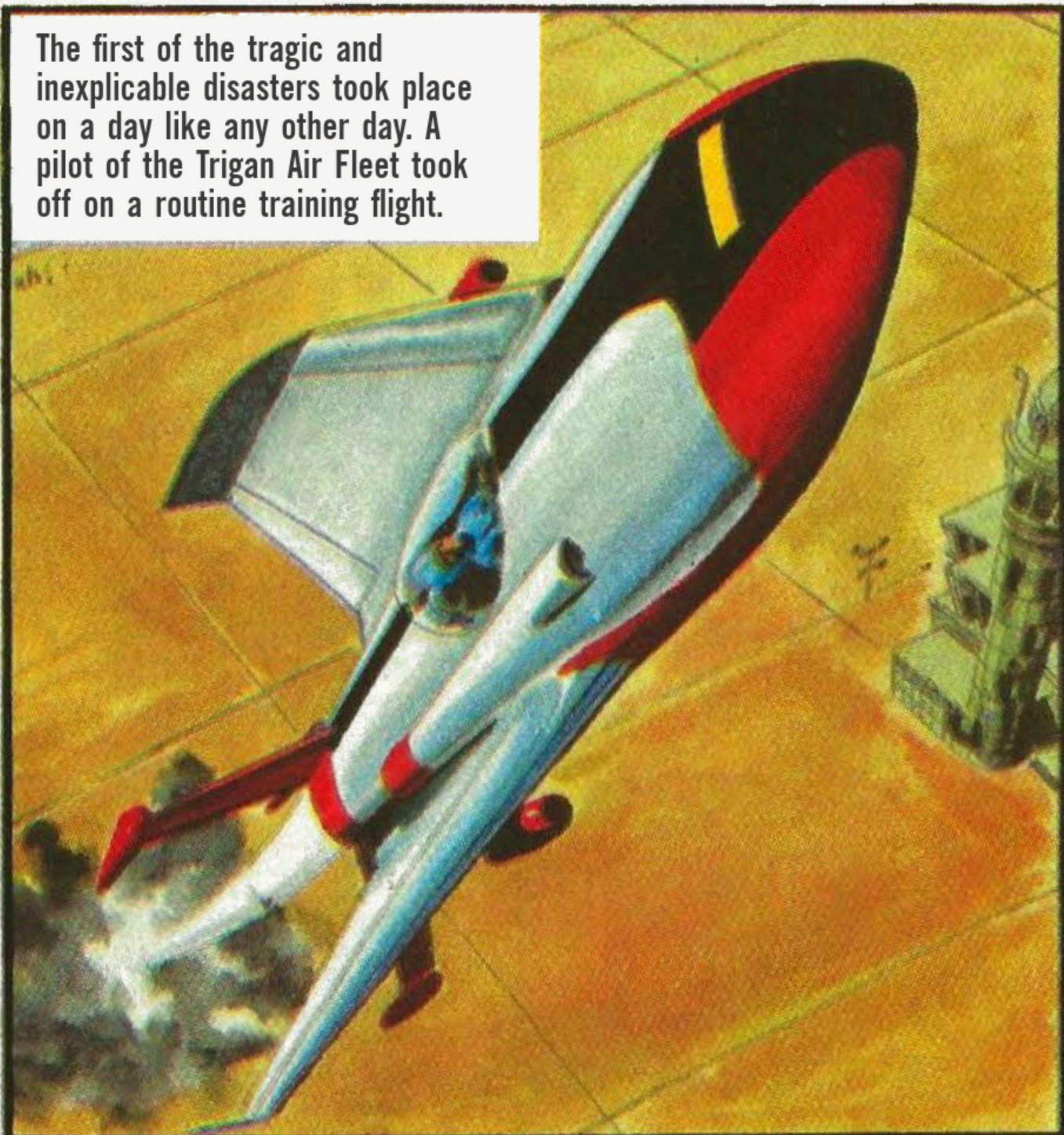


THE TRIGAN EMPIRE

The planet Elekton lies in the galaxy of Yarna, and the greatest power on Elekton is the Trigan Empire, ruled over by its founder, the Emperor Trigo.

The first of the tragic and inexplicable disasters took place on a day like any other day. A pilot of the Trigan Air Fleet took off on a routine training flight.

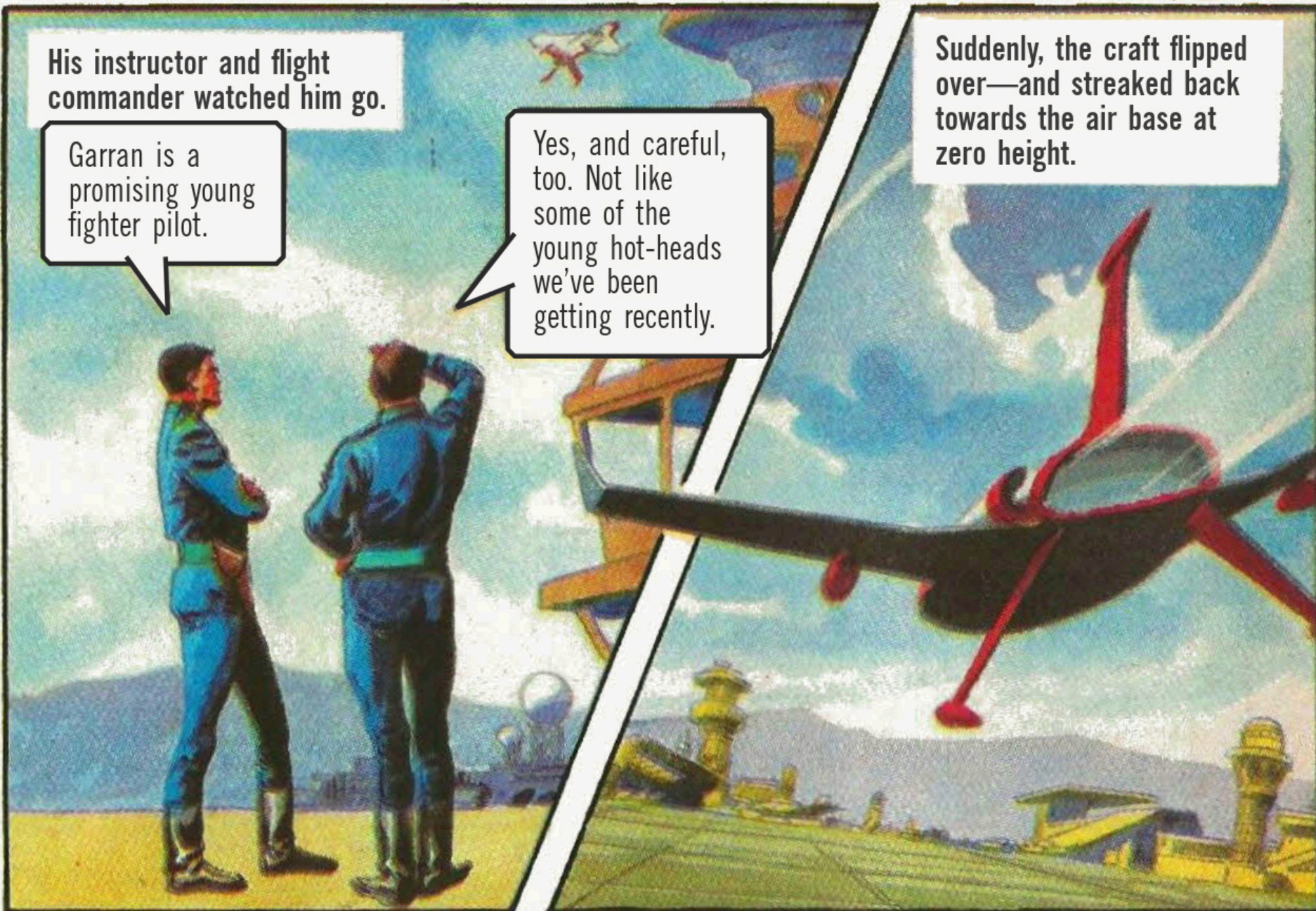


His instructor and flight commander watched him go.

Garran is a promising young fighter pilot.

Yes, and careful, too. Not like some of the young hot-heads we've been getting recently.

Suddenly, the craft flipped over—and streaked back towards the air base at zero height.

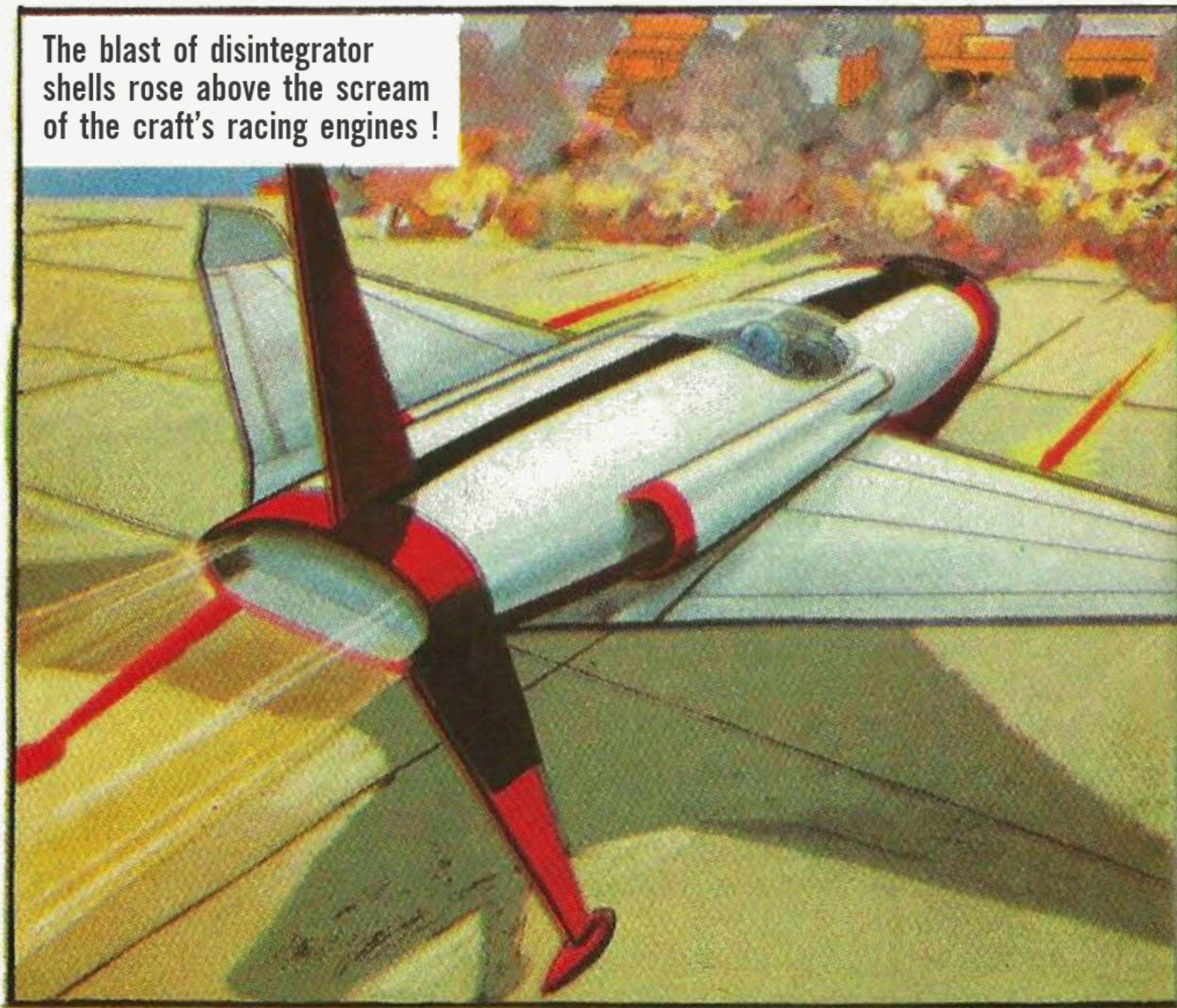


Look out!

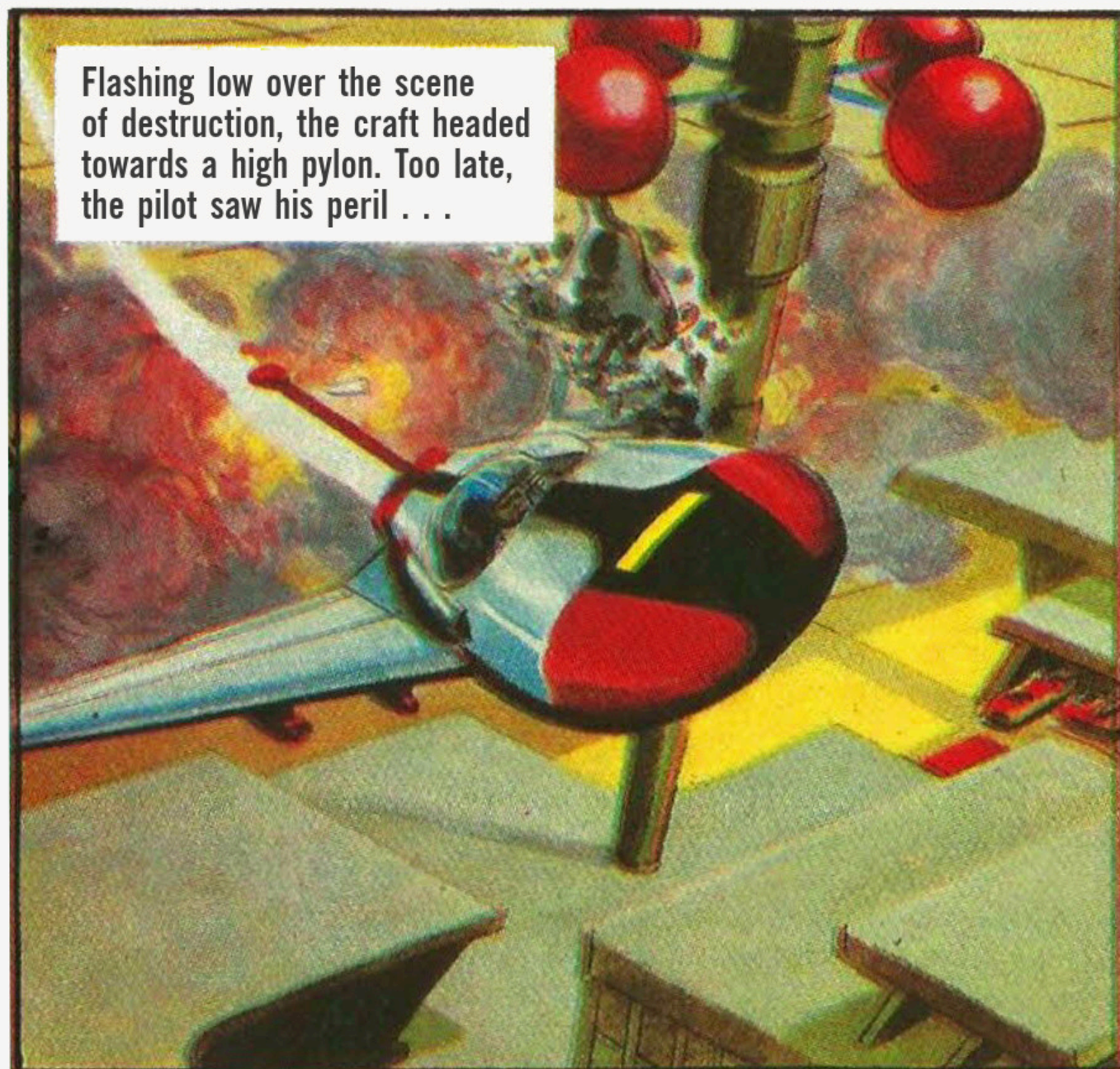
What does he think—?



The blast of disintegrator shells rose above the scream of the craft's racing engines!



Flashing low over the scene of destruction, the craft headed towards a high pylon. Too late, the pilot saw his peril . . .

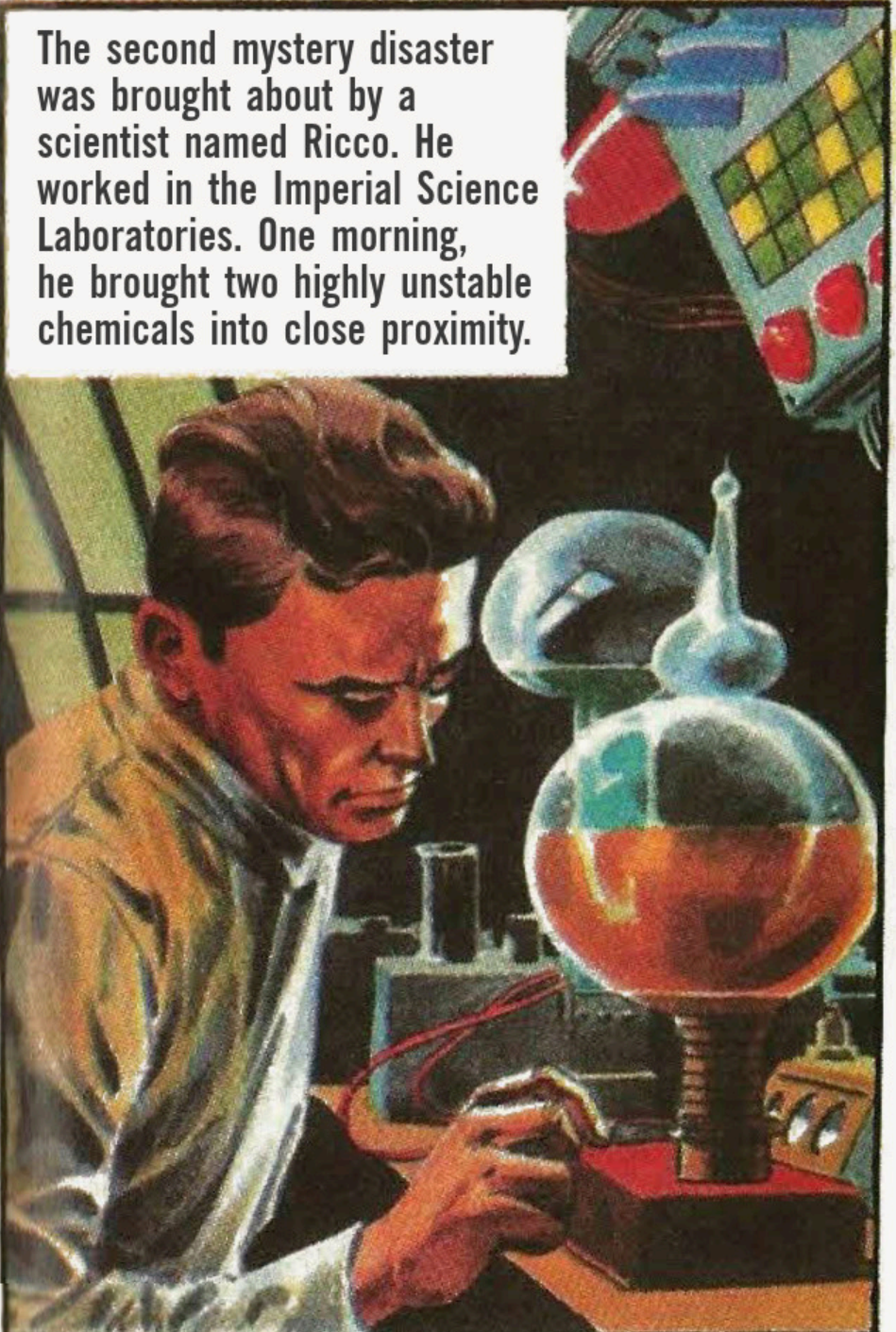


By the time they reached the scene of the crash, it was too late to do anything.

Why did he do it—why?

We'll never know—now!

