

MORE ADVENTURES OF THE

TRIGAN EMPIRE

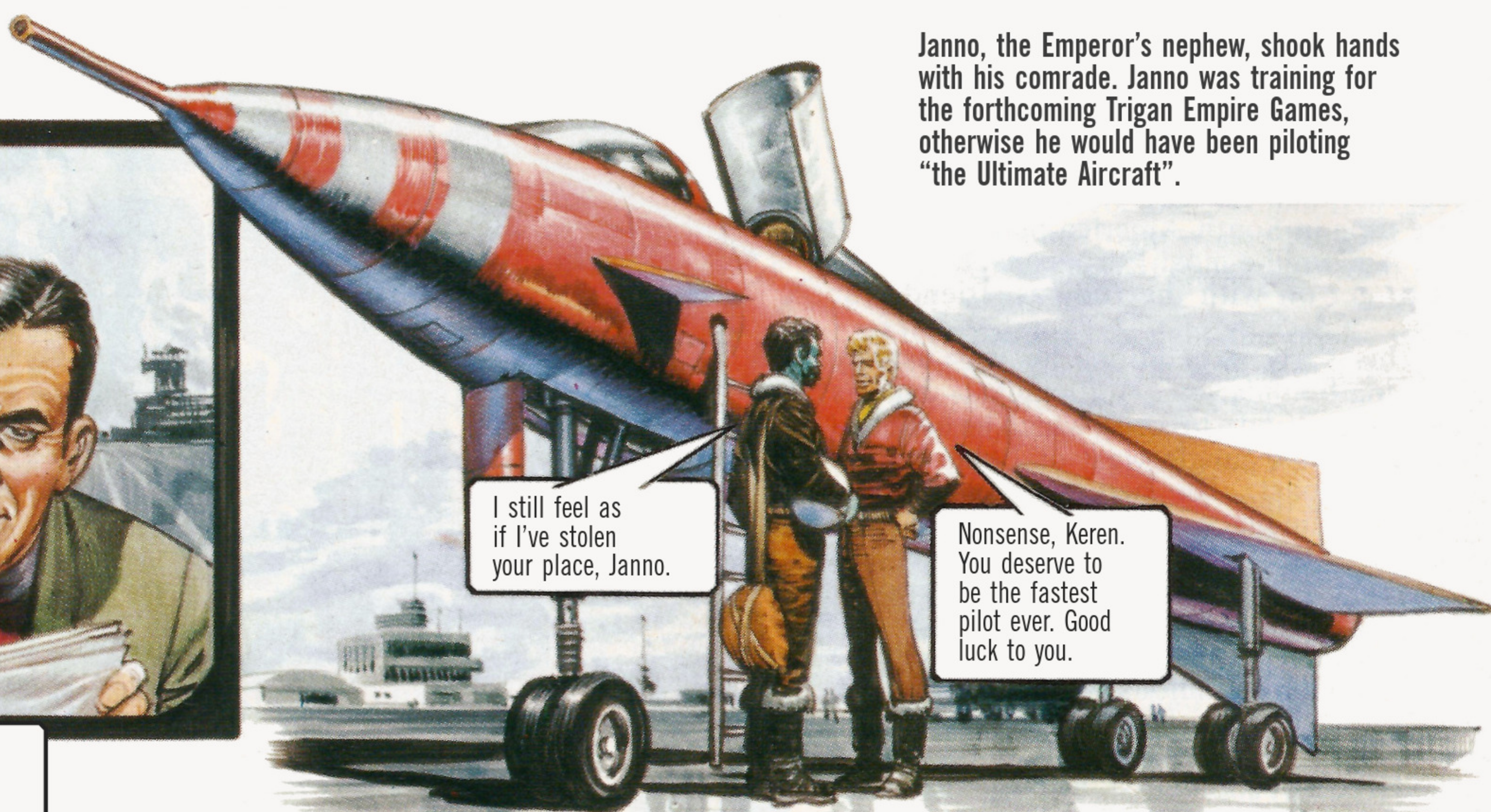
Far, far away beyond the bounds of uttermost space, lies the planet Elekton, situated in the galaxy of Yarna. The greatest power on the planet is the Trigan Empire, ruled over by its founder, the Emperor Trigo . . .

All Elekton was tuned-in to one of the outstanding events of the age.

Janno, the Emperor's nephew, shook hands with his comrade. Janno was training for the forthcoming Trigan Empire Games, otherwise he would have been piloting "the Ultimate Aircraft".



We see Keren of the Air Fleet about to climb into the cockpit of what may prove to be the fastest craft that will ever fly in the atmosphere.



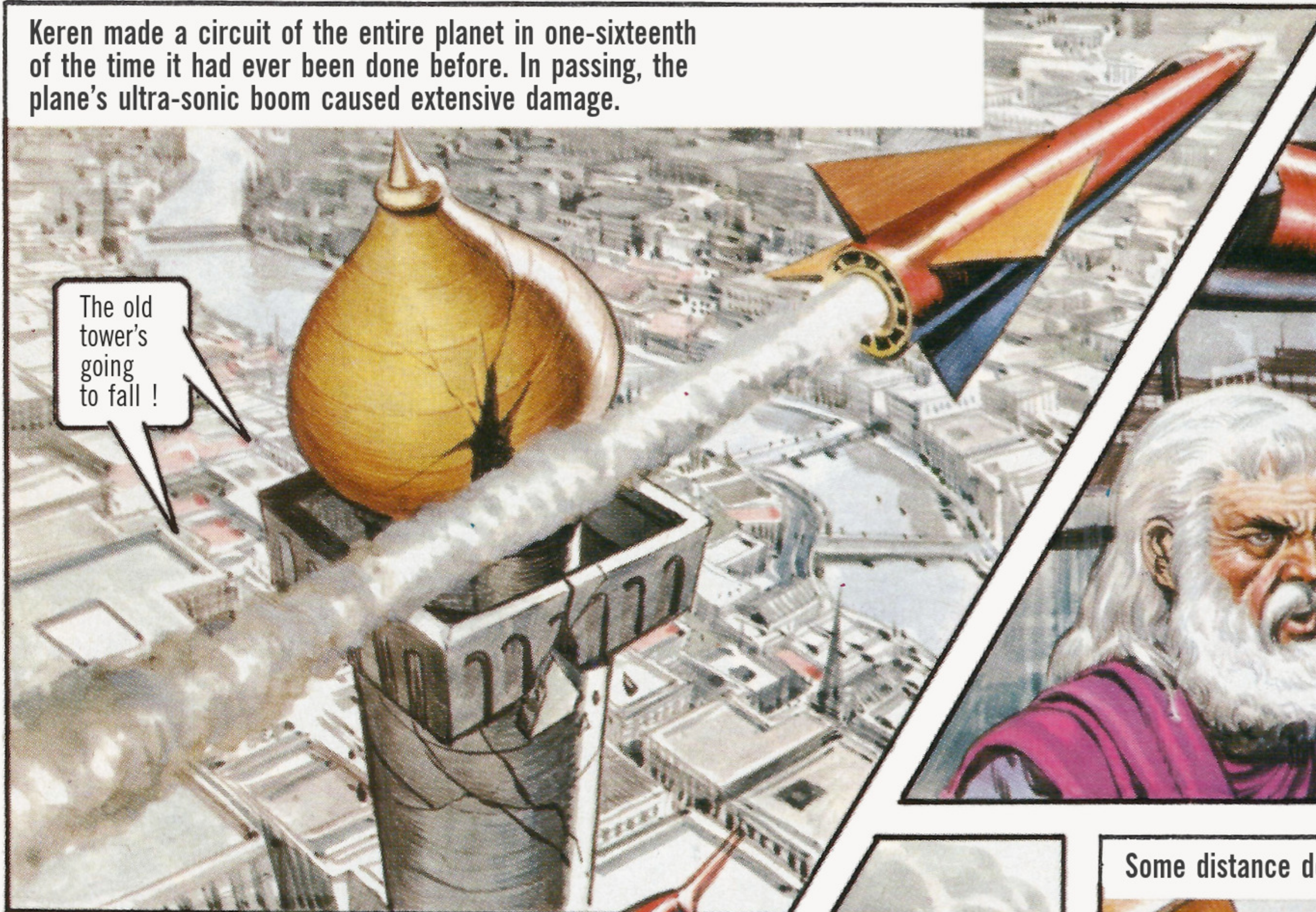
I still feel as if I've stolen your place, Janno.

Nonsense, Keren. You deserve to be the fastest pilot ever. Good luck to you.

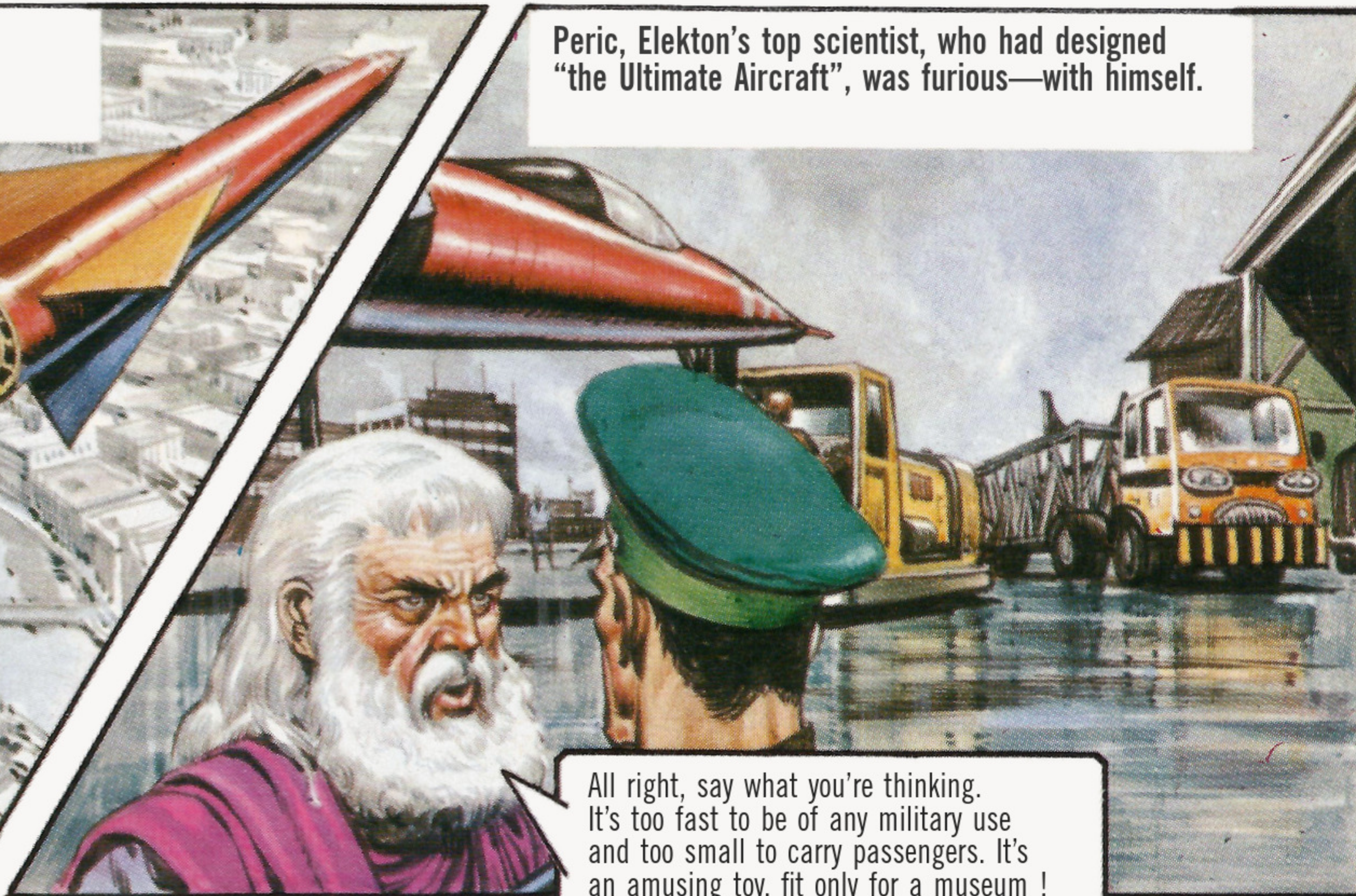
DON LAWRENCE

Keren made a circuit of the entire planet in one-sixteenth of the time it had ever been done before. In passing, the plane's ultra-sonic boom caused extensive damage.

Peric, Elekton's top scientist, who had designed "the Ultimate Aircraft", was furious—with himself.



The old tower's going to fall!



All right, say what you're thinking. It's too fast to be of any military use and too small to carry passengers. It's an amusing toy, fit only for a museum!

The craft, destined to be stripped down to its component parts for close examination in Peric's laboratory, was loaded on to a transporter and taken away from the air base.

Some distance down the highway . . .

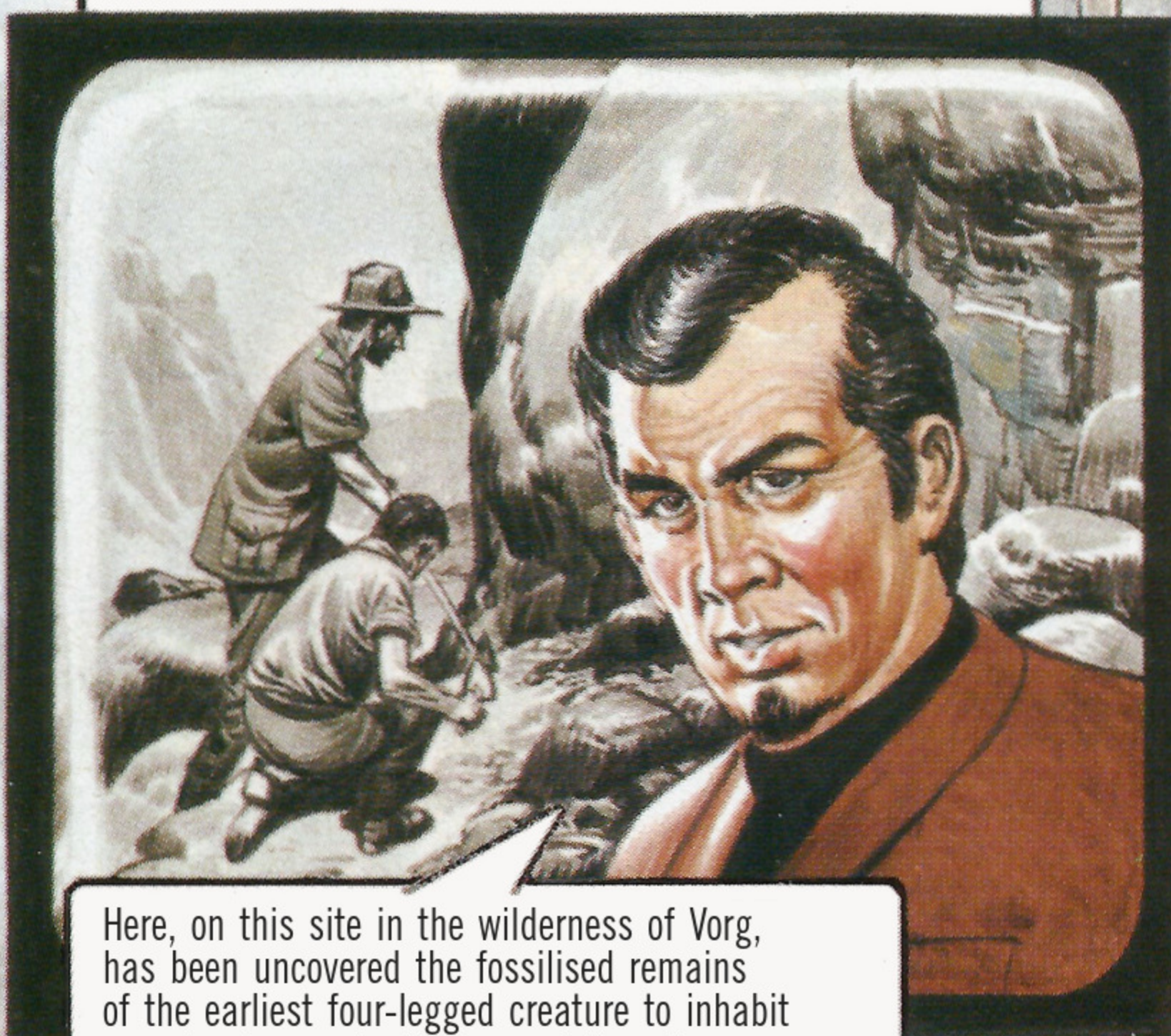


Halt!

The unarmed crew of the transporter looked on while "the Ultimate Aircraft" was attached to the heli-jet and carried skywards.

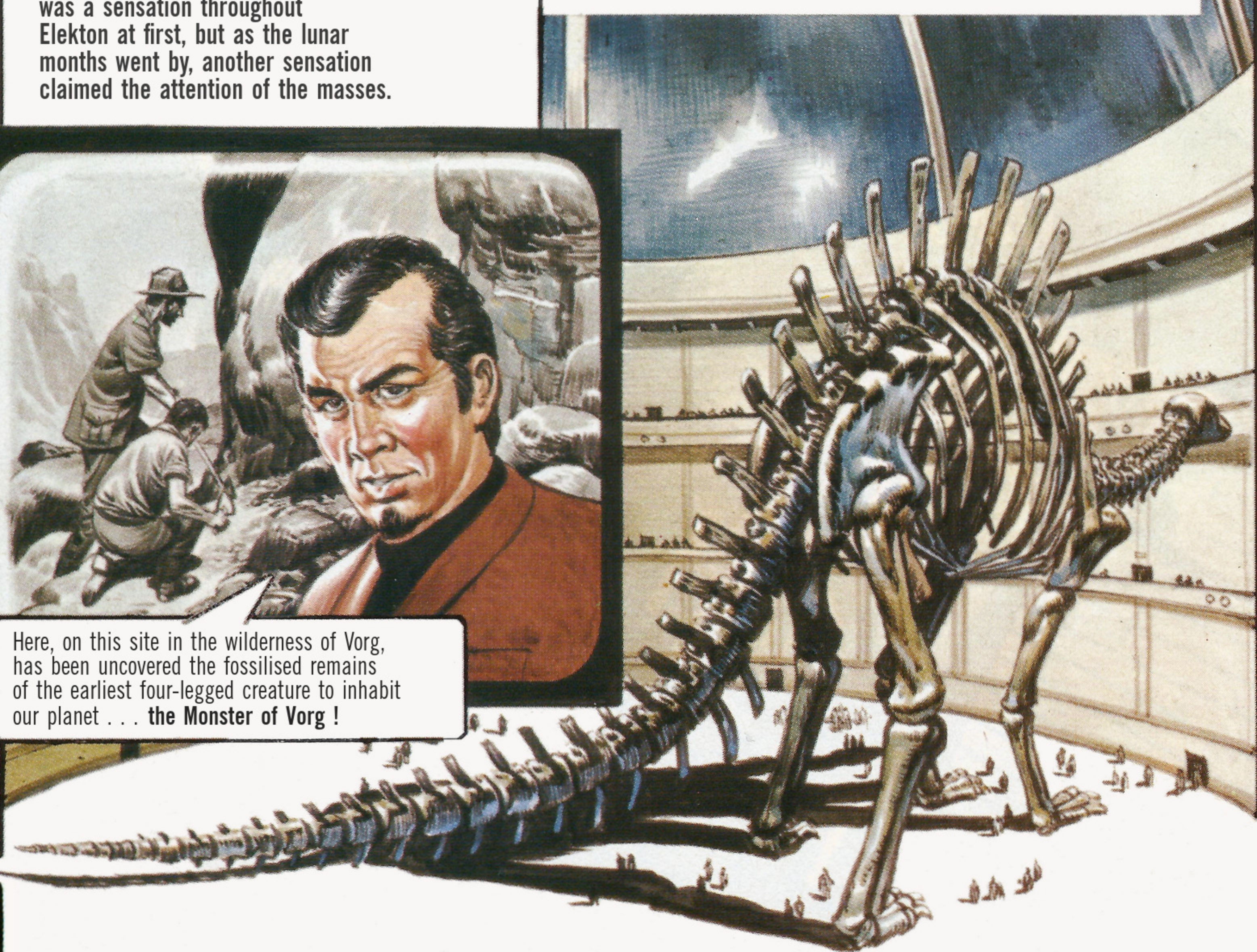


The snatching of the wonder plane was a sensation throughout Elekton at first, but as the lunar months went by, another sensation claimed the attention of the masses.



Here, on this site in the wilderness of Vorg, has been uncovered the fossilised remains of the earliest four-legged creature to inhabit our planet . . . the Monster of Vorg !

"The Monster of Vorg" was exhibited in a specially constructed building in Trigan City. It became one of the sights of the planet.



Several weeks later, from out of a peaceful sky, a force of armed warriors descended.



Acting swiftly and ruthlessly dealing with the slightest opposition, they cleared visitors from the vast building that housed the monster.



