

THREE CLOSE READS FOR GRAPHIC BIOS - INTRODUCTION

HOW TO READ COMICS:

AN INTRODUCTION WITH DR. TREVOR GETZ

OH, HELLO THERE.
YOU'RE ABOUT TO READ
A COMIC.

WHETHER YOU'VE NEVER
OPENED A COMIC BOOK IN YOUR
LIFE OR IF YOU'VE SPENT THE LAST
DECADE COLLECTING THEM, I'M HERE
TO TEACH YOU MORE ABOUT
HOW TO READ COMICS.

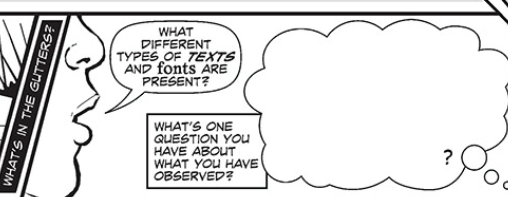

YOU MAY WANT TO WORK THROUGH
SOME OF THE PAGES THAT FOLLOW,
OR ALL OF THEM. IT MAY BE OVERWHELMING,
BUT JUST TAKE AWAY WHAT WILL HELP YOU!

THIS IS OUR
"THREE CLOSE READS
FOR GRAPHIC BIOGRAPHIES"
TOOL. MAKE SURE YOU
OPEN IT WHENEVER YOU
START READING
A COMIC.

IT WILL
HELP YOU KEEP
TRACK OF YOUR IDEAS
AS YOU READ THE COMIC
AT THREE DIFFERENT
LEVELS: **OBSERVE**,
UNDERSTAND, AND
CONNECT.

NOW, LET'S
GET STARTED.
THERE'S A COMIC
ON THE NEXT
PAGE.

LET'S GO
READ IT.

READ 1: OBSERVE	FIRST, SKIM ONLY THE PICTURES AND THEN JUST THE WORDS. WHAT'S THE FIRST THING YOU NOTICE?		
IN THIS FIRST READ, YOU DON'T NEED TO WRITE ANYTHING DOWN. SIMPLY OBSERVE. IF YOU WANT TO TAKE NOTES, USE A PIECE OF SCRAP PAPER.	 WHAT SHAPES AND COLORS ARE MOST NOTICEABLE IN AND AROUND THE PANELS? HOW DID YOU KNOW WHERE TO START AND WHICH DIRECTION TO READ? <i>WHAT'S IN THE GUTTERS?</i>	WHAT'S ONE QUESTION YOU HAVE ABOUT WHAT YOU HAVE OBSERVED?	
READ 2: UNDERSTAND	IN ONE SENTENCE OR ONE PICTURE, WHAT IS THE MAIN IDEA OF THE COMIC?	DESCRIBE, DRAW, OR CUT-AND-PASTE TWO PIECES OF EVIDENCE THAT TELL YOU WHAT THE CREATOR'S MAIN IDEA IS.	REMEMBER, EVIDENCE CAN INCLUDE STUFF LIKE TEXT, IMAGES, DESIGN ELEMENTS, USE OF COLOR, ETC....
READ 3: CONNECT	WHAT DID YOU LEARN ABOUT THIS PERSON'S LIFE?		
	HOW DOES THIS PERSON'S LIFE CONNECT TO WHAT YOU'RE LEARNING?		



OTTLIE BAADER 1847-1925

LIKE MANY PEOPLE DURING THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION, OTTLIE BAADER (1847-1925) LIVED A LIFE OF WORK. SHE WAS ALSO A LEADER OF MOVEMENTS TO REFORM LABOR, FIRST IN HER OWN COMMUNITY, AND THEN ACROSS THE COUNTRY OF GERMANY.

OTTLIE BAADER WAS BORN IN 1847. HER FATHER WORKED IN A FACTORY.

OTTLIE DID NOT ATTEND SCHOOL UNTIL THE AGE OF 10. SHE LEARNED TO READ, WRITE, AND DO BASIC MATH.

"THE GIRLS THERE WERE EDUCATED ABOVE ALL TO HAVE GOOD MANNERS. THE IDEAL WOMAN OF THE TIME WAS GENTLE, TENDER, AND SWEET."

