







AND NOW?

THERE'S NO IMPACT.

THERE'S NO PLANE.

NOTHING...

I'VE ALWAYS SUFFERED FROM INSOMNIA, FROM THE TIME I WAS A BOY.

NORMALLY I GO TO BED AROUND 10:30, AND SLEEP UNTIL 1:00.

THEN NOTHING.

I WAKE UP TRYING TO IMAGINE SOMETHING. BUT NOTHING COMES OUT. I STAY LIKE THIS FOR HALF AN HOUR TO SEE IF SLEEP WILL RETURN



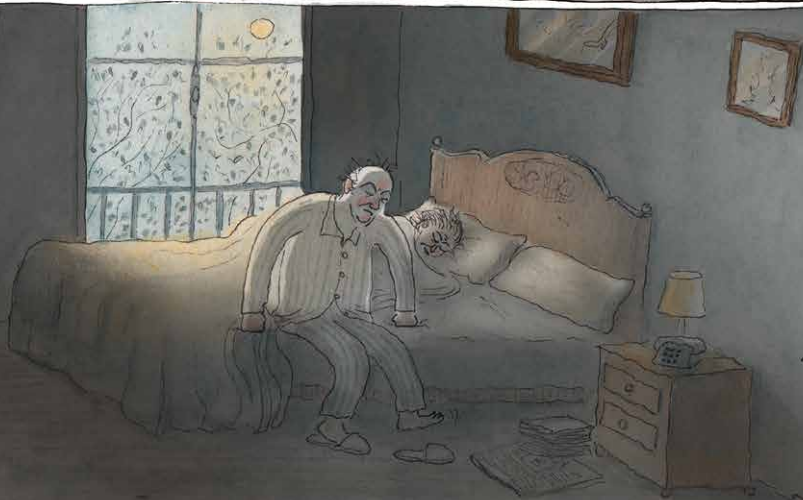
BUT IT'S LIKE BEING WITH YOUR EYES AGAINST A WALL.

EVERYTHING IS GRAY, MUTED, OPAQUE.

NO MESSAGE, NO GHOST. THE MIND REMAINS INERT.

OFTEN TIMES I GET UP AND GO OUT TO THE STREET.

IT'S A STATE IN WHICH I CAN'T WORK, LEAVING ME WITH ONLY THE OPTION OF WALKING TO CLEAR MY HEAD.



GENERALLY I HEAD TOWARDS THE PIAZZA DI SPAGNA.

THOUGH LATELY I'VE TAKEN TO GOING ON LONGER WALKS.





WHEN I STILL DROVE,
I USED TO WANDER
AROUND ROME FOR
ENTIRE NIGHTS.

SOMETIMES ALONE,
SOMETIMES WITH FRIENDS.
FOR ME IT WAS A WAY
OF GETTING TO KNOW THE
CITY IN GREATER DEPTH.

OF UNRAVELING
ITS MYSTERIES.



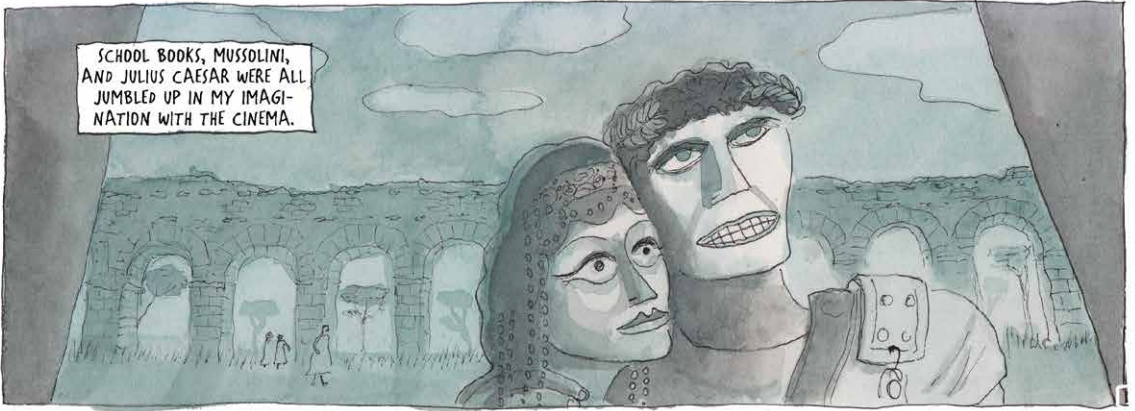
SO MANY YEARS
HAVE PASSED...

WHAT WAS ROME LIKE
FOR ME BEFORE? WHAT
WAS IT LIKE, FOR EXAMPLE,
IN MY CHILDHOOD?



AN IMPORTANT
PART OF THE IMAGES
THAT CAME TO ME
CAME FROM FILMS.

