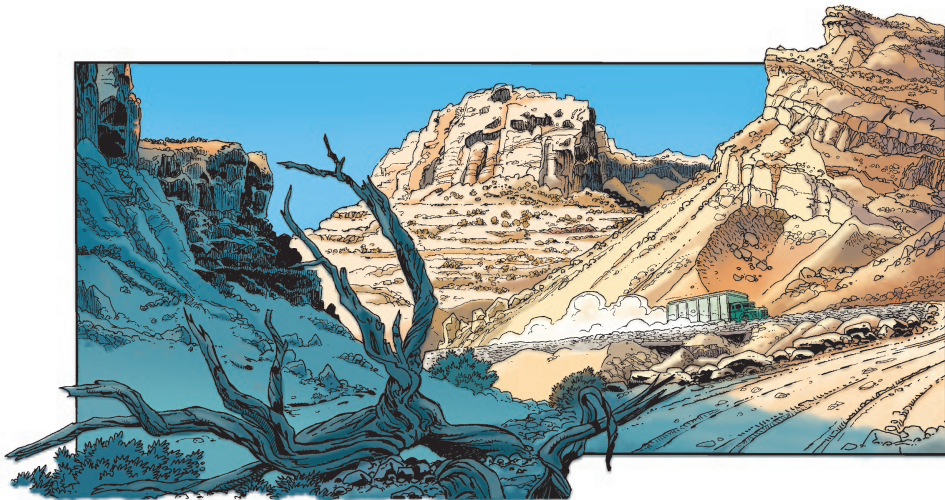


DENAYER

# Wayne Shelton

VAN HAMME

## 1 | THE MISSION



Colour work: Bertrand DENOULET

Original title: Wayne Shelton – La mission

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