AUTHOR TREVOR R. GETZ

ARTIST LIZ CLARKE

BUT HER MOTHER DIED OF THE FLU, AND SHE HAD TO GO TO WORK AT 13 TO SUPPORT THE FAMILY AS A SEAMSTRESS, WORKING TWELVE HOURS A DAY AND THEN TAKING ON EXTRA SMALL JOBS IN THE EVENING.

"THERE WAS NO NEED FOR ANY BIG FAMILY MEETING TO CHOOSE THE RIGHT JOB FOR ME, BECAUSE THERE WASN'T MUCH CHOICE FOR GIRLS IN THOSE DAYS."

EVENTUALLY, SHE GOT A JOB IN A WOOL FACTORY. CONDITIONS WERE TERRIBLE. THE MACHINES WERE DANGEROUS. THE AIR WAS HEAVILY POLLUTED. FREQUENTLY, AFTER A FULL DAY SHIFT, THEY HAD TO WORK AT NIGHT AS WELL.

"I WAS SO MISERABLE THAT I STOOD AT THE MACHINE HALF LIKE A CORPSE."

AROUND 1871, WAGES WERE CUT. OTTLIE AND OTHER WOMEN REFUSED TO WORK UNTIL THEIR WAGES WENT BACK UP.

NOW A LABOR ORGANIZER, OTTLIE PUT HER BASIC EDUCATION TO GOOD USE. SHE WROTE FOR THE MAGAZINE *EQUALITY* AND LOBBIED FOR WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE, THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN, AND LABOR RIGHTS.

SHE DIED IN 1925, AFTER A LIFETIME AS AN INDUSTRIAL WORKER.

FROM CHILDHOOD ON MY LIFE HAS BEEN ALL WORK, AND EVERYTHING THAT I RELATE HERE IS BASED ON THIS LIFE OF WORK AND CAN ONLY BE UNDERSTOOD ON THIS BASIS.

THERE IS NOTHING UNUSUAL ABOUT MY LIFE. THOUSANDS OF WORKING GIRLS OF MY TIME LIVED AND WORKED JUST AS I DID.

...DID YOU GET ALL THAT?

DON'T PANIC!

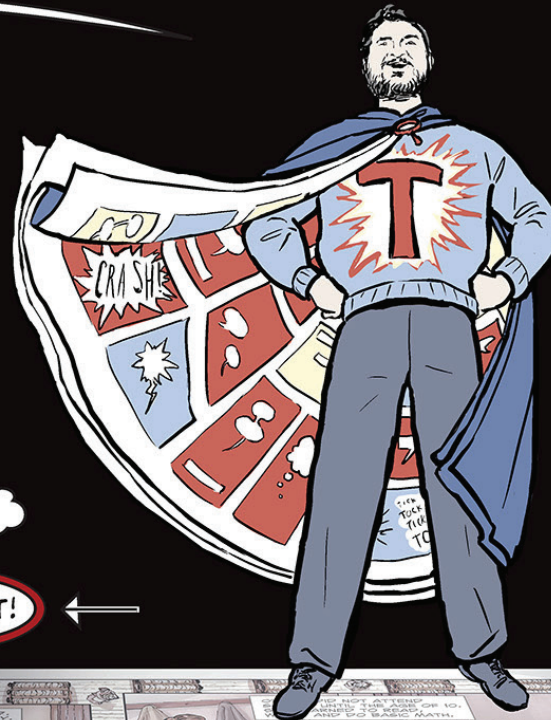
YOU DON'T NEED TO BE A SUPERHERO TO READ COMICS. IT'S HARD WORK, AND YOU HAVEN'T BEEN TRAINED YET.

ON THE NEXT PAGES, I'M GOING TO WALK YOU THROUGH THE THREE STEPS OF READING A COMIC...

OBSERVE

UNDERSTAND

CONNECT!

