



W. VANCE - J. VAN HAMME

# MAXIMILIAN'S GOLD

# XIII

Colour work: PETRA

 **CINEBOOK**  
The 9th Art Publisher

Original title: L'or de Maximilien

Original edition: © Dargaud Benelux (Dargaud-Lombard SA), 2005  
by Van Hamme & Vance  
[www.dargaud.com](http://www.dargaud.com)  
All rights reserved

English translation: © 2012 Cinebook Ltd

Translator: Jerome Saincantin

Lettering and text layout: Imadjinn  
Printed in Spain by Just Colour Graphic

This edition first published in Great Britain in 2012 by  
Cinebook Ltd  
56 Beech Avenue  
Canterbury, Kent  
CT4 7TA  
[www.cinebook.com](http://www.cinebook.com)

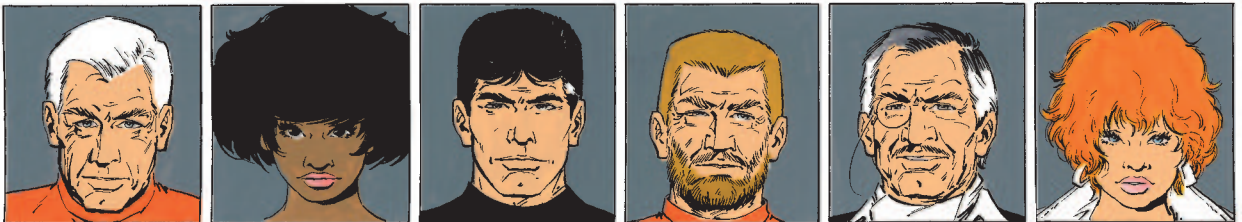
A CIP catalogue record for this book  
is available from the British Library

ISBN 978-1-84918-139-6





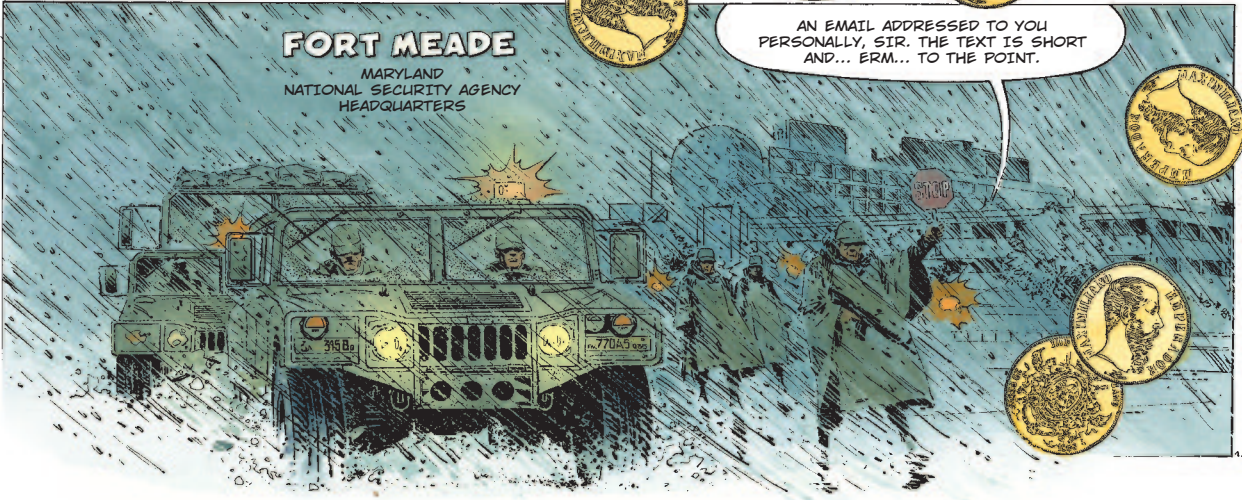
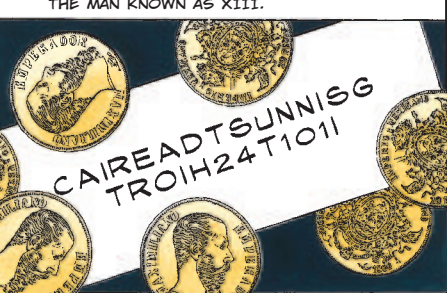
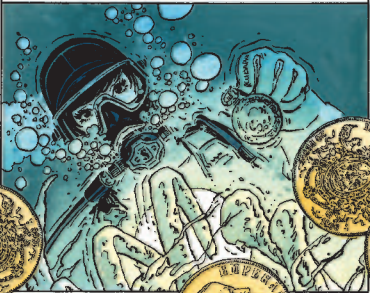
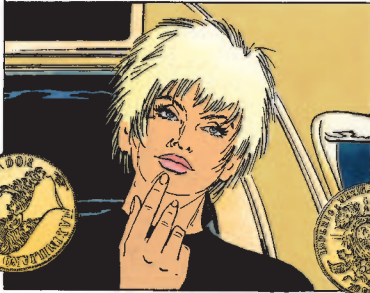
ACCUSED OF THE MURDER OF AMERICAN PRESIDENT WALTER "WALLY" SHERIDAN, GENERAL BEN CARRINGTON, MAJOR JONES AND JASON MCLANE FLED TO COSTA VERDE. THE UNITED STATES DEMANDED THEIR EXTRADITION, BUT THEY MANAGED TO LEAVE THE COUNTRY, ALONG WITH SEAN MULLWAY, ABOARD THE JET OF MARQUIS ARMAND DE PRÉSEAU AND HIS WIFE, FORMER SPADS SERGEANT BETTY BARNOWSKY.



