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“With *The Churchgoers* [Gijsemans] boldly goes his own way, proving that he is no one-trick pony who relies on previous successes”

9E Kunst

Graphically [*De Kerkgangers*] bears similarities to Chris Ware’s work, but where Ware forever wonders his own graphic universe, Gijsemans continually looks for new forms

NRC handelsblad

The Churchgoers

BEN GIJSEMANS

1994 – the summer holiday is agonizingly long. The 14-year-old Harold is particularly bothered by the boredom. He and his little brother Carl are staying with their grandparents during the week. The only excitement comes from Peter, Harold’s up-to-no-good classmate who takes the brothers on adventures after church on Sundays. But on one such afternoon the boys discover something that puts a strain on their friendship...

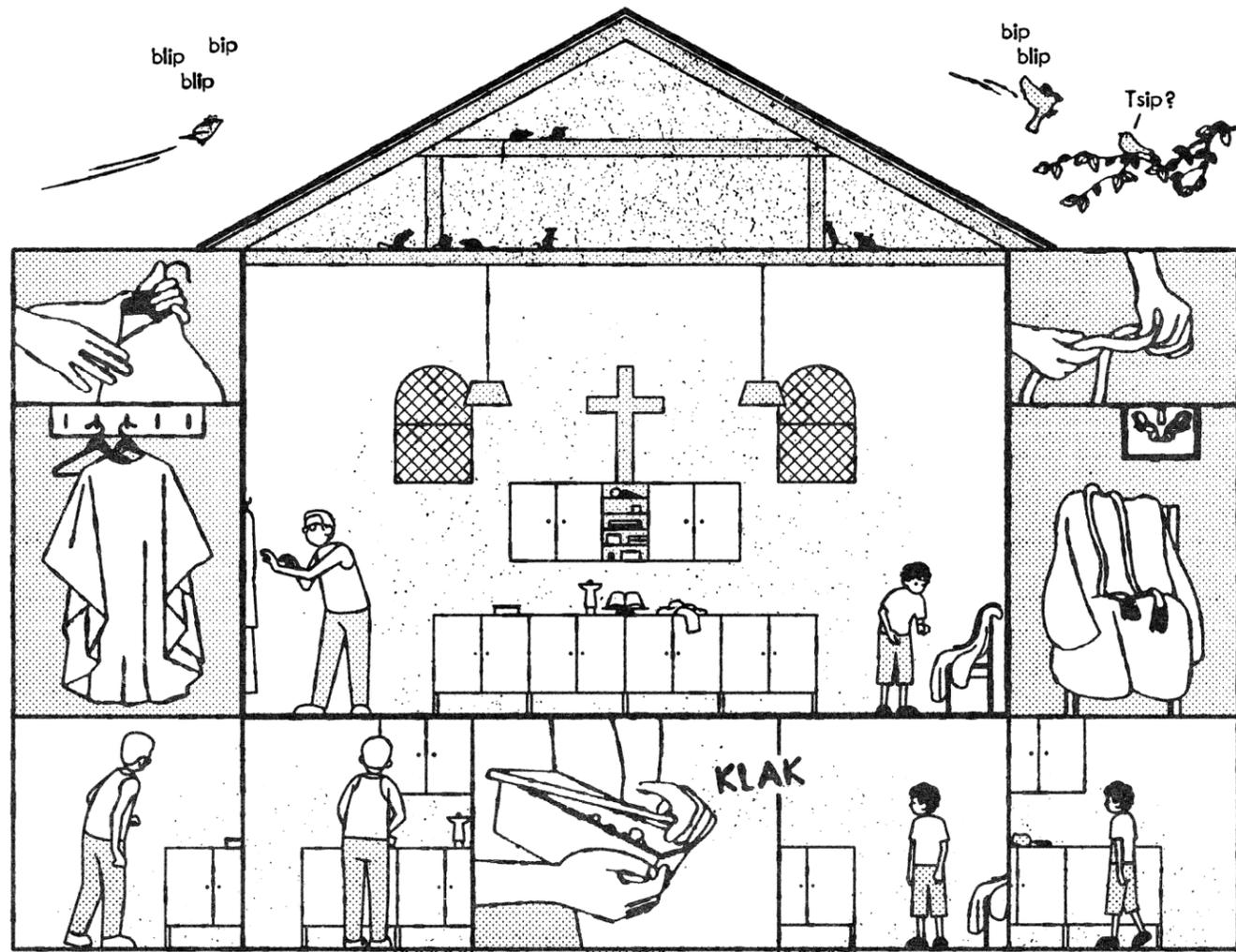
*Ben Gijsemans (b.1989) studied audiovisual arts and comics in Ghent and Brussels. The first chapter of his debut *Hubert* was his thesis. It was very well received at home and abroad. Gijsemans’ drawings are incredibly detailed, and more often than not depict loners who feel out of place among other people.*



