

Disassembling “Desmontados”

by Arqu medes

When you publicly ask for help for a project, you find yourself receiving collaboration offers from people you hardly know, least of all from their professional side. The moment then arrives to entrust a virtual stranger with your dream, hoping that the person behind a forum nickname will put as much inspiration into your idea as yourself. Sometimes you fail or rather they fail you. Other times, the result exceeds your most optimistic expectations.

I have tried to find among my emails the first contact I had with Jesus, to try and refresh my memory on how it happened. Did I write to him? Did he offer help himself? I haven't been able to find it, it's lost on the net. It doesn't worry me, whichever the start was, this relationship between Jesus and the magazine is one of the most fortunate times that we have lived. His stories have been, since the first issue, my favorite part of the magazine. His creativity and professionalism have given light and color to stories that are funny, ironic, bittersweet... always caught up with the news and trends of our LEGO® world. Truly creative people are shy, so it has been difficult for me to be able to find out a bit more about him and how he works.

HBM: How long have you been a LEGO fan? And what about a comics fan?

J: Ever since I was a little, there's always been LEGO around the house (and Tente, I'm that old), with which my brothers and I would never stop playing. And the same thing happens with comics; as far as I can remember in my house we've always read superhero comics, Asterix, Metal Hurlant, etc. It's true that, like many in our generation, I went through a period of being a lot less interested in LEGO, but I never lost interest in drawing. So much so that, while I was studying Biology, I saw that what it was that I should really do for a living.

HBM: What's the most difficult thing, or what you find the hardest in each Desmontados?

J: Well, to be honest, what I find the most difficult, issue after issue... is the translation! ^_^ I feel like E.T. the extraterrestrial probably has a better English level than I do. Luckily, one of my brothers regularly helps me with those translations (or rather, he practically does them for me). But talking about the creative side, the most difficult part is probably to find the idea, the subject that each issue is going to deal with. Finding something that makes you reflect a bit upon the direction this hobby of ours is headed in and something that at the same time can also give you a smile on your face. Or something that will simply make you laugh at those problems that only AFOLs would understand.

Do you remember how the idea of doing Desmontados came about?

I was very active around the forums back in the day, doing the odd drawing for a Viking BrickWars comic strip to see the light of day. After seeing that a friend suggested I should do the poster for the reunion, which was happening in Madrid (and satisfaction!). But I realized I would have needed a bit more skill, so I asked for my opinion, awfully grateful. Someone thought like me, Carlos, HM and I decided to do a comic strip for the reunion. I say to you, it's the best

HEY, WAIT A SECOND!



THIS IS BORING! HAVEN'T YOU READ ENOUGH ARTICLES ALREADY?



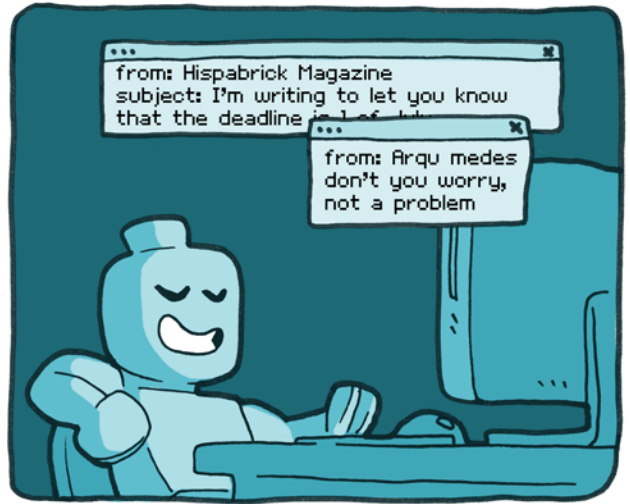
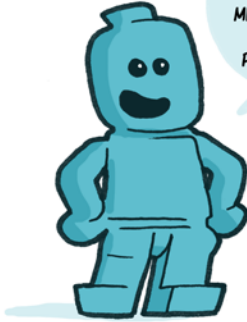
COME WITH ME IF YOU WANT TO KNOW HOW "DESMONTADOS" IS ACTUALLY MADE THE FIRST STEP IS--



PREPARATION

3 MONTHS FOR DEADLINE

THIS TIME I WON'T DO IT ALL LAST MINUTE! I'LL START TO WORK WITH PLENTY OF TIME!