MUCH AGAINST THEIR WILL, THEY'RE ACCOMPANIED BY FELICITY BROWN, WHO IS ALSO WANTED BY AMERICAN JUSTICE FOR THE MURDERS OF JEREMY AND MATT ROWLAND.

IN COSTA VERDE, OUR FRIENDS HAVE RECOVERED THE LAST OF THE THREE SILVER WATCHES, ON THE CASING OF WHICH IS CARVED A MYSTERIOUS MESSAGE, KEY AND DIRECTIONS TO A FABULOUS TREASURE...

... 100,000 GOLD PESOS BEARING THE LIKENESS OF MEXICAN EMPEROR MAXIMILIAN, HIDDEN IN 1911 SOMEWHERE BETWEEN THE SIERRA MADRE AND THE RIO GRANDE BY LIAM MCLANE, GEORGE MULLWAY AND JACK CALLAHAN, THREE PRESUMED GREAT-GRANDFATHERS OF THE MAN KNOWN AS XIII.





READ IT TO ME, FLOYD. CAN'T YOU SEE I'M BUSY?



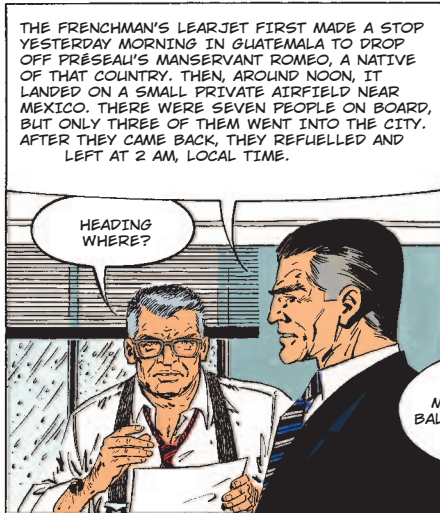
?!?

"THE DAY OF RECKONING IS COMING, GIORDINO. YOU'RE AS GOOD AS DEAD," AND IT'S SIGNED "SEAN AND JASON."



