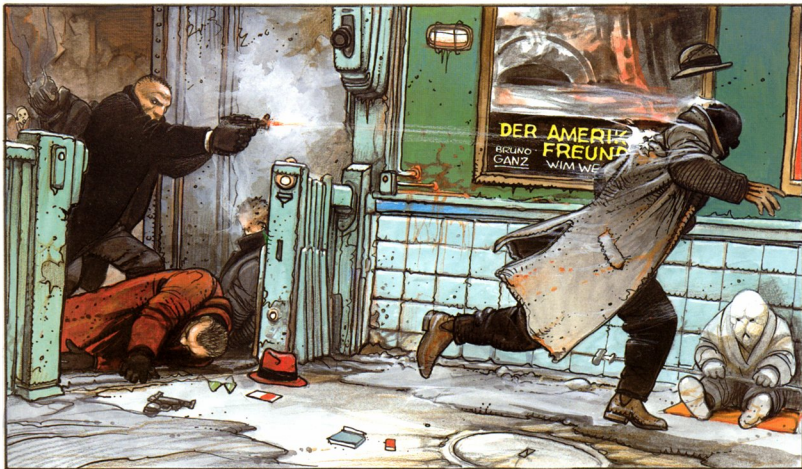
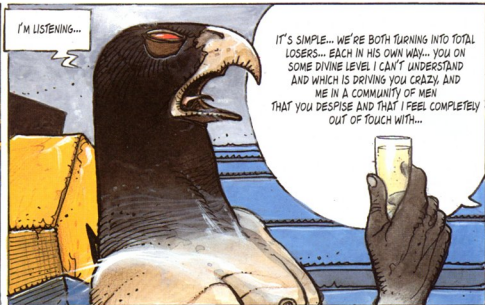
... JEFF NICK AND IVAN... JEFF NICK AND IVAN...  
JEFFNICKANDIVANJEFFCNIIANDIVANJIFFNECKANDIVA-  
JENKFNLUCKTANJEFFNICKEFF

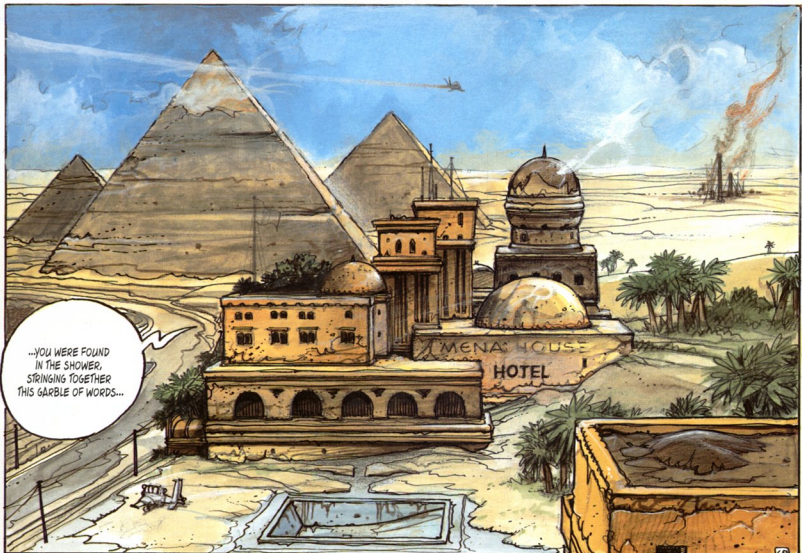
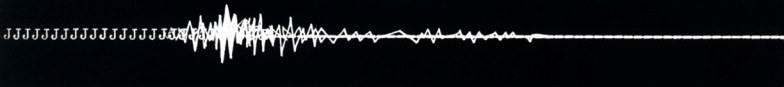
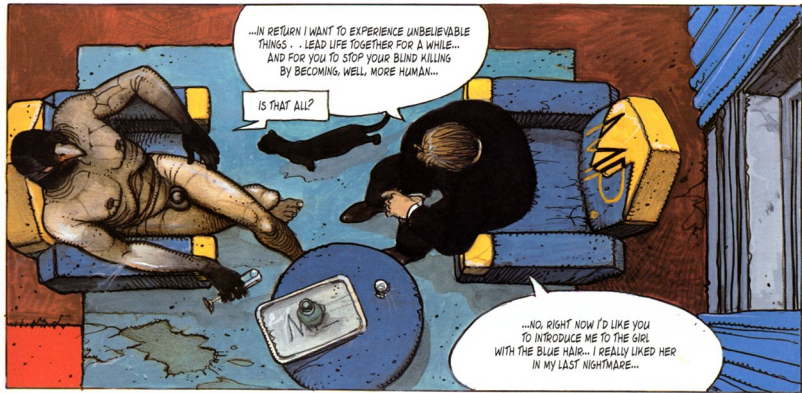














...YOUR HANDS WERE SCRUBBING THAT FABULOUS WHITE BODY OF YOURS OVER AND OVER... YOUR TYPEWRITER WAS ALL JAMMED UP AND STILL SMOKING... I THINK THAT IT WAS AT THAT MOMENT THAT I FELL IN LOVE WITH YOU... HORUS WAS STUMPED AND I WAS BEWILDERED...



...THAT'S WHEN THIS GUY CAME IN...  
OR RATHER, APPEARED, WHO KNOWS HOW...  
HIS FACE WAS ALL COVERED WITH BLACK GAUZE...  
THERE WAS SOMETHING TREMENDOUSLY POWERFUL  
ABOUT HIM... POWERFUL BUT PEACEFUL...  
HE SAID NOTHING... NO ONE SAID ANYTHING...  
NOT EVEN HORUS...

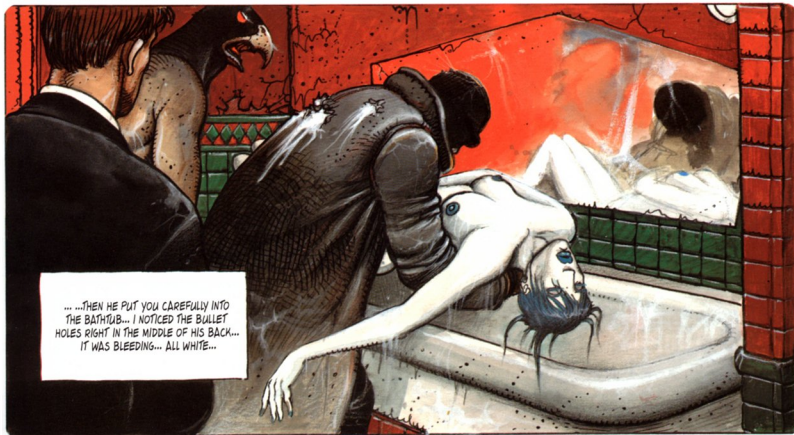
...HE WENT RIGHT TO THE PILLS AND BEGAN COUNTING THEM... NINE YELLOW ONES AND TWO REDS... HE TOOK FOUR OF THEM (INCLUDING TWO RED ONES)... JUST MUTTERING IN A HOLLOW, ECHOING VOICE:



WRONG DOSAGE,  
YOU LITTLE FOOL...



...THEN HE TOOK  
YOU OUT OF  
SHOWER AND  
MADE YOU SWALLOW  
THE SEVEN YELLOW  
ONES THAT REMAINED...

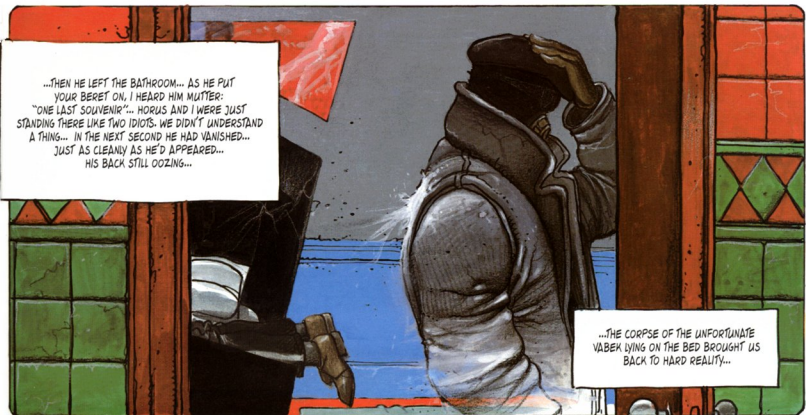


... THEN HE PUT YOU CAREFULLY INTO  
THE BATHTUB... I NOTICED THE BULLET  
HOLES RIGHT IN THE MIDDLE OF HIS BACK...  
IT WAS BLEEDING... ALL WHITE...



...AFTER KISSING YOU THROUGH THAT WEIRD MASK OF HIS, HE TOOK TWO OF THOSE  
PILLS HIMSELF (ONE OF EACH COLOR), AND SAID: "THE TWO LEFT OVER ARE MINE...  
SHE MIGHT NEED THEM SOME DAY... FOR ANOTHER STORY"





...THEN HE LEFT THE BATHROOM... AS HE PUT YOUR BERET ON, I HEARD HIM MUTTER: "ONE LAST SOUVENIR"... HORUS AND I WERE JUST STANDING THERE LIKE TWO IDIOTS. WE DIDN'T UNDERSTAND A THING... IN THE NEXT SECOND HE HAD VANISHED... JUST AS CLEANLY AS HE'D APPEARED... HIS BACK STILL OOZING...

...THE CORPSE OF THE UNFORTUNATE VABEK LYING ON THE BED BROUGHT US BACK TO HARD REALITY...

THEN THINGS STARTED HAPPENING AT A HELLISH PACE, BECAUSE WE HAD TO GET AWAY SOONER THAN WE'D PLANNED DUE TO THE APPEARANCE OF THE PYRAMID OVER BERLIN... YOU WERE IN A DEEP SLEEP WHEN WE LOADED YOUR BODY INTO AN AIRTAXI WE'D HAD A HARD TIME GETTING AND THEN SPLIT... DUE SOUTH... HORUS WASN'T REALLY SURPRISED TO SEE HIS OWN PEOPLE HOT ON HIS TRAIL AND PILOTED LIKE A GOD... GOGOL HAD GOTTEN BACK HIS GREEN AND WHITE STRIPES AND WAS OVERJOYED TO LEAVE EUROPE WHERE THAT EX-TERRORIST HEAD OF HIS STILL HAD A PRICE ON IT... AND ME, ALDICE NIKOPOL SENIOR (I'LL EXPLAIN THAT SOMEDAY...), I FOUND THE ADVENTURE QUITE THRILLING, AS I PATIENTLY WAITED FOR YOU TO WAKE...



YOU WANTED TO EXPERIENCE THE UNBELIEVABLE, NIKOPOL!! AND YOU'RE GOING TO GET IT!!!



The day after I woke up -  
March 6, 2025 -

CAIRO - I'm starting a diary...

...Because I need to write even more now...

Nikopol and Henri are beside a swimming pool  
with no water... it's hot... I just read a copy of what  
I wrote on the Script-Walker and felt totally detached...

Dead people, "Thames colored" blood (!!!!)...

Was I out of my mind? Anyway, there isn't  
a trace of anything on my hands or body, nothing...  
I pick up the phone...





HELLO? JEFF WYNATT?...



SPEAKING... WHO IS THIS?... HELLO!...

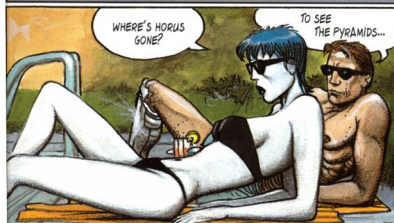


HELLO?



On that same March 6, 2025, I burn those sad words, proof of twelve days of what seemed like a never-ending, bloody nightmare... Except for Ivan Vabek, killed by Horus (to save me, says he), the others (Jeff and Nick) were dead only in my own mind... And then there's John, much more painful... As I burn the story of our affair, I can feel my stomach sinking, contracting into an open pit, like a gaping wound... But the H.L.V. has cut most of this out of my memory, so I'll probably never realize the full extent of the disastrous misunderstanding over his death... May he live happily ever after without me (he must be immortal), just as I hope to without him...

March 7, 2025 - I've got the feeling I'm starting everything at square one... it's very hot and there's still no water in the pool...



