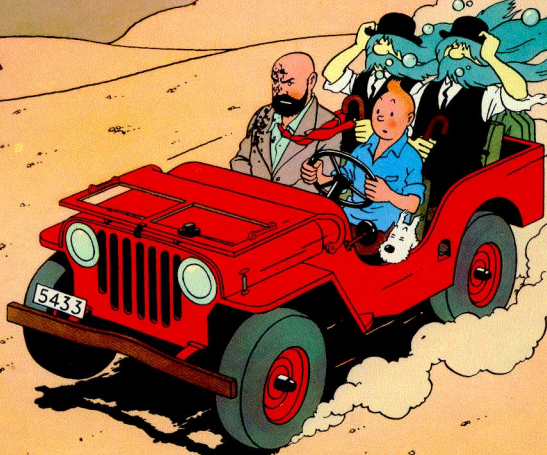


HERGE
THE ADVENTURES OF
TINTIN

LAND
OF
BLACK GOLD

الذهب الأسود

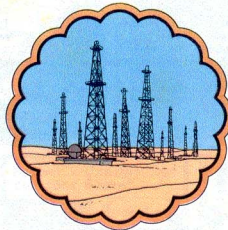


HERGÉ

THE ADVENTURES OF TINTIN

**LAND
OF
BLACK GOLD**

الذَّهَبُ الْأَسْوَدُ

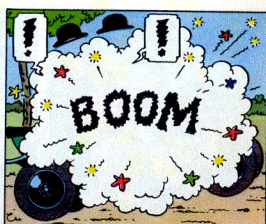
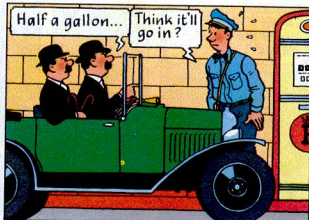
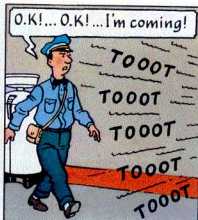
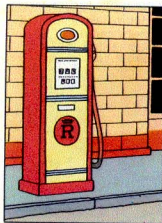


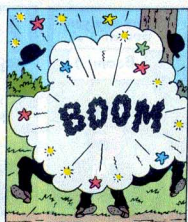
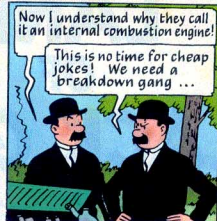
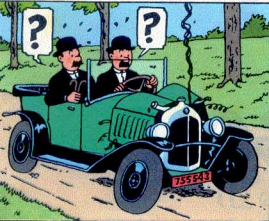
METHUEN CHILDREN'S BOOKS

LONDON

LAND OF BLACK GOLD

الذَّهَبُ الاسْوَدُّ





Next morning ...

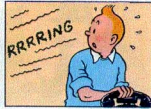
"Crisis deepens - official!
"On the brink of war?"
"Are we prepared?" ...
"Call-up for army re-
serve" ... "Forces on
standby" ... Things
look bright, I must say.



Yes... Tintin here... Oh, hello Captain... How are you?... Any news?

I've just had Admiral's orders: "Captain Haddock. Immediate. Proceed to assume command of merchant vessel blank blank" (the name's secret, of course) "at blank, where you will receive further orders." So that's that... I've been mobilised! ... No, there won't be time to see you. I'm off right away... I'll keep in touch ...
'Bye, Tintin ...

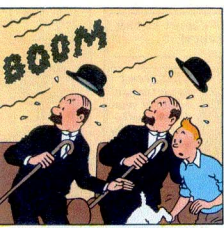
Goodbye, Captain, and good luck. Let's hope it's only a false alarm ...



Hello!
Good morning. What news?

What news! Plenty! Something very odd has just happened!
To be precise ... we just happen to be very odd!
Really? Tell me about it. Come on in...

Well, we'd just filled up with petrol and were driving peacefully along, when all of a sudden, without a word of warning ... our car went ...



It seems to be catching!

It certainly is... That's exactly what happened to us!
Yes. And that's not all ...

A few minutes later my cigarette lighter, filled at the same pump, blew up in my hands ...
The petrol ... it must have been ...

...doctored, yes! ... That's what suddenly occurred to us... And if it was doctored, it must have been done by someone with an interest in wrecked cars. Remember the old police maxim: Who profits from the crime?

Now, who stands to gain from this business?... Who, eh?... I'll tell you! ... the breakdown people, Autocart!

No doubt about it : Autocart doctors the petrol. When the engine blows up, you send for a breakdown truck. And who do you call? The people who do the most advertising : Autocart !



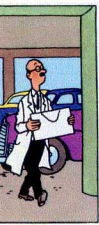
I suppose it's possible, but...

No buts ! It's a certainty !... We're taking up the case, and by this time next week we'll have enough evidence to arrest the entire board of directors.

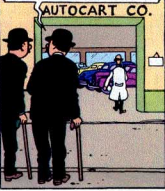


Good luck to you! ...

For a start, we'll take a snoop around the Autocart garage ...



Shall we look ? ...

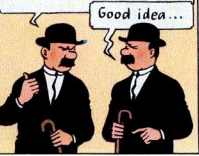


AUTOCART CO.



WANTED
Good drivers with mechanical experience to man breakdown trucks
APPLY *Autocart*

Well, what do you think?... It's a perfect cover... gives us a chance to see what goes on inside the place ...



Good idea ...

Next day ...



Now, you know what you're supposed to be doing ?

Certainly we do, sir !



I must say, I'm intrigued by this petrol business ...

?



I'd like to get to the bottom of it ...

You aren't starting another of your adventures are you? Why don't we retire?



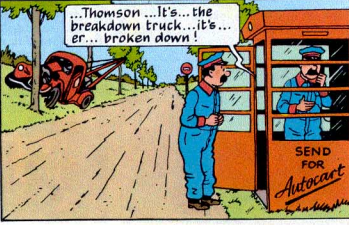
The managing director, please

ENQUIRY



Meanwhile ...

Hello! Autocart to the rescue... Yes... Yes... B 0494 ... For Mr... ?



...Thomson ...It's... the breakdown truck...it's... er... broken down!

SEND FOR *Autocart*

Would you like to comment, sir, on the situation created by the deterioration in petrol quality ...



Catastrophic!
The situation is catastrophic...

Look! In two months, consumption has dropped by 65% ... And it's falling every day ... This very morning ...



SALES CHART

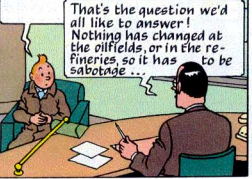
... the airline companies decided to suspend all services because of the dangers of fuel explosions in the air ... Oil shares have slumped to half their value ... the bottoms dropping out of the market ... It's a disaster! ... A catastrophe! ...



Even worse! What about the international situation? ... Supposing war comes ... breaks out tomorrow? ... Imagine what'll happen ... Ships ... planes ... tanks ... The armed forces completely immobilised! ... The mind boggles! ... Disaster!



What do you think has caused this sudden change in the petrol?



That's the question we'd all like to answer!
Nothing has changed at the oilfields, or in the refineries, so it has to be sabotage ...

We took samples at the wells, from storage depots, aboard the tankers, in the refineries, and we had them analysed ... Nothing! Absolutely nothing! Then we decided to treat the petrol itself, to prevent it exploding. Our top scientists are working night and day on the problem... to find some way of ...



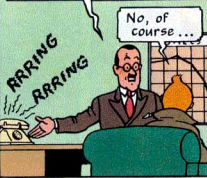
BOOM



Another car blowing up! ... Where was I? Oh yes... My senior research officer says they are on the verge of success in our labs ... I'm expecting a call from him any moment now to say they've found the solution ...



That'll be him ... Do you mind? ...



No, of course ...

Yes? ... Well, you've got it? ... An answer?... What? ... Nothing at all?... Nothing?... I see... Well, it's a pity... You'll just have to keep at it ...

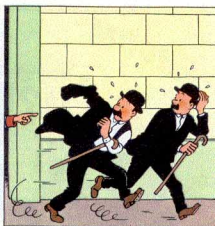
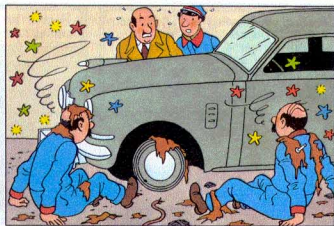
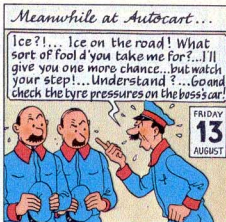


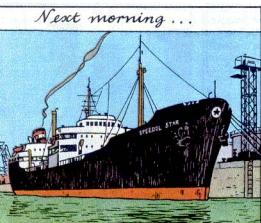
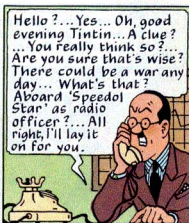
What? ... Should you go on with the research? Of course... surely that's obvious... Why bother to ask? ...



Because if we're to go on, sir, you'll have to consider building a new laboratory!



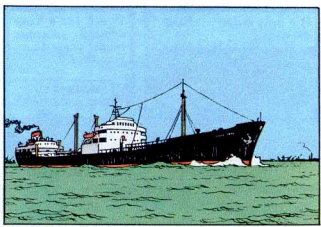




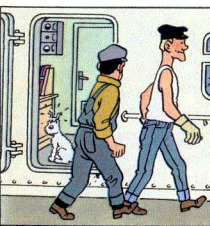
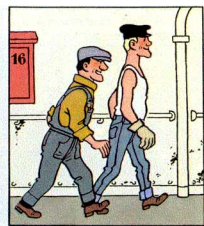
Tell me, my man, where is our cabin ?

