



Los puentes de Moscú
[The Bridges of Moscow]

Author and artist: Alfonso Zapico

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Asturian author Alfonso Zapico takes on the Basque conflict and the dark years of Euskadi

On the first day of winter in 2016, Eduardo Madina, a socialist politician who survived an ETA attack in 2002, and Fermin Muguruza, onetime frontman of the band Kortatu and a musical idol of Euskadi, met in the Basque city of Irun. Both shared coffee and conversation while Alfonso Zapico recorded the moment in his notebook. Those sketches were the genesis of *Los puentes de Moscú [The Bridges of Moscow]*, which is the story of various generations of young Basques whose own history is drawn in black and white.

In today's world, where every day a new wall is put up somewhere, we need more bridges. This is a story of bridges, of human beings who, though wanting and fragile, long to unite two fringes of a shared society. Alfonso Zapico confirms: "To draw the dark years of Euskadi is to muddy your shoes in a puddle. Why do I do it? Out of curiosity, to see the source. Maybe the puddle itself is the source. In its depths you can see the sea."

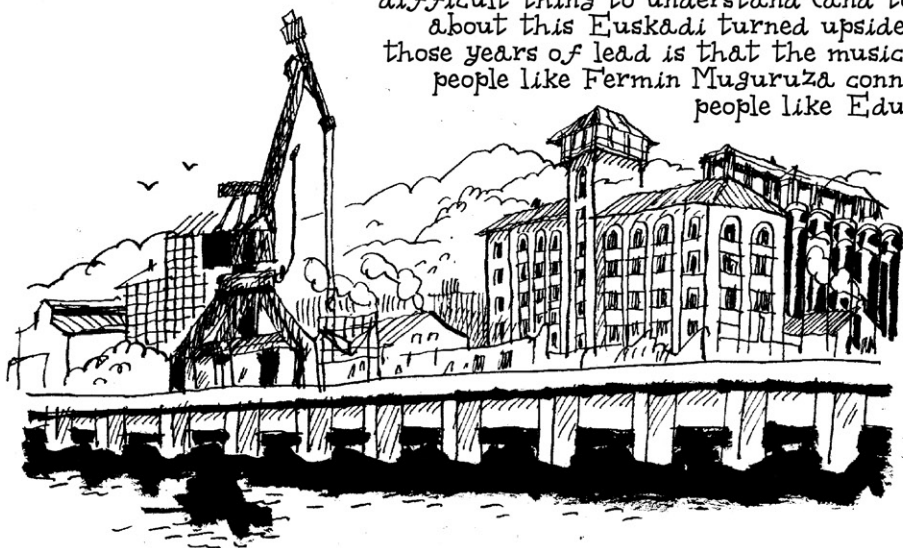
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Chapter 6

The front line



The strangest, most paradoxical and the most difficult thing to understand (and to explain) about this Euskadi turned upside down by those years of lead is that the music made by people like Fermin Muguruza connects with people like Edu Madina.



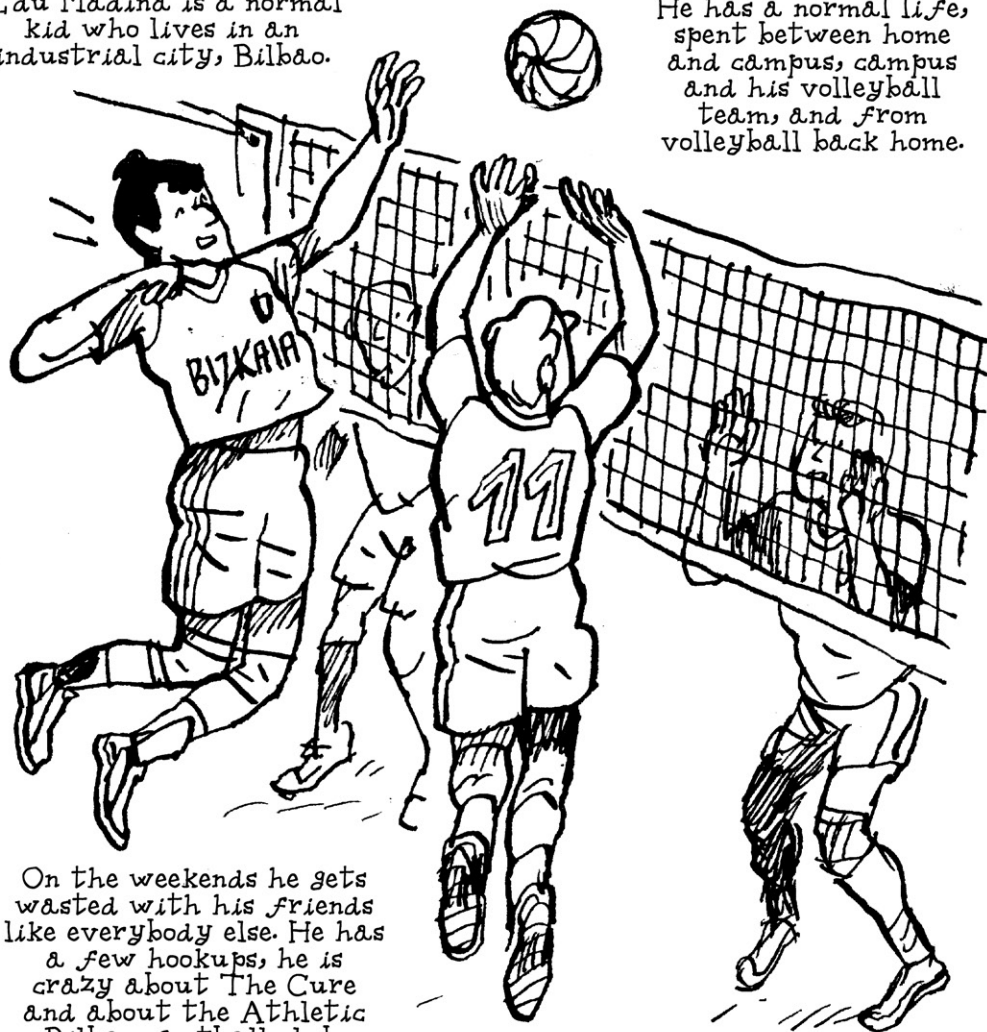
On the front lines, on both sides of the trenches, people are listening to Kortatu, Negu Gorriak, Cicatriz, Eskorbuto, Hertzainak, La Polla Records, RIP...

