

GENERALI ADVENTURES

6
COMICS
INSIDE!



A tale of
Assicurazioni Generali,
between history
and comics



GENERALI ADVENTURES



A tale of Assicurazioni Generali, between history and comics

Our purpose, “enable people to shape a safer and more sustainable future by caring for their lives and dreams”, is the reason why we exist and it inspires and motivates us.

We have always driven our efforts with the intention to improve people’s lives.

In an increasingly complex world, our ability to care and help people by offering innovative, personalized solutions will enable them to make decisions and shape a safer future for themselves, their loved ones, their business and their communities.

GENERALI ADVENTURES

Tale by Alessandro Brunetti.

Comics by Giulio De Vita, Helena Masellis, Kalina Muhova,
Francesco Cattani, Cristina Portolano, Yi Yang and Alessandro Lise

Cover illustration by Luca Salvagno

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A tale of Assicurazioni Generali, between history and comics

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What do you think the Historical Archives of an insurance company founded almost two centuries ago might look like?

The Historical Archive of Assicurazioni Generali is a small jewel overlooking the Gulf of Trieste. It is housed in the bright rooms of Palazzo Berlam, the "*red skyscraper*" inspired by the characteristic New York skyscrapers which was recently renovated and is used for work and training at an international level.

But of course it is also an excellent archive open to the public, where in order to leaf through its exhibits you have to wear a traditional archivist's light white gloves, fully respectful of the ancient stories and the ink with which they were written.

To celebrate the 190th anniversary of the Company's foundation on 26 December 1831 in Trieste, the archivists worked to rediscover and enhance the value of some significant moments in the history of Generali, which are intertwined with the events of Great History, but also with the lives, ideas and, at times, adventures of the people who have traced and marked its path through the centuries.

The result is 19 gems of "*Generali Life Stories: Extraordinary Tales of Ordinary Lives*", which you will also find in this book and which embody the values that have always been part of the Company's DNA: its drive for innovation under the banner of progress, its openness to different cultures and unexplored territories, and its commitment to a more open, prosperous and supportive society. Elements that allow us, still today, to meet the challenges of our time as a Lifetime Partner for people and be protagonists in shaping a sustainable future.

With this book, we wanted to instil new life into some of these characters, these "superheroes" from the past, exceptionally normal people who reach through the pages to touch us in the present.

We did this by choosing six stories, six extraordinary adventures inspired by real events, but playing with the sometimes dreamlike imagination of comics. In the drawings of six artists with entirely different styles and backgrounds, as if to outline the passage of time and the integration of multiple perspectives, you will find "clues" hidden here and there, like a puzzle, which are also revealed thanks to art photography. Among these is the *Assicurazioni Generali Bollettino* founded in 1893, probably the oldest corporate magazine, which has accompanied the stages of the Company's history, collecting its chronicles and reflections.

And then, who is Bruna? She is the blogger who will steal you away from traditional stereotypes and take you to a decidedly more "pop" and irreverent dimension. Bruna "La Rossa" (The Red) who explores, dreams, rummages, searches, who never gives up, Bruna who speaks her mind... Bruna who represents the amazement of those who discover fragments of identity in the past that compose the present, and the future... Bruna who reconstructs 190 years of Generali's history, challenging even herself.

Are you intrigued yet?

We had fun creating this book, and we hope you will have fun reading it and have a chance, at least this time, to put aside everything you have ever known, or thought you knew, about insurance.

The Editorial Office

Prologue

How Bruna Policarpo was enlisted by the Big Company to write about its exploits

I'm a normally special kind of girl. At least that's how I'd like to be seen. I work by writing and write by working. In particular, I lend all my critical ardour to a few web magazines, one about cinema and one about art, the kind of publications that lay down the law, at least among enthusiasts. For a living, I write content for some social profiles. In short, I practice the rather bombastic job of social media manager and try to get the clients I work for to say things on the web that are intelligent and profound, but at the same time so universally superficial that they give me the creeps.

I feed my ambitions by dreaming of writing short stories, short novels, practically like lightning. Even just considering a novel makes me queasy, anything I might write that's longer than 30 or 40 pages. I think I must be a child of synthesis: short texts, short holidays, short loves.

Then one afternoon I get a call. A voice that all by itself makes me imagine the pure efficiency not of a secretary, but of the head of all the secretaries in the world, capable of calling the president of the nation by name, you pick the nation.

A voice that makes me jump to my feet and click my heels.

This voice speaks dry, unquestionable, definitive words. All my willpower has disappeared. Without managing to issue a sliver of resistance, because I haven't even had a chance to think anyway, she puts me through to the person who wanted to briefly speak with me. In my confusion, I think it's Mrs Supreme General (but perhaps I have confused the role with the company) of the corporate office of the Big Company, which, because of my agitation, I have not clearly grasped.

A tale by Alessandro Brunetti

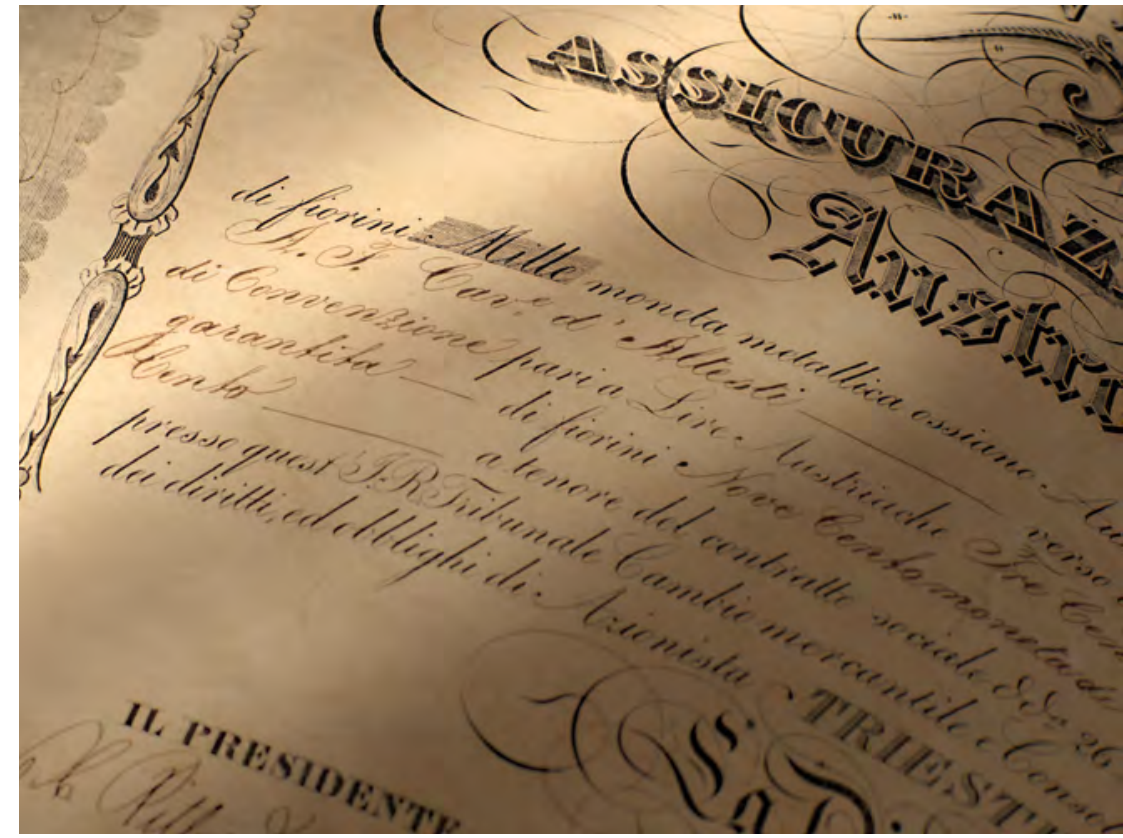
The voice on the other end is full of honey and silk, it's so perfect that it could enchant me simply by dictating a recipe, but we're not talking about delicacies here but about a job she'd like me to do. For her and for that "big cat" who has been slyly smiling for more than 190 years on the signs of some of the most beautiful buildings in the world. This job, for which she chose me after a selection process so meticulous that it took place entirely without my knowledge, is of

immense value in this phase of the Big Company's life, and she would have liked to have discussed it further with me during a group *call**, suitably *scheduled**, having first offered me the choice of the most convenient time *slot** (but why, why, do I always find myself faced with such horrific words?). But instead, because of her busy schedule, she can only tell

me that it's about writing a long story, long in the sense that it has to connect 190 years of history and stories. She realises the seriously *demanding** challenge (here we go again!) but wants my absolute, unconditional, confidential, yielding yes, and right away. Take it or leave it. And I, enveloped in her wonderful way with words, trained to have the most loving attitude to command and nurtured in the most prestigious schools in the West, what can I do but capitulate and say yes, yes ma'am. Only to regret it a tenth of a second after hanging up, knowing that from then on, I would be immersed in something so articulate and complex that I would have to give up half my life, including several padel matches that I would gladly play, if only I could play. Now that I've told you all these things about me, let me introduce myself.

* English terms in the original Italian text

A story that connects almost two centuries of history, from the foundation of Generali in 1831 to the present day, narrating them from the point of view of the people and the impact that Generali has had on society.



Share Certificate no. 1
of Assicurazioni Generali
Austro-Italiche
(Trieste, June 30, 1832)

My name is Bruna, which means brown-haired in Italian. Even if I've got red hair.

And this joke has been plaguing me since I was three months old. And I swear, I haven't been able to stand it since I was in the cradle.

Having somehow overcome my initial disorientation, not without the help of a few Spritz cocktails - the original version from Trieste of course in honour of the customer - do I finally understand which customer we had been talking about. I open my computer and as if by magic, the very efficient machine that moves entirely around Mrs Supreme General has already sent me links and credentials to access tons of documents. I've been registered in all the historical archives of the Big Company; I've been enabled to share anything I might want to search or download online. And lastly, as precious as the Holy Grail, I've been sent the contract, in which in black and white, I could appreciate the mathematical refinement in the use of Arabic zeros: a small line, not brazenly long, but not ridiculously short either.

In short, pleasantly correct. And praise to Muhammad ibn Musa al Khwarizmi, inventor of the most important number of all.

Chapter 1

What Bruna discovered between wakefulness and sleep and how dreaming teaches more than wakefulness

The next day, I go straight to my desk, starting to poke around and explore the stories I find in the endless documents they have made available to me.

While increasingly immersed in a world that's far away but at the same time strangely topical, a quiet knock on the door brings me back to the here and now of my life. A yellow-clad gentleman is at the door, handing me a large parcel and mumbling something that sounds like my surname, but very mispronounced. I adapt and say thank you as I close the door.

I start opening it: the package in question contains, in turn, another package with an envelope on top. I remove the elegant card, on which I read the message, handwritten and signed by Mrs Supreme General herself, as I can see from the elegant heading.

And what has Mrs Supreme General written? Spoilers. Because her note tells me that the box contains original archive materials, which I may exceptionally consult in my studio, doing all the research necessary to begin my work. Translated from her formal eloquence, she was basically saying, "Get to work honey, don't beat around the bush".

The element of surprise having been eliminated, I open the package.

There are two folders full of documents from the early 19th century. I gently pick them up and place them on the table. Underneath them, at the bottom of the package, is an unexpected padded bundle. I pick it up and it's heavy, certainly not paper. The morning looks promising.

I'm thrilled. Where do I start?



Archivist leafing through one of the documents kept in Palazzo Berlam, which hosts the Assicurazioni Generali Historical Archive

I choose the padded bundle.

The packaging is made of soft material, the type used to wrap monitors and crystal lamps. I open the soft plastic sheets, discarding the paper that's the last bastion defending the contents. Two metal plaques are revealed before my eyes, perhaps preserved, perhaps restored. The bright red strikes me, even before the lettering. I gently place them on the desk.

I open my laptop and begin searching. Albeit in a rusty and almost illegible version, I have seen those metal plaques before. It was an October day and I had been walking through the Trastevere district in Rome. I had been chasing a strange story of churches and stuccoes, and had seen this plaque on the facade of an old house, still in place despite being almost corroded by time. I had photographed it, and then found others and continued to photograph them. They're here in my archive, somewhere. Found them. More ruined, more worn, but similar to the polished, brightly coloured ones currently sitting on my desk.

I know what they are. I studied them after having found them by chance that day. I had an article ready for a magazine on industrial archaeology. I don't have to go pull it up, I have a good memory for things I've studied: a gift that made high school easier and university more fun. These plaques had been affixed to buildings covered by fire insurance policies. They enabled the fire-fighters of insurance companies to identify insured buildings and intervene.

Yes, because the fire brigade was not a State body as it is today, and putting out fires was not only a voluntary service but also a paid one.

Giuseppe Lazzaro Morpurgo, the founder of Generali, was the first in Italy to introduce the fire plaques, collect statistics and establish city fire brigades.

These beautiful red, black and blue signs were also a perfect advertising vehicle for the companies themselves, which competed for apartment blocks in the big cities. A few years later, continuing its interest in buildings, Generali became a real estate giant, buying historic buildings

and constructing new ones all over Europe starting with Vienna, and affixing its own logo.

Meanwhile, I continue looking at the plaques. I pick one up, it has writing in a language I don't recognise.

I ask the online translator for help and discover that it's in Hungarian: *Generali Triesti általános biztosító társaság 1831, Assicurazioni Generali of Trieste*. And in that moment I notice that

I can feel a strange energy emanating from the plaque, a sort of current, a vibration. I instinctively open my hand and drop the piece of metal, which falls back onto the packaging, almost without a sound.

I'm shaken, I don't understand what's going on. I throw myself into examining the other documents for a distraction. They are amazing documents, even just their graphics. Characters with different shapes, mingling languages, heraldic coats of arms, imperial eagles and Venetian lions.

There's a bit of everything in the folder. Policies, claims, bills, letters. I handle these almost 200-year-old pages with care, wearing the white cotton gloves that I've kept at home since my archive research days.

I'm trying to imagine myself in a situation that seems simple today, almost obvious, and which at that time was a sort of revolution.

They are often iconic buildings, true symbols of their city, other times they are entire blocks, modern, functional, alive. It is the Company's real estate, which like its policies, knows no boundaries.





Fire attacking houses, the wood of their beams burning, entire neighbourhoods threatened by that fire which provided warm food and shelter against the cold. And then the idea of a policy against all these dangers. In Italy, or rather in what would one day be Italy but was still Hapsburg territory, the idea arrived in the early 1800s, also thanks to the Company.

I am so engrossed in my research, for which I am constantly switching from papers to notes, from the web to dictionaries, that when I look up I see the sun now low, ready to hide behind the building across the street.

I suddenly realise that I'm tired. But a very light sheet of paper, folded twice until it is almost minute, catches my attention. It had wound up in a bundle of pages held together by a crease, as was once used to bind scattered sheets.

I assume that the diligent archivists have also missed it, which I find truly bizarre.

But nothing seems to surprise me anymore. I start to open the paper, I'm afraid it will crumble in my hands, but the paper has a better texture than I think. It has minute, precise writing slanting to the right. And I feel a jolt in my hand again, that paper again transmits something to me that I can't explain.

A letter.