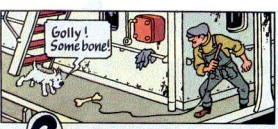
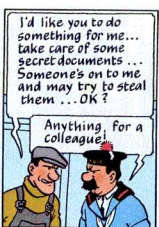


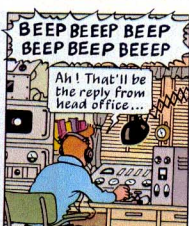
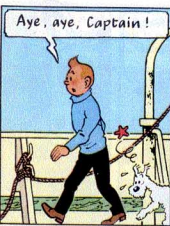
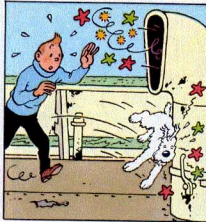
... and the next time you open your big mouths you'll address me as 'captain'! ... Understand ?



How uncouth!









???...False alarm!

But where is Snowy?

I'll fix you, you vermin! I'll fix you!

OH!

Vermin!

Beast!

Snowy! My poor Snowy! ... It's me... Don't be afraid ...

YOW!

A rat!

NOW!

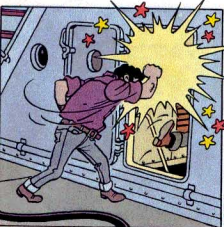
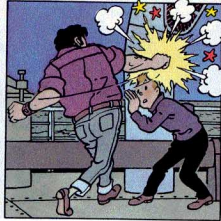
So, my clever friend ...

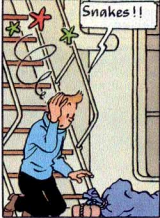
I...I...I'd like to... to explain ...

You don't need to... I do the explaining around here...

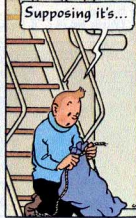


I assure you ... I mean... It was all a mistake...





Snakes!!



Supposing it's...



SNOWY!



Murderer! You were going to drown my dog!

Your dog? What dog?



Dog?... Fog?... A foggy dog! Ha! Ha! Ha! Little dog laughed... That's rum! Rum-te-tum! Fifteen men on the dead man's chest ...



Why not?... Rub it with camphorated oil!... And that's not all... Sister Susie's sewing socks for soldiers!

He's knocked himself silly!



Here, come with me!

Only on condition that we go together...



It's getting rough!
Rough stuff! Haha!



Have you seen the heavenly twins? I can't find them.

They came on the bridge with me, then vanished!



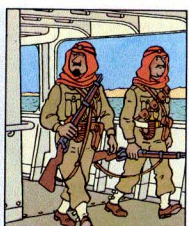
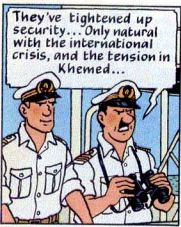
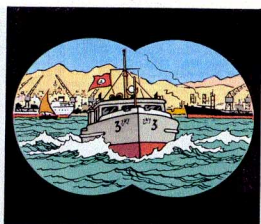
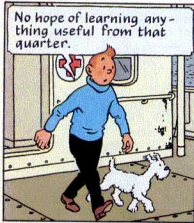
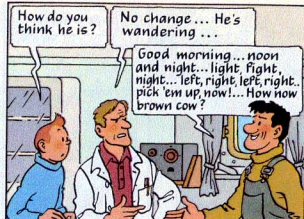
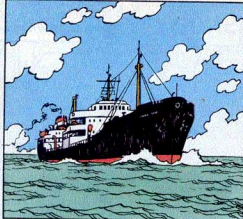
THOMSON!... THOMPSON!



They must have been washed overboard!



Quick, Mr. Mate!... We've kept a place for you... so we'll all be ready when the ship starts to sink...



These papers are hidden in the radio officer's cabin, sergeant.

Let me see!

Aha! All very interesting... A shipment of arms to Sheik Bab El Ehr!

I assure you, sergeant, I ...

Keep your hands off! ... We're police officers! We'll see you pay for this!

To be precise: you'll see we pay for this!

Heroin in their baggage, sir... And they're pretending to be police officers!

Indeed?

We were tricked, sergeant... An agent from Naval Intelligence gave us the package. He said it contained secret documents.

And where is this 'agent', eh?

He's here on board, sergeant... But he suddenly seems to have lost his wits...

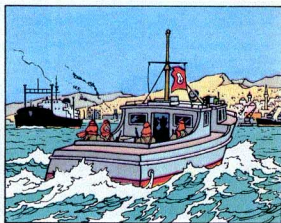
Meaning that we can't question him, I suppose!... A neat little story... But it just happens that I am very far from losing MY wits!

What a fool I've been! ... Another false trail!

All right, get these three bright boys into the launch. They'll be interrogated ashore.

But...

I ...

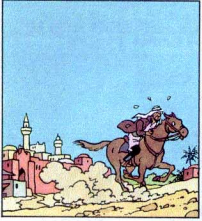


Who've you got there?

The two are just a couple of drug-smugglers, I think... But the young one has important documents to do with Bab El Ehr.

Excellent work! Our noble sheik will reward you when he comes to power! ... Go now!

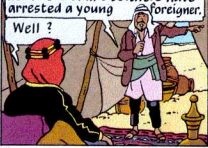
Bab El Ehr must be informed!



That evening...

I have come from Khemikhal, noble master. There I received news: the emir's soldiers have arrested a young foreigner.

Well ?



One of the guards works for us. He said he'd found papers on the prisoner... papers referring to an important shipment of arms for you.

The young man shall escape and be brought here to me!

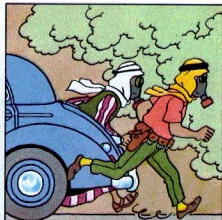
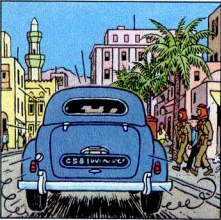


Next morning...

Come with me. You're going to the special security gaol. The secret police want you for questioning.



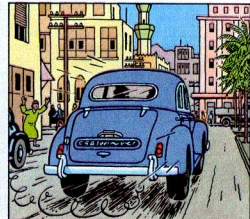
There they are, Moham-med! Put your foot down!



Over here!



Hurry!



Meanwhile ...

We've checked your papers. They're in order. You can go.

Thank you. What about Tintin?

Your friend?... He was seized on his way here by Bab El Ehr's men.

Now we've got to find them... And that's a thankless job. They made the snatch, and vanished without trace. Still, there's a £5000 reward for anyone who leads us to the sheik's hideout.

Five thousand pounds! You needn't say that again!... By this time next week we'll bring you Bab El Ehr trussed like a turkey!

Very good! May Alláh go with you!

Next morning...

Five thousand pounds reward!

Here is the young foreigner brought by your partisans, noble sheik.

Enter!

Greetings, and welcome, young stranger... Heaven will bless you for embracing our great cause... Now, when do the guns arrive?

What guns?

What guns? Our guns, our shipment of arms... You've brought news of their delivery: isn't that so?

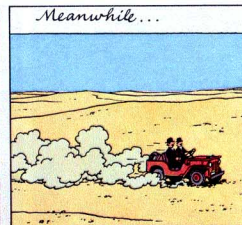
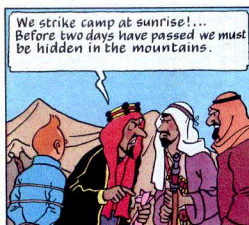
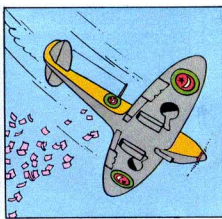
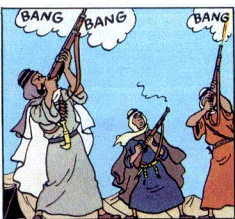
Me?... Not me, most noble sheik! ...

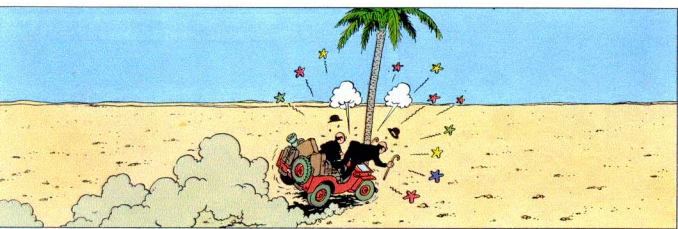
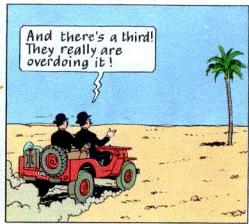
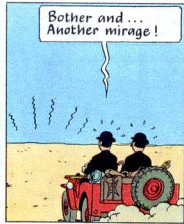
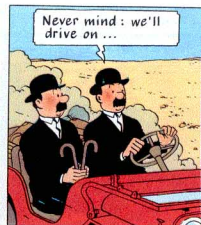
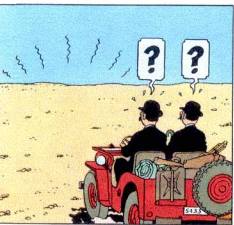
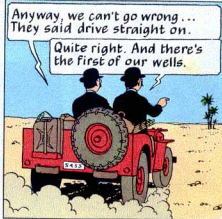
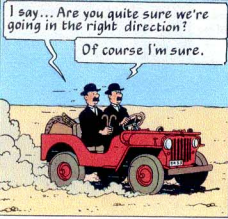
You lied to me, son of a mangy dog!