And it's not only Edu Madina. Not only leftist youth or the kids of Euskadi. Everybody listens to that music.



At the end of the '90s, Edu Madina is a normal kid who lives in an industrial city, Bilbao.

He has a normal life, spent between home and campus, campus and his volleyball team, and from volleyball back home.



On the weekends he gets wasted with his friends like everybody else. He has a few hookups, he is crazy about The Cure and about the Athletic Bilbao football club.

The stage on which Edu Madina acts is the same as that of many kids in the Basque Country during those years. In the foreground, in sharp focus, is the image of the most intimate parts of his life.



FAMILY



FRIENDS



SOCIALIST
YOUTH



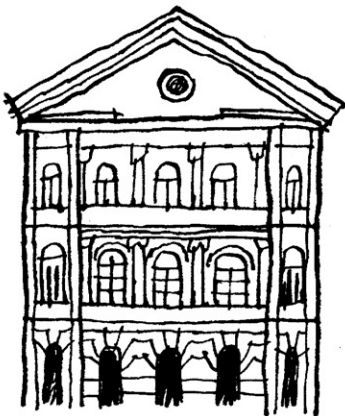
VOLLEYBALL
TEAM



GIRLS



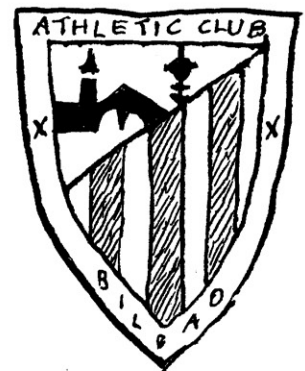
THE CURE



COLLEGE



SUMMERS IN
HIS FAMILY'S
HOMETOWN



ATHLETIC CLUB
BILBAO

There is scenery in the background, darker and more difficult to perceive. It is moving behind him, perhaps it doesn't interest him much, but it's there. It's always been there. This set can't be chosen or controlled, and oftentimes it's the set itself that decides the role each of us will play in a one-time-only production.



THE CITY



INDUSTRIAL
DECAY



POLLUTION



ETA



ETA
PRISONERS



THE VINDICATION
OF ETA
PRISONERS



SMACK

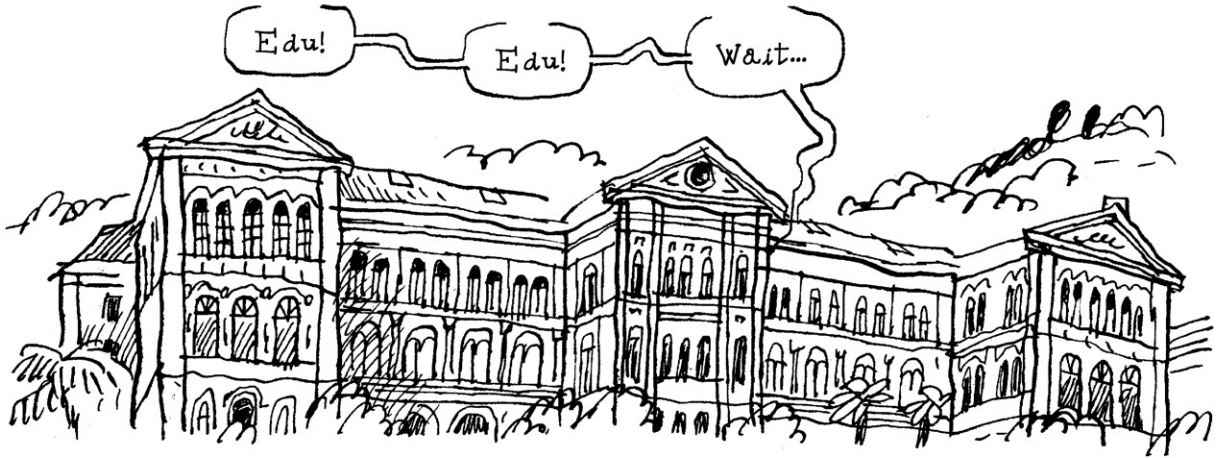


THE DEAD



THE PRESS
REPORTING ON
THE DEAD

University of Deusto (Bilbao)



* The truth is that, despite his nerdy little know-it-all face and his good grades, Edu Madina didn't show up for class until his third year of college.

Let's head
outside then,
it's a sunny
day today.

