

CY, O'NER

comics as eyewitness

October 2020

Sri Lanka

Armenia

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Mauritania

Colombia

front line defenders



Colombia

Guardia Indígena de Cauca

The winner of the Americas regional award, the Guardia Indígena del Cauca (Indigenous Guard of Cauca) - Kiwe Thegnas (Defenders of Life and Territory), is a community life and ancestral resistance composed of women, men, boys and girls who defend their territories in a peaceful, unarmed way. It was created in the violent region of Cauca in southwestern Colombia, and in 2001 began operating as an organized collective. The majority of the indigenous guards belong to the Nasa indigenous group, which is the largest and most organised, and they have trained other communities throughout Colombia over the years to defend their own territories. Their communities have been subjected to multiple forms of violence resulting from the presence of armed actors, the drug trafficking economy and multinational exploitation.

Over the last three years Colombia has been the most lethal country in the world for human rights defenders, and this, despite a peace agreement between the government and the FARC coming into force. Among the most vulnerable are land and indigenous peoples' rights defenders. The Guardia have suffered attacks against and killings of its members, and face a myriad of threats from the army and other state agencies, as well as narco-trafficking and other criminal groups.

Artist: Michael Guetio
[Instagram](#)

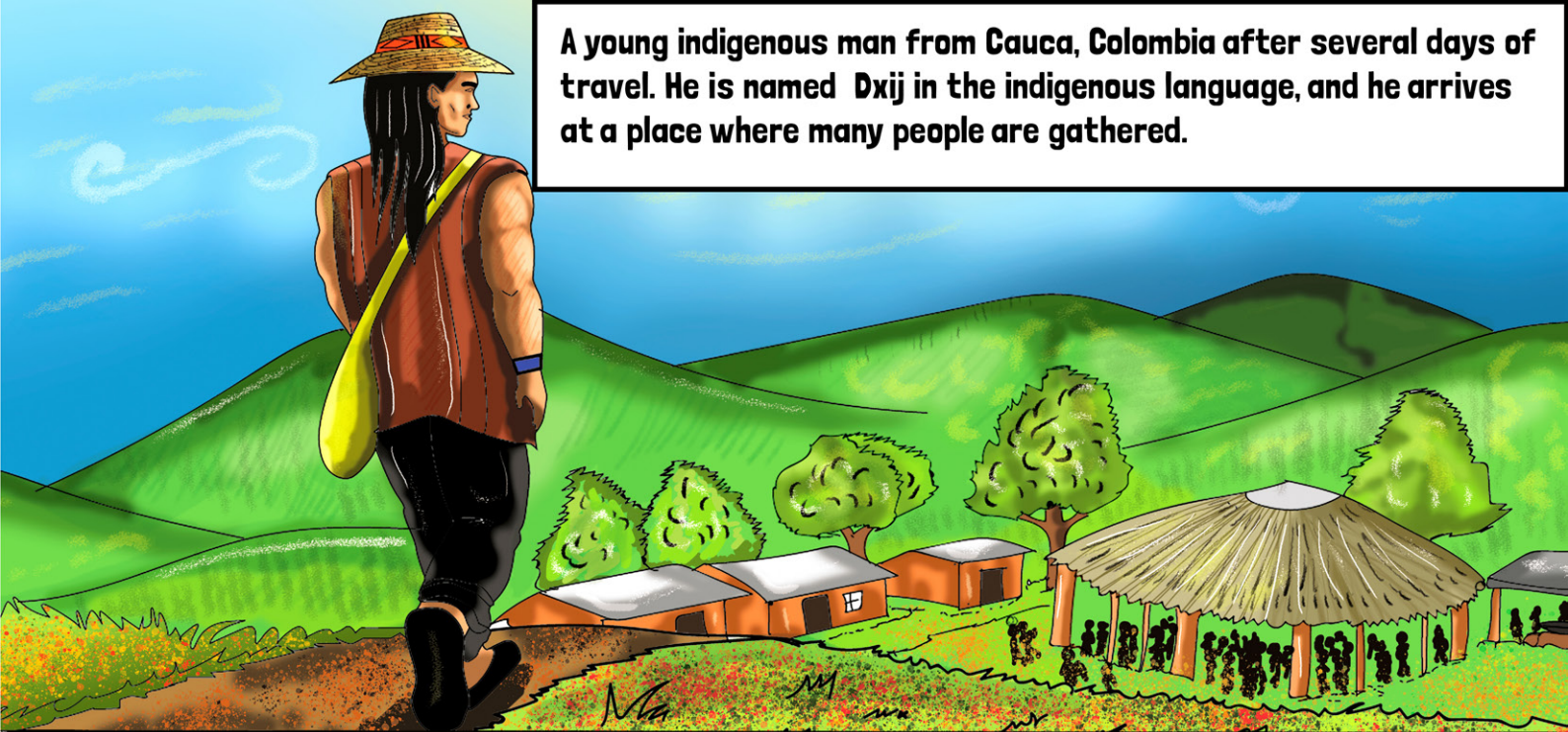
Espíritu del viento

Spirit of the Wind

THINGS



A young indigenous man from Cauca, Colombia after several days of travel. He is named Dxi in the indigenous language, and he arrives at a place where many people are gathered.