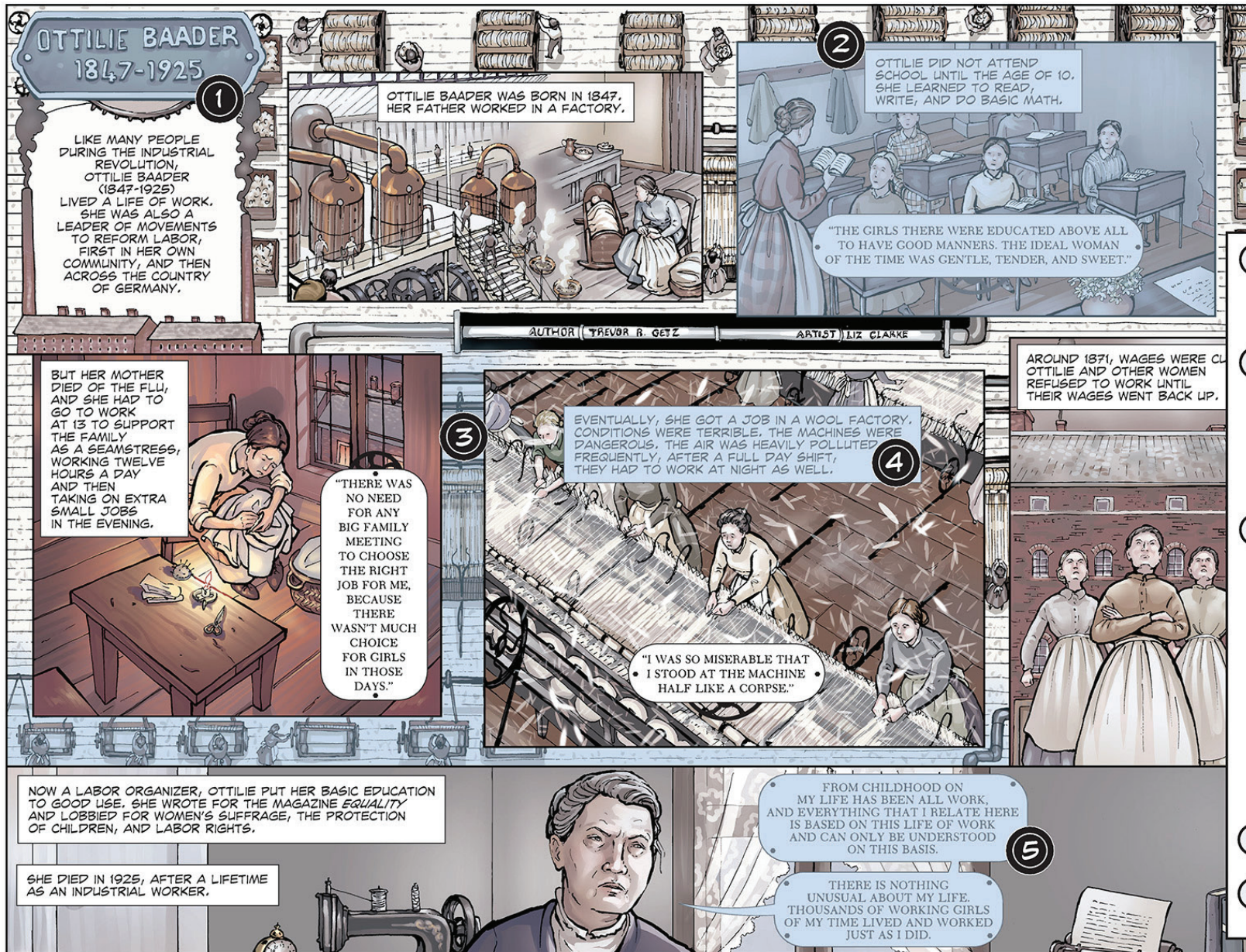


WE'RE GOING TO SPEND THE MOST TIME ON "OBSERVE"—THAT'S WHEN YOU LOOK AT THE ELEMENTS OF A COMIC AND BEGIN TO FIGURE OUT WHAT'S GOING ON.

NOW, OPEN YOUR THREE CLOSE READS TOOL AND I'M GOING TO EXPLAIN THE STEPS I TAKE WHENEVER I LOOK AT A COMIC FOR THE FIRST TIME.



READ 1: OBSERVE



EVERY COMIC IS DIFFERENT, BUT HERE ARE SOME BASIC TERMS TO GET YOU STARTED!



