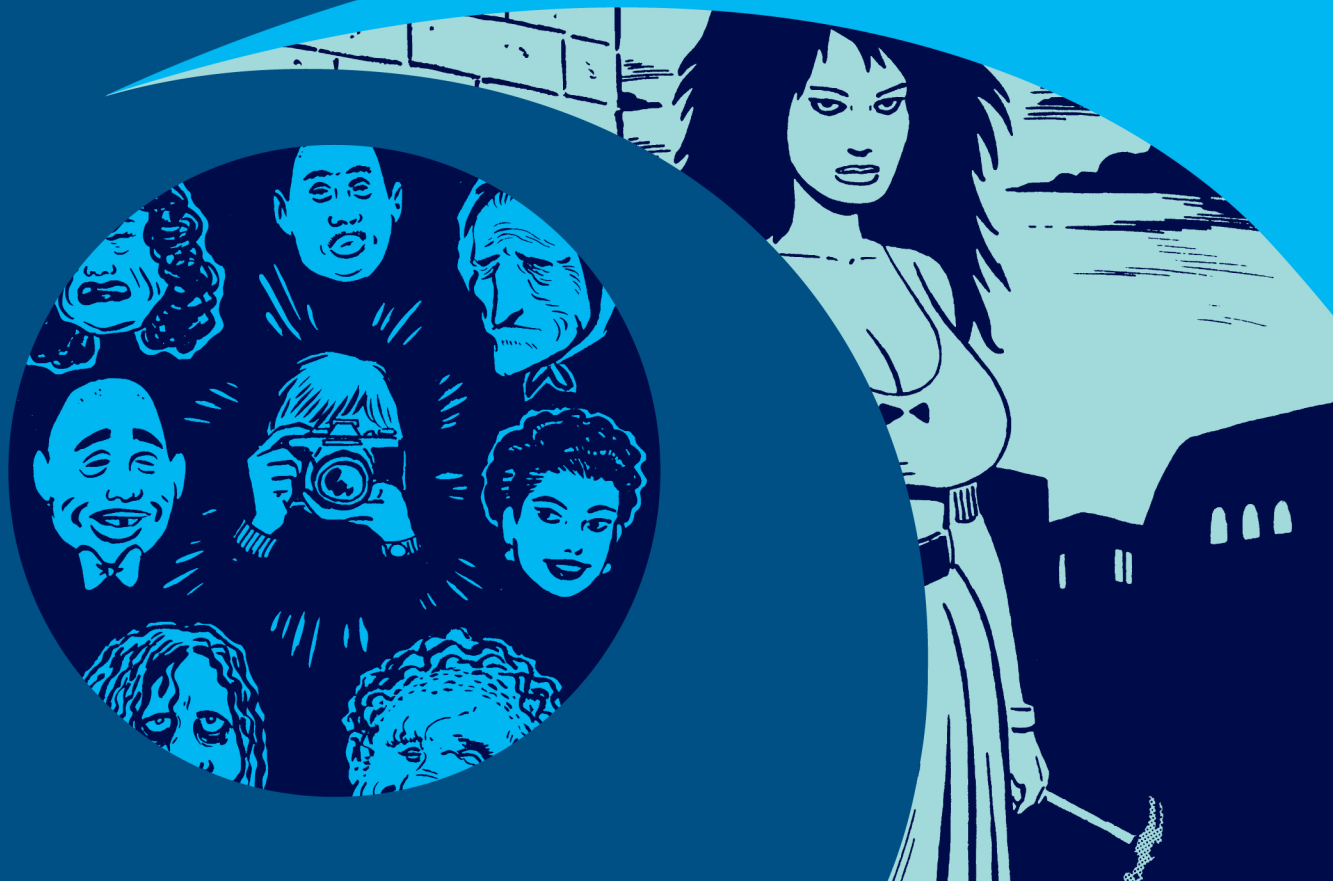




Gilbert
Hernandez

HEARTBREAK SOUP

A LOVE AND ROCKETS BOOK



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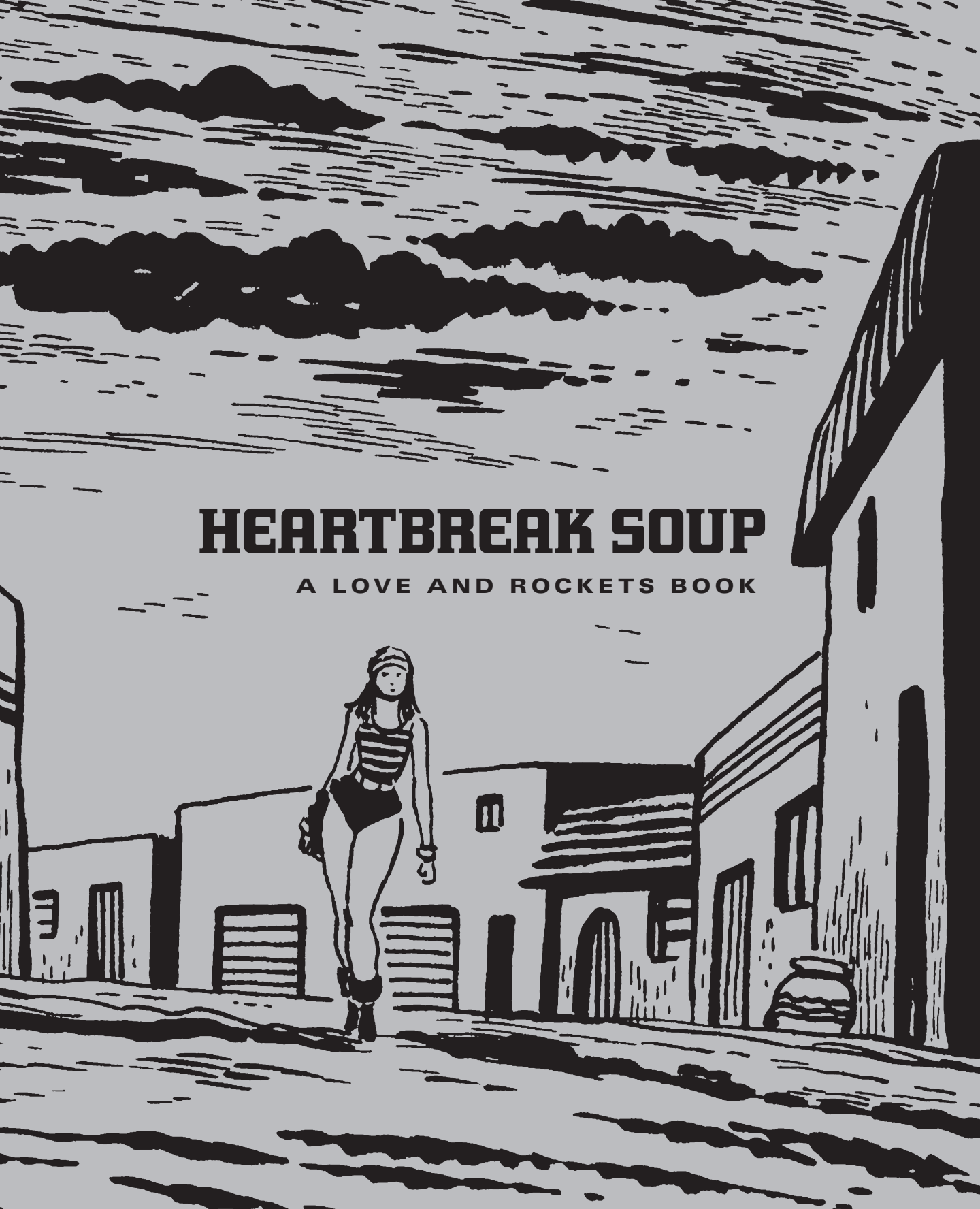
A LOVE AND ROCKETS BOOK

FANTAGRAPHICS
BOOKS



HEARTBREAK SOUP

A LOVE AND ROCKETS BOOK



HEARTBREAK SOUP

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at www.fantagraphics.com

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AS WELL AS
GIVING BATHS FOR
A LIVING IN THOSE
DAYS, CHELO WAS
ALSO A MIDWIFE.
SHE CAN TELL
YOU STORIES.



IT WAS CHELO
WHO TALKED
VICENTE'S MOTHER
GABRIELA INTO
NOT DROWNING
HIM WHEN HE WAS
BUT A FEW
MINUTES INTO OUR
GREY WORLD.



JESÚS ANGEL TOOK
TWO DAYS TO REMOVE
HIMSELF FROM HIS
WEARY MOTHER RITA.
WITNESSES OF THE
BIRTH AGREED IT
LOOKED LIKE JESÚS
MIGHT STAY INSIDE HIS
MOTHER FOREVER, BUT
THE MOMENT AFTER
CHELO SUGGESTED A
CAESAREAN SECTION,
OUT HE CAME AS IF HE
HAD HEARD HER AND
UNDERSTOOD THAT HE
WAS ALREADY MAKING
THINGS DIFFICULT
FOR EVERYBODY.

AURORA AND ISRAEL WERE BORN TO ELISSA AND JUAN DIAZ WITHOUT INCIDENT. FOUR YEARS LATER WHEN THE TWINS WERE PLAYING JACKS IN THE STREET, A TOTAL ECLIPSE STRUCK; THE SUNSHINE RETURNED SOON ENOUGH AND EVERYTHING SEEMED NORMAL, SAVE ONE THING: AURORA WAS GONE.

THE SEARCH FOR THE MISSING CHILD LASTED TWO MONTHS, BUT IT WAS OF NO USE. VENGEFUL SPIRITS, INTERGALACTIC KIDNAPPERS, DIVINE INTERVENTION, EVEN OLD FASHIONED EARTHLY FOUL PLAY WAS CONSIDERED AS THE SOURCE OF THE MYSTERY.



YEARS LATER, A STRANGER PASSING THROUGH PALOMAR WOULD MENTION TO ISRAEL THAT SHE HAD SEEN A GIRL FIRE-EATER IN AUSTRIA WHO LOOKED EXACTLY LIKE HIM.

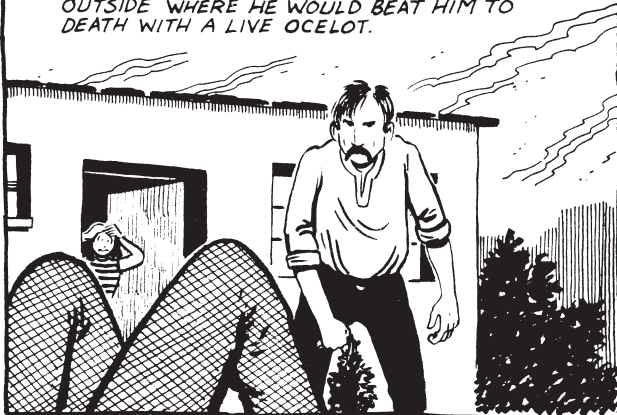
SAKAHAFTEWA, KNOWN AS SATCH TO HIS FRIENDS, WAS BORN TO NENA AND OLAF GARCIA. SATCH ENTERED THE WORLD WITH A RESONANT SNEEZE.

LATER IN HIS LIFE THE LAD BECAME A MASTER SOMNAMBULIST: IN THE DEAD OF NIGHT HE COULD BE FOUND SIX STREETS FROM HIS BED FAST ASLEEP ATOP A FRESHLY FILLED GRAVE OR UNDER THE CHURCH STEPS AS HE DREAMED OF SWIMMING WITH BALDHEADED WOMEN.



CHELO WAS ONLY ALLOWED TO ASSIST IN PIPO'S BIRTH BECAUSE A PHYSICIAN WAS CALLED IN WHEN PIPO'S MOTHER ELVIRA BROKE OUT IN A RAGING FEVER DURING LABOR.

PIPO WAS BORN WITH FEW COMPLICATIONS, BUT THEN THE DOCTOR ACCIDENTLY DROPPED THE INFANT ON HER HEAD PROVOKING HER DRUNKEN FATHER TO DRAG THE PHYSICIAN OUTSIDE WHERE HE WOULD BEAT HIM TO DEATH WITH A LIVE OCELOT.



PIPO'S FATHER WAS THEN SENT TO JAIL WHERE HE WAS KILLED IN A KNIFE FIGHT OVER OWNERSHIP OF A CIGARETTE LIGHTER.

PIPO GREW UP TO BE A LOVELY GIRL WITH NO APPARENT SIGN OF DAMAGE.



CHELO'S ANCESTORS FOUNDED THIS TOWN OF PALOMAR, SHE BEING THE LAST OF THAT LINE.

CHELO'S FATHER EMIL WORKED IN A MINE AND HER MOTHER IRMA WAS A MIDWIFE.

OVERLY STUBBORN AS A GIRL, CHELO WAS ONCE BEATEN SO SEVERLY BY HER FATHER THAT HE RENDERED HIS ONLY CHILD INCAPABLE OF HAVING CHILDREN.

ALTHOUGH EMIL WAS SORRY, HE WAS NEVER ALLOWED NEAR HIS DAUGHTER AGAIN.



DESPERATE, EMIL TRIED TO GET IRMA TO HAVE MORE CHILDREN; SHE TOLD HIM TO FIND SOMEBODY ELSE. HE WISELY DID NOT ARGUE.

HIS ATTEMPTS TO HAVE CHILDREN WITH OTHER WOMAN FROM THE TOWN FAILED. NO WOMAN IN PALOMAR WANTED A CHILD BY A CHILD CRIPPLER.

EMIL BLAMED CHELO'S STUBBORNNESS FOR ENDING THE FAMILY LINE AND THEREFORE ABANDONED HIS FAMILY TO START A NEW ONE SOMEWHERE IN THE UNITED STATES. MONTHS LATER, IRMA RECIEVED IN THE MAIL AN ENVELOPE FROM PARIS TEXAS CONTAINING ONLY TWO GOLD TEETH CAKED WITH DRIED BLOOD. IRMA NEVER SHOWED CHELO.

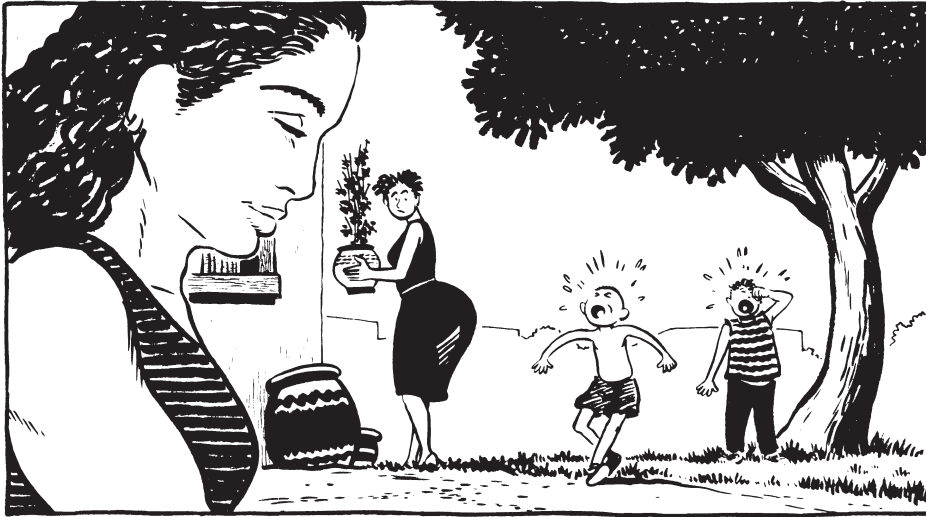
IRMA REMARRIED TO A GERMAN TRUCKDRIVER NAMED HANS WHO WAS VERY GOOD TO HIS NEW WIFE AND DAUGHTER, YET CHELO WAITED FOR HER TRUE FATHER TO RETURN, THE FATHER SHE FELT SHE DESERVED. WHEN HANS AND IRMA FINALLY CONVINCED CHELO EMIL WAS DEAD, CHELO DECIDED SHE WOULD BE A MIDWIFE LIKE HER MOTHER. CHELO FELT SHE WAS GOING TO BRING CHILDREN INTO THE WORLD ONE WAY OR ANOTHER.



FOR CHELO'S FIRST ASSIGNMENT IRMA TOOK HER DAUGHTER TO A HOUSE WHERE TWO UNRELATED WOMEN WERE ABOUT TO DELIVER. INSIDE, CHELO WAS LED TO A ROOM WITH TWO BEDS.

ON ONE BED LASHED TO THE POSTS WAS A WOMAN NAMED DALIA WHO CURSED AND HOWLED AND THRASHED AS IF POSSESSED BY THE DEMON ITSELF. ON THE OTHER BED A WOMAN NAMED LICHA SIMPLY SMIRKED AT CHELO AS IF TRYING TO SUPPRESS LAUGHTER.

WHEN IT WAS ALL OVER CHELO'S FEELINGS OF GUILT FOR ALLEGEDLY CAUSING THE END OF THE FAMILY LINE WANED. SHE WAS ALMOST GLAD SHE COULD NEVER BEAR CHILDREN.



MANUEL AND SOLEDAD WERE BORN ALMOST SIMULTANEOUSLY. CHELO WOULD SEE THE TWO BOYS GROW UP TO BE THE BEST OF BUDDIES.

AS KIDS THEY FOUGHT MOST OF THE TIME, LICHA'S SON SOLEDAD USUALLY BEING THE VICTOR. DALIA'S SON MANUEL WOULD BEGIN TO CRY, THEN SOLEDAD WOULD FOLLOW SUIT BECAUSE HIS BEST FRIEND WAS HURT.

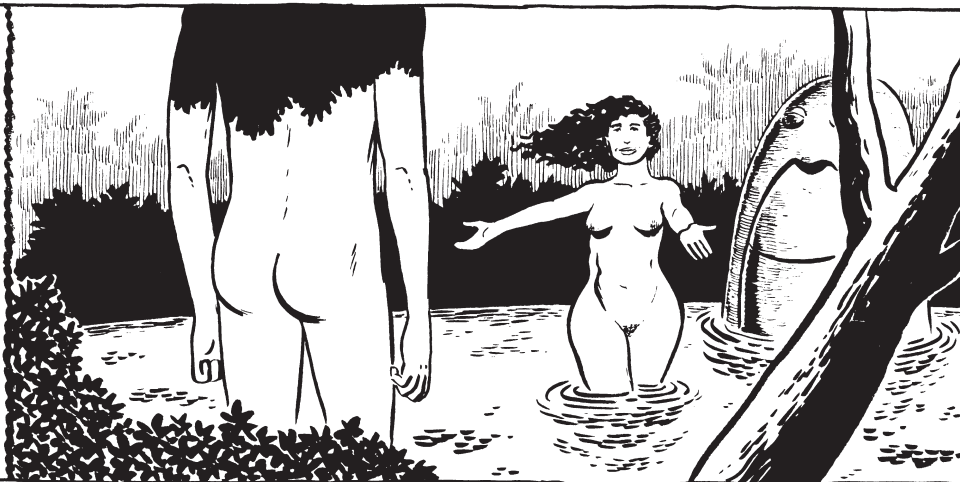
SOLEDAD LATER BECAME QUITE THE EDUCATED FELLOW. WHENEVER HIS NOSE WAS NOT BURIED IN A BOOK ABOUT SOCIALISM OR PHILOSOPHY, IT SEEMED HE HAD A QUESTION OR AN ANSWER FOR EVERYTHING. HE WAS QUICKLY REGARDED AS SOMEONE TO AVOID.



MANUEL PREFERRED TO CONCENTRATE ON THE DELIGHTS OF THE DIVINE PASSION. AS YOUNG AS THIRTEEN YEARS OLD HE WAS IN AND OUT OF LOVER'S BEDROOMS.



WHAT INTERESTED MANUEL IN A PARTICULAR WOMAN COULD NOT BE PREDICTED: ONE WOMAN WOULD BE PRETTY, ALTHOUGH IT WAS THE WAY SHE CURSED AND BELCHED THAT EXCITED HIM; ANOTHER WOMAN WOULD BE HOMELY, YET POSSESSING EARS THAT INSPIRED HIS KNEES TO TREMBLE...



SOLEDAD'S ENCOUNTERS WITH WOMEN WERE PITIFUL AS HE SEEMED TO HAVE A DIFFICULT TIME EVEN SPEAKING TO THEM.

HE WOULD ROUTINELY SUFFER FROM BOUTS OF DEPRESSION THAT COULD ONLY BE SHAKEN BY MANUEL AND HIS UNRELENTING LUST FOR LIFE.



MANUEL WAS NOT AN ARTICULATE FELLOW, SOMETIMES LITERALLY SPENDING HOURS STRUGGLING TO DESCRIBE SUCH THEORIES AS SOLVING THE WORLD HUNGER PROBLEM BY CROSSBREEDING CATTLE WITH ELEPHANTS.

SOLEDAD WOULD SIT AND LISTEN PATIENTLY TO EVERY WORD.



WHILE SOLEDAD WORKED FOR HIS LIVING AS HARD AS HE WORKED ON HIS EDUCATION, MANUEL RARELY PICKED UP A SHOVEL OR HAMMERED A NAIL. IT WAS SAID AN EX-LOVER WHO MOVED TO THE UNITED STATES PERIODICALLY SENT HIM LARGE SUMS OF MONEY. THIS DISGUSTED SOLEDAD TO NO END AND HE AND MANUEL ARGUED OVER IT CONSTANTLY.



THEN, SEEMINGLY OUT OF NOWHERE WAS THE SECRET AFFAIR OF SOLEDAD AND PIPO. HE DEFLOWERED HER SEVEN DAYS AFTER HER THIRTEENTH BIRTHDAY, BUT ONLY UNDER THE CONDITION THAT HE BUY HER THAT PINK DRESS HER MOTHER SAID WAS TOO EXPENSIVE.



THE AFFAIR DID NOT LAST LONG AS PIPO QUICKLY TIRED OF SOLEDAD'S OPPRESSIVE LIBIDO. SHE SOUGHT REFUGE BEHIND HER MOTHER'S SKIRTS.

SOLEDAD RESPECTED PIPO'S DECISION TO PART WAYS AND BACKED OFF, PERHAPS INFLUENCED BY PIPO'S MOTHER AS WELL...

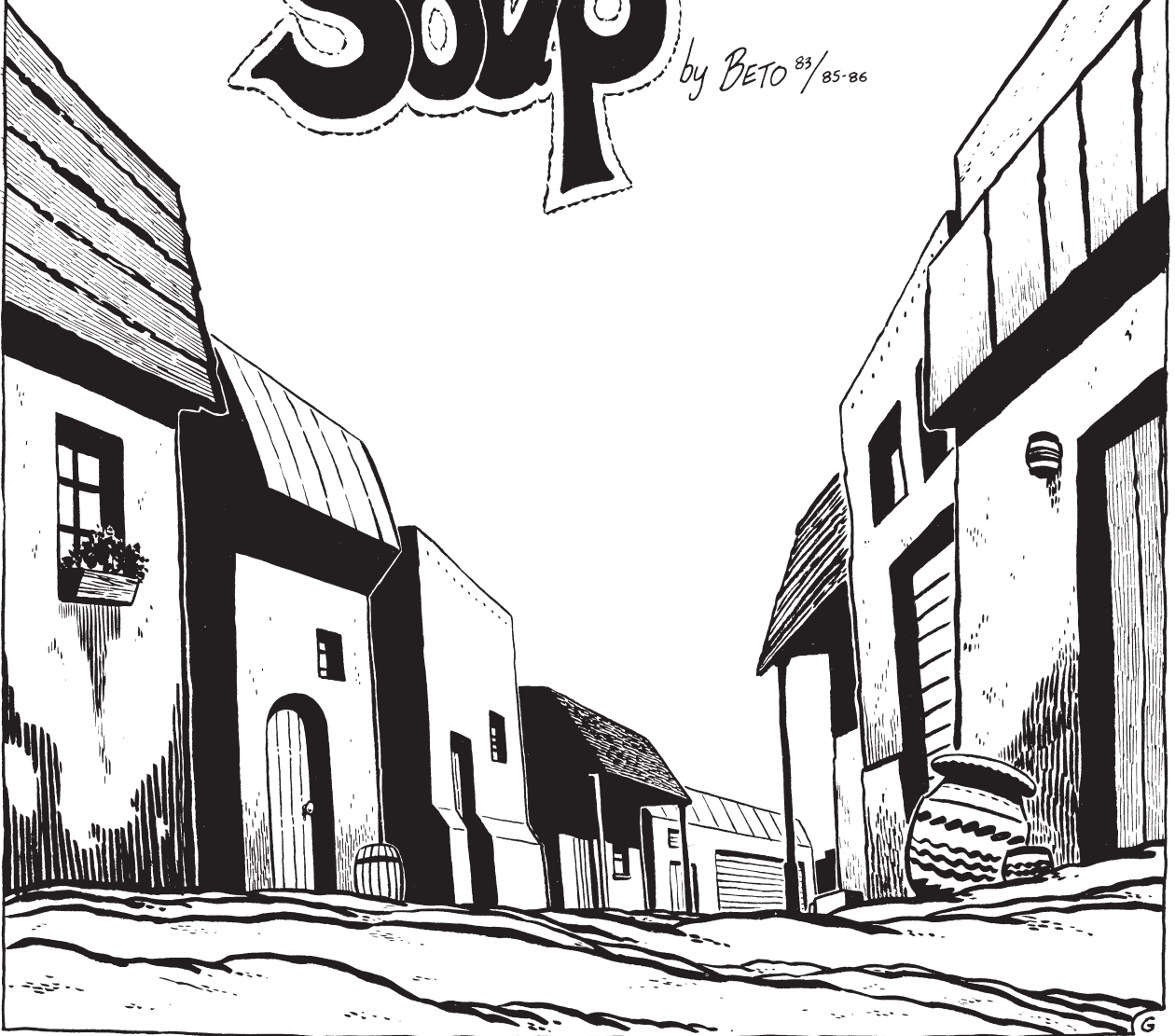


FEW PEOPLE KNEW OF THAT AFFAIR. CHELO WAS ONE WHO DID AND MANUEL WAS ONE WHO DID NOT. CHELO COULD TELL YOU STORIES...

CHELO DELIVERED OVER A HUNDRED CHILDREN IN THE SMALL TOWN OF PALOMAR BEFORE SHE BECAME A BANADORA FULL TIME, BUT THE BIRTHS OF MANUEL AND SOLEDAD WOULD ALWAYS REMAIN IN HER MIND AS VIVID AS THE TRAGIC END OF THE BOYS' FRIENDSHIP ON EARTH.

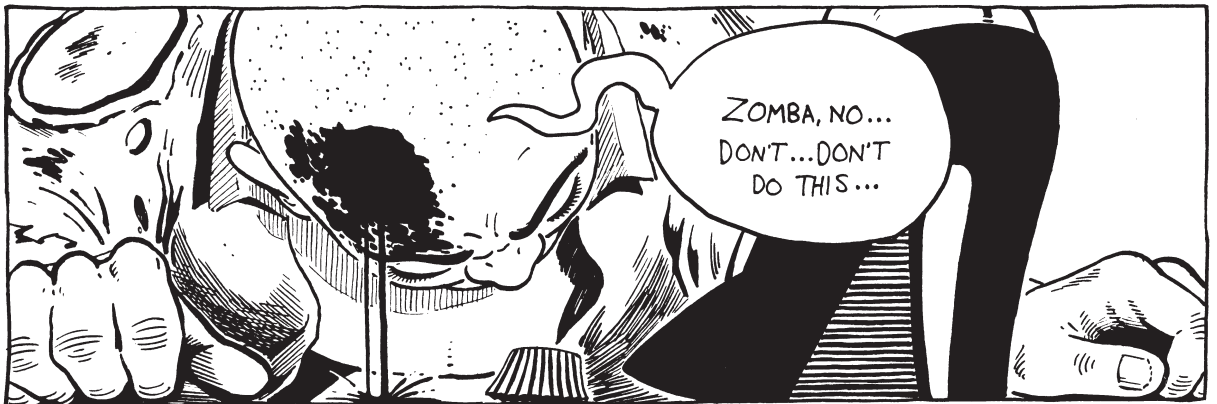
Heartbreak Soup

by BETO ⁸³/85-86



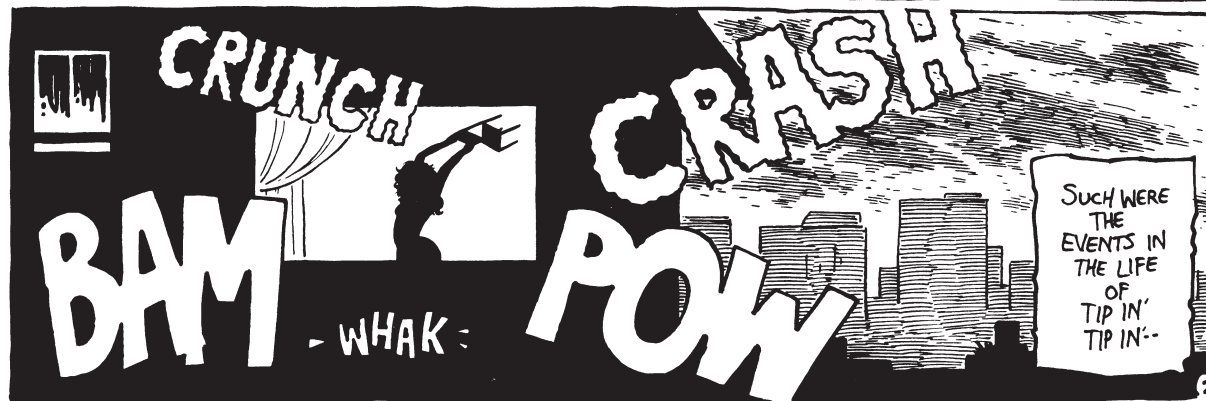
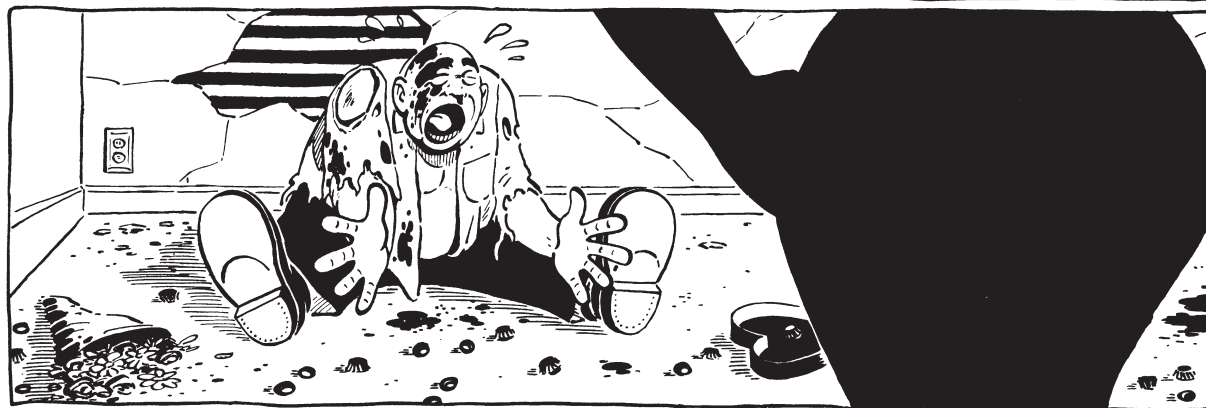
SOPA DE GRAN PENA

EL
BETO
'83



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SOPA DE GRAN PENA ('SOAP'-UH DEH GRAWN PEN'-UH) : HEARTBREAK SOUP





--TO ZOMBA! QUEEN OF WOMEN--!

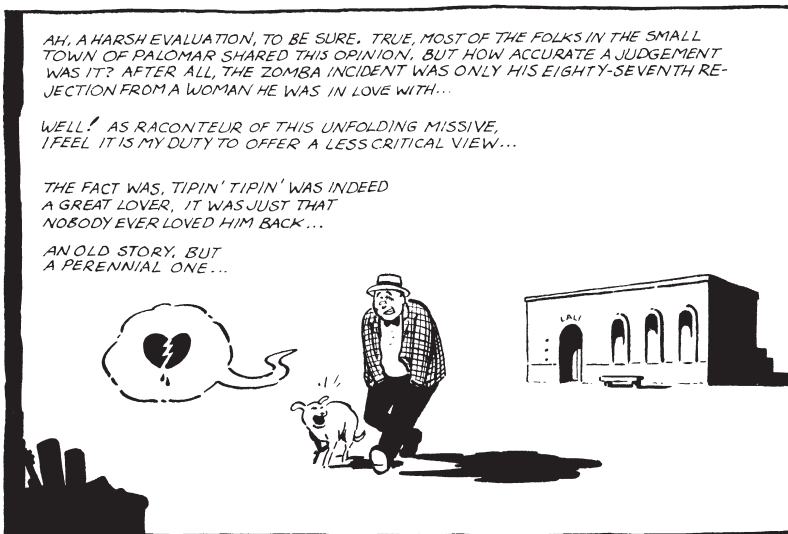


LOVE IS BUT A VITAMIN TO ONE SUCH AS MYSELF!

BEHOLD--! HE WHO HOLDS THE SECRETS OF THE UNIVERSE HIDDEN WITHIN HIS CHONERS!



BUT OF COURSE, WE KNOW THE REAL STORY, DON'T WE? TIPIN' TIPIN' IS BUT A LIAR, A LOSER AND A LAMER ALL SQUISHED INTO ONE SAD EXCUSE FOR A MAN ... TSK TSK.

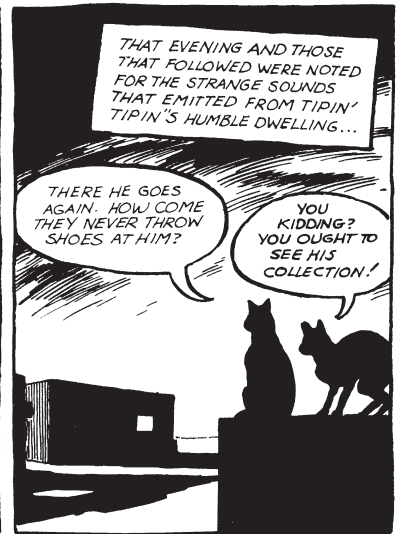


AH, A HARSH EVALUATION, TO BE SURE. TRUE, MOST OF THE FOLKS IN THE SMALL TOWN OF PALOMAR SHARED THIS OPINION, BUT HOW ACCURATE A JUDGEMENT WAS IT? AFTER ALL, THE ZOMBA INCIDENT WAS ONLY HIS EIGHTY-SEVENTH REJECTION FROM A WOMAN HE WAS IN LOVE WITH...

WELL! AS RACONTEUR OF THIS UNFOLDING MISSIVE, I FEEL IT IS MY DUTY TO OFFER A LESS CRITICAL VIEW...

THE FACT WAS, TIPIN' TIPIN' WAS INDEED A GREAT LOVER, IT WAS JUST THAT NOBODY EVER LOVED HIM BACK...

AN OLD STORY, BUT A PERENNIAL ONE...



THAT EVENING AND THOSE THAT FOLLOWED WERE NOTED FOR THE STRANGE SOUNDS THAT EMITTED FROM TIPIN' TIPIN'S HUMBLE DWELLING...

THERE HE GOES AGAIN. HOW COME THEY NEVER THROW SHOES AT HIM?

YOU KIDDING? YOU OUGHT TO SEE HIS COLLECTION!

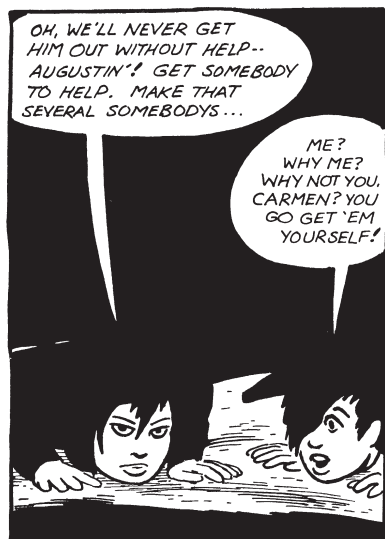
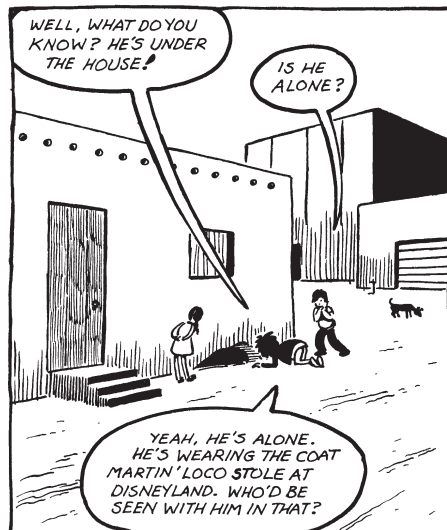


AND WHAT OF THOSE DENIZENS OF PALOMAR WHO DIDN'T INDULGE IN THESE DERISIONS AGAINST TIP..?

HEY, CARMEN!

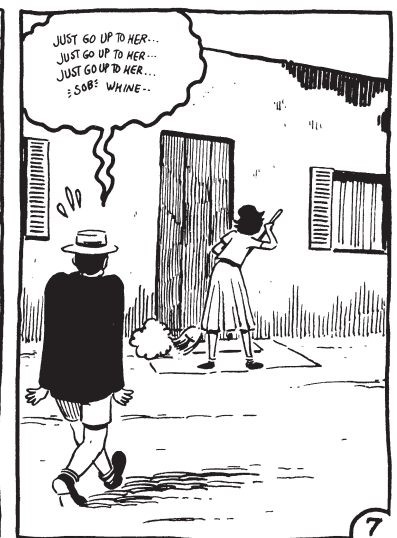
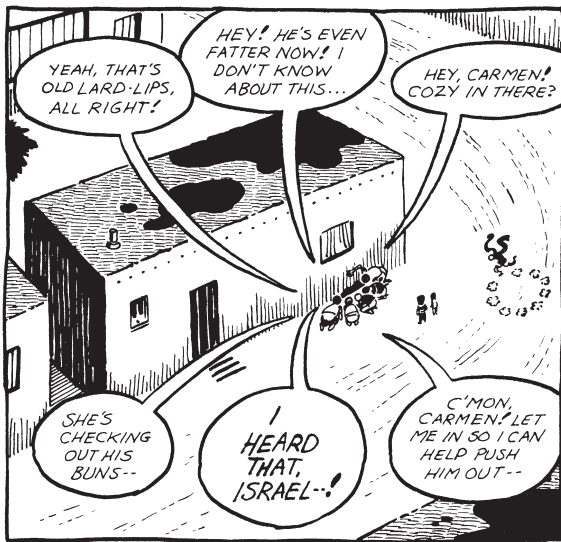


CARMEN - CAR' MEN / GATO - GAH' TOE / AUGUSTIN - AW GOOSE TEEN / LUCIA - LOU SEE'UH / PIPO - PEE' POE / CHELO - CHEN' LOW / GORDO - GORE' THOUGH

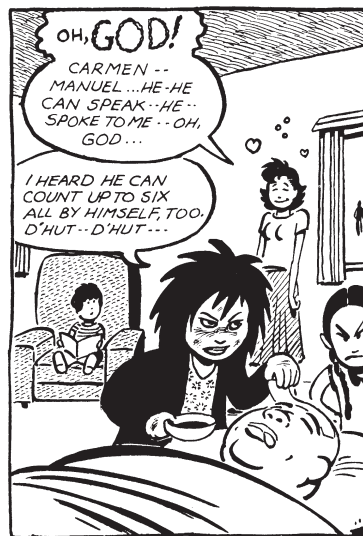
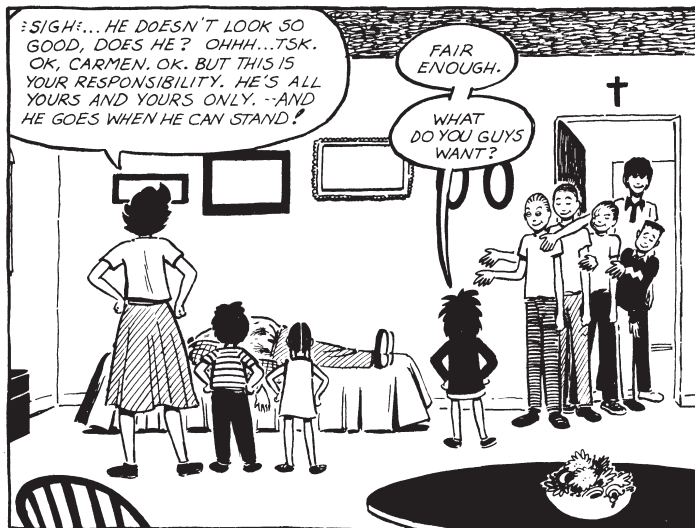




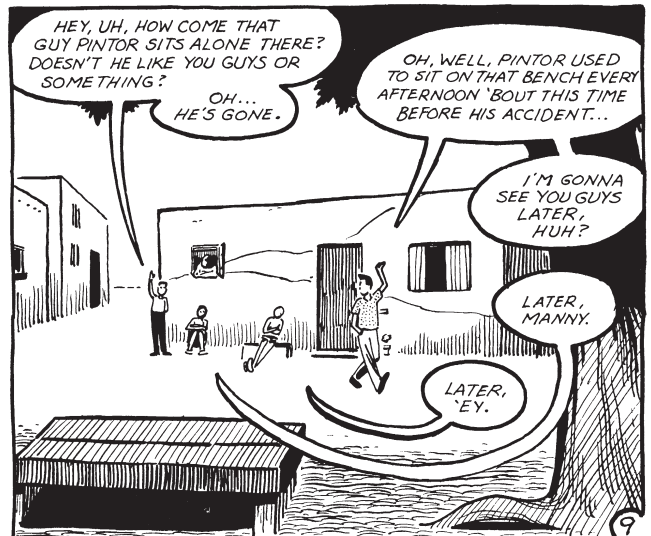
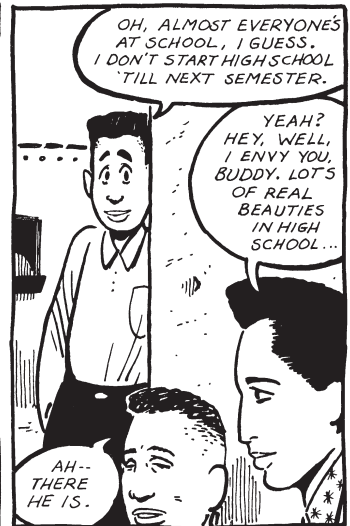
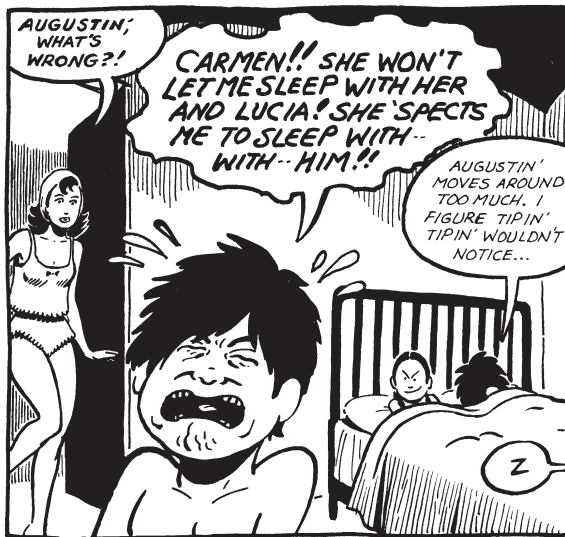
VICENTE - VEE ZEN 'TEH / JESUS - HEH SOOS / ISRAEL - EES 'RYE EL



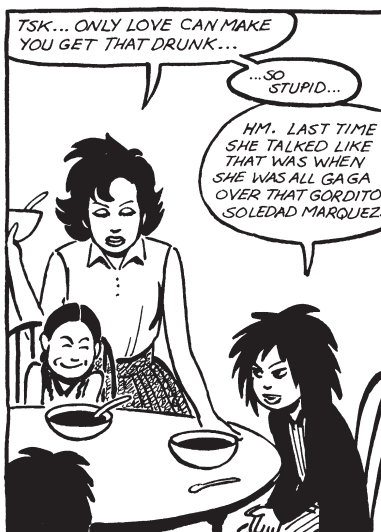
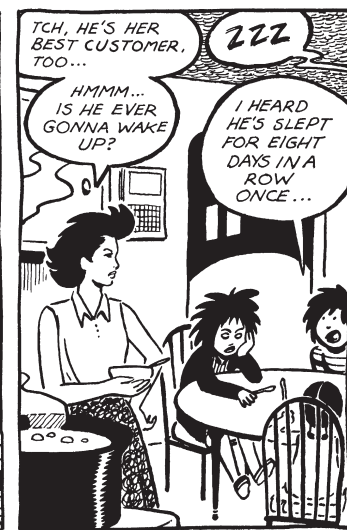
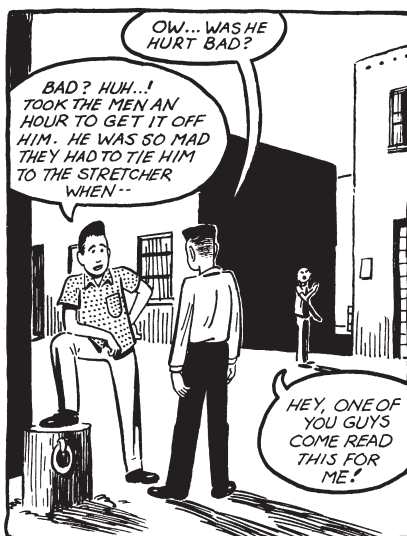
PADRE PACO - PAW' DRAY PAW' KOE / BRUJA (WITCH) BREW' HAH



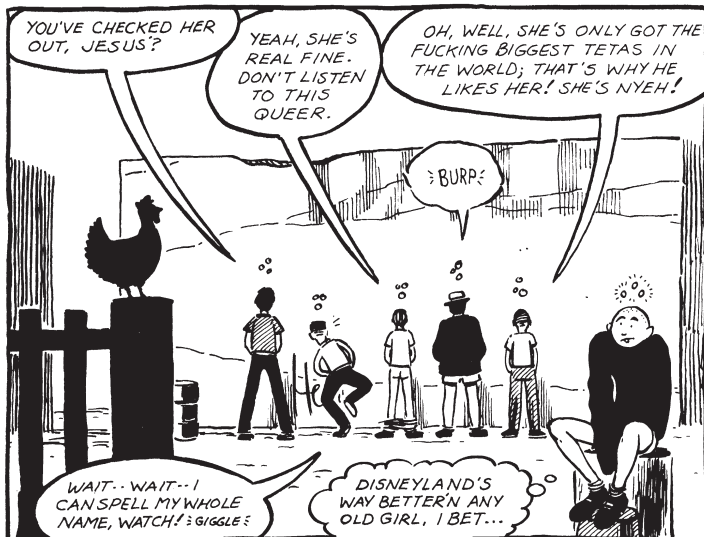
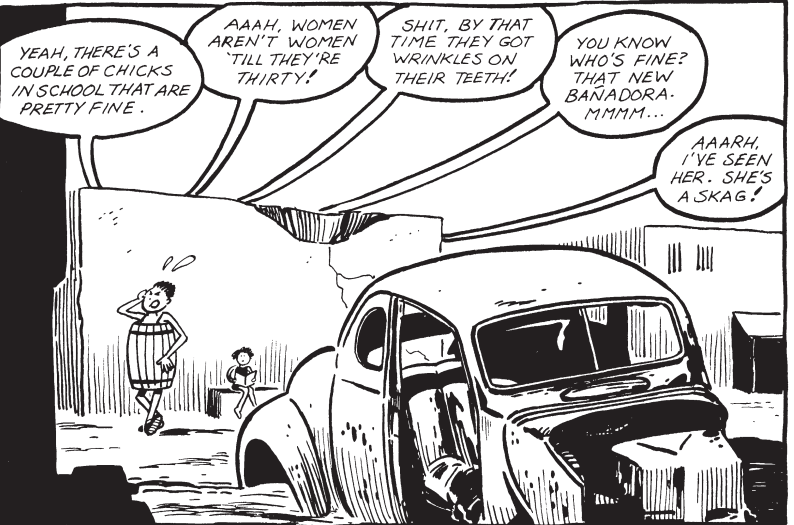
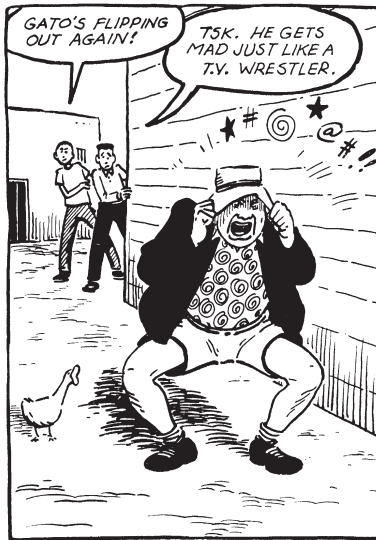
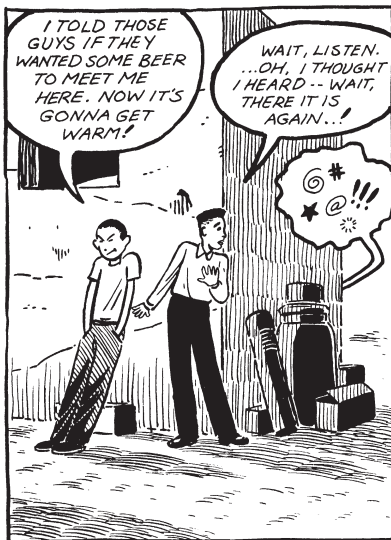
MANUEL - MON WELL

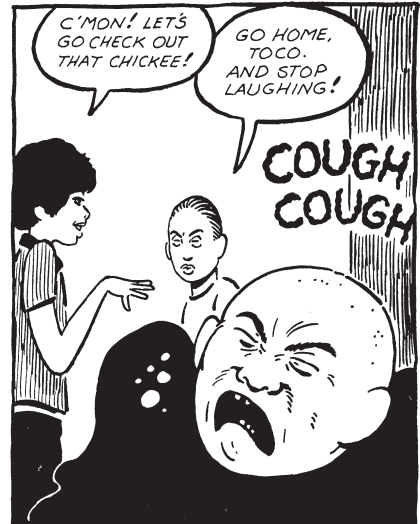
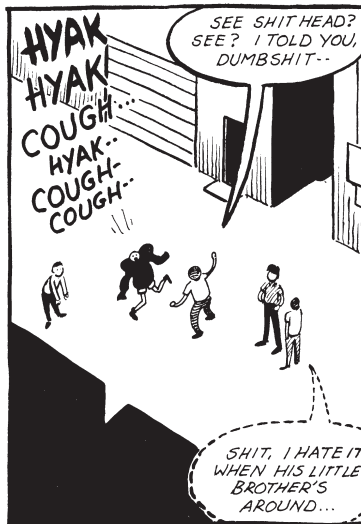
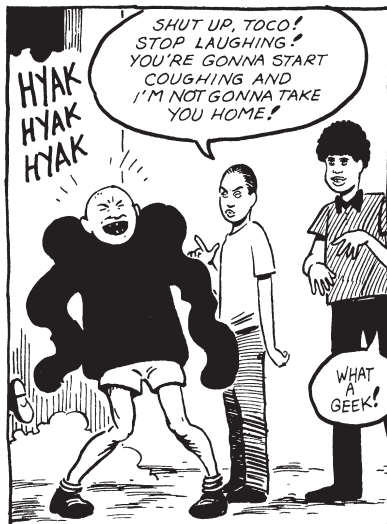


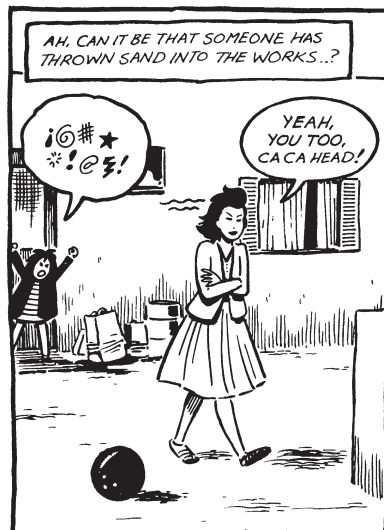
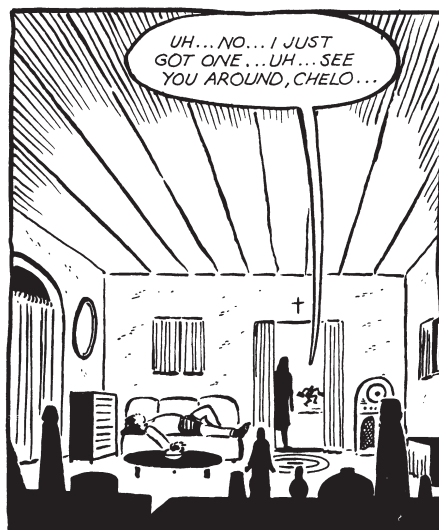
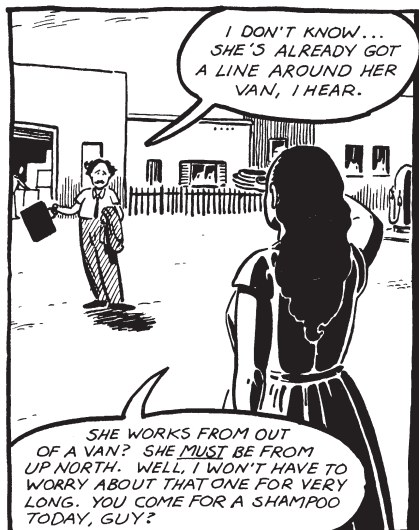
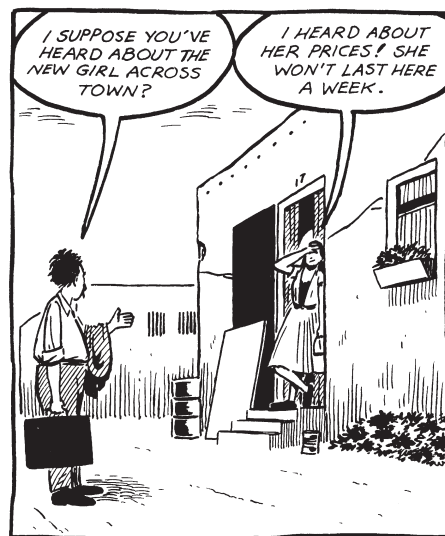
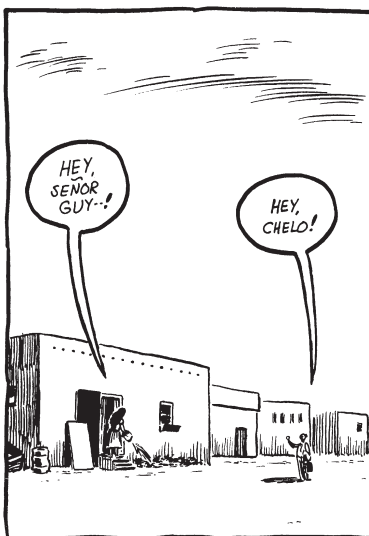
ARTURO - ARE TWO' ROW | SOLEDAD - SO LEH DAHD' | PINTOR - PEEN TOR' | GUERO - WHED'OH (BLOND)



BANADORA (BINE YA DOOR'AH) BATH GIVER

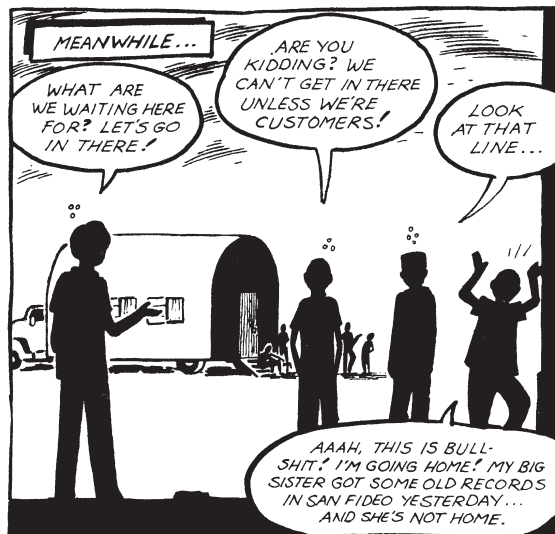
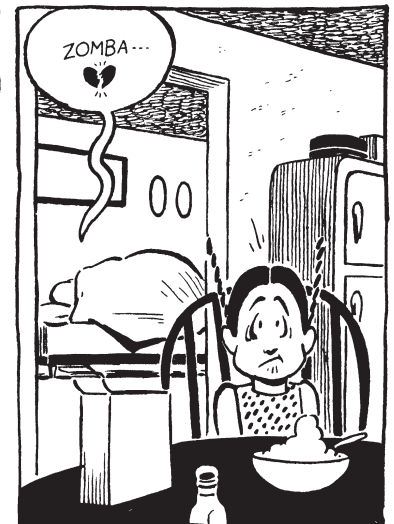
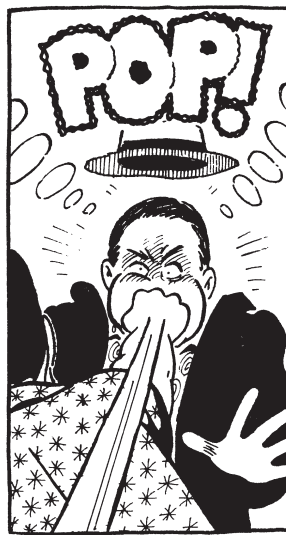


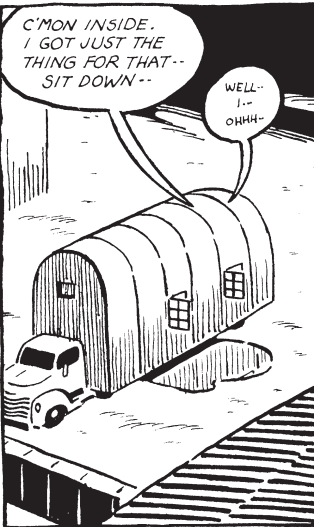


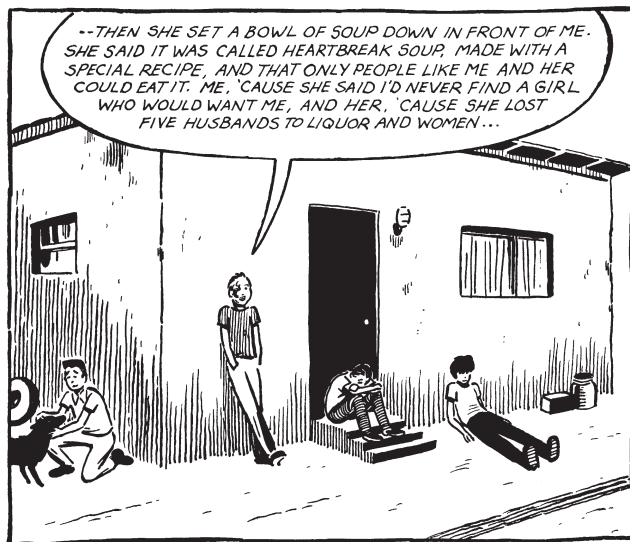
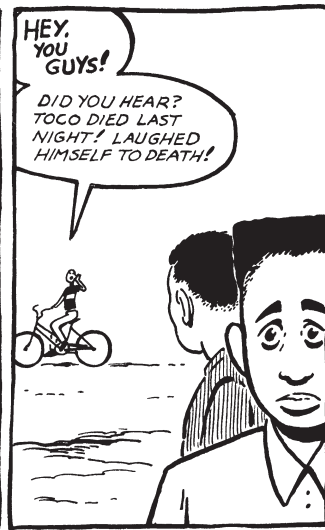


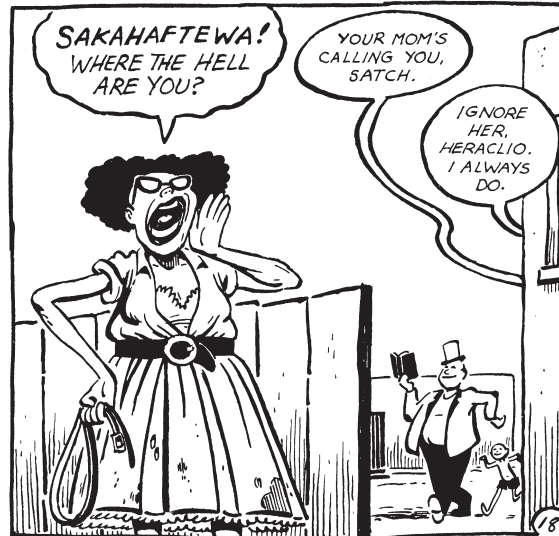


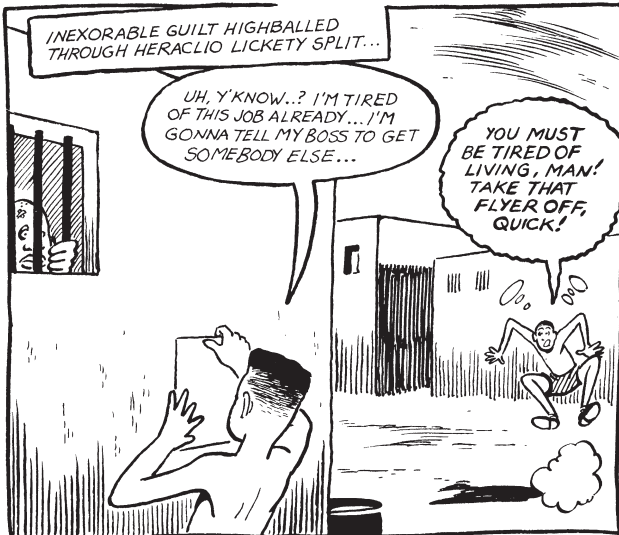
TIA (AUNT) TRINCHIS (TEA-UH TREEN' CHEESE)

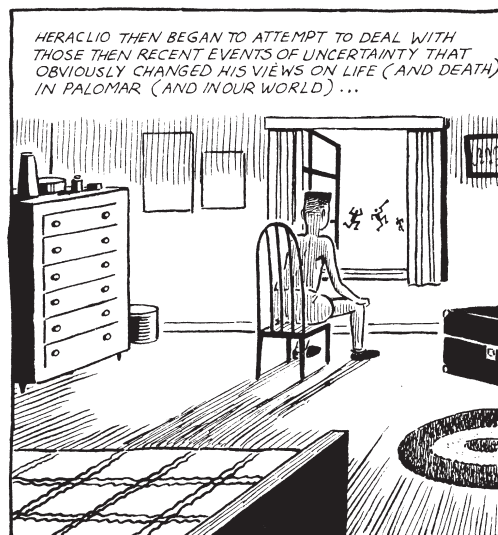
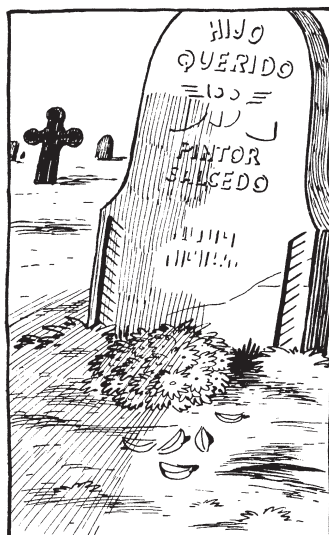
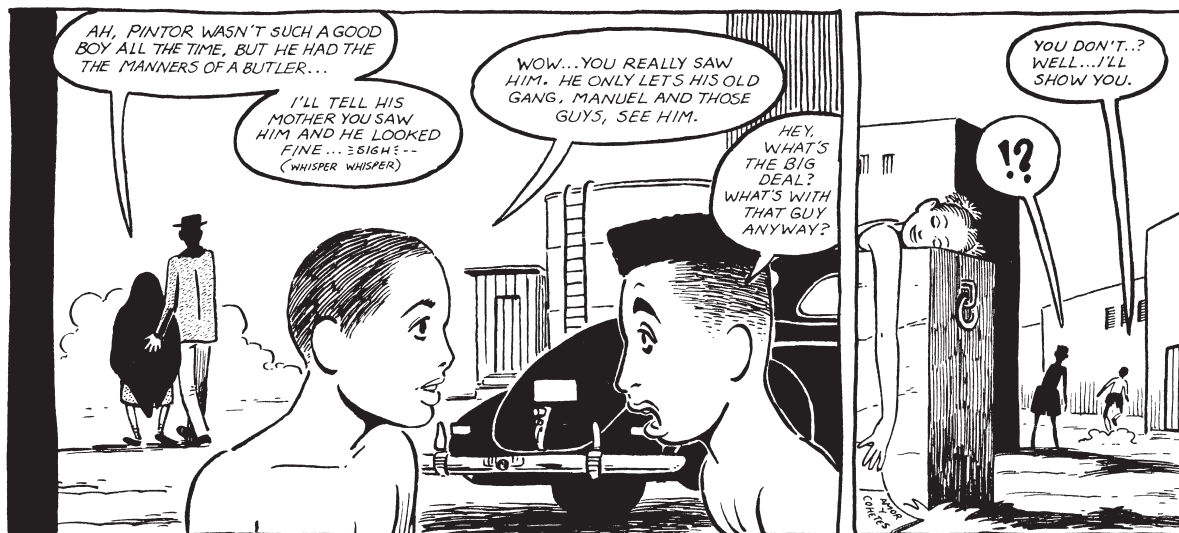


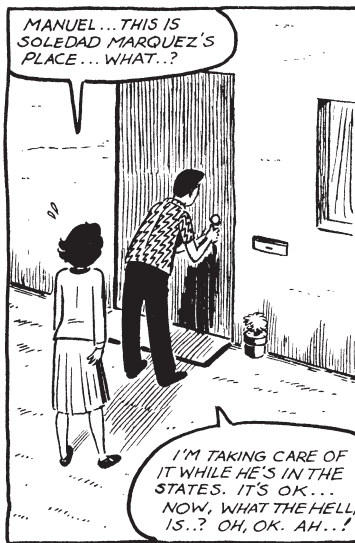














YOU'VE GOT A PRETTY NICE SET UP HERE. IT'S ROOMY. MY VAN BECOMES A BOILER AFTER JUST ONE CLIENT! THIS PLACE IS COOL...



OK, SO I'LL RETURN WITH A NEW BOTTLE OF SHAMPOO AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. I'VE GOT TO RUN NOW. THANKS AGAIN...



WHO-THE-HELL WAS-THAT?

GET BACK IN THAT TUB BEFORE I THROW YOU BACK IN...

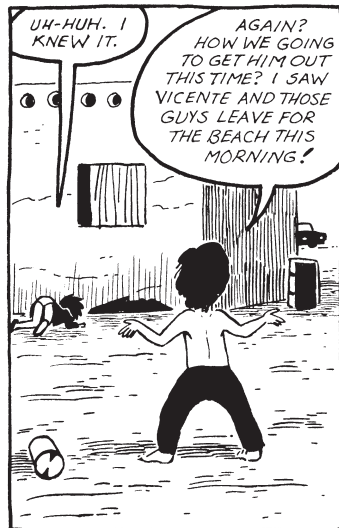


AND SO...

YUP! HE'S GONE. ALL RIGHT. I LOOKED EVERYWHERE!

MEEORRRRR
-FTTT
-FTTT

WELL, THERE'S ONLY ONE PLACE TO LOOK FOR THAT GUY. SIGH...



UH-HUH. I KNEW IT.

AGAIN? HOW WE GOING TO GET HIM OUT THIS TIME? I SAW VICENTE AND THOSE GUYS LEAVE FOR THE BEACH THIS MORNING!



MEEORRRRR

FOY... IF PIPO WERE HERE SHE COULD SWEET TALK MANUEL AND HIS LAZY BUDDIES TO HELP, BUT SHE'S NOT AROUND EITHER...

WE COULD FLOOD HIM OUT LIKE A GOPHER...!



I'VE ALWAYS CONSIDERED YOU TO BE A MAN OF GREAT INGENUITY, AUGUSTIN! GET THE HOSE. HE'LL HAVE HIS BATH YET, HUH?

END OF PART ONE--

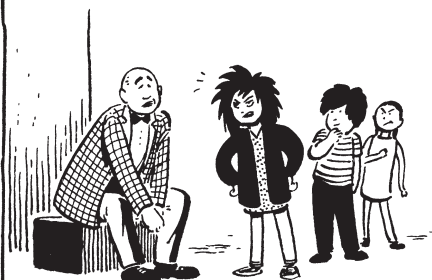
WELCOME TO PALOMAR...

POPULATION THREE HUNDRED AND EIGHTY-SIX...



PALOMAR - PALL'OH MAR (PIGEON COOP)

IT WAS SUPPOSED THAT OUR STORY BEGAN WHEN A WOMAN CALLED ZOMBA RETURNED TIPIN' TIPIN'S LOVE WITH AN ELBOW TO HIS EYE AND A KNEE TO HIS CROTCH. WELL...! AS EXPECTED, THE SENSITIVE FELLOW HIGHBALLED INTO DEEP DEPRESSION.



TIPIN' TIPIN'-TEE PEEN' TEE PEEN' / PIPO - PEE'POE
LUCIA - LOO SEE'AH / AUGUSTIN - AW GOOSE TEEN'

AWARE OF THE FACT THAT MOST OF THE CITIZENS OF PALOMAR CONSIDERED TIP TO BE THE 'VILLAGE YO YO' AND THUS CARED LITTLE ABOUT HIS DILEMMA, AN ALTRUISTIC YOUNG GIRL NAMED CARMEN (AIDED BY HER SISTERS, THE OLDER PIPO AND YOUNGER LUCIA, AND BROTHER AUGUSTIN) DECIDED SHE'D OFFER TIP MORAL SUPPORT IN HIS HOUR OF NEED...

WELL, MAYBE IT STARTED WHEN MANUEL TOOK MORE THAN A CASUAL INTEREST IN THE MUCH YOUNGER PIPO, WHO JUST HAPPENED TO BE ENTHRALLED BY HIS VERY EXISTENCE IN THE FIRST PLACE. MANUEL'S WAS A SUPERFICIAL INTEREST, TO BE SURE, BUT PIPO WAS NEVER ONE TO QUESTION WHAT APPEARED TO BE A GOOD DEAL. ALL SHE KNEW WAS THAT HE WANTED HER...



MANUEL - MON WELL'

IT SHOULD BE NOTED THAT GATO'S FEELINGS FOR PIPO WERE SINCERE, AND THAT SHE COULDN'T CARE LESS, BUT THAT NEVER CHANGED ANYBODY'S MIND BEFORE...

YEAH, THEY DON'T COME MUCH FINER THAN PIPO... SHE'S LIKE...LIKE...SHE'S JUST FINE, THAT'S ALL...



GATO - GAH TOE

OR PERHAPS IT BEGAN WHEN LUBA CAME INTO TOWN. YOU SEE, CHELO HAD BEEN THE ONLY BAÑADORA* IN TOWN, AND WAS NOT PREPARED FOR THIS UPSTART FROM THE NORTH TO TAKE A GOOD PORTION OF THE BATHING BUSINESS FROM THE VETERAN BATHER...

HUH...! SHE'S ONLY IN ONE PIECE TODAY BECAUSE SHE'S GOT A KID TO FEED.



*BAÑADORA - BINE YA DOOR'AH (SHE WHO BATHES OTHERS, LUBA - LOO'BAH / CHELO - CHEH'LOW'



OR WHEN SOLEDAD MARQUEZ TOOK OFF FOR THE STATES AND LEFT HIS PLACE IN MANUEL'S CARE?

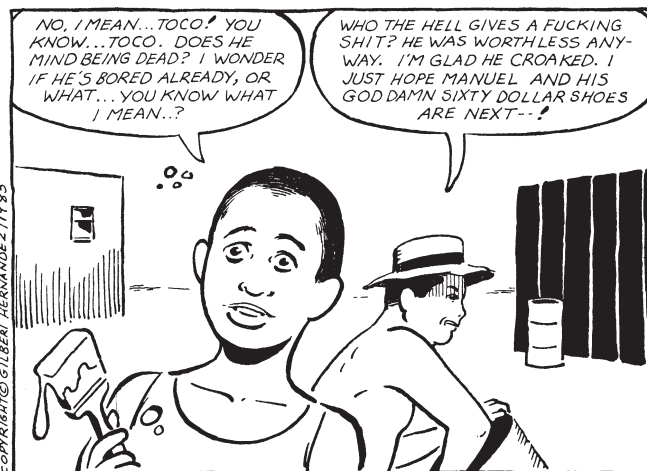
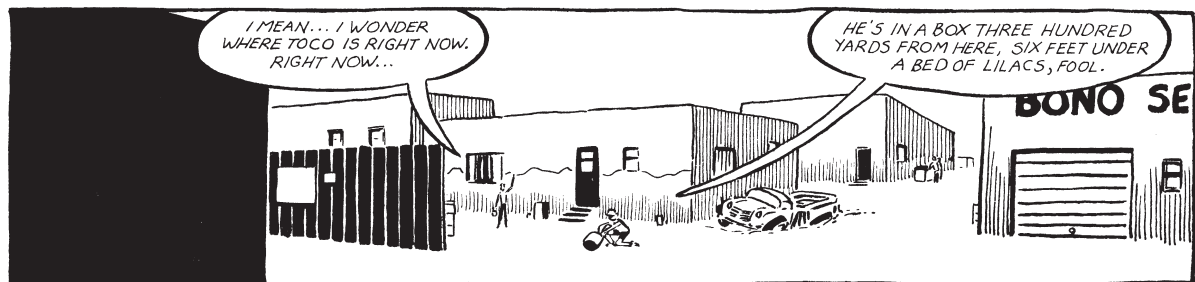
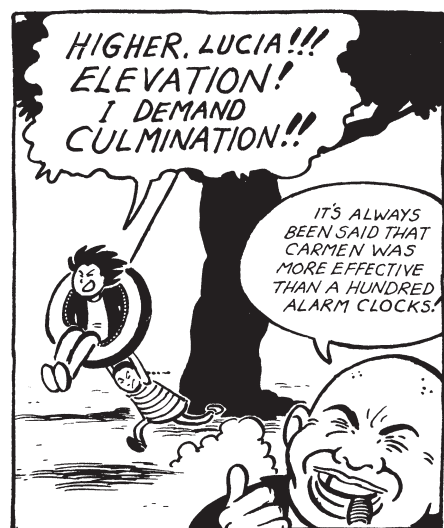
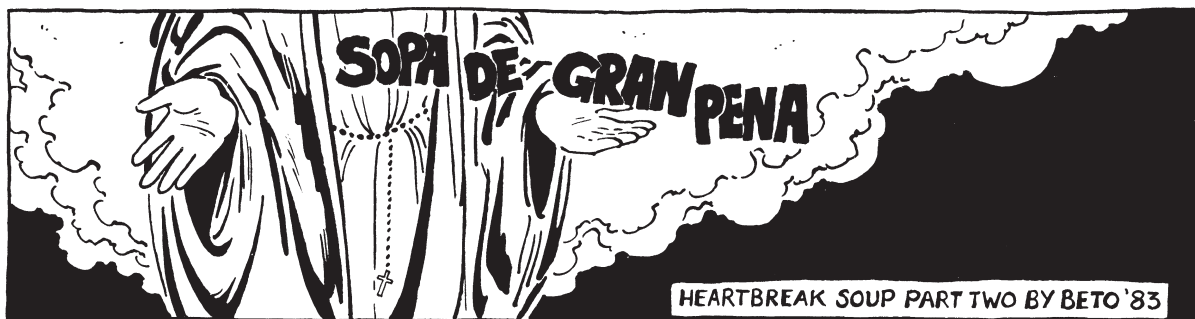


OR MAYBE, JUST MAYBE IT STARTED WHEN HERACLIO SAW PINTOR'S GHOST (BUT WAS UNAWARE OF IT AT THE TIME).



