

MORE ADVENTURES OF THE

# TRIGAN EMPIRE

The planet Elekton lies in the galaxy of Yarna, far in the uttermost reaches of space. The greatest force on Elekton is the Trigan Empire, ruled over by its founder, the Emperor Trigo...

THE AIR FLEET BASE NEAR TRIGAN CITY WAS A SCENE OF COLOURFUL ACTIVITY. AN INSPECTION BY NO LESS THAN MARSHAL ROSSU, CHIEF OF THE MIGHTY TRIGAN AIR ARM.



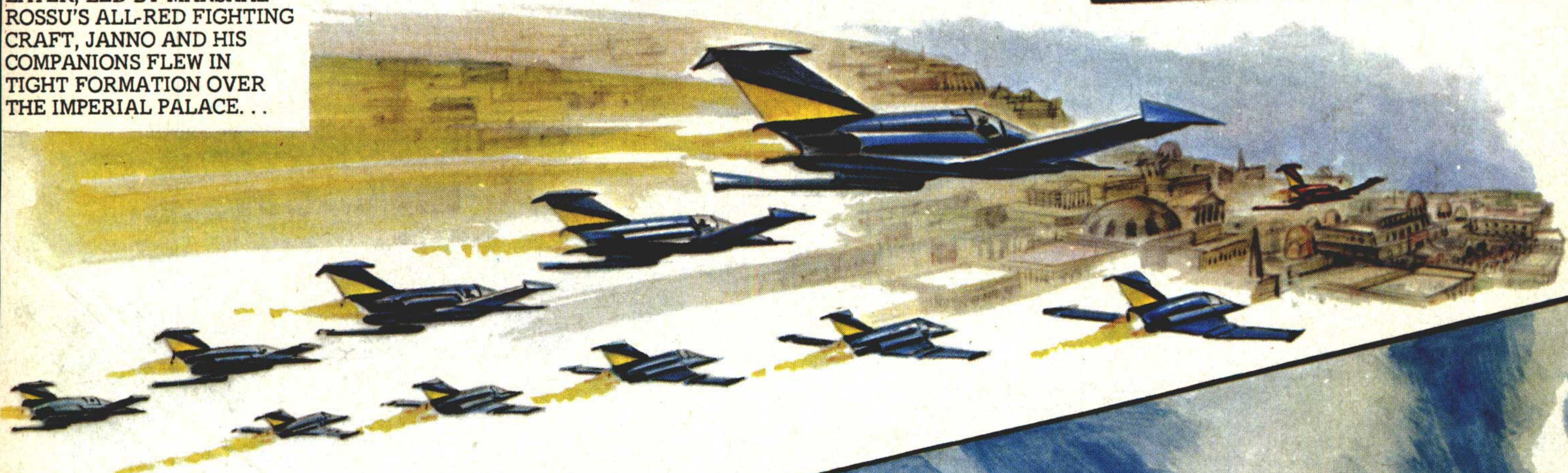
IT WAS THE OCCASION OF THE EMPEROR'S BIRTHDAY. THE MARSHAL PAUSED FOR A WORD WITH THE EMPEROR'S NEPHEW JANNO.

Ah, Lieutenant Janno. You will, of course, be attending the reception at the palace after the fly-past. Join me after we land, and accompany me in my automobile.



Yes, Excellency. Thank you.

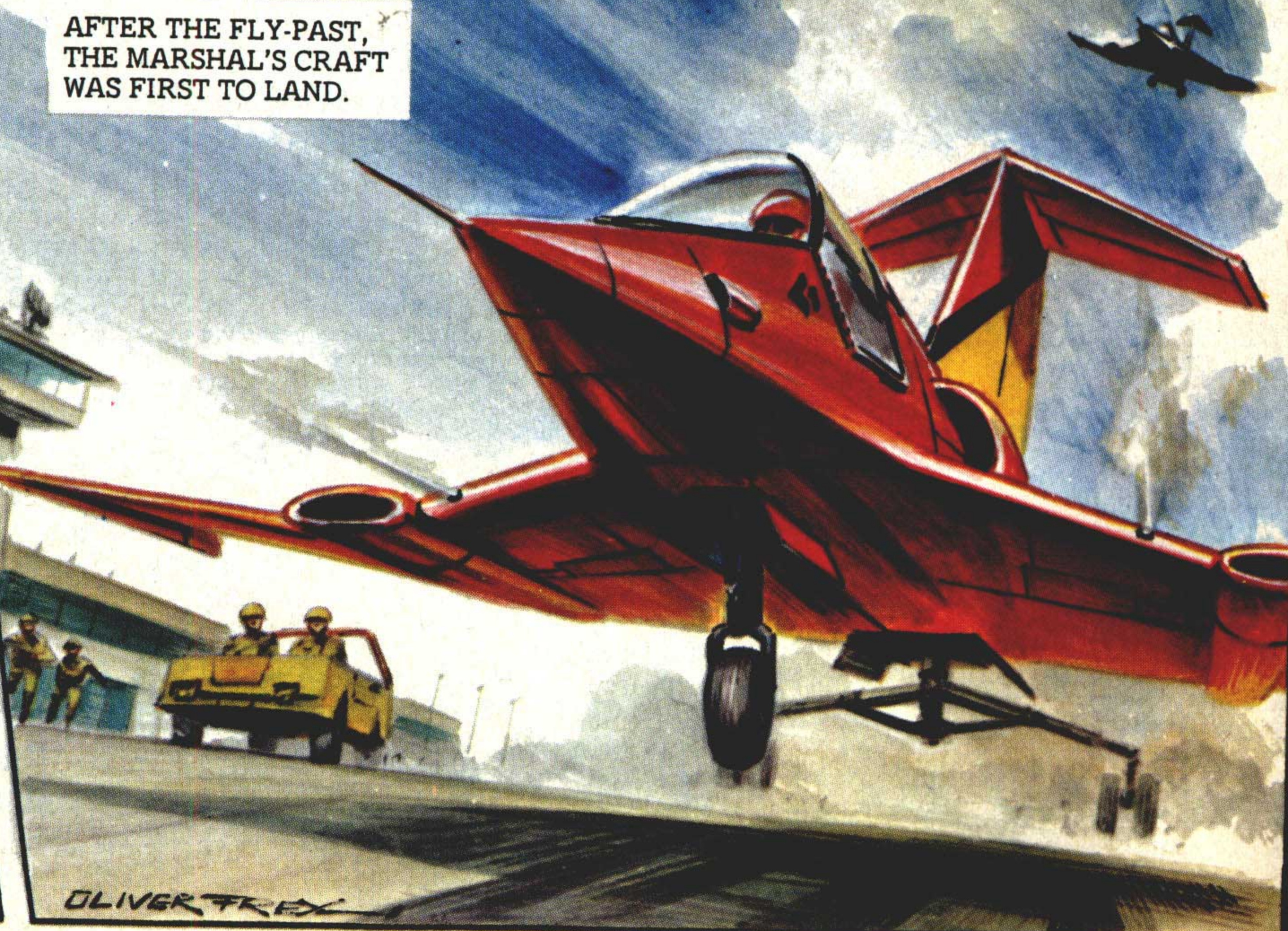
LATER, LED BY MARSHAL ROSSU'S ALL-RED FIGHTING CRAFT, JANNO AND HIS COMPANIONS FLEW IN TIGHT FORMATION OVER THE IMPERIAL PALACE...



...WHERE THE EMPEROR TRIGO TOOK THE SALUTE.



AFTER THE FLY-PAST, THE MARSHAL'S CRAFT WAS FIRST TO LAND.



OLIVER TREX



AND THEN, AS IT CAME TO A HALT...

Hey! Where's the pilot?