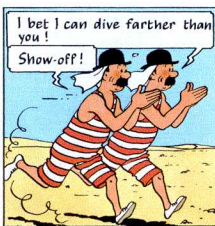
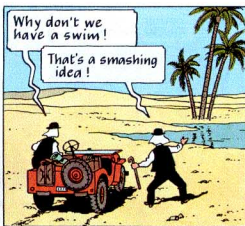
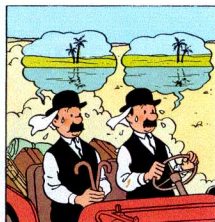
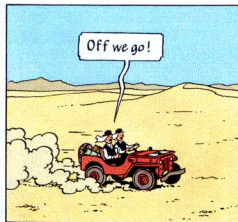
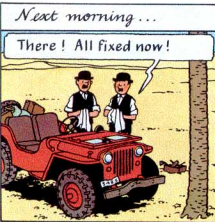
Oh, no! most powerful master... It was the guard who told me... I swear by Allah!

That's quite true, noble sheik. Some papers were found in my cabin... but they didn't belong to me... And I've no idea who put them there...

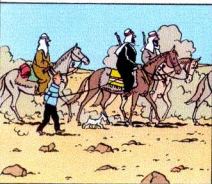
It's a trick... A miserable trick to discover my hideout... I suppose you think I'll let you go?... To run home and betray us to the police, those snivelling lap-dogs of Ben Kalish Ezab?... Never! You stay here with us. You are my prisoner!







Meanwhile ...

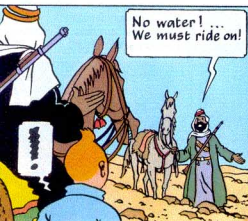
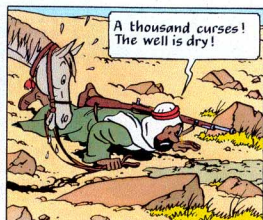
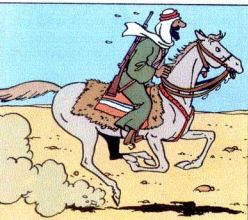


Allah be praised! ... See! The well of Bir Kegg!

Indeed!



Water! ... At last! ... I'm dying of thirst ...



The prisoner has fallen: he is finished!

Untie his hands: we will abandon him!



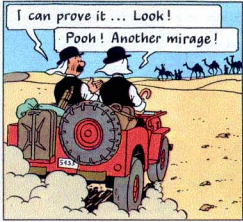
Wooah! ... Wooah!
... Murderers!
Rotten sand-hoppers!





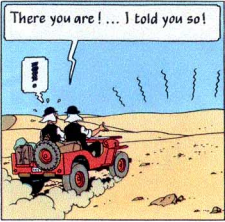
You and your sense of direction! A fat lot of good it's doing us!

I tell you we're all right. This is a main road ...



I can prove it ... Look!

Pooh! Another mirage!



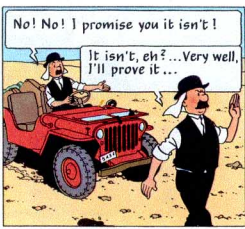
There you are! ... I told you so!

•••••



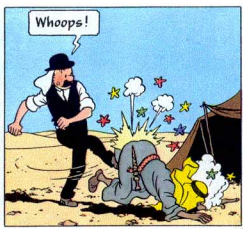
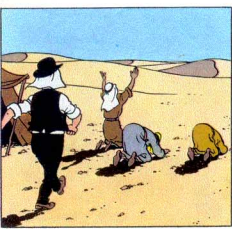
This time there's no mistake : we're saved!

My poor friend ... It's only a mirage ... Any fool can tell at a glance ...



No! No! I promise you it isn't!

It isn't, eh? ... Very well, I'll prove it ...



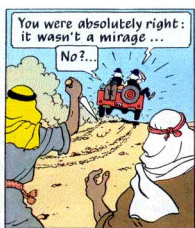
Whoops!



Oh ... my goodness ... I ... er ... I beg your pardon ... I mistook you for a mirage!

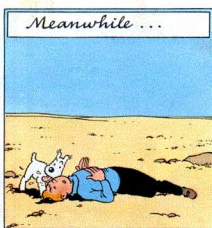


وقف عندك، جيان
ملعون، كسرت رأسك



You were absolutely right : it wasn't a mirage ...

No?...

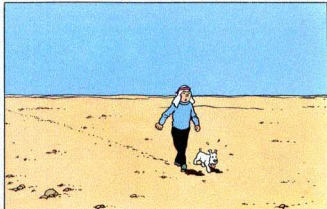


Meanwhile ...

He's coming round ... at last!

The devils! They left me behind... We've got to get out of this somehow...

Where am I? ... What happened? ... Oh... I remember... The Arabs... crossing the desert ... the dried-up well ...



Many weary hours later...



There!... I can't believe it!... A pipeline... palm trees... an oasis! Look Snowy! We're saved!



If only... if only it isn't a mirage!



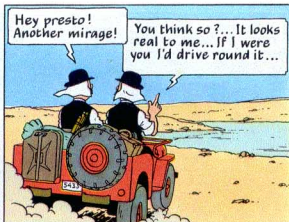
A well!... Water! ... Thank heavens! ... Water!



Lovely, loving water!



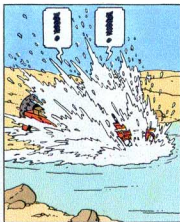
Meanwhile, some miles away ...



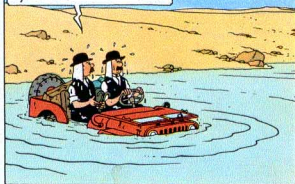
Hey presto! Another mirage!

You think so? ... It looks real to me... If I were you I'd drive round it...

Me? Drive round something that's nothing but something you think is something but is nothing?... I never heard such rubbish!... We're going straight ahead!



To be precise: I told you so!





Aaah ... That was marvellous!



Now, all we need is something to eat... I wonder ... Yes!



We're in luck! ... Those are date palms ... Let's see...



HUP!

What are you hoping for? A couple of pigeon pies?



Oh, Snowy! I'm so sorry!



It's getting dark ... We'll have to spend the night here, tomorrow perhaps we'll be lucky enough to meet someone...

These things have certainly got bones, but I'd prefer a chop!



Time passes ... Brrr! It's freezing cold... If only I could get to sleep...



Ssh!... What's that noise?...

?



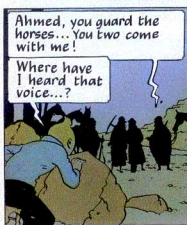
Horsemen!... Snowy, our luck's really in! We'll be rescued!



Hey, wait a minute... Horsemen? In the middle of the night? Perhaps we'd better stay hidden ...



They're all dismounting...



Ahmed, you guard the horses... You two come with me!

Where have I heard that voice...?



What's going on?



Get on with it ... and hurry!



What can they be doing over by the pipeline?



They're running back ...
I wonder if ...



? BOOM



Great snakes!
They've blown
up the pipe-
line!



On your horses!...The
alarm will be raised!

That voice!...
I'm sure I
know that
voice!



Hello, what's that
one doing?

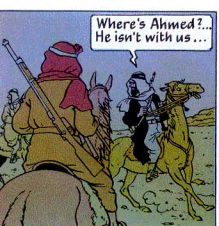


Now I can see...He's
fixing a stirrup or
something ...
Dare I ... ?



Come on, Snowy! ... It's
all or nothing!

Heigh-ho!
Now what's he
after?



Where's Ahmed?...
He isn't with us ...



Ah, he's coming ... Ride on!

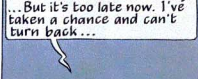


Meanwhile...

Hello... hello... pumping station twelve reporting total loss of pressure... pipe must be broken above this station... Please send a repair-gang immediately...



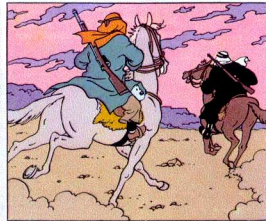
I must be mad... This is crazy... But it's too late now. I've taken a chance and can't turn back...



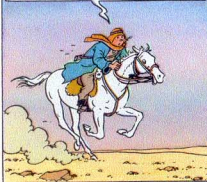
Hello... Hello... Pumping station eleven? ... Number one control here... Close all valves immediately... The pipe's fractured between you and number twelve... A repair-gang is on the way...



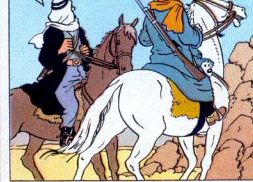
This is where we separate... It will confuse any pursuers... Ahmed will come with me...



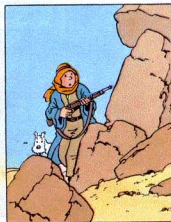
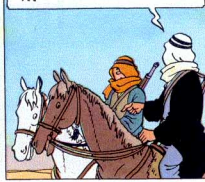
Where in the world have I heard that voice?



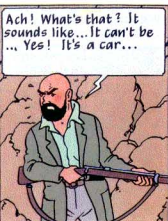
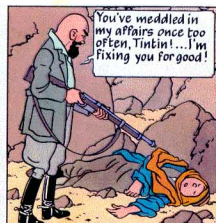
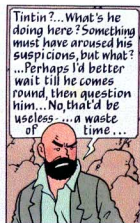
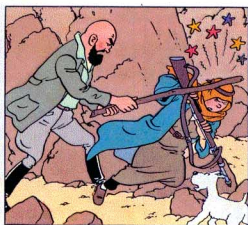
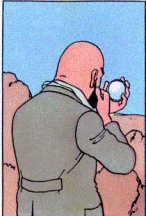
Whoa!



Hold my horse... Wait here... I'll be back in a moment...

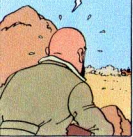


Crumbs! I know who that is! ... It's Doctor Müller! (1)



(1) See The Black Island

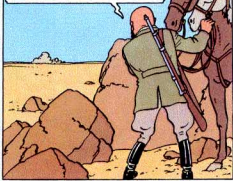
The horses! If they spot the horses I'm done for!



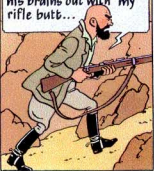
What about Tintin? ... Kill him now? ... No, they'd hear the shot... Ach, he's out cold; there's plenty of time to deal with him later...