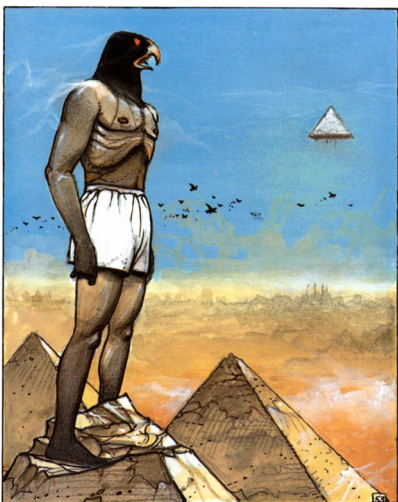
WHERE'S HORUS GONE?

TO SEE THE PYRAMIDS...

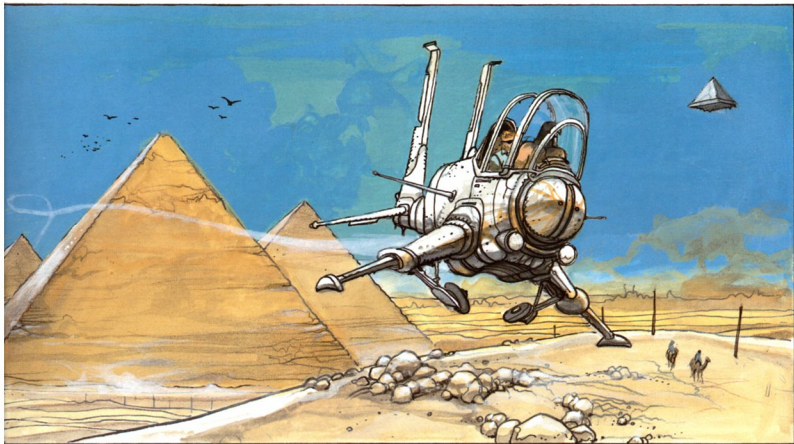


I'M GETTING INTO THE SHADE... MY STEEL LEG IS HEATING UP...

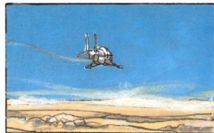
MY SKIN TOO... I'M COMING WITH YOU...



Our sudden departure, due to the arrival of the flying pyramid over Cairo, was like a game I didn't mind playing at all... That way I didn't have time to ask myself too many questions about how my strange relationship with the Nikolai/Horus pair came about, and even now I don't really know much about it.



As far as my interest in a new love affair is concerned, it would almost scare me, if somewhere in the bottom of one of my pockets there weren't those two little pills, especially the yellow one with its spectacular mind-scouring effect... Already I'm almost happy, it's high noon and we're heading due south, the sun's high, the sand wide open... Farther away still from the cold cities with their wounds and blue tears...





# THE NIKOPOL TRILOGY

**equator cold**

"Qbpeb ? I pqn't give a cbad arqut qbpeb. I'm gqing tq jive,  
jqve, anp pie in cqmdjete anp utteb chaqz !"

A. Nikopol (Equator City 2034)

-YOU DON'T SERIOUSLY EXPECT ME TO BELIEVE THAT YOU'RE HIS SON?! HIS TWIN BROTHER MAYBE, BUT NOT HIS SON!...  
-OKAY, I WON'T PUSH IT. YOU'RE RIGHT, WE'RE THE SAME AGE, WE'RE TWINS...



-THAT I CAN SWALLOW!



...ANYWAY, HERE IT IS... THE LAST SCENE I SHOT WITH HIM...

...I LIKE THIS SHOT. NICE AND TIGHT.

—COULD HE ACT, AT LEAST?



—NOT REALLY... HE COMES OFF A BIT FALSE HERE. IT WASN'T HIS THING, ACTING. ON THE OTHER HAND HE HAD A TERRIFIC EYE FOR IMAGE, AND FOR FRAMING. EVEN DIRECTING, SOMETIMES.  
—AND THE GIRL... IS THAT...?  
—YEAH, THAT'S HER. JILL BIOSKOP ANYTHING ON A FILM SET, SHE WAS INTO IT. AND SHE WASN'T A BAD ACTRESS EITHER. NOT BAD AT ALL... I REALLY LIKED HER.

MY PROBLEM IS, THIS FILM IS GOING TO END UP LIKE ALL THE REST:  
STILL IN DAILIES, TWO-THIRDS SHOT... I'VE GIVEN UP ON EVER GETTING ONE IN THE CAN.

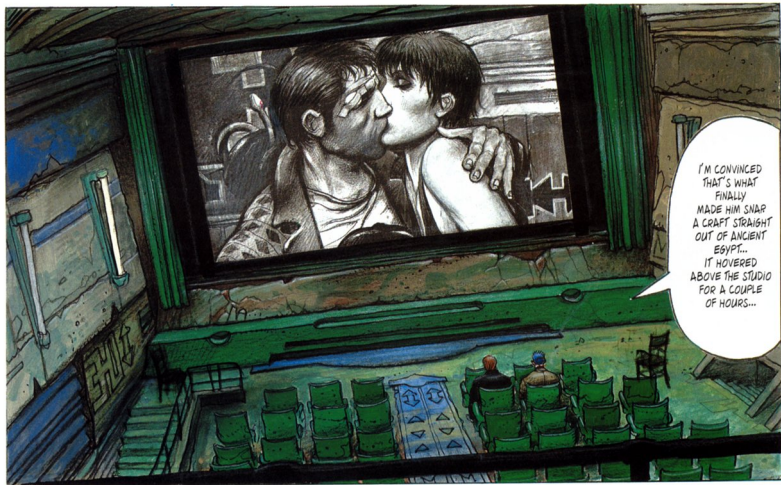


DO YOU REALIZE THAT IN OVER 40 YEARS OF PRODUCING AND DIRECTING, I HAVE NEVER ACTUALLY FINISHED A SINGLE FILM?  
THERE'S ALWAYS BEEN A WAR, A FAMINE, AN ECONOMIC CRISIS, THE SUICIDE OF AN ACTRESS, OR A SHORTAGE OF FILMSTOCK TO MESS EVERYTHING UP.  
THERE! LOOK! RAN OUT OF COLOR FILM ON THIS ONE, SO I HAD TO FINISH THE SCENE IN BLACK AND WHITE... AND SHORTLY AFTER THAT, NIKOPOL  
DITCHED US. INTO THIN AIR WITH THAT GREEN-STRIPED CAT OF HIS. NEVER HEARD FROM HIM SINCE. THE FILM WAS OF COURSE ABORTED...



-AND YOU HAVE NO IDEA WHERE HE COULD HAVE GONE?  
-NONE AT ALL. HE WAS A STRANGE MAN, YOUR...UH, TWIN BROTHER. MORE THAN ANYTHING ELSE HE WAS DANGEROUSLY UNPREDICTABLE.  
FOR TWO YEARS HE WAS HERE, LIVING AND WORKING WITH JILL, BUT I NEVER GOT EVEN A GLIMPSE OF WHAT HE KEPT INSIDE THAT HEAD  
OF HIS... TERRIBLE THINGS, I EXPECT. WILD STORMS... HE COULD GET VERY VIOLENT, BUT HE WAS ALSO VERY SCARED...  
SCARED OF ANYTHING. OF SHADOWS, OF A DARK ROOM, OF A FLYING PYRAMID...  
-A WHAT?  
-YOU HEARD ME RIGHT. A FLYING PYRAMID.





I'M CONVINCED THAT'S WHAT FINALLY MADE HIM SNAP A CRAFT STRAIGHT OUT OF ANCIENT EGYPT... IT HOVERED ABOVE THE STUDIO FOR A COUPLE OF HOURS...



I TOOK SOME PHOTOS...



WEIRD, ISN'T IT?

YEAH...



NATURALLY, JILL WAS DEEPLY AFFECTED BY THE WHOLE AFFAIR...

SHE WAS VERY MUCH IN LOVE AND ALREADY THREE MONTHS PREGNANT WHEN HE LEFT...

PREGNANT?

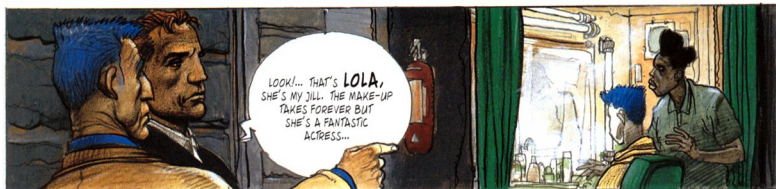


YEAH... IT WENT PRETTY BADLY FOR HER, TOO... SHE WAS ALWAYS VOMITING UP THE STRANGEST THINGS...

?



IN THE END, SHE LEFT ME TOO... JUST A COUPLE OF WEEKS LATER. HAVEN'T HEARD FROM HER EITHER... IT'S BEEN ALMOST EIGHT YEARS NOW. THE DAY SHE COMES BACK, I'LL STOP DYING MY HAIR BLUE.





IT'S A PERSONAL INTERPRETATION,  
OBVIOUSLY. BUT I THINK  
IT WILL BE GOOD...

OF COURSE  
IT WILL...



CAN I ASK YOU A FAVOR,  
BEFORE YOU  
DISAPPEAR TOO?

GO AHEAD!



YOUR JACKET... YOU DON'T FIND  
THEM LIKE THAT AROUND HERE...  
AND IT'S EXACTLY WHAT MY NIKOPOL  
NEEDS. WILL YOU GIVE IT TO ME?  
IT CAN BE YOUR CONTRIBUTION  
TO THE FILM... AN EXTENSION  
OF YOUR BROTHER,  
IF YOU LIKE...



BO WILL GIVE YOU  
HIS IN EXCHANGE.  
I'M SURE IT WILL  
SUIT YOU VERY WELL...

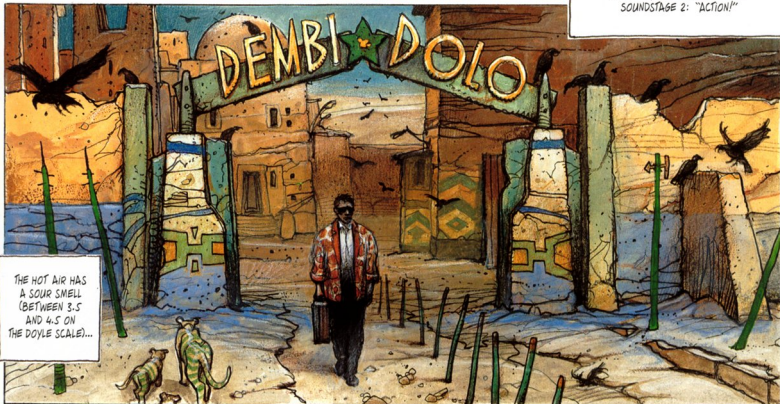
THAT'S FUNNY.  
I WAS THINKING JUST  
THE OPPOSITE...





OCTOBER, 2034.  
NIKO, SON OF NIKOPOL,  
LEAVES GIANCARLO  
DONADONI AND DEMBI  
DOLO STUDIOS WITH  
SCANTY INFORMATION  
ON HIS FATHER AND  
AN ILL-FITTING JACKET  
ON HIS SHOULDERS...

BEHIND HIM, DRY AS THE DESERT AIR,  
DONADONI'S FIRST CALL OF THE DAY PIERCES  
THE BADLY INSULATED WALLS OF  
SOUNDSTAGE 2: "ACTION!"



THE HOT AIR HAS  
A SOUR SMELL  
(BETWEEN 3.5  
AND 4.5 ON  
THE DOYLE SCALE)...



...AND THE WILDLIFE HAS GREEN  
STRIPES...

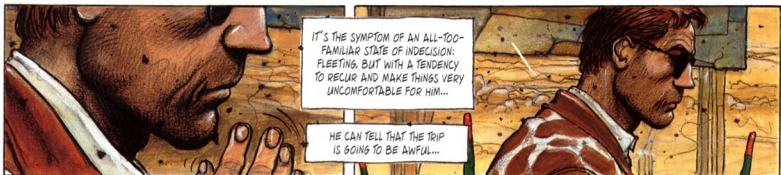
GREEN?

...ALMOST THE SAME GREEN AS  
THE TRAIN STATION OPPOSITE.



