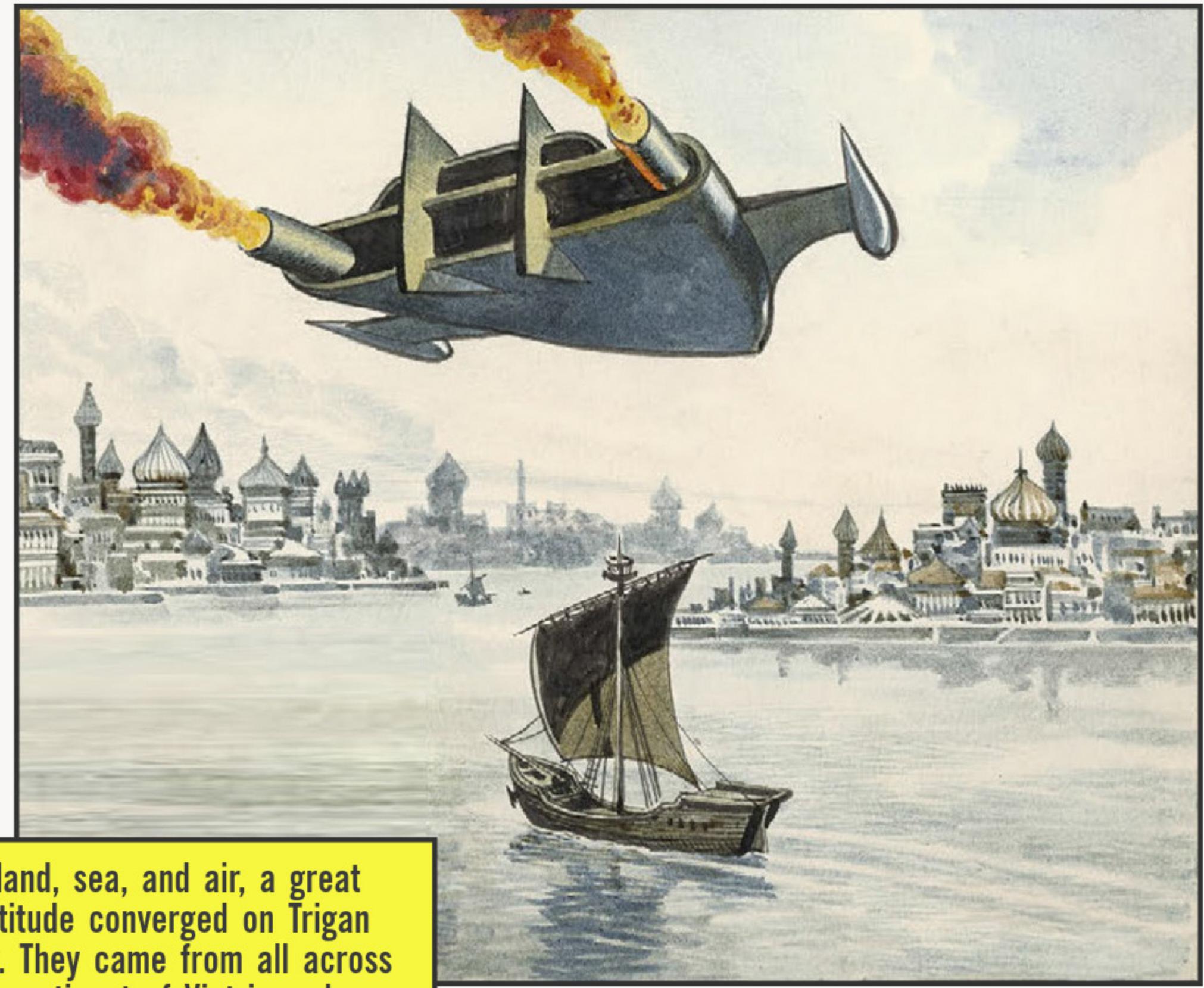
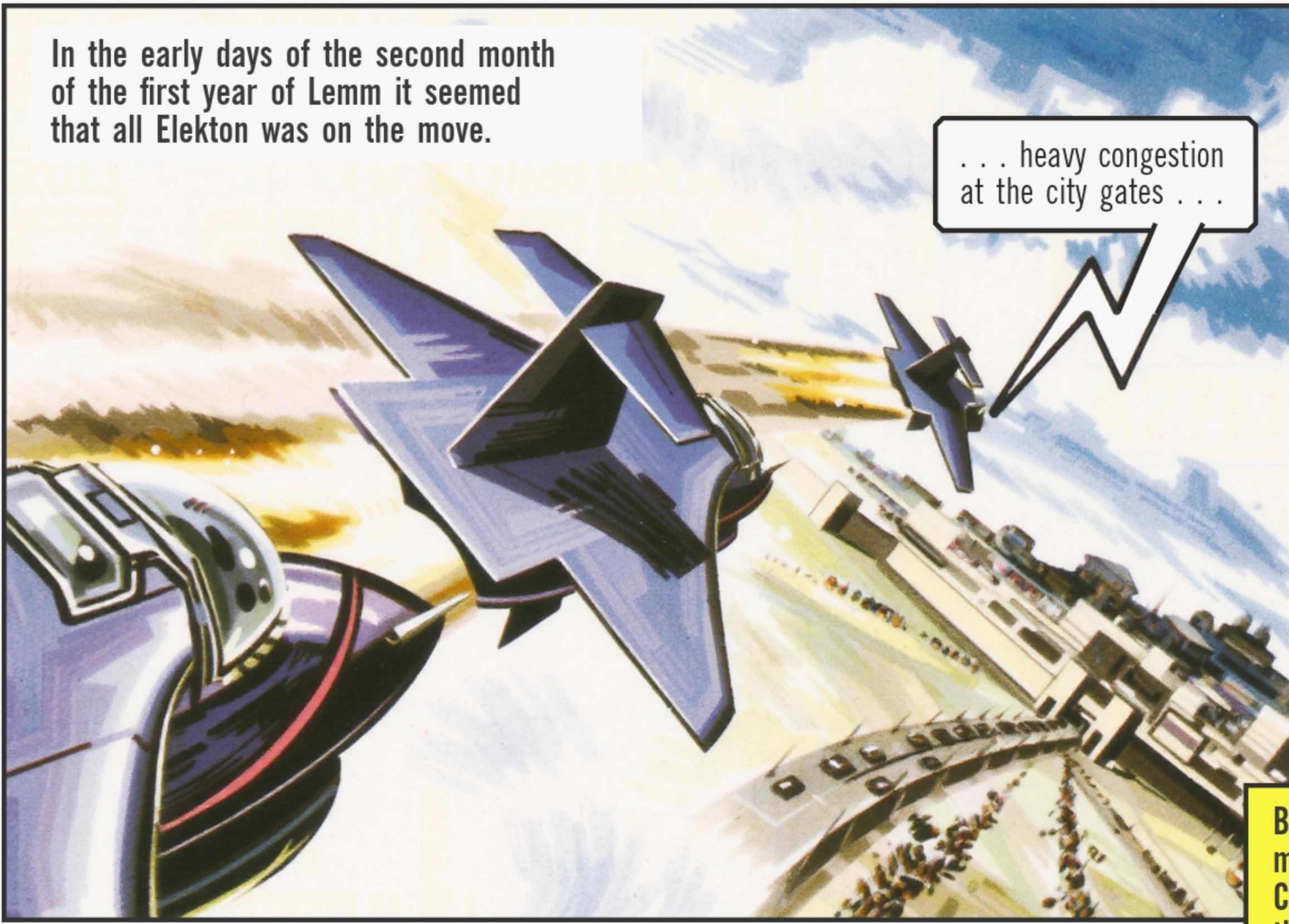


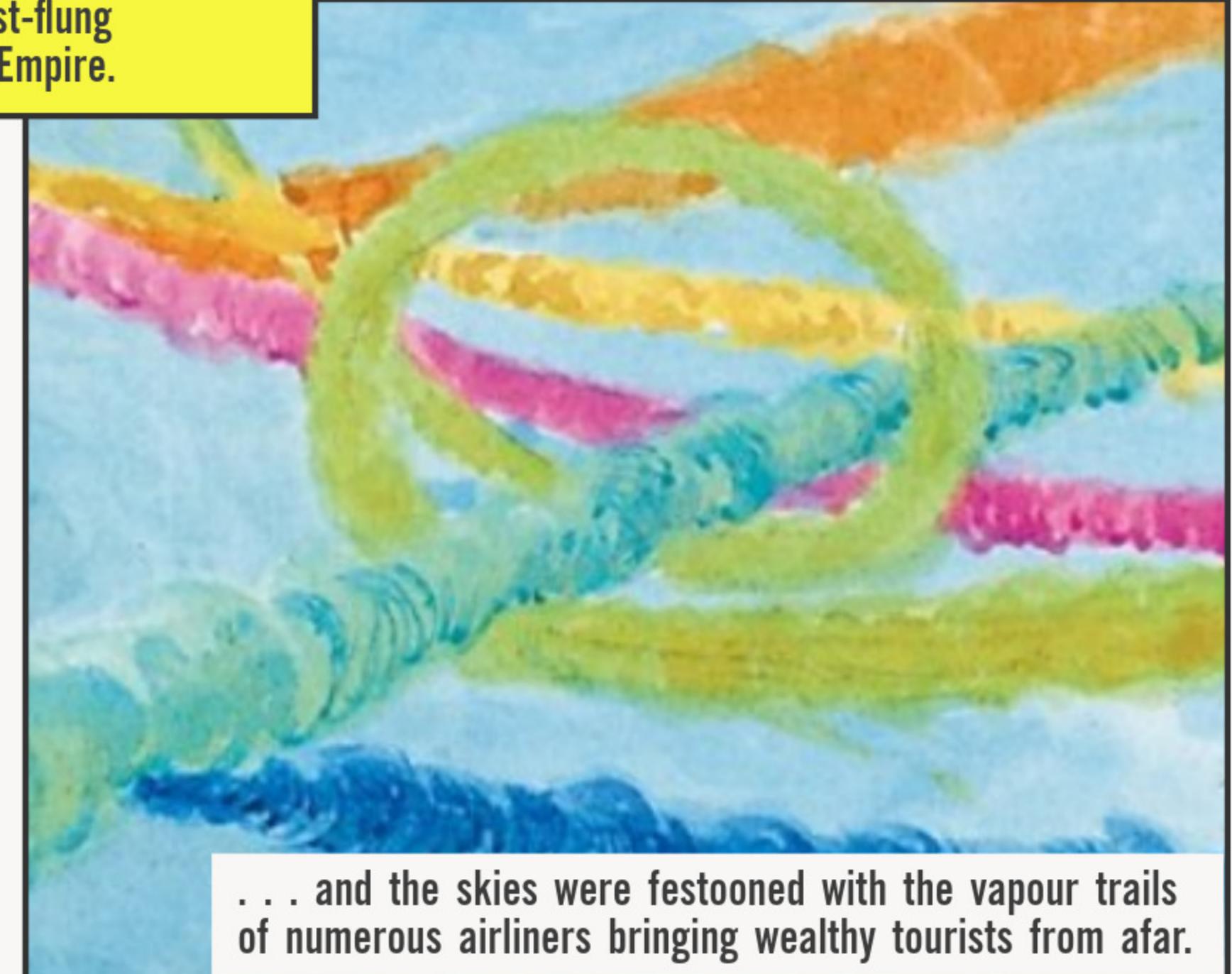
# THE TRIGAN EMPIRE

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.

In the early days of the second month of the first year of Lemm it seemed that all Elekton was on the move.



The occasion was the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the City and Empire. The city streets were brightly decorated with streamers . . .



. . . and the skies were festooned with the vapour trails of numerous airliners bringing wealthy tourists from afar.

There were two among the visitors to Trigan who chose more traditional means of transport, at least for the final legs of their respective journeys.



The arrivals were Zad Krakkar, the Potentate of Tharv . . .

. . . and Keren, the recently crowned King of Daveli.

The two had another reason to be in Trigan City. Together with the Emperor Trigo, the three heads of state were to be the first signatories to the historic Charter of United Victris.



The day of the anniversary arrived and, as ever, the Trigan Air Fleet manifested the military might of the Empire in a thrilling display over the great capital.

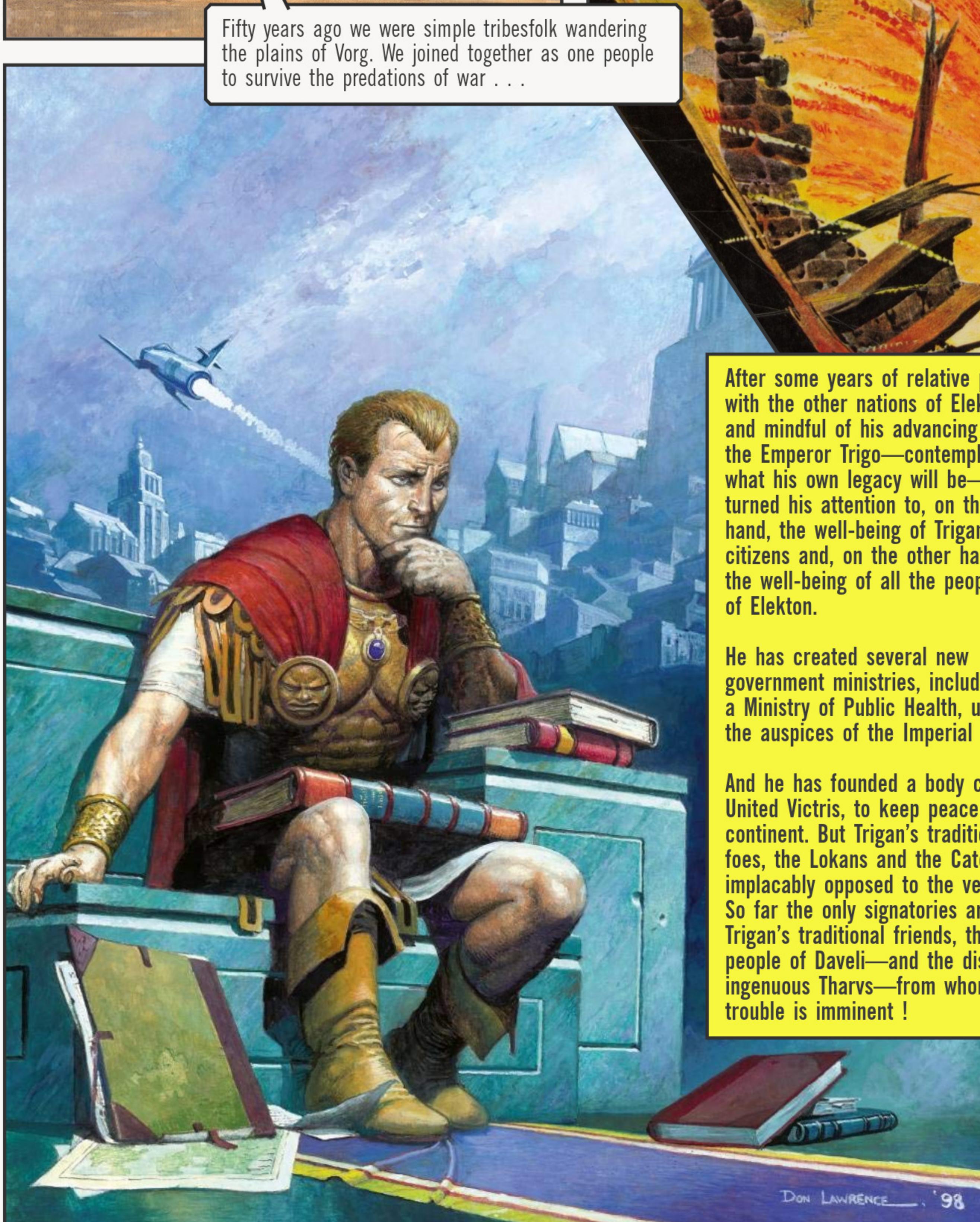


Fifty years ago we were simple tribesfolk wandering the plains of Vorg. We joined together as one people to survive the predations of war . . .



Many of Trigan's older citizens could vividly recall narrowly escaping genocide at the hands of the Lokans.

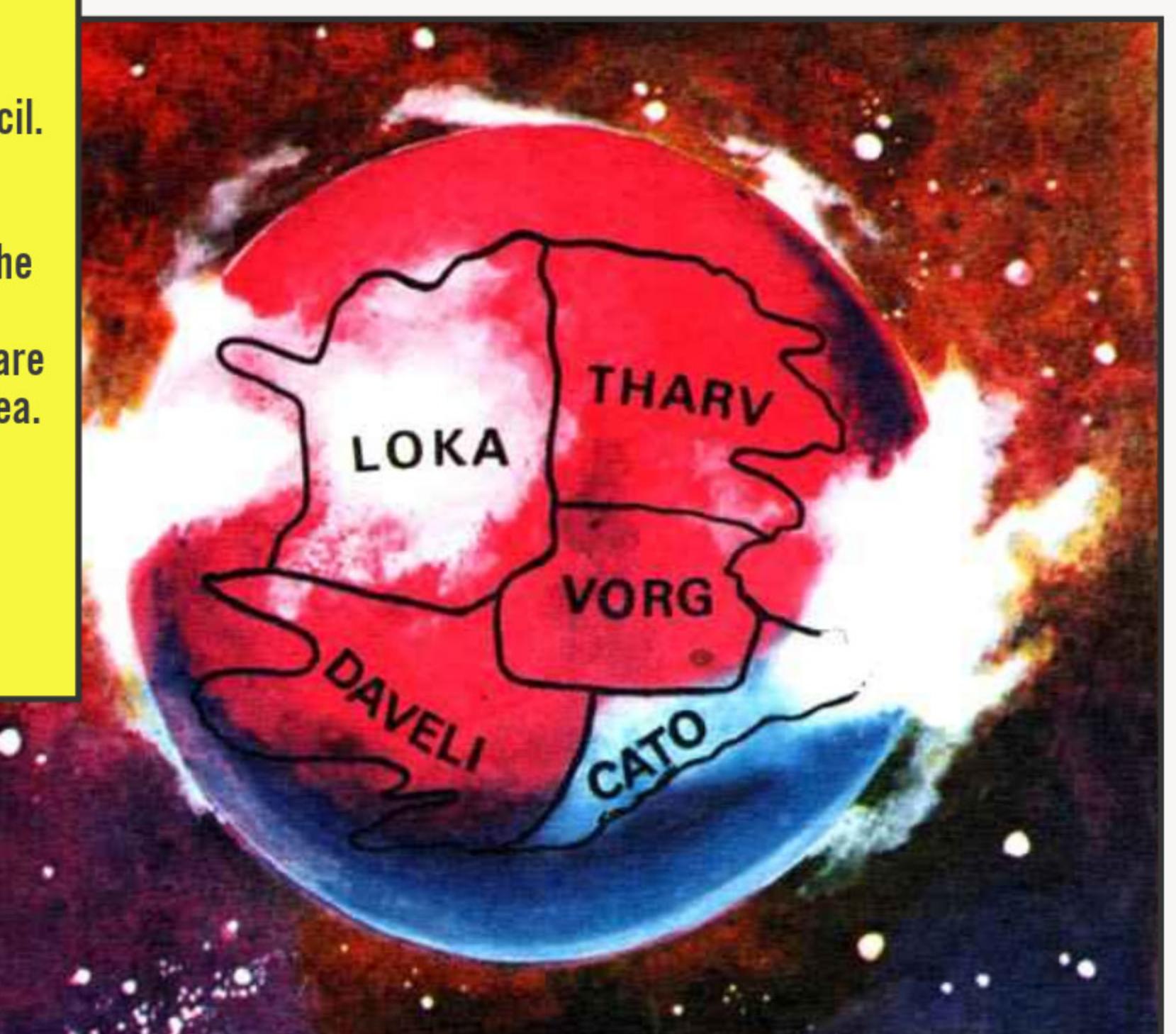
. . . and today we join together with our friends Tharv and Daveli as United Victris —peace for our time !

