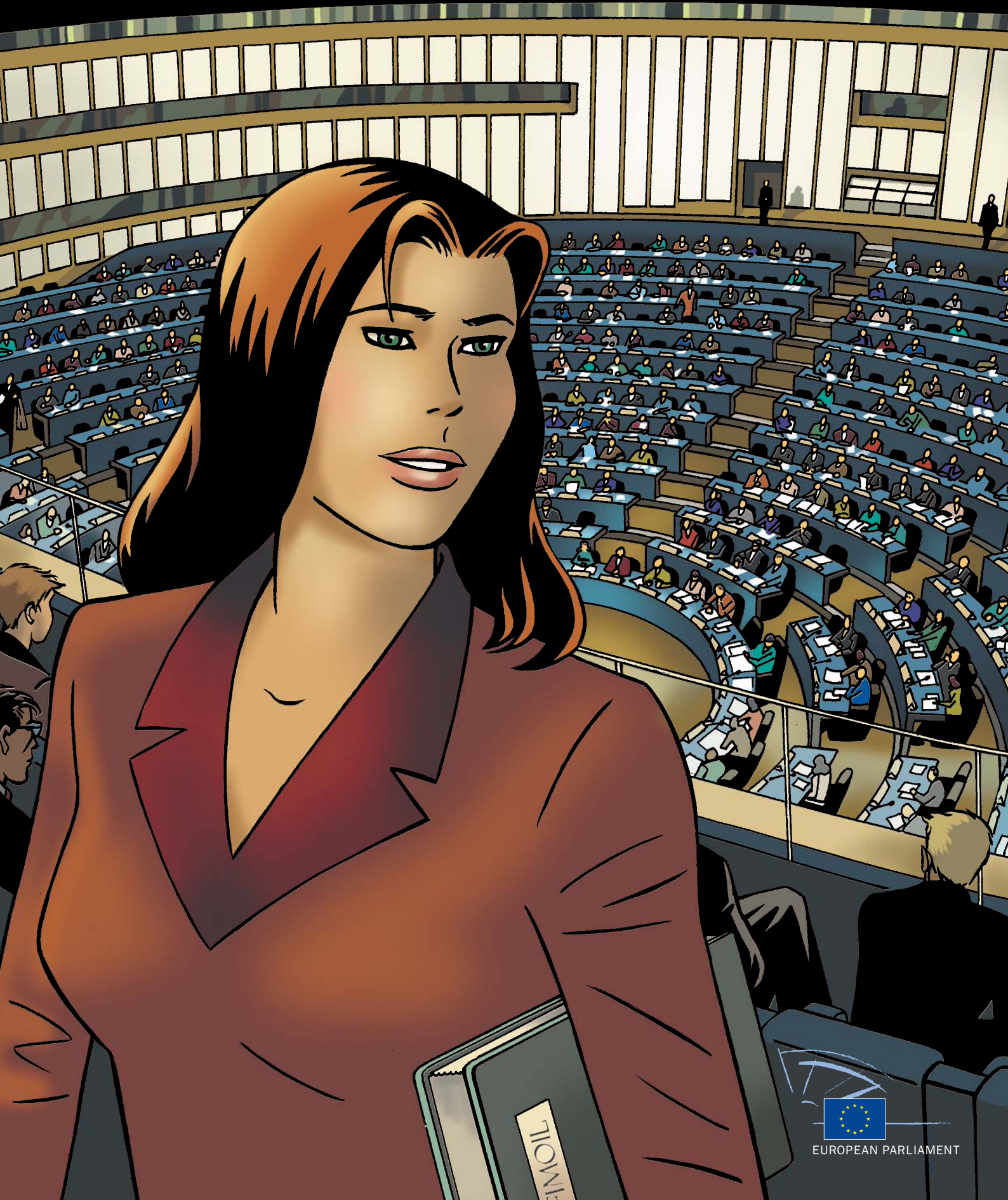


TROUBLED WATERS

D. DAVID

C. CUADRA & R. MIEL



EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

TROUBLED WATERS

D. DAVID

C. CUADRA & R. MIEL

At the 30th International Comic Strip Festival in Angoulême (23-26 January 2003), the European Parliament received the Alph-Art Communication prize for its 'Troubled Waters' album, judged to be 'best communication campaign using the comic strip medium'.

Although the adventures portrayed in this story are entirely fictional, the procedures described accurately reflect reality.

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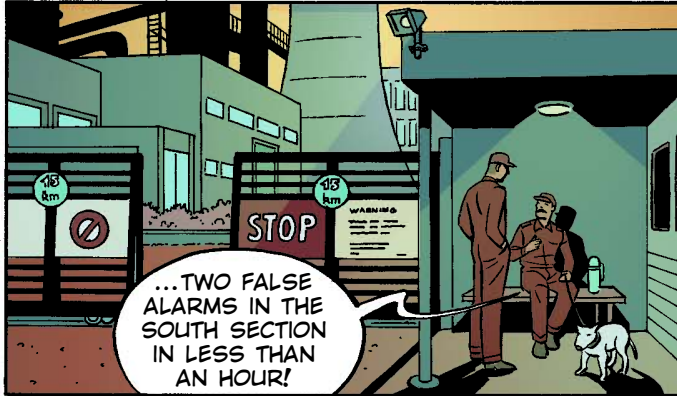
www.europarl.ie



KEEP YOUR EYES PEELED!



I HOPE IT'S QUIETER THAN LAST NIGHT ...



...TWO FALSE ALARMS IN THE SOUTH SECTION IN LESS THAN AN HOUR!

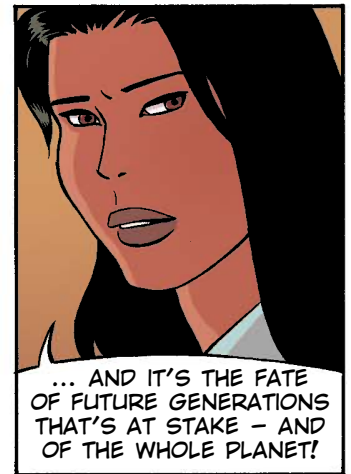
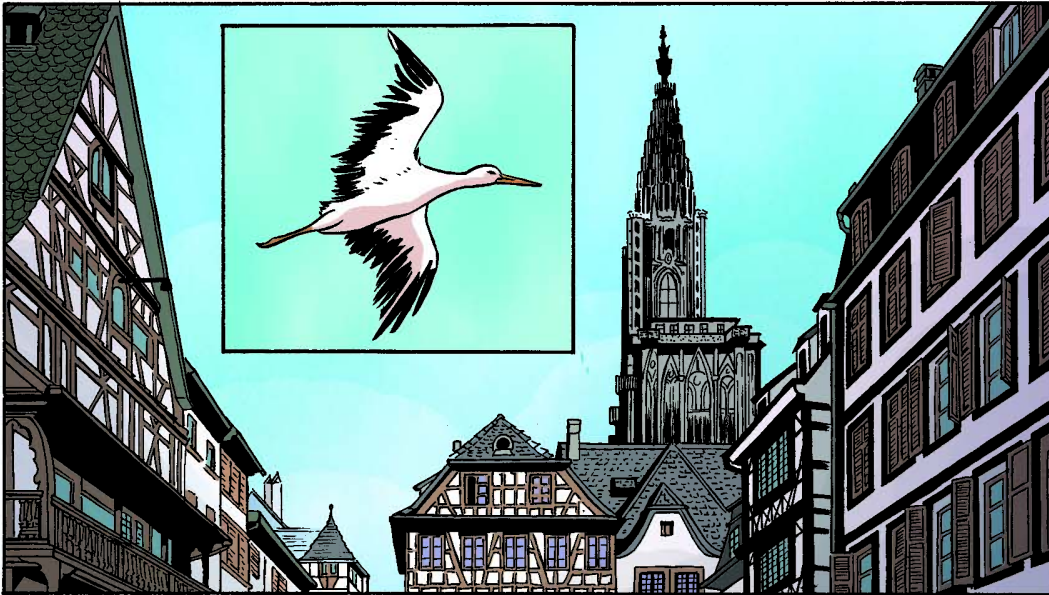


CHEERS, MAX, SEE YOU TOMORROW!



NOT THE SOUTH SECTION AGAIN!







IT'S OK. I'LL ANSWER IT. TIME'S GETTING ON.



GOOD MORNING, MR SORO. YES, MS VEGA'S STILL HERE, BUT SHE'S DUE IN THE CHAMBER VERY SOON... CAN I HELP YOU? IS IT URGENT?



YES, CHRIS... YOUR GROUP'S VOTING WITH US? THAT'S GREAT NEWS! LET'S HOPE THE REST OF THEM DO THE SAME!



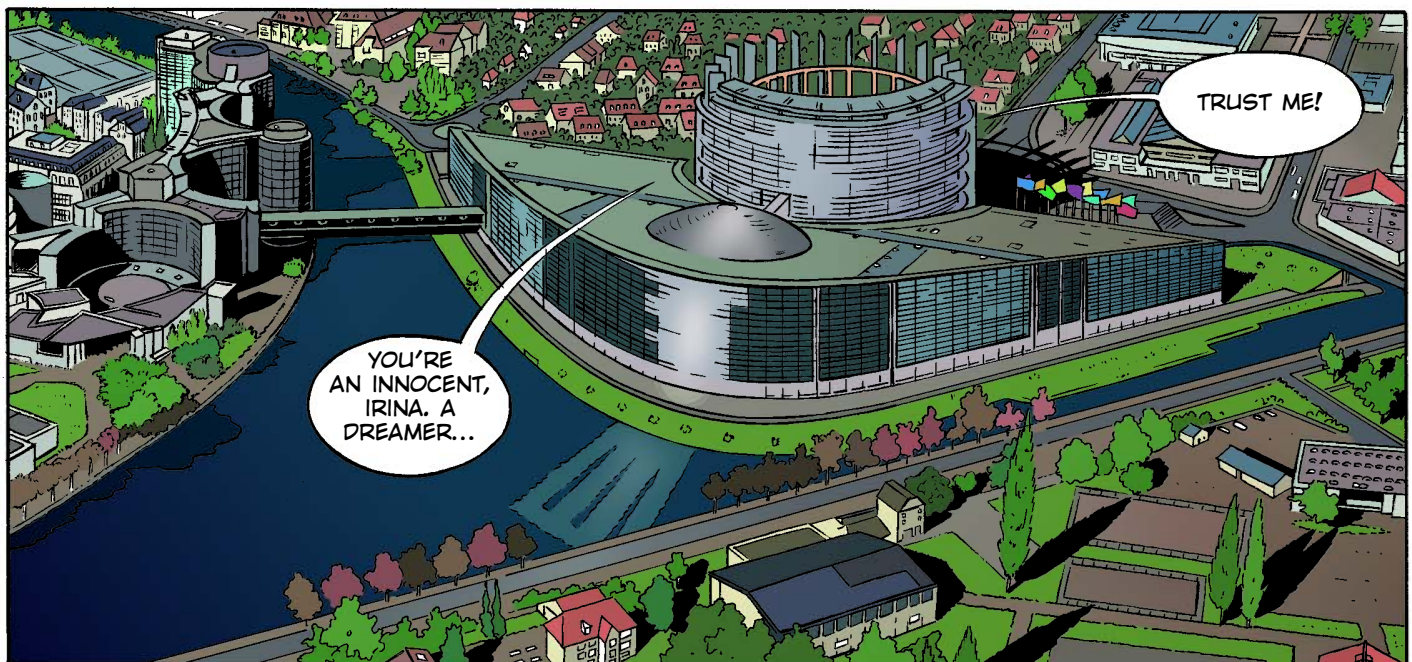
IRINA! I HEAR THE ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE'S MADE YOU ITS RAPPORETEUR FOR THE WATER DIRECTIVE! I'M SURE WE CAN RELY ON YOU TO POUR OIL ON TROUBLED WATERS! HA! HA!

YOU CAN LAUGH! WAIT UNTIL YOU'VE SEEN MY AMENDMENTS TO THE COMMISSION PROPOSAL!



BE CAREFUL, IRINA. THERE ARE A LOT OF INTERESTS AT STAKE!

THERE ARE INDEED. AND THEY ALL HAVE TO BE RECONCILED.



YOU'RE AN INNOCENT, IRINA. A DREAMER...

TRUST ME!

WATER IS NOT A COMMERCIAL PRODUCT LIKE ANY OTHER, ...

ÉL AGUA NO ES UN BIEN...

... PRODOTTO COMMERCIALE ...

L'EAU N'EST PAS UN BIEN MARCHAND ...

... SONDERN EIN EREBTES GUT...

... EN ALMINDELIG HANDELSVARE ...

... NÄO É UM PRODUTO COMERCIAL ...

TO NEPO ΔEN EINAI...

... WATER IS GEEN GEWONE ...

VESI EI OLE ...

... IT IS THE HERITAGE OF ...

Italiano

Dutch

Nederlands

... THE PEOPLE OF THE EUROPEAN UNION!

FOR ONCE WE ALL AGREE...

94

395

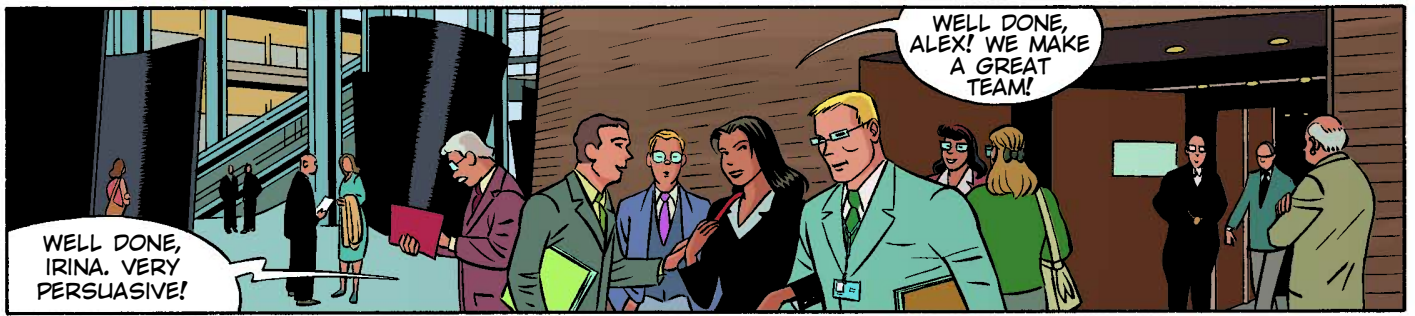
396

...AND CO-DECISION WITH THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS APPLIES!

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, WE SHALL NOW VOTE!

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, PARLIAMENT HAS VOTED UNANIMOUSLY ...

...IN FAVOUR OF EUROPE'S CITIZENS BEING FULLY INVOLVED IN DECISION-MAKING ON WATER POLICY!



WELL DONE, IRINA. VERY PERSUASIVE!

WELL DONE, ALEX! WE MAKE A GREAT TEAM!



THERE ARE QUITE A FEW VISITORS TODAY. I'LL TRY AND GET A TABLE.

ARE YOU HAVING COFFEE?



PARLIAMENT HAS GOT A LOT TO SAY ABOUT WATER POLLUTION, TARIFFS, MANAGEMENT AND, ABOVE ALL, THE DEADLINES FOR IMPLEMENTING THESE MEASURES.

WE'LL BE GETTING THE COUNCIL'S COMMON POSITION SOON... THEN THINGS WILL START TO HOT UP!

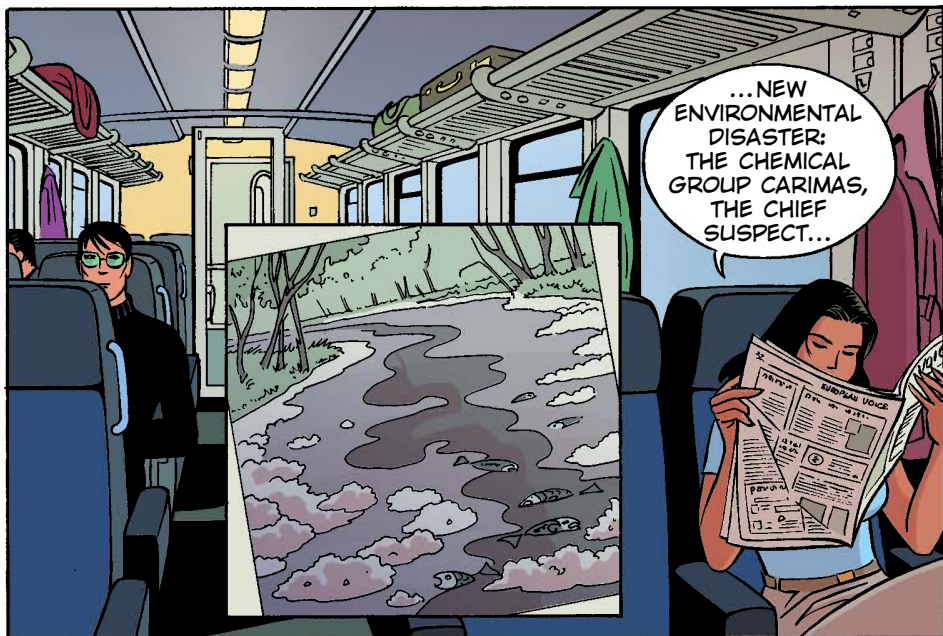
BYE, EVERYONE. I'M OFF TO BRUSSELS.



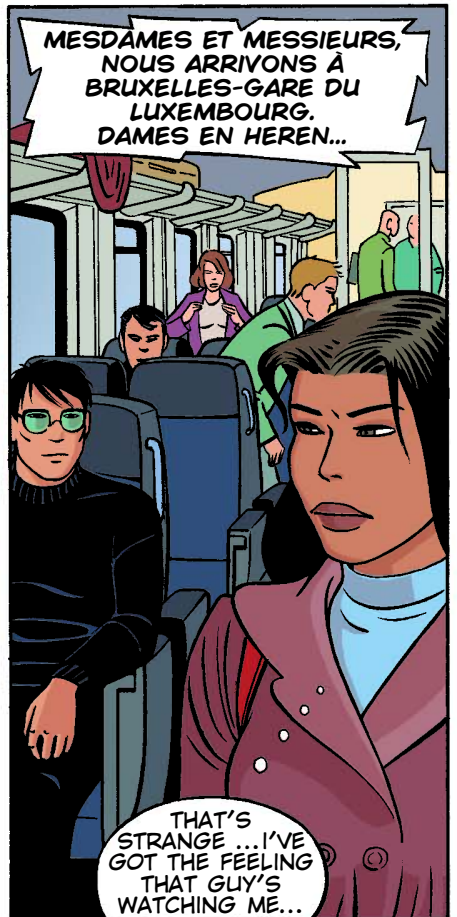
AT THIS TIME OF NIGHT? YOU'LL GET HOME VERY LATE.

YES. I'VE GOT A CARPOOLING ARRANGEMENT WITH TWO COLLEAGUES.

I'M CATCHING THE TRAIN TOMORROW MORNING.

