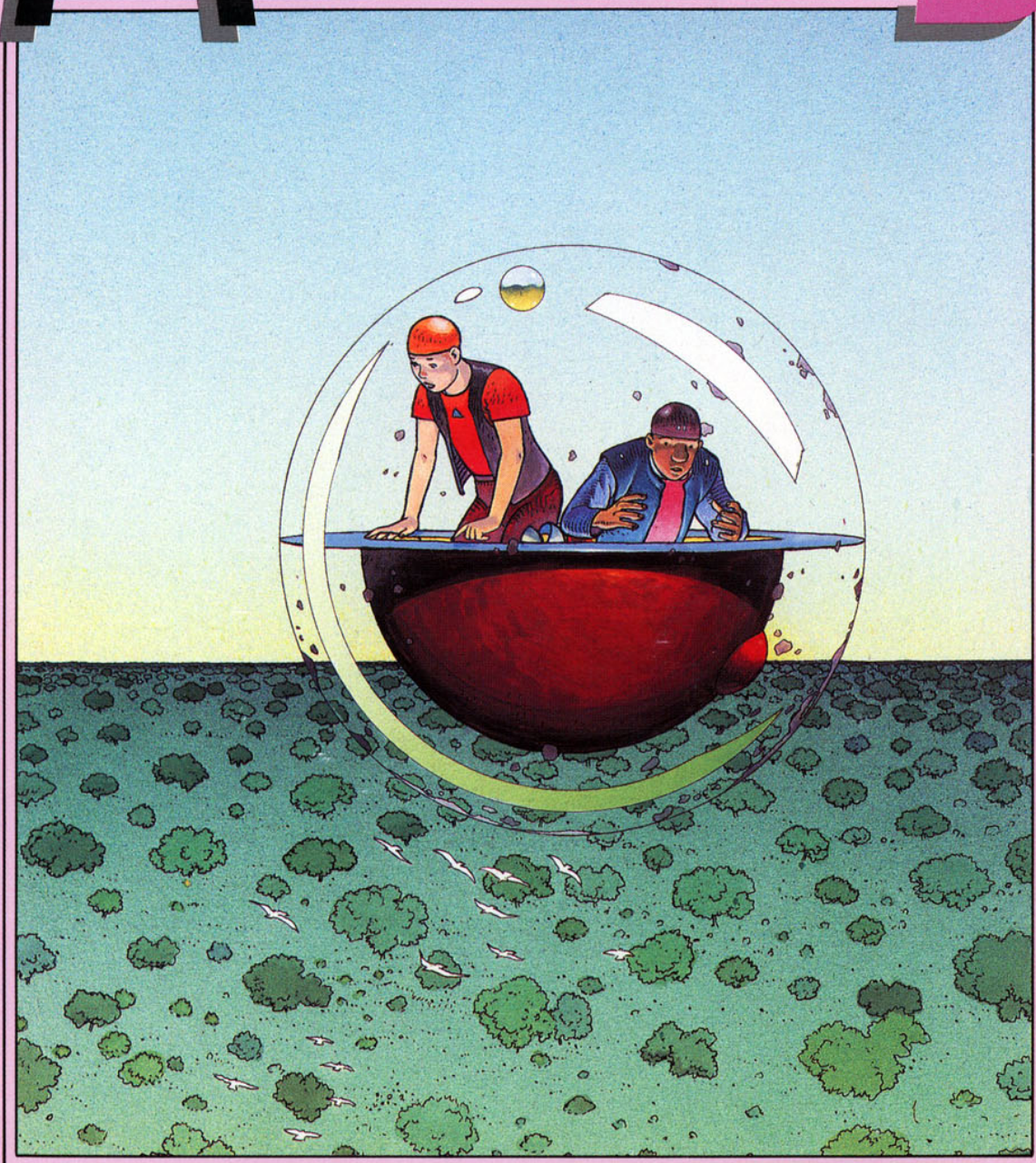


MOEBIUS 5TM

THE COLLECTED FANTASIES OF JEAN GIRAUD



◆ THE GARDENS OF ◆
AEDENATM

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MOEBIUS 5

THE GARDENS
OF AEDENA

THE GARDENS OF AEDENA

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THE UNFAITHFUL BODY

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with special thanks to Jean Annestay, Salvador Soldevila,
Isabelle Morin, Yvan Delporte & Edward Magalong

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UPON A STAR

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THE GARDENS OF AEDENA

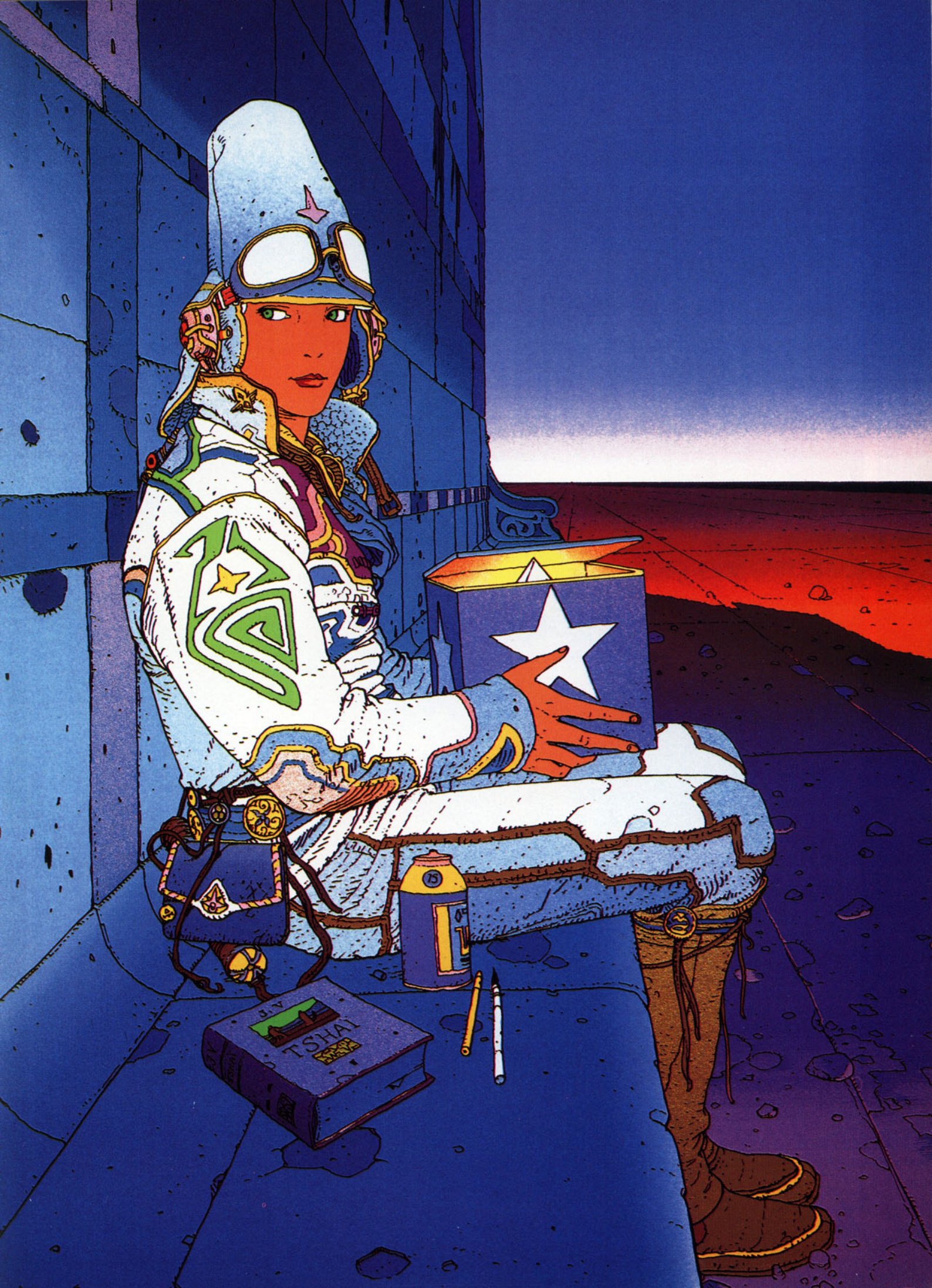
OTHER MOEBIUS GRAPHIC NOVELS

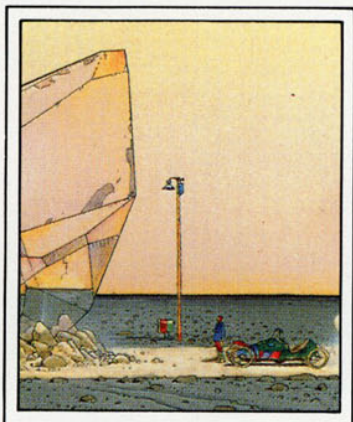
MOEBIUS 6

**PHARAGONESIA
& OTHER STRANGE STORIES**

published by
The Marvel Entertainment Group
387 Park Avenue South
New York, NY 10016
ISBN # 0-87135-282-6

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THE ROAD TO AEDENA

The Gardens of Aedena, a sequel to **Upon A Star**, our first volume, marks a transition in Moebius' career.

The story is itself an example of a transition. It shows a progressive and graceful evolution from the somewhat innocent, "clear line" style of **Upon A Star** in the first twenty to thirty pages, to a more detailed look, better adapted to its darker ending.

Then, as Moebius explains in his afterword, **The Gardens of Aedena** is also the departure point from which a series of inter-related stories will spring, linking up with earlier works, such as **The Airtight Garage**, to form the basis of a consistent Moebius universe. This saga is planned to encompass several multi-book cycles, and millions of years in the History of the Moebius multiverse. And it all begins here...

And what better symbol for this conceptual transition, than the not-so-obvious return of Major Grubert as the enigmatic Master Burg! Continuity buffs will also enjoy the painting on the wall of Page 40, which portrays the Airtight Garage itself, or rather its ancestor, the asteroid Flower, as it appeared in **The Horny Goof**.

The Gardens of Aedena is a bridge between Moebius' past and Moebius' future in more ways than one. **Hit Man**, for instance, an earlier story, very different both in style and content, turns out to have more than a passing connection with the themes of **The Aedena Cycle**. And so does **The Unfaithful Body**, a more recent, amusing fantastic voyage. Obviously, the themes that Moebius is now developing were seminally present in his work years ago.

Last, and perhaps not least, this is the first time that one of Moebius' stories is published first in English. Indeed, **The Gardens of Aedena** has not yet appeared in France, under any form. If you consider that the story was drawn in part in Japan, it may very well be Moebius' first, truly international piece of work.

A milestone on the road to Aedena.

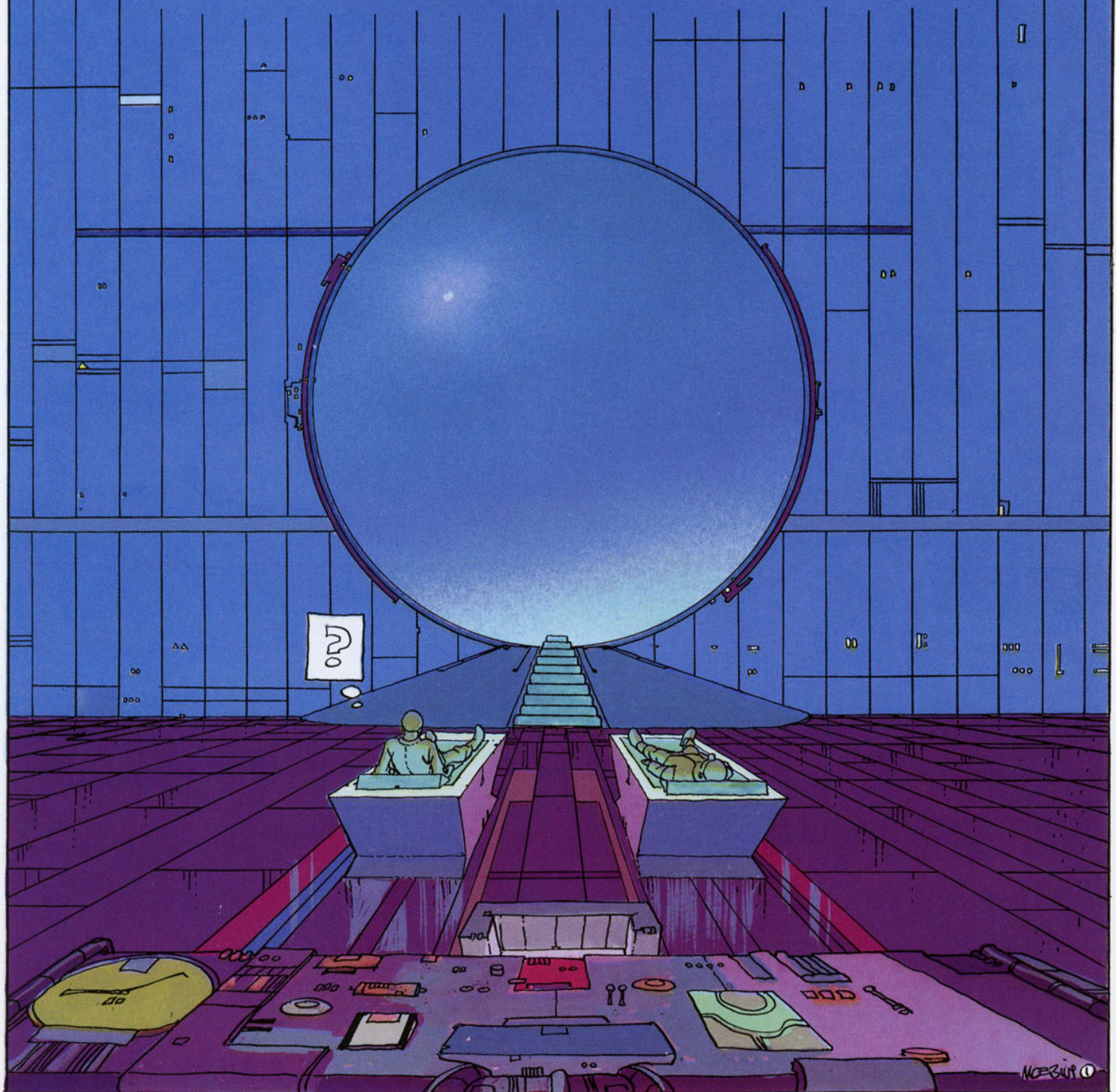
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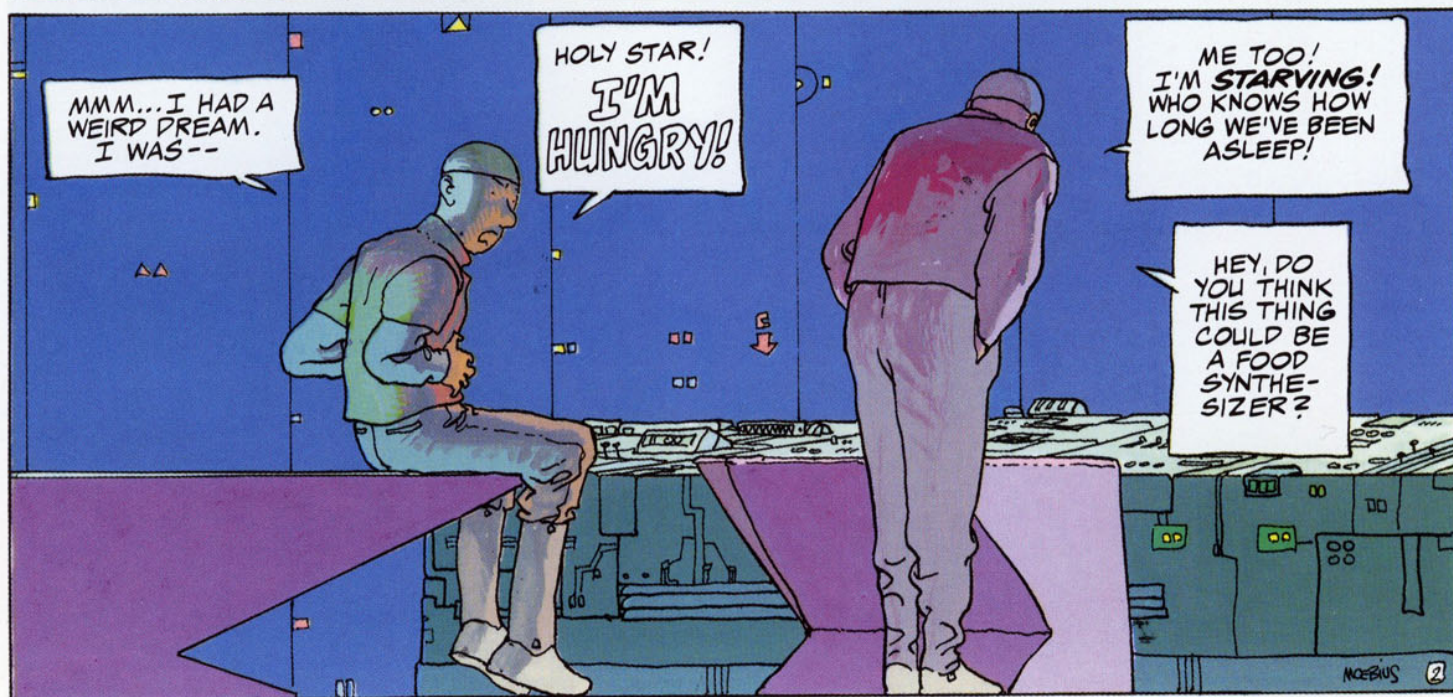
THE GARDENS OF AEDENA

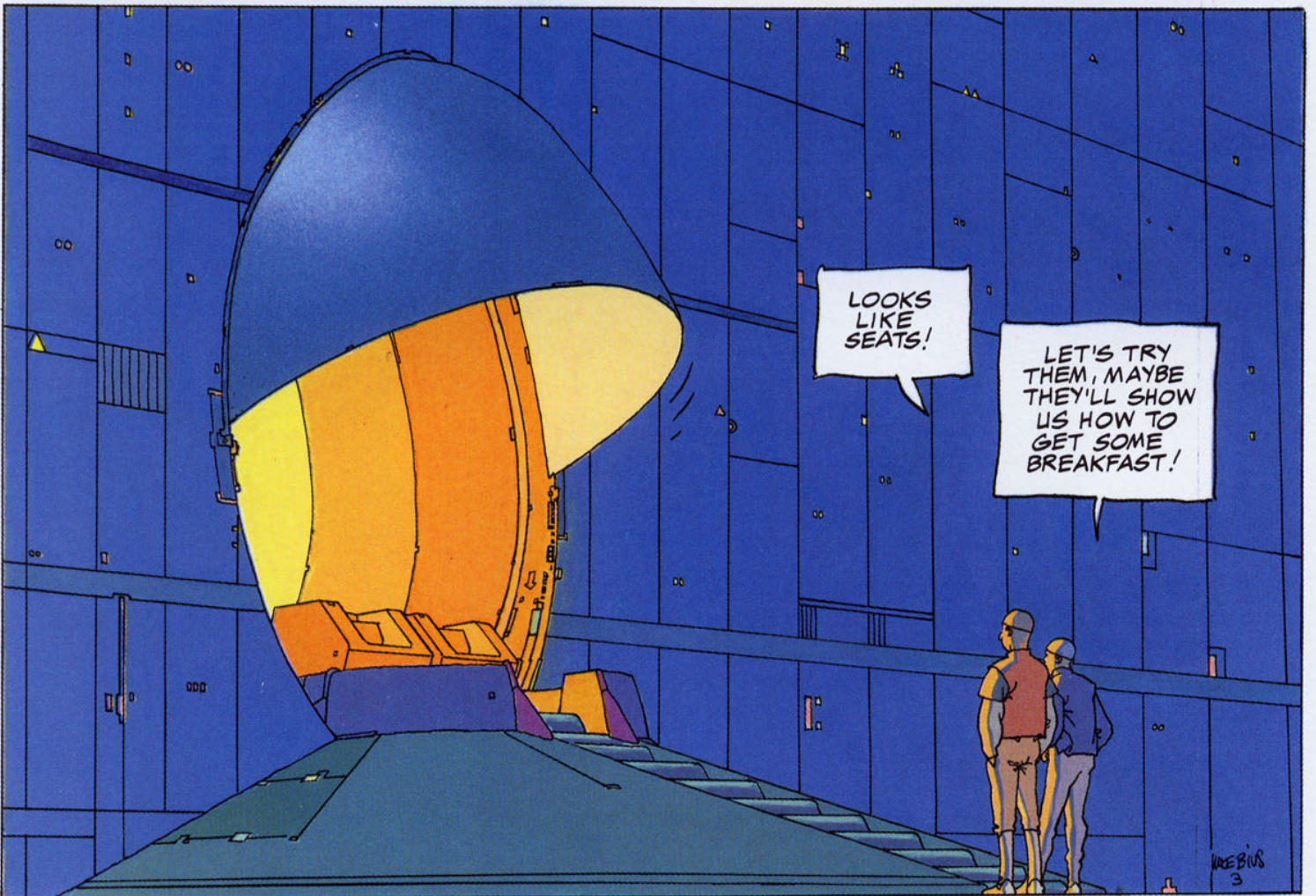
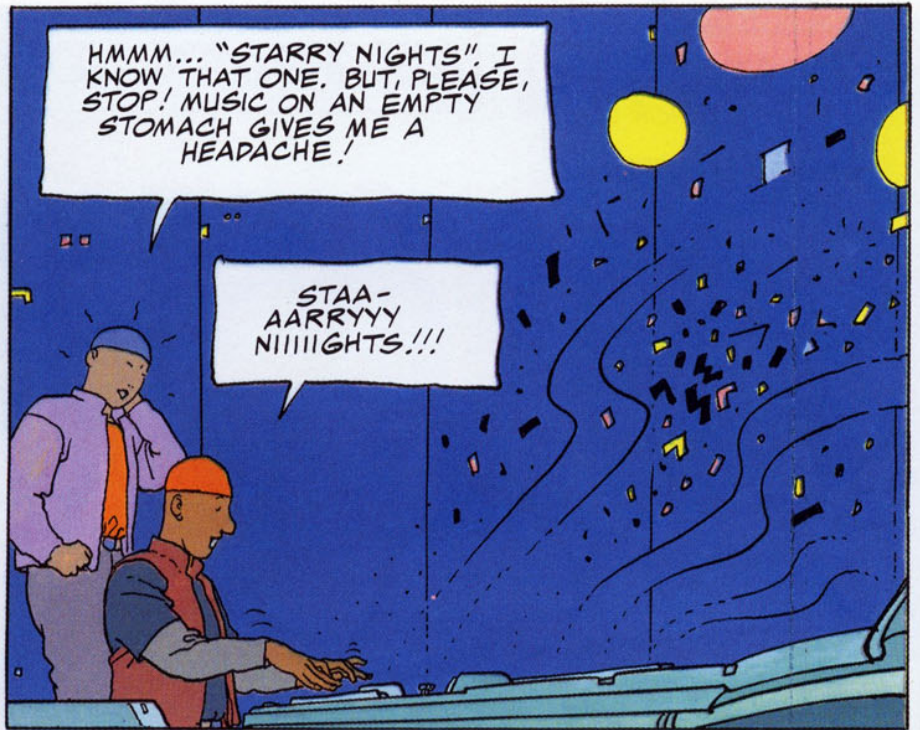
INVESTIGATING THE ENIGMATIC DISAPPEARANCE OF THE CREW OF A SPACE STATION, STEL AND ATAN CRASH LAND ON A STRANGE AND APPARENTLY DESERTED WORLD, WHICH THEY DUB "POOL BALL" BECAUSE OF ITS SMOOTH AND PERFECTLY SPHERICAL SHAPE.

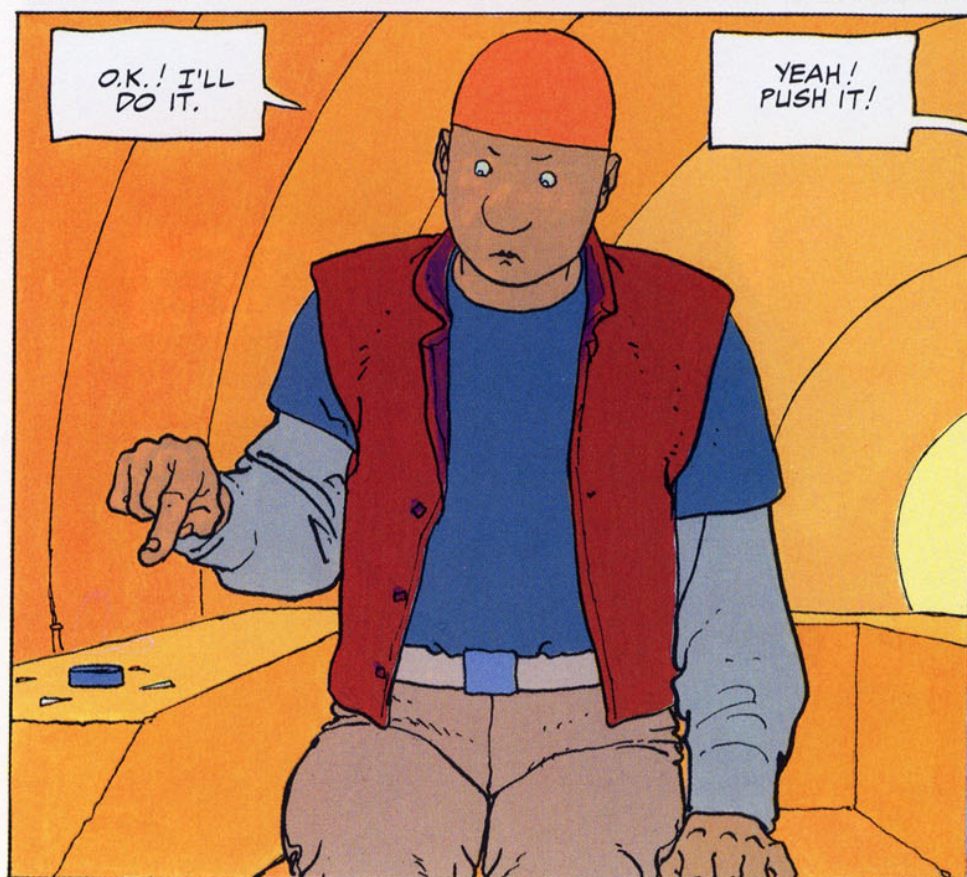
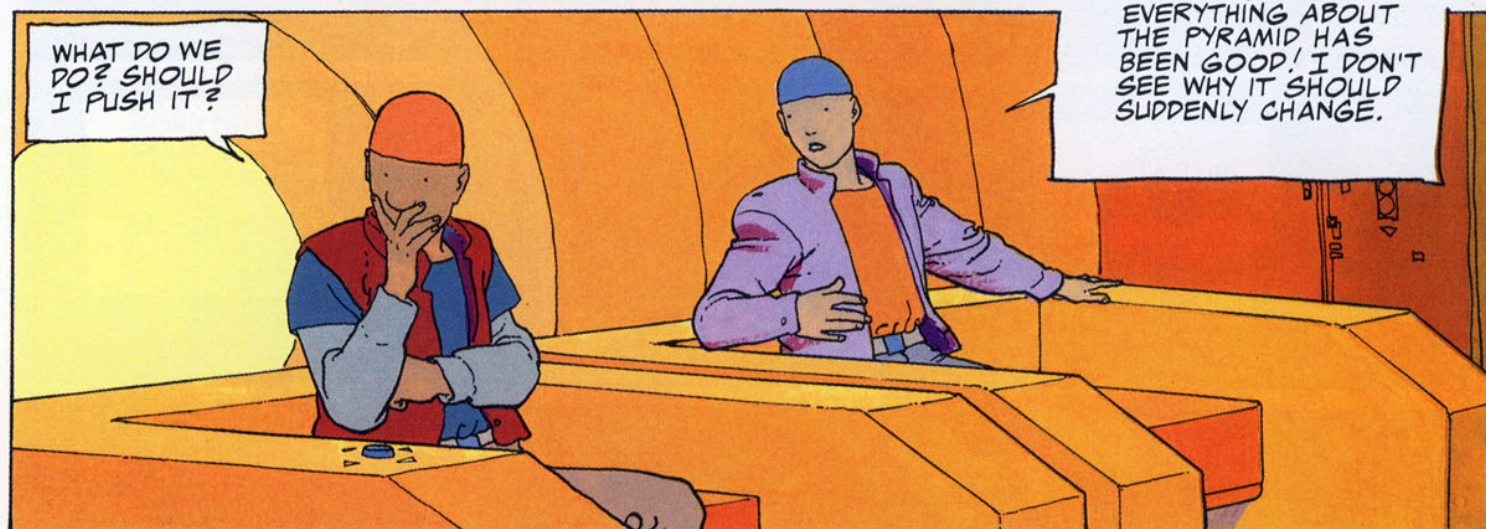
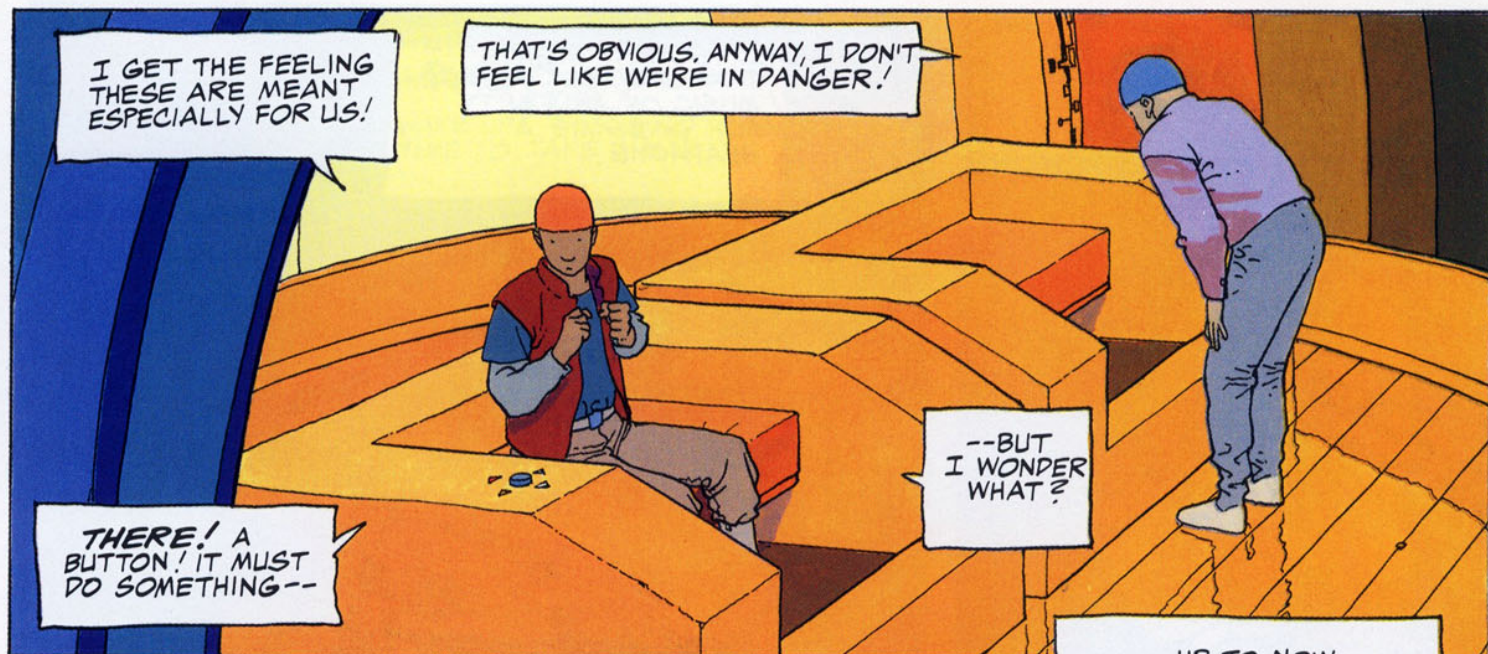
EVENTUALLY, THEY DISCOVER AN INCREDIBLE ASSEMBLY OF BEINGS REPRESENTING A SAMPLE OF ALL THE INTELLIGENT LIFEFORMS IN THE GALAXY. THESE PEOPLE APPEAR TO HAVE BEEN GATHERED BY A MYSTERIOUS PYRAMID, WHICH HAS PRESERVED THEM IN A STATE OF IMMORTALITY FOR OVER SEVEN HUNDRED THOUSAND YEARS.

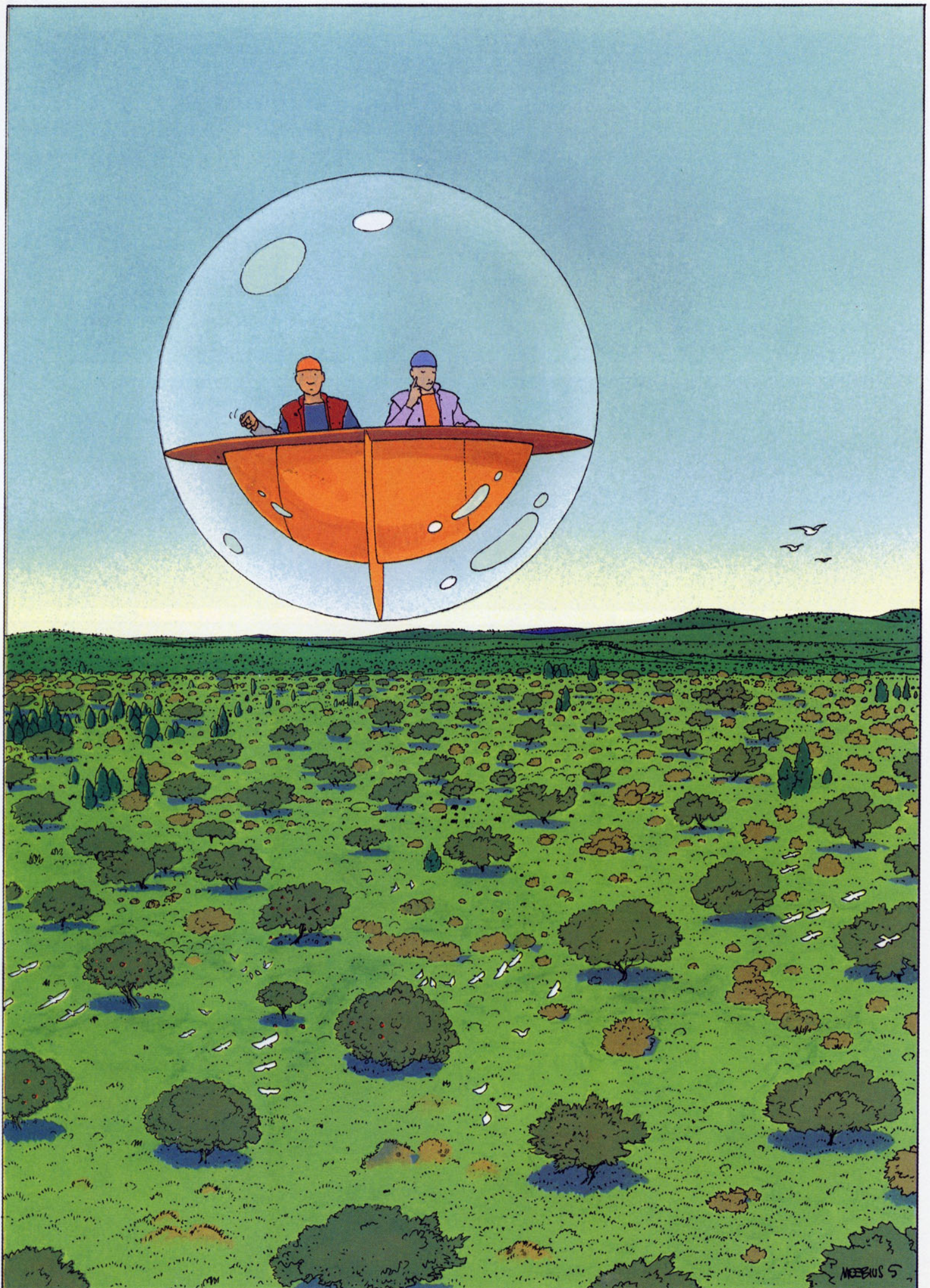
STEL THEN DISCOVERS THAT HE IS, IN FACT, THE PILOT THAT THE PYRAMID-- A SENTIENT STARSHIP-- HAS BEEN AWAITING FOR A MILLENNIA. CARRYING THE ENTIRE POPULATION OF "POOL BALL" WITHIN ITSELF, THE PYRAMID AT LAST TAKES OFF TOWARDS ITS MYTHICAL DESTINATION: **AEDENA**, THE LEGENDARY PARADISE PLANET.

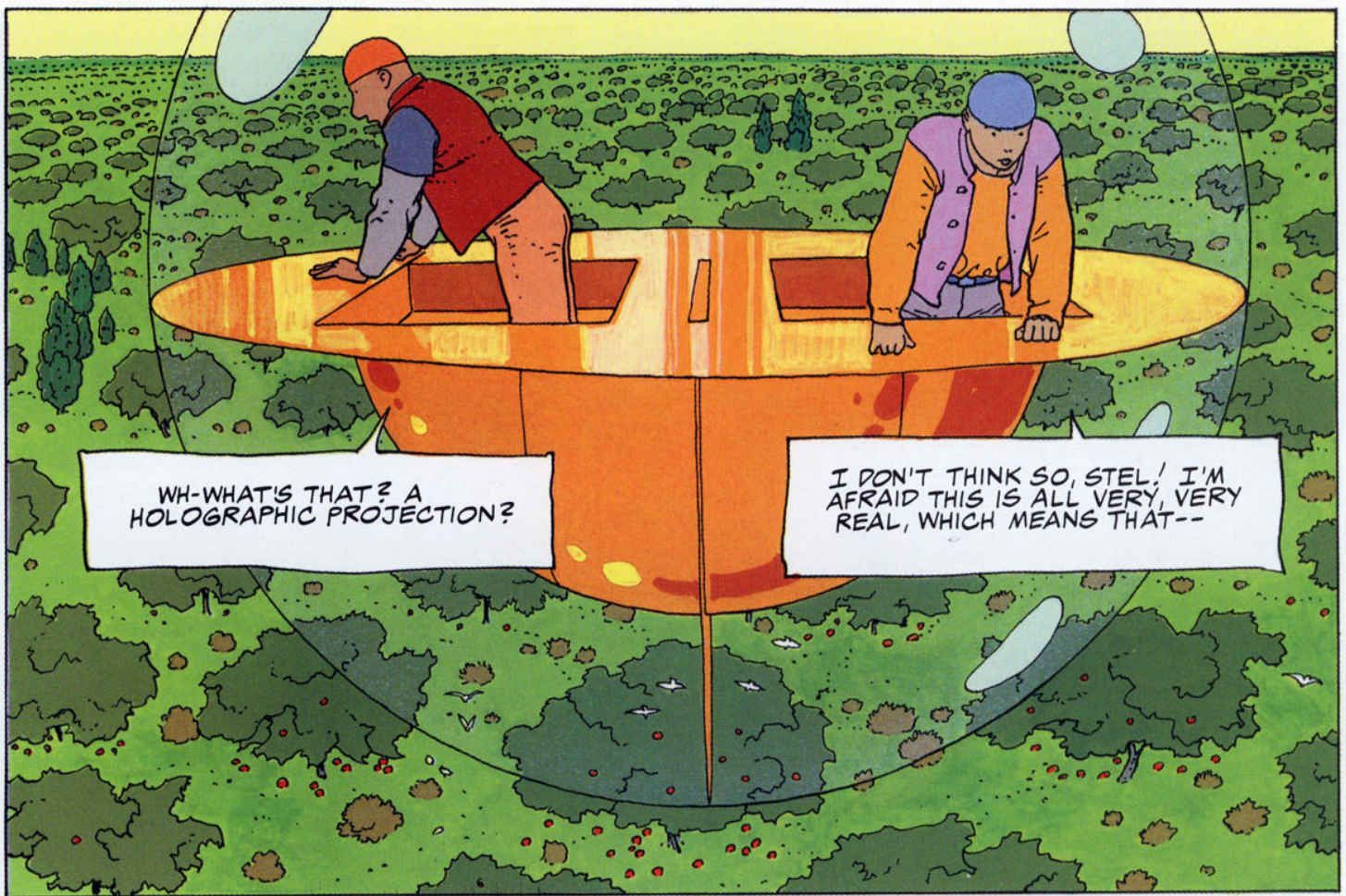










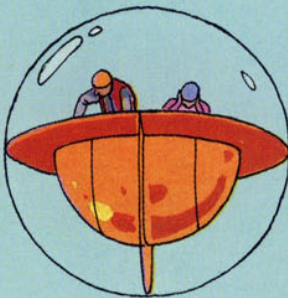


WH-WHAT'S THAT? A HOLOGRAPHIC PROJECTION?

I DON'T THINK SO, STEL! I'M AFRAID THIS IS ALL VERY, VERY REAL, WHICH MEANS THAT--

--WE'RE THE ONES WHO'VE BEEN PROJECTED SOMEWHERE! QUICK! PRESS THAT DAMNED BUTTON AGAIN! WE'VE GOT TO GET BACK TO THE SHIP!

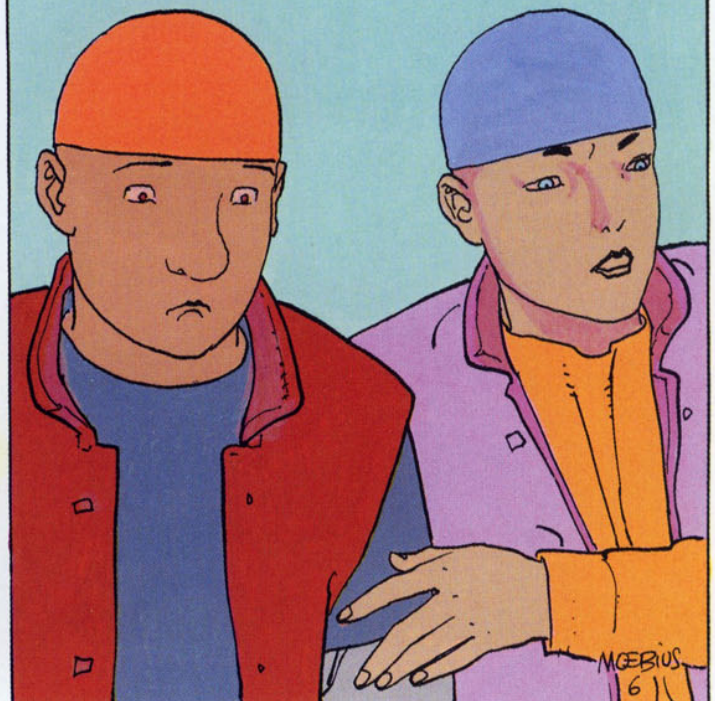
I'VE ALREADY DONE THAT! BUT NOTHING HAPPENS!

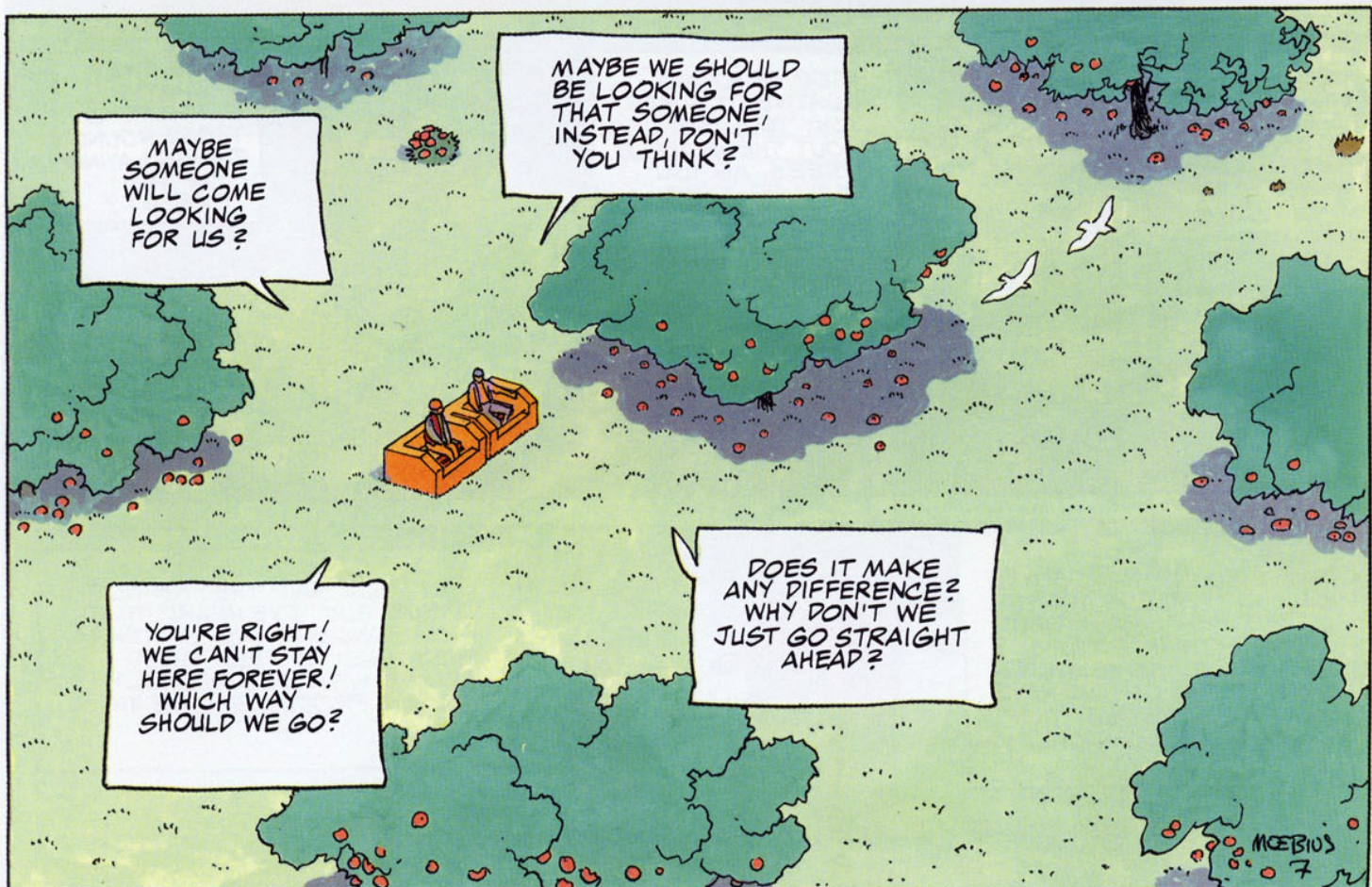
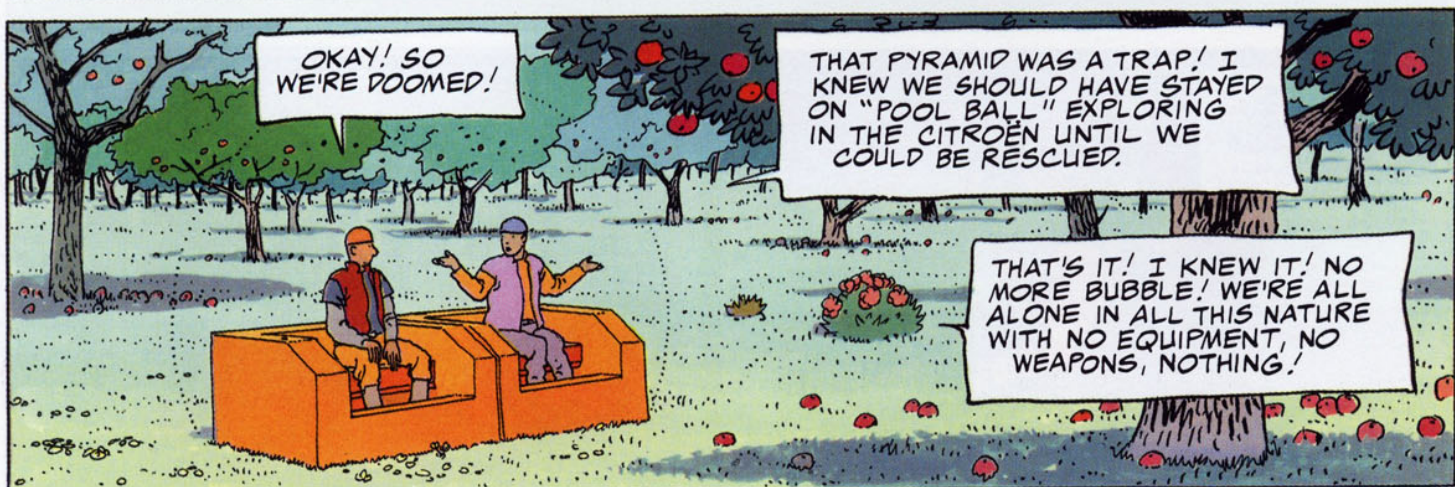
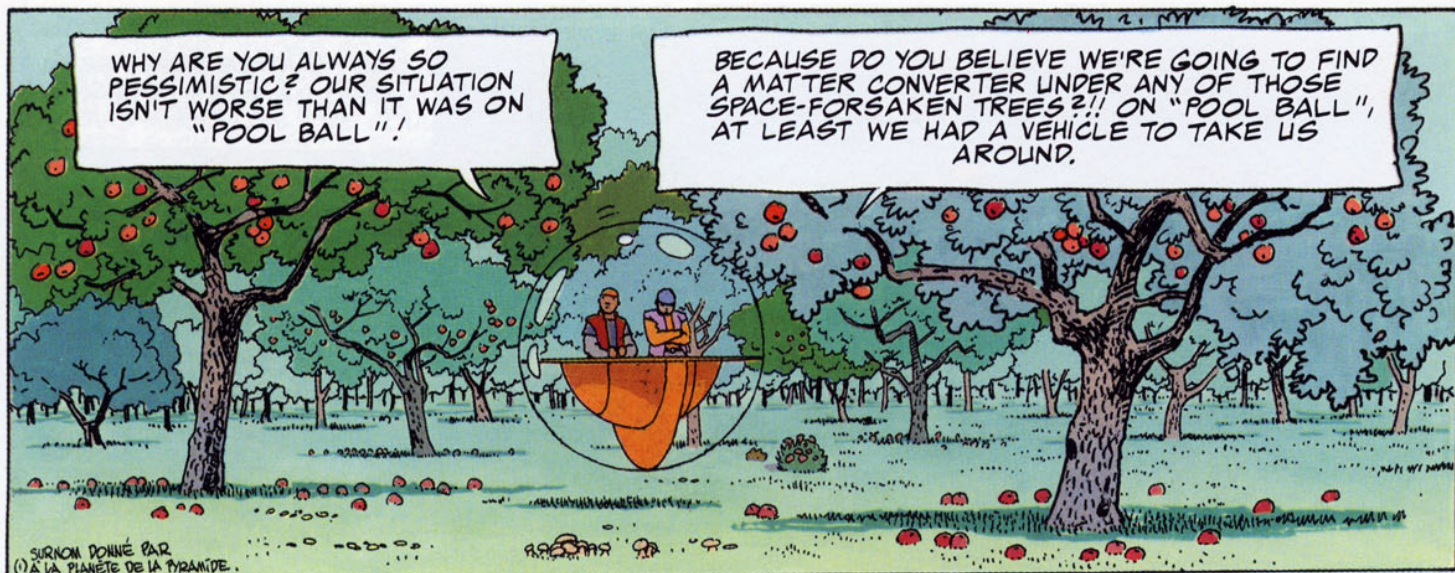


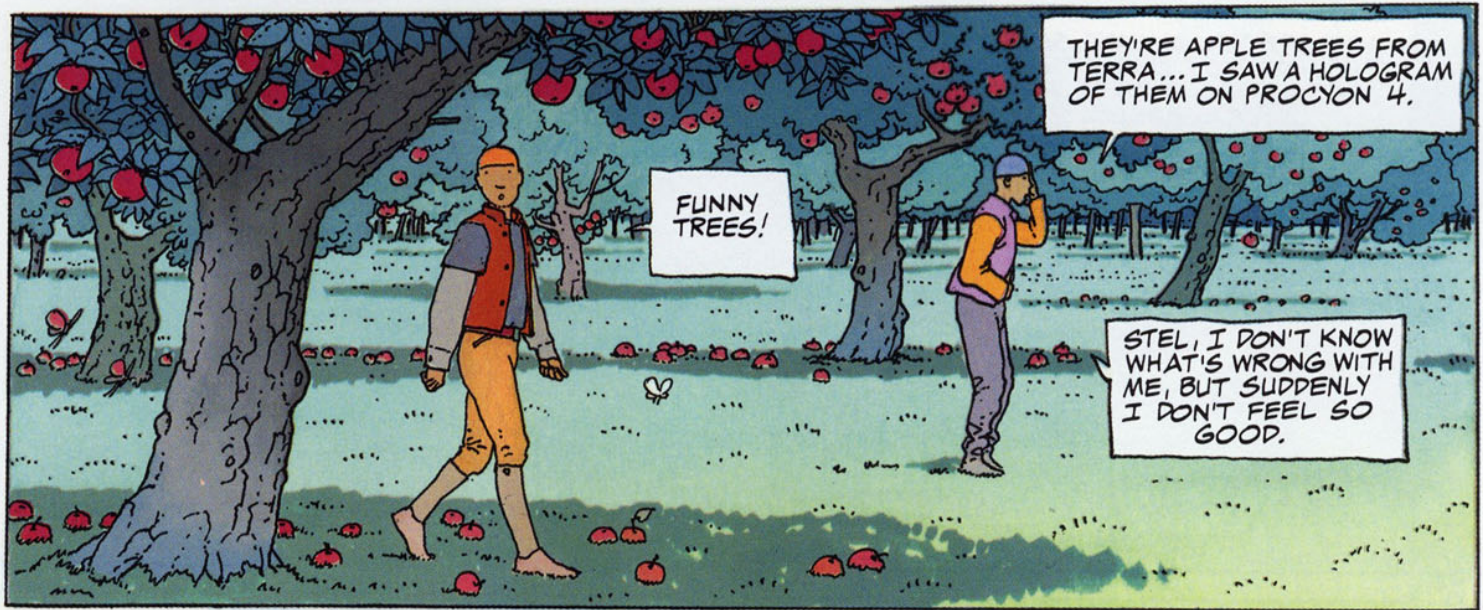
I GUESS THAT MEANS WE'RE STUCK HERE!

