

# I'VE SEEN WHALES

JAVIER DE ISUSI

ASTIBERRI

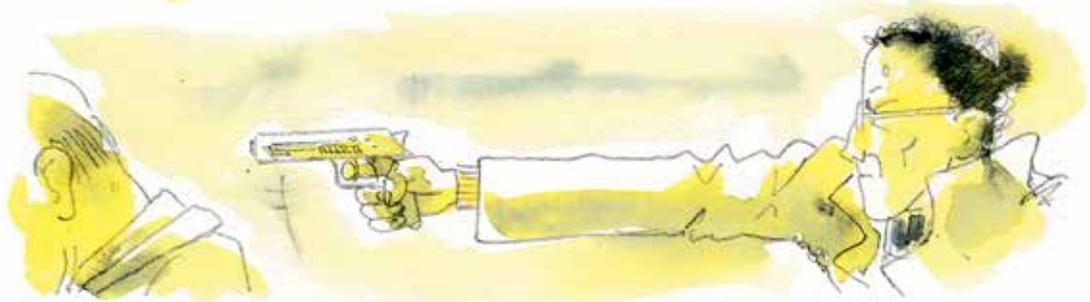
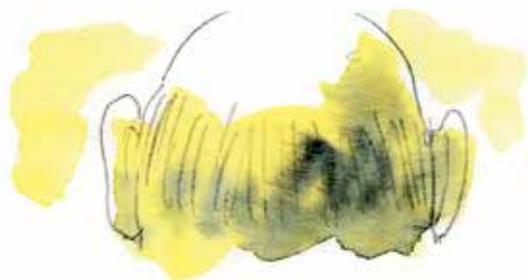
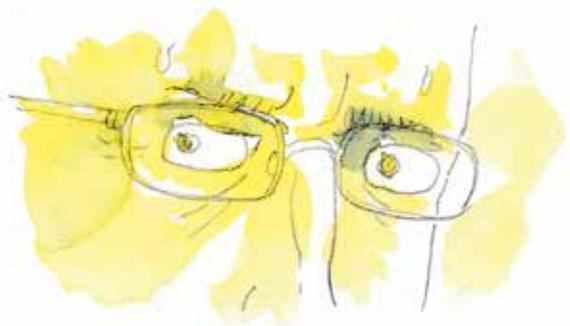
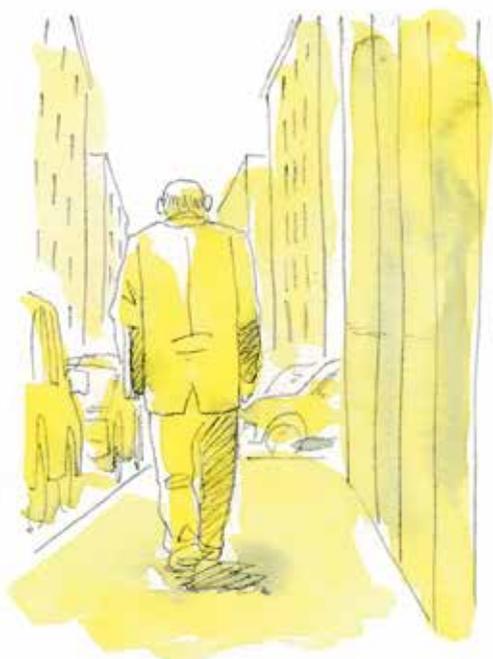


Denborak bidea ahorturik  
etxera itzuli ninduzunean  
berria zizun ateko zura  
eta sarraila ere\*

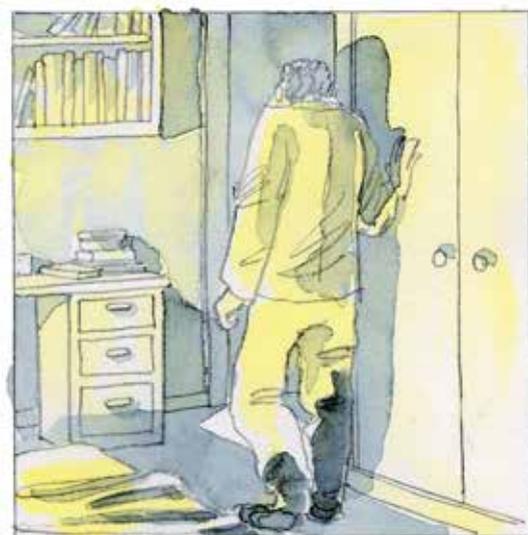
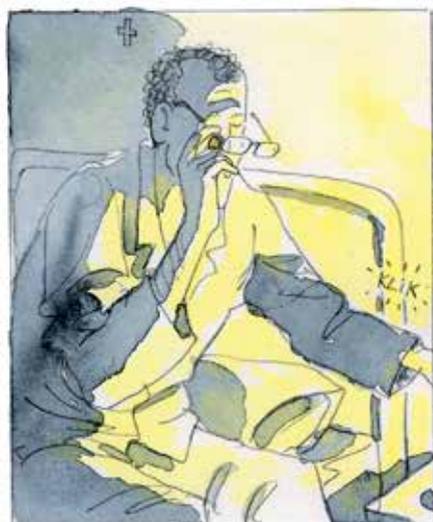
**Joseba Sarrionandia**

\* Cuando volví a casa  
consumido el camino por el tiempo  
nueva era la madera de la puerta  
nueva también la cerradura











\* EN EUSKERA: PAPÁ.