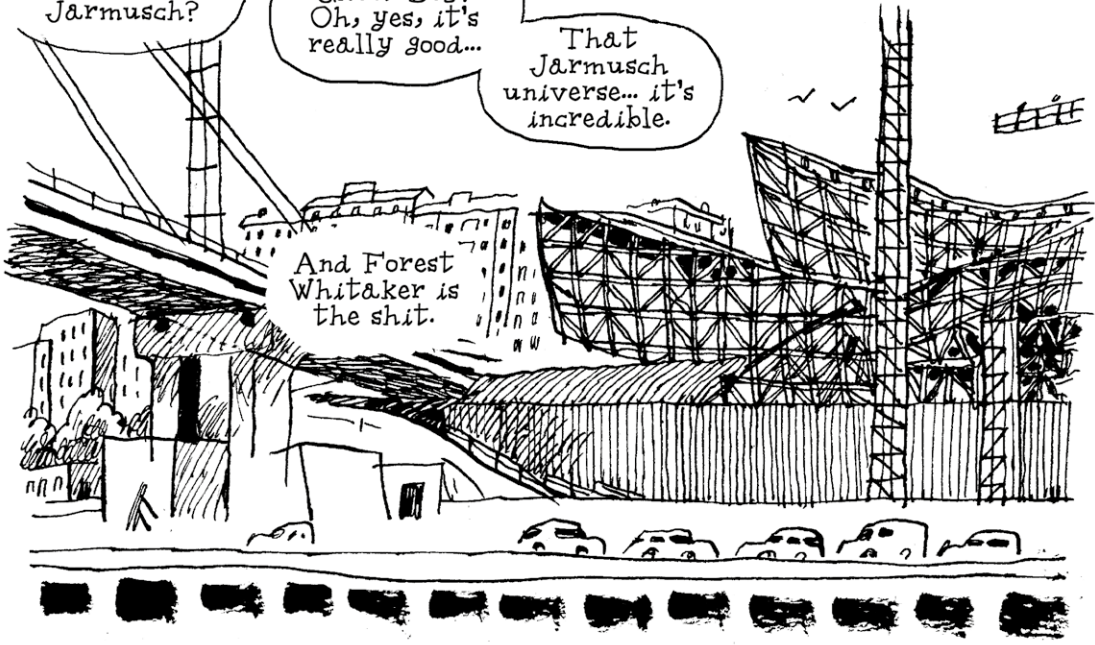


Have you seen the latest by Jarmusch?

"Ghost Dog?"
Oh, yes, it's really good...

That Jarmusch universe... it's incredible.

And Forest Whitaker is the shit.



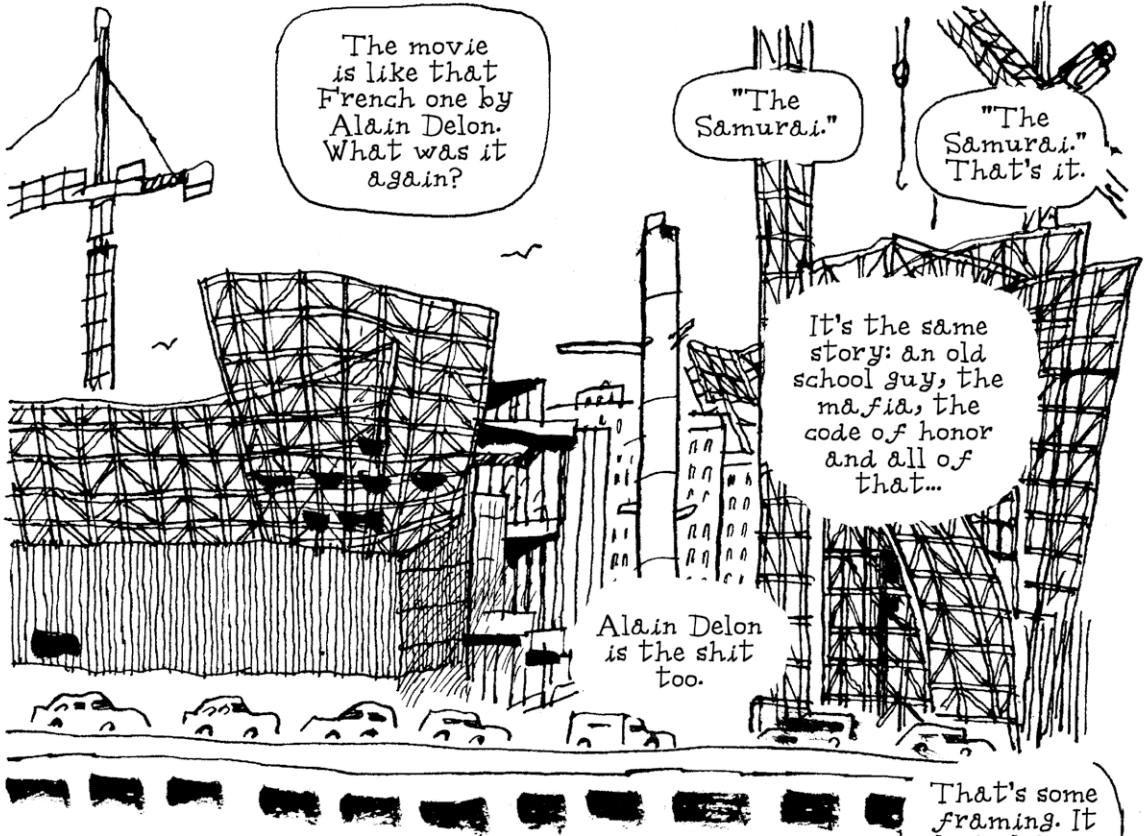
The movie is like that French one by Alain Delon. What was it again?

"The Samurai."

"The Samurai." That's it.