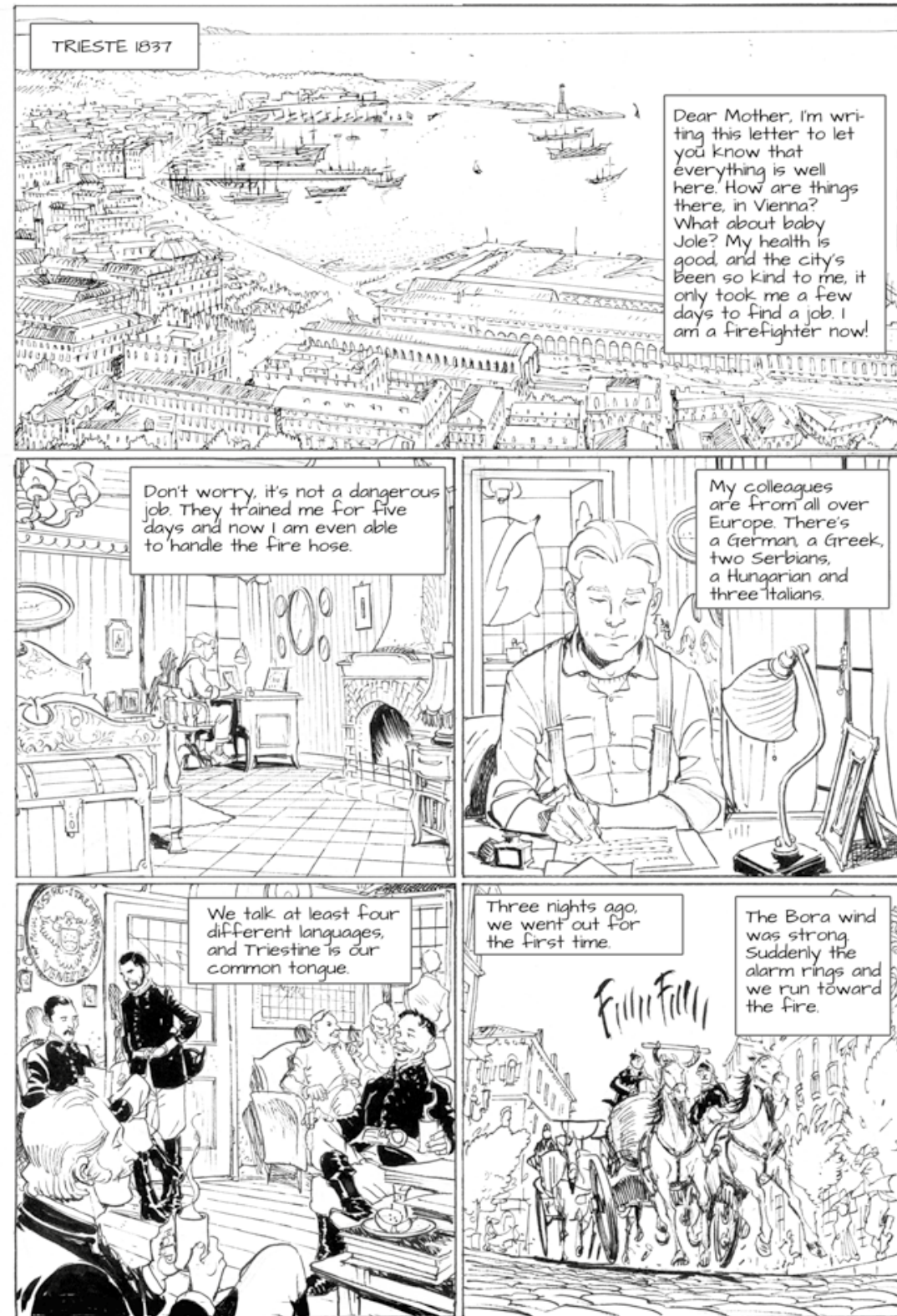
A letter written from Trieste, in German, sent from a son to his distant mother. It's dark outside, and the darkness takes hold of me as well. With the letter in my hand, with my hand still in its white glove, I make it in time to throw myself on the sofa.

Generali's first emblem was the Hapsburg double-headed eagle. But this soon gave way to the lion of Venice: the Company had chosen Italy as the starting point for its spread across Europe.

The Social Contract of Assicurazioni Generali Austro-Italiche (Trieste, December 26, 1831)

Pitch black

A comic by Giulio De Vita





It's twilight, there's an orange glow over the city and the wind blows the smoke around. We arrive at a stone building by the Canal, but we can't see the flames, they must be somewhere upstairs.

HELLFIRE!

HOW ARE WE GONNA PUT IT OUT?

WE WONT END UP LIKE THE GUARDIANS AT LA FENICE!



LET'S NOT WASTE ANY TIME! GEORG, CHECK THAT THE PLATE ON THE FRONT DOOR IS IN GOOD STANDING.

WHAT PLATE, CAPTAIN?

WITHOUT THE INSURANCE COMPANY'S PLATE WE CAN'T INTERVENE!

HURRY UP! EVERY SECOND MATTERS!

LOOK ALL OVER THE BLOCK! SPLIT UP!

I'LL GO THERE.

TOO MUCH SMOKE I CAN'T SEE!

COUGH! COUGH! I CAN'T BREATHE! I'M GONNA DIE!

FAREWELL, MY SWEET RITA OUR DREAMS DISSOLVE IN TONIGHT'S SMOKE. I LOVE YOU.

GEORG, DON'T LEAVE ME. TAKE MY HAND.



RITA
MY LOVE, I'LL
TAKE YOUR
HAND FOR THE
LAST...



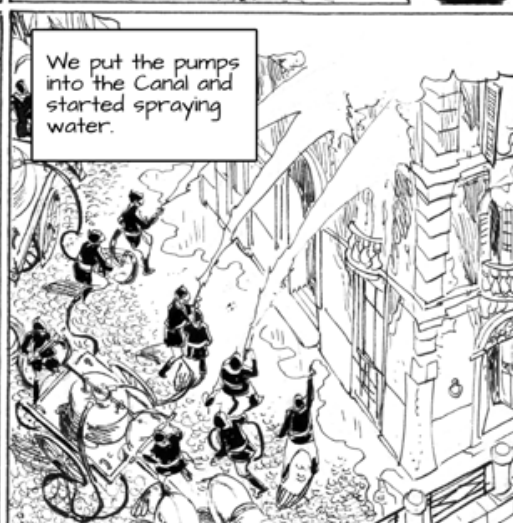
THE PLATE!
I CAN'T
BELIEVE IT!



GEORG
FOUND
THE PLATE!

THE WIND
MUST HAVE
BLOWN IT
AWAY.

GO HELP
HIM!



We put the pumps
into the Canal and
started spraying
water.



IT'LL TAKE SOME
TIME, BUT WE'LL
PUT THESE
FLAMES OUT



We worked all night long to
extinguish that fire.

We went home worn
out but happy.



GOOD MORNING,
EVERYBODY. I HAVE
SOMETHING FOR YOU,
GEORG.

YES,
SIR.



THE COMPANY
WANTS YOU TO HAVE
THIS. THE WHOLE UNIT
IS GRATEFUL.

THANK YOU,
CAPTAIN.
IT WAS MY
DUTY.



Ah Mother,
I also met
a local girl.



YOUR CAMOMILE,
DEAR.

RITA,
HONEY.

I'll tell you about her
in my next letter.



I WANT
TO STAND BY YOU
FOREVER.

TAKE MY
HAND.

...and maybe one
day you'll meet
her.

THE END



Assicurazioni Generali
fire marks (19th and 20th
century)

I wake up.

It's early, the pale morning light when the sun hasn't yet risen to claim its throne. I feel cold, the organza curtains lightly fluttering, recognising the notes of the wind that only they can interpret.

Georg appeared to me in a dream. Georg? Who's Georg? My hand springs alive to look for something, without me even controlling it. It searches and finds. The sheet of paper of the letter I hadn't even had time to read before collapsing on the couch. And which I now know perfectly. Georg the fire-fighter, Georg proud of his work, wrote to his mother telling her what had happened to him a few days after he had joined the service. I shoot up, reach the table, look for the metal plaque and put it next to the letter. Without announcing itself in any way, the sun makes the enamel of the metal and the white of the paper shine. Georg had touched that plaque, not one like it, that one. I don't have any proof, I can't tell anyone. Even though it's been restored, it's the same one that he picked up from the ground on the evening of the fire, almost red-hot. It's the plaque that enabled him to recognise the building to be saved. The brigade commander wanted him to keep it. And he tells his mother all of this in the letter. I have no idea how, but yesterday the plaque and Georg were close again, here in my house.

I wonder if Mrs Supreme General had understood something and wanted to test me?

The journey has just begun. A shiver runs down my spine. It's not from the cold, but excitement. It's Georg and his fire.

Chapter 2

How Bruna discovered that the dreams of many in time can become the reality of a single great man. Or almost

I let a day go by. I did everything I could to stay away from my work for Generali. I ate, walked, read and wrote without thinking about insurance, fires, Georg. I finally felt good. Only, I realised that I had oversold myself. So I told myself that I would devote six hours a day to the book, no more, and avoid getting swallowed up completely. First I put everything back in the box: folders, plaques, envelopes, documents, papers. I wiped the dust from the table and put that away too. A new day, all to be built. Come on Bruna, you let yourself get carried away.

I look at the documents and a map stands out, Suez. And as always, I find myself searching online. I type in Suez, and the screen fills with images of a ship. The ship that terrorised the world. That discovered its fragile vital ganglia. It was March 2021, and the container ship Ever Given, one of the world's largest, pulled into the middle of the Canal. And panic broke out. In a matter of hours, hundreds of goods - liquid, solid, gaseous - found themselves trapped on either side of this iron mountain towering over the surrounding desert. The world went back 180 years in time. To before the Suez Canal. And to say that this gut cutting through the desert is an ancient idea. Or rather, more than an idea: until a few years before the Common Era, thanks to the Egyptians and Persians, the Canal was a reality. Then the sand took over, and no one managed to reopen it, to dig out the sand, at least until the mid-1800s when the project became fundamental again for some European states, first and foremost France. Sure that's a nice story, but what does Generali have to do with it?

Perhaps I made a mistake, I read it wrong.

I go back and look at the documents and see that I was spot on. Generali was also involved in the Canal, full steam ahead. In particular thanks to two men from the Company: Pasquale Revoltella and Giuseppe Morpurgo. Two eminent businessmen. I wanted to know more. So I call Fulvio, a friend from Trieste. Maybe he can help me. He's a reporter,

but he's the only one I know on that scene. Polite conversation, more chitchat, we exchange news about ourselves and our love lives. Then I shoot: what do you know about Revoltella Pasquale and Morpurgo Giuseppe? He can tell from a distance that the conversation has become serious. He wants to know what I'm looking for. I

tread lightly, mentioning an article on the people of Trieste who've left their mark. He doesn't bite, but pretends to. He wants to figure out what I'm really interested in. We seem like cat and mouse. But I don't know who's what. In the end he just throws it out there: Revoltella loved ancient Egypt so much that he tried to have himself embalmed. And the other one, for me, is the inventor of Instagram. Bye.

And hangs up, obnoxiously. He knows very well that now there's no way I can stay out of this. A story that doesn't hold up, with two great men who effortlessly circulate among imperial courts and national chancelleries, one who feels like a Pharaoh out of time, the other who is an *ante litteram* social media influencer. I immediately get to work and decide to go with Giuseppe Morpurgo. I search and search, digesting pages and pages, sometimes getting lost.

Then finally I catch a trace.

Governments and heads of state wanted the Suez Canal. But also Generali, which immediately realised the potential hidden in the multiplication of maritime traffic to and from Europe in Trieste's favour.



Map of the region of operation under the East Department of Generali (1912)

It's a glint, but the solution to the enigma my journalist friend dropped in my lap flashes before me. In an old issue of the Generali magazine created in 1893, there's a letter sent from aboard the ship on the day the Canal was inaugurated. That seems a bit understated. But it is again Generali's magazine that ultimately gives a meaning and answers to what Fulvio had said. At ease sitting behind a desk or in the presence of His Majesty, the Generali manager has written a brief daily report along the journey from Trieste to Port Said amid yachts and dream trains, in a unique style, more like a post on a social networking site than something written by a self-restrained nobleman dedicated to business. The descriptions are somewhere between poetic and metaphysical. A new language, capable of engaging and creating a remote experience for the reader.

Does it seem too modern?

You're wrong, it's a story that's....

Timeless



A comic by Helena Masellis
and Alessandro Lise





LET'S REVIEW THE PLAN.

WE HAVE NO TIME.



TIME IS THE ONLY THING WE HAVE.

NO, PLEASE. NO AGENCY SLOGANS.



LET ME REMIND YOU THAT YOU ALREADY MISSED THE TIMENAUT. TWICE.

IT WON'T HAPPEN AGAIN.

SHOULD I TURN HERE?

YES. THE INAUGURATION OF THE CANAL IS TOMORROW, BUT SOME CEREMONIES ARE HAPPENING



LET ME REMIND YOU THAT YOU ARE INVISIBLE, BUT NOT INTANGIBLE.

YES, YES, MOTHER. I WON'T TOUCH ANYONE. DON'T WORRY. WHERE'S EMPRESS ANTONIA?



EUGENIA, NOT ANTONIA! ARE YOU SURE YOU STUDIED THE FILE?

DON'T WORRY...



HOW CAN I NOT WORRY, IF YOU DON'T EVEN KNOW THE EMPRESS' NAME?

I DID MY HOMEWORK: THERE'S GONNA BE TWO RELIGIOUS CEREMONIES HERE, SOON

ONE IS A CHRISTIAN RITUAL, THE OTHER ISLAMIC.



I WISH PROSPERITY ON THIS COLOSSAL ENTERPRISE.

THAT'S GIUSEPPE MORPURGO. HE'S HERE ON BEHALF OF THE CITY OF TRIESTE, WHICH IS FINANCING THE ENTERPRISE. FOR THEM, THE CANAL IS GOING TO BE A HUGE GROWTH OPPORTUNITY.



MERCI, MON CHER MORPURGO!

THE OTHER ONE IS FERDINAND DE LESSEPS. HIS COMPANY FINISHED BUILDING THE CANAL. HE IS A DIPLOMAT, AN ENTREPRENEUR AND A VISIONARY.



AND HERE SHE IS, THE EMPRESS EUGENIA, NAPOLEON III'S WIFE AND LAST QUEEN OF FRANCE.



SHE'LL ABANDON THE THRONE IN TWO YEARS, IN 1871, AFTER THE FRANCO-PRUSSIAN WAR.

ALRIGHT, ALRIGHT, I GET IT. YOU DON'T NEED TO REPEAT THE DOSSIER BACK AT ME...



BE ALERT, OUR INTEL SAYS THE TIMENAUT MIGHT STRIKE HERE.

I SEE HIM!





Portrait of Giuseppe Lazzaro Morpurgo attributed to Gino Parin and made in the first half of the 20th century. Oil painting on canvas

And now it's Pasquale's turn. A self-made man, he emigrated from Venice to Trieste at a very young age in search of fortune, and was capable not only of finding it but also of multiplying it. Trieste is now home to his house-museum, a villa and his story full of twists and turns. No Revoltella No Suez: this could be the slogan of his life. But why did Fulvio tell me about mummies and Pharaohs? If I called him, I would be admitting defeat, and then I would be the mouse forever. I might as well look again. Tiredness was setting in and I had skipped lunch chasing two 200-year-old geniuses. I threw myself on an armchair, a pathetic attempt to escape the sofa or worse, the bed. Bruna, resist. Bruna come

on, make yourself a double espresso. Bruna.

I wake up and I'm a cricket, in the sense that I'm chirping. Yes, that very noise there, very much like a summer afternoon at the seaside. Only I'm making the noise not because I'm transforming as if in a Kafkaesque *Metamorphosis* (by the way, Generali is the only insurance company to have had a writer whose surname gave rise to an adjective. I'm talking about Franz Kafka, one of the greatest names in 20th-century literature, the inventor of stories sometimes steeped in magic and dismay which are still an emblem of our modernity, at times even too ambiguous and complex), but because I'm looking for a word in my memories, a small crumb of bread that can lead me to unravel the mystery of the baron who wanted to be Pharaoh, at least according to evil Fulvio. I

keep chirping, frrrr frrrr until finally my very core is lit up: forensic radiology! That's what I was looking for, it had been written on the business card under the name of an anatomic pathologist who studied the dead by CT scan for museums, historians and courts. So where in God's name is your business card, right now you're worth more than a bank note, more than a life insurance policy, more than a bitcoin. Abandoning the armchair, I jump to my feet and venture to the bookshelf to explore the things kept there, waiting to be useful: I take everything off but no news of the professor. I'm at the end of my rope, I'm trying hard to avoid the umpteenth internet search all because I'm stubborn and messy, stubborn but messy, stubborn as well as messy. And in the end, stubbornness beats mess 10 to nil.

Kafka was employed by Generali. This is another fact in the Company's history and archives. Insurance was a constant in the writer's working life, and represents a lateral but not marginal aspect of his life.

The card is under the box that holds strange objects found on the beach.

Logical, right? Silly me for not thinking of it.

