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“It’s hard to put down this comic, that answers all the questions any geeks, nerds and culture lovers might have.”

NRC

“*What went before* is not an album that you should read in one go. It is a cheerful book about art-history, that ought to be enjoyed with attention and detail.”

De 9^e Kunst

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Original title : Wat vooraf ging (Oogachtend, 2024. Softcover, 18x24 cm. 144 pp.)

What went before

Hanco Kolk

In *What went before* Hanco Kolk researches the often-unknown backstories behind big names imprinted in our collective memories, in smooth, flowing lines with a generous dose of humour.

Did William Shakespeare really create Romeo and Juliet?

What made Cinderella tick, according to Sigmund Freud?

What does Mickey Mouse have to do with the battle of Hastings?

...And Frankenstein with Chat GPT?

What influence did Dracula have on Victorian women with salacious tendencies?

Kolk travels to places far away and times long past, to find answers to these, and many other questions.

Hanco Kolk is one of the most prominent Dutch comic artists, praised by both mainstream audiences and serious art circles. He is best-known for his humorous creations with collaborator Peter de Wit, with Kolk usually being the illustrator and co-writer. Among their works are the historical adventure comic ‘Gilles de Geus’ (1983-2003), the photo comic ‘Mannetje en Mannetje’ (1988-1995) and the newspaper gag comic ‘S1ngle’ (2000- ...). Kolk is equally renowned for his drawing style, which is linear and has become soberer and more refined over the years.



REMAKE / REMODEL

2021

Oh, look Henri! Spielberg made a new movie: "The West Side Story." Ohh pleaaaase!



It's just a remake of the 1961 movie that received 10 Oscars!

My bad.



1595

Oh look, milady! Will Shakespeare wrote a new piece: "Romeo & Juliët"!



Psch.

Juliët's part isn't even played by a woman!

Yes, but...



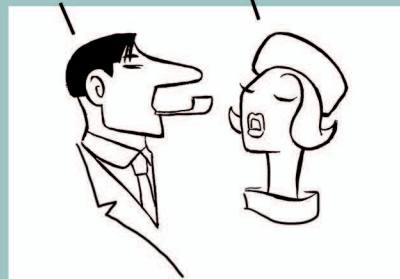
1961

Look, darling-dearest! Robert Wise made a new movie: "West Side Story." Puh.



That picture is only a remake of the Broadway musical that received 5 Tony's!

Pardon.



Isn't that normal? The law doesn't allow female actors. And the high-pitched voice of mister Robert Goffe sounds just like a woman's!



Psch.

Besides, that Romeo and Juliet story is 40 years old!

Roekoe?



1955

Hey hon! Bernstein and Sondheim made a new musical: "West Side Story"! Trash.



It's just a remake of Shakespeare's "Romeo & Juliët"!

Sorry.



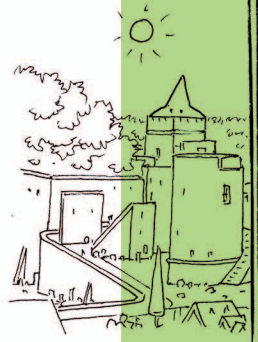
Didn't you know? That Shakespeare of yours takes his material from all over! That charlatan only wrote two original plays in his life!



"Romeo and Juliët" is a remake!

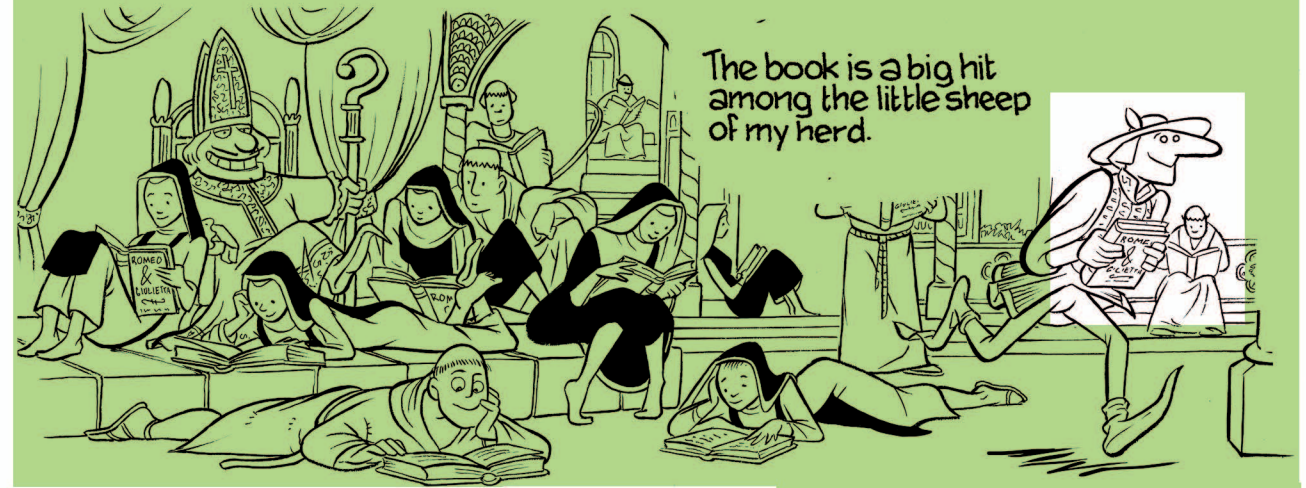


The original plot of "Romeo & Juliet" was written by the bishop of Agen!



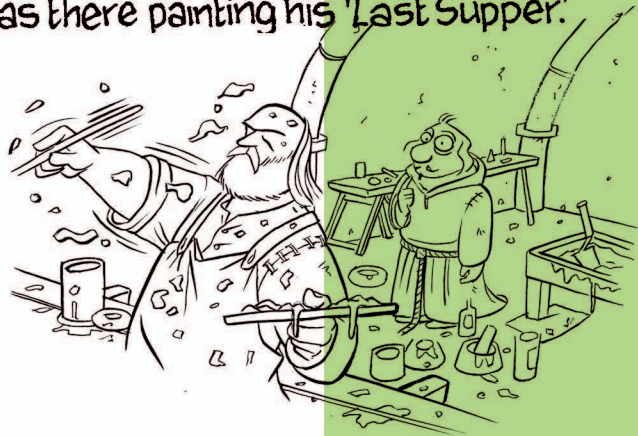
Matteo Bandello was his name.

Yes, that would be me. Hi there, folks!



The book is a big hit among the little sheep of my herd.

I was studying in Milan, at the monastery of Santa Maria della Grazie when maestro Leonardo was there painting his 'Last Supper'.



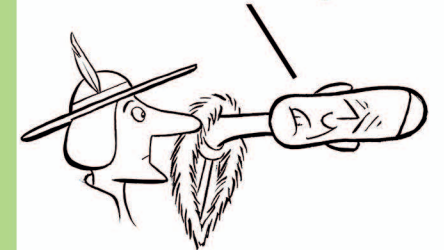
I wrote another great book about that.

1554 Lord da Porto, allow me to give you this book by the esteemed Bandello: 'Romeo e Giu...'



Ugh! No!

I, Luigi da Porto, am the real author! The book by the bishop is a remake!

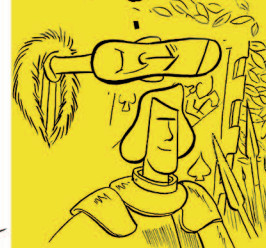


On one of my many travels, I ended up in Caldero, where I quickly made friends.



One of them, Alessandro Pellegrini, told me the story that inspired me to write 'Romeo e Giulietta'.

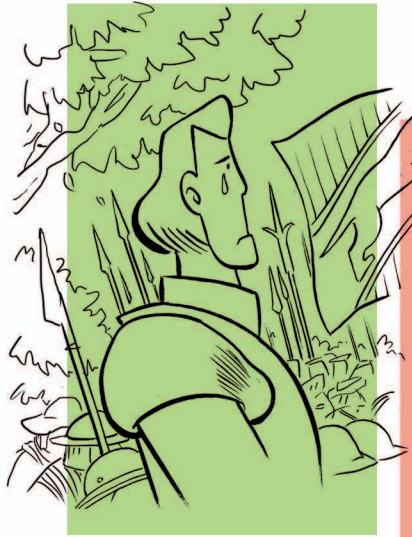
I was once a young knight...



On one of my many expeditions, my archer, Peregrino, was telling me another one of his stories...



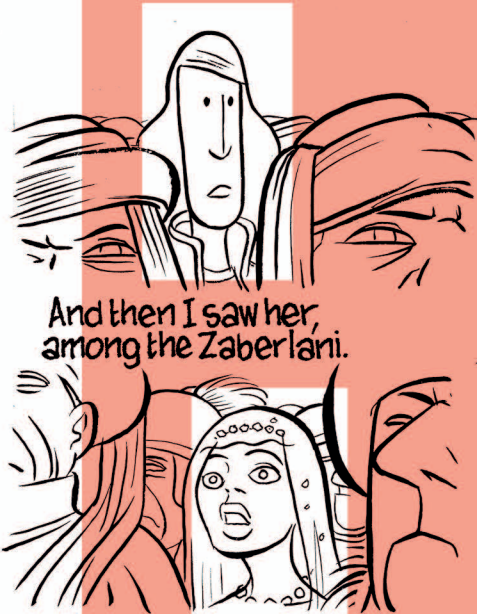
But it moved me,
because it reminded
me of happier times.



On February 26, 1511, two rivalling branches
of the Savorgnan clan made a treaty;
the Strumieri and the Zamberlani.



I was there, as a
member of the
Strumieri clan.
I looked over
the crowd.



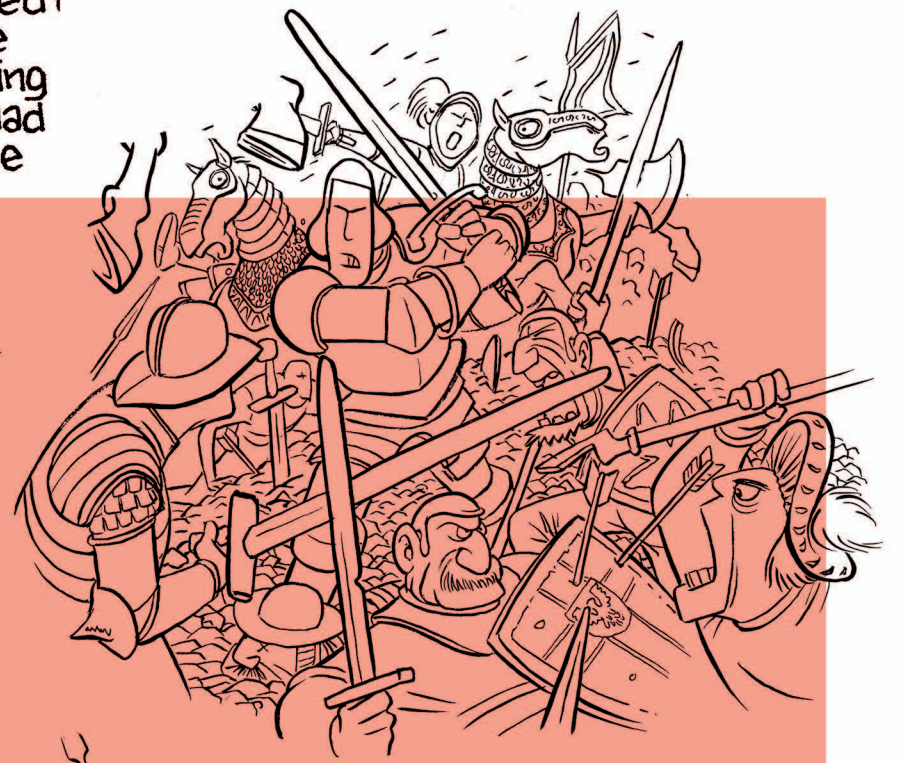
And then I saw her,
among the Zaberlani.

Lucina, the love of my life.

Lucina Savorgnan,
16 years old and more
beautiful than Venus
herself. We saw each
other and were lost.



But tempers flared
again. By the time
Peregrino was telling
me his story we had
resumed the battle
against the
Zamberlani.

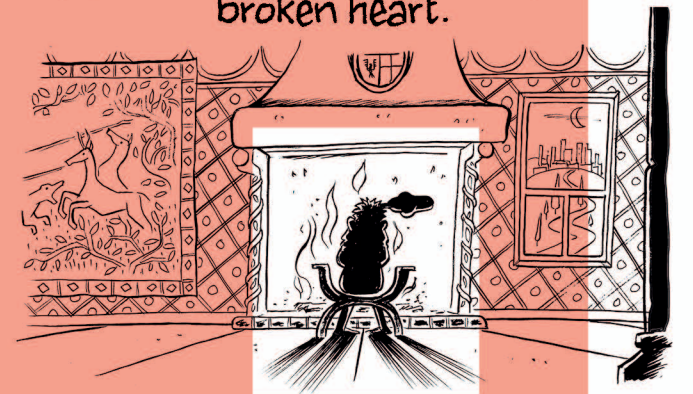


I had to fight
against my
dear Lucina's
clan!



In the heat of
the fight, my
neck got
severely
injured.

The wound turned out to be
permanent. And so was my
broken heart.



Eventually I decided
to merge my own
love story
with
Peregrino's
tale.

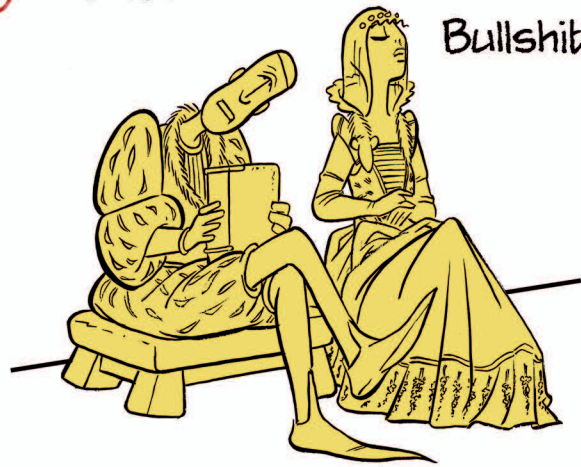


The ink blended
with my tears,
but I wrote
'Giulietta e Romeo!'

1530

Dearest Lucina, I dedicated a book to you: 'Giulietta e Romeo'.

Bullshit.



Masuccio Salernitano wrote that 60 years ago. You simply changed the names and made a remake!



1476

Esteemed prophet Girolama Savornarola, my name is Masuccio. Tell me if my book 'MARIOTTO E GANOZZA' will be a success!



I.. I see colors! Music! Dance! In 545 years!



It will be a fantastic lightshow by one 'Stefano Spielberg'. This book is merely a *premake!*



Mamma mia! No, another one.



GIROLAMA SAVORNAROLA, THE PROPHET OF FLORENCE, WAS BURNED IN 1498.

EPILOGUE 1875-CUBA

What is the *lectura* reading us today, Alvarez?

Romeo y Julieta, Garcia. Isn't it wonderful?



The whole factory is crying. I can see that, Alvarez.

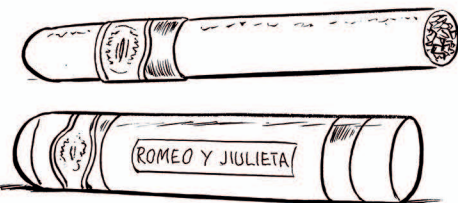


In homage, we shall call this cigar the ROMEO Y JULIETA!



The Romeo y Julieta-cigar is in production to this very day.

There's also a cigar called *Monte Cristo*.



But that's another story.