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Original title : De kerkgangers (Oogachtend, 2022. Hardcover, 22x27 cm, 160 pp.)

Rights sold : French (Dargaud)



blip blip
blip blip

bip blip

Tsip?

Wait a minute before you take a sweet, Carl.

Do you have any idea what it could be?

Erm... The bell?

I want to talk about something first.

You were late ringing the bell again, weren't you, Carl?

Yes, mister pastor.

Hm, right, and that wasn't the first time.

No, mister pastor.

You know, Carl, if you don't want to be an altar boy anymore, you can tell me.

You don't have to do it if you don't want to.

Okay.

Hm...

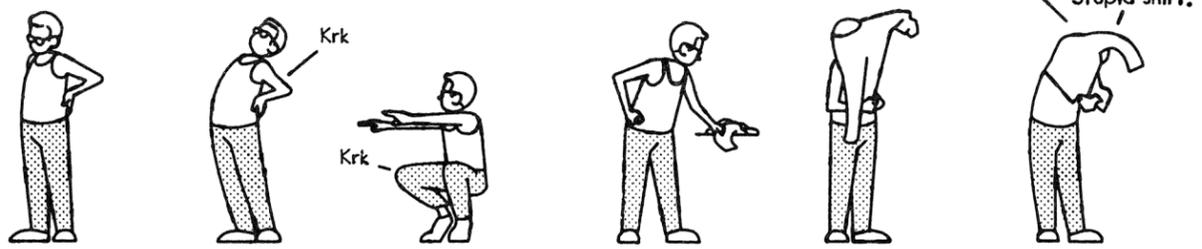
Discuss it with your parents.

Go now. Your parents and brother are waiting.

Thank you, mister pastor.

Next week it's David's turn and then it's yours again. Don't forget.