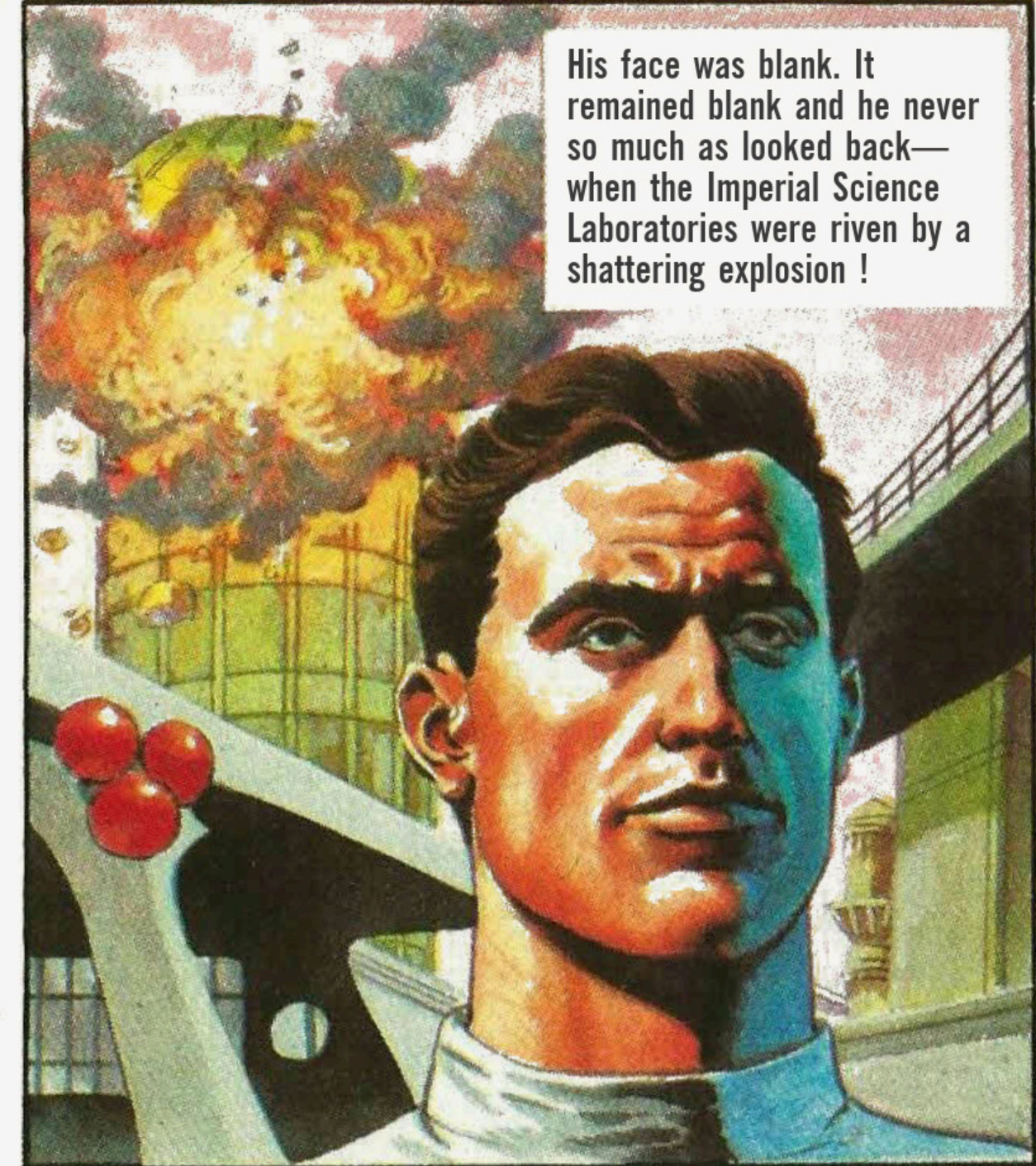




The second mystery disaster was brought about by a scientist named Ricco. He worked in the Imperial Science Laboratories. One morning, he brought two highly unstable chemicals into close proximity.



... Then swiftly walked out of the building.



His face was blank. It remained blank and he never so much as looked back—when the Imperial Science Laboratories were riven by a shattering explosion !

Three days later, with the disasters still unexplained, the Emperor Trigo was addressing his council on another matter of great gravity.



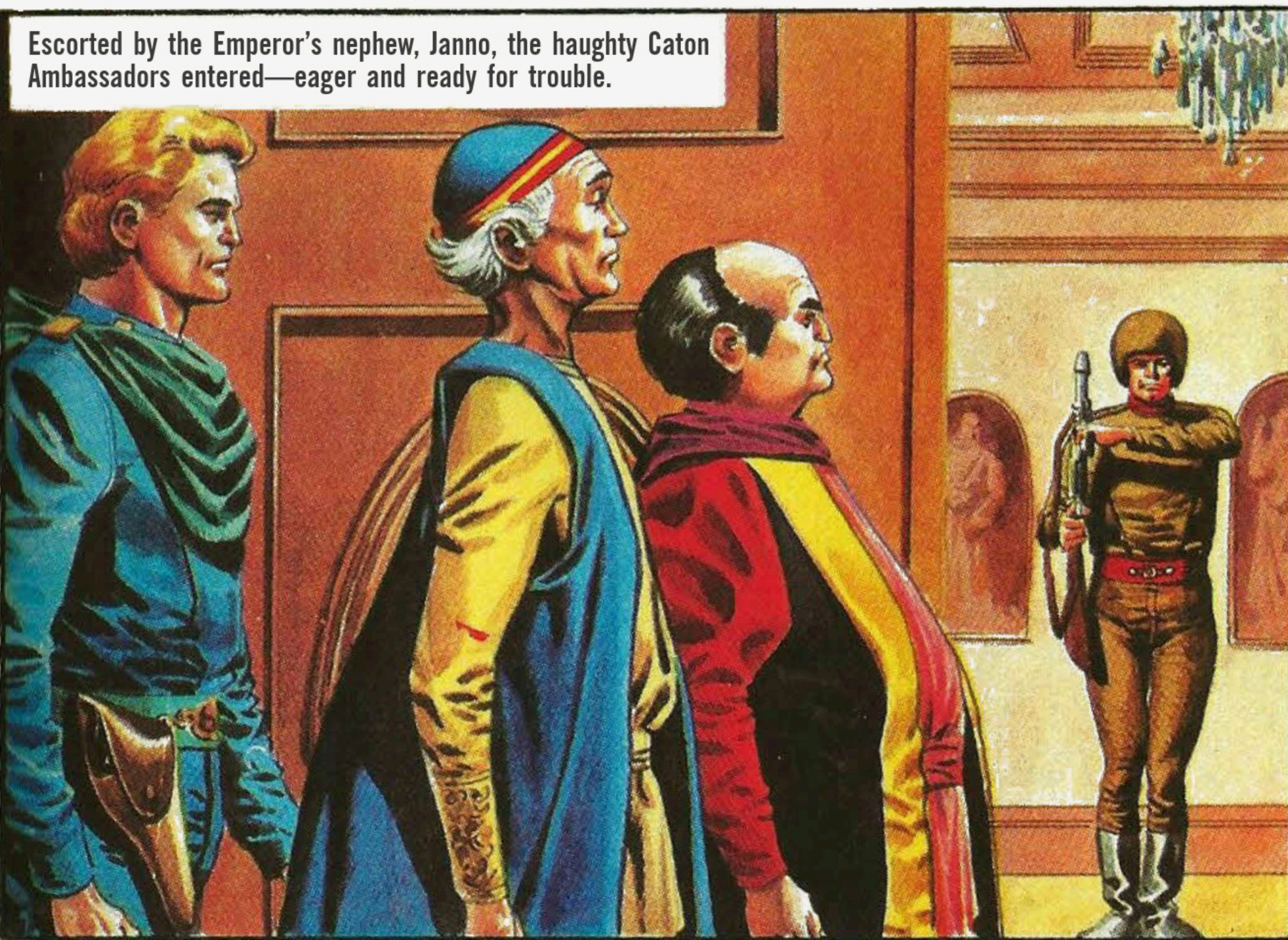
Gentlemen ! I do not have to warn you that the misunderstanding between ourselves and Cato could lead to war. I warn you to treat the Caton Ambassadors with great tact and courtesy, so that we can settle our differences !



The doors of the council chamber swung open.

Imperial Majesty ! Excellencies ! ... The noble Ambassadors from Cato !

Remember ! One unguarded word could lead to war !



Escorted by the Emperor's nephew, Janno, the haughty Caton Ambassadors entered—eager and ready for trouble.



They found trouble soon enough ! The guardsman on the door brought down his weapon ... and ...

THE TRIGAN EMPIRE

A couple of tragic and inexplicable disasters have taken place in Trigan City — and the third seems just about to happen. A palace guard man has gone berserk and has opened fire on the ambassadors from Cato!

With a sweep of his arm, Janno sent the two Ambassadors sprawling to the floor. Then he dived under the hail of projectiles . . .

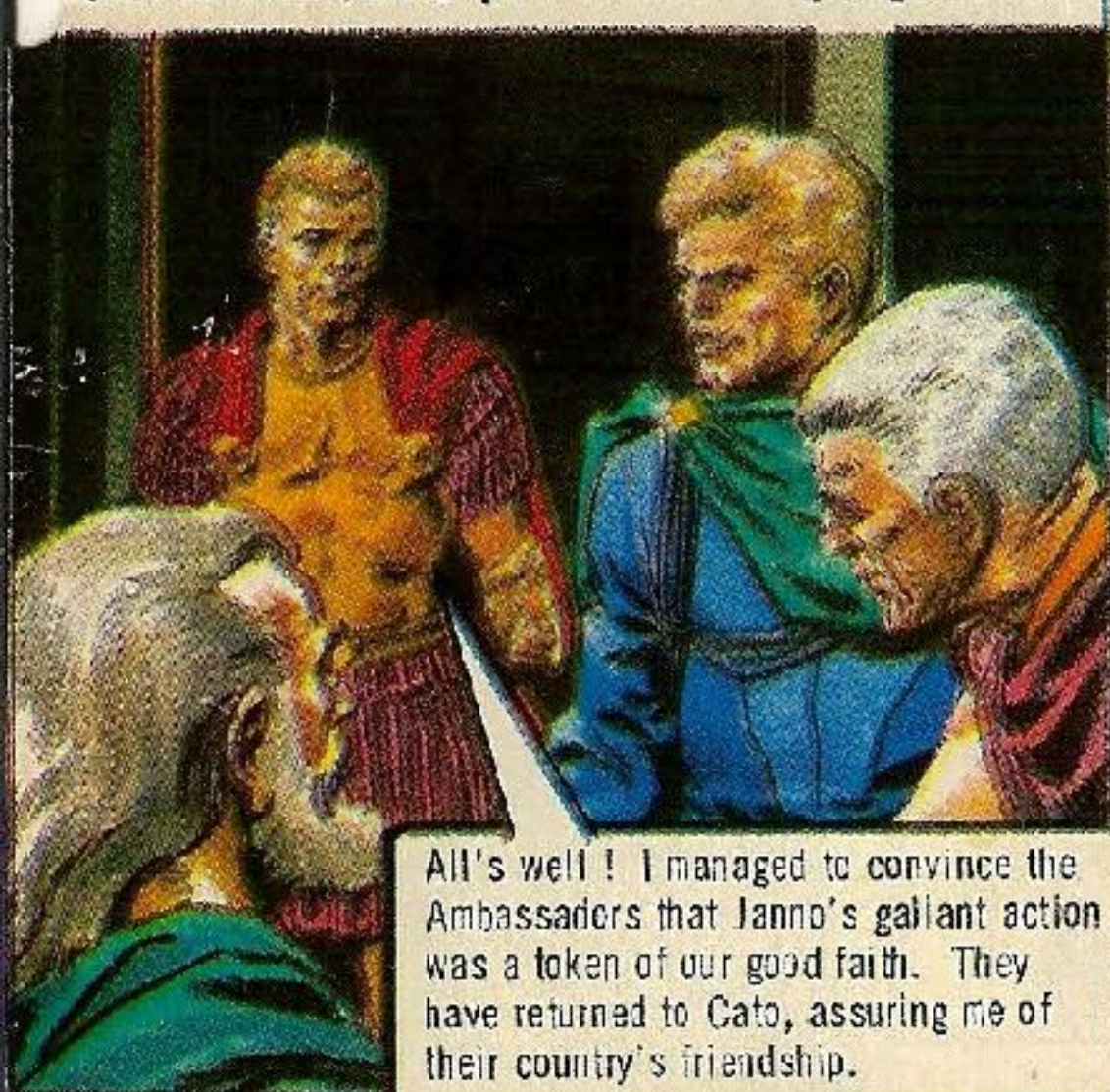


. . . And brought down the guardsman!



Well done, lad!

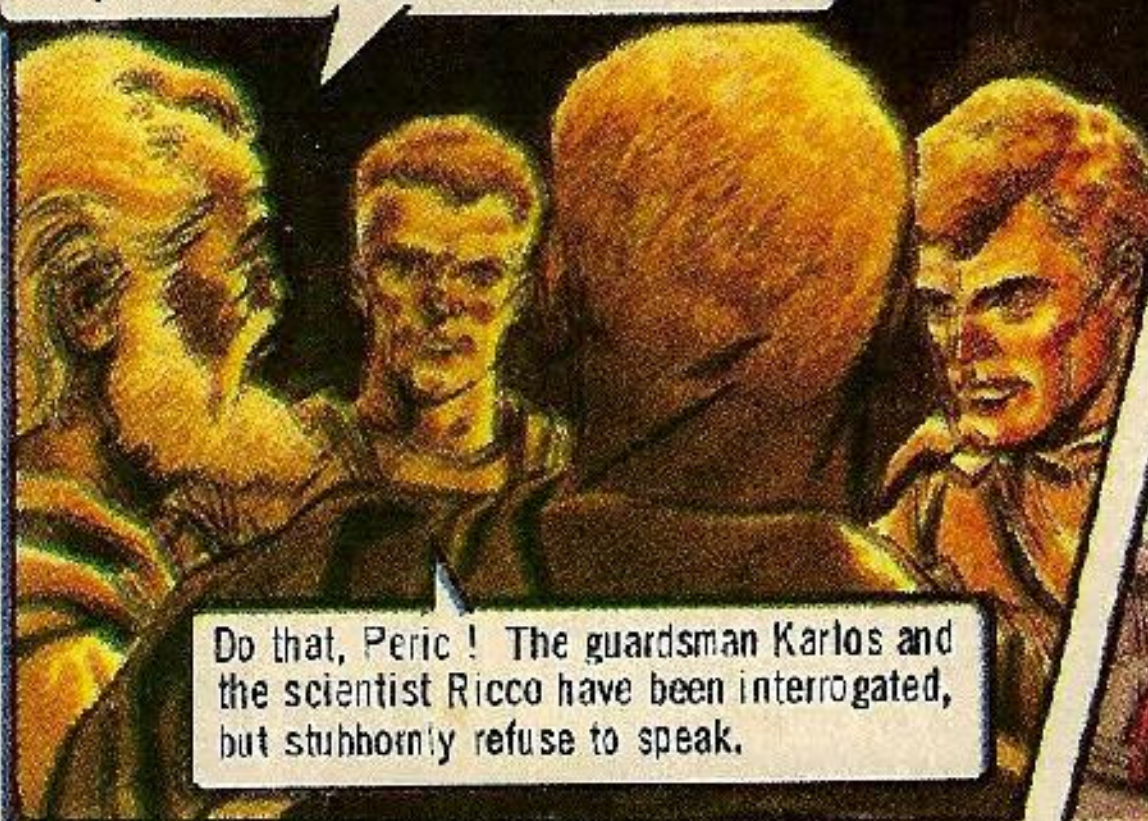
Some time later, the Emperor was able to report good news.



All's well! I managed to convince the Ambassadors that Janno's gallant action was a token of our good faith. They have returned to Cato, assuring me of their country's friendship.

Peric thought deeply for a while . . . and then . . .

You know, I am convinced that there is some connection between what happened today and the two recent disasters. I should like to study the dossiers of the three men concerned.



Do that, Peric! The guardsman Karlos and the scientist Ricco have been interrogated, but stubbornly refuse to speak.

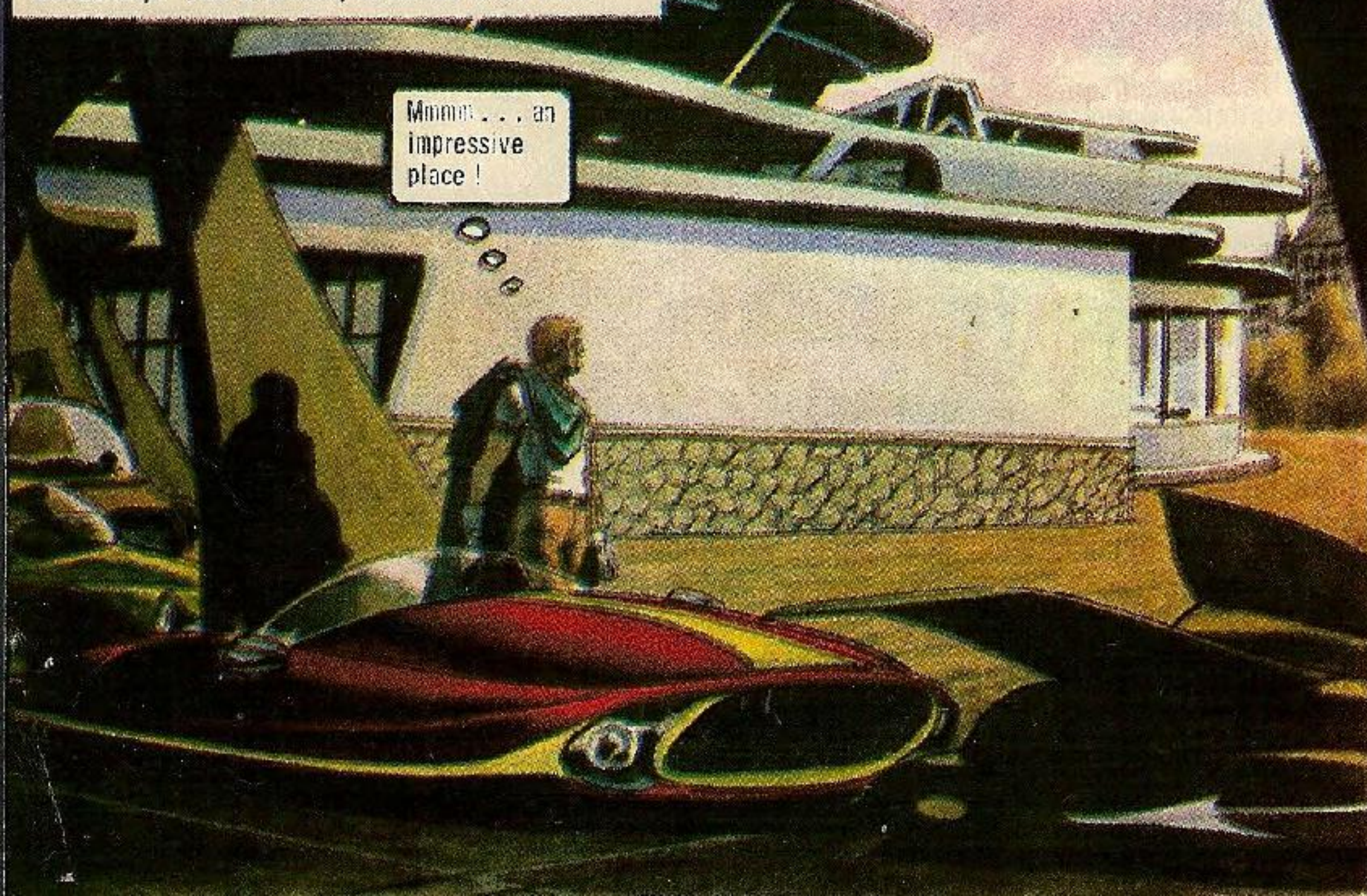
As they parted company, Trigo had a word with his nephew.

Again, Janno — my thanks for what you did today! Tell me, are you joining us in the Zargot hunt this afternoon?



Sorry, Uncle, but I have already arranged my afternoon's sport.

The Trigan national sport was a thrilling ball game called Zota. A new Zota club had recently been built in the City, and Janno had been invited to accept a free membership. That afternoon, he arrived at the club.



Mmm . . . an impressive place!

As the Emperor's nephew, he was greeted with great respect.

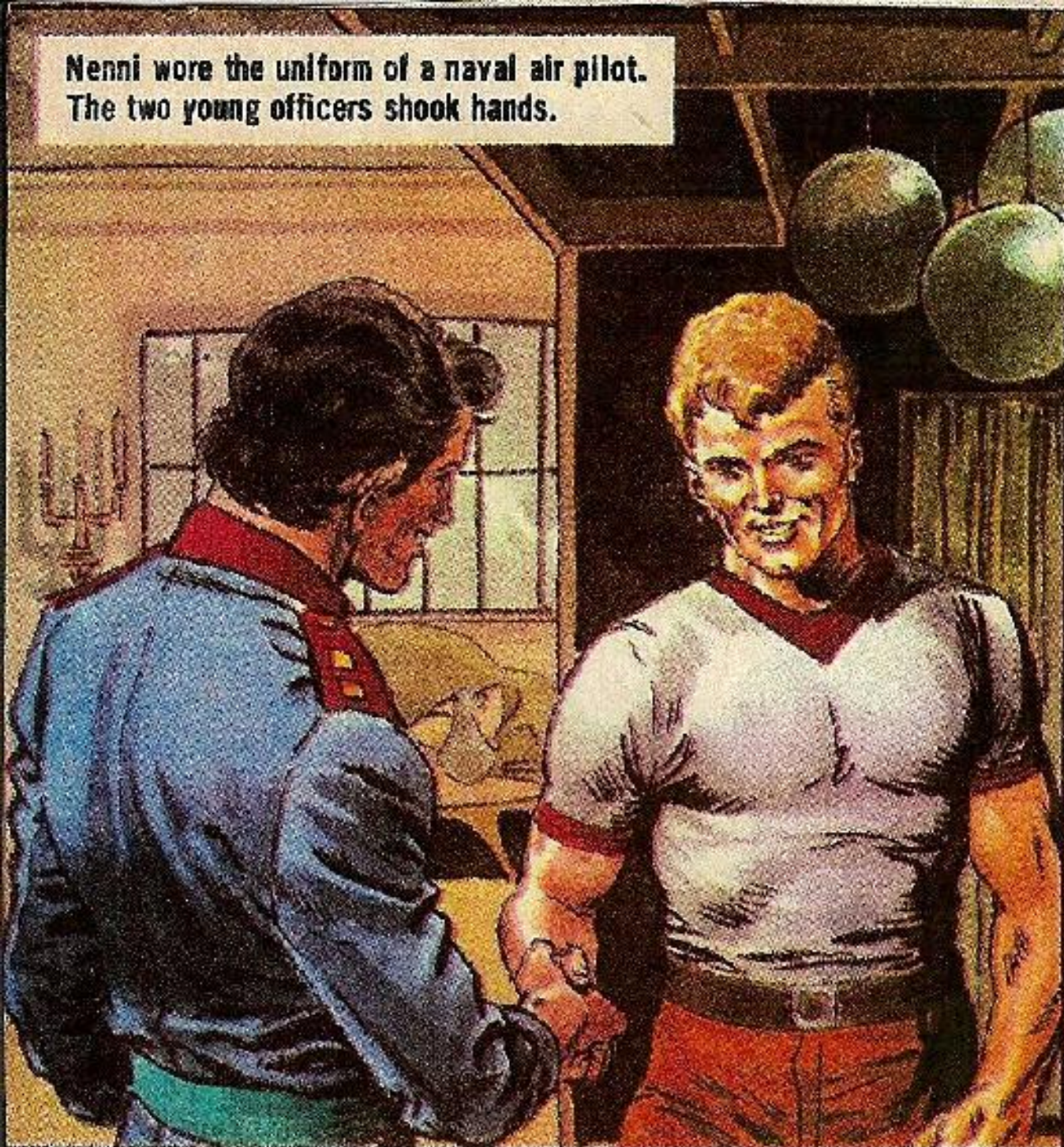
Lord Janno, if you wish to play now, may I introduce Captain Nenni, who is waiting for a game.