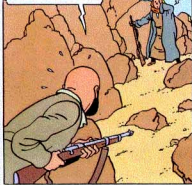
So, they've gone! That was a close thing ...



Quick! I must take care of Tintin... I was careless ... I should have bashed his brains out with my rifle butt...



Teufel!



Just in time! BANG



What's all that racket?



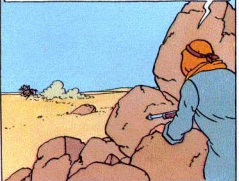
Now what? ... Any more? ... No, it's all quiet; he's stopped shooting... Perhaps it's a trick ...



Hey, what's that? ... Galloping horses? ... He can't have ...



Yes! He's made off with both horses, the thug!



Here I am, back to square one... with a bump on my head as well!



On our way, Snowy ... we haven't any choice ...



We must follow his tracks!



Let me near that brute again and he'd better watch his trousers!

What's it all about?... What's that gangster Müller doing here?... And why should he want to wreck the pipeline?... When he had me at his mercy, why didn't he kill me?... I just don't have any of the answers.



Hello... I can't be mistaken... Let's take a closer look...



They're wheelmarks, Snowy... This really is a bit of luck!



Splendid!... Perhaps we're on a bus route!...

Let's see... I'd say they were tyres on a jeep... The sand and pebbles were thrown back by the wheels, so it was travelling that way. We'll go in the same direction...



And we'll worry about our friend Müller later.



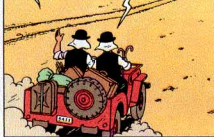
Meanwhile ...

I don't like it, Thomson ... IF we don't get somewhere soon ...

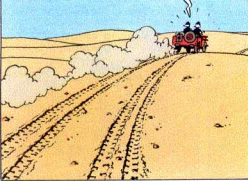


It's all right!... Look!... There! ... Tracks of a car!

Quite correct! And they aren't a mirage, either!

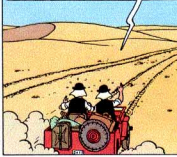


All we do is follow the tracks and we're saved!



An hour later ...

Hooray!... More tracks!... A second car joined the first one...



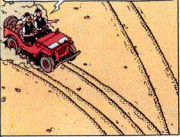
A real stroke of luck hitting this road.

To be precise: we've really had a stroke!



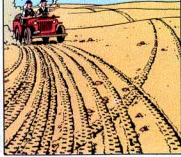
Another hour later...

There!... A third car joined the other two!... We're on a very busy road ...

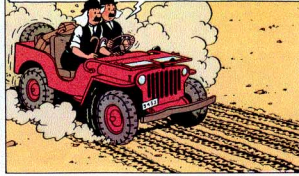


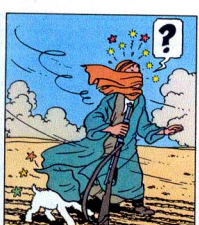
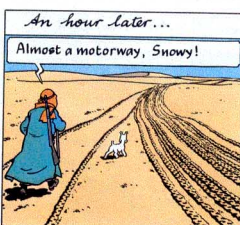
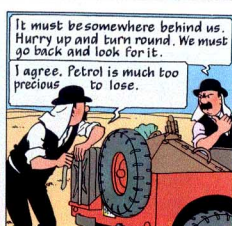
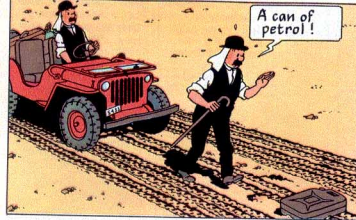
Several hours go by...

Another one!... That makes the seventh.

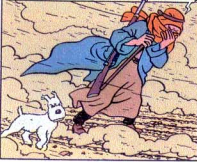


We're obviously getting near a big town and ... Hey! Stop!... What's that there, ahead of us?





Ooh! Here it comes! We're right in the middle of it! ... Worst of all, the wind and sand will wipe out all the tracks ...



This awful sand... gets in your eyes...and your mouth...We can't go on!... Only one thing to do...



Wait till the storm blows over ...



Ssh! ... I heard something...There it is again ... A car engine!



We can't go on like this. We must raise the windscreen and put up the hood ...



OOEE!



Careful! You mustn't let go ...

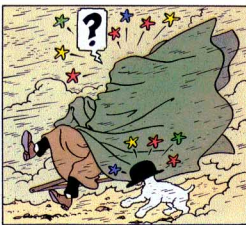
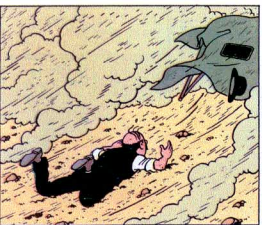
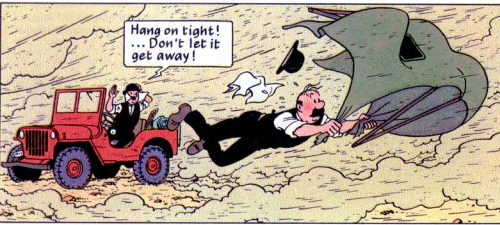


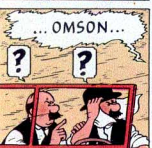
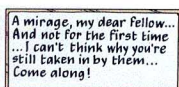
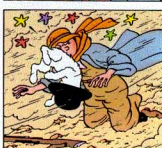
OOEE!

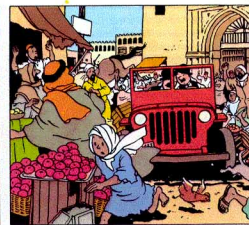
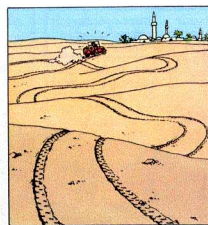
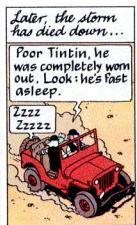
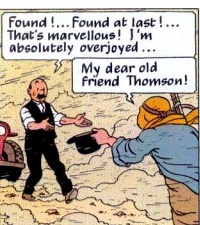
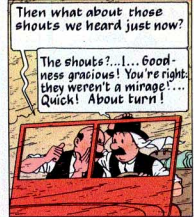
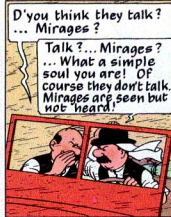


Ugh! this sand!

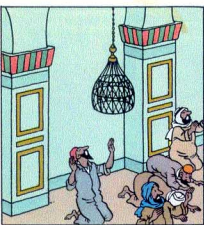
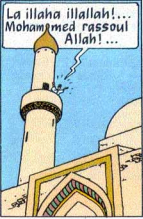
Come on, Snowy!



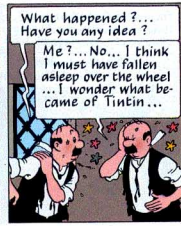
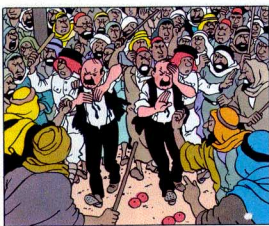




La illaha illallah!...
Mohammed rassoul
Allah!...



What... what
happened?!



What happened?...
Have you any idea?

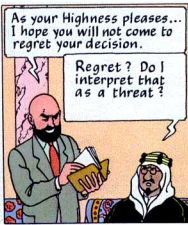
Me?... No... I think
I must have fallen
asleep over the wheel
... I wonder what be-
came of Tintin...

Next morning...



Well, Mohammed Ben Kalish Ezab,
will you sign the contract?

No.



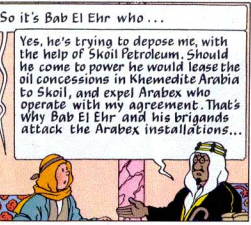
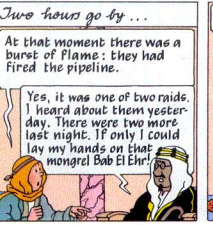
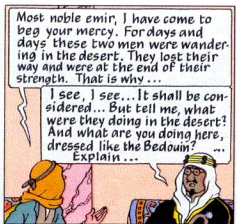
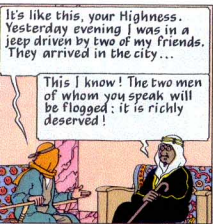
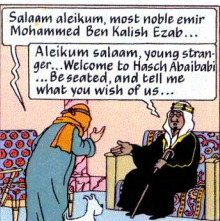
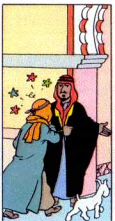
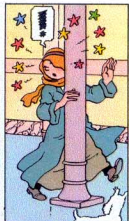
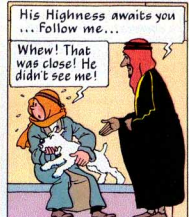
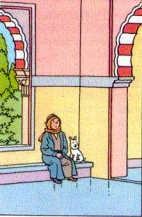
As your Highness pleases...
I hope you will not come to
regret your decision.

Regret? Do I
interpret that
as a threat?



هناك شخص يريد مقابلة

Very good. I
will receive him.



It's very simple: if I sign a contract with Skoil the attacks will cease immediately. So why do I refuse to sign Professor Smith's contract?

Yes, why, I wonder?



It is strange, I do not know why I am telling you all this... You are a stranger... I have no reason, but I trust you. So... Inch Allah!... I refuse to sign the contract because I do not like Professor Smith and I do not like his Skoil Petroleum.

Oh?



But I have interrupted your story... You were telling how the saboteurs had blown up the pipeline.

They came running back and remounted their horses. I remained hidden behind the rocks... Suddenly...



Master!... Master!... Oh! Master!

What is it?... Who dares to disturb us?



Oh, Master! Master!... Your son!...

Well, Ali Ben Mahmud, what new prank is my little lamb playing this time?



