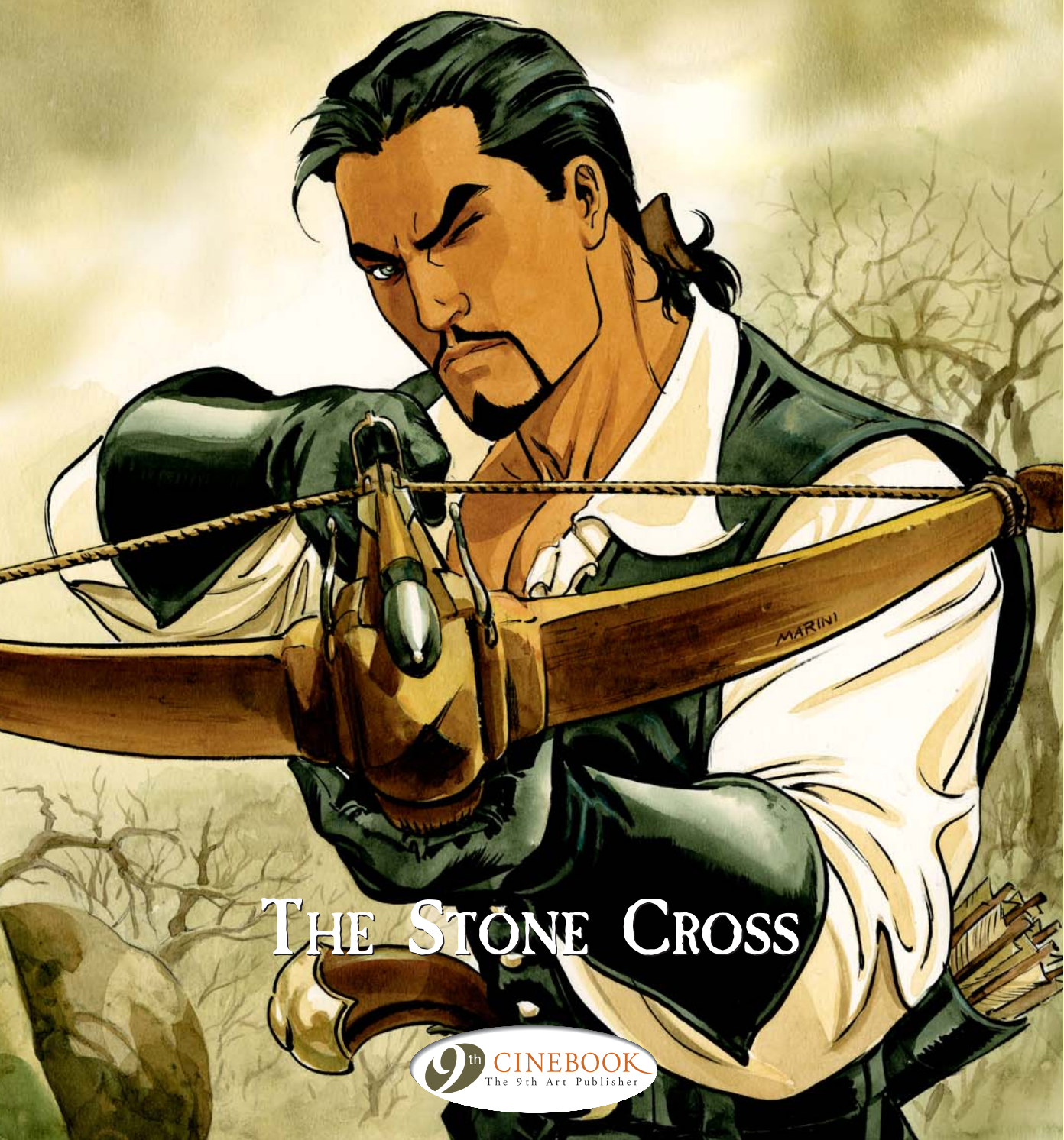


MARINI THE DESBERG

# SCORPION



THE STONE CROSS

9<sup>th</sup> CINEBOOK  
The 9th Art Publisher

All of this happened when the Scorpion was still quite young. An adventurer, a lady-killer and treasure hunter, for whom death had been but a game. Before it suddenly became so personal.

To the memory of a mother burned at the witches' stake by the Church and who had bequeathed him that mark of the Devil, that sign of infamy on his shoulder, the Scorpion had added a new wound.

Like all of Rome, he was grieving. The Pope had just been murdered. Amidst the sadness though, the election of a new Pope was being organised in fear. Fear of the formidable Cardinal Trebaldi, Prefect for the Propagation of the Faith, whose warrior monks controlled every crossroads of the city. Fear of those invisible families who shared among themselves all the power of the world, and in whose name Trebaldi was, perhaps, the Angel of Death...



With the authors' consent, and in order not to upset our more sensitive readers, certain illustrations of this edition of *The Scorpion* have been modified.  
The original version of *The Scorpion* is published in French by Dargaud.

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Anatolia, first century of the Christian era





I'VE NEVER HEARD OF THIS CHRESTOS!

YOU WOULDN'T BE ONE OF HIS DISCIPLES TOO, WOULD YOU?