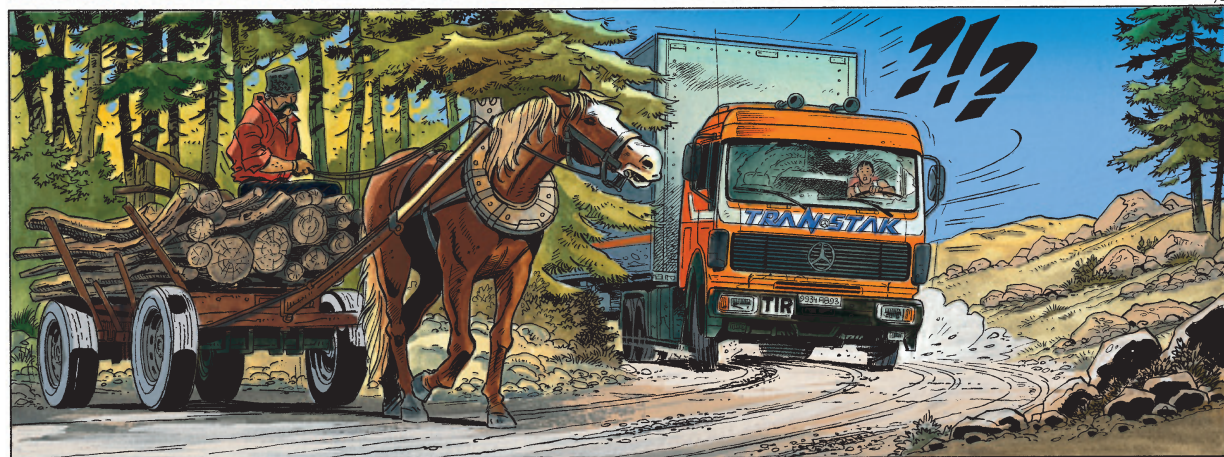
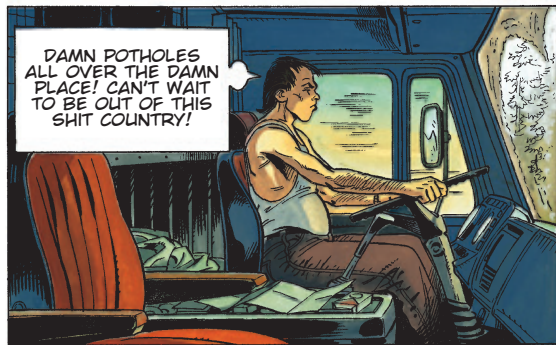
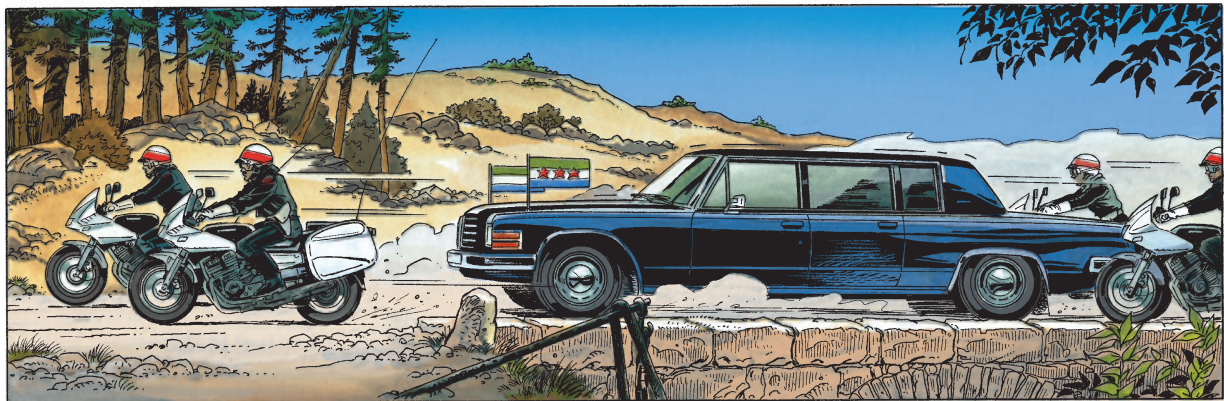
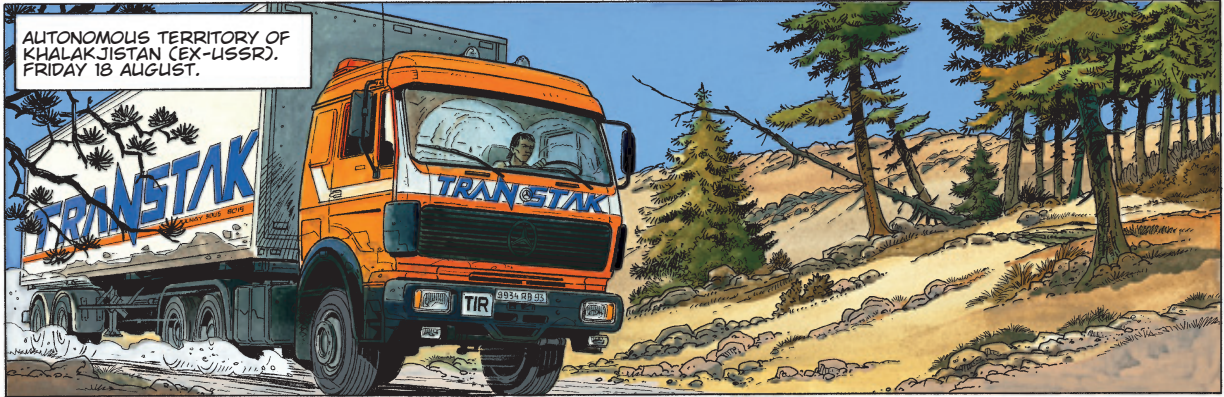