The Marshal!  
He - he's disappeared!

Nothing here but his flying kit!

NEWS WAS BROUGHT TO THE EMPEROR.

He can't have disappeared!

It's true, uncle! One instant his Excellency was at the controls, the next there was nothing left but his helmet and gravity-suit.

You were the first to point out that there was no pilot in the craft as it taxied to a halt?

OTHER ENQUIRIES - OF A MORE CONFIDENTIAL NATURE - WERE MADE AT THE EMPEROR'S ORDERS. BUT TO NO AVAIL.

The Marshal has a happy family life. His financial affairs are in good order, his health excellent. There is no reason, in the opinion of the secret police, why he should choose to disappear.

Then he must have been taken by force, unwillingly. But... how?

THE AIR FLEET HIGH COMMAND HELD AN ENQUIRY SOME DAYS LATER. TEN MECHANICS GAVE EVIDENCE AND ALL TOLD THE SAME TALE.

Yes, sir. And when we looked inside, he'd vanished!

THAT MORNING, AT THE OTHER SIDE OF THE CITY, THE OWNER OF A WEAPONS SHOP MADE A CASUAL REMARK TO HIS ASSISTANT.

I shall be in my office if you require me.

Yes, sir.

SOME TIME LATER...

'Scuse me, sir. A gentleman here wants to buy a...

By all the stars!

What's the matter?

My boss has vanished, that's what! And left his clothes behind!

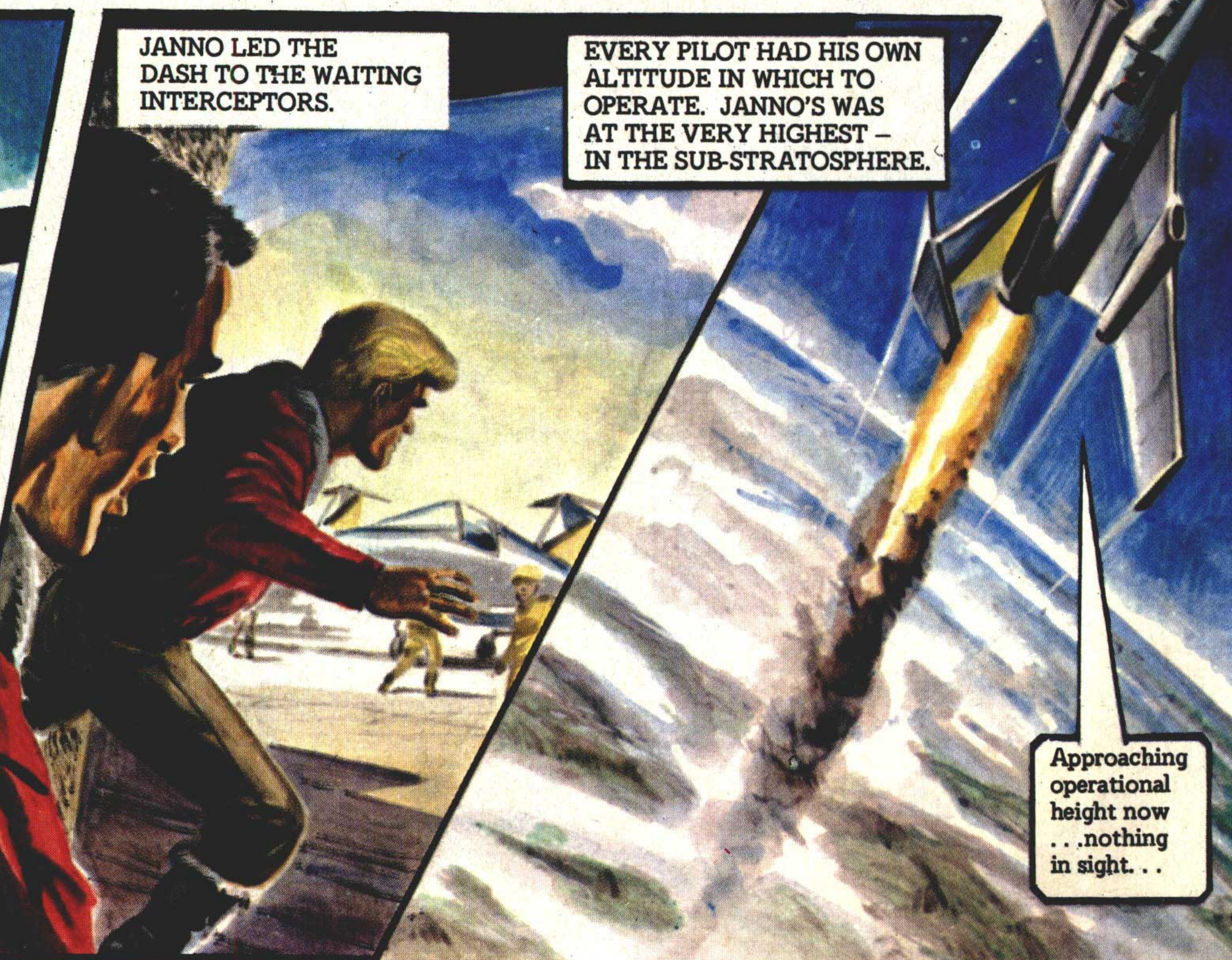
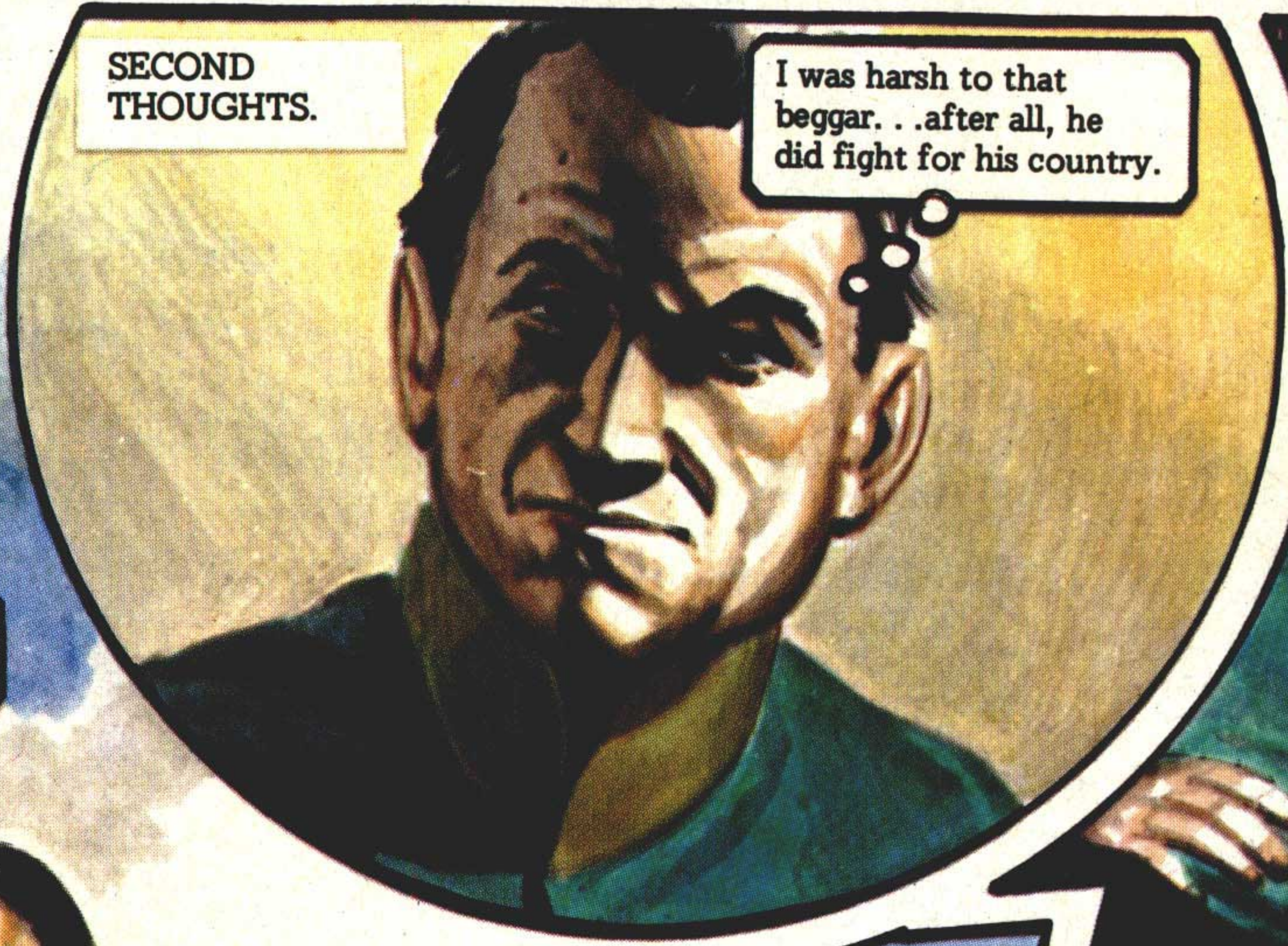
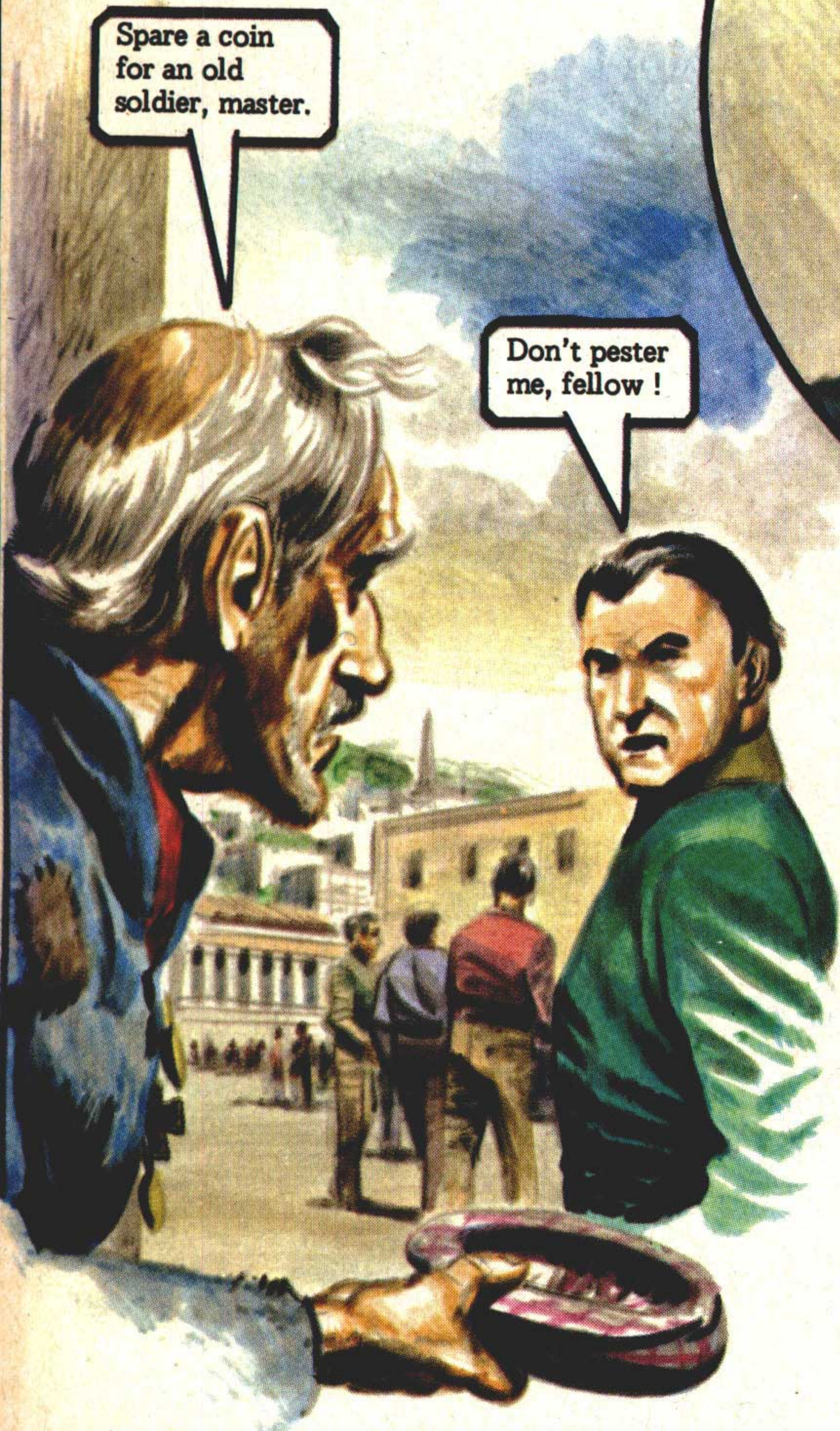
CONTINUED NEXT WEEK



