

HEAVY METAL[®]

The adult
illustrated fantasy
magazine

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In
this
issue:
STEPHEN KING
terrifies!



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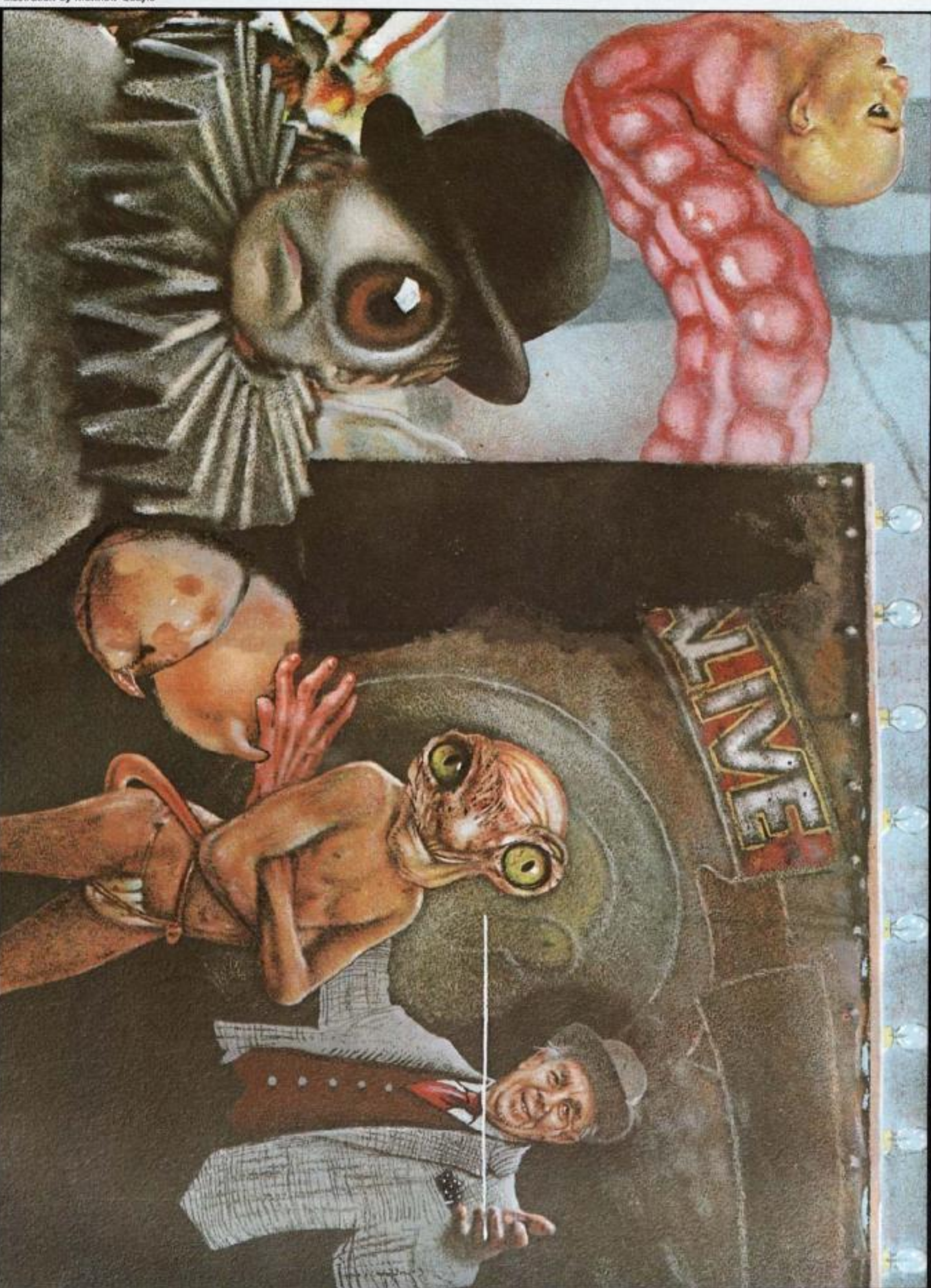
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by Chris Moore

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Illustration by Matthew Quayle



EDITORIAL

One word that gets bandied about beyond tolerance: the noun *hero*. Too much in comics, too much in film, too much in these very pages. John Wayne, *hero*. Bruce Springsteen, *hero*. Superman, *hero*. In this age of instant herodom, what really makes a hero out of heroic stuff? One isn't the absolute result of the other. Don't the media fabricate meager heroic images? With all the loss of honor, the diminished sense of self-respect and man-ners, people are grasping at anything that smacks of—as Tom Wolfe called it—"the right stuff." They need that figure which rises above it all.

But where to look for it? First, a dip into the pages of *Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary*: "A mythological or legendary figure often of divine descent endowed with great strength or ability; a man admired for his achievements and qualities; one that shows great courage; the central figure in an event or period; the principal male character in a literary or dramatic work."

Okay, put it all together. You get *the right stuff*. Someone who seems like an ordinary guy, rising far above average status, with something that carries him beyond normal ken. This is a guy who summons up something from within and sustains it; he acts, and by that alone rises to mythic status. The heroic notation: Dan, not Den; Chuck Berry, not Elvis Presley. Dan was the ordinary fellow raised to be the hero; Chuck Berry, the flawed character nevertheless capable of being more than what was expected. Elvis had a star-stocking machine around him; Berry, on the other hand, did it by virtue of personal will if by nothing else.

Most important, a flawless hero is no hero at all. The president is expected to make life-and-death decisions daily. For him the extraordinary is ordinary. It's that character who acts beyond expectation who deserves accolades.

And this is a magazine full of heroes. Or is it? The hero who matters most is the man who acts extraordinarily and becomes by it an example that is transformed into myth. Don Quixote may have been a fool for chasing windmills, but he was a heroic one for doing so at all.

—B.B.

The 1981 World Fantasy Art Exhibition, in conjunction with the 7th World Fantasy Convention, will be held in Berkeley, California, this October. They are now soliciting submissions from artists from around the globe. The exhibition will feature fantastic painting, sculpture, and drawings. To submit your work, send a sheet of 20 35mm color slides of the art you wish to exhibit, with a resume and/or a cover letter to: Will Stone, 560 Sutter Street, Suite 201, San Francisco, California 94102. The deadline is August 1. And may the best artists win!

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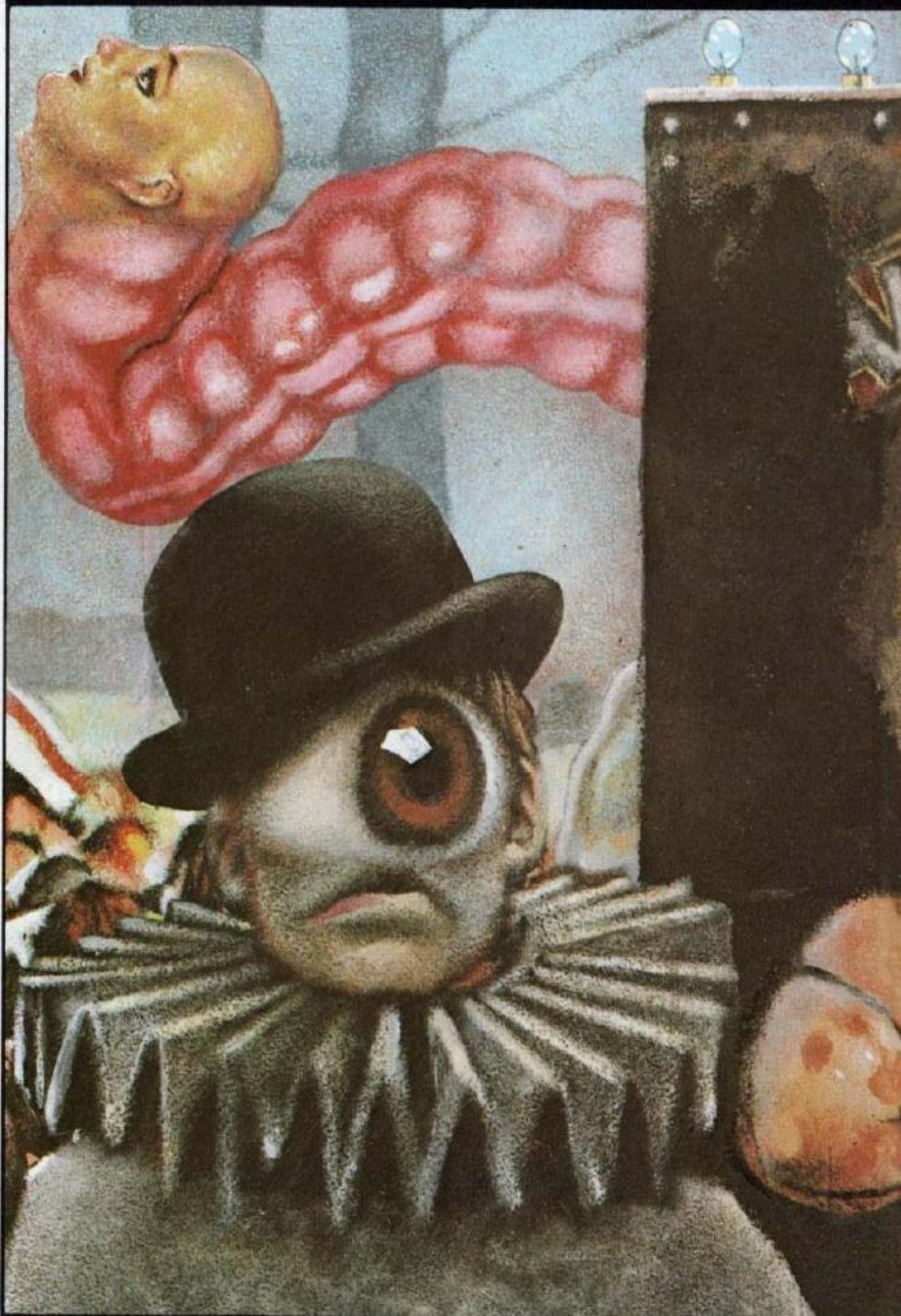
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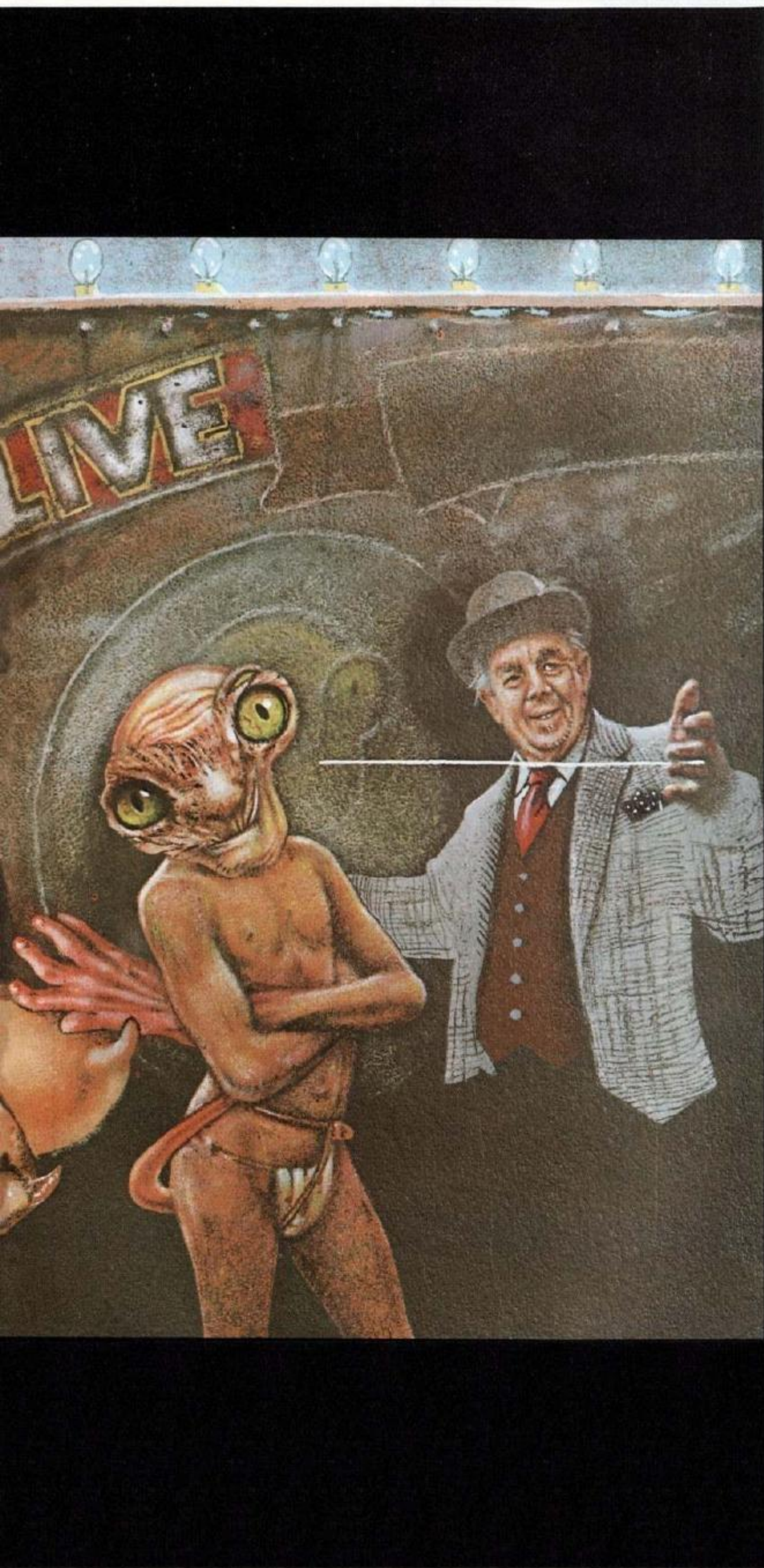
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ROBERT E. HOWARD'S
BLOODSTAR

BY RICHARD CORBEN,
JOHN JAKES,
AND JOHN POCSIK

While on the road, desperately attempting to avenge the death of his wife, Helva, Bloodstar met up with Loknar, Helva's former suitor and his mortal enemy. After a brutal hand-to-hand combat between the two, Bloodstar slew the ex-Aesir war chief, and encountered in the process the horrible demon who haunts the valley.



EVEN AS A TENTACLE LIFTED TOWARD HIM,
I SAW BLOODSTAR SEND A SHAFT DEEP INTO
THE HORROR. ARROW AFTER ARROW DISAPPEARED
INTO IT, EACH TIPPED WITH ENOUGH VENOM
TO FELL A BULL ELEPHANT.

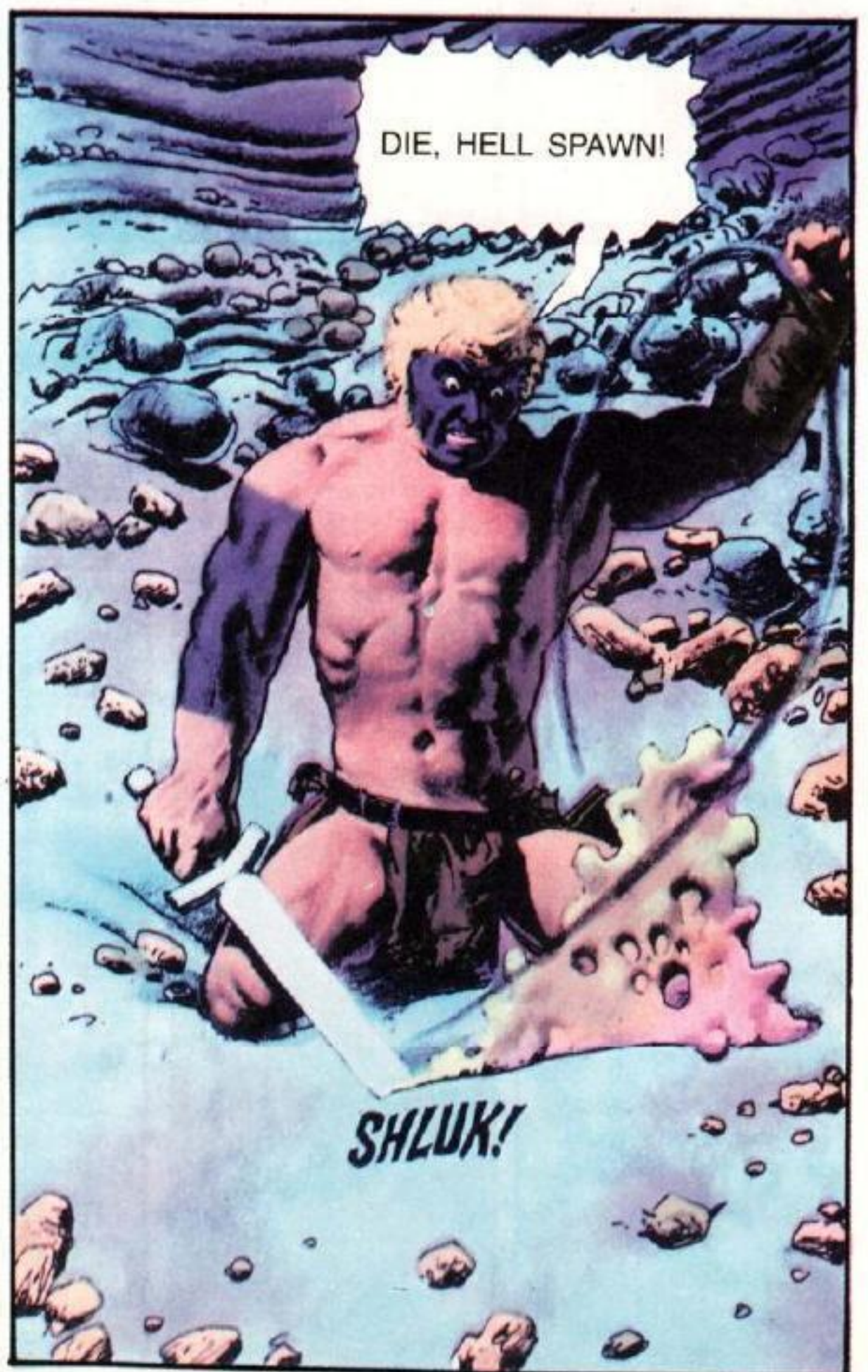


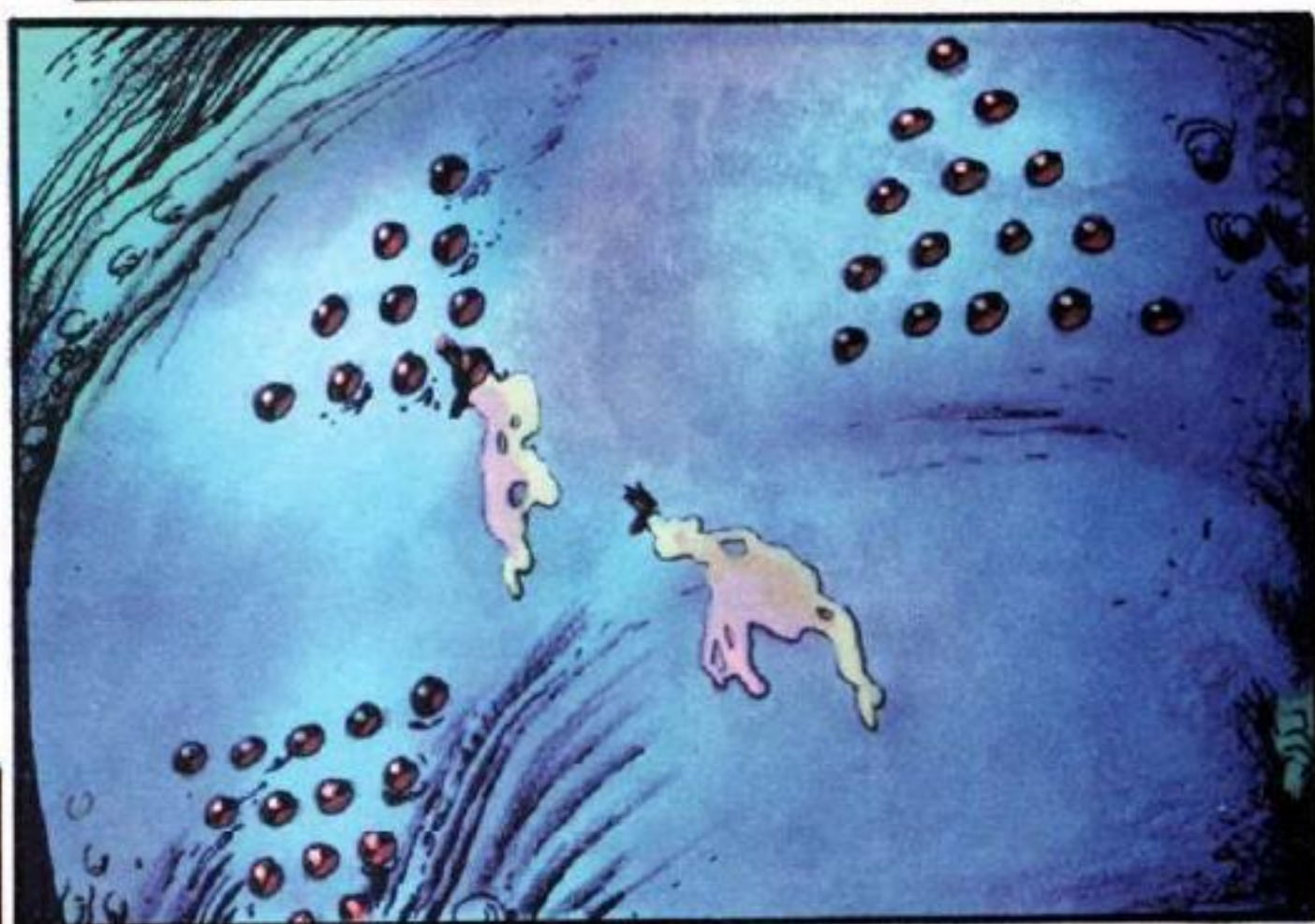
BLOODSTAR'S
CONFIDENCE FADED
AS HE SHOT HIS
LAST ARROW INTO
THE QUAKING MASS.
DID HE HEAR YMIR
CALLING HIM?

SATHA'S POISON WAS
POWERLESS AGAINST
THIS UNDYING BEING!

I TRIED TO SHOUT A
WARNING FOR HIM TO
FLEE...

FLEE!







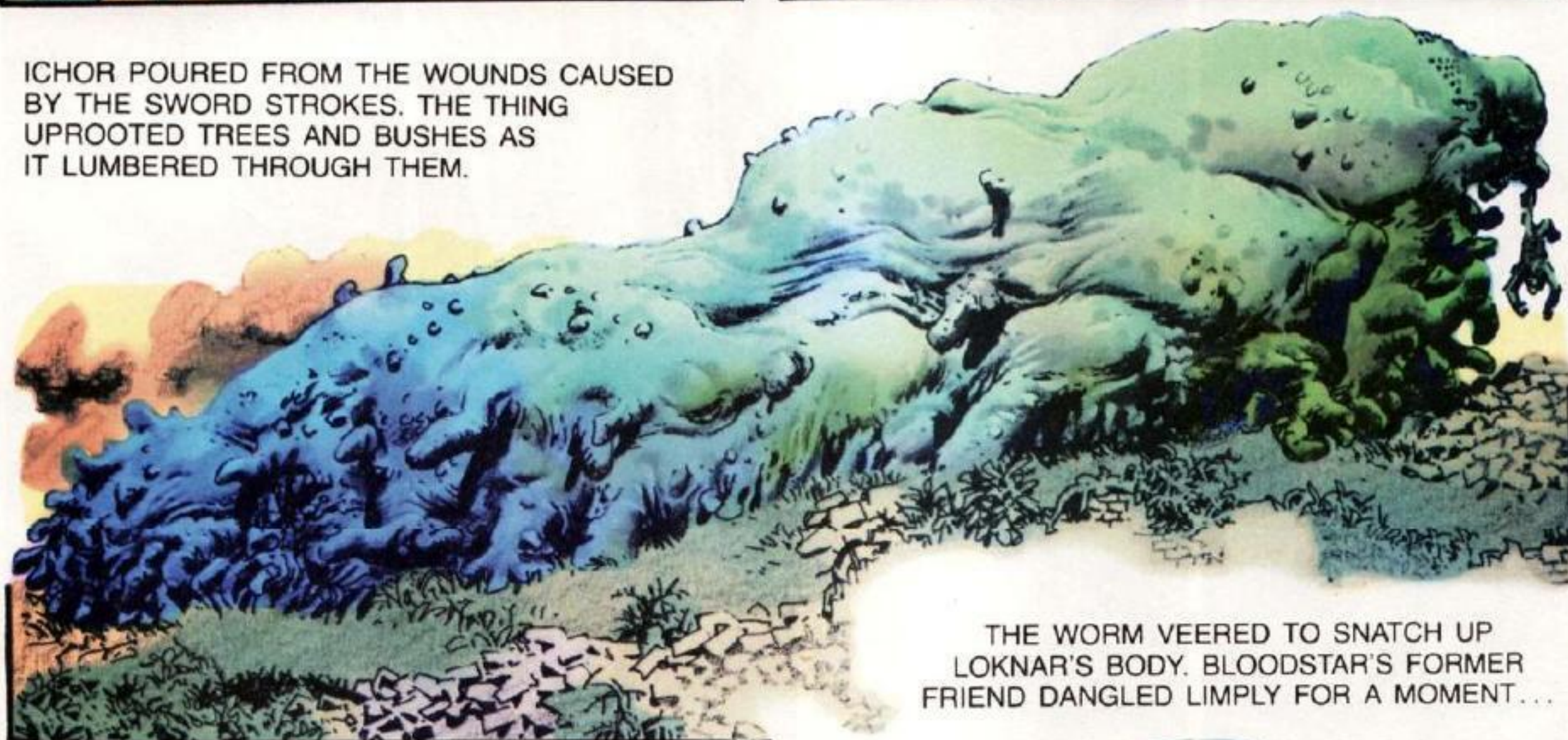
MY EYES BURNED WITH UNSHED TEARS AS I WATCHED HIM TRY TO REACH HIS SWORD—AND FAIL.



THE MONSTER'S TENTACLES WHIPPED WILDLY THROUGH THE AIR.

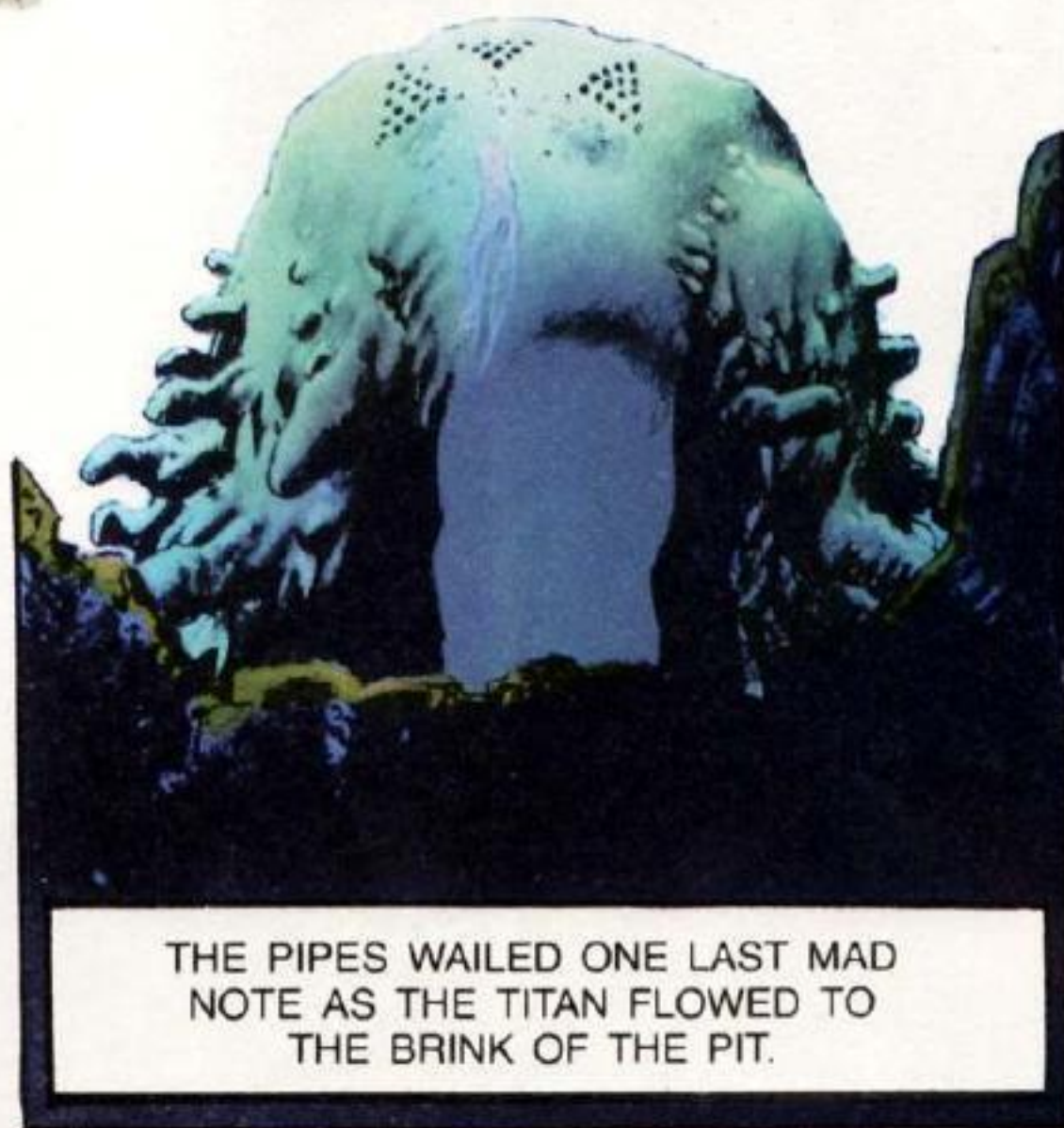


ICHOR POURED FROM THE WOUNDS CAUSED BY THE SWORD STROKES. THE THING UPROOTED TREES AND BUSHES AS IT LUMBERED THROUGH THEM.



THE WORM VEERED TO SNATCH UP LOKNAR'S BODY. BLOODSTAR'S FORMER FRIEND DANGLED LIMPLY FOR A MOMENT...

ONLY TO BE SUDDENLY DASHED AGAINST A WALL WITH SUCH FORCE THAT HE BECAME A SHAPELESS PULP.



THE PIPES WAILED ONE LAST MAD NOTE AS THE TITAN FLOWED TO THE BRINK OF THE PIT.

I COULDN'T BELIEVE
MY EYES! I SAW
IT CHANGING AS IT
HUNG THERE ON THE
LIP OF THE ABYSS.



I WANTED TO FLEE,
BUT MY FEET WOULD
NOT CARRY ME.



THE STENCH FROM
THE DYING MONSTER
WAS OVERPOWERING.