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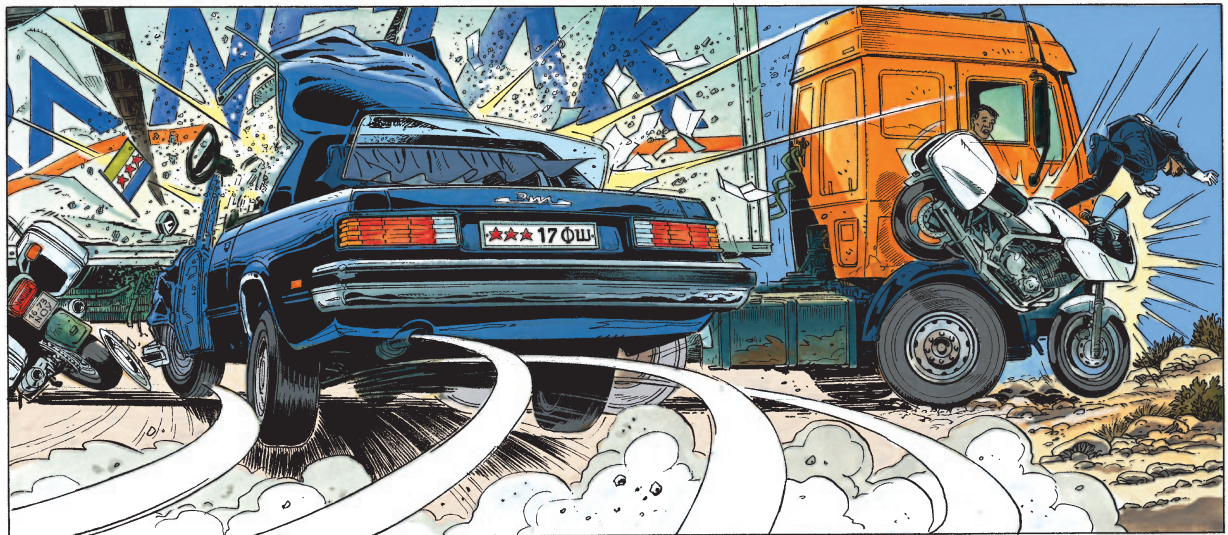
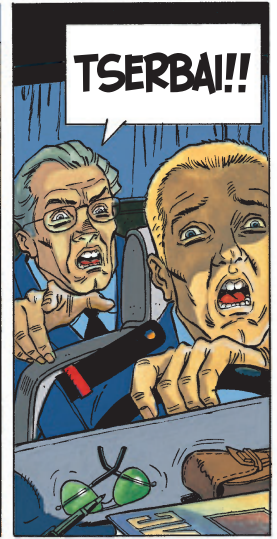
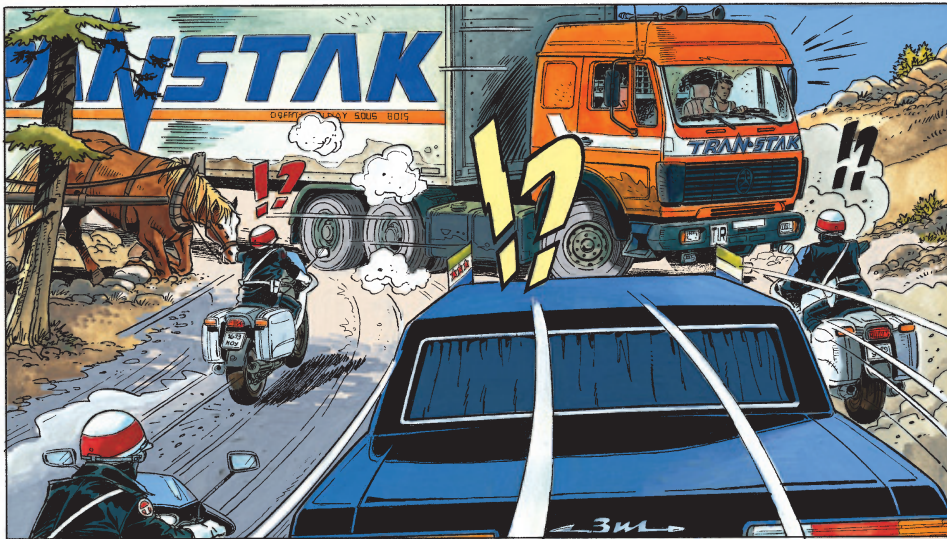
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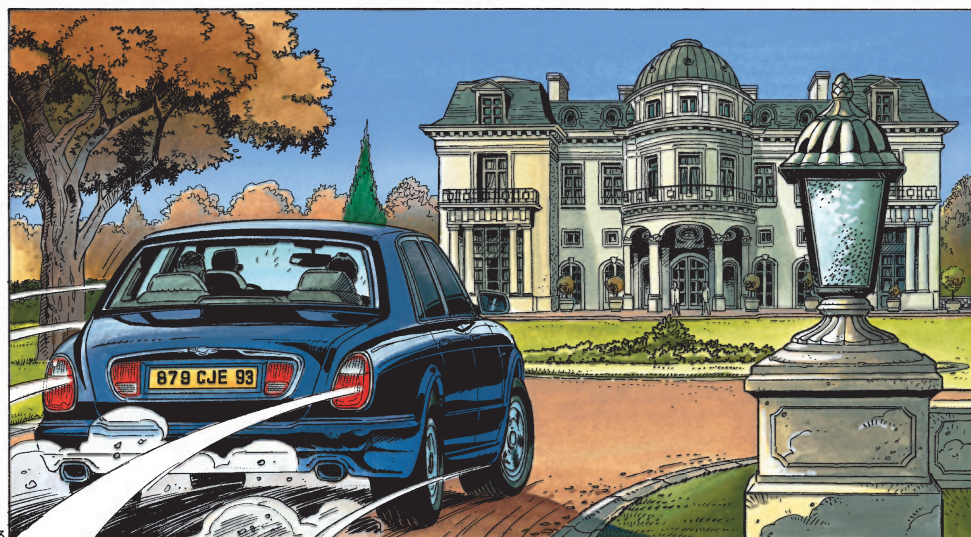