WELL, MAYBE THE LOCAL CONSTABLE CAN SHED SOME LIGHT ON THIS ELUSIVE DISCLOSURE...





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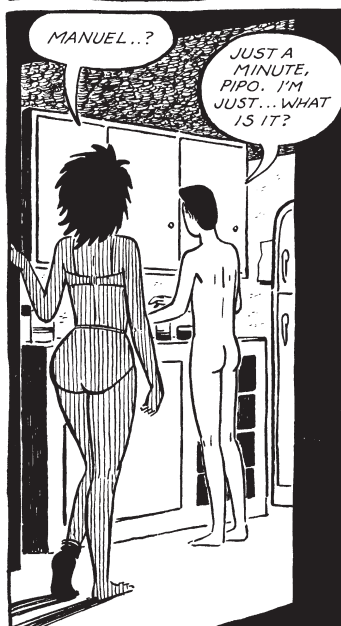
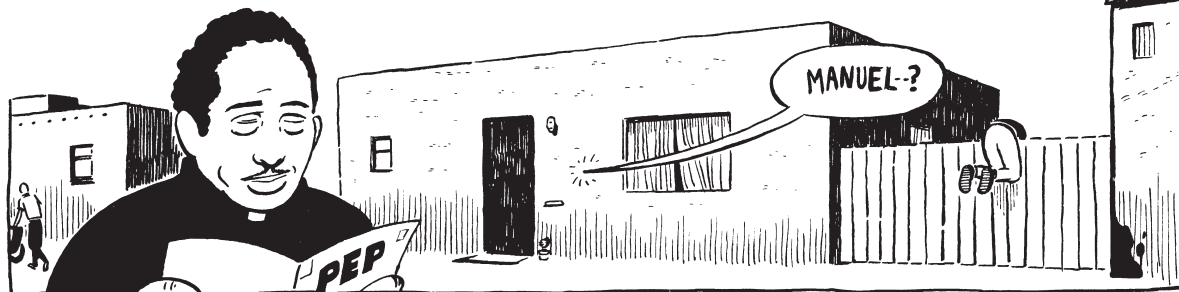
SOPA DE GRAN PENA - SOAP UH DEH GRAWN PEN UH

TWENTY THREE

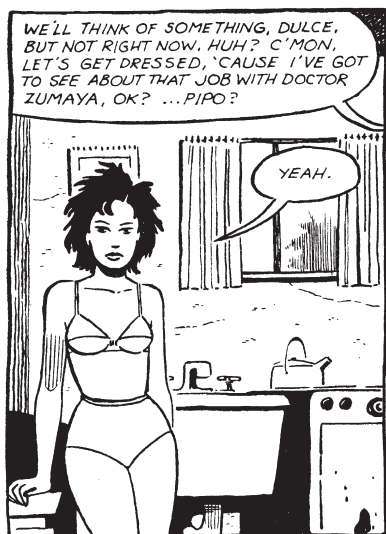


SUCH WAS LIFE
IN THE SMALL TOWN OF
PALOMAR...

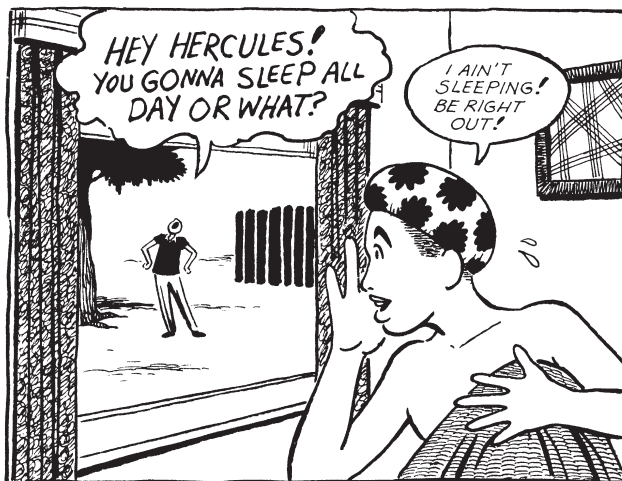
AND HERE WE HAVE THE HOME OF SOLEDAD MARQUEZ, WHO AT THE TIME WAS RETURNING FROM HIS TRIP TO THE STATES, UNAWARE THAT HIS ABODE WAS OCCUPIED BY TWO OF HIS PERSONAL ACQUAINTANCES, INSTEAD OF ONE. BUT WITH MANUEL, HE SHOULD HAVE KNOWN.



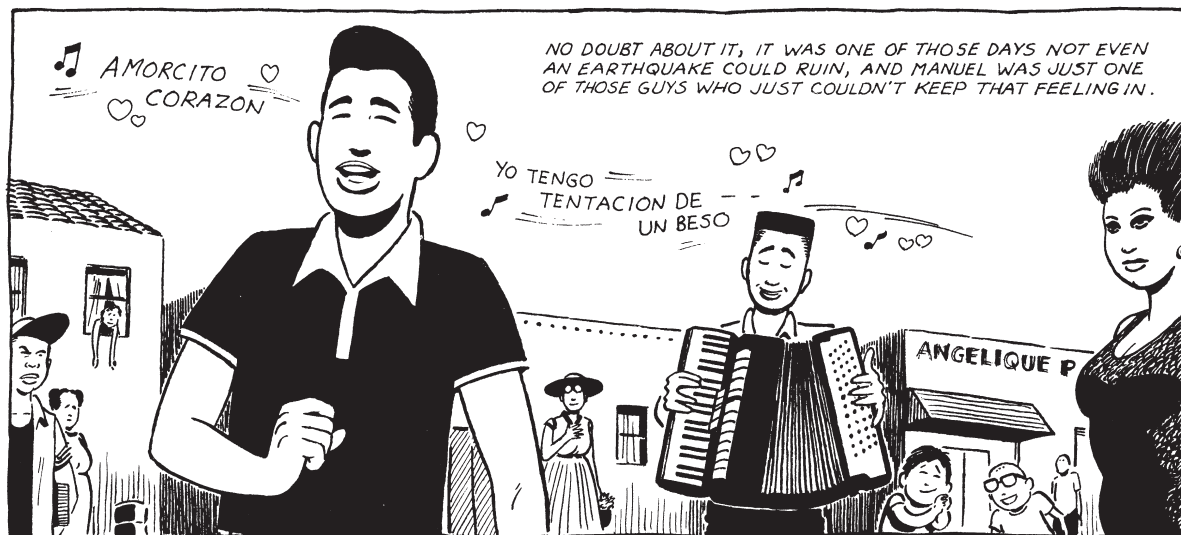
JUAN COBOS- WON COE' BOZE / GORDO MARTINEZ- GORD' THOUGH MARTEEN EX / DULCE- DUEL' SEH (SWEET)



AND JUST WHEN HERACLIO WAS WONDERING WHY HE HADN'T SEEN MANUEL FOR A COUPLE OF DAYS ...

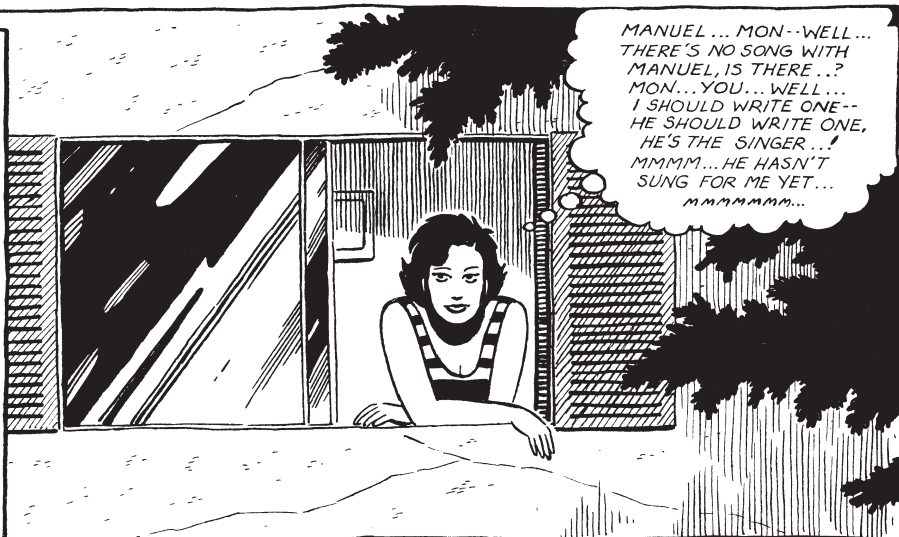


ZUMAYA - ZOO MY'AH



IT HAD BEEN DAYS SINCE SHE HAD SEEN MANUEL, SO IF PIPO WASN'T BUSY CLEANING, WASHING OR COOKING, SHE COULD BE FOUND PATIENTLY GAZING OUT THE WINDOW OF HER HOME, HOPING HE MIGHT FIND SOME FREE TIME FROM HIS JOB TO DROP BY TO SEE HER...

THE POOR GIRL WAS UNAWARE OF HOW MANUEL ACTUALLY SPENT HIS FREE TIME, BECAUSE SHE RARELY WENT OUT, AND, ODDLY ENOUGH, SHE, NOT BEING A TERRIBLY CURIOUS PERSON, NEVER CARED TO INDULGE IN GOSSIP.



MANUEL... MON--WELL... THERE'S NO SONG WITH MANUEL, IS THERE...? MON... YOU... WELL... I SHOULD WRITE ONE-- HE SHOULD WRITE ONE, HE'S THE SINGER...! MMMMM... HE HASN'T SUNG FOR ME YET...
MMMMMMMM...



SO, WHAT'S SO FUNNY, LUCIA? AUGUSTIN'?



LUCIA WANTED TO KNOW WHY YOU SMELLED SO FUNNY.

OH--! I DIDN'T PUT TOO MUCH ON, DID I? SNIFF--

TSK! YOU WOULDN'T KNOW THE DIFFERENCE, ANY WAY.

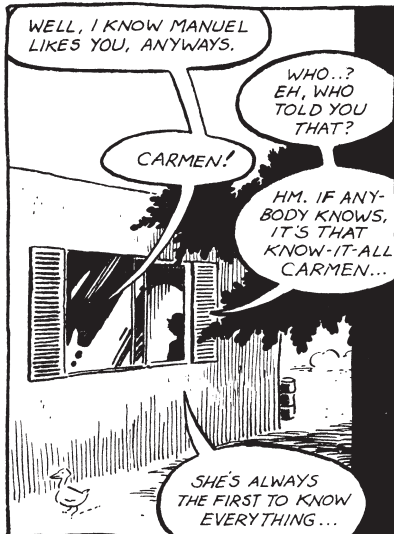


WHEN YOU LIKED SOLEDAD MARQUEZ YOU NEVER DRESSED UP FOR HIM, PEEP.

I TOLD YOU, I NEVER LIKED SOLEDAD.

'CAUSE HE'S TOO FAT?

NO, 'CAUSE I LIKE MANUEL.



WELL, I KNOW MANUEL LIKES YOU, ANYWAYS.

WHO...? EH, WHO TOLD YOU THAT?

CARMEN!

HM. IF ANYBODY KNOWS, IT'S THAT KNOW-IT-ALL CARMEN...

SHE'S ALWAYS THE FIRST TO KNOW EVERYTHING...



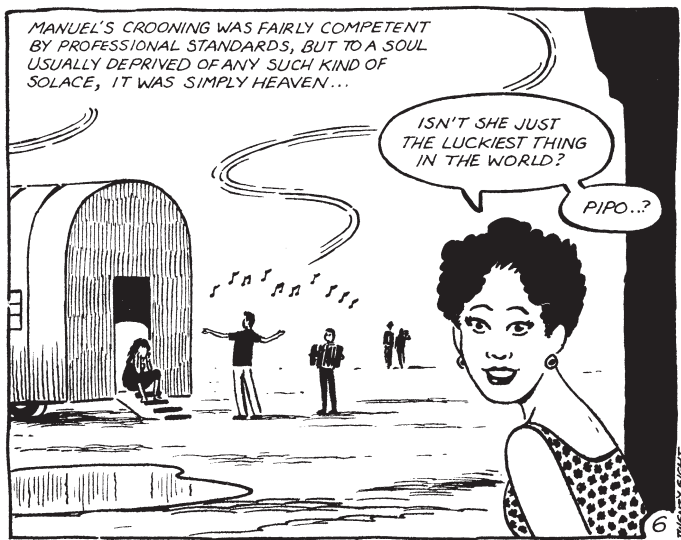
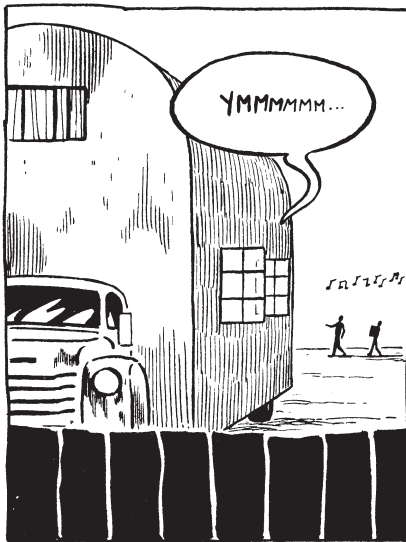
YEAH, CARMEN SAID MANUEL LIKES ANYTHING THAT MOVES IN A DRESS. THAT MEANS YOU, CARMEN, LUCIA, MOM, CHELO...

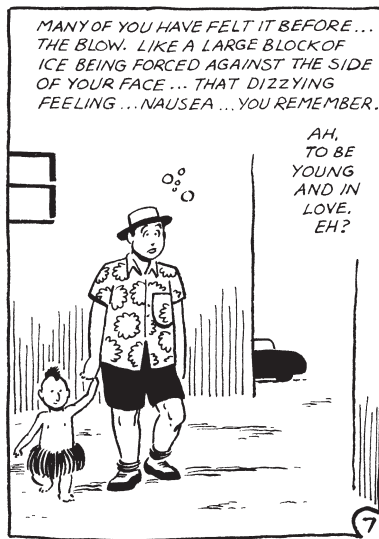
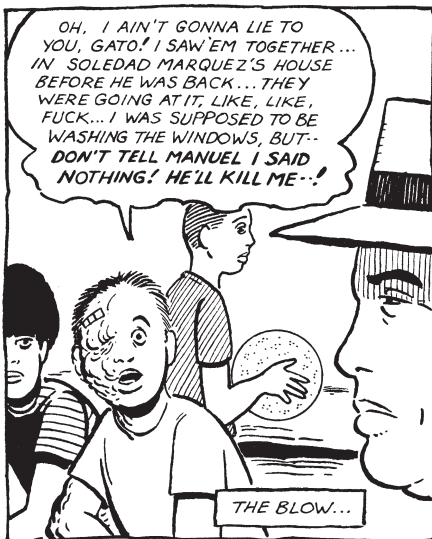
MARTÍN EL LOCO WEARS A DRESS SOME-TIMES... DOES THAT MEAN MANUEL LIKES HIM, TOO?

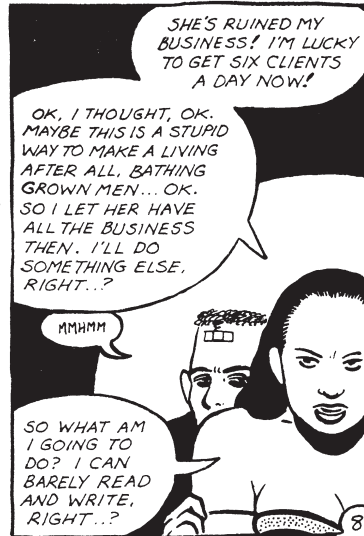
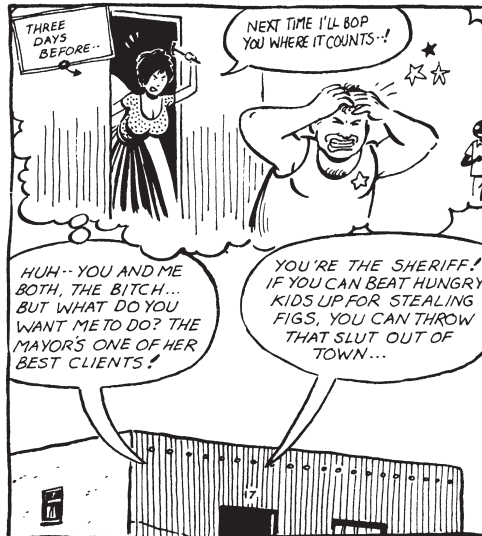


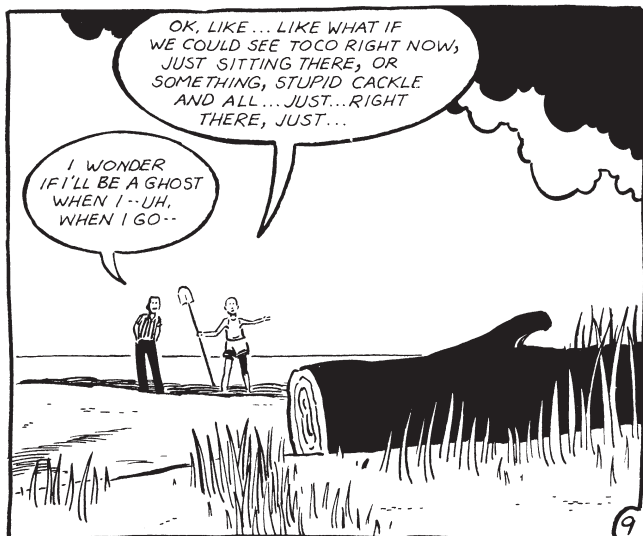
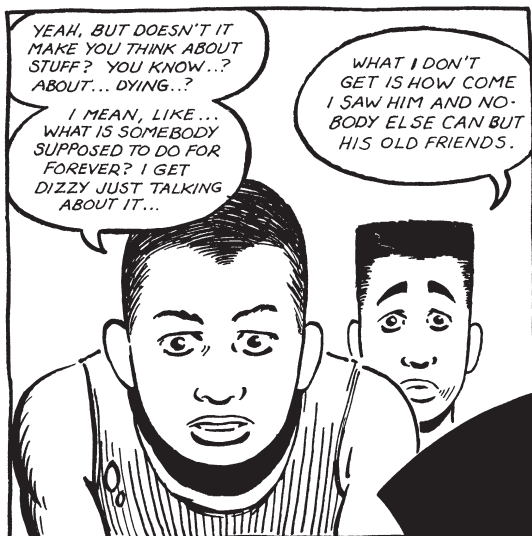
IF GOSSIP COULD NEVER PIQUE PIPO'S CURIOSITY, HER INSECURITY WAS ANOTHER STORY...

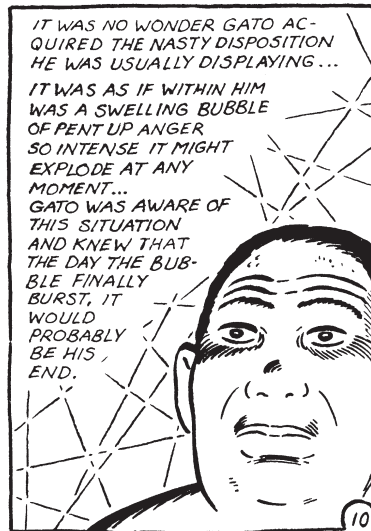
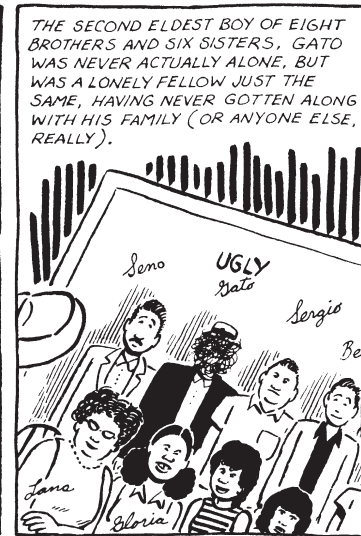
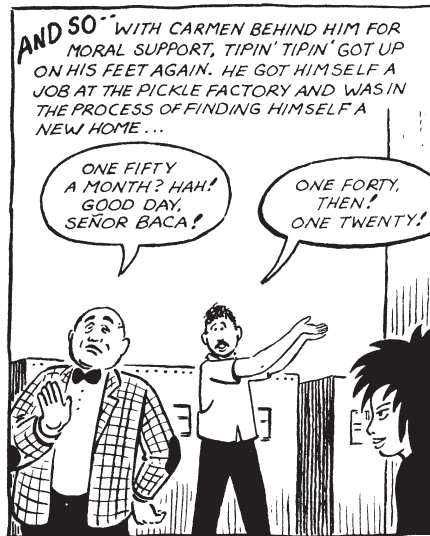
WHAD I SAY? WHAD I SAY?

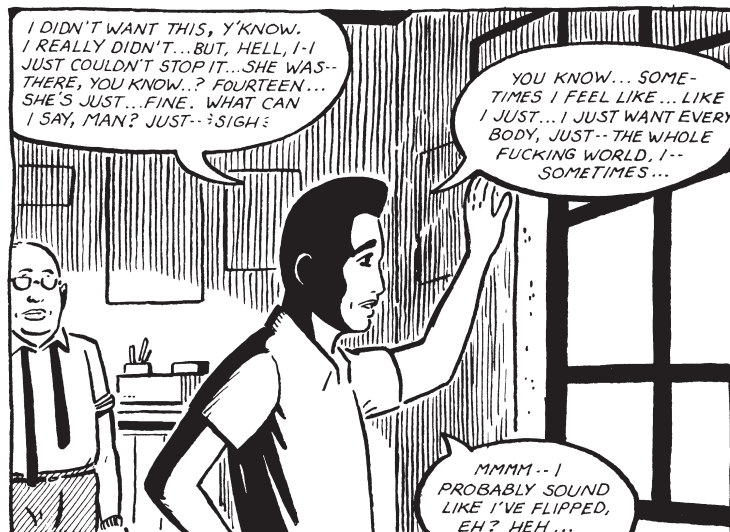
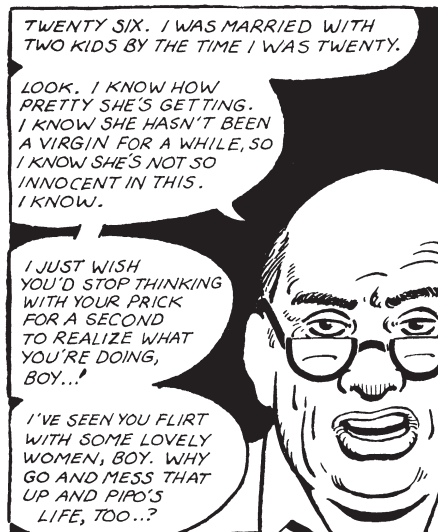
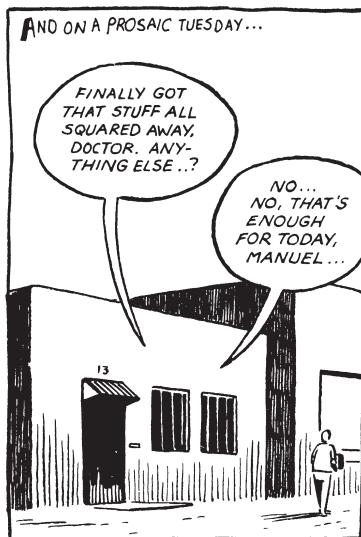


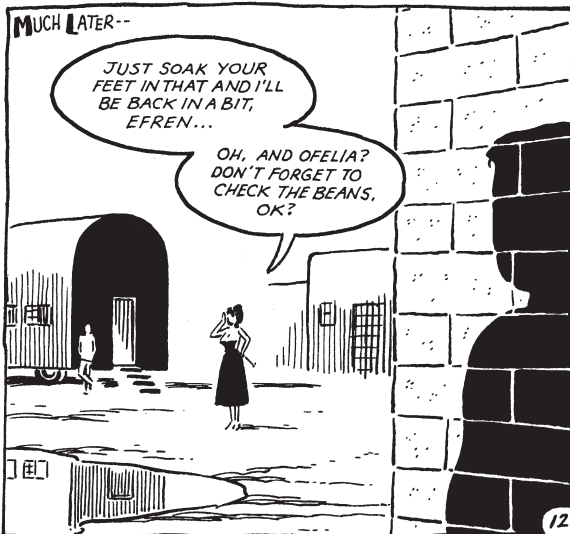
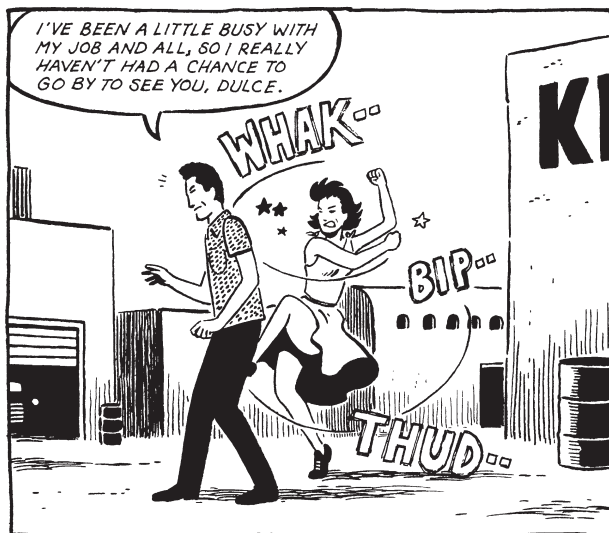














WHAT DID I TELL YOU ABOUT COMING AROUND HERE EXPECTING A FREE BATH? I TOLD YOU --

I COULD ARREST YOU FOR BEATING ME THE OTHER DAY, Y'KNOW...



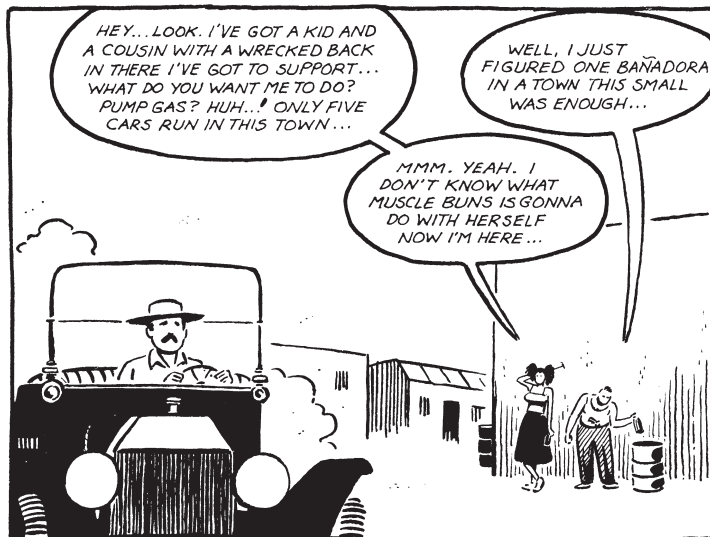
GET THIS STRAIGHT, BOY. COPS DON'T SCARE ME AND YOU'RE NO EXCEPTION! YOU TOUCH ME --!

HEY, C'MON. I JUST WANNA BE FRIENDS. I BROUGHT YOU A COLD ONE... C'MON.



MMM. BEWARE OF GEEKS BEARING GIFTS...

SO HOW COME A CITY GIRL LIKE YOU IS BATHING BIG BOYS FOR A LIVING?



HEY... LOOK. I'VE GOT A KID AND A COUSIN WITH A WRECKED BACK IN THERE I'VE GOT TO SUPPORT... WHAT DO YOU WANT ME TO DO? PUMP GAS? HUH...! ONLY FIVE CARS RUN IN THIS TOWN...

WELL, I JUST FIGURED ONE BAÑADORA IN A TOWN THIS SMALL WAS ENOUGH...

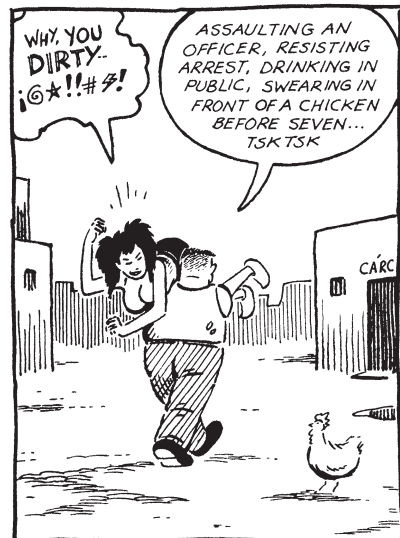
MMM. YEAH. I DON'T KNOW WHAT MUSCLE BUNS IS GONNA DO WITH HERSELF NOW I'M HERE...



HEY, LUBA!! I'M GETTING COLD!

OH, SHUT UP OR I'LL CHARGE YOU DOUBLE AND TAKE YOUR WATCH, TOO!

'SCUSE ME MA'AM, BUT YOU'LL HAVE TO COME WITH ME. YOU'RE UNDER ARREST.



WHY, YOU DIRTY...
!@*!!#?!

ASSAULTING AN OFFICER, RESISTING ARREST, DRINKING IN PUBLIC, SWEARING IN FRONT OF A CHICKEN BEFORE SEVEN...
TSK TSK



A COUPLE OF DAYS IN A CELL SHOULD TEACH YOU -- OW!

I'LL KILL YOU... OUCH

YOW! OOF!

YEEP! BIP!

BAM! THUD!



YOU'LL LEARN THE LAW IS NOT TO BE FLOUTED IN THIS TOWN, CITY GIRL...

CÁRCEL - CÁRSEL (JAIL)

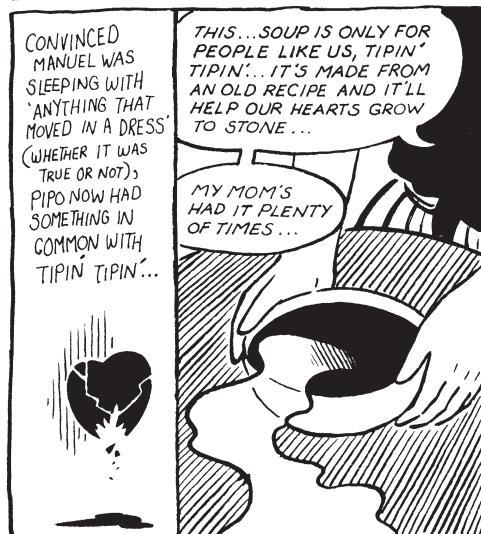


YOU TWO WANT TO PLAY YOUR BULLSHIT WARGAMES AT MY EXPENSE? ALL RIGHT, BE MY GUEST. I'LL BE OUT OF TOWN FOR A COUPLE OF DAYS SO I'LL BE BACK TO DECLARE THE VICTOR. IF YOU GET HUNGRY YOU CAN ALWAYS EAT THE COCKROACHES. OR EACH OTHER.



WELL, IF YOU'RE GONNA KICK MY BUTT, DON'T EXPECT NO EASY VICTORY, WOMAN...

OH, SHUT UP AND COME HERE, SILLY...



CONVINCED MANUEL WAS SLEEPING WITH 'ANYTHING THAT MOVED IN A DRESS' (WHETHER IT WAS TRUE OR NOT); PIPO NOW HAD SOMETHING IN COMMON WITH TIPIN' TIPIN'...

THIS... SOUP IS ONLY FOR PEOPLE LIKE US, TIPIN' TIPIN'... IT'S MADE FROM AN OLD RECIPE AND IT'LL HELP OUR HEARTS GROW TO STONE...

MY MOM'S HAD IT PLENTY OF TIMES...



MOM... YOU KNOW, MY MOM DIDN'T REALLY GO INTO SAN FIDEO TO FIGHT WITH OUR LANDLORD... SHE WENT TO SEE A MAN... PROBABLY A BUNCH OF MEN... SHE ALWAYS DOES... MOM'S NEVER MARRIED, YOU KNOW... ONE OF THESE DAYS SHE MIGHT NOT COME BACK... SHE'S ALWAYS TELLING US THAT, THAT SHE'S GONNA LEAVE US FOR GOOD AND LET US ROT HERE IN THIS TOWN ALONE...

WELL... SHE TELLS THAT TO CARMEN, MOSTLY. THEY'RE ALWAYS FIGHTING... YOU KNOW HOW CARMEN IS, ALL SMARTY... MOM HATES IT...



NOBODY KNOWS WHO CARMEN'S REAL PARENTS ARE... WE FOUND HER, ME AND MOM, LONG TIME AGO WANDERING AROUND THE SWAP MEET WITH A NOTE PINNED TO HER DRESS THAT READ, 'GOOD RIDDANCE'. I NEVER KNEW WHY MOM DECIDED TO BRING HER HOME... HUH...

S' FUNNY... NO ONE CAN FIGURE OUT HOW OLD CARMEN REALLY IS... SHE LOOKS TEN, BUT-- HEH, SHE LIKES TO SAY SHE'S PERMANENTLY ELEVENTEEN... HEH... LEVENTEEN...



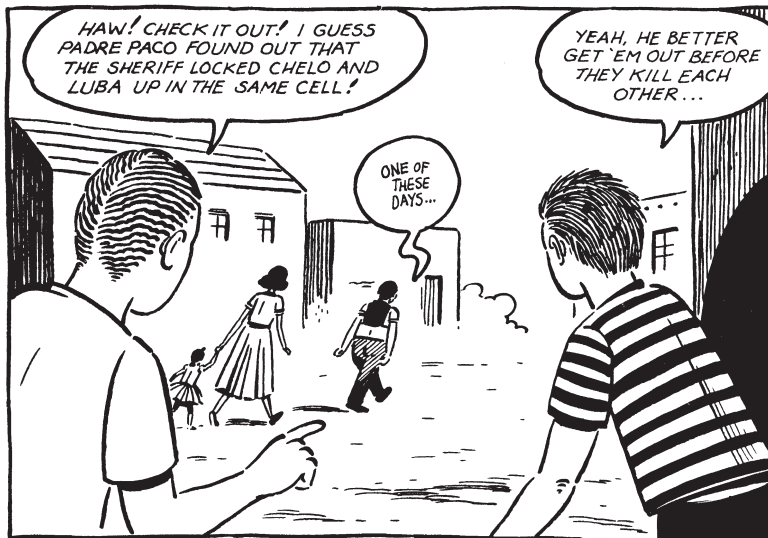
PIPO BECAME SILENT FOR A MOMENT. IT WAS HER COLD, ALMOST CLINICAL DELIVERY THAT UNNERVED TIP SO... HE KEPT WAITING FOR HER TO EXPLODE, AND HE REALLY DIDN'T WANT TO BE THERE WHEN SHE DID, BUT, YOU KNOW.

WE HAVE A NICE HOUSE... I DO ALL THE WORK, ALMOST... MOM MAKES DECENT MONEY AT THE PACKING HOUSE, BUT IF IT WEREN'T FOR ME HERE AT HOME... SHOOT--



THE KIDS EAT GOOD... THEIR CLOTHES ARE CLEAN... I-- I'M GOOD... I C-CAN DO A-ANY-THING... I-I CAN... I'M GOOD... HE TOLD ME I WAS, HE--

PIPO'S...





AH, A POTENTIALLY
CLASSIC RIVALRY,
SHOT TO HELL. TSK.

YOU
KIDDING?
WAIT TILL THEY
BOTH GET THEIR
HANDS ON THE
SHERIFF!

THE BEST
IS YET TO
COME ...



THEN, ONE COOL
WEDNESDAY NIGHT...

OH, BUT, MANUEL ...
SOMEBODY'S GOING
TO FIND US HERE ...

NO WAY...THE
DOCTOR LIVES IN
SAN FIDEO AND I'VE
GOT THE ONLY
EXTRA KEY, DULCE ...



AM I YOUR
DULCE, MANUEL?
REALLY..?

TONANSIN, IF
YOU WERE ANY
SWEETER, I'D
WORRY ABOUT
DIABETES ...

TSK,
SILLY...



AND NOW, IF THE PATIENT WILL
KINDLY REMOVE HER PANTIES,
THE DOCTOR CAN THEN PROCEED
WITH THE DELICATE OPERATION.

EEEEEEEEEE



HERACLIO...

MAAAA...?
SHUT UP... MAAA
WHAT...?



FOOL... YOU WANNA
WAKE UP MY MOM AND
DAD...? WHAT...?

MANUEL... HE--
C'MON... MANUEL--
HE'S GONNA
DIE-- HE'S--



WHAT...?
WAIT, WHAT
ARE YOU
TALKING--
MANUEL--?

HE'S BEEN
SHOT...! HE'S
GONNA--
C'MON!



WAIT! YOU
SAY GATO'S GOT
MANUEL HOLED
UP THERE IN THE
DOCTOR'S
OFFICE?

YEAH, HE SHOT
MANUEL, AND NOW
THEY'RE TALKING!

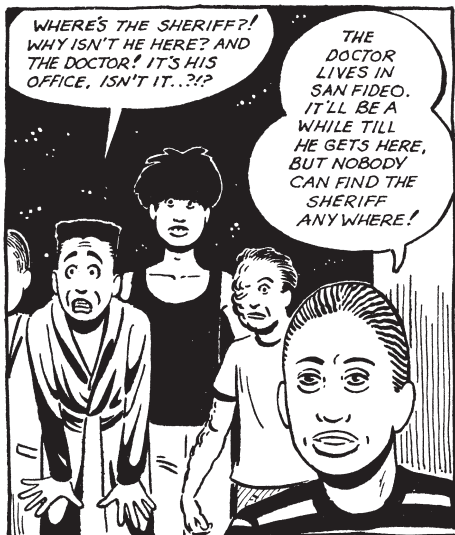
GATO'S FINALLY FLIPPED,
MAN! HE'LL SHOOT ANYBODY
THAT TRIES TO GET IN... HE
ALREADY GOT JUAN COBOS
IN THE FOOT, I HEARD!

YOU MISSED IT!
JUST BEFORE YOU
GOT HERE TONANSIN
CAROLONGAS CAME
RUNNING OUT IN
JUST HER CHONERS!

TONANSIN - THE MAN SEEN

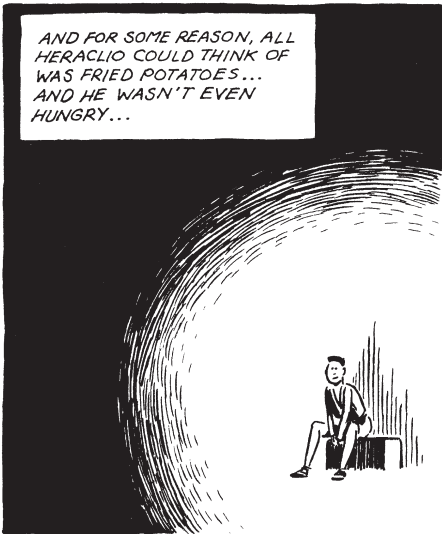
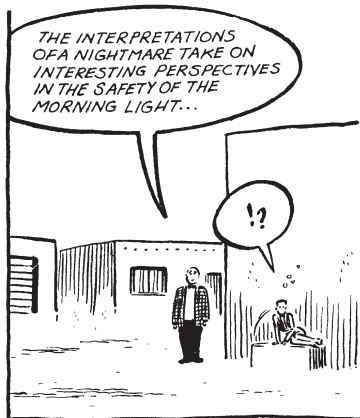
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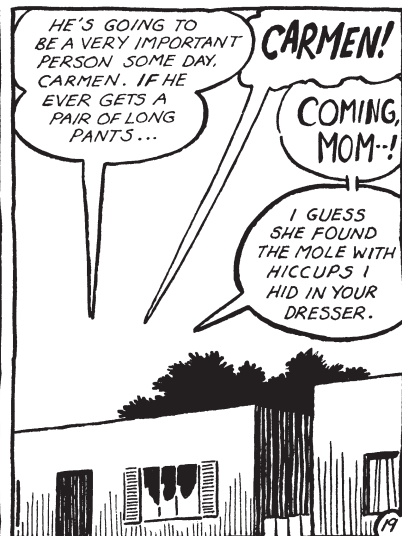
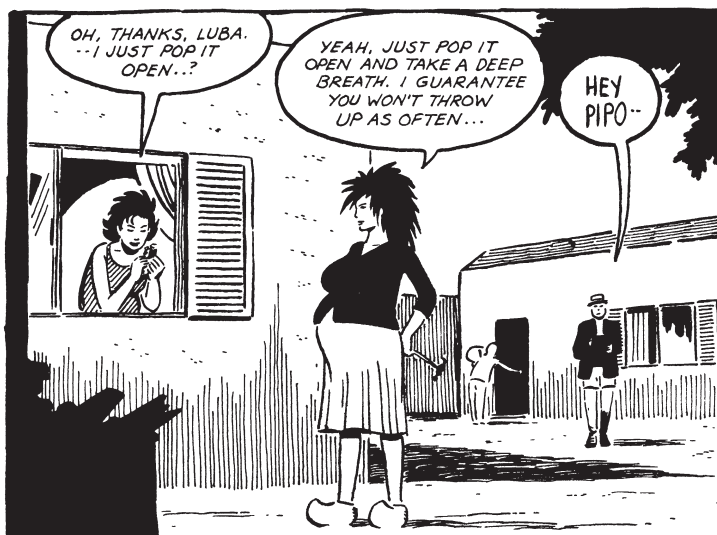
THIRTY EIGHT

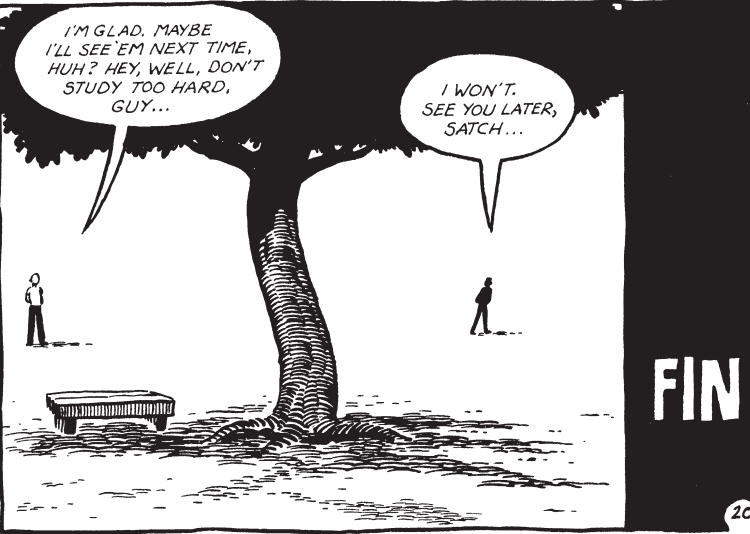
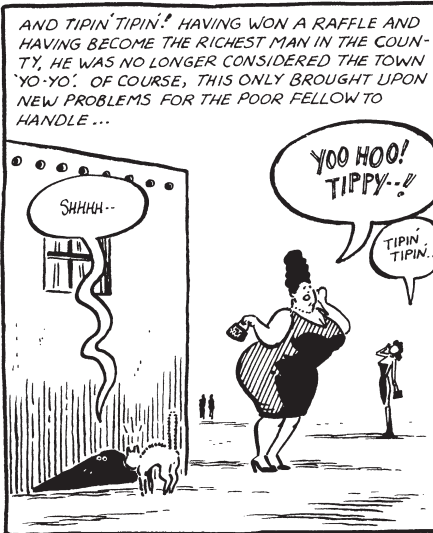
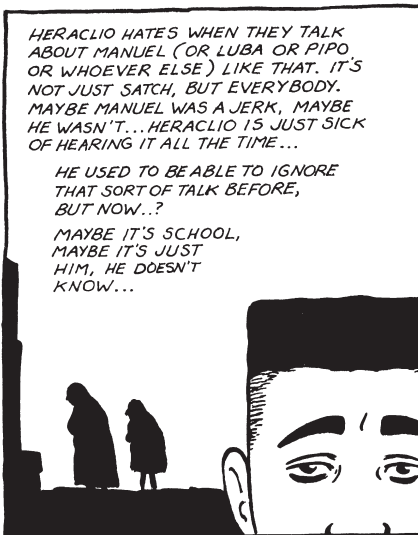
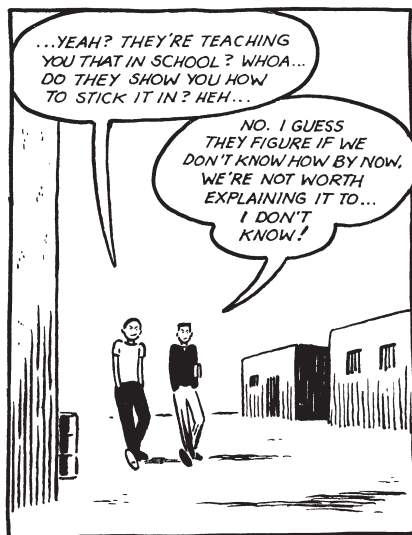




THE DOCTOR FINALLY ARRIVED AND WAS WITH MANUEL ALL NIGHT... THE NEXT THING HERACLIO KNEW, IT WAS MORNING, AND IT WAS A SADDENED VOICE THAT HAD AWAKENED HIM... TIPIN' TIPIN'S VOICE...

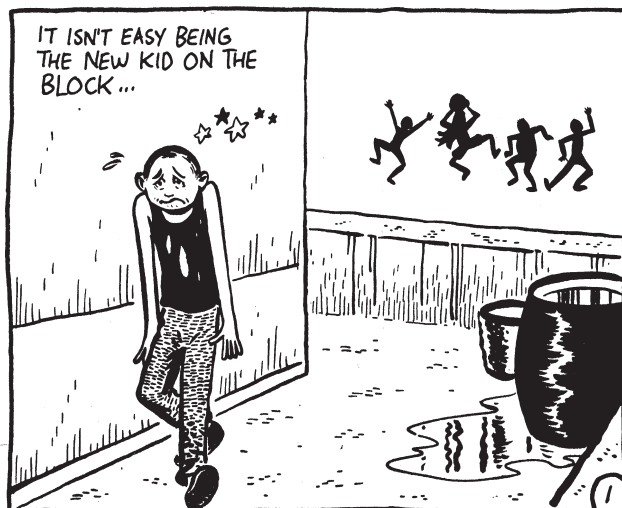
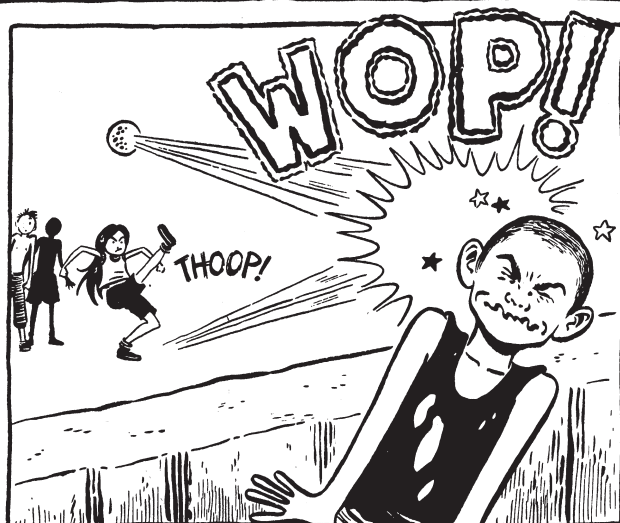
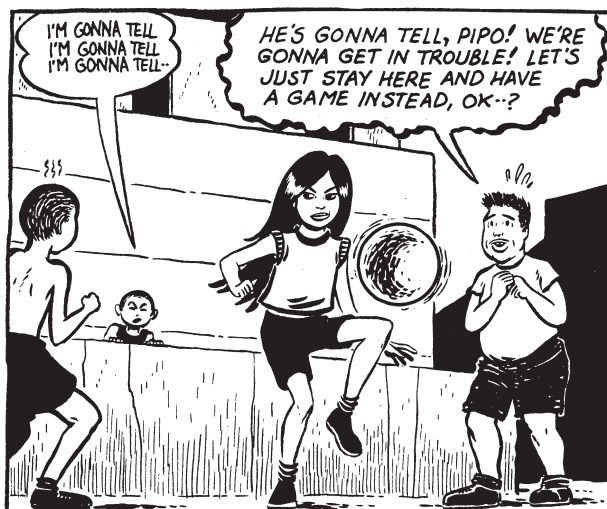




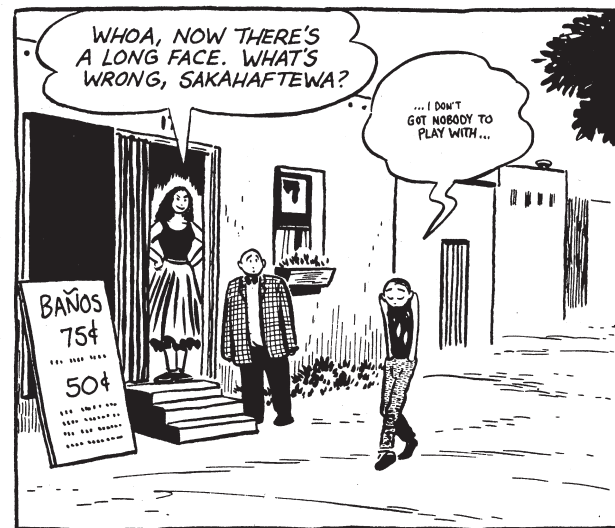
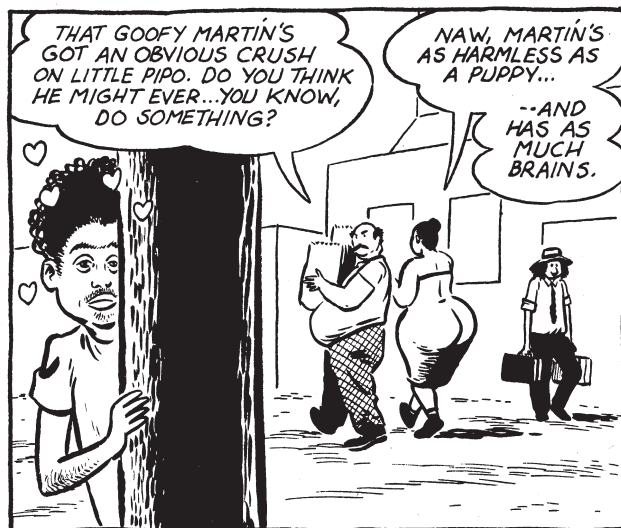


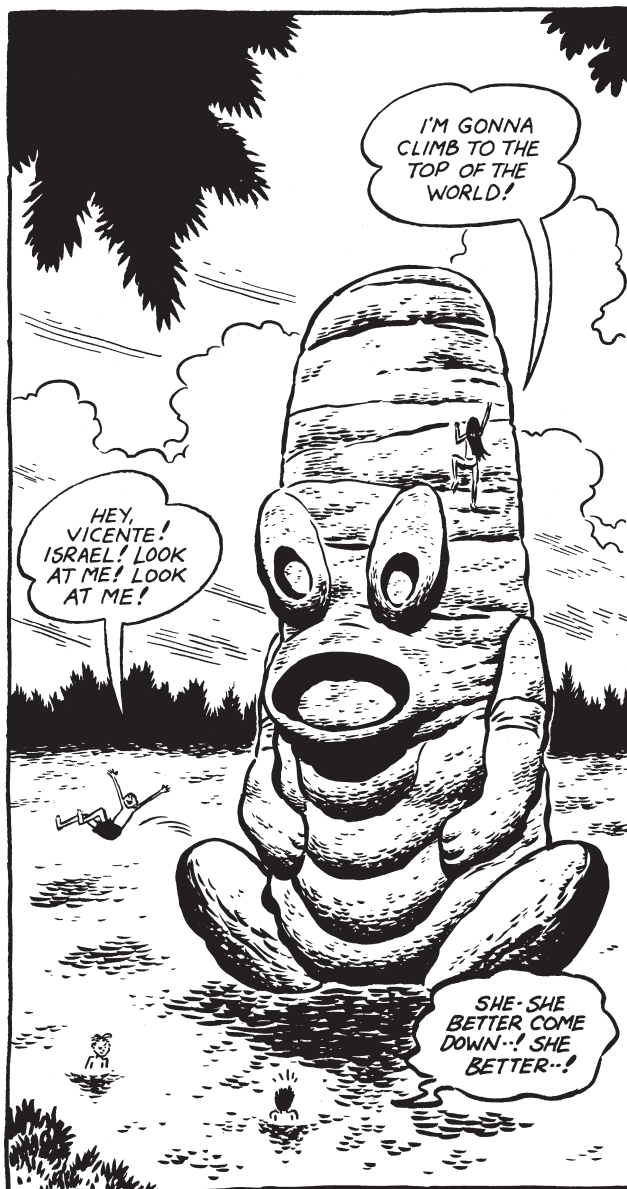
A LITTLE STORY ...

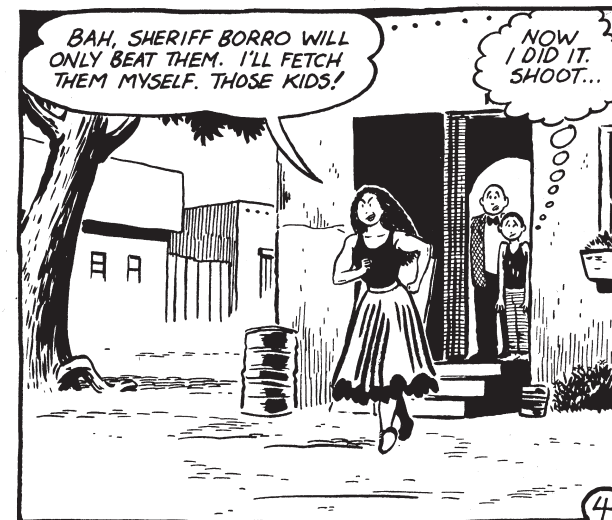
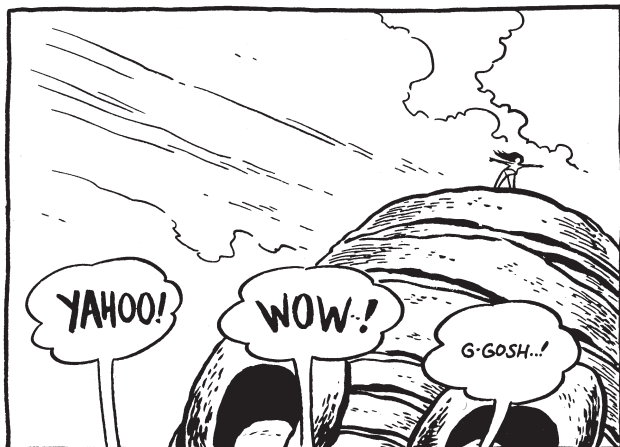
BY GILBERT "GODFATHER OF SOUL" HERNANDEZ-85

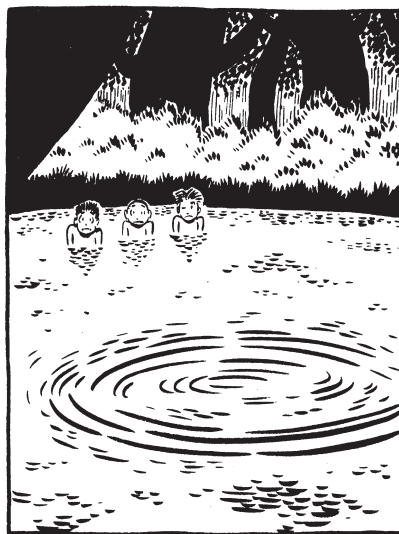
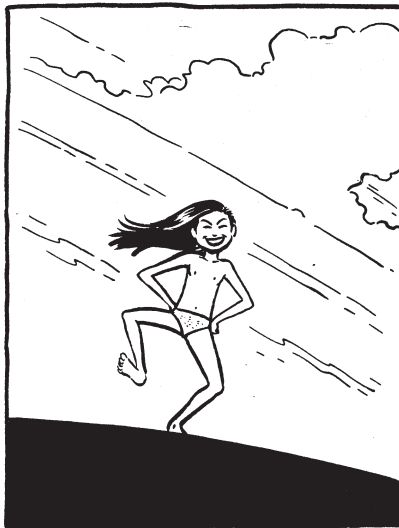


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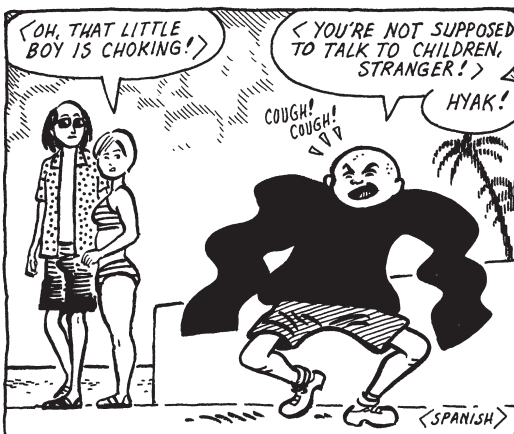
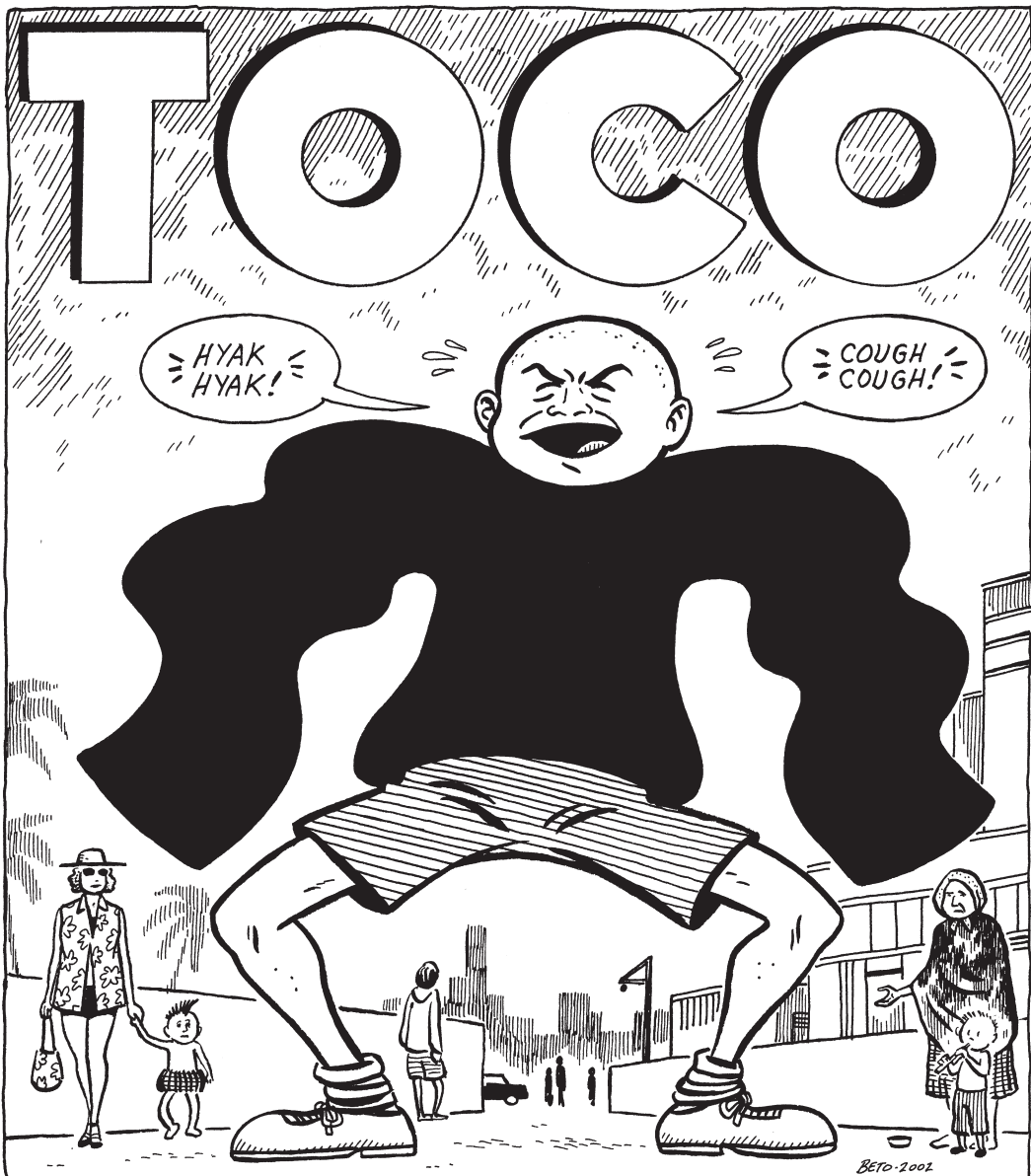


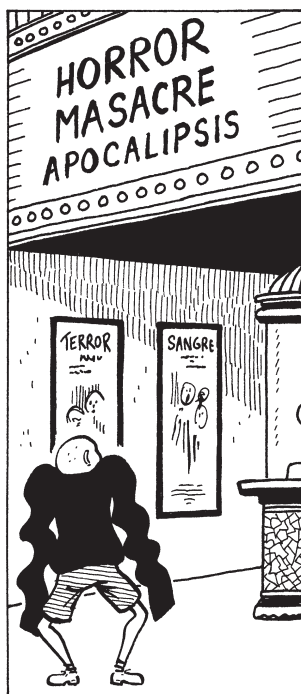


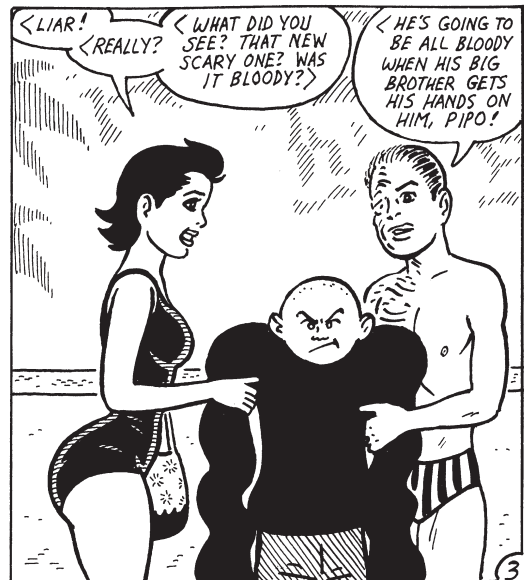
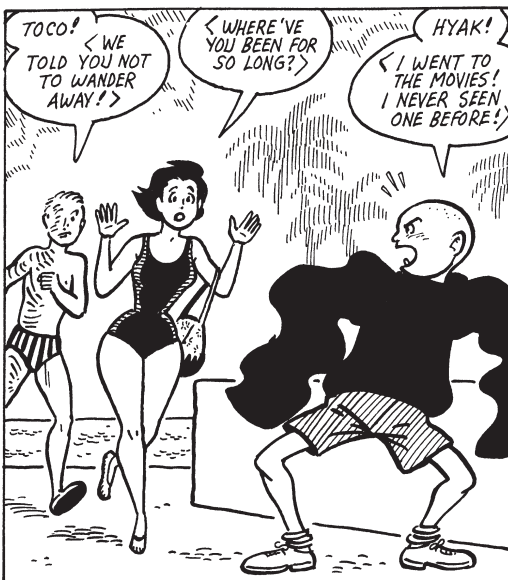
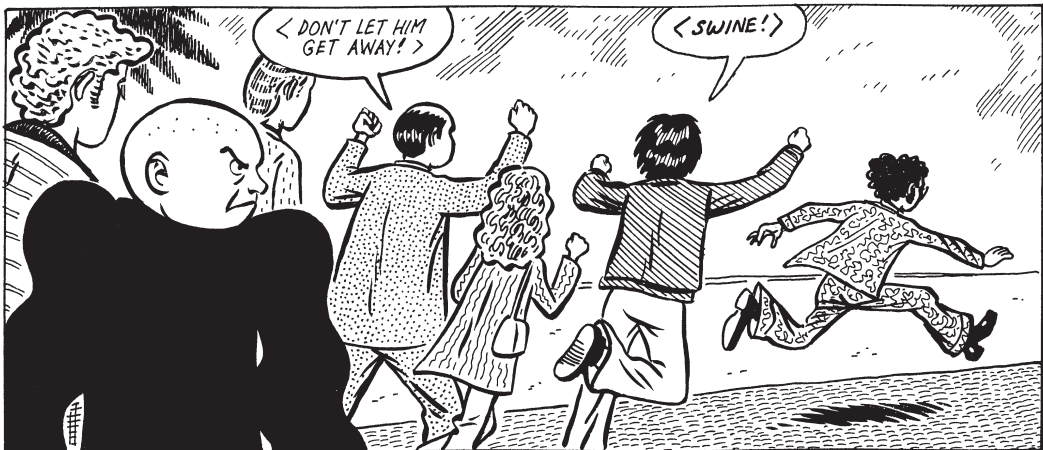
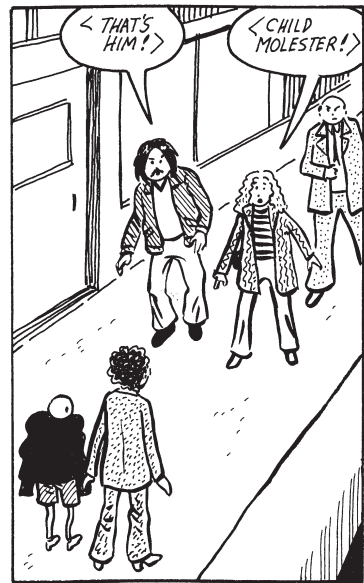


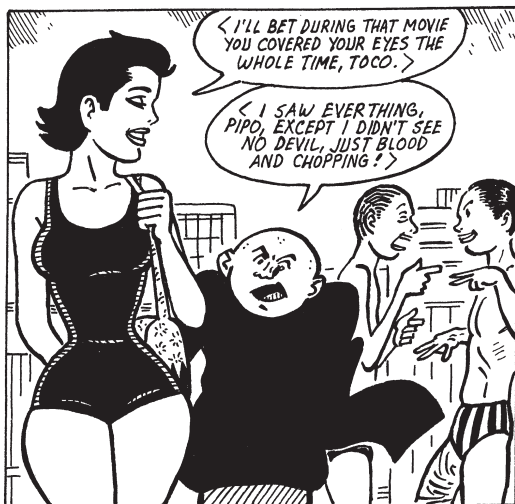
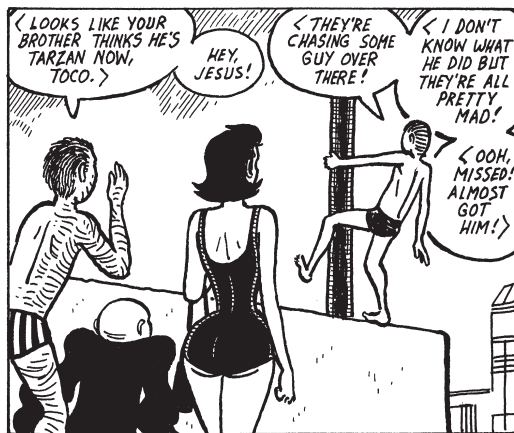
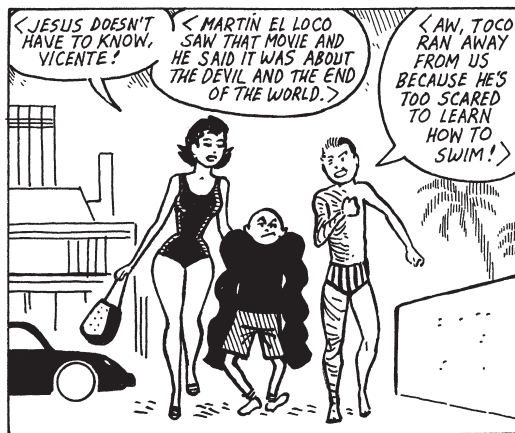






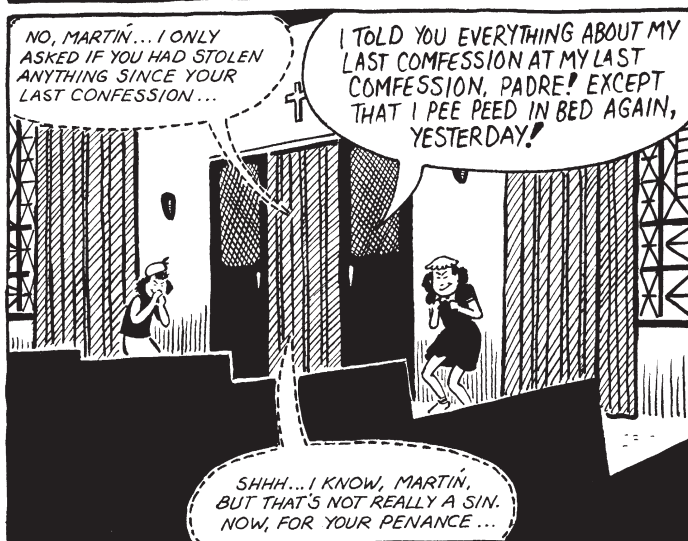




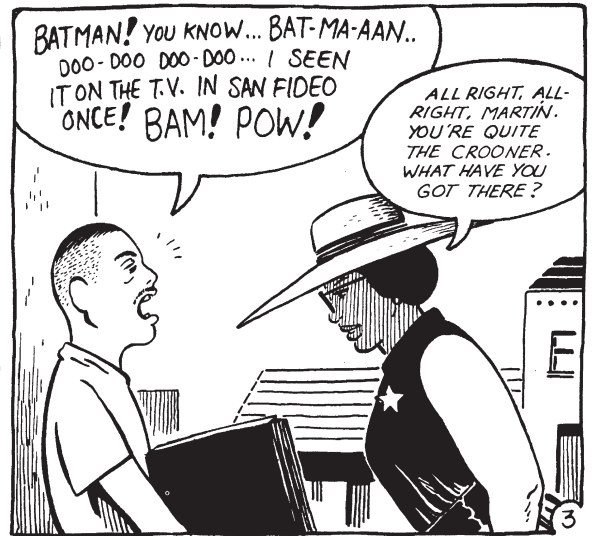
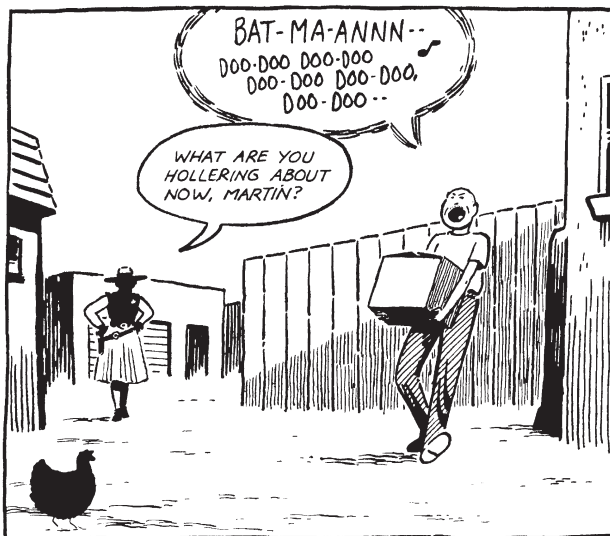
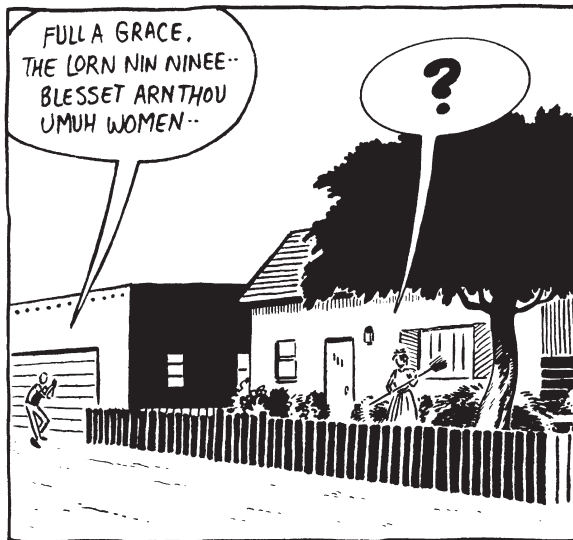


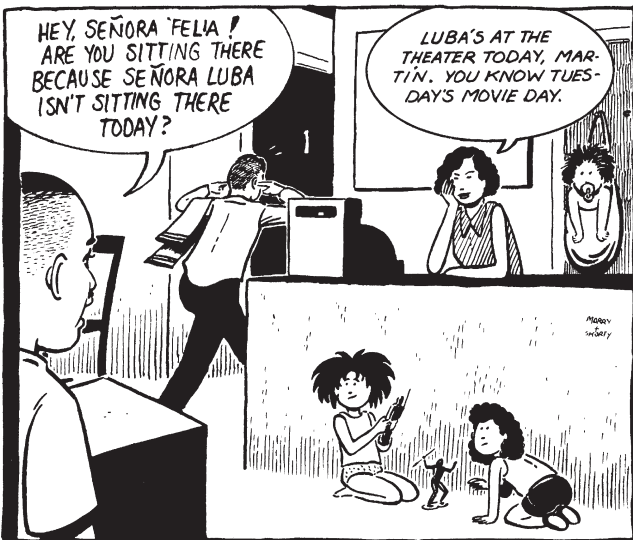
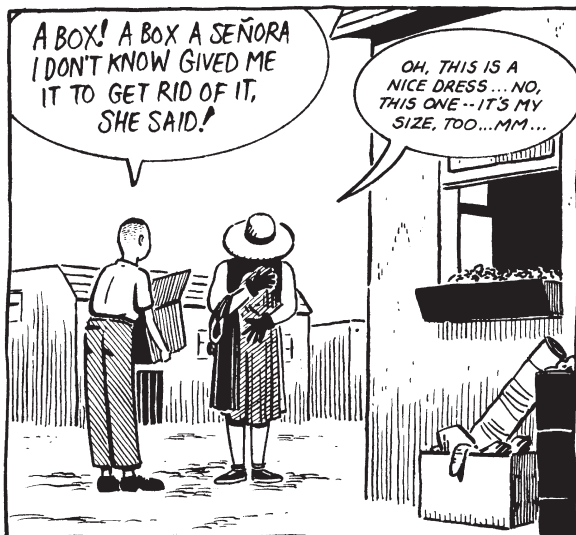


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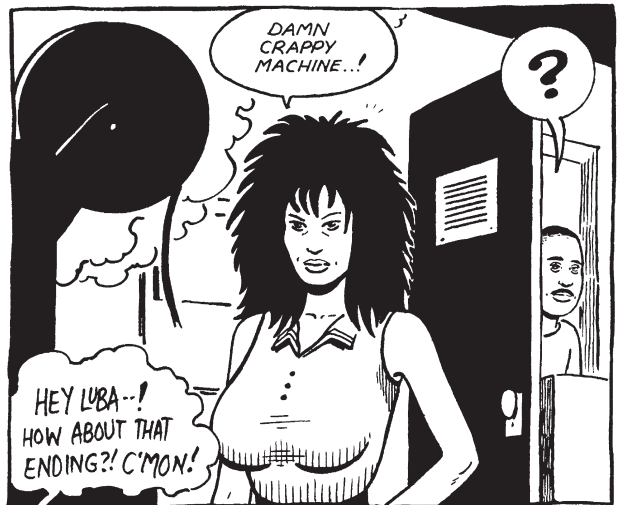


