

HERGE

THE ADVENTURES OF

TINTIN OF LAND OF BLACK GOLD

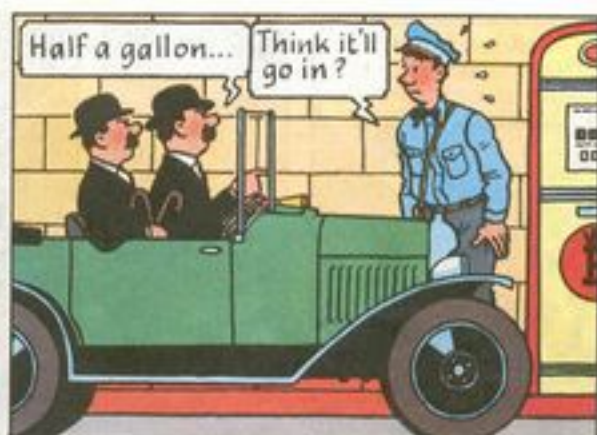
الذهب الأسود

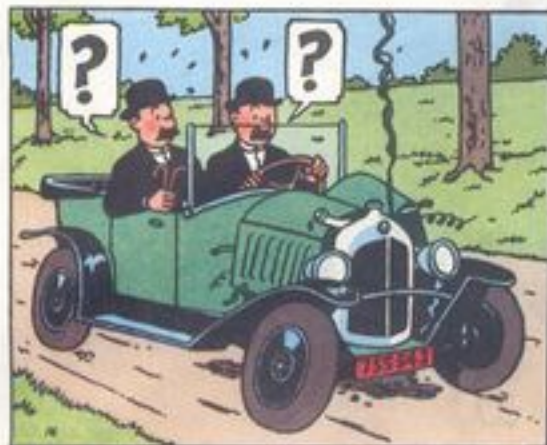


MAGNET

LAND OF BLACK GOLD

الذَّهَبُ الاسْوَدُّ





Next morning ...

"Crisis deepens - official
"On the brink of war?"
"Are we prepared?" ...
"Call-up for army re-
serve" ... "Forces on
standby" ... Things
look bright, I must say.



Yes... Tintin
here... Oh, hello
Captain... How
are you?... Any
news?

I've just had Admiralty orders:
"Captain Haddock. Immediate
Proceed to assume command
of merchant vessel blank
blank" (the name's secret,
of course) "at blank, where
you will receive further
orders." So that's that... I've
been mobilised! ... No,
there won't be time
to see you. I'm off
right away... I'll keep
in touch ...
'Bye, Tintin.

Goodbye, Captain,
and good luck.
Let's hope it's
only a false
alarm ...



Hello!

Good morning.
What news?

What news! Plenty! Something
very odd has just happened!

To be precise ... we just
happen to be very odd!

Really? Tell me
about it. Come
on in ...

Well, we'd just filled up with
petrol and were driving
peacefully along, when all of
a sudden, without a word of
warning ... our car went ...



It seems to be
catching!

It certainly is... That's exactly
what happened to us!

Yes. And that's
not all ...

A few minutes later my cigar-
ette lighter, filled at the same
pump, blew up in my hands ...

The petrol... it
must have
been ...

...doctored, yes! ... That's
what suddenly occurred to
us... And if it was doctored,
it must have been done by
someone with an interest in
wrecked cars. Remember the
old police maxim: Who profits
from the crime?

Now, who stands to gain
from this business?... Who,
eh?... I'll tell you! ... the
breakdown people,
Autocart!

No doubt about it: Autocart doctors the petrol. When the engine blows up, you send for a breakdown truck. And who do you call? The people who do the most advertising: Autocart!

I suppose it's possible, but...



No buts! It's a certainty!... We're taking up the case, and by this time next week we'll have enough evidence to arrest the entire board of directors.

Good luck to you!...

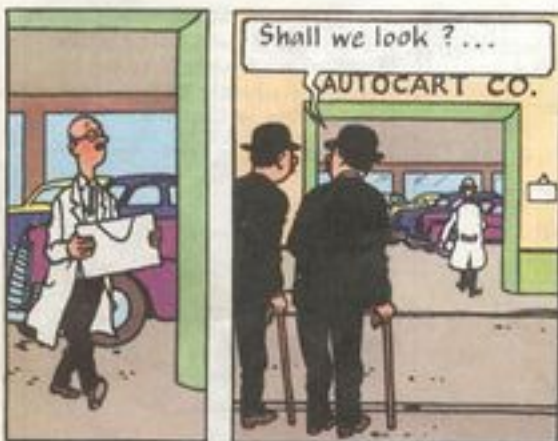


For a start, we'll take a snoop around the Autocart garage...



Shall we look?...

AUTOCART CO.



WANTED
Good drivers with mechanical experience to man breakdown trucks
APPLY *Autocart*



Well, what do you think?... It's a perfect cover... gives us a chance to see what goes on inside the place...

Good idea...



Next day...

Now, you know what you're supposed to be doing?

Certainly we do, sir!



I must say, I'm intrigued by this petrol business...



I'd like to get to the bottom of it...

You aren't starting another of your adventures are you? Why don't we retire!



The managing director, please

ENQUIRY



Meanwhile...

Hello! Autocart to the rescue... Yes... Yes... B 0494... For Mr...?



...Thomson... It's... the breakdown truck... it's... er... broken down!



Would you like to comment, sir, on the situation created by the deterioration in petrol quality ...

Catastrophic!
The situation is catastrophic ...

Look! In two months, consumption has dropped by 65% ... And it's falling every day ... This very morning ...

SALES CHART

... the airline companies decided to suspend all services because of the dangers of fuel explosions in the air ... Oil shares have slumped to half their value ... the bottom's dropping out of the market ... It's a disaster! ... A catastrophe! ...

Even worse! What about the international situation? ... Supposing war comes ... breaks out tomorrow? ... Imagine what'll happen ... Ships ... planes ... tanks ... The armed forces, completely immobilised! ... The mind boggles! ... Disaster!

What do you think has caused this sudden change in the petrol?