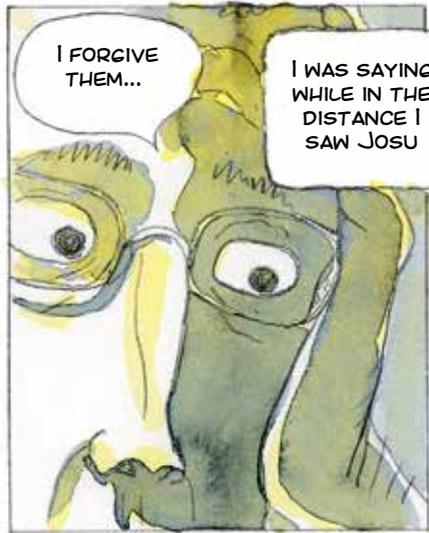


"I FORGIVE THEM", I SAID, AND ALL THE MASS MEDIA ECHOED THE WORDS OF THE YOUNG SEMINARIAN ORPHAN.



I FORGIVE THEM...

I SAID, WITHOUT REALLY KNOWING THE SCOPE OF THESE TWO WORDS



I FORGIVE THEM...

I WAS SAYING WHILE IN THE DISTANCE I SAW JOSU



I...FORGIVE THEM...

AND I DID NOT UNDERSTAND WHY, AT MY FATHER'S FUNERAL, JOSU, MY BEST FRIEND, APPROACHED ME



I... THEM...



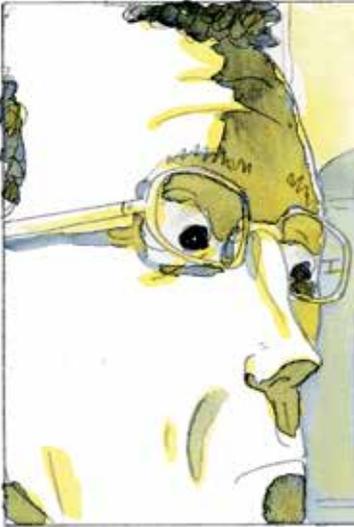
I MUST HAVE FELT SOMETHING IN THAT MOMENT, SOMETHING PROMPTED ME TO CALL HIM. IT WAS IN VAIN, HE DIDN'T ANSWER.

JOSU!



I OFTEN REMEMBER THIS SCENE.  
THOUGH I DONT KNOW WHY,  
I REMEMBER SEEING IT FROM  
OUTSIDE OF MYSELF.

IN MY MEMORY I  
SEE MYSELF FROM  
A DISTANCE, ALONE,  
AND JOSU AHEAD OF  
ME LOOKING GRIM AND  
CREST FALLEN IN  
THE RAIN.



I DIDN'T GO  
BACK TO SEE  
JOSU, AND  
FOR YEARS IT  
TORMENTED  
ME TO THINK  
THAT HE'D HAD  
ANYTHING TO  
DO WITH THE  
ATTACK. IT  
WOULD HAVE  
MADE ME AN  
INVOLUNTARY  
ACCOMPLICE.



BUT NO. JOSU  
APPARENTLY,  
ALREADY  
INSIDE ETA,  
HAD NOTHING  
TO DO WITH  
IT. HE HADN'T  
EVEN MET THE  
ONE WHO DID  
IT, A CERTAIN  
BISKARRET.



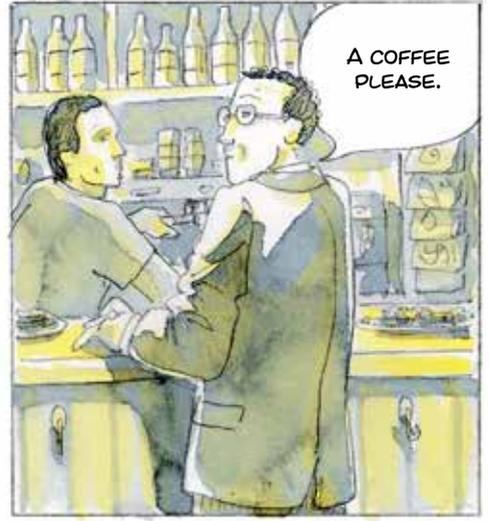
ANDRES  
BISKARRET  
DIED AT THE  
HANDS OF  
OTHERS, THE  
GAL. YEARS  
LATER.