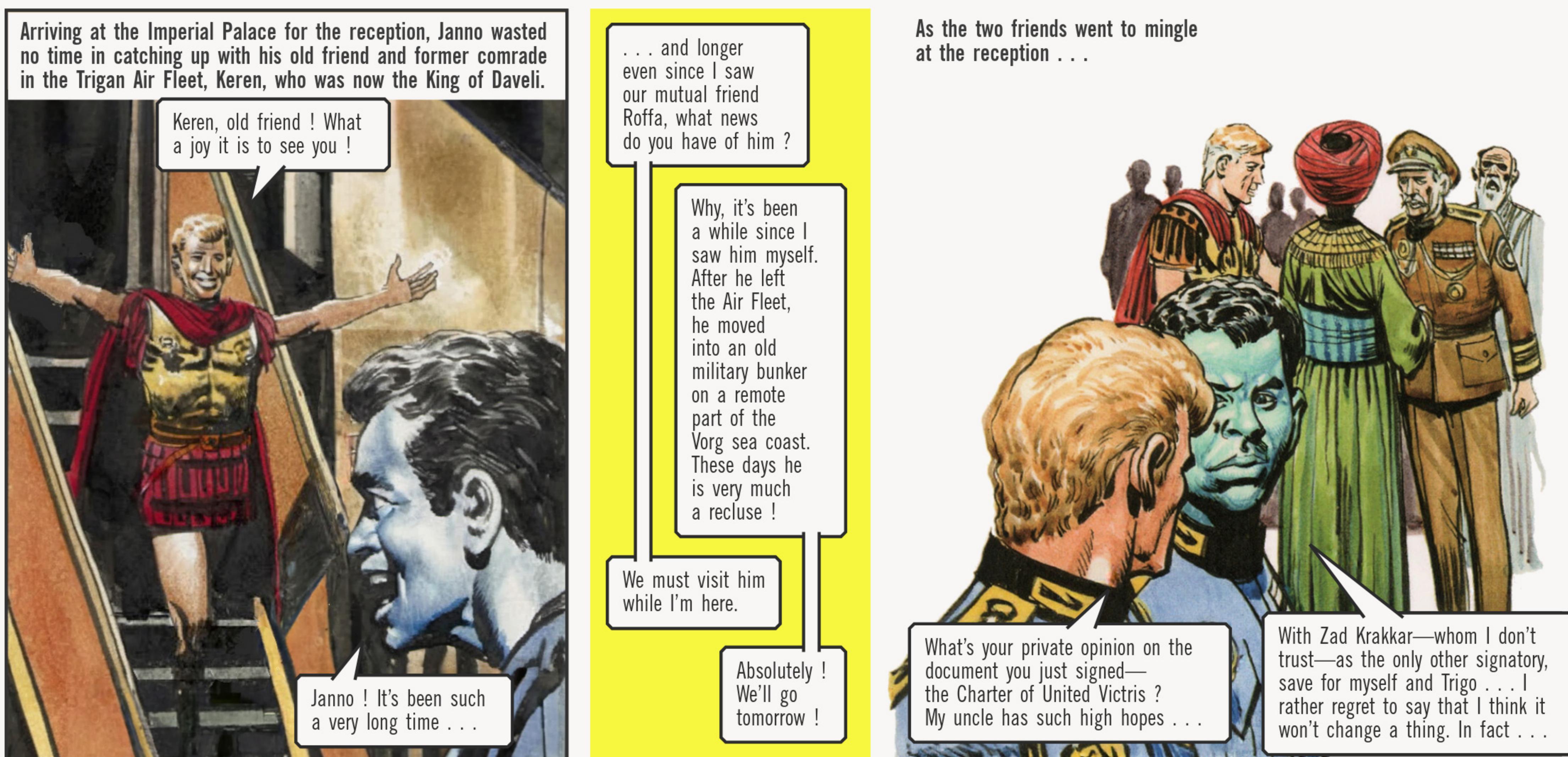


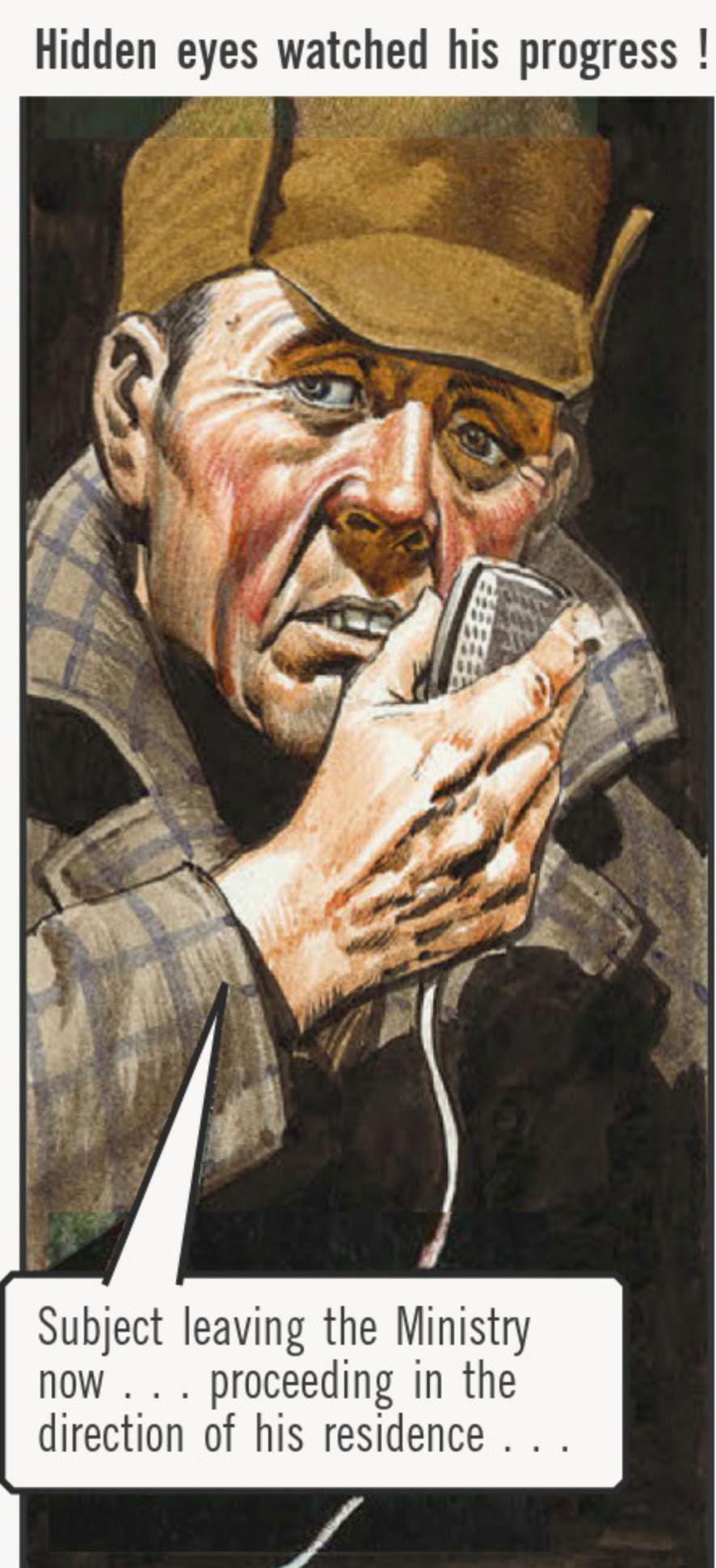
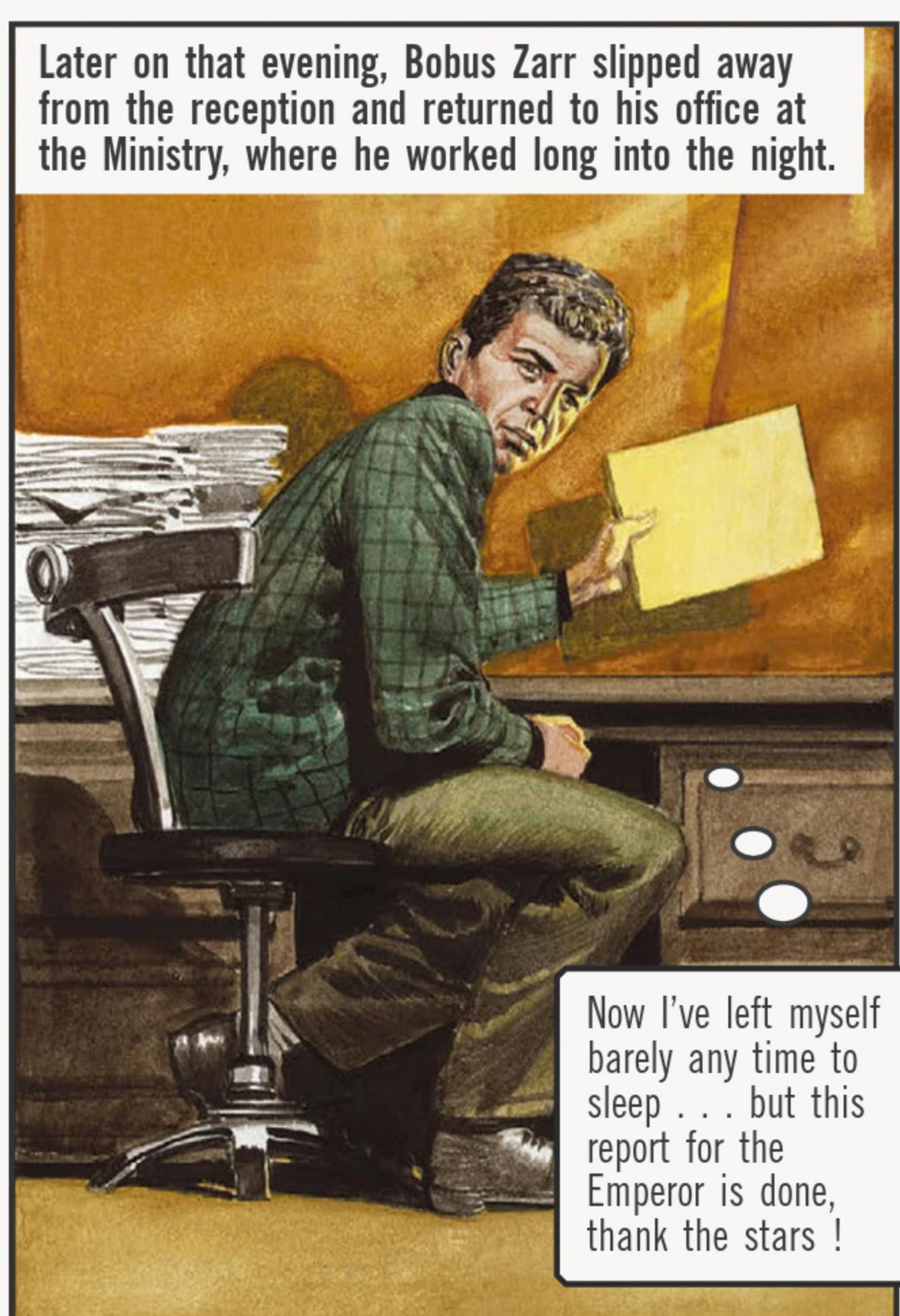
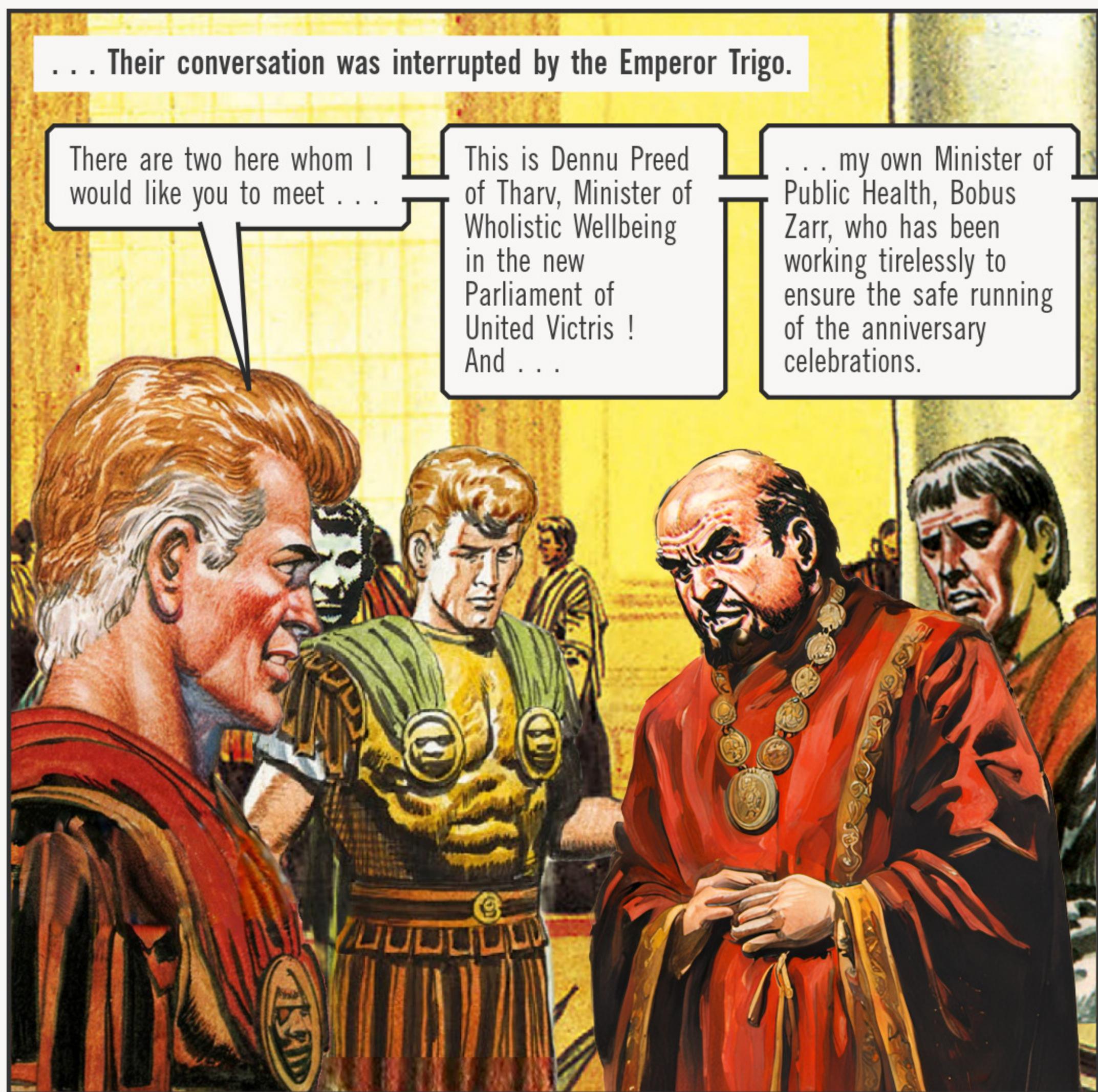
After some years of relative peace with the other nations of Elekton, and mindful of his advancing age, the Emperor Trigo—contemplating what his own legacy will be—has turned his attention to, on the one hand, the well-being of Trigan citizens and, on the other hand, the well-being of all the peoples of Elekton.

He has created several new government ministries, including a Ministry of Public Health, under the auspices of the Imperial Council.

And he has founded a body called United Victris, to keep peace on the continent. But Trigan's traditional foes, the Lokans and the Catons, are implacably opposed to the very idea. So far the only signatories are Trigan's traditional friends, the people of Daveli—and the disingenuous Tharvs—from whom trouble is imminent !







Arriving home, Bobus Zarr opened the door to his luxury penthouse apartment—and received the shock of his life !

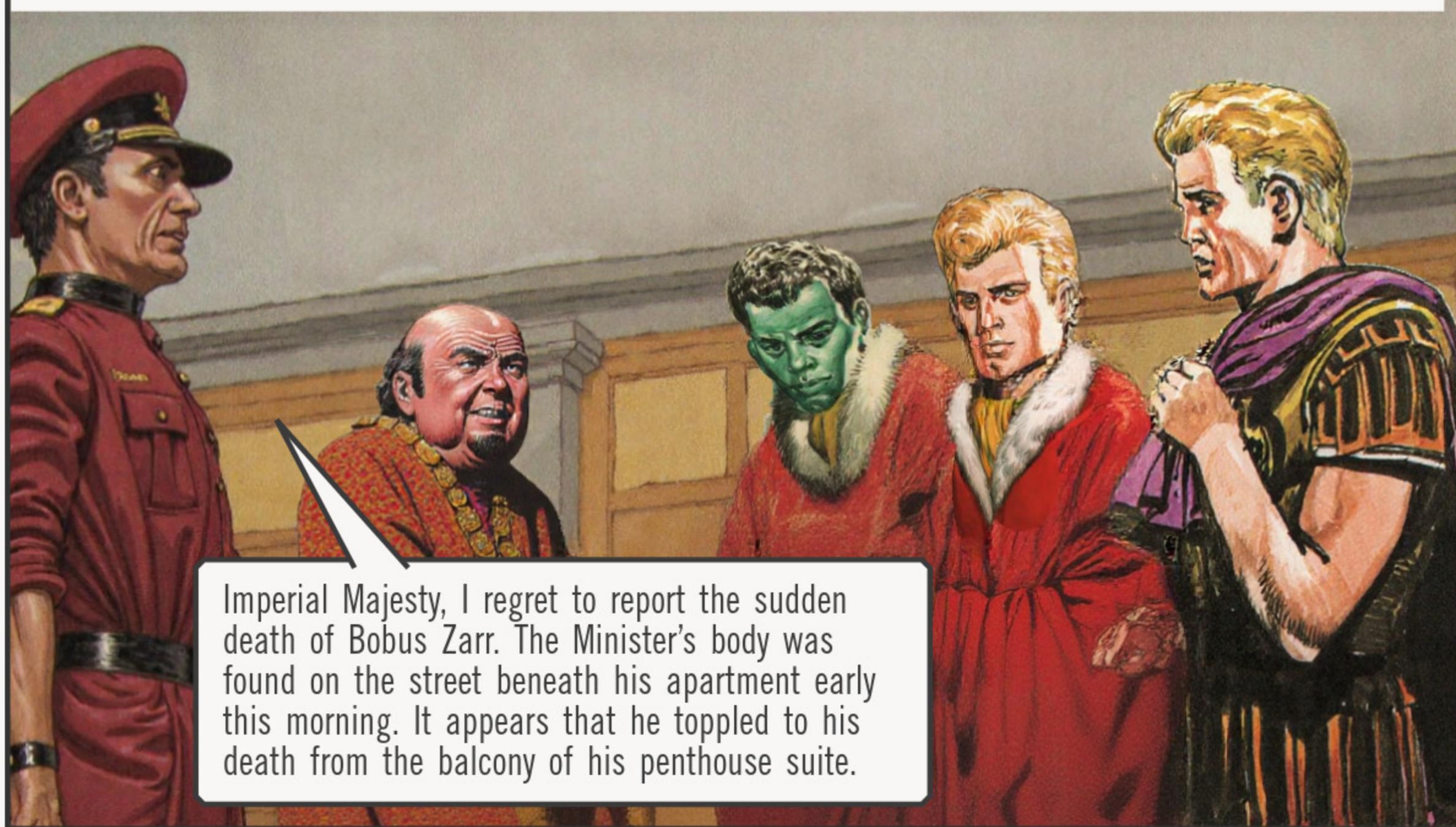


Moments later, a terrified scream split the morning air above the city.



DON LAWRENCE

At that morning's scheduled briefing by the Chief of Police, the Emperor appeared tired and ill. Present were Janno, Keren, and Dennu Preed, the Minister of Wholistic Wellbeing of the new Parliament of United Victris. There was one conspicuous absence.



The news was not well received. The Emperor's malaise disposed him to anger.



Dennu Preed could scarcely believe his good fortune. Not only had the Trigan authorities failed to suspect foul play in the murder of his counterpart, but . . .



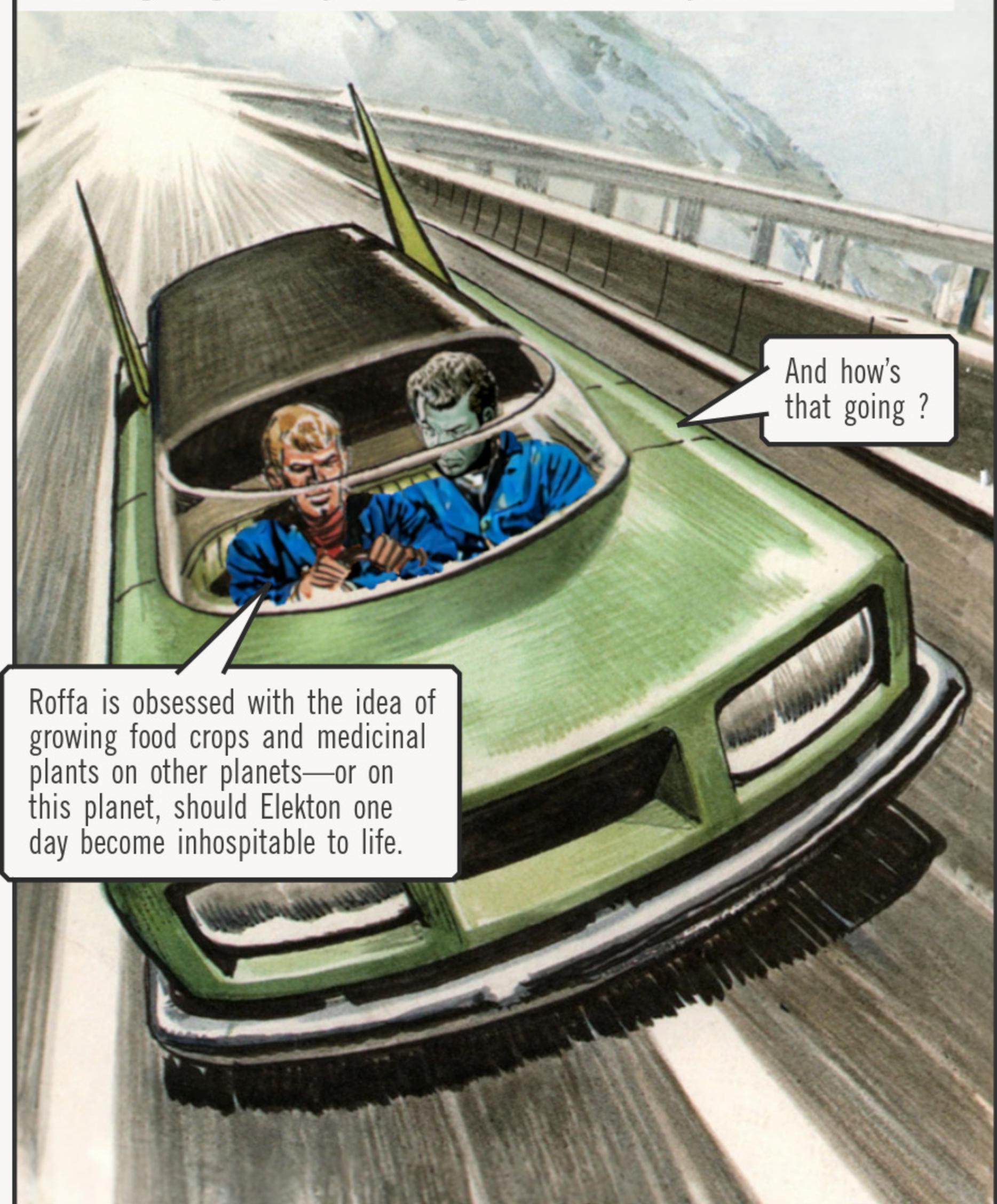
Trigo's voice softened. His request was terse.



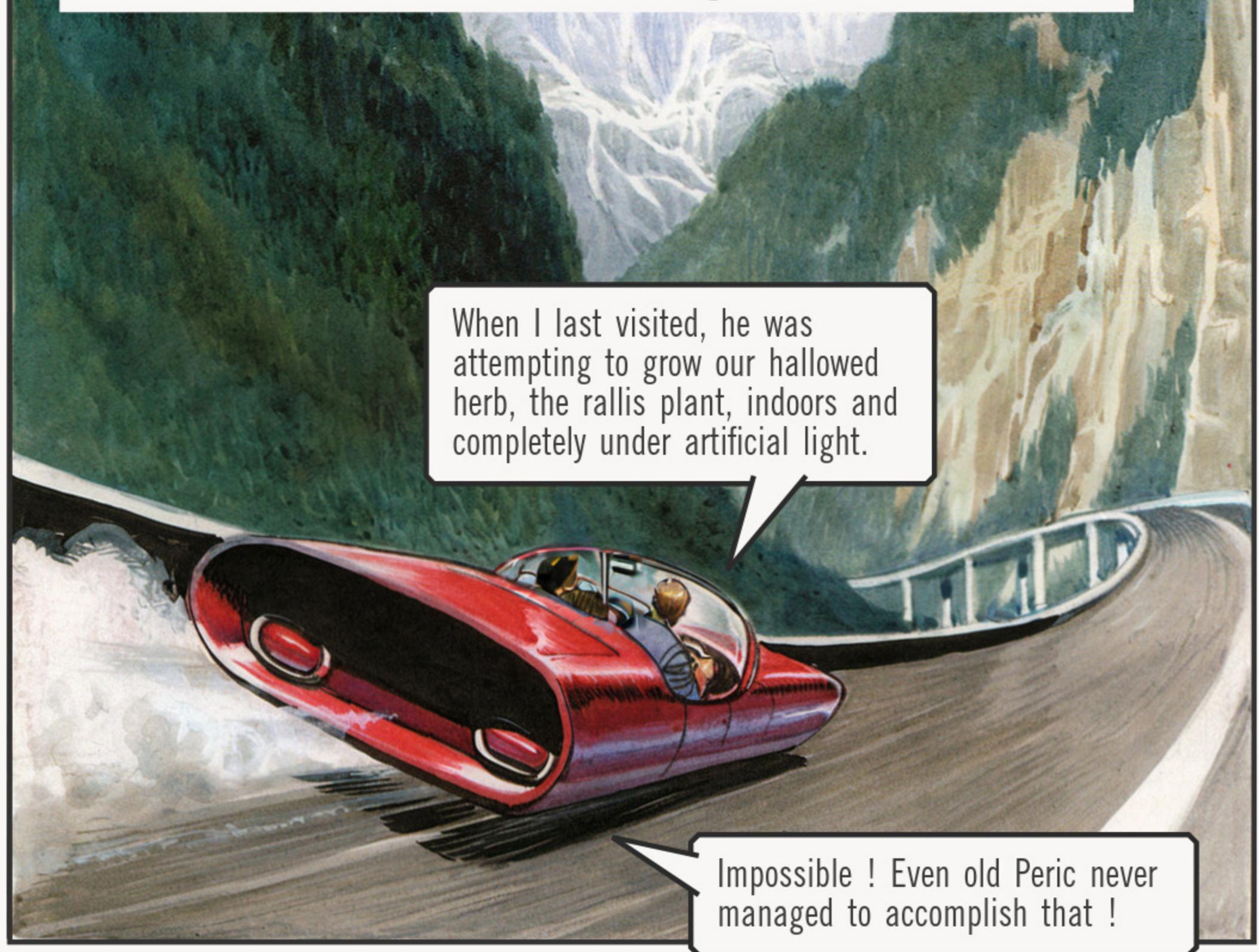
The Tharvian's reply was immediate and glibly reassuring.



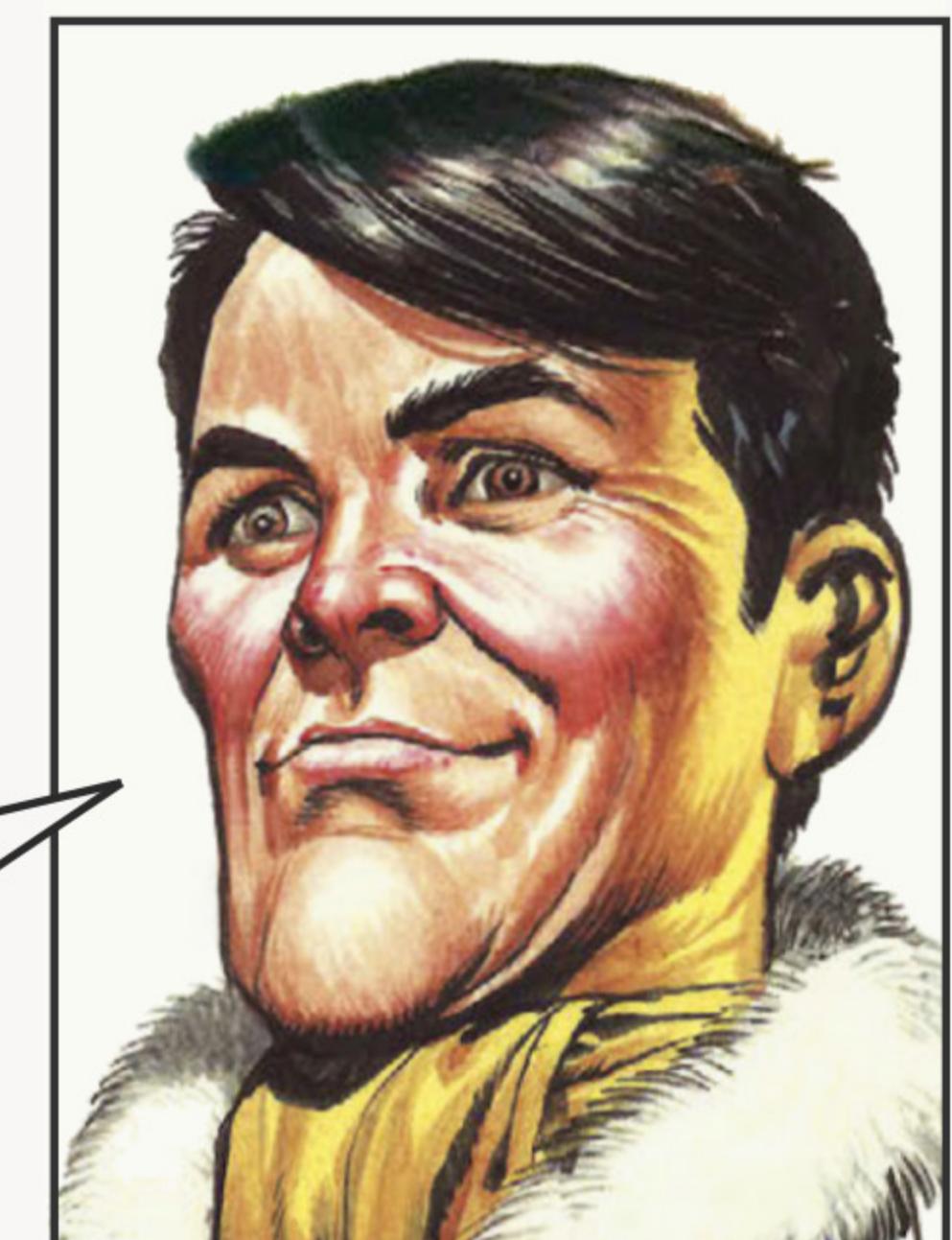
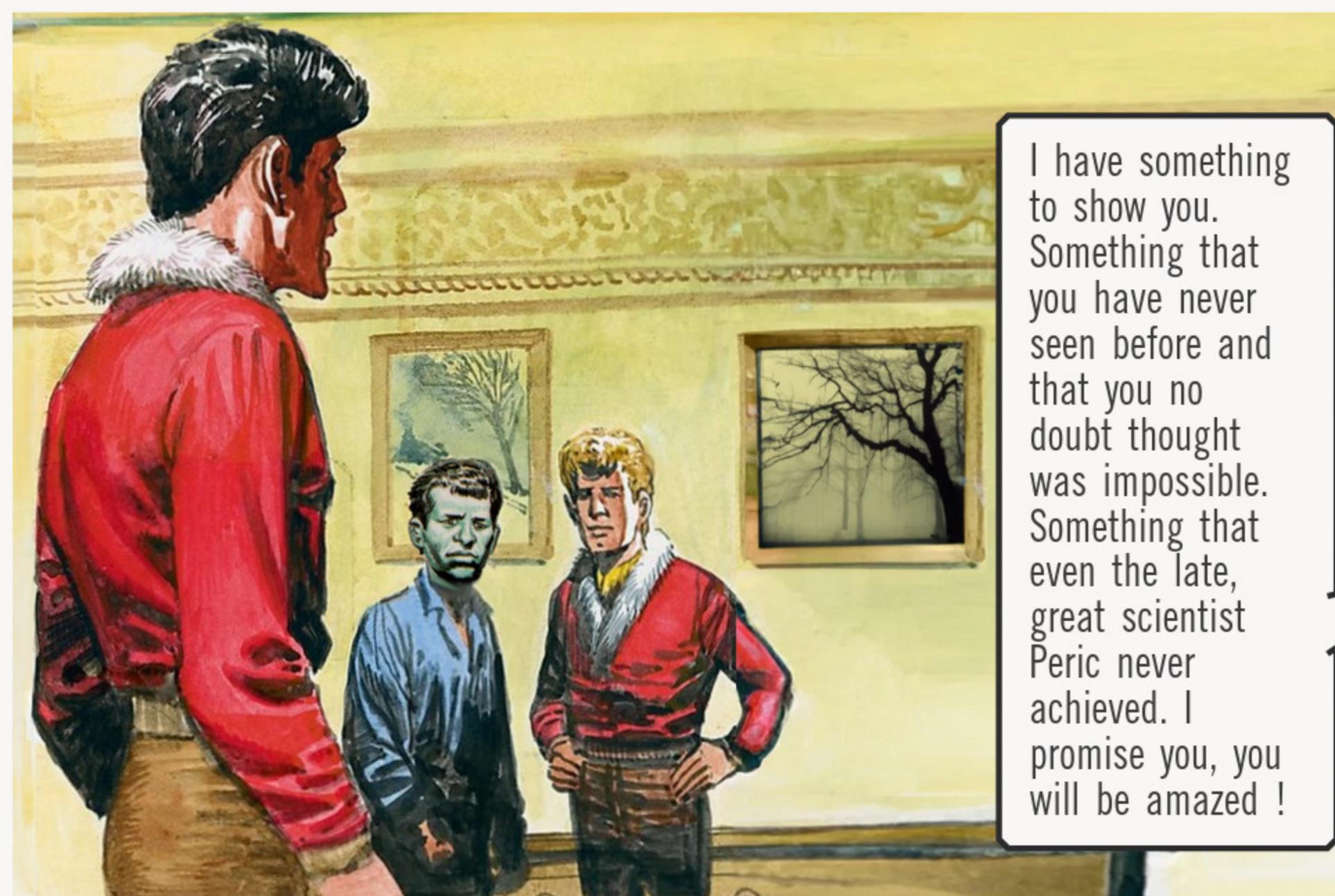
After the meeting, Janno and Keren set off to visit their friend Roffa. Janno drove them in his new convertible, which was the very latest in technological gimmickry—it changed colour at the push of a button !