I'll try to give you a good game.



Don't try too hard — I'm badly out of practice!

Nenni wore the uniform of a naval air pilot.
The two young officers shook hands.



They played . . .



... And Janno won.

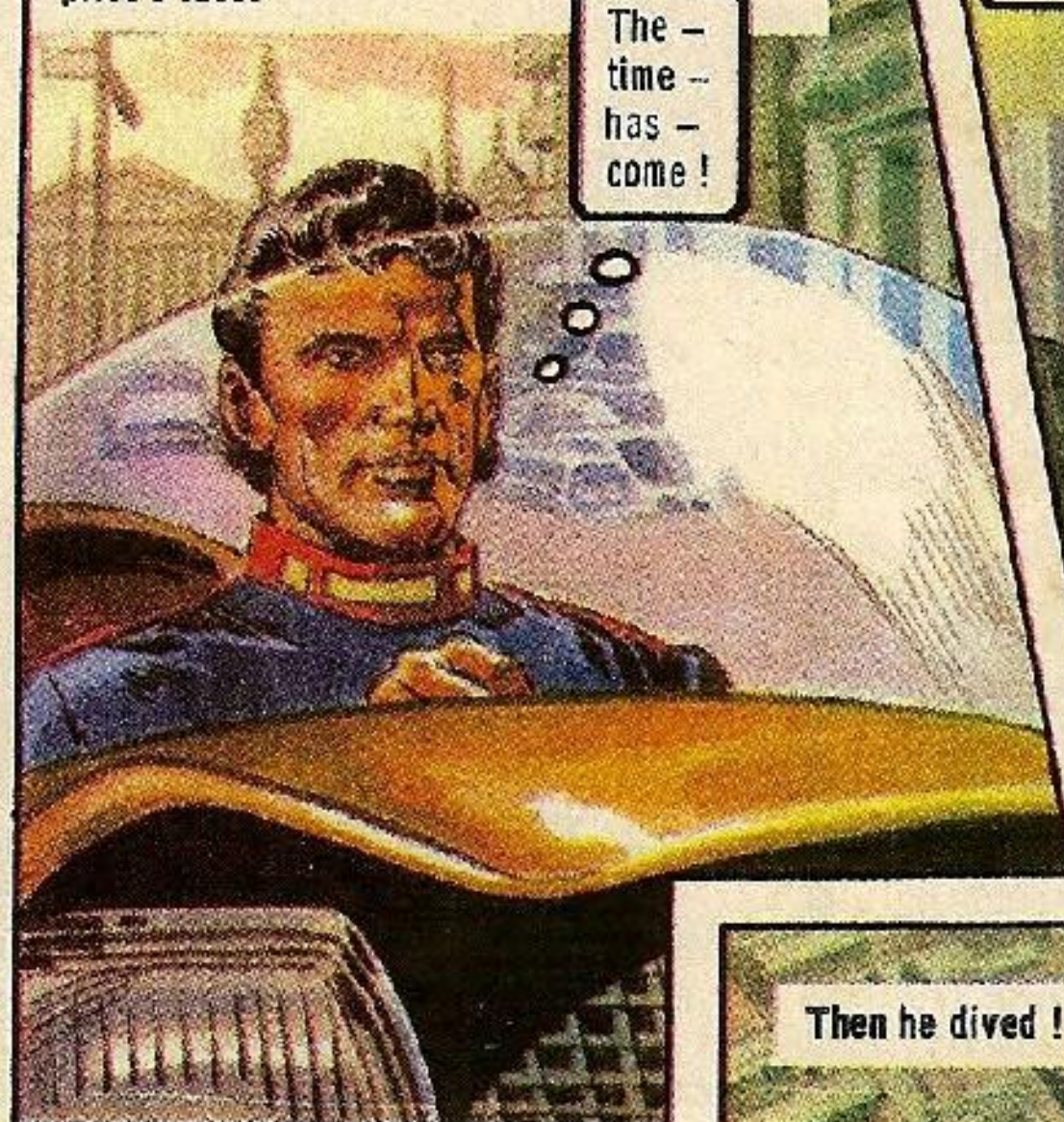
You must give
me a chance
of revenge.

Willingly!
Shall we say
tomorrow?



Elekton's twin suns were dipping towards the
horizon as the two parted company and
Captain Nenni drove away. It was then that
a strange expression passed over the naval
pilot's face.

The -
time -
has -
come!



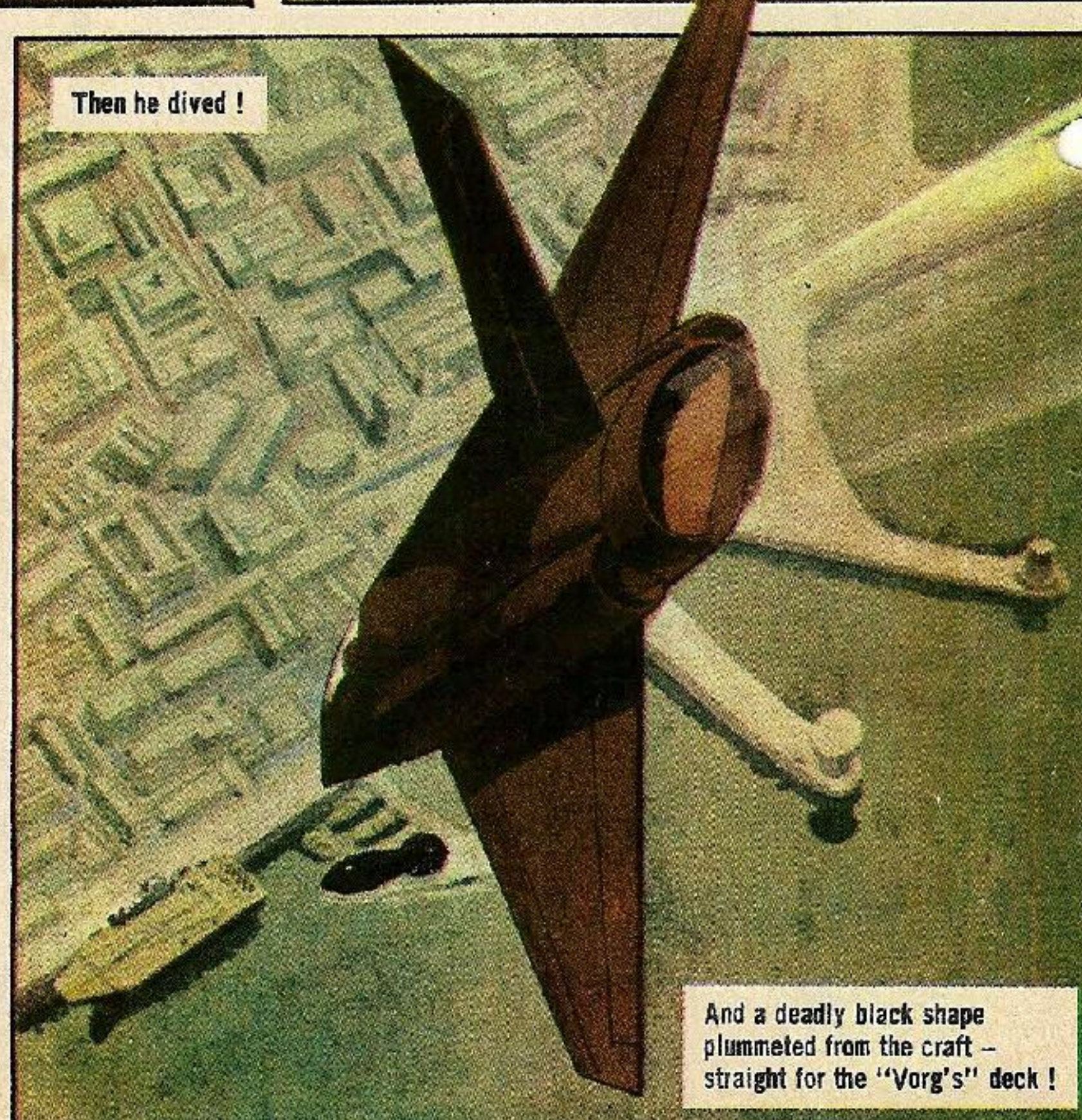
Nenni's ship was the air carrier "Vorg", the
pride of the Trigan Navy. He went aboard.

Prepare my
craft for
take off!

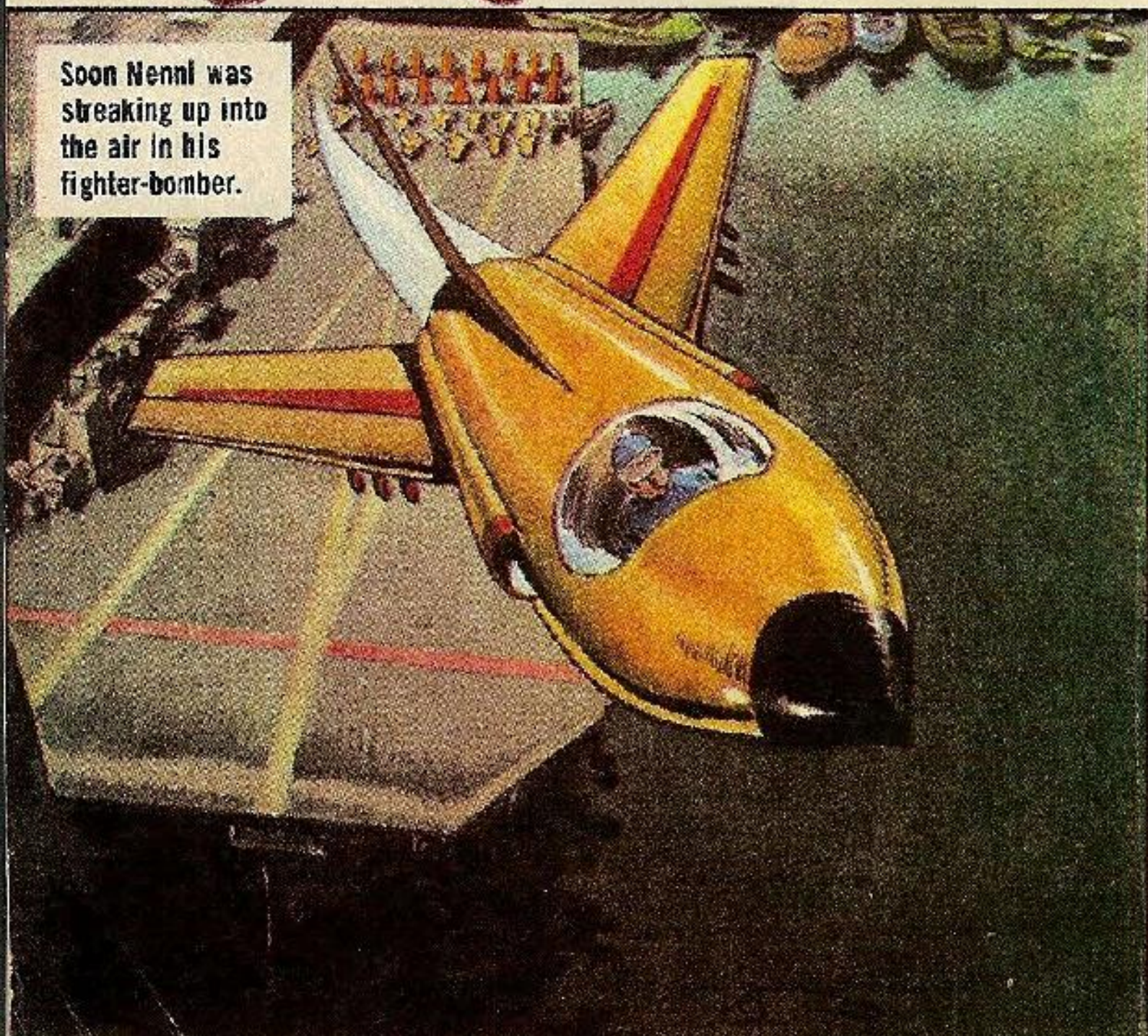
Yes, Captain.



Then he dived!



Soon Nenni was
streaking up into
the air in his
fighter-bomber.



And a deadly black shape
plummeted from the craft -
straight for the "Vorg's" deck!

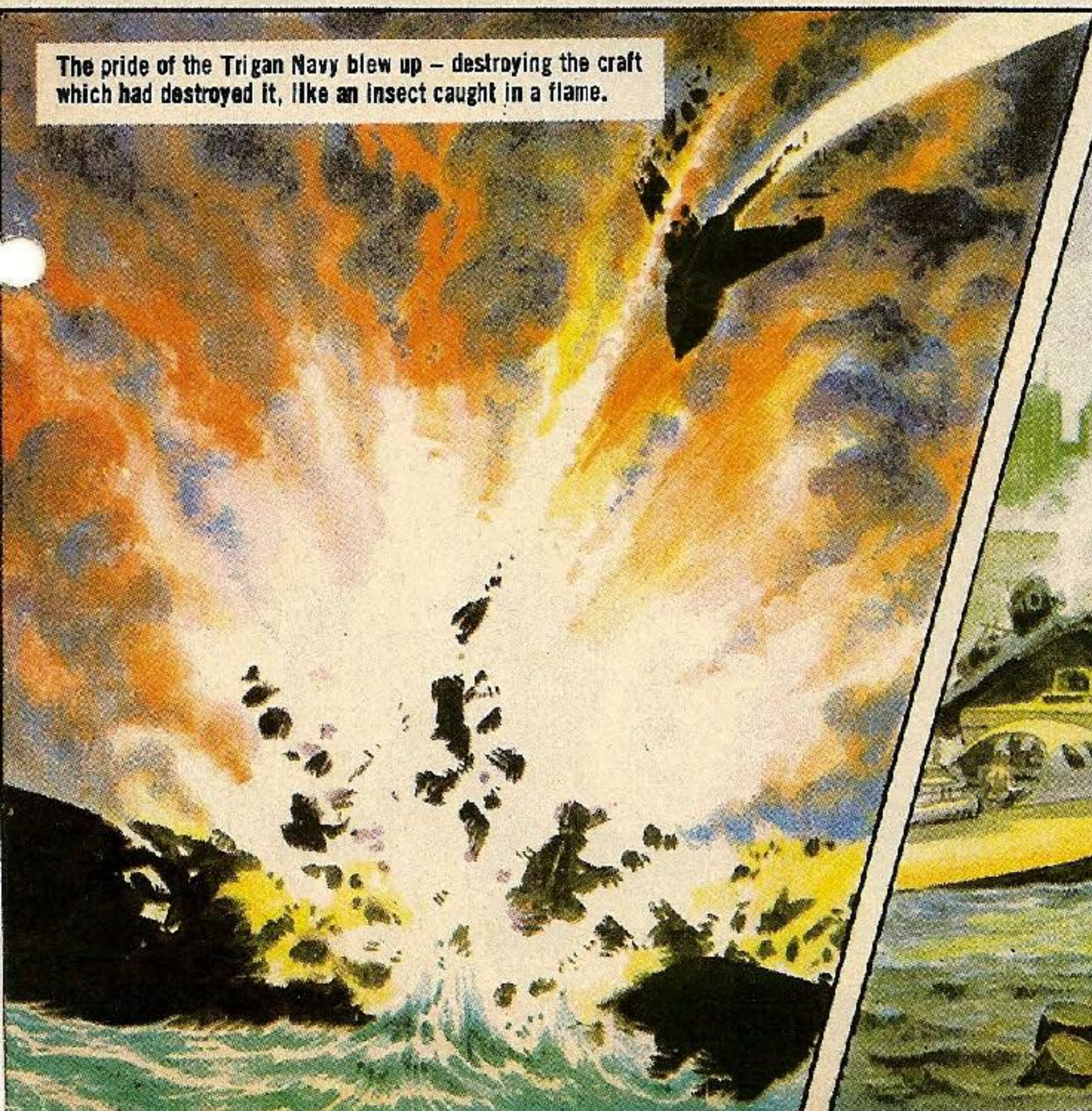
THE TRIGAN EMPIRE

Three inexplicable happenings have taken place in Trigan City, two of them ending in disaster. And now a naval air pilot is bombing his own ship, the air carrier "Vorg"!

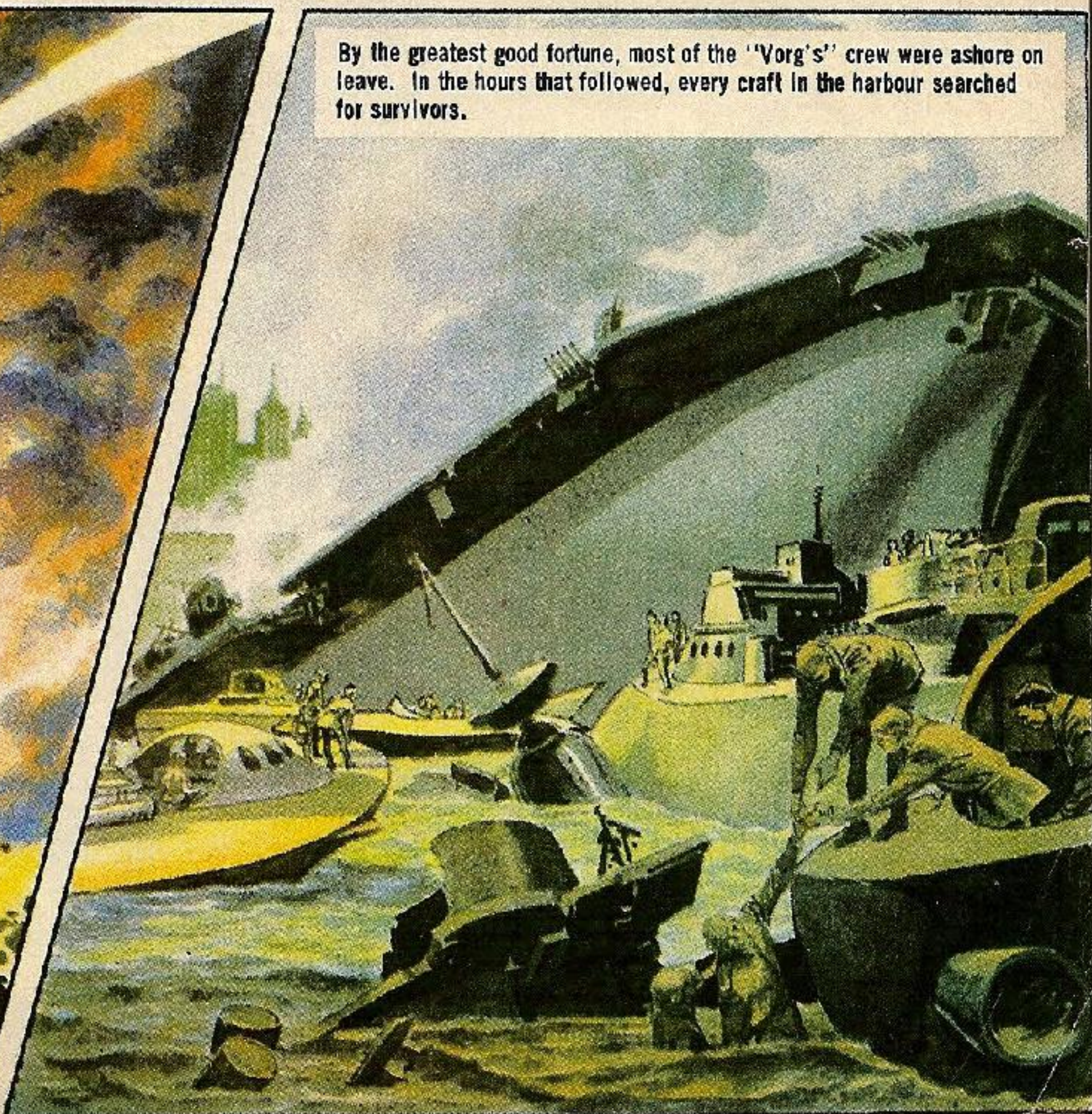
Captain Nenni's bomb struck the carrier in the centre of its deck. There was a rending explosion!



The pride of the Trigan Navy blew up – destroying the craft which had destroyed it, like an insect caught in a flame.