# MORE ADVENTURES OF THE TRIGAN EMPIRE

Marshal Rogsu, chief of Trigan air fleet, has vanished from his fighter craft, leaving behind only his flying kit. Other strange happenings follow, such as the weird affair of the missing beggar...

IT HAPPENED IN THE GREAT SQUARE OF TRIGAN CITY IN BROAD DAYLIGHT...





AND THEN — JANNO SAW A TELL-TALE 'BLIP' ON HIS SCREEN.

UP — UP — UP — THE INTREPID PILOT FOLLOWED HIS QUARRY. AND THEN HE SAW...IT...AND EXPERIENCED A PANG OF DISAPPOINTMENT.

Contact ahead !  
...and it's high up...in the stratosphere !

It was only an echo from that old abandoned weather station !

Better get down to my operational height. This craft isn't fit to operate for more than a very short while in the stratosphere.

AFLAME AND OUT OF CONTROL, JANNO HAD ONLY ONE THOUGHT...

A PAIR OF EYES WATCHED JANNO FROM THE SEEMINGLY DESERTED CITY IN SPACE.

BLAM ! — BLAMM !  
— EXPLOSIVE PROJECTILES SLAMMED INTO THE LITTLE INTERCEPTOR !

Elekton's gravitational pull is strong enough to take me down — but will the craft burn out and me with it before we reach the ground ?

By all the stars...

OLIVER FREY



MORE ADVENTURES OF THE

# TRICAN EMPIRE

People on the planet Elekton are vanishing without trace and the authorities are puzzled. Then Janno, the Emperor's nephew, pursuing an intruder, is shot down . . .

WITH HIS DOOMED CRAFT IN FLAMES, AND THE GROUND COMING UP TO MEET HIM AT SUPERSONIC SPEED, JANNO PRESSED THE ESCAPE BUTTON.

BUT . . .

I'm going to hit that high-tension cable !

ZZZZZKKK-K-K-KK !

QUVER TREY

THEY FOUND HIM LATER.

Is he ? . .

As near as makes no difference !

The craft was fired upon, you say ? — Fired upon by whom ?

That, Imperial Majesty only Janno can tell us, when he recovers . .





...If he recovers!