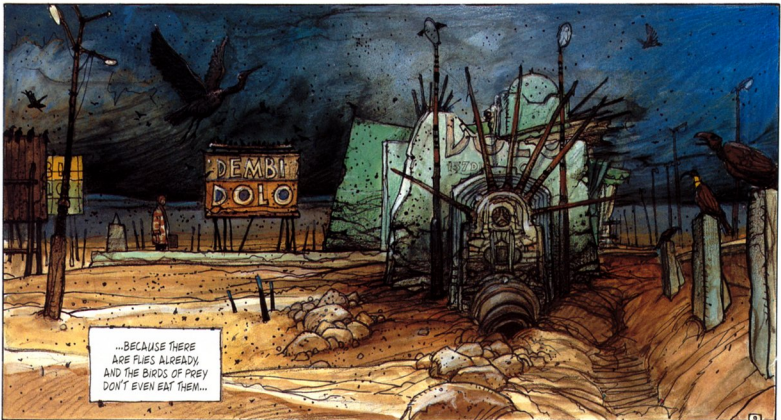
NIKO'S IDEA IS SIMPLE.  
HE'LL GET ON THE FIRST TRAIN  
TO COME. CHANCE WILL DECIDE.  
IT WILL EITHER TAKE HIM  
BACK UP NORTH, TO THE SEA,  
TO ALEXANDRIA; OR DOWN SOUTH,  
TO THE LAKE, TO THE EQUATOR.

HE HAS NO  
PREFERENCE AT ALL,  
WHICH PROFOUNDLY  
DISTURBS HIM.



IT'S THE SYMPTOM OF AN ALL-TOO-  
FAMILIAR STATE OF INDECISION:  
FLEETING, BUT WITH A TENDENCY  
TO RECUR AND MAKE THINGS VERY  
UNCOMFORTABLE FOR HIM...

HE CAN TELL THAT THE TRIP  
IS GOING TO BE AWFUL...



...BECAUSE THERE  
ARE FLIES ALREADY,  
AND THE BIRDS OF PREY  
DON'T EVEN EAT THEM...



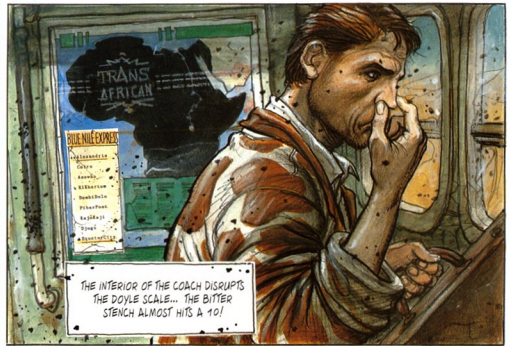
AFTER AN INEVITABLE PERIOD OF WAITING, THERE IS NOTHING TO REPORT... EXCEPT PERHAPS THE PASSAGE OF A TAXI-PLANE AT LOW ALTITUDE, TRAILED AT A SEVEN-MINUTE INTERVAL BY TWO OTHER PLANES.... "DEFINITELY NOT TAXIS, THOSE ONES" JUDGES NIKO. "MORE LIKE ETHIOPIAN PIRATES."



ANOTHER JUST AS INEVITABLE PERIOD LATER, AS THE SKY OMINOUSLY DARKENS (WELL ABOVE 7 ON THE RANDALL SCALE!), THE TRAIN ARRIVES... OR RATHER, THE TRAINS ARRIVE... BECAUSE IT'S DOWN TO THE WIRE, A PHOTO-FINISH WORTHY OF AN OLYMPIC 100-METER DASH...



THE SOUTH-BOUND WINS... SOUTH!  
THE EQUATOR IT IS!



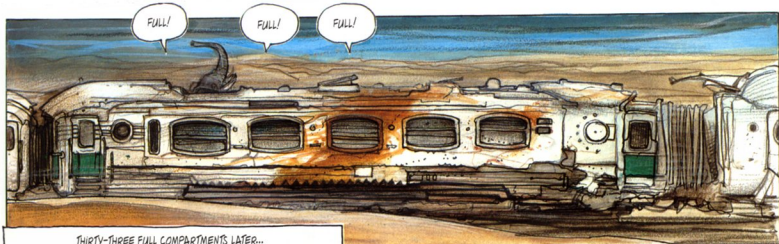
THE INTERIOR OF THE COACH DISRUPTS THE DOYLE SCALE... THE BITTER STENCH ALMOST HITS A 10!



FULL...



FULL...



FULL!

FULL!

FULL!

THIRTY-THREE FULL COMPARTMENTS LATER...



HELLO!



HELLO!



MAY I?

IF YOU DARE...



I WOULD DARE ANYTHING...



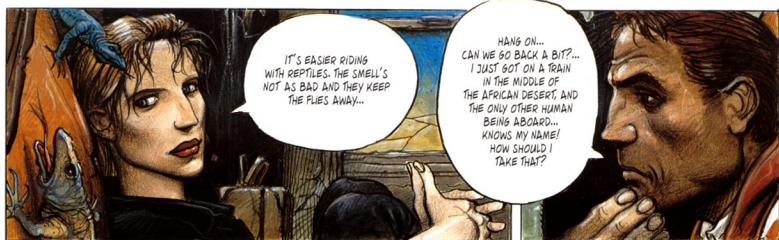
...IF IT MEANS SITTING ACROSS FROM YOU.



MY NAME IS NI-

I KNOW: NIKOPOL. I'M YELENA PROKOSH-TOOTOBI. CALL ME YELENA. I'LL CALL YOU NIKO.

?!



IT'S EASIER RIDING  
WITH REPTILES. THE SMELL'S  
NOT AS BAD AND THEY KEEP  
THE FLIES AWAY...

HANG ON...  
CAN WE GO BACK A BIT?...  
I JUST GOT ON A TRAIN  
IN THE MIDDLE OF  
THE AFRICAN DESERT, AND  
THE ONLY OTHER HUMAN  
BEINGS ABOARD...  
KNOWS MY NAME!  
HOW SHOULD I  
TAKE THAT?



AS JUST A SIMPLE COINCIDENCE.  
A BIT ODD, MAYBE, BUT COINCIDENCE  
ALL THE SAME. IT HAPPENS THAT I JUST  
SPENT A FEW DAYS IN PARIS AND  
YOU'RE ALL OVER  
THE AIRWAYS THERE!

WHO, ME?  
I LEFT PARIS MORE  
THAN SIX MONTHS AGO!  
I'M FINISHED WITH  
ALL THAT...  
I'M OUT OF POLITICS!



THEN THERE'S TWO  
THINGS ABOUT YOU THAT  
YOU DON'T KNOW YET.  
FIRST YOUR OLD  
GOVERNMENT HAS JUST  
BEEN OVERTHROWN  
BY THE FASCIST  
OPPOSITION...

NO  
SURPRISE  
THERE!

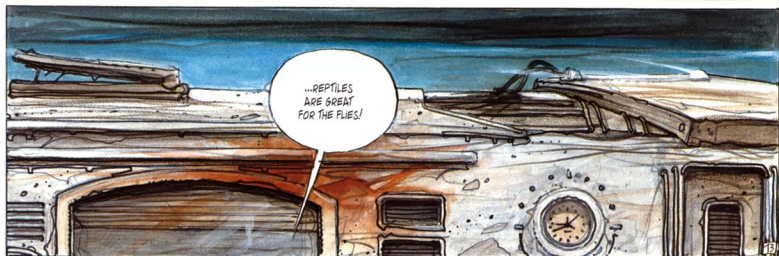
AND SECOND, YOU YOURSELF  
HAVE JUST BEEN CONDEMNED TO DEATH  
FOR MURDERING AN OLD MAN IN HIS HOSPITAL BED  
A FEW MONTHS AGO... JEAN-FERDINAND CHOUBLAIC...



THAT'S HOW  
I SAW YOUR FACE  
EVERYWHERE. TELEVISION,  
NEWSPAPERS, POSTERS...  
AT THE MOMENT  
YOU'RE A VERY  
WANTED MAN...

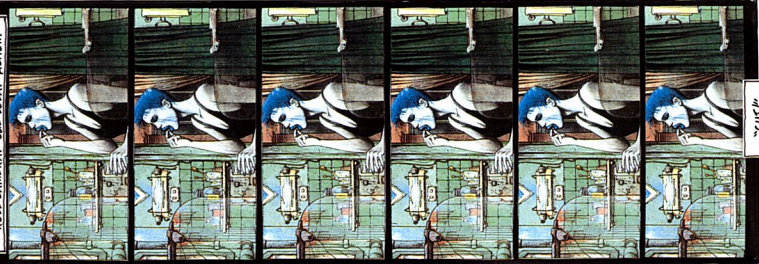


YOU'RE RIGHT...



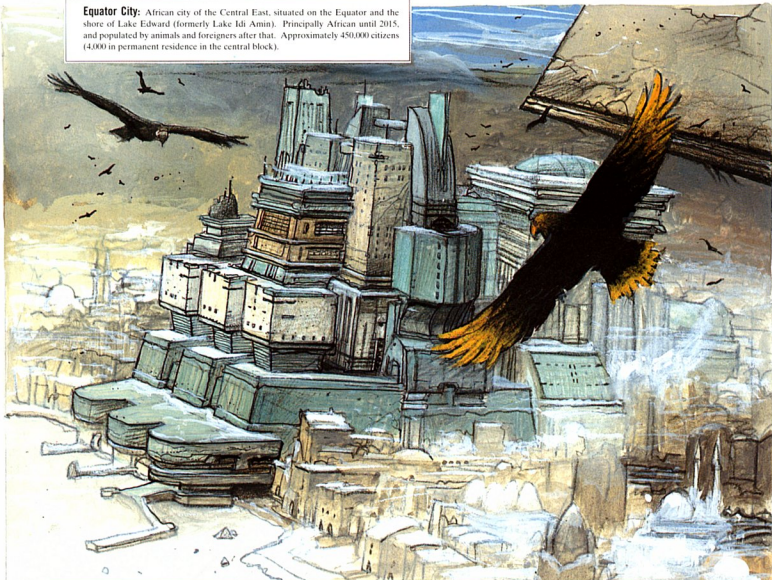
...REPTILES  
ARE GREAT  
FOR THE FLIES!

"ROLL CAMERA, CUE LOUIE ACTION!"



"CUT!"

**Equator City:** African city of the Central East, situated on the Equator and the shore of Lake Edward (formerly Lake Idi Amin). Principally African until 2015, and populated by animals and foreigners after that. Approximately 450,000 citizens (4,000 in permanent residence in the central block).



**Climate:** Unique case in the history of climatology. Since the year 2021, the temperature of the city and its immediate surroundings stays permanently at -6 degrees, the port's waters frozen for almost half a square mile. Snow blizzards frequently occur in the micro-climatic zone (due to vertical displacement, also known as "cork-popping" or "the chimney effect"). Outside the zone is a desert climate, hot to very hot (61 degrees minimum, 117 degrees maximum).

**History:** The French-German consortium of medicine and technology, DELISLE-ZULKAË, platform of humanitarian aid in Africa since the year 2002, undergoes rapid and thorough expansions until the year 2015. Vast financial contributions from new partnerships gradually enable the consortium to operate independently of international organizations, and it distances itself little by little from its original

humanitarian goals. The heart of Equator City (a central block designed by Prance Lee), was built in 2021 thanks largely to rather dubious capital from the Russo-Japanese communications group, OSSIPOV-KOGUSHI. Two years later, the addition of Ronald KAHEMBA, native of the lake region and charismatic "agent of the irrational", finally convinces the last sceptical elements of African society, and K.K.D.Z.O. (Kahemba-Kogushi-Delisle-Zulkar-Ossipov) is born. Despite a few activities sanctioned by the U.N. and the Human Rights Corporation (most notably two dams in the Himalayas, programs to eliminate disease in Africa, and a remarkably effective literacy campaign, for a total of almost 8 on the Coaseau scale), this ruthless and bloodthirsty consortium, already omnipotent at the dawn of the 30's, very quickly rises to become the farthest-reaching crime syndicate of the Southern Hemisphere.

*(to be continued)*



I DON'T LIKE IT AT ALL!

BIT OF A SURPRISE, THOUGH...

YES, RATHER...

HMM...

THE SAME PHENOMENON OCCURRED A FEW YEARS AGO IN EUROPE. THERE'S NO DANGER. IT WILL SOON PASS.

## KAHEMBA, Ronald

Theologian by education, specialist in mathematics as well as in individual thought and behavior, Ronald Kahemba is the undisputed media chief of K.K.D.Z.O. However, his involvement in the irrational world (Ndembus transience) does not grant him universal acceptance.