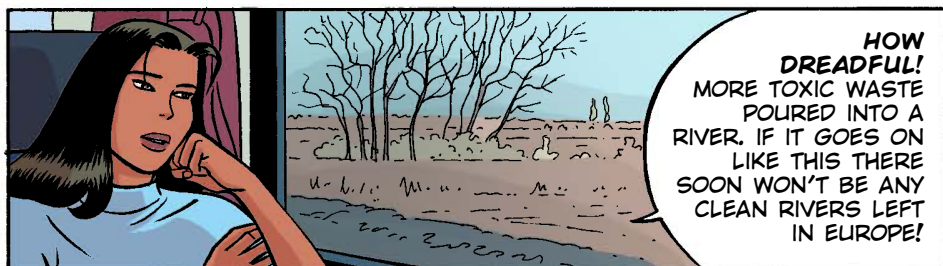


...NEW ENVIRONMENTAL DISASTER: THE CHEMICAL GROUP CARIMAS, THE CHIEF SUSPECT...

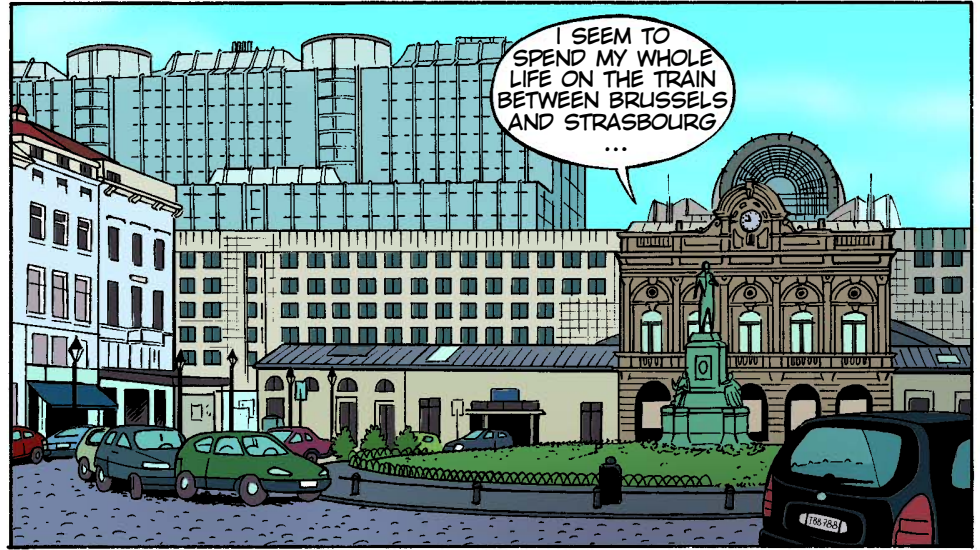
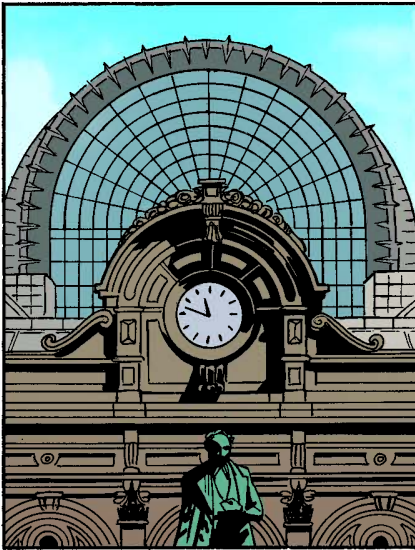


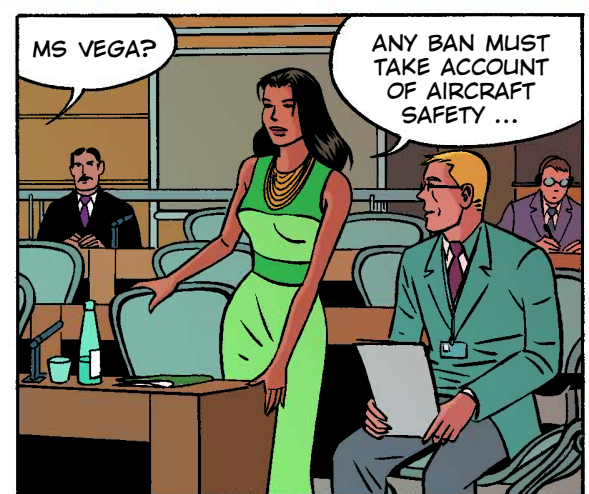
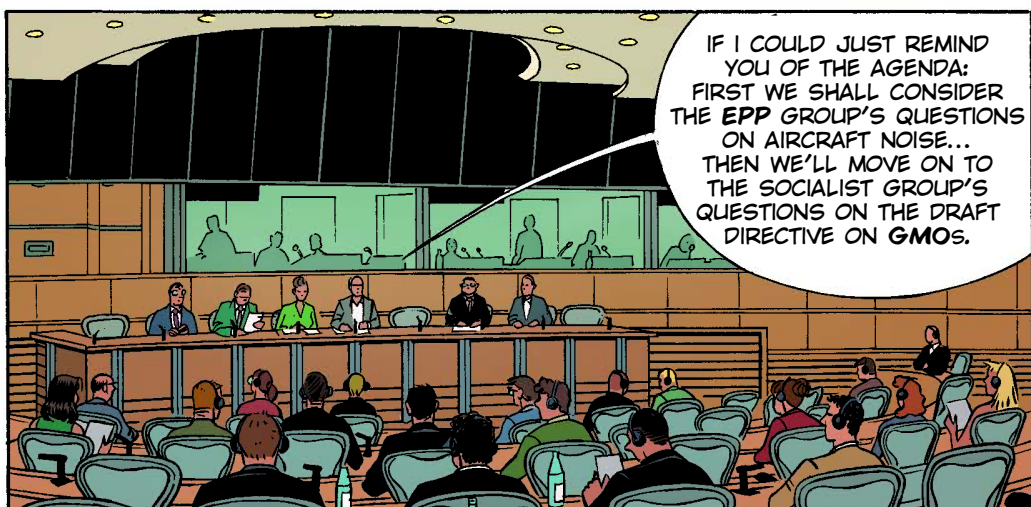
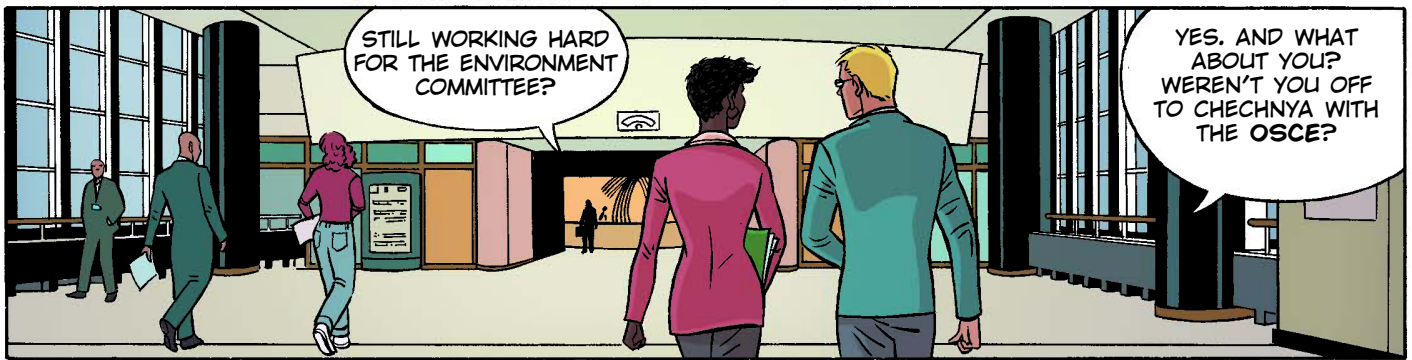
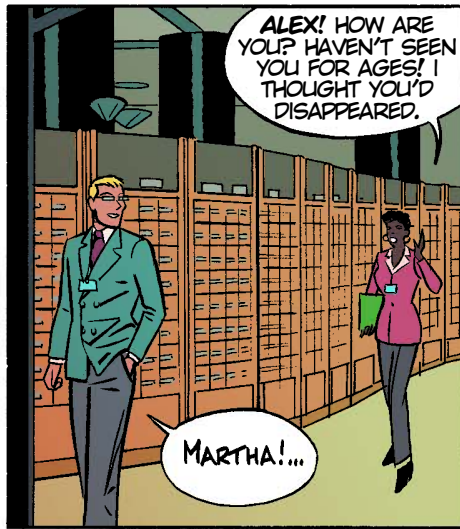
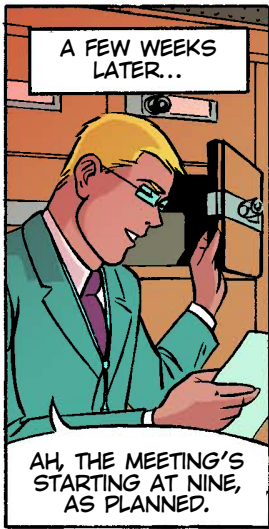
MESDAMES ET MESSIEURS, NOUS ARRIVONS A BRUXELLES-GARE DU LUXEMBOURG. DAMES EN HEREN...

THAT'S STRANGE ...I'VE GOT THE FEELING THAT GUY'S WATCHING ME...



HOW DREADFUL! MORE TOXIC WASTE POURED INTO A RIVER. IF IT GOES ON LIKE THIS THERE SOON WON'T BE ANY CLEAN RIVERS LEFT IN EUROPE!





...WE ALL KNOW THAT CLIMATIC CONDITIONS SOMETIMES MEAN THAT ROUTES HAVE TO BE CHANGED. AND THE IMPACT ON LOCAL EMPLOYMENT AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT WOULD ALSO HAVE TO BE LOOKED AT.

I'M SORRY, MR PRADO. YOU'VE ALREADY SPOKEN. WE MUST MOVE ON TO THE NEXT ITEM ON THE AGENDA ...

WHAT ABOUT A PIZZA AT DA MIMO?

Jean Monnet

GOOD IDEA! SOME FRESH AIR WOULD DO US GOOD ...

ENJOYING THE SUN?

JACQUES! HOW LOVELY!

I'VE TRIED TO PHONE YOU, BUT THERE WAS NO REPLY...

I'M WORKING FLAT OUT. I'M DOING ANOTHER PHOTO EXHIBITION, NOT FAR FROM HERE.

THAT'S GREAT! WHERE?

FANTASTIC!

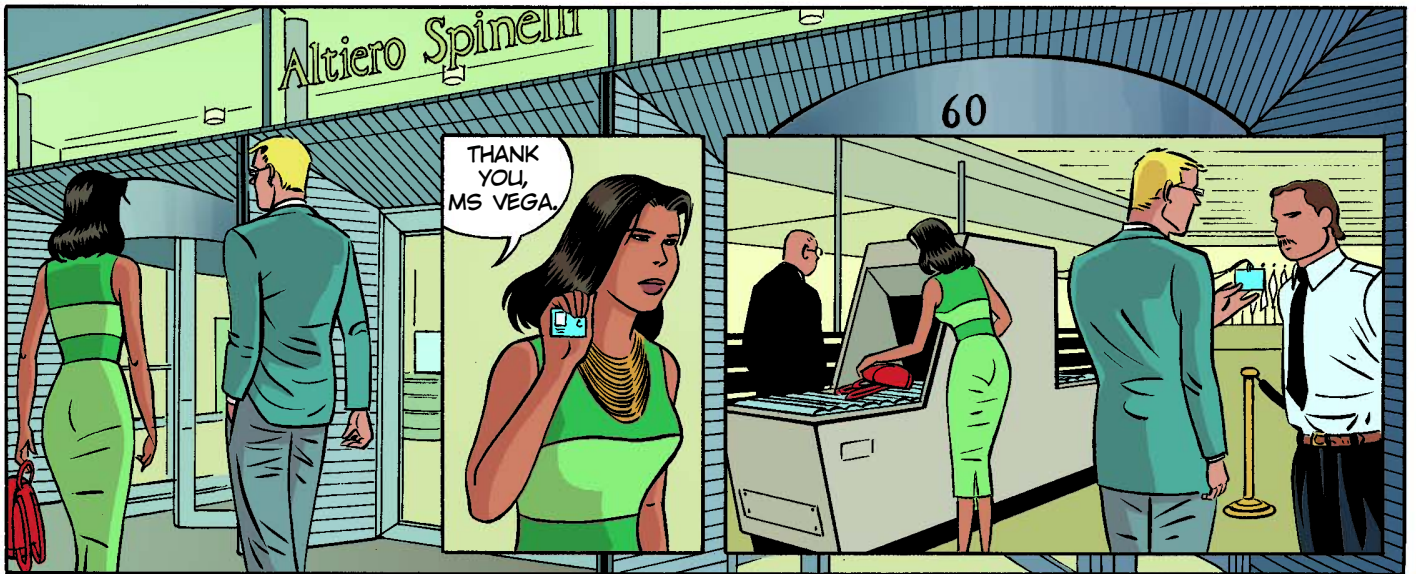
AT THE BIBLIOTHÈQUE SOLVAY... THE SUBJECT SHOULD INTEREST YOU. IT'S CALLED 'TROUBLED WATERS'.

BEPPi, UNA NAPOLITANA E DUE FRUTTI DI MARE!

SIGNORE?

NOTHING, THANK YOU.

YOU WON'T STAY AND EAT WITH US?



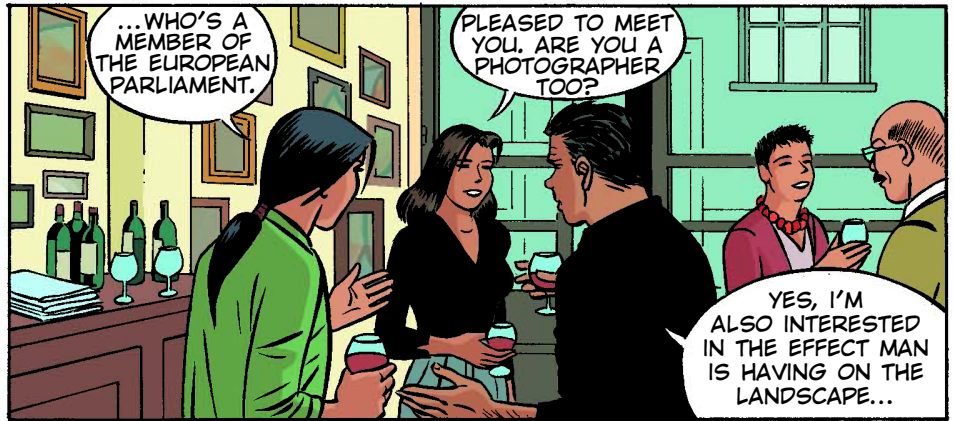


DIANA WORKS FOR A HUMAN RIGHTS NGO.

AND YOU'RE WORKING ON THE ENVIRONMENT?

YES, AMONG OTHER THINGS.

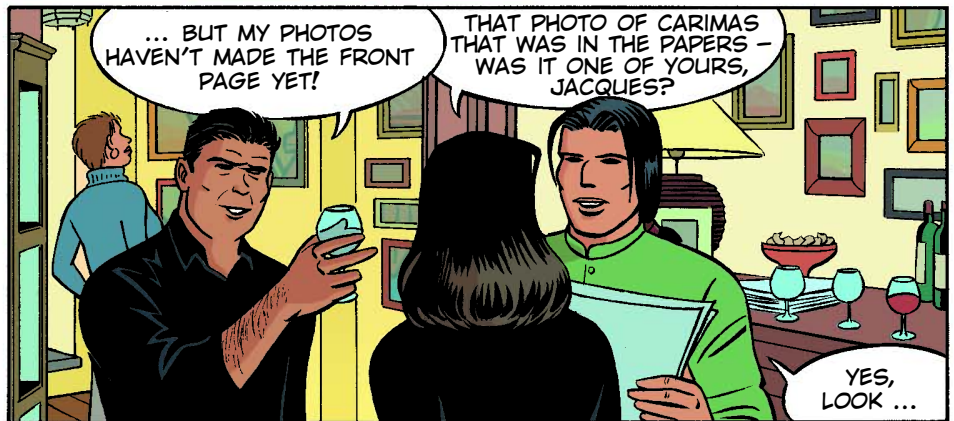
AH! KOSTAS! THIS IS IRINA, THE FRIEND I TOLD YOU ABOUT...



...WHO'S A MEMBER OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT.

PLEASUED TO MEET YOU. ARE YOU A PHOTOGRAPHER TOO?

YES, I'M ALSO INTERESTED IN THE EFFECT MAN IS HAVING ON THE LANDSCAPE...



... BUT MY PHOTOS HAVEN'T MADE THE FRONT PAGE YET!

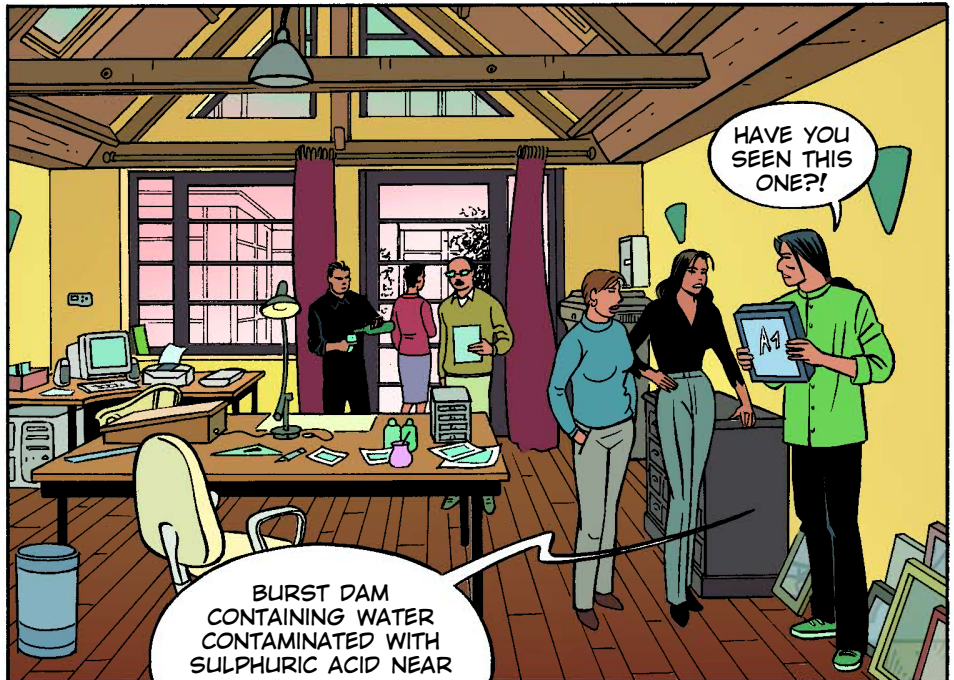
THAT PHOTO OF CARIMAS THAT WAS IN THE PAPERS - WAS IT ONE OF YOURS, JACQUES?

YES, LOOK ...



...AND I'VE GOT SOME MORE. I'LL GIVE YOU A PREVIEW, IF YOU LIKE...

THEY'RE GOING IN THE EXHIBITION.

