

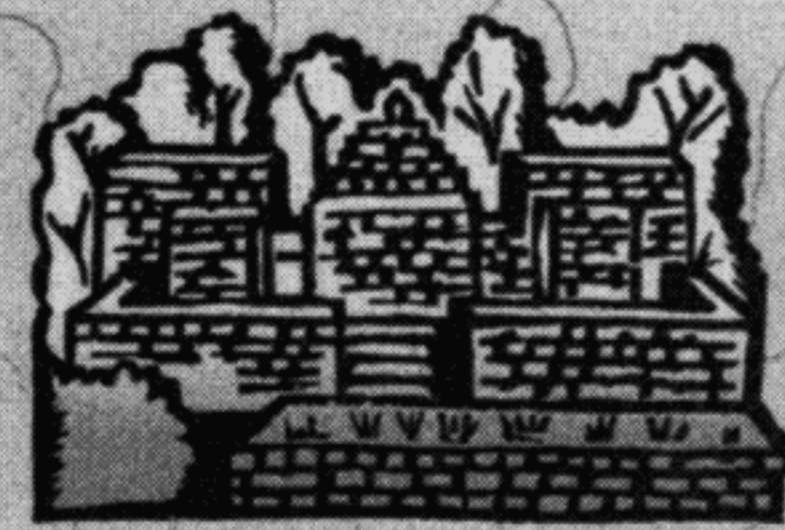
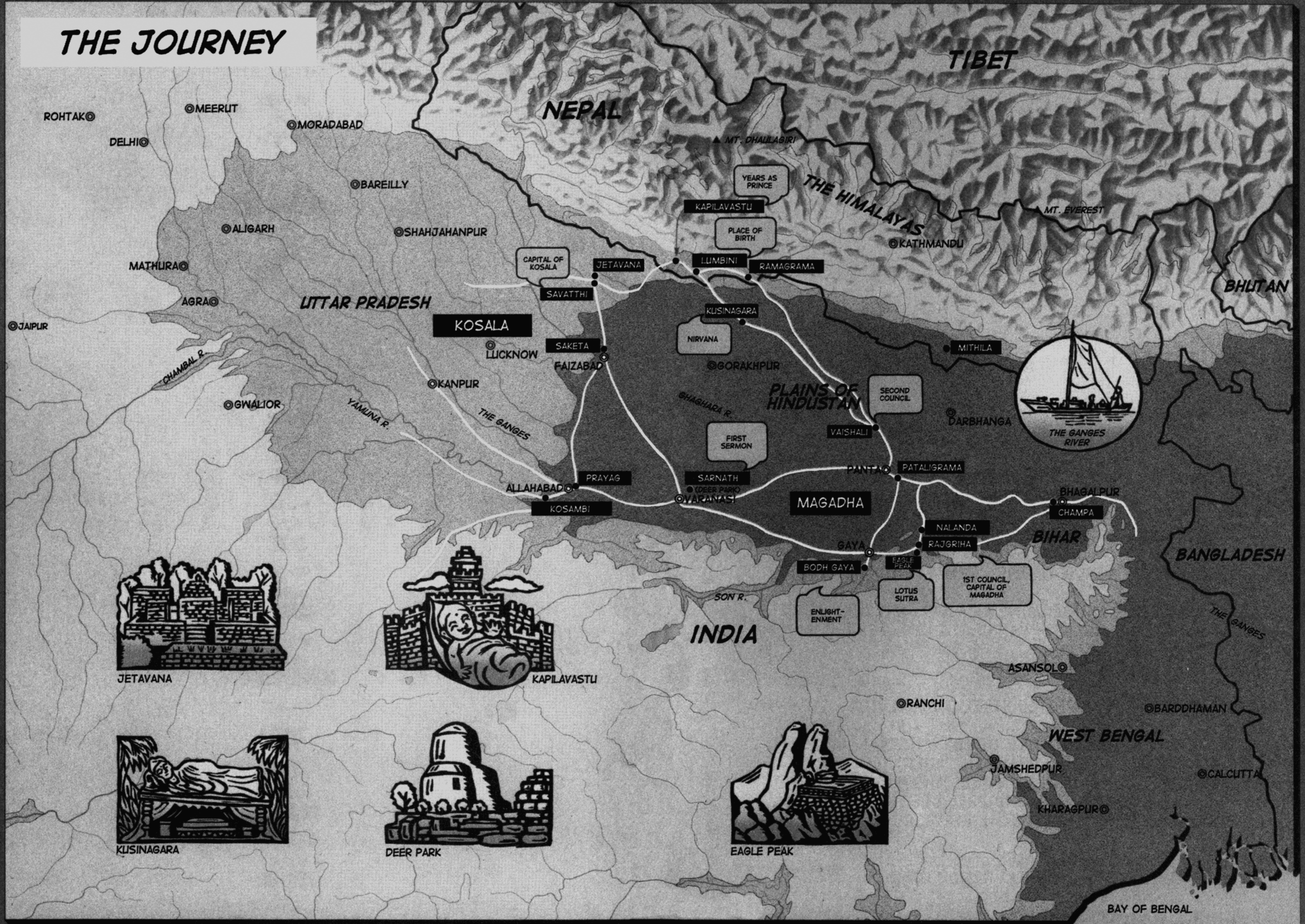
B U D D H A

U S A M U T E Z U K A

V
E
R
T
I
C
A
L.

2 • *The Four Encounters*

THE JOURNEY



JETAVANA



KAPILAVASTU



KUSINAGARA



DEER PARK



EAGLE PEAK



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PART TWO

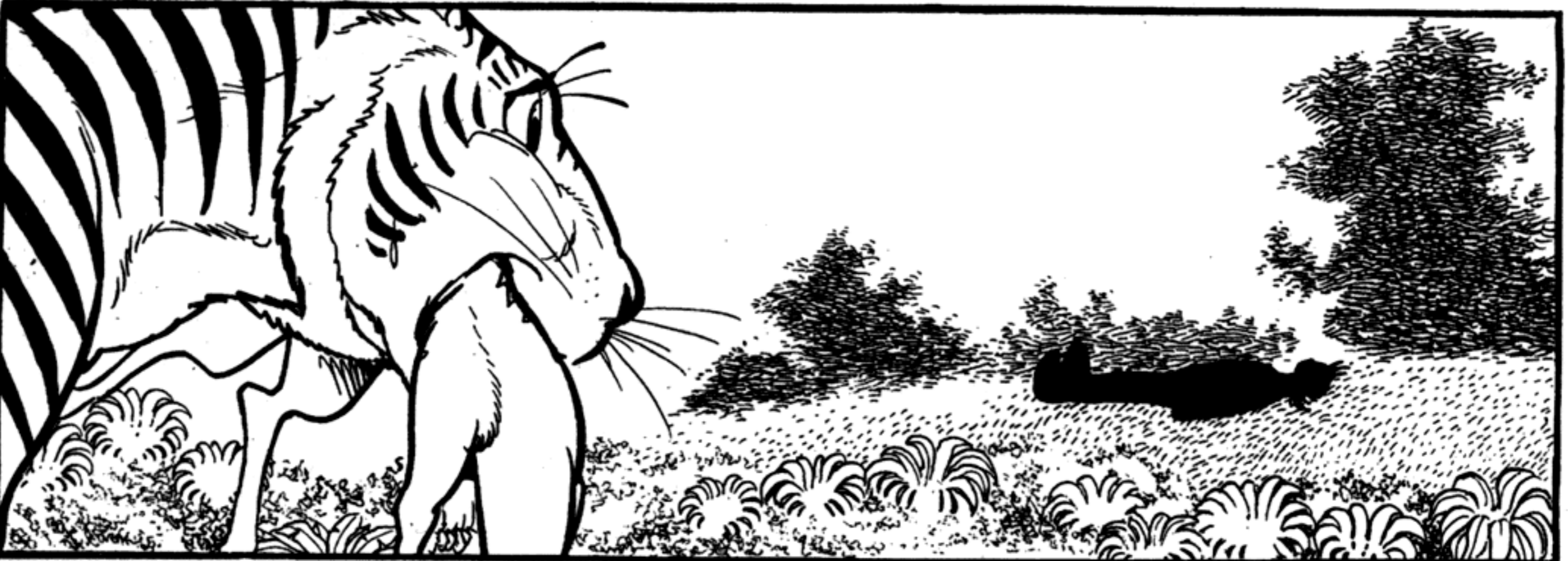
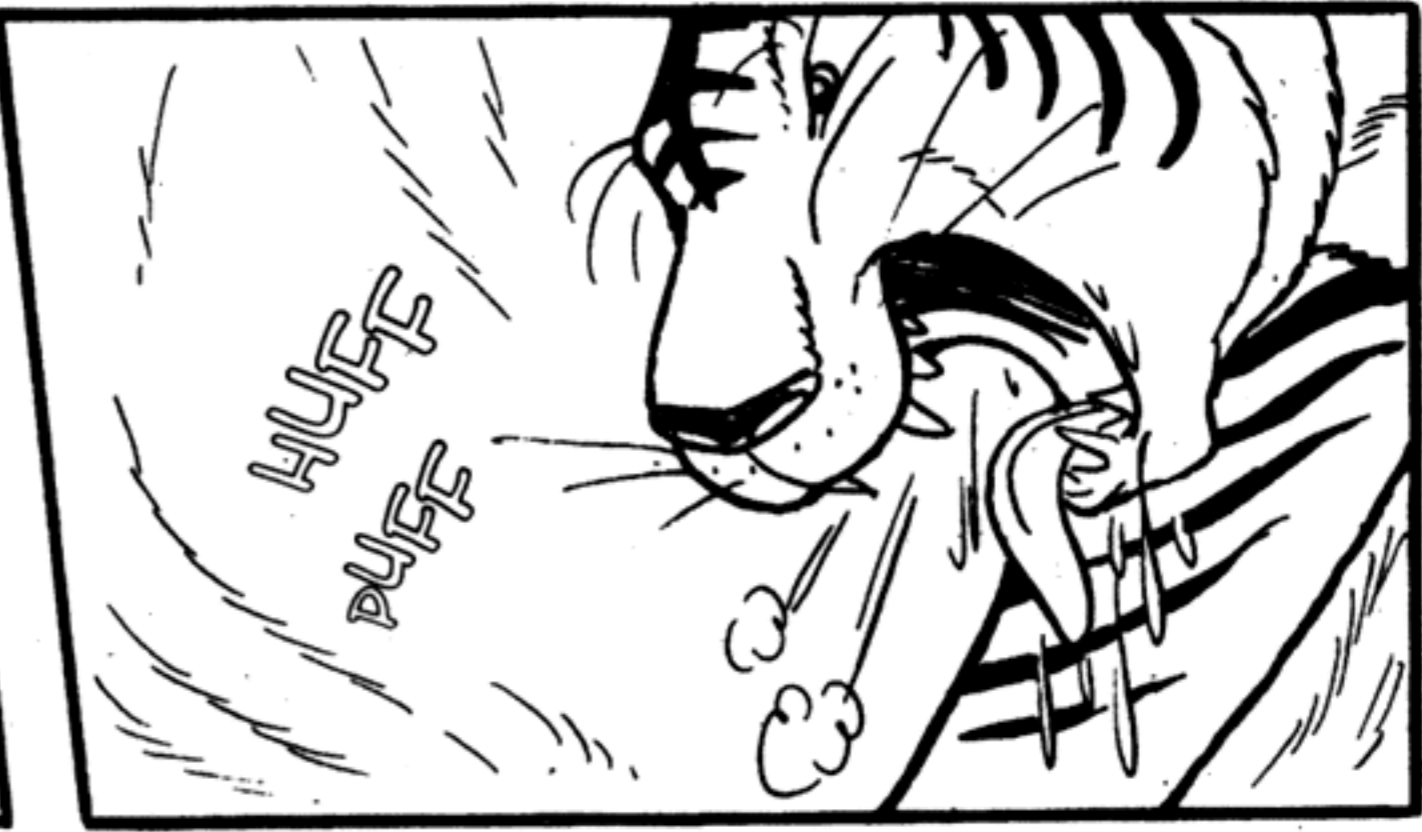
CHAPTER ONE

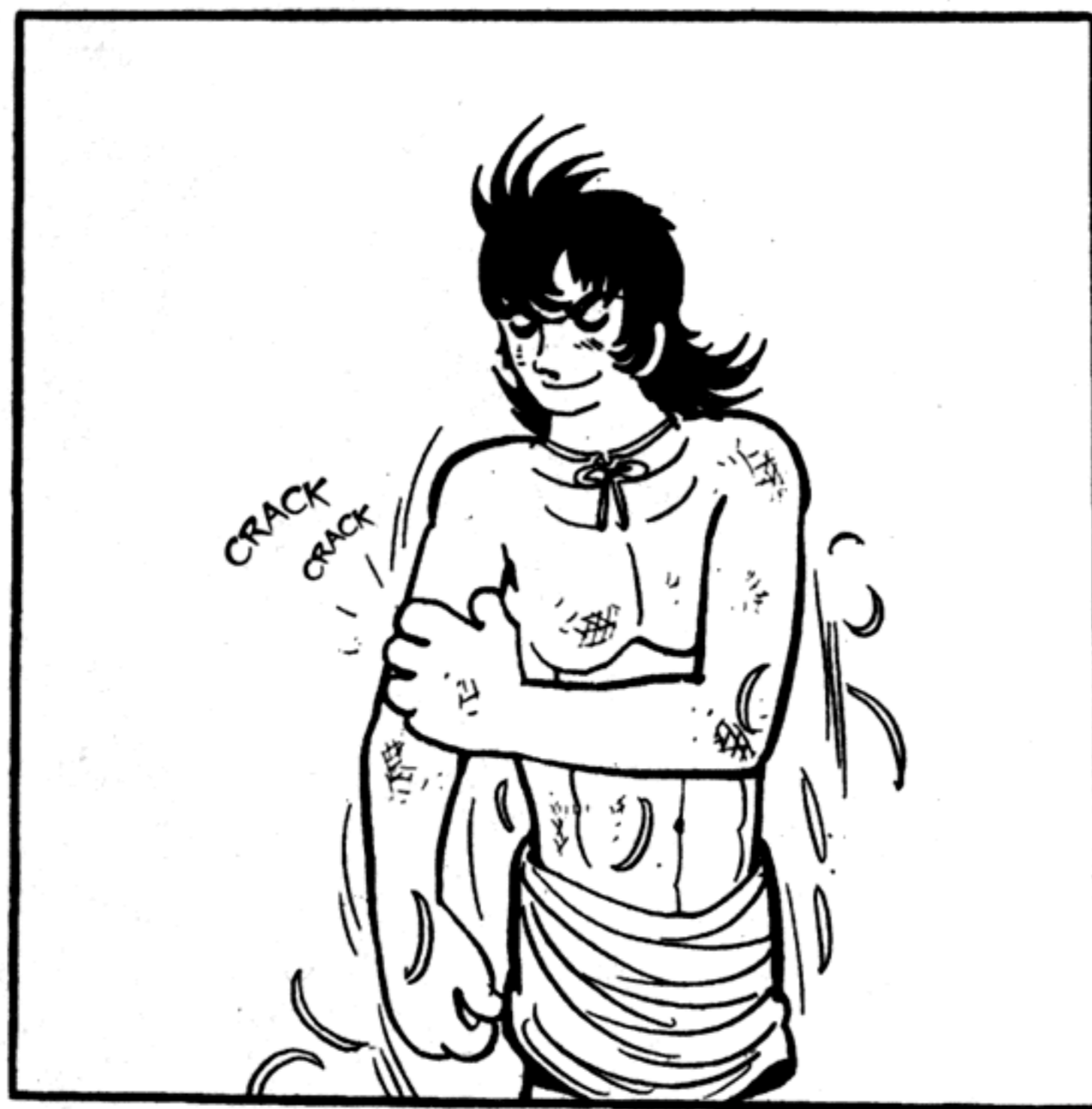
THE PRINCE

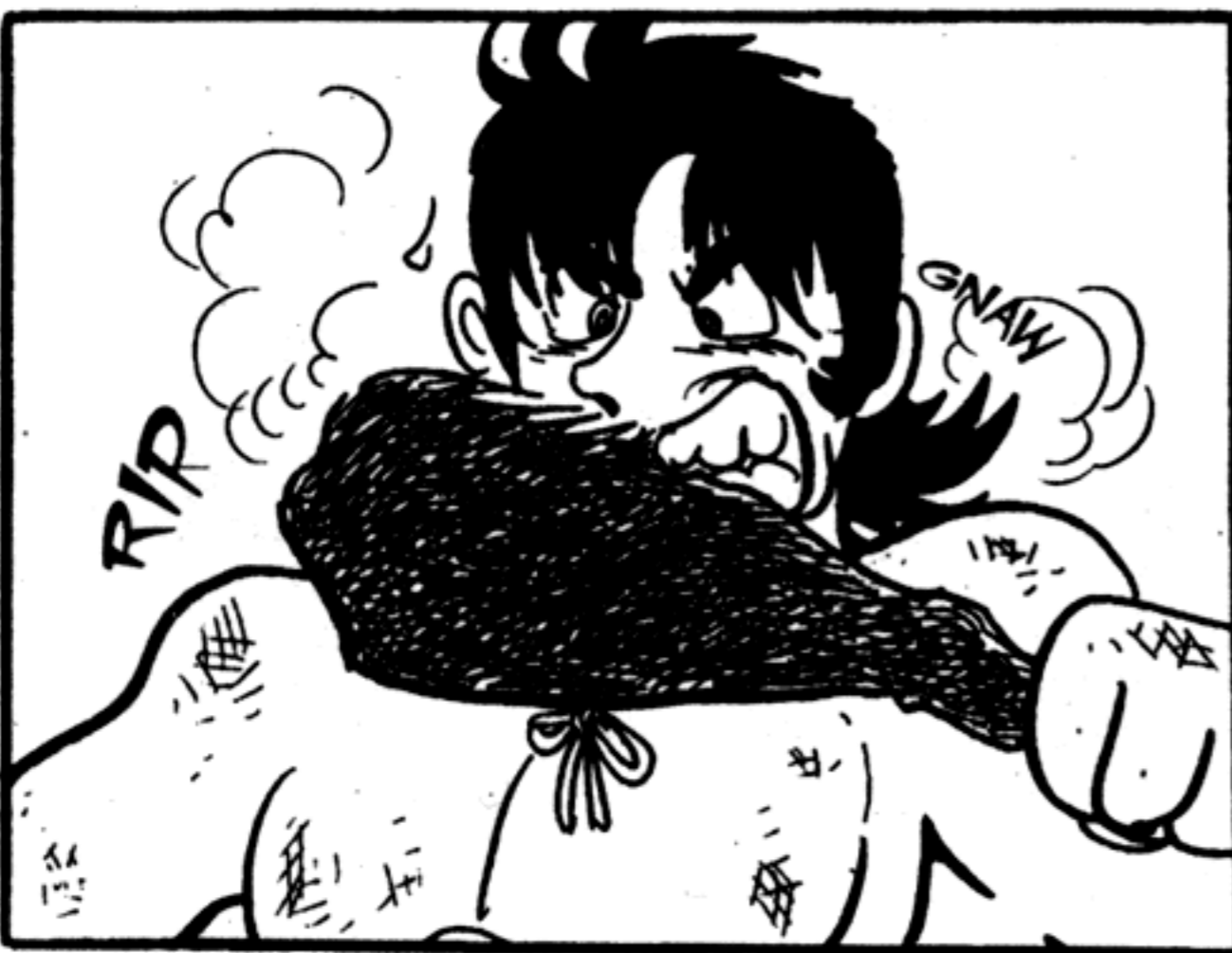
WHAT IS ONE MAN'S LIFE COMPARED TO THE ETERNITY
OF TIME AND SPACE? NO MORE THAN A SNOWFLAKE
THAT GLITTERS IN THE SUN FOR A MOMENT
BEFORE MELTING INTO THE FLOW OF TIME.
CHAPRA HAS PASSED INTO OBLIVION AND SO HAS BUDAI.
TEN YEARS HAVE COME AND GONE.

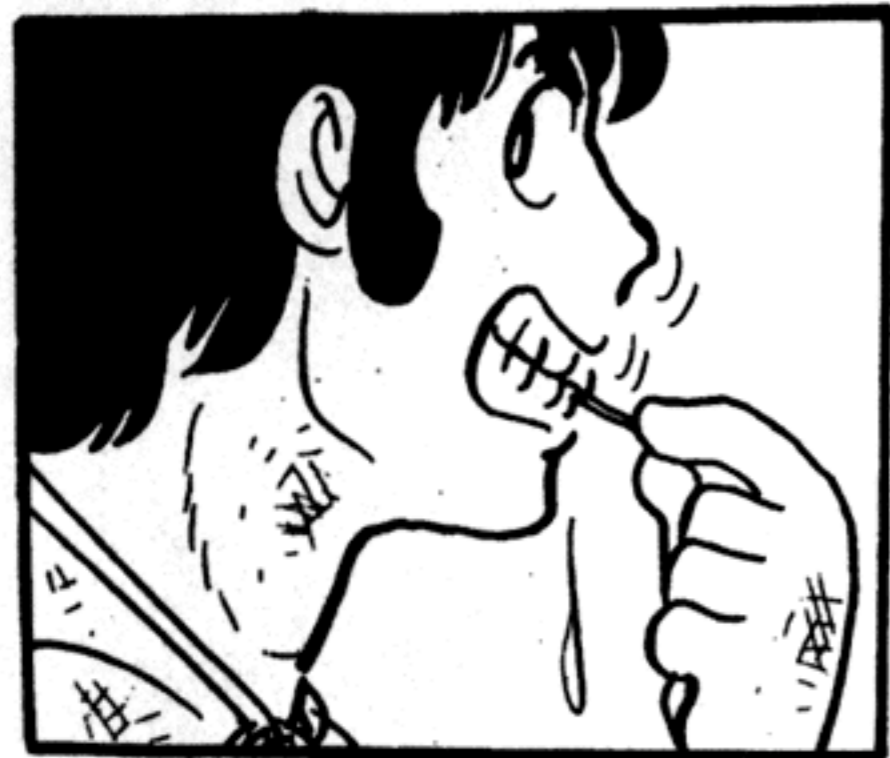
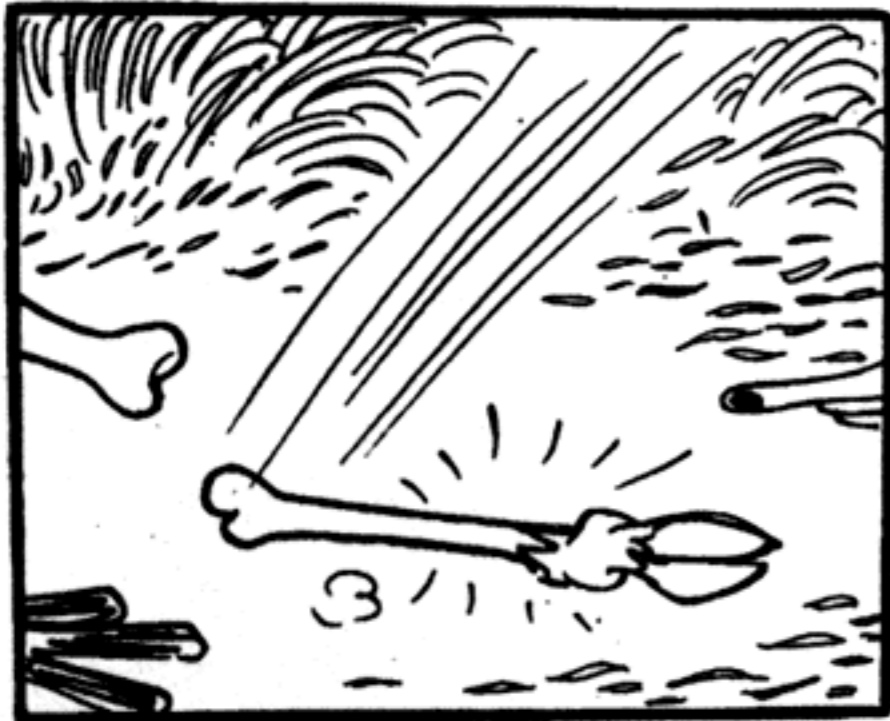


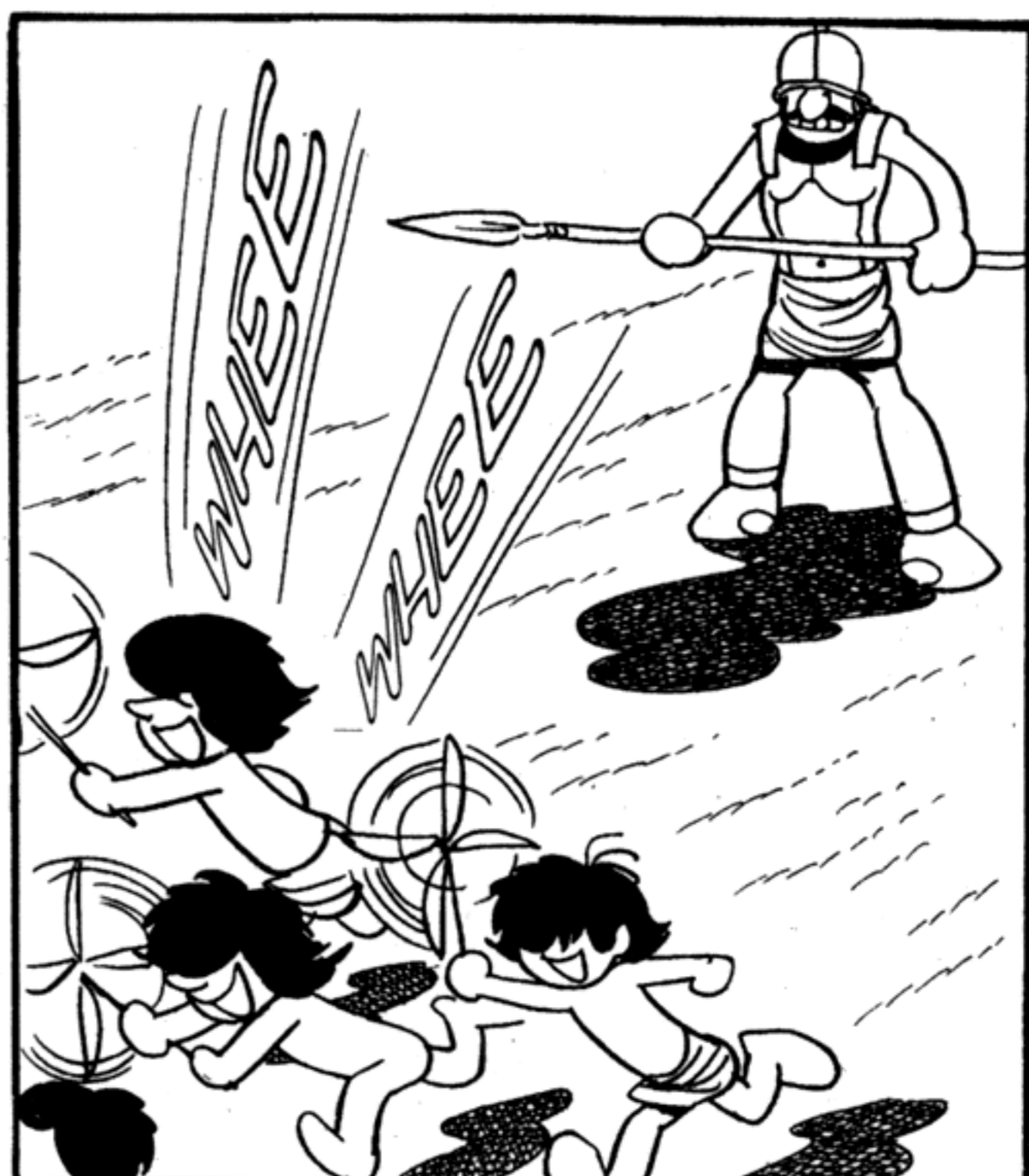
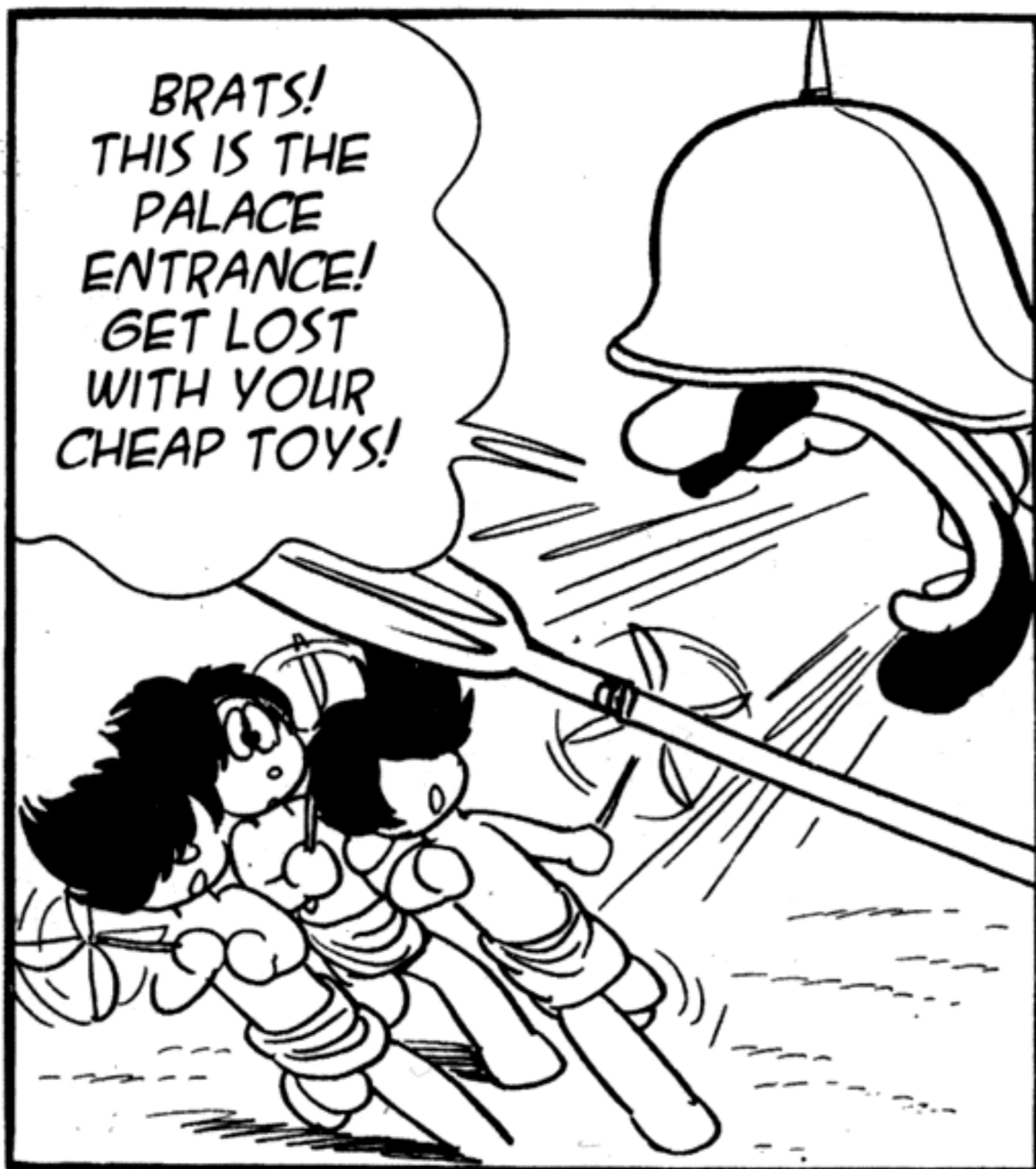


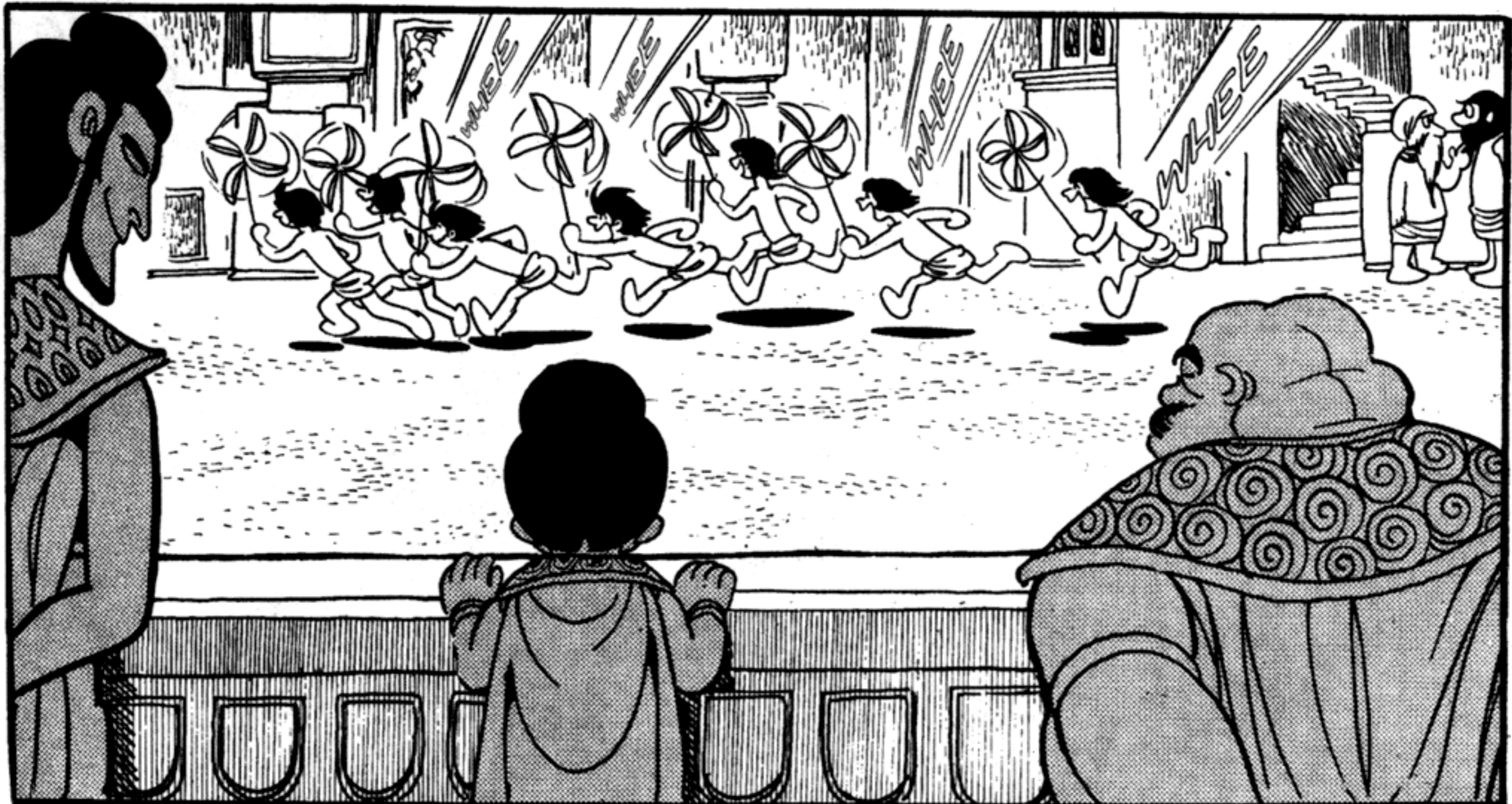
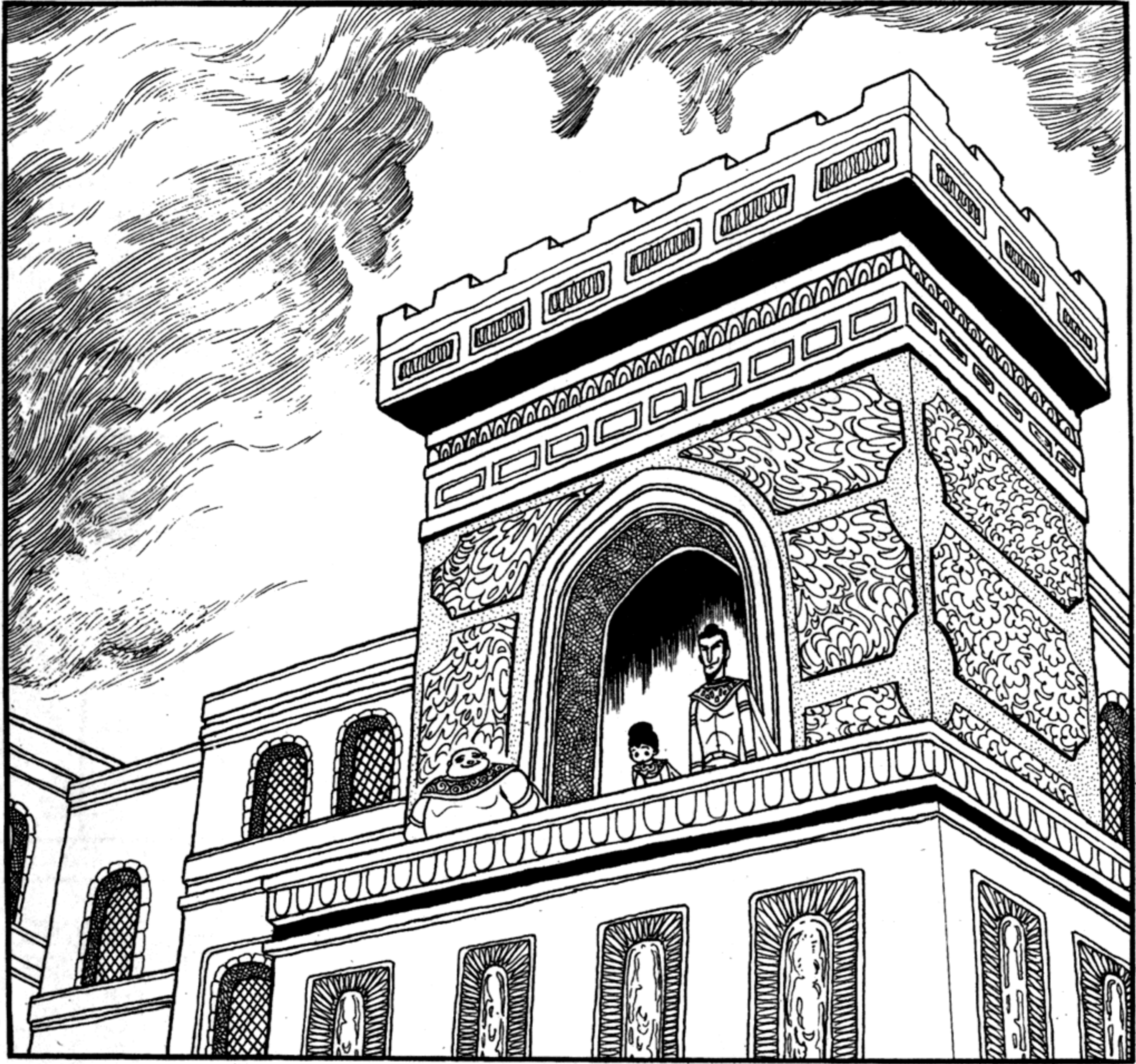


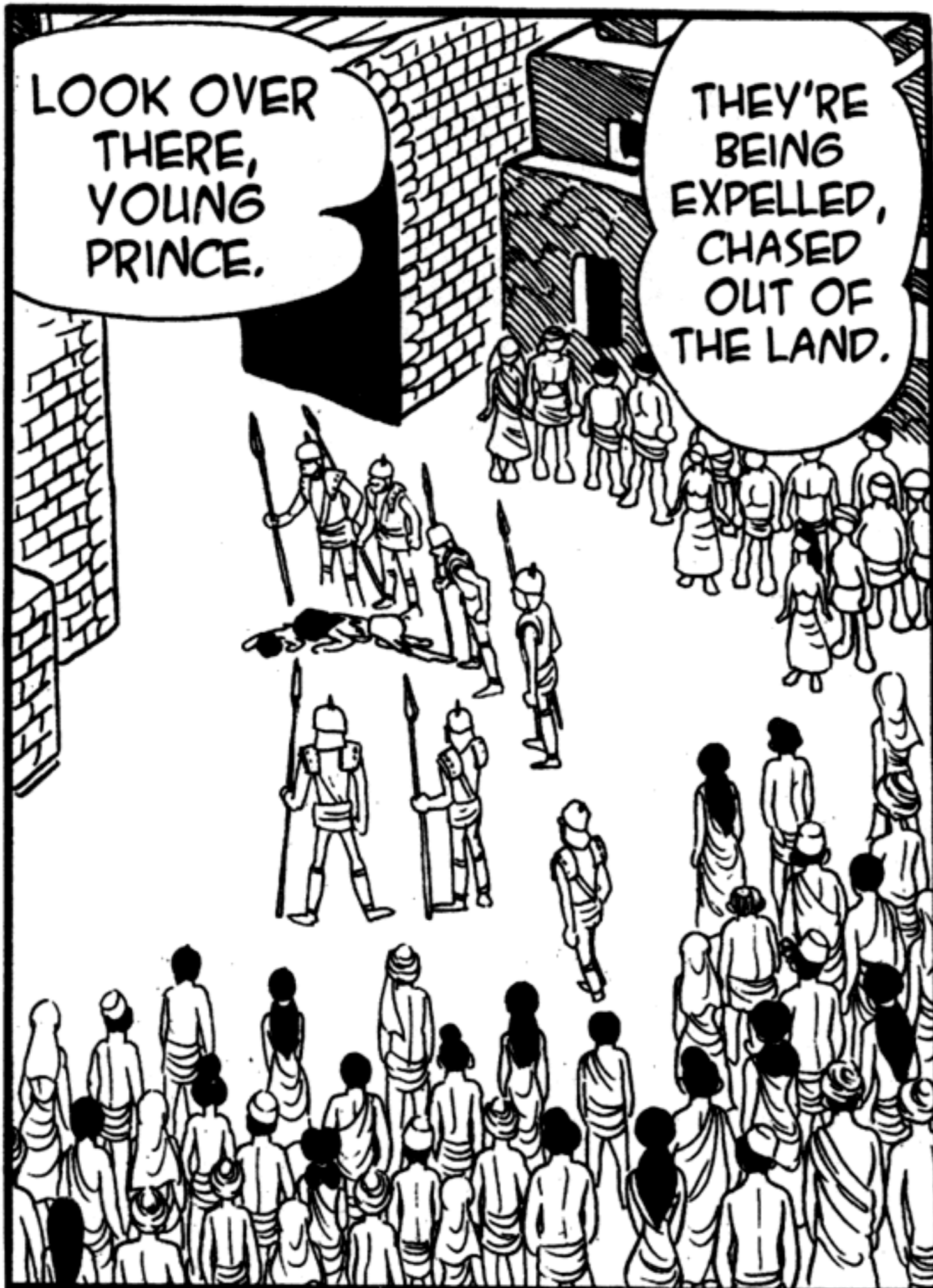
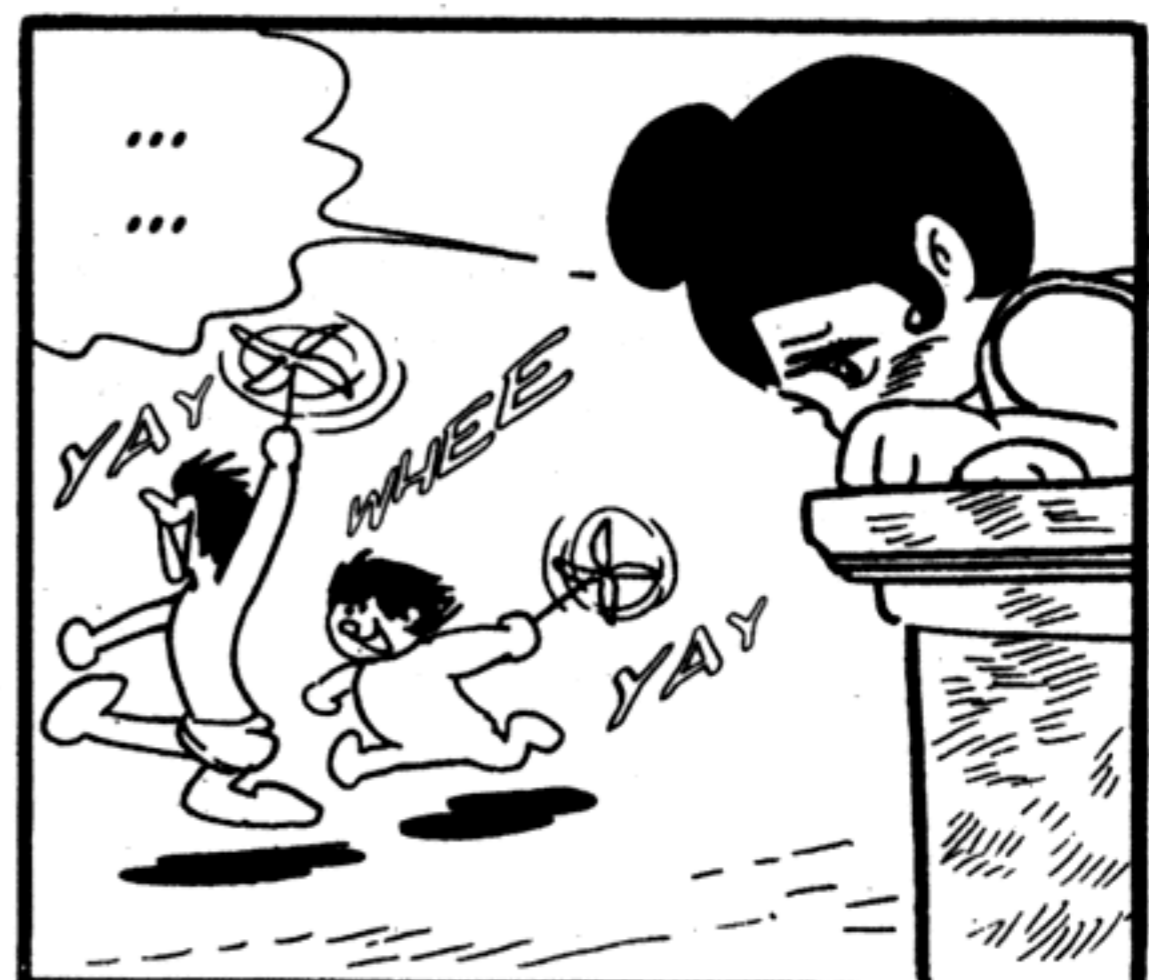


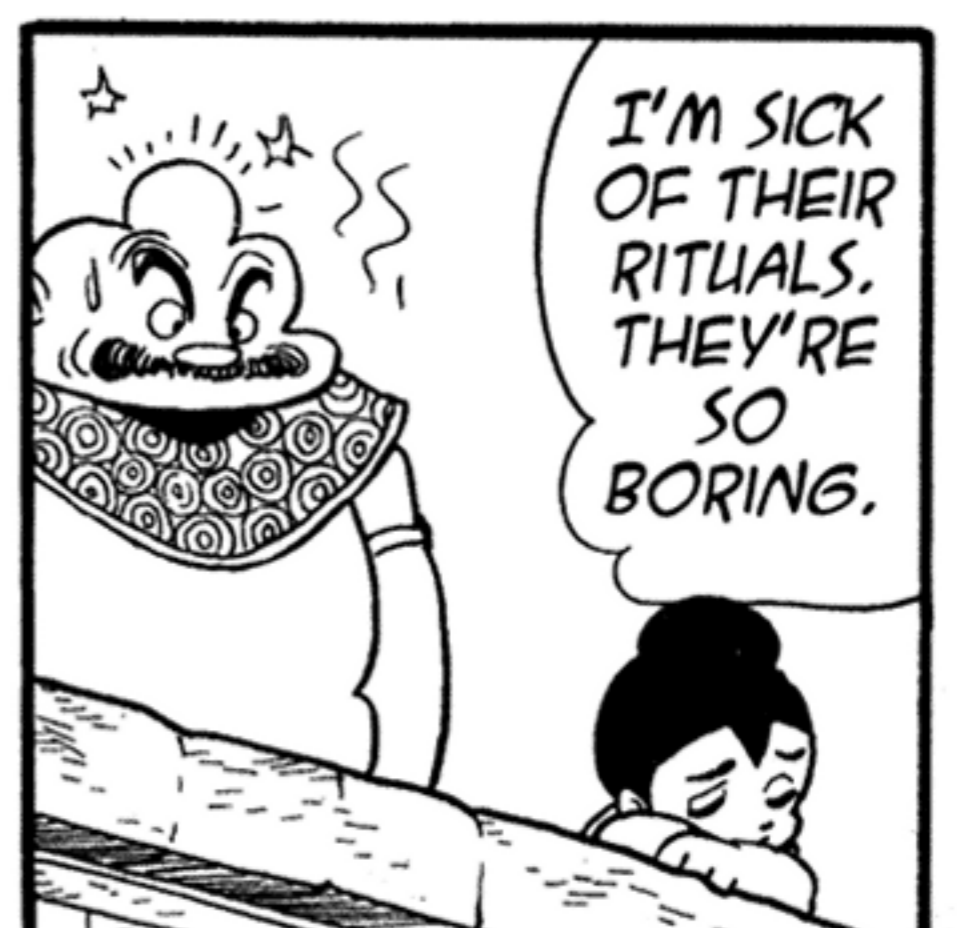
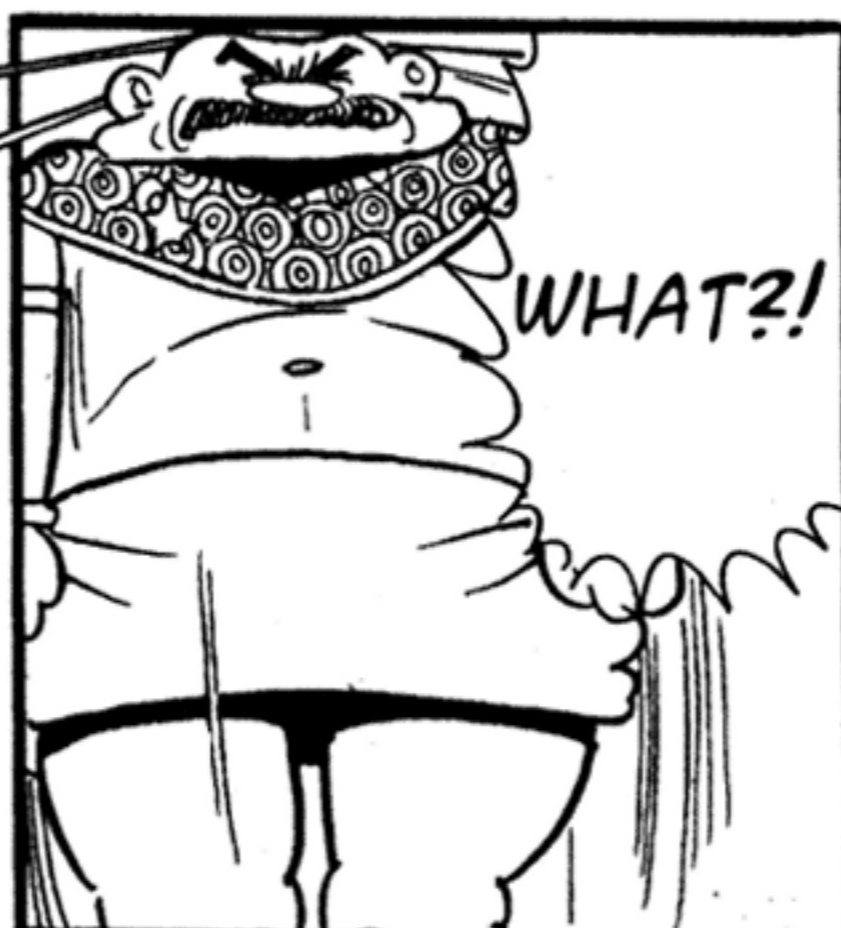
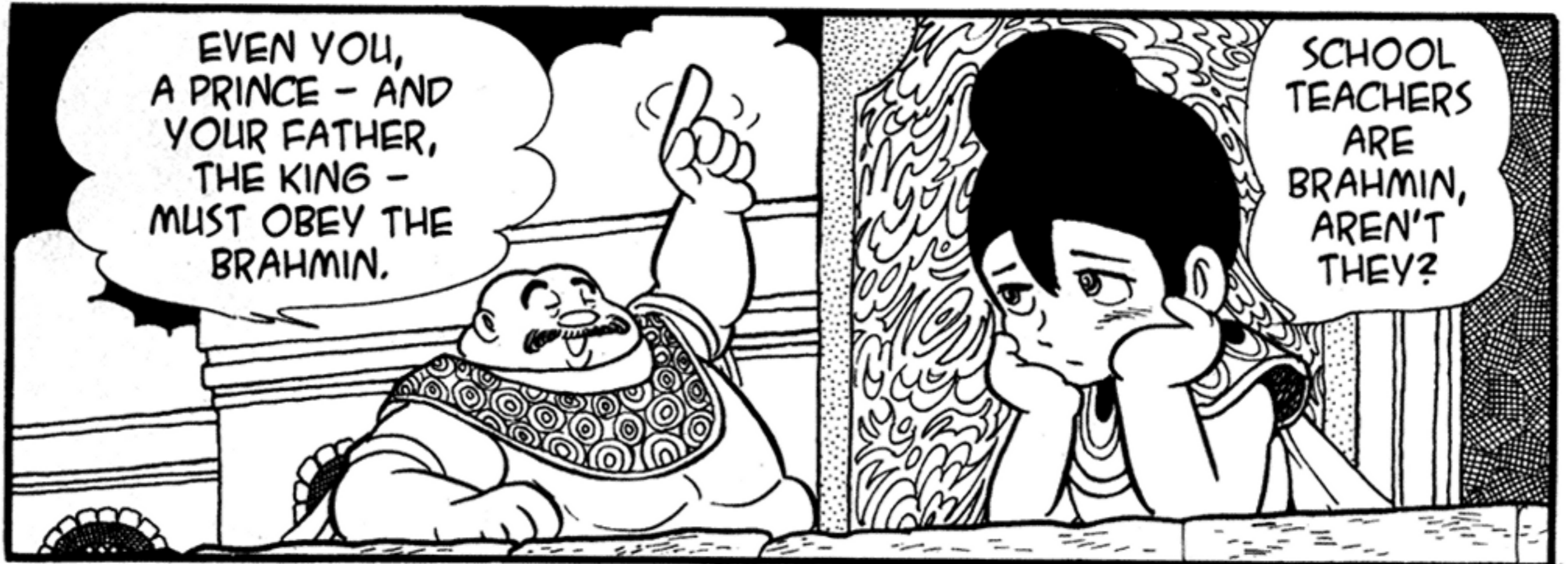
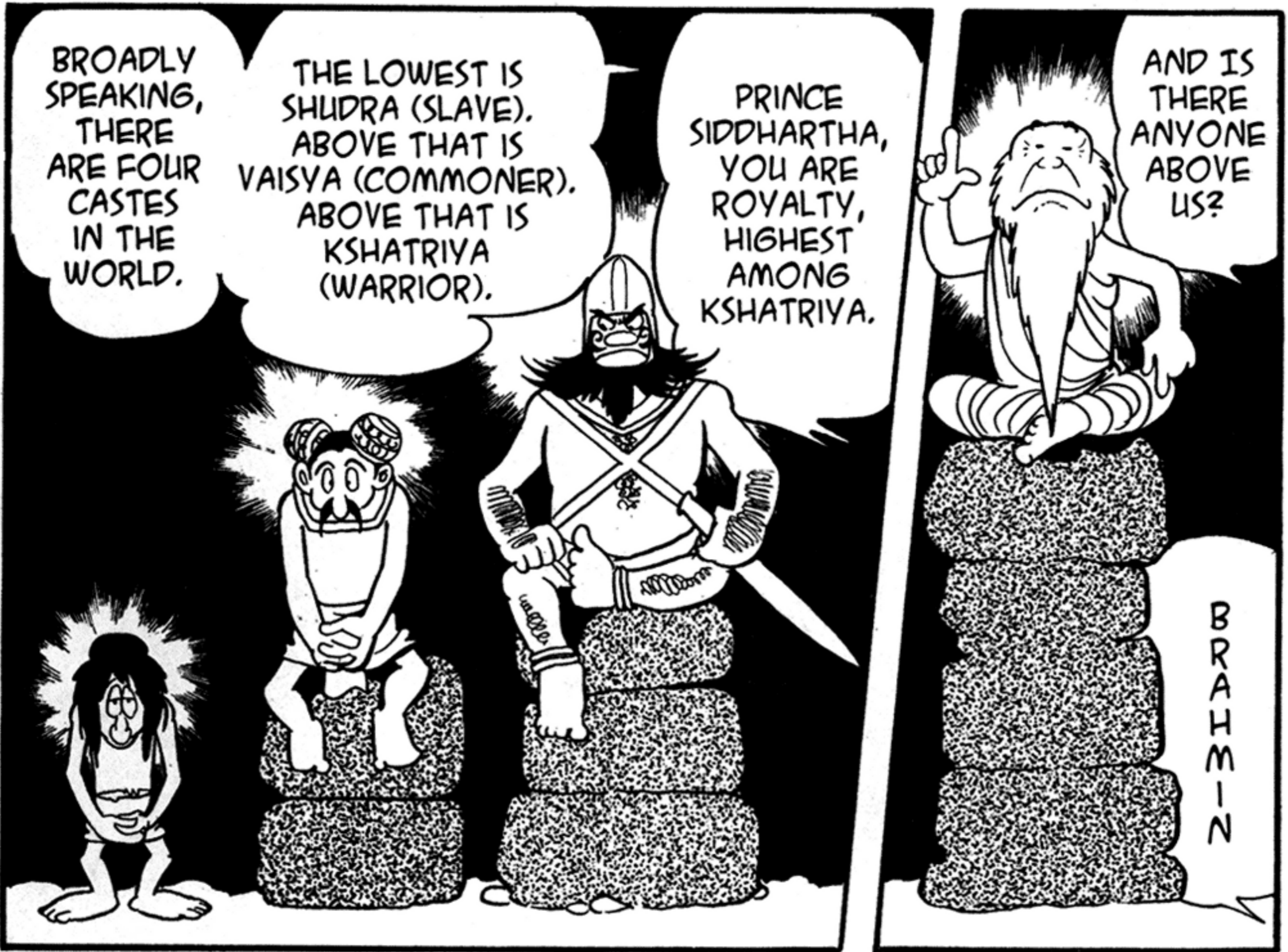


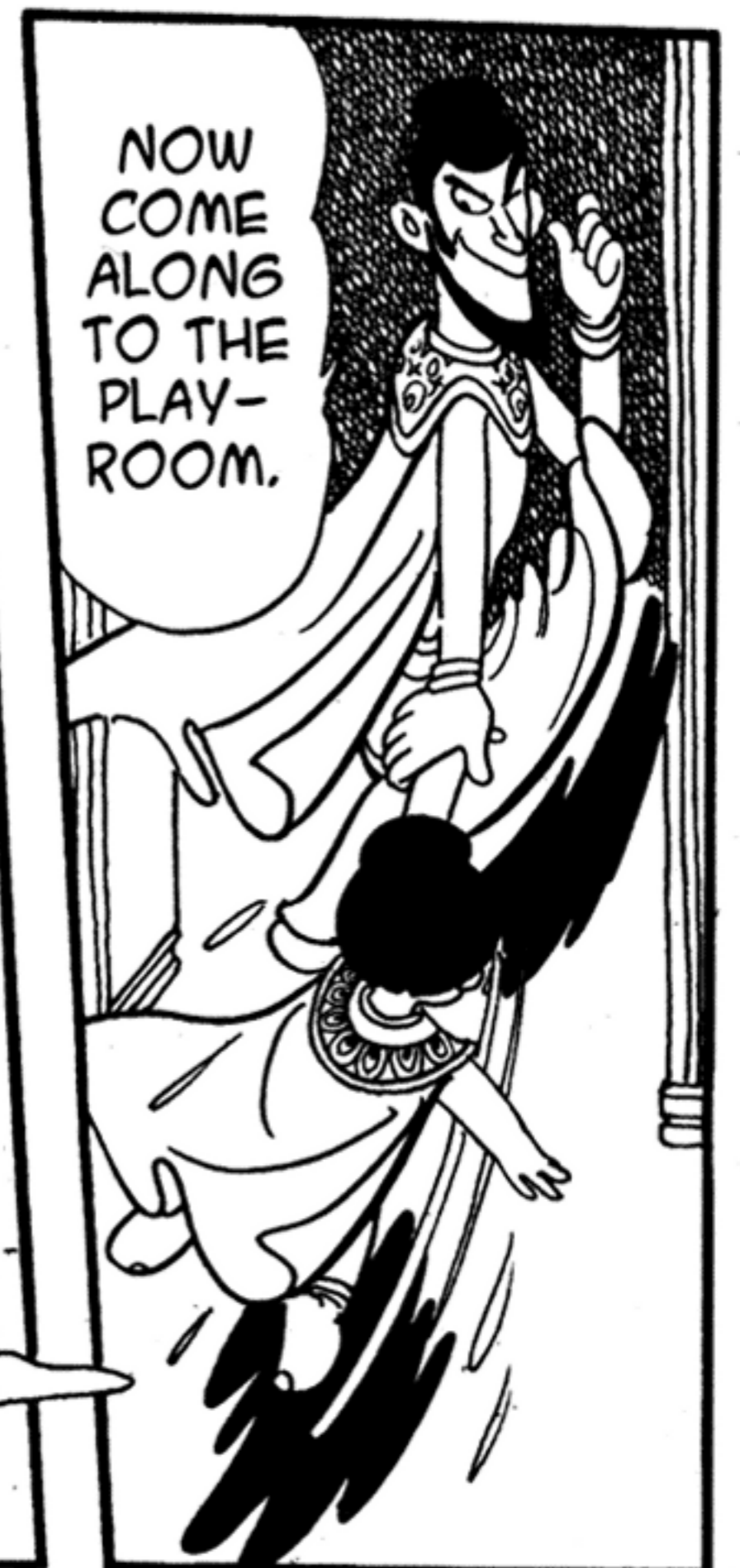
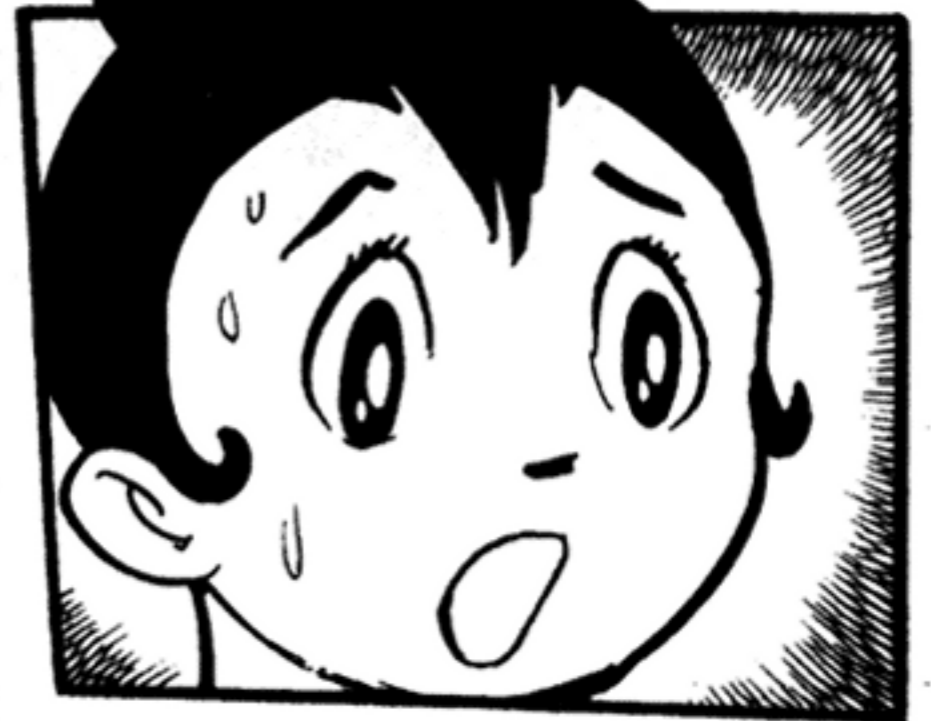
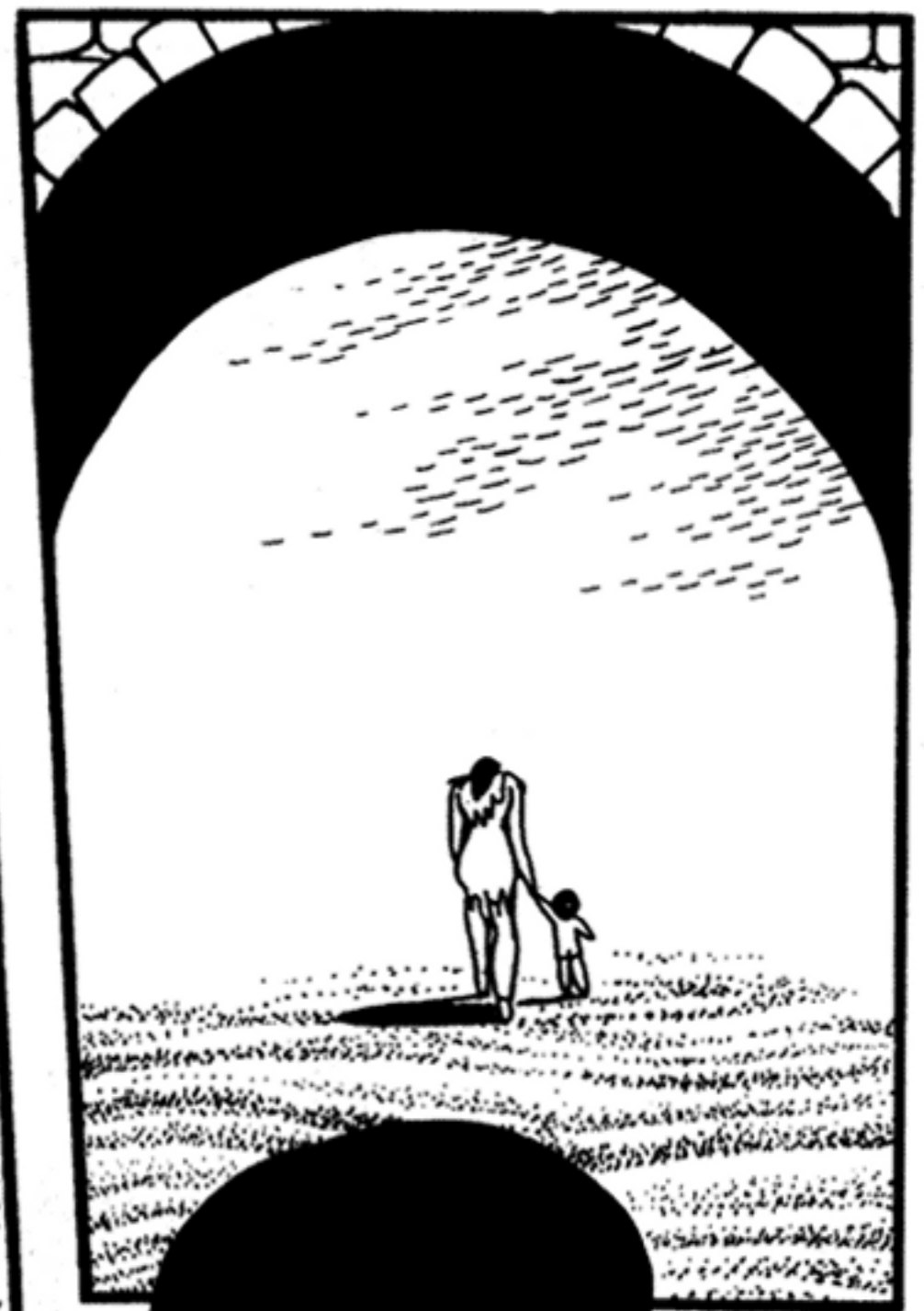














ANNOUNCING
PRINCE
SIDDHARTHA AAAA!