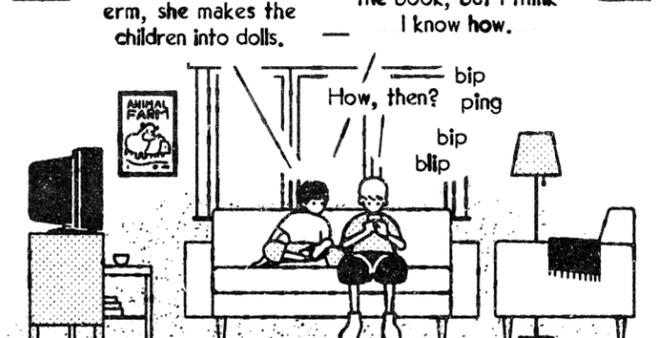
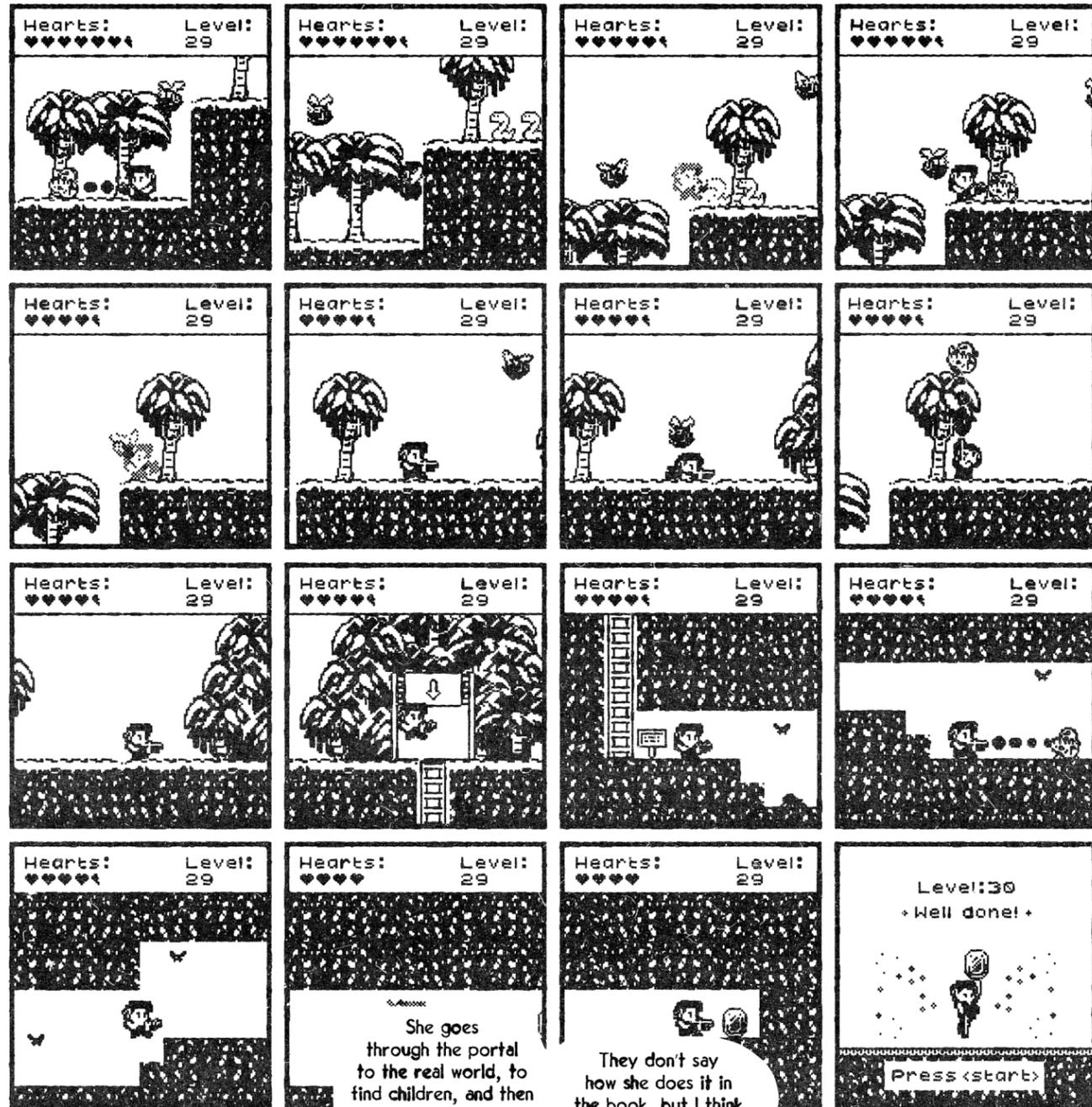
Bye mister pastor.



