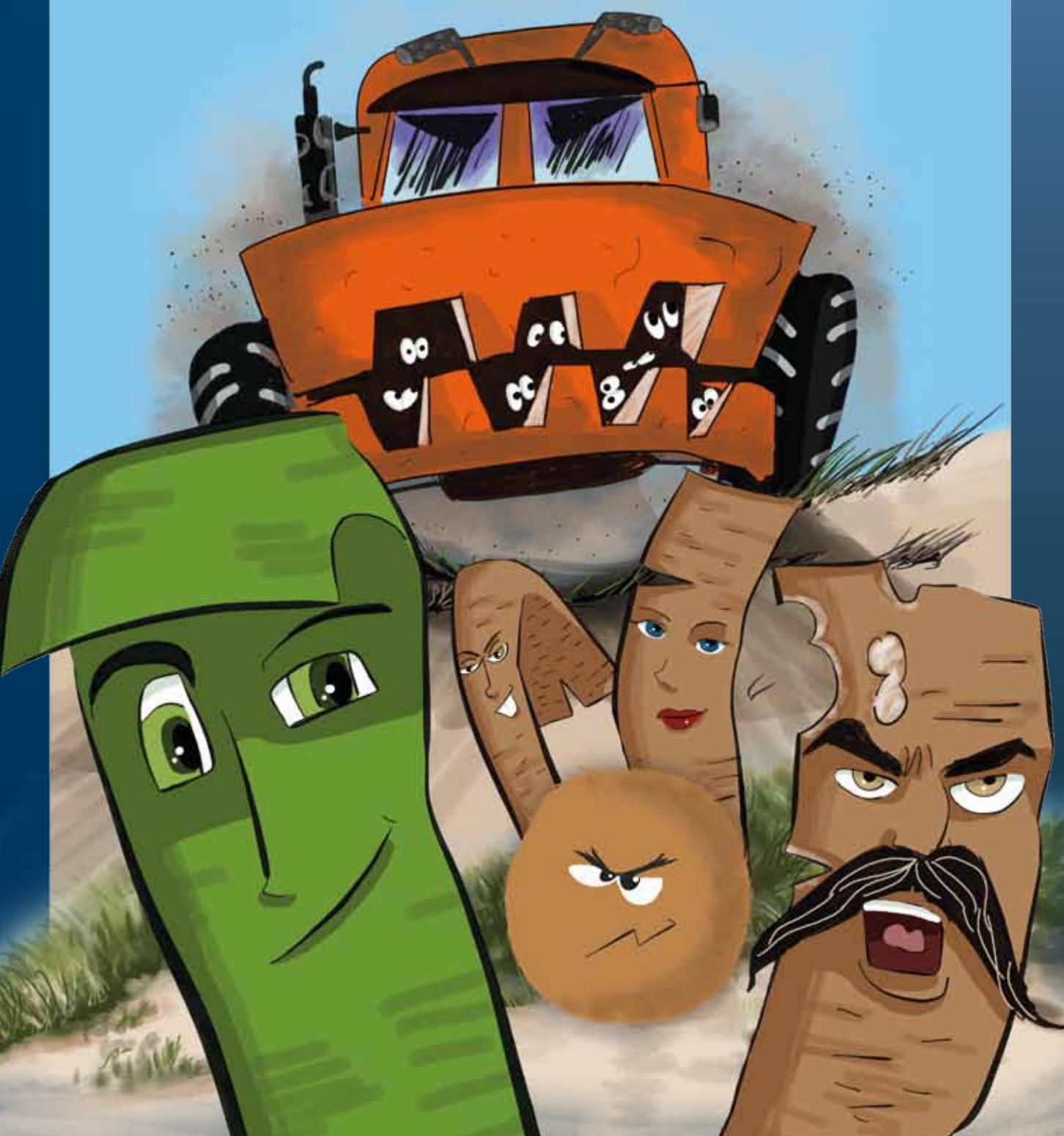


BANQUETTE TO THE RESCUE!



Posidonia oceanica: meadows and banquette

Posidonia oceanica is an “endemic” species of the Mediterranean Sea, living only in this sea. It forms extensive underwater meadows from the surface up to 40 meters deep.

Posidonia meadows are submerged forests, representing a green lung and harbouring the 25% of all the biodiversity of the Mediterranean Sea. They represent a valuable food source for many marine organisms and are perfect nursery and nesting areas.

The *Posidonia oceanica* beach cast on the Mediterranean shores is a natural phenomenon. In fact, as in terrestrial plants, the oldest leaves of *posidonia* reach the end of their life cycle, die and fall off during the autumn season. Large quantities of leaves are therefore deposited on the beaches in front of the meadows, forming the so-called “*banquette*”.

The *banquettes* are sometimes impressive structures in which the dead leaves of *posidonia* and the sand are tightly mixed in a compact and elastic structure, with important ecosystem functions including coast protection against erosion. In the presence of the *banquette*, the sea storms only affect its superficial and less structured part, without impacting the underlying beach.

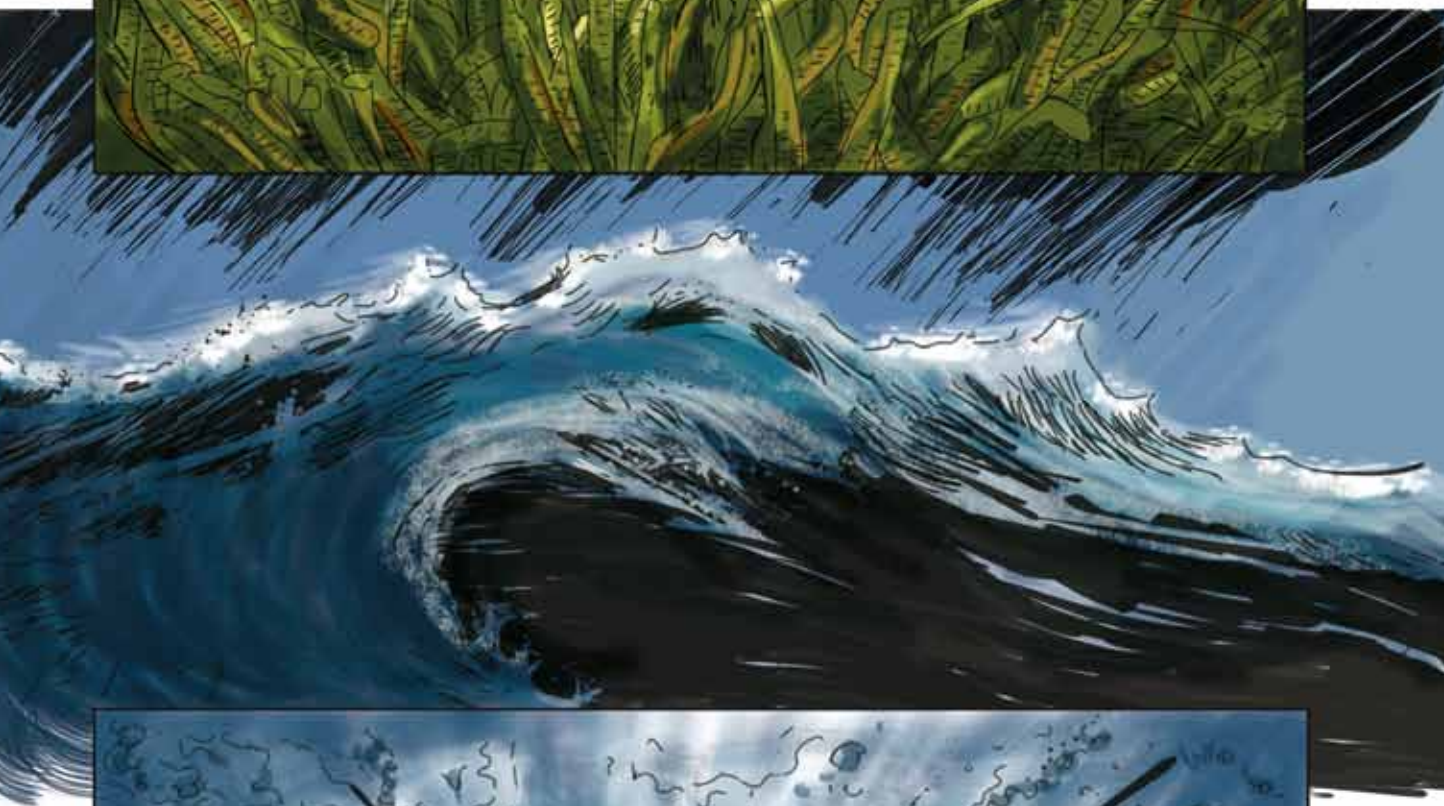
BARGAIN “The BANquette of *Posidonia*: integrating knowledge and promoting an ecologic management model for responsible management” is a project funded under the Lazio Region Call for Proposals for Research Groups. It aims to identify and promote strategies for eco-sustainable and innovative management of *posidonia* accumulations on the shores at the regional level.