That's the question we'd all like to answer! Nothing has changed at the oilfields, or in the refineries, so it has to be sabotage ...

We took samples at the wells, from storage depots, aboard the tankers, in the refineries, and we had them analysed ... Nothing! Absolutely nothing! Then we decided to treat the petrol itself, to prevent it exploding. Our top scientists are working night and day on the problem ... to find some way of ...

BOOM

?

?

Another car blowing up! ... Where was I? Oh yes ... My senior research officer says they are on the verge of success in our labs ... I'm expecting a call from him any moment now to say they've found the solution ...

That'll be him ... Do you mind? ...

No, of course ...

RRRING
RRRING

Yes? ... Well, you've got it! ... An answer? ... What? ... Nothing at all? ... Nothing? ... I see ... Well, it's a pity ... You'll just have to keep at it ...

What? ... Should you go on with the research? Of course ... surely that's obvious ... Why bother to ask? ...

Because if we're to go on, sir, you'll have to consider building a new laboratory!

Analysis of the petrol showed nothing... but what if someone used an additive that leaves no trace?... Tonight, Snowy my friend... we'll take a little trip to see some storage tanks...



Meanwhile at Autocart...

Ice?!... Ice on the road! What sort of fool'd you take me for?... I'll give you one more chance... but watch your step!... Understand?... Go and check the tyre pressures on the boss's car!



Anyway, we're better off here at the garage. More likely to get inside information...



My car ready, Vic?



In a minute, sir. We're just checking your tyre pressures.

Ssh! It's the manager.

How are things going, Vic? As bad as ever?



Afraid so...

It looks black... Everyone's talking of war... they say things could blow sky high at any moment.



That night...



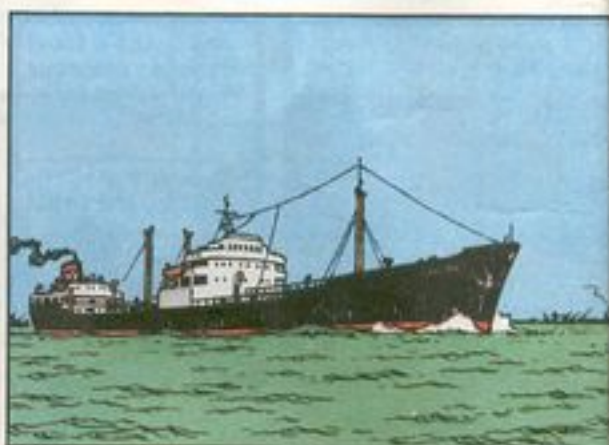
Aha! There are the tanks...



?

















Next morning...

Ah, the storm's blown it - self out...



How do you think he is?

No change... He's wandering...

Good morning... noon and night... light fight, night... left, right, left, right pick 'em up, now!... How now brown cow?



No hope of learning anything useful from that quarter.



Several days later...

There's Khemikhal

Yes, and there's a launch putting out, with police aboard, I bet.



They've tightened up security... Only natural with the international crisis, and the tension in Khemed...



Military police: we have orders to search the ship.

Oh?... Very well...



Military police: this is a cabin search!

Go ahead.



Military police: open your bags!



Aha! As we were told: behind the coat-hooks!



These papers were hidden in the radio officer's cabin, sergeant.

Let me see!

Aha! All very interesting... A shipment of arms to Sheik Bab El Ehr!

I assure you, sergeant, I ...

Keep your hands off! ... We're police officers! We'll see you pay for this!

To be precise : you'll see we pay for this!

Heroin in their baggage, sir... And they're pretending to be police officers!

Indeed!

We were tricked, sergeant... An agent from Naval Intelligence gave us the package. He said it contained secret documents.

And where is this 'agent', eh ?

He's here on board, sergeant ... But he suddenly seems to have lost his wits...

Meaning that we can't question him, I suppose! ... A neat little story... But it just happens that I am very far from losing MY wits!

What a fool I've been! ... Another false trail!

All right, get these three bright boys into the launch. They'll be interrogated ashore.

But...

I ...



Who've you got there ?

The two are just a couple of drug-smugglers, I think... But the young one has important documents to do with Bab El Ehr.

Excellent work! Our noble sheik will reward you when he comes to power! ... Go now!

Bab El Ehr must be informed!



That evening...

I have come from Khemikhal, noble master. There I received news: the emir's soldiers have arrested a young foreigner.

Well ?



One of the guards works for us. He said he'd found papers on the prisoner...papers referring to an important shipment of arms for you.

The young man shall escape and be brought here to me !



Next morning...

Come with me. You're going to the special security gaol. The secret police want you for questioning.



There they are, Mohammed! Put your foot down!



Over here!



Hurry!



Meanwhile...

We've checked your papers. They're in order. You can go.

Thank you. What about Tintin?

Your friend?... He was seized on his way here by Bab El Ehr's men.

Now we've got to find them... And that's a thankless job. They made the snatch, and vanished without trace. Still, there's a £5000 reward for anyone who leads us to the sheik's hideout.

Five thousand pounds! You needn't say that again!... By this time next week we'll bring you Bab El Ehr trussed like a turkey!

Very good! May Allah go with you!

Next morning...

Five thousand pounds reward!

Here is the young foreigner brought by your partisans, noble sheik.

Enter!

Greetings, and welcome, young stranger... Heaven will bless you for embracing our great cause... Now, when do the guns arrive?

What guns?

What guns? Our guns, our shipment of arms... You've brought news of their delivery: isn't that so?

Me?... Not me, most noble sheik! ...

You lied to me, son of a mangy dog!

Oh, no! most powerful master... It was the guard who told me... I swear by Allah!

That's quite true, noble sheik. Some papers were found in my cabin... but they didn't belong to me... And I've no idea who put them there...

It's a trick... A miserable trick to discover my hideout... I suppose you think I'll let you go?... To run home and betray us to the police, those snivelling lap-dogs of Ben Kalish Ezab?... Never! You stay here with us. You are my prisoner!

Tie him up, and guard him well!



A plane!

Noble master! A spy-plane from the emir!



That's the sheik's camp.