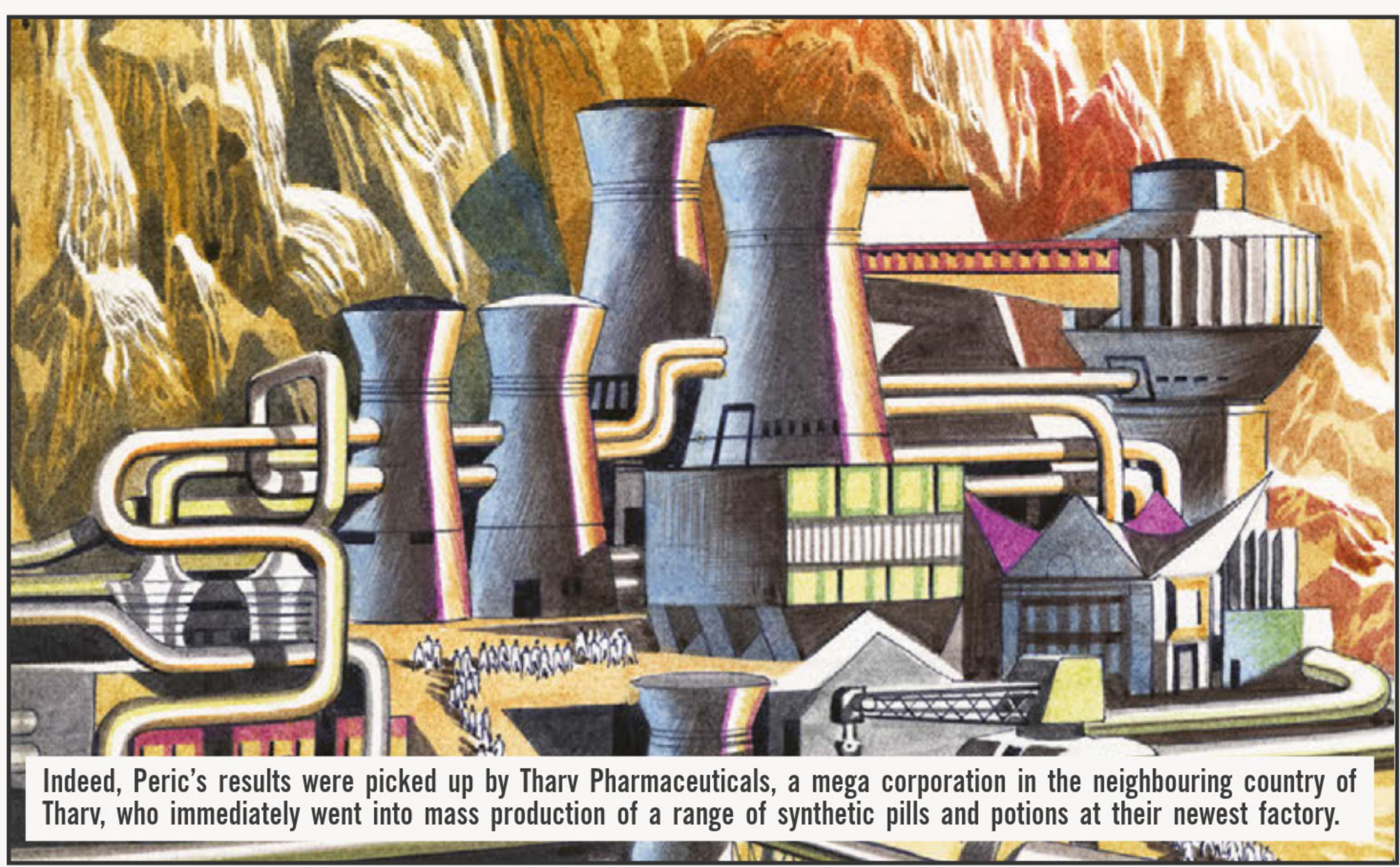
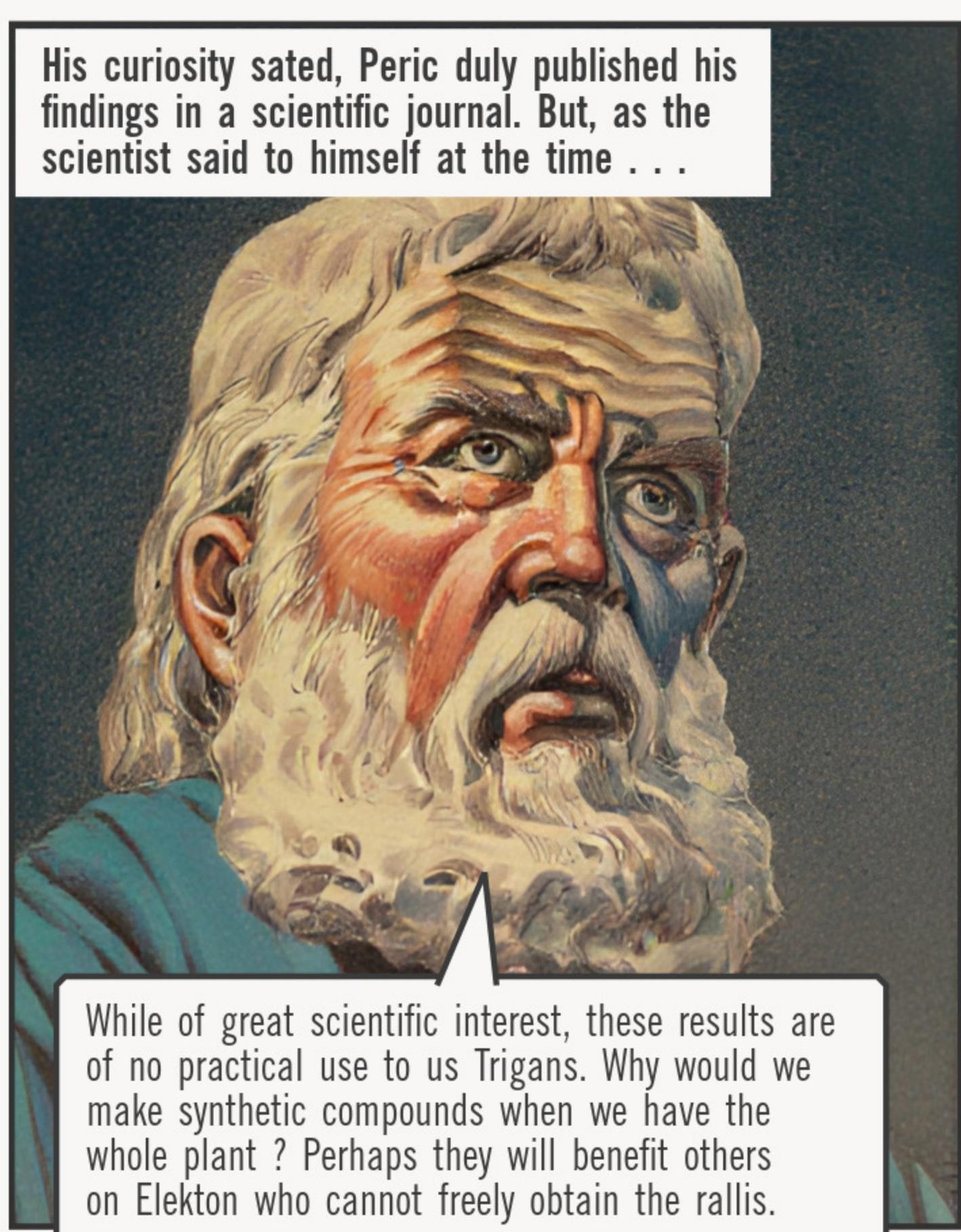
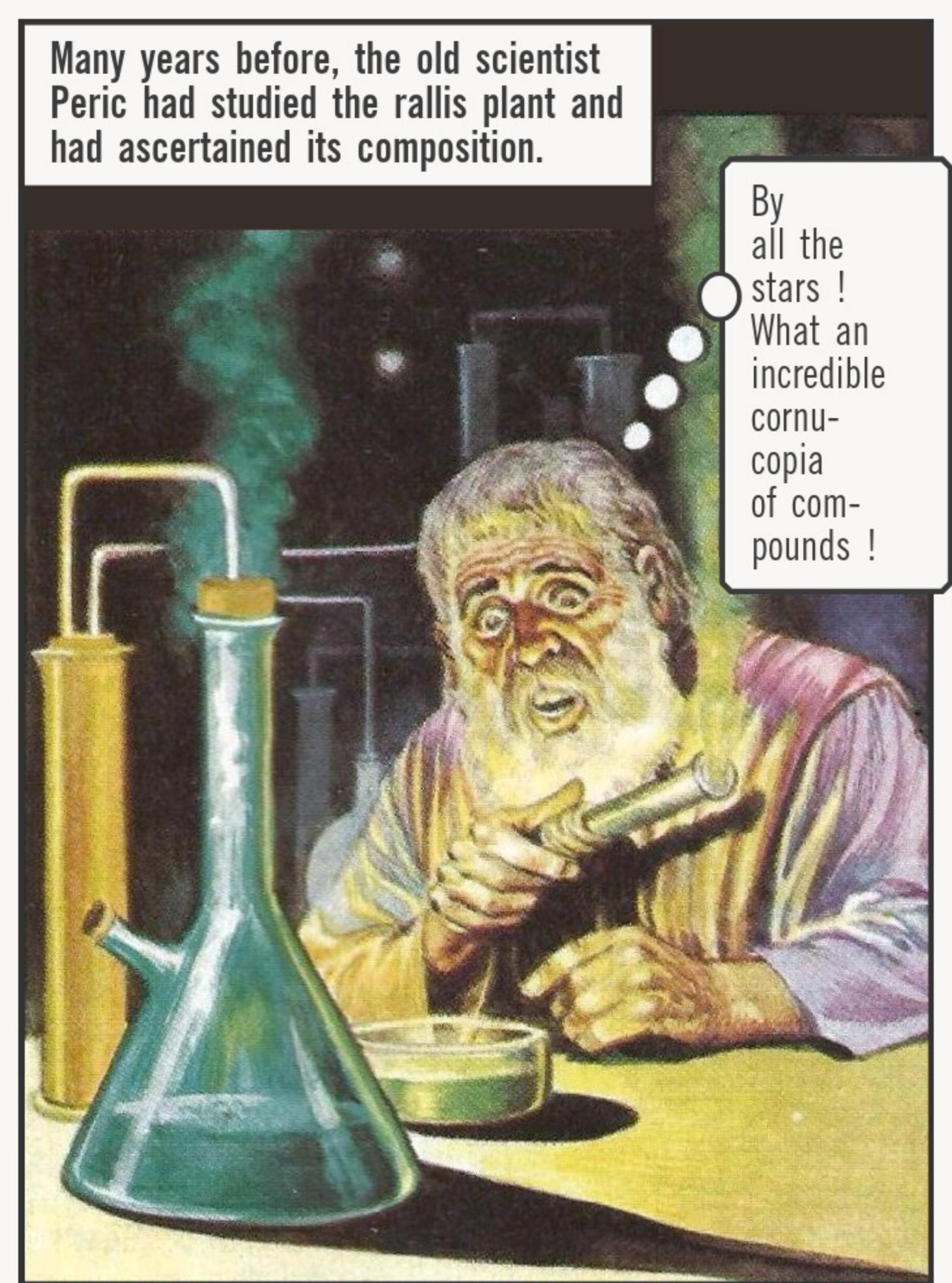
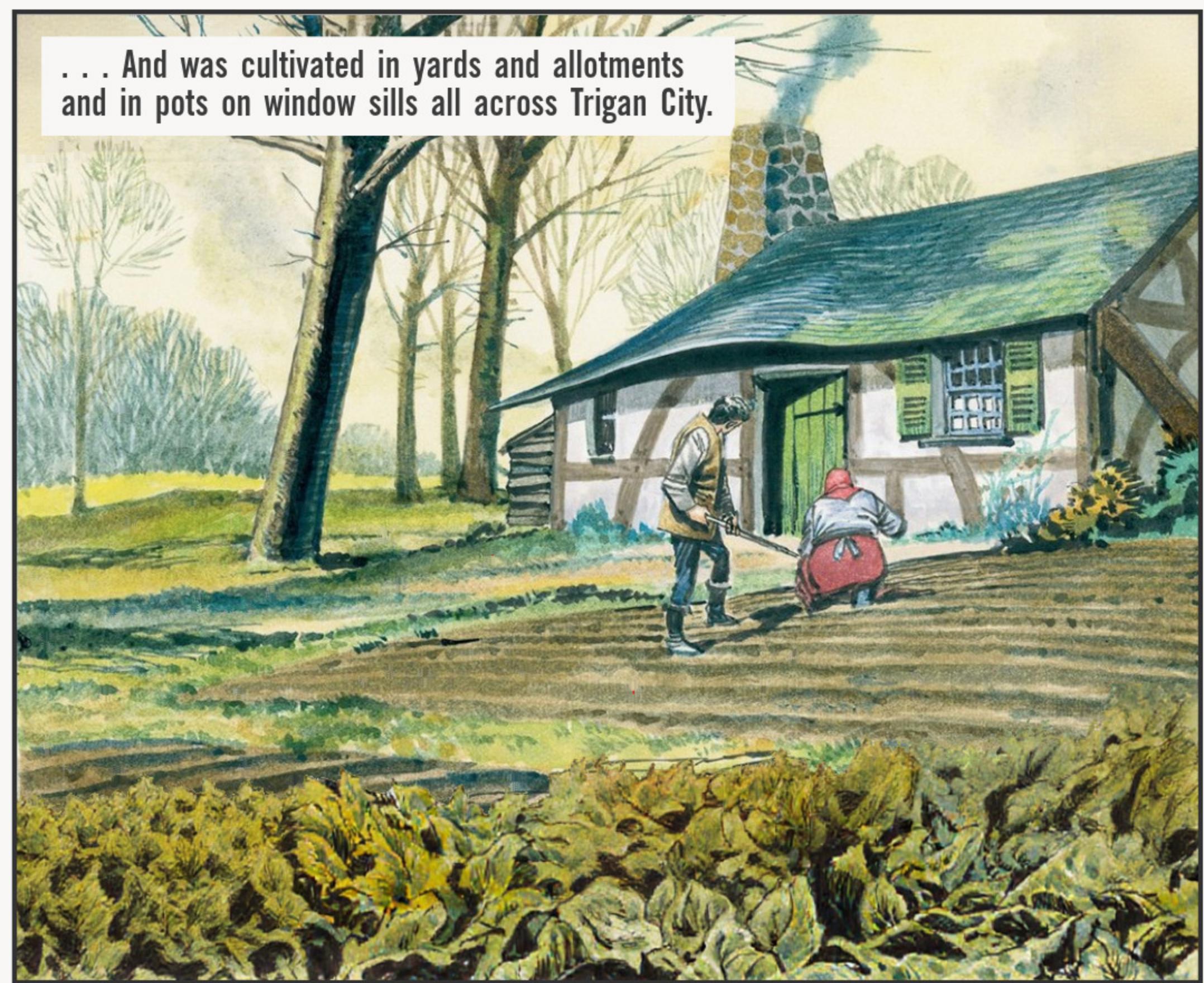
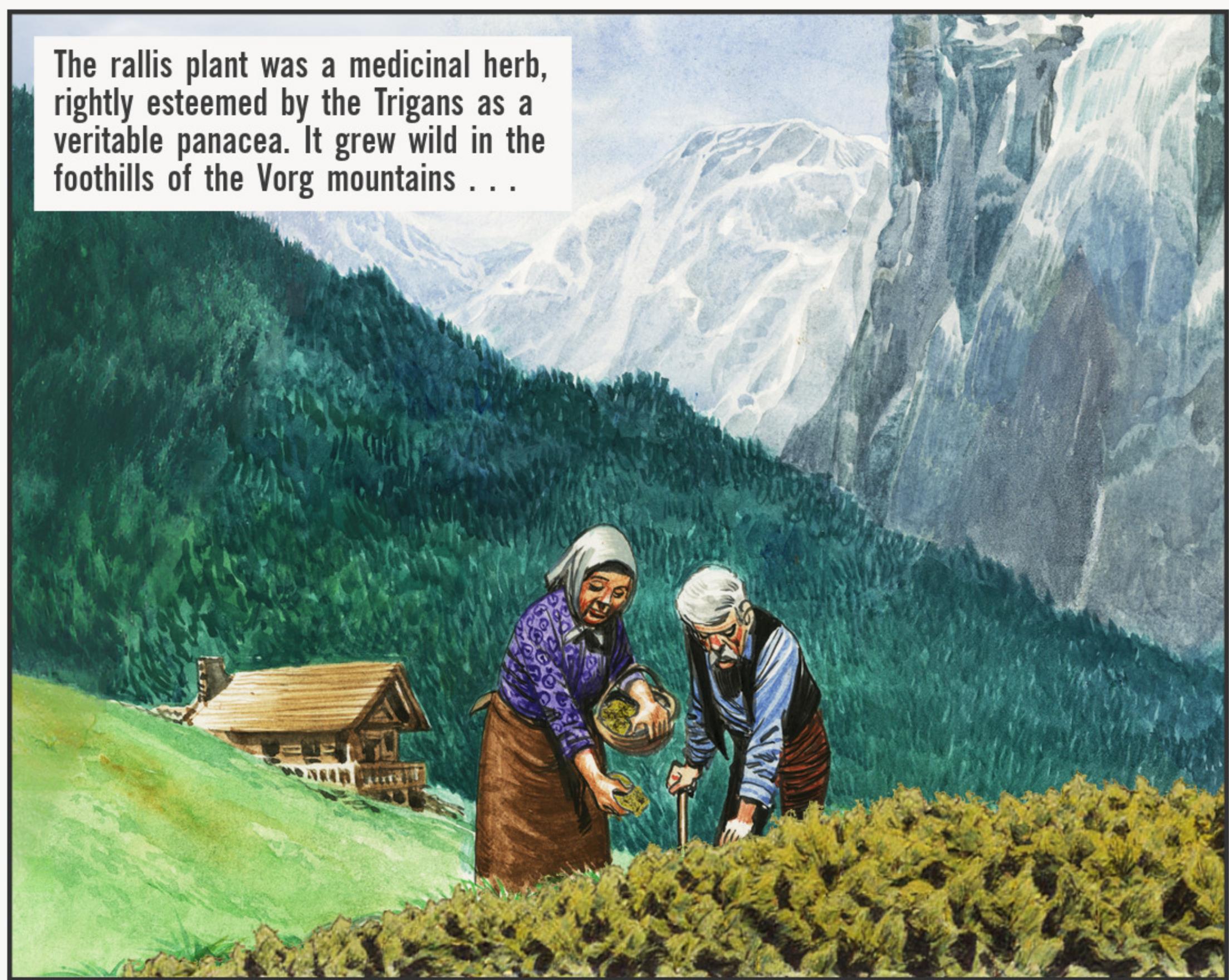


They sped towards their destination—a decommissioned military bunker on an isolated stretch of the Vorg sea coast—now home to Roffa, their mutual friend and former comrade in the Trigan Air Fleet.



Roffa was home. He was overjoyed to see his two old friends. But he gave them no chance to rest after their journey. He spoke with pride.





The rallis plant would not grow outside of Trigan City and the surrounding Vorg region. The scientific reason for this was a mystery. Nor would it grow except under natural daylight, until . . .



Roffa was happy to explain.

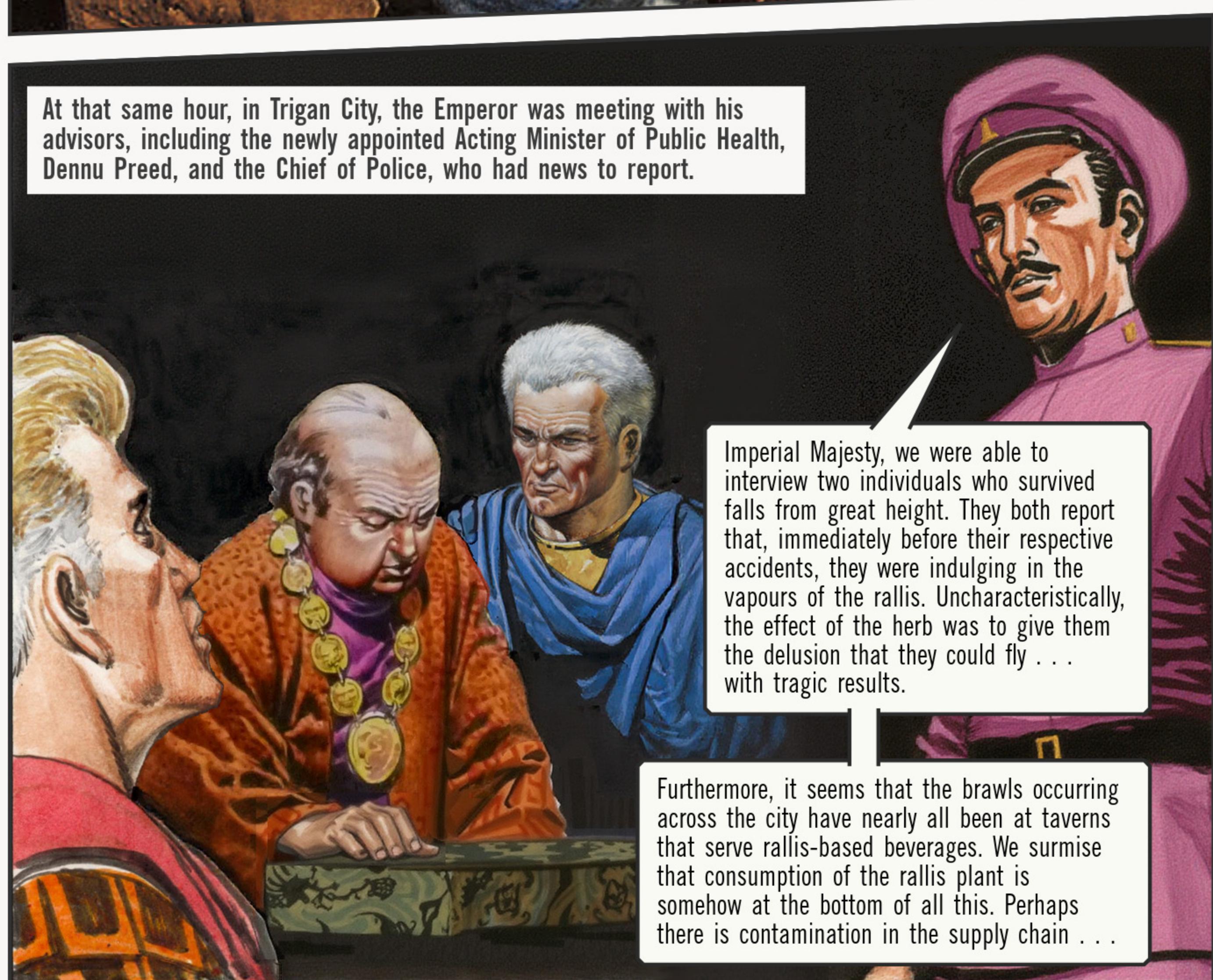
The rallis is a very particular plant. The key to growing it under lights is to reproduce exactly the frequencies of the light emitted by Elekton's twin suns.

Janno, I know that you do not partake. Keren, my friend . . .

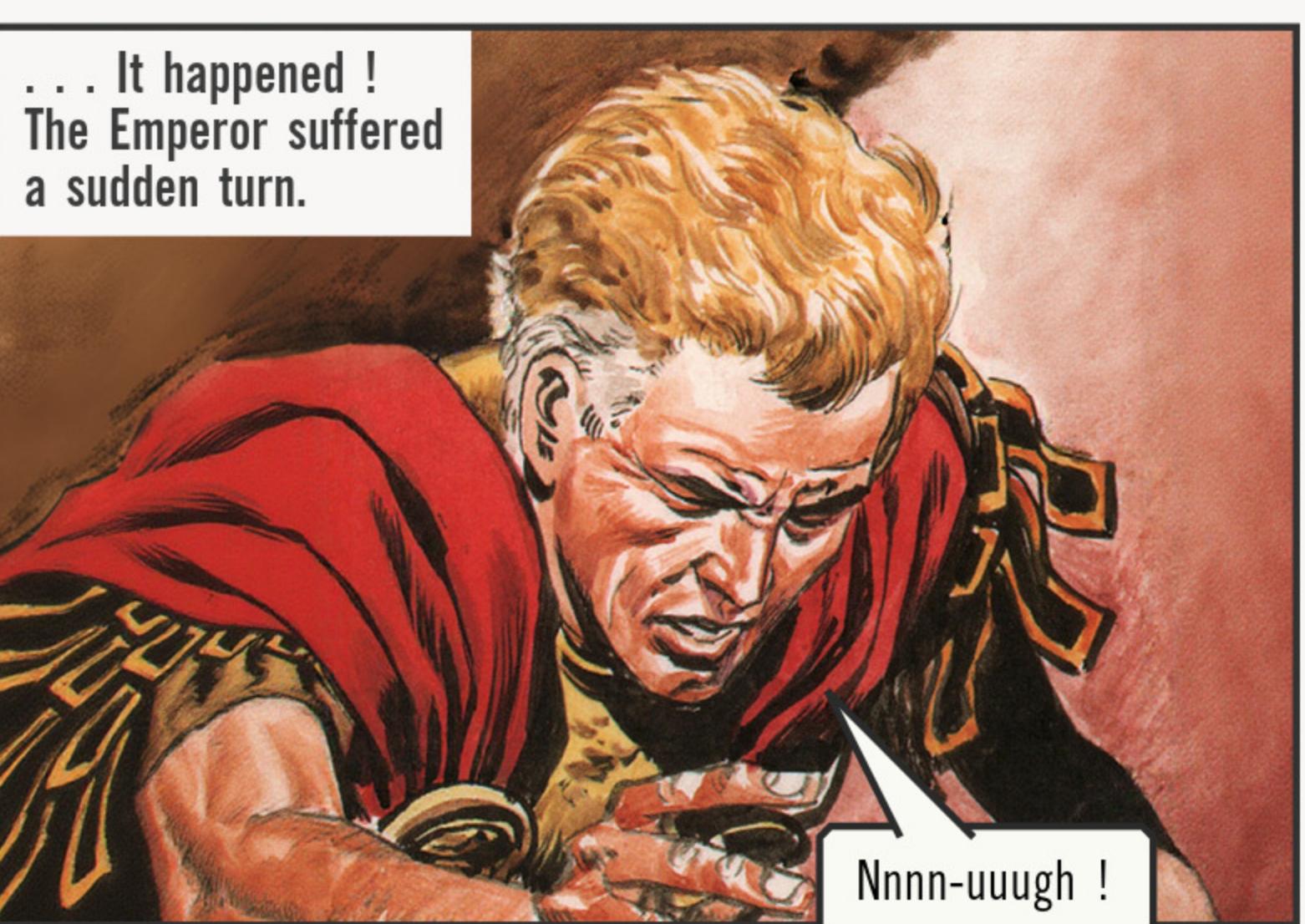
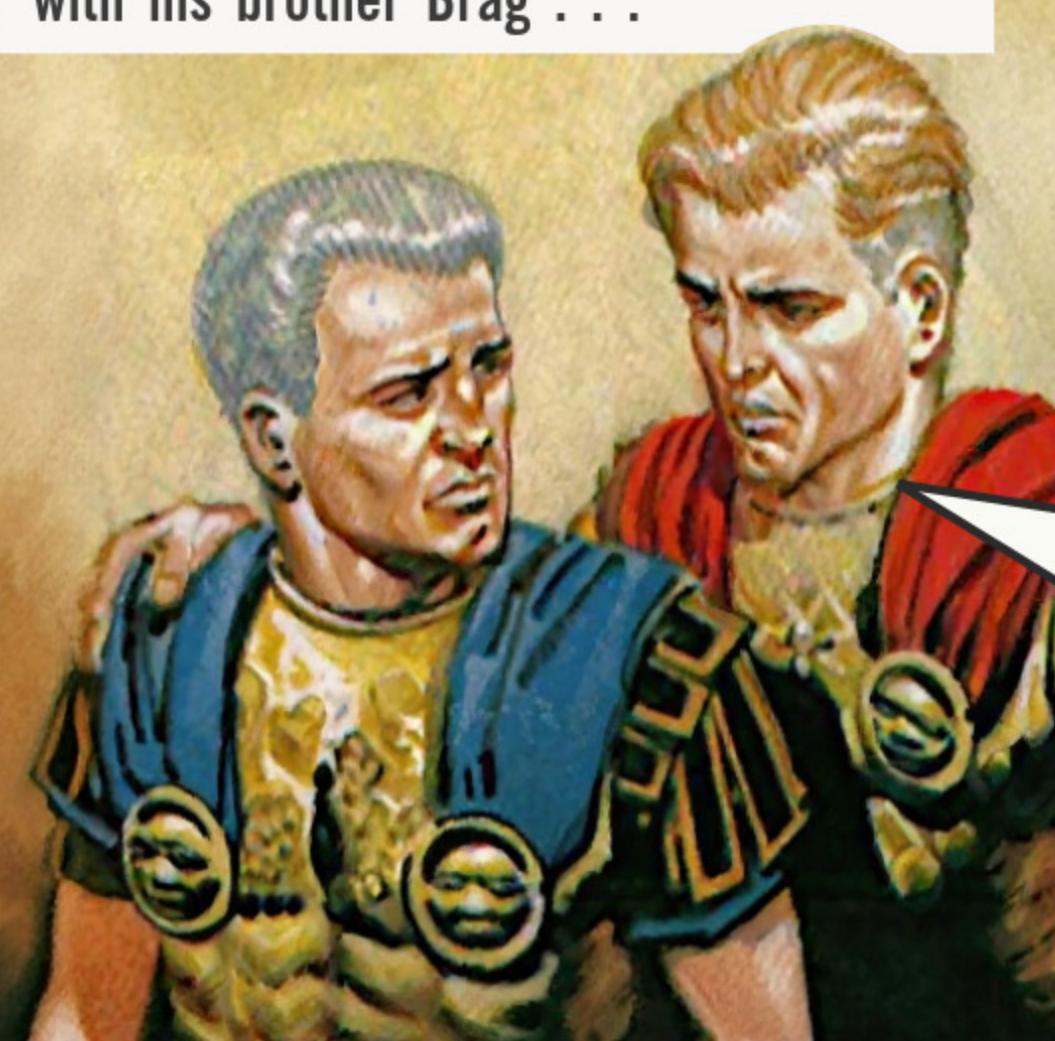
I would offer you some of the rallis but I cannot bring myself to harvest even one of my plants before the time is due. I will be harvesting the plants in two days' time . . . I would very much like you to make a return visit !

Now, we have much else to talk about . . .