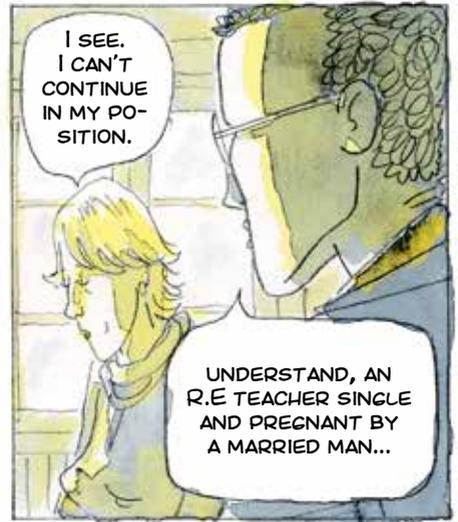


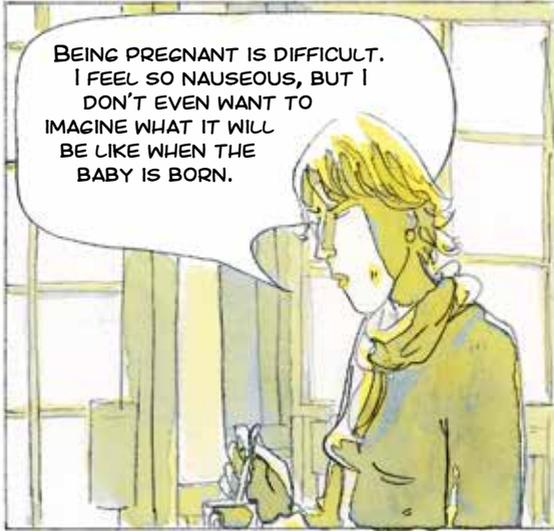
AND SO HE BECAME A  
MARTYR AND I HAD TO  
STAND AND WATCH HIS  
FACE PAPERED ACROSS  
THE STREETS, LIKE  
A SAINT.



ANYWAY, I  
STILL DON'T  
UNDERSTAND  
WHY I HAVE  
THESE DREAMS.  
AND WHY NOW,  
TWENTY FIVE  
YEARS ON...



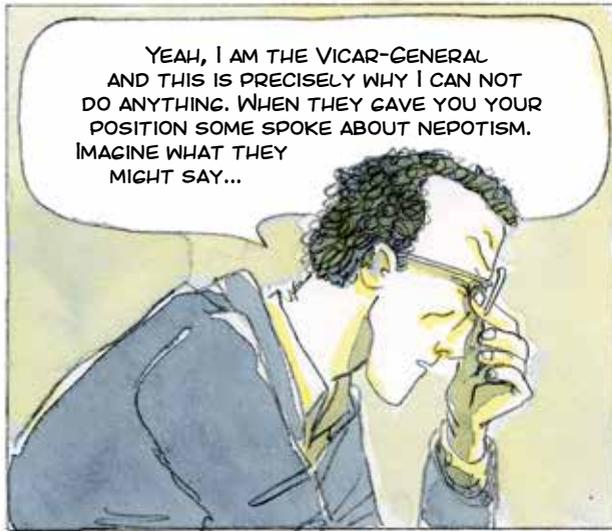




BEING PREGNANT IS DIFFICULT. I FEEL SO NAUSEOUS, BUT I DON'T EVEN WANT TO IMAGINE WHAT IT WILL BE LIKE WHEN THE BABY IS BORN.



I DON'T MIND RAISING IT ALONE, I'M NOT EVEN GOING TO ASK GONZALO TO ACKNOWLEDGE IT. BUT I NEED MY JOB, ANTON. DO SOMETHING, PLEASE. YOU CAN! YOU'RE THE VICAR-GENERAL.

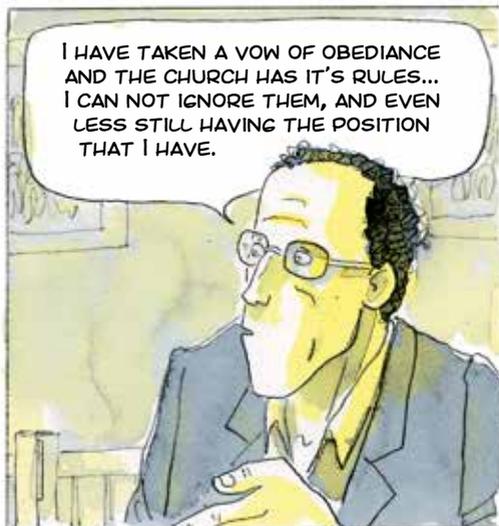


YEAH, I AM THE VICAR-GENERAL AND THIS IS PRECISELY WHY I CAN NOT DO ANYTHING. WHEN THEY GAVE YOU YOUR POSITION SOME SPOKE ABOUT NEPOTISM. IMAGINE WHAT THEY MIGHT SAY...

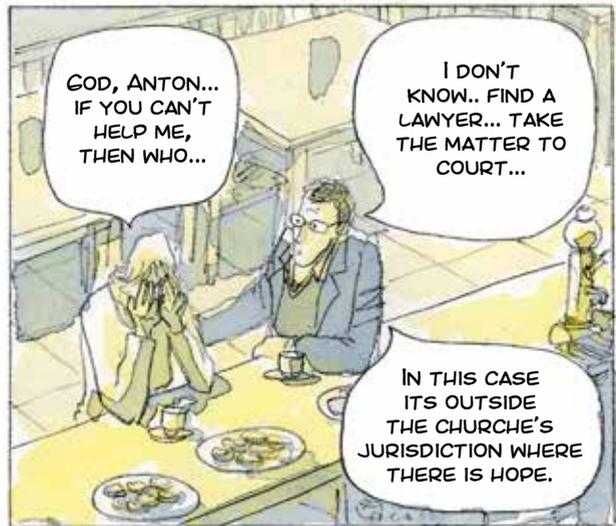


IS IT A QUESTION OF THAT? OF WHAT THEY MIGHT SAY?