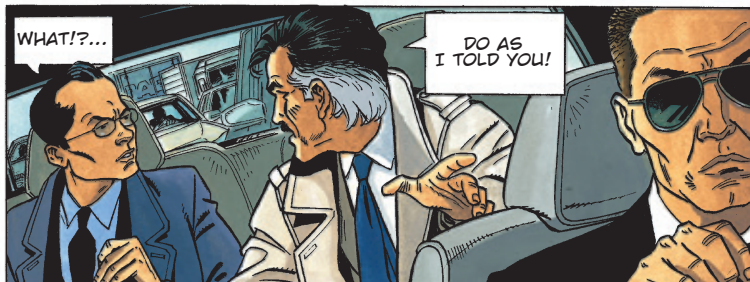
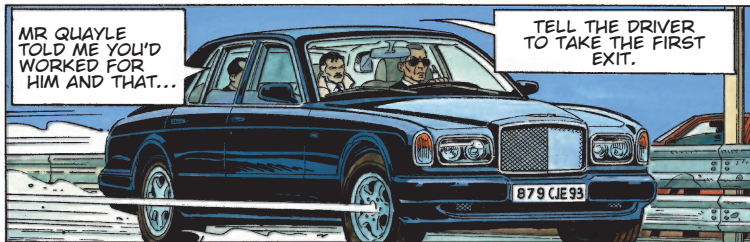
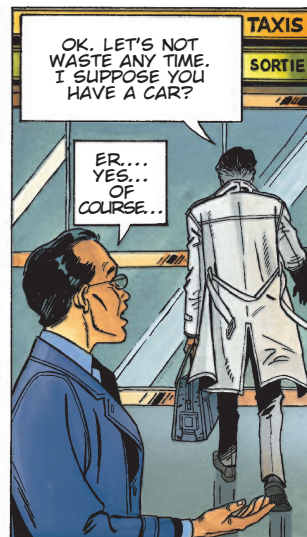
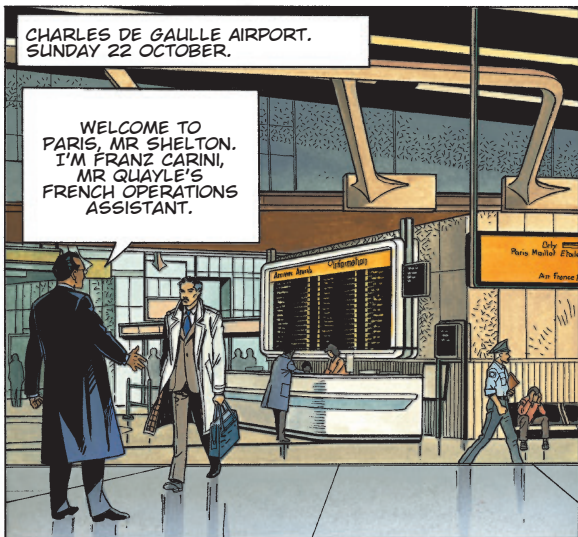