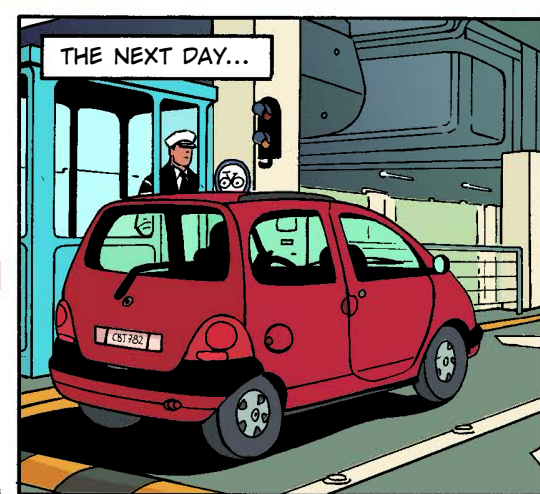
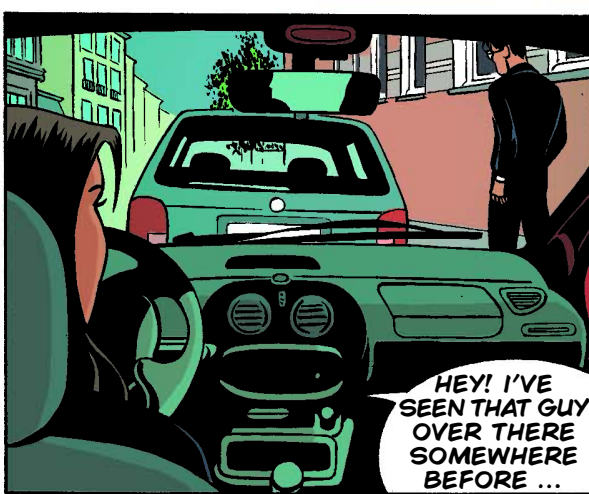
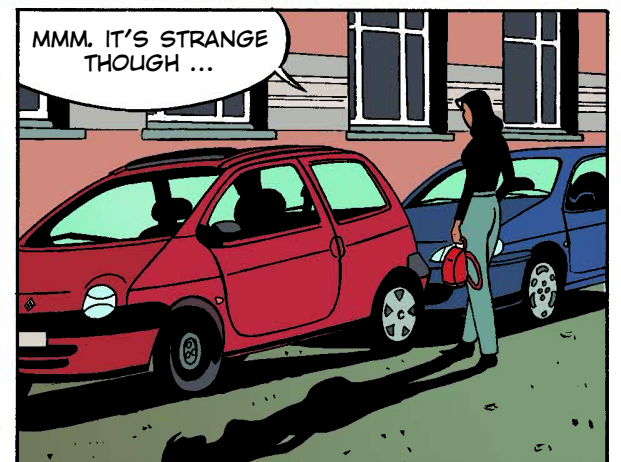
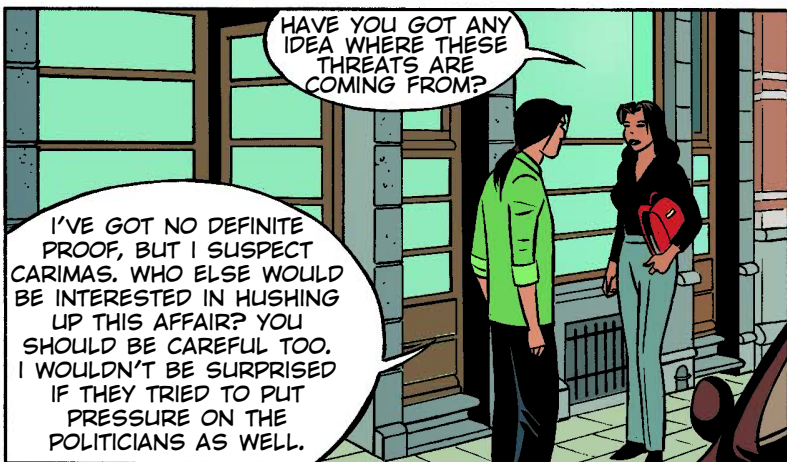


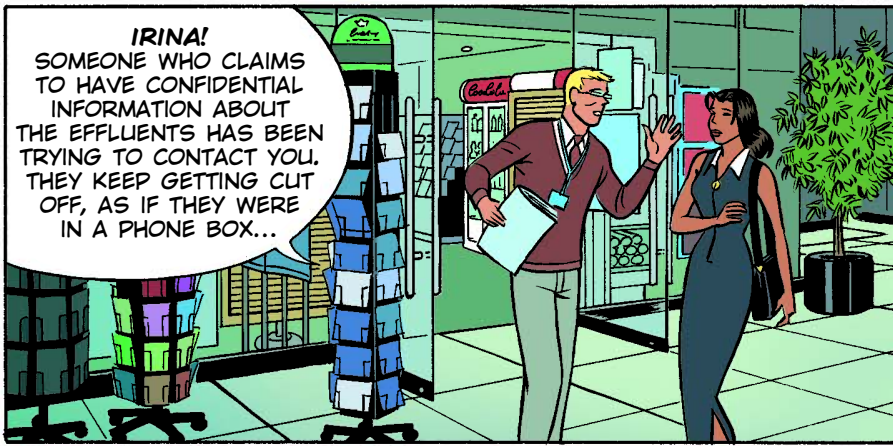
HAVE YOU SEEN THIS ONE?!

BURST DAM CONTAINING WATER CONTAMINATED WITH SULPHURIC ACID NEAR A LEAD MINE IN SOUTHERN EUROPE.

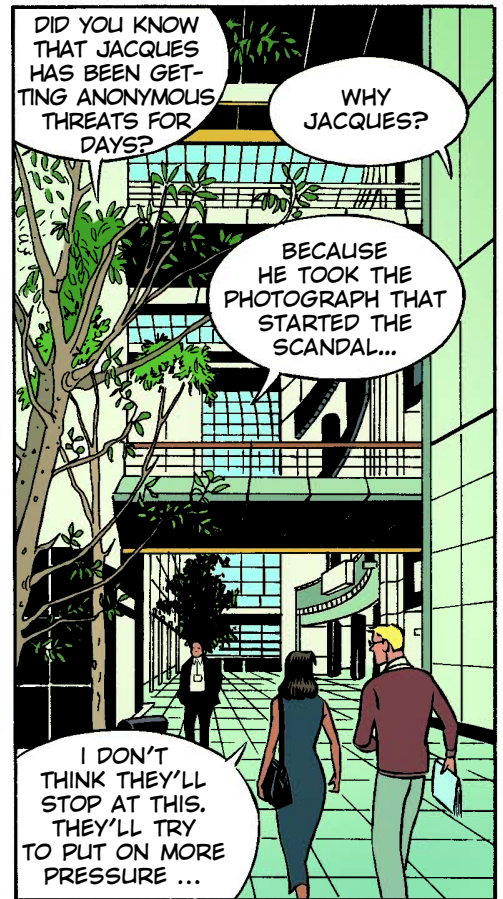


EXCUSE ME!





IRINA!
SOMEONE WHO CLAIMS TO HAVE CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE EFFLUENTS HAS BEEN TRYING TO CONTACT YOU. THEY KEEP GETTING CUT OFF, AS IF THEY WERE IN A PHONE BOX...



DID YOU KNOW THAT JACQUES HAS BEEN GETTING ANONYMOUS THREATS FOR DAYS?

WHY JACQUES?

BECAUSE HE TOOK THE PHOTOGRAPH THAT STARTED THE SCANDAL...

I DON'T THINK THEY'LL STOP AT THIS. THEY'LL TRY TO PUT ON MORE PRESSURE ...



AND HE DIDN'T LEAVE A NAME?

NO. HE SEEMED VERY NERVOUS.



HAVE YOU GOT TODAY'S PAPERS?

I HAVEN'T HAD TIME TO LOOK ...

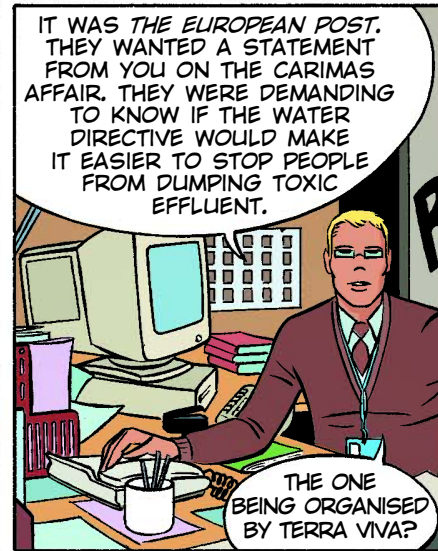


CARIMAS IN COURT!

...CHRISTIAN LOB, THE GROUP'S MANAGING DIRECTOR, ACCUSES THE PRESS OF MANIPULATION AND THREATENS TO PROSECUTE ANY PAPERS THAT PASS ON WHAT HE VIEWS AS LIBELLOUS ACCUSATIONS...



HELLO? NO, I'M SORRY, MS VEGA CAN'T ANSWER THAT QUESTION. NOT AT THIS STAGE.



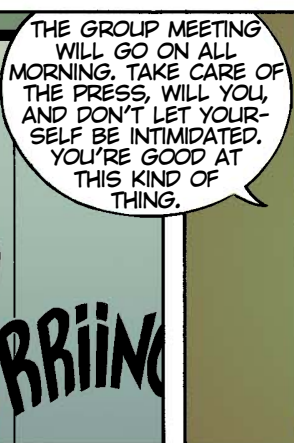
IT WAS THE EUROPEAN POST. THEY WANTED A STATEMENT FROM YOU ON THE CARIMAS AFFAIR. THEY WERE DEMANDING TO KNOW IF THE WATER DIRECTIVE WOULD MAKE IT EASIER TO STOP PEOPLE FROM DUMPING TOXIC EFFLUENT.



WITH ALL THIS STRESS I'M NOT SURE IF I SHALL BE GOING TO THE WORKING DINNER TONIGHT.

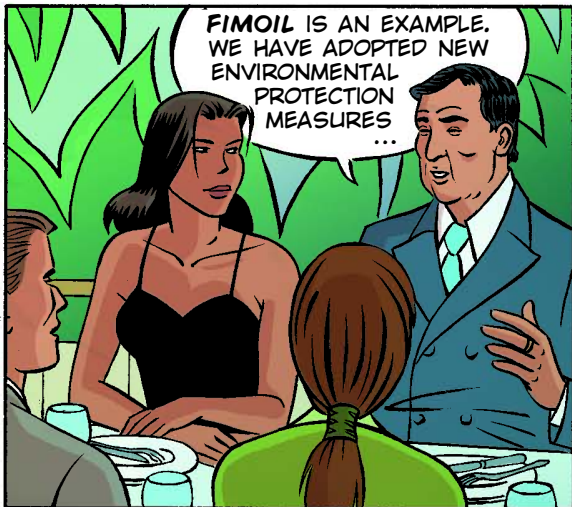
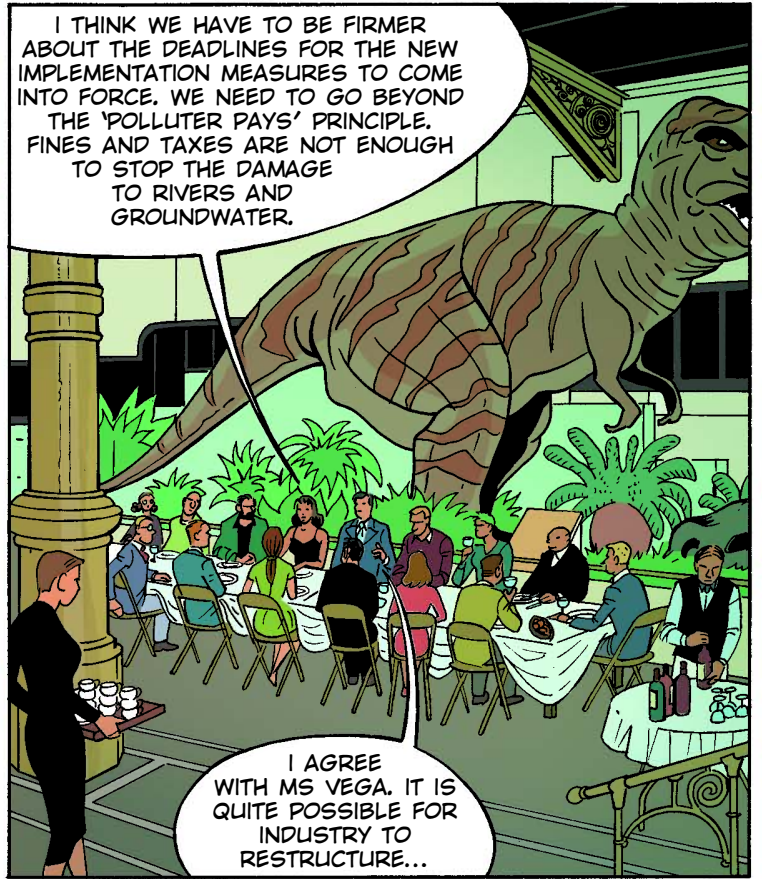
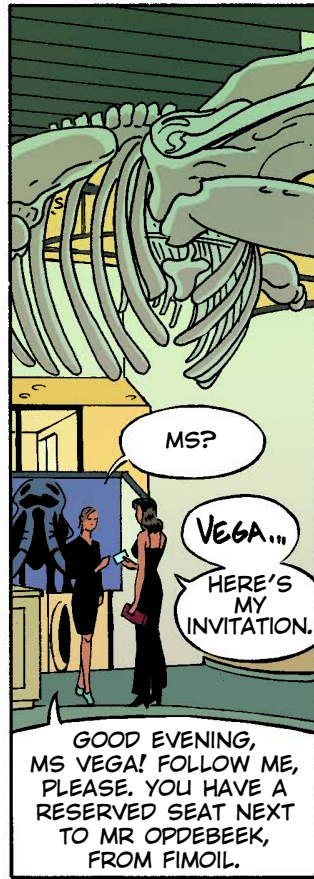
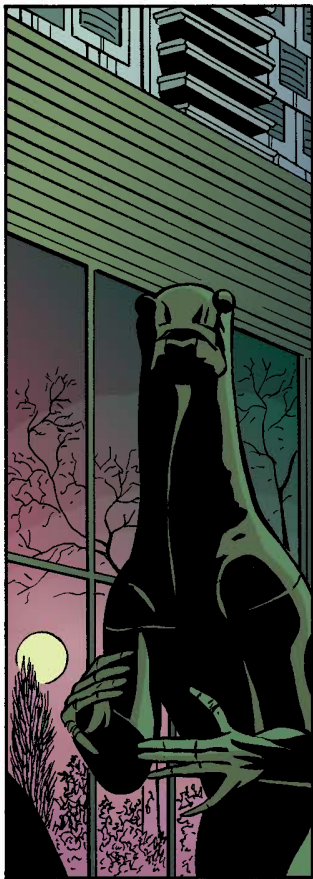


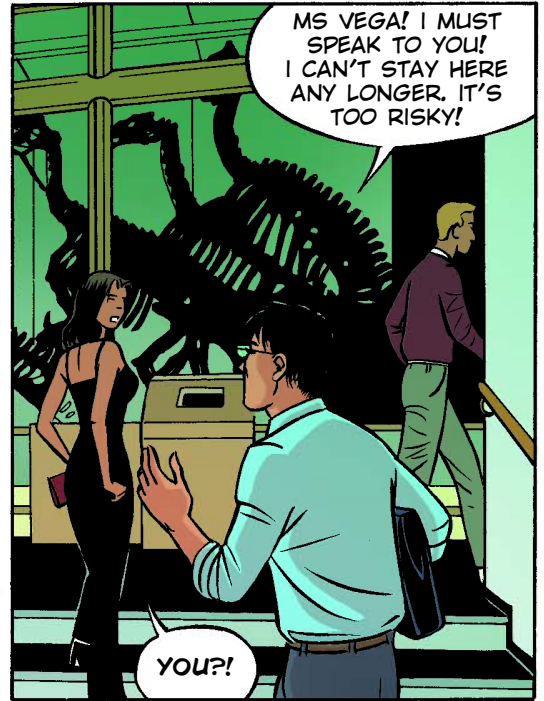
YES. THEY'VE INVITED PEOPLE FROM THE COMMISSION AND PARLIAMENT, AND REPRESENTATIVES OF INDUSTRY. AND SOME JOURNALISTS AND NGOS.



THE GROUP MEETING WILL GO ON ALL MORNING. TAKE CARE OF THE PRESS, WILL YOU, AND DON'T LET YOURSELF BE INTIMIDATED. YOU'RE GOOD AT THIS KIND OF THING.

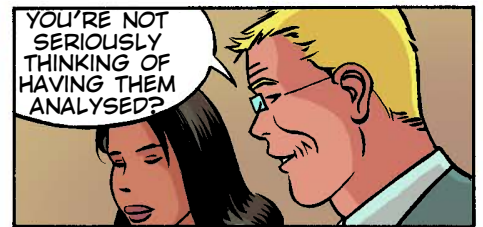




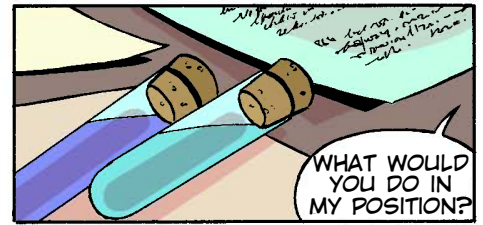




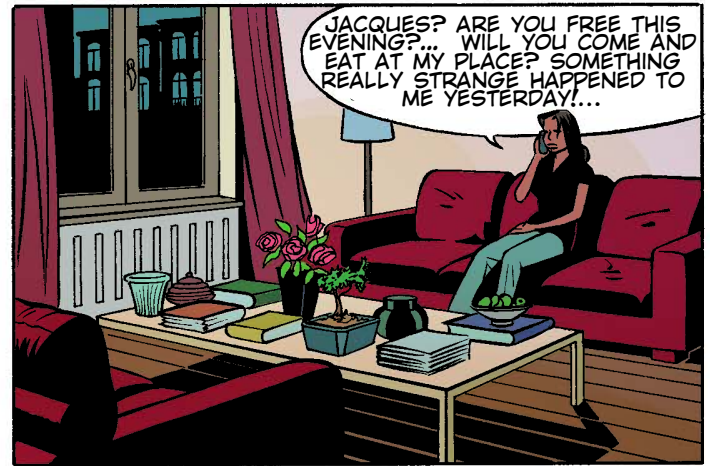
WHAT?