## KOGUSHI, Tina

Founder of Tokyo's Global Center for Industrial Invention, Tina Kogushi is renowned for her abilities both as C.E.O. and ophthalmic electrician. A dark mystery shrouds her life between the years 2013 and 2021, after which she reappears, bringing a colossal fortune to K.K.D.Z.O. Despite strong suspicions, her connections to the Sino-Japanese mafia have never been proved.

## DELISLE, Jean-Loïc

Doctor of surgery and microsurgery, Jean-Loïc Delisle dedicated the first half of his life to humankind, all the while developing a highly advanced network of clinics. His capacities in the field of medical research have always been of a questionable nature. He has not practiced surgery for many years, except upon himself, for cosmetic reasons. He conceals his age, but is said to be over a hundred years old.

## ZULKAR, Haris

AwarDED the Nobel Prize for astrotechnology in 2010, Haris Zulkar engineered an ambitious program of communications satellites for K.K.D.Z.O.'s benefit. However, immediately after the launch the consortium is expelled by the international authorities of the World Space Company, on the grounds of "gross negligence of the rudimentary laws of proper space conduct". K.K.D.Z.O.'s space program continues in flagrant violation of the law. All of Haris Zulkar's diplomas and his Nobel Prize have been retracted.

## OSSIPOV, Igor

Son of a famous integrationist Slavophile at the turn of the century, Igor Ossipov's education is varied and murky, but his intellectual capacities are exceptional. He plays a crucial role in K.K.D.Z.O.'s criminal organization.

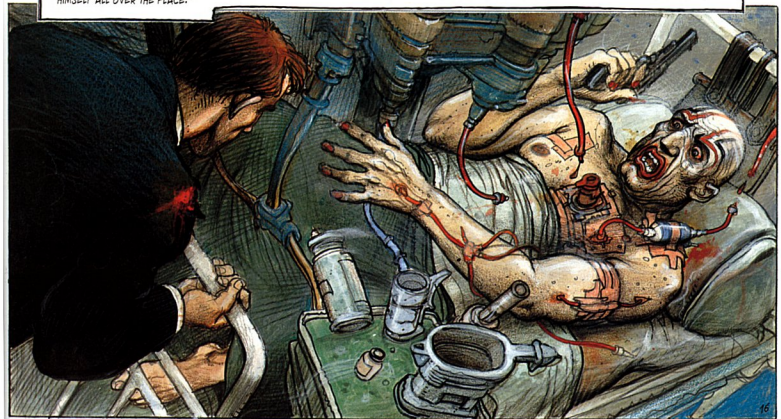


IT'S SNOWING, AND THERE ARE SUSPICIOUS FOLDS IN THE SKY...





"I BELIEVE CHOUBLANC SUMMONED ME BECAUSE HE KNEW HE WAS FINISHED... HE HAD FINALLY ACCEPTED DEATH... BUT NIKOPOL SURVIVING HIM AS THE HEAD OF ALL PARIS? THAT HE COULD NOT ACCEPT. SO AS SOON AS I ARRIVED, HE TOOK A PISTOL FROM UNDER HIS BEDCLOTHES... HE WAS WEARING THE SAME MAKE-UP AS HE HAD IN HIS DAYS OF GLORY... HE STARTED CRYING, AND INSULTING ME... THEN SHOOTING... FIRST INTO THE AIR, THEN AT ME. HE HIT MY RIGHT SHOULDER, SO I TIPPED HIM OUT OF HIS BED. HE DIED AFTER A FEW SECONDS ON THE FLOOR, DISCONNECTED FROM HIS TUBES, SPILLING HIMSELF ALL OVER THE PLACE!"



"IT'S WEIRD. THAT GUY COULD  
MAKE ME LAUGH RIGHT  
TO THE VERY END!"



—WHAT ABOUT THIS PHOTO  
THEY'RE SHOWING  
EVERYWHERE? DOES IT  
MAKE YOU LAUGH TOO?

—THAT "PHOTO" IS A CLUMSYLY  
RETOUCHED VIDEO STILL—  
LOOK AT CHOUBLANC'S  
RIGHT HAND. HE WAS  
HOLDING A PISTOL IN IT, AND  
NOW HE ISN'T... THOSE IDIOTS  
DON'T EMBARRASS ANYONE  
BUT THEMSELVES...

# SHOCKING!



## NIKOPOL ASSASSINATES CHOUBLANC

The evidence in black and white.

...AND THERE'S NO SHORTAGE  
OF IDIOTS, IN PARIS  
OR ANYWHERE ELSE.



HOW SHOULD  
I TAKE THAT?

AS JUST A SIMPLE  
STATEMENT. YOU DON'T  
LOOK LIKE THE TYPE WHO  
USUALLY GETS TAKEN  
ADVANTAGE OF

IN THAT CASE  
I'LL REASSURE YOU TOO:  
YOU DON'T LOOK LIKE  
THE TYPE WHO USUALLY  
ASSASSINATES  
PEOPLE.



GREAT!  
NOW WE'RE  
ALMOST EVEN...

ALMOST?

YOU KNOW ALL  
ABOUT ME, BUT  
I DON'T KNOW ANYTHING  
ABOUT YOU...

AT THAT PRECISE MOMENT THE BLUE NILE EXPRESS PASSES MBARARA, THE OLDEST ELEPHANT IN THE WORLD.



YELENA PROKOSH-YOTOBI WAS BORN IN TRIESTE, IN 2007 OF PARENTS SHE SAYS NOTHING ABOUT. SHE STUDIES GENETICS IN LYON, MARRIES, GETS A DIVORCE, HAS BEAUTIFUL CINDER-BLUE EYES, THINKS NIKO, RESUMES HER STUDIES IN VANCOUVER, AND EARNS TWO DEGREES WITH FAIR TO GOOD GRADES. HER LITTLE SMILE THAT MELTS INTO A BIG GRIN IS ALSO DEVASTATING, AND SHE TRAINS AT PRIVATE CENTERS IN BOSTON AND LAS VEGAS FOR TWO YEARS BEFORE RETURNING TO EUROPE. WITH HER NOSE SLIGHTLY BENT FROM A BRAWL IN MARSEILLES, WHICH IN NIKO'S VIEW JUST ADDS TO HER CHARM, SHE SPECIALIZES IN ABNORMAL GENETICS AND HEREDITARY ANOMALIES OF WHICH THERE IS NO SHORTAGE THESE DAYS. SHE IS EN ROUTE TO EQUATOR CITY, WHERE AN INTERESTING CASE AWAITS HER AS FOR NIKO, HE IS ALREADY IN LOVE.



AN INTERESTING CASE?

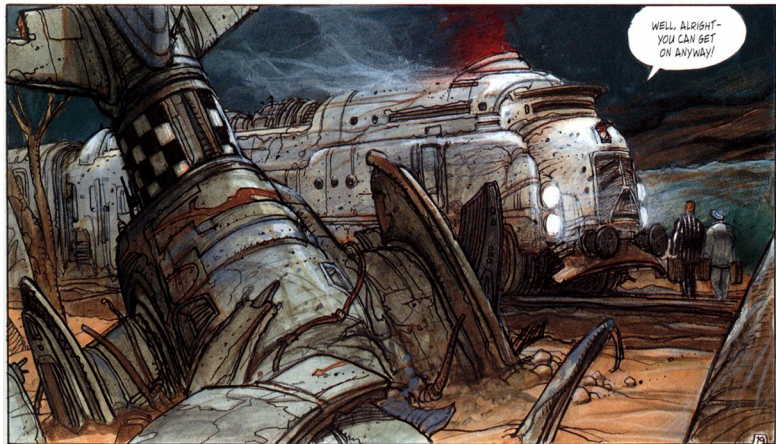
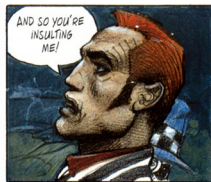
YES, VERY!



THE SUDDEN DECELERATION IS IN THE ORDER OF R3 ON THE STEINER SCALE...



AND YELENA FALLS RIGHT INTO NIKO'S ARMS.





ALLOW ME  
TO INTRODUCE MYSELF  
I AM JOHN-EL...



I KNOW, JOHN-ELVIS  
JOHNELVISSON.  
I RECOGNIZED YOU.

NIKO ALREADY DISLIKES THIS MAN.



HE DOESN'T LIKE  
IVO KOHL MUCH  
EITHER. HENCHMAN  
WITH THE FACE  
OF CEMENT.

INTELLIGENT, BRILLIANT, BUT A LITTLE TOO TALKATIVE, JOHNELVISSON IS THE CHAMPION OF THE NORTHERN HEMISPHERE IN ALL CATEGORIES OF CHESS-BOXING ENDORSED BY THE C.B.A. (CHESS-BOXING ASSOCIATION). HE IS NEAR THE TOP OF BOTH THE OLD KASPAROV-TYSON SCALE AND THE NEWER BIGGS-ISAQ. HE'S DEFENDING HIS TITLE AT A MATCH IN EQUATOR CITY. IT GOES WITHOUT SAYING THAT HE'S A MILLIONAIRE; HIS THOUGHTS ARE QUICK AND BRUTAL, HIS BLOWS EQUALLY SO.

YELENA LISTENS, CAPTIVATED...  
"WHAT A WASTE," THINKS NIKO.



CHEERS!

AND USES THE OPPORTUNITY TO MAKE SOME NEW FRIENDS AT THE BAR.



...AND NIKO HATES HIM-  
SELF ONCE MORE.



THE SKY ABOVE EQUATOR CITY IS LIKE THE INSIDE OF HIS HEAD:  
FULL OF SUSPICIOUS FOLDS AND SINISTER PRECIPITATION...



HE TAKES A DEEP  
BREATH...



AND WHEN YELENA SPEAKS HE SAYS THE  
FIRST THING THAT COMES TO HIS HEAD.

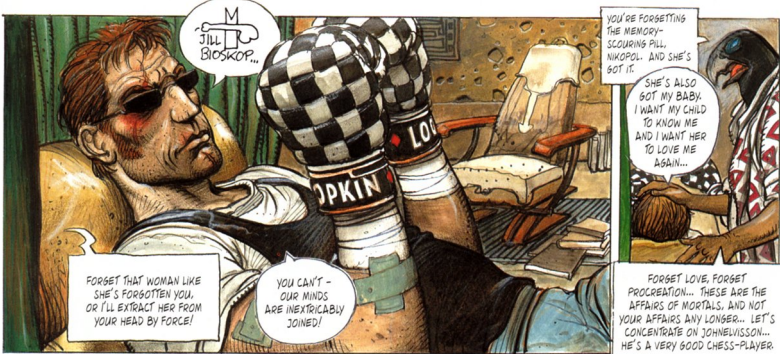
HAD A BIT  
TOO MUCH?

IT'S  
THE PYRAMID...



WHY -  
WHAT DOES  
THE PYRAMID  
DO TO YOU?





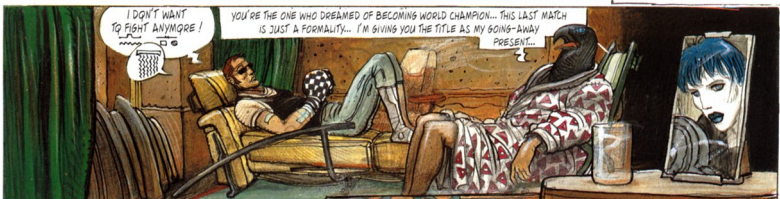
FORGET THAT WOMAN LIKE SHE'S FORGOTTEN YOU, OR I'LL EXTRACT HER FROM YOUR HEAD BY FORCE!

YOU CAN'T - OUR MINDS ARE INEXTRICABLY JOINED!

YOU'RE FORGETTING THE MEMORY-SCOURING PILL, NIKOPOL. AND SHE'S GOT IT.

SHE'S ALSO GOT MY BABY. I WANT MY CHILD TO KNOW ME AND I WANT HER TO LOVE ME AGAIN...