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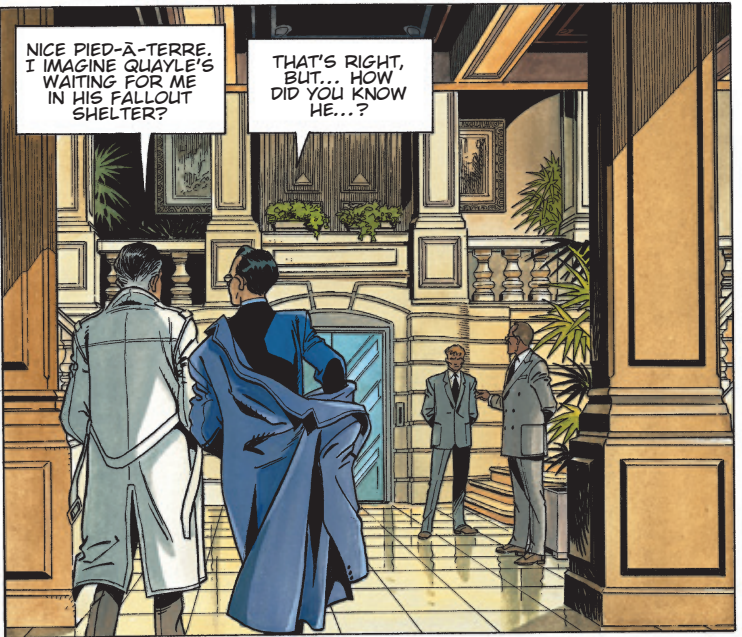
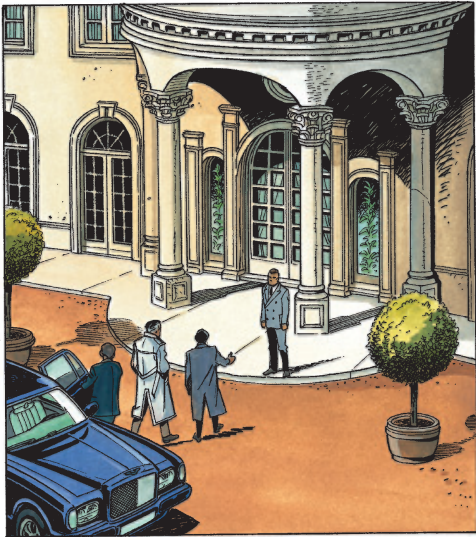
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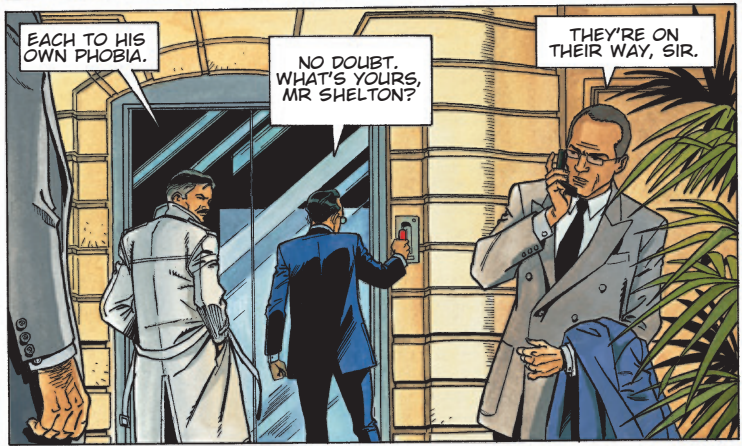