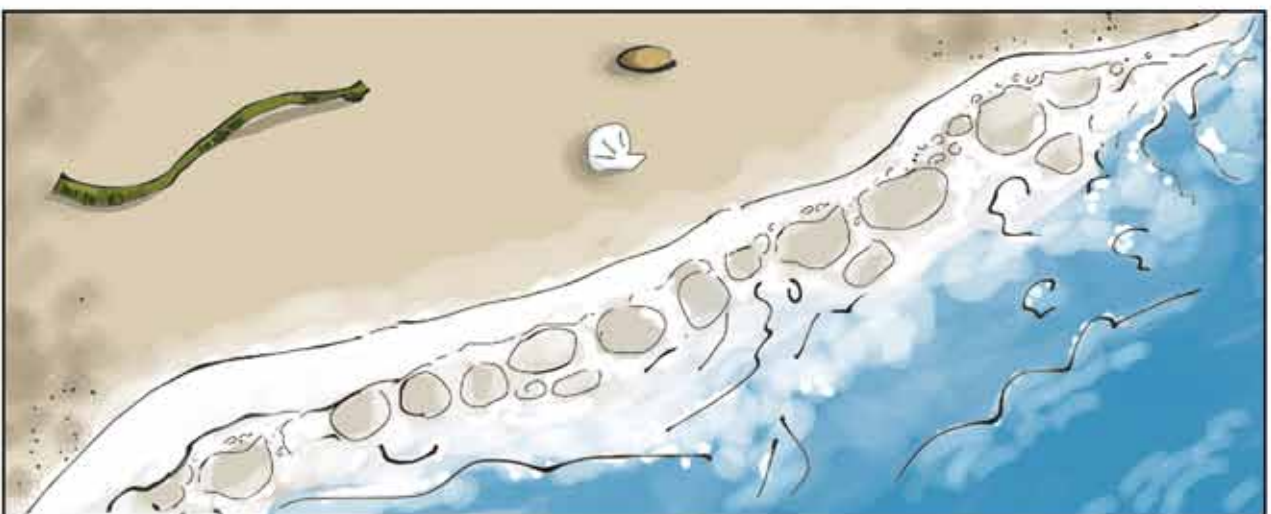
This is the story of a *banquette* that fought against the unfair end in the landfill!