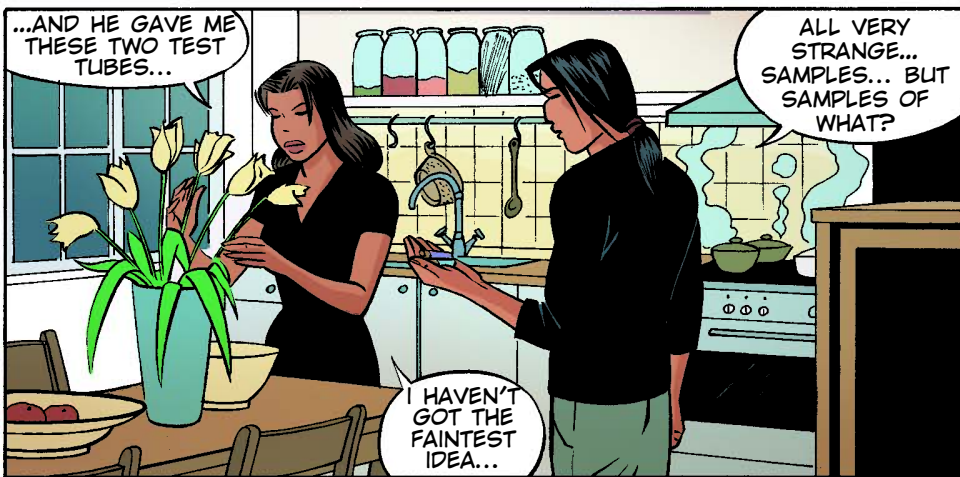
YOU'RE NOT SERIOUSLY THINKING OF HAVING THEM ANALYSED?



WHAT WOULD YOU DO IN MY POSITION?



JACQUES? ARE YOU FREE THIS EVENING?... WILL YOU COME AND EAT AT MY PLACE? SOMETHING REALLY STRANGE HAPPENED TO ME YESTERDAY!...



...AND HE GAVE ME THESE TWO TEST TUBES...

ALL VERY STRANGE... SAMPLES... BUT SAMPLES OF WHAT?

I HAVEN'T GOT THE FAINTEST IDEA...



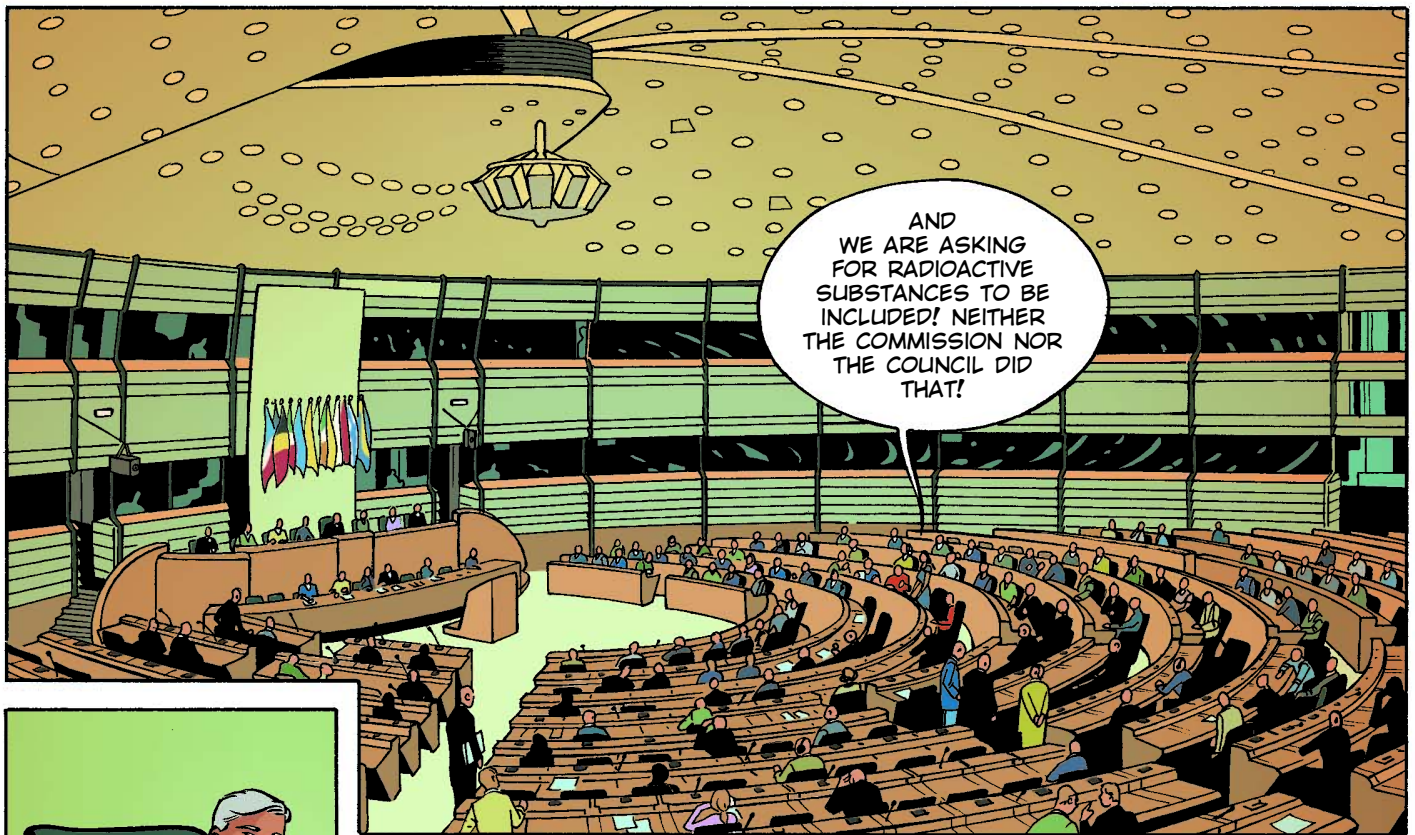
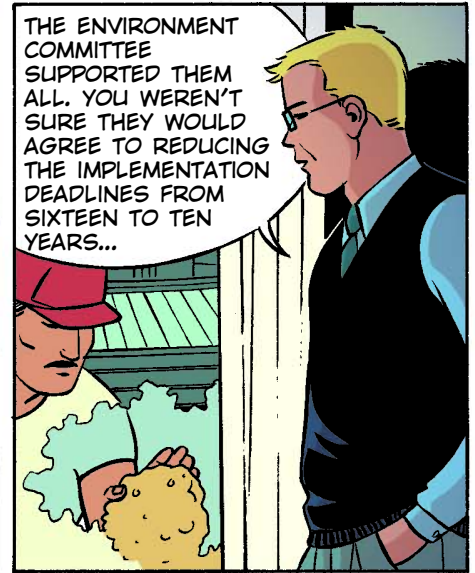
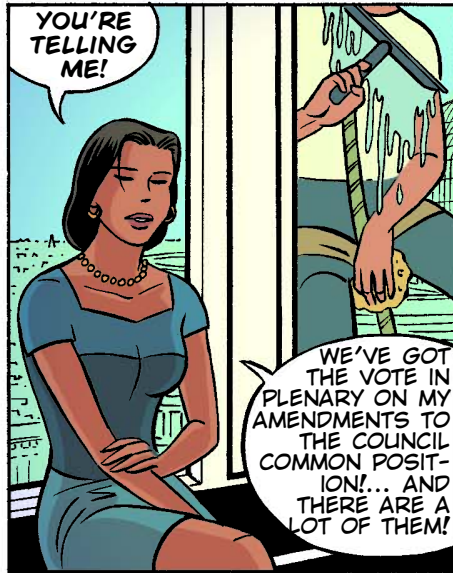
PERHAPS WE'LL FIND OUT WHAT'S REALLY GOING ON NOW...

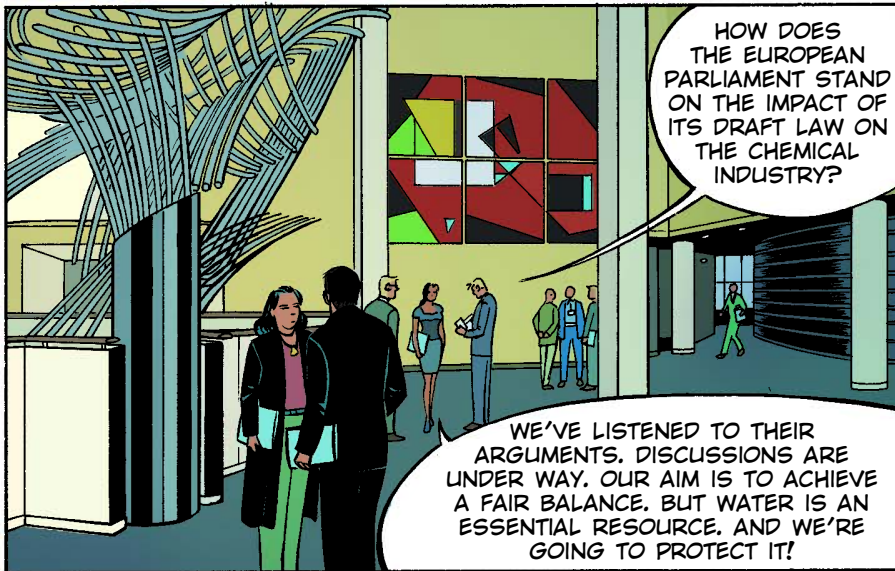
I DON'T KNOW... IT'S PROBABLY JUST A JOKE IN RATHER POOR TASTE...



I'M NOT SO SURE... TAKE THEM TO A LAB TOMORROW! IT'S A RISK WE'LL HAVE TO TAKE ...

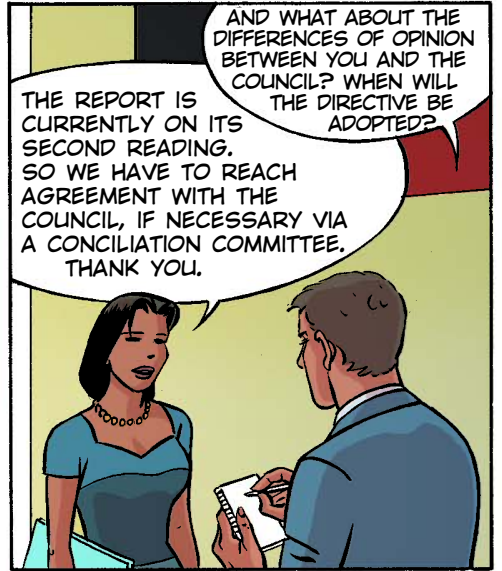






HOW DOES THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT STAND ON THE IMPACT OF ITS DRAFT LAW ON THE CHEMICAL INDUSTRY?

WE'VE LISTENED TO THEIR ARGUMENTS. DISCUSSIONS ARE UNDER WAY. OUR AIM IS TO ACHIEVE A FAIR BALANCE. BUT WATER IS AN ESSENTIAL RESOURCE. AND WE'RE GOING TO PROTECT IT!



AND WHAT ABOUT THE DIFFERENCES OF OPINION BETWEEN YOU AND THE COUNCIL? WHEN WILL THE DIRECTIVE BE ADOPTED?

THE REPORT IS CURRENTLY ON ITS SECOND READING. SO WE HAVE TO REACH AGREEMENT WITH THE COUNCIL, IF NECESSARY VIA A CONCILIATION COMMITTEE. THANK YOU.



SIR, SIR... YOU ARE A MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT...

?!

HA! HA!



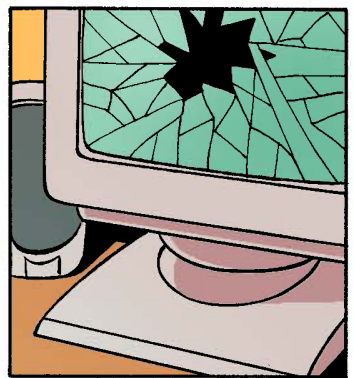
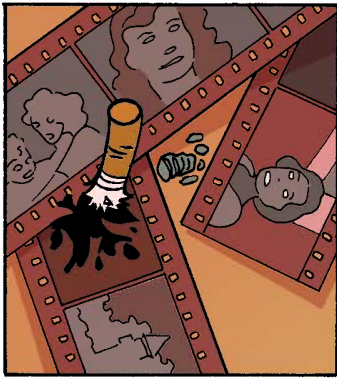
SEE YOU TOMORROW, 'HONORABLE MEMBER'... I'M STARVING!

HA, HA! DON'T GO TO THE CHIP SHOP IN PLACE JOURDAN. THEIR CHIPS ARE MUCH TOO GOOD!



WHAT'S GOING ON, JACQUES?!

I'LL GIVE YOU ONE GUESS!



THEY'VE TAKEN SOME EQUIPMENT... AND NEGATIVES AND PRINTS AS WELL... IT'S GOING TO COST ME A FORTUNE!

THEY'VE SMASHED THE WHOLE PLACE UP!



YES. THEY TRIED REALLY HARD - BUT THEY WERE WASTING THEIR TIME!



THIS IS WHAT THEY WERE LOOKING FOR!



'THEY'?



I'M SURE! CARIMAS ARE THE ONES BEHIND THIS!

HAVE YOU TOLD THE POLICE?

I HAVEN'T GOT ANY PROOF, UNLESS YOU COUNT THE SCANDAL MY PHOTO CAUSED AND THE THREATS OVER THE PHONE.



WHAT A MESS! CARLA CALLED ME... I TOLD YOU YOU WERE TAKING A RISK! THESE PEOPLE DON'T CARE HOW MUCH DAMAGE THEY DO...

WE'VE FINISHED. WE'LL SEE YOU DOWN AT THE STATION FOR THE STATEMENT.

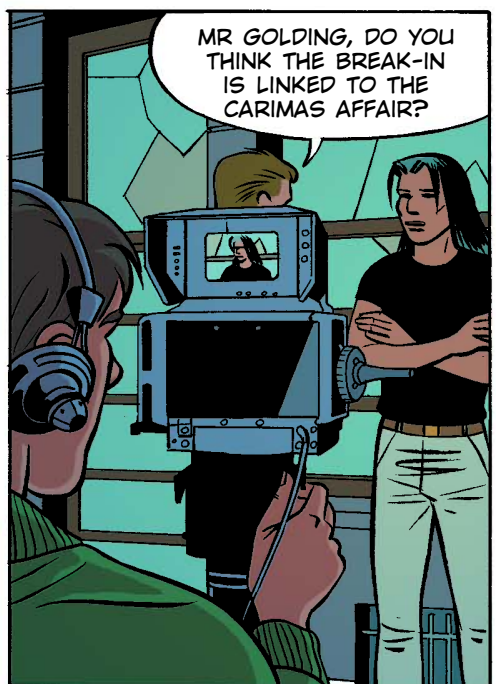


KOSTAS!

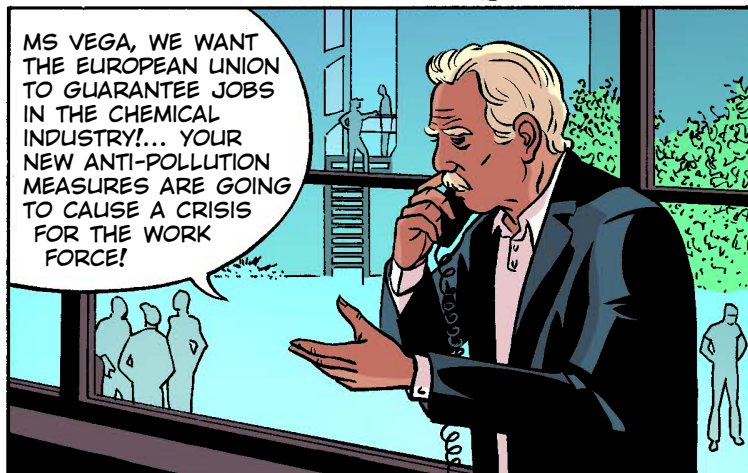
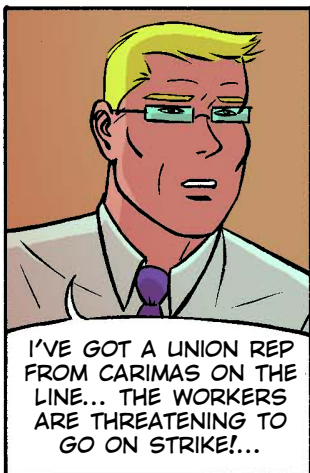
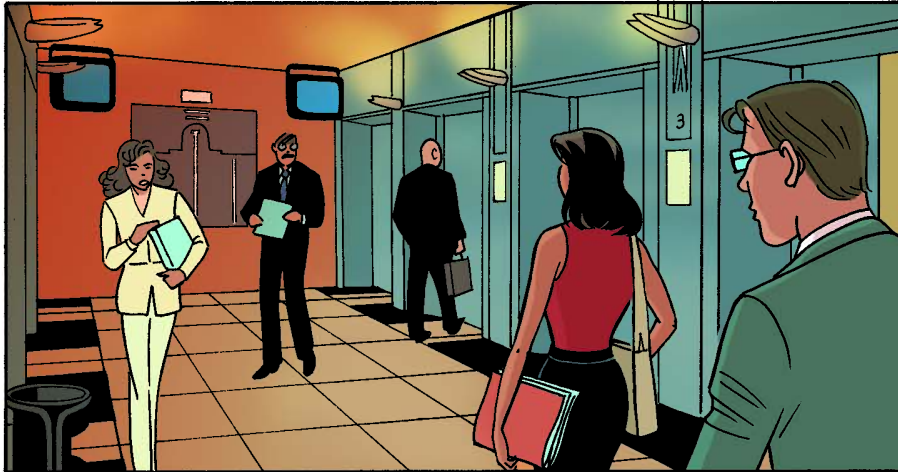
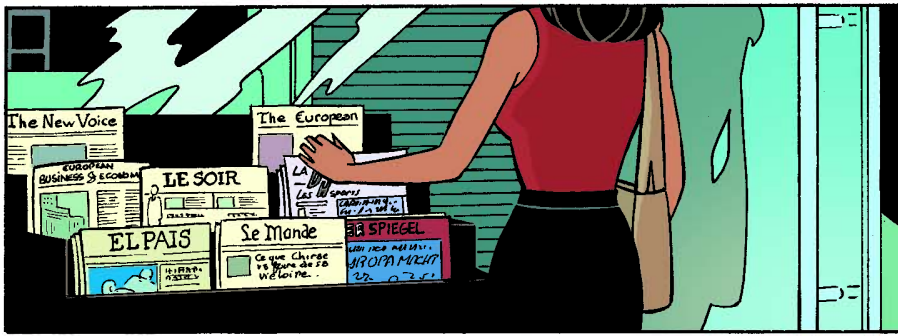


YOU CAN'T LET THIS GO UN-REPORTED. I'M GOING TO CALL YOUR PAPER ...

IT'S YOUR LAB I NEED... I'VE JUST GOT TIME TO REDO THE PRINTS BEFORE THE EXHIBITION.