The professor's name is also Fulvio, this is a persecution. I call him, preparing for a long speech to explain who I am and why he should remember me, how we met at a conference I attended as a student at university. But the professor immediately stops me with a mind-blowing: "Bruna, how are you?"

Now, how is it that some people have a memory and others, like me, if they don't write their name down on a piece of paper, are capable of forgetting it? I get straight to the point, even if it sounds absurd, and tell him that I'm studying 19th-century dead people embalmed in the Egyptian ways.

And at that precise moment, it's as if an angelic song is playing directly in my head, or so it seems to me: "Ah yes, like the old Baron Revoltella, who didn't seem so old at all".

Damn Fulvio, and I don't even have to clarify which of the two, because it's all the same. So it's true that the baron had requested to be embalmed. And he tells me, as an eye-witness and co-protagonist of the study of the corpse, the bizarre and Gothic story of the baron's mummy which, in spite of the instructions in his will, did not really turn out well. The body had however surprised the doctors with a number of oddities, from the considerable consumption of champagne in the last months of his life, to his diet of meat and fish, from the tailcoat in which he was buried to the medical age of the body, which was 20 years younger than his actual age. In short, the ingenious and presumably eccentric baron had not been able to see his dream of the Suez Canal fulfilled, because he died a few days before the end of the work. But his memory continues to inhabit the dreams and fantasies of those who came after him. Revoltella and Morpurgo: they don't make guys like that any more.

Chapter 3

About what binds us to the earth and the sky, and of those who have made earth an art and art an earth

I lie in bed watching the path of a spider moving obliquely from one point to another of the beams in my ceiling. I wish I could imitate him, but then I think that of all the various superheroes, Spiderman is the least happy, so I set the wish aside. I read somewhere that *desire* comes from the Latin word *desidera*, which means to miss the stars, or miss something good and beautiful. And what am I missing today? So many things, but above all the good and the beautiful. I have to get back to my work for Generali. I'm looking for a story, one among the many that exist, and I'd like to find a good and beautiful one. So I dive into the Bollettino magazine, randomly skipping among the decades.



Two different covers of the magazine "Il Bollettino", the Generali corporate magazine founded in 1893

I am struck by the story of the 1898 Turin National Exhibition, the last of the century. Piedmont's capital city had been spruced up, the pavilions housing the various exhibitions were competing to impress visitors, and the large enclosure where the event was held was like a container of wonders, first and foremost electricity and aeronautics.

More than 8,000 companies, large and small, had come from all over Italy to showcase their products, and wonder, amazement, surprise

abounded. Of course, Generali was also there with Anonima Infortuni. And because the company was ahead of its time, it did what we would call co-branding today: it participated in the Exhibition together with an engineering company from Milan, Ceretti & Tanfani, with

something never seen before: the first automatic machine for issuing accident insurance policies. It has all the flavour of American inventiveness, yet it happened in Italy at the end of the 19th century.

The intuition of selling insurance policies through a vending machine is something that could still amaze today. But it was already a reality more than a century ago for Generali.



The ticket issued by the travel insurance vending machine

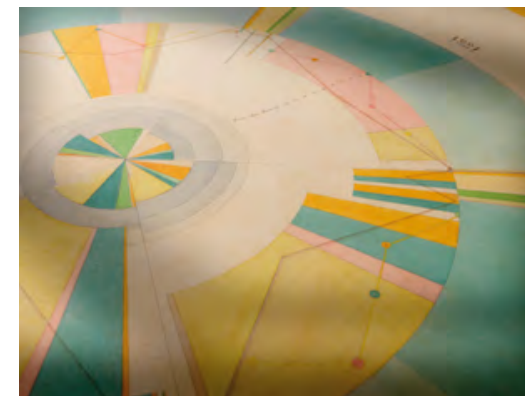


But then I come across an article that puts together a farm, a colony, and its large group of children. The black and white photos strike me: standing on the white sand of a beach in the Veneto region, dozens of small children are frolicking in their underwear and vests. They also have hats, also white.

I read and learn that they're the children of Generali employees, not white-collar workers, but farmers from Ca' Corniani. I re-read more carefully. Generali issues insurance policies. We've understood that. But it also has a farm.

Generali's interest in agriculture is nothing new. As early as 1836, the Company launched its first hail insurance policy with the aim of creating customised insurance coverage for people.

And this is a novelty, but it fits: if you work to make the future less uncertain, it also seems right to invest in the certainty that the land and its fruits give you. Worst case scenario, you've got something to eat. And not only did it have many employees on this farm, it also took care of the children and sent them to summer camps to breathe in the fresh sea air and enjoy the water and the sun. I smell a story full of values, my search for beauty may have found its answer. I set my sights on Ca' Corniani, and I won't regret it. I understand this when I read the words "reclamation" and "marshes". You may not know this, but my great-grandmother was the daughter of one of the heroes of the reclamation of Ostia Antica, labourers who came down from Ravenna to transform the marshes into arable fields and beaches for the new bourgeoisie of the capital. But these people from Ravenna were also revolutionaries, and they all lived in a commune. My great-grandmother, whose red hair I wear with pride, was born in that commune, rode bareback and never married, but had seven children. And I have the surname of a woman, the matriarch.



Hail insurance graphic plates (1884)

That's why Ca' Corniani immediately captivated me, even before I knew its history: it's a story that I feel as mine.

An unexpected eagerness grips me; I can't stand still, I have to do something. Yes, but what? Simple: leave, go, see. Ca' Corniani, here I come! And so, having packed a light but complete suitcase, I leave the ashen heat of my city for the first Generali farm. It's late afternoon when I arrive. The sky is full of low, dense, livid grey clouds. The wind is colder than

I thought. The estate is only a few kilometres away, and I stop my car in a clearing. I've only just remembered that my car insurance is with Generali.

Sitting in the driver's seat, I look at the roof of a farmhouse glistening the colour of gold. I start the engine and drive through the

first drops - heavy, pounding, dark. Suddenly, summer is a distant memory. I turn on the heater, start the windscreen wipers and defrost the windows. I slowly and solemnly approach those buildings, those old farmhouses, that shining roof, I can sense the river, but I can see very little. Thunder fills the silence of the countryside and a neon sign lights up before my eyes, but the force of the rain makes it impossible to read through the waterlogged glass. The light that flashed without warning now disappears. How mysterious. I stop the engine. I wait. The thunderstorm settles into a finer rain, while a glow full of optimism creeps in under the clouds to the east. And the neon lights come on again. This time I can understand what I'm looking at: a sign silhouetted against the sky. A sign that warns, that subverts, that reverses expectations: every time lightning strikes in Italy, it will light up.

Car insurance has been compulsory in Italy since 1971. Civil liability for drivers became law in that year, a measure for which the Company worked with the State to define its content.



Car insurance advertising postcard of Anonima Infortuni (1923)

I wait. And the miracle shows itself again, the light shines once more. Then, just as it started, the rain stops, the early evening sky clears up above me. And Ca' Corniani welcomes me like a daughter returning to the home of her roots.

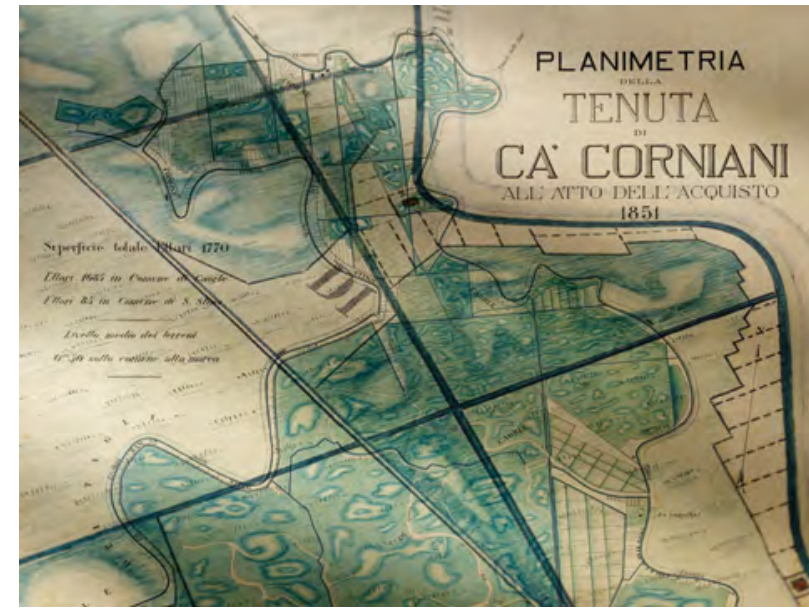
My cheeks are wet, but it's not because of the rain.

Once again Generali has forced me to look inside myself, once again I must come to terms with what is light and what is dark deep within. Mrs Supreme General is bringing me to increasingly skewed terrain, that of my emotions. I need to re-

charge my batteries, calm down, drink some wine from this land that brings me back to the centre of myself. Tonight I have everything and I have nothing, tonight desire cradles me, tonight I have the stars, all the stars.

It's morning.

I woke up and walked barefoot out onto the veranda of my room. A step separates me from the grass, from the countryside. I step down, and feel happy. It hasn't been so easy and so intense for a long time. My heart skips a beat, a sort of vertigo, a moment suspended over nothingness. I go back to my room overlooking the fields, at the edge of the river. It's time to set out and unveil the secrets of Ca' Corniani and Genagricola, one of Italy's largest farms. It's time to go back, even in time.



Plan of the Ca' Corniani estate at the time of purchase (1851)

But above all, it's time for breakfast. And so I take a seat in the large hall of my *agriturismo*. While I'm absorbed more in taste than in thought, a man with a full beard and a long moustache, old but of indefinable age, approaches my table. He has a martial air about him, but at the same time his smile breaks down any resistance. He introduces himself with a slight bow, increasing the sensation of temporal estrangement that I had already felt as soon as I saw him. "I am Daniele, at your service", he says. And after asking permission, he sits down at my table.

I watch him with my head slightly tilted, uncertain. "I'm here to accompany you to the farm."

And with these words pronounced in a deep voice and an accent barely tinged with Veneto dialect, he wins me over once and for all.

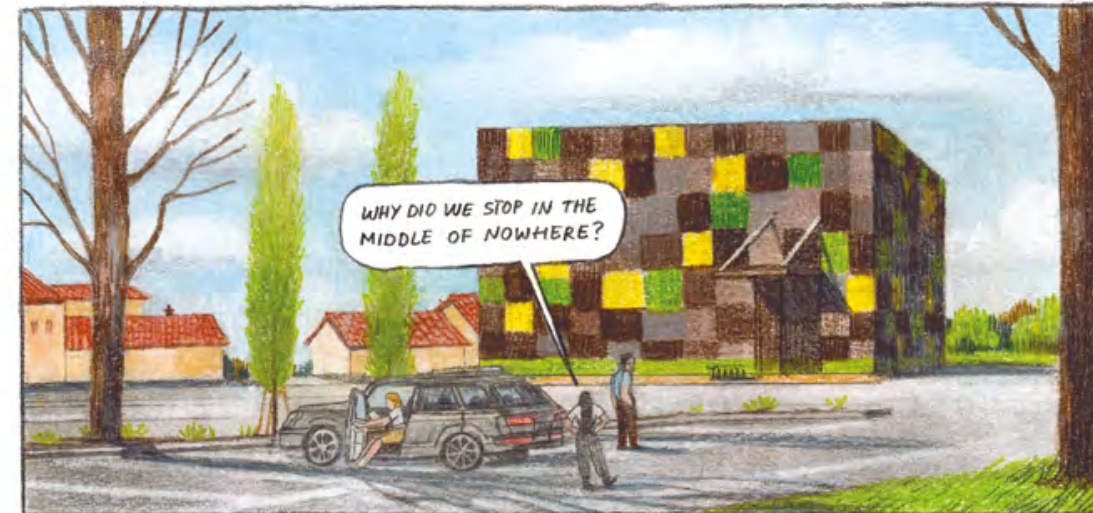
I feel like Alice in Wonderland, except there's no White Rabbit here, there's...

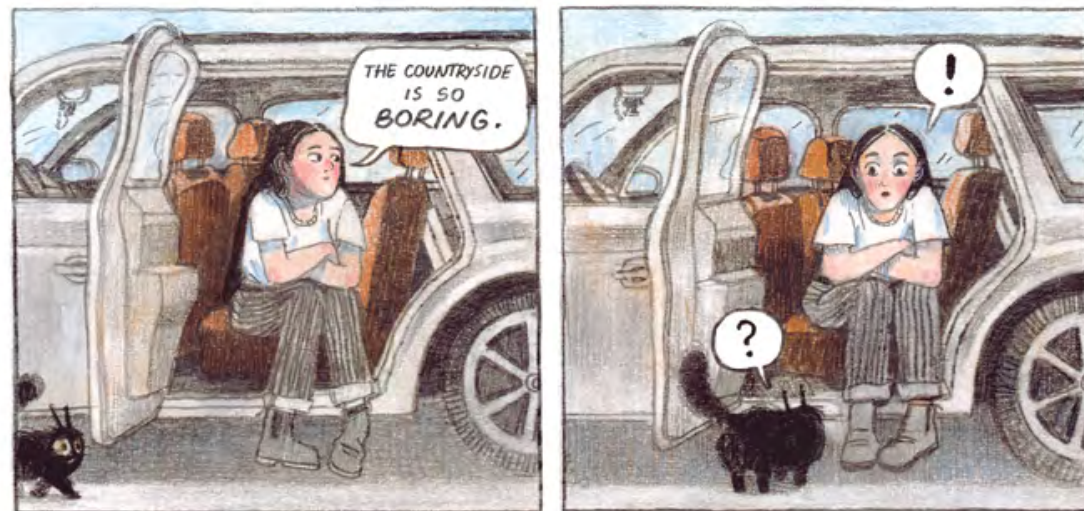


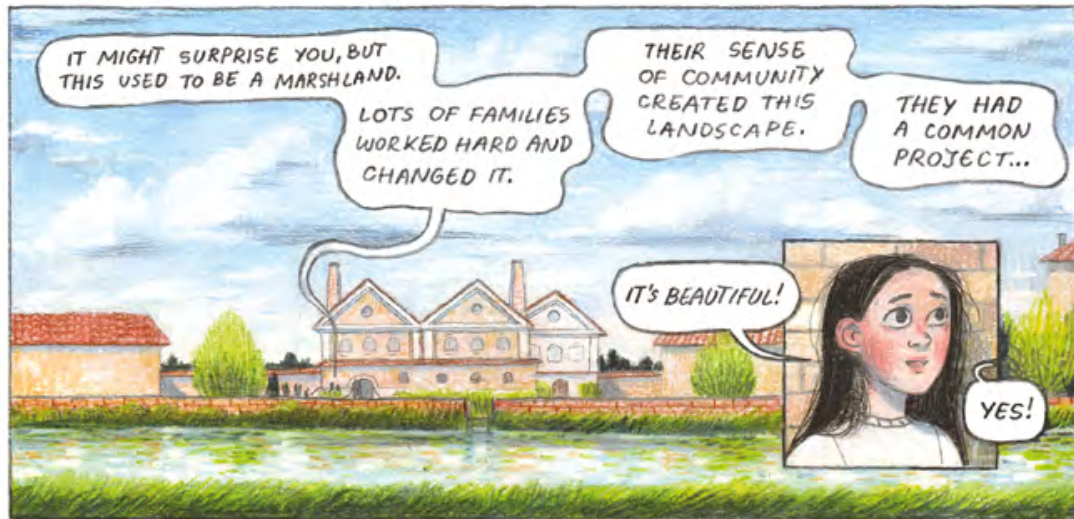
An elusive cat



A comic by Kalina Muhova and Alessandro Lise







La Vecchia Cantina, the iconic place of Ca' Corniani, an architectural jewel that recreates the microclimate suitable for the production of wine



While we're travelling in the car he tells me that the first thing he wants me to see are the white sentries. I don't really understand what he's talking about, but when I see them, no further explanation is necessary. A long row of sculpted animals watches the river, each standing on a block. The sculptures are by Alberto Garutti, the artist who also created the gold roof of the old farmhouse and the sign that illuminates with every bolt of lightning. I find myself walking among dogs, goats, mythological figures paying tribute to all the animals that have lived here. Meanwhile, I listen to Daniele's story. The land reclamation, the large commune where up to 3,000 people lived, the school for the farmers' children, the infirmary for the sick, the church.