By the greatest good fortune, most of the "Vorg's" crew were ashore on leave. In the hours that followed, every craft in the harbour searched for survivors.



The Emperor Trigo was aghast to hear of the tragedy . . . and so was his nephew Janno.

One disaster after another! What can be behind it all?

I can't understand it, Uncle! I played a game of Zota with Captain Nenni only a short while before he destroyed his own ship - and he was perfectly normal then!

I think you should tell that to Peric! He's round at the Laboratory, searching the dossiers to try and find some connecting link between the disasters.

I'll go now, Uncle.

Janno entered Peric's Laboratory to be met by the hum of high-powered computers. The great scientist was at work with his assistants.

It's the same result, Peric!

We'll try once more!

Janno watched them operate the giant electronic brain again. And then . . .

The same!

Very interesting!

Watch this, Janno!

Four faces were flashed on a large screen at the end of the Laboratory.

Here we have Garran - the young trainee pilot who shot up his own base and was killed in the process. Garran came from the Province of Oma and was a perfectly normal lad in every way.

Ricco - a Scientist at the Imperial Laboratories, before he blew them up! A native of the City. Rather shy. Now in custody and refuses to talk.

Karlos - Guardsman in the Imperial Bodyguard. A faithful soldier - before he tried to kill the Caton Ambassadors! He won't talk, either.

Lastly, Captain Nenni. One of the best air pilots in the Navy - and you know what he just did!

But - I, too, was recently given a free membership of the club!

Peric continued - and a shock of horror trailed an icy finger down Janno's spine.

We have put the dossiers of those four men through the computer five times, and the four had only one common factor - they had all recently been given free membership of the new Trigan Zota Club!

Wha-a-a-at?

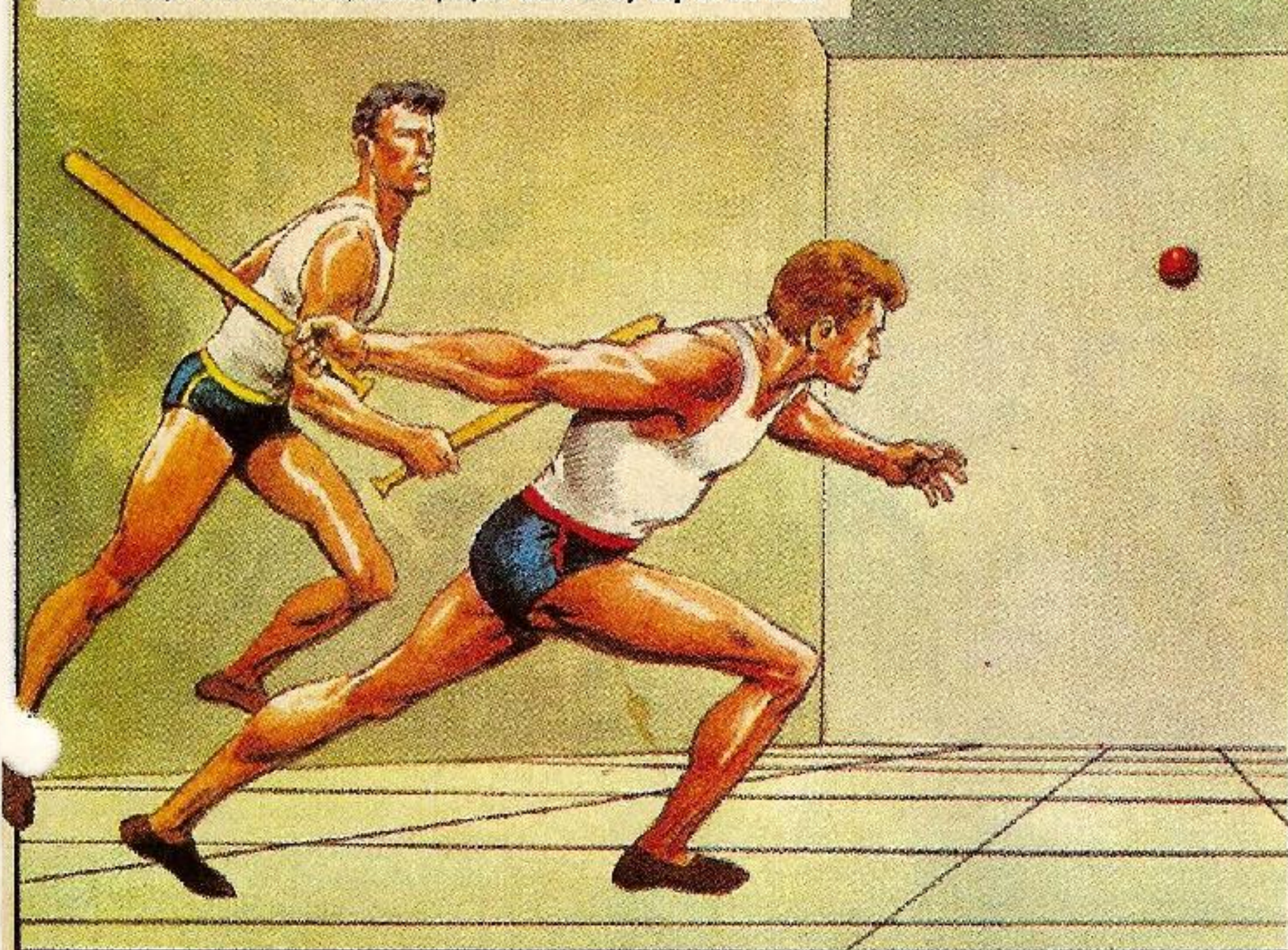
Were you now? It's obviously a conspiracy! For reasons of his own, someone used those four men to cause the disasters - and he obviously met them at the Zota Club!

And it seems to me, that our unknown conspirator may be planning to use you also, Janno!

THE TRIGAN EMPIRE

Four inexplicable disasters have taken place in Trigan City. The scientist, Peric, believes that the explanation of the disasters may in some way be connected with the new Trigan Zota Club, of which Janno is a member.

In the days that followed, Janno played Zota every day at the club.



On the fourth day, someone came up to him.

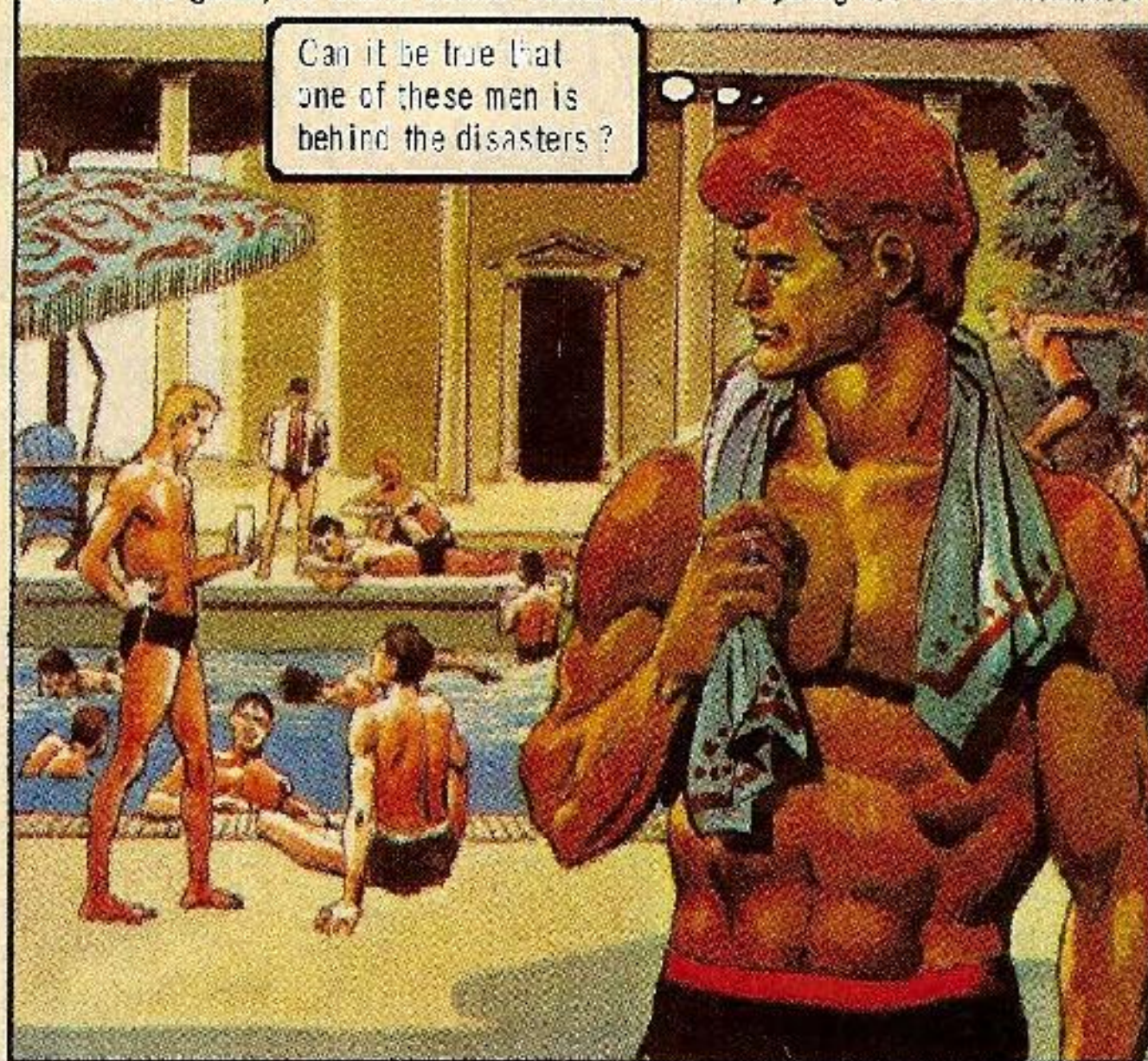
You don't remember me, perhaps. My name is Doran, and my father was a Colonel in the Imperial Guard. You and I played together as boys.



Doran — of course, I remember you well.

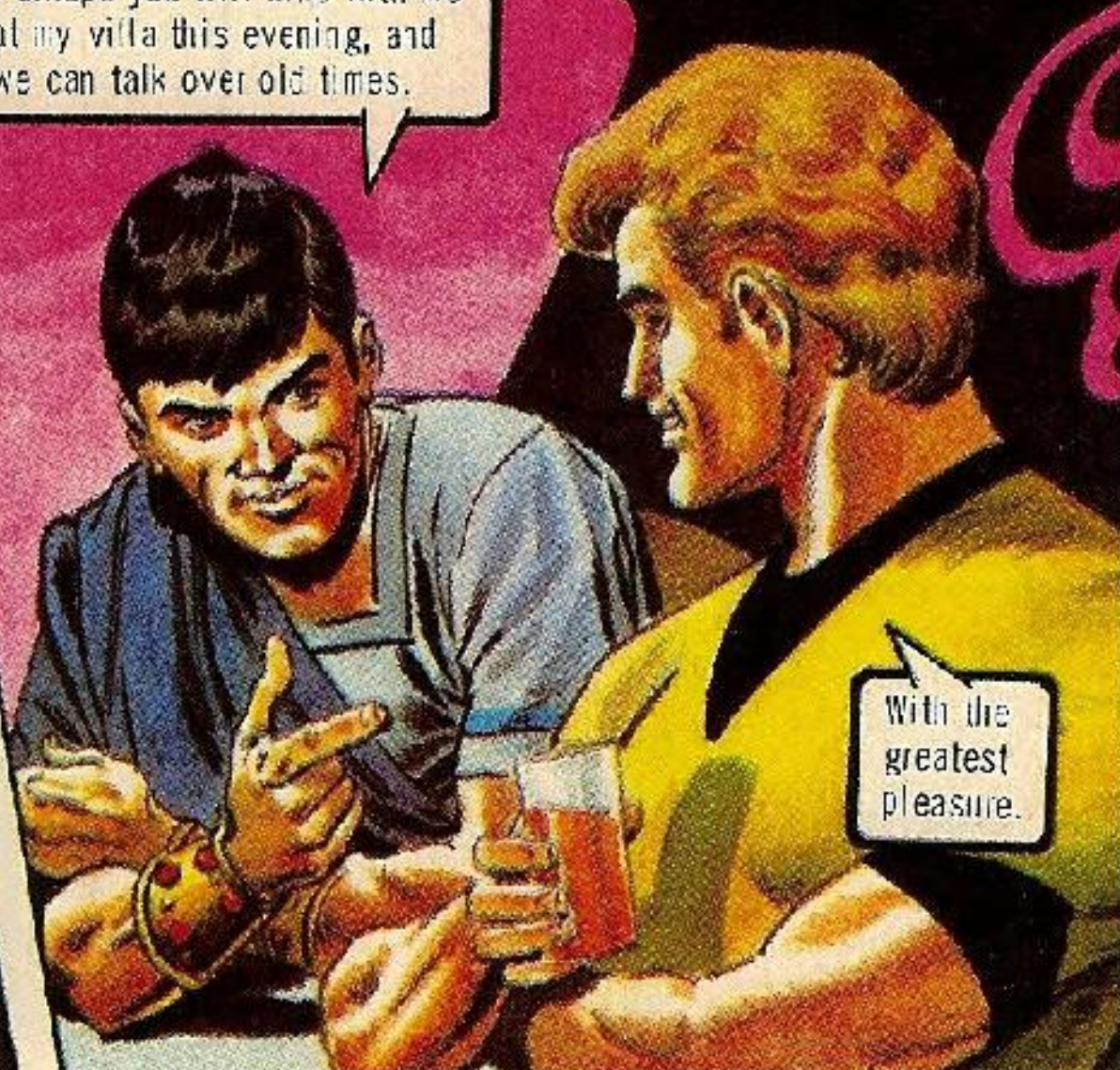
After his game, he would wander round the club, eyeing his fellow members.

Can it be true that one of these men is behind the disasters?



Janno had not seen his old playmate for many years.

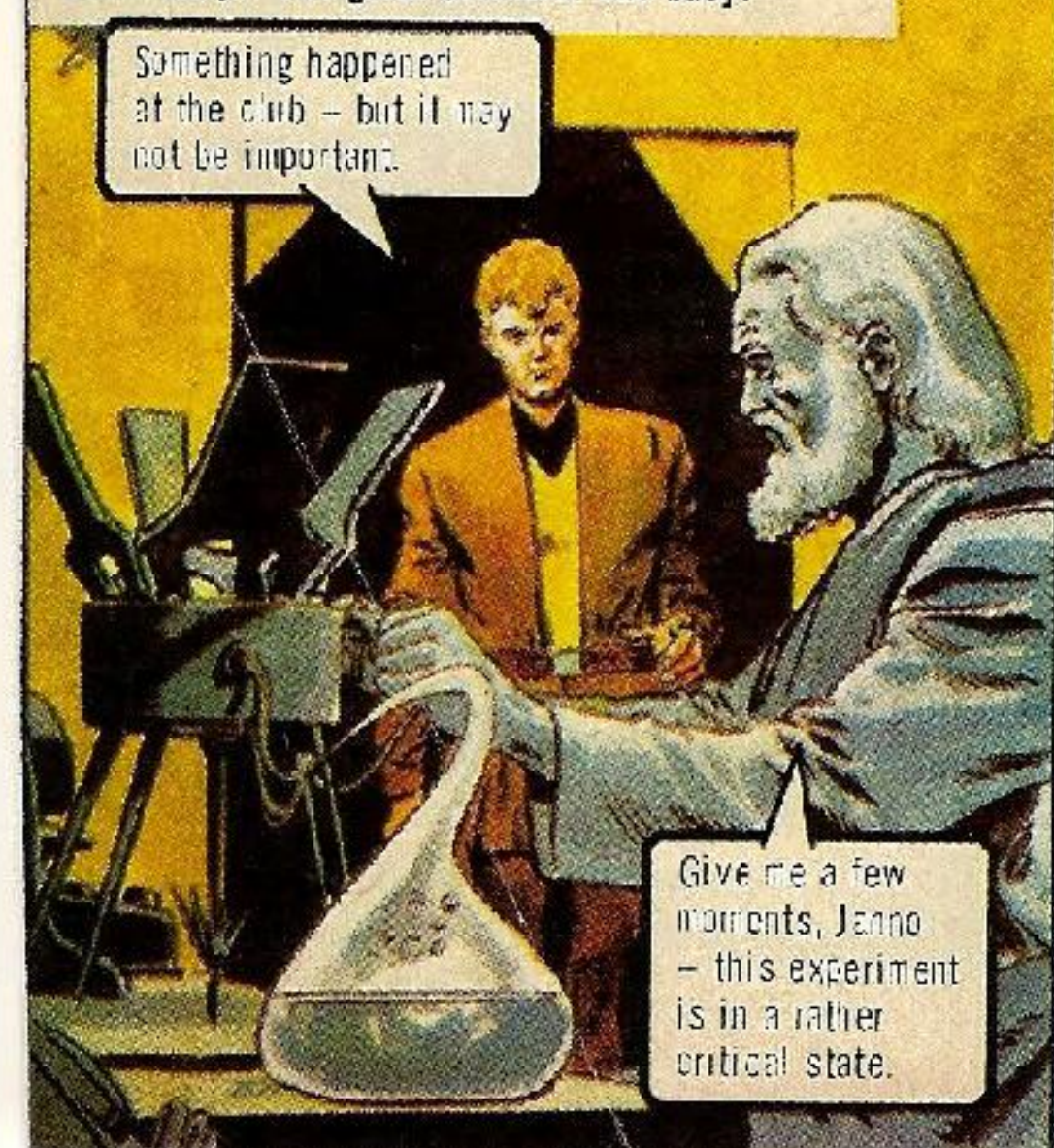
Perhaps you will dine with me at my villa this evening, and we can talk over old times.



With the greatest pleasure.

After this meeting, Janno went straight to Peric's Laboratory. The great Scientist was busy.

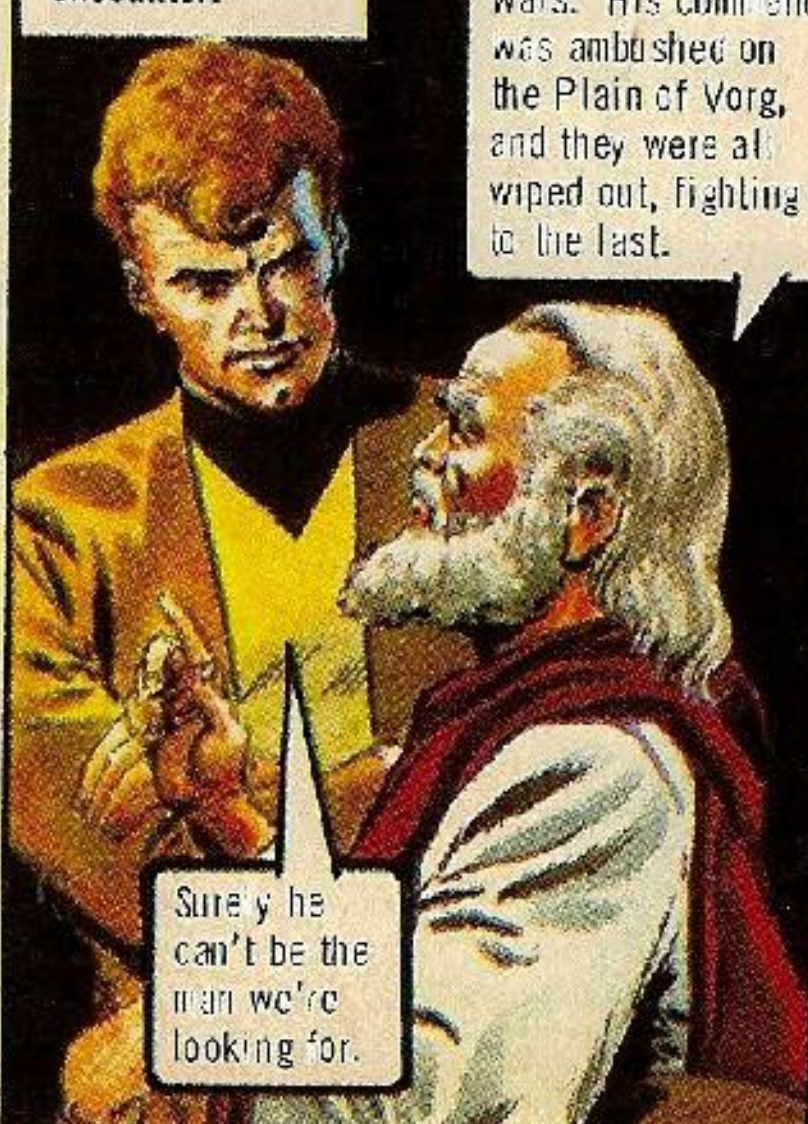
Something happened at the club — but it may not be important.



Give me a few moments, Janno — this experiment is in a rather critical state.

Later, Janno told Peric of his encounter.