Krk

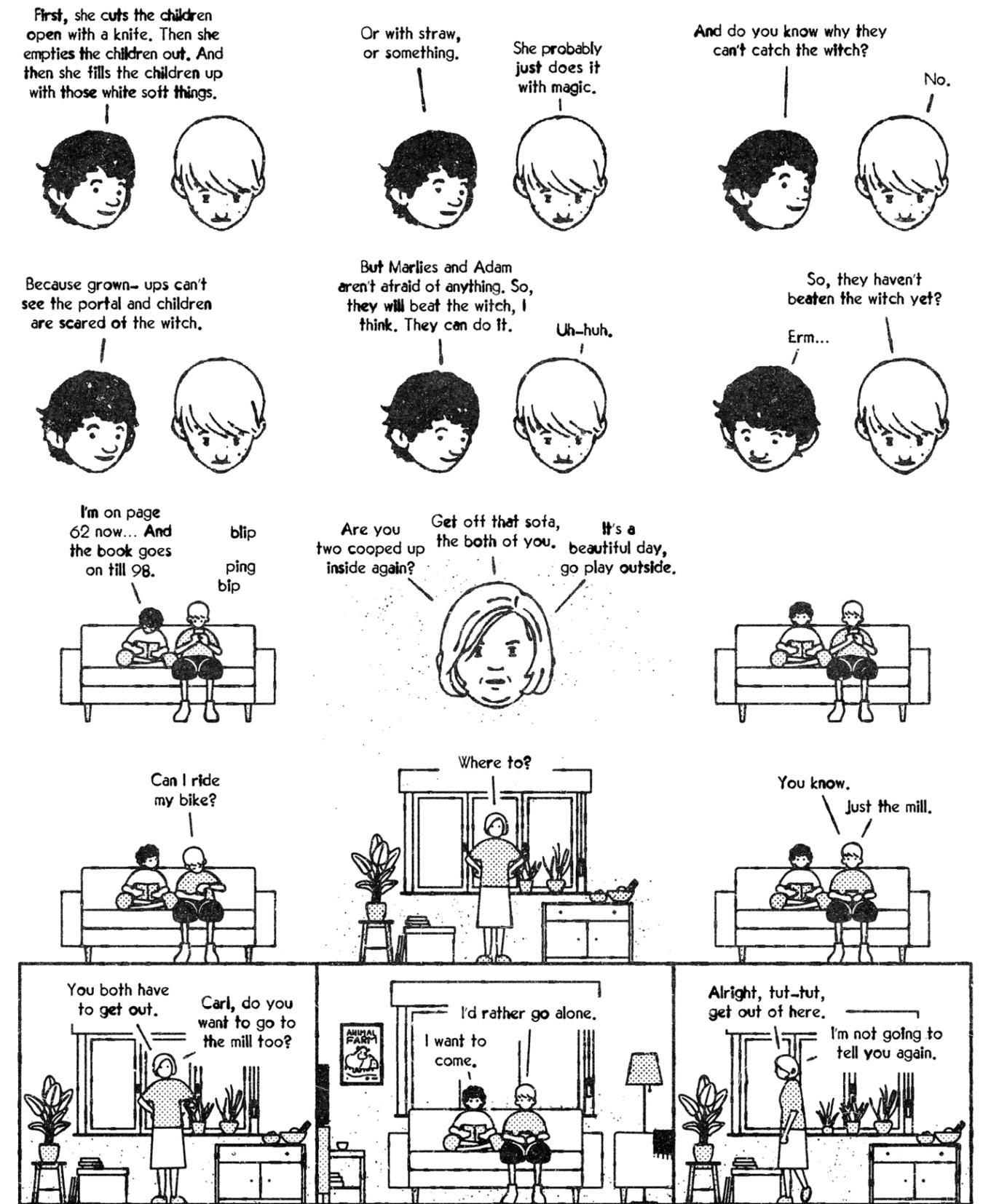
Krk

Dammit. Stupid shirt.



She goes through the portal to the real world, to find children, and then erm, she makes the children into dolls.

They don't say how she does it in the book, but I think I know how.



First, she cuts the children open with a knife. Then she empties the children out. And then she fills the children up with those white soft things.

Or with straw, or something.

She probably just does it with magic.

And do you know why they can't catch the witch?

No.

Because grown-ups can't see the portal and children are scared of the witch.

But Marlies and Adam aren't afraid of anything. So, they will beat the witch, I think. They can do it.

Uh-huh.

So, they haven't beaten the witch yet?

Erm...

I'm on page 62 now... And the book goes on till 98.

blip ping bop

Are you two cooped up inside again?

Get off that sofa, the both of you.

It's a beautiful day, go play outside.

Where to?

Can I ride my bike?

You know. Just the mill.

You both have to get out.

Carl, do you want to go to the mill too?

I'd rather go alone.

I want to come.

Alright, tut-tut, get out of here.

I'm not going to tell you again.