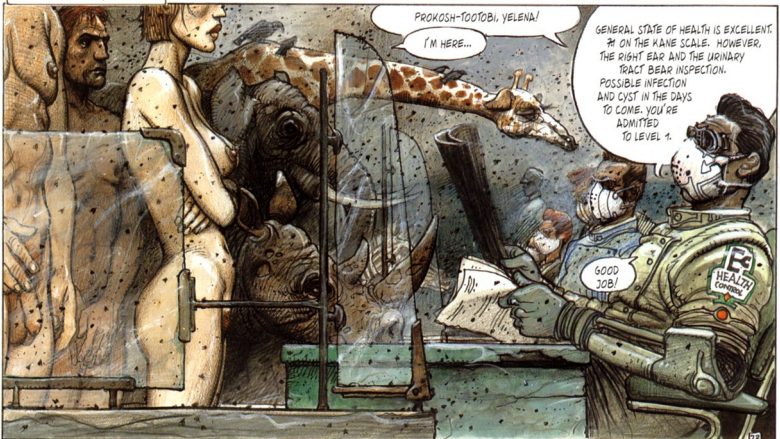
FORGET LOVE, FORGET PROCREATION... THESE ARE THE AFFAIRS OF MORTALS, AND NOT YOUR AFFAIRS ANY LONGER... LET'S CONCENTRATE ON JOHNELVISSON... HE'S A VERY GOOD CHESS-PLAYER.



I DON'T WANT TO FIGHT ANYMORE!

YOU'RE THE ONE WHO DREAMED OF BECOMING WORLD CHAMPION... THIS LAST MATCH IS JUST A FORMALITY... I'M GIVING YOU THE TITLE AS MY GOING-AWAY PRESENT...

AT THAT MOMENT NIKO FINDS YELENA BEAUTIFUL, NAKED IN THE DAMPNESS, SURROUNDED BY FLIES... HE DOESN'T DARE LOOK AT HER ANYMORE...



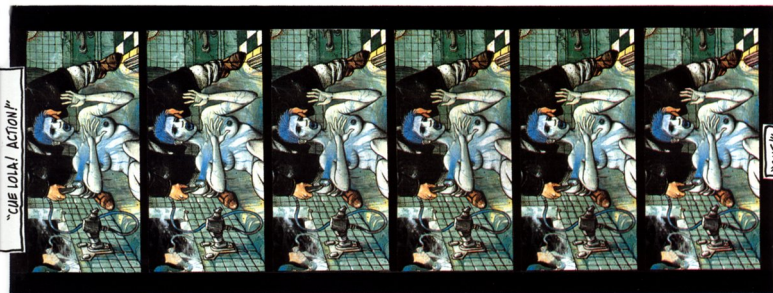
PROKOSH-TOOTBI, YELENA!

I'M HERE...

GENERAL STATE OF HEALTH IS EXCELLENT. #1 ON THE KANE SCALE. HOWEVER, THE RIGHT EAR AND URINARY TRACT BEAR INSPECTION. POSSIBLE INFECTION AND CYST IN THE DAYS TO COME. YOU'RE ADMITTED TO LEVEL 1.

GOOD JOB!





## STATUS REPORT

SEPTEMBER 2034

K.K.D.Z.O.'s  
Accomplishments in  
the Southern Hemisphere

### RANGOON

Anti-viral microsurgery center  
(so-called "microscopic killer  
robot" techniques).

### CALCUTTA

"Abortive microchips" into  
public domain (Indopakistanese  
government order).

### DAR ES SALAAM

Inauguration of information  
centers on "automedication".

### MOMBASA

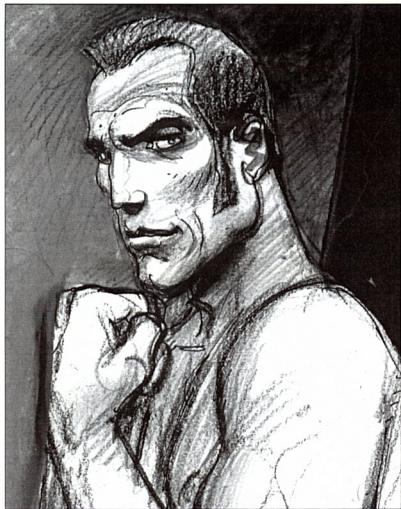
Large-scale decontamination  
operations.



# K.K.D.Z.O.'S REPLY TO THE U.N.

Harshly graded on the U.N.'s humanitarian scale, primarily for alleged deviations from the international standard, the K.K.D.Z.O. consortium has now created its own grading scale which will send the obsolete pretender of world unification back to its precious research committees! A new way of judging the world is born!

The new K.K.D.Z.O. judgment on any noteworthy global event. As an example, K.K.D.Z.O. rated the worldwide efforts of the U.N. over the last ten years as an abysmal 4.2 on a scale of 1 to 10. This new scale represents, without a doubt, an important step towards the creation of a new world order. K.K.D.Z.O. could be the driving force behind it.



John-Elvis Johnelvisson: 10 out of 10?

# JOHN-ELVIS JOHNELVISSON IN EQUATOR CITY

John-Elvis Johnelvisson, one of the most fully-rounded men in the Northern Hemisphere (superlative levels on all scales) was received by Ronald KAHEMBA and Igor OSSIPOV upon his arrival at K.K.D.Z.O. Palace. After performing an a capella rendition of a rock song (his own lyrics), he announced during a brief press conference: "I'm in top shape! An 8 or a 9 at least!" and that "with this Chess-Boxing World Title, I should be approaching a 10 on the scale of all scales of the mind and body!" His opponent, the very withdrawn and mysterious Loopkin, was once again conspicuous in his absence.

# K.K.D.Z.O. NOAH'S ARK SOON IN ORBIT!

This young giraffe and baby hippopotamus will be the stars of the satellite "K.K.-D.Z.O. NOAH'S ARK", to be launched within the next few days. This satellite, entirely conceived by Haris ZULKAR and Ronald KAHEMBA, will test new hibernation techniques.



康  
威  
崑  
瀚  
涸  
木

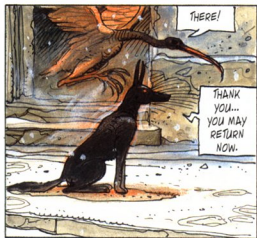
THAT NIGHT ANUBIS AND THOTH DRIFT DOWN TOWARDS EQUATOR CITY, LIKE THE SNOWFLAKES AROUND THEM.



LET ME DOWN THERE...



**VLOUFFF**



THERE!

THANK YOU... YOU MAY RETURN NOW.

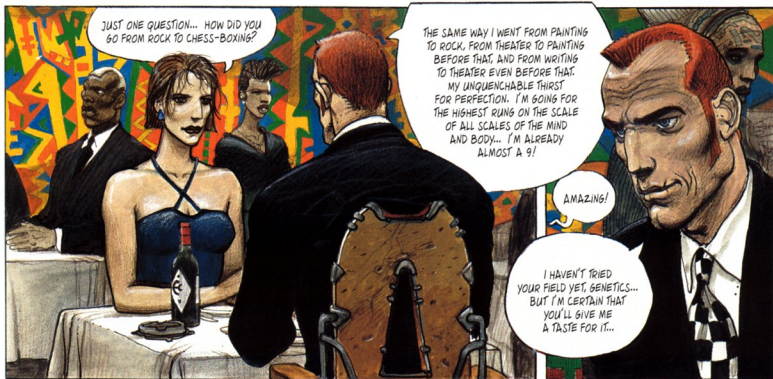
AT THE SAME TIME, NOT FAR AWAY, NIKO ISN'T FEELING HUNGRY. NIKO IS REFUSING THE PRESCRIBED TREATMENT, NIKO IS THINKING OF YELENA, NIKO IS FEELING WORRIED... HE FEELS CONFUSED AND TRAPPED AND SPIED UPON...

IN HIS ROOM, ON THE WALL BEHIND HIM, A PIECE OF GRAFFITI WATCHES HIM...

A PIECE OF GRAFFITI WITH BLUE HAIR, BLUE NIPPLES, BLUE PUBIC HAIR... AND WHITE SKIN...

IS HE ON THE RIGHT TRACK? JILL BIOSKOP... HIS FATHER... THE WHOLE THING...

BUT WHAT DOES ANY OF THAT MATTER NOW? IT'S YELENA HE'S THINKING ABOUT... YELENA!



JUST ONE QUESTION... HOW DID YOU GO FROM ROCK TO CHESS-BOXING?

THE SAME WAY I WENT FROM PAINTING TO ROCK, FROM THEATER TO PAINTING BEFORE THAT, AND FROM WRITING TO THEATER EVEN BEFORE THAT. MY UNQUENCHABLE THIRST FOR PERFECTION. I'M GOING FOR THE HIGHEST RUNG ON THE SCALE OF ALL SCALES OF THE MIND AND BODY... I'M ALREADY ALMOST A 9!

AMAZING!

I HAVEN'T TRIED YOUR FIELD YET, GENETICS... BUT I'M CERTAIN THAT YOU'LL GIVE ME A TASTE FOR IT...



I DON'T KNOW... YOU HAVE TO BE PATIENT, AND HUMBLE... FOR EXAMPLE, I DON'T EVEN KNOW IF I'M GOING TO FIND WHAT I'M LOOKING FOR HERE...



AND WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING FOR?

THAT'S JUST IT, I DON'T KNOW... THEY TOLD ME ABOUT AN INCIDENT THAT WAS HUSHED UP A FEW YEARS AGO... AN EXTREMELY ABNORMAL BIRTH, BUT IT'S ALL VERY MURKY... NOT MUCH MATERIAL TO CLIMB SCALES WITH, I'M AFRAID.



THELMA BRIDGES, HEAD NURSE, SURROGATE MOTHER TO MANY. SHE CAN REMEMBER ANYTHING, EXCEPT WHAT SHE HASN'T SEEN, AND EVEN THAT SHE CAN EASILY IMAGINE WITH THE HELP OF HER 'PROFOUND ARTISTIC SENSE'.

HER STORY, MORE OR LESS: "IT HAPPENED SEVEN YEARS AGO... JILL BIOSKOP WAS GIVING BIRTH TO SOMETHING... 'NOT QUITE NATURAL'. ALL THE SPECIALISTS CAME RUNNING, CROWDING BETWEEN HER THIGHS TO REMOVE 'THE SPECIMEN', AND THEY DID!" "THAT'S WHEN YOU WENT CRAZY. YOU BROKE DOWN THE DOORS AND KILLED EVERYONE IN THE WING. NO WITNESSES! YOUR EYES WERE BRIMMING FIRE... YOU SEIZED JILL BIOSKOP AND HER BLOOD-SOAKED CREATURE WRAPPED UP IN A SHEET, AND DISAPPEARED..."



"BUT OF COURSE," IS THELMA BRIDGES' REPLY.





DO YOU HEAR HIS INHUMAN CRY?  
IT'S ANUBIS, IN HIS JACKAL  
FORM... HE WANTS TO TALK...

I'M HAVING A HARD TIME READING...  
I GET MY LETTERS MIXED-UP 'O'S  
WITH 'O'S, AND S'S WITH Z'S TOGG...  
I MIZUNDERSTAND WORDZ  
AND LOZE THEIR MEANINGZ....



HORUZ! I WANT IT OVER BETWEEN UZ!  
LET'Z ZPLIT UP!

TRUE. THE TIME HAS COME.  
I MUST MAKE A DECISION...  
TONIGHT, NIKOPOL, TONIGHT...

IF HE WOULD ONLY STOP  
HOWLING... I CANNOT  
BEAR IT...

I WANT TO LIVE KNOWING  
THAT I'M GOING TO DIE!  
I WANT TO LOVE AND BE  
LOVED. I DON'T WANT  
TO KEEP SUFFERING  
FROM THE HEAT IN MINUZ  
TWENTY DEGREEZ UNDER  
THE SNOW! I WANT  
TO FIND JILL BIGZKOP  
AND MY CHILD!  
I WANT JILL!

JILL, LILL,  
LIJJ?



MANY CRIES AND THEIR DISTURBING ECHOES SOUNDED THAT NIGHT OVER EQUATOR CITY. THE SNOW FELL THICKER, AND THE TEMPERATURE DROPPED LOWER (-56 ON THE DANIEL FAHRENHEIT SCALE). THERE WERE ALSO MORE CRACKS IN THE SKY THAN USUAL (FROM 6.6 UP TO 70) AND SOME NEW THREATENING FOLDS (FROM SUSPICIOUS TO VERY SUSPICIOUS)... RONALD MAHEMBA, AGENT OF THE IRRATIONAL, WAS FORCED TO CALL UPON VIDYE MUKULU, SUPREME SKY-BEING, IN HOPES OF CALMING THE TEMPEST... ALL IN VAIN. HE SPENT THE NIGHT UNCOMFORTABLY, TOSSED BETWEEN FOLDS AND CREVASSES...