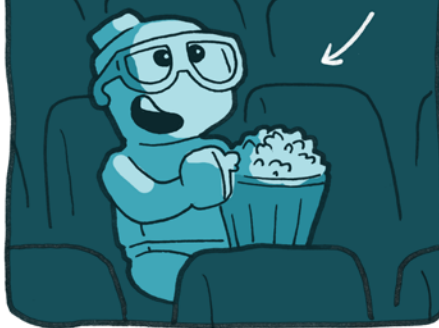


2 MONTHS FOR DEADLINE



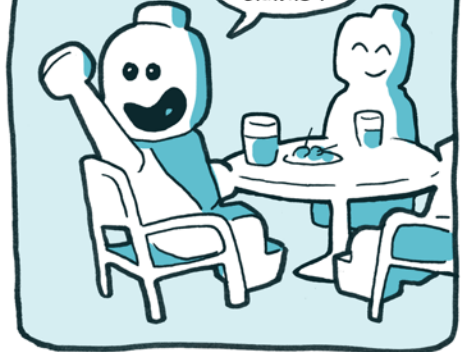
1 MONTH AND A HALF

DON'T GO TO THE FILMS IN 3D, IT'S BAD FOR THE WALLET



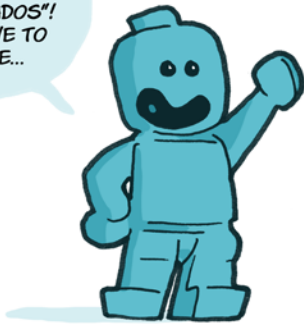
1 MONTH

WAITER, ONE MORE OF "PATATAS BRAVAS"!



2 WEEKS FOR DEADLINE

IT'S OKAY! I STILL HAVE TIME TO DO A GOOD "DESMONTADOS"! I JUST HAVE TO FIND THE...

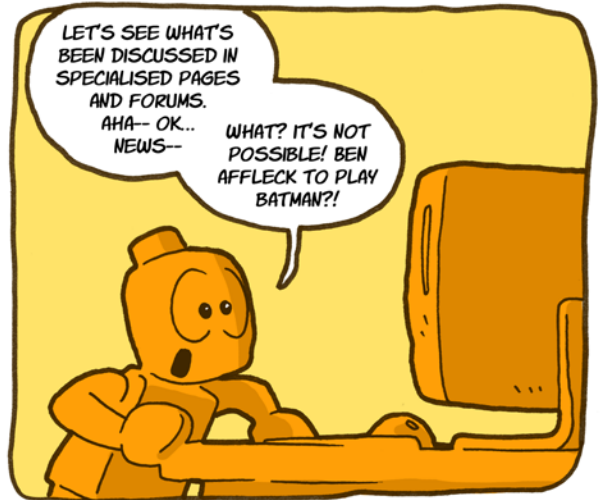


IDEA

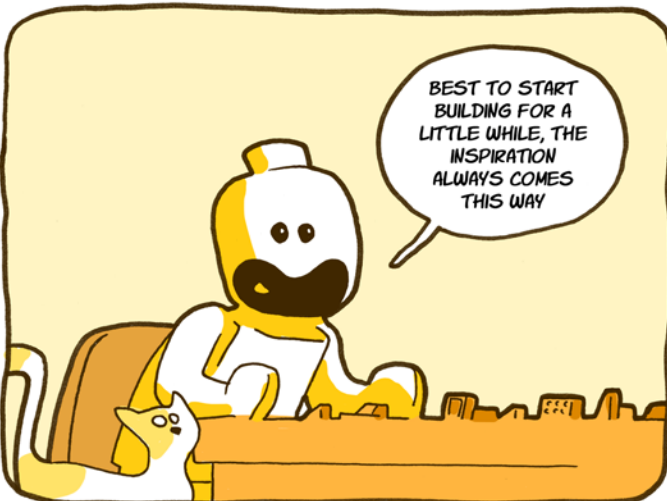
LET'S SEE WHAT'S BEEN DISCUSSED IN SPECIALISED PAGES AND FORUMS.

AHA-- OK... NEWS--

WHAT? IT'S NOT POSSIBLE! BEN AFFLECK TO PLAY BATMAN?!