It's the same story: an old school guy, the mafia, the code of honor and all of that...

Alain Delon is the shit too.



That's some framing. It looks like a dinosaur.

Or a space station.

Do you know why they're building it here?

Because those snobs in San Sebastián don't want it there looking ugly.

HAHA
HAHA

Have you heard the latest by Doctor Deseo?

It just came out.

"Fugitives in Paradise."

Yeah I've heard it.

About fifty times, more or less...

It's those guys that are the shit, Doctor Deseo.

24

24

Which song
do you like the
most?

From
that
album? I
don't know...

Also, you
already know
what my
favorite Doctor
Deseo song is,
don't you?

Tuviste que decirme adios / calles hundidas a mis pies / para echarte
en
falta
hasta la
muerte...

Of course
I know! It's
my fa-
vorite too...

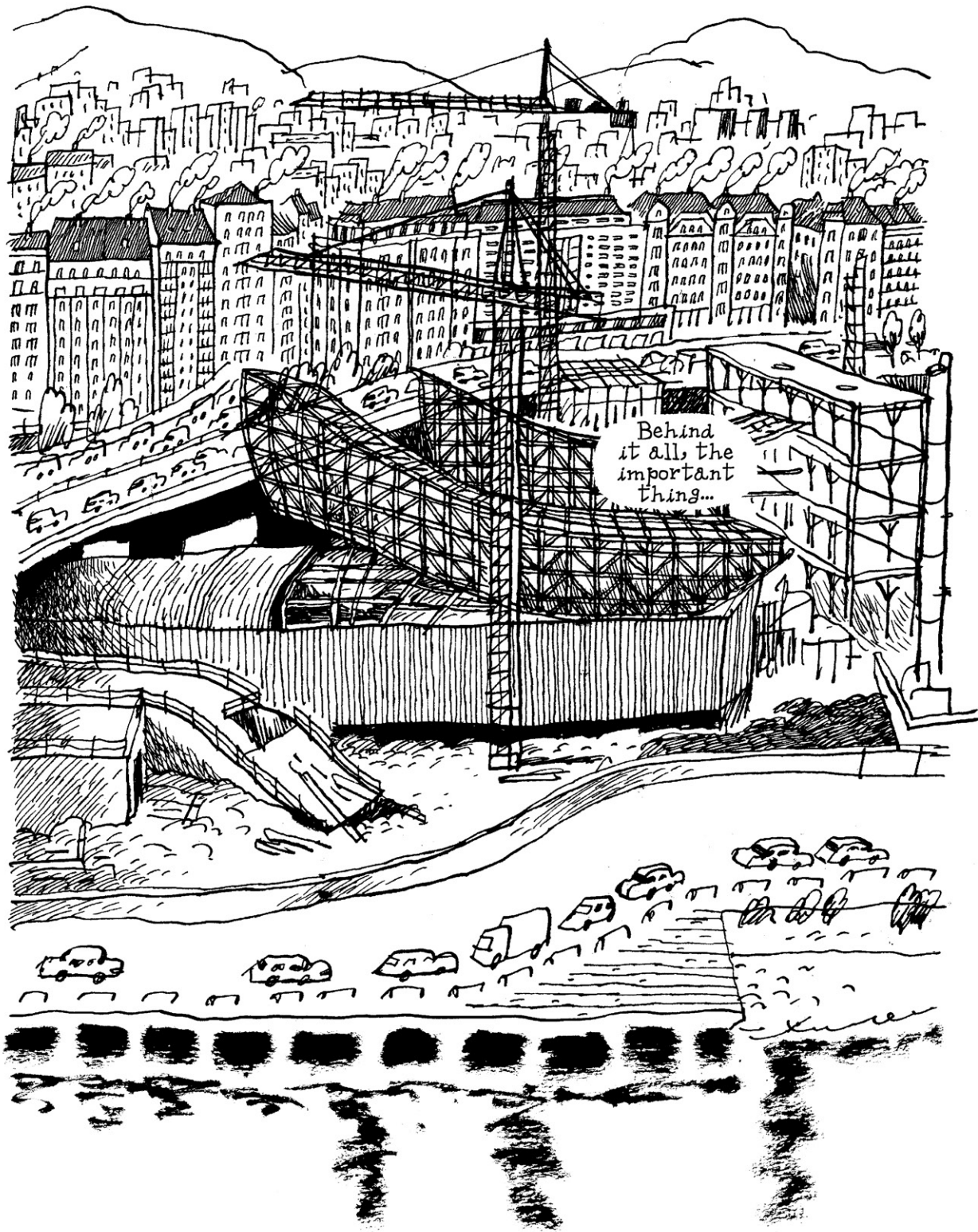
y yo bailando al ritmo de mis zapatos negros/como una veleta fiel

al viento/corazón de tango, tengo el cuerpo de jota y soy...

