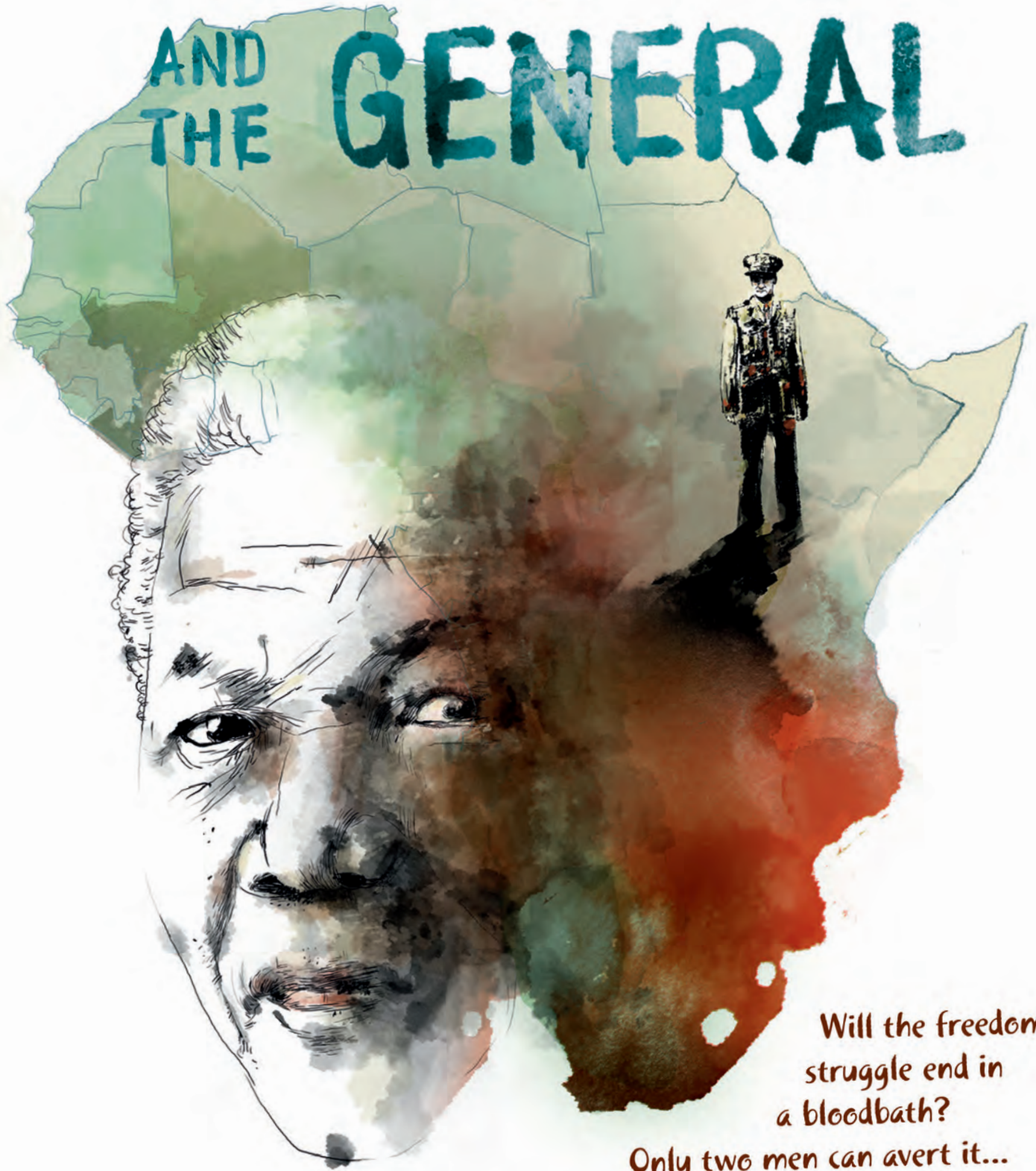


JOHN CARLIN – ORIOL MALET

MANDELA AND THE GENERAL



Will the freedom
struggle end in
a bloodbath?

Only two men can avert it...

MANDELA AND THE GENERAL

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**MANDELA
AND
THE GENERAL**

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To the Reader



Nelson Mandela
and John Carlin on
February 11, 1994.

I WAS IMMENSELY FORTUNATE to be a foreign correspondent based in Johannesburg, working for the *Independent* of London, from 1989 to 1995. From the privilege of the journalist's front-row seat, I witnessed the drama of Nelson Mandela's journey from prison to the presidency, the difficult death of the racist tyranny known as "apartheid," and the establishment of democracy in South Africa for the first time since the arrival of the first European settlers in 1652.

Not all the descendants of those settlers were happy to see power finally slip from their grasp, least of all a group of bitter, fearful, and heavily armed farmers who, under the leadership of a retired general called Constand Viljoen, vowed to go to war to stop black rule.

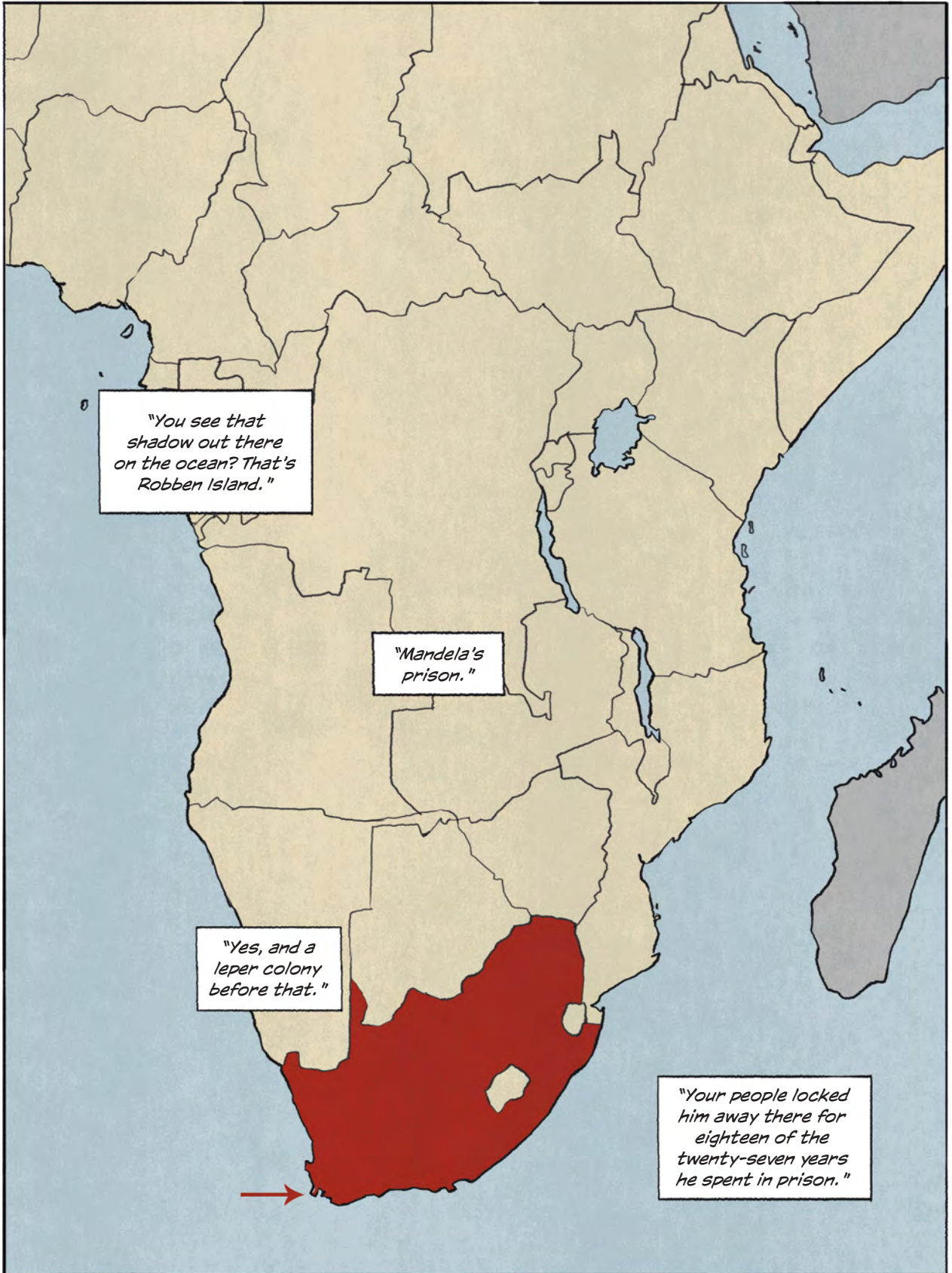
Mandela's lifelong quest for freedom had pitted him against against one implacable adversary after another, but none was to prove more dangerous than Viljoen, a legendary military leader in the eyes of many white South Africans.

Mandela knew that should he fail to defeat the general and the far-right cause he embodied the dream of a democratic South Africa was in mortal peril; the nightmare, he warned, was that his country would "drown in blood."

Mandela responded as his instincts and his temperament demanded: he fought not with arms but with words; he resorted not to violence but to reason and charm. In what was to be the last great challenge in his life's mission to liberate black South Africa, he set himself the seemingly impossible task of meeting face to face with General Viljoen and persuading him not only to disarm, not only to call off the war, but to embrace the new, post-racial political order.

In putting together the story of Nelson Mandela's implausible seduction of Constand Viljoen I have drawn on numerous personal encounters with Mandela and, still more revealingly, on a conversation I had with the general himself at a beachside bar in Cape Town several years after the fateful events described in this book. I also met the general's identical twin brother, Braam Viljoen, who played a discreet but critical role in bringing about peace in South Africa.

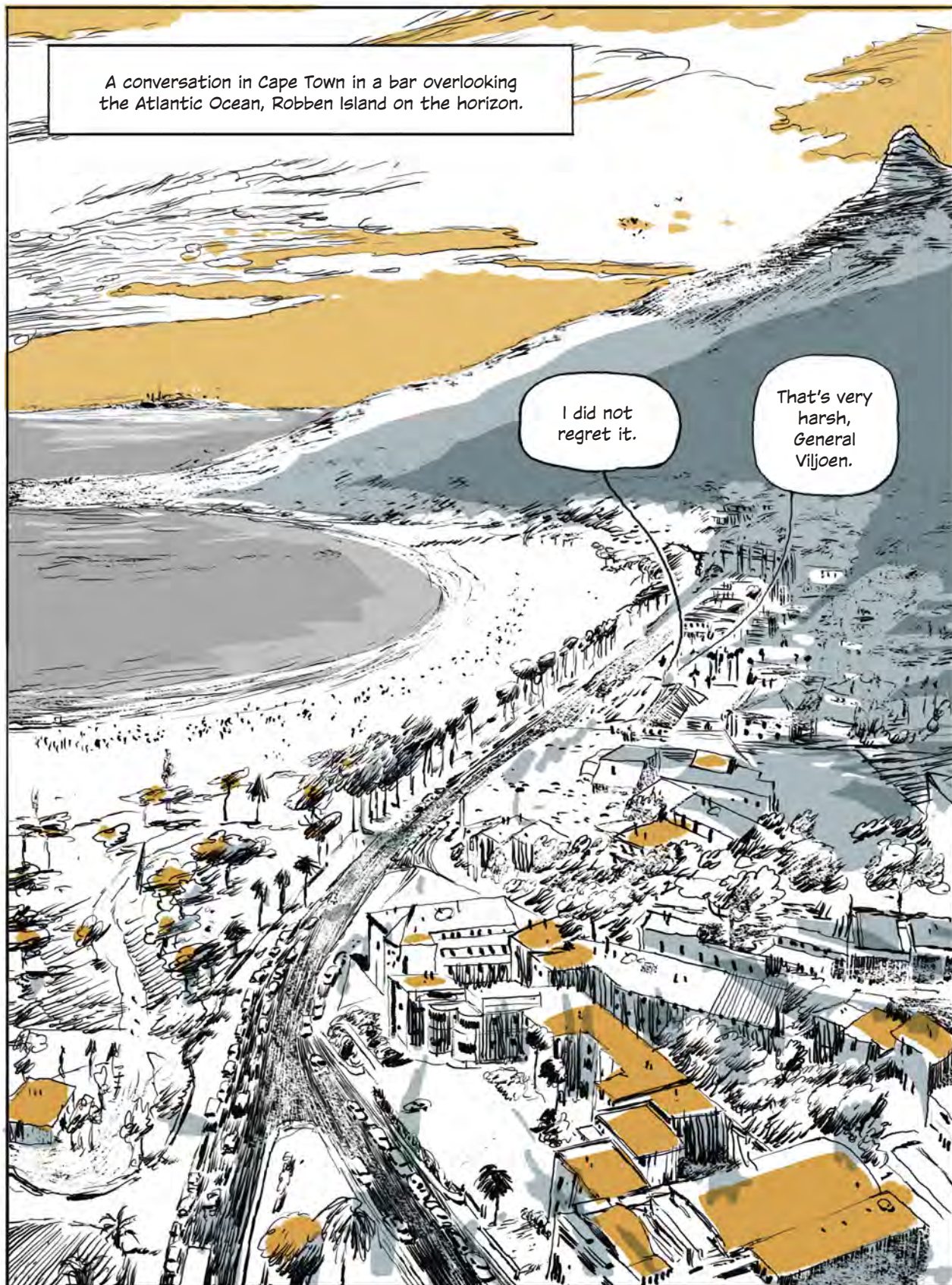
John Carlin



A conversation in Cape Town in a bar overlooking the Atlantic Ocean, Robben Island on the horizon.