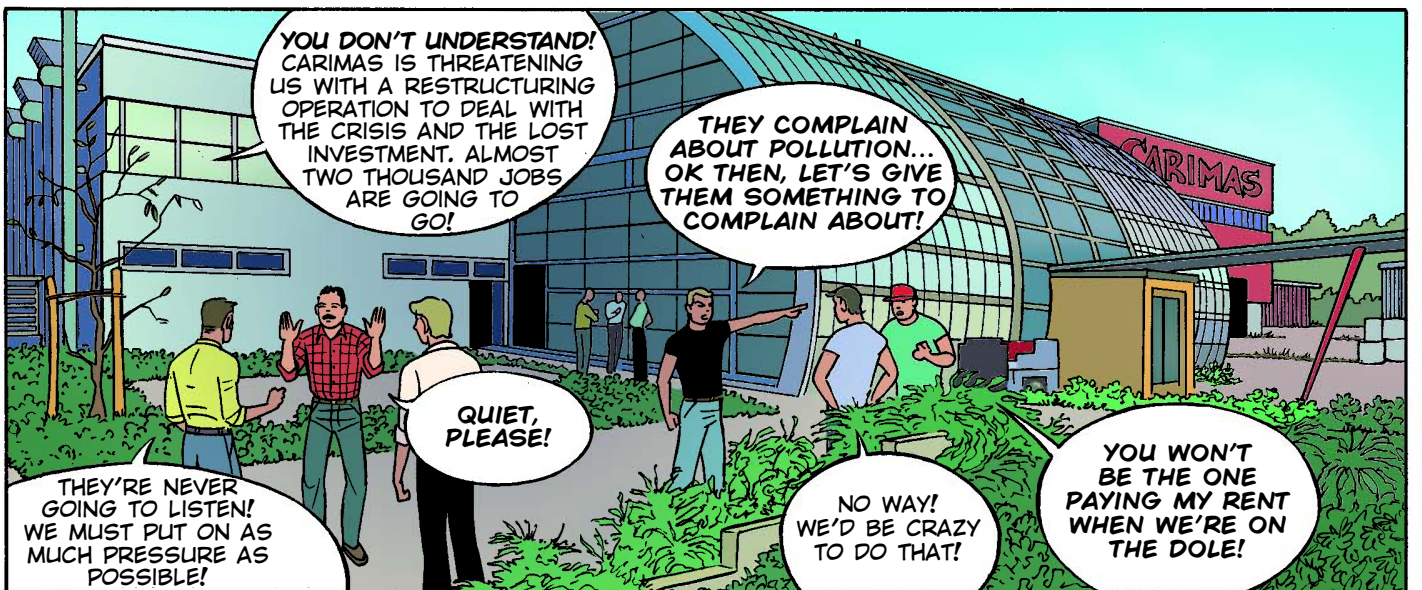
MR GOLDING, DO YOU THINK THE BREAK-IN IS LINKED TO THE CARIMAS AFFAIR?



I'VE GOT A UNION REP FROM CARIMAS ON THE LINE... THE WORKERS ARE THREATENING TO GO ON STRIKE!...

MS VEGA, WE WANT THE EUROPEAN UNION TO GUARANTEE JOBS IN THE CHEMICAL INDUSTRY!... YOUR NEW ANTI-POLLUTION MEASURES ARE GOING TO CAUSE A CRISIS FOR THE WORK FORCE!

JOBS ARE VITALLY IMPORTANT, FOR US AND FOR YOU, BUT ENCOURAGING POLLUTION WON'T SAVE THEM!



YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND! CARIMAS IS THREATENING US WITH A RESTRUCTURING OPERATION TO DEAL WITH THE CRISIS AND THE LOST INVESTMENT. ALMOST TWO THOUSAND JOBS ARE GOING TO GO!

THEY COMPLAIN ABOUT POLLUTION... OK THEN, LET'S GIVE THEM SOMETHING TO COMPLAIN ABOUT!

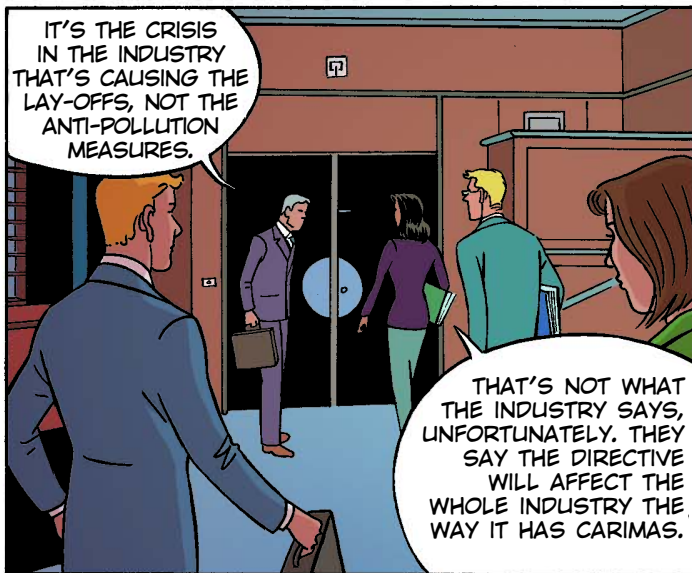
THEY'RE NEVER GOING TO LISTEN! WE MUST PUT ON AS MUCH PRESSURE AS POSSIBLE!

QUIET, PLEASE!

NO WAY! WE'D BE CRAZY TO DO THAT!

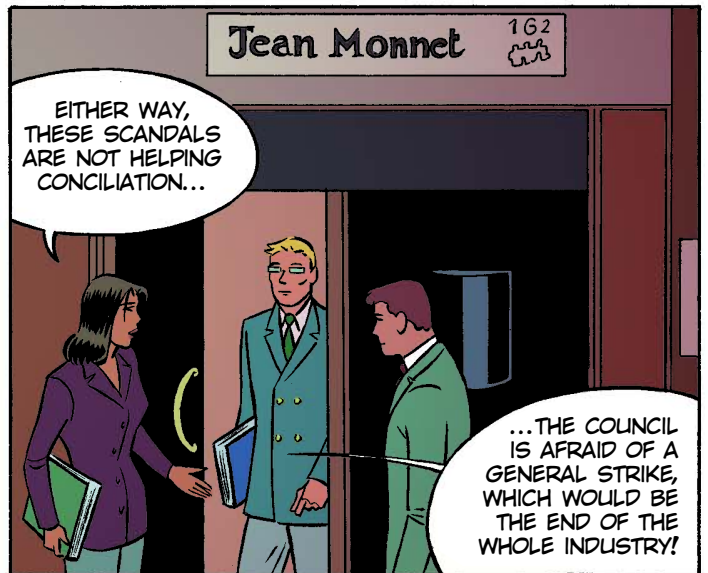
YOU WON'T BE THE ONE PAYING MY RENT WHEN WE'RE ON THE DOLE!

* Carimas in the hot seat again. Photographer Jacques Golding victim of an unexplained break-in. A



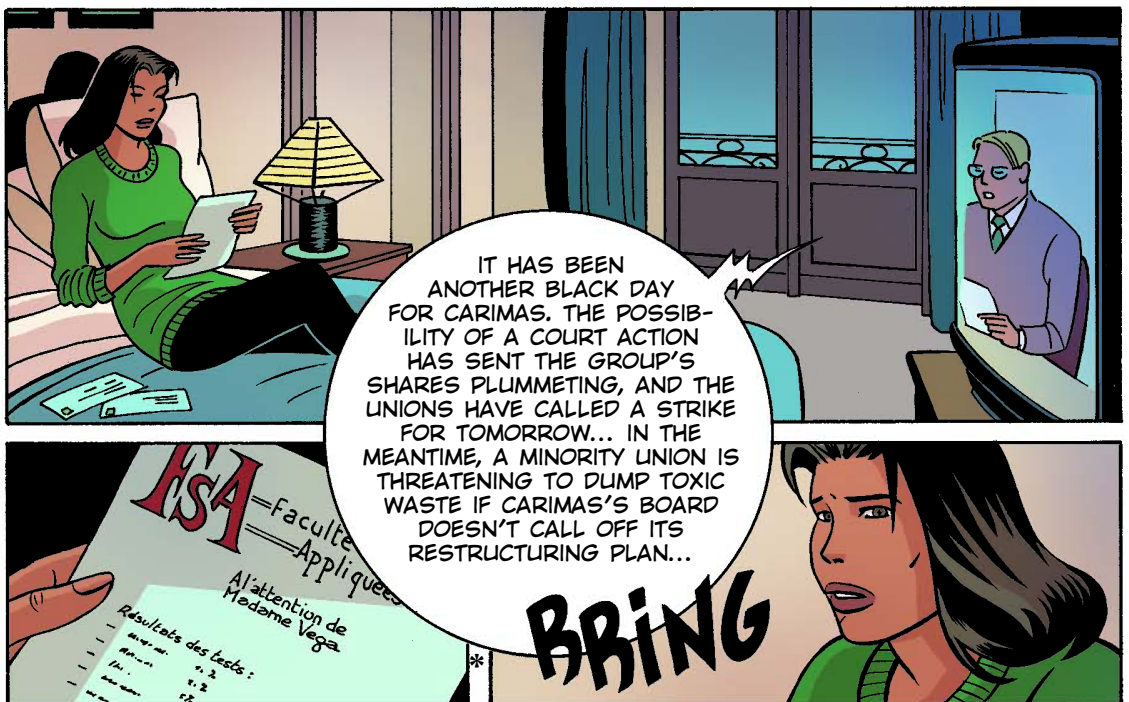
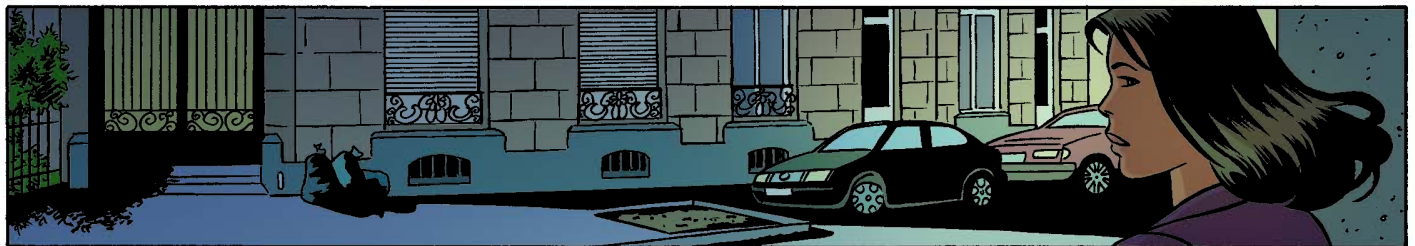
IT'S THE CRISIS IN THE INDUSTRY THAT'S CAUSING THE LAY-OFFS, NOT THE ANTI-POLLUTION MEASURES.

THAT'S NOT WHAT THE INDUSTRY SAYS, UNFORTUNATELY. THEY SAY THE DIRECTIVE WILL AFFECT THE WHOLE INDUSTRY THE WAY IT HAS CARIMAS.



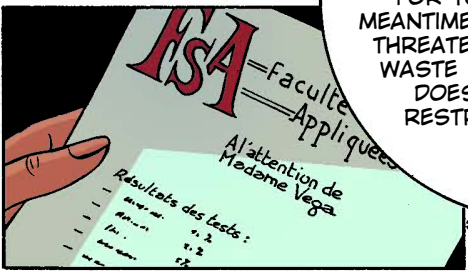
EITHER WAY, THESE SCANDALS ARE NOT HELPING CONCILIATION...

...THE COUNCIL IS AFRAID OF A GENERAL STRIKE, WHICH WOULD BE THE END OF THE WHOLE INDUSTRY!

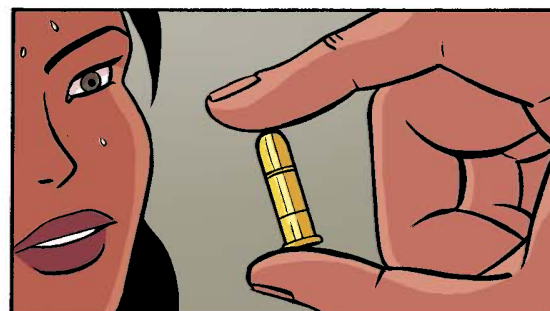
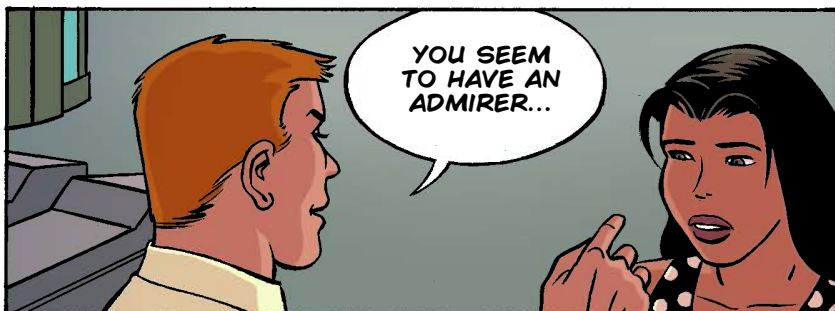
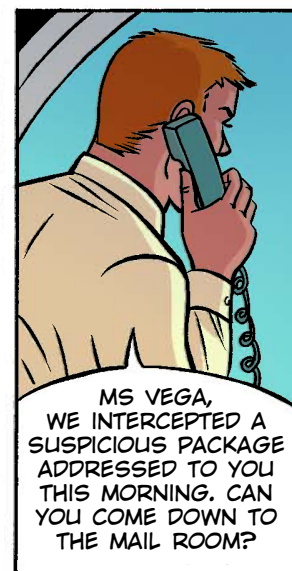


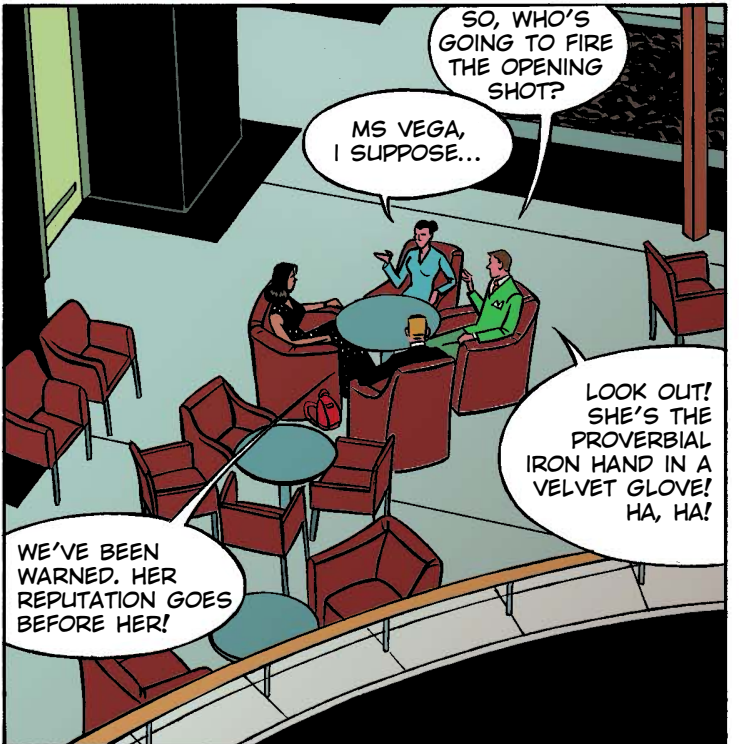
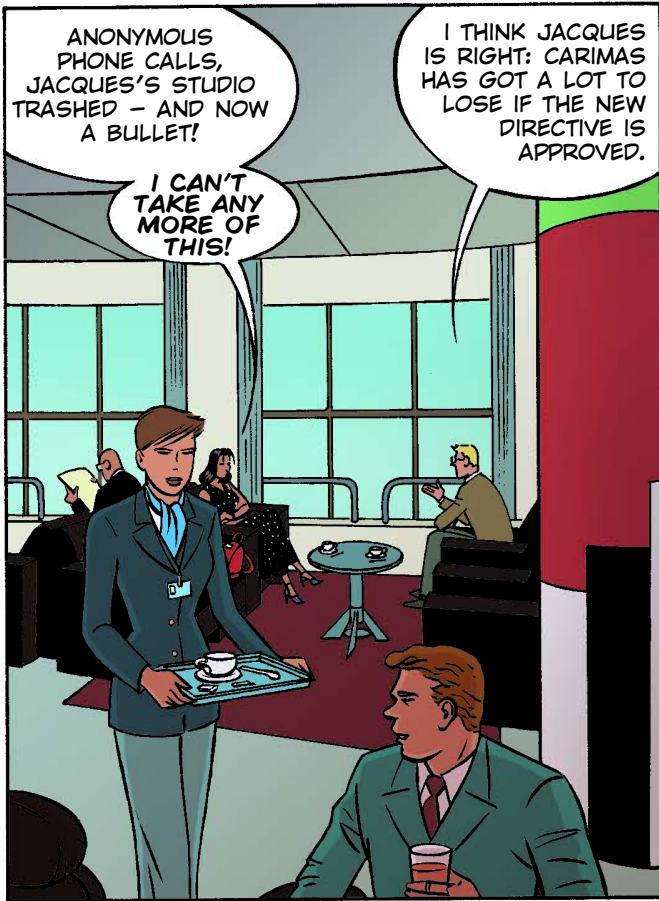
IT HAS BEEN ANOTHER BLACK DAY FOR CARIMAS. THE POSSIBILITY OF A COURT ACTION HAS SENT THE GROUP'S SHARES PLUMMETING, AND THE UNIONS HAVE CALLED A STRIKE FOR TOMORROW... IN THE MEANTIME, A MINORITY UNION IS THREATENING TO DUMP TOXIC WASTE IF CARIMAS'S BOARD DOESN'T CALL OFF ITS RESTRUCTURING PLAN...

BRING



* Faculty of applied sciences. Test results:



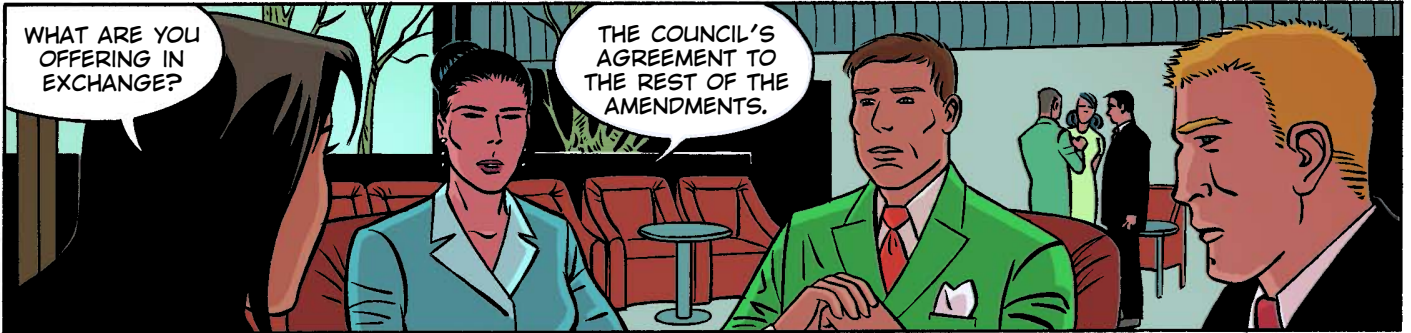




...YOU WON'T GET MANY OF THE MEMBER STATES TO AGREE IF YOU DON'T MAKE CONCESSIONS ON IMPLEMENTING DEADLINES AND EXEMPTIONS...



AND THE COMMISSION WON'T HAVE TIME TO DRAW UP THE LIST OF DANGEROUS SUBSTANCES YOU WANT BY THE 1ST OF JULY.