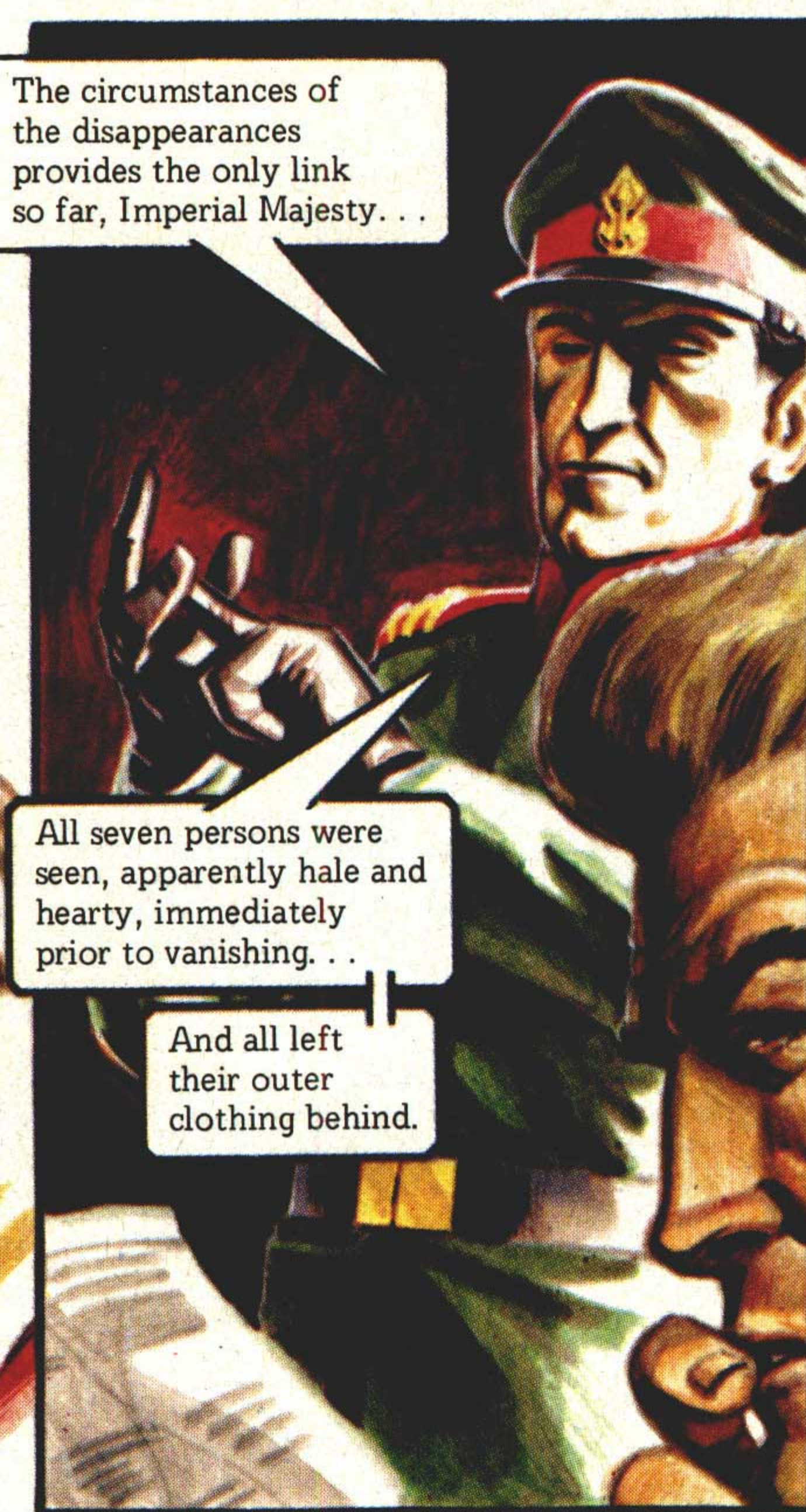
Another matter for your attention, Imperial Majesty. While enquiring into the strange disappearance of Marshal Rossi, our computers have come up with a series of most remarkable coincidences...

Explain yourself, Colonel.



See, Imperial Majesty — there have been no less than seven other disappearances in the last lunar month.

You are surely not suggesting some connection? What possible link exists between the Marshal of the Trigan air fleet and... for instance... a beggar?



The circumstances of the disappearances provides the only link so far, Imperial Majesty...

All seven persons were seen, apparently hale and hearty, immediately prior to vanishing...

And all left their outer clothing behind.

ROSSI WAS THE YOUNGEST SENATOR THE EMPIRE HAD EVER KNOWN, AND TIPPED FOR SUPREME MINISTER BEFORE HE WAS MUCH OLDER.



Do not wait for me. I will find my own way home.

Yes, Excellency.

BUT HELP WAS AT HAND. AS SOON AS ROSSI ARRIVED HOME, HE HAD A CALL...



ROSSI HAD — A CERTAIN WEAKNESS...



GAMBLING WAS HIS PASSION. HE PLAYED BADLY AND STAKED RECKLESSLY.

Fool that I am, I'm ruined... ruined!



...Listen carefully...

Who are you?

That is immaterial, Excellency. I am a friend. I am willing to pay off all your gambling debts — in return for a simple service that you must perform for me...

CONTINUED NEXT WEEK.



MORE ADVENTURES OF THE

# TRIGAN EMPIRE

A series of mysterious disappearances of various people from Trigan City are baffling the Trigan authorities. Now Senator Rossi, who has a weakness for gambling, appears to be the next victim.

AFTER HE HAD HAD A LONG CONVERSATION WITH A MYSTERY CALLER, SENATOR ROSSI REPLACED THE RECEIVER.

This is fantastic !  
But what can I do ?  
Except obey him !

IMMEDIATELY, THE SENATOR DROVE OUT OF THE CITY IN HIS SUMPTUOUS AUTOMOBILE – WITHOUT, FOR ONCE, HIS UNIFORMED CHAUFFEUR.

After all, he has  
pledged to pay all  
my gambling debts, and  
save my reputation !

AND THEN . . .

IN A LONELY PART OF THE MOUNTAIN ROAD BEYOND TRIGAN CITY, ROSSI STOPPED THE VEHICLE. HE TOOK OFF HIS OUTER CLOTHES AND LAID THEM IN THE DRIVER'S SEAT.

I don't see the  
sense of it but  
this is what he  
told me to do.

There  
it goes !

HARDLY HAD THE EXPENSIVE VEHICLE DASHED ITSELF TO SCRAP METAL ON THE ROCKS FAR BELOW THAN THE SOUND OF ENGINES MADE ROSSI LOOK UP.

This must  
be – him !

THE NEXT  
MOMENT . . .

Nicely done,  
Excellency !  
And now,  
get in . . .  
animal !



EARLY THE NEXT MORNING, A GROUP OF FISHERMEN FOUND THE WRECKAGE OF THE SENATOR'S VEHICLE IN A MOUNTAIN STREAM.

The driver's clothes are here !

But he never could have survived that awful drop !

THE REPORT OF THE DISAPPEARANCE OF ONE OF HIS MOST PROMISING POLITICIANS WAS BROUGHT TO THE EMPEROR TRIGO.

Senator Rossi was seen leaving his villa, Imperial Majesty, and heading for the mountain road. And now — nothing but a pile of clothes !

I remind you, Imperial Majesty, that Rossi makes the eighth.

A FEW DAYS LATER, JANNO RECOVERED CONSCIOUSNESS AFTER HIS CRASH.

The abandoned weather station. . . Somebody. . . Someone. . .

Easy now, Lieutenant. You need a lot of rest. Don't tire yourself.

HIS HALF-INCOHERENT BABBLINGS WERE EXAMINED BY THE STAFF OF AIR-FLEET HEADQUARTERS.

Janno says, and we only have his evidence, that he was fired on from the old weather station.