The dream of a man and a company, Generali, which wanted to create a new model of agriculture based on the community and its values. We stop in front of the chequered cube, from which bicycles and cyclists come and go.

They come from all over the world to visit this land that was once a swamp and is now an example. The sun is high, with only a trace of yesterday's storm left in the fresh air. Daniele says goodbye, almost taps his heels together and I'm sure he would have kissed my hand, had I offered it. He turns and walks straight towards a farmhouse. I walk to my car to go back to the *agriturismo*, crossing the square of the farming village to reach it.

But something makes me turn my head, and my gaze stops at the window of an office building. I look closer; beyond the window I can see a desk, shelves of records and documents. And a portrait on a wall: it's my mentor, Daniele. A woman looks out of the window, we look at each other surprised and then burst out laughing, for no real reason. Almost embarrassed, I ask her about the portrait behind her and she says, "Are you asking me about Major Francesconi, Secretary General Francesconi, or the visionary Francesconi? He was all this and much more. Without him, this place would not exist".

I turn around stunned and think back to Mrs Supreme General: had she known where I'd wind up?

I walk away after a quick goodbye nod to the woman at the window. She was likely left thinking that all tourists are strange. But she's right, I do feel strange. Had I spoken with a ghost or dreamt of doing so? The inscription lights up. This time it's a bolt from the blue.

About those who venture into unknown lands and how you shouldn't fear what you don't know you don't know

So what happened over these days? I collected stories, I met people in dreams, ghosts, the dead ahead of us. But now I need to talk to someone in the flesh. For a moment I entertain the idea of calling Mrs Supreme General. With the excuse of telling her of my progress, I'd like to be lulled by her voice again, but then I wonder: what would she think of me? Maybe she'd think she had chosen wrong, that the lucky Bruna is just a ridiculous adventuress with no writing skills whatsoever, the furthest thing from Little Women's Jo, who fed my adolescent fantasies. Better to study the material on Generali. Innovation, sustainability, being ahead of the times. These are important values for a company, but I'm writing a story, not a company brochure. I'm suddenly overcome with panic, here we go again. I thought I had fought my fears and instead here I am feeling sorry for myself. Mrs Supreme General, how could you think I could do it?

I go back to reading the stories, stories of normal people who had the strength to do something out of the ordinary. Perhaps they too were afraid, and fear comes from the unknown. And then there's what you don't know you don't know, which is even worse.

Or not? I know that I would never jump with a parachute, with a rope tied to a bridge, with a paraglider. It's a fear I know, hence I avoid putting myself through it. But then there are the things I don't know, or rather that I don't know I don't know. Hundreds of things that I totally ignore because they have never appeared before my eyes, before my senses, and that I happily ignore.



The intervention of Europ Assistance during the 1968 Winter Olympic Games in favor of the Italian sledding athlete Cristina Pabst

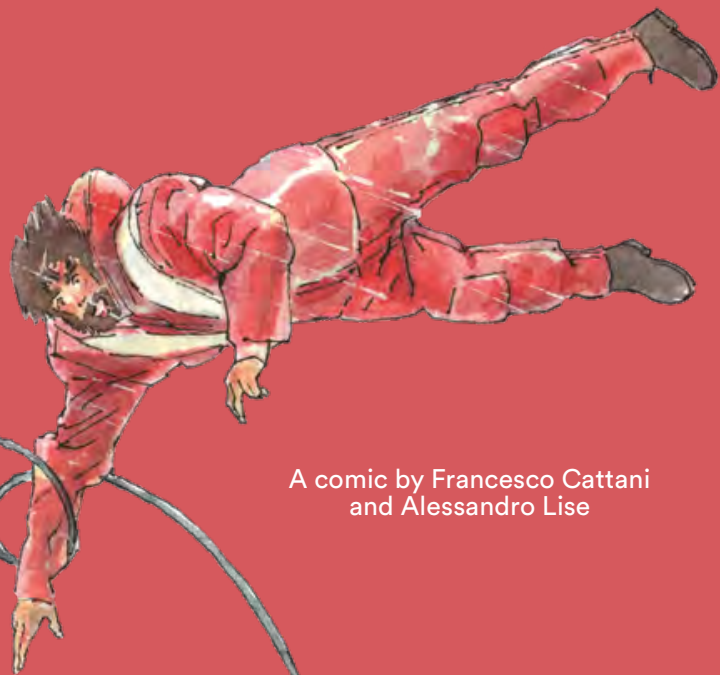
As I digress in this way, I discover that I didn't know Europ Assistance. The great thing is that even its inventor didn't know what he was creating, he simply had no idea. So when his closest friends had an accident in Spain, he tried to bail them out, totally unaware of how difficult it could be. It was 1963, there were no fax machines, no mobile phones, no interconnected networks. Only the telephone and if you were advanced the telex. Now you try, kind reader, to do something as silly as renting a car in Madrid using only a landline (I was kind to choose a European capital, mind you). And nothing else.

How would you find the number of the Spanish office? No, you don't have a search engine. No, you don't have an automatic translator. No, you don't have Alexa. I'm talking about Pierre Desnos, who created something he didn't know out of nothing. And he did it so well that from then on he started saving lives and helping people in trouble all over the world. I think he's a hero. Generali did too, because Europ Assistance entered its orbit and is still there. Just as it still creates solutions capable of recovering a canoeist lost in Cambodia, saving a child attacked by bees in the Guadeloupe Islands, and treating and saving a tourist suffering from a heart attack in the middle of the desert.

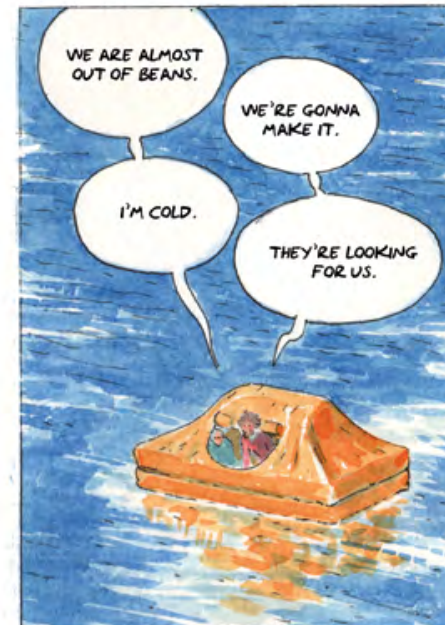
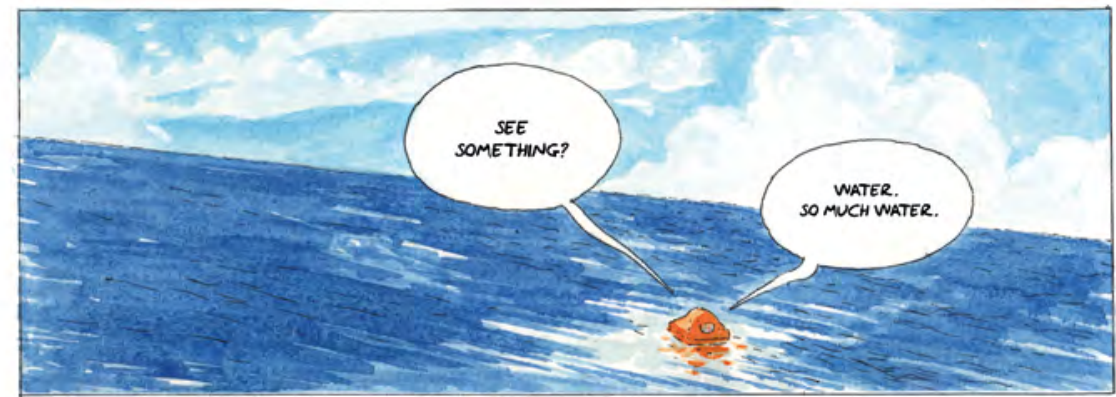
Speaking of deserts, it's hot as hell in my room right now. I get up and open the window.

To create a company from scratch that can help its clients all over the world, providing any kind of assistance quickly and overcoming terrible obstacles. It's not a film. It's Europ Assistance.

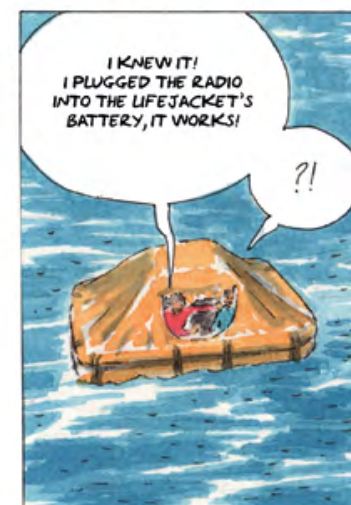
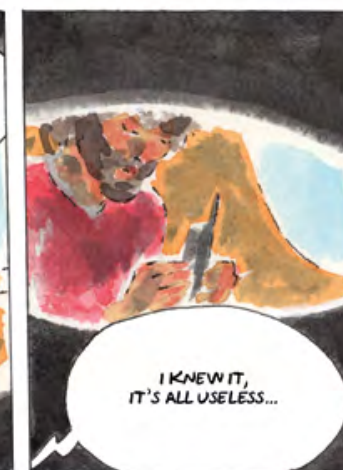
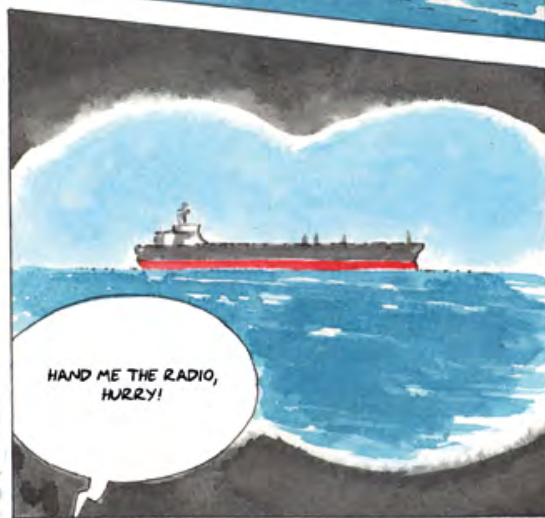
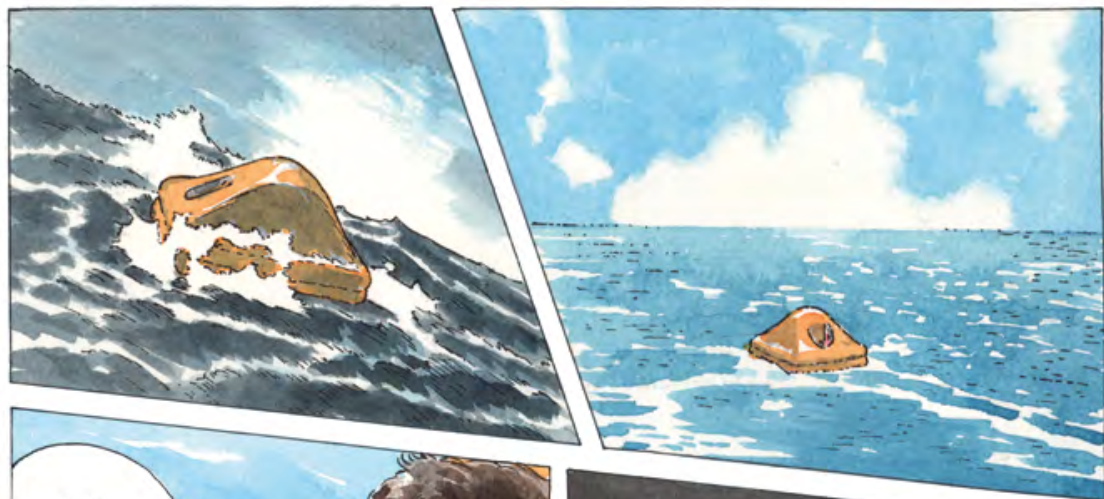
Fresh breeze



A comic by Francesco Cattani and Alessandro Lise









Testimony of the rescue in 1993 of skipper Paolo Rizzi together with Andrea Pribaz, caught by a storm seven hundred miles from the Azores



Of course, it would be nice to talk to one of these people, but I don't think that's appropriate. Hi, I'm Bruna, can I ask you a few questions about your adventure? Where are you? Ah, Kuala Lumpur, of course I'll see you at the bar on the corner. No, I'd say it certainly isn't appropriate. And speaking of the bar on the corner, I'm in the mood for gelato and I don't know if it's open or not. I'll go downstairs to take my mind off things for a bit.

The square is scorched by the sun, the usual group of troublemakers playing cards are under the ivy canopy insulting each other like old friends. Old for sure, friends I've never been sure. The bar is historic and not at all fancy, which may be why it's always crowded, even with the thermometer off the charts.

I catch Mario's attention and point to the gelato tubs surrounded by frost. He makes my cone with skilful gestures, scoop after scoop. I'm fascinated. And I almost miss the fact that he has a new tattoo, a cogwheel - a motorbike sprocket to be precise - broken in two and coloured blue and red. Won over by curiosity and with the lure of the gelato so close, I ask him what it means. And so he tells me a story full of accidents, of motorbikes falling to pieces, of flying twenty metres in the air and how in the end everything turned out okay.

Based on the experience gained with Europ Assistance, in 2000s Generali launched the Immagina platform, a flexible insurance that follows the development of people and their needs.

Meaning? I ask.

Meaning, they helped him back on his feet, gave him a new motorbike and he was able to continue his journey along the Moroccan Great Atlas. Sorry, who saved you? And he, as jeering as ever, answers me in Roman dialect while pointing to the tattoo:

"Hey Bruna, can't you see that it's their colours? Euroassistans" he says, mashing the words together.

"If it wasn't for these superstars, I'd still be wandering around the mountains. And let me tell you something else: Immagina.

You'd never have guessed that the people at Generali came up with it.

Bye Bruna bella, see you later".

Mario opened my eyes: with only a few words, without getting lost in useless details, he explained how Europ Assistance works, electing himself as an absolute and unconscious, but perfectly representative, testimonial. Walking home and savouring every drop of my cone, I freely consider a series of thoughts. I'd also like to be able to count on someone to get me out of trouble when most needed. But I doubt that a panic attack triggered by a blank sheet of paper, for example, is one of the problems that Europ Assistance can solve for me.

Chapter 5

How putting wings on the desire to explore new places means putting people on a solid footing

My deep dive into Generali continues. But every now and then I have to step away, look into the daily news. One news story, among many others, piques my curiosity. We seem to be in the middle of a space race. But the protagonists are not China, Russia, India or the USA. They have names and surnames, huge amounts of capital and are businessmen in the deepest sense of the word. I'm talking about Richard Branson, Jeff Bezos and Elon Musk, who have decided to challenge each other among orbits and rockets, launches and zero gravity. But the assault on the sky began just over 100 years ago with the Wright brothers. I think the world is split between those who hear a plane flying overhead and stop to look up and follow its path, and those who don't. As a dreamer, I proudly belong to the first category. Maybe it's because Peter Pan could fly, maybe it's because of my desire to separate my shadow from the ground, but the vertical dimension has always attracted me.

And so I start thinking about Umberto Nobile, the North Pole pioneer who never could have accomplished his mission without Generali. And not because it was a sponsor. But because thanks to actuarial mathematics applied to policies, it was able to insure the explorer and his adventure.

The drive for knowledge can also come from a life insurance policy. The courage and determination of an explorer must find a solid footing, and that footing is insurance. This is how Nobile flew to the North Pole.



Umberto Nobile became famous for his two airships across the North Pole. The 1928 expedition aboard the airship Italia was insured by Generali



I realise that it doesn't matter whether it's the flight of a plane or an airship, they've made my thoughts soar far away and now it's time to get back to work.

But it's not easy with the Bollettino blaring in front of me. Just like a surfer passes from one wave to the next, I drift from one news story to the next, attracted by the glint of a name, a fact, a word. Generali's passion for technology is not the stuff of millennials: it had chosen to rely on Hollerith machines, true forerunners of computers. The machines read punch cards and could process thousands of information items, which could then be represented logically or graphically.