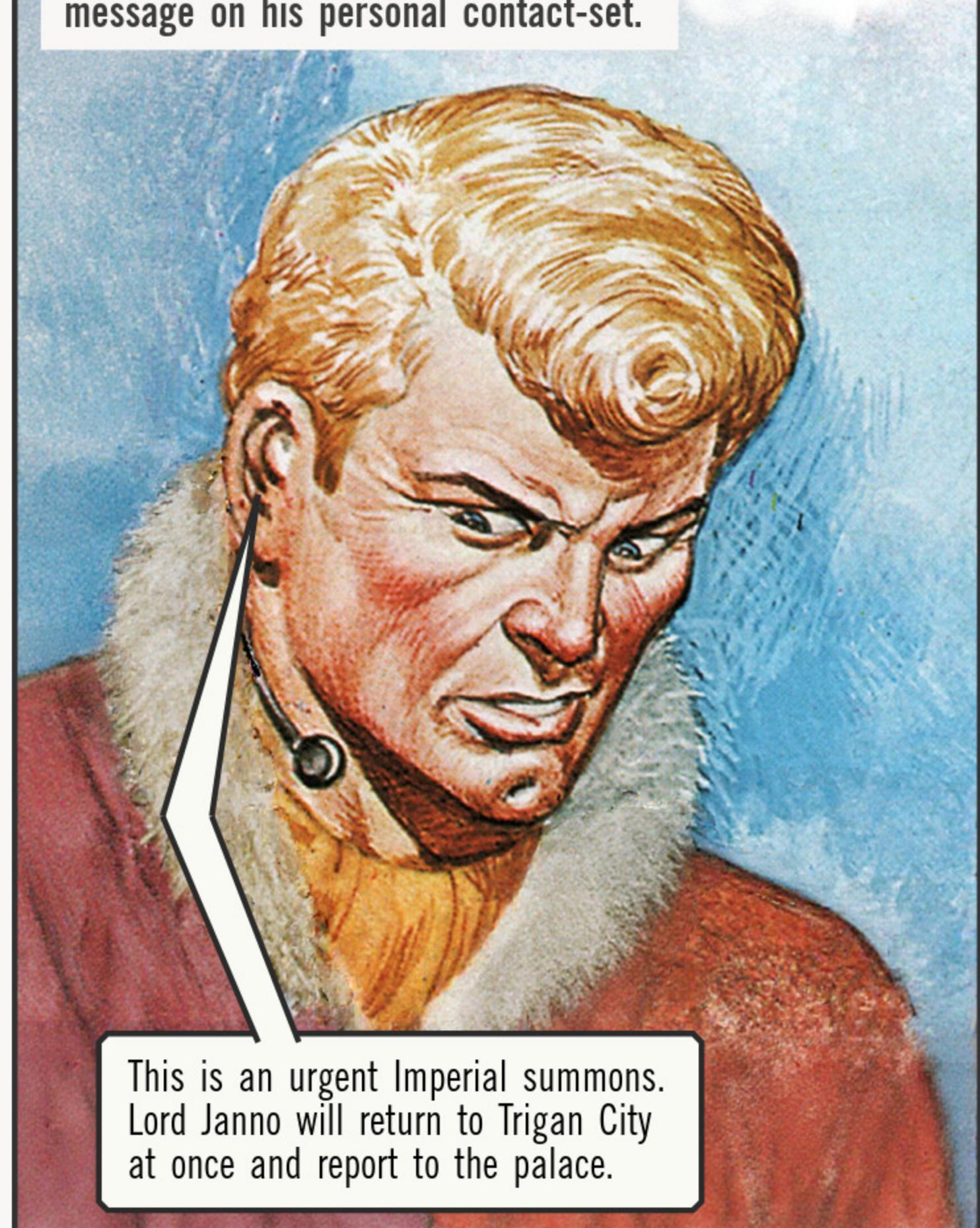
At that same hour, in Trigan City, the Emperor was meeting with his advisors, including the newly appointed Acting Minister of Public Health, Dennu Preed, and the Chief of Police, who had news to report.



Then, as Trigo was leaving the meeting with his brother Brag . . .



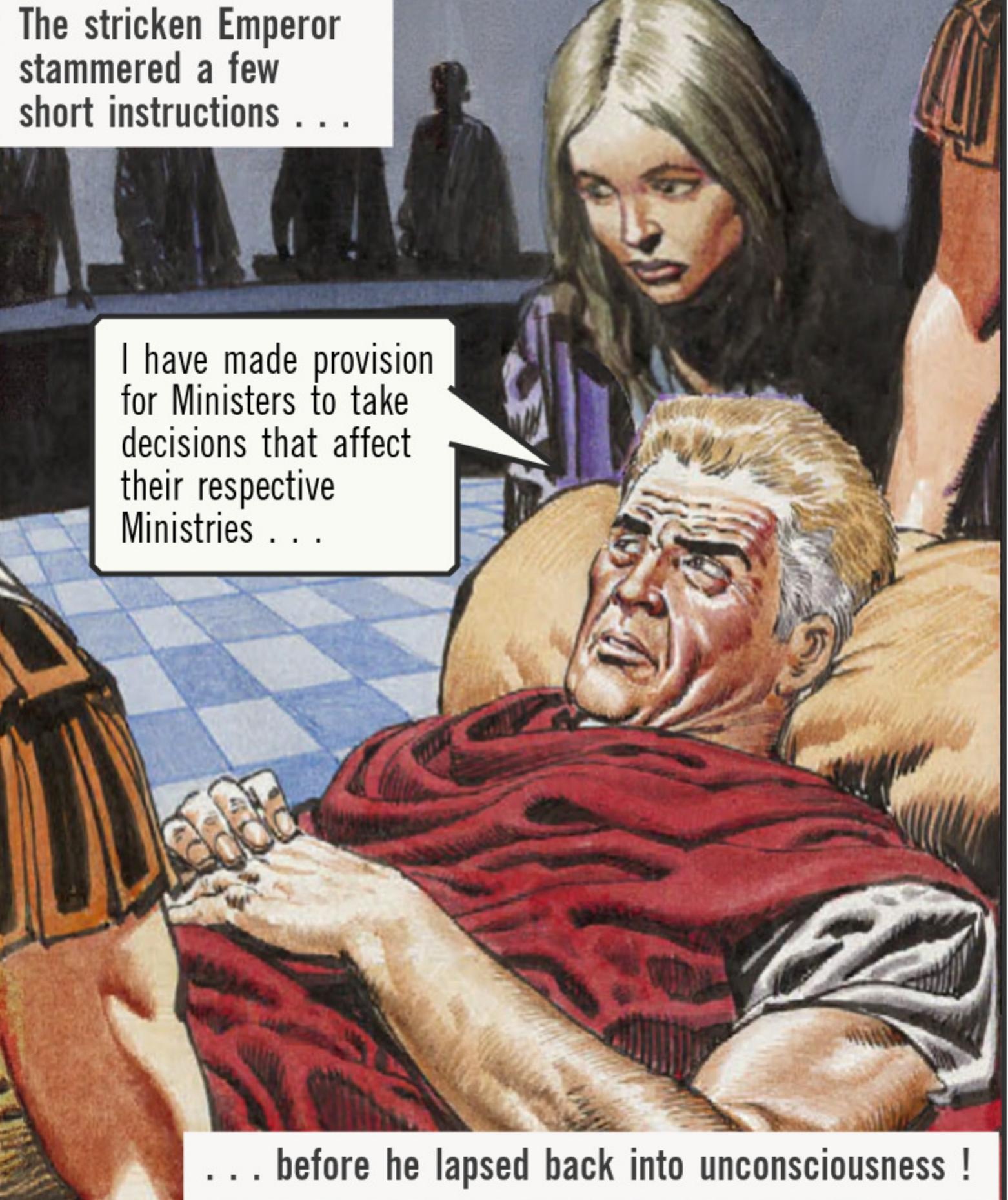
Soon thereafter, Janno received a message on his personal contact-set.

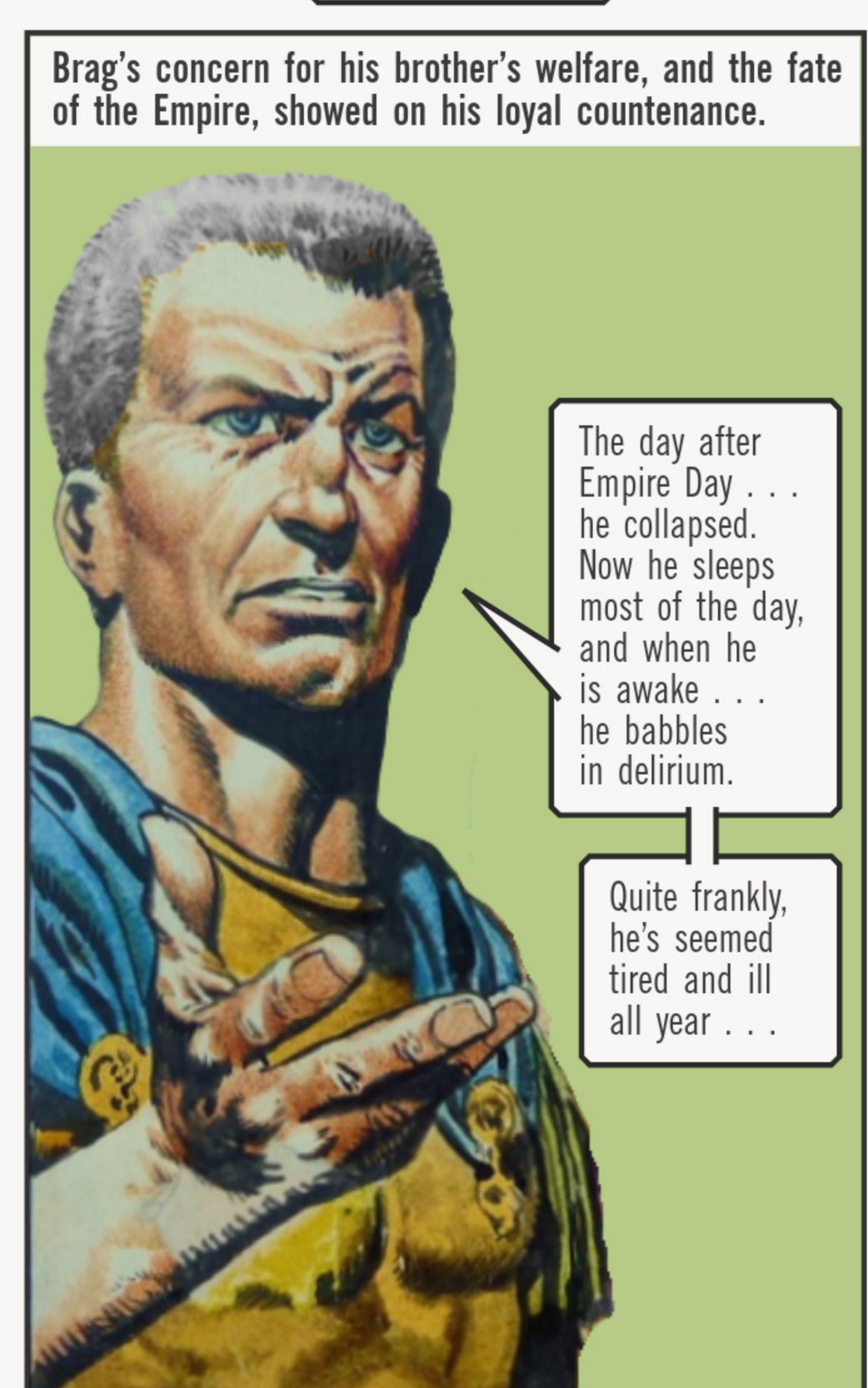
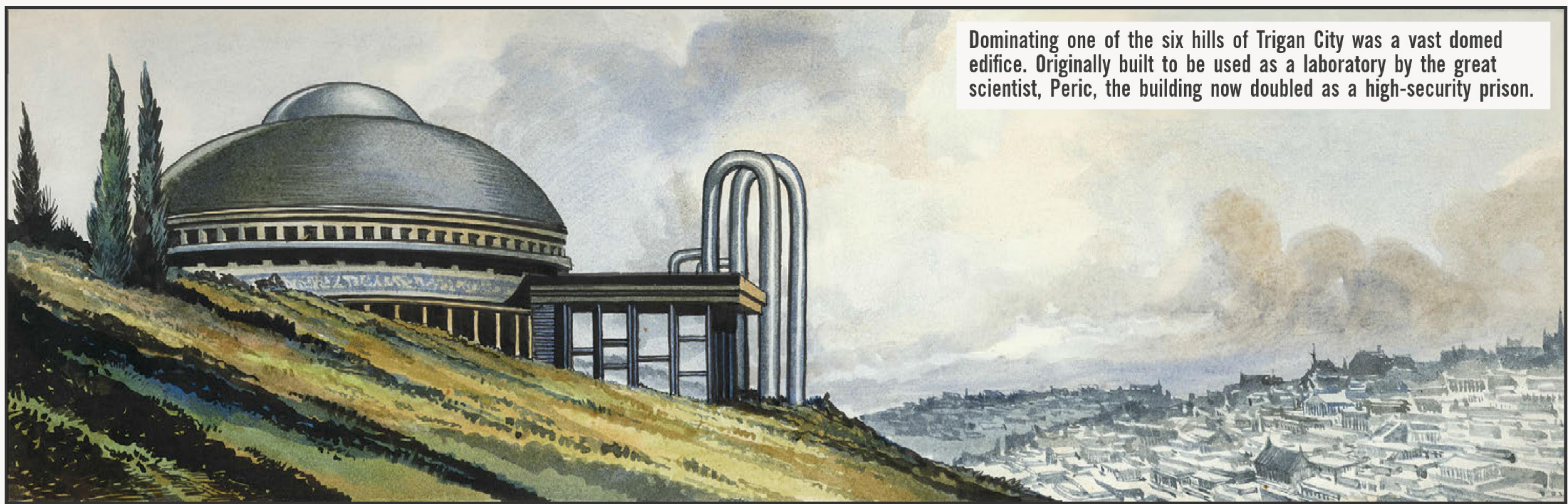


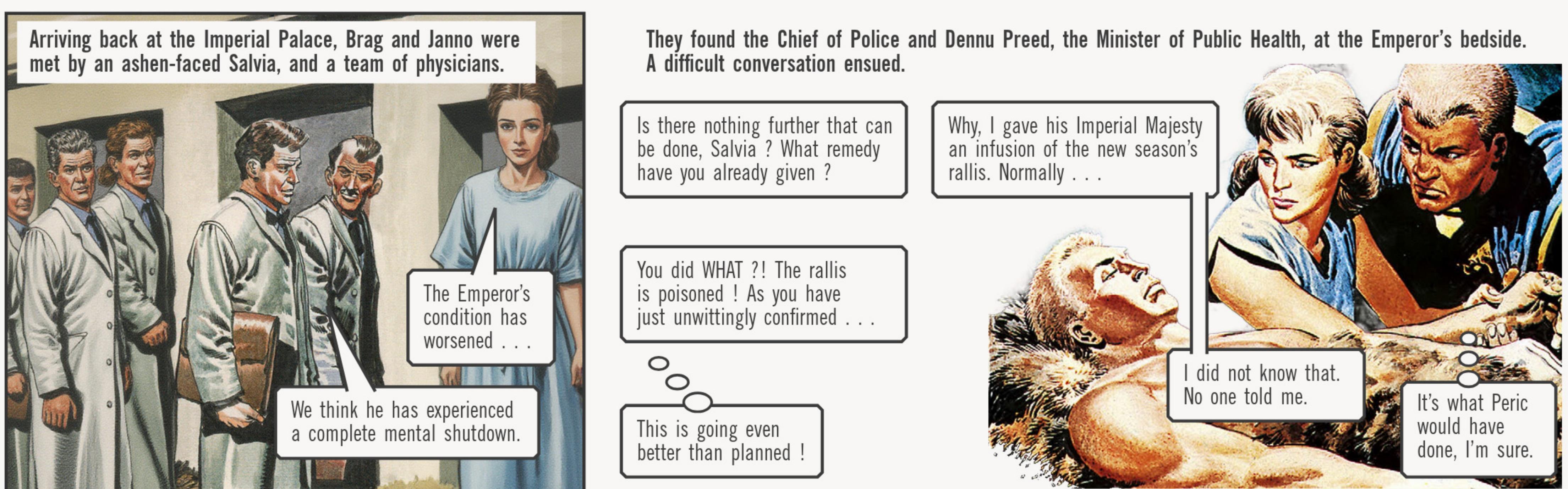
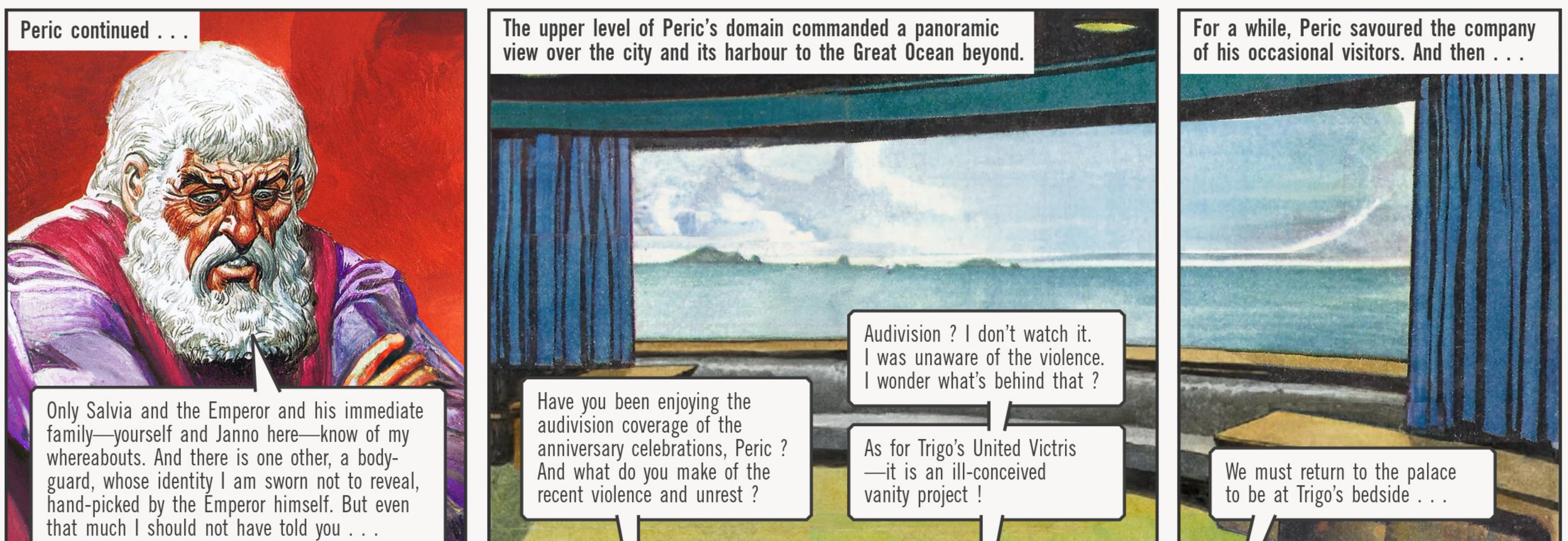
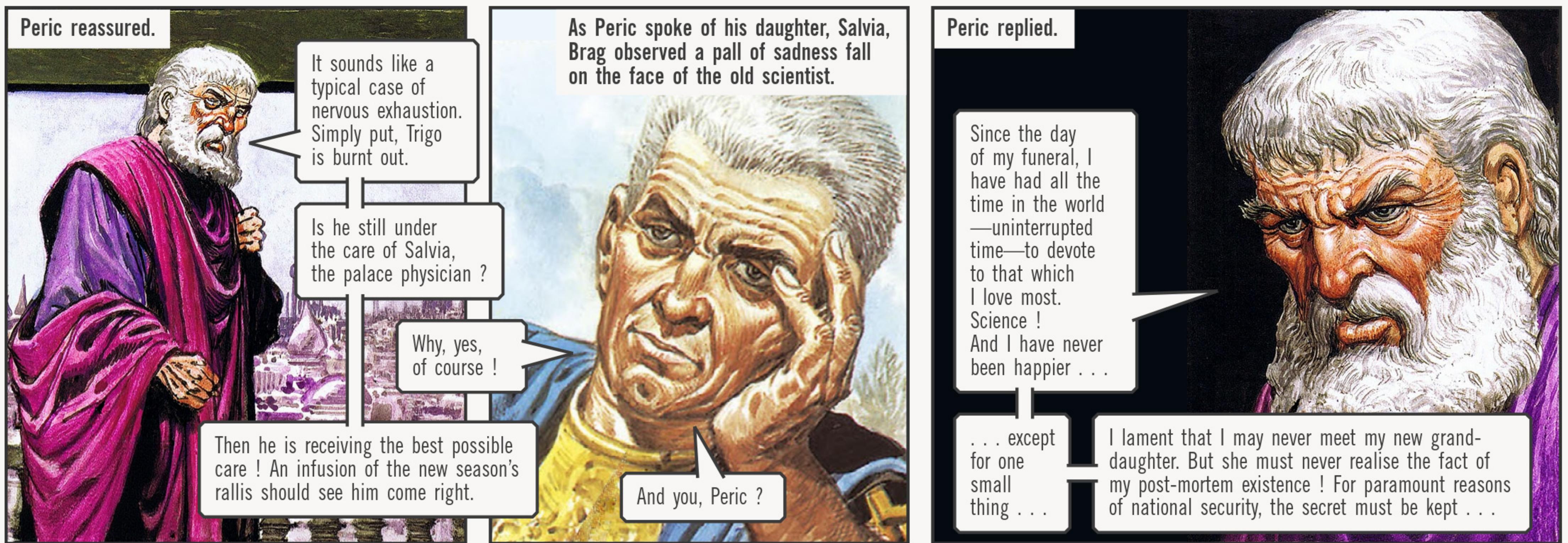
Trigo had only just come to when Janno and Keren arrived at the Imperial chambers. Salvia, the Emperor's personal physician, met them.

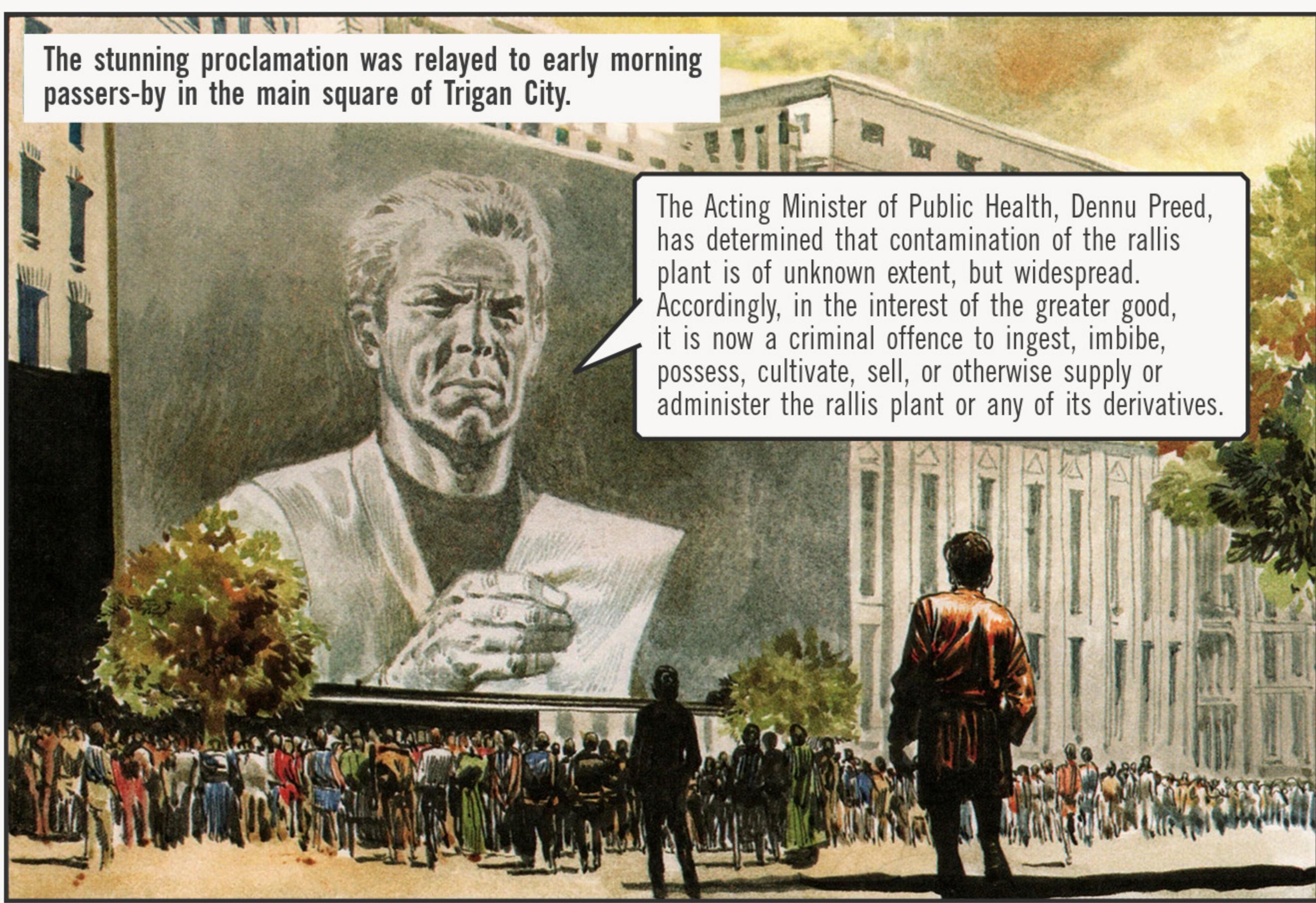


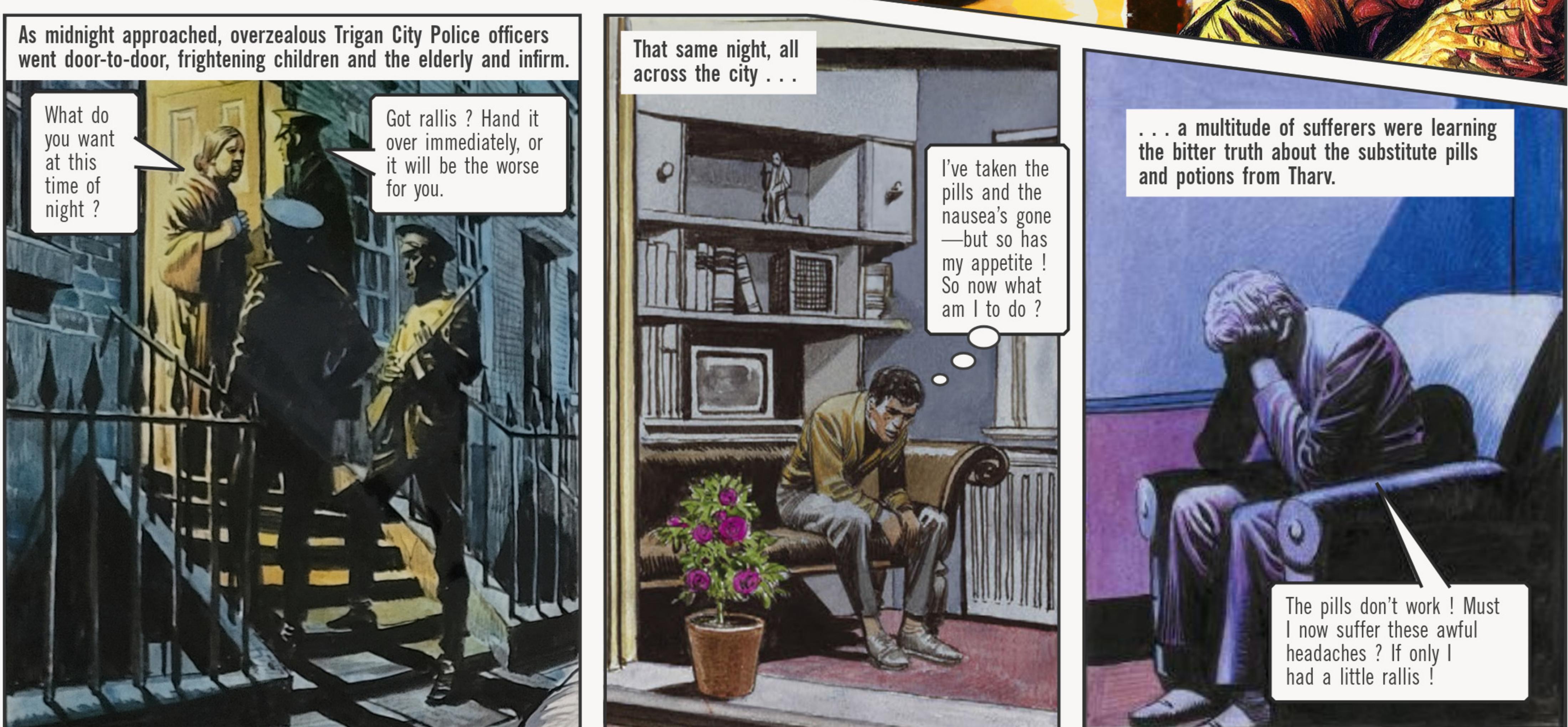
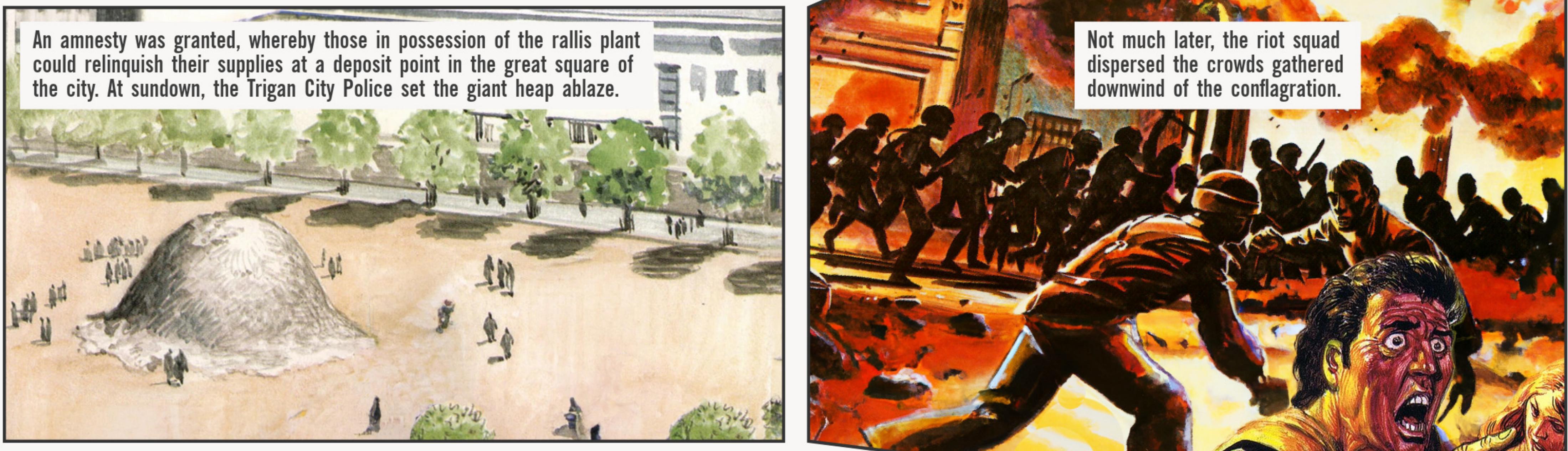
The stricken Emperor stammered a few short instructions . . .