- 1 **TITLE**
-THIS TELLS YOU WHAT THE COMIC IS ABOUT, AND IN THIS CASE, WHEN IT HAPPENED.
- 2 **PANELS**
-EVERY PAGE OF A COMIC IS DIVIDED INTO PANELS. THE SHAPE AND POSITIONING OF THE PANELS CAN COMMUNICATE DIFFERENT THINGS. THERE CAN BE MANY PANELS OR JUST ONE ON A PAGE.
- 3 **GUTTERS**
-THE SPACE BETWEEN PANELS. GUTTERS DIVIDE THE STORY INTO PIECES. IN THIS COMIC, THE GUTTERS ARE FILLED WITH INDUSTRIAL MACHINERY AND PIPES, WHICH SHOW YOU THE DIRECTION YOU SHOULD READ.
- TEXT**
-TEXT IS PLACED IN BALLOONS. THE APPEARANCE OF THE BALLOONS AND THE LETTERING HELP US. THESE MAY INCLUDE
- 4 **EXPOSITORY TEXT (NARRATION)**
AS WELL AS
- 5 **SPEECH OR THOUGHT BALLOONS.**

READ 1: OBSERVE

ALL THESE **COMIC ELEMENTS** GET PUT TOGETHER INTO A **SEQUENCE**—TO BE READ FROM BEGINNING TO END.

LET'S START WITH THE **PAGE DESIGN**. THIS PAGE HAS MUTED **COLORS**, SIGNIFYING A DULL INDUSTRIAL LIFE AND LANDSCAPE. THERE ARE ALSO OTHER INDUSTRIAL ELEMENTS, LIKE **PIPES**, **MACHINES**, AND **WORKERS**.



OTTILIE BAADER 1847-1925

LIKE MANY PEOPLE DURING THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION, BAADER (1925) WAS ALSO A MEMBER OF MOVEMENTS TO REFORM LABOR, FIRST IN HER OWN COMMUNITY, AND THEN ACROSS THE COUNTRY OF GERMANY.

OTTILIE BAADER WAS BORN IN 1847. HER FATHER WORKED IN A FACTORY.

OTTILIE DID NOT ATTEND SCHOOL UNTIL THE AGE OF 10. SHE LEARNED TO READ, WRITE, AND DO BASIC MATH.

"THE GIRLS THERE WERE EDUCATED ABOUT HOW TO HAVE GOOD MANNERS. THE IDEAL WOMAN OF THE TIME WAS GENTLE, TENDER, AND SWEET."

AUTHOR (TREVOR R. GETZ) ARTIST (LIZ CLARKE)

BUT HER MOTHER DIED OF THE FLU, AND SHE HAD TO GO TO WORK AT 13 TO SUPPORT THE FAMILY AS A SEAMSTRESS, WORKING TWELVE HOURS A DAY AND THEN TAKING ON EXTRA SMALL JOBS IN THE EVENING.

"I WAS SO MISERABLE THAT I STOOD AT THE MACHINE HALF LIKE A CORPSE."

AROUND 1871, WAGES WERE CUT. OTTILIE AND OTHER WOMEN REFUSED TO WORK UNTIL THEIR WAGES WENT BACK UP.

NOW A LABOR ORGANIZER, OTTILIE PUT HER BASIC EDUCATION TO GOOD USE. SHE WROTE FOR THE MAGAZINE *EQUALITY* AND LOBBIED FOR WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE, THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN, AND LABOR RIGHTS.

SHE DIED IN 1925, AFTER A LIFETIME AS AN INDUSTRIAL WORKER.

FROM CHILDHOOD ON MY LIFE HAS BEEN ALL WORK, AND EVERYTHING THAT I RELATE HERE IS BASED ON THIS LIFE OF WORK AND CAN ONLY BE UNDERSTOOD ON THIS BASIS.

THERE IS NOTHING UNUSUAL ABOUT MY LIFE. THOUSANDS OF WORKING GIRLS OF MY TIME LIVED AND WORKED JUST AS I DID.

THE CREATOR TELLS US HOW TO READ THIS PAGE USING PIPES IN THE **GUTTERS** TO CONNECT **PANELS**.

READ 1: OBSERVE

THE CREATOR OF A COMIC MAKES LOTS OF CHOICES TO ASSEMBLE THE ELEMENTS TOGETHER.

MOST OF THE ACTION IN ANY COMIC TAKES PLACE IN **PANELS**, WHICH COMBINE ART AND TEXT.