Edwin Dagua Ipia, the community leader, looks at the newcomer and admires his traditional dress.



Our friend has good energy and appears to be a good leader.

OK, let's end the meeting. Now put on some music!



At night ...



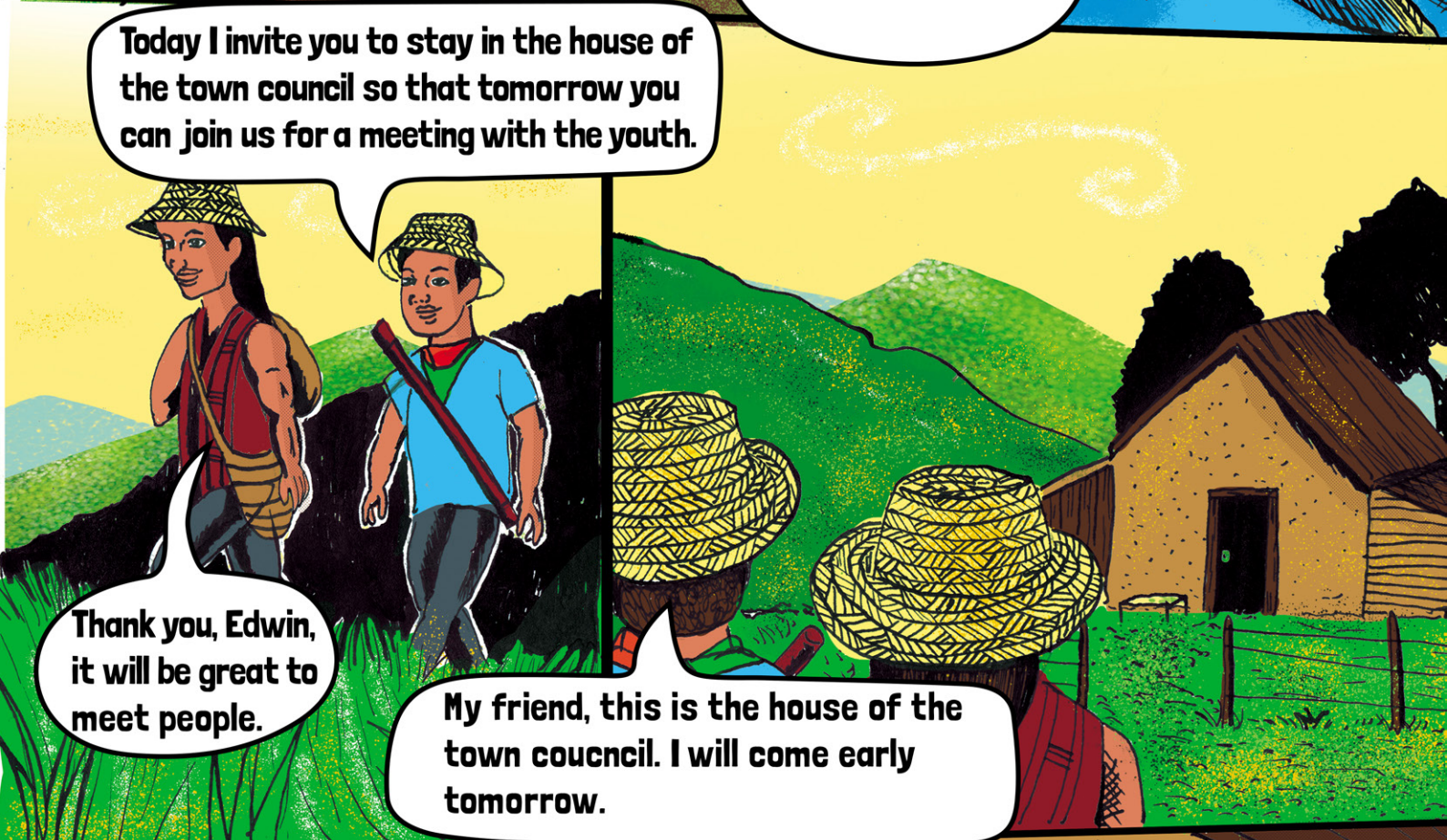
Welcome, comrade. Where are you from?