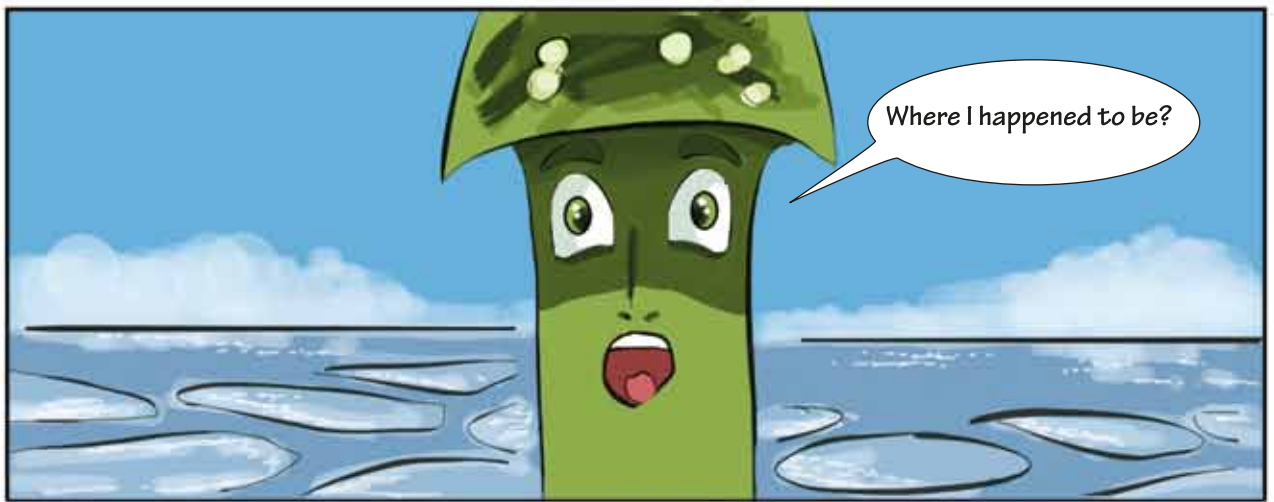


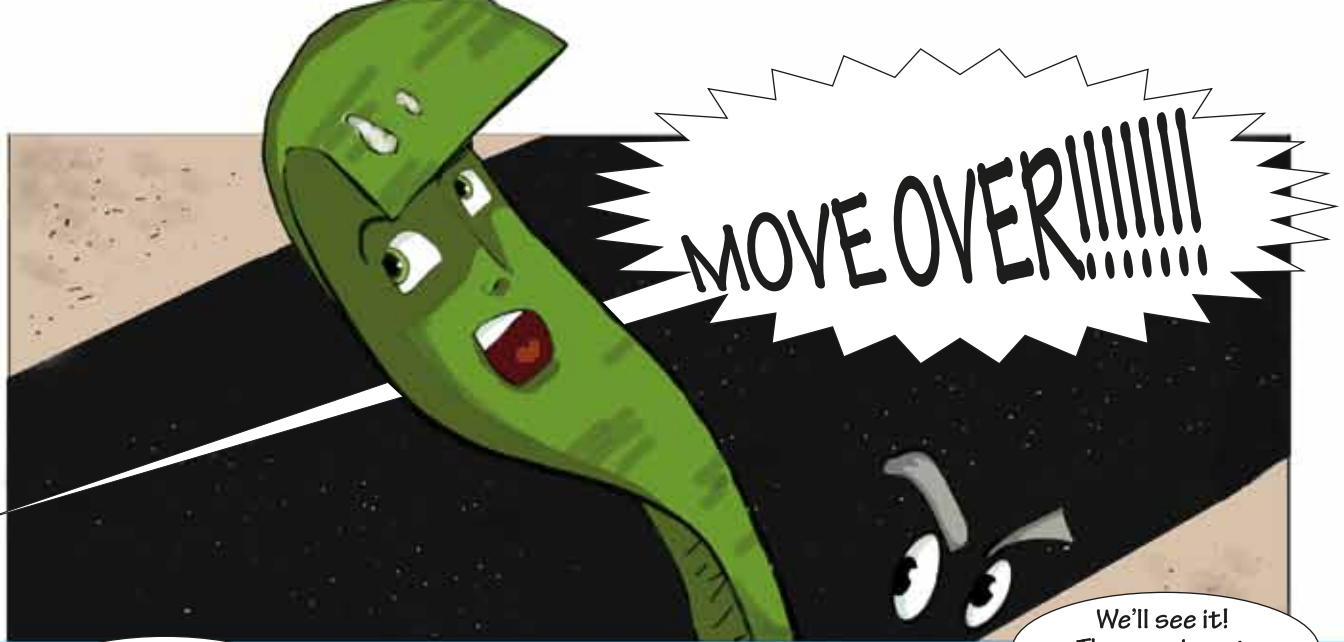
“Why are you sad Sandy?” - Told the Sea.

“Because a sharp-toothed monster came and ripped me off the dress you gave me...”





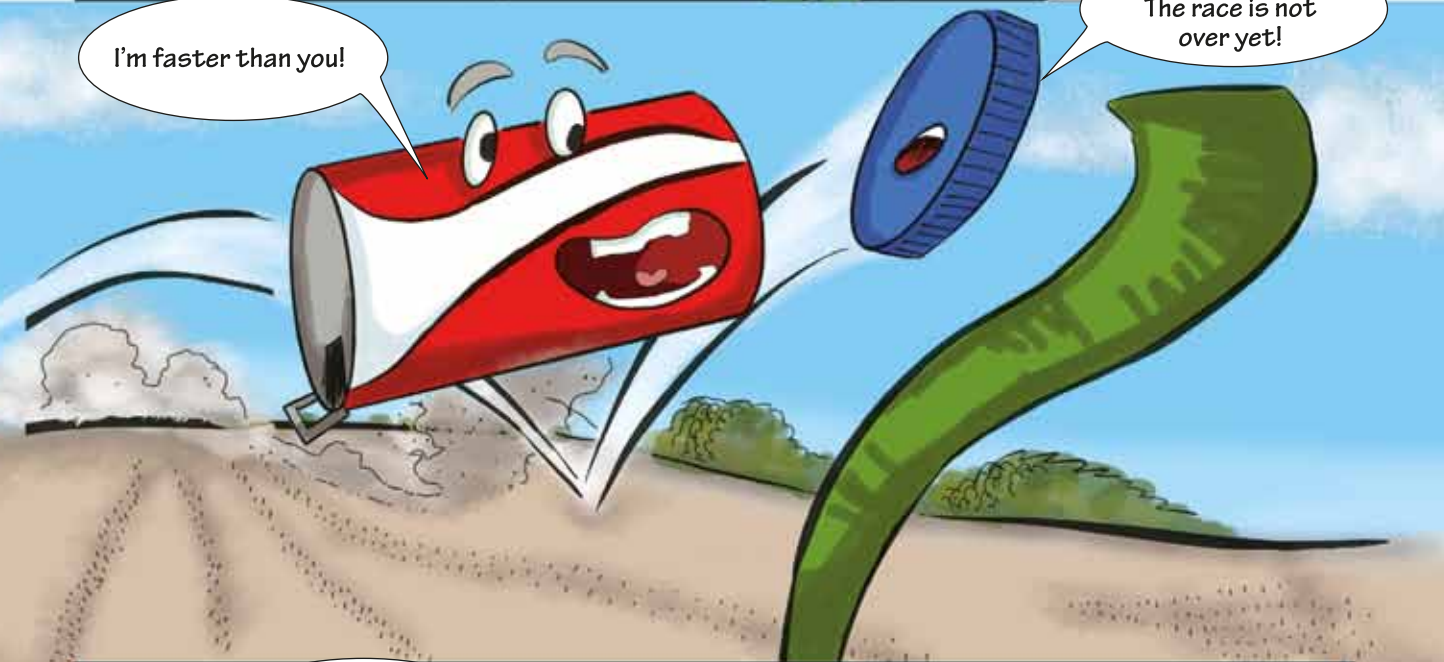




MOVE OVER!!!!!!



We'll see it!
The race is not
over yet!



I'm faster than you!

We'll see it!
The race is not
over yet!



Come on!
Show him who
you are!!!

...Come on SHORTY!!

And you, who are you?
Where do you come from?

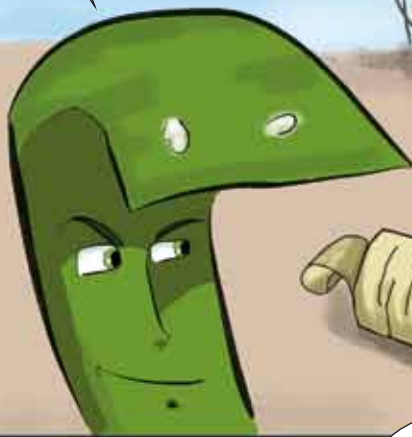
From everywhere!

We enjoy it as long as we can!



What a strange place!
Full of colorful objects!...

...and bizzare little animals!



It's not my meadow,
but maybe it's not so bad!





THEY'RE COMIIING!!!!



LET'S HIDE!!!!!!