WELCOME
TO THE
PLAYROOM!

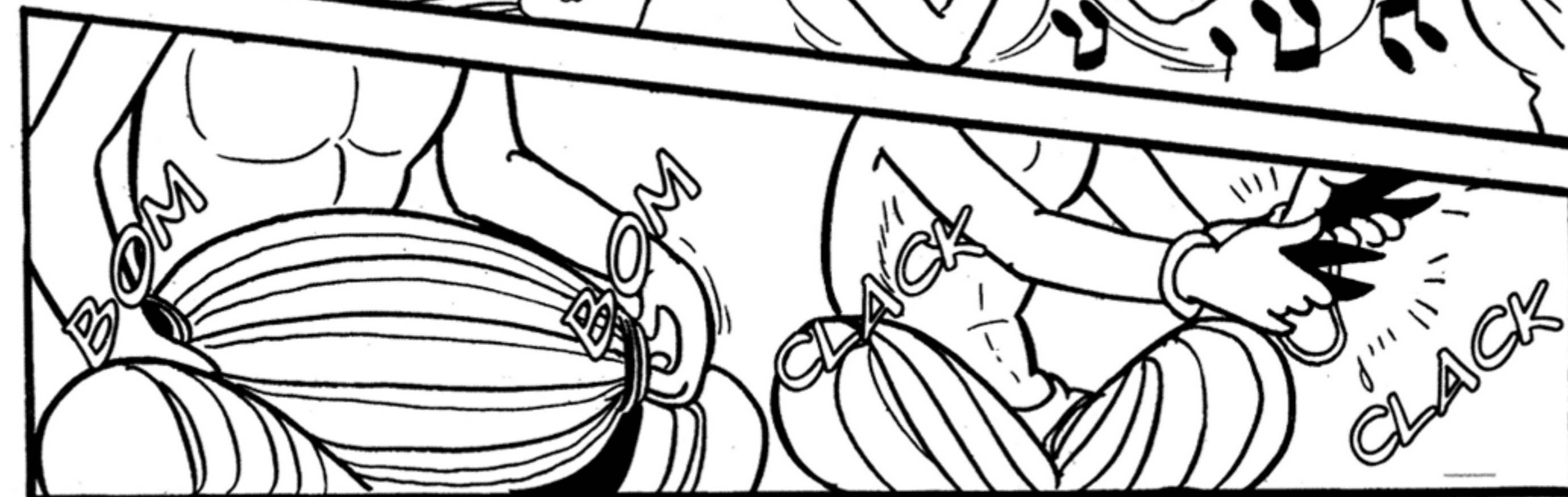


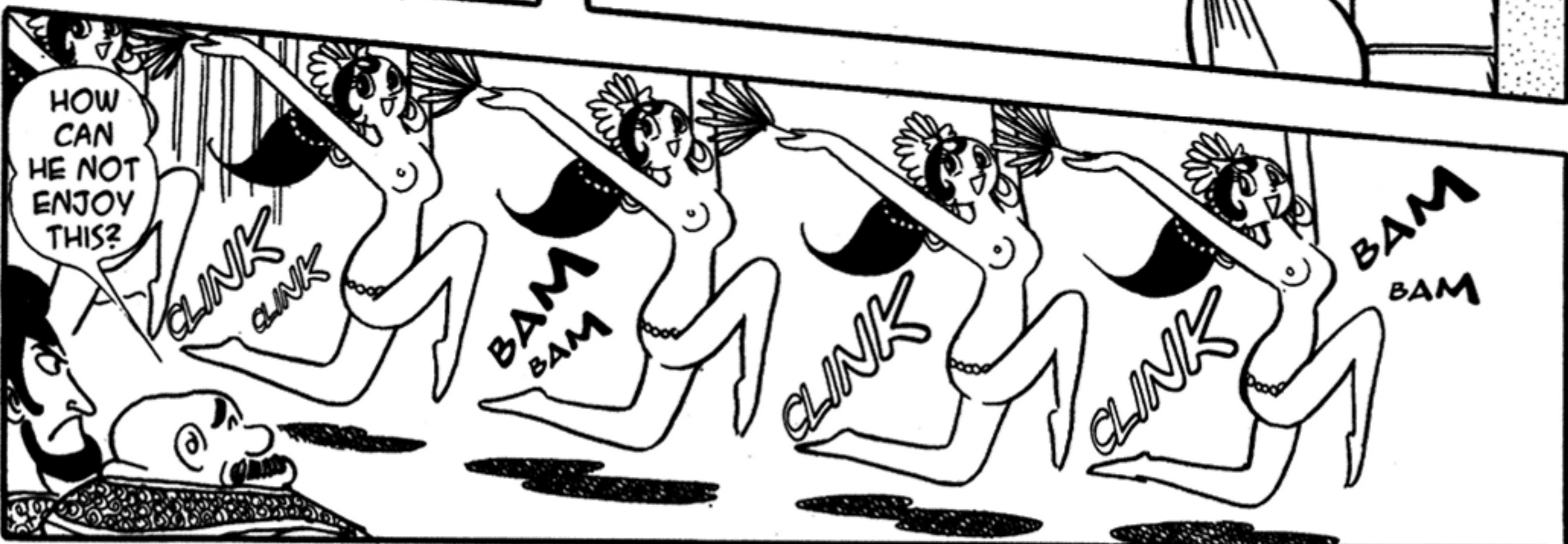
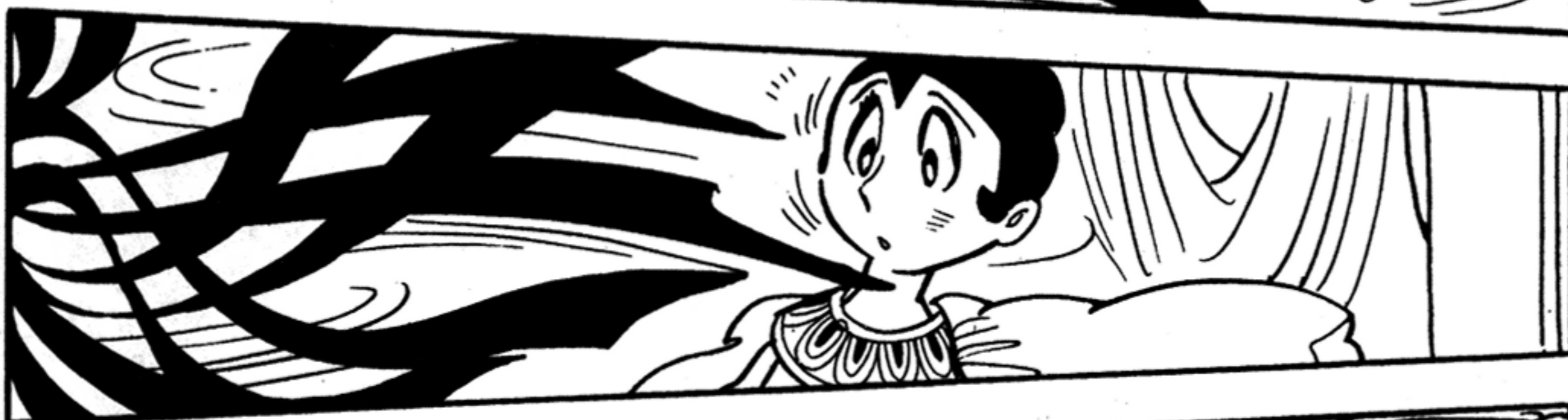
WELCOME,
YOUR
HIGHNESS!

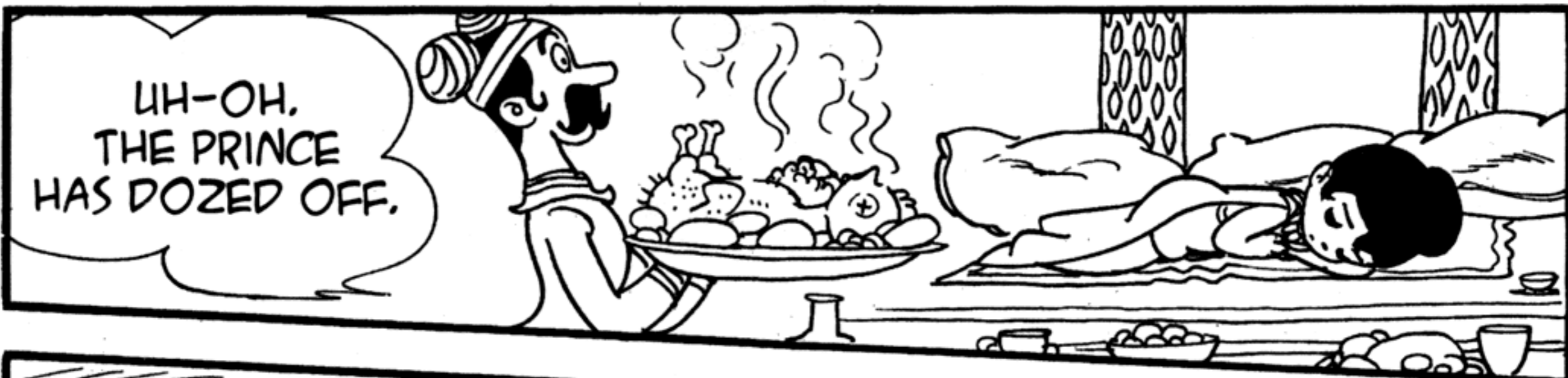
NICE
TO SEE
YOU!

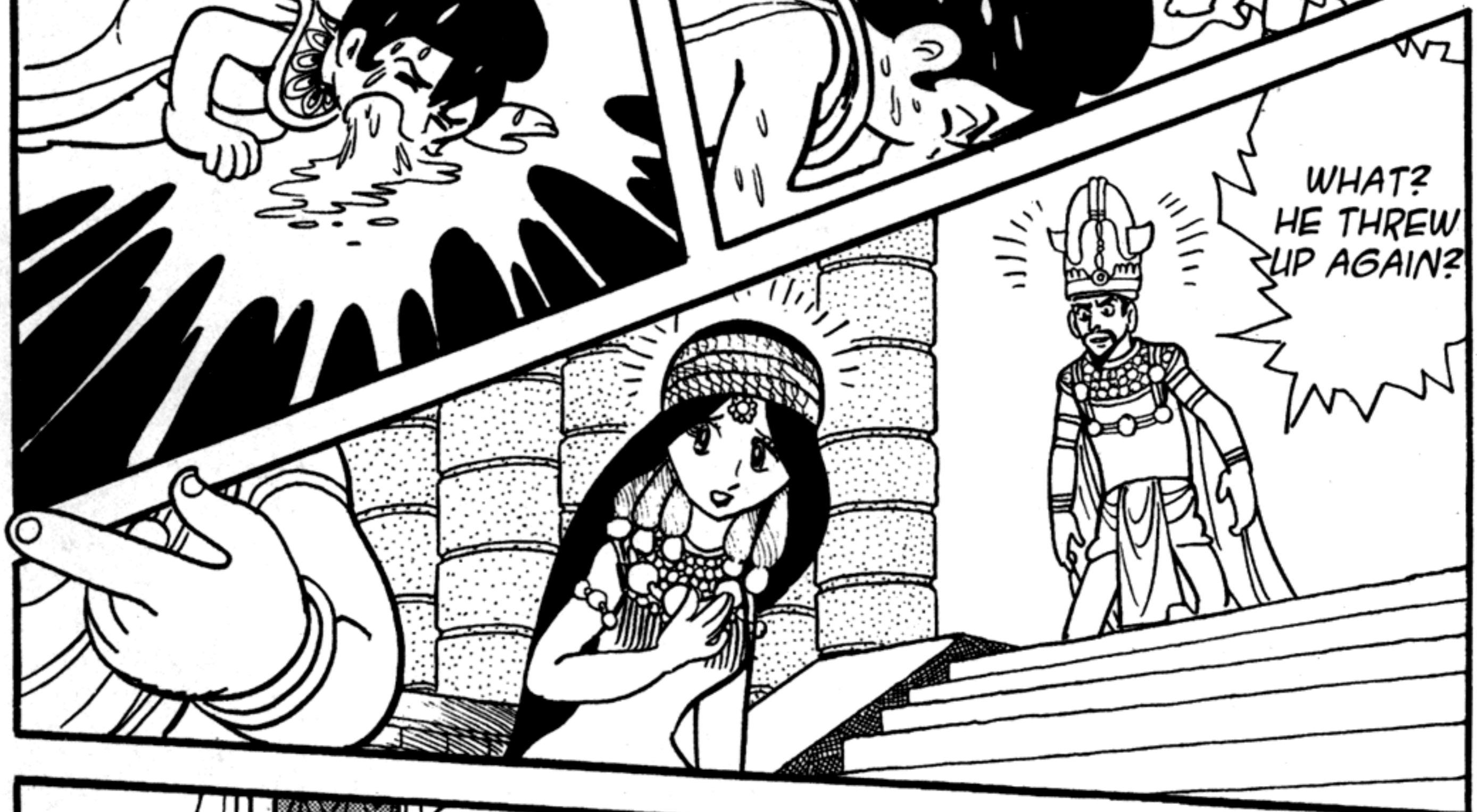
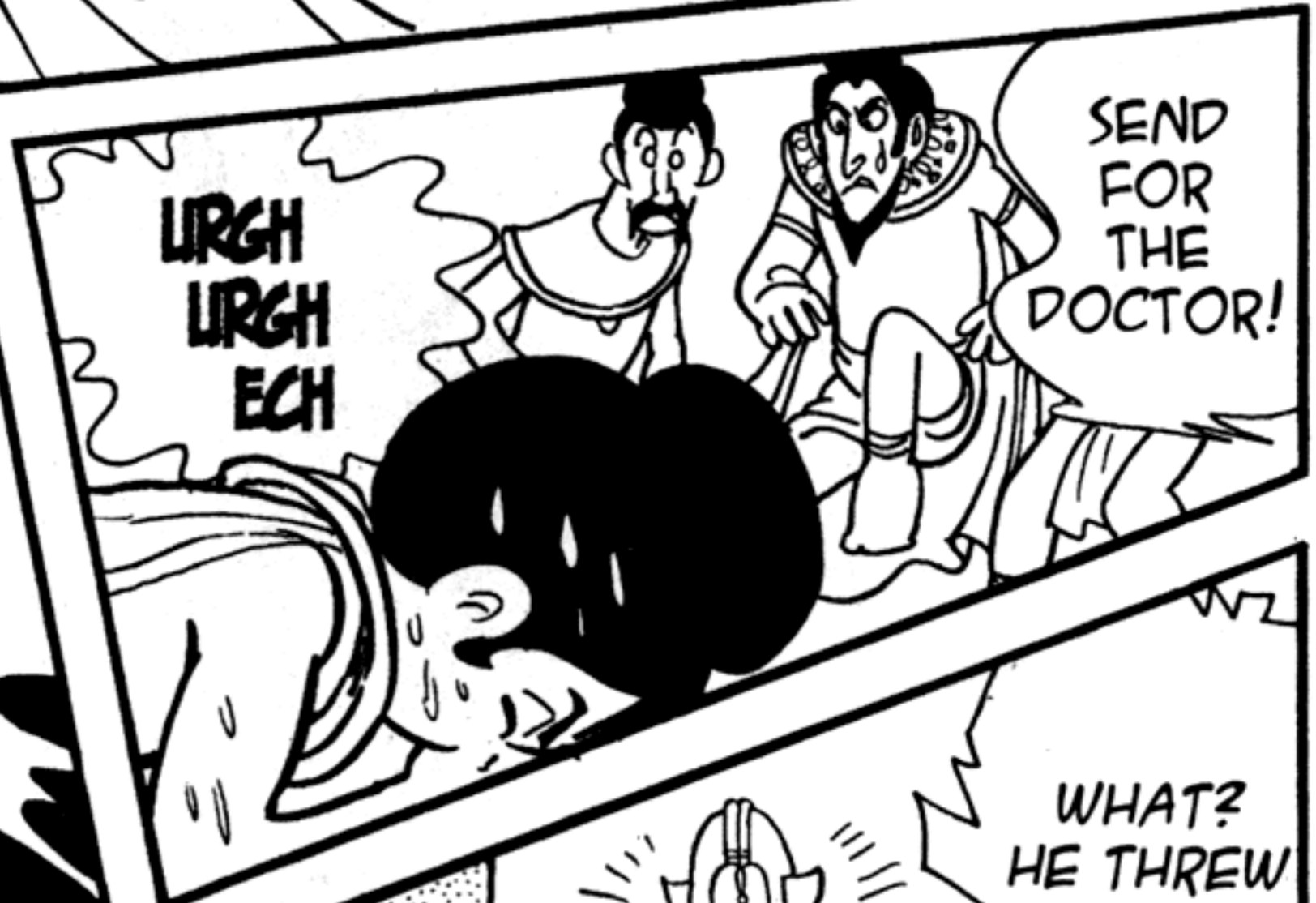
SO GLAD
YOU'RE
HERE!

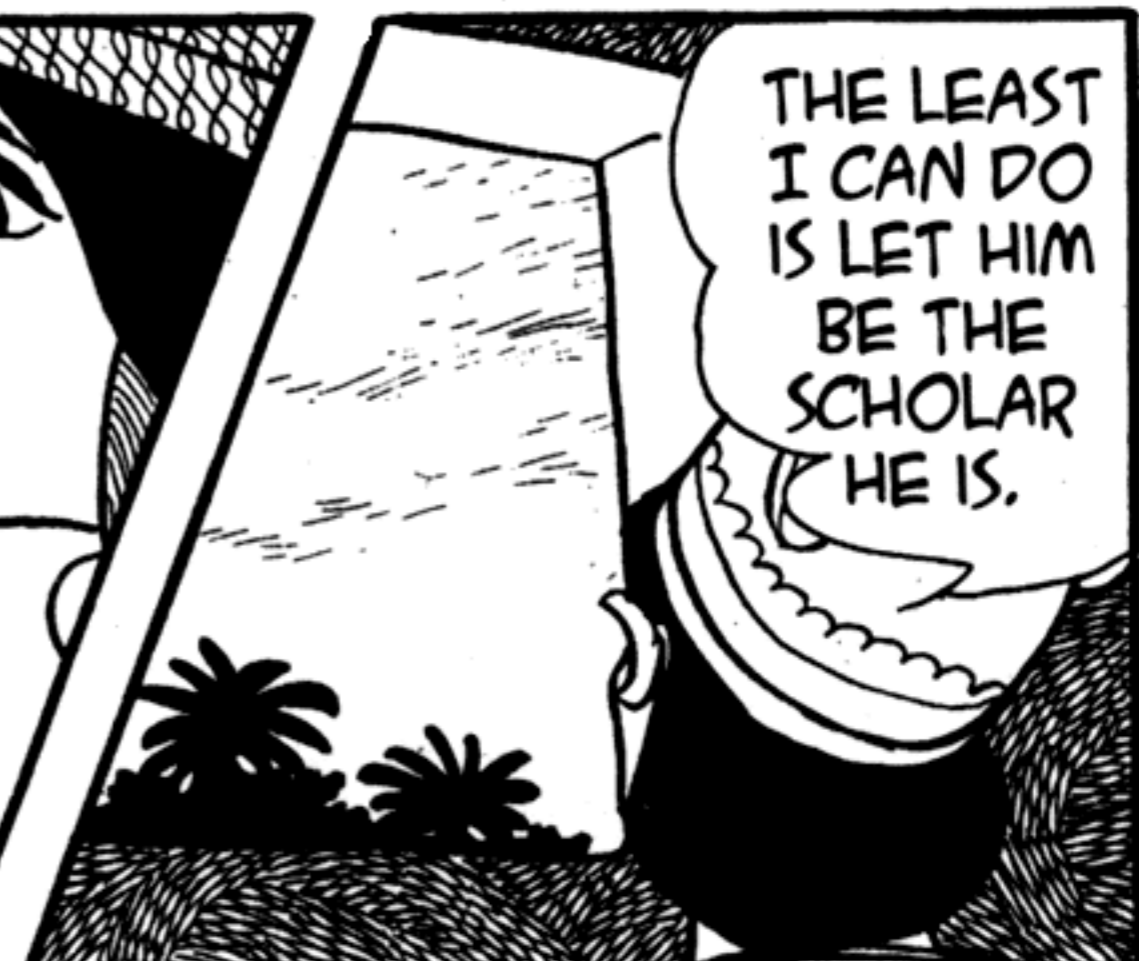
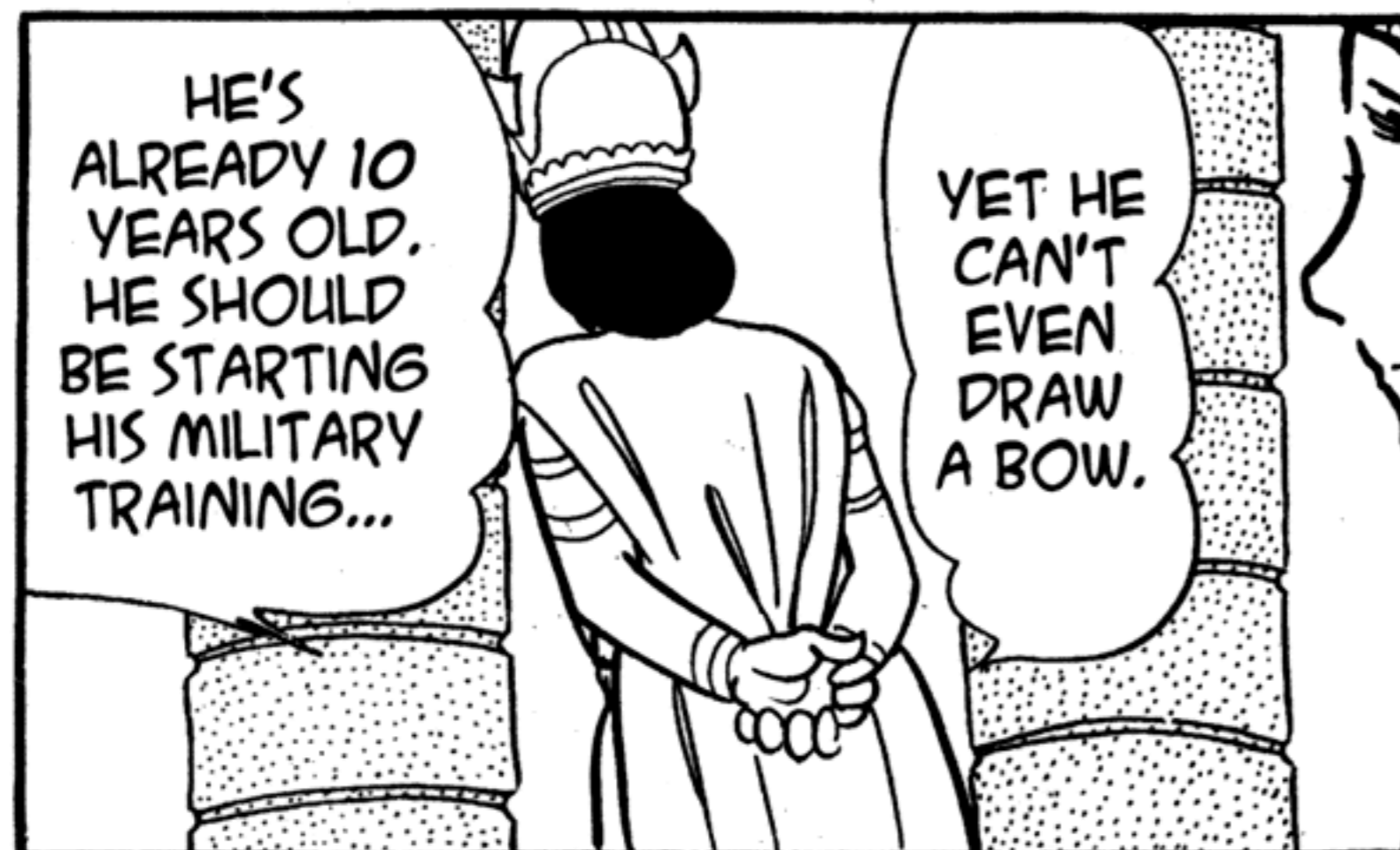
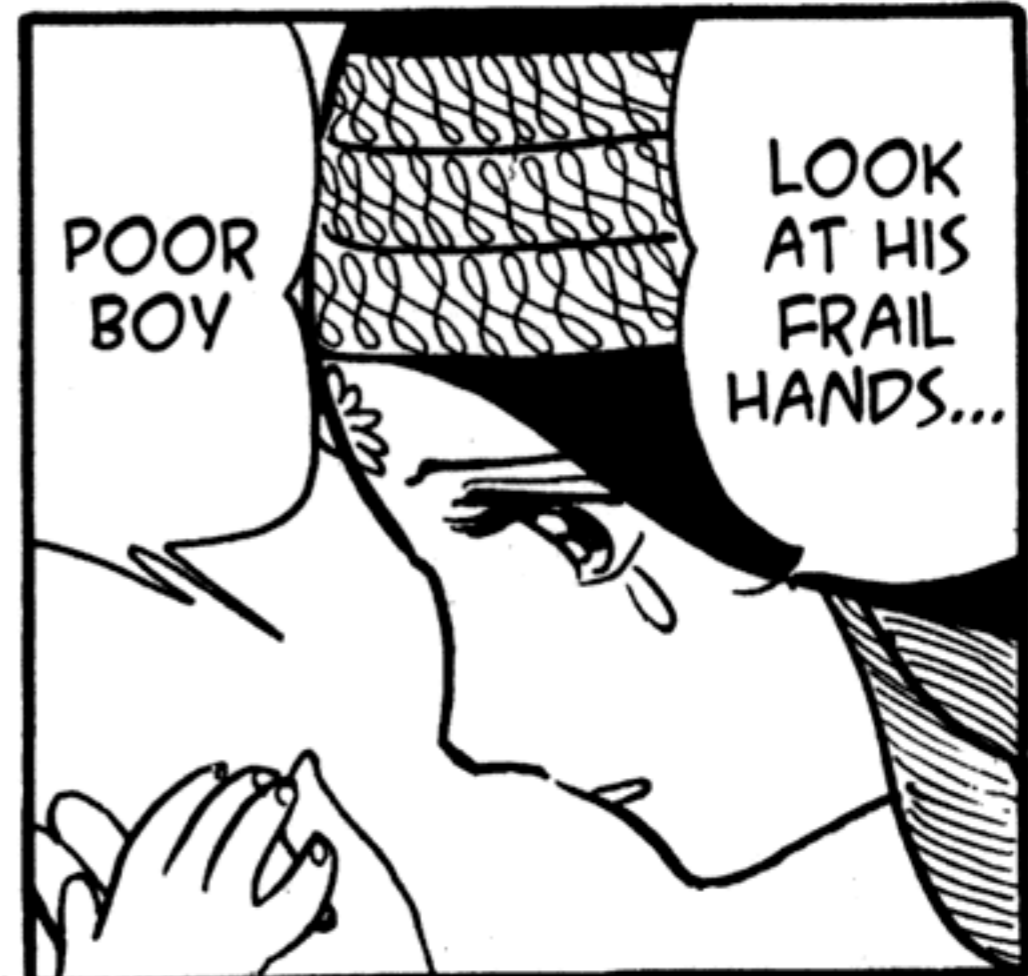
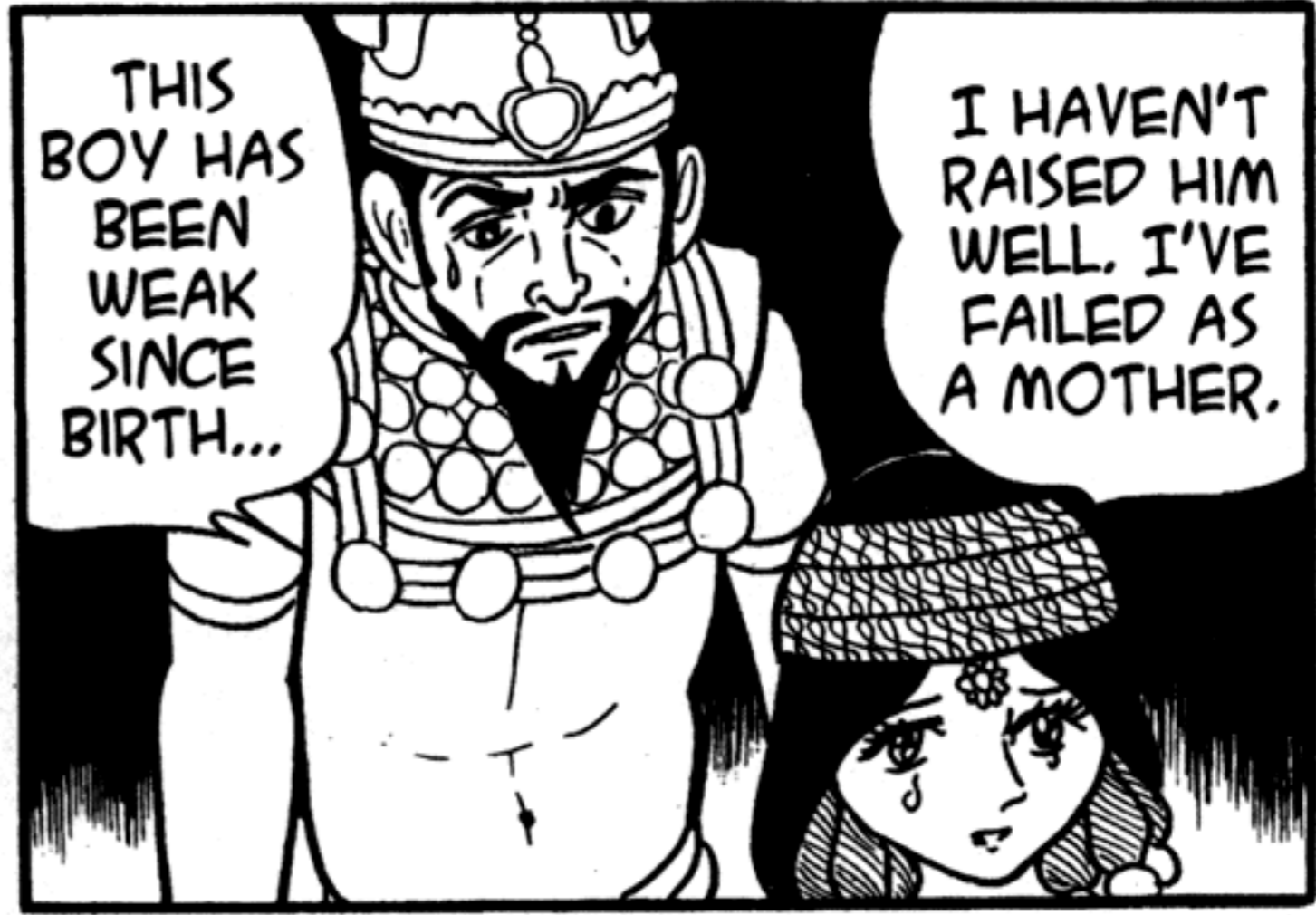
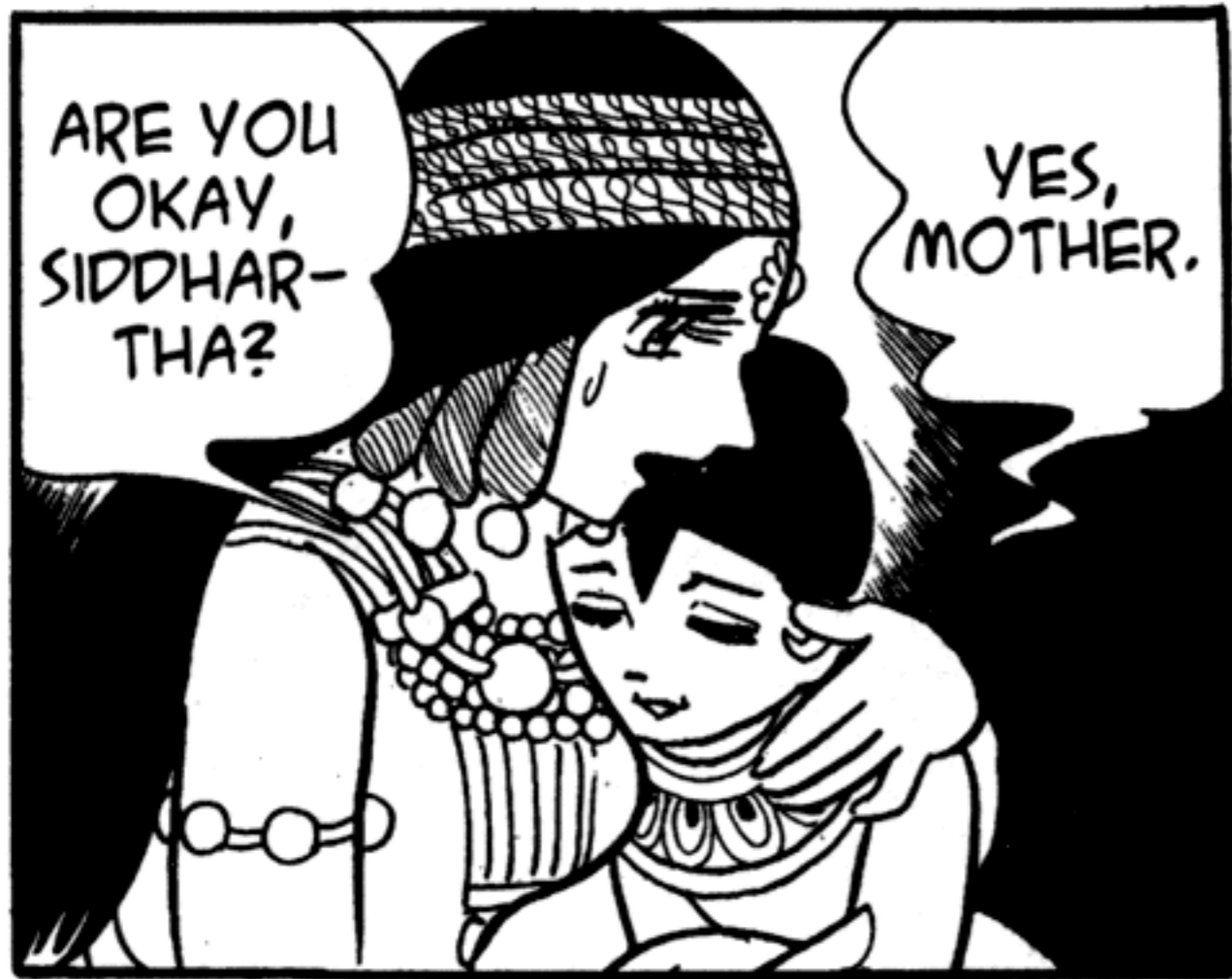
WANNA
PLAY?

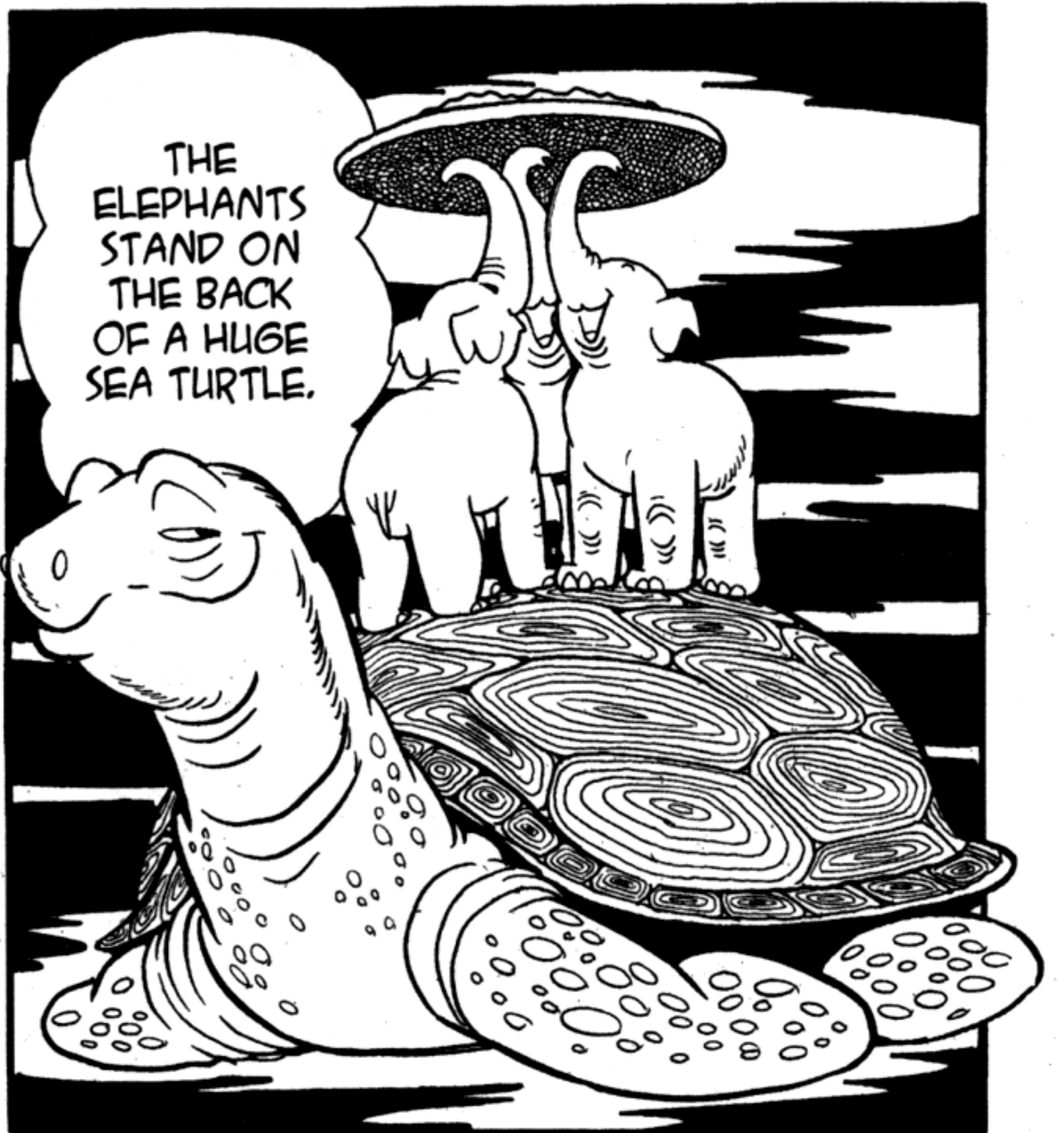
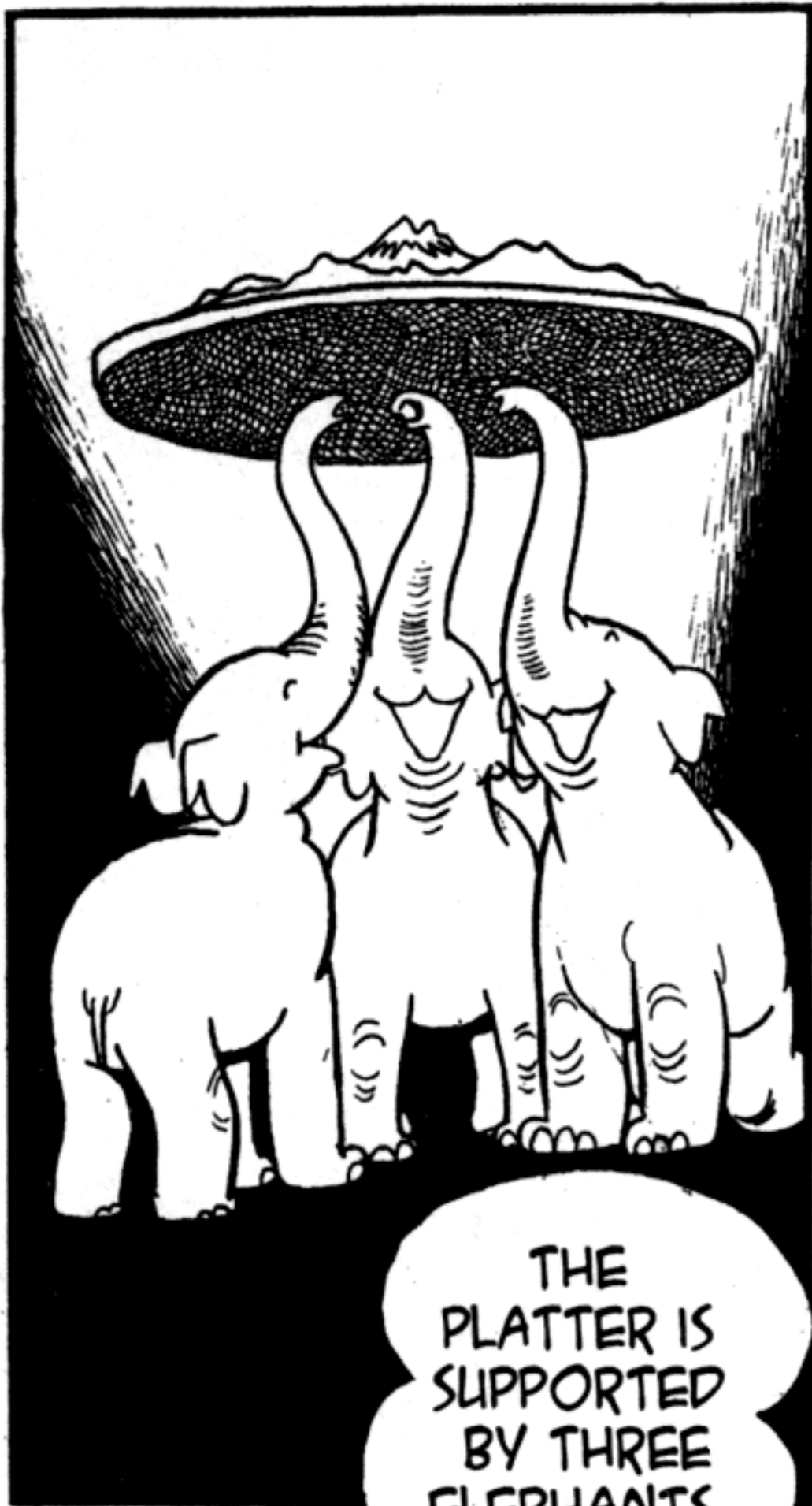
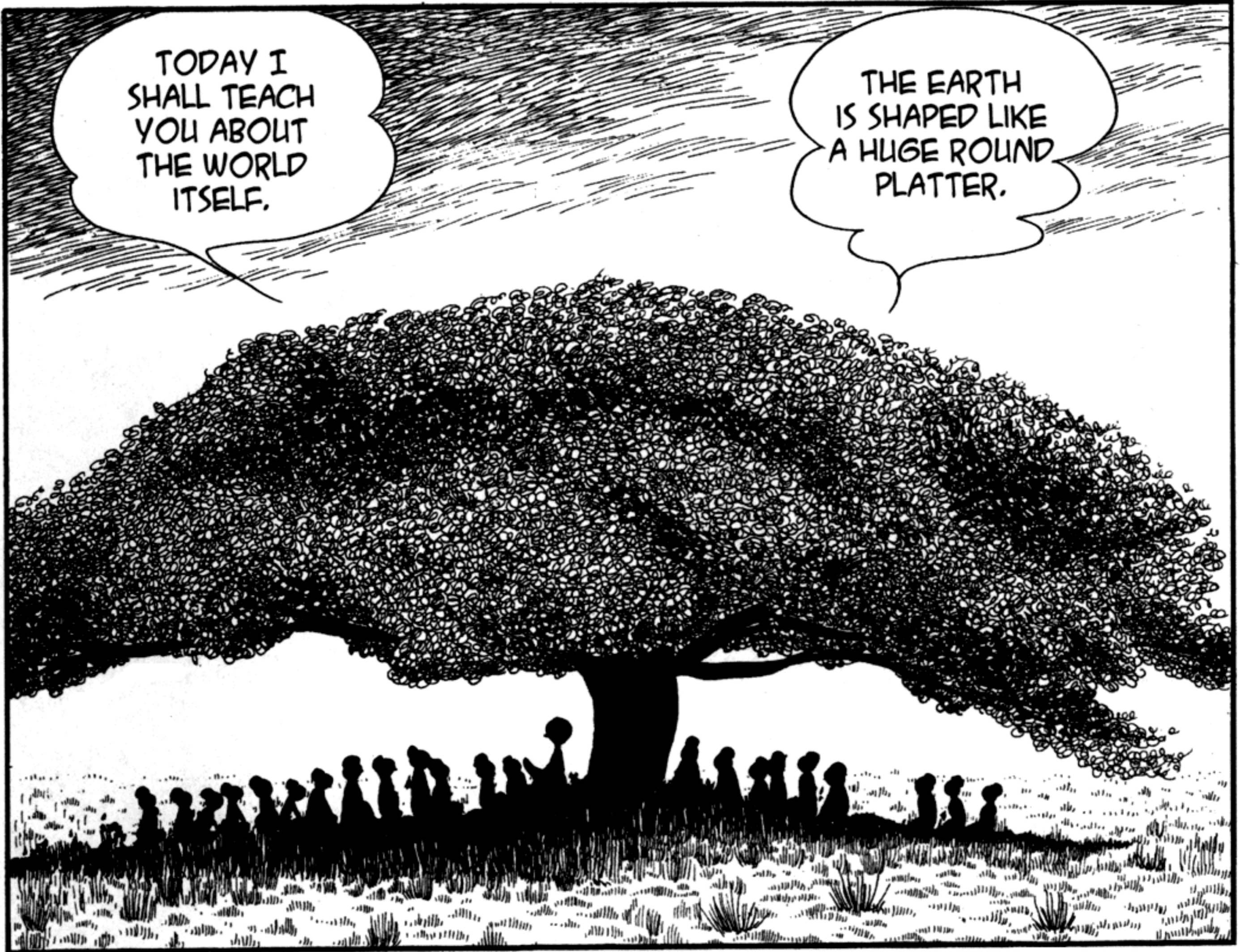










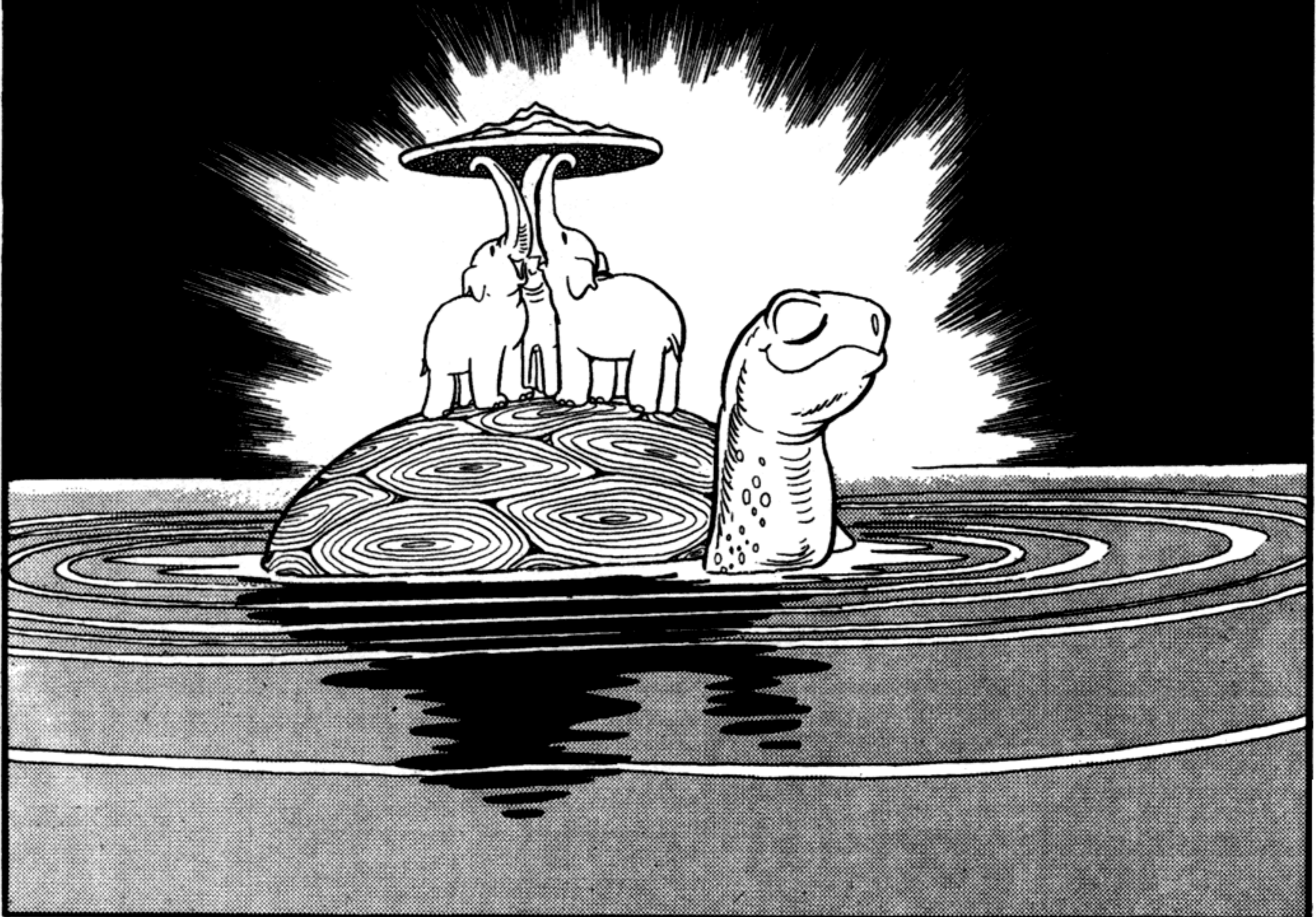


AND THE SEA TURTLE?

HE FLOATS IN A VAST SEA OF MILK.

AND THE SEA OF MILK? WHAT COMES NEXT, TEACHER?

THE DHARMA DOESN'T SAY! AND SINCE THE STORY STOPS THERE, YOU WEREN'T MEANT TO WONDER!



HOW CAN I NOT? ALL THAT MILK...

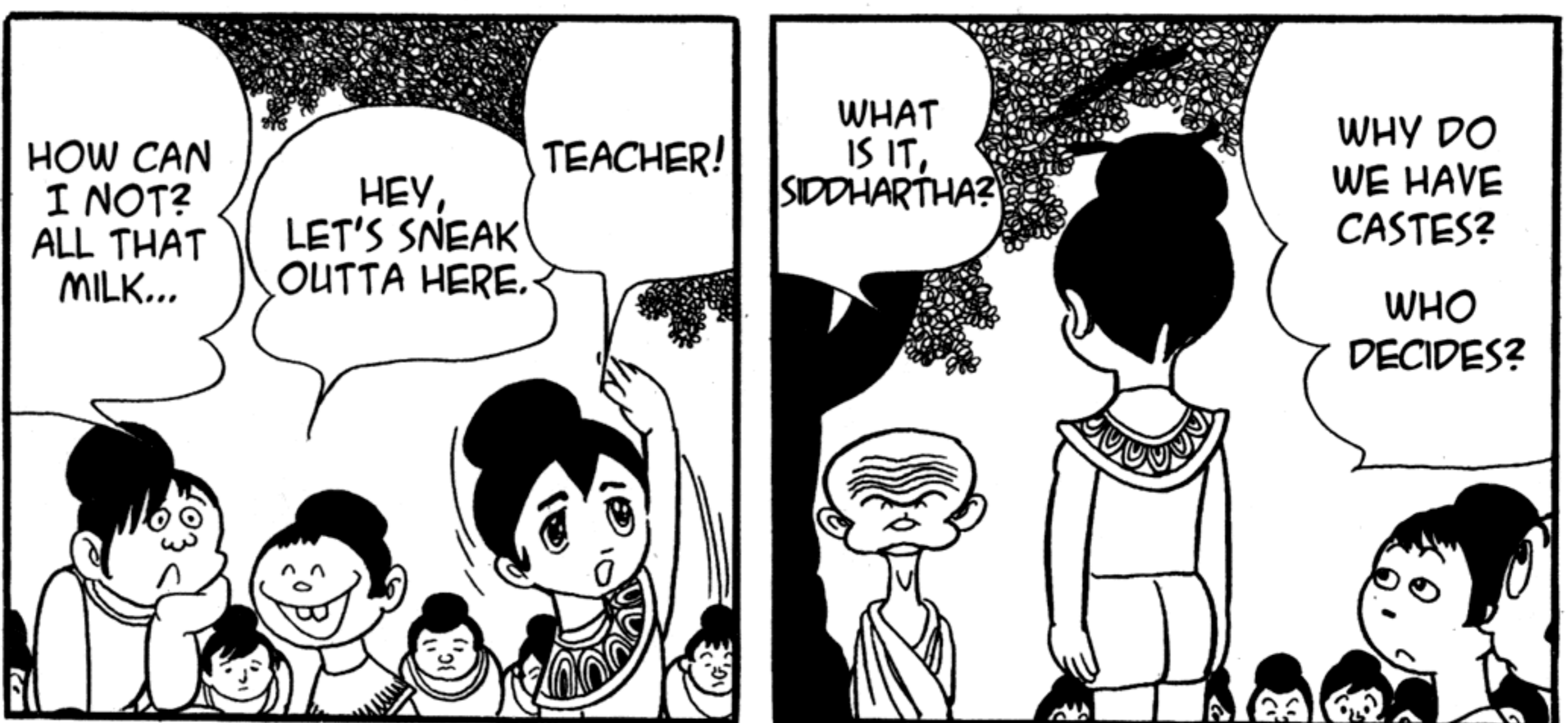
HEY, LET'S SNEAK OUTTA HERE.

TEACHER!

WHAT IS IT, SIDDHARTHA?

WHY DO WE HAVE CASTES?

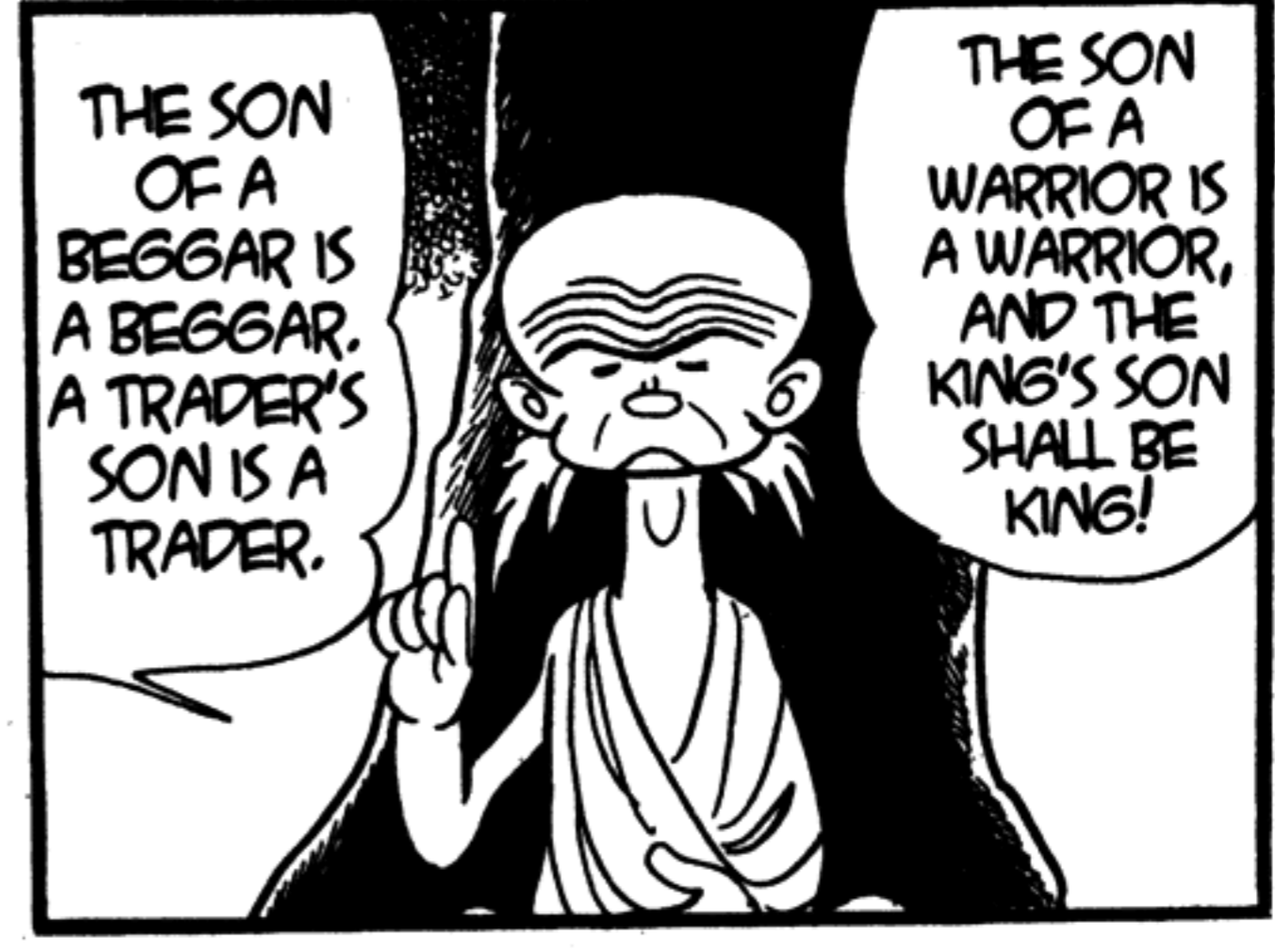
WHO DECIDES?





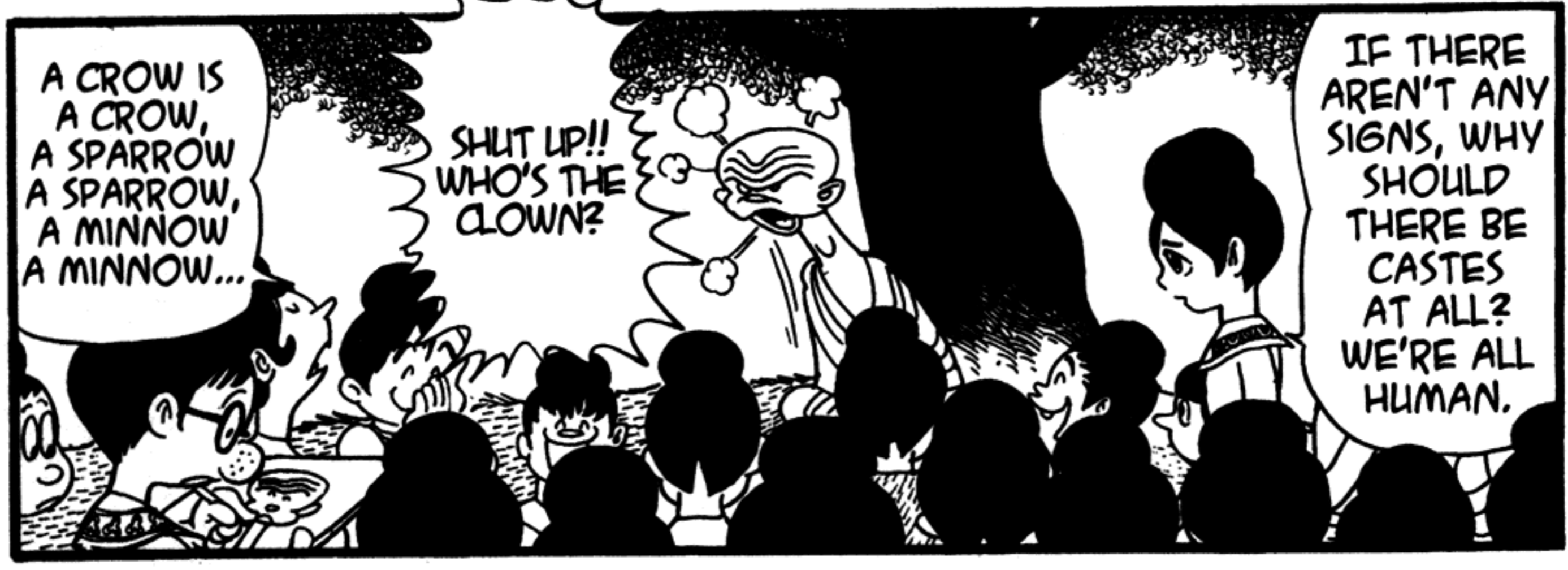
WHAT SIGN DETERMINES YOUR CASTE?

NO ONE DECIDES OUR CASTES. IT'S NOT ABOUT ANY SIGN.



THE SON OF A BEGGAR IS A BEGGAR. A TRADER'S SON IS A TRADER.