NICE PIED-À-TERRE. I IMAGINE QUAYLE'S WAITING FOR ME IN HIS FALLOUT SHELTER?

THAT'S RIGHT, BUT... HOW DID YOU KNOW HE...?



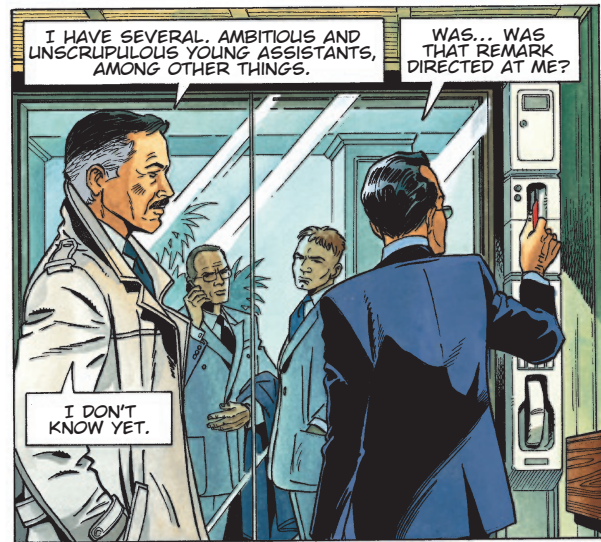
EVERYONE KNOWS THAT HORACE T. QUAYLE, PRESIDENT OF THE TEXAS INVESTMENT TRUST, HAS HAD A FALLOUT SHELTER BUILT UNDER EACH OF THE PROPERTIES HE OWNS WORLDWIDE.



EACH TO HIS OWN PHOBIA.

NO DOUBT. WHAT'S YOURS, MR SHELTON?

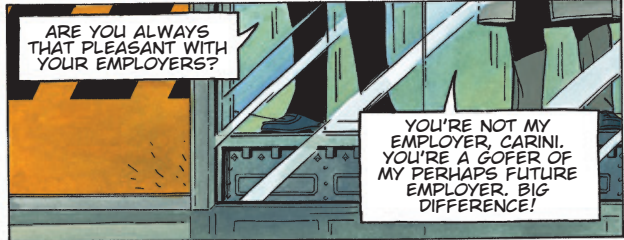
THEY'RE ON THEIR WAY, SIR.



I HAVE SEVERAL AMBITIOUS AND UNSCRUPULOUS YOUNG ASSISTANTS, AMONG OTHER THINGS.

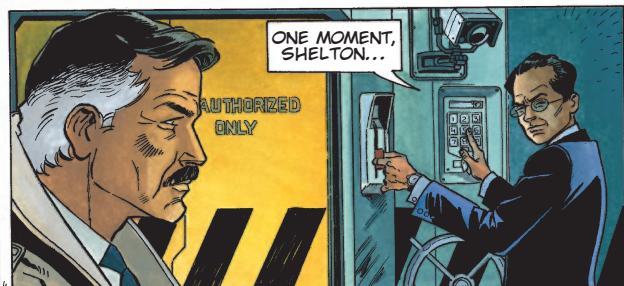
WAS... WAS THAT REMARK DIRECTED AT ME?

I DON'T KNOW YET.