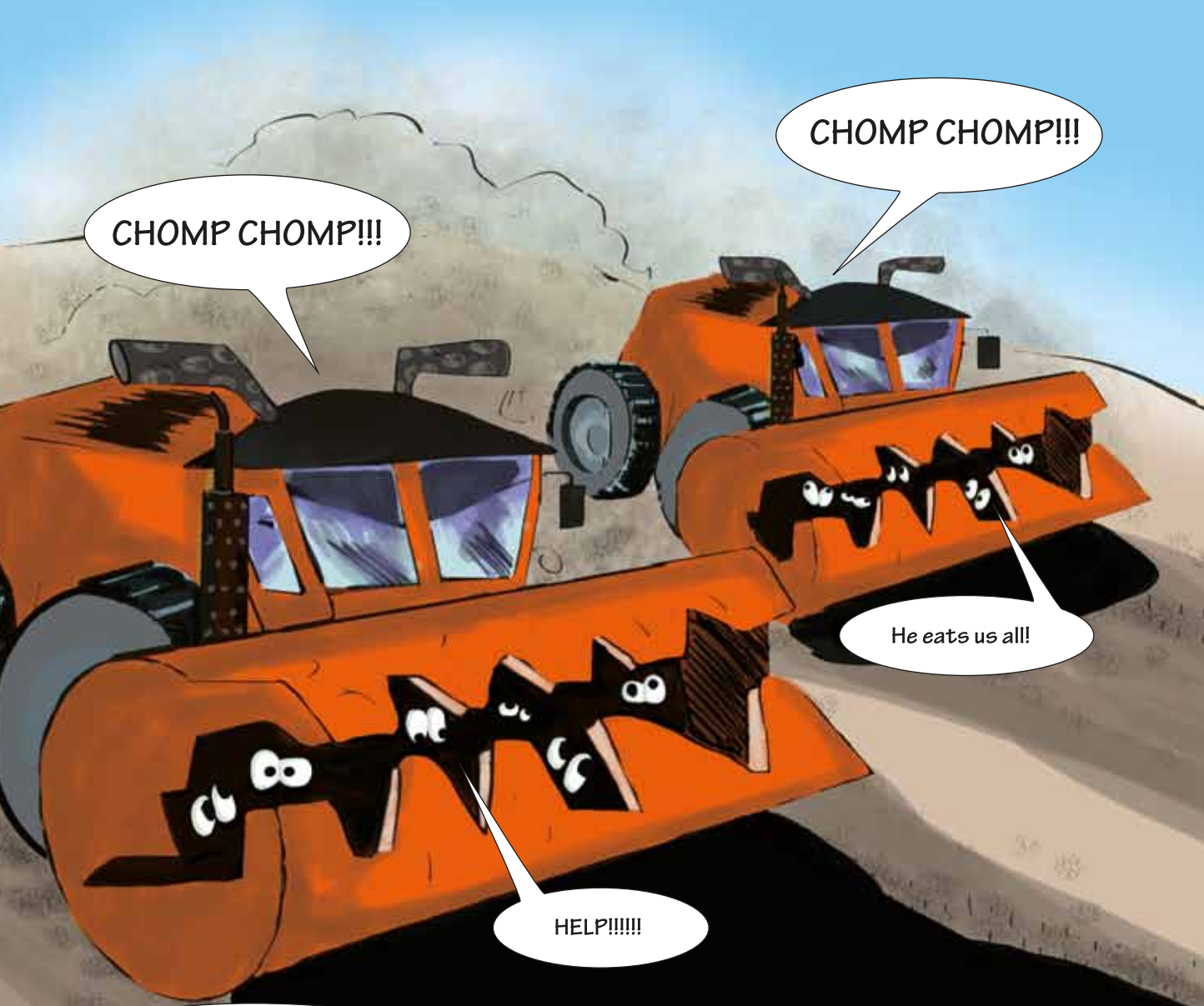


Excuse me...Who's coming??

CHOMP!
LET'S GIVE THIS PLACE A GOOD CLEAN-UP!!!
CHOMP CHOMP!



We're finished!!



CHOMP CHOMP!!!

CHOMP CHOMP!!!

He eats us all!

HELP!!!!!!

What do these monsters want from us?



They come to remove waste from the beach! But they devour and destroy everything they cross on their way!



How awful!!

Hey boy come with me if you want to live!

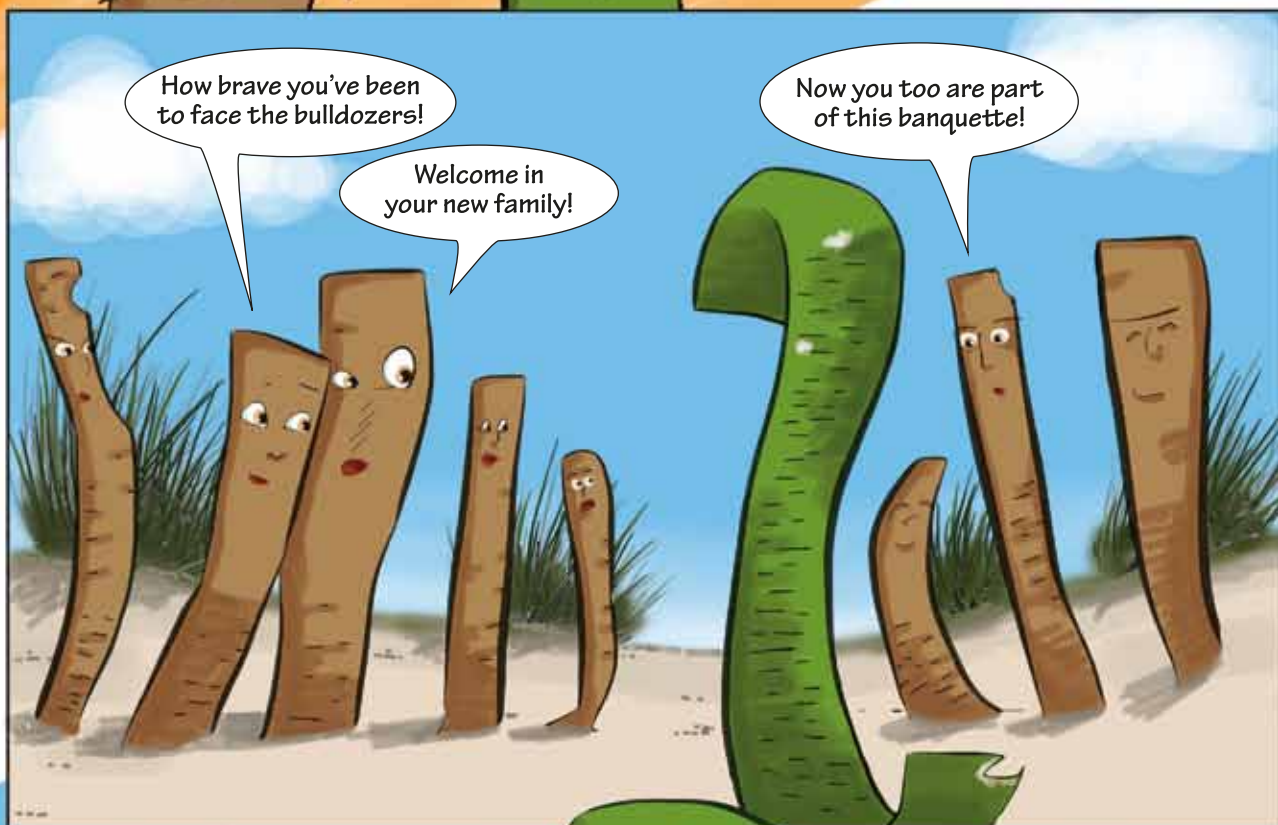
NOTE FOR THE READER: The leaves are already dead even if they don't know it ;)

They go away at last...





...you can get out!




How brave you've been to face the bulldozers!

Welcome in your new family!