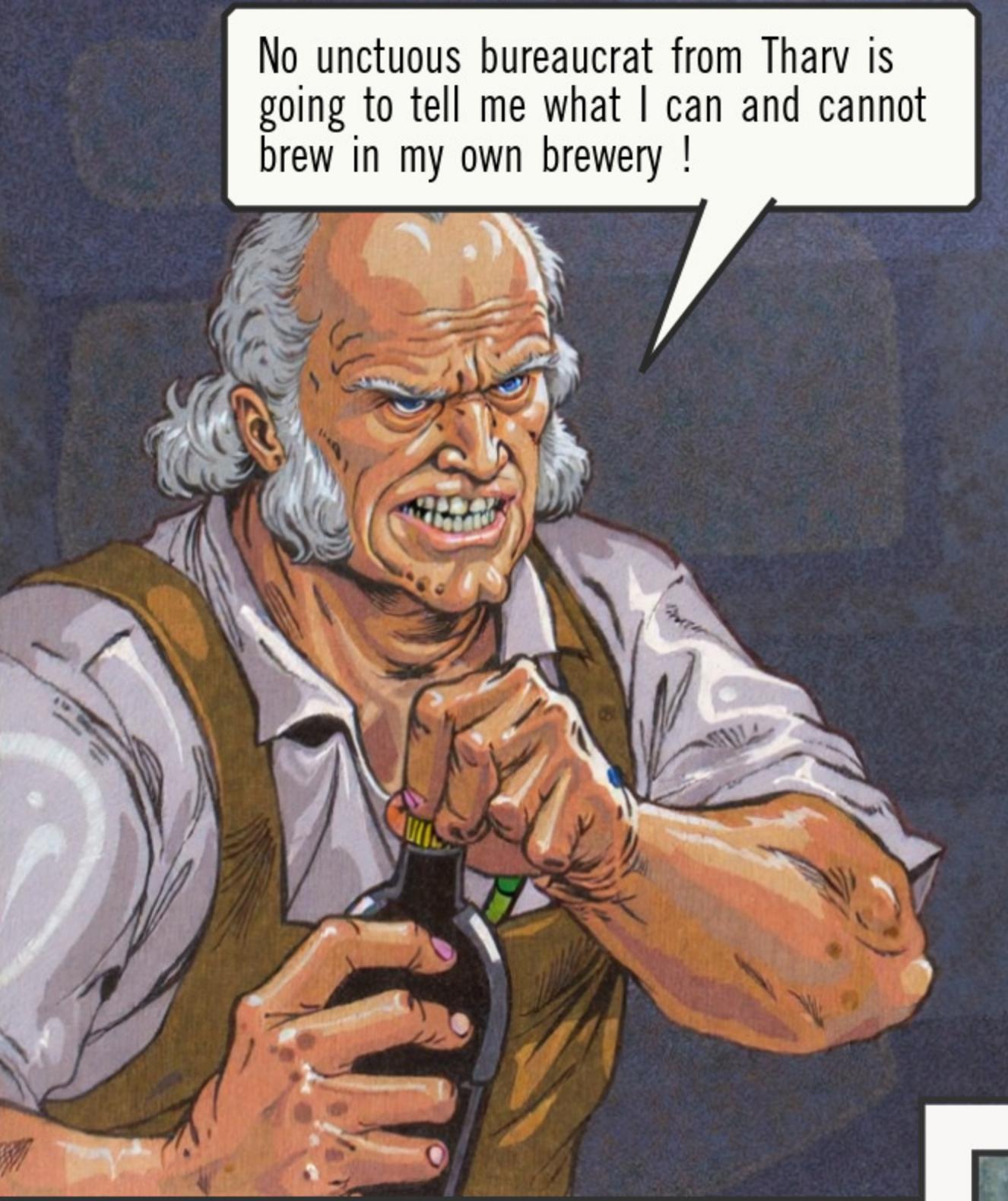




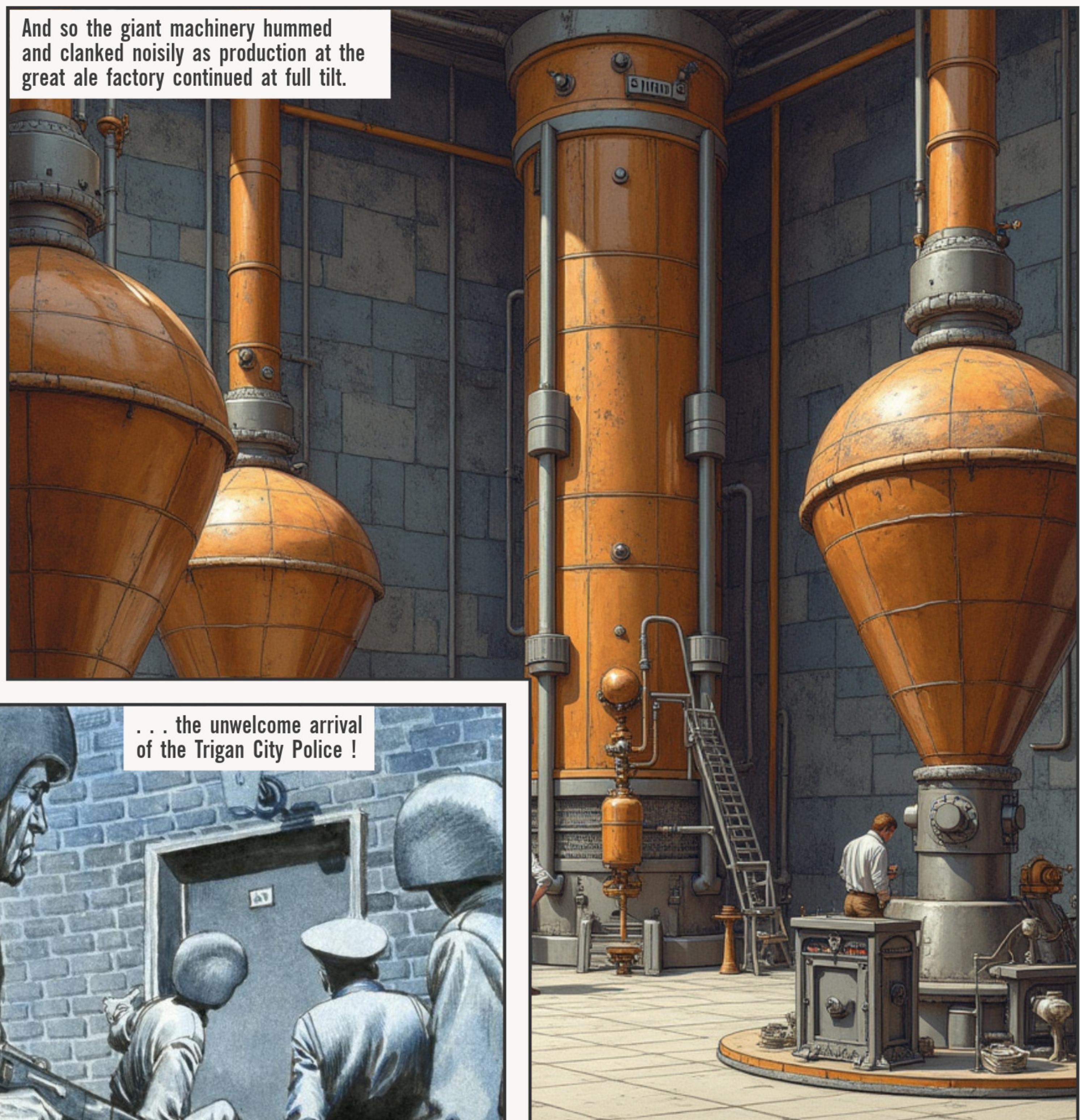




Tarkas was the owner of Trigan City's largest brewery, which supplied half of the populace's demand for rassis-based beverages. He was very rich. He was also proud and stubborn.

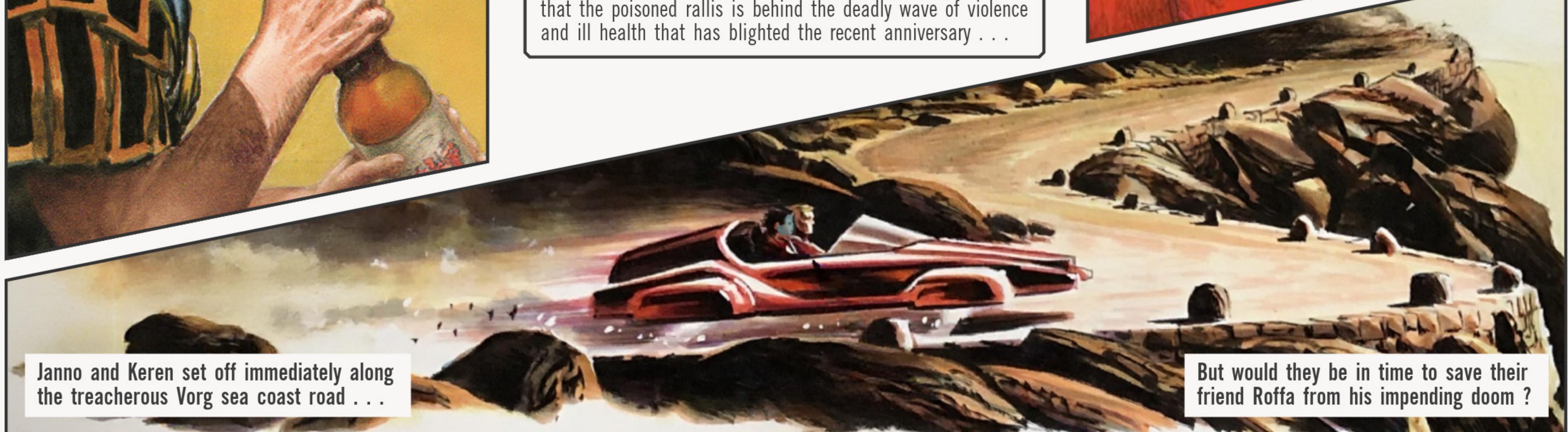
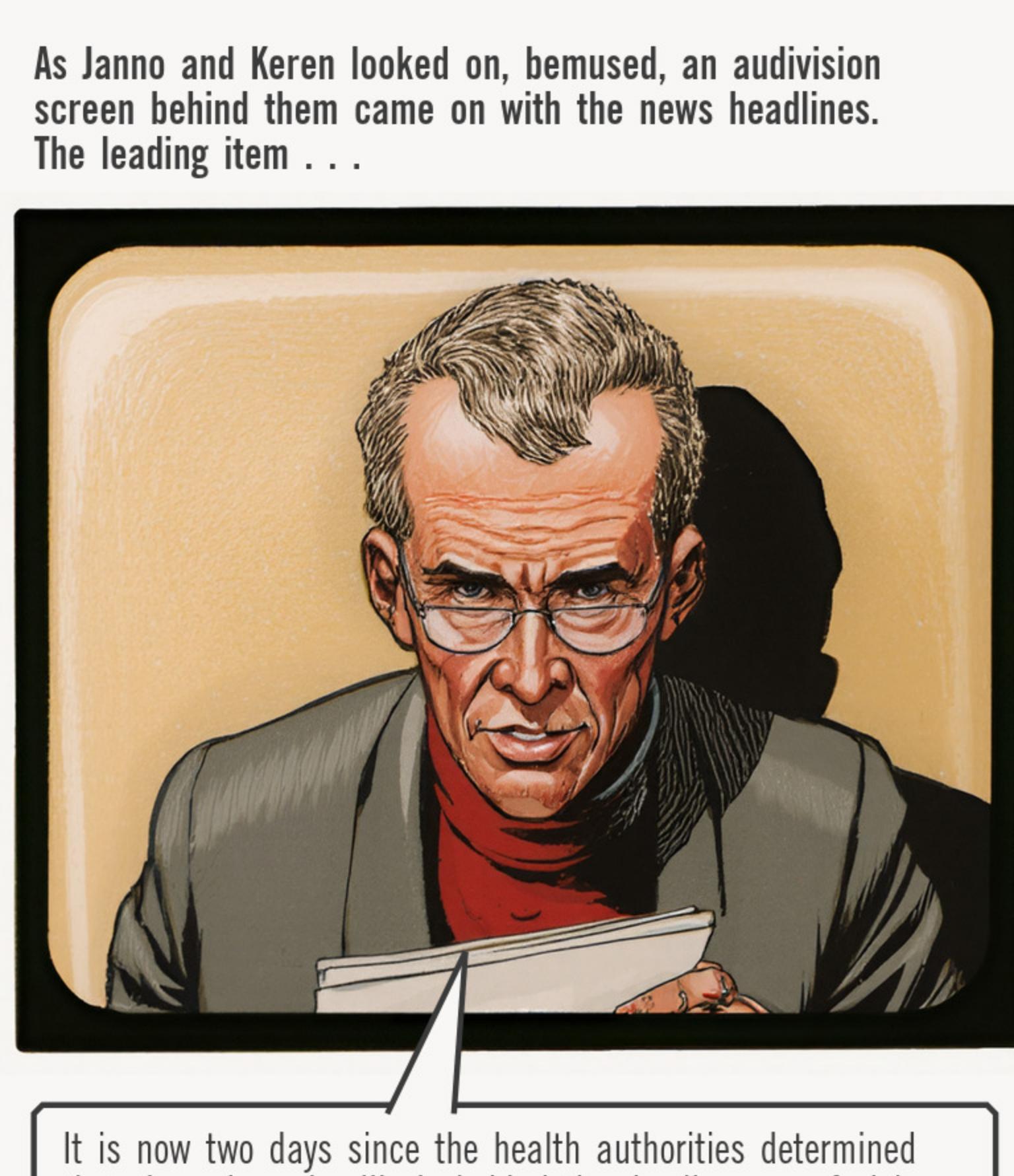
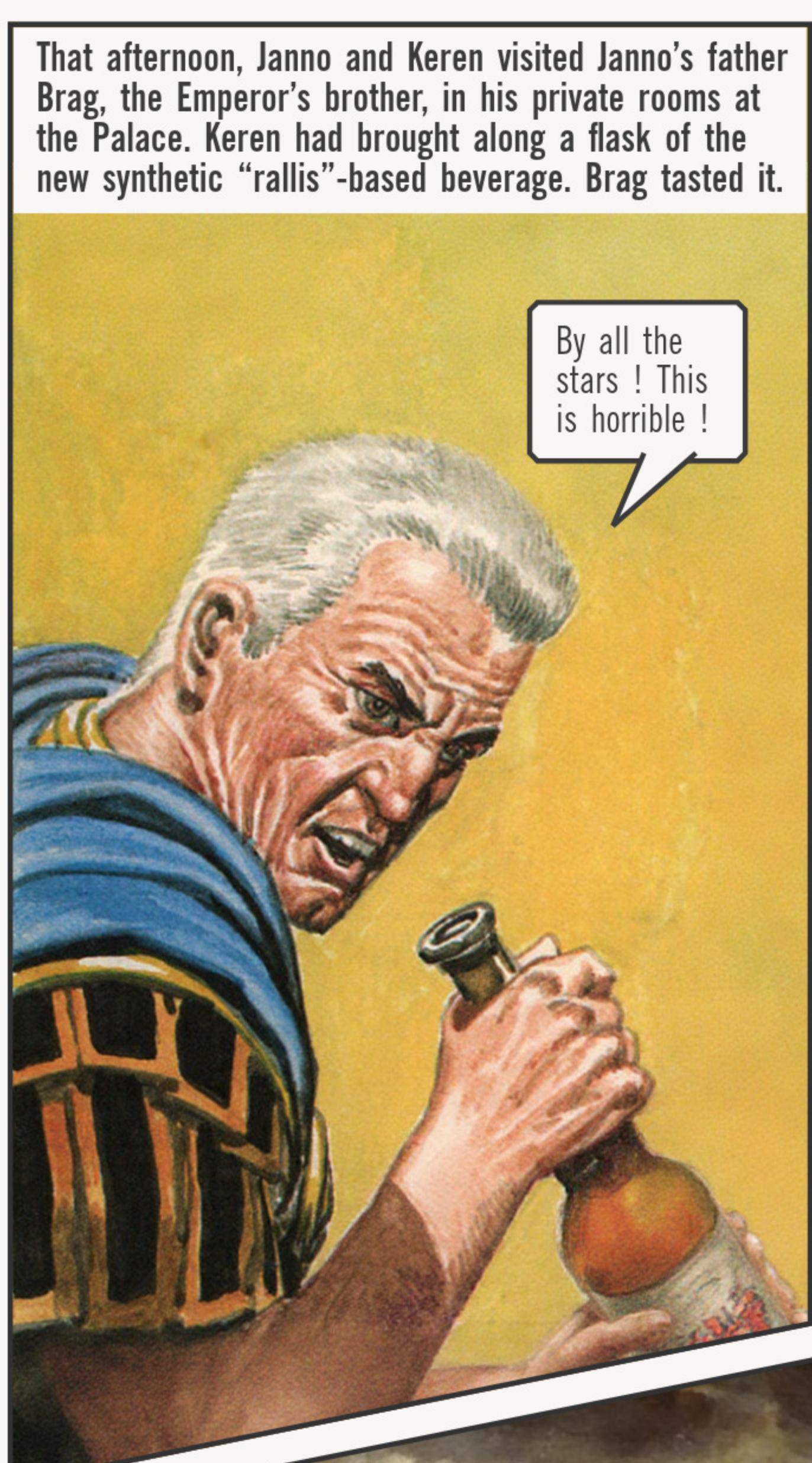
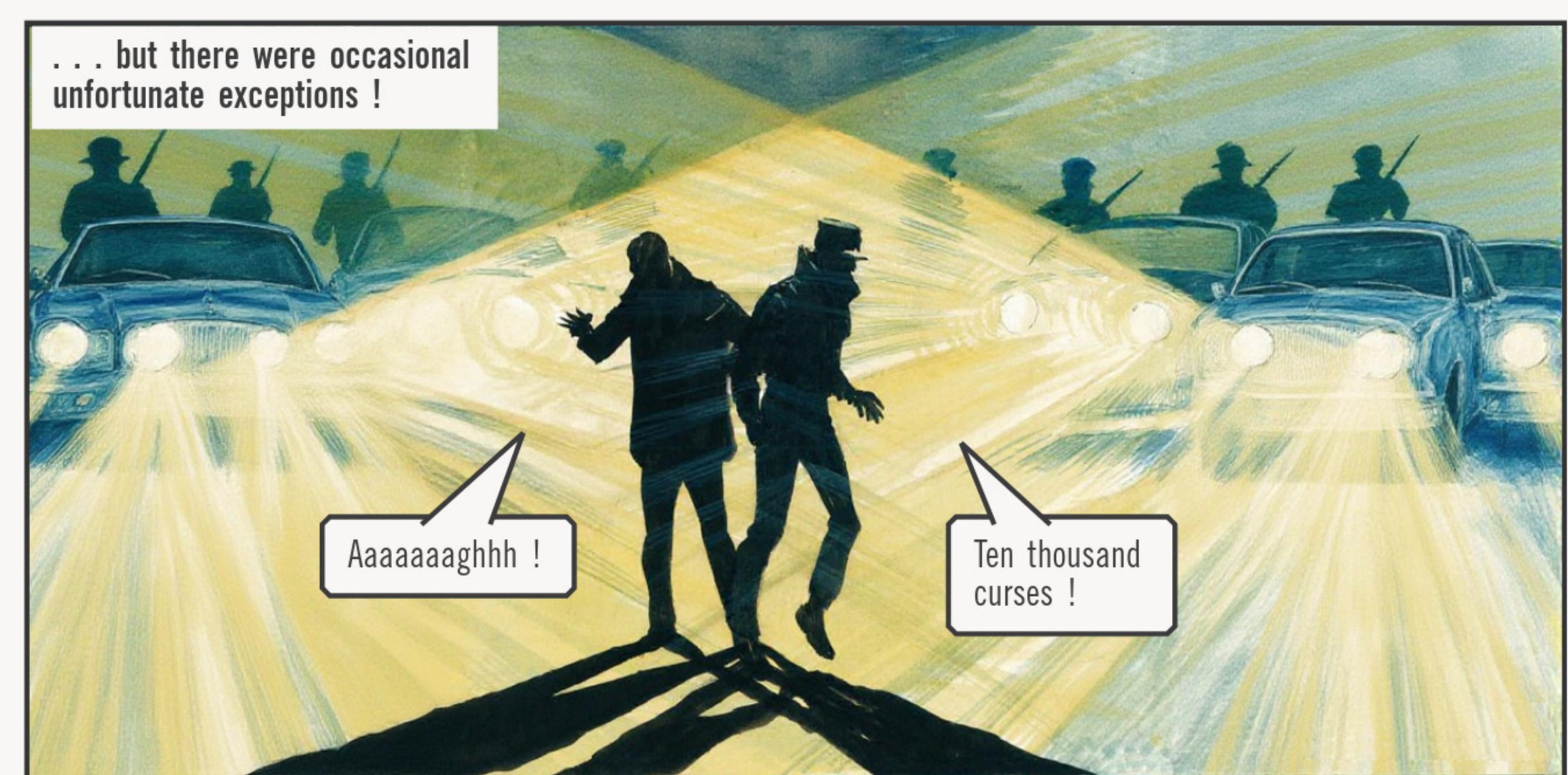
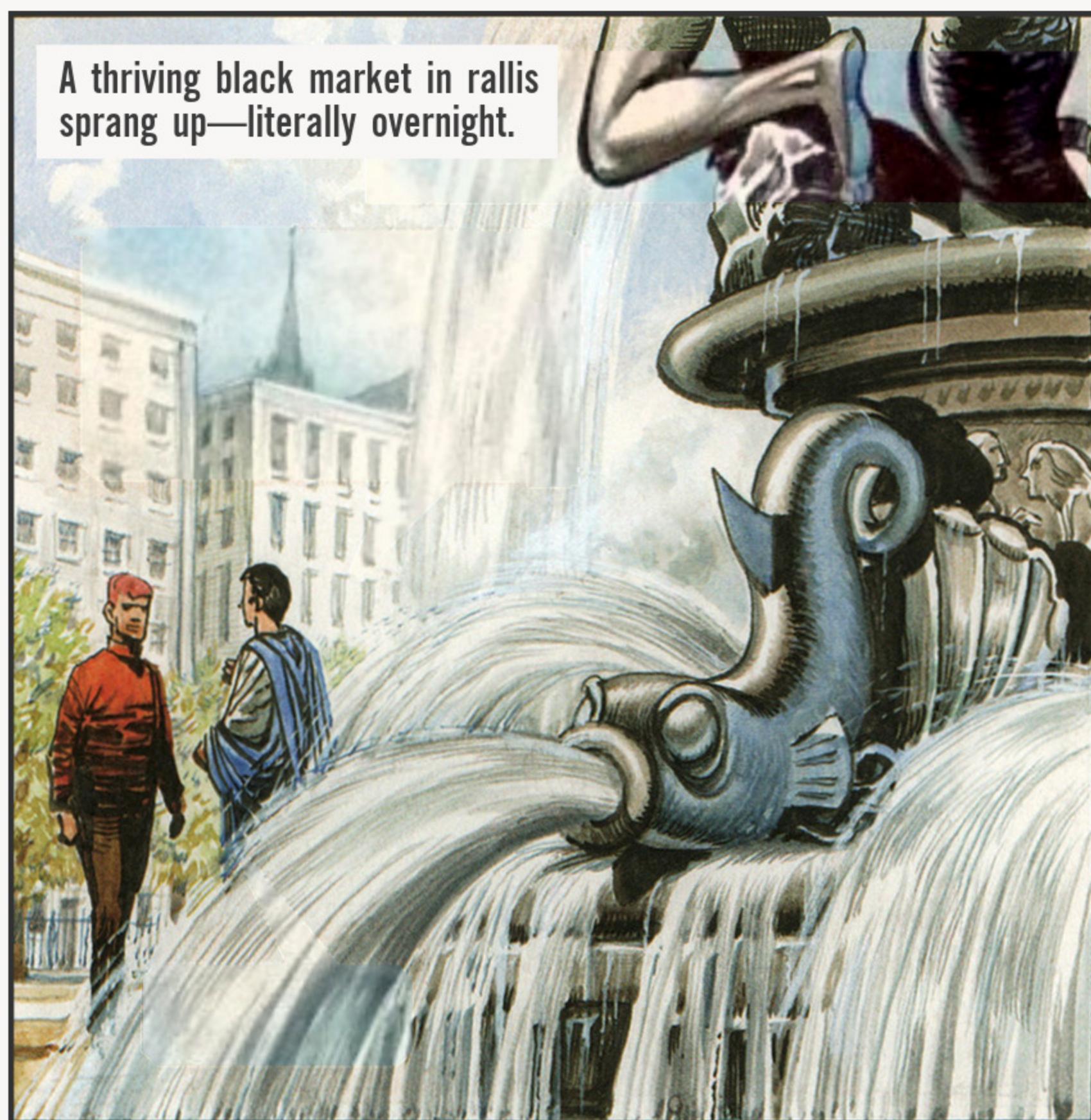


And so the giant machinery hummed and clanked noisily as production at the great ale factory continued at full tilt.



Tarkas was taken before the city magistrate . . . but it was not merely a matter of paying a fine !