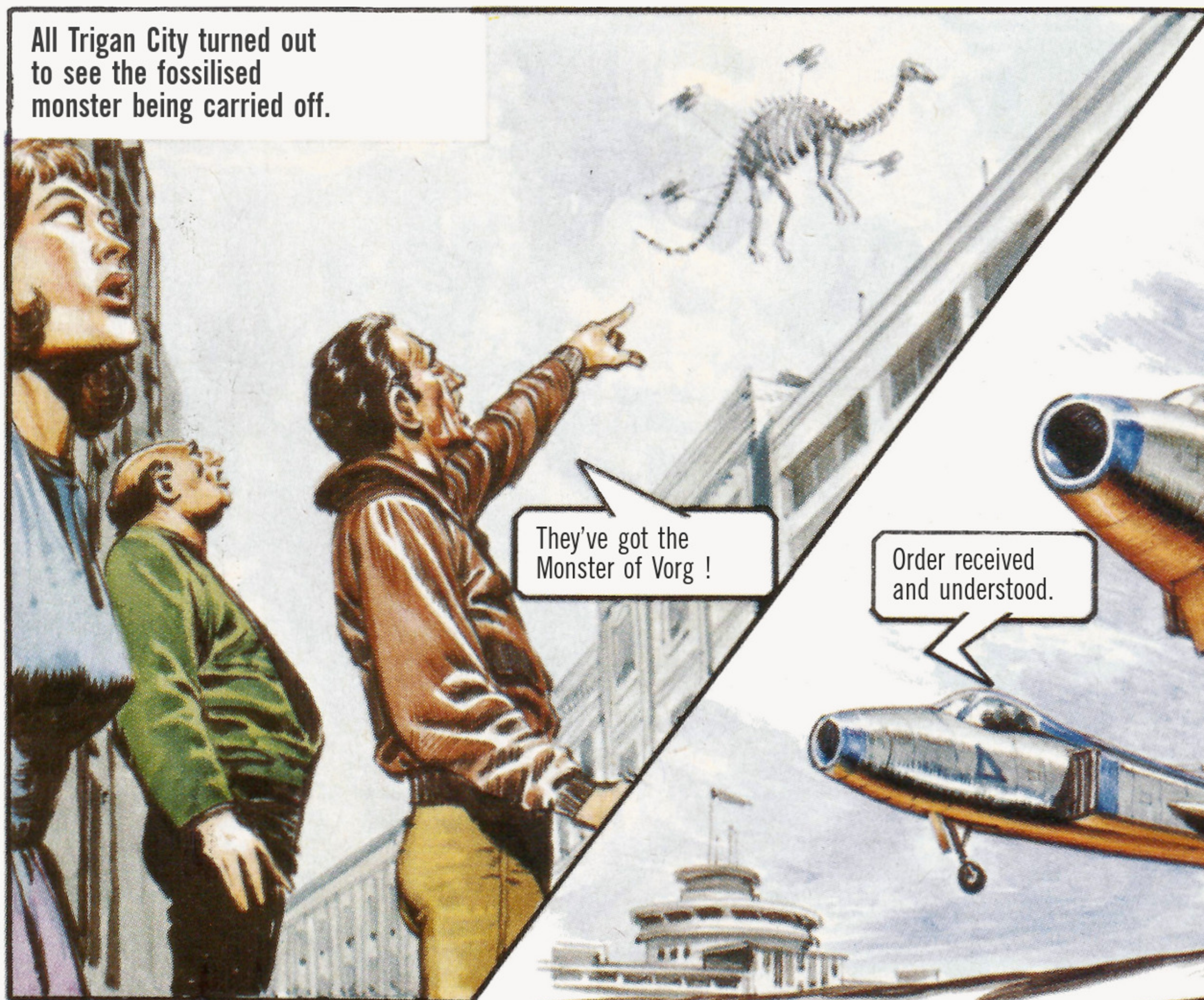
Aaaagh !

Explosive charges brought the transparent roof crashing down.



Then, from out of the wreckage rose "the Monster of Vorg" !

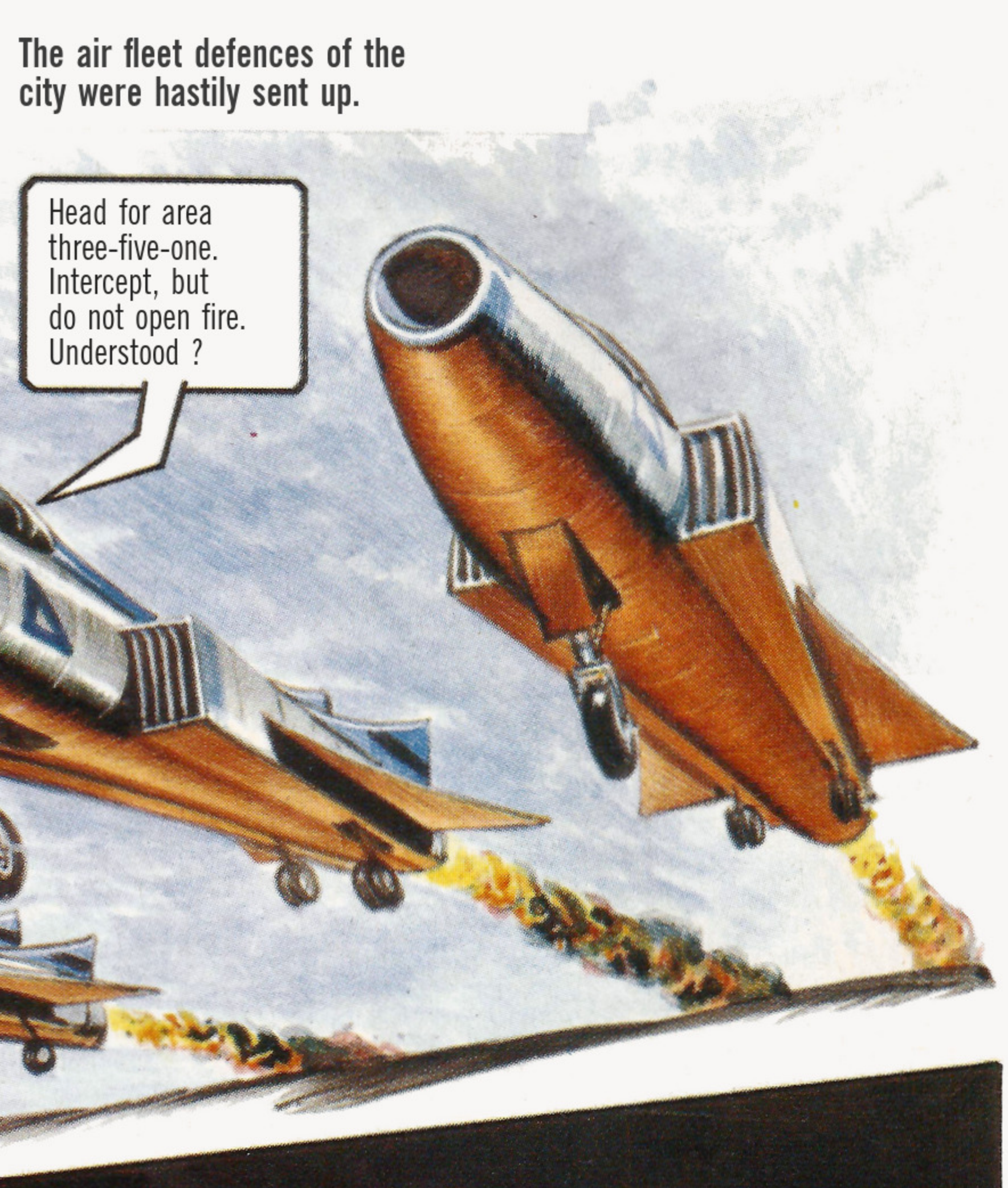




All Trigan City turned out to see the fossilised monster being carried off.

They've got the Monster of Vorg !

Order received and understood.



The air fleet defences of the city were hastily sent up.

Head for area three-five-one. Intercept, but do not open fire. Understood ?



Later . . .

Leader of the interceptors reports they've lost contact, sir.

With a thing that size ? Impossible !



When it was all over, the experts went through the operation in detail and came up with a surprising conclusion.

The thieves, whoever they are, made their escape in this direction. Shortly before passing the boundary of greater Trigan City, they disappeared from sight. So we estimate that the Monster of Vorg is still somewhere near at hand !



Speculation about the missing giant fossil was on everyone's lips for a few days. The incident was then completely overshadowed by—the Trigan Empire Games !

People of the planet Elekton. We proudly present the twentieth Trigan Empire Games !



A star athlete and strong contender for the Victor's Grand Crown was Janno, the Emperor's nephew.

Competitors for the pole-climbing take your places.

Good luck, Janno.

Pole-climbing—the most physically-demanding and dangerous of all Elekton athletic events and Janno was the first to plant his flag.

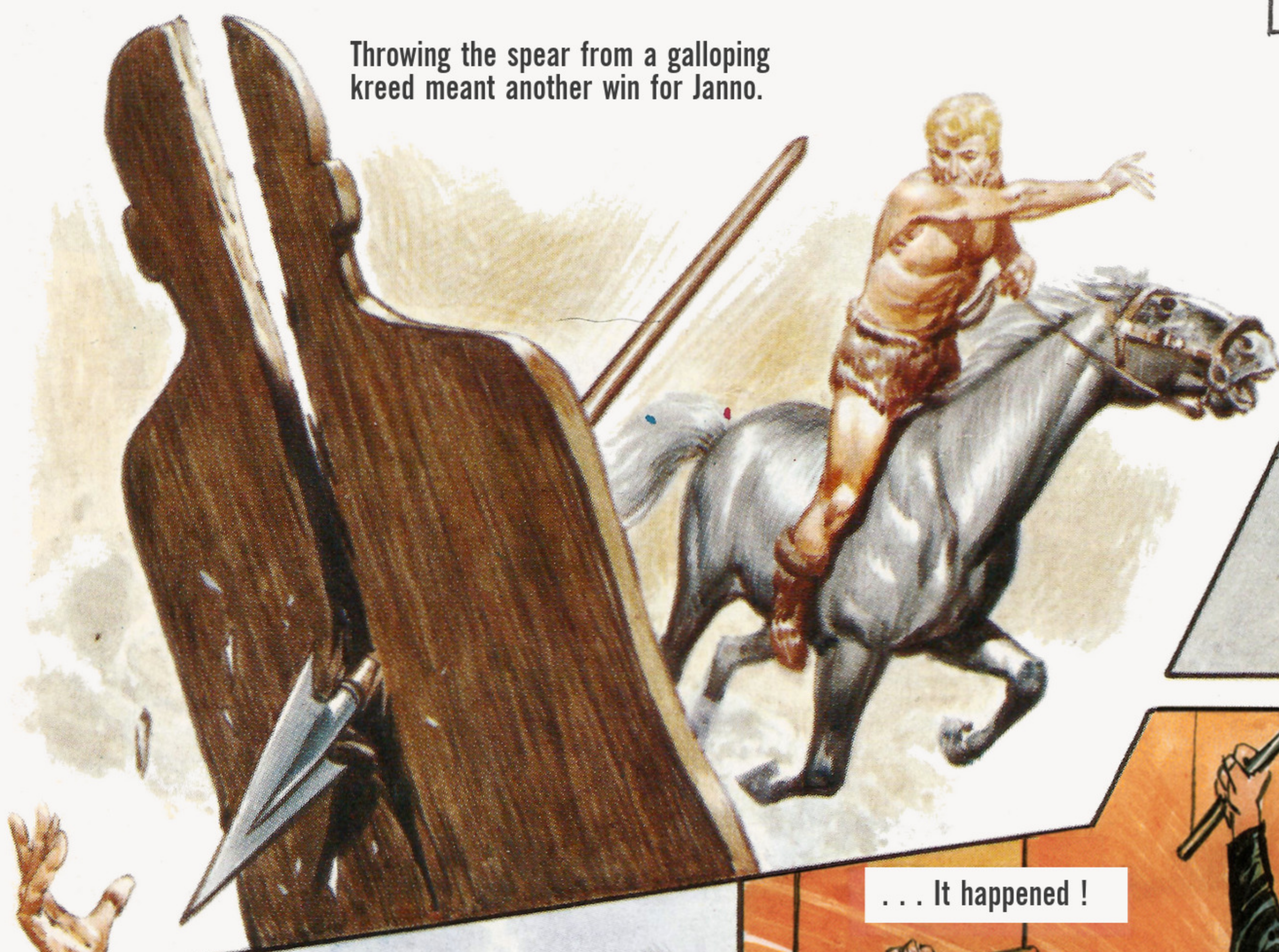


Then followed the ancient and traditional five-zarra foot race, the competitors bearing armour and weapons with Janno again the winner.



With three firsts in main events and sundry other placings, the Emperor's nephew was an outright winner of the Victor's Grand Crown.

Throwing the spear from a galloping creed meant another win for Janno.



Well done, lad !

Thanks, Uncle !



Before a finger could be lifted to help him, the victor of the games was snatched into the sky.



... It happened !

Uuuuuhhh !



It was while he was making a triumphal circuit of the stadium that . . .



News of the snatching of the Emperor's popular nephew was flashed round the planet. For the first time, there was a mention of a sinister connection between Janno's disappearance and other sensational events.



In this manner, Lord Janno was snatched up into the sky. It will be recalled that the Ultimate Aircraft and the Monster of Vorg were taken in the same way.

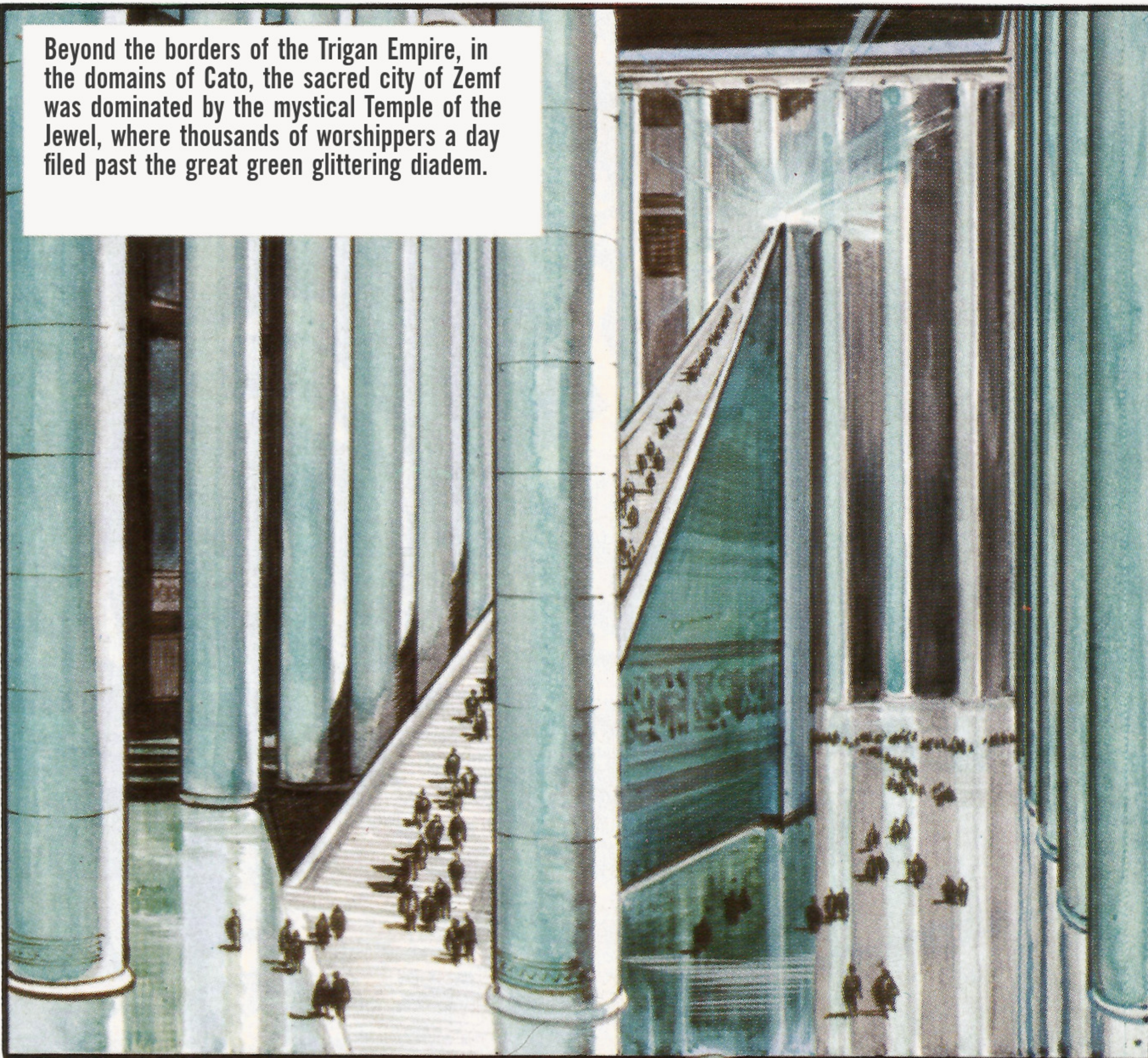
The diadem was guarded by the most sophisticated electronic devices. It was reckoned that the sheer complexity of the defences were sufficient to defeat any intruder. And then one day, they came.



By the time they had broken through into the temple, it had been emptied of panic-stricken worshippers. But their troubles had scarcely begun.



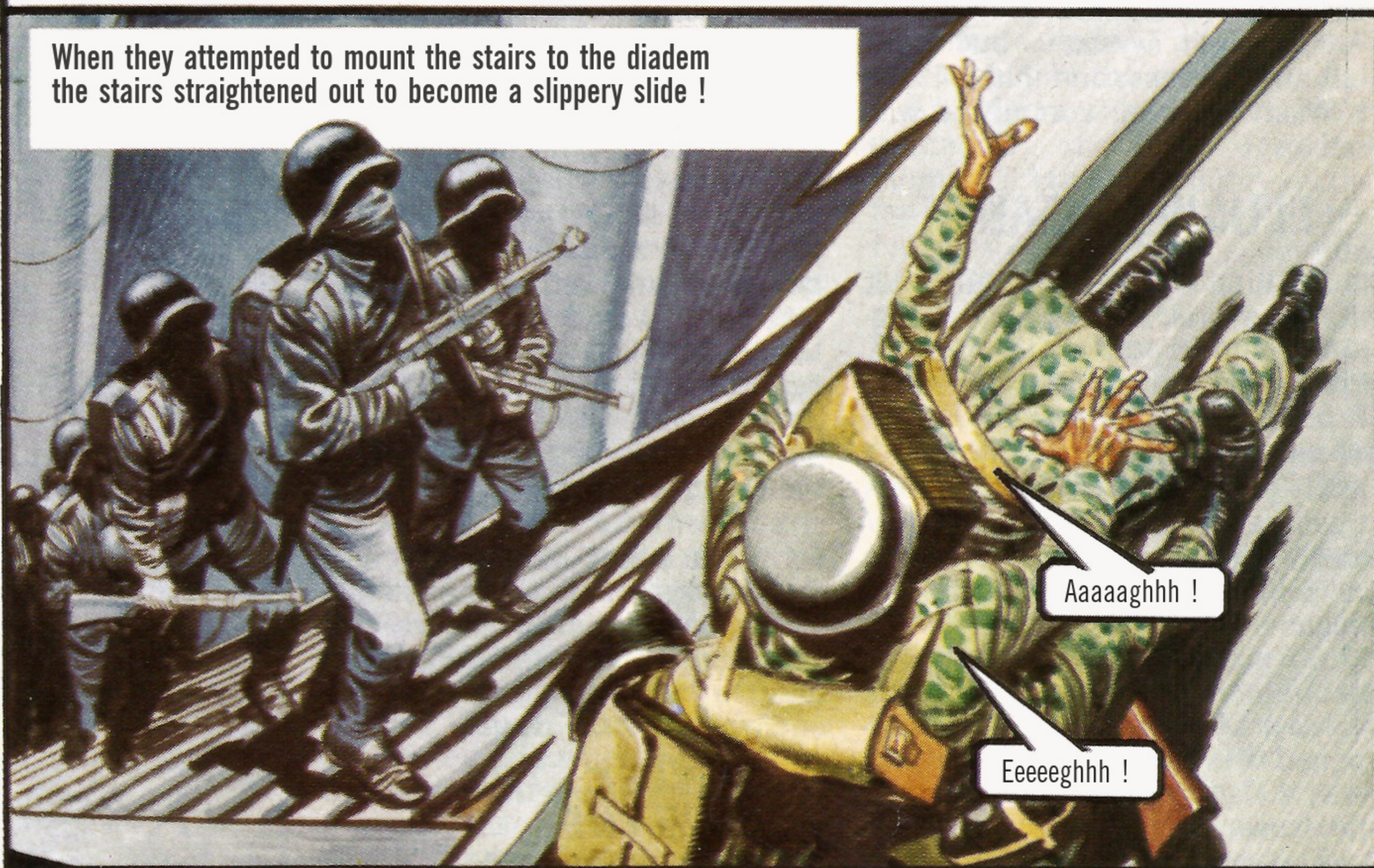
Beyond the borders of the Trigan Empire, in the domains of Cato, the sacred city of Zemf was dominated by the mystical Temple of the Jewel, where thousands of worshippers a day filed past the great green glittering diadem.



The invaders landed on the temple's roof, and immediately ran into electronically-discharged projectiles that turned the roof into a death-trap.



When they attempted to mount the stairs to the diadem the stairs straightened out to become a slippery slide !