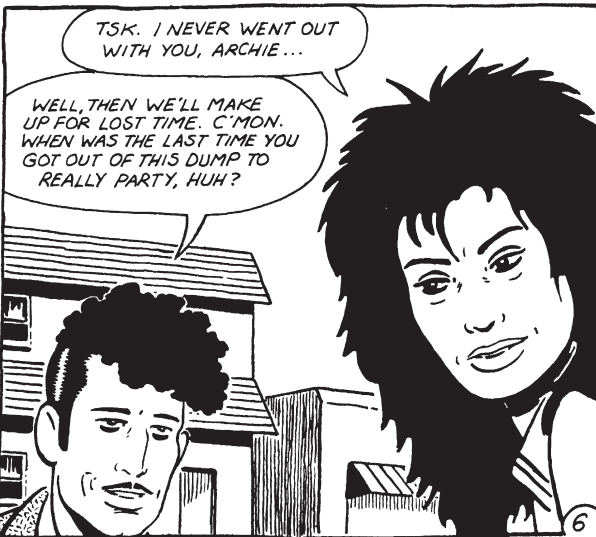
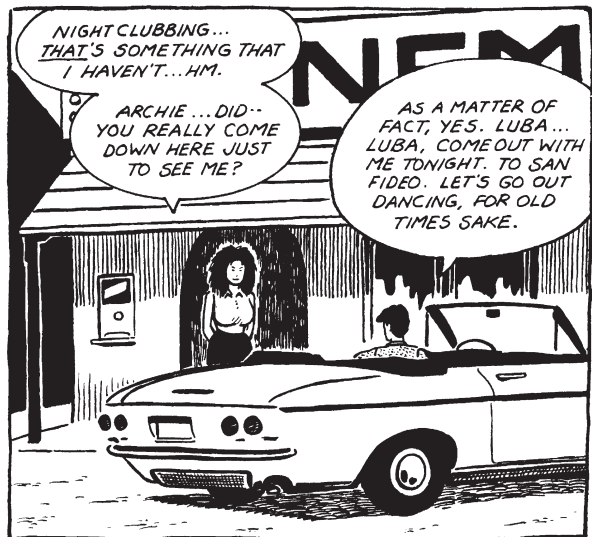
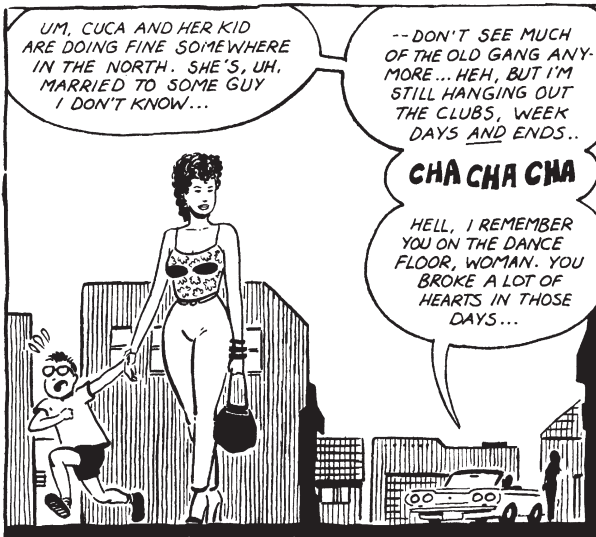
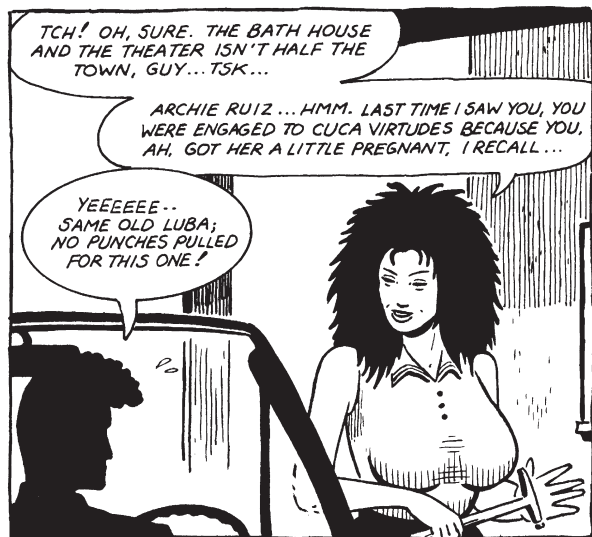
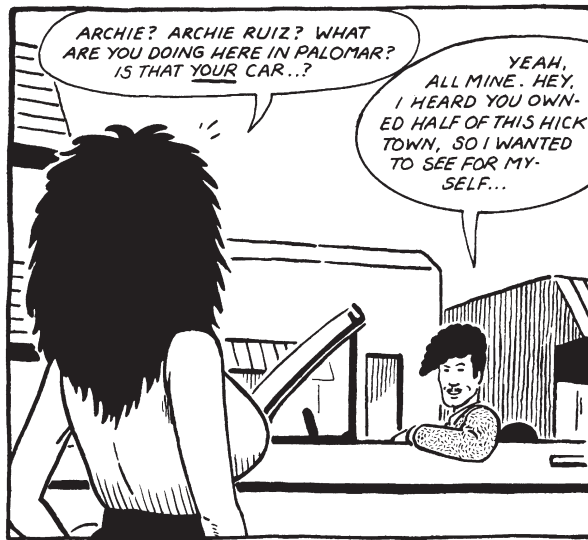
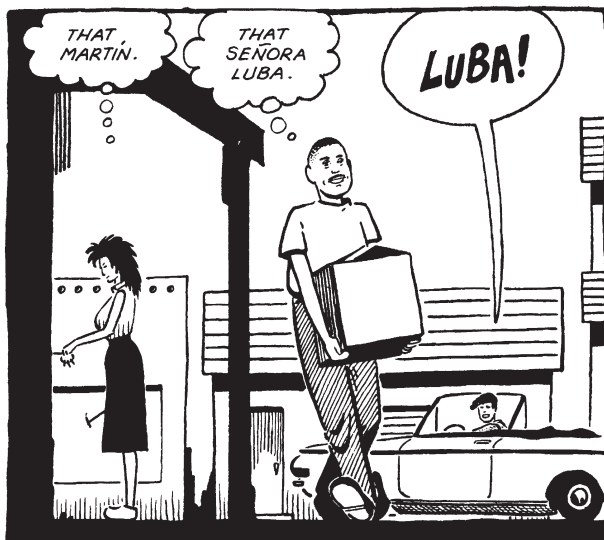
MARTÍN EL LOCO - MARTÍN EL LOE'COE (THE CRAZY)



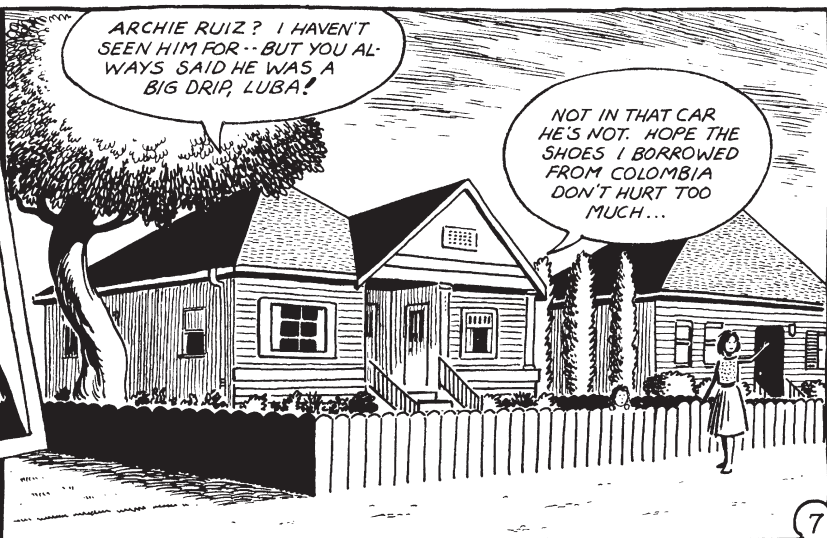
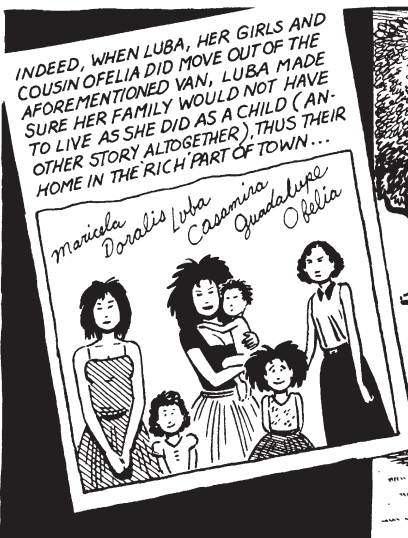
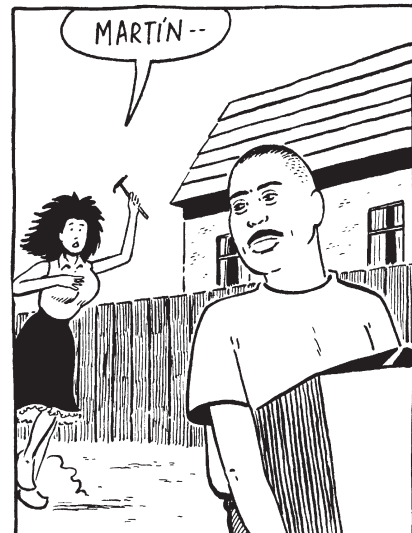
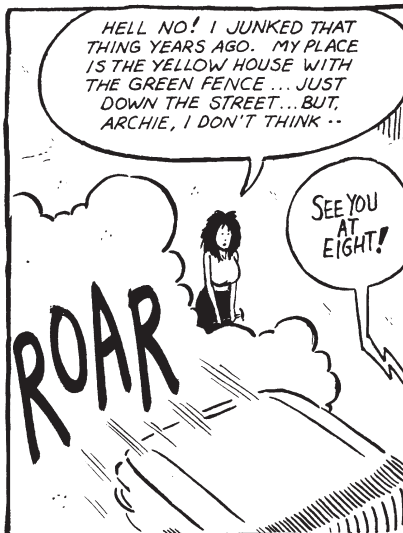
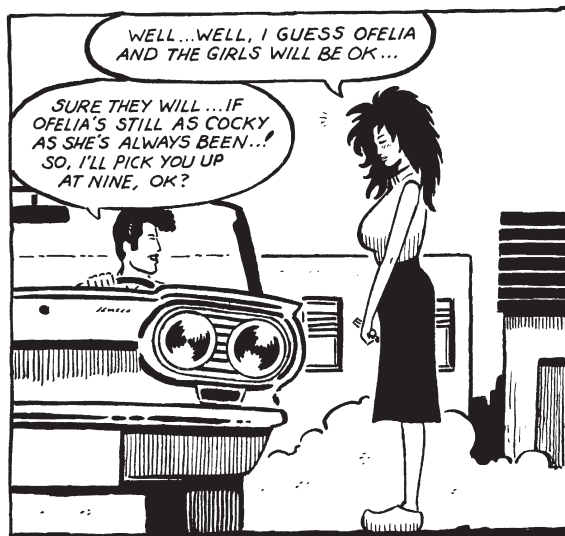


LUBA- LOO'BAH / OFELIA- OH FELL' EE AH / CHICO- CHEE'KOE / MARICELA- MAR EE CELL' AH / CHELO- CHELL'OH





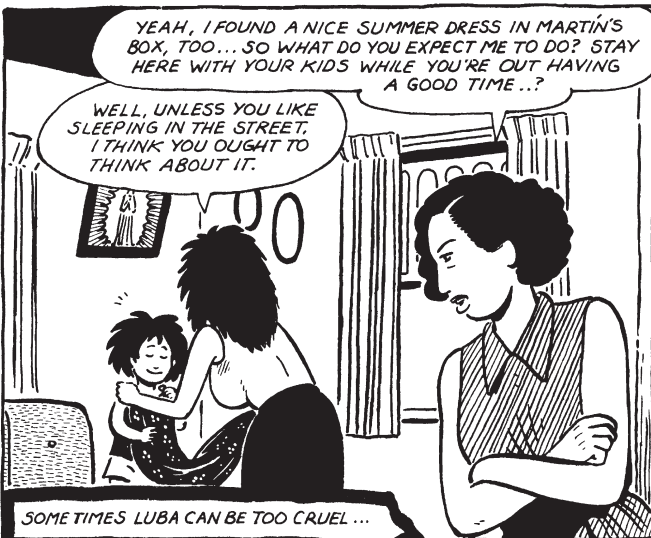
RUIZ - ROO EEZ' / CUCA VIRTUDES - KOO KAH VEER TOO 'DEZ





AND WHAT ARE YOU SUPPOSED TO WEAR, GIRL? THE DRAPES? YOU GAVE ALL YOUR NICE DRESSES TO PIPO WHEN SHE GOT MARRIED!

OH, THEY DIDN'T FIT ANY MORE ANYWAY... BUT LOOK AT WHAT I GOT FROM MARTIN! CHARRP, EH?



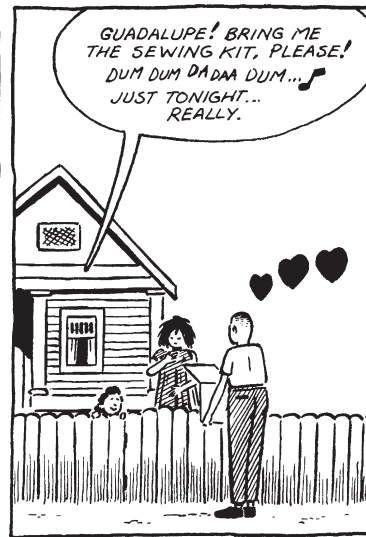
YEAH, I FOUND A NICE SUMMER DRESS IN MARTIN'S BOX, TOO... SO WHAT DO YOU EXPECT ME TO DO? STAY HERE WITH YOUR KIDS WHILE YOU'RE OUT HAVING A GOOD TIME...?

WELL, UNLESS YOU LIKE SLEEPING IN THE STREET, I THINK YOU OUGHT TO THINK ABOUT IT.

SOME TIMES LUBA CAN BE TOO CRUEL ...



OH, YOU KNOW I DON'T MEAN THAT, HONEY... SEE WHY I HAVE TO GET OUT? I'M BECOMING AN OLD BITCH BEFORE MY TIME. IT'S JUST FOR TONIGHT, REALLY. ARCHIE'S NOT EXACTLY MY TYPE, BUT HIS IDEA OF A NIGHT OUT IS. JUST TONIGHT, REALLY.

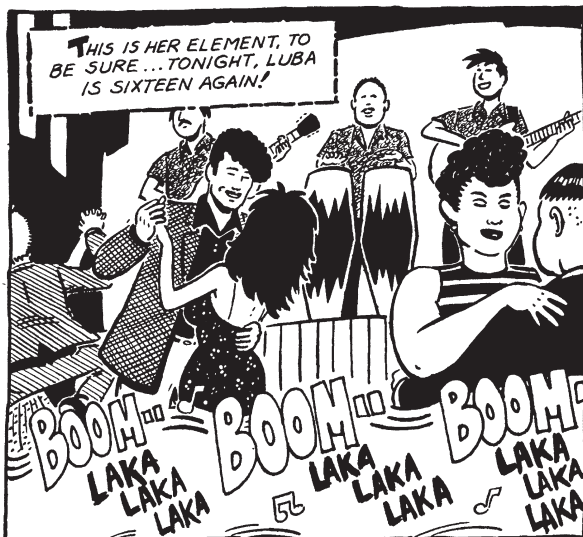


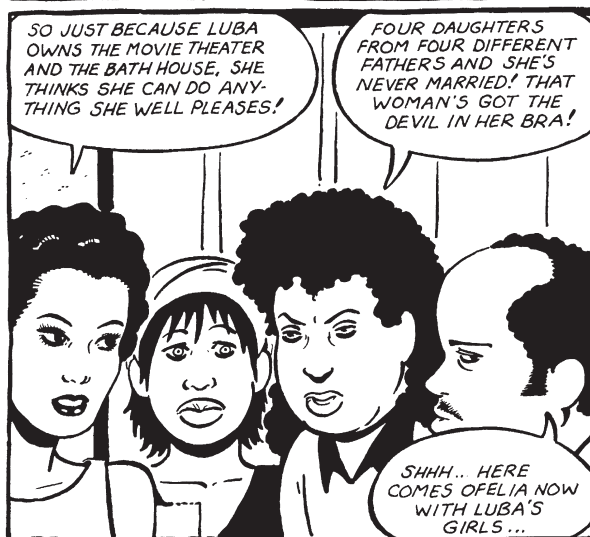
GUADALUPE! BRING ME THE SEWING KIT, PLEASE! DUM DUM DADA DUM... JUST TONIGHT... REALLY.





ISRAEL - EES'RYE EL / KIKO - KEE'KOE / VICENTE - VEE SEN'TEH / CHACON - CHAH CONE





ACT of CONTRITION

PART TWO

BE TO '83

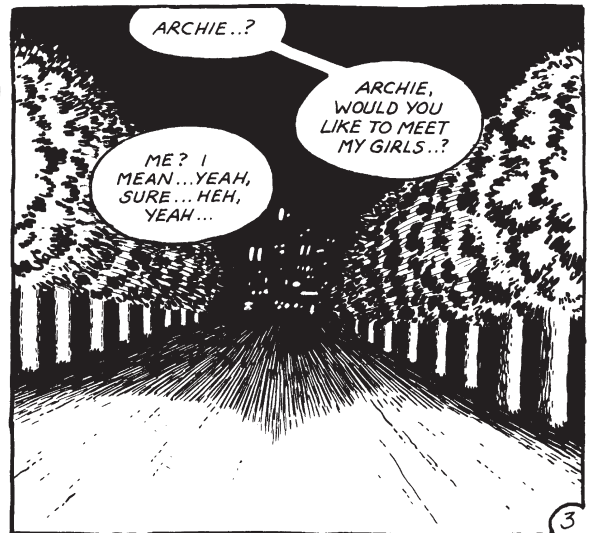
ARCHIE AND LUBA GO BACK A FEW YEARS, IT'S TRUE, BUT DESPITE THE RUMORS YOU MAY HAVE HEARD, THEY'VE NEVER BEEN LOVERS...

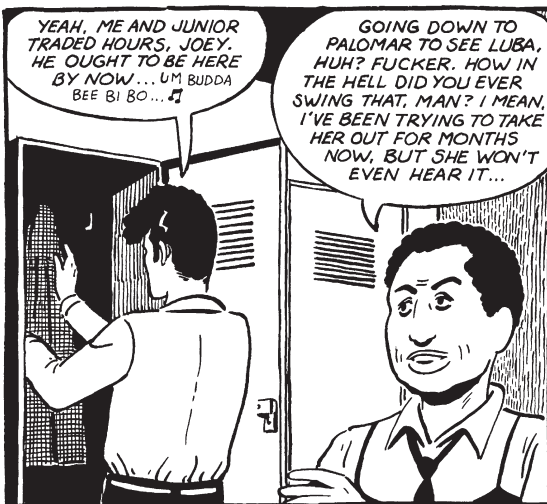
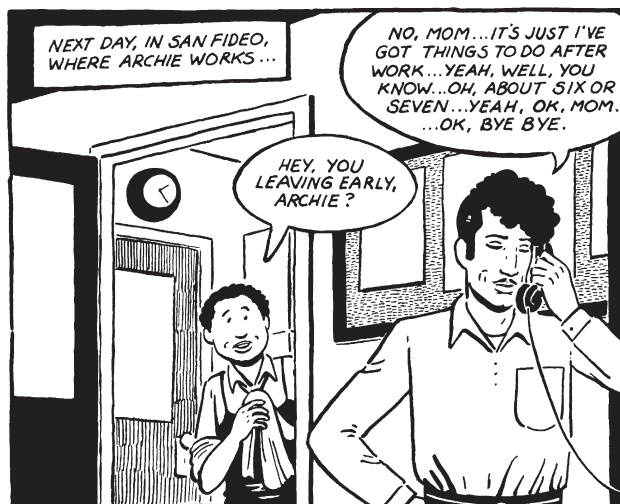
THIS IS PROBABLY ONE OF THE REASONS WHY THEY GET ALONG SO WELL (IF NOT THE REASON) ...

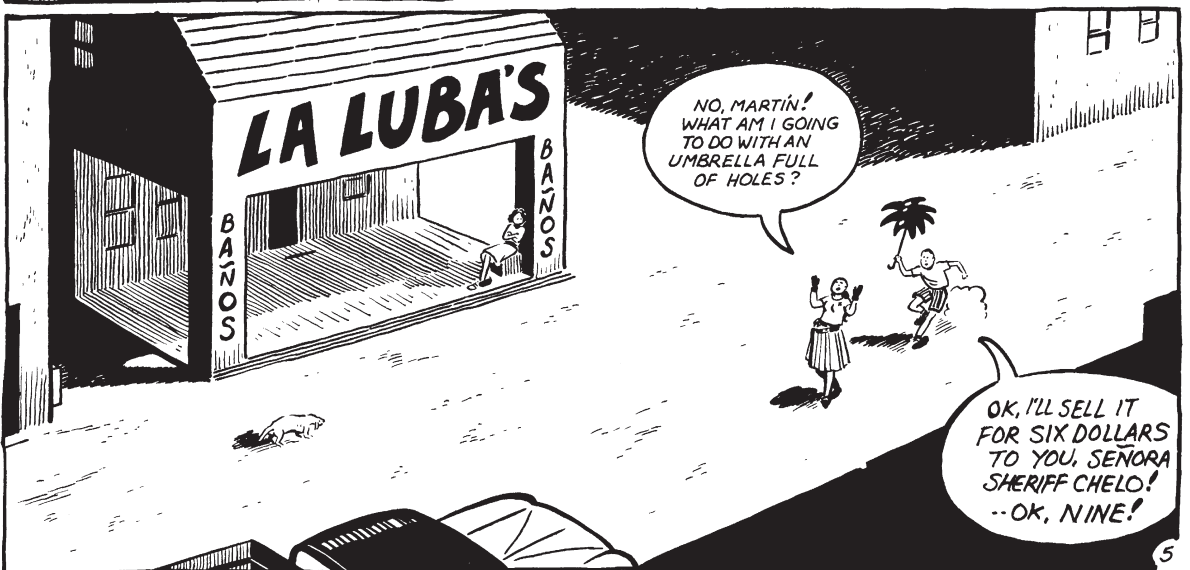
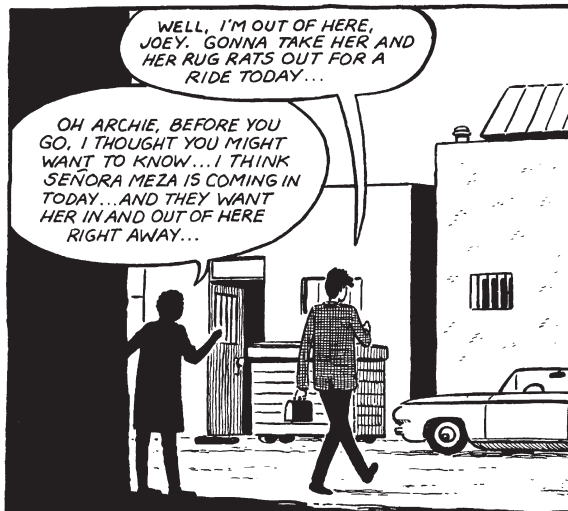
THE WAY LUBA FLIRTS WITH THE OTHER GUYS THAT HANG OUT AT CLUBLAND WOULD PISS OFF ANY BOY-FRIEND; THEN AGAIN, ARCHIE IS JUST AS BAD, SO...

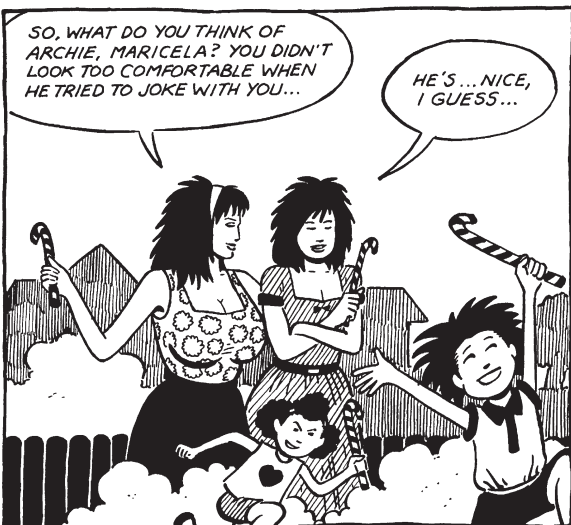
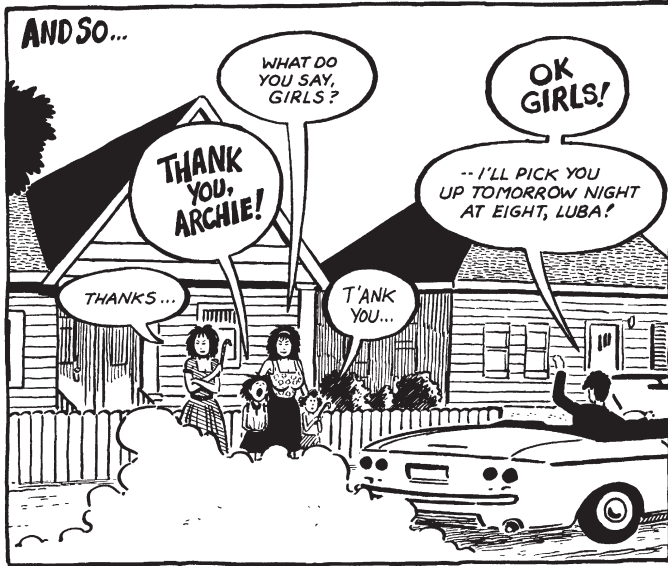
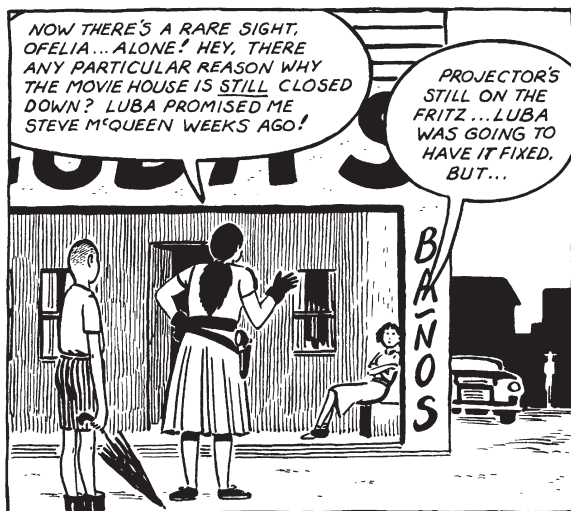
BUT WHEN IT COMES TO HITTING THE DANCE FLOOR ITSELF, THOSE TWO CANNOT BE SEPARATED FOR THE WORLD! SOMETIMES THE CHEMISTRY IS JUST RIGHT FOR SOME PEOPLE, Y'KNOW? IN THIS CASE, THE COMBINATION IS ROWR!









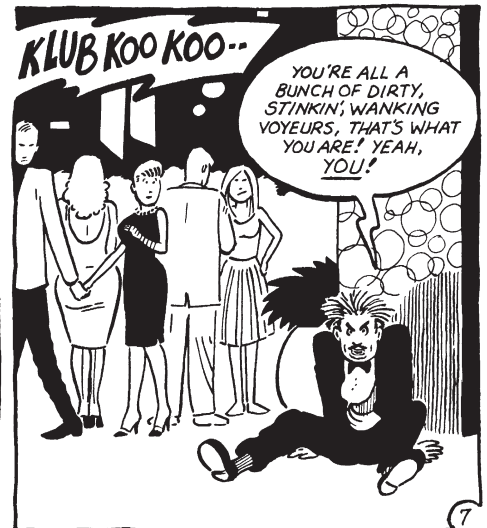


"...WHEN I WAS ABOUT SIXTEEN, STILL LIVING UP NORTH IN CALENTURA, MY FRIENDS AND I USED TO HANG OUT AT THE CLUBS THERE (AS DINGY AS SOME OF THEM WERE)... WE JUST LOVED THE MUSIC SO MUCH... I JUST LOVE LIVE MUSIC... SOME OF THE GUYS WEREN'T TOO BAD EITHER... SOME, I SAID. ANYWAY, WE NEVER HAD ANY PROBLEM GETTING INTO THE CLUBS... WE LOOKED OLDER FOR OUR AGE, I SUPPOSE... HM. WE'D DRESS UP IN CLOTHES I'D BETTER NEVER CATCH YOU WEARING, GIRL..."



"ARCHIE AND HIS GANG WERE REGULARS OF THE CLUBS... THEY WERE THE CREEPIEST GUYS I'D EVER MET. I MEAN, THEY WERE THE TYPE OF GUYS WHO TRY TO IMPRESS YOU BY DESCRIBING THE DETAILS OF A BAD FACTORY ACCIDENT OR OTHER PLEASANT THINGS LIKE THAT. YEAH, GROWN MEN..."

"THEY USED TO BUG THE HECK OUT OF US, ALWAYS ASKING US OUT AND STUFF... ESPECIALLY RUDY! HE NEVER DID LET UP ON ME... AND I NEVER DID GO OUT WITH HIM. UGH, I CAN STILL SMELL HIS BREATH..."









OHHH...THAT WAS A GOOD IDEA... LIKE A BOILER IN THERE... HM...LOTS OF CREEPS HANGING OUT TONIGHT...

PUT THIS ON, FOR CHRIST'S SAKE... ..IF YOUR GIRLS COULD SEE YOU...



WHAT..? ARCHIE...WHAT-WHAT'S WRONG..? I WAS ONLY DANCING... YOU BRING ME HERE TO DANCE...!

YOU WEREN'T DANCING, YOU WERE-- --SHOWING OFF! JUST ABOUT FALLING OUT OF YOUR DRESS...!



OH... OH, SO ALL OF A SUDDEN YOU DON'T APPROVE OF GOD'S DESIGN FOR MY FIGURE ANY MORE, EH?

OH, COME ON, IN THAT DRESS, YOU--

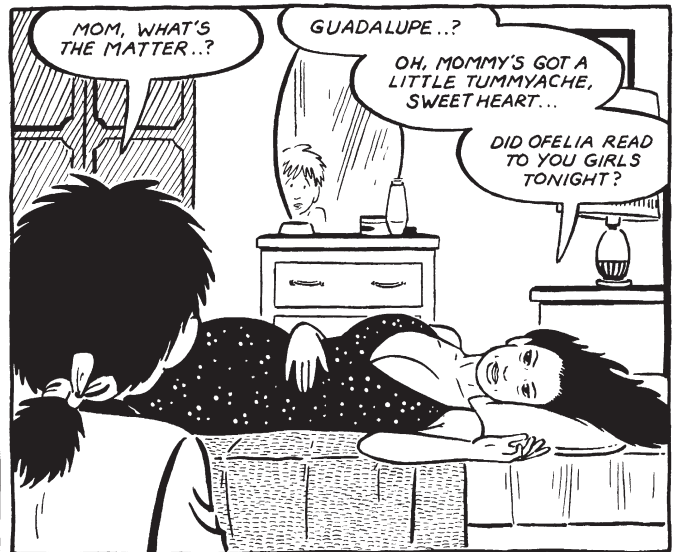
--YOU TOLD ME YOU LIKED THIS DRESS, ARCHIE!



I--I... YOU'VE GOT FOUR GIRLS AT HOME, WOMAN! THEY DESERVE BETTER THAN YOU-- YOU SHOWING YOURSELF OFF LIKE A--A-- THEN YOU DON'T THINK PEOPLE ARE SAYING SHIT, WHEN--I KNOW I BROUGHT YOU HERE IN THE FIRST PLACE, BUT-- THOSE GIRLS DESERVE BETTER THAN THEIR MOTHER ACTING--

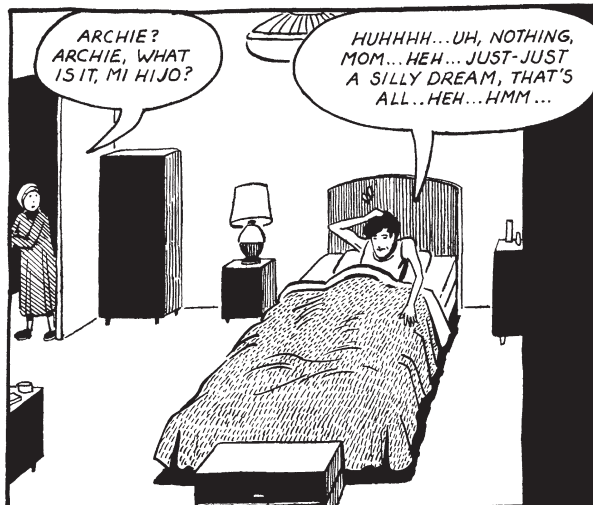
ALL RIGHT, ARCHIE. TAKE ME HOME. NOW.





**END
of
PART
TWO**





NOW, SOMETHING LIKE THIS HAS NEVER HAPPENED TO ARCHIE RUIZ BEFORE :

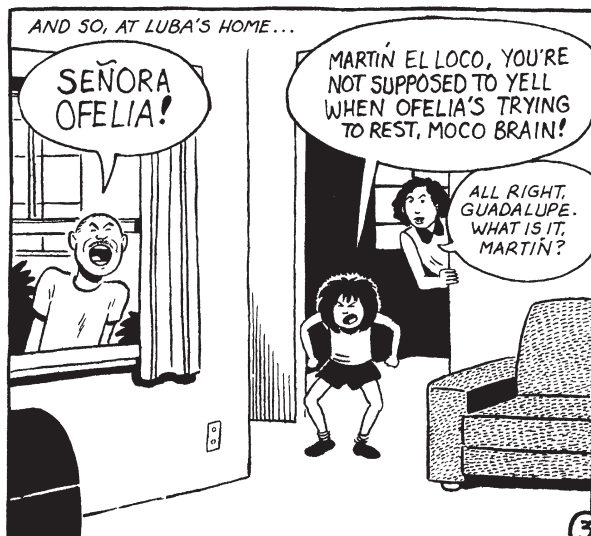
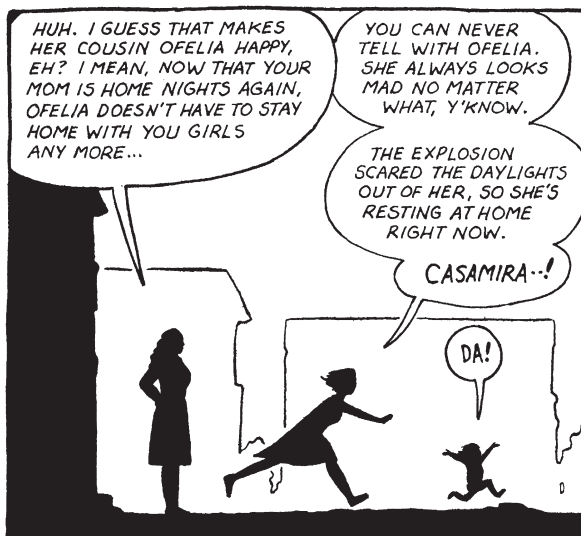
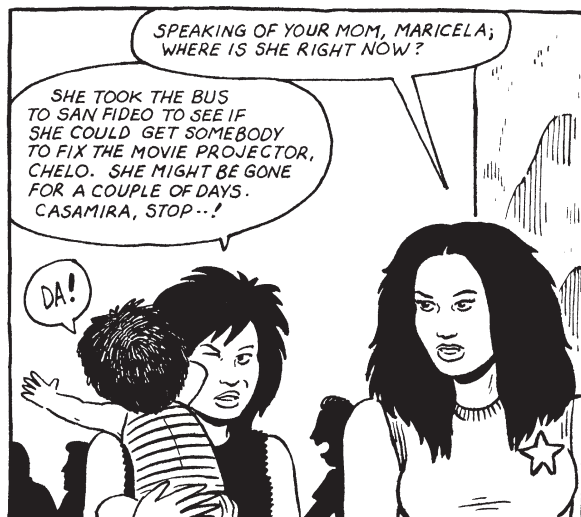
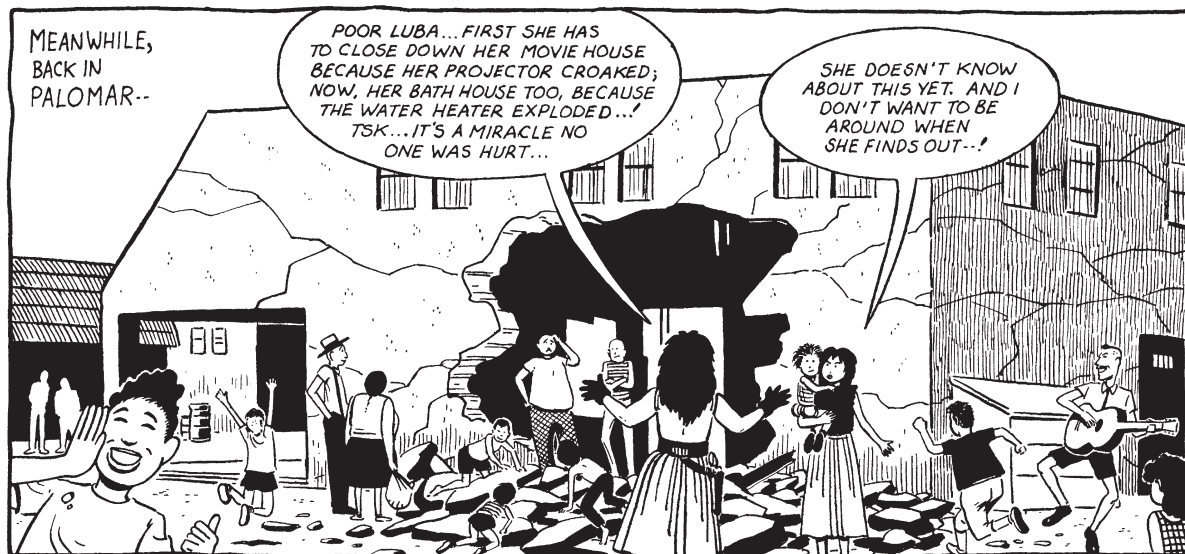
IT'S BEEN A FEW DAYS OR SO SINCE HE AND LUBA HAD THEIR LITTLE PARTING OF THE WAYS ...

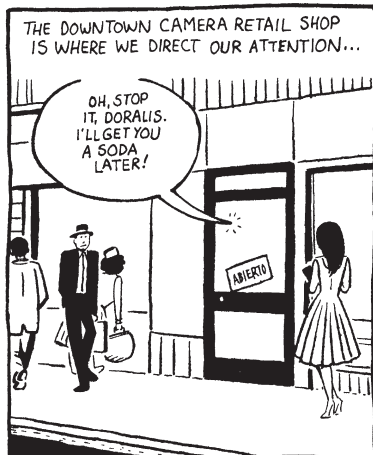
ARCHIE FIGURED THAT WAS THAT, YOU KNOW, OTHER FISH IN THE SEA AND ALL THAT STUFF...

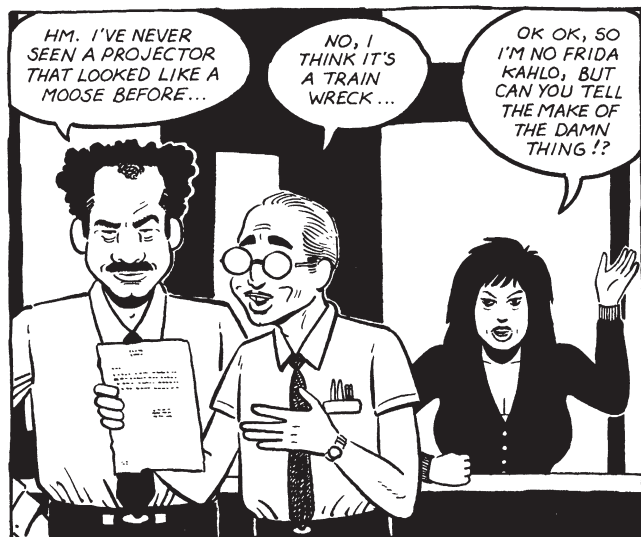
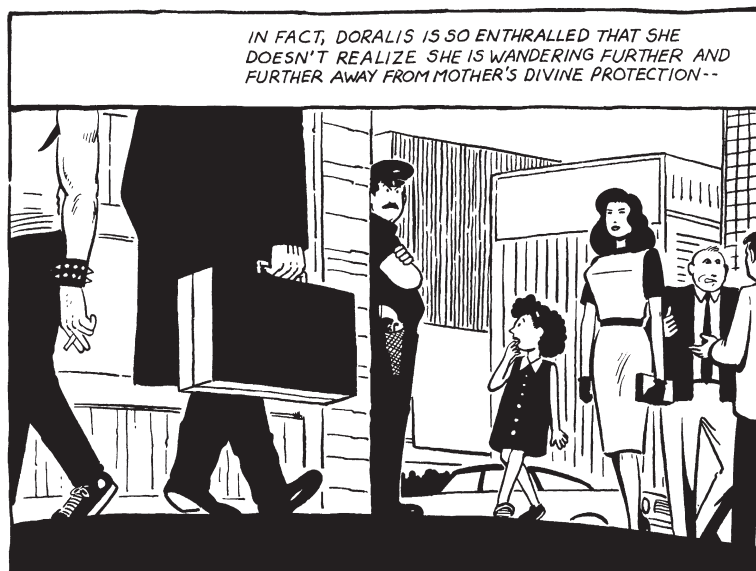
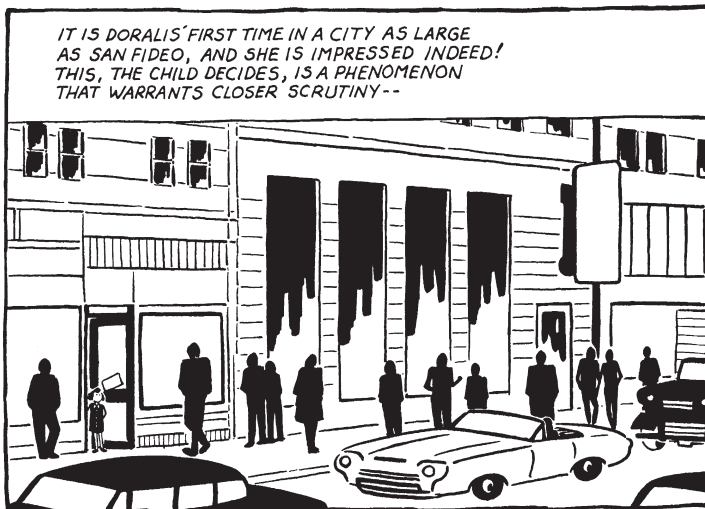
WELL, THIS NIGHTMARE SEEMS TO HAVE CHANGED HIS MIND ...

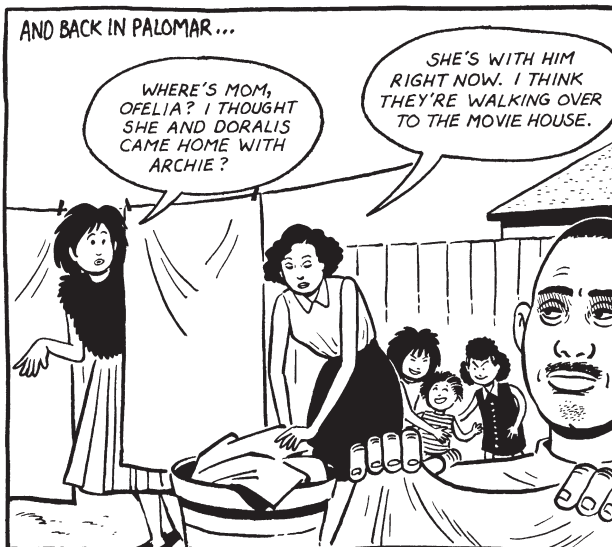
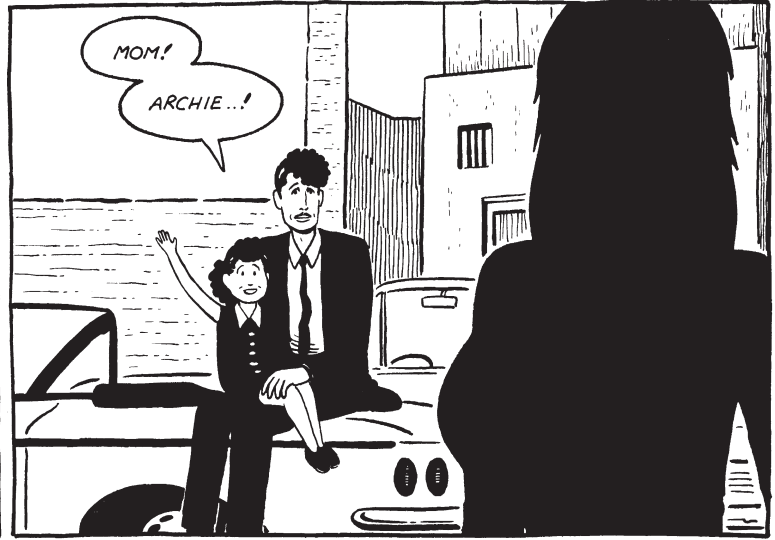
HE HASN'T HAD A NIGHTMARE SINCE HE BECAME A MORTICIAN FOURTEEN YEARS AGO...

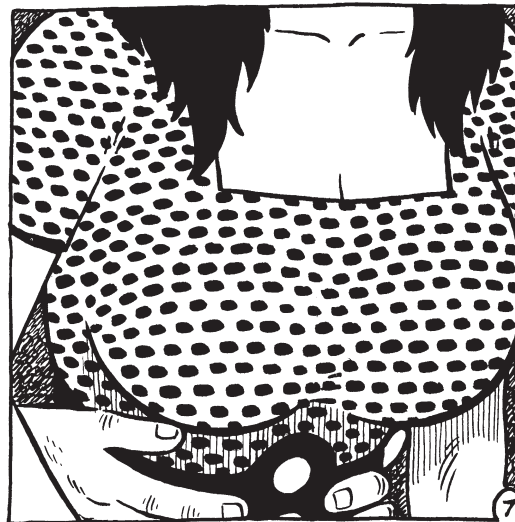
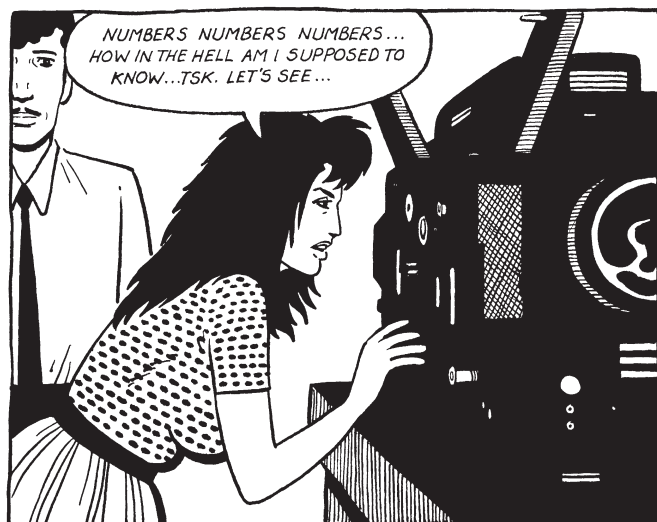
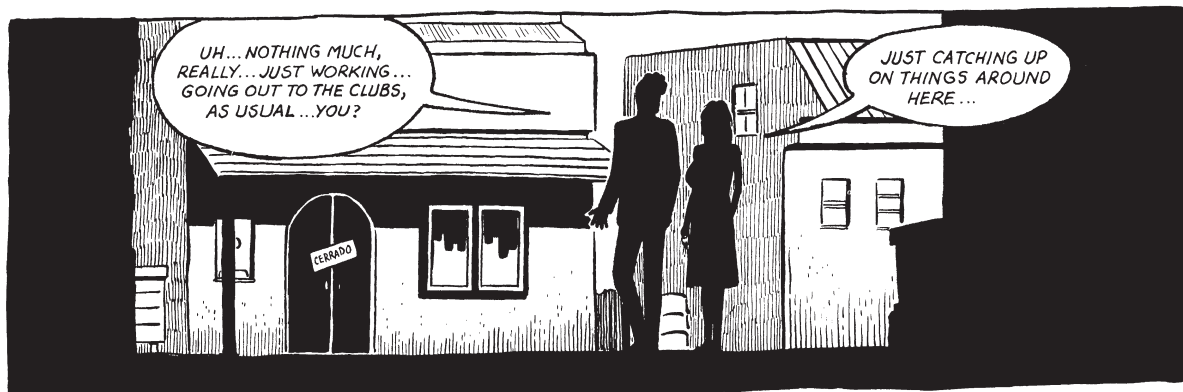




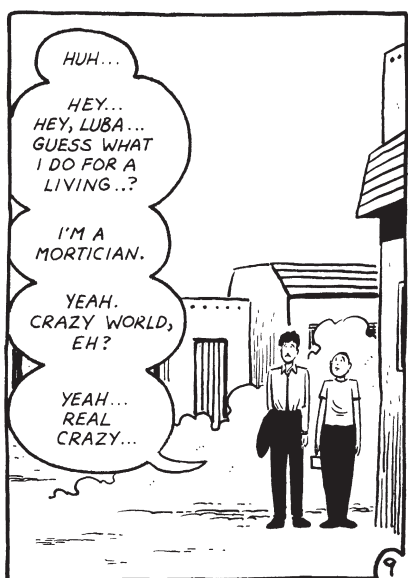
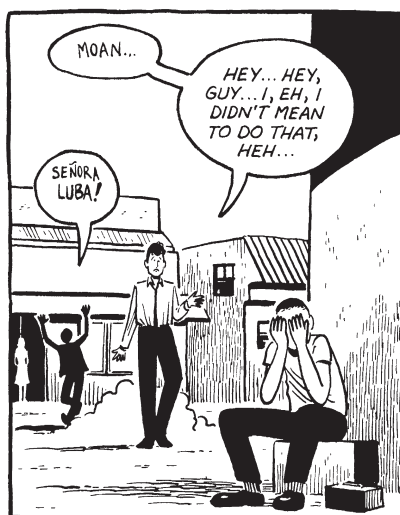


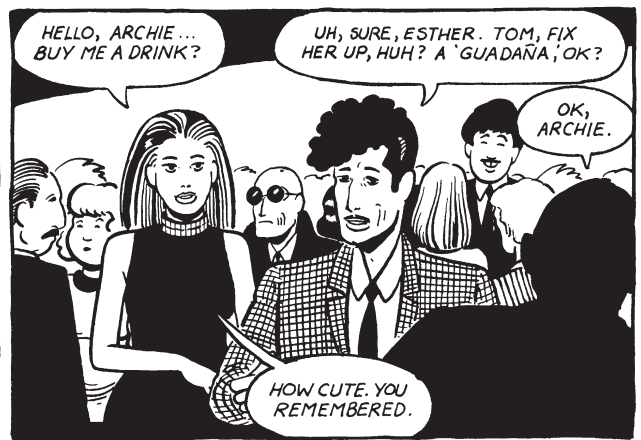


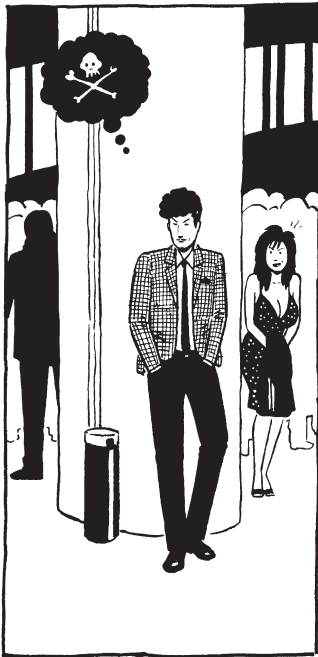










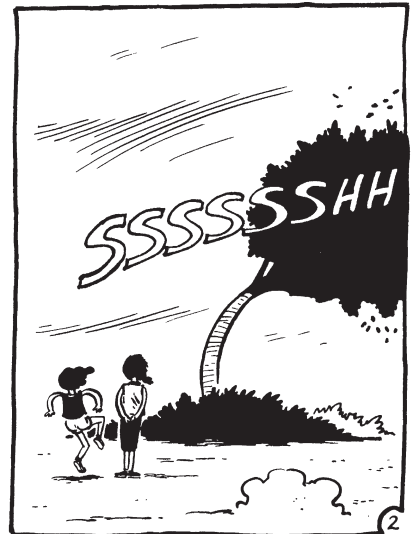
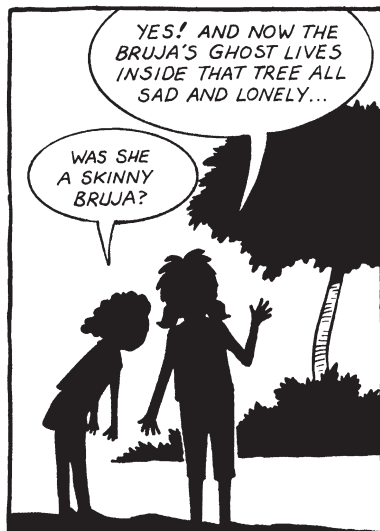


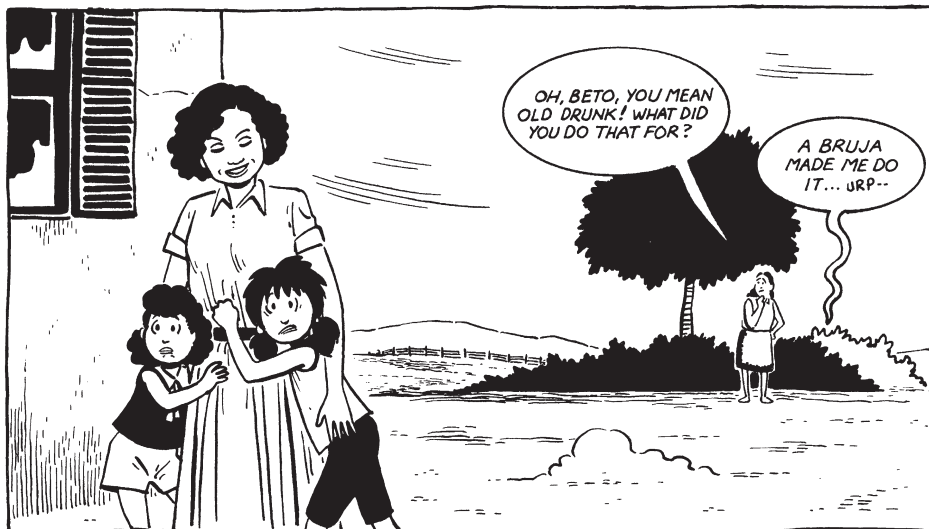
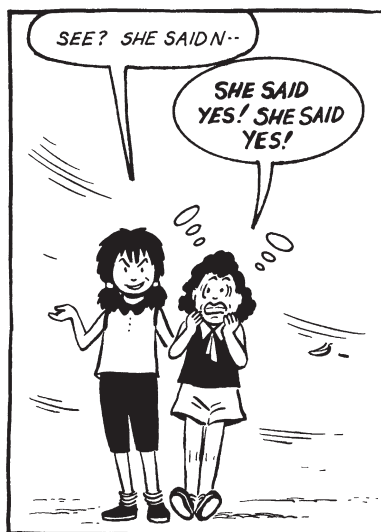


The WHISPERING TREE

by BETO
APR-84







The End

Heartbreak Soup Theater

The MYSTERY WEN

by BETO'83

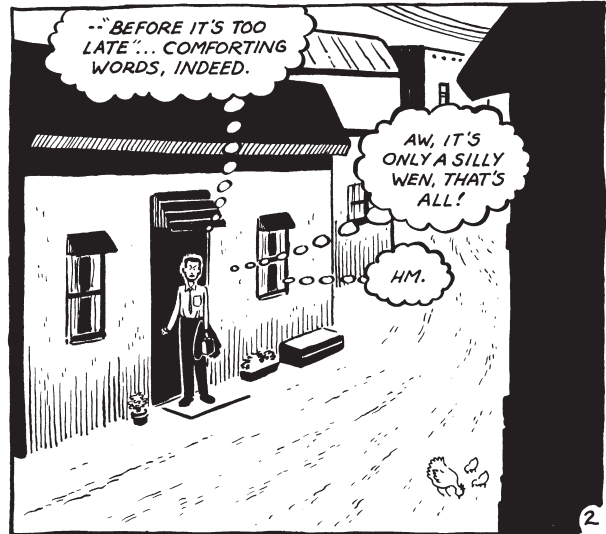
THE LIFE OF AN ACCORDION TEACHER IS NOT QUITE AS MUNDANE AS YOU WOULD IMAGINE, DEAR READER...

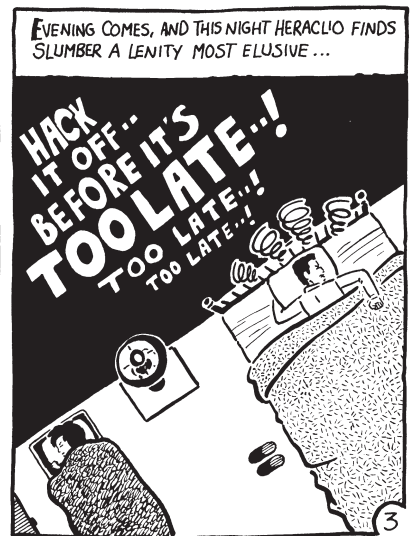
HEY, PEPO...

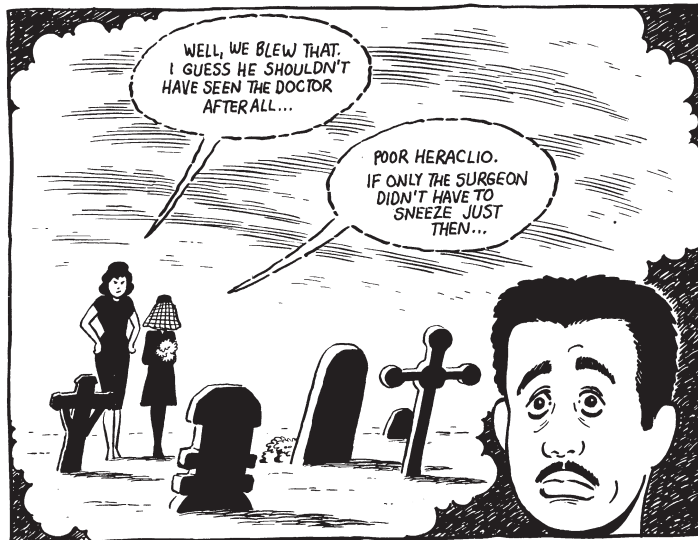
HEY, HERACLIO!

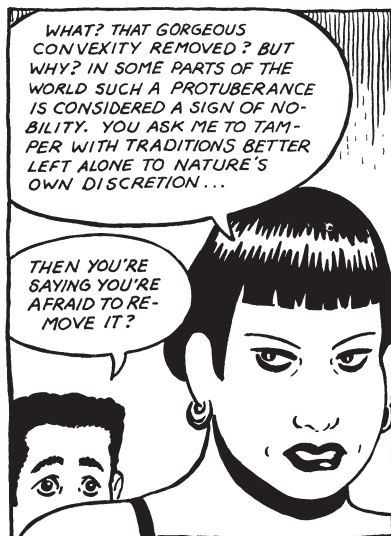
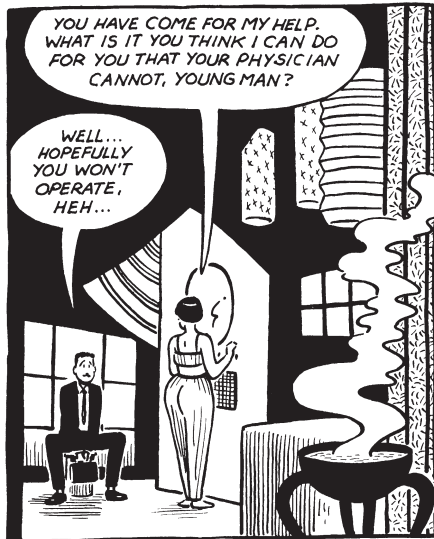
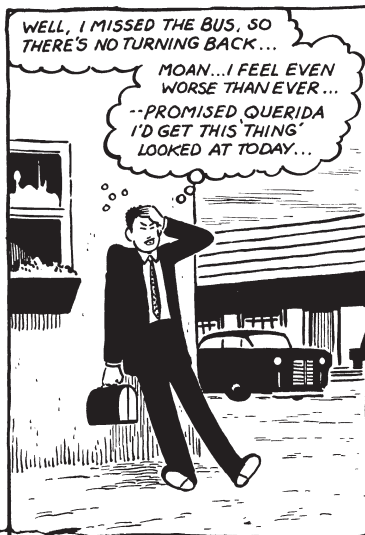


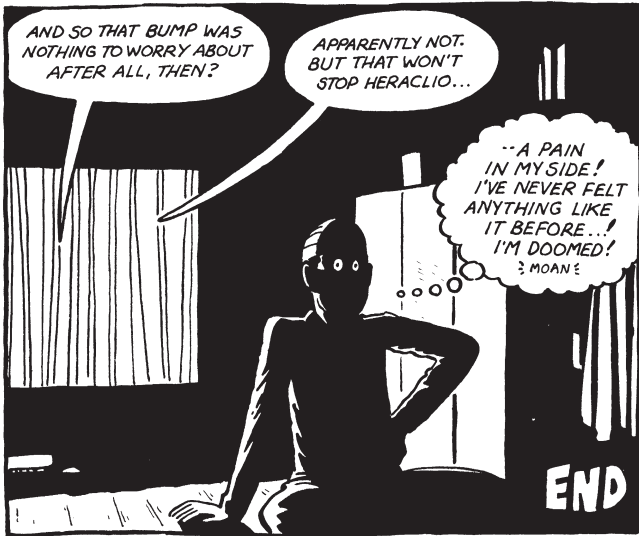
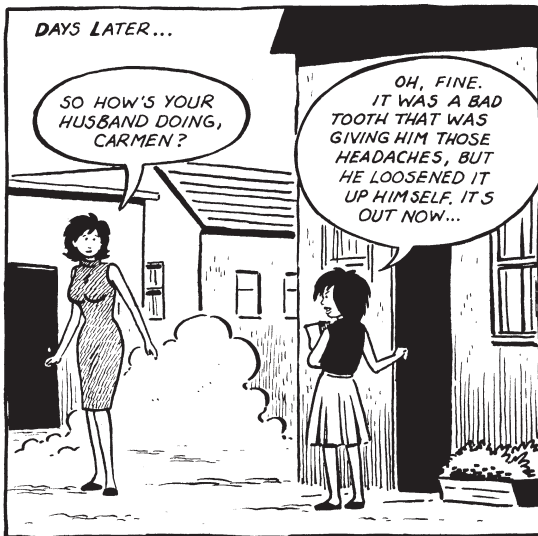
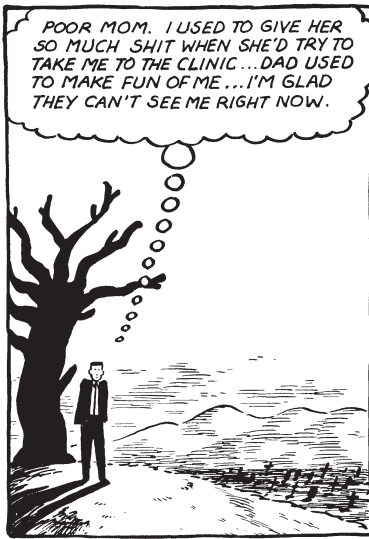
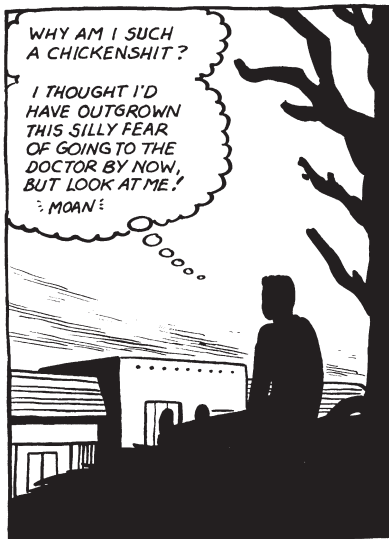
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the LAUGHING SUN

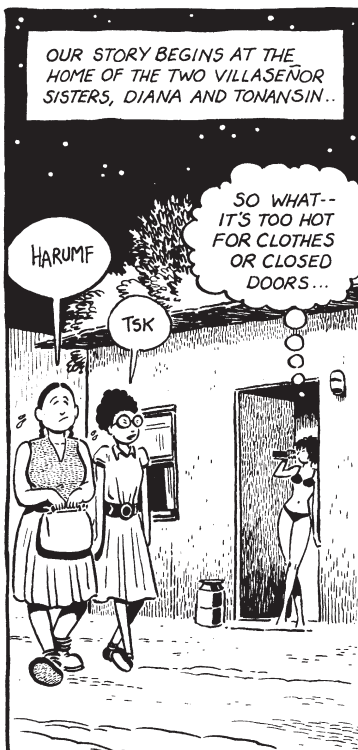
BETO '84
MAY-JUNE



THE SUN HAS BEEN A PITILESS
POTENTATE THESE DAYS ...
IT'S ALMOST AS IF IT HAS CHOSEN
THE TOWN OF PALOMAR TO FOCUS
ITS WRATH UPON ...



AND APPARENTLY THE EVENINGS
OF LATE ARE DEMANDING EQUAL
TIME ...



OUR STORY BEGINS AT THE
HOME OF THE TWO VILLASEÑOR
SISTERS, DIANA AND TONANSIN..

HARUMF

Tsk

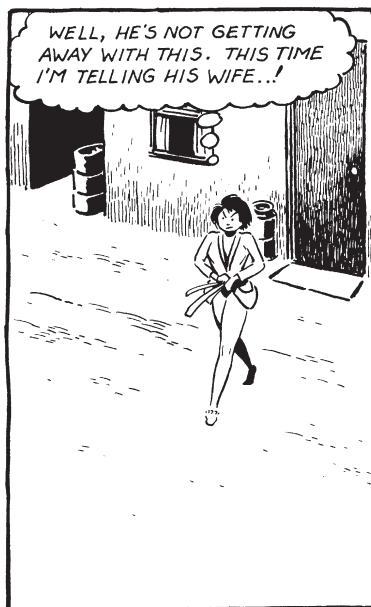
SO WHAT--
IT'S TOO HOT
FOR CLOTHES
OR CLOSED
DOORS...



BUMP..

DIANA?
THAT YOU?

THOUGHT YOU
WERE GONNA
STAY OVER RIRI'S
TONIGHT...!





NOW WHAT--?
CARMEN? WHAT
IS IT...?!

HURRY!



HE-- HE TRIED TO KILL
ME... HE KILLED MY BABY...
HE'S A MONSTER! A-A
MONSTER...!



CHELO...
THE BABY?

IT'S... ALIVE.
IT'S GOT A NASTY
BRUISE ON IT'S
HEAD, BUT IT'S
BREATHING...



HE'S CRAZY, THAT'S ALL...
TRIED TO KILL ME... I SWEAR,
HE TRIED TO KILL-- WRECKED THE
WHOLE HOUSE... GRABBED A
STEAK KNIFE AND RAN...



SHE CAN STAY
WITH YOU, TONIGHT,
OK, TONANSIN?

WELL...
UH, OK...

I WANT TO
STAY WITH
MY BABY.

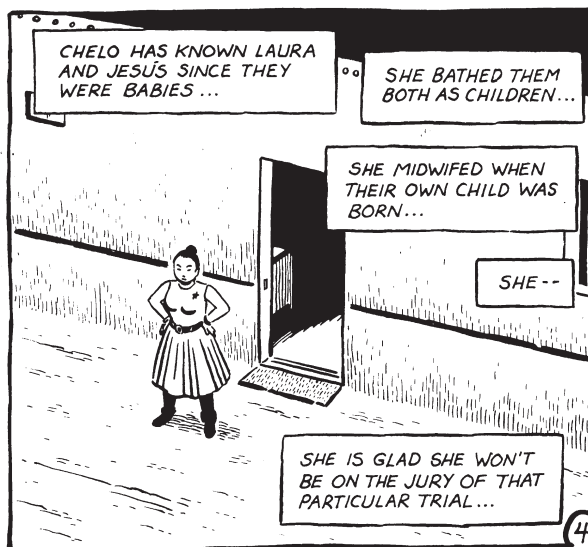
YOUR BABY WILL
HAVE TO STAY WITH
DR. ZUMAYA TONIGHT,
LAURA. YOU CAN
SEE HER IN THE
MORNING...

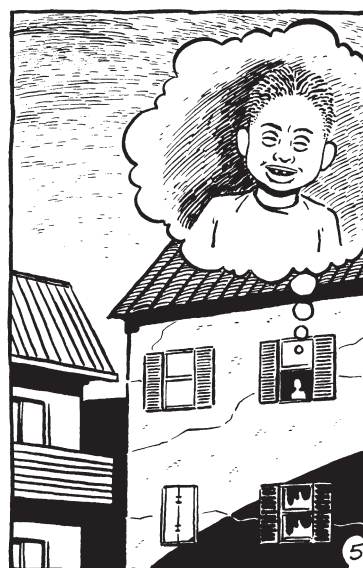
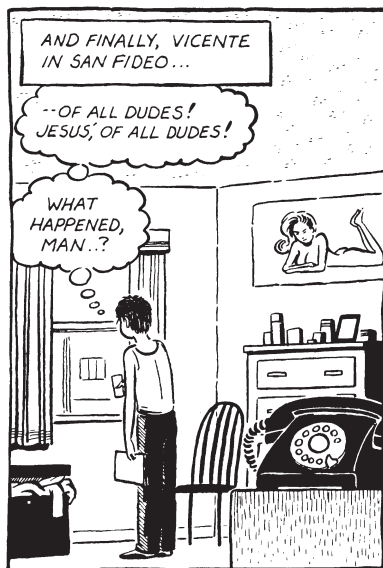
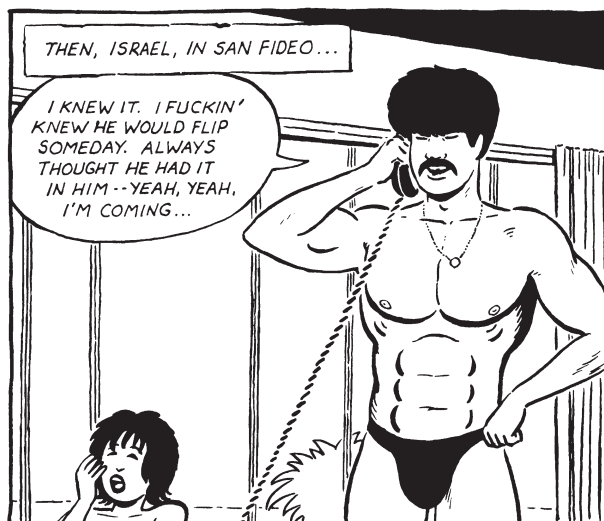


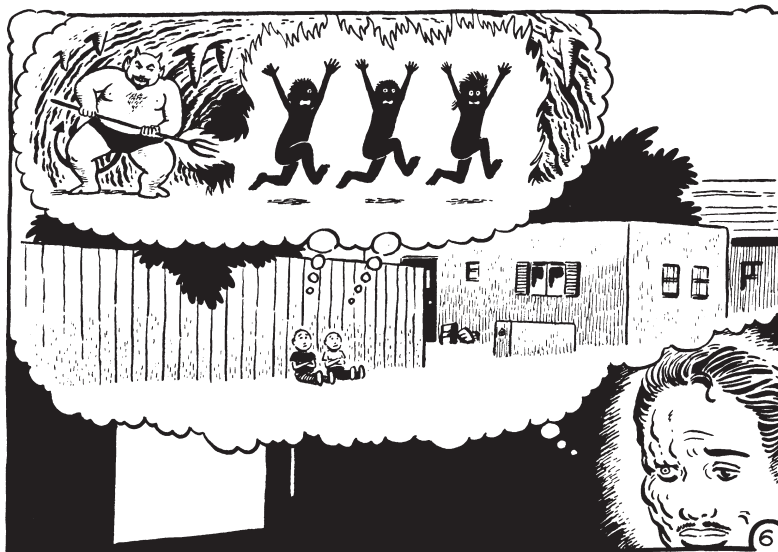
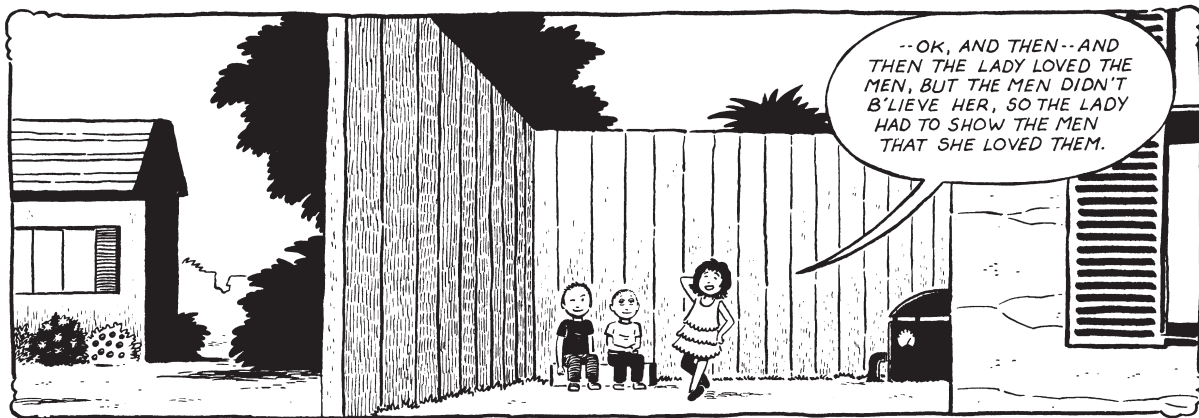
--JUST LIKE YOU
SAID, BOSS! HE STOLE
JUAN COBOS' CAR AND
HEADED FOR THE
MOUNTAINS!

OH,
JESUS,
JESUS...

SIGH--



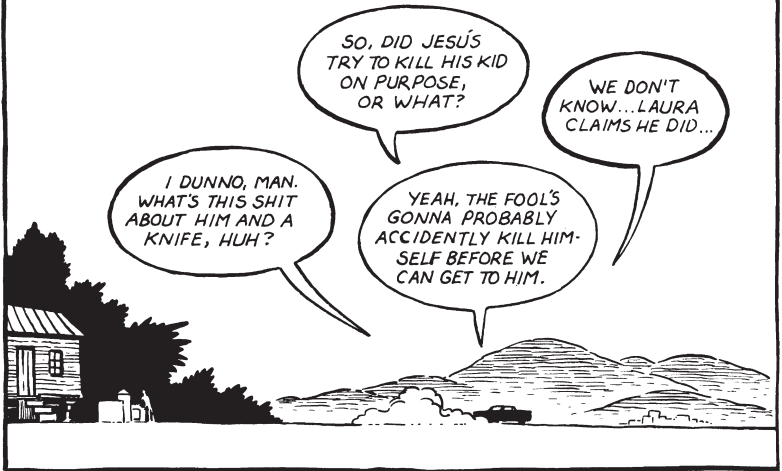






FUCKIN' JESÚS...

AND SO, OLD FRIENDS
ARE REUNITED, ALBEIT UNDER
GRIEVOUS CIRCUMSTANCES...



SO, DID JESÚS
TRY TO KILL HIS KID
ON PURPOSE,
OR WHAT?

WE DON'T
KNOW...LAURA
CLAIMS HE DID...

I DUNNO, MAN.
WHAT'S THIS SHIT
ABOUT HIM AND A
KNIFE, HUH?

YEAH, THE FOOL'S
GONNA PROBABLY
ACCIDENTALLY KILL HIM-
SELF BEFORE WE
CAN GET TO HIM.



SO--SO, WHY ISN'T CHELO
DOING THIS? SHE'S STILL
SHERIFF OF THAT DUMP,
ISN'T SHE?