SCHOOL BOOKS, MUSSOLINI,
AND JULIUS CAESAR WERE ALL
JUMBLED UP IN MY IMAGI-
NATION WITH THE CINEMA.

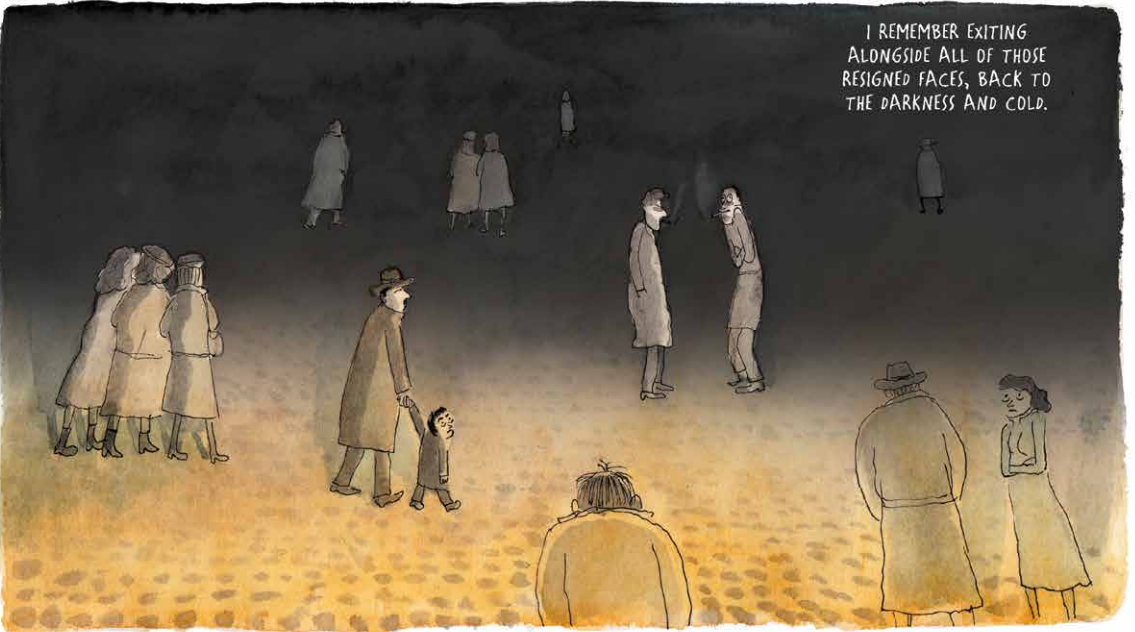


SO GOING TO THE MOVIE
THEATER WAS A KIND OF
RITUAL, LIKE GOING TO CHURCH.

THOUGH CHURCH NEVER
HAD THAT HOT AND
SMOKY ATMOSPHERE.

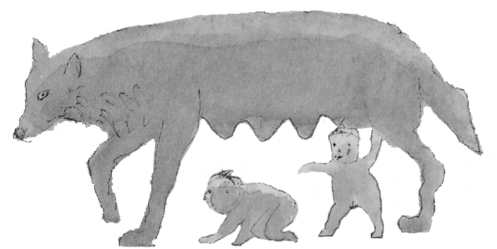


I REMEMBER EXITING
ALONGSIDE ALL OF THOSE
RESIGNED FACES, BACK TO
THE DARKNESS AND COLD.









ROME IS A SUITABLE CITY FOR ME, IT'S THE ONLY CITY I COULD EVER LIVE IN,
IT GIVES ME A FEELING OF MATERNAL PROTECTION, WITH A PLACENTAL ASPECT,
DOMINATED AS IT IS BY THE HOLY CHURCH. ROME IS THE GREAT MOTHER.

YOU CAN SPEND 364 DAYS A YEAR COMPLETELY DETACHED FROM THIS
CITY, LIVING WITHOUT SEEING IT, OR WORSE, PUTTING UP WITH IT WITH ANNOYANCE.
BUT THEN ALL OF THE SUDDEN A SHAPE APPEARS, A NEVER-BEFORE-SEEN COLOR,
SOMETIMES IT'S A GENTLE BREEZE THAT MAKES YOU SEE AND DISCOVER HIGH
CORNICES AND TERRACES AGAINST A BLUE SKY THAT TAKES YOUR BREATH AWAY.
THEN THAT FEELING OF PEACE APPEARS, ERASING ALL TENSION.