TAKE OFF THIS VEIL. SHOW YOURSELF!



**HYAAAAH!**

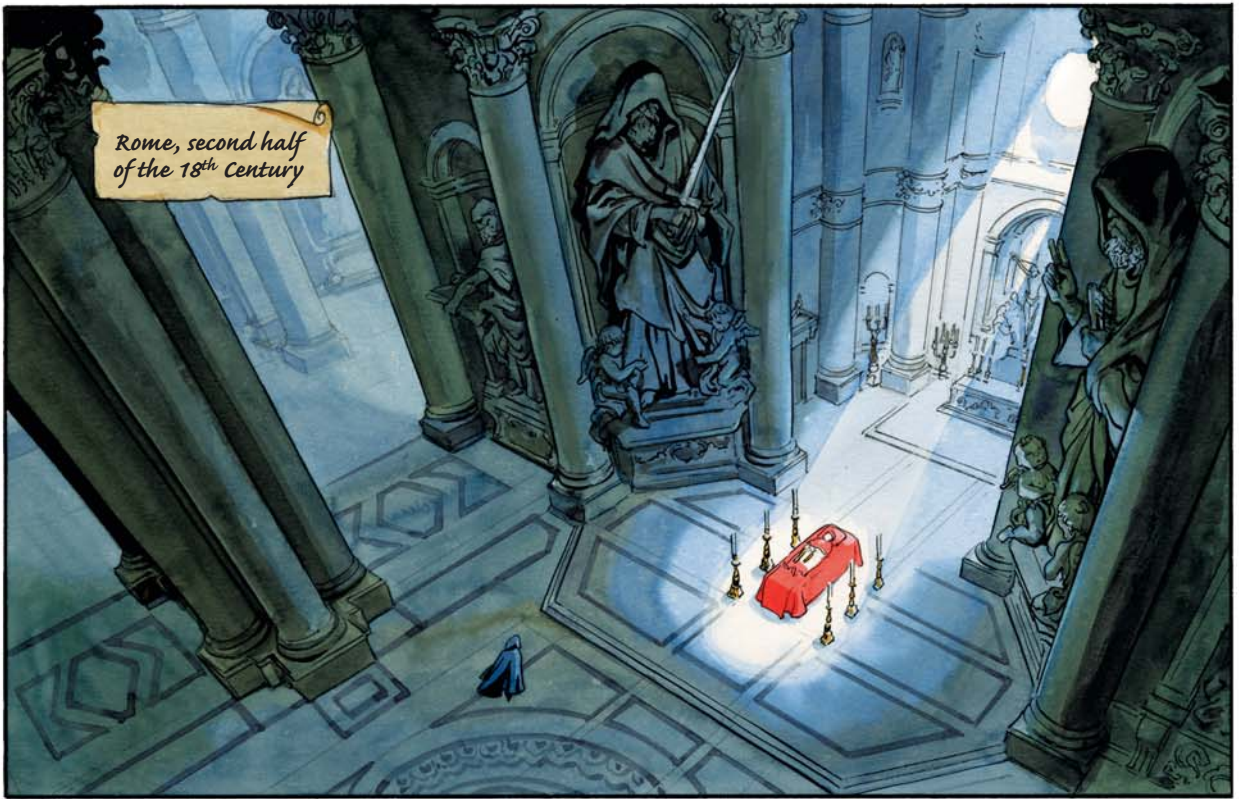


**AAAHH!**



SO WHAT WILL YOU DO THEN, UPSIDE DOWN, OUT OF RESPECT TOWARDS YOUR MASTER?





Rome, second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> Century



FATHER, O FATHER... FORGIVE ME FOR FAILING TO PROTECT YOU.



NO SOONER HAD I DISCOVERED WHO YOU WERE THAN I HAD TO LOSE YOU. IF ONLY I COULD HAVE SPOKEN TO YOU MORE...



MAYBE EVEN HELD YOU IN MY ARMS! I WHO HAVE ALWAYS BELIEVED I WAS THE DEVIL'S SON.



THE DEVIL'S SON YOU ARE!



TREBALDI!?

YOU WANT THE TRUTH? THEN HEED IT!



YOUR MOTHER WAS A MAGNIFICENT WHORE. AN ACCURSED SPELL-WEAVER! THANKS TO HER KNOWLEDGE OF SORCERY, SHE BEWITCHED THE HOLIEST OF MEN.



WITH HER LEWD AND SENSUOUS MAGIC, SHE TURNED HIM AWAY FROM HIS FAITH, FROM HIS SACRED DUTIES.

AND FROM THAT MONSTROSITY A CHILD WAS BORN! A CHILD THE DEVIL CLAIMED AS A TROPHY.



YOU BEAR HIS MARK. YOU ARE HIS BEAST!

NO!



!

HUNH!



GGK...





GO BACK TO YOUR ONE AND ONLY FATHER...

YOUR EXISTENCE IS AN INSULT TO OUR MOTHER CHURCH.



...IN HELL!



BUT BEFORE YOU DIE, I MUST EXORCISE YOU.



AAH!



IN THE NAME OF THE ALMIGHTY LORD, I CAST YOU OUT, FOUL BEAST!



AHH...



!



!?