Heaven grant that it is indeed a prank! Master, your son has disappeared!

Ha! ha! ha! ha!... Disappeared!... If you knew my son you would laugh as I do. He's the naughtiest young rascal anyone ever saw!... Every day he thinks up some new little wickedness... But come with me, you'll see for yourself...

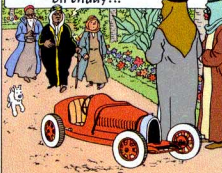


He was in the garden, Master...

Yes, yes, Ali Ben Mahmud, calm yourself!



There's the little motor car I gave him last week... on his sixth birthday...



Abdullah!... Abdullah!... Where are you, my treasure?



Abdullah!... Come out now, my little sugar plum!



Abdullah, my baby lamb-kin...



Abdullah!... Abdullah! Where are you hiding?



Abdullah, you little rascal, if you don't come at once Papa will be cross!



Excuse me, Highness, but does your son wear a blue robe?

A blue robe?... Abdullah?... No!... Why do you ask?

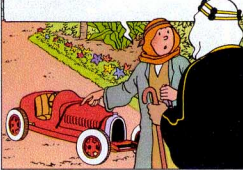


Here's a piece of blue cloth I just found, caught on a branch ... Under the tree are some very deep footmarks... Obviously someone was hiding in the tree, and then jumped to the ground ...



Perhaps... Yes... But...

There's your son's motor car... It has been shoved to one side, as you can see from the tyre marks ...



But I don't understand ... What are you trying to say ?



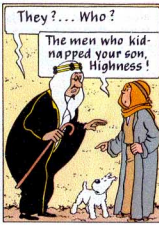
I hardly dare tell you, Highness... I fear the worst... Come with me... There will be other clues ...



There! I knew it!... More footmarks!...

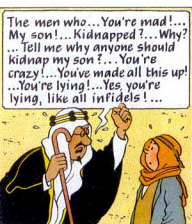


And here...and there ... And look! Marks on the wall! This is where they must have climbed over...



They?... Who?

The men who kidnapped your son, Highness!

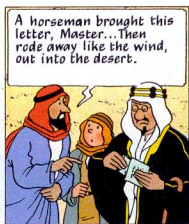


The men who... You're mad!... My son!... Kidnapped?... Why?... Tell me why anyone should kidnap my son?... You're crazy!... You've made all this up!... You're lying!... Yes, you're lying, like all infidels!...



Where is Mohammed Ben Kalish Ezab ?

Over there, by the wall, with the stranger.



A horseman brought this letter, Master...Then rode away like the wind, out into the desert.



BY ALLAH!



It's unbelievable!...Here, read this letter...



Excuse me, Highness ...it is in Arabic...

Oh yes, I will translate for you...



"To Mohammed Ben Kalish Ezab... If you want to see your son again, throw Arabex out of Khemed." It's signed: Bab El Ehr.

Yes, it's what I would expect!

Bab El Ehr! Bab El Ehr! Son of a mangy dog!... Grandson of a scurvy jackal!... Great grandson of a moulting vulture!... My revenge will be terrible!... I will impale you on a spit!... I will roast you over a slow fire!... I will pull out your beard, one hair at a time... And I will stuff it down your throat...



But we must act! Where is my military adviser?



! Ohhh! ... His little car!

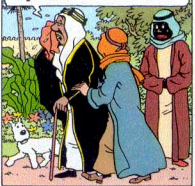


Boo-hoo-hoo... My little Abdullah!... My little honeybun, where are you!... My little peppermint cream... Boo-hoo-hoo... hoo... hoo...



Highness, you must calm yourself!

Woo-hoo-hoo... My little angel... Boo-woo-hoo-hoo!



My little Abdullah!... Aaaaah... Aaaaah... Aaaaah... Aaaaah... ?



TCHOOO!... Aaaaah... TCHOO!... Aaaaah TCHOOO!



You see... Aaaaah... TCHOOO!... It was one of his last tricks: he'd just found out about... Aaaaah TCHOOO!... about Aaaaah TCHOOO!... about sneezing pow-ow-ow-der!... He wanted a box for his birthday...



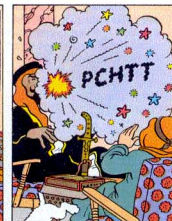
A few minutes later...

This is Yussuf Ben Mulfrid, my military adviser. He'll explain his plan of campaign... A cigarette?



No, thank you. I don't smoke.

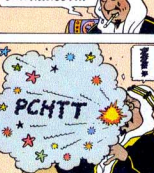
Well, noble master... In two hours, three hundred horsemen will be ready to leave in pursuit of Bab El Ehr's followers. I have already given orders for scouts to follow their trail... Briefly, I can say to you...



Allah is good!... My little poppet replaced all my best havanas with his trick cigars... Wasn't that sweet?...



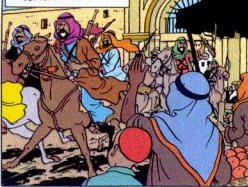
My one and only little chickadee!...



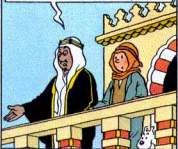
By the beard of the prophet! That wretched little centipede has changed all my best Sobranies for his filthy joke cigarettes!...



Two hours later...



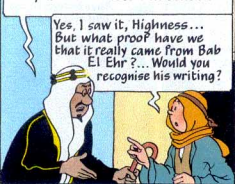
There they go... With Allah's help they will succeed... they will snatch my dear duckling from the hands of that monster. Bab El Ehr!



To tell the truth, Highness, that expedition is entirely useless... Useless, for the very good reason that Bab El Ehr didn't kidnap your son. We've got to look elsewhere for him...



What?! ... Not Bab El Ehr?... But you saw the letter he sent...



Yes, I saw it, Highness... But what proof have we that it really came from Bab El Ehr?... Would you recognise his writing?

His writing?... Actually, no... But... but if you knew it wasn't from him, why didn't you say so sooner?... And another thing: why did you let me send out my horsemen?



Why?...?

Quite simply, to make the real kidnapper believe that his trick has succeeded... Then, unless I'm very much mistaken...

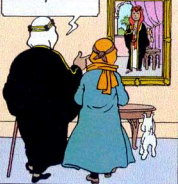


The real kidnapper?... You know who he is?

I think so, Highness, but I need more proof... And I don't know where he has taken your son... That's the main thing we've got to discover... By the way, have you a recent photograph of Abdullah?... It would be useful if I could have a look at it.



That's his latest portrait..



Poor little cherub... The sittings were real torture for him...



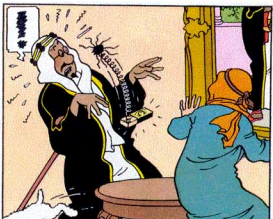
Actually, the artist went insane...



Ah, let's see... Is this one of those infernal cigarettes?... No, it's a real one...



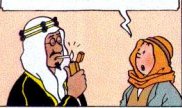
Papa begs your pardon, lambkin, for such a wicked suspicion!



Another of his con-founded tricks! ... Now where did he get that?



Well, he's certainly quite un-mistakable! ... Now I must start my search, Highness ... Could you fit me out with some different clothes? ... And I'd like some information on Doctor Müll ... I mean Professor Smith.



Professor Smith?... You think he can help you find my son? ...



He's an archaeologist, digging for remains of the ancient civilisations that once flourished in these lands... At the same time he acts as representative for Skoil Petroleum.



Yes, in Wadesdah, my capital ... about twenty miles from here, on the coast. He lives in an enormous palace, perched like an eagle's nest on the top of a cliff.



Take no notice... Just a cap... Abdullah scattered them everywhere ... They lived things up in the palace...



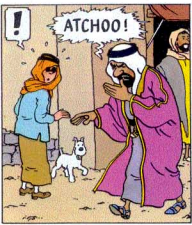
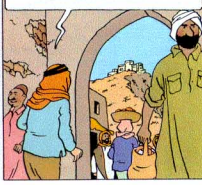
Where was I?... Oh, yes... The two friends I mentioned... I have a great favour to ask on their behalf: please treat them as your honoured guests. Lavish every comfort upon them; take every possible care of them ... But if you want me to find your son, for pity's sake don't allow them out of the palace on any pretext whatsoever.



Next morning, in Wadesdah ...



That must be Professor Smith's palace, up there ...

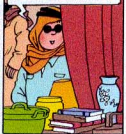


Great snakes! It's Senhor Oliveira da Figueira! (1)



تفضل سيدي
عندي كل ما تريد
وبما سخمان رخيصة

What a salesman!
Just the same!
He's persuaded
that man to buy
a pair of roller-
skates!



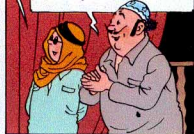
انا تحت امركم

السلاطة
ATCHOO!



Nasty cold, eh?

Yes, a sudden epidemic
... started this morning
among Professor Smith's
servants...



But come in, come in,
honoured sir... Absolutely
no obligation ...
But I'm sure you'll
find a little something
you need once you're
inside my shop ...



To tell the truth, Senhor
Oliveira, I don't need anything
... But I'm delighted to see
you... Do you remember me?



Tintin!... Espléndido!...
What a wonderful
surprise!... This calls for a
celebration!

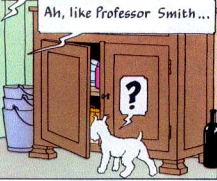
Si!... Si!... You must take
a glass of wine with me...
Some fine Portuguese
rosé ... My country's
bottled sunshine!



Now, what brings
you to this god-
forsaken land!

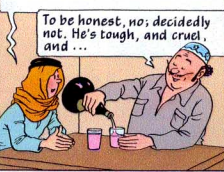


Well... I... I... er... I'm interest-
ed in archaeology...



Ah, like Professor Smith...