NO... NO... IT IS ONLY...



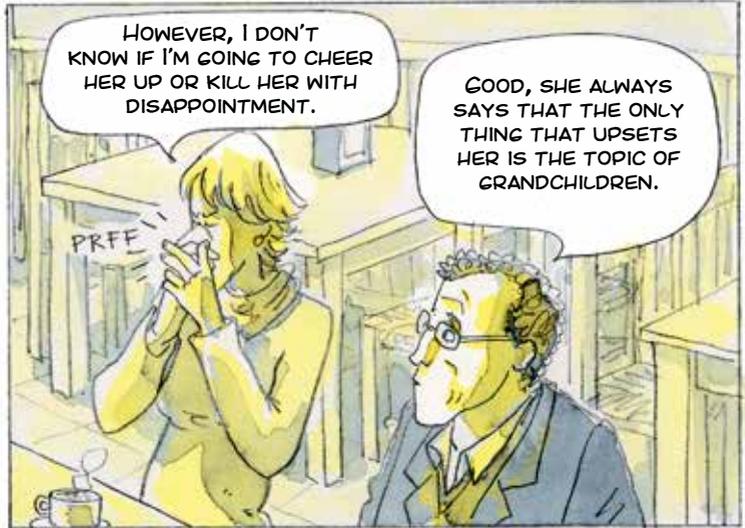
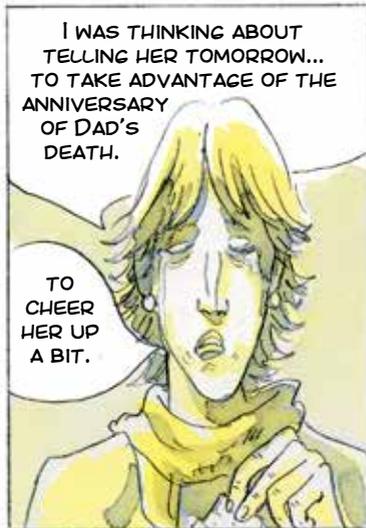
I HAVE TAKEN A VOW OF OBEDIENCE AND THE CHURCH HAS IT'S RULES... I CAN NOT IGNORE THEM, AND EVEN LESS STILL HAVING THE POSITION THAT I HAVE.



GOD, ANTON... IF YOU CAN'T HELP ME, THEN WHO...

I DON'T KNOW.. FIND A LAWYER... TAKE THE MATTER TO COURT...

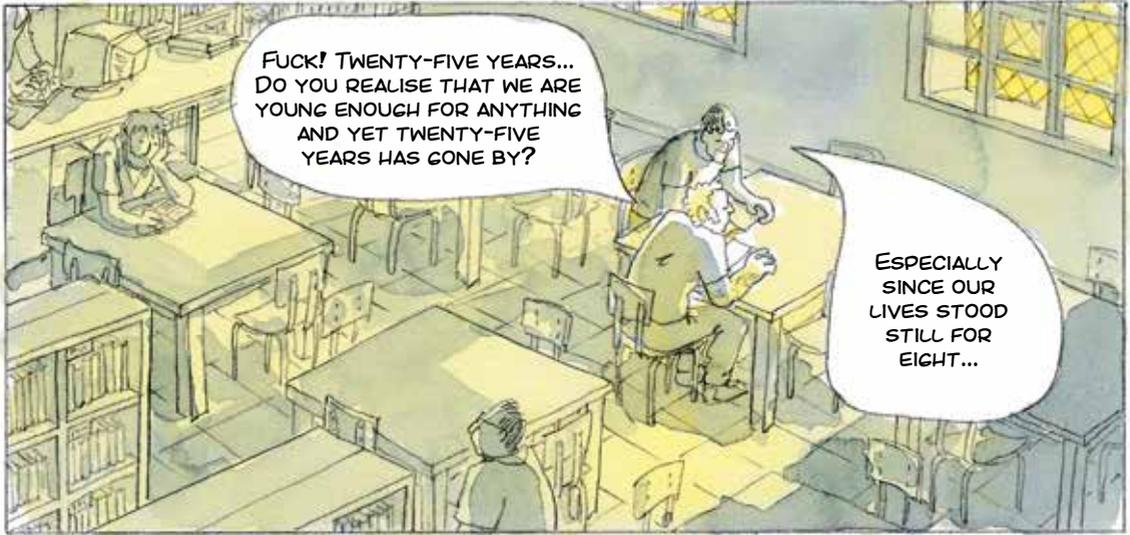
IN THIS CASE ITS OUTSIDE THE CHURCHE'S JURISDICTION WHERE THERE IS HOPE.





**JOSU**





FUCK! TWENTY-FIVE YEARS... DO YOU REALISE THAT WE ARE YOUNG ENOUGH FOR ANYTHING AND YET TWENTY-FIVE YEARS HAS GONE BY?

ESPECIALLY SINCE OUR LIVES STOOD STILL FOR EIGHT...



HEY, DON'T GO THERE, YOU'LL GET DEPRESSED. WHAT YOU SHOULD DO IS GET OUT MORE, HANG OUT WITH GIRL, YOU KNOW, HAVE FUN!