LOOK! THE BUBBLE'S FALLING!

I BET IT'S GOING TO DROP US IN THE MIDDLE OF NOWHERE! STEL, NOT ONLY ARE WE STUCK HERE, WE'RE ALSO DOOMED!







THEY'RE APPLE TREES FROM TERRA... I SAW A HOLOGRAM OF THEM ON PROCYON 4.

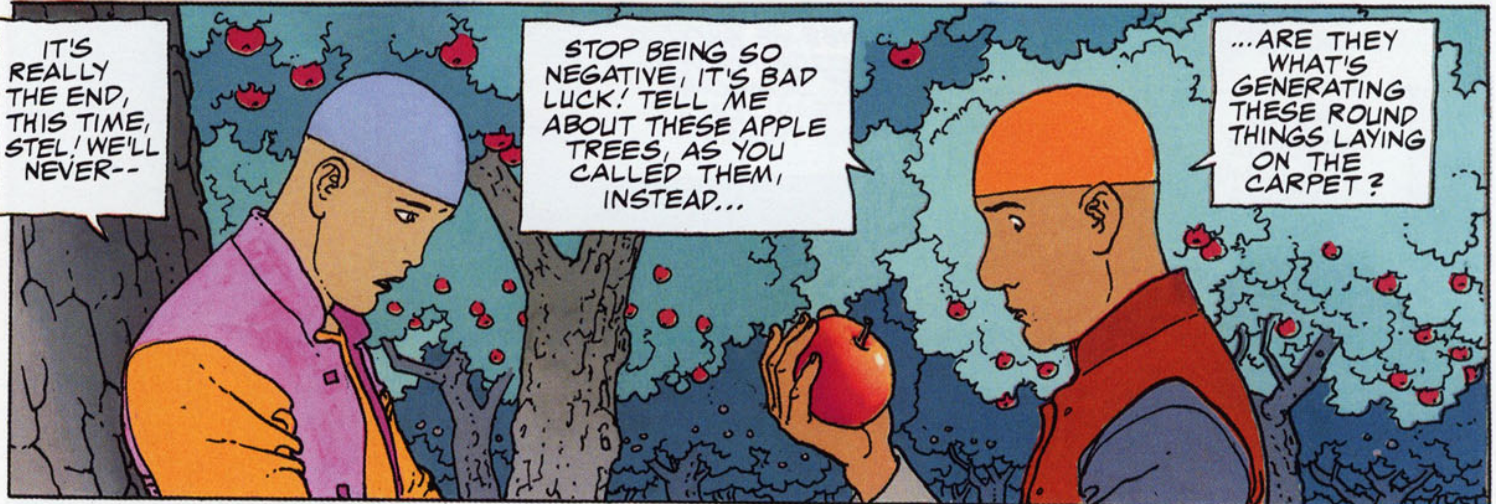
FUNNY TREES!

STEL, I DON'T KNOW WHAT'S WRONG WITH ME, BUT SUDDENLY I DON'T FEEL SO GOOD.



PFFF...! I FEEL DIZZY, AND MY LEGS ARE ALL WEAK.

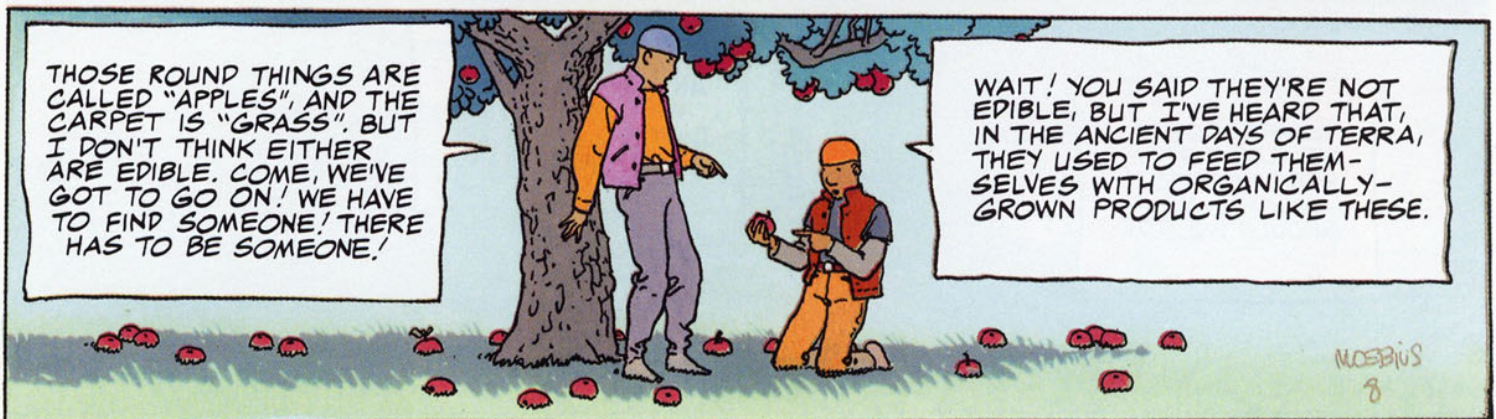
MUST BE BECAUSE WE HAVEN'T EATEN. I FEEL IT TOO. I SEE FUNNY LIGHTS DANCING IN FRONT OF MY EYES.



IT'S REALLY THE END, THIS TIME, STEL! WE'LL NEVER--

STOP BEING SO NEGATIVE, IT'S BAD LUCK! TELL ME ABOUT THESE APPLE TREES, AS YOU CALLED THEM, INSTEAD...

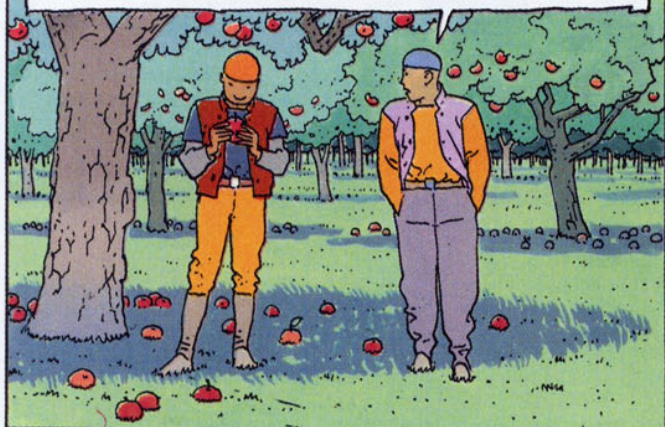
...ARE THEY WHAT'S GENERATING THESE ROUND THINGS LAYING ON THE CARPET?



THOSE ROUND THINGS ARE CALLED "APPLES", AND THE CARPET IS "GRASS". BUT I DON'T THINK EITHER ARE EDIBLE. COME, WE'VE GOT TO GO ON! WE HAVE TO FIND SOMEONE! THERE HAS TO BE SOMEONE!

WAIT! YOU SAID THEY'RE NOT EDIBLE, BUT I'VE HEARD THAT, IN THE ANCIENT DAYS OF TERRA, THEY USED TO FEED THEMSELVES WITH ORGANICALLY-GROWN PRODUCTS LIKE THESE.

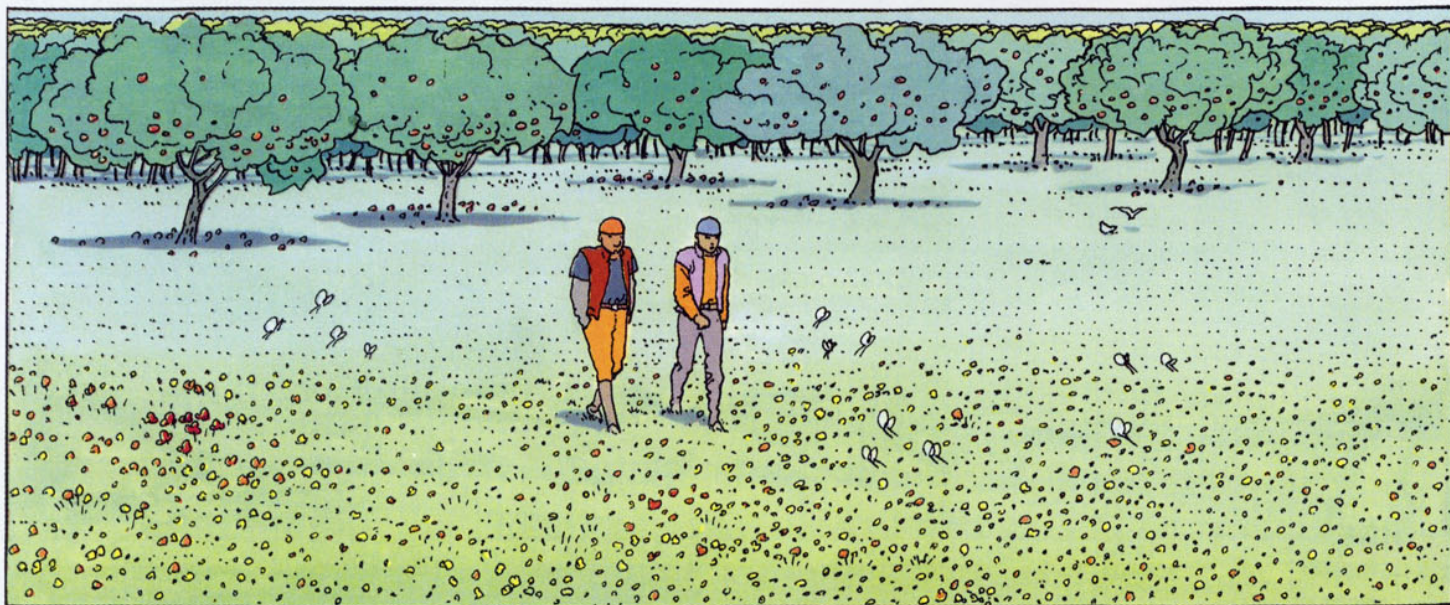
OF COURSE! THOSE POOR PRIMITIVES DIDN'T HAVE MATTER CONVERTERS LIKE WE DO. BUT THAT WAS OVER FOUR THOUSAND YEARS AGO, STEL! WE COULDN'T ASSIMILATE SUCH TYPES OF FOOD NOW.



BESIDES, EATING SOMETHING THAT'S ALIVE! YERCH! IT'S TOO DISGUSTING! IT MAKES ME SICK JUST TO THINK ABOUT IT! DON'T MENTION IT ANYMORE, OKAY?

OKAY! I WON'T BRING IT UP AGAIN!

GOOD! LET'S DROP IT!





ATAN! ATAN!
ANSWER ME!

HE'S
REALLY
OUT OF IT!



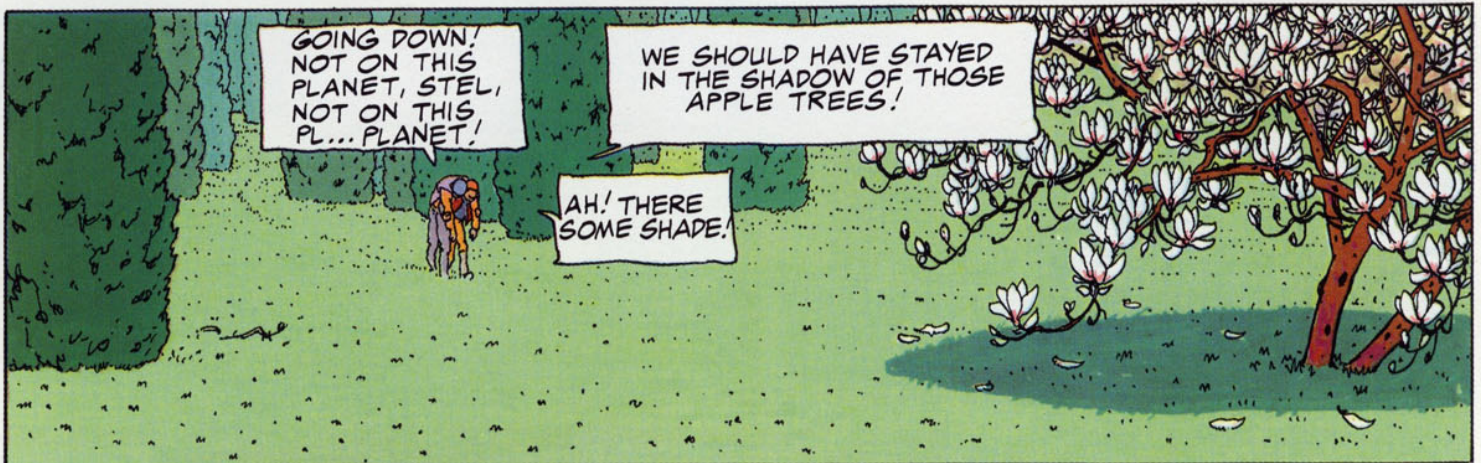
THE SHIP... IT'S
GOING TO
CRASH! STEL...THE
HEAT...THE SHIP...

WHAT SHIP?



RETRO-ROCKETS HAVE
BURNED OUT, HAVEN'T
THEY? IS OUR TRAJEC-
TORY OKAY? STEL? THE
SHIP'S GOING DOWN.
GOING D...

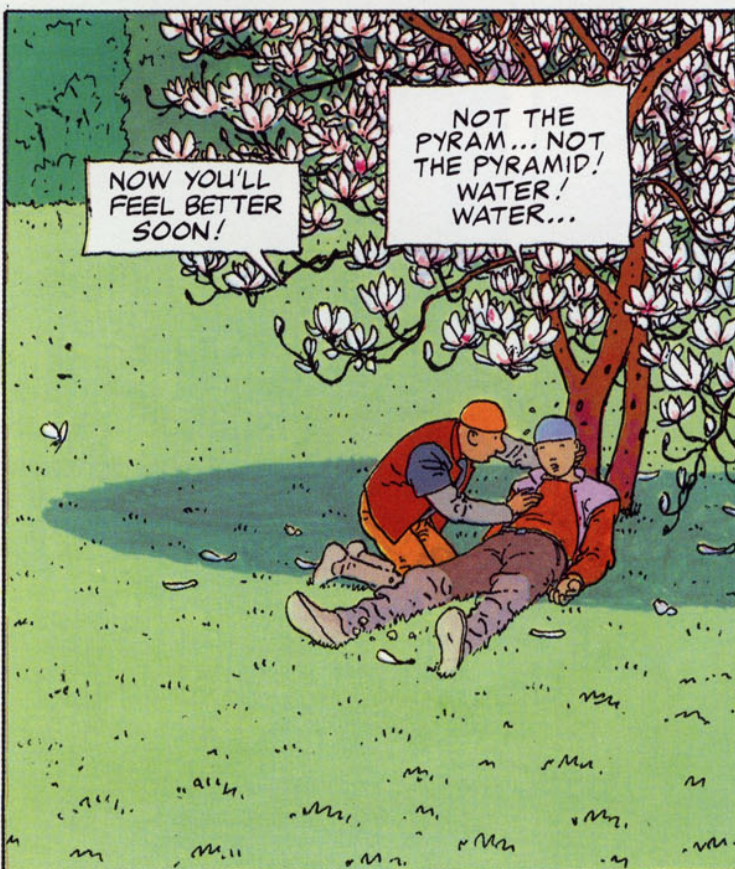
HE'S DELIRIOUS.
MUST BE THE SUN!
WE'RE NOT USED TO
THIS KIND OF HEAT!



GOING DOWN!
NOT ON THIS
PLANET, STEL,
NOT ON THIS
PL... PLANET!

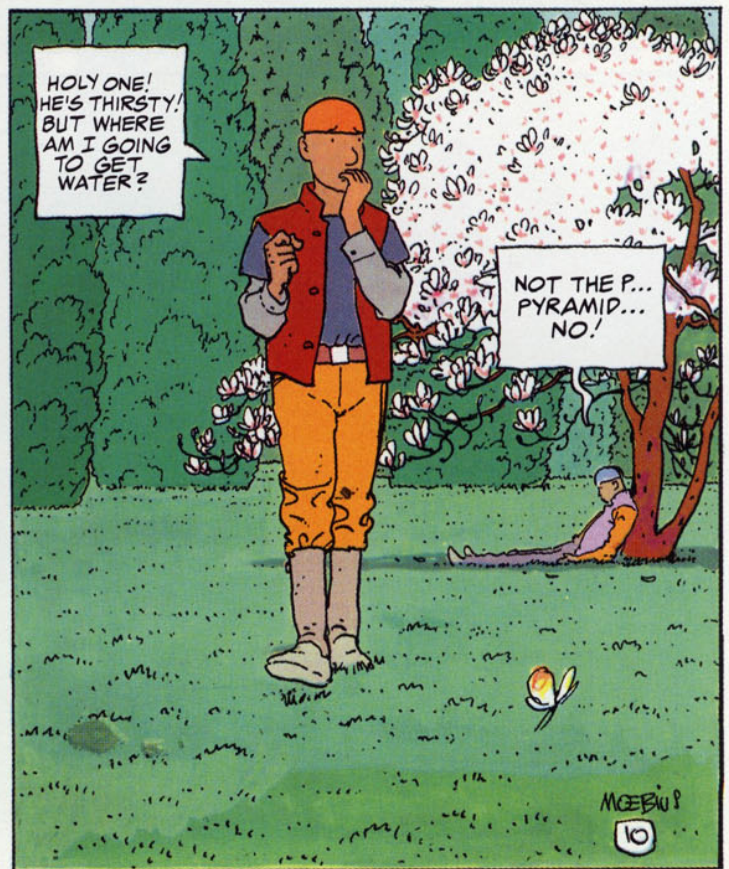
WE SHOULD HAVE STAYED
IN THE SHADOW OF THOSE
APPLE TREES!

AH! THERE
SOME SHADE.



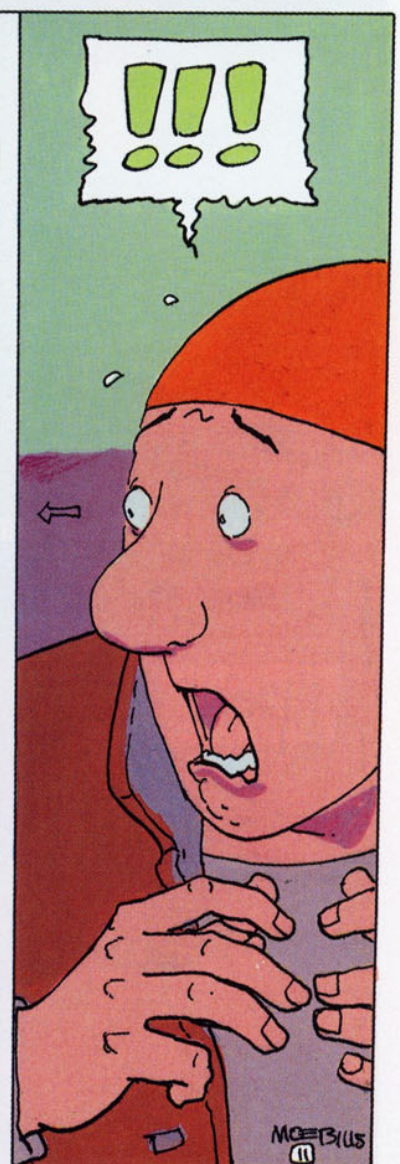
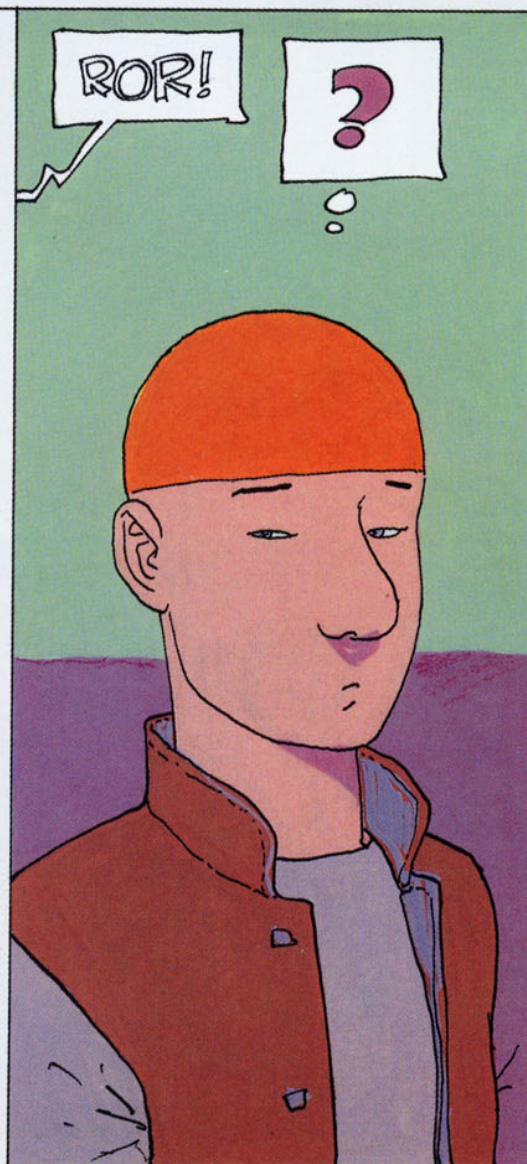
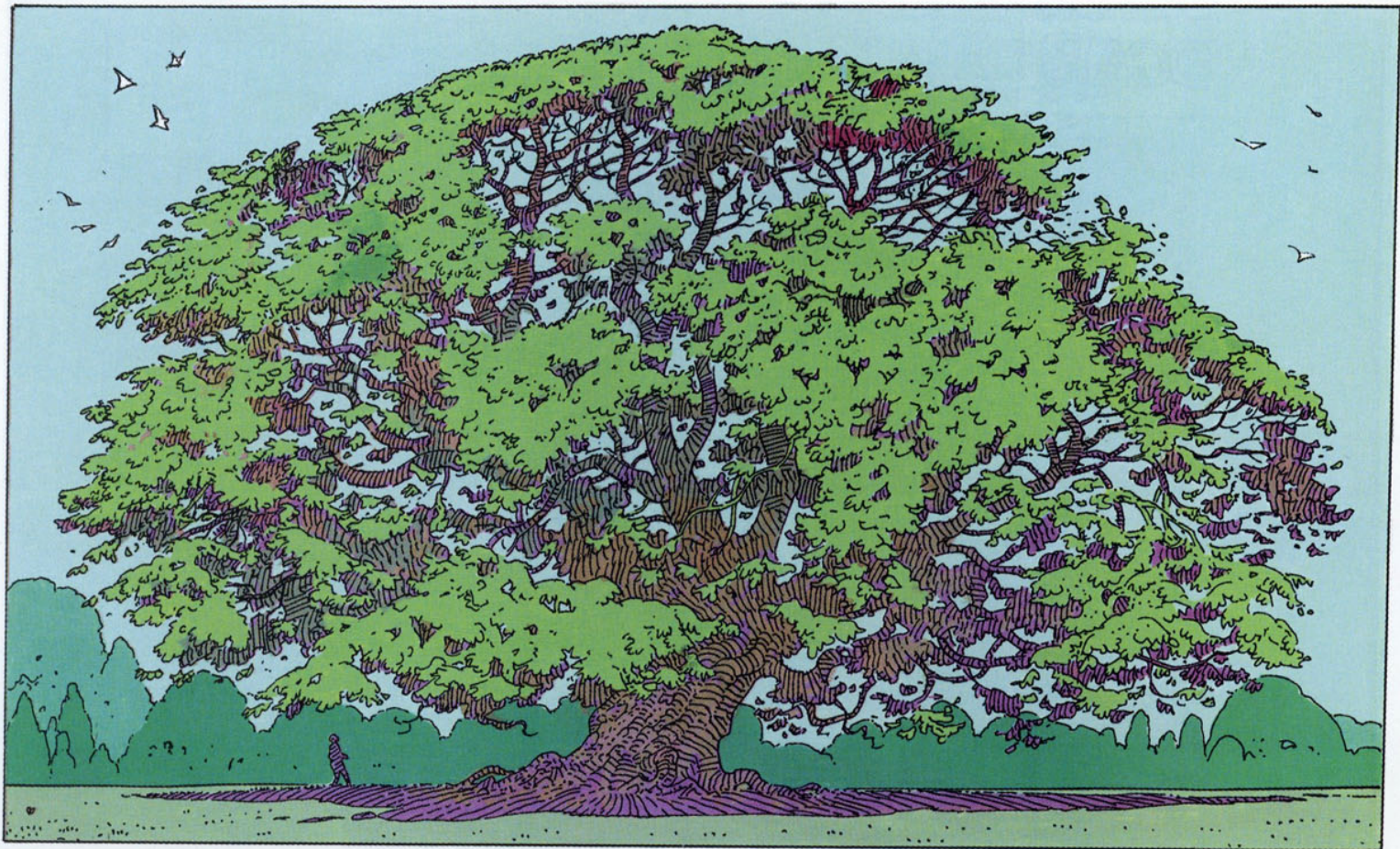
NOW YOU'LL
FEEL BETTER
SOON!

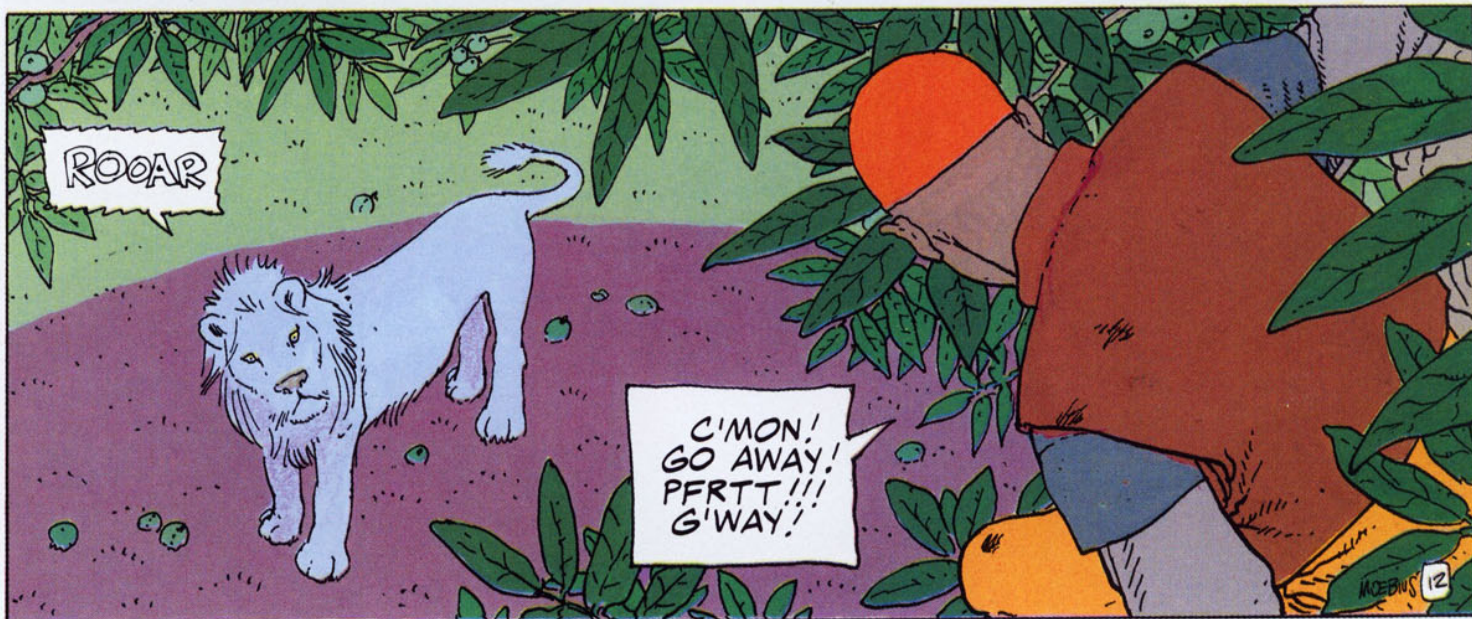
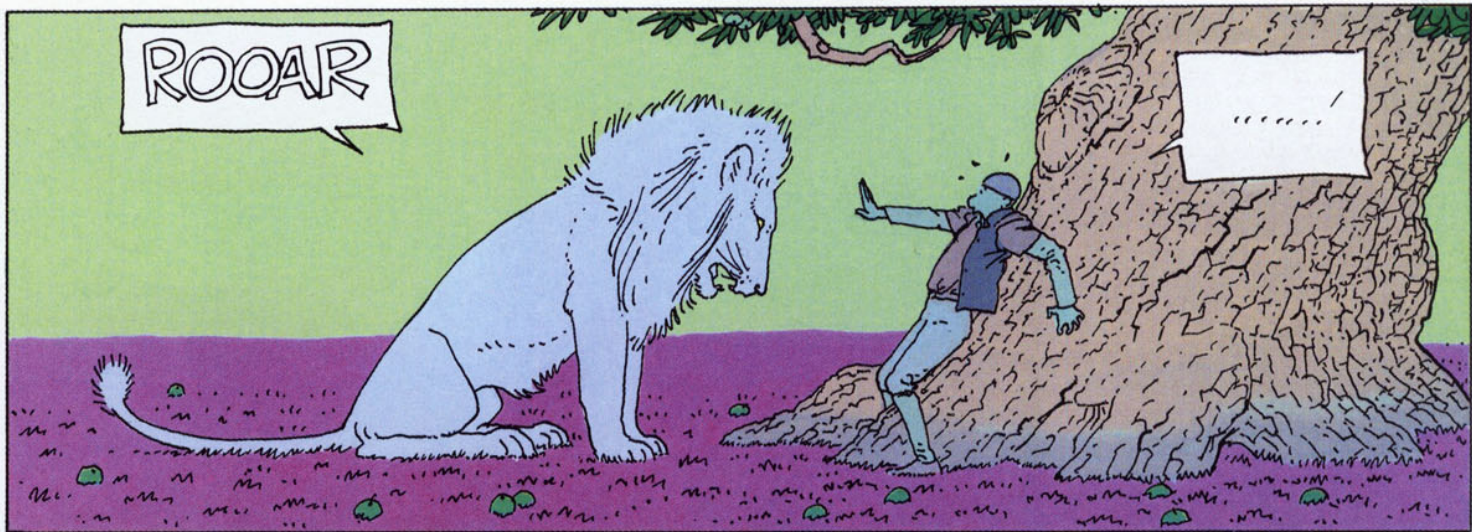
NOT THE
PYRAM... NOT
THE PYRAMID!
WATER!
WATER...

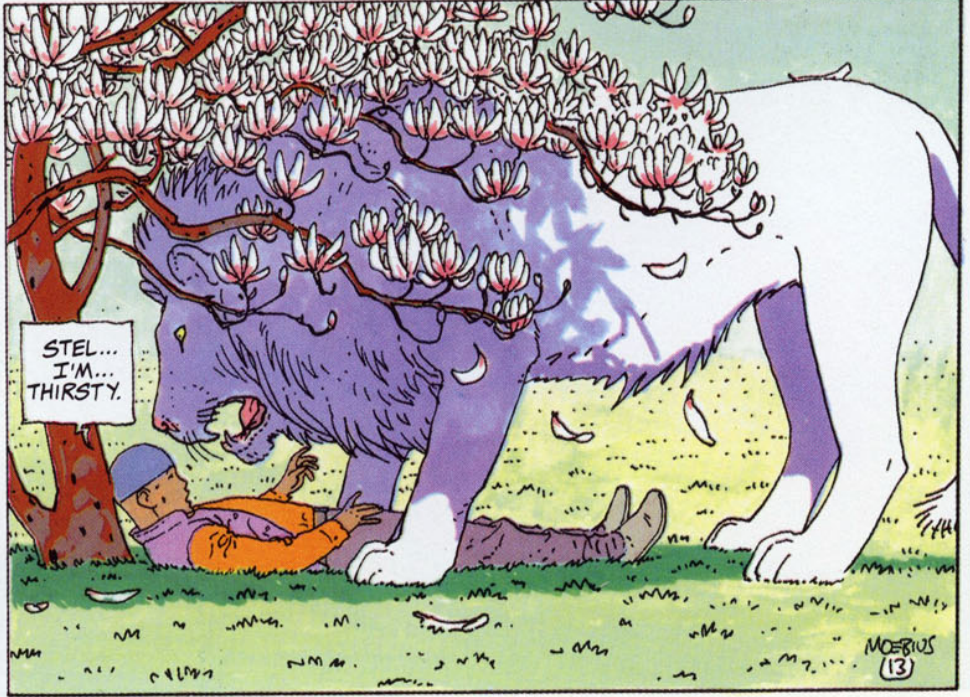
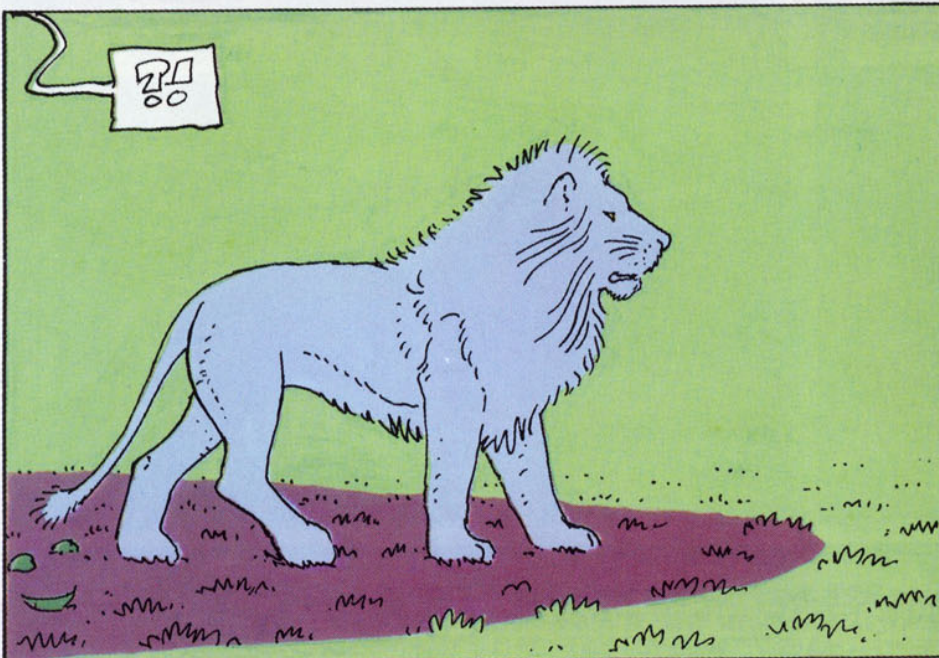
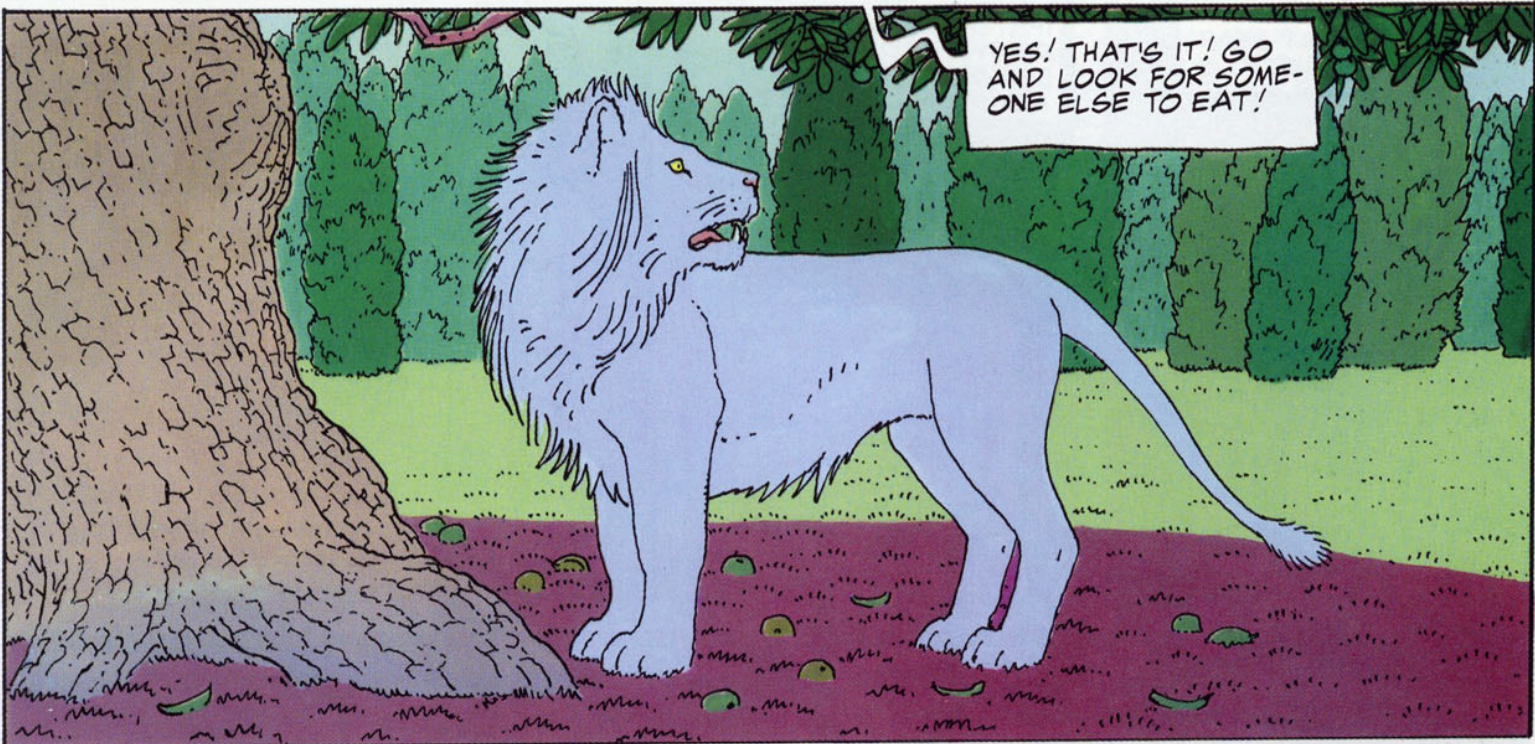


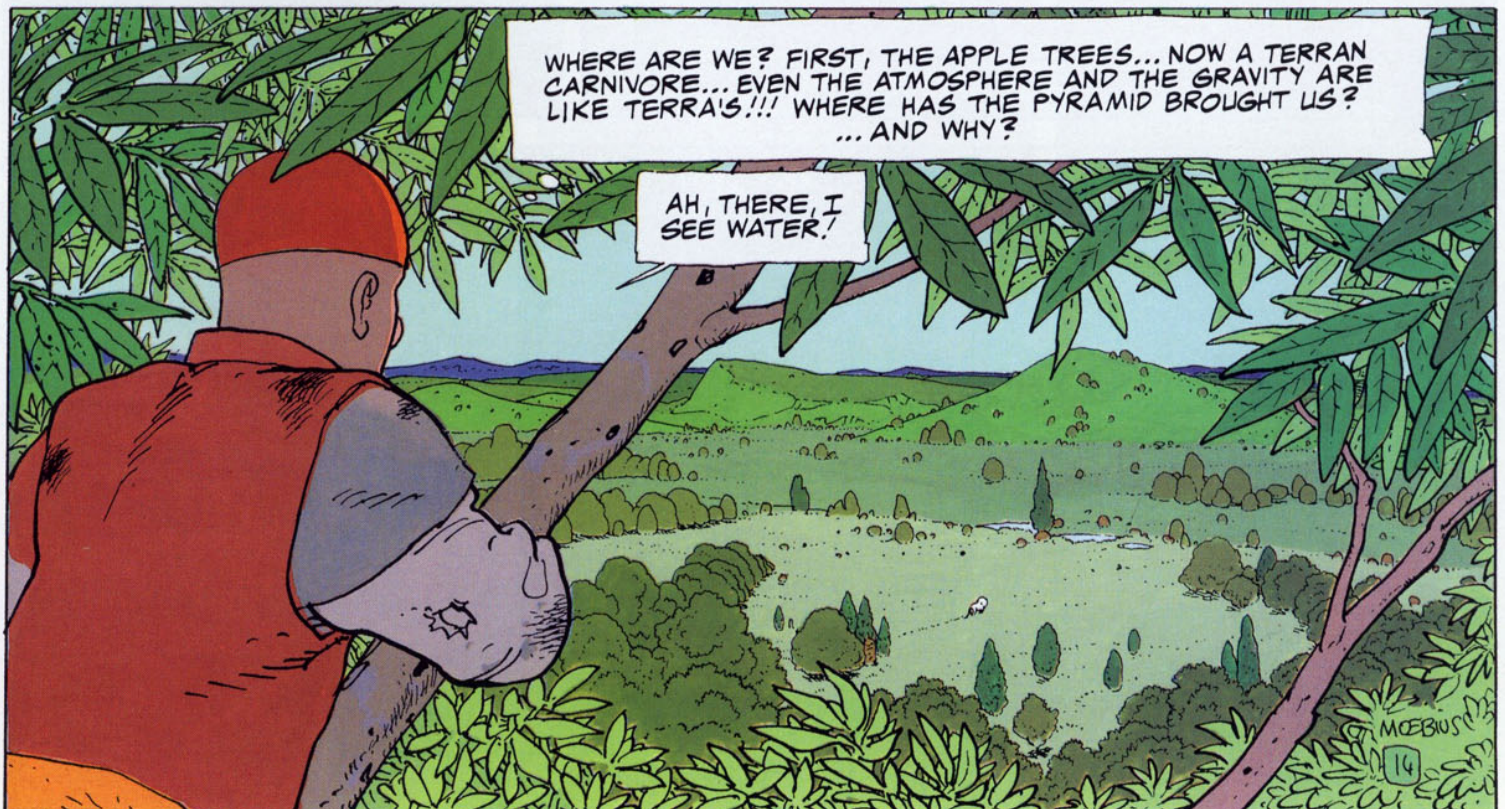
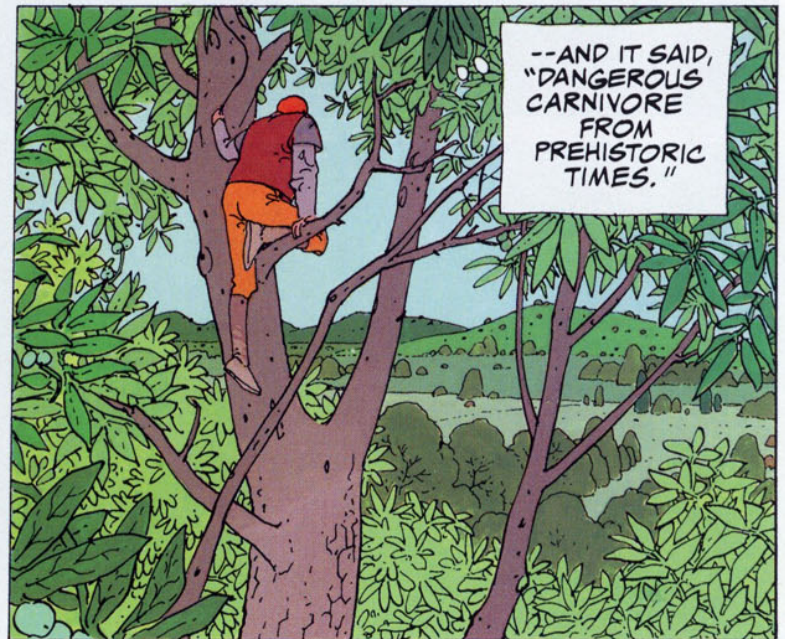
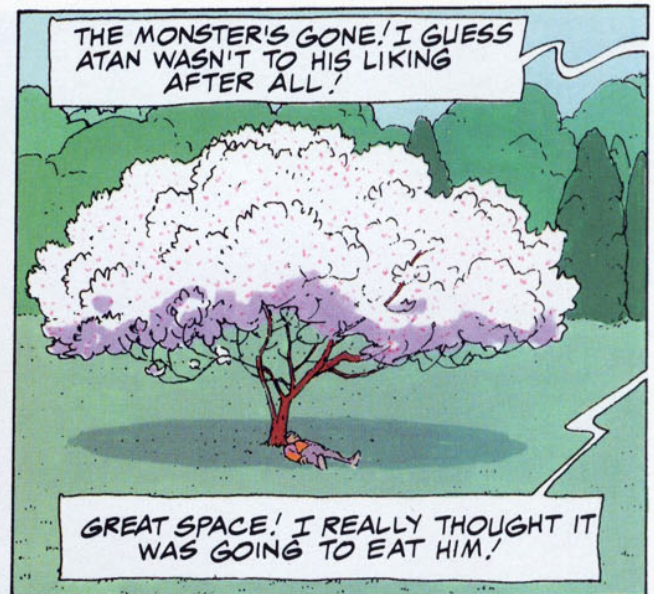
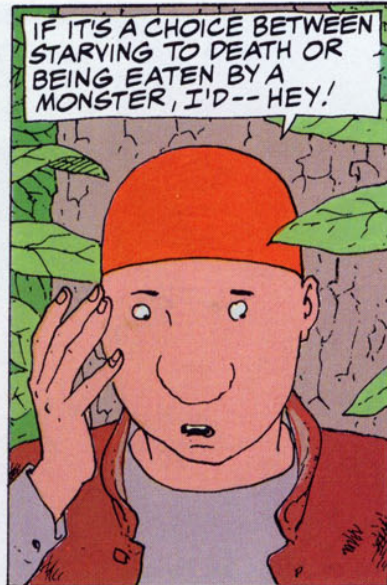
HOLY ONE!
HE'S THIRSTY!
BUT WHERE
AM I GOING
TO GET
WATER?

NOT THE P...
PYRAMID...
NO!









LOOKS LIKE A POOL...
WITHOUT KNOWING IT,
THAT ANIMAL MAY HAVE
SAVED OUR LIVES.

AT LEAST
FOR NOW!

ATAN MUST BE RIGHT. THE PYRA-
MID ALWAYS PROVED ITSELF TO
BE SOMETHING GOOD...I EVEN
FELT THAT WHEN I STOOD BE-
FORE ITS GREAT CRYSTALS. (1)

AH!
THE
COAST'S
CLEAR!

(1) SEE "UPON A STAR", VOL. 1.