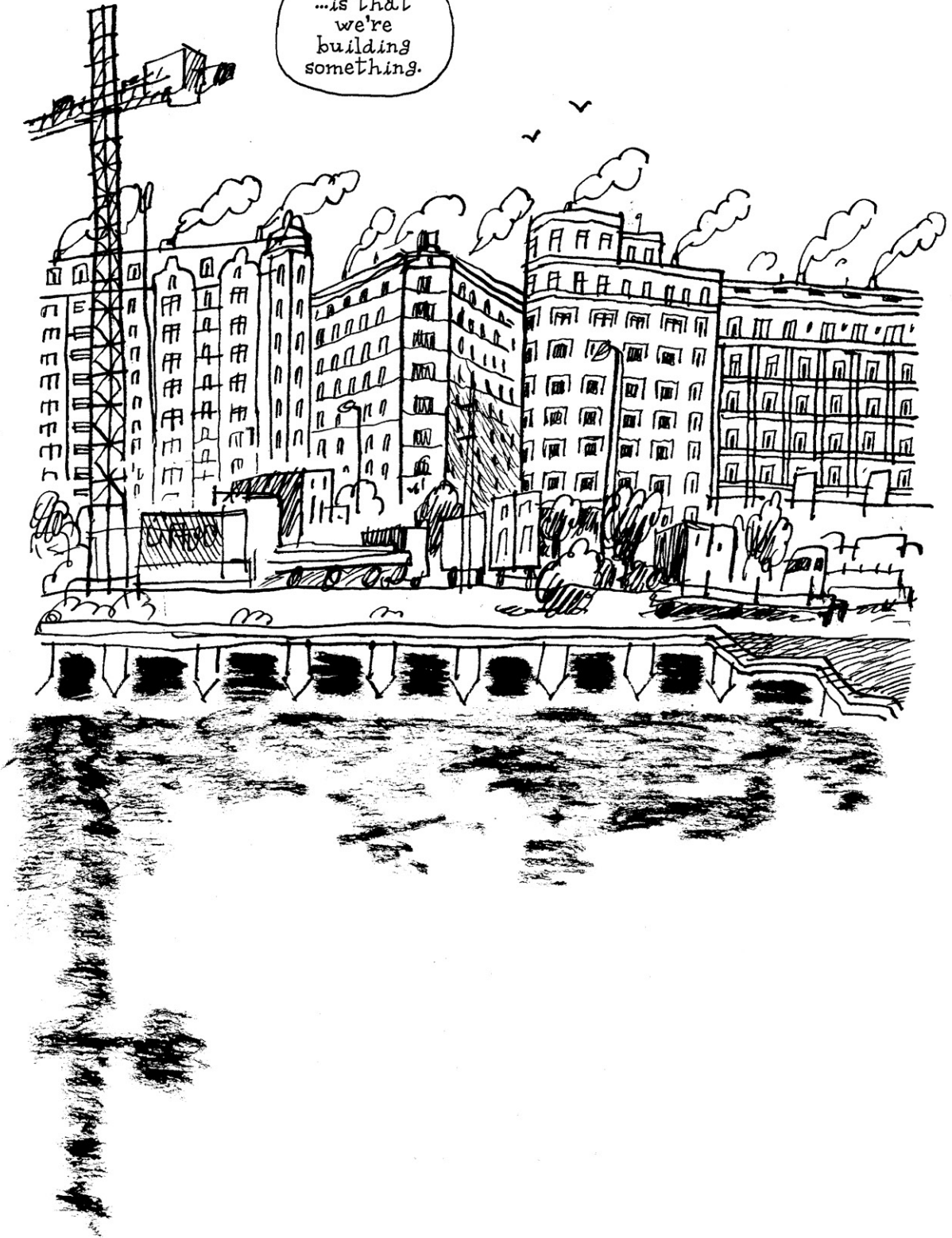


You know what, Edu?

un aprendiz de sinvergüenza en brazos de la soledad / vendió su alma al diablo / y aquí tú y yo brindando por un adiós...



...is that
we're
building
something.



Chapter 7

Bilbao-Montreal-Bilbao

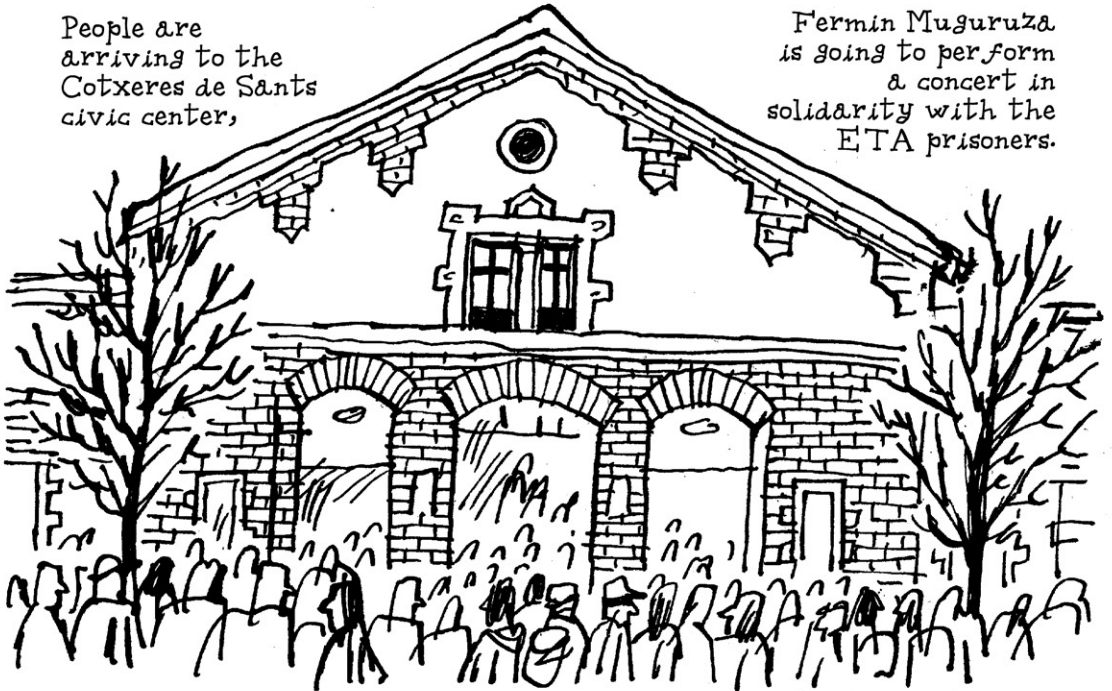


March 3, 2001.
Barcelona.