RIGHT, WITH GIRLS. ONLY YOU WOULD ENCOURAGE A COMPANION TXARLI.

OF COURSE! DO YOU KNOW WHAT THEY TOLD ME ABOUT DOMINIC, THE BRIT?



APPARENTLY HIS WIFE IS THE MADAM OF A WHOREHOUSE IN MARSEILLE, AND WHEN SHE CAN'T COME TO VISIT HIM ... SHE FIXES HIM UP WITH ONE OF HER GIRLS!

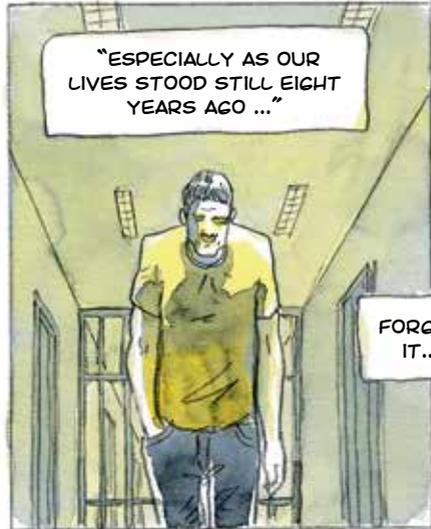


WHAT DO YOU THINK? WE COULD REACH AN AGREEMENT WITH HIM AND HE COULD SEND SOMEONE FROM TIME TO...

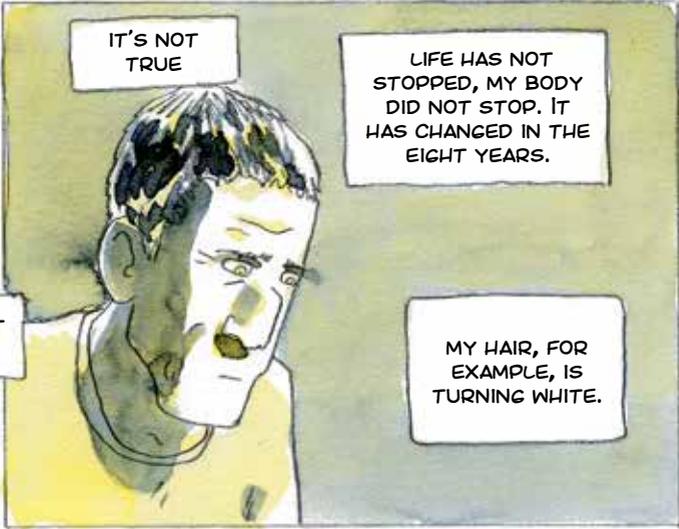
LOOK, TXARLI. I AM MARRIED AND YOU ARE ABOUT TO GET SENT INSIDE.



HA!  
I'M LOCKED UP!  
VERY FUNNY!



"ESPECIALLY AS OUR  
LIVES STOOD STILL EIGHT  
YEARS AGO ..."

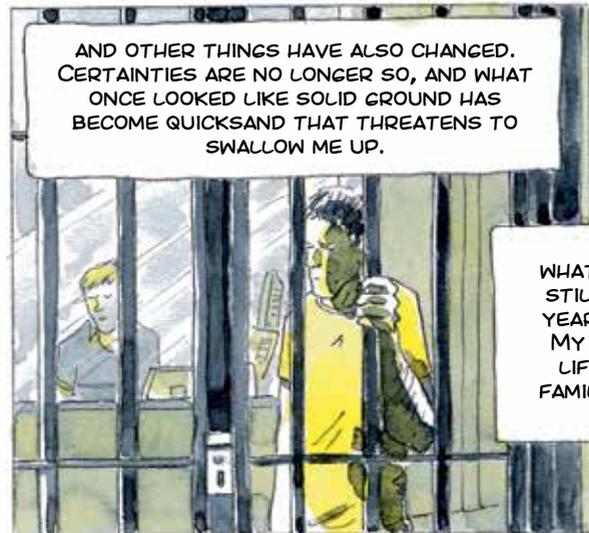


IT'S NOT  
TRUE

LIFE HAS NOT  
STOPPED, MY BODY  
DID NOT STOP. IT  
HAS CHANGED IN THE  
EIGHT YEARS.

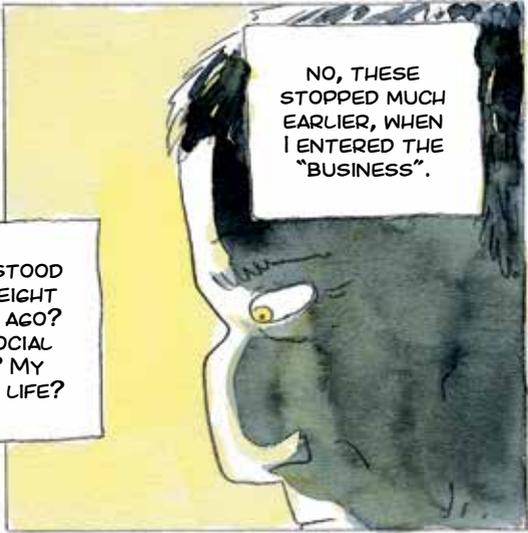
FORGET  
IT...