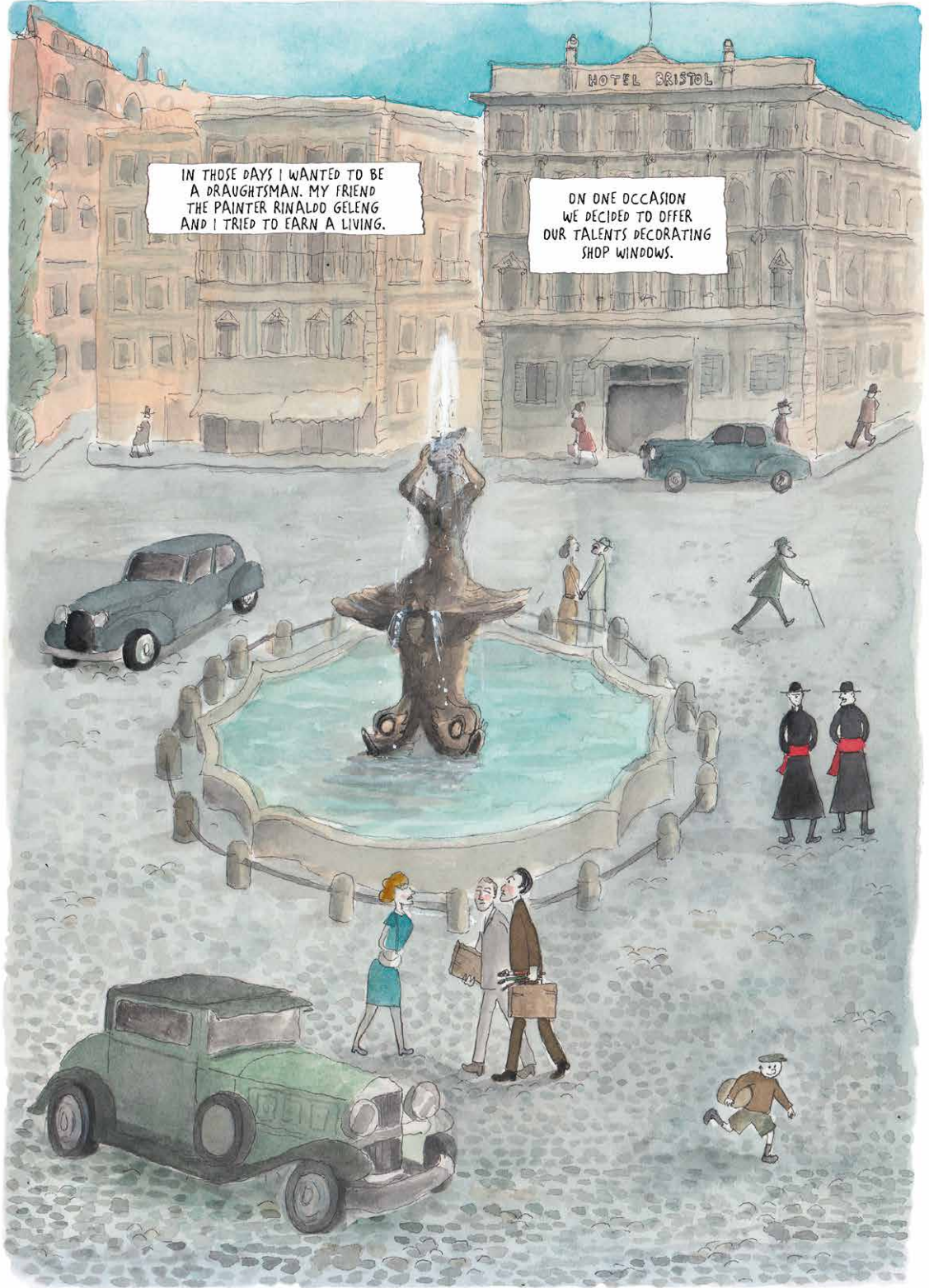


1939, TERMINI STATION, THE HUNGRY EYES OF THE SMALL-TOWN KID I REMAIN TODAY.

IT WAS A TIME OF WAR, BUT THE CHAOS AND NEUROSI THAT HAVE BROUGHT SO MUCH CRITICISM ON THIS CITY TODAY DID NOT YET EXIST.



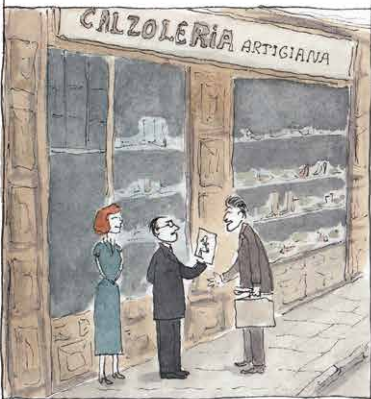




IN THOSE DAYS I WANTED TO BE
A DRAUGHTSMAN. MY FRIEND
THE PAINTER RINALDO GELENG
AND I TRIED TO EARN A LIVING.