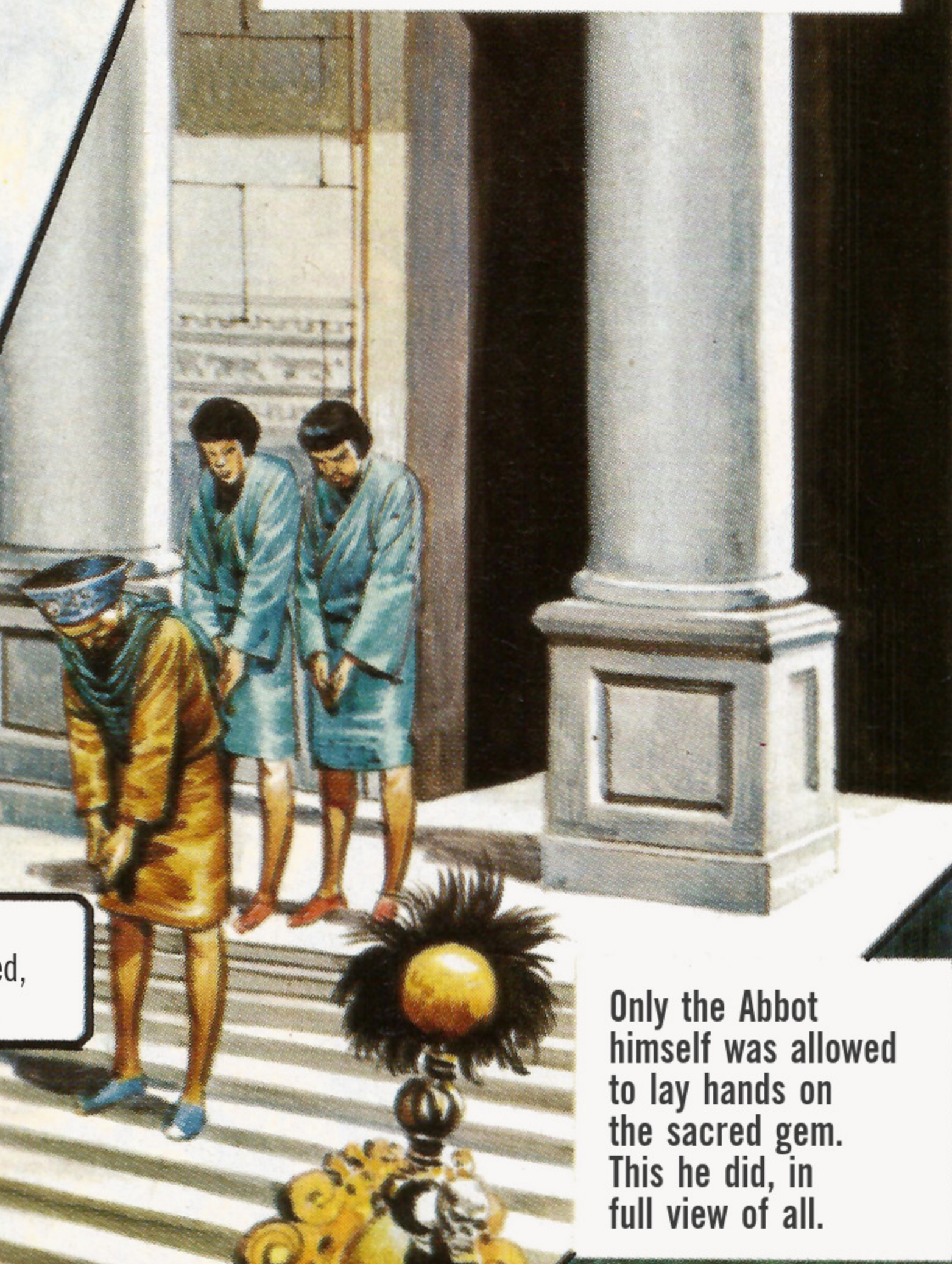
By then, the wail of police sirens outside the building told the intruders that a hue and cry had been raised. Their leader came to a swift decision.



Thwarted by the very complexity of the defences, the raiders broke off the attempt and flew away.



Guardian and keeper of the Great Green Diadem was the Abbot of Zemf, who dwelt in a palace on the mountain crest and was seldom seen. Soon after the departure of the raiders, the Abbot arrived at the Temple of the Jewel.

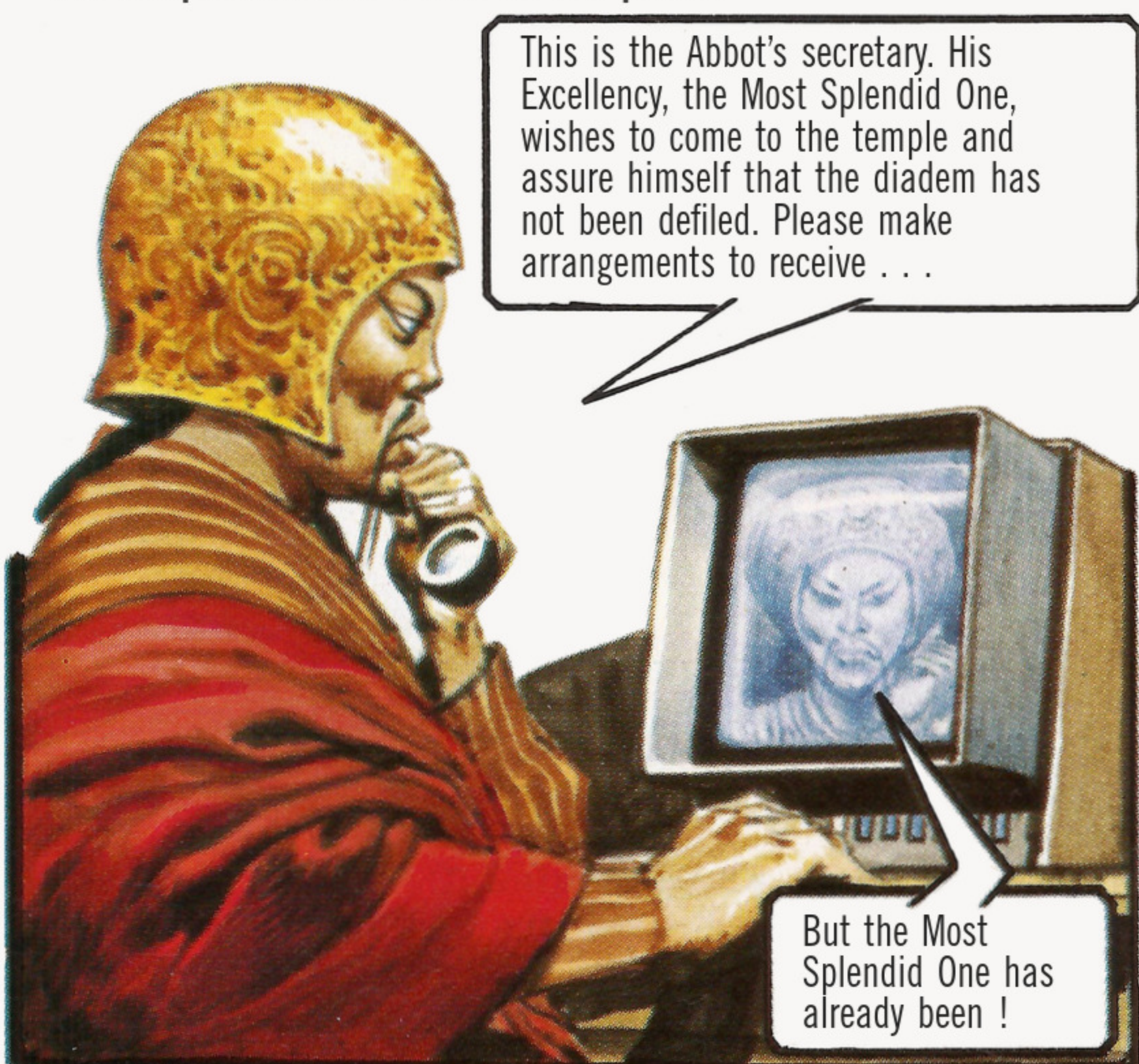


This I must see with my own eyes, and with my own hands. I must ensure myself that it has suffered no harm.



All is well. The sacred diadem has not been defiled !

Later that day, the resident high priest of the temple received a call on vidi-phone.



This is the Abbot's secretary. His Excellency, the Most Splendid One, wishes to come to the temple and assure himself that the diadem has not been defiled. Please make arrangements to receive . . .

But the Most Splendid One has already been !



What ? Do nothing and touch nothing until I am with you !

One hour later, the Abbot's secretary was inspecting the huge gem.



Fools ! Dolts ! Bunglers ! This is not the Diadem of Zemf.

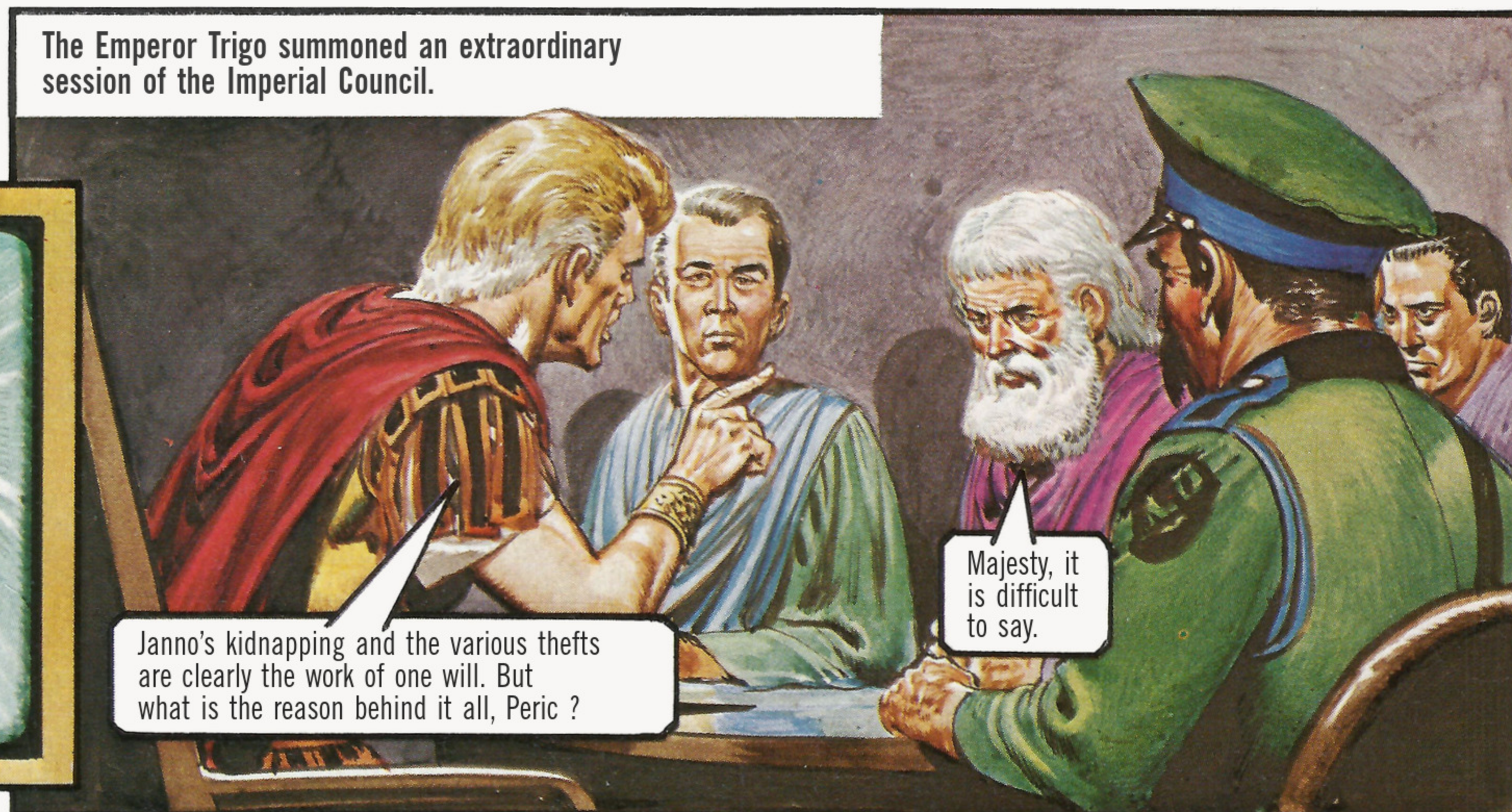
He who came here was an imposter. He took the true diadem and left behind this copy.

The fiendish cunning by which the diadem had been taken was the most sensational aspect of the news story.



Following on an unsuccessful attack upon the temple, one of the thieves posed as the Abbot of Zemf, switched the diadem for a fake and made off with the true jewel !

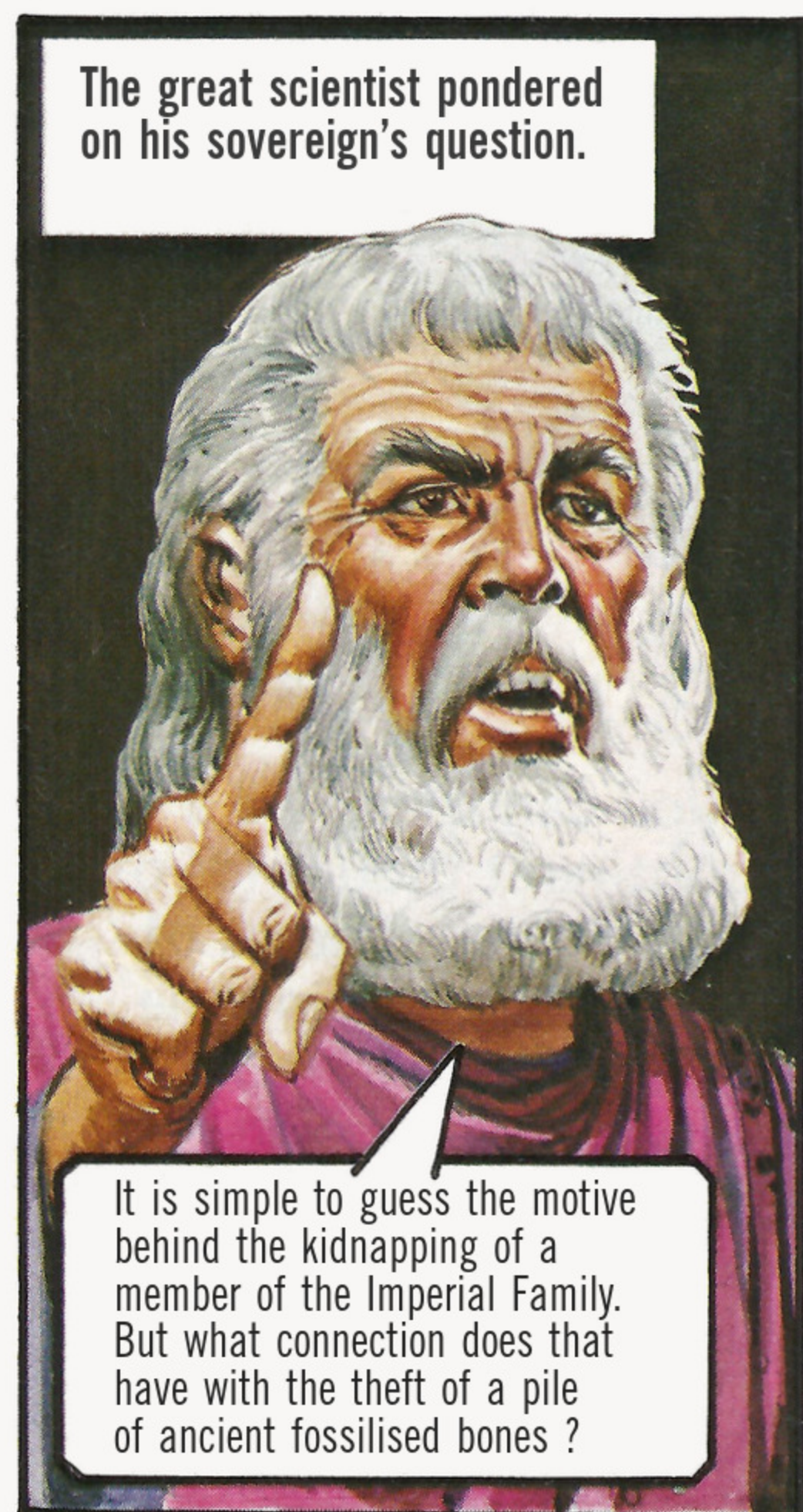
The Emperor Trigo summoned an extraordinary session of the Imperial Council.



Janno's kidnapping and the various thefts are clearly the work of one will. But what is the reason behind it all, Peric ?

Majesty, it is difficult to say.

The great scientist pondered on his sovereign's question.



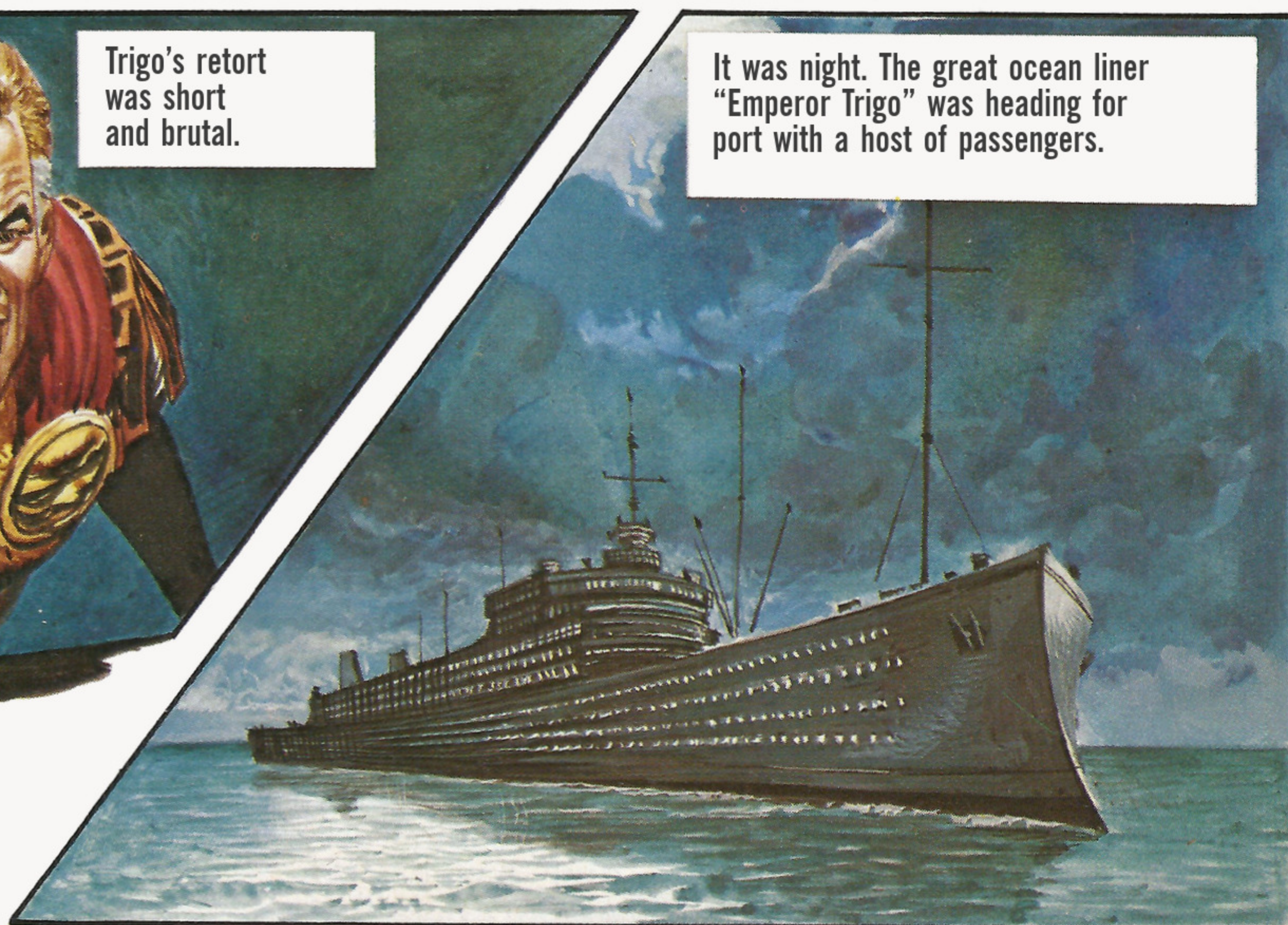
It is simple to guess the motive behind the kidnapping of a member of the Imperial Family. But what connection does that have with the theft of a pile of ancient fossilised bones ?

Trigo's retort was short and brutal.