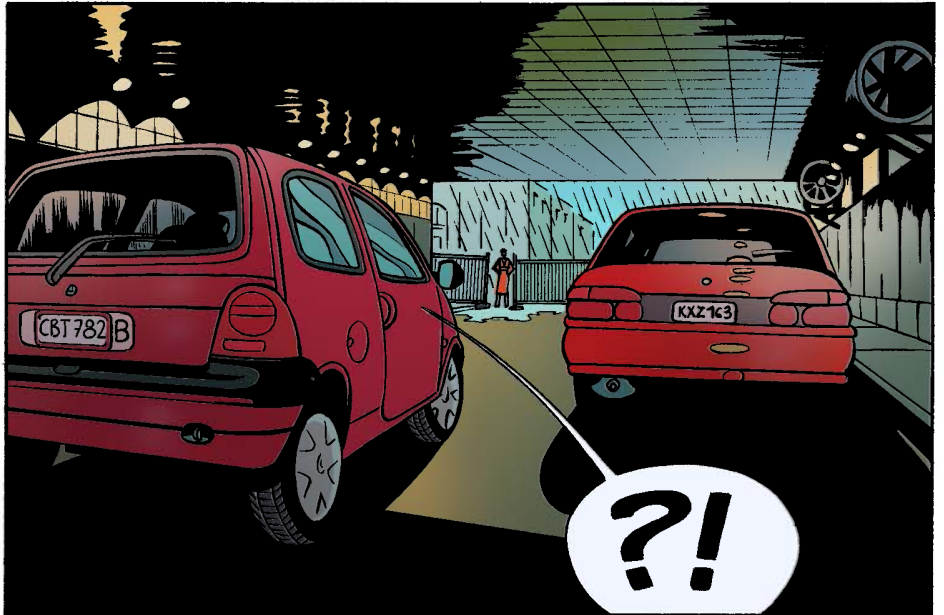
WHAT ARE YOU OFFERING IN EXCHANGE?

THE COUNCIL'S AGREEMENT TO THE REST OF THE AMENDMENTS.



WE'LL THINK ABOUT YOUR PROPOSAL.

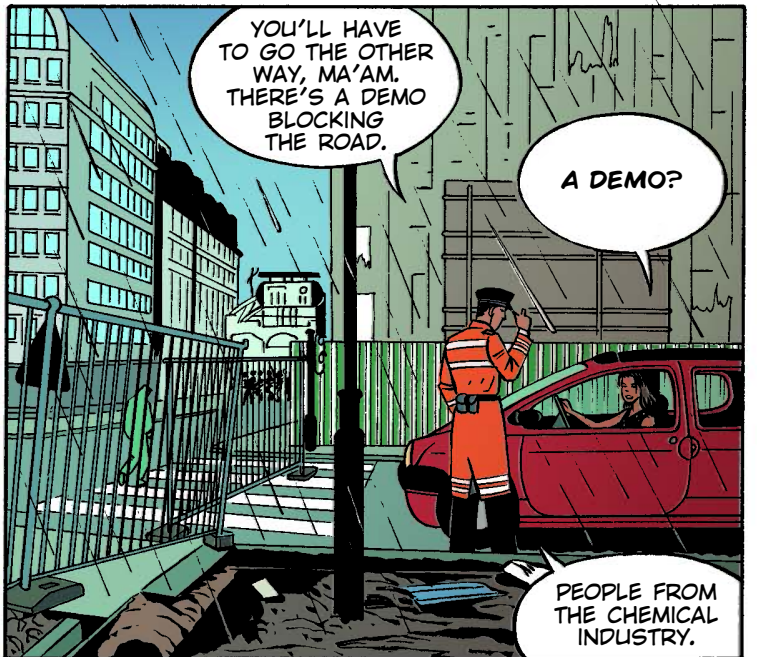
SO OUR NEXT MEETING WILL BE ON THURSDAY.



?!



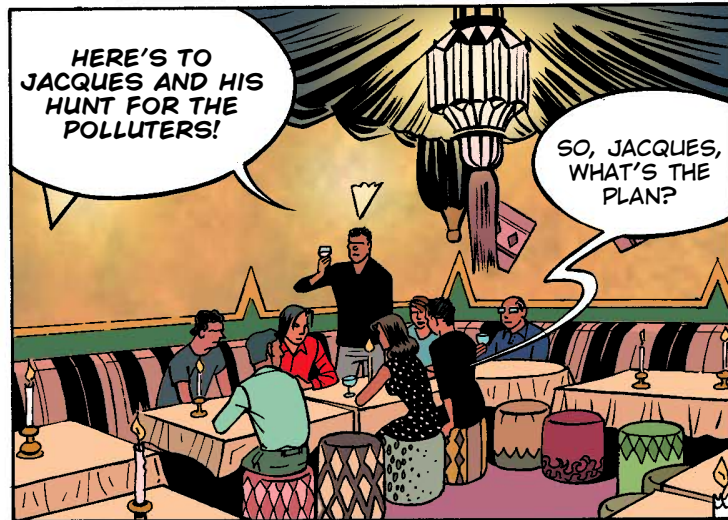
WHAT'S GOING ON?

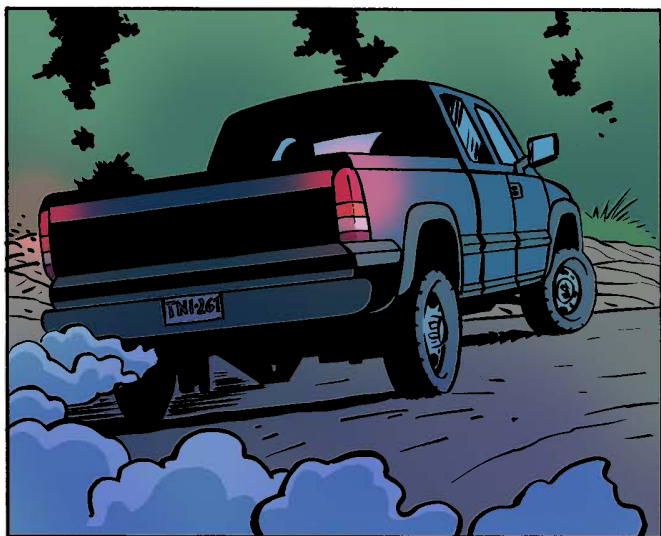
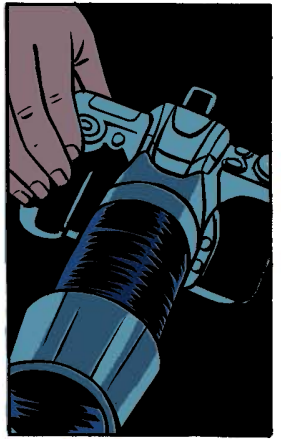
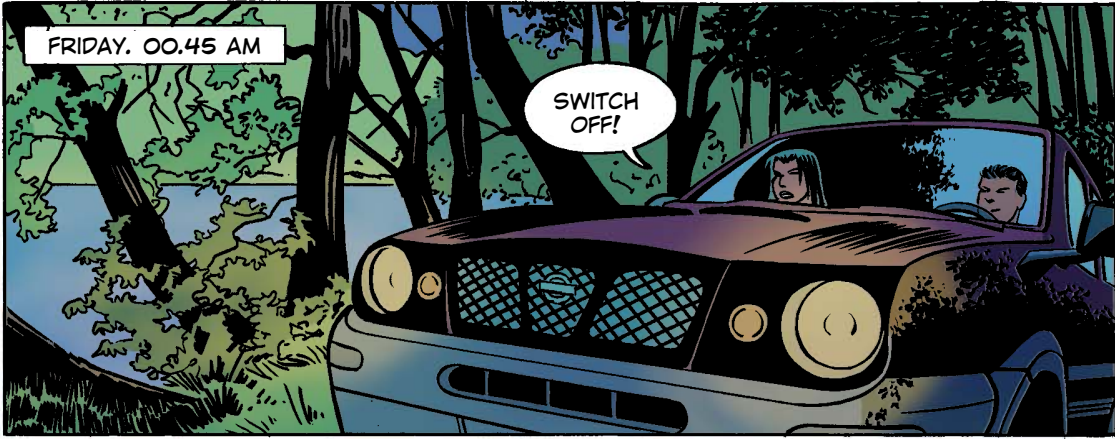


YOU'LL HAVE TO GO THE OTHER WAY, MA'AM. THERE'S A DEMO BLOCKING THE ROAD.

A DEMO?

PEOPLE FROM THE CHEMICAL INDUSTRY.





FRIDAY. 00.45 AM

SWITCH OFF!

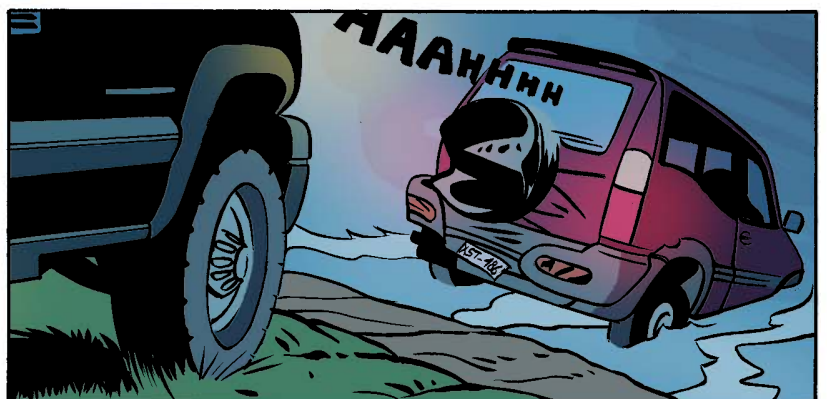
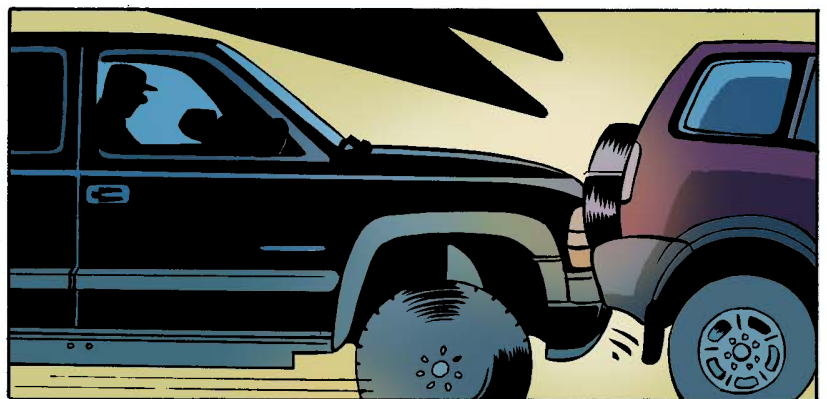
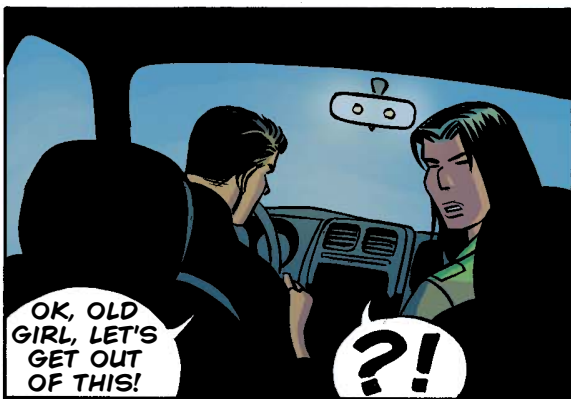
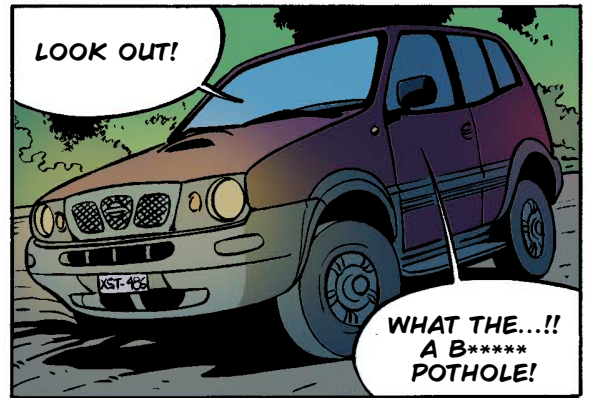
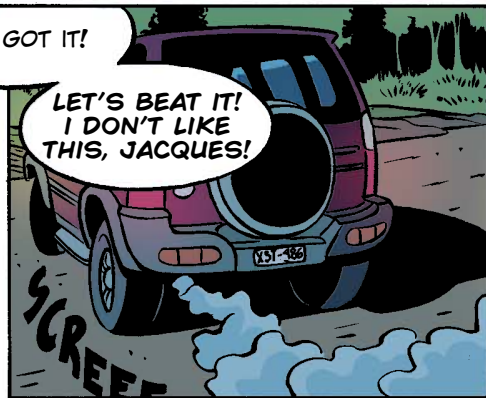
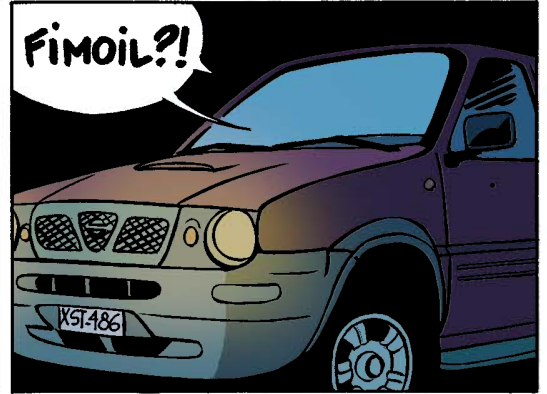
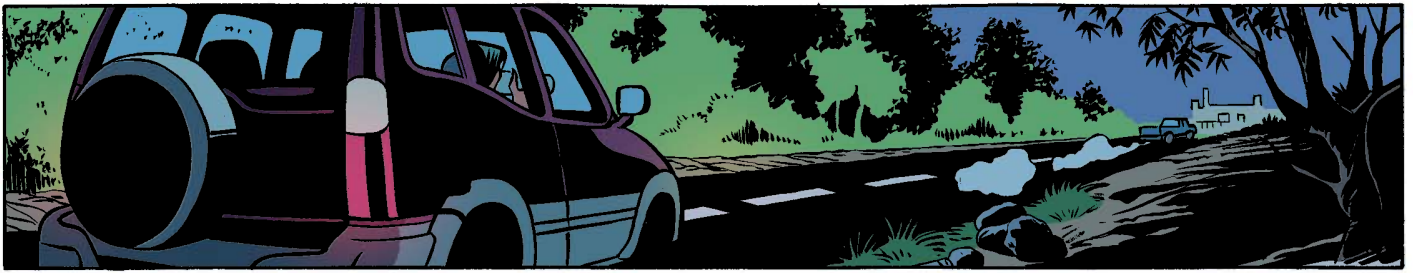
BE CAREFUL!
I'LL WAIT FOR
YOU IN THE CAR...
READY TO GO!

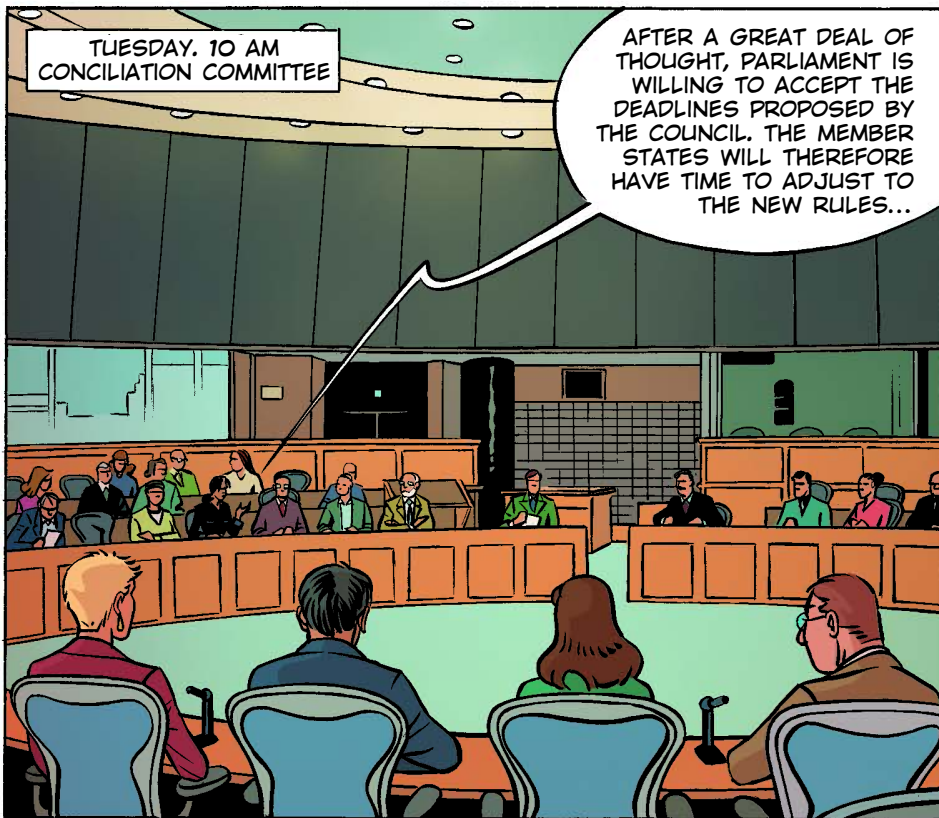
HELLO!
WE'VE GOT
COMPANY!

...BARRELS?!
DON'T TELL
ME...

QUICK! TURN AROUND!
THEY'VE JUST POURED
TOXIC WASTE INTO THE
RIVER! LET'S GET
AFTER THEM!

IT WAS
CARIMAS STUFF,
WASN'T IT?





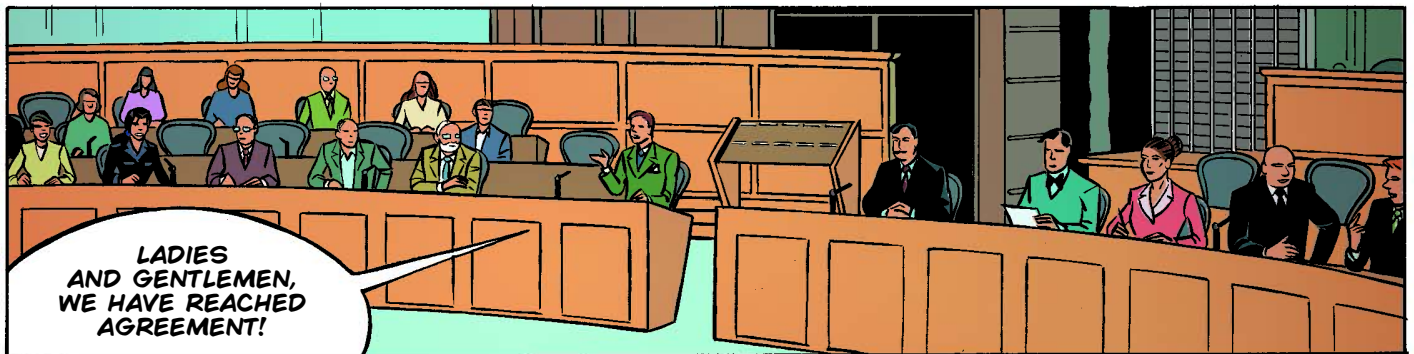
TUESDAY, 10 AM
CONCILIATION COMMITTEE

AFTER A GREAT DEAL OF
THOUGHT, PARLIAMENT IS
WILLING TO ACCEPT THE
DEADLINES PROPOSED BY
THE COUNCIL. THE MEMBER
STATES WILL THEREFORE
HAVE TIME TO ADJUST TO
THE NEW RULES...