'CAUSE WE'RE DOING
IT, THAT'S WHY! IF JESÚS
HAS GONE NUTS, I THINK
WE SHOULD BE THE FIRST
PEOPLE TO TALK TO HIM.

YEAH! WHAT'S
WITH YOU, ISRAEL?
IT'S JESÚS,
MAN!

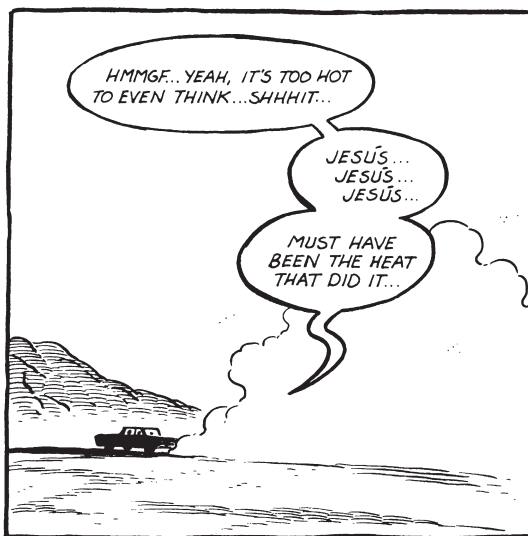


YEAH...JESÚS. THAT FUCKER.
MAN, WHEN I GET MY HANDS
ON HIM...WHY'D HE RUN FOR
THE HILLS OF ALL PLACES?

NAW-!
NO WAY-!

YEAH! YOU CAN ASK
THESE GUYS HERE! IT'S
TRUE; I SWEAR!

WHAT'S
THAT,
PINTOR?



TO BE
CON-
CLUD-
ED
NEXT
ISSUE

JESUS... JESUS BEGAN TO YELL ...
HE BEGAN YELLING AND THROWING
THINGS AROUND THE HOUSE LIKE...LIKE
A MANIAC...CRAZY...

AND I TOLD HIM-- I TOLD HIM, 'YOU'RE
CRAZY, YOU'LL KILL US ALL, BUT HE
ONLY GOT CRAZIER ...

THAT'S WHEN HE KNOCKED THE
CRIB OVER WITH THE BABY--

I SCREAMED, 'YOU KILLER-- YOU'VE
KILLED MY BABY, YOU'VE KILLED
MY BABY, YOU MONSTER--!'

AS SOON AS HE HEARD THAT,
HE RAN OUT THE DOOR...



THE BABY... WASN'T KILLED,
AFTER ALL... IT'S OK NOW,
GOT A LITTLE BRUISE...

HE'S NOT COMING
NEAR ME OR THAT
CHILD AGAIN, I--
I SWEAR IT...!

JESUS - HEH '5003

WELL! IT APPEARS JESUS'S OLD BUDDIES
HERACLIO, VICENTE, SATCH AND ISRAEL
FIND THIS REPORT HARD TO BELIEVE,
DESPITE THE FACT THAT JESUS HAS IN-
DEED STOLEN A NEIGHBOR'S CAR...

NAW...

JESUS?!

NO
WAY.

HUH...

YOU
NEVER
KNOW,
EH?

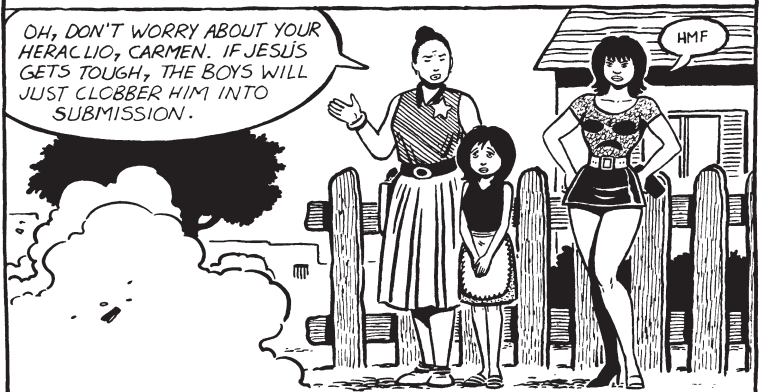


SHERIFF CHELO, UPON HEARING THE DISTRESSING NEWS, HAS GRANTED
HERACLIO'S REQUEST OF AUTHORIZING THE BOYS TO BRING JESUS
BACK FROM THE MOUNTAINS WHERE HE HAS FLED.

A BLACK DAY FOR THOSE INVOLVED, TO BE SURE...

OH, DON'T WORRY ABOUT YOUR
HERACLIO, CARMEN. IF JESUS
GETS TOUGH, THE BOYS WILL
JUST CLOBBER HIM INTO
SUBMISSION.

HMF



PART
2

Laughing

BETO
MAY-JULY
'84

THE

SUN

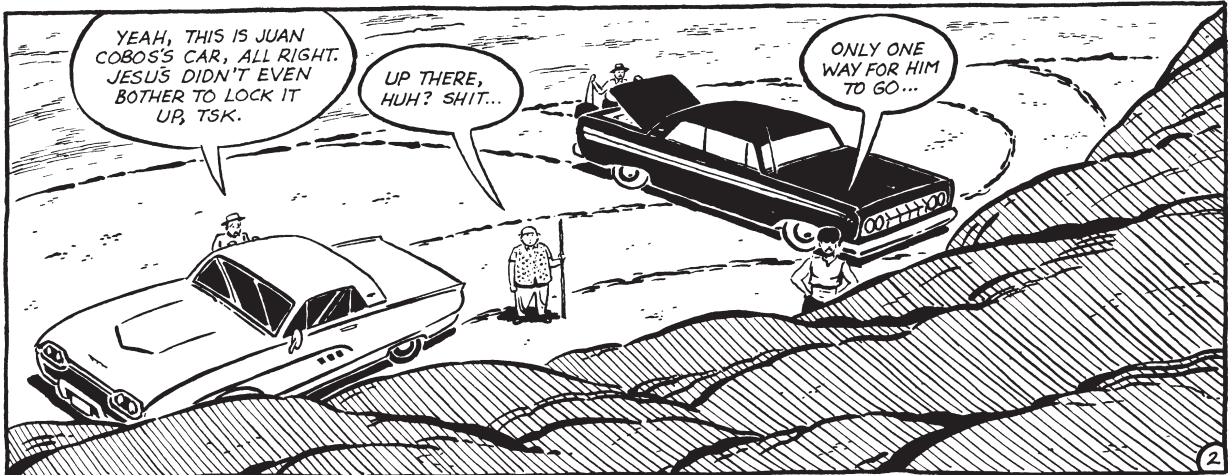
IN THE TINY VILLAGE
OF POLOX, THE BOYS FIND
THAT LUCK IS WITH THEM.

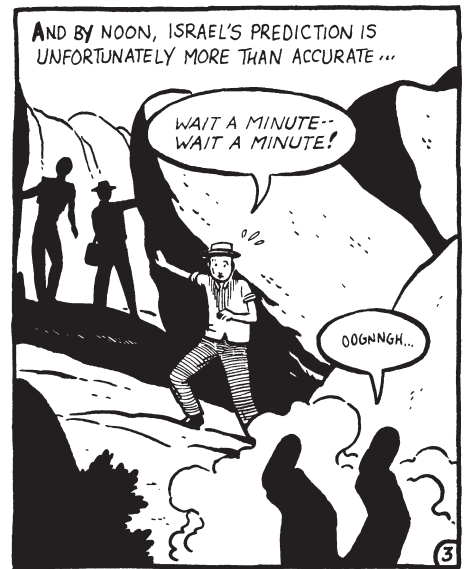
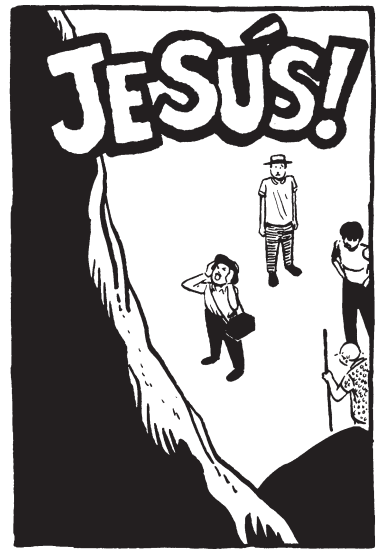
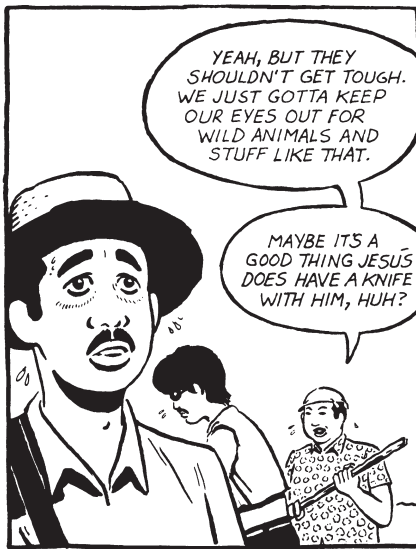
AT LEAST HE LEFT
US AN EASY ENOUGH
TRAIL TO FOLLOW...

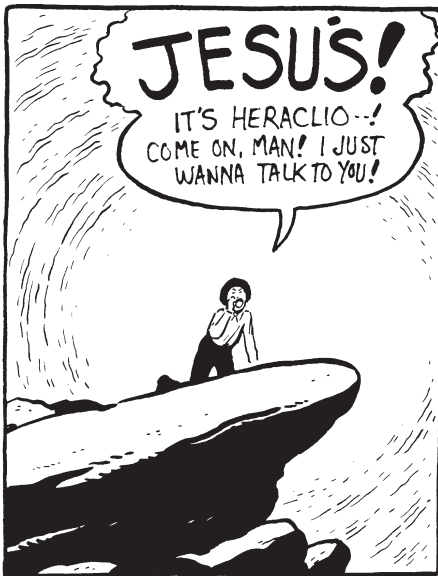
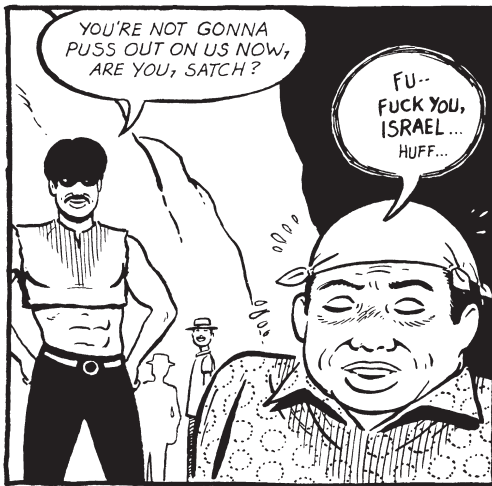
OH YEAH, IT'S GONNA BE
A BREEZE SEARCHING FOR
HIM IN THOSE MOUNTAINS...!

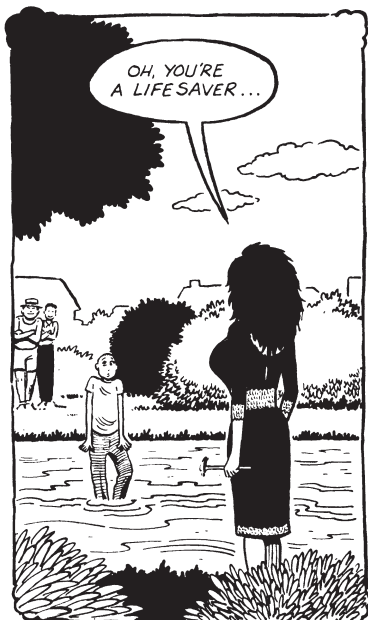
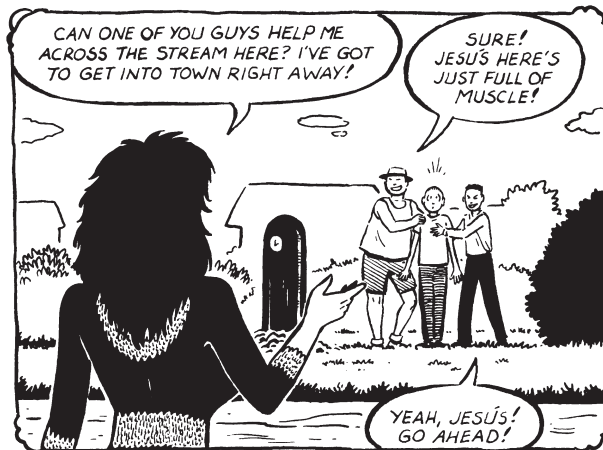
WHY'D HE DO
IT, VICENTE?
WHY'D JESUS--
DO IT.

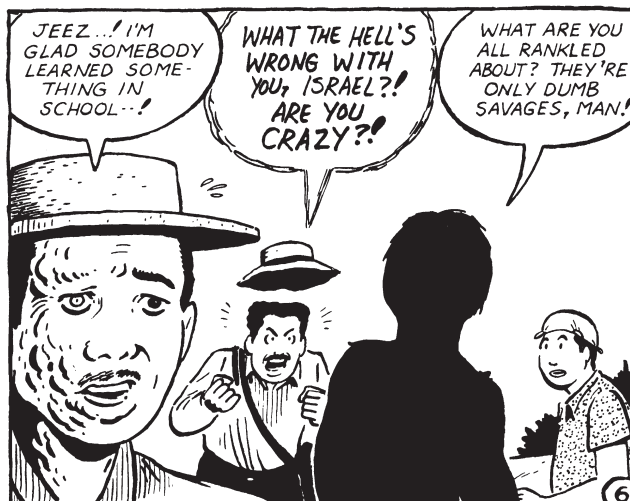


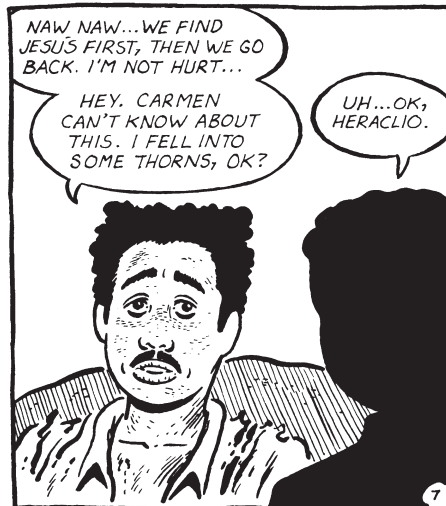
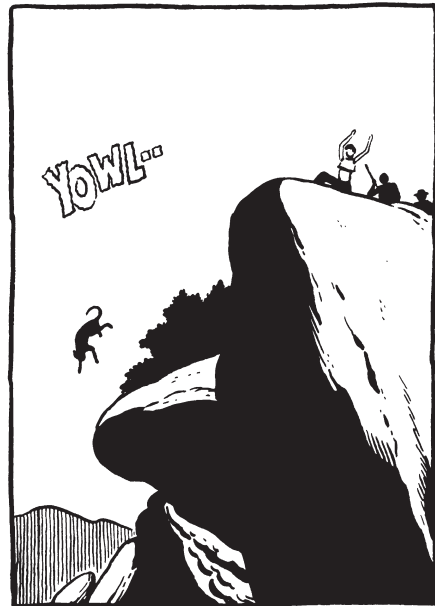












..THUS, THEIR QUEST CONTINUES, MORE OR LESS, WITH A FEW MINOR DISTRACTIONS HERE AND THERE ...

E.G.: SATCH SWOONS AGAIN AND MEETS UP WITH SOME THORNS OF HIS OWN...

NOT SO FAST!



VICENTE SAMPLES SOME SPRING WATER AND SLOWS DOWN THE EXPEDITION AS NATURE CALLS... AGAIN... AND AGAIN... AND AGAIN...

ARGH...



SHORTLY AFTERWARDS, ISRAEL LOSES HIS FOOTING AND WINDS UP UNDER HIS OWN ROCKSLIDE...

HAR..

HAR..

HAR!



BUT DESPITE SUCH DISPIRITING SETBACKS (AND OTHERS), THE BOYS NONETHELESS PERSEVERE ...

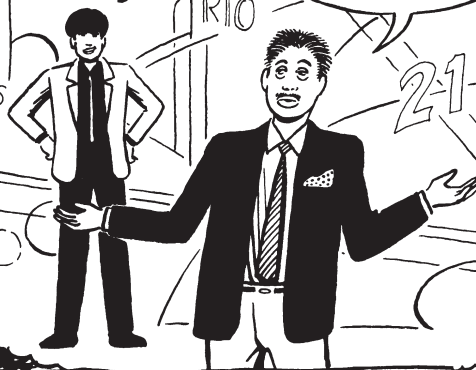
JESUS!



SO YOU'RE GONNA DO IT. YOU'RE GONNA MARRY LAURA.

HEY, MAN. I GOT HER PREGNANT, RIGHT? I'M GONNA MARRY HER.

GIRLS GIRLS



SHE'S A FUCKING BALL-BUSTER, MAN! HASN'T SHE EVER HEARD OF ABORTION? I'LL BET SHE GOT PREGNANT ON PURPOSE, JESUS! YOU CATHOLICS...

FUCK YOU, ISRAEL! WE BOTH WANT THE BABY. YOU DON'T CARE ABOUT NOBODY! JUST YOU AND YOUR DICK!

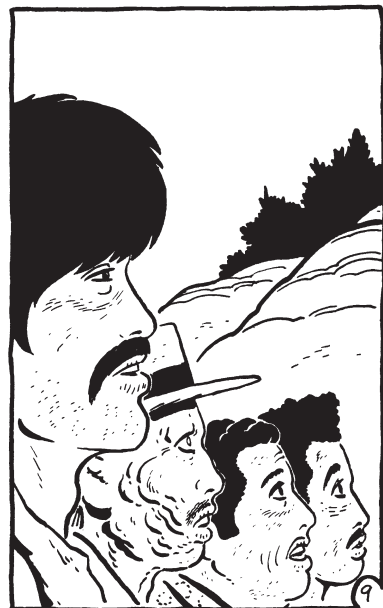
ZU-ZU

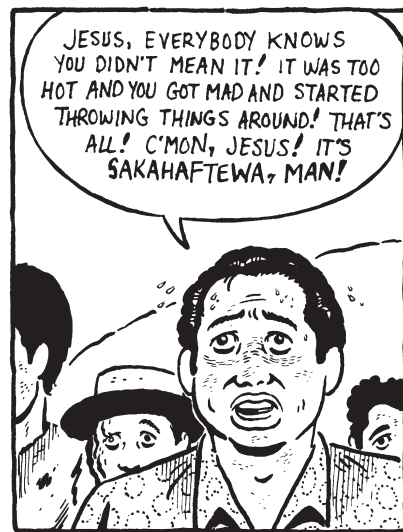


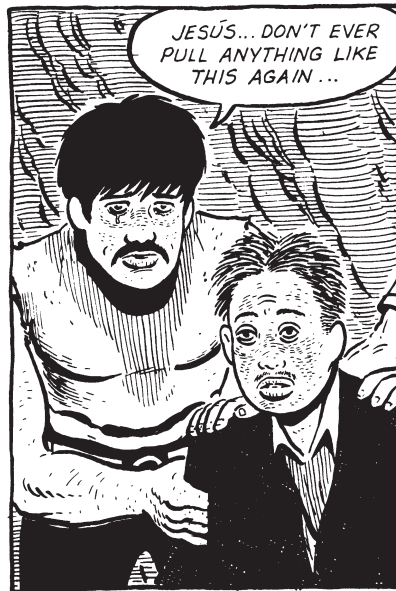
MARRYING THE BITCH WON'T HELP THE BRAT NONE, FOOL! SHIT, YOU AND LAURA DON'T EVEN GET ALONG! ALWAYS ARGUING...!

I'M NOT LISTENING...! WHEEEEE--OOOOO ATTATTATTATTA--RRRRRRRR









STARTED LIKE ANY OTHER FIGHT, Y'KNOW...
LAURA AND I WERE AT THE MARKET THAT DAY...
AND LUBA WAS THERE, RIGHT..?

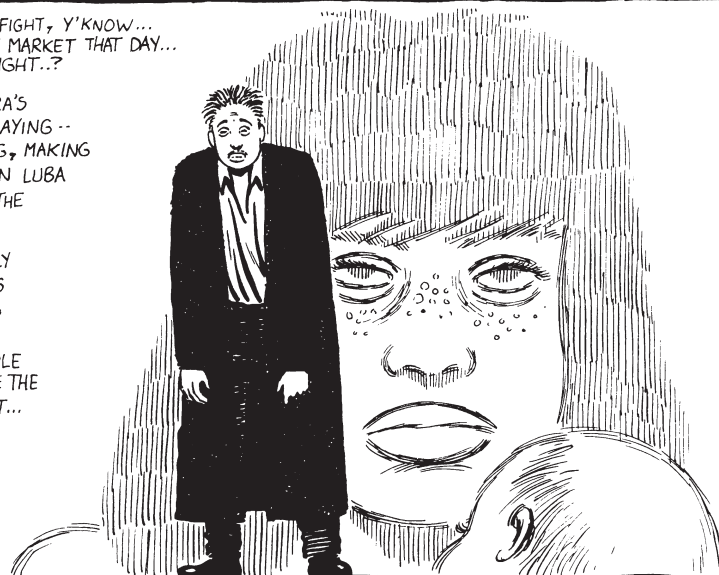
WE GET HOME AND LAURA'S
ALL PISSED OFF, SHE'S SAYING --
SAYING I WAS DROOLING, MAKING
AN ASS OF MYSELF WHEN LUBA
BENT OVER TO INSPECT THE
CHILIS...

I MEAN, FUCK, I WAS ONLY
LOOKING, Y'KNOW? IT'S
NOT LIKE I WAS FUCKING
HER, RIGHT?

WHY IS IT FOR SOME PEOPLE
LOOKING MAY AS WELL BE THE
SAME AS FUCKING? SHIT...

I DON'T KNOW...

OK... SO WE GET
HOME, RIGHT..?

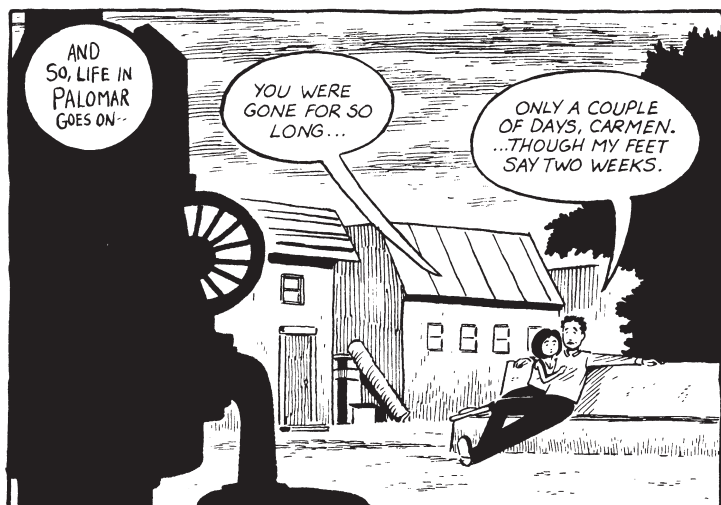


AAHH...WE START AT
EACH OTHER, HOLLERING
AND HOLLERING AND IT'S
GETTING LOUDER AND IT'S
GETTING HOTTER AND
LOUDER AND HOTTER AND--

NEXT THING I KNOW
SHE'S SCREAMING, 'YOU
KILLED MY BABY, YOU'RE
A MONSTER...!' AND I
LOOK AND THE KID'S ON
THE GROUND... NOT
MOVING...

I-I JUST WANTED TO DIE...

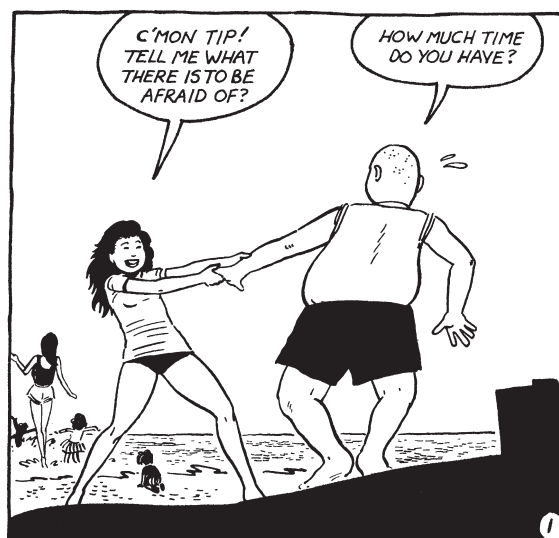
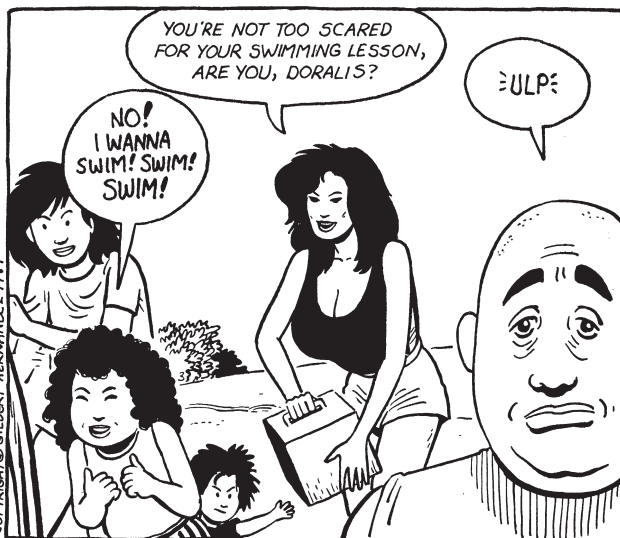
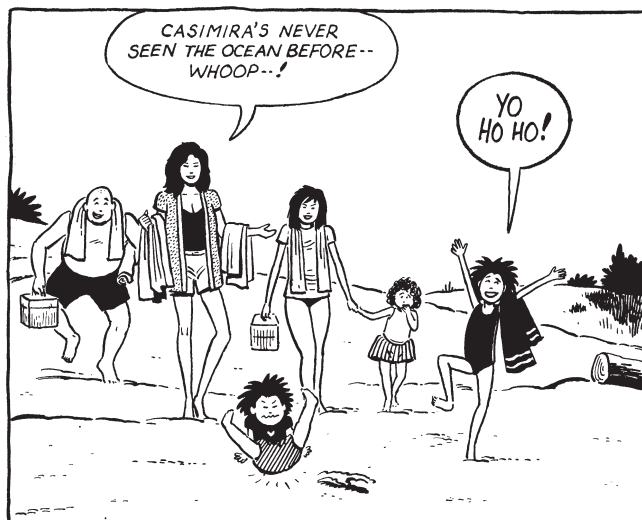
DON'T REMEMBER MUCH
AFTER THAT... NOT 'TILL I
HEARD ISRAEL YELLING AT
ME LIKE ALWAYS...

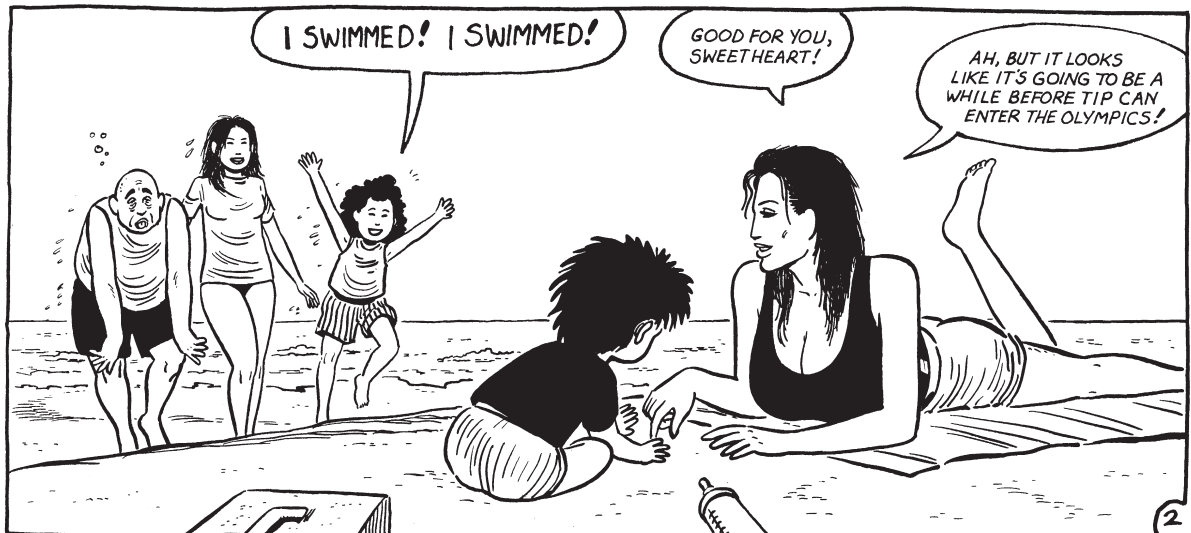
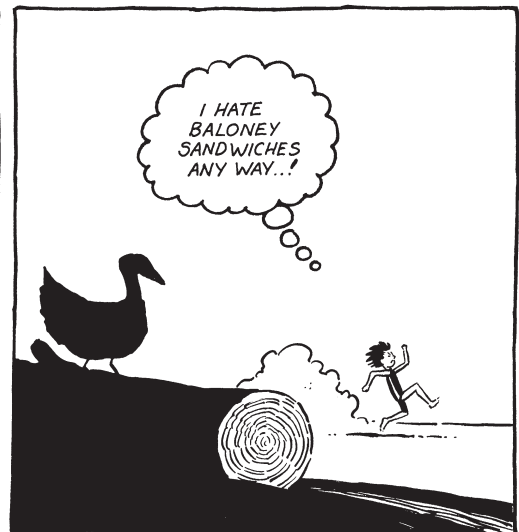
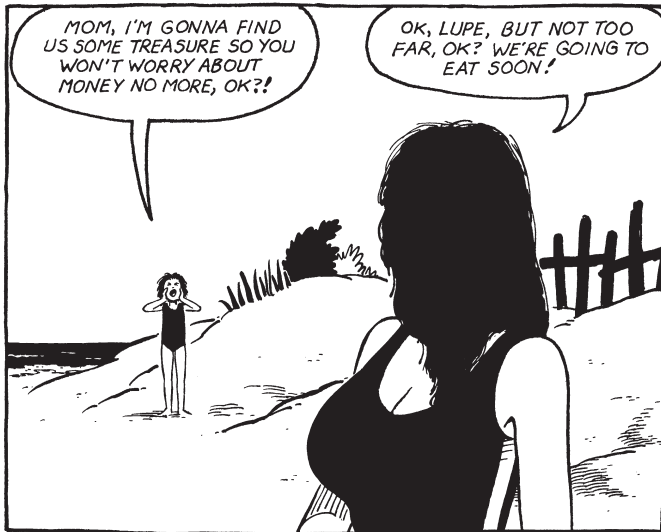
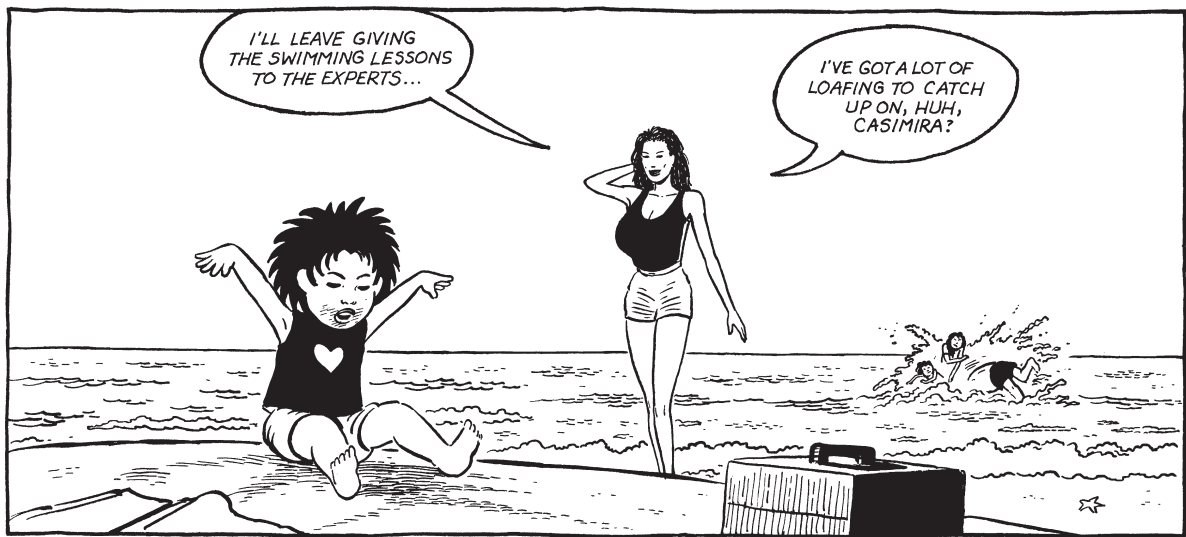


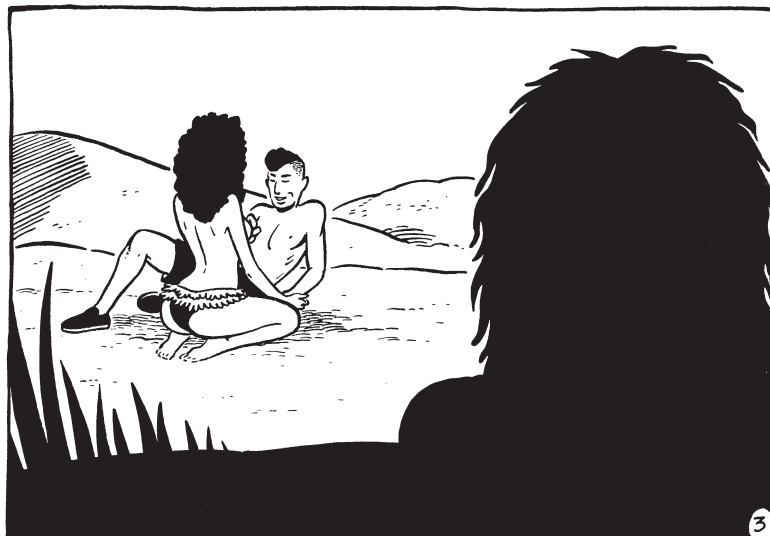
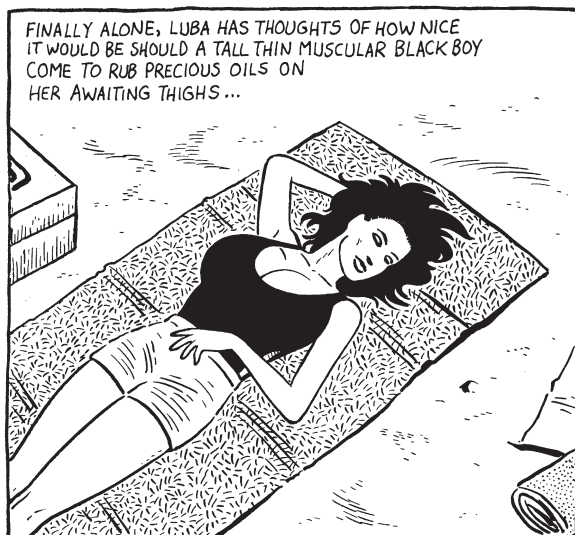
ON ISIDRO'S BEACH

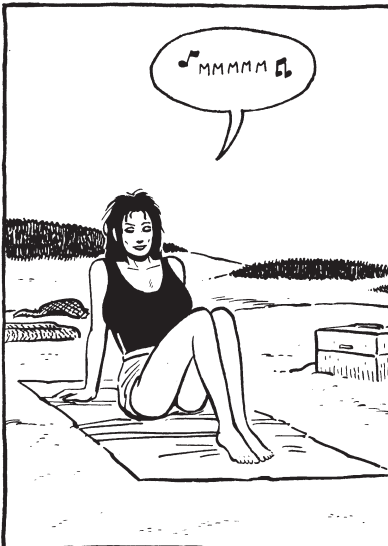
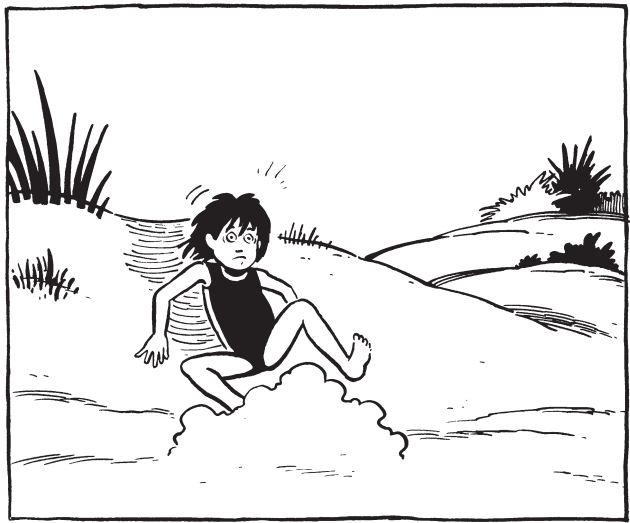


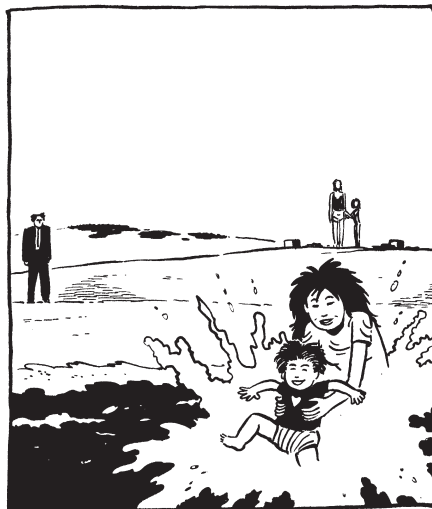
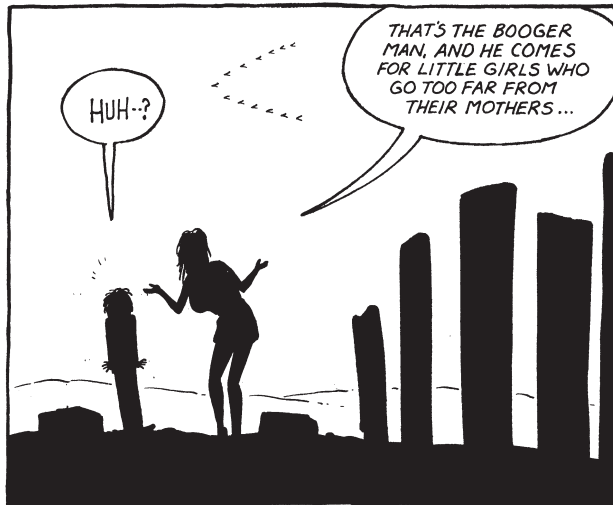
by
BETO
WRITTEN
LATE 83-
FINISHED
EARLY 84-

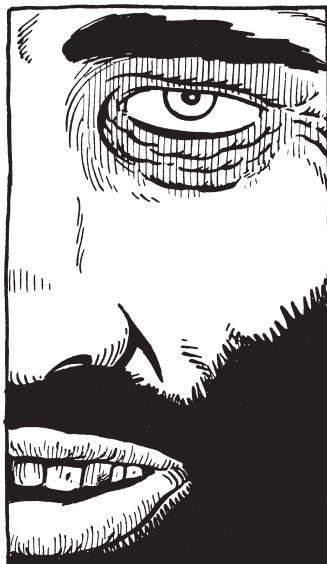
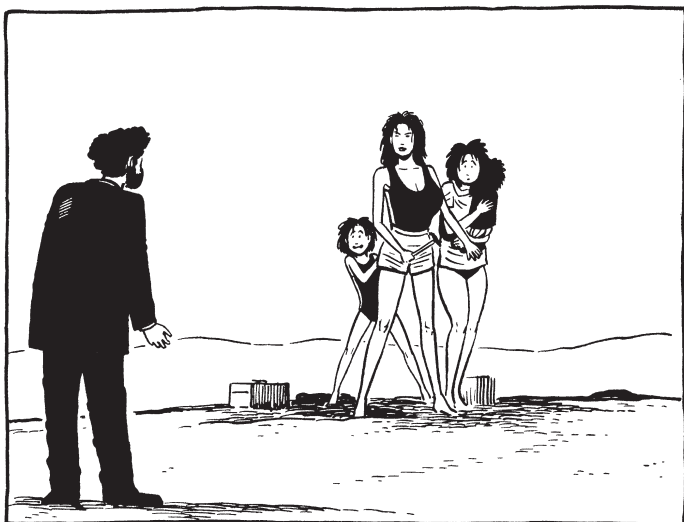


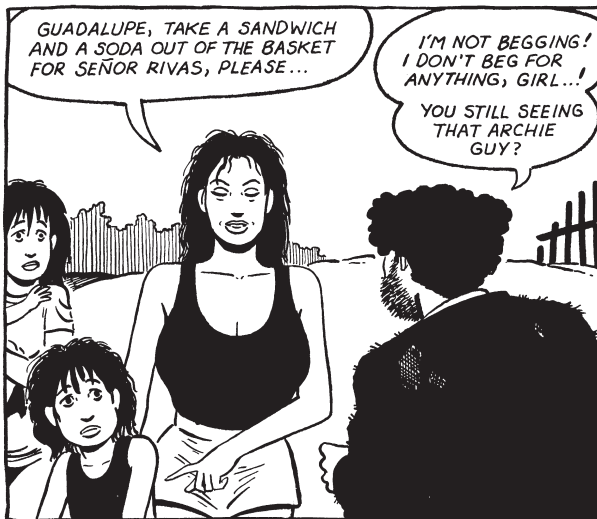












GUADALUPE, TAKE A SANDWICH AND A SODA OUT OF THE BASKET FOR SEÑOR RIVAS, PLEASE...

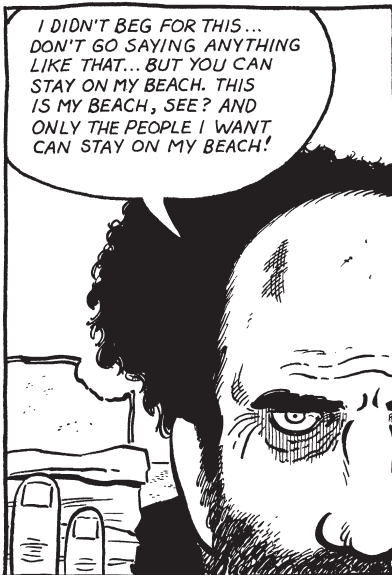
I'M NOT BEGGING! I DON'T BEG FOR ANYTHING, GIRL...! YOU STILL SEEING THAT ARCHIE GUY?



YES...EH, AS A MATTER OF FACT, HE'LL BE COMING AROUND THE DUNE ANY SECOND NOW, ISIDRO.

I ALWAYS THOUGHT YOU WERE TOO GOOD FOR HIM...

BALONEY. TCH.



I DIDN'T BEG FOR THIS... DON'T GO SAYING ANYTHING LIKE THAT... BUT YOU CAN STAY ON MY BEACH. THIS IS MY BEACH, SEE? AND ONLY THE PEOPLE I WANT CAN STAY ON MY BEACH!



THANK YOU THEN, ISIDRO...

HMMMM...

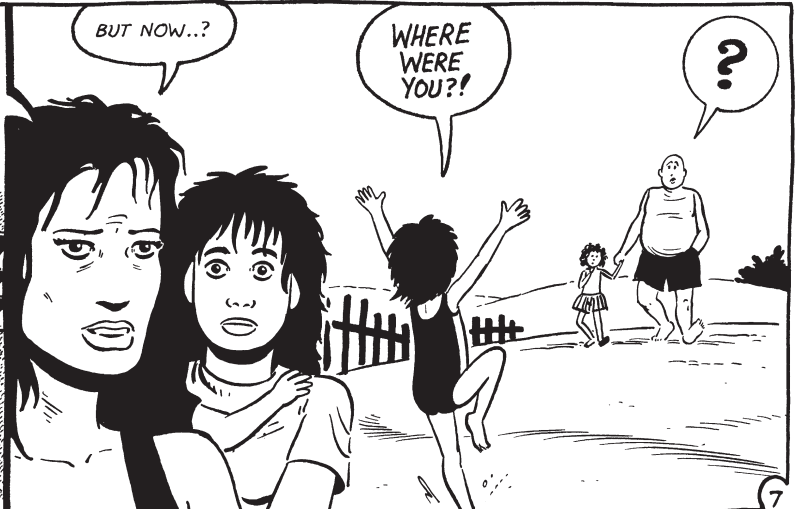


YOU KNOW THAT GUY, MOM?

I USED TO...



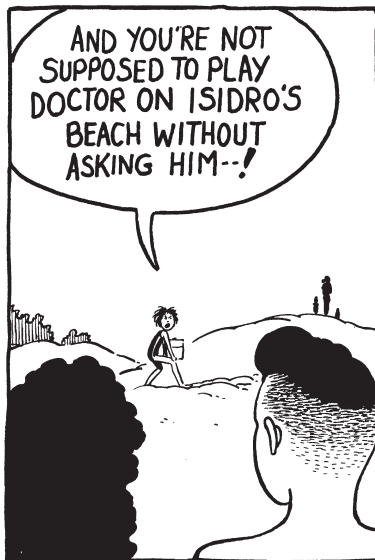
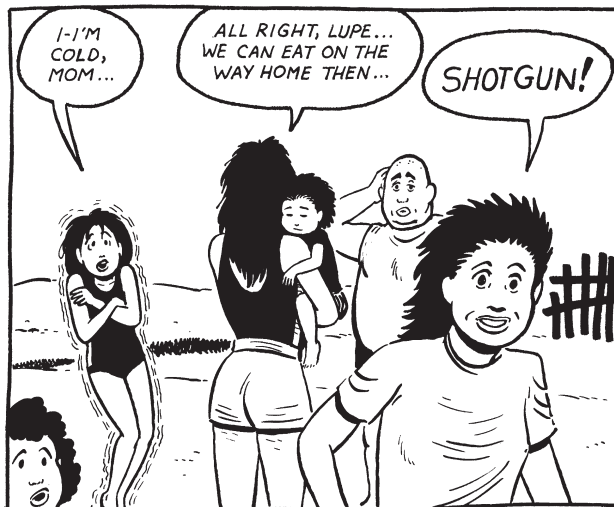
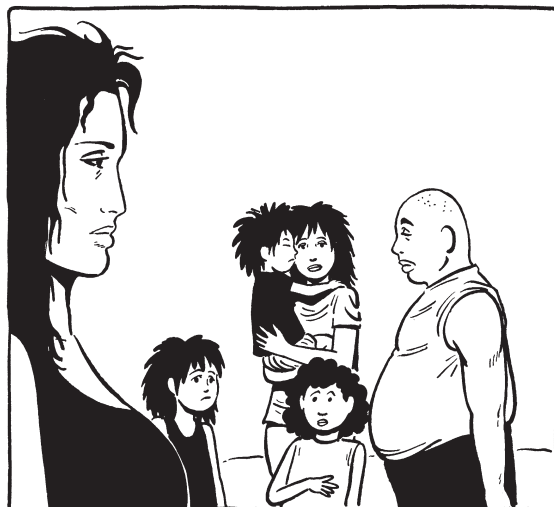
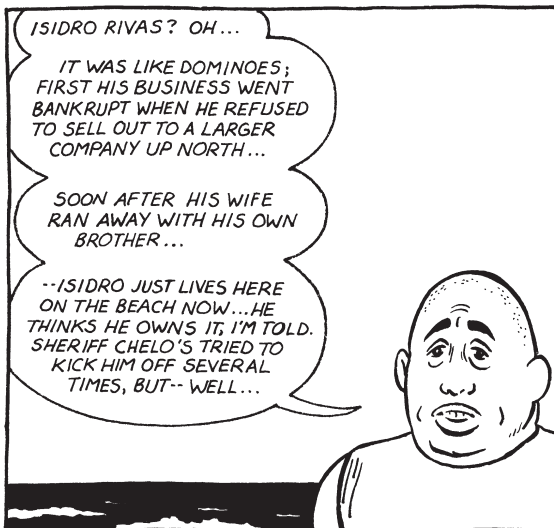
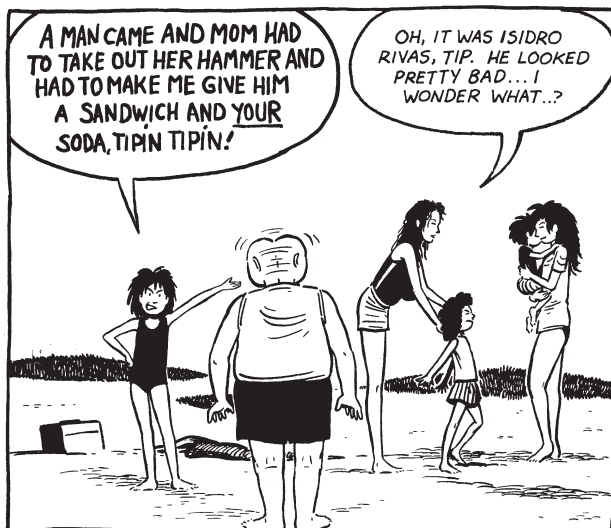
I SAW HIM NOT ONE YEAR AGO THE OWNER OF A FISH MARKET THAT DID GREAT BUSINESS. HE WAS MARRIED TO A GIRL WHO LOOKED LIKE A VERY YOUNG PATRICIA NEAL...EVERYBODY THOUGHT THEY WERE THE HAPPIEST COUPLE ALIVE...



BUT NOW...?

WHERE WERE YOU?!

?



heartbreak Soup

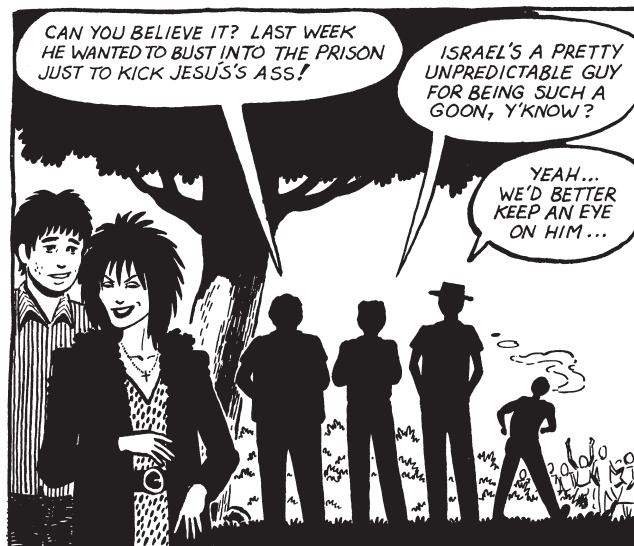
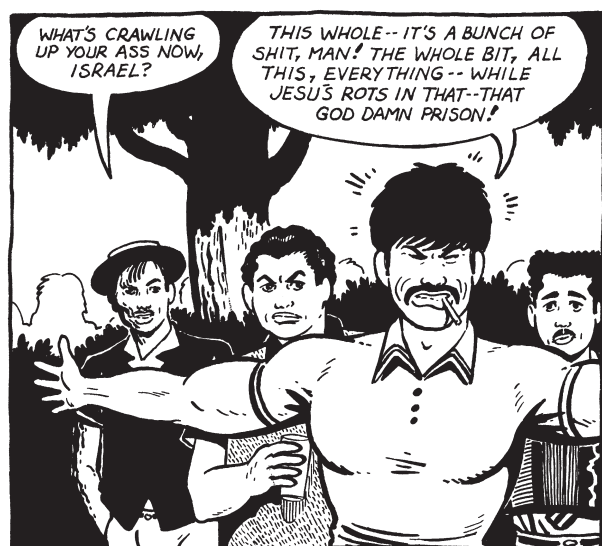
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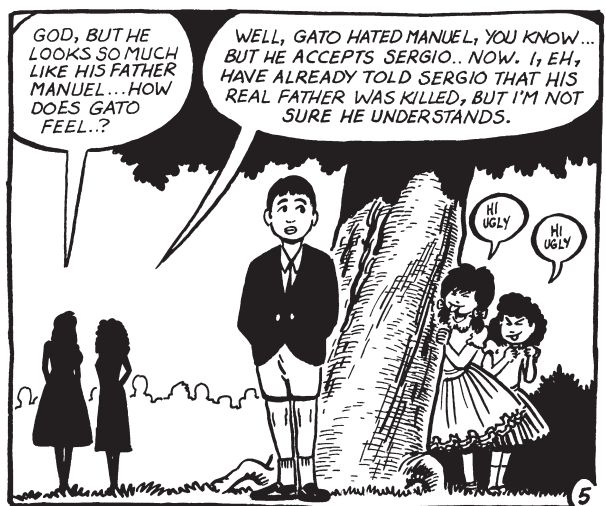


HERACLIO: AIR-AWK'LED / TONANTZIN: TOE-NONT-ZEEN





VICENTE: VEE-SEN-TEH / ISRAEL: EES-RYE-EL / JESU'S: HEH-SOOS / MARICELA: MARR-EE-SELL-AH



GUADALUPE: GWAH-DAH-LOO-PEH / DEMONA (DEMON GIRL): DE-MOE-NYUH / PIPO: PEE-POE / SERGIO: SAIR-HEE-O / GATO: GAH-TOE / MANUEL: MON-WELL

LUBA'S THOUGHTS DRIFT BACK TEN YEARS OR SO TO THE DAYS WHEN MANUEL AND PIPO WERE LOVERS...

FOR THE RECORD, PIPO WAS INDEED IN LOVE; BUT MANUEL, WELL, YOU KNOW HOW THESE SELF-APPOINTED CASANOVAS ARE...

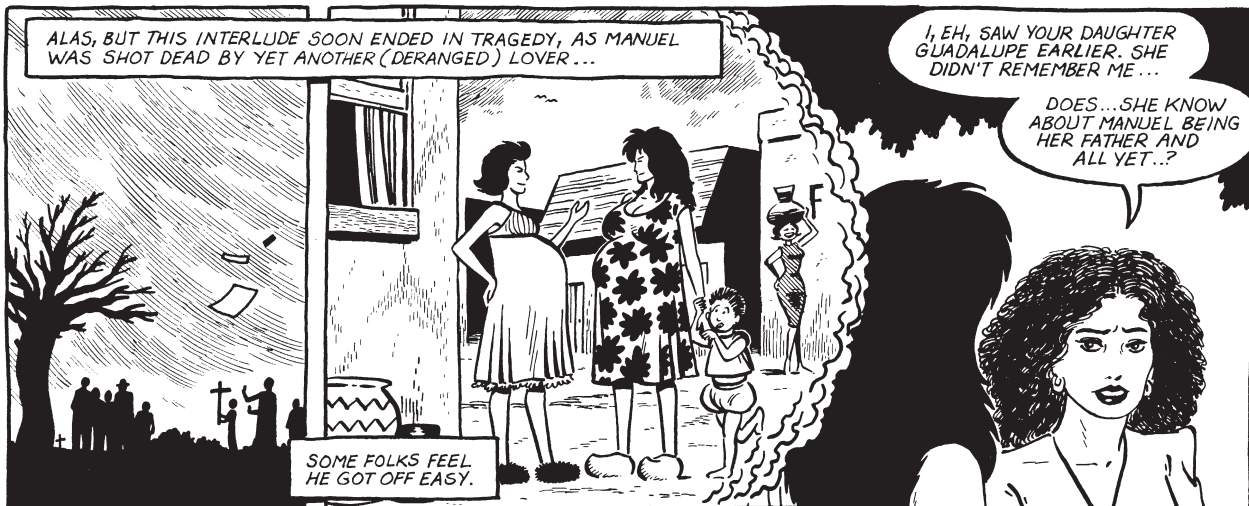
AS IT GOES, LUBA HERSELF TOOK A FANCY TO MANUEL, AND HE WAS ONLY TOO HAPPY TO RECIPROCATE (PIPO FOUND OUT LATER)...



ALAS, BUT THIS INTERLUDE SOON ENDED IN TRAGEDY, AS MANUEL WAS SHOT DEAD BY YET ANOTHER (DERANGED) LOVER...

I, EH, SAW YOUR DAUGHTER GUADALUPE EARLIER. SHE DIDN'T REMEMBER ME...

DOES...SHE KNOW ABOUT MANUEL BEING HER FATHER AND ALL YET...?



SOME FOLKS FEEL HE GOT OFF EASY.

NO. NONE OF MY DAUGHTERS KNOW WHO THEIR FATHERS ARE...AND I'M KEEPING IT THAT WAY.

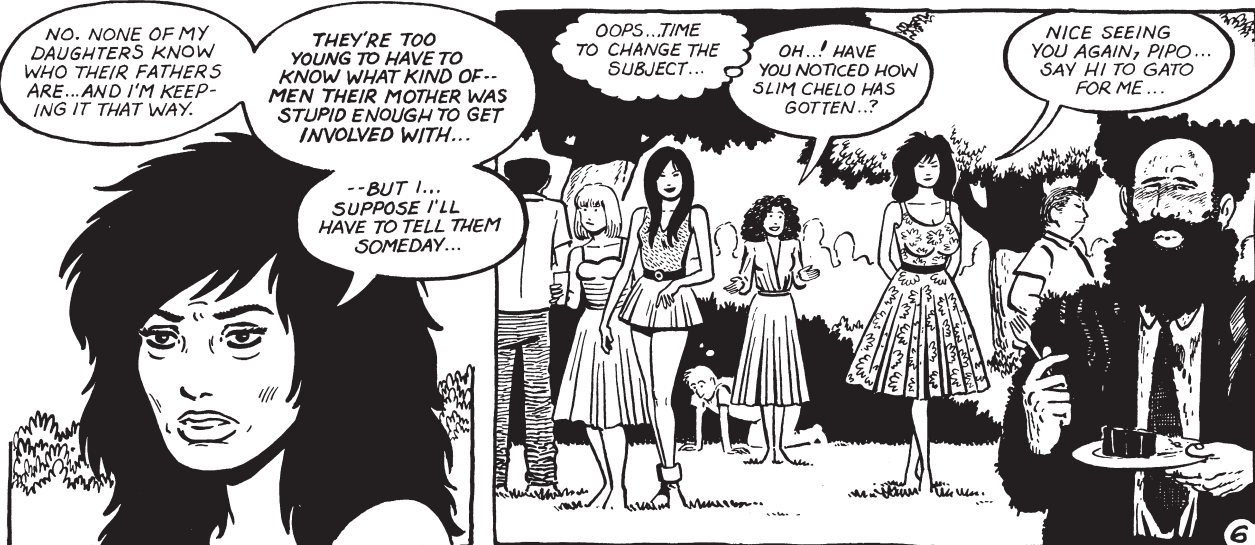
THEY'RE TOO YOUNG TO HAVE TO KNOW WHAT KIND OF--MEN THEIR MOTHER WAS STUPID ENOUGH TO GET INVOLVED WITH...

--BUT I... SUPPOSE I'LL HAVE TO TELL THEM SOMEDAY...

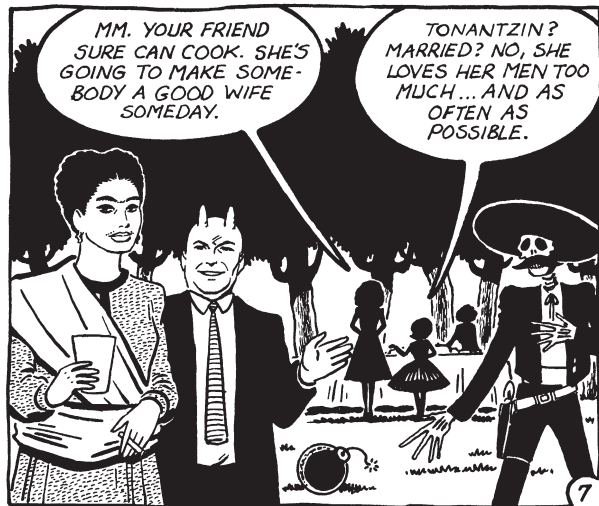
OOPS...TIME TO CHANGE THE SUBJECT...

OH...! HAVE YOU NOTICED HOW SLIM CHELO HAS GOTTEN...?

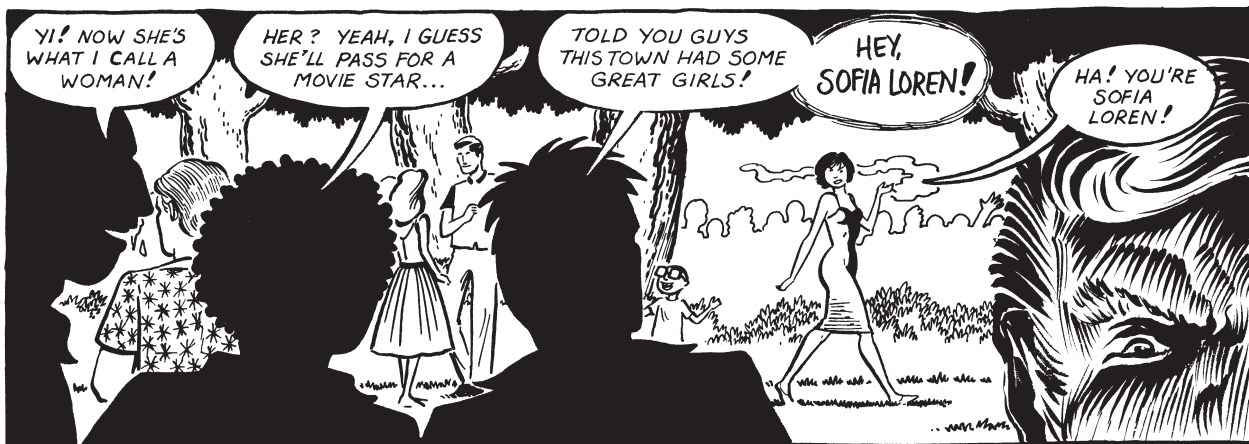
NICE SEEING YOU AGAIN, PIPO... SAY HI TO GATO FOR ME...



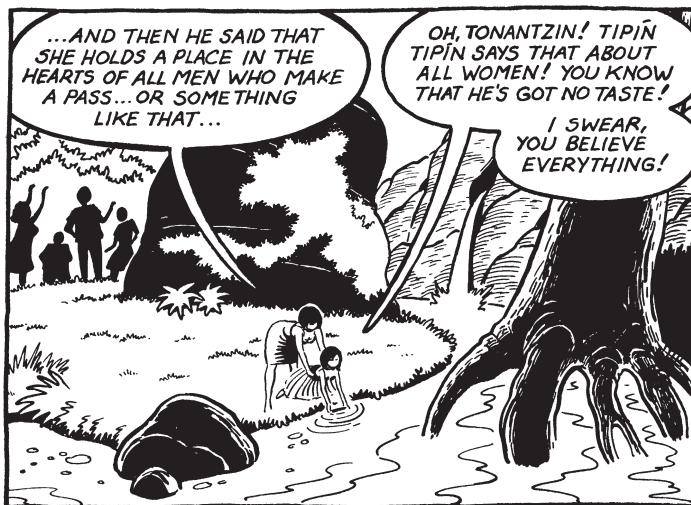
CHELO: CHELL-O



LUCIA: LOO-SEE-AH / AUGUSTÍN: OW-GOOSE-TEEN / BABOSAS (SLUGS): BAH-BOE-SAHS



TIPÍN TIPÍN: TEE-PEEN' TEE-PEEN'





LOOKS LIKE YOUR SISTER'S LANDED A NEW BOYFRIEND, DIANA.

IF YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT TONANTZIN, YOU MEAN A NEW VICTIM.



NOW LISTEN HERE, BORRO! I'M HERE TO HAVE A GOOD TIME, SO I DON'T WANT TO HEAR THAT YOU'RE GETTING OUT OF LINE, OR I'LL--

RELAX, CHELO, RELAX. I USED TO BE SHERIFF OF THIS TOWN. I GOT A CLEAN-CUT IMAGE TO UPHOLD...



WELL, JUST DON'T YOU FORGET THAT I'M THE SHERIFF NOW!

CAN IT, YOU HOG. I'M HERE ON UNFINISHED BUSINESS...



--AND TODAY, BUSINESS IS A PLEASURE.

OH, CASIMIRA, GIVE ME A BREAK! YOU KNOW I'VE ALWAYS BEEN BAD AT THIS.

DA--
DA--
DA--!



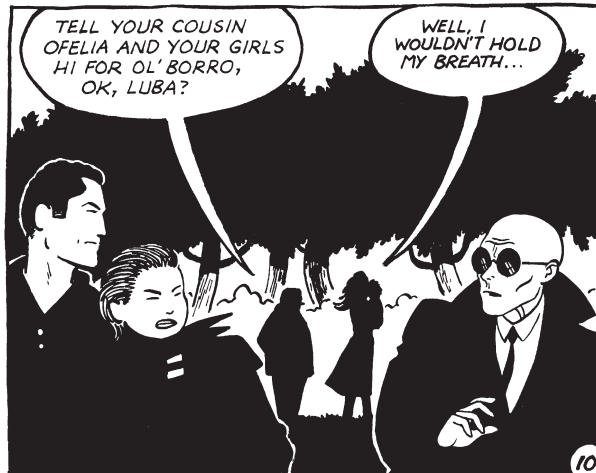
HELLO, LUBA. AND YET ANOTHER OF YOUR CHILDREN AS BEAUTIFUL AS HER MOTHER ...

OH... THANKS, BORRO. YOU LOOK AT LEAST HALF-HUMAN YOURSELF...



WHY HASN'T ANYBODY KILLED YOU TO PUT US OUT OF OUR MISERY?

WHY DON'T YOU JUST ADMIT THAT YOU'D LOVE TO YANK MY CHOAD?

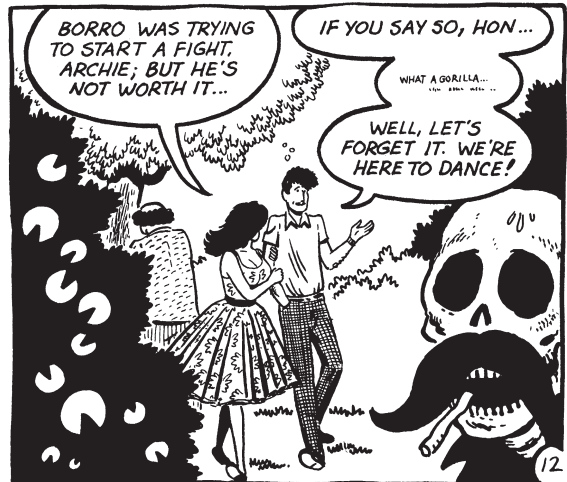


TELL YOUR COUSIN OFELIA AND YOUR GIRLS HI FOR OL' BORRO, OK, LUBA?

WELL, I WOULDN'T HOLD MY BREATH...

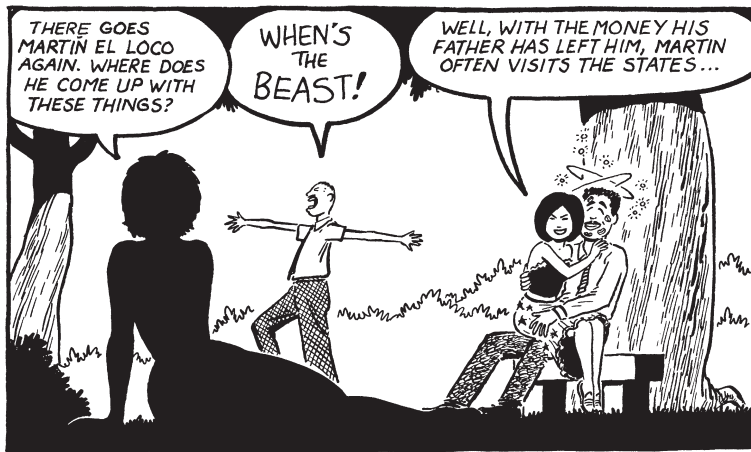
BORRO: BOAR-O / CASIMIRA: CASS-EE-MEER-AH











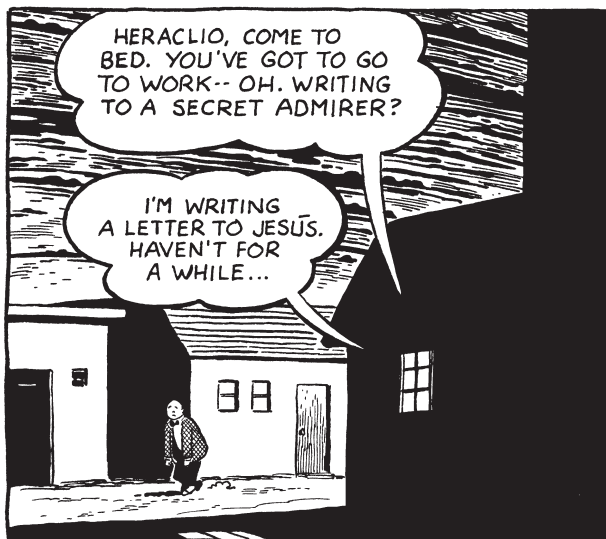
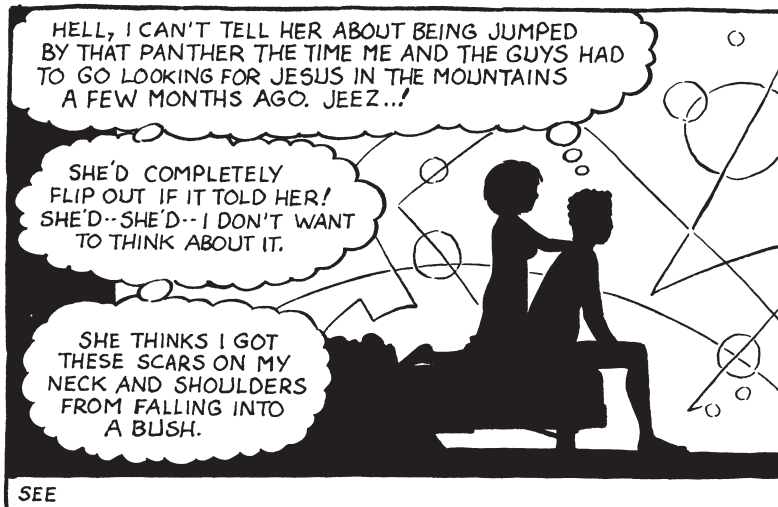
MARTIN EL LOCO-MAR-TEEN EL LOE-COE (THE CRAZY)

THE RETICENT HEART

BETO/85



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CARMEN'S LESS THAN
SUBTLE HONESTY IS SOME-
THING HERACLIO HAS LEARN-
ED TO ADMIRE IN HIS WIFE,

BUT...

FATE HAS SEEN FIT TO
BURDEN HERACLIO WITH
CERTAIN EXPERIENCES
HE PREFERS TO REVEAL TO
NO ONE, FOR FEAR OF
HURTING THOSE HE LOVES.

FLASHBACK: A FEW
YEARS BEFORE CARMEN
AND HERACLIO BECAME
WIFE AND HUSBAND...

**HEY
KING
DONG!**

WELL,
I WILL BE
A SON OF A
BITCH...

ALL RIGHT. WHERE'D
YOU GUYS STEAL IT?

STEAL IT? HEY,
MAN, I BOUGHT THIS
BABY CASH
MONEY!

NAW, REALLY. ISN'T THIS YOUR BOSS'S CAR,
JESÚS? I REMEMBER YOU TELLING ME 'BOUT IT--

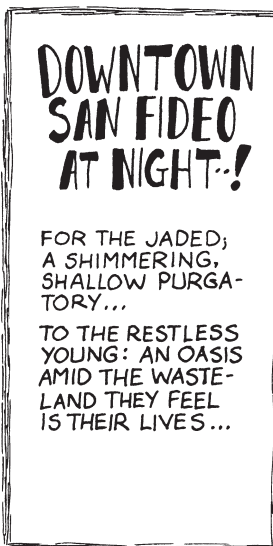
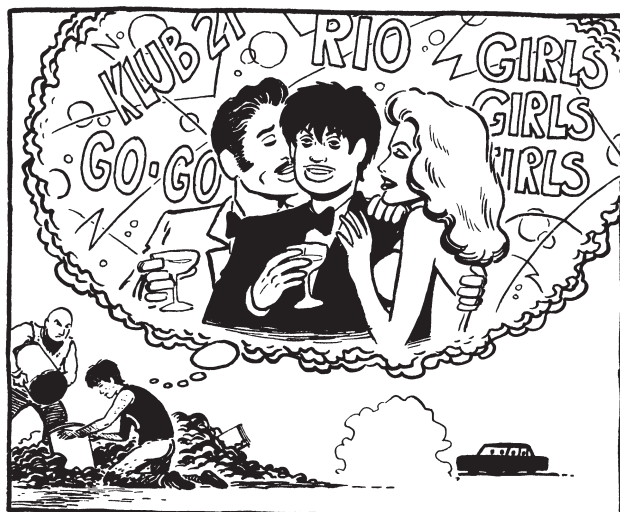
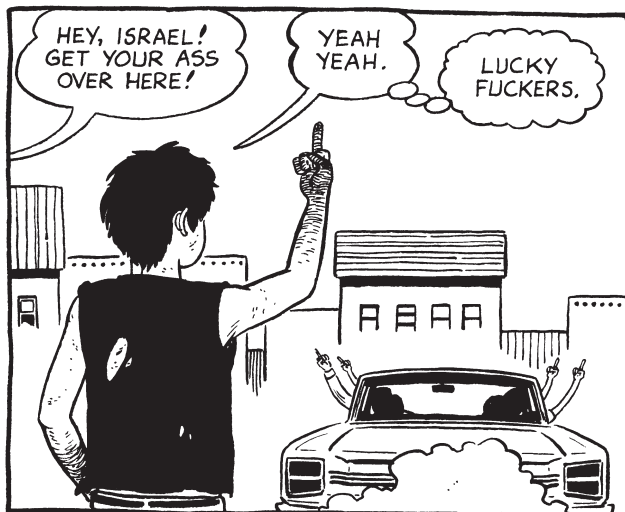
HE LET ME USE IT
OVERNIGHT. C'MON,
ISRAEL. WE'RE GOING TO
SAN FIDEO. BABES,
MAN.

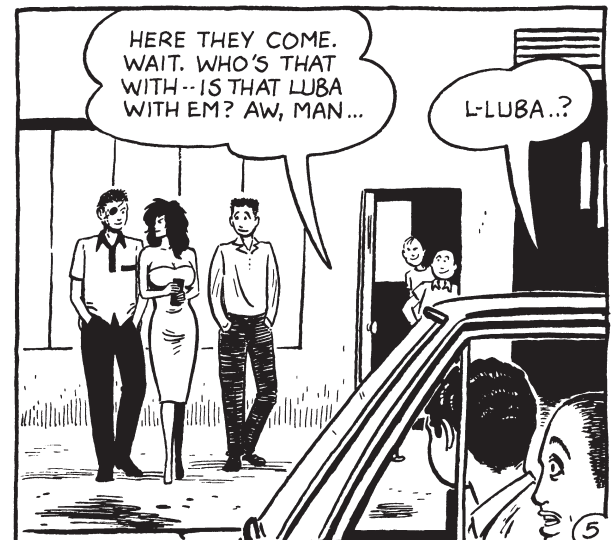
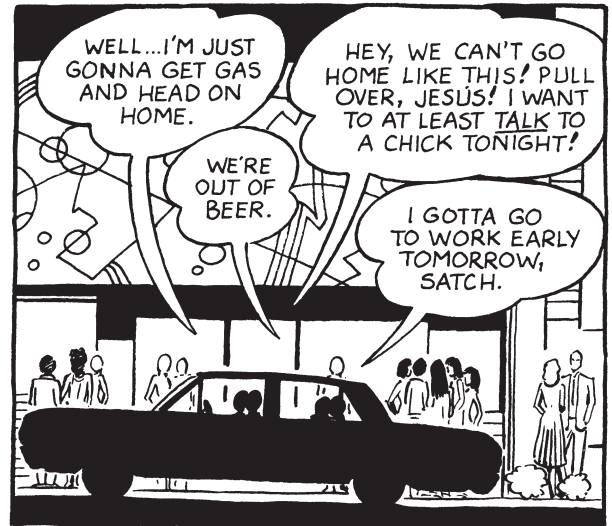
SHIT, I WISH. I'LL BE FINISHED HERE BY MIDNIGHT
IF I'M LUCKY. LOOK AT YOU GUYS! DRINKIN' BEERS IN
BROAD DAYLIGHT! WOTTA WORLD!