Now you too are part of this banquette!



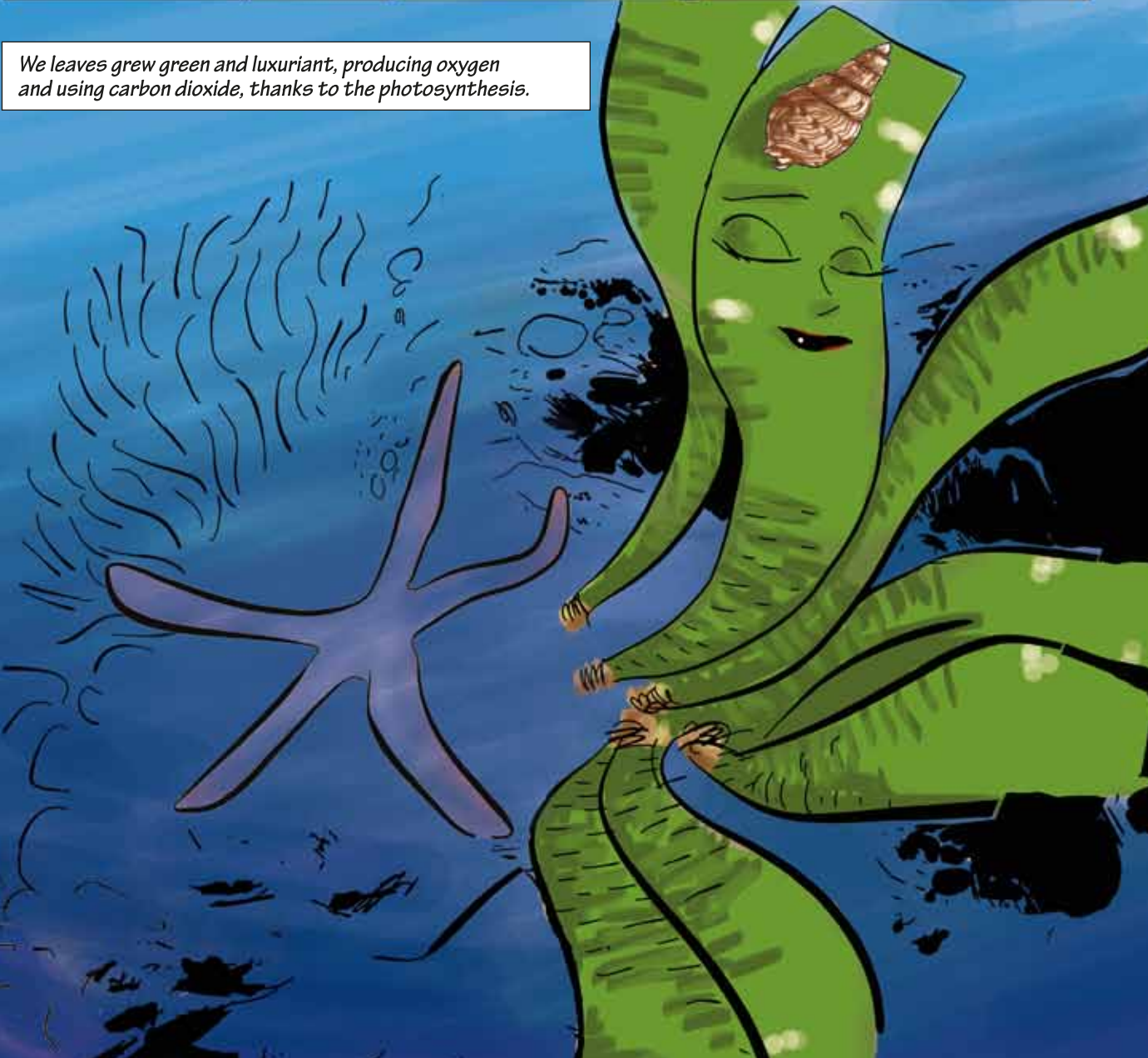
Wow! how many you are!



Ehi LEAF!
I know you!
We come from the same meadow!

What a coincidence!
LIGEIA, you too got here!

We leaves grew green and luxuriant, producing oxygen and using carbon dioxide, thanks to the photosynthesis.



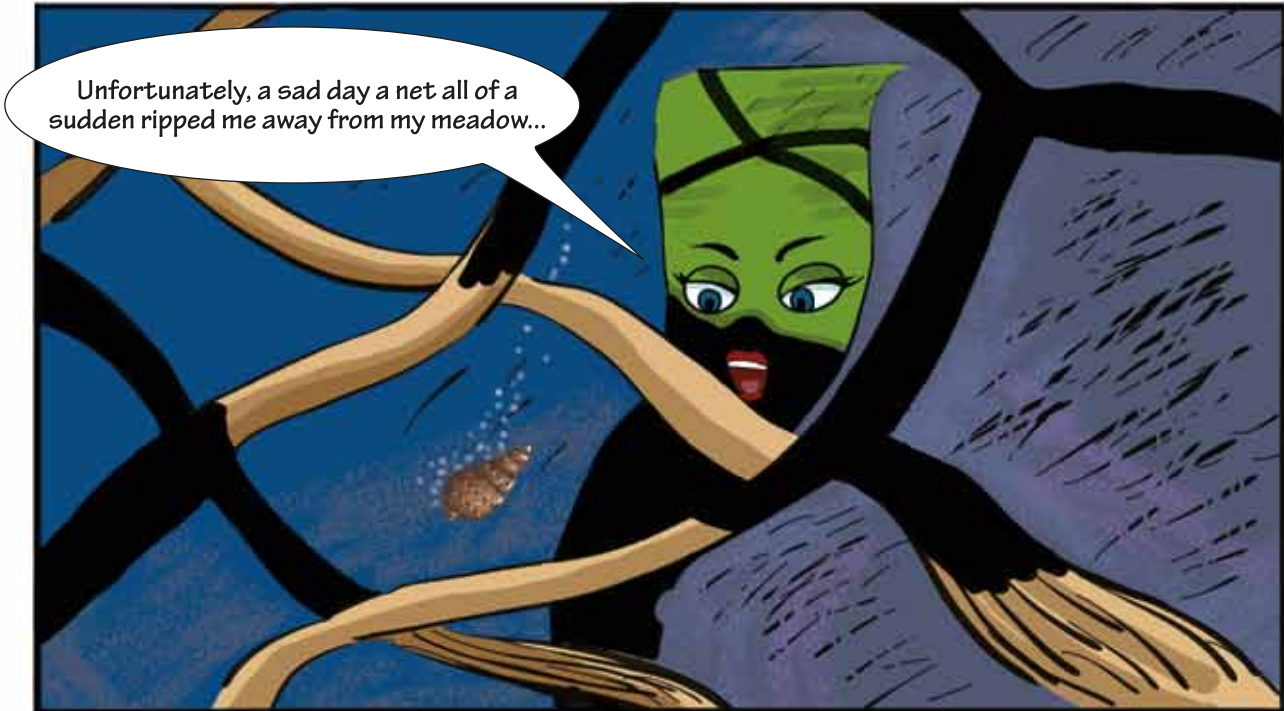
Our presence made the sea less impetuous.