AT LAST SILENCE AND
PEACE RETURNED.



THE GROUND SHOOK BENEATH ME.
I COVERED MY EARS AGAINST
THAT GHASTLY WAIL. DUST BOILED
UP AND BLOTTED OUT THE SUN.



...HELVA
...LITTLE ONE



BLOODSTAR!
BLOODSTAR!





GROM...MY FRIEND.
I'M DYING. HAND
ME MY SWORD.



LET MY TALE BE
TOLD FROM CAMP TO
CAMP AND FROM TRIBE
TO TRIBE, OF THE LOVE
SHARED BY BLOODSTAR
AND HELVA, AND OF
THE TREACHERY AND
SORROW WE
SUFFERED.

BLOODSTAR!
YOUR SON—
HE LIVES!



BYRDAG
FOUND HIM BY
THE FALLS.



MY SON!



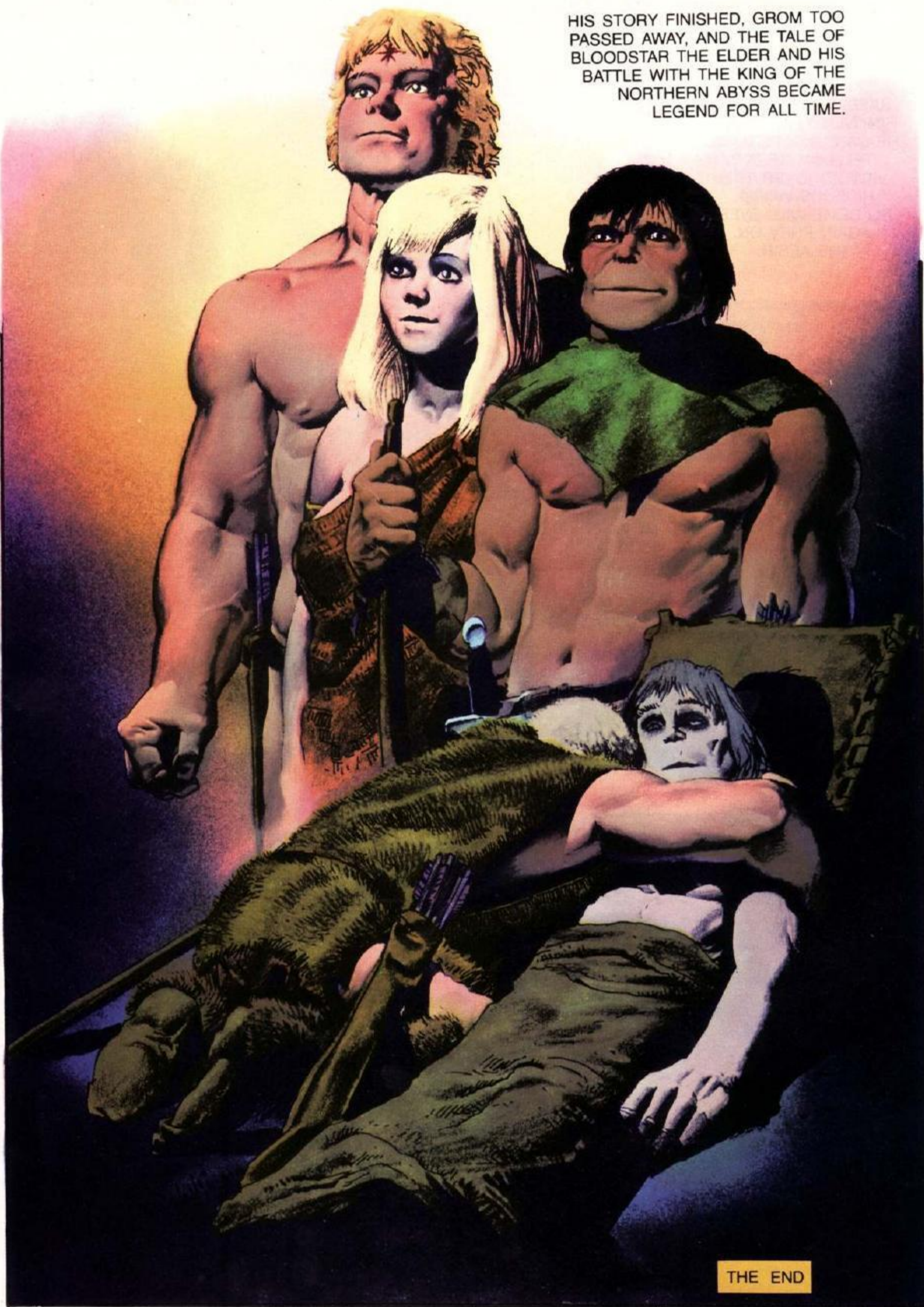
KEEP MY SON
SAFE, GROM. TEACH
HIM WELL, AND WHEN
HE CAN UNDERSTAND,
TELL HIM OF MY
VICTORY OVER THE
HIDEOUS WORM.
NO DEVIL WILL EVER
AGAIN PREY ON
THE AESIR.

BUILD ME A
CAIRN WHERE I
MAY LIE, WITH MY
BOW AND SWORD AT
MY SIDE, THAT I MAY
GUARD THIS VALLEY
FOREVERMORE.
IF THE GHOST OF
THE WORM RETURNS
MY SPIRIT WILL BE
READY TO DEFEAT
IT AGAIN.

YOUR FATHER
SIGHED ONCE AND
PASSED OVER
INTO THE DARK.



HIS STORY FINISHED, GROM TOO
PASSED AWAY, AND THE TALE OF
BLOODSTAR THE ELDER AND HIS
BATTLE WITH THE KING OF THE
NORTHERN ABYSS BECAME
LEGEND FOR ALL TIME.



THE END



HOWDY, FOLKS! ONCE AGAIN WE FIND OURSELVES BACK IN THE **OLD WEST**; IN THE DAYS OF CACTUS AND SAGEBRUSH, CORRALS AND SALOONS, COWBOYS AND... WELL, **OUR** COWBOYS APPEAR TO BE UP AGAINST **SOMETHING DIFFERENT**, WOULDN'T YOU AGREE? LET US RETURN TO THE TOWN OF **HANGMAN'S CORNERS** AND LOOK IN ON THE FOLKS GATHERED UP- STAIRS IN SADIE'S ROOM AT THE **NOOSE & GIBBET SALOON**...



SADIE (HIC)...YOU A' RIGHT? WE WUZ... WE...WUZ, UHHH... WORRIED 'BOUT YA. (BURP)

SADIE AIN'T HERE, SHERIFF.

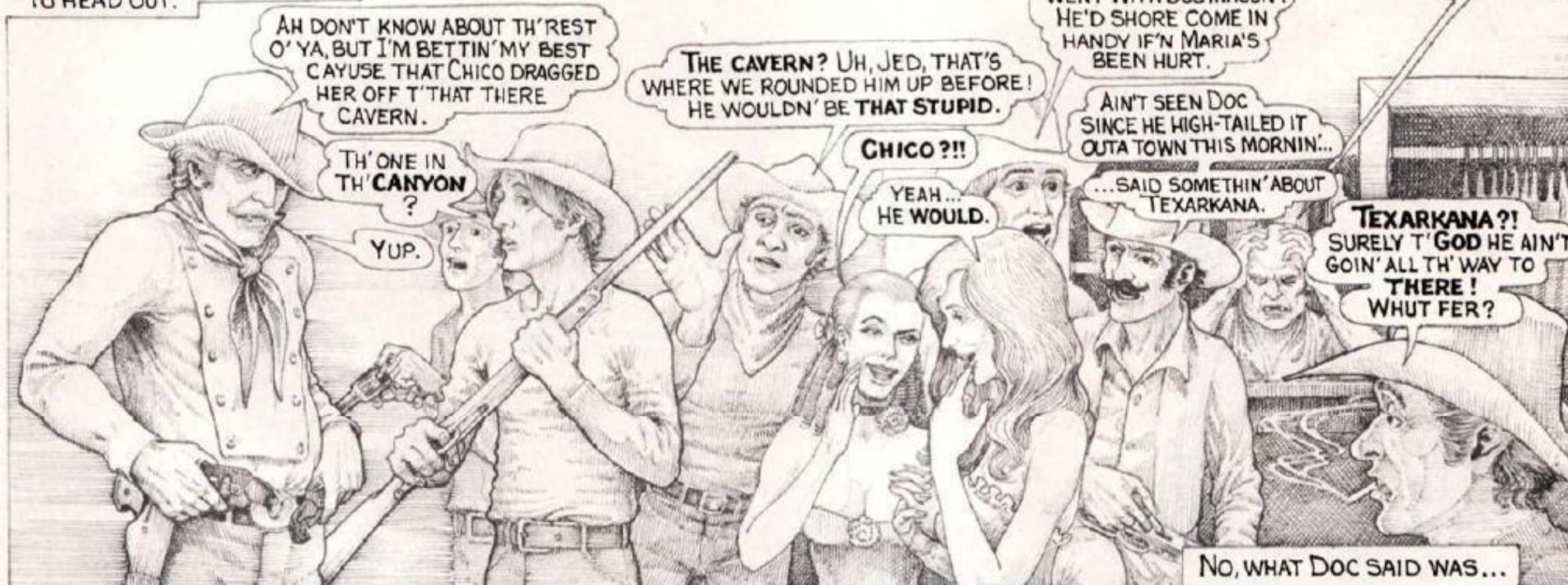
SHE PLUMB DISAPPEARED.

RECKON WE OUGHTA GET UP ANOTHER SEARCH PARTY?

NAH, 'CAUSE JED AN' HIS BUNCH IS A-READY GOIN' OUT A-LOOKIN' FER CHICO AN' MARIA. SURE AS SHOOTIN' IF THEY COME ACROSS SADIE, THEY'LL REALIZE SHE'S MISSIN' AN' FIND HER...RIGHT?

SURE. THAT MAKES SENSE! ...DON'T IT?

DOWN THE STREET AT **MARIA CONQUESO'S PLACE**, JED AND HIS BUNCH ARE JUST FIXING TO HEAD OUT.



AH DON'T KNOW ABOUT TH' REST O' YA, BUT I'M BETTIN' MY BEST CAYUSE THAT CHICO DRAGGED HER OFF T' THAT THERE CAVERN.

TH' ONE IN TH' CANYON?

YUP.

THE CAVERN? UH, JED, THAT'S WHERE WE ROUNDED HIM UP BEFORE! HE WOULDN'T BE THAT STUPID.

CHICO?!!

YEAH... HE WOULD.

DOES ANYBODY KNOW WHAT TH' HELL WENT WITH DOC MASON? HE'D SHORE COME IN HANDY IF N' MARIA'S BEEN HURT.

AIN'T SEEN DOC SINCE HE HIGH-TAILED IT OUTA TOWN THIS MORNIN'...

...SAID SOMETHIN' ABOUT TEXARKANA.

HIER! IN DER ALTER WEST... FOMPIERS! ACH!

TEXARKANA?! SURELY T' GOD HE AIN'T GOIN' ALL TH' WAY TO THERE! WHUT FER?

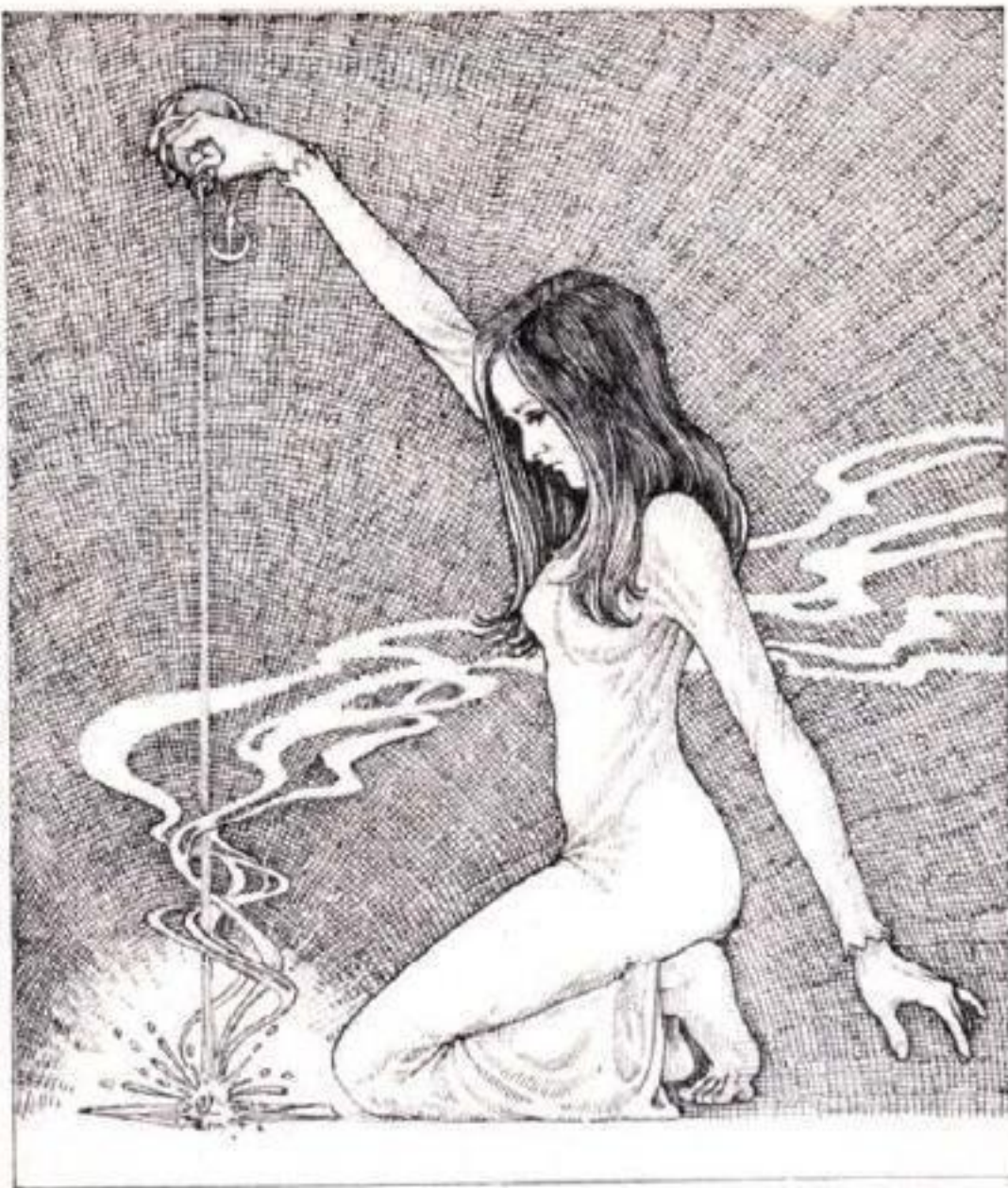
No, what Doc said was...



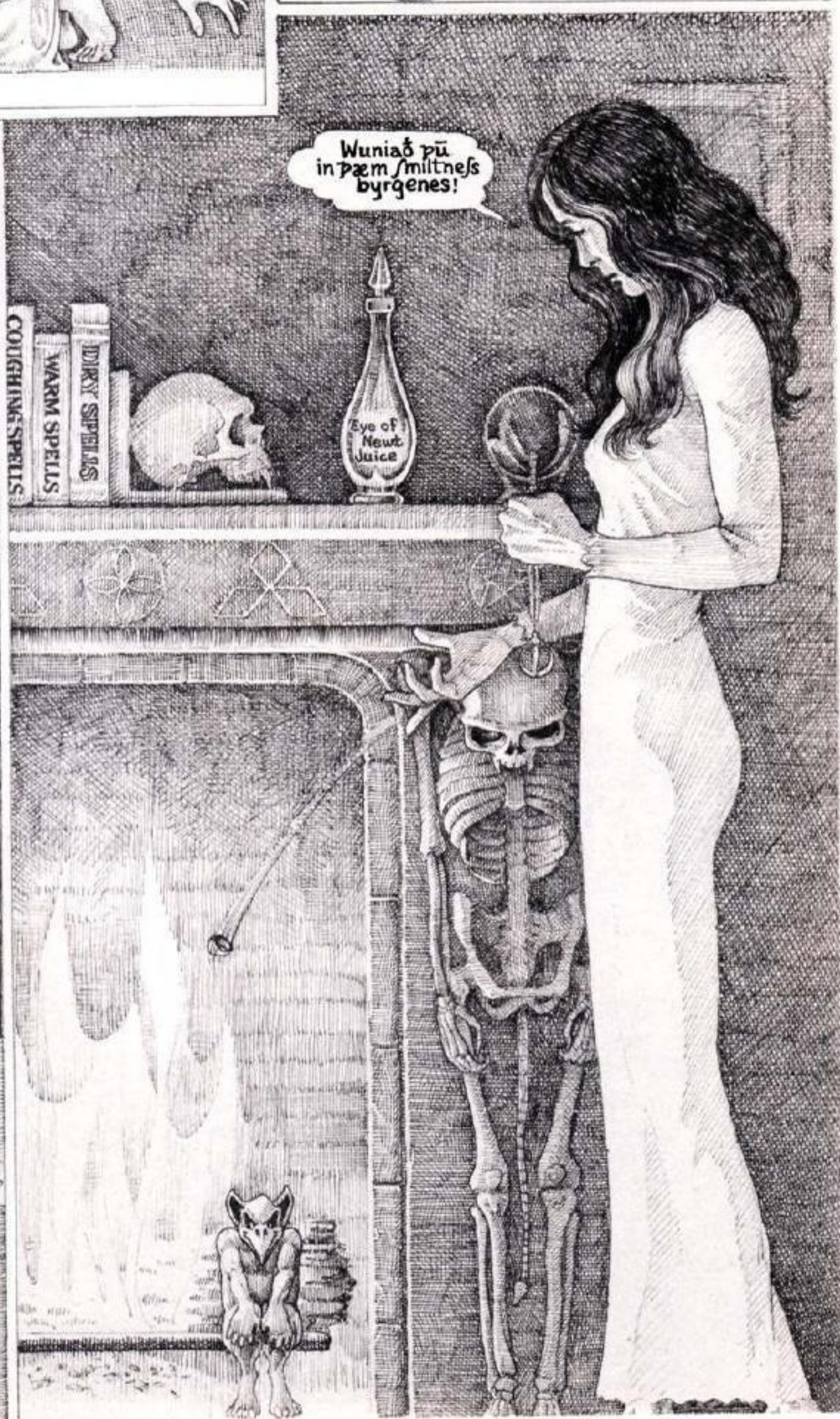
<PART FIVE>

IN THE MEANTIME, DOC MASON IS MANY MILES TO THE WEST OF HANGMAN'S CORNERS, IN THE HIDDEN LAIR OF **TEX ARCANIA** HIMSELF!





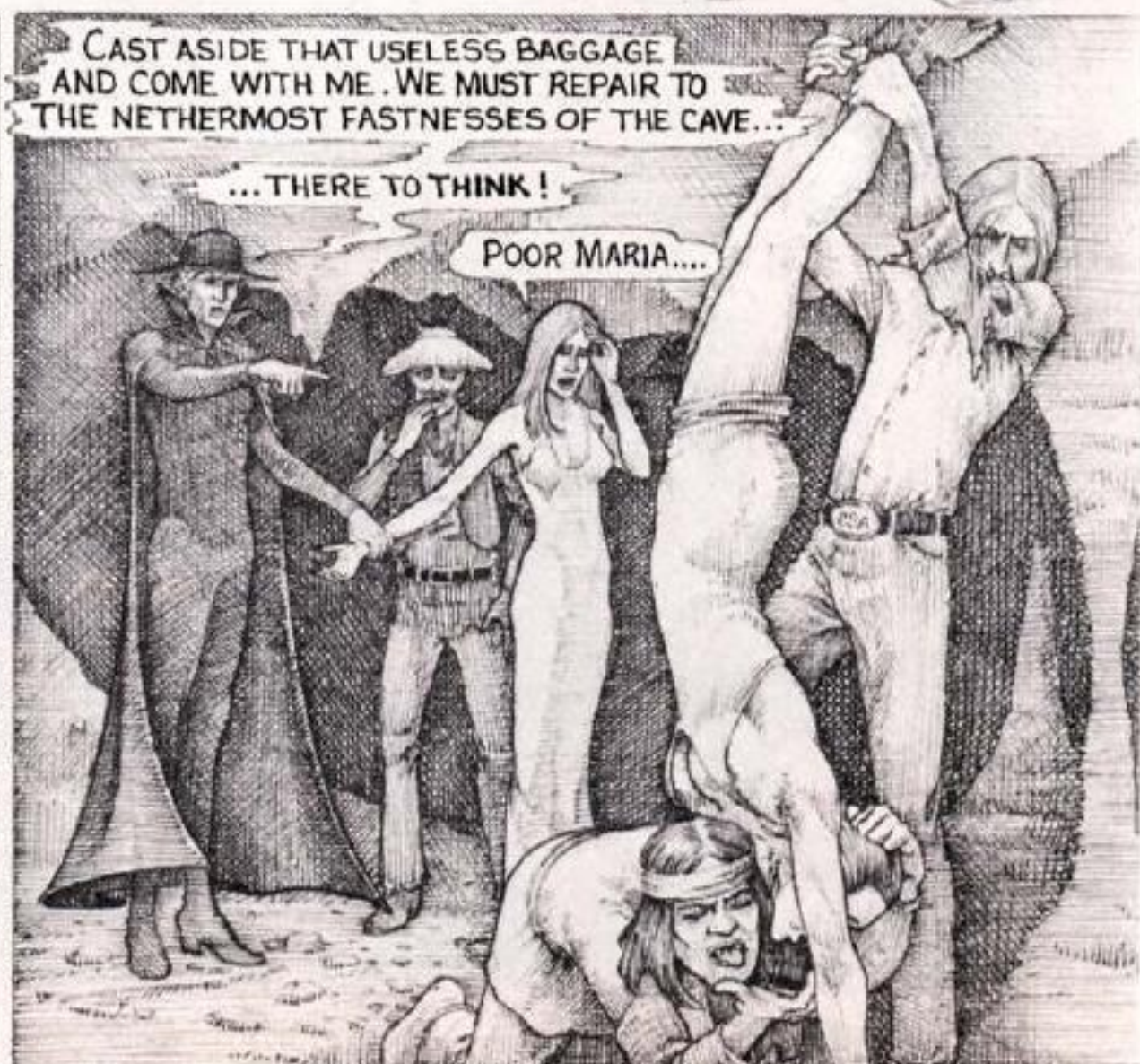
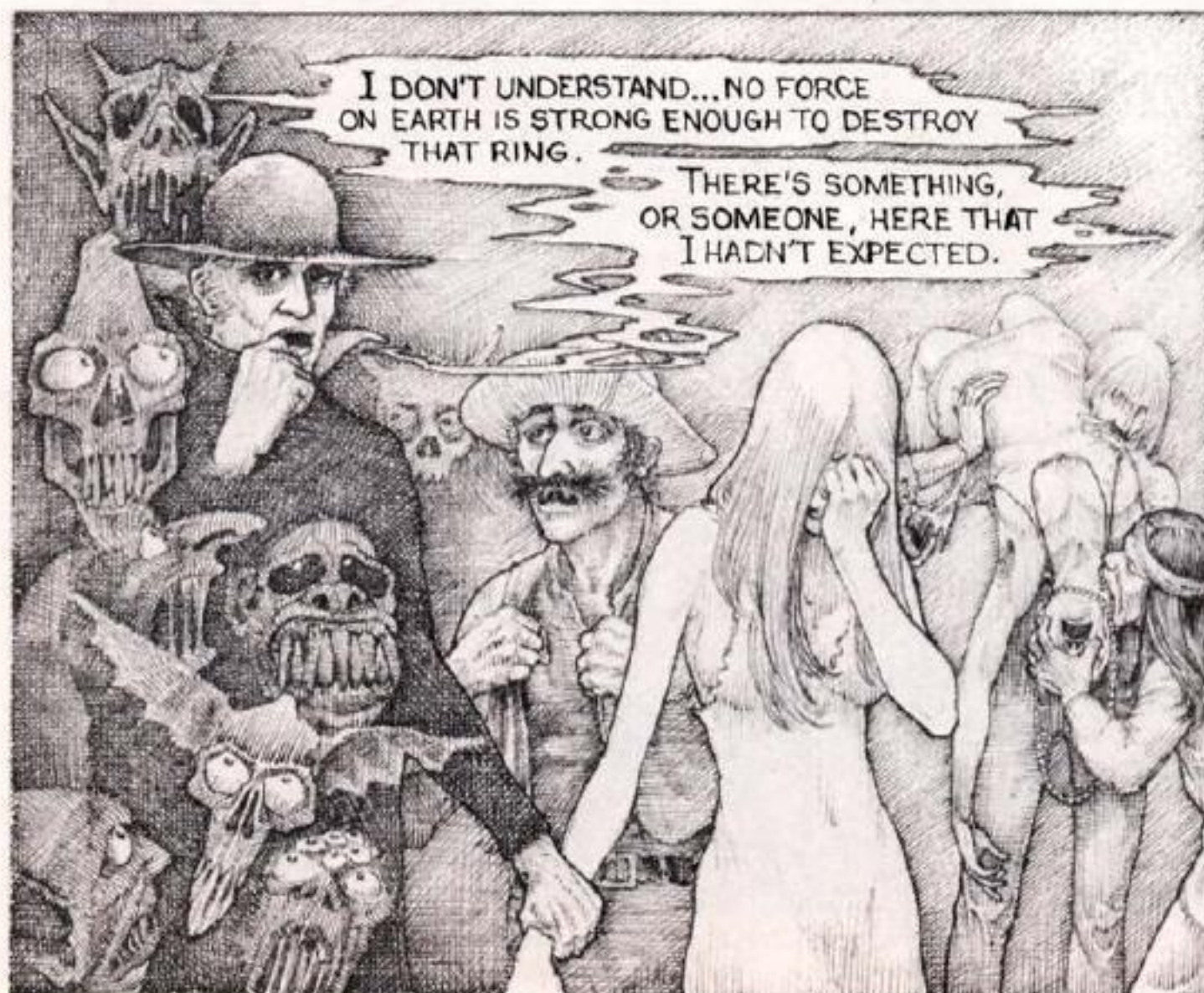
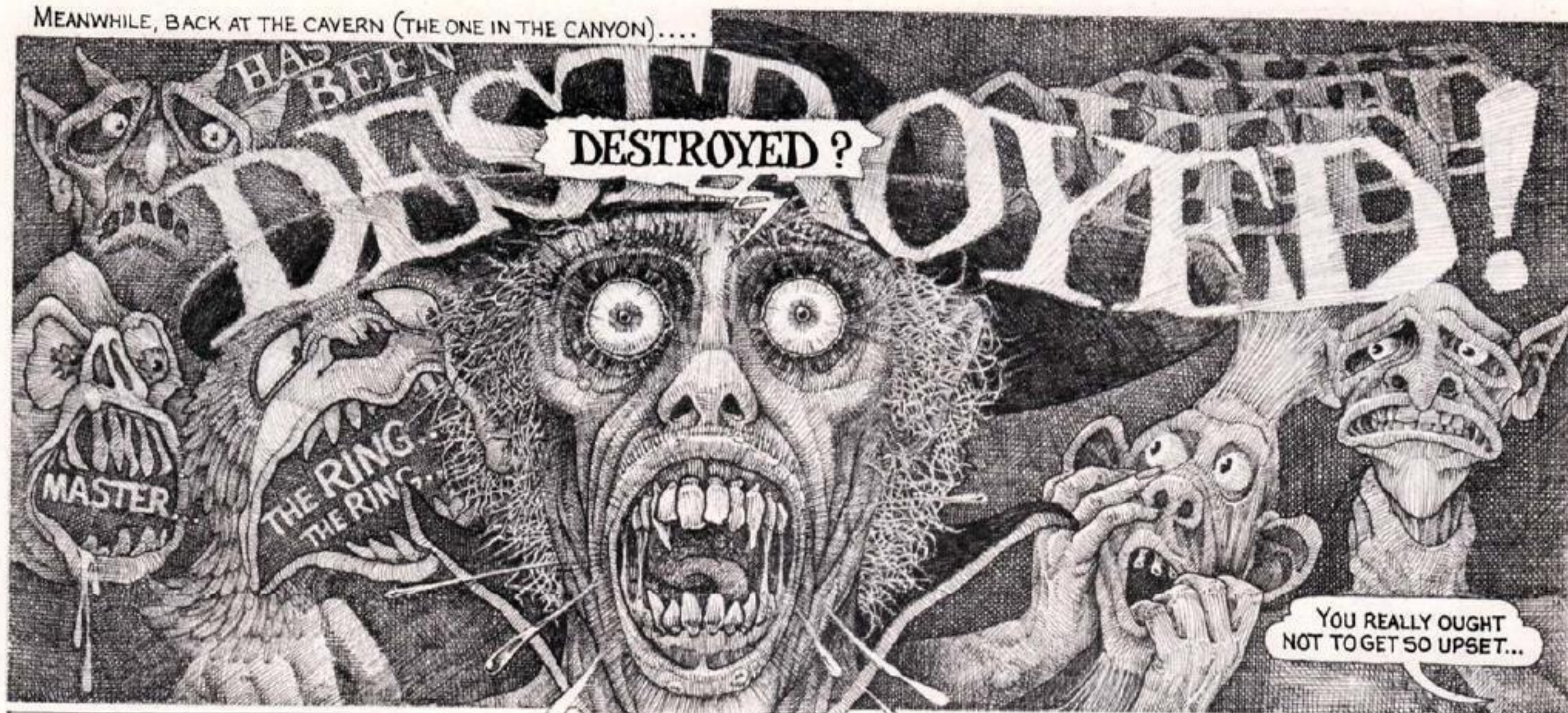
Gesceafta
unācwencedlices
fyres.