SO, IF WE GO ALONG WITH IT, THERE'S
NOTHING TO BE AFRAID OF. IF WE'RE
HUNGRY, THERE HAS TO BE FOOD
SOMEWHERE, AND THE SAME GOES
FOR BEING THIRSTY.

I KNOW THAT THE FIRST RULE OF SPACE TRAVEL SAYS;
YOU SHOULD NEVER INGEST ANY NATIVE SUBSTANCE
THAT HASN'T BEEN PREVIOUSLY CAREFULLY TESTED AND
ANALYZED BY A SHIP'S ROBOMEDIC.

WELL, I SAY
FORGET THE
RULE!

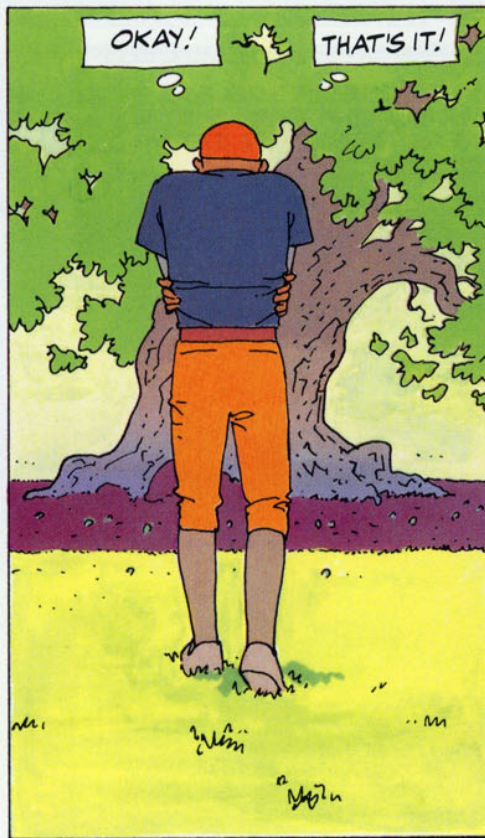
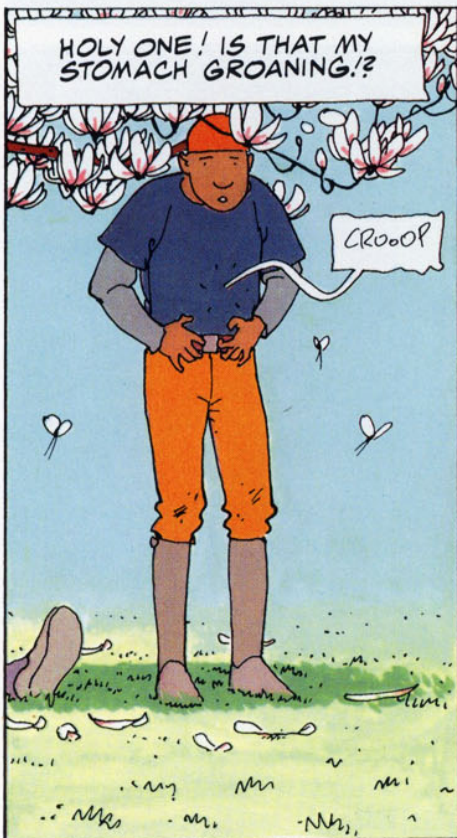
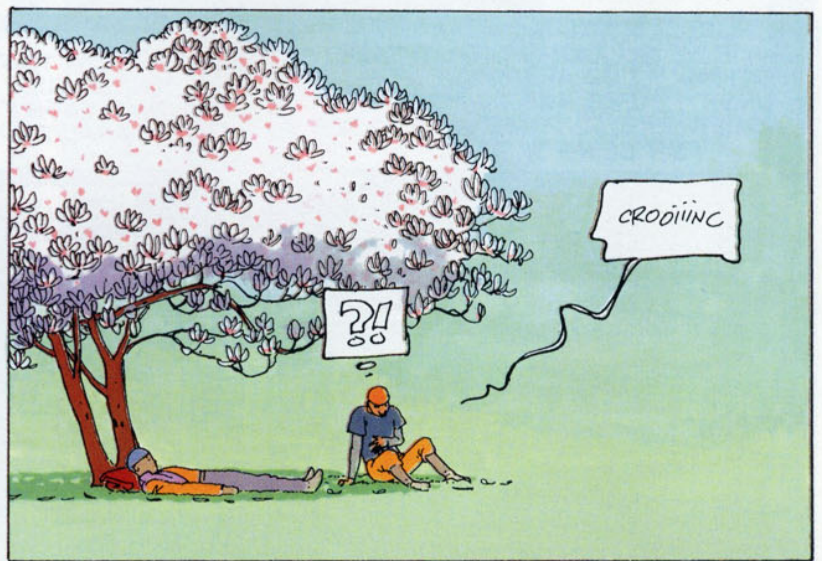
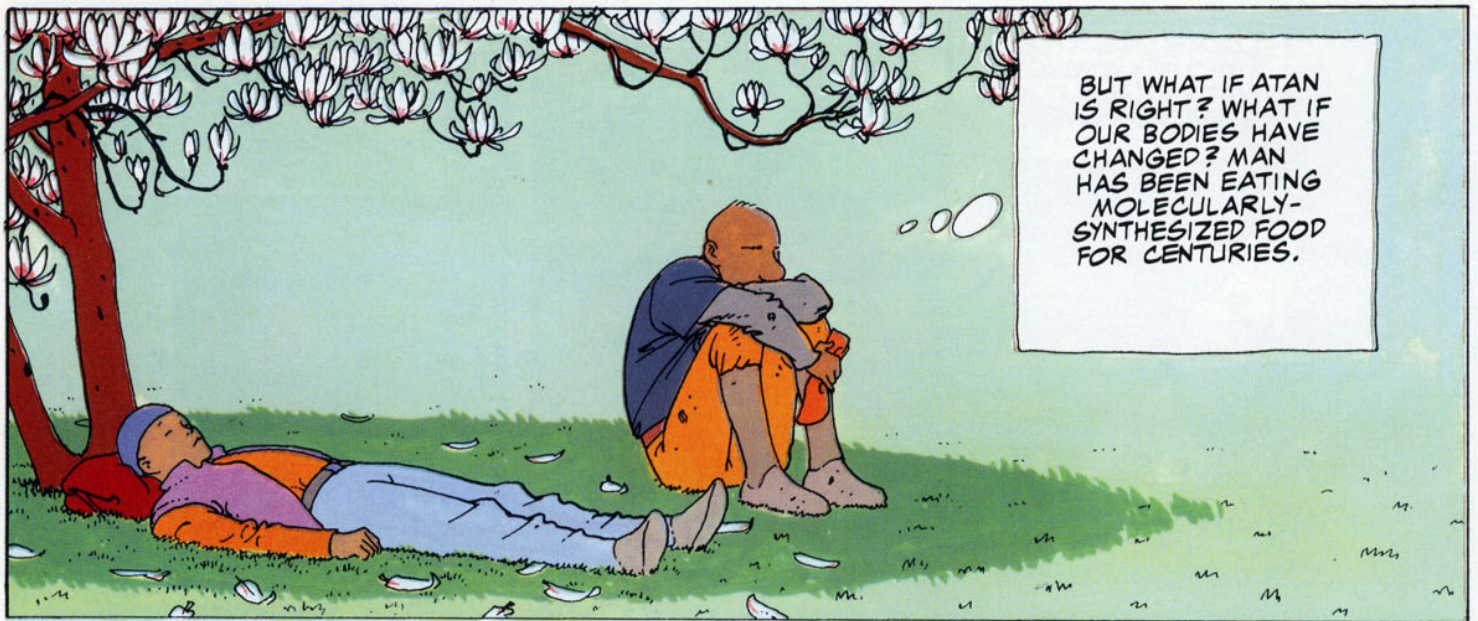
MMM...TASTES
NOTHING LIKE
RECYCLED
WATER!

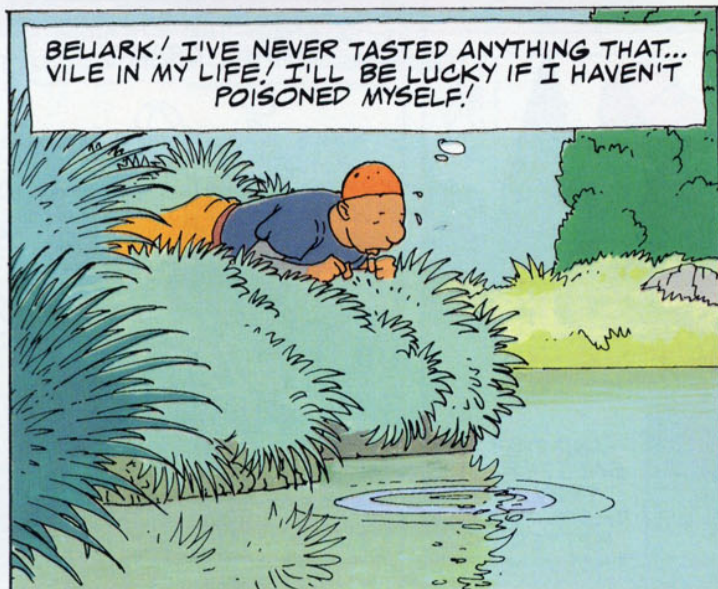
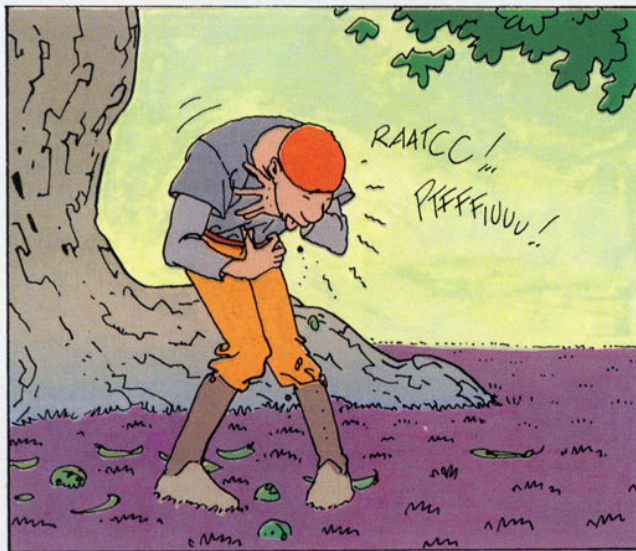
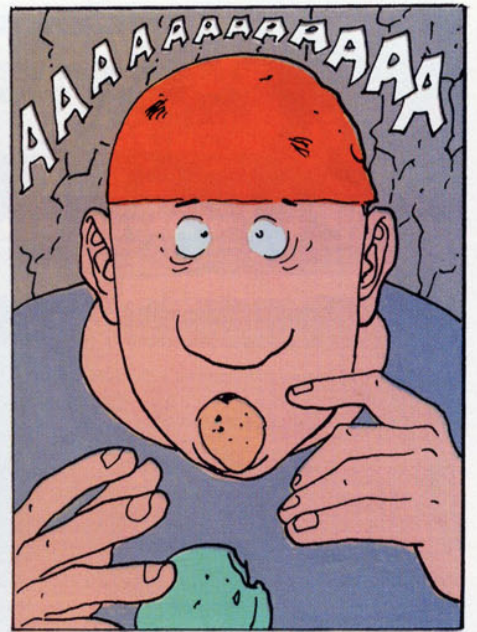
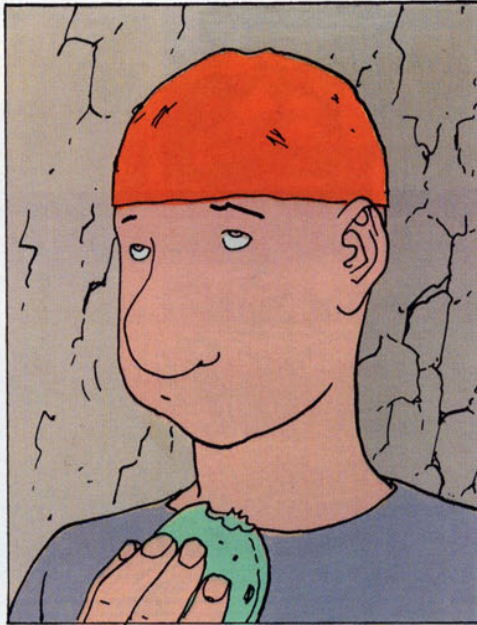
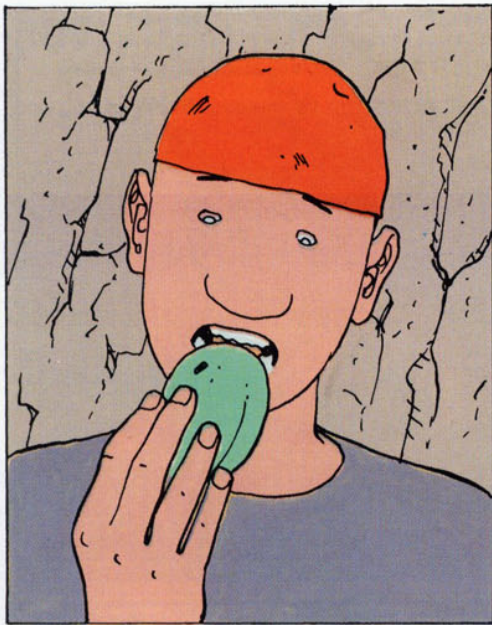
IF WE WANT TO SURVIVE,
WE'LL HAVE TO DECONDITION
OURSELVES TO ALL THOSE
PARANOID FEARS!

TAKE THOSE APPLES, FOR
EXAMPLE! I'M SURE THEY'RE
PERFECTLY OKAY TO EAT!

LIKE MOST EVERYTHING THAT
GROWS ON TREES, PROBABLY!

I REALLY HAVE TO
CHECK IT OUT!





BELARK! I'VE NEVER TASTED ANYTHING THAT... VILE IN MY LIFE! I'LL BE LUCKY IF I HAVEN'T POISONED MYSELF!



SO, EITHER ATAN IS RIGHT OR THE PYRAMID'S CRAZY...WHICH DOESN'T MAKE ANY SENSE...UNLESS...

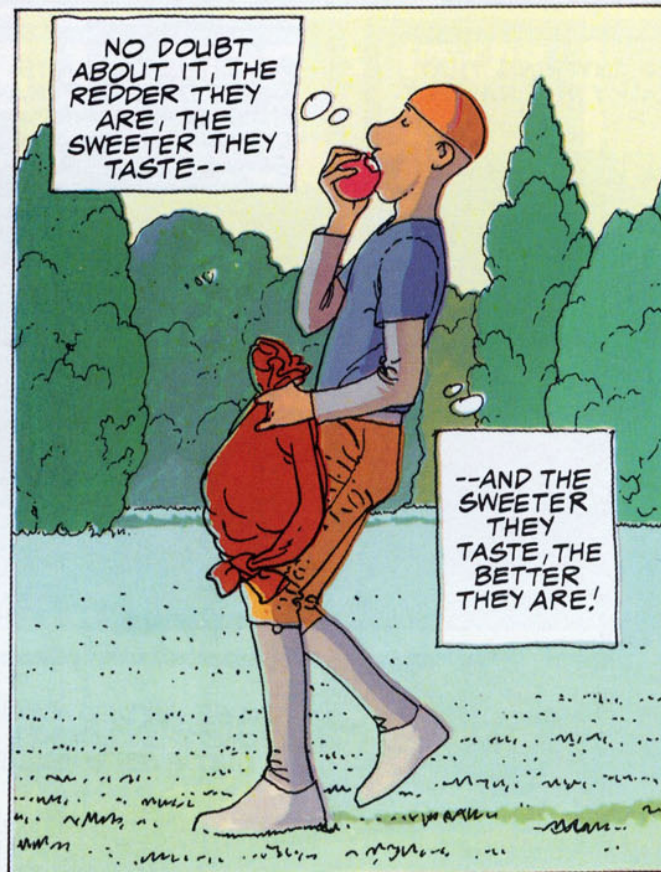
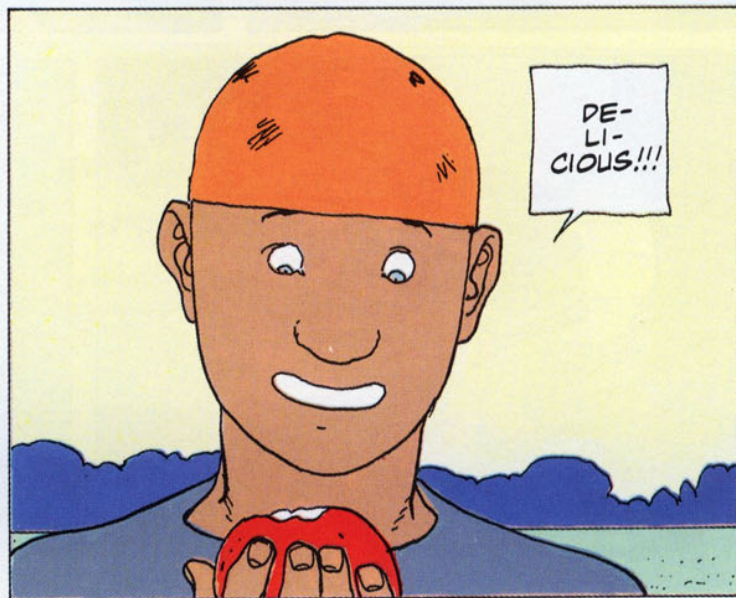
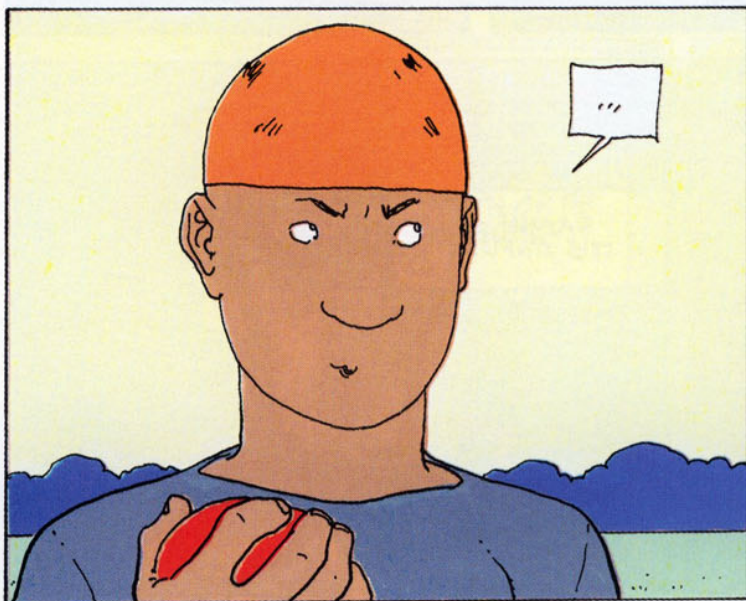
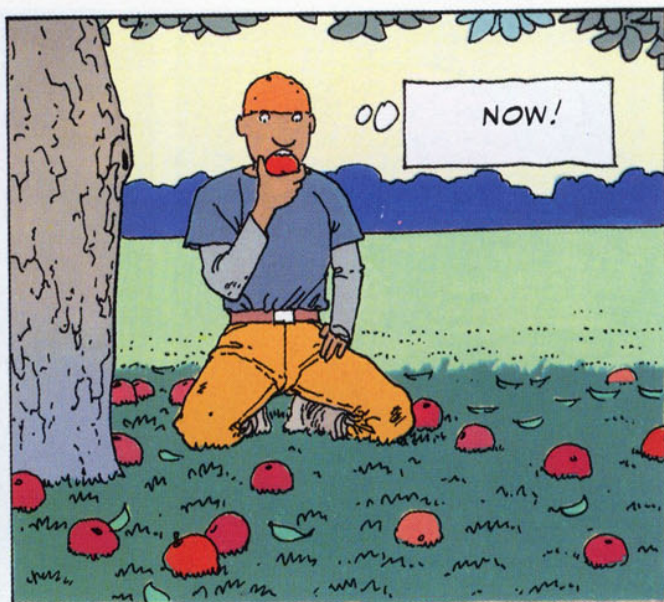
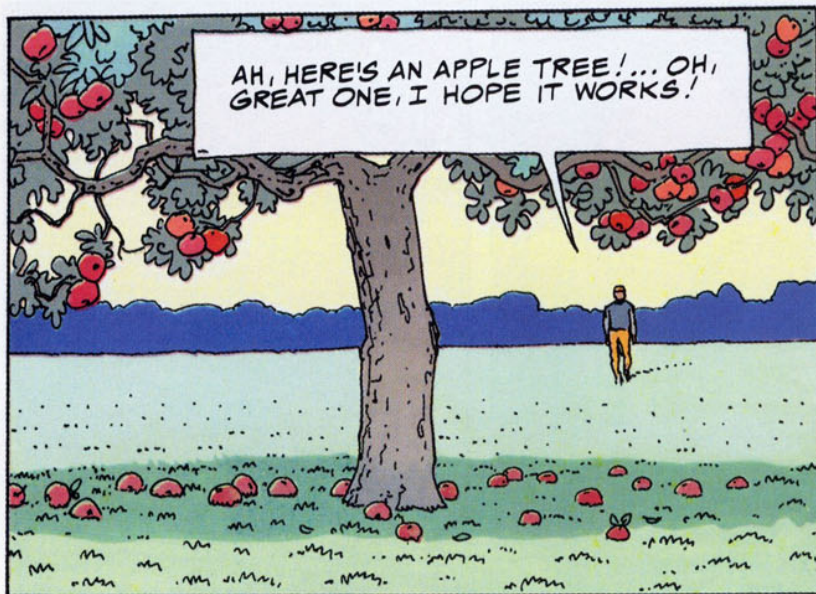


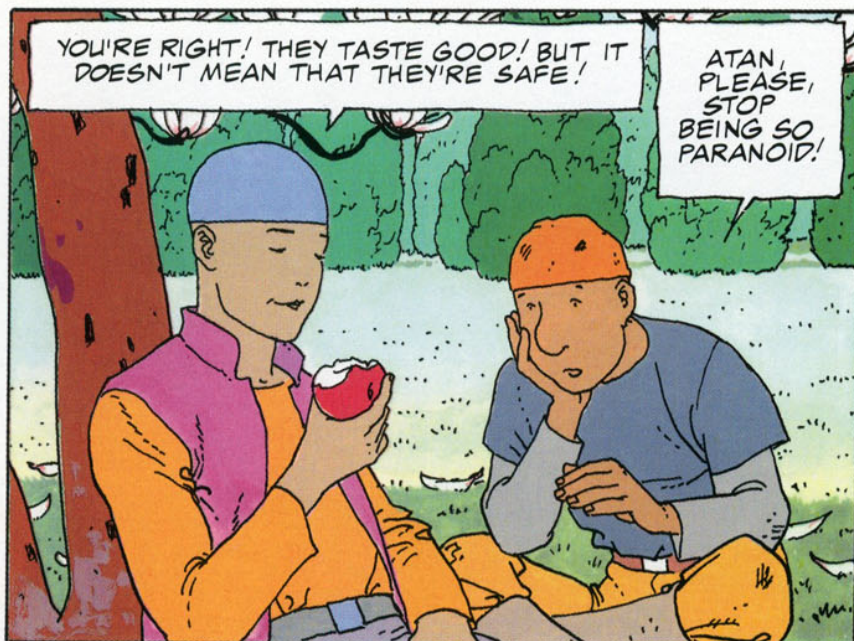
WAIT! WHAT IF THAT TASTE WAS LIKE A KIND OF SIGNAL SAYING "DON'T EAT ME, I'M NOT GOOD FOR YOU!" SO, IF I COULD FIND A FRUIT THAT TASTES GOOD...



SURE... WHY NOT? LIKE ALL THEORIES, IT HAS TO BE TESTED.

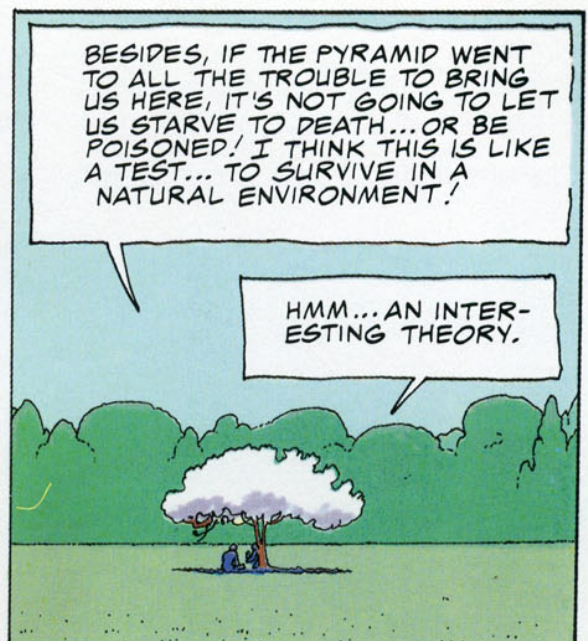
THOSE APPLES MAY EVEN BE THE SOLUTION! THEY LOOKED FINE TO ME... AND THEY EVEN SMELLED GOOD...





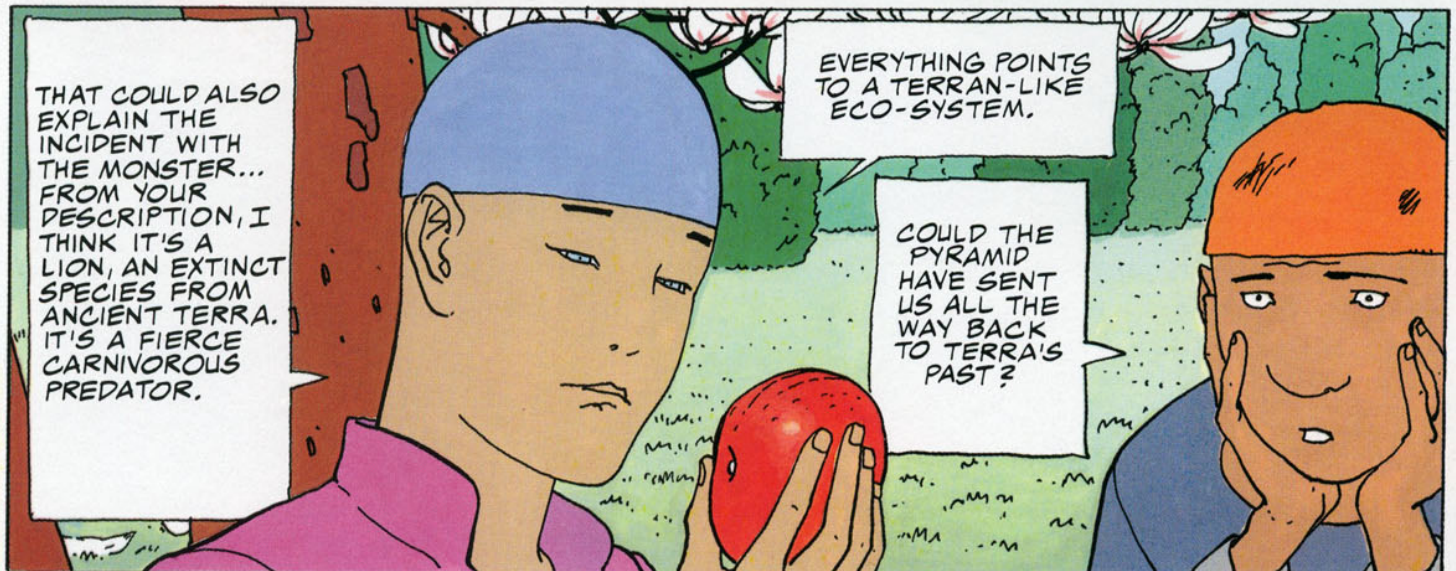
YOU'RE RIGHT! THEY TASTE GOOD! BUT IT DOESN'T MEAN THAT THEY'RE SAFE!

ATAN, PLEASE, STOP BEING SO PARANOID!



BESIDES, IF THE PYRAMID WENT TO ALL THE TROUBLE TO BRING US HERE, IT'S NOT GOING TO LET US STARVE TO DEATH...OR BE POISONED! I THINK THIS IS LIKE A TEST... TO SURVIVE IN A NATURAL ENVIRONMENT!

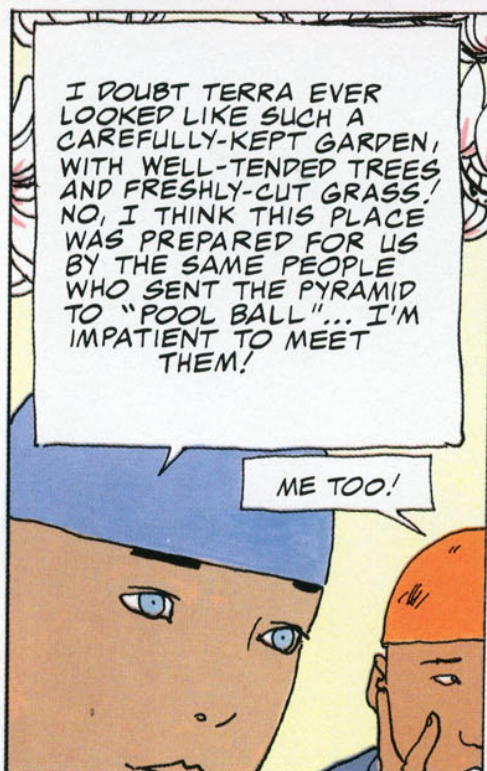
HMM... AN INTERESTING THEORY.



THAT COULD ALSO EXPLAIN THE INCIDENT WITH THE MONSTER... FROM YOUR DESCRIPTION, I THINK IT'S A LION, AN EXTINCT SPECIES FROM ANCIENT TERRA. IT'S A FIERCE CARNIVOROUS PREDATOR.

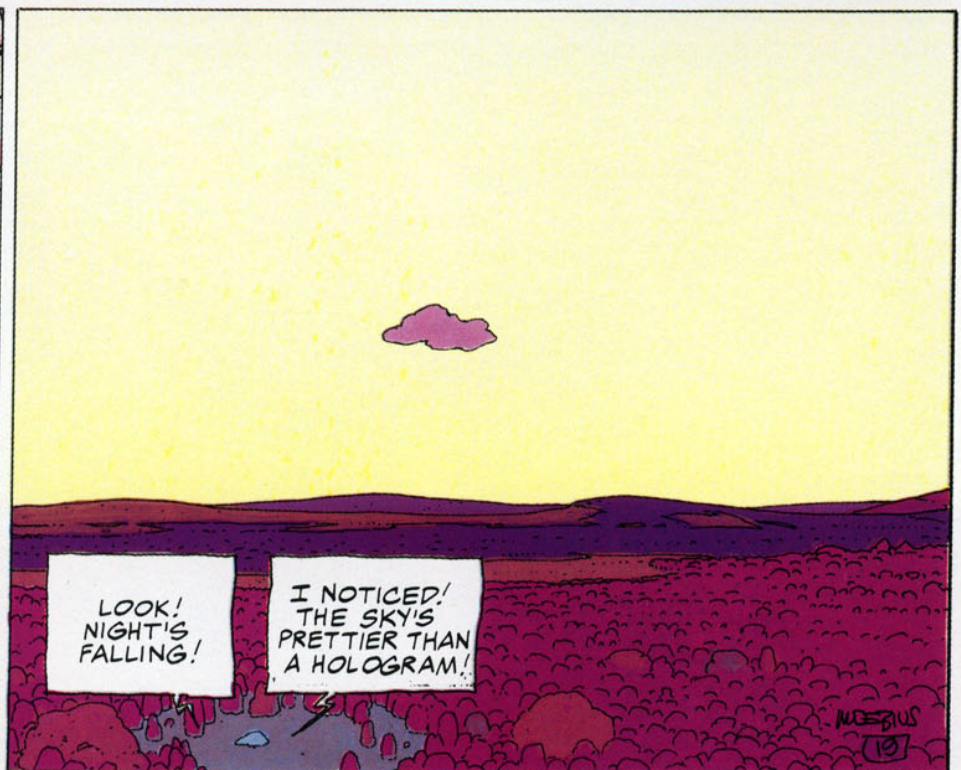
EVERYTHING POINTS TO A TERRAN-LIKE ECO-SYSTEM.

COULD THE PYRAMID HAVE SENT US ALL THE WAY BACK TO TERRA'S PAST?



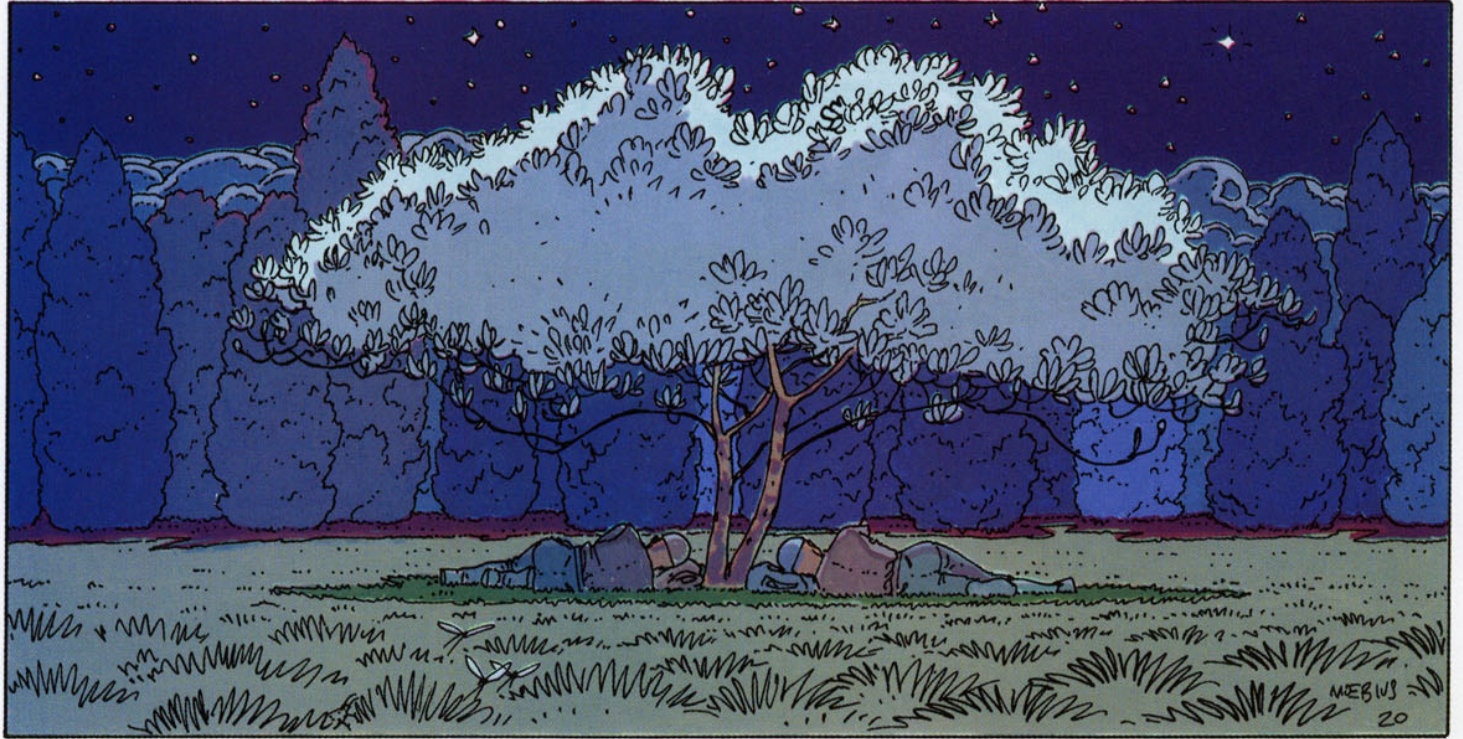
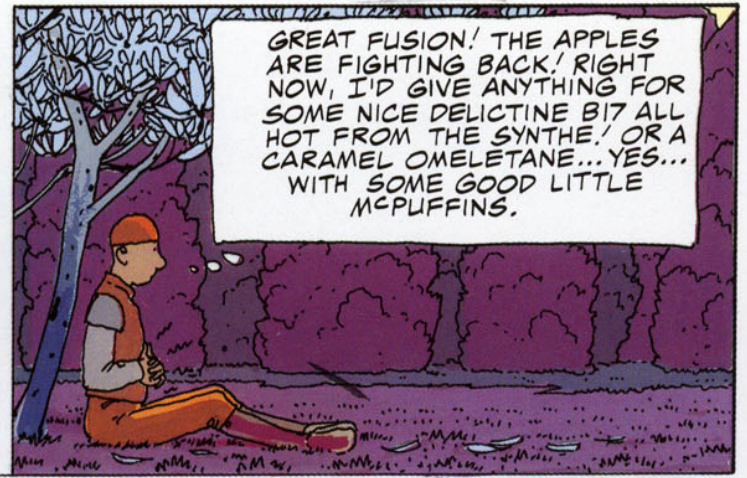
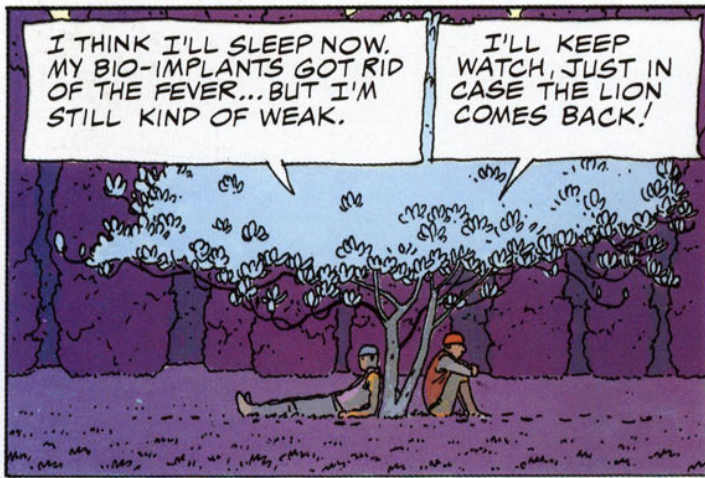
I DOUBT TERRA EVER LOOKED LIKE SUCH A CAREFULLY-KEPT GARDEN, WITH WELL-TENDED TREES AND FRESHLY-CUT GRASS! NO, I THINK THIS PLACE WAS PREPARED FOR US BY THE SAME PEOPLE WHO SENT THE PYRAMID TO "POOL BALL"... I'M IMPATIENT TO MEET THEM!

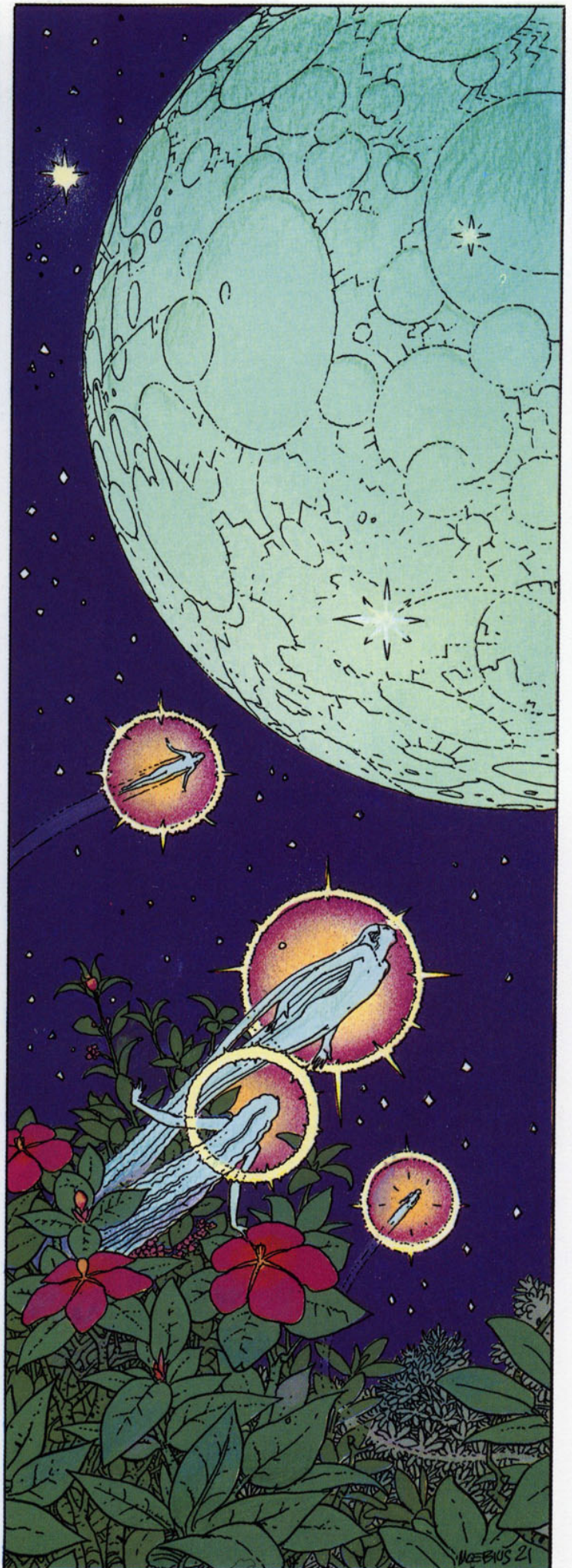
ME TOO!

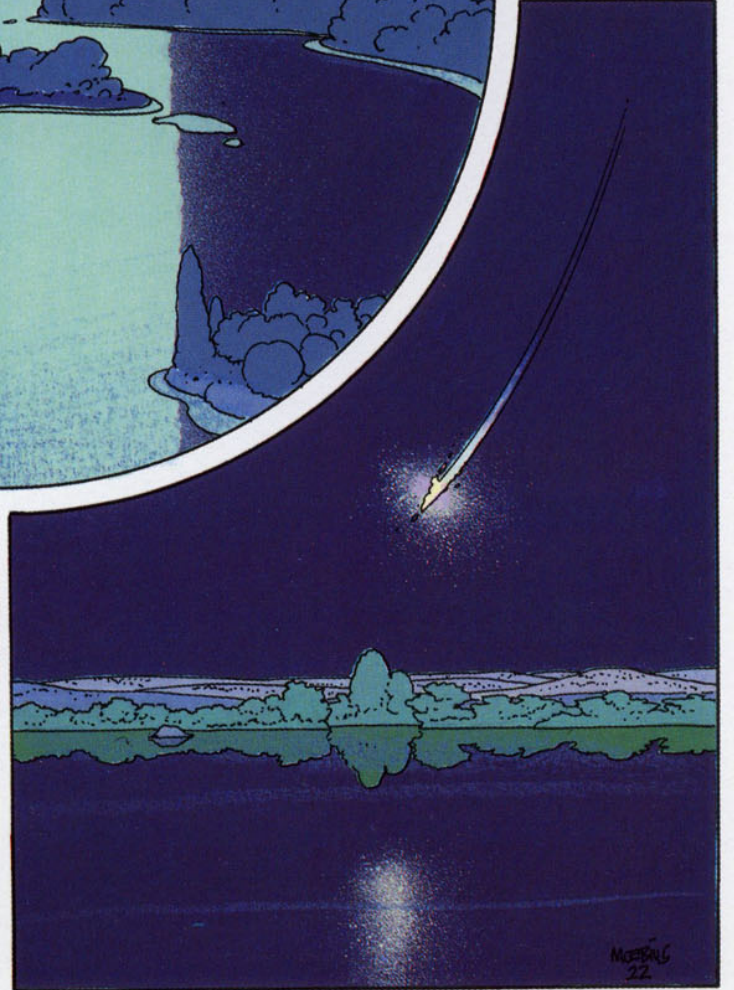
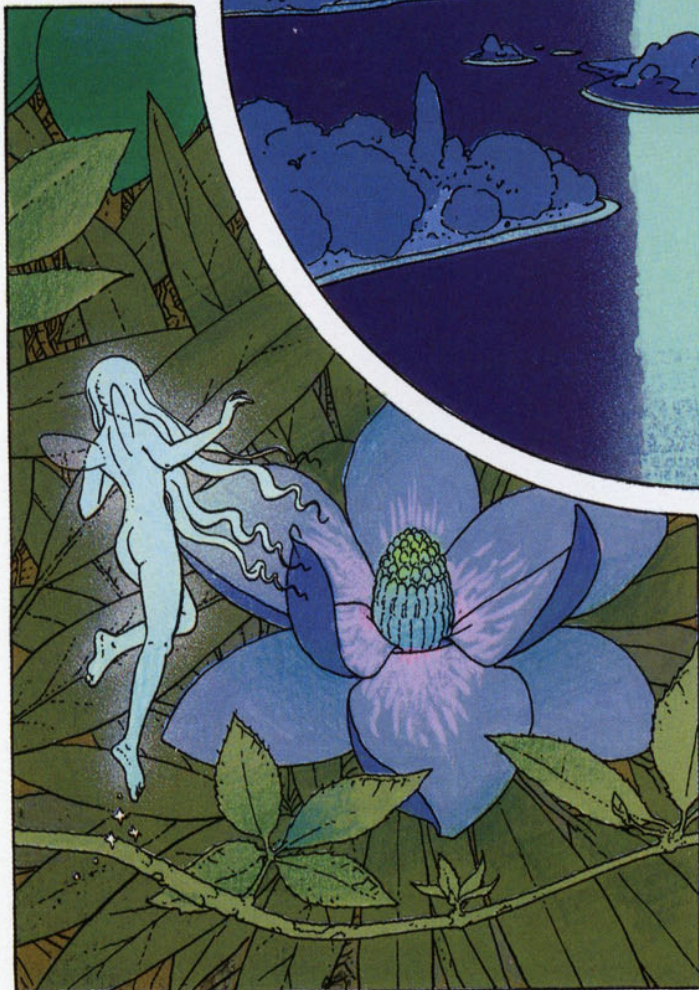


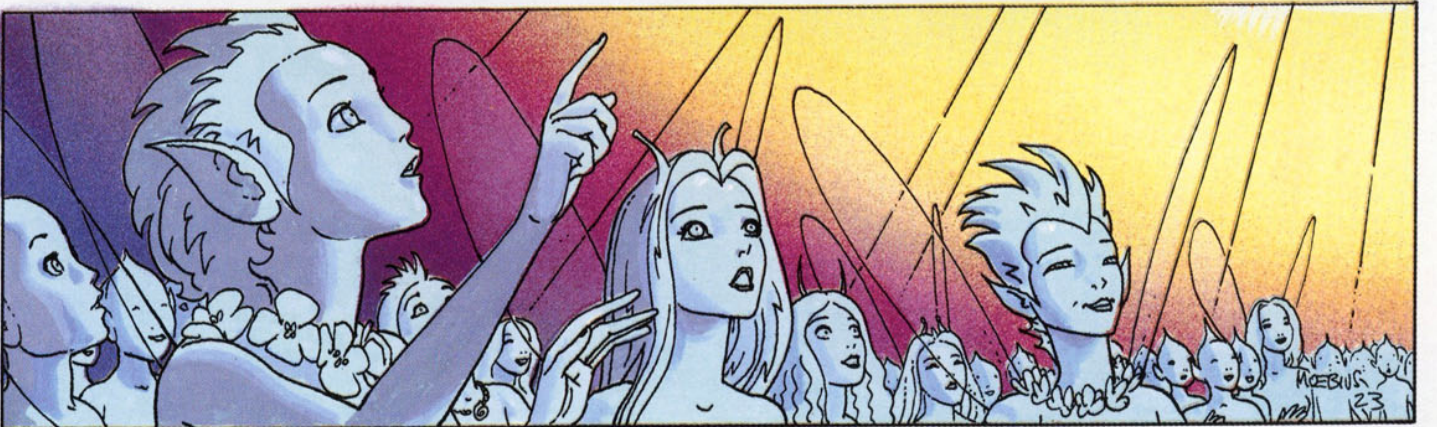
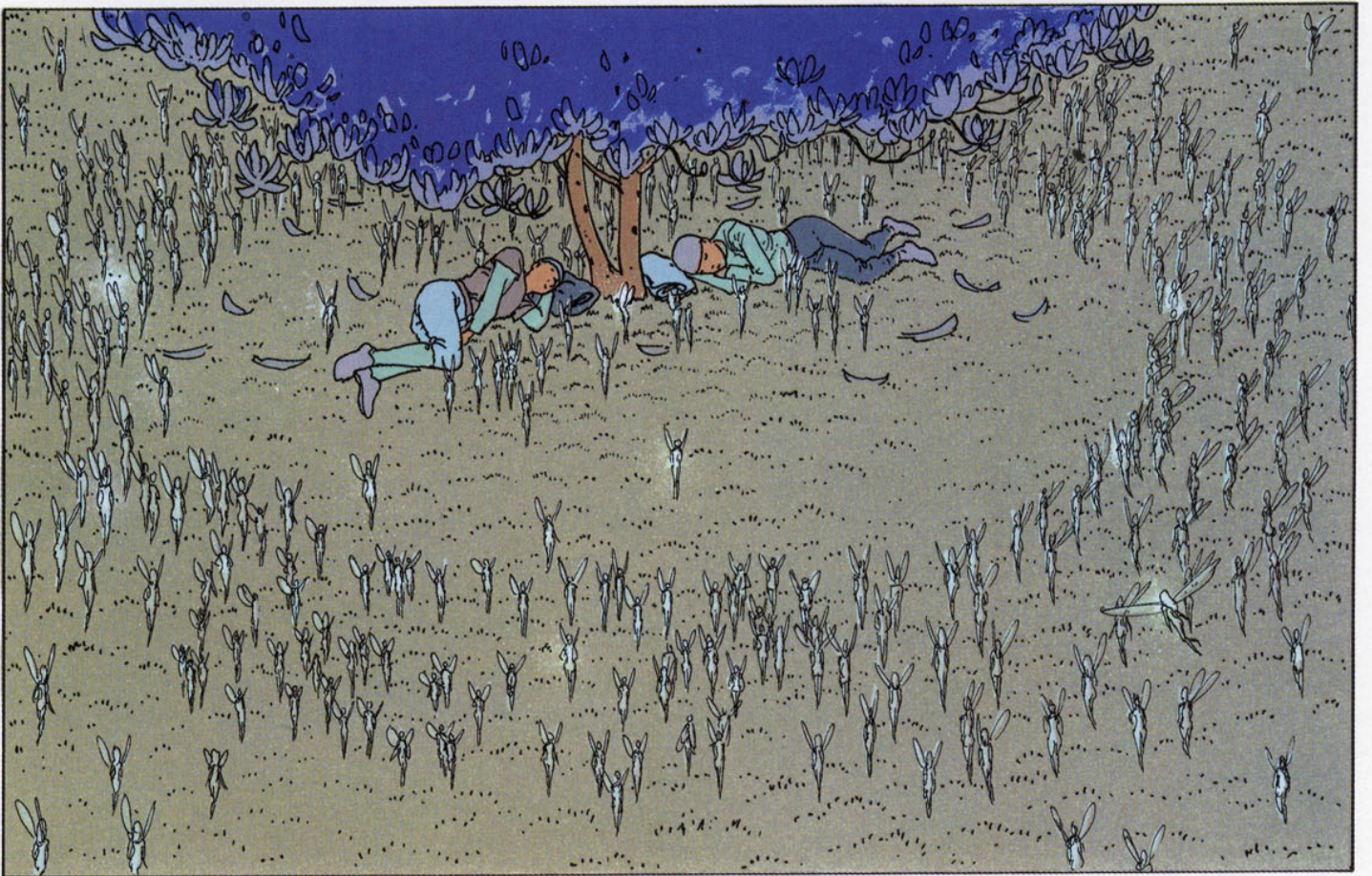
LOOK! NIGHT'S FALLING!