The name Hollerith didn't mean anything to me either, but then I researched who he was. And I found myself facing the founder of the International Business Machines Corporation, IBM for short, also known as Big Blue. And from blue to sky blue, it's a small step. As I continue to half watch the Bollettino, I realise why the story of today's space race struck me. Without Generali, space would be even farther away.

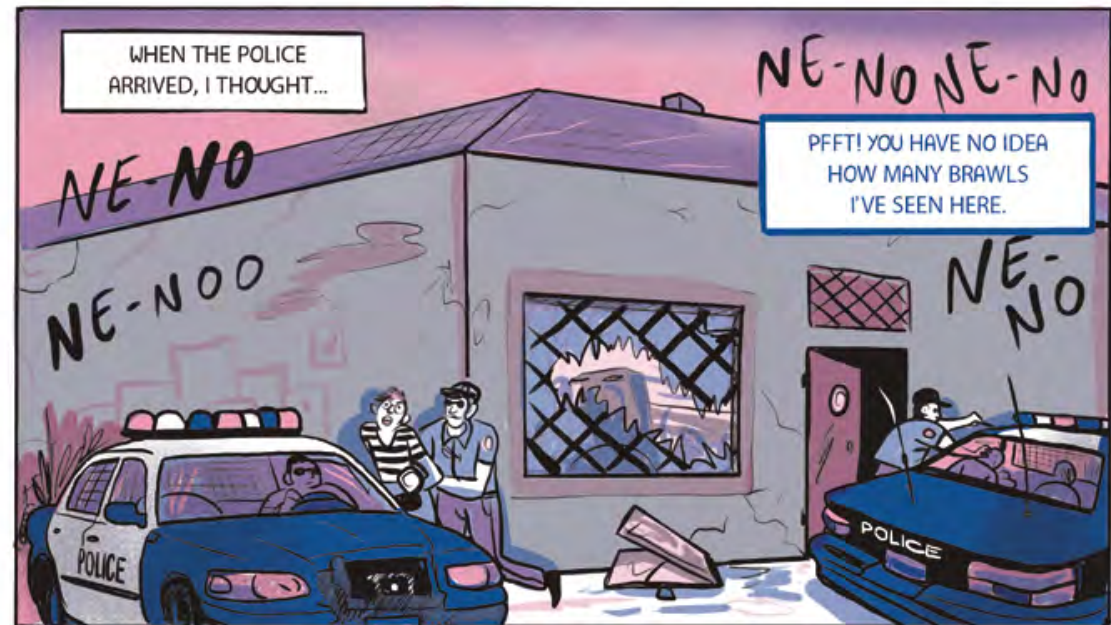
Its first policy dates back to 1964. In 1977, Generali accompanied the launch of the Sirio satellite from Cape Canaveral.

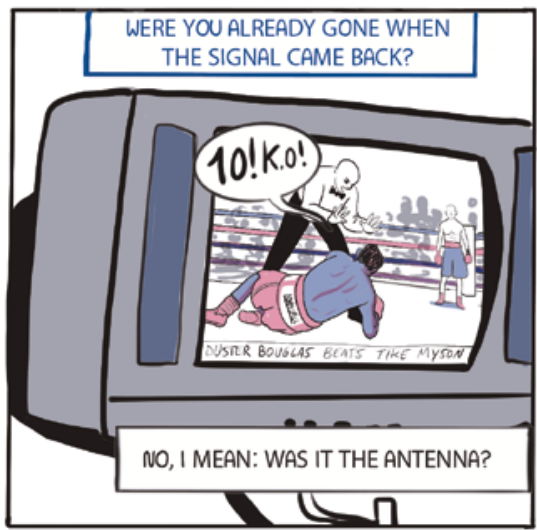
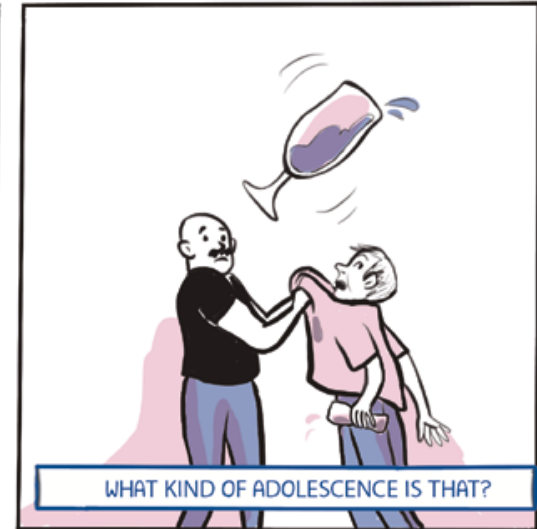
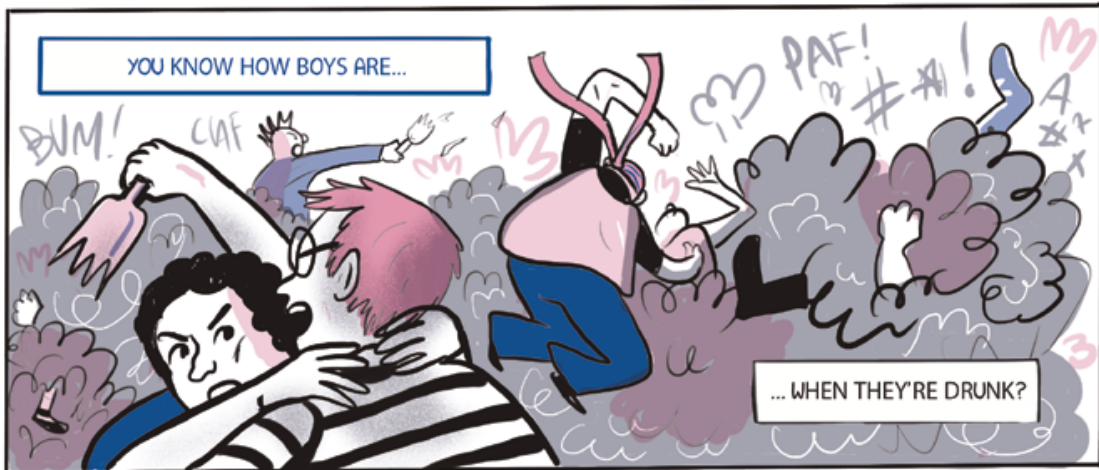
Computers arrived in Trieste in 1932. They were a touch different from the current ones, but capable of processing up to 24,000 cards per hour and of knowing fundamental data for managing policies, customers, and companies.

*Earth calls,
the Lion answers*



A comic by Cristina Portolano
and Alessandro Lise







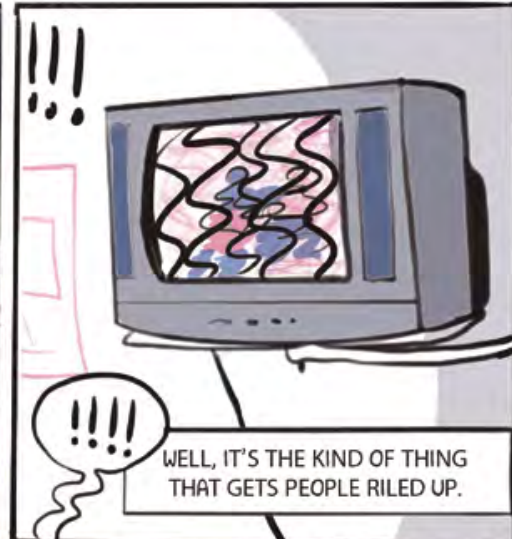
ANTENNA?!



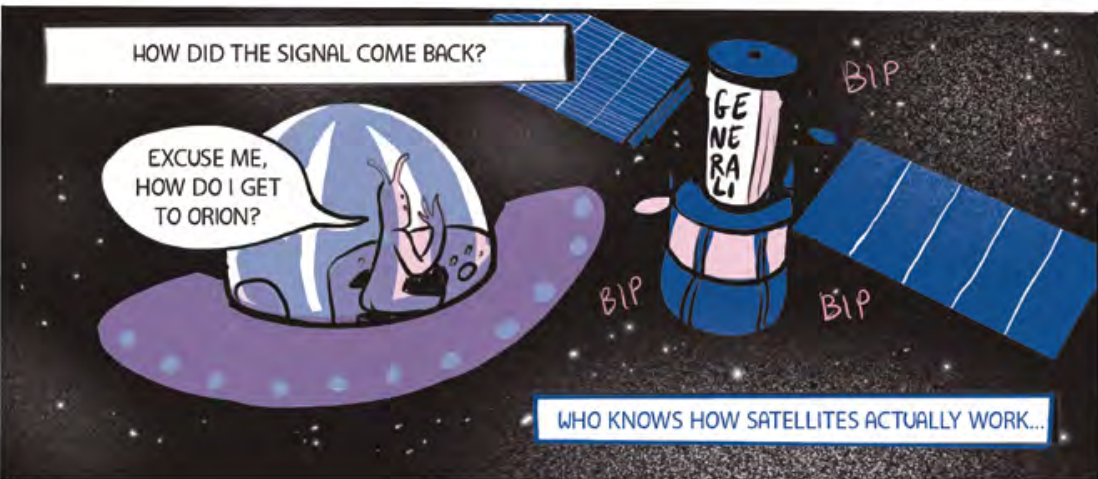
IT WAS A SATELLITE FAILURE!



JUST WHEN DUSTER BOUGLAS LOOKED BEATEN IN ROUND TEN!



WELL, IT'S THE KIND OF THING THAT GETS PEOPLE RILED UP.

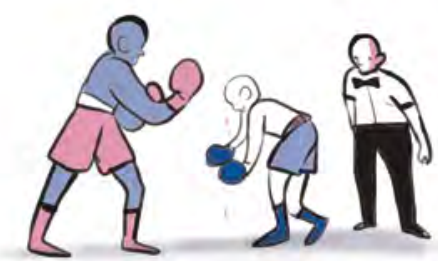


HOW DID THE SIGNAL COME BACK?

WHO KNOWS HOW SATELLITES ACTUALLY WORK...

WHERE DID YOU FIND THE MONEY TO TIDY UP?

I BET THE BANK AGAINST TIKE MYSON.



REALLY?!

NO, BUT YOU'RE NOT GONNA BELIEVE THE TRUTH.



DID YOU ROB A BANK?

THE SATELLITE TRANSMISSION WAS INSURED!



INSURED?

BY AN ITALIAN COMPANY, "GENERALI."



YOU DON'T BELIEVE ME, JUST AS I EXPECTED.



5 September 1989, launch of the Soyuz TM8 shuttle insured by Generali

In 1989, the company's symbol of the winged Lion was on the side of the Soyuz TM8. I don't know if it perhaps brought the flight good luck, but it was indeed very fortunate, because the two crewmen managed to overcome a series of problems unscathed which could have been fatal. In 1992, the Company insured the first Italian astronaut, Franco Malerba. Generali had believed in the space race right from the start: if today it's possible for us to communicate with the whole world, watch the Oscars or the Olympics live from Tokyo, if science has been able to conduct experiments that were unthinkable before then, it is because someone thought that the risk of sending a satellite, a space station, an antenna capable of picking up the farthest solar system into space was quantifiable, insurable and sustainable. Because the progress of an entire planet, our own, is also and above all based on impossible challenges, on dreams that become real, on iron wills that do not bend in the face of difficulties but invent instruments capable of overcoming them, even if only in the form of insurance policies.

When the space race began, Generali was ready. It had learnt to assess the risks for ships around the world in its 100+ years of activity. Would it be frightened by a spaceship?

I don't know if the space race of three tycoons is progress. It is certainly business, and I believe in my own small way that it is not enough to merely push people to go further, to look at the horizon and imagine going beyond it, for the good and well-being of all. I pause to take a break outside and go look at the sky, follow the flight of a small propeller-driven plane riding the clouds, growing weightless, pointing its nose towards the sun. If it can be there, a dot in the sky for those who want to look at it, it also owes this to a winged Lion who dreamt of flying and did it, for all of us.

Chapter 6

About how, in hard times, it's more important to know how to cast a net rather than throw in the towel

It seems that the end is near, at least for now. The table is full of sheets, notes, pens and pencils. One wall has become a rainbow of sticky notes to keep track of dates, facts, names and connections. Between two apparently tidy folders I also found a biscuit, a clear sign of nocturnal hunger from internet research. It's time to tidy up, and two perfectly clean boxes, the kind clothes purchased online arrive in when I have no desire to go out, are waiting for their load of papers.

I wish I could be here in 2211, recounting more and more stories, surprising myself and trying to convey my feelings to those reading my words. There will be another Bruna writing, better than me at intriguing people with the extraordinary and special stories of Generali's lives. Maybe there will be another Mrs Supreme General, or perhaps the original will still be around. Science works miracles.

In short, do you think maybe I'm afraid of the end? Of course, that's why I always put down the books I read on the second-to-last page. If you don't believe me, take a look next to my sofa or bed. The bookmarks, which are bus tickets, tea bags and postcards bought at the market, all spring up in the same place, two millimetres from the back cover.

Unfortunately, this chapter has to have an end. I realise only now that it is perhaps the most complex because it concerns all of us, our today and our tomorrow, but above all the tomorrow of those who come after us.

I pluck up courage with a nice piece of ultra-dark chocolate, and begin to make sense of the facts I want to recount, trying to follow an order, an imaginary line capable of uniting

history with the news, the past with the present which is before my eyes but will already be old tomorrow.

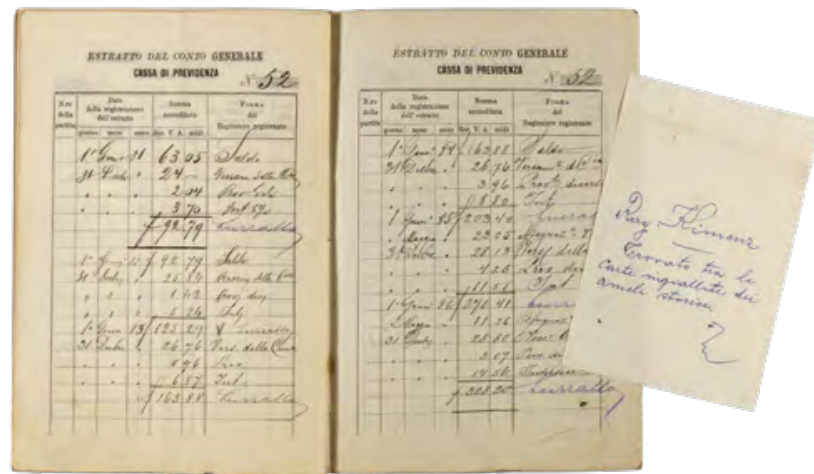
I have a confession to make.

I only now realise that page after page, Generali has taught me something, meaning something about myself. It

dreamed and built, while I would have stopped halfway through my dreams up until yesterday. And that's why I never would have believed I could successfully write a book, this book.

But I've also learned that being an enterprise means being enterprising, facing adventures, moving

mountains. And if this enterprise is in the insurance business its responsibility is even greater, because its real product is the promise for everyone to live with fewer worries, every day.



Example inside pages of a pension fund book of 1880

When I told you about Ca' Corniani, and the children of the farmers sent to school and on holiday to the seaside to better grow up, I told an exceptional story, but certainly not an exception. Because Generali has always acted in the present while thinking of the future, in other cases too.

So it's 1880. Generali has always known that employees working for the Lion count more than balance sheets, that employees are first and foremost people with lives, dreams, desires and fears. And what can an insurance company whose mission is to mitigate its customers' uncertainty do for them?

Precisely, mitigate the same uncertainty in its workers. Twenty years ahead of the Italian State, Generali launched the Cassa di Previdenza per i dipendenti [Employee Pension Fund], the first case (another record, to be sure) of income support for families by an Italian company.

But now I want to surprise you, just as I was surprised. Because if you think that Generali's focus on people's well-being is just a corporate matter, you are seriously mistaken. Indeed, the Company has always thought big, even worrying about entire populations. Edmondo Richetti, one of its top leaders, born in Trieste and living in Vienna, armed himself with a pen on the eve of the First World War and wrote a revolutionary document. He called

on the nations of Europe to unite, to make peace, to replace conflict with cooperation by joining his Union of European States. No one listened to him, as history clearly reveals, but those 15 pages embody the basic idea of the European Community still to come. Family welfare, attention to the primary and moral needs of peoples and individuals, open borders, international cooperation.