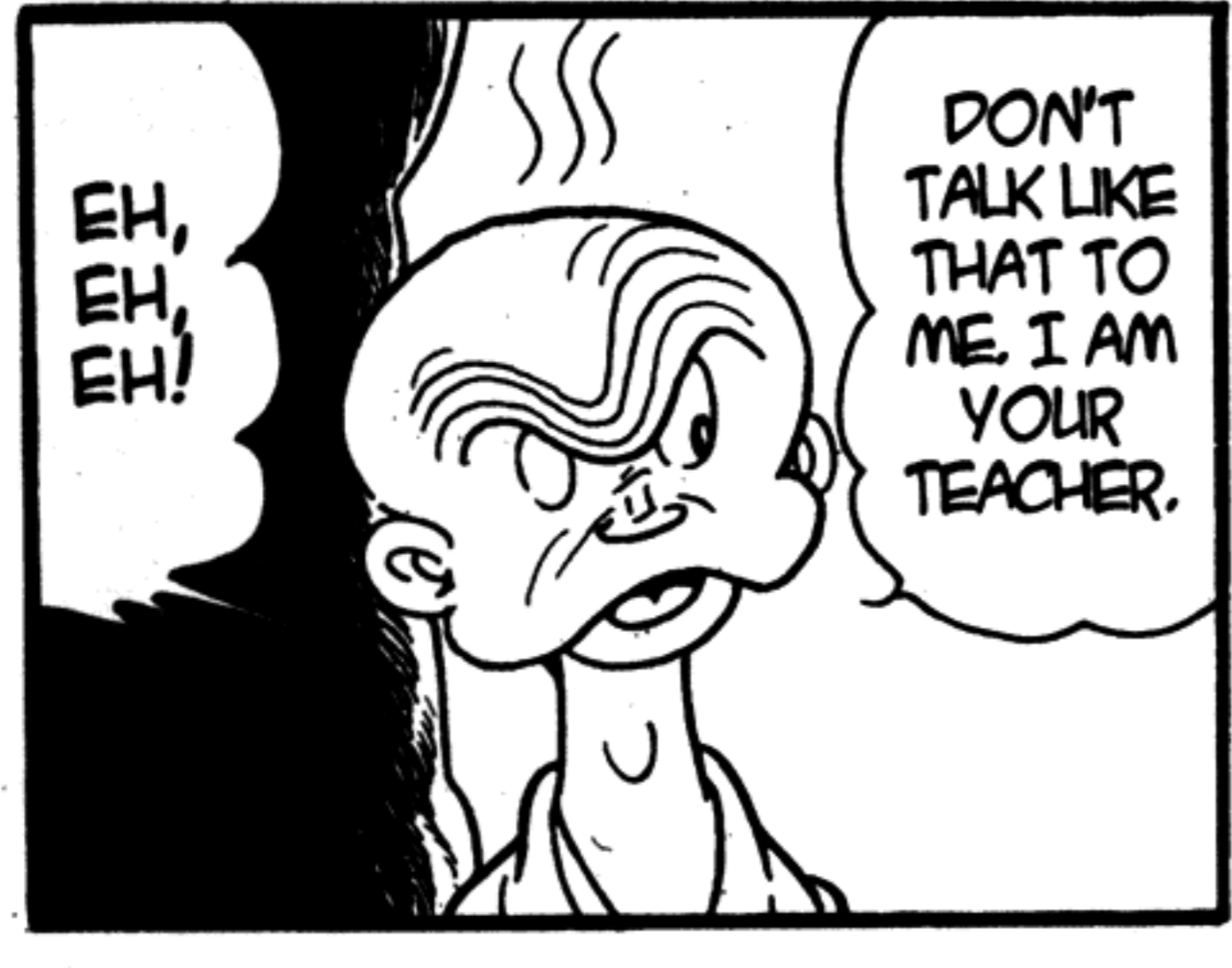
THE SON OF A WARRIOR IS A WARRIOR, AND THE KING'S SON SHALL BE KING!



A CROW IS A CROW, A SPARROW A SPARROW, A MINNOW A MINNOW...

SHUT UP!! WHO'S THE CLOWN?

IF THERE AREN'T ANY SIGNS, WHY SHOULD THERE BE CASTES AT ALL? WE'RE ALL HUMAN.



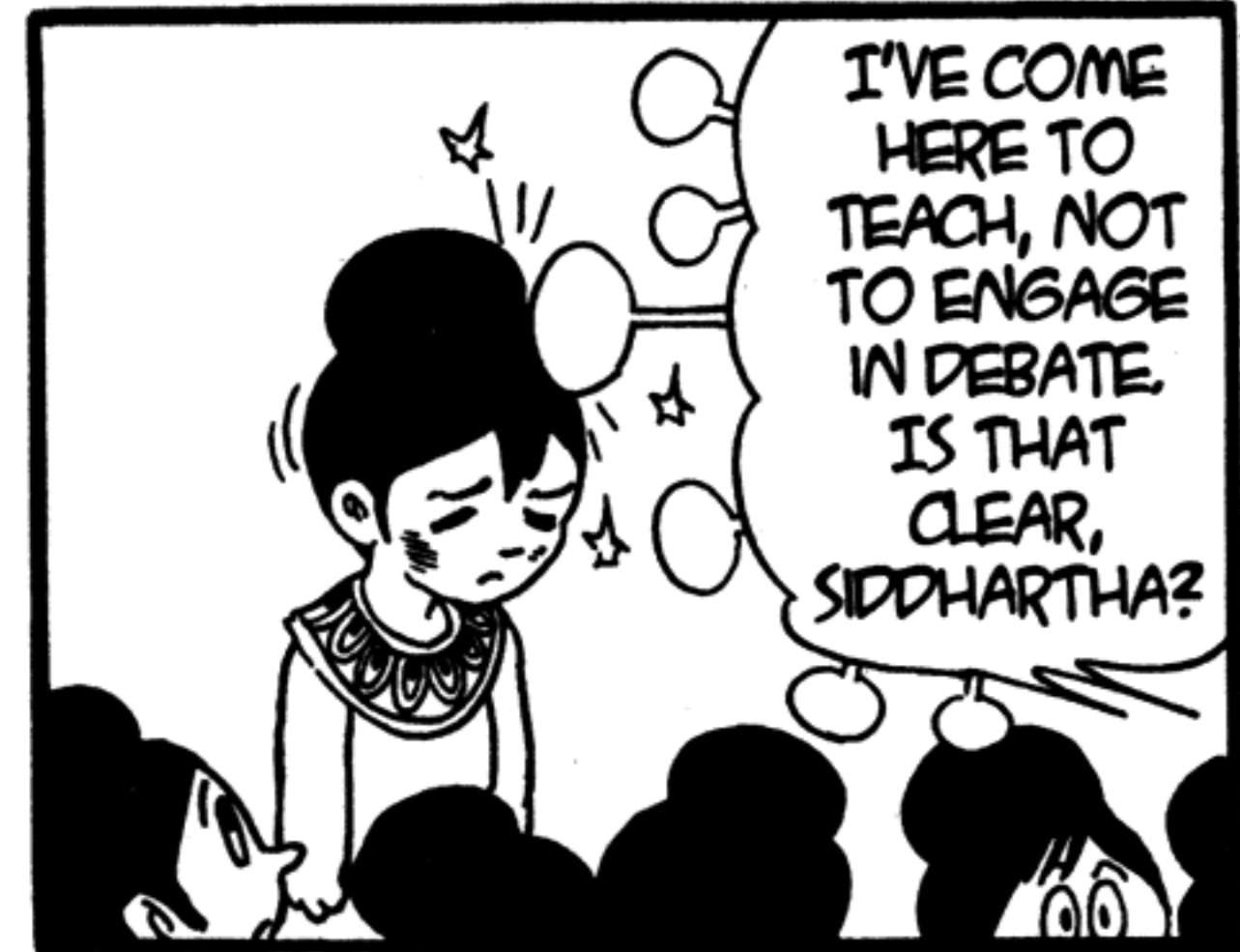
EH, EH, EH!

DON'T TALK LIKE THAT TO ME. I AM YOUR TEACHER.

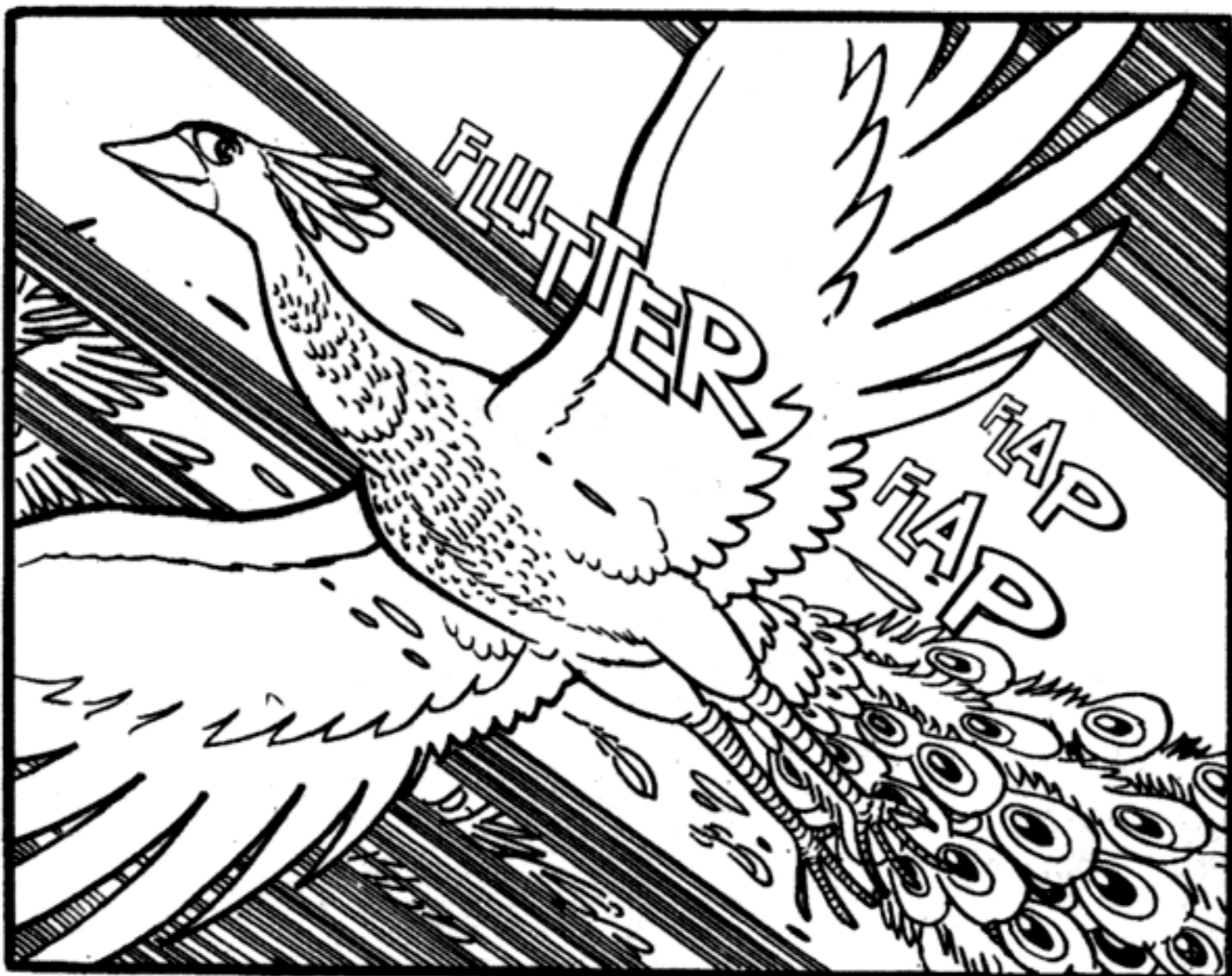


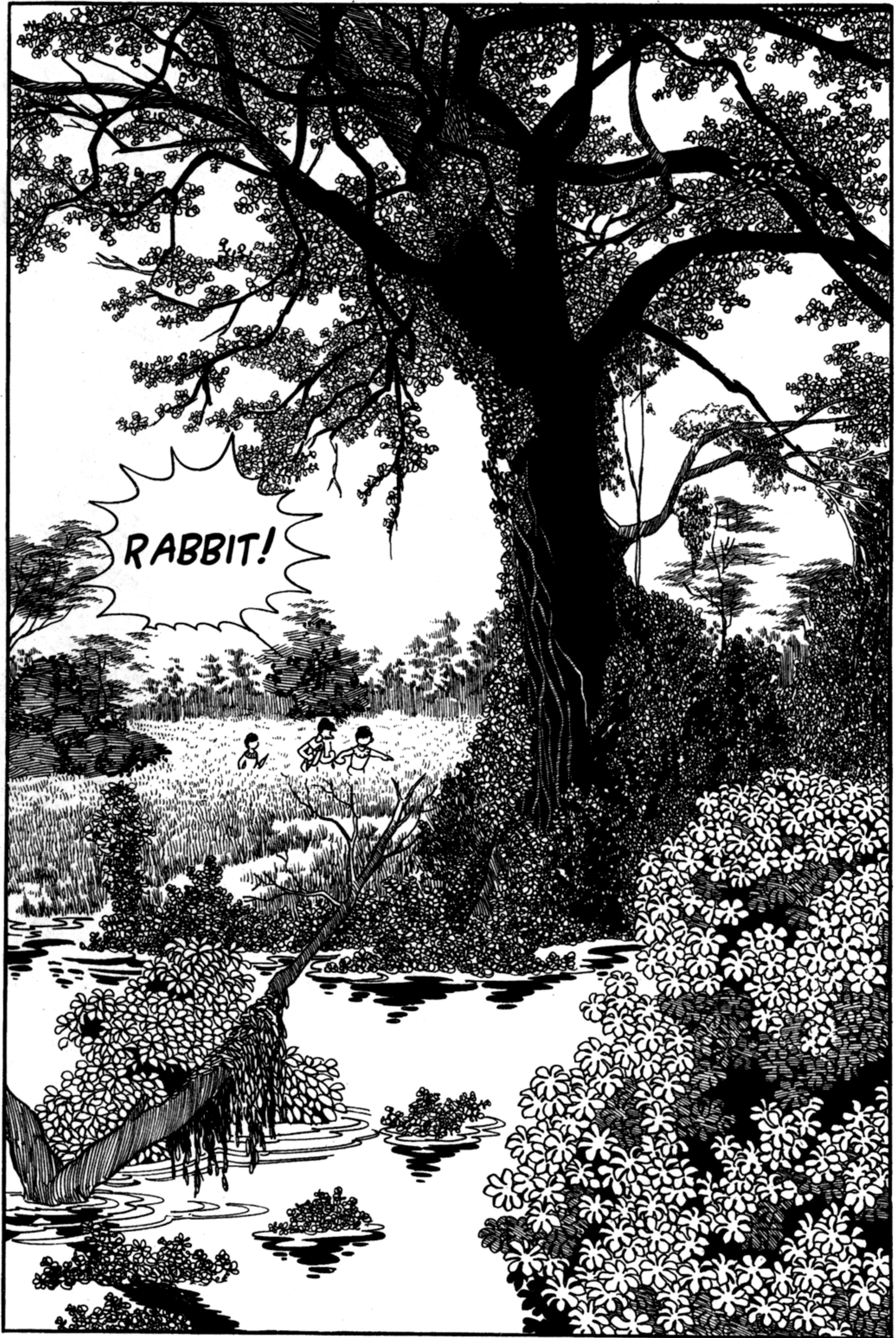
YO, SIDDHARTHA, FORGET THE OLD FART. COME SNEAK OFF WITH US TO PLAY.

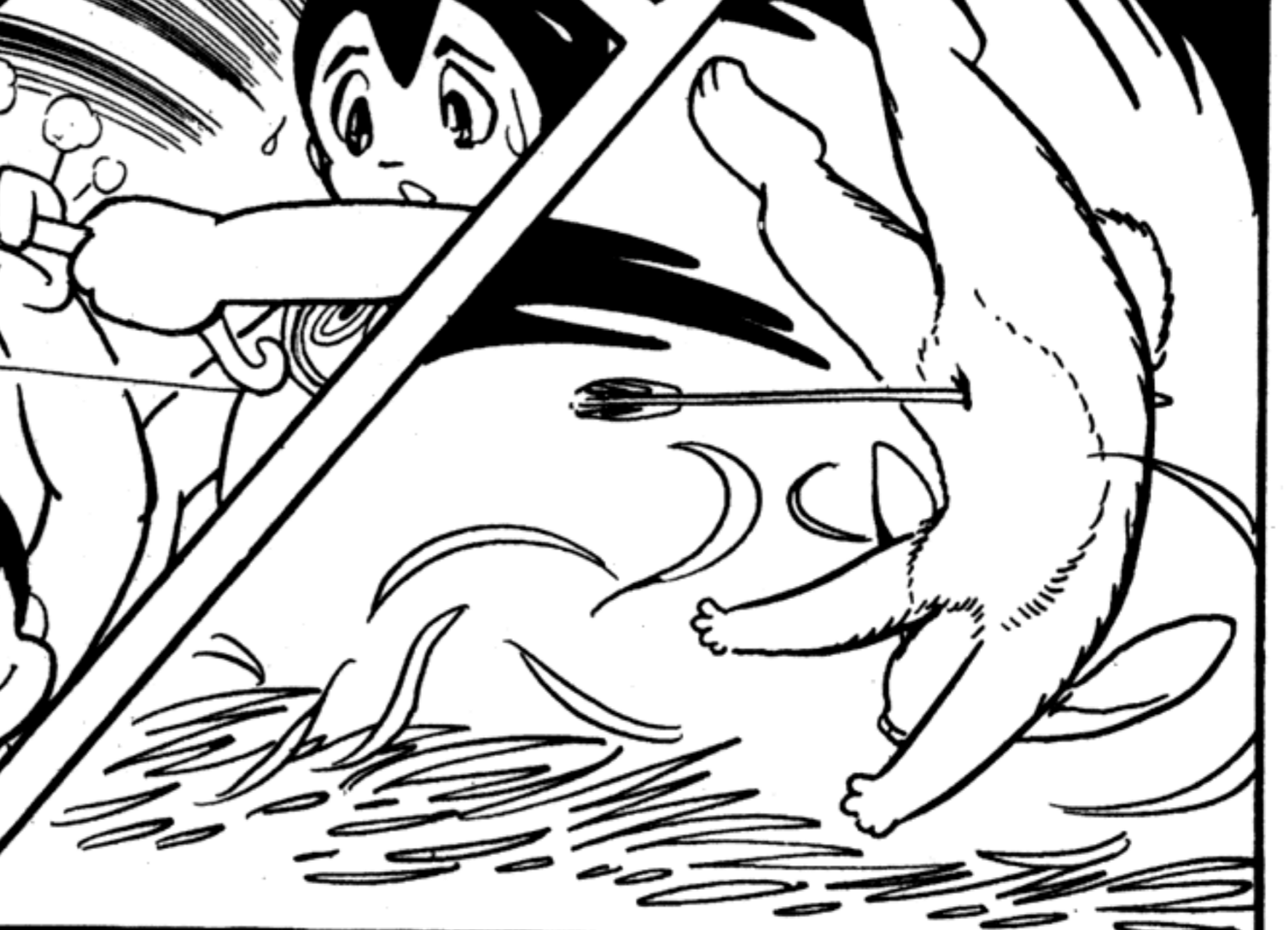
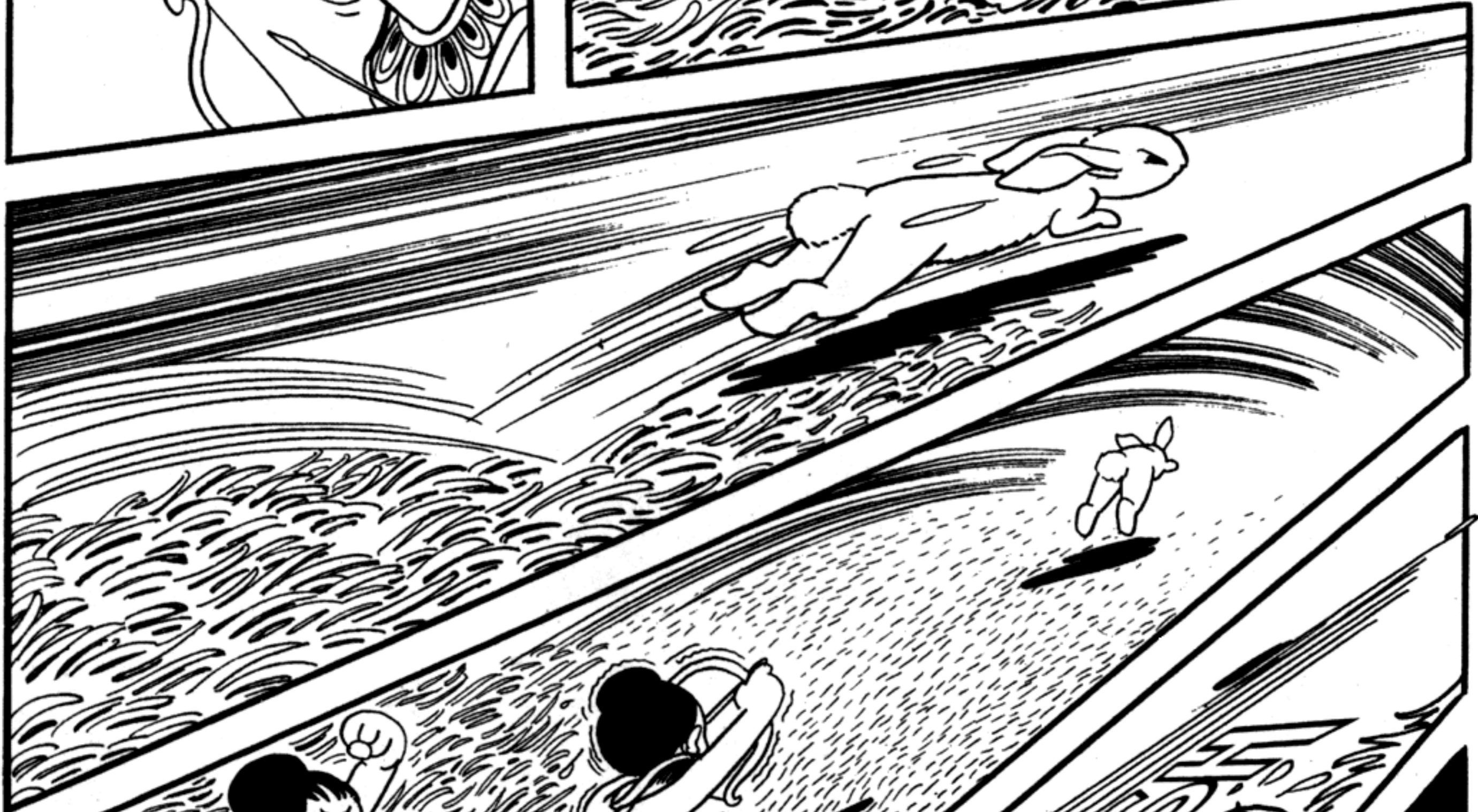
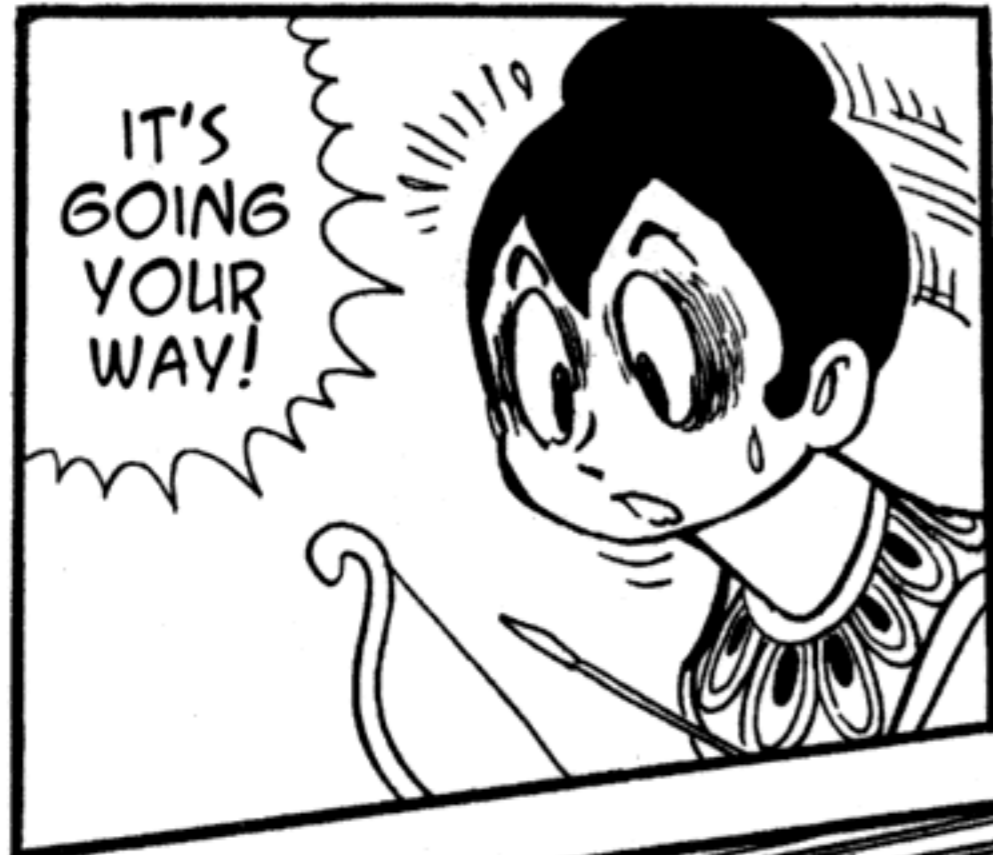
THERE'RE RABBITS IN THE GARDEN OUT BACK.

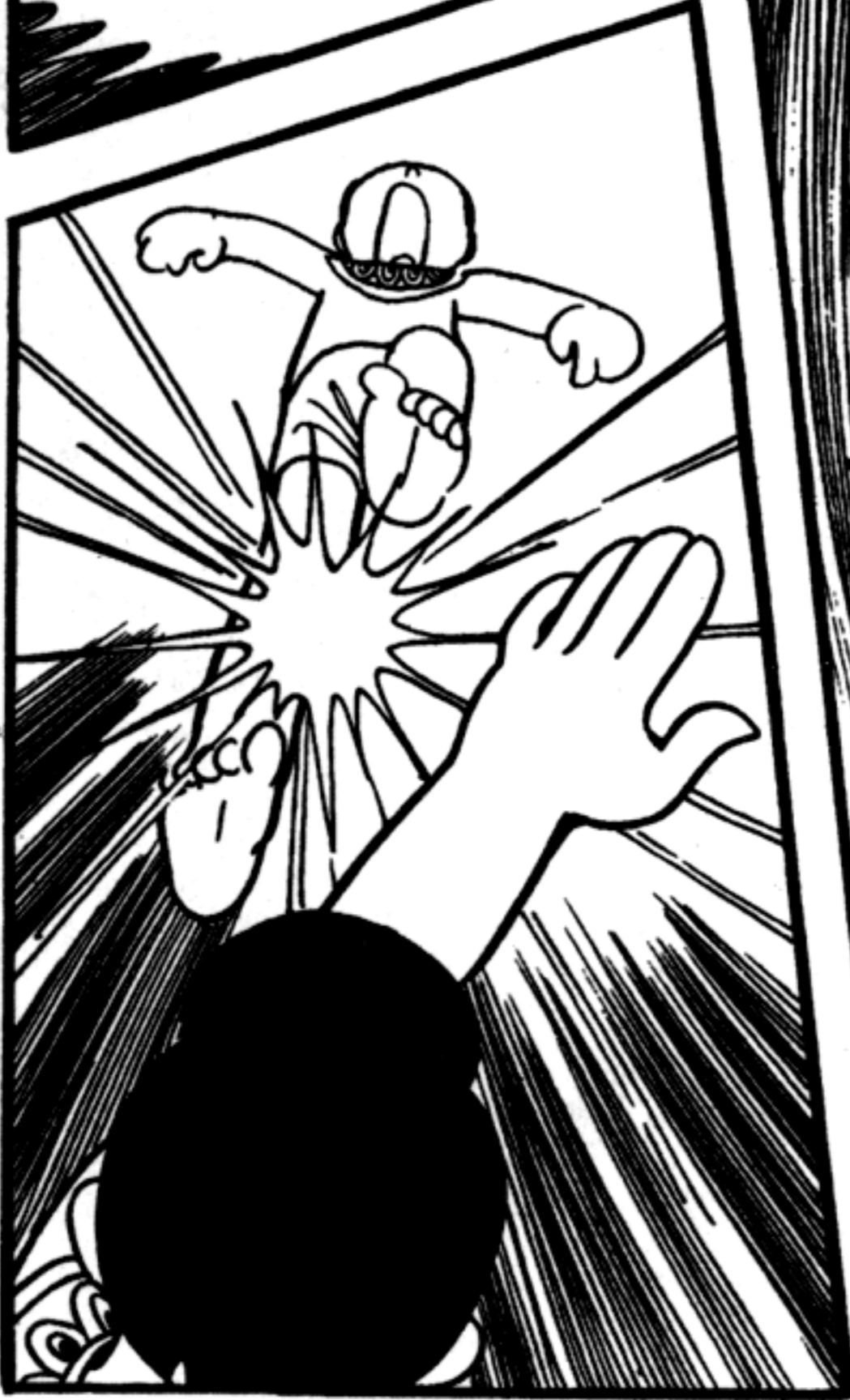
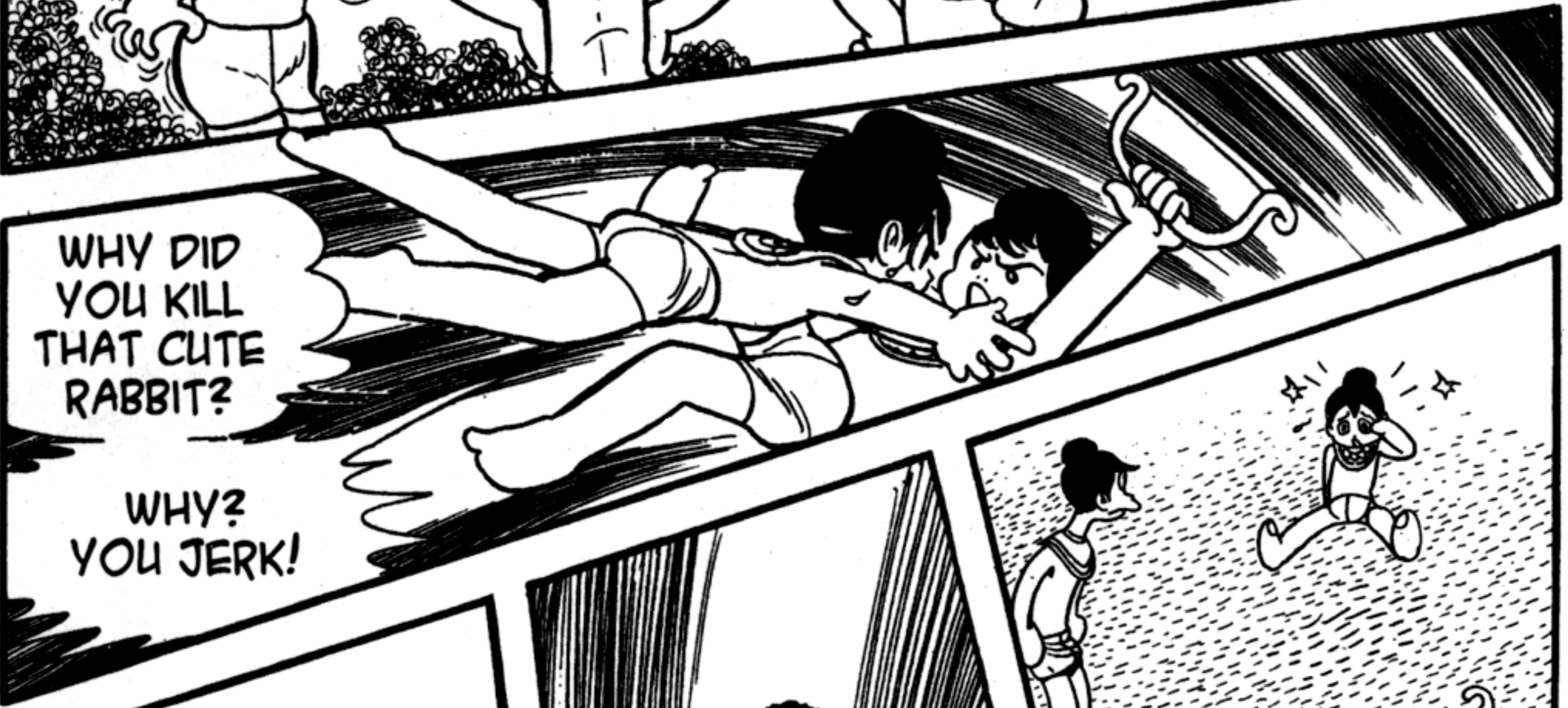
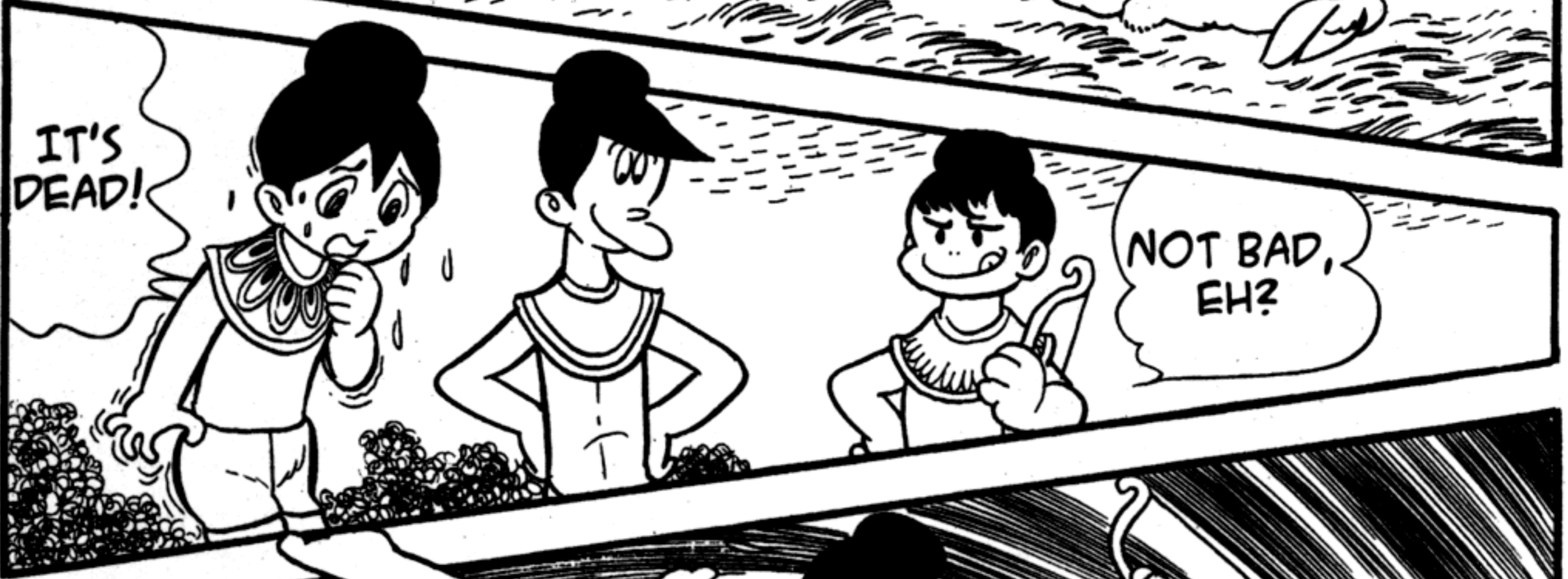
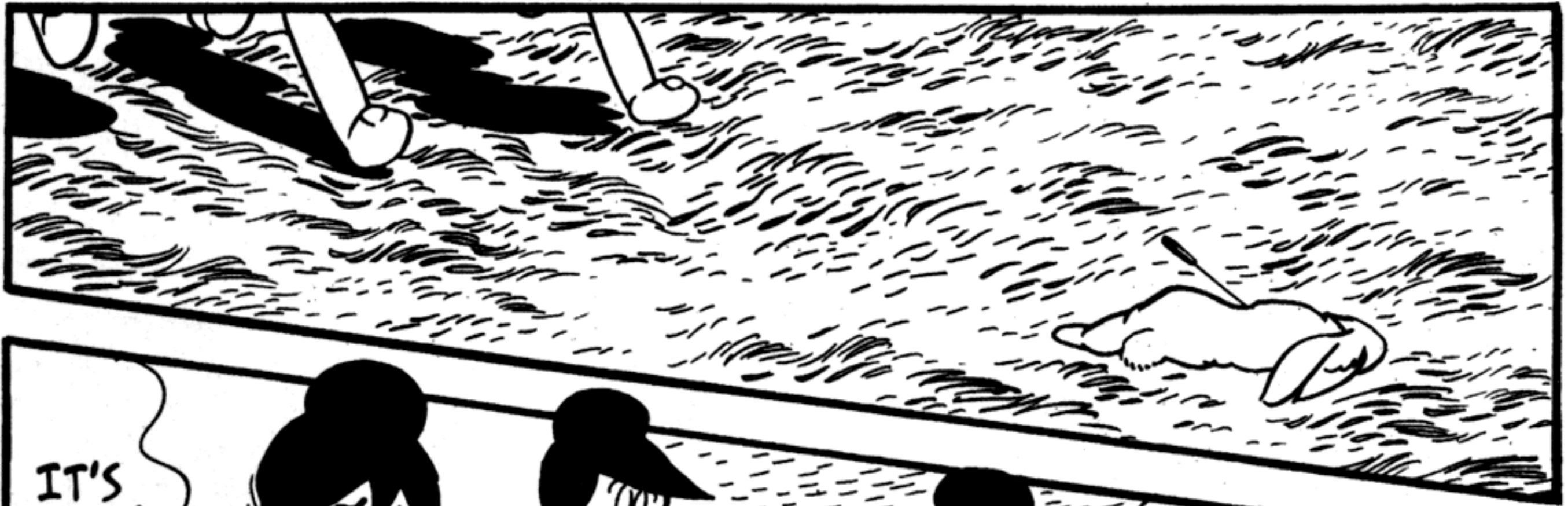


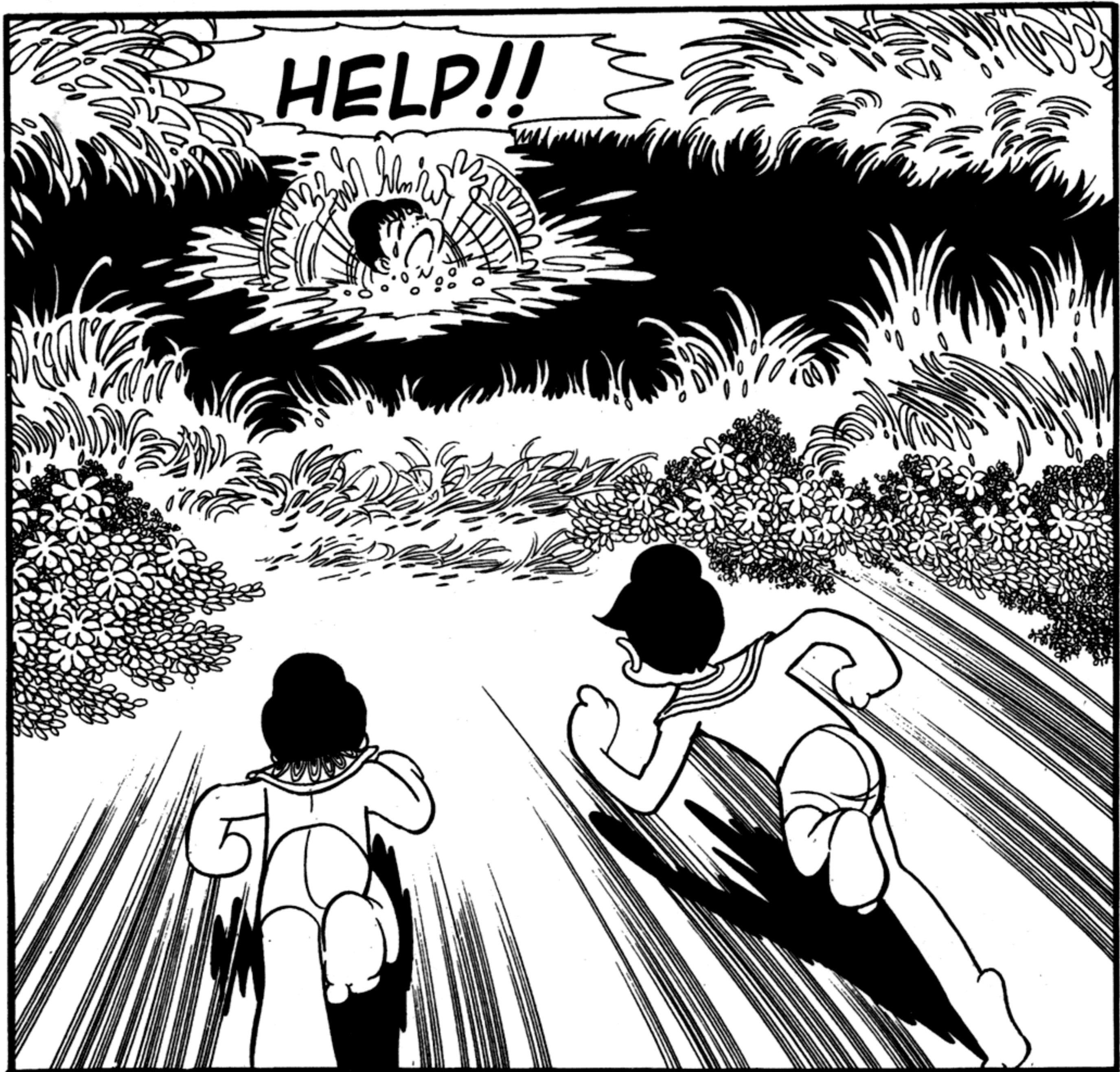
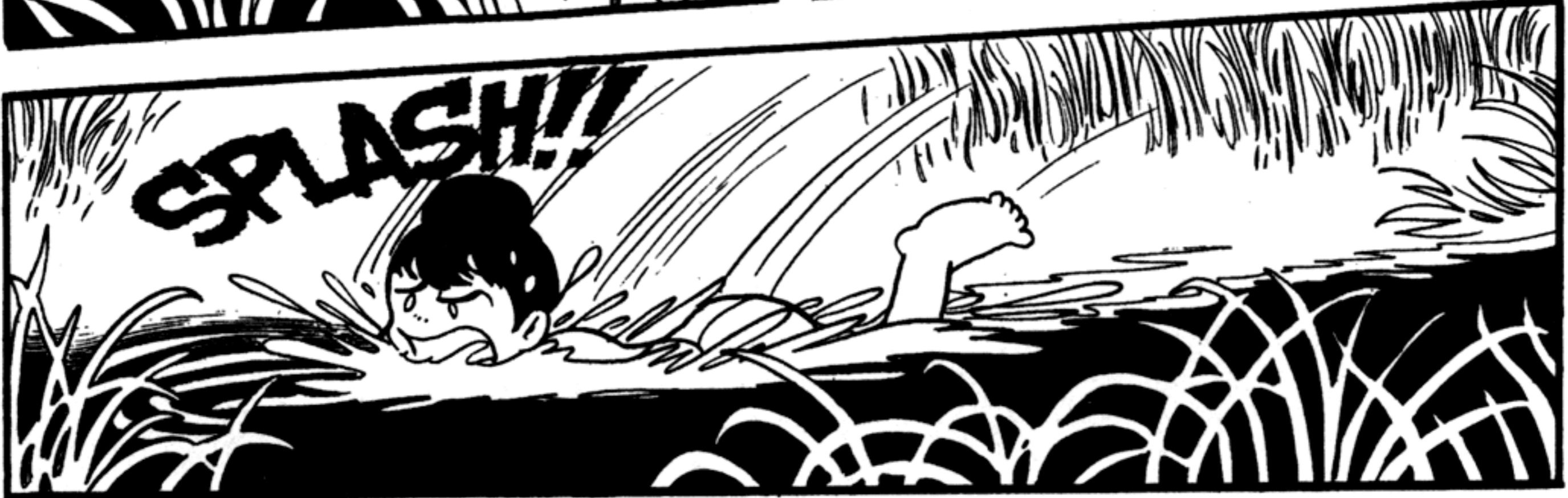
I'VE COME HERE TO TEACH, NOT TO ENGAGE IN DEBATE. IS THAT CLEAR, SIDDHARTHA?

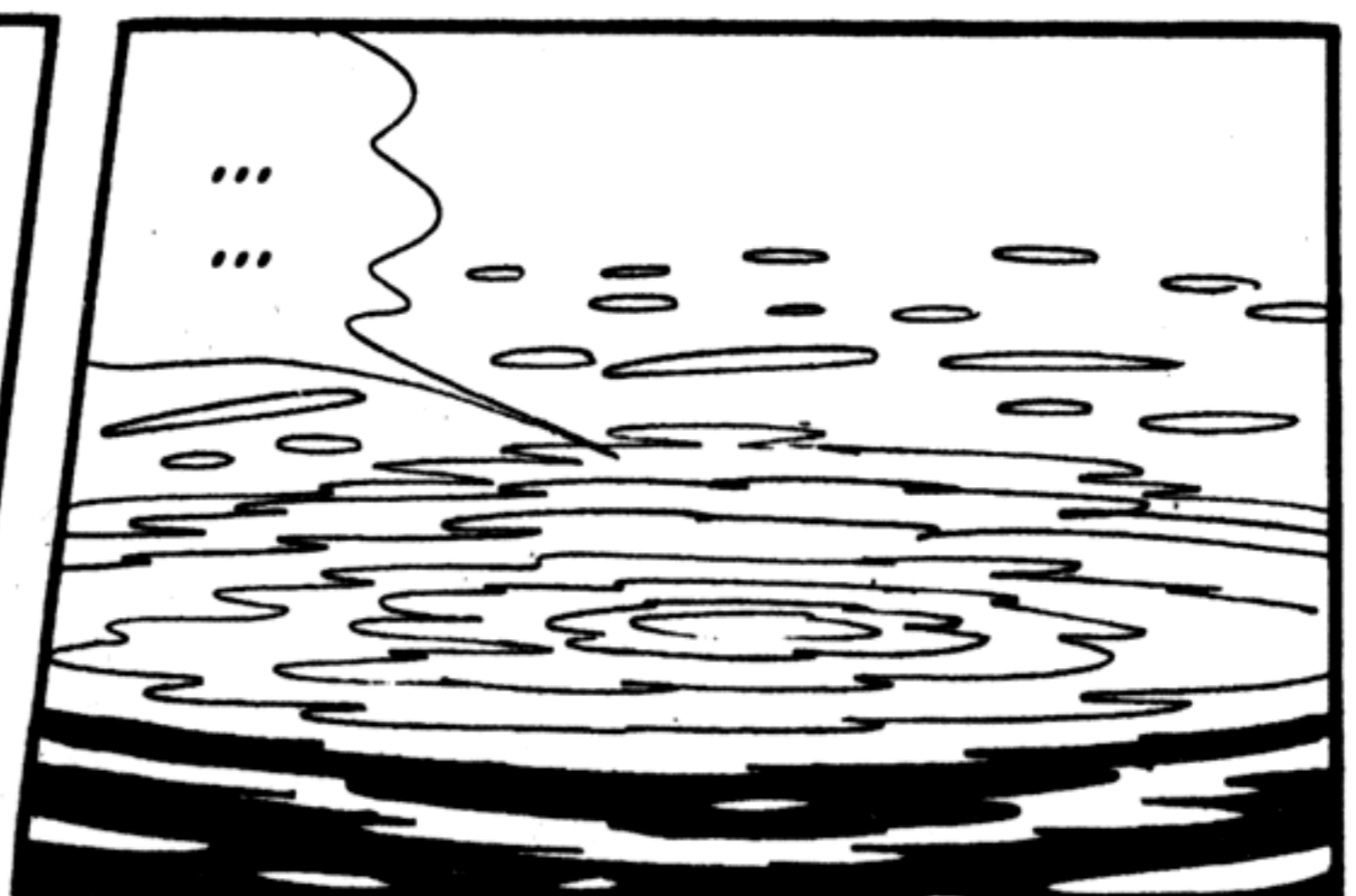
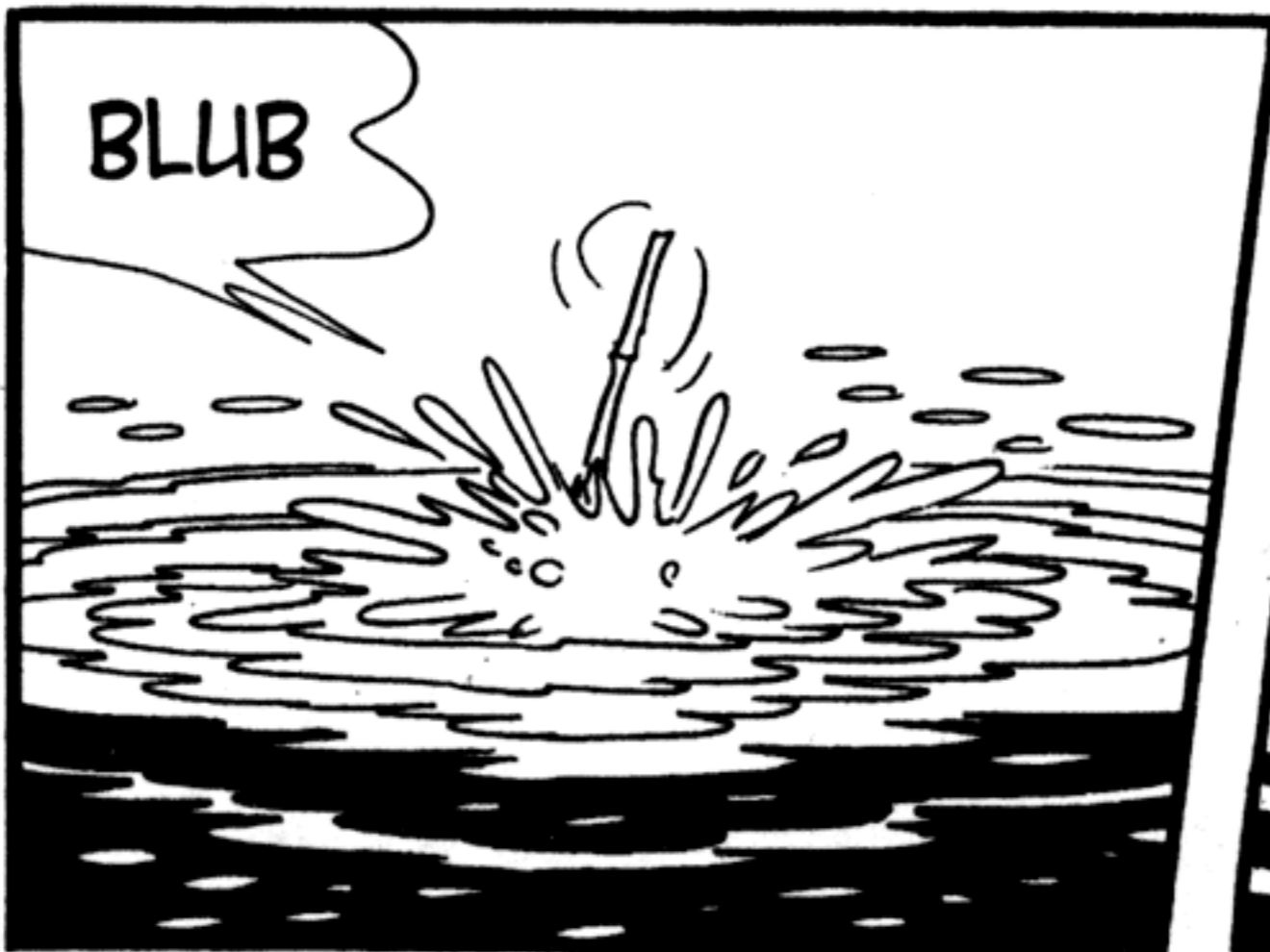
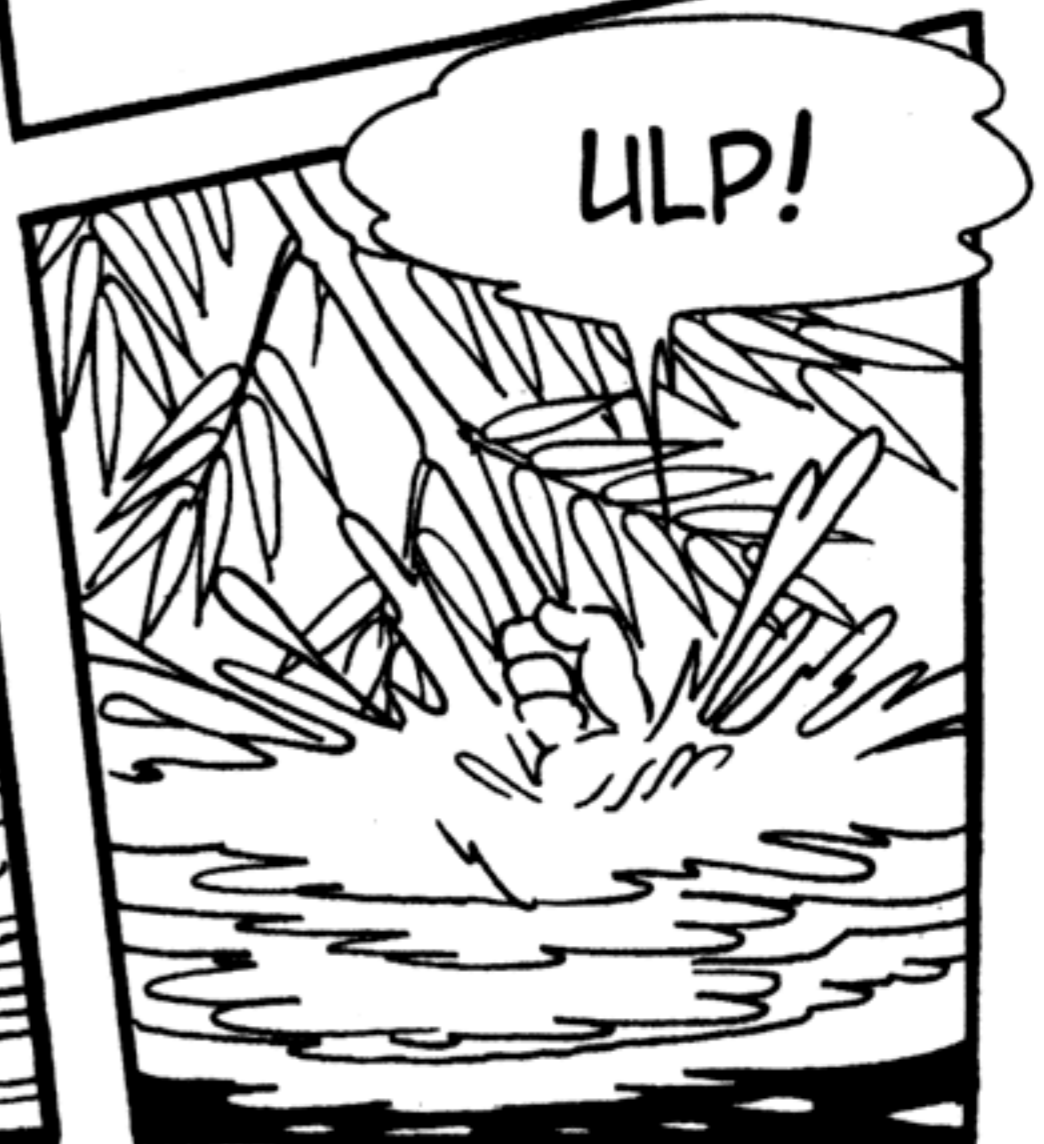
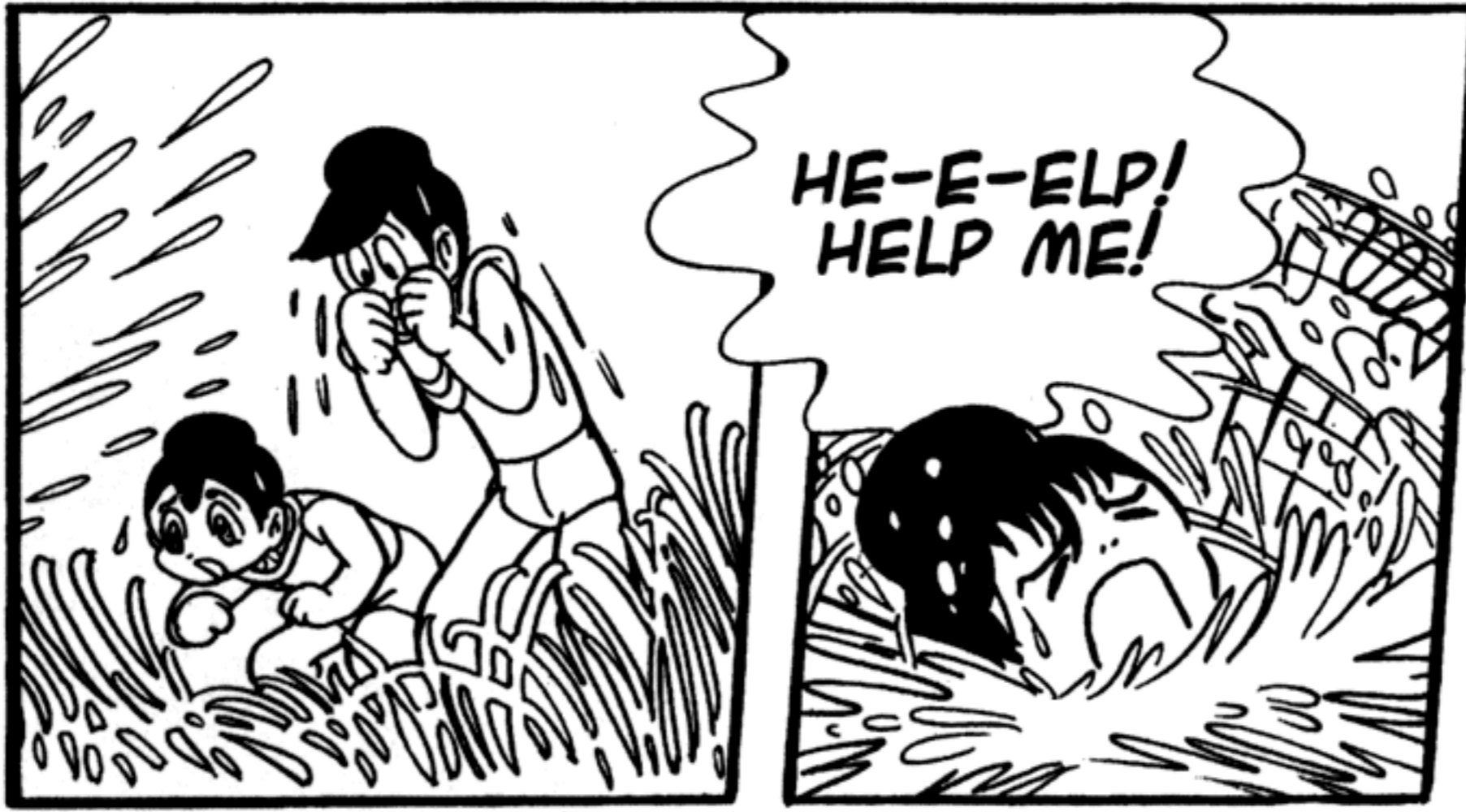


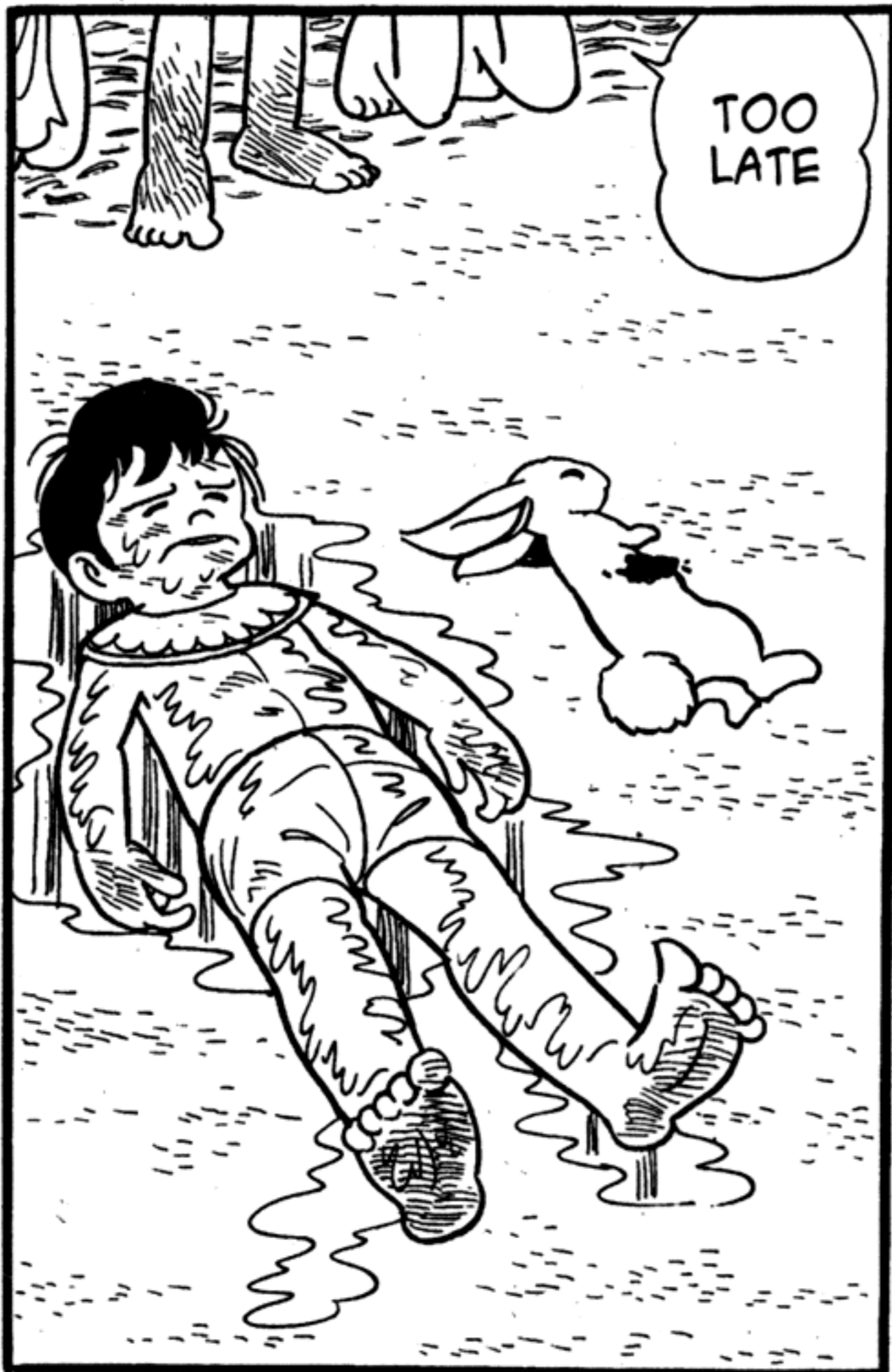


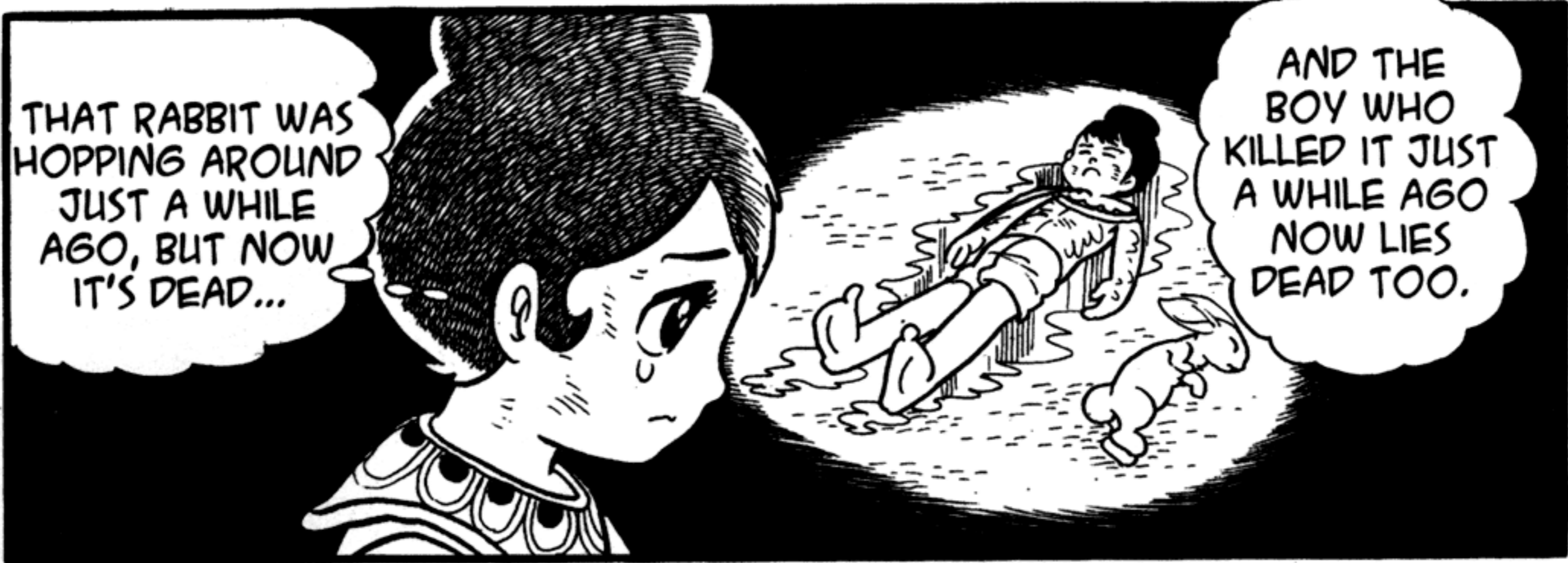










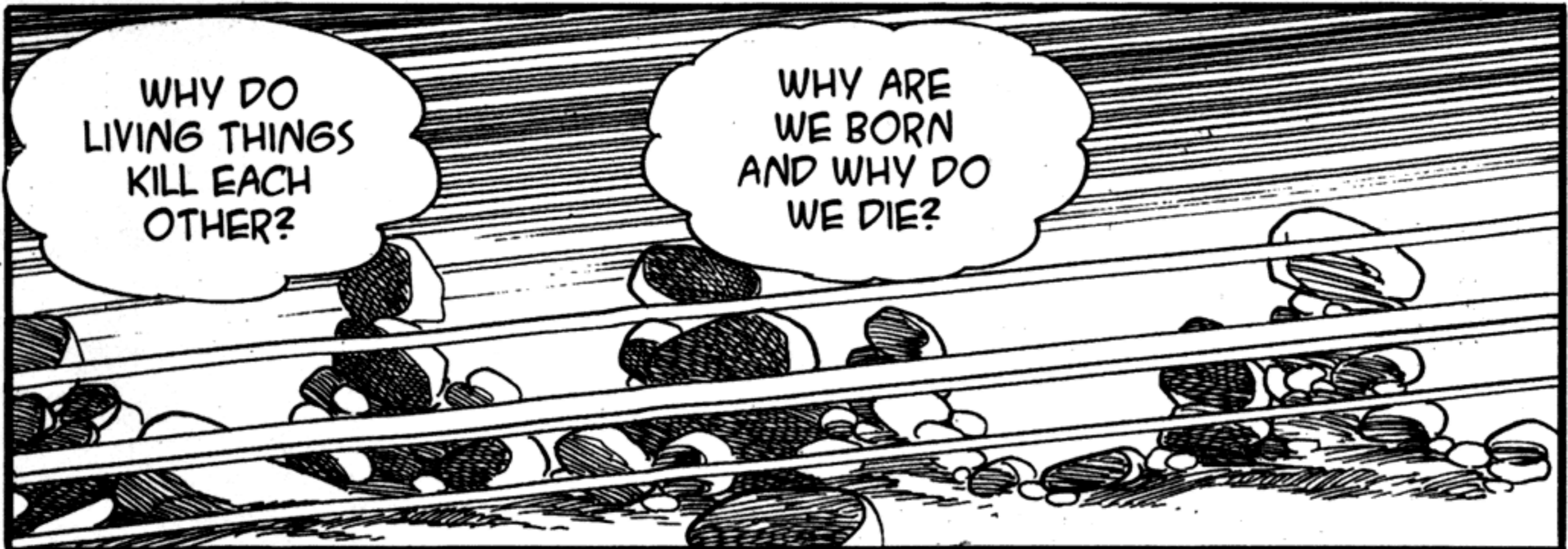


THAT RABBIT WAS HOPPING AROUND JUST A WHILE AGO, BUT NOW IT'S DEAD...