...ON CONDITION
THAT THE MEMBER
STATES ARE REQUIRED
TO TAKE STEPS TO
ELIMINATE DANGEROUS
SUBSTANCES FROM
UNDERGROUND AND
SURFACE WATERS
AND TO INTRODUCE
A FAIR PRICING
SYSTEM.

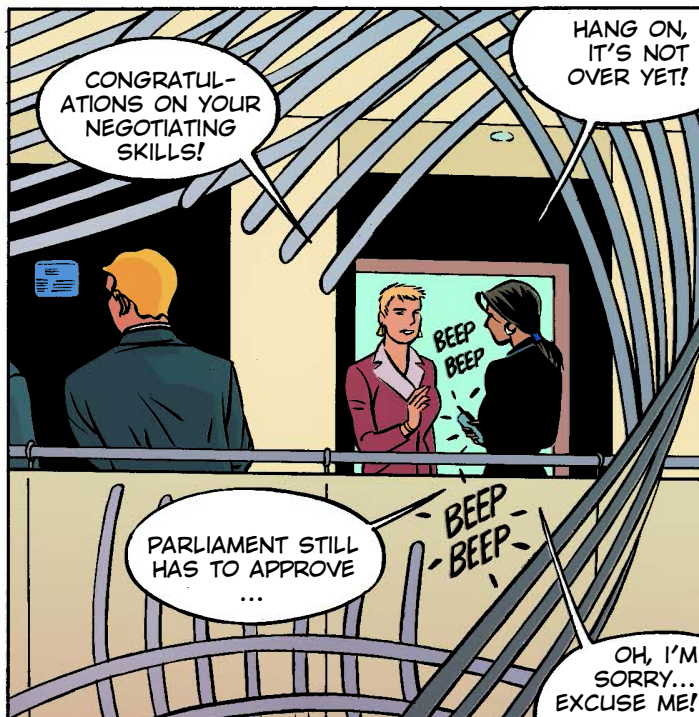
WE
CONSIDER
PARLIAMENT'S
POSITION TO BE
REASONABLE.



LADIES
AND GENTLEMEN,
WE HAVE REACHED
AGREEMENT!



SPLendid!
THIS HAS BEEN
AN ALL-ROUND
SUCCESS.



CONGRATULATIONS ON YOUR
NEGOTIATING
SKILLS!

HANG ON,
IT'S NOT
OVER YET!

PARLIAMENT STILL
HAS TO APPROVE
...

OH, I'M
SORRY...
EXCUSE ME!



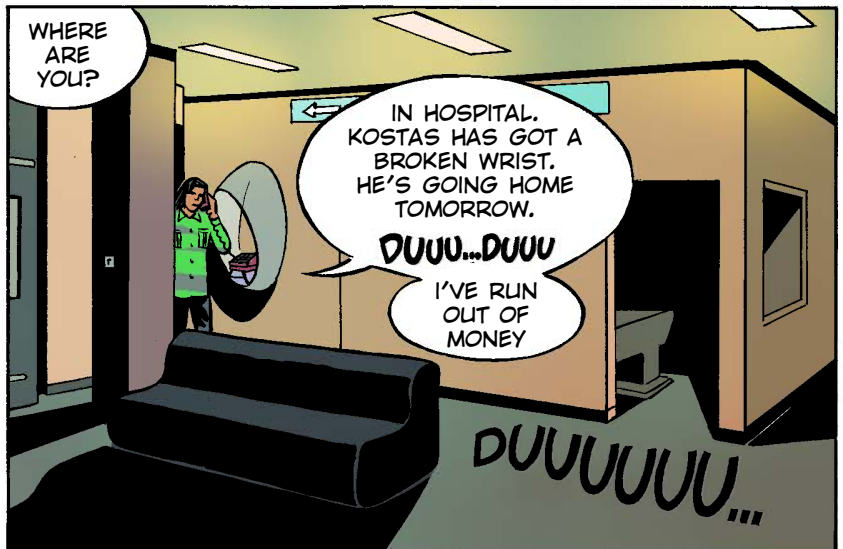
JACQUES? AT
LAST! I DIDN'T
KNOW WHAT HAD
HAPPENED TO
YOU!... HANG ON,
I CAN'T HEAR
YOU...



WHAT?... PUSHED INTO THE RIVER?



THEY TRIED TO GET RID OF US - WE KNEW TOO MUCH - BUT I SAVED THE FILM. AND NOW IT'S THEIR TURN TO GO UNDER. SOMETHING STINKS ABOUT FIMOIL...



WHERE ARE YOU?

IN HOSPITAL. KOSTAS HAS GOT A BROKEN WRIST. HE'S GOING HOME TOMORROW.

DUUU...DUUU

I'VE RUN OUT OF MONEY

DUUUUUUU...

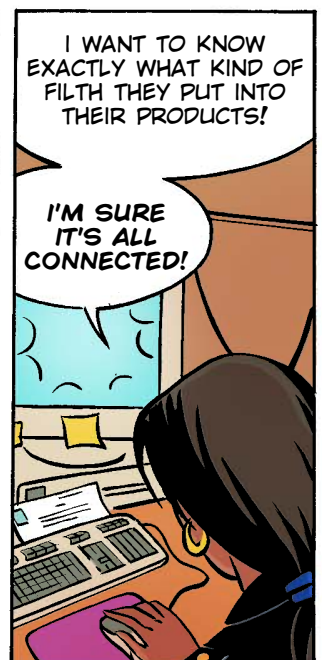


I MUST HURRY ...



AH, THERE YOU ARE, ALEX!

FIND THE CARIMAS FILE, WILL YOU? I WANT YOU TO GET THE COMPOSITION OF THE WASTE THAT WAS DUMPED! IT DOESN'T MATTER HOW, BUT GET IT! THEN ASK CARIMAS AND FIMOIL FOR THEIR PRODUCTION REPORTS!



I WANT TO KNOW EXACTLY WHAT KIND OF FILTH THEY PUT INTO THEIR PRODUCTS!

I'M SURE IT'S ALL CONNECTED!

Archives

Dans le texte

Fimoil

ET

Premières lignes:

du: 1

janvier

1994

au: 30

Reportage

Sur la piste des talibans

Les anciens maîtres de Kaboul n'ont pu être gommés ni d'Afghanistan ni du Pakistan

21 SEPTEMBRE - UNE SEMAINE POUR COMPRENDRE

Mardi: Nine Eleven, un an après

Vendredi: Victor se balade dans New York

Fimoil lance une guerre de prix contre Carimas sur le marché asiatique*

En 2004, il faudra dire les Vingt-cinq

Bush rassemble et divise

POLITIQUE

Yankees et chocs: les perspectives

En 2004, il faudra dire les Vingt-cinq

CINEMA

Stallone fait rire Deauville

Après la pluie et le beau temps

Le Sadeien promet qu'il est prêt

Le grand film: Remontez la pente

Le film de l'été: Les hommes de l'été

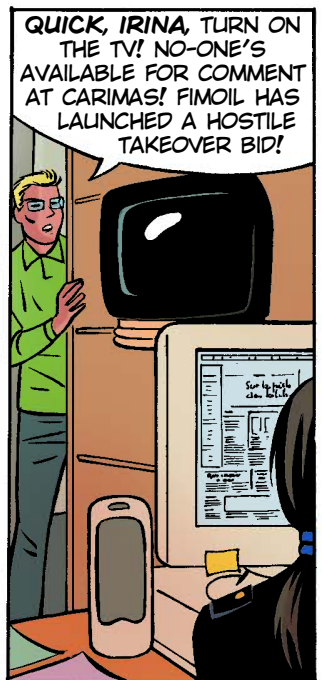
Le film de l'été: Les hommes de l'été

Le film de l'été: Les hommes de l'été

SOMMAIRE

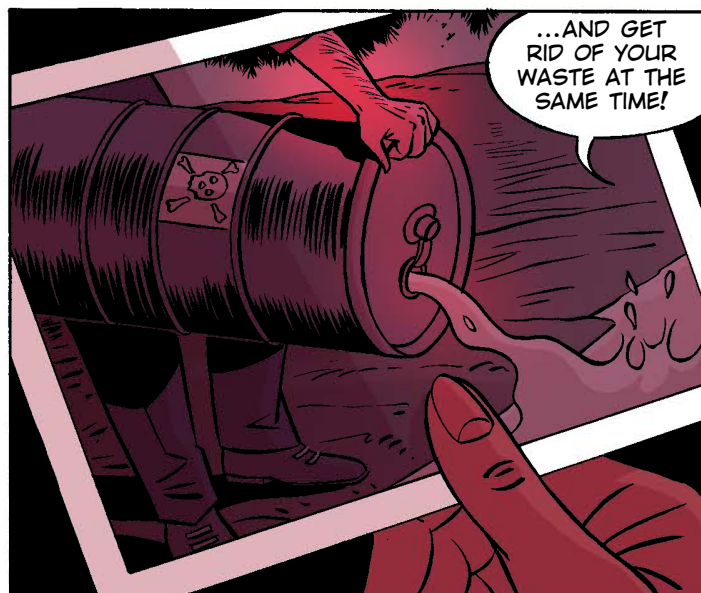
Page 2

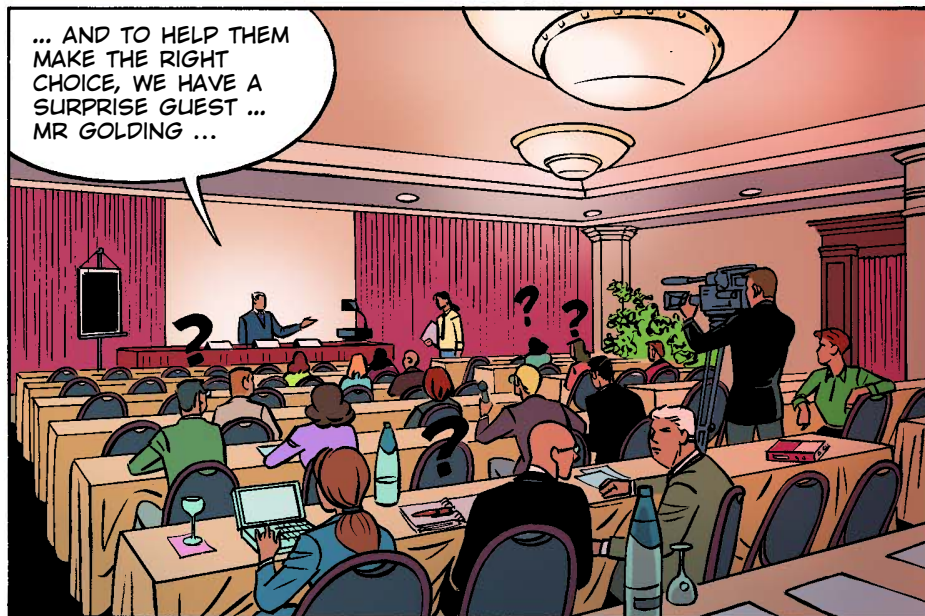
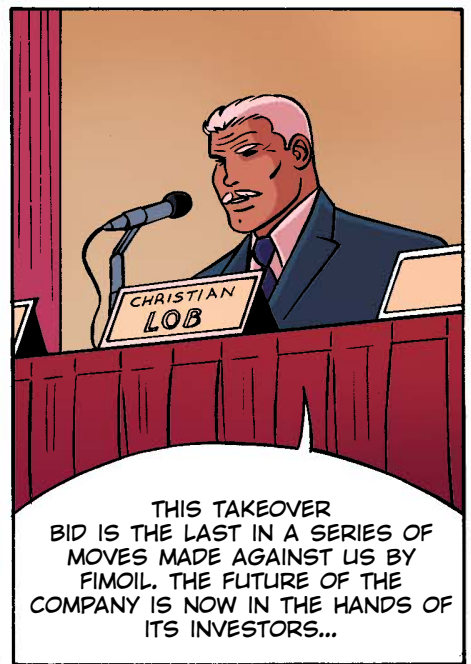
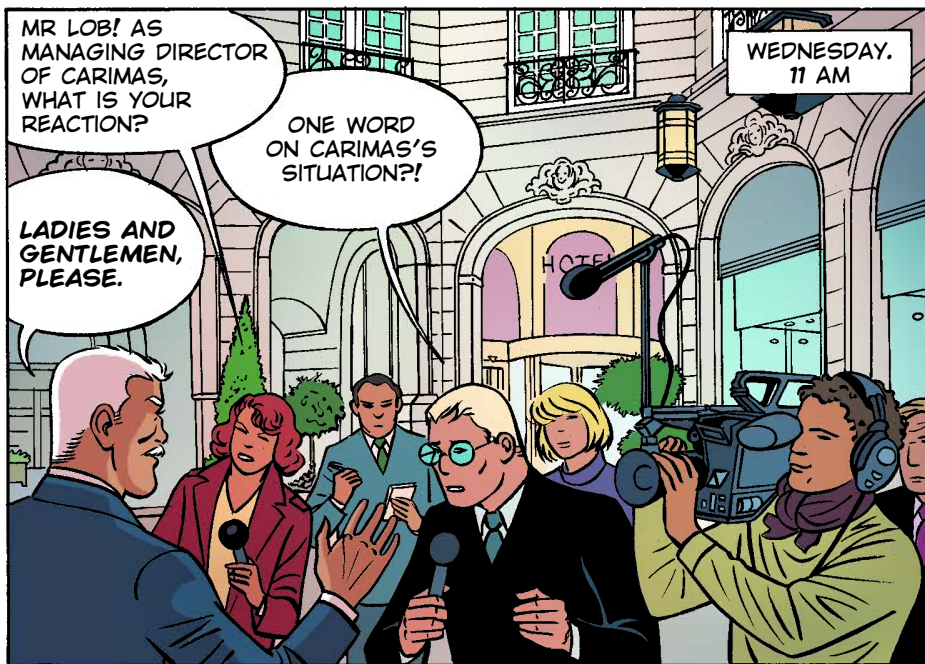
Page 3

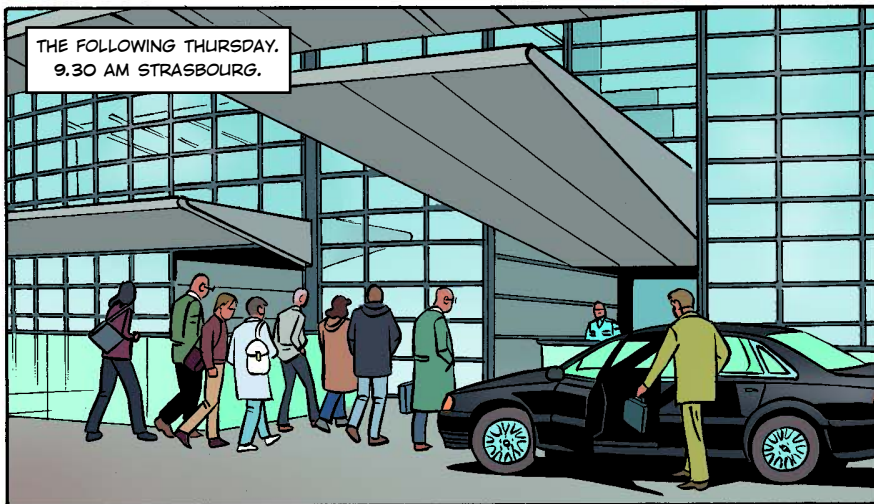


QUICK, IRINA, TURN ON THE TV! NO-ONE'S AVAILABLE FOR COMMENT AT CARIMAS! FIMOIL HAS LAUNCHED A HOSTILE TAKEOVER BID!

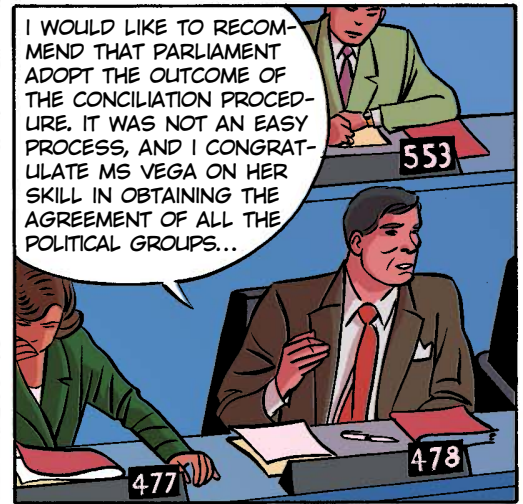
* Fimoil starts price war with Carimas on Asian markets



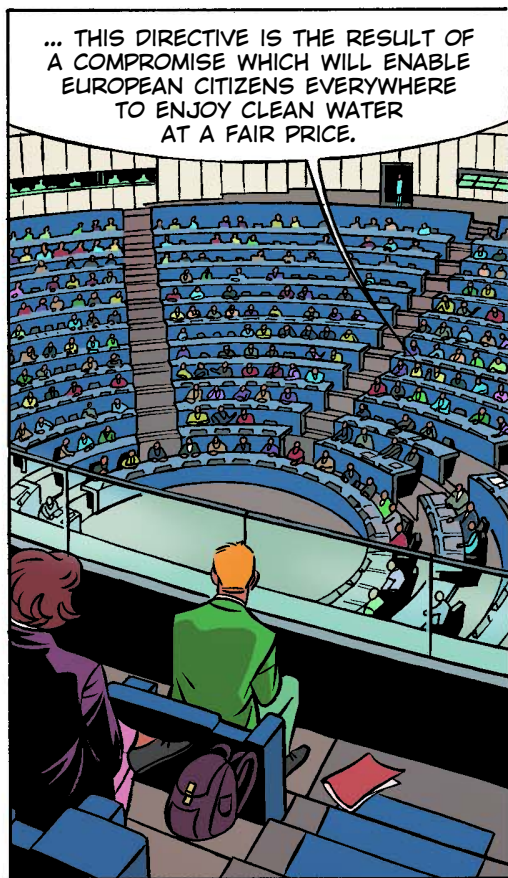




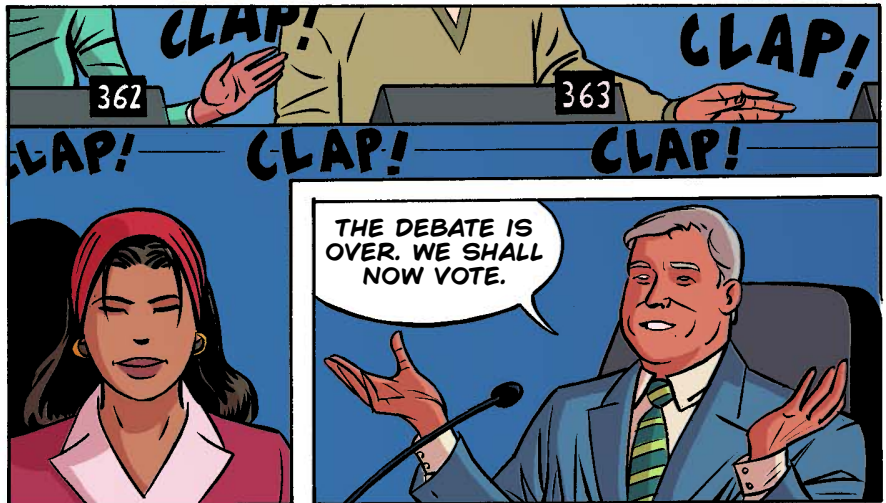
THE FOLLOWING THURSDAY.
9.30 AM STRASBOURG.