Visionary? Romantic?
Pacifist? More likely, he was a lucid observer of its time, able to see the horrors of war approaching, and to offer Europe a way out full of possibilities, well ahead of history.

Gründung des Vereines
„Europäischer Staatenbund“

in Wien.

Einladung.

Die p. t. Herren, welche als Mitglieder dem neuen Vereine beizutreten wünschen, werden höflichst ersucht, dem Gefertigten ihren Beitritt anzumelden. Sobald die Satzungen von der kompetenten Behörde genehmigt sein werden, wird der Gefertigte alle Einsender verständigen, wo und wann die erste Generalversammlung stattfinden soll, in welcher die Wahl der Vereinsdirektion und des Schiedsgerichtes auf Grund der Mehrheit der abgegebenen Stimmen vorzunehmen ist.

Wien, im Mai 1914.

Edmond Richetti Edler von Terralba
Wien, IV. Wohllebengasse 15.

Aufruf.

Alle europäischen Völker, ohne Unterschied des Stammes, wünschen den Frieden. Alle Völker, ohne Klassenunterschied, würden mit Freuden die europäischen Staaten miteinander vereinigt und verbunden sehen, damit die Schrecken eines Krieges vermieden werden. Alle Völker verlangen dringend eine Sozialreform und eine Besserung der wirtschaftlichen Verhältnisse.

Die Milliarden von Schulden, welche die Staaten erdrücken, und die Milliarden von Kosten für die Erhaltung der Heere beängstigen 420 Millionen Europäer, welche, ganz verloren in der Finsternis einer vollständig unsicheren Zukunft, sich voll Schrecken fragen, was für eine entsetzliche Katastrophe zu erwarten ist, wenn ein europäischer Krieg oder eine Revolution ausbrechen sollte.

Angeichts dieses düsteren Horizonts, voll gewitterschweren Wolken, hat der gegenwärtige Premierminister Englands Lord Asquith den Europäern einen sicheren Weg gezeigt, als er erklärte, dass, um das zu erreichen, was ganz Europa herbeisehnt und will, die Völker selbst sich organisieren müssen, um die eigenen Regierungen zu zwingen, ihren Willen zu erfüllen.

Um nun diesen Zweck zu erreichen, ist wohl nicht nötig, dass 420 Millionen Europäer sich gegen ihre Regierungen empören; ist nicht nötig, die Revolution oder Anarchie anzurufen, sondern nur jenes Recht zur Geltung zu bringen, das alle Europäer besitzen; jenes Recht, das alle Staaten ihnen feierlich gewährt haben; das Recht, das zu fordern, was sowohl den Regierungen als auch den Staatsbürgern sich nützlich erweisen kann.

Man will nicht den Krieg, sondern den Frieden haben: man will nicht die ungeheuren Auslagen für die Heere, welche die Völker an den Bettelstab bringen, sondern den wirtschaftlichen Aufschwung und den Wohlstand der Völker. Nun denn, das, was man wünscht, das, was gefordert wird, das haben die 420 Millionen Europäer in ihren Händen; es ist ihr unumschränkter Besitz, den die Staaten und Regierungen weder unterdrücken, noch aufheben oder in Beschlag nehmen können.

Organisieren wir uns in eine grosse Vereinigung, welche ihre Teilnehmer in jeder noch so kleinen Ortschaft besitzt, die von Europäern bewohnt wird.

Organisieren wir uns, das ist unsere Schlachtordnung, die auch den Regierungen nicht unwillkommen sein wird.

These are words of today, but they have always been in Generali's genetic heritage.

I follow the imaginary path that I have traced in my mind through facts and people: I'm almost afraid to make a misstep, to lose the thread, to get lost myself, but I realise that every single episode finds its place like a piece in a giant puzzle, making the final image richer and richer.

In 2017, Generali threw itself into a courageous and impressive project with all its strength and vision, a project which required energy and steadfastness, willpower and no limits. I'm talking about THSN, The Human Safety Net. A foundation that takes care of families, newborns and start-ups created by refugees, with real projects.

Dream and reality, hope and certainty. The profound meaning of this project is to develop human potential even in the most disadvantaged contexts.

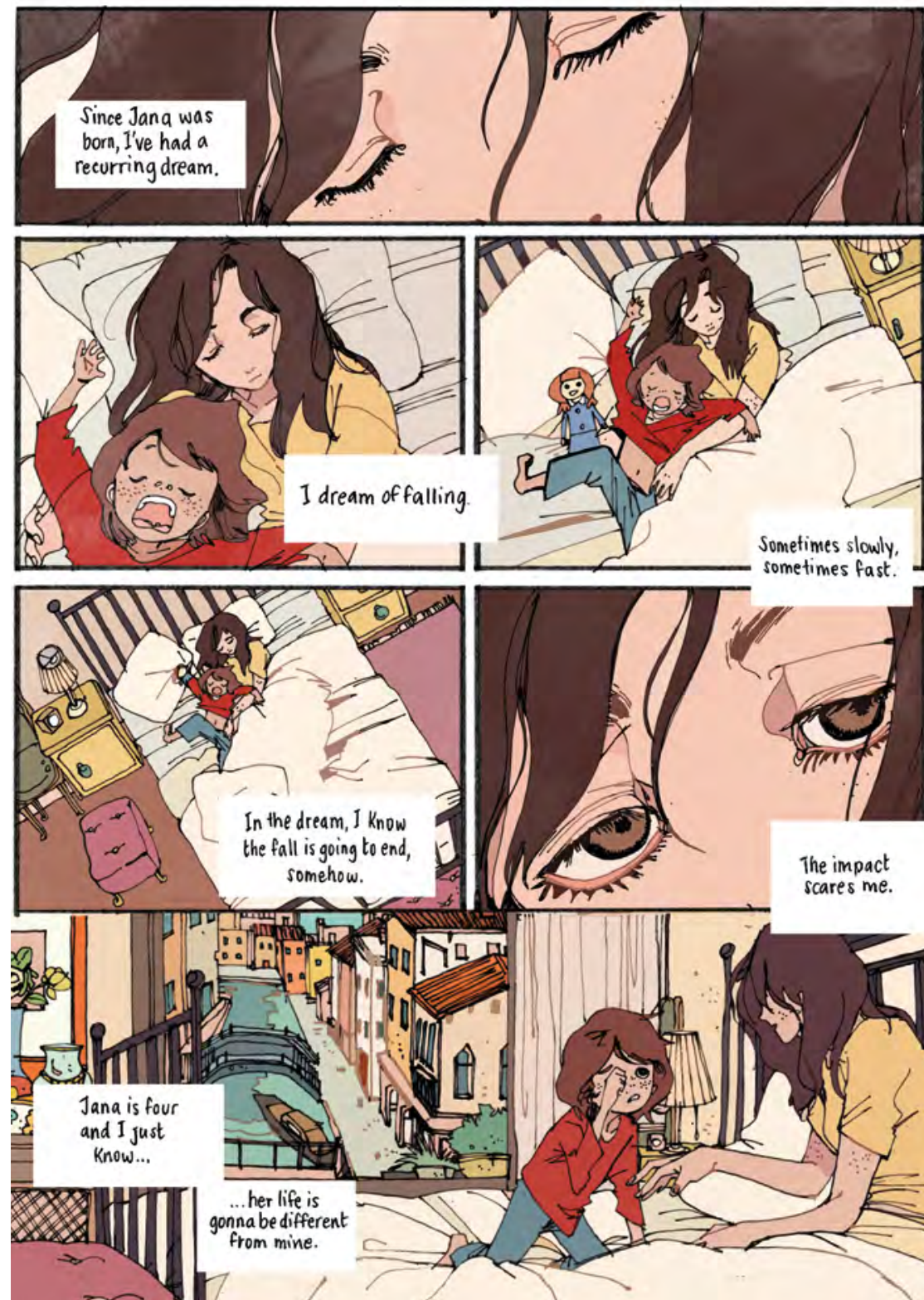
With the opening of the Procuratie Vecchie building in Venice, the THSN project shows itself to the public in all its depth. Families, babies, refugees are at the centre of the net. Capable of reaching anywhere in the world.

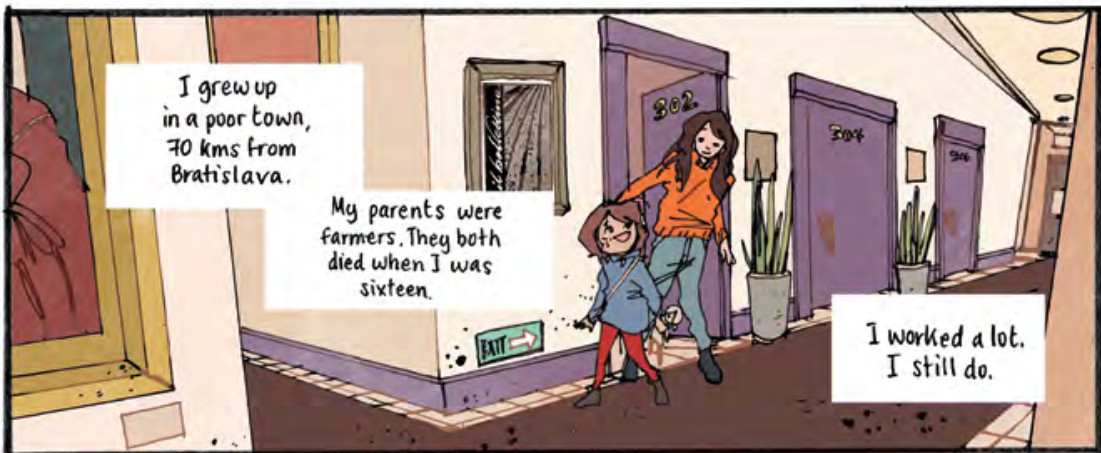
Pacifist manifesto
by Edmondo Richetti
promoting the founding
of the "Europäischer
Staatenbund" (Union
of European States)
Vienna, May 1914

The safety net



A comic by Yi Yang and Alessandro Lise





I grew up in a poor town, 70 kms from Bratislava.

My parents were farmers. They both died when I was sixteen.

I worked a lot. I still do.



Recently, Jana and I moved to the capital city.



Here, I was sent to a project that helps parents of small children.



I didn't think living in a large city would be so difficult.

But here I got to know other mothers, I made friends.



Now that I'm with them, things got simpler.



Educators there helped me with Jana. They said she's got potential.



They said she's intelligent.



And they invited us to Venice. Venice!

I had never traveled out of Slovakia before.



Jana was excited.



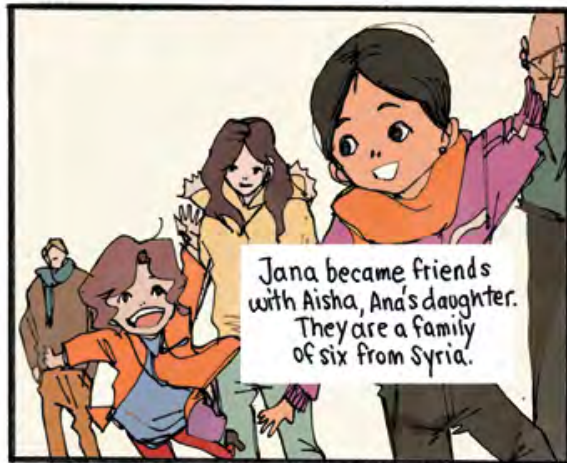
When we saw the square... I'm sure her heart skipped.



We weren't alone
There were other
families. We listened
to their stories.



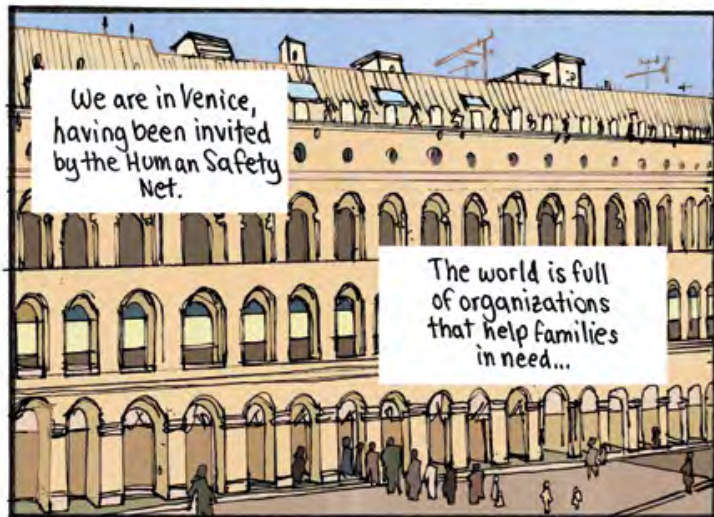
Mariana is from
Argentina. Patricia
arrived from Spain
with a small son.



Jana became friends
with Aisha, Ana's daughter.
They are a family
of six from Syria.



Anas lost everything
because of the war.
But a German organization
helped him start a farm, and
now he makes vegetable oil.



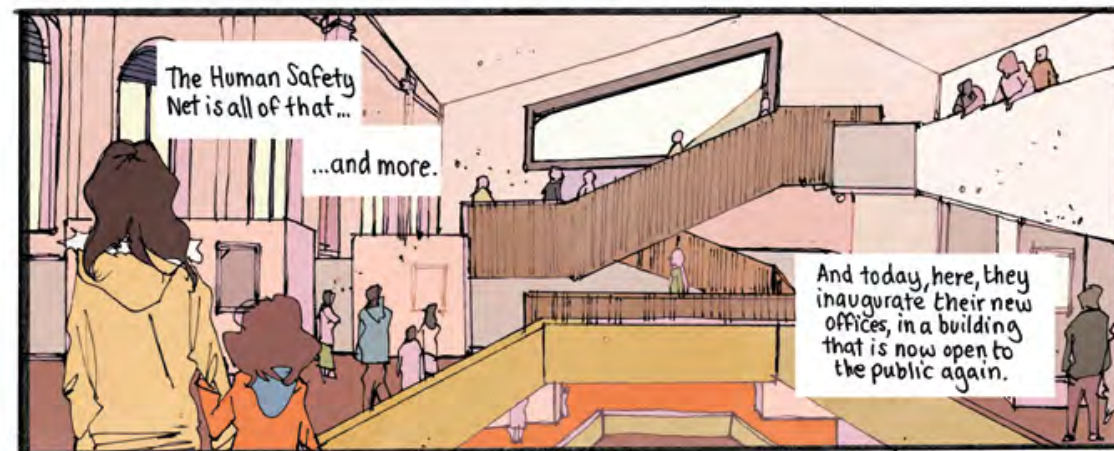
We are in Venice,
having been invited
by the Human Safety
Net.

The world is full
of organizations
that help families
in need...



...and they're people
who help the helpers:
they network, share
knowledge...

... Find
money.



The Human Safety
Net is all of that...

...and more.

And today, here, they
inaugurate their new
offices, in a building
that is now open to
the public again.



I still dream
of falling...

...almost
every night.



But lately
something's
changed.



The impact.
In the dream
I know I'm falling.

I feel like
an acrobat
falling from
the rope.

I am not
scared.



I know I have
a safety net.



The *Procuratie Vecchie*,
St Mark's Square, 2015

THSN is active worldwide wherever Generali is present, for example helping premature babies in the Czech Republic, families in Argentina, and refugees in Germany. Its headquarters are in Venice, in the Procuratie Vecchie building in St Mark's Square which had been the headquarters of the Company and before that the residence of the Procurators of the Serenissima, citizens who were committed, among other things, to carrying out good deeds. Now the Procuratie are the beating heart of this more ethical, sustainable, contemporary vision of the world.

The same vision that led Generali to launch Fenice 190, a way of concretely looking to the future.

I jump a few years forward to find myself in the present day: full of fear, missing direct contact, a hug that remains an imaginary gesture, a hug that does not warm. Fenice 190 was created during the great epidemic: it is an investment plan that will support the European economies affected by Covid-19 for five years, pursuing sustainable growth and focusing on infrastructure, innovation and digitisation, green living, healthcare and education. A virtual, but very concrete, embrace that will make its effects felt for a long time.