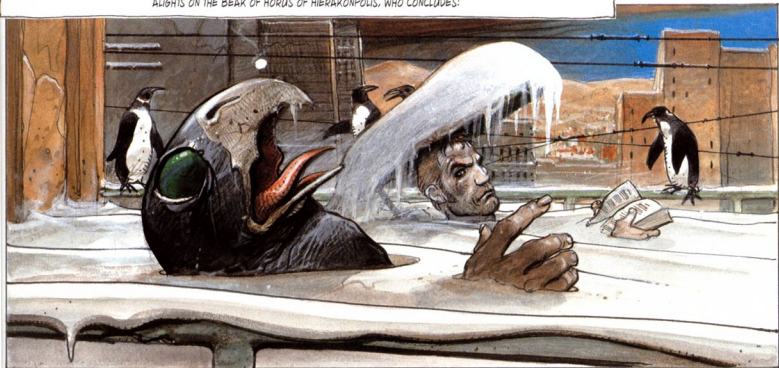
IT IS SAID THAT THE INVISIBLE DIALOGUE BETWEEN HORUS AND ANUBIS TOOK PLACE IN DIVINE VIOLENCE. MORE THAN ONCE, THE UNFORTUNATE NIKOPOL'S SKULL CAME CLOSE TO SPLITTING...

AS FOR THE REST, WE FIND THAT YELENA PROKOSH-TOOTBI WAS COLD, ALONE IN HER BED, AND THAT NIKO SUFFERED TERRIBLE NIGHTMARES IN HIS... OBSCENE NIGHTMARES, PAINTED BY THE HAND OF THELMA BRIDGES... EVEN GIANCARLO DONADONI, IN DEMBI DOLO, DIDN'T SHUT HIS EYES ALL NIGHT.





THE NEXT DAY, HOWEVER, SUNRISE COMES RIGHT ON TIME. TO MARK THE END OF A LONG CONVERSATION, A SINGLE PROWLFLAKE ALIGHTS ON THE BEAK OF HORUS OF HIERAKONPOLIS, WHO CONCLUDES:



"YOU SEE, NIKOPOL... THANKS TO YOU I HAVE KNOWN MANY THINGS OF EARTH AND THE PEOPLE UPON IT... FOR ME ELEVEN YEARS IS LIKE THE BLINK OF AN EYE, BUT I WILL ALWAYS REMEMBER THE SMELLS, SOUNDS, AND SENSATIONS I SHARED WITH YOU... EVEN IF I DIDN'T UNDERSTAND LOVE ALL TOO WELL... BELIEVE ME, YOU'VE BEEN A GOOD HOST... WE ROAMED THIS PLANET FAR AND WIDE, LONG AND HARD... FAR TOO HARD... AND YOU KNOW THAT I'VE SEEN ENOUGH TO MAKE ANY NORMAL GOD PISS HIS PANTS. YOU HUMANS ARE UTTERLY INEPPURED TO RUN THIS WORLD. EVERYTHING YOU TOUCH ROTTS AWAY... I WANTED TO MAKE PEACE WITH HUMANS, BUT THEY'RE TOO SMALL-MINDED... THEY WILL NEVER BE RID OF THEIR UNCHECKED PATRIOTISM, THEIR STUBBORN FAITH, THEIR INEPTITUDE FOR POWER AND THEIR CHRONOLOGICAL LIMITATIONS... FOR YOUR LIFESPAN IS YOUR WEAKEST POINT... YOU DON'T LIVE LONG ENOUGH TO RETAIN OR

EVEN REALIZE THE VALUE OF WHAT'S REALLY IMPORTANT... AH, WELL! WE, THE GODS, HAVE MADE YOU BADLY. A TERRIBLE THING TO ADMIT, BUT ADMIT IT I MUST. NOW, LISTEN CAREFULLY, NIKOPOL. I'M GOING TO LEAVE YOU WITH THE POWERS YOU NEED... YOU WILL BREATHE AT HALF YOUR RATE; LITTLE BY LITTLE, YOU WILL DO EVERYTHING AT HALF YOUR RATE. AND THEN EVEN SLOWER THAN THAT. YOUR HEART WILL MARK ONE BEAT EVERY TWO MINUTES. I DON'T KNOW WHAT SORT OF MAN THIS SLOWED EXISTENCE WILL MAKE YOU, BUT IT IS TIME THAT WE GO OUR SEPARATE WAYS. MY REBELLION COMES TO ITS END, AND I PREPARE MYSELF TO FACE THE JUDGMENT OF MY OWN KIND. AT BEST I WILL BE SENTENCED TO A FEW FRACTIONS OF ETERNITY, BUT ABOVE ALL: HARMONY MUST BE RESTORED FROM CHAOS. WE MUST REENTER THE 'NUN', IN SHORT REPLACE HUMANKIND WITH SOMETHING BETTER. ORDER, NIKOPOL! DO YOU UNDERSTAND? A PERFECT AND BALANCED ORDER FOR WHICH I WILL PROVIDE THE INSPIRATION!"

"QBQBE? I PONT GIVE A CBAD ARGUT QBQBE! I'M GOING TO JIVE, JQVE, ANP PIE IN COMDJETE ANP UTTEB CHAQZ!" \*

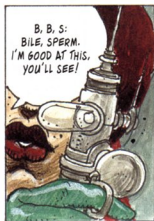
\* IN ADDITION TO MIXING HIS O'S AND Q'S, S'S AND Z'S, J'S AND I'S, NIKOPOL IS ALSO CONFUSING HIS B'S AND R'S, AND HIS P'S AND D'S.



"IT'S DECIDED! TOMORROW NIGHT I GIVE YOU THE TITLE, AND THEN I TAKE MY LEAVE... YOU WILL BE MASTER OF YOUR FATE AGAIN, AND IMMORTAL AS WELL. I'LL MAKE YOU FORGET ME, FORGET YOUR PAST, AND FORGET JILL BIOSKOR."

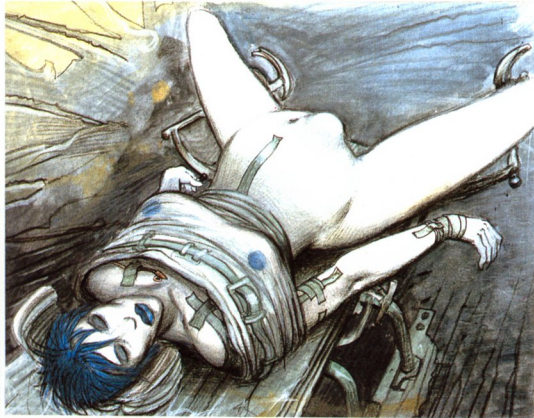
"TO FORGET UJJI, I'P HAVE TO FORGET MYZEJ!"

"THEN I'LL MAKE YOU FORGET YOURSELF TOO!"



-DON'T YOU HAVE THE MEDICAL FILE, PROFESSOR?

-NO... EVERYTHING WAS DESTROYED.



...NOTHING REMAINS EXCEPT THESE FAIRLY COMMONPLACE PHOTOS... TAKEN JUST BEFORE THE DELIVERY... BEFORE THE EVENT...

-WHAT ABOUT WITNESSES? ALL DEAD?

-ALL OF THEM. EXCEPT A NURSE DOWN IN LEVEL MINUS 1... A CERTAIN THELMA BRIDGES... NOT VERY RELIABLE IF YOU ASK ME...

-I'LL TRY HER ANYWAY... THANKS FOR EVERYTHING.

-GOOD LUCK... BUT EVEN WITH THAT BULGE I DON'T THINK WE'RE DEALING WITH ONE OF THE MORE INTERESTING GENETIC ANOMALIES. I PUT IT AT LESS THAN 5' ON THE KHALED SCALE... NOWADAYS WE DON'T EVEN LOOK AT ANYTHING BELOW 8 OR 8 1/2!



...AND WHAT ABOUT ON THE BULLSHIT SCALE?



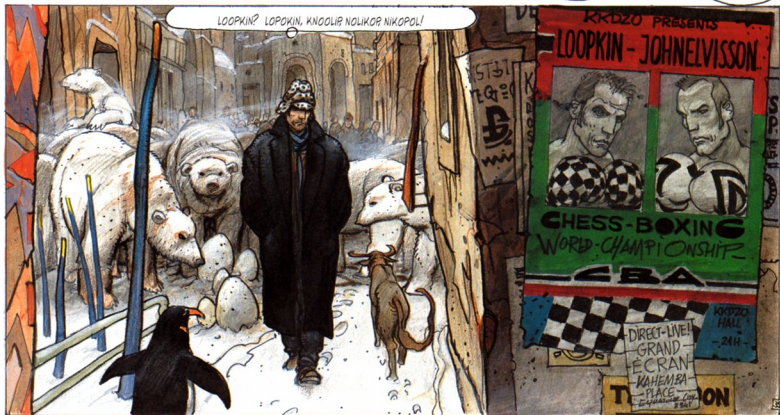
I'D LIKE TO SEE MISS THELMA BRIDGES...

ARE YOU WITH THE FAMILY?

NO, WHY?



MISS BRIDGES HAD A BIT OF AN ACCIDENT.



"NIKO'S GONE CRAZY!" THINKS YELENA, WATCHING NIKOLOP'S ANAGRAM IN THE RING.



THE NUMBERS APPROACH THE TOPS OF THE SCALES: 9.7 ON THE BIGGS (VIOLENCE); 9.4 ON THE SERBO-CROAT (HATE); 8.8 ON THE PRELJOCAJ (LEGSWORK); 8.3 ON THE POPPI (TACTICS) AND 9.1 ON THE SISINGA-MANSARAJA (STYLE).



ARE YOU WELL, NIKOLOP?

NOT AT ALL!



GO JOHN-ELVIS!

GO NIKO!



I SMELL SOMETHING INHUMAN ON THIS LOOPKIN...

I SMELL BLOOD... IT STINKS!



GO, DAD!

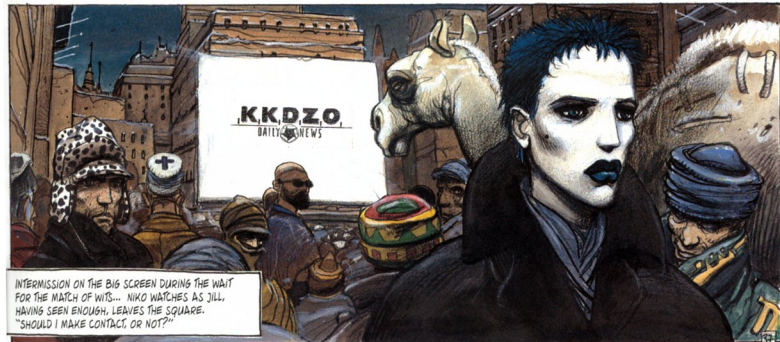


?

HEY!?



BLUE HAIR?

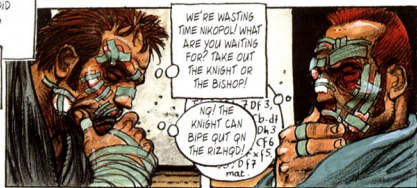




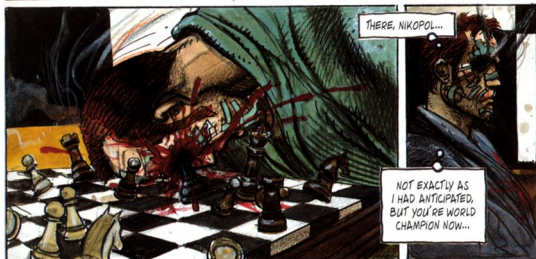
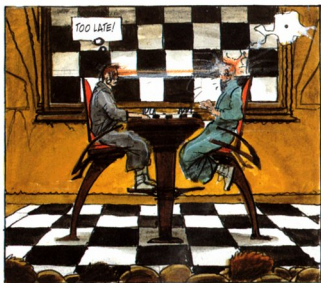


SO NIKO WILL NEVER FIND OUT ABOUT THE CHILD... HE'S CERTAIN HE WILL NEVER SEE JILL BIOSKOP AGAIN... THE IMAGE OF HER IN HIS HEAD HAS FADED JUST AS SHE DID INTO THE DARKNESS OF THE STAIRWELL... AND THE OBSSIVE PICTURE OF YELENA RISES ONCE AGAIN TO THE SURFACE... "YELENA!"