BANG BANG

BANG



Poor fools, they're dropping leaflets...and none of my men can read! Hahaha!!



لعنك الله... يا ابن الكلب يلعن ابوك بدوي



Such language! ... Don't listen to him, Tintin ... even in Arabic!



We strike camp at sunrise!... Before two days have passed we must be hidden in the mountains.



As for you, you come with us! You'll make a good hostage!



Meanwhile...



I say... Are you quite sure we're going in the right direction?

Of course I'm sure.



Anyway, we can't go wrong... They said drive straight on.

Quite right. And there's the first of our wells.



We'll stop there for a minute and fill the radiator.



Goodness gracious! ... A mirage!

A mirage?... Really?... I thought they'd been abolished.



Never mind: we'll drive on...



Ah! We've made good time. There's Tel El Esdi... We'll stop there for a drink...

Good idea!

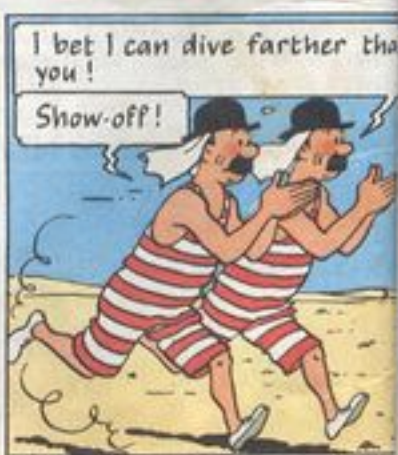


Bother and... Another mirage!



And there's a third! They really are overdoing it!





Meanwhile ...



Allah be praised! ... See! The well of Bir Kegg!

Indeed!



Water! ... At last! ... I'm dying of thirst ...



The prisoner has fallen:
he is finished!

Untie his hands:
we will abandon
him!



Wooah! ... Wooah!
... Murderers!
Rotten sand-hoppers!



You and your sense of direction! A fat lot of good it's doing us!

I tell you we're all right. This is a main road ...



I can prove it ... Look!

Pooh! Another mirage!



There you are! ... I told you so!



This time there's no mistake : we're saved!

My poor friend ... It's only a mirage ... Any fool can tell at a glance ...



No! No! I promise you it isn't!

It isn't, eh? ... Very well, I'll prove it ...



Whoops!



Oh... my goodness... I... er... I beg your pardon... I mistook you for a mirage!



وقف عندك، جيان
ملعون اكسر رأسك



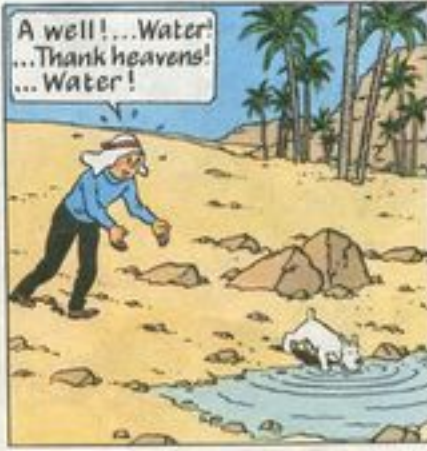
You were absolutely right: it wasn't a mirage ...

No?...



Meanwhile ...









They're running back ...
I wonder if ...



? BOOM



Great snakes!
They've blown
up the pipe-
line!



On your horses! ... The
alarm will be raised!

That voice! ...
I'm sure I
know that
voice!



Hello, what's that
one doing?



Now I can see... He's
fixing a stirrup on
something ...
Dare I ... ?



Come on, Snowy! ... It's
all or nothing!

Heigh-ho!
Now what's he
after?



Where's Ahmed?...
He isn't with us ...



Ah, he's coming ... Ride on!



Meanwhile...

Hello... hello...
pumping station
twelve reporting
total loss of pressure
...pipe must be
broken above this
station... Please
send a repair-gang
immediately...



I must be mad... This is crazy
... But it's too late now. I've
taken a chance and can't
turn back...



Hello... Hello... Ring
ing station eleven
... Number one con
trol here... Close
all valves immedi
ately... The pipe's fra
ctured between ya
and number two
... A repair-gang
on the way



This is where we separate... It
will confuse any pursuers...
Ahmed will come with me...



Where in the world have I
heard that voice?



Whoa!



Hold my horse... Wait here
... I'll be back in a moment



Crumbs! I know who that is! ... It's Doctor Müller! (1)



What's he doing?



Where can he have gone?



Poor silly Ahmed! Sometimes a mirror comes in handy to see what goes on behind you! ... And I don't like spies!



But... it isn't Ahmed ... Krutzitürken! It's Tintin!



Tintin?... What's he doing here? Something must have aroused his suspicions, but what? ... Perhaps I'd better wait till he comes round, then question him... No, that'd be useless... a waste of time...



You've meddled in my affairs once too often, Tintin! ... I'm fixing you for good!



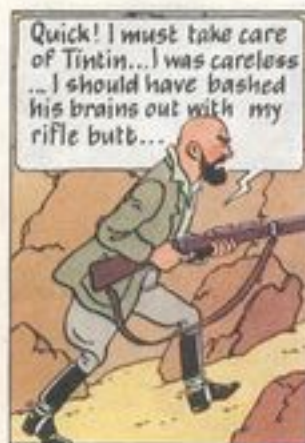
Ach! What's that? It sounds like... It can't be... Yes! It's a car...



No, a jeep! ... Der Teufel! They're after me already!



(1) See The Black Island



What's it all about?... What's that gangster Müller doing here?... And why should he want to wreck the pipeline?... When he had me at his mercy, why didn't he kill me?... I just don't have any of the answers.



Hello... I can't be mistaken... Let's take a closer look...



They're wheelmarks, Snowy... This really is a bit of luck!



Splendid!... Perhaps we're on a bus route!...

Let's see... I'd say they were tyres on a jeep... The sand and pebbles were thrown back by the wheels, so it was travelling that way. We'll go in the same direction...



And we'll worry about our friend Müller later.



Meanwhile ...

I don't like it, Thomson... If we don't get somewhere soon...