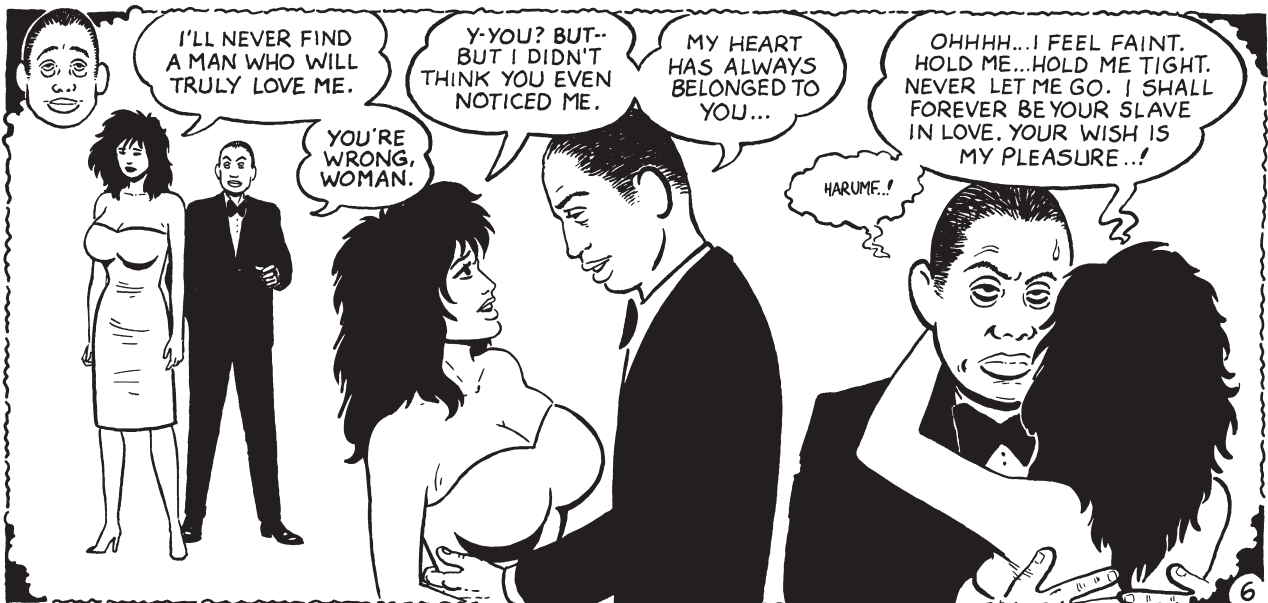
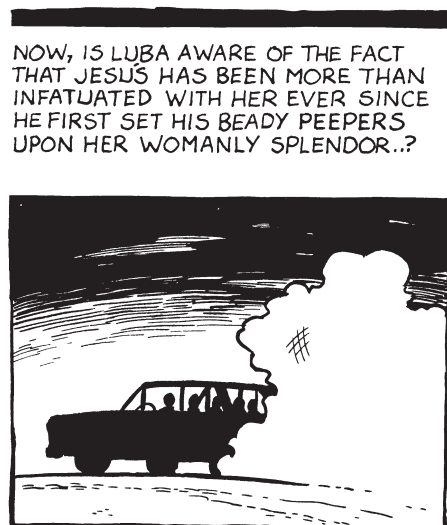
HEY SATCH, VICENTE SAYS
YOU'LL PISS YOUR PANTS
FIRST GIRL YOU MEET!

FUK
YEH...

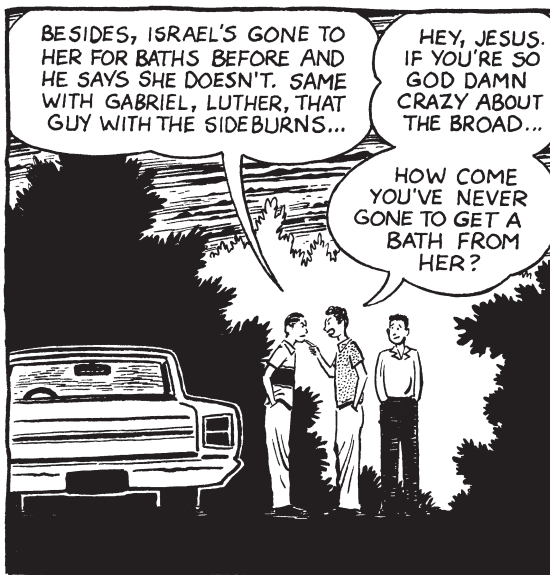
Tsch!



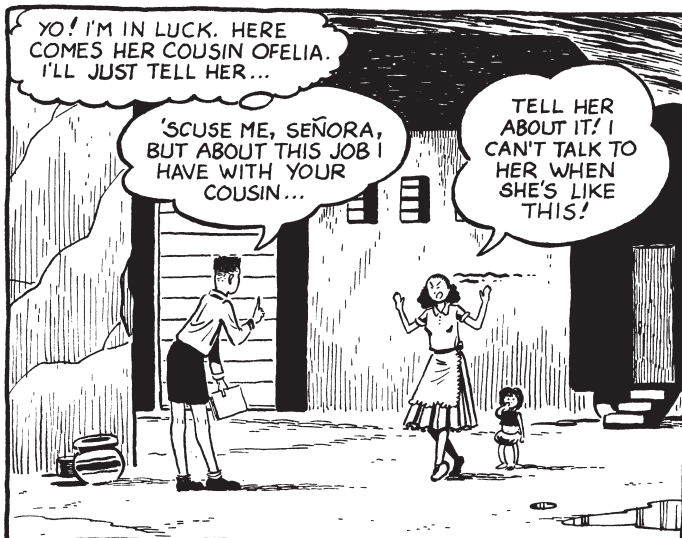
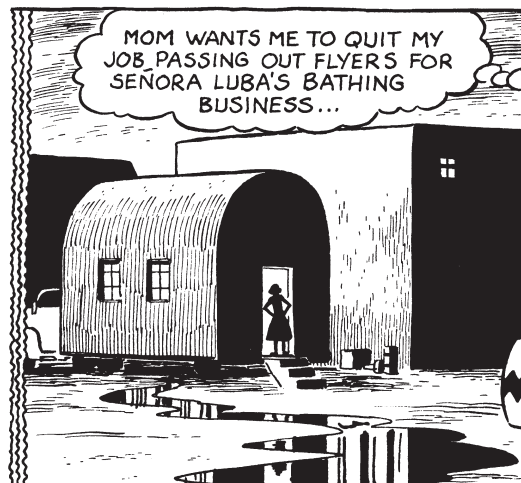
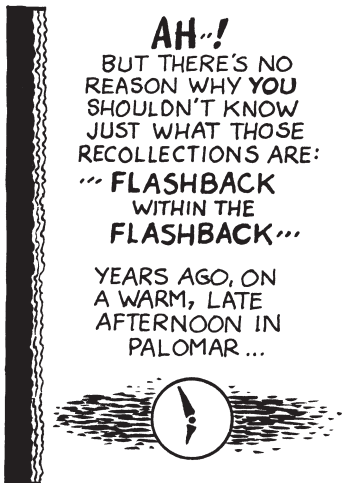








THERE WASN'T A SNOWBALLS CHANCE IN HELL HERACLIO MIGHT REVEAL TO HIS FRIENDS THE NATURE OF THE RECOLLECTIONS RUNNING THROUGH HIS MIND JUST THEN. RECOLLECTIONS THAT BEGAN THE MOMENT THEY PICKED UP LUBA FROM THE GAS STATION.





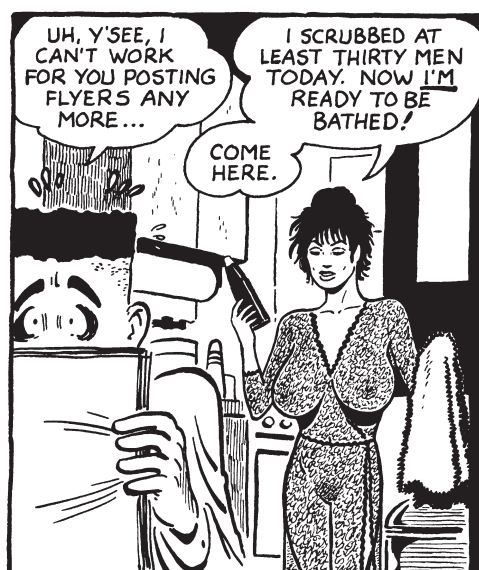
ITOC
TOC!

GET IN
HERE.



SEÑORA
LUBA? SEE,
I, UH...

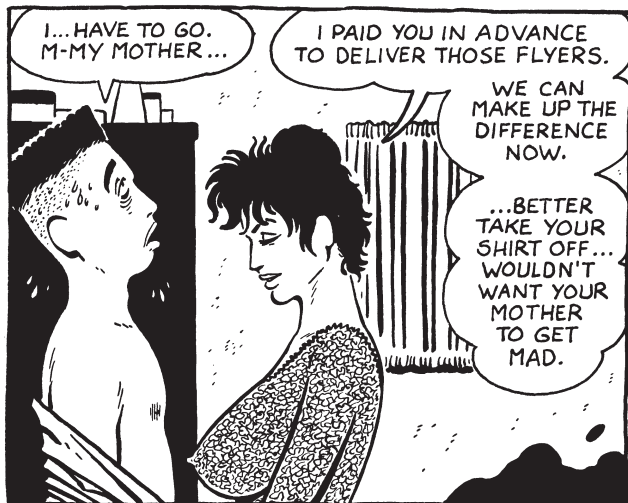
GOD, BUT THIS
BATHING BUSINESS
IS A GODDAMN PAIN
IN THE ASS.



UH, Y'SEE, I
CAN'T WORK
FOR YOU POSTING
FLYERS ANY
MORE...

I SCRUBBED AT
LEAST THIRTY MEN
TODAY. NOW I'M
READY TO BE
BATHED!

COME
HERE.



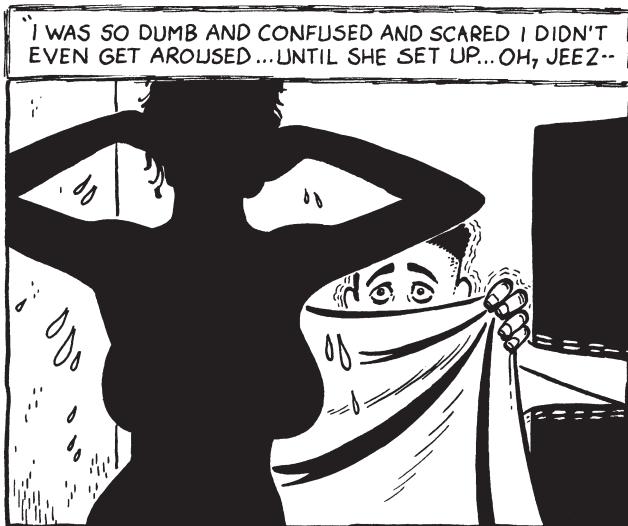
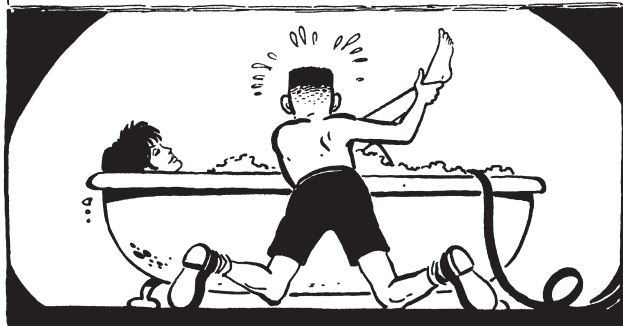
I...HAVE TO GO.
M-MY MOTHER...

I PAID YOU IN ADVANCE
TO DELIVER THOSE FLYERS.

WE CAN
MAKE UP THE
DIFFERENCE
NOW.

...BETTER
TAKE YOUR
SHIRT OFF...
WOULDN'T
WANT YOUR
MOTHER TO
GET
MAD.

WHAT HAPPENED NEXT, IN HERACLIO'S OWN WORDS:
...SEEMS LIKE A DREAM TO ME NOW. IT'S A MIRACLE
THAT I DIDN'T WET MY PANTS. AS I SCRUBBED AWAY,
LUBA LETHARGICALLY BEGAN COMPLAINING ABOUT HOW
THERE WERE NO DECENT MEN IN PALOMAR, NO PHONES,
HOW SHE WANTED TO OPEN A MOVIE THEATER 'CAUSE
NOBODY IN TOWN HAD EVER HEARD OF STERLING HAYDEN...

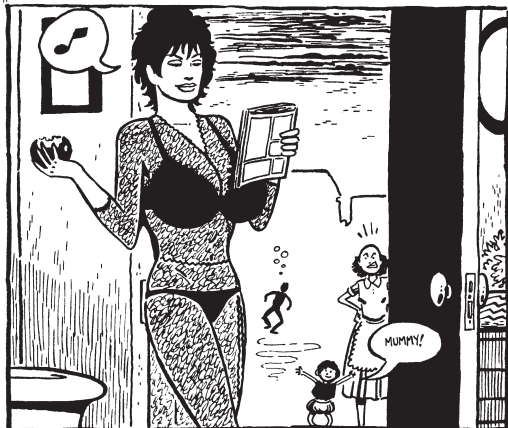


"I WAS SO DUMB AND CONFUSED AND SCARED I DIDN'T
EVEN GET AROUSED ...UNTIL SHE SET UP...OH, JEEZ--

"SHE THEN OPENED MY PANTS AND DOWN THEY SLID.
GENTLY SHE PUSHED ME DOWN ON THE SOFA AND--
WELL, IT DIDN'T LAST LONGER'N A FEW SECONDS,
BUT SHE DIDN'T SEEM TO CARE EITHER WAY. SHE
SMILED WHILE SHE HELPED ME ON WITH MY CLOTHES.



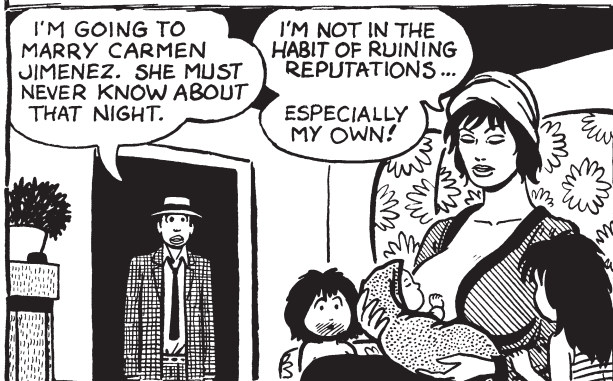
"I STAGGERED HOME WITH THE MIXED FEELINGS OF EXHILARATION AND CONFUSION NOT SETTING WELL IN MY BELLY. I LOVED THE EXPERIENCE ...AND I HATED IT.



"IN THE MANY WEEKS THAT FOLLOWED, I DEVELOPED A REALLY BIG CRUSH ON HER, NATURALLY, BUT SHE NEVER LET ME NEAR HER AGAIN. I MEAN, WE SAID HI, BUT-- WELL, I EVENTUALLY GOT OVER HER WHEN SCHOOL STARTED...



"CAN YOU UNDERSTAND WHY I'VE NEVER TOLD ANYONE? IT WOULD HAVE GOTTEN AROUND TO JESUS EVENTUALLY FOR SURE! AND CARMEN! HAVING CARMEN FIND OUT WOULD BE WORSE THAN FACING A DOZEN ATTACKING PANTHERS! NO THANKS!"

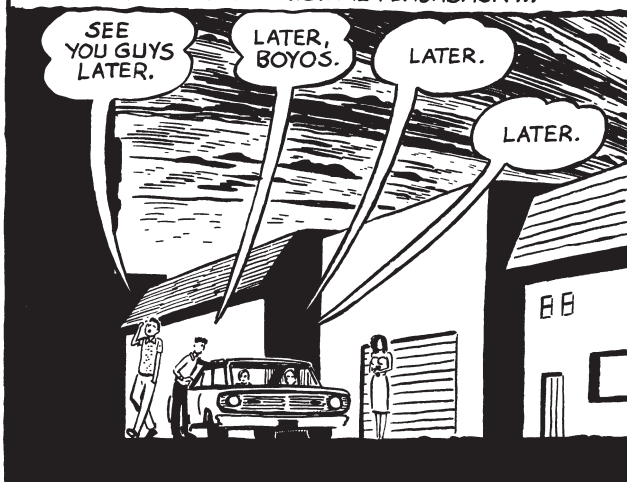


I'M GOING TO MARRY CARMEN JIMENEZ. SHE MUST NEVER KNOW ABOUT THAT NIGHT.

I'M NOT IN THE HABIT OF RUINING REPUTATIONS...

ESPECIALLY MY OWN!

NOW BACK TO OUR ORIGINAL FLASHBACK ...



SEE YOU GUYS LATER.

LATER, BOYOS.

LATER.

LATER.



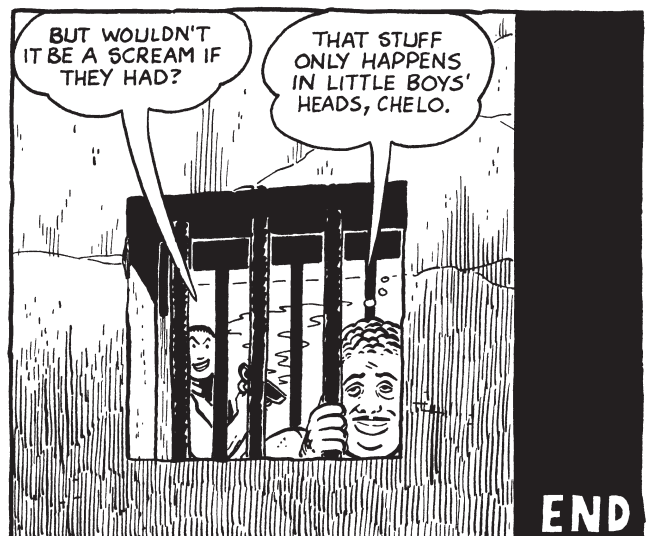
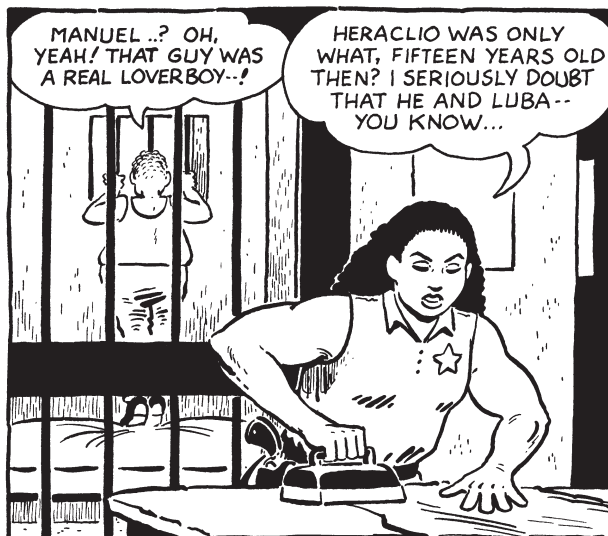
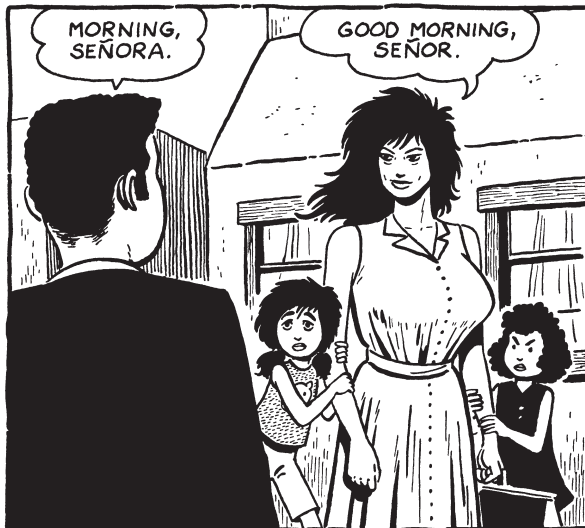
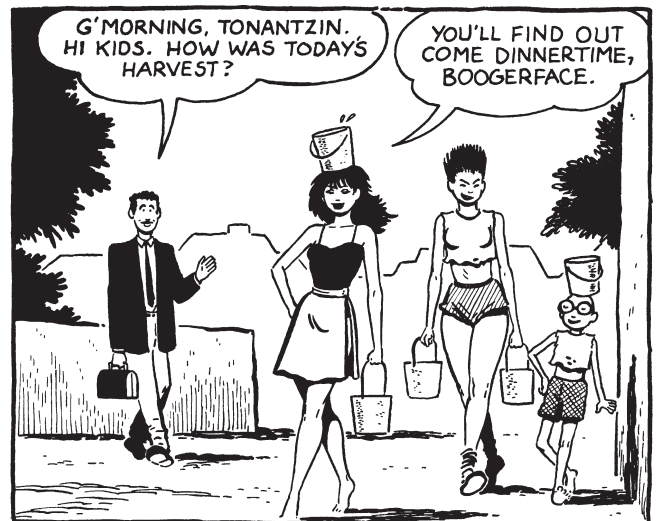
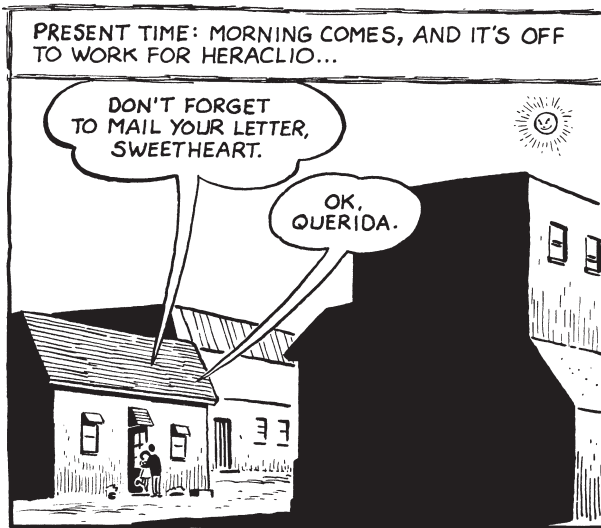
THANKS A LOT, GUY. COME BY FOR A BATH SOME-TIME, HUH?

ALL RIGHT.



SO WHEN'S THE WEDDING, JESUS?

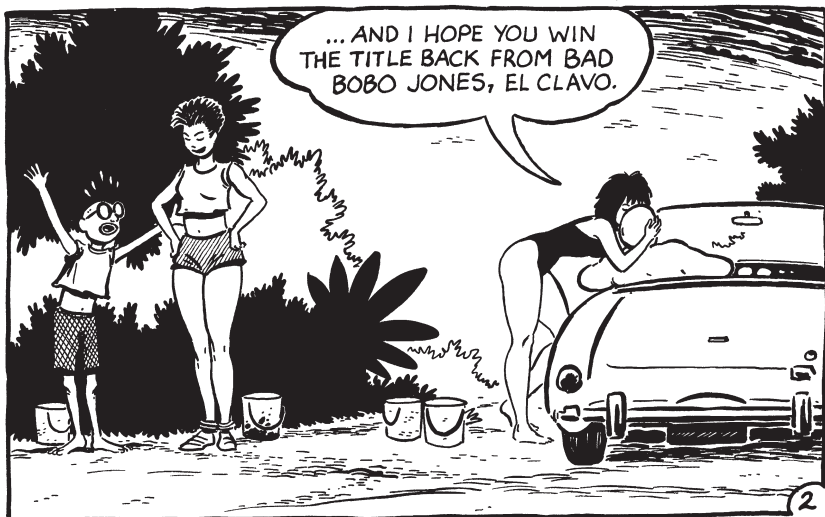
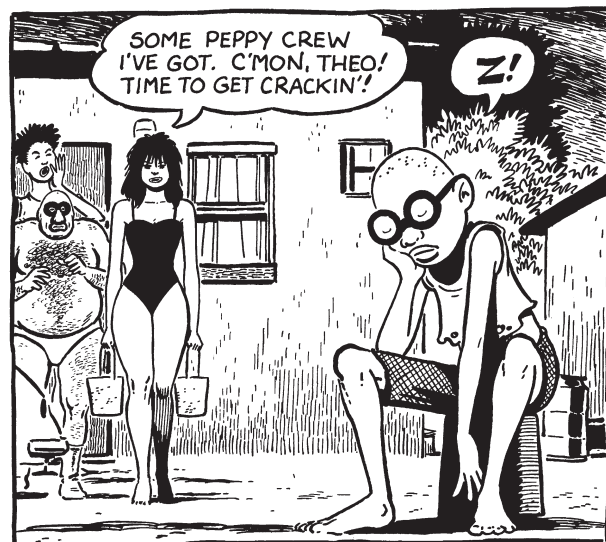
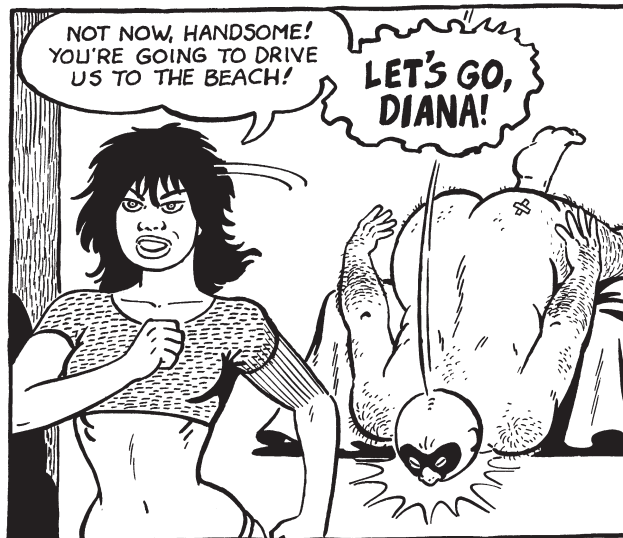
FUCK YOU.

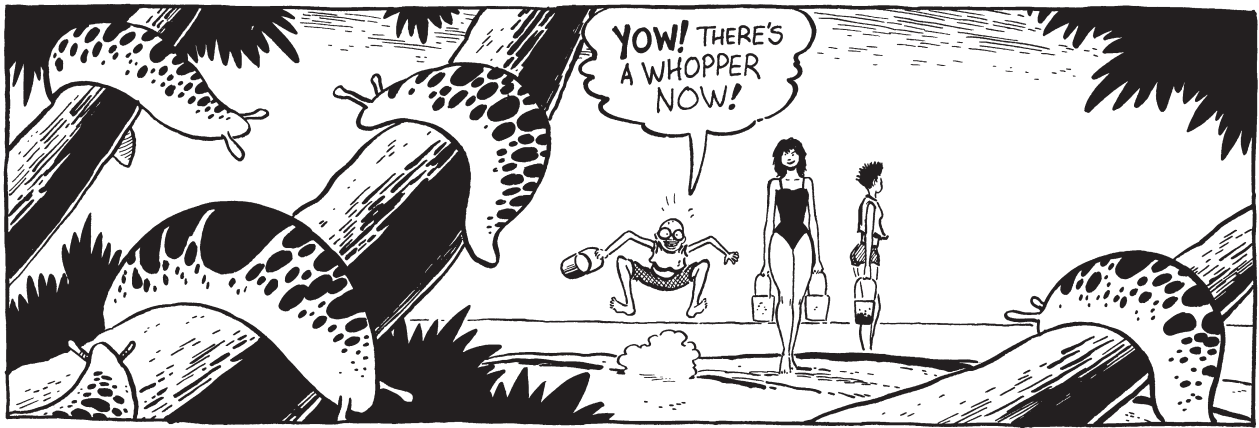


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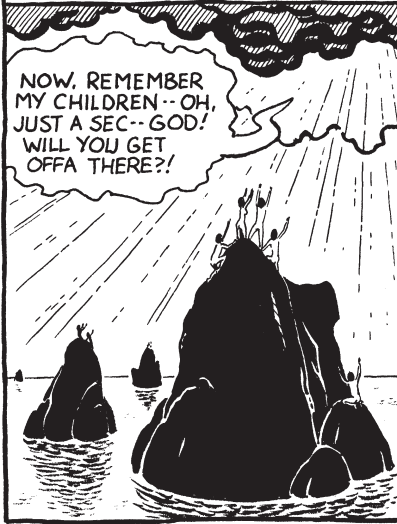




WHILE DIANA BECOMES POSSESSED BY A GODDESS, TONANTZIN IS ACTUALLY NAMED AFTER GOD'S OWN MOTHER, THE PROTECTRESS OF THE EARTH, AND SHARES SOME SIMILARITIES WITH HER CELESTIAL NAMESAKE...



LEGEND HAS IT THAT CENTURIES AGO WHEN GOD THREW A TANTRUM AND FLOODED THE EARTH, TONANTZIN, IN AN ACT OF BOTH DEFIANCE AND COMPASSION, BREAST-FED THE SURVIVORS WITH PULQUE...

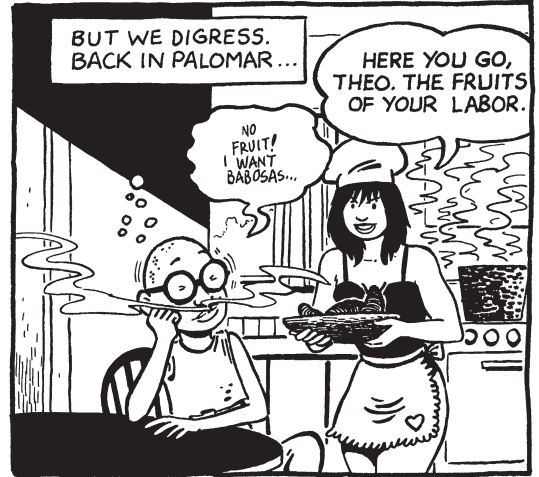


A FEW YEARS BACK OUR OWN TONANTZIN STAYED UP FOR FORTY-TWO HOURS STRAIGHT PREPARING DOZENS OF BABOSAS FOR THE HOMELESS VICTIMS OF AN EARTHQUAKE THAT STRUCK THEIR FAR AWAY VILLAGE...

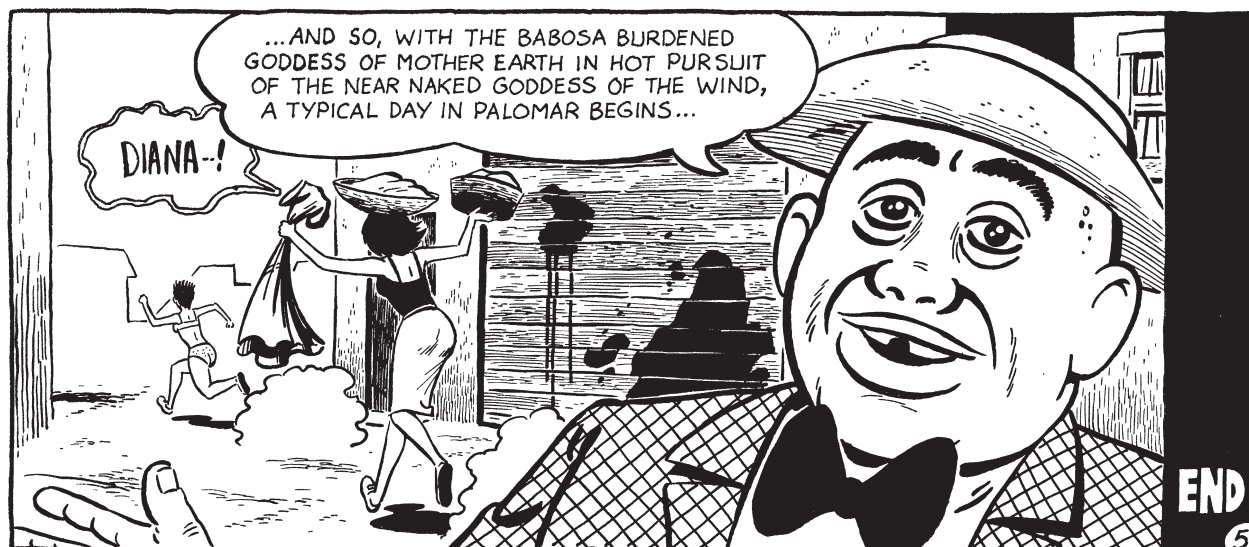
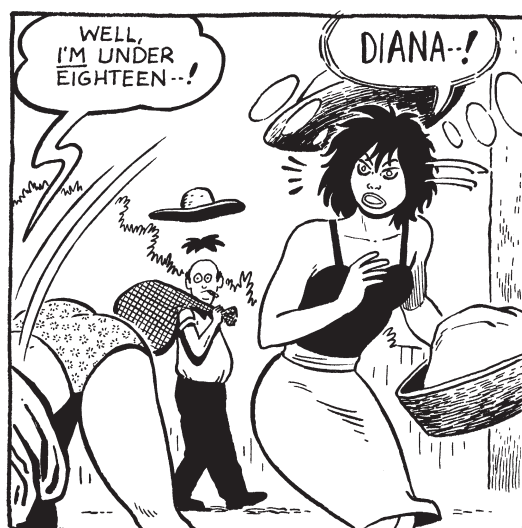
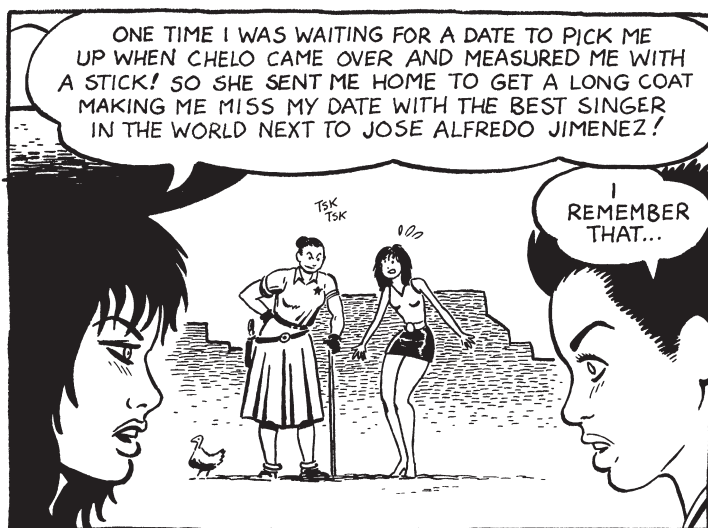
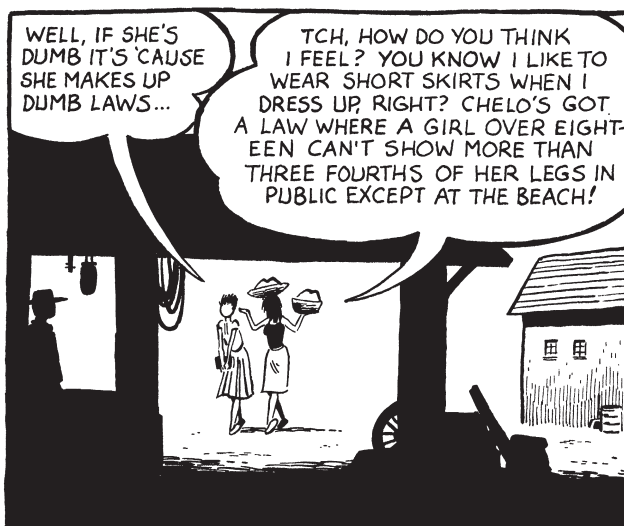
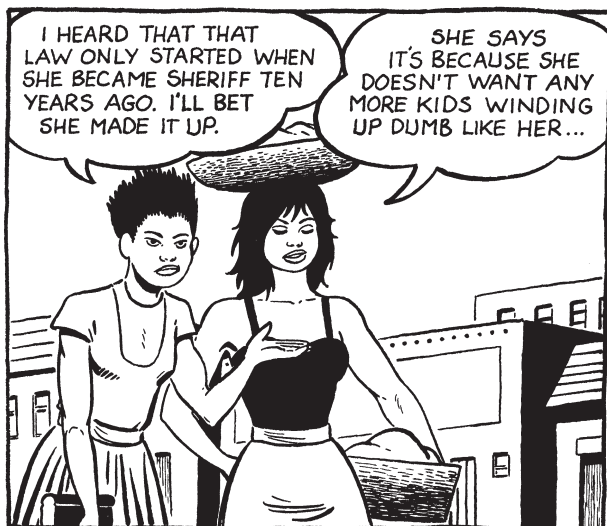


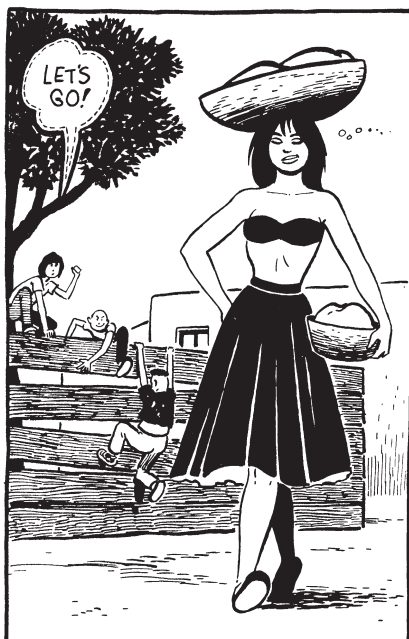
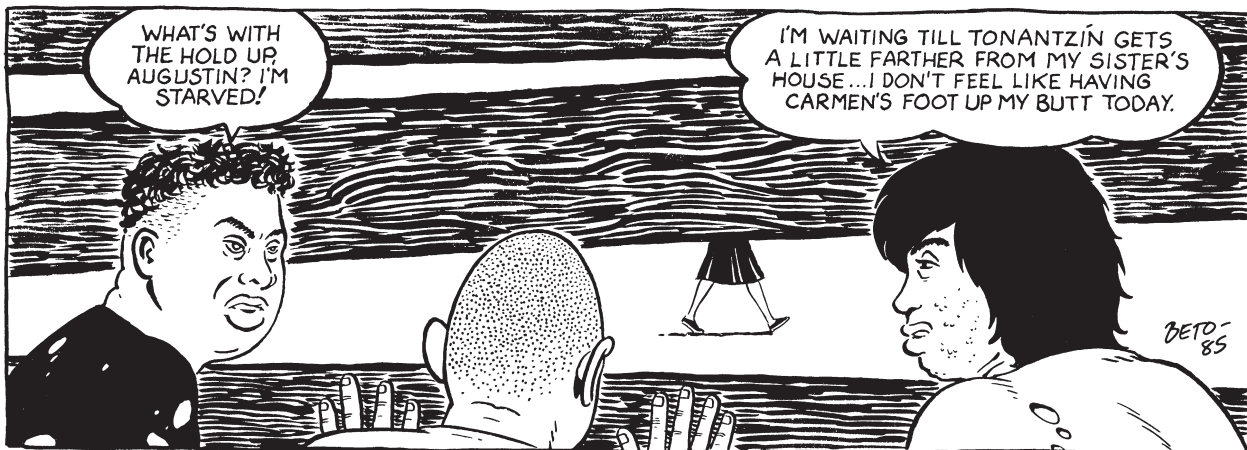
OUR TONANTZIN IS ONLY AS MORTAL AS ANYONE, OF COURSE, BUT THERE ARE THOSE FELLOWS WHOLLY CONVINCED THAT AFTER EXPERIENCING BOTH HER SPLENDID COOKING TALENTS AND SEXUAL PROWESS IN BED, SHE AND HER DIVINE NAMESAKE CAN ONLY BE ONE AND THE SAME...

--THEN THERE'S ALWAYS THE FOLKS WHO PREFER LIKENING HER TO THE DEVIL.

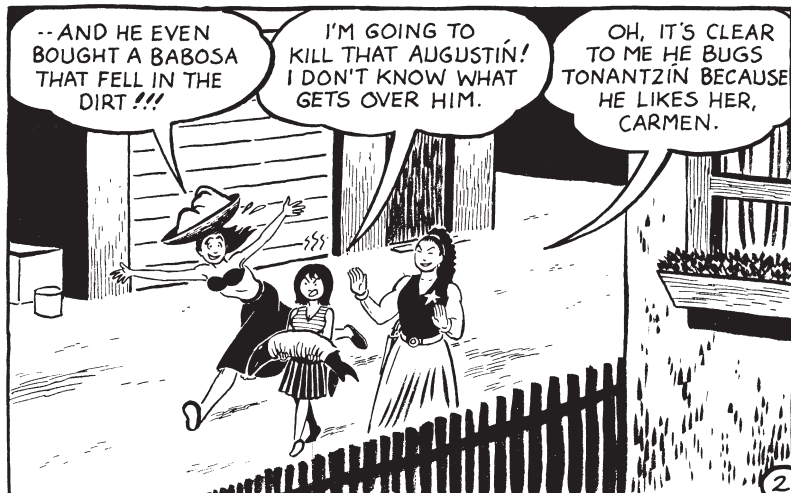
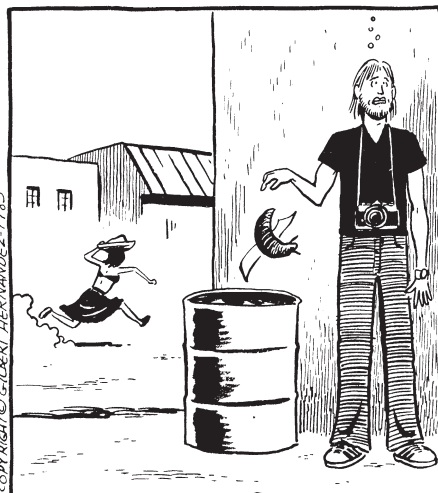


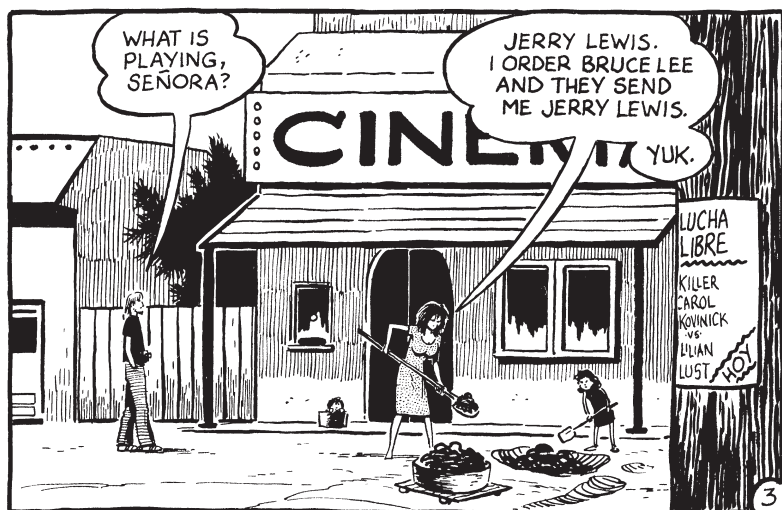
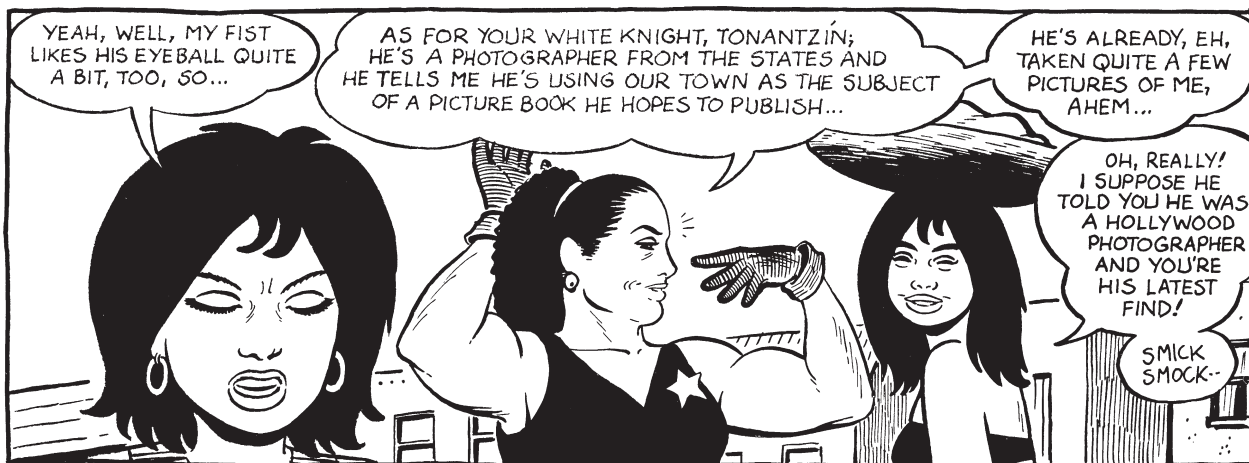
PULQUE - AN ALCOHOLIC DRINK HUMANS MAKE FROM THE Maguey PLANT

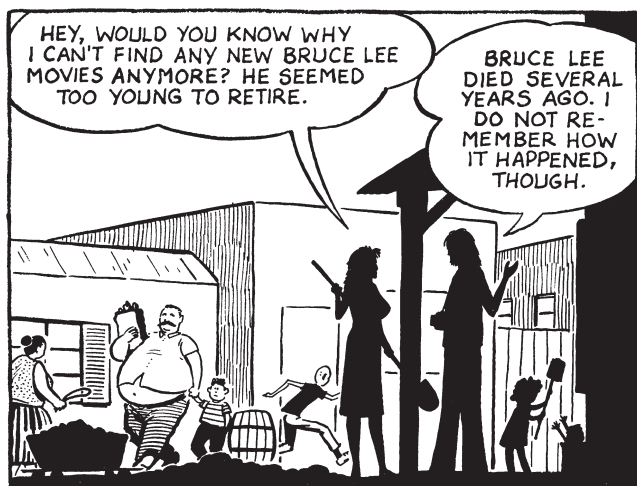




AN AMERICAN IN PALOMAR







THE MORE TRAGIC, HUMOROUS, SENTIMENTAL OR WRETCHED THE BETTER FOR MILLER, AS HE HAS FOUND IN THE PEOPLE OF PALOMAR THE IDEAL SUBJECT MATTER FOR THE BOOK HE HOPES WILL ESTABLISH HIS (SELF-PROCLAIMED) GENIUS TO THE ART WORLD...



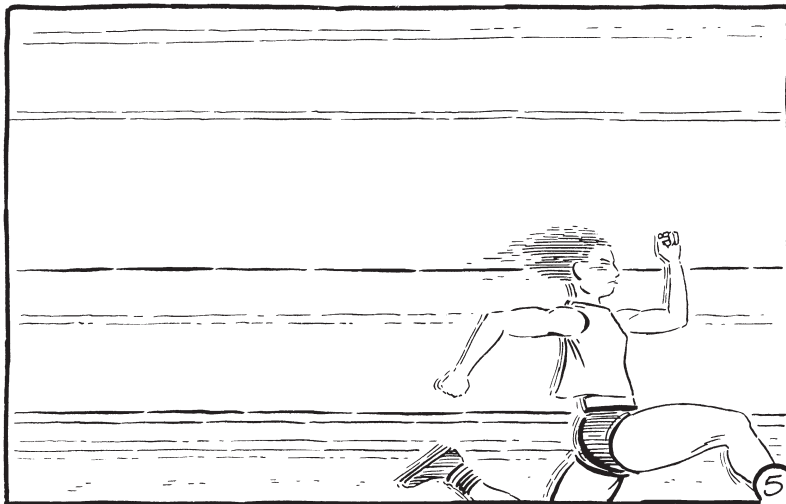
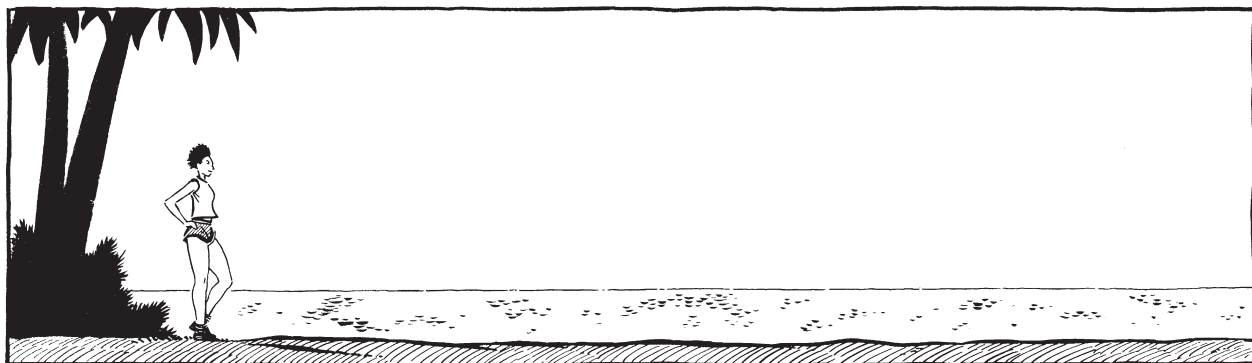
WITH YEARS OF EXPERIENCE FREELANCING FOR VARIOUS GEOGRAPHIC MAGAZINES BEHIND HIM, HOWARD MILLER IS FAMILIAR WITH HIS CHOSEN SOURCE MATERIAL WHILE JADED BY IT AS WELL...

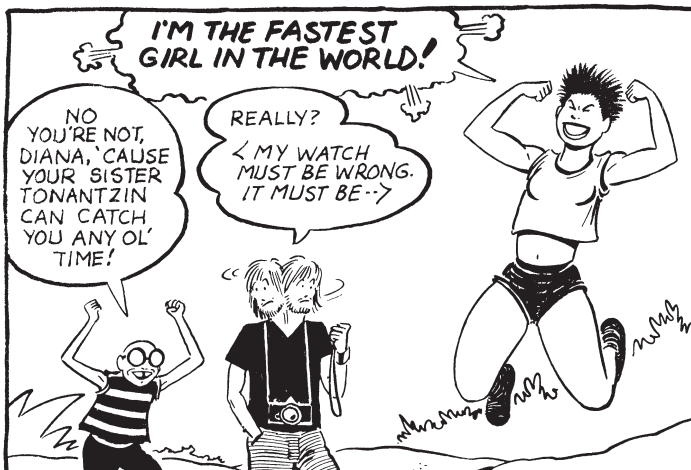
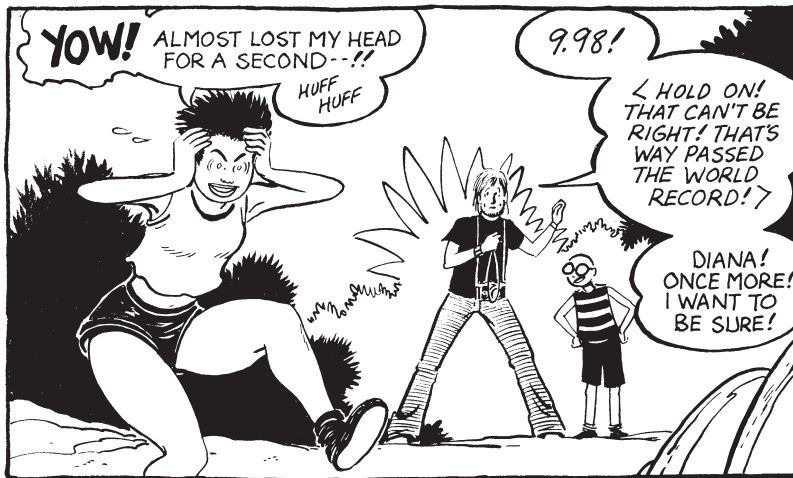
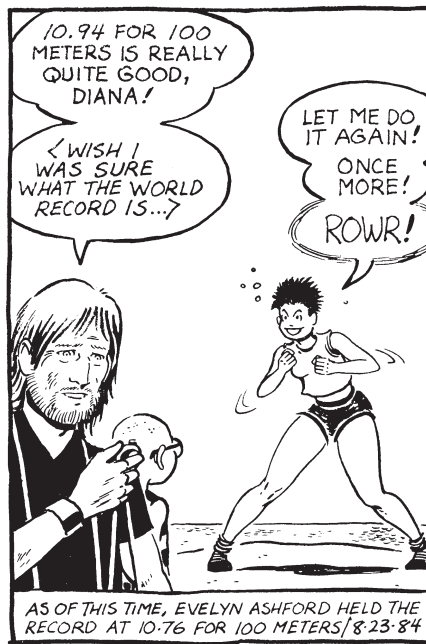
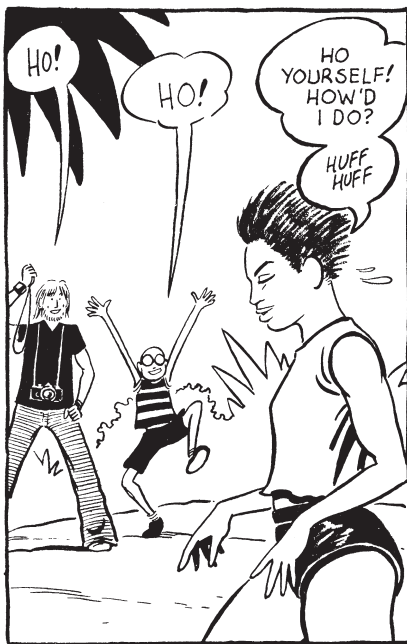
JUST ANOTHER GROUP OF INDIANS AND BLACKS AND WHATEVERS TO HIM...

HE BELIEVES IT IS HIS 'AESTHETIC GENIUS', HOWEVER, THAT WILL MAKE ALL THE DIFFERENCE.



AS FOR FRATERNIZING WITH THE NATIVES, MILLER HAS FOUND THEM TO BE QUAINLY CONVIVIAL, IF SOME OF THEM PERHAPS TOO FRIENDLY...

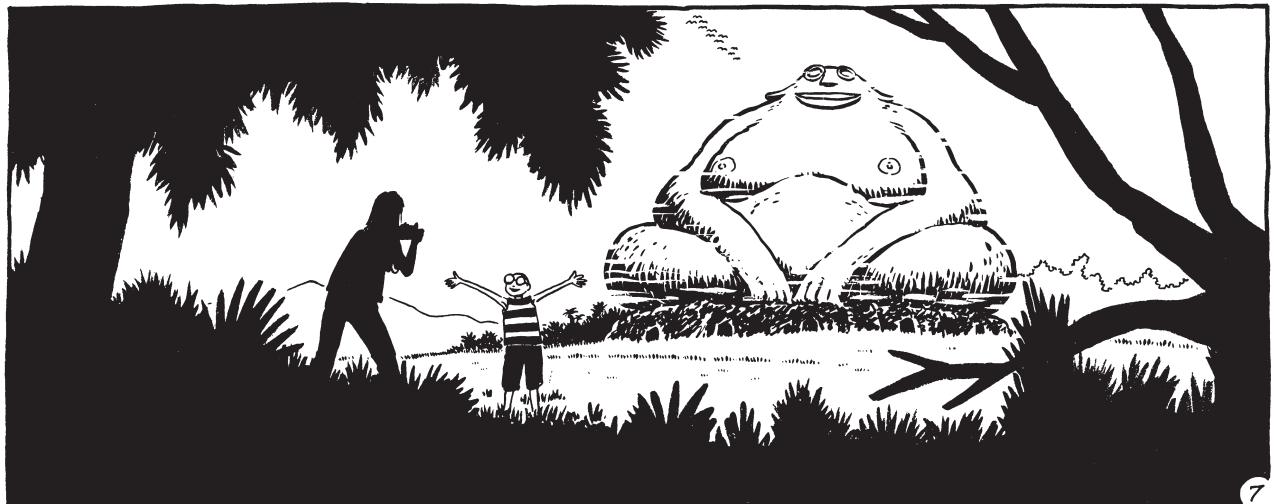
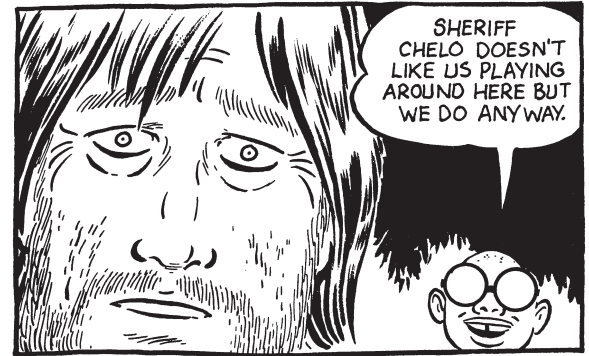
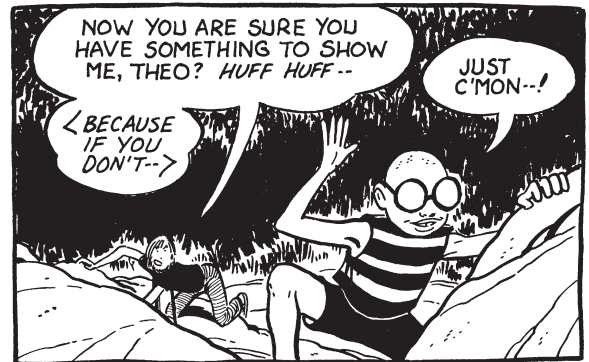




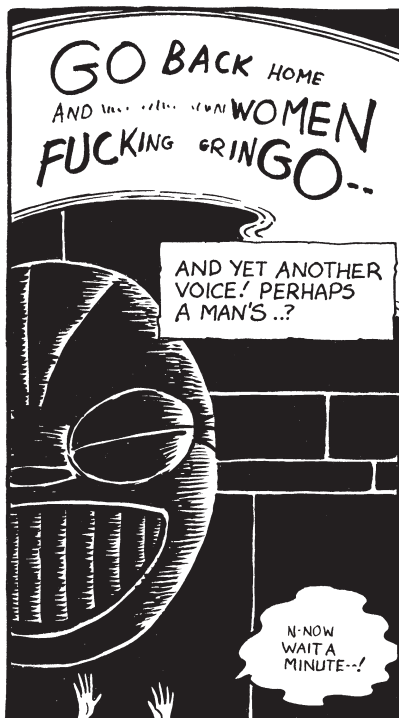
FOR YEARS HOWARD MILLER HAS ENTERTAINED HIS OWN THEORY THAT THE TRULY GREAT ATHELETES OF THE WORLD NEVER ENTER OR NEVER MAKE IT TO THOSE SPORTING EVENTS DESIGNED TO DETERMINE WORLD RECORDS AND SUCH...

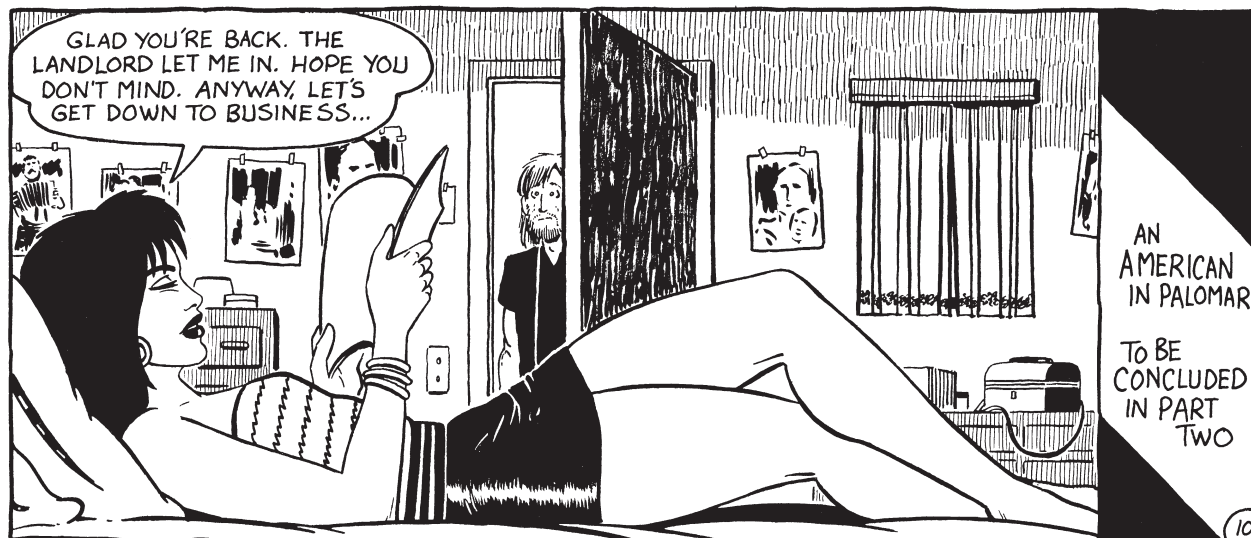
MILLER CERTAINLY NEVER EXPECTED TO HAVE HIS MUSINGS CONFIRMED IN PALOMAR...

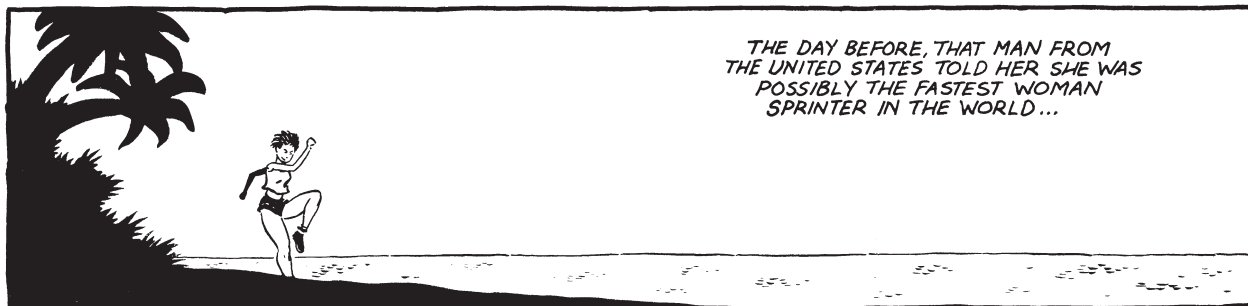












THE DAY BEFORE, THAT MAN FROM
THE UNITED STATES TOLD HER SHE WAS
POSSIBLY THE FASTEST WOMAN
SPRINTER IN THE WORLD...

THIS IS THE REASON DIANA VILLASEÑOR
IS UP SO EARLY ON A SATURDAY MORNING,
A DAY WHEN HER OLDER SISTER TONANTZIN
USUALLY ALLOWS HER TO SLEEP IN.

UP UNTIL LAST NIGHT, THE
ONLY ACTIVITY DIANA LOVED
MORE THAN RUNNING WAS
SLEEPING. THAT HAS NOW
CHANGED.



THE FASTEST WOMAN
IN THE WORLD.



THE PROSPECT OF THAT SENT
DIANA'S IMAGINATION SOARING.
SHE FANCIED THE ROAR OF CROWDS
AS SHE WINS EVERY RACE, THE KISSES
OF HANDSOME CHAMPION ATHLETES,
AND OF BEING THE FIRST WOMAN
ON MARS.

THEN, THE INEVITABLE LOW
AFTER THE HIGH.

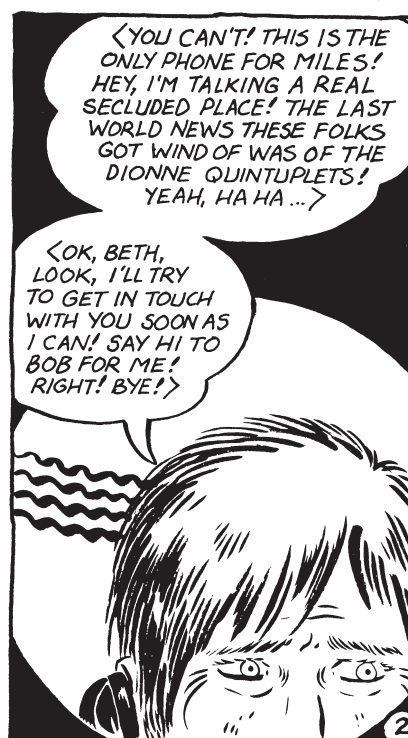
EXISTENTIAL CONTEMPLATION
KEPT HER AWAKE MOST OF THE NIGHT,
WHEN FINALLY SHE CAME TO A
CONCLUSION:



DIANA HAS DECIDED
NOW SHE MUST BE THE
FASTEST OF ALL.



AN AMERICAN...

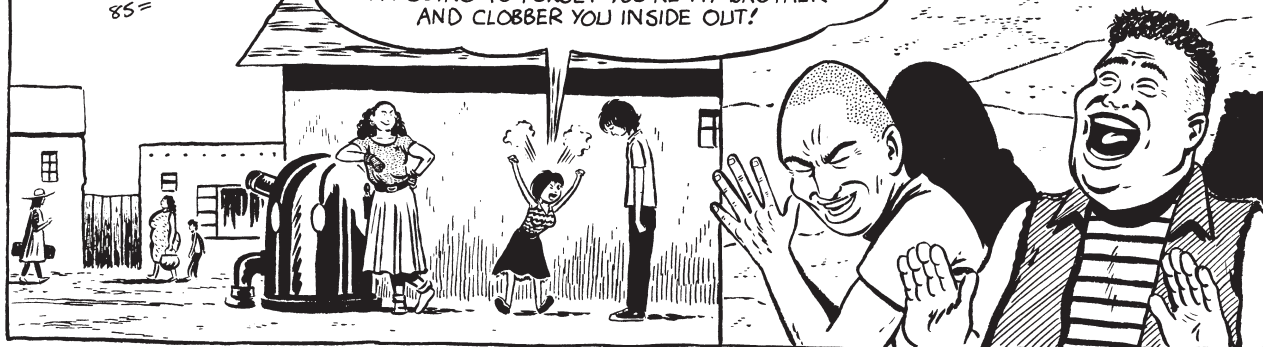


...IN PALOMAR

PART TWO

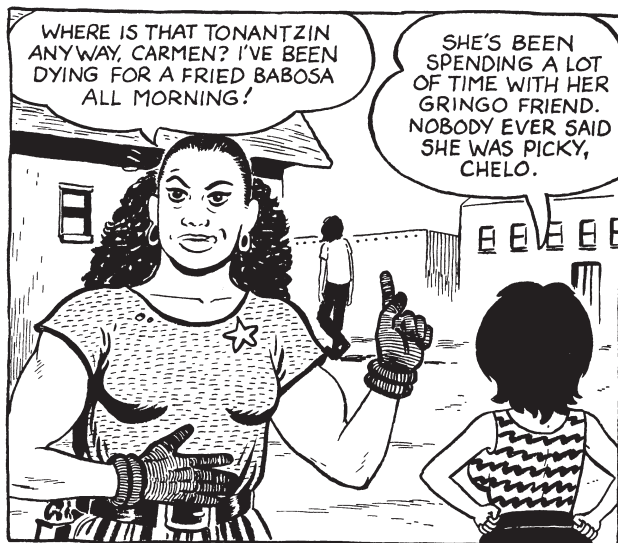
by
GILBERTO
"BUMP CITY"
HERNANDEZ
85

--AND IF I HEAR YOU AND YOUR FRIENDS
ARE BOTHERING TONANTZIN AGAIN, AUGUSTÍN,
I'M GOING TO FORGET YOU'RE MY BROTHER
AND CLOBBER YOU INSIDE OUT!



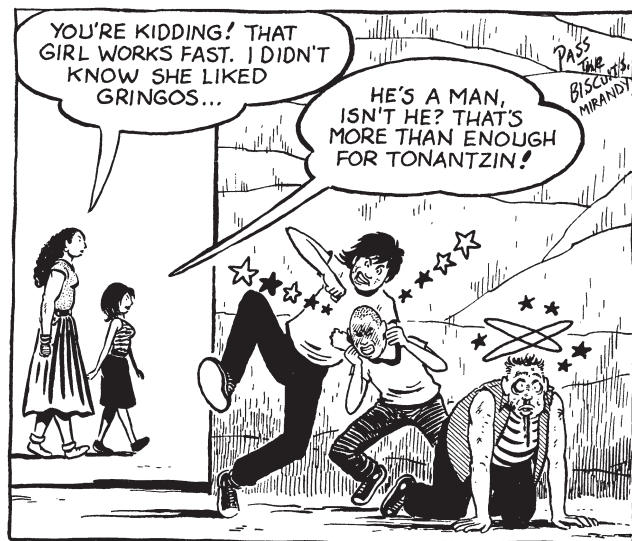
WHERE IS THAT TONANTZIN
ANYWAY, CARMEN? I'VE BEEN
DYING FOR A FRIED BABOSA
ALL MORNING!

SHE'S BEEN
SPENDING A LOT
OF TIME WITH HER
GRINGO FRIEND.
NOBODY EVER SAID
SHE WAS PICKY,
CHELO.



YOU'RE KIDDING! THAT
GIRL WORKS FAST. I DIDN'T
KNOW SHE LIKED
GRINGOS...

HE'S A MAN,
ISN'T HE? THAT'S
MORE THAN ENOUGH
FOR TONANTZIN!

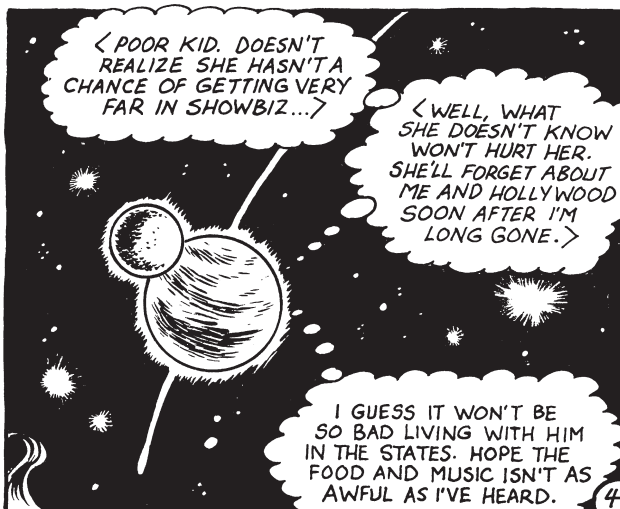
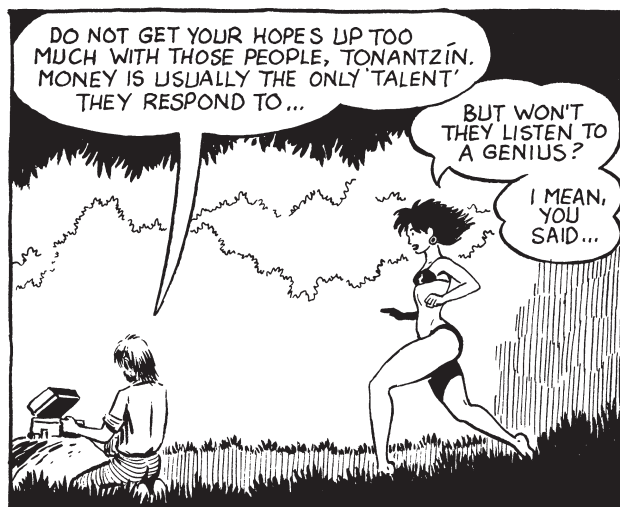


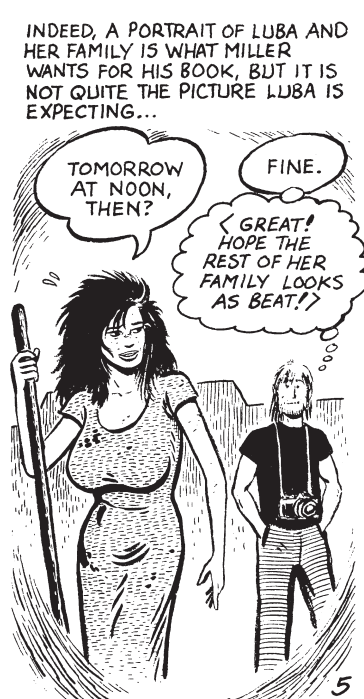
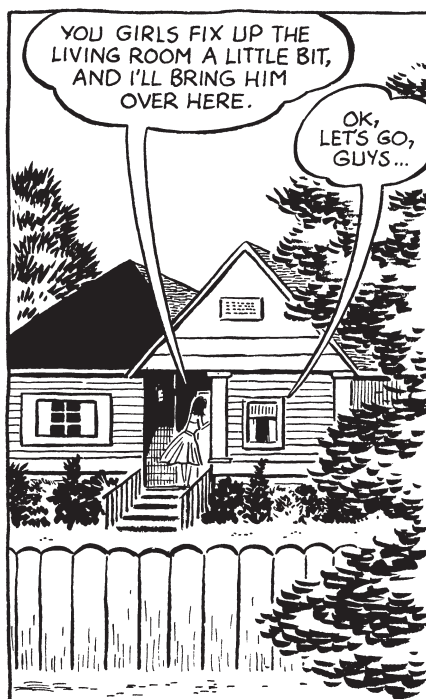
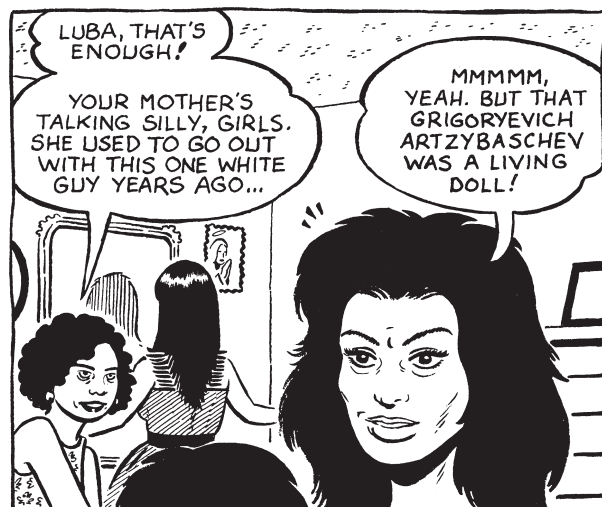
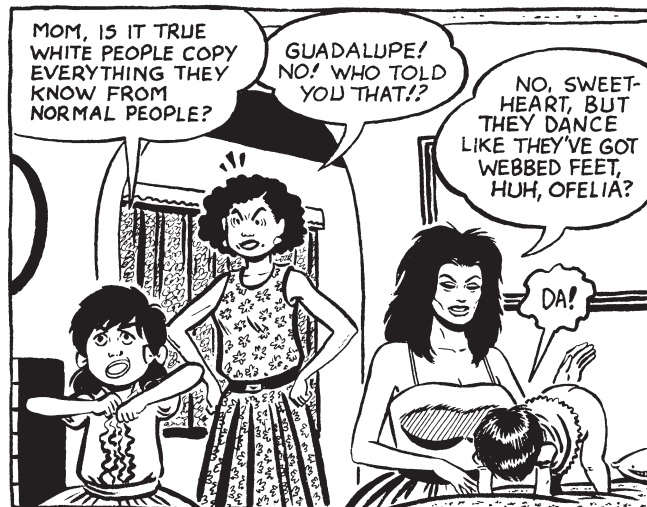
SINCE HIS ARRIVAL
IN PALOMAR,
HOWARD MILLER
HAS BEEN BUSY
CAPTURING THE
'HUMAN CONDITION'
WITH HIS CAMERA,
BUT IT HAS LEFT
THE JADED SELF-
PROCLAIMED
AESTHETIC GENIUS
FAMISHED FOR
A DIVERSION...