I NOTICED! THE SKY'S PRETTIER THAN A HOLOGRAM!

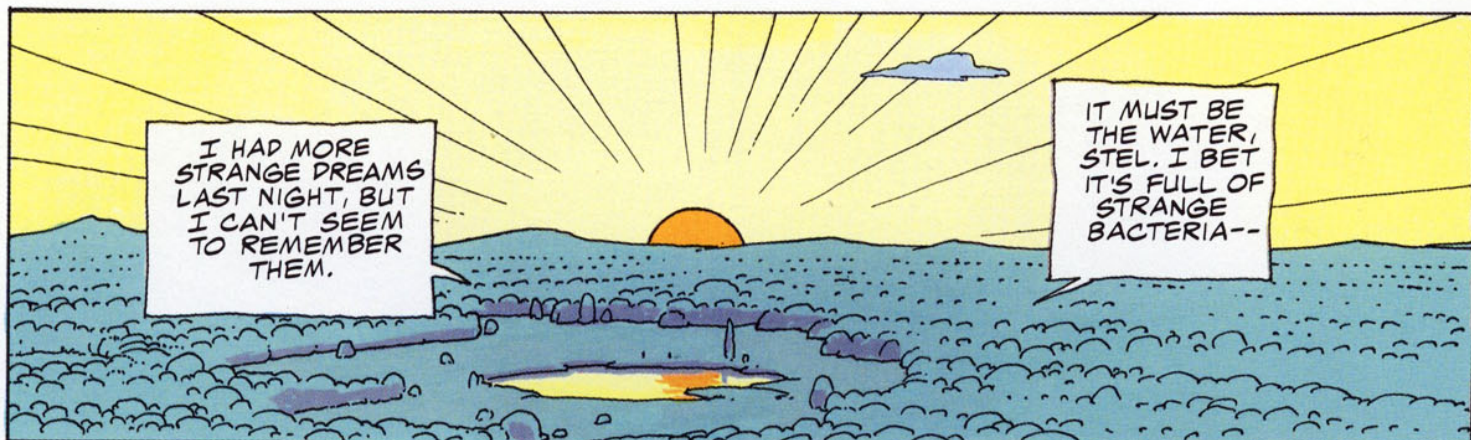












I HAD MORE STRANGE DREAMS LAST NIGHT, BUT I CAN'T SEEM TO REMEMBER THEM.

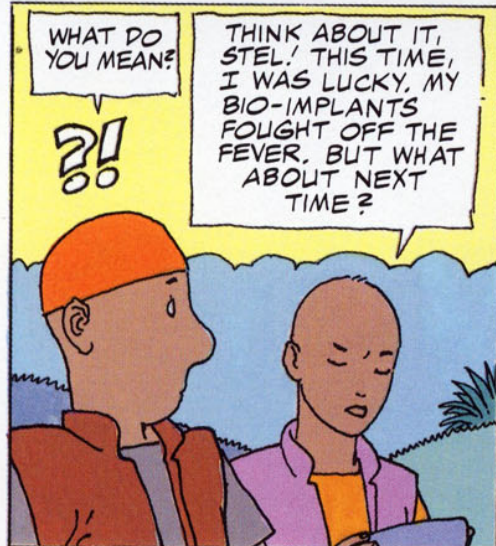
IT MUST BE THE WATER, STEL. I BET IT'S FULL OF STRANGE BACTERIA--



ATAN, WE'VE BEEN HERE FOR A WEEK. NOW THAT YOU FEEL BETTER, MAYBE WE SHOULD THINK ABOUT GOING ON.

--AND NO WAY TO BOIL IT. STILL, IT TASTES REALLY GOOD.

I DON'T MIND GOING ON, I FEEL OKAY NOW, BUT I STILL DON'T HAVE MANY ILLUSIONS ABOUT OUR CHANCES OF SURVIVING HERE.



WHAT DO YOU MEAN?

?!
oo

THINK ABOUT IT, STEL! THIS TIME, I WAS LUCKY, MY BIO-IMPLANTS FOUGHT OFF THE FEVER. BUT WHAT ABOUT NEXT TIME?



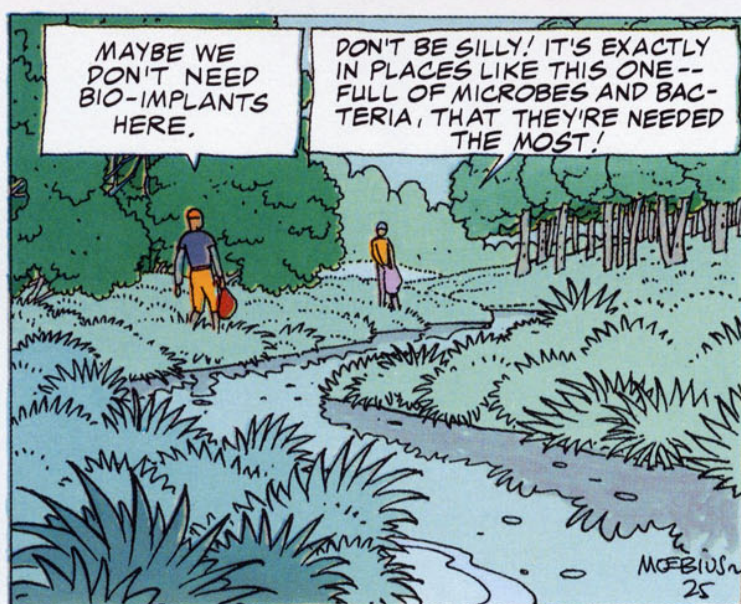
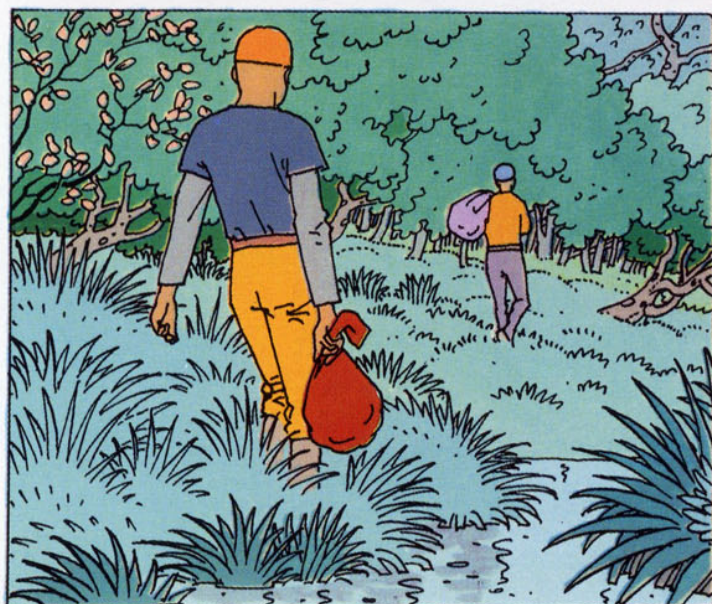
GREAT UNIVERSE! THE BIO-IMPLANTS! YOU'RE RIGHT!

YES. THEY'LL WEAR OFF SOON... YOURS AND MINE...



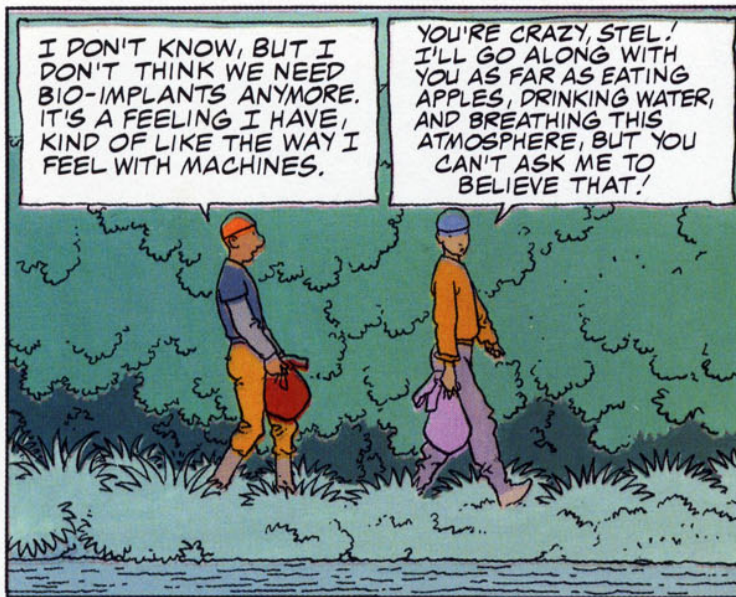
YOU DON'T THINK WE CAN MAKE IT WITHOUT THEM?

WE NEVER HAD A REASON TO TRY BEFORE! ANYWAY, I THINK WE SHOULD FOLLOW THE STREAM LEADING FROM THE POND. AT LEAST, THAT WAY WE WON'T BE THIRSTY!



MAYBE WE DON'T NEED BIO-IMPLANTS HERE.

DON'T BE SILLY! IT'S EXACTLY IN PLACES LIKE THIS ONE-- FULL OF MICROBES AND BACTERIA, THAT THEY'RE NEEDED THE MOST!



I DON'T KNOW, BUT I DON'T THINK WE NEED BIO-IMPLANTS ANYMORE. IT'S A FEELING I HAVE, KIND OF LIKE THE WAY I FEEL WITH MACHINES.

YOU'RE CRAZY, STEL! I'LL GO ALONG WITH YOU AS FAR AS EATING APPLES, DRINKING WATER, AND BREATHING THIS ATMOSPHERE, BUT YOU CAN'T ASK ME TO BELIEVE THAT!

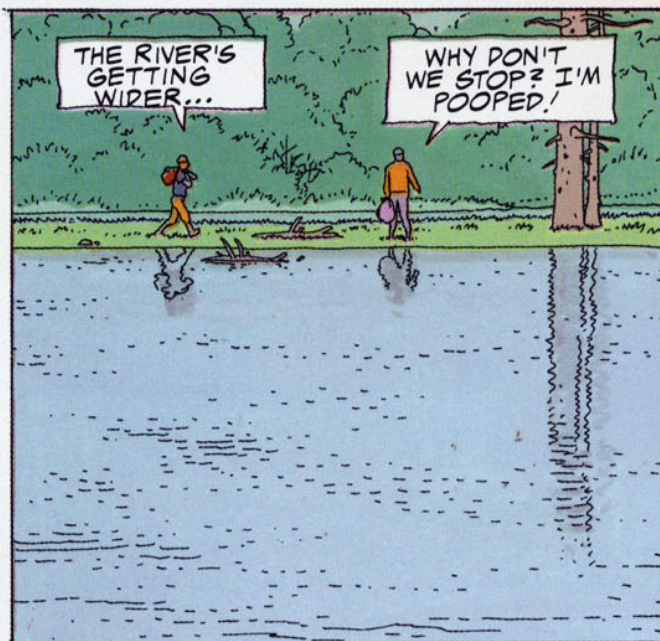


I DON'T THINK ANYTHING WILL EVER SURPASS THE PRODUCTS OF OUR TECHNOLOGY. EVEN THOSE APPLES OF YOURS HAVE HURT MY STOMACH, AND I'M STILL NOT CONVINCED THAT THEY CAN BE ASSIMILATED. LOOK AT ME... I'VE ALREADY LOST SIX POUNDS!

COME ON--

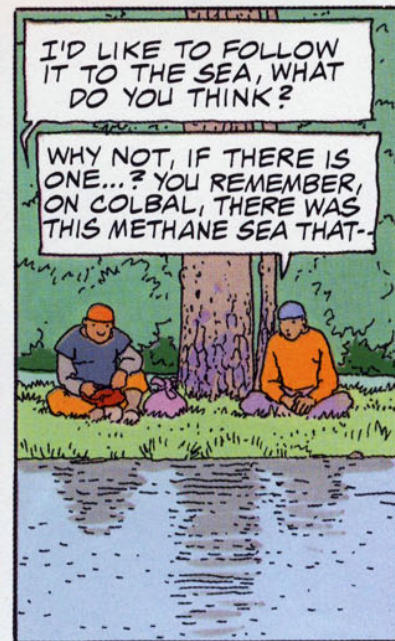


--LET'S GO!



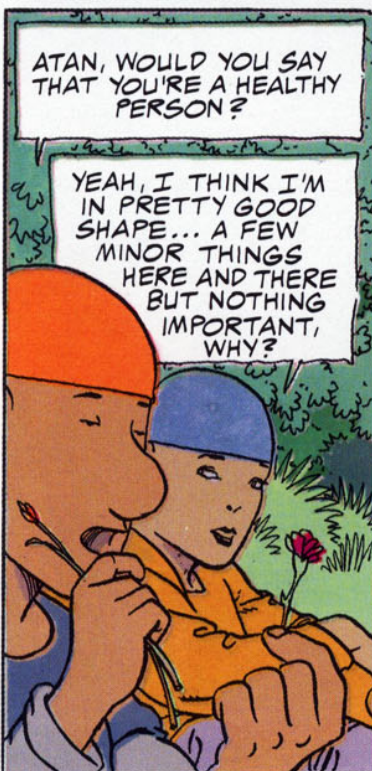
THE RIVER'S GETTING WIDER...

WHY DON'T WE STOP? I'M POOPED!



I'D LIKE TO FOLLOW IT TO THE SEA, WHAT DO YOU THINK?

WHY NOT, IF THERE IS ONE...? YOU REMEMBER, ON COLBAL, THERE WAS THIS METHANE SEA THAT--



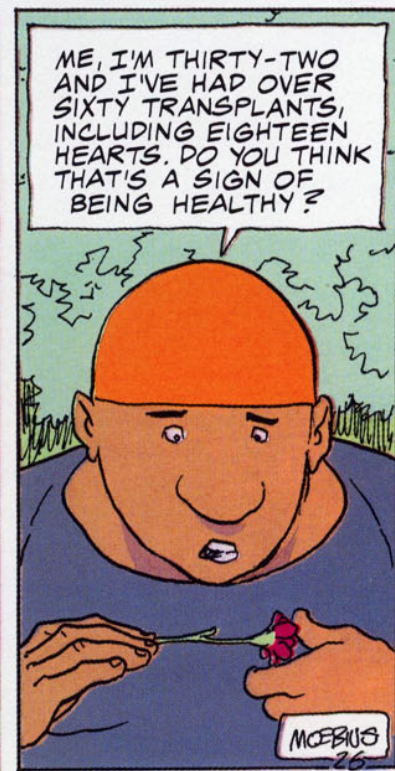
ATAN, WOULD YOU SAY THAT YOU'RE A HEALTHY PERSON?

YEAH, I THINK I'M IN PRETTY GOOD SHAPE... A FEW MINOR THINGS HERE AND THERE BUT NOTHING IMPORTANT, WHY?

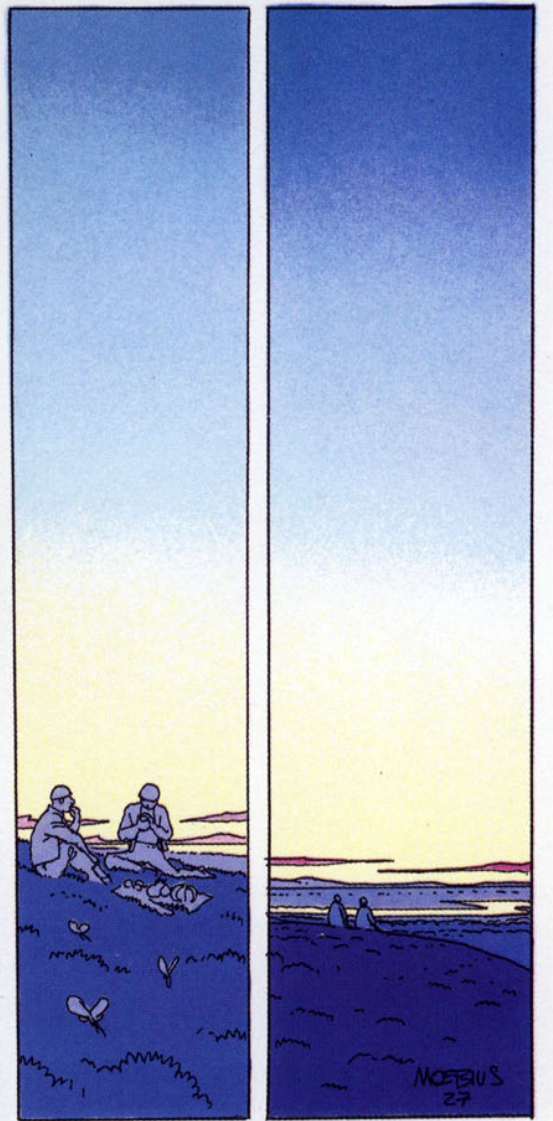
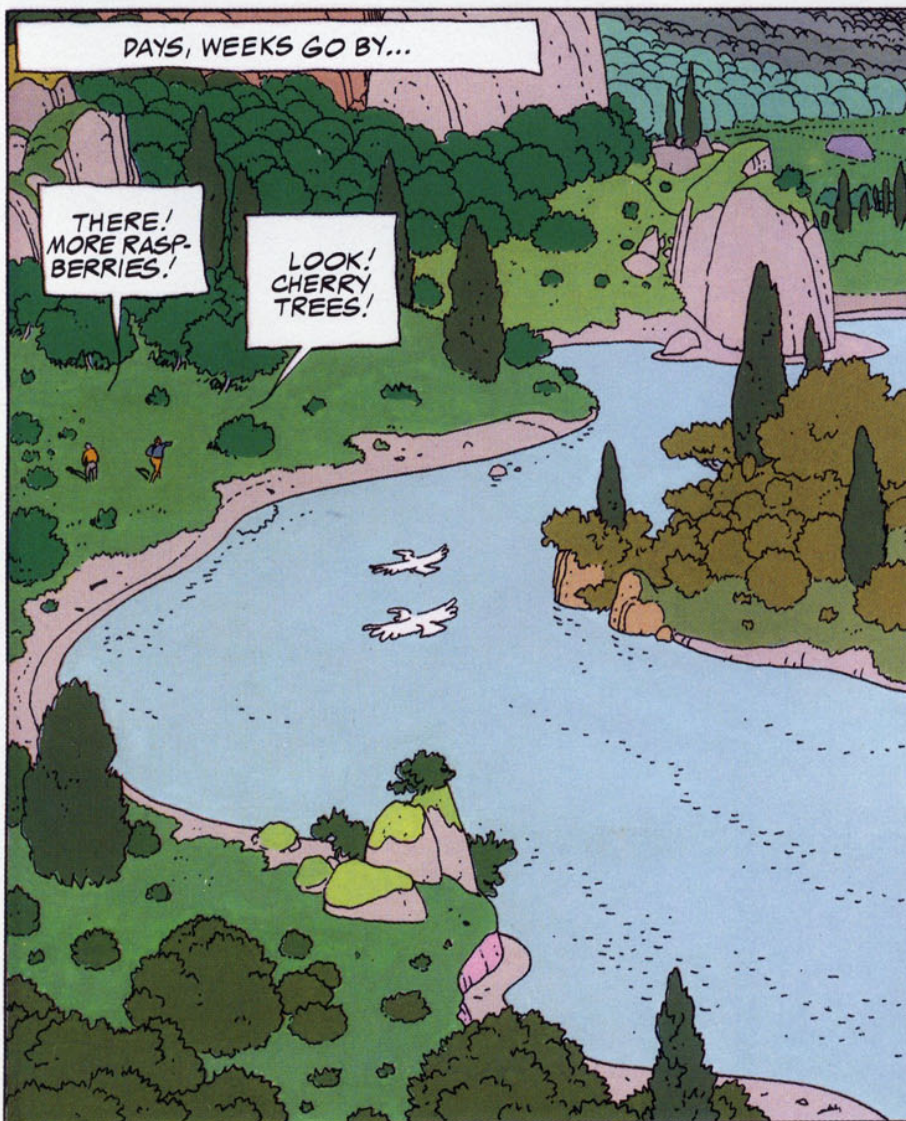
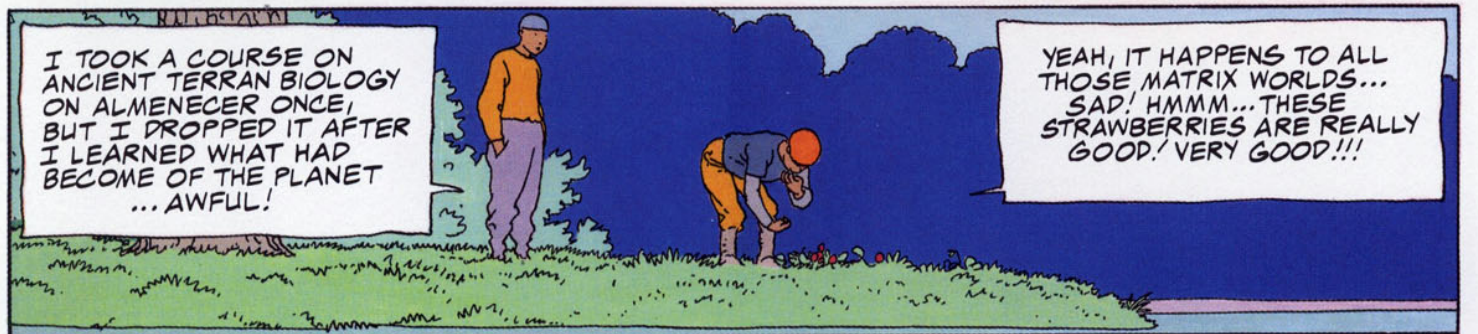
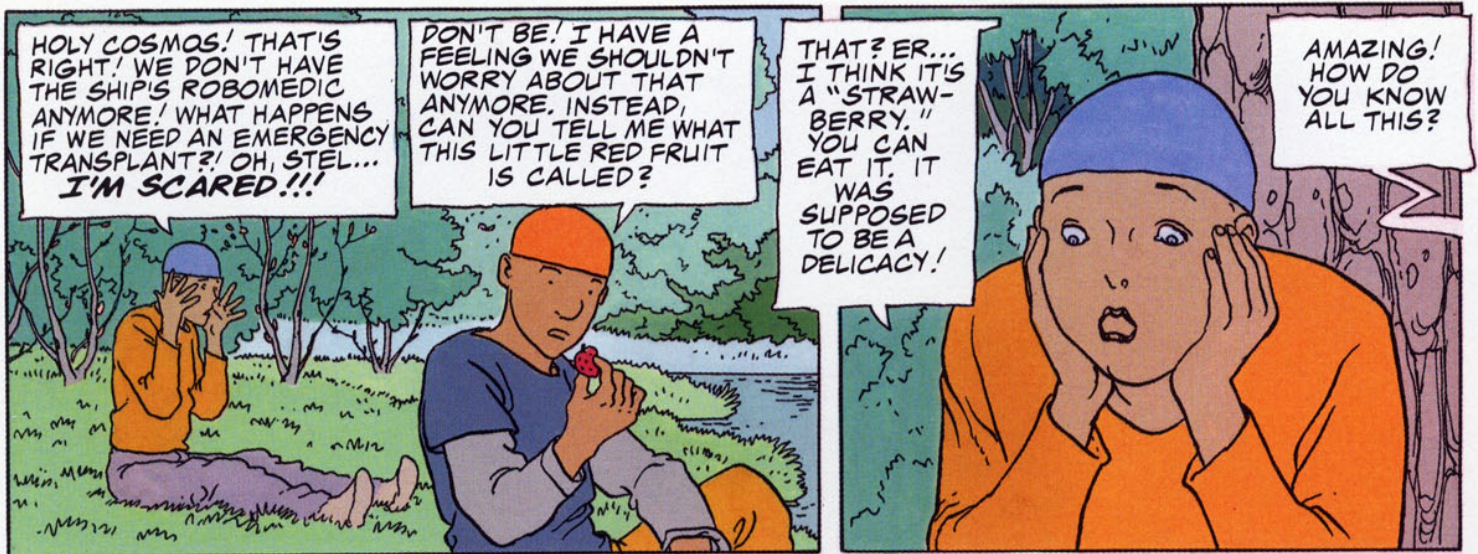


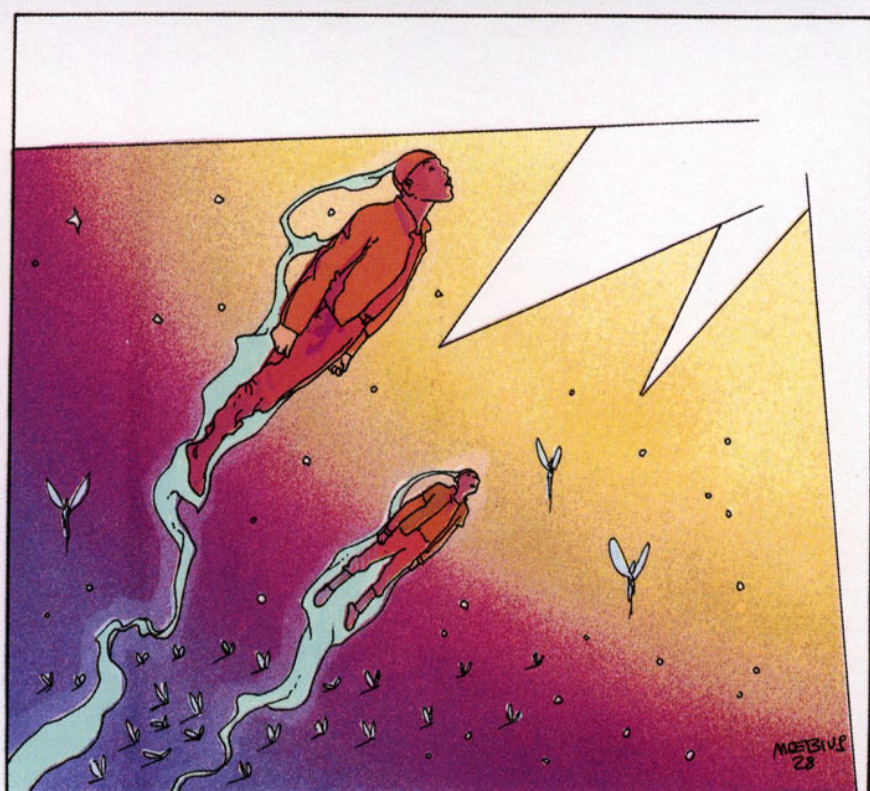
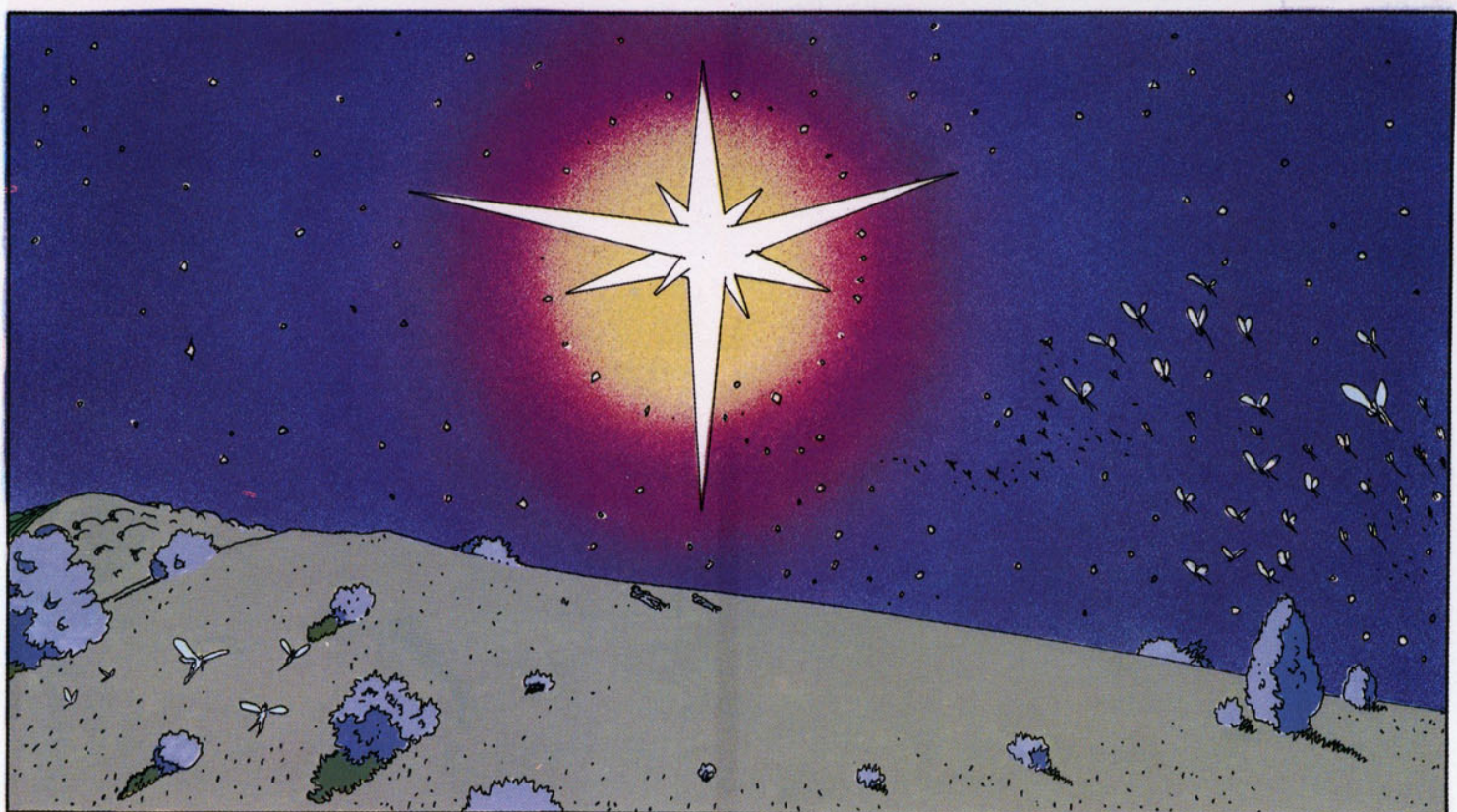
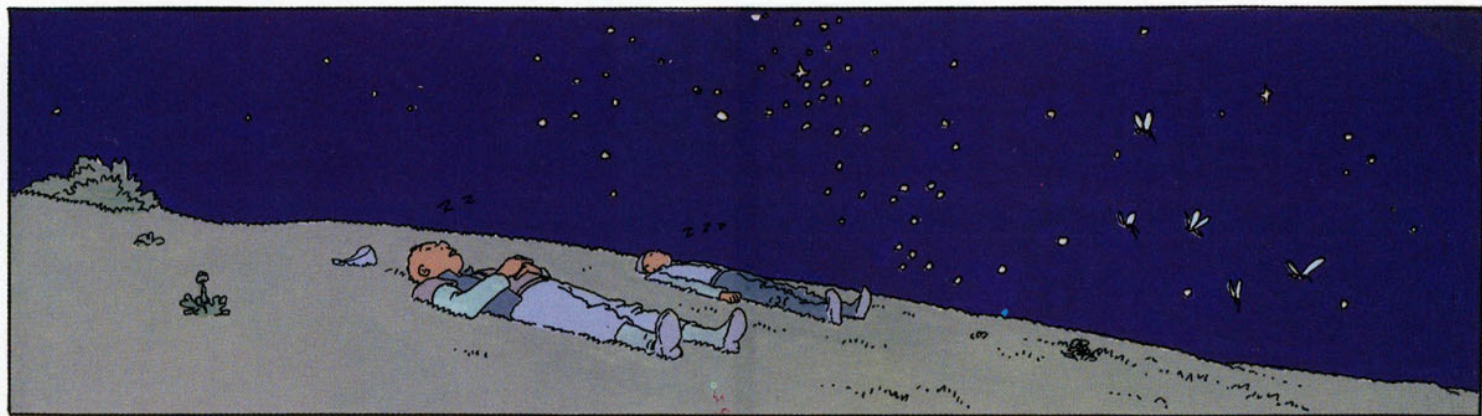
WHY? WELL, WE DON'T HAVE A ROBOMEDIC ANYMORE... HOW OLD ARE YOU AND HOW MANY TRANSPLANTS HAVE YOU HAD?

HMMM... I'M TWENTY-THREE AND I'VE HAD... I DON'T KNOW... ABOUT THIRTY TRANSPLANTS, INCLUDING SEVEN HEARTS, I THINK.

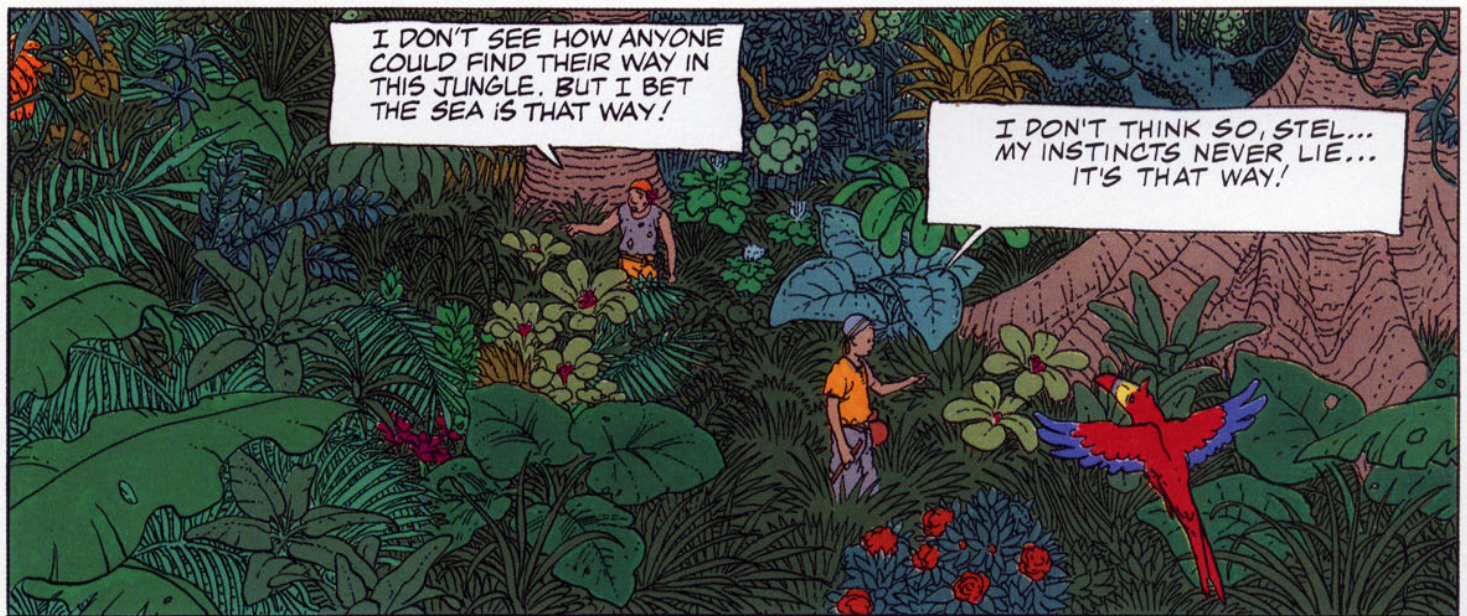


ME, I'M THIRTY-TWO AND I'VE HAD OVER SIXTY TRANSPLANTS, INCLUDING EIGHTEEN HEARTS. DO YOU THINK THAT'S A SIGN OF BEING HEALTHY?



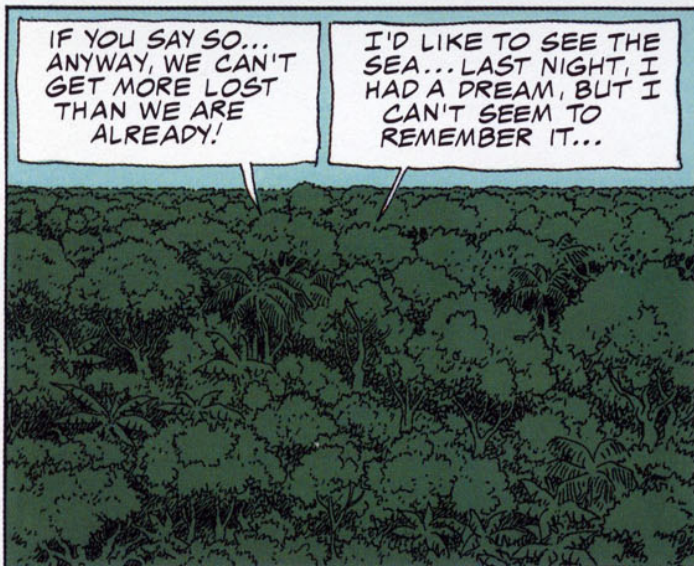






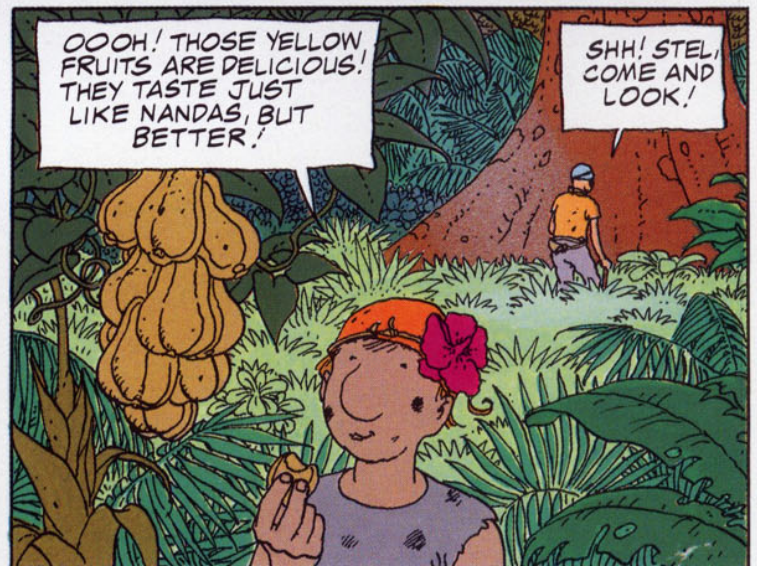
I DON'T SEE HOW ANYONE
COULD FIND THEIR WAY IN
THIS JUNGLE. BUT I BET
THE SEA IS THAT WAY!

I DON'T THINK SO, STEL...
MY INSTINCTS NEVER LIE...
IT'S THAT WAY!



IF YOU SAY SO...
ANYWAY, WE CAN'T
GET MORE LOST
THAN WE ARE
ALREADY!

I'D LIKE TO SEE THE
SEA... LAST NIGHT, I
HAD A DREAM, BUT I
CAN'T SEEM TO
REMEMBER IT...



OOOH! THOSE YELLOW
FRUITS ARE DELICIOUS!
THEY TASTE JUST
LIKE NANDAS, BUT
BETTER!

SHH! STEL,
COME AND
LOOK!



BY ALL THE
INTERPOLATED
WORLDS!
WHAT'S
THAT?!

IT'S A
FAIRY!



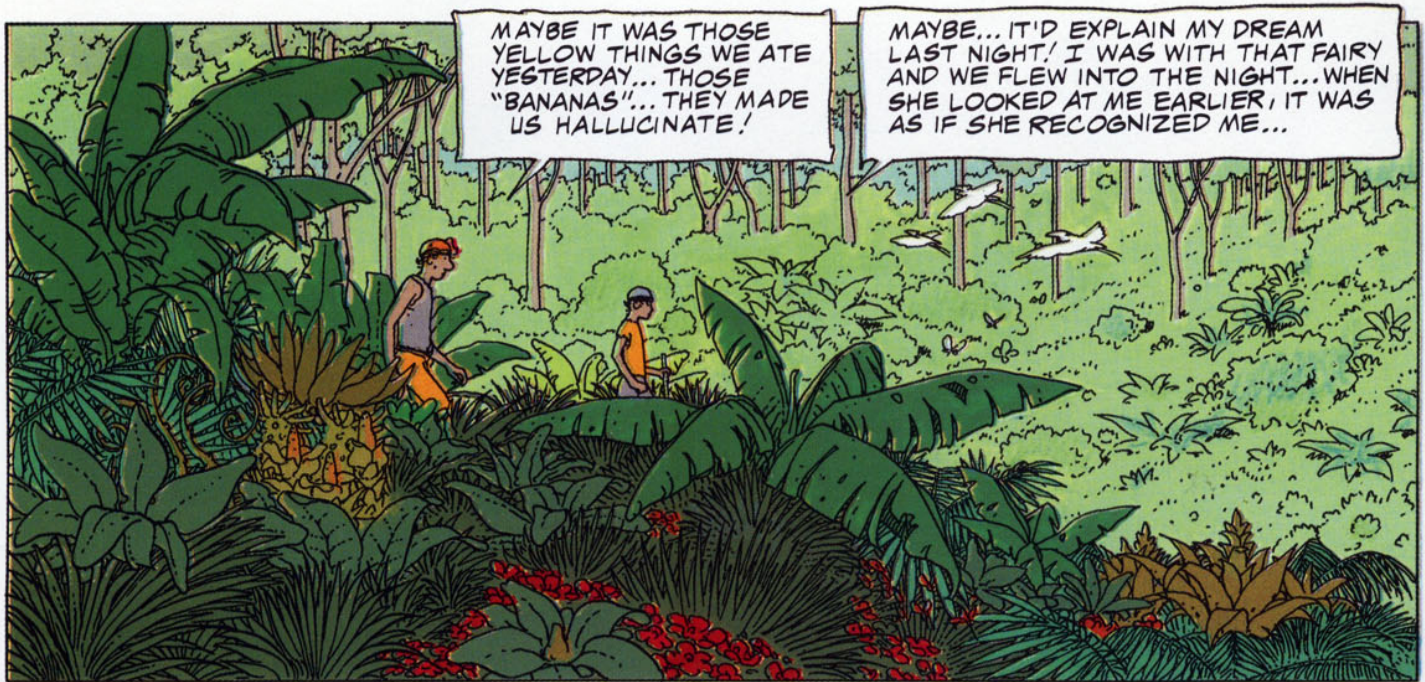
A FAIRY?
IS THAT
PART OF
THE
TERRAN-
ECO-
SYSTEM?

I'M NOT SURE... I THINK
IT WAS A MYTHOLOGICAL
CREATURE... A LITTLE
LIKE THE BUZZARIS ON
PERSHAWARD... IT WAS--
OOH!!! NOW, I REMEM-
BER MY DREAM!!!

HEY! DID YOU SEE
WHAT SHE DID?!

?

GONE!
PFFT!
VANISHED,
JUST
LIKE
THAT!



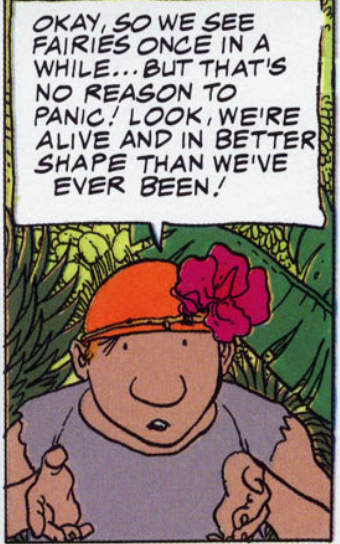
MAYBE IT WAS THOSE YELLOW THINGS WE ATE YESTERDAY... THOSE "BANANAS"... THEY MADE US HALLUCINATE!

MAYBE... IT'D EXPLAIN MY DREAM LAST NIGHT! I WAS WITH THAT FAIRY AND WE FLEW INTO THE NIGHT... WHEN SHE LOOKED AT ME EARLIER, IT WAS AS IF SHE RECOGNIZED ME...



WHAT'S GOT INTO ME IS THAT I'M FED UP WITH THIS PLACE! NOT ONLY ARE WE DOOMED TO WANDER FOREVER BUT, ON TOP OF IT, WE'RE BEGINNING TO LOSE OUR MINDS! **I CAN'T STAND IT!**

BUT, ATAN, WE'RE NOT LOSING OUR MINDS.



OKAY, SO WE SEE FAIRIES ONCE IN A WHILE... BUT THAT'S NO REASON TO PANIC! LOOK, WE'RE ALIVE AND IN BETTER SHAPE THAN WE'VE EVER BEEN!



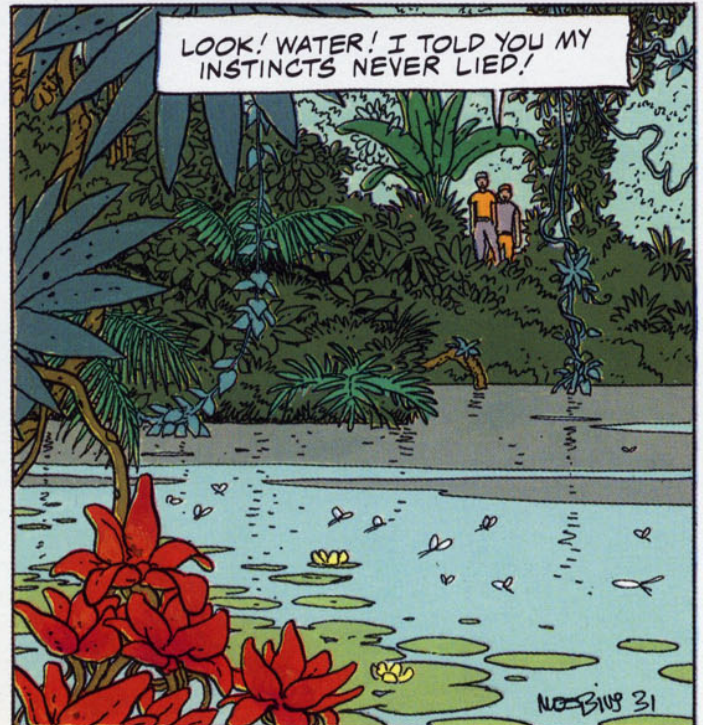
THIS FOREST IS BEAUTIFUL! IT'S FULL OF GOOD FRUITS AND THERE'S NO DANGER... WHY DON'T WE JUST LEARN TO ENJOY OUR NEW, SIMPLER LIFE?

I GUESS YOU'RE RIGHT. OKAY! LET'S GO ON--

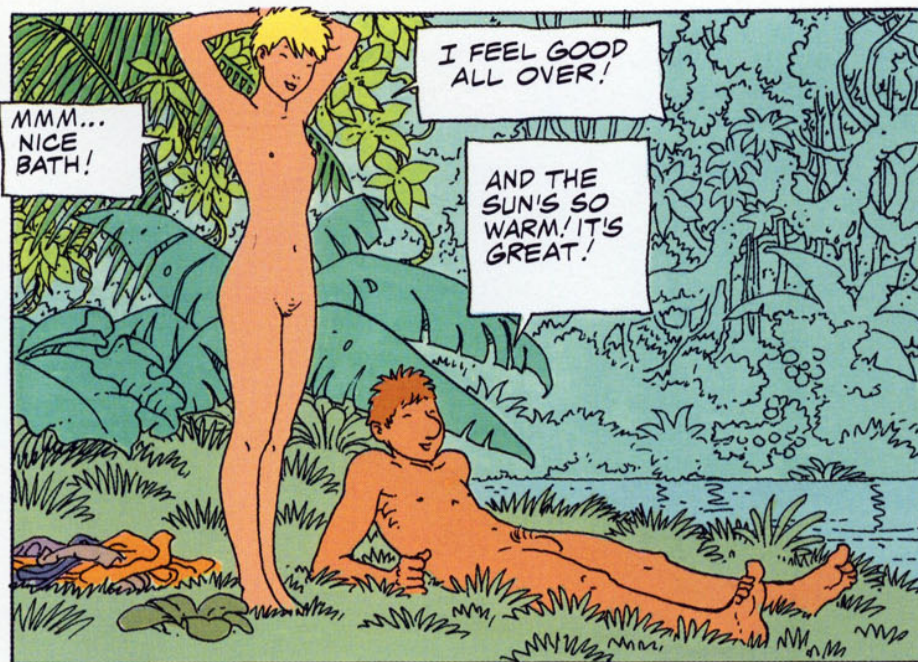


BUT I STILL DON'T TRUST YOUR "NEW, SIMPLER LIFE".

YOU'LL SEE... YOU'LL CHANGE YOUR MIND.



LOOK! WATER! I TOLD YOU MY INSTINCTS NEVER LIED!



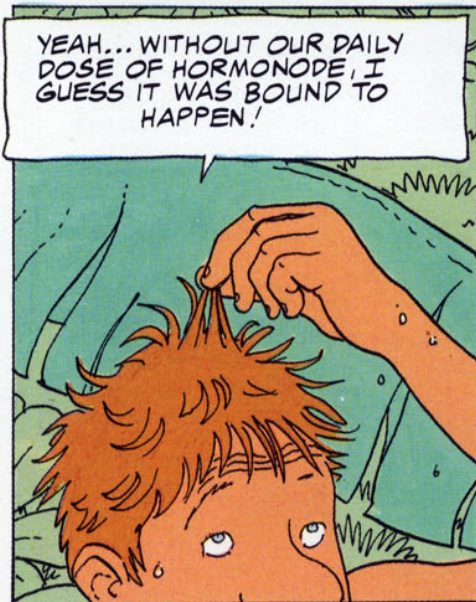
MMM...
NICE
BATH!