It's all right!... Look!... There!... Tracks of a car!

Quite correct! And they aren't a mirage, either!



All we do is follow the tracks and we're saved!



An hour later ...

Hooray!... More tracks!... A second car joined the first one...



A real stroke of luck hitting this road.

To be precise: we've really had a stroke!



Another hour later...

There!... A third car joined the other two!... We're on a very busy road...



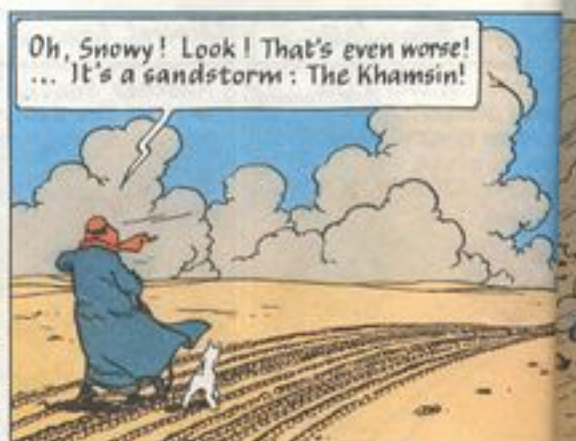
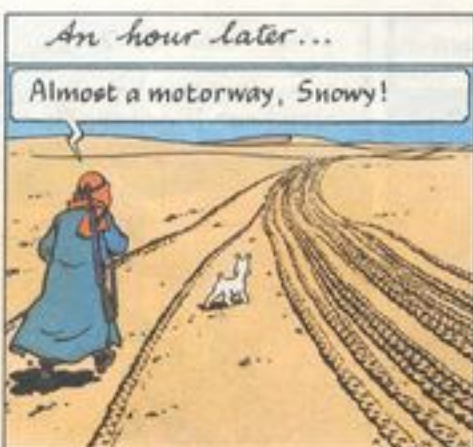
Several hours go by...

Another one!... That makes the seventh.



We're obviously getting near a big town and... Hey! Stop!... What's that there, ahead of us?





Ooh! Here it comes! We're right in the middle of it! ... Worst of all, the wind and sand will wipe out all the tracks ...



This awful sand... gets in your eyes... and your mouth... We can't go on! ... Only one thing to do ...



Wait till the storm blows over ...



Ssh! ... I heard something... There it is again ... A car engine!



We can't go on like this. We must raise the windscreen and put up the hood ...



OOEE!



Careful! You mustn't let go ...

Don't worry, I'm holding it.



OOEE!



Ugh! this sand!



Come on, Snowy!



Hang on tight! ... Don't let it get away!

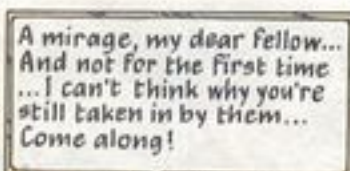
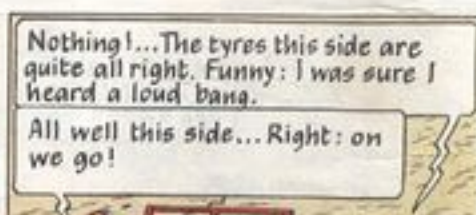


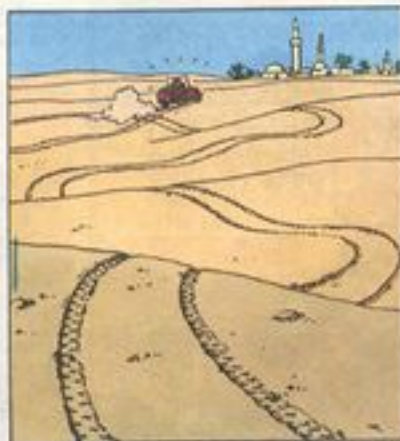
OOEE!

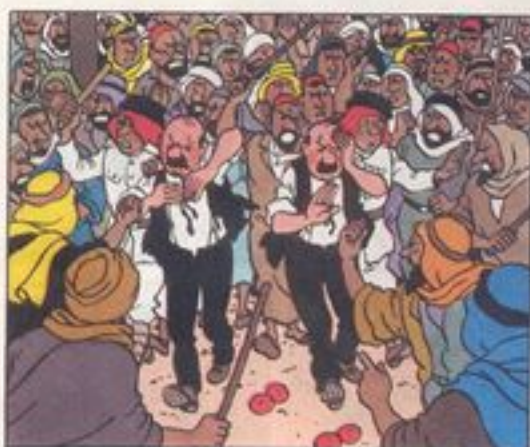


OOEE!











It's very simple: if I sign a contract with Skoil the attacks will cease immediately. So why do I refuse to sign Professor Smith's contract?

Yes, why, I wonder?

It is strange, I do not know why I am telling you all this... You are a stranger... I have no reason, but I trust you. So... Inch Allah!... I refuse to sign the contract because I do not like Professor Smith and I do not like his Skoil Petroleum.

Oh?

But I have interrupted your story... You were telling how the saboteurs had blown up the pipeline.

They came running back and remounted their horses. I remained hidden behind the rocks... Suddenly...

Master!... Master!... Oh! Master!

What is it?... Who dares to disturb us?

Oh, Master! Master!... Your son!...

Well, Ali Ben Mahmud, what new prank is my little lamb playing this time?

Heaven grant that it is indeed a prank! Master, your son has disappeared!

Ha! ha! ha! ha!... Disappeared!... If you knew my son you would laugh as I do. He's the naughtiest young rascal anyone ever saw!... Every day he thinks up some new little wickedness... But come with me, you'll see for yourself...

He was in the garden, Master...

Yes, yes, Ali Ben Mahmud, calm yourself!

There's the little motor car I gave him last week... on his sixth birthday...

Abdullah!... Abdullah!... Where are you, my treasure?

Abdullah!... Come out now, my little sugar plum!

Abdullah, my baby lamb-kin...

Abdullah!... Abdullah! Where are you hiding?

Abdullah, you little rascal, if you don't come at once Papa will be cross!