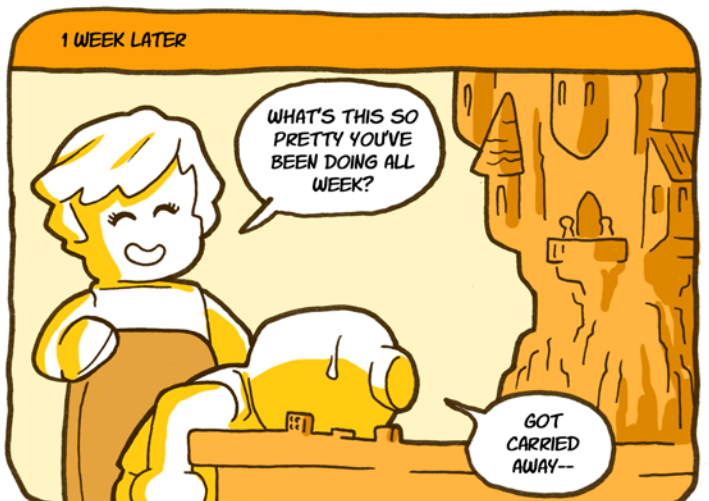
BEST TO START BUILDING FOR A LITTLE WHILE, THE INSPIRATION ALWAYS COMES THIS WAY



1 WEEK LATER

WHAT'S THIS SO PRETTY YOU'VE BEEN DOING ALL WEEK?

GOT CARRIED AWAY--



5 DAYS TO DEADLINE

ENOUGH, I MUST NOT WASTE ONE MORE MINUTE! I'LL GET ON IT RIGHT AWAY!



DIE, YOU DAMN SKELETON!

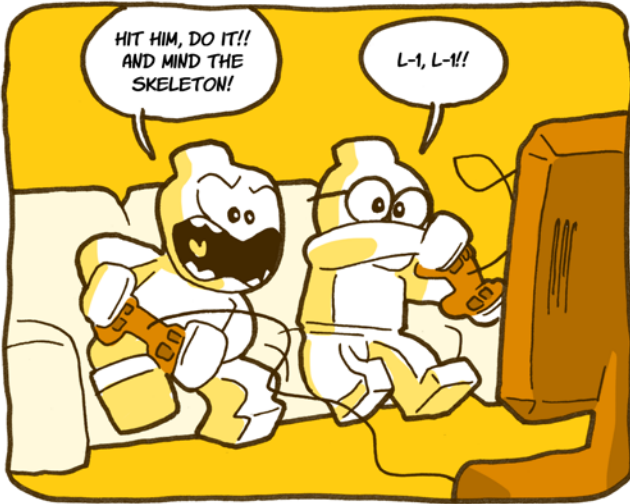


I KNOW! I'LL GO SEE MY BROTHER, HE ALWAYS HELPS ME POLISHING IDEAS!



HIT HIM, DO IT!! AND MIND THE SKELETON!

L-1, L-1!!



--THE ADAPTATION OF "CRIME AND PUNISHMENT" SUMMED-UP IN A ONE-PAGE VERSION THAT I'VE ALWAYS WANTED TO DO! I SHALL BUILD THE BACKGROUNDS TO BE ABLE TO DRAW THEM ALL REALISTICALLY UP UNTIL THE TINIEST DETAIL. EVERYTHING THAT I FEATURE WILL BE MOCS! NO SIMPLIFYING ANYTHING! AND EXTRAS, LOTS OF EXTRAS! I'M DRAWING EVEN THE LAST MINIFIG, BUT WITH TORSOS, HAIR AND ORIGINAL ACCESSORIES ALL OF THEM, I'M NOT MAKING UP ANY OF THEM THIS TIME. AND IT ALL WILL BE WRAPPED UP IN A STORY WITH SOCIAL CONNOTATIONS, GREAT CHARACTER ARCS AND TONS OF COMEDY. I EVEN HAVE AN IDEA TO INCLUDE THE LATEST SPACE NEWS THAT CAME OUT LAST WEEK!

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

GOOD LUCK--



AND WHY DON'T YOU DO ONE OF THOSE IDEAS YOU HAVE IN YOUR NOTEBOOK?

TO BE HONEST--



THIS MIGHT BE THE WORLD'S MOST USELESS NOTEBOOK. HERE I PUT ANY IDEA I THINK OF, AND WHEN I LOOK AT THEM AFTER SOME TIME HAS PASSED, I DON'T LIKE ANY OF THEM.