But the only feasible explanation, according to the computer, is that he was fired on from the ground.

That weather station has been deserted for ten lunar years.

NEVERTHELESS, THE OLD WEATHER STATION IN THE STRATOSPHERE WAS GIVEN A CURSORY LOOK-OVER — FROM A DISTANCE.

See any sign of life ?

BUT A PAIR OF HATE-FILLED EYES WATCHED BOTH AIRCRAFT LEAVE.

You must be joking.

Good for you ! If you had stayed an instant longer, I would have destroyed you both — as I did the other !



MORE ADVENTURES OF THE

# TRIGAN EMPIRE

Due to a chain of mysterious circumstances, eight people from the Trigan Empire have vanished. However, Janno, the Emperor's nephew, has various clues which he is prepared to act upon.

NIGHT TIME, SILENCE AND DARKNESS AS A DARK FIGURE EMERGED FROM AN UPPER WINDOW OF TRIGAN CITY HOSPITAL. . .

... AND EMBARKED ON A DIZZY DOWNWARD CLIMB.

SOME TIME LATER, A NIGHT NURSE MAKING HER ROUNDS SPOTTED THE EMPTY BED.

He's gone !

Alarm ! Alarm !  
Lieutenant Janno  
is missing from  
his room !

THAT ASSUMPTION WAS INCORRECT. JANNO HAD LEFT OF HIS OWN ACCORD, AND FOR A VERY GOOD REASON. AT THAT MOMENT, HE WAS ENTERING AIR FLEET BASE.

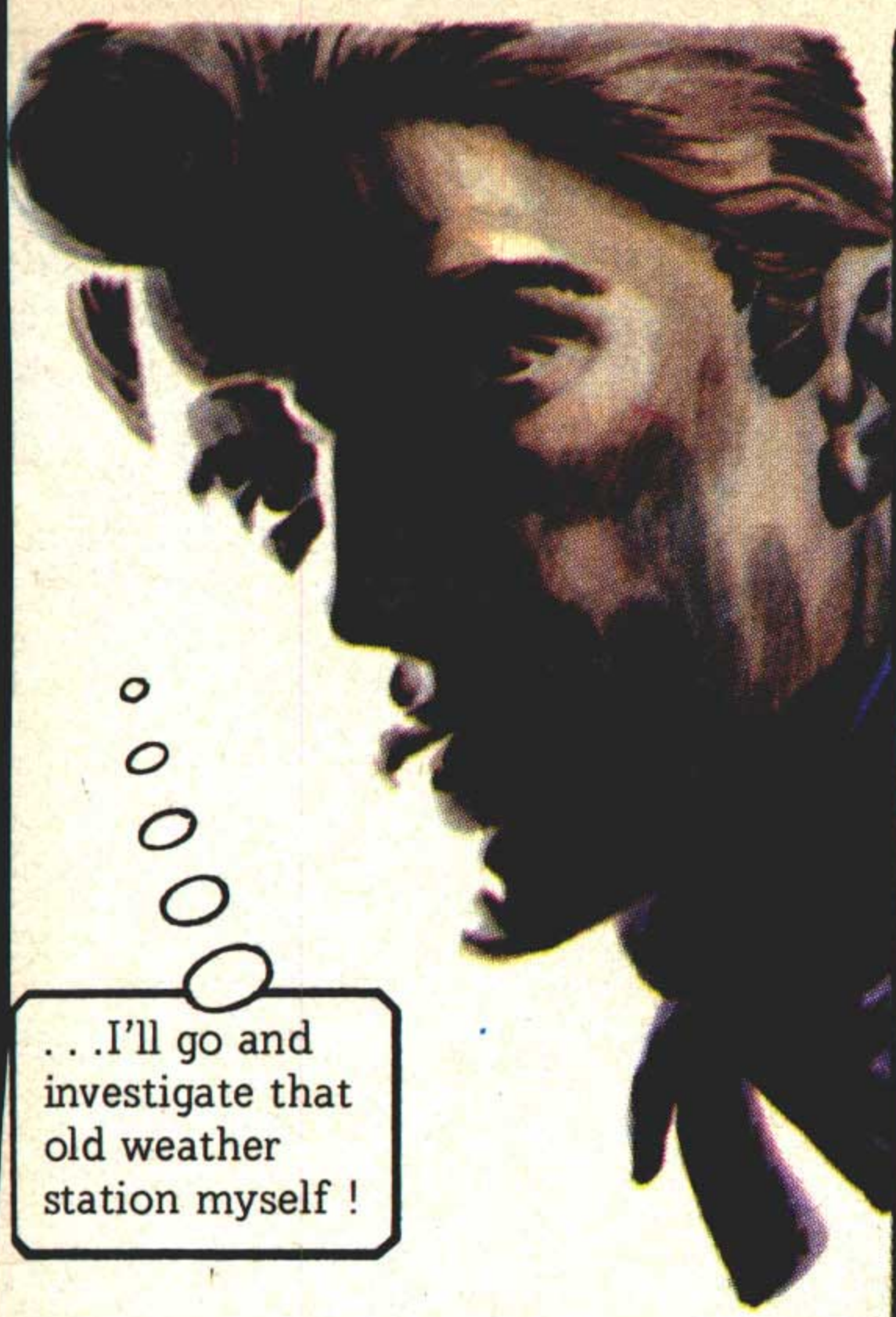
They won't believe what I tell them. They treat me as if I'm wandering in my mind - and so. . .

NEWS WAS BROUGHT TO THE IMPERIAL PALACE, AND THE EMPEROR HIMSELF AWAKENED, TO HEAR OF HIS NEPHEW'S DISAPPEARANCE.

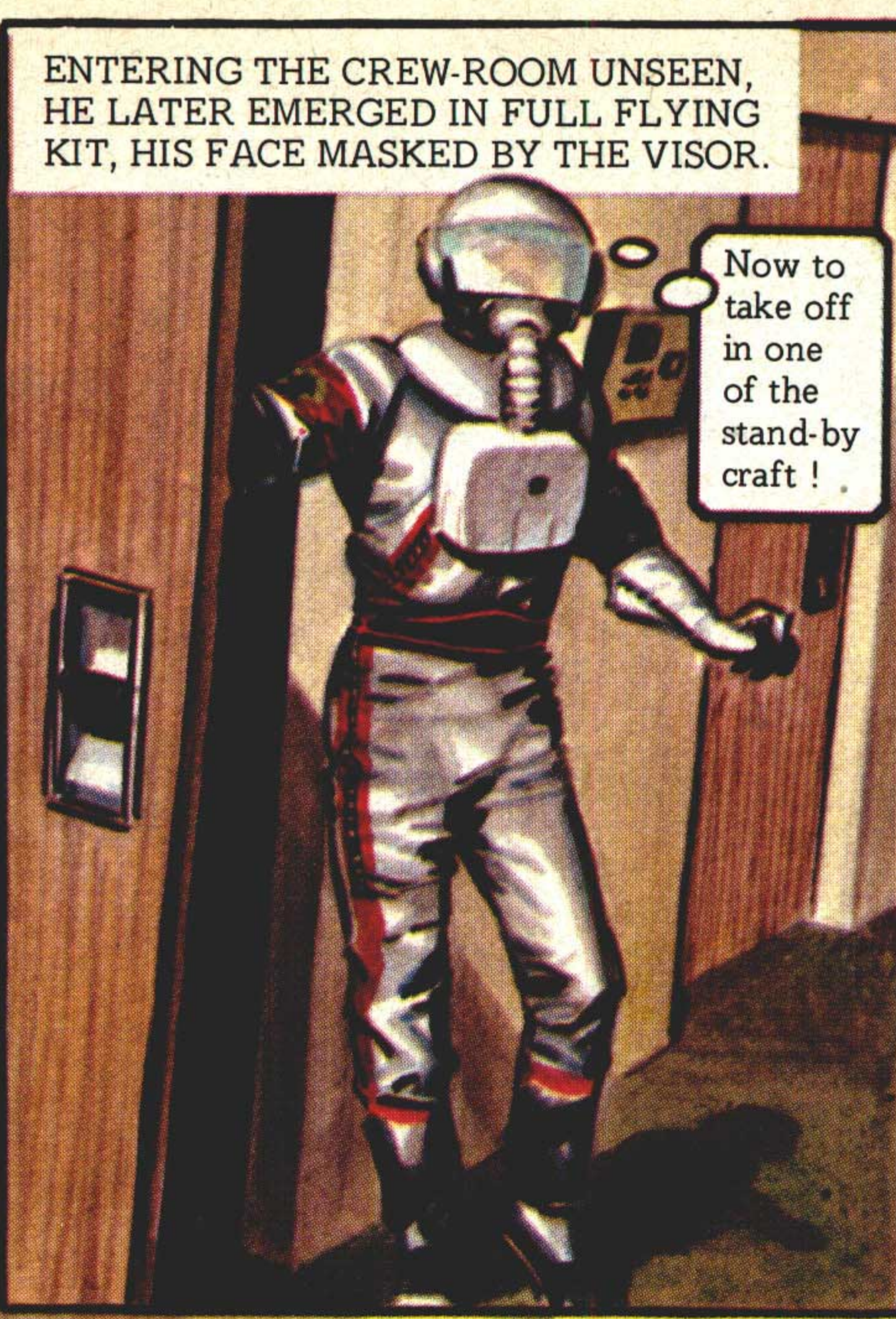
But I understood Janno had only just come off the danger list, and the doctors had prescribed several more weeks of complete rest and quiet.