Excuse me, Highness, but does your son wear a blue robe?

A blue robe?... Abdullah?... No!... Why do you ask?

Here's a piece of blue cloth I just found, caught on a branch ... Under the tree are some very deep footmarks... Obviously someone was hiding in the tree, and then jumped to the ground ...

Perhaps...
Yes... But...

There's your son's motor car... It has been shoved to one side, as you can see from the tyre marks ...

But I don't understand...
What are you trying to say?

I hardly dare tell you, Highness... I fear the worst... Come with me... There will be other clues ...



There! I knew it!...
More footmarks!...

And here... and there ...
And look! Marks on the wall! This is where they must have climbed over...

They?... Who?

The men who kidnaped your son, Highness!

The men who... You're mad!... My son!... Kidnaped?... Why?... Tell me why anyone should kidnap my son?... You're crazy!... You've made all this up!... You're lying!... Yes, you're lying, like all infidels!...

Where is Mohammed Ben Kalish Ezab?

Over there, by the wall, with the stranger.

A horseman brought this letter, Master... Then rode away like the wind, out into the desert.

BY ALLAH!

It's unbelievable!... Here, read this letter...

?

Excuse me, Highness... it is in Arabic...

Oh yes, I will translate for you...

"To Mohammed Ben Kalish Ezab... If you want to see your son again, throw Arabex out of Khemed." It's signed: Bab El Ehr.

Yes, it's what I would expect!

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
أنا محمد بن علي
أنا أخبرك أن
عليك أن تخرج
المعادنة مع
مشرقتك
باب الله



Bab El Ehr! Bab El Ehr! Son of a mangy dog!... Grandson of a scurvy jackal!... Great grandson of a moulting vulture!... My revenge will be terrible!... I will impale you on a spit!... I will roast you over a slow fire!... I will pull out your beard, one hair at a time... And I will stuff it down your throat...



But we must act! Where is my military adviser?



Ohhh! ... His little car!



Boo-hoo-hoo-ooo-ooo!... My little Abdullah!... My little honeybun, where are you?... My little peppermint cream... Boo-hoo-hoo... hoo... hoo...

Higness, you must calm yourself.



Woo-hoo-hoo... My little angel... Boo-woo-hoo-hoo!



My little Abdullah!... Aaaaah... Aaaaah... Aaaaah... Aaaaah...



TCHOOO!... Aaaaah... TCHOOO!... Aaaaah TCHOOO!



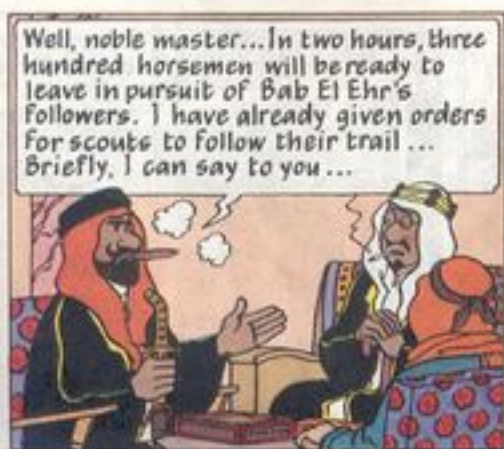
You see... Aaaaah... TCHOOO!... It was one of his last tricks: He'd just found out about... Aaaaah TCHOOO!... about Aaaaah TCHOOO!... about sneezing pow-ow-ow-der!... He wanted a box for his birthday...



A few minutes later...

This is Yussuf Ben Mulfrid, my military adviser. He'll explain his plan of campaign... A cigarette?

No, thank you. I don't smoke.



Well, noble master... In two hours, three hundred horsemen will be ready to leave in pursuit of Bab El Ehr's followers. I have already given orders for scouts to follow their trail... Briefly, I can say to you...



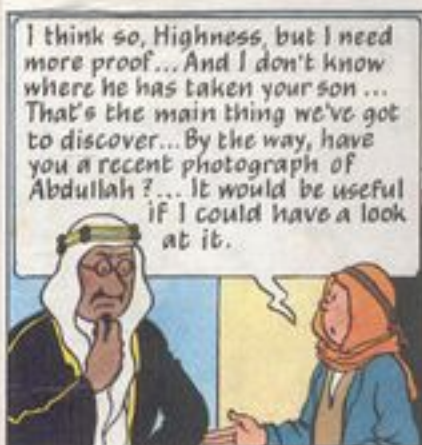
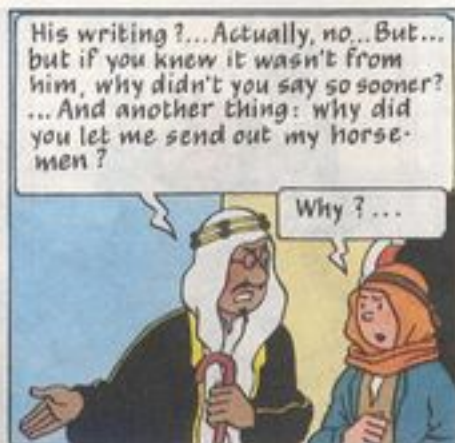
Allah is good!... My little poppet replaced all my best havanas with his trick cigars... Wasn't that sweet?...



My one and only little chickadee!...



By the beard of the prophet! That wretched little centipede has changed all my best Sobranics for his filthy joke cigarettes!...



Another of his confounded tricks! ... Now where did he get that?

Well, he's certainly quite unmistakable! ... Now I must start my search, Highness ... Could you fit me out with some different clothes? ... And I'd like some information on Doctor Müll... I mean Professor Smith.

Professor Smith?... You think he can help you find my son?...

Perhaps...

He's an archaeologist, digging for remains of the ancient civilisations that once flourished in these lands... At the same time he acts as representative for Skoil Petroleum.

He lives here?

Yes, in Wadesdah, my capital ... about twenty miles from here, on the coast. He lives in an enormous palace, perched like an eagle's nest on the top of a cliff.

I see... There's just one more thing...

BANG

Take no notice... Just a cap... Abdullah scattered them everywhere ... They lived things up in the palace...