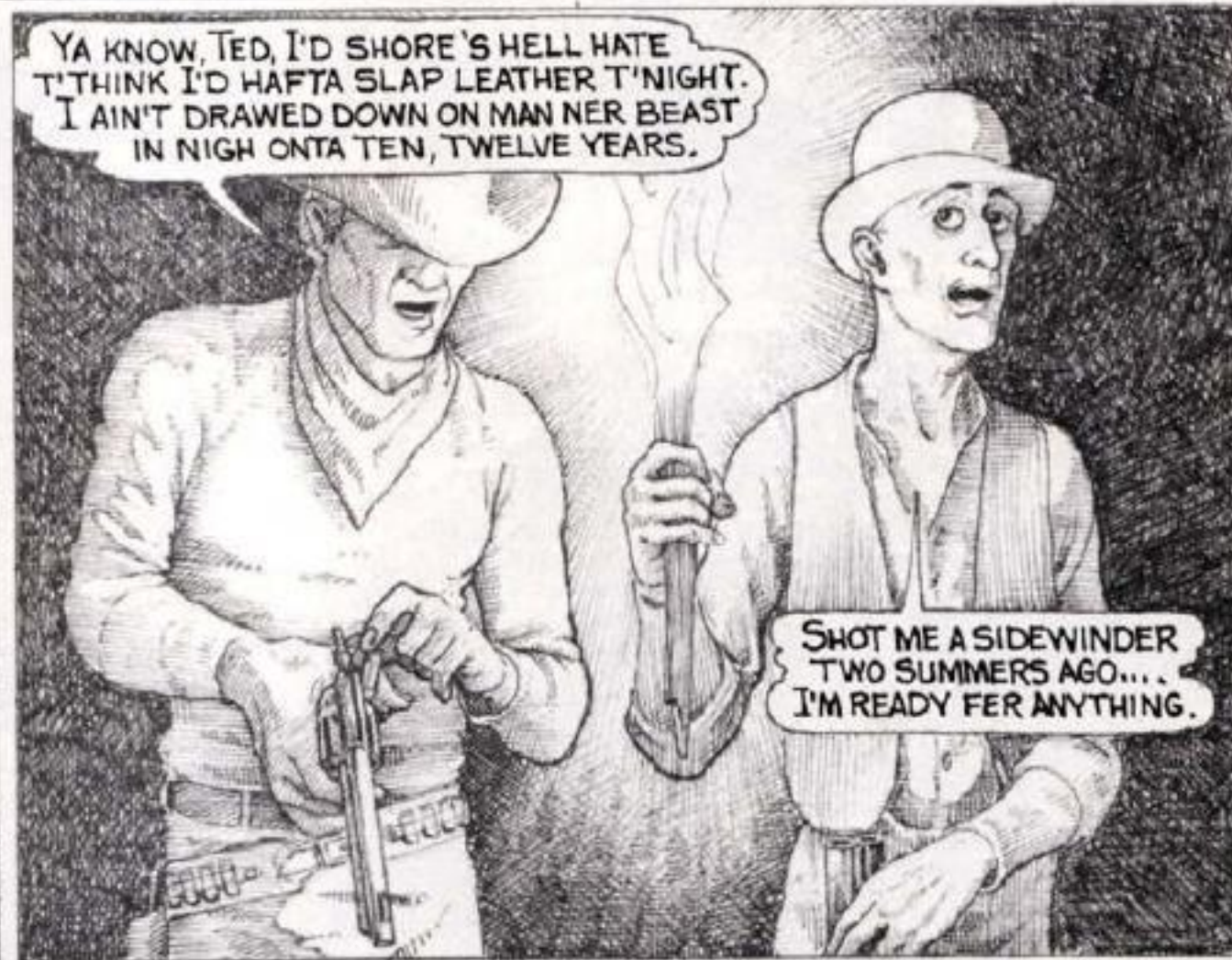
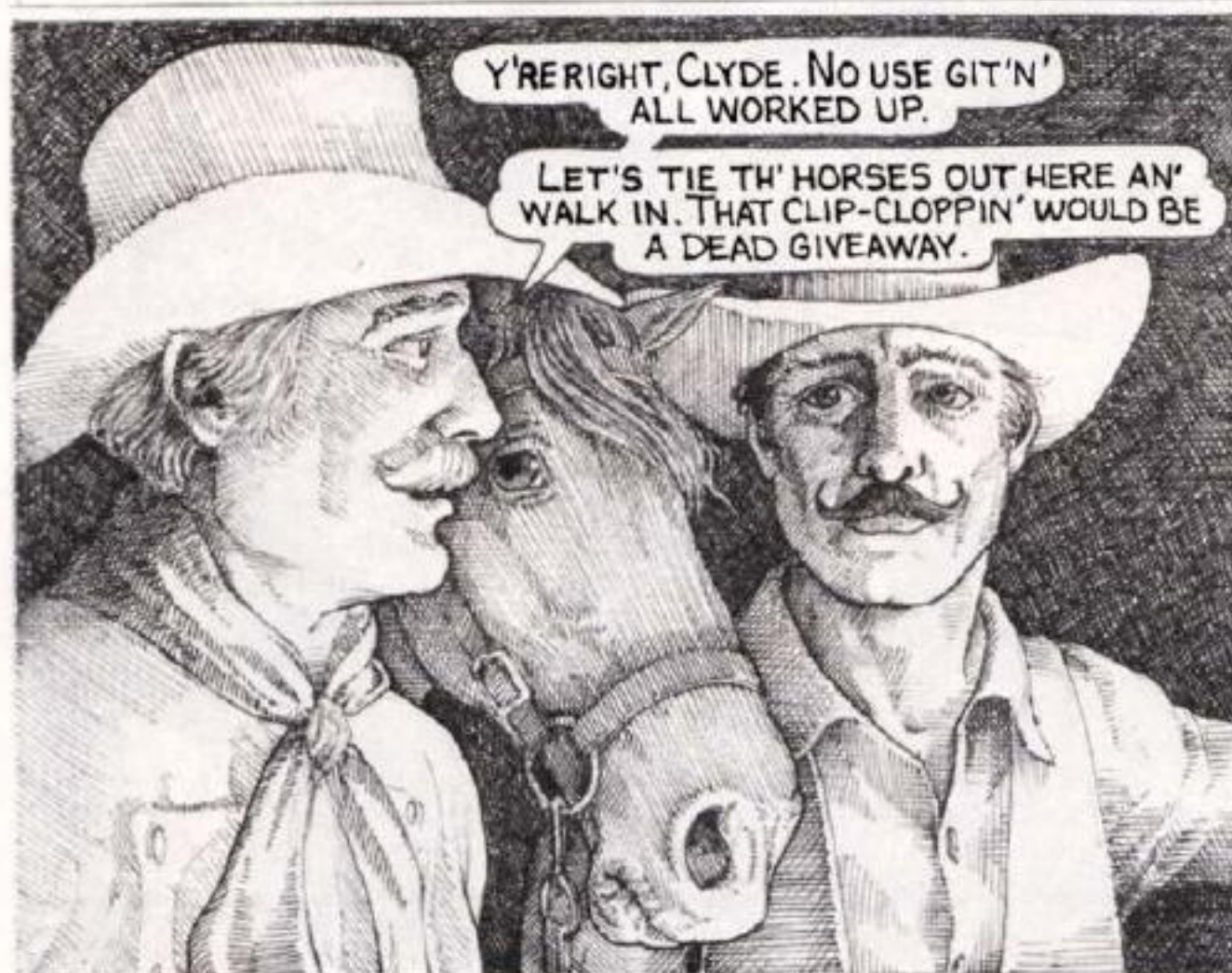
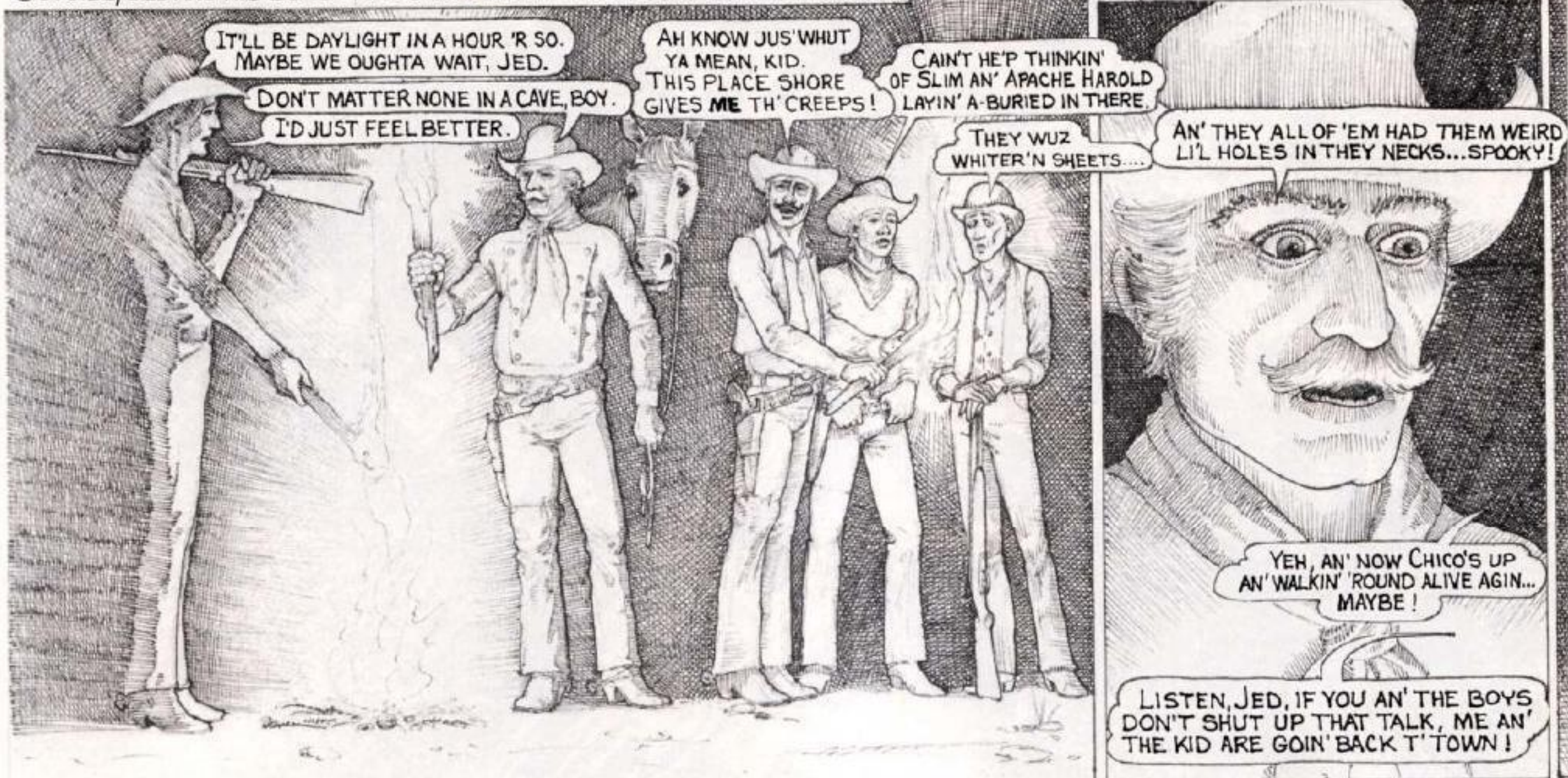
Wuniað þū
in þæm smiltnefs
byrgenes!

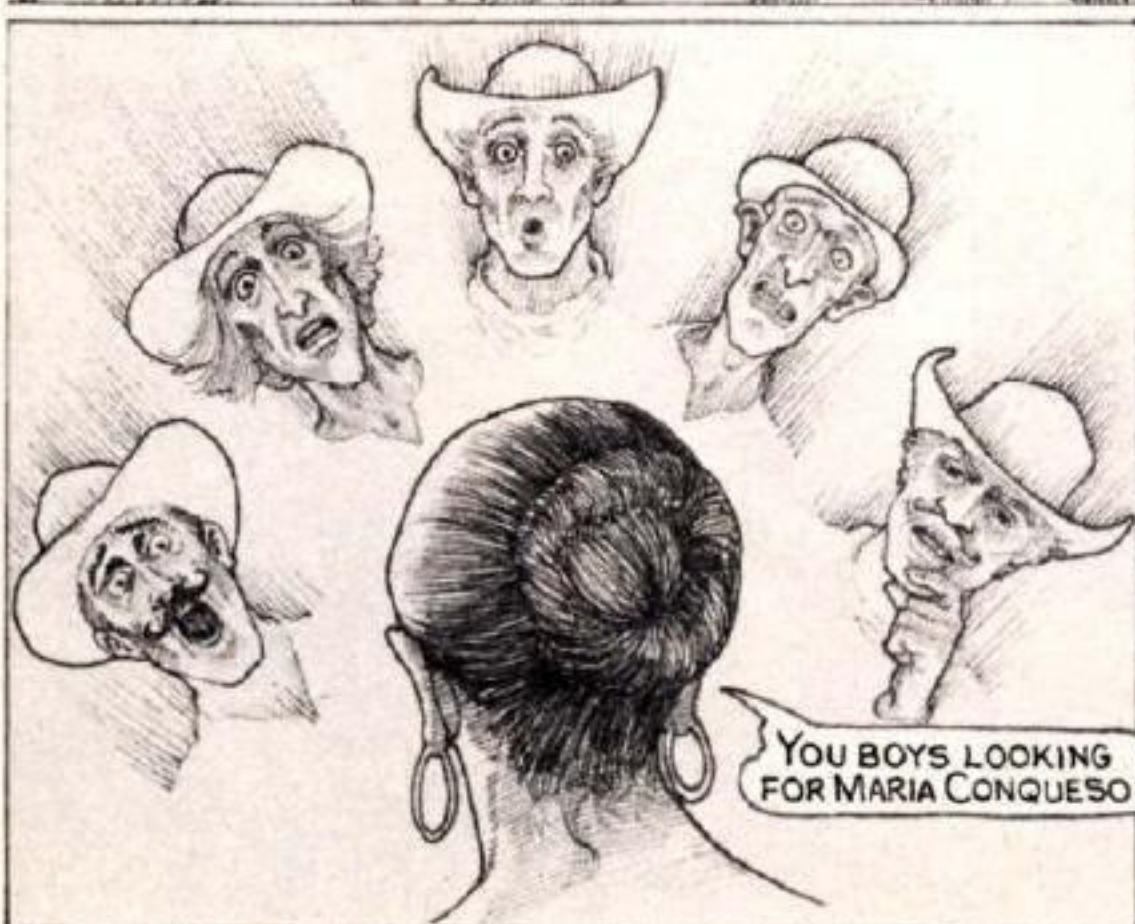
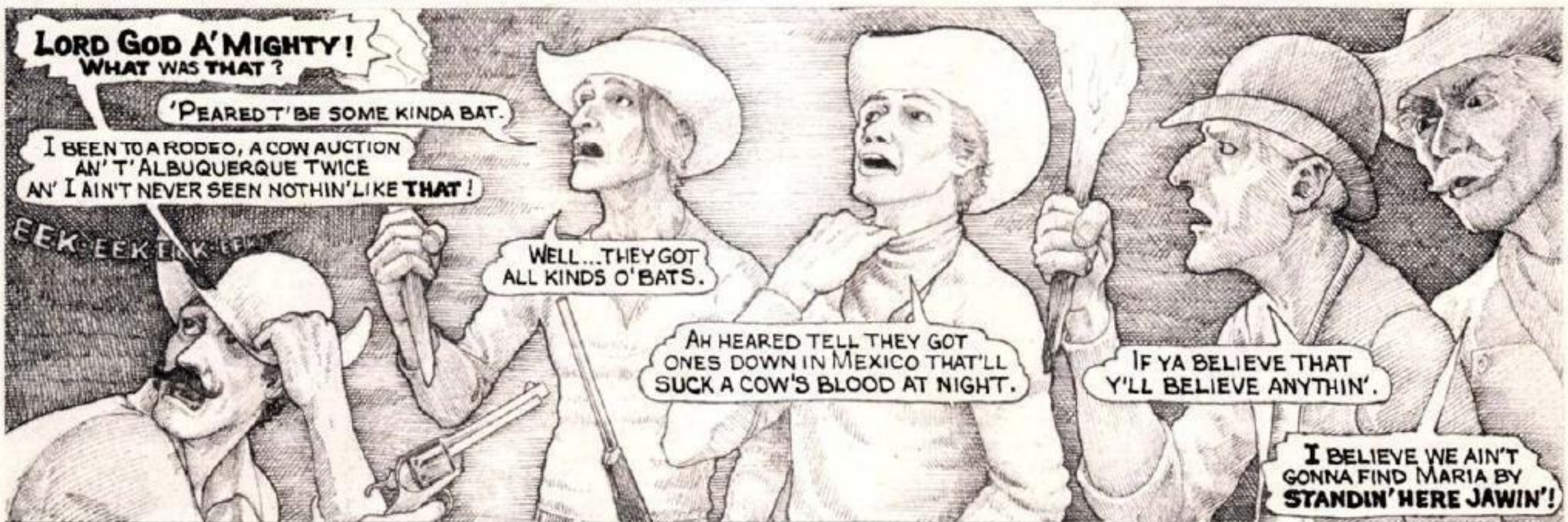
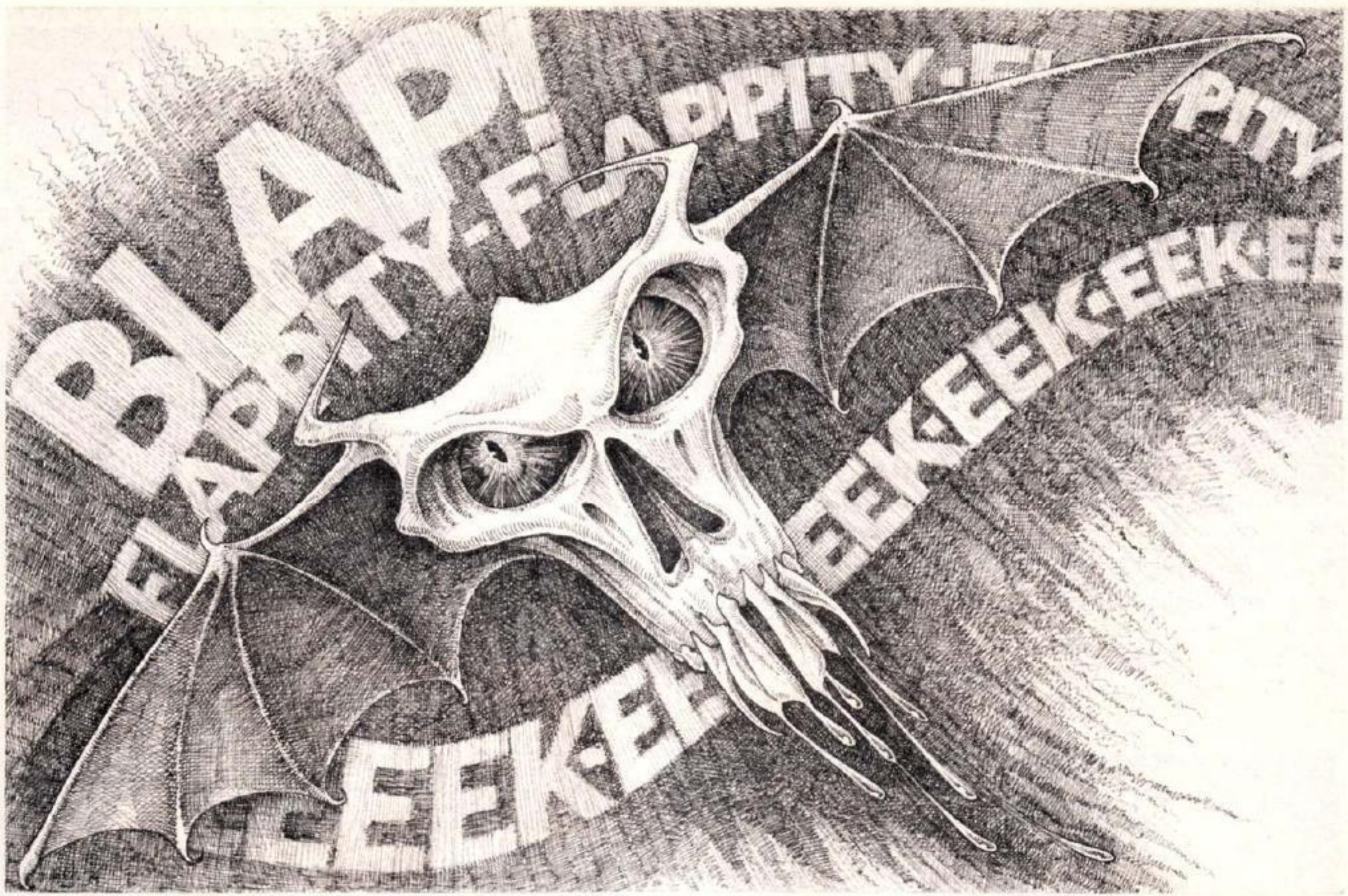


MEANWHILE, BACK AT THE CAVERN (THE ONE IN THE CANYON)....



OUTSIDE, JED AND HIS BUNCH ARE GATHERED AT THE MOUTH OF THE CAVERN.





SO EPISODE FIVE ENDS WITH A PLEASANT SURPRISE: A JOB WELL DONE BY JED AND HIS BUNCH. WHILE THEY DIDN'T EXACTLY RESCUE MARIA, THEY DID MANAGE TO FIND HER. OR VICE VERSA. MAYBE THIS MARKS A TURNING POINT IN THE FORTUNES OF THE FOLKS OF HANGMAN'S CORNERS. MAYBE THIS MEANS THAT GOOD JUST MIGHT TRIUMPH OVER EVIL AFTER ALL...





**THE
BLUE
AIR
COMPRESSOR**
**A
Telling
of
Horror
by
Stephen
King**

The house was tall, with an incredible slope-shingled roof. As he walked up toward it from the shore road, Gerald Nately thought it was almost a country in itself, geography in microcosm. The roof dipped and rose at varying angles above the main building and two strangely angled wings; a widow's walk skirted a mushroom-shaped cupola which looked toward the sea; the porch, facing the dunes and lusterless September scrub grass, was longer than a Pullman car and screened in. The high slope of roof made the house seem to beetle its brows and loom above him. A Baptist grandfather of a house.

He went to the porch and, after a moment of hesitation, through the screen door to the fanlighted one beyond. There were only a wicker chair, a rusty porch swing, and an old discarded knitting basket to watch him go. Spiders had spun silk in the shadowy upper corners. He knocked.

There was silence, inhabited silence. He was about to knock again when a chair someplace inside wheezed deeply in its throat. It was a tired sound. Silence. Then the slow, dreadfully patient sound of old, overburdened feet finding their way up the hall. Counterpoint of cane: Whock...whock...whock...

The floorboards creaked and whined. A shadow, huge and unformed in the pearled glass, bloomed on the fanlight. Endless sound of fingers laboriously solving the riddle of chain, bolt, and hasp lock. The door opened. "Hello," the nasal voice said flatly. "You're Mr. Nately. You've rented the cottage. My husband's cottage."

"Yes," Gerald said, his tongue swelling in his throat. "That's right. And you're—"

"Mrs. Leighton," the nasal voice said, pleased with either his quickness or her name, though neither was remarkable. "I'm Mrs. Leighton."

©1981 Stephen King

this woman is so goddam fucking big and old she looks like oh jesus christ print dress she must be six-six and *fat* my god she's fat as a hog can't smell her white long white hair her legs those redwood trees in that movie a tank she could be a tank she could kill me her voice is out of any context like a kazoo jesus if i laugh i can't laugh can she be seventy god how does she walk and the cane her hands are bigger than my feet like a goddam tank she could go through oak for christ's sake

"You write." She hadn't offered him in.

"That's about the size of it," he said, and laughed to cover his own sudden shrinking from that metaphor.

"Will you show me some after you get settled?" she asked. Her eyes seemed perpetually luminous and wistful. They were not touched by the age that had run riot in the rest of her

wait get that written down

image: "age had run riot in her with luxuriant fleshiness: she was like a wild sow let loose in a great and dignified house to shit on the carpet, gore at the welsh dresser and send the crystal goblets and wine-glasses all crash-a-tumble, to trample the wine-colored divans to lunatic puffs of springs and stuffing, to spike the mirror-bright finish of the great hall floor with barbarian hoofprints and flying puddles of urine"

okay she's there it's a story i feel her

body, making it sag and billow.

"If you like," he said. "I didn't even see the cottage from the Shore Road, Mrs. Leighton. Could you tell me where—"

"Did you drive in?"

"Yes. I left my car over there." He pointed beyond the dunes, toward the road.

A smile, oddly one-dimensional, touched her lips. "That's why. You can only see a blink from the road; unless you're walking, you miss it." She pointed west at a slight angle away from the dunes and the house. "There. Right over that little hill."

"All right," he said, then stood there smiling. He really had no idea how to terminate the interview.

"Would you like to come in for some coffee? Or a Coca-Cola?"

"Yes," he said instantly.

She seemed a little taken back by his instant agreement. He had, after all, been her husband's friend, not her own. The face loomed above Gerald, moonlike, disconnected, undecided. Then she led him into the elderly, waiting house.

She had tea. He had Coke. Millions of eyes seemed to watch them. He felt like a burglar, stealing around the hidden fiction he could make of her, carrying only his own youthful winsomeness and a psychic flashlight.

My own name, of course, is Steve King, and you'll pardon my intrusion on your mind—or I hope you will. I could argue that the drawing aside of the curtain of presumption between reader and author is permissible because I am the writer; i.e., since it's *my* story I'll do any goddam thing I please with it—but since that leaves the reader out of it completely, that is not valid. Rule One for all writers is that the teller is not worth a tin tinker's fart when compared to the listener. Let us drop the matter, if we may. I am intruding for the same reason that the pope defecates: we both have to.

You should know that Gerald Nately was never brought to the dock; his crime was not discovered. He paid all the same. After writing four twisted, monumental novels, he cut his own head off with an ivory-figured guillotine purchased in Kowloon.

I invented him first during a moment of eight o'clock boredom in a class taught by Carroll F. Terrell of the University of Maine English faculty. Dr. Terrell was speaking of Edgar A. Poe, and I thought

ivory guillotine Kowloon

twisted woman of shadows, like a pig

some big house

The blue air compressor did not come until later.

He did show her some of his writing. Not the important part, the story he was writing about her, but fragments of poetry, the spine of a novel that had ached in his mind for a year like embedded shrapnel, four essays. She was a perceptive critic, and addicted to marginal notations with her black felt-tip pen. Because she sometimes dropped in when he was gone to the village, he kept *the* story hidden in the back shed.

September melted into cool October, and the story was completed, mailed to a friend, returned with suggestions (bad ones), rewritten. He felt it was good, but not quite right. Some indefinable was missing. The focus was a shade fuzzy. He began to toy with the idea of giving it to her for criticism, rejected it, toyed with it again. After all, the story *was* her; he never doubted she could supply the final vector.

His attitude concerning her became increasingly unhealthy; he was fascinated by her huge, animalistic bulk, by the slow, tortoiselike way she trekked across the space between the house and the cottage,

image: "mammoth shadow of decay swaying across shadowless sand, cane held in one twisted hand, feet clad in huge canvas shoes which pump and push at the coarse grains, face like a serving platter, puffy dough arms, breasts like drumlins, a geography in herself, a country of tissue"

by her reedy, vapid voice; but at the same time he loathed her, could not stand her touch. He began to feel like the young man in "The Tell-Tale Heart," by Edgar A. Poe. He felt he could stand at her bedroom door for endless midnights, shining one ray of light on her sleeping eye, ready to pounce and rip the instant it flashed open.

The urge to show her the story itched at him maddeningly. He had decided, by the first day of December, that he would do it. The decision making did not relieve him, as it is supposed to do in the novels, but it did leave him with a feeling of antiseptic pleasure. It was right that it should be so—an omega that quite dovetailed with the alpha. And it *was* omega; he was vacating the cottage on the fifth of December. On this day he had just returned from the Stowe Travel Agency in Portland, where he had booked passage for the Far East. He had done this almost on the spur of the moment: the decision to go and the decision to show his manuscript to Mrs. Leighton had come together, almost as if he had been guided by an invisible hand.

In truth, he *was* guided by an invisible hand—mine.

The day was white with overcast, and the promise of snow lurked in its throat. The dunes seemed to foreshadow the winter already, as Gerald crossed them between the slate-roofed house of her dominion and the low stone cottage of his. The sea, sullen and gray, curled on the shingle of beach. Gulls rode the swells like buoys.

He crossed the top of the last dune and knew she was there—her cane, with its white bicycle handgrip at the base, stood against the side of the door. Smoke rifted from the toy chimney.

Gerald went up the board steps, kicked sand from his high-topped shoes to make her aware of his presence, and then went in.

"Hi, Mrs. Leighton!"

But the tiny living room and the kitchen both stood empty. The ship's clock on the mantel ticked only for itself and for Gerald. Her gigantic fur coat lay draped over the rocker like some animal sail. A small fire had been laid in the fireplace, and it glowed and crackled busily. The tea pot was on the gas range in the kitchen, and one tea cup stood on the counter, still waiting for water. He peered into the narrow hall which led to the bedroom.

"Mrs. Leighton?"

Hall and bedroom both empty.

He was about to turn back to the kitchen when the mammoth chuckles began. They were large, helpless shakings of laughter, the kind that stays hidden for years and ages like wine. (There is also an Edgar A. Poe story about wine.)

The chuckles evolved into large bellows of laughter. They came from behind the door to the right of Gerald's bed, the last door in the cottage. From the toolshed.

my balls are crawling like in grammar school the old bitch she's laughing she found it the old fat shebitch goddam her goddam her goddam her you old whore you're doing that 'cause i'm out here you old shebitch whore you piece of shit

He went to the door in one step and pulled it open. She was sitting next to the small space heater in the shed, her dress pulled up over her oak-stump knees to allow her to sit cross-legged, and his manuscript was held, dwarfed, in her bloated hands.

Her laughter roared and racketed around him. Gerald Nately saw bursting colors in front of his eyes. She was a slug, a maggot, a gigantic crawling thing evolved in the cellar of the shadowy house by the sea, a dark bug that had swaddled itself in grotesque human form.

In the flat light from the one cobwebbed window her face became a hanging graveyard moon, pocked by the sterile craters of her eyes and the ragged earthquake rift of her mouth.

"Don't you laugh," Gerald said stiffly.

"Oh Gerald," she said, laughing all the same. "This is such a bad story. I don't blame you for using a pen name. It's—" She wiped tears of laughter from her eyes. "It's *abominable!*"

He began to walk toward her stiffly.

"You haven't made me *big* enough, Gerald. That's the trouble. I'm too big for you. Perhaps Poe, or Dostoyevsky, or Melville...but not *you*, Gerald. Not *you*. Not *you*."

She began to laugh again, huge racking explosions of sound.

"Don't you laugh," Gerald said stiffly.

The toolshed, after the manner of Zola:

Wooden walls, which showed occasional chinks of light, surrounded rabbit traps hung and slung in corners; a pair of dusty, unstrung snowshoes; a rusty space heater showing flickers of yellow flame like cat's eyes; rakes; a shovel; hedge clippers; an ancient green hose coiled like a garter snake; four bald tires stacked like doughnuts; a rusty workbench covered with nails, screws, bolts, washers, two hammers, a plane, a broken level, a dismantled carburetor which once sat inside a 1949 Packard convertible; a 4hp air compressor painted electric blue, plugged into an extension cord running back into the house.

"Don't you laugh," Gerald said again, but she continued to rock back and forth, holding her stomach and flapping the manuscript with her wheezing breath like a white bird.

His hand found the rusty Winchester rifle and he pole-axed her with it.

Most horror stories are sexual in nature.

I'm sorry to break in with this information but feel I must in order to make the way clear for the grisly conclusion of this piece, which is (at least psychologically) a clear metaphor for fears of sexual impotence on my part. Mrs. Leighton's large mouth is symbolic of the vagina; the hose of the compressor is a penis. Her female bulk, huge and overpowering, is a mythic representation of the sexual fear that lives in every male, to a greater or lesser degree: that the woman, with her opening, is a devourer.