ON ONE OCCASION
WE DECIDED TO OFFER
OUR TALENTS DECORATING
SHOP WINDOWS.

WE SPLIT UP AND I TRIED MY LUCK AT A SHOE STORE AT THE BOTTOM OF THE VIA VENETO.



VERY WELL, I'LL LET YOU DO IT, BUT MAKE IT QUICK.

AH, THANK YOU VERY MUCH, SIR.

GELENG HAD LEFT ME A SKETCH FOR REFERENCE. IT WAS A PROVOCATIVE WOMAN TO ATTRACT THE ATTENTION OF PASSERSBY.



I ASKED FOR A LADDER, WHICH THEY BEGRUDGINGLY GAVE ME.



I WASN'T USED TO PAINTING ON THIS SCALE. SOON A GROUP OF CURIOUS ONLOOKERS FORMED AROUND ME.



BUT WHAT IS THIS YOUNG MAN DOING FOR THEM IN THE STORE?

THE BOSS IS LETTING HIM DO A PAINTING.

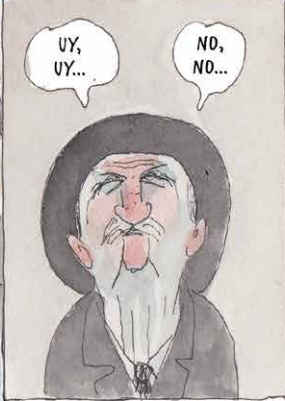
IN EFFECT, THE DRAWING WAS COMING OUT HORRIBLY AND DEFORMED. EVEN A LITTLE BOY WHO WAS NEARBY STARTED GIVING ME TIPS.



YOU HAVE TO FILL OUT THE HIPS.

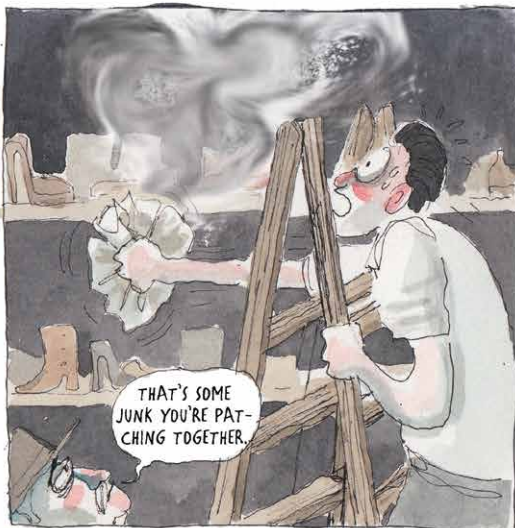
FLESH OUT THE BUST... OOF...

I WAS IN A COLD SWEAT... EVERYONE WAS LOOKING ON, PUZZLED, EXCEPT THAT ONE SALESWOMAN WHO WATCHED ME SYMPATHETICALLY.



UY, UY...

NO, NO...



ON ANOTHER OCCASION, DOING PORTRAITS FOR RESTAURANTS, WE CAME ACROSS A FAMILY WITH A NON-ROMAN AIR.



THEY LOOKED AT US WITH RESPECT. THEY MUST HAVE CONSIDERED US SOMETHING TYPICAL OF THE METROPOLIS, AN INCREDIBLE AND CURIOUS PHENOMENON.



EEHHH...
NO, NO...



HEY, RINALDO...
IT'S NOT COMING OUT...
HELP...



WELL! WHAT IS THE MEANING OF THIS!
EXCUSE MY COLLEAGUE, SIR. HE'S JUST STARTING OUT AND HE STILL DOESN'T KNOW VERY WELL...
I'LL TAKE OVER FROM HERE.



NO, ENOUGH ALREADY! IF YOU LIKE, BRING TWO CHAIRS AND JOIN US AT THE TABLE.
COME NOW, SIT DOWN AND WE'LL ORDER DESSERT.



IN THE END THEY TREATED US TO PASTRIES WITH CHOCOLATE.

EVERYTHING FINISHED IN A STRANGELY FAMILIAR, EVEN QUIANT ATMOSPHERE. IT WAS AS THOUGH WE HAD RECEIVED SOME RELATIVES FOR A VISIT.

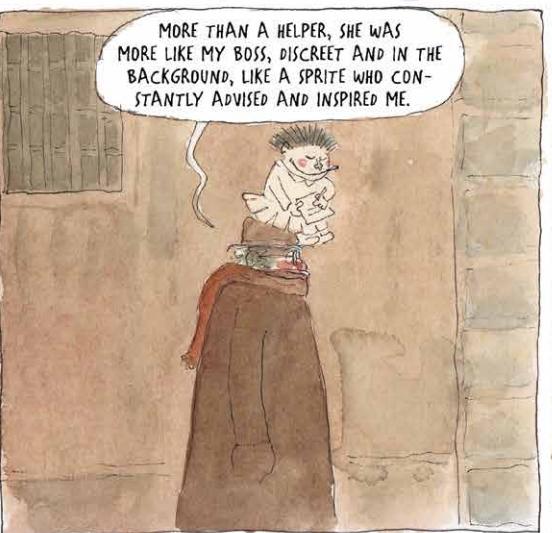
LUNCH WITH JUNG AND LILIANA
IN THE PIAZZA OF A LITTLE TOWN
IN LIGURIA (OR PERHAPS
SWITZERLAND).