Oh?... I see.

Where was I?... Oh, yes... The two friends I mentioned... I have a great favour to ask on their behalf: please treat them as your honoured guests. Lavish every comfort upon them; take every possible care of them... But if you want me to find your son, for pity's sake don't allow them out of the palace on any pretext whatsoever.

Next morning, in Wadesdah...

That must be Professor Smith's palace, up there ...

ATCHOO!

A cold?... Or sneezing powder? I'd better follow.

ATCHOO!

صباح الخير
تفصيل....

Great snakes! It's Senhor Oliveira da Figueira! (1)

تفضل سيدي
عندي كل ما تريد
وباشمان رخيصة

What a salesman!
Just the same!
He's persuaded
that man to buy
a pair of roller-
skates!

انا تحت امركم

مع السلامة
ATCHOO!..

Nasty cold, eh?

Yes, a sudden epidemic
... started this morning
among Professor Smith's
servants...

But come in, come in,
honoured sir... Absolu-
tely no obligation ...
But I'm sure you'll
find a little something
you need once you're
inside my shop ...

To tell the truth, Senhor
Oliveira, I don't need anything
... But I'm delighted to see
you... Do you remember me?

Tintin!... Espléndido!...
What a wonderful sur-
prise!... This calls for a
celebration!

Si!... Si!... You must take
a glass of wine with me...
Some fine Portuguese
rosé ... My country's
bottled sunshine!

Now, what brings
you to this god-
forsaken land!

Well... I... I... er... I'm interest-
ed in archaeology...

Ah, like Professor Smith...

Exactly... You seem to know him.
Tell me, what's he like? A pleasant
sort of fellow?

To be honest, no; decidedly
not. He's tough, and cruel,
and ...

BING
ZZING
CRACK
BUMP



There's a
mousetrap in
the cupboard,
but it sounds
as if we've
caught a full-
grown rat!

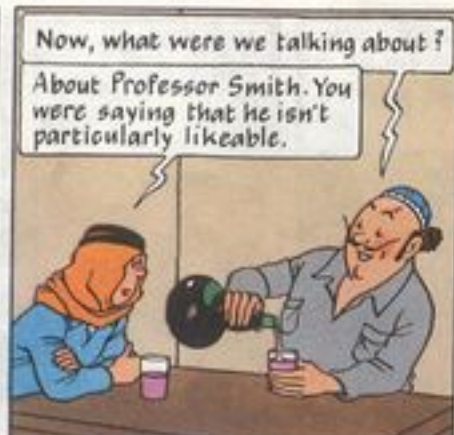






Here we are... Ah, you're listening to the news...

Yes, The threat of war seems to be lessening, thank heavens!



Now, what were we talking about?

About Professor Smith. You were saying that he isn't particularly likeable.



That's true... But he's extremely rich, and I'm his main supplier... So you see... My customers include all the top people in the area... At least, not quite all... Not the emir, alas!... What a man!... One of the best!... Which is more than can be said for his nasty little son... A real pest, young Prince Abdullah!... But you won't have heard: he's just been kidnapped!

I did hear of it!



Look here, Senhor Oliveira, would you like to be appointed official supplier to the Emir Ben Kalish Ezab?

Would I like it?... Of course!... It would be the crowning glory of my career... But... what would I have to do?



Help me recover Prince Abdullah... To do that, smuggle me into Professor Smith's house...

Professor Smith... What for?... Well, if you like... It's quite easy... I go there each morning...



The next morning...

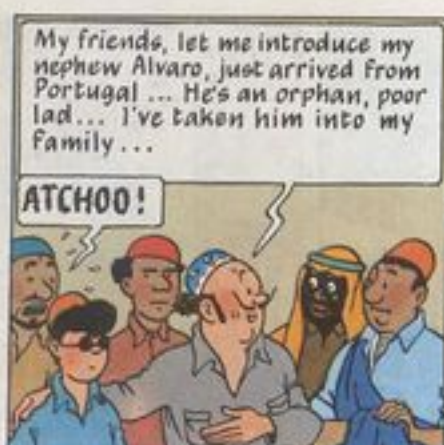
Salaam aleikum, Murad!

Aleikum sala... Tchoo!!



Who is the young stranger?

My nephew Alvaro... I want him to meet the palace servants.



My friends, let me introduce my nephew Alvaro, just arrived from Portugal... He's an orphan, poor lad... I've taken him into my family...

ATCHOO!

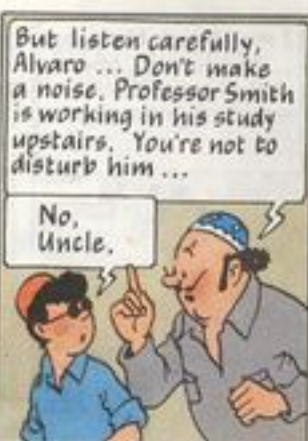


Just between ourselves he's a little... well... a bit simple... Not surprising after what's happened to him... A dreadful story... Just imagine, his father, who was a well-known snail-farmer... Excuse me, just a minute...



Be a good boy, Alvaro... While I'm busy with the gentlemen, you run and play in the garden... I'll call you...

Yes, Uncle.

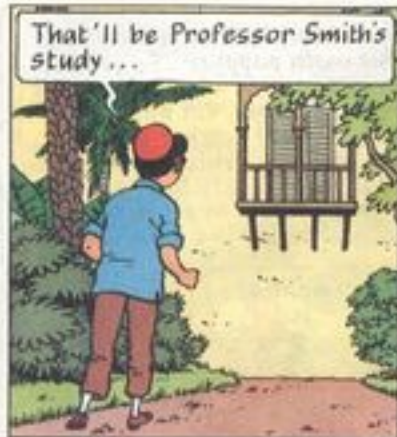


But listen carefully, Alvaro... Don't make a noise. Professor Smith is working in his study upstairs. You're not to disturb him...

No, Uncle.



That's fine... He'll keep them safely occupied with one of his endless stories... but I mustn't waste time...



The key's in the door... And the door's locked from the inside!... But there's no-one here... It doesn't make sense...