GODDAM IT! WHERE DID THIS MAIL COME FROM!? WHEN WAS IT SENT!?

LAST NIGHT, FROM A CYBERCAFÉ IN MEXICO.



THE FRENCHMAN'S LEARJET FIRST MADE A STOP YESTERDAY MORNING IN GUATEMALA TO DROP OFF PRÉSEALI'S MANSERVANT ROMEO, A NATIVE OF THAT COUNTRY. THEN, AROUND NOON, IT LANDED ON A SMALL PRIVATE AIRFIELD NEAR MEXICO. THERE WERE SEVEN PEOPLE ON BOARD, BUT ONLY THREE OF THEM WENT INTO THE CITY. AFTER THEY CAME BACK, THEY REFUELLED AND LEFT AT 2 AM, LOCAL TIME.

HEADING WHERE?



THE FLIGHT PLAN SAID VERA CRUZ. I JUST CHECKED: THE LEARJET NEVER WENT NEAR VERA CRUZ. IT WASN'T LOCATED ANYWHERE ELSE, EITHER.

DON'T TELL ME THEY HAD THE BALLS TO COME BACK TO THE US!?



IT'S POSSIBLE. I'LL PUT ALL OUR RESOURCES ON ALERT.

FIND THEM, FLOYD! USE ANYTHING YOU HAVE TO, BUT FIND THEM!



GENERAL WHITTAKER, PLEASE, FROM FRANK GIORDINO, NSA.

IT'S URGENT.



I'M SORRY, SIR, BUT THE GENERAL TOOK A FEW DAYS' LEAVE. HOWEVER, HE TOLD ME HE COULD BE FOUND AT HOME IN CASE OF AN EMERGENCY.



I MUST SAY I'VE BEEN IN MUCH LESS COMFORTABLE SITUATIONS.

TRUE, BUT IT HAD BETTER NOT LAST TOO LONG. I'VE ALREADY GAINED BACK 10 POUNDS.

IT'LL LAST UNTIL OUR FRIENDS HAVE MANAGED TO DECRYPT THE ENIGMA OF THE THREE WATCHES.

OR UNTIL GIORDINO FINDS US. WITH THE MASSIVE RESOURCES OF THE NSA, HE'S BOUND TO GET A WHIFF OF US EVENTUALLY, EVEN IN THIS OUT-OF-THE-WAY SPOT. YOU WERE WRONG TO SEND HIM THAT EMAIL, NUMBER XIII.

THAT WAS CARRINGTON'S IDEA, NOT MINE.

ARMAND'S PLANE IS WELL HIDDEN. THE NEAREST VILLAGE IS 35 MILES AWAY, AND RETIRED SERGEANT CHARLIE OXBOW, WHO OWNS THIS CHARMING GUEST-HOUSE ON THE SHORES OF THE PACIFIC, IS AN UNCONDITIONAL FAN OF THE GENERAL. RIGHT NOW, WE'RE COMPLETELY SAFE.

IF YOU SAY SO. THAT LEAVES THE PROBLEM OF YOUR FEMME FATALE, THERE. WHAT ARE WE GOING TO DO WITH HER?