That is so, Imperial Majesty. I am afraid we must assume that your nephew did not leave the hospital of his own free will.





... I'll go and investigate that old weather station myself !



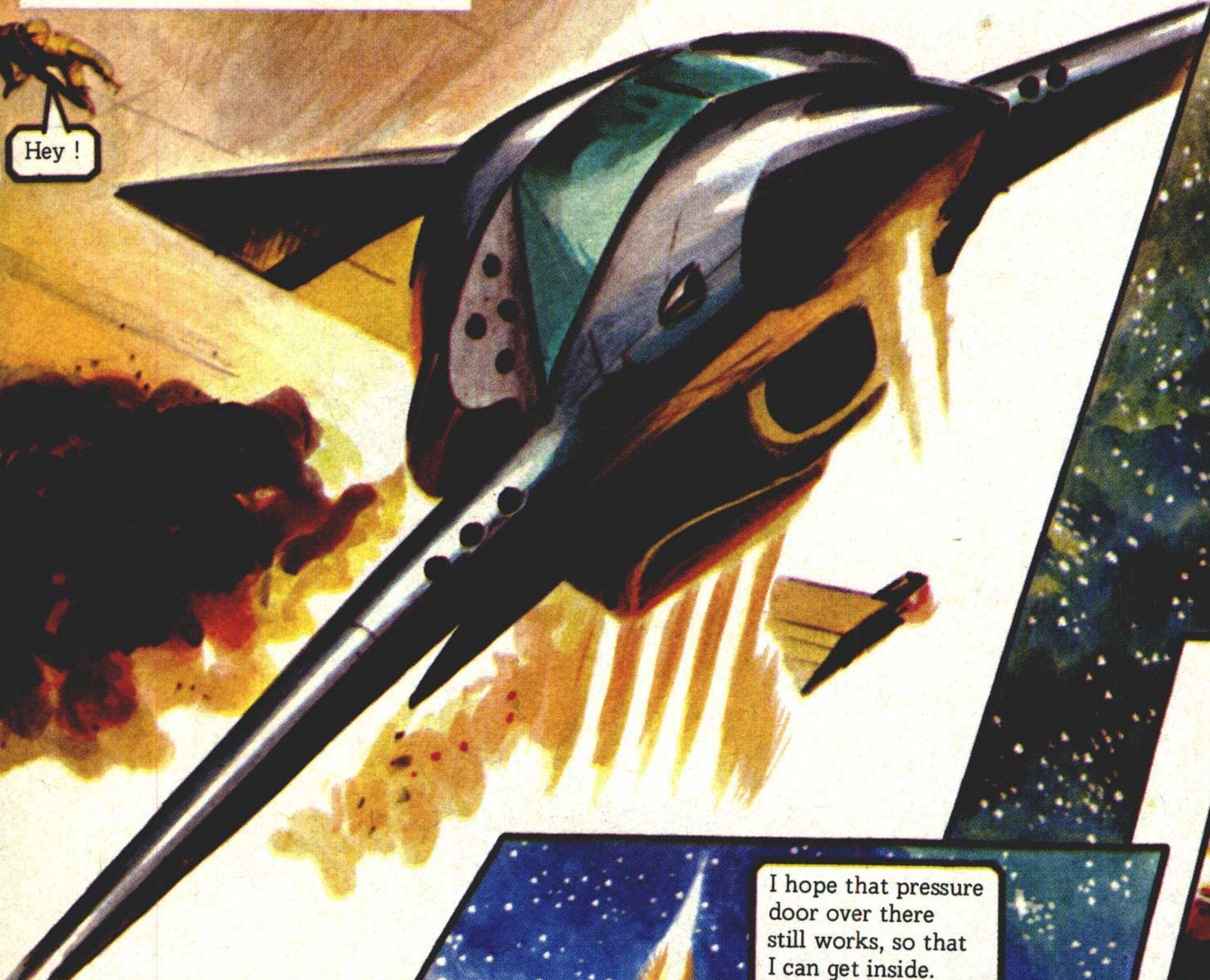
ENTERING THE CREW-ROOM UNSEEN, HE LATER EMERGED IN FULL FLYING KIT, HIS FACE MASKED BY THE VISOR.



THREE ZIPPY FIGHTER-CRAFT STOOD READY FOR EMERGENCY TAKE-OFF, DAY AND NIGHT. APPROACHING THE NEAREST, JANNO WAS CHALLENGED.

Excuse me, Sir, may I see your authorisation, please ?

A TOUCH OF A STARTER BUTTON BLASTED THE POWERFUL ENGINES INTO LIFE. ...AND...



JANNO DECELERATED RAPIDLY, AND BROUGHT HIS CRAFT DOWN UPON A LANDING PLATFORM ON THE ANCIENT, ABANDONED WEATHER STATION.



THE PRESSURE DOOR WAS STILL OPERATIVE. MOMENTS LATER, JANNO WAS INSIDE THE STATION.



BUT HE WAS NOT ALONE !

CONTINUED NEXT WEEK



MORE ADVENTURES OF THE

# TRIGAN EMPIRE

Seeking to prove that he was fired upon and 'shot down' by a marksman hiding in an abandoned weather station in space, Janno lands to investigate, unaware that a masked figure is stalking him . . .

A SUDDEN STUNNING BLOW DASHED JANNO SENSELESS.

Uuuuhh !

BACK IN TRIGAN CITY, JANNO'S DISAPPEARANCE HAD CAUSED THE EMPEROR TO SUMMON A SPECIAL MEETING TO DISCUSS HIS NEPHEW'S POSSIBLE FATE.

I think we may take it that Janno can be counted as the ninth person to vanish in this strange manner.

Precisely, Imperial Majesty. . .

ELEKTON'S TOP SCIENTIST SMILED SAGELY.

There comes a time, Colonel, when computer machines, however sophisticated, cannot compete with . . . the mind !