JUNG IS AN EXTREMELY
HANDSOME OLDER MAN, FULL
OF PHYSICAL AND INTELLECTUAL
VIGOR, HIS GAZE IS CLEAR
AND SHARP.



WE ATE SPAGHETTI AND BIT INTO THE SAME NOODLE,
EVEN THOUGH IT ENDED UP ON ALL THREE OF OUR PLATES.





IN MY YOUTH I HAD NO SPECIAL
INTEREST IN FILM. MY REAL
OBJECTIVE IN COMING TO
ROME WAS TO BE A CONTRIBUTOR
TO THE MYTHICAL SATIRICAL
REVIEW "MARC'AURELIO."





IN MY IMAGINATION, THE PUBLICATION OF "MARC'AURELIO" WAS AS IMPORTANT AS THE COLDSSEUM, THE VATICAN, AND ANY OTHER MONUMENT IN THE ETERNAL CITY.



ARRIVING THERE WITH MY PORTFOLIO AND MY DRAWINGS WAS AN EXHILARATING MOMENT.



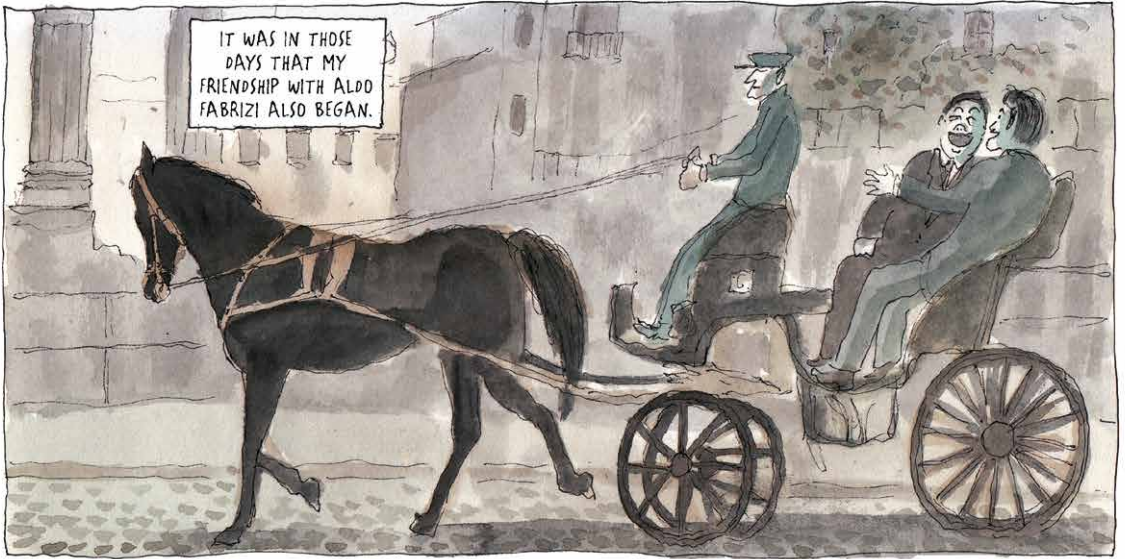
I GREW VERY NERVOUS IN FRONT OF THE DIRECTOR. VITO DE BELLIS...

I FELT AS THOUGH MY ROUGH FIGURE SKETCHES WERE TOO RIDICULOUS TO HAVE THE RIGHT TO INVADRE HIS SPACE.



LATER ON, THERE I WAS. RUBBING ELBOWS WITH ALL OF THOSE GENIUSES WHO HAD BEEN MY IDOLS.

IN THAT ABSOLUTE HAPPINESS, I COULDN'T EVEN IMAGINE THAT THAT WOULD ONLY BE THE BEGINNING.



SOMETIMES EVEN WHEN I WAS ALONE, I WOULD CATCH
A HORSE CARRIAGE TO GET BACK HOME.

I SAT NEXT TO THE
DRIVER AND ADMIRING
THE FAÇADES OF THE
CHURCHES, THE BRIDGES,
THE PALACES...

SOMETIMES, I HAD THE DRIVER
TAKE ME TO THE VIA DELLA
CONCILIAZIONE.