I FEEL GOOD
ALL OVER!

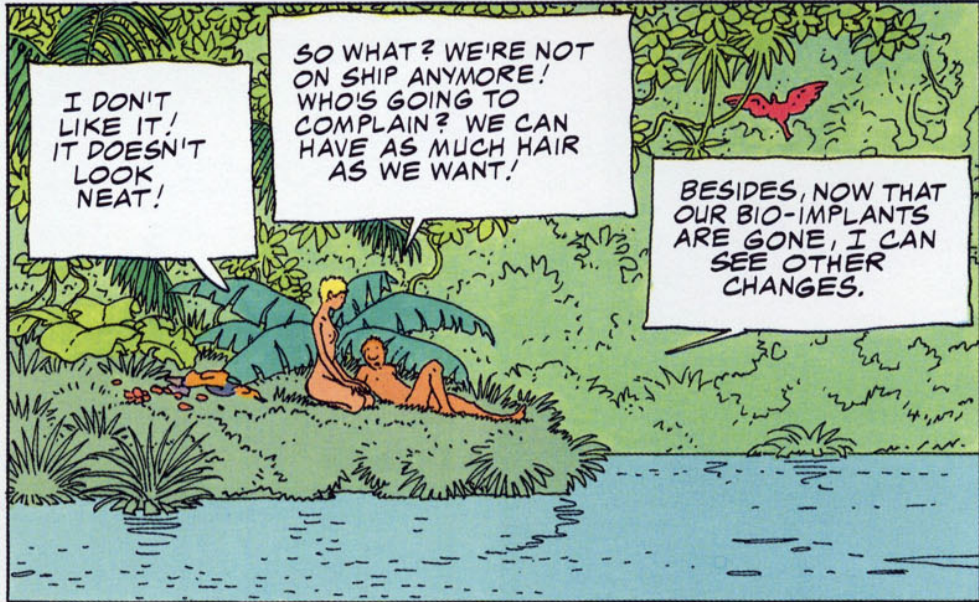
AND THE
SUN'S SO
WARM! IT'S
GREAT!



SAY, STEL, HAVE YOU NOTICED
HOW OUR BODY HAIR HAS BEEN
GROWING BACK LATELY?



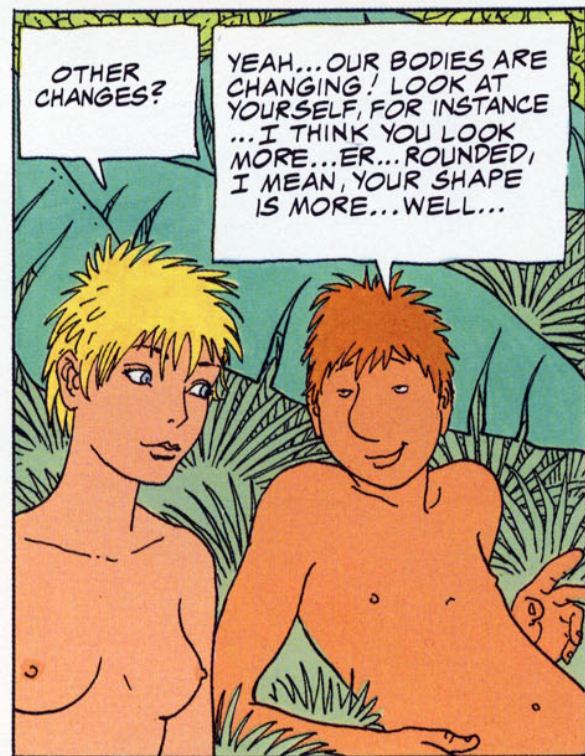
YEAH... WITHOUT OUR DAILY
DOSE OF HORMONODE, I
GUESS IT WAS BOUND TO
HAPPEN!



I DON'T
LIKE IT!
IT DOESN'T
LOOK
NEAT!

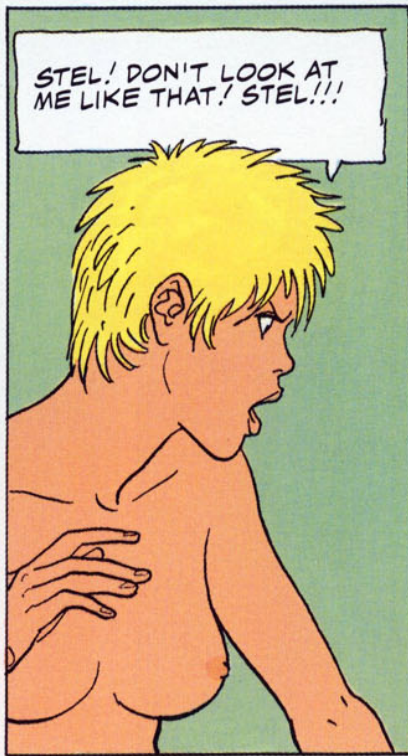
SO WHAT? WE'RE NOT
ON SHIP ANYMORE!
WHO'S GOING TO
COMPLAIN? WE CAN
HAVE AS MUCH HAIR
AS WE WANT!

BESIDES, NOW THAT
OUR BIO-IMPLANTS
ARE GONE, I CAN
SEE OTHER
CHANGES.



OTHER
CHANGES?

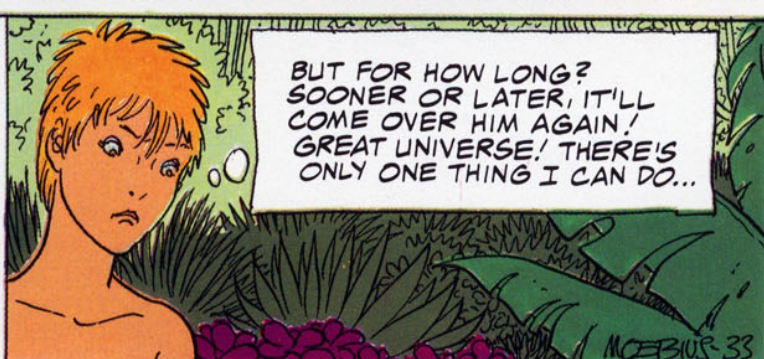
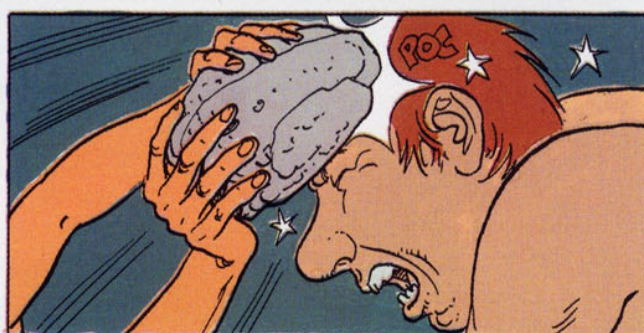
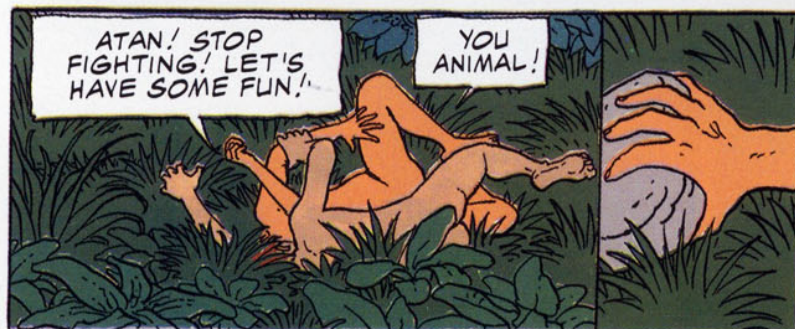
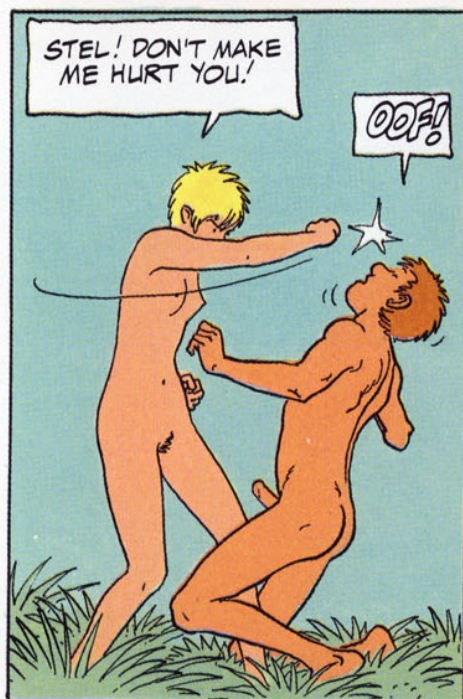
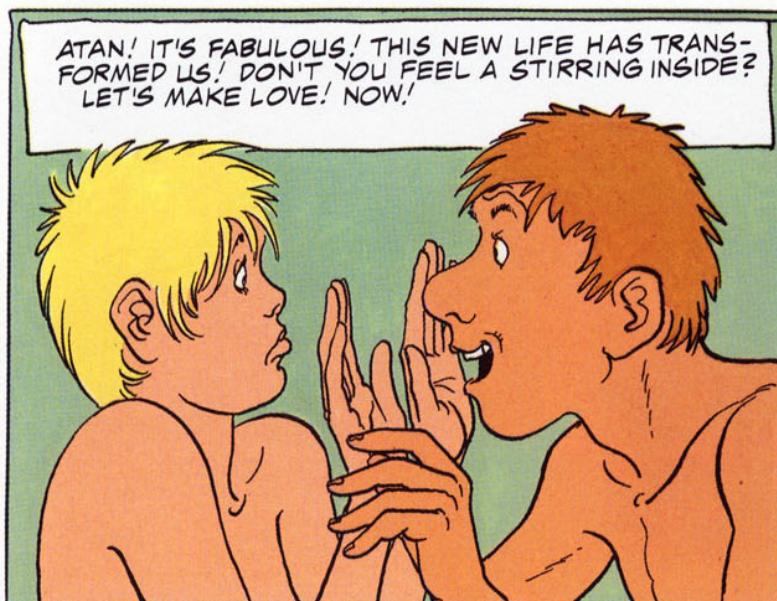
YEAH... OUR BODIES ARE
CHANGING! LOOK AT
YOURSELF, FOR INSTANCE
... I THINK YOU LOOK
MORE... ER... ROUNDED,
I MEAN, YOUR SHAPE
IS MORE... WELL...

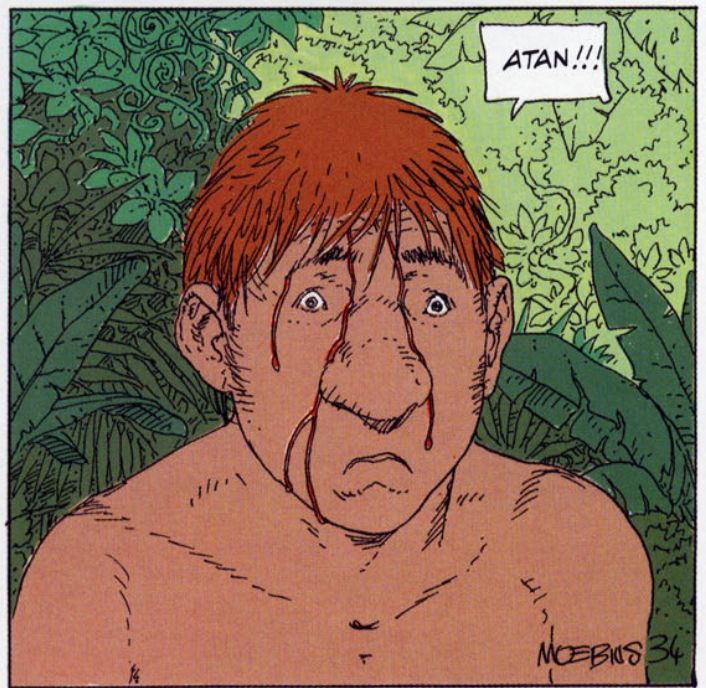
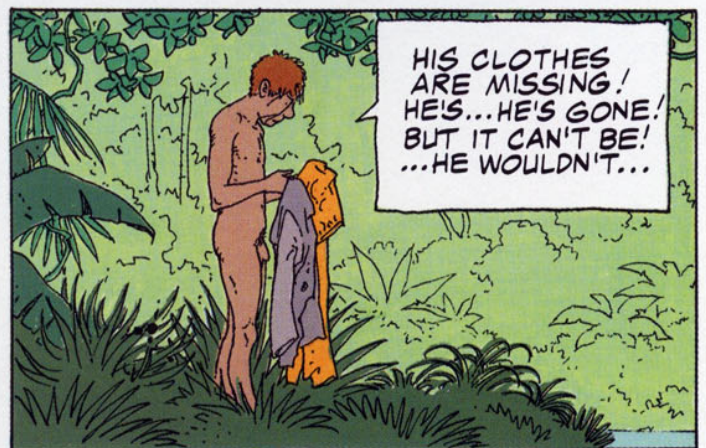
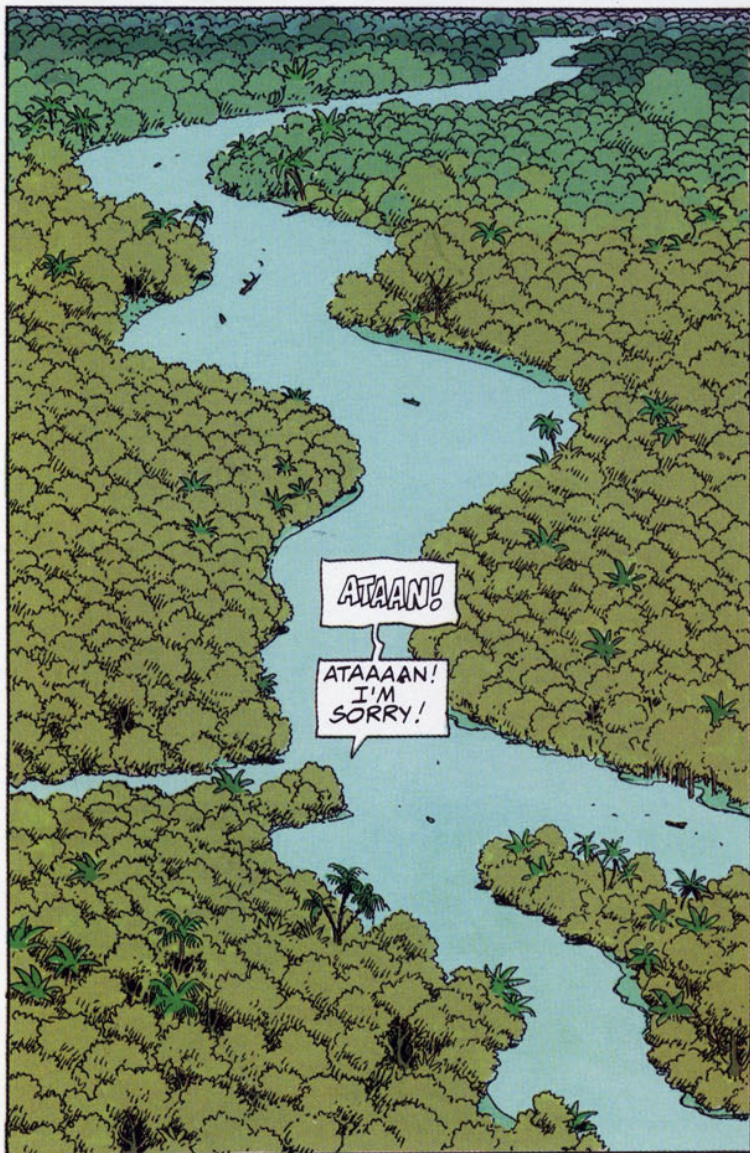
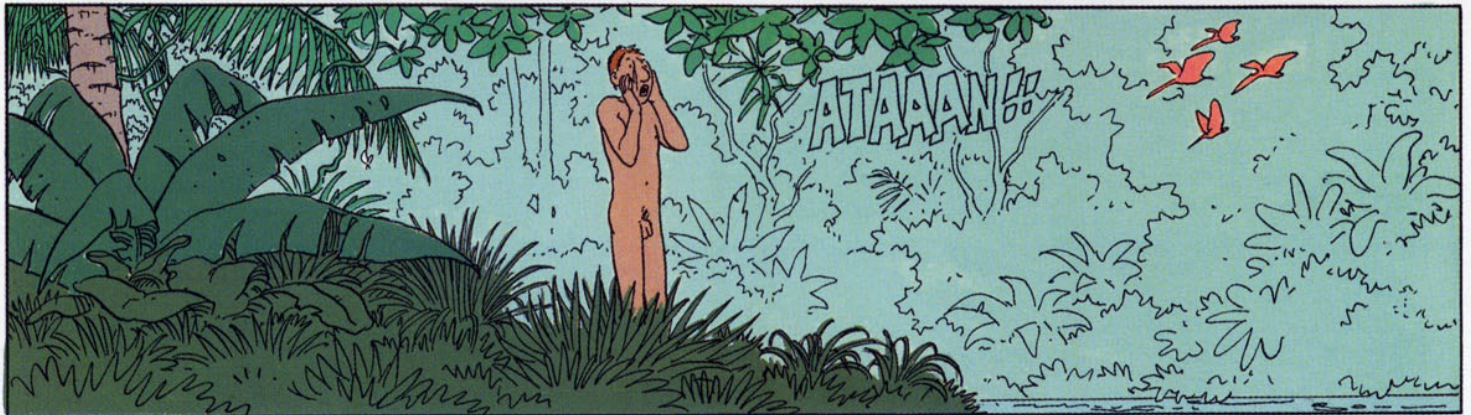
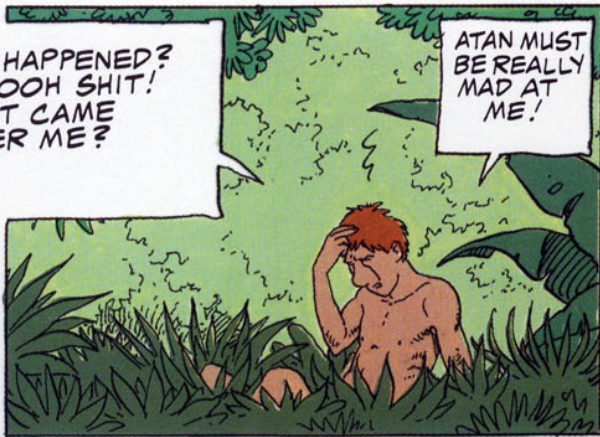
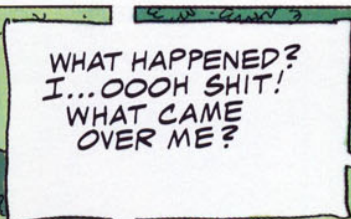


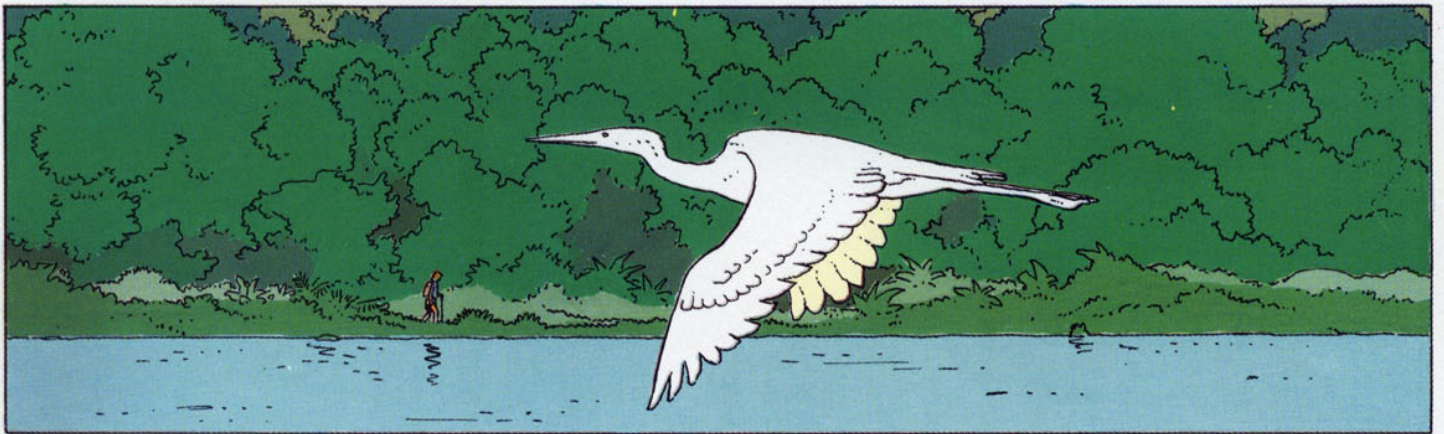
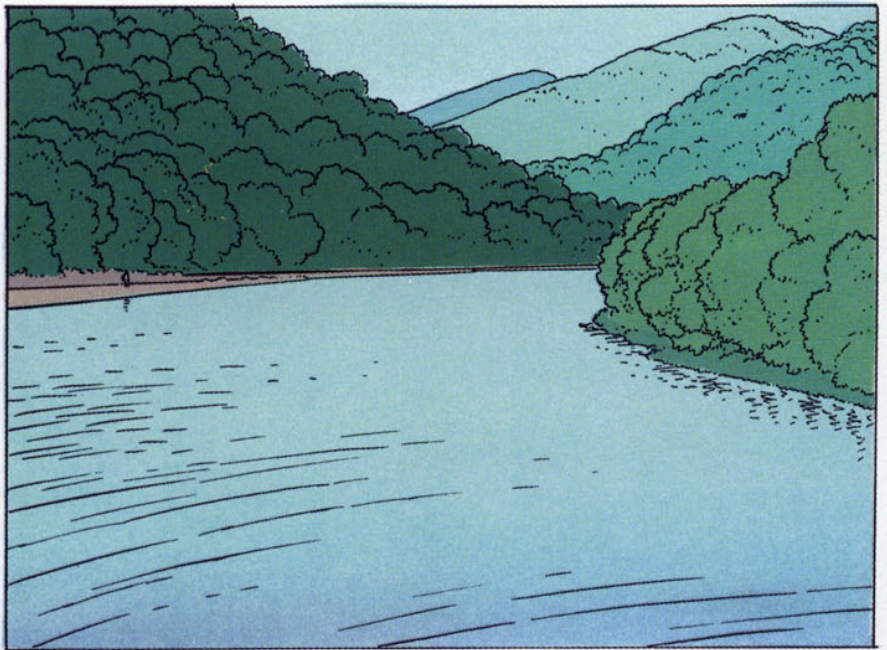
STEL! DON'T LOOK AT
ME LIKE THAT! STEL!!!

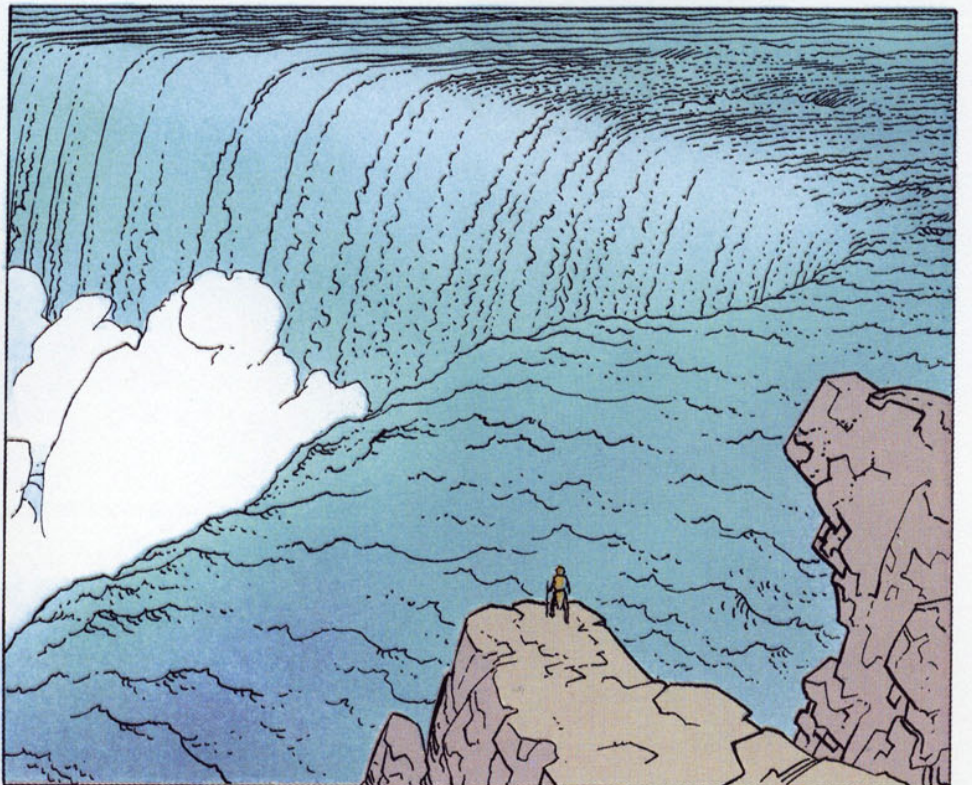
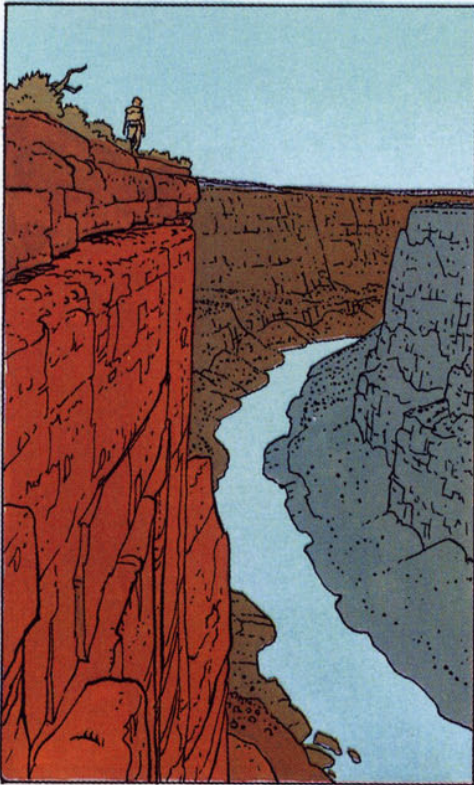
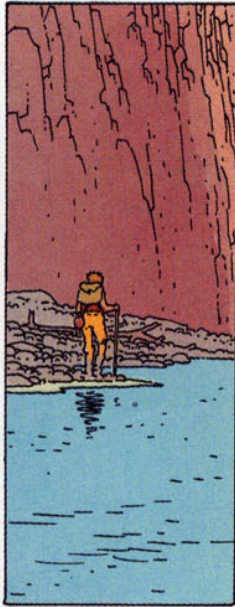


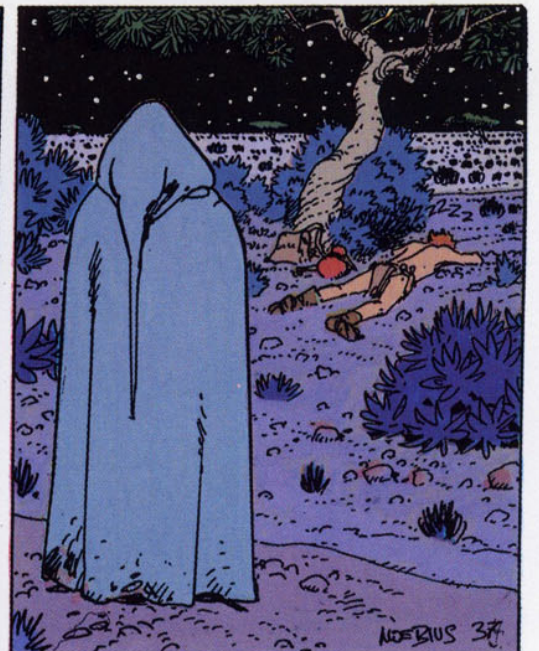
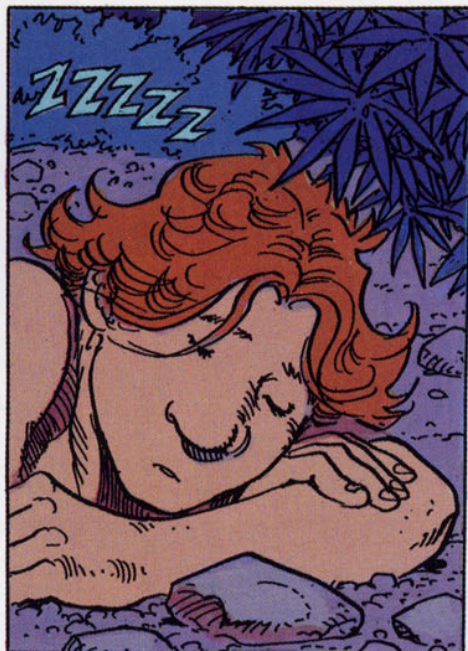
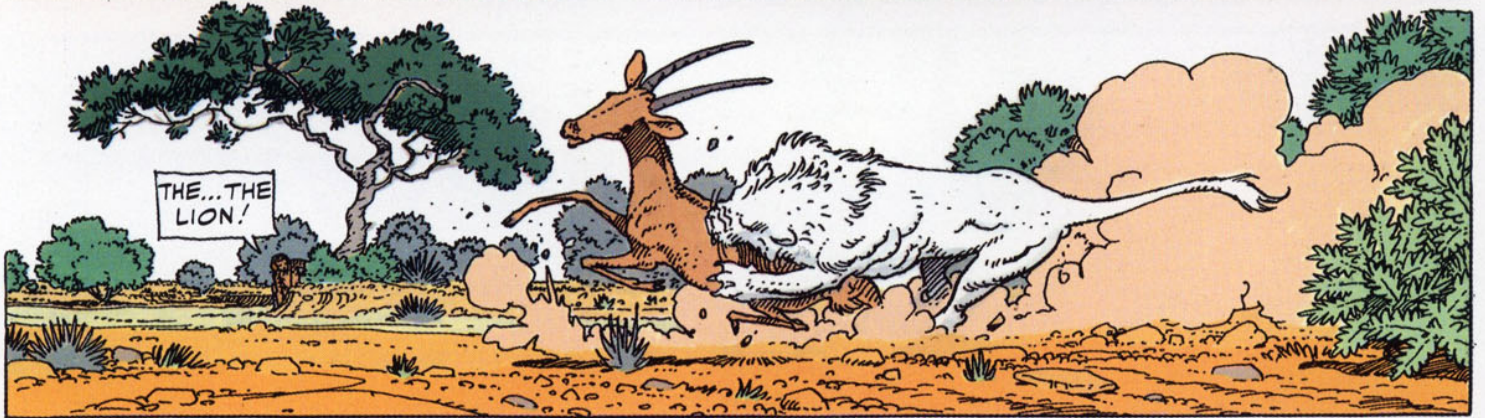
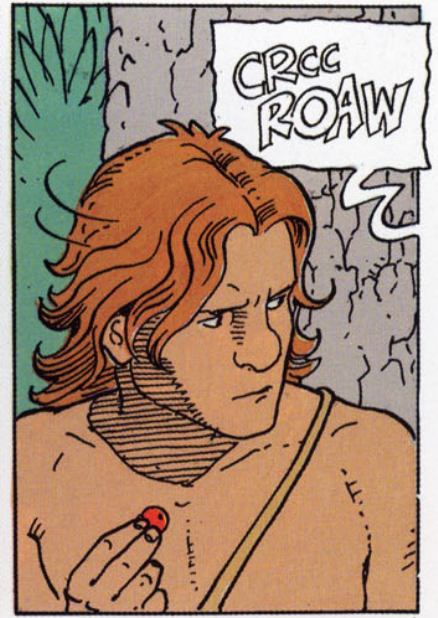
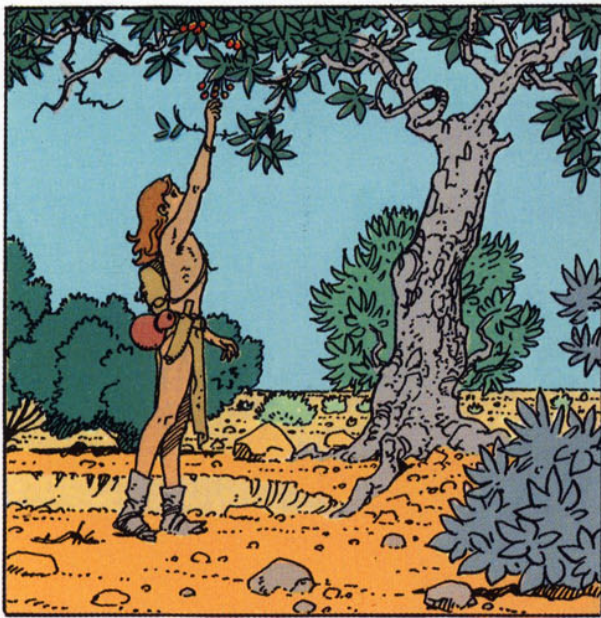
STEL, YOU CAN'T... OOOH!
YOU'RE SICK! YOU'RE
DISGUSTING!

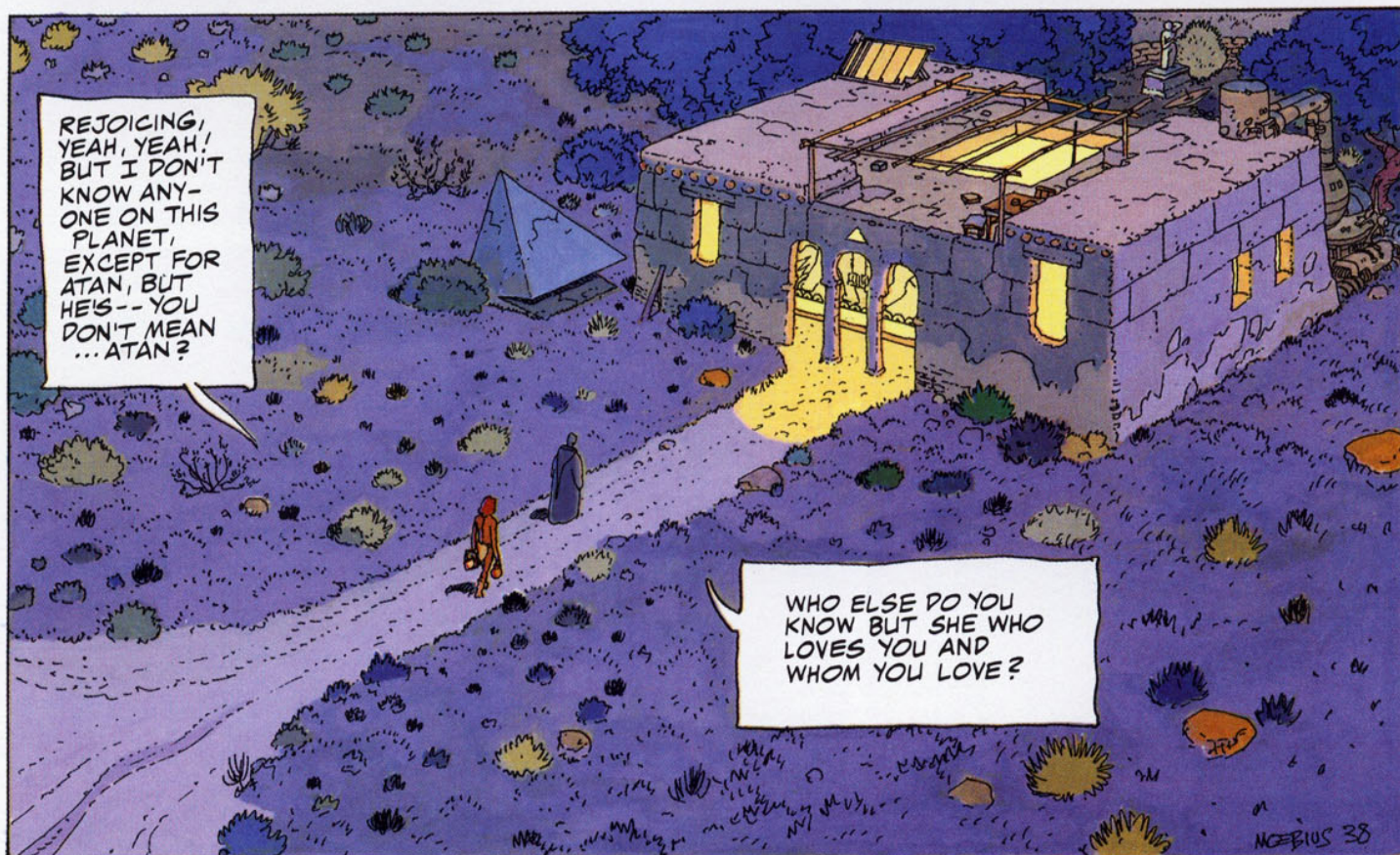
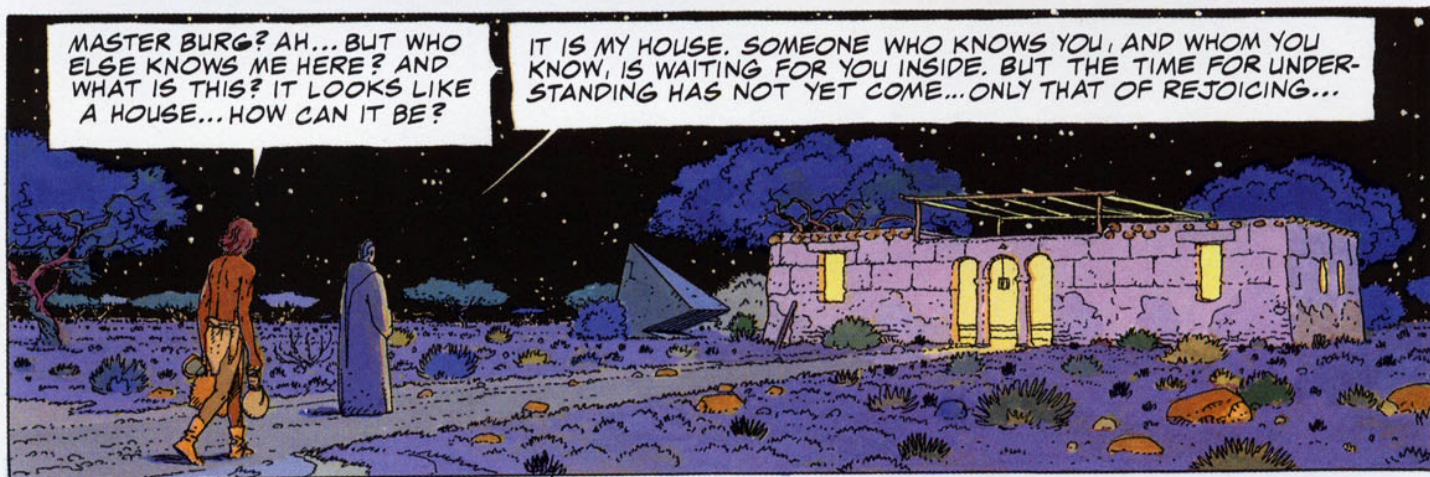
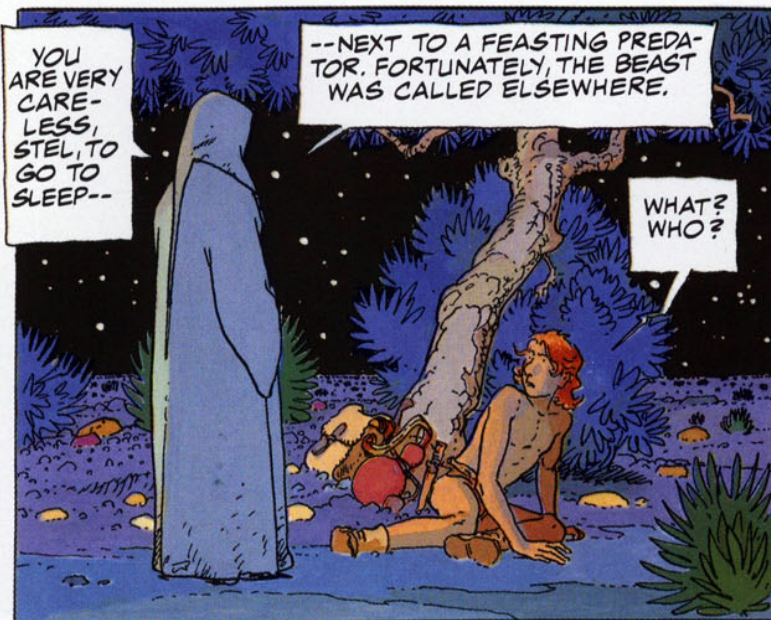


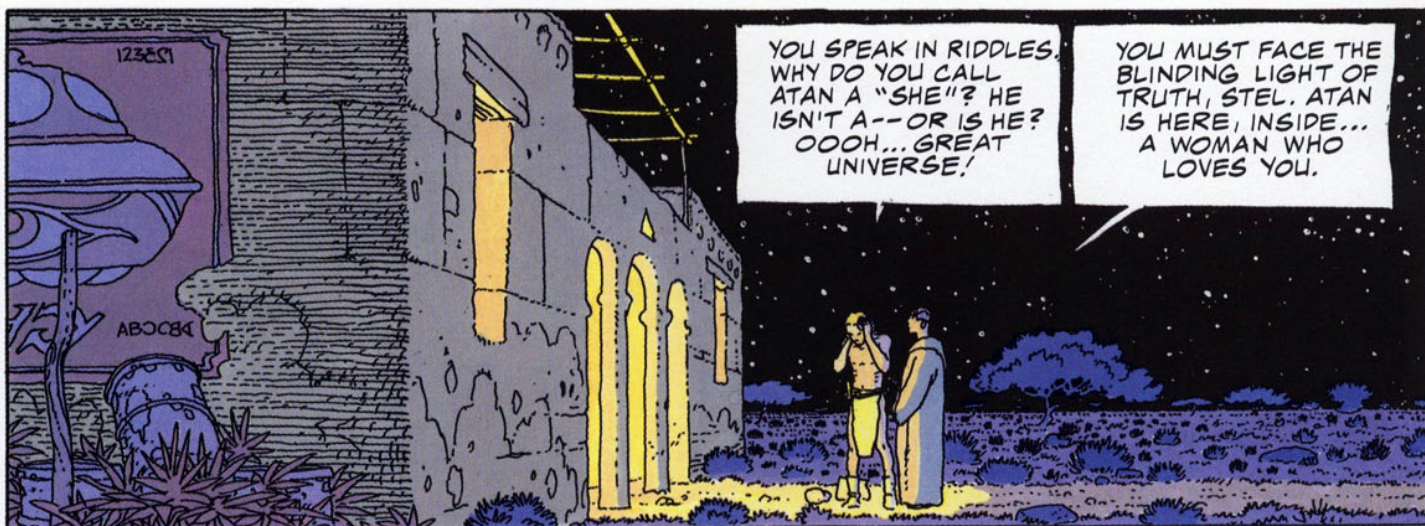












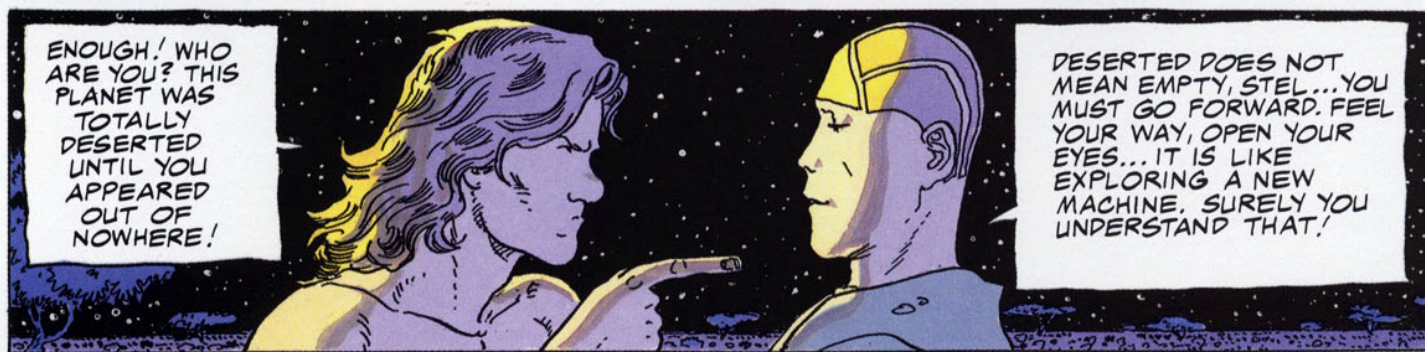
YOU SPEAK IN RIDDLES.
WHY DO YOU CALL
ATAN A "SHE"? HE
ISN'T A-- OR IS HE?
OOOH... GREAT
UNIVERSE!

YOU MUST FACE THE
BLINDING LIGHT OF
TRUTH, STEL. ATAN
IS HERE, INSIDE...
A WOMAN WHO
LOVES YOU.



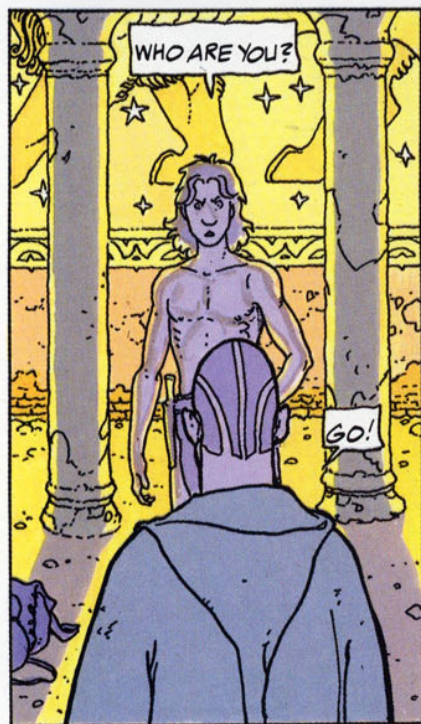
A WOMAN
WHO LOVES
ME... BUT RAN
AWAY AND
DISAPPEARED
AFTER
KNOCKING
ME DOWN!

A WOMAN CAN CHANGE,
STEL. FIRST, SHE
STRUCK YOU, BUT NOW,
SHE WILL COMFORT
YOU... WHAT MATTERS
IS NOT UNDERSTANDING
BUT REJOICING. GO,
STEL! GO SEE HOW
SWEET ATAN'S LOVE
CAN BE!



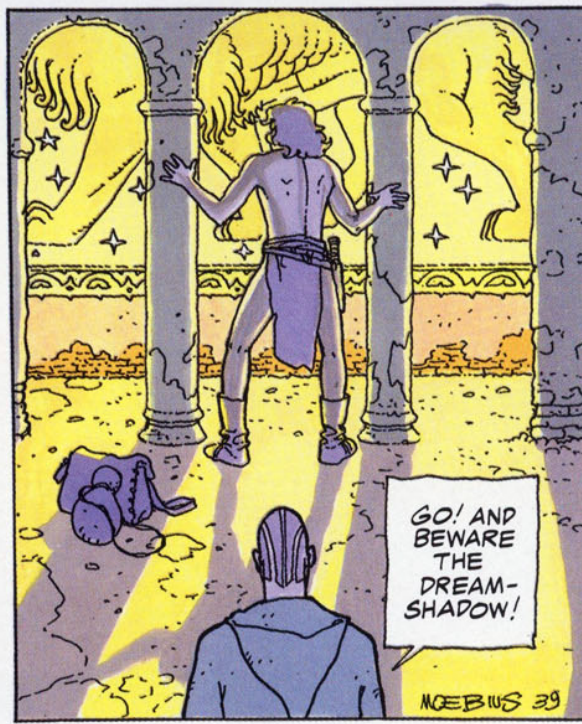
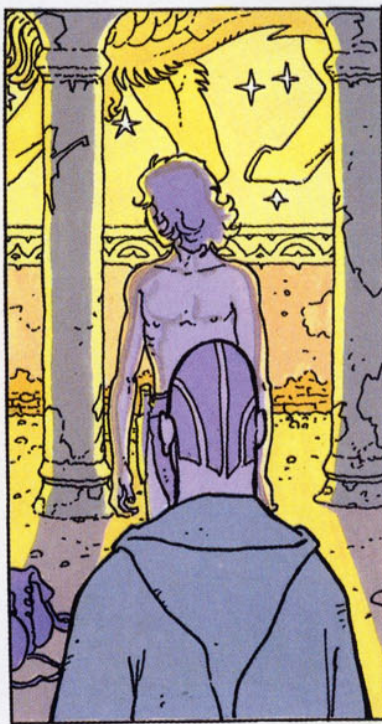
ENOUGH! WHO
ARE YOU? THIS
PLANET WAS
TOTALLY
DESERTED
UNTIL YOU
APPEARED
OUT OF
NOWHERE!

DESERTED DOES NOT
MEAN EMPTY, STEL... YOU
MUST GO FORWARD. FEEL
YOUR WAY, OPEN YOUR
EYES... IT IS LIKE
EXPLORING A NEW
MACHINE. SURELY YOU
UNDERSTAND THAT!