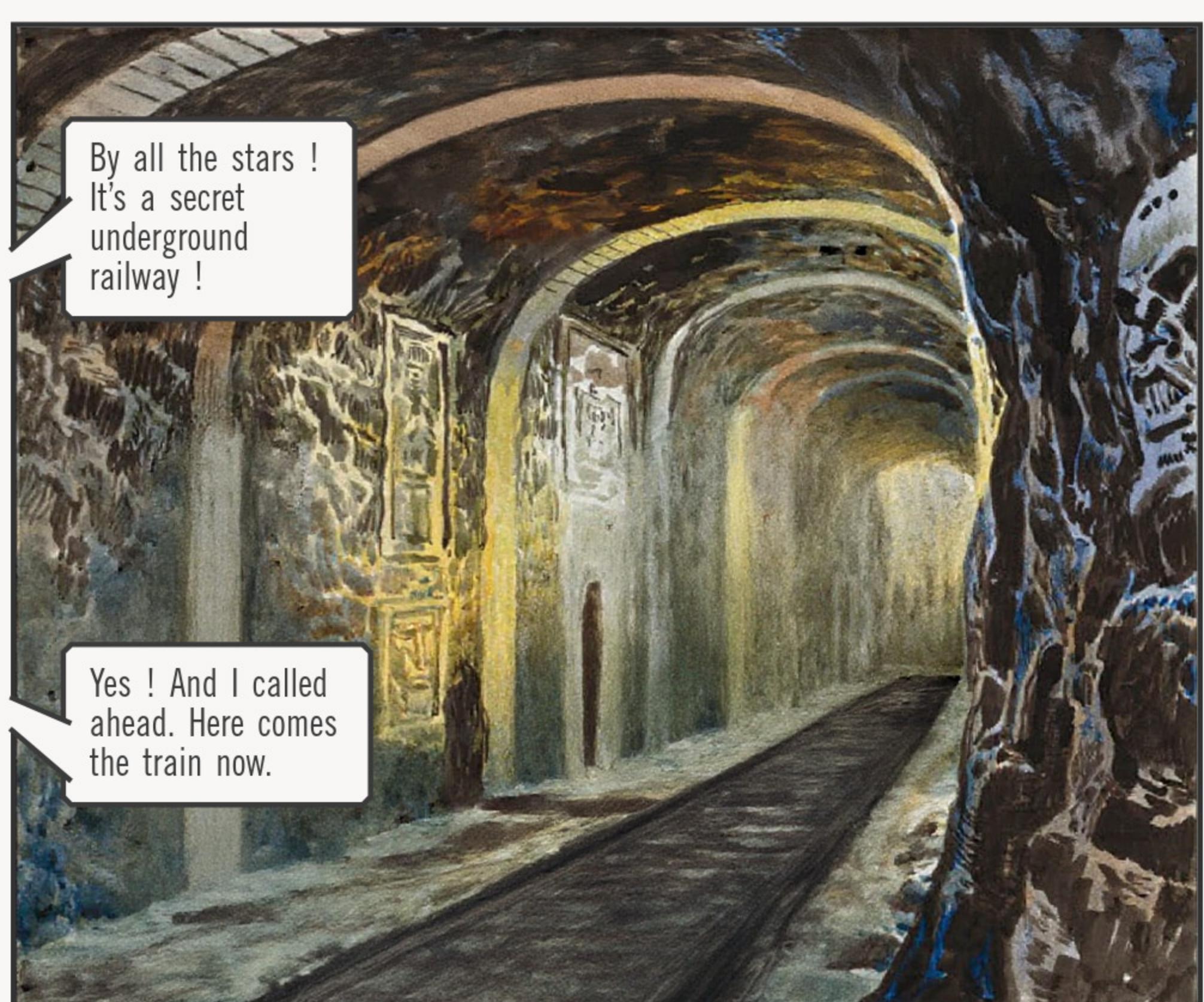
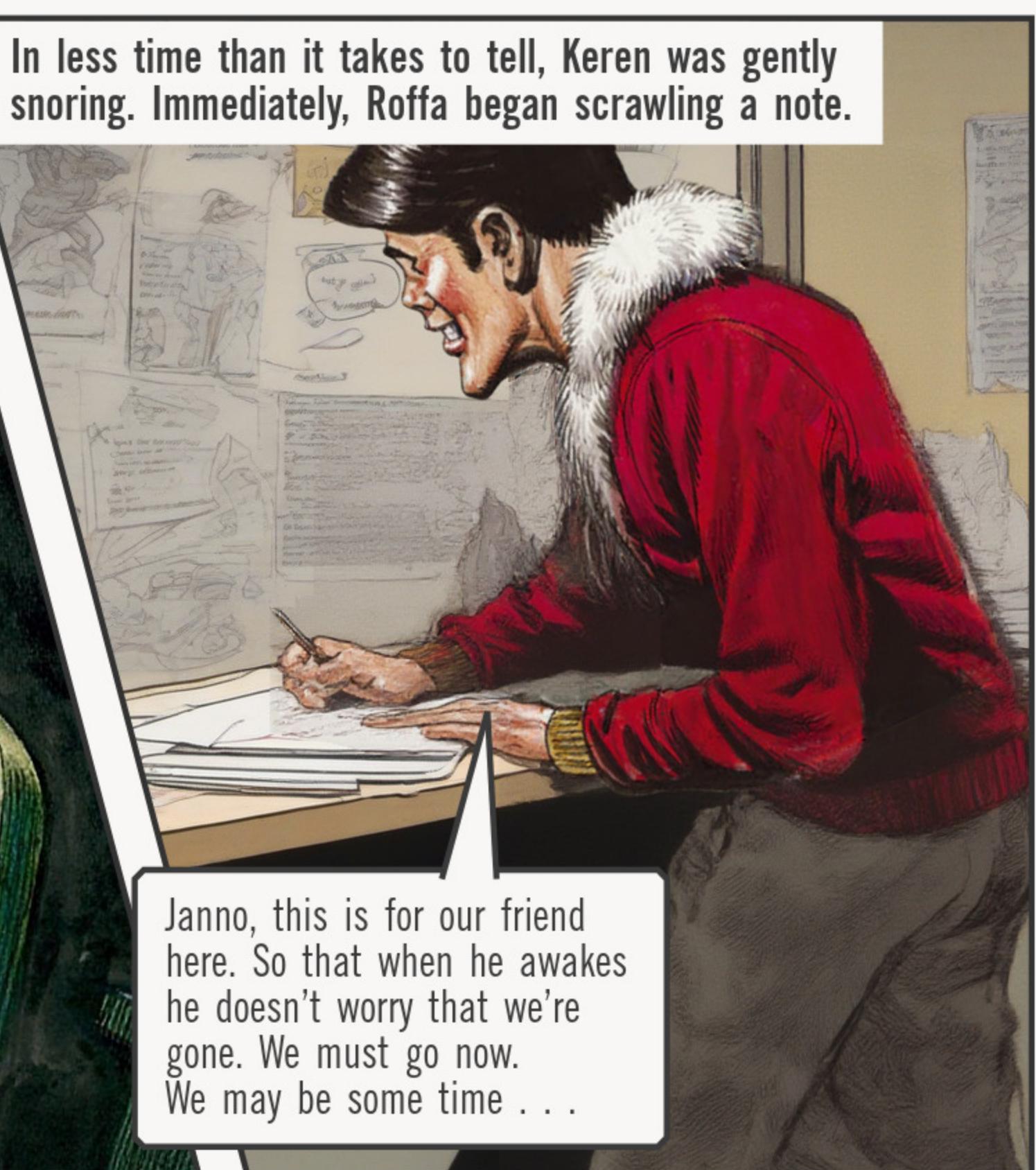


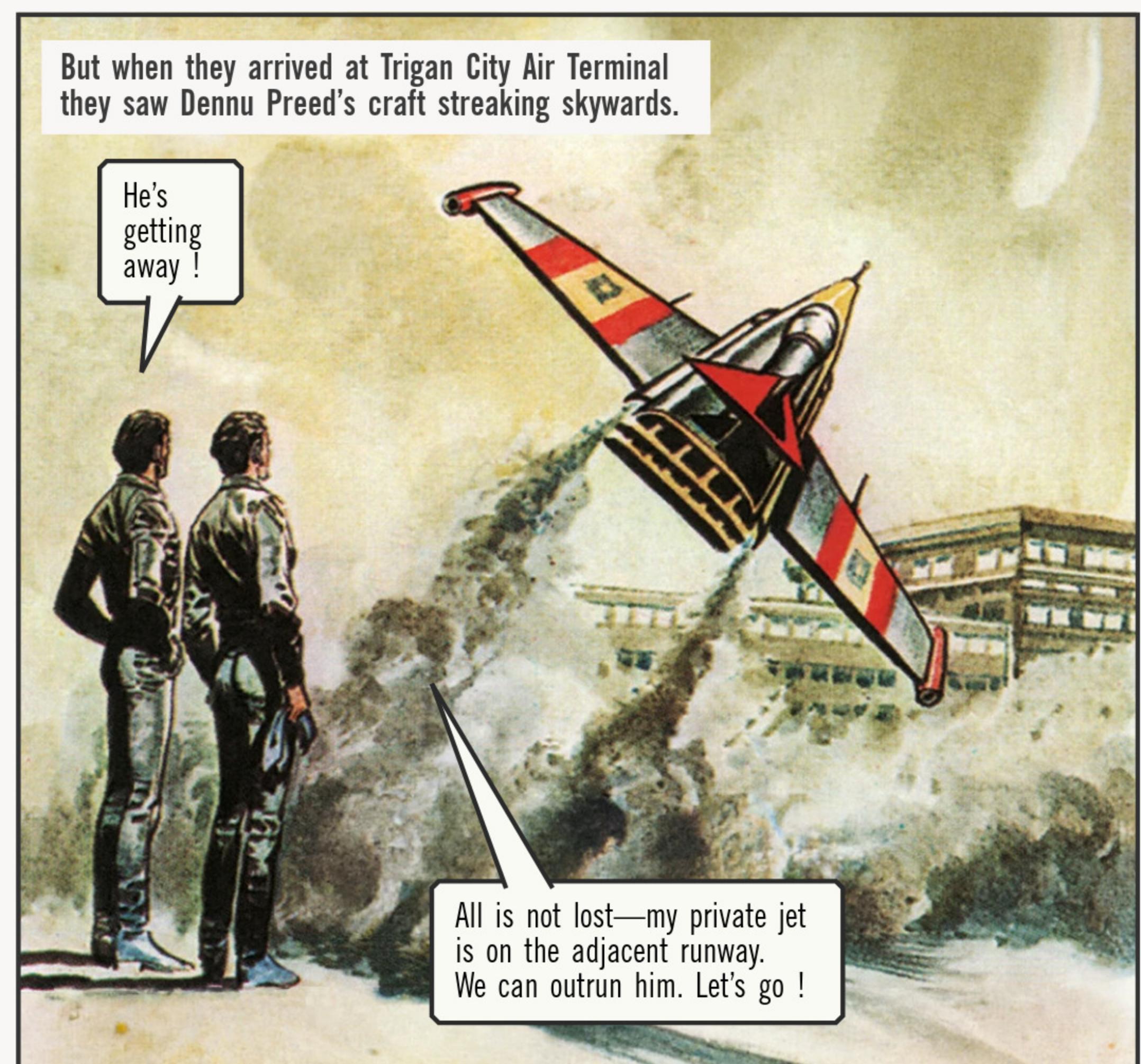
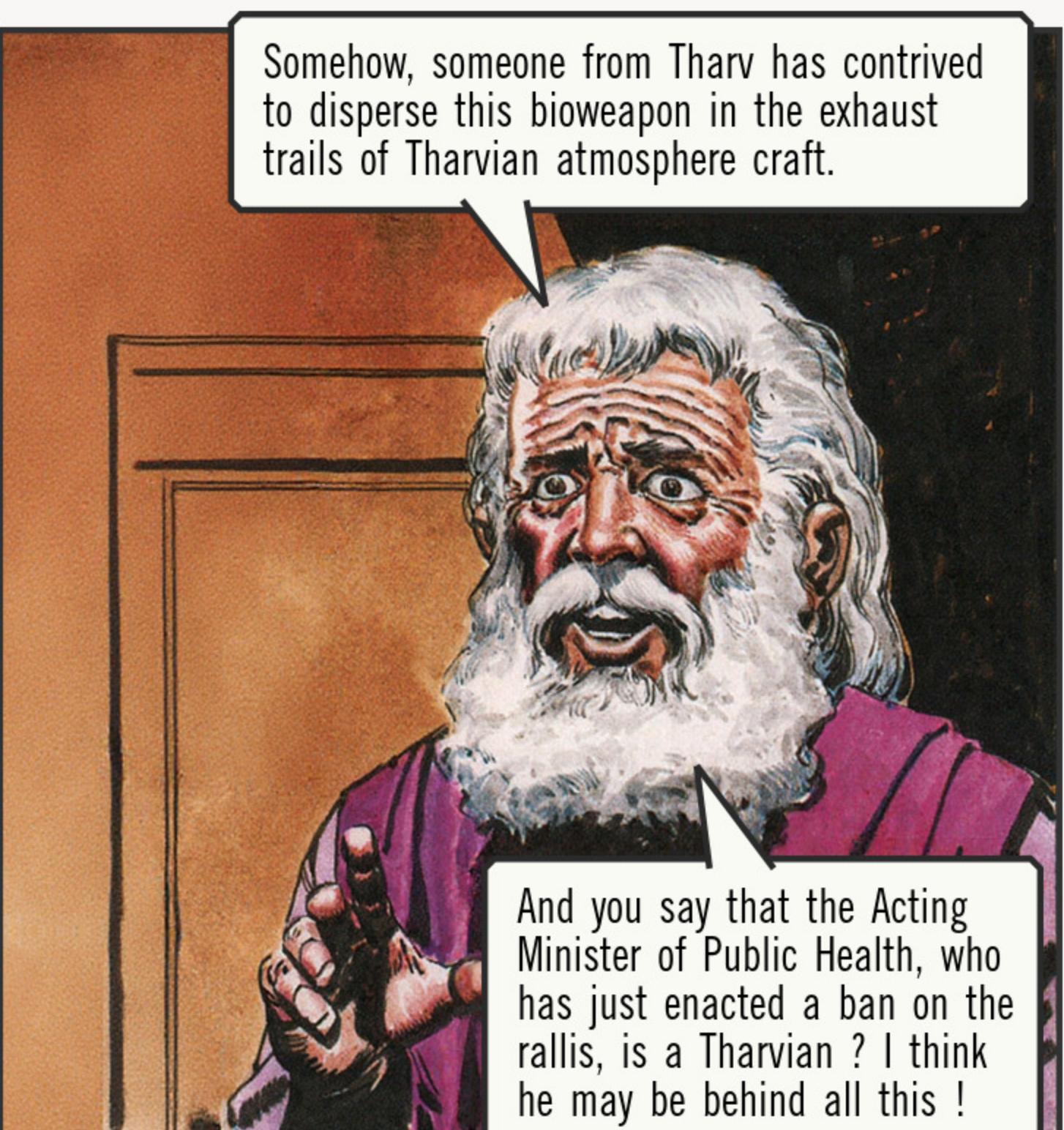
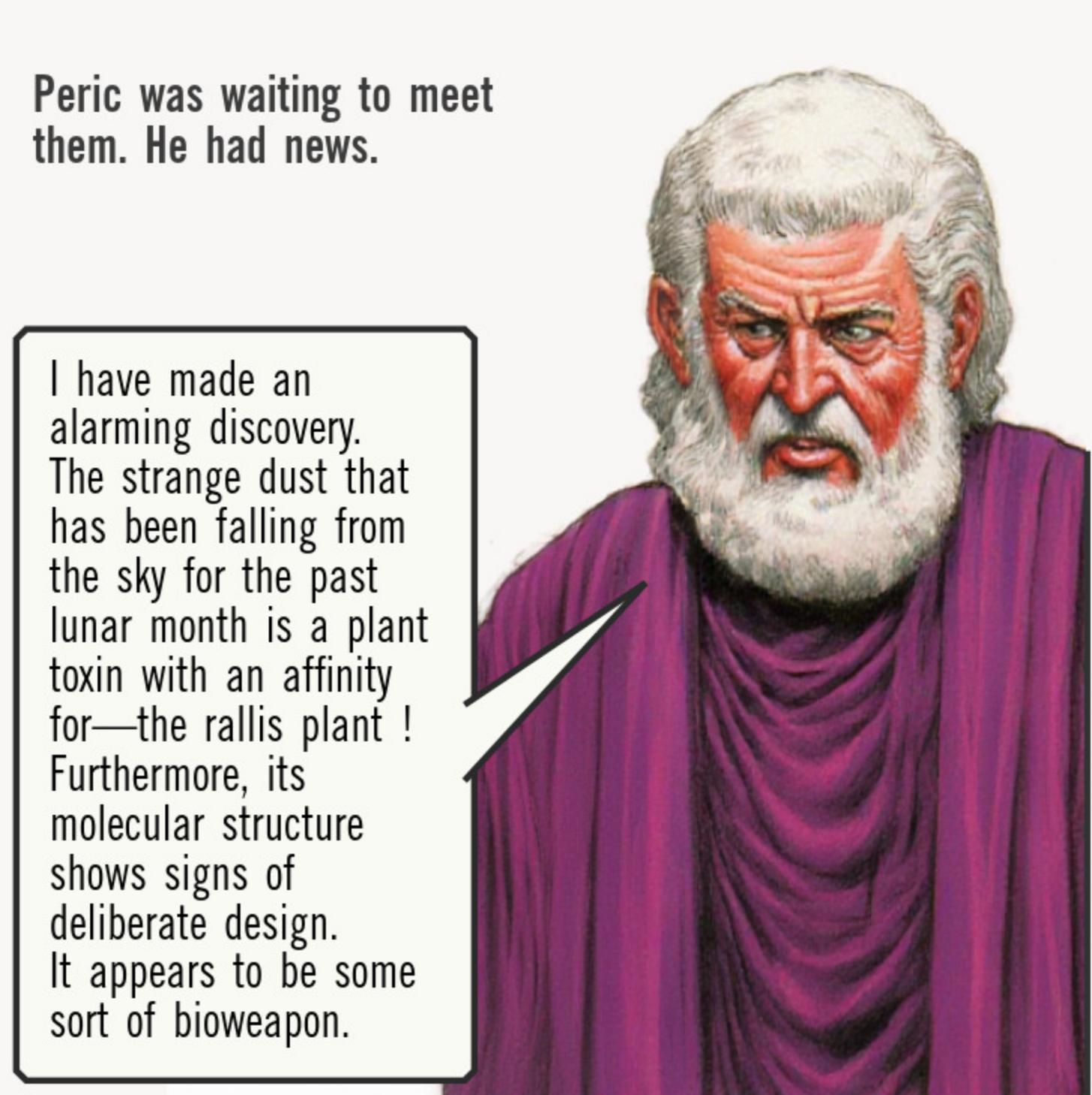
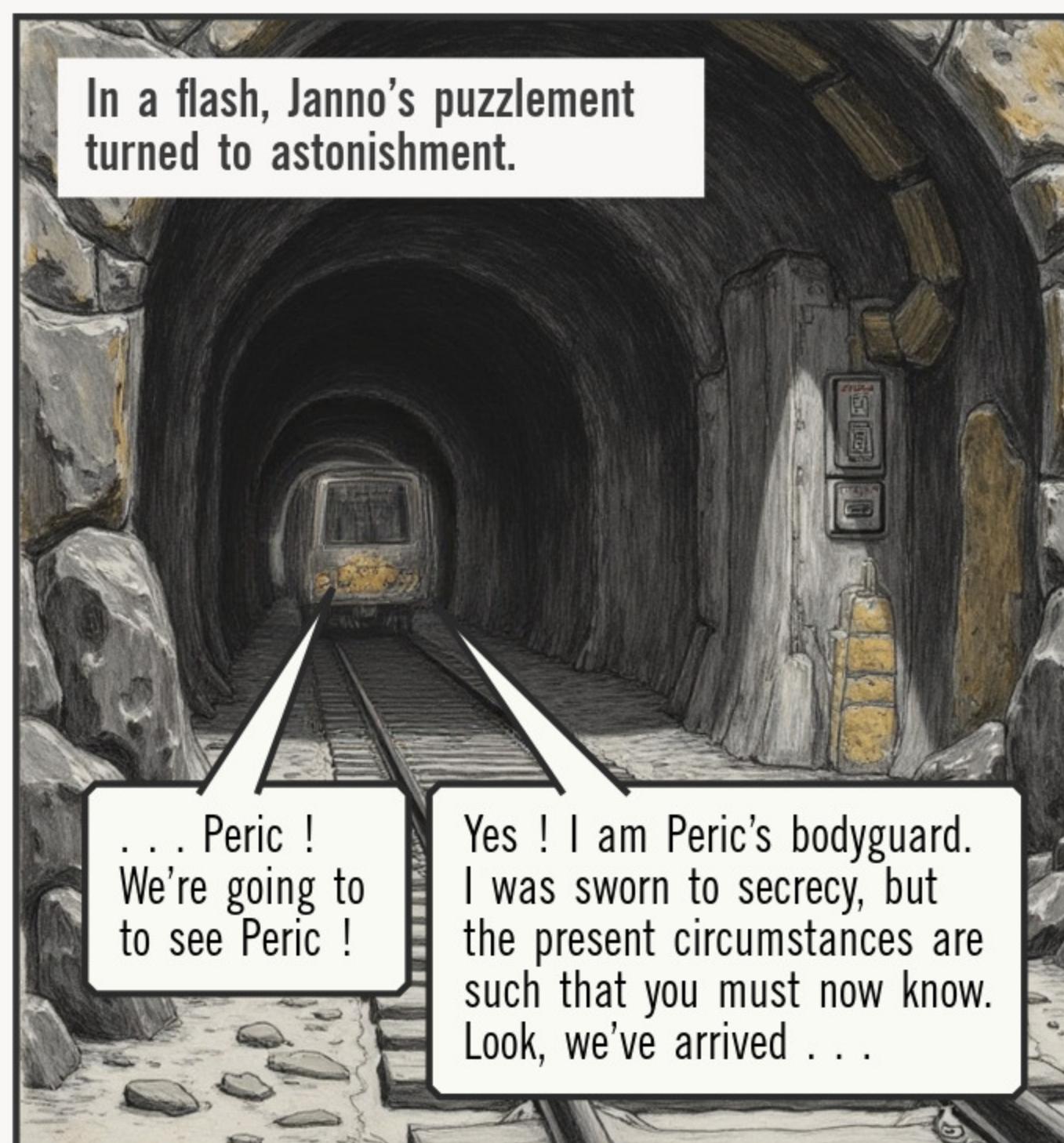


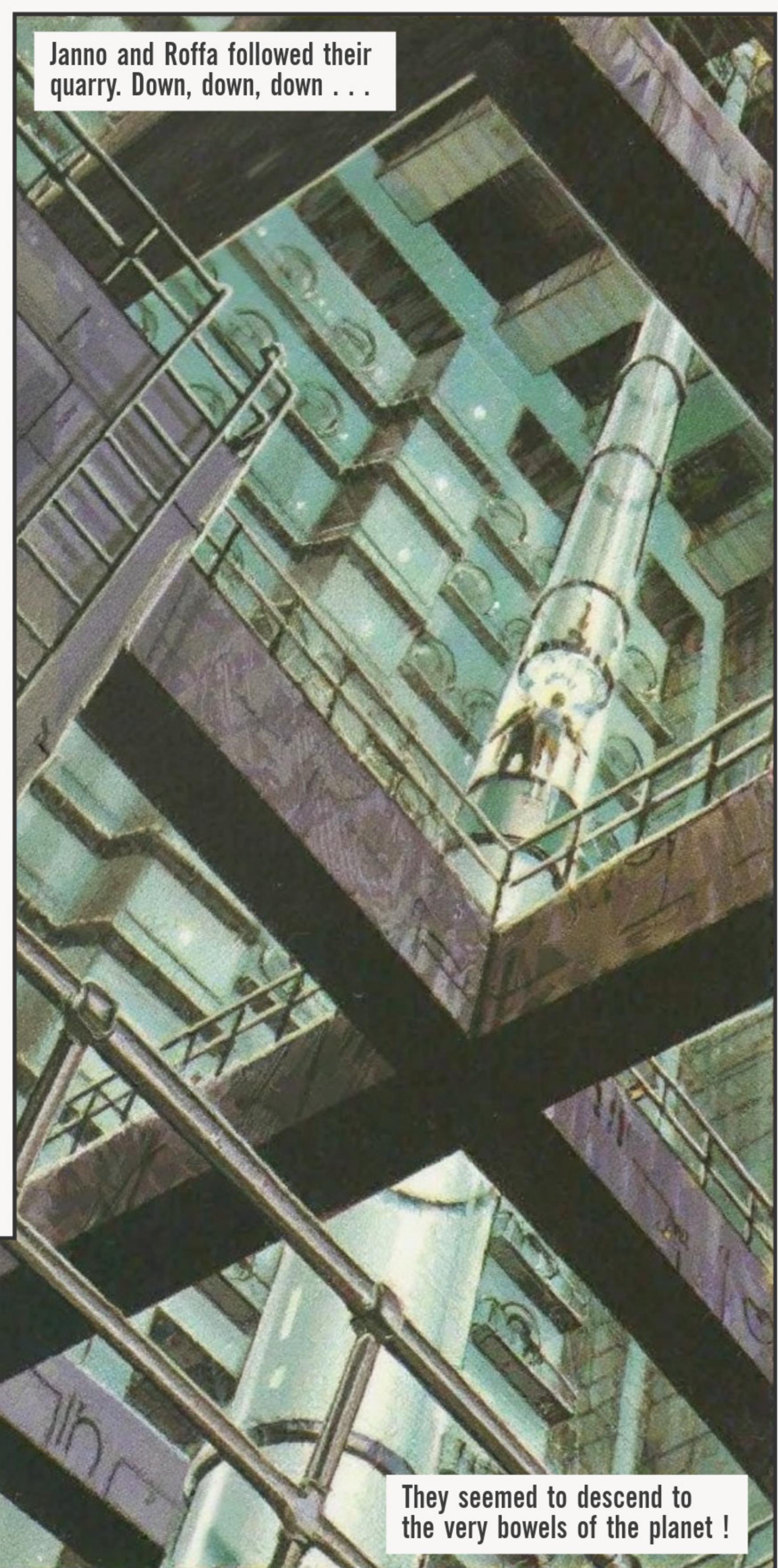
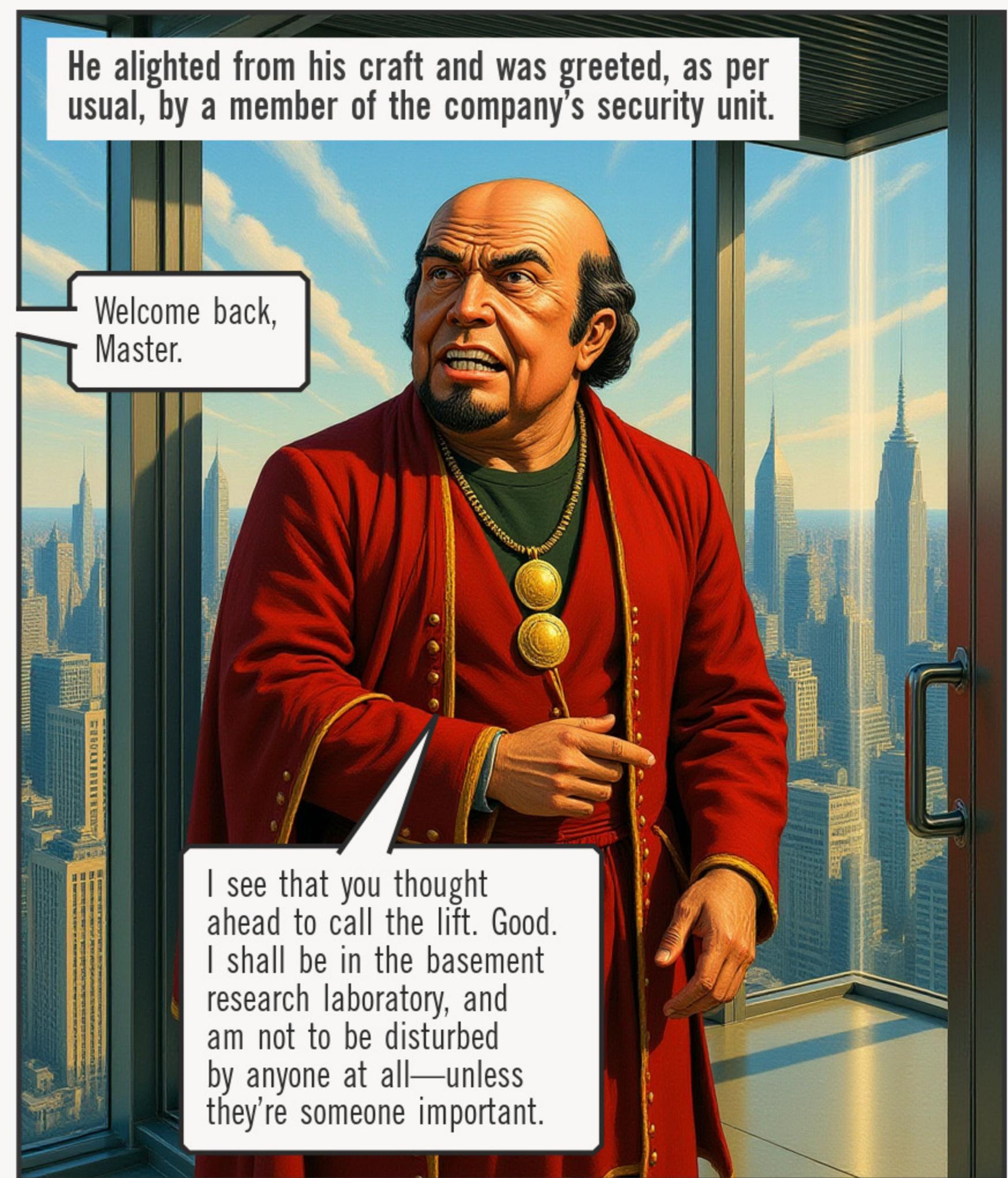
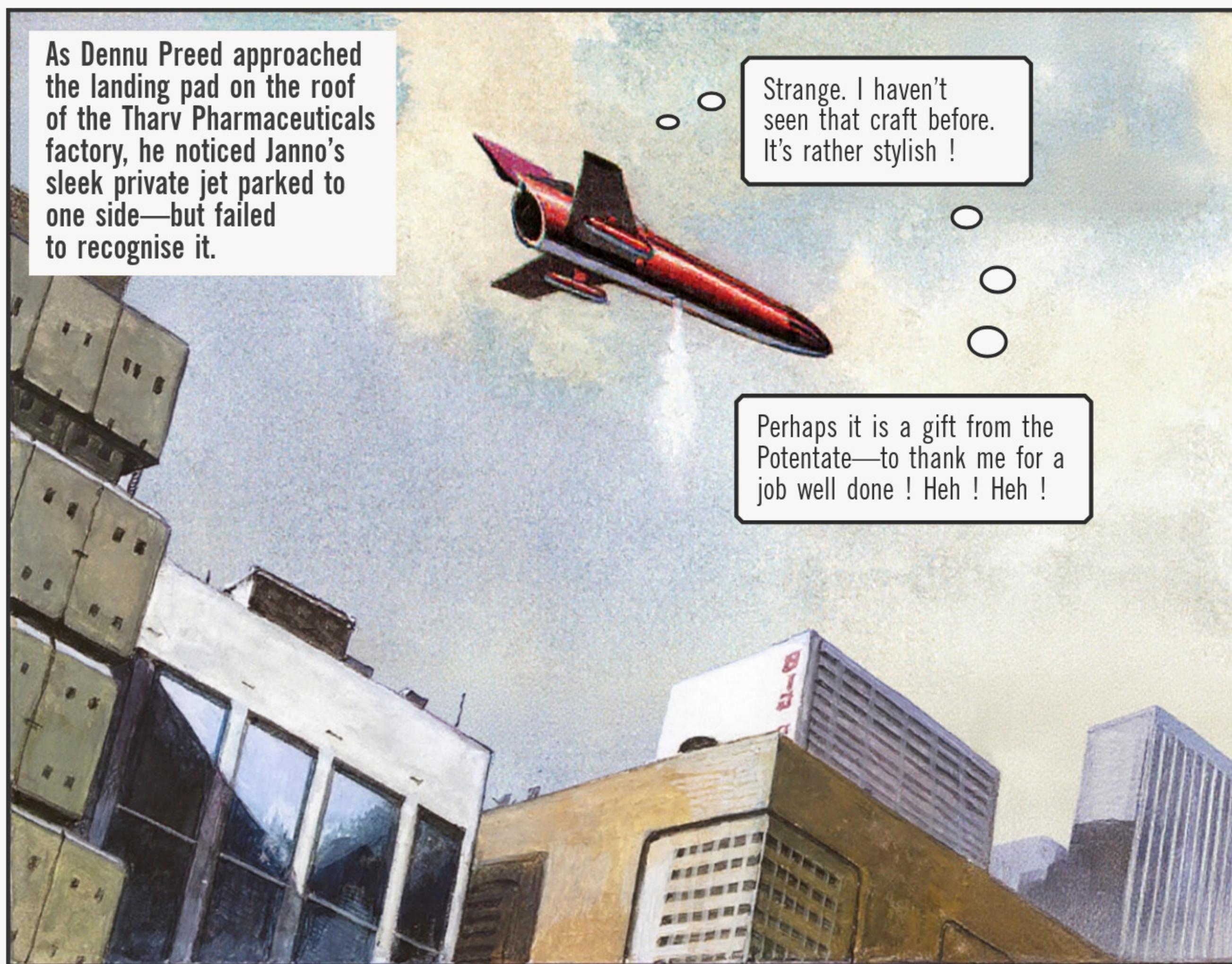
From the look on Roffa's face it was immediately apparent to Janno and Keren that they had arrived too late—Roffa had already partaken of his crop.