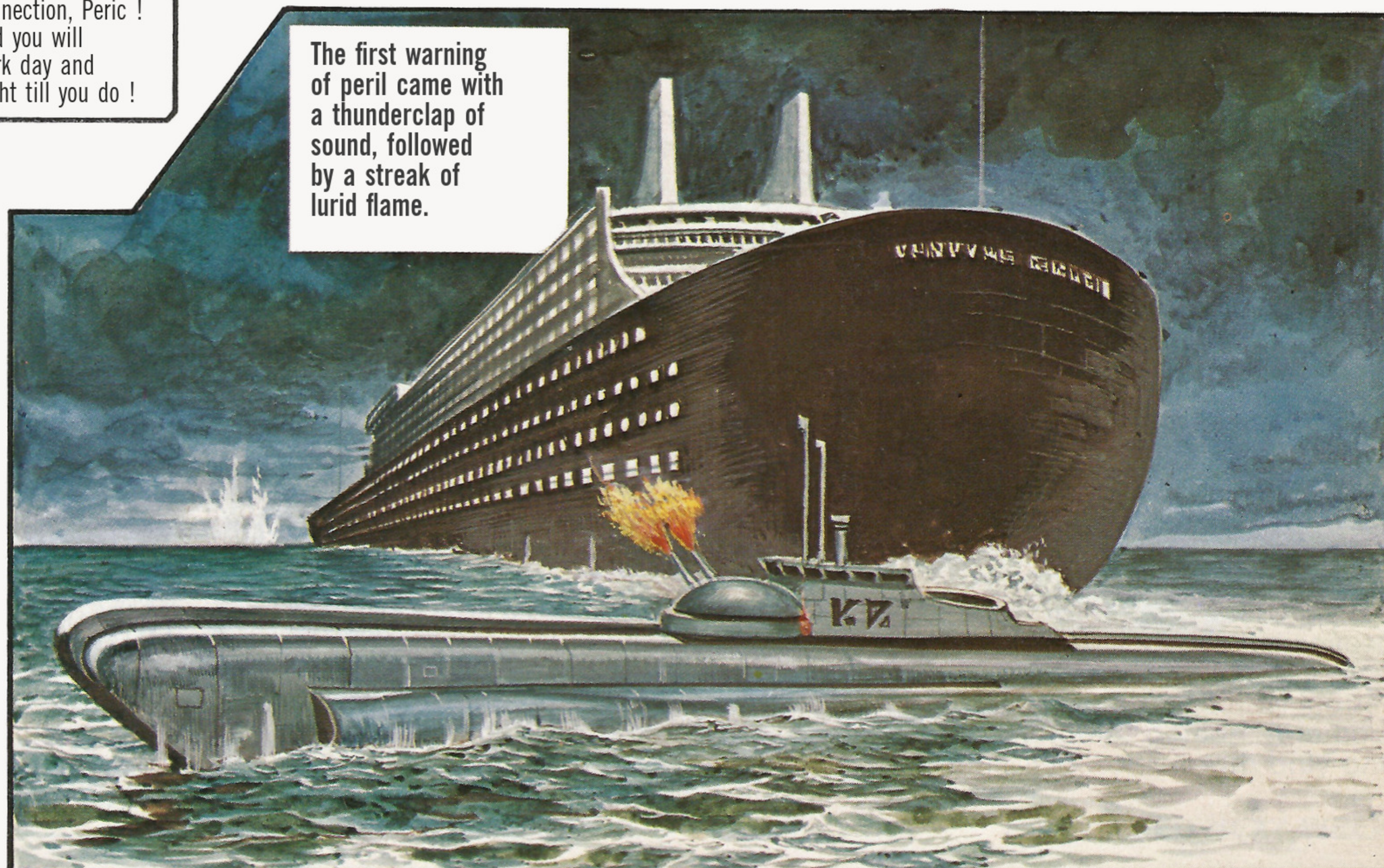


You will find that connection, Peric ! And you will work day and night till you do !

It was night. The great ocean liner "Emperor Trigo" was heading for port with a host of passengers.



The first warning of peril came with a thunderclap of sound, followed by a streak of lurid flame.



Danger lurked nearby.



Prepare to surface and fire a warning projectile.



A party of masked and ruthless raiders soon boarded the ship.



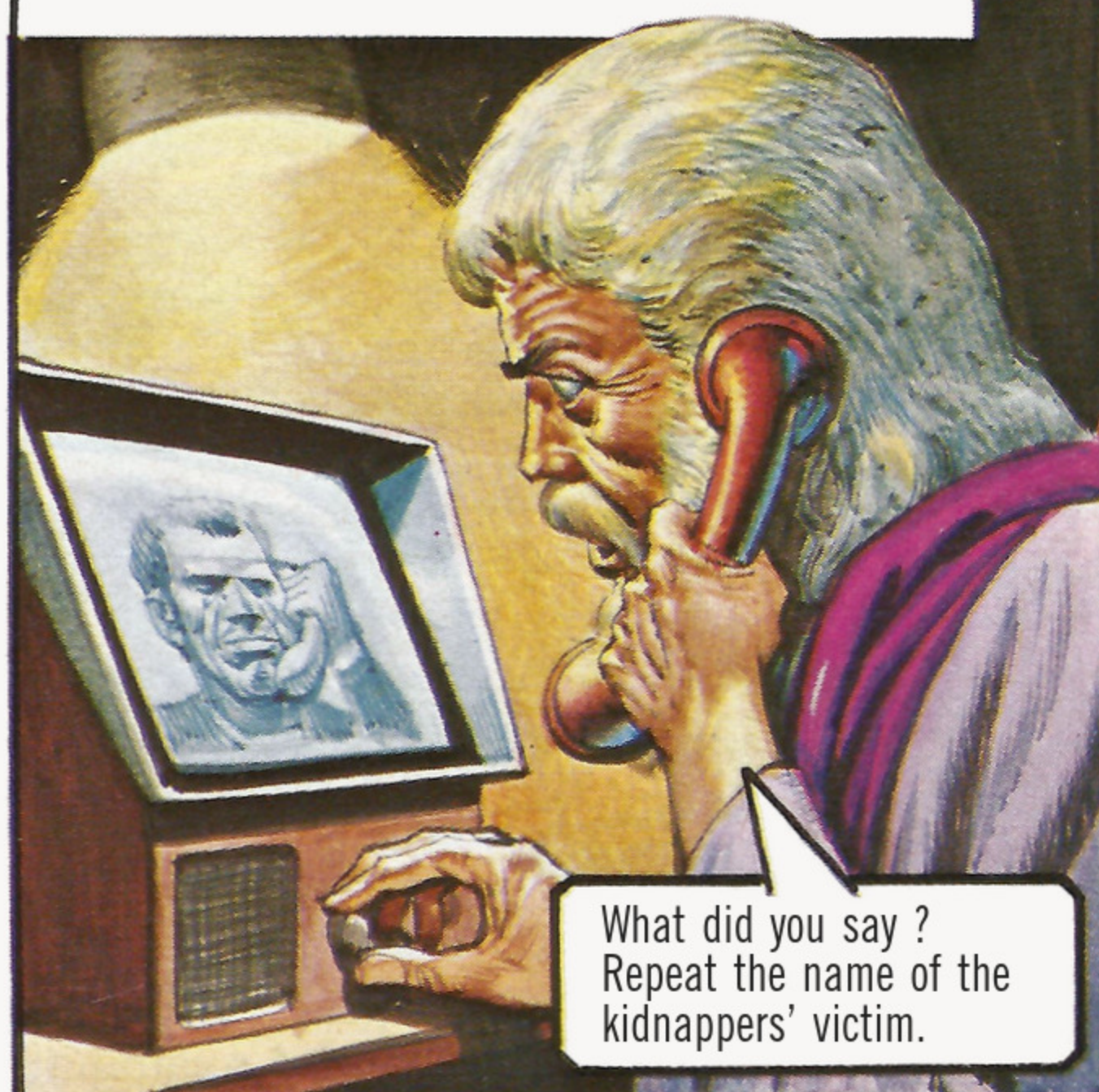
Down into the palatial dining saloon, among the horrified passengers, they marched.



They halted by a mild-looking individual who was eating alone.



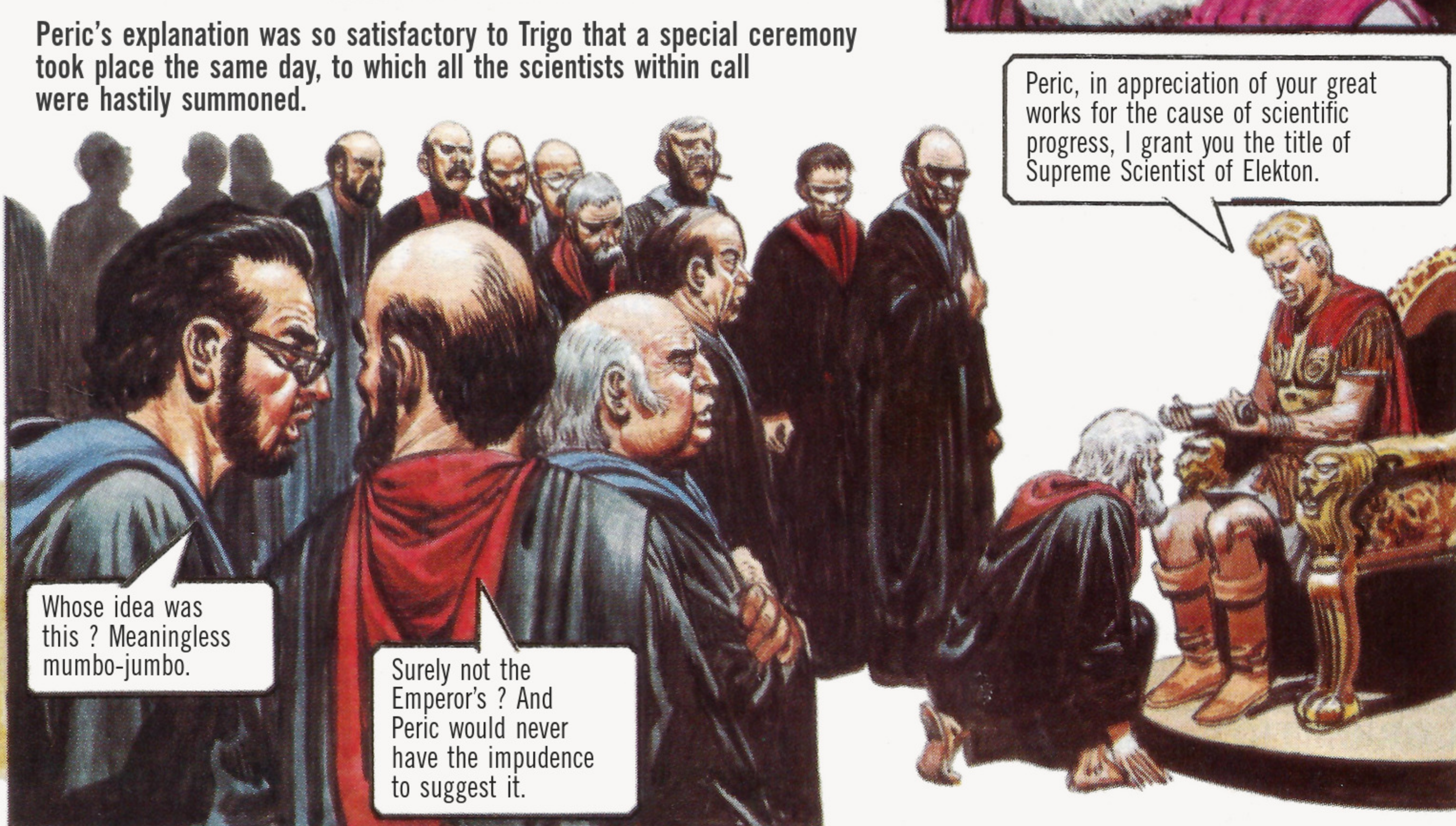
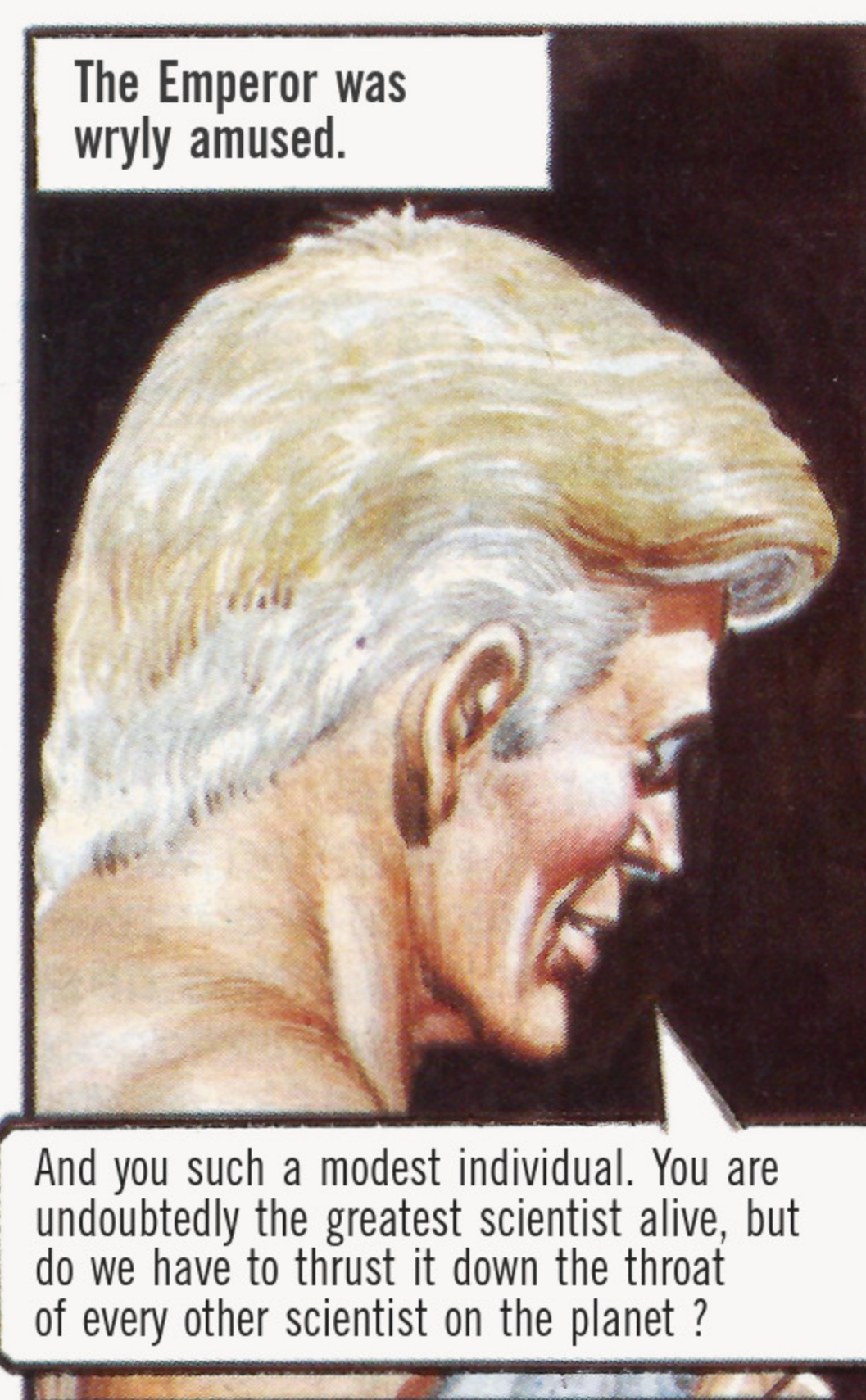
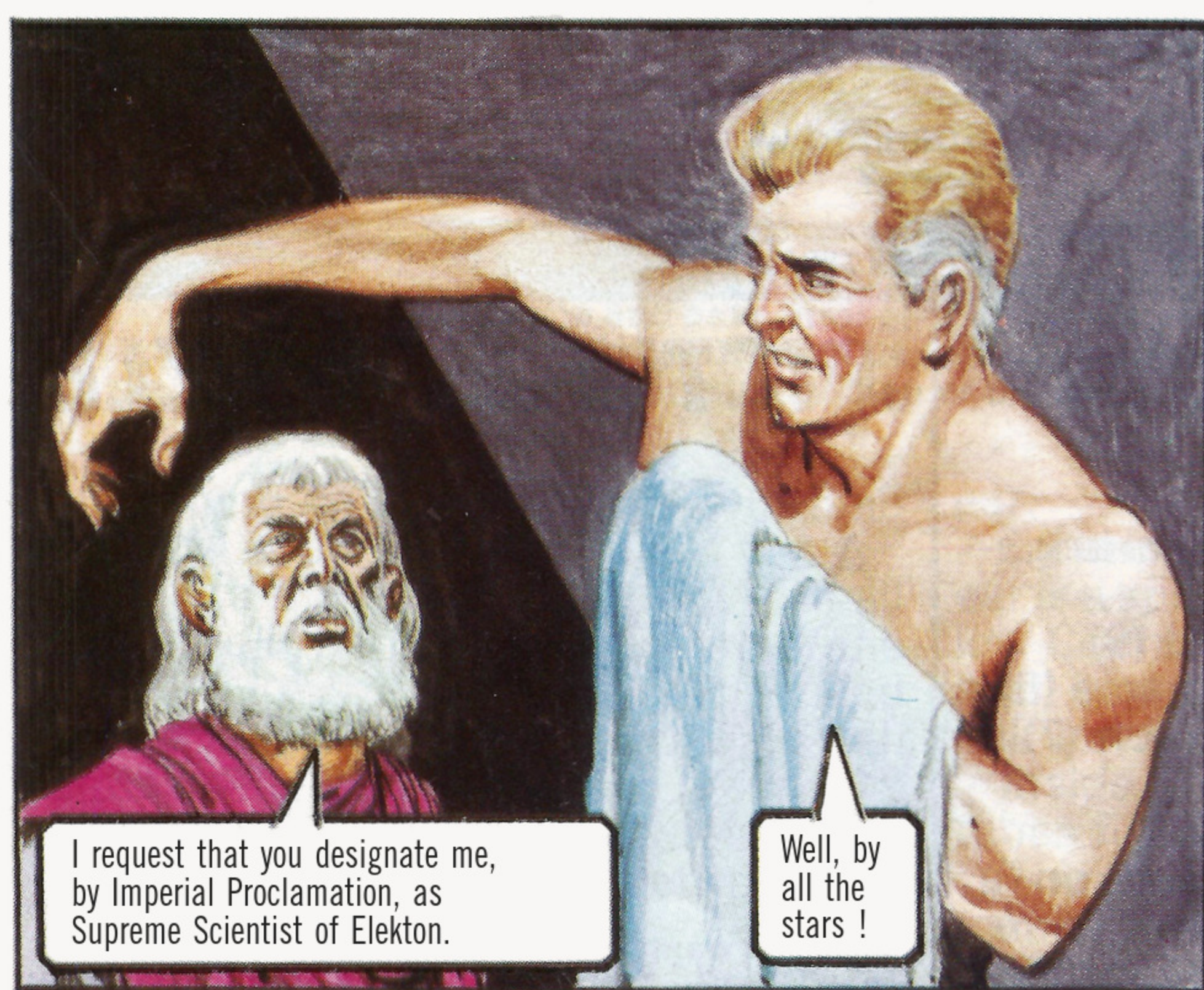
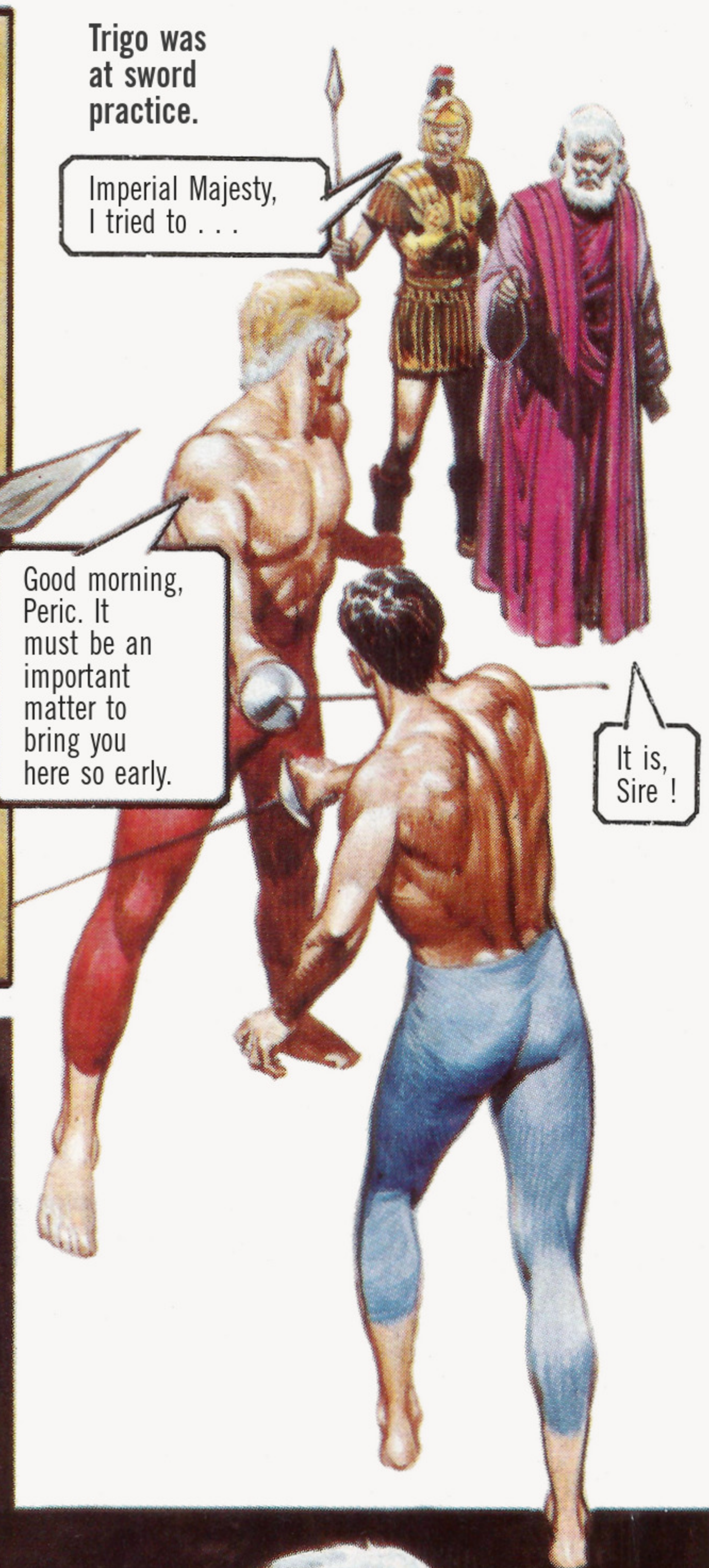
News of the outrage reached Trigan City before dawn. It was immediately passed to Peric, who had spent a sleepless night in his laboratory, puzzling his brain.