In the works of Edgar A. Poe, Stephen King, Gerald Nately, and others who practice this particular literary form, we are apt to find locked rooms, dungeons, empty mansions (all symbols of the womb); scenes of living burial (sexual impotence); the dead returned from the grave (necrophilia); grotesque monsters or human beings (externalized fear of the sexual act itself); torture and/or murder (a viable alternative to the sexual act).

These possibilities are not always valid, but the post-Freud reader and writer must take them into consideration when attempting the genre.

Abnormal psychology has become a part of the human experience.

She made thick, unconscious noises in her throat as he whirled around madly, looking for an instrument; her head lolled brokenly on the thick stalk of her neck.

He seized the hose of the air compressor.

"All right," he said thickly. "All right, now. All right."

bitch fat old bitch you've had yours not big enough is that right well you'll be bigger you'll be bigger still

He ripped her head back by the hair and rammed the hose into her mouth, into her gullet. She screamed around it, a sound like a cat.

Part of the inspiration for this story came from an old E.C. horror comic book which I bought in a Lisbon Falls drugstore. In one particular story, a husband and wife murdered each other simultaneously in mutually ironic (and brilliant) fashion. He was very fat; she was very thin. He shoved the hose of an air compressor down her throat and blew her up to dirigible size. On his way downstairs a booby trap she had rigged fell on him and squashed him to a shadow.

Any author who tells you he has never plagiarized is a liar. A good author begins with bad ideas and improbabilities and fashions them into comments on the human condition.

In a horror story, it is imperative that the grotesque be elevated to the status of the abnormal.

The compressor turned on with a whoosh and a chug. The hose flew out of Mrs. Leighton's mouth. Giggling and gibbering, Gerald stuffed it back in. Her feet drummed and thumped on the floor. The flesh of her cheeks and diaphragm began to swell rhythmically. Her eyes bulged and became glass marbles. Her torso began to expand.

here it is here it is you lousy louse are you big enough yet are you big enough

The compressor wheezed and racketed. Mrs. Leighton swelled like a beach ball. Her lungs became straining blowfish.

Fiends! Devils! Dissemble no more! Here! Here! It is the beating of his hideous heart!

She seemed to explode all at once.

Sitting in a boiling hotel room in Bombay, Gerald rewrote the story he had begun at the cottage on the other side of the world. The original title had been "The Hog." After some deliberation he retitled it "The Blue Air Compressor."

He had resolved it to his own satisfaction. There was a certain lack of motivation concerning the final scene, where the fat old woman was murdered, but he did not see that as a fault. In "The Tell-Tale Heart," Edgar A. Poe's finest story, there is not real motivation for the murder of the old man, and that was as it should be. The motive is not the point.

She got very big just before the end; even her legs swelled up to twice their normal size. At the very end, her tongue popped out of her mouth like a party favor.

After leaving Bombay, Gerald Nately went on to Hong Kong, then to Kowloon. The ivory guillotine caught his fancy immediately.


As the author, I can see only one correct omega to this story, and that is to tell you how Gerald Nately got rid of the body. He tore up the floorboards of the shed, dismembered Mrs. Leighton, and buried the sections in the sand beneath.

When he notified the police that she had been missing for a week, the local constable and a state policeman came at once. Gerald entertained them quite naturally, even offering them coffee. He heard no beating heart, but then, the interview was conducted in the big house.

On the following day he flew away, toward Bombay, Hong Kong, and Kowloon.

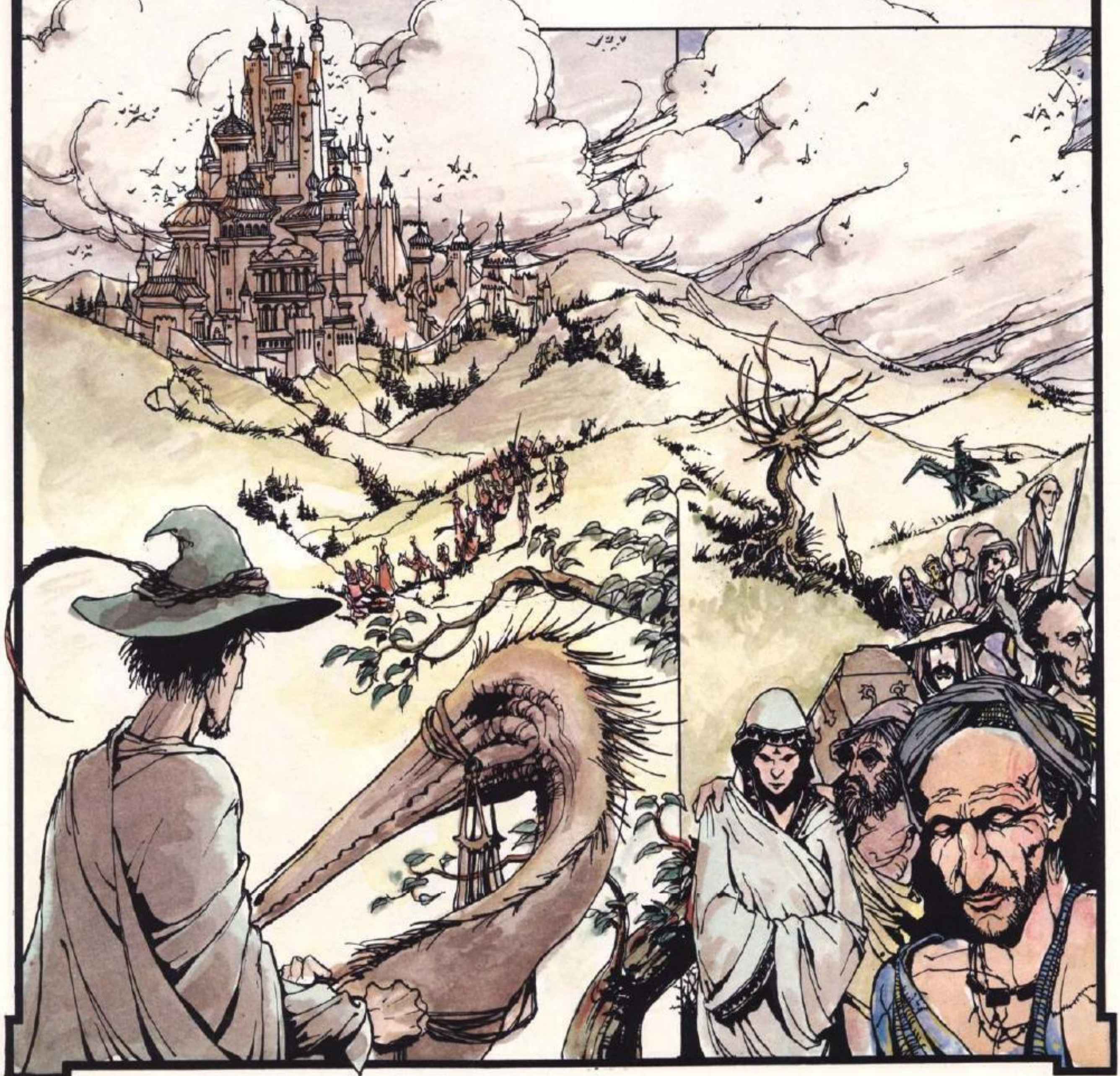
STORY
BY
DRUILLET

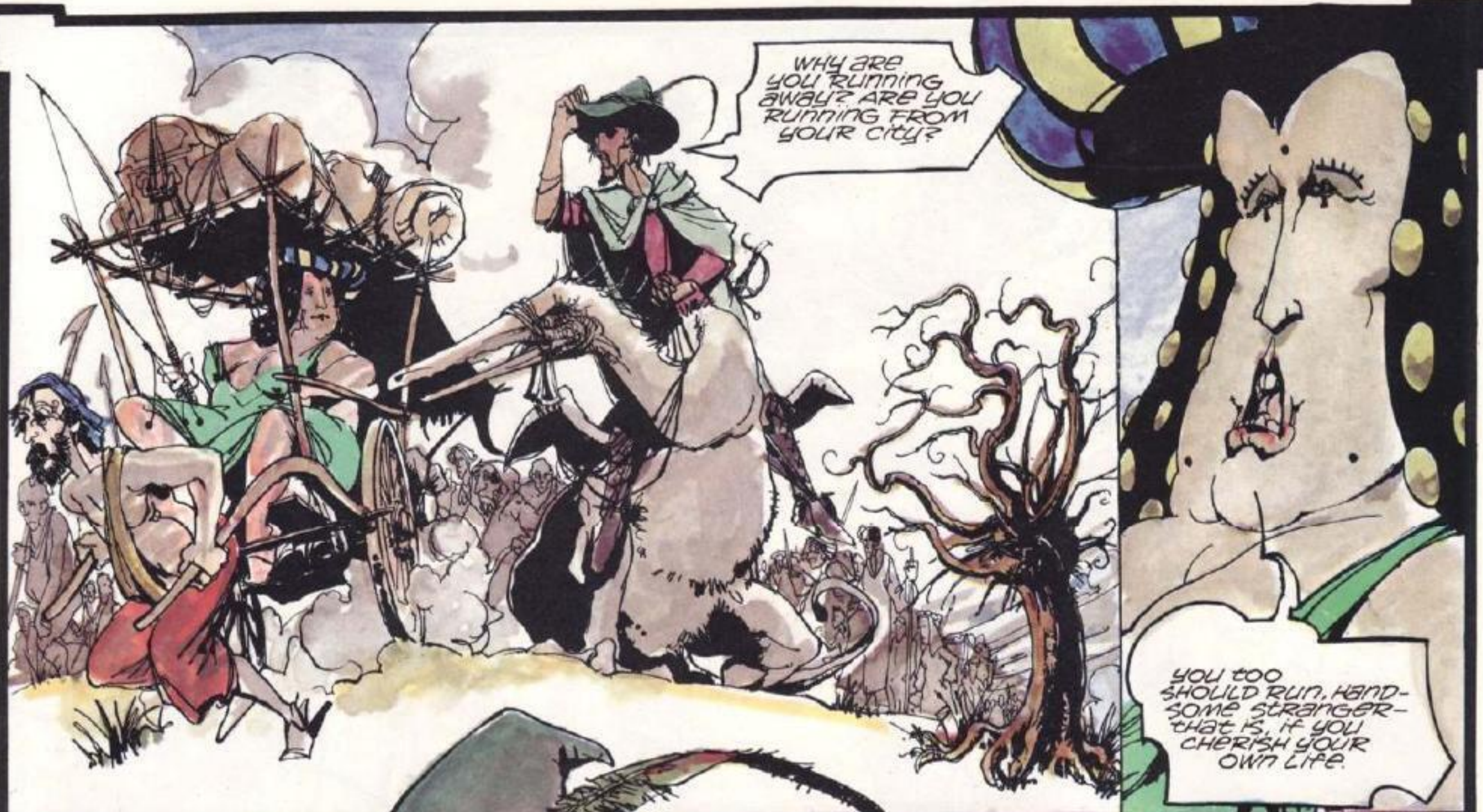
ART
BY
MR. PICOTTO




FIRAZ LIVED IN A TIME WHEN THE WORLD HAD NO NAME. HE WAS A LIVING REMINDER OF THE LOWER QUARTERS OF THE RED CITY WHICH BORDERS ON THE GREAT SEA. FIRAZ, FILTHY AND STARVING, TRAVELED A LONG TIME IN THE FOREST OF THE BLACK PILLARS, AND EVENTUALLY SIGHTED A CITY UNFAMILIAR TO HIM. IT WAS ARSANEM, ONE OF THE MANY CITIES POPULATING THE ORIENTAL WORLD.

BUT AS HE STOOD AND
GAZED AT THIS BEAUTIFUL
CITY, HE NOTICED ITS IN-
HABITANTS WERE DIS-
PERSING IN SMALL GROUPS
OUT INTO THE
COUNTRYSIDE.



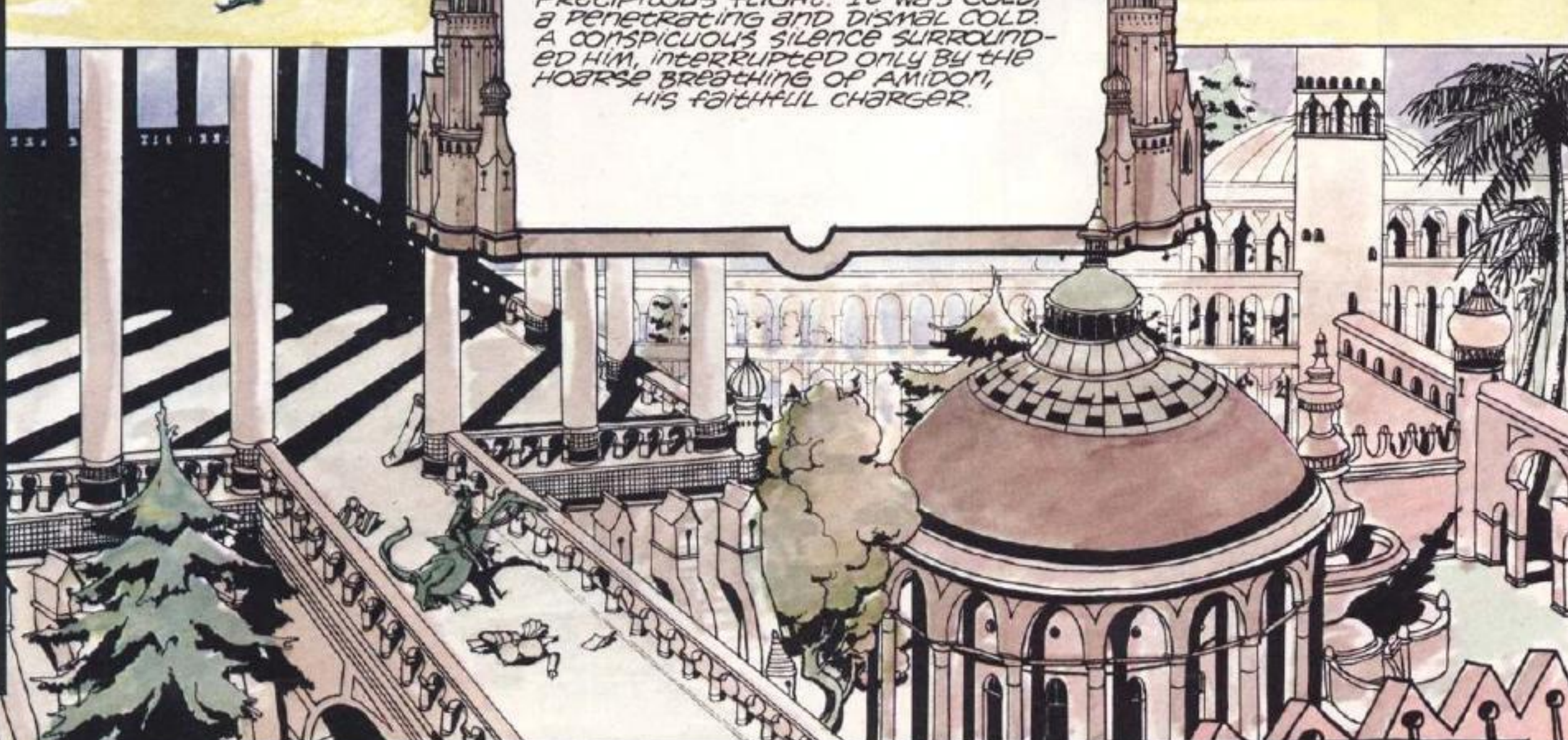




WHAT DO YOU WANT, STRANGER?
WHY ARE YOU ASKING ALL
THESE QUESTIONS?

QUESTIONS! QUESTIONS!
WELL, IF YOU ARE SO CURIOUS,
TAKE THE CITY! TAKE IT!
I'M GIVING IT TO YOU!...
FORWARD, ON, YOU... YOU
GODFORSAKEN
CREATURES!

SO FIRAZ ENTERED THE CITY. A COM-
BINATION OF FEAR AND CURIOSITY
HAD SEIZED HIM, A FAMILIAR SER-
SATION FOR AN ADVENTURER AS
CRAZY AS HIMSELF. INSIDE THIS
CITY OF 1,000 DOORS, EVERYTHING
WAS IN DISARRAY; THE SCATTERED
OBJECTS WERE A TESTIMONY TO A
PRECIPITOUS FLIGHT. IT WAS COLD,
A PENETRATING AND DISMAL COLD.
A CONSPICUOUS SILENCE SURROUND-
ED HIM, INTERRUPTED ONLY BY THE
HOARSE BREATHING OF AMIDON,
HIS FAITHFUL CHARGER.



WHAT MAGIC, WHAT CHARM
EMANATES FROM THESE
PLACES.

CRIVATTO

PROLY


CRIVATTO

AH! LOOK
AT THAT!

BY OTTANTOTH,
THE GOD OF MAM-
MALS, SOMEONE TRIED
TO KILL ME!

SUDDENLY THE CITY
SEEMED TO COME
ALIVE. THE WALLS AND
THE PILLARS BEGAN
TO SWAY WICKEDLY, AS
IF TO WHISK FIRST UP
AND PUSH HIM IN AN
UNKNOWN DIRECTION.
HE WAS CARRIED
FASTER THAN HIS
LEGS COULD HOLD
HIM.


NOW I UNDER-
STAND! THE CITY IS
DEFINITELY ALIVE
AND HOLDS SOME-
THING AGAINST
ME!



CRAZED
TERRORS AND
BLACK BLOOD
HAUNT ME.

FIRAZ CURSED HIMSELF FOR
HIS INSATIABLE CURIOSITY,
WHICH HAD THROWN HIM INTO
THIS MONSTROUS CITY. HIS
BITTER REGRETS WERE OF
NO HELP TO HIM NOW, SO
FIRAZ RAN AND RAN...


NO EXIT!




FIRAZ TREMBLED WITH FEAR, HANGING ON TO THE ELEPHANT'S STONE.

FIRAZ STOOD AND STARED IN WONDERMENT AS THE WHOLE CITY BEHIND HIM BLEW IN THE NIGHT WIND...

BY GOD, IT IS FLYING AWAY. THE CITY IS FLYING AWAY OH MY GOD—I CURSE YOU!



I, A BEGGAR FROM THE LOWER QUARTERS OF THE RED CITY, HERE I AM FLYING INTO THE STARS.

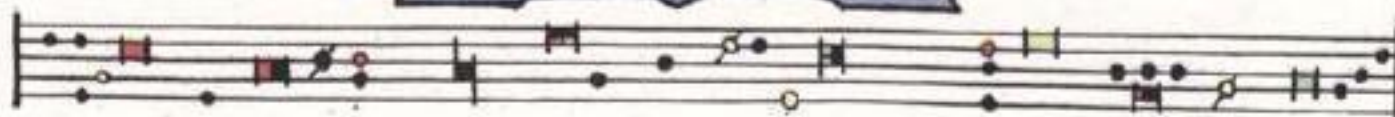


COME WITH US, CHILD OF THE BLACK BARCH!

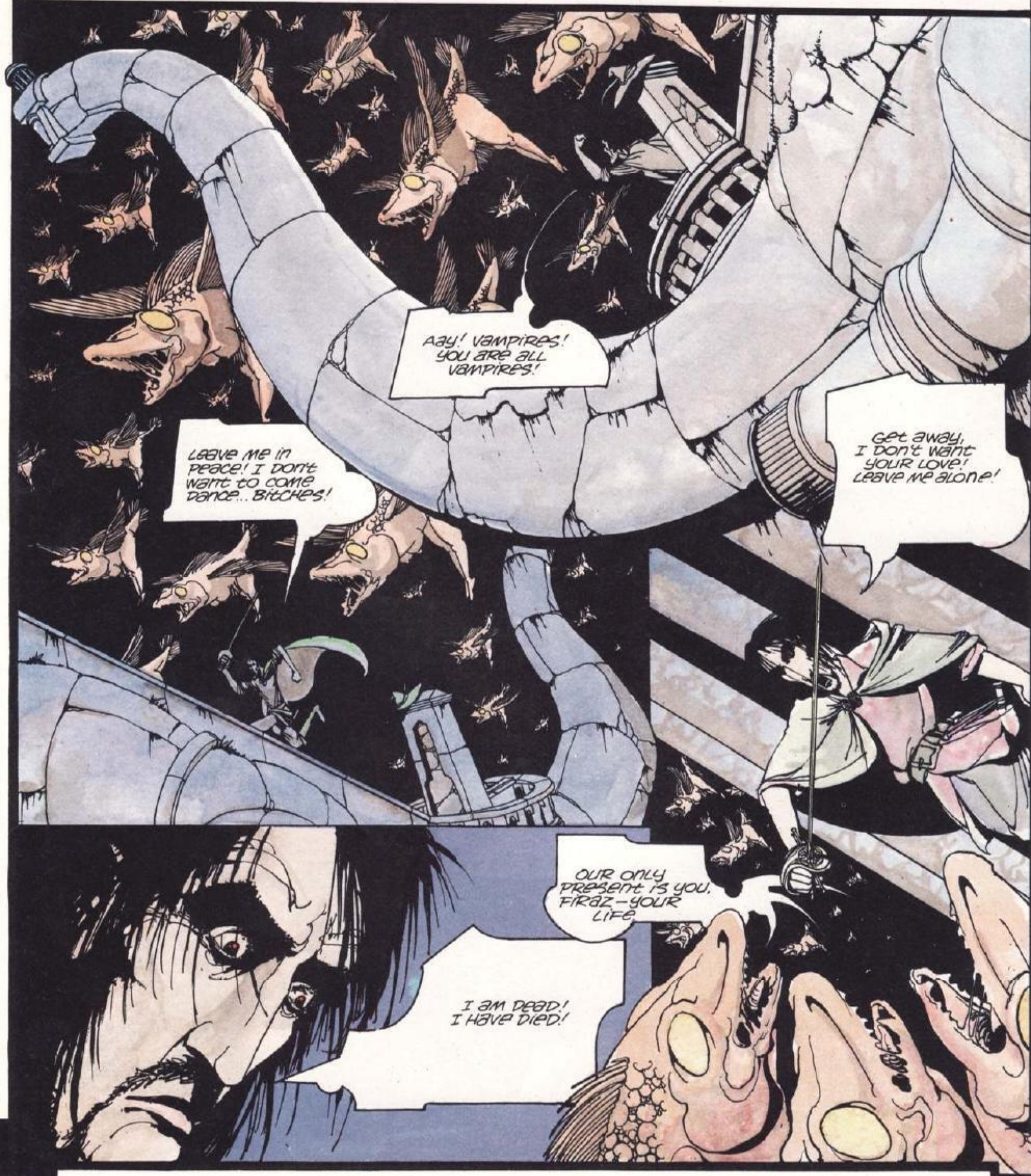
OH, JOY, THE ONE WE'VE WAITED FOR IS COMING TO US BY WAY OF THE CITY.

COME ALONG WITH US!

CHOIR OF THE CREATURES



SEE, FIRAZ, OUR SOULS ARE AS PURE AS THE WATERFALLS OF YOUR NATIVE COUNTRY. OUR RED EYES SHINE LIKE THE BLAZE WITHIN A VOLCANO. LISTEN TO OUR SONGS OF SWEET, UNPARALLELED LOVE. WE LOVE YOU, FIRAZ. COME DANCE WITH US IN THE SKY.



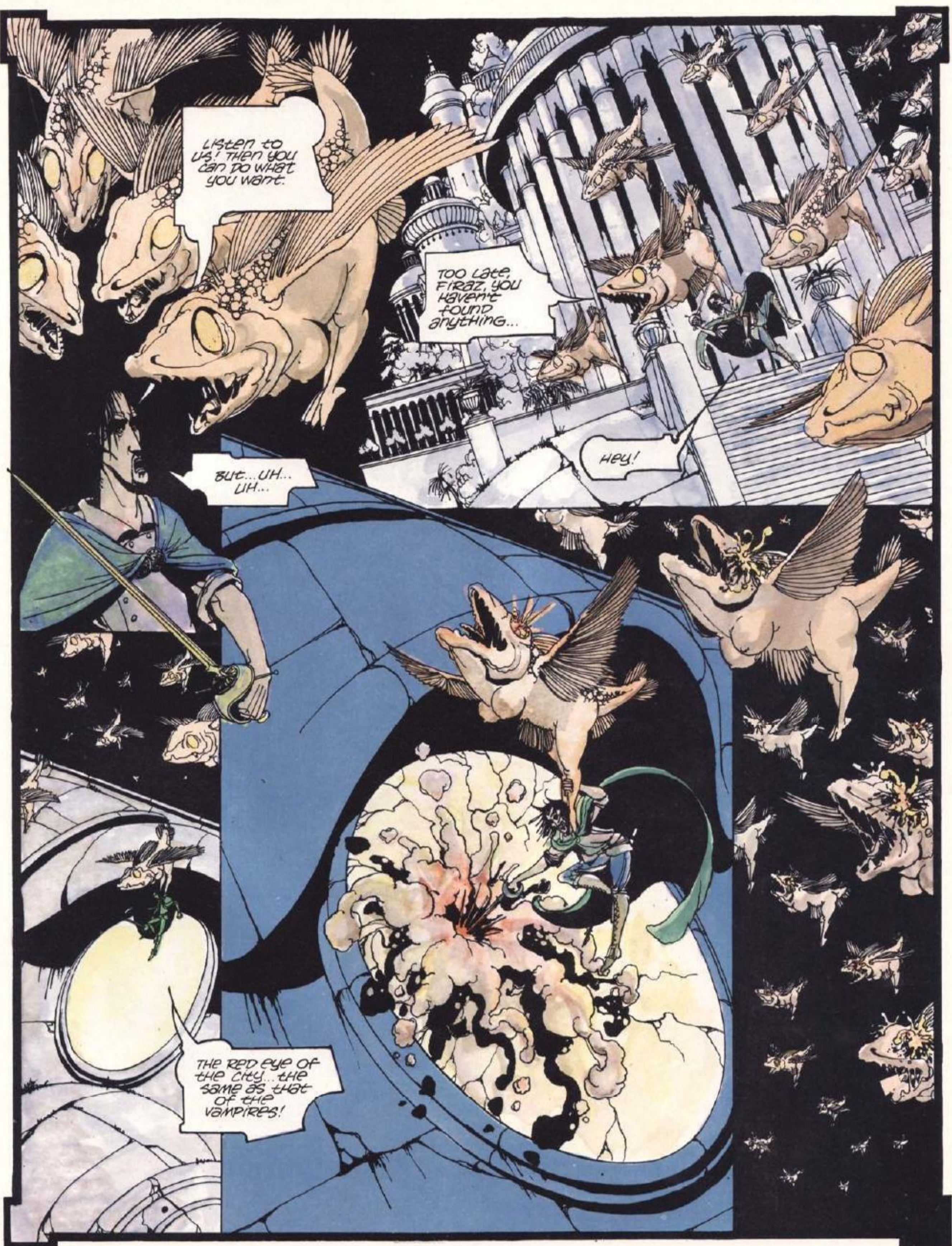
AAY! VAMPIRES!
YOU ARE ALL
VAMPIRES!

LEAVE ME IN
PEACE! I DON'T
WANT TO COME
DANCE... BITCHES!

GET AWAY,
I DON'T WANT
YOUR LOVE!
LEAVE ME ALONE!

OUR ONLY
PRESENT IS YOU,
FIRAZ—YOUR
LIFE

I AM DEAD!
I HAVE DIED!



LISTEN TO
US! THEN YOU
CAN DO WHAT
YOU WANT.

TOO LATE,
FIRAZ, YOU
HAVEN'T
FOUND
ANYTHING...

HEY!

BUT... UH...
UH...

THE RED EYE OF
THE CITY... THE
SAME AS THAT
OF THE
VAMPIRES!



I SAW IT SO
CLEARLY!



SOMETIME IN THE LAST CENTURY, MAN CONQUERED THE FRONTIERS OF SPACE.

SCIENTIFIC EXPLORATIONS HAVE BEEN REPLACED BY CORPORATE EXPEDITIONS TO EXPLOIT THE VAST MINERAL WEALTH OF DISTANT WORLDS. ONE OF THE PRIME COLONIES IS IO, THE INNERMOST MOON OF JUPITER.

TRAPPED BY THE FIERCE GRAVITATIONAL FIELD OF THE GIANT PLANET, IO IS AN AIRLESS, SULFUROUS LUNAR BODY, WITH A RADIUS OF 566 MILES AND A SURFACE GRAVITY ONE-SEVENTH THAT OF EARTH. THE FEARSOME MASS OF JUPITER GIVES THE ILLUSION THAT THOSE ON THE TINY MOON COULD FALL UPWARD, SWALLOWED BY THE IMMENSITY.

UNDER THE GLARE OF JUPITER'S STORMY RED EYE, CON-AMALGAMATE 27 IS ERECTED—A HUGE MINING COMPLEX, WHICH EXISTS SOLELY TO EXTRACT PRECIOUS ORE FROM IO'S CRUST. ITS INHABITANTS ARE FUGITIVES AND LONERS, AN ARMY OF SOCIETY'S MISFITS. DRAWN TO IO BY DESPERATION AND GREED, THE LABORERS ARE ANONYMOUS DRONES TRYING TO FORGET THEIR PASTS. THEY HAVE FOUND A REMOTE SANCTUARY IN THE DARK, BARREN RECESSES OF OUTLAND.



WRITTEN AND ILLUSTRATED BY STERANKO

OUTLAND

ADAPTED FROM THE PETER HYAMS SCIENCE FICTION FILM

THE SETTLEMENT PERCHES ON THE EDGE OF A DEEP CRATER, FRYING IN THE SUNLIGHT, FREEZING IN THE SHADOWS ON THE SCAFFOLDING, HUNDREDS OF FEET BELOW. STAR MINERS PLUNDER THE SMALL WORLD'S RICH DEPTHS, USING POWERFUL ELECTRIC ARC-CUTTERS, MUSCLE, AND NERVE.

OFTEN WITHOUT WARNING THE RESULTS ARE DANGEROUS, SOMETIMES DEADLY.
TUESDAY 4:15 P.M.

GODDAMN
SPIDERS!
I HATE 'EM!
MORE'N
ANYTHING!



GO TELL THE UNION MAN,
TARLOW! A HUNDRED AN'
SEVENTY DEGREES BELOW
ZERO IN THIS CIRCUS...



GOD! LOOK AT 'EM! THE
LITTLE BASTARDS! HOW
I HATE 'EM! CRAWLING
AROUND, EVERYWHERE!



AN' WE BROIL OUR ASSES
OFF INSIDE THESE SUITS!
I'M GONNA SEE THE SHOP
STEWART AFTER THIS SHIFT!



KILL 'EM! IT'S THE ONLY
WAY TO STOP 'EM! BURN
'EM, STOMP 'EM! DAMN
SPIDERS! I'LL KILL 'EM!



BAD ENOUGH WE CAN'T
REGULATE THESE SUITS
WITHOUT YOUR STOMPIN'
AROUND LIKE A JACKASS!