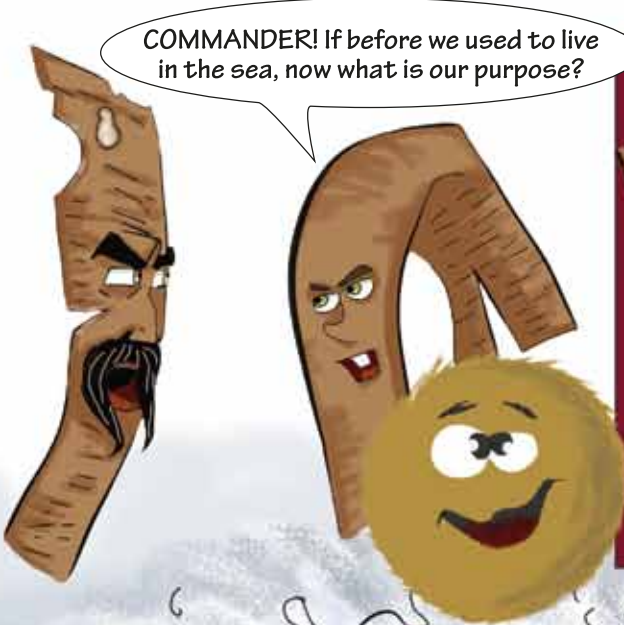


waters were clear and clean; for that too we were always surrounded by friends !




Epiphytes like sponges, hydroids, bryozoans lived above us , while fishes and crustaceans came to lay eggs, to hide or to look for food among our tufts!







COMMANDER! If before we used to live in the sea, now what is our purpose?



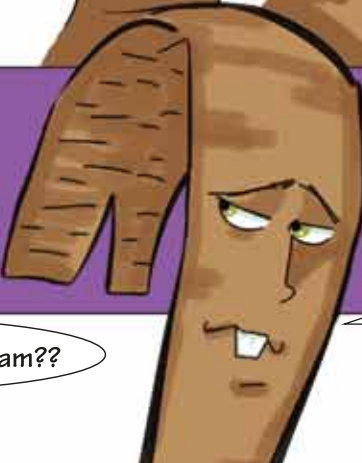
Now we are the banquette!
We protect the balance between land and sea!



All working together like a rugby team we protect the coast from erosion!



CHOMPY! What's a rugby team??



EGA!
Please don't talk!
Don't interrupt the Commander!



We must work hard to make the beach beautiful for the summer!

Yes sir! It won't be easy...



Again this year the sea has brought a lot of rubbish on the beach





Tomorrow the bulldozers will come back to complete the work!

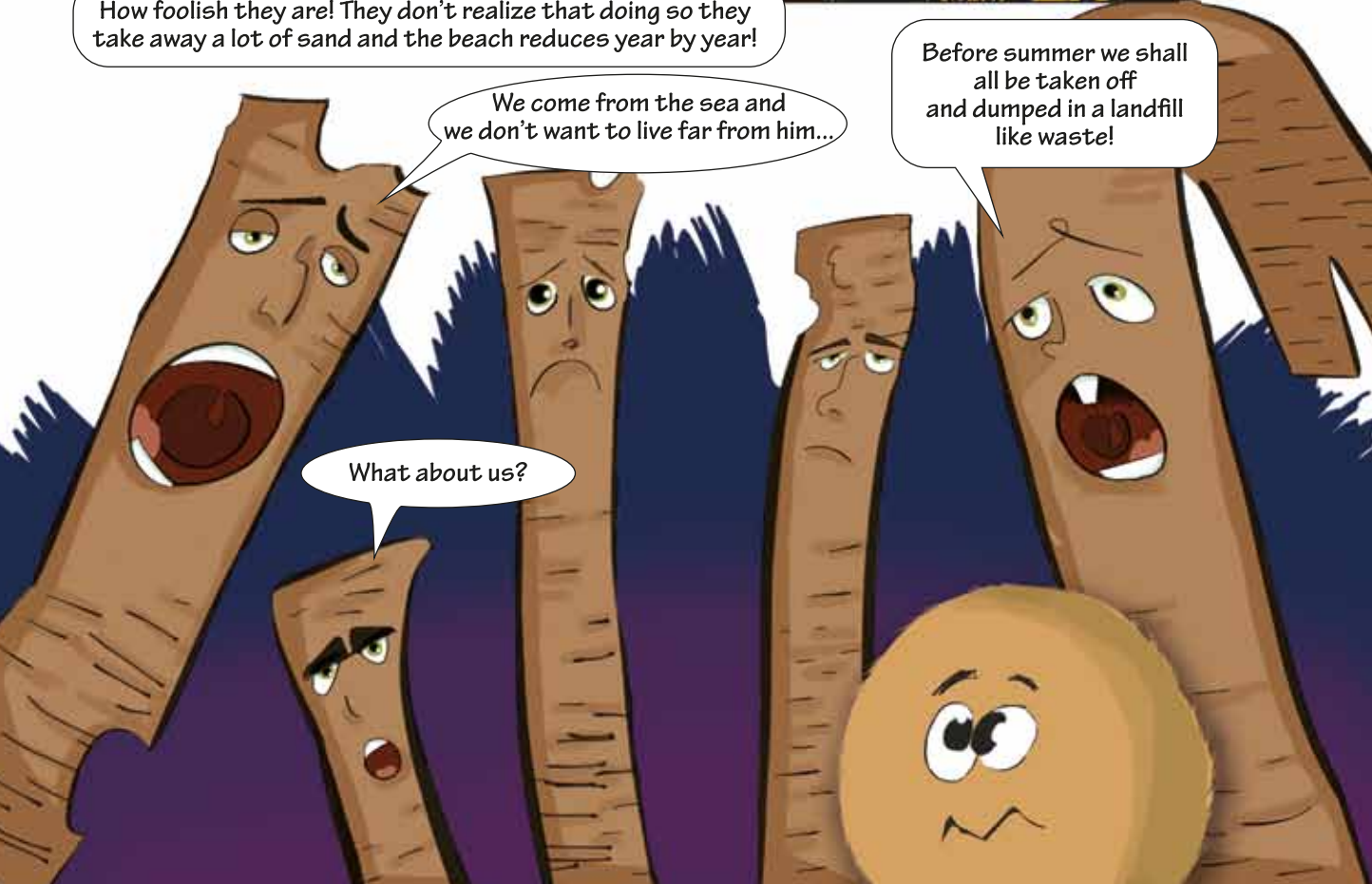


How foolish they are! They don't realize that doing so they take away a lot of sand and the beach reduces year by year!

We come from the sea and we don't want to live far from him...

Before summer we shall all be taken off and dumped in a landfill like waste!

What about us?



We have to fight to stay on our beach!



To resist is not the solution!
We'll lose!



COME ON!!!

Damn! We are leaves!!
With bulldozers we have not chance!

I've got another idea: listen!

We must...psss...psss... and then psss...