3 DAYS TO DEADLINE

-- I may have to deliver it one day late. I'm having a few little problems and--



DRAWING

FOR EACH ISSUE, I TRY TO DO SOMETHING DIFFERENT--

I FEEL INSPIRED TODAY, I SHALL GIVE THE LIGHTS A ALTERNATE TREATMENT AND A RADICALLY DIFFERENT STYLE, MORE ARTISTIC



I WENT TO A MUSEUM YESTERDAY, BUT I'LL BE OVER IT TOMORROW

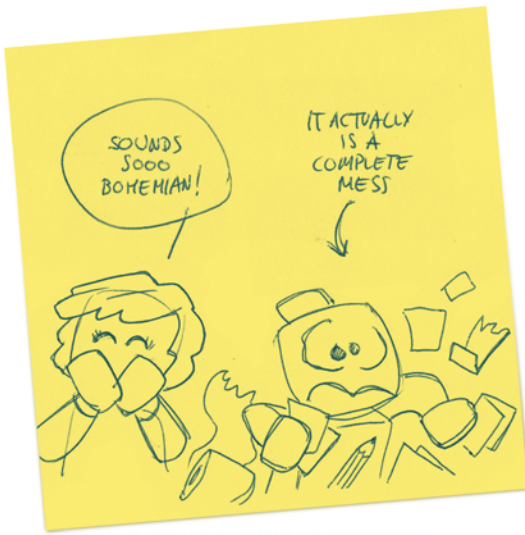
-- ALTHOUGH IT'S NOT ALWAYS POSSIBLE

AAARGH, I HAVE NO TIME NOW!! I'LL HAVE TO DO IT LIKE I ALWAYS DO!

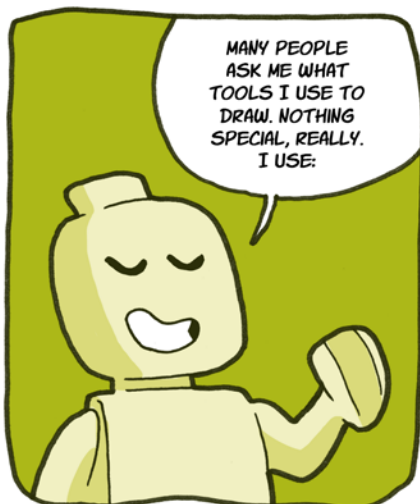
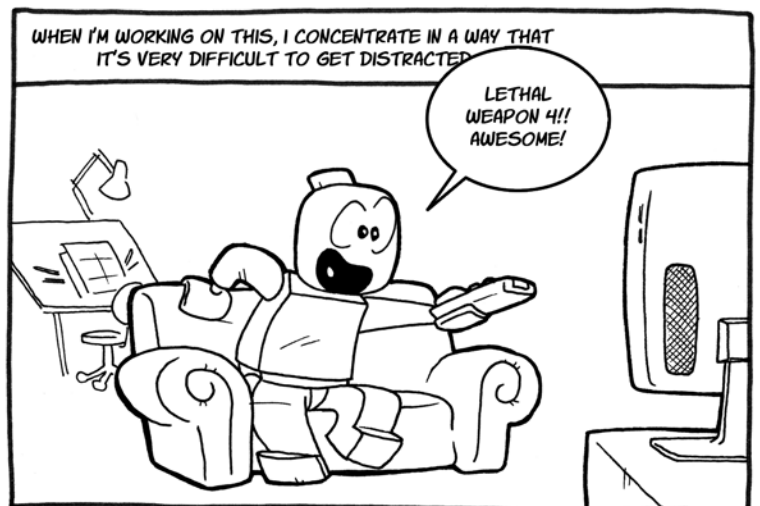
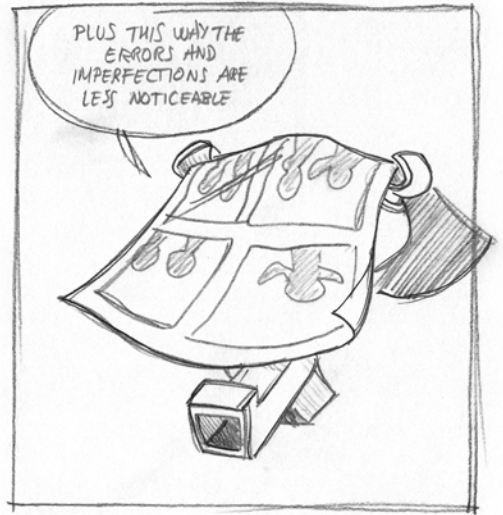
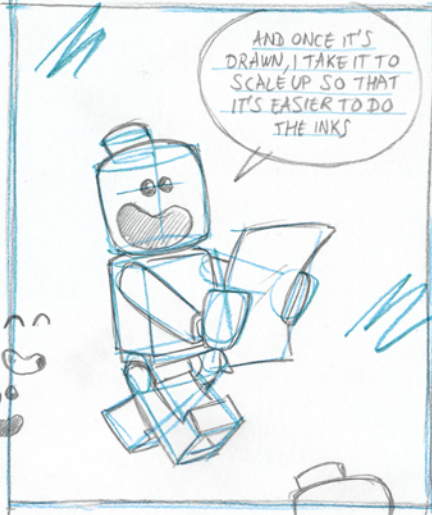
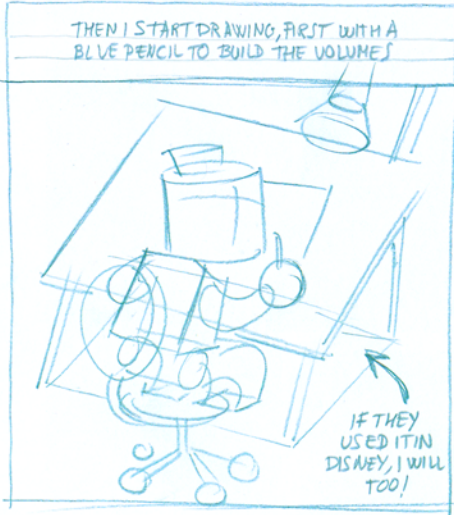