A great light dawned in Peric's mind.



Next morning, the planet's newspapers screamed—**CHORPINAL KIDNAPPED**—*Elekton's greatest living composer* snatched from the liner "Emperor Trigo" while on his way to conduct his newest symphony.



The ceremony over, Peric took himself to his villa in the suburbs, where he relaxed.



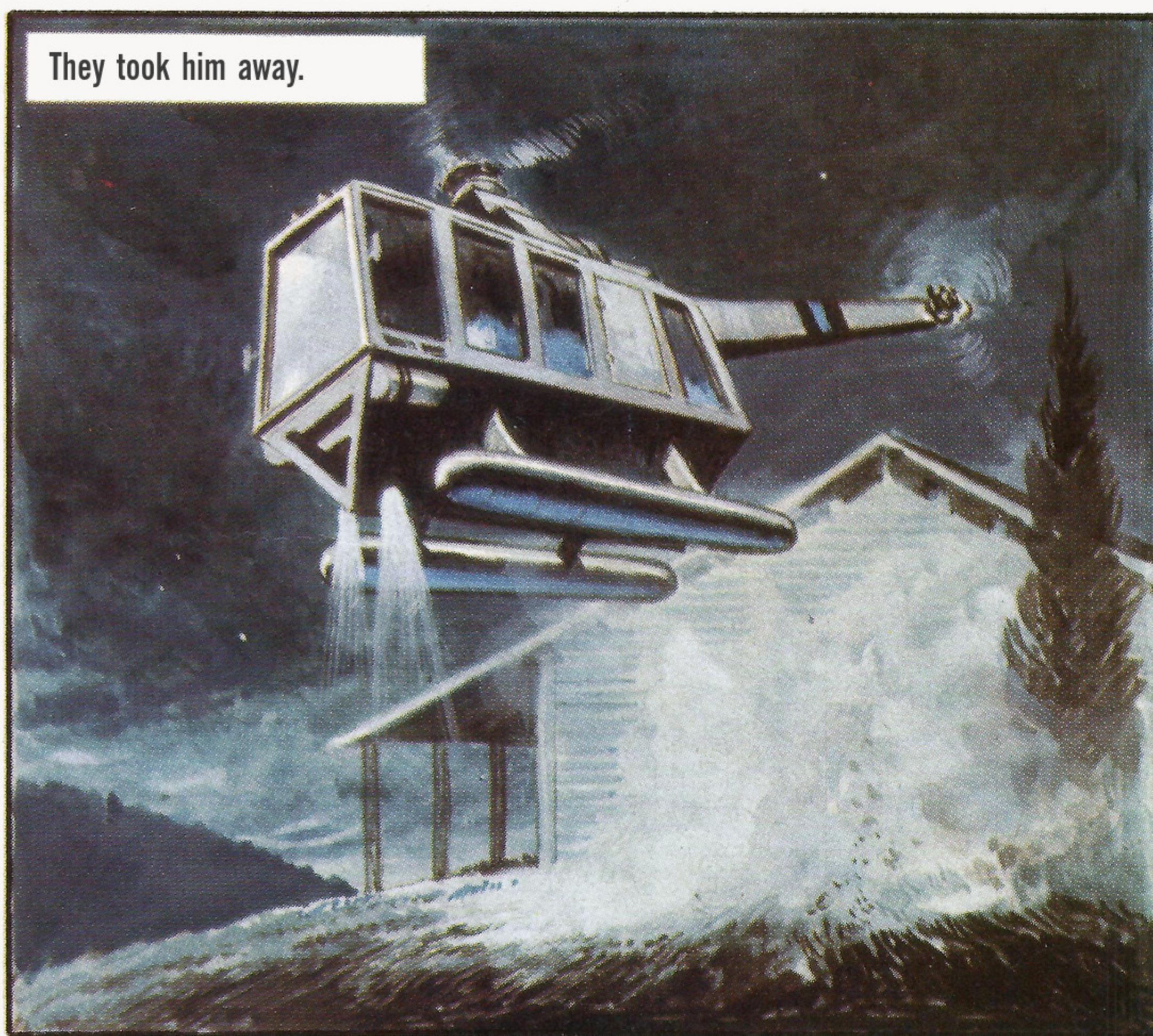
He did not have long to wait. That same evening . . .



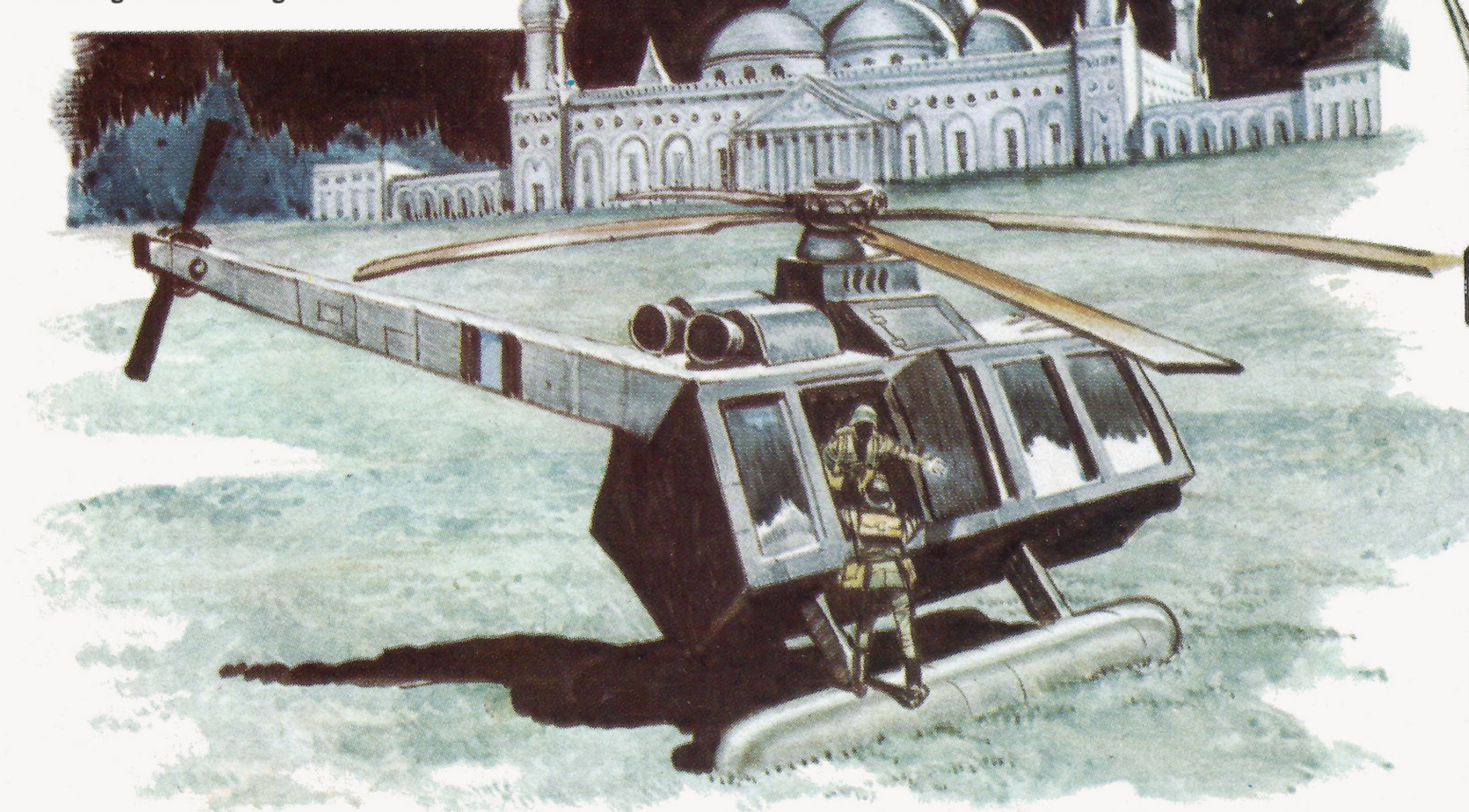
The great scientist did not turn a hair when they burst in on him.



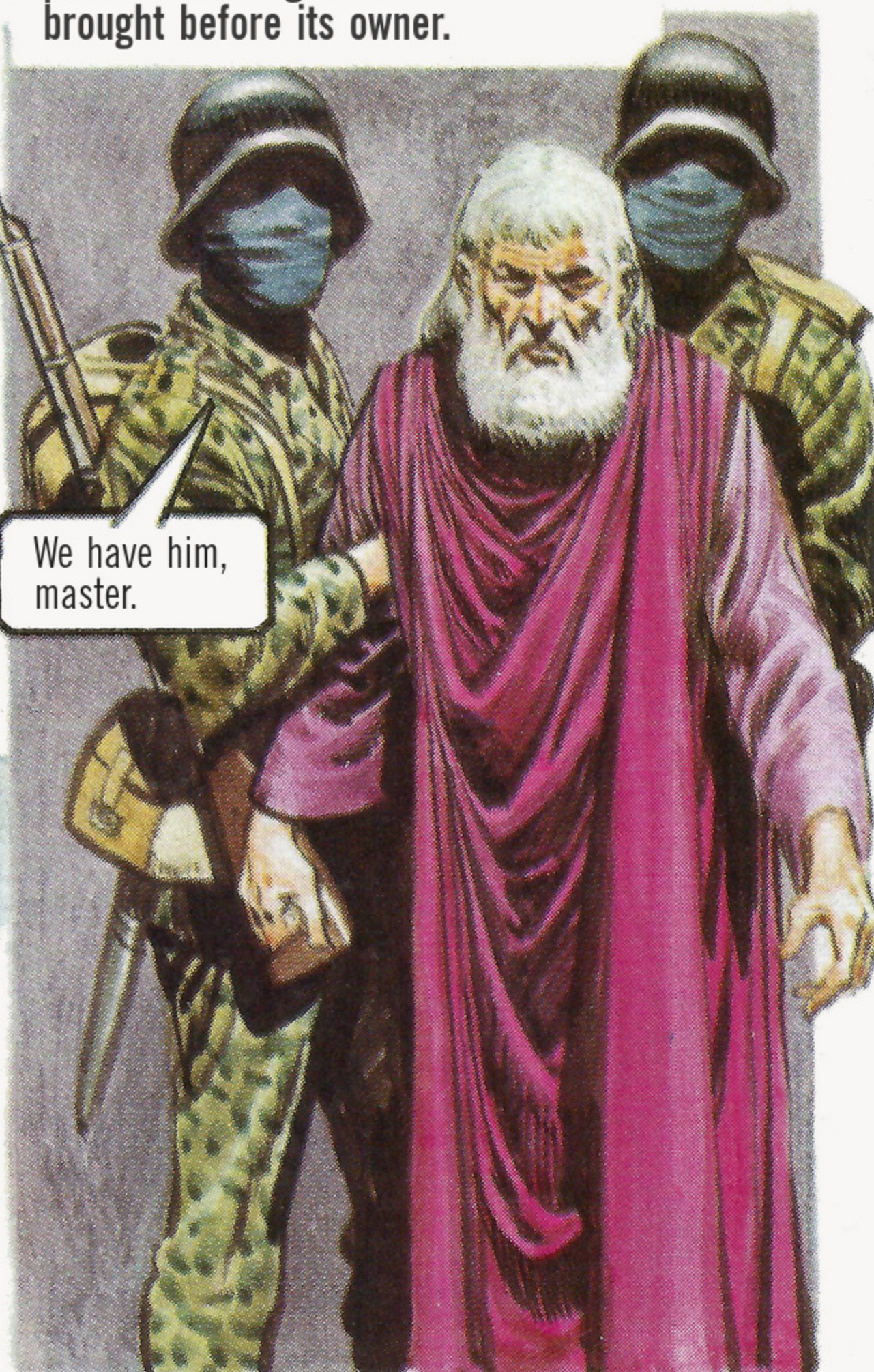
They took him away.



Not far away, in a pleasant valley beyond the city limits, a sumptuous mansion standing in secluded grounds . . .



He was taken into the palatial dwelling and brought before its owner.



Forty lunar years before these events took place—before Trigo had founded the great city and empire that bears his name—a small caravan of settlers were passing across the barren and inhospitable Desert of Vorg.

Suddenly ! . . .



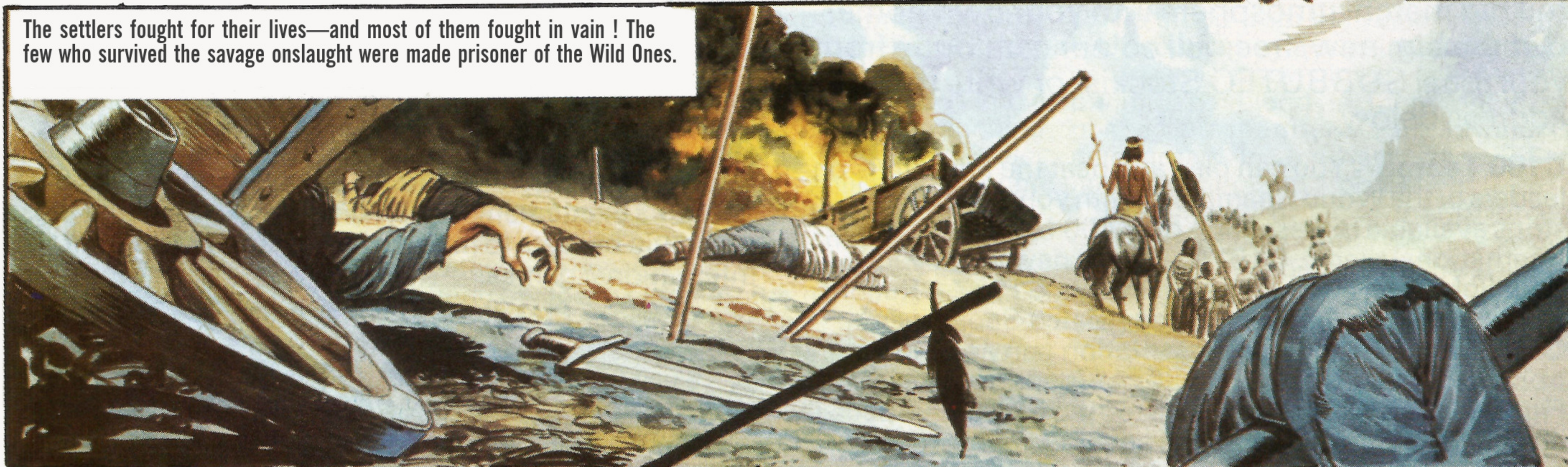
Alarm ! Alarm ! The Wild Ones are coming !

. . . They came !—shrieking their wild war-cries !

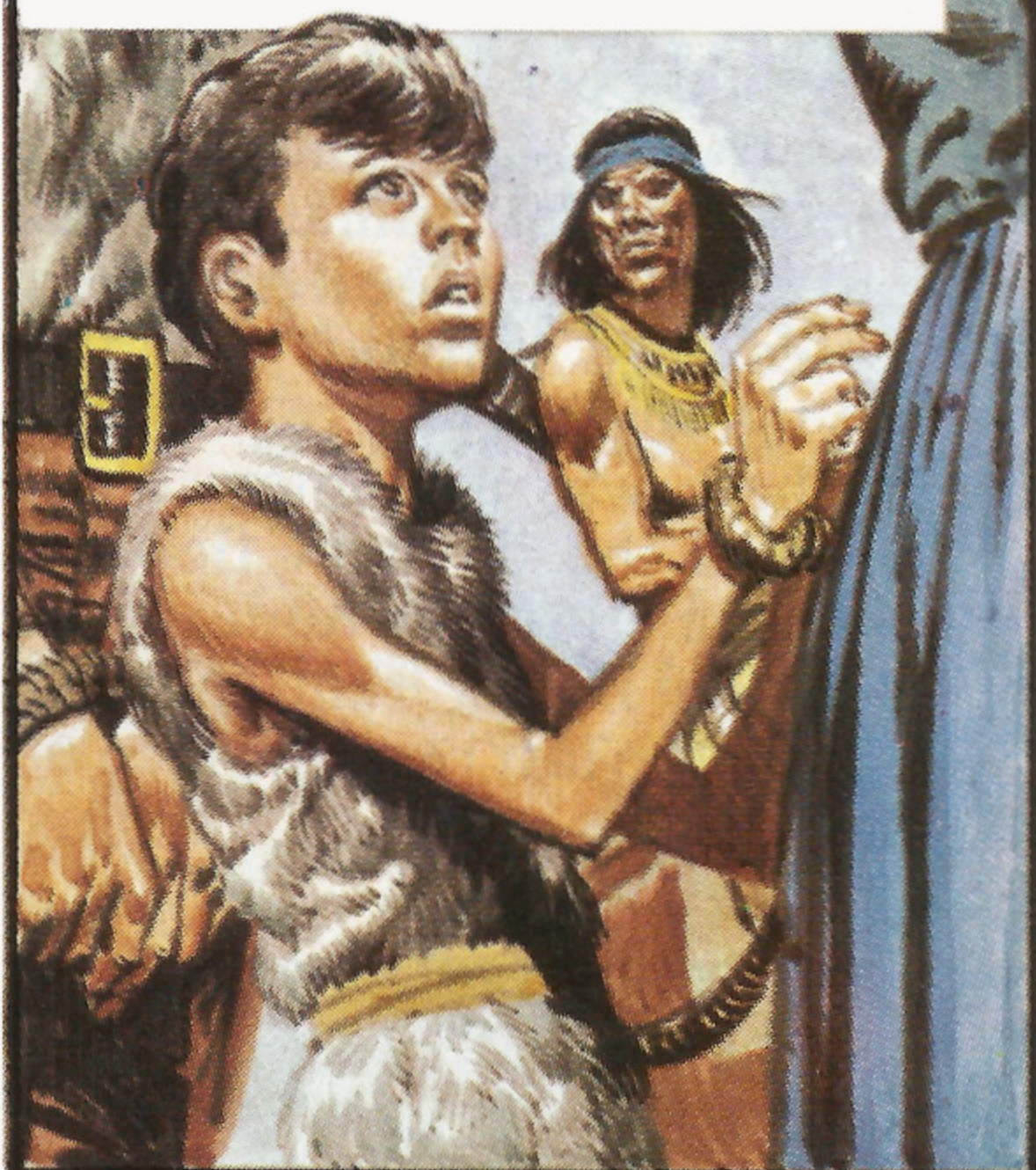


DON LAWRENCE

The settlers fought for their lives—and most of them fought in vain ! The few who survived the savage onslaught were made prisoner of the Wild Ones.