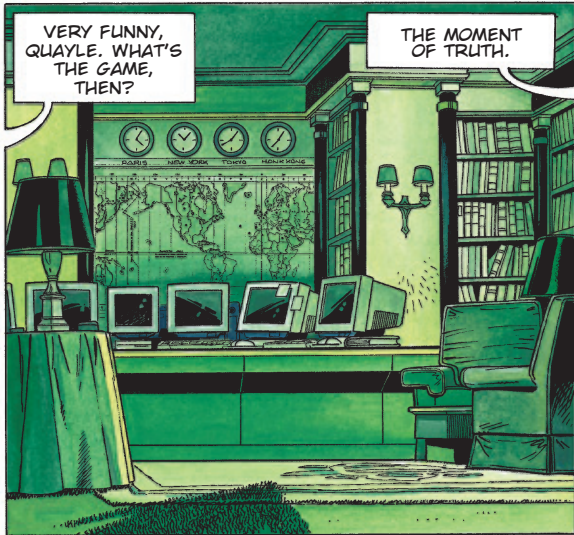
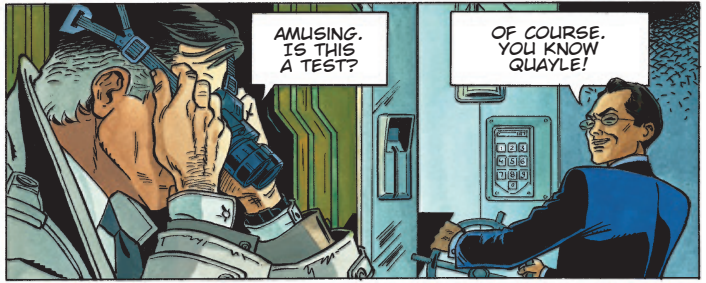
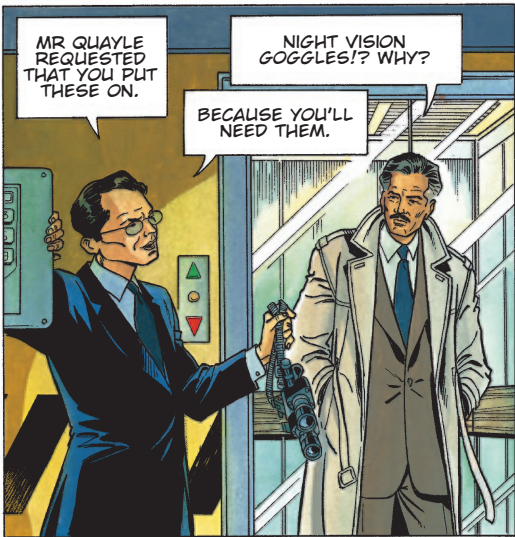
ARE YOU ALWAYS THAT PLEASANT WITH YOUR EMPLOYERS?

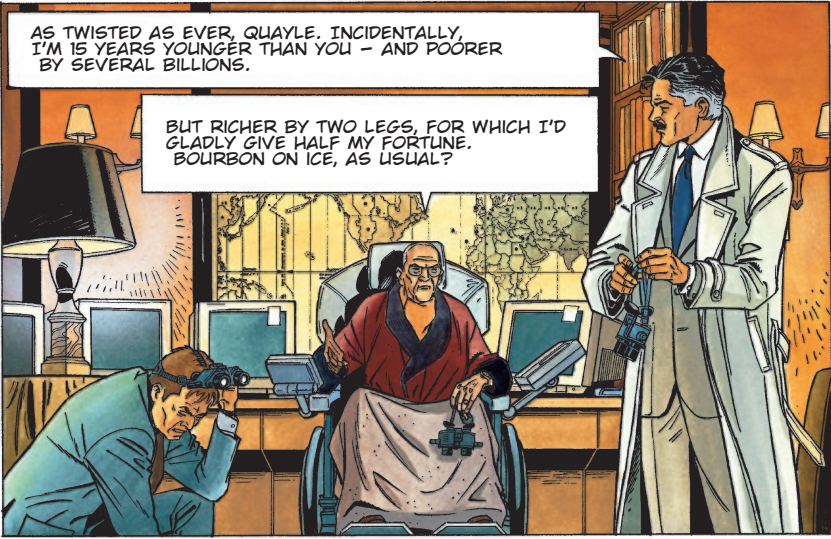
YOU'RE NOT MY EMPLOYER, CARINI. YOU'RE A GOFER OF MY PERHAPS FUTURE EMPLOYER. BIG DIFFERENCE!