Chapter six is coming to an end, I have less and less space. Come on Bruna, have another piece of chocolate and move on. I've got to say it, I have to be honest with myself and the reader. I've seen fires and passions, but also utopias become reality, machines dispense security, travellers saved from sharks and men and women going beyond all limits. I've seen swamps giving life and volunteers helping babies and adults to live.

With the Fenice Fund, the Company has committed itself to a series of initiatives to support recovery after the severe crisis caused by Covid-19. The objectives are ambitious, and the forces deployed are up to the task.

I've seen business go hand in hand with dreams, ideals become the foundation for prosperity, even after the greatest tragedies.

But I've also seen other things. I've seen myself grow, become more confident. Did Mrs Supreme General know that my fear of writing more than ten pages would break down against dozens of years of history?

How could she have known that I would face the terror of growing and confronting reality, taking my strength from the dreams of people who had not only imagined but also forged reality?

Writing was the cure, and while I was doing it, Generali was doing something for me. An exchange, a transfer. Uncertainty versus security, past versus future, possibility versus reality.

190 years is a long time, but soon it will be 200 and then the counter will keep counting.

What I'd like to see continue is not just time, but the strength of Generali, its secret transcendence, the visionary spirit that all the people at Generali have had, pursued, wanted. And that I too have learned to have, at least in a small way. There will be no end to all this energy, even if this is the word that, by contract, I should put at the last part of this line. But I'm Bruna and I don't like to end stories.

Epilogue

I sent the file of the story to Mrs Supreme General. Imagining that maybe, between appointments, next week or the next month, she would download it to read it. The next day a courier, again dressed in yellow, rang my doorbell. This time he was not carrying a bulky parcel, but a delicately light envelope.

I opened it and inside, on that card I had already admired at the beginning of it all, two simple words: Thank you.

No need to decipher Mrs Supreme General's signature, I know it well. Then, pure *déjà vu*, a very thin sheet of paper folded several times falls from the envelope:

"Dear Bruna, I chose you because I knew your fears, perhaps the strongest lever to drive you to the end of the task I had entrusted you with. I was not mistaken. Now a new challenge awaits. Someone other than me has read the story and would like you in their newspaper. We'll see each other soon, I think, and it will be nice to give you a hug. You were right, no story deserves an end. And it's just the beginning."





**Further historical
information**

The Nineteenth Century

1831

Eagle and lion: identity of an international company



Founded in Trieste on 26 December 1831 on the initiative of the insurer Giuseppe Lazzaro Morpurgo, Assicurazioni Generali Austro-Italiche - as it was originally called - has always demonstrated its ability to unite interests, places and people. Its organisational structure was initially based on two pillars: the Central Directorate in Trieste, responsible for the Hapsburg territories and abroad, and the Directorate in Venice, responsible for the Italian peninsula.

Trieste had been chosen as a central location because of its strategic position: it had gained importance between the 18th and 19th centuries thanks to its free port, which was able to attract entrepreneurs and create a new trading economy, as well as providing fast connections with western and central-northern Italy and with the hinterland of the Austrian countries. Generali's first emblem was therefore the double-headed eagle, the symbol of the Hapsburg Empire which ruled the city at the time.

During the *Risorgimento*, however, Venice rose up against the Austrians, establishing the Republic of St Mark in March 1848. This led Generali to remove the adjective "Austro-Italiche" from its company name first, and then to gradually adopt the winged lion as its representative symbol in Italy, which definitively replaced the two-headed eagle after the Great War.

Shares and shareholders. The share capital geography

Generali was born cosmopolitan: entrepreneurs of different languages, ethnicities and religions, including prominent European personalities in contact with the most powerful banking and financial circuits of the time, signed the deed of its establishment.

A foundation designed for openness required a modern corporate structure that would allow it to make the most of its international calling. The joint stock company model was chosen and, thanks to the division of capital among a large number of shareholders, it allowed them to intervene directly in the life of the company by expressing their vote in proportion to their shareholding, and made it easier to raise the necessary funds for the company. The company's large share capital of 2 million Austrian florins, which was 10 times higher than the average financial endowment of companies in Trieste at the time, enabled it to face the turbulence in the sector with adequate capitalisation.

The modernity of the project did not take long to bear fruit: within a few years of its foundation, the share capital rose from 2 million to 4 million Austrian florins in 1856, and to over 6 million in the early 20th century.

Smart technologies and geolocation: fire plaques



Originally, there was no public service for putting out the fires that ravaged cities. Insurance companies found an effective solution in the early 19th century: fire plaques, first introduced in

England in the 17th century and used by Generali since its foundation.

The Company threw itself into this branch with the spirit of pioneers, combined with a scientific and innovative approach. It supported the formation of city fire brigades, collected statistical data and classified buildings into seven classes according to their characteristics. Metal plaques were attached to insured buildings to make them easily recognisable, in a sort of geolocation system, albeit still "analogue". They stood out on houses and palaces all over Europe like sentinels, protecting the insured property in times when fires were quite frequent.

The use of these plaques was an advantage not only for the owners of the insured properties, but also for neighbouring properties, as the risk of fire spreading was reduced. An advantage for the safety of the whole community.

The Generali Historical Archive holds a large collection of fire plaques which, due to their artistic value, are a widespread cultural heritage and are displayed in museums and collections all over the world.

1836

Data analytics and analogue simplification: hail tables

Insurance against hail damage was a new and risky subject in the 19th century due to the difficulty of establishing appropriate rates and premiums because of the lack of data, hail being an unpredictable weather phenomenon. Given these difficulties, insurance companies were hesitant to operate in this line of business. In Italy, the first insurance policy against damage caused by such phenomena was created by Generali in 1836.

The Company realised the need to invest in agricultural insurance: the Italian economy was predominantly based on agriculture, but its production was barely enough to support families. This decision was indicative not only of a technical choice, but also of an innovative commercial policy based on technological advances and a clear desire to spread the concept of private insurance among the population.

The Company therefore undertook to make up for the statistical deficit by collecting data in the field from its extensive agency network, which recorded the effects of each storm: frequency, intensity, type of lightning, thunder and hail,

as well as wind direction, and the crops most affected and damaged.

This great work, which Generali shared with the insurance institutes with that it was associated, not only helped to achieve criteria uniformity in estimating damage, but also advanced the study of atmospheric phenomena, with the collaboration with the Central Meteorological Office in Rome in 1881.

The data collected by agents were also used to produce fascinating and sophisticated diagrams and cartograms, which were published at the great universal exhibitions of the time.

1851

The Ca' Corniani communities over 170 years of history



Generali's farms form part of the vast array of patrimonial guarantees that the Company has put in place to meet its commitments to policyholders. One of the largest is Ca' Corniani, which covers more than 1,700 hectares in Veneto, north-west of the Adriatic lagoon.

When it was purchased by Generali in 1851, the estate consisted of marshland and marginal cultivated land.

Starting in 1851, Generali embarked on a pioneering reclamation project, shaping the large community of Ca' Corniani day by day: the Company's first farm was born, equipped with infrastructures and services that significantly improved working conditions and health, as well as the cultural development of local residents, in a positive development dynamic for society. Today Ca' Corniani continues to be a sustainable community that combines sustainable land cultivation and the promotion of the area through new tourist-cultural activities.

1854

Generali anticipates the Welfare State, a European invention



From the outset, Generali has been distinguished by a concept of corporate welfare that was ahead of its time. In 1855, when no form of public protection for workers existed, the "Cassa Pensioni", or Pension Fund, was set up to provide for families in the event of an employee's death. Over time, the Company felt the need to strengthen the foundations of the system, founding the "Cassa di Previdenza" in 1880 which included not only death, but also invalidity and old-age benefits, and then in 1924 the "Fondo di Previdenza", which became an integral part of the collective labour contract for the staff of the Italian Head Offices.

This system actively involved employees and their families, offering them valuable support in case of difficulties and increasing their sense of belonging and loyalty to the Company. The steady growth of the Pension Fund was also a sign of shared hope which spread from the company and its employees to society at large.

1869

A historic turning point: the opening of the Suez Canal and the "Trieste System"

The opening of the Suez Canal in 1869 revolutionised the map of global trade at the time, opening up routes to the East without having to circumnavigate Africa. Built by Ferdinand de Lesseps according to a design by Luigi Negrelli,

the work also had two Trieste protagonists in Pasquale Revoltella and then Giuseppe de Morpurgo, who shared the dream of opening the canal, connected to a vision for the development of Trieste and its port, which had seen declining activity in those years.

The two protagonists from Trieste were entrepreneurs and men from Generali, and both had worked in the maritime branch, an experience that enabled them to achieve their goal: after Suez, the banking system in Trieste was strengthened, as was the inflow of Austrian-German capital into local companies. Trieste's trade expanded and the city was populated at a spectacular rate, bringing economic success that allowed Generali to expand its markets around the world: from the eastern Mediterranean to North Africa, to major ports in the Far East and the Americas.

1877

Generali: trailblazing tables for trailblazing missions

Generali's commitment to the life insurance business dates back to its birth. In the port of Trieste in 1831, protecting people from all kinds of risks meant adding life insurance to the common transport coverage, which was not very widespread in the Hapsburg Empire but considered essential by the Company.

Marco Besso, general secretary in Trieste from 1877 and later director and chairman, was very active in this field. He directed Generali's interest and participation towards the progress of actuarial studies, whose mathematical-statistical work formed the basis of life insurance.

Thanks to the work of Vitale Laudi and Wilhelm Lazarus, Generali's first actuarial table was created in 1877: the L-L Table, from the initials of their surnames.

Popes, emperors, writers, astronauts, but also children, teachers, photographers, traders: Generali has historically insured many people, including the crew of the Umberto Nobile expedition that explored the North Pole in 1928 on the airship Italia.

1881

The Generali city: widespread real estate heritage

At the turn of the 19th century, Generali took on the unusual appearance of a "group", with subsidiaries

and affiliates scattered throughout Italy and Central Europe.

The internationalisation of the company was a wide-ranging project which included large real estate investments. The then-Secretary General Marco Besso did his best to ensure that Generali chose the best locations for its offices: he acquired land suitable for building or purchased buildings of great historical, artistic and logistical value in major European and non-European cities, which contributed to the modernisation, development, redevelopment or embellishment of various urban areas, adopting the most advanced technological solutions of the time.



The real estate business began in two cities that were symbolic for Generali's activities: in 1881 in Vienna with the construction of the agency office in Bauernmarkt, and above all in Trieste, the city of its foundation, where the historic headquarters were inaugurated in 1886 in what is now Piazza Duca degli Abruzzi. The palace still represents one of the most remarkable and characteristic architectural testimonies of Trieste's flourishing 19th century. Today the assets under management include a unique combination of historical and modern properties ranging from ancient buildings such as the Procuratie Vecchie in Venice to new architectural masterpieces such as CityLife in Milan, one of Europe's largest redevelopment projects.

1898

Generali pioneers on-demand insurance: the policy vending machine

The great Universal Exhibitions have always been a window on the world: places for comparison and

valuable indices of the degree of development of the exhibiting countries, with their collections of inventions and wonders.

Created under the banner of innovation, Generali had the ability to interpret changes and emerging needs, make them its own and transform them into solutions using the best existing technology. It is no wonder then that, together with its child company Anonima Infortuni, it amazed the public with an engineering first at the 1898 Turin Exhibition: the automatic insurance policy distributor, a machine that provided an automatic and instant money-back guarantee attached to the ticket for 10 cents, covering any accidents which occurred during the trip. Practically the ancestor of modern vending machines.

This innovation perfectly embodied Generali's attitude in grasping the transformation of the society of the second industrial revolution, which had become "mobile" thanks to the development of railways, which had therefore developed the need to have an immediate guarantee of insurance coverage for journeys.

Marco Besso, the man who brought the Company into the modern era, wrote in his Autobiography: "Insurance [...] should not be seen as a source of profit for the company but as a source of moral satisfaction, as it should contribute to the well-being and tranquillity of families". And also of those in the family who, for work or leisure, decided to set out on a journey.



The Twentieth Century

1907

Franz Kafka: the story of a special employee

The Group was increasingly global at the beginning of the 20th century. Present on four continents, it had many agencies, including one in Prague: one of the largest cities in the Hapsburg Empire. A young law graduate worked there in the life insurance business: Franz Kafka. Looking for a job that would allow him to support himself and find time to write, Kafka began his experience in Generali in 1907 with enthusiasm and the hope of being able to travel and visit more exotic countries. Working abroad became a distant dream, but above all, full-time employment was very demanding and got in the way of writing. Just nine months later, Kafka officially submitted his resignation.

His dedication to his work is attested by his technical reports and the esteem in which he was held by his superiors during his career in the insurance industry, but in his writings we find several references to his concerns that the office would take away from his writing.

His company history is preserved in the papers of his personal file, kept by the Generali Historical Archives and complete with his employment application, curriculum vitae and signature. As mentioned, in the early 1900s Generali was present on four continents and the Group had nine subsidiary and associated companies. The head office in Trieste communicated with the periphery, and knowledge was disseminated according to a network model of people, careers and knowledge that was unique at the time, represented today by the Generali Group Academy.

the horrors of war. This is precisely what can be found in the dossier of Edmondo Richetti, a Generali executive from Trieste and then resident in Vienna, a dynamic and visionary entrepreneur and a cosmopolitan citizen of the world.



It is an invitation to the founding meeting of the "Europäischer Staatenbund", the Union of European States, which he convened in Vienna in May 1914 to promote peace - which brings economic prosperity - against war and military spending that drag peoples into misery. The revolutionary document anticipates the spirit of the European Community in its highest idealism by half a century. It is an antidote to war setting four objectives: disarmament, the establishment of compulsory life insurance for all citizens, the introduction of a single direct taxation, and the free movement of main goods. Multiculturalism, internationalism, Europeanism, the idea of insurance and welfare as a measure for the security and improvement of people's lives are concrete values of Generali that find a very high ideal motivation in this document: the right to peace as a basic condition for all European citizens.

1914

Generali for Europe: the Pacifist Manifesto by Edmondo Richetti

The personal files of Generali employees can conceal pleasant surprises, including a heartfelt appeal for peace among European states to banish

1932

Hollerith machines: the challenge of "counting" well and quickly to innovate insurance

Internationally renowned mathematician Bruno de Finetti left a lasting mark on Generali, where in the 1930s he led the creation of the mechanographic

centre based on the punch card machines of the American Hermann Hollerith, founder of IBM. The first Hollerith office was set up at the Accounting Department of the Central Directorate in Trieste in 1932. It was equipped with electric tabulating and sorting machines that made it possible to automate and speed up accounting operations, saving time and avoiding calculation errors.

$$\int_a^b X(\lambda) d\lambda = \lim_{n \rightarrow \infty} \frac{\lambda}{n} \sum_{i=1}^n X\left(\frac{b}{n} \lambda\right).$$

From a system dedicated to life insurance, the Hollerith department then became an autonomous department, centralising the mechanical data processing of all branches and services of the Trieste Head Office.

With the adoption of tabulating machines, Generali gave further proof of keeping up with the increasingly dynamic times. Not only did this cutting-edge technology bring enormous benefits to the conduct of business and the satisfaction of policyholders, but it also benefitted the entire internal administrative body, allowing managers to solve difficult rationalisation and administrative problems and relieving employees of repetitive copying tasks.

Punch cards spread rapidly around the world, only to disappear in the mid-1980s with the advent of computers, which allowed data to be entered and processed directly via the computer keyboard.

1960

Freewheeling... but safely: Generali and motor insurance

The invention of the automobile at the end of the 19th century opened up new horizons for travel, but at the same time posed new challenges for insurers: more people could travel with greater comfort and speed, but as traffic increased, so did the number of accidents.

