

I grew up in Savigny-lès-Beaune, my grandfather and his father (my mother's grandfather) were winemakers.



I'm Émile the great great grand-father, I was *champagnisateur* in Savigny.

So, I bought this old convent on 'rue du Jarron' for its large cellar!

My grand-parent's house.

I lived here with my parents until I was 4. 30m² (320ft²), no bathroom and toilet over across the courtyard.

My grand uncle lived there.

The cellars were my favourite place to play when I was a kid. I learned how to walk and ride a bike around the cases and palettes in the courtyard above them.



When you grow up you will make vin and cremant. You're the lucky one, Fred, since you are the oldest of your siblings and all cousins you'll be the first who can choose.



Actually, I wanted to be a veterinarian in Africa because of the series "Daktari."



Or why not Indiana Jones.

After majoring in biology in high school I said "No!" (thank you) and went to the École des Beaux-Arts in Beaune. It was two of my cousins that took over the "Parigot-Richard" vineyards.

But what do I tell people?!



... is what my mother said when I told her I'd dropped out of vet school.

During the whole 18 years that I've been creating children's books and graphic novels I've wanted to write

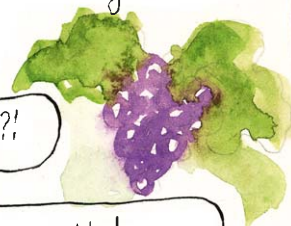
and illustrate a book on wine in the spirit of my travelogues with my grandfather.

Ach! Forget it! Wine is to be drunk not read!



What are you going to say?! It's all been said.

Besides wine has become snobby!



My grandfather used to say that "snobbisme is class for jerks..." - that wine should have stayed simple. He's 90 now and still doesn't want to write the book with me. His name is Bernard Richard and he is stubborn...

You could at least write a short preface for me...



What do you want me to say???

There you go; my short preface.



WINE IS MY LIFE!

We'll see, Fred! But hurry up...

So I'm doing it...

MOUTHWATERING

A few years ago my grandfather was having dinner with his three daughters and during the meal he started to choke quite seriously,



Something wasn't going down, or the trachea was blocked, we couldn't tell which, but it went on and on...



My mother and aunts started to panic when their father started to turn blue, gasping for air,



They decide to lie him down and try and get him to drink a glass of water, but he didn't let them, stubborn!



They were insisting, then suddenly in one brisk move

SCHBLINK!!!



He threw the glass of water against the wall! He managed to get air and tried to say something...



They held his hand, caressed his face and slowly but surely my grandfather got better

You seem better now?

HFI

HFI

You gave us a scare,

You seem better now?

You gave
us a
scare,

The he gets up, looks his daughters and yells:
HAVE YOU LOST YOUR MINDS?!!

^{S=} HAVE YOU LOST YOUR MINDS?!!

HF

4/21

HT!

A cartoon illustration of a man with a large nose and a red jacket, shouting at two children in a kitchen. A speech bubble above him reads: "I NEARLY CROAKED AND YOU OFFERD ME WATER!!!". The man has a frustrated expression. The children, a boy with blonde hair and a girl with brown hair, look up at him. The kitchen background includes a counter with a green bottle and a brown stool.

A cartoon illustration of a man in a red jacket shouting, "NEXT TIME REMEMBER THAT I WANT TO DIE WITH WINE IN MY MOUTH!!! IS THAT UNDERSTAND??!" He is pointing his finger. A speech bubble from the left says "Dad!!!" and a speech bubble from the right says "Your glasses!!!". A hand is shown holding a green glass of wine.

Dad

Your glasses

A cartoon illustration of a man sitting at a table, looking up at three women standing behind him. The man has a speech bubble saying "Gotta be kidding...". One woman has a speech bubble saying "Come on girls bring out the cheese." The other two women have speech bubbles with "?! " and "? " respectively. The man is holding a glass and looking confused.

Come on girls
bring out
the cheese.

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?

When my mother told me the story she added:

Your grandfather's pretty serious when it comes to his wine...

Your grandfather's pretty serious when it comes to his wine...

Fred

Just a small example of the complexity in a (small) Burgundian village! Savigny-lès-Beaune (pop. 1400) has about 750 acres of Pinot Noir (about 320 acres of that are 1er Cru) and 100 acres of Pinot Blanc and Chardonnay (about 30 acres of that are 1er Cru).
List of the "climats" considered as 1er Cru:

Aux Clous
Aux Fourneaux
Aux Gravains
Aux Guettes
Aux Serpentières
Basses Vergelesses
Bataillière
Champ Gevrey
La Dominode
Les Charmières
Les Hauts-Jarrous
Les Lavières
Les Marconnets
Les Narbantons
Les Penillets
Les Rouvrettes
Les Talmettes
Les Vergelesses
Petits Godeaux
Redrescul

You're forgotten
les Hauts Marconnets
and Les Jarrous!