SPIDERS, TARLOW? YOU
POPPED YOUR CORK?
THERE'S NOTHING ALIVE
OUT HERE... **NOTHING!**
THE HEAT IN THAT SUIT
GETTIN' TO YOU? HUH?

LEVEL 4 C
STRY CLEAR HULL
SHAFT 7032 LU

YEAH, I'LL GET 'EM, KILL
'EM BEFORE THEY GET
ME! BEFORE... GOD, NO!
THEY'RE ON MY... MY LEG!

VERY FUNNY, TARLOW!
WE'RE NOT FALLIN' FOR IT!
NOW CUT THE GARBAGE
AN' GET BACK TO WORK!

GET 'EM OFF ME! THEY'RE
GETTIN' INSIDE MY SUIT!
GOD, HELP ME! PLEASE...
THEY'RE GETTIN' INSIDE...

THE DRILL, TARLOW! NOT
THE DRILL! DON'T DO IT!
CHRIST, DON'T CUT THE
SUIT! DON'T LET THE...

THWEEEEEAAHHH...



WEDNESDAY: 7:47 AM... THE ADMINISTRATION MESS LAY ADJOINING THE WORKERS' CAFETERIA, WHERE A FRACTION OF THE COLONY'S 2144 PERSONNEL ARE PRESENT TO OFFICIALLY WELCOME FEDERAL MARSHAL WILLIAM T. O'NEIL TO A JOB FEW MEN WOULD CONSIDER WORTHWHILE. CON-AM 27 GENERAL MANAGER MARK B. SHEPARD HAS MADE THE INTRODUCTION TO THE GENERAL STAFF. HE ASKS FOR QUESTIONS. THERE ARE NONE.

MARSHAL! FLO SPECTOR, ACCOUNTING SERVICES! I'M SURE I SPEAK FOR MARK AND ALL OF US IN EXTENDING A WELCOME TO YOU AND YOUR FAMILY! I KNOW YOU'VE BEEN HERE ALMOST TWO WEEKS, BUT IF THERE'S ANYTHING I CAN DO FOR YOUR WIFE AND SON, PLEASE HAVE THEM CALL ME!

THANK YOU VERY MUCH, MRS. SPECTOR. I'LL TELL CAROL TO KEEP IN TOUCH WITH YOU. WE'LL ALL HAVE TO GET TO KNOW EACH OTHER... HOPE I CAN JUSTIFY YOUR TRUST!

WERE PRETTY MUCH LIKE EVERY OTHER MINING TOWN MARSHAL. NO SURPRISES, NO TROUBLE. I'M SURE YOU'LL BE USED TO US IN NO TIME. JUST REMEMBER, OUR PEOPLE WORK HARD, VERY HARD!

SINCE I'VE BEEN HERE, THE MINE HAS BROKEN ALL PRODUCTIVITY RECORDS. WE'RE ON OUR WAY TO BECOMING THE TOP CON-AM OUTFIT... AND EVERYONE IN THIS ROOM HAS A BIG BONUS TO PROVE IT!

DEPUTY MONTONE WILL TELL YOU I WORK THEM HARD AND I LET THEM PLAY HARD. GOOD WORK COMES FROM CONTENTED PEOPLE. GIVE THEM ROOM TO LET OFF STEAM... KNOW WHAT I MEAN, MARSHAL?

THANK YOU FOR THE ADVICE, MR. SHEPARD!

MOMENTS LATER, IN A NEARBY ACCESS CORRIDOR.

HEY, O'NEIL! TAKE IT EASY! HE WAS JUST TRYING TO SNIFF YOU OUT! THAT'S ALL! THINGS RUN SMOOTH, AND THEY MAKE THEIR MONEY!

YEAH! I REALLY WONED THEM!

THAT'S JUST HIS WAY! A LITTLE CEREMONY FOR THE GOOD FOLK! THAT'S ALL, CMON!

WHAT THE HELL DOES HE MEAN BY ALL THAT KNOW WHAT I MEAN, MARSHAL? STUFF?

I DON'T LIKE HIS WAY! ROOM TO LET OFF A LITTLE STEAM? HE'S AN ASSHOLE!

A VERY POWERFUL ASSHOLE! BELIEVE ME, O'NEIL, HE'S NO ONE TO MESS AROUND WITH!

ASSHOLE!

WEDNESDAY! 7:47 A.M.... THE ADMINISTRATION MESS HALL ADJOINING THE WORKERS' CAFETERIA, WHERE A FRACTION OF THE COLONY'S 2,144 PERSONNEL ARE PRESENT TO OFFICIALLY WELCOME FEDERAL MARSHAL WILLIAM T. O'NIEL TO A JOB FEW MEN WOULD CONSIDER WORTHWHILE. CON-AM 27 GENERAL MANAGER MARK B. SHEPPARD HAS MADE THE INTRODUCTION TO THE GENERAL STAFF. HE ASKS FOR QUESTIONS. THERE ARE NONE.

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WHAT THE HELL DOES HE MEAN BY ALL THAT KNOW WHAT I MEAN, MARSHAL? STUFF?

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A VERY POWERFUL ASSHOLE! BELIEVE ME, O'NIEL, HE'S NO ONE TO MESS AROUND WITH!

YEAH! I REALLY WOWED THEM!



THAT'S JUST HIS WAY! A LITTLE CEREMONY FOR THE GOOD FOLK! THAT'S ALL. C'MON!



ASSHOLE!

WEDNESDAY, 11:51 P.M. THE STRAGGLERS OF A NEW SHIFT FILL THEIR OXYGEN TANKS IN PREPARATION FOR A NIGHT'S MINING INSIDE THE CRATER. CALVIN DELABRETE, WITHOUT A WORD, ANOTHER WORKER ENTERS THE R.G.G. AREA, UNNOTICED UNTIL HE STEPS INTO THE SHAFT'S AIRLOCK.

HEY! WHAT THE HELL...
THAT GUY'S NOT SUITED!
UP! STOP HIM! QUICK!

HEY YOU! GET OUT OF THAT
LOCK BEFORE YOU GET HURT!
YOU GOTTA HAVE A...

DON'T TOUCH THAT CONTROL
PANEL! IF THE DOOR SHUTS
IT'LL BE TOO LA...



CAUTION
ALL PER...
require
FO...
SHIFTS...
under...
unless...
operation
Groundby
Level

CAUTION
Oxygen
Required
SECOND
Level

CAUTION
PRESSURE
SUITS ONLY
DANGER
SUB ONE

CAUTION
DANGER
SUB THREE
NO AIR
SUB TWO

CAUTION
DANGER
SUB FIVE
NO AIR
SUB FOUR

WEDNESDAY, 11:51 PM...THE STRAGGLERS OF A NEW SHIFT FILL THEIR OXYGEN TANKS IN PREPARATION FOR A NIGHT'S MINING INSIDE THE CRATER. CALMLY, DELIBERATELY, WITHOUT A WORD, ANOTHER WORKER ENTERS THE RIGGING AREA, UNNOTICED UNTIL HE STEPS INTO THE SHAFT'S AIRLOCK.

HEY! WHAT THE HELL...
THAT GUY'S NOT SUITED
UP! STOP HIM! QUICK!



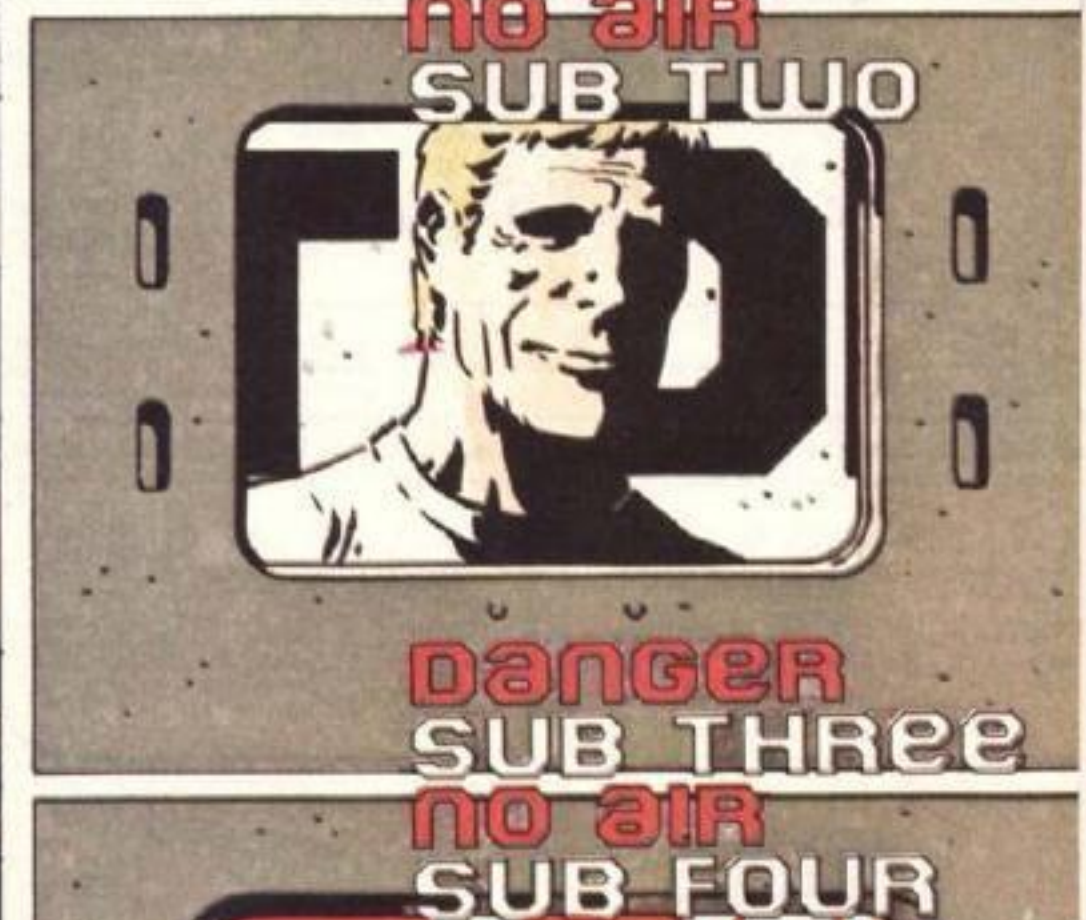
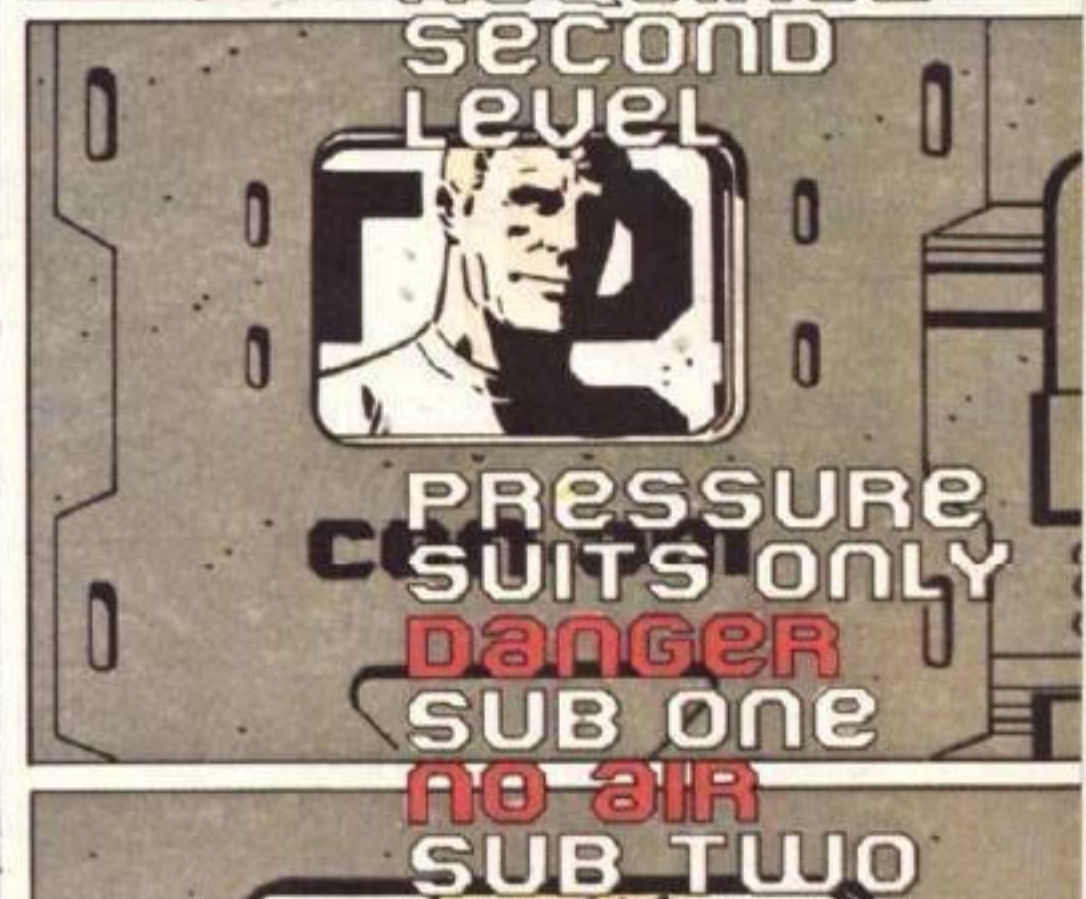
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PANEL! IF THE DOOR SHUTS
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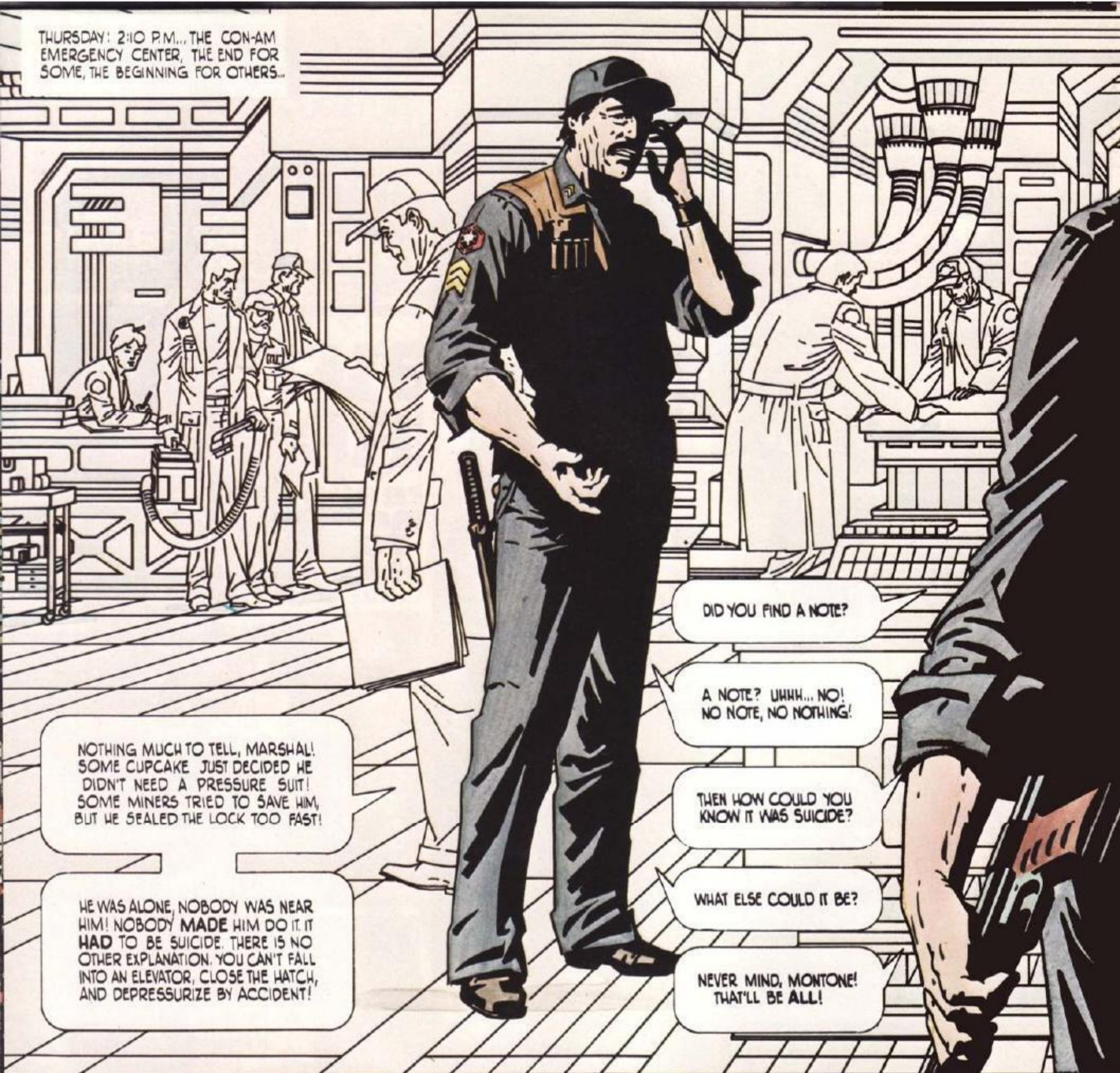
elevator
Level 00C

CAUTION
AIRLOCK
ALL PERSONS
REQUIRE
FOR
SHIFTS
UNDER
UNLESS

DO NOT
BEYOND



THURSDAY: 2:10 P.M., THE CON-AM
EMERGENCY CENTER, THE END FOR
SOME, THE BEGINNING FOR OTHERS...



DID YOU FIND A NOTE?

A NOTE? UHHH... NO!
NO NOTE, NO NOTHING!

THEN HOW COULD YOU
KNOW IT WAS SUICIDE?

WHAT ELSE COULD IT BE?

NEVER MIND, MONTONE!
THAT'LL BE ALL!

NOTHING MUCH TO TELL, MARSHAL!
SOME CUPCAKE JUST DECIDED HE
DIDN'T NEED A PRESSURE SUIT!
SOME MINERS TRIED TO SAVE HIM,
BUT HE SEALED THE LOCK TOO FAST!

HE WAS ALONE, NOBODY WAS NEAR
HIM! NOBODY **MADE** HIM DO IT. IT
HAD TO BE SUICIDE. THERE IS NO
OTHER EXPLANATION. YOU CAN'T FALL
INTO AN ELEVATOR, CLOSE THE HATCH,
AND DEPRESSURIZE BY ACCIDENT!

I'VE NEVER HEARD THAT ONE
BEFORE! IT'S REALLY FUNNY!
NOW, HOW ABOUT HELPING
ME WITH A LITTLE PROBLEM?

SINCE I'VE ARRIVED HERE,
TWO MEN HAVE DIED...
UNDER CIRCUMSTANCES
THAT MAKE NO SENSE!

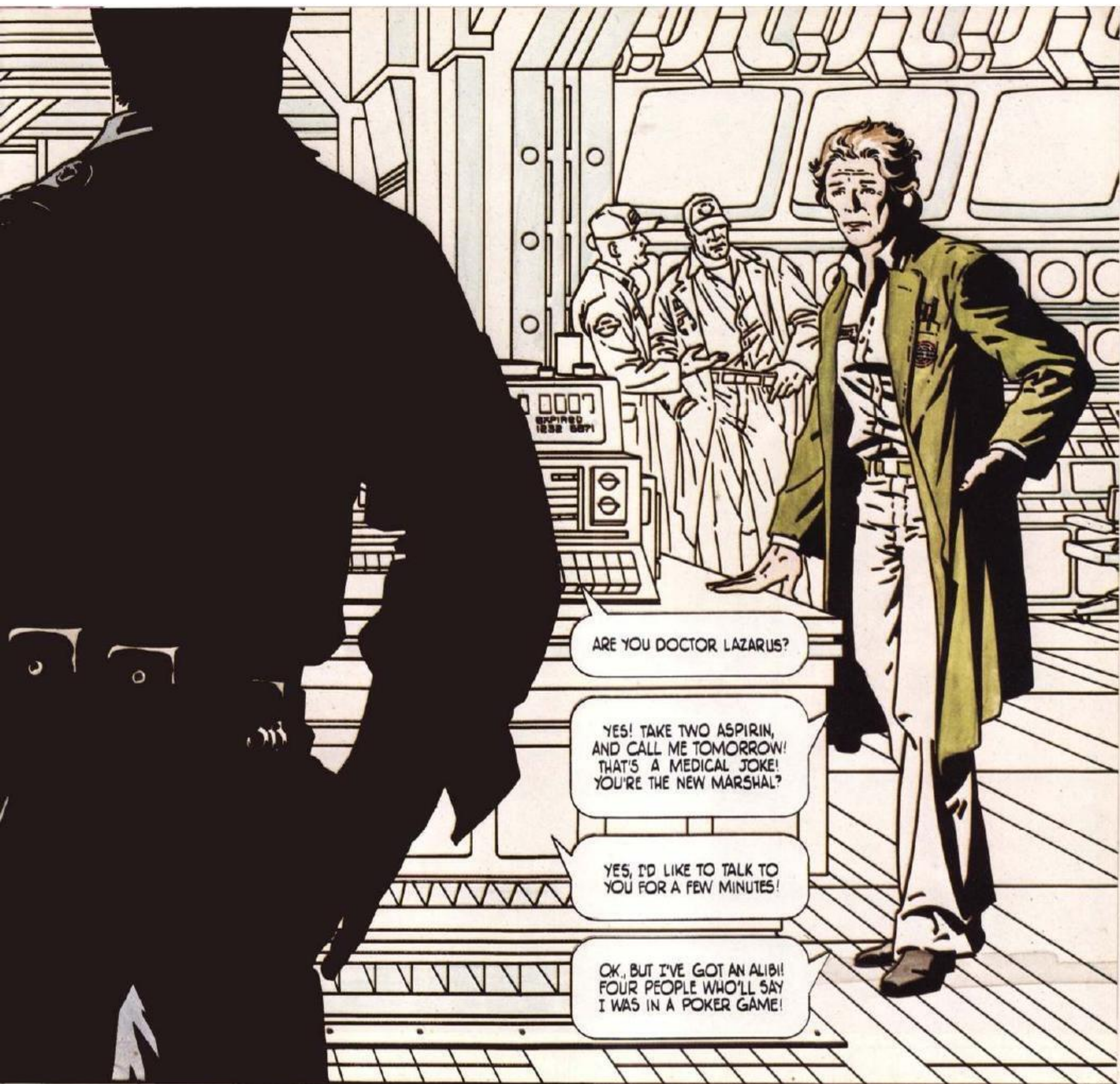
WELL, IT **HAPPENS** HERE!
I'M NOT A PSYCHIATRIST,
I DON'T KNOW **WHY**, MAY
BE THEY JUST CAN'T TAKE IT!

BUT, ACCORDING TO THE
REPORTS, YOU **NEVER** DID
ANY AUTOPSIES. WOULD
YOU TELL ME **WHY** NOT?

IN THE FIRST PLACE, THE
COMPANY WANTED THE
BODIES SHIPPED QUICKLY,
SECONDLY, WHEN A BODY...



O'NIEL



ARE YOU DOCTOR LAZARUS?

YES! TAKE TWO ASPIRIN,
AND CALL ME TOMORROW!
THAT'S A MEDICAL JOKE!
YOU'RE THE NEW MARSHAL?

YES, I'D LIKE TO TALK TO
YOU FOR A FEW MINUTES!

OK, BUT I'VE GOT AN ALIBI!
FOUR PEOPLE WHO'LL SAY
I WAS IN A POKER GAME!

IS EXPOSED TO SUB ZERO
PRESSURE, THERE ISN'T MUCH
LEFT TO EXAMINE. THIRDLY,
YOU ARE A BIG NUISANCE!

I KNOW. I REALLY DO HATE
TO INTERRUPT YOUR BUSY
SCHEDULE THIS WAY, BUT I
MUST START SOMEWHERE!

I'D LIKE A RECORD OF ALL
THE INCIDENTS IN THE PAST
SIX MONTHS LIKE THE TWO
THAT HAPPENED THIS WEEK!

...AND I'D LIKE IT REAL
SOON, OR I MIGHT JUST
DECIDE TO KICK YOUR NASTY
ASS ALL OVER THIS ROOM!

THAT'S
A
MARSHAL
JOKE!



FRIDAY 3:53 A.M.
THE OFFICIAL QUARTERS OF
W.T. ONIEL, A NARROW, CONFINING SPACE
OF RAW METAL WALLS AND FLOORS, EXPOSED
PLUMBING AND VENTILATORS.

HOME.



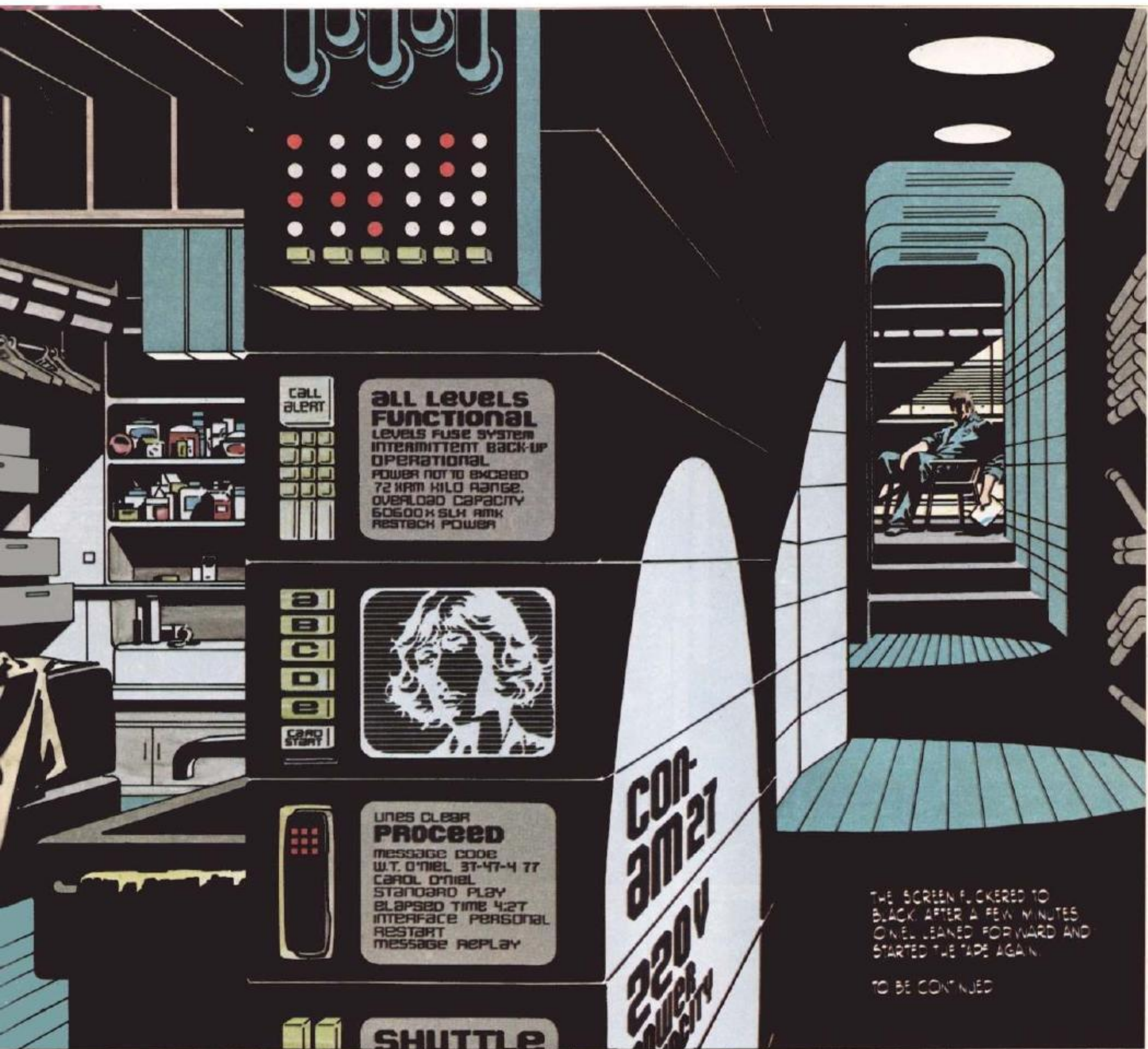
I'M TRYING TO KEEP MY
COMPOSURE, BILL. I HATE
THESE MESSAGES, BUT I'M
SUCH A COWARD. I SIMPLY
CAN'T LOOK AT YOUR FACE...

I DON'T WANT TO CHANGE
MY MIND. I DO LOVE YOU,
BUT I JUST CAN'T TAKE IT
ANYMORE. WE'VE GONE
OVER ALL THIS BEFORE...

MY CRYING AND YOUR
ASSURANCES THAT THE
NEXT ASSIGNMENT WILL
BE DIFFERENT... BUT IT
NEVER IS. IT CAN'T BE!

THEN SOMETHING SNAPPED
YESTERDAY WHEN I WAS
WATCHING PAULIE PLAY...
NO FRIENDS, NO ROOM,
EVER SINCE HE WAS BORN...





HE'S A LOT LIKE HIS FATHER, HE NEVER COMPLAINS... NOT LIKE HIS MOTHER, GOD ONLY KNOWS! HE DESERVES A REAL CHILDHOOD, BILL.

HE'S A CHILD WHO SPENDS HIS DAYS LOOKING AT HIS BOOKS ABOUT EARTH...AND HIDING THEM SO THAT YOUR FEELINGS WON'T GET HURT.

YOU THINK IT'S WORTH IT, TO GO ANYWHERE TO KEEP THE GOOD OLD PEACE, BUT IT'S ALWAYS THE SAME. I JUST DON'T HAVE YOUR FAITH.

SO... SO I'M TAKING PAULIE BACK HOME ON THE SHUTTLE. YOU DON'T DESERVE THIS, BUT I HAVE TO GO, MY LOVE. I'LL CONTACT YOU SOON...



THE IMMORTALS' FETE

Last we saw, the news of the man who fell from the sky was out. Horus, the god of Hierakonopolis, found Alcide Nikopol, the mysterious visitor, in a subway station in Paris. Since he'd lost a leg in the fall, Horus transplanted a piece of the subway track, which with some exercise and a lotta swearing Nikopol was able to maneuver. Little did he suspect that Horus was not tending to him out of the goodness of his heart, but in order to take possession of his body.



MEANWHILE, IN THE BATHROOM AT THE ELYSÉE...





SO, HE'S LEAVING...

OF COURSE... I'VE JUST ORDERED HIM TO...



I BEG OF YOU... IT'S ABSOLUTELY NATURAL TO...



THANK YOU, MY GOOD MAN!

YOU SEE, NIKOPOL, DONE AMICABLY... WITHOUT VIOLENCE OR A DROP OF BLOOD...

DID YOU HYPNOTIZE HIM?