THAT IS IT,
TONANTZIN. I AM
ALL OUT OF
FILM.

MMMM, TOO BAD.
I COULD DO THIS
ALL DAY.







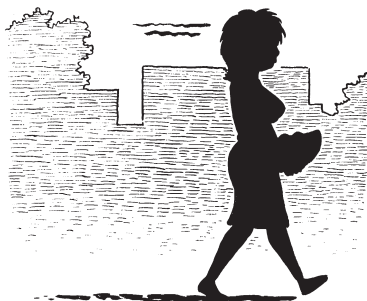


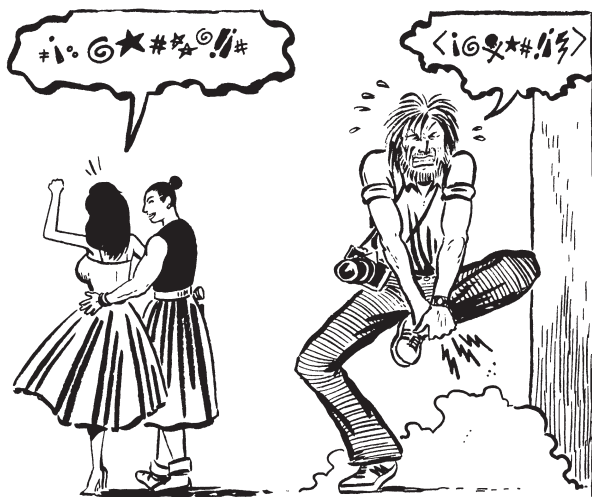
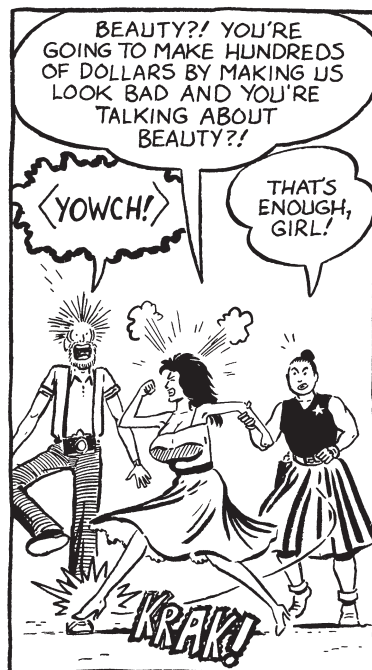
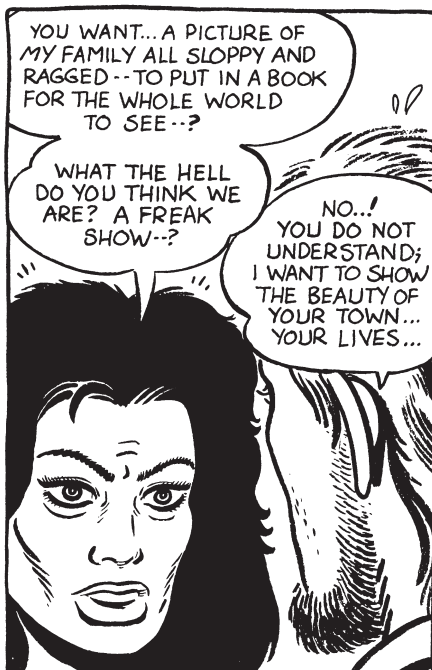
TONANTZIN'S PROBABLY MY BEST FRIEND AND I LOVE HER, BUT SOMETIMES SHE GETS THE WRONG IDEA ABOUT THINGS...

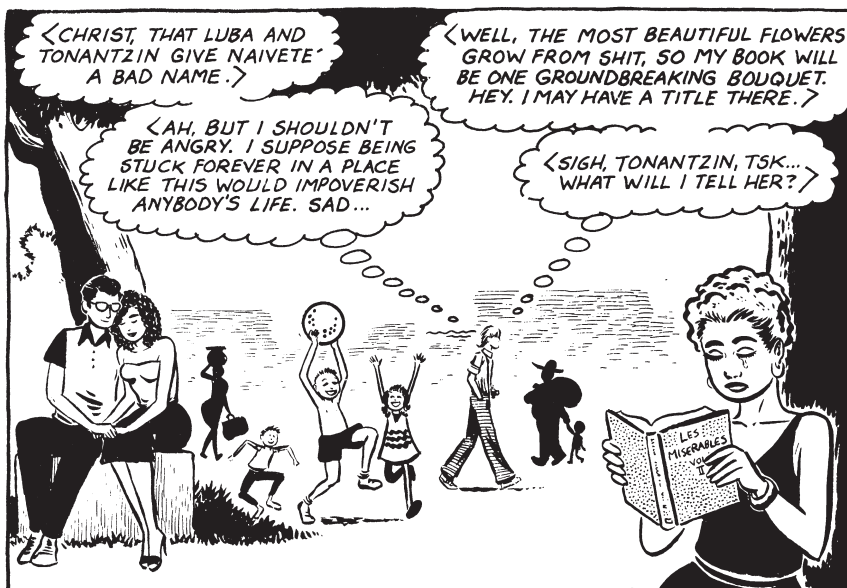
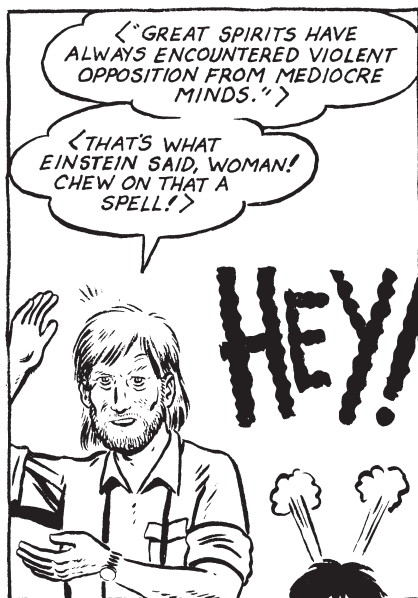
SHE'S NEVER SHOVED ME OUT OF HER HOUSE BEFORE...

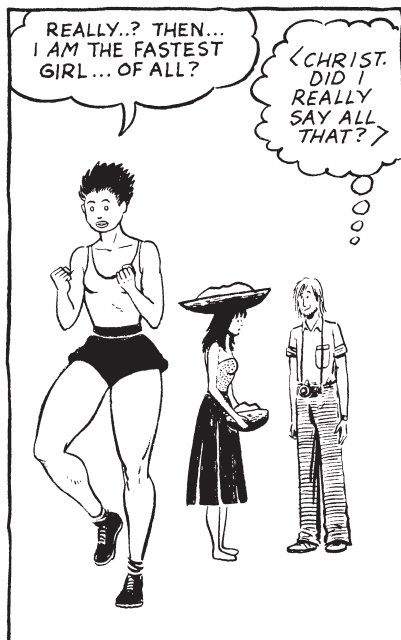
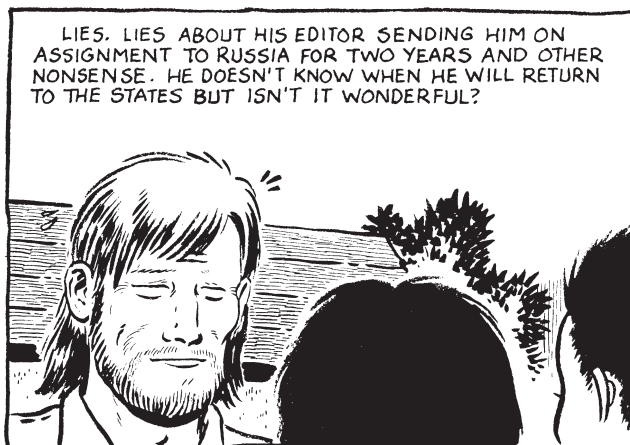
I'D BETTER TALK TO THIS GRINGO MYSELF...

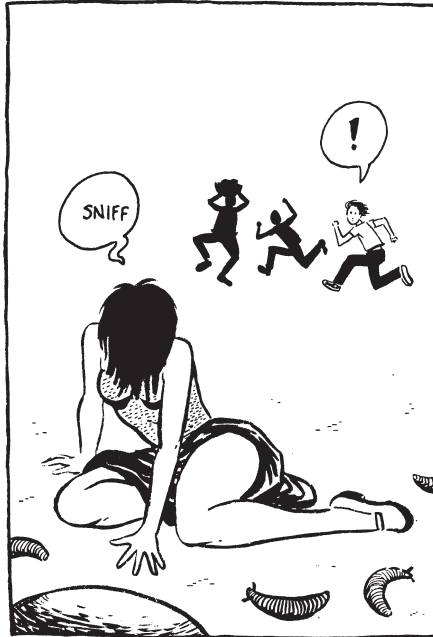
NEVER CALLED ME SHORTY BEFORE, EITHER...

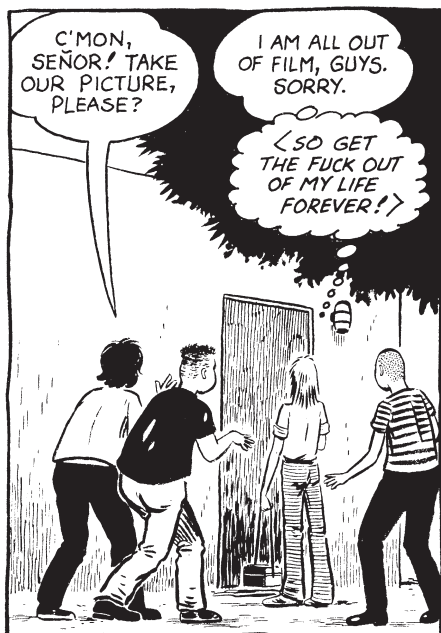












...WINNER OF THE
KOVINICK PRIZE
FOR PHOTOJOURNALISM

--HOWARD
MILLER!



THANK YOU--
THANK YOU

I WOULD LIKE TO THANK
ABSOLUTELY NO ONE FROM
PALOMAR FOR THIS PRESTIGIOUS
AWARD, AS IT WAS ONLY THROUGH
MY EXTRAORDINARY AESTHETIC EYE
THAT FINE ART COULD BE CULLED
FROM SUCH AN OTHERWISE
DREARY, OVERUSED
SUBJECT...



TO MY ARTISTIC PEERS MORE
FASCINATED WITH MY SUBJECT, I
SAY VISIT PALOMAR AT YOUR OWN
RISK. I CAN'T GUARANTEE YOU'LL
ALSO EXPERIENCE THERE THE KIND
OF PHYSICAL AND EMOTIONAL PAIN
THAT BEGETS ART, BUT THE
FOOD AND MUSIC MAY BE
ENOUGH FOR YOU...



-- AND BY NO MEANS
FORGET OL' SEÑOR ALBERTO
EINSTEIN'S GREAT QUOTE:

"GREAT SPIRITS HAVE ALWAYS
ENCOUNTERED VIOLENT
OPPOSITION FROM MEDIOCRE
MINDS..."



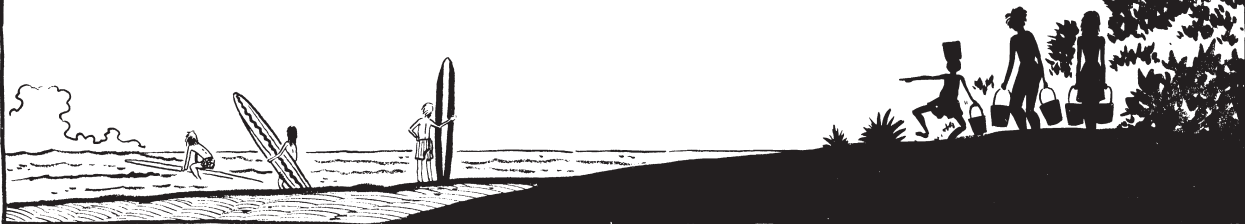
-- BECAUSE
THE MEDIOCRE
MIND YOU
ENCOUNTER
MAY BE YOUR
OWN.

WEEKS LATER, CARMEN WILL STILL NOT SPEAK TO SHERIFF CHELO FOR BREAKING AUGUSTIN'S ARM WHEN SHE ARRESTED HIM AND HIS GOONS FOR THE ASSAULT.

AS FOR THE BATTERED BUT WISER MILLER, HE GLADLY FOLLOWED CHELO'S SUGGESTION OF LEAVING PALOMAR WITHOUT SO MUCH AS A GOODBYE TO ANYONE.

SEE? I TOLD YOU!

YEAH, THEY'RE GRINGOS, ALL RIGHT. WONDER WHAT THEY'RE DOING?



WE SHOULD ASK 'EM IF THEY KNOW SENOR MEELEER!

A LOT OF GRINGOS HAVE BEEN COMING AND GOING SINCE HE LEFT. WONDER IF HIS BOOK ABOUT US IS OUT ALREADY?

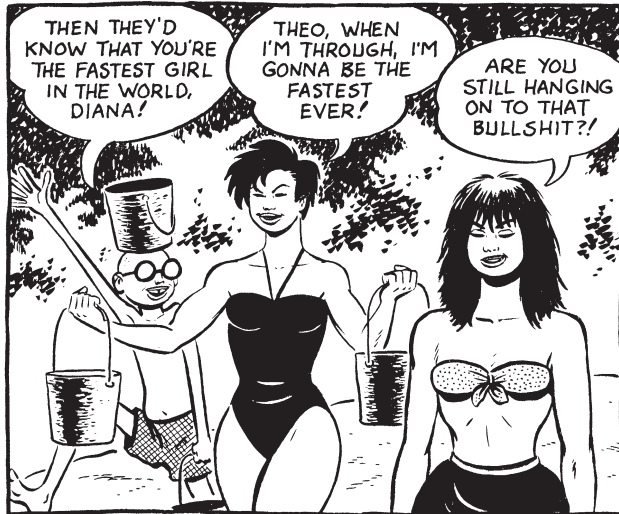
HMF.



THEN THEY'D KNOW THAT YOU'RE THE FASTEST GIRL IN THE WORLD, DIANA!

THEO, WHEN I'M THROUGH, I'M GONNA BE THE FASTEST EVER!

ARE YOU STILL HANGING ON TO THAT BULLSHIT?!



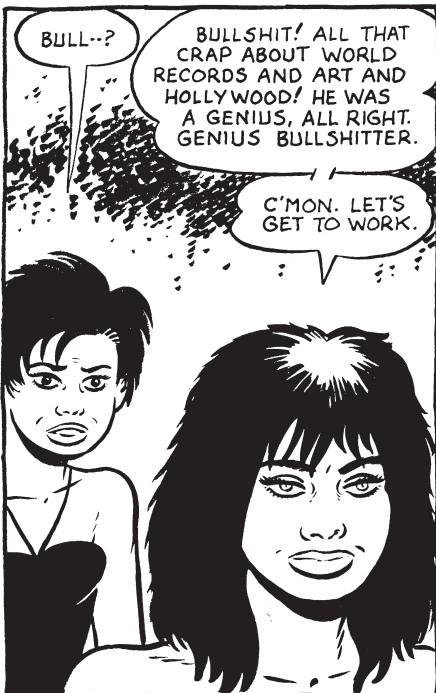
BULL--?

BULLSHIT! ALL THAT CRAP ABOUT WORLD RECORDS AND ART AND HOLLYWOOD! HE WAS A GENIUS, ALL RIGHT. GENIUS BULLSHITTER.

C'MON. LET'S GET TO WORK.

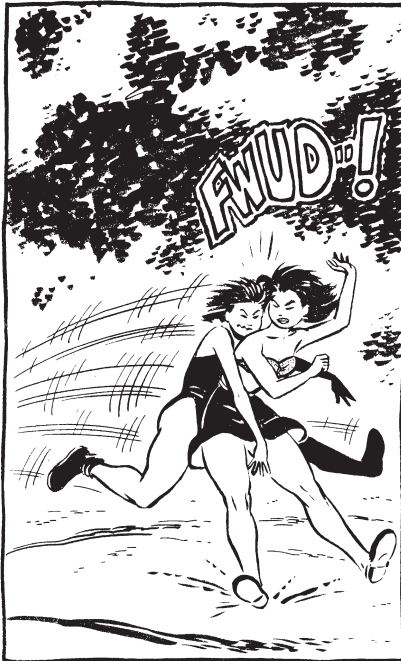
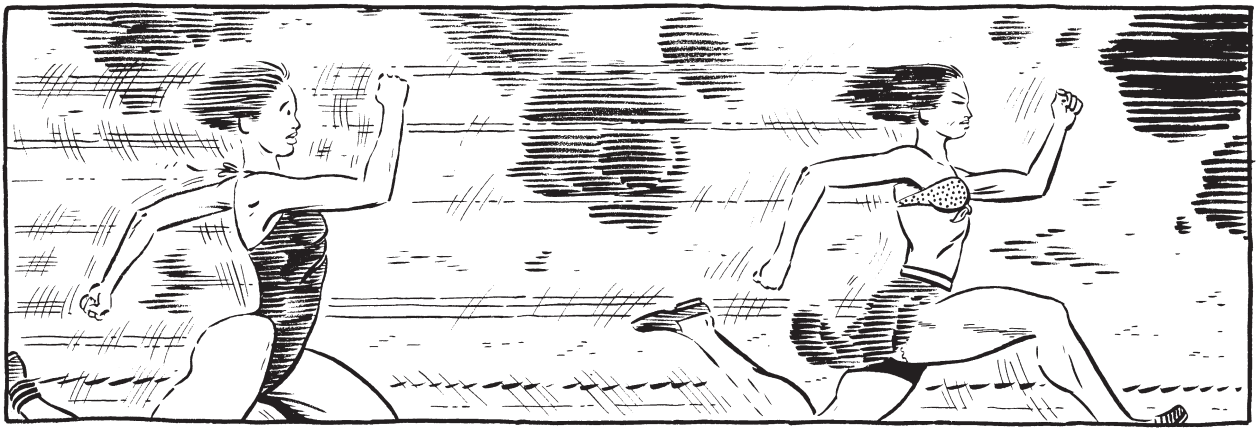
I AM THE FASTEST!

DIANA--!



I AM --- I AM--!





DESPITE THE LOOKS OF THINGS, TONANTZIN HATED TO DO WHAT SHE JUST DID, BUT FEELS SHE HAD NO OTHER CHOICE: IF SHE DOESN'T LOOK AFTER DIANA, WHO WILL?

C'MON. LET'S GET TO WORK.

OF COURSE, TONANTZIN'S LITTLE DISPLAY HAS ONLY SERVED TO ENCOURAGE DIANA EVEN MORE.

TONANTZIN SAYS THAT SHE DOESN'T MISS MEELER MUCH, AS SHE NEVER HAD ANY REAL FEELINGS FOR HIM. SHE JUST WISHES HE'D HAVE BEEN AROUND TO PAY HALF THE ABORTION FEE.

I'M HOPING HER ENCOUNTER WITH HIM HAS ONCE AND FOR ALL EXORCISED HER NAIVE ASPIRATIONS OF CONQUERING SHOWBIZ.

BUT WE SHALL SEE WHAT WE SHALL SEE.



AS TIME PASSES IN PALOMAR, THE DAILY RITUALS OF WORK AND PLAY EASE THE MEMORY OF HOWARD MILLER AND HIS PROPOSED BOOK OUT OF THE MINDS OF THE PEOPLE. MOST FOLKS HAVE ALREADY FORGOTTEN HIS NAME, MUCH LESS REMEMBER HIS FACE.

BACK IN THE UNITED STATES MILLER WISHES HE COULD BE SO LUCKY.

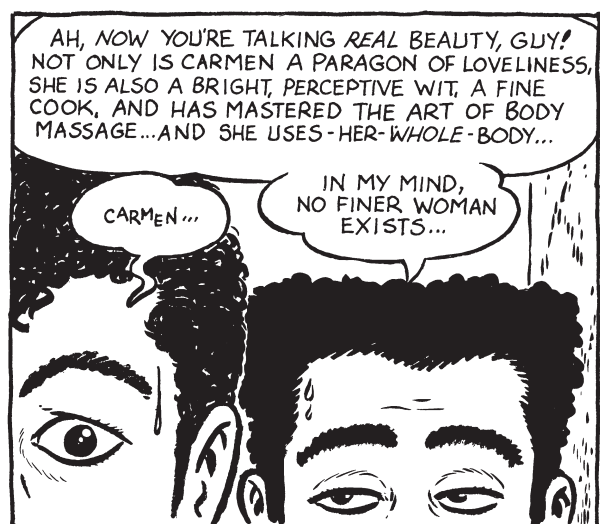
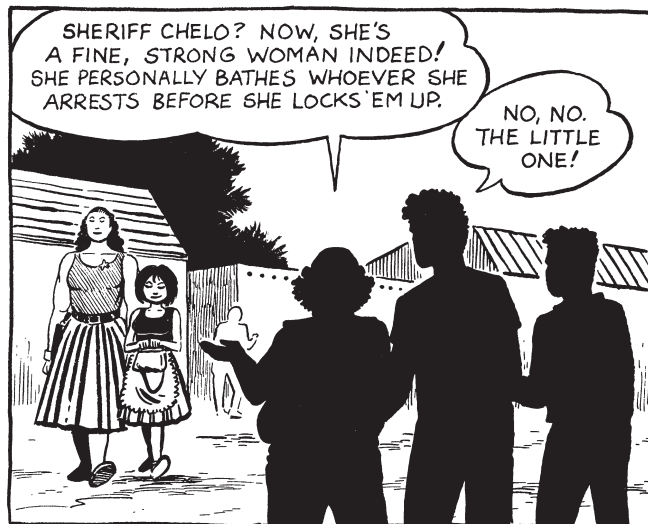
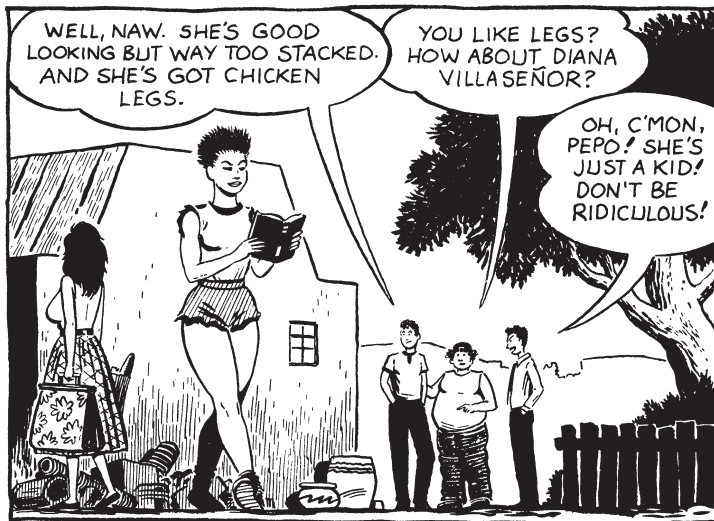


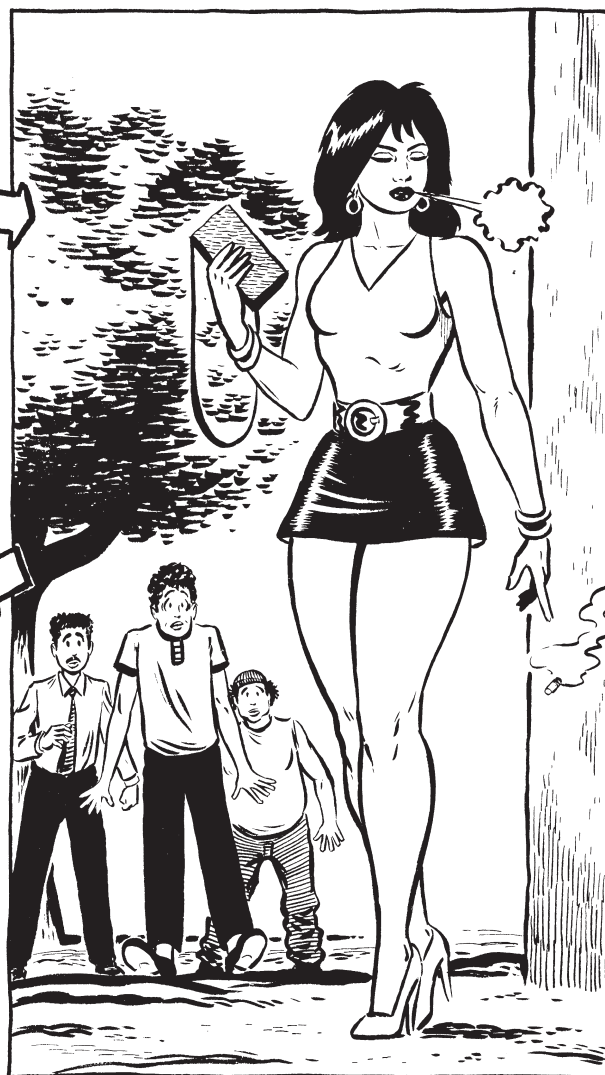
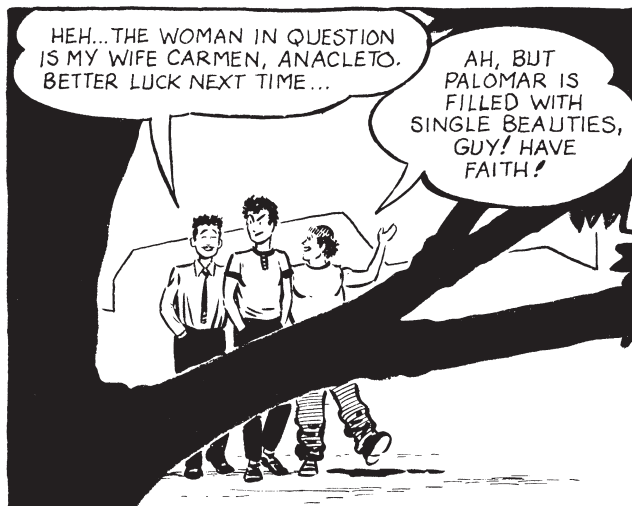
BOYS WILL BE BOYS

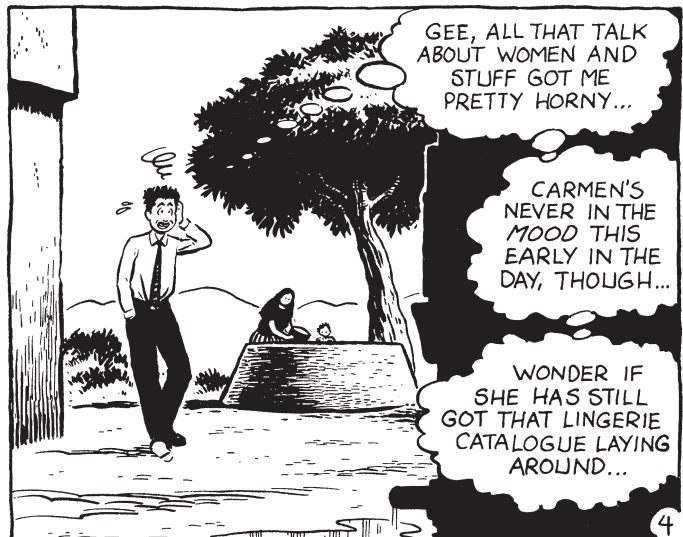
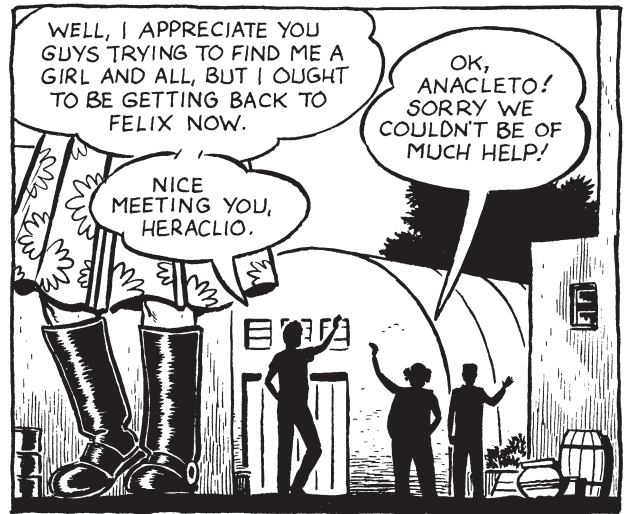
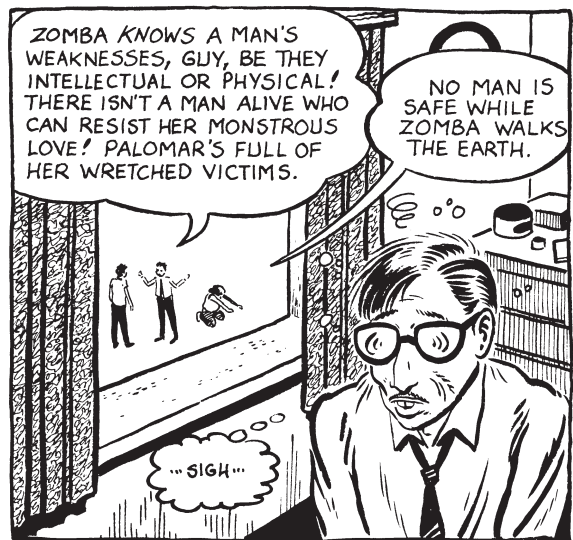
by Gilbert
DR LOVE
HERNANDEZ
6/85



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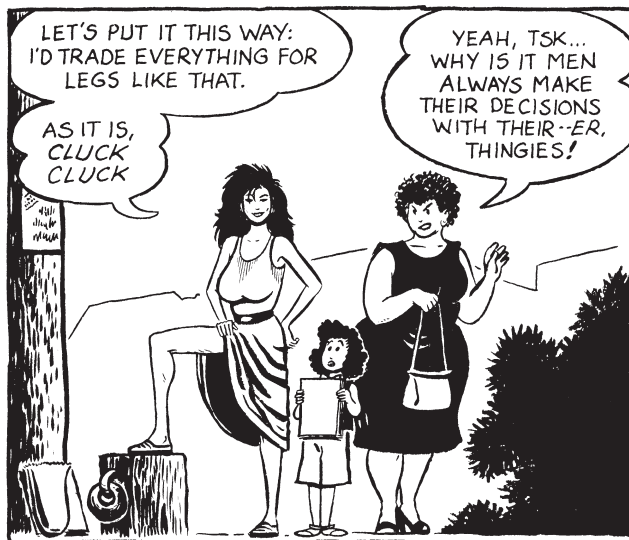
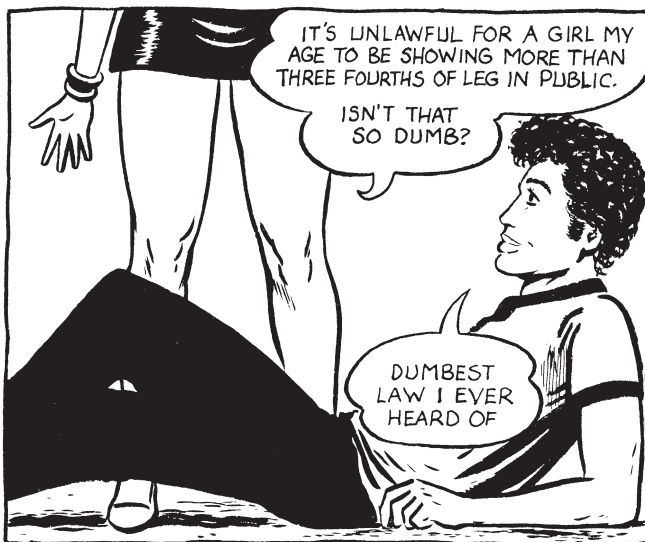


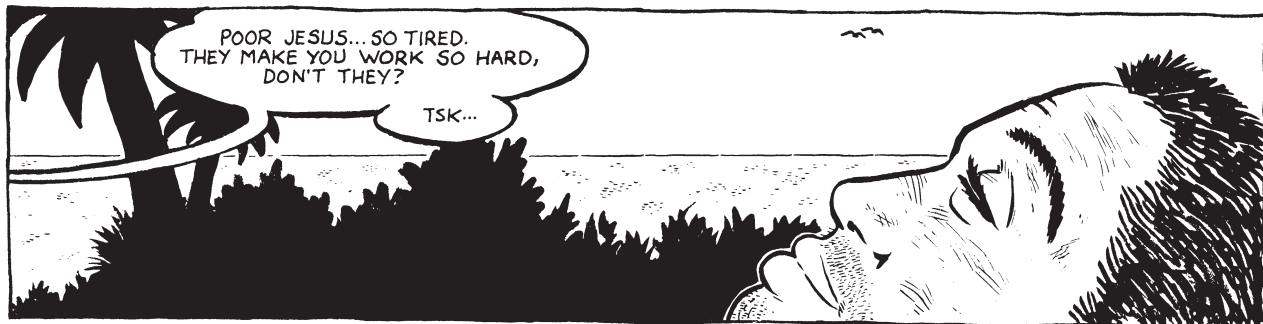




QUERIDA - DARLING (KEH-REE-THUH)







POOR JESUS... SO TIRED.
THEY MAKE YOU WORK SO HARD,
DON'T THEY?

TSK...



WELL, NOW MAMA LUBA'S
HERE TO TAKE YOU AWAY FROM
ALL THAT, OK...?



AHH...BUT YOU'RE NOT
TOO TIRED FOR MAMA, ARE
YOU SWEETHEART...?

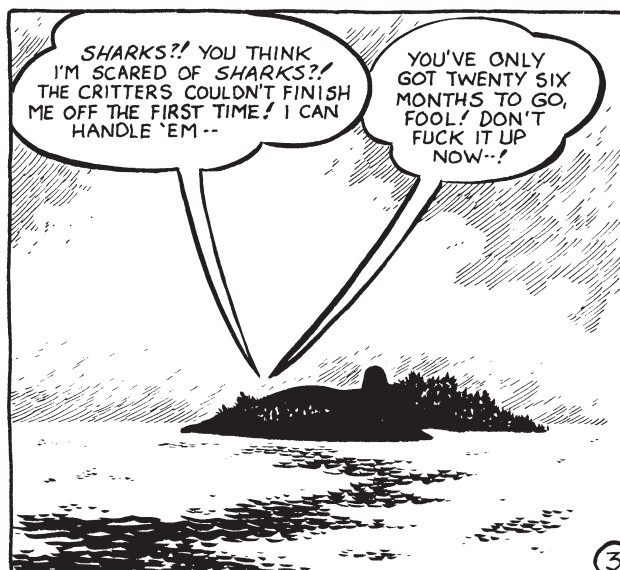
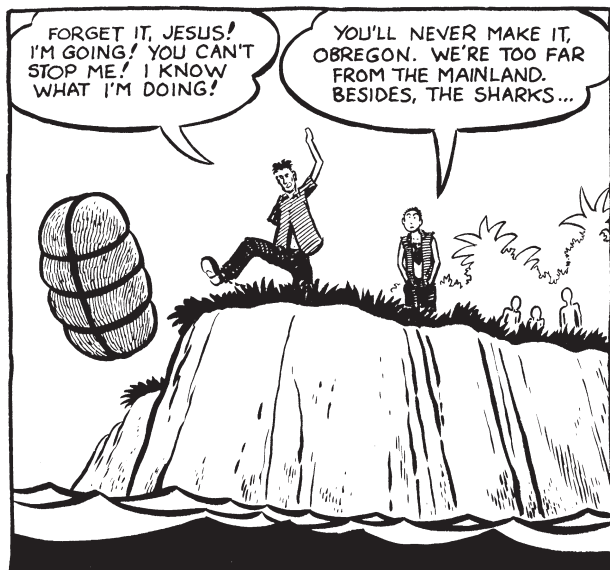


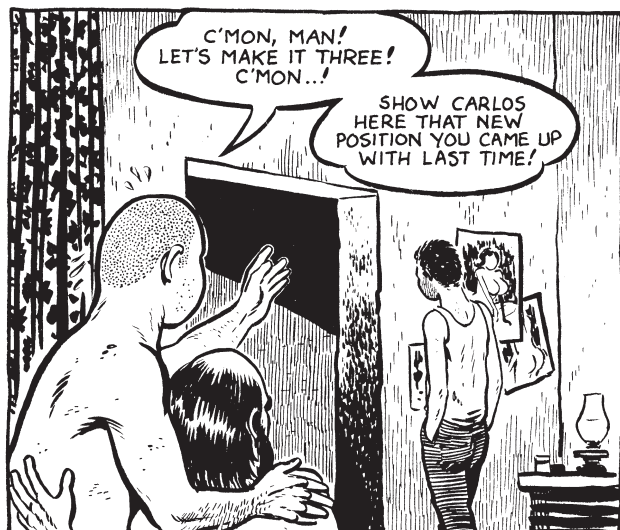
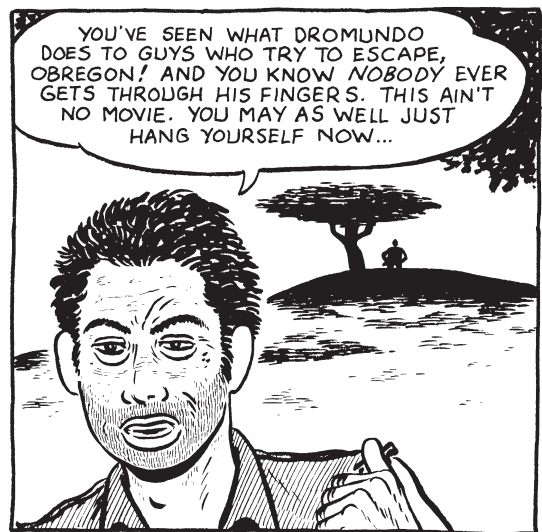
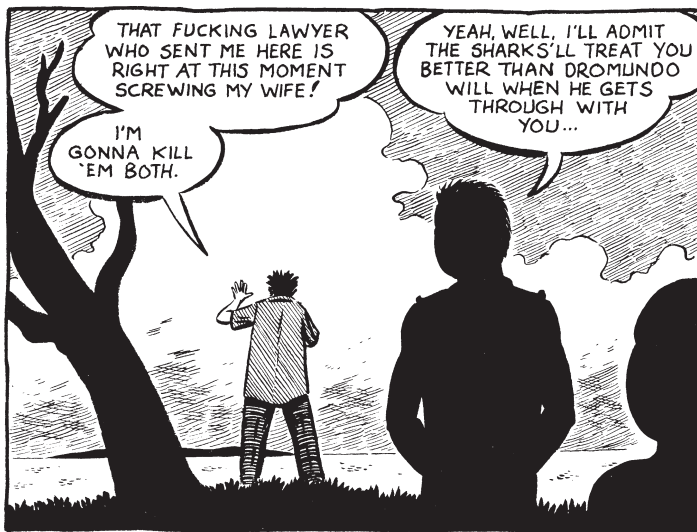
Holidays in the Sun

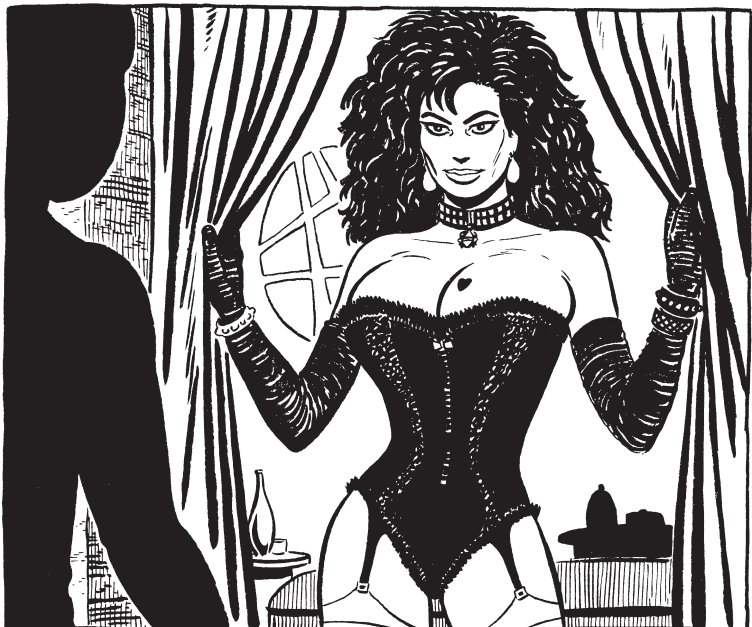
SEPT.
OCT.
BETO 85



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THOUGH JESÚS ANGEL HAS NEVER HAD RELATIONS WITH LUBA, HE HAS INDEED INDULGED IN OVER FIFTEEN THOUSAND DIFFERENT SEXUAL FANTASIES OF THE WOMAN FROM THE MOMENT HE FIRST SET HIS EYES ON HER SOME TWELVE YEARS AGO IN PALOMAR...

NOW, TO JESÚS'S CONFUSION, HIS ESTRANGED WIFE LAURA IS REPLACING LUBA MIDWAY THROUGH THESE IMAGINARY INTERLUDES.

BUT WHY? LAURA IS THE LAST PERSON HE WANTS TO THINK ABOUT...



I'M TELLING YOU, JESÚS, THAT DROMUNDO DOESN'T SCARE ME ONE BIT!



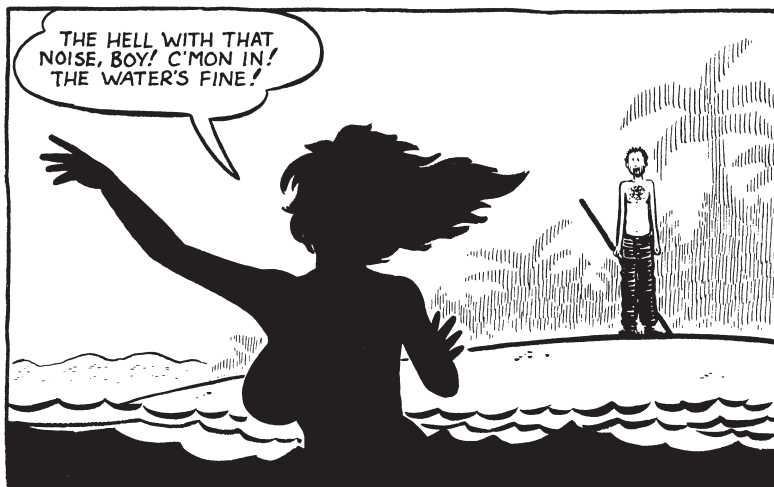
YEAH, HE'S UP THERE ON THE HILL EVERYDAY LOOKING DOWN ON US, BUT HE WON'T COME DOWN HERE, NO SIR...!

I GOT A PLAN THAT EVEN HE CAN'T STOP, MAN! IF YOU WANT IN ON IT JUST LET ME KNOW, HUH...?



♪ JESUS... ♪

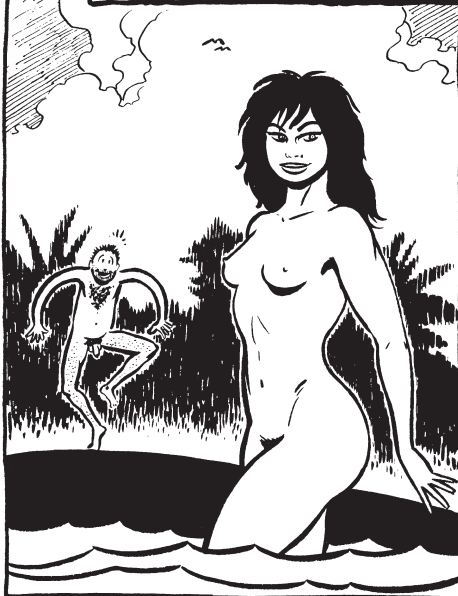




NO. NOT LUBA. SOMEONE ELSE. THINK OF SOMEONE ELSE. LUBA ONLY LEADS TO LAURA.



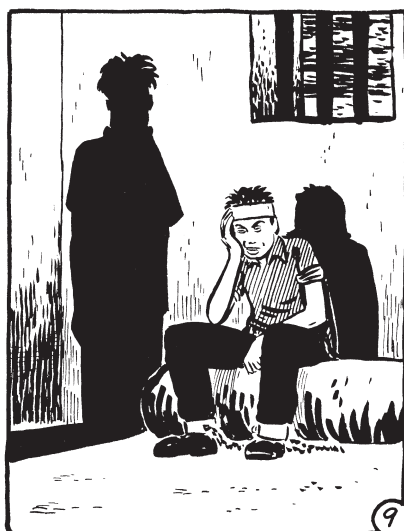
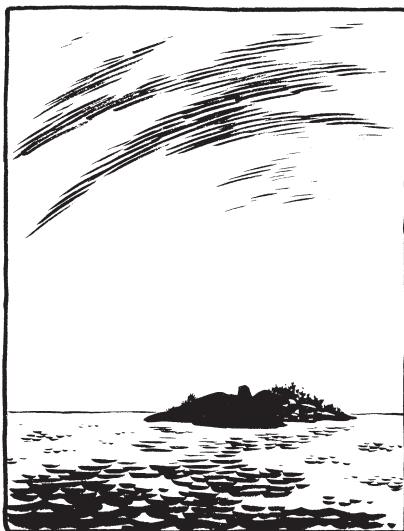
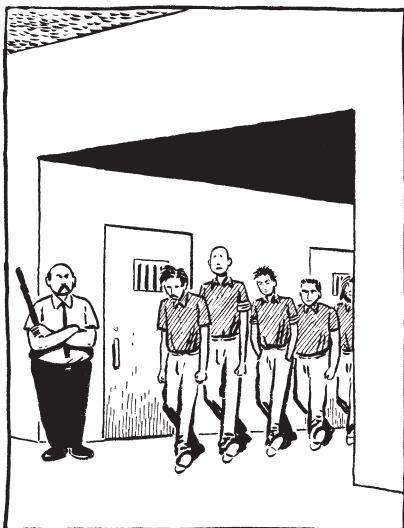
AH, TONANTZIN! THERE YOU GO. SHE AND JESUS HAD QUITE AN AFFAIR GOING A YEAR OR SO BEFORE HE WAS SENT HERE. LOVELY, VIVIFYING, SERENE TONANTZIN...

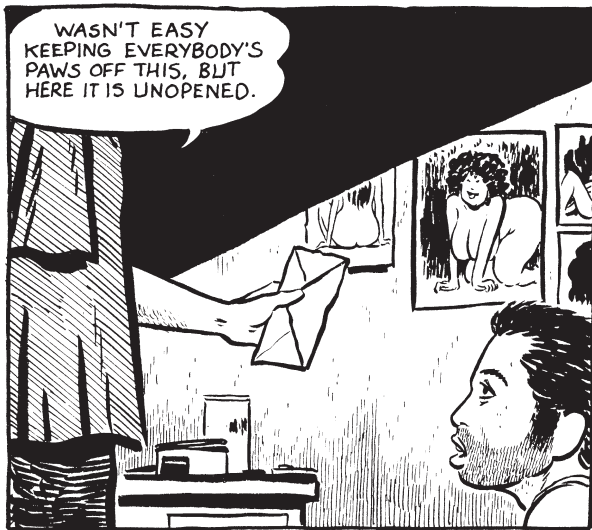


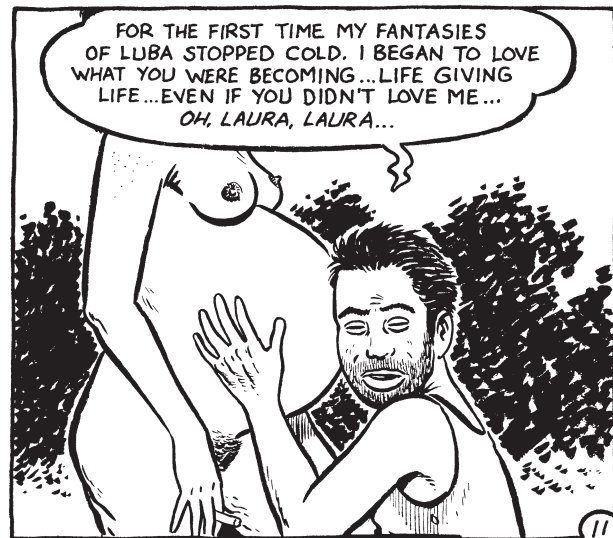
SUCCESS. LAURA IS NOWHERE TO BE FOUND IN HIS FANTASIES OF TONANTZIN... BUT IT IS TOO LATE: TRYING NOT TO THINK OF SOMETHING USUALLY LEADS TO THINKING ABOUT IT...

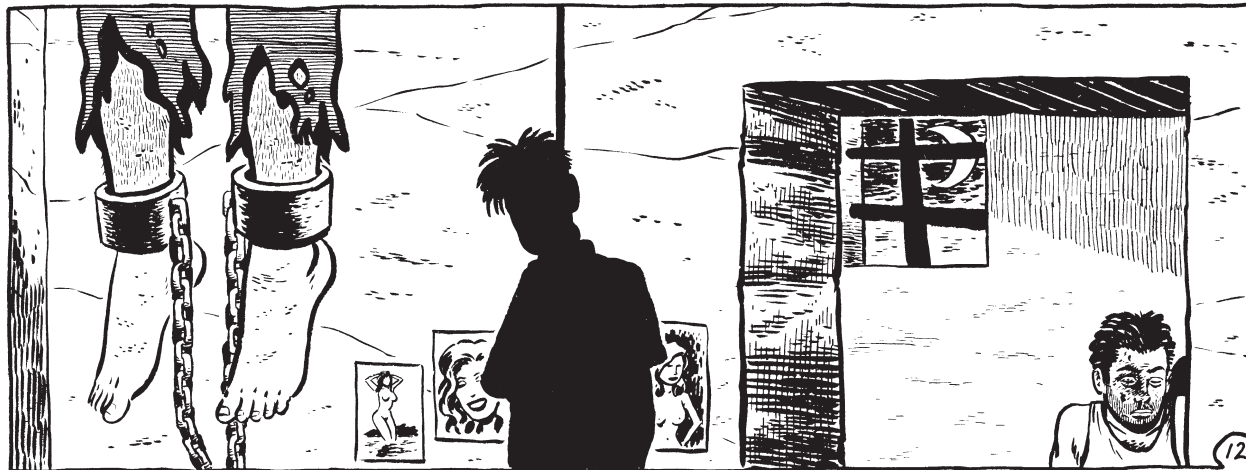
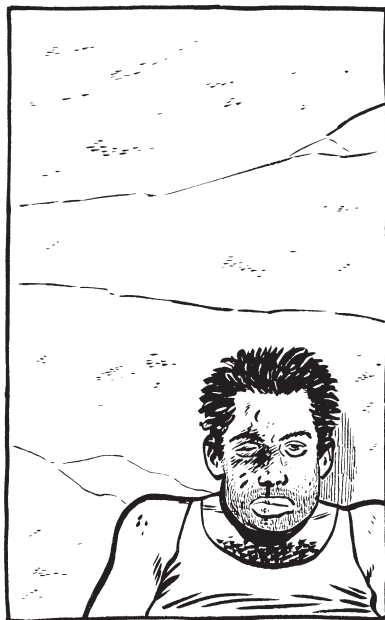
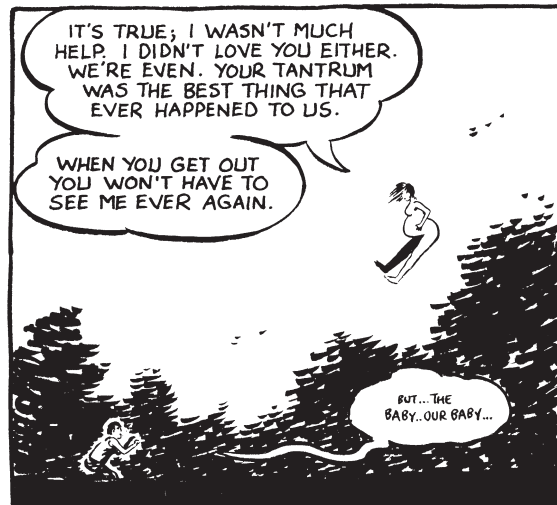
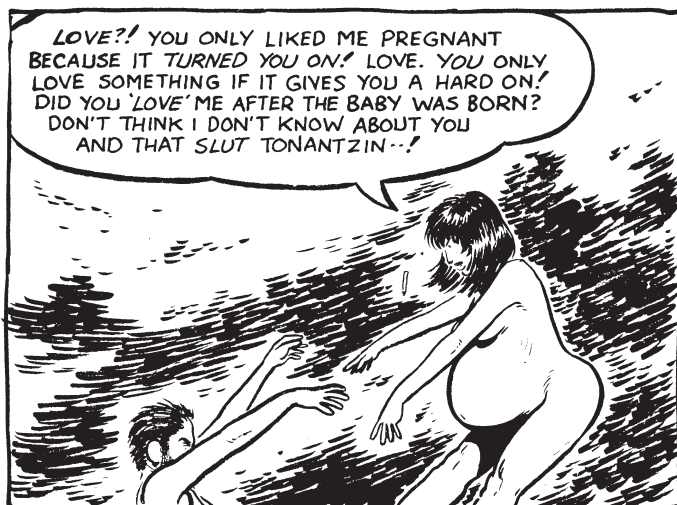


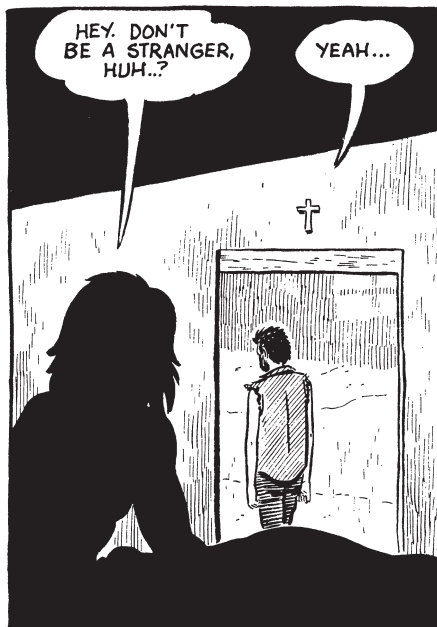
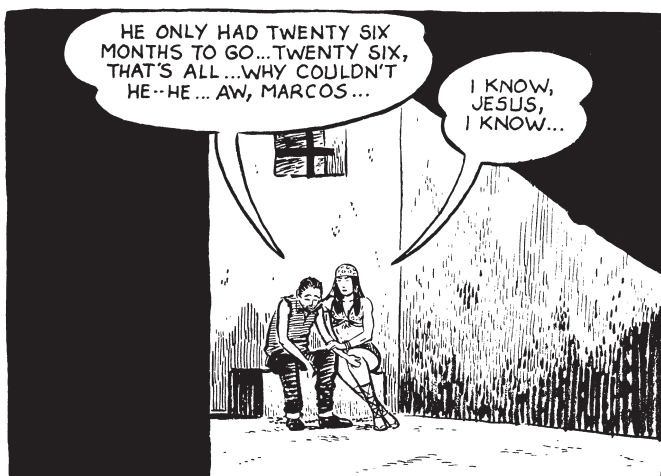






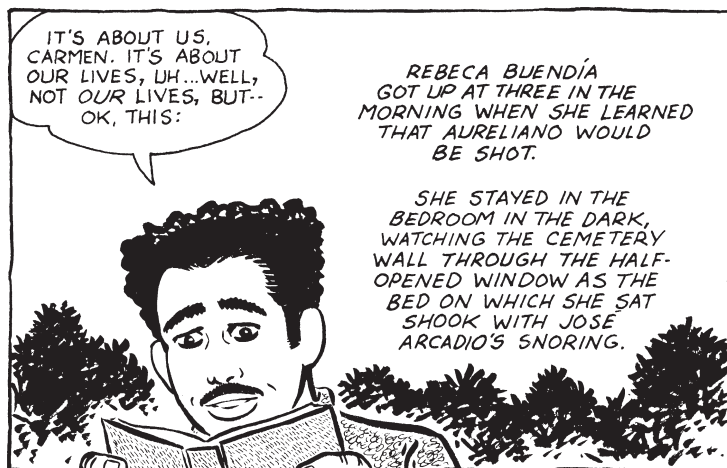












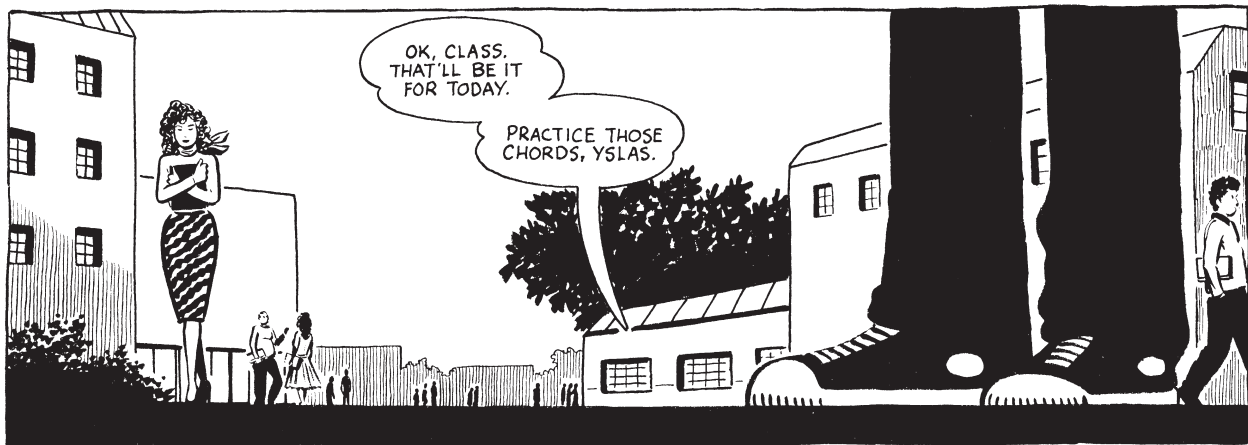
IT'S ABOUT US, CARMEN. IT'S ABOUT OUR LIVES, UH...WELL, NOT OUR LIVES, BUT-- OK, THIS:

REBECA BUENDÍA GOT UP AT THREE IN THE MORNING WHEN SHE LEARNED THAT AURELIANO WOULD BE SHOT.

SHE STAYED IN THE BEDROOM IN THE DARK, WATCHING THE CEMETERY WALL THROUGH THE HALF-OPENED WINDOW AS THE BED ON WHICH SHE SAT SHOOK WITH JOSE ARCADIO'S SNORING.



IF YOU SAY SO, SWEETHEART.



OK, CLASS. THAT'LL BE IT FOR TODAY.

PRACTICE THOSE CHORDS, YSLAS.



HEY, PROFESSOR! EVEN A MUSIC TEACHER NEEDS A DRINK NOW AND THEN?

OH, GLORIA, THANKS, BUT I DON'T WANT TO MISS THE BUS...



I'LL DRIVE YOU HOME, SILLY. HERACLIO, IF YOU DON'T LOOSEN UP YOU'RE GOING TO WIND UP LOOKING LIKE THAT MUNCH PRINT.

THAT BAD, HUH? HEH, MY WIFE MADE ME TAKE IT OUT OF THE HOUSE BECAUSE A GUEST MIGHT THINK THEIR HOSTS HAD PAINT-ED SUCH A THING.

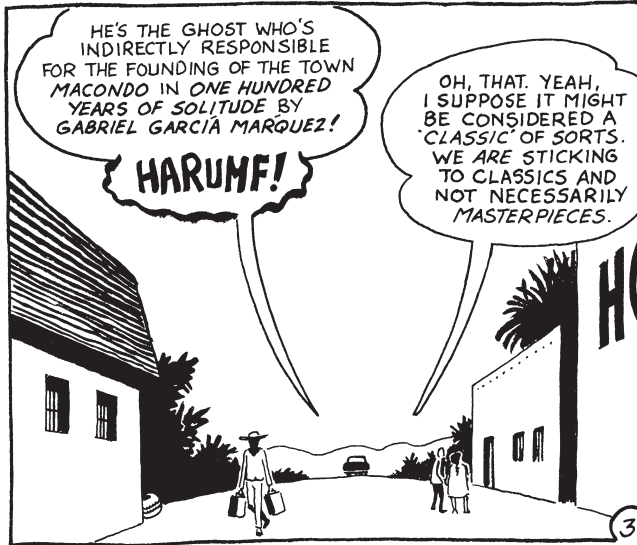
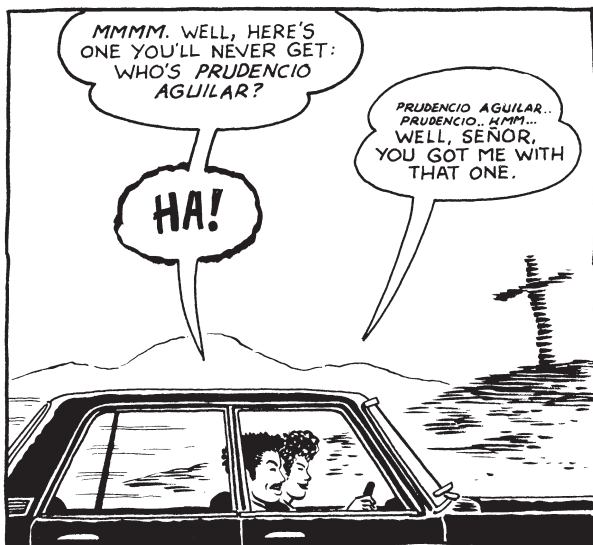
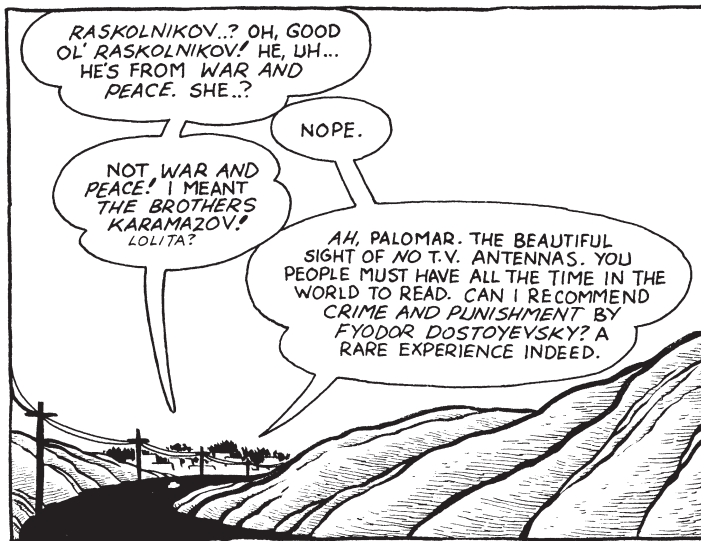


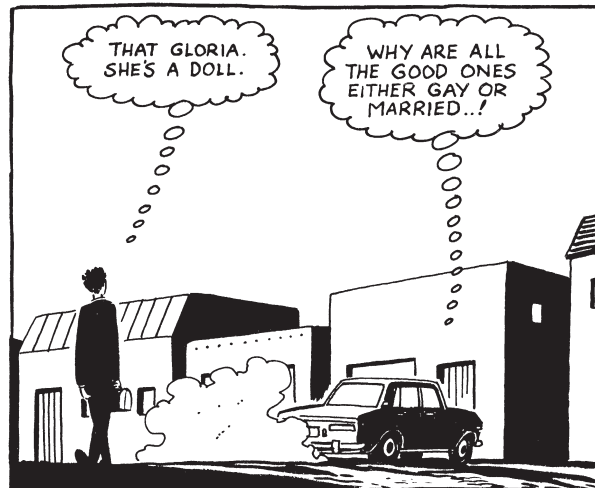
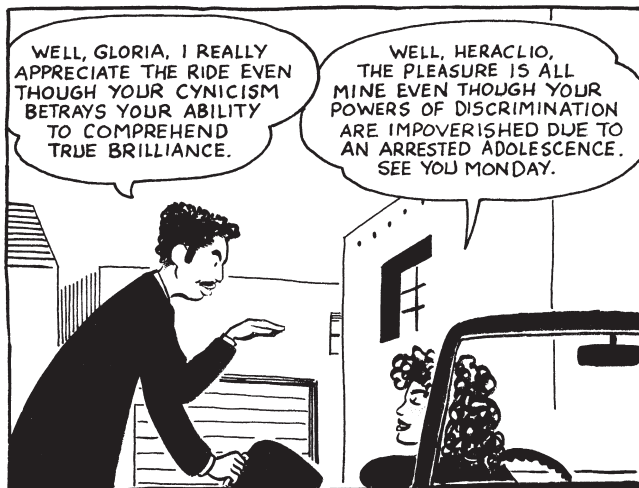
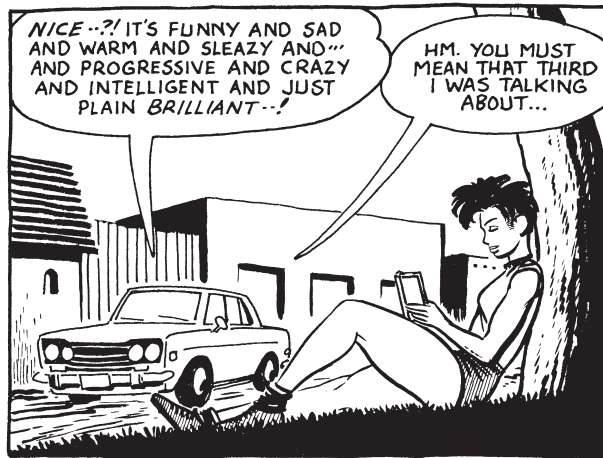
ACTUALLY, I'M THE ONE WHO SOMETIMES FEELS THAT WAY WHEN I'M TEACHING MY GRAMMAR CLASS.

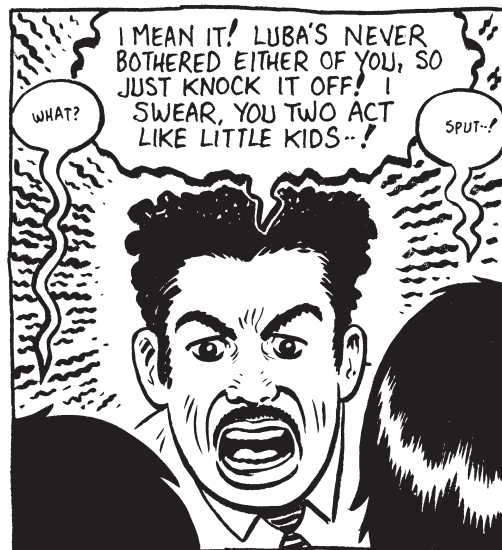
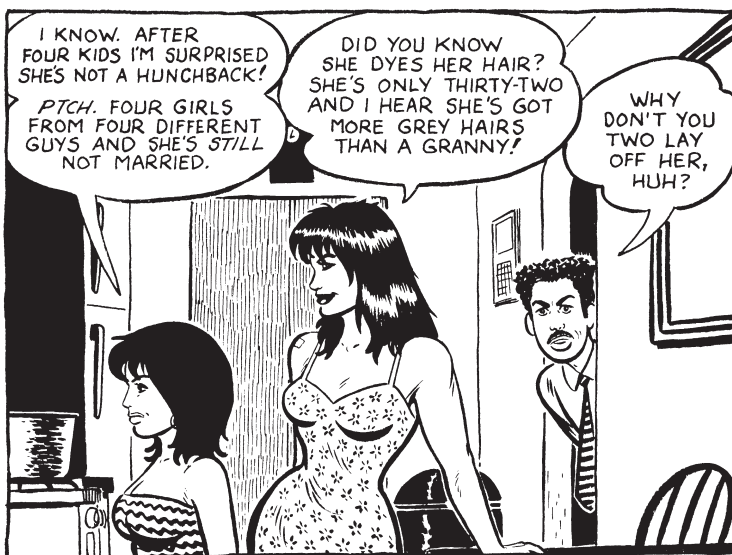
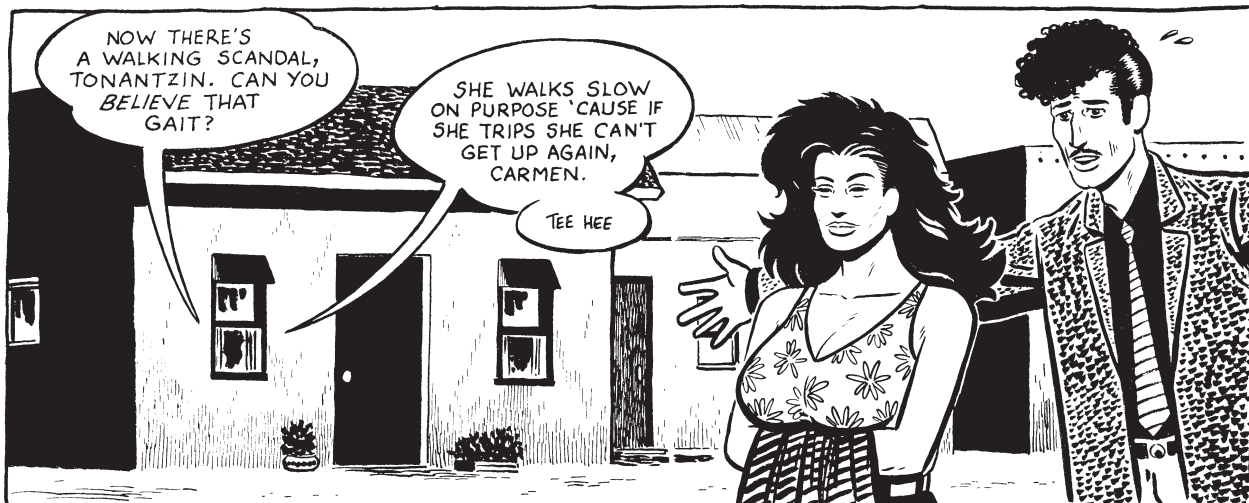
WHAT'S THE POINT?

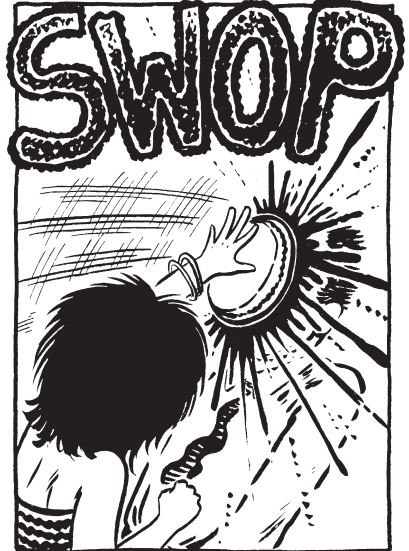
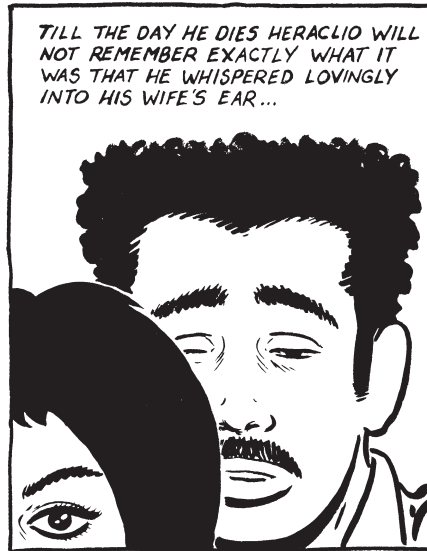
WHO EVER REALLY LEARNS ANYTHING?

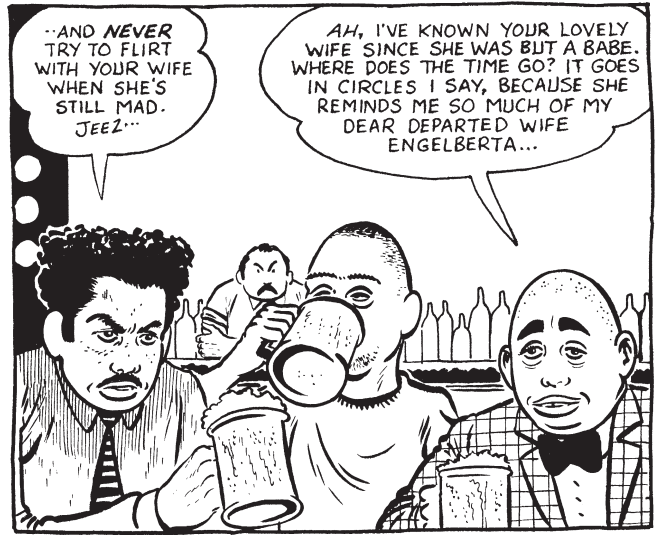
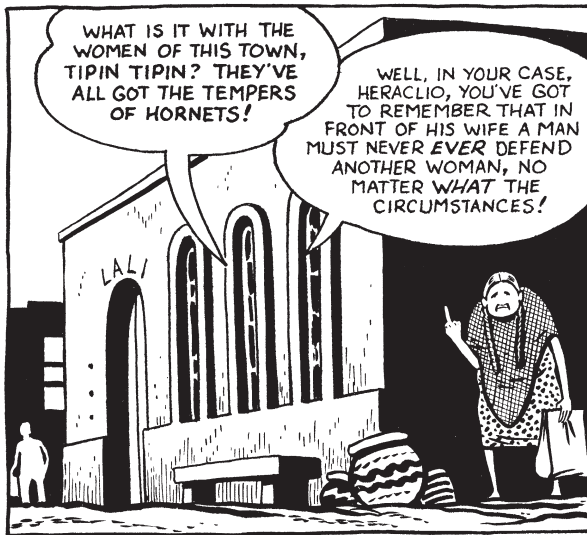
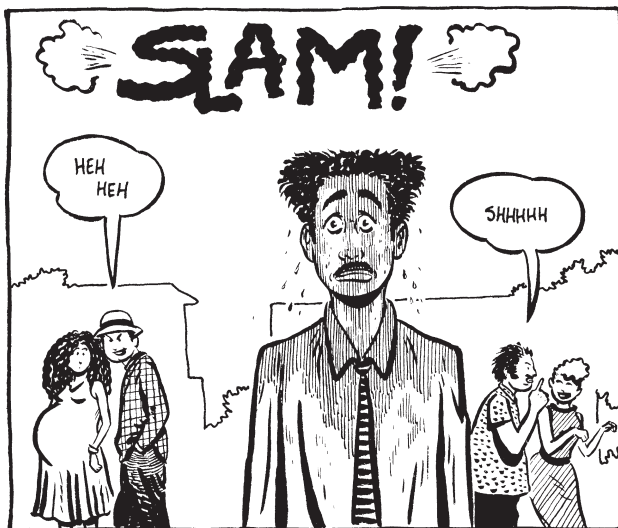
EEAAUUURRGH...