THE VIEW OF ST. PETER'S BASILICA
ALWAYS SEEMED FASCINATING TO ME.

IT HAS AN IMMATERIAL
LIGHTNESS THAT
I'VE NEVER SEEN IN ANY
OTHER ARCHITECTURE.

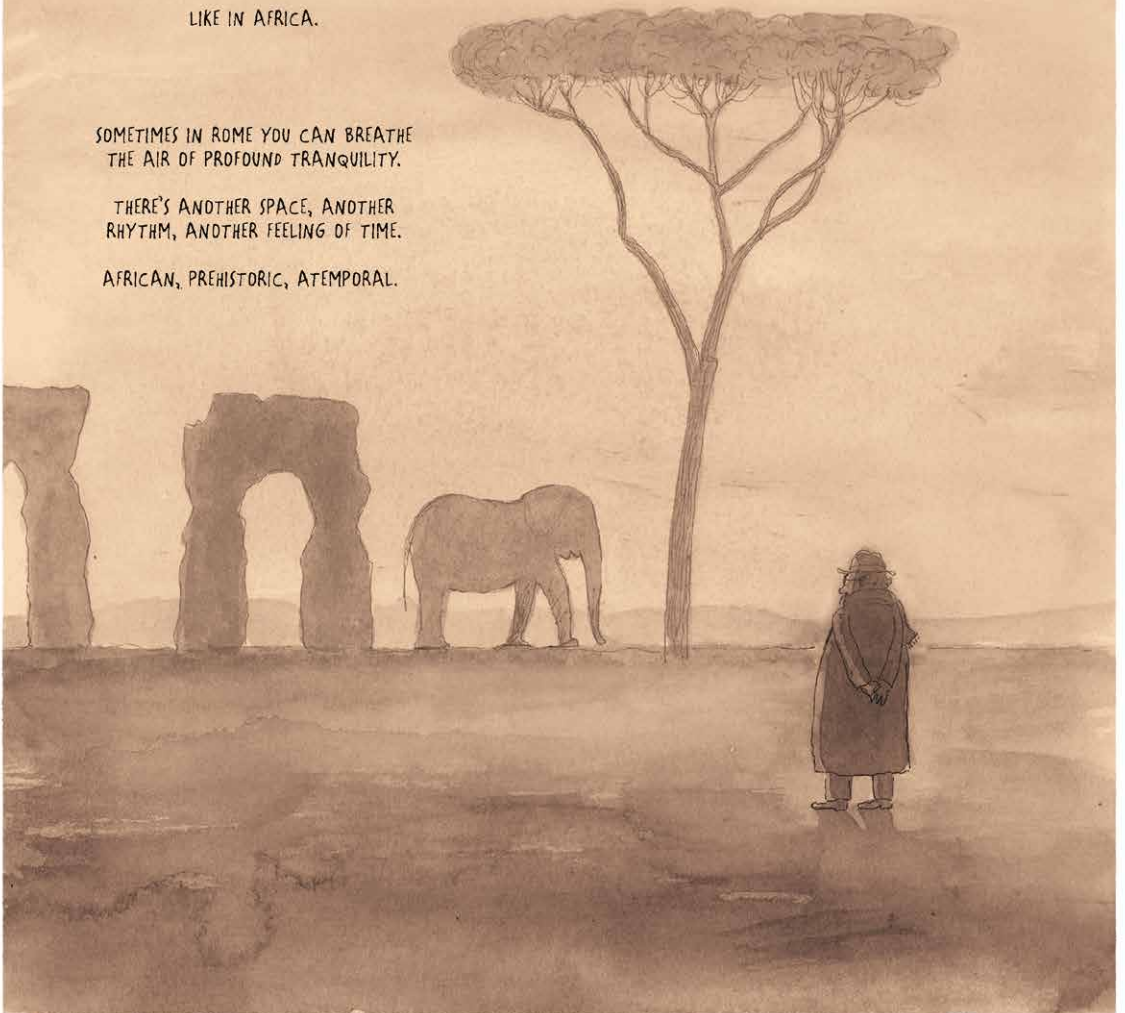
THUS APPEARED AGAIN THAT SENSATION
OF PEACE THAT ERASES ANY TENSION.

LIKE IN AFRICA.

SOMETIMES IN ROME YOU CAN BREATHE
THE AIR OF DEEP TRANQUILITY.

THERE'S ANOTHER SPACE, ANOTHER
RHYTHM, ANOTHER FEELING OF TIME.

AFRICAN, PREHISTORIC, ATEMPORAL.







GIULIETTA WAS THE WOMAN OF MY DESTINY, I EVEN THINK OUR RELATIONSHIP ALREADY EXISTED BEFORE WE MET FOR THE FIRST TIME.