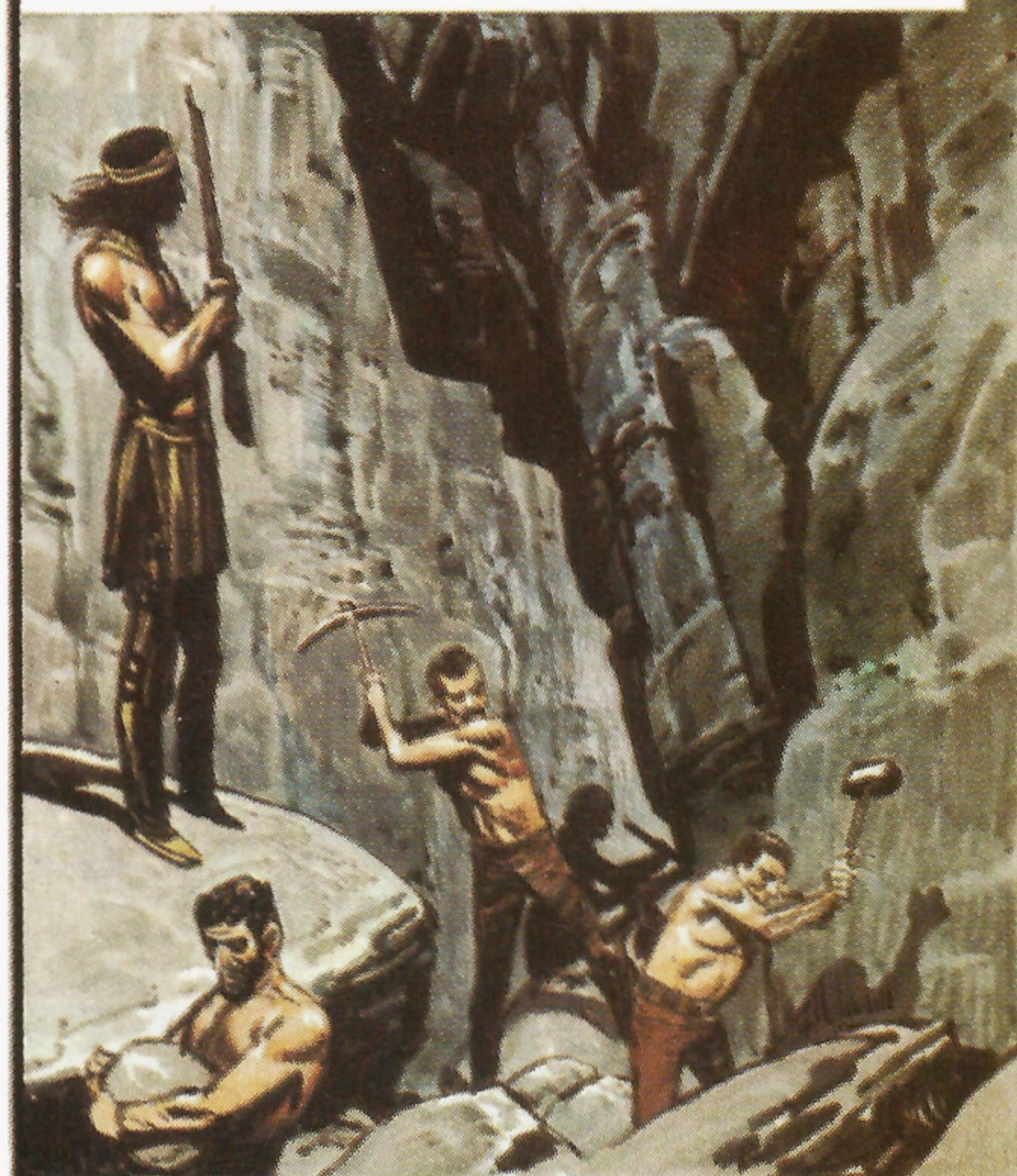
The smallest and weakest of these wretched prisoners was a lad named Lipka. But there must have been a great will to live within that skinny frame—for Lipka was the only one to survive the cruel captivity.



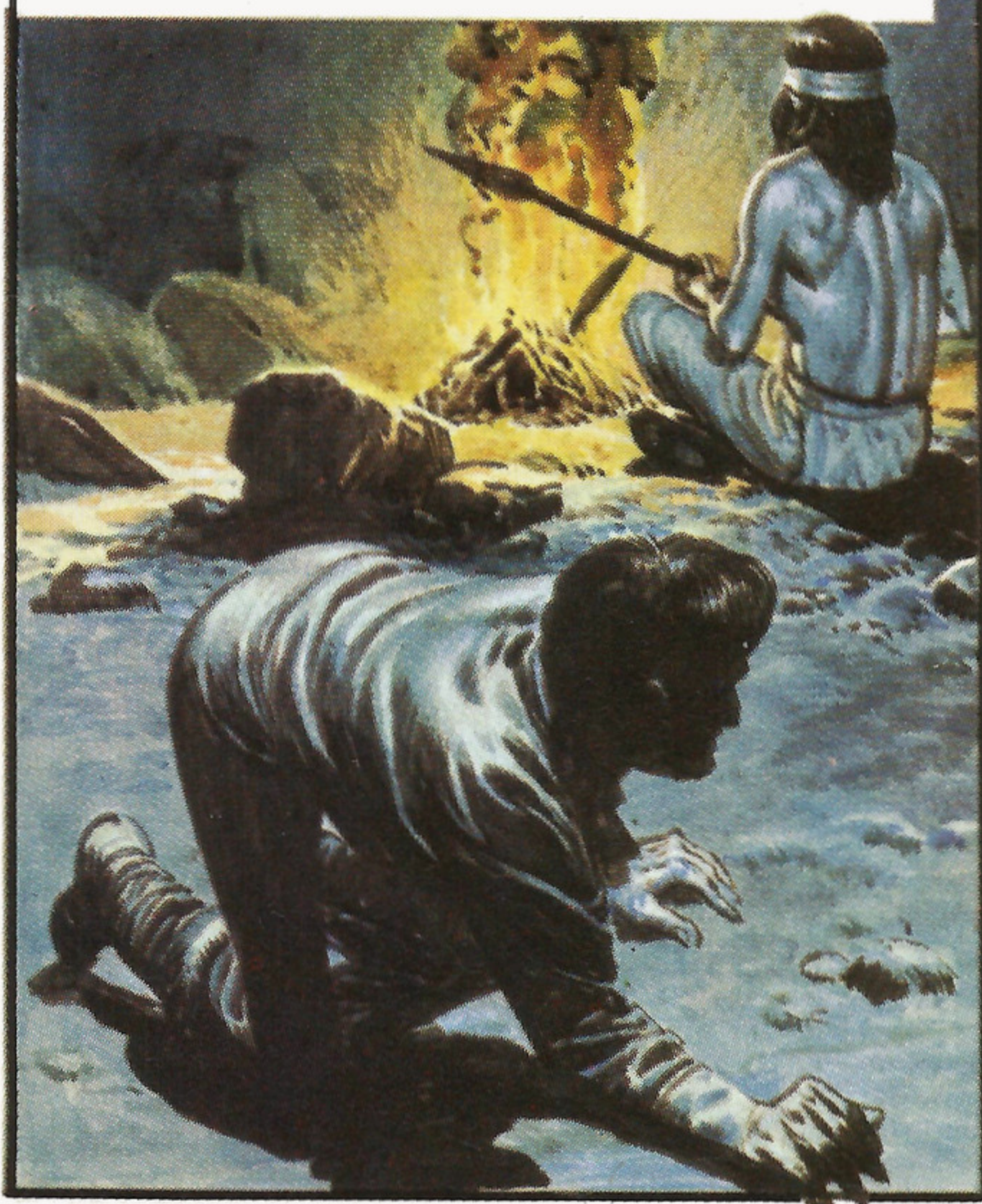
In the long years that followed, Lipka was a slave to the proud and savage warriors of the desert, who covered themselves with ornaments of the yellow metal that was prized all over Elekton.



Indeed, Lipka himself laboured to dig out the yellow metal from the secret places known only to the Wild Ones.



Lipka was a grown man, hardened by years of slavery and deprivation, when he managed to escape from his cruel captors.



Later, in a frontier town, he told his astonishing story to an interested party.

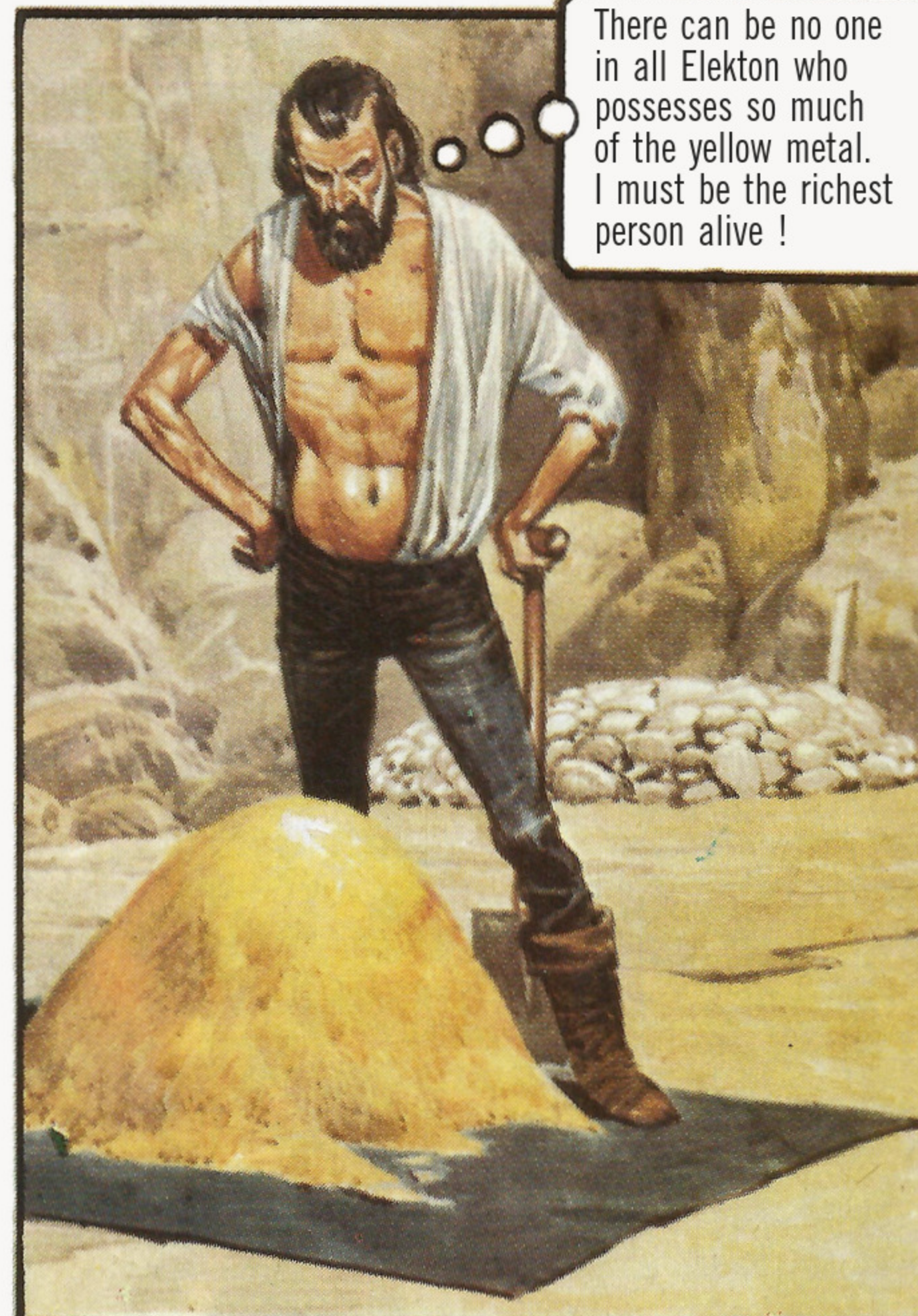


You say that you know where the Wild Ones dig out the yellow metal?

Yes. I could take you there. It's perfectly safe, for the Wild Ones have a superstition that only allows them to dig for the yellow metal on one day a year.

The ex-slave and his new-found friend journeyed into the wilderness where, for many lunar years, they dug out the yellow metal. It was after his companion died of the bite of a venomous nobra that Lipka decided to return to civilization.

There can be no one in all Elekton who possesses so much of the yellow metal. I must be the richest person alive!



It was the selfsame Lipka—the richest person alive on the planet Elekton—who confronted the kidnapped scientist Peric in the palatial mansion near Trigran City.

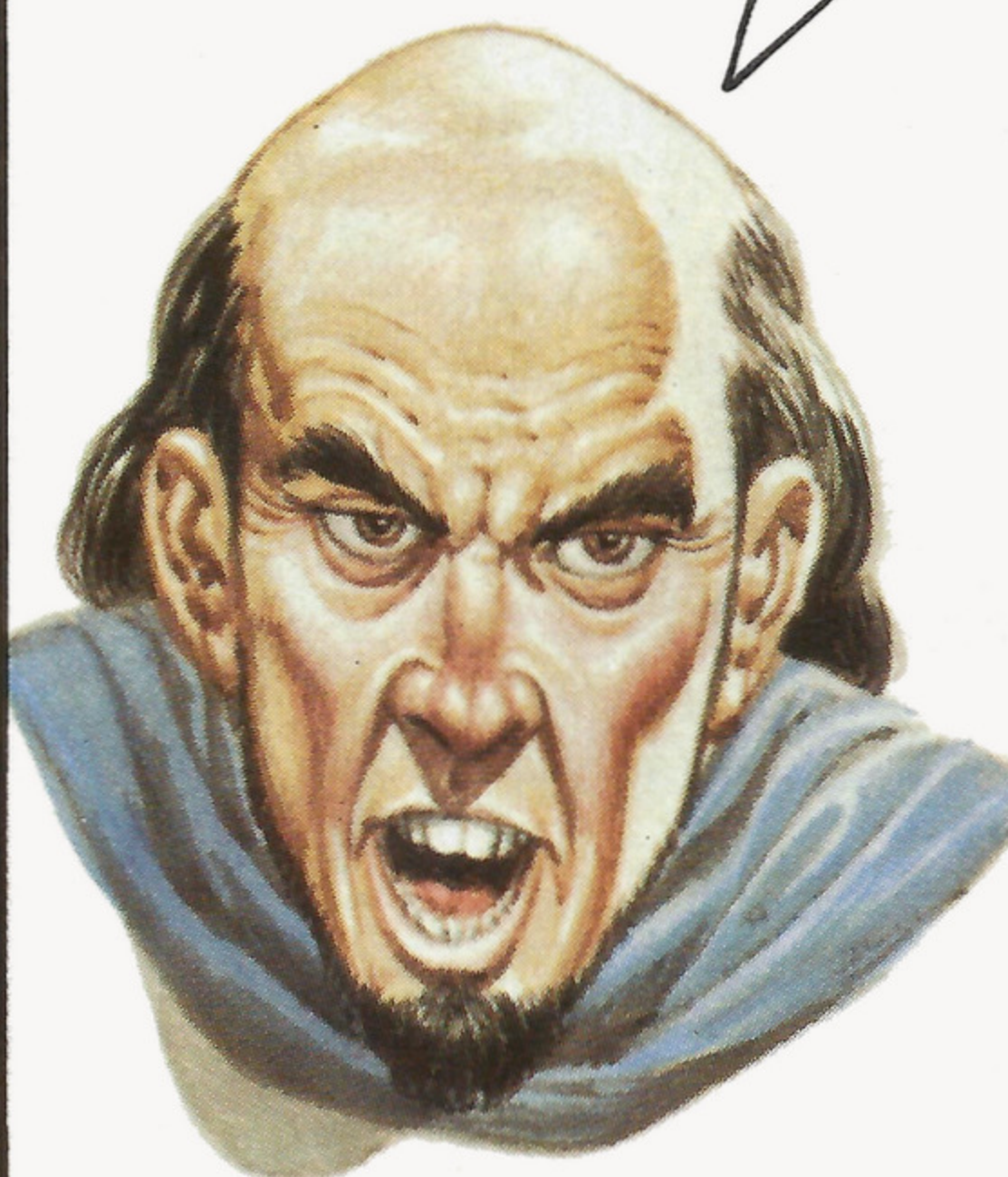


So you are Peric, the Supreme Scientist of Elekton.

And you I recognise as the multimillionaire Lipka. But, tell me, with all your boundless wealth, what has driven you to crime?

Lipka replied . . .

Peric, for the greater part of my life, I owned nothing but the few rags I stood up in! I spent a childhood of deprivation, without a friend or a toy! I had nothing! . . . I did not even own myself! . . . I was a slave!

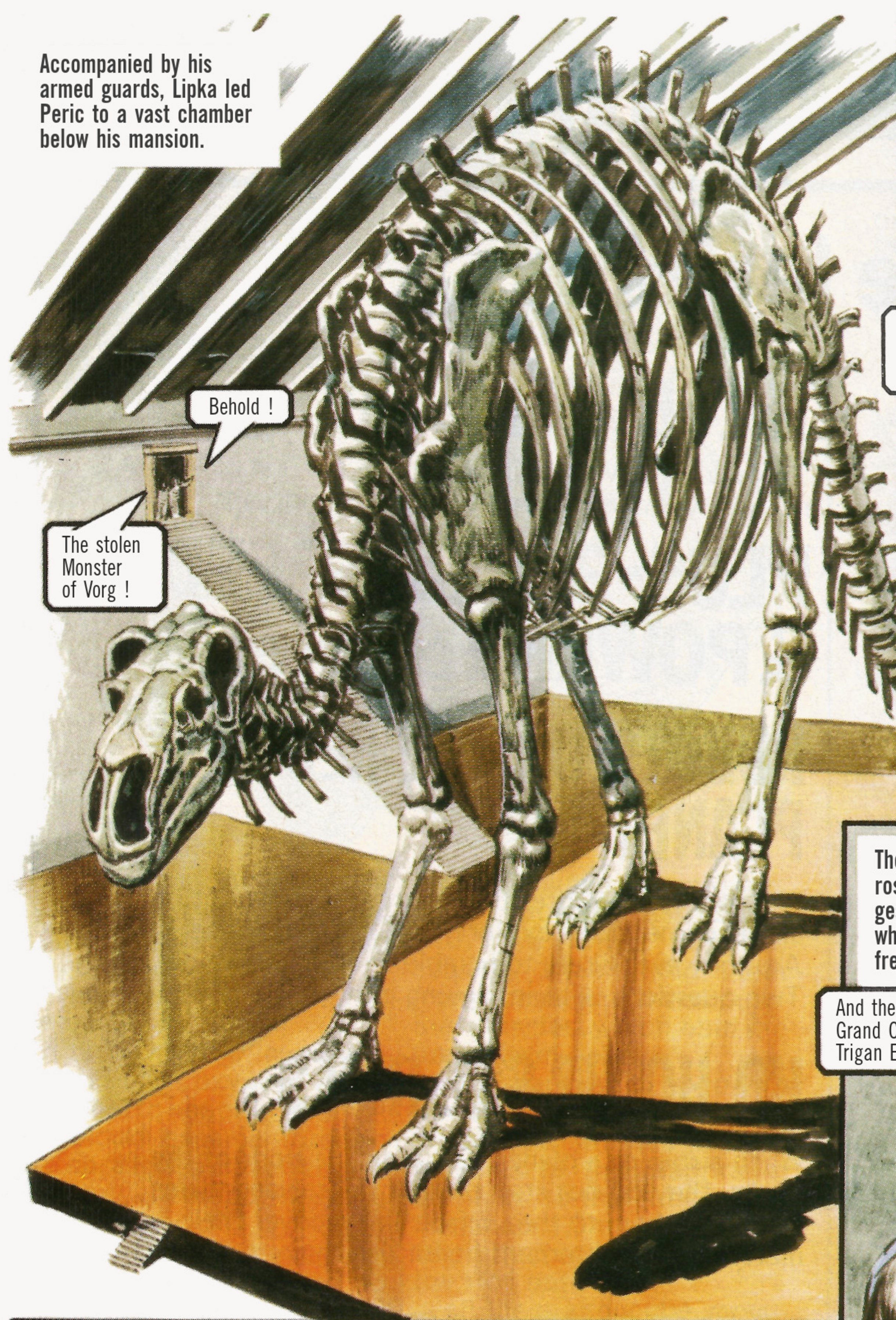


Now, all that is changed!

Come! I will show you things that will fill you with wonder and disbelief! . . . Come!



Accompanied by his armed guards, Lipka led Peric to a vast chamber below his mansion.



Behold !

The stolen Monster of Vorg !

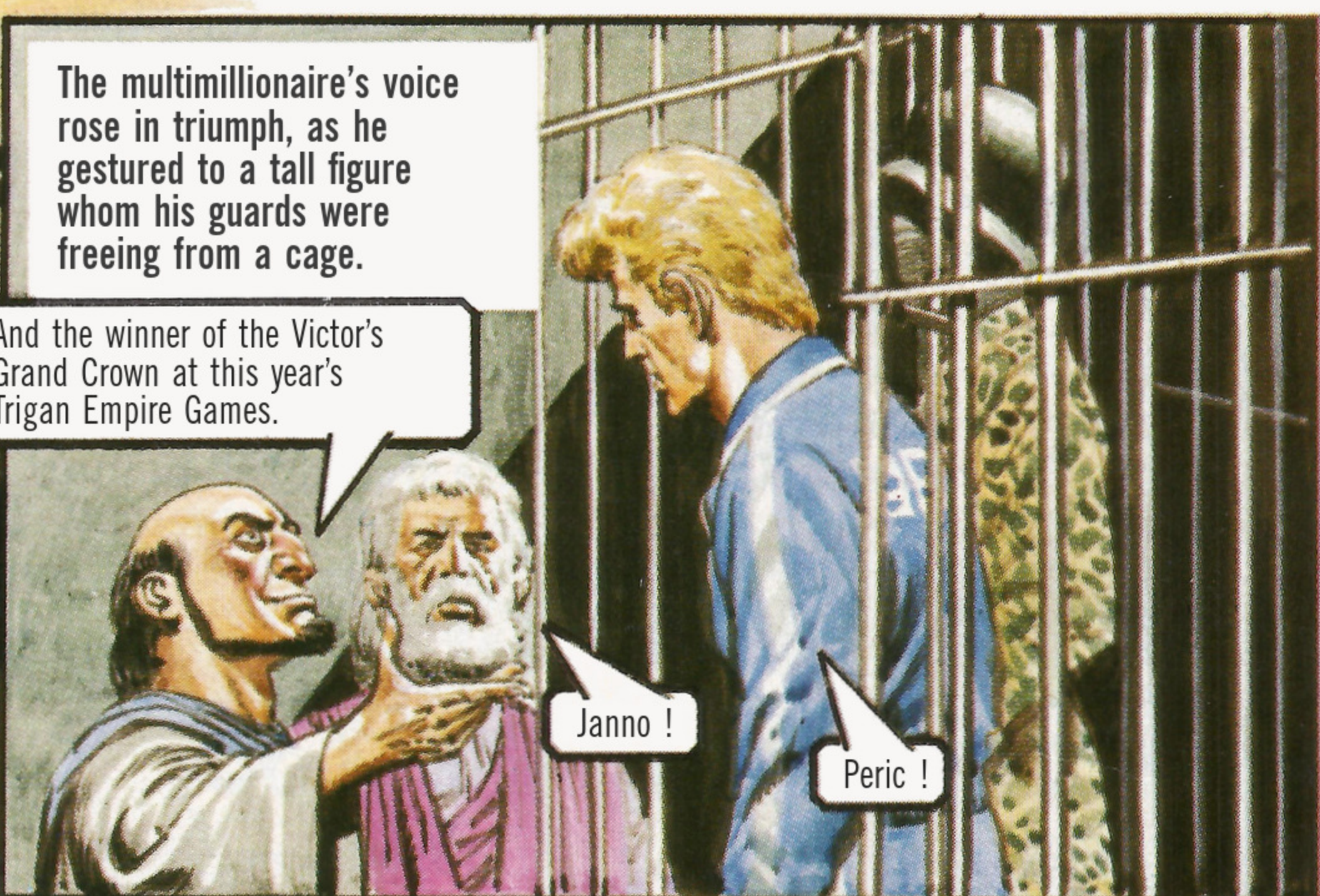
And that is not all, my friend—see !