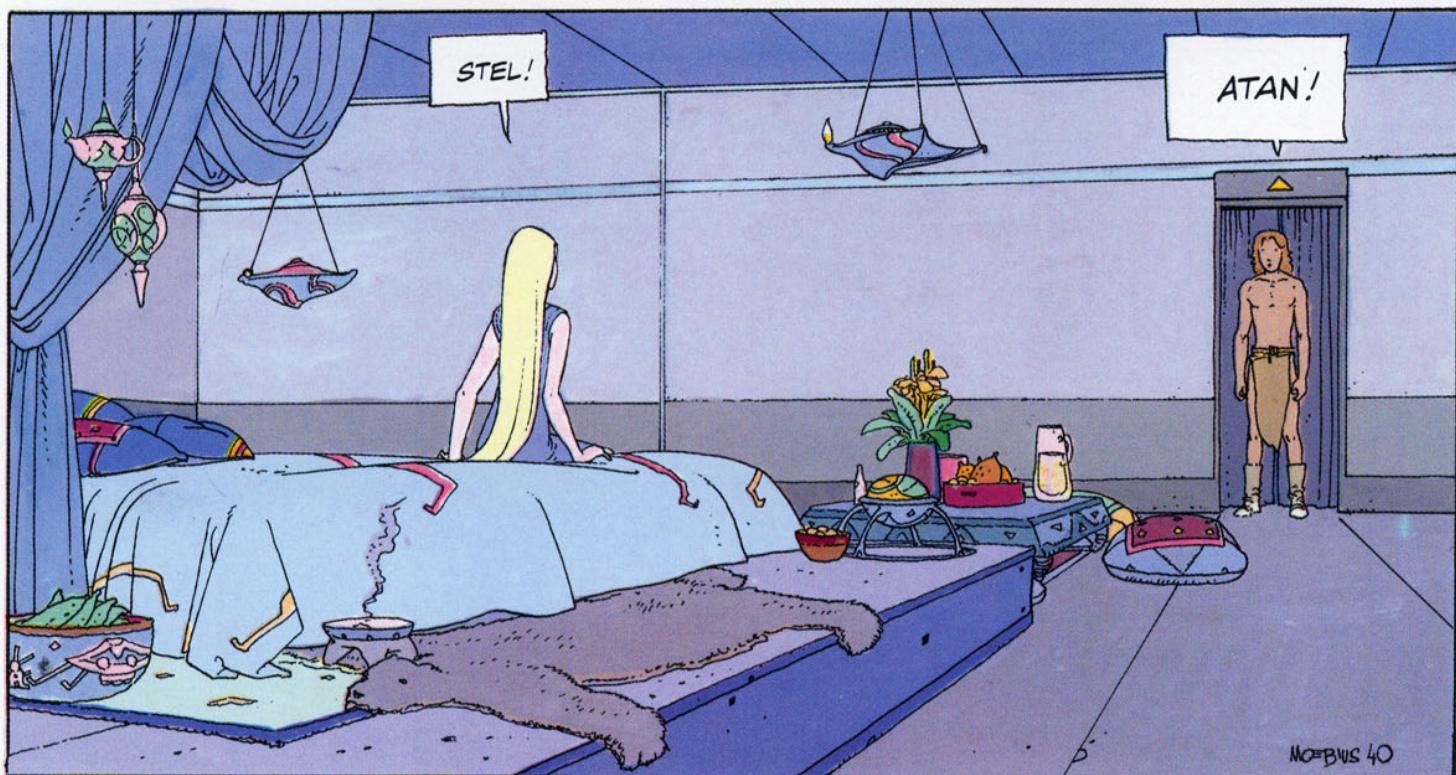
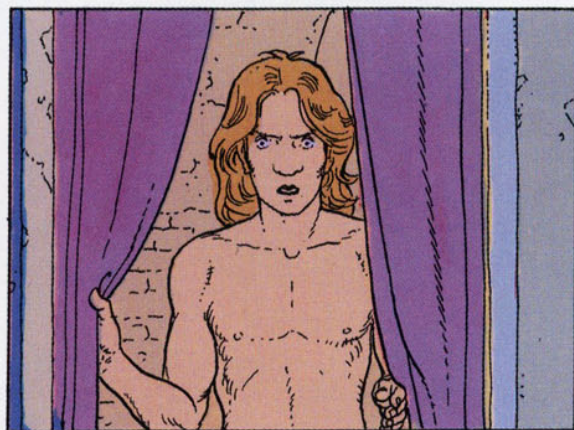
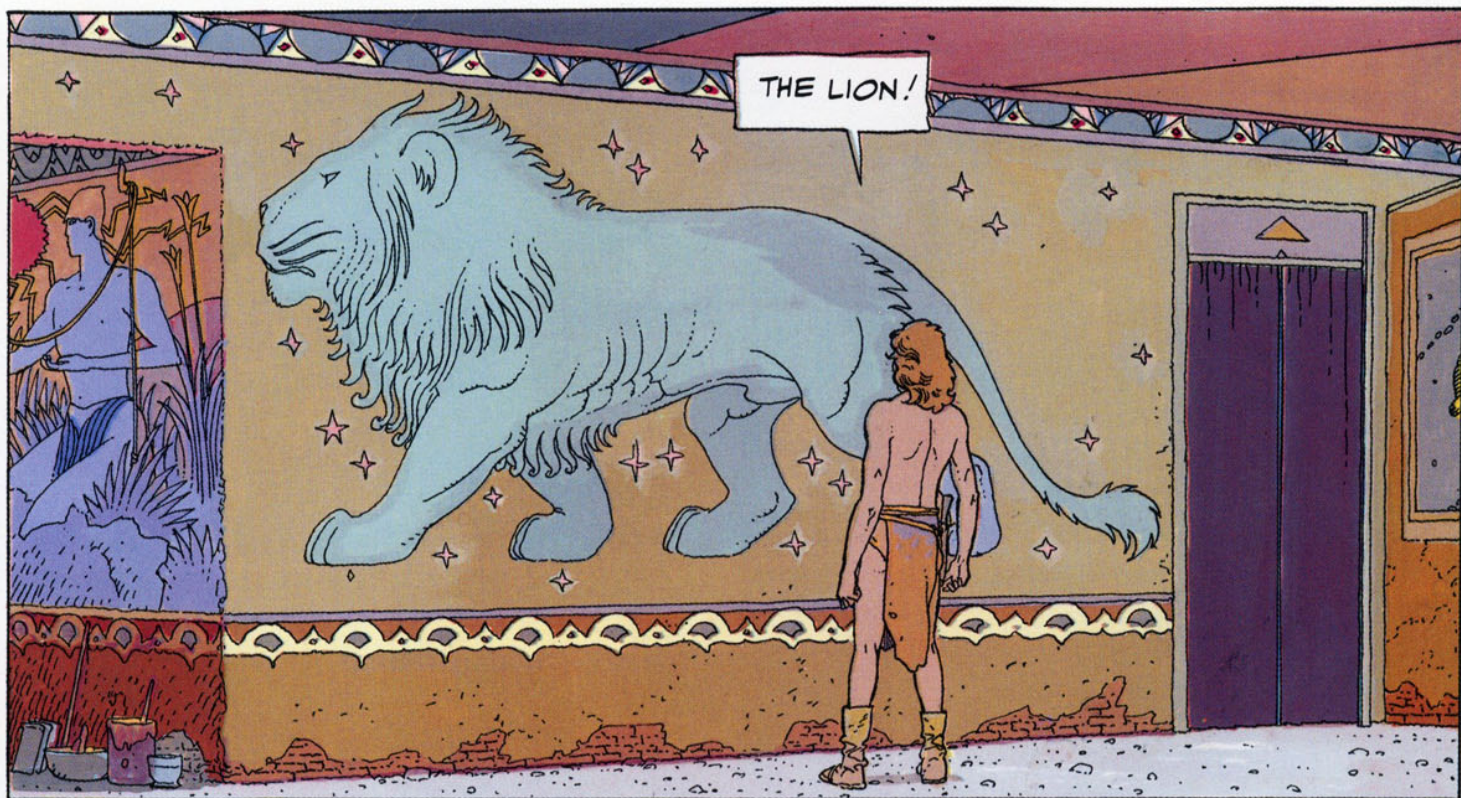


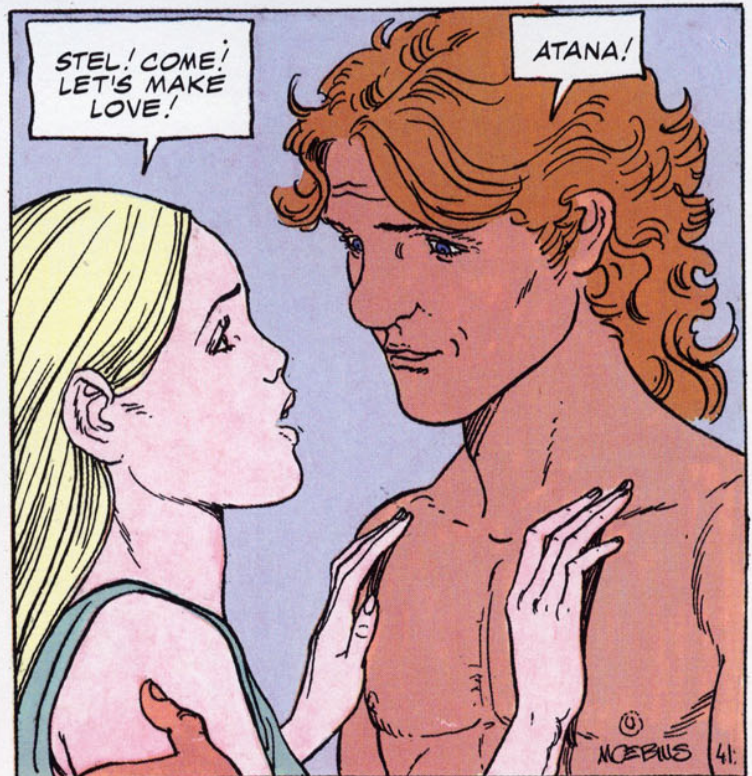
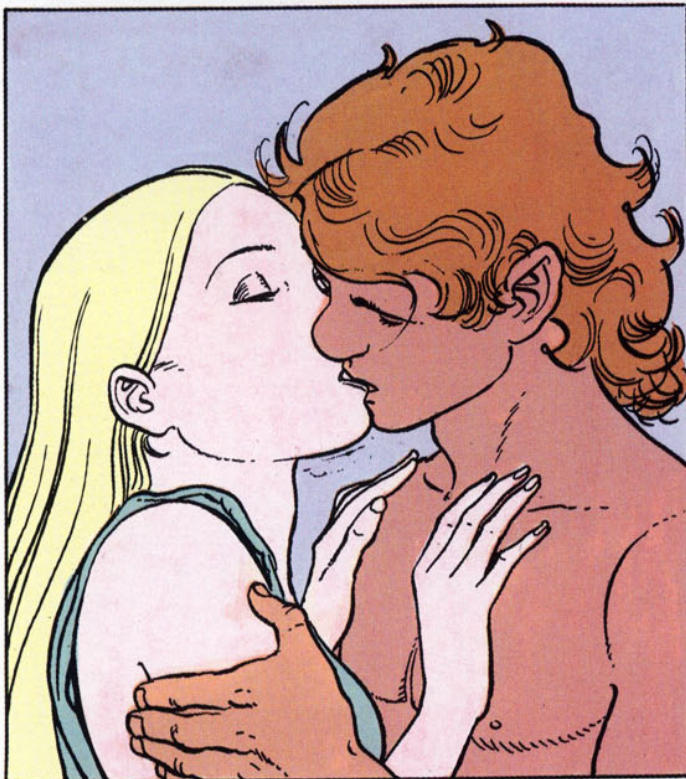
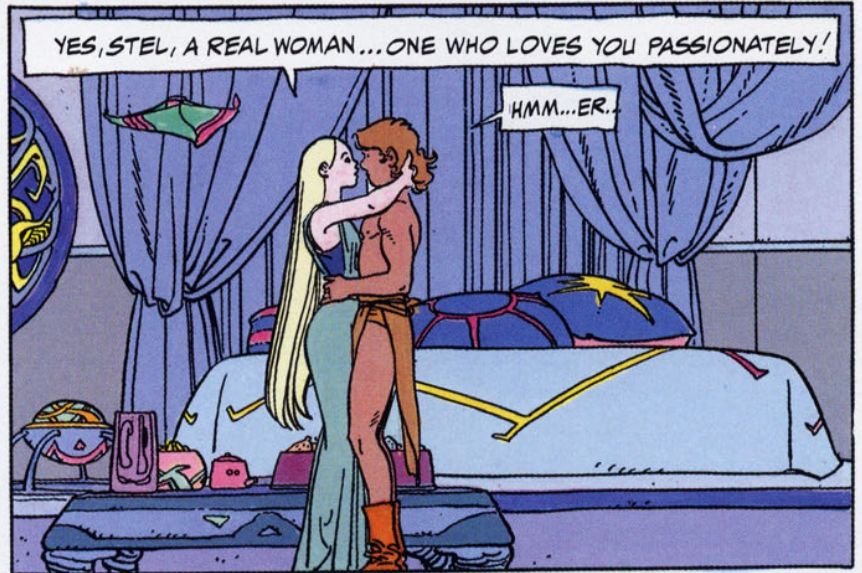
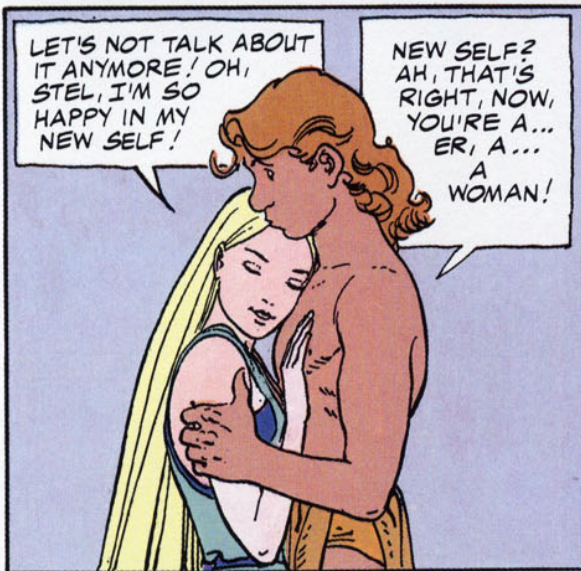
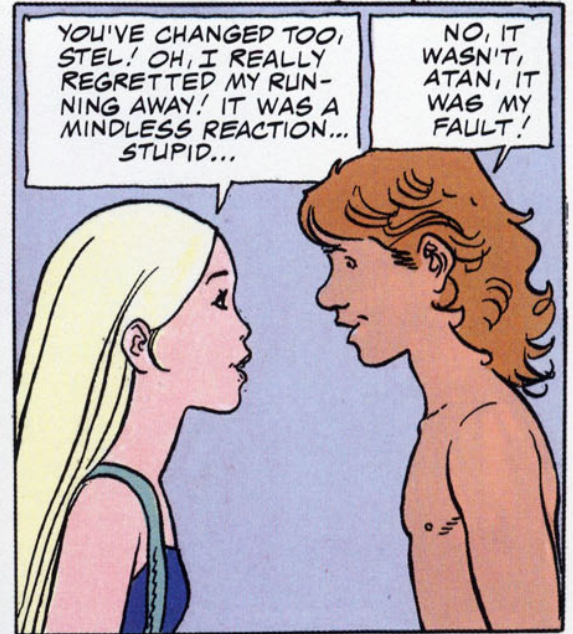
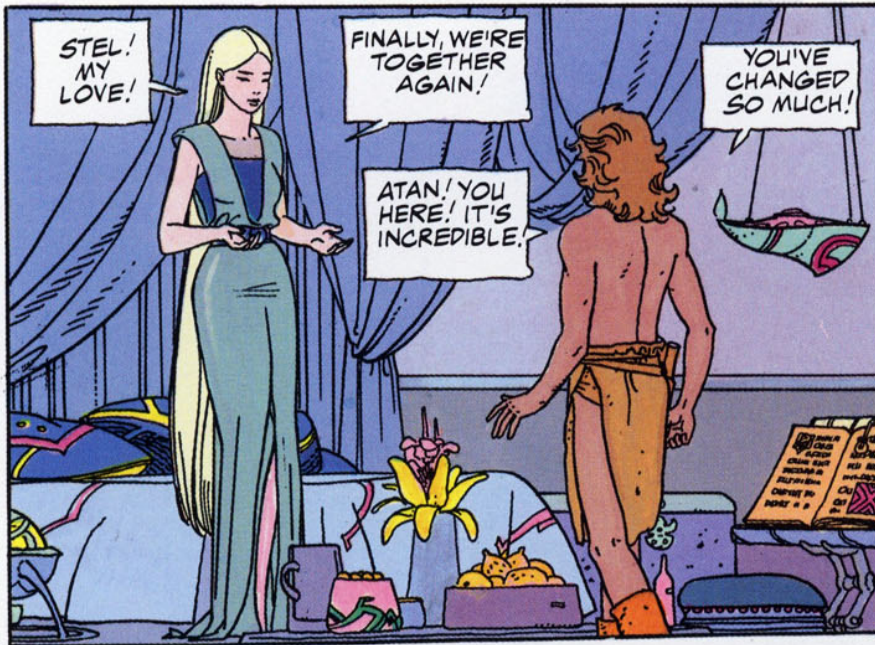
WHO ARE YOU?

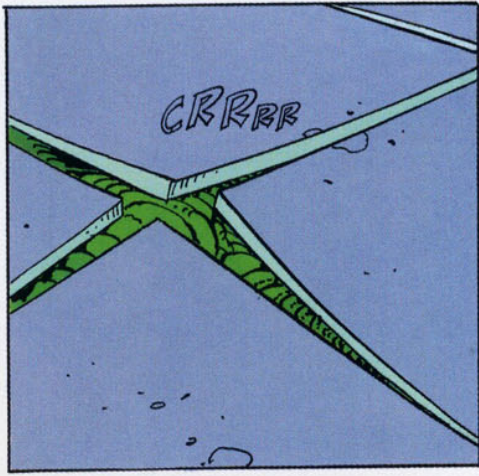
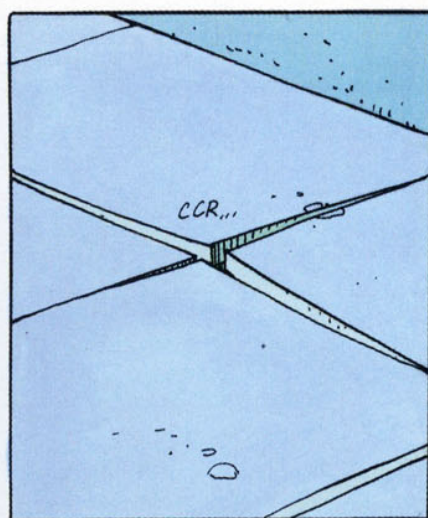
GO!

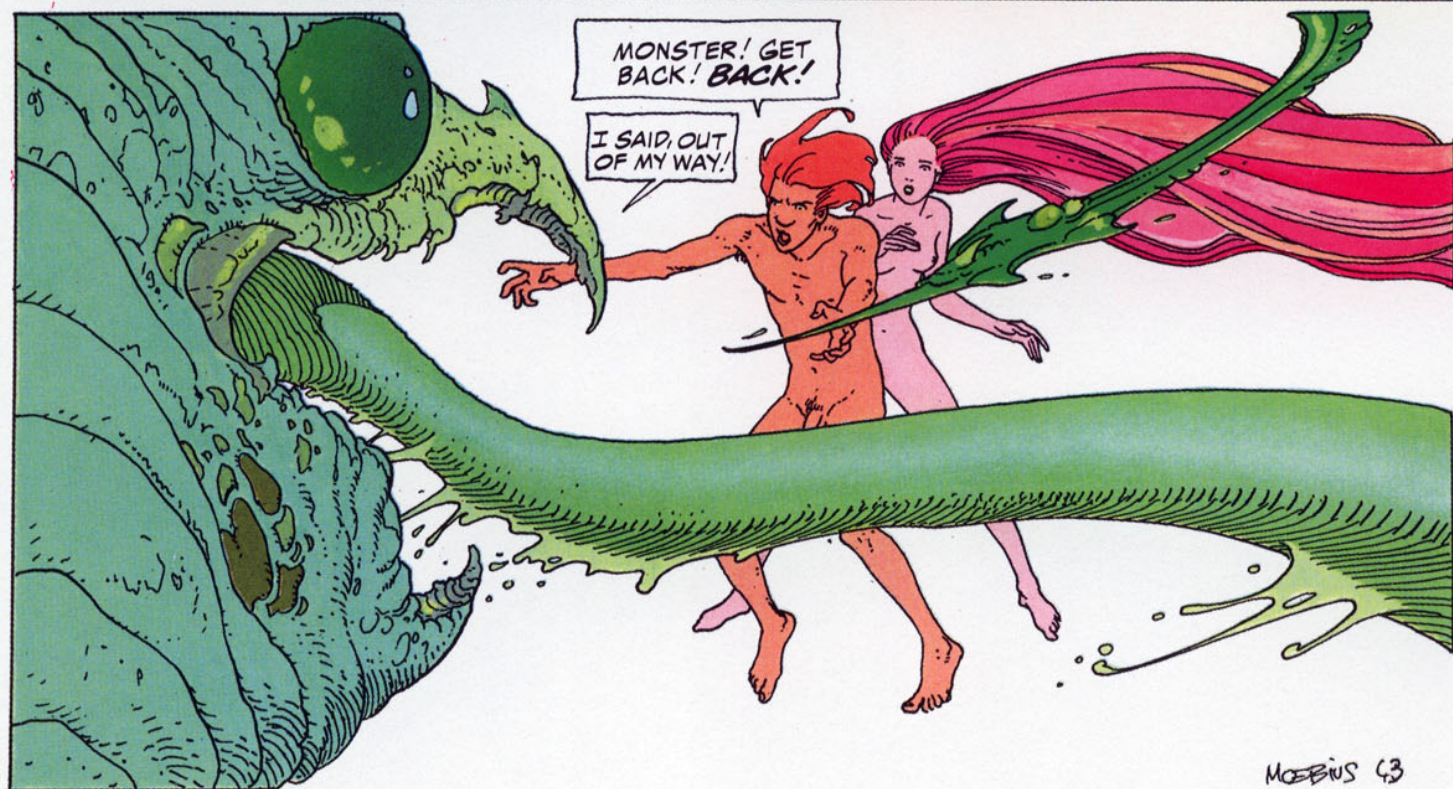
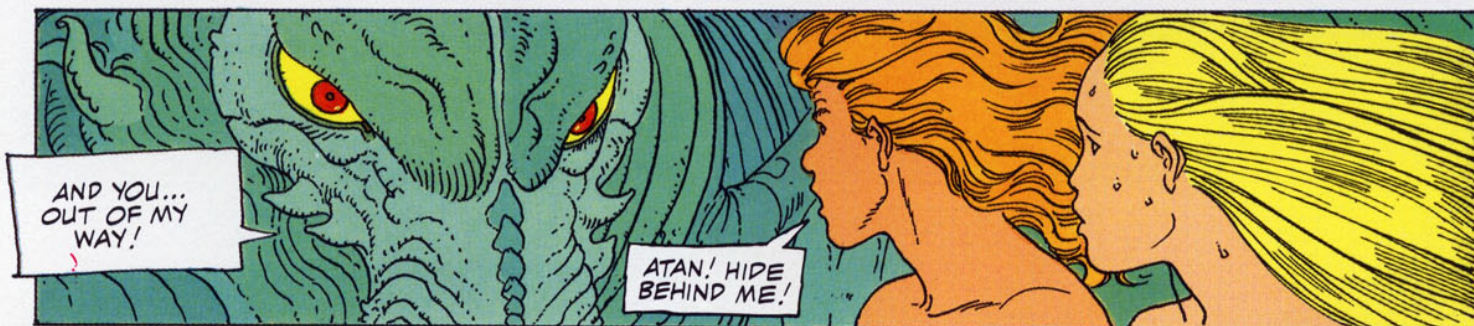
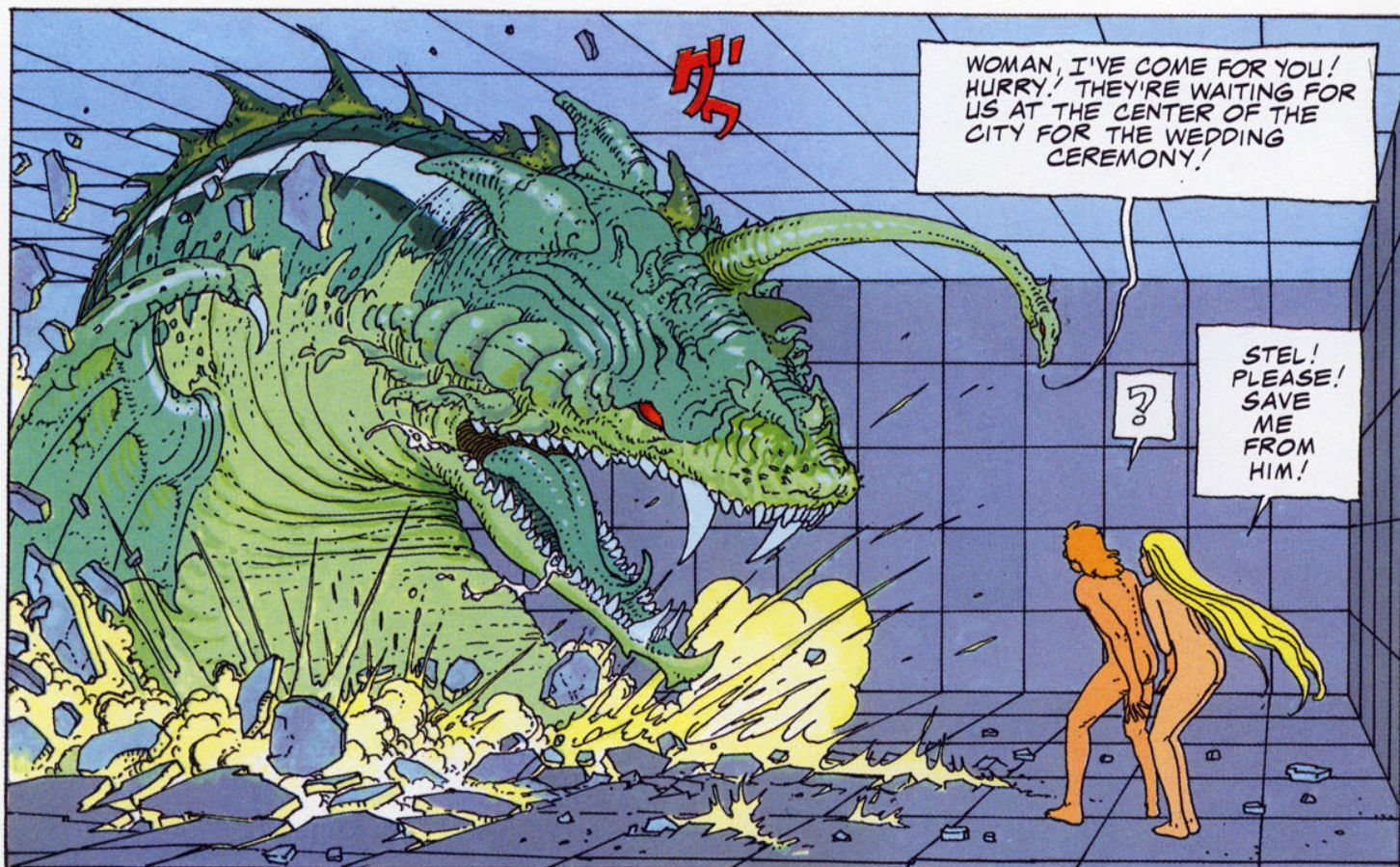


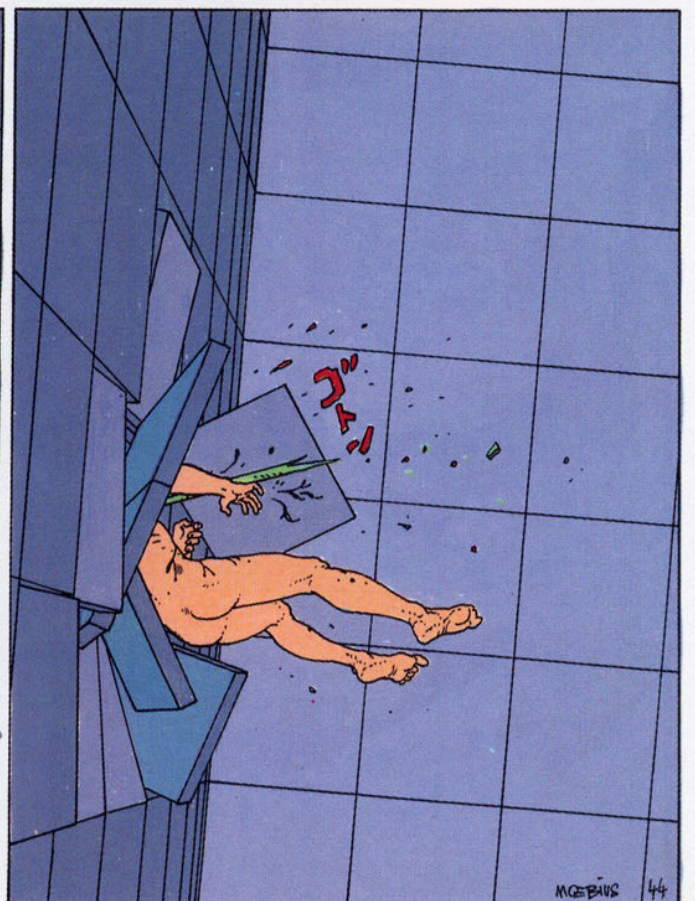
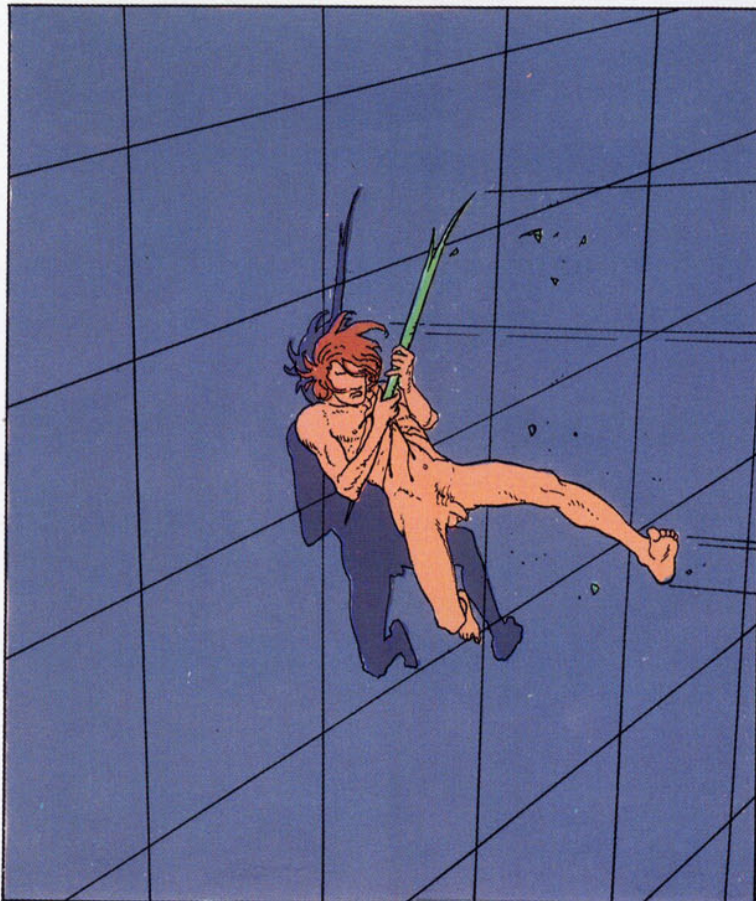
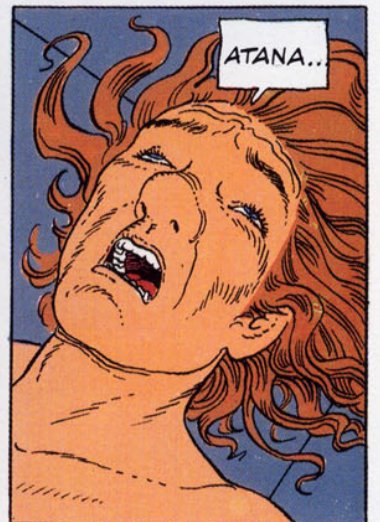
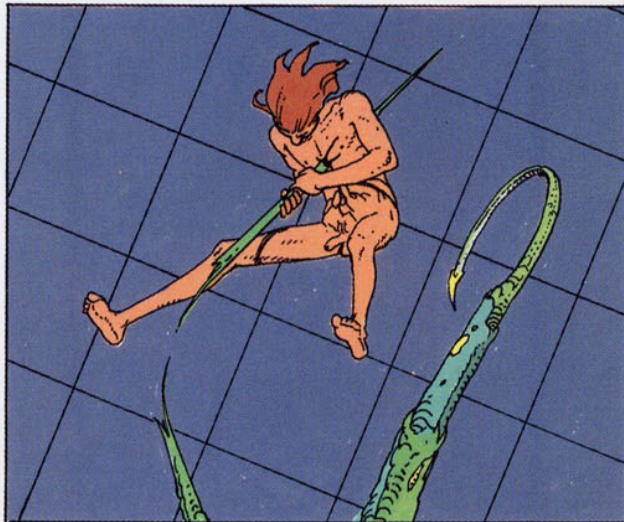
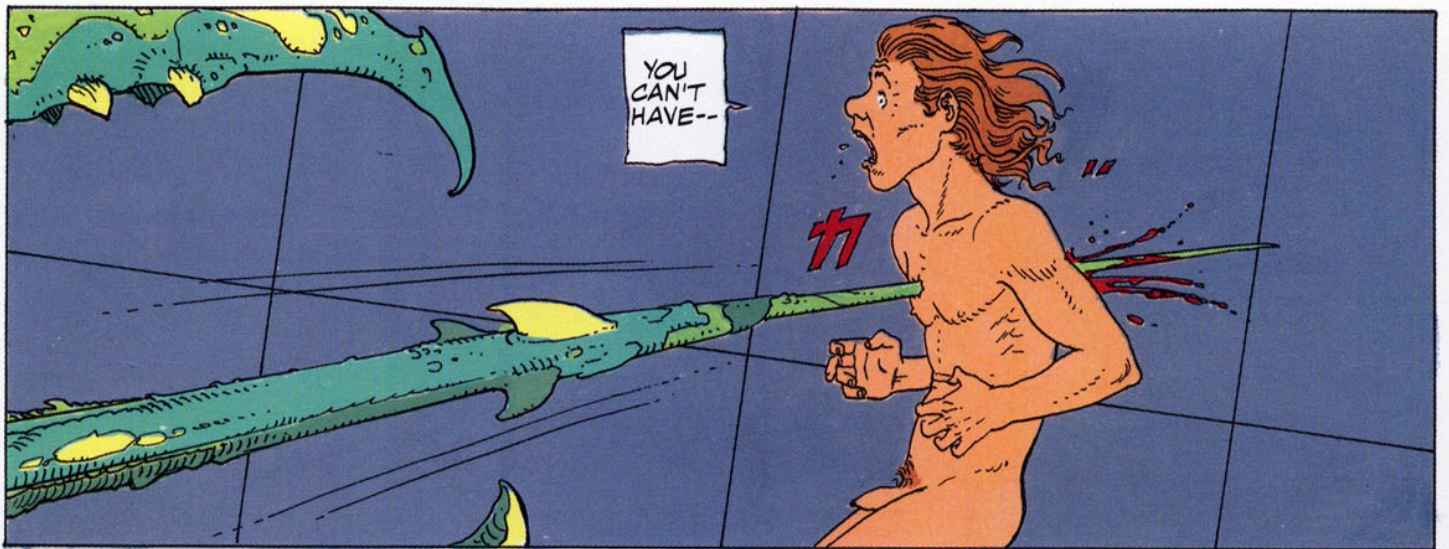
GO! AND
BEWARE
THE
DREAM-
SHADOW!

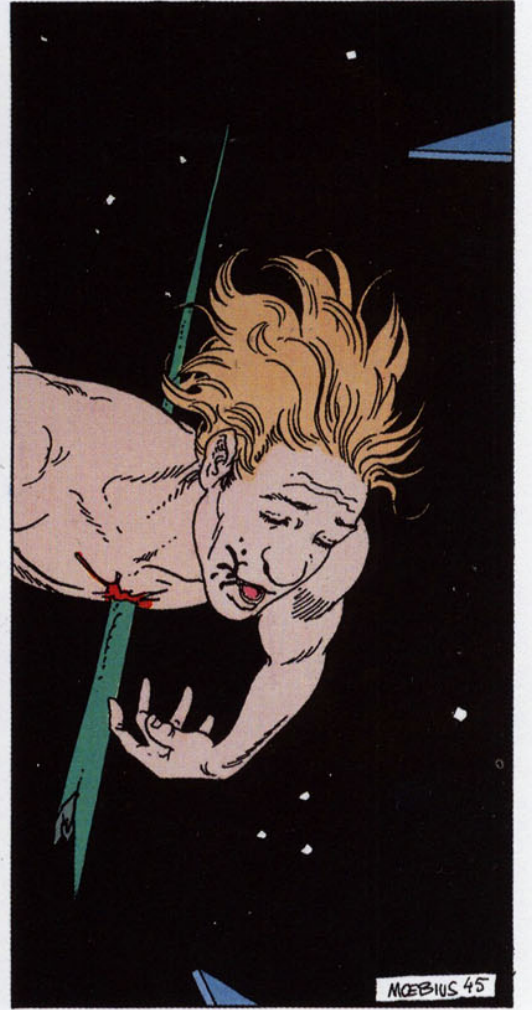
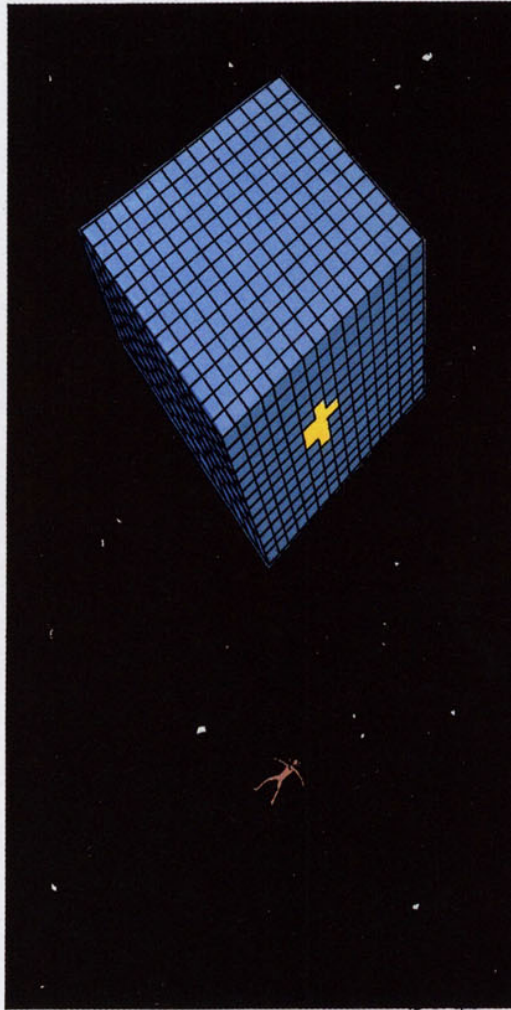
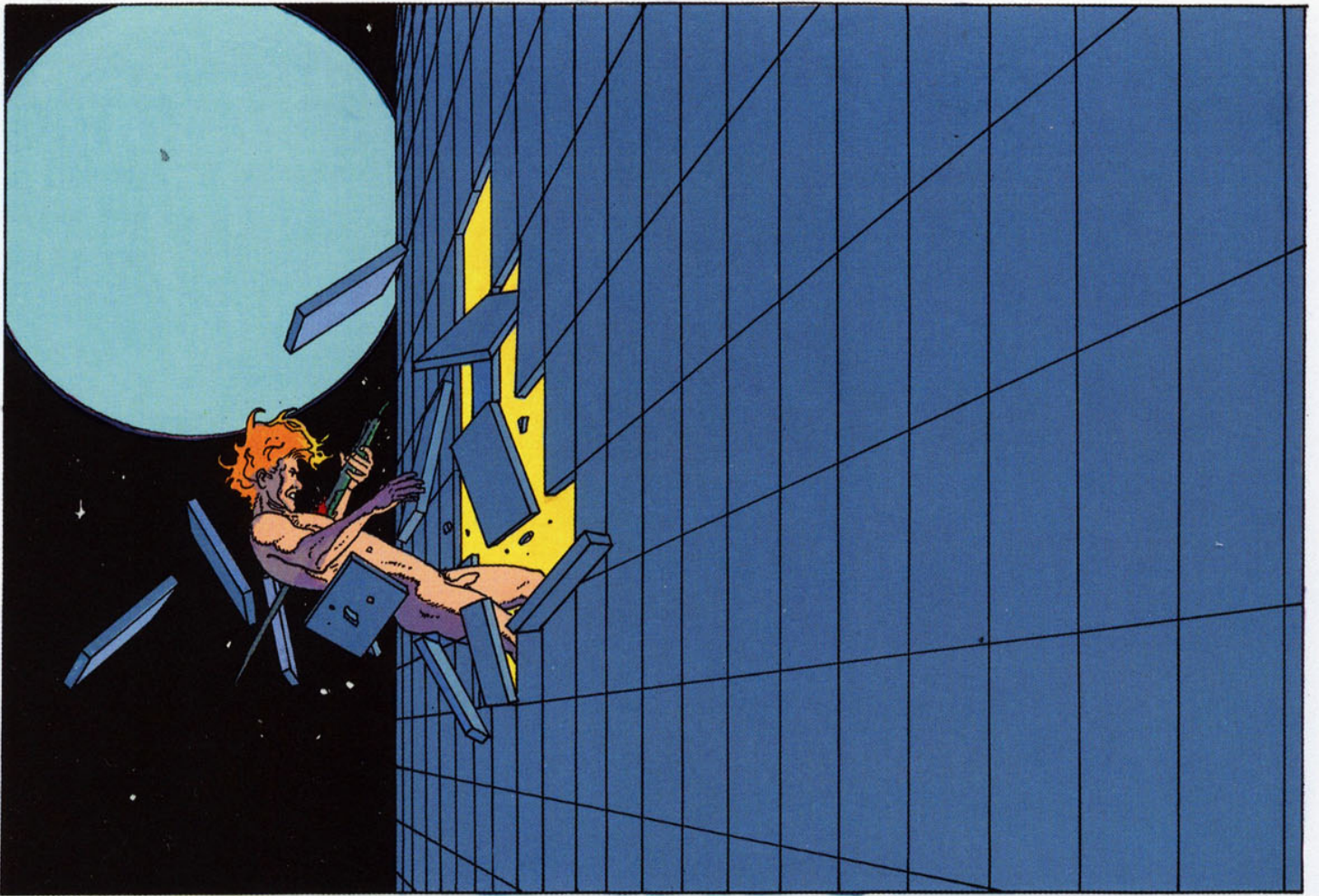


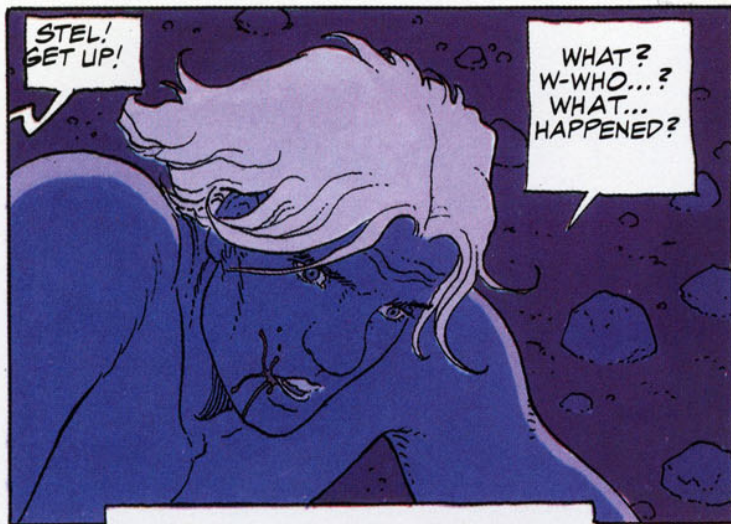












WHAT?
W-WHO...?
WHAT...
HAPPENED?



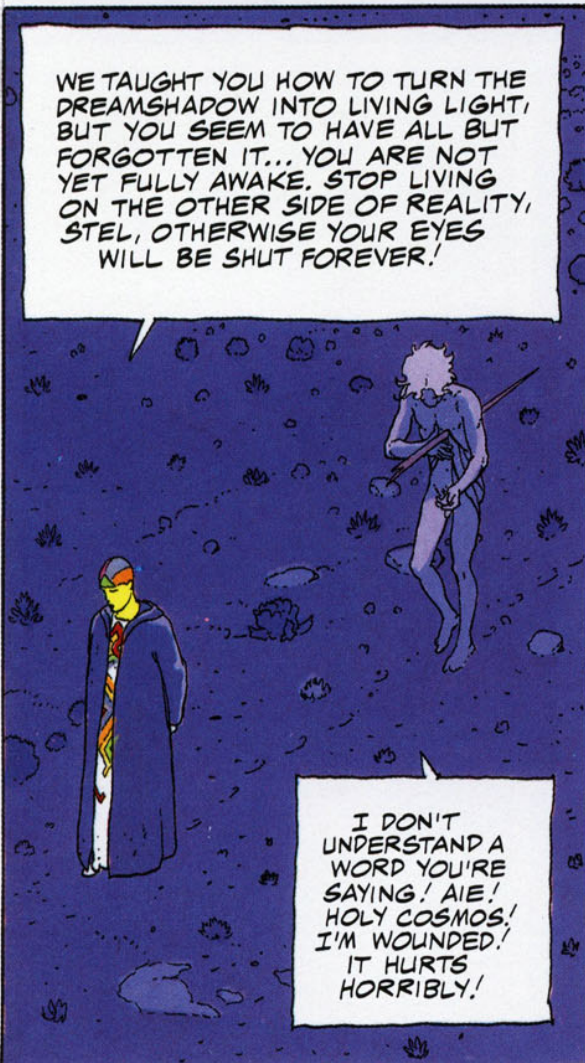
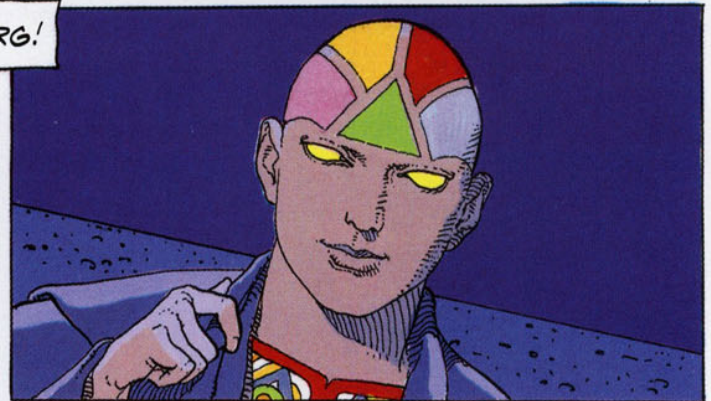
STEL, ONCE AGAIN YOU
FELL ASLEEP NEAR A
FEASTING PREDATOR.

MASTER BURG! I--OH,
SO IT WAS ALL A DREAM!
GREAT UNIVERSE! THAT
CREATURE...!



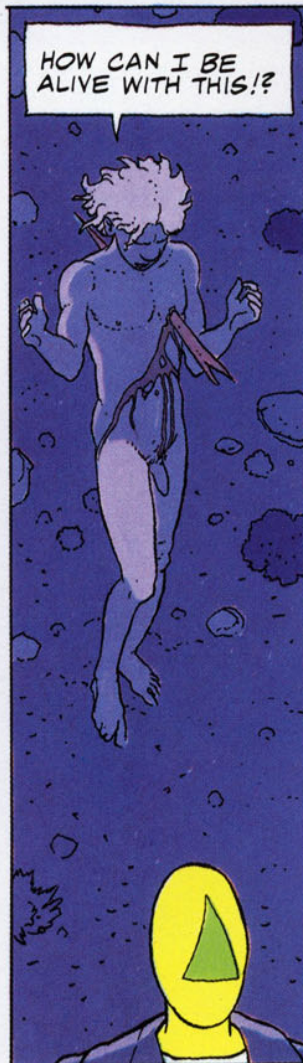
I SEE THAT YOU HAVE ENCOUNTERED
THE DREAMSHADOW!

BURG!

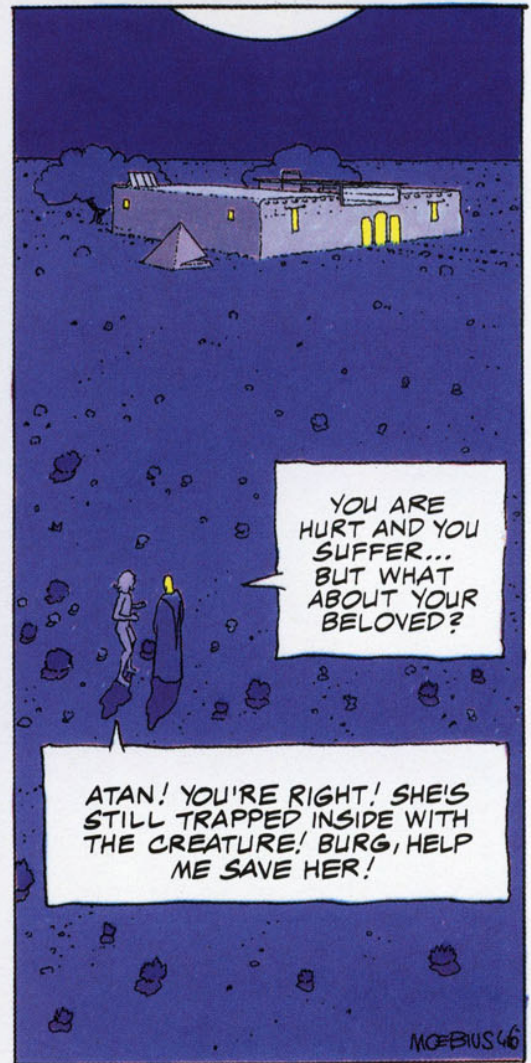


WE TAUGHT YOU HOW TO TURN THE
DREAMSHADOW INTO LIVING LIGHT,
BUT YOU SEEM TO HAVE ALL BUT
FORGOTTEN IT... YOU ARE NOT
YET FULLY AWAKE. STOP LIVING
ON THE OTHER SIDE OF REALITY,
STEL, OTHERWISE YOUR EYES
WILL BE SHUT FOREVER!

I DON'T
UNDERSTAND A
WORD YOU'RE
SAYING! AIE!
HOLY COSMOS!
I'M WOUNDED!
IT HURTS
HORRIBLY!



HOW CAN I BE
ALIVE WITH THIS!?



YOU ARE
HURT AND YOU
SUFFER...
BUT WHAT
ABOUT YOUR
BELOVED?