MY HAIR, FOR  
EXAMPLE, IS  
TURNING WHITE.



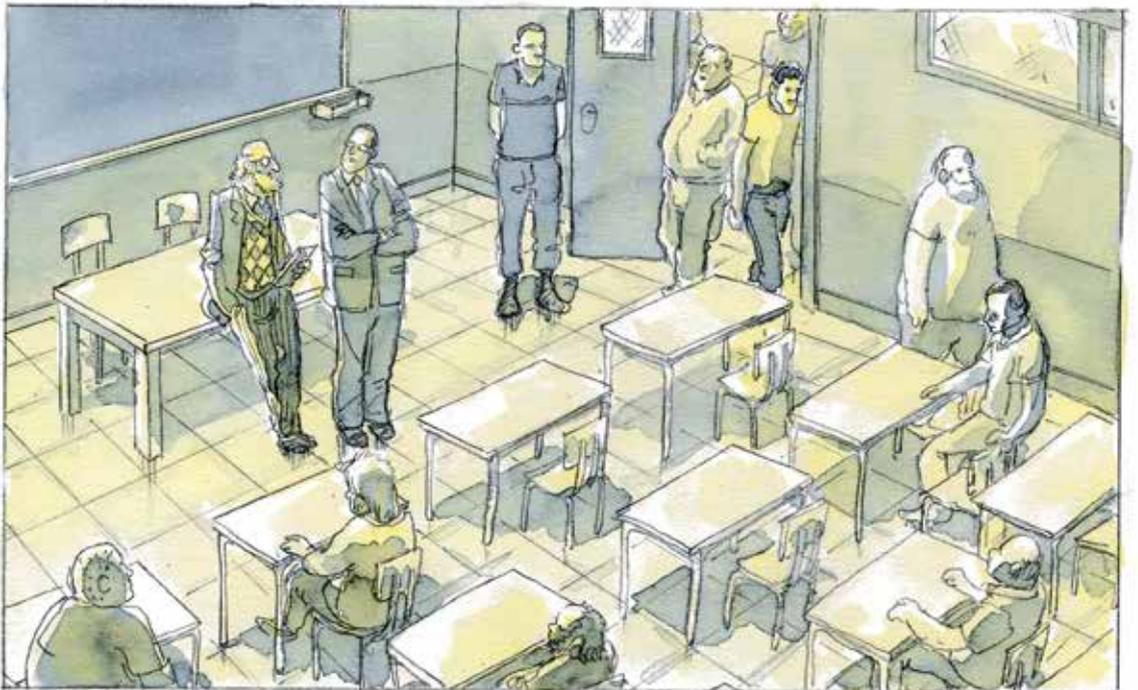
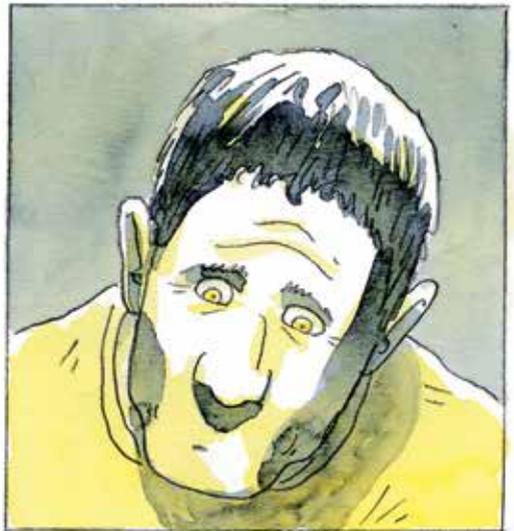
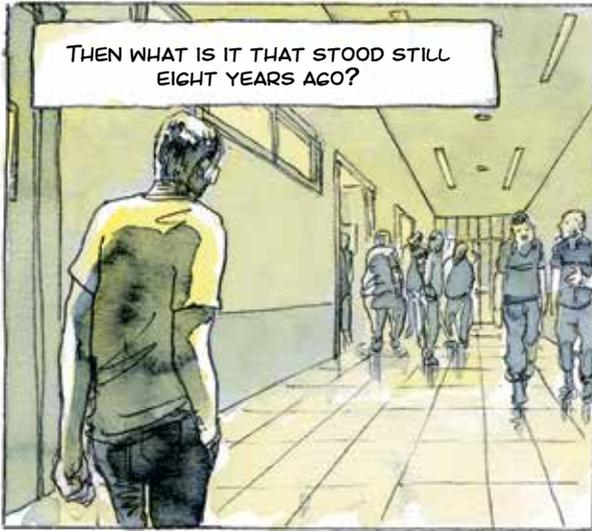
AND OTHER THINGS HAVE ALSO CHANGED.  
CERTAINTIES ARE NO LONGER SO, AND WHAT  
ONCE LOOKED LIKE SOLID GROUND HAS  
BECOME QUICKSAND THAT THREATENS TO  
SWALLOW ME UP.

WHAT STOOD  
STILL EIGHT  
YEARS AGO?  
MY SOCIAL  
LIFE? MY  
FAMILY LIFE?