I shall apply my mind to the problem !

. . . And it is of vital importance that we discover immediately what is the connection between Janno and those other eight unfortunates.

But, Peric, the computer machines have been working on it day and night.

OUT ON THE EDGE OF SPACE, IN THE LONG-ABANDONED WEATHER STATION. . .

. . . JANNO RECOVERED CONSCIOUSNESS.

By all the stars !

OLIVER TREY



EIGHT PEOPLE REGARDED HIM, AND ONE MAN'S FACE WAS STARTLINGLY FAMILIAR.

Marshal Rossu !  
What are you doing here, Excellency ?

I might well ask you the same question, Lieutenant.

SUDDENLY - A NEWCOMER !

You ! I demand an explanation as to why we've been tricked into coming here.

THE CONCEALING MASK WAS RIPPED AWAY, REVEALING A COUNTENANCE THAT WAS LINED AND HARDENED WITH GREAT SUFFERING.

There are eight of you, plus one intruder who should not be here at all, but who will suffer the same fate as the rest. . .

The time has now come for me to unmask and tell you all !

Well, do you know me ?

I never saw you before !

THE STRANGER BEGAN HIS STORY.

"ONE TERRIBLE DAY, A DEADLY VIRUS FEVER STRUCK THE CREW, LAYING THEM LOW IN THEIR SCORES. BY THE END OF THAT DAY, I WAS THE ONLY PERSON ALIVE AND ON MY FEET. AND PLEADING FOR HELP . . ."

I take you back ten lunar years. To the day when this weather station was a new project and operating with a crew of a hundred trained personnel, of which I was one.

Come to our aid . . .  
come to our aid . . .  
please . . . please . . .

CONTINUED NEXT WEEK



# MORE ADVENTURES OF THE TRICAN EMPIRE

An abandoned weather station on the edge of space. A group of prisoners, including Janno, nephew to the Emperor Trigo, are listening while their captor tells them of events that happened many years before.

"ALONE IN THE STRICKEN WEATHER STATION, WITH ALL ABOUT ME DYING, I SENT MY MESSAGE OUT ACROSS THE ETHER."

Help me, please. . . someone. . . help !

"SOMEWHERE OUT THERE, A SUBSTRATOSPHERE PASSENGER CRUISER PICKED UP MY FEEBLE CALL."

Hello, hello, weather station. . . receiving you. . . what is your trouble ?

"I CAN IMAGINE WHAT TOOK PLACE BETWEEN THE CAPTAIN OF THE CRUISER AND HIS SECOND PILOT."

Sir, they've got the virus fever aboard the weather station ! Practically everyone is wiped out and the signal operator wants us to land there and bring him off.

There's only one thing for it.

"INSTEAD OF TAKING THE DECISION HIMSELF, AS HE SHOULD HAVE, THE CAPTAIN CONSULTED EIGHT FRIGHTENED PEOPLE."

So there you have it. Do we land on the weather station and take off the survivor, at the risk of ourselves contracting the virus fever ?

. . . I put it to the vote !

No !

No !

No !

And I add my own vote. . . No !



"PICTURE MY HORROR AND DESPAIR WHEN I RECEIVED THEIR VERDICT."

Cruiser's Captain speaking. I'm sorry, friend, but we have taken a vote, and we think the risk is too great.

No! No! You can't do this to me!

"THE SOLE SURVIVOR ON AN ABANDONED CITY IN MID-SPACE, WITH EVERYTHING I NEEDED TO SUSTAIN LIFE – FOOD, DRINK, WARMTH, PURIFIED AIR – EVERYTHING BUT FREEDOM. NOTHING BUT MIND-BENDING SOLITUDE."

You can't abandon me!

Five lunar years have passed. I think another five will drive me insane!

OLIVER TREX

"MY SANITY WAS SAVED BY MY DISCOVERY – IN ONE OF THE MANY WELL-EQUIPPED WORKSHOPS – OF A DAMAGED AIR CRAFT. IN THE YEARS THAT FOLLOWED, I WORKED ON THE CRAFT, TO REPAIR IT."

One day, I'm going to have this fit to fly. Then it's back to Elekton. . .

. . .and vengeance!

"YEARS LATER. . ."

It is ready!

And now, to find those who condemned me to all those years of terrible solitude . . .

. . . and to pay them back in kind!

HIS STORY FINISHED, THE SPEAKER REGARDED HIS PRISONERS.

The ten year-old crew and passenger list told me all I needed to know. Further investigation revealed that two of those persons had died in the meantime, but that eight remained, including the captain of the cruiser . . .

. . . Now Marshal Rossu, Chief of the Trigan Air Fleet!

CONTINUED NEXT WEEK



# MORE ADVENTURES OF THE TRIGAN EMPIRE



In an abandoned weather station on the edge of space, a group of prisoners, including Janno, nephew of the Trigan Emperor, are listening to their captor's tale of vengeance

You who condemned me to ten years of solitude aboard this abandoned hulk — are yourselves going to spend the rest of your lives here !

HE EXPLAINED. . . "AT MY INSTRUCTIONS, YOU WORE THE YELLOW OVERALLS OF A MECHANIC ON THE DAY OF THE FLY-PAST. WHEN YOU LANDED, YOU SLIPPED OFF YOUR FLYING KIT AND CLAMBERED, UNSEEN, OUT OF THE CRAFT."



THE AVENGER POINTED TO MARSHAL ROSSU. . .

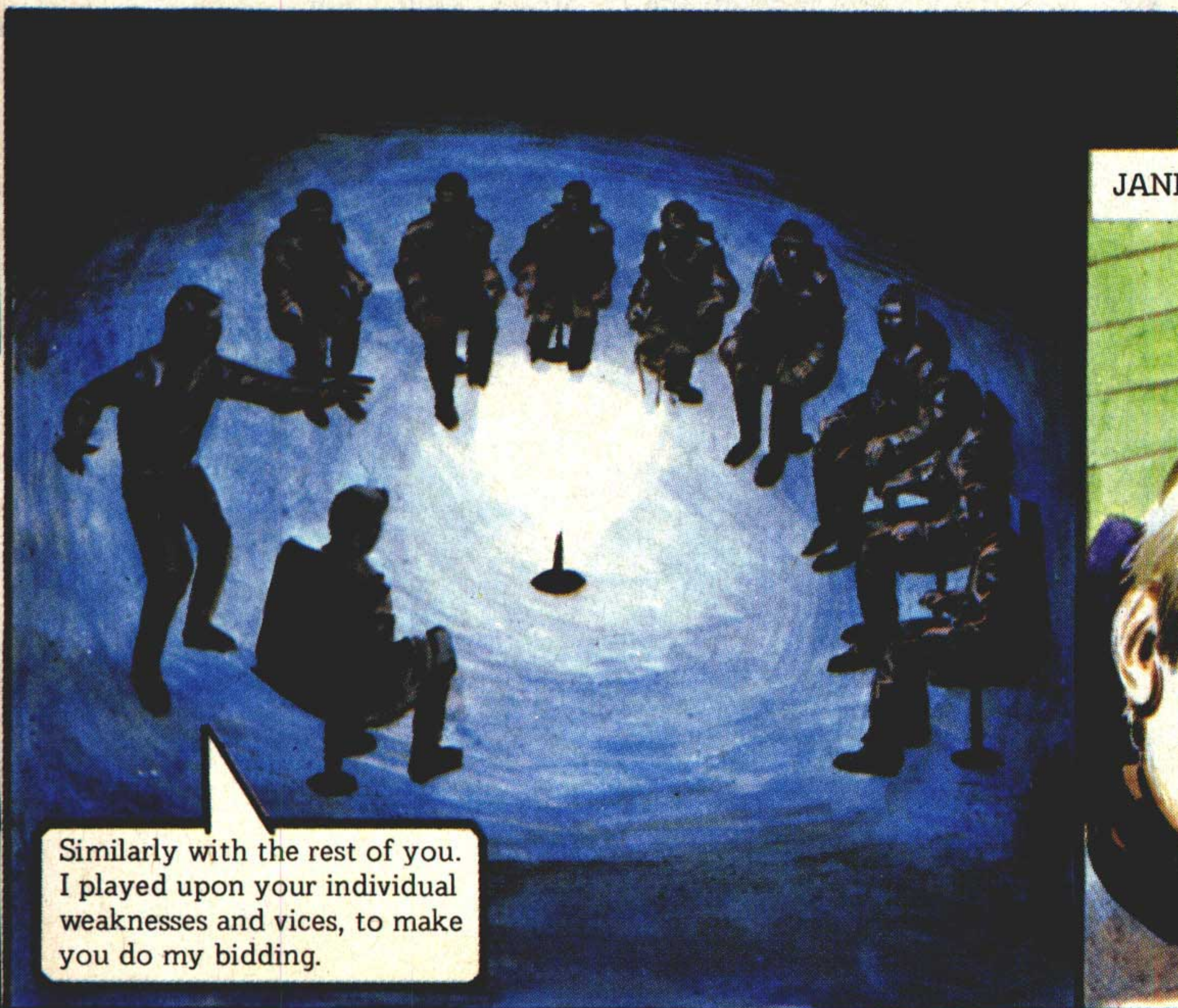
I brought you here, one by one ! Rossu, I discovered things about you that would have meant your ruin. You were only too glad to do anything I demanded of you. . .