I'll work that out later... First, let's have a look at the papers on his desk...



What's in this folder?



Hello... A file of newspaper cuttings...



SCIENTIFIC BAFFLI
MORE PETROL BLASTS

by our Motoring Correspondent
in the street he cope
the risk

WORLD'S AIRCRAFT GROUNDED

LONDON, Monday
Heathrow, a

FUEL MYSTERY

What's gone wrong with our petrol?
An outbreak of mysterious automobile explosions is terrorising the world's capitals. Car engines

Now why should Dr. Müller be interested in that petrol mystery? ... I wonder if ...



ATCHOO!

??



Great snakes! The hearth is opening! ... I must hide!

Aaah...



TCHOO!



What's he doing in that corner?... Ah, I see... That's where a secret button for the trapdoor must be hidden.



Aaah... Aaah... TCHOO! ... Aaah... TCHOO! ... Ach, that little pest! ...



Lucky I persuaded him to swap his confounded box of sneezing powder for a pair of roller-skates...



There... I'll burn it in a minute...



Drat! He's starting to write!



Let's hope he won't be long... I'm beginning to get pins and needles...







Whew! Saved again! He's still out cold... Quick, I must tie him up, gag him, hide him somewhere... and telephone to the emir...



Meanwhile, in the kitchen...

...Alas! The poor woman never got over it. She died of grief and shame, at the age of ninety-seven. Her husband, broken-hearted, soon followed her to the grave. But that wasn't the end of the terrible tragedies this unhappy family had to suffer... One day, their son...



There, Doctor Müller... That's taken care of you!



Hello?... Hello?... Is that the royal palace?... I want to speak to His Highness... Tintin... Hello? is that you, Highness?



Tintin?... Yes... Where are you?... With Professor Smith?... What?... My son there?... A prisoner?... What's that you say?... What?... Oh! You sneezed! Bless you!



You must send men to Wadesdah... Have the palace surrounded... Meanwhile, I'll try to rescue the prince...



I can't say I like these toys, but this time I'd better be armed.



Now let's have a closer look at this...



Concrete tunnels! An underground fortress...



What's this?



A bunker...



Crumbs! What a place!... A real Maginot Line!



AAAAH...



Is that you, boss?



Boss?... Is that you, boss?



AAAAAH...

Nobody there... that's odd...



I could have sworn I heard a sneeze...



Stop!... Hands up... or I'll shoot!...



Don't move, and don't make a sound... or else...



Right!... Now you're going to take me to the emir's son... Get moving, and don't try any funny business!... Understand?



He's in there...

You've got the key?... Open up...



All right?... Stand away... Face the wall, and keep your hands up...



Quick, Abdullah!... Hurry!... I've come to take you home to your father...



Shan't!... Don't want to go home!... This is a nice game... Let me go!... I hate you!... I won't go!

But...



BANG



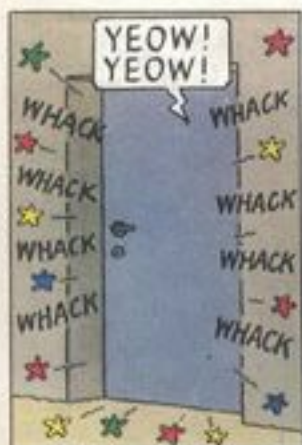
Abdullah!... Come along Abdullah!... There isn't time to play about...



اترك هذا ؟







Poor Tintin! What will become of him?

Hello, what's that?... It can't be... Why, yes, it's Snowy!

But we left him shut up in my house... How did he manage to get out?

Snowy! ... Here, Snowy!



Meanwhile...

Ooh! Look! Over there... Rails! Rails to play trains with!

Yes, railway lines... But you can play later...

No! ... Now!... I want to play trains!

Chuff-chuff chuff-chuff...
Abdullah!



Abdullah!... Stop that!... Come here!

YEOWW!...

YEOWW!...

?

Chuff - chuff
chuff - chuff...



Abdullah!... For heaven's sake, come back!

TOOOOT!

Get him, Abdul!

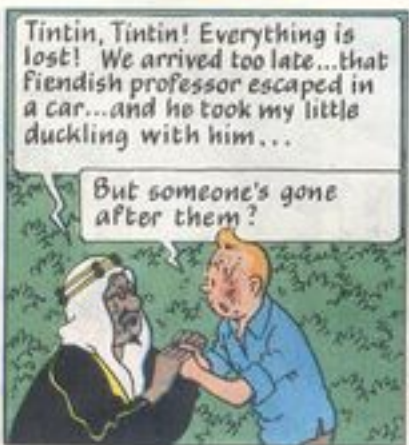
YEOWW!

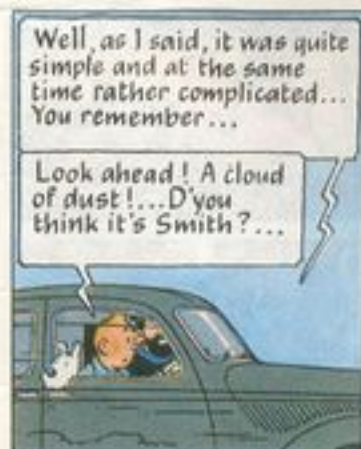
RAT TAT
TAT TAT TAT
RAT TAT





Seems to be calming down ...





Moving? ... Were we moving? ... Oh, now I see... It must have been that other car... It passed us so fast I thought we were standing still ...



Meanwhile ...



I'm thirsty!

So am I ...



I want an ice-cream!

Later, later...



No! I want one now! I want an icecream! I want an icecream! ... Then I want to go home! ...



Shut up! There's your icecream!



Waaah! ... Waaah! ... Waaah! ...

And cut out that racket or I'll ... Sit down, Abdullah! ... Abdullah! Sit down here!



No! I want to sit here! ... I hate you! ... I shall tell my papa ... And my papa is the emir! ...



I know... I know...
Yes, you're right... I was just going to tell you... As I said, it was really quite simple... but at the same time rather complicated ...

There they are! Another dust-cloud! ... This time it's certainly Müller!



Hee! Hee! My itching powder!