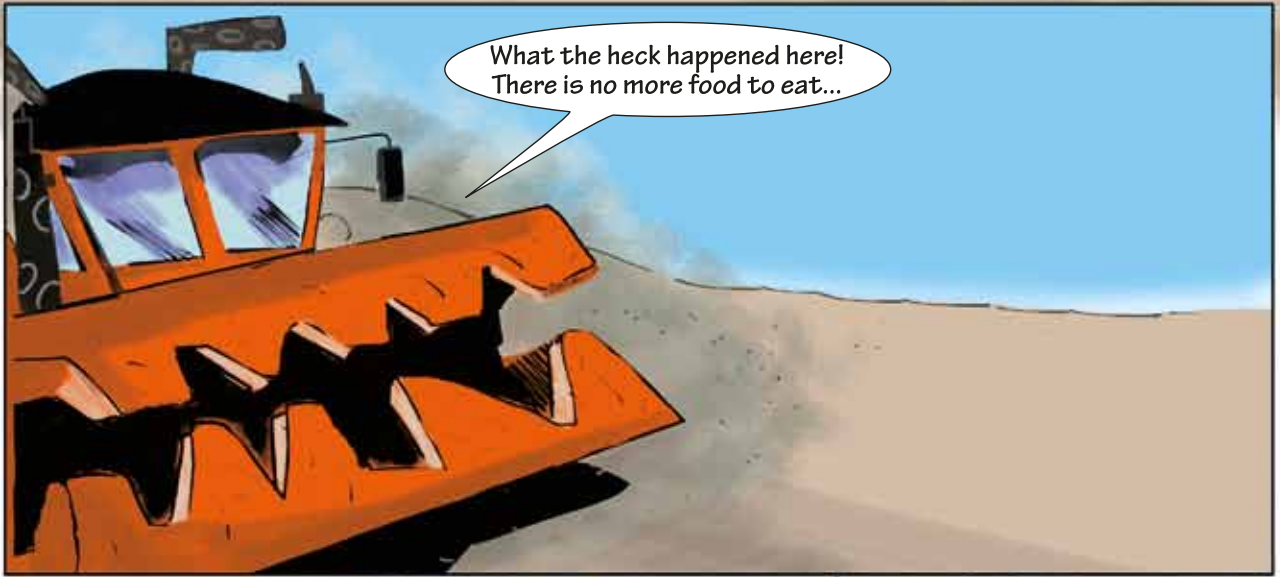
I've never been for war!
I'd put my inspiration in
something more glamour!

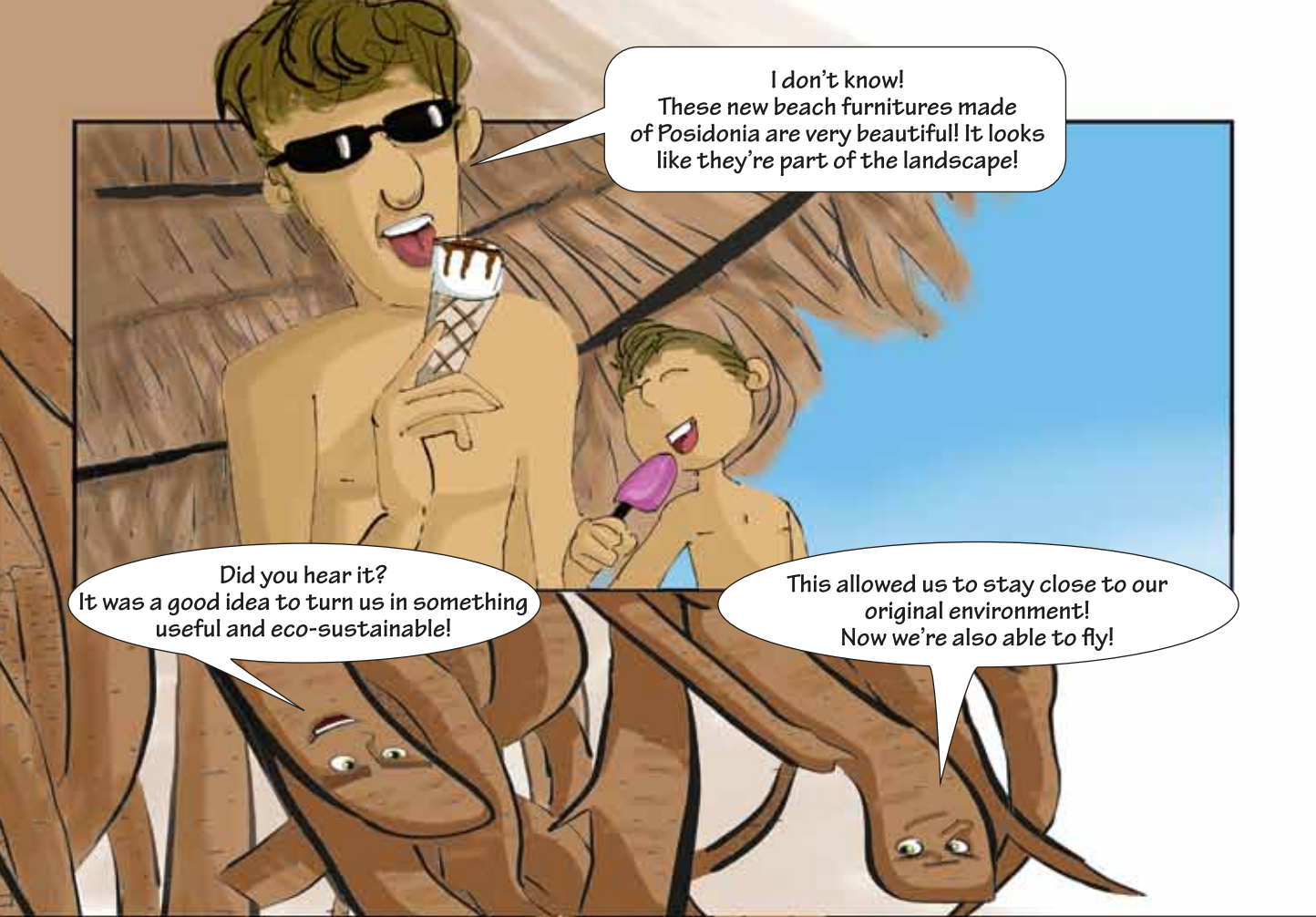
Yes, it could function...!
Let's get down to work!!





THE FOLLOWING DAY...





I don't know!
These new beach furnitures made
of Posidonia are very beautiful! It looks
like they're part of the landscape!

Did you hear it?
It was a good idea to turn us in something
useful and eco-sustainable!

This allowed us to stay close to our
original environment!
Now we're also able to fly!



Who would ever have said it
that the Posidonia could be
such a resource?

Look how beautiful
the lanterns!



HURRAH!!
We won!!

The bulldozers have gone away!

Sure it is strange...in the place where I come from children play happily among the fallen leaves and the insects and their parents don't mind!



COOL! Where do you come from exactly?!

From a wood, obviously!



We won this battle but to win the war we have to change the mentality of humans!

We must convince them that we leaves are part of the beach like stones and shells and here we have to stay to play our important ecological role.