"YOU WERE THERE, LOST AMONG THE OTHER YELLOW-GARBED FIGURES, WHEN THEY MADE THEIR ASTONISHING DISCOVERY."



The Marshal — he — he's disappeared !

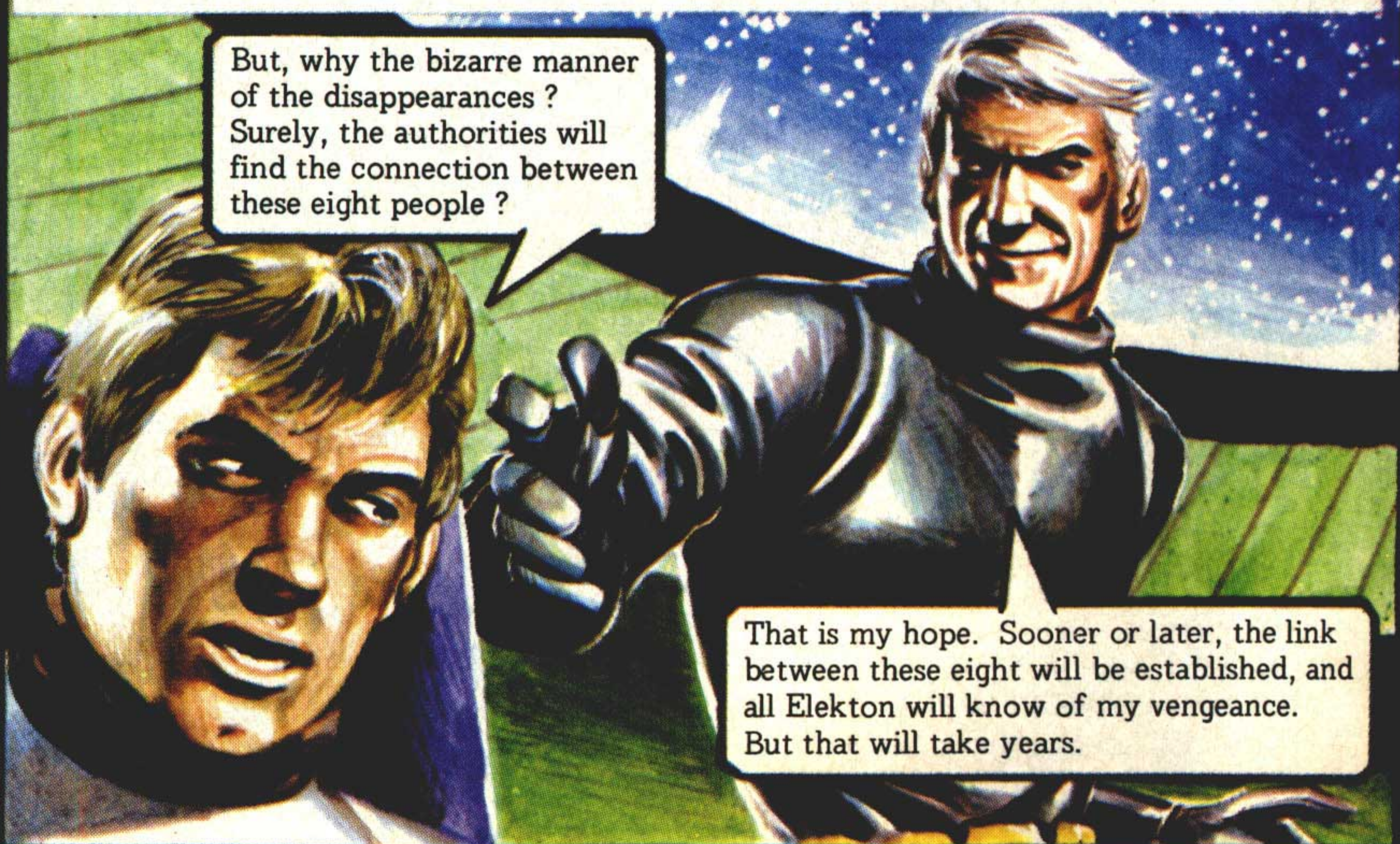
Nothing here but his flying kit !



Similarly with the rest of you. I played upon your individual weaknesses and vices, to make you do my bidding.

JANNO HAD BEEN LISTENING, SPELLBOUND. ONE QUESTION CAME TO HIS MIND.

But, why the bizarre manner of the disappearances ? Surely, the authorities will find the connection between these eight people ?



That is my hope. Sooner or later, the link between these eight will be established, and all Elekton will know of my vengeance. But that will take years.



A KNIFE SLASHED THE BONDS THAT HELD JANNO.

And now, I will free you all — to begin what may well be a life imprisonment in this abandoned hulk !

THE YOUNG TRIGAN REACTED LIKE A RELEASED SPRING — HE LEAPT !

No life imprisonment for me, my friend !

THERE WAS A REPORT — BUT NOT FROM THE WEAPON THAT WAS AIMED AT JANNO. . .

In that case, fool. . .

INTO THE COMPARTMENT STREAMED A CONTINGENT OF TRIGAN GUARDSMEN, AND THE SCIENTIST PERIC.

JANNO STARED IN RELIEF AND ASTONISHMENT AT ELEKTON'S TOP SCIENTIST.

Janno, my young friend ! It seems that we have arrived in the nick of time !

How did you solve the mystery, Peric ?

In my own head, Janno. I quickly reasoned that the eight must have some connection in the past. But it was your claim to have been fired on from this abandoned weather station that provided the missing clue.

THE EMPEROR TRIGO SMILED GRIMLY.

SOME TIME LATER. . .

That poor fellow's trial was held today. Happily, I was able to pardon him. After all, his experience has cruelly unbalanced his mind.

Your Imperial Majesty is merciful.

What about Marshal Rossu, Uncle Trigo ? It can scarcely be said that he's come out of this affair with his reputation intact.

Following upon a little hint from myself, Marshal Rossu has resigned for reasons of ill-health !

CONTINUED NEXT WEEK.