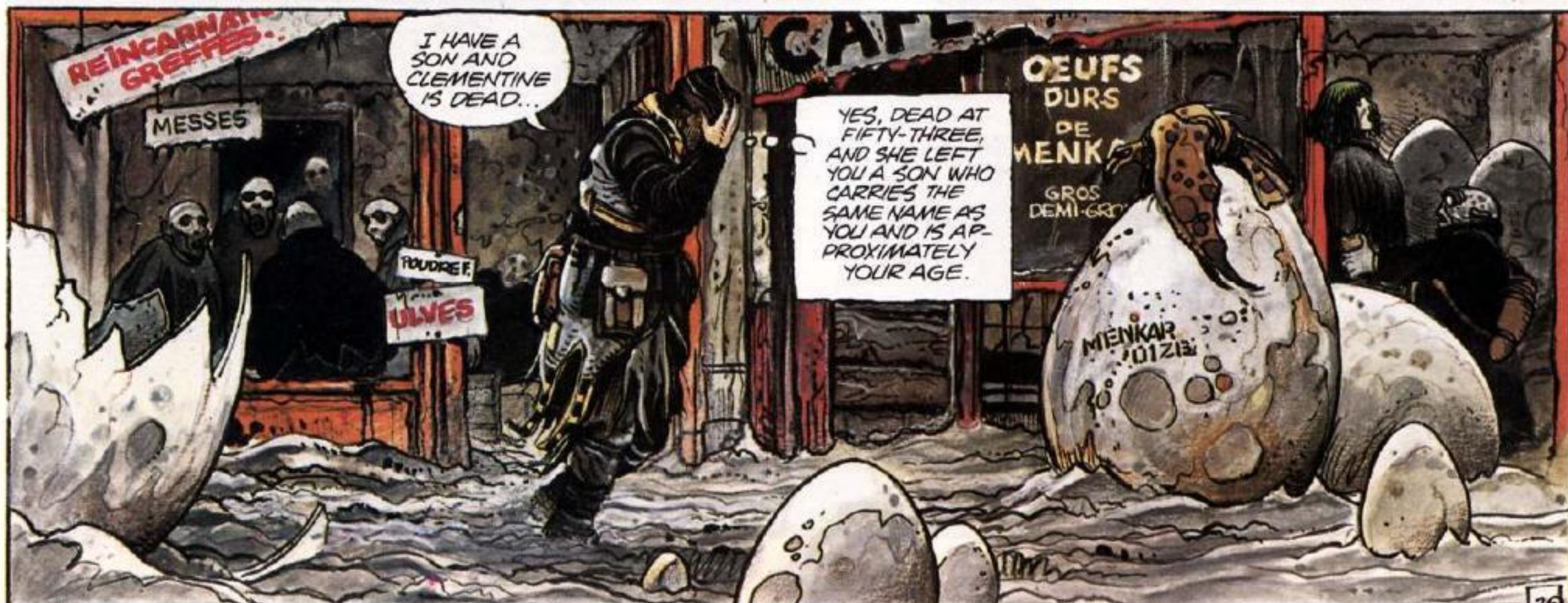
IN A WAY...



I SENSE THAT YOU'RE NERVOUS, NIKOPOL... YOU'RE AFRAID OF ME, AREN'T YOU?

I DON'T APPRECIATE YOUR POWERS OR YOUR MANNERS... AND I DON'T PARTICULARLY RELISH THE FACT THAT YOU'RE INSIDE OF ME.

MORE-OVER, THE GUY WHOSE CLOTHES WE STOLE WAS COVERED WITH RED BLOTCHES. I DON'T WANT TO BE HIT WITH AN INCURABLE DIS-EASE.



THE NIGHTS FALL VERY QUICKLY, AS THEY HAVE BEEN DOING EVERY MONTH OF MARCH FOR THE LAST FEW YEARS. A SAD AND PAINFUL NIGHT, ACCOMPANIED BY A STRANGE SHOWER OF GREENISH SNOW. THE DISORDER OF ALCIDE NIKOPOL WAS DEEPER THAN EVER...

HERE'S THE BORDER POST... BEYOND IT IS THE FIRST WARD... THE WARD OF PRIVILEGE AND LEGALITY.

I DON'T CARE.

I DO, NIKOPOL. I DO...



WE'RE GOING TO GET RID OF THE SENTINEL QUICKLY; THEN WE'LL SET UP THE RECORDING COMPUTER AND THE DISINTEGRATING MACHINE...

BUT WHY...



PAPERS! MAGNETIC PASS CARD...

OF COURSE!

LOOK HIM STRAIGHT IN THE EYES, NIKOPOL.



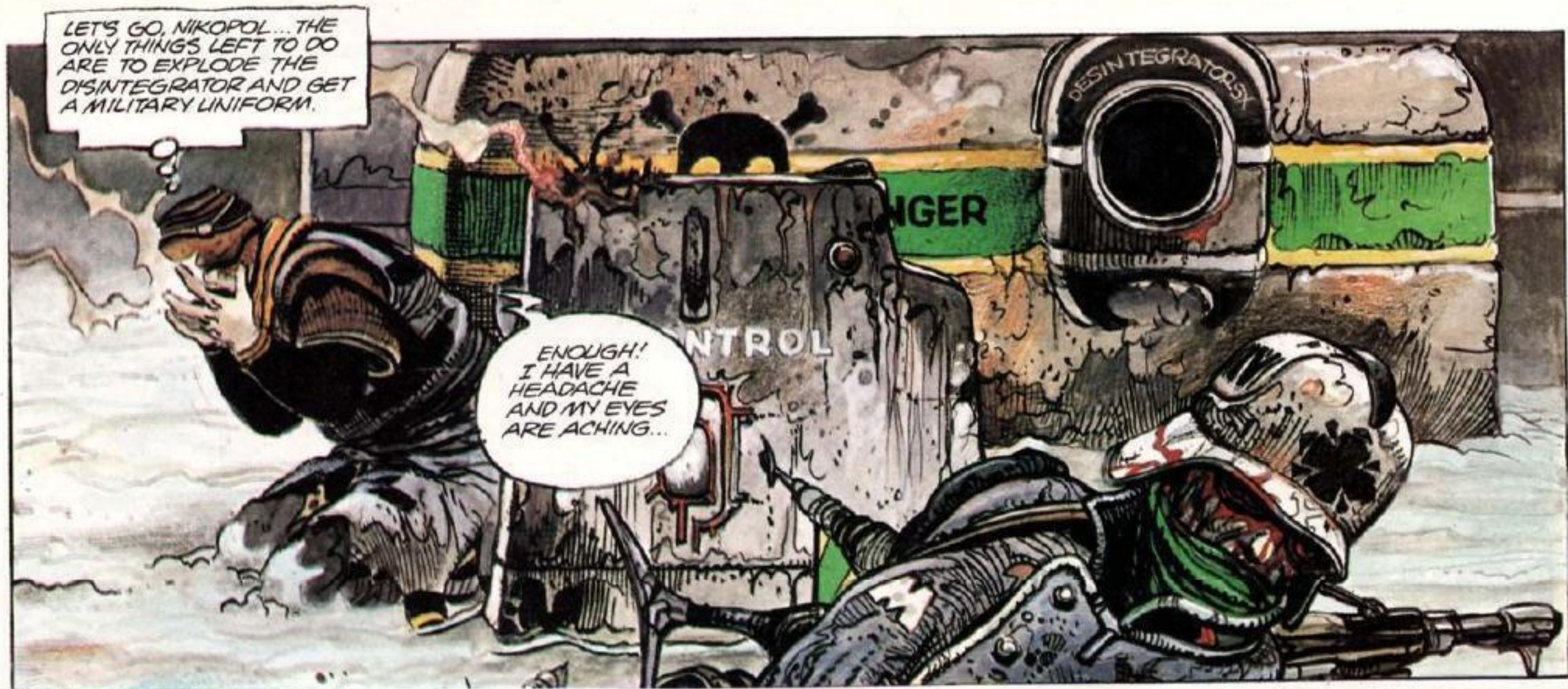
...LIKE THAT?

PERFECT!

PSHIIIIII

AAAH!!!





YES, UP TO A POINT!... THESE CHOUBLANCIST SLOGANS, HOWEVER, PERFECTLY DEFINE THE SITUATION OF YOUR POOR CITY...

MMM... THIS CHOUBLANC IS NOTHING NEW! HE HAS LIFTED THE MOTTO'S OF MUSSOLINI WORD FOR WORD...

MUSSOLINI?

Tout est dans l'Etat. Rien d'humain ou de spirituel n'est en dehors de l'Etat.

La guerre est à l'homme ce que la maternité est à la femme.

YES... A DICTATOR FROM THE LAST CENTURY... I STILL REMEMBER THE COLLEGE COURSE I TOOK—"THE RISE OF FASCISM IN ITALY"—COMPLETELY FAILED IT.

YOU SEE, NIKOPOL, I BELIEVE WE'RE FINALLY GOING TO BE ABLE TO FIND A COMMON GOAL BETWEEN US. YOU WILL FIGHT FOR POLITICAL AND HUMANITARIAN REASONS, AND I, WELL, FOR REASONS OF PERSONAL VENGEANCE, OF THE DIVINE AND UNIVERSAL ORDER. I THOUGHT AT FIRST THAT I MIGHT NEED TO DISCONNECT YOUR CEREBRAL FUNCTIONS IN ORDER TO USE YOUR BODY IN TOTAL PEACEFULNESS, BUT I HONESTLY FEEL THAT A KIND OF COOPERATION MIGHT BE POSSIBLE...


PERSONALLY, I DON'T SEE WHAT... BUT FIRST OF ALL, WHAT IS THIS COMMON GOAL?

THE TAKING OVER OF THE GOVERNMENT IN PARIS AT THE NEXT ELECTIONS, AND EVEN BEFORE, IF POSSIBLE... PERHAPS FROM THIS EVENING... OR...

ARE YOU JOKING?

NO... AND IT'S HERE THAT THE FIRST ACT DEBUTS...

FLECHES NOIRES DE PARIS
CONTRE
BOULETS ROUGES
DE BRATISLAVA



MAN IS A
SOCIAL BEING,
MR. MARTIN, AND
AS SUCH, HE HAS
UNAVOIDABLE OB-
LIGATIONS TO
PERFORM FOR
THE SOCIETY
THAT HE HAS
CHOSEN FOR
HIS HOME.

AND BESIDES,
THINGS CAN BE MADE
VERY UNPLEASANT
FOR YOU, MR. MARTIN.

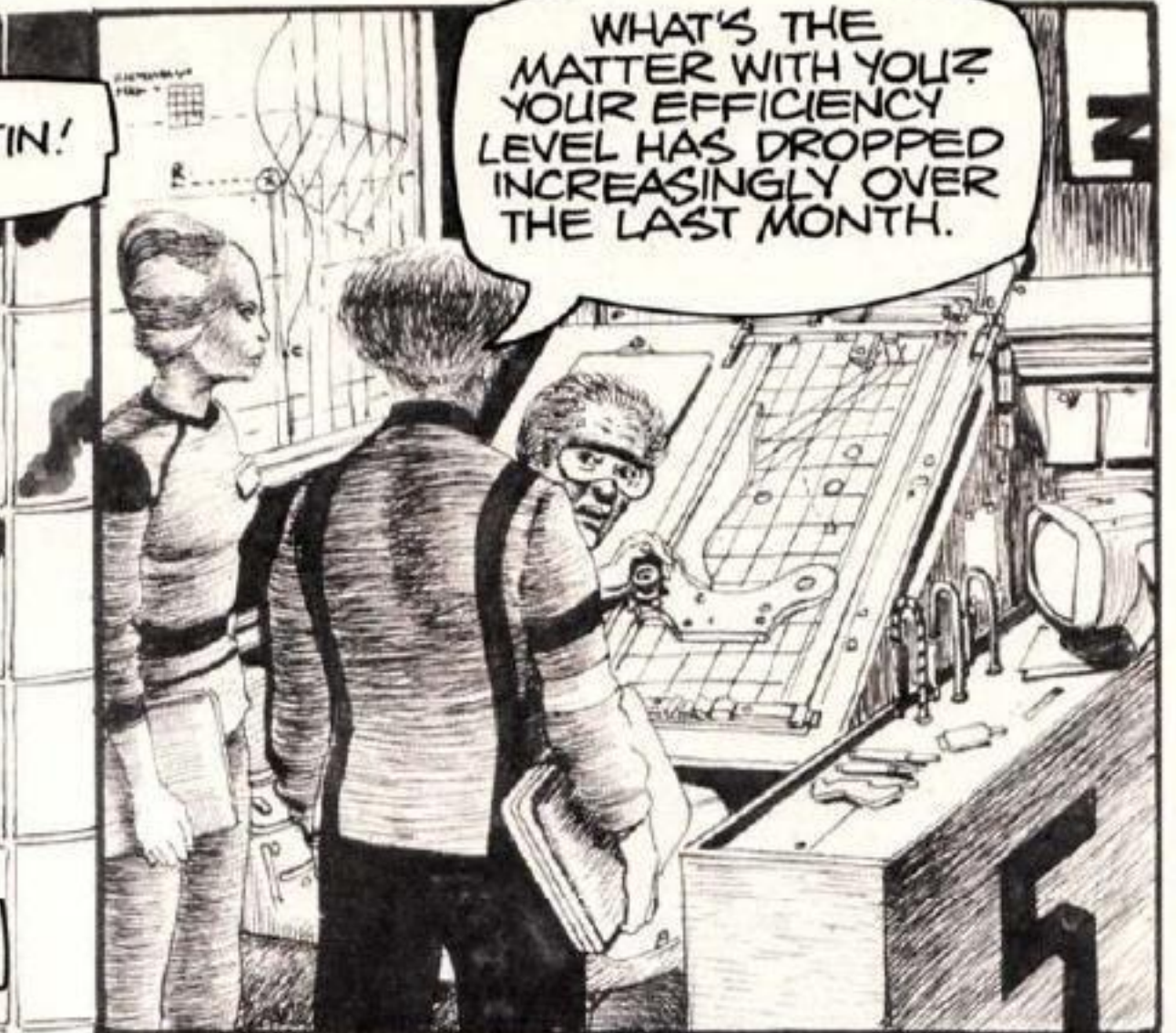
PARADISE



MR. MARTIN!

MR. MARTIN!

HUH?



WHAT'S THE
MATTER WITH YOU?
YOUR EFFICIENCY
LEVEL HAS DROPPED
INCREASINGLY OVER
THE LAST MONTH.



YOU'D
BETTER SHAPE
UP, MARTIN! RUMOR
HAS IT THAT THERE
IS GREAT DIS-
SATISFACTION AT
TOP LEVEL WITH
YOUR BE-
HAVIOR.



THANKS FOR
THE WARNING,
BUCKLEY.

TAKE CARE OF
YOURSELF, MY FRIEND.
THERE IS A CERTAIN
TONE OF COMPASSION
IN YOUR WARNING—
YOU KNOW THAT'S
NEITHER HEALTHY
NOR WISE IN THIS
COMPLEX!



MR. MARTIN,
REPORT...



MARTIN!



REPORT
TO THE
RANKING
PRINCIPAL
AT ONCE.



MARTIN, WE ARE ALL RELATIVELY IMPORTANT TO THE RUNNING OF THIS COMPANY.

FRANKLY, YOUR RECENT ATTITUDE HAS BEEN OBSERVED, AND WITH GREAT CONCERN. I MIGHT ADD WE FEEL YOU HAVE BECOME HIGHLY DAMAGING TO US, NOT TO MENTION HOW YOU MIGHT HAVE AFFECTED YOUR OWN RECORD.

IN ADDITION, I HAVE GOTTEN COMPLAINTS FROM THE PRESIDENT OF YOUR RECREATION LODGE. IT SEEMS YOU HAVE MISSED MANY LEISURE-HOUR GATHERINGS.

SOMETHING IS OBVIOUSLY ON YOUR MIND. ANYTHING I CAN HELP YOU WITH?

REMEMBER, I AM NOT ONLY YOUR SUPERIOR, BUT A FRIEND, TOO. WE HAVE ALL HAD OUR MOMENTS OF EMOTIONAL STRESS. NOTHING THAT A FEW DAYS' R&R WON'T CURE!

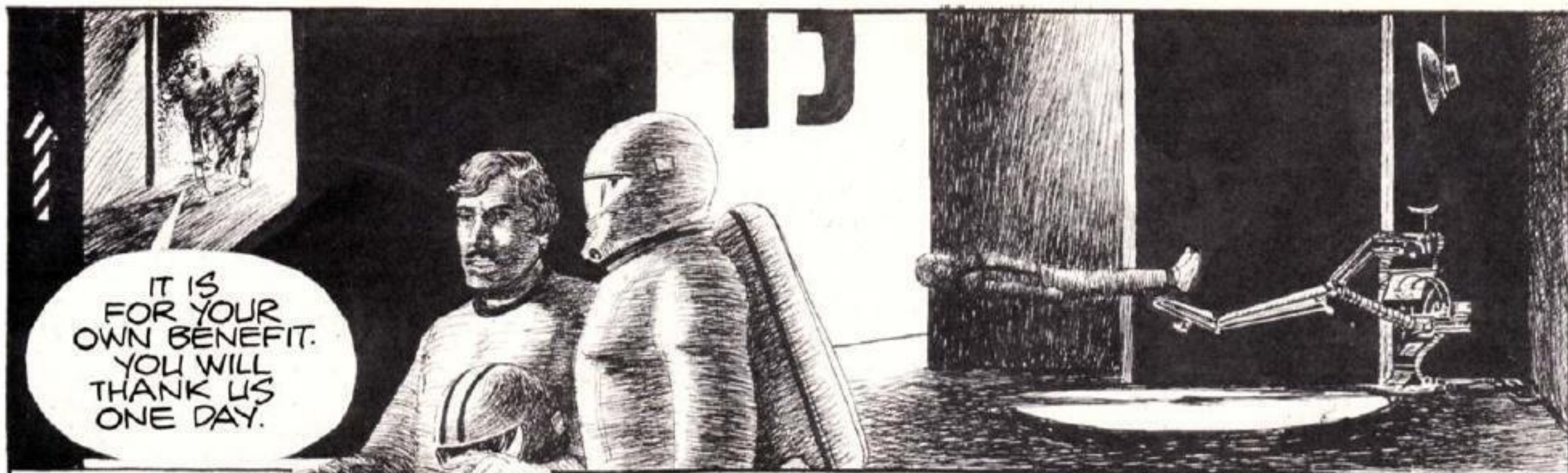
THANK YOU, SIR. I WILL KEEP YOUR ADVICE IN MIND.

MARTIN JUST LEFT MY OFFICE. I WANT A DETAILED REPORT OF HIS COMINGS AND GOINGS, 24 HOURS A DAY!

HE COULD POSSIBLY GET VIOLENT.

THERE HAVE BEEN SIMILAR CASES IN THE PAST...





IT IS
FOR YOUR
OWN BENEFIT.
YOU WILL
THANK US
ONE DAY.

EVERY SOCIETY HAS
A SET OF RULES
WHICH ARE APPLIC-
ABLE TO EACH AND
EVERY MEMBER.



THE UNDERTAKING OF THESE
DUTIES IS A MORAL, MOREOVER
A PATRIOTIC, OBLIGATION!...

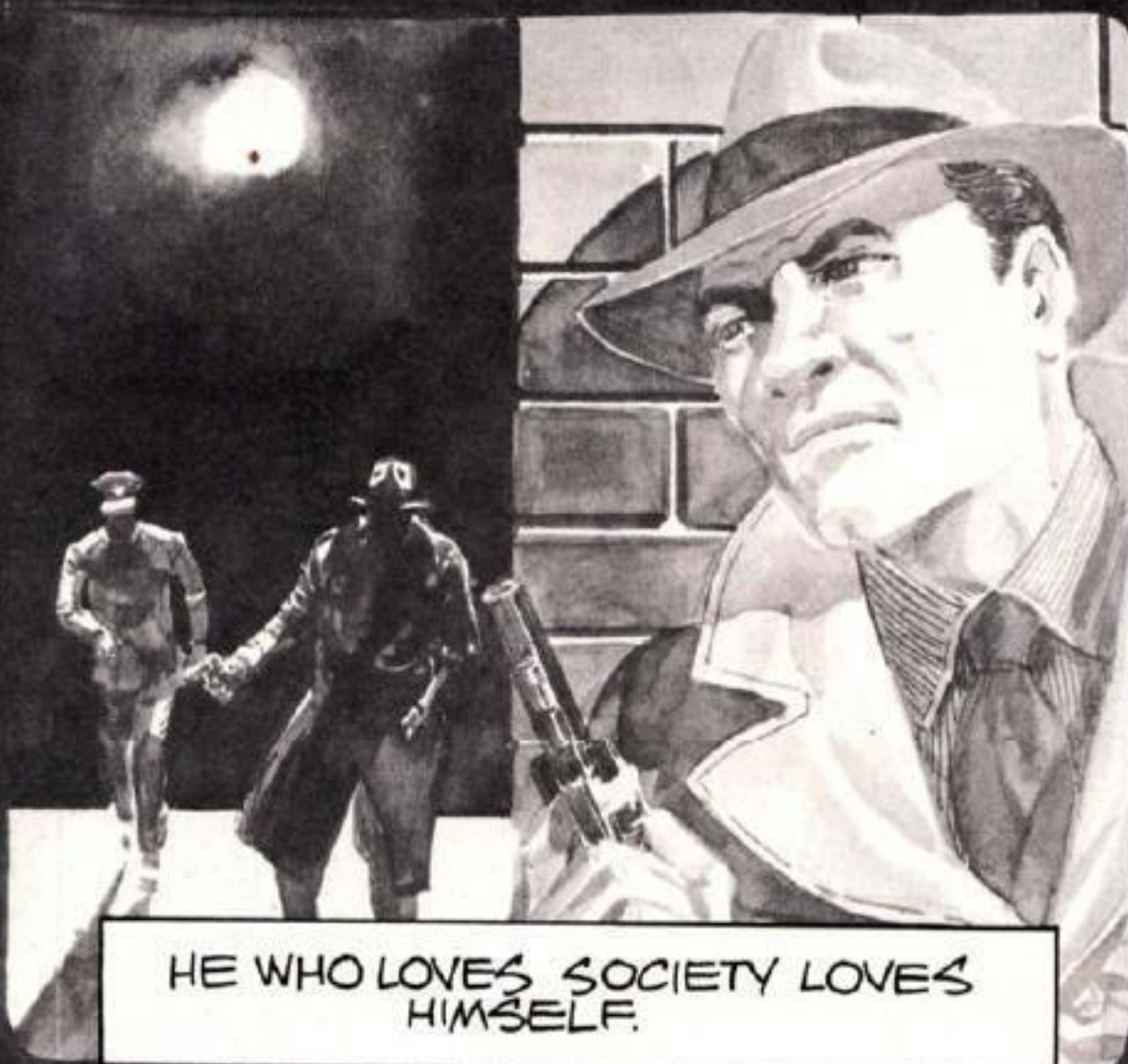
...AND MORALITY IS A DUTY
UNTO ONESELF.



AS IS LOVE.



IT IS A MORAL DUTY.



HE WHO LOVES SOCIETY LOVES HIMSELF.



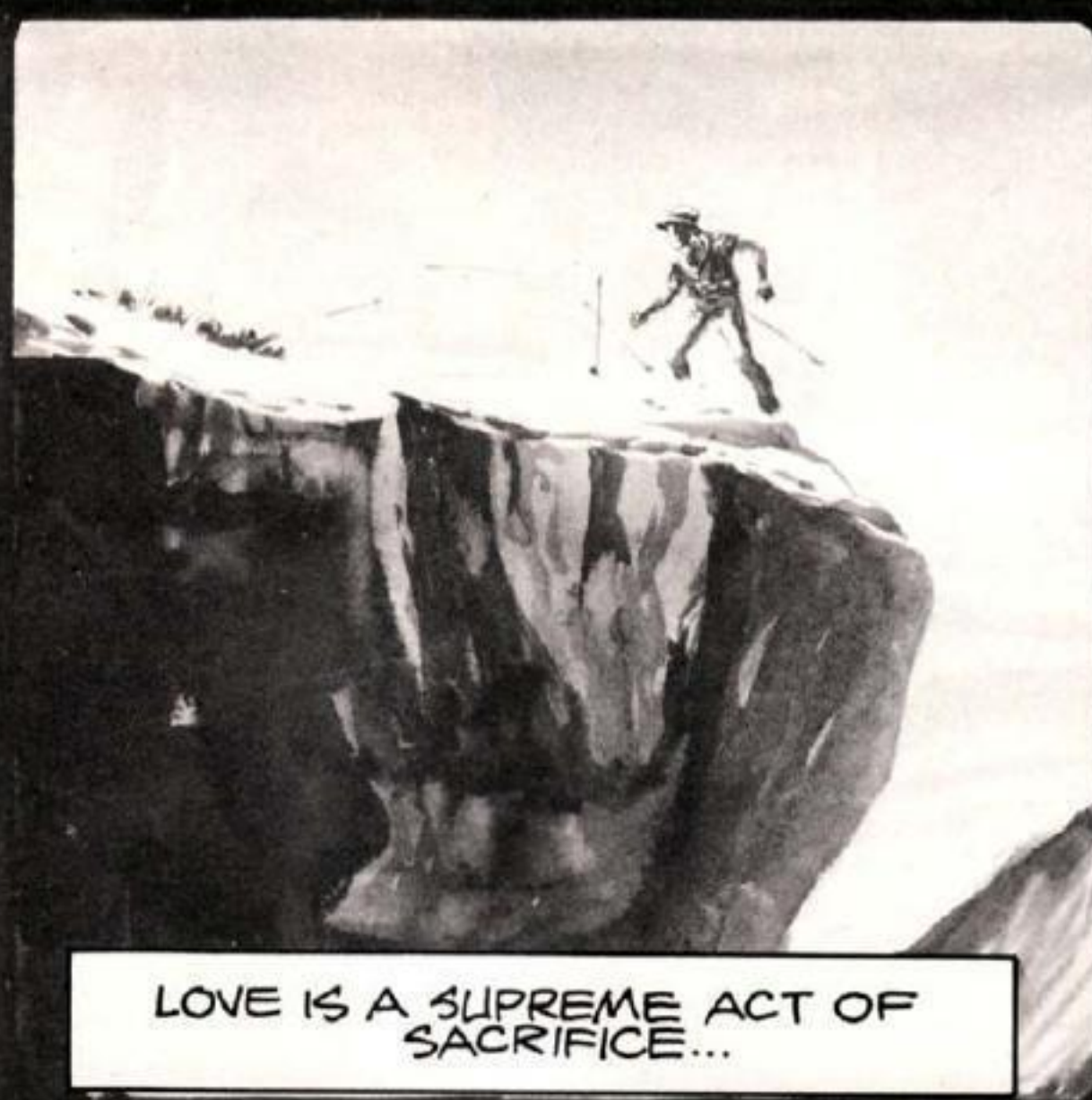
IN TURN, SOCIETY LOVES THOSE WHO LOVE SOCIETY.

INSURING THOSE AROUND YOU IS LOVING YOURSELF.





HE WHO DOES NOT LOVE SOCIETY
IS PUNISHING HIMSELF.



LOVE IS A SUPREME ACT OF
SACRIFICE...



SACRIFICE IS AN ACT OF
PERSONAL GREATNESS...



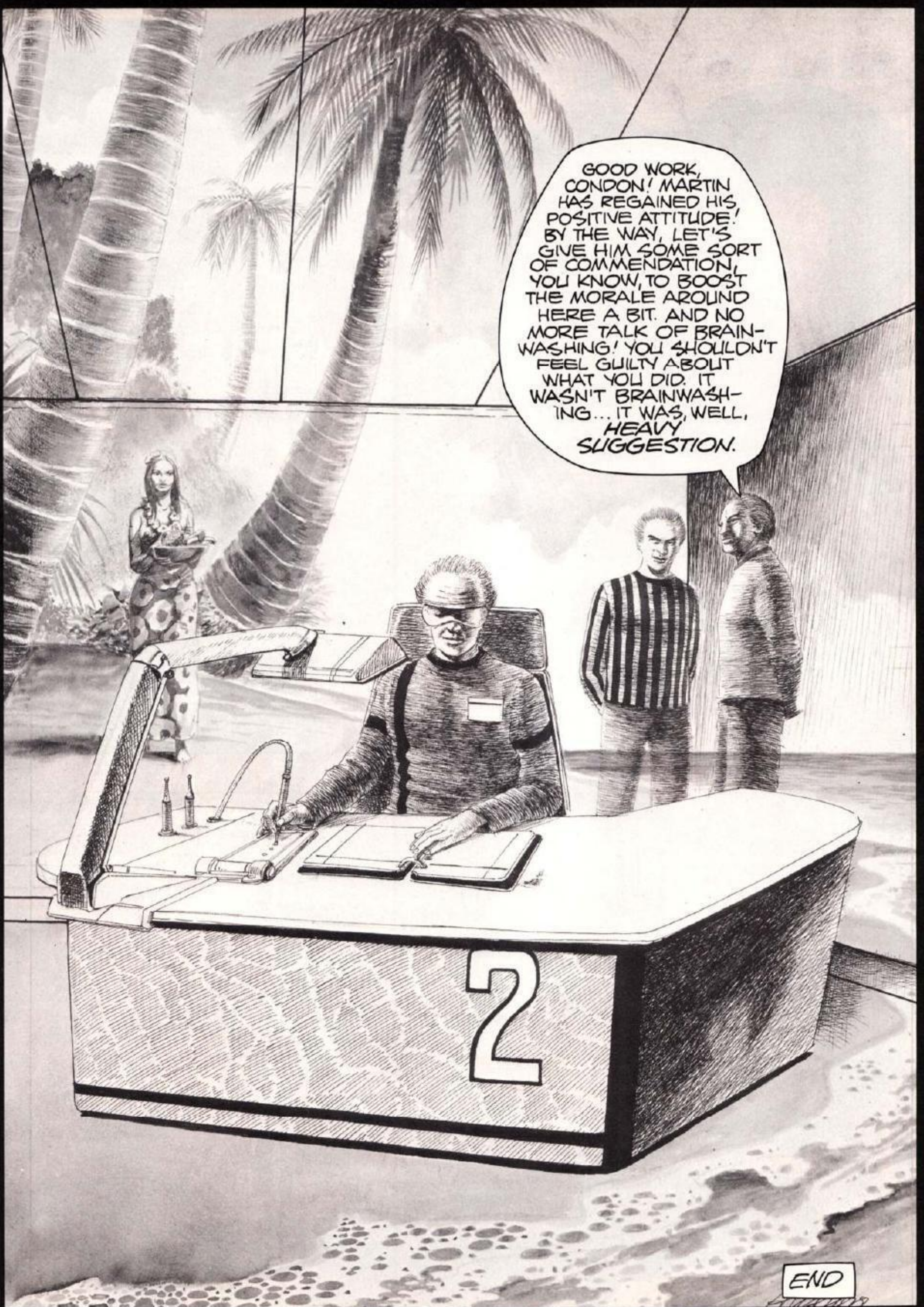
...AND, AS SUCH, IS REWARDED.