The Ultimate Aircraft designed by me. The fastest thing that ever flew.

The multimillionaire's voice rose in triumph, as he gestured to a tall figure whom his guards were freeing from a cage.

And the winner of the Victor's Grand Crown at this year's Trigan Empire Games.



Janno !

Peric !

Lipka then introduced another "acquisition"—Elekton's top living musical composer, frightened but still defiant.



And here is Chorpinal who still refuses to conduct for me a command performance of his new symphony.

Nor will I ever, you . . . you . . . barbarian !

But a word from Peric made the great composer change his mind.



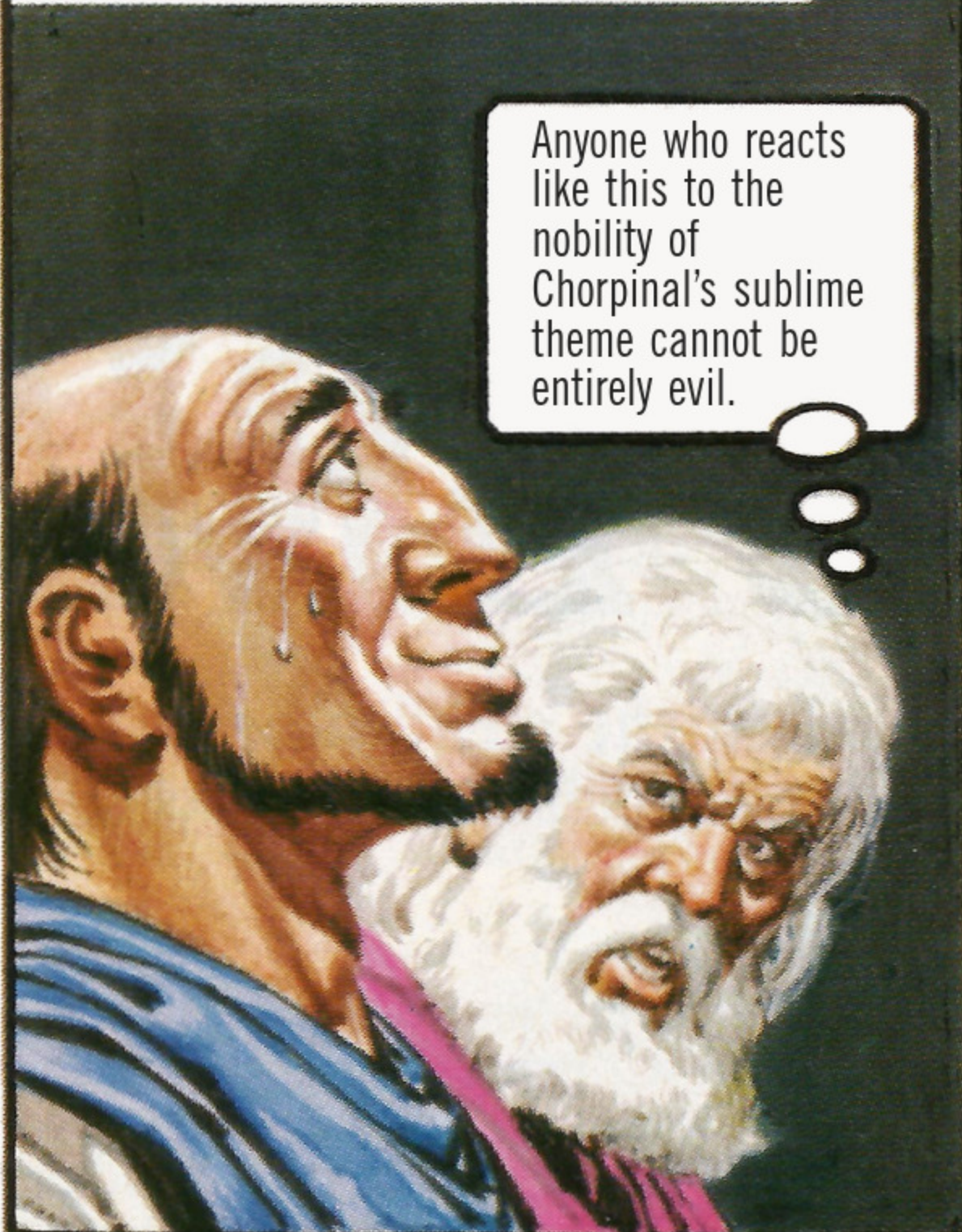
Trust me. Do as I say. Humour him and conduct your symphony.

Oh, very well.

So, in a private concert hall of the mansion, with an orchestra of two hundred, Chorpinal conducted a performance of his master work, the famous "Freedom Symphony".



Peric was greatly affected by the beauty of the music. He was surprised to see that his neighbour was also emotionally stirred.



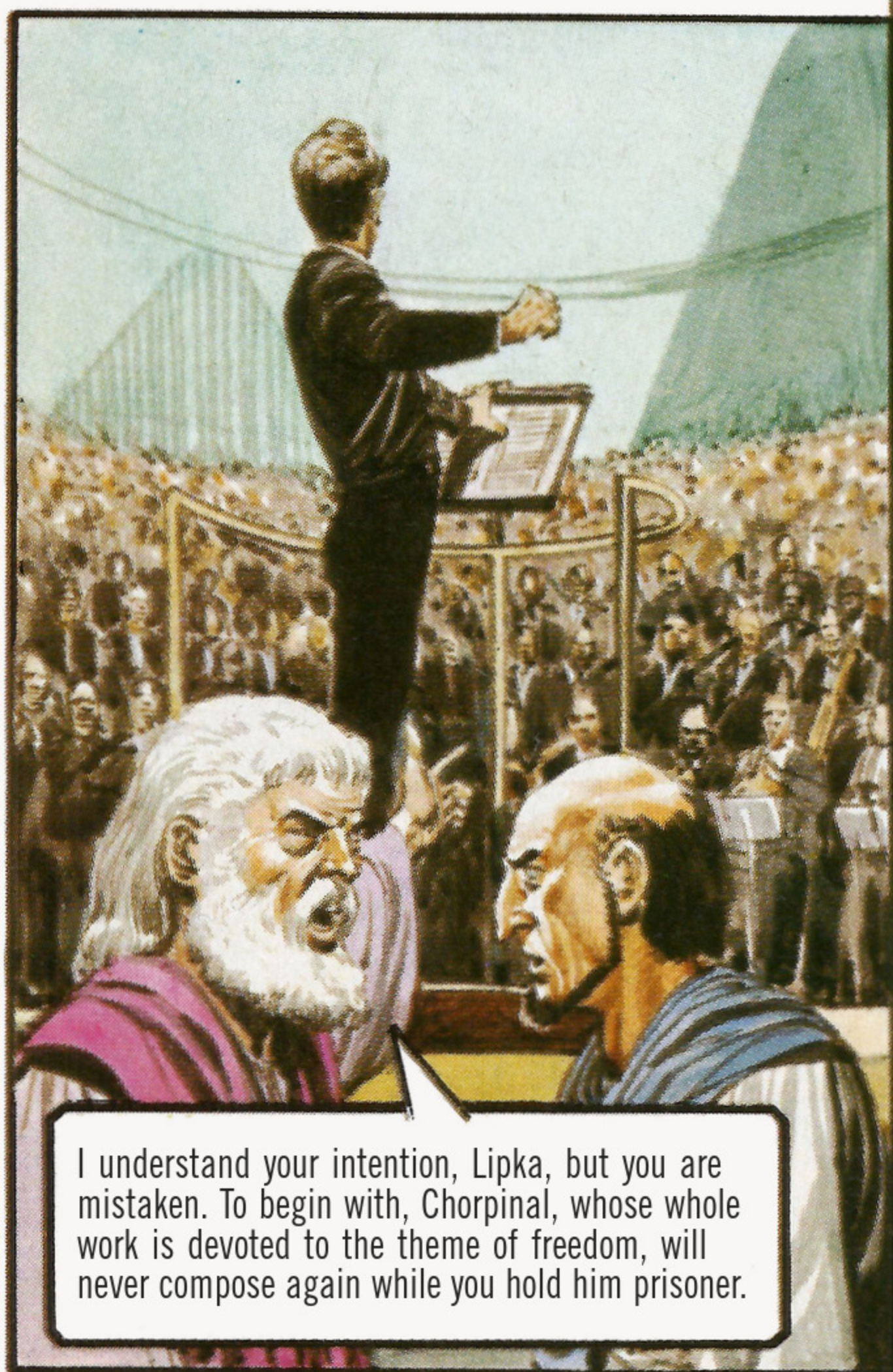
Anyone who reacts like this to the nobility of Chorpinal's sublime theme cannot be entirely evil.

When it was over, the multi-millionaire turned to Peric.

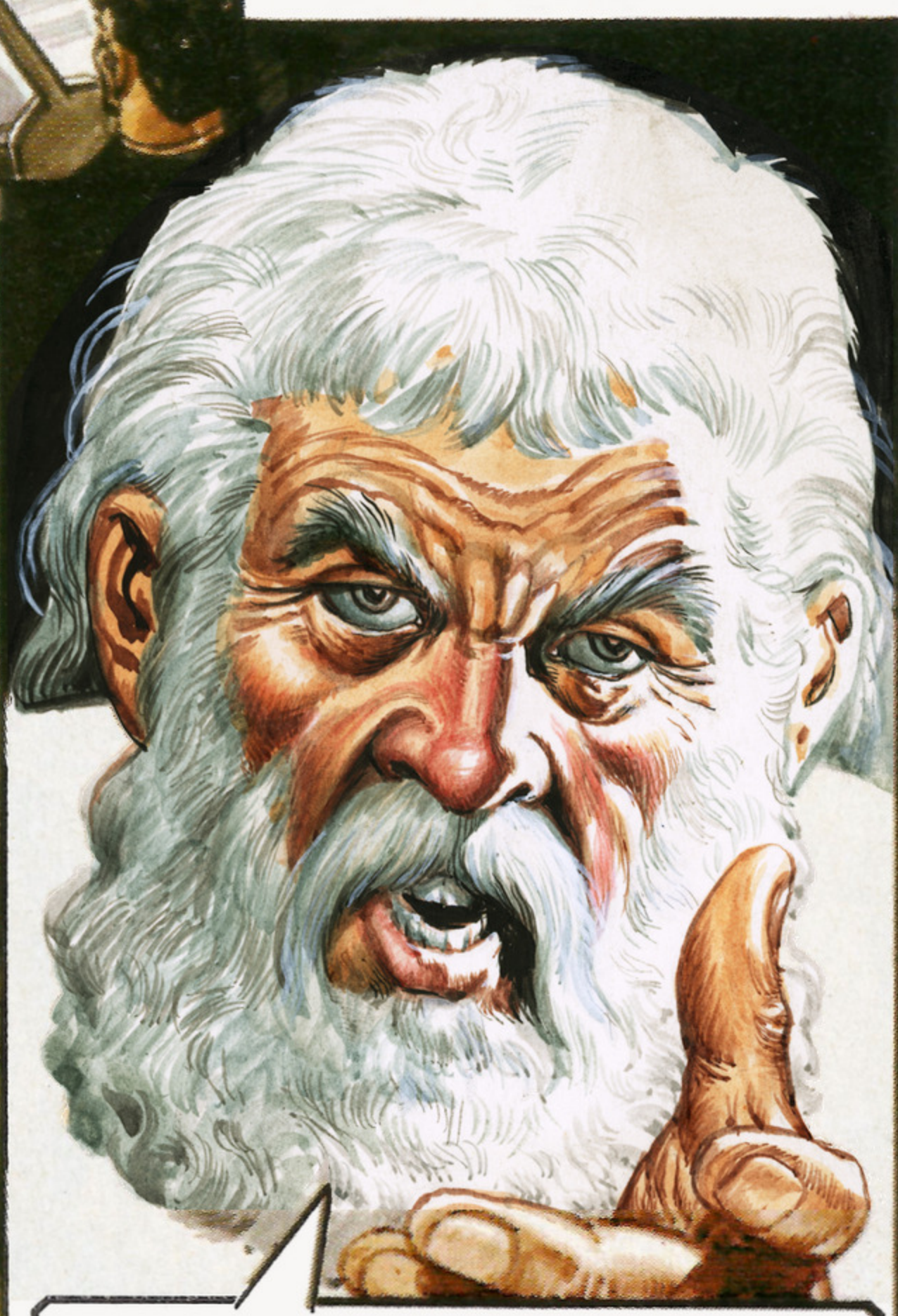


After a lifetime of slavery and deprivation, Peric, I am in a position to indulge my every whim. And my whim is for the perfect! The fastest—the greatest—the biggest—the noblest of everything!

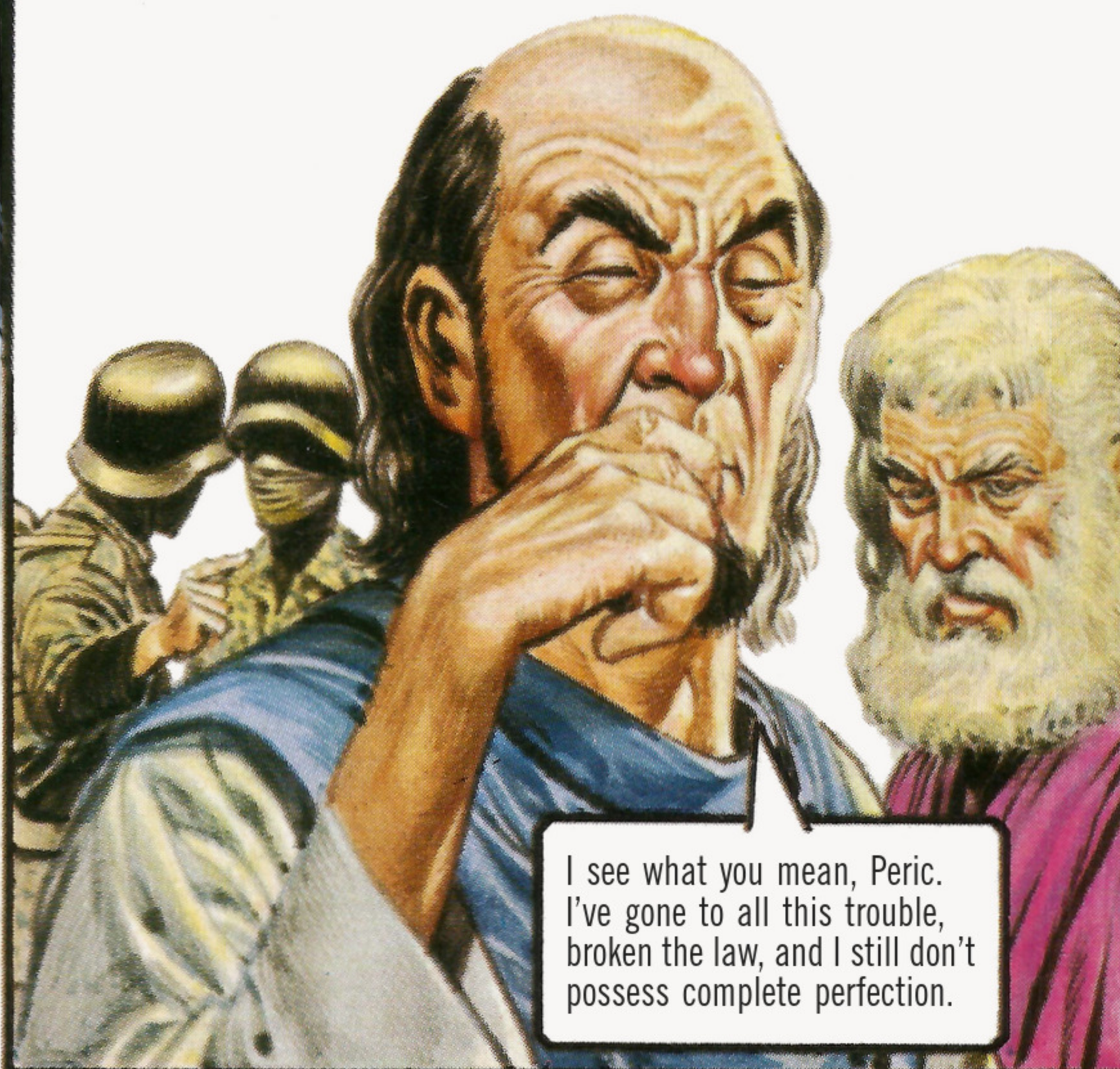
Peric was quick to observe that his oratory was having a marked effect upon Lipka.



I understand your intention, Lipka, but you are mistaken. To begin with, Chorpinal, whose whole work is devoted to the theme of freedom, will never compose again while you hold him prisoner.



The Monster of Vorg was pre-dated by an even bigger creature. It is quite feasible, but useless, to build a faster machine than the Ultimate Aircraft. Janno's record at the Empire Games has already been broken. As for the Green Diadem, the fake you left in its place is still being worshipped by its devotees who have not been told that you have stolen the original.



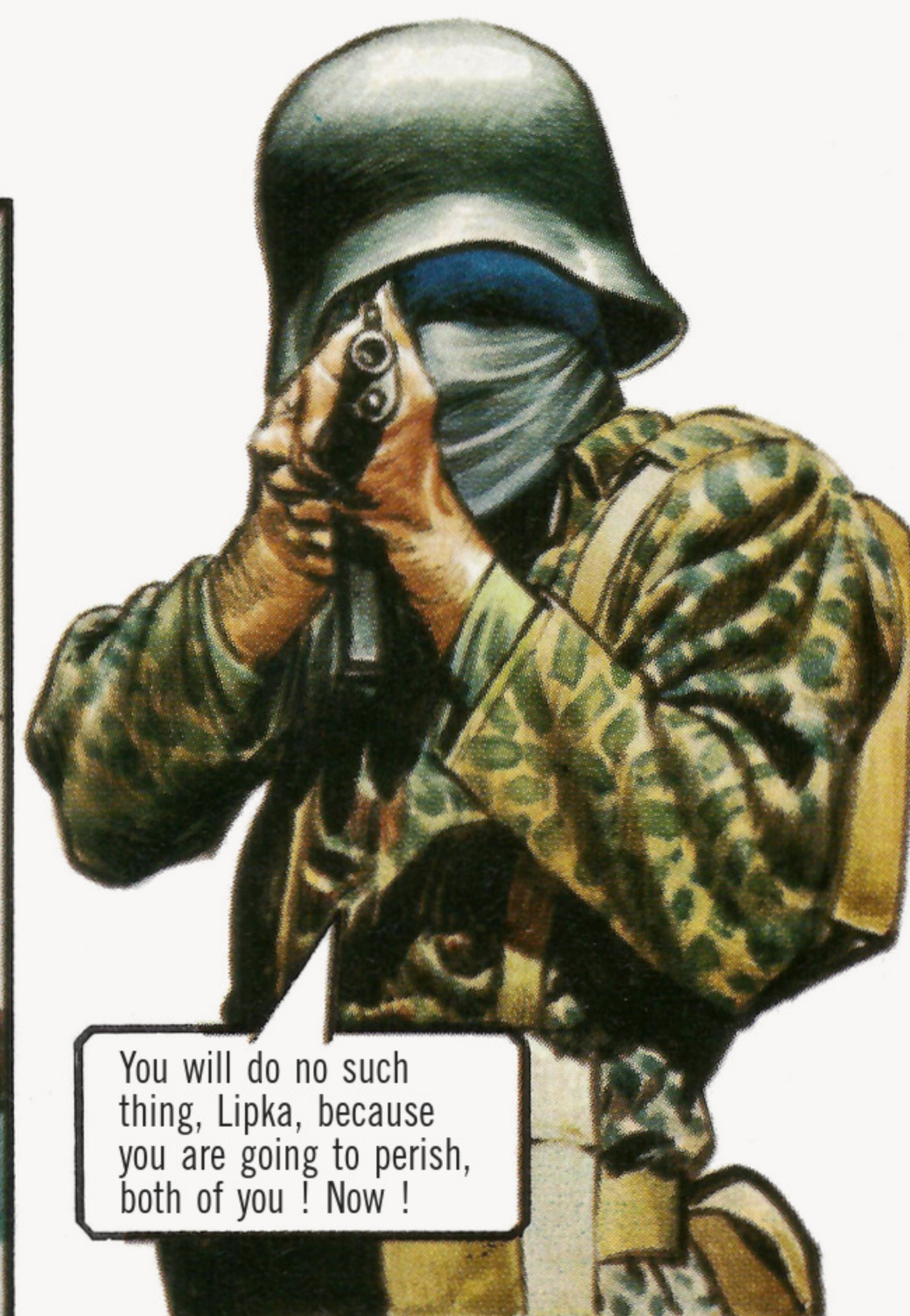
I see what you mean, Peric. I've gone to all this trouble, broken the law, and I still don't possess complete perfection.