22 in
all!

That's
22!

And of course no
sign, nothing
indicating these
parcels, you need
a map and to
count rows to
find them! I
don't know them
all. My parent's
adress, for
example is, Les
Saucours, towards
Les Redrescul.
Easy to remember!

Aux Champs Chardons
Aux Champs des pruniers
Aux Fourches
Aux Grands Liards
Aux Petits Liards
Aux Pointes
Dessus de Montchemevoy
Dessus les Gollardes
Ez Connardises
Grands Picotins
Guettetes
Le Village
Les Bas Liards
Les Bourgeois
Les Godeaux
Les Gollardes
Les Goudelettes
Les Petits Picotins
Les Penillets
Les Pimentiers
Les Planchots de la Champagne
Les Planchots du Nord
Les Prévaux
Les Ratausses
Les Saucours, Les Vermots
Moutier Amet et Roichottes

There's Le
Dessus Les
Vermots?!

And Les
Boutières?!

😊 And that's that!



My grandfather's memories of the war are totally hostile and irreparable.



When he brings them up he easily goes from laughter to tears.

During the Occupation there was a curfew every night in the village...



With 4 to 6 German soldiers at a time making rounds in the streets until dawn.



We would hide out and then meet up secretly in the cellars and hang out together sometimes even with some girls.



We usually ran out of supplies so we'd sneak back out and search for the bottles that we had hidden around the town.



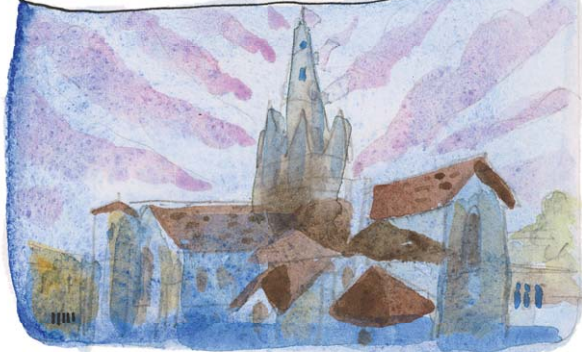
The street lights were out and we hugged the walls keeping to the shadows, snickering like donkeys.



We tried to work out the schedule for the rounds but since we were drinking, we usually got it wrong so we'd listen for the sound of their boots in the streets...



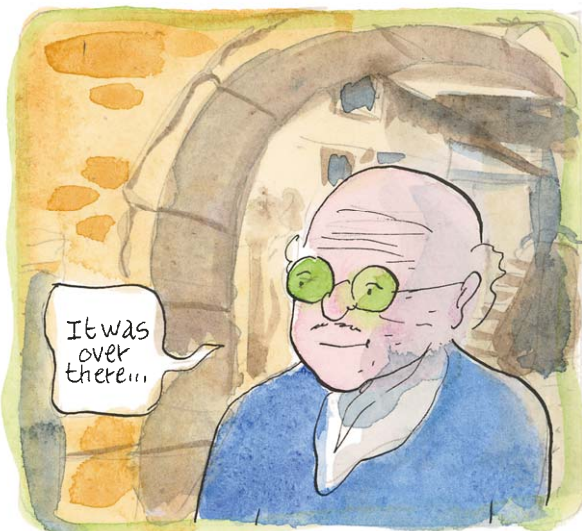
Scared yet giggling we'd watch them go by, drunk on wine and fear. We foolishly risked our lives for a few more hours of fun.



We never got caught, they were horrible yet good times at the same time. We were 20... and had an incredible need to do stupid things and laugh a lot.



It was over there...



No, the big shock came, like it did to everyone else, in leaving Berlin as our truck passed the lines of people who had been in the camps.



All those walking skeletons in pyjamas falling to their knees as we passed... I couldn't tell if they wanted to thank us, plead to us or curse us or if they were cheering us on in silence...



LIVING PROOF



For my grandfather, like for all the experts, 1929 was the year of years of 20th century! While the stock market in New York was imploding the grape harvest in Burgundy was booming thanks to the excellent weather. The fruit was rich in sugar without any maladies what-so-ever. Cherry in the bottle, it was the year my grandfather's little brother was born. So they invested, they saved bottles, lots of them, for as long as possible...