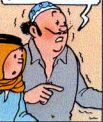
Exactly... You seem to know him.
Tell me, what's he like? A pleasant
sort of fellow?



To be honest, no; decidedly
not. He's tough, and cruel,
and ...



There's a
mousetrap in
the cupboard,
but it sounds
as if we've
caught a full-
grown rat!



(1) See Cigars of the Pharaoh

All right ?

There...yes...a big mouse for a small trap!



Excuse me... A customer ... I'll be back in a moment.

Please don't worry ... I'll clean up the mess while you're gone.



You see what happens to Nosey Parkers!



There, all tidied up... Hello, a radio. I wonder if I can get any news ?



CLICK



What's the matter ? ... Dead?...It doesn't even light up...



Oh, I see. The plug isn't connected .

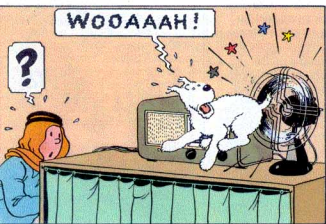


There, it should work now.



WOOAAAH!

?

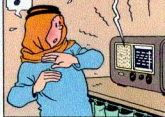


The wrong plug! Let's try this one ...



Ah! My beauty past compare ... These jewels bright ...

!



... I wear ... Was I ever Margarita? Come, reply ...



WHEET... CRACK... CRR ... dernières nouvelles d'Europe ... CRR ... AA?... AA?... HNET!... HNET... CRR... The European news service...



Following today's meeting of foreign ministers a spokesman indicated that there had been a definite easing of tension... An easing too of the outbreak of engine explosions which has bedevilled many countries. The epidemic seems to have ceased as mysteriously as it began.



In a statement, Mr. Peter Barrett, Head of the Fuel Research Division of the Ministry of Transport, told our reporter he had nothing to say, except that his department's investigations were continuing ...



Here we are... Ah, you're listening to the news...

Yes, The threat of war seems to be lessening, thank heavens!



Now, what were we talking about?

About Professor Smith. You were saying that he isn't particularly likeable.



That's true... But he's extremely rich, and I'm his main supplier... So you see... My customers include all the top people in the area... At least, not quite all... Not the Emir, alas!... What a man!... One of the best!... Which is more than can be said for his nasty little son... A real pest, young Prince Abdullah!... But you won't have heard: he's just been kidnapped!



Look here, Senhor Oliveira, would you like to be appointed official supplier to the Emir Ben Kalish Ezab?

Would I like it?... Of course! ... It would be the crowning glory of my career... But... what would I have to do?



Help me recover Prince Abdullah... To do that, smuggle me into Professor Smith's house ...

Professor Smith... What for? ... Well, if you like... It's quite easy... I go there each morning ...



The next morning ...

Salaam aleikum, Murad!

Aleikum sala... Tchoo!!



Who is the young stranger?

My nephew Alvaro... I want him to meet the palace servants.



My friends, let me introduce my nephew Alvaro, just arrived from Portugal ... He's an orphan, poor lad... I've taken him into my family ...

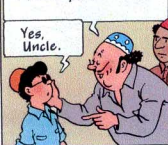
ATCHOO!



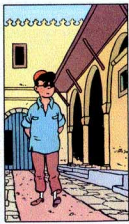
Just between ourselves he's a little ... well... a bit simple... Not surprising after what's happened to him... A dreadful story... Just imagine, his father, who was a well-known snail-farmer... Excuse me, just a minute...



Be a good boy, Alvaro ... While I'm busy with the gentlemen, you run and play in the garden ... I'll call you...



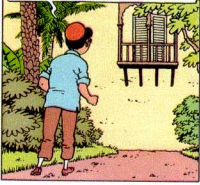
But listen carefully, Alvaro ... Don't make a noise. Professor Smith is working in his study upstairs. You're not to disturb him ...



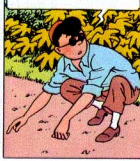
That's fine... He'll keep them safely occupied with one of his endless stories... but I mustn't waste time...



That'll be Professor Smith's study ...



Let's see if he really is there ... I just need some pebbles ...



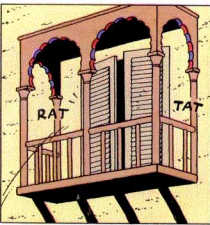
Right on the shutters...



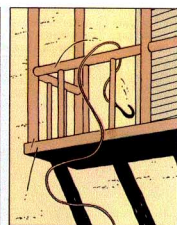
Any sign of life?... No...



Let's try again ...



No one at home ... Good!



Hooked first time! That's a bit of luck!



There!... I made it!



Careful... mustn't take chances...

Meanwhile...
...So his father, who'd married the daughter of Da Costa the pirate from Lisbon, suddenly found himself in the middle of an extraordinary adventure. One day...



Aha!...The room's empty...



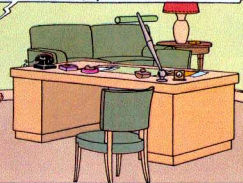
I must lock the door ... If someone comes, it'll give me time to make a getaway ...



The key's in the door... And the door's locked from the inside!... But there's no-one here...! It doesn't make sense...



I'll work that out later... First, they've got a look at the papers on his desk...



What's in this folder?



Hello... A file of newspaper cuttings...

SCIENTIFICALLY BAFFLING
MORE PETROL BLASTS
by our Motoring Correspondent
... in the street here
... cope with the risk of
... warning

WORLD'S AIRCRAFT GROUNDED
LONDON, Monday
Heathrow Airport
standards
today.
Airliners
almond
depart
BOA and
of spokes
battered

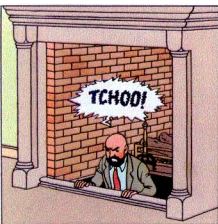
FUEL MYSTERY
What's gone wrong with our petrol?
An outbreak of mysterious automobile explosions is terrorising the world's capitals. Car engines die without warning.

Now why should Dr. Müller be interested in that petrol mystery? ... I wonder if ...

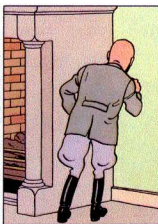


Great snakes! The hearth is opening! ... I must hide! ...

Aaah...



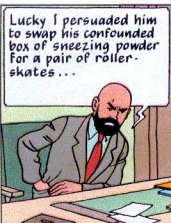
TCHOO!



What's he doing in that corner?... Ah, I see... That's where a secret button for the trapdoor must be hidden.



Aaah... Aaah...TCHOO! ... Aaah...TCHOO! ... Ach, that little pest!



Lucky I persuaded him to swap his confounded box of sneezing powder for a pair of roller-skates...



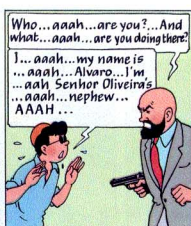
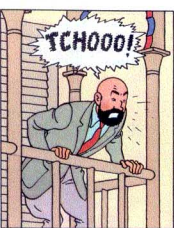
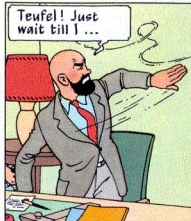
There... I'll burn it in a minute...

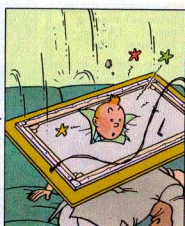
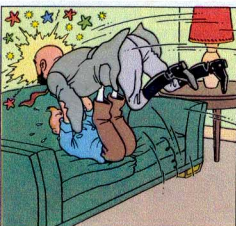
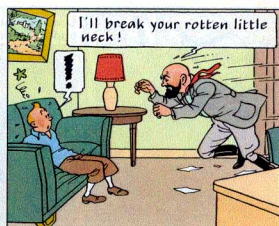
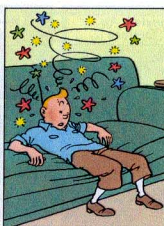
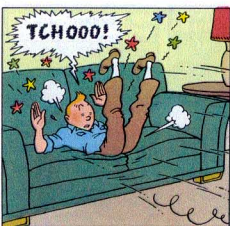
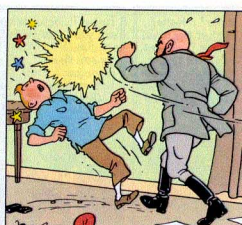
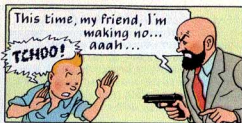


Drat! He's starting to write!

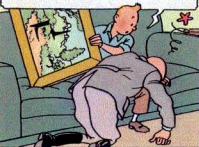


Let's hope he won't be long... I'm beginning to get pins and needles...





Whew! Saved again! He's still out cold... Quick, I must tie him up, gag him, hide him somewhere... and telephone to the emir...

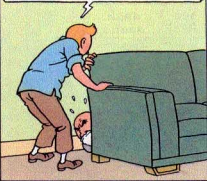


Meanwhile, in the kitchen...

...Alas! The poor woman never got over it. She died of grief and shame, at the age of ninety-seven. Her husband, broken-hearted, soon followed her to the grave. But that wasn't the end of the terrible tragedies this unhappy family had to suffer... One day, their son...



There, Doctor Müller... That's taken care of you!



Hello?... Hello?... Is that the royal palace?... I want to speak to His Highness... Tintin... Hello? is that you, Highness?



Tintin?... Yes... Where are you?... With Professor Smith?... What?... My son there?... A prisoner?... What's that you say?... What?... Oh! You sneezed! Bless you!



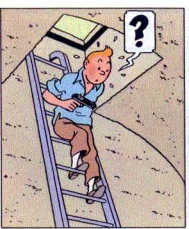
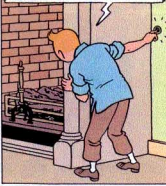
You must send men to Wadesdah... Have the palace surrounded... Meanwhile, I'll try to rescue the prince...



I can't say I like these toys, but this time I'd better be armed.



Now let's have a closer look at this...



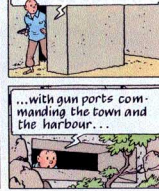
Concrete tunnels! An underground fortress...



What's this?



A bunker...

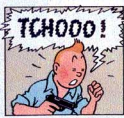


...with gun ports commanding the town and the harbour...

Crumbs! What a place!... A real Maginot Line!



AAAAH...



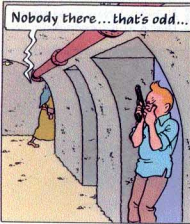
Is that you, boss?

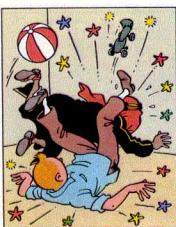
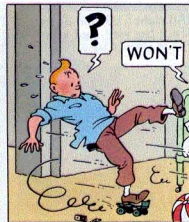
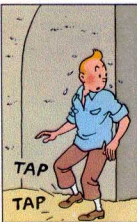
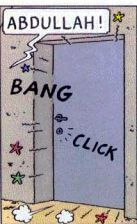
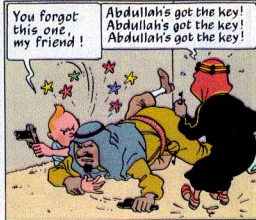


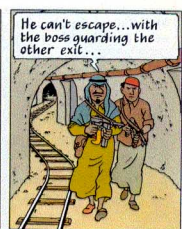
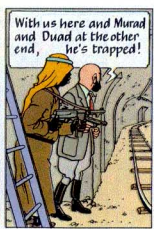
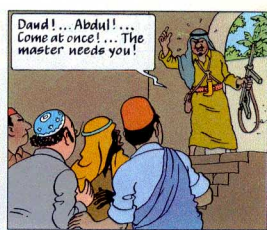
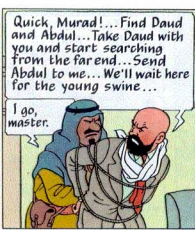
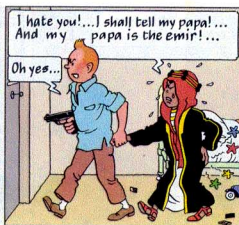
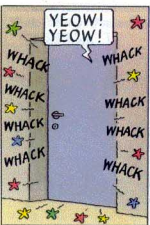
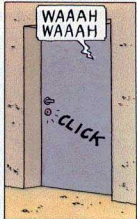
Boss? ... Is that you, boss?



AAAAAH...







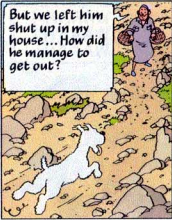
Poor Tintin! What will become of him?



Hello, what that?... It can't be... Why, yes, it's Snowy!



But we left him shut up in my house... How did he manage to get out?



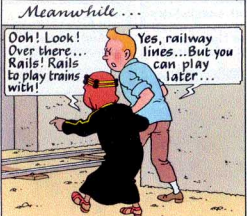
Snowy! ... Here, Snowy!



Meanwhile...

Ooh! Look! Over there... Rails! Rails to play trains with!

Yes, railway lines... But you can play later...



No!... Now!... I want to play trains!

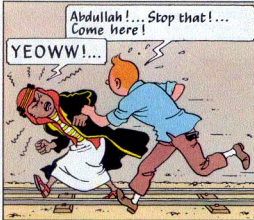


Chuff-chuff chuff-chuff... Abdullah!



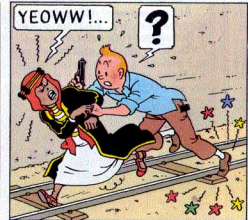
Abdullah!... Stop that!... Come here!

YEOWW!...

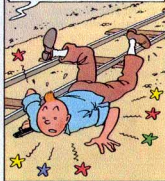


YEOWW!...

?



Chuff - chuff chuff - chuff ...

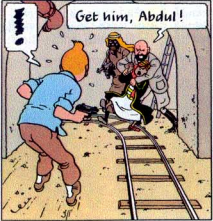


Abdullah!... For heaven's sake, come back!

TOOOOT!

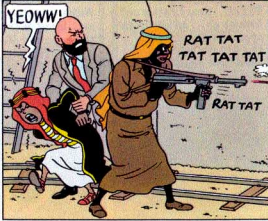


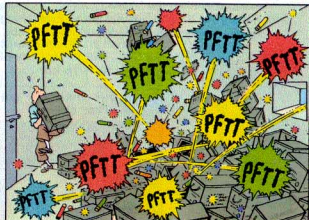
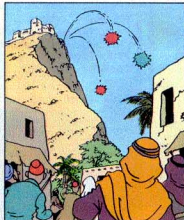
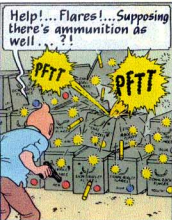
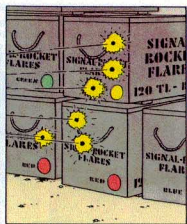
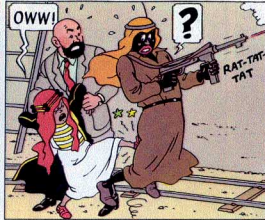
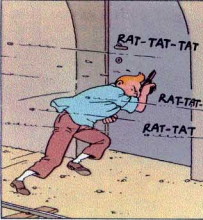
Get him, Abdul!



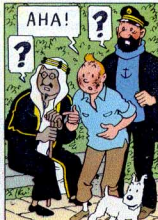
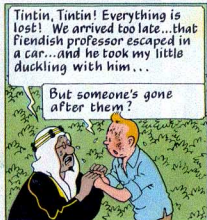
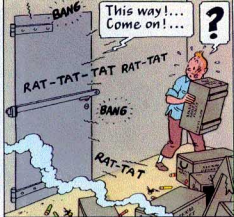
YEOWW!

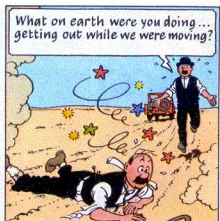
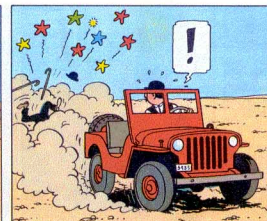
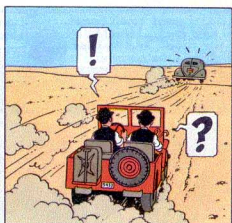
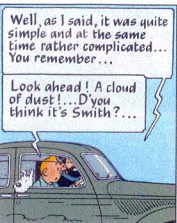
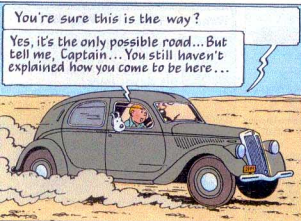
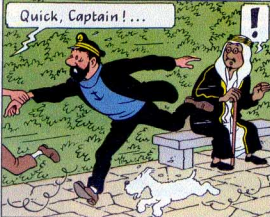
RAT TAT TAT TAT TAT RAT TAT





Seems to be calming down ...

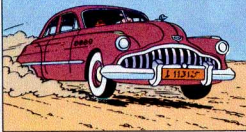




Moving? ... Were we moving? ... Oh, now I see... It must have been that other car... It passed us so fast I thought we were standing still ...



Meanwhile ...



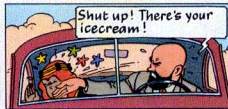
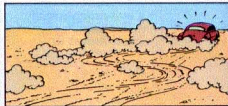
I'm thirsty! So am I ...



I want an ice-cream! Later, later ...

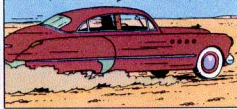


No! I want one now! I want an icecream! I want an icecream! ... Then I want to go home! ...



Waaah! ... Waaah! ... Waaah! ...

And cut out that racket or I'll ... Sit down Abdullah! ... Abdullah! Sit down here!



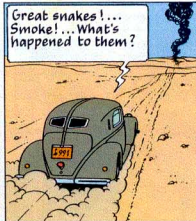
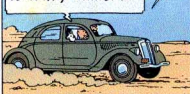
No! I want to sit here! ... I hate you! ... I shall tell my papa ... And my papa is the emir! ...



I know... I know...

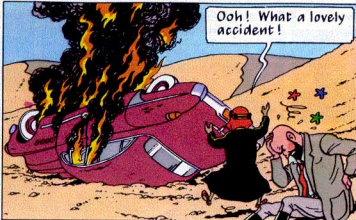
Yes, you're right... I was just going to tell you... As I said, it was really quite simple... but at the same time rather complicated ...

There they are! Another dust-cloud! ... This time it's certainly Müller!





Look at their tracks! ... Müller must have lost control of the car... it went over, and caught fire... Let's hope nothing's happened to the prince ...

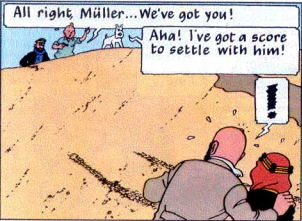


Ooh! What a lovely accident!



Can we have another one?

Ssh!... A car's stopping... Doors banging... Wait! ...



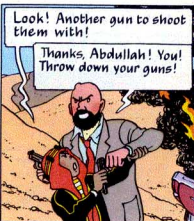
All right, Müller... We've got you!

Aha! I've got a score to settle with him!



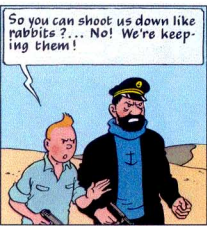
Got me?... Not yet!... Take one more step and I'll shoot the boy!

Whoopie! Just like a real gangster film!

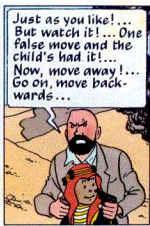


Look! Another gun to shoot them with!