ATAN! YOU'RE RIGHT! SHE'S
STILL TRAPPED INSIDE WITH
THE CREATURE! BURG, HELP
ME SAVE HER!

ALL THOSE NIGHTS, WE
PREPARED YOU TO FIGHT
THE DARK SIDE OF THE
DREAM...GO! THE KEY
LIES IN REGAINING YOUR
TRUE SIGHT!

BUT THE MON-
STER'S GOING
TO CREAM ME!

TRUE SIGHT WILL
MAKE HIM VANISH!

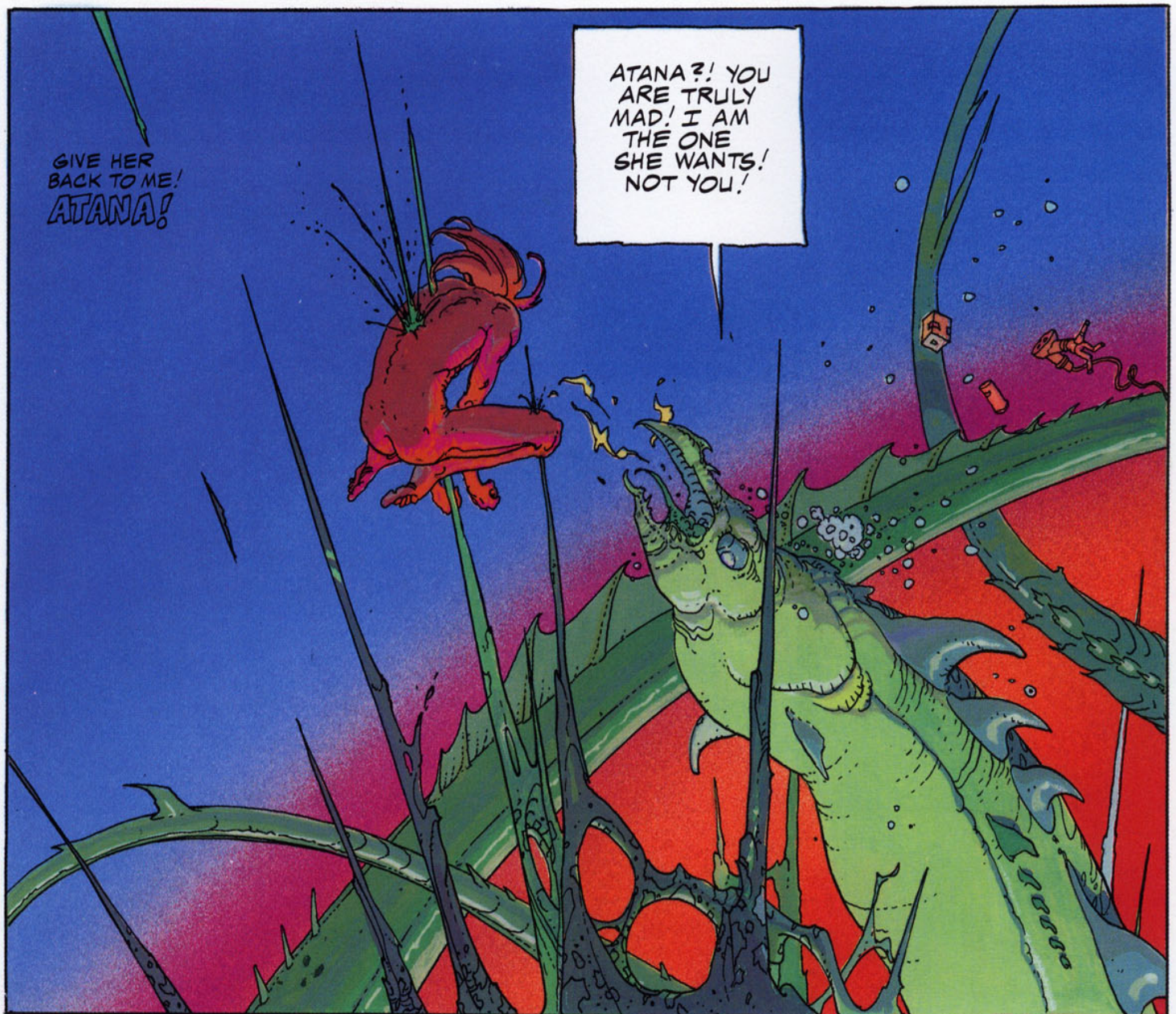
BUT I
DON'T-

YOUR LIGHT BROTHER AND THE MANY
ELVES OF AEDENA HAVE TAUGHT YOU
THE TRUE SIGHT. USE IT!

ATAN!

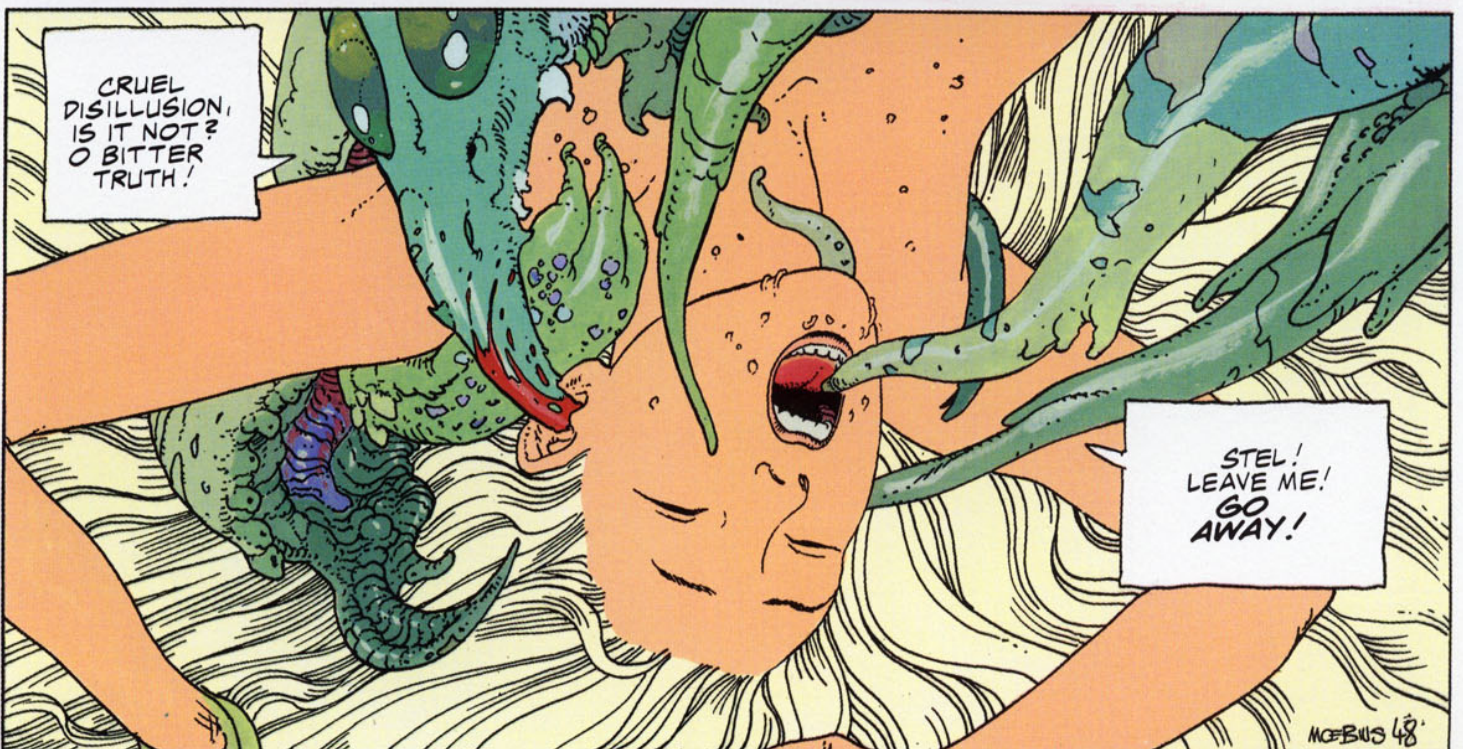
ATANA!

AAAAAAAAAAAA



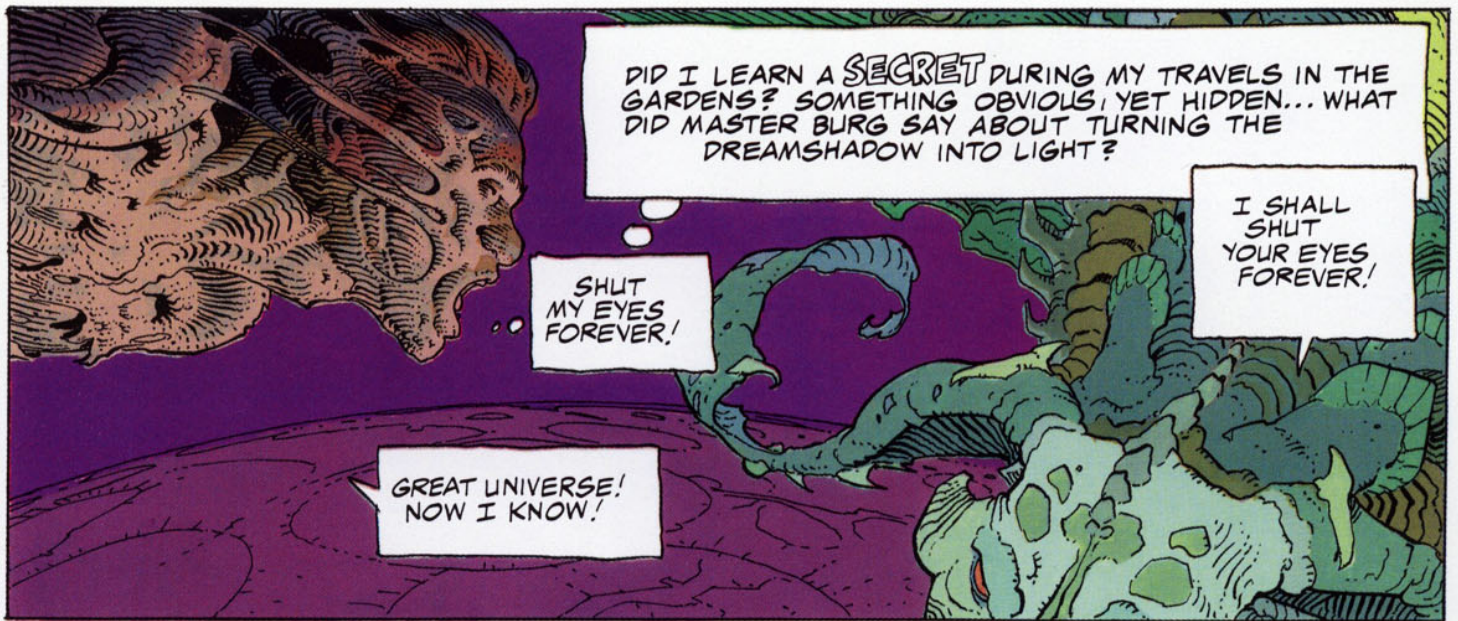
GIVE HER
BACK TO ME!
ATANA!

ATANA?! YOU
ARE TRULY
MAD! I AM
THE ONE
SHE WANTS!
NOT YOU!



CRUEL
DISILLUSION,
IS IT NOT?
O BITTER
TRUTH!

STEL!
LEAVE ME!
**GO
AWAY!**

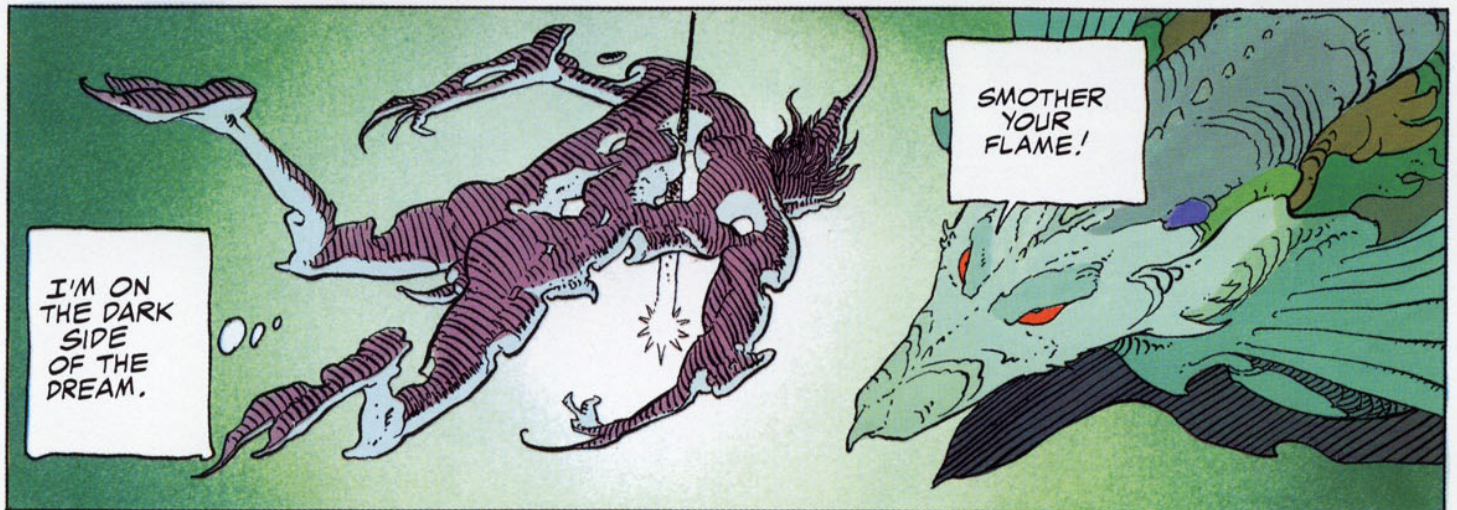


DID I LEARN A SECRET DURING MY TRAVELS IN THE GARDENS? SOMETHING OBVIOUS, YET HIDDEN... WHAT DID MASTER BURG SAY ABOUT TURNING THE DREAMSHADOW INTO LIGHT?

SHUT MY EYES FOREVER!

I SHALL SHUT YOUR EYES FOREVER!

GREAT UNIVERSE! NOW I KNOW!

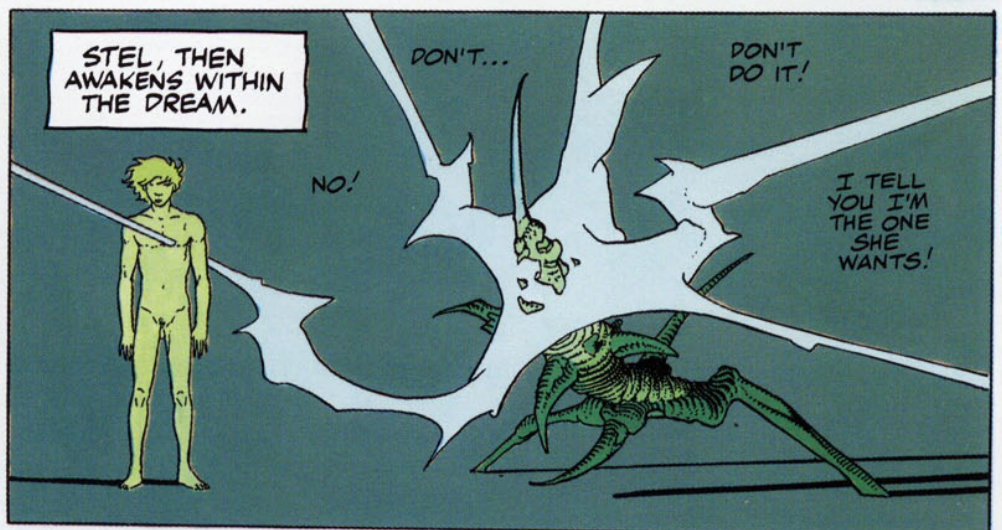


SMOTHER YOUR FLAME!

I'M ON THE DARK SIDE OF THE DREAM.



AND I'M THE KEY! THE ONE WHO CAN OPEN THE DOOR TO THE BRIGHT SIDE! BUT FIRST, I MUST AWAKEN WITHIN THE DREAM!



STEL, THEN AWAKENS WITHIN THE DREAM.

NO!

DON'T...

DON'T DO IT!

I TELL YOU I'M THE ONE SHE WANTS!



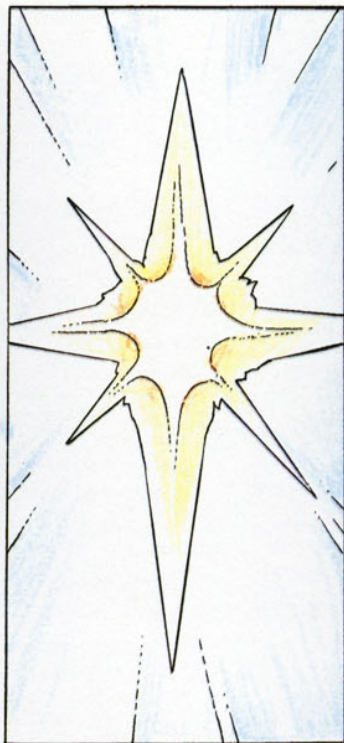
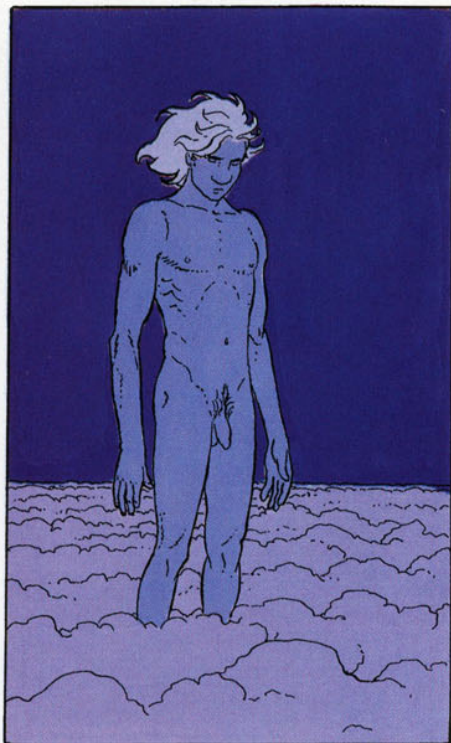
HUMAN! PUNY HUMAN!

NOT YOU...

GOOD-BYE!

I'LL DO WORSE THAN KILL YOU, PUNY HUMAN!

GOOD-BYE STEL! HA HA HA! WE'LL MEET AGAIN IN THE OTHER REALITY!

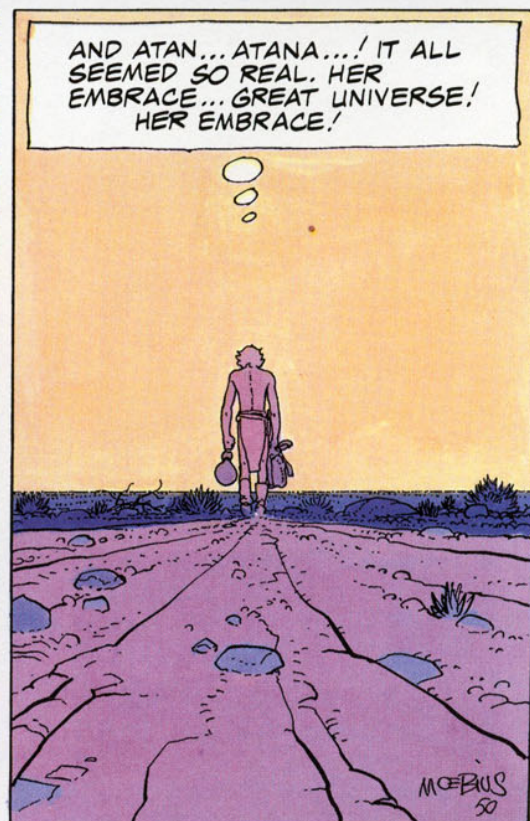


THE LION!

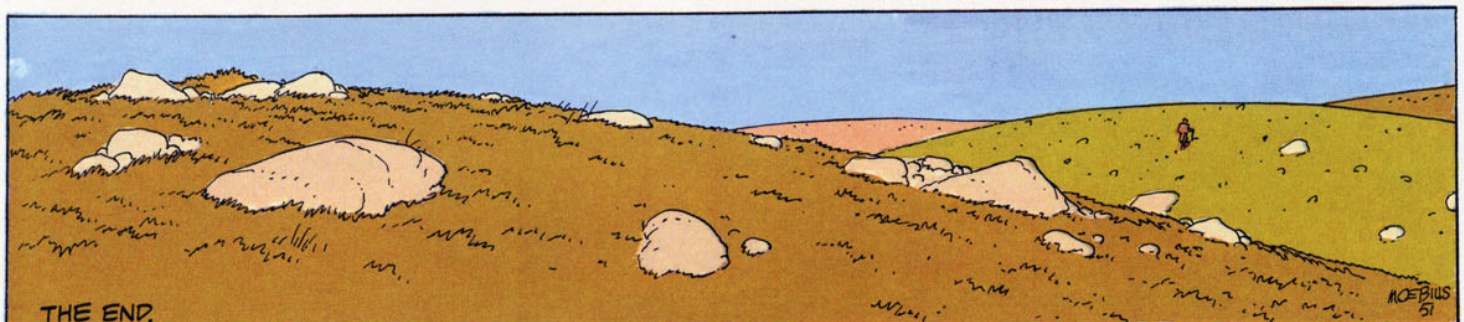
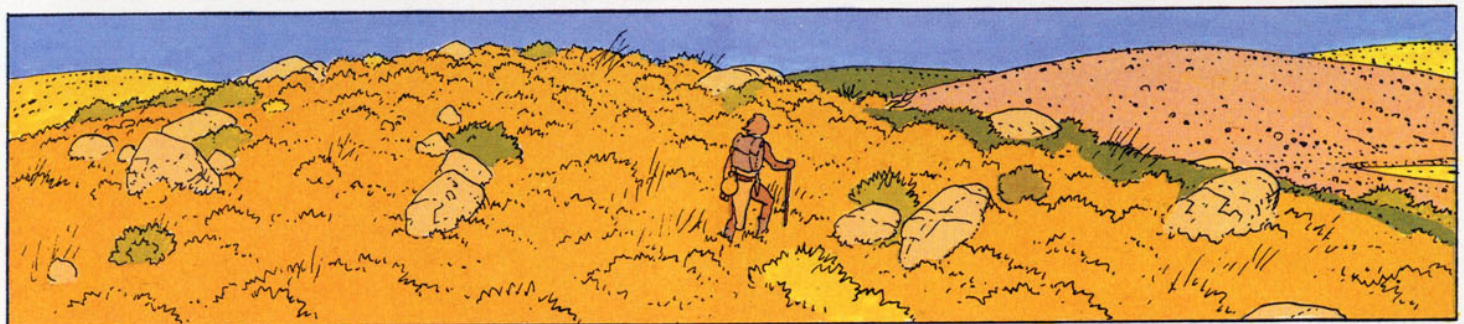
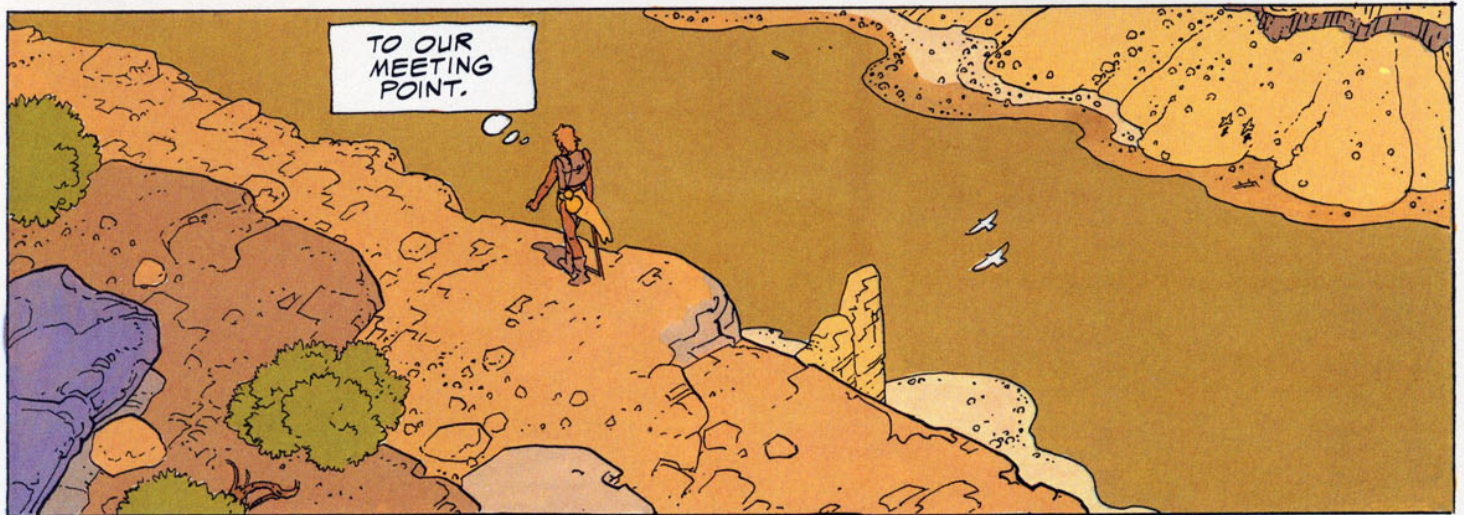
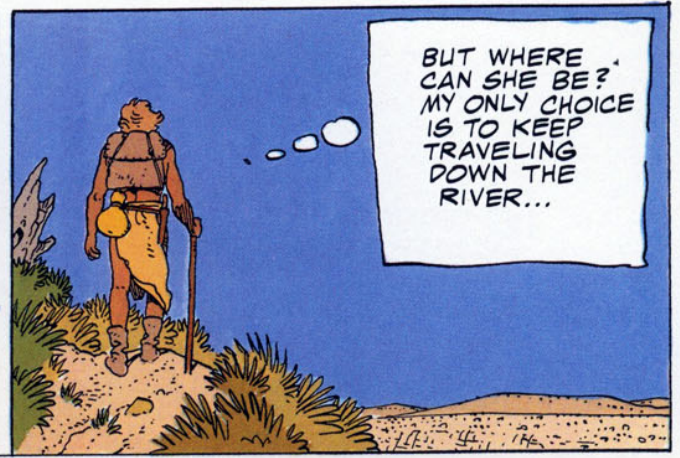
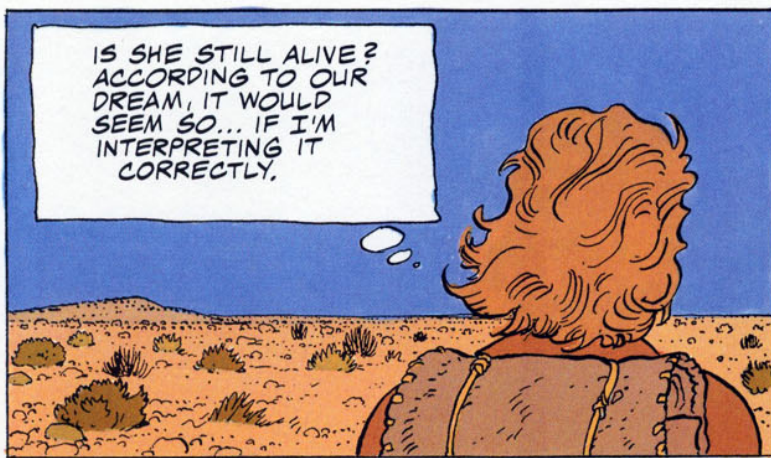
GONE! VANISHED! GREAT
UNIVERSE! IT WAS ALL A
DREAM! ANOTHER DREAM!
BUT THIS TIME, I
REMEMBER EVERYTHING!

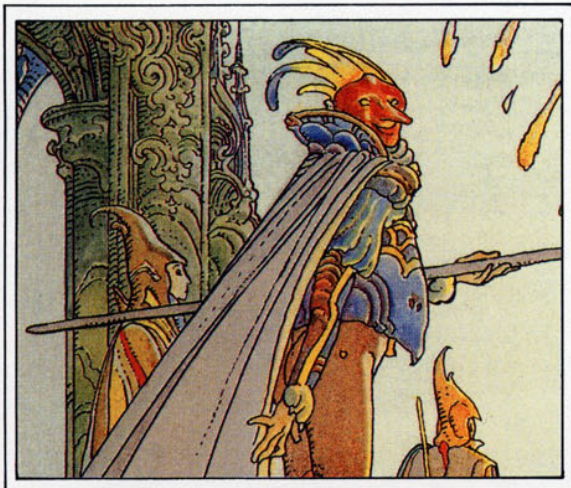
BURG... WHAT A STRANGE
CHARACTER! AND THE
MONSTER! I DEFEATED
HIM! I DEFEATED THE
DARK SIDE OF THE DREAM!

AND ATAN... ATANA...! IT ALL
SEEMED SO REAL, HER
EMBRACE... GREAT UNIVERSE!
HER EMBRACE!



MOEBIUS
50





After finishing **Upon A Star**, I kind of forgot about it and went on to other projects. I moved to Tahiti, then to Los Angeles. Then, in 1984, I found myself in Tokyo, where I had been sent by TMS Entertainment, Inc, a Japanese animation studio, to work on designs for a full-length feature based on Winsor McCay's creation, **Little Nemo in Slumberland**.

At that time, I had just entered a new phase in my life, when I had suddenly decided to change and improve the way in which I was dealing with food. It was an area I had been working on for many years. For instance, I already was a vegetarian, but when you start to work on refining your own nutrition, it always turns into a lifetime's work. First, you start with some general theories, which you refine further and further to take into account the specifics of your own case, your own needs and your own limitations. During that time, there are also new discoveries being made, that force you to adjust your work. So, this kind of thing really becomes a sort of permanent evolution that goes on for years and years.

In any event, as I was becoming frustrated with the limits of being a vegetarian, I discovered the work of Guy-Claude Burger, a Swiss researcher in the field of nutritional instincts. Very quickly, I became extremely enthusiastic about this new approach.

I was, therefore, in the midst of a personal reevaluation when I had to go to Tokyo. Then, a third factor intervened. **Upon A Star** had just been rereleased in France, no longer as a limited edition, promotional book, but as a regular "album" for the general public. So, I was literally embarking upon a new adventure, both physically and spiritually, when suddenly, by rereading the story, I discovered that I had finished it in a very open-ended fashion. I realized that, quite unconsciously, I had in fact asked myself a riddle.

In my mind, I then made an immediate correlation between the questions asked at the end of **Upon A Star** and Guy-Claude Burger's instincto-nutrition. Burger's theories in a way relied on the concept of the semi-mythical original Garden of Eden. And there I was, sending my characters to a mythical planet named Aedena!

At the time, I was in an environment that was creatively extremely favorable. First, I was feeling the kind of inner exaltation that you often experience when you embark on a new project. Second, when you're in a foreign country for the first time, your creativity is always boosted, you could say, virginized. Then, I was in an ideal physical situation well-known to creators, that of the hotel room. It was a very comfortable hotel room, with a beautiful view of Tokyo. I even had a drawing table which, at my request, the hotel had installed for me.

As I said, I was there to contribute designs for **Nemo**, but I had told them that I could not very well begin until the script was ready. As it turned out, it was not, and every day, we spent a couple of hours working on it with other people. That meant that I was free for the rest of the day. I did not do much tourism, because I really wanted to work on **The Gardens of Aedena**.

I spent a month in Tokyo, and I drew the first twenty-five pages of **The Gardens**. In it, I tried to show the dangers of the conditioning created by an artificial food supply, when confronted with the problem of survival in a natural milieu. I pictured all the fears and obstacles that prevent the rediscovery of the natural functions. I also wanted to show the mutations that begin to appear when you switch from artificial food to natural food. Of course, in the story, it is all very simplified. In real life, it would very likely not happen that way. Some mental barriers are just indestructible. But it happens that way here because my characters are heroes. To me, it means that they're not perfect beings, but are susceptible to improvement.

When I came back to Los Angeles, I had to lay aside these twenty-five pages to work on **The End of the Trail**, a new **Blueberry** adventure. It afforded me the opportunity of a pause and, after I had finished the **Blueberry** story, I went back to the twenty-five pages of **The Gardens** and reread them. I made some changes. For instance, I redrew the first page. I also changed Page 21 from a single-panel page to a two-panel page. Lastly, I began to rework the script, which I had originally written in the plane on my way to Japan.

I decided to take the original ending, which was very compact, and develop it into what will eventually be the third book in **The Aedena Cycle**, entitled **The Goddess**. That change, in turn, gave me more room to develop the character of Stel, especially his sexual awakening, his encounter with Master Burg and his dream, the meaning of which will become clear in the next book.

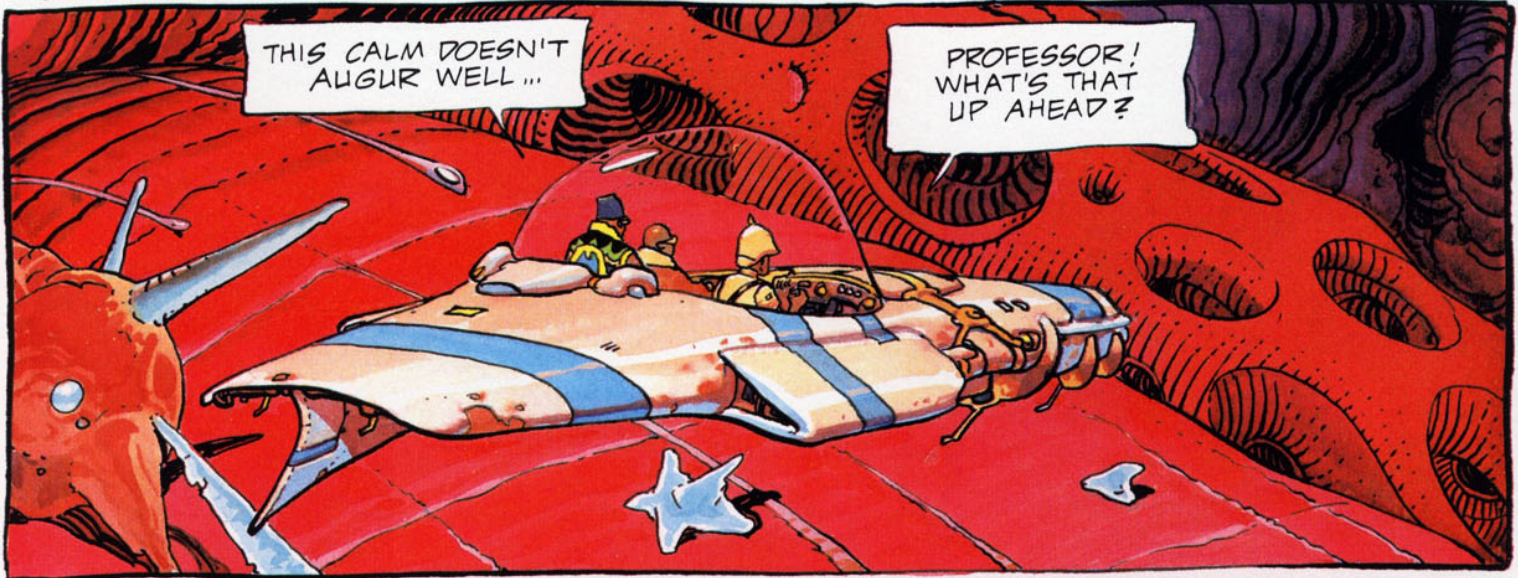
Master Burg, of course, is Major Grubert spelled backwards. Grubert is on Aedena for a very specific reason that will also become clear in another cycle of books devoted to his story, and on which I am working right now. The first in that series, entitled **The Otra**, is a direct sequel to **The Airtight Garage** and should be finished next summer.

The Cycle of the Major and **The Aedena Cycle** are really two interconnected works in the saga of the Moebius Universe. Right now, there are some questions to which I have answers, and others to which I do not—at least for the time being. But I will find them when I come to it.

By embarking on this project I have purposefully given myself things to draw and to write that I know are beyond my current abilities. It is really very interesting, because it means that if I want to be able to complete this saga, I will have to better myself, to work hard and, ultimately, to grow.

JOURNEY TO THE CENTER OF AN UNFAITHFUL BODY BY MOEBIUS

THE MILITANT MAJOR IS EXPLORING THE BEAUTIFUL BODY OF HIS BELOVED MALVINA. GUIDED BY THE PROFESSOR, AND SECONDED BY HIS FAITHFUL "SECOND", HE MAKES A STARTLING DISCOVERY...



THIS CALM DOESN'T
AUGUR WELL ...

PROFESSOR!
WHAT'S THAT
UP AHEAD?

I'LL BE FRIED!
IT'S A
HELPERT CELL
BEING ATTACKED
BY THE
AIDS
VIRUS!

AND IN
FACT...

IT'S
BEAU-
TI-
FUL!

YOU SEE
THESE
LITTLE BLUE
SPHERES,
MAJOR?
THEY'RE THE
ENEMY!

IT'S DISGUSTING!
LET'S MOVE ON!
TO THE PANCREAS,
FOR INSTANCE,
TO ASSESS THE
SITUATION THERE!

THAT WOULD
EXPLAIN HER
CONSTANT
HEADACHES!

AFTER HAVING CAREFULLY PARKED THEIR VEHICLE,
THE THREE EXPLORERS GO ADVENTURING.

WHAT A
MESS! THE
ENTIRE IMMUNE
SYSTEM
IS GOING
TO THE
DOGS.

HMM...
LET'S
TAKE A
CLOSER
LOOK...

HEY! THERE'S
SOMETHING STUCK
THERE!

BEAUTIFUL!

GOODNESS
GRACIOUS! IT
LOOKS LIKE A
MESSAGE...
BUT HOW
COULD IT BE
POSSIBLE...?

THESE JOURNEYS
INSIDE A BODY
ARE REALLY FULL
OF SURPRISES!

Pour le
Major

A LETTER...!
PERSONALLY
ADDRESSED
TO ME! IT'S
BETTER
THAN
FANTASTIC
VOYAGE!

IT SAYS:

"DEAR MAJOR G. YOU'VE
BEEN GONE FOR SO LONG...
I CAN'T TAKE IT ANY-
MORE. I'M LEAVING YOU
FOR LIEUTENANT B.
WE'RE IN LOVE. GOOD-BYE.
SIGNED:
MALVINA."

WOW!

MALVINA!
TRAITOR! WHEREVER
YOU GO, I'LL
FIND YOU!

MAJOR!
WAIT!!

THIS
EXPE-
DITION
IS A
DIS-
ASTER!

FIN... 1386. MOEBIUS



THE UNFAITHFUL BODY

I drew this story two years ago, at a time when I was preoccupied by the concept of the relations between diseases and the human body. It is obviously something that comes up when one is as interested as I am in nutritional matters.

The problem of the graphic representation of the inside of the body is a fascinating one, especially if you go down to the level of molecules. Does it look like space? Is it bright? Very dark? I saw **Fantastic Voyage** and **Inner Space**, and I think that, from this standpoint, they are all pure fantasies, which really strikes me as the best way to handle this. You use some scientific documentation, of course, but the most intelligent way to go is to portray it in a symbolical and almost playful sort of way.

The Unfaithful Body is otherwise an amusing variation on a very serious idea. In the fourth, and yet untitled, book of **The Aedena Cycle**, the characters have to go down and explore the inside of one of our heroes' body. It is only there that they find the key to Aedena's secret. For me, **The Unfaithful Body** is a little like a prototype, a gag, but one with meaning.

HIT MAN

I absolutely love this story which, to me, is the perfect example of total freedom, a story that makes fun of everything, and yet ends with a revelation. I love the speed and the humor of its dialogue. I wrote **Hit Man** deliberately in that style, very much as I had done with **The Airtight Garage**, with which it shares many similarities. It is a very entropic story, self-destructing at almost every page, and yet, by so doing, ever creating something new.

On the graphic level, it is an homage to Tardi, one of the great French comic artists. In my opinion, one of his merits is to have freed the field of a certain tense formality by reintroducing a style that was very popular at the turn of the century, and which mixed freedom and artistic skill.

In a very strange and unexpected fashion, **Hit Man** anticipates **The Aedena Cycle**. There is the absurdity of the initial situation, the heroes trapped by their conditioning, following an initiatic path on which they discover magic and other dimensions, and which finally propels them on the shores of an Eden-like world, one without technology, and on which the same age-old questions have been replaced by new answers: love and freedom. In one word: Aedena.

HIT MAN

1ST EPISODE
THE THOUSANDTH CONTRACT

PAR
MGEBIUS

STARRING

THE KILLER..... EDUARDO HAMMER
GARY COOPER..... DIMITRI DODD
INSPECTOR BRIGGS... PHILO VANCE
THE VICTIM..... AZADIEL KOVAKS

ARGH...

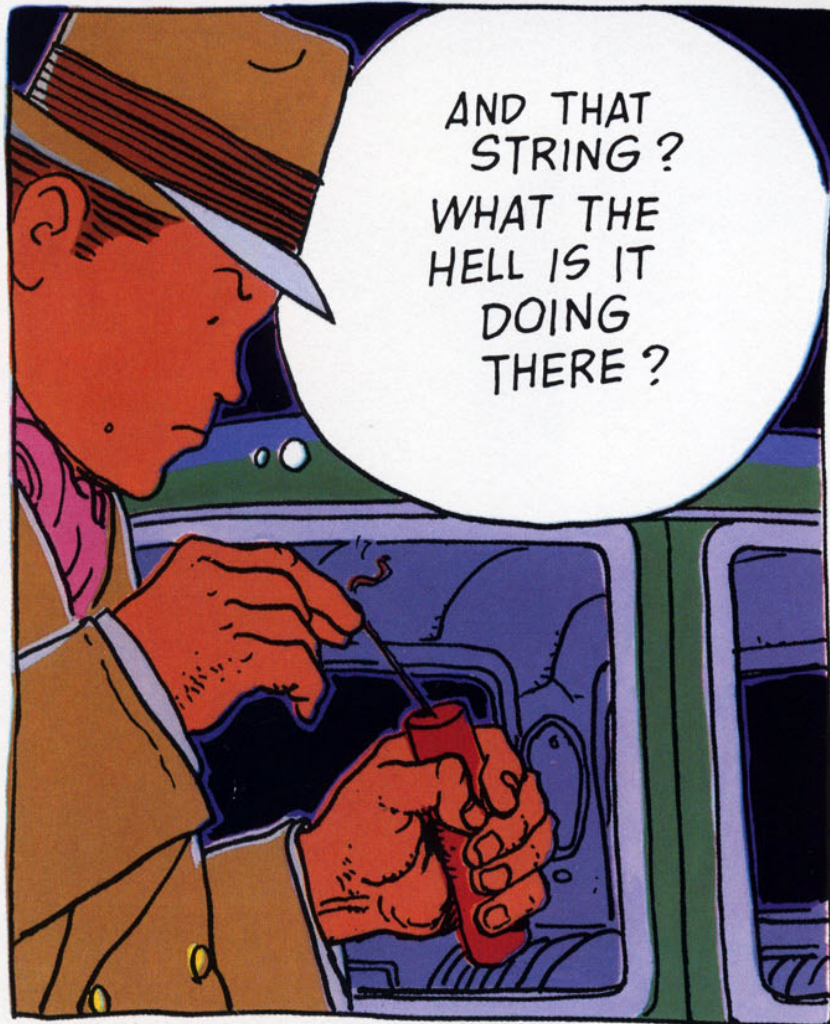
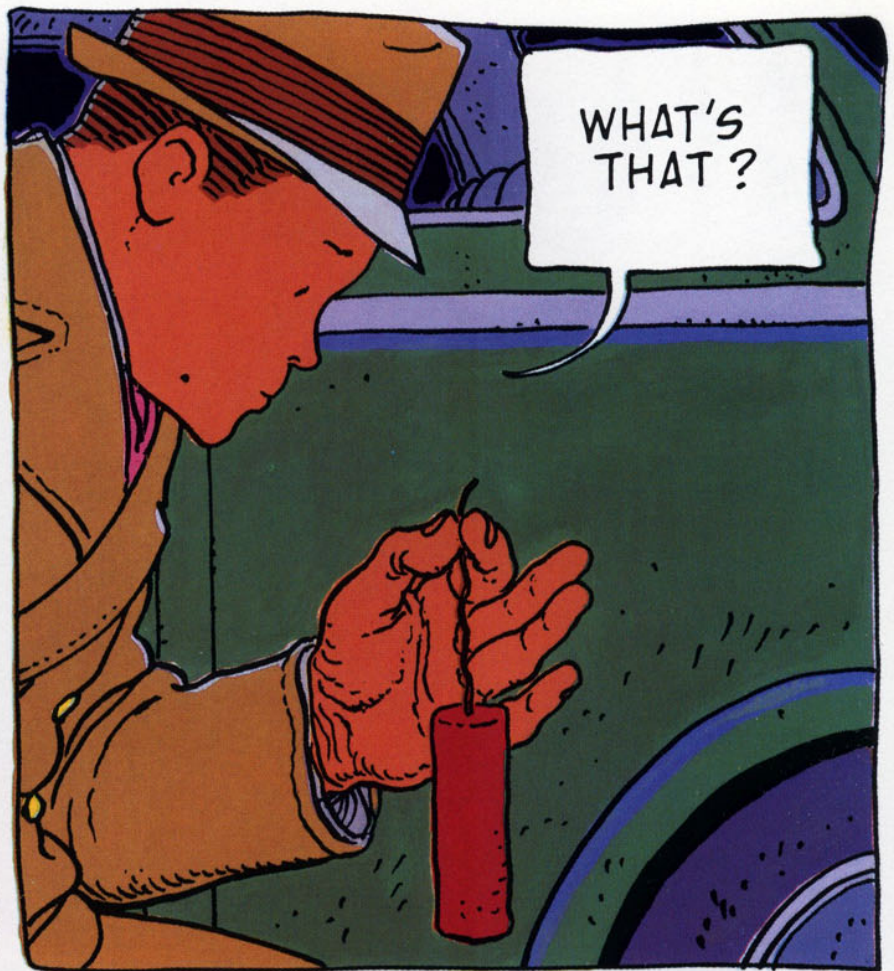


THE SMALL BELGIAN SPONGE
FACTORY OF NORTON
ABBAY, NOT TOO
FAR FROM THE
BROOKLYN
BRIDGE. A
QUIET PLACE.



THAT WAS MY THOUSANDTH
CONTRACT. NOW THAT I'M
RICH, I CAN RETIRE TO
MY FARM IN MARYLAND.





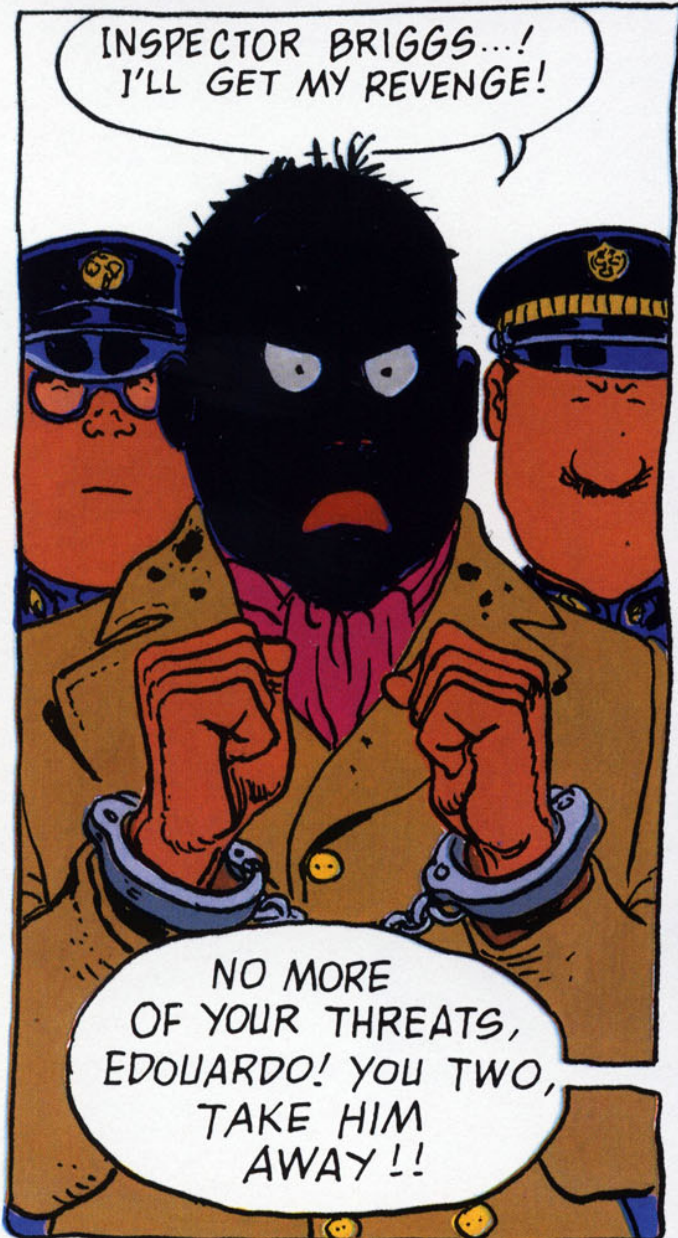


A
TRAP!

THAT'S RIGHT, MURDERER!
A TRAP YOU FELL RIGHT INTO
AND ONE YOU WON'T
SOON ESCAPE!!

HABA

GO ON, MEN! PUT
THE CUFFS ON
HIM!