BUT THE IMAGE OF HIS FATHER ON THE SCREEN IS EVEN CLEARER (4250 LINES ON THE K.K.D.Z.O. FLAT-SCREEN TV!)







## KAHEMBA SUSPICIOUS!

Ronald KAHEMBA came forward against the Chess-Boxing Association's decision to validate Loopkin's dubious victory over Johnnelvisson. Professor Jean-Loïc DELISLE himself will perform the autopsy on the talented but unfortunate champion.

### IVO KOHL: DEATH BY CEMENT SICKNESS

Ivo Kohl, John-Elvis Johnnelvisson's chess advisor, succumbed to a deadly fit of "Cement Sickness" at the end of the match between his protégé and the very withdrawn and mysterious Loopkin.

The autopsy of the concrete remains of Ivo Kohl will be performed by Professor Jean-Loïc DELISLE himself, who has worked for many years on treating this exceedingly rare malady.

Face fragments of Ivo Kohl (upper lip, cheek, nose).  
In the background, J. Johnnelvisson's corpse awaits autopsy.



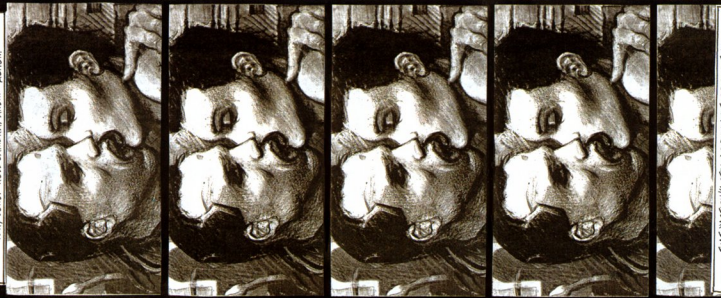
*"I believe that Johnnelvisson died approximately one and thirty-two hundredths of a second before his left eye was impaled on the Black Queen," declares the Professor. "It's this first death, the more suspicious one, that interests me."*

### EQUATOR CITY AWAIT'S NKONO JR.



The Ndembusi irrationalist K. N. Nkono Jr. is expected today in Equator City, according to a reliable source. The precipitated arrival of this specialist of reincarnation, possession, and black magic, at Ronald KAHEMBA's request, is apparently linked to Johnnelvisson's death and certain "suspicious behavior" of Loopkin's.

"OHAY! ENOUGH! WE'LL ENOUGH IT IN BLACK AND WHITE!  
LOAH! BO, HEDDY! FOR THE BIG KISS?... MAKE IT LONG -  
VERY LONG! ROLL CAMERA, AND... ACTION!"



...STILL AS DRY AS THE DESERT AIR,  
WILL BE GIANCARLO DONADONI'S LAST COMMAND.  
THE CALL TO "CUT!" NEVER COMES.



YES. I GOT  
YOUR NIGHTMARE,  
GOSOL... ARE YOU  
SURE OF WHAT  
YOU SAW?

POSITIVE!  
HE FELL IN THE MIDDLE  
OF A TAKE... HEART  
ATTACK, DEAD IN AN  
INSTANT.



POOR  
DONADONI...

WE MUST GO BACK  
TO DEMBI DOLO... DID  
HE FINISH HIS FILM,  
AT LEAST?

NO!



AND NIKOPOL?  
WHAT DO I DO  
ABOUT NIKOPOL?



ERASE?

ERASE!

YES,  
ERASE!



WITHIN A COLORLESS LIGHTNING FLASH, THERE IS A SLOW AERIAL DANCE...

"INCREDIBLE!"



VERY SURPRISING INDEED, MASTER KAHENBA...  
EGYPTIAN GODS... AND NOT MINOR ONES  
EITHER.

THIS IS AT THE TOP  
OF ALL THE SCALES  
OF THE IRRATIONAL.  
EVEN MINE...



WHAT DO YOU  
ADVISE?

ABOVE ALL, DON'T CONFRONT THEM DIRECTLY...  
WE ARE NOT POWERFUL  
ENOUGH.



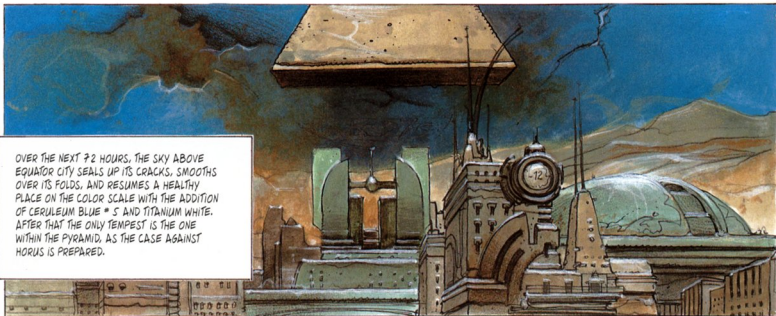
WHAT ABOUT  
THE HUMAN DOWN  
THERE, LOOPKIN?

THAT'S A DIFFERENT STORY... AN IMMORTAL  
IN THIS CITY WOULD BE LIKE A VIRUS IN  
A HEALTHY ORGAN... YOU CAN'T ELIMINATE  
HIM, SO YOU'LL HAVE TO TAKE HIM  
AWAY, ISOLATE HIM... I SEE TWO  
SOLUTIONS: EITHER BURY HIM  
DEEP UNDERGROUND OR SHOOT  
HIM HIGH INTO THE AIR... AND  
AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE!

DON'T YOU HAVE A  
SATELLITE LAUNCH  
COMING UP?  
YES!



OVER THE NEXT 72 HOURS, THE SKY ABOVE EQUATOR CITY SEALS UP ITS CRACKS, SMOOTHS OVER ITS FOLDS, AND RESUMES A HEALTHY PLACE ON THE COLOR SCALE WITH THE ADDITION OF CERULEUM BLUE \* 5 AND TITANIUM WHITE. AFTER THAT THE ONLY TEMPEST IS THE ONE WITHIN THE PYRAMID, AS THE CASE AGAINST HORUS IS PREPARED.



OKAY... YOU DON'T REMEMBER ANYTHING, YOU DON'T TALK, YOU DON'T EAT OR SLEEP YOU HARDLY BREATHE, YOUR HEART BEATS WHEN IT FEELS LIKE IT, AND YOU HAVEN'T GROWN EVEN ONE SECOND OLDER! CAN YOU EVEN THINK?

I AM REBUILDING MYSELF!

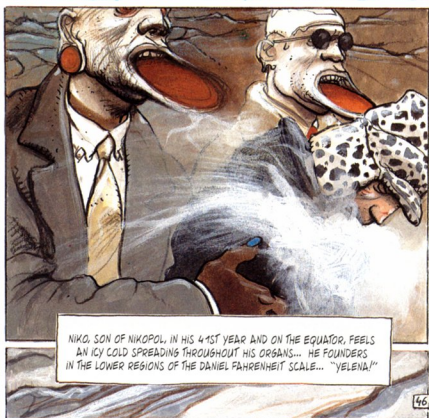


GOOD IDEA! WE'LL BOTH REBUILD OURSELVES, EACH IN HIS OWN WAY... AS FOR ME I'M GOING TO START WITH A WOMAN, AND LOVE... YOU SHOULD THINK ABOUT IT TOO... IT WOULDN'T DO YOU ANY HARM...

SEE YOU!



NIKO GOES FROM HOTEL TO HOTEL SEEKING YELENA, FRESH AND CONFIDENT. THE LAST FEW DAYS' EVENTS, HIS FATHER, AND THE BRIEF TRANSIT OF ANUBIS THROUGH HIS BODY ALL BLUR INTO AN ABSTRACT SATISFACTION. EVEN THE SIGHT OF THE PYRAMID, UP IN THE BLUE SKY, MAKES HIM SMILE...





BES WILL READ THE 999 PRINCIPAL ACCUSATIONS AGAINST YOU, O HORUS OF HIERAKONPOLIS! AND I REMIND YOU THAT YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO CHOOSE ONE AMONG US TO SPEAK IN YOUR DEFENCE!

I WILL DEFEND MYSELF ALONE, O THOTH, AND DEMONSTRATE TO ALL OF YOU THE POSITIVE ASPECTS OF MY REBELLION...

I EVEN HAVE A FEW PROPOSALS TO MAKE...

ⲙⲓⲛⲓ ⲙⲓⲛⲓ  
FIRST: ACCUSED OF TREASON.  
SECOND: ACCUSED OF MISMANAGEMENT.  
THIRD: ACCUSED OF MEDICINE ABUSE.  
FOURTH: ACCUSED OF HERESY.  
FIFTH: ACCUSED OF...



ARE YOU SURE YOU KNOW WHAT YOU'RE DOING, KANEMBA? THE PYRAMID IS ALMOST IN THE CENTER OF THE LAUNCH TRAJECTORY...

OSSIPOV IS RIGHT... PERHAPS WE SHOULD DELAY THE FIRING...

IMPOSSIBLE! WE HAVE A VIRUS TO RID OURSELVES OF AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE... BEFORE IT BECOMES THE EPICENTER OF A PLAGUE...

WE'LL JUST CLIP THE PYRAMID'S WINGS A BIT... THAT'S ALL...



MISS! A MESSAGE FOR YOU!



Niko  
Tel  
991-01-3  
Bukoba Hival



HELLO? NIKO?

ANSWER ME, NIKO! I KNOW YOU'RE THERE... I CAN HEAR YOU BREATHING... IT'S YELENA... I GOT YOUR MESSAGE. IT MADE ME VERY HAPPY.

HELLO?!





HELLO?

WHAT ARE YOU PLAYING AT, NIKO?



I'M RE-BUILDING MYSELF...



??... THAT'S ORIGINAL... DID JOHNHELISSON DAMAGE YOU THAT MUCH?

JOHN-WHO?



LISTEN... I DON'T KNOW WHAT HAPPENED TO YOU... BUT I'M LEAVING TONIGHT. I GOT ANOTHER LEAD ON... ON THAT CASE I CAME FOR. I'M ON THE BLUE NILE EXPRESS TO DEMBI DOLO... I'VE RESERVED A COMPARTMENT FOR TWO, WITH A FLYNET... IT LEAVES AT MIDNIGHT.

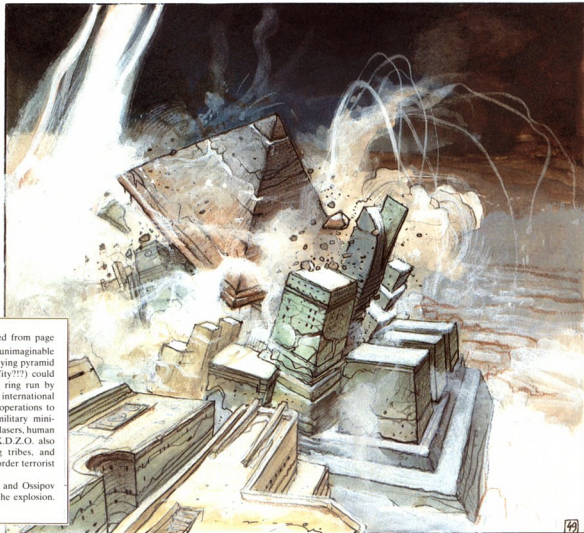
...AS AN ANGEL WITH A BEASTLY EYE I SLIDE TOWARD YOU NOISELESSLY AND RETURN AGAIN TO HOLD YOU TIGHT IN THE SHADOWS OF THE NIGHT!

?

-WE'VE NEUTRALIZED THE LOOPKIN VIRUS, MASTER... WE PUT HIM IN THE CENTRAL HIBERNATOR, IN PLACE OF THE BABY HIPPO. HE'S ALREADY IN A PERMANENT CRYOGENIC SLEEP THERE'S NOTHING MORE TO FEAR... ACCORDING TO OUR PREDICTIONS, THE PYRAMID WILL NOT HANG MUCH LONGER ABOVE YOUR SKIES, NOW THAT HE'S GONE... MAY VIDYE MUKULU HEAR OUR PRAYER!  
-I HOPE HE DOES! IN THE MEANTIME, LAUNCH THAT THING INTO ORBIT, AND LET'S HEAR NO MORE ABOUT IT!