THIS PANEL INTRODUCES YOU TO THE SUBJECT OF THE STORY. OTHER PANELS DO OTHER WORK...

GUTTERS ARE THE PLACE WHERE YOU, THE READER, DO YOUR THINKING TO CONNECT ONE PANEL TO ANOTHER. THAT MAKES YOU A CO-CREATOR!



THE CREATOR VARIES THE SHAPE OF THE **BALLOONS**, THE FONT, AND OTHER ELEMENTS AS PART OF THE DESIGN TO HELP THE READER.

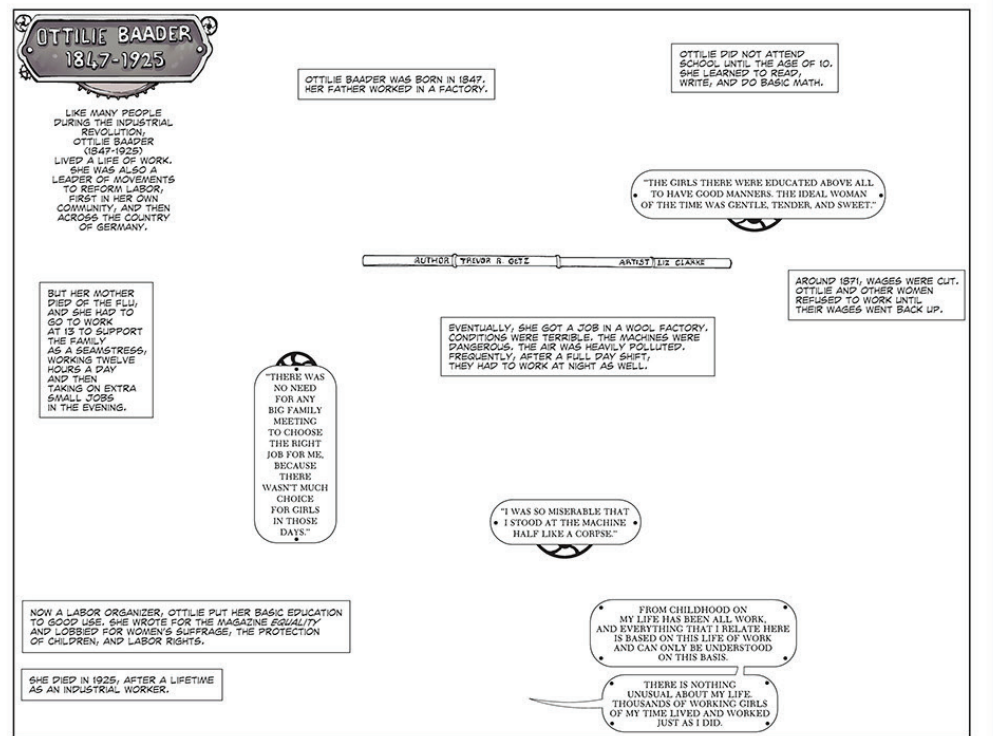
IN THIS PANEL, TWO VOICES ARE PRESENT-THE NARRATOR (SQUARE, SANS SERIF) AND BAADER HERSELF (OVAL, SERIF, LOOKS LIKE AN INDUSTRIAL LABEL).

READ 1: OBSERVE

ONE LAST TIP
FOR OUR FIRST READ:
SOMETIMES, I LIKE TO BEGIN
BY ONLY LOOKING AT THE
PICTURES OF A COMIC PAGE.
WHAT DOES THE **ART** BY
ITSELF TELL ME...?



THEN, I LOOK AT
ONLY THE TEXT, IGNORING
ALL THE ART AND FOCUSING
ON THE **WORDS**.



BUT REALLY, NEITHER **TEXT** NOR **ART** ALONE
ARE ENOUGH. COMICS MAKE MEANING BY
COMBINING ART AND TEXT. WHEN YOU LOOK AT
ART AND TEXT TOGETHER, THEN YOU CAN BEGIN
TO **UNDERSTAND** THE MEANING AND
ARGUMENT OF A GRAPHIC BIOGRAPHY.

AND THAT BRINGS US TO
THE END OF OUR FIRST READ.

READ 2: UNDERSTAND

READ 2: "UNDERSTAND" IS ALL ABOUT FINDING EVIDENCE IN THE COMIC THAT TELLS YOU WHAT THE CREATORS' ARGUMENT IS.