Peric made a last appeal.

It's not too late, Lipka. Free those you have kidnapped! Return the other things and throw yourself on Imperial mercy.



Yes, Peric, I will.



You will do no such thing, Lipka, because you are going to perish, both of you! Now!

Lipka let out a wail of anguish as one of the guards picked up the Great Green Diadem.



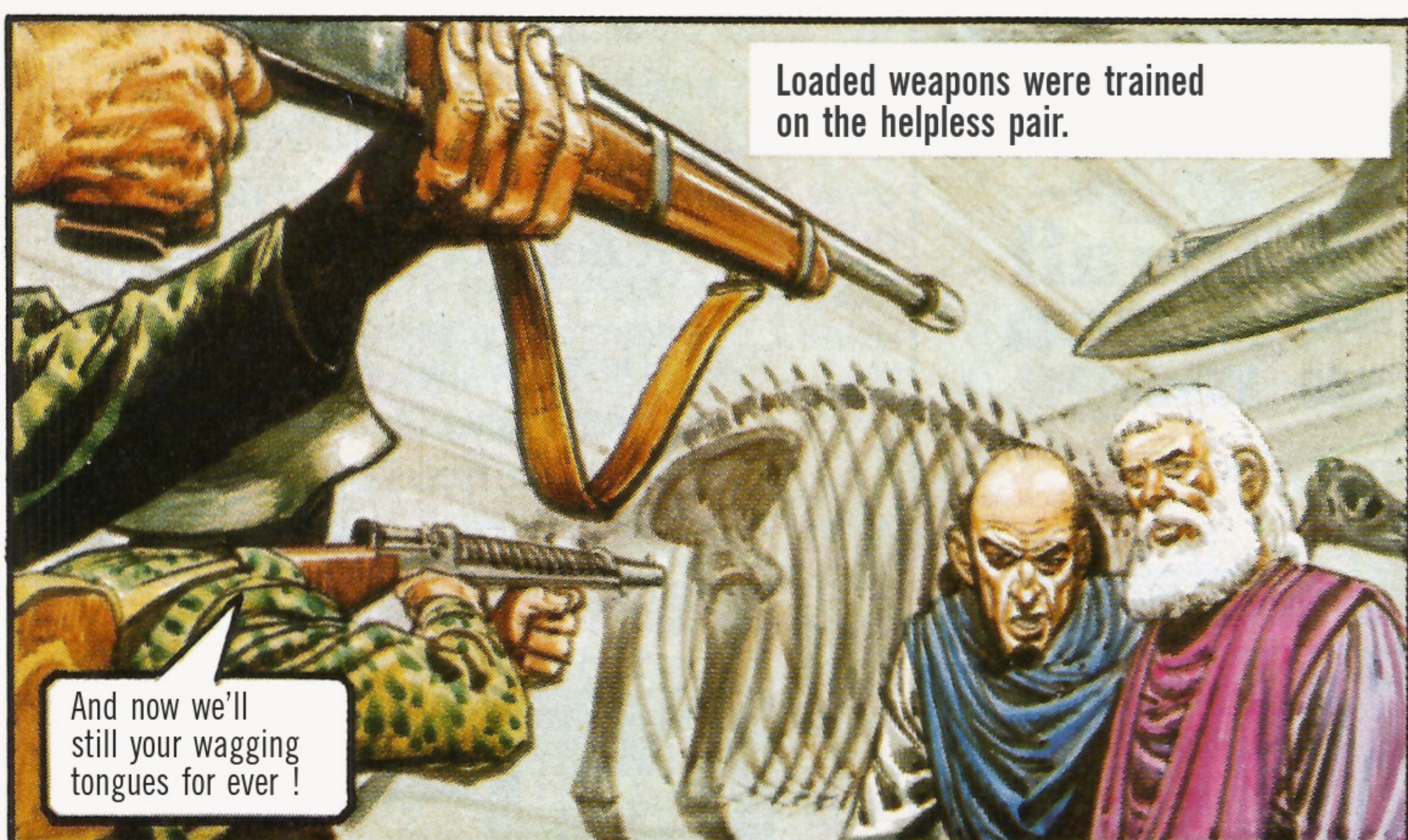
We'll cut this up and dispose of it. It will fetch enough money to keep us in luxury for the rest of our lives.

No ! Do not harm the diadem ! It is utter perfection !

He was felled by a brutal blow.



Babbling fool ! What do we care for perfection ? We've done your bidding, and now we're taking our payment.



Loaded weapons were trained on the helpless pair.

And now we'll still your wagging tongues for ever !

But one person had been entirely overlooked—Janno. And he burst upon the scene like a thunderbolt.



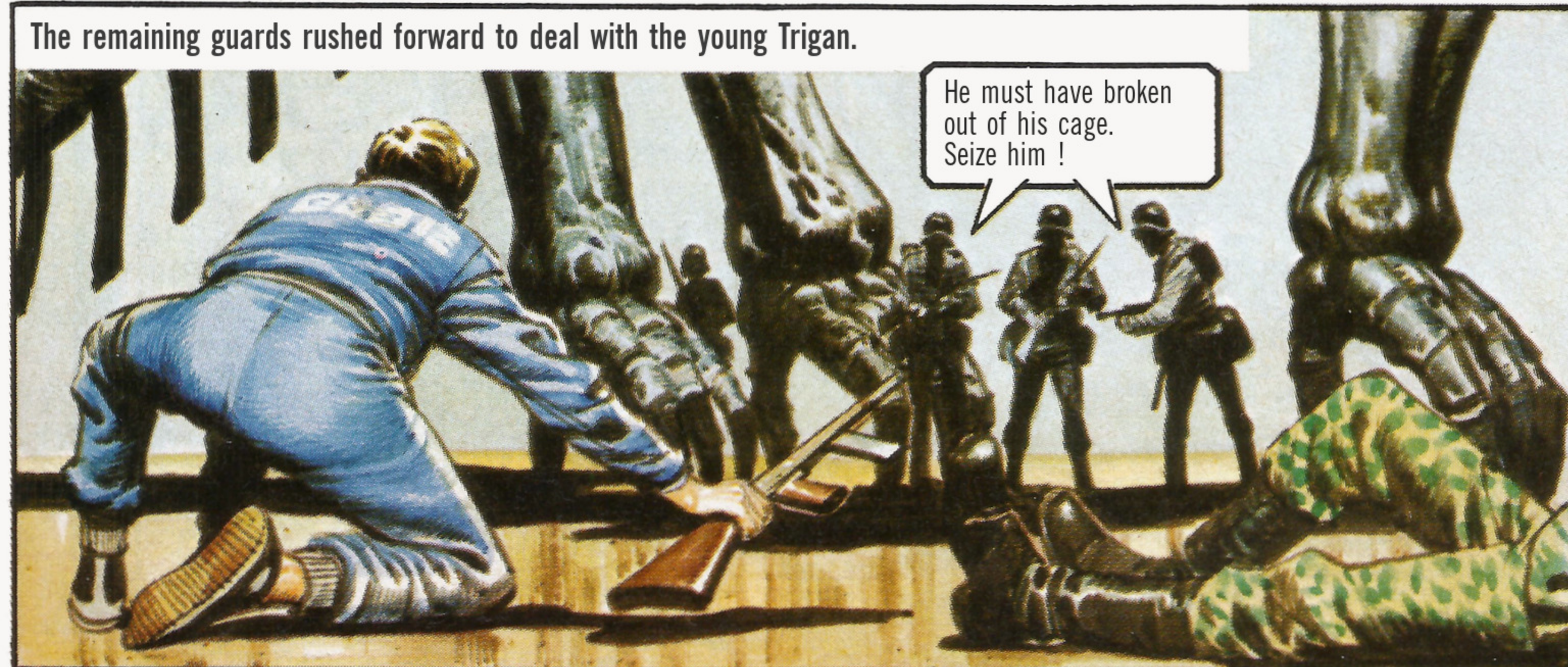
Uuuuuugh !

Eeeeeeeeghh !

Picking up a fallen weapon, Janno took hasty aim.

DON LAWRENCE

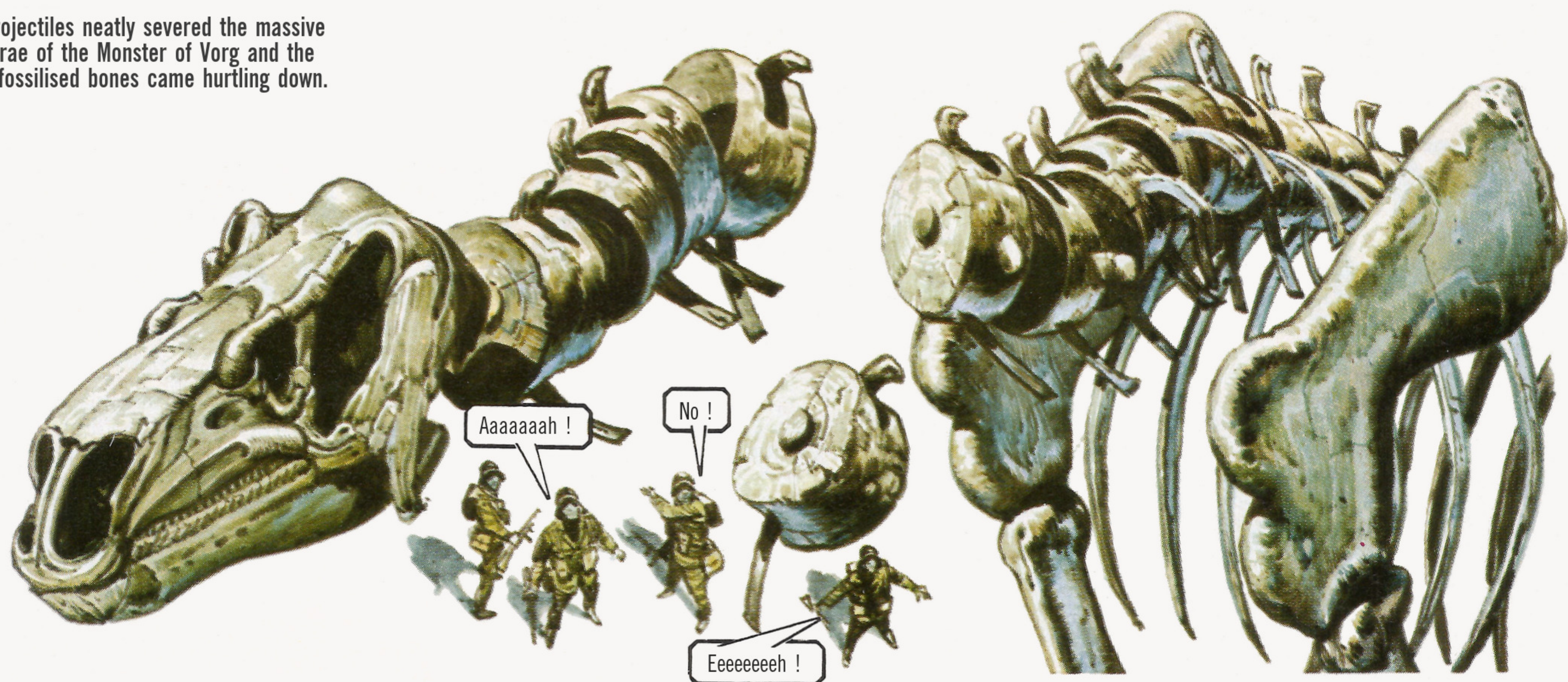
The remaining guards rushed forward to deal with the young Trigan.



He must have broken out of his cage. Seize him !



The projectiles neatly severed the massive vertebrae of the Monster of Vorg and the great fossilised bones came hurtling down.



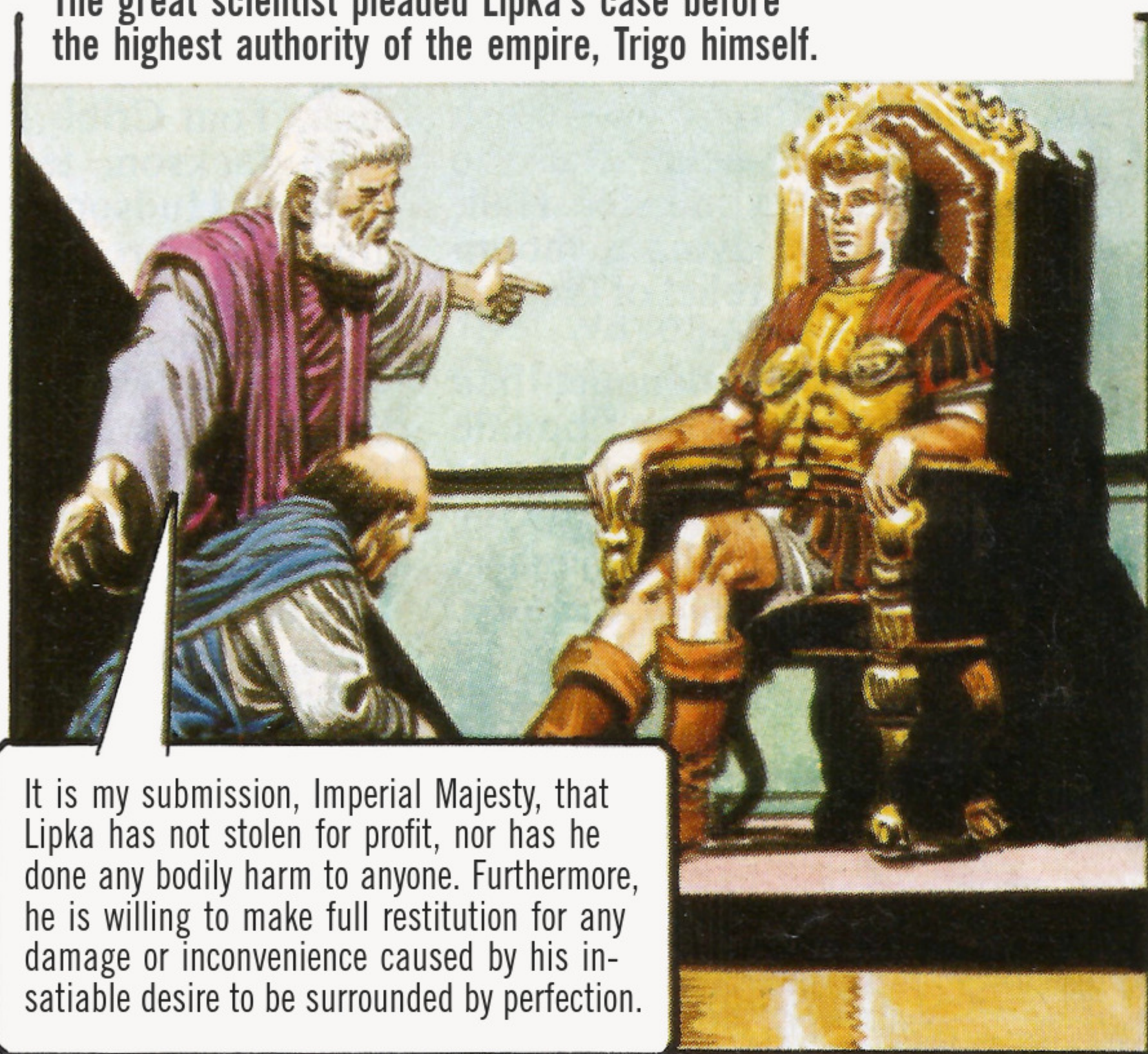
Moments later, all was silent in the great hall. Peric laid his hand on the shoulder of HE WHO HAD COLLECTED PERFECTION.



Come, Lipka. I will be at your side when you confess all.

You have been good to me, Peric—better than I deserve.

The great scientist pleaded Lipka's case before the highest authority of the empire, Trigo himself.



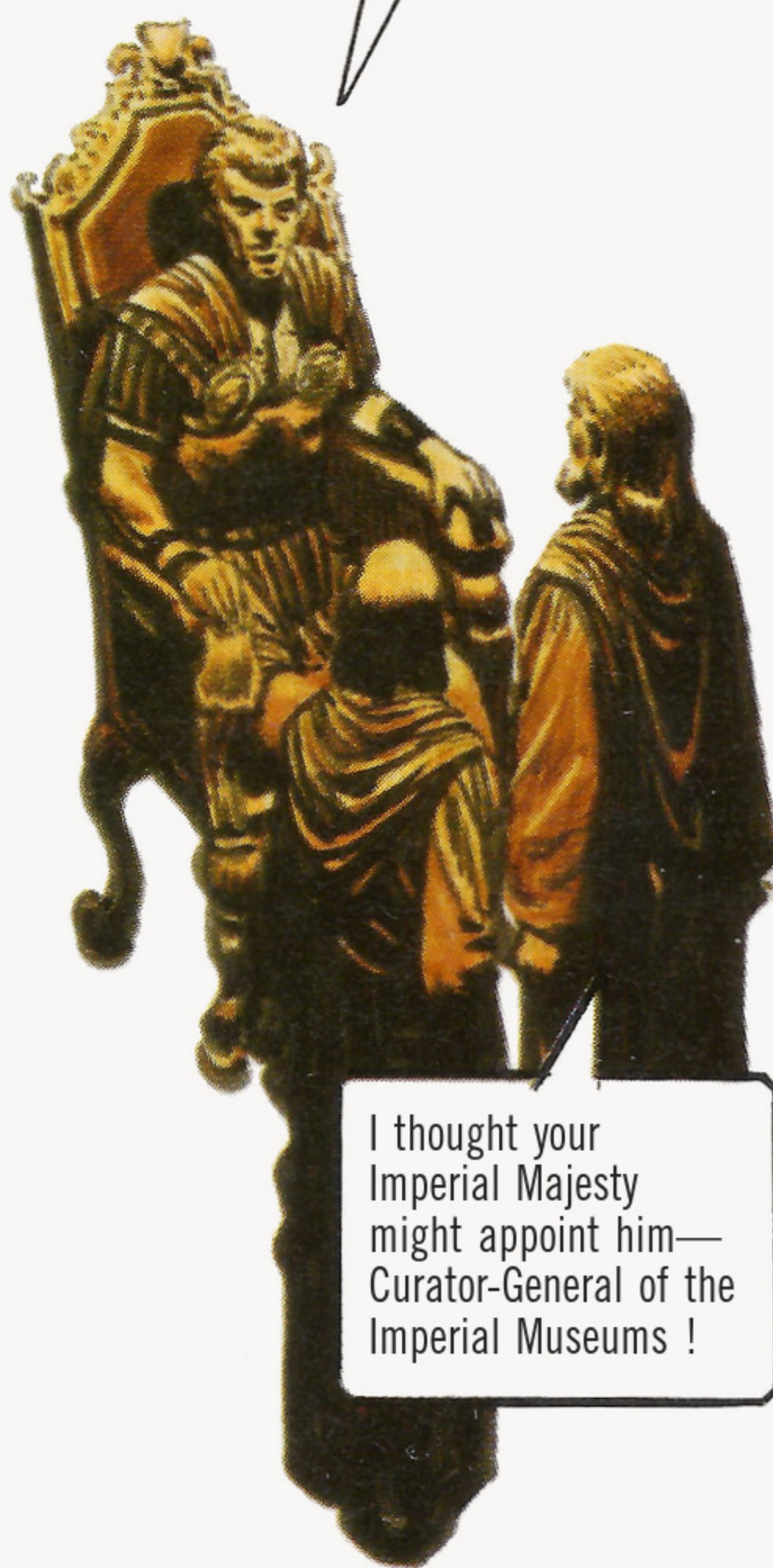
It is my submission, Imperial Majesty, that Lipka has not stolen for profit, nor has he done any bodily harm to anyone. Furthermore, he is willing to make full restitution for any damage or inconvenience caused by his insatiable desire to be surrounded by perfection.

I am willing to pardon him, provided we can be assured that he keeps his insatiable desire in check. Any suggestions, Peric?



Yes, Sire. Frankly, this fellow is bored to death by being a multimillionaire. He needs a job of work!

What employment have you in mind?



I thought your Imperial Majesty might appoint him—Curator-General of the Imperial Museums!

And so, Lipka was from then on surrounded by the perfection he craved. As Curator-General, he was responsible for every museum in the vast empire.



And all mine!

... In a manner of speaking!

His eye often fell upon the restored fossil of the Monster of Vorg, and then he remembered.



Was that really the fiercest thing that ever lived, sir?

Yes, my boy, and it can still smite mightily, I assure you!

Mike Butterworth

Don Lawrence

THE TRIGAN EMPIRE

THE ULTIMATE COLLECTION