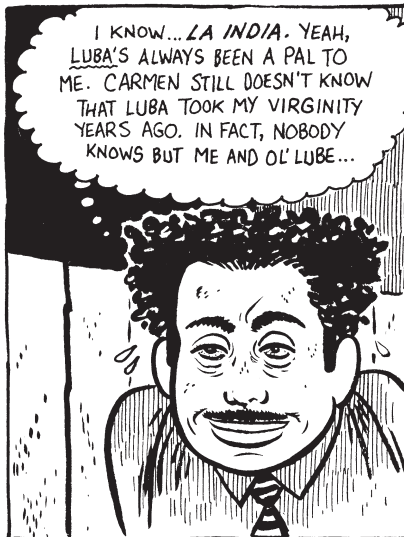
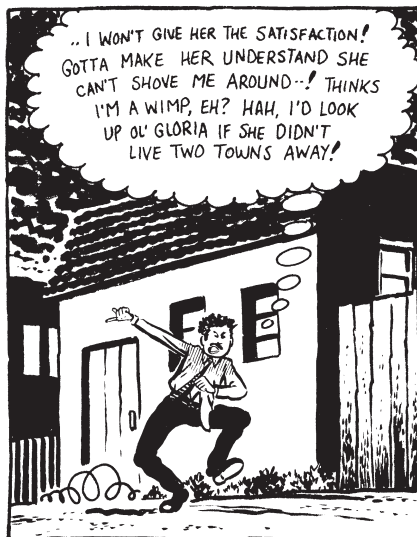
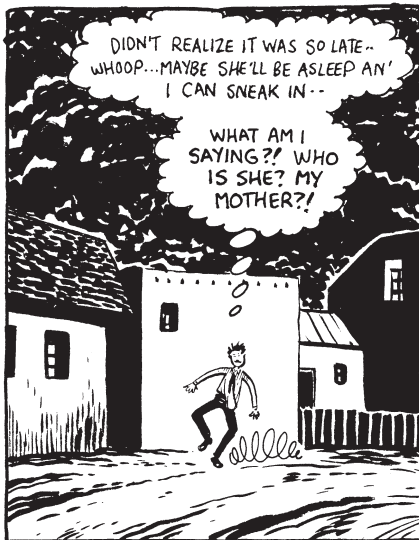
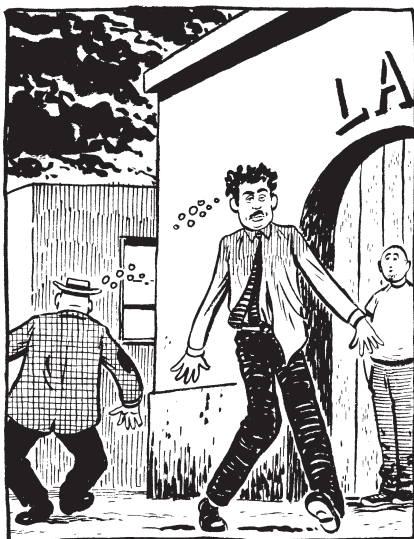










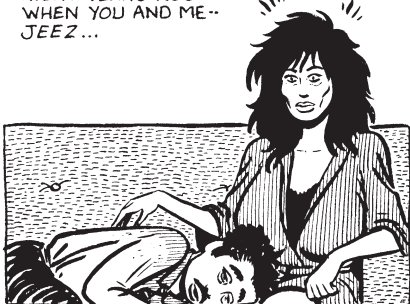




SIGH, I'M HERE BECAUSE OF MY WIFE CARMEN...SHE LOVES THIS TOWN, THE PEOPLE...WELL, NOT EVERYBODY. SHE'S NOT TOO CRAZY ABOUT YOU, Y'KNOW...

A FRIEND TRIED TO TELL ME THAT WAS BECAUSE CARMEN AND I HAVEN'T BEEN ABLE TO HAVE KIDS AND YOU'RE NOT MARRIED AND YOU'VE GOT FOUR GIRLS RUNNING AROUND. I DUNNO, CARMEN WON'T SAY ANYTHING...

MAN, CAN SHE BE UNREASONABLE! IF SHE KNEW ABOUT THAT NIGHT YEARS AGO WHEN YOU AND ME-- JEEZ...

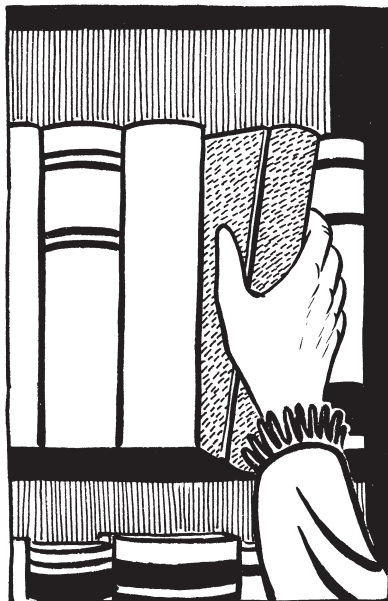
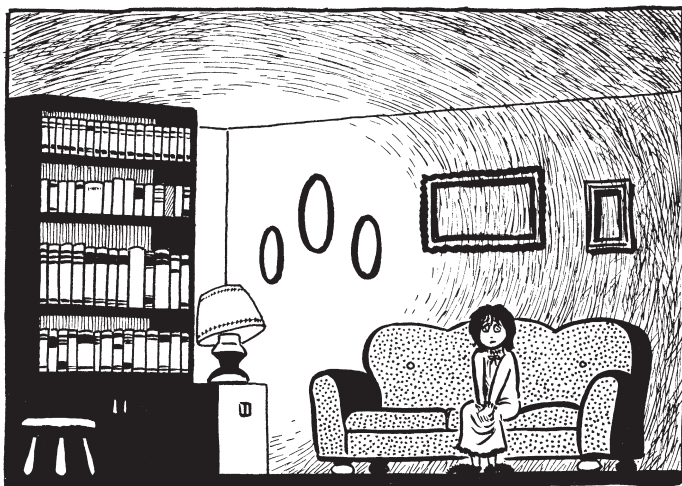


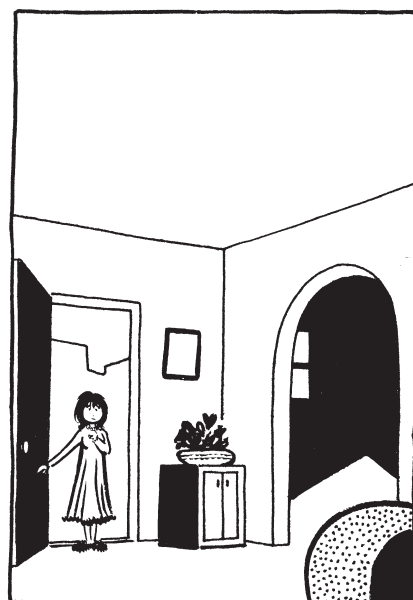
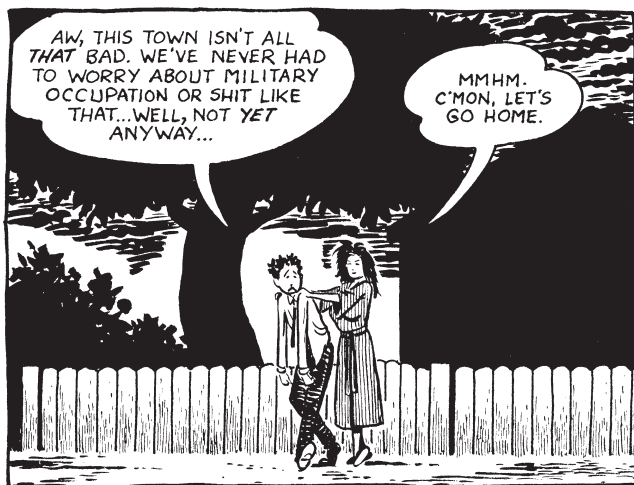
LUBA HAD ALMOST FORGOTTEN ABOUT THAT ENCOUNTER. IT WAS SUCH A TRIVIAL MATTER TO HER THEN THAT SHE WAS NOT CERTAIN WHICH OF THE BOYS SHE HAD SEDUCED THAT NIGHT...



HEY, LUBA...ABOUT THAT NIGHT...? WHY...HOW COME? I MEAN, I WAS JUST A DUMB KID, I DIDN'T... WHY? WHAT WAS IN IT FOR YOU...?







THE WAY THINGS'RE GOING

BETO85

VICENTE CAME HOME ONE DAY LOOKING PRETTY BEAT. HE HAD JUST LOST HIS JOB AT THE PLANT.



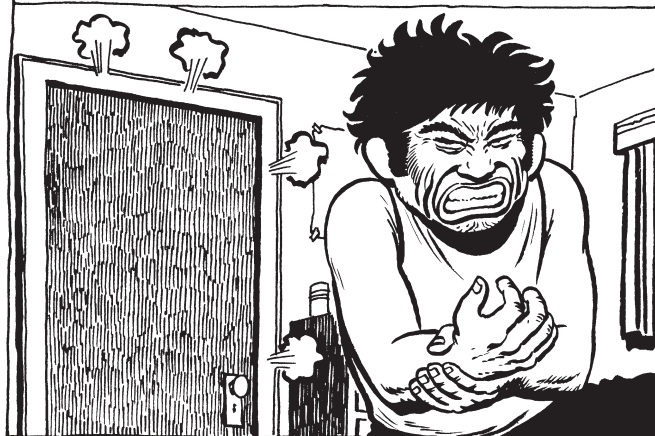
HE SAID THEY DIDN'T GIVE HIM ANY REASON FOR THE SACK AND WHEN HE WENT TO TALK TO ONE OF THE BOSSES, GATO, A GUY HE'S KNOWN FOR AT LEAST TWENTY YEARS, THE BUM SAYS "IT'S OUT OF MY HANDS." AND THAT WAS IT! LIKE KNOWING A GUY FOR TWENTY YEARS DOESN'T MEAN A GODDAMN THING! THEY WEREN'T BOSOM BUDDIES BUT THEY WEREN'T GODDAMN ENEMIES, EITHER!



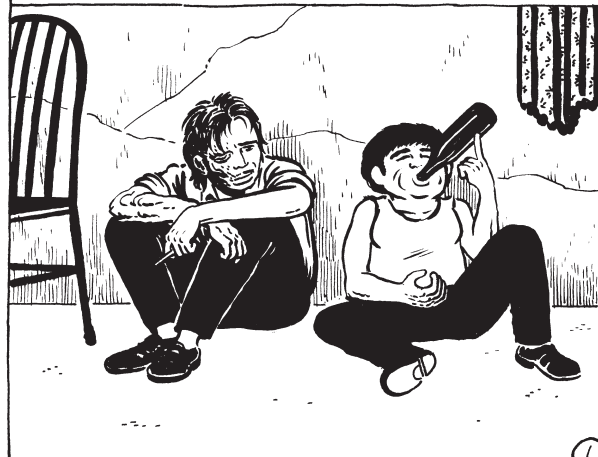
I'D BEEN OUT OF A JOB MYSELF FOR THREE WEEKS WITH NO PROSPECTS IN SIGHT. I WAS ALREADY DOWN TO MY LAST FEW BUCKS AND MOST OF VICENTE'S LAST CHECK WENT TO PAYING OFF HIS DEBTS. DON'T EVEN MENTION WOMEN ...



I FORGET WHY, BUT WE GOT INTO A FIST FIGHT. I BUST TWO KNUCKLES 'CAUSE THAT RIGHT SIDE OF HIS FACE IS PRETTY TOUGH. HE WALKS OUT WITH ONLY A POPPED LIP.



VICENTE COMES BACK WITH A BOTTLE OF CHEAP WINE AND WE'RE PALS AGAIN.



WE PUT ON OUR GOOD SUITS AND HIT DOWNTOWN. INSTEAD OF JOBS FALLING INTO OUR LAPS, WE FIND OURSELVES IN THE MIDST OF DOZENS OF PEOPLES IN THEIR GOOD SUITS WITH THE SAME LOOK ON THEIR FACES THAT I'VE BEEN SEEING IN THE MIRROR LATELY.



WE MUST HAVE COVERED THIRTY PLACES THAT DAY. EVERYWHERE WE WENT THERE MUST HAVE BEEN AT LEAST TWENTY GUYS AHEAD OF US. CONSTRUCTION JOBS, CARWASHES, DISHWASHERS, EVEN THE LOWEST SHIT JOBS WERE TAKEN; THE JOBS ONLY THE POOREST OF THE POOR LOCAL INDIANS USUALLY ACCEPT. VICENTE AND I CONSIDER BECOMING HOUSEWIVES.



LATER WE MEET UP WITH A FRIEND OF VICENTE'S FROM PALOMAR NAMED LUBA. I DON'T USUALLY GET ALONG WITH THEM INDIANS FROM UP NORTH, BUT SHE'S O.K.; SHE'S NOT STUCK UP LIKE MOST OF HER PEOPLE.



WHILE THEY SHOOT THE SHIT I STEP OVER TO THE CURB TO SCRAPE OFF SOME DRIED DOGSHIT FROM MY HEEL. THIS LADY PASSING BY LOOKS AT VICENTE AND LUBA AND CRACKS TO HER FRIEND, "NOW AREN'T THEY A PAIR..."



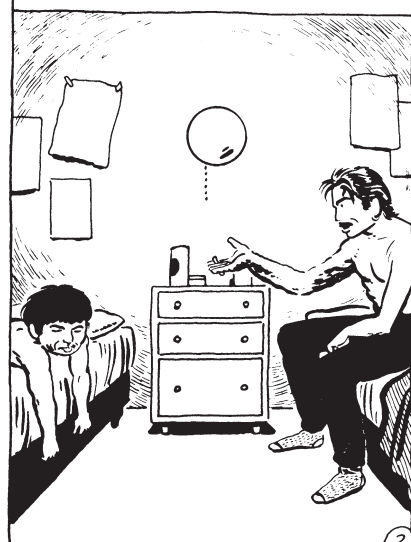
VICENTE AND LUBA OVERHEAR THIS AND THEY FIGURE THE BITCH WAS REFERRING TO VICENTE'S MISMATCHED SHOES. HE WAS HOPING NO ONE'D NOTICE THAT HE HAD DYED A BROWN RIGHT SHOE TO MATCH HIS BLACK LEFT ONE.



AFTER LUBA'S GONE VICENTE TELLS ME HE DIDN'T MENTION TO HER OUR SORRY SITUATION EVEN THOUGH HE WAS SURE SHE WOULD'VE BEEN GLAD TO HELP US OUT MONEYWISE. PRIDE. IT'LL KILL YOU, I'M TELLING YOU.



THAT NIGHT AT HOME I MAKE MY USUAL SOUNDS ABOUT JOINING THE ARMY AND ONCE AGAIN VICENTE TALKS ME OUT OF IT...



VICENTE FIGURES WE'LL BE FIGHTING THE U.S. FOR SOME REASON OR ANOTHER SOONER OR LATER. HE'S PROBABLY RIGHT, THE WAY THINGS ARE GOING...

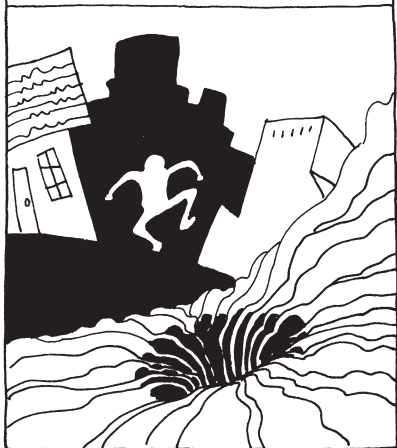


AS I DRIFTED OFF TO SLEEP I RECALLED SOME PARTICULAR NEWS FROM THE U.S. I'D HEARD THAT DAY: A MARRIED MAN AND WOMAN WERE ATTACKED ON THE STREET BY TEENAGED BOYS WHO MISTOOK THE WOMAN FOR A GUY. UH...DID THOSE GUYS EXPECT TO KILL THAT COUPLE, BECAUSE THEY DIDN'T; OR DID THEY THINK A BLACK EYE OR A BUSTED ARM WILL PREVENT THE SPREAD OF A.I.D.S.?



YEAH, WELL, THE WAY THINGS ARE GOING THE EARTH OUGHT TO BE ASSUMED FLAT AGAIN IN A FEW YEARS...

I HAVE THIS DREAM AND VICENTE'S FRIEND LUBA'S IN IT. SHE'S FALLEN INTO THIS DEEP HOLE AND I'M RUNNING AROUND TRYING TO FIND HER SOMETHING TO EAT. I DON'T UNDERSTAND DREAMS MYSELF...



A WEEK PASSES AND OUR LUCK REMAINS PATHETIC. WE'RE DOWN TO ONE MEAL A DAY. RICE AND COCA COLA. THE MUTTS IN OUR NEIGHBORHOOD BEGIN TO LOOK TASTY. WELL, ALMOST.

I WAKE UP ONE MORNING AND VICENTE'S ALREADY GONE. YOUR CHANCES OF BEING HIRED SOMEWHERE ARE BETTER IF YOU'RE ALONE ANYWAY, SO I GET DRESSED AND I'M OUT THERE.



FUCKING BROAD DAYLIGHT AND THESE KIDS JUMP ME AND STEAL MY COAT AND WHAT'S LEFT OF MY MONEY.



I SAT THERE BOTH LAUGHING AND CRYING. I SHOULD HAVE SOLD THE COAT MYSELF FOR EXTRA CASH LIKE I HAD PLANNED BEFORE.

FOR A DELIRIOUS MOMENT I THOUGHT OF GOING BACK TO MY WIFE, BUT I CAME TO MY SENSES BEFORE I EVEN SCRAPPED MYSELF UP OFF THE DIRT.



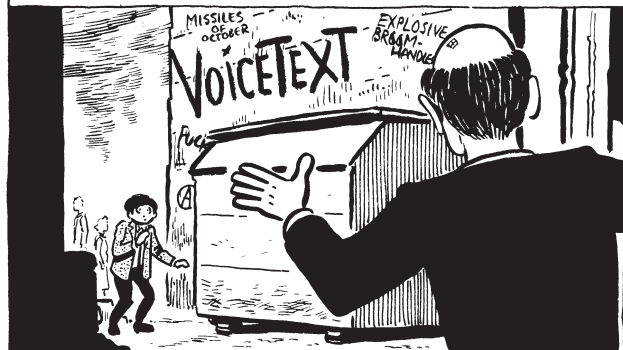
I WENT HOME TO GET MY NOT-SO-GOOD COAT AND SET OFF AGAIN. I DIDN'T WANT TO GIVE MYSELF ANY TIME TO SIT AROUND THE HOUSE TO MOPE IN SELF-PITY.



BY MIDDAY I WAS FEELING SHITTY; MY SIDES HURT FROM THOSE KIDS' GOD DAMN HARD SHOES, I WAS FAMISHED AND A GORGEOUS NUBIAN MAIDEN CAUGHT ME PICKING MY NOSE.



I SLIP INTO AN ALLEY TO SPIT UP IN PRIVATE WHEN THIS GUY IN A SHARP SUIT COMES OUT OF THE BACK DOOR OF THIS DINKY RESTAURANT AND HE ASKS ME IF I WANT A JOB. I ALMOST SHIT. IT'S ONLY A LOWLIFE BUS BOY DEAL, BUT THE WAY THINGS ARE GOING ...



WE WALK INTO THE SMALL SMELLY KITCHEN AND I MEET THE COOK. I MANAGE TO TALK 'EM INTO A QUICK MEAL THAT THEY DEDUCT FROM MY PAY. WELL, I TOOK ONE BITE AND WAS OUT OF THERE LIKE A FLASH.



I WALKED FAST BECAUSE I DIDN'T WANT TO GIVE MYSELF ENOUGH TIME TO CHANGE MY MIND OUT OF DESPERATION. OR OUT OF SENSE. THE FASTER I WALKED THE MORE ANGRY I GOT. WAS I ANGRY...!



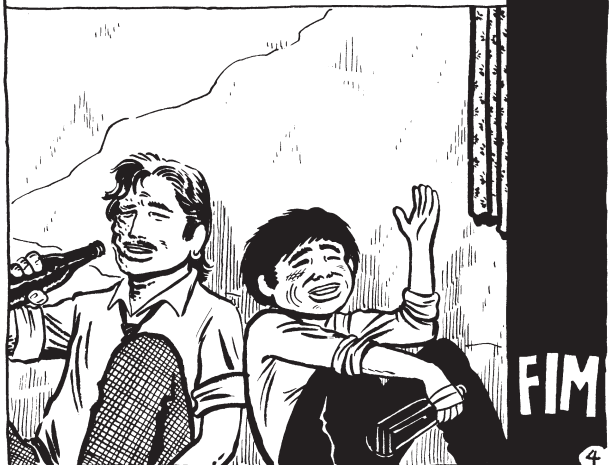
THAT ASSHOLE IN THE SHARP SUIT TELLS ME THAT ANOTHER GUY HAD BEEN IN EARLIER FOR THE JOB BUT THEY DIDN'T HIRE HIM BECAUSE HALF HIS FACE WAS FUCKED UP AND HE MIGHT HAVE KEPT CUSTOMERS AWAY. THEY TOLD HIM IT WAS BECAUSE OF HIS EARRING. AND KNOWING THAT DAMN VICENTE HE PROBABLY BELIEVED 'EM!



I FOUND VICENTE AT HOME BUSILY PREPARING A STEAK DINNER FOR THE BOTH OF US. TWO BOTTLES OF COLD GERMAN BEER AWAITED OUR PARCHED PALATES. HIS GOOD SUIT COAT WAS NOWHERE TO BE SEEN.



PRIDE. IT'LL KILL YOU, I'M TELLING YOU.



LOOK, I DON'T DESCRIBE THINGS VERY WELL. I'M NO WRITER. I SOMETIMES FORGET WHAT I'M SAYING, UH...IN MID-SENTENCE WHETHER I'M TALKING TO ONE PERSON OR TO ONE THOUSAND. ANYWAY, I'LL TRY TO MAKE THIS AS QUICK AND EASY AS POSSIBLE ON EVERYONE, OK?

ALL RIGHT, FIRST AND LAST THERE IS CARMEN. PERIOD. CARMEN, MY JEWEL IN THE CROWN, MY SALVATION FROM OBLIVION, MY LIGHT IN THE DARKNESS. CARMEN, THE CENTER OF THE UNIVERSE, THE LOVELIEST GROUP OF MOLECULES EVER TO ASSEMBLE. CARMEN THE ETERNAL FLAME...

CARMEN, CARMEN, CARMEN. MY STRENGTH AND MY WEAKNESS. FIRST AND LAST AND EVERYTHING IN BETWEEN... DO I MAKE MYSELF CLEAR?



for the Love of CARMEN

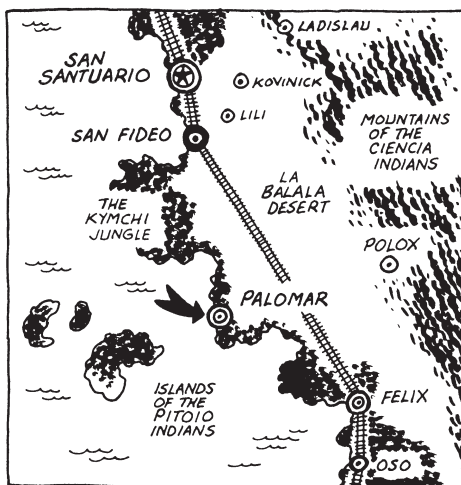
BETO 96

BY GILBERT 'THE RUSSIAN NIGHTMARE' HERNANDEZ-1986

THIRTEEN YEARS AGO, AFTER MY BIG SISTERS GOT MARRIED AND MOVED AWAY LEAVING ME ALONE WITH MY PARENTS, MOM CONVINCED DAD IT WAS TIME WE GOT OUT OF THE CITY WHERE I WAS RAISED AND WE MOVE TO A NICE, QUIET VILLAGE IN THE SOUTH. WELL, THAT VILLAGE WOULD TURN OUT TO BE OL' PALOMAR.



PALOMAR'S QUITE ISOLATED, EVEN FOR A SMALL TOWN. THE CLOSEST TRAIN STATION IS IN FELIX. THERE'S A PUBLIC BUS THAT COMES UP FROM FELIX BUT THAT'S ONLY IF THE DRIVER ISN'T TOO LAZY AND PRETENDS TO FORGET TO STOP HERE.



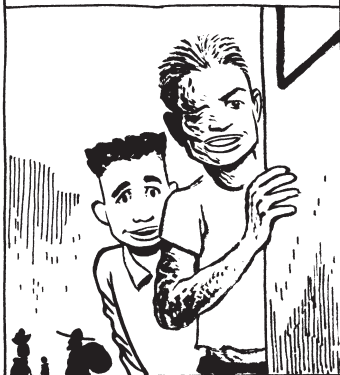
I THOUGHT MY PARENTS WERE JOKING. WE MAY AS WELL HAVE MOVED TO PLUTO! AFTER WE SETTLED IN, I ALMOST CRIED THE FIRST TWO WEEKS WE WERE THERE. I WAS SO MAD AND SCARED AND FRUSTRATED. I WASN'T TO START SCHOOL FOR ANOTHER COUPLE OF MONTHS, SO MOST OF THE TIME I SAT INDOORS LOOKING OUT MY BEDROOM WINDOW IN GROWING FASCINATION THE LOCALS GO ABOUT THEIR PLUVIAN BUSINESS.

WHEN MY FOLKS COULD STAND IT NO LONGER, THEY ORDERED ME TO GO OUT AND MAKE FRIENDS. TO THIS DAY THEY STILL WONDER IF THEY MADE THE RIGHT DECISION, CONSIDERING WHO TURNED OUT TO BE MY FRIENDS...

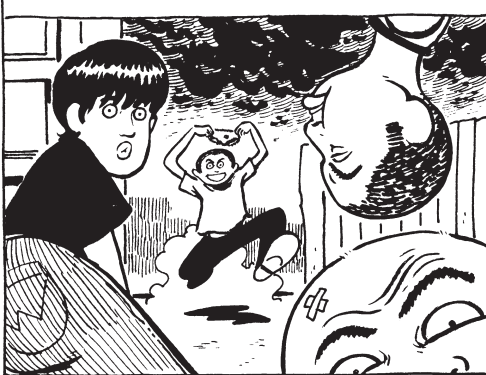


TRANSLATED BY BIG DADDY HIGGENBOTHAM

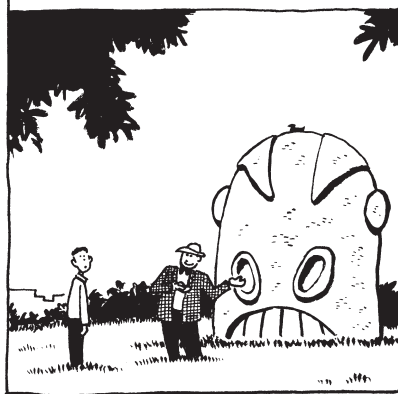
FIRST THERE WAS VICENTE. DESPITE HIS PROBLEM, HE WAS GENUINELY FRIENDLY AND AGREEABLE; YOU'D FORGET THAT HE SUFFERED FROM ASTHMA TIME TO TIME...



THEN THERE WAS LANKY AND FEY ISRAEL, THE ALWAYS HORNY SATCH, KEYED-UP AND CONFUSED JESUS AND HIS WHACKY LITTLE BROTHER TOCO. AFTER ONLY A WEEK OF HANGING OUT WITH THESE GUYS I COULDN'T IMAGINE LIVING ANYWHERE ELSE.



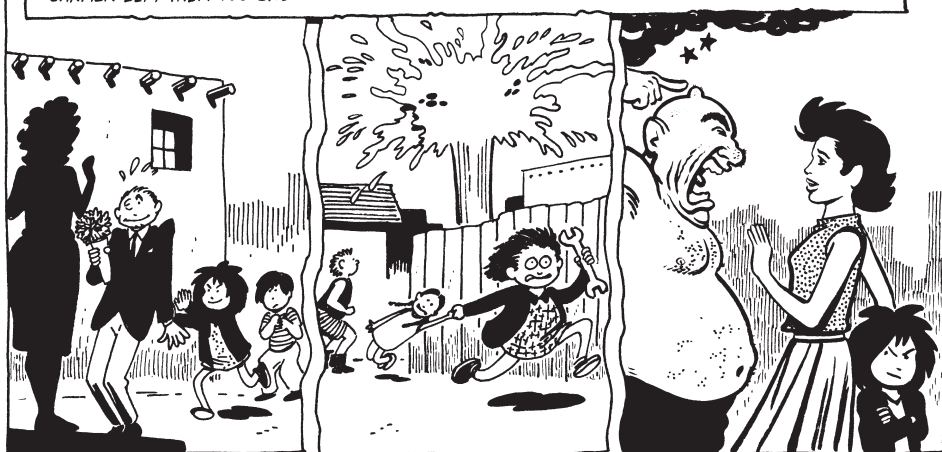
AS I BEGAN TO APPRECIATE THE BEAUTY OF MY NEW HOME AND ITS GOOD FOLK, THE ANTICS OF ONE PARTICULAR PERSON CAUGHT MY ATTENTION MORE TIMES THAN ANY OTHER.



I GUESS CARMEN JIMENEZ WAS ABOUT ELEVEN, BUT SHE LOOKED EIGHT. I WAS FOURTEEN. I DON'T THINK SHE KNEW I WAS EVEN ALIVE THEN.



WHETHER ALONE OR CONSPIRING WITH HER BROTHER AUGUSTÍN AND SISTER LUCIA, CARMEN SEEMED UBIQUITOUS; ALWAYS POKING IN OTHER PEOPLE'S AFFAIRS, SOMETIMES TO GOOD EFFECT, SOMETIMES NOT. HER POOR OLDER SISTER PIPO WAS ALWAYS THERE AFTERWARDS TO REPAIR THINGS IF CARMEN LEFT THEM TOO BAD.



I REMEMBER TRYING TO TELL MY FRIENDS OF CARMEN'S ESCAPADES, BUT THEY WEREN'T INTERESTED. THEY CONSIDERED CARMEN A CREEP. I DISCOVERED THEN THAT SHE HAD A NOT SO SECRET CRUSH ON ISRAEL. SHE REPULSED HIM, OF COURSE. SOMETIMES I'D WONDER WHY I BOTHERED HANGING OUT WITH THOSE GUYS AT ALL.



I CONTINUED TO ENJOY CARMEN'S ADVENTURES FROM AFAR; I SIMPLY KEPT THINGS TO MYSELF.



IF I COULDN'T ALWAYS TALK TO MY PALS ABOUT PERSONAL THINGS OR WHATEVER, MANUEL ALWAYS HAD TIME TO HEAR ME OUT. MANUEL WAS OLDER BUT HE LIKED ME FOR SOME REASON. I DON'T THINK HE EVER CALLED ME BY MY REAL NAME, THOUGH.



MANUEL FELT IT WAS HIS DUTY TO PREPARE ME FOR THE IMMINENT WORLD OF WOMEN AND ROMANCE, BUT HIS POETIC DESCRIPTIONS OF LOVEMAKING WERE TOO ABSTRACT, TOO OBLIQUE FOR THIS ADOLESCENT MIND TO GRASP, SO BEING THE EXPERT MASTURBATOR I WAS, I KEPT IMAGINING A GOOD SNEEZE AT THE END OF A ROLLER COASTER RIDE.



NO ONE COULD HAVE PREPARED ME FOR MY FIRST TIME, ESPECIALLY WHEN YOU CONSIDER IT WAS WITH LA INDIA LUBA. ! ONE MINUTE I'M IN HER LIVING ROOM TELLING HER I HAVE TO MY QUIT MY JOB DELIVERING FLYERS FOR HER BATHING BUSINESS, AND THE NEXT MINUTE -- ZOW!



YEAH, YEAH, I KNOW WHAT SOME OF YOU GUYS ARE THINKING, BUT I'M TELLING YOU, IT REALLY WASN'T MUCH FUN. MAYBE IF I WAS OLDER, IF I HAD EXPERIENCE, I DON'T KNOW... I MEAN, HELL, I DIDN'T REALLY KNOW WHAT CLOBBED ME TILL I WAS WELL ON MY WAY HOME.

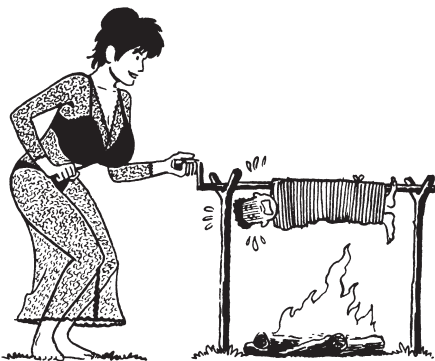


I REMEMBER SITTING IN MY ROOM SHORTLY AFTER IT HAPPENED AND MY MOTHER WAS TALKING ABOUT A BROKEN LAMP OR SOMETHING. RIGHT THEN I ALMOST TOLD HER, I SWEAR...



I COULDN'T TELL ANYBODY. I DON'T THINK LUBA TOLD ANYBODY EITHER BECAUSE IT'S MY GUESS THAT I WASN'T THE FIRST OR LAST BOY SHE'D PLANNED TO SEDUCE...

THAT SAME NIGHT I DIDN'T SLEEP MUCH. ONE MOMENT I'D FEEL TRIUMPHANT AND THE NEXT DISGUSTED AND HOLLOW...



THE NEXT MORNING I MASTURBATED JUST TO FEEL NORMAL AGAIN, BUT I FELT AWFUL, MAYBE WORSE...

THAT DRY, MATTED HAIR, HER APPALLINGLY OVERSIZED BREASTS, THAT-THAT UNNERVING HUSKY LAUGH... AND THE SMELL, THE SMELL, IT ALL SWAM STRONG IN MY HEAD FOR DAYS AND DAYS...

I THEN DECIDED I HAD TO TELL MY FRIENDS...



ISRAEL WAS IN ONE OF HIS USUAL "HEY LOOK, I'M AN ASS-HOLE" MOODS, SO I WASN'T GOING TO TELL HIM ANYTHING.



I ASKED SATCH WHAT HE'D DO IF LUBA EVER CAME ON TO HIM AND HE ALMOST SHIT. WITH THE FOULEST DESCRIPTIONS OF THE FEMALE BODY I'D EVER HEARD, SATCH MADE IT CLEAR HE WASN'T THE ONE TO TELL.

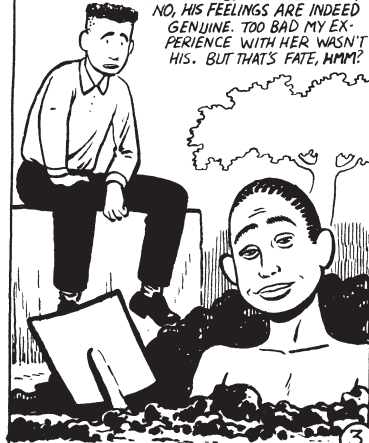


VICENTE WAS STILL DEPRESSED ABOUT TOCO DYING SUDDENLY THE WEEK BEFORE. I DIDN'T BOTHER TO BRING UP LA INDIA...



FUNNY, BUT JESUS WAS TAKING HIS LITTLE BROTHER'S DEATH REAL WELL, SO I SIMPLY CAME OUT AND ASKED HIM WHAT HE THOUGHT OF LUBA. TURNS OUT HE IS THE LAST GUY I'D EVER TELL OF MY EXPERIENCE!

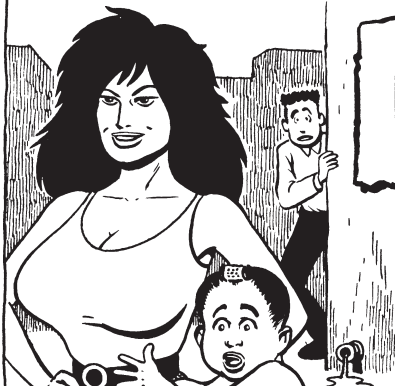
HE WAS, IS, AND PROBABLY ALWAYS WILL BE CRAZY ABOUT THE WOMAN. AND IT ISN'T JUST AN ADOLESCENT INFATUATION; NO, HIS FEELINGS ARE INDEED GENUINE. TOO BAD MY EXPERIENCE WITH HER WASN'T HIS. BUT THAT'S FATE, HMM?



WHEN I FOUND MANUEL HE WAS TOO BUSY HAVING HIS SECRET LOVE AFFAIR WITH PIPO BEING REVEALED TO THE WORLD BY PIPOIN HERSELF. I DECIDED THEN I WOULDN'T TELL ANYBODY, PERHAPS NEVER.



THAT WAS THE FIRST TIME I SAW LUBA SINCE THAT NIGHT... AND THE LAST TIME I SAW MANUEL ALIVE.



WHAT WITH TOCO SUCCEUNING TO A COUGH, LUBA SEDUCING ME, THEN MANUEL BEING SHOT TO DEATH BY HIS EX-LOVER SOLEDAD, AND ALL THIS HAPPENING WITHIN WEEKS OF ONE ANOTHER...! WELL. FOR SOME ODD REASON I NOSE DIVED INTO A DEEP DEPRESSION...



I BEGAN TO LOOSEN UP A BIT WHEN I STARTED SECONDARY SCHOOL. I QUICKLY MADE NEW FRIENDS THERE AND BECAME DISTANT TO THE GOINGS ON BACK HOME...

I DIDN'T HANG OUT MUCH ANY MORE...



THEN THERE WERE THE GIRLS IN SCHOOL! THE GIRLS!! I MUST HAVE BEEN THE WORLD'S HORNIEST HUMAN BEING BY THEN. SHORT, TALL, THIN, FAT, PRETTY, NOT SO PRETTY, I WANTED THEM ALL! EVEN THE SHALLOW, MATERIALISTIC GASHEADS! YOW!



I HAD FINALLY GOTTEN A HANDLE ON WHAT MANUEL WAS TALKING ABOUT!

I BEGAN TO THINK ABOUT HAVING REAL CONTACT WITH SOME OF THESE GIRLS AND I BECAME UNSETTLED. WOULD SEX WITH ONE OF THESE BEAUTIES BE LIKE IT WAS WITH LUBA? I GOT NAUSEOUS JUST THINKING ABOUT IT...

I GOT DEPRESSED. I BEGAN TO HATE WHAT LUBA DID TO ME. I BEGAN TO HATE HER.



BACK IN PALOMAR MY BUDDIES WERE DEALING WITH THEIR SEXUAL URGES THE WAY NORMAL TEENAGE BOYS DO: AND POOR TONANTZIN VILLASENOR WAS ONLY TOO HAPPY TO OBLIGE THEM. I HAD NO PART IN IT.



SECONDARY SCHOOL-HIGH SCHOOL TO LIS.

THEN I WENT AWAY TO COLLEGE. THE SCHOOL WAS UP NORTH AND I MAJORED IN MUSIC. IT WAS THE FIRST TIME I LIVED AWAY FROM MY PARENTS. DAD'S WORK SENT THEM BOTH TO LIVE IN COLOMBIA, SO I DIDN'T KNOW WHERE I WAS GOING TO GO AFTER I GRADUATED. AND I KIND OF LIKED THAT FEELING OF... OF FREEDOM, I GUESS...

IN COLLEGE I ENJOYED THE COMPANY OF FOLKS WHO APPRECIATED DISCUSSING THE LIKES OF EZRA POUND, POLITICS, VAN GOGH, THE IMPORTANCE OF DARK BEER...

MY FEW ENCOUNTERS WITH IGNORANCE WERE WHEN PALOMAR WAS MENTIONED. IT WAS CONSIDERED A JOKE TOWN FILLED WITH RAVISHING CRO-MAGNON WOMEN, IDIOTS AND MONGOLOID THUGS. BUT I WAS THE EXCEPTION, OF COURSE. I'M ONE OF THE 'GOOD' ONES, YOU KNOW.



SHALLOW, MATERIALISTIC GASHEADS-YUPPIES

SOMETIMES WHEN I WAS ALONE I'D RECALL THE GOOD TIMES I HAD IN PALOMAR. THEN I'D WORRY ABOUT VICENTE'S FUTURE. I RECOGNIZED I WAS LUCKY TO HAVE WHAT I HAD, BUT WHERE'D THAT LEAVE MY FRIENDS?!



MY COLLEGE MATES WERE WRONG ABOUT PALOMAR, OF COURSE. IT DIDN'T MATTER, ANYWAY... PALOMAR NEVER NEEDED THE REST OF THE WORLD'S PERMISSION TO EXIST.

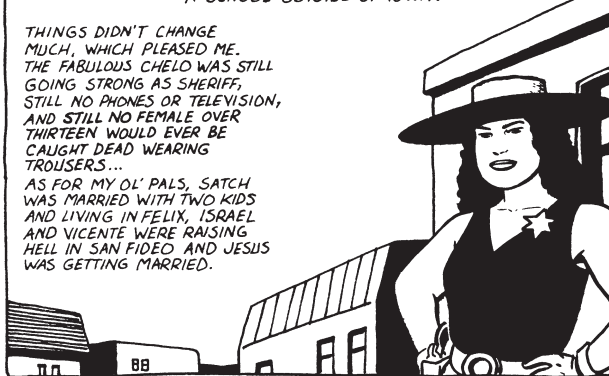


I WENT THROUGH FOUR YEARS OF COLLEGE WITHOUT ONCE BECOMING INTIMATE WITH A WOMAN.

I GRADUATED AND DECIDED TO RETURN TO PALOMAR. I GOT A JOB TEACHING MUSIC AT A SCHOOL OUTSIDE OF TOWN.

THINGS DIDN'T CHANGE MUCH, WHICH PLEASED ME. THE FABULOUS CHELO WAS STILL GOING STRONG AS SHERIFF, STILL NO PHONES OR TELEVISION, AND STILL NO FEMALE OVER THIRTEEN WOULD EVER BE CAUGHT DEAD WEARING TROUSERS...

AS FOR MY OL' PALS, SATCH WAS MARRIED WITH TWO KIDS AND LIVING IN FELIX, ISRAEL AND VICENTE WERE RAISING HELL IN SAN FIDEO AND JESUS WAS GETTING MARRIED.



I MET LUBA ON THE STREET AND SHE TREATED ME LIKE AN OLD FRIEND, EVEN IF SHE KEPT FORGETTING MY NAME. WE SETTLED ON HERCULES AND IT'S STUCK SINCE.

I WASN'T MAD AT HER ANY MORE. I THINK I HAD EVEN MISSED HER A LITTLE...



IT WAS AT JESUS' WEDDING WHERE I FIRST SAW MY BUDDIES TOGETHER AGAIN. HOME COOKING WAS ALREADY RESHAPING SATCH'S FIGURE, CITY LIFE WAS MAKING ISRAEL CYNICAL, WHILE IT WAS HAVING NO EFFECT ON VICENTE AT ALL. POOR JESUS LOOKED MORE CONFUSED THAN EVER. EVEN THEN I KNEW HIS MARRIAGE WOULDN'T LAST. GOD, HOW I MISSED THOSE GUYS!



TONANTZIN HAD VERY MUCH GROWN UP AND HASN'T LET ANYONE FORGET IT SINCE.

JESUS AND LAURA GOMEZ WERE MARRIED THREE YEARS. SHE WAS A DECENT SORT. SHE AND JESUS SIMPLY DID NOT BELONG ON THE SAME PLANET TOGETHER, THAT'S ALL.



AND THEN...THERE SHE WAS. SHE OFFERED ME A FRIED BABOSA, BUT I DIDN'T RECOGNIZE HER AT FIRST; WHEN I DID, I SHUDDERED AS IF AN ICE-CUBE WAS SHOVED UP MY ASS.



WE STUMBLED AROUND SMALL TALK. SHE SEEMED REALLY IMPRESSED WITH MY, ER, ACADEMIC STANDING, EVEN IF SHE KEPT FORGETTING MY NAME. BUT I WAS USED TO THAT.



ISRAEL INTERRUPTED AND STARTED UP WITH HIS USUAL CRUDE REMARKS ABOUT WOMEN IN GENERAL, AS IF HE WAS SEEING JUST HOW FAR HE COULD GO BEFORE CARMEN FLIPPED.

WELL, SHE DIDN'T. INSTEAD, SHE STOOD THERE AND TOOK EVERY BIT, AS IF SHE DESERVED IT OR SOMETHING...

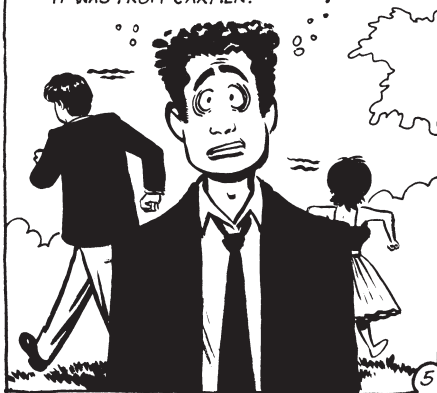


I GUESS I HAD ONE DRINK TOO MANY, BECAUSE THE NEXT THING I KNOW --

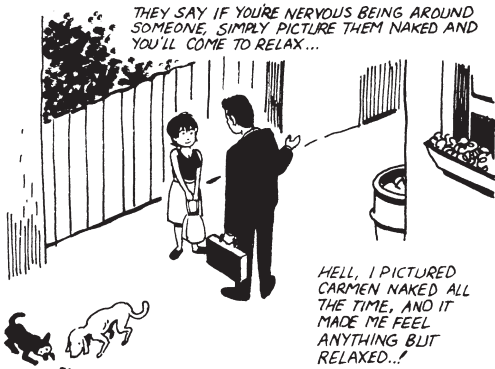


THEN I FELT LIKE SHIT. EVERYBODY KNOWS THAT ISRAEL HAS NEVER HIT ANYONE SMALLER THAN HIMSELF, SO HE JUST CUSSSED ME OUT AND WALKED AWAY.

IT WAS THE FIRST AND LAST TIME ANYBODY EVER CALLED ME A BULLY. AND IT WAS FROM CARMEN.



AS TIME PASSED WE'D SEE EACH OTHER ON THE STREET AND SAY A FEW FRIENDLY WORDS. SHE SEEMED TO GET PRETTIER EVERY TIME I SAW HER. NO, MAKE THAT GODDAMN BEAUTIFUL.



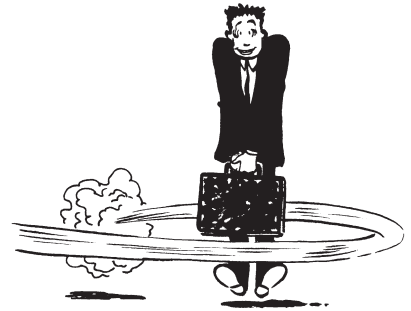
THEY SAY IF YOU'RE NERVOUS BEING AROUND SOMEONE, SIMPLY PICTURE THEM NAKED AND YOU'LL COME TO RELAX...

HELL, I PICTURED CARMEN NAKED ALL THE TIME, AND IT MADE ME FEEL ANYTHING BUT RELAXED...

IT WAS WHEN I ACCIDENTALLY DROPPED MY BRIEFCASE AND WE BOTH REACHED FOR IT THAT I KNEW...



MY BODY SURGED WITH AN ENERGY I THOUGHT WAS ONLY RESERVED FOR BODYBUILDERS OR HONEST EVANGELISTS! CARMEN MUST HAVE EXPERIENCED A SIMILAR JOLT, BECAUSE SHE LOOKED AT ME THE WAY A CAT DOES WHEN YOU SURPRISE IT AND TOOK OFF LIKE A FLASH.



THAT WAS ALL I NEEDED TO KNOW. THE VERY NEXT DAY I WENT UP TO SAN FIDEO TO SEE PIPO...

EVEN THOUGH IT WAS OBVIOUS HER HUSBAND GATO WAS DOING VERY WELL FOR HIS FAMILY, THINGS MUST HAVE BEEN DULL FOR PIPO. SHE WAS REALLY HAPPY TO SEE ME. AND WE HAD NEVER EVEN BEEN INTRODUCED BEFORE THEN.



MAN, THAT WOMAN CAN TALK. SHE ACTED LIKE LUBA DID WHEN I FIRST CAME BACK, TREATING ME LIKE AN OLD FRIEND, REMINISCING THE GOOD OL' DAYS. I COULD SENSE SHE STILL HADN'T GOTTEN OVER MANUEL.

WHEN HER MONOLOGUE FINALLY SWUNG MY WAY, I BLURTED OUT THE FACT THAT I WANTED TO MARRY HER SISTER. PIPO'S EYES LIT UP.



PIPO FELT HER SISTER LUCIA WOULD MAKE A GOOD WIFE, BUT DIDN'T I THINK SHE WAS A LITTLE YOUNG STILL?

I TOLD HER I WANTED TO MARRY CARMEN, NOT LUCIA.

YOU SHOULD HAVE SEEN PIPO'S FACE.



SHE SAT QUIET FOR A MOMENT AS IF I HAD TOLD HER MANUEL WAS ACTUALLY STILL ALIVE.

SHE SMILED AND WISHED ME LUCK.

WHEN I LEFT I COULD SWEAR I HEARD PIPO BEHIND THE DOOR LAUGHING...



A MORNING OR SO LATER I FIGURED I WAS A NUT. I DIDN'T EVEN KNOW CARMEN. NOT REALLY. FOOL.



I DIDN'T GO TO WORK THAT DAY. I PUT ON MY BEST SUNDAY SUIT AND AT A GOOD DISTANCE I CIRLED CARMEN'S HOUSE ALL DAY LONG TILL IT WAS DARK.

I COULDN'T BRING MYSELF TO KNOCK ON THE DOOR OR TO GO AWAY. I NEVER SAW ANYONE ENTER OR LEAVE THE HOUSE IN ALL THAT TIME.



MAYBE I WAS HOPING SOMEBODY INSIDE MIGHT NOTICE ME AND CALL ME OVER. MAYBE I WAS A BLASTED IDIOT.

I FELT LIKE A FOOL FOR MISSING WORK AND SHOWED UP AS USUAL THE NEXT DAY.



BUT WHEN I GOT HOME I SNUCK UP ON SOMEBODY'S ROOF AND SAT THERE WATCHING CARMEN'S HOUSE BLOCKS AWAY.

I SAW CARMEN AND HER FAMILY IN AND OUT ALL AFTERNOON. I STAYED UP THERE UNTIL NIGHT AND WHEN FINALLY THE LAST LIGHT WAS OUT, I WENT HOME. WITH A COLD.



THE NEXT DAY I DITCHED WORK AGAIN. I AGAIN PUT ON MY BEST SUIT AND AGAIN I CIRCLED CARMEN'S HOUSE AT THAT COMFORTABLE DISTANCE.

THIS TIME I SAW AUGUSTIN AND LUCIA IN AND OUT ALL DAY, BUT NO CARMEN.



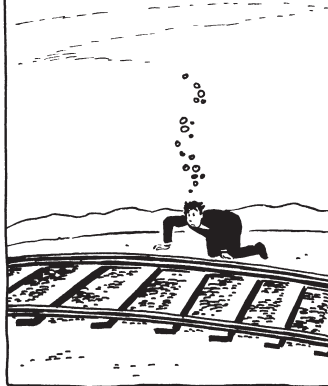
FEELING VERY STUPID AND USELESS, I STARTED HOME. THEN I HEARD LOUD LAUGHING FROM THE HOUSE. I SWEAR, IT SOUNDED LIKE PIPO AND CARMEN! I TRIED TO GET AWAY AS FAST AS I COULD WITHOUT BLOWING IT.



I DIDN'T GO HOME. I WENT TO THE BAR AND GOT SMASHED.



NEXT THING I KNOW I'M BANGING MY HEAD AGAINST THE RAILROAD TRACKS WHICH LIE OVER SIX KILOMETERS FROM TOWN...



I HAD A LOT OF TIME TO THINK ABOUT WHAT I WAS DOING AS I WALKED HOME.



I MANAGED TO MAKE IT INTO TOWN BEFORE NOON WITHOUT BEING SEEN BY ANYONE I KNEW.



AT HOME I GOT CLEANED UP AND CHANGED MY SUIT. I SAT INSIDE ALL DAY AND WAITED FOR THE NIGHT. THEN I WENT OUT.



UPON REACHING THE ISLAND, I HEADED STRAIGHT FOR THE MAIN VILLAGE.



I GAVE THEM TWO HUNDRED AND EIGHTEEN FRANCS, SIX BACK ISSUES OF COSMOPOLITAN, AND A FRAMED AUTOGRAPHED PHOTO OF AMERICAN FILM STAR CONRAD BAIN. IN RETURN I WAS GIVEN THE WORKS.





I KNOCKED THREE TIMES AND LUCIA OPENED UP AND LET ME IN...



I ASKED CARMEN'S MOTHER ELVIRA FOR CARMEN'S HAND IN MARRIAGE. ELVIRA LOOKED AT ME LIKE I WAS MAKING FUN OF HER.



IN ELVIRA'S OWN WORDS: "IT WAS JUST ME AND MY LITTLE PIPO IN THOSE DAYS. BEFORE THE TOURISTS DISCOVERED THE SWAP MEET, WHEN YOU COULD STILL HAGGLE OR TRADE, BEFORE THE FIXED PRICES AND GOVERNMENT TAXES..."



"AND THERE BETWEEN THE BLIVITZ VENDOR AND THE WORLD'S WORST POTTERY SAT THE DEMON ALL ALONE. PINNED TO HER SACK WAS THE NOTE WHICH READ 'GOOD RIDDANCE'." I STILL HAVE THAT NOTE SOMEWHERE..."



"NATURALLY I WAS DISGUSTED THAT THE SWAP MEET HAD SUNK THIS LOW. I CURSED THEM ALL AND THEIR GRANDMOTHERS AS WELL. THEN I BROUGHT THE CHILD HOME WITH ME."



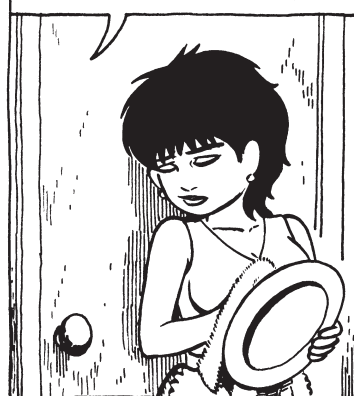
"SHE WAS THE MOST WELL-BEHAVED CHILD I HAD EVER SEEN. PIPO WAS JEALOUS AND TEASED HER A LOT, BUT THE CHILD NEVER WHINED ONCE. I NAMED HER CARMEN AFTER MY GREAT GRANDMOTHER WHO FOUGHT IN THE LEGENDARY SIX DAY LAUNDRY WAR..."



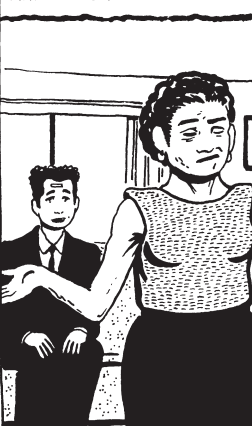
"WHEN SHE FINALLY DECIDED TO SPEAK, THE THINGS THAT CAME OUT OF THAT TINY MOUTH COULD HAVE TURNED THE NASTIEST OF CONVICTS WHITE..."



"WHEN SHE GOT OLDER IT WAS WORSE. SHE WOULD INSULT PEOPLE, ANYBODY WITH THE COLDEST, CRUELEST WORDS... AND SO QUIETLY, SO SERIOUS... NO MATTER HOW BAD I PUNISHED HER SHE WOULDN'T STOP. SHE DOES IT TO THIS DAY. PEOPLE DON'T TALK TO HER MUCH BECAUSE WHO KNOWS IF SHE'LL BE IN ONE OF HER MOODS? I'VE KNOWN THOSE WHO'VE WANTED TO KILL HER..."



THEN WHEN ELVIRA WAS THROUGH SHE ASKED ME IF I STILL WANTED CARMEN. I SAID YES. ELVIRA THOUGHT FOR A MINUTE AND THEN SIGHED, WHISPERING SOMETHING TO HERSELF THAT MAY HAVE BEEN GOOD RIDDANCE.



IT FELT LIKE I WAS LEFT ALONE IN THE ROOM LONG ENOUGH TO FINISH HALF OF WAR AND PEACE. WHEN CARMEN FINALLY ENTERED SHE DIDN'T LOOK OLDER THAN TWELVE...



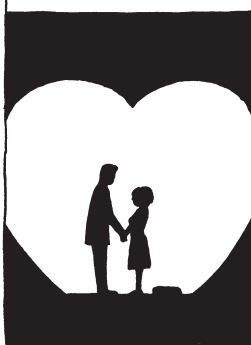
I LET HER HAVE IT, BOTH BARRELS. I COULDN'T STOP MYSELF. I TALKED AND TALKED HOPING TO CONVINCE HER I WASN'T JUST SOME LOCO OFF THE STREET. OF COURSE, I PROBABLY SOUNDED JUST LIKE SOME LOCO OFF THE STREET...



THEN WHEN I FINALLY PAUSED TO CATCH MY BREATH, SHE SPOKE. SHE ASKED ME IF I HAD EVER HAD SEX WITH ANYONE BEFORE. FLAT OUT, JUST LIKE THAT, COMPLETELY SERIOUS...



MY MIND ANSWERED "YES," BUT MY MOUTH SAID "NO." I DON'T KNOW WHY I SAID NO BUT IT WAS WHAT SHE WANTED TO HEAR BECAUSE THEN SHE AGREED TO MARRY ME. FLAT OUT, JUST LIKE THAT...



WE SET THE DATE AND EVERYTHING WAS GOING GREAT. I FELT STRONG AND CONFIDENT AND MY PARENTS WERE HAPPY AND MY BUDDIES THOUGHT I WAS LOCO BUT WERE HAPPY FOR ME JUST THE SAME AND THE FOLKS IN TOWN WERE HAPPY --



...I BEGAN HAVING SERIOUS DOUBTS. I STARTED GETTING NERVOUS AND CONFUSED.

DOUBT TURNED TO PARANOIA WHICH TURNED TO NEAR PANIC...

CARMEN ONLY AGREED TO MARRY ME BECAUSE SHE THOUGHT I WAS A VIRGIN; AT LEAST THAT'S WHAT I CONVINCED MYSELF.

I WAS OBSESSED WITH THIS PREDICAMENT! IN MY FEVERED MIND MY LITTLE LIE TOOK ON GALACTIC PROPORTIONS!



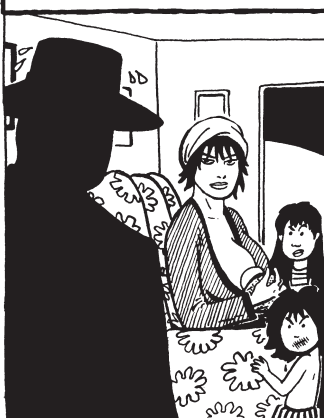
I FIGURED IT WAS THE WORKS I GOT ON THE ISLAND! WERE THE EFFECTS WEARING OFF, OR DID THE INDIANS RECOGNIZE THE QUESTIONABLE VALUE OF MY TRADE AND BEGIN TO SOMEHOW REVERSE THE PROCESS? I RE-SIGNED MYSELF TO THE LATTER EXPLANATION, OF COURSE. GOD, WAS I A WRECK!



I WENT TO THE BAR TO TRY TO DRINK MYSELF INTO SOME KIND OF ANSWER. AFTER KNOCKING BACK A FEW I HEADED STRAIGHT FOR LUBA'S HOUSE.



I BURST IN WITHOUT KNOCKING, LIKE SOMEONE READY TO ANNOUNCE TO HIS FAMILY THAT WORLD WAR THREE HAD FINALLY BEGUN...



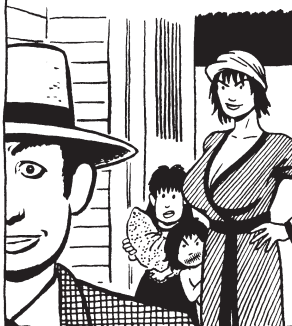
I TOLD LUBA THAT CARMEN MUST NEVER FIND OUT ABOUT THAT NIGHT. I MUST HAVE LOOKED PRETTY BAD, PRETTY SERIOUS, BECAUSE LUBA IMMEDIATELY AGREED. I'M NOT SURE NOW THAT SHE REALLY KNEW WHAT I WAS TALKING ABOUT...



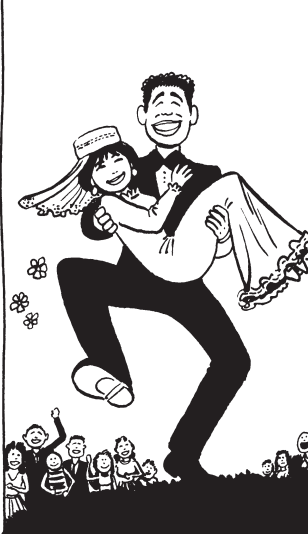
I APOLOGIZED FOR BEING A JERK AND AS I BEGAN TO LEAVE I FELT MY CONFIDENCE RAPIDLY RETURNING! I BEGAN TO FEEL STRONG, LIKE THE TIME CARMEN AND I FIRST TOUCHED HANDS --!

FROM BEHIND ME I COULD HEAR LUBA IN A MOCKING VOICE, 'GOOD LUCK ON YOUR IMPRISONMENT--OH, I MEAN MARRIAGE, GUY...

I DIDN'T CARE. I COULD HAVE KICKED LARRY HOLMES' ASS THE WAY I WAS FEELING...



OUR WEDDING WAS NICE; NO FIGHTS, NO BARFING...

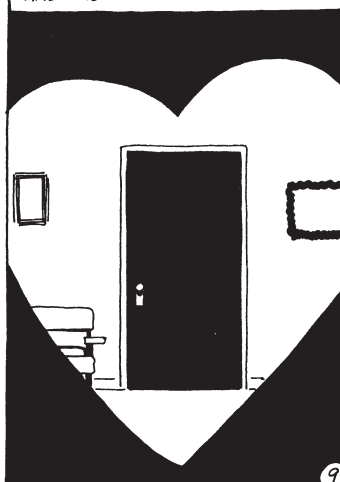


THAT NIGHT AS WE PREPARED FOR BED, I BEGAN TO FEEL A LITTLE GUILTY FOR WANTING HER SO BAD, LIKE SOME DROOLING, Slobbering JOHN...

I GOT OVER THAT QUICK ENOUGH, THOUGH.



ALL I WILL SAY ABOUT OUR FIRST NIGHT TOGETHER IS THAT IT WAS FAR LOYLIER THAN WHAT'S DELINEATED IN THOSE BOGUS LETTERS TO PENTHOUSE MAGAZINE MONTH AFTER MONTH...



WE'VE BEEN MARRIED FOR FOUR YEARS NOW. CARMEN GETS PRETTY SCARED NOW AND THEN BECAUSE SHE DOESN'T KNOW WHO SHE REALLY IS OR WHERE SHE'S FROM...

CARMEN HANGS OUT WITH TONANTZIN A LOT. GOD, AND WHEN THOSE TWO ARE TOGETHER NO ONE IS SAFE. I LOVE MY WIFE, BUT MAN, CAN SHE BE A JERK...!



TONANTZIN'S QUITE THE HOMEWRECKER, YOU KNOW. DRESSES UP LIKE SOME CARTOON WHORE AND MANIPULATES THE WEAKER GUYS LIVES JUST FOR THE FUN OF IT. AND CARMEN CONDOES IT? WELL, MAYBE IT IS FAIR. ONCE THE EXPLOITED, NOW THE EXPLOITER. PERSONALLY, I THINK THE GIRL'S A BIT OF A CREEP.



CARMEN KNOWS NOW ABOUT THAT NIGHT WITH ME AND LUBA. EVEN THOUGH IT HAPPENED LONG BEFORE WE WERE MARRIED, CARMEN WAS SURE TO BRING IT UP WHENEVER SHE WAS LOSING AN ARGUMENT, SAYING I WAS A LIAR AND THAT I TRICKED HER INTO MARRIAGE, BLAH-BLAH...



WELL... SHE DOESN'T BRING IT UP IN FIGHTS ANY MORE; NOT AFTER HER LITTLE 'THING' WITH ISRAEL.

THREE MONTHS AGO, RIGHT AFTER DINNER, OUT OF THE BLUE CARMEN BROKE DOWN CRYING AND CONFESSED TO CHEATING ON ME.



ABOUT A YEAR AGO WHILE I WAS AT WORK ISRAEL WAS IN TOWN VISITING HIS FOLKS. CARMEN SAW HIM AND INVITED HIM IN. THEY TALKED ABOUT OLD TIMES AND CRAP LIKE THAT AND... WELL, SHE CLAIMS NOBODY PLANNED IT, IT JUST HAPPENED. I CAN FUCKING IMAGINE...



SHE TELLS ME WHEN IT WAS OVER BOTH SHE AND ISRAEL FELT SO ROTTEN THAT HE PROMISED HER HE'D NEVER RETURN TO PALOMAR AGAIN.

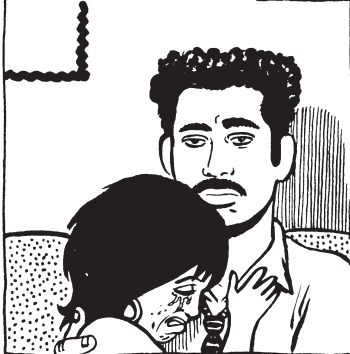


AS IT TURNS OUT, CARMEN GOT PREGNANT. CONVINCED IT WAS ISRAEL'S KID AND NOT MINE, CARMEN HAD IT ABORTED. SHE DID IT FOR FEAR THAT I'D FIND OUT WHO'S KID IT WAS SOONER OR LATER AND SHE'D LOSE ME FOR SURE...



IT'S A RARE OCCURRENCE IN OUR PART OF THE COUNTRY WHEN A WOMAN HAS AN ABORTION. IT'S CONSIDERED A MORAL CRIME COMPARABLE TO KILLING ONE'S OWN PARENTS! OR ONE'S OWN CHILDREN.

I TRIED TO COMFORT HER DESPITE MY IMMEDIATE FEELINGS, BUT THAT MADE HER FEEL MORE GUILTY...



SO THERE I WAS, A WALKING TUMOR OF SEETHING FRUSTRATION WITH NO OBVIOUS OUTLET IN SIGHT.

I MEAN, I COULDN'T SOMEHOW PUNISH HER. SHE'D ALREADY SUFFERED ENOUGH, SHE IS SUFFERING TO THIS DAY...



A FEW NIGHTS AFTER SHE GAVE ME THE GOOD NEWS I SNUCK OUT WHILE SHE SLEPT AND I GOT ALARMINGLY DRUNK. I AGAIN FOUND MYSELF BANGING MY HEAD AGAINST THOSE GOOD OL' RAIL-ROAD TRACKS SO FAR FROM HOME...



THIS TIME I MANAGED TO MAKE IT HOME BEFORE DAWN. AND THIS TIME I DIDN'T GO TO THE ISLAND FOR THE WORKS. THIS TIME I CAME HOME TO MY WIFE. AND TO MY LIFE...

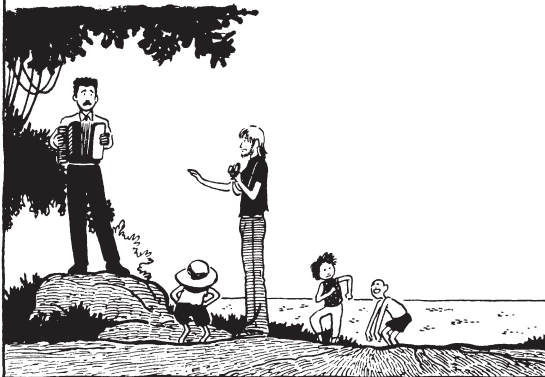


THE LAST TIME I SAW ISRAEL WAS RIGHT BEFORE HIS AND CARMEN'S THING.

THE AMERICAN PHOTOGRAPHER HOWARD MILLER WAS IN PALOMAR USING OUR TOWN AS THE SUBJECT FOR A PHOTOJOURNAL...



MILLER RELATED TO ME SEVERAL FIRST HAND ACCOUNTS OF WHAT HE'D SEEN IN CAMBODIA, NICARAGUA, SOUTH AFRICA... HE SHOWED ME A FEW SHOTS HE TOOK IN EL SALVADOR I WON'T SOON FORGET. I ASKED HIM WHY PALOMAR, THEN? WE AREN'T NEWS TO ANYBODY. HE SAID THIS TIME HE JUST WANTED TO SHOW THE PURE BEAUTY OF INNOCENCE INSTEAD OF THE HORROR THAT USUALLY DESTROYS IT.



IT WAS WHEN MILLER BECAME INVOLVED WITH TONANTZIN THAT THINGS WENT TO SHIT.

I DON'T REALLY KNOW WHAT HAPPENED BETWEEN THEM, BUT IT RESULTED IN HIS LEAVING FOR THE STATES IN A HURRY AND TONANTZIN LEFT HURT AND PREGNANT.



CARMEN FLIPPED! HER RACIST TENDENCIES EXPLODED LIKE I'D NEVER SEEN BEFORE! SHE JUST ABOUT BLAMED THE ENTIRE WHITE RACE FOR HURTING TONANTZIN...

SHE WAS OUT OF LINE, SO I LET HER HAVE IT. SO ALL OF A SUDDEN SHE'S A MIND READER AND SHE KNEW EXACTLY HOW MILLER FELT ABOUT IT. OF COURSE, CARMEN WENT AFTER ME NEXT...



EVEN AFTER HE WAS LONG GONE I NOTICED A LOT OF FOLKS IN TOWN WERE PRETTY MAD AT MILLER, BUT I COULD SEE THAT MOST OF THEM WERE JUST USING HIM AS AN EXCUSE TO VENT THEIR RACIST ANTI-WHITE AMERICAN BILE IN PUBLIC.

AND EVERYTIME I STUCK UP FOR MILLER, I GOT IT, TOO.



WELL, ALMOST EVERYTIME. I REMEMBER LUBA BITCHING ABOUT HOW MILLER WAS CLEARLY EXPLOITING US ALL, AND WAS GOING TO GET RICH AND FAMOUS TO BOOT...

THIS TIME I CHICKENED OUT AND KEPT MY MOUTH SHUT. I JUST DIDN'T FEEL LIKE HAVING LUBA'S WRATH UPSIDE MY HEAD, TOO...

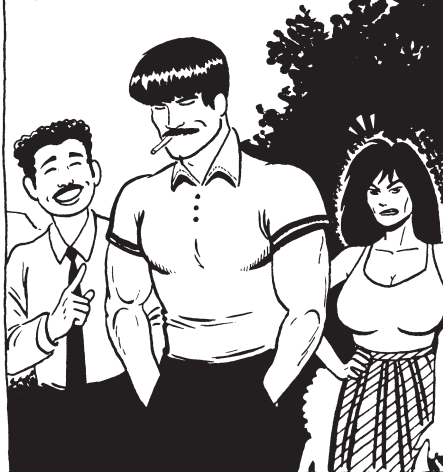


THEN ISRAEL SPOKE UP AND DEFENDED HIM! ISRAEL SAID MAYBE MILLER WASN'T SUCH A GREAT GUY, BUT IF IT WASN'T FOR HIS BOOK ABOUT PALOMAR, NOBODY MIGHT EVER KNOW WE EVEN EXISTED!

SO WHEN MILLER'S GONE AND WE'RE ALL GONE AND THIS TOWN'S GOOD AND GONE, EITHER FLATTENED BY BOMBS OR HAVING BEEN RENDERED UNRECOGNIZABLE WITH SKYSCRAPERS AND MALLS, HIS BOOK MIGHT BE ALL WHAT'S LEFT OF US...OUR WORLD, OUR LIVES...



IT WAS PROBABLY THE FIRST TIME ISRAEL AND I EVER AGREED ON SOMETHING, EVEN IF IT WAS ONLY PARTIALLY. WHAT WAS THE WORLD COMING TO...?



NOW I FIND OUT ABOUT HIM AND MY WIFE, AND-- WELL, THAT'S ALL IN THE PAST, LIFE GOES ON, RIGHT? SHIT...

I GOT A LETTER FROM MILLER A FEW WEEKS BACK. HE STILL HASN'T FOUND A PUBLISHER FOR HIS BOOK YET. SAYS HE STILL THINKS OF TONANTZIN A LOT...



FUNNY, BUT LUBA AND I HAVE BECOME PRETTY GOOD BUDDIES IN THE LAST YEAR OR SO. CARMEN STILL DOESN'T LIKE HER BUT SHE USUALLY KEEPS QUIET ABOUT IT...



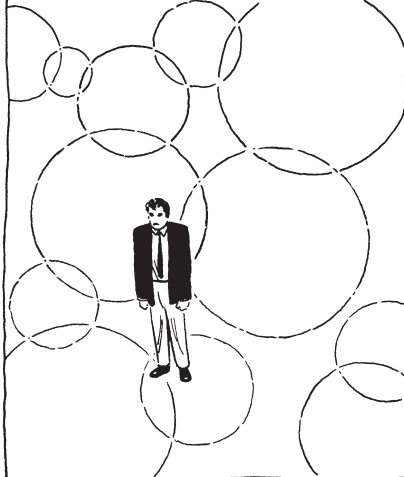
LAST I HEARD OF VICENTE, HE WAS ON HIS WAY TO THE UNITED STATES WITH SOME GUYS TO FIND DECENT WORK. I GET THIS...FEELING, I DON'T KNOW, THIS FEELING THAT I'LL NEVER SEE VICENTE AGAIN. I TRY NOT TO THINK ABOUT IT...



WHAT CAN I SAY ABOUT OL' SATCH. SATCH IS SATCH. SATCH IS SATCH. ALWAYS AND FOREVER. AT THE RATE HIS WIFE MARTA'S HAVING KIDS, THEY OUGHT TO BE STARTING THEIR OWN COUNTRY SOON.



ISRAEL. HUH. WELL, AS FAR AS I CAN TELL, HE'S KEPT HIS PROMISE TO CARMEN, BECAUSE NOBODY'S SEEN HIM FOR A LONG TIME, NOT EVEN HIS FOLKS. TO BE HONEST, I CAN'T SAY I MISS HIM.



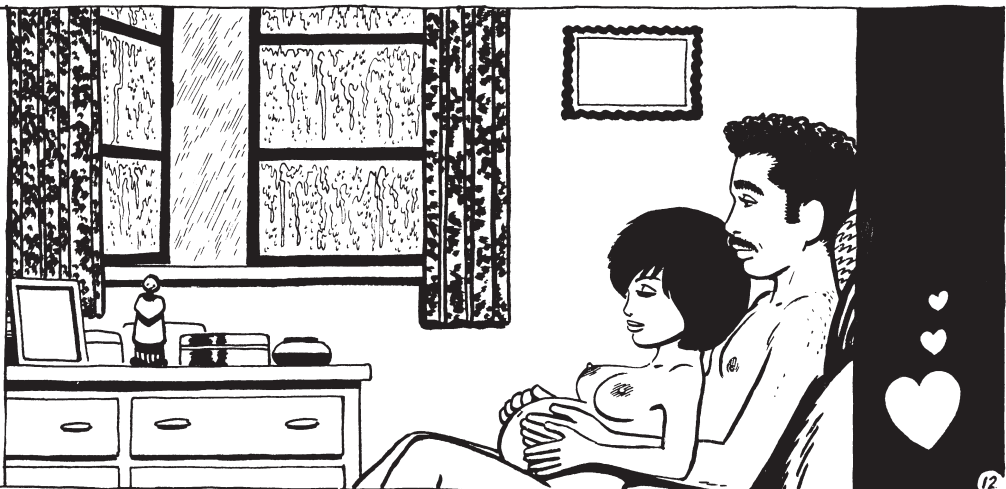
JESUS OUGHT TO BE GETTING OUT OF PRISON SOON IF HE'D ONLY STOP BEATING UP ON THEM GUARDS...



PIPO'S BACK LIVING IN PALOMAR AND IS IN THE PROCESS OF DIVORCING OL' GATO. THIS MAKES CARMEN PRETTY HAPPY, NOT TO MENTION THE LOCAL BACHELORS.