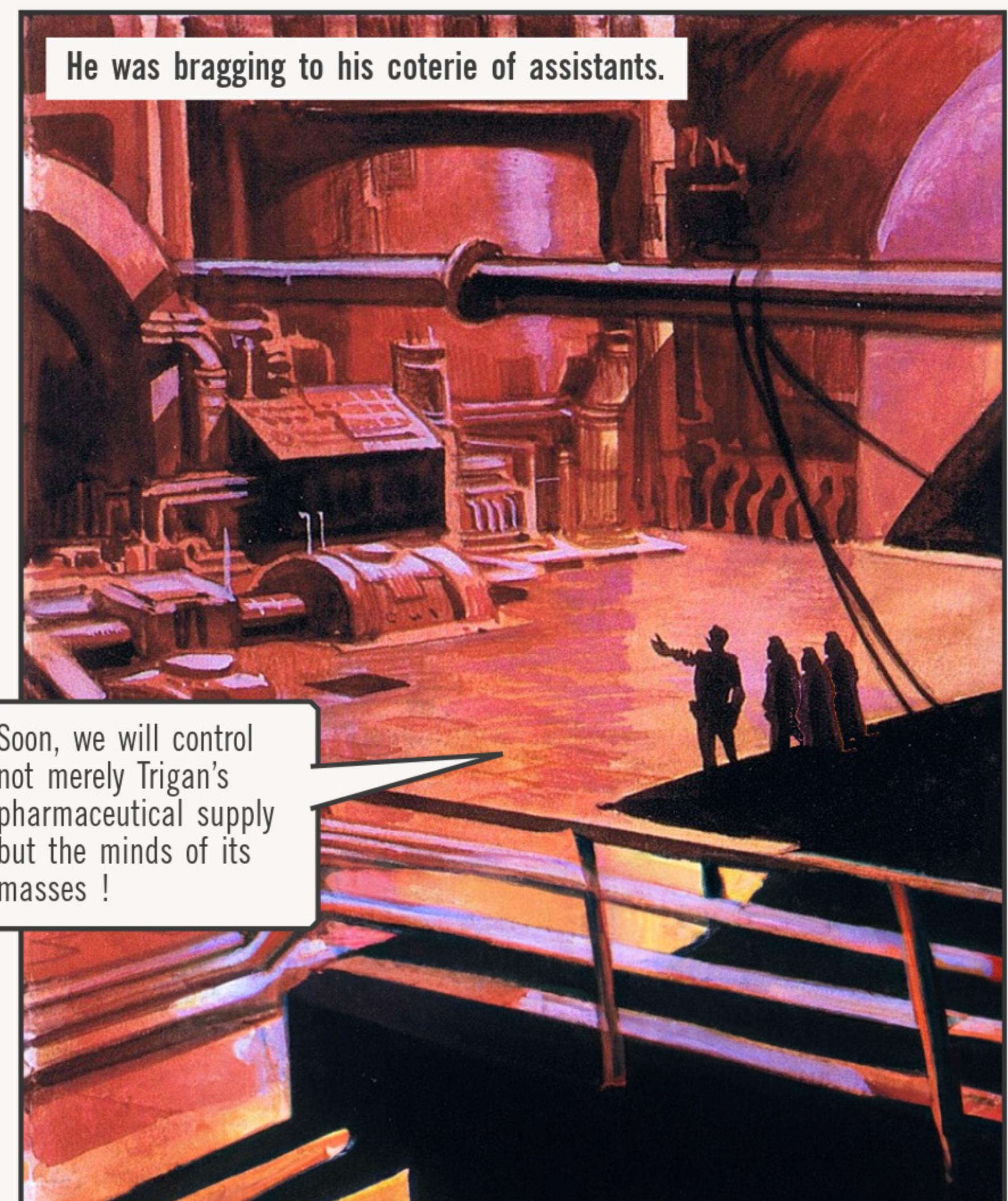
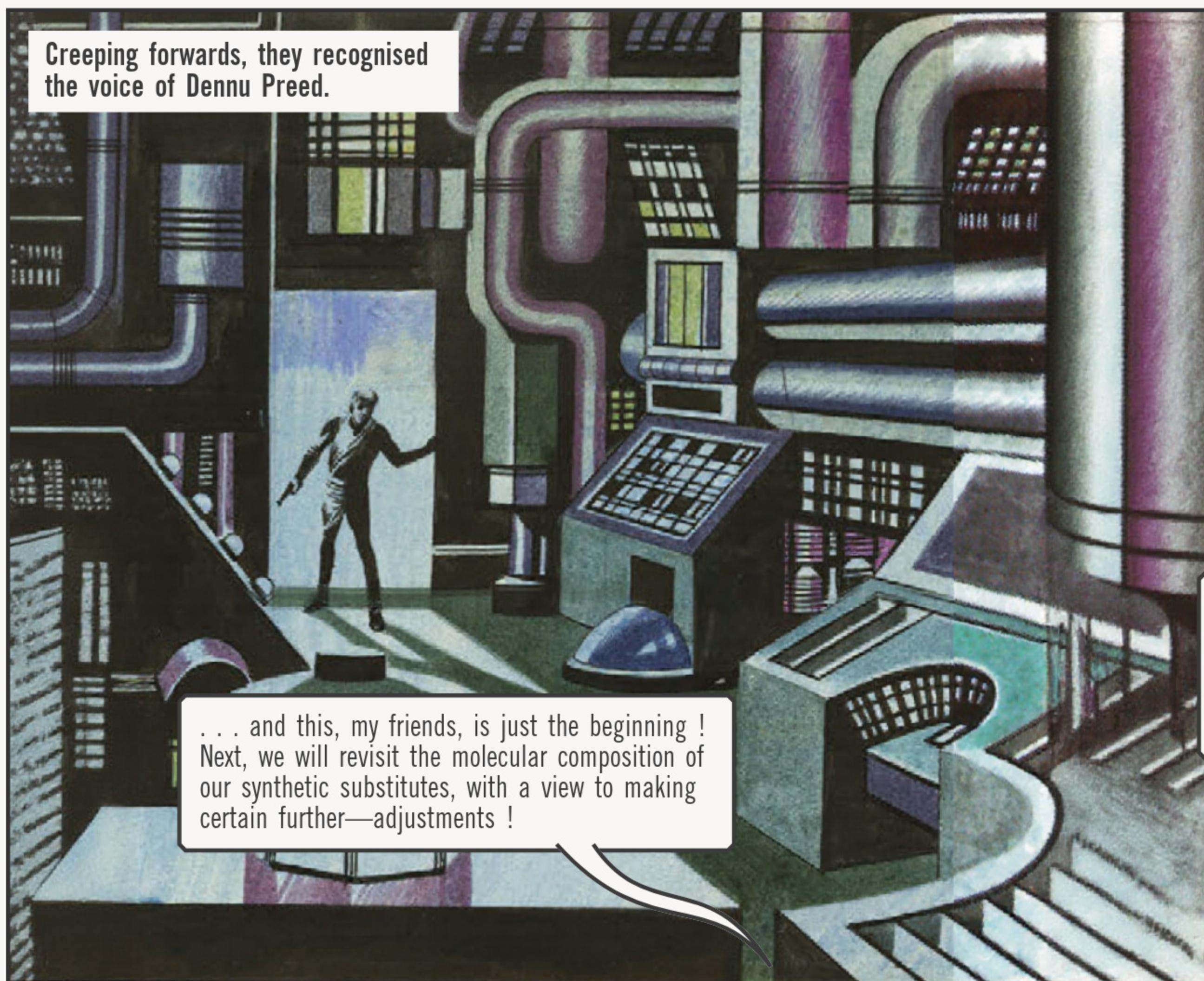
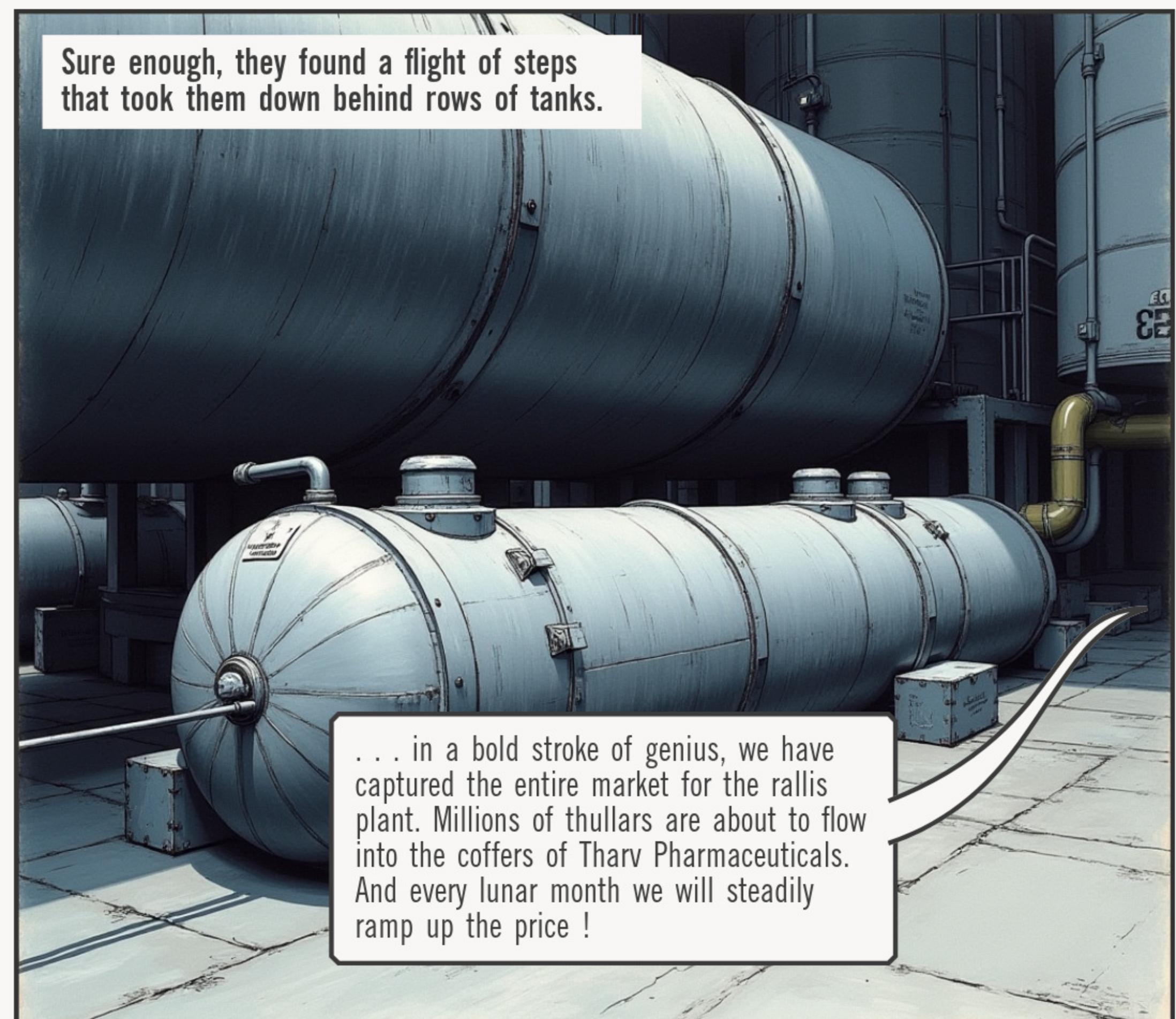
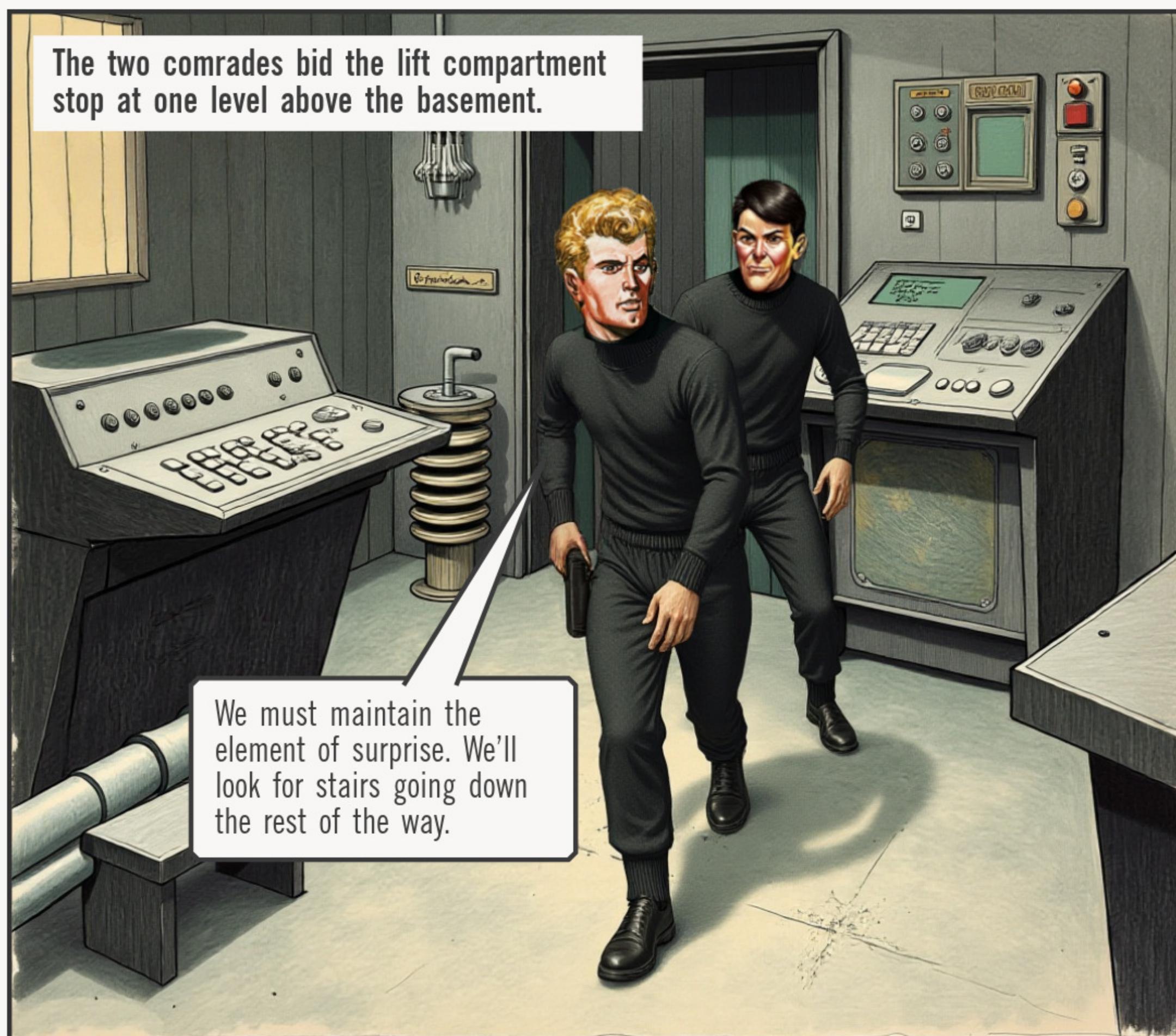


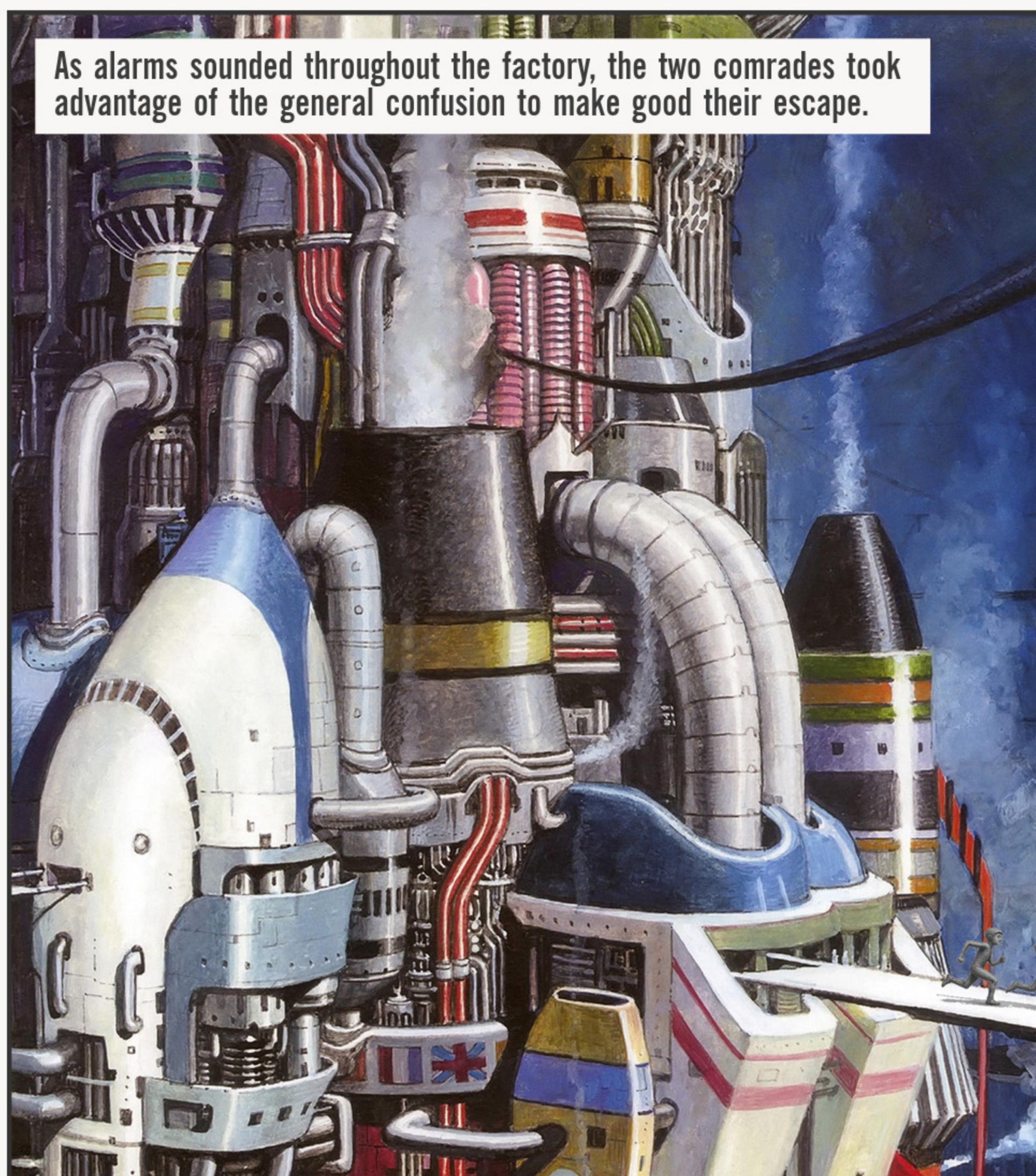
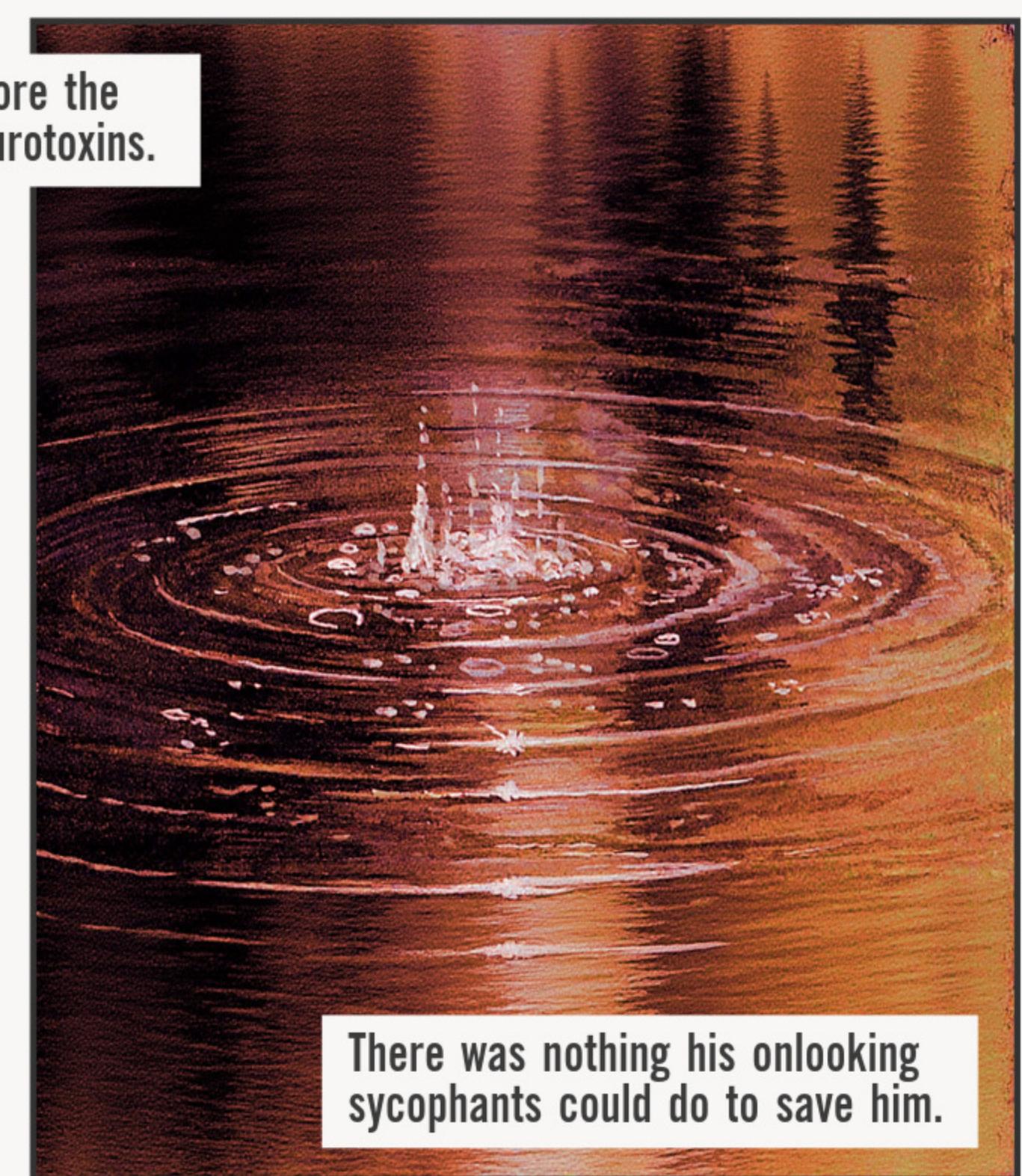
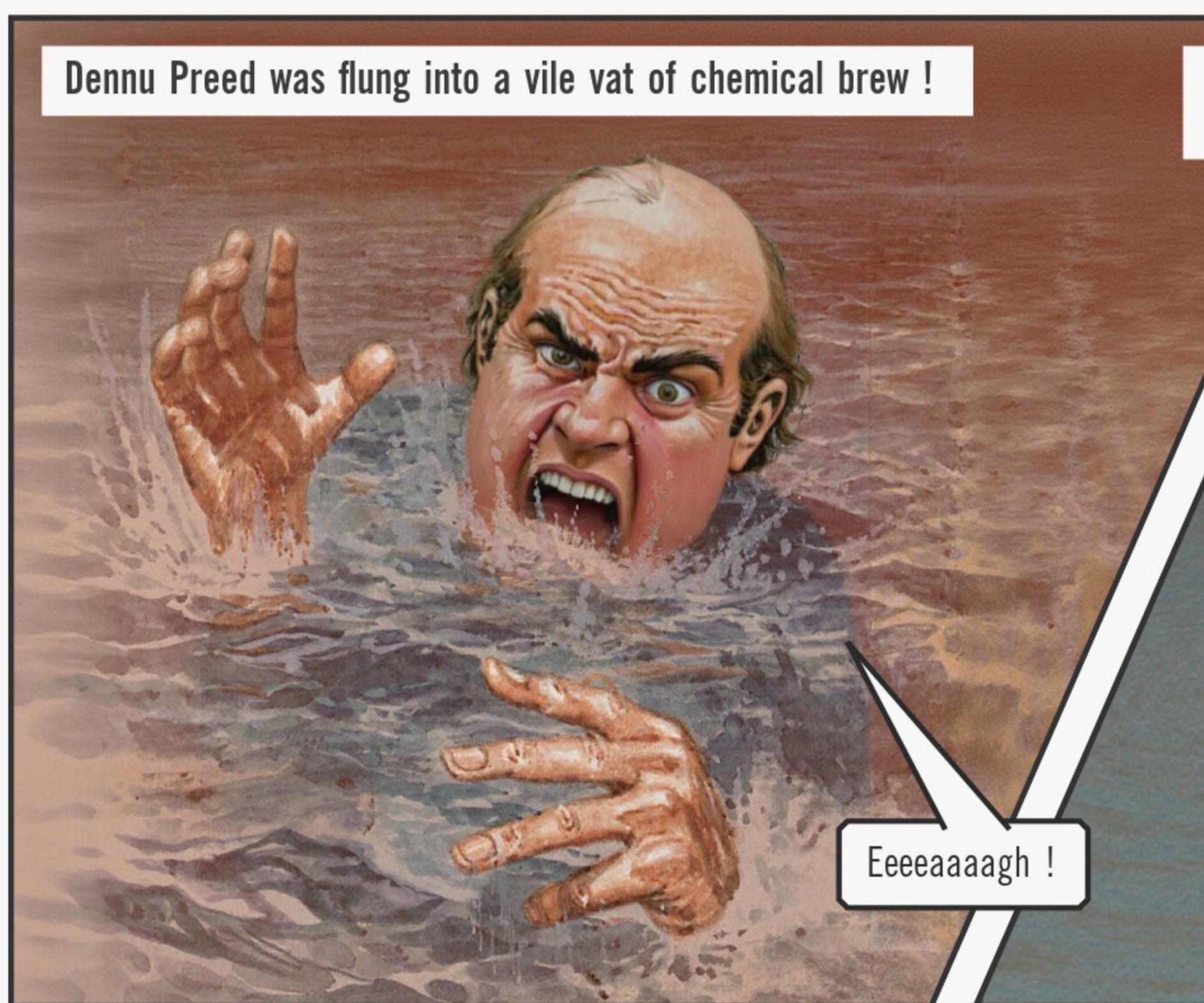
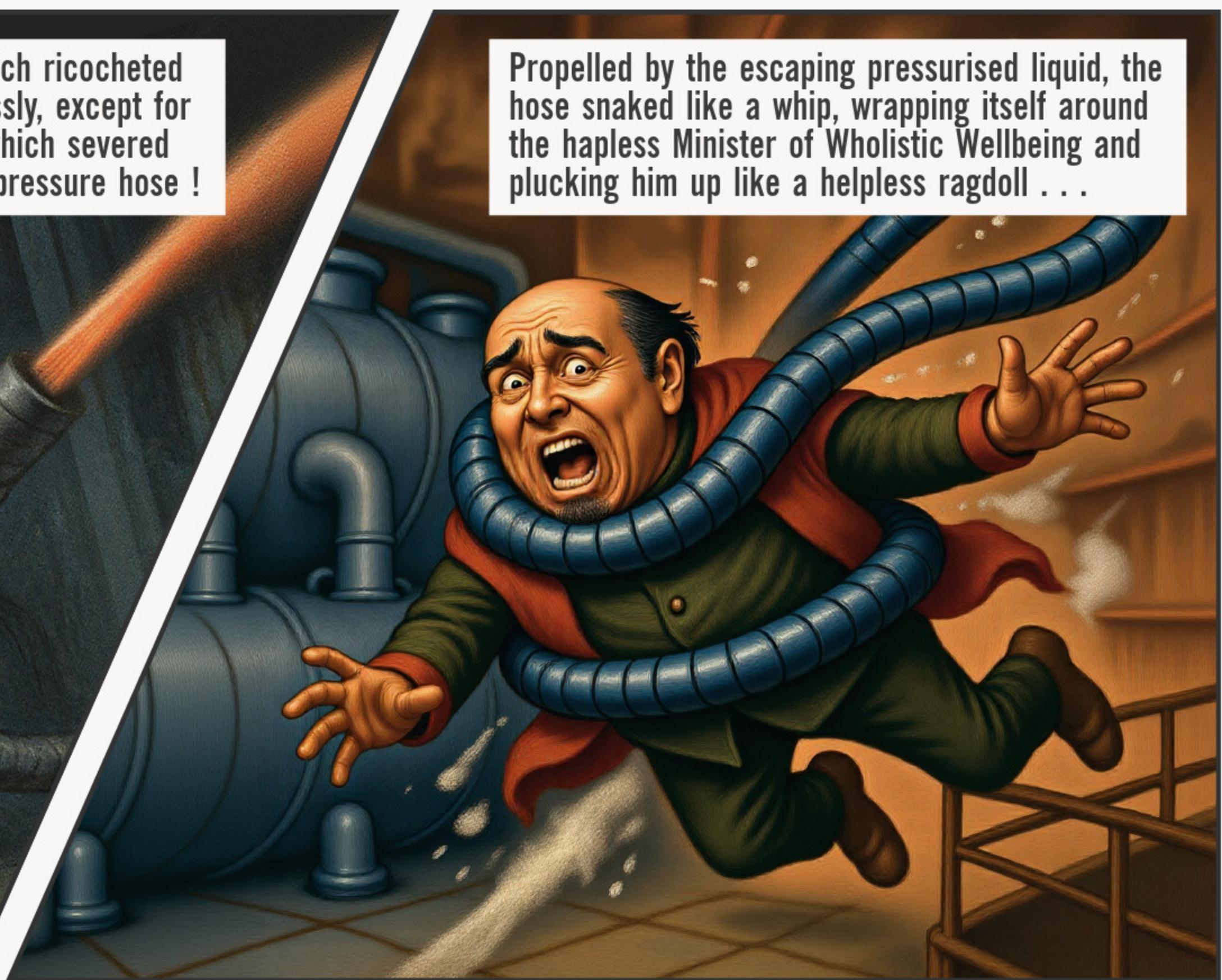
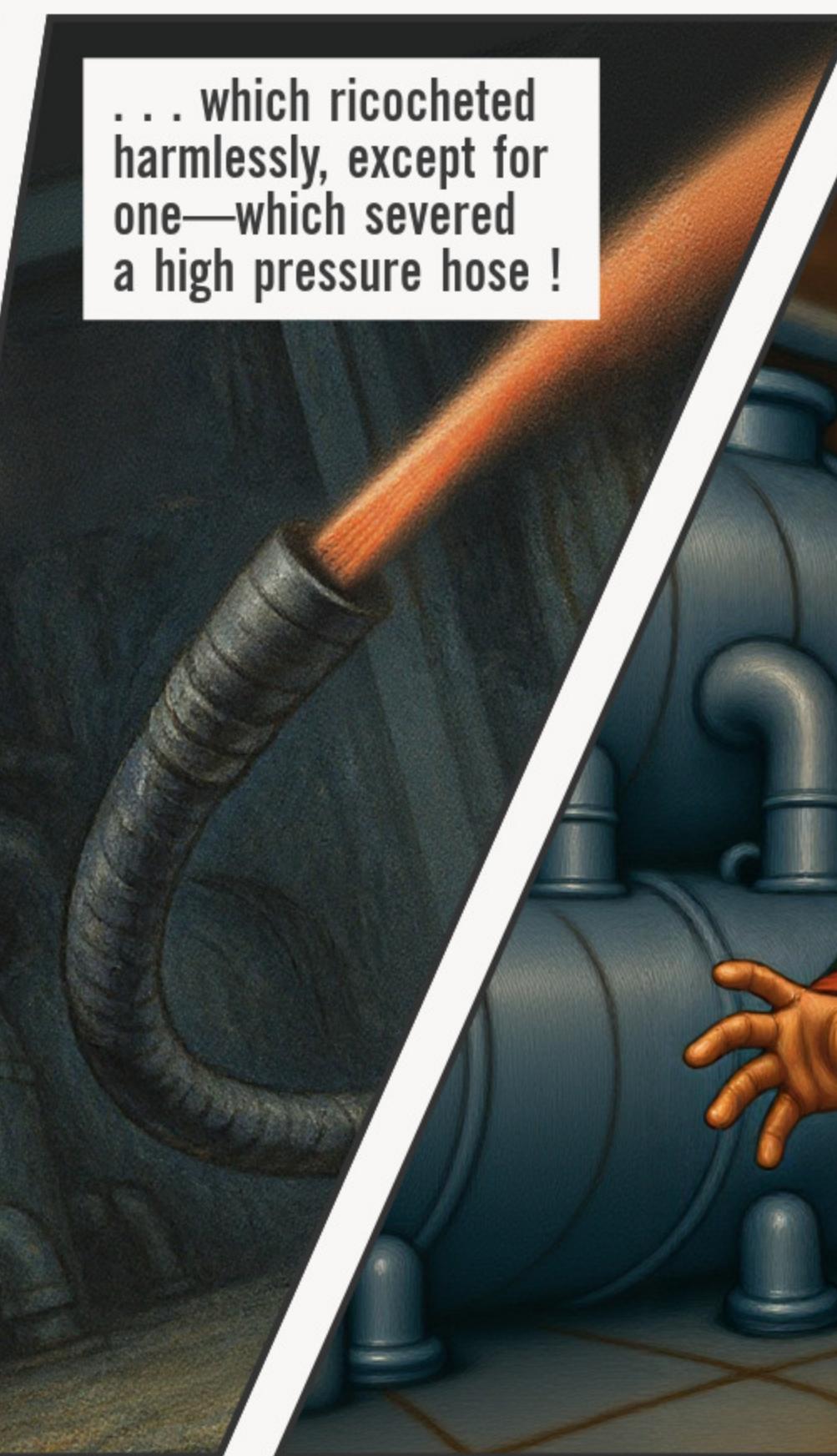
Roffa insisted that his own crop remained uncontaminated because it had been grown under controlled conditions. Keren was keen to confirm Roffa's hypothesis. He took several deep inhalations from Roffa's ornate table-top vaporising device.