LET'S LOOK AT HOW THE CREATORS BUILD BAADER'S STORY, USING HER OWN WORDS AND THEIR NARRATION. WE ALREADY KNOW THAT THEY START WITH SOME HISTORICAL BACKGROUND.

LIKE MANY PEOPLE DURING THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION, OTTILIE BAADER (1847-1925) LIVED A LIFE OF WORK. SHE WAS ALSO A LEADER OF MOVEMENTS TO REFORM LABOR, FIRST IN HER OWN COMMUNITY, AND THEN ACROSS THE COUNTRY OF GERMANY.

OTTILIE BAADER WAS BORN IN 1847. HER FATHER WORKED IN A FACTORY.

NEXT, HER EARLY LIFE IS DESCRIBED-IN A FEW WORDS, BUT AN IMAGE OF HER HOME AND FACTORY DOES MOST OF THE DESCRIBING.

OTTILIE DID NOT ATTEND SCHOOL UNTIL THE AGE OF 10. SHE LEARNED TO READ, WRITE, AND DO BASIC MATH.

IN THIS **PANEL**, THE STORY STARTS GETTING COMPLICATED. THE CREATOR TELLS US SOMETHING, BUT BAADER COMPLICATES IT BY ADDING HER OWN **VOICE**.

"THE GIRLS THERE WERE EDUCATED ABOVE ALL TO HAVE GOOD MANNERS. THE IDEAL WOMAN OF THE TIME WAS GENTLE, TENDER, AND SWEET."

THE CREATOR USES A LITTLE **COLOR** TO HIGHLIGHT BAADER'S STORY. BUT NOTICE HER **STANCE**-SHE IS SMALL, **CROUCHED**, BECAUSE ALL SHE CAN DO (AS SHE TELLS US) IS WORK.

HER MOTHER DIED OF THE FLU, AND SHE HAD TO GO TO WORK AT 13 TO SUPPORT THE FAMILY. AS A SEAMSTRESS, WORKING TWELVE HOURS A DAY AND THEN TAKING ON EXTRA SMALL JOBS IN THE EVENING.

"THERE WAS NO NEED FOR ANY BIG FAMILY MEETING TO CHOOSE THE RIGHT JOB FOR ME, BECAUSE THERE WASN'T MUCH CHOICE FOR GIRLS IN THOSE DAYS."

IN THIS CENTRAL PANEL, WE GET A NEW **PERSPECTIVE**: THE FACTORY FLOOR, WITH BAADER ALMOST LOST AMONG THE POLLUTION AND THE OTHER WORKERS.

FREQUENTLY, AFTER A FULL DAY SHIFT, THEY HAD TO WORK AT NIGHT AS WELL.

"I WAS SO MISERABLE THAT I STOOD AT THE MACHINE HALF LIKE A CORPSE."

AROUND 1871, WAGES WERE CUT. OTTILIE AND OTHER WOMEN REFUSED TO WORK UNTIL THEIR WAGES WENT BACK UP.

SUDDENLY, BAADER IS SHOWN IN A VERY DIFFERENT **STANCE** AND **PERSPECTIVE**. SHE IS POWERFUL, SEEN FROM BELOW. SHE HAS LEARNED TO ORGANIZE, AND THE CREATOR SHOWS HER AS EMPOWERED.

NOW A LABOR ORGANIZER, OTTILIE PUT HER BASIC EDUCATION TO GOOD USE. SHE WROTE FOR THE MAGAZINE *EQUALITY* AND LOBBIED FOR WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE, THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN, AND LABOR RIGHTS.

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THERE IS NOTHING UNUSUAL ABOUT MY LIFE. THOUSANDS OF WORKING GIRLS OF MY TIME LIVED AND WORKED JUST AS I DID.

THIS LAST **PANEL** STRETCHES ACROSS THE BOTTOM ROW. IT'S WHERE THE CREATOR CONCLUDES BAADER'S STORY.

BAADER GETS THE LAST WORD IN THE **TEXT**, IN TWO LINKED SPEECH BALLOONS. BUT THE CREATOR PUTS A **VISUAL ELEMENT** IN AS WELL. ALTHOUGH THERE IS A SEWING MACHINE IN THE **PANEL**, THE LAST IMAGE IS A TYPEWRITER AND BOOKS, SHOWING THAT BAADER HAD AN IMPACT THROUGH HER WRITING.