STILL SHOTS WITH WHITE BACKGROUND

THE FIRST THING I DO WHEN I HAVE THE IDEA DOWN IS TRYING TO GIVE IT GRAPHIC SHAPE, IN THE UNDERGROUND OR IN A CAFE: PAPERS SHEETS, NOTEBOOKS, PAPER NAPKINS, POST-ITS... ANYTHING GOES!



AND WHEN I FINALLY PUT ALL THIS IN ORDER, I TRANSFER IT TO A OUTRAGEOUSLY SMALL AND NOT VERY USEFUL STORYBOARD



SCANNER, PLACED IN THE CORNER AND THEREFORE PRONE TO ACCUMULATE GREAT AMOUNTS OF ENTROPY, PAPERS AND OTHER STUFF

COFFEE (OR TEA, IF THERE'S NO COFFEE LEFT)

I USE PHOTOSHOP TO COLOR, AND NEARLY ALWAYS WITH THE PRE-SET BRUSHES

TO DRAW I USE A BLUE PENCIL AND A 0.5 HB MECHANICAL PENCIL

ANCIENT GRAPHIC TABLET. I ESTIMATE I WON'T KNOW WHAT A CINTIQ IS UP UNTIL 2035 AT LEAST—

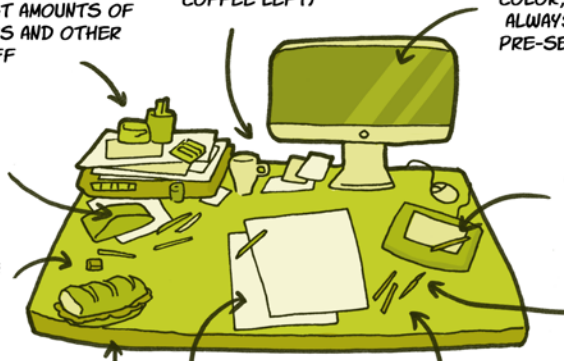
ONE OF THOSE ERASERS THAT MAKE THE PAPER GREASY AND DISGUSTING BEFORE ERASING

PENTEL BRUSH, THE ILLUSTRATOR'S BEST FRIEND

VERY IMPORTANT TO STAY HYDRATED

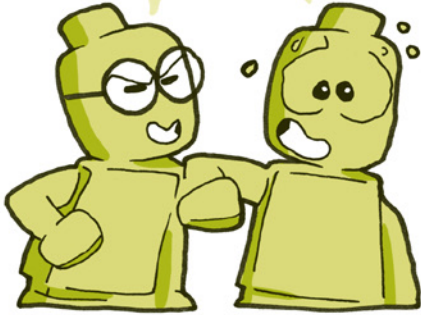
COMPLETELY NORMAL, CONVENTIONAL NORMAL PAPER

FOR THE INKS I USE PILOT TYPE OF MARKERS AND EDDING 1300



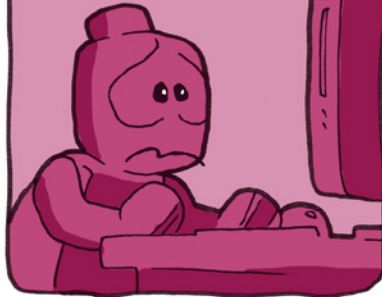
I BET NO ONE HAS EVER ASKED YOU THOUGH--

SHH--

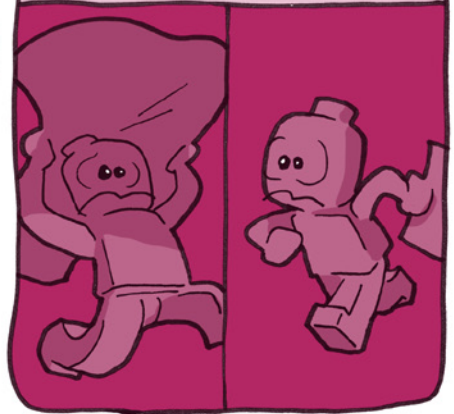


THE DAY OF THE DEADLINE

--in time, but don't worry, in just a couple of days at the latest--



ONCE INKED, SCALE IT BACK DOWN--



--TO BE ABLE TO SCAN IT



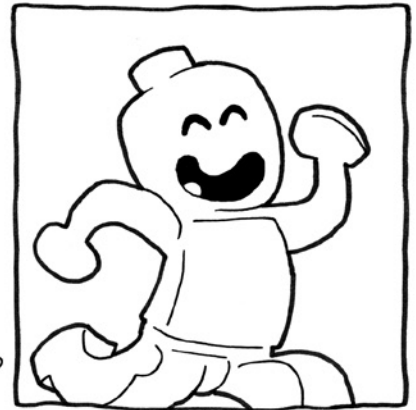
AND STILL NEEDS A BIT MORE WORK TO GO FROM THIS--



* DRAMATISED SCENE

--TO THIS

AND SO WE ARRIVE AT THE LAST STEP--

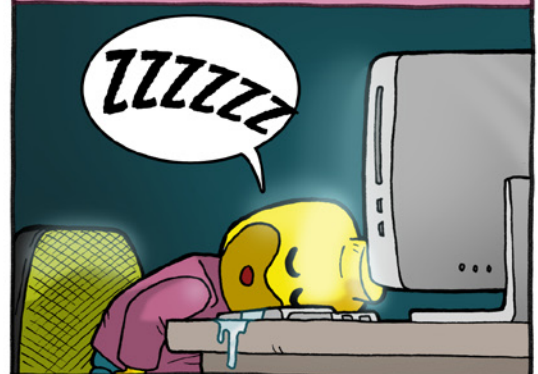


COLOR

I DO THE COLOR IN TWO PARTS. FIRST I GIVE A BASE COLOR TO ALL THE ELEMENTS IN THE PAGE



SECOND: APPLY LIGHTS, SHADES AND COMPOSE THE TEXT BALOONS



5 DAYS AFTER THE DEADLINE, AND AFTER DEALING WITH THE USUAL SETBACKS--

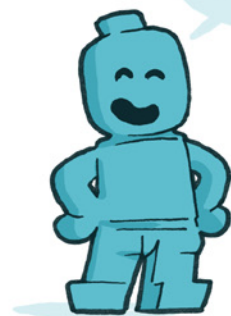


-- I ONLY NEED TO SEND THE FINISHED PAGE

--sorry I'm late, but don't worry, the next one will be ready in time, because--



THIS TIME I WON'T DO IT ALL LAST MINUTE!



Jesús