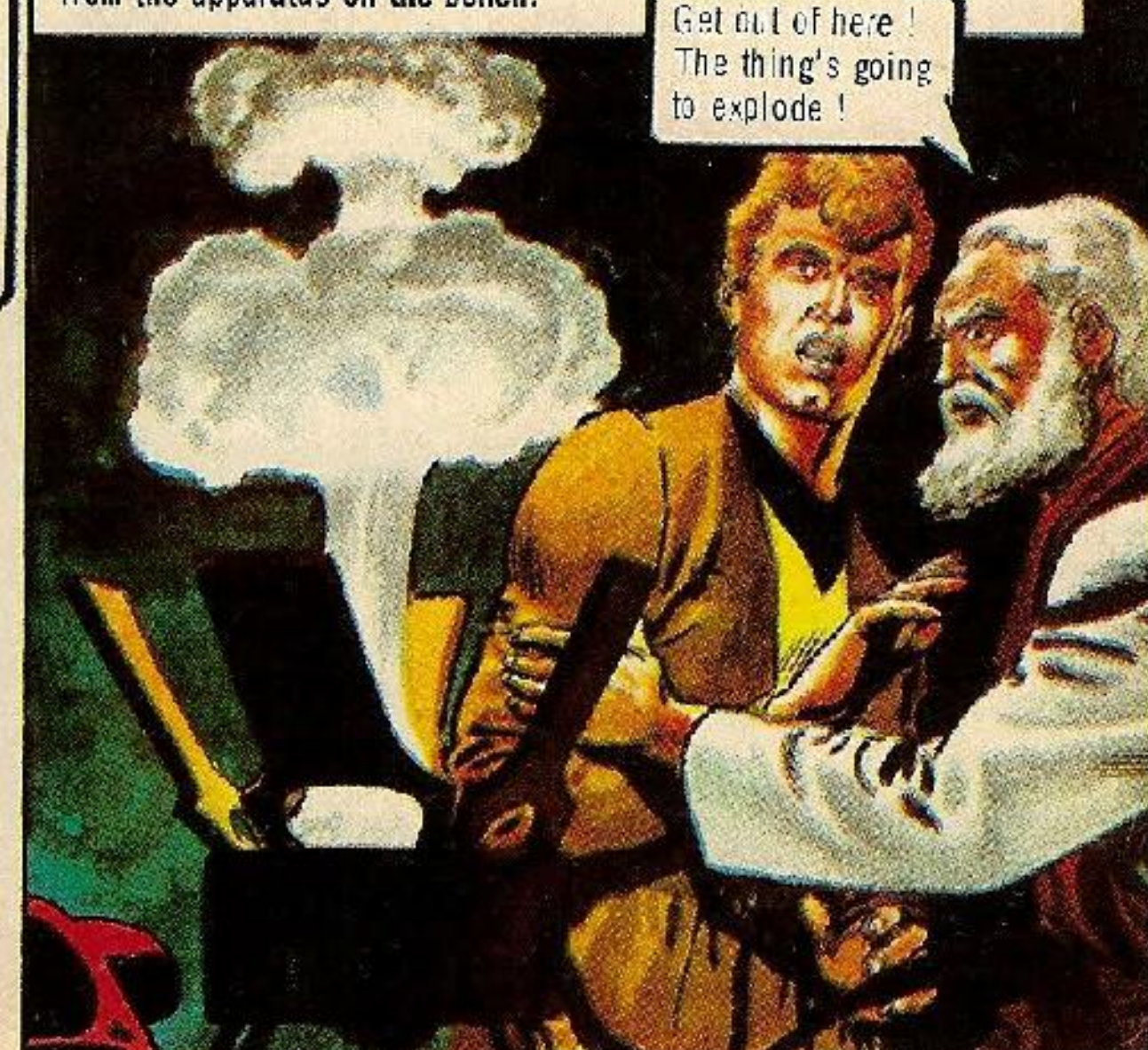
Doran? Oh, yes. His father was a hero of the Lokan wars. His command was ambushed on the Plain of Vorg, and they were all wiped out, fighting to the last.



Surely he can't be the man we're looking for.

Before Peric could comment, there was an ominous billow of smoke from the apparatus on the bench.

Get out of here! The thing's going to explode!



They were half way to the door when a searing stab of flame shot across the Laboratory !

Aaaaah!

There was little damage done. But . . .

I can
hardly
see !

That is caused by
the Z-rays from
the disintegrating
particles. You are
suffering from parti-
clidness, but your
sight will be perfectly
all right by tomorrow.

I hope I can
see well enough
to get to Doran's
Villa this evening.

You will. While you
are there, learn all you
can about him. And be
careful ! If he is behind
the disasters, he is a
dangerous man !

Shortly after dark, Janno arrived at Doran's
villa, where he was greeted by his host.

Good evening,
my friend.

They dined alone. And during the meal, Doran drew attention to a Medallion that
hung around his neck.

This is interesting,
Janno. It was given
to me by my father . . .

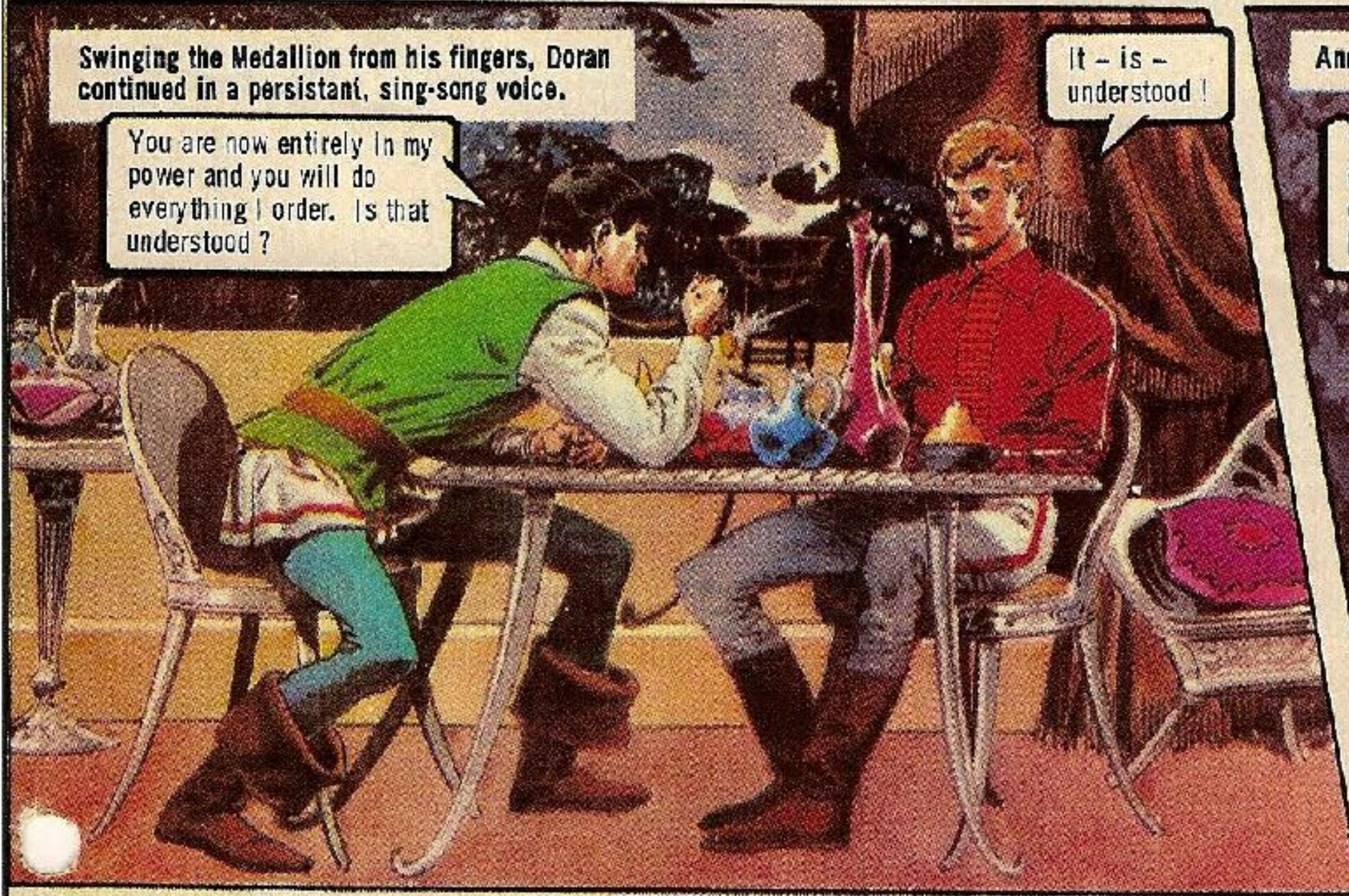
A strange note came into Doran's voice.

You are getting very sleepy, Janno
. . . very sleepy . . . your senses
are slipping away . . .

Look closely
at it, Janno
. . . look
very closely . . .

THE TRIGAN EMPIRE

After four inexplicable disasters have taken place in Trigan City, Janno meets an old boyhood friend, Doran, who may be responsible for the disasters. While they are dining together, Doran behaves very strangely



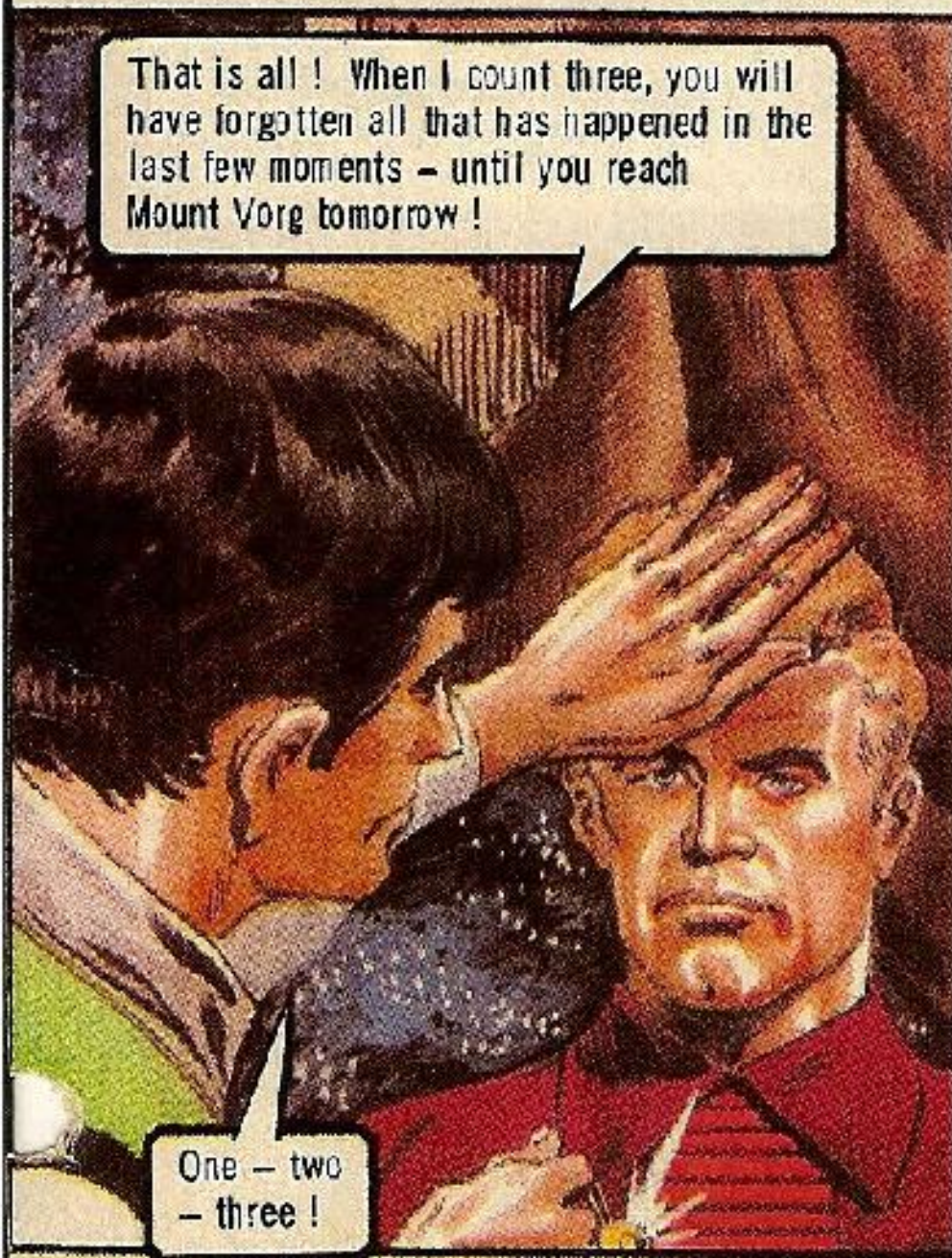
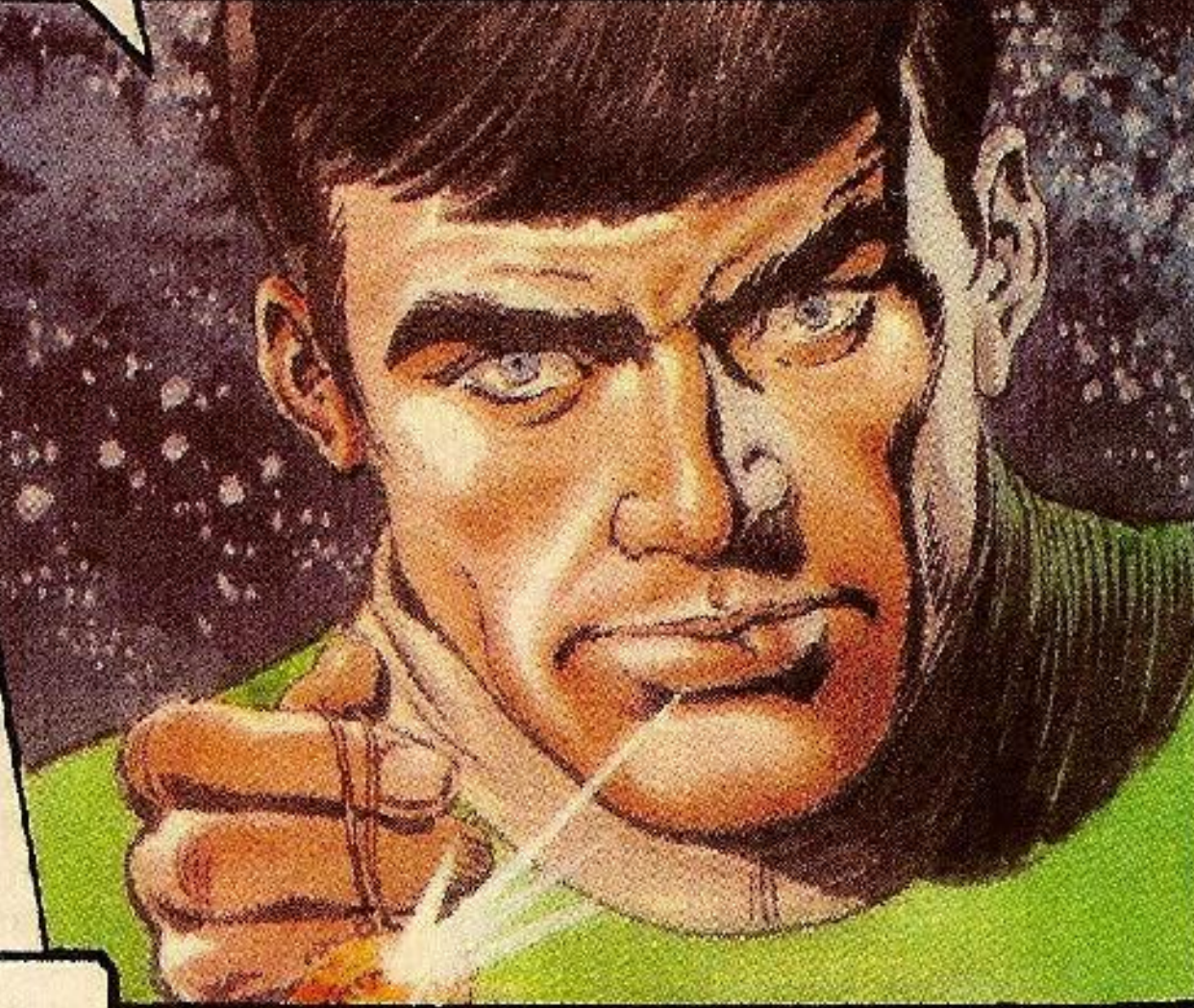
Swinging the Medallion from his fingers, Doran continued in a persistent, sing-song voice.

You are now entirely in my power and you will do everything I order. Is that understood?

It - is - understood!

And then - the astounding order!

The Emperor is your enemy! Remember that! He must be eliminated! Tomorrow, when you fly escort to the Imperial craft that is to take him to Cato, you will collide with the Imperial craft over Mount Vorg!

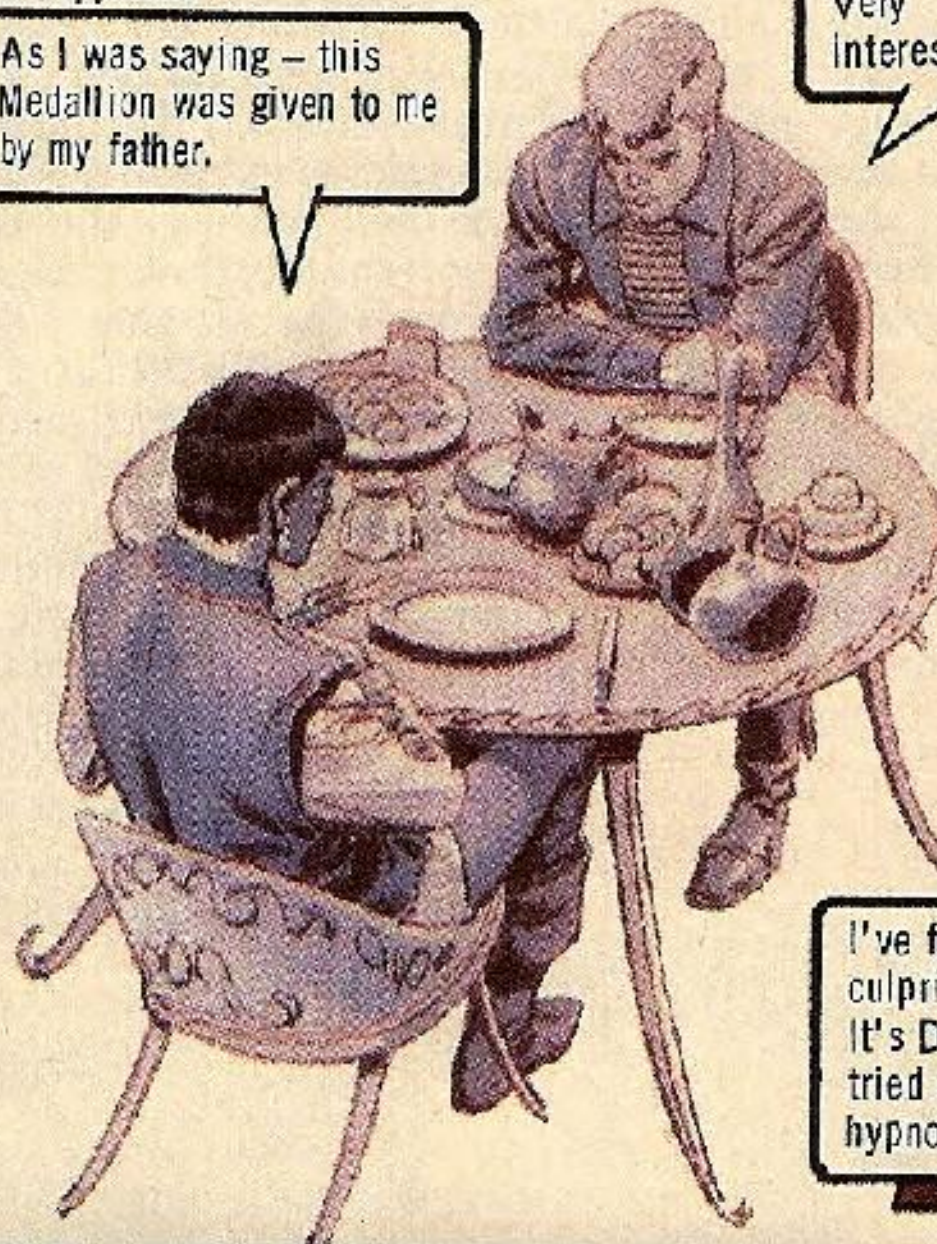


That is all! When I count three, you will have forgotten all that has happened in the last few moments - until you reach Mount Vorg tomorrow!

One - two - three!