People are
arriving to the
Cotxeres de Santis
civic center,

Fermin Muguruza
is going to perform
a concert in
solidarity with the
ETA prisoners.



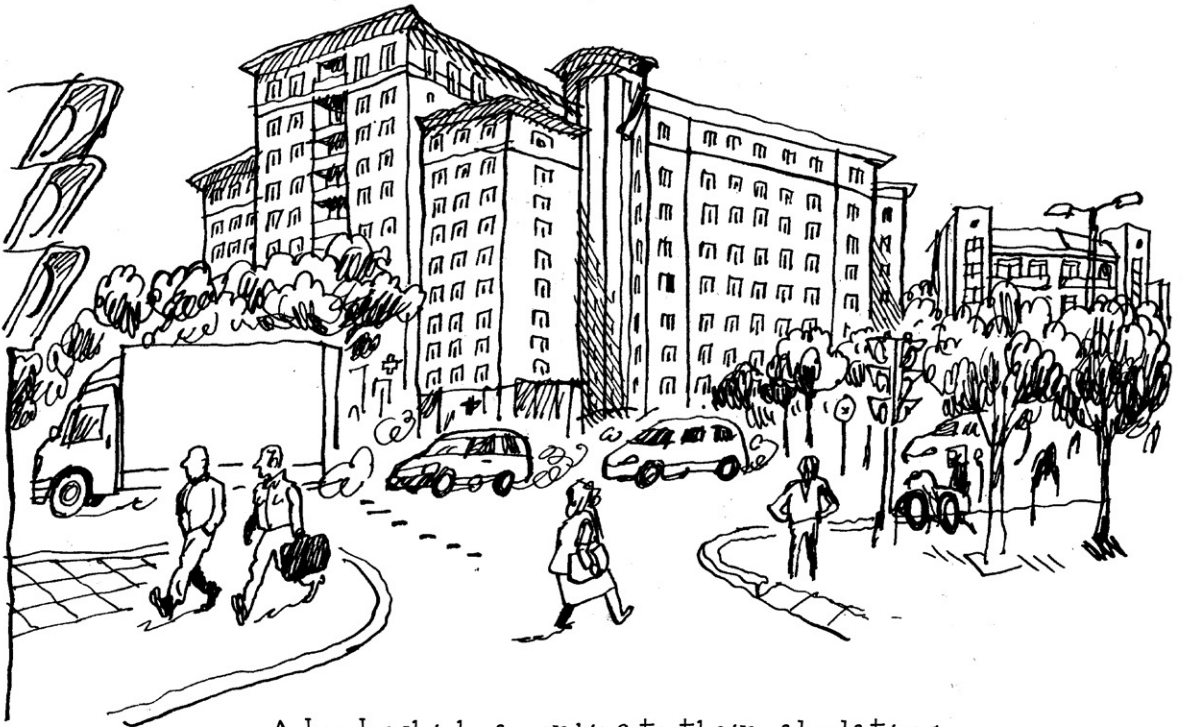
He can't know it, but in a bar nearby the concert venue, called
Botavara, four friends are meeting. One of them is carrying a
duffel bag. Inside the bag is a pressure cooker.



Fermin also doesn't know (because no one knows except the four friends) that inside the pressure cooker is a substance called CLORATITE: a homemade explosive.