AND THE BOY WHO KILLED IT JUST A WHILE AGO NOW LIES DEAD TOO.



TWO DEAD BODIES SIDE BY SIDE - HUMAN OR RABBIT, ONCE YOU DIE YOU LOOK EQUALLY DEAD.



WHY DO LIVING THINGS KILL EACH OTHER?

WHY ARE WE BORN AND WHY DO WE DIE?



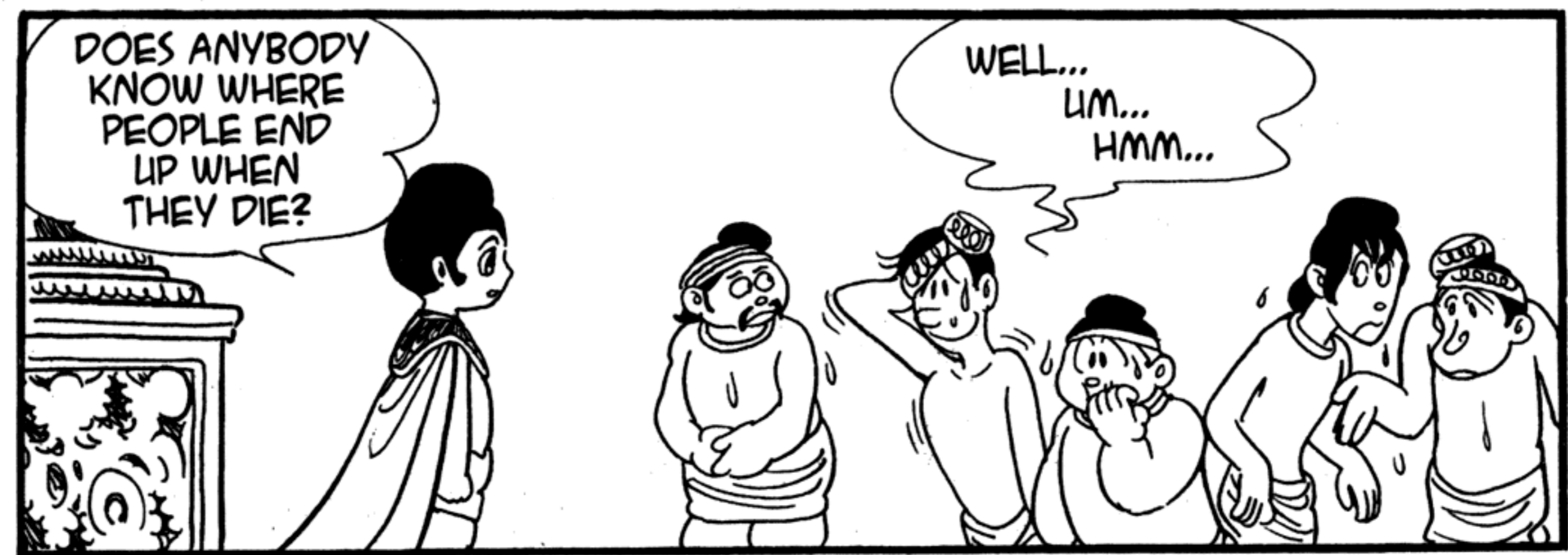
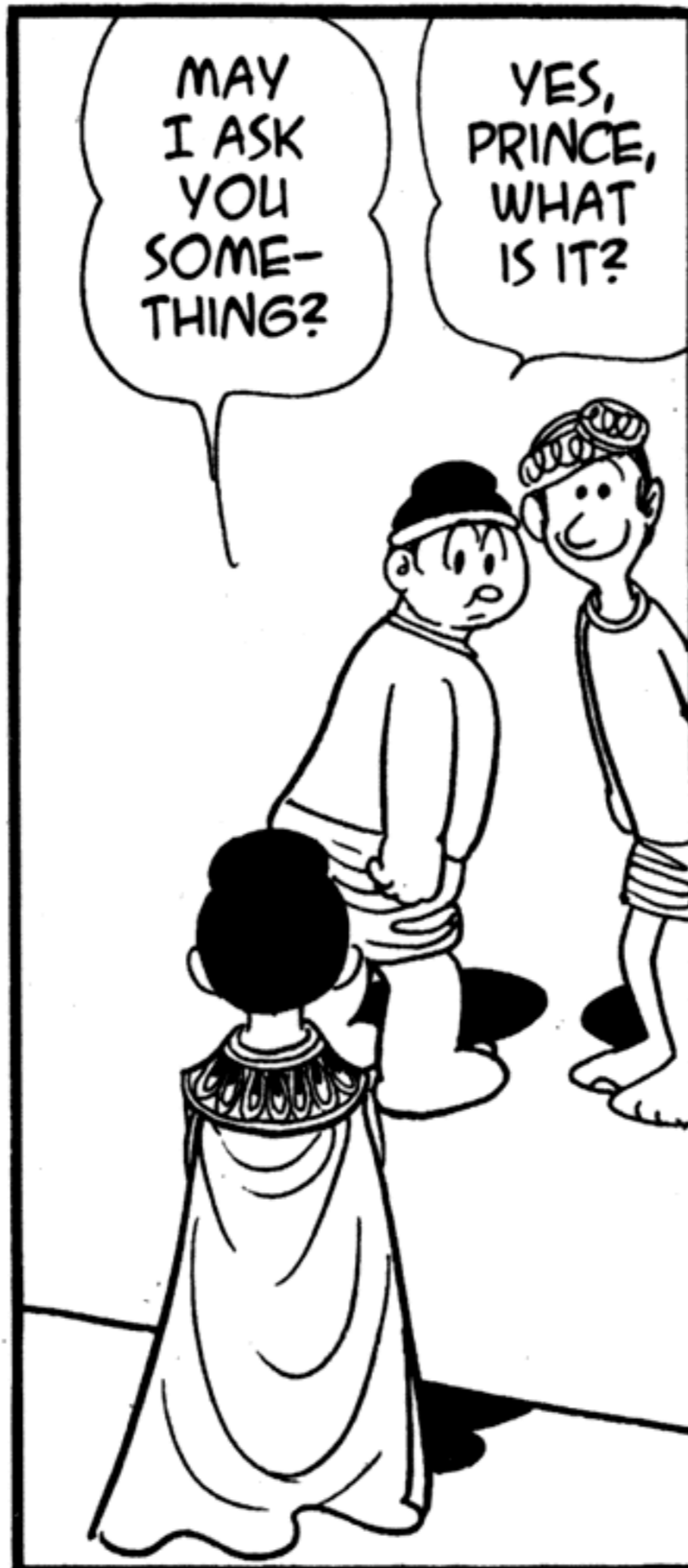
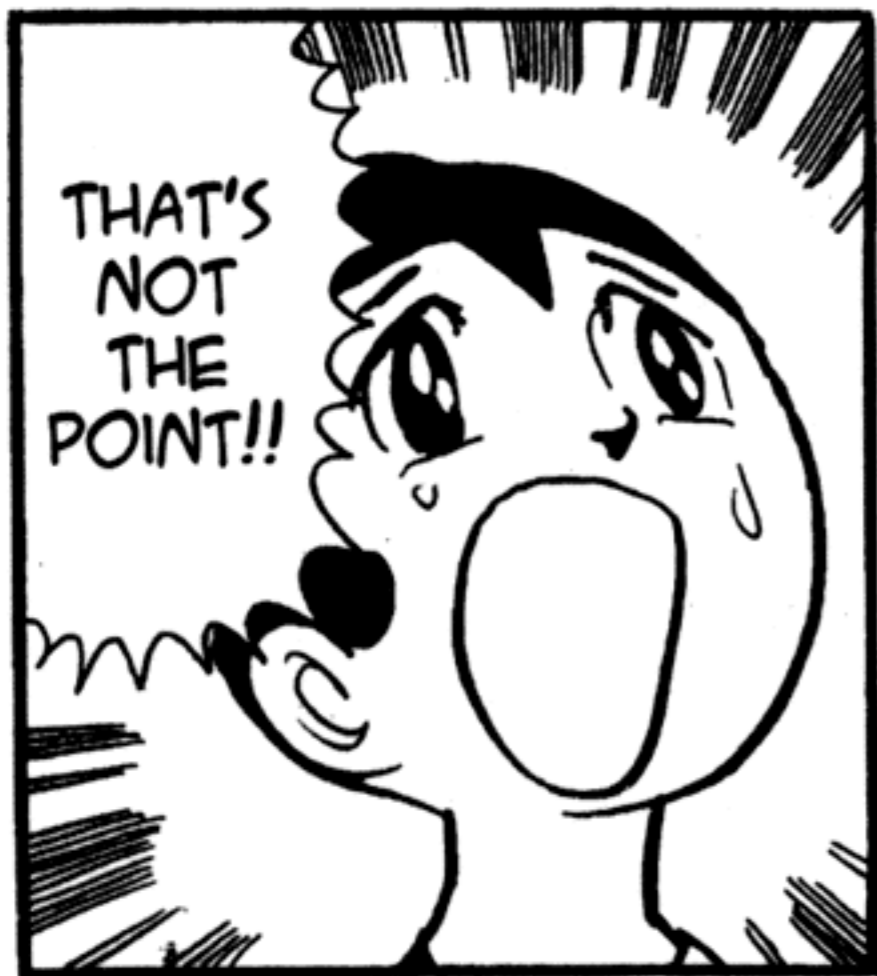
SIDDHARTHA

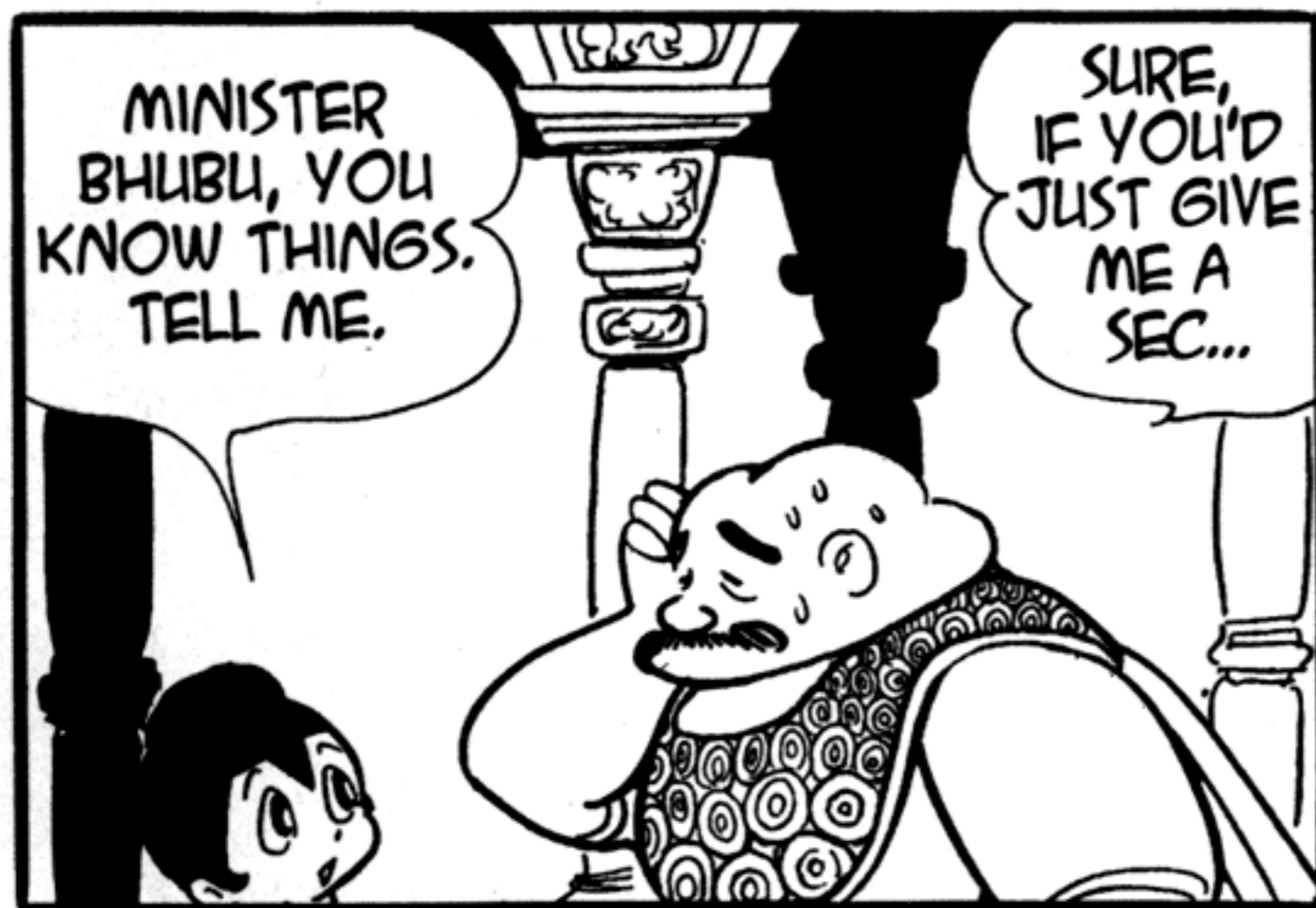


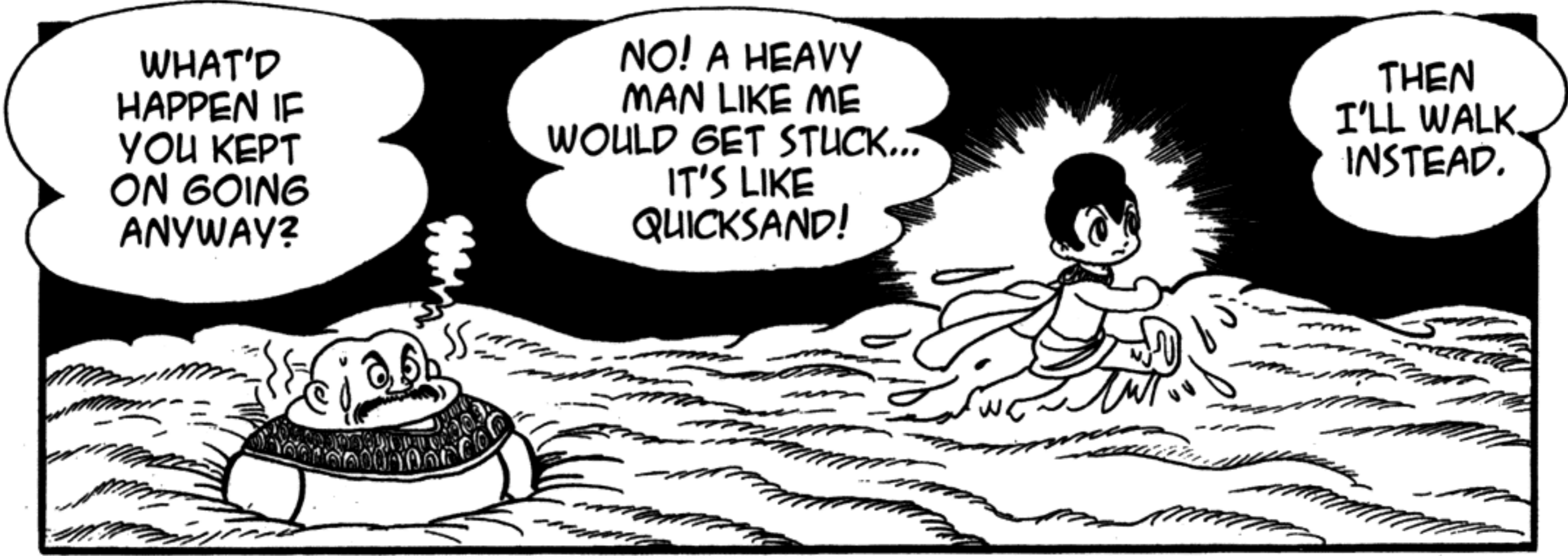
ARE YOU OKAY? IT WASN'T YOU?

I WAS SO WORRIED...

MOTHER!







WHAT'D HAPPEN IF YOU KEPT ON GOING ANYWAY?

NO! A HEAVY MAN LIKE ME WOULD GET STUCK... IT'S LIKE QUICKSAND!

THEN I'LL WALK INSTEAD.



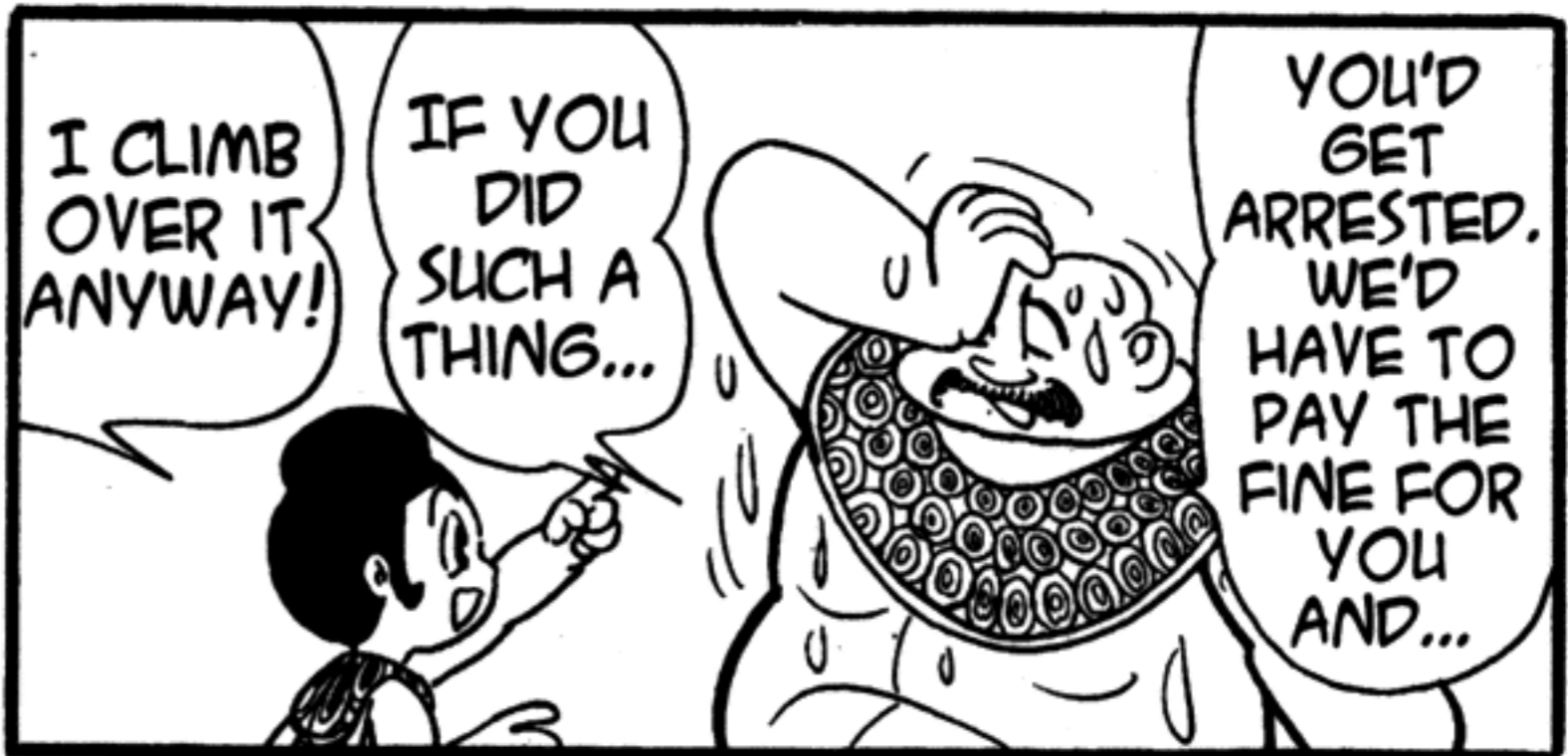
OH, BUT BEYOND THAT IS A FOG SO DENSE YOU WOULDN'T KNOW WHERE YOU WERE GOING!

BUT I'D STILL BE ABLE TO GO ON, RIGHT?



WHAT DO I GET TO?

AN IRON GATE WITH A SIGN THAT SAYS, "NO TRESPASSING."



I CLIMB OVER IT ANYWAY!

IF YOU DID SUCH A THING...

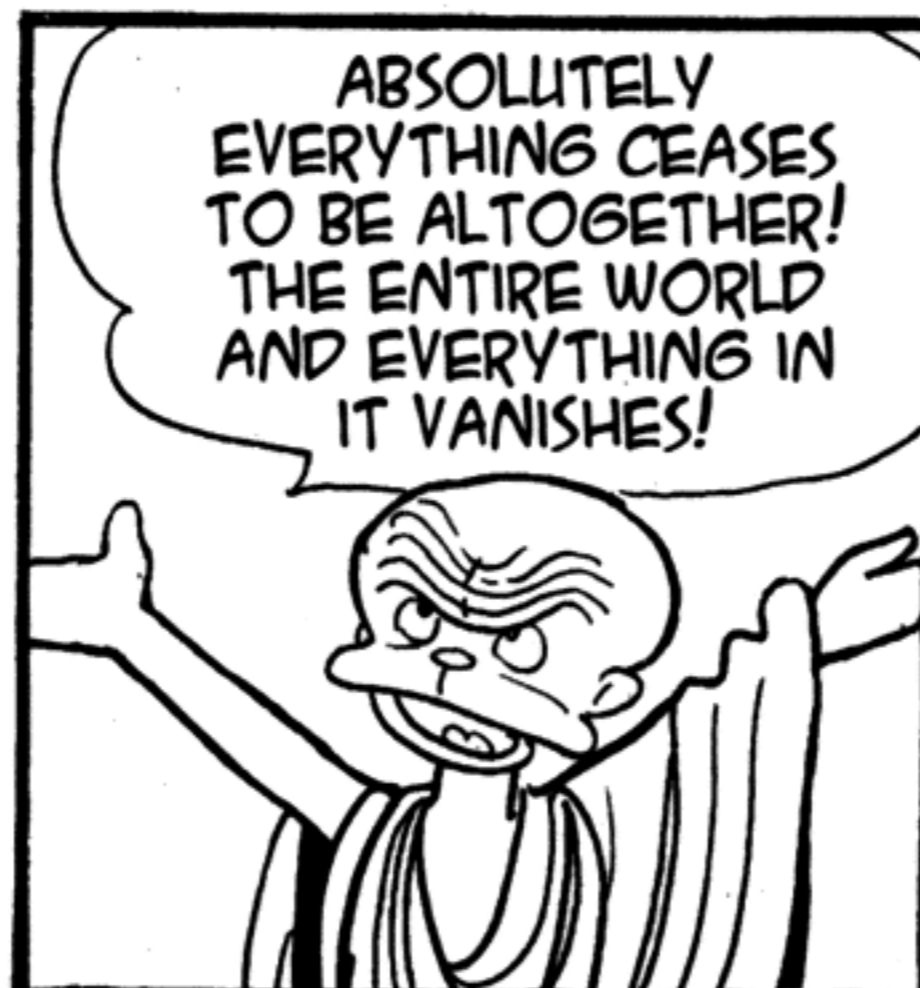
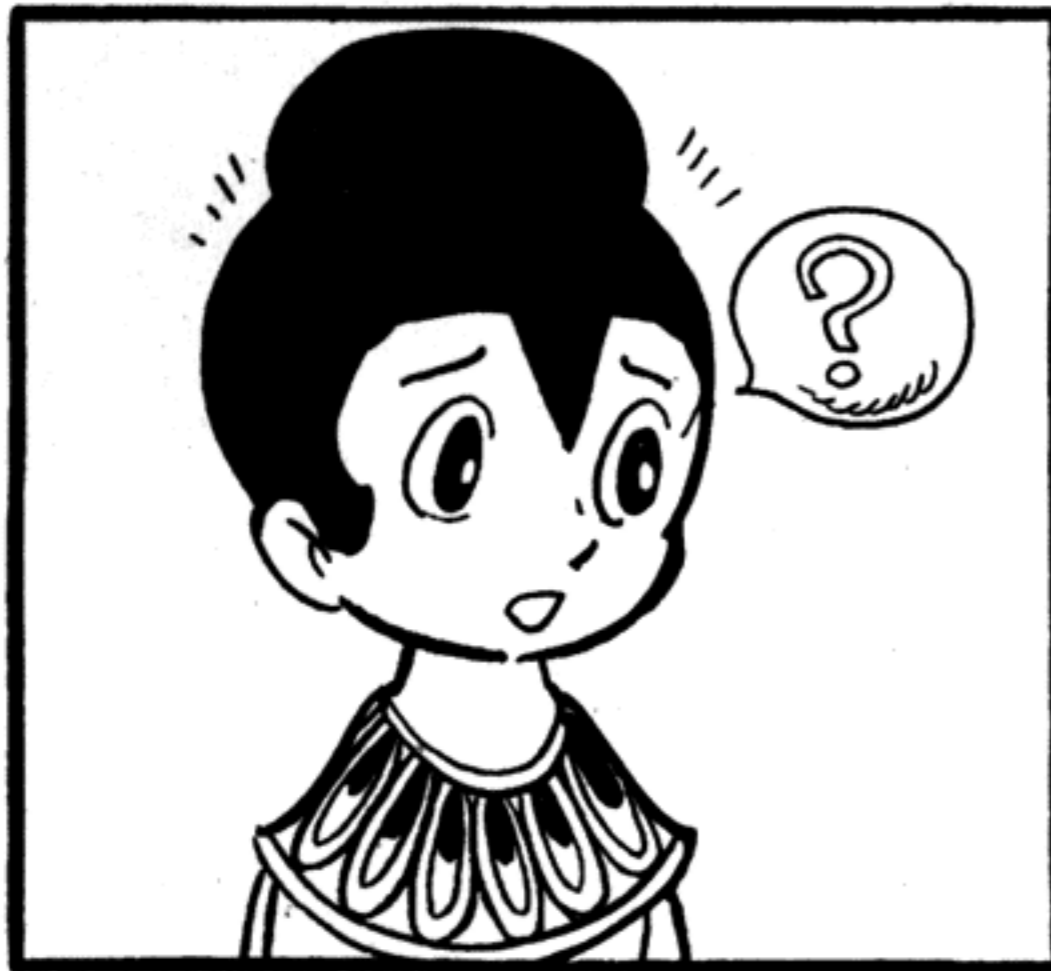
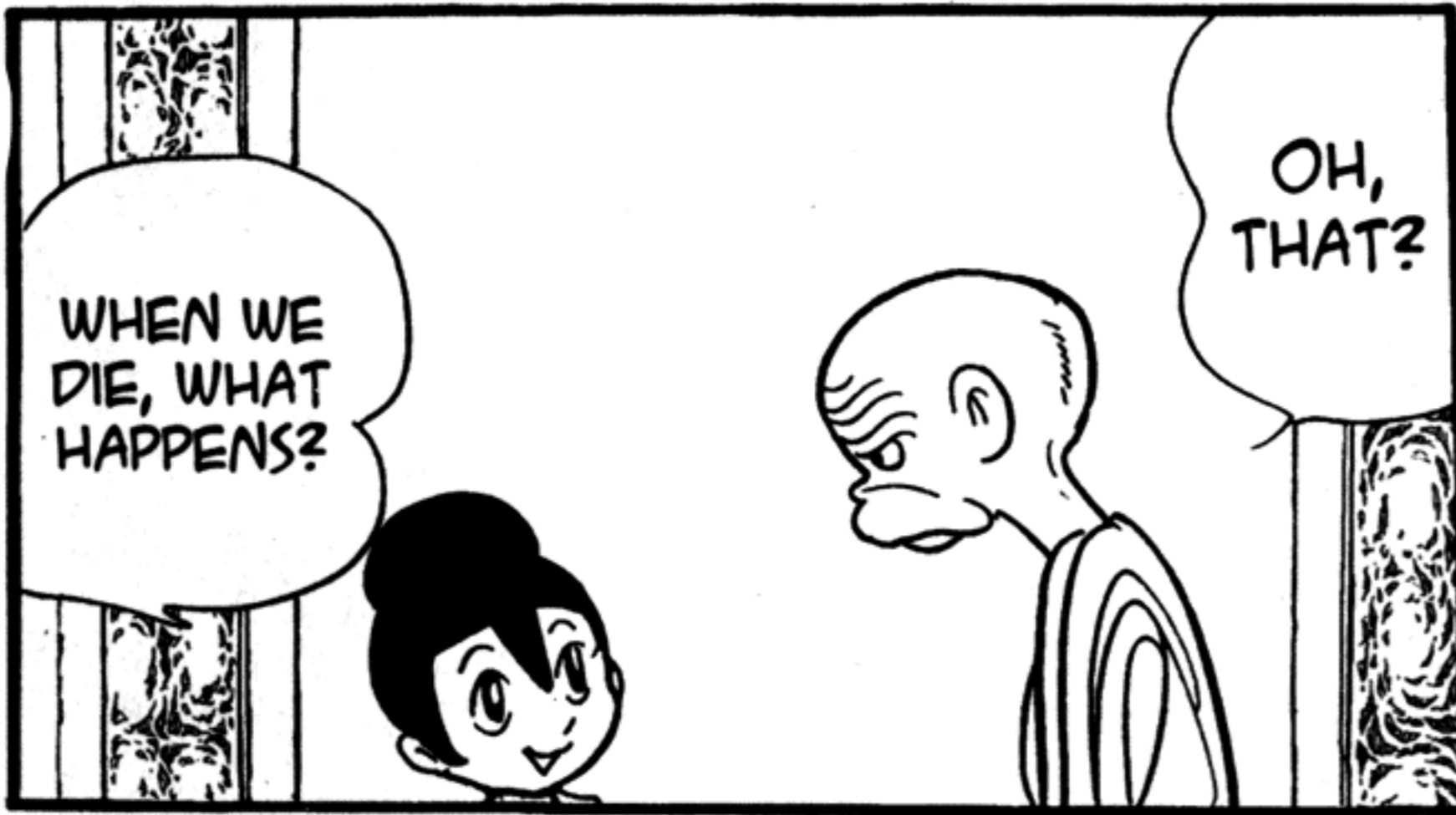
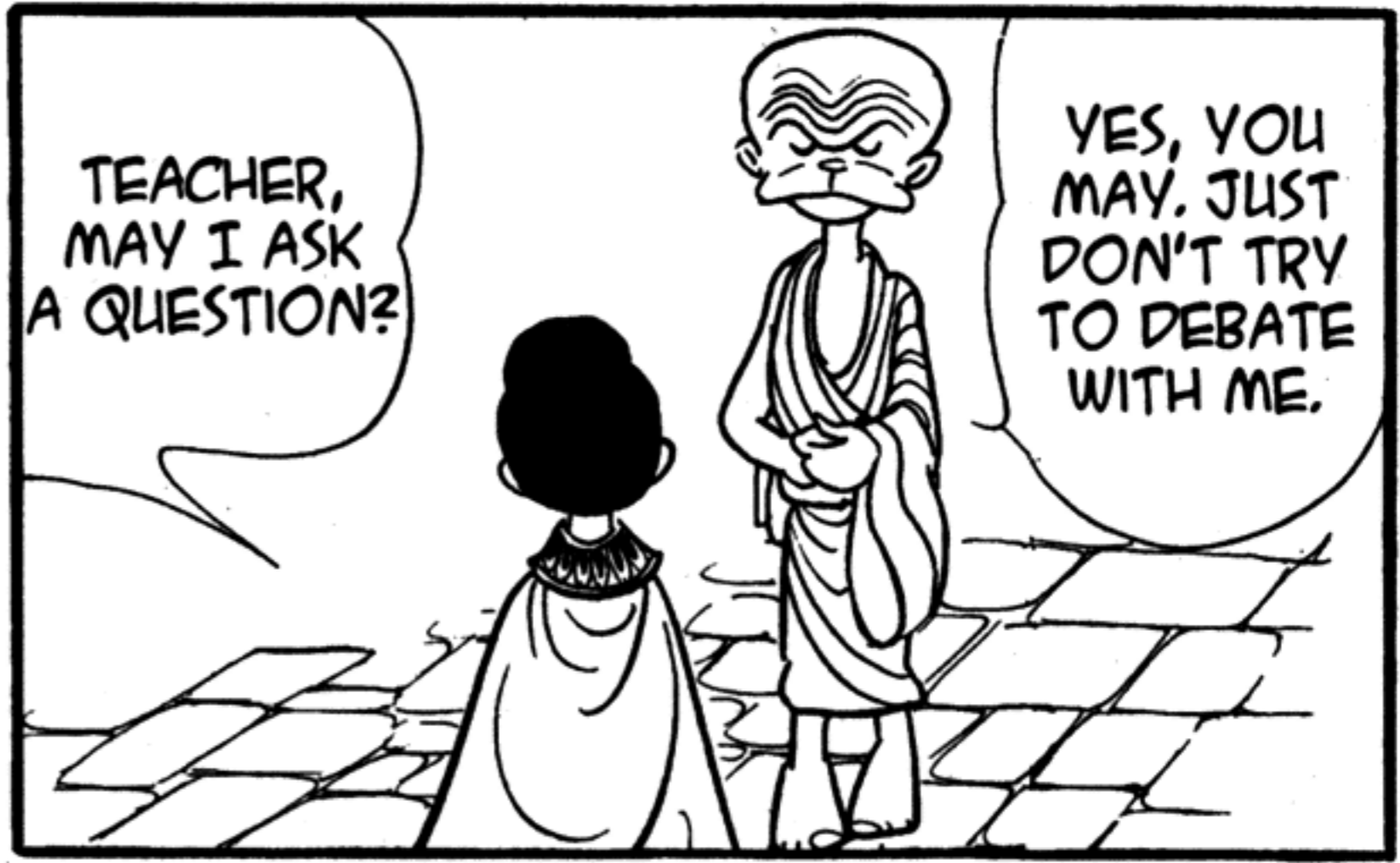
YOU'D GET ARRESTED. WE'D HAVE TO PAY THE FINE FOR YOU AND...

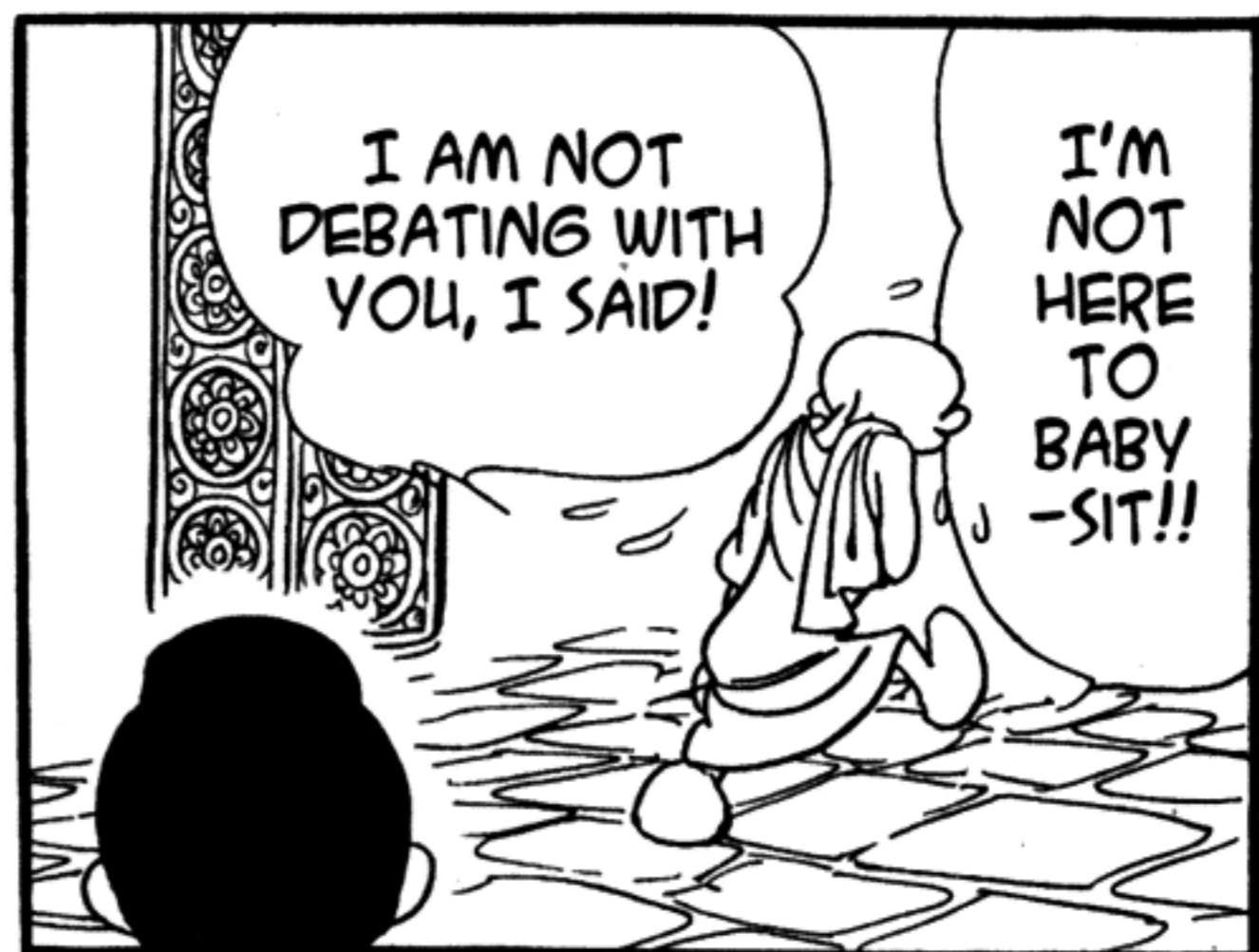
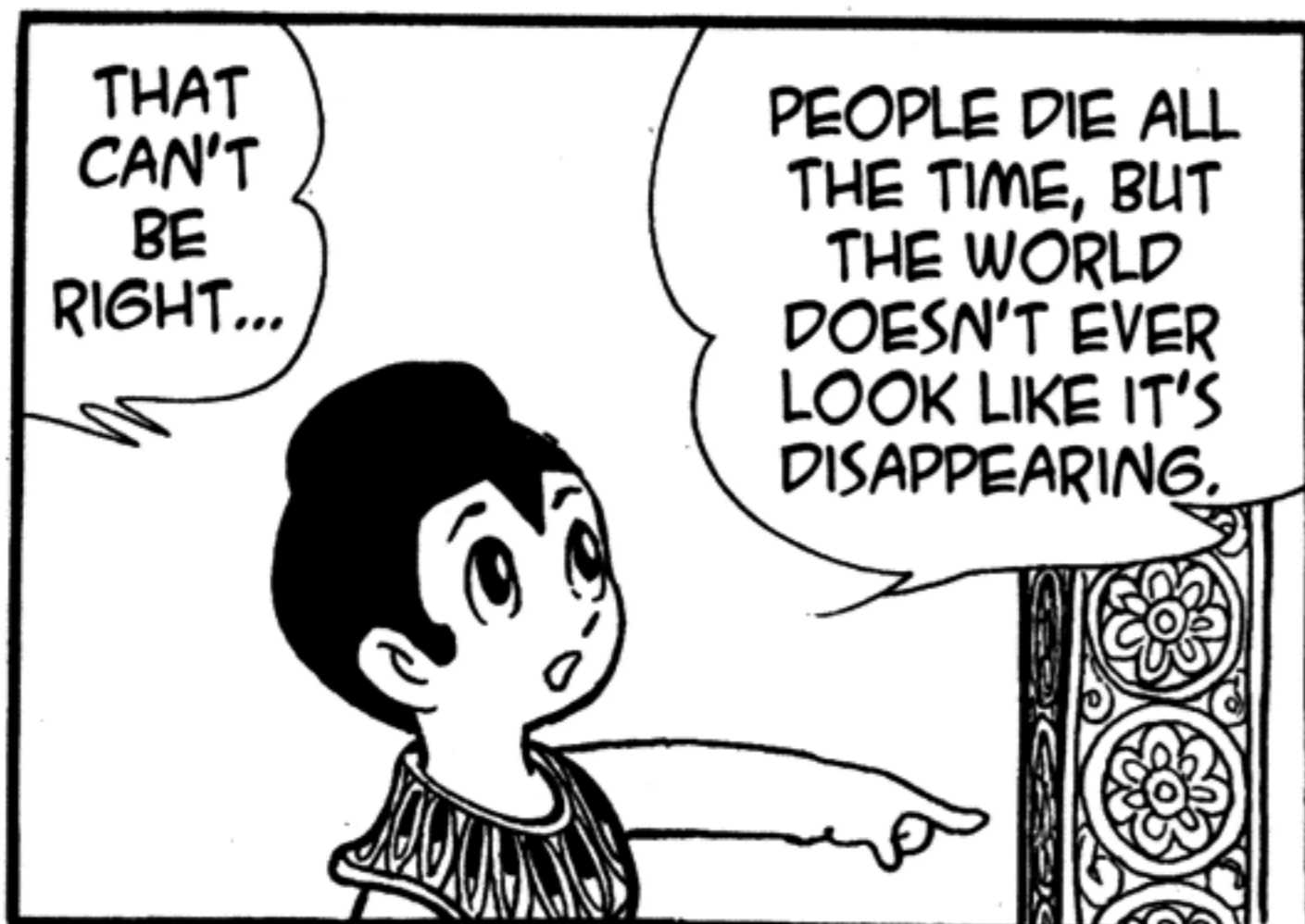
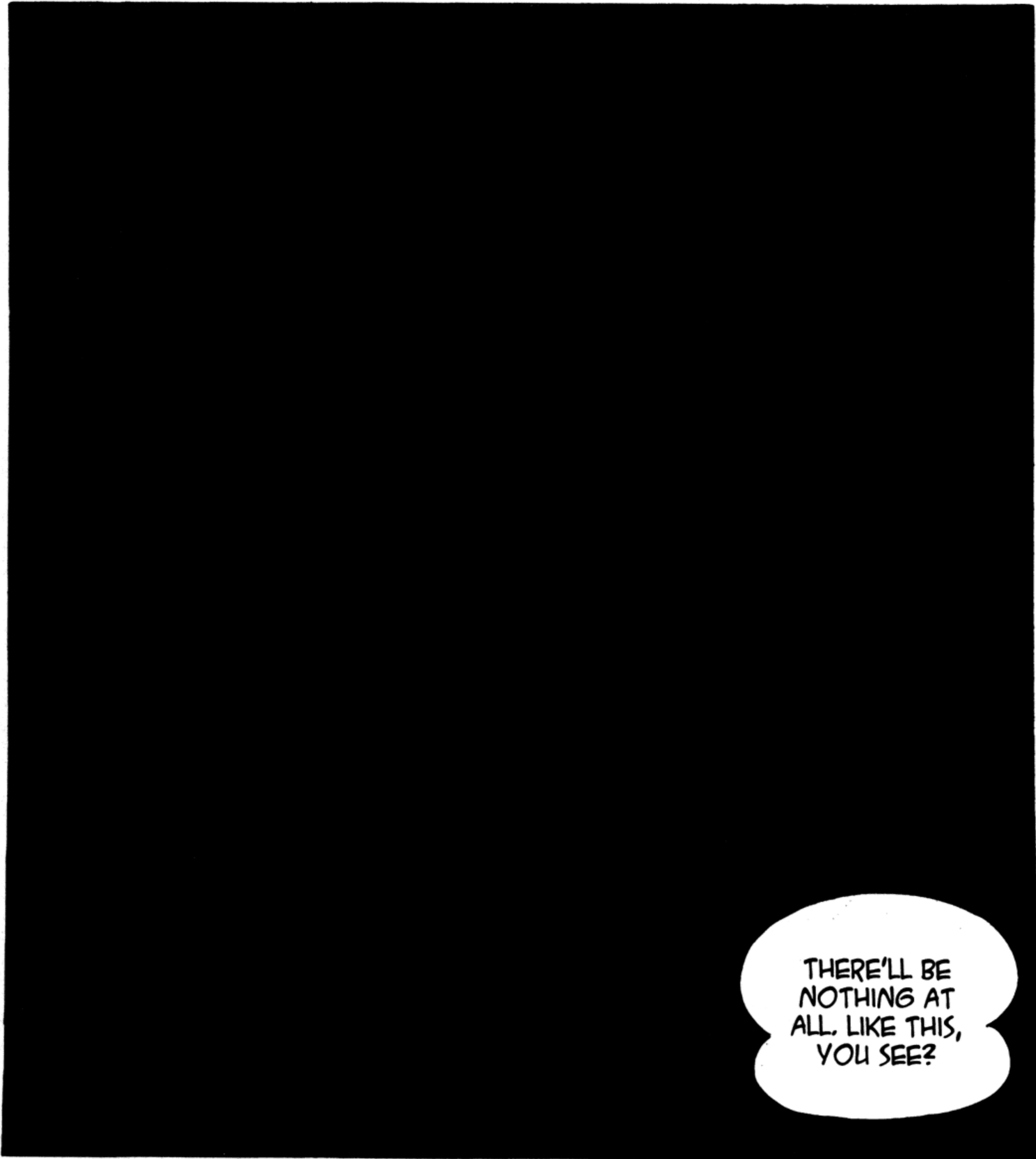


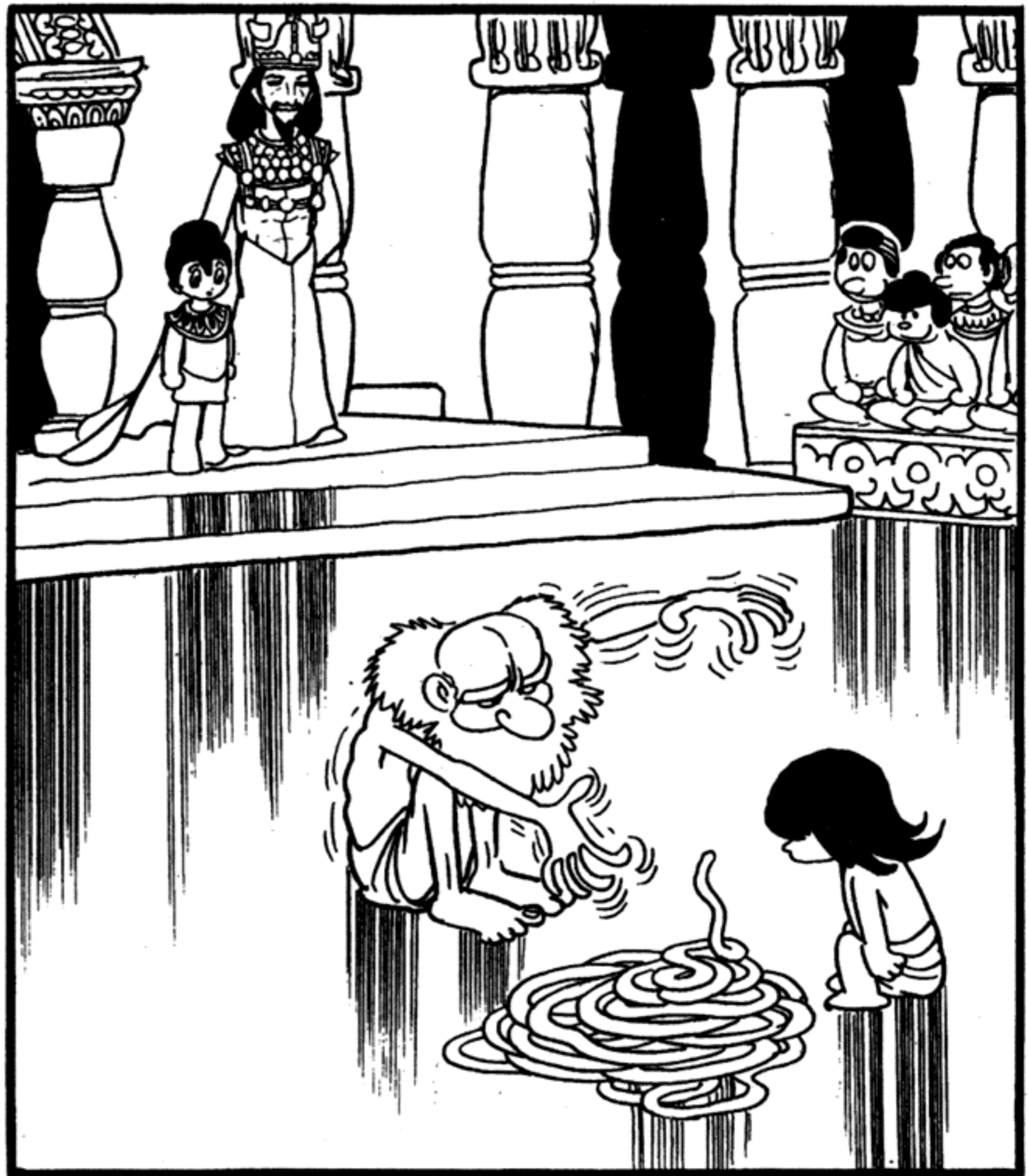
ENOUGH, MINISTER BHUBU. YOU'RE JUST MAKING THIS UP.

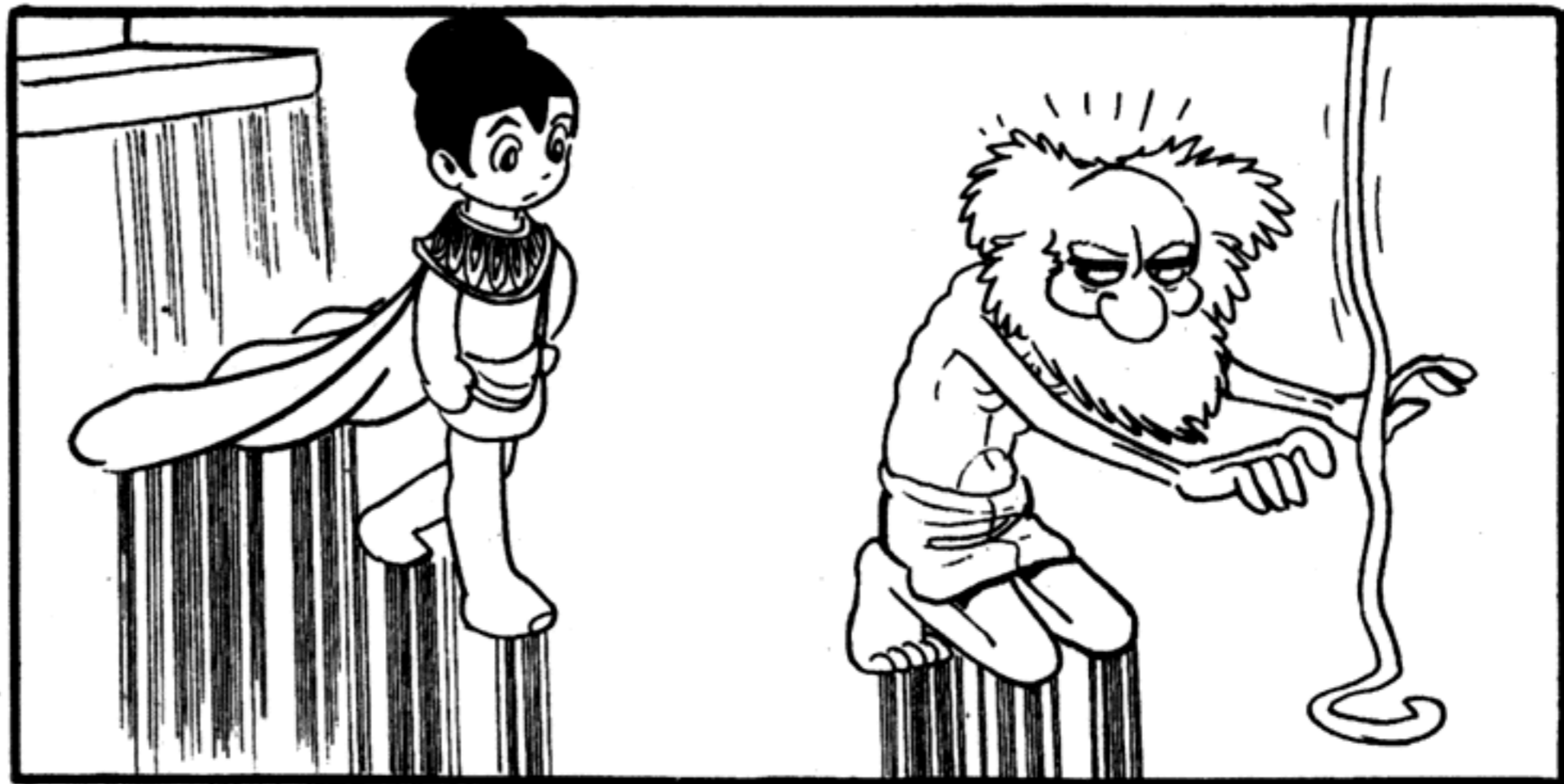
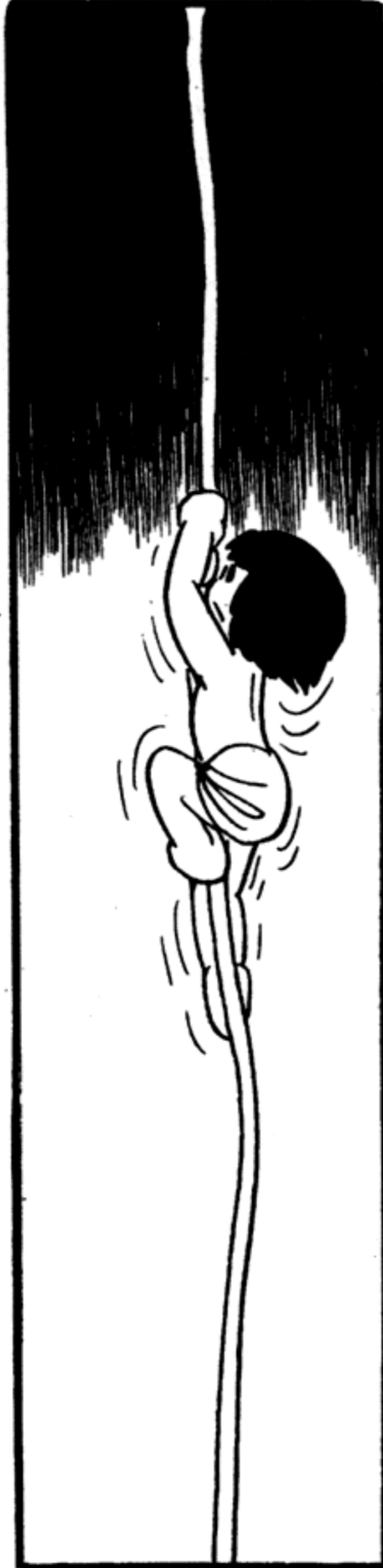


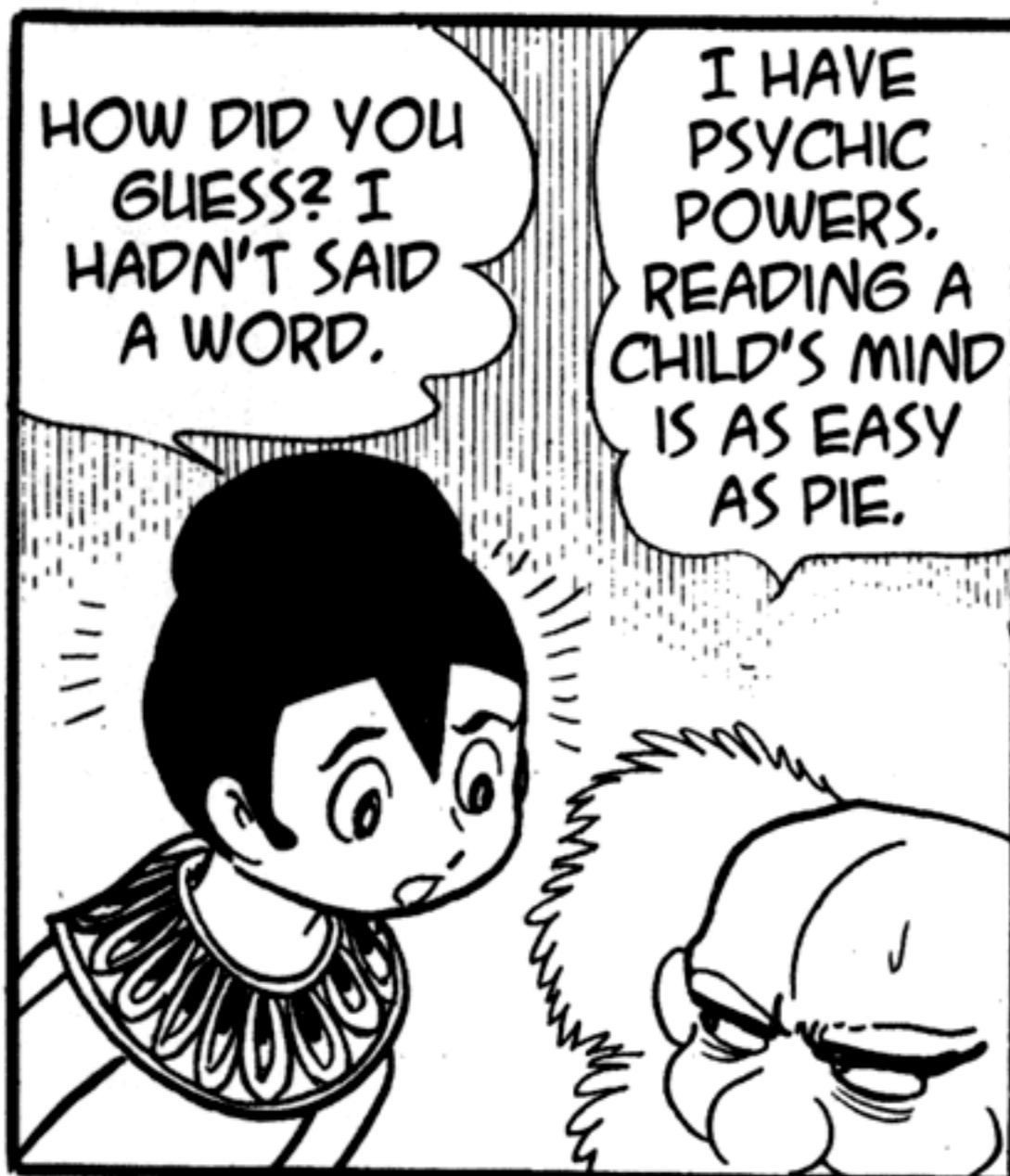
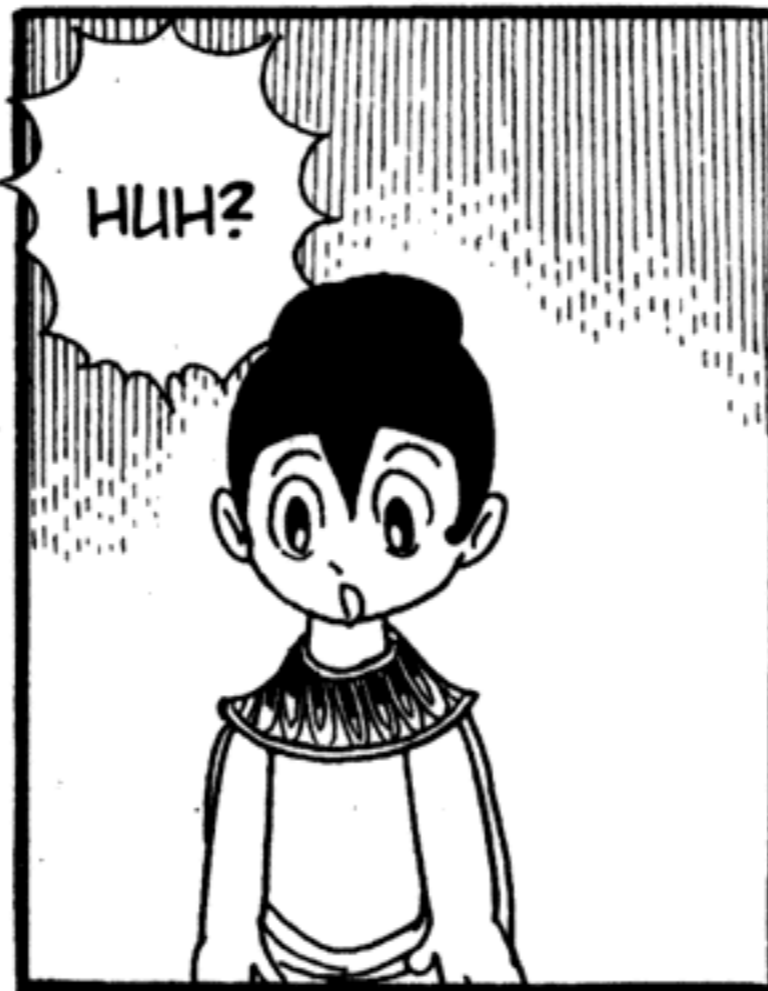
PHEEW, HIS HIGHNESS IS MIGHTY CLEVER. SUCH A FOOL HE MADE OUT OF ME.