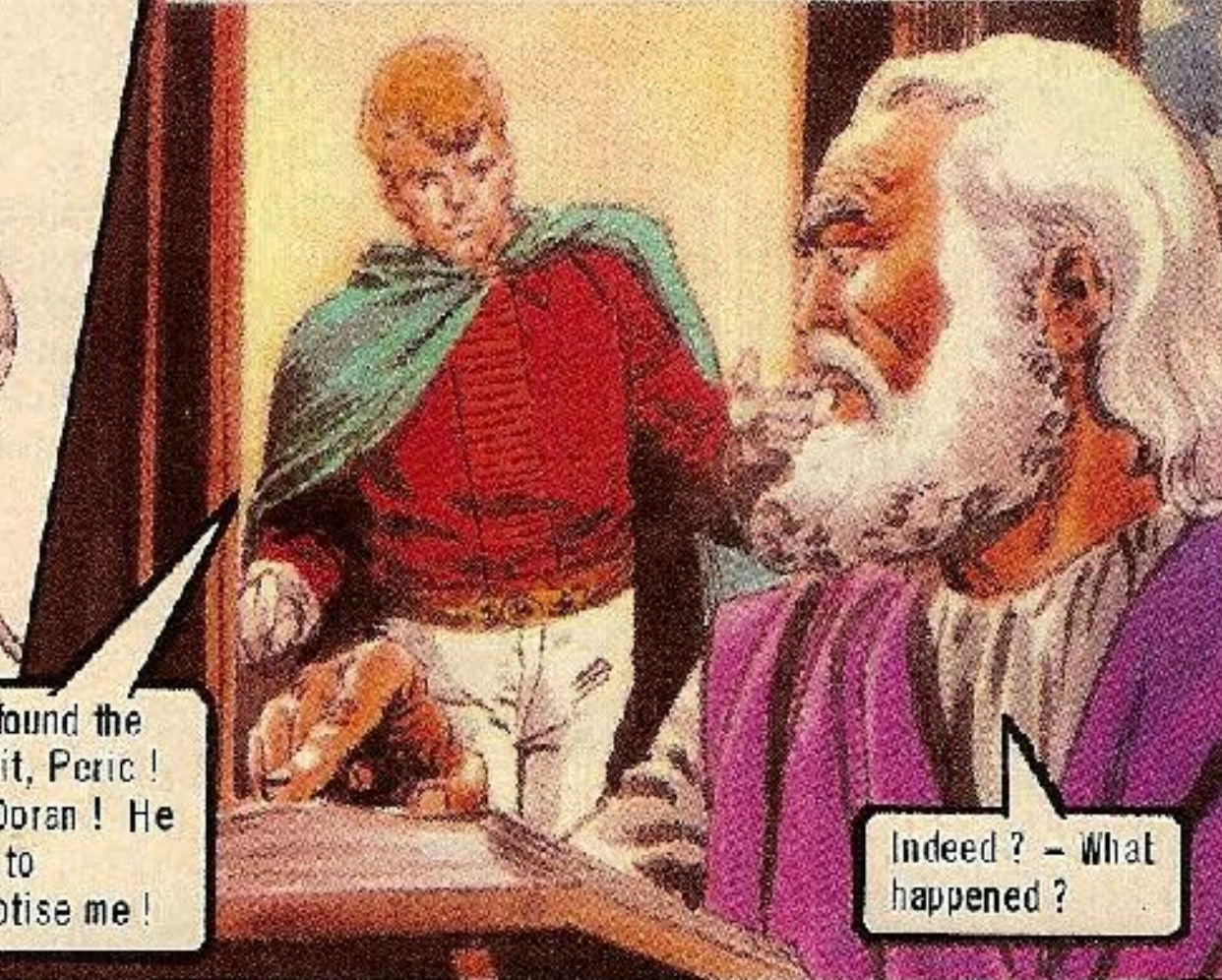
Doran continued his conversation as if nothing had happened.

As I was saying - this Medallion was given to me by my father.



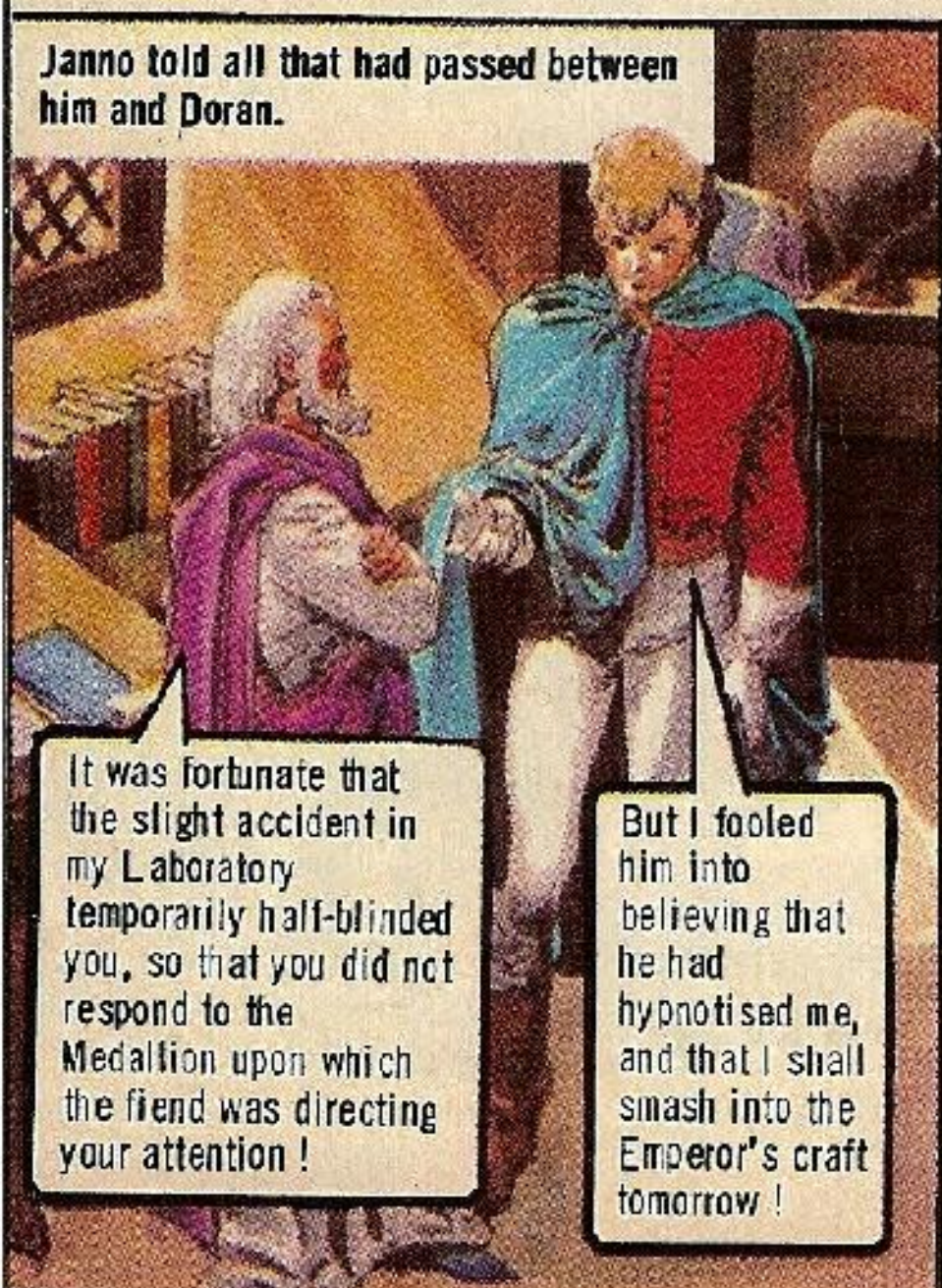
Very interesting.

Janno left Doran's villa soon afterwards - and went straight to Peric.



I've found the culprit, Peric! It's Doran! He tried to hypnotise me!

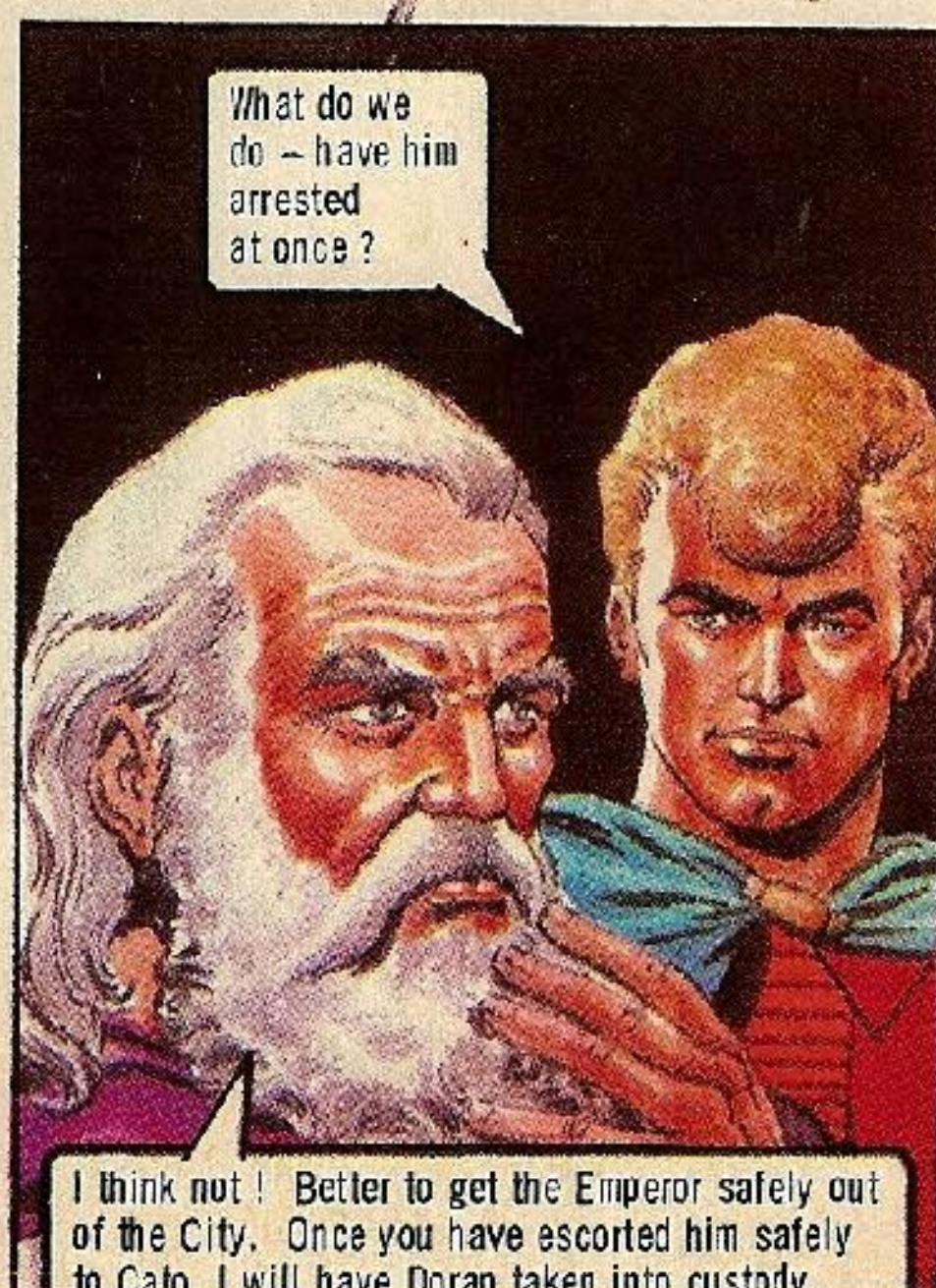
Indeed? - What happened?



Janno told all that had passed between him and Doran.

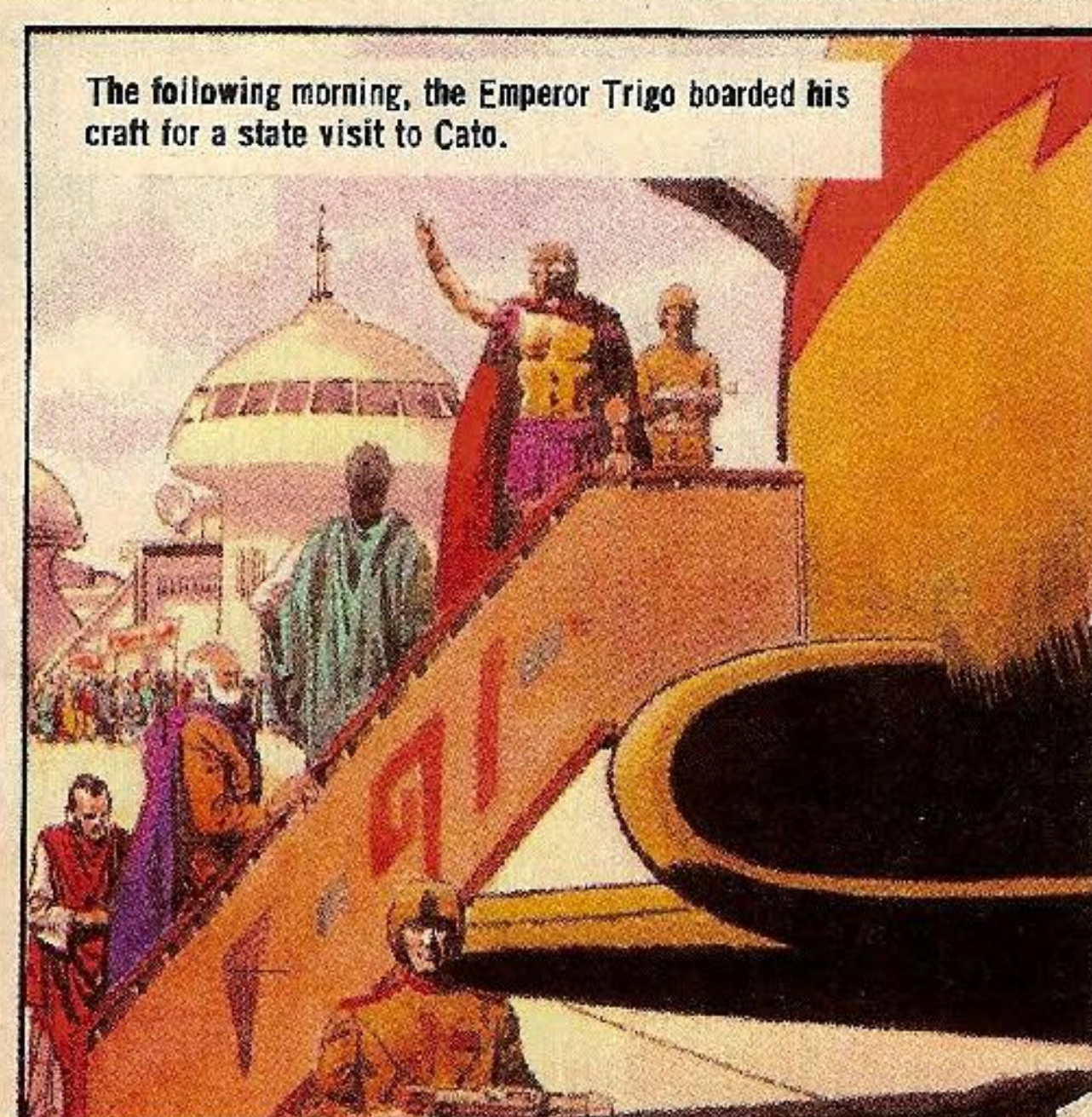
It was fortunate that the slight accident in my Laboratory temporarily half-blinded you, so that you did not respond to the Medallion upon which the fiend was directing your attention!

But I fooled him into believing that he had hypnotised me, and that I shall smash into the Emperor's craft tomorrow!



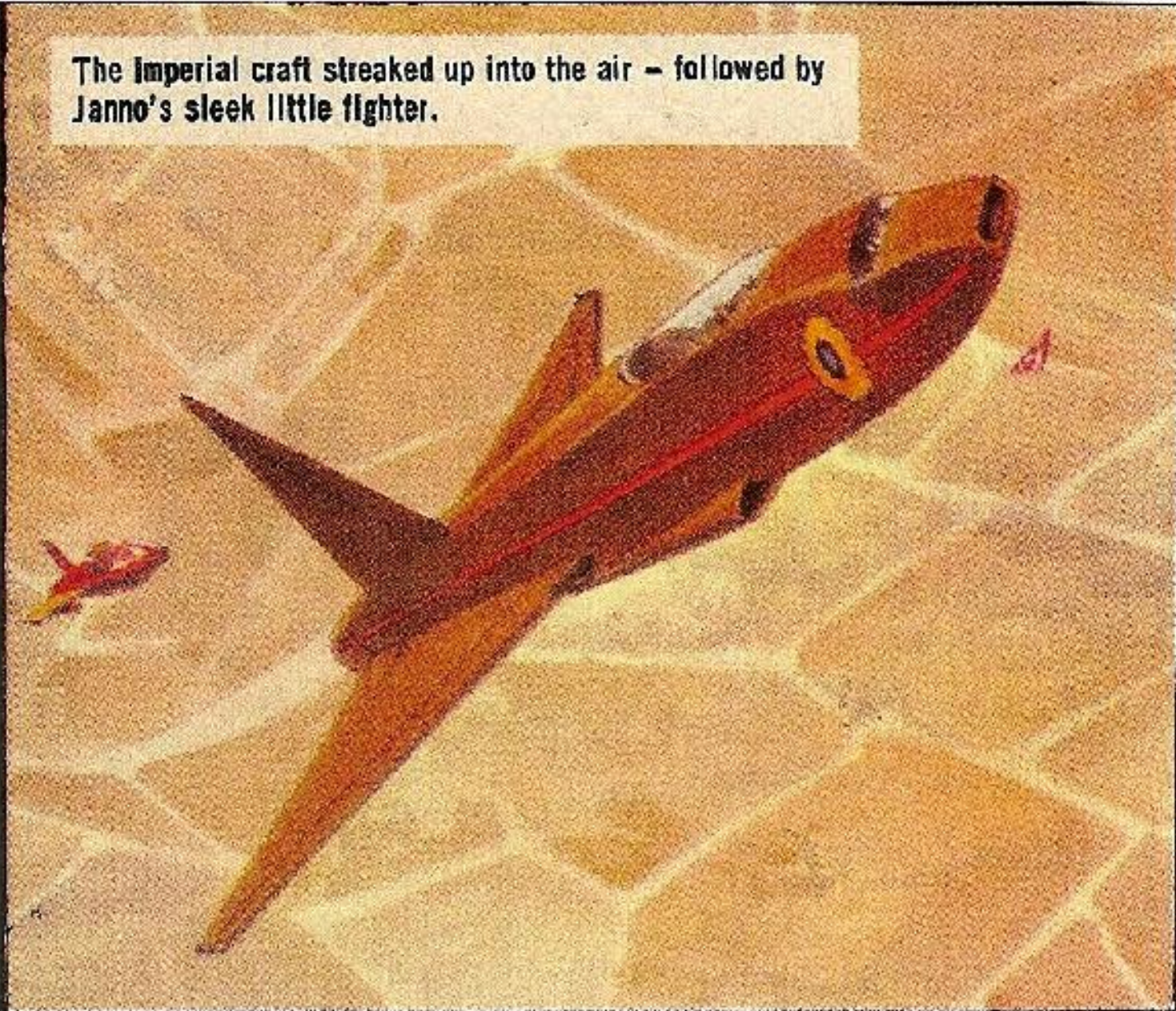
What do we do - have him arrested at once?

I think not! Better to get the Emperor safely out of the City. Once you have escorted him safely to Cato, I will have Doran taken into custody.



The following morning, the Emperor Trigo boarded his craft for a state visit to Cato.

The Imperial craft streaked up into the air – followed by Janno's sleek little fighter.

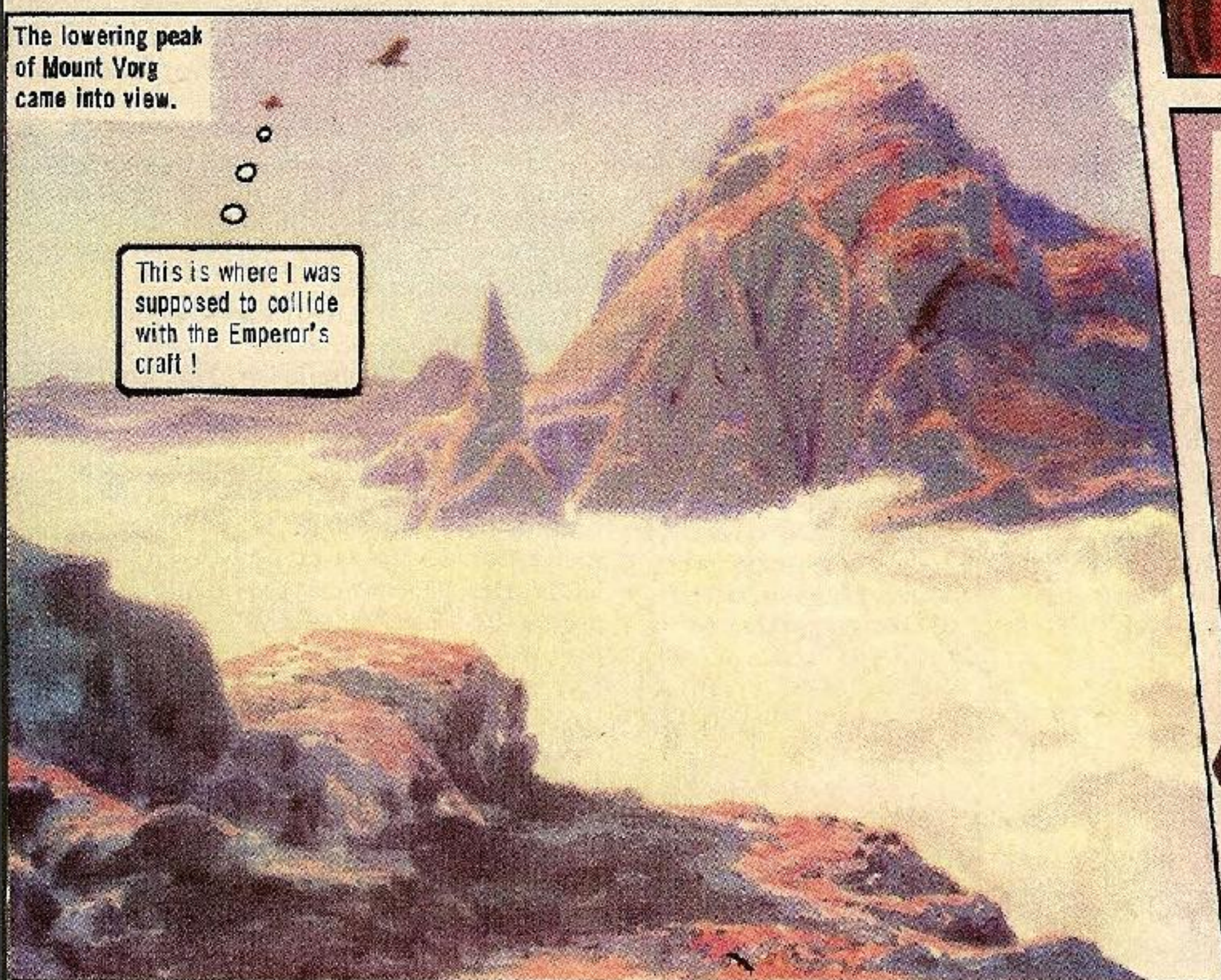


Janno took up station above and behind the other craft – and smiled to himself.