In order to increase traffic safety, the number plaque system and the first traffic laws were introduced in various countries. Generali immediately took up the challenge with its child company Anonima Infortuni dedicated to insuring against personal injury, thanks to which

it extended motor insurance to all the countries in which it operates in Europe and worldwide. But it was at the end of the 1950s that the decisive turning point came with the proposal to introduce compulsory third party motor liability insurance. Led by Generali, the companies of the time worked with the State to define the regulatory boundaries of the issue. The law, which was to come into force in 1971, established compensation for victims and the creation of a guarantee fund to compensate for damage caused by unknown, uninsured or insolvent vehicles.

1963

"You live, we care": Europ Assistance, a calling as a Lifetime Partner



Europe Assistance was founded in 1963 in Paris as an organisation to help people in distress away from home by offering state-of-the-art medical assistance.

The revolutionary idea arose from a dramatic event experienced by the Company's founder, Pierre Desnos, who had found himself coming to the aid - from afar - of the family of his closest friends, who had been involved in a car accident in Spain. Marked by the event, he created an organisation for which assistance was understood as a constant activity to safeguard people on the move, which in just a few years became a world leader in assistance services.

Generali recognised the potential of the project and became its main shareholder. Europ Assistance Italia was founded in July 1968 with the aim of providing Italian tourists with comprehensive insurance assistance 24 hours a day, against accidents that could affect them while travelling abroad.

Since then, Europ Assistance has supported countless trips and witnessed major political, technological and environmental changes across the planet while always maintaining its line of

conduct, characterised by listening to customer needs and adapting to innovations in order to increase the types of services offered, keeping pace with technological progress and often ahead of public demand.

1964

Generali in space: a leader in a frontier sector

Around the mid-1920s, the Generali Group became involved in the first aeronautical coverage. Sensitive to the theme of exceeding limits, it collaborated on pioneering explorations at the edges of the globe.

At the request of the National Research Council (CNR), in 1964 it ensured the “San Marco” project designed by Luigi Broglio, which made Italy one of the first nations to send a satellite into orbit after the Soviet Union and the United States.

Generali became one of the leading companies in the sector: in 1977 it insured the launch of Sirio, an Italian telecommunications satellite, from Cape

Canaveral; in 1989 it was among the first to start collaborating with China and the USSR; and in 1992 it insured Franco Malerba, the first Italian astronaut in history. It also organised international conferences to share knowledge with other insurers, government agencies and space industry technicians.

The Group's interest in space risks was not random: it was not only a technological challenge, but also an economic one responding to a precise operational choice in keeping with the corporate philosophy of a company that wants to live in its time, becoming a leader in the sector thanks also to the high level of its staff's technical preparation.



The Twenty-First Century

2020

Immagina - insurance from another perspective

Immagina is more than insurance: it is a simple and dynamic service platform dedicated to the protection of home, health, pets and mobility. Designed around the everyday needs of our customers, it is flexible because it adapts to habits and lifestyles and changes as they evolve.

In this sense, it marks a change in perspective: it does not just pay for the consequences of damage when it occurs, but intervenes upstream so as to avoid or minimise it.

It becomes “something” to be used every day. For example, in the event of an emergency it provides the right support service to cope with it, from a physiotherapist at home to sending baby sitters or pet sitters to look after children or pets during the recovery phase.

Likewise, it allows to install smart sensors at home sending alerts directly to a smartphone in the event of an electrical fault or flooding, and guarantees timely intervention thanks to its network of specialised technicians.

Through *Immagina*, customers build their playlist of prevention, assistance and protection together with agents, being able to rely on it at any time and modify it when needs change, always

maintaining the same single contact, expiry and payment date. *Immagina* allows to be a Lifetime Partner in the most important moments of people's lives.

2021

Fenice 190: the investment plan to revitalise Europe

Generali's 190th anniversary falls in a rather unusual year, that of recovery after the most serious economic crisis since the post-war period, triggered by the Covid-19 pandemic.



The European Union, which had not shown a great sense of unity until now, has decided to face the social and economic crisis from a united front: on 21 July 2020, Member States reached the agreement for Next Generation EU, a €750 billion instrument to foster recovery and create a post-Covid-19 Europe that is greener, more digital, more resilient and up to face present and future challenges.

The insurance industry, national governments, and institutions worked together to address the costs of business interruption.

Generali was among the first to move in this direction, launching a Europe-wide anti-pandemic initiative in March 2020. In February 2021 it unveiled Fenice 190, a €3.5 billion investment plan - including €1.05 billion invested in 2020 - to support the recovery of European economies affected by Covid-19, starting with Italy, France and Germany and continuing throughout the five years of the plan in all the European countries where the Group is present.

With Fenice 190, Generali wants to play a leading role in recovery and leave a concrete mark for the future, with significant support for the most innovative, sustainable and strategic sectors for the rebirth of the European economy and to encourage the inclusion of those most affected by the crisis.

2022

The Human Safety Net

Venice is famous worldwide for its ingenuity, openness and imagination, qualities well summed up by the symbol of the Winged Lion. The banner of the Republic is also intertwined with the history of Generali: the group's founders set up their first Italian offices in Venice in 1832, in the imposing Procuratie Vecchie on the north side of St Mark's Square.

These spaces are now projected into a future centred on the values of social inclusion and sustainability. For the first time in 500 years, the Procuratie Vecchie will be open to the public as the home of The Human Safety Net, a movement of people helping people, Generali's global initiative for a more inclusive and sustainable future.

Launched in 2017, its mission is to unlock the potential of people living in the most vulnerable circumstances. It supports families with children up to six years old and the integration of refugees through work, so that they can improve the living conditions of their families and communities.

It works with more than 50 non-profit and social enterprises, implementing programmes in over 23 countries in Europe, Latin America and Asia. Since its conception, it has been a network open to collaboration with other companies, foundations and institutions that share its vision. Employees and agents contribute as volunteers or experts to support its NGO partners, families and refugees.



Alessandro Brunetti

author of Bruna's story

I have always worked in the field of communication. As a copywriter in large agencies and small creative boutiques, I have created campaigns, written brochures and published websites without neglecting a single product sector. I have been awarded at *Cannes* (Leone d'Oro), but also at *Clio*, *ADCI*, *Epica*, *Radio Festival*, *New York Festival* and *Chicago Film Festival*, or at least those are the ones I remember. Yes, because unfortunately I am a bit forgetful and not only do I never recognise actors, but can also watch films for the second time as if I had never seen them. I have a book that I'd always carry with me, "The Master and Margarita", and not a year goes by that I don't re-read it. Almost as if it were the first time.

I am passionate about writing, language, or rather languages, alphabets, grammar rules and the philosophy of syntax. I am curious, very curious, about practically everything. And if I catch a glimpse of the waves of the sea, I'm enraptured. That's why I have been bodyboarding for over 30 years.

Alessandro Lise

comic book writer

Born in Padua in 1975, he has published as a scriptwriter - together with Alberto Talami as artist - the comic books "Quasi quasi mi sbattezzo" (*BeccoGiallo* 2009), "Saluti e bici" (*BeccoGiallo* 2014), "Il futuro è un morbo oscuro, Dottor Zurich!" (*BeccoGiallo* 2018, best scriptwriting award at

Comicon in Naples), "Rosa Ananas" (*Coconino press* 2019) and "La Guida galattica alla Costituzione" (*SOMSI* 2022). Again with Alberto Talami, in 2010 he won the *Nuove Strade* award at *Comicon* in Naples for his self-published work "Morte ai cavalli di Bladder Town". Some of his comics have appeared in *Archimede*, *Internazionale*, *Linus*, *Smemoranda*. He teaches *Scriptwriting for Comics* at the *International School of Comics* in Padua and at the *Bottega di narrazione*.

Giulio De Vita

scriptwriter and illustrator of "Pitch black"



Born in Pordenone in 1971, he began as an advertising designer at the age of 16 and made his debut in comics with "Lazarus Ledd" (1993, ed. *Star Comics* with texts by Ade Capone) and some superhero covers for *Marvel Italia*. He then designed the cover for the album "La Donna, il Sogno, il Grande Incubo" by 883, storyboards for several video clips of musicians such as Sting,

Zucchero and Vasco Rossi and engaged in some directing. He worked on character design for the film "Aida degli alberi" by Guido Manuli and created the comic book series "Kylion" for Disney (with texts by Francesco Artibani).

In 2000 he entered the French market, which praised him as one of the most internationally acclaimed realistic illustrators of his generation: titles such as "Le Décalogue" (2001), "James Healer" (2002-2004), "Wisher" (2006-2010), "Les Mondes de Thorgal, Kriss de Valnor" (2010-2015) are among his most awarded and best-selling. In 2016, he produced a special *Tex* album, "Sfida nel Montana", a much-appreciated colour reinterpretation of the Bonellian ranger revisited in an international key. Given the authority he has acquired, since 2018 he has been the creator and artistic director of *PAFF! Palazzo Arti Fumetto Friuli*, which is among the most active and prestigious cultural institutions dedicated to the art of comics in Europe.

Helena Masellis

cartoonist of "Timeless"



Born in 1994 in Brazil, when she lived there she thought she would end up working in a completely different industry. Once she moved to Italy, she began studying arts and turned it into a job, between storyboards for TV and cinema, video game design and then comics.

She currently collaborates with several international and Italian companies for comic book and film

production, including *Lucky Red*, *RAI*, *Sergio Bonelli Editore*, *Image Comics*, *Editions Dupuis*, *Boom!Studios* and *Caurette Editions*.

Kalina Muhova

cartoonist of "An elusive cat"



Kalina Muhova is a Bulgarian illustrator and cartoonist who has lived in Italy since 2013. In the course of her young but already rich career, she has published her work with several publishing houses in Italy and abroad. She has illustrated authors such as Faulkner and Tolstoy and has found her own way into children's comics with "Diana sottosopra" (*Canicola*, 2019), her first book as a single author. Her other publications include "Sofia dell'Oceano" with Marco Nucci (*Tunué*, 2018) and "Il balcone" (*Tunué*, 2020), and she has recently presented three small intimist books to the public: "Scusa", "Grazie", and "Prego" (*Rulez*, 2021). In the continuous stylistic vibration of her work - whether comics or illustrations for adults or children - technical expertise and expressive daring, deep melancholy and subtle, pervasive irony are mixed together.



Francesco Cattani

cartoonist of "Fresh Breeze"



Born in Bologna in 1980, he was awarded the *Micheluzzi Prize* for Best Short Story 2008 and the *Nuove strade Prize* in 2010 at *Comicon* in Naples. His first graphic novel "Barcazza" (*Canicola*, 2010) has also been translated in France and Spain. In 2017 he published "Luna del mattino" (*Coconino Press*), also published in France and awarded in 2018 with the *Romics Grand Prize* "Best Book" and the *Attilio Micheluzzi Prize* "Best Comic Book". In 2020, his collection of short stories "Notte rosa" (*Coconino Press*) was published. He is currently working on the "Dylan Dog" series (*Sergio Bonelli Editore*).

Cristina Portolano

cartoonist of "Earth calls, the Lion answers"



She was born in Naples in 1986 but has lived in Bologna since 2005. She draws comic books, illustrations and teaches in various schools and

academies such as *IAAD (Institute of Applied Art and Design)*. Her books published both in Italy and abroad include: "Quasi signorina" (*Topipittori*, 2016), "Non so chi sei" (*Rizzoli Lizard*, 2017), "Io sono mare" (*Canicola*, 2018), "Francis Bacon" (*Centauria*, 2019). She has published stories in the anthologies "Cinque", five comic stories on five songs by Giovanni Truppi (*Coconino Press*, 2020), "The PASSENGER" special Napoli (*Iperborea*, 2021). She has published drawings and illustrations for *Camelozampa*, *Fondazione Toscanini*, "Ossigeno" published by *People edizioni*. She collaborates with the *FREEDA* portal and *Internazionale Kids*. Her next book is called "TETTONICA" (written by the screenwriter Sofia Assirelli) for *Feltrinelli comics*.

Yi Yang

cartoonist of "The safety net"



Born in China in 1994, she moved to Italy in 2014. In 2016 she published "Aiuto!" with *BAO Publishing*, worked on directly with the scriptwriter Isaak Friedl, with whom she also made "Sasso il pittore". Later she published "Aiuto! - Fratelli", "Welcome to the jungle" in *Dylan Dog Color Fest*, "La tasca di mezzanotte" and a large number of illustrated books. In 2020, she published "EasyBreezy" for *BAO Publishing*. "One day without name and one year without us" will be published soon.

Luca Salvagno

cover illustration artist



Luca was born in Chioggia in 1962. In 1988, he began publishing comics and illustrations professionally in the *Messaggero dei Ragazzi* of Padua. He has collaborated with the following publishers: *Rizzoli*, *Mondadori* and *San Paolo*. He has been extensively published in *Il Giornalino*. He has collaborated with Franco Benito Jacovitti as a colourist, continuing the work after his death. He has been publishing humorous comics also in the Netherlands for a few years now. He lives and works between Padua and Este, where he teaches drawing and painting at an artistic high school.

Massimo Gardone

archive documents photoreportage

Massimo Gardone was born in Genoa and grew up in Palermo. In Trieste he founded *Studio Azimut* together with his collaborators Alessandra and Lorenza, where he began his career inspired by the world of theatre and dance. Since the 1990s and in synergy with the most important Italian graphic designers, he has specialised in still life and works on several expressive levels between photography and video. His creative vision balanced between personal research and commercial needs has been chosen

to redefine the visual identity of many brands. The interpretation of floral forms that he has been pursuing for years breaks down all standard impositions: the images of his flowers enclose a harmonious fusion between the poetic nature of softness and graphic precision, becoming book covers, the wefts of fine fabrics and original pieces of furniture over the years. Inspired by Hiroshi Sugimoto, he continues his creative research by photographing the sea and horizons, nourishing the Instagram page *#piccolimaritascabili*.

Matteo Caccia

original stories that inspired the comics

He collects, writes and tells stories on the radio and live, in writing and verbally, for example on *Radio2*, where he wrote and hosted "Amnesia", "Una Vita" and "Pascal". In 2019, he returned to *Radio24* where he started with "VendoTutto", "Voi siete qui" and is now on air every day at 3 pm with "Linee d'ombra". He created and hosts the story show "Don't tell my mom", staged the first Monday of each month in Milan. He has written three books: "Amnesia" and "Il nostro fuoco è l'unica luce" for *Mondadori* and the most recent, "Il silenzio coprì le sue tracce" for *Baldini&Castoldi*.

He is the Professor of the two-year course "Brand new" on business communication at the *Holden School* of Turin.

He is the author and voice for *Audible* of: "La Piena", podcast series which tells the story of a mechanic who has infiltrated the South American Narcos; "Oltre il confine", ten-episode podcast series which tells the story of Karim Franceschi, the first Italian in Kobane against Isis; "L'Isola di Matteo", a ten-episode podcast series about a journey in western Sicily which gives voice to the stories, at times mythical and legendary, of people who have crossed (or perhaps not) their destiny with that of Matteo Messina Denaro, first and foremost the Sicilian journalist Giacomo Di Girolamo; finally, "Il Mondo Addosso", a podcast dedicated to the stories of the inhabitants of the island of Giglio, on the tenth anniversary of the Costa Concordia shipwreck.

Special thanks:

Assicurazioni Generali Historical Archive



Corporate Heritage & Historical Archive

consultation and historical materials

One of the largest insurance archives, declared a cultural asset by Mibact, the Italian Ministry for Cultural Heritage and Activities and Tourism. It preserves the documentation produced or taken over from the General Directorate of Trieste from 1831, the year of its foundation, to the end of the 20th century. The historical archive currently contains approximately 65,000 units of archival description for 15 linear kilometres of documentation, 3,000 volumes of minutes of the governing bodies, articles of association, balance sheets and account books reproduced and available for consultation in digital format and 3,000 reproductions from loose photographs and photo albums.

Website: www.heritage.general.com

Email: archivistoricogenerali@general.com

PAFF! Palazzo Arti Fumetto Friuli



cartoonists coordination and support

An innovative platform for the cross-fertilisation of different cultural disciplines, unique in Europe, using the language of comics as a tool for emotional connection. It is based in Pordenone in the prestigious villa of Parco Galvani, a historic urban context enriched by a large contemporary art gallery. It hosts inclusive activities such as internationally important experiential exhibitions, advanced training courses, education for different audiences, events, conferences and conserves a permanent collection.

Website: www.paff.it

Email: info@paff.it

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