ONE MOMENT, SHELTON...

AUTHORIZED ONLY





AS TWISTED AS EVER, QUAYLE. INCIDENTALLY, I'M 15 YEARS YOUNGER THAN YOU - AND POORER BY SEVERAL BILLIONS.

BUT RICHER BY TWO LEGS, FOR WHICH I'D GLADLY GIVE HALF MY FORTUNE. BOURBON ON ICE, AS USUAL?



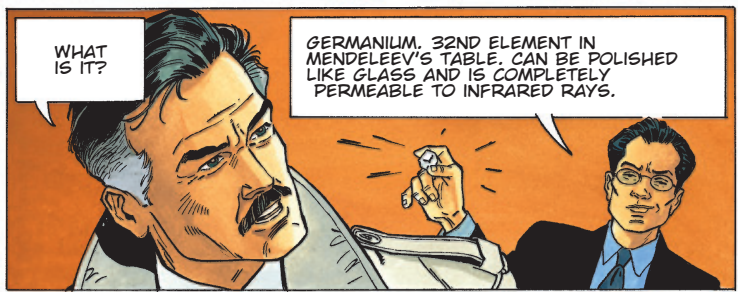
SORRY ABOUT THIS LITTLE STUNT, SHELTON, BUT IT WASN'T JUST ABOUT TESTING YOUR REFLEXES. PLEASE, TAKE A SEAT.



YOU SEE, FOR THE PAST FEW MONTHS I'VE BEEN FASCINATED BY INFRARED OPTICS, AND THEIR APPLICATION IN THE FIELDS OF GROUND WEAPONS AND SPACE PHOTOGRAPHY.



THOSE APPLICATIONS, ALREADY VERY ADVANCED, AS YOU KNOW, ARE ABOUT TO SEE NEW AND QUITE EXTRAORDINARY DEVELOPMENTS IN THE COMING YEARS, AND THANKS TO WHAT, THOSE DEVELOPMENTS? TO THAT. CARINI!...

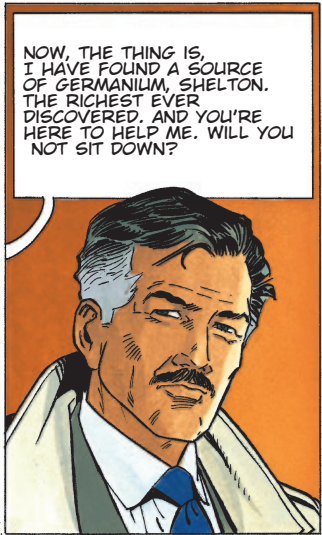


WHAT IS IT?

GERMANIUM. 32ND ELEMENT IN MENDELEEV'S TABLE. CAN BE POLISHED LIKE GLASS AND IS COMPLETELY PERMEABLE TO INFRARED RAYS.



AND HAS THEREFORE BECOME AN ESSENTIAL COMPONENT, CLASSIFIED AS A STRATEGIC RESOURCE, IN 'STAR WARS'. ALL MAJOR POWERS WOULD SELL THEIR OWN GOVERNMENTS TO THE DEVIL FOR A SECURE AND STEADY SUPPLY OF GERMANIUM. THE PROBLEM IS THAT THIS METAL IS FOUND ONLY IN MINUTE AMOUNTS INSIDE ZINC OR LEAD ORE. AS YOU CAN IMAGINE, ITS PRICE HAS RISEN ACCORDINGLY.



NOW, THE THING IS, I HAVE FOUND A SOURCE OF GERMANIUM, SHELTON. THE RICHEST EVER DISCOVERED. AND YOU'RE HERE TO HELP ME. WILL YOU NOT SIT DOWN?

\*STRATEGIC DEFENCE INITIATIVE, THE ORIGINAL US SPACE-BASED ANTI-BALLISTIC MISSILE DEFENCE PROGRAMME (NOW DEFUNCT).