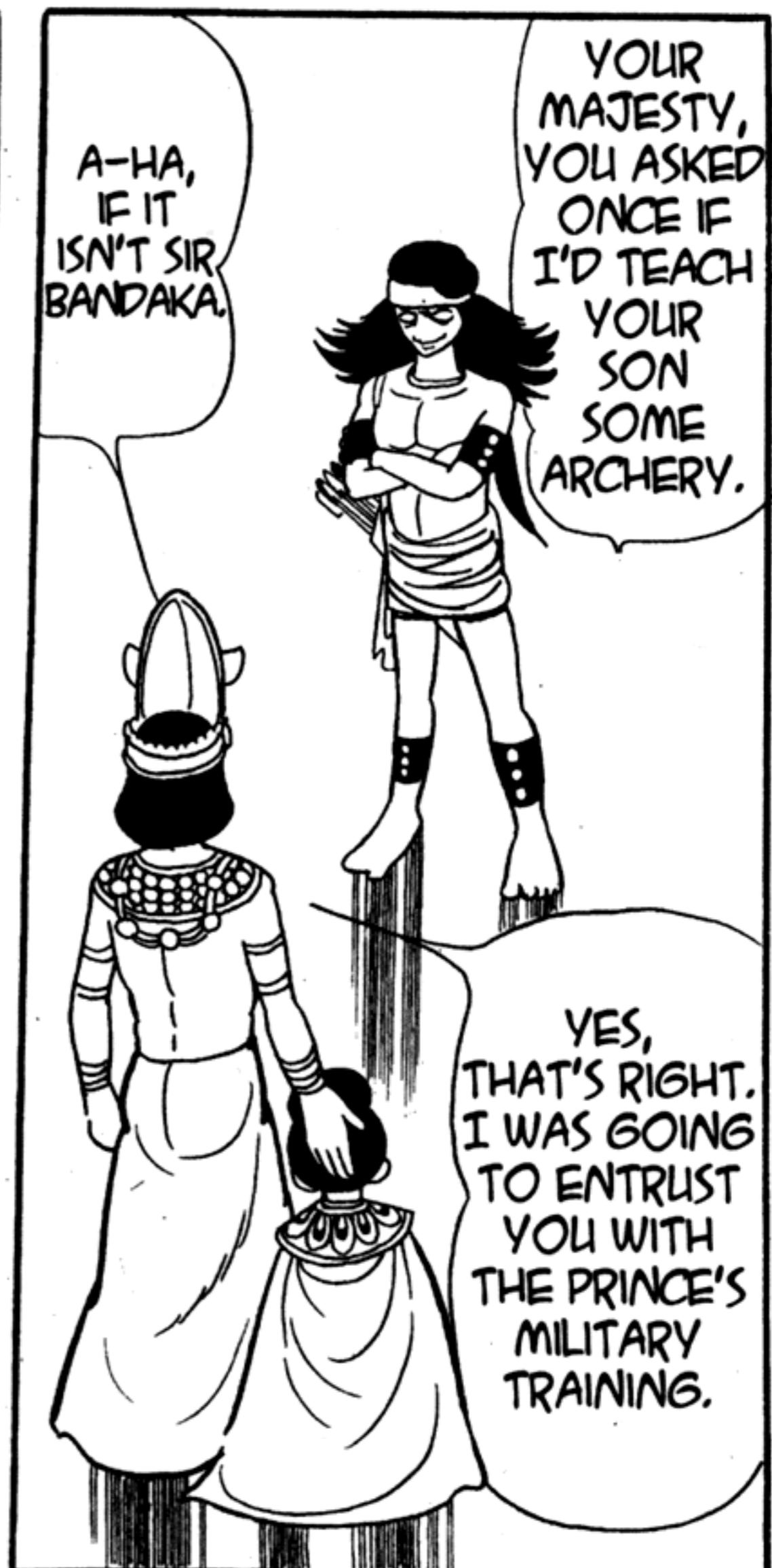














BUT I'VE GIVEN UP ON THAT IDEA.

YOU SEE, MY BOY SIDDHARTHA WAS BORN WEAK. HE DOES NOT HAVE THE STRENGTH TO WIELD A BOW.



YOUR MAJESTY, WHY ARE YOU GIVING UP?! HAVEN'T THE SHAKYA ALWAYS BEEN GREAT ARCHERS? IT'S A FACT KNOWN THROUGHOUT THE LAND.

AH, BUT MY SON'S BETTER SUITED TO THE WAYS OF THE WISE.



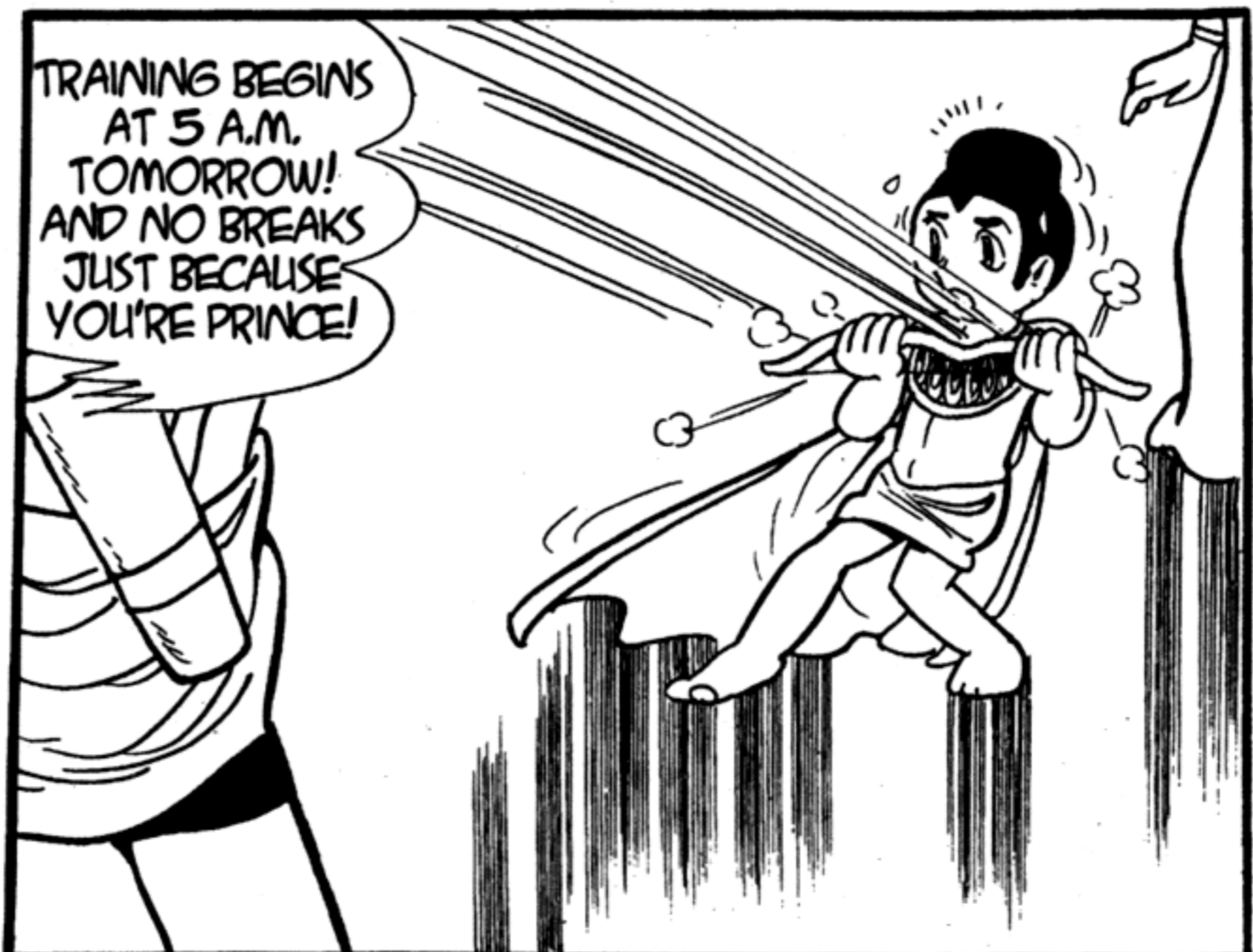
HEH HEH, THAT MAKES ME WANT TO TRAIN HIM ALL THE MORE.



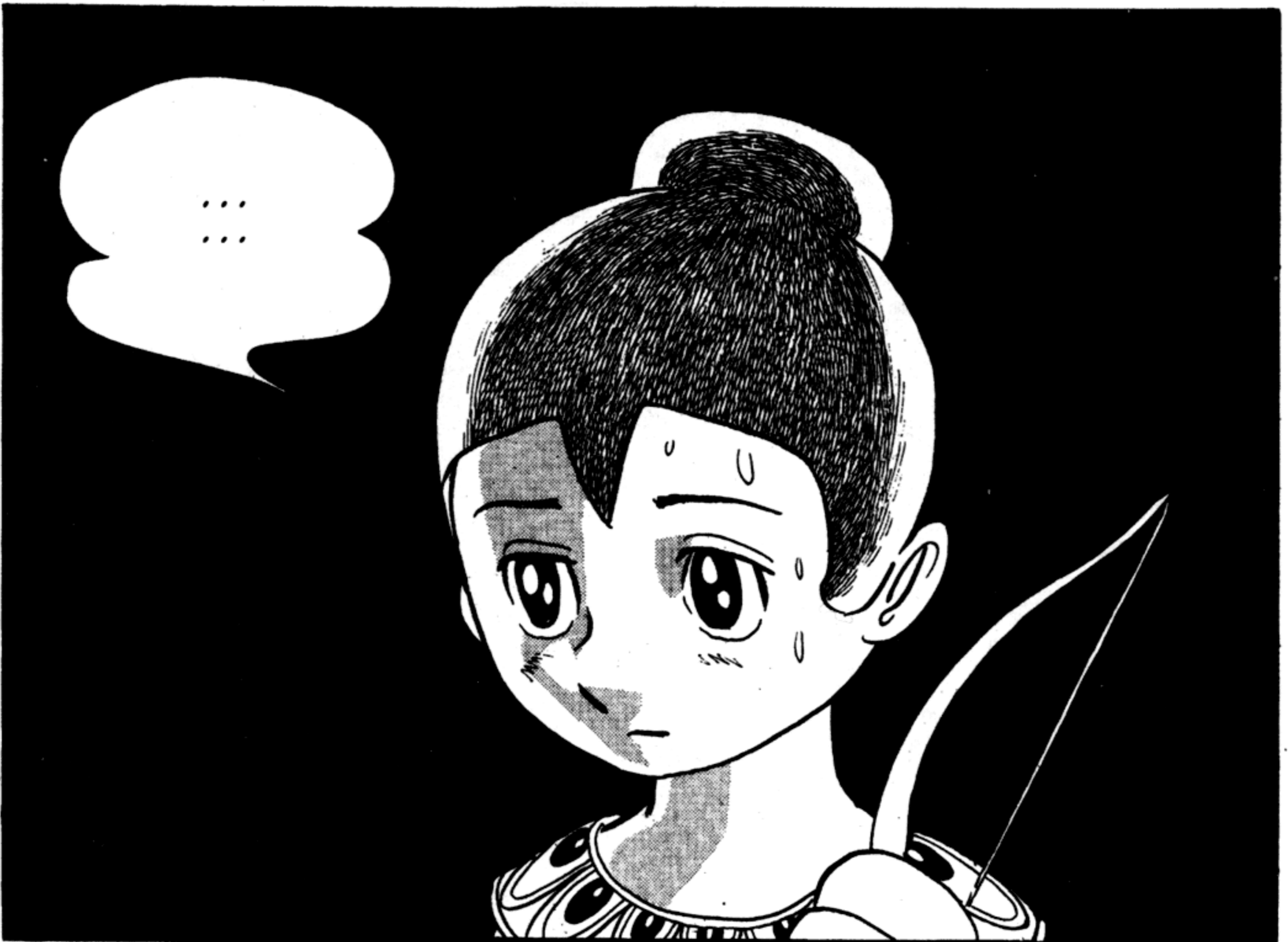
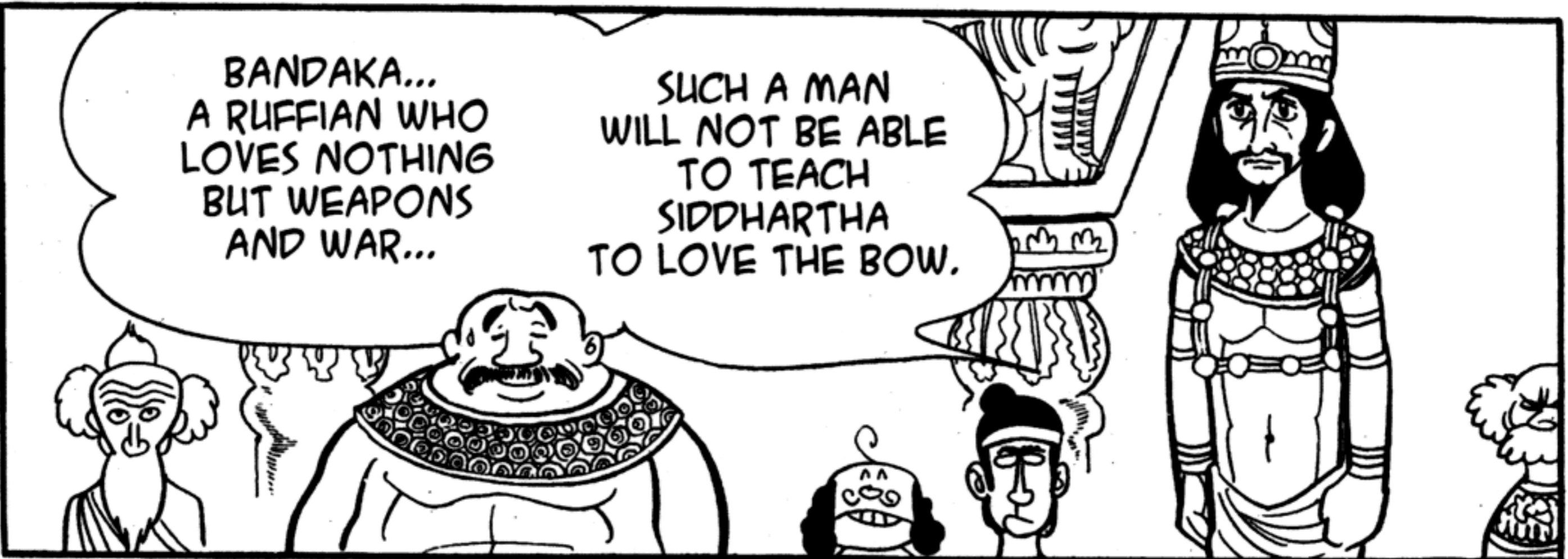
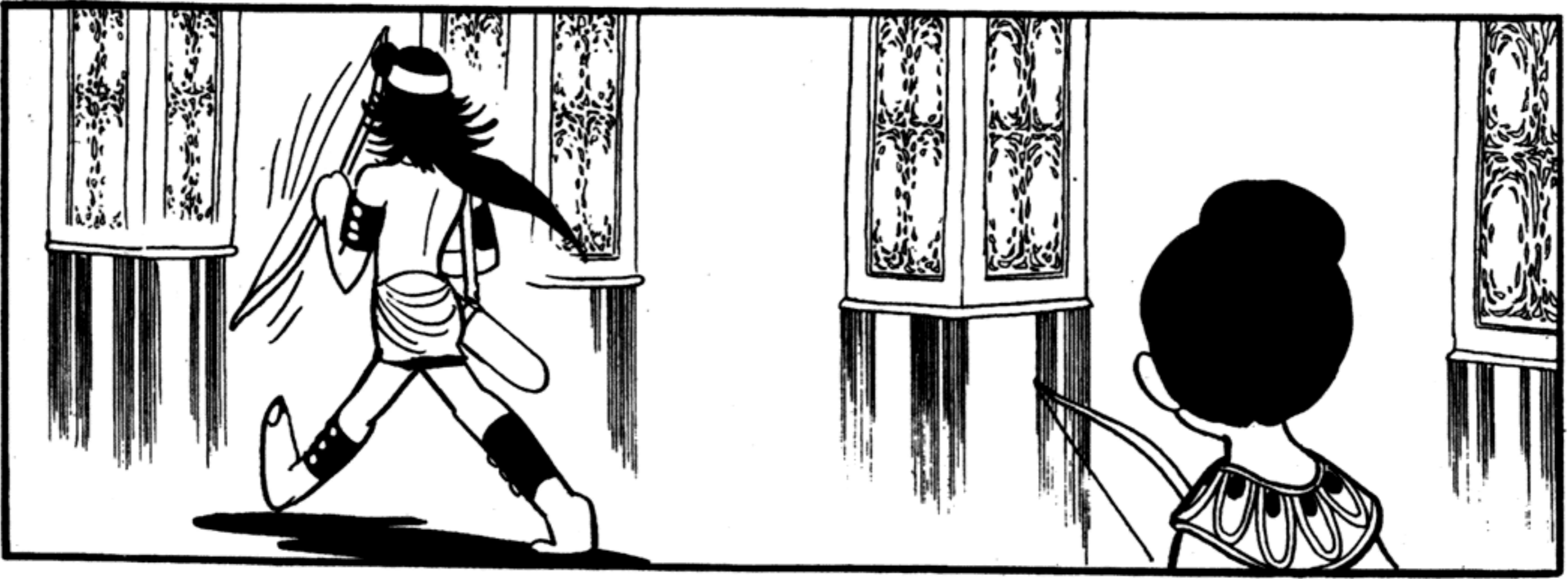
I'LL MAKE SURE NO ONE EVER CALLS HIM...

THE WEAKLING PRINCE!

I'VE EVEN MADE HIM A BOW THAT HE COULD DRAW.

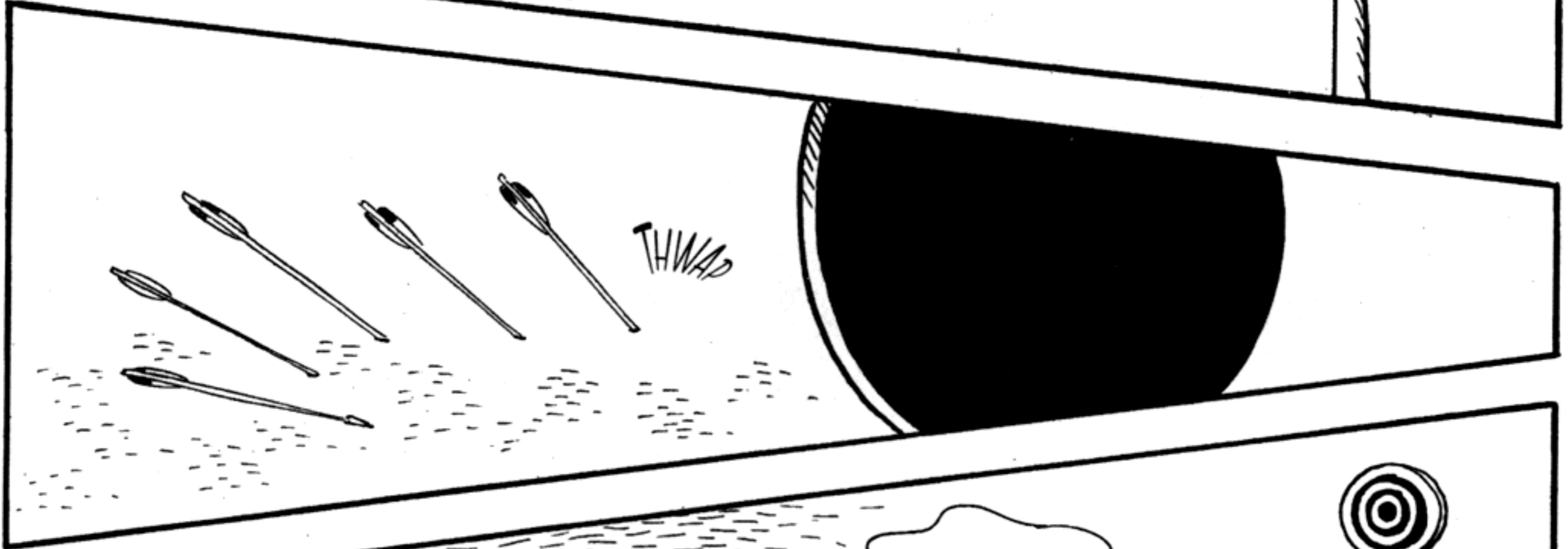


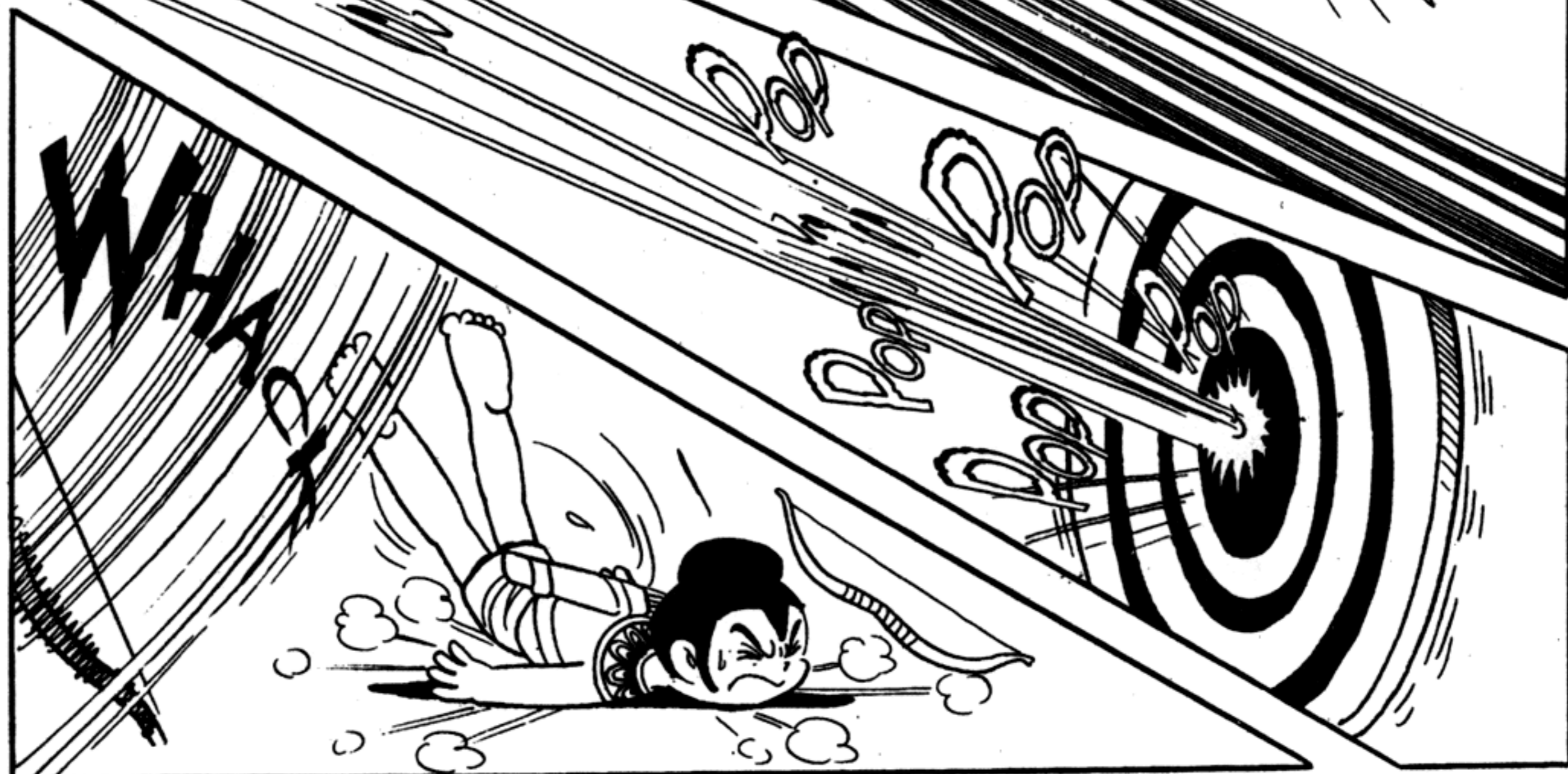
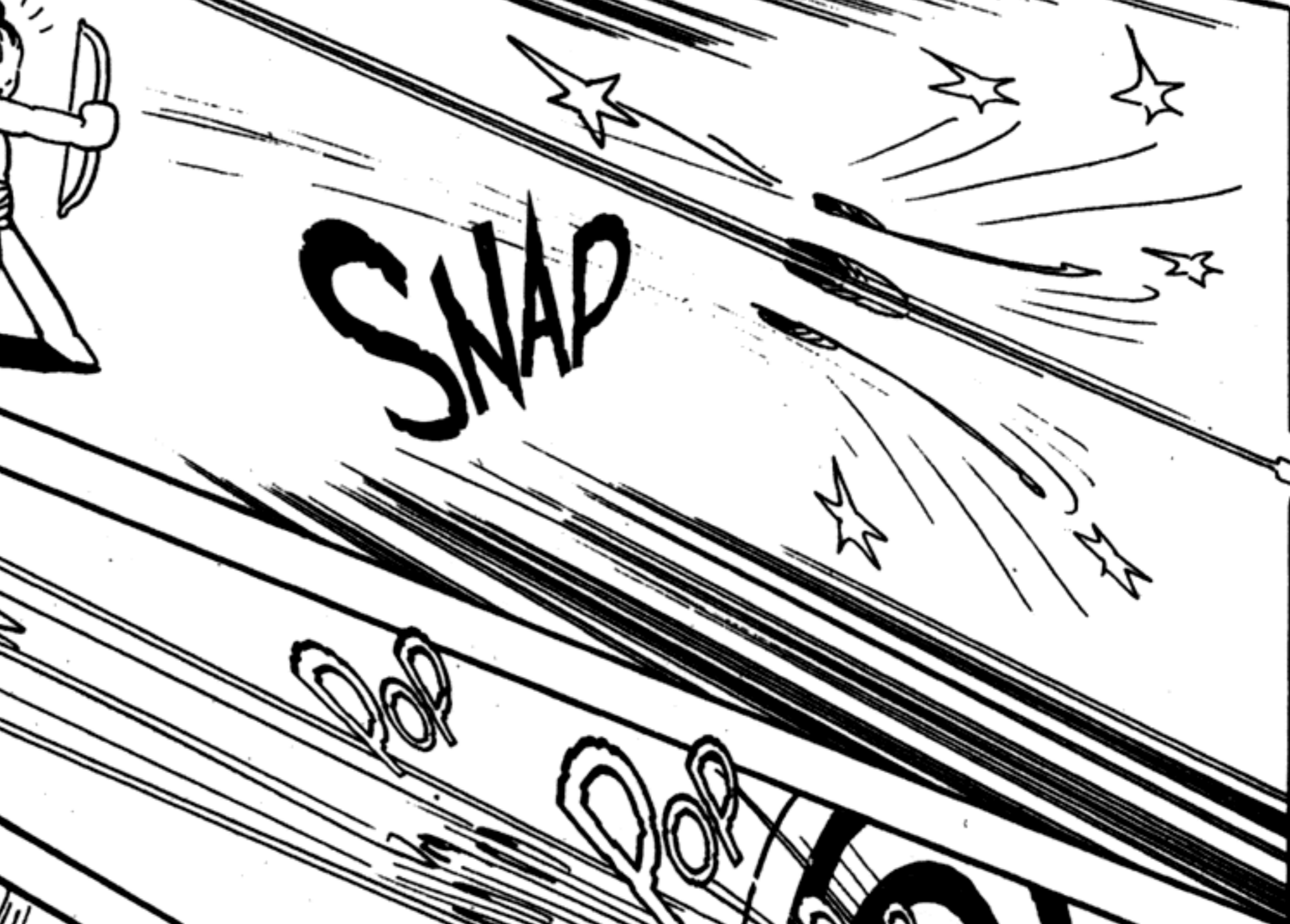
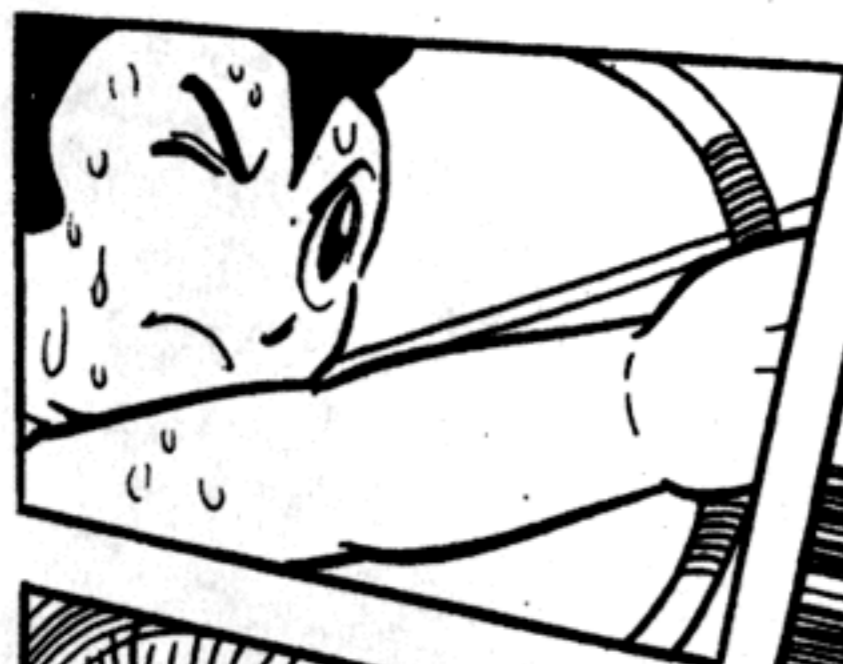
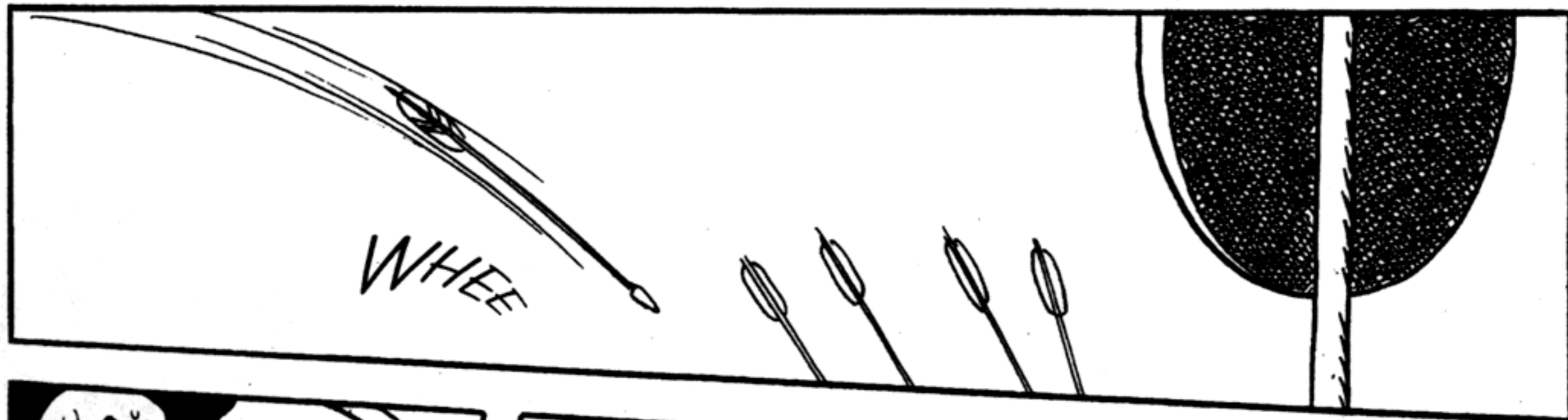
TRAINING BEGINS AT 5 A.M. TOMORROW! AND NO BREAKS JUST BECAUSE YOU'RE PRINCE!



CHAPTER TWO

THE GARDEN OF MEDITATION

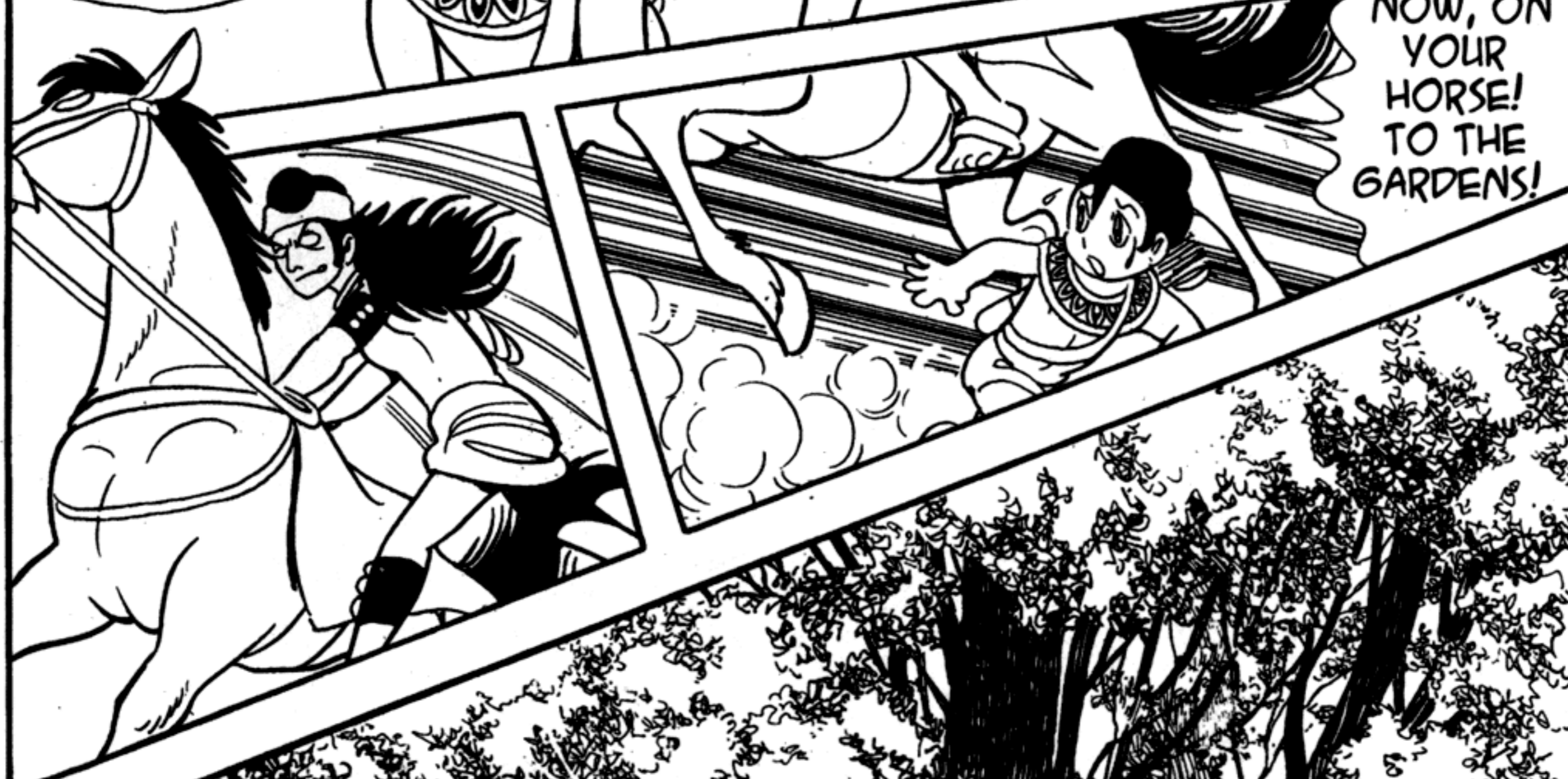


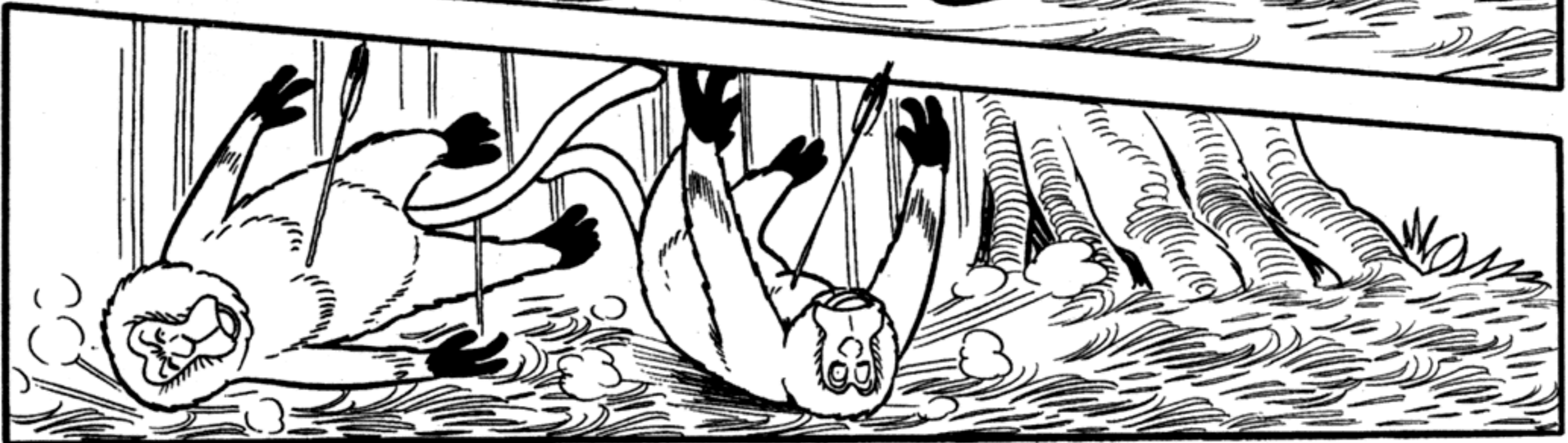
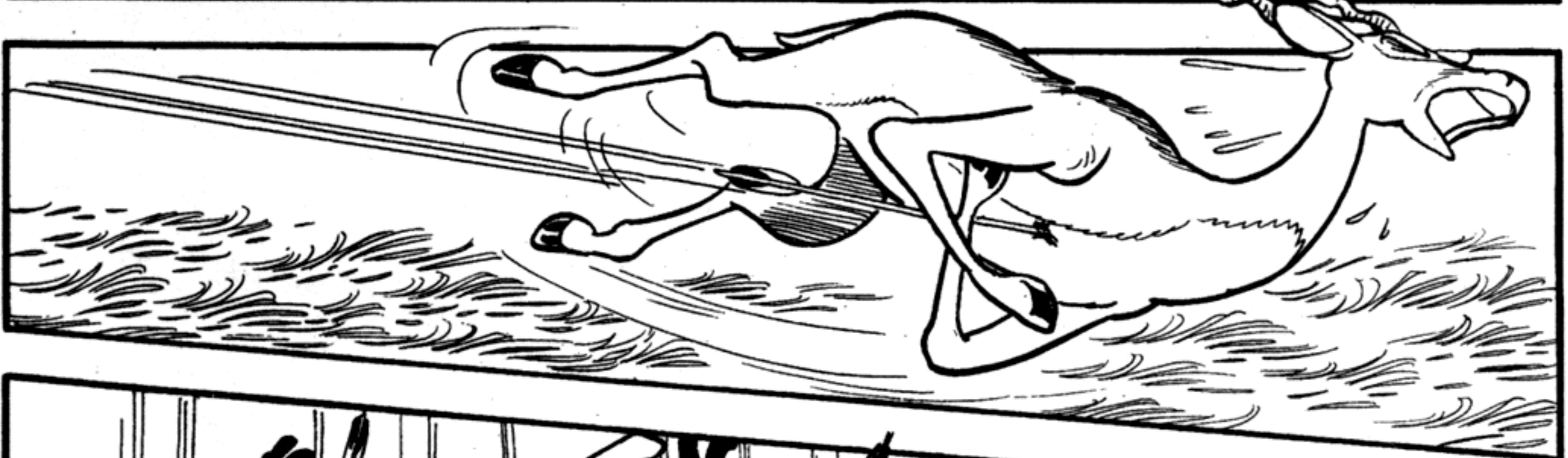


I DIDN'T
COME TO
KAPILAVASTU
TO HAVE A
GOOD LAUGH
OVER WHAT A
WIMP YOU
ARE.

I'M GONNA
WHIP YOU
INTO SHAPE!
ONE DAY
YOU'LL
THANK ME
FOR THIS.

NOW, ON
YOUR
HORSE!
TO THE
GARDENS!





I AM BY FAR THE BEST ARCHER IN THE WORLD, LITTLE PRINCE. OH, THERE WAS THAT CHAMPION OF KOSALA, A LAD NAMED CHAPRA. BUT IN THE END HE WAS NO MATCH FOR BANDAKA!



NOTHING IN LIFE IS MORE SATISFYING THAN BEING A GOOD ARCHER. TRUST ME ON THAT, SIDDHARTHA.

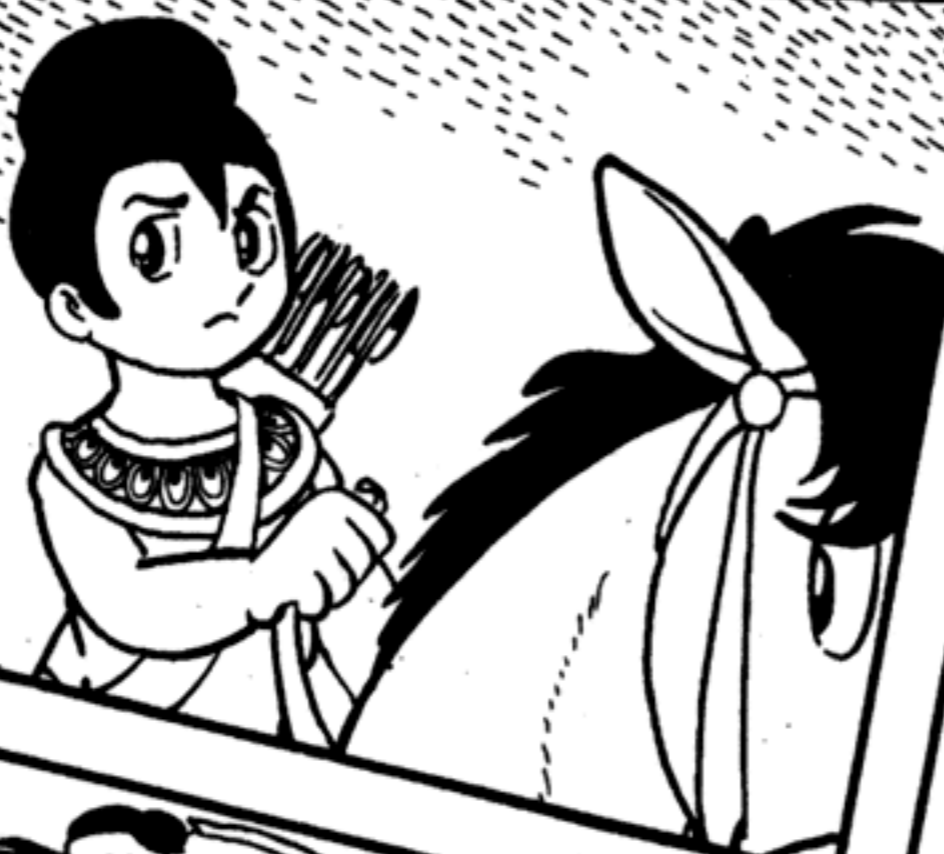
I DON'T KNOW ABOUT THAT...



WHAT'D YOU SAY?

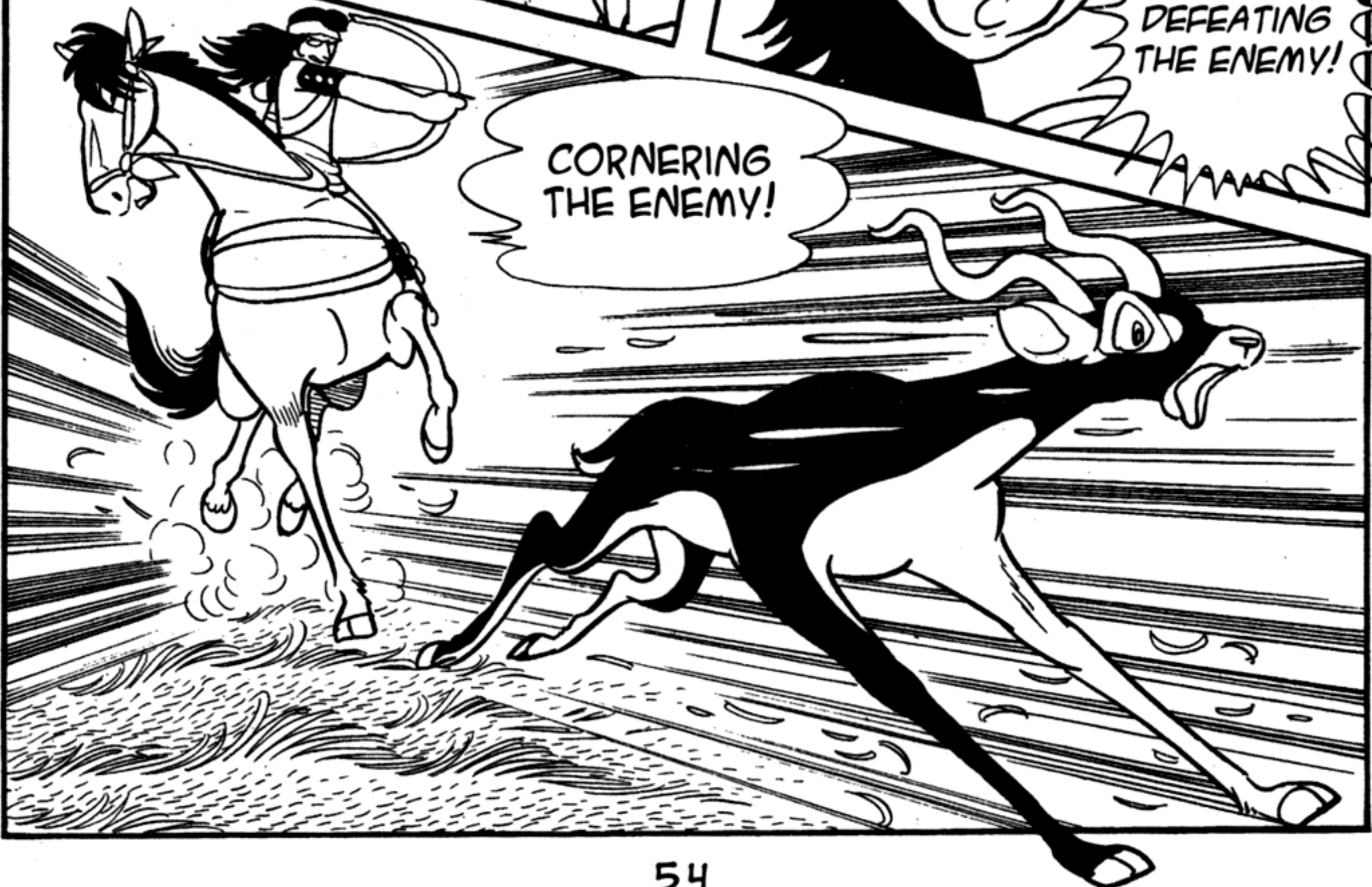


WHAT USE IS A BOW ANYWAY - OTHER THAN FOR KILLING?



YOU MEAN DEFEATING THE ENEMY!

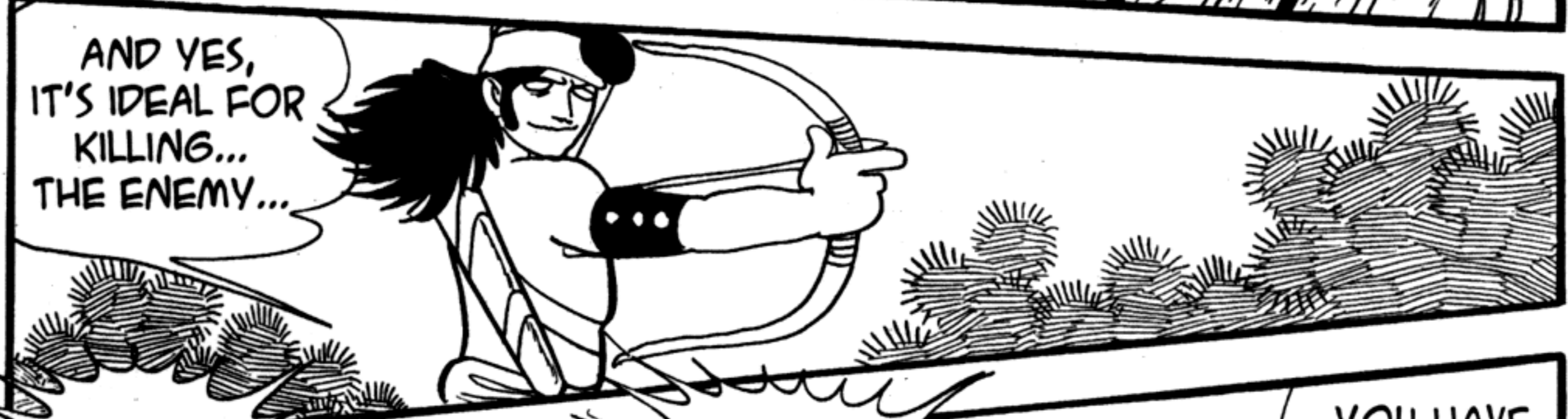
CORNERING THE ENEMY!





MAKING HIM BEG FOR HIS LIFE!

HA HA HA



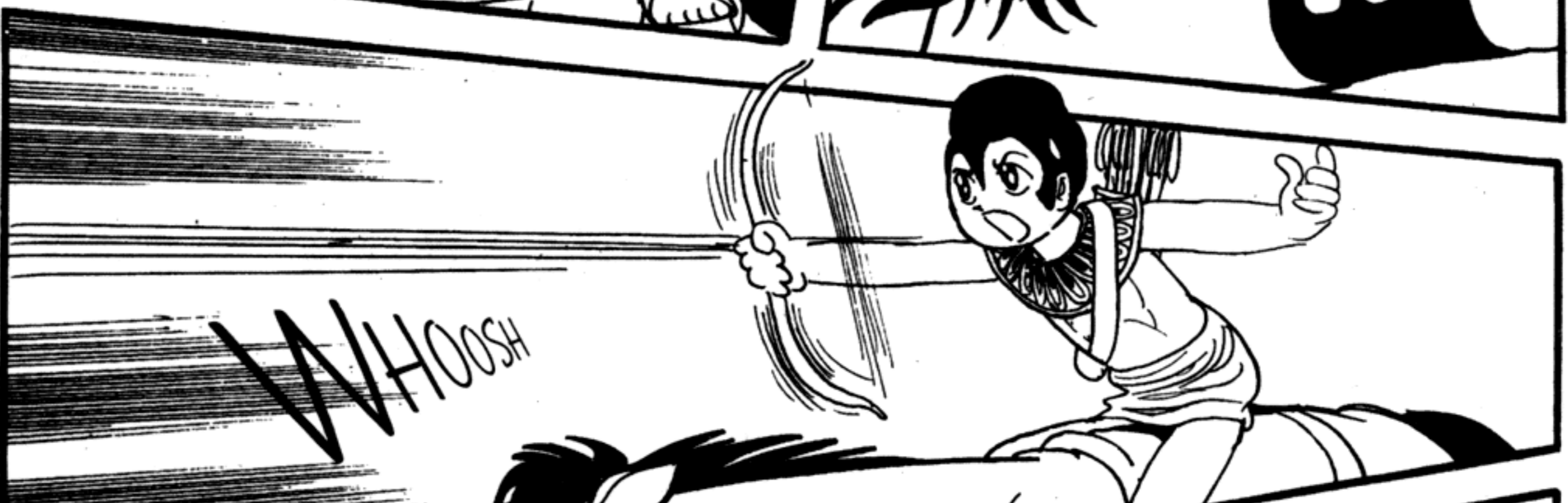
AND YES, IT'S IDEAL FOR KILLING... THE ENEMY...



OKAY, ENOUGH!

LOWER YOUR BOW!

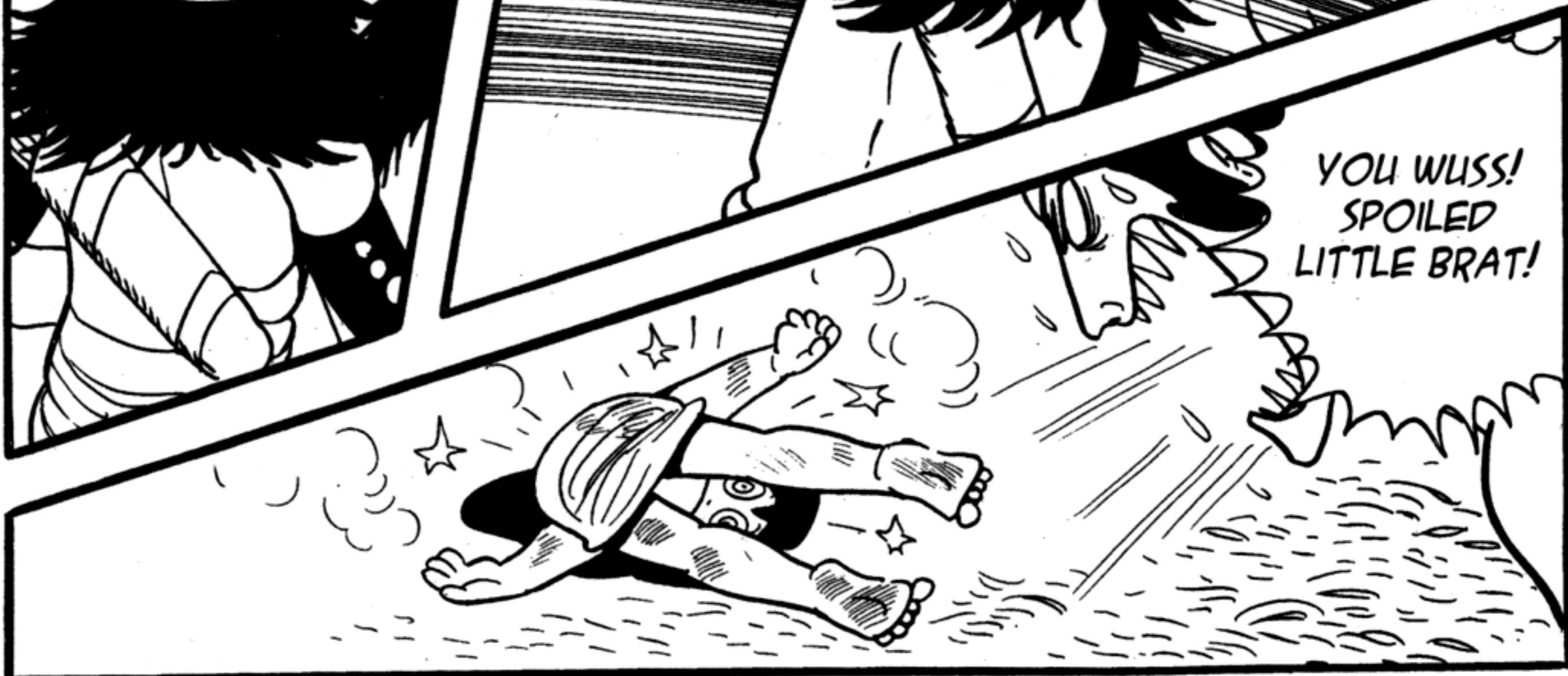
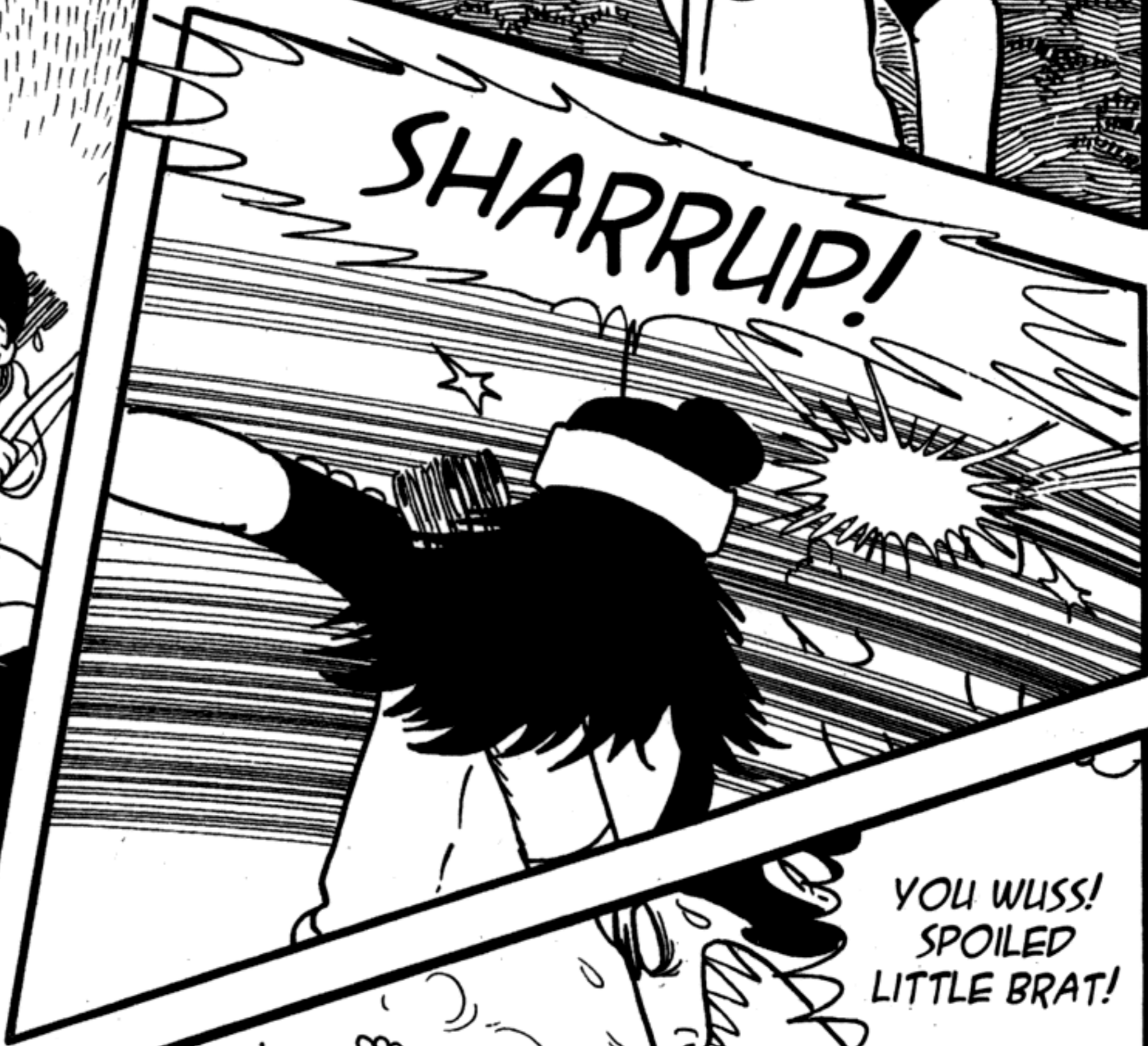
YOU HAVE NO IDEA HOW MUCH FUN THIS IS, DO YOU?



WHOOOSH



huh?





THOUGH FEW IN NUMBER, THE SHAKYA ENJOY THE HIGHEST REPUTATION IN MIGHTY KOSALA; NO, MAKE THAT THROUGHOUT HINDUSTAN.

BUT I FEAR YOU'VE GOT A LONG WAY TO GO...

I'LL LET YOU OFF THE HOOK THIS TIME, BUT DON'T EVER TRY THAT AGAIN.



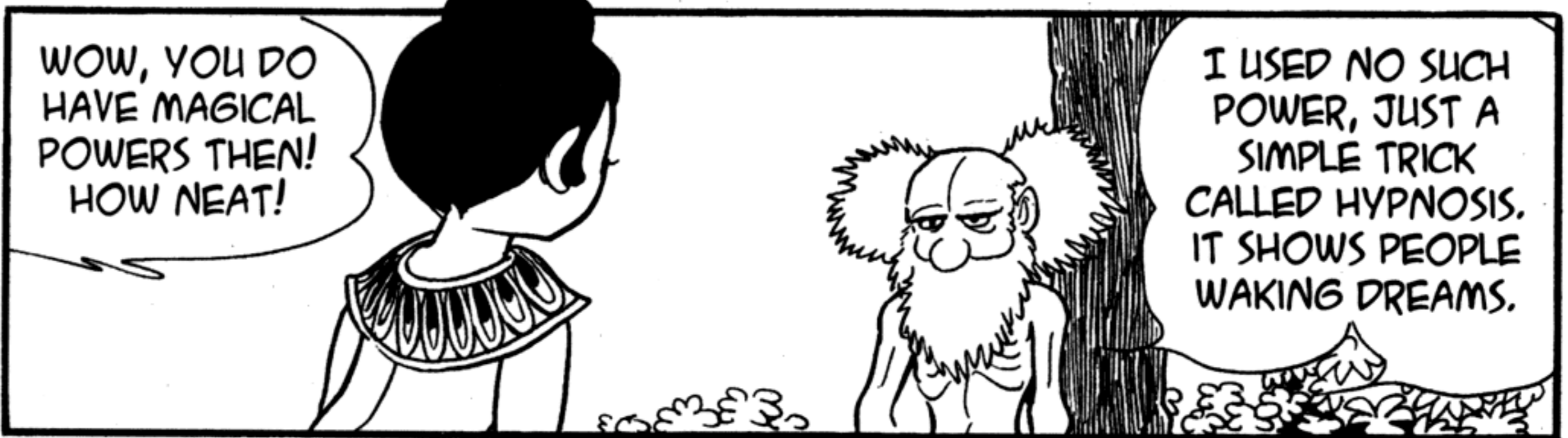


AH,
YOU HAVE
COME!



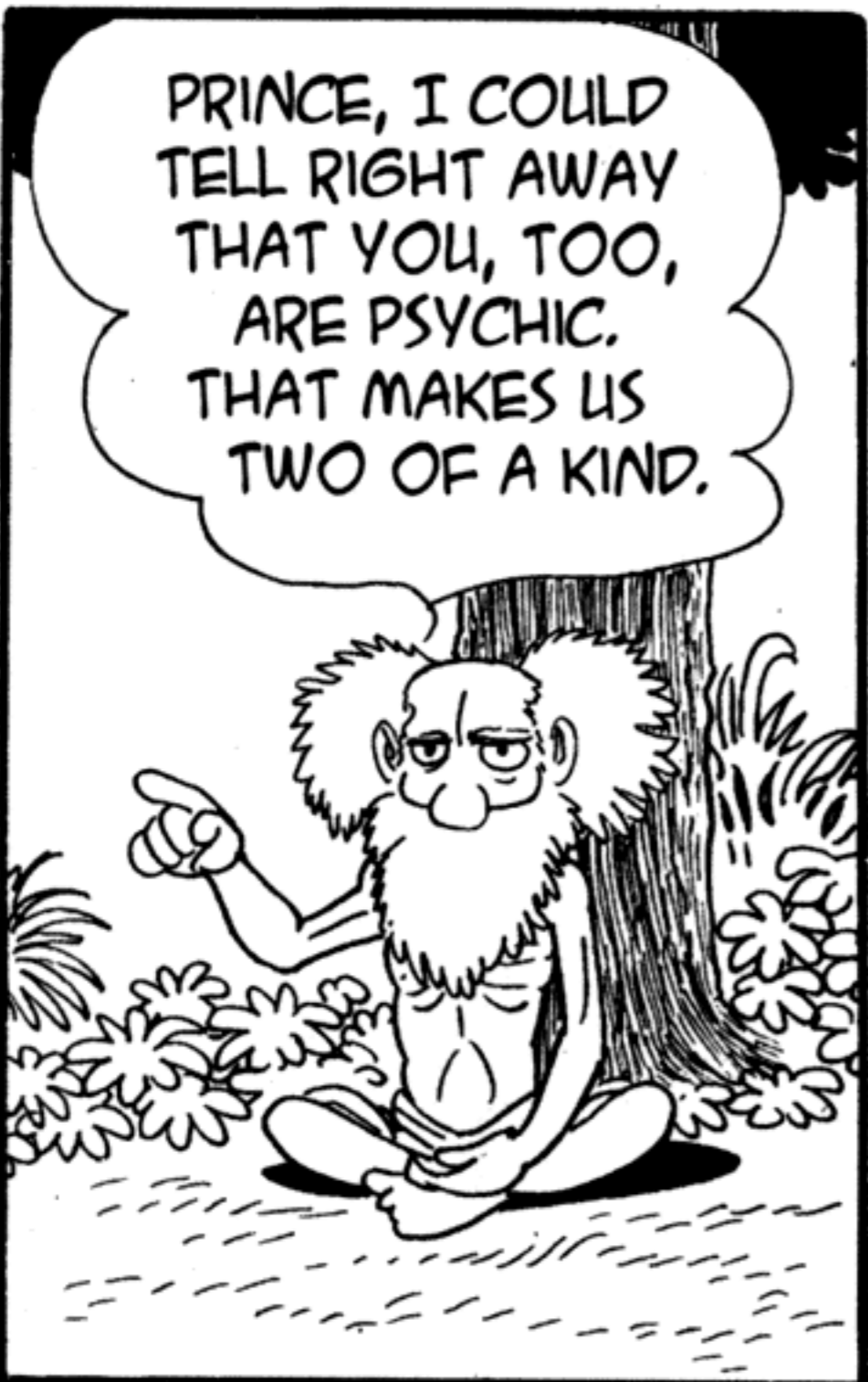
WHERE'S
THAT BOY...
YOU KNOW,
THE ONE
WHO CLIMBED
UP THE
ROPE?