And if they really must move us, that they be careful not to damage the beach and not to throw us in the landfill!

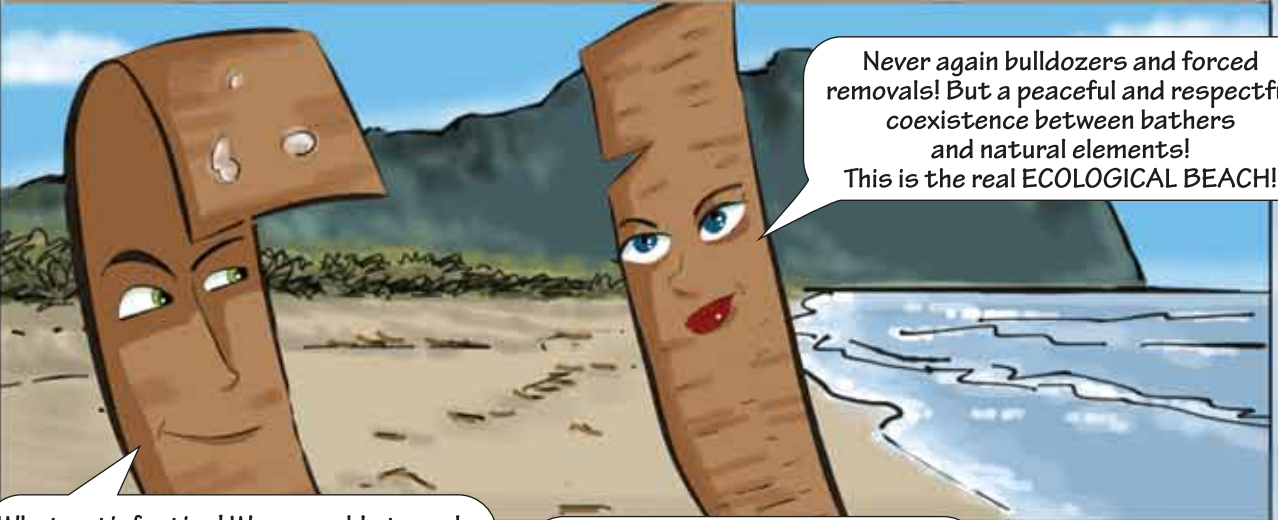
AFTER A FEW YEARS...

I found other leaves to decorate our castle!

Dad told me that when these leaves were not here the beach was reduced and there was not space to play!

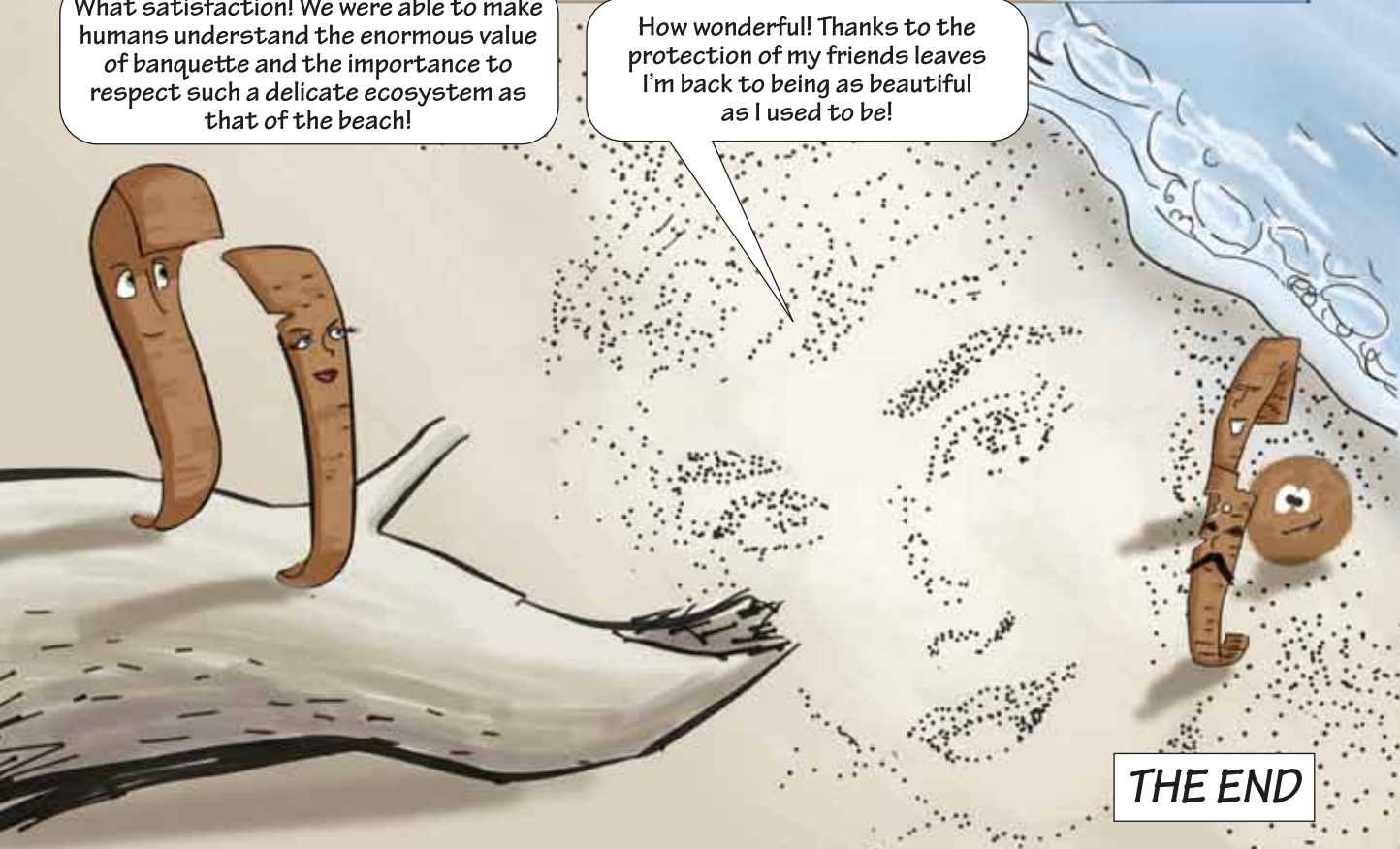


Never again bulldozers and forced removals! But a peaceful and respectful coexistence between bathers and natural elements! This is the real ECOLOGICAL BEACH!

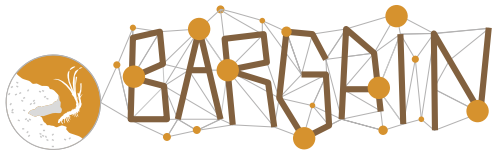


What satisfaction! We were able to make humans understand the enormous value of banquette and the importance to respect such a delicate ecosystem as that of the beach!

How wonderful! Thanks to the protection of my friends leaves I'm back to being as beautiful as I used to be!



THE END



BAnquette di Posidonia:
integRare le conoscenze
e promuovere un modello
di spiaGgia ecologica
a gestioNe responsabile

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Funding program:



Sponsorship:

