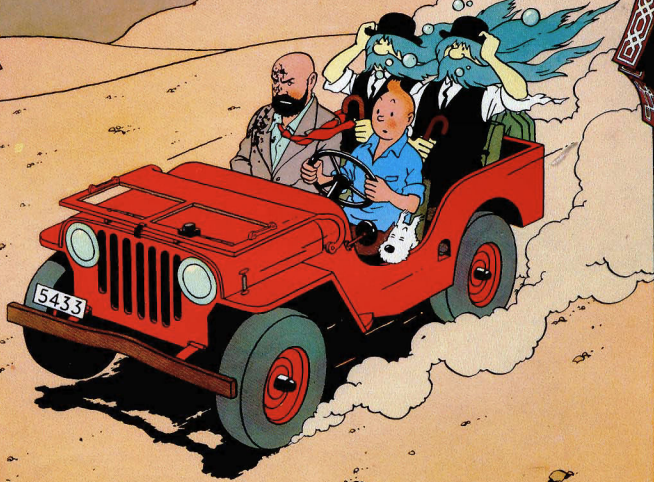


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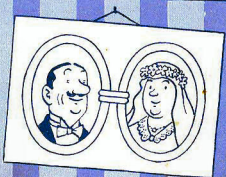
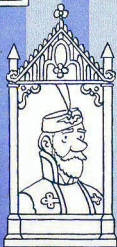
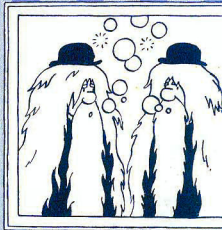
THE ADVENTURES OF
TINTIN

**LAND
OF
BLACK GOLD**

الذهب الاسود



METHUEN

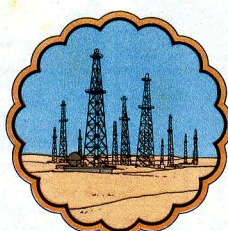


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THE ADVENTURES OF TINTIN

**LAND
OF
BLACK GOLD**

الذَّهَبُ الْأَسْوَدُ

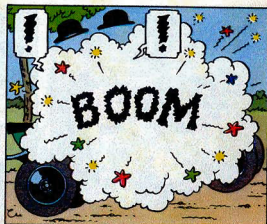
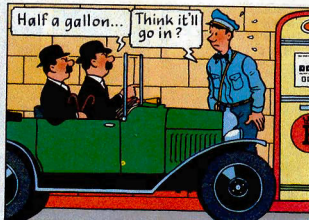
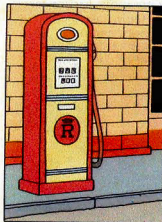


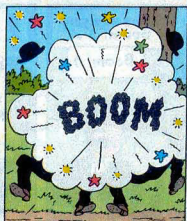
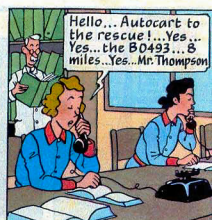
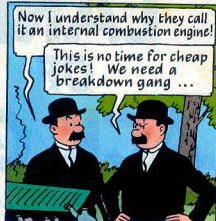
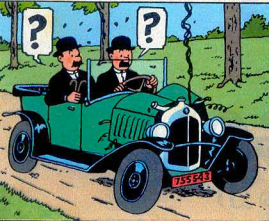
METHUEN CHILDREN'S BOOKS

LONDON

LAND OF BLACK GOLD

الذهب الأسود





Next morning ...

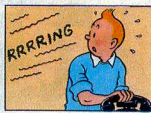
"Crisis deepens - official!
"On the brink of war?"
"Are we prepared?" ...
"Call-up for army re-
serve" ... "Forces on
standby" ... Things
look bright, I must say.



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

I've just had Admiral 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 ...

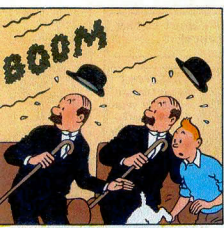
Goodbye, Captain, and good luck. Let's hope it's only a false alarm ...



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!...

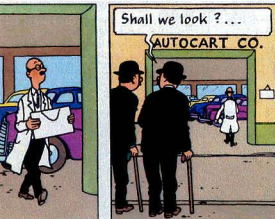


For a start, we'll take a snoop around the Autocart garage...



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!

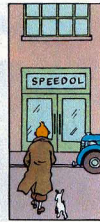


I must say, I'm intrigued by this petrol business...



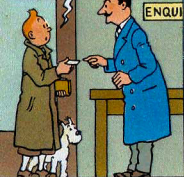
I'd like to get to the bottom of it...

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



The managing director, please

ENQUIRY

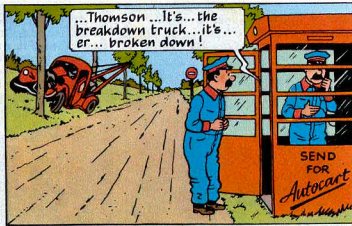


Meanwhile...

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



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



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 ...

RRRING
RRRING

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 ...

SALES CH

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

SA

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