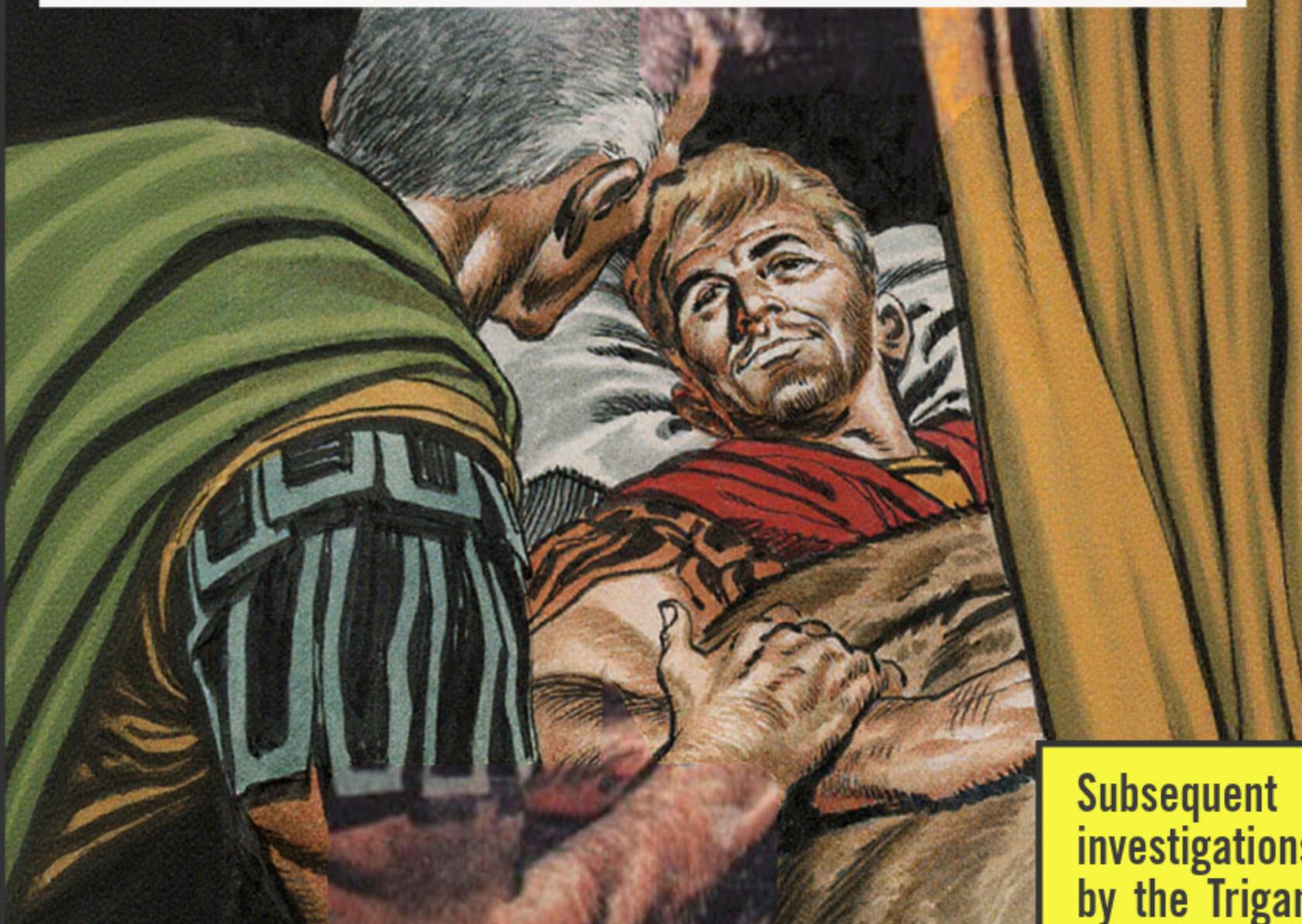




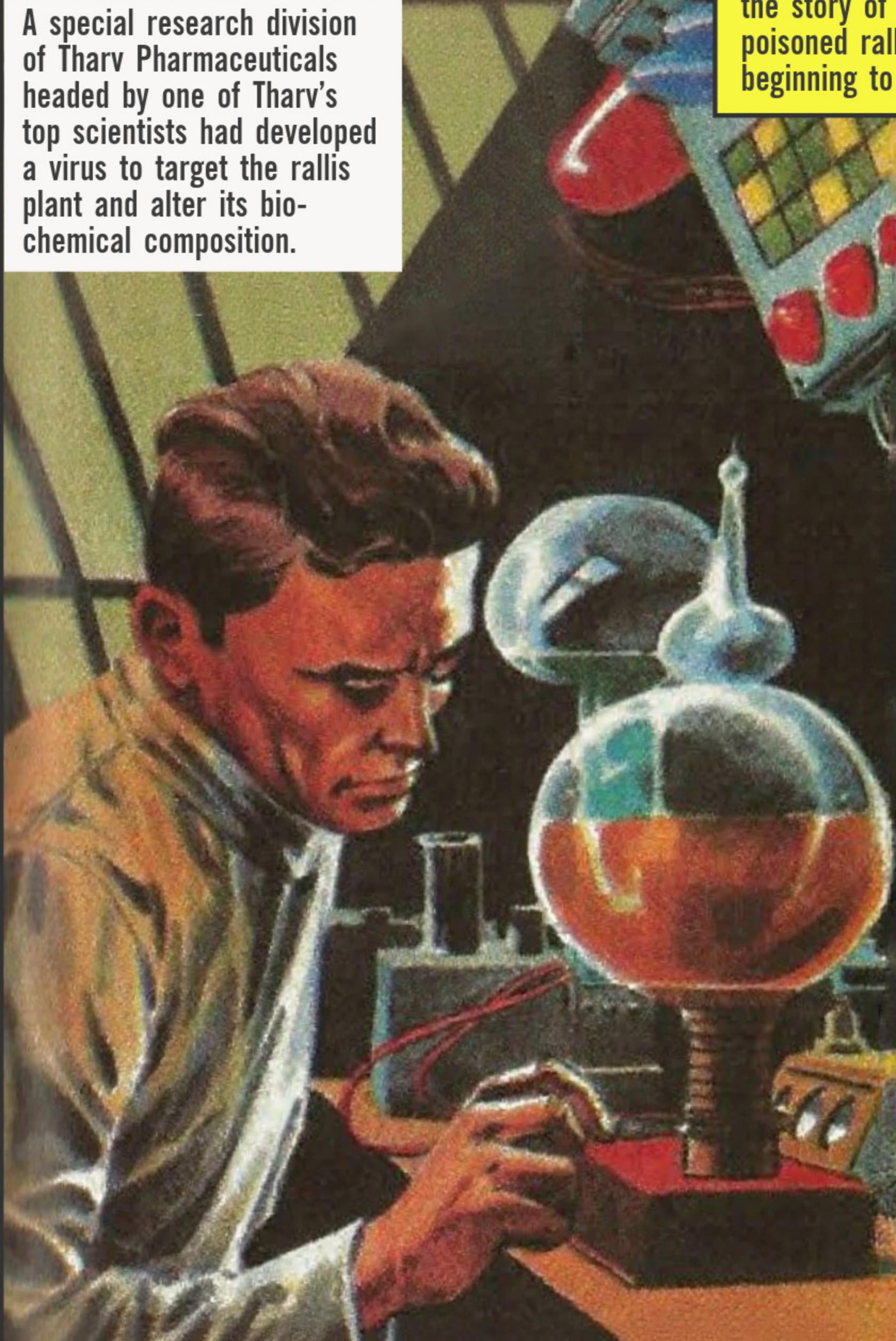




They arrived back at the Imperial Palace to find the Emperor Trigo already on the road to recovery. Keren had followed the instructions in the note that Roffa had left him, and delivered a parcel of the uncontaminated rallis plant.

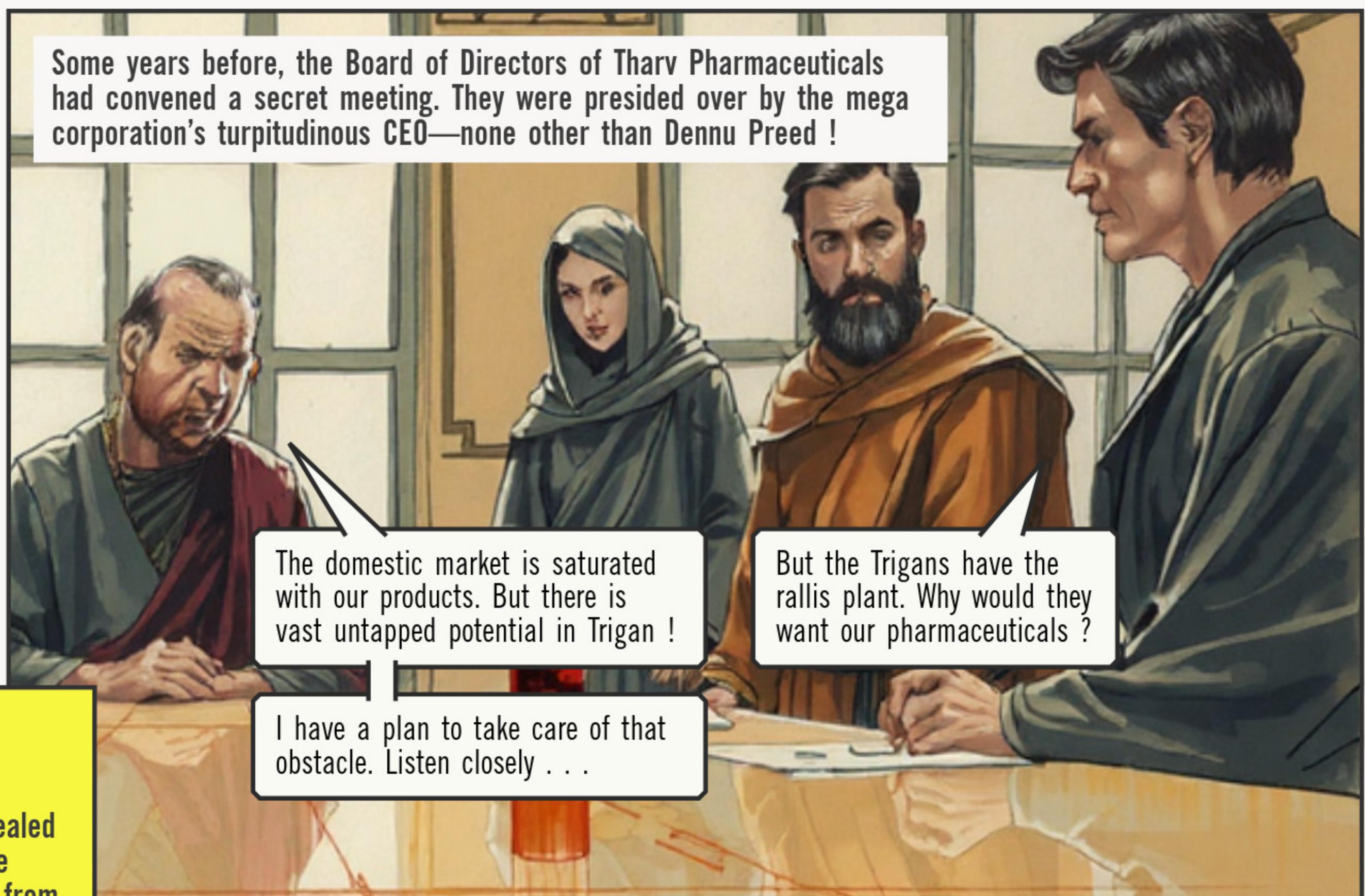


A special research division of Tharv Pharmaceuticals headed by one of Tharv's top scientists had developed a virus to target the rallis plant and alter its biochemical composition.



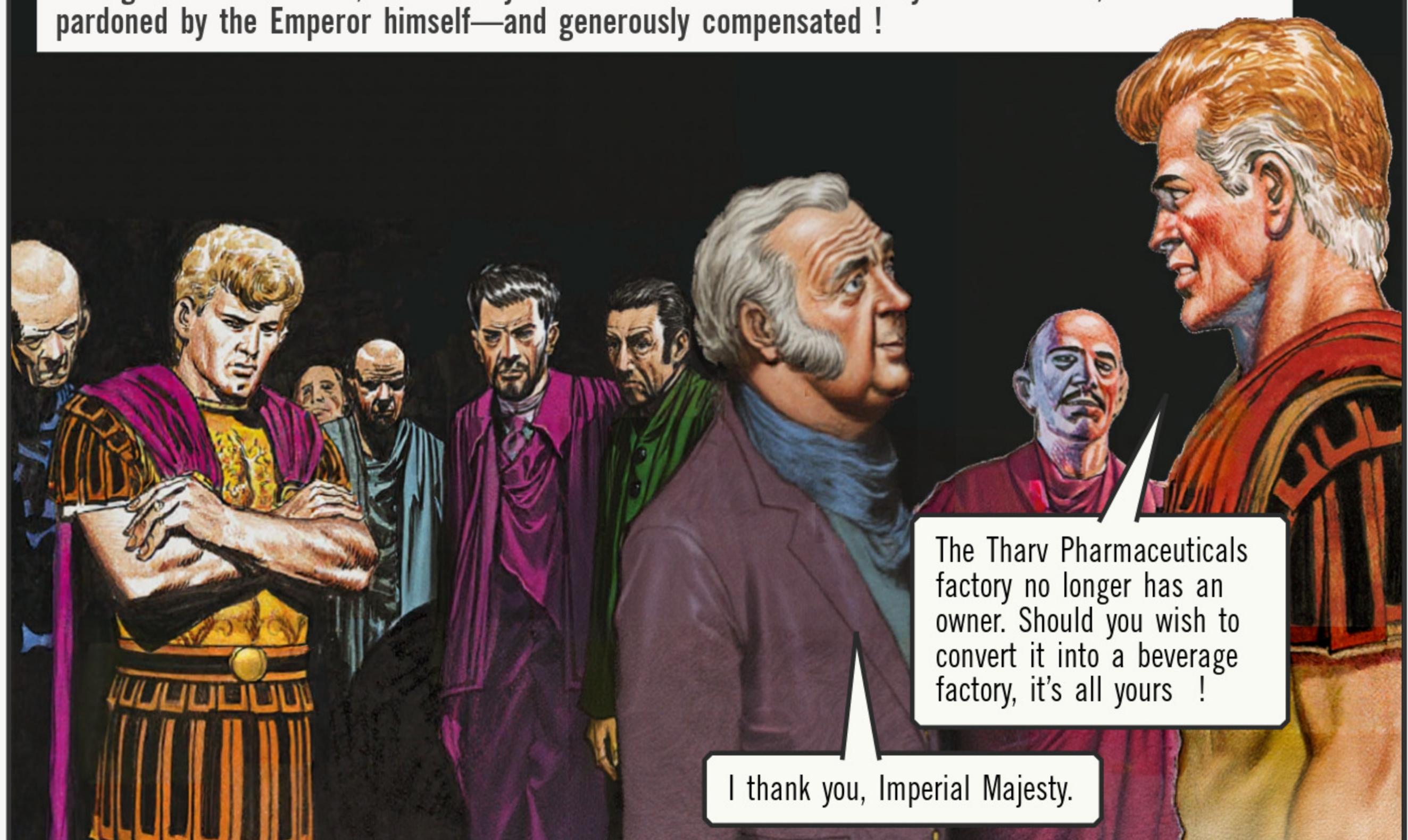
Subsequent investigations by the Trigan authorities revealed the story of the poisoned rallis from beginning to end.

Some years before, the Board of Directors of Tharv Pharmaceuticals had convened a secret meeting. They were presided over by the mega corporation's turpitidinous CEO—none other than Dennu Preed !

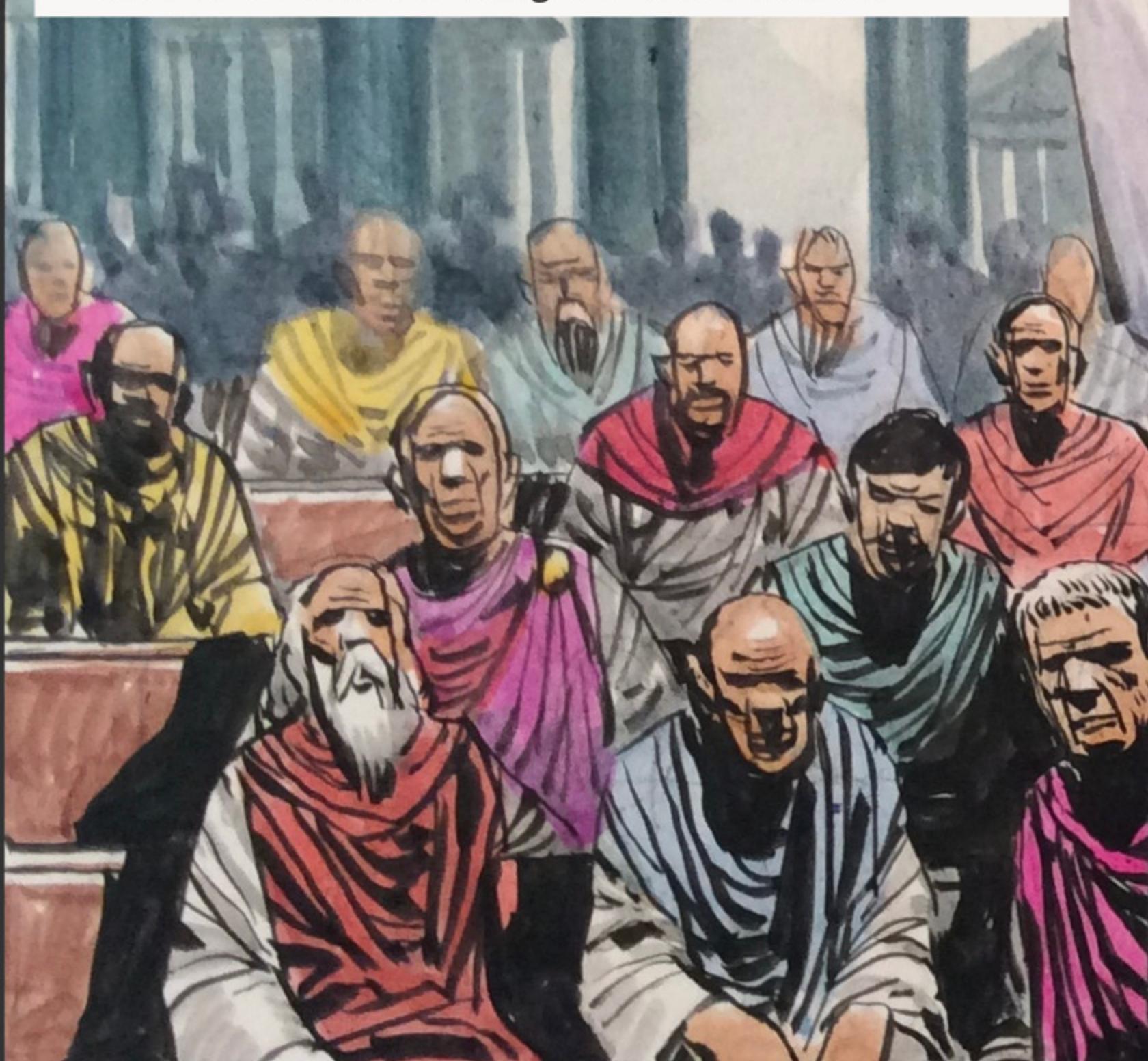


The occasion of the Trigan Empire's fiftieth anniversary had provided the perfect opportunity to deliver the viral load—in the exhaust trails of atmosphere craft coming from Tharv.

All those whose health had been affected soon recovered from the toxic effects of the poisoned rallis. And all those who had been convicted and imprisoned were pardoned and released. One among them was Tarkas, the wealthy brewer. His confiscated brewery was returned, and he was pardoned by the Emperor himself—and generously compensated !



United Victris was now in tatters. Members of the Parliament of United Victris were thoroughly vetted and provided new employment in a governing body set up to rule over Tharv—the Potentate and his ruling elite had vanished !



The conclusion of this strange saga was a short speech by the Emperor, at the next session of the Imperial Council. A change of heart and a change of plan !