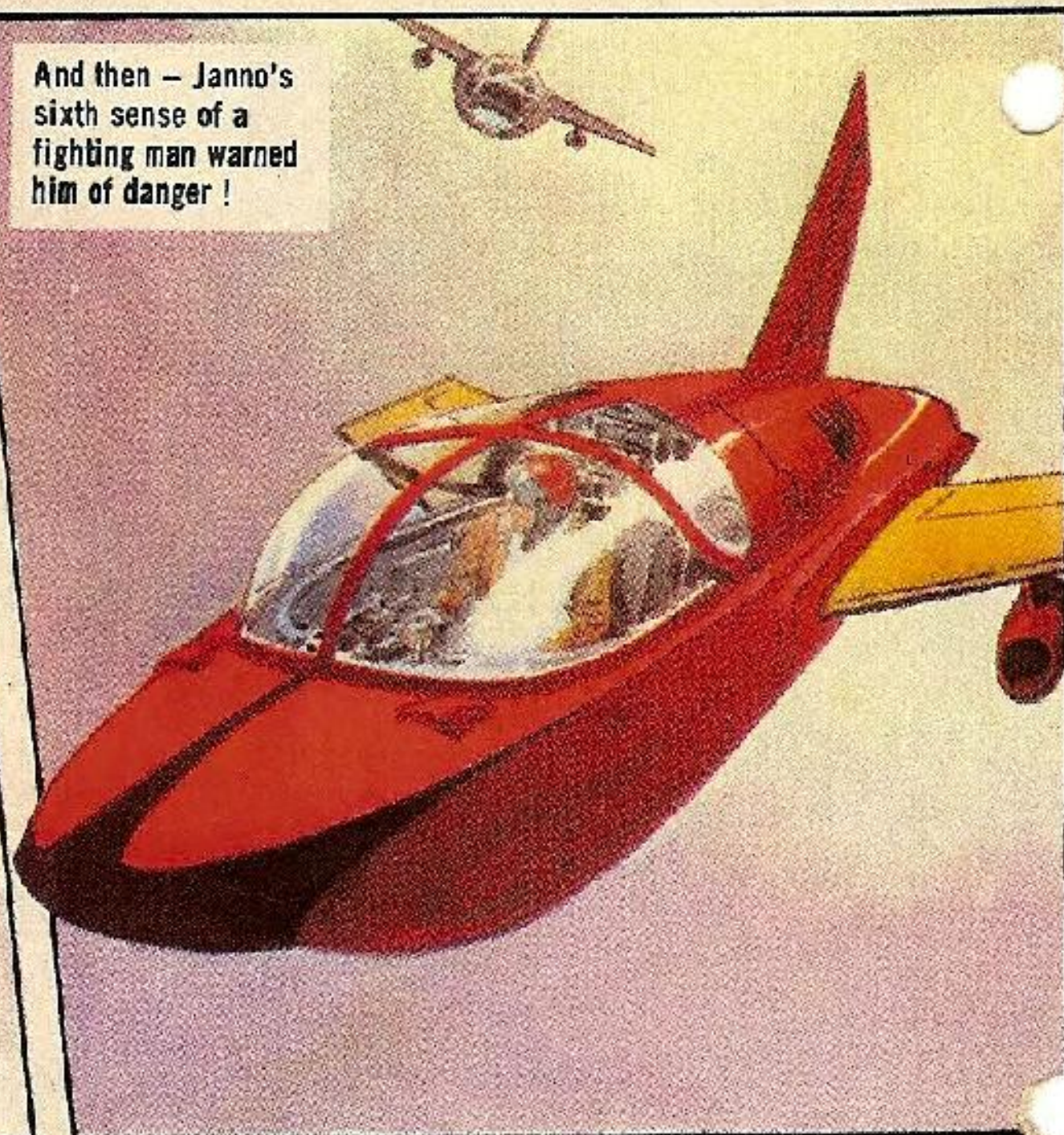
That scoundrel Doran is going to receive an unpleasant shock any time now!

The lowering peak of Mount Vorg came into view.

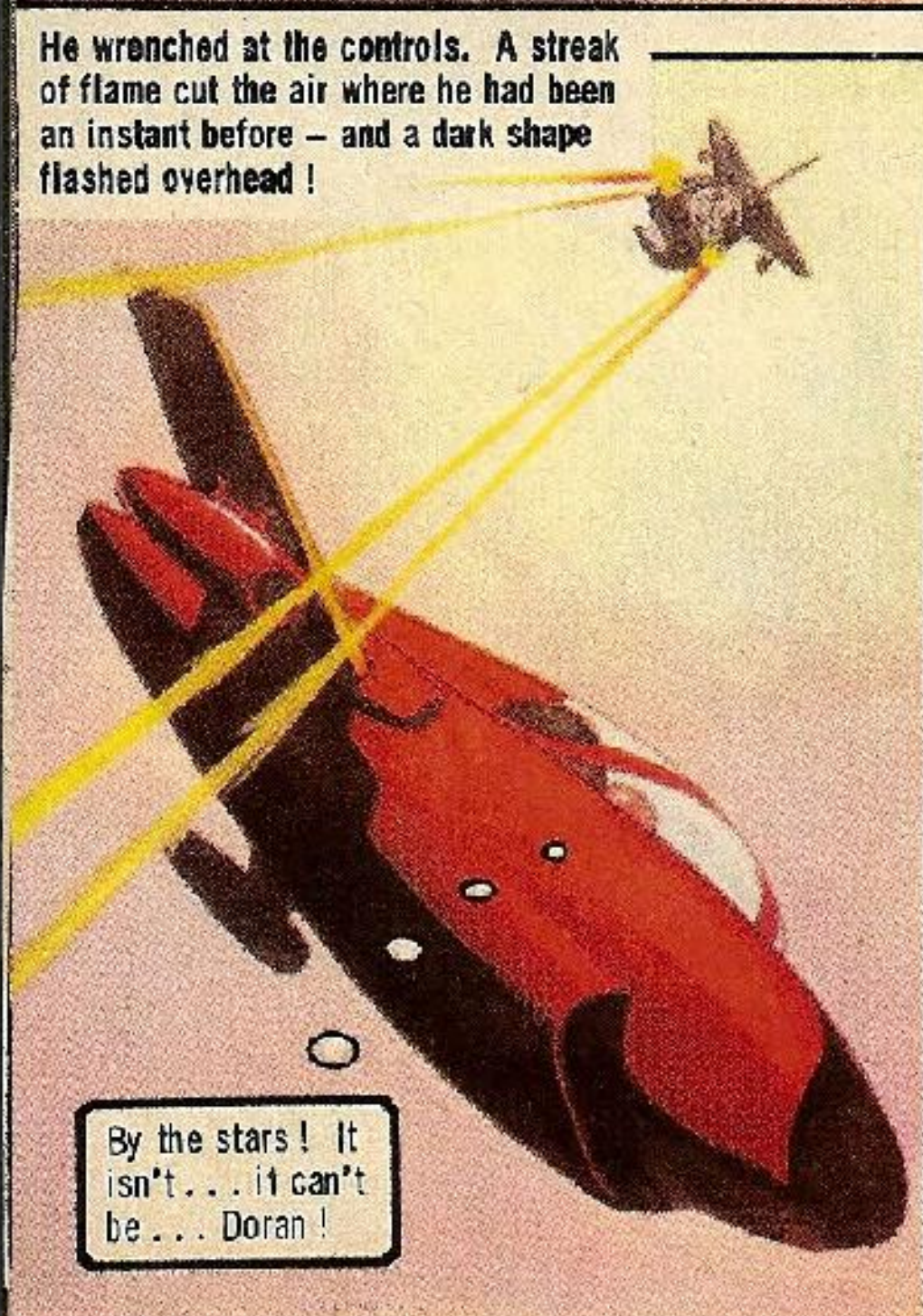


This is where I was supposed to collide with the Emperor's craft!

And then – Janno's sixth sense of a fighting man warned him of danger!



He wrenched at the controls. A streak of flame cut the air where he had been an instant before – and a dark shape flashed overhead!



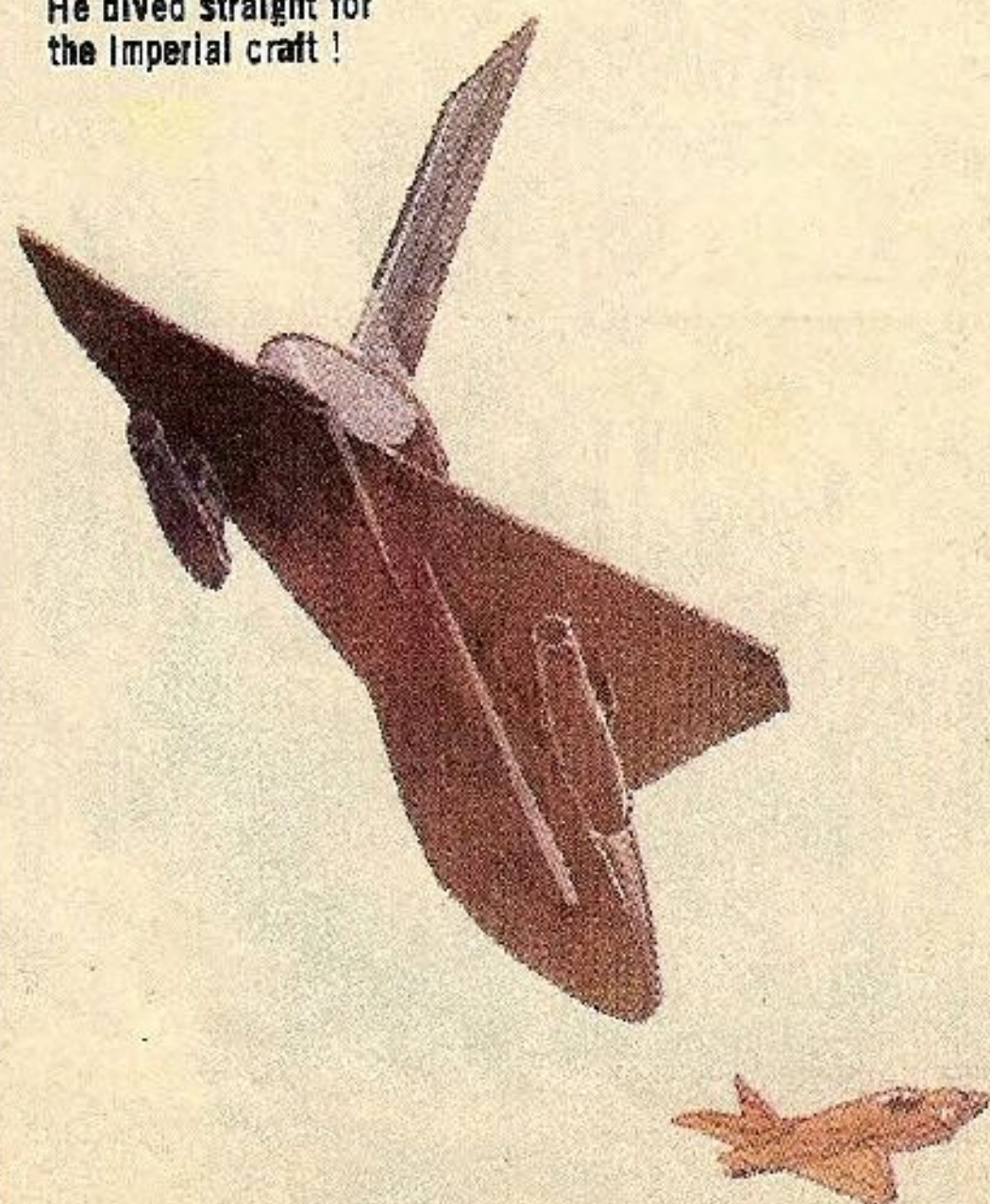
By the stars! It isn't... it can't be... Doran!

But the man at the controls of the other craft was indeed Doran!

It is fortunate that I am always at hand in case of failure! Now I will perform the final disaster myself – The destruction of the Emperor!



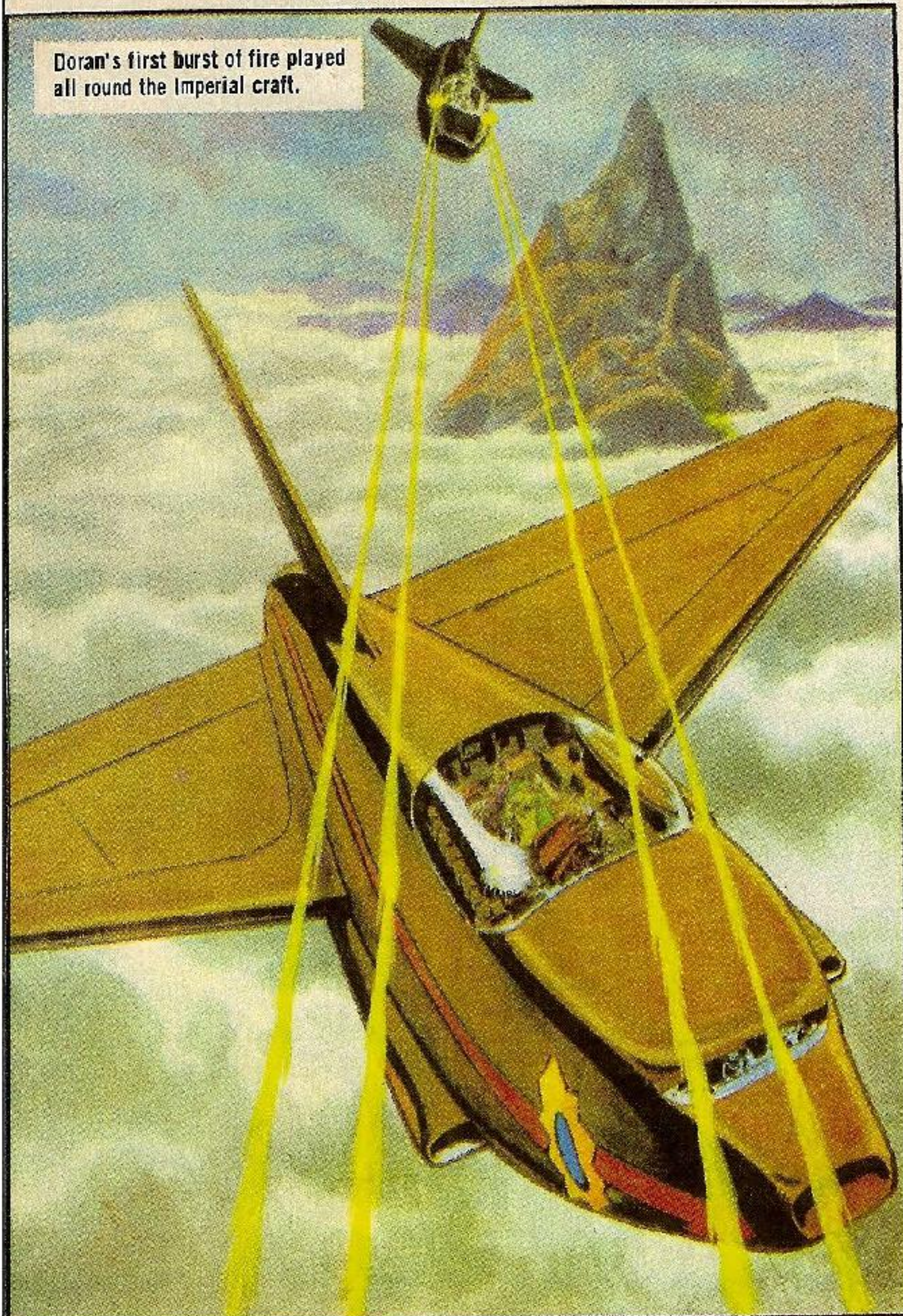
He dived straight for the Imperial craft!



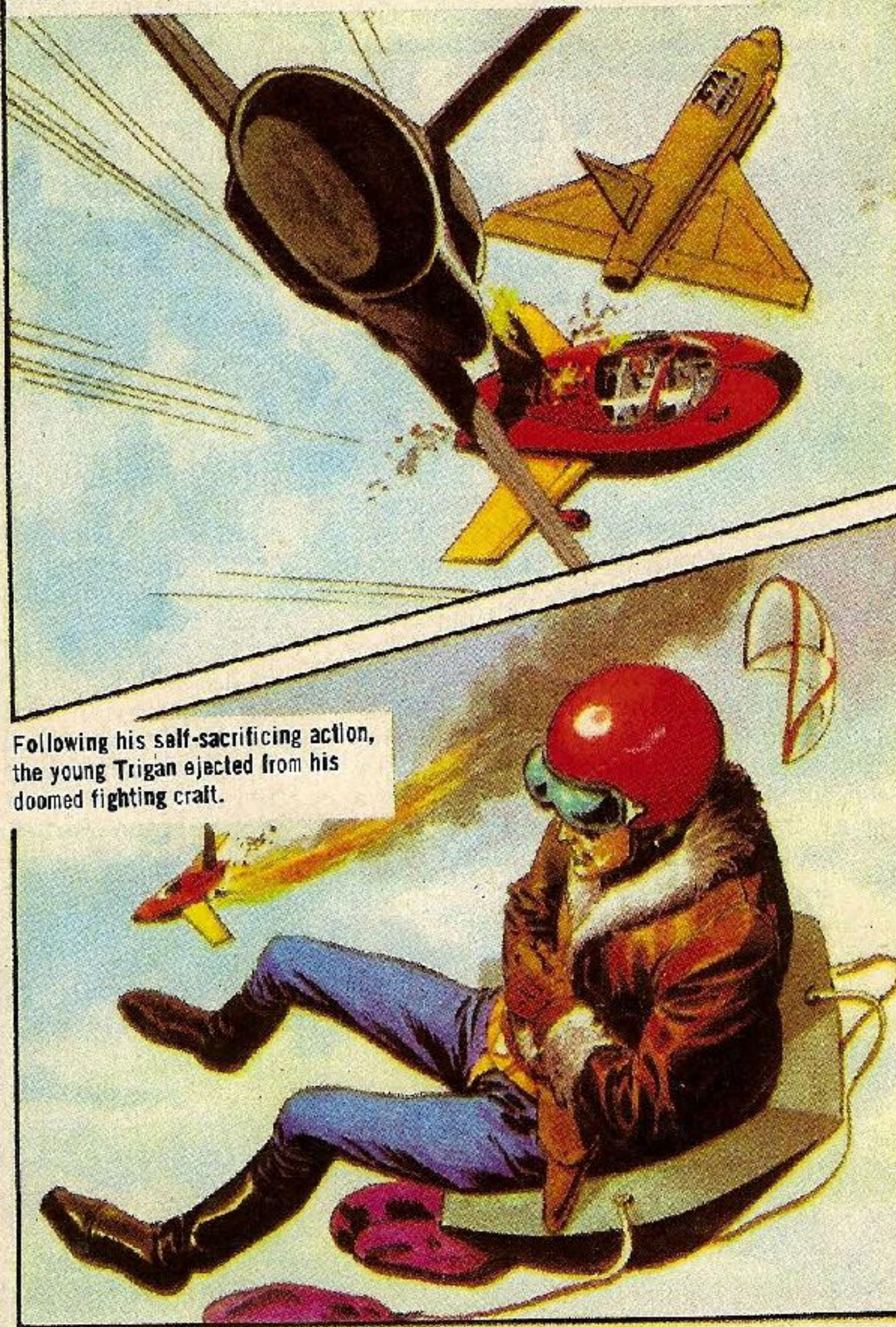
THE TRIGAN EMPIRE

Doran, the man responsible for the four disasters in Trigan City, has used hypnosis to try and make Janno collide with the aircraft carrying Emperor Trigo. But his plan fails and now he is about to destroy the Emperor himself

Doran's first burst of fire played all round the Imperial craft.