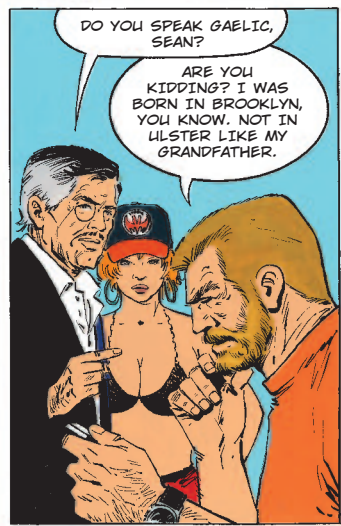
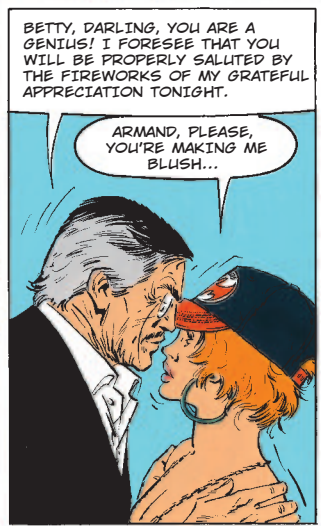
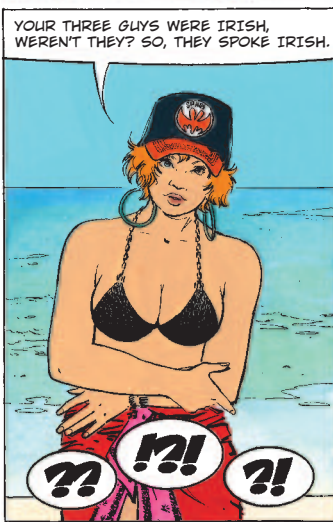
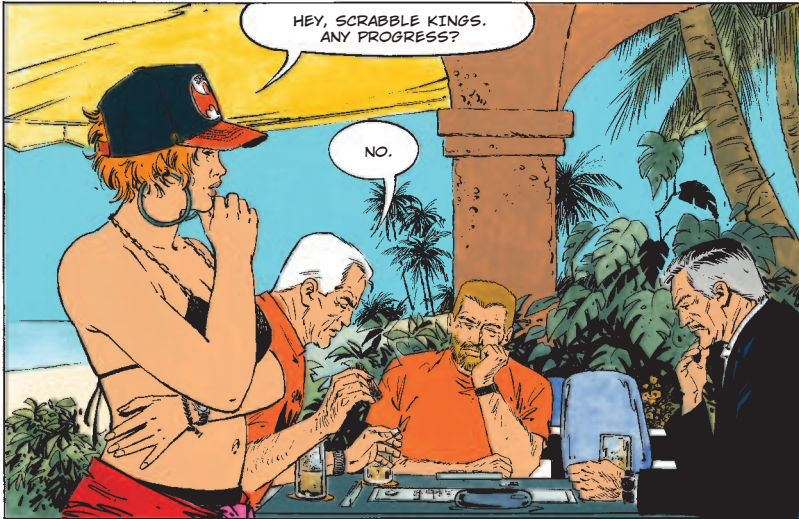
I'LL ADMIT THAT ACTUALLY IS A PROBLEM...