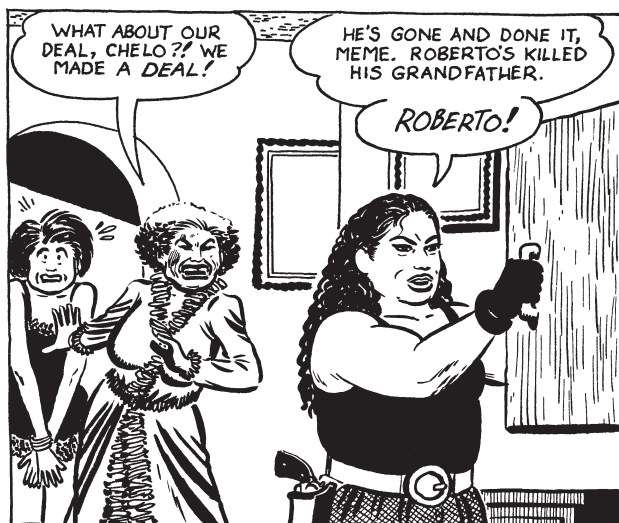


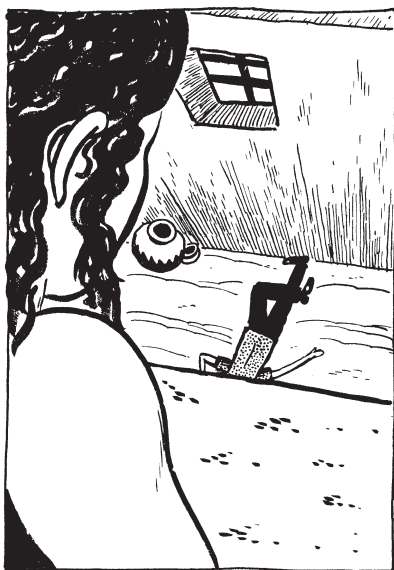
WELL, I GUESS THAT'S ALL...UM, CARMEN'S PREGNANT NOW, SO WE'RE PRETTY HAPPY. I'M A LITTLE WORRIED FOR HER BECAUSE SHE'S SO TINY AND HAVING A KID CAN BE AN ORDEAL. BUT LIFE'S AN ORDEAL SOMETIMES, RIGHT? LIFE, LOVE, IT'S HARD WORK, RIGHT? YEAH, SIGH... I'LL ADMIT IT, THOUGH, SOMETIMES WHEN I'M DOWN, SOMETIMES IT ALL JUST MAKES ME WANT TO BANG MY HEAD ON--NAW, NAW, HEH. JUST KIDDING, REALLY... HEH, HEH, JEEZ...



DUCK FEET







"YEARS AGO AS A MIDWIFE CHELO HELPED BRING ROBERTO INTO THE WORLD; NOW AS SHERIFF SHE HAS HELPED TAKE HIM OUT. IT'S A SIN, ALL RIGHT. A BLOODY SIN..."

OSKAR BENEVENTE, 35,
SHOE REPAIRMAN

"HIS GRAMPA WAS ALWAYS, YOU KNOW, TRYING TO, UM... I'M JUST GLAD HE CAN'T BUG ME ANYM-- OH GOD. THAT'S MEAN, ISN'T IT? OH, I'M SO AWFUL..."

DIANA VILLASEÑOR, 16,
STUDENT



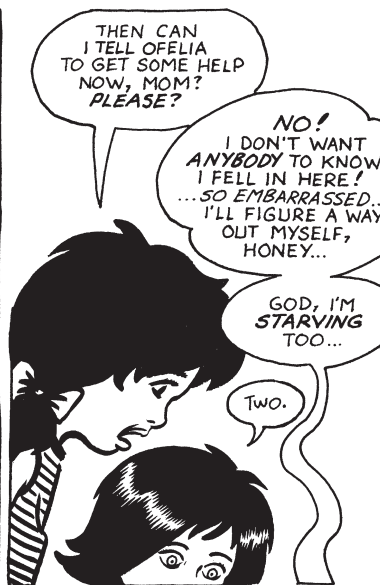
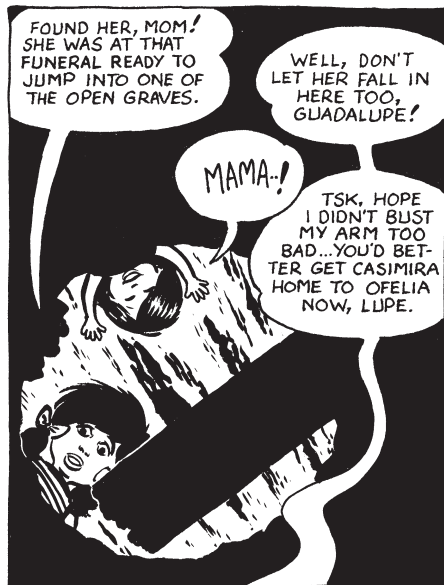
GATO! YOUR BROTHER AND GRANDFATHER AREN'T YET FIVE MINUTES INTO THE GROUND AND ALREADY YOU'RE ACTING SILLY!

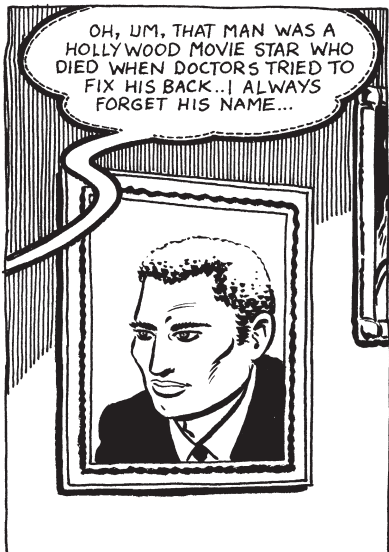
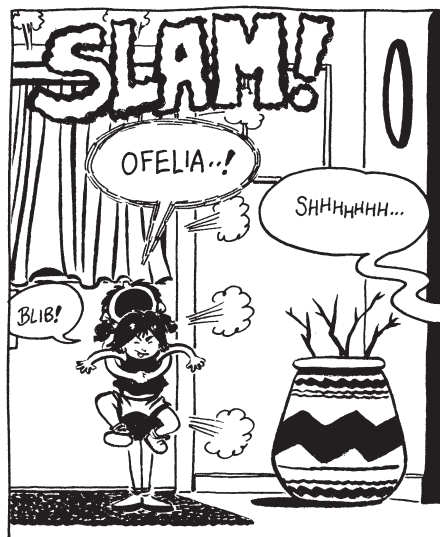
WHAT'S DONE IS DONE, PIPO. LIFE GOES ON...



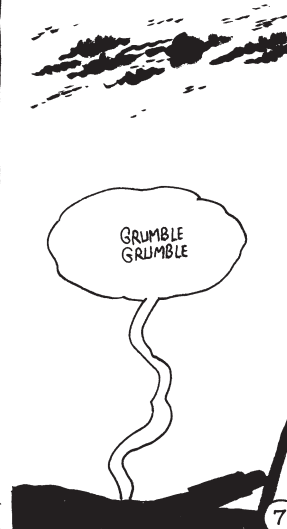
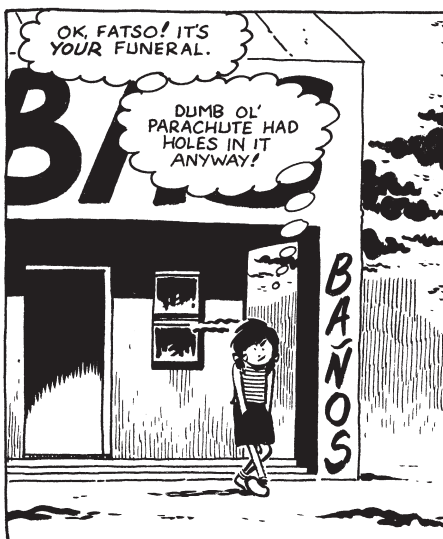
ME AND DEATH HAVE AN UNDERSTANDING, MI AMOR. I CALL HIM OUT EVERYDAY AND EVERYDAY HE BACKS OFF. I JUST MAY DECIDE TO LIVE FOREVER...

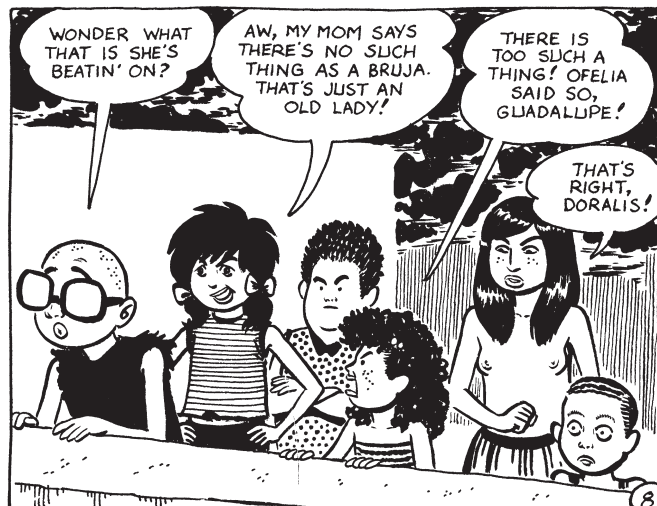
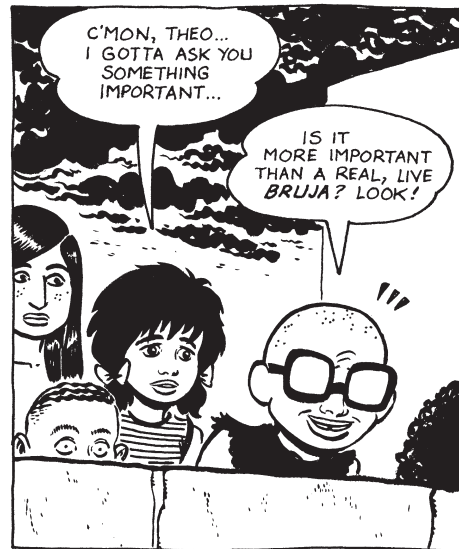
OH, DON'T START WITH YOUR CREEPY BULLSHIT. CAN'T YOU SHOW RESPECT FOR AT LEAST TEN MINUTES? YOU'RE SO COLD...



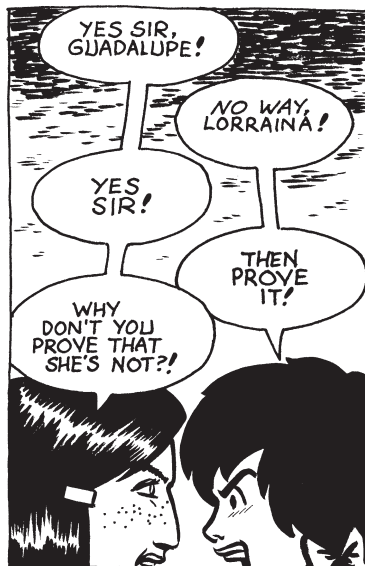


· CURANDERA · HEALER, WITCH DOCTOR · MOVIE STAR · JEFF CHANDLER





BRUJA-BREW'HAH (WITCH)



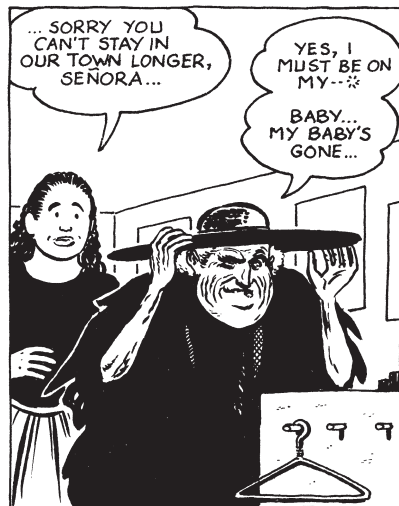


BANADADORA/ BANADORA- BATH GIUER





THE CHILDREN FLEE
FOR FEAR OF THE
UNKNOWN, SAVE
GUADALUPE; SHE RUNS
BECAUSE OF WHAT SHE
KNOWS...



... SORRY YOU
CAN'T STAY IN
OUR TOWN LONGER,
SEÑORA...

YES, I
MUST BE ON
MY...

BABY...
MY BABY'S
GONE...



YOUR
B--?

THE LEATHER
POUCH? MY
BABY--!

MAYBE
IT'S ON THE
FLOOR, OR...

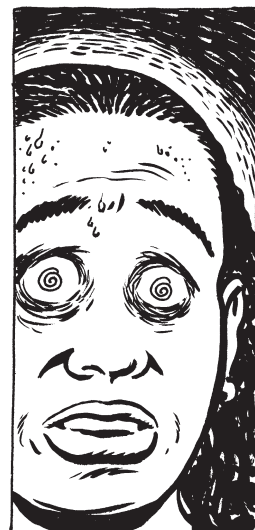
YOU'VE
TAKEN
IT!

CARCEL



N-NO... I DIDN'T
EVEN KNOW YOU--
YOU... UHH...

DEMANDADO



TO BE
CON-
CLUD-
ED IN
PART
TWO

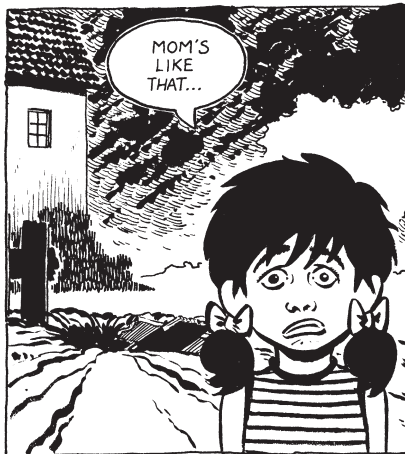
DUCK FEET

Part TWO

by BETO/86

NOW LISTEN HERE,
YOU ALL! THIS IS SHERIFF
TONANTZIN TALKIN' AND I'M
NOT TOLERATING ANY
FUNNY STUFF IN MY
TOWN, HEAR?!

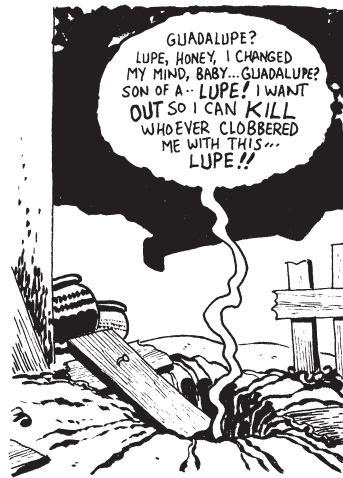
LUBA HAS ACCIDENTALLY FALLEN INTO A DEEP PIT AND IS TOO EMBARRASSED TO GET HELP. ONLY HER DAUGHTER GUADALUPE KNOWS OF LUBA'S PREDICAMENT BUT THE CHILD WAS SWORN TO SECRECY.

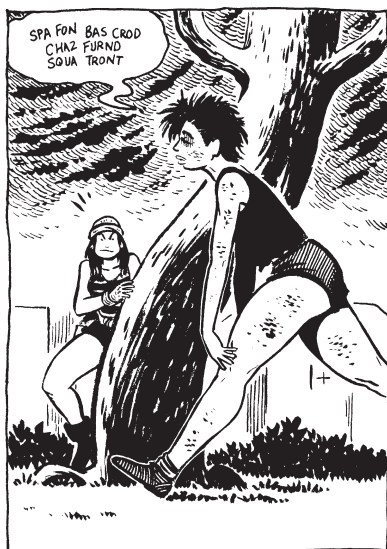


AN ALLEGED BRUJA HAS COME TO PALOMAR. A LEATHER POUCH CONTAINING A BABY'S SKULL WAS STOLEN FROM HER BY SOME CURIOUS CHILDREN, BUT DUE TO THEIR CARELESS HORSE-PLAY THE INFANT CRANIUM WAS LOST. THE OLD WOMAN SEARCHES THE TOWN FOR HER "BABY"...

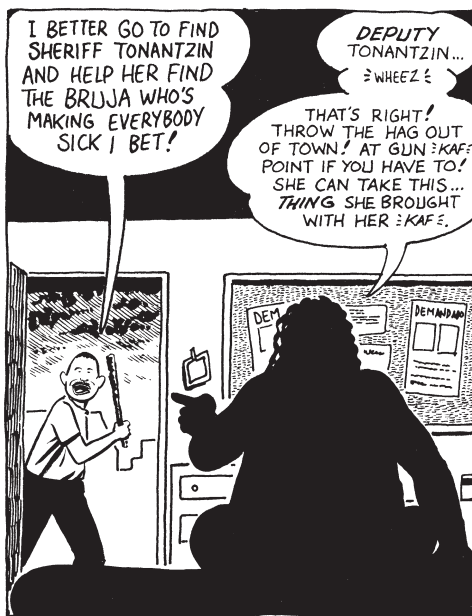


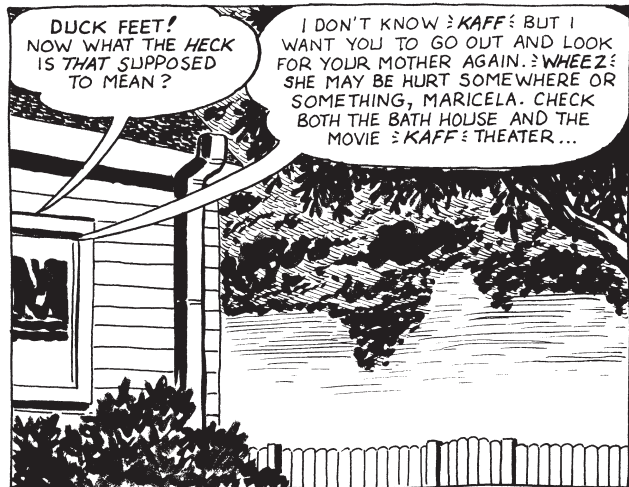
AS IT HAPPENS, THE STOLEN SKULL SITS AT THE BOTTOM OF THE SAME HOLE FROM WHERE LUBA NOW STRUGGLES TO CLIMB OUT...

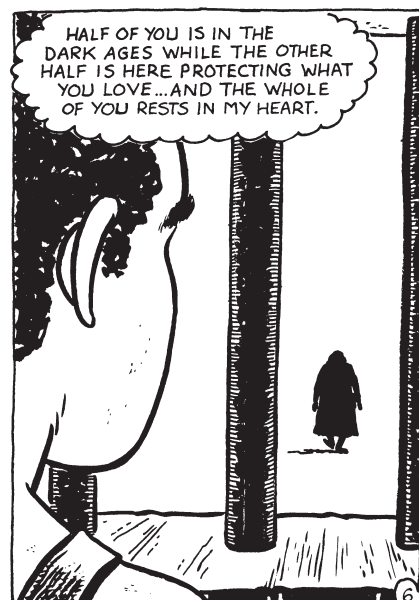
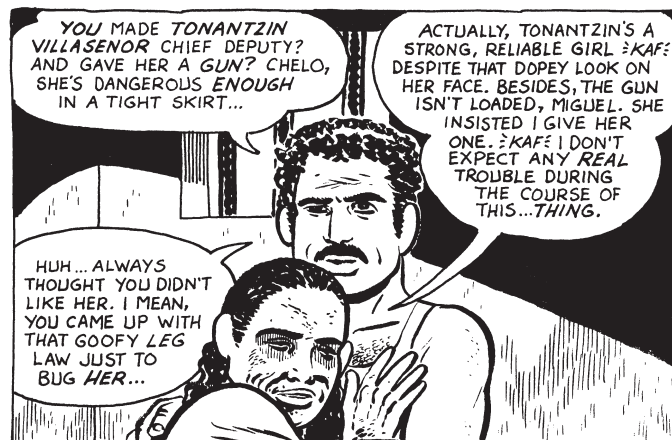
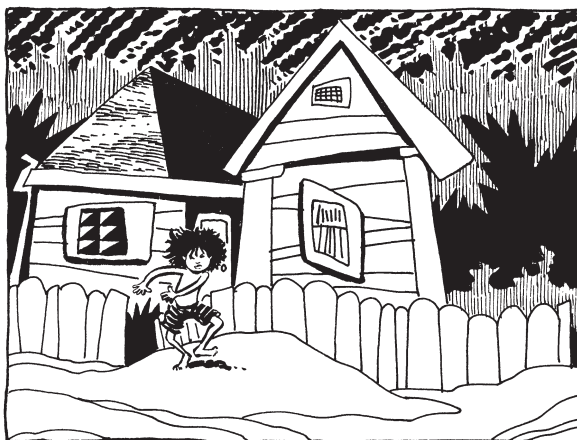




HUH. SHE CAN JOKE, BUT NEITHER THE YANKS OR THE SOVIETS ARE ABOVE SECRETLY POISONING TOWNS SO THAT THEY CAN LATER COME AND OFFER AID TO GET US ON *THEIR* SIDE.







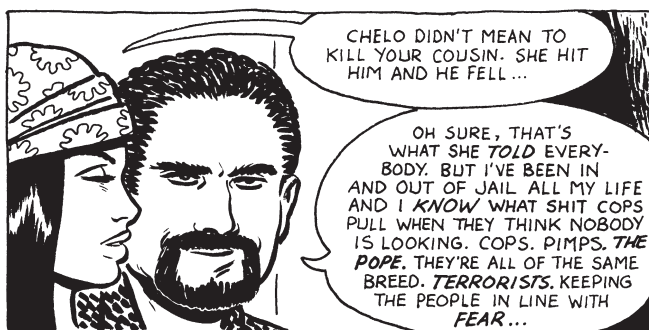


ER, GERALDO, DIDN'T YOU SEE THE WARNING SIGNS OUTSIDE OF TOWN?

DON'T CHANGE THE SUBJECT! YOUR SHERIFF WHAT'S-ER-NAMÉ MURDERED MY COUSIN ROBERTO ALL THE SAME! HE DIED LIKE A COMMON--LIKE A DOG IN THE STREET, LIKE-- HIS HEAD WAS TURNED COMPLETELY BACKWARDS! I WOULDN'T CALL THAT CRIB DEATH...!

YOU FORGET ROBERTO KILLED HIS GRAMPA IN THE FIRST PLACE, GERALDO...

AAAH, YOU KNOW WHAT KIND OF SWINE THE OLD MAN WAS! TREATED EVERYONE LIKE DIRT, LIKE-- HE CAME CLOSE TO MOLESTING YOUR LITTLE SISTER DIANA A FEW TIMES, AS I RECALL...



CHELO DIDN'T MEAN TO KILL YOUR COUSIN. SHE HIT HIM AND HE FELL ...

OH SURE, THAT'S WHAT SHE TOLD EVERYBODY. BUT I'VE BEEN IN AND OUT OF JAIL ALL MY LIFE AND I KNOW WHAT SHIT COPS PULL WHEN THEY THINK NOBODY IS LOOKING. COPS. PIMPS. THE POPE. THEY'RE ALL OF THE SAME BREED. TERRORISTS. KEEPING THE PEOPLE IN LINE WITH FEAR...



THAT'S CRAZY TALK! MAYBE I OUGHT TO SIT YOU IN A CELL FOR A FEW DAYS TO COOL YOU OFF!

HEH. I AM GOING TO JAIL REAL SOON. BUSTED A BOTTLE ACROSS SOME STUPID COP'S FACE AFTER HE POPPED ME FOR COKE. JUMPED BAIL.

THEY'LL FIND ME, NO PROBLEM.

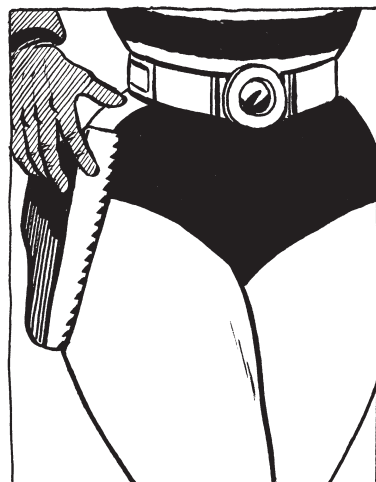


AH, BUT ALL THIS SHIT ABOUT COPS AND STUFF IS OLD NEWS. BUT THAT'S THE WAY IT IS, THE WAY IT'S ALWAYS BEEN, SO FORGET IT! THEY TELL YOU. YEAH, WELL, TELL THAT TO A BLACK KID IN SOUTH AFRICA ...

HEY, WAIT! AREN'T WE STILL GONNA--AW, FORGET IT. GO TO HELL!



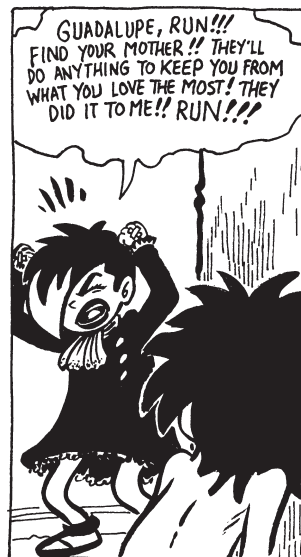
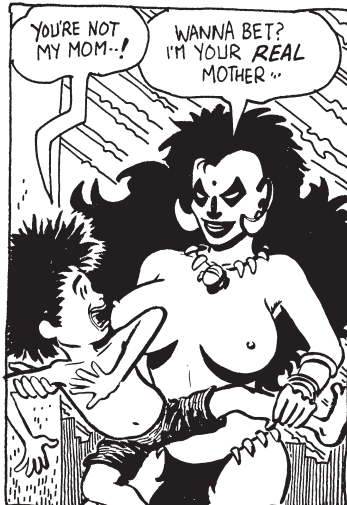
GOD, HOW'D A GUY WHO'D BEEN SO GOOD IN THE SACK TURN OUT TO BE SUCH A LOON? CRAZY PEOPLE GIVE ME THE SHIVERS...

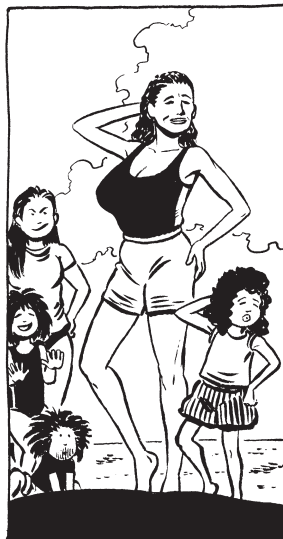
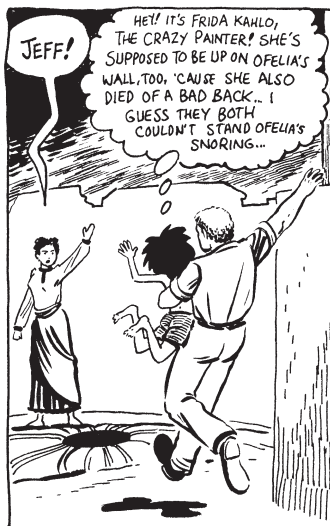


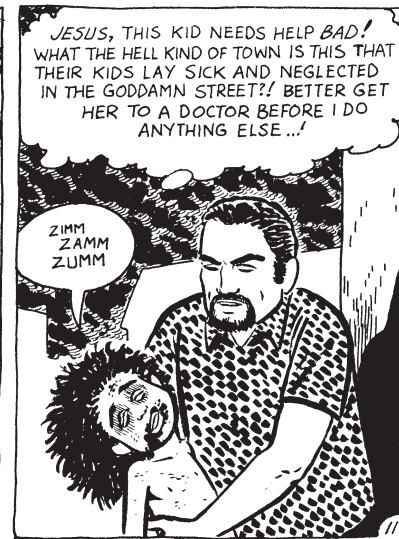
MY--MY GUN! GERALDO! DID YOU SEE WHERE I--I--

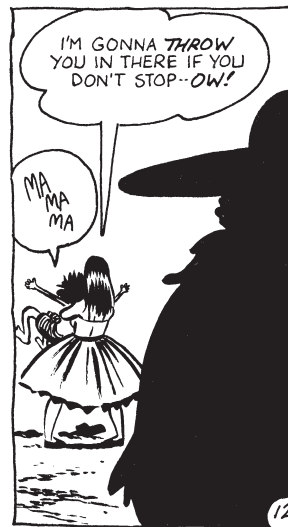
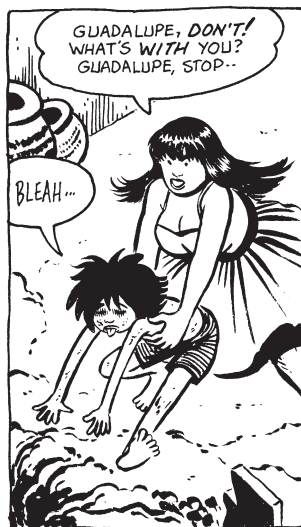
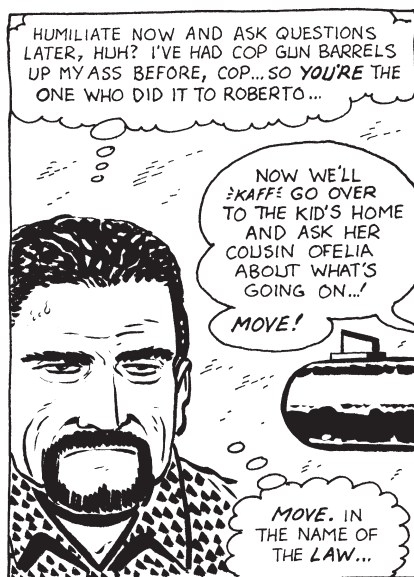
GERALDO--?

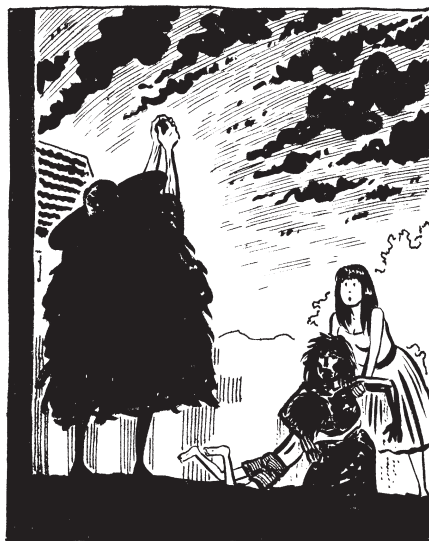
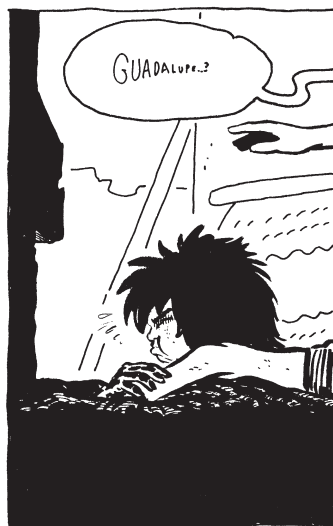


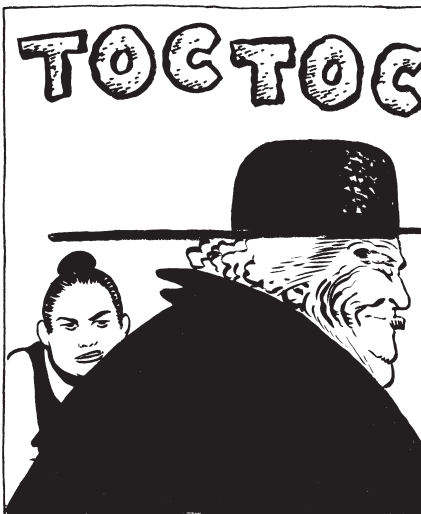


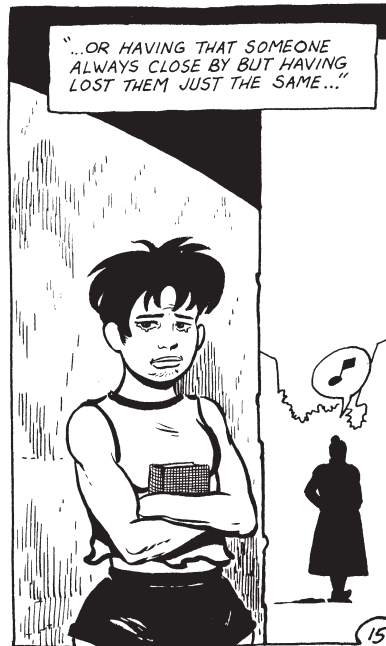
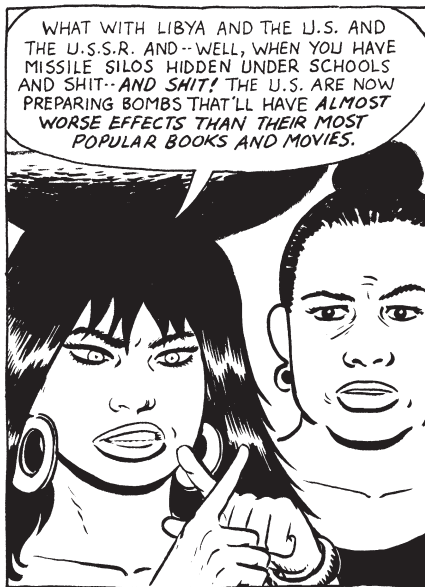
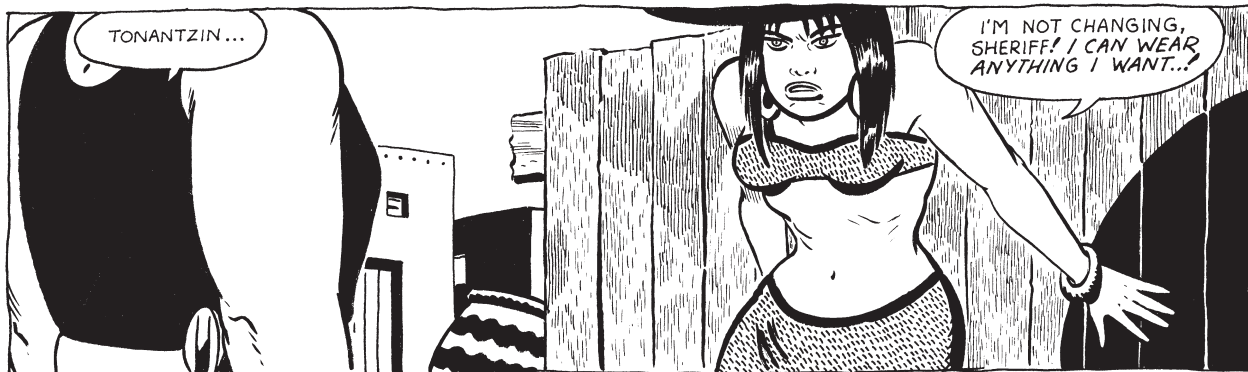


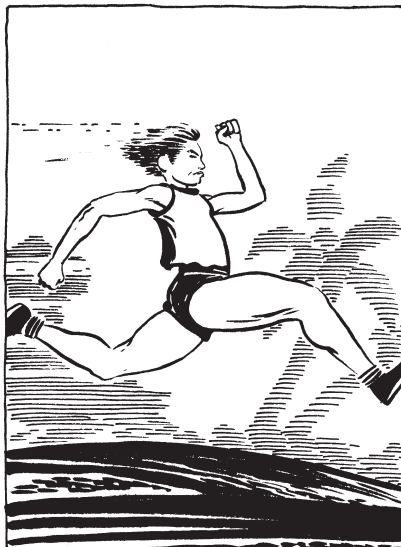


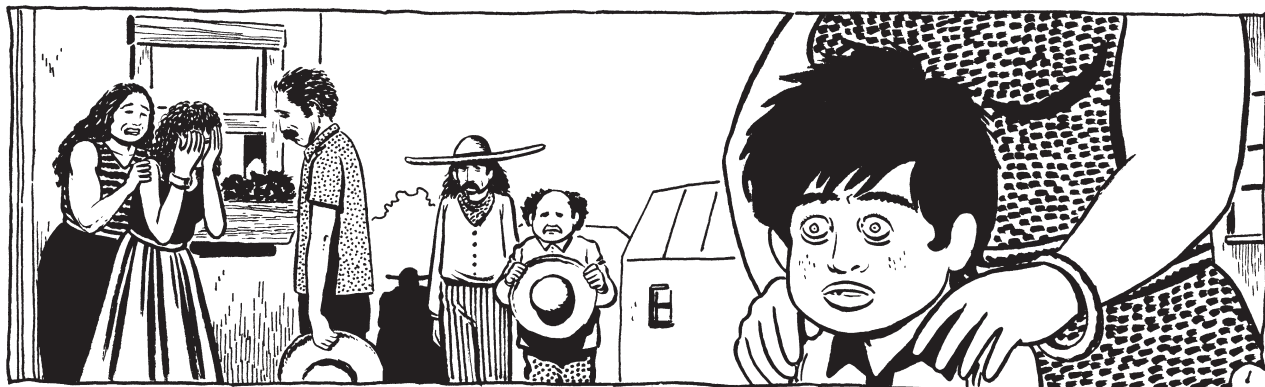
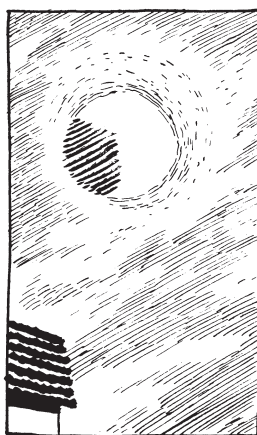
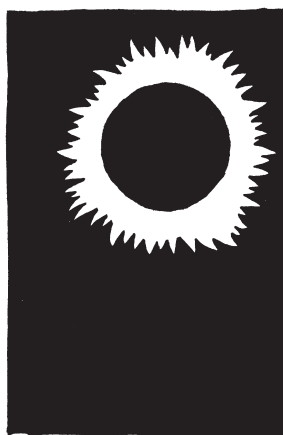
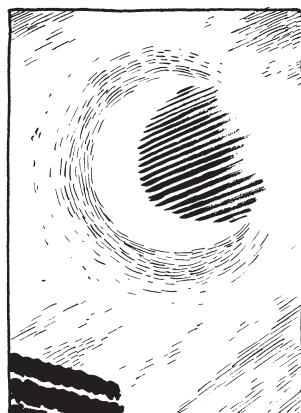
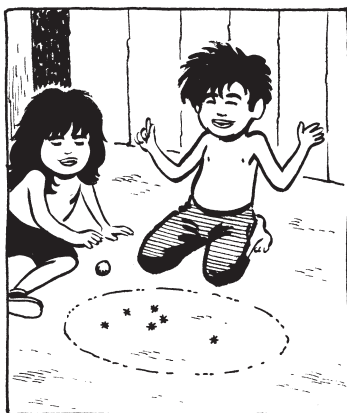
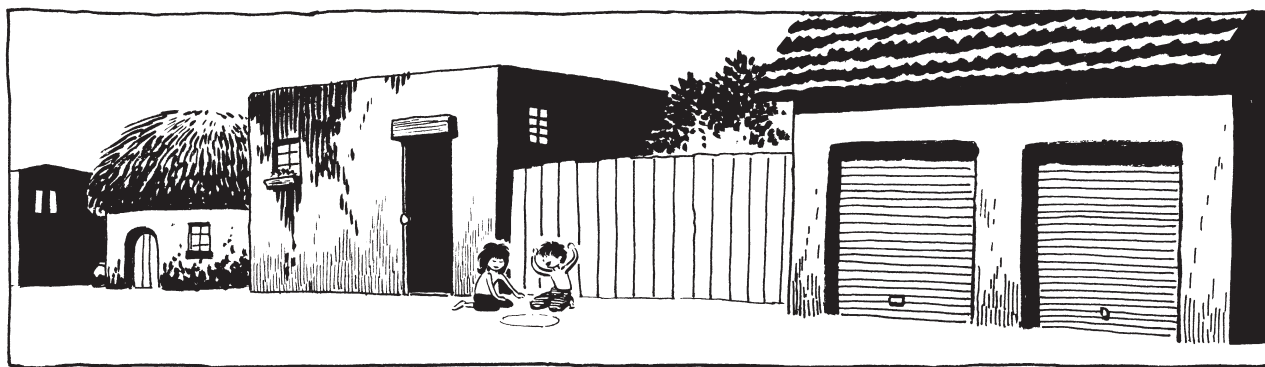


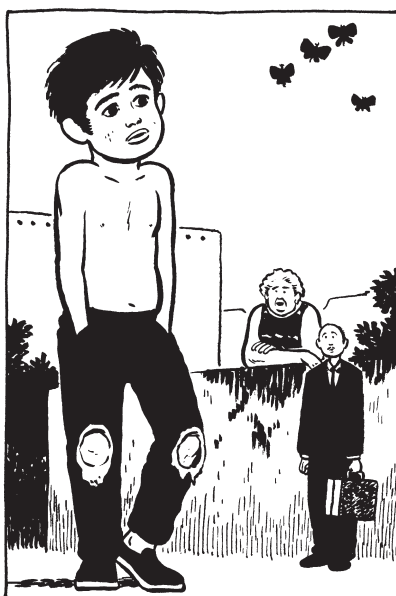
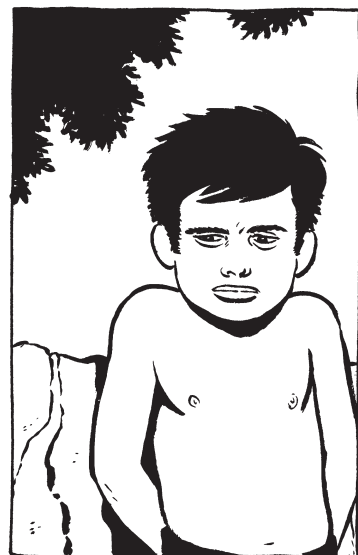
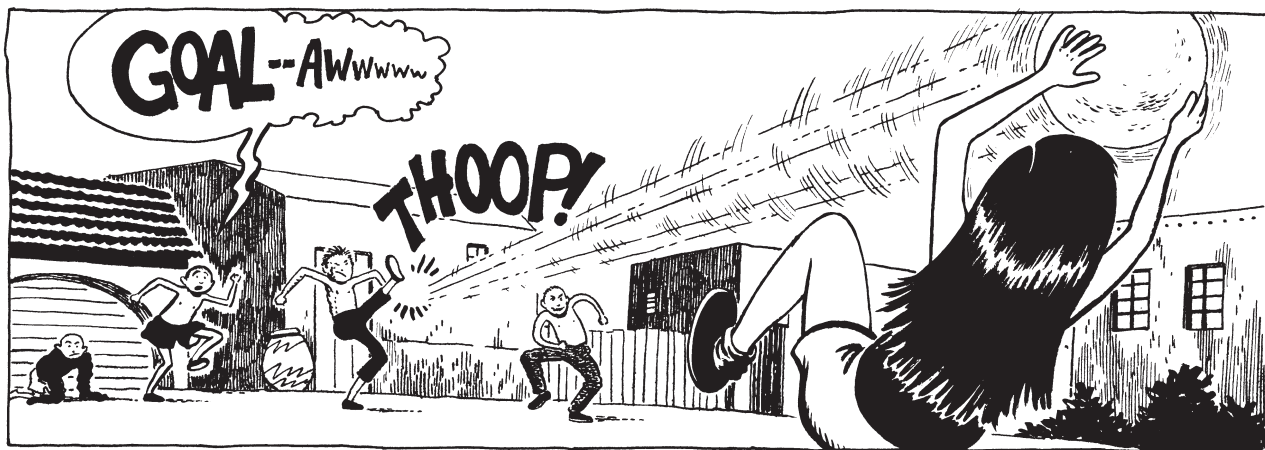


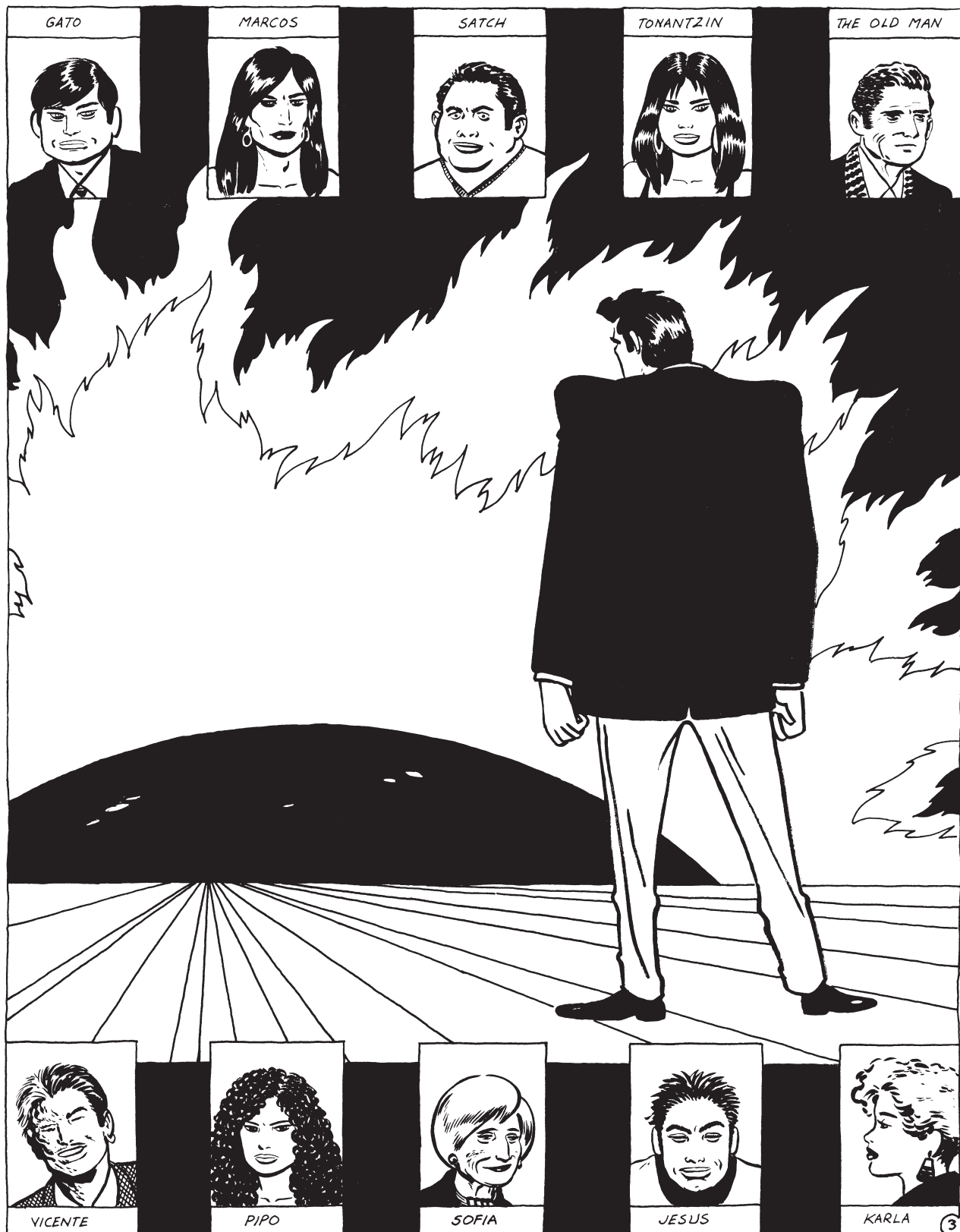


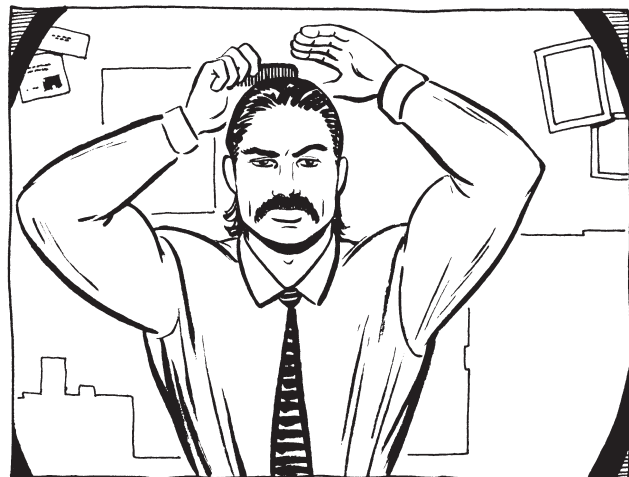
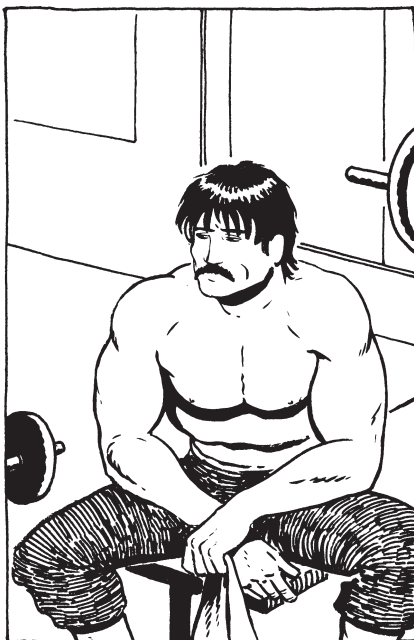


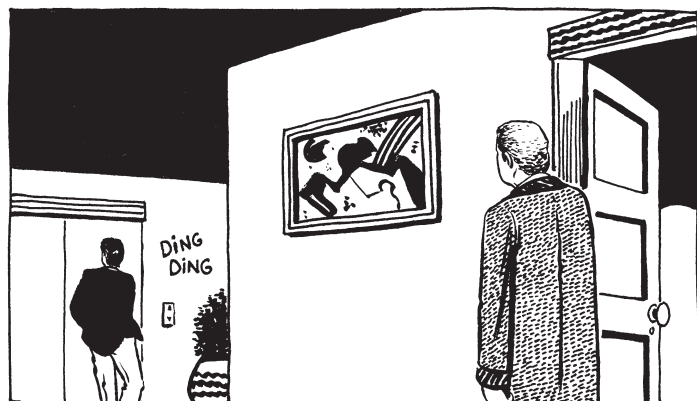




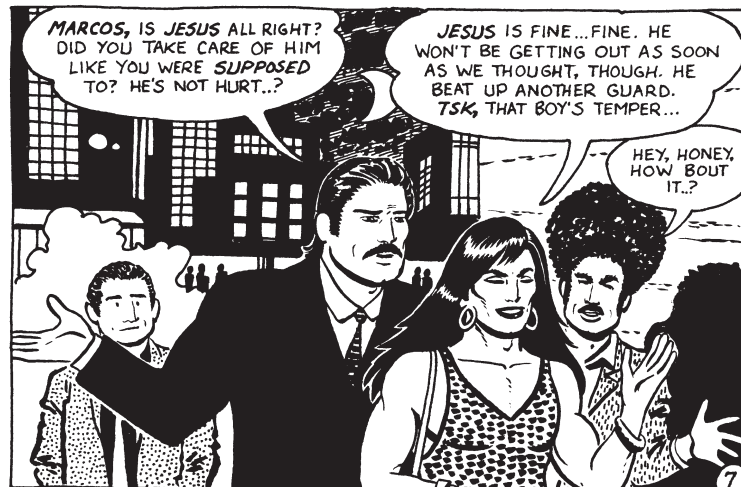
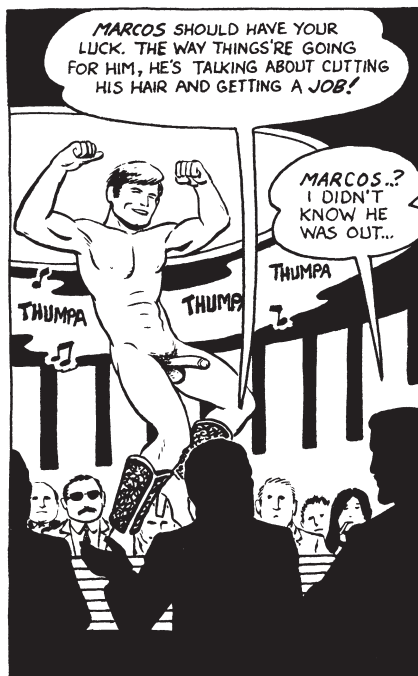
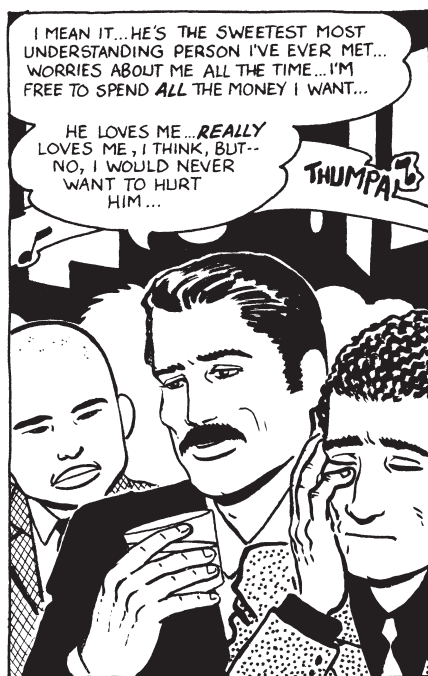


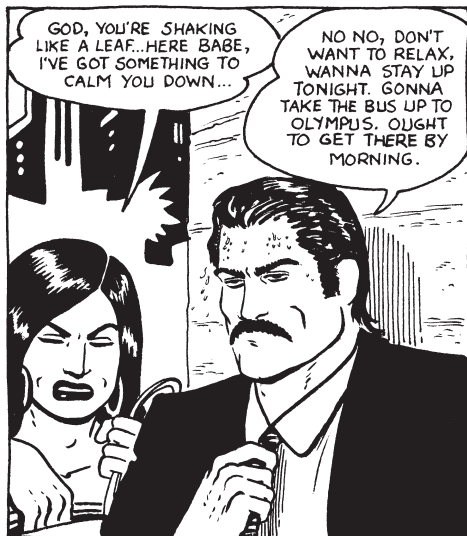
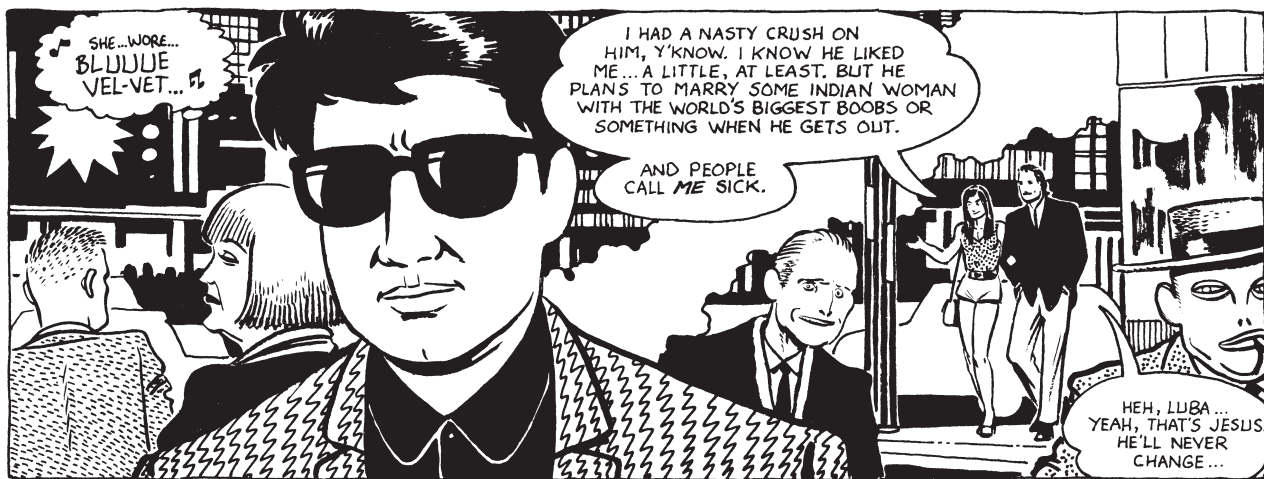




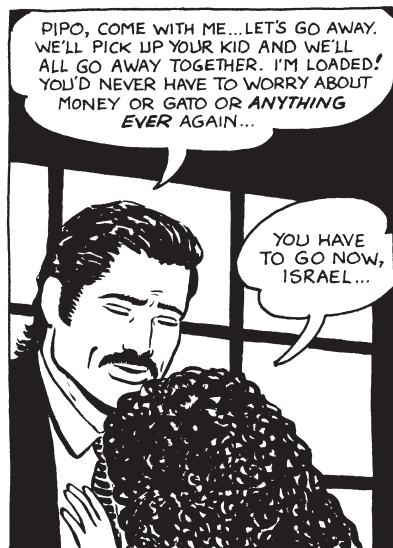
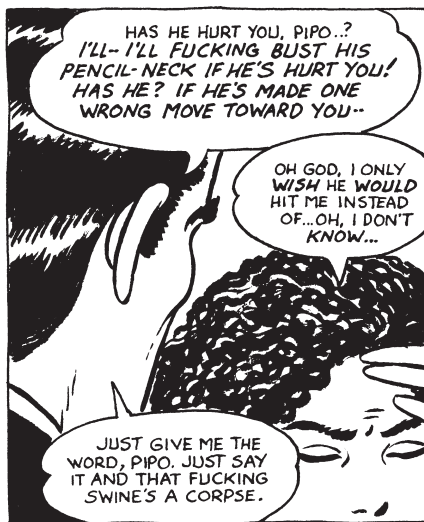










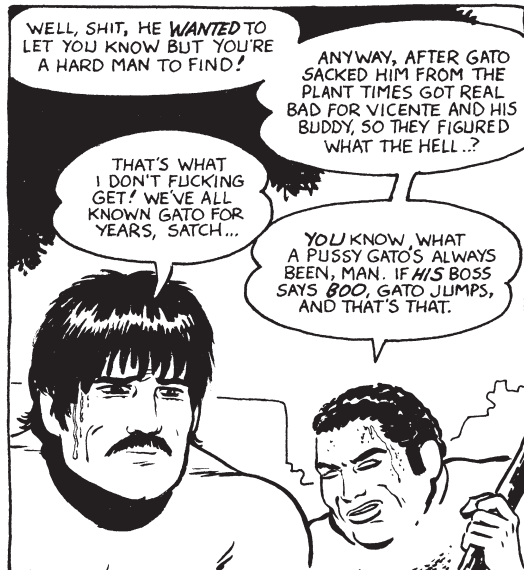


SATCH Y VICENTE



I'M TELLING YOU, ISRAEL, VICENTE'S GONE. HE AND HIS BUDDY SATURNINO PULLED UP STAKES AND HEADED FOR THE STATES...

BUT WHY DIDN'T HE TELL ME. I COULD HAVE TRIED TALKING HIM OUT OF IT-- I COULD HAVE GONE WITH HIM...!



WELL, SHIT, HE *WANTED* TO LET YOU KNOW BUT YOU'RE A HARD MAN TO FIND!

ANYWAY, AFTER GATO SACKED HIM FROM THE PLANT TIMES GOT REAL BAD FOR VICENTE AND HIS BUDDY, SO THEY FIGURED WHAT THE HELL...?

THAT'S WHAT I DON'T FUCKING GET! WE'VE ALL KNOWN GATO FOR YEARS, SATCH...

YOU KNOW WHAT A PUSSY GATO'S ALWAYS BEEN, MAN. IF HIS BOSS SAYS *BOO*, GATO JUMPS, AND THAT'S THAT.



YOU BOYS LOOK LIKE YOU BOTH COULD USE A COLD ONE.

OOH, YOU'RE A DREAM, MARTA.

THANKS, MART.



YEAH... F*CKIN' VICENTE...

GUESS I'M PRETTY LUCKY WITH WHAT I GOT... DON'T MAKE TOO MUCH MONEY, BUT I GOT A GOOD WIFE, GOOD KIDS, MY OWN HOME...



WELL, TAKE CARE THEN, ISRAEL... AND THANKS AGAIN FOR THE HELP. THIS WOULD HAVE TAKEN ME A WEEK TO DO BY MYSELF...

GLAD TO HELP OUT, SATCH. SAY BYE TO MARTA FOR ME...



OH. DID ISRAEL LEAVE ALREADY? I DIDN'T SEE HIM GO...

THE HELL YOU DIDN'T...

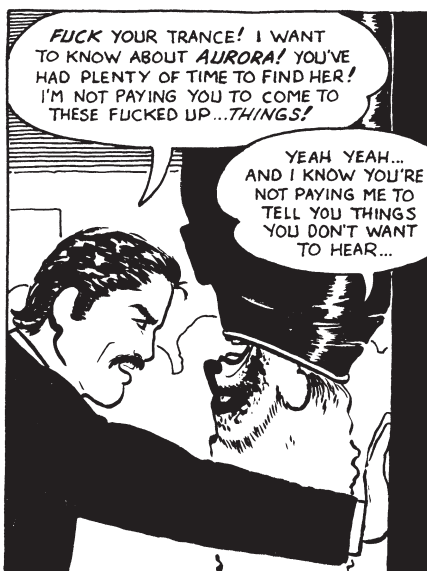


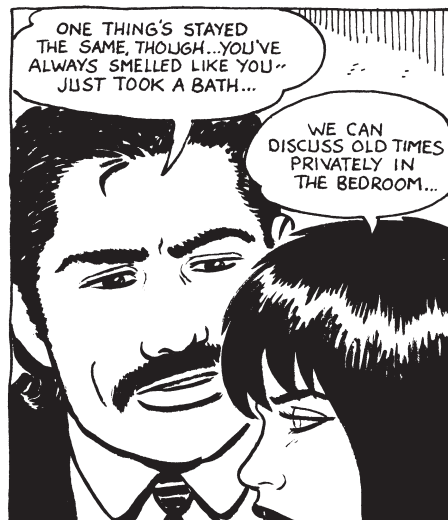
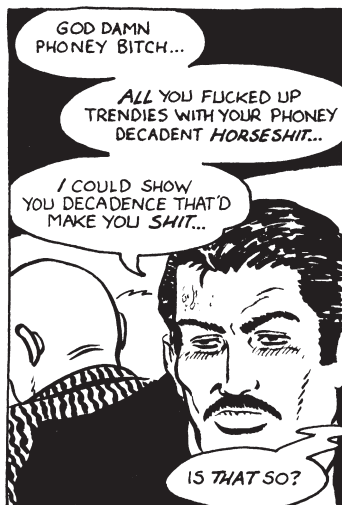
STARING AT HIM LIKE HE WAS A GODDAMN SIDE OF BEEF AND YOU HADN'T EATEN FOR A MONTH--

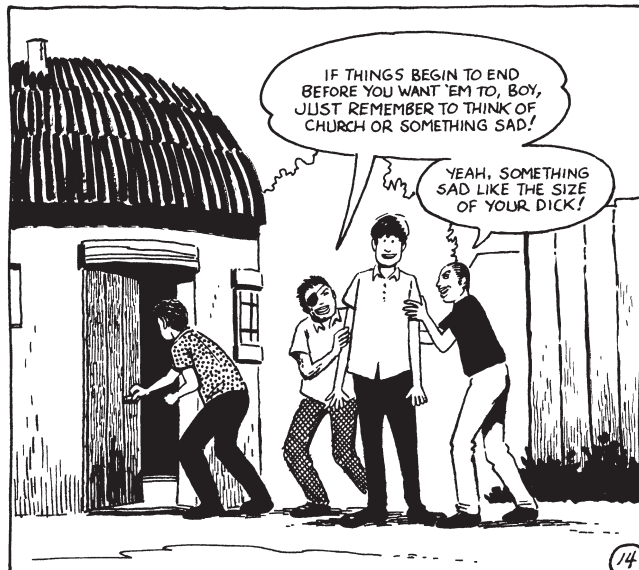
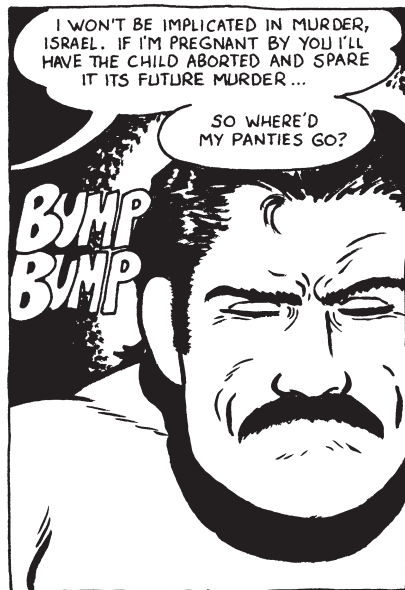
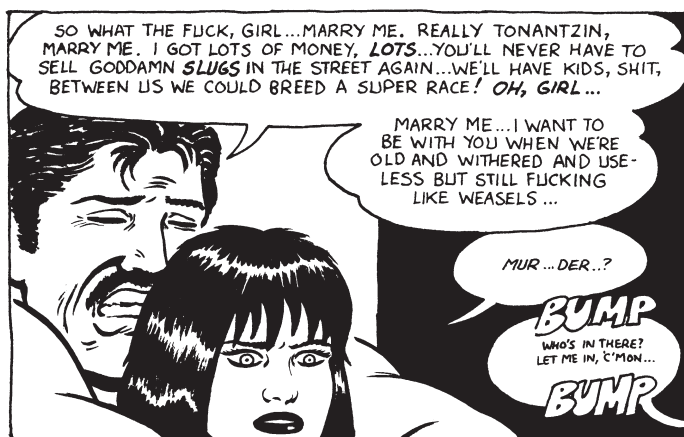
GET INSIDE!

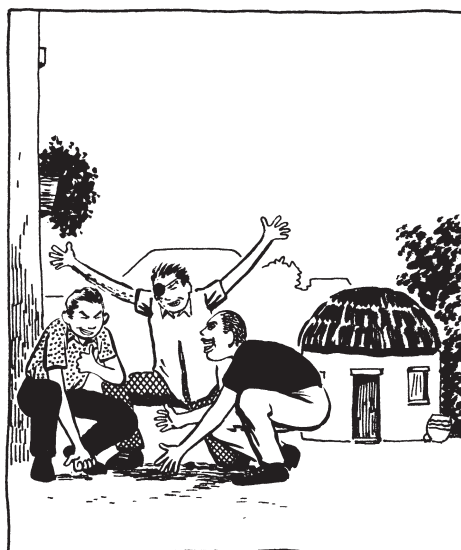
WHONG

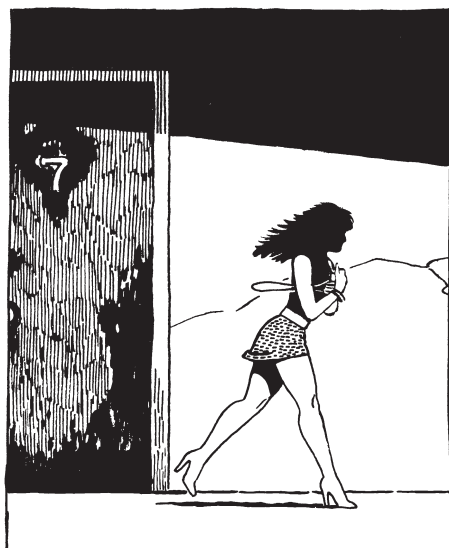
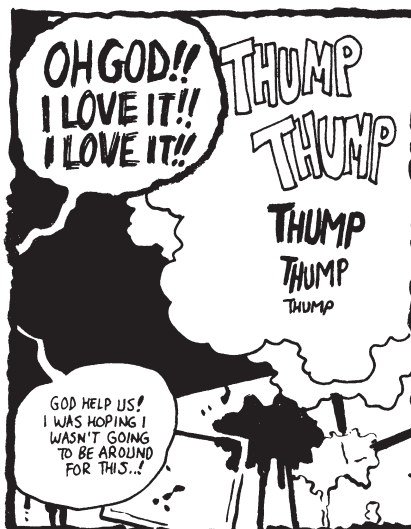
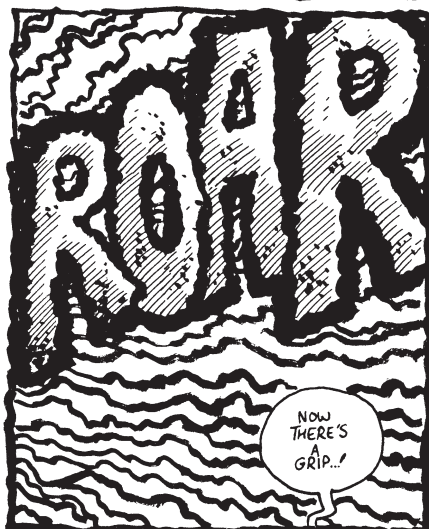
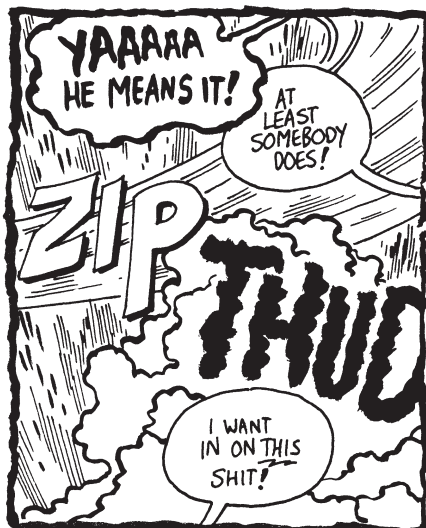
AAAAAAA~ I'LL POISON YOUR DINNERS! I WILL!











JORGE

OH, GOD, LOOK AT YOU! C'MON IN, THEN. CHRIST.

LOOK AT YOU! JEEZ, THESE-- THESE BINGES ARE KILLING YOU, ISRAEL...

WELL, THAT'S IT, BOY! NO MORE, I WON'T BE INVOLVED IN YOUR SHIT ANY MORE!

THAT'S RIGHT! GO AHEAD AND LOOK AT ME LIKE THAT! I MEAN WHAT I SAY, ISRAEL! NO MORE!

YOU GO AHEAD, WRECK YOURSELF! I'M THROUGH WITH IT!

HERE. WIPE OFF THAT BLOOD, FOR CHRIST'S SAKE...

I'M MARRIED TO MIMI NOW, ISRAEL. WE'RE HAPPY WITH OUR DULL **NORMAL** LIFE. SUPRISED? YEAH, SAME OLD MIMI, BUT THERE'S NO **BULLSHIT** WITH US!

DON'T TRY TO CUDDLE UP WITH ME, BOY. IT WON'T WORK.

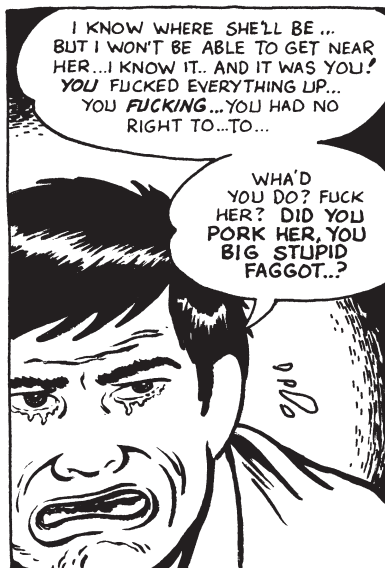
GOODBYE, ISRAEL. ...GOD HELP YOU.

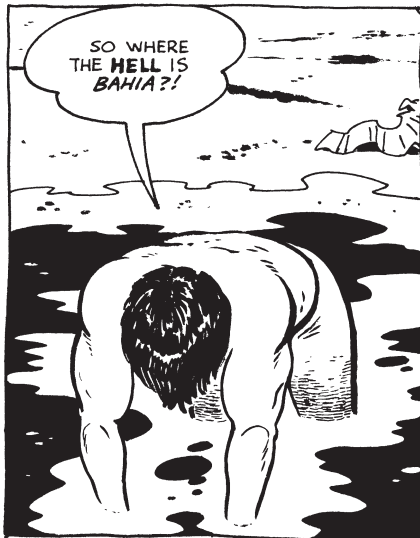
JORGE...ARE YOU OK?

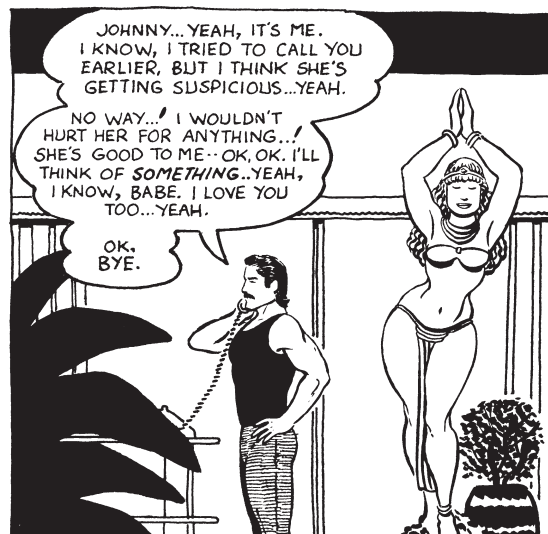
MM.

JORGE, COME TO BED NOW.

OK, MIMI...













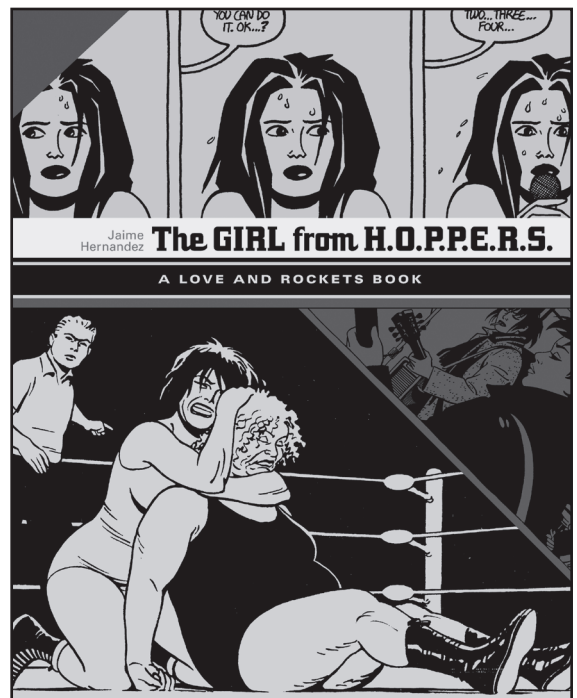
Gilbert
Hernandez

HUMAN DIASTROPHISM

A LOVE AND ROCKETS BOOK

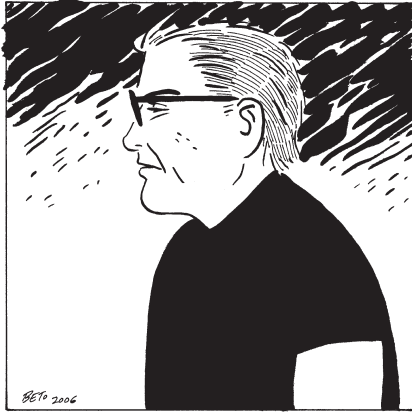


If you've enjoyed this book, you can follow the continuing tales of Palomar in *Human Diastrophism*.
(Release date: July 2007)



Jaime Hernandez's "Locas" stories appeared in *Love and Rockets* side by side with Gilbert's tales of Palomar. They're now being collected into three books: *Maggie the Mechanic* (available now), *The Girl from H.O.P.P.E.R.S* (release date: July 2007), and *Perla* (not pictured; release date: December 2007).

GILBERT HERNANDEZ



Born in 1957, Gilbert Hernandez enjoyed a pleasant childhood in Oxnard, California with four brothers and one sister. The siblings were, in Gilbert's words, "born into a world with comic books in the house" — Archie, Marvel, and *Dennis the Menace*. A further strain of DNA was added later when an older brother smuggled R. Crumb's *Zap* into the house.

Gilbert's childhood enthusiasm for comics was equaled only by his teenaged appetite for rock and roll ('50s, 60's, 70's, punk). Both he and his brother Jaime created eye-catching poster art for local bands like the Angry Samoans, Agent Orange, Black Flag and others through the early '80s.

Initiated by older brother Mario and bankrolled by younger brother Ismael, Gilbert and Jaime created *Love & Rockets* #1 in 1981. It may have been a very small, black and white affair, but almost a quarter of a century later, the series is regarded as a modern classic and the Hernandez brothers continue to create some of the most startling, original, and intelligent comic art to be seen since the '60s underground boom.

Ironically, the greatest mainstream exposure for Gilbert came when a British musical group appropriated the name without permission in the 1980s. Years later, the name was symbolically reclaimed by Gilbert when he gave it to a fictional and exceptionally obnoxious garage band in the storyline "Love & Rockets X." Gilbert's 13-year saga *Palomar*, as serialized in the first volume of *Love & Rockets* from 1983 to 1996, remains one of the defining bodies of work of its era.

In addition to his continuing work on *Love and Rockets*, Gilbert is the author of the original graphic novels *Sloth* and *Grip* for DC Comics, *Girl Crazy* for Dark Horse Comics, and the illustrator of Peter Bagge's *Yeah!* for DC Comics.

Gilbert lives in Las Vegas, NV, with his wife and daughter.