HE WAS JUST
AN ILLUSION.
THERE WAS
NEVER ANY
CHILD THERE
AT ALL.



WOW, YOU DO
HAVE MAGICAL
POWERS THEN!
HOW NEAT!

I USED NO SUCH
POWER, JUST A
SIMPLE TRICK
CALLED HYPNOSIS.
IT SHOWS PEOPLE
WAKING DREAMS.



PRINCE, I COULD
TELL RIGHT AWAY
THAT YOU, TOO,
ARE PSYCHIC.
THAT MAKES US
TWO OF A KIND.

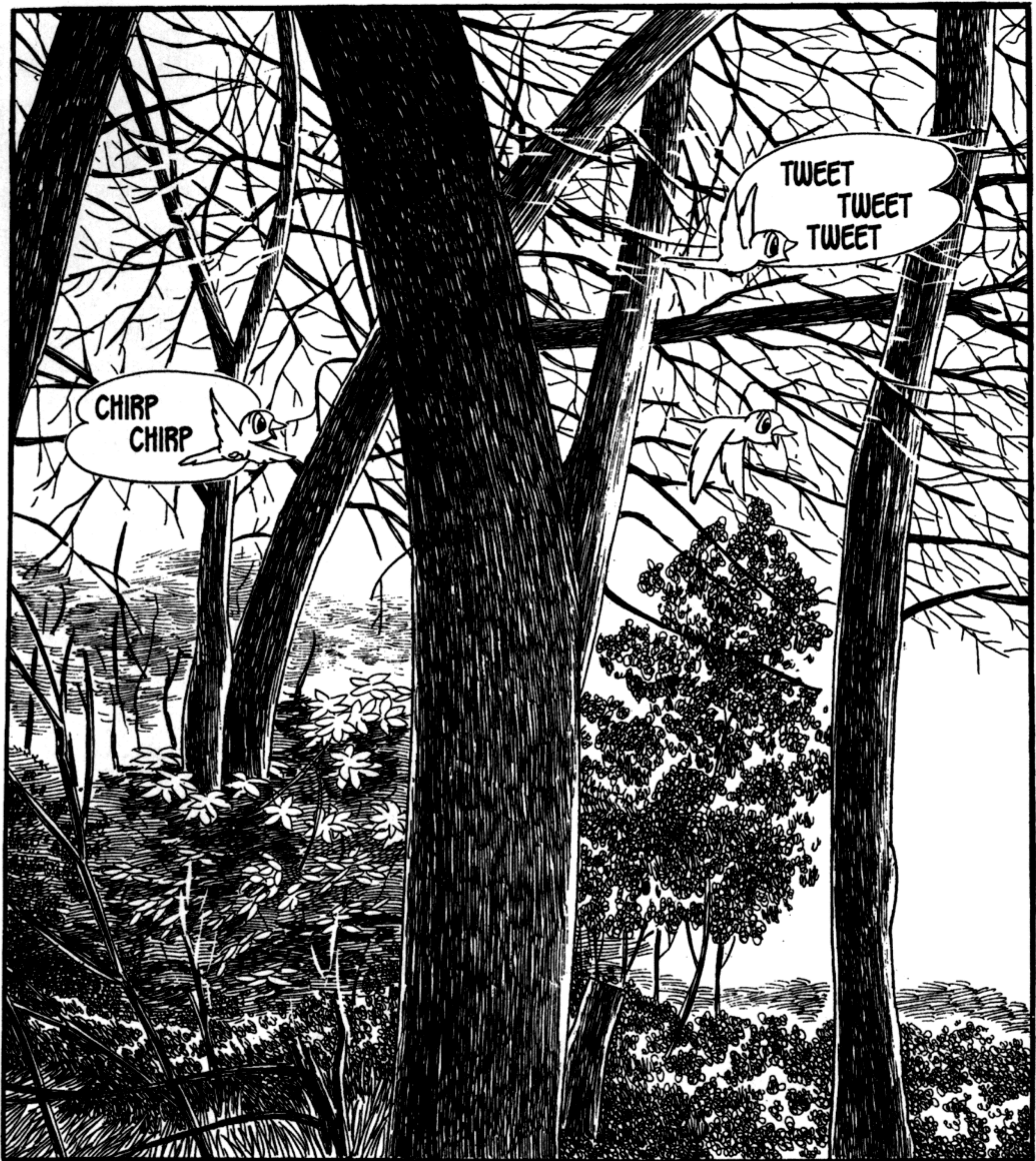


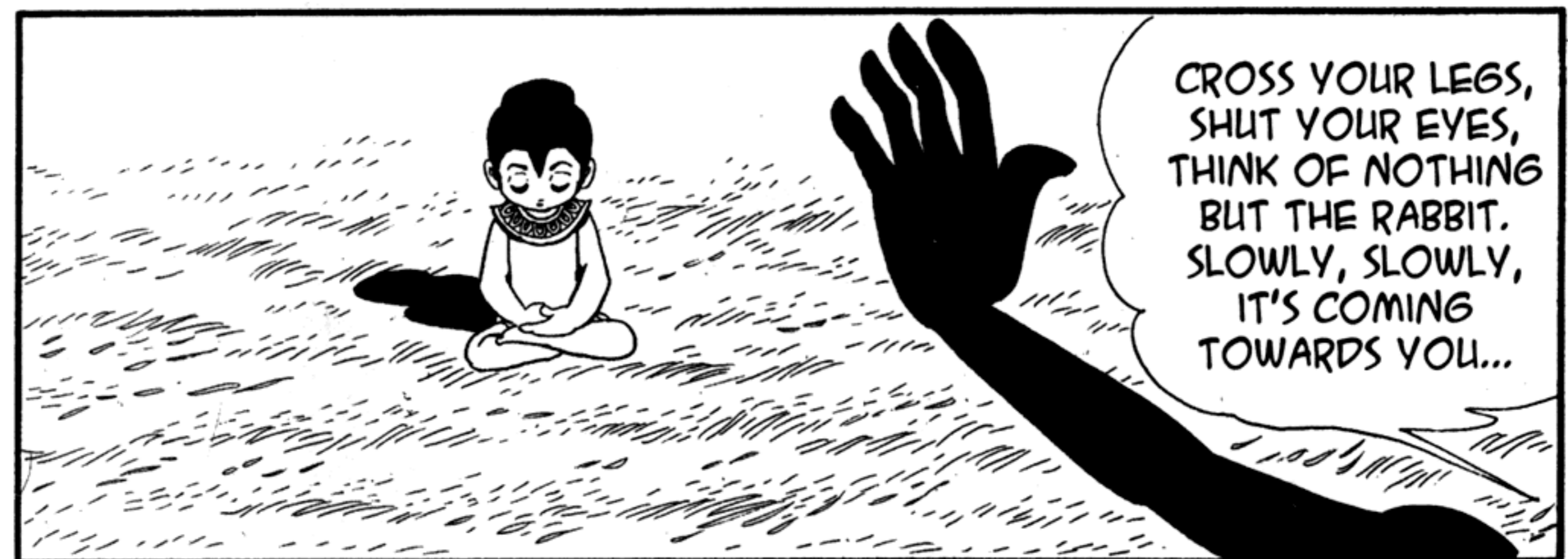
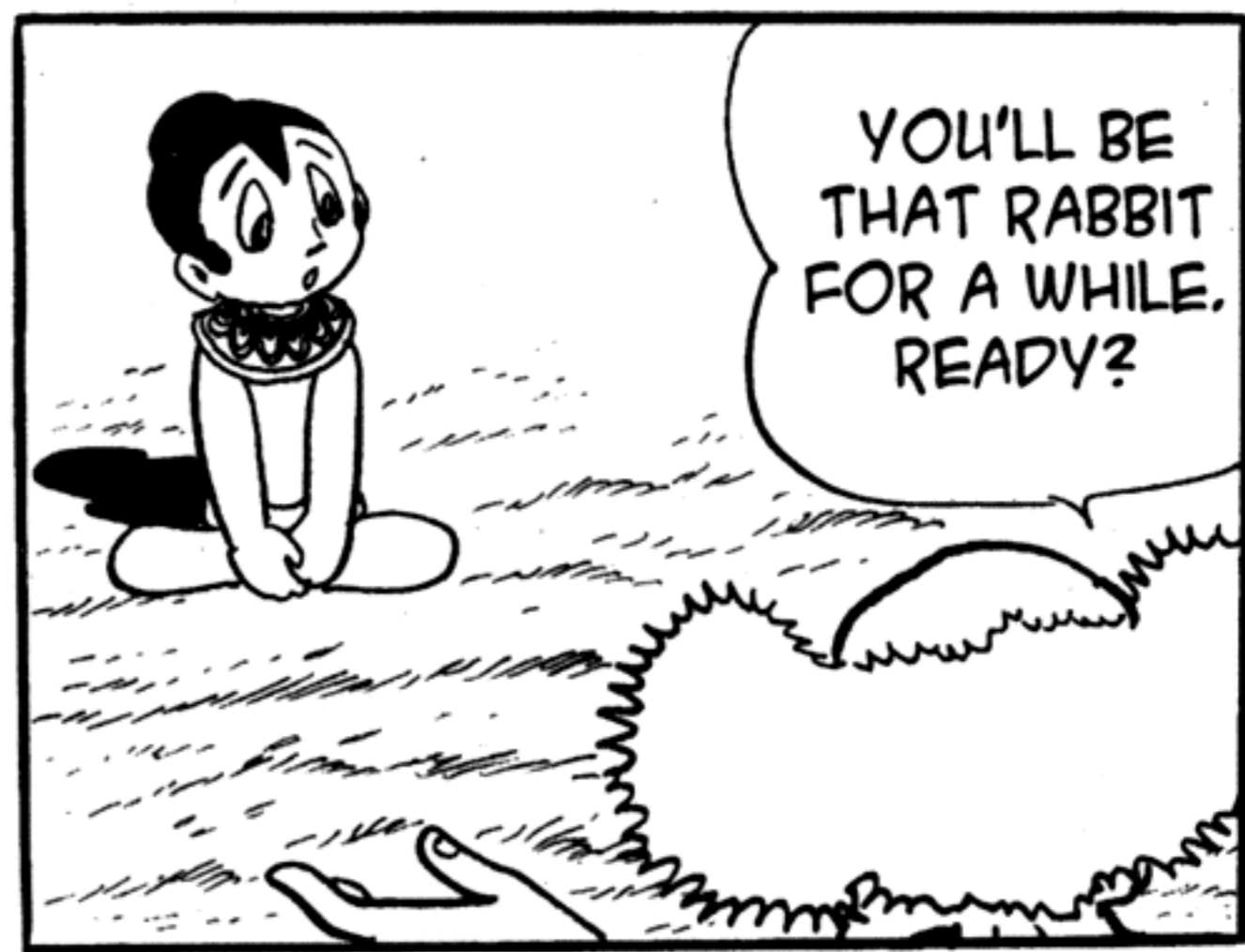
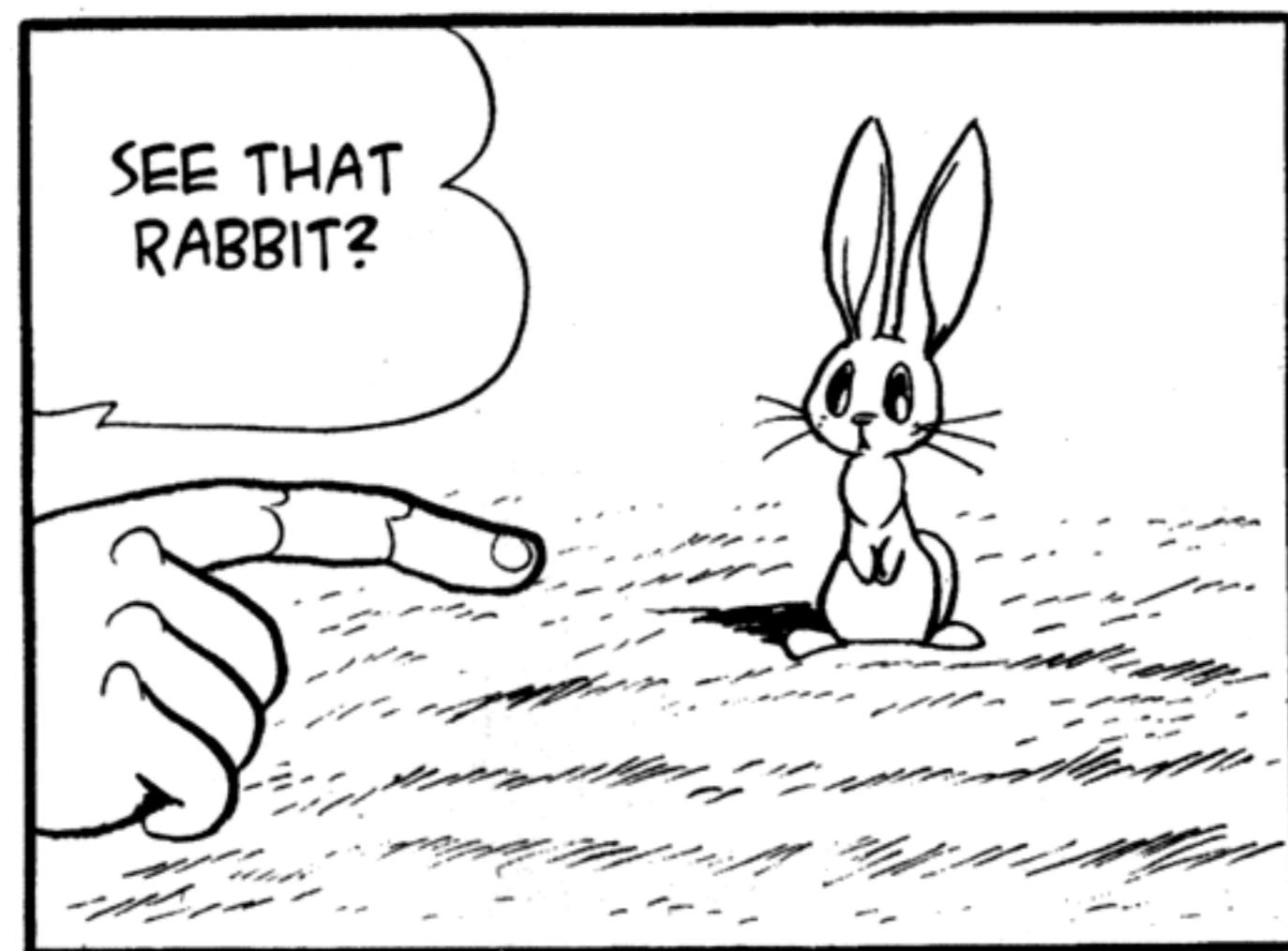
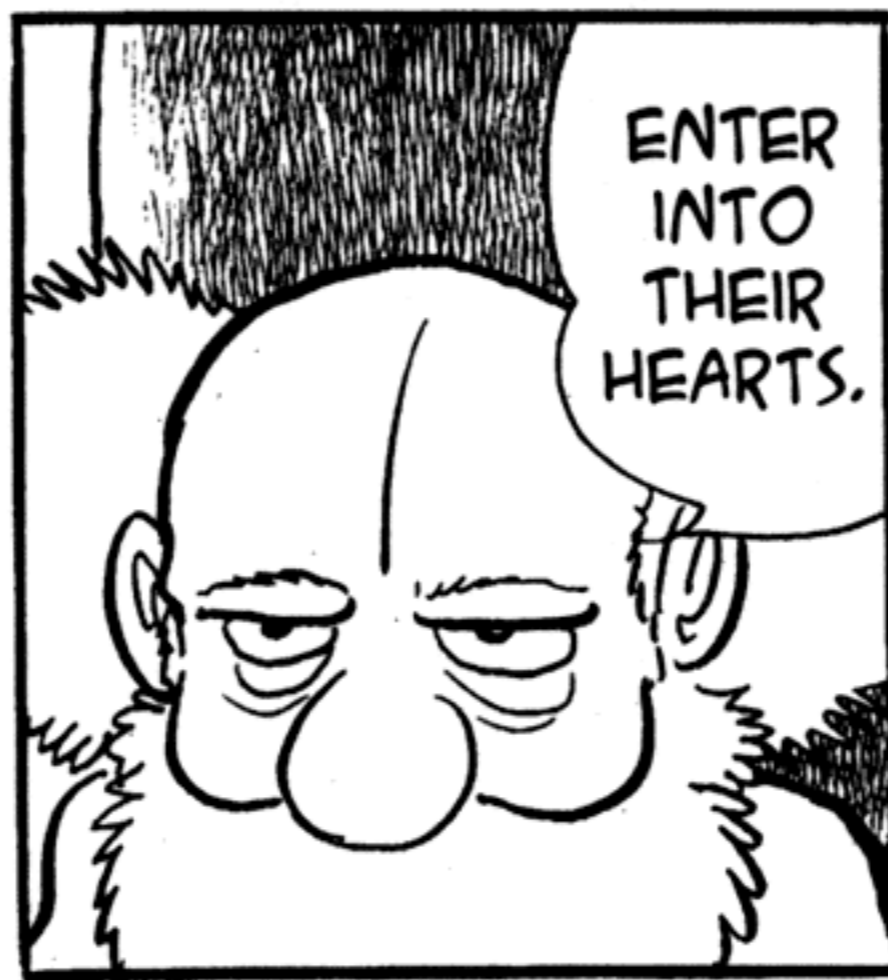
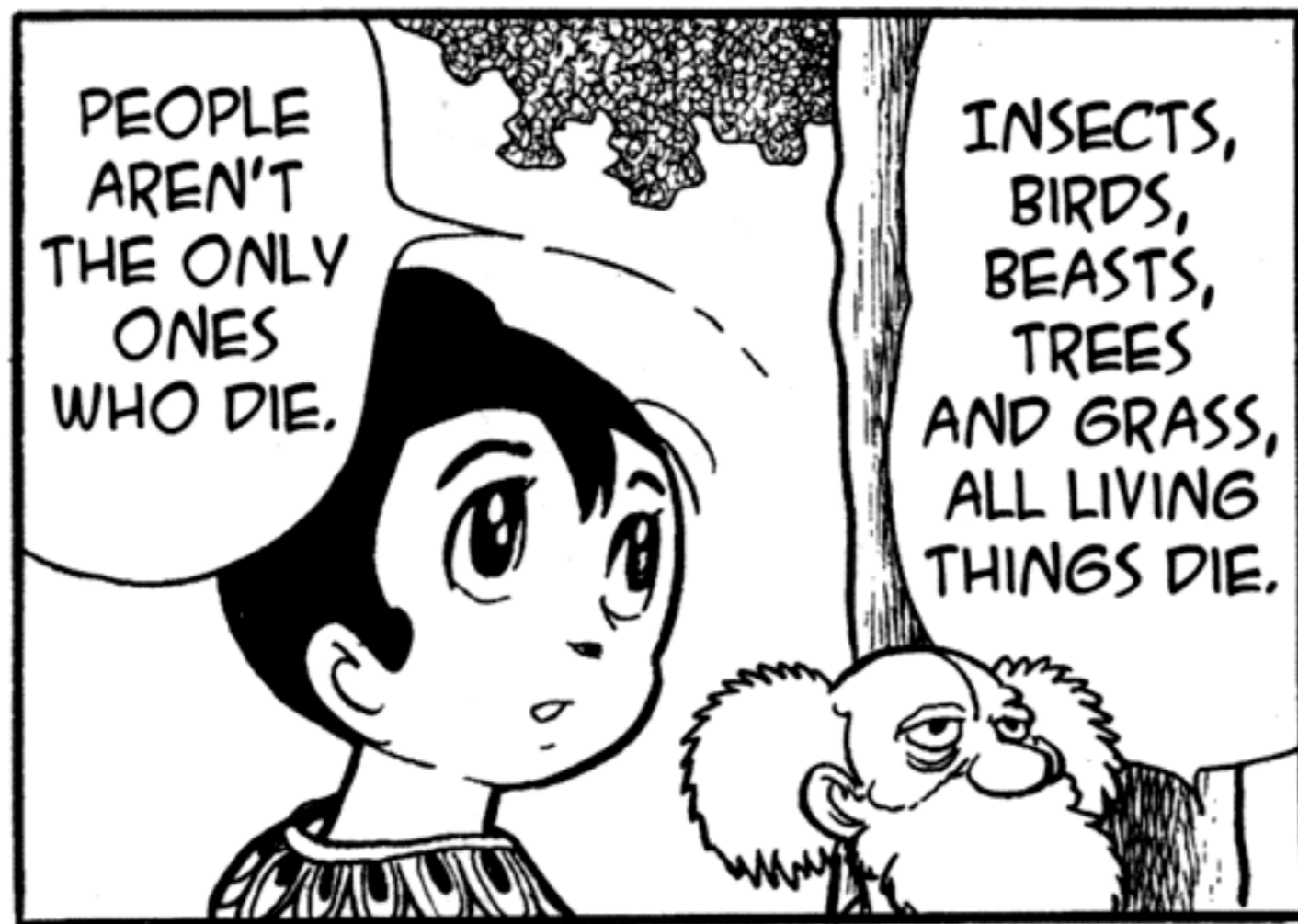
PSYCHICS CAN SEE
WITH THEIR SOULS,
HEAR SOUNDS
THAT CANNOT
BE HEARD, AND
SENSE WHAT THE
FUTURE BEARS.



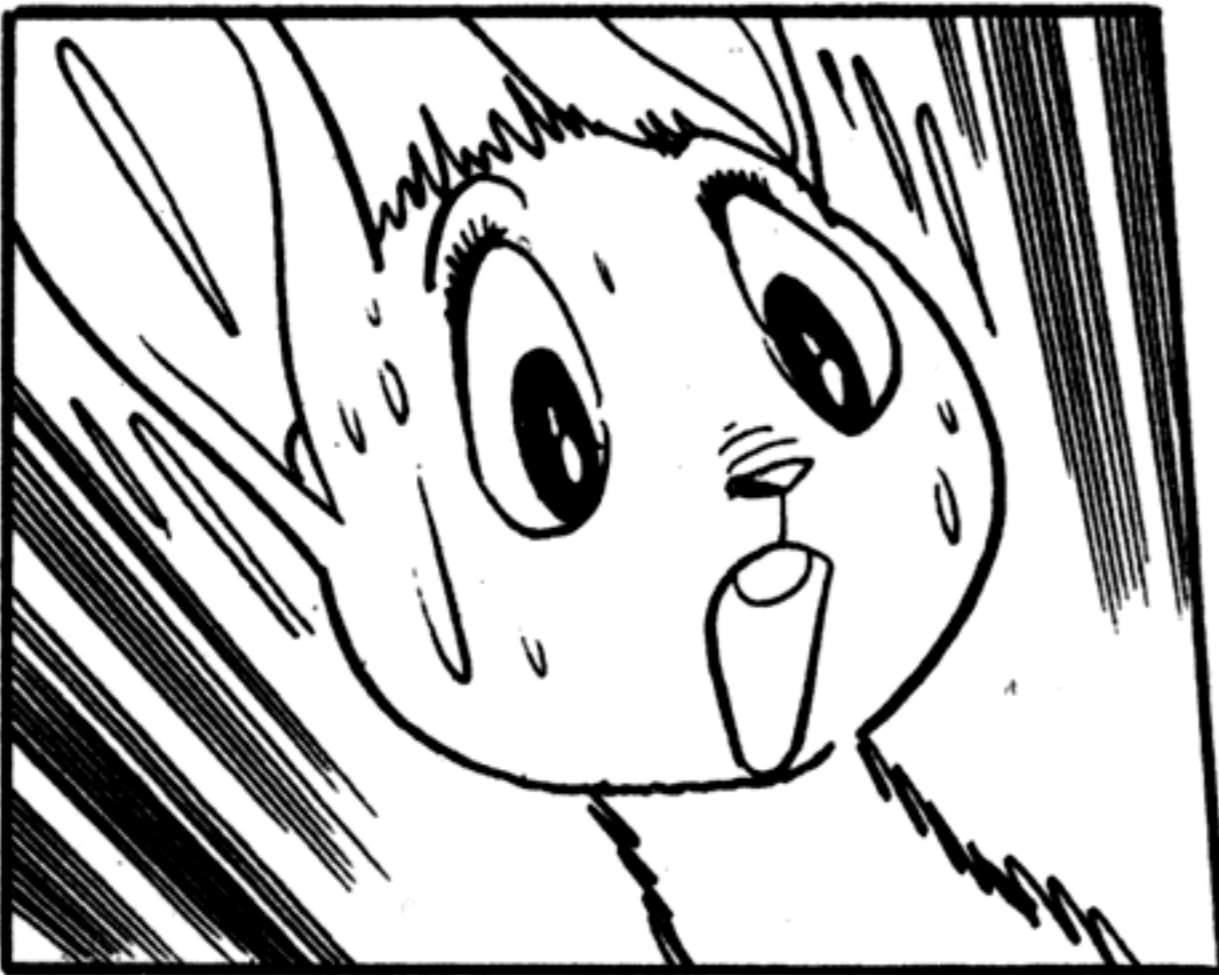
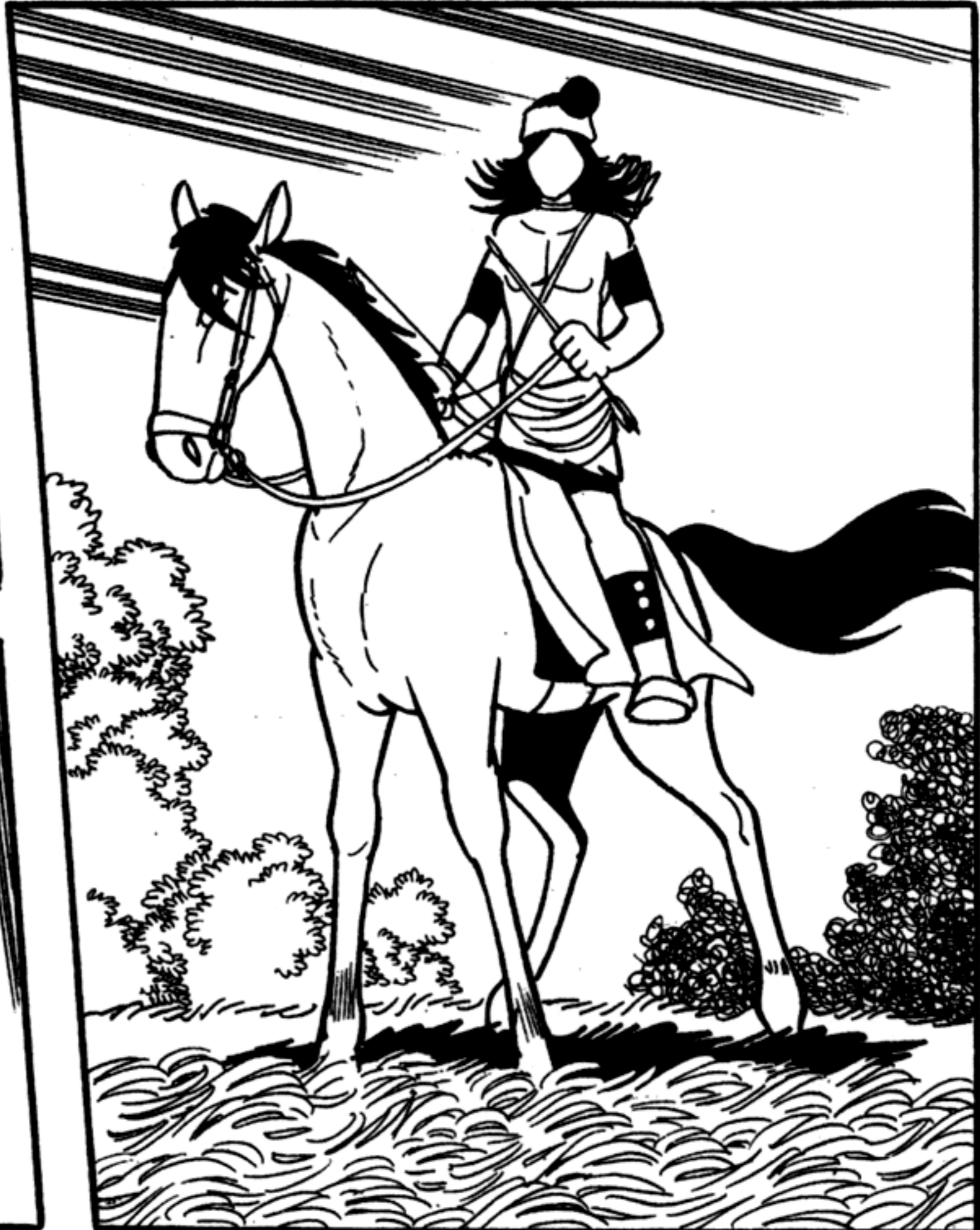
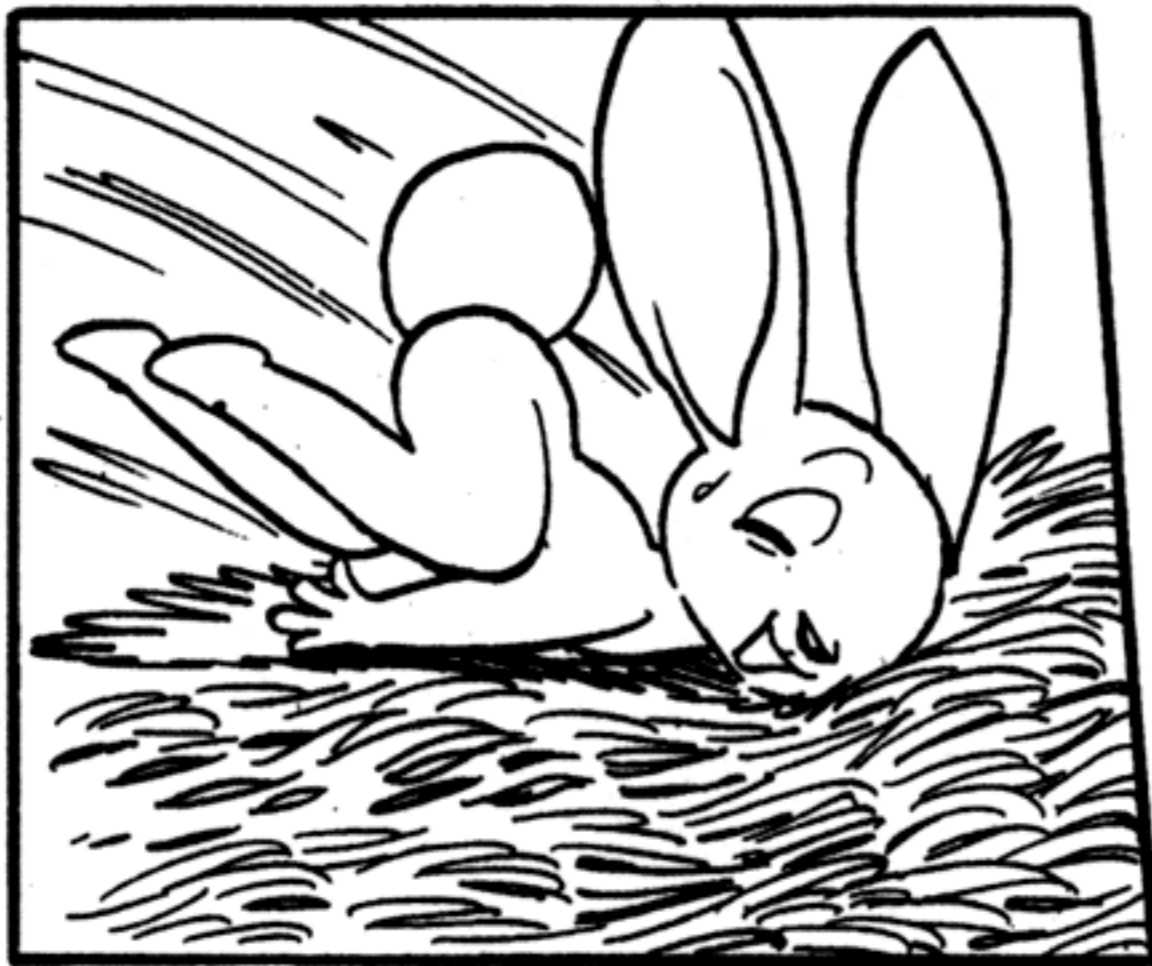
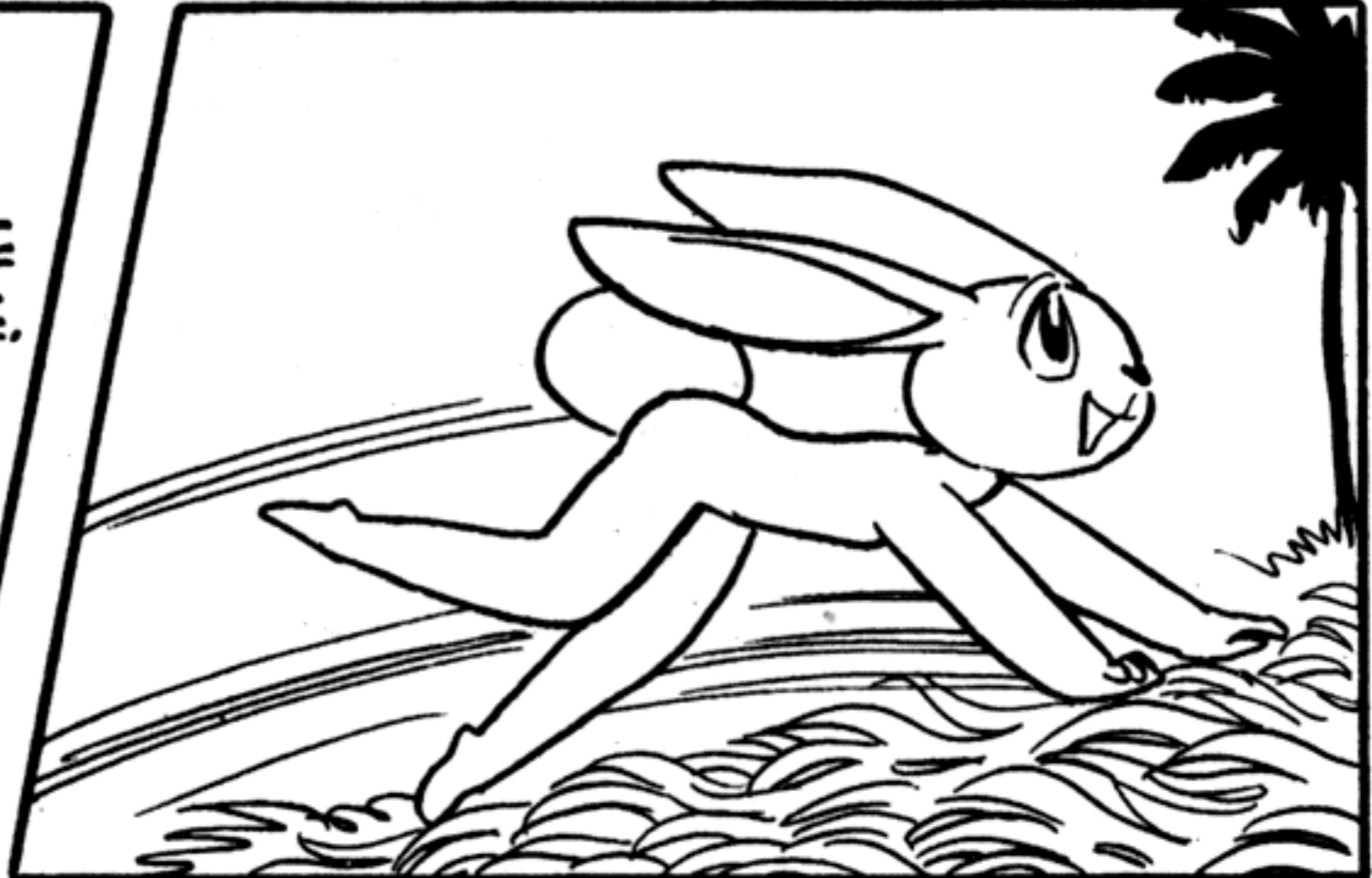
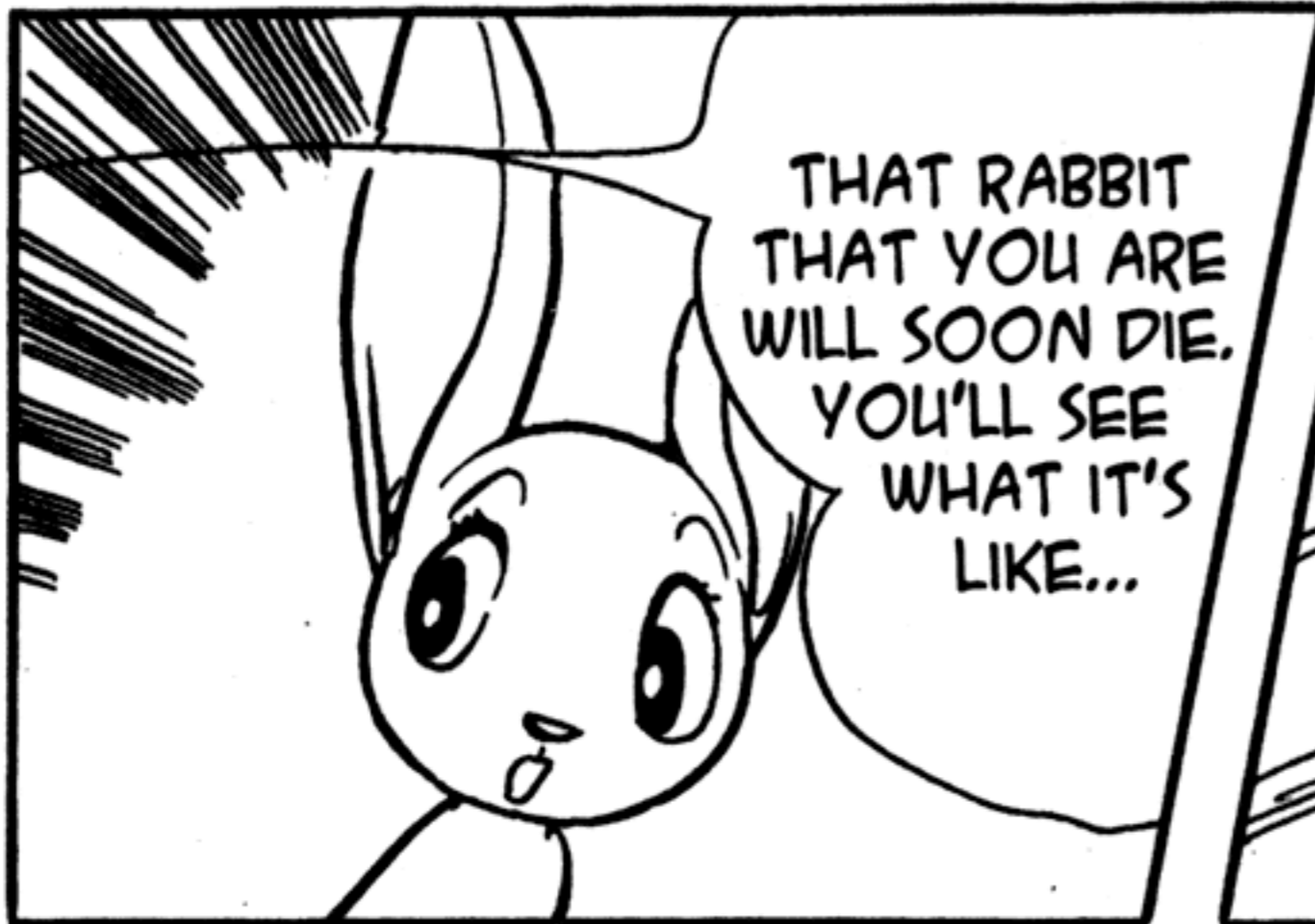
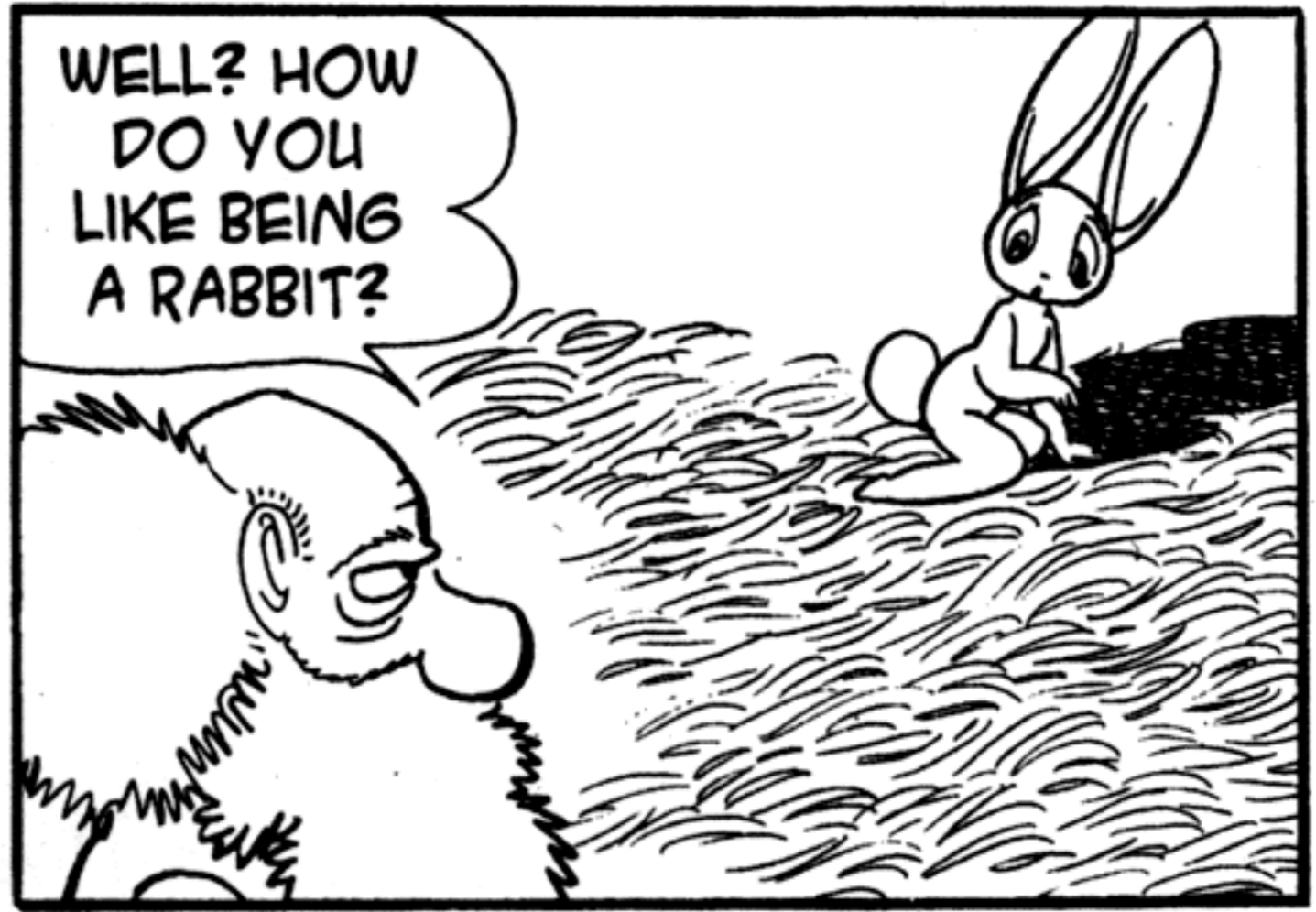
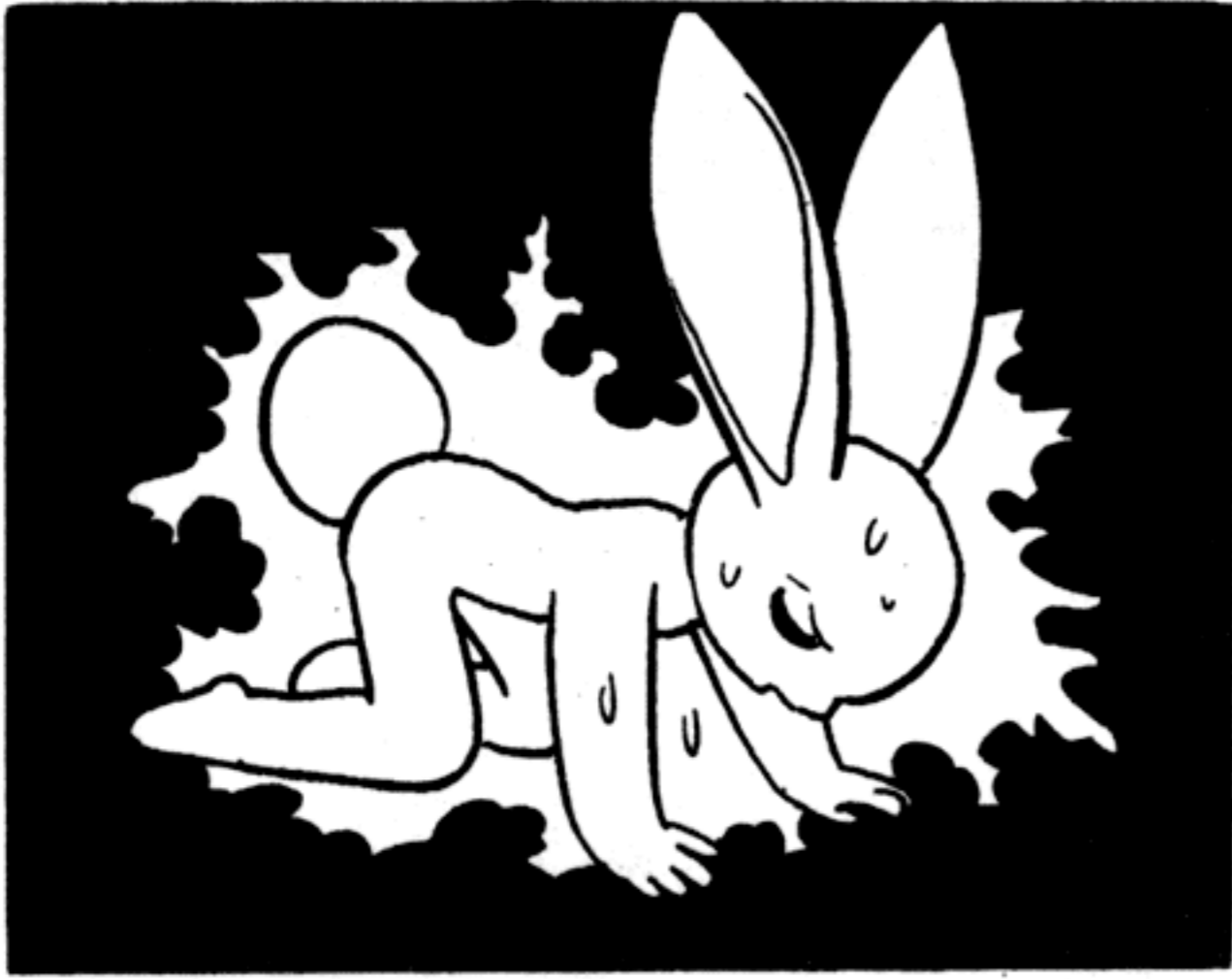
IS MY
TEACHER
A PSYCHIC
TOO?

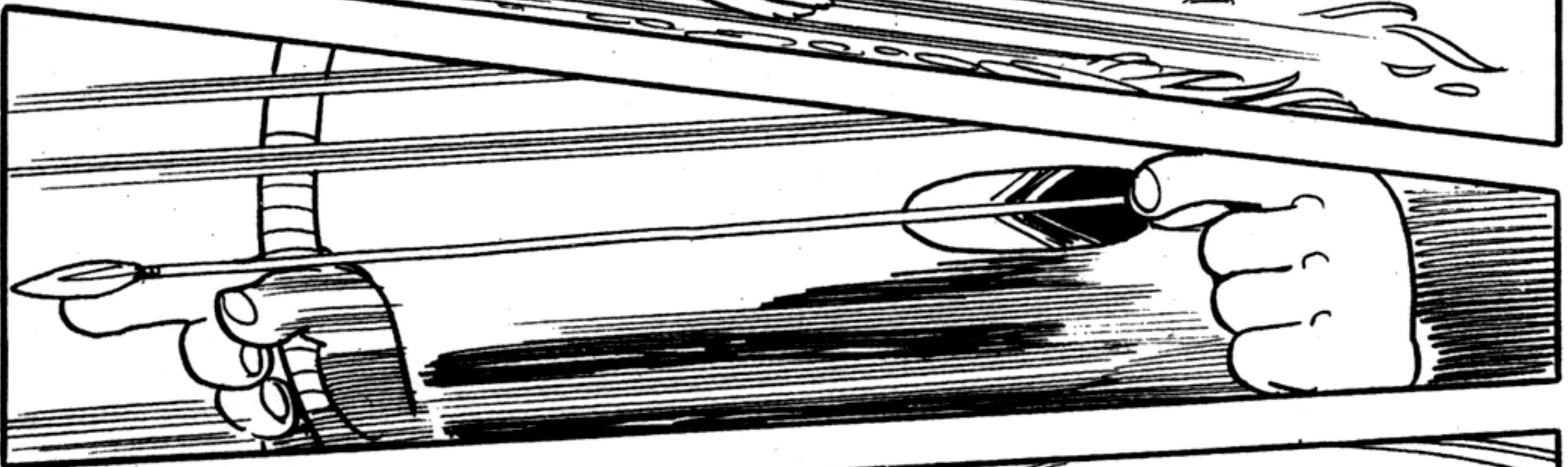
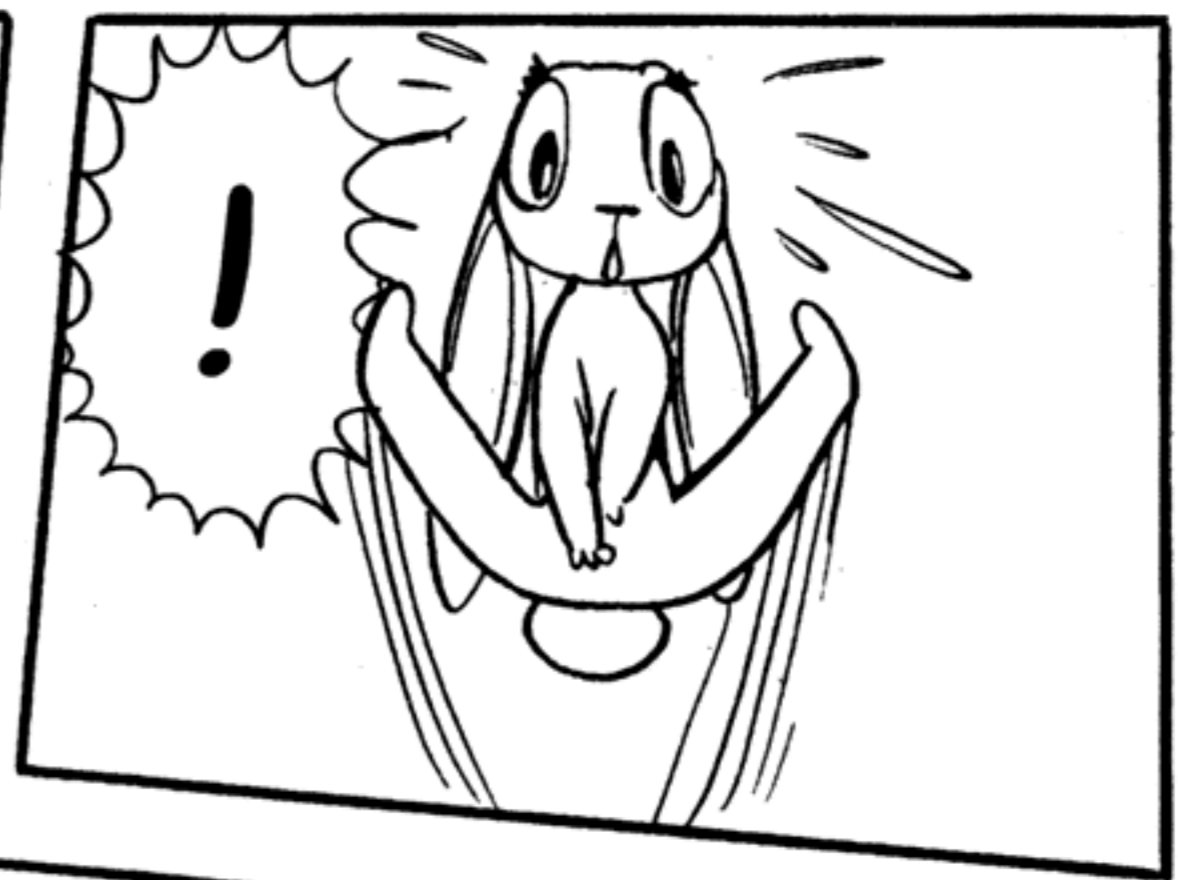
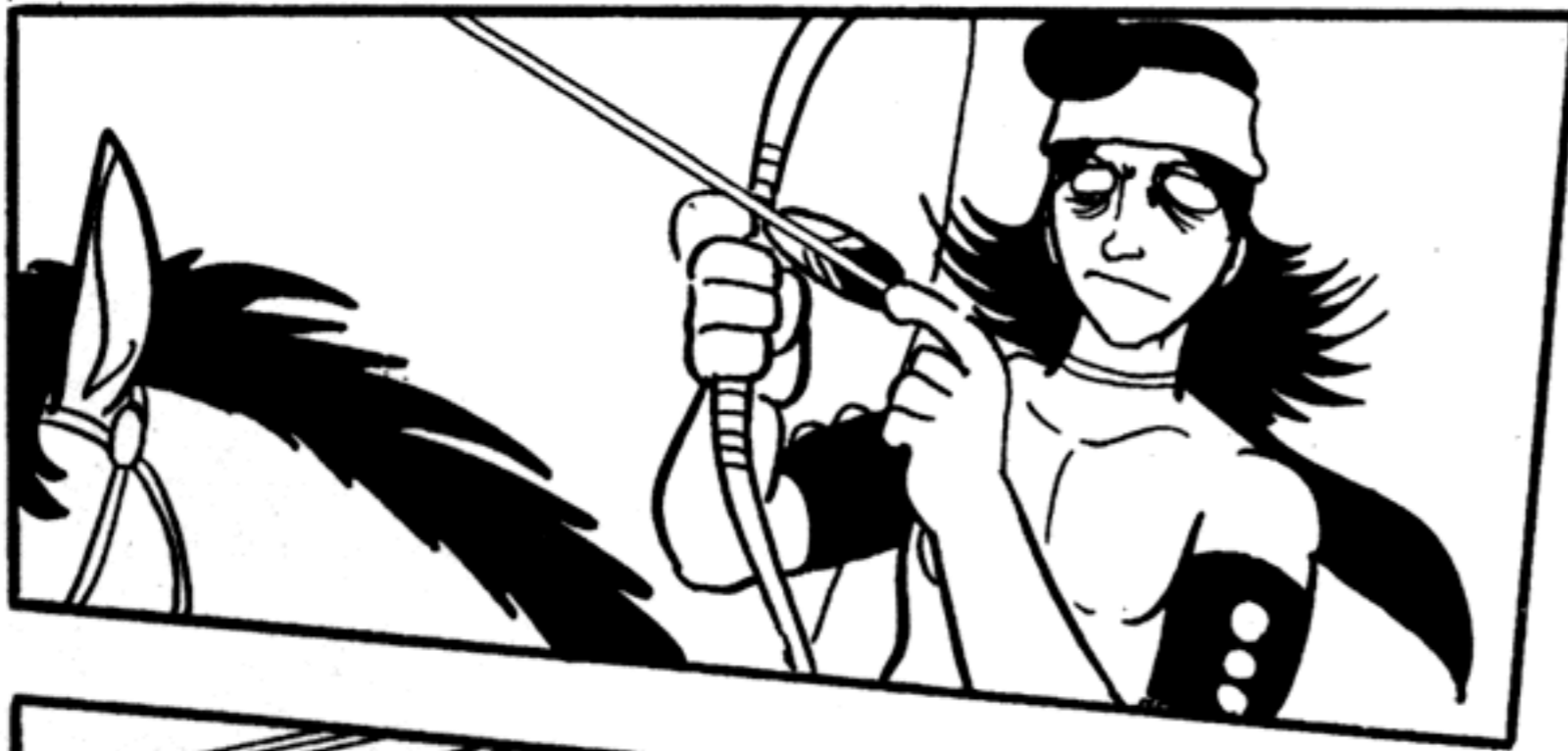
NO, NO.
HE'S
MINOR
LEAGUE.