Great snakes! ... Smoke! ... What's happened to them?



Look at their tracks!
... Müller must have
lost control of the car...
it went over, and
caught fire... Let's hope
nothing's happened
to the prince ...



Ooh! What a lovely
accident!

Can we have
another one?

Ssh!... A car's
stopping...
Doors banging
... Wait! ...



All right, Müller... We've got you!

Aha! I've got a score
to settle with him!



Got me?... Not yet!...
Take one more step
and I'll shoot the boy!

Whoopee! Just
like a real gang-
ster film!



Look! Another gun to shoot
them with!

Thanks, Abdullah! You!
Throw down your guns!



So you can shoot us down like
rabbits?... No! We're keep-
ing them!



Just as you like! ...
But watch it! ... One
false move and the
child's had it! ...
Now, move away! ...
Go on, move back-
wards ...



Aha! ... Excellent! ... Another car ready and
waiting! ... Go on! Keep moving back!

Ooh! Papa's car! That's Papa's car!
Are we going to play another accident?



Get inside, you!
And keep your
mouth shut!



All right ... One bullet at
the car when I go and
I'll wring this repulsive
little monkey's neck! ...
Understand?... So, auf
wiederschen!



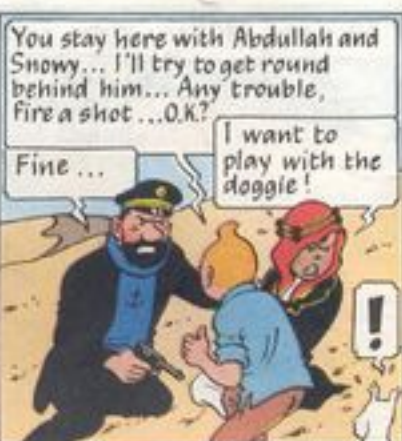
Waaah!
Waaah!

Beast! ... Baby-snatcher! ...
Brigand! ... Baboon! ...
Belemnite! ... Bully! ...
Bougainvillea! ... Bashi-bazouk!

Waaah!



Waaah! ...
Waaah!





Blistering barnacles! ... Look at the two Thompsons!

Crumbs! Whatever's happened to them?

I don't know ... hic ... the heat, per... hic... perhaps... Unless it was the aspirin we... hic... we just took ...

A tube we found in the sand ... Here ...

What sort of aspirin?

I don't understand ... It seems real enough ... But let's take a look at the contents ...

Strange ... the tablets have the maker's mark, all right ... It's extraordinary ...

I agree, it's very odd ...

Blistering-Barnacles! Blistering-Barnacles! Look at your funny friends now! ...

Captain! Captain! ... How awful!

Er... I... hic... feel rather peculiar!

Er... to be pre... hic... Me too!

Do it again, thundering barnacles!

We must get help for them at once ... You take the car and return Abdullah to his father ... I'll drive the jeep, with Müller and the Thompsons ...

Hic...

Right!

I'll make you rich for life if you destroy those aspirins, instead of analysing them ...

So! The tube belongs to you ... What's in the tablets?

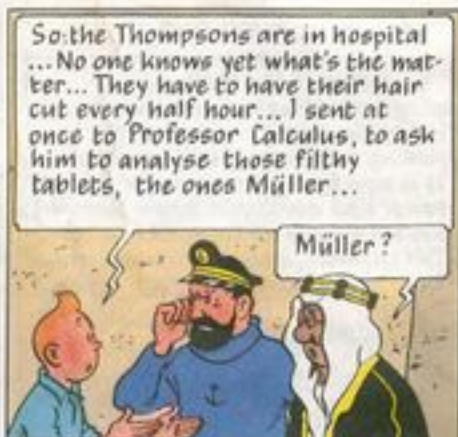
Why worry?... Destroy them and your fortune's made!

No thank you, Doctor Müller... I'm not interested.

At Wadesdah Hospital, two hours later ...

Doctor, doctor! Come quickly! Two extraordinary cases! ...

There... ?



B blistering barnacles! Look at that!

My house, by thunder! What's that nitwitted ninepin done to my beautiful house?!

... The research was exceedingly difficult. I enclose a photograph of Marlin'spike after my first experiments ...

... Anyway, they were successful: that's all that matters. As for the phenomena in the capillary systems of the Thompsons, these will soon cease with the aid of the powders I have prepared and sent to you separately. The other substance I have sent is for use with petrol, and will entirely neutralize the effects of the compound Formula fourteen...

Let's read on: he's sure to explain ...

His first?... Did he do some more?!!



Some weeks later...

"Each day of the Müller trial brings startling new disclosures. Today the whole mystery of the exploding car engines was revealed. It is now known that a major foreign power had developed a new chemical, known simply as Formula fourteen. This chemical, added to petrol, increased its explosive qualities tenfold."

"In the event of war, the agents of this foreign power could easily contaminate the oil reserves of the other side. The recent outbreak of car explosions was by way of a trial, on a reduced scale, of this new tactic. Thanks to the work of the famous boy reporter, Tintin, the secret of Formula fourteen has been discovered."

"...An effective antidote has immediately been developed by his distinguished colleague, Professor Cuthbert Calculus, to neutralize the effects of the chemical. By his prompt action, Tintin has undoubtedly prevented the outbreak of war. Better news too of the detectives Thomson and Thompson who inadvertently swallowed some formula fourteen. They are now out of danger, and well on the way to recovery."



What about that? We had a narrow escape, eh?... If it hadn't been for the Thompsons, we'd be at war!... You know, Captain, you still haven't told us how you came to be mixed up in this business...

Well... Pff... It's like this... Pff... I think I told you... Pff... it's quite simple really... Pff... and at the same time rather complicated...

Would you believe it... Pff... I... Pfff...

Oh, yes... Well, I... thank you, Highness...



Another of Abdullah's little tricks! ... And he promised me he'd be good! ... Ah, what adorable little ways he has!

Adorable!... Adorable!... I'll say he is!! ... Well, if you want to hear my story, it won't be from me!... Blistering barnacles, as far as I'm concerned, this is the end!

END