READ 3: CONNECT

THIS COMIC IS A BIOGRAPHY, BUT IT ALSO HELPS US MAKE **CONNECTIONS** TO THE WIDER EXPERIENCE OF THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION. THAT'S THE FOCUS OF OUR THIRD AND FINAL READ: USING **EVIDENCE** FROM THE COMIC TO CONNECT A BIOGRAPHY TO THE HISTORY YOU'RE LEARNING IN THIS UNIT.

OTTLIE BAADER 1847-1925

RIGHT AWAY, THE CREATORS TELL US HER LIFE WAS "LIKE MANY PEOPLE..."

LIKE MANY PEOPLE DURING THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION, OTTLIE BAADER (1847-1925) LIVED A LIFE OF WORK. SHE WAS ALSO A LEADER OF MOVEMENTS TO REFORM LABOR, FIRST IN HER OWN COMMUNITY, AND THEN ACROSS THE COUNTRY OF GERMANY.

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SUPPORTING THEIR ARGUMENT, THE AUTHORS RARELY SHOW BAADER ALONE. THEY ALSO HIGHLIGHT "SOCIAL" ISSUES THAT WERE SHARED BY MANY PEOPLE, LIKE "LABOR" AND "EDUCATION."

AUTHOR | TREVOR R. GETZ ARTIST | LIZ CLARKE

BUT HER MOTHER DIED OF THE FLU, AND SHE HAD TO GO TO WORK AT 13 TO SUPPORT THE FAMILY AS A SEAMSTRESS.

WE ALSO SEE GENDER PLAYING A ROLE. IN THE PREVIOUS PANEL AND IN THIS ONE, BAADER FRAMES HER STORY IN HER EXPERIENCES AS A GIRL AND A WOMAN.

"THERE WAS NO NEED FOR ANY BIG FAMILY MEETING TO CHOOSE THE RIGHT JOB FOR ME BECAUSE THERE WASN'T MUCH CHOICE FOR GIRLS IN THOSE DAYS."

CONTINUING THE THEME OF SHARED EXPERIENCES, WE SEE BAADER LABORING IN MISERABLE CONDITIONS AMONG MANY OTHER SUFFERING WORKERS...

EVENTUALLY, SHE GOT A JOB IN A WOOL FACTORY. CONDITIONS WERE TERRIBLE. THE MACHINES WERE DANGEROUS. THE AIR WAS HEAVILY POLLUTED. FREQUENTLY, AFTER A FULL DAY SHIFT, THEY HAD TO WORK AT NIGHT AS WELL.

SO MISERABLE THAT I DIED AT THE MACHINE HALF LIKE A CORPSE."

AROUND 1871, WAGES WERE CUT. OTTLIE AND OTHER WOMEN REFUSED TO WORK UNTIL THEIR WAGES WENT BACK UP.

BUT HERE, THE STORY OF WIDESPREAD EXPERIENCES IS FLIPPED, BECAUSE WE SEE PEOPLE ORGANIZING TOGETHER—LITERALLY STANDING NEXT TO EACH OTHER TO IMPROVE THEIR CONDITIONS.

NOW A LABOR ORGANIZER, OTTLIE PUT HER BASIC EDUCATION TO GOOD USE. SHE WROTE FOR THE MAGAZINE *EQUALITY* AND LOBBIED FOR WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE, THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN, AND LABOR RIGHTS.

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THERE IS NOTHING UNUSUAL ABOUT MY LIFE. THOUSANDS OF WORKING GIRLS OF MY TIME LIVED AND WORKED JUST AS I DID.

AT THE END OF READ 3, YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO IDENTIFY THE COMIC'S ARGUMENT AND USE EVIDENCE FROM THE COMIC TO EXPLAIN HOW IT FITS IN WITH WHAT YOU'RE LEARNING!

FINALLY, THE CREATORS LET BAADER MAKE HER OWN STATEMENT AS TO WHETHER HER LIFE WAS TYPICAL FOR HER TIME. SHE LITERALLY COMPLETES THEIR ARGUMENT IN HER OWN WORDS!