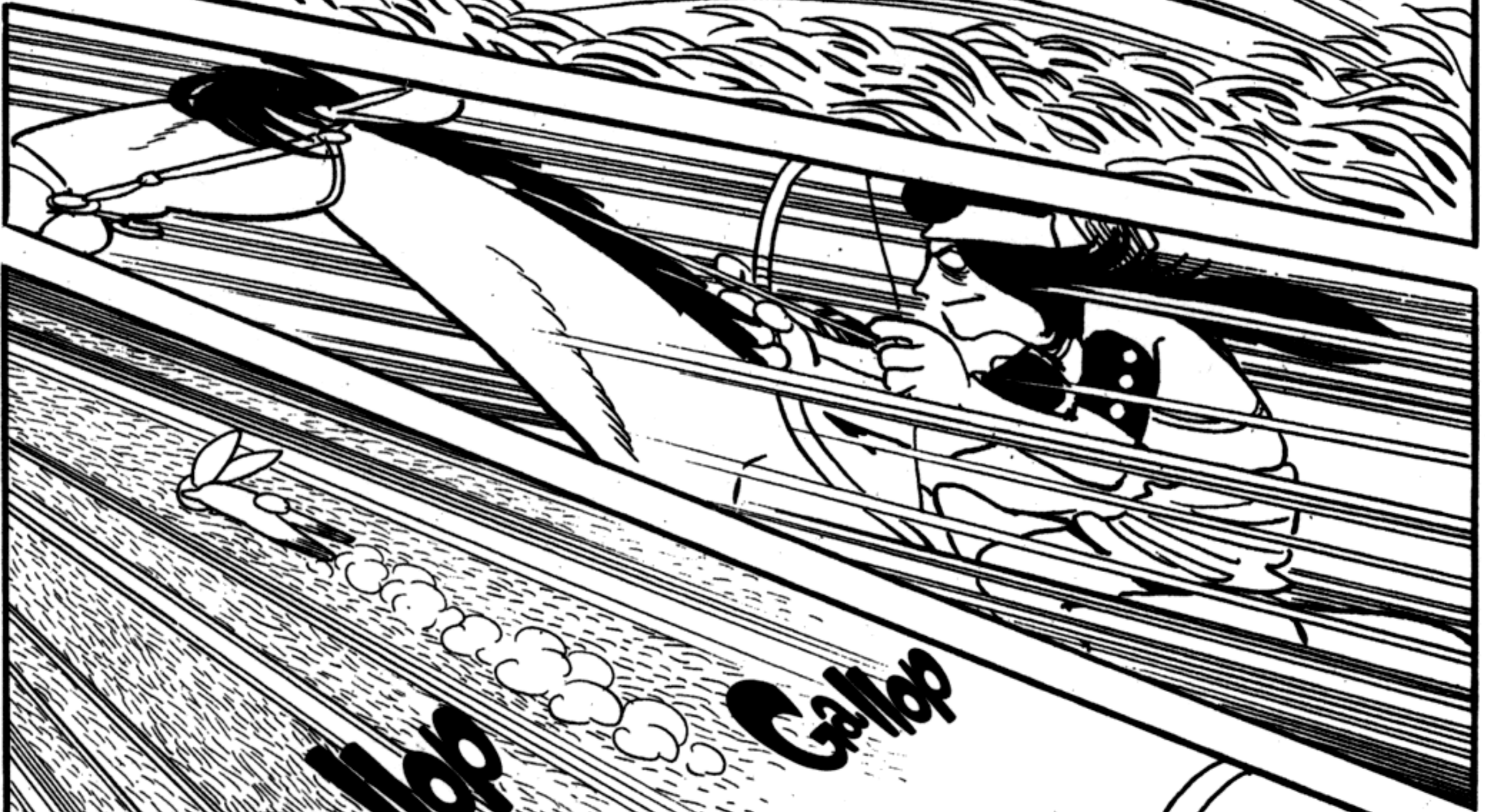
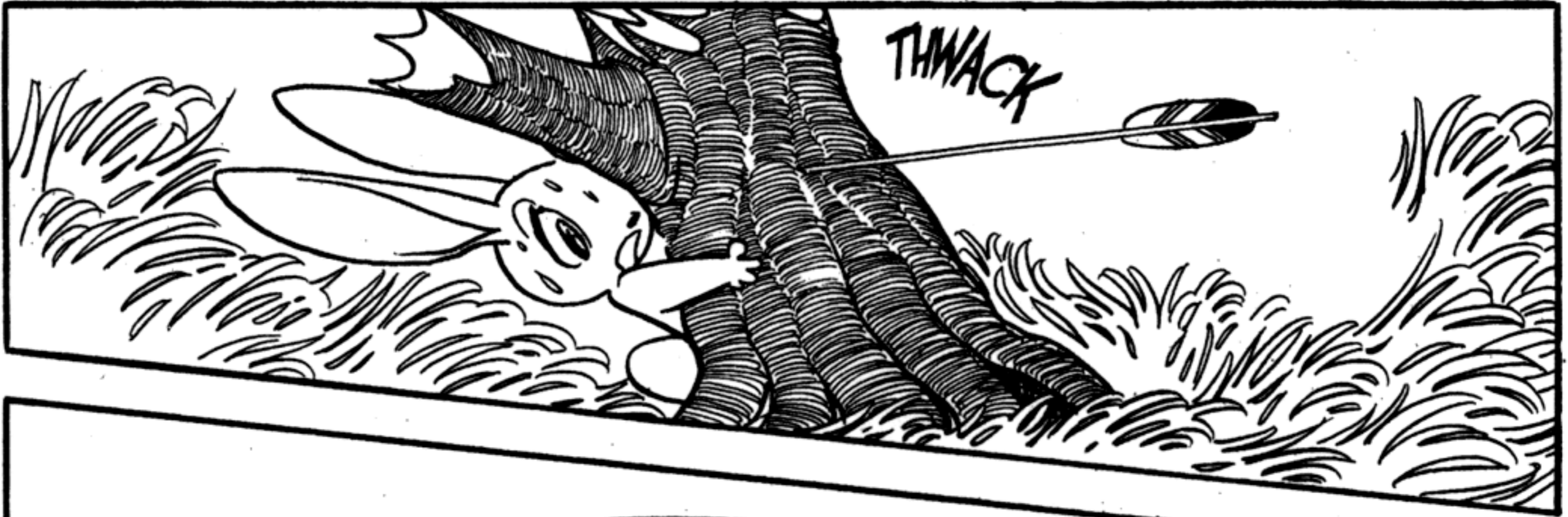


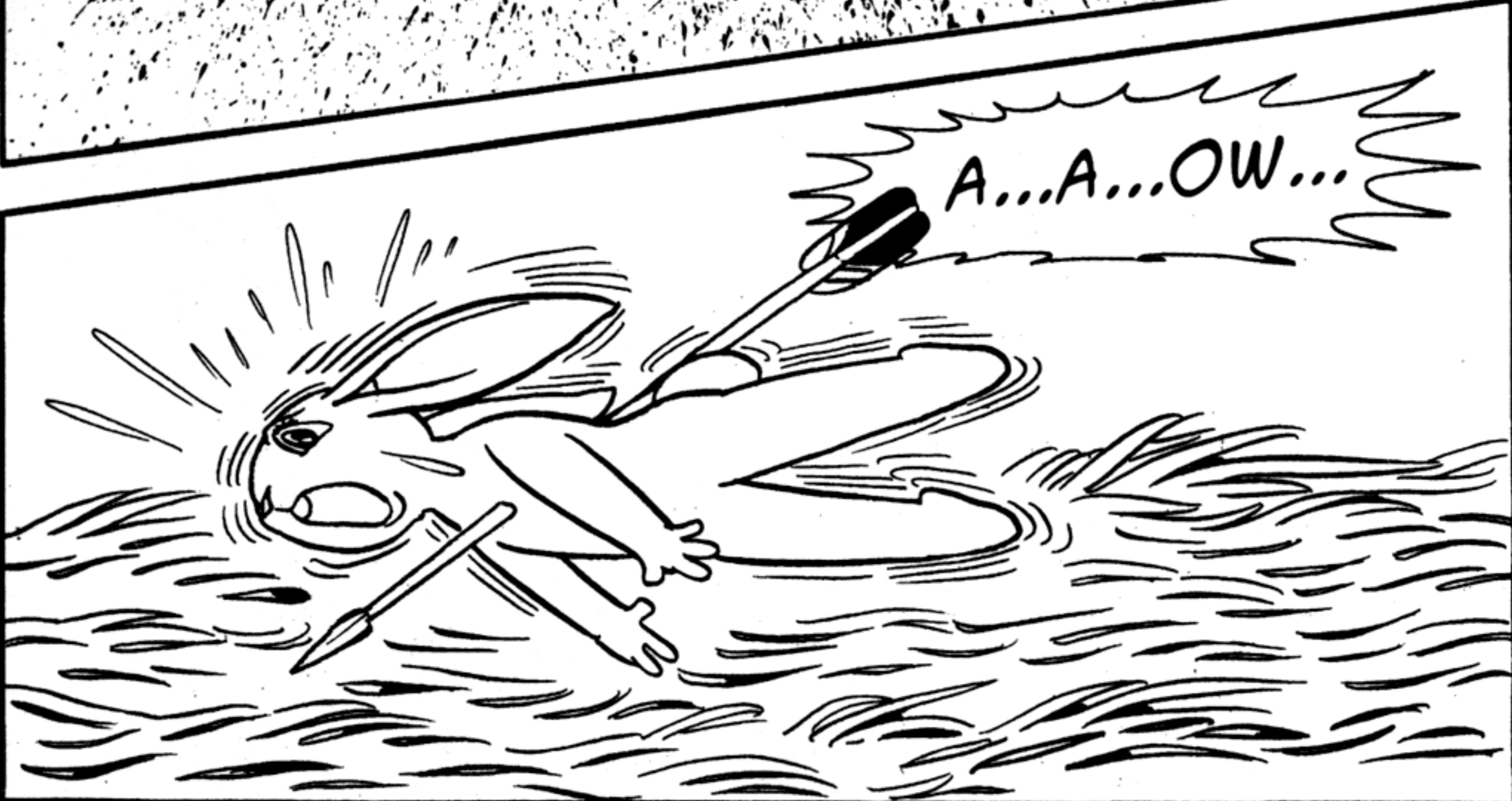
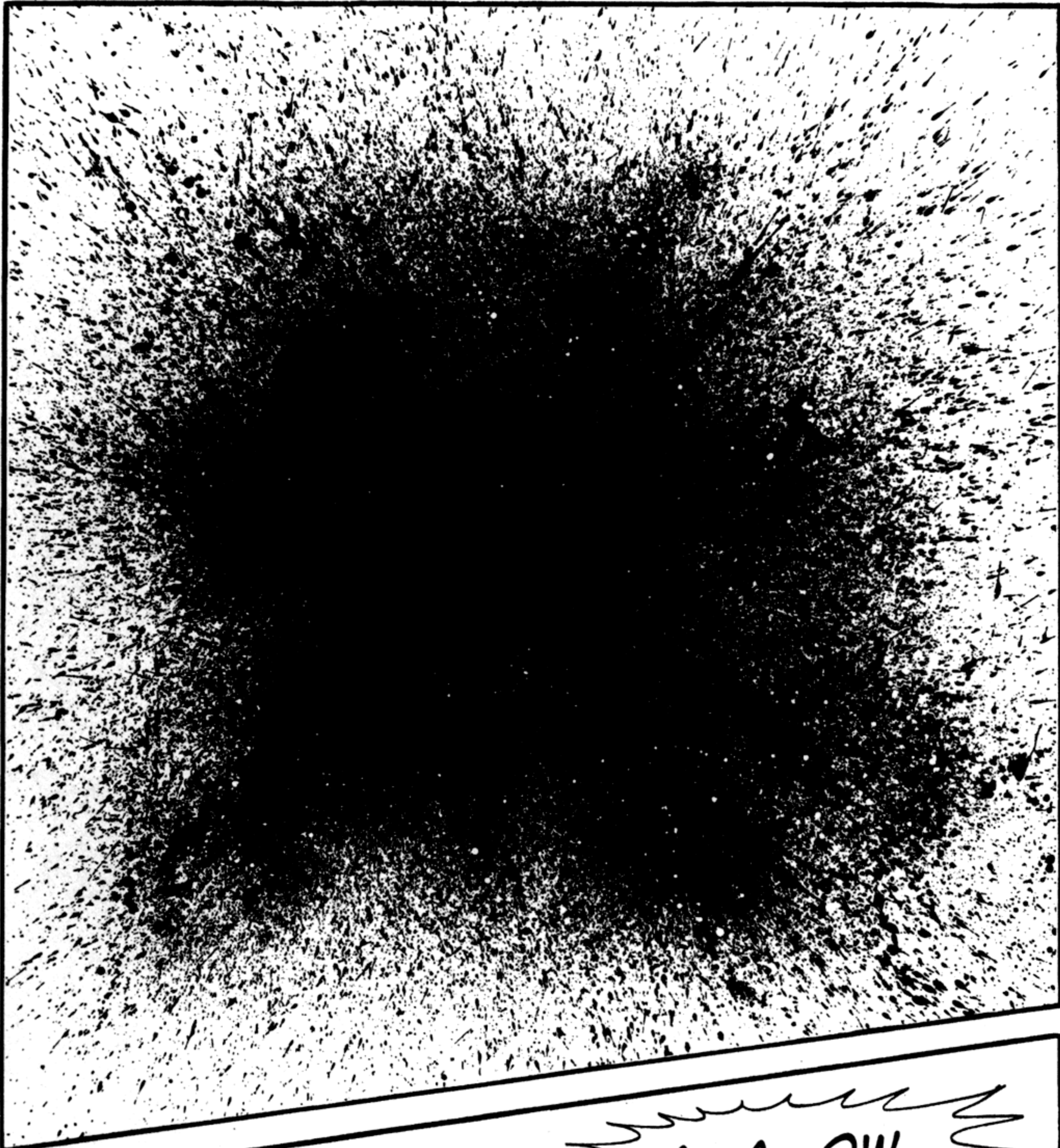


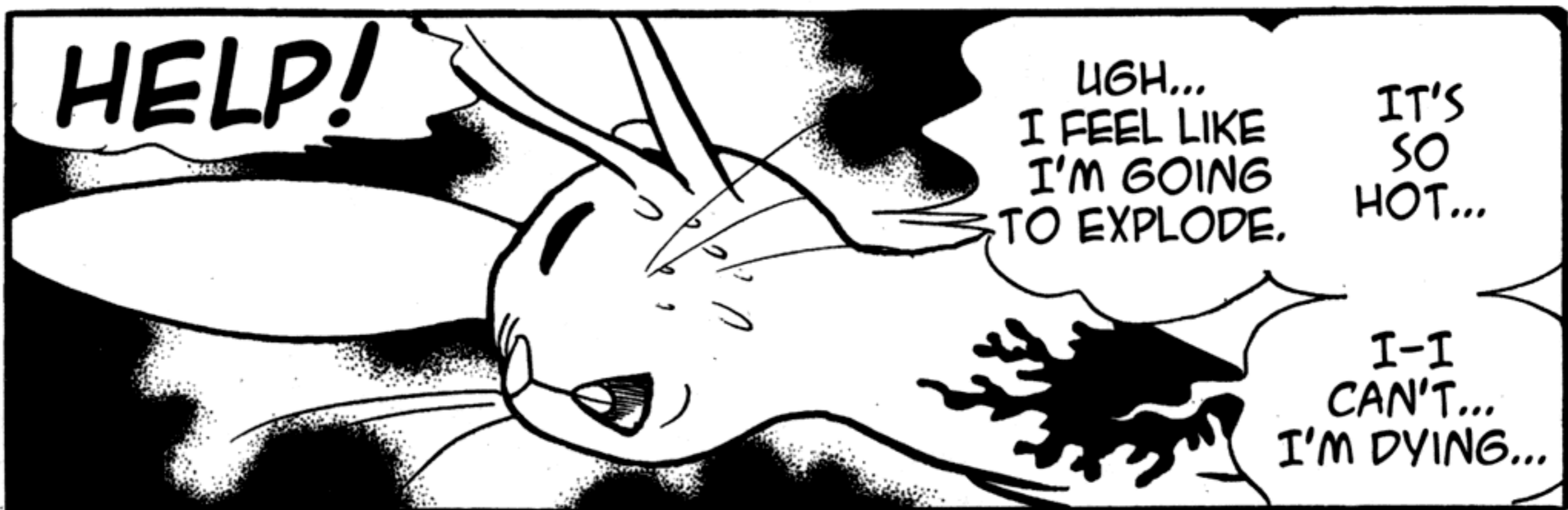






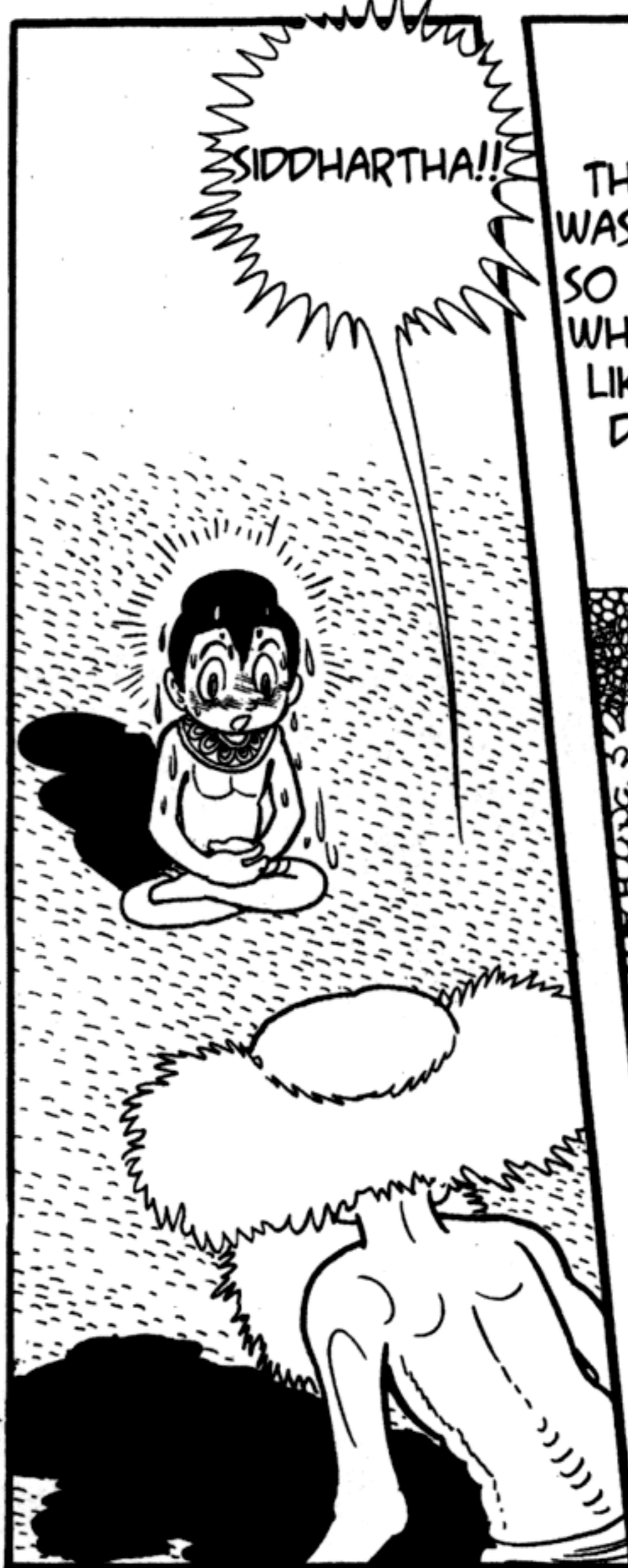








WAKE UP,
PRINCE.

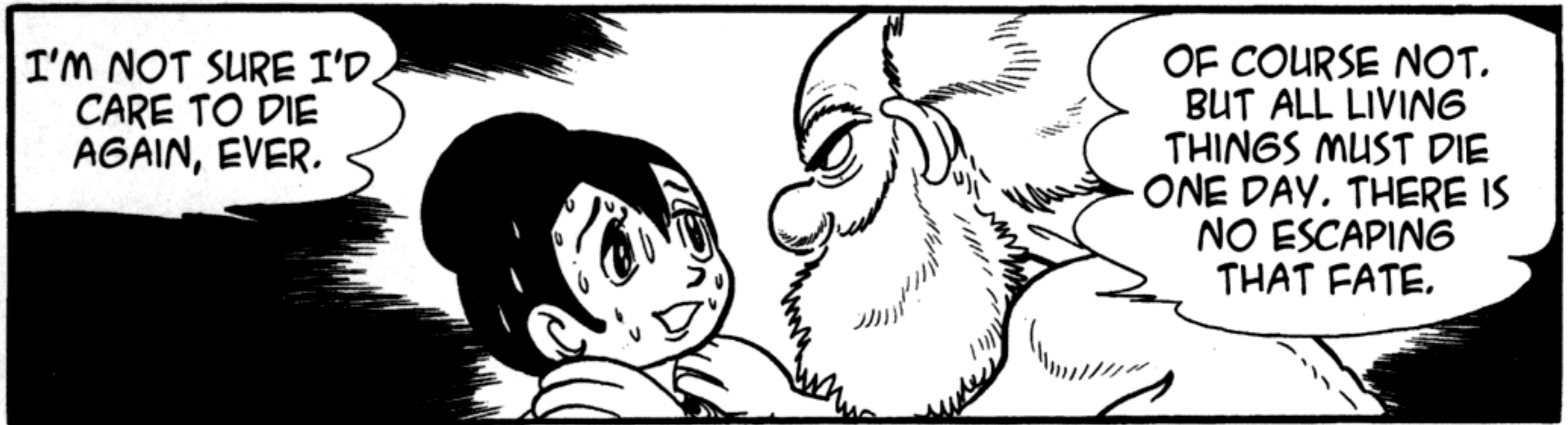


SIDDHARTHA!!



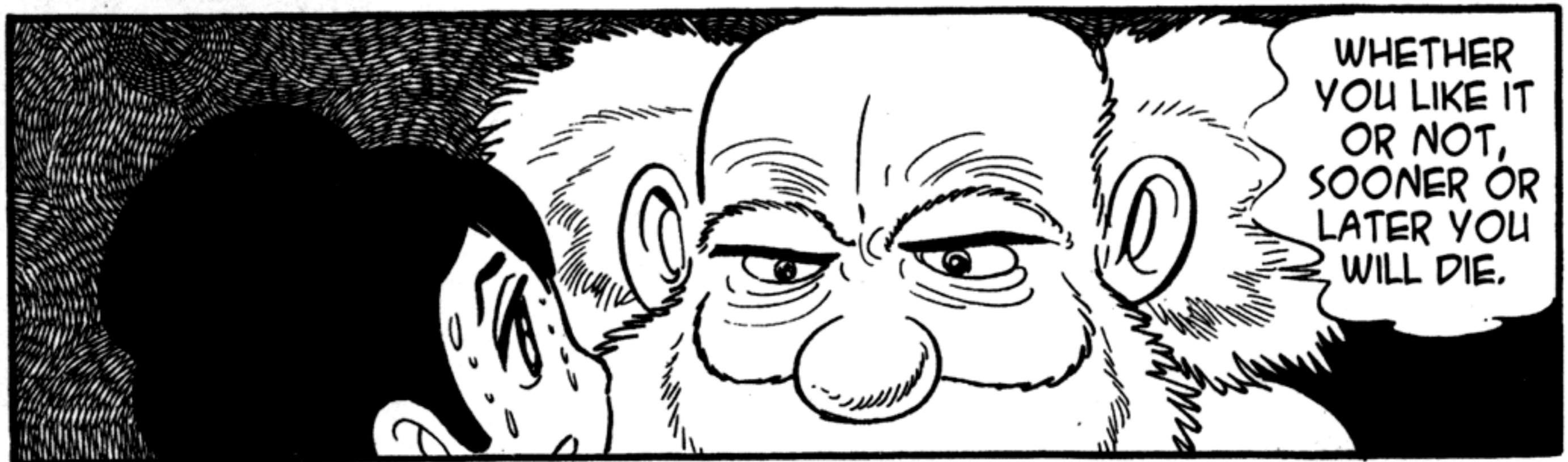
TH-THAT WAS SCARY...
SO THAT'S WHAT IT'S
LIKE TO DIE...

QUITE A FEAR-
SOME THING,
DEATH,
IS IT NOT?

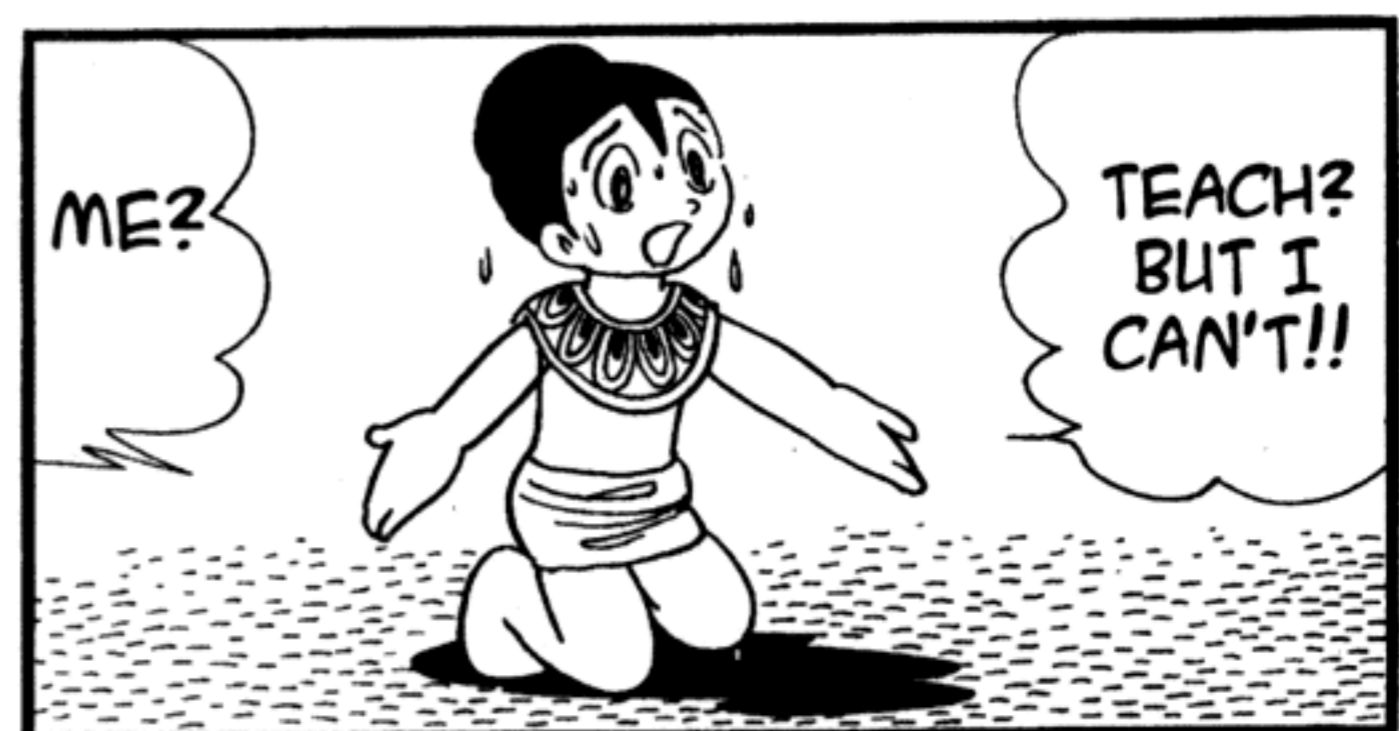


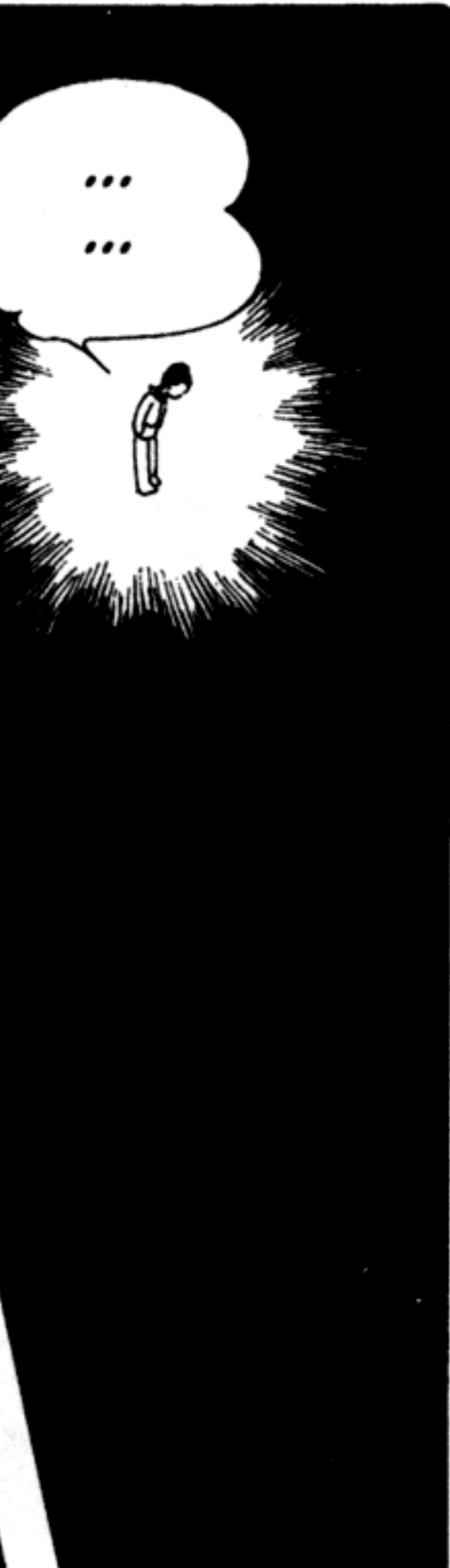
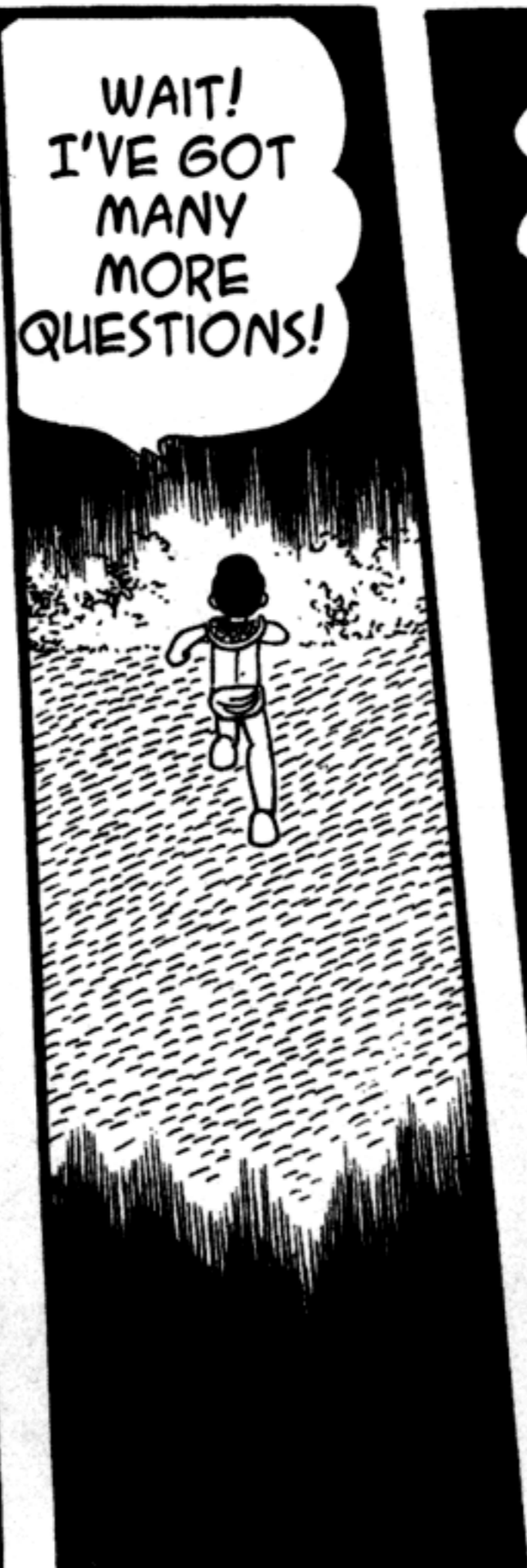
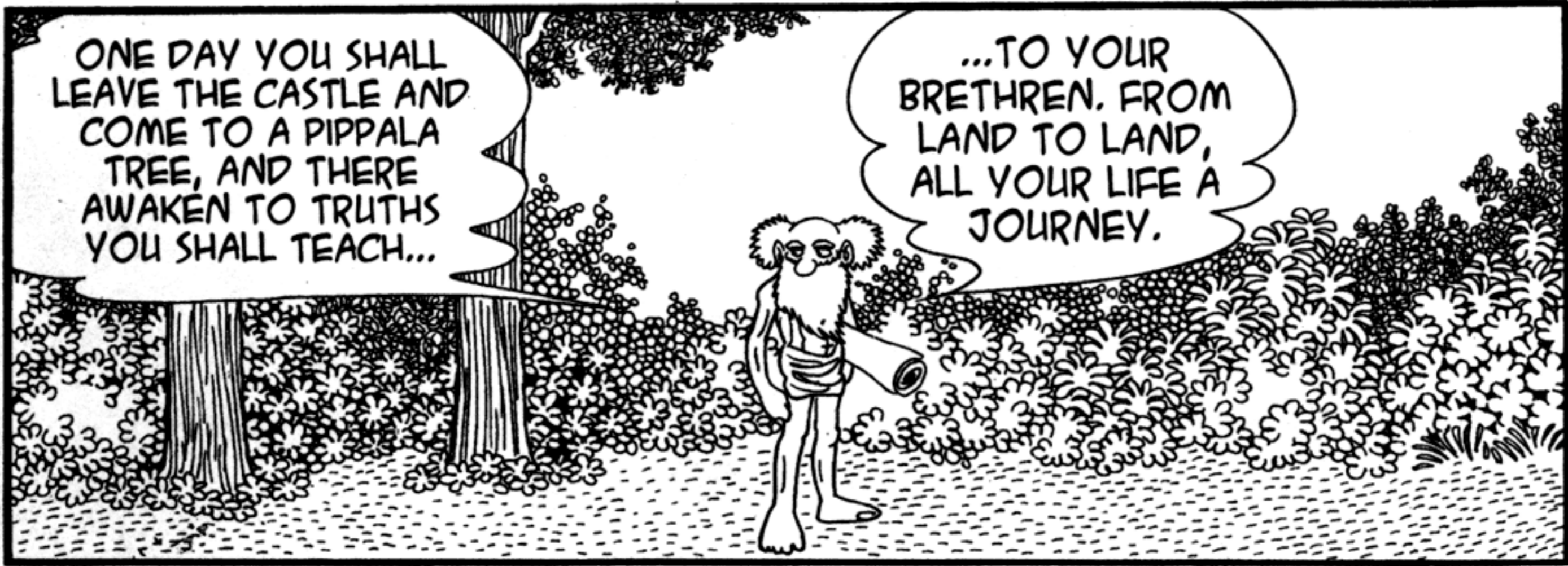
I'M NOT SURE I'D
CARE TO DIE
AGAIN, EVER.

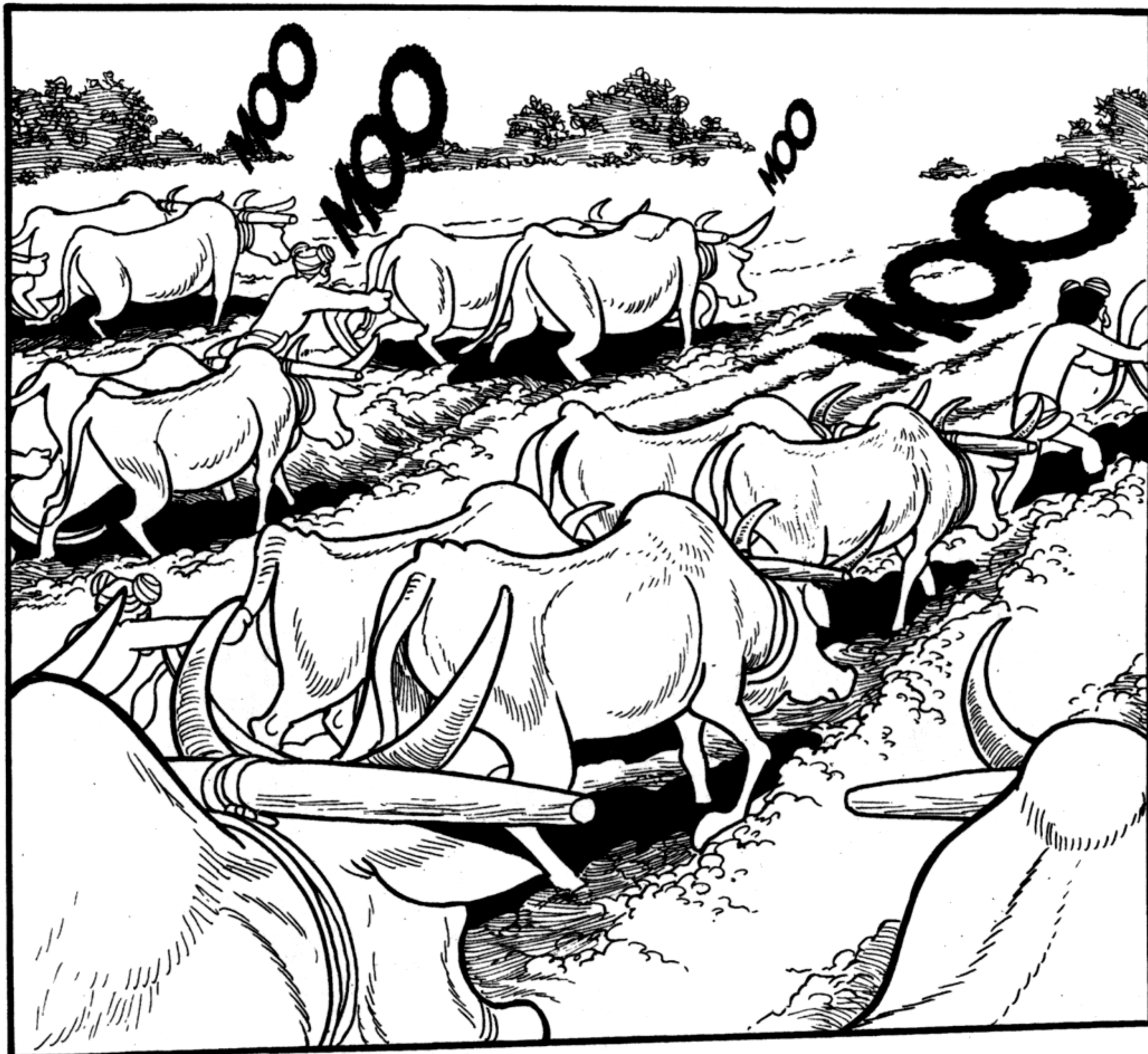
OF COURSE NOT.
BUT ALL LIVING
THINGS MUST DIE
ONE DAY. THERE IS
NO ESCAPING
THAT FATE.

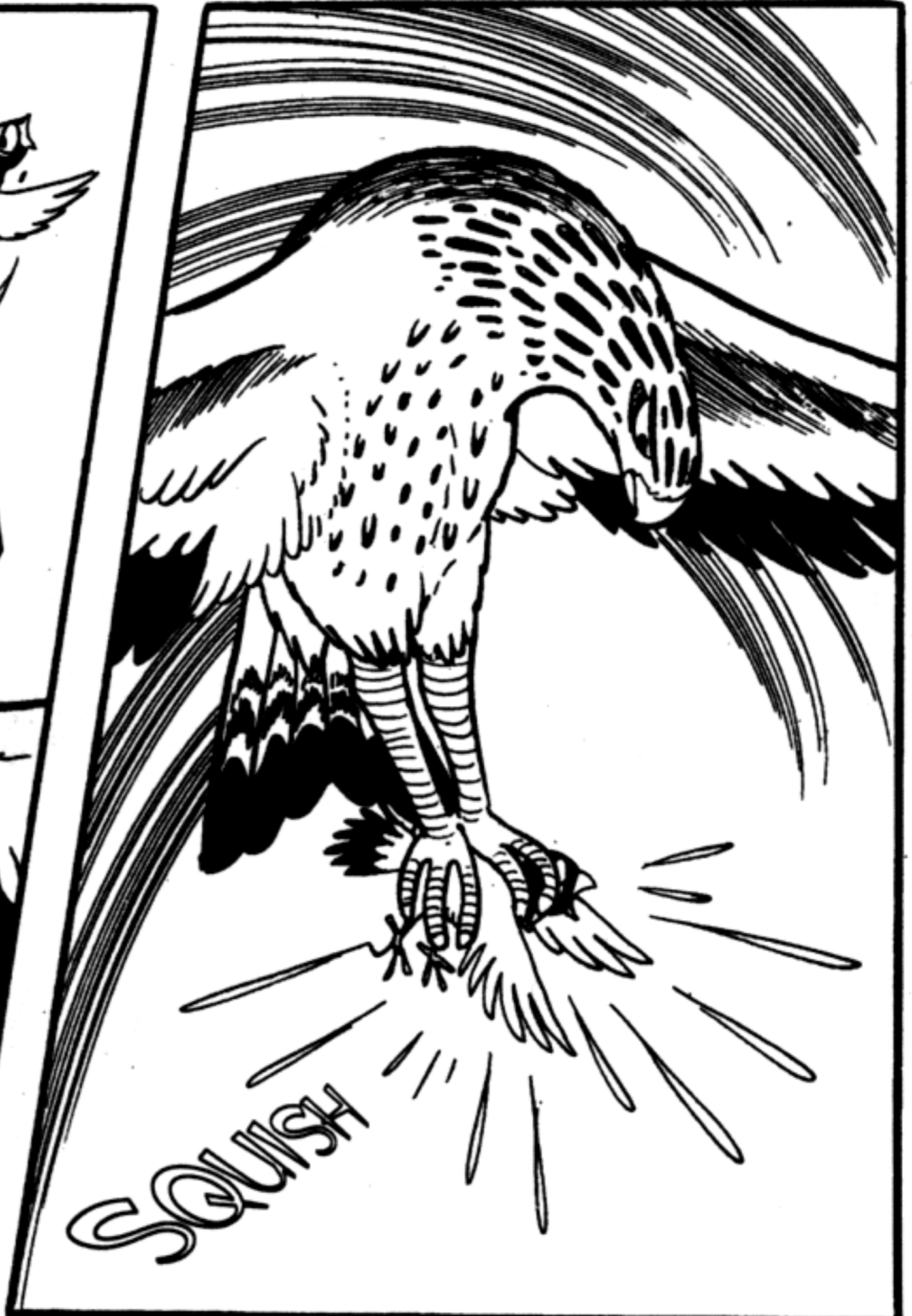
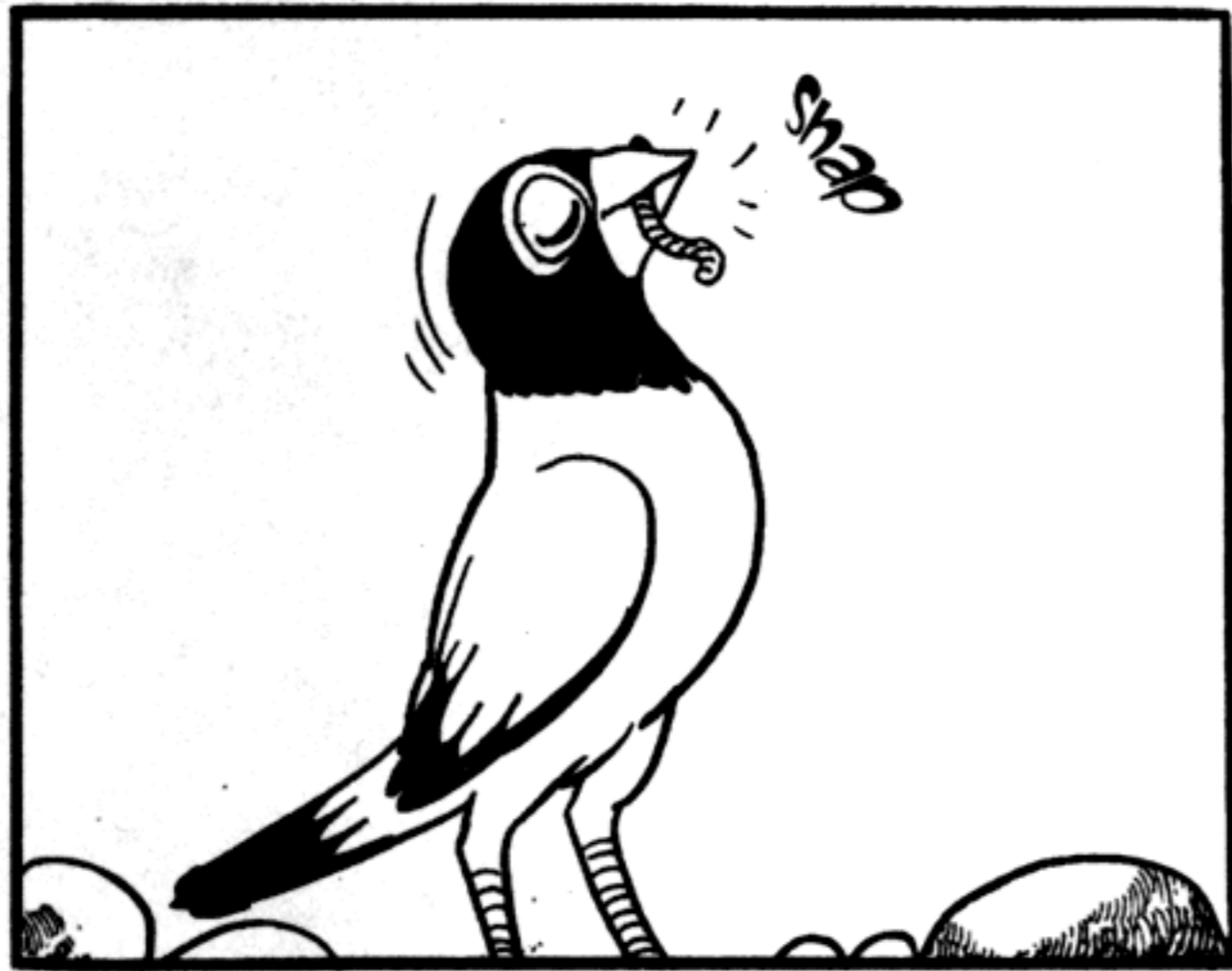
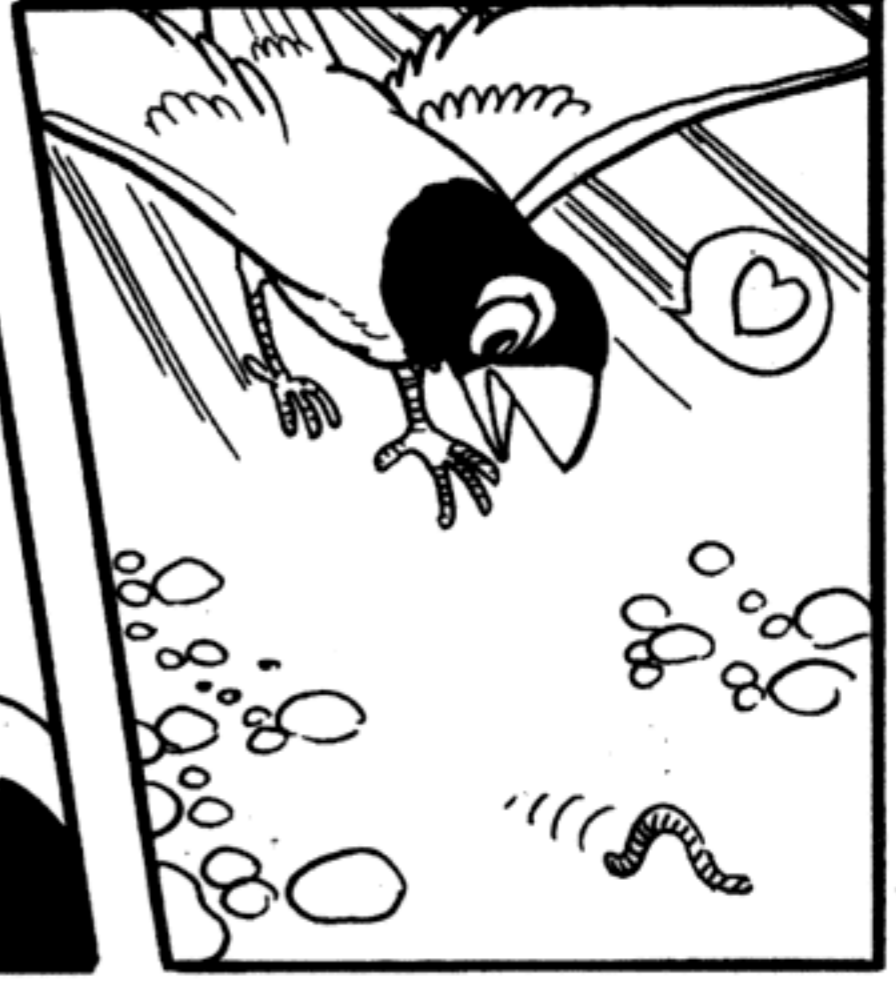


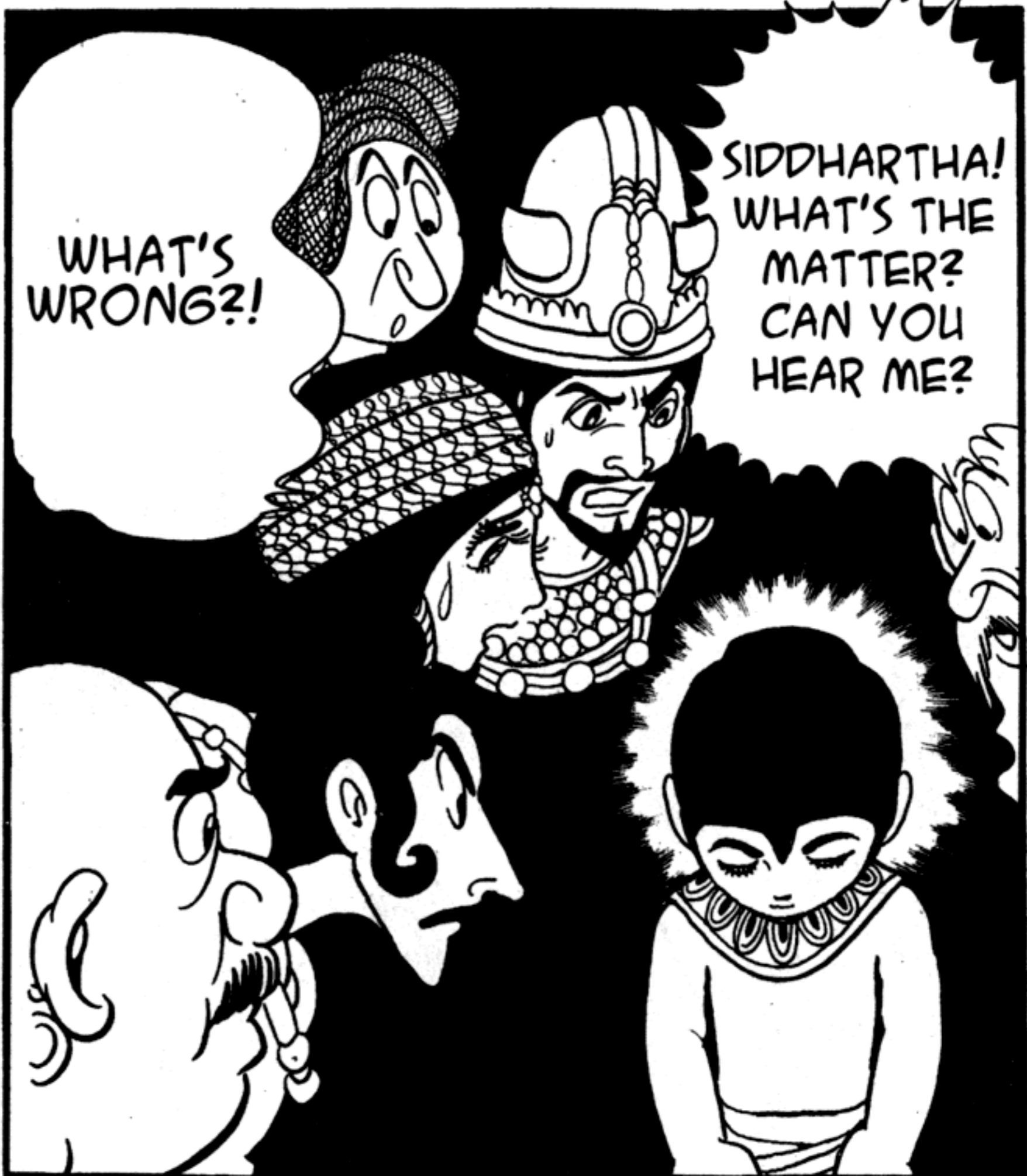
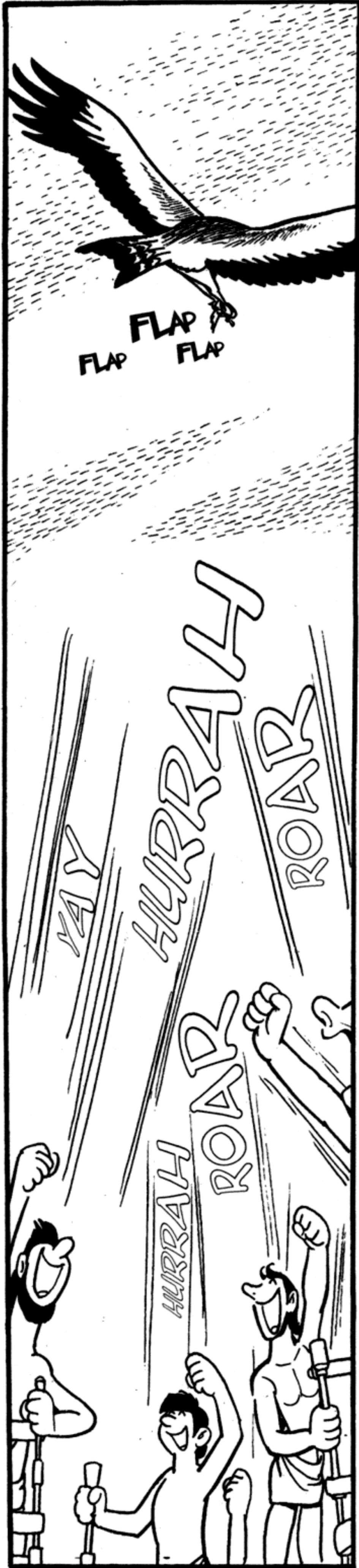
WHETHER
YOU LIKE IT
OR NOT,
SOONER OR
LATER YOU
WILL DIE.

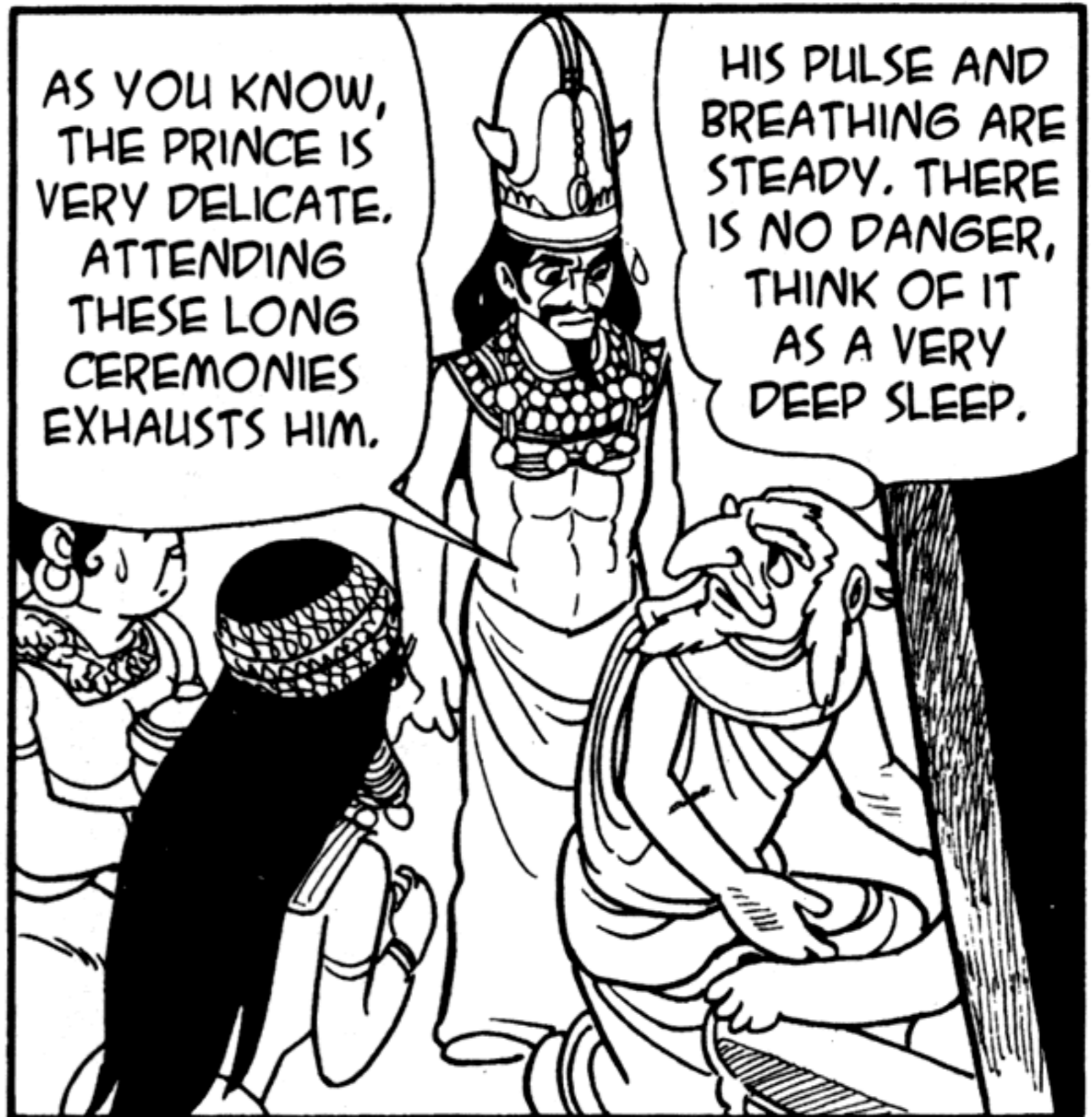














HE HAS COME TO! O GODS!

HONEY PIE, YOU SCARED US SO!

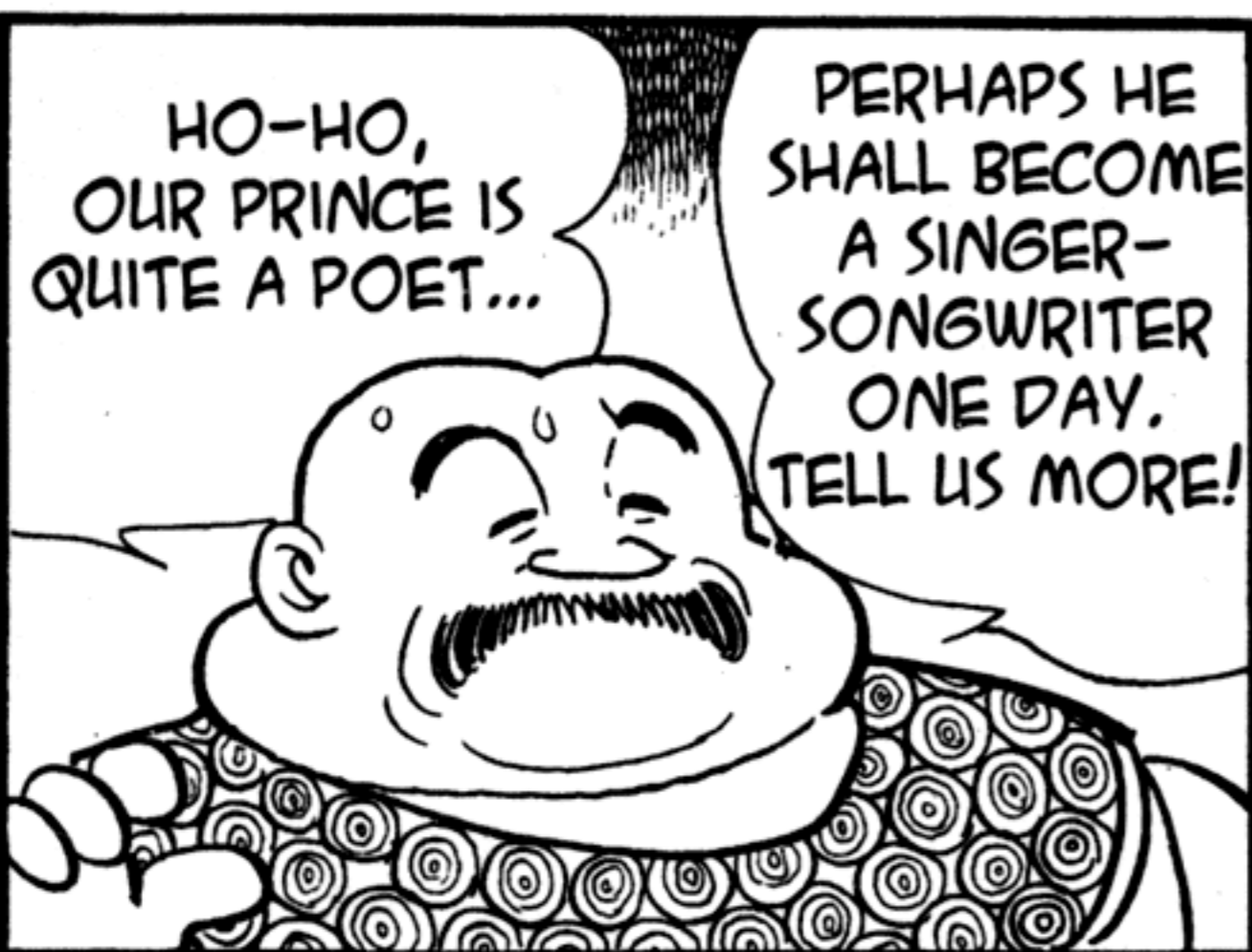


THE FESTIVAL IS OVER. LET US RETURN TO THE PALACE.



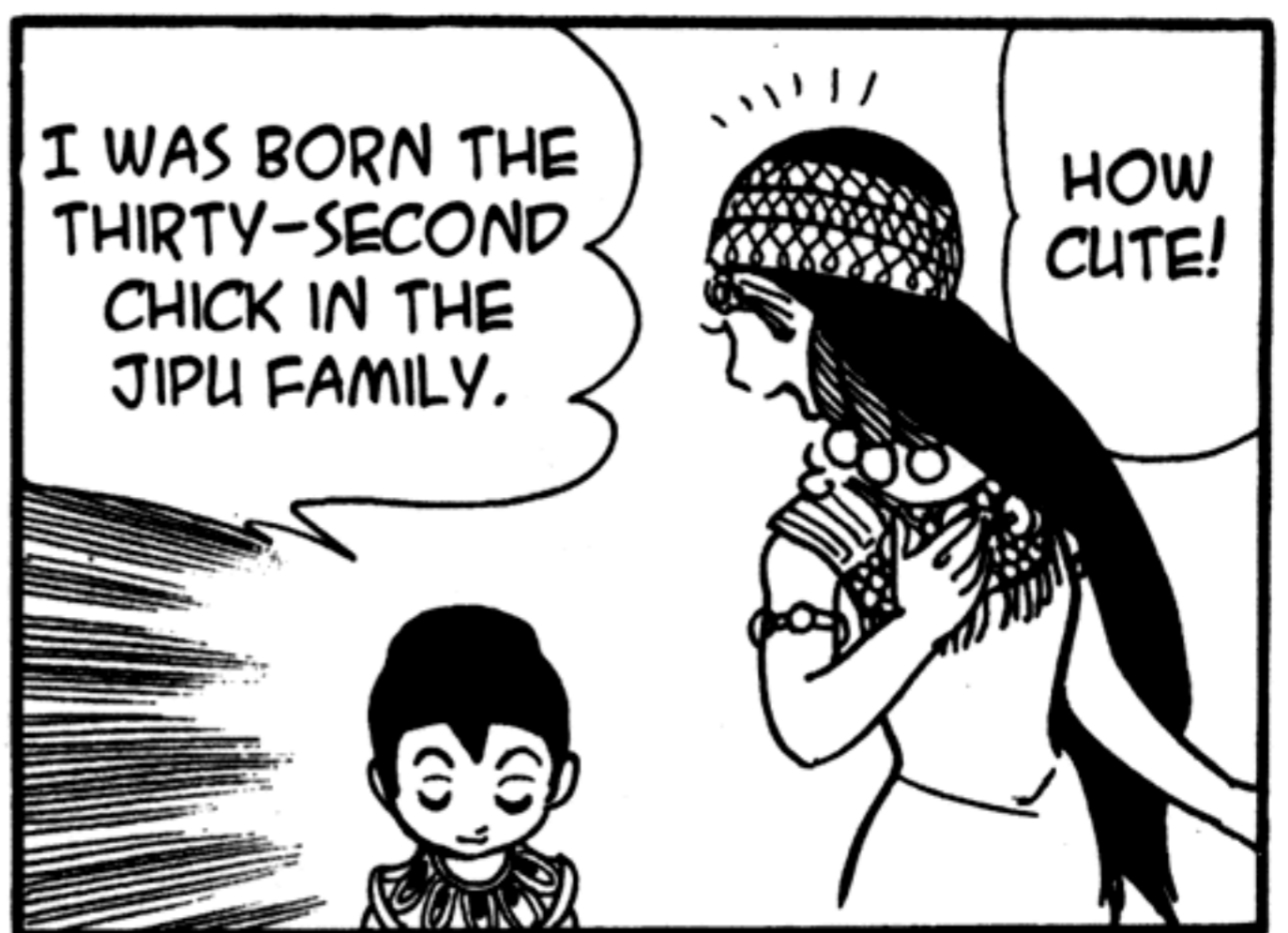
A DREAM? WHAT WAS IT ABOUT?

UM... I WAS A BIRD... I LIVED A BIRD'S LIFE FROM BIRTH TO DEATH.



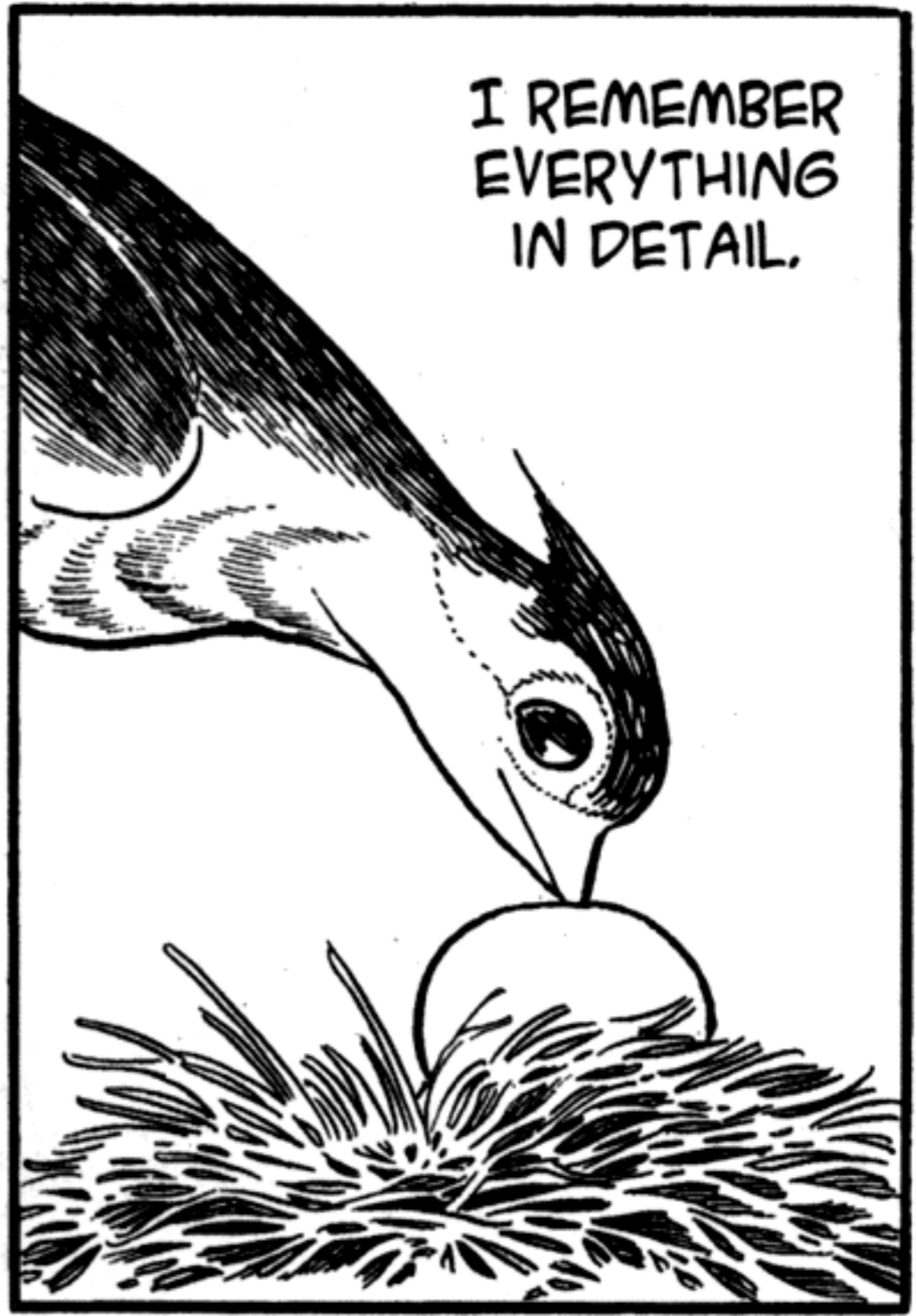
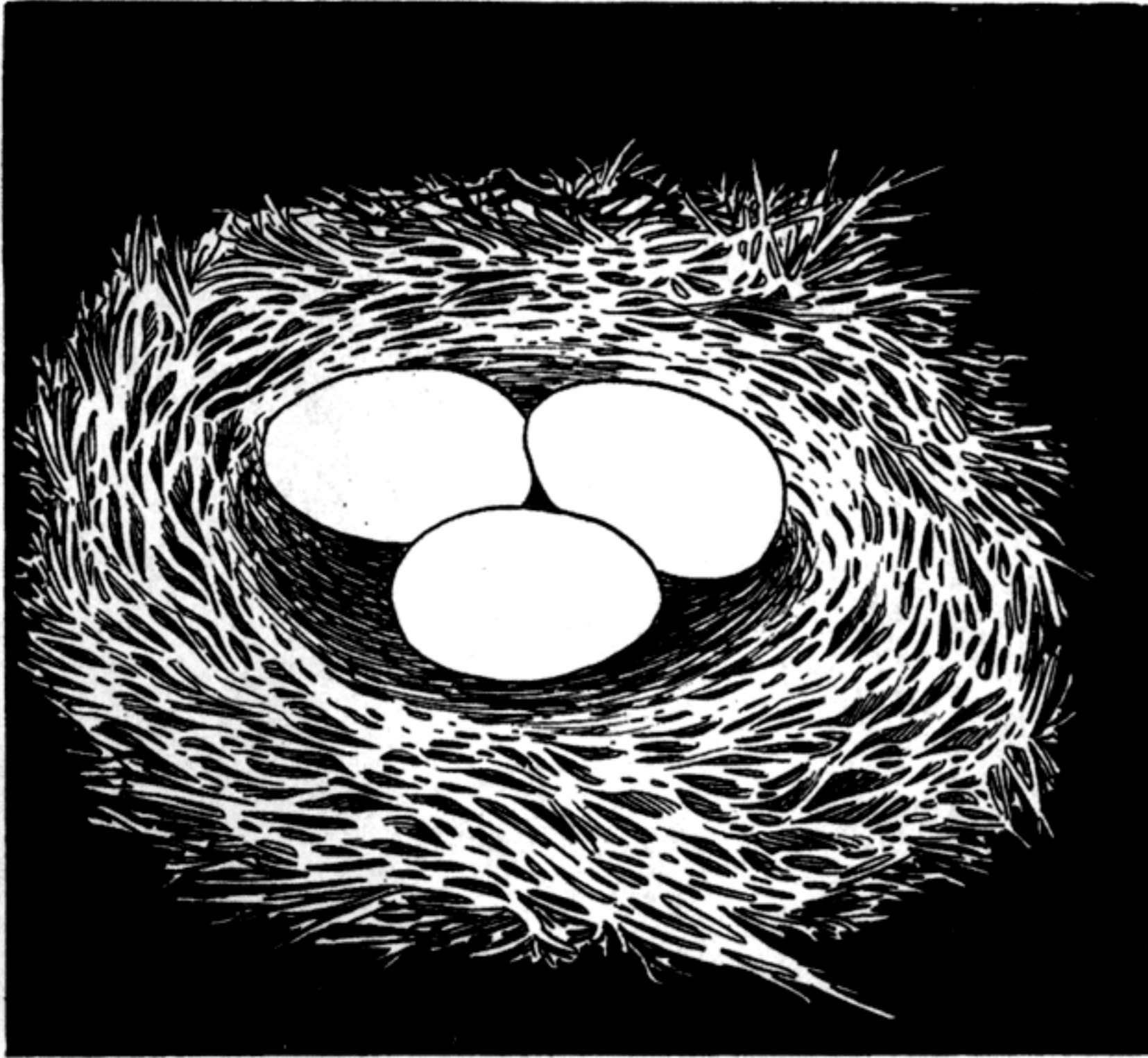
HO-HO, OUR PRINCE IS QUITE A POET...