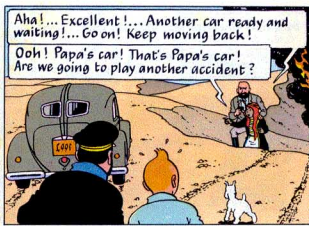
Thanks, Abdullah! You! Throw down your guns!



So you can shoot us down like rabbits?... No! We're keeping them!



Just as you like! ... But watch it! ... One false move and the child's had it! ... Now, move away! ... Go on, move backwards ...



Aha! ... Excellent! ... Another car ready and waiting! ... Go on! Keep moving back!

Ooh! Papa's car! That's Papa's car! Are we going to play another accident?



Get inside, you! And keep your mouth shut!



All right ... One bullet at the car when I go and I'll wring this repulsive little monkey's neck! ... Understand?... So, auf wiedersehen!

Waaah! Waaah!

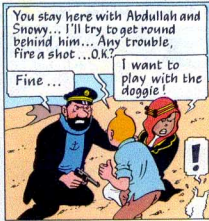
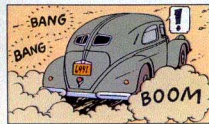


Beast! ... Baby-snatcher! ... Brigand! ... Baboon! ... Belemnite! ... Bully! ... Bougainvillea! ... Bashi-bazouk!

Waaah!



Waaah! ... Waaah!

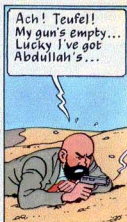




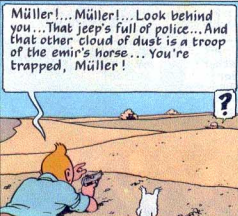
Billions of blistering barnacles!... You Arabian Nightmare!... I'll...



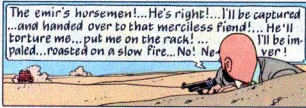
Bang, Blistering-Barnacles! Bang!



Ach! Teufel! My gun's empty... Lucky I've got Abdullah's...



Müller!... Müller!... Look behind you... That jeep's full of police... And that other cloud of dust is a troop of the emir's horse... You're trapped, Müller!



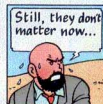
The emir's horsemen!... He's right!... I'll be captured... and handed over to that merciless fiend!... He'll torture me... put me on the rack!... I'll be impaled... roasted on a slow fire... No! No! No!



I told you I'd never be taken alive!... Now I keep my word!



But first Formula Fourteen... I must destroy them... Where...?!... I must have lost them!



Still, they don't matter now...



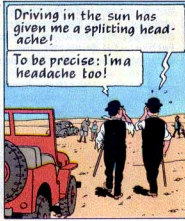
Don't do it!... In heaven's name...



?



It was my ink pistol! I gave it to him, Blistering-Barnacles!



Driving in the sun has given me a splitting headache!

To be precise: I'm a headache too!



Hello! What's that there on the ground?



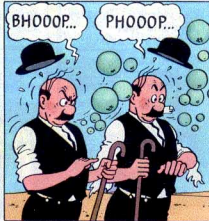
Aspirin!... What a stroke of luck!... One each, and our heads will vanish!

One... Two!



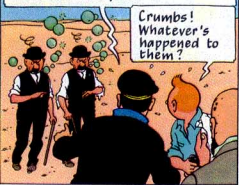
Tastes a bit odd, I'd say...

Oh, you know, medicine is never particularly nice...



BHOOP... PHOOP...

Blistering barnacles! ... Look at the two Thompsons!



Crumbs! Whatever's happened to them?

I don't know... hic... the heat, per... hic... perhaps... Unless it was the aspirin we... hic... we just took ...



A tube we found in the sand ... Here ...

What sort of aspirin?

I don't understand ... It seems real enough... But let's take a look at the contents ...



Strange... the tablets have the maker's mark, all right... It's extraordinary ...



I agree, it's very odd ...

Blistering-Barnacles! Blistering-Barnacles! Look at your funny friends now! ...



Captain! Captain! ... How awful!



Er... I... hic... Feel rather peculiar!

Er... to be pre... hic... Me too!

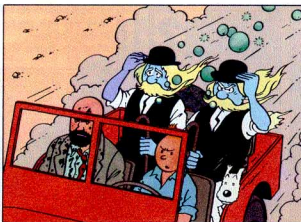
Do it again, thundering barnacles!

We must get help for them at once ... You take the car and return Abdullah to his father... I'll drive the jeep, with Müller and the Thompsons ...



Hic...

Right!



I'll make you rich for life if you destroy those aspirins, instead of analysing them...

So! The tube belongs to you... What's in the tablets?



Why worry?... Destroy them and your fortune's made!



No thank you, Doctor Müller... I'm not interested.

At Wadesdah Hospital, two hours later...



Doctor, doctor! Come quickly! Two extraordinary cases! ...



There...

!?

A little later...

Master!... See!
Your car is returning!
...

With Abdullah?



With Abdullah!... Abdullah!...
My little sugar plum!... My
darling chocolate candy!

He can have his sugar
plum, as far as I'm
concerned!



My sweetest strawberry
angel cake! ...

At last! Now I can
have a quiet smoke!

WAAAH!



Waaah! Waaah! Waaah!
Want to stay with
Blistering-Barnacles!



My nose!... Bil-
lions of blistering
barnacles!...
My nose!

Again!... Burn your
nose again!

Come, come,
don't be
cross... It
was his
little game
... a jolly
prank...



Ah, here comes Tintin...



So: the Thompsons are in hospital
... No one knows yet what's the mat-
ter... They have to have their hair
cut every half hour... I sent at
once to Professor Calculus, to ask
him to analyse those filthy
tablets, the ones Müller...

Müller?



Oh... of course, Highness...
you don't know... Müller is
the real name of Professor
Smith.

That reptile! Where
is he? Impale him
instantly!



Müller is in the hands of the
police, Highness. And I've given
my word that he'll have a fair
trial.

By Allah! How you Western-
ers complicate things! ...
We men of the East are far
more expeditious!



The trial will attract plenty of attention!
... I found these papers on him. They prove
Müller was a secret agent for a major
foreign power... In the event of war it
was his job to use his men to seize the
oil wells, which explains the veritable
arsenal we found under his palace...
And he was already manoeuvring to
oust Arabex in favour of Skoil.



Those are the essentials.
A police search of his palace,
and a full interrogation of
Müller and his accomplices
will fill in the details. Quite
simply, it's an episode in
the perpetual warfare
over oil... the world's
black gold...



Some days later...

Tintin! Tintin! ...
A letter from
Calculus!



*My friends, I have
immediately analysed the
tablets you sent. I have
discovered that if you add
only a minute part to
petrol its explosive qualities
are increased to an alarming
degree.*

*By trial and error
I have concluded that
one single tablet
dissolved in a tank
holding 5000 gallons
of petrol would be
enough to cause a*

Anyway, Captain, that
solves the mystery of cars
blowing up... Hey, what's
the matter? What have
you got there?



Thundering
typhoons!

Blistering barnacles!
Look at that!



My house, by thunder!
What's that nitwitted ninepin
done to my beautiful
house?!

Let's read on:
he's sure to
explain ...



... The research was
exceedingly difficult.
I enclose a photo-
graph of Marlinspike
after my first
experiments ...

His first?...
Did he do some
more?!!



... Anyway, they were suc-
cessful: that's all that mat-
ters. As for the phenomena
in the capillary systems of
the Thompsons, these will
soon cease with the aid of
the powders I have prepared
and sent to you separately.
The other substance I
have sent is for use with
petrol, and will entirely
neutralize the effects of the
compound Formula
Fourteen...



Some weeks later...

"Each day of the Müller trial
brings startling new disclosures.
Today the whole mystery of the ex-
ploding car engines was revealed.
It is now known that a major foreign
power had developed a new chemical,
known simply as Formula fourteen.
This chemical, added to petrol, increased
its explosive qualities tenfold."



"In the event of war, the agents of
this foreign power could easily contam-
inate the oil reserves of the other
side. The recent outbreak of car ex-
plosions was by way of a trial, on a
reduced scale, of this new tactic.
Thanks to the work of the famous
boy reporter, Tintin, the secret of
Formula fourteen has been discovered."



"...An effective antidote has im-
mediately been developed by his
distinguished colleague, Professor
Cuthbert Calculus, to neutralize the
effects of the chemical. By his prompt
action, Tintin has undoubtedly pre-
vented the outbreak of war.
Better news too of the detectives
Thomson and Thompson who inad-
vertently swallowed some Formula
fourteen. They are now out of danger,
and well on the way to recovery."



What about that? We had a narrow
escape, eh?... If it hadn't been for the
Thompsons, we'd be at war!... You
know, Captain, you still haven't told
us how you came to be mixed up in
this business...

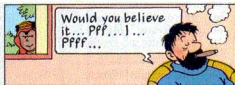
Oh, yes... Well, I... thank
you, Highness...



Well... Pfff... It's like this...
Pfff... I think I told you...
Pfff... it's quite simple really
... Pfff... and at the same time
rather complicated...



Would you believe
it... Pfff... I...
Pfff...



Another of Abdullah's little tricks!
... And he promised me he'd be good!
... Ah, what adorable little ways
he has!




Adorable!... Adorable!... I'll say he is!! ...
Well, if you want to hear my story, it
won't be from me!... Blistering barnac-
les, as far as I'm concerned, this is
the end!



END







THE ADVENTURES OF TINTIN

LAND OF BLACK GOLD

Who is trying to sabotage European supplies of petrol, and why? An international situation develops which threatens to result in war unless the saboteurs can be brought to justice. Tintin is called in, and he and Snowy are soon following the tracks of the evil and dangerous plotters to the deserts and towns of the Middle East, where their efforts to find them are complicated by hazards difficult even by Tintin's standards

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