THE HEADQUARTERS OF THE ITALIAN RADIO WAS LOCATED ON THIS STREET, AND GIULIETTA WORKED FOR A COMIC THEATRE COMPANY. IN THAT MOMENT THEY WERE BROADCASTING A SERIES OF PROGRAMS, "THE ADVENTURES OF CICO AND PALLINA," A PAIR OF NEWLYWEDS, THE TEXTS OF WHICH WERE MINE. GIULIETTA PLAYED PALLINA.

I WANTED TO MAKE A MOVIE OUT OF THOSE STORIES AND I CALLED GIULIETTA TO ASK HER FOR A FEW PHOTOS.

LATER I INVITED HER OUT TO DINNER AT A RESTAURANT.



EEH... SI NO TIENE INCONVENIENTE, ME GUSTARÍA QUE NOS VIÉSEMOS PARA HABLAR.

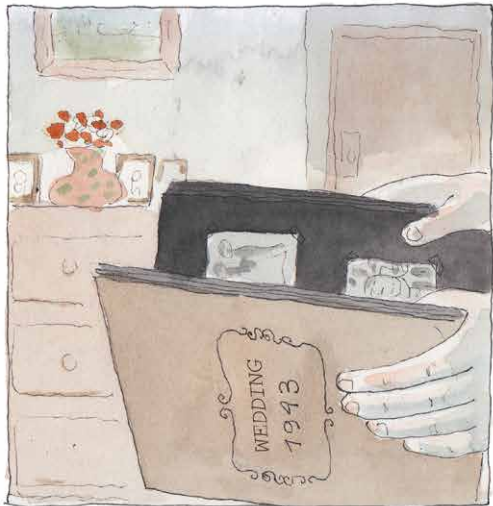


WE TALKED AT LENGTH, BUT IN THE END THANKS TO THE WAR, THAT PROJECT NEVER GOT OFF THE GROUND.

WE STARTED SEEING EACH OTHER AND AFTER A YEAR MORE OR LESS WE GOT MARRIED.



GIULIETTA WAS LIVING WITH HER AUNT, AND NEXT DOOR TO THEM, ON THE SAME FLOOR, LIVED A MILANESE MONSIGNOR, MARQUIS LUIGI CORNAGGIA MEDICI, PRELATE OF THE BASILICA OF SANTA MARIA MAGGIORE. AS HE WAS VERY ELDERLY, THE VATICAN GAVE HIM PERMISSION TO SAY MASS AT HOME. HE HAD A PIECE OF FURNITURE THAT HAD BEEN CONVERTED INTO AN ALTAR AND IT WAS THERE THAT WE WERE MARRIED.





I MADE THE MISTAKE OF OPENING THE DOOR TO THE BASEMENT, WHERE I'VE BEEN KEEPING A POLAR BEAR.

THE BEAST PURSUED ME UP THE STAIRS, I HARDLY HAD TIME TO SHUT THE DOOR WITH ITS TINY AND RIDICULOUS CHAIN.

THE DOOR WON'T HOLD!



NOW I'M IN THE BATHROOM OF MY OFFICE. I DISCOVER AN UNKNOWN DOOR.



UPON ENTERING I AM SURPRISED TO FIND MYSELF IN A LITTLE SECRET ROOM.

ALL OF THE SUDDEN AN ENORMOUS LION APPEARS AT MY BACK, SNIFFING ME.

I STAND THERE FROZEN, TRYING TO THINK OF SOMETHING.

IF I DON'T FIND ANY FOOD TO GIVE HIM, AND IN HERE THERE IS TRULY NOTHING, WHAT WILL BECOME OF ME.

TODAY I DID MANAGE TO FALL
BACK ASLEEP. AND HAD TWO
SHITTY NIGHTMARES...



TONIGHT THERE IS NO ONE
IN THE PIAZZA DI SPAGNA.

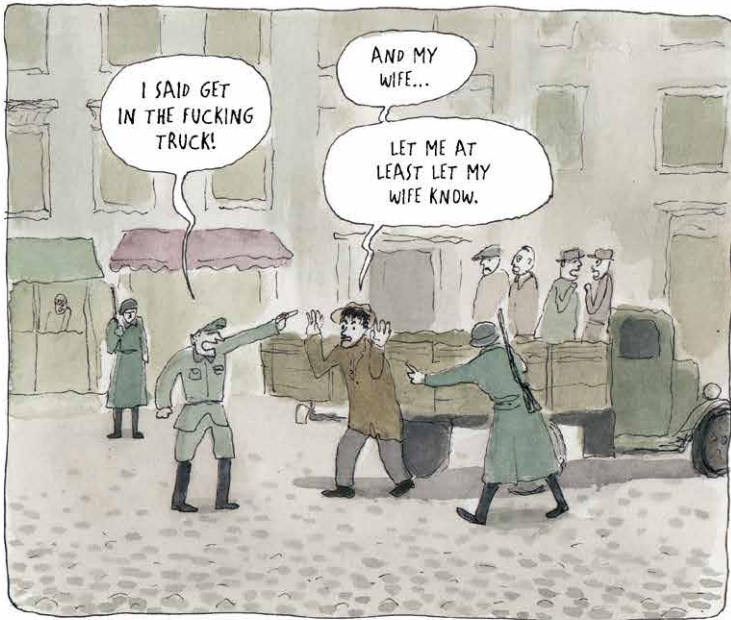
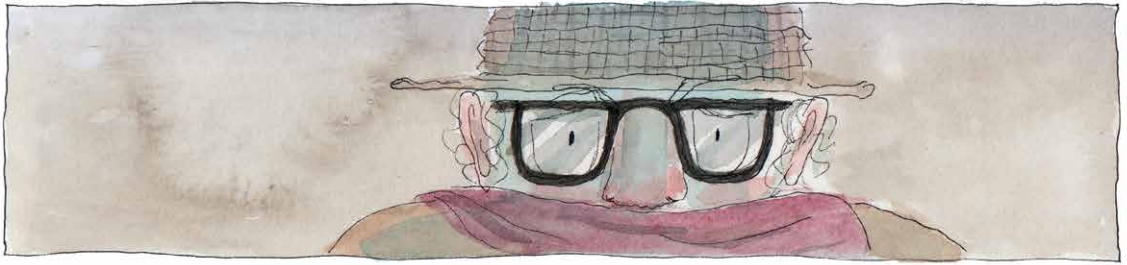
WELL, ONLY KEATS'S GHOST.

I OFTEN COME ACROSS HIM,
BUT WE DON'T USUALLY TALK.



HE IS IMMERSSED IN HIS MEMORIES AND I IN MINE.







THAT NIGHT I GET HOME VERY LATE, AND THINGS BEING AS THEY ARE I IMAGINE GIULIETTA MUST BE REALLY WORRIED. I RUN UP THE STAIRS.



THINGS ARE WORSE THAN I EVEN IMAGINED, BECAUSE OF THE SCARE SHE LOSES THE BABY WE WERE EXPECTING. SHE WAS FOUR MONTHS PREGNANT.



SHORTLY AFTER SHE GOT PREGNANT AGAIN AND THIS TIME EVERYTHING WENT WELL.

WE CALLED HIM LITTLE FEDERICO HE LOOKED JUST LIKE GIULIETTA. SHE WAS HAPPIER THAN EVER.



BUT WITHIN A FEW DAYS THE CHILD GOT SICK.

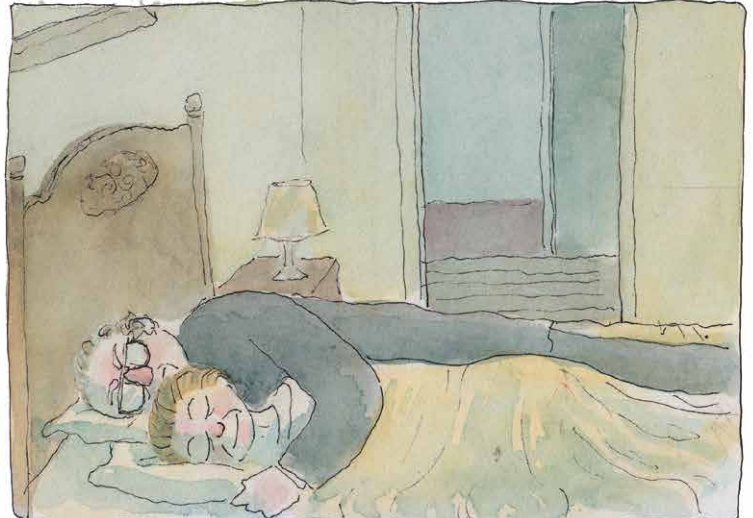


HE DIED FIFTEEN DAYS LATER.

GIULIETTA FELL GRAVELY ILL AND WAS BEDRIDDEN FOR SOME TIME.



AFTER THAT NEITHER OF US THOUGHT OF HAVING CHILDREN AGAIN.



I'M DROWNING ALONGSIDE THE RUINS OF
A SINKING HOUSE.

ROSSELLINI GRABS ME BY THE HANDS AND PULLS ME UP,
WITH HIS HELP I MIGHT MAKE IT.

I CAN SEE LA MALFA* OVER THERE ALMOST SUBMERGED,
I CAN'T DO ANYTHING FOR HIM.



*UGO LA MALFA (1903-1979), DESIGNATED LEADER OF THE ITALIAN REPUBLICAN PARTY.