NO, THESE  
STOPPED MUCH  
EARLIER, WHEN  
I ENTERED THE  
"BUSINESS".

THEN WHAT IS IT THAT STOOD STILL  
EIGHT YEARS AGO?





TOK, TOK...  
SARTU LEIKE?\*

\* KNOCK KNOCK! CAN I COME IN?



ZELAN HITZALDIA?\*

ONDO.\*\*\*

HOW DID IT GO?

WAIT...  
I'LL READ IT.

\*\* HOW'S IT GOING? \*\*\* GOOD.



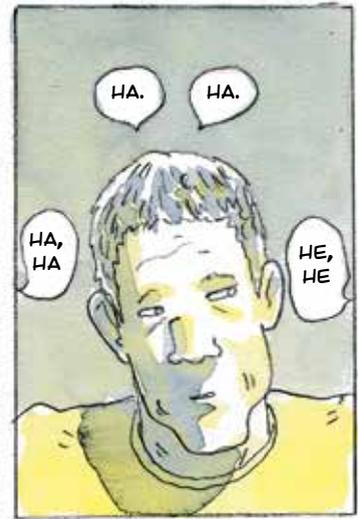
"COMMENT FAIRE FACE  
AUX DÉFIS SOCIAUX  
ET PERSONNELS DE  
MANIÈRE AFFIRMATIVE  
ET PROSOCIALE".

BLOODY  
HELL, WHATS  
THAT SUP-  
POSED TO  
MEAN.



AAAAH! I WOULD  
HAVE GONE!

BE CAREFUL JOSU, THEY  
WILL TAKE ADVANTAGE  
AND BRAINWASH... "DE  
MANIÈRE AFFIRMATIVE ET  
PROSOCIALE".



HA. HA.

HA,  
HA

HE,  
HE



WE'LL, SOMETIMES THERE ARE REALLY GOOD PEOPLE WHO COME. THE GUY WHO CAME LAST WEEK KNEW A LOT ABOUT THE PALESTINIAN-ISRAELI CONFLICT AND YOU MISSED IT.

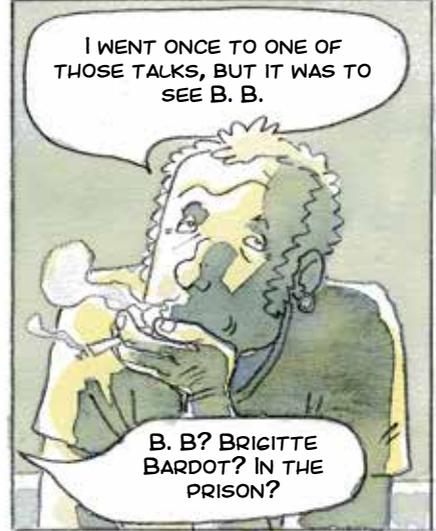


LOOK, TO THAT TALK I WOULD HAVE LIKED TO HAVE GONE.



WHY? DID THEY SA ANYTHING NEW? LIKE THAT ONE HISTORIAN THAT SPOKE ABOUT THE IRA... BLAH, BLAH, BLAH!

THEY ARE ALL VERY UNDERSTANDING WHEN IT COMES TO FOREIGN CONFLICTS.



I WENT ONCE TO ONE OF THOSE TALKS, BUT IT WAS TO SEE B. B.

B. B? BRIGITTE BARDOT? IN THE PRISON?



YES, SHE WAS A SAINT. SHE CAME TO TALK ABOUT THE THINGS SHE DEDICATES HERSELF TO NOW, LIKE BULLFIGHTS AND WHALES...IT'S ALL THE SAME TO ME, I JUST WENT TO SEE HER.

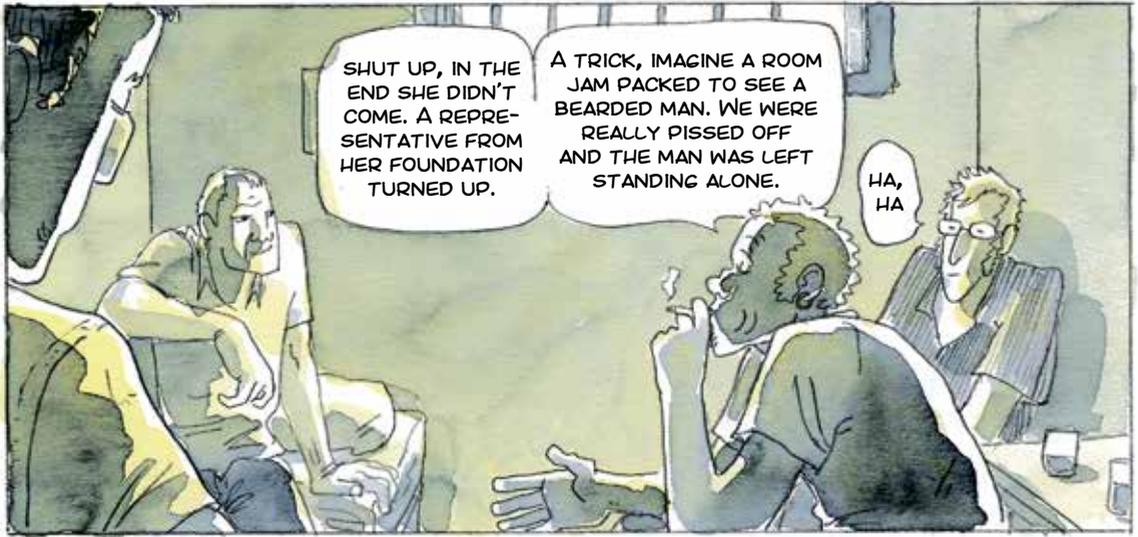
HMMM? BUT NOW SHE IS THE ONE LOOKING LIKE A WHALE.