SOCIETY REWARDS THOSE WHO
UNDERTAKE THEIR DUTIES.



RIGHT?

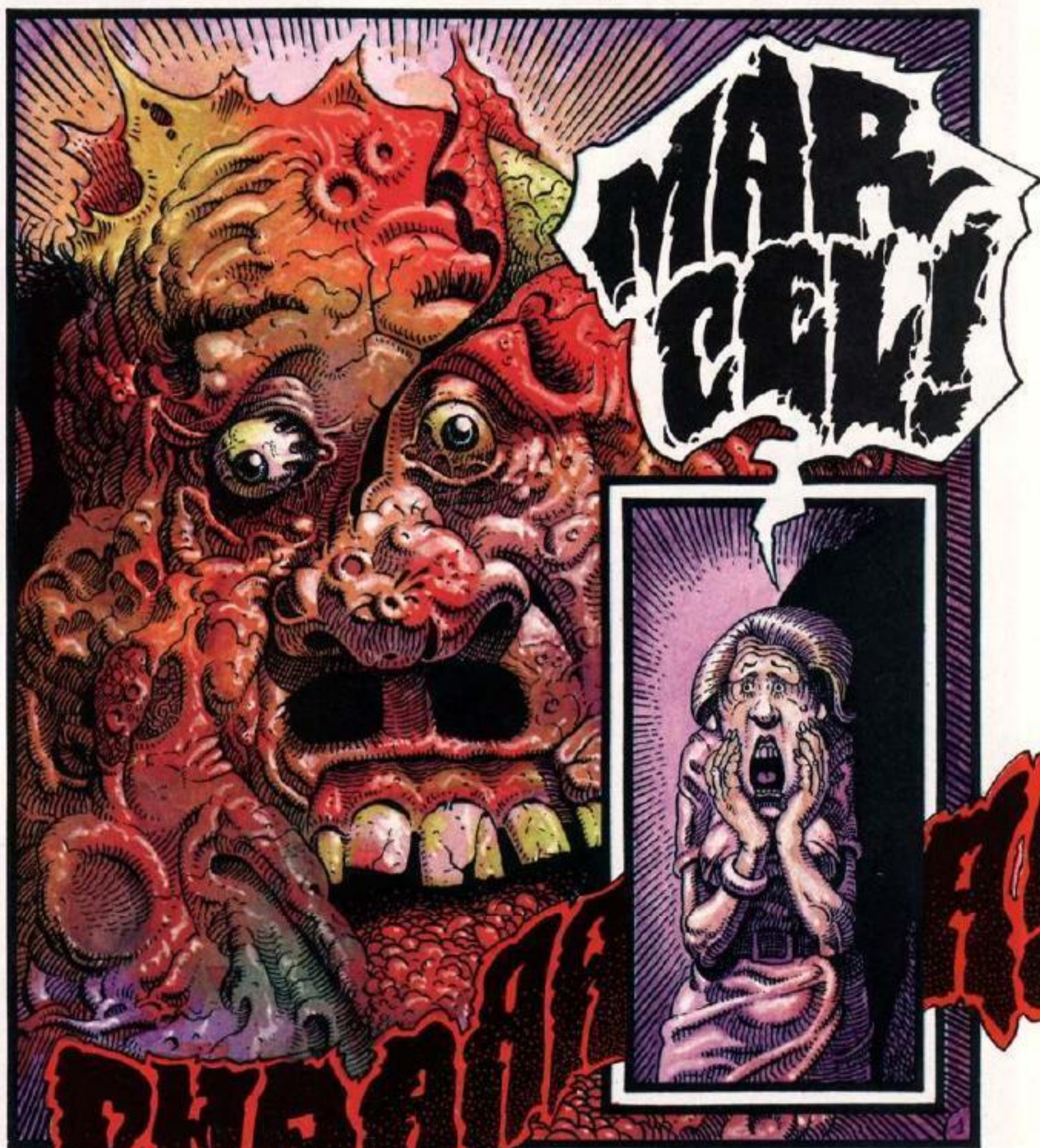
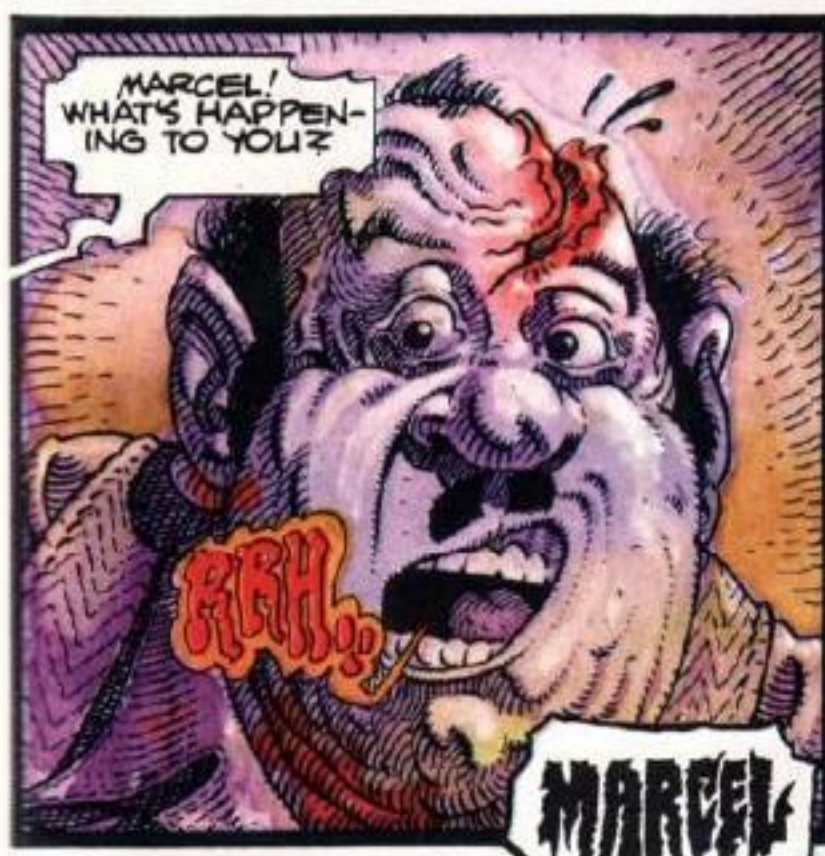
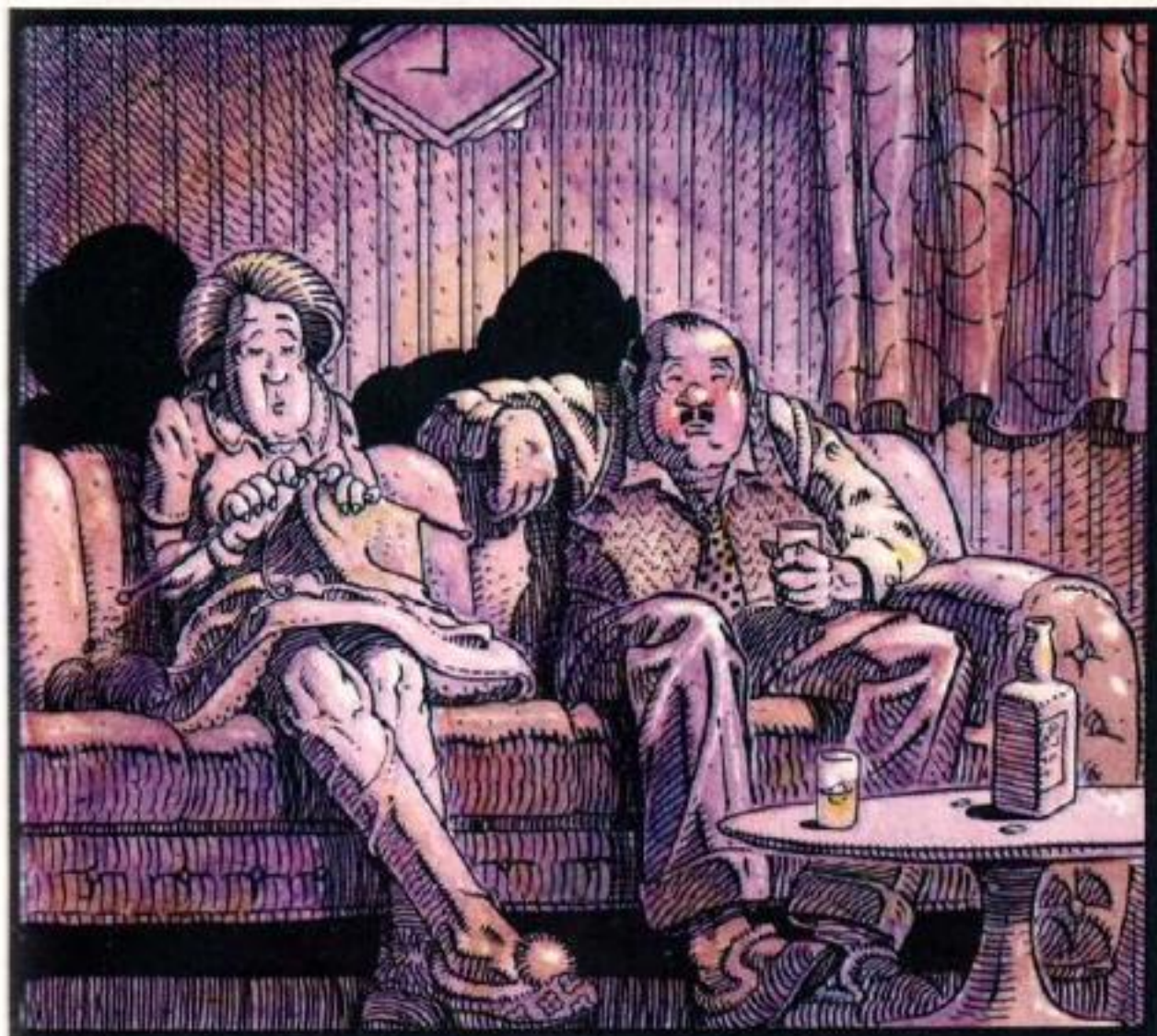
GOOD WORK,
CONDON! MARTIN
HAS REGAINED HIS
POSITIVE ATTITUDE!
BY THE WAY, LET'S
GIVE HIM SOME SORT
OF COMMENDATION,
YOU KNOW, TO BOOST
THE MORALE AROUND
HERE A BIT. AND NO
MORE TALK OF BRAIN-
WASHING! YOU SHOULDN'T
FEEL GUILTY ABOUT
WHAT YOU DID. IT
WASN'T BRAINWASH-
ING... IT WAS, WELL,
HEAVY
SUGGESTION.



END

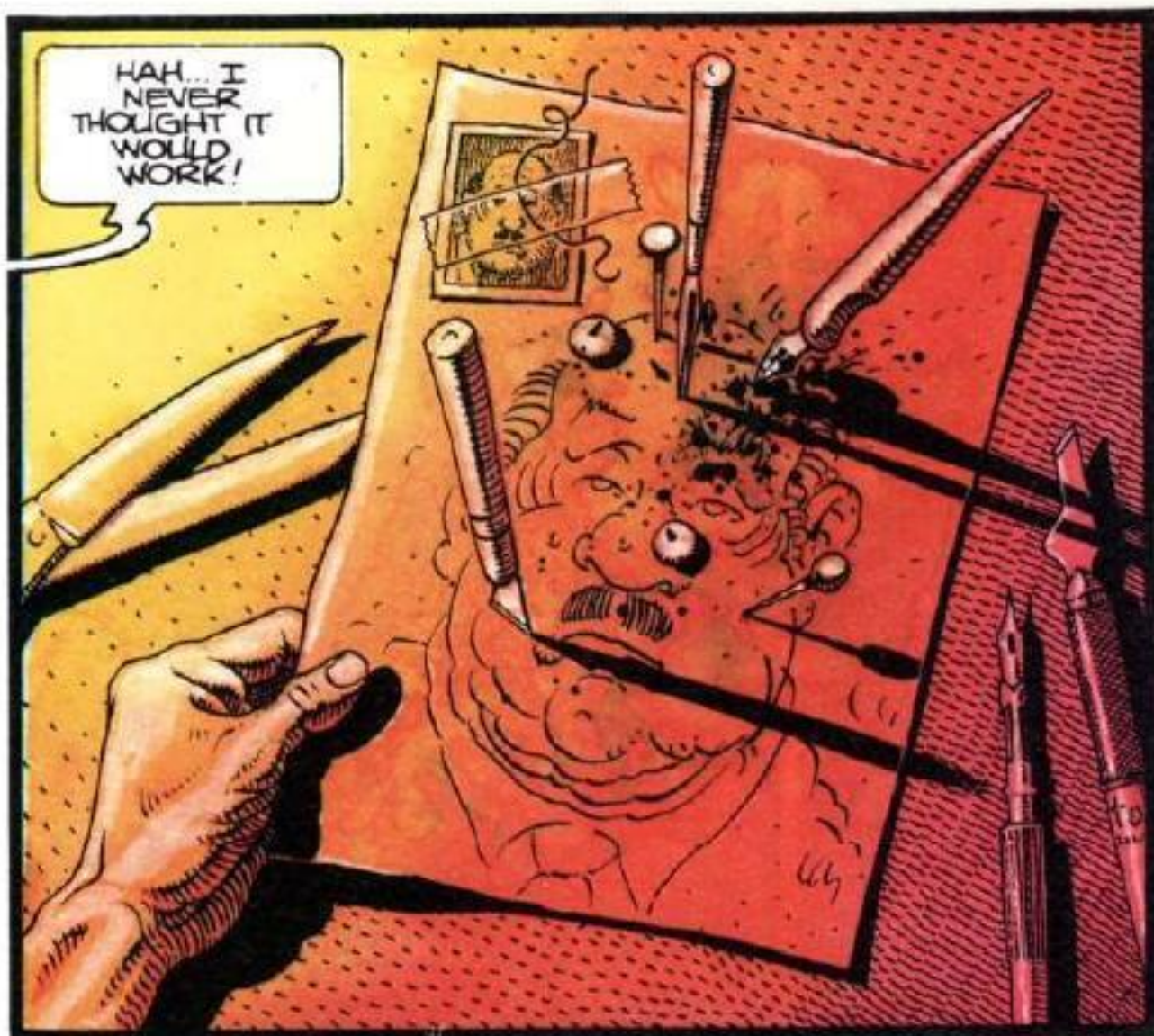
WHOOOO THE VOODOO?

BY CAZA









CAZA
77

... the canvas walls of the hut are shredded by percussion gunfire.

ARRGH!

Outside, a roar of confusion as...

OOMPH!

GO, PORFIRIO. NOW!

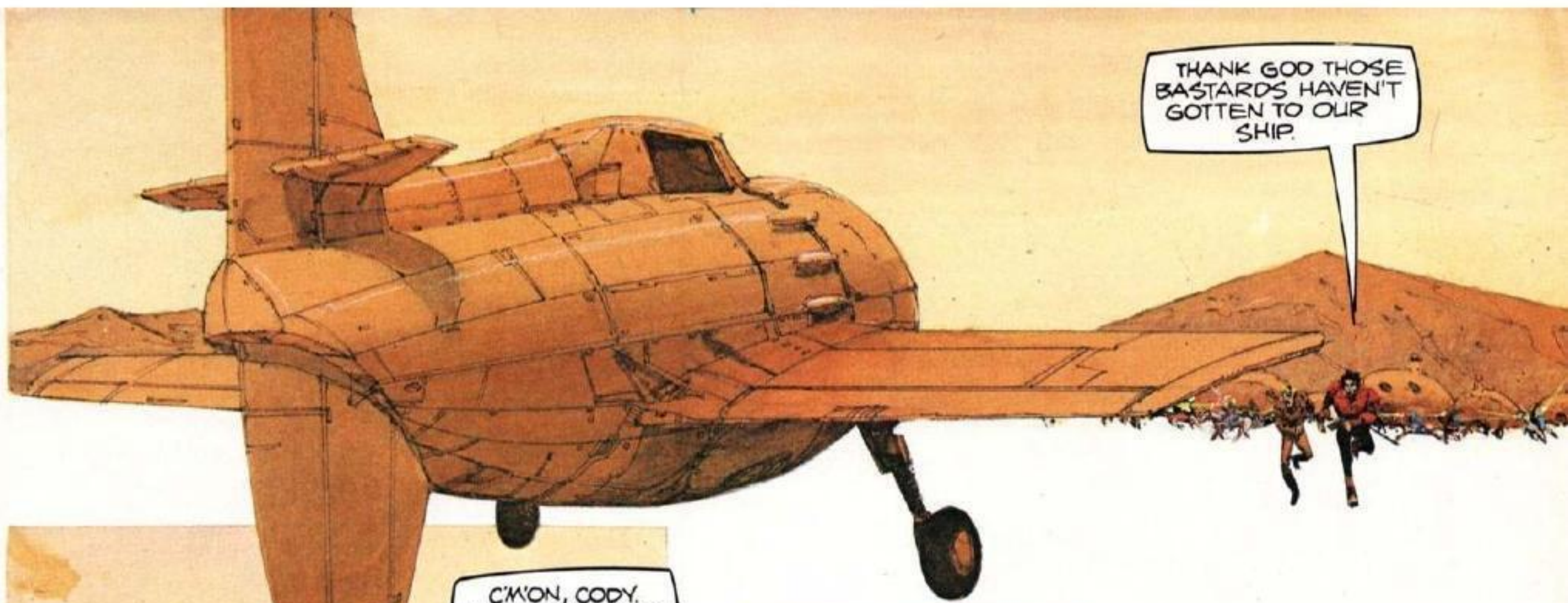
RENEGADES! MARAUDERS!

BZZZOW

RAPID FIRE. CUT THROUGH THEM... BACK TO THE GLIDER.

CODY STARBUCK

When last we read, Cody and Porfirio had set out to meet with Lady Tessa in order to sell her a clonedroid labor force for Detweiler. When the three of them met, she furiously ordered that Cody and Porfirio be imprisoned, tried, and executed...for no apparent reason.

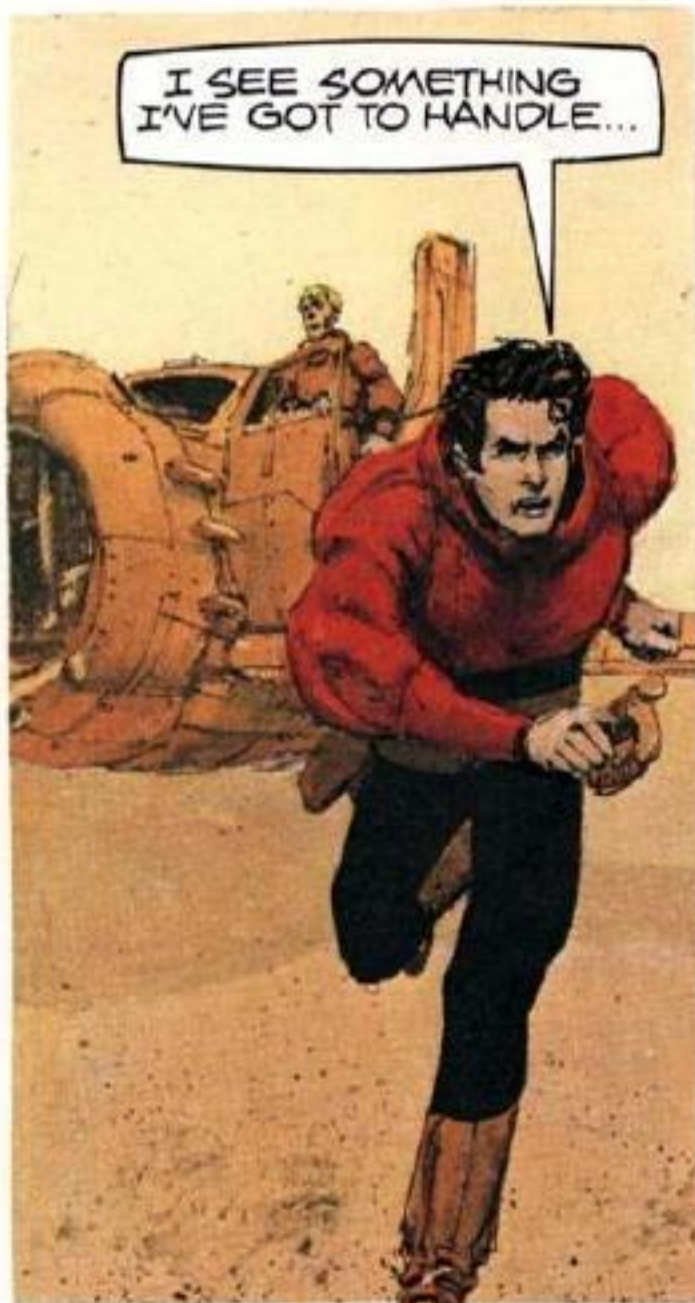


THANK GOD THOSE
BASTARDS HAVEN'T
GOTTEN TO OUR
SHIP.



WARM HER UP...
GET A BLASTER...
AND KEEP
YOUR EYE
ON ME!

C'MON, CODY.
THIS IS NO TIME
FOR MEDITATION.



I SEE SOMETHING
I'VE GOT TO HANDLE...



KEEP STRUGGLING
WITH HIM, HONEY. JUST
ONE MORE MOMENT.



CHUK

GOOD MONEY
YOU'LL FETCH,
BITCH. JUST
STOP SQUIRMING!

YOUR PEOPLE WILL
PAY THE RANSOM
WITHIN DAYS.
HOLD STILL!



WORM!
WORM!
LET... ME...
GO!

...through the
confusion of death
and destruction
a warrior chieftan
tries to subdue
his valuable prize.

But the "bitch" is not
so easily taken... not
this time, at any rate.



A RANSOM
YOU'LL NEVER
COLLECT!

LET ME GO!
LET ME GO!
MURDERER!

YOLI!...

...BASTARD!...

...MURDERER!

Mortally wounded,
the raider pitches to
the ground. As he
falls his foot catches
in the stirrup. It will
be many kilometers
before this horse is
released from its gory
burden.



SHUT UP, DAMMIT!
I DON'T KNOW WHAT
THE HELL YOU'RE
TALKING ABOUT!

YOU'RE COMING
WITH ME!



THE HELL I
AM! LET ME
GO!

IF YOU DON'T
STOP THIS, I'M
GOING TO
HAVE TO...

HURRY UP,
CODY...

IS SHE
OKAY?

GIVE ME
A HAND
WITH HER...

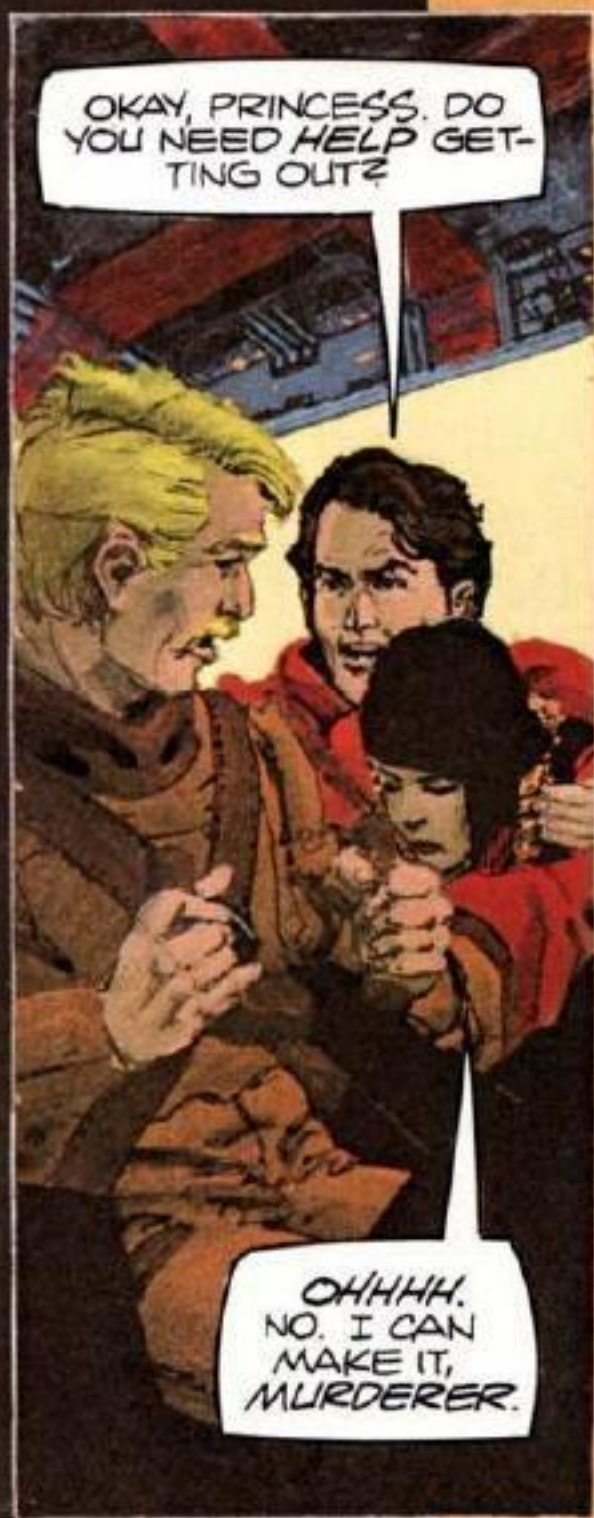


YES... I HAD
TO CLIP HER.
SHE WOULD HAVE
GOTTEN US ALL
KILLED.



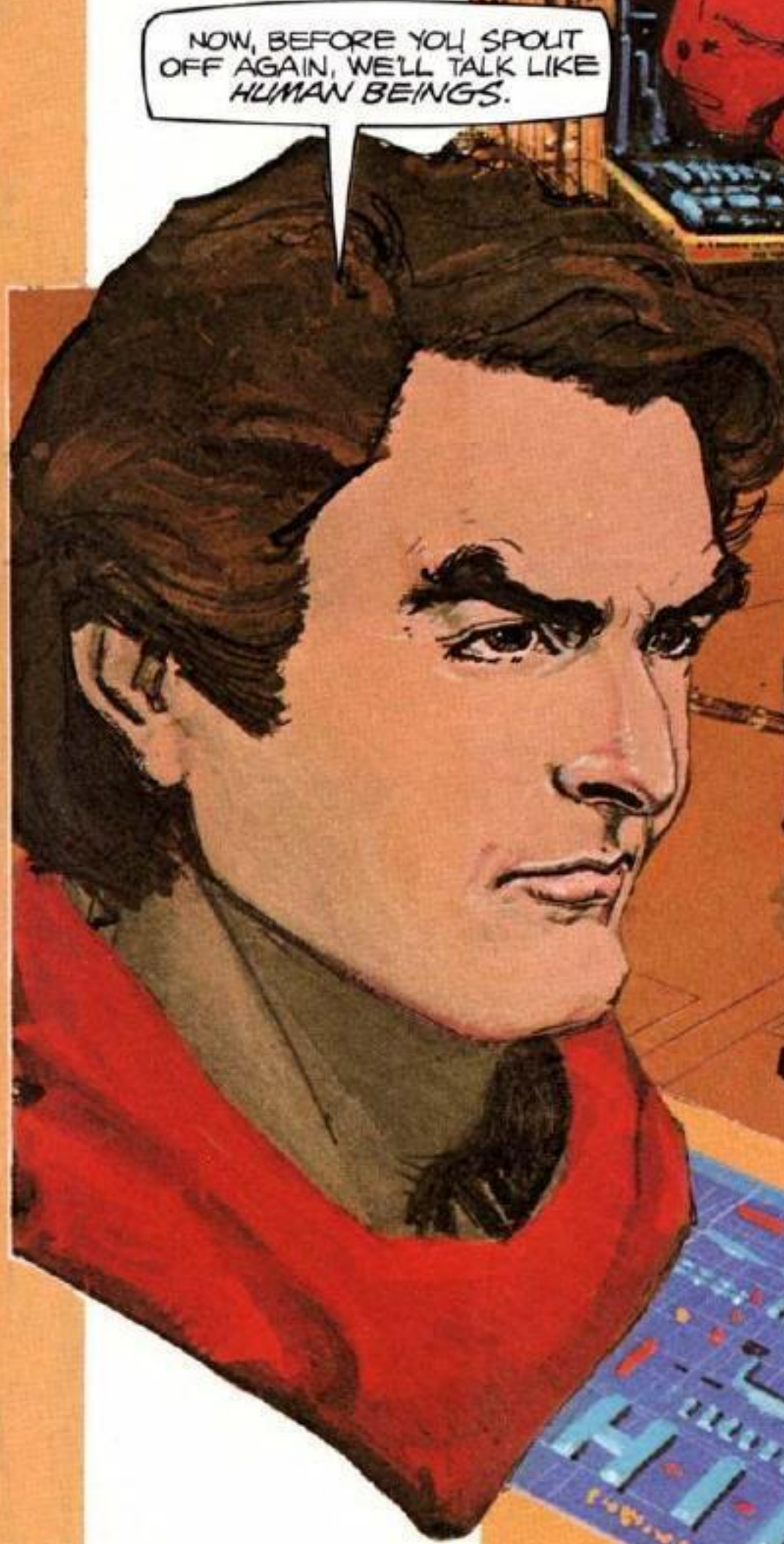
HOLD HER STEADY, CRISIS. WE'LL BE THERE IN MOMENTS.

Somewhat later . . .



OKAY, PRINCESS. DO YOU NEED HELP GETTING OUT?

OHhhh. NO. I CAN MAKE IT, MURDERER.



NOW, BEFORE YOU SPILT OFF AGAIN, WE'LL TALK LIKE HUMAN BEINGS.



LET ME GET THIS STRAIGHT... YOU ACCUSE ME OF... AMONG OTHER THINGS... **MURDER**. I AM A PIRATE AND A SOLDIER... NOT AN ASSASSIN.

THE BLOOD OF DETWEILER IS ON YOUR HANDS. THAT'S ALL I HAVE TO SAY.

SHE SEEMS HYSTERICAL...
I DON'T THINK SHE'S GOING
TO TALK, CODY.

DAMN. YOU ARE
NOT A PRISONER, BUT
IF THREATS OF VIOLENCE
ARE WHAT IT TAKES TO
GET SOME KIND OF
EXPLANATION OUT
OF YOU...

I'LL SPEAK.

I am—I was—a Romany princess.
Our caravan crossed the desert
a year ago. In a valley, we found
your ship.

You were the only
human present...
your crew were little
half men, their faces
marked...

Drones...

Hush, Crisis...

We invited you to
our evening meal.

You explained that
you had been hired
by the government
to seed the clouds,
to end the long
drought.

You raised a toast of friendship
to my family and went back
to your ship.

That night my sleep
was broken by shouts
and gunfire . . .

As I left my steam
wagon, you and your
little demons were
torching our camp and
slaughtering my family.

I ran, and
took a shot
to the head.

THIS IS RIDICULOUS. BEFORE
A FEW DAYS AGO, I'D NEVER
HEARD OF DETWEILER, NOR
SET EYES ON YOU.