From high up in the mountains and I'm going to the capital.



Have you been a community leader for long?

Since I can remember, I have been involved in the process of activating Guardia youth.



Today I invite you to stay in the house of the town council so that tomorrow you can join us for a meeting with the youth.

Thank you, Edwin, it will be great to meet people.

My friend, this is the house of the town council. I will come early tomorrow.



In the morning ...



Let me introduce DxiJ who comes from the upper mountains.

Welcome, comrade, how nice you are here. I am Jimmy, coordinator of the Guardia.

Great to meet you!

Later that day...



Well, comrades, it is time to assess the situation in the territory.

Our territory is going through a very difficult time. The illegal crops have brought armed groups that attack our community. We must deal with this problem.





After the death of my parents, I am on my way to the capital to find my brother.



Edwin!

An armed group took one of our men and want to kill him.



Call all the community, we must rescue him.



If you don't want to plant marijuana the easy way, then you'll pay a price!





Easy, comrade, we are here.

We are the Guardia Indígena (Indigenous Guard) in this territory and I am an authority.



And what are you going to do with your little sticks? Tap us?



We are peaceful. But if we have to remove you from the territory, we will.

Outnumbered, the armed group retreats.



Comrade Edwin, I don't have a good feeling. It is better to sit and ask for strength from the spirits (ritual) ceremony.

It is better to leave, those Indians were brave.



The situation is not good. We must prepare to face problems.



Be careful, Edwin. This is already known. We must gather the community.



Calm Edwin, this was already known we must bring the community together.



Your days are numbered!



We'll go alert the Guardia in order to take control of the territory.



Another threat has been sent to the community. We must be vigilant all over our territory.



Many thanks, comrades, for accompanying me. See you tomorrow.

They want us to be weak and silent, but we cannot be silent. It is time to raise our sticks and defend our territory.

At night ...



Good night. When you will go, tell us and we will come.

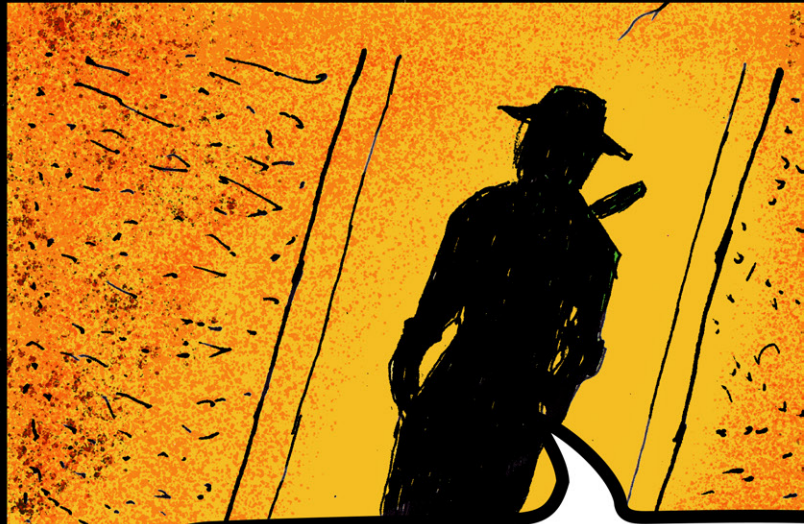


We have to take care of our leaders.


In the morning ...



The community is worried but if I'm wrong, everyone is wrong




I must not be afraid. I must go forward to make my community strong.



The strength of the community is its unity and in our beliefs.

We'll see if he's got courage.


Now we'll see if he is so brave when he's alone.




Let's see if he is still brave without his people?



and if we allow this, it'll grow out of control!



Because of you, people are making trouble for us.



I was born and raised a rebel and will die a rebel, defending my culture and my community.



Edwin is gone but his legacy and his story will go on in the strength of the Guardia and the organization of our community.

defending my culture and my community.



"I was born and raised a rebel, I was forged in the harshness of life. I believe that you can change the present in which we live for a better future. I don't have much, but I am happy with what I have. I don't follow denominations, nor political colors, I am not from the right or the left. I am from below, from those who make fun of those above, proudly Nasa of the Huellas Indigenous Reservation."



This is a work recognized and protected by the traditional authorities of the Cerro Tijeras Reservation, Article 7 of the Constitution of Colombia of 1991, convention 169 OIT of 1989, ratified by Law 21 of 1991, UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples 2007, Law 89 of 1890.

Thank you for joining us in the first chapter of 'Thegza'.



Municipio de Suárez Cauca



Find us online



frontlinedefenders.org/cypher