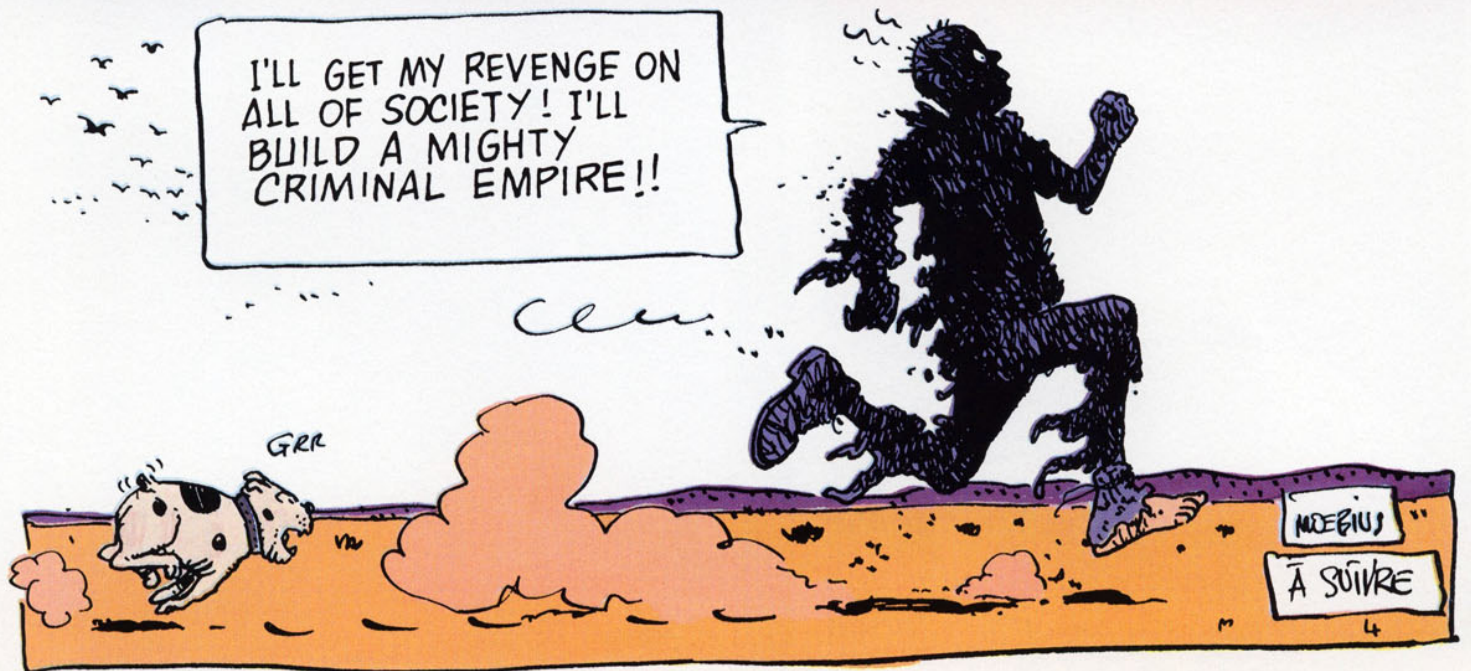
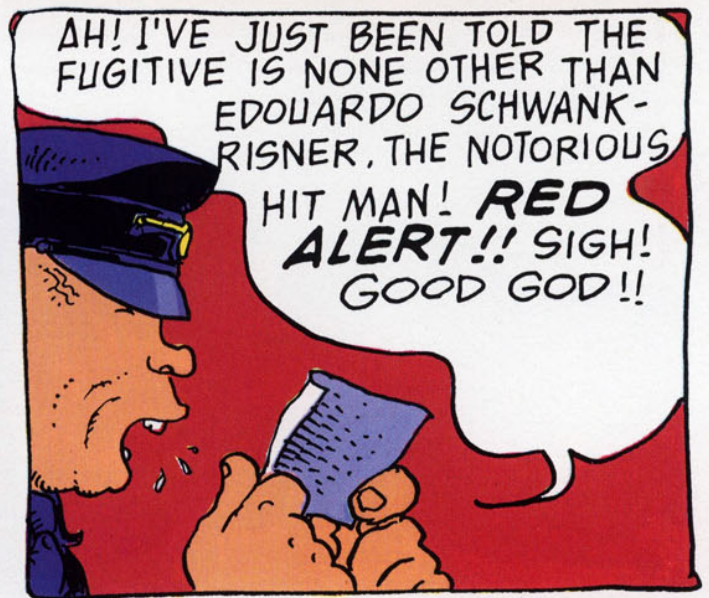
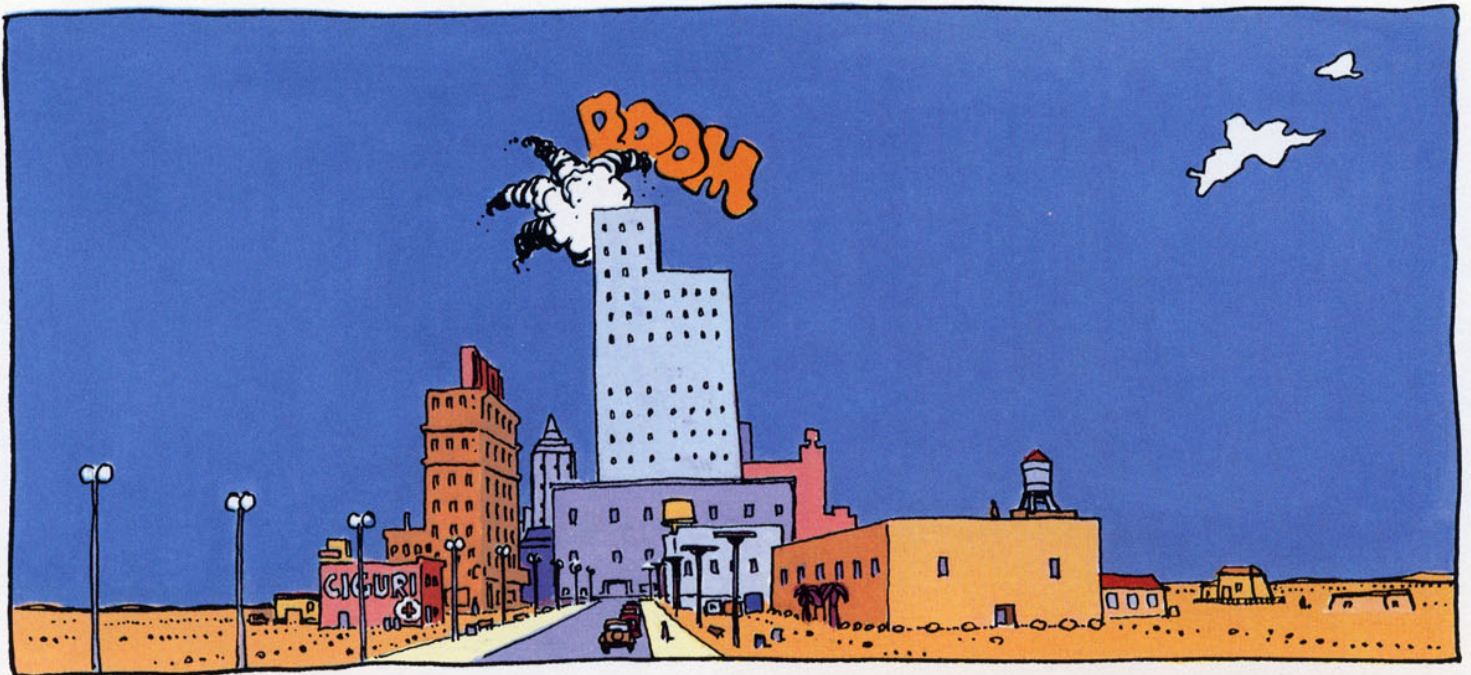
INSPECTOR BRIGGS...!
I'LL GET MY REVENGE!

NO MORE
OF YOUR THREATS,
EDOUARDO! YOU TWO,
TAKE HIM
AWAY!!



TWO YEARS LATER, IN THE WORST
CELL OF THE NOTORIOUS ROLLER-
PALMITAS (ARIZ.) PENITENTIARY.

AT LAST!
MY
PLAN'S READY!
RIGHT DOWN
TO THE LAST
DETAIL!



HIT MAN

2ND EPISODE:

THE STORY SO FAR: THE NOTORIOUS HIT MAN EDOUARDO SCHWANKRISNER HAS JUST ESCAPED FROM THE DREADED ROLLER-PALMITAS (ARIZ.) PENITENTIARY...

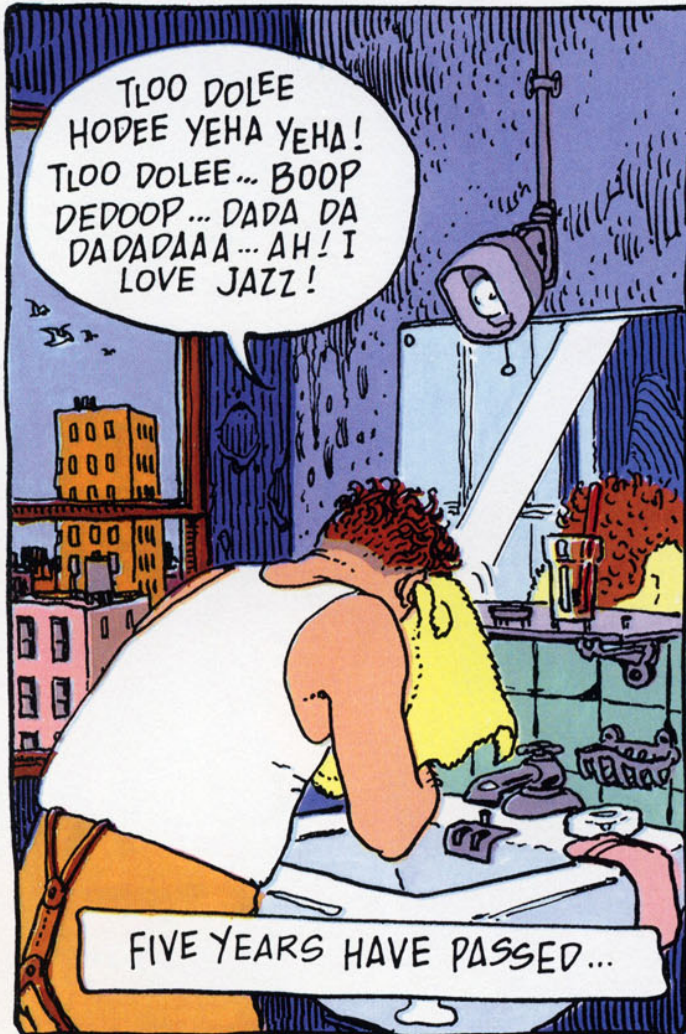
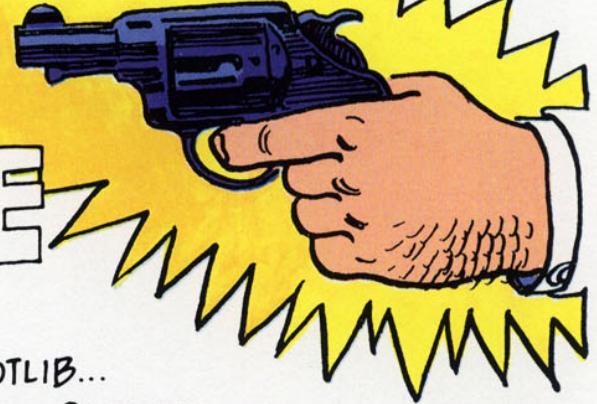
A MOEBIUS + MARVEL PRODUCTION!

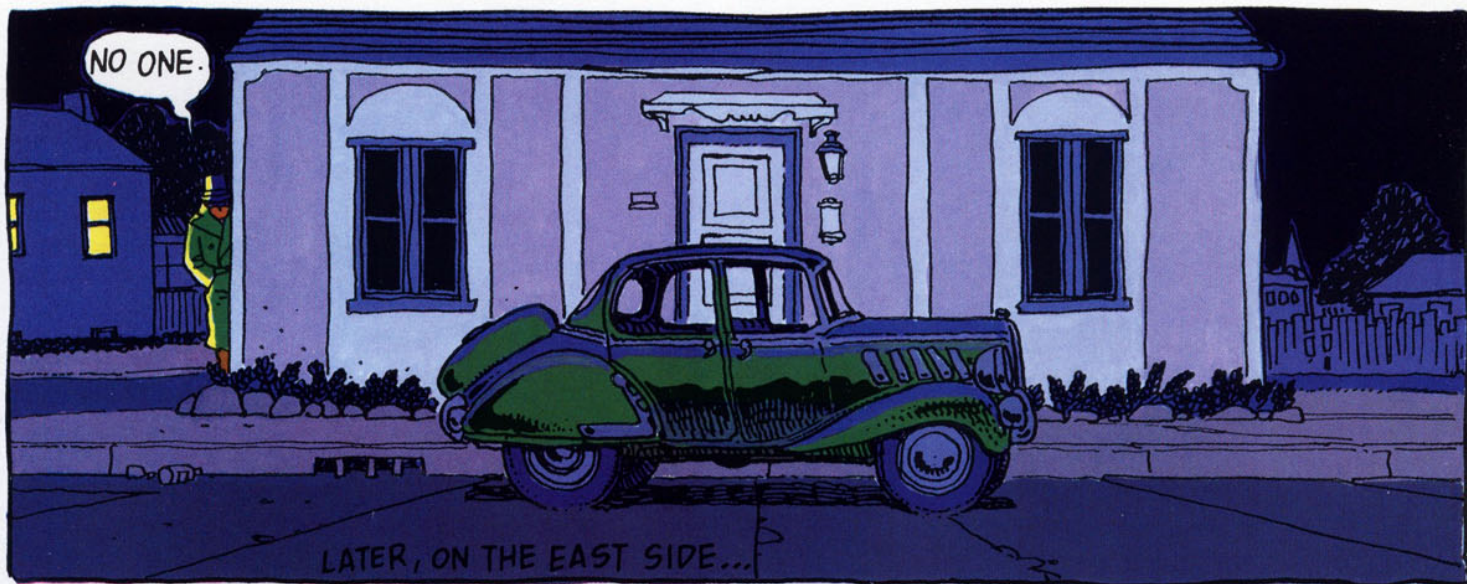
THE FURY OF REVENGE

WITH

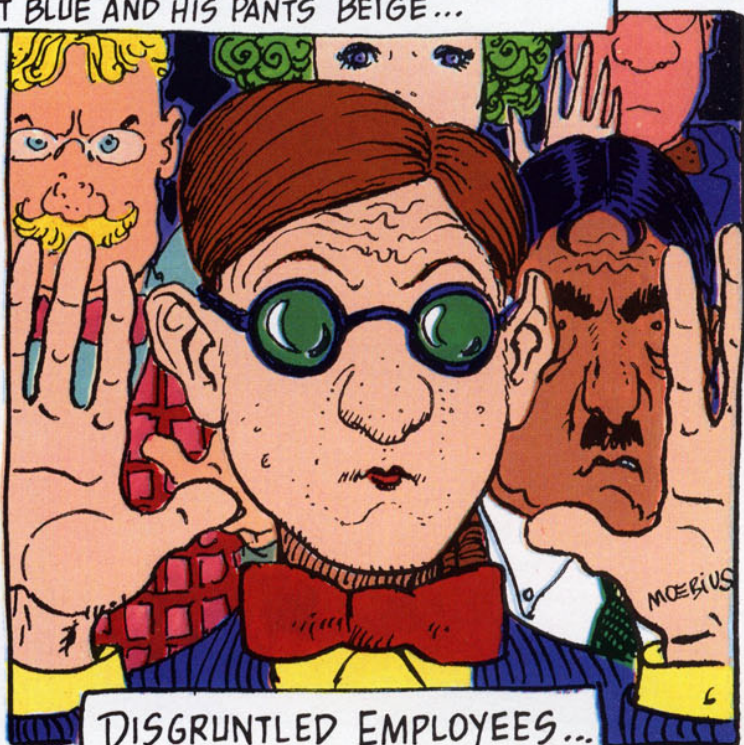
DECREASING BY SIZE ORDER →

: ELIZABETH SCHWARZKOFF... JEAN-FRANCOIS... KIAPP... ALFONZO MORAVIA... ALAIN STENDALL... MARCELLO GOTLIB... GUILLAUME FRIDKINE... JOSEPH ROBBE-GRILLET... ALI GUITARE

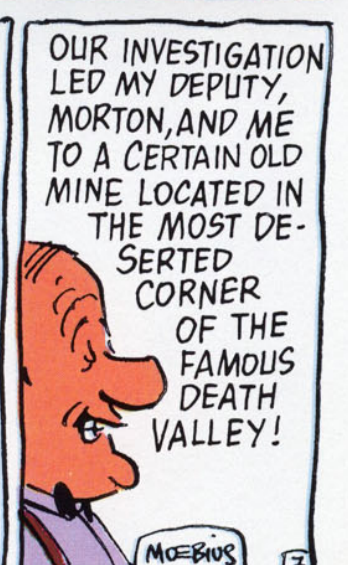
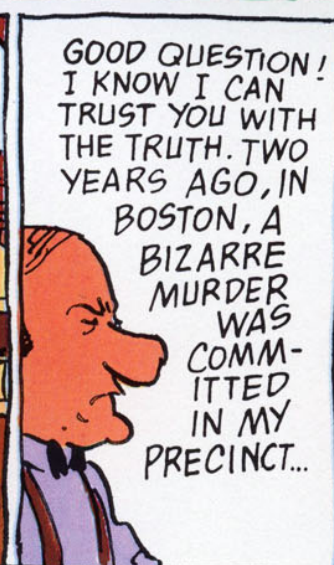
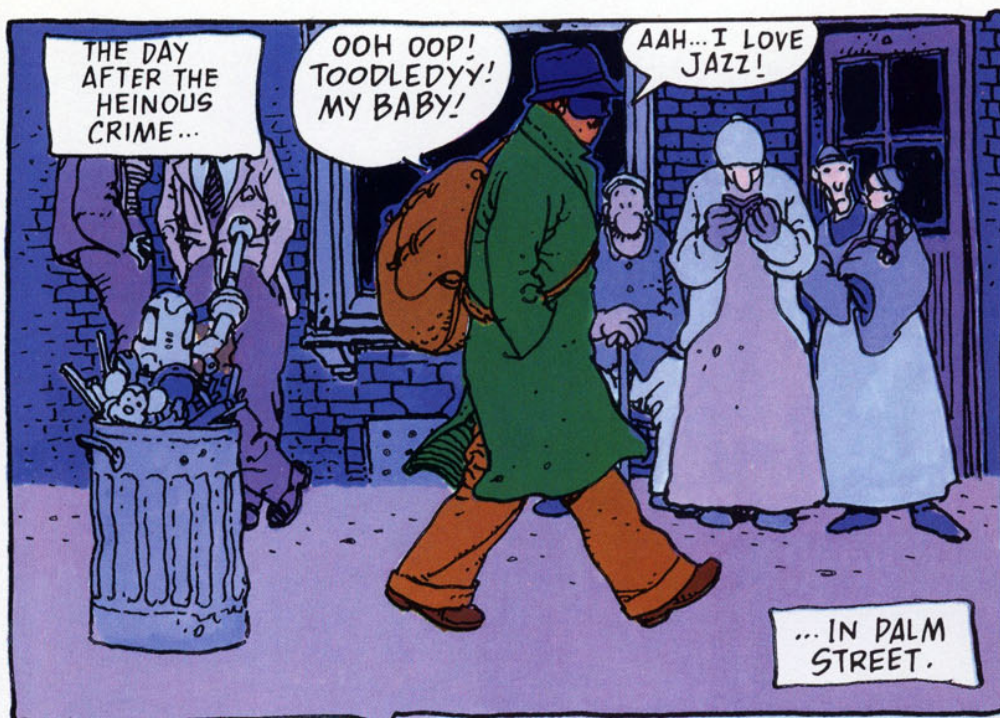




THIS STORY'S ANTI-HERO, TAKING ADVANTAGE OF AN INCIDENT, FURTIVELY STEPS INTO A SUMPTUOUS MONTANA BANK... BECAUSE OF HIS MASK, HE THINKS HE WON'T BE IDENTIFIED... HIS COAT IS GREEN... HIS HAT BLUE AND HIS PANTS BEIGE...



DISGRUNTLED EMPLOYEES...





A STRANGE IDOL, PROBABLY LATIN-AMERICAN IN ORIGIN, WAS BLOCKING THE MAIN TUNNEL...WE REALIZED WE WERE FACED WITH A MYSTERY.

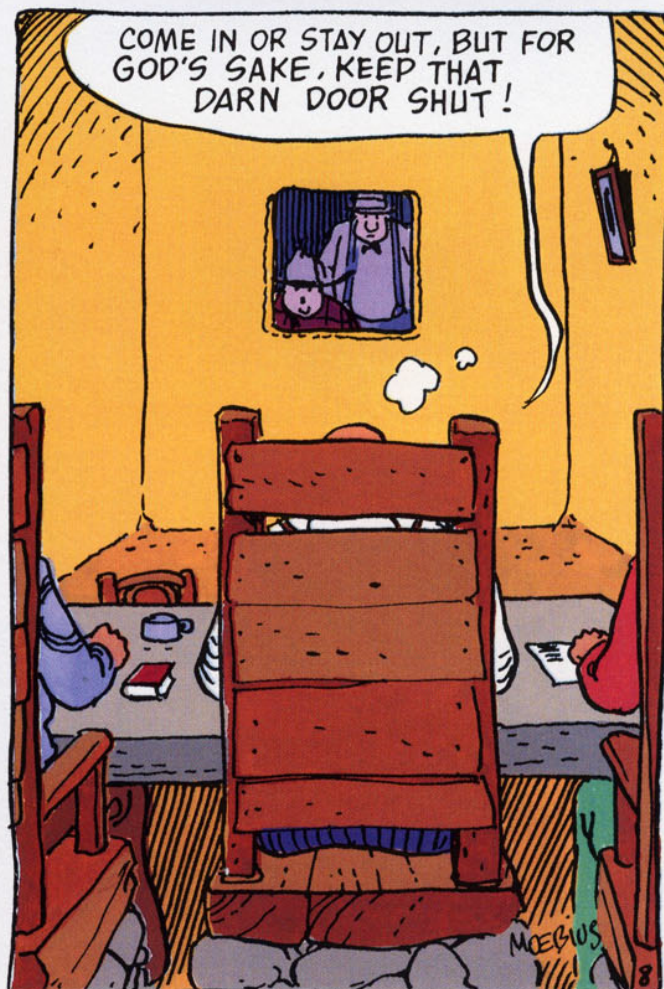
THEN, ACTING ON INTUITION, MORTON FIGURED OUT THE MECHANISM THAT CONTROLLED THE OPENING OF THE SECRET DOOR...

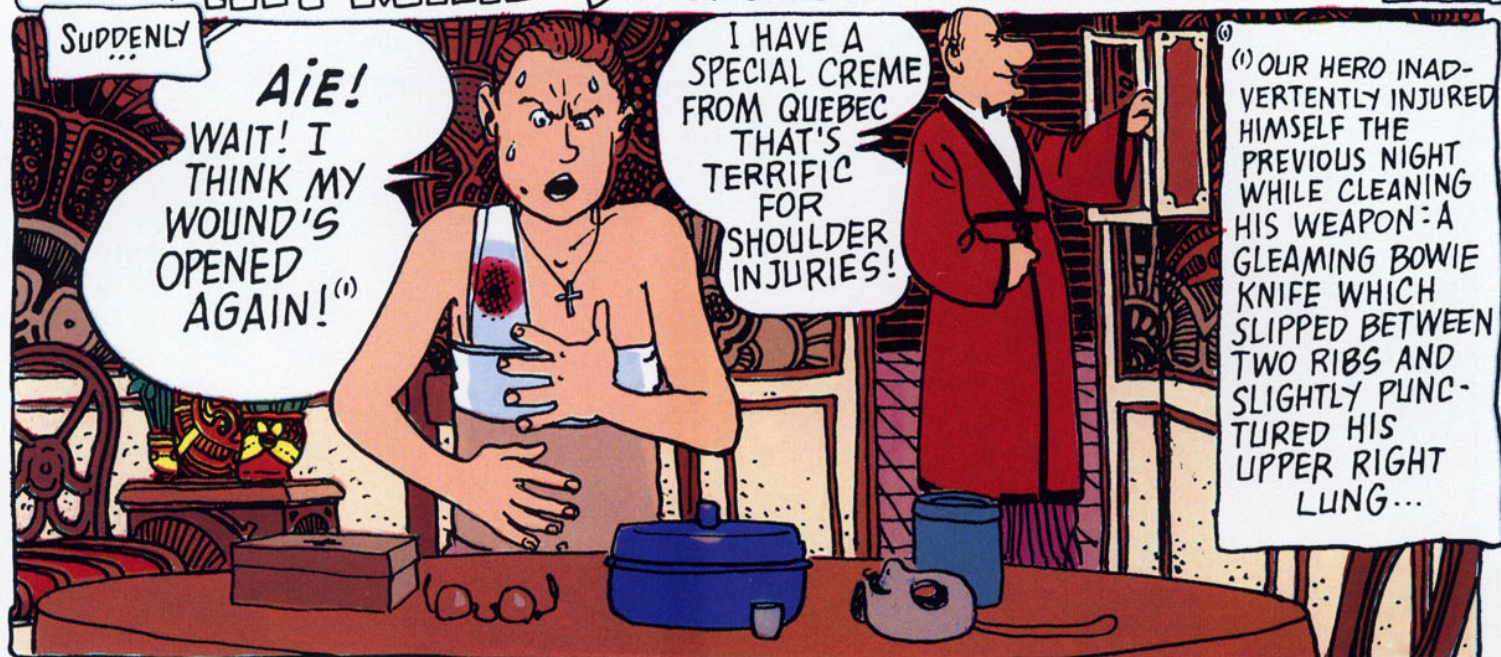


WE WERE THEN WITNESS TO AN INCREDIBLE SIGHT...

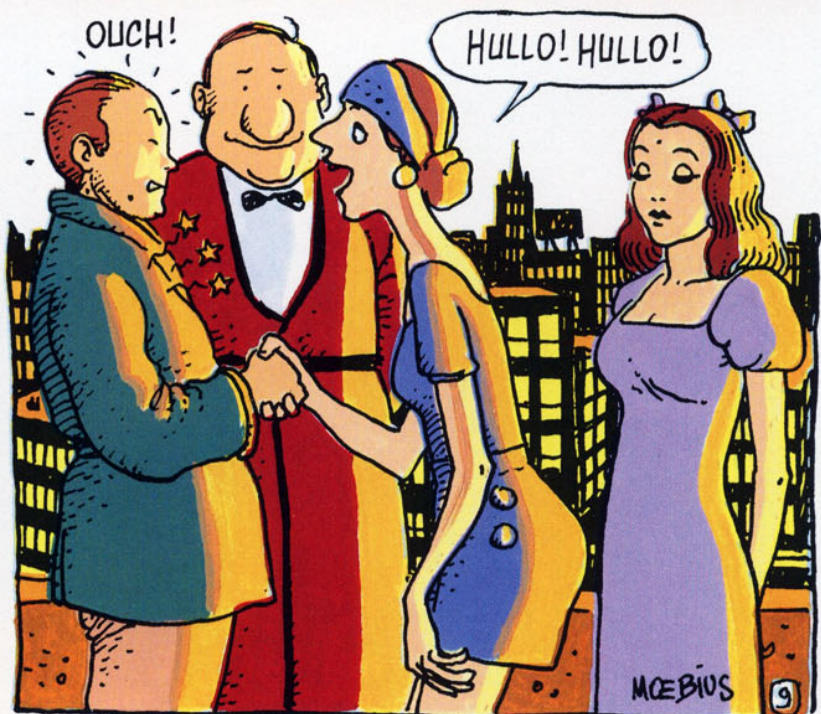
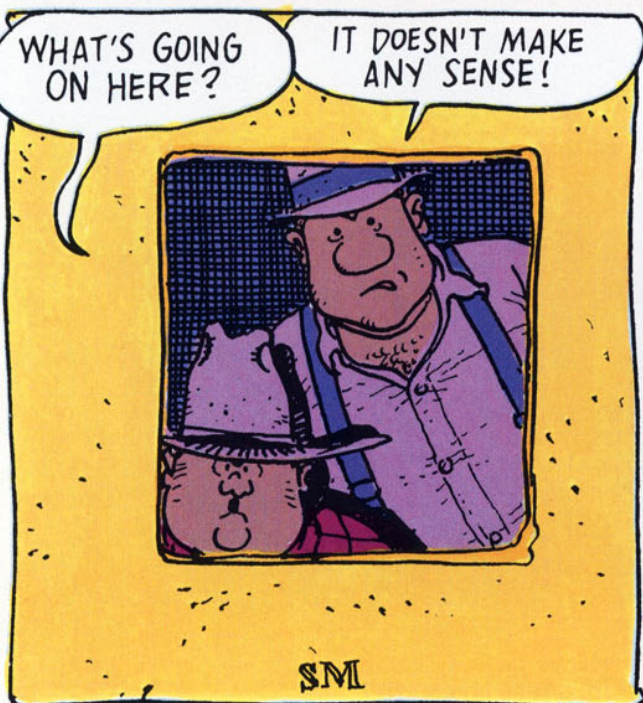
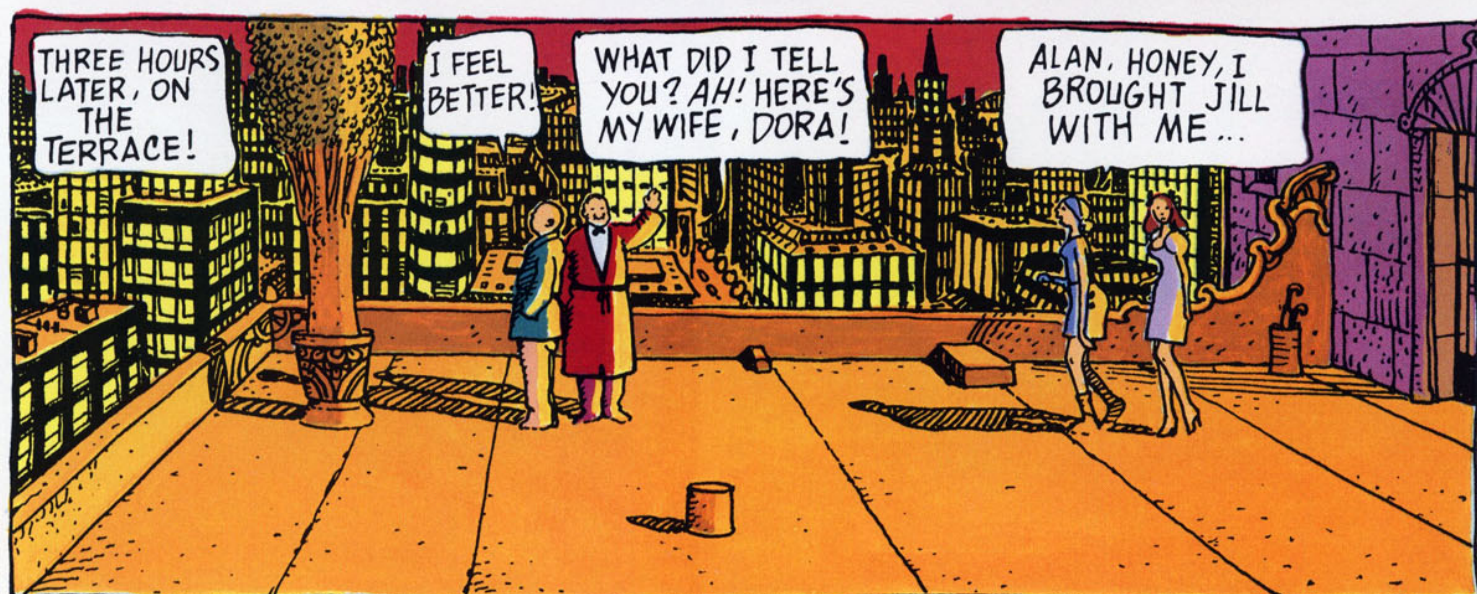


COME IN OR STAY OUT, BUT FOR GOD'S SAKE, KEEP THAT DARN DOOR SHUT!

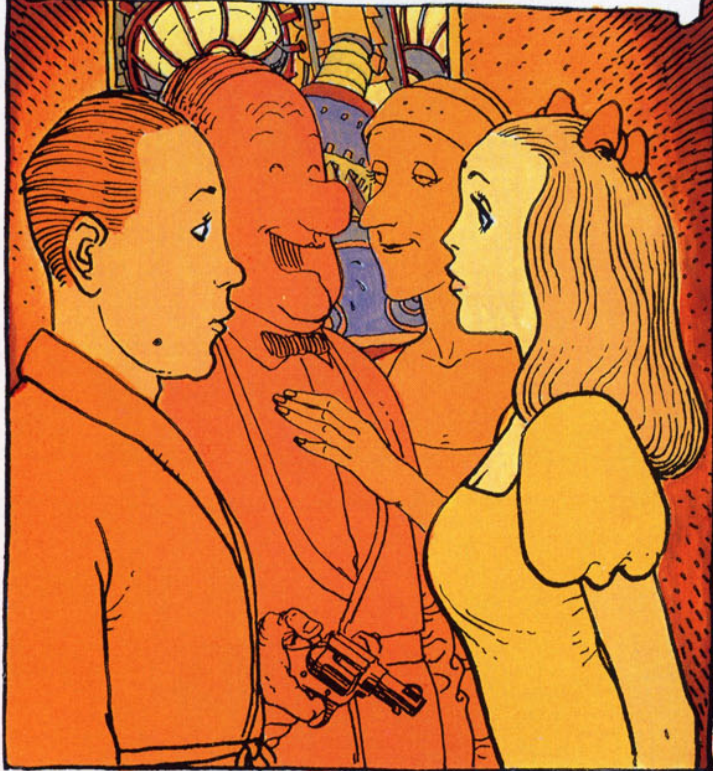




(1) OUR HERO INADVERTENTLY INJURED HIMSELF THE PREVIOUS NIGHT WHILE CLEANING HIS WEAPON: A GLEAMING BOWIE KNIFE WHICH SLIPPED BETWEEN TWO RIBS AND SLIGHTLY PUNCTURED HIS UPPER RIGHT LUNG...



THAT'S WHEN OUR EYES MET. I HAD BEEN WAITING FOR HIM/HER ALL MY LIFE, WHO MY HEART HAD BEEN CALLING FOR ALL ETERNITY. I HAD NEVER FELT ANYTHING LIKE THIS BEFORE...

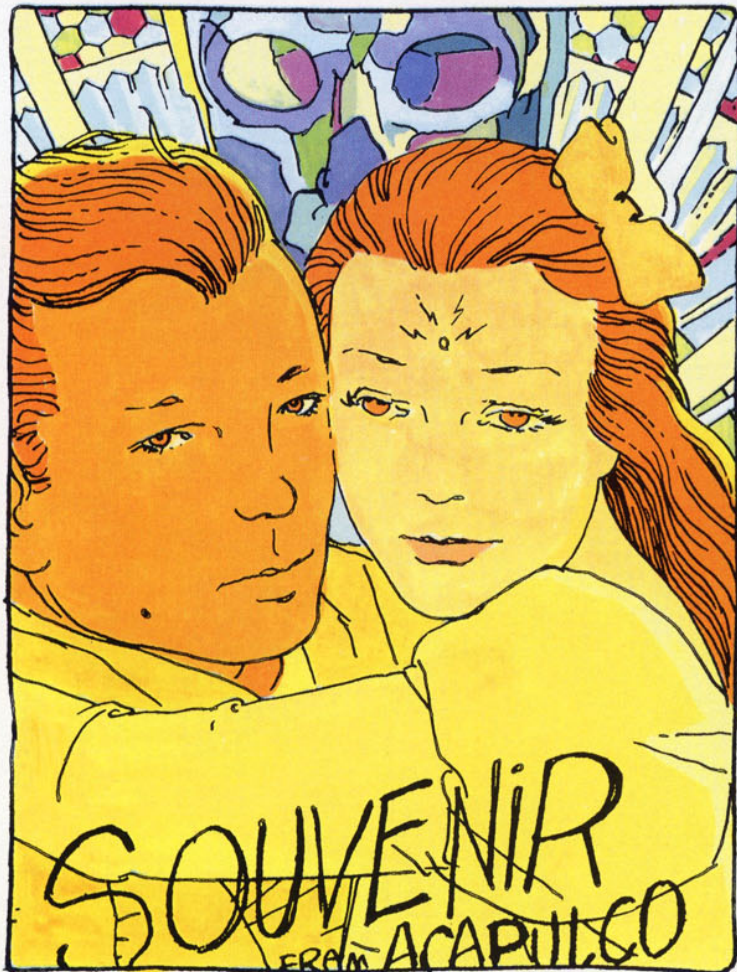
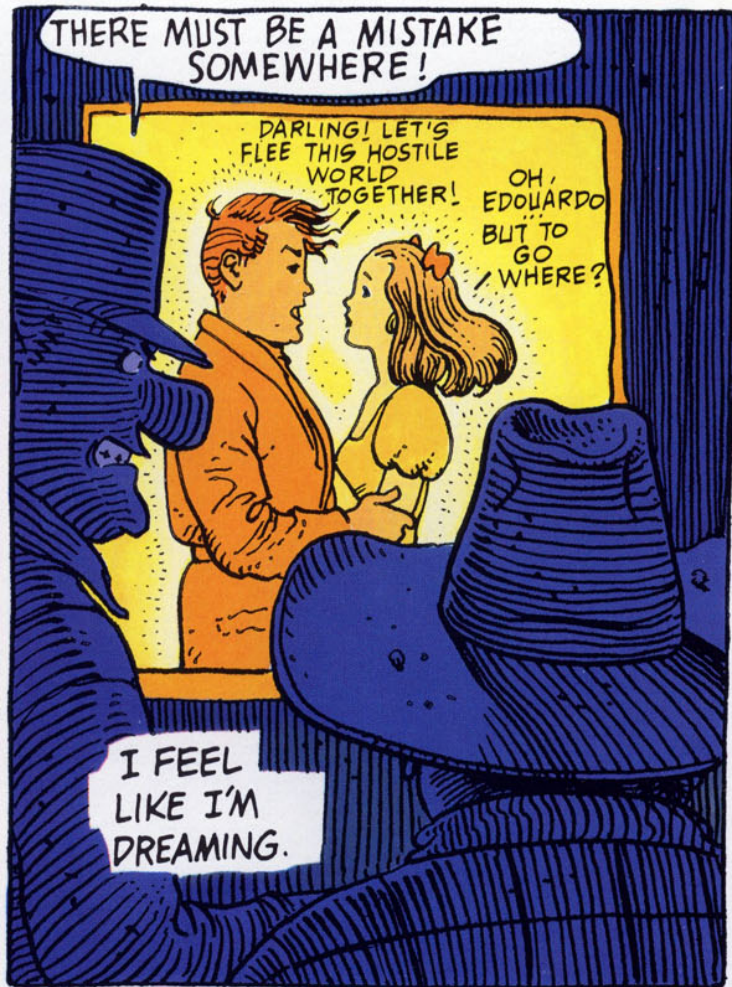


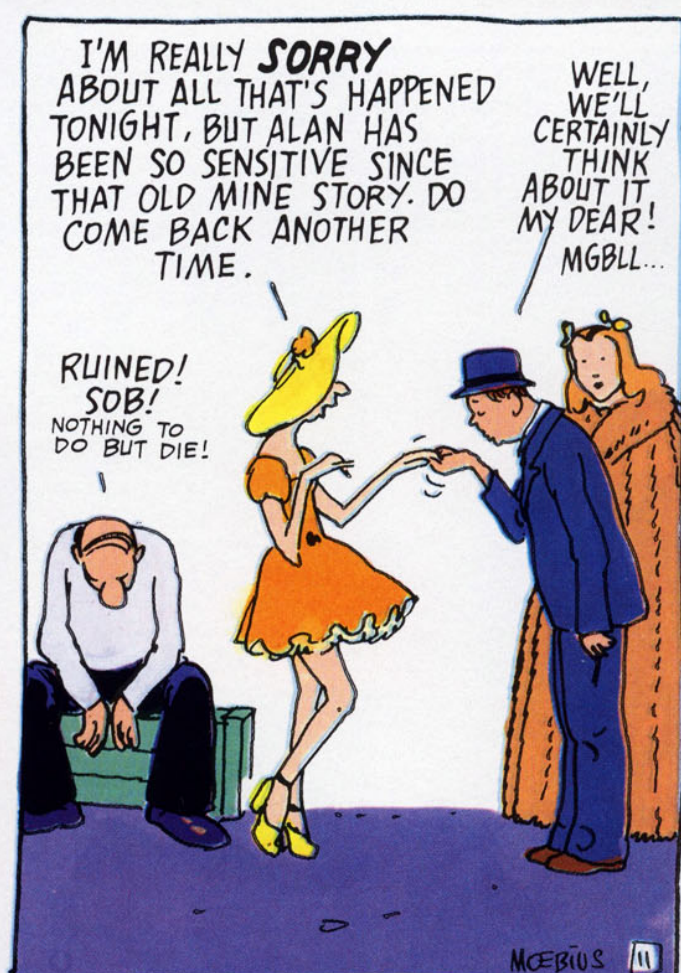
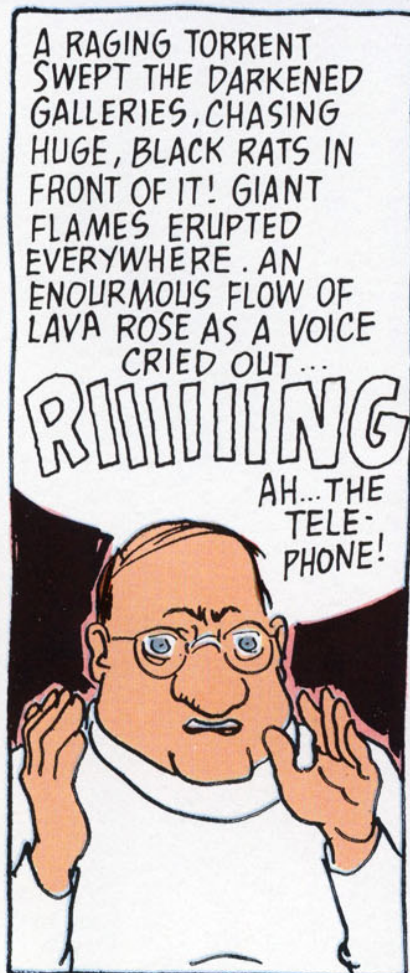
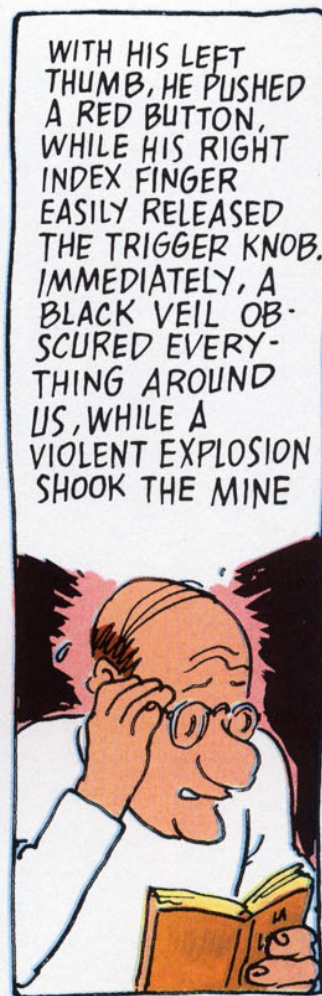
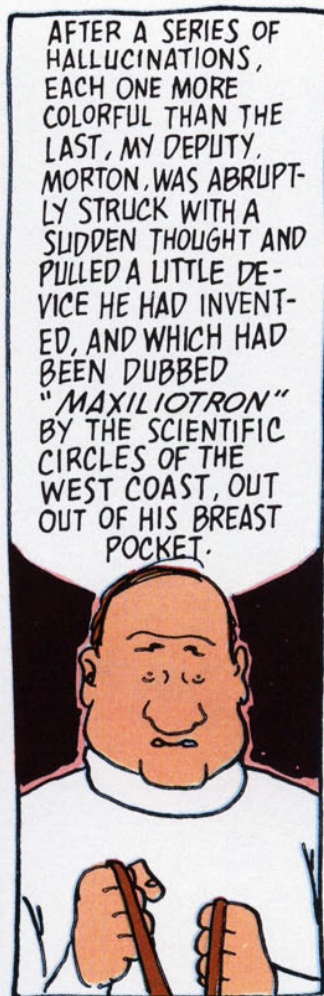
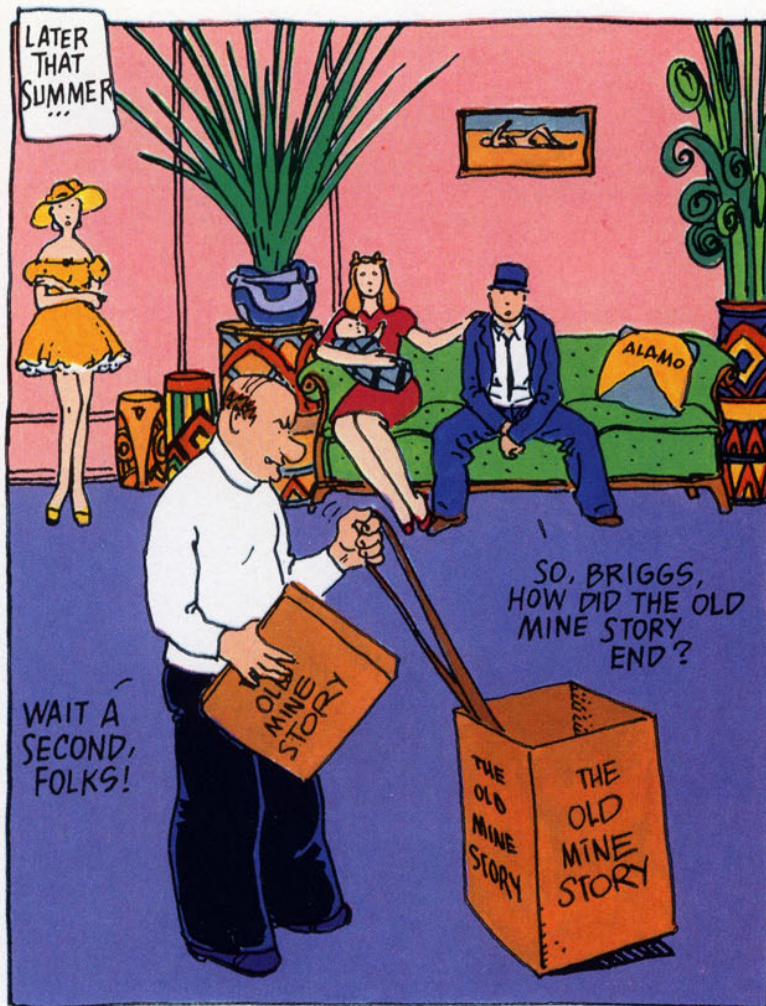
THERE MUST BE A MISTAKE SOMEWHERE!

DARLING! LET'S FLEE THIS HOSTILE WORLD TOGETHER!

OH, EDUARDO BUT TO GO WHERE?

I FEEL LIKE I'M DREAMING.

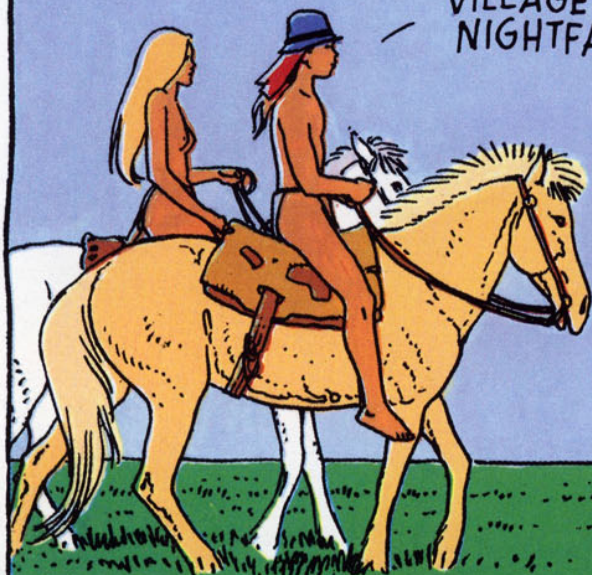




YEARS HAVE GONE BY...

WHAT A SWEET SMELLING
BREEZE, SUDDENLY... BRIGGS
NEVER UNDERSTOOD THE
SECRET OF THE OLD
MINE IN DEATH
VALLEY!

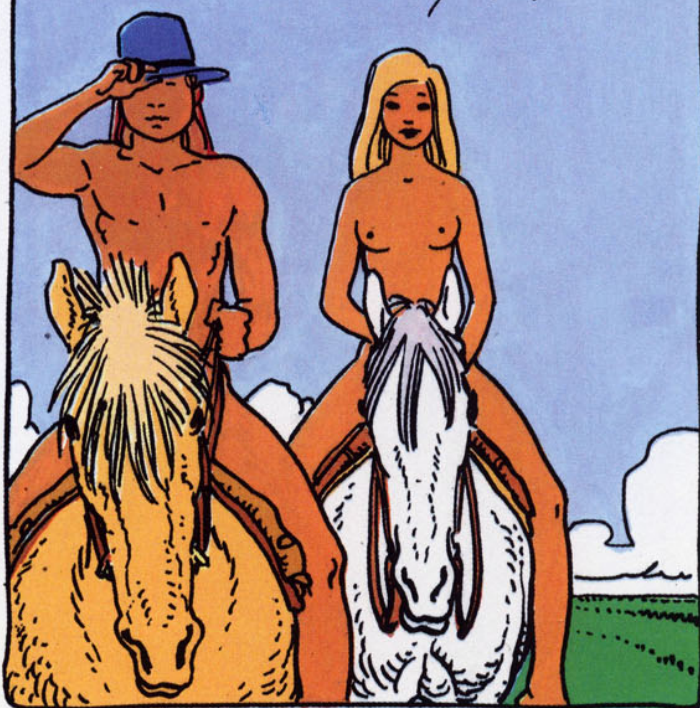
PFF!
HE DIDN'T HAVE
THE KEY. WE'LL
ARRIVE AT THE
VILLAGE BY
NIGHTFALL...



CENTURIES PERHAPS...

JILL! DID YOU
ENJOY YOUR RIDE
TO THE WATER-
FALL?

YES.
ON AND ON
I TRAVEL.
AND MY
LOVER IS A
HIT
MAN.



SOME TIME, IN ANY EVENT... WE HAVE NO MORE INFORMATION TO IMPART ABOUT THE MAN
KNOWN AS EDUARDO HAMMER, A.K.A. EDUARDO SCHWANKRISNER, A.K.A. ED McLYNN...

Yok Yok



FIN

MEBNS

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