...GHOUL, LIAR.
YOU ATE AND DRANK
WITH US. THEN...
MURDERED...
FIRST MY FAMILY...
THEN MY
WORLD.

You left me
for dead.

I came to in the smoldering
ruins of our caravan.

In shock . . . feverish . . .
I staggered west into
the desert.

That day . . .
the rains came.




SEE HERE, STARBUCK...
THIS FARCE HAS GONE
FAR ENOUGH.

I AM BORED.
GET IT OVER WITH.
KILL ME NOW.

YOU FORGET, I
KNOW THE HORROR
THAT HIDES BEHIND
THAT PRETENSE OF
INNOCENCE.

OBVIOUSLY, NOTHING
I SAY WILL CONVINCE
YOU OF MY IN-
NOCENCE.



SO WE'LL RETURN YOU...
UNHARMED... TO YOUR
PEOPLE. PERHAPS THIS
GESTURE WILL
CONVINCE—



PORFIRIO...
WARM UP THE
GLIDER...

NAPALM THE
RAIDERS, IF NEC-
ESSARY. SEE
THAT SHE'S
SAFE.

RIGHT,
CODY.

DON'T
TOY WITH
ME.



SOMEONE IS OBVIOUSLY
DOING A HELL OF A JOB
IMPERSONATING ME!

WHAT D'YOU THINK WE
SHOULD DO ABOUT IT, CRISIS?

WELL...IF YOU'RE
ASKING ME TO SPEC-
ULATE ON THE LOOK IN
YOUR EYE... I'D SAY
WE'RE GOING TO HUNT
DOWN THIS IMPOSTER.

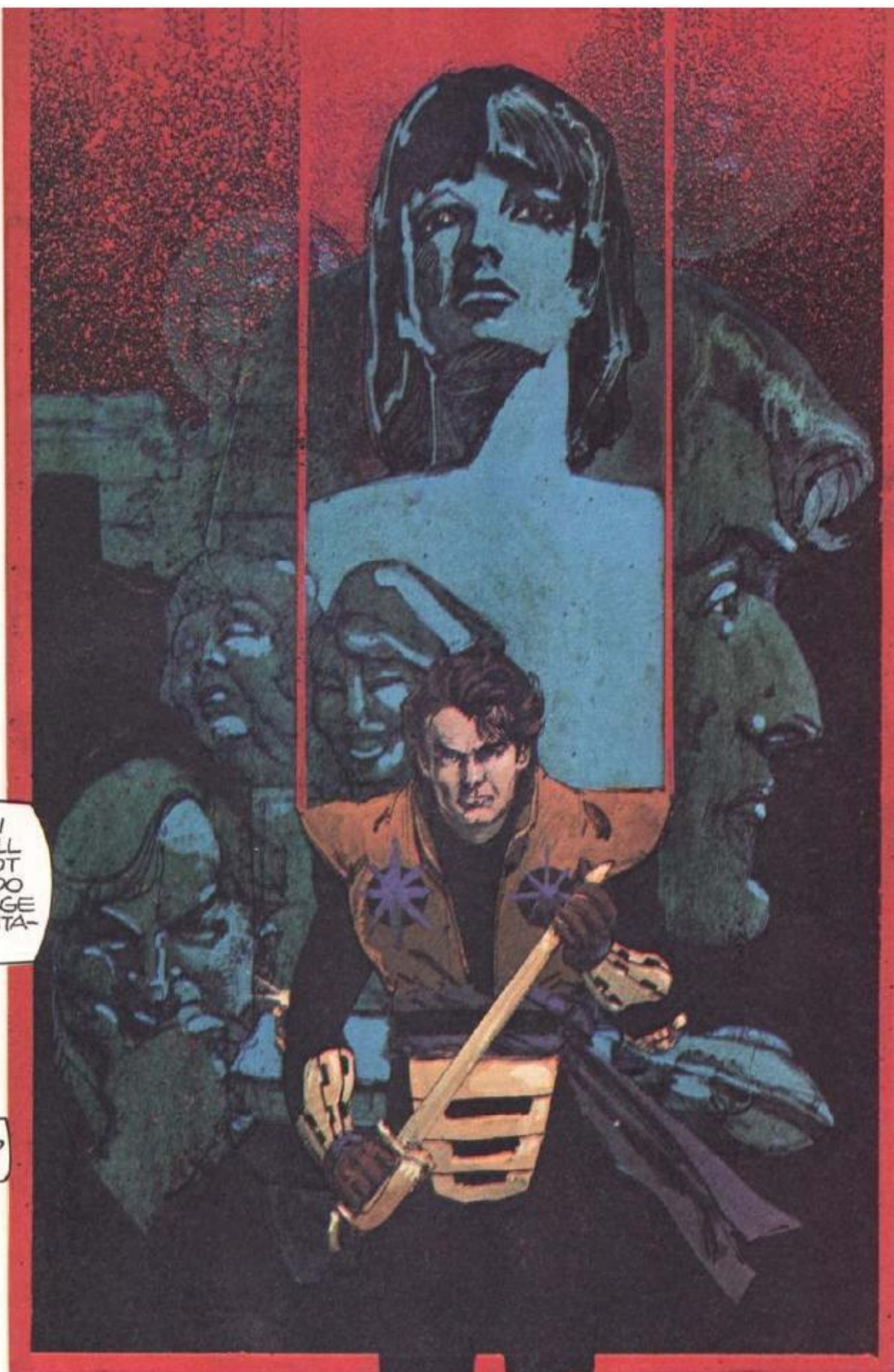
AND DON'T ASK
ME WHY...



...I KNOW
DAMN WELL
YOU'RE NOT
GOING TO DO
IT TO SALVAGE
YOUR REPUTA-
TION.

WELL, CRISIS,
LET'S CALL IT...

...UNREQUITED
LIST.



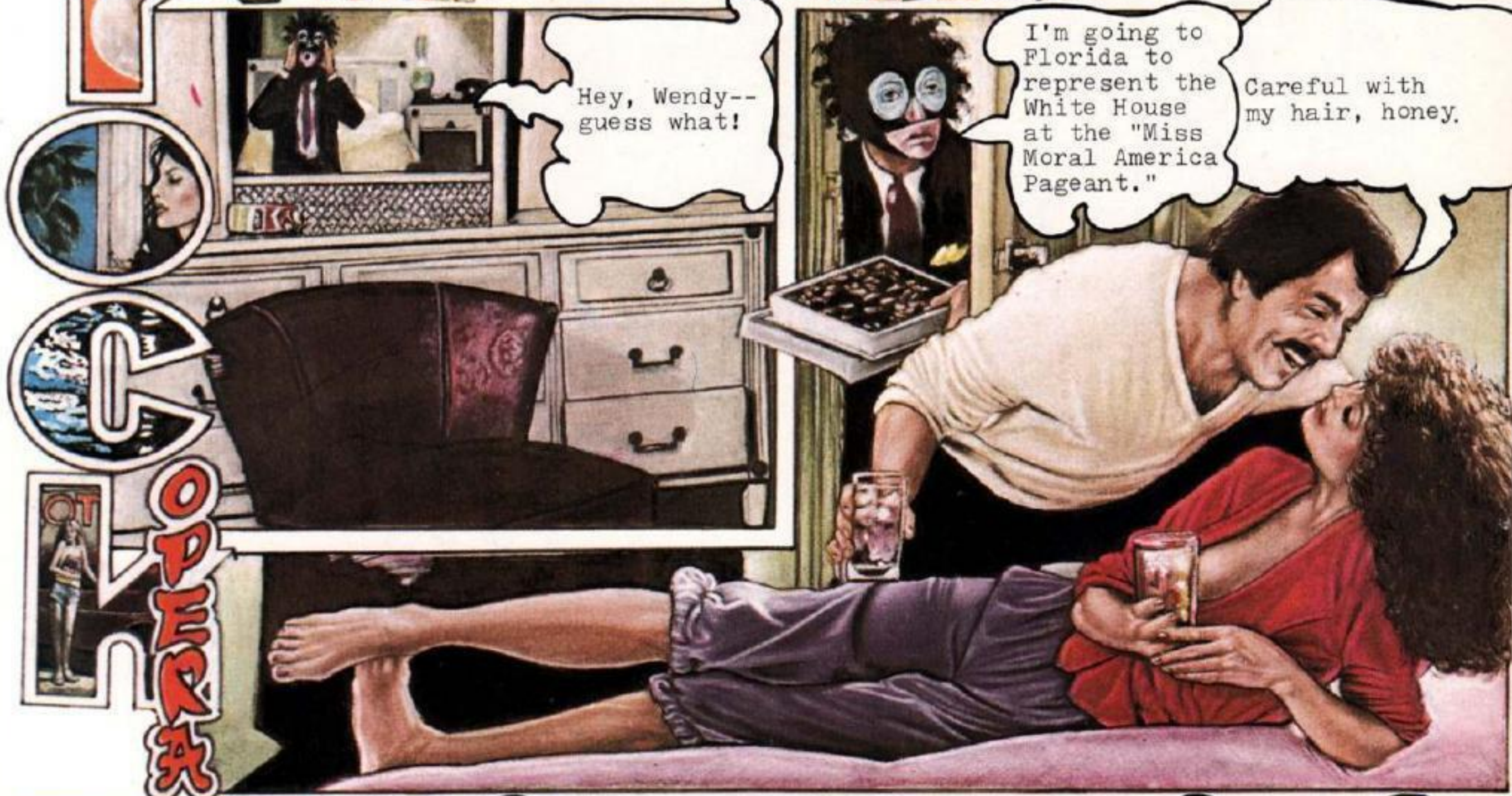
A month of money ...
time, and energy ...
spent searching.
Through the
slums and star pits
of a hundred worlds,
he stalks ...
unearthing
information
from friend
and foe alike.

Through the
underworld of a
collapsed federation
he pursues the
cold trail of his
doppelgänger ...
his corrupt and
twisted image ...
until finally,
the trail grows
hot ...

... on 1026, a world too
unimportant to be
named officially, but
known to most as a
robbers' roost.

Here he finds
his quarry.

TO BE CONTINUED...



Hey, Wendy--
guess what!

I'm going to
Florida to
represent the
White House
at the "Miss
Moral America
Pageant."

Careful with
my hair, honey.

I guess you
don't want
to come,
huh?

It was a
grim bunch
that flew
down to
Cocoa Beach
that after-
noon--

--a morose gang of
wizened geriatrics--

--and me, trying to
drown my misery in the
pulped orange peel pro-
vided by the airline.



Hey! Are you the guy from the White House?

I'm Marty Meadows-- we're going to be roomies during the pageant.

How do you do?



Terrible! Let's go find a bar.



So, you're a stand-up comic, huh?

Yeah, but I'm really lousy...my act just depresses people.

Oh--how come?

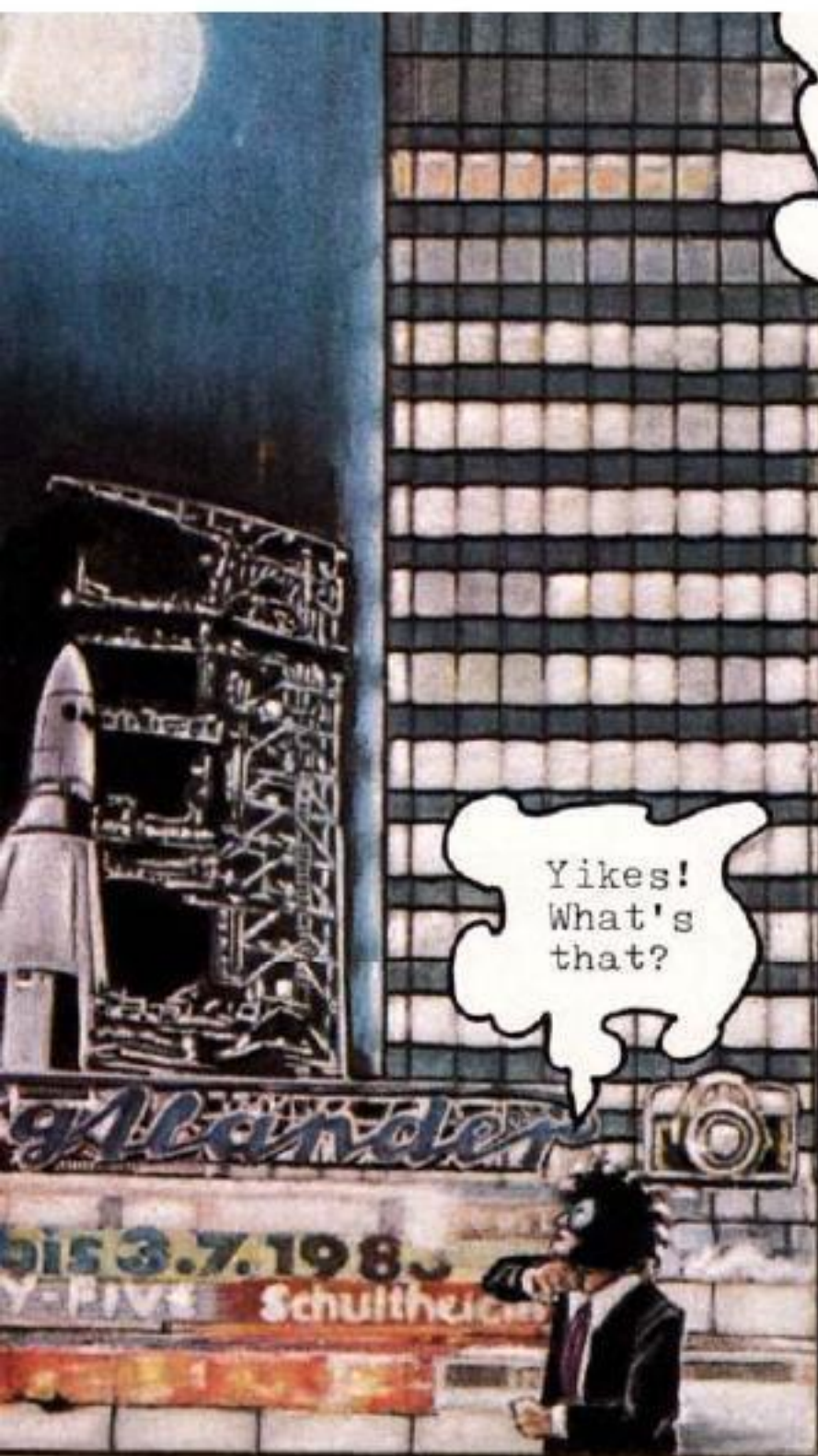
Because I'm not a happy person--that's how come! I've got rotten luck with women.



Well, join the club.



♪ Puh-leez reliss me, let me goooo... ♪



Yikes!
What's
that?

That's the
Space Skuttle.
They're launch-
ing it on Sat-
urday.

I thought
the Moral
Mafiosi
closed the
space pro-
gram down.



No, they're sending up a bunch
of Fundamentalist astronauts
with orders to find Heaven...



In a drunken stupor, we found
our hotel and checked in.



Hey, pal--
you've signed
the register
as "Mr. and
Mrs. John
Smith."



So what? We're
just as moral
as the next
guy!



We were awakened early the
next morning by a hammering
on the door and a voice like
the tinkling of a thousand
little bells.

I had passed out in the bathtub, and Marty had
collapsed on the floor, after trying to pump
his stomach out with a vacuum cleaner.



Wake up,
boys--
rise and
shine!



This is Helen O'Troy--she's in charge of the pageant.

Oh! My stomach! Oh!



You two are due at poolside--you're supposed to be interviewing the contestants.



Here are two copies of the Judges' Rules, and remember--

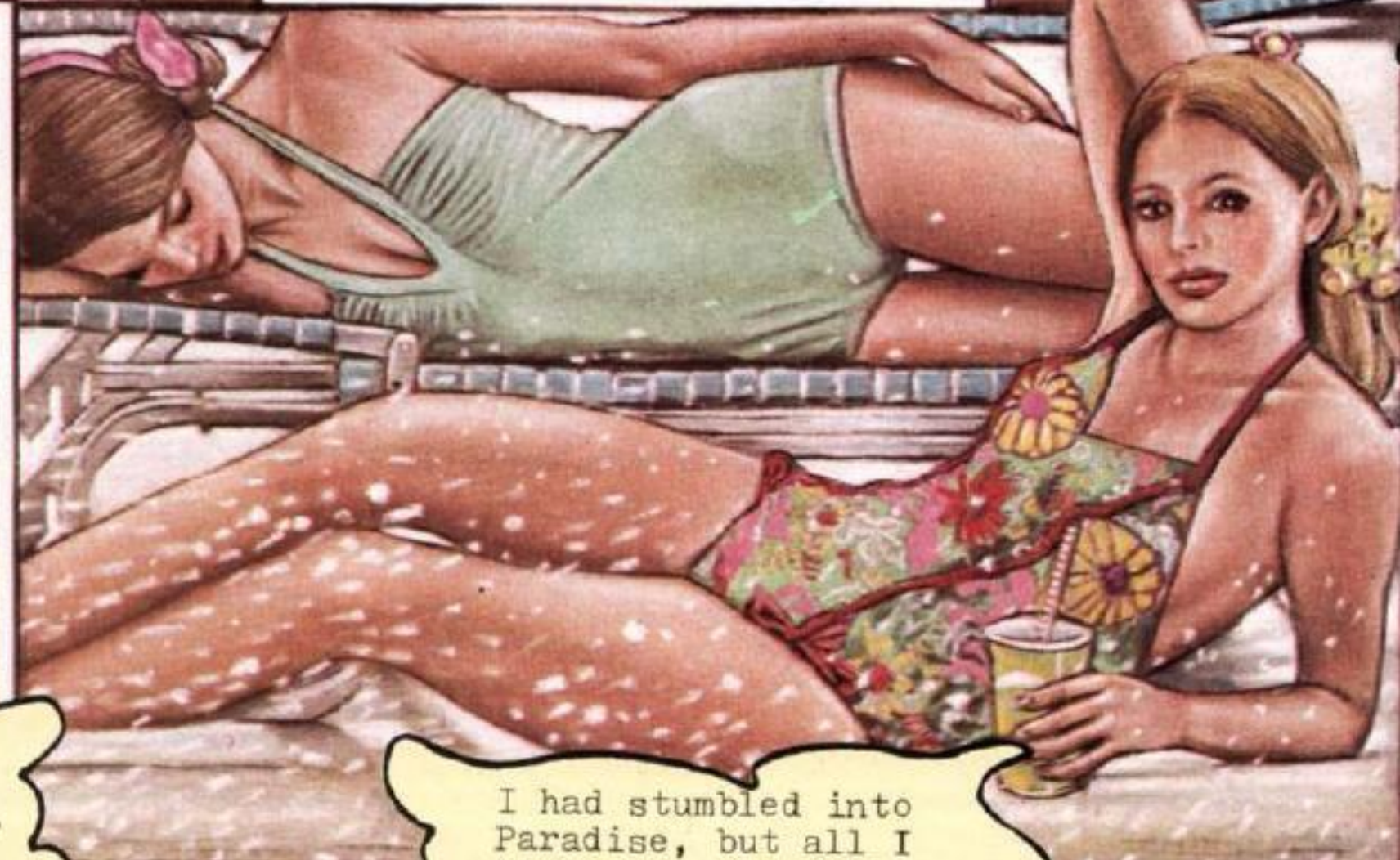
--if either of you tries to check the oil of any of my girls, I'll nail your dipstick to the door!



Blinded by the Florida sun, I groped my way to the pool. As my vision cleared, I could see row upon row of female thighs and breasts, broiling in the sun, covered with an oily glaze of cocoa butter.



Suddenly my stomach heaved.



I had stumbled into Paradise, but all I wanted was an Alka-Seltzer...

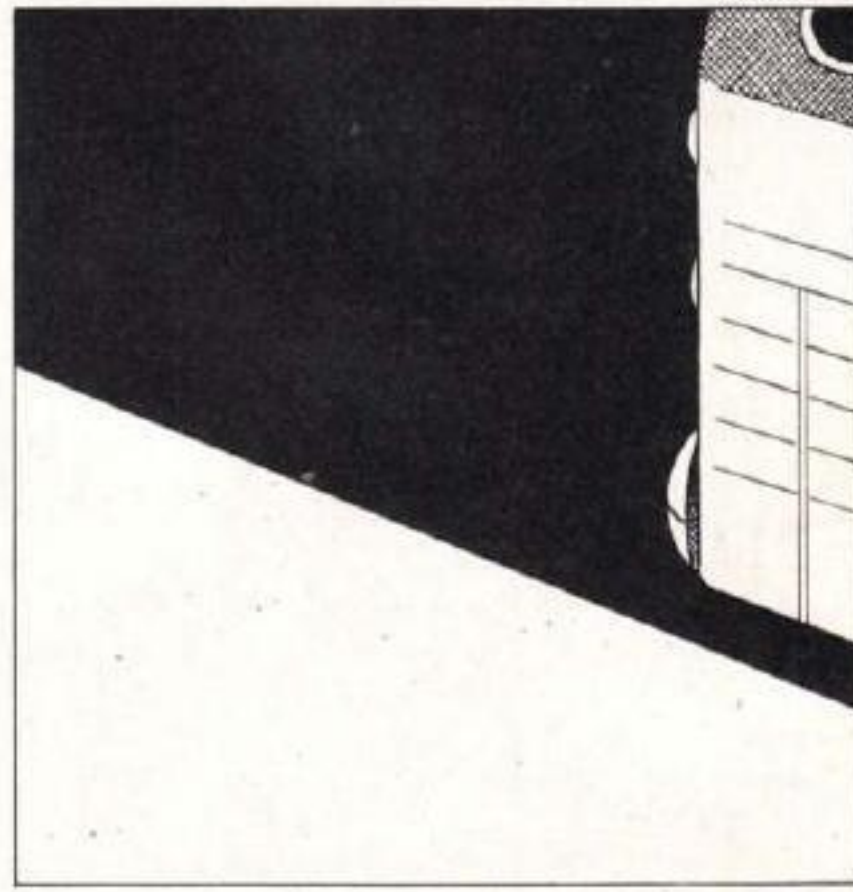
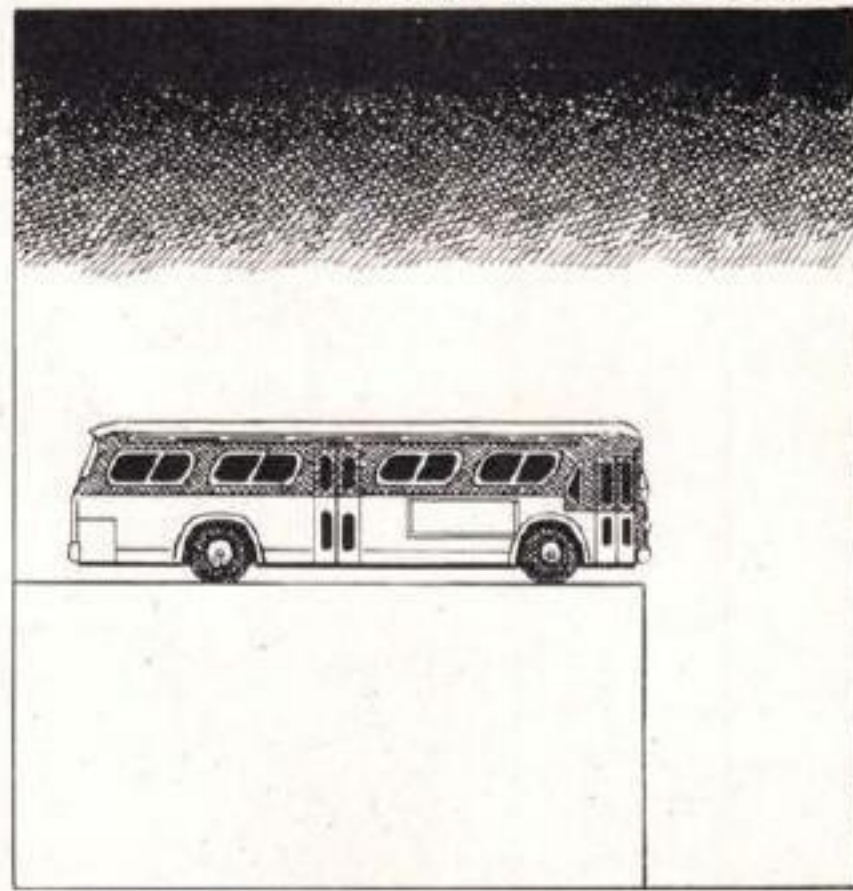
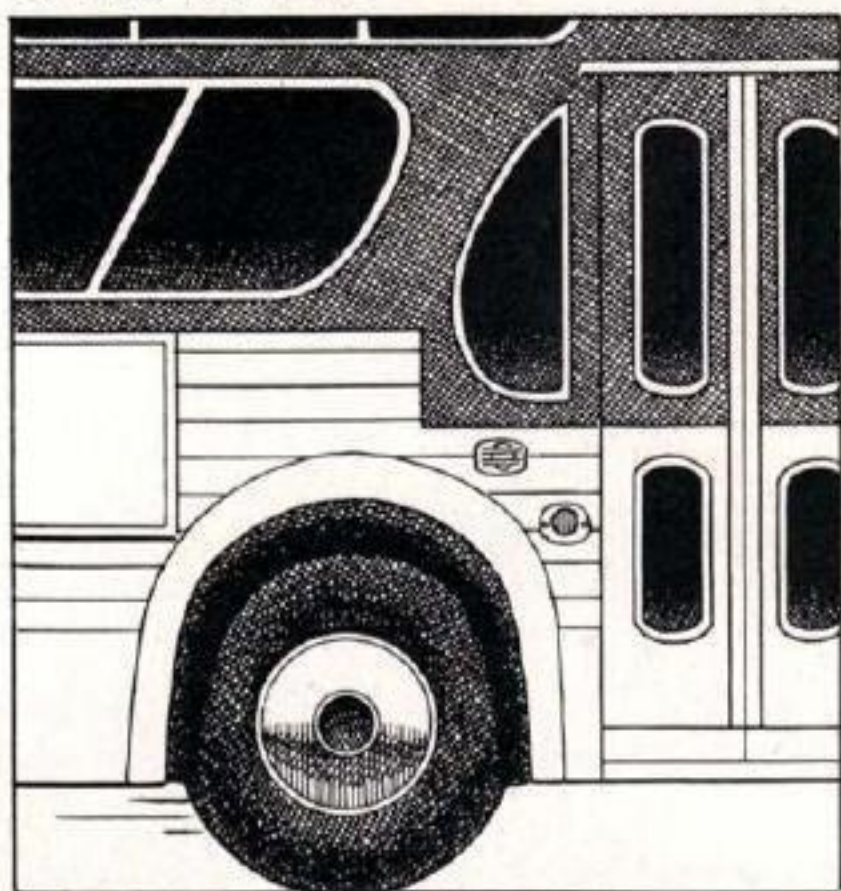
Oh! Oh!



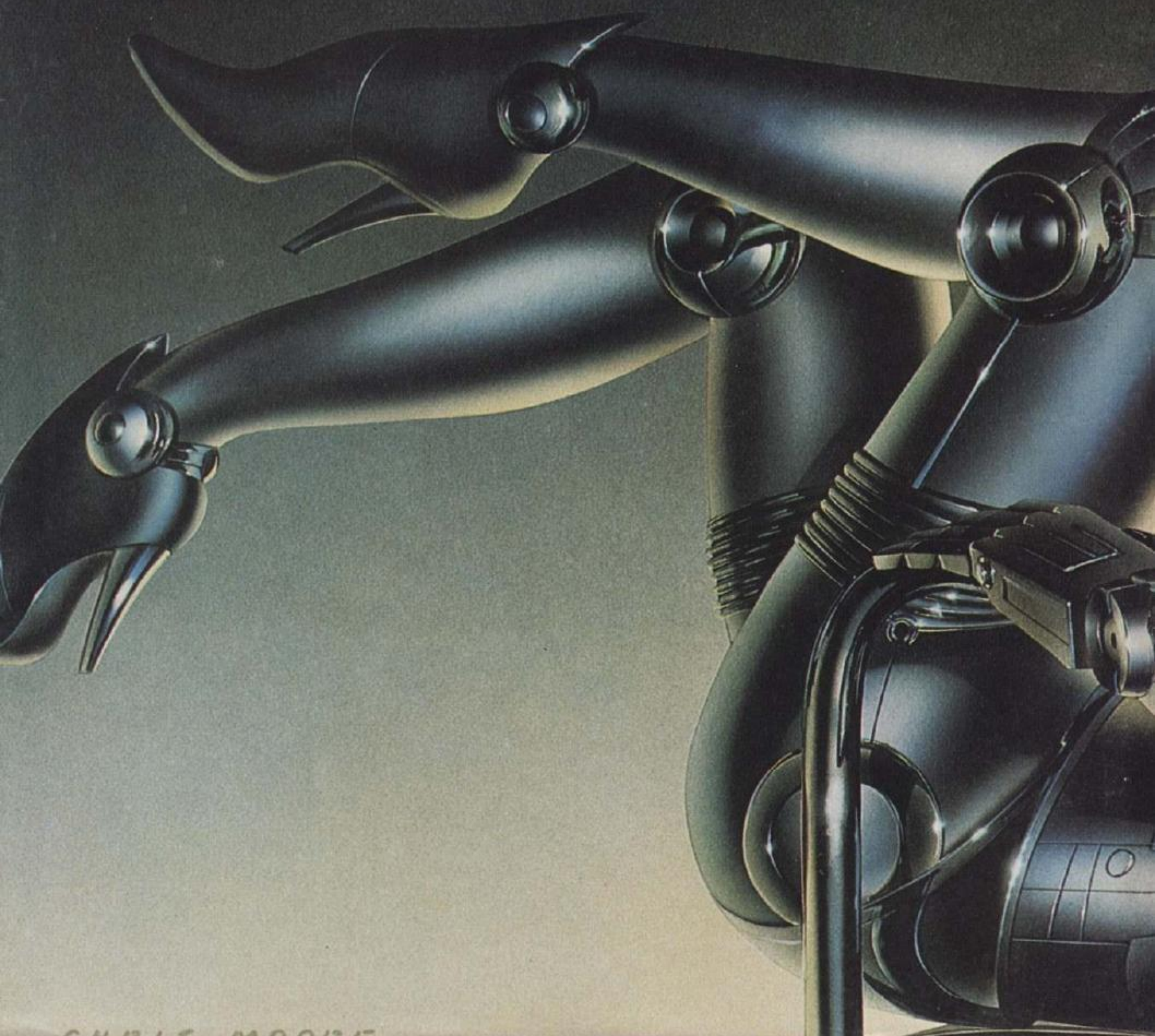
TO BE CONTINUED...

the bus

PAUL KIRCHNER ©



**Steranko's illustrated Outland premieres.
Richard Corben remembers way back when.
Plus: Druillet, Chaykin, Findley,
and Bilal play on!**



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this
issue:
STEPHEN KING
terrifies!**



H