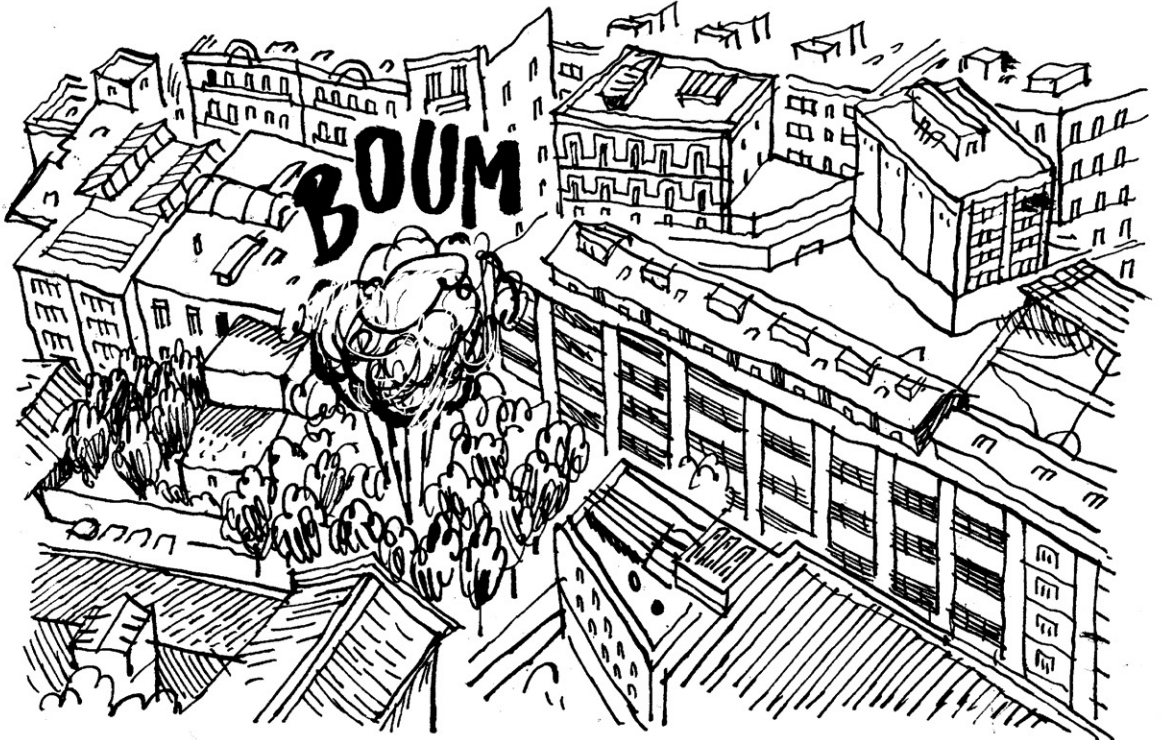


The four friends belong to a neonazi group called Timbalers del Bruch. And because a concert supporting ETA prisoners is too good an occasion to pass up, they decide to plant a bomb.



A bomb which, according to their calculations, should explode right in the middle of the Fermin Muguruza concert.

What no one knew (not even the *four friends*) is that the proportions of the chloratite were incorrect.



On the way to the concert it explodes in Bonet i Muixi square.

The two potential perpetrators of the bombing suffer various burns.

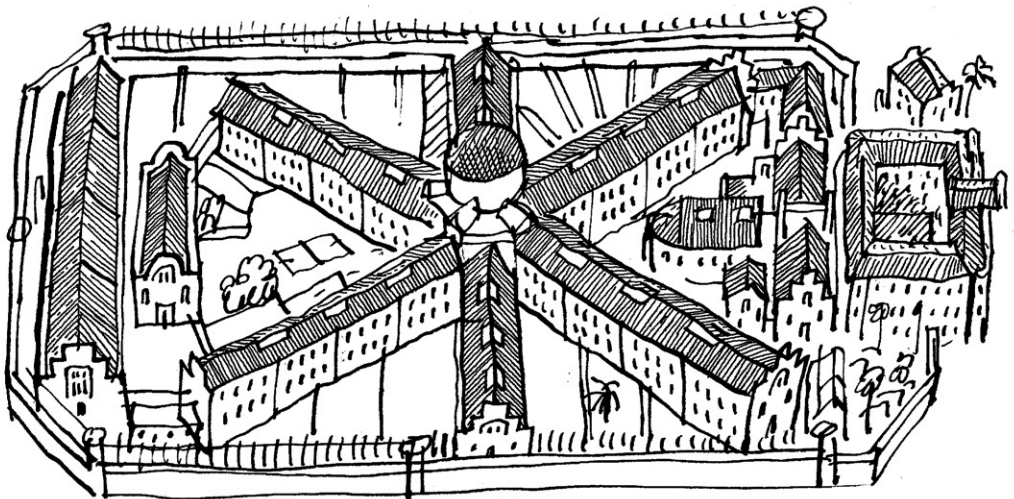


Fermin and his band play until the end, without finding out anything.

In reality, almost no one found out anything. Those four friends were detained and judged on charges of terrorism.



They were sentenced to 6 years in prison. They served a short sentence and soon were back on the streets. The news dissolved and disappeared in the air just like that defective bomb.



After all, it was a concert in favor of ETA prisoners.

February 19, 2002. Edu Madina wakes up in his house in the neighborhood of Arangoiti, in Bilbao.



He works in an office in Sestao, in human resources. He plans training courses for all types of businesses on the river's left bank. He drinks his coffee and looks at his watch.



When Edu leaves his house he still doesn't know it, but this will be the last time he will walk on the two legs that he came into this world with.



Here it is.

My Seat Ibiza.

And now...

I have to check underneath.



Shit, it's raining.



If you want to drag yourself across the ground in order to check underneath, you are going to get filthy, Edu.

And to top it off you'll be late.

But...



Remember, the protocol.

Maybe they've marked you. Maybe you're on a list.

You don't have a security detail, Edu.

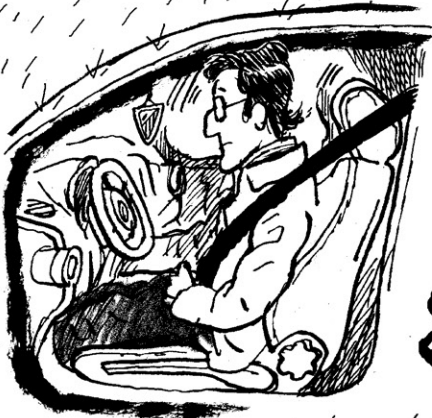
Always the same schedule.

Always the same route.

Bah

Cut the crap, damn it, you're going to be late.

And it's raining.

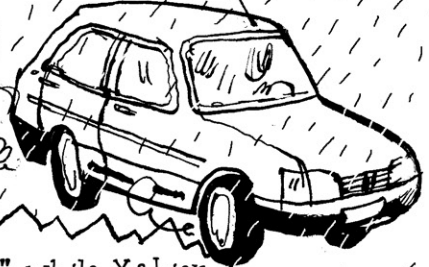


Well...

So much fuss and in the end, nothing.