I WOULD LIKE TO RECOMMEND THAT PARLIAMENT ADOPT THE OUTCOME OF THE CONCILIATION PROCEDURE. IT WAS NOT AN EASY PROCESS, AND I CONGRATULATE MS VEGA ON HER SKILL IN OBTAINING THE AGREEMENT OF ALL THE POLITICAL GROUPS...



... THIS DIRECTIVE IS THE RESULT OF A COMPROMISE WHICH WILL ENABLE EUROPEAN CITIZENS EVERYWHERE TO ENJOY CLEAN WATER AT A FAIR PRICE.

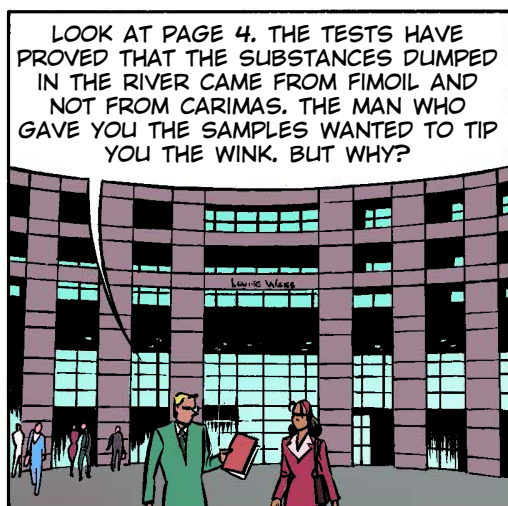


CLAP! CLAP! CLAP! CLAP! CLAP!

THE DEBATE IS OVER. WE SHALL NOW VOTE.



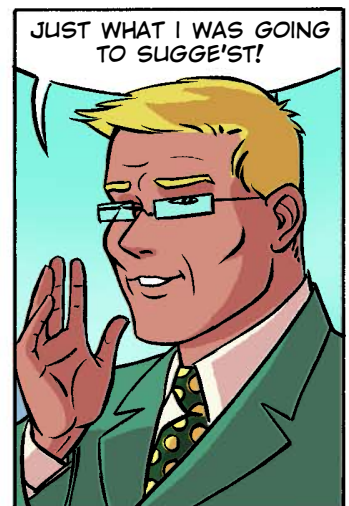
THE WATER POLICY DIRECTIVE IS HEREBY APPROVED!



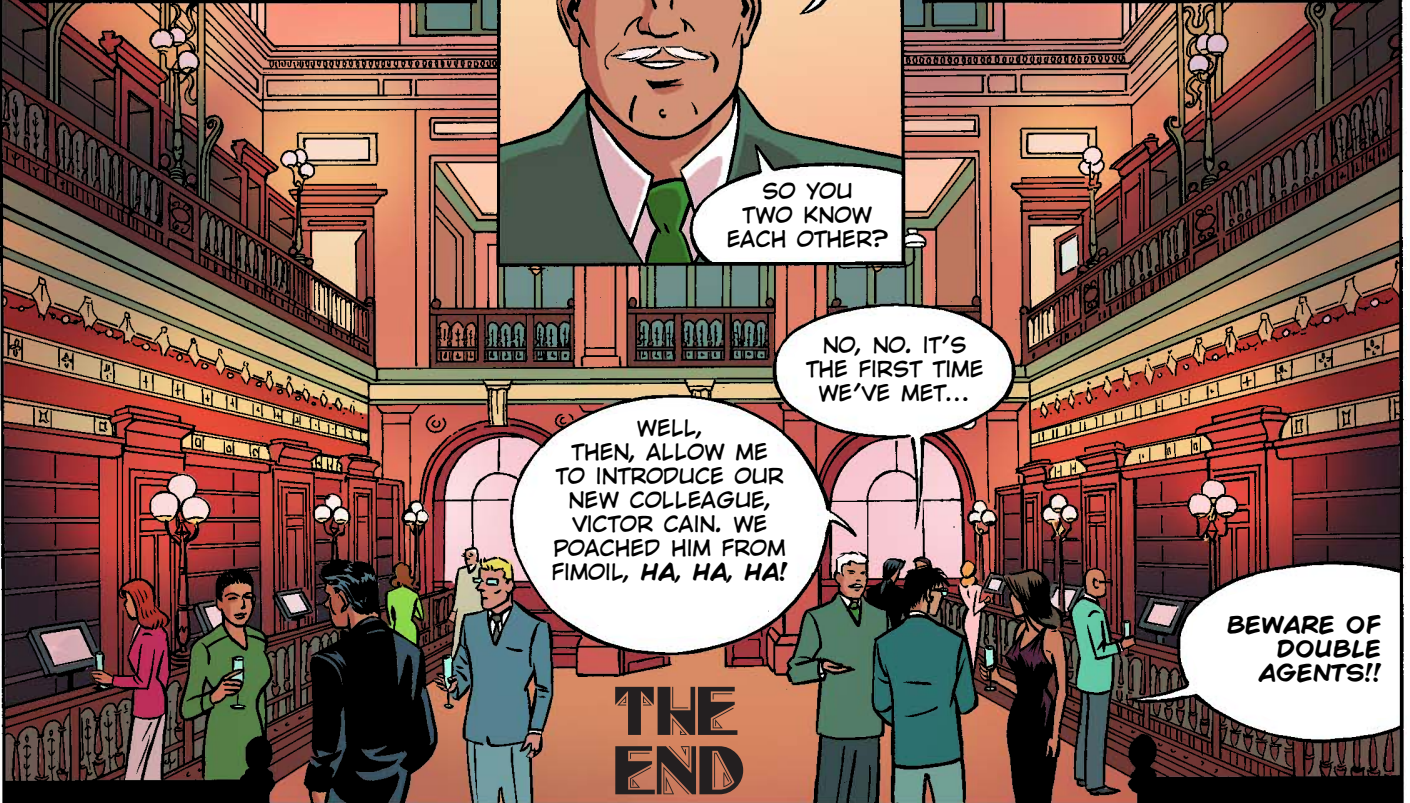
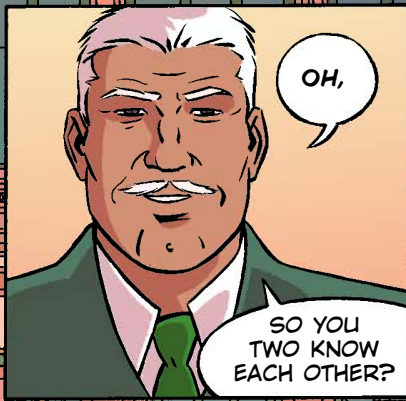
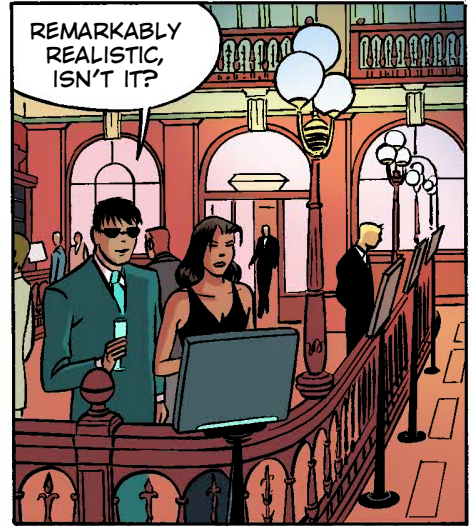
LOOK AT PAGE 4. THE TESTS HAVE PROVED THAT THE SUBSTANCES DUMPED IN THE RIVER CAME FROM FIMOIL AND NOT FROM CARIMAS. THE MAN WHO GAVE YOU THE SAMPLES WANTED TO TIP YOU THE WINK. BUT WHY?



YES, WHY? AND WHO? WE MAY NEVER KNOW ... SHALL WE HAVE A BITE TO EAT BEFORE WE GO?



JUST WHAT I WAS GOING TO SUGGEST!



Your EP phrasebook...





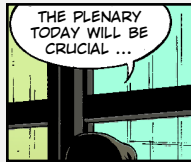
Strasbourg

Strasbourg is the seat of the **European Parliament**.



The European Union

The European Union is an ever closer union between the nations of Europe. Its Member States fly their flags in Strasbourg. The fifteen Member States – soon to be more – adopt common policies and measures, because they can achieve better results together than they could individually.



Plenary

The **European Parliament** meets 'in plenary sitting' when it holds its part-sessions – 12 week-long part-sessions in Strasbourg and a number of shorter ones in Brussels. All Members of the European Parliament are expected to attend. When a parliamentary standing **committee** meets, on the other hand, usually only the members of that committee attend.



'If I don't manage to win Parliament over we shall have missed a wonderful opportunity to use our environmental powers...'

The European Parliament, which MEP Irina Vega here refers to as 'Parliament', is elected every five years by the citizens (over 18 years) of the Member States of the **European Union**. At present the European Parliament has 626 Members.

The **Council of Ministers** and the **European Parliament** now adopt European environmental and other 'laws' together. The **directive** on water policy was the first piece of legislation where the European Parliament used 'codecision' in the area of the environment.



Alex

Members of the European Parliament have parliamentary assistants. Alex is Irina Vega's assistant.



Political group

Like political parties in national parliaments, political groups play a major role in the **European Parliament's** policy decisions. The vast majority of Members of the European Parliament belong to a political group, the others being referred to as 'non-attached' Members. The political groups in the **European Parliament** are made up of Members from different Member States.

Rapporteur

When a parliamentary standing committee has to consider a proposal for a 'European law', it chooses one of its members – the rapporteur – to draw up a report which, if adopted by the committee, is debated and voted on in **plenary**. Once approved, this report constitutes the position of the European Parliament.



Environment Committee

Members of the European Parliament are divided among 17 parliamentary standing committees; the Environment Committee is one of them.

Amendments

An amendment is a change to the proposed text of a law. Amendments are tabled and voted on, first in **committee**, then in the **European Parliament** meeting in **plenary sitting**.

Commission

The European Commission (here referred to simply as 'the Commission') is the institution which initiates 'Community laws', manages European policies and enforces the treaties. At present it is made up of 20 independent Commissioners (2 each from France, Germany, Italy, Spain and the United Kingdom and 1 from each of the other Member States).The Commission is nominated by the governments of the Member States and appointed or rejected by the European **Parliament**.

'El agua no es un bien...'

The work of the interpreters allows parliamentary proceedings to take place in all the official languages of the **European Union**.



Codecision

'Codecision' is the usual legislative procedure of the **European Union**: the **Council of Ministers** and the **European Parliament**, on an equal footing, jointly adopt the 'European laws' proposed by the **European Commission**. The **European Parliament** has to give its final consent.



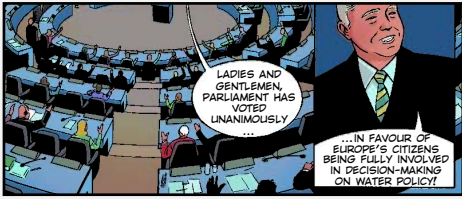
Council of Ministers

The Council of Ministers – officially called the 'Council of the European Union' – is made up of ministers from each Member State (or their representatives). It adopts 'European laws', often in codecision with the **European Parliament**. Its make-up varies according to the subject (foreign affairs, the budget, the environment etc.). It should not be confused with the European Council. At least twice a year the European Council – i.e. the heads of state or government of the Member States and the President of the **European Commission** – meets to decide on the main lines of the **European Union's** policy. The media sometimes refer to these meetings as summits.

'Ladies and gentlemen, we shall now vote!'

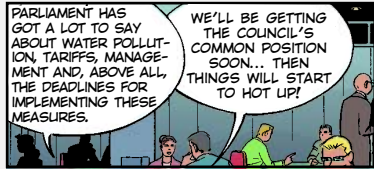
The European Parliament sitting in plenary is voting at first reading on the report on the 'proposed law' presented by the European Commission. The codecision process has really begun. It can involve up to three readings by Parliament.





'Ladies and gentlemen...'

While the **European Parliament** is elected for five years, its President is elected by the Members for two and half years, i.e. half a parliamentary term. The President of the **European Parliament** oversees all **Parliament's** activities, chairs its sittings and represents it in all its external relations.



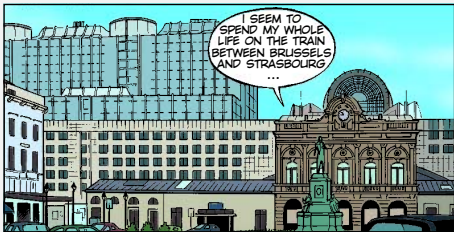
Common position

The legislative text on which the Council of Ministers agrees after the **European Parliament** has adopted its position at first reading is called a 'common position'.



'Bruxelles-Gare du Luxembourg'

The Gare du Luxembourg is next to the **European Parliament** buildings in Brussels.



'I seem to spend my whole life on the train between Brussels and Strasbourg...'

Members of the **European Parliament** work in both Strasbourg, where most parliamentary sittings are held, and Brussels, where the standing **committees** and **political groups** hold their meetings and a few additional part-sessions take place. The secretariat of the **European Parliament** is located in a third city, Luxembourg. A number of officials and the staff of the political groups are located in Brussels.



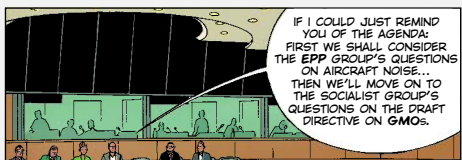
Info Point

There are many **European Union** 'Info Points' in the Member States, as well as in the applicant countries. They provide information for the public on the **European Union** and its policies. The **European Parliament's** website gives information on the activities of the **European Parliament** and its Members: www.europarl.eu.int.



OSCE

The Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe is made up of European, Asian and North American nations. Its role is to prevent conflict situations in Europe, manage them if they do occur and act in the wake of any conflict.



Directive

A directive is one of the forms that a 'European law' can take. It lays down the results to be achieved but leaves it up to the Member States to decide how to achieve them.

Second reading

When the **European Parliament** has received the Council's 'common position' it begins to prepare for its second reading if it wishes to insist on changes proposed at first reading.



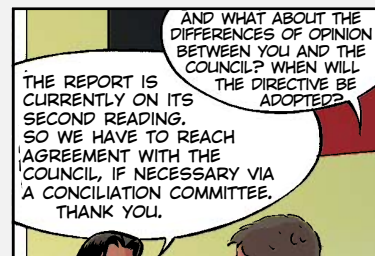
NGO

Non-governmental organisation: many organisations that do not depend on governments are active in areas such as food aid, health, human rights and the environment. The list is extremely long, and includes the Red Cross, Amnesty International, Médecins sans Frontières, Caritas, Oxfam and WWF International.



Conciliation Committee

Under the codecision procedure, if there is still disagreement between the **European Parliament** and the **Council of Ministers** after Parliament's second reading, the members of the **Council** and a delegation from **Parliament** meet in a 'Conciliation Committee' to try to find a compromise. The **Parliament** and **Council** delegations are of equal size.

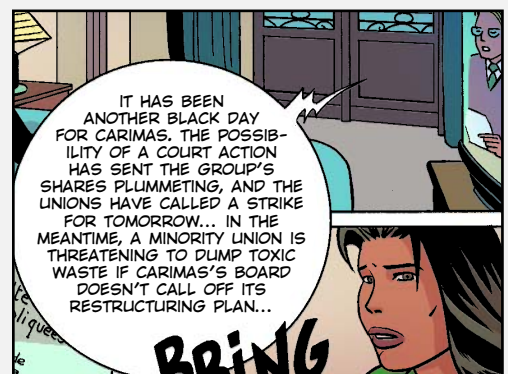


Minority union

Trade unions, which defend the rights of workers in a company, an industry or at national or **European Union** level, first came into being in the nineteenth century. Union elections are held within companies. A union may have a majority or dominant position, or a minority position.

Board

The board of a company is the body which takes strategic decisions for the company.



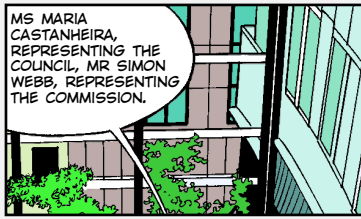
'But you're going to have to negotiate with the Council.'

The **Conciliation Committee** is the forum for this negotiation, the aim of which is to reach a compromise between the **European Parliament** and the **Council** of the European Union.

An informal meeting of the Conciliation Committee

Informal meetings of a **Conciliation Committee** can be held without the presence of all the parties involved. They are preparatory working meetings where, among other things, possible compromise solutions can be discussed.





'Ms Maria Castanheira, representing the Council, Mr Simon Webb, representing the Commission'

At this informal meeting of the **Conciliation Committee** the **Council of Ministers** is represented by an official from the **Member State** holding the Council presidency (a presidency lasts for 6 months), the **Commission** by one of its officials.



'You won't get many of the Member States to agree...'

The Member States adopt a position through the intermediary of their representative on the **Council of Ministers**.

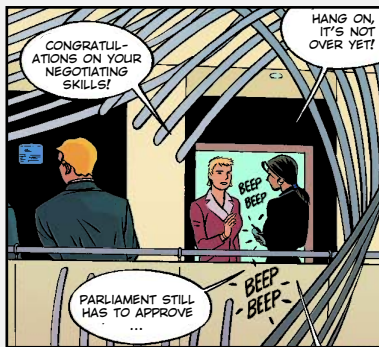
Implementing deadlines

Directives stipulate that the measures adopted must be implemented within a certain period, thus giving the Member States time to adjust.



Conciliation Committee (continued)

At official meetings of a **Conciliation Committee** the **Council of Ministers** presidency is represented by the relevant minister of the country holding the presidency and the **European Commission** is represented by a Commissioner. The **European Parliament** delegation, which is politically balanced, is chaired by one of Parliament's Vice-Presidents and must include the **rapporteur** and the chairman of the relevant parliamentary standing committee.



'Parliament still has to approve...'

While success in the conciliation process almost always guarantees the success of the legislative procedure, the **European Parliament** still has to confirm the **Conciliation Committee's** draft text at a third reading.



'Fimoil has launched a hostile takeover bid!'

When companies are trying to take over a competitor they often use the 'takeover bid' technique. The shareholders of the company being targeted are offered a price for their shares which is higher than their price on the stock exchange. If the company believes this operation to be harmful to it, it will call it a 'hostile takeover bid'.



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