BY SEALING THE PECULIAR FATE OF NIKOPOL JUNIOR, THE DESPERATE IRRATIONALIST RONALD KAHEMBA HAS, WITHOUT KNOWING IT, SIGNED DEATH-WARRANT OF THE K.K.D.Z.O. EMPIRE...



**EQUATOR CITY: History** (continued from page 16)

Only a supernatural disaster of unimaginable proportions (the crash-landing of a flying pyramid onto the nerve-center of Equator City???) could put an end to the organized crime ring run by K.K.D.Z.O. Later investigations by international authorities bring various smuggling operations to light (trafficking in micro-robots, military mini-electronics, illegal satellite-mounted lasers, human organs, and numerous toxins). K.K.D.Z.O. also supplied religious fanatics, warring tribes, and nationalist guerrillas with "made-to-order terrorist packages".

Kahemba, Kogushi, Delisle, Zulkar, and Ossipov all disappeared in the aftermath of the explosion. They are still on the run.



FULL!  
FULL!  
FULL!



FULL!

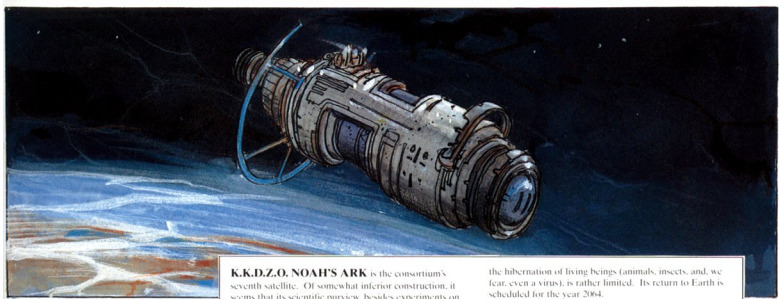


THIRTY-THREE FULL COMPARTMENTS LATER...

WELL, WELL, IF IT ISN'T THE "ANGEL WITH A BEASTLY EYE"...



GOOD EVENING...



**K.K.D.Z.O. NOAH'S ARK** is the consortium's seventh satellite. Of somewhat inferior construction, it seems that its scientific purview, besides experiments on

the hibernation of living beings (animals, insects, and, we fear, even a virus), is rather limited. Its return to Earth is scheduled for the year 2064.



"YOUR EYES, IN WHICH IS SEEN NOTHING, NOR BITTER NOR SWEET— TWO COLD JEWELS WHERE GOLD AND FLAME ARE ONE AND THE SAME!"

AGAIN?



"LIKE RUNOFF FROM GLACIERS MAKING A TIDE, A WAVE'S FLOW FULL OF SURPRISES, POURING INTO YOUR SMILE SO WIDE PAST YOUR LIPS THE WATER RISES."

DO YOU ALWAYS RECITE BAUDELAIRE WHILE MAKING LOVE?



IT'S MY FIRST TIME...

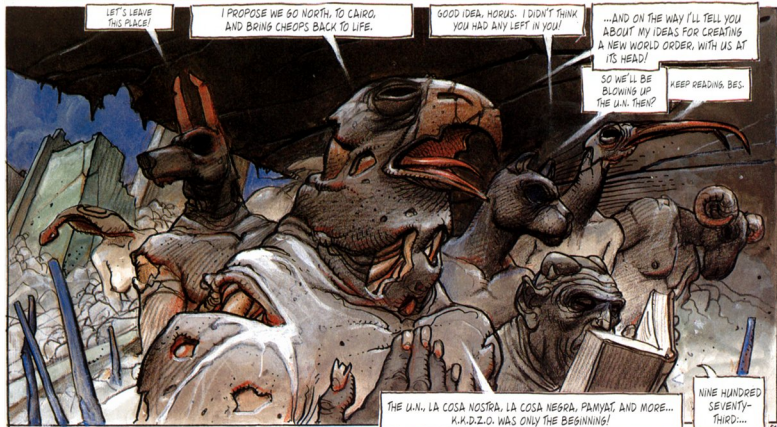
RECITING BAUDELAIRE OR MAKING LOVE?

BOTH!



YOU GOT HIT IN THE HEAD TOO HARD, NIKO... TEMPORARY AMNESIA... IT HAPPENS. I'LL HELP YOU "REBUILD YOURSELF"... TRUST ME.

WHO'S BAUDELAIRE?



LET'S LEAVE THIS PLACE!

I PROPOSE WE GO NORTH, TO CAIRO, AND BRING CHEOPS BACK TO LIFE.

GOOD IDEA, HORUS. I DIDN'T THINK YOU HAD ANY LEFT IN YOU!

...AND ON THE WAY I'LL TELL YOU ABOUT MY IDEAS FOR CREATING A NEW WORLD ORDER, WITH US AT ITS HEAD!

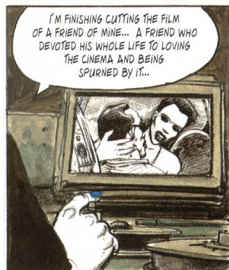
SO WE'LL BE BLOWING UP THE U.N. THEN?

KEEP READING, BES.

THE U.N., LA COSA NOSTRA, LA COSA NEGRA, PAMYAT, AND MORE... K.K.D.Z.O. WAS ONLY THE BEGINNING!

NINE HUNDRED SEVENTY-THIRD!...

THE LAST MORNING OF OCTOBER 2034.  
YELENA AND NIKOPOL, NOT FULLY AWAKE, ARRIVE EARLY AT DEMBI DOLO STUDIOS WITH THE SUN AT THEIR BACKS.



I'M FINISHING CUTTING THE FILM OF A FRIEND OF MINE... A FRIEND WHO DEVOTED HIS WHOLE LIFE TO LOVING THE CINEMA AND BEING SPURNED BY IT...



YOU'RE A GENETICIST...

YES...

...SO YOU'VE COME ABOUT THE CHILD?

I'D LIKE TO SEE IT, YES... AND TO HEAR WHAT YOU HAVE TO SAY ABOUT IT.



VERY SORRY... BUT I'D REALLY RATHER NOT. AND HE HIMSELF WOULD NOT LIKE IT... HE DOESN'T LET ANYONE NEAR HIM...



YOU MIGHT BE ABLE TO CATCH A GLIMPSE OF HIM TONIGHT, THOUGH, AS HE WALKS ALONG THE RAMPARTS...



YOU'LL BE LEAVING AFTERWARDS... THERE'S A BAD MICRO-CLIMATE MOVING UP FROM THE SOUTH... YOU'LL BE SNOWED IN IF YOU STAY HERE... I'D RATHER AVOID IT TOO... I JUST HAVE ONE MORE SHOT TO DO AT DAWN... THE GENERIC ENDING SHOT: AN AIRPLANE FLYING AWAY... YOU'LL BE ON THAT PLANE...



IS THE BLUE HAIR AND WHITE SKIN NATURAL?

YOU LIKE IT?

NOT BAD.

HAVE WE MET BEFORE?



HE WOULDN'T REMEMBER... HE'S "REBUILDING" HIMSELF.

THAT'S LUCKY. ME TOO.



GO GET JILL AND THE PILOT. WE HAVE TO ROLL. THE STORM'S COMING.

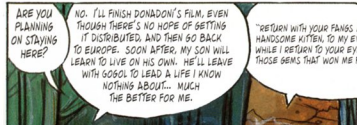
THAT'S A STRANGE CLOUD...



"IT'S AS IF IT'S CARRYING A BUNCH OF ANIMALS..."



...I SEE AN IBIS, A HAWK, A CROCODILE, A JACKAL, A RAM, A COBRA, AND A BLACK CAT..."



ARE YOU PLANNING ON STAYING HERE?

NO. I'LL FINISH DONADON'S FILM, EVEN THOUGH THERE'S NO HOPE OF GETTING IT DISTRIBUTED, AND THEN GO BACK TO EUROPE. SOON AFTER, MY SON WILL LEARN TO LIVE ON HIS OWN. HE'LL LEAVE WITH GOSOL TO LEAD A LIFE I KNOW NOTHING ABOUT... MUCH THE BETTER FOR ME.

"RETURN WITH YOUR FANNS AND YOUR CLAWS, HANDSOME KITTEN, TO MY EVER-LOVING HEART, WHILE I RETURN TO YOUR EYES, WHERE I SAW THOSE GEMS THAT WON ME FROM THE STAFF."



I'LL KEEP WORKING IN THE MOVIE BUSINESS... HAVE ANOTHER CHILD, A MORE NORMAL ONE... TRAVEL EXTENSIVELY, DOING SPECIAL REPORTS, AND MEET MY DEATH ACCIDENTALLY IN ONE OF THOSE INTERMINABLE BALKAN CONFLICTS. I'LL BE SIXTY-SEVEN, WITH NO REGRETS.



AND NOW YOUR TURN, YES, LENA.



"I'LL LIVE SEVEN HAPPY AND STORMY YEARS WITH NIKO, BUT WON'T STAY WITH HIM AFTER THAT... I'LL START A FAMILY WITH ANOTHER MAN AND CONTINUE RESEARCHING RARE GENETIC CASES... I'LL DIE VERY OLD, SURROUNDED BY CHILDREN AND ANIMALS, BUT WITH ONE HAUNTING PROFESSIONAL REGRET: OF NEVER HAVING BEEN ABLE TO APPROACH YOUR CHILD..."



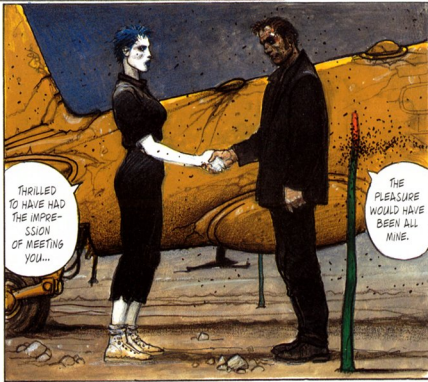
AND YOU, NIKO?

ME? WELL, SEVEN HAPPY AND STORMY YEARS WITH YOU SOUNDS LIKE ENOUGH FOR ME... AS FOR THE REST, IT'S ALL A NIGHTMARE... I LOOKED DEEP BUT MY LIFE IS A WELL WITH NO BOTTOM AND NO END... "I AM VAMPIRE, DOWN TO THE CORE ONE OF THOSE FORGOTTEN GREAT MEN WHO WILL SUFFER, AGAIN AND AGAIN ETERNAL LAUGHTER, BUT SMILE NO MORE!"

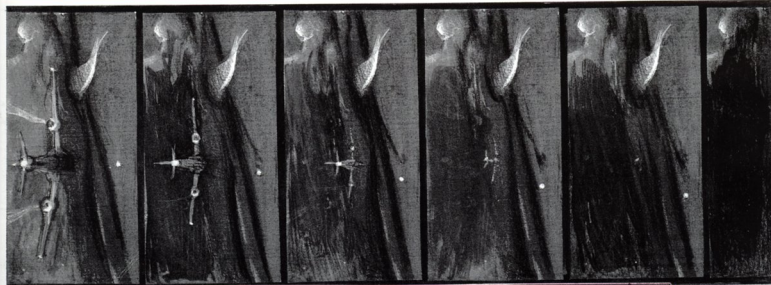
ARE THESE GREEN STRIPES NATURAL?



RISES EARLY, AS IF HURRIED, THE DESERT WIND MARKS 3:7 ON THE OLD EOLE SCALE.



"...DONADONI WOULD HAVE LIKED THIS SHOT... I'M CERTAIN OF IT... HE WOULD HAVE LIKED THE CROWDED FRAME, WITH THE PEOPLE FLYING AWAY IN THE AIRPLANE, THE CLOUD WITH THE STRANGE TAIL, EVEN THAT BRIGHT SPOT IN THE BOTTOM THIRD OF THE SKY, WHICH MUST BE A SATELLITE... HE WOULD HAVE GONE CRAZY TRYING TO FIND THE SYMBOLISM!"  
-TELL ME WHEN TO CUT!



-DON'T CUT! LET IT KEEP ROLLING UNTIL THE RUN-OUT, UNTIL THE EMPTY FRAME, UNTIL THE END.



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