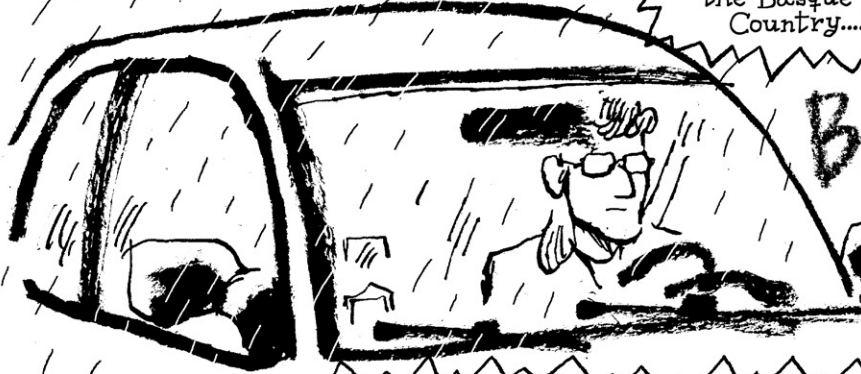
"Good morning. Rain in Biscay on this Tuesday, the 19th of February. It's 8:15 AM, and here's the news..."



"The Madrid Government opens political debate on the legal siege of separatist political party Batasuna..."

"...the People's Party invites the Spanish Socialist Worker's Party to support the proposals because they favor the anti-terrorist pact..."

"...while Xabier Arzalluz says that the measures will lead to a state of derogation in the Basque Country..."



"In world news, the Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres challenged Prime Minister Sharon, criticizing the military campaign against the Palestinians. Peres affirms that the only solution is political, and it can only come via dialogue..."

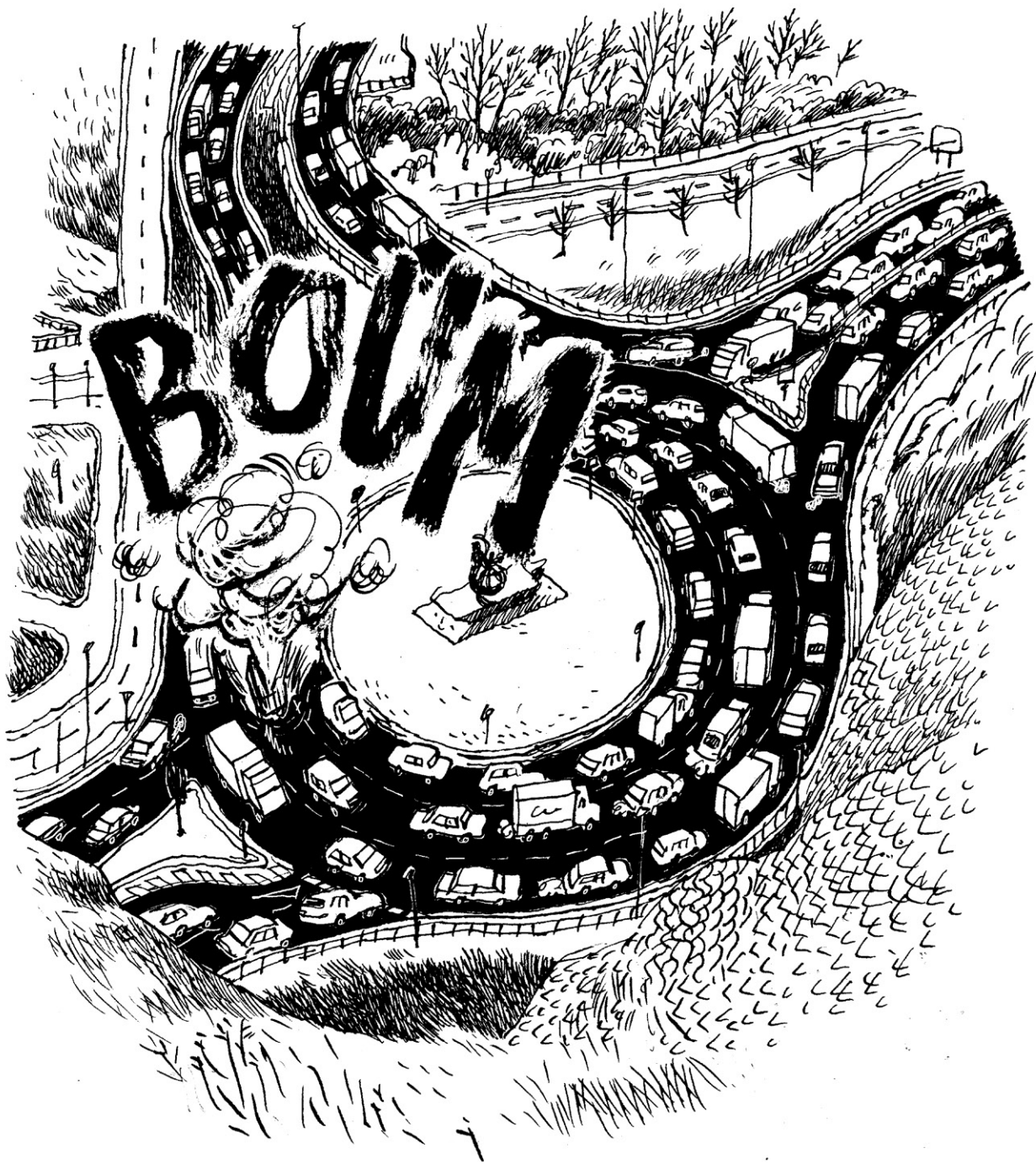


BROUM

BROUM

BRUM
BRUM

BROUM



At 8:20 AM on that rainy
Tuesday, the half-kilo of
Titadine that ETA had
put under Edu Madina's
seat exploded.