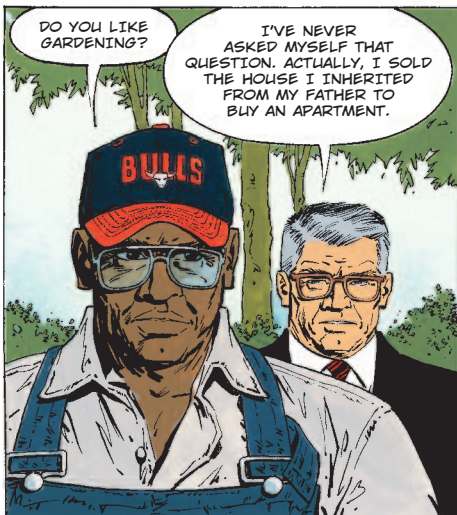
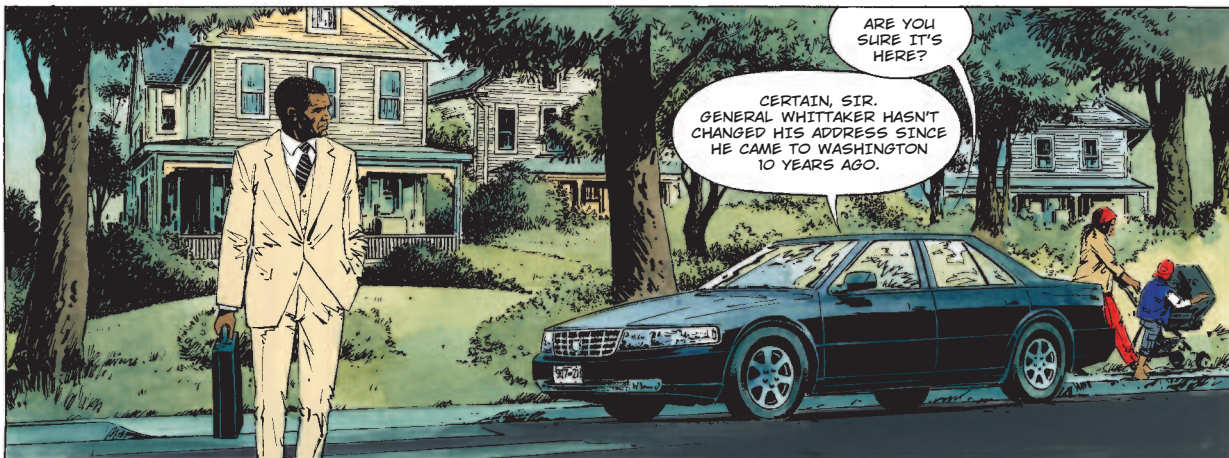
TURNING HER OVER TO MEXICAN OR AMERICAN AUTHORITIES WOULD BE THE SAME AS TURNING OURSELVES IN. AND WE CAN'T RIGHTLY HANG HER OURSELVES, CAN WE?

PITY. I'D HAPPILY PULL ON THE ROPE MYSELF. WHAT IF SHE ESCAPES, THOUGH?

WHERE DO YOU WANT HER TO GO? SHE'S LOCKED UP TIGHT ALL NIGHT. DURING THE DAY, SHE'S UNDER CONSTANT WATCH BY ONE OF US.

PHEWWW... I'M GOING INSIDE. IT'S TOO HOT OUT HERE.





\*POSH NEIGHBOURHOOD OF WASHINGTON, DC

I RECEIVED AN EMAIL FROM MCLANE AND HIS SUPPOSED FATHER. A THREATENING EMAIL FROM MEXICO.

AND THAT WORRIES YOU? WHAT ARE YOU AFRAID OF, GIORDINO?

THAT THE PUBLIC MAY LEARN OF OUR ROLE IN WALLY SHERIDAN'S DEATH? THAT MULLWAY MAY TELL HIS VERSION OF YOUR SISTER CARLA'S MURDER?

WHAT... WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?...

I GOT AN EMAIL FROM MEXICO TOO, YOU SEE. A VERY LONG EMAIL SIGNED BY OUR FRIEND BEN CARRINGTON, IN WHICH HE TOLD ME EVERYTHING I DIDN'T YET KNOW ABOUT YOU AND YOUR TWISTED SCHEMES.

NONE OF THIS WOULD BE HAPPENING IF YOU'D SENT YOUR SPADS TO COSTA VERDE TO ELIMINATE THEM LIKE I'D ASKED, WHITTAKER\*.

YOU AND I ARE IN THE SAME BOAT, DAMMIT!

I KNOW. YOU TOLD ME SO AT LEAST A DOZEN TIMES.

THE PROBLEM IS THAT MY ABILITY TO STAND BEING ON THAT STINKING TUB OF YOURS IS QUICKLY DIMINISHING. THAT SAID, I'M ON VACATION, AND I HAVE A GARDEN TO FINISH.

GOODBYE, GIORDINO.

\*SEE PREVIOUS VOLUME.

BACK TO FORT MEADE, SIR?

NO. TO MY PLACE!

MICHELANGELO? IT'S ME, FRANCESCO. I HAVE A FAVOUR TO ASK...

MEXICO D.F.

JOHN KILLARNEY?

CABALLERO IDE WIERRO