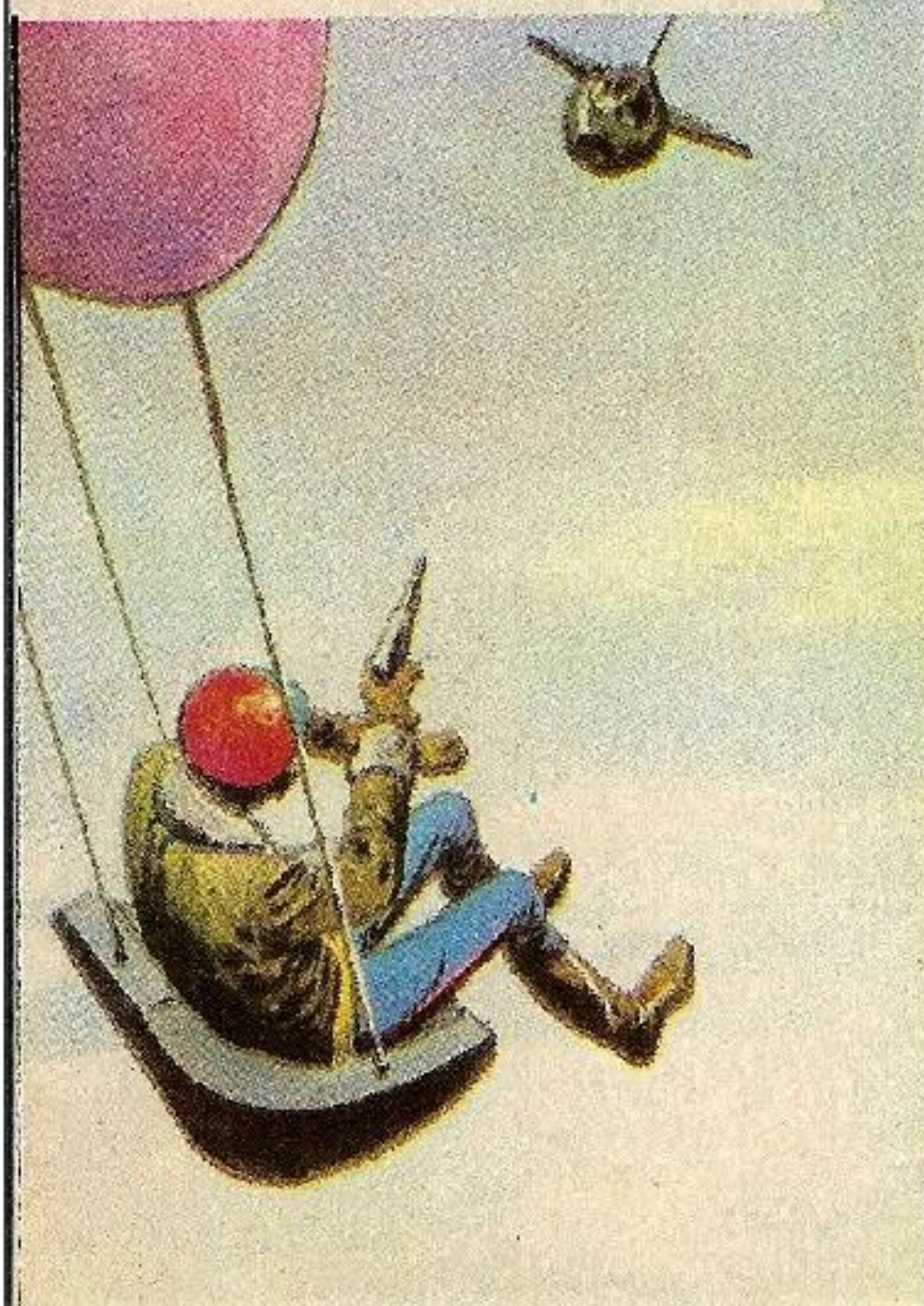


His second was closer on aim, and the Emperor Trigo must certainly have perished that day – but for Janno – who fearlessly dived his own craft into the hail of projectiles!



Following his self-sacrificing action, the young Trigan ejected from his doomed fighting craft.

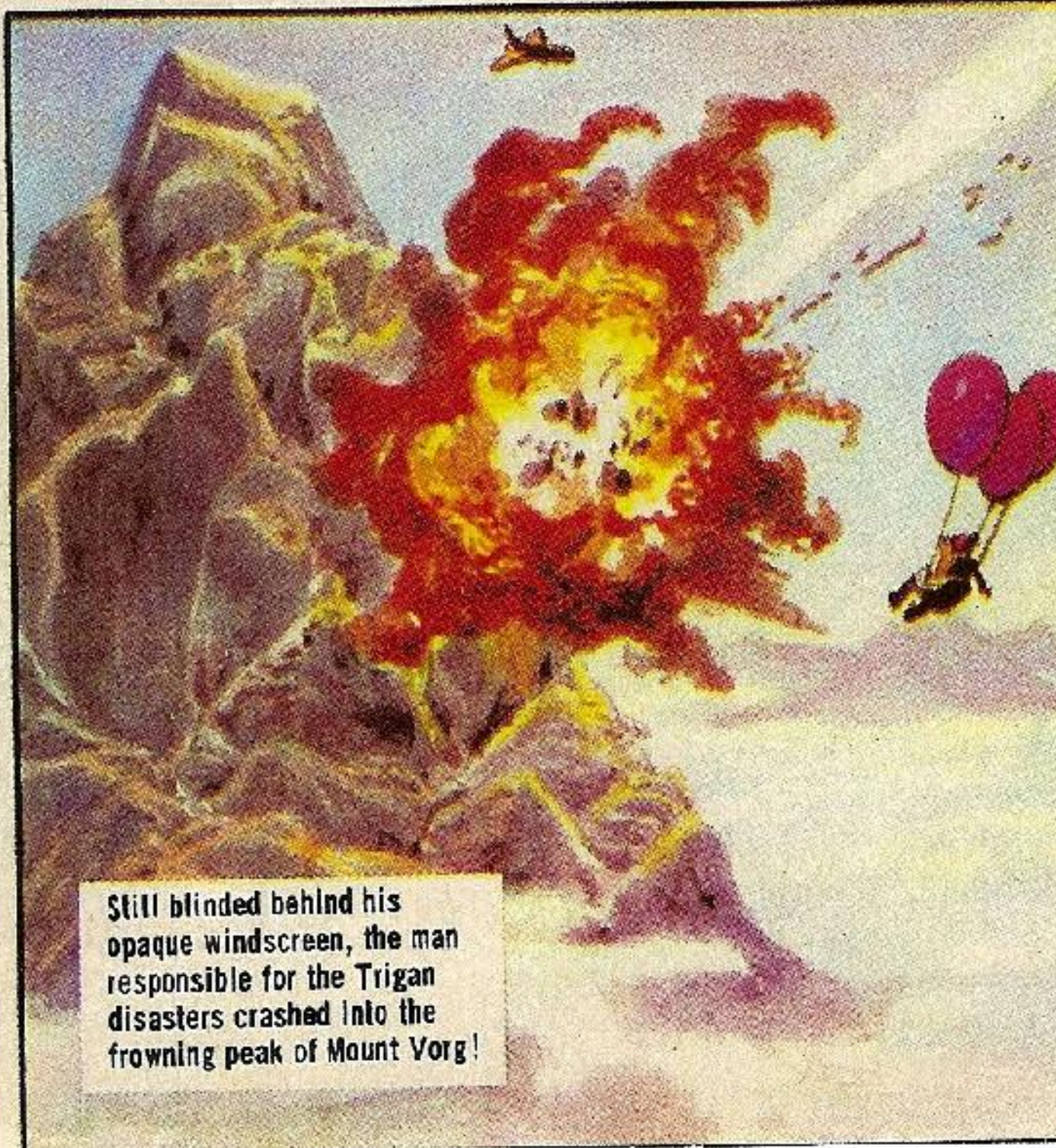
Then Janno saw the black killer coming at him. At any moment, the projectiles would tear at his body. He drew his pistol and took hasty aim...



Doran, who was squinting through his gun sight...



... Was suddenly blinded – as his armoured windscreen was crazed by Janno's lucky shot.



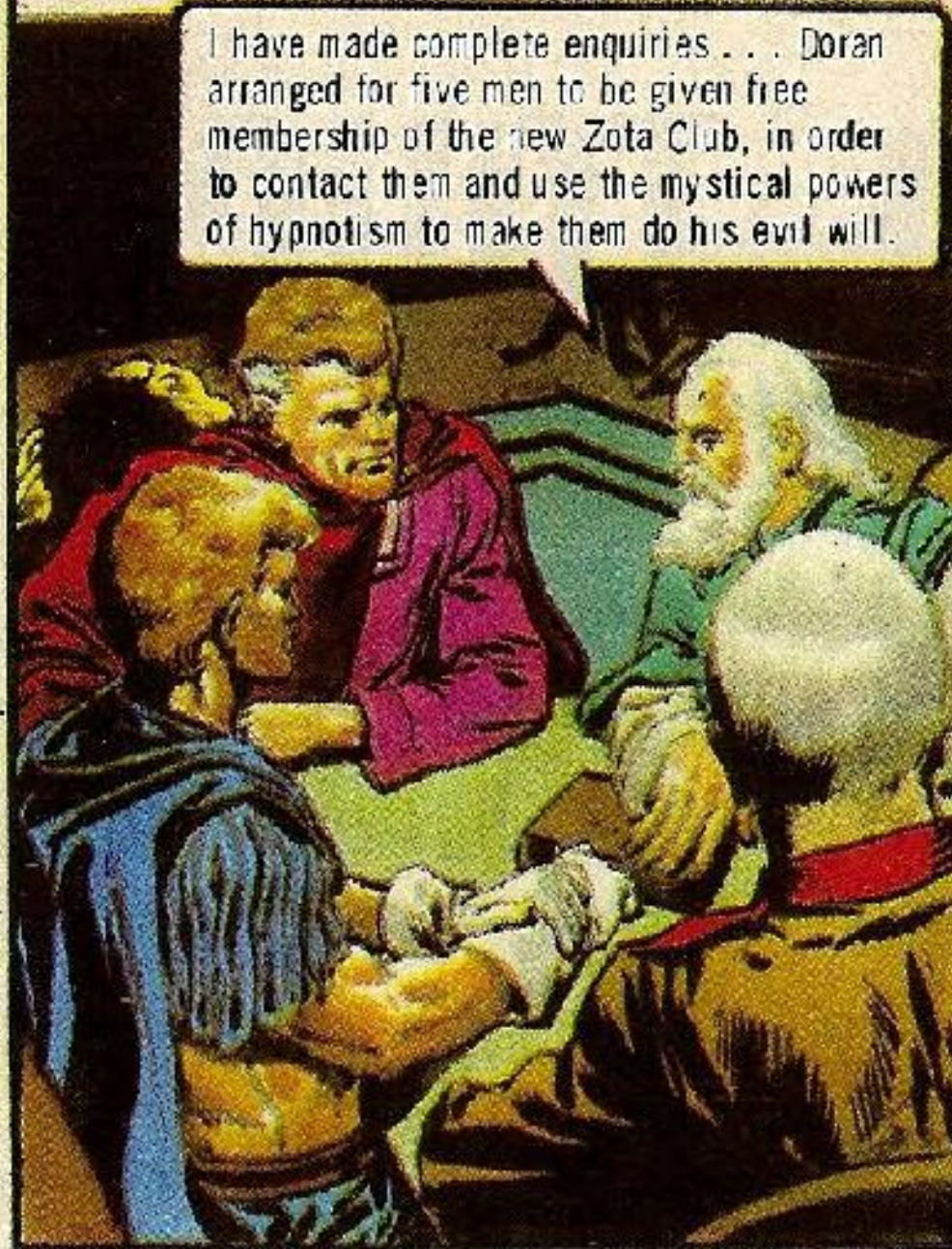
Still blinded behind his opaque windscreen, the man responsible for the Trigan disasters crashed into the frowning peak of Mount Vorg!

As the Imperial craft circled near him, Janno waved to his Uncle. His shout could not be heard, but he knew that his message was clear.



All's well!
There will
be no more
disasters!

Some days later, when Trigo had returned from Cato, old Peric unravelled the final threads of the mystery.

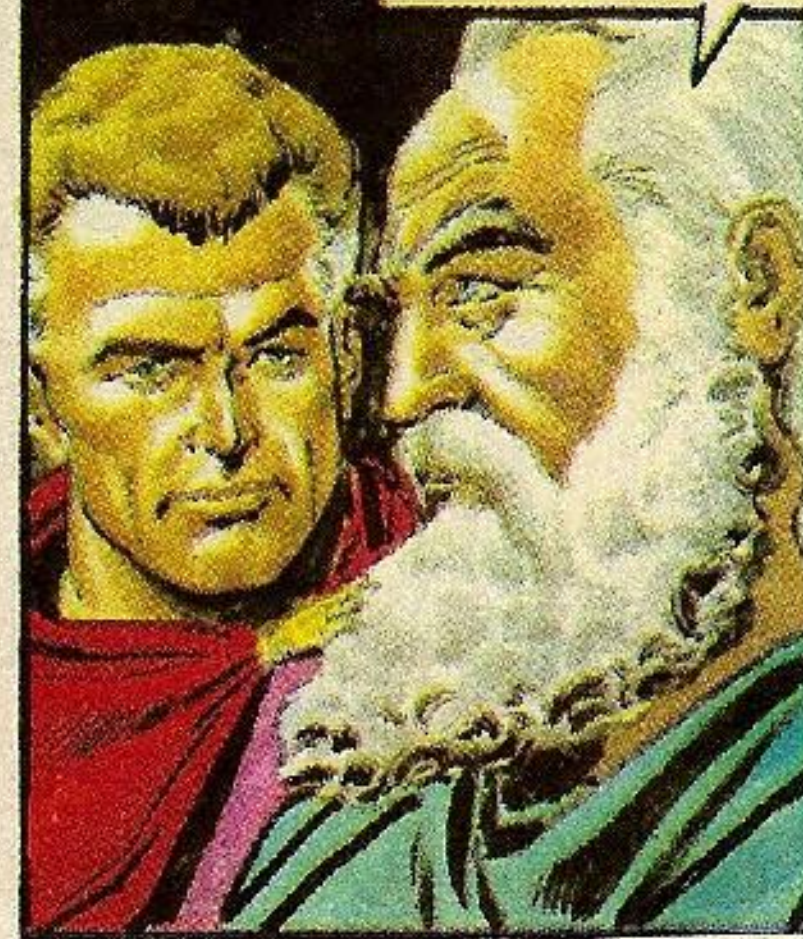


I have made complete enquiries . . . Doran arranged for five men to be given free membership of the new Zota Club, in order to contact them and use the mystical powers of hypnotism to make them do his evil will.

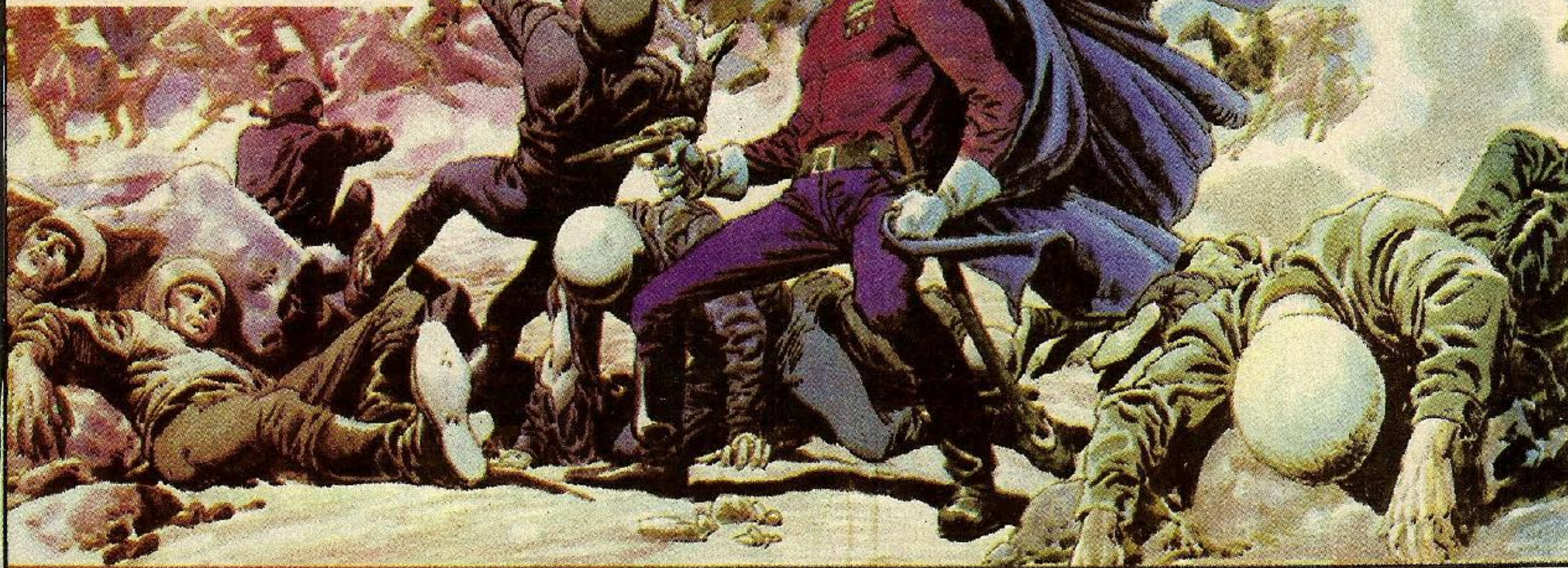
Trigo burst in with a question.

But why? . . .
Why? . . . Doran bore an honoured name!

His diary has been found, and it explains all. He was obsessed with the idea that his father was carelessly sent to his death by the Trigan high command



All present recalled – in their minds' eyes – the saga of Doran's father, a colonel of the Imperial Guard, who was wiped out with his command during the Lokan wars.

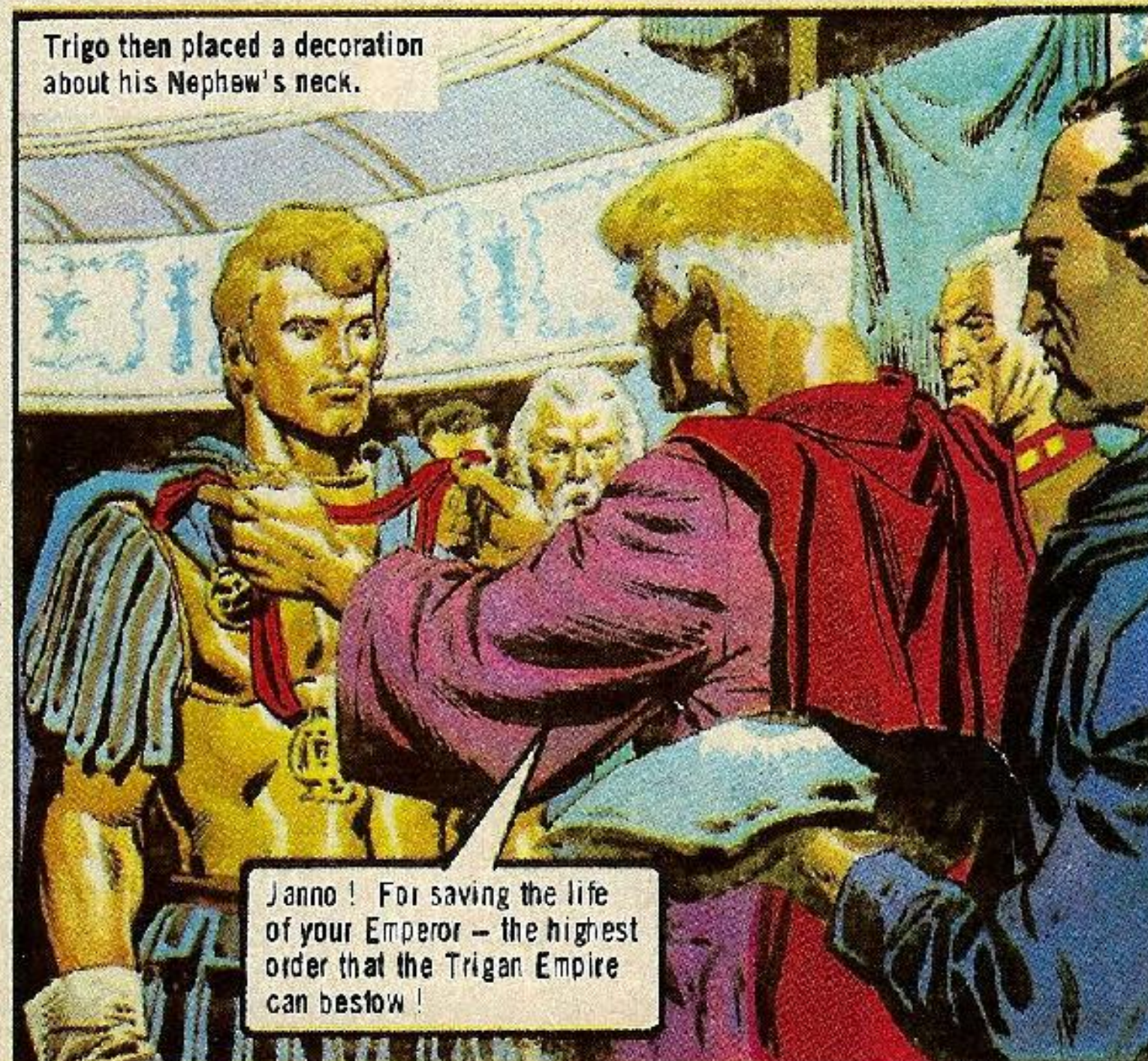


So – Doran planned the disasters against the Trigan Empire to avenge his father's death!



Yes! But he was misguided. It was his father's own glory-seeking folly that led him into the Lokan trap. He died an unnecessary hero!

Trigo then placed a decoration about his Nephew's neck.



Janno! For saving the life of your Emperor – the highest order that the Trigan Empire can bestow!