DON'T SAY THAT OSCAR, SHE HAS ONLY AGED AND WITH DIGNITY. I LOVE THAT WOMAN SHE IS UNTAMEABLE.

BUT, ISN'T SHE A FASCIST?

AN INDOMITABLE FASCIST, YEAH! HE HE, AND HOW WAS IT?



SHUT UP, IN THE END SHE DIDN'T COME. A REPRESENTATIVE FROM HER FOUNDATION TURNED UP.

A TRICK, IMAGINE A ROOM JAM PACKED TO SEE A BEARDED MAN. WE WERE REALLY PISSED OFF AND THE MAN WAS LEFT STANDING ALONE.

HA, HA



HOW DO I EXPLAIN TO TXARLI, MIKEL AND OSCAR ... HOW DO I EXPLAIN TO THEM THAT I'M DROWNING.

THAT I NEED AIR. THAT I GO TO THESE TALKS BECAUSE I NEED TO HEAR WORDS FROM SOMEONE WHO...

...SOMEONE WHO IS NOT STUCK IN HERE.



THAT I NEED TO OPEN THE WINDOW FOR SOME AIR.



HI, JOSU! ENTZUN AL DUK?\*

\* HEY, JOSU! ARE YOU LISTENING?



HM?

TXARLI SAYS HE HAS A FOOLPROOF ARGUMENT TO CONVINCE THE SPANISH GOVERNMENT TO BE INTERESTED IN BASQUE, CATALAN AND GALICIAN INDEPENDENCE.

THE EUROVISION SONG CONTEST!



WE'LL, IF YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT IT IS, THE BORDERING COUNTRIES VOTE FOR EACH OTHER. WHY DOESN'T SPAIN EVER WIN? IT'S OBVIOUS, BECAUSE SHE BORDERS WITH ONLY 2 OTHER PARTICIPATING COUNTRIES.



AH, I SEE. AND YOU THINK THAT AFTER ACHIEVING BASQUE, CATALAN AND GALICIAN INDEPENDENCE, THEY WOULD VOTE FOR SPAIN IN THE CONTEST.

AND WHY NOT? I WOULD DO IT GLADLY. SPAIN TWELVE POINTS, L'ESPAGNE DOUZE POINTS.

HEE HEE, IT'S TRUE, THE ARGUMENT IS INFALLIBLE! IT HURTS THAT IT WOULDN'T WORK WITH FRANCE, WHO ALREADY HAVE NINE NEIGHBORS...



SOMETIMES I CHEAT



I ESCAPE



I LEAVE MY  
BODY...



... AND  
I ESCAPE



THEN I'M NOT ME,  
I DON'T HAVE A NAME.

I AM EVERYTHING  
AND I AM  
NOTHING, SO NO  
ONE SEES ME.

AND NO ONE CAN  
POINT AT ME OR  
JUDGE ME.

I DON'T HAVE  
TO HIDE OR  
PRETEND.



I CAN GO  
WHERE I WANT

AS FAST  
AS I WANT

IF I WANT TO  
I CAN GO BACK  
HOME

SOMETIMES I GET TO SMELL THE HARBOR AND LISTEN TO THE HORNS OF SHIPS SAILING INTO THE ESTUARY.



I CAN SEE KARMELE AND ARITZ, AND I CAN TELL THEM HOW MUCH I MISS THEM.



I CAN SEE PEOPLE LIVE.

THEY ONLY LOOK AT ME AND PERMIT AN EMBRACE,

GENERALLY ARITZ IS STILL A CHILD, BUT TODAY I LOOKED DOWN AT HIM AND HE WAS FOURTEEN YEARS OLD, AS HE IS NOW AND I SAW MYSELF WHEN I WAS HIS AGE.

SOMETIMES KARMELE HOLDS MY GAZE FOR A WHILE.



AND WITHOUT REALIZING IT, I COME FACE TO FACE WITH ANTON, THE DAY WE MET, THE FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL



ONLY THIS TIME ANTON SAYS NOTHING ... HIS EYES EXPRESS NOTHING ...





JUST LIKE THE LAST  
TIME I SAW HIM ...  
TWENTY-FIVE  
YEARS AGO, AT  
HIS FATHER'S  
FUNERAL.



I APPROACH, AND I  
FEEL MY HEART BEAT  
AS FAST AS HIS.

THE WORDS COME,  
BIT BY BIT.



CARRIED AND HIDDEN FOR  
TWENTY- FIVE YEARS

FOR TWENTY-  
FIVE YEARS  
THEY HAVE  
WANTED TO  
COME OUT



THEY ARE  
ONLY TWO

SO WEAK  
AND YET SO  
FRIGHTENING



...

I'M  
SORRY