PERHAPS HE SHALL BECOME A SINGER-SONGWRITER ONE DAY. TELL US MORE!

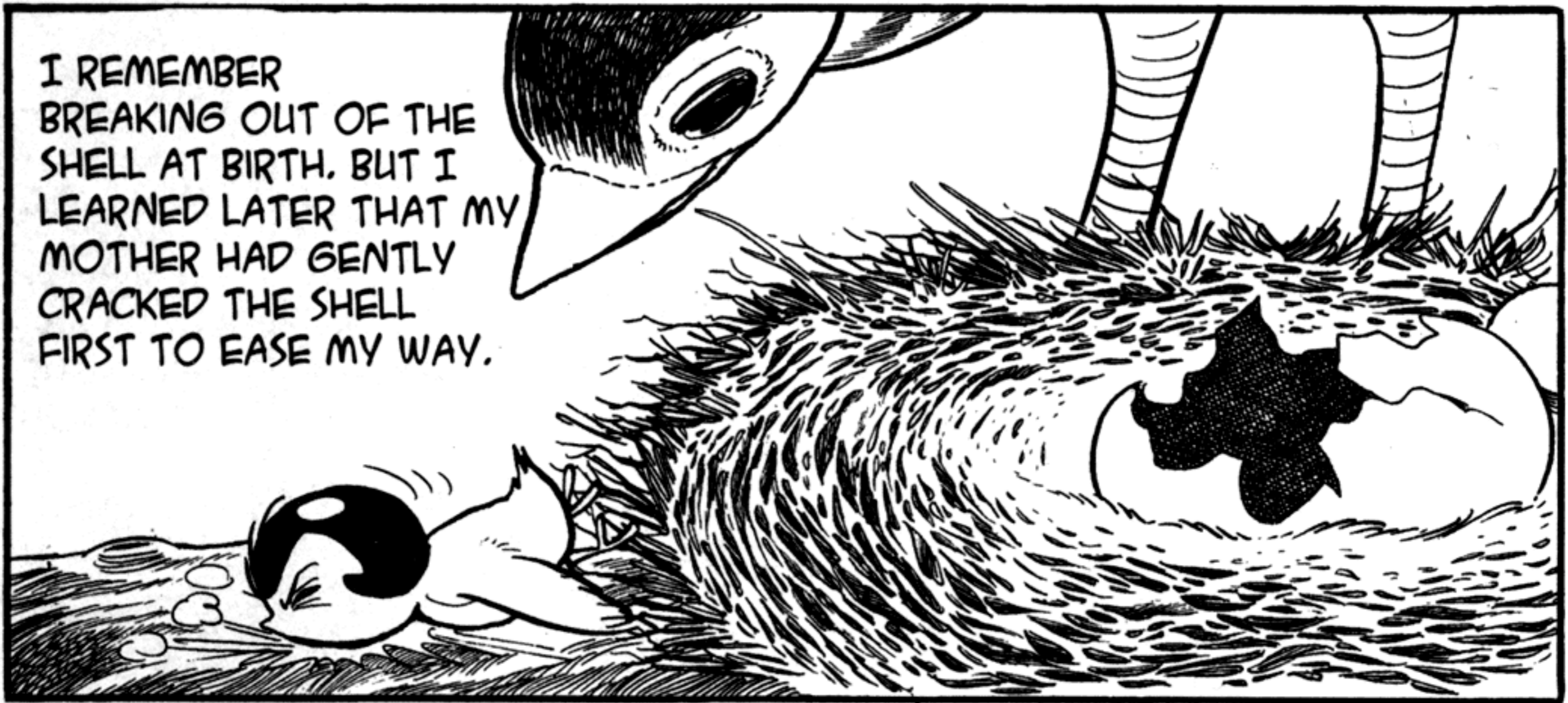


I WAS BORN THE THIRTY-SECOND CHICK IN THE JIPIU FAMILY.

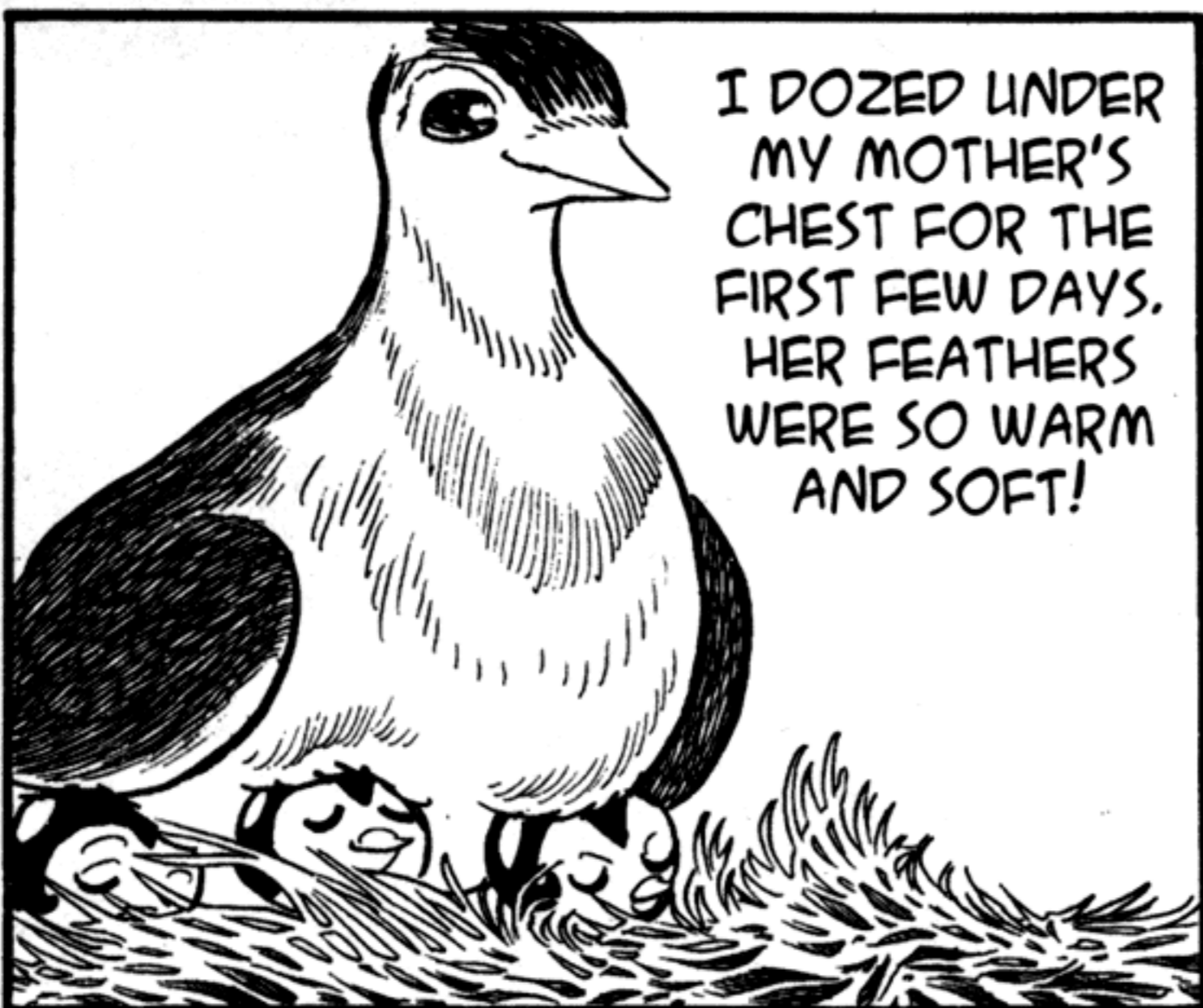
HOW CUTE!



I REMEMBER
EVERYTHING
IN DETAIL.



I REMEMBER
BREAKING OUT OF THE
SHELL AT BIRTH, BUT I
LEARNED LATER THAT MY
MOTHER HAD GENTLY
CRACKED THE SHELL
FIRST TO EASE MY WAY.

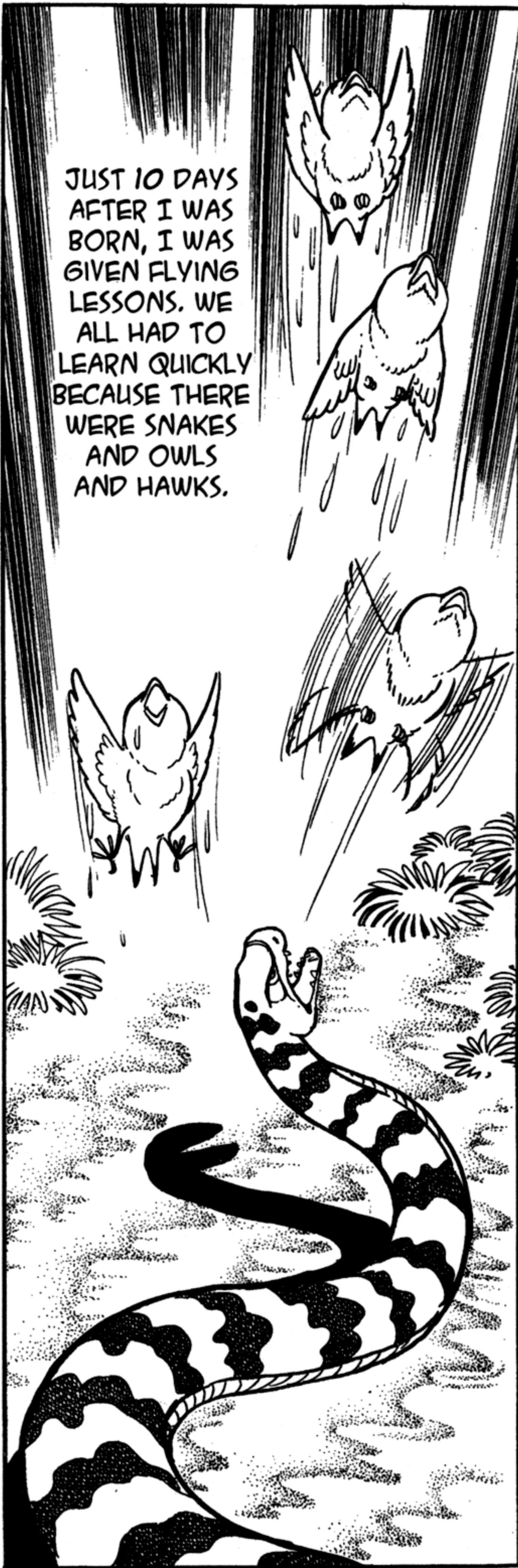


I DOZED UNDER
MY MOTHER'S
CHEST FOR THE
FIRST FEW DAYS.
HER FEATHERS
WERE SO WARM
AND SOFT!



I WAS STRONG,
SO I KICKED
AWAY MY
SIBLINGS TO
KEEP THE
COZY SPOT.

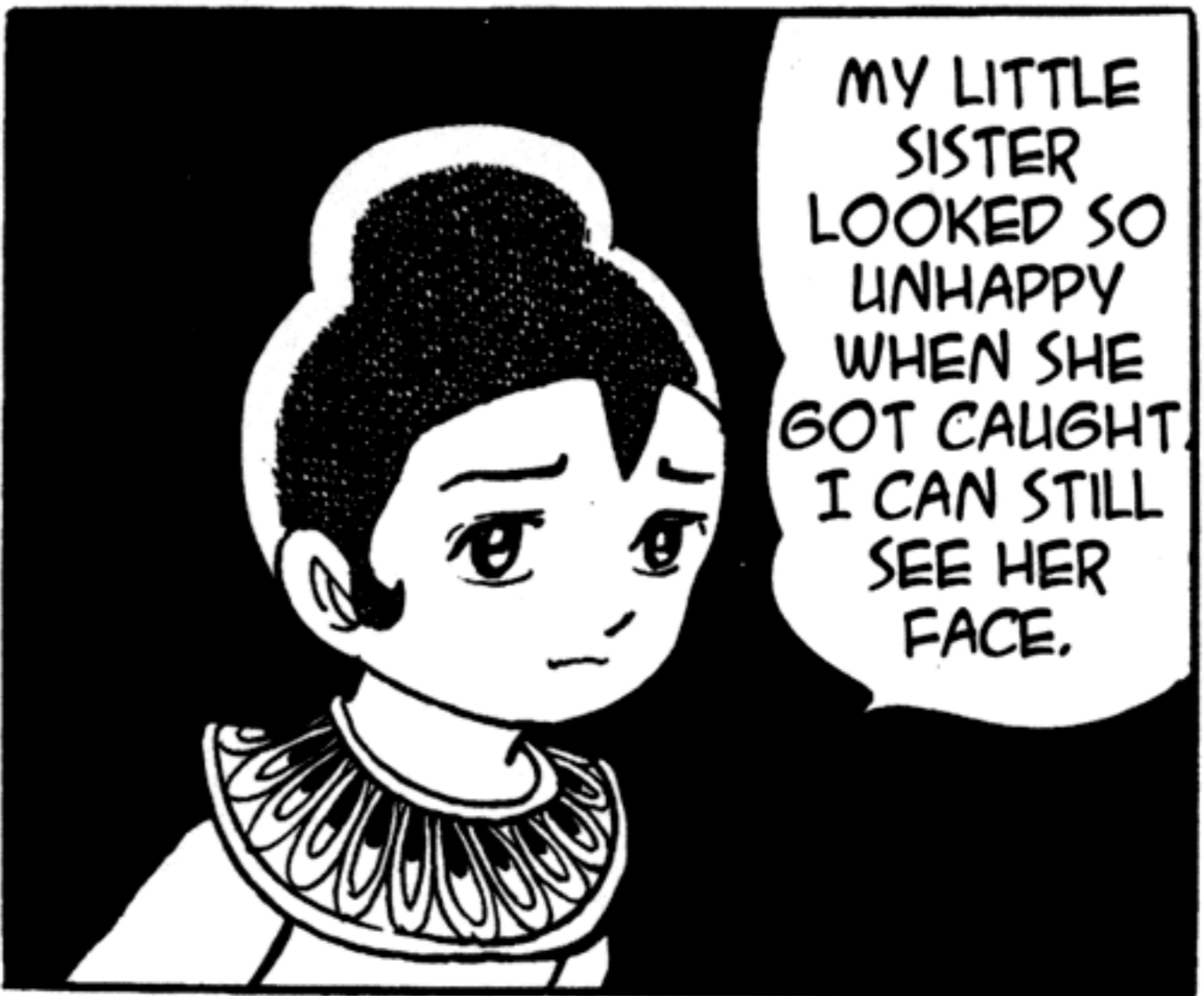
JUST 10 DAYS
AFTER I WAS
BORN, I WAS
GIVEN FLYING
LESSONS. WE
ALL HAD TO
LEARN QUICKLY
BECAUSE THERE
WERE SNAKES
AND OWLS
AND HAWKS.



MY LITTLE
BROTHERS
AND SISTERS,
WHO DIDN'T
PRACTICE
ENOUGH,
ALL DIED.

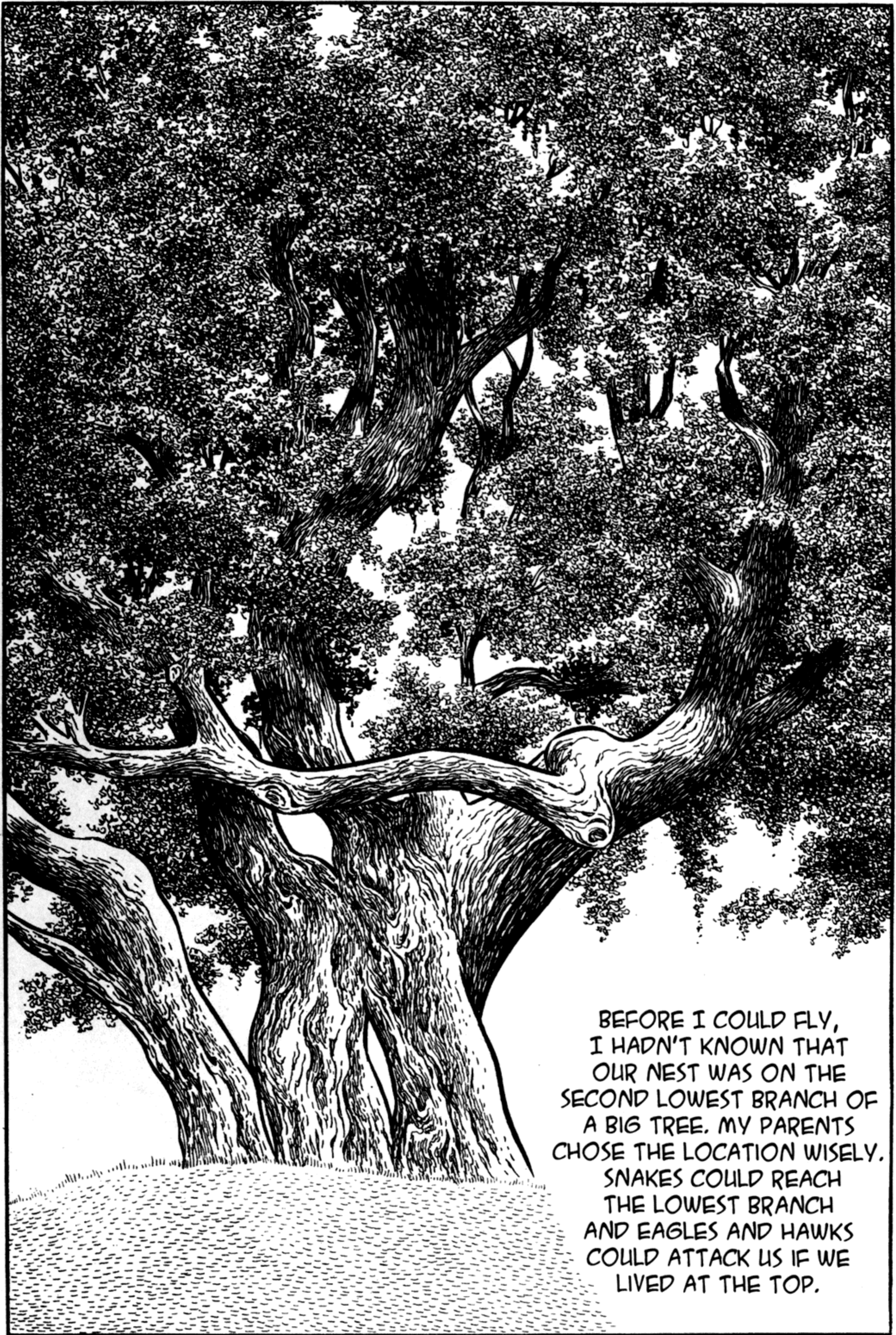


MY LITTLE
SISTER
LOOKED SO
UNHAPPY
WHEN SHE
GOT CAUGHT.
I CAN STILL
SEE HER
FACE.

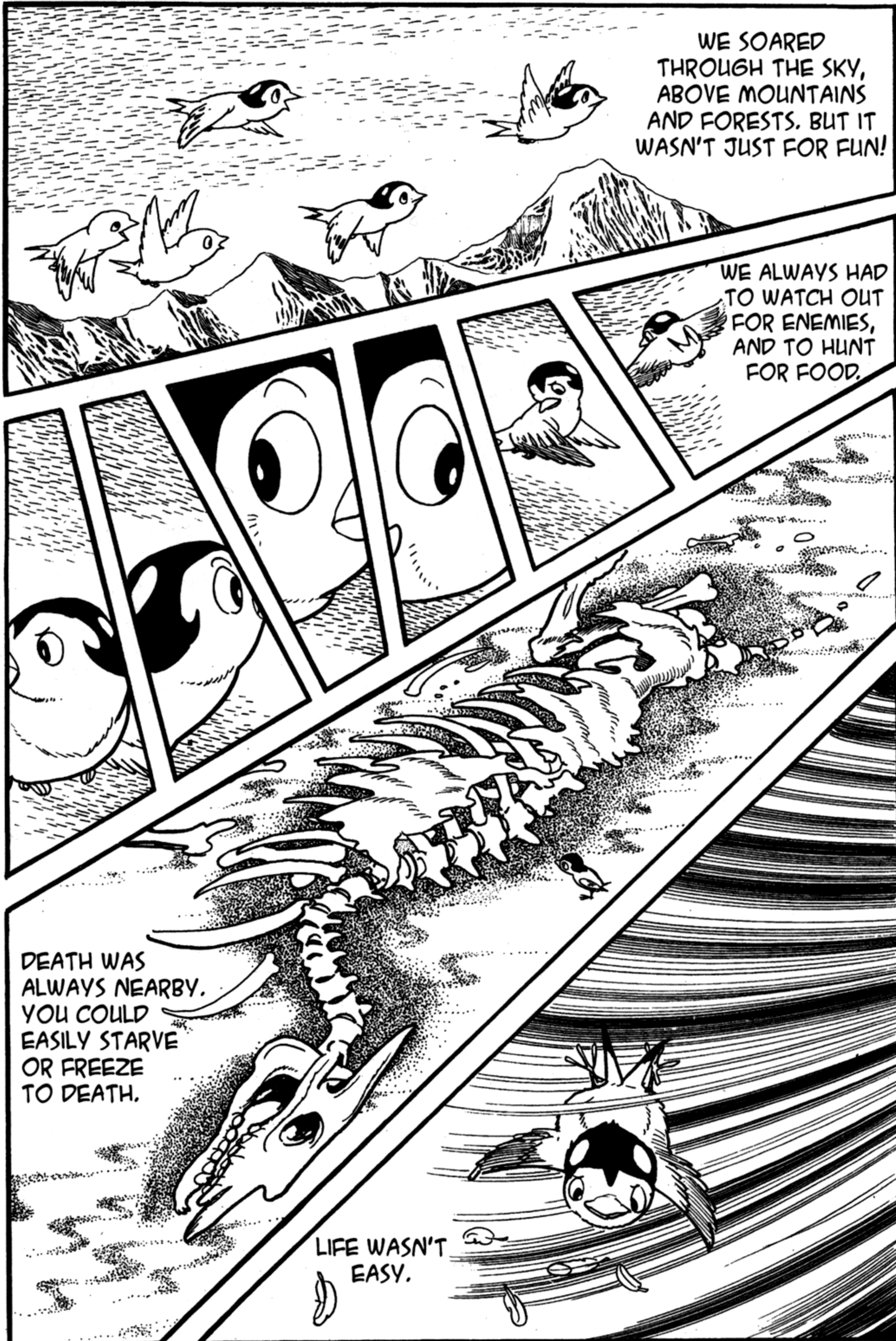


WHAT A
STRANGE
DREAM...





BEFORE I COULD FLY,
I HADN'T KNOWN THAT
OUR NEST WAS ON THE
SECOND LOWEST BRANCH OF
A BIG TREE. MY PARENTS
CHOSE THE LOCATION WISELY.
SNAKES COULD REACH
THE LOWEST BRANCH
AND EAGLES AND HAWKS
COULD ATTACK US IF WE
LIVED AT THE TOP.

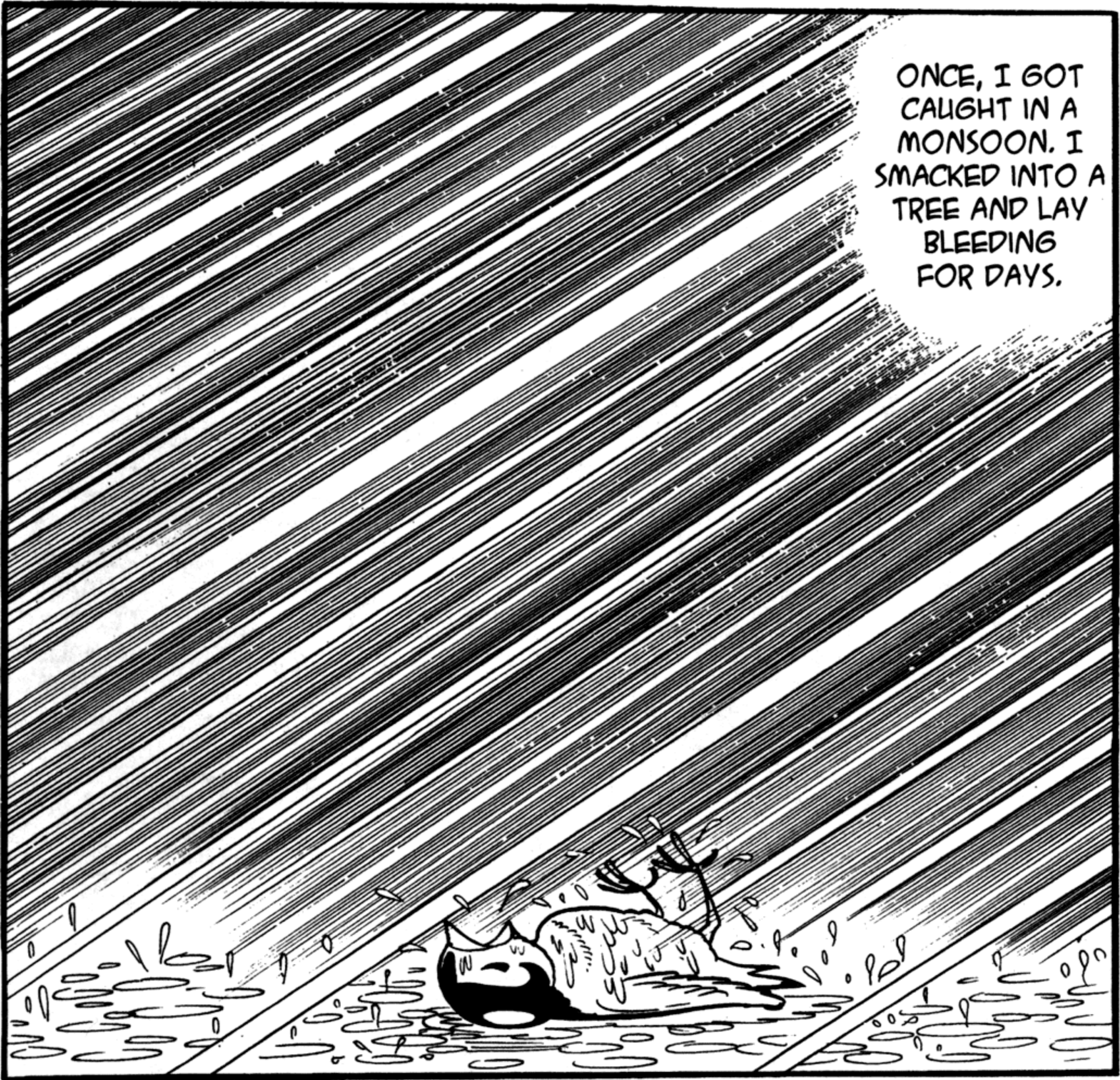


WE SOARED THROUGH THE SKY, ABOVE MOUNTAINS AND FORESTS. BUT IT WASN'T JUST FOR FUN!

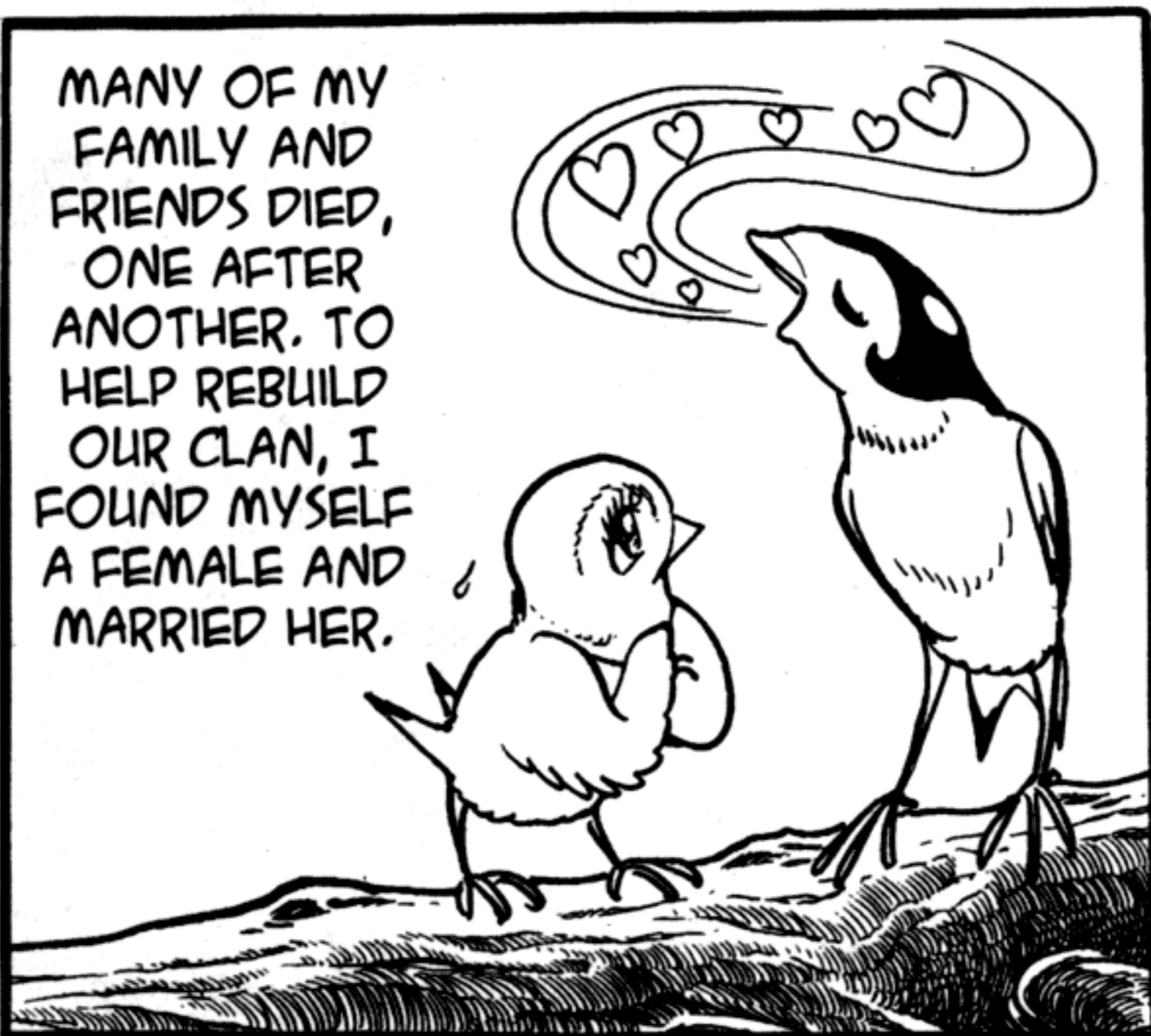
WE ALWAYS HAD TO WATCH OUT FOR ENEMIES, AND TO HUNT FOR FOOD.

DEATH WAS ALWAYS NEARBY. YOU COULD EASILY STARVE OR FREEZE TO DEATH.

LIFE WASN'T EASY.



ONCE, I GOT CAUGHT IN A MONSOON. I SMACKED INTO A TREE AND LAY BLEEDING FOR DAYS.



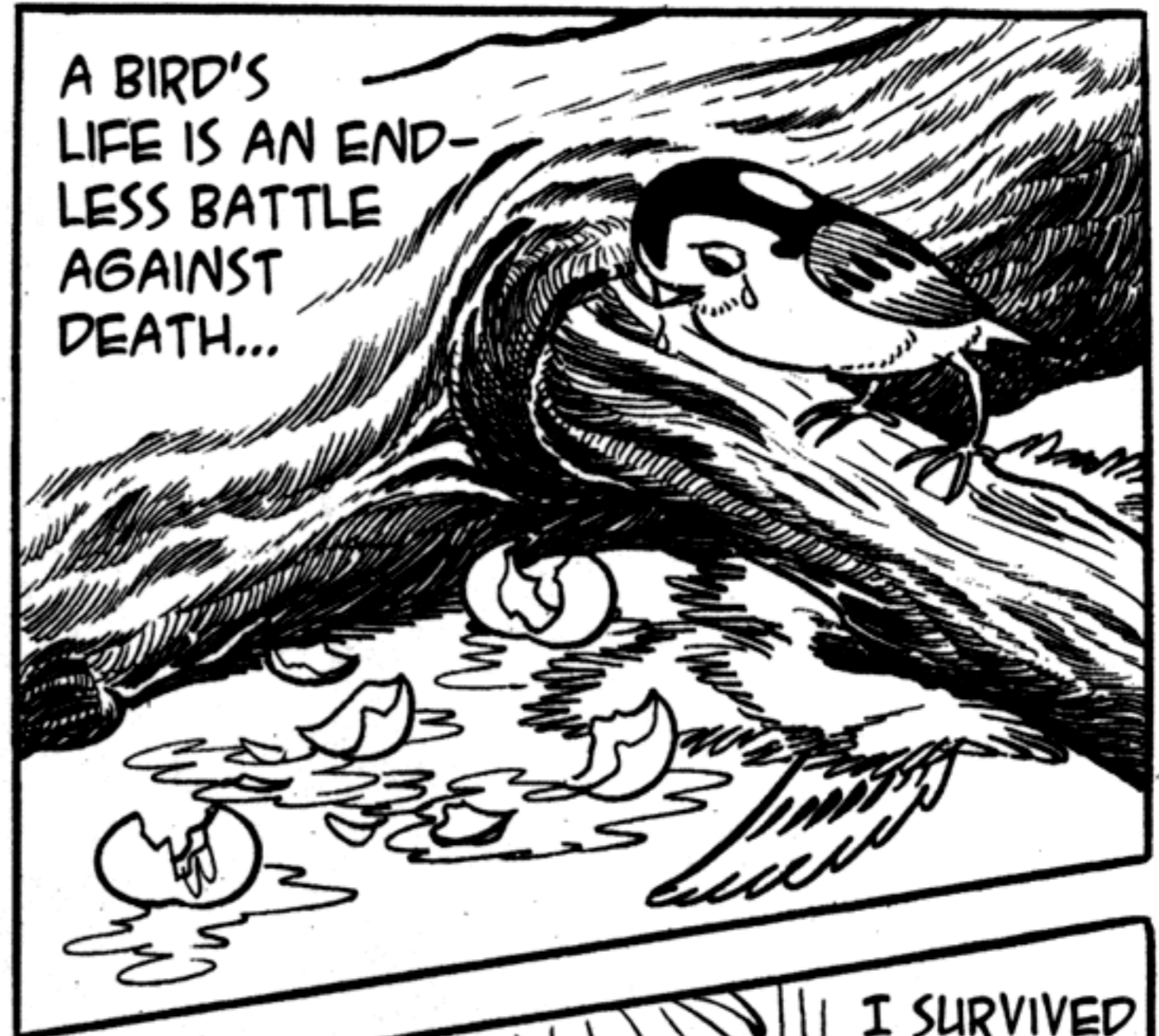
MANY OF MY FAMILY AND FRIENDS DIED, ONE AFTER ANOTHER. TO HELP REBUILD OUR CLAN, I FOUND MYSELF A FEMALE AND MARRIED HER.



SHE WAS SO SWEET, MOTHER. SHE LAID MANY, MANY EGGS... BUT ONE DAY...



A HUMAN CUT DOWN
THE TREE WE LIVED IN,
CRUSHING ALL THE
EGGS AND MY BELOVED.



A BIRD'S
LIFE IS AN END-
LESS BATTLE
AGAINST
DEATH...

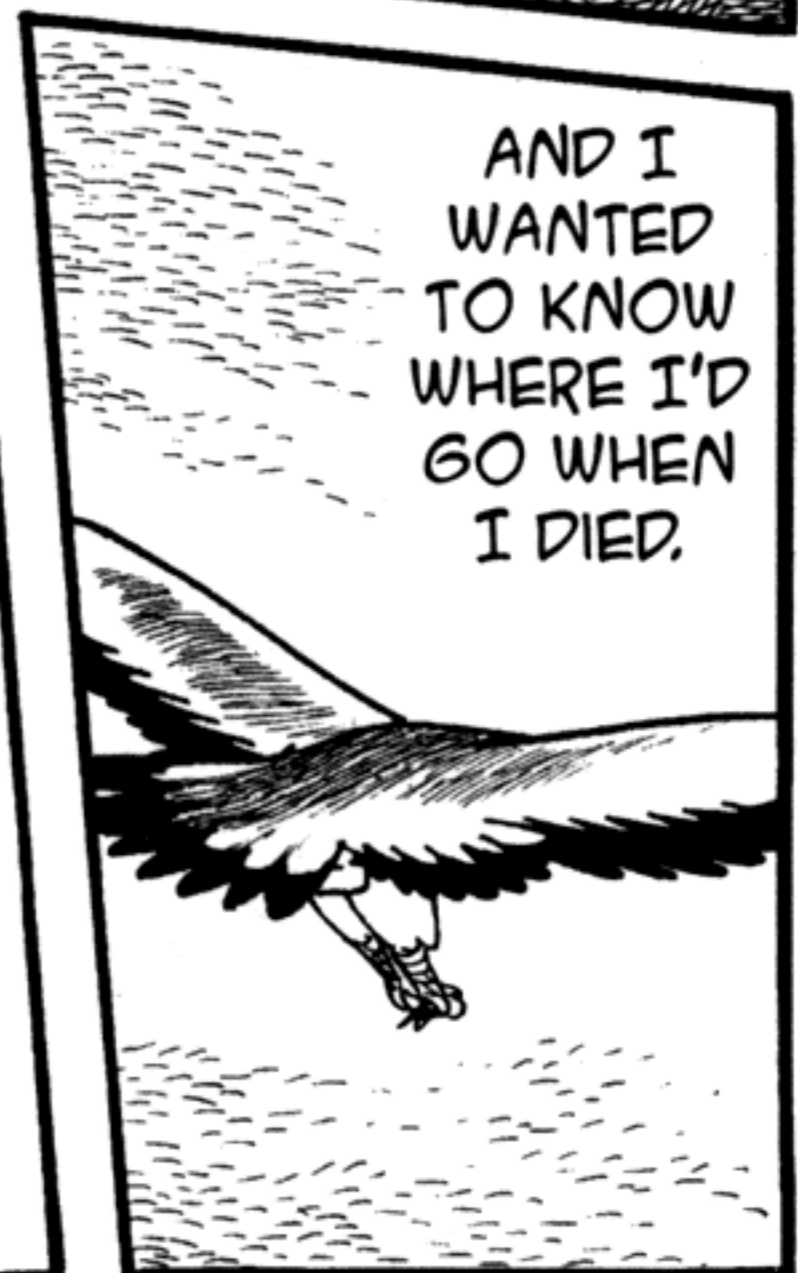
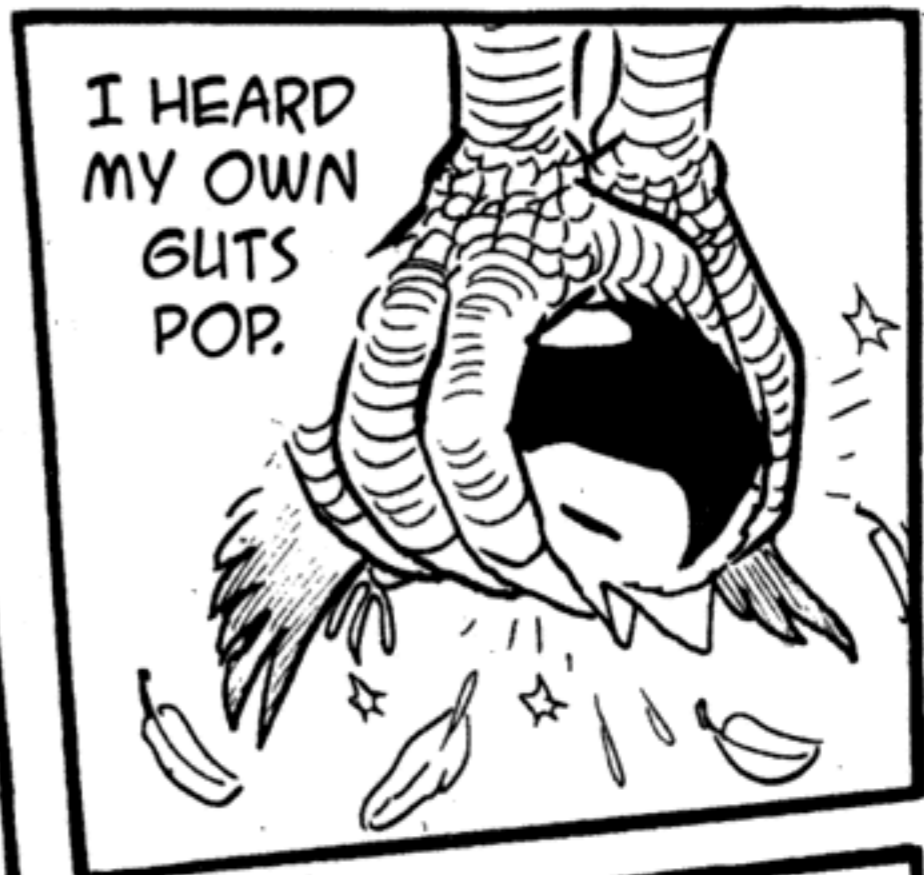
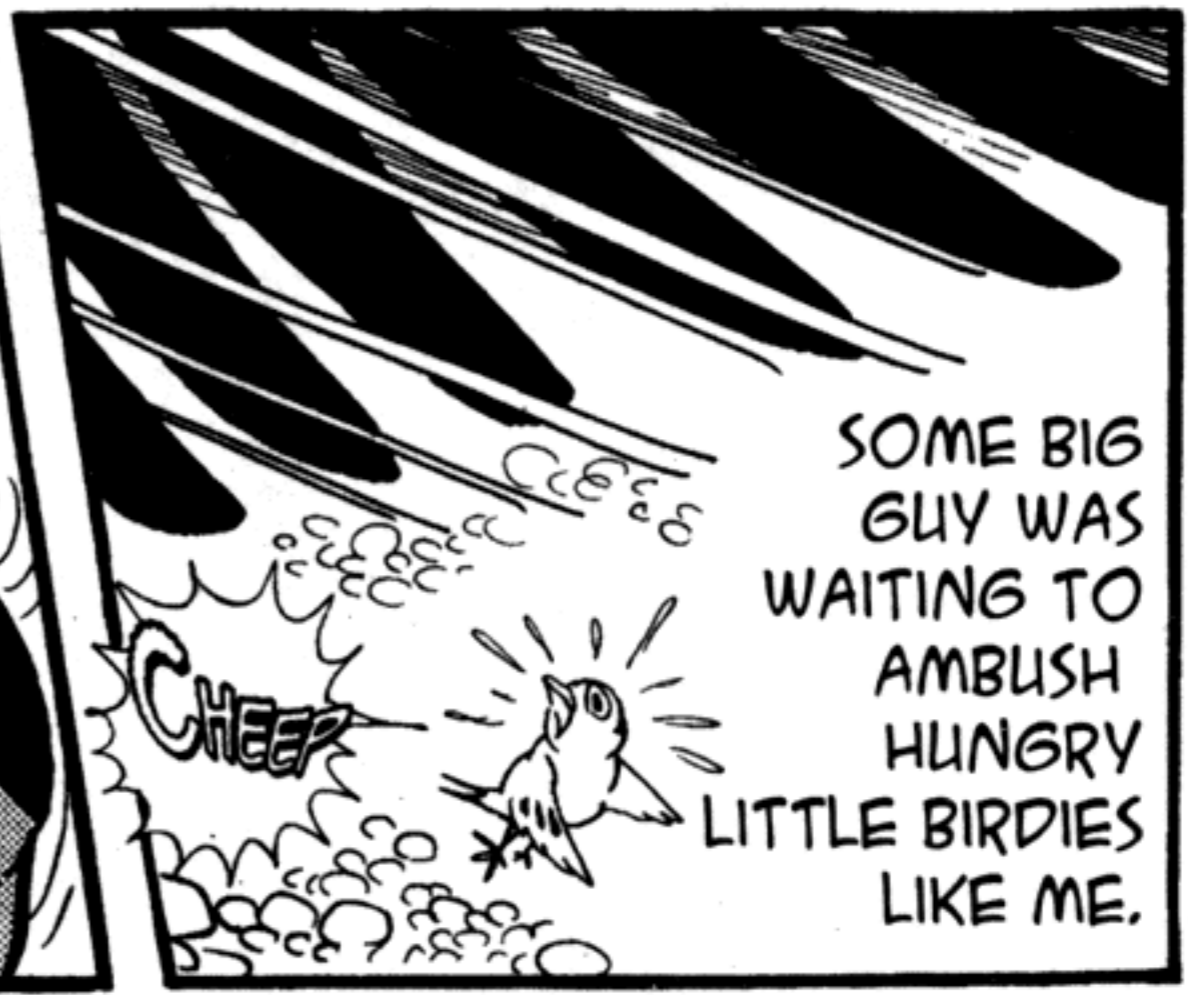


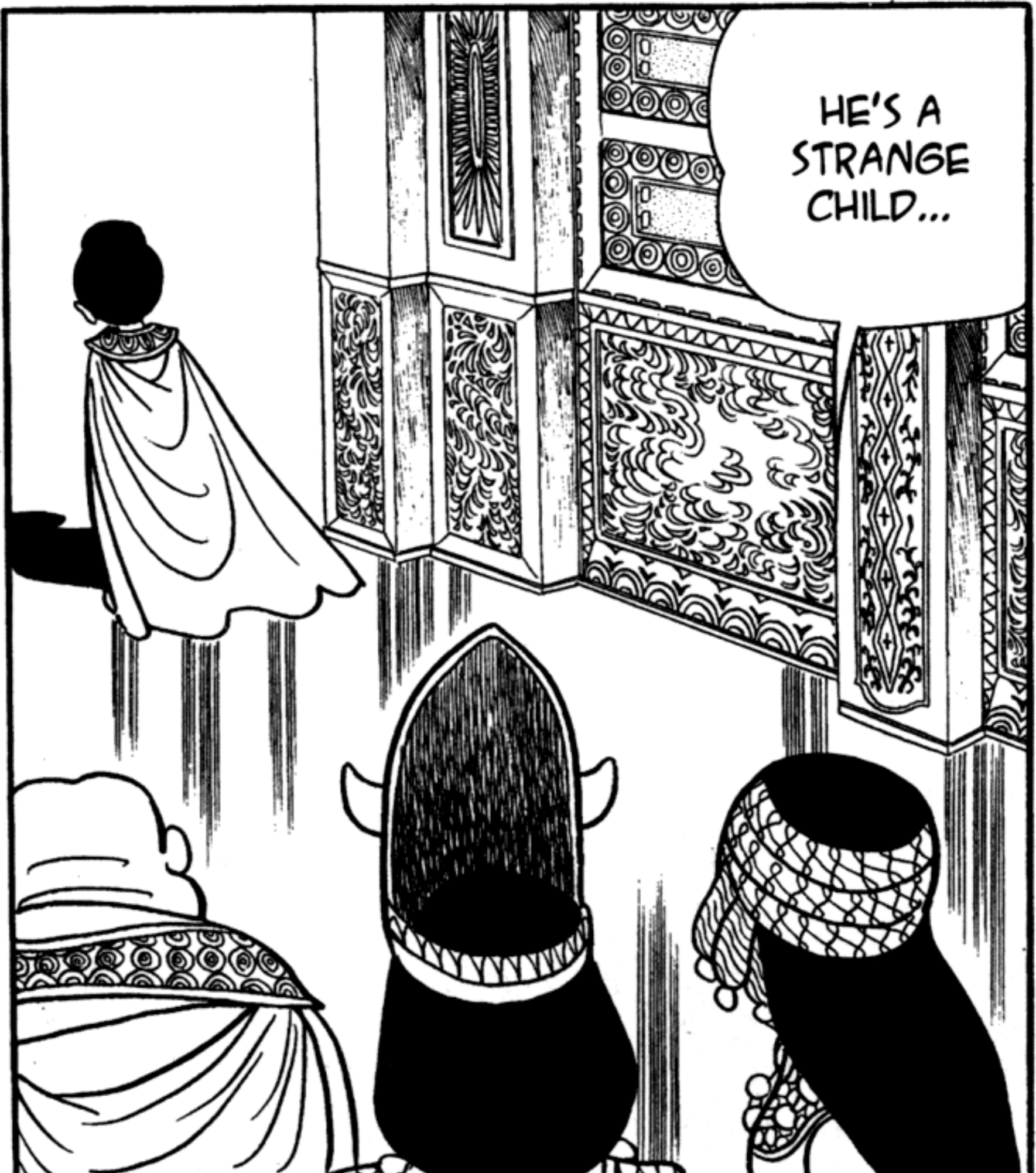
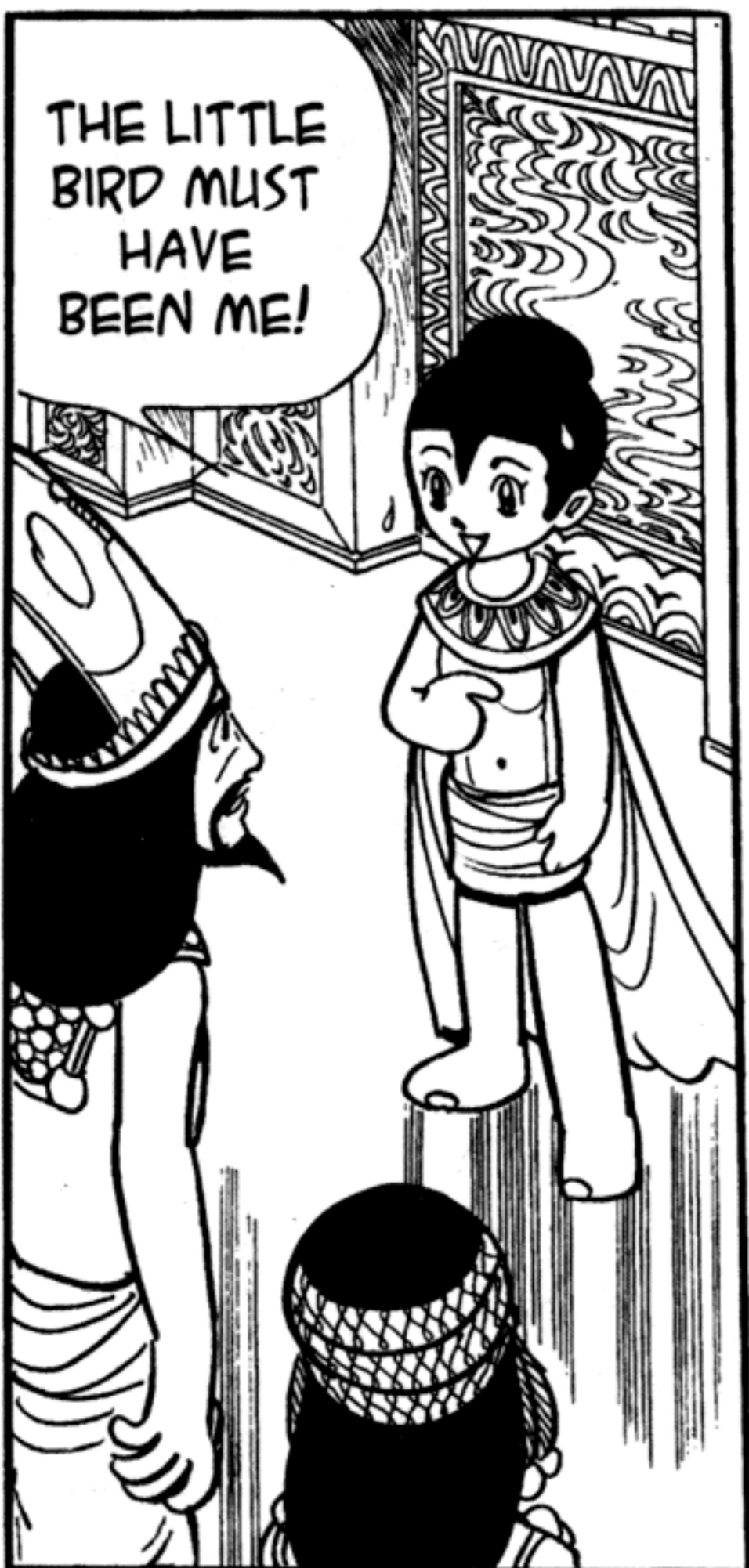
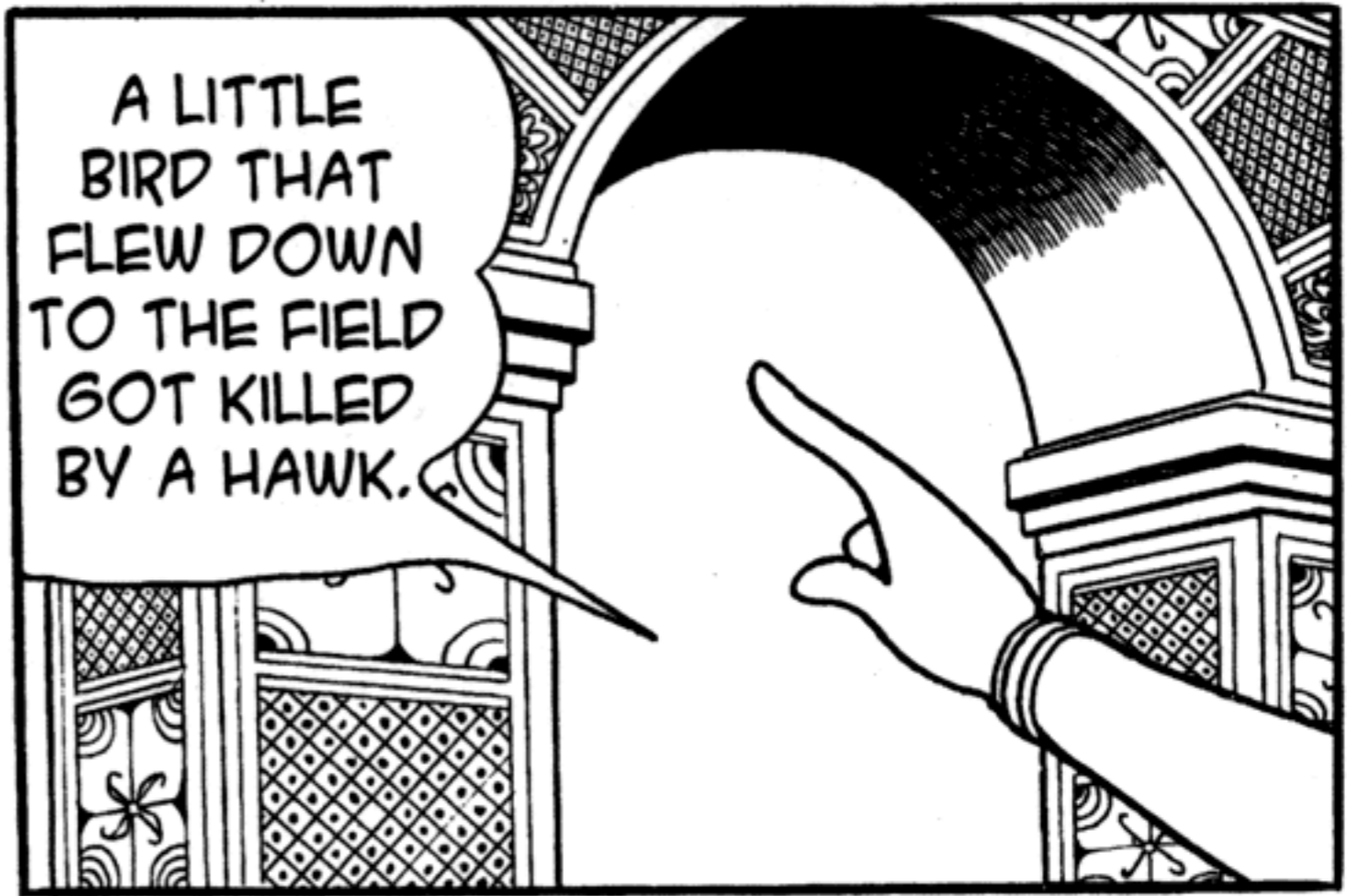
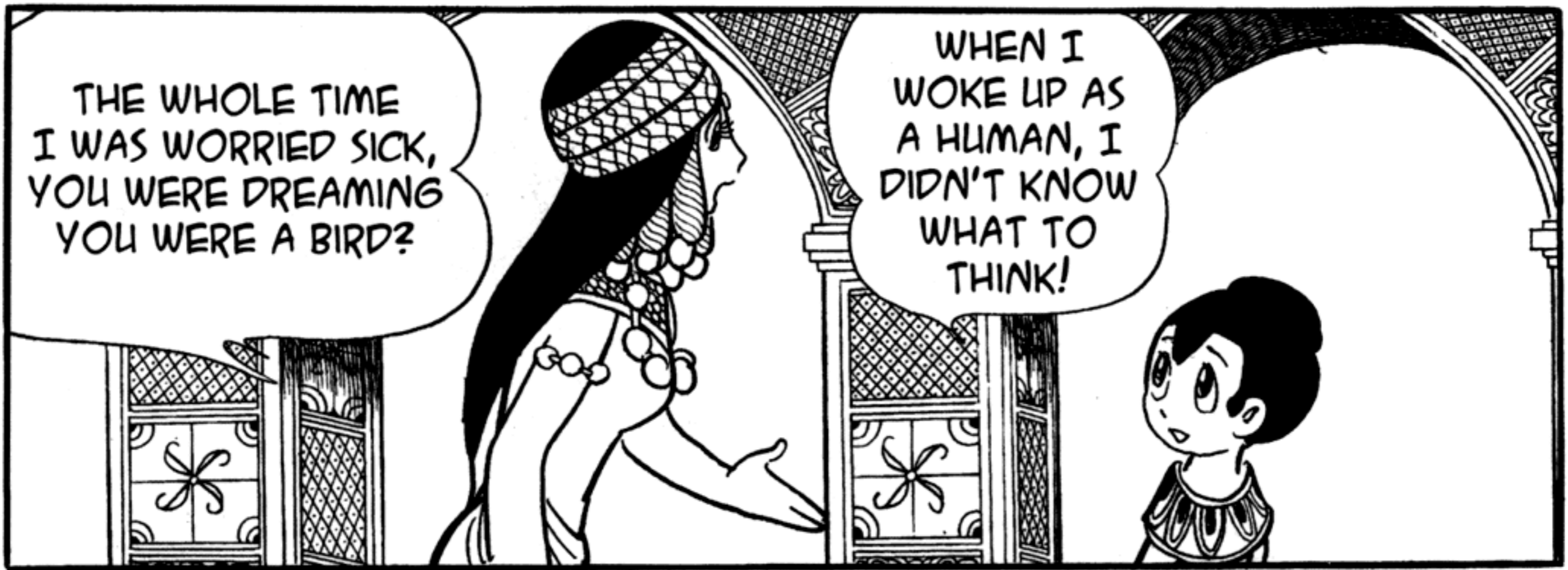
I SURVIVED
FOR MANY
YEARS
BEFORE I
FINALLY
MET MY
END.



I FOUND A
WORM AT
SOME HARVEST
FESTIVAL...

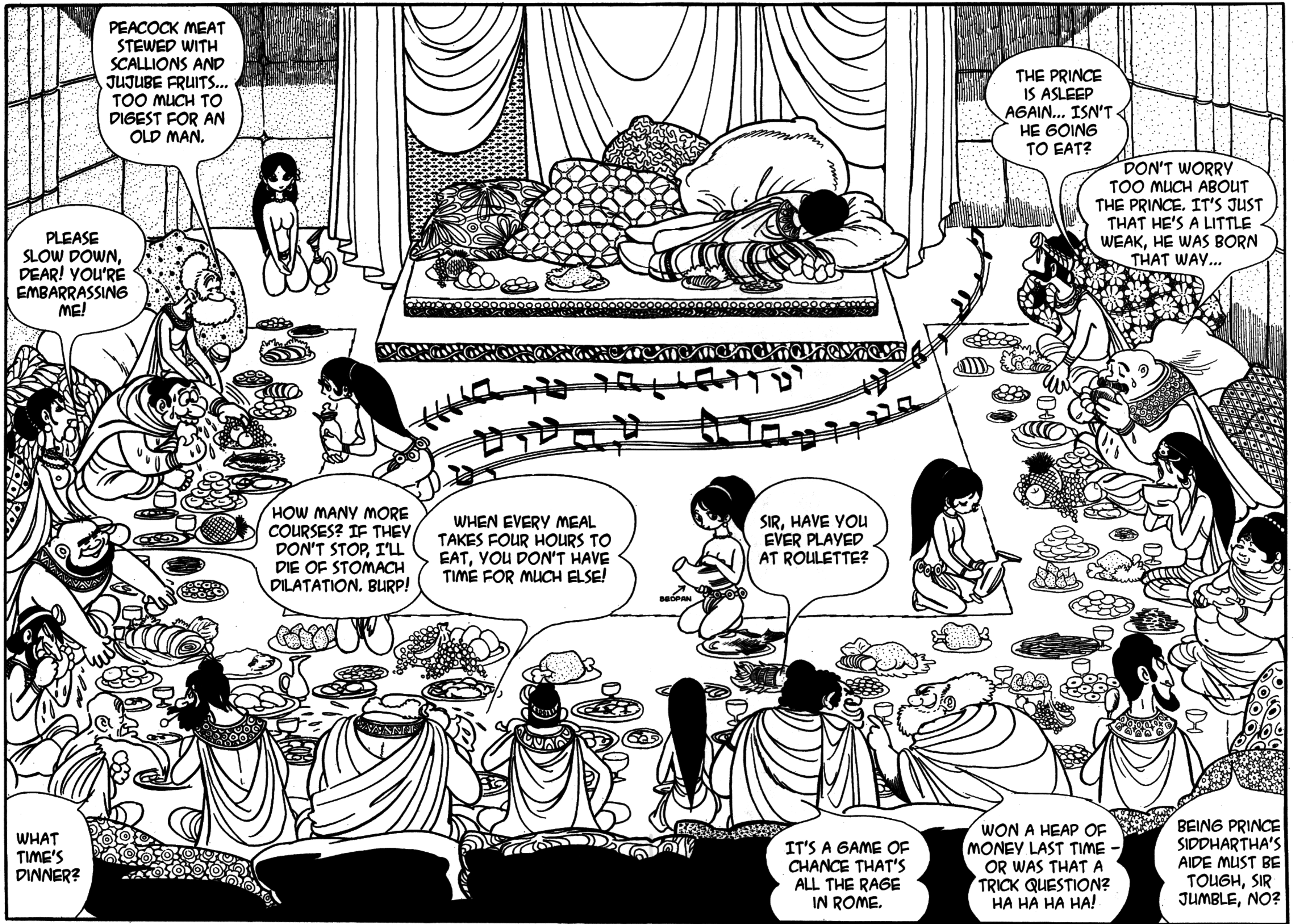
I CAME
FLUTTERING DOWN.





CHAPTER THREE

THE RAPIDS



PEACOCK MEAT STEWED WITH SCALLIONS AND JUJUBE FRUITS... TOO MUCH TO DIGEST FOR AN OLD MAN.

THE PRINCE IS ASLEEP AGAIN... ISN'T HE GOING TO EAