

FABIO BERTI

We are the LANDSCAPE



OUR LANDSCAPE IN A COMIC

The Valeggio sul Mincio, Castelnuovo del Garda, Sommacampagna, Sona, Bussolengo and Pastrengo local councils have cooperated to create something special.

A 28 page comic about the landscape that surrounds us and that brings us together. This project was made possible thanks to the support of the Veneto Region and belongs to the activities of Local Observatory for the Landscape of the Moreniche Hills inland Lake Garda. But why a comic about the landscape? Because the landscape is not only a background, it is part of what we are. The hills, the fields, the rivers, the villages we see every day have stories to tell, stories about us, about the people who lived before us and those who will come after us. A comic is an amusing and engaging way to discover these ties and to look through new eyes at places we may think we already know.

This project is the result of the cooperation of the six councils and of an author/artist who knows and loves our area.

With the pictures and the narratives, it will take you on a journey through the Moreniche Hills, the iconic places and the traditions that make our landscape unique.

The aim is simple but important: make you understand how much the landscape is a precious treasure, something we have to know, appreciate and protect. And who better than you, who are the future, can make the difference?

So have a pleasant read and a good journey to discover what makes our area so special!

Bussolengo - Claudio Perusi

Castelnuovo del Garda - Chiara Trotti

Pastrengo - Antonio Aragona

Sommacampagna - Chiara Turazzini

Sona - Paolo Bellotti

Valeggio sul Mincio - Massimo Brunelli

Credits

TEXT, PICTURES, COLOURS AND COVER: Fabio Berti

GRAPHICS AND LAYOUT: : Fabio Berti

Thanks for the English translation: Carol Thomas

In cooperation with the Bussolengo, Castelnuovo del Garda, Pastrengo,
Sommacampagna, Sona, Valeggio sul Mincio

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What do we really know
about our landscape?

How much do we really know
about what surrounds us?

This plain, these hills are
made by many like me that,
through glaciations and
dissolutions, have been
transported here by the rivers
for millions of years.

But who is
speaking? Me
obviously!

These rocky
formations have
changed in time,
more pointed at
first, then the
winds and the
rains made them
round, then

.....farmers
did the rest.

But before it was cultivated this
soil had very little vegetation,
was dry and pebbly.

We rocks, integral part of these hills, are the result of deposits from the ancient mountains in South Tyrol.

The Mincio and the Tione unloaded most of these deposits.

So plains and depressions were created among the hills.

Areas which collected water and then became swamps.

These were later reclaimed by man and could be cultivated.

Many settled next to me and remained here for thousands of years.

But some were not destined to stay here forever....

1860, PASTRENGO.



TAKE THOSE
OVER THERE AS WELL!
WE STILL HAVE ROOM, WE
NEED A LOT OF
THEM!



In 1861 Radetzky the
Austrian general ordered
4 different reinforced
structures to be built in
the area of Pastrengo, to
protect the areas near
Verona that
communicated with
Austria.

One of these was Fort
Nugent, built on the
Poggio Pol hill.

Each structure was
equipped with all
that was necessary
for a long stay.

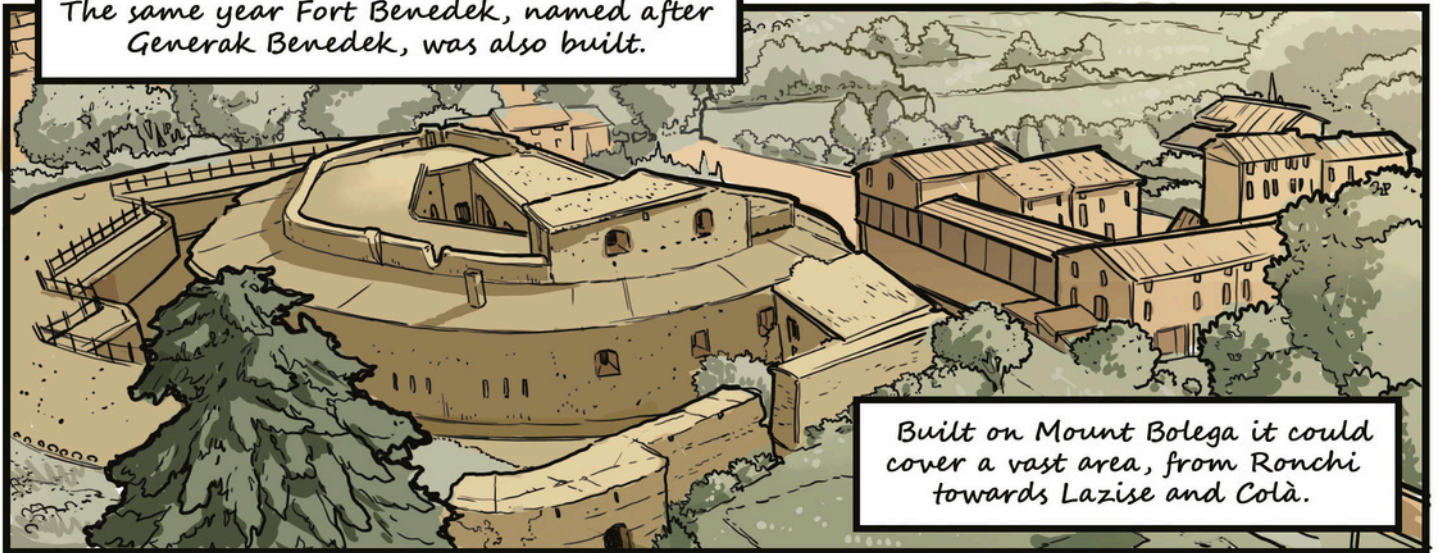


They were built in 7
months by engineer
Salis-Solio. .



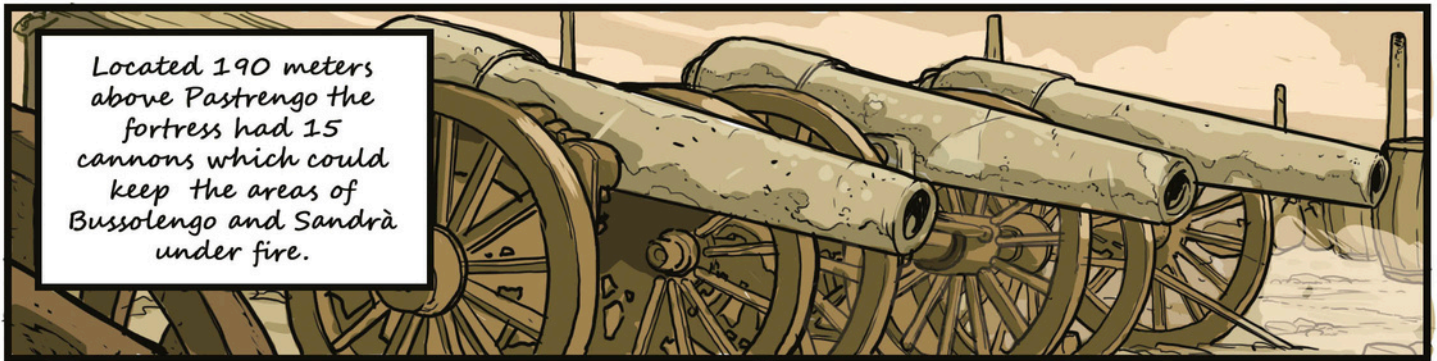
The forts housed
about 80 soldiers,
had stables for the
animals, etc.... and
were armed with
about 15 cannons.

The same year Fort Benedek, named after Generak Benedek, was also built.



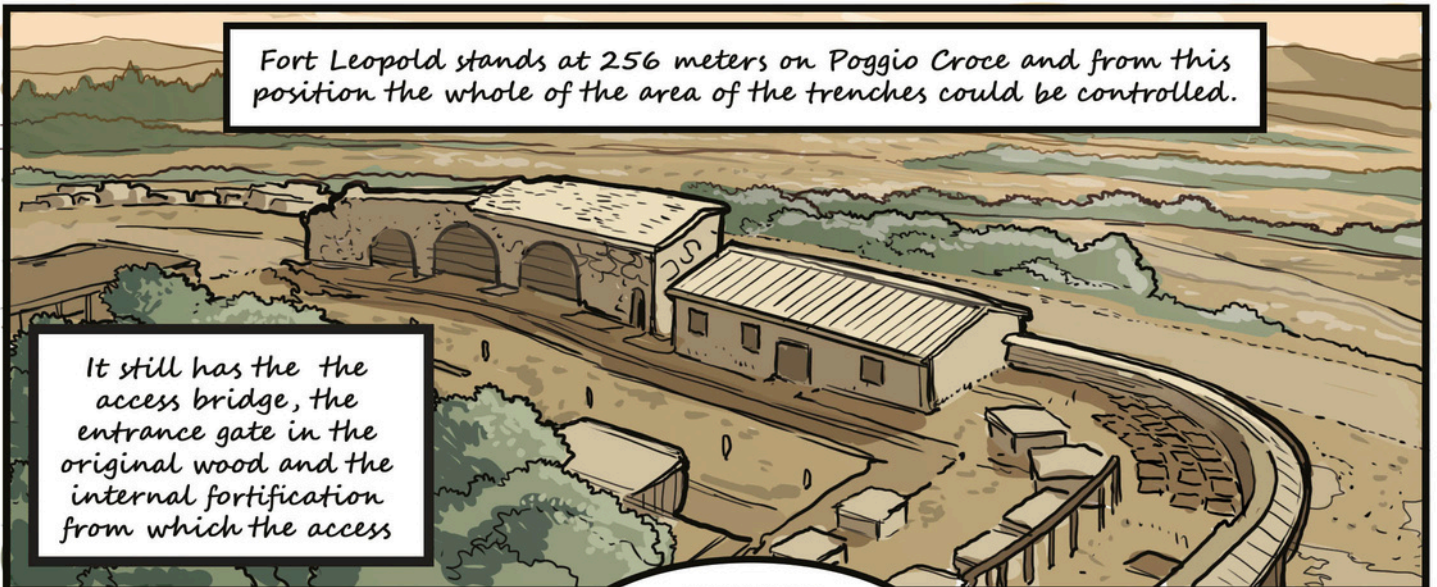
Built on Mount Bolega it could cover a vast area, from Ronchi towards Lazise and Colà.

Located 190 meters above Pastrengo the fortress had 15 cannons which could keep the areas of Bussolengo and Sandra under fire.



Fort Leopold stands at 256 meters on Poggio Croce and from this position the whole of the area of the trenches could be controlled.

It still has the the access bridge, the entrance gate in the original wood and the internal fortification from which the access



NOCHMALS
VIELEN DANK, WIR SEHEN
UNS IN EIN PAAR
MONATEN!*



* THANKS AGAIN, SEE YOU IN
A FEW MONTHS' TIME.

In the 10th century a farmer from Pastrengo crossed the Cavallara, an ancient road that connected Lake Garda to the river Adige.

WE ARE NEARLY DONE, THESE ARE THE LAST ONES.

At the time transport by river was still widely used for moving goods, in particular those that were valuable such as ...

...salt that in those days was also called "white gold" because of its importance.

Salt came from the Adriatic and using the river was transferred to places in Northern Europe.

But this was not the case, because our boat was going in another direction....

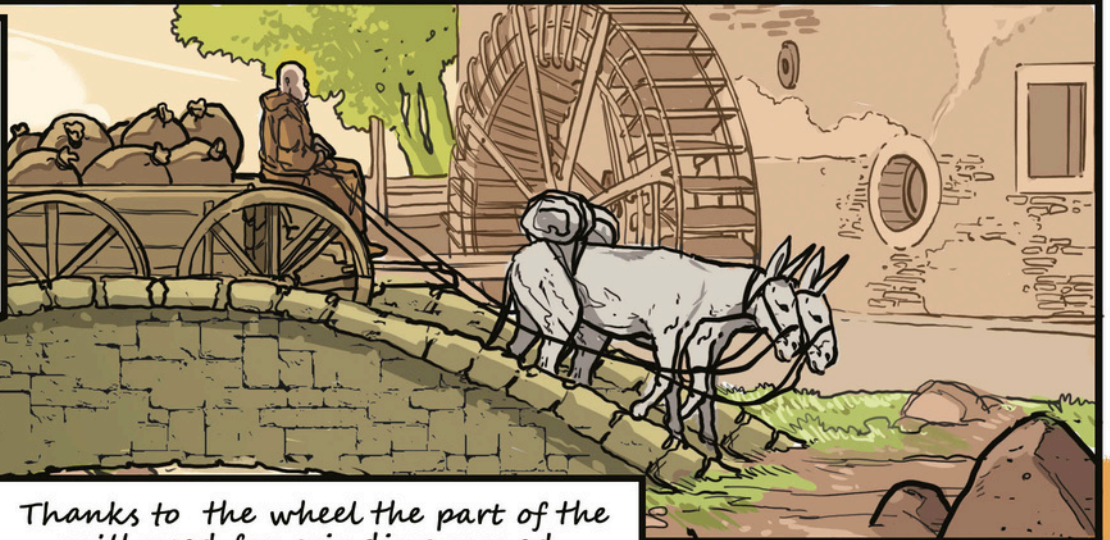
...to Bussolengo.

In ancient times the first means of transport by river were simple rafts which allowed transport only following the direction of the current.

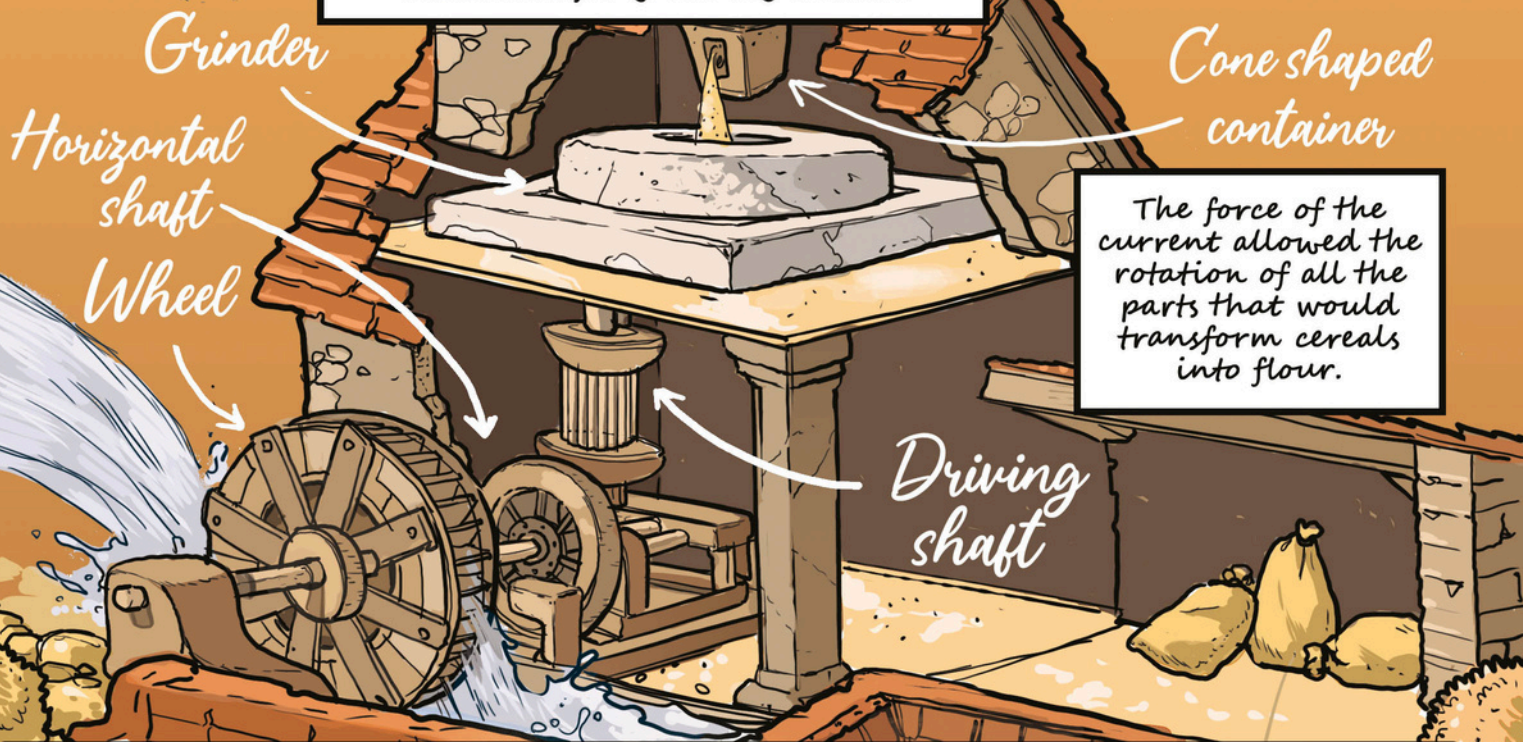


Later boats called Burchi were created. These made it possible to navigate also against the current.

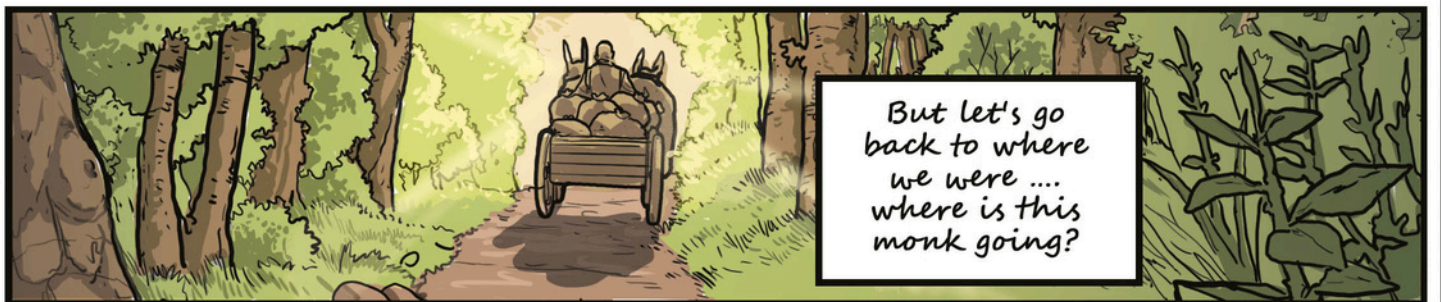
The current of the river was also the motor of another very important tool: the wheel of the water mill.



Thanks to the wheel the part of the mill used for grinding moved.



The force of the current allowed the rotation of all the parts that would transform cereals into flour.



But let's go back to where we were where is this monk going?

..... to the church
of San Salvar..

The church had
been built using
the stones from
the river.

Inside there is an
inscription dating back
to Roman times.

This proved that the
church had been
built on a much
older building.

But only in the 8th and 9th
century with the Longobards did
the church become more similar
to the one we see today.

This makes it the oldest
church in Bussolengo.







Can you hear them? You can almost hear the shouting in the middle of the battle.

By the end of the 1300s, Gian Galeazzo of the Visconti family from Milan wanted to expand his territories.....

...his aim was to cross and seize the borders of the Verona territory.



At the time the Scaligeri family headed by Antonio della Scala ruled Verona.



Gian Galeazzo Visconti signed a secret agreement with two other powerful families, the Carrara and the Gonzaga.

With the only aim of occupying Verona and sharing the spoils.

On October 18th 1387 following orders from the Visconti a commanding officer of the Milan army arrived outside the walls of Verona.

The Visconti had previously agreed with some of the opposition to the Scaligeri family for the entrances to the city to be opened and so the soldiers conquered Verona.

This marked the end of the Scaligeri rule on Verona.

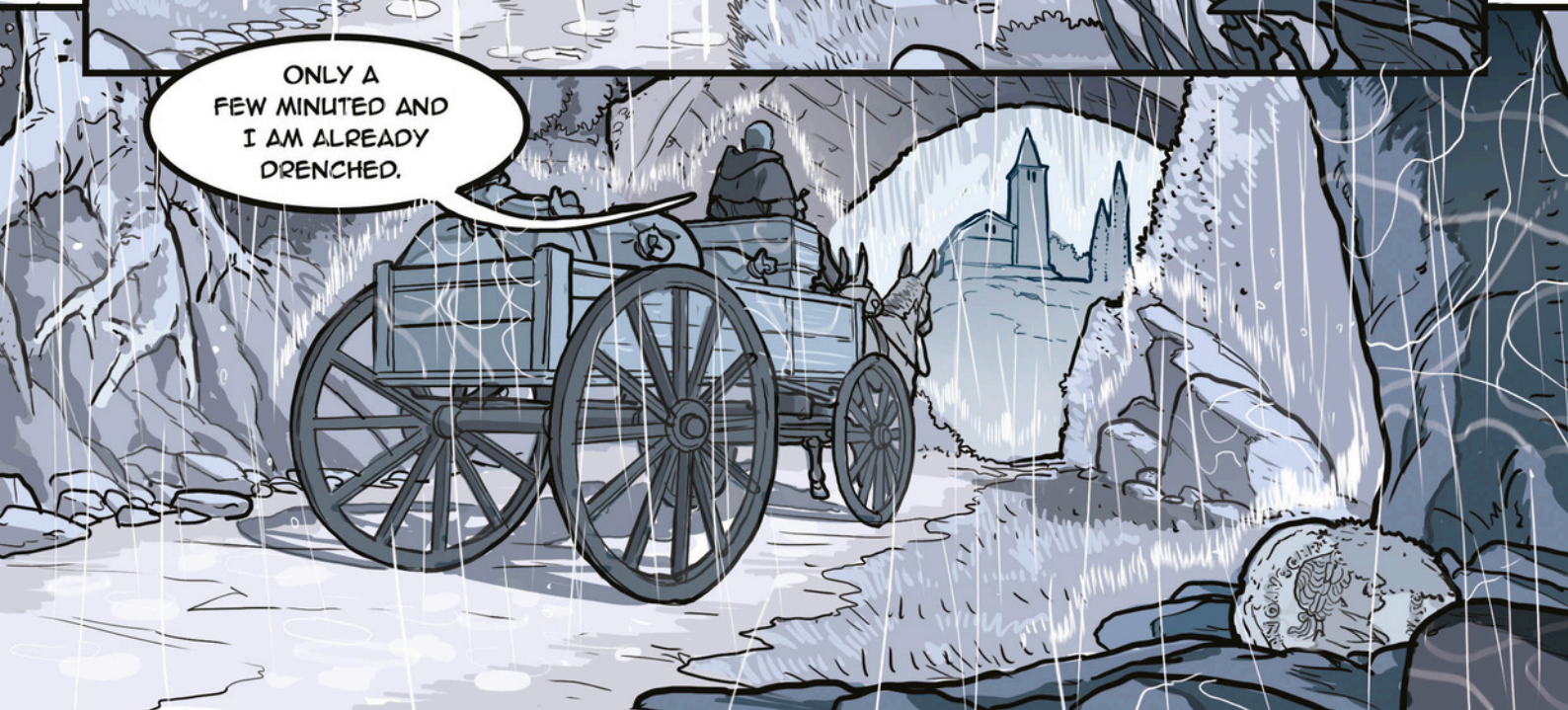
Among the many possessions that the Visconti obtained from their conquest there was also an old fort.

It had been built a century earlier in what is today Castelnuovo del Garda.

The Visconti transformed it into a castle surrounded by a double circle of walls.

And in the middle of it there was a donjon which has survived till today...

...with the name of Torre Viscontea.



FIRST CENTURY AD, IN THE AREA
WHERE TODAY SONA IS.

! The Romans are working, they
are building a pagan temple,
dedicated to their gods.

We are now around 800 AD,
the temple has become a
christian church.

It is built using morenic stones.

In the early middle ages,
following other changes the Santa
Giustina church in Palazzolo
looked similar to today's church.

The bell tower was
added in 1200.

In the following centuries there
were other minor changes.



WITH THIS
RAIN EVERYBODY HAS
GONE INDOORS.



AT LEAST I KNOW
WHERE TO UNLOAD
EVERYTHING.



MASSIMO!



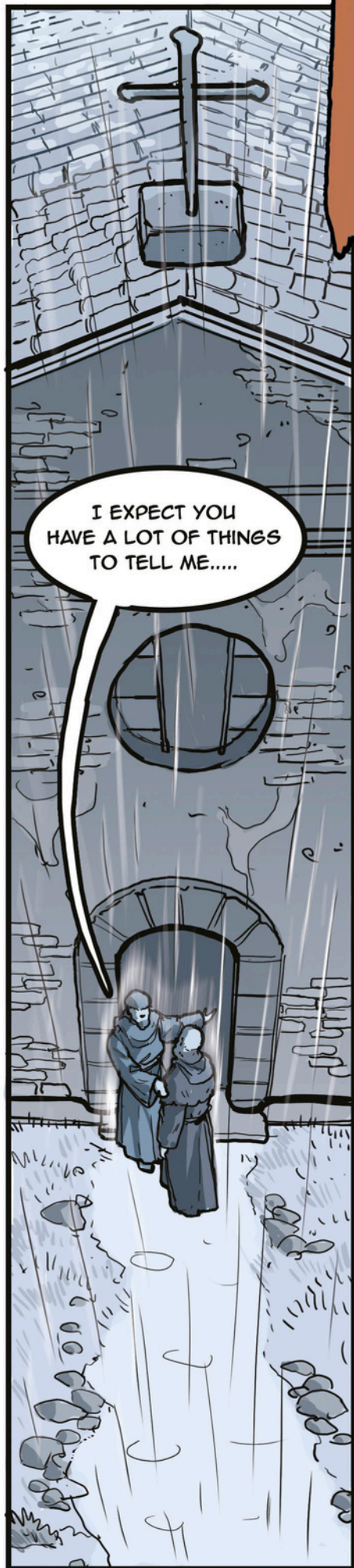
SO CLOSE
AND YET SO FAR!
WE ARE ONLY A FEW
STEPS APART BUT WE
NEVER SEE EACH
OTHER!!

I'M ALWAYS
SO BUSY... BUT
REMEMBER THAT THE
DOORS OF MY CHURCH
ARE ALWAYS
OPEN.



COME ON MASSIMO,
YOU'RE NOT THINKING
OF LEAVING IMMEDIATELY,
ARE YOU?

COME IN
FOR A WHILE FOR
A HOT DRINK.

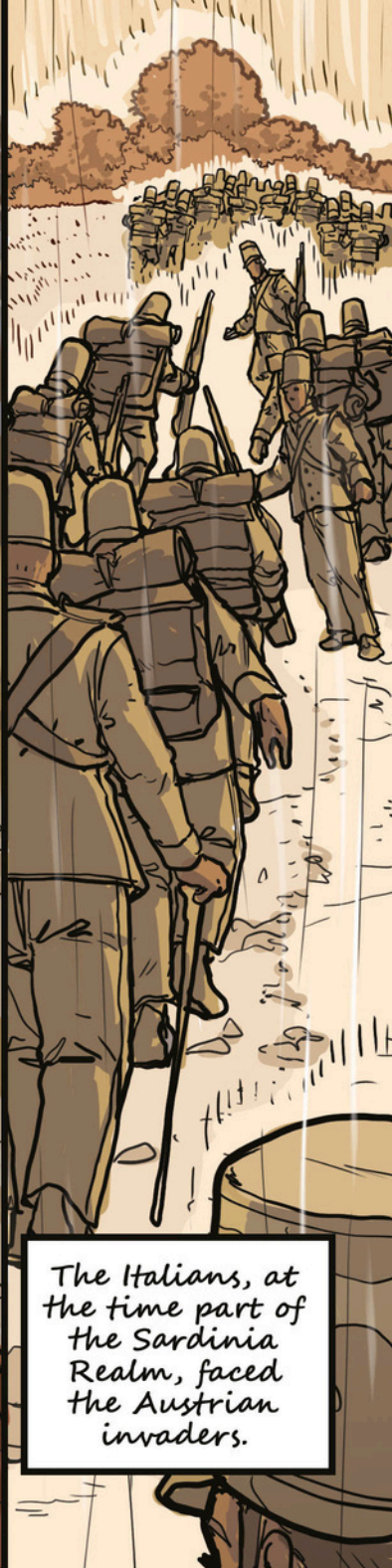


I EXPECT YOU
HAVE A LOT OF THINGS
TO TELL ME.....

Woooooos!!!



The first and
the third
independence
war were in
1848 and
1866.



The Italians, at
the time part of
the Sardinia
Realm, faced
the Austrian
invaders.

One of the many important battles that were fought was the Battle of Custoza, in which the small village of Sommacampagna was the theater of violent fighting both in 1848 and in 1866.



At the end the outcome was devastating, thousands of men died.



Nine years after the end of the second war, Father Gaetano Privatelli was the vicar in Custoza and had something in mind.



To gather all the victims of the two previous battles in a single place.

In 1877 a committee met to create a competition.

The competition was only for architects, and the best plan would be chosen.

The aim? To build a memorial to collect the remains of all the soldiers.



A large pile of architectural plans and drawings, some showing building facades and others showing floor plans, scattered across the top left of the page.

Eighty-two plans arrived
for the competition.

A framed architectural drawing of a monument, featuring a tall obelisk on a tiered base, surrounded by trees and a small body of water.

Two of them were
of great interest.

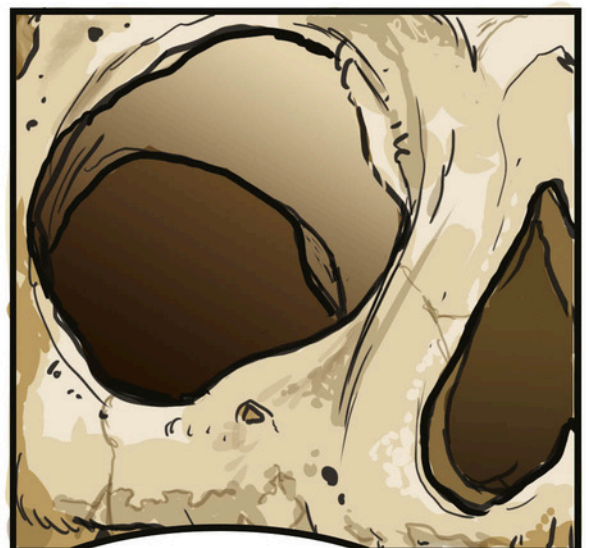
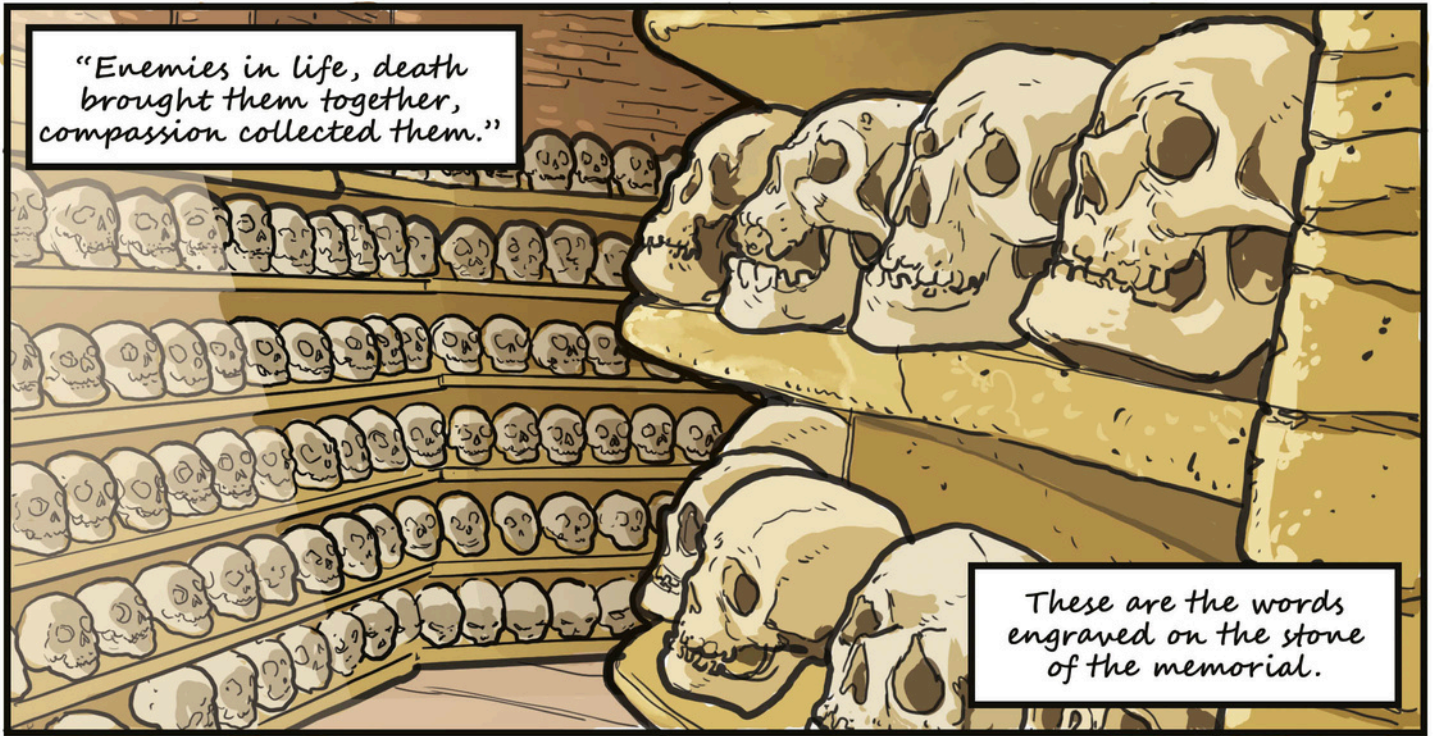
But in the end
Giacomo Franco's
plan won.

A large, detailed illustration of the Custozza Ossario monument, a tall obelisk on a tiered base, standing prominently in the center of the page.

Two years later
the Custozza
Ossario (building
containing the
bones of people
who died during
a war) was
finished at the
top of the
Belvedere Hill.

A detailed illustration of the interior of the ossuary crypt, showing rows of shelves filled with human skulls and bones, with a small window in the background.

The crypt
contains the
remains of
Italian and
Austrian
soldiers.



1450 IN THE AREA WHERE TODAY
VALEGGIO SUL MINCIO IS LOCATED.

HE WAS DARK
WITH A GRIM APPEARANCE...
HE COULD SEE WHERE I
WAS EVEN IF HIS HEAD
WAS MISSING!

WHY WAS
IT MISSING?

SEE, THIS IS
HOW THE STORY
STARTS..

NO DOUBT
SOMEBODY HAD CUT
IT OFF!

AT THE
BEGINNING OF THE 1400S
GIACOMO DA CARRARA
CONTROLLED VALEGGIO
SUL MINCIO.

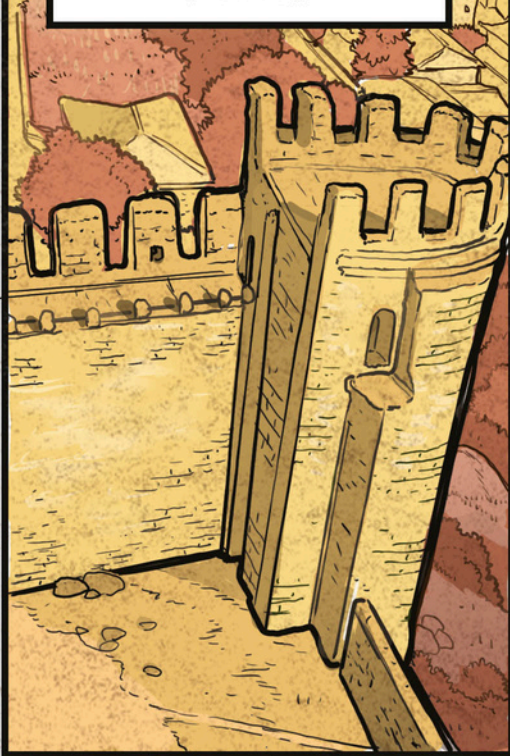
IN THOSE DAYS
CONTROLLING SUCH A
TOWN MEANT BEING IN DIRECT
CONTACT WITH THE ENEMIES RULING
MANTUA (THE GONZAGA) AND
THOSE RULING MILAN
(THE VISCONTI).

TEN YEARS
EARLIER THE VISCONTI
HAD OWNED THE
SCALIGERI
CASTLE.

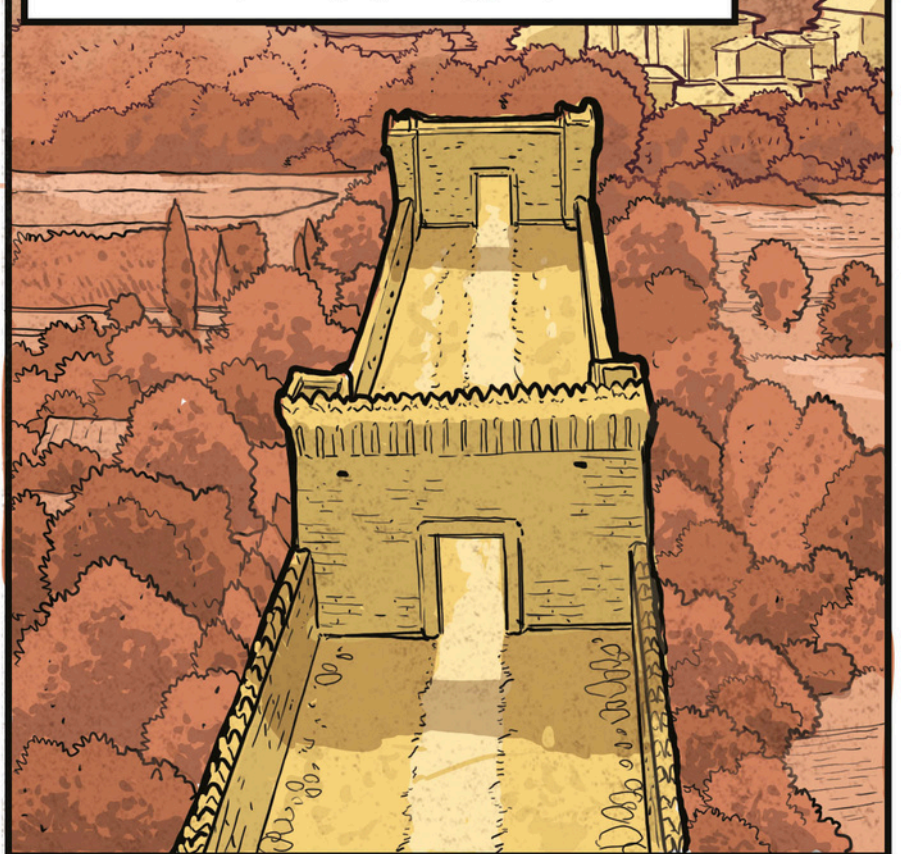
BUILT ON A
MUCH OLDER FORTIFIED
BUILDING, THEN MODIFIED
OVER THE CENTURIES, IT
GAINED ITS FINAL SHAPE
IN THE 14TH
CENTURY.



Located on Mount Ogheri, the castle was over 15 metres high and had been built to protect the borders.



The Visconteo Bridge had the same function: 650 metres long and 25 wide, it was part of a bigger plan.



A circle of fortified walls called "Serraglio" 13km long and 16 metres high that reached the neighbouring towns and would isolate Verona from all attacks.



In those years Giacomo's desire to own the castle and part of the "Serraglio" was made more and more impossible by an enemy that was very close: the Republic of Venice.

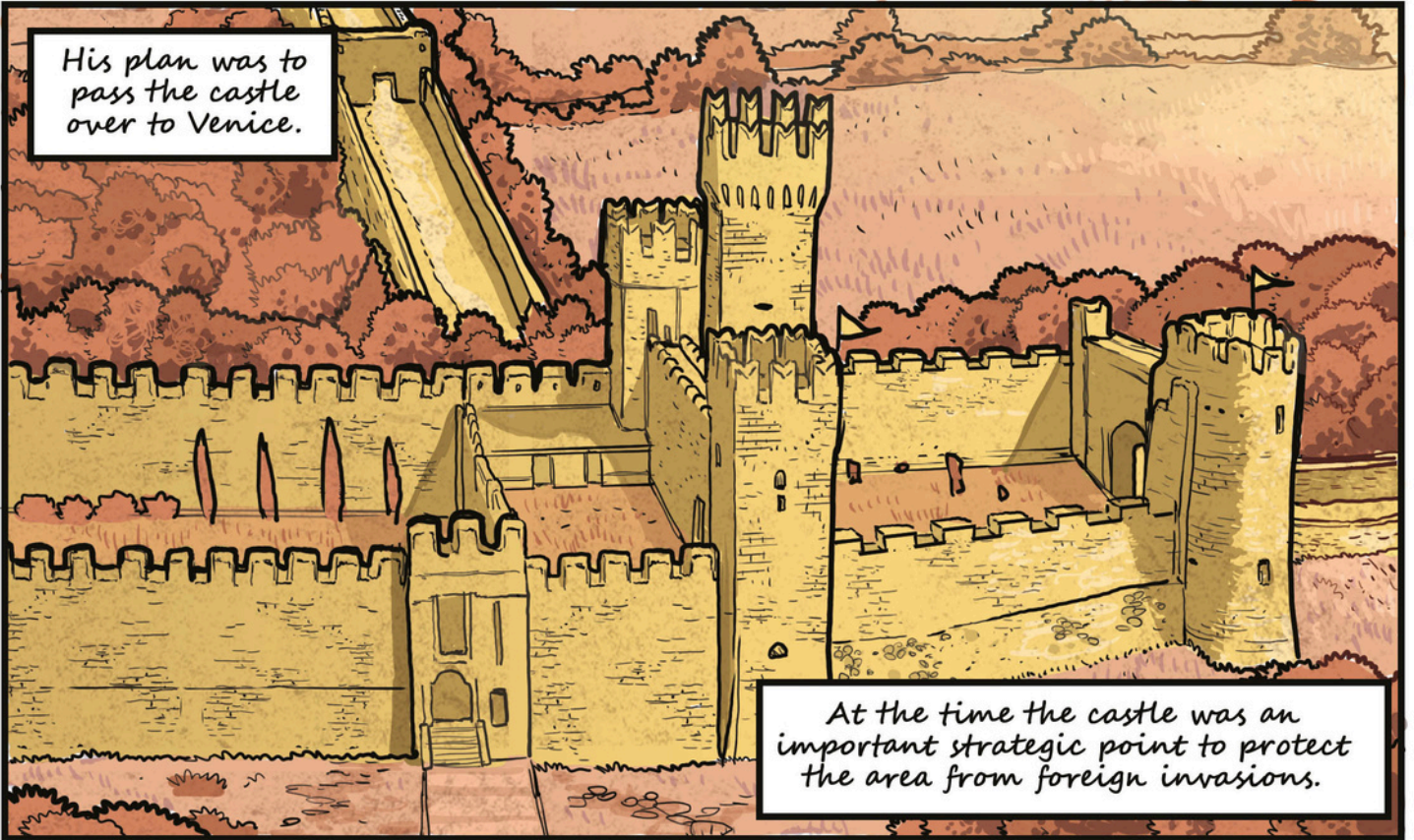


Interested in the Verona area.

Giacomo was informed of Sir Andriolo da Parma's secret plans. Sir Andriolo owned the Scaligeri Castle in Valeggio.

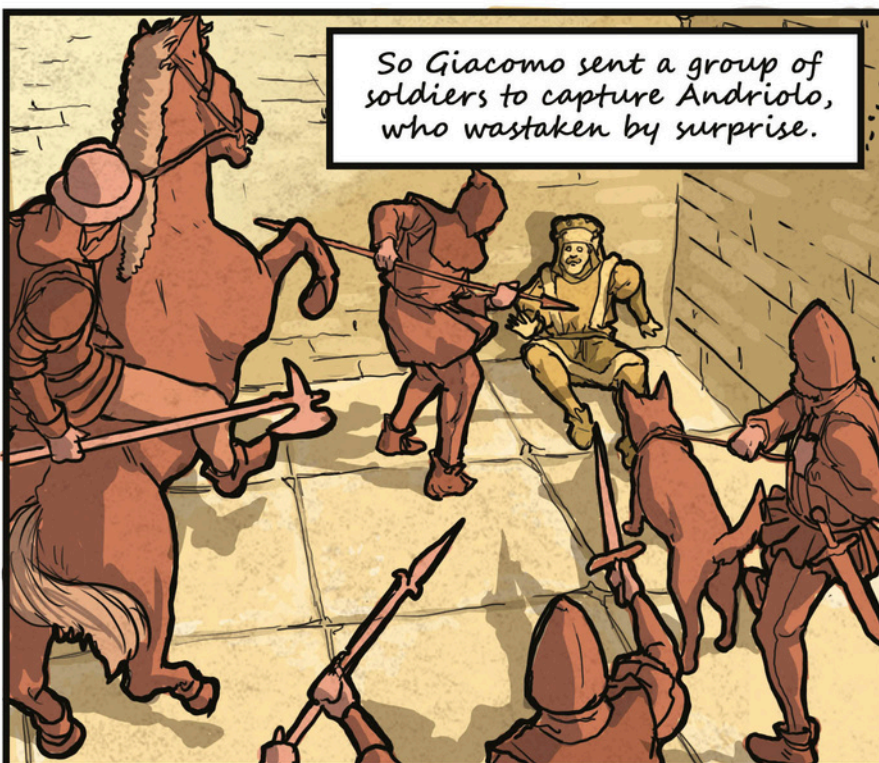


His plan was to pass the castle over to Venice.



At the time the castle was an important strategic point to protect the area from foreign invasions.

So Giacomo sent a group of soldiers to capture Andriolo, who was taken by surprise.



Andriolo's sword, symbol of authority, was taken and broken into two pieces.



Then it was thrown somewhere but nobody knows where.

Andriolo was taken prisoner and transported far from the castle.

Dragged to the river Adige he was tied to a post....

...and killed.

His body was never found.

Andriolo's killing did not solve Giacomo's problems.

The Veronese rebelled and he was forced to flee.

From the day his ghost is said to wander along the castle walls in the nights of full moon.

Hoping to find his broken sword and put the two pieces back together.

So as to be able to rest in peace at last.



What do we really know
about our landscape?

How much do we really know
about what is around us?

Maybe we never
know enough, but
we certainly know a
little more now.

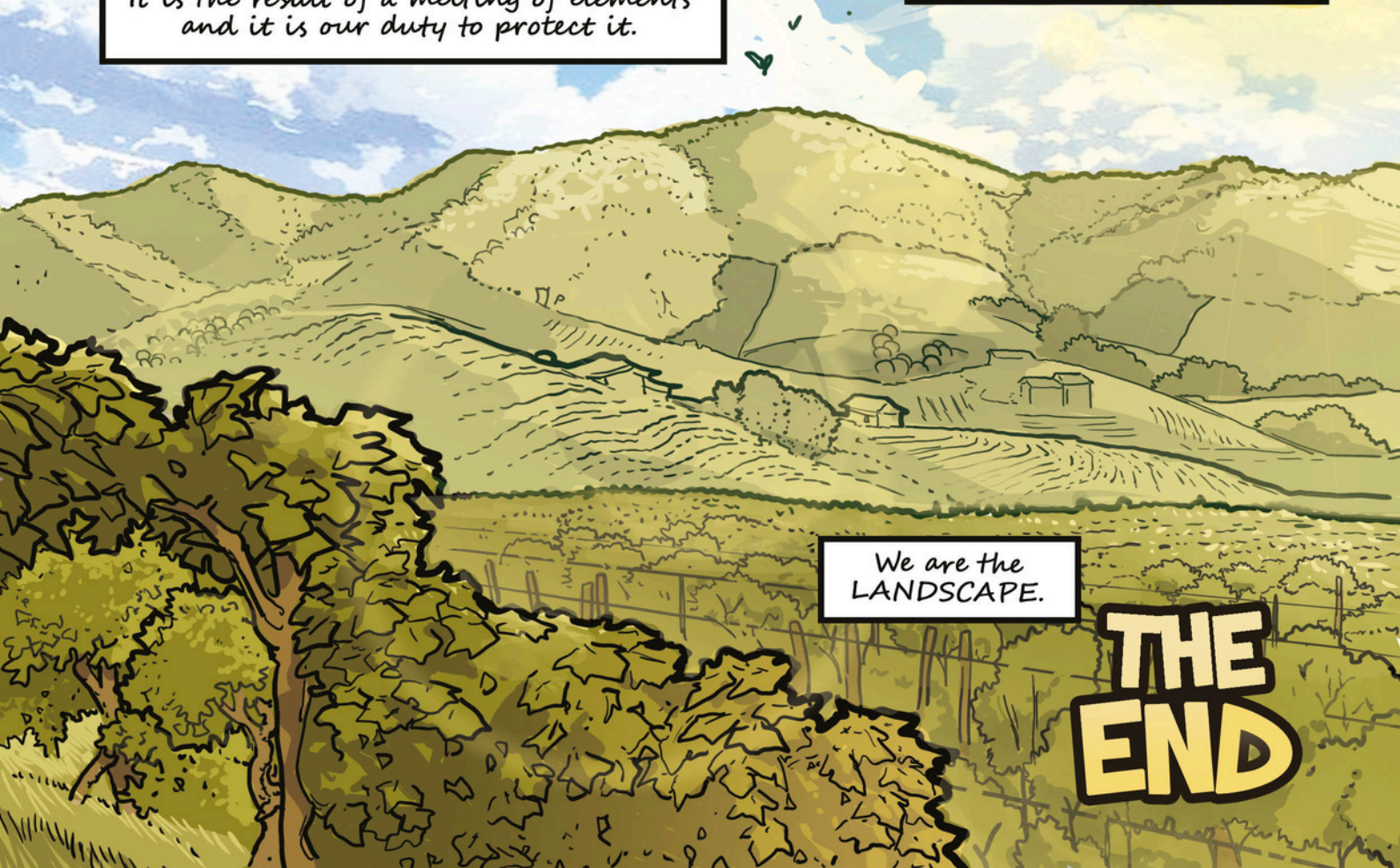
The landscape is a part
of our area, and like
every person it has its
own identity, its own
personality.

And this personality
is the result of many
elements, that put
together create it...

....and to which
we belong.



It is the result of a melting of elements and it is our duty to protect it.





BIOGRAPHY

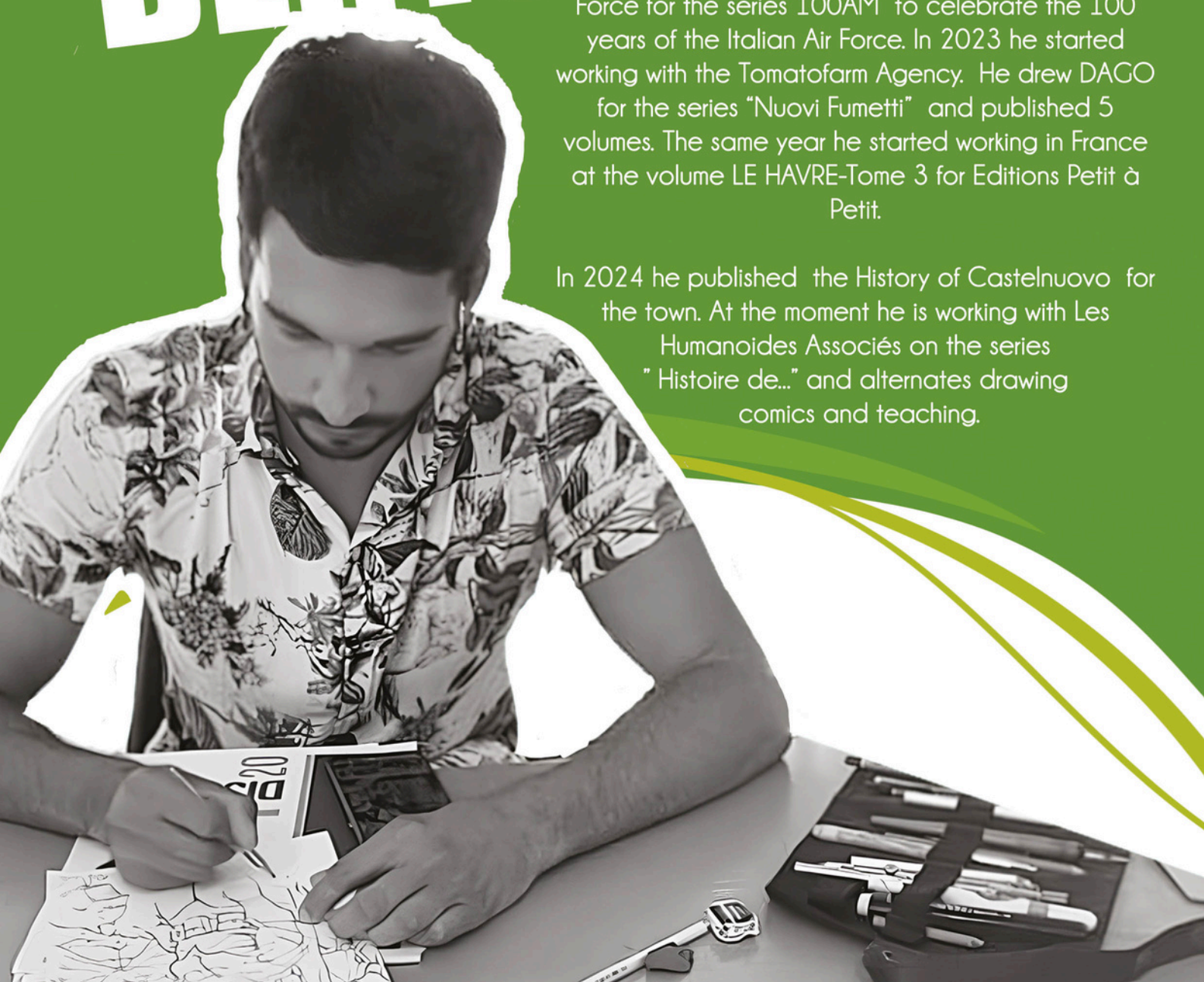
Author

Fabio BERTI

Fabio Berti was born in Adria in 1996. In 2018 he graduated from the Comics Academy in Padua with top marks and produced his first work "Lone Warriors - first bad habits" published by Pangolino Press. The following year Upper Comics published his "Tales from Time" and he joined the staff of Edizioni Letterarie producing "Waters of life". In September 2020 he published "Crawley's Crawlers" with Prankster Comics and a short story "The Reefer" for Oblo' APS. In 2021 he started a collaboration with Editoriale Aurea for Lanciostory publishing various stories in chapters or self-ending "Ronin's sword", "Nero: the emperor who didn't burn Rome", "The Night Hunter" and "Ronin's revenge",

In 2022 he published his comic "The Return of the Heroes" in cooperation with the Italian Air Force for the series 100AM to celebrate the 100 years of the Italian Air Force. In 2023 he started working with the Tomatofarm Agency. He drew DAGO for the series "Nuovi Fumetti" and published 5 volumes. The same year he started working in France at the volume LE HAVRE-Tome 3 for Editions Petit à Petit.

In 2024 he published the History of Castelnuovo for the town. At the moment he is working with Les Humanoïdes Associés on the series "Histoire de..." and alternates drawing comics and teaching.



How much do we truly
know about what
surrounds us?

A journey in time through the
history of monuments, people and
environments that have
characterized the landscape inland
Lake Garda.