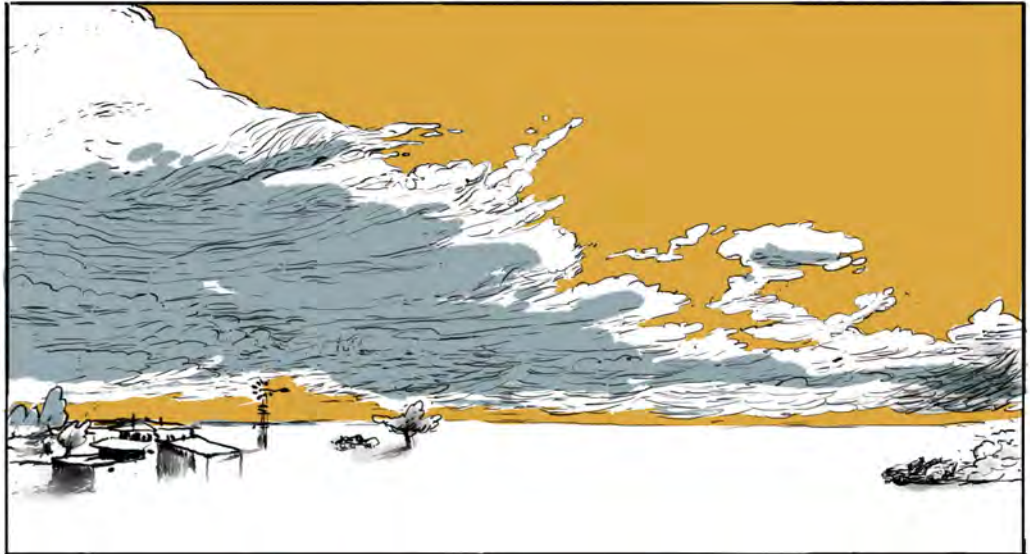
I did not regret it.

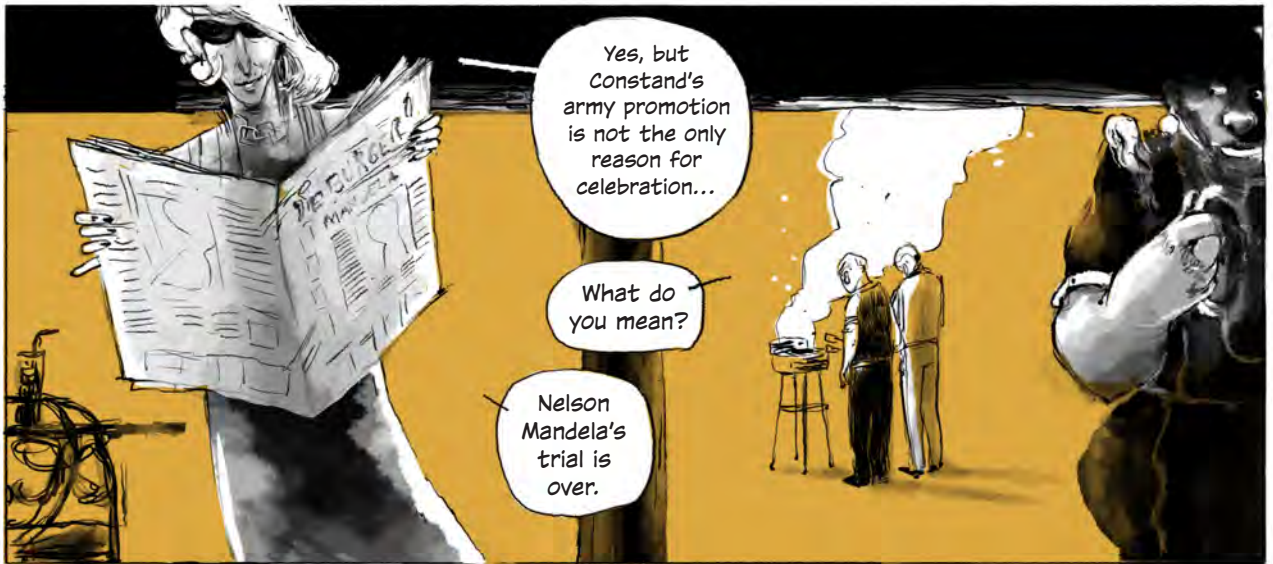
That's very harsh, General Viljoen.





"Things were so different when I was a young up-and-coming soldier. I'll never forget one sunny winter's day in 1964 when I got leave from the army to travel to the family farm. It brings back such vivid memories."





Yes, but Constand's army promotion is not the only reason for celebration...

What do you mean?

Nelson Mandela's trial is over.



He's got a life sentence.

Let me see.



Mmmm... I thought he would receive a death sentence.



But it's still a great day for the white nation...

...and an important victory against communism.

Let's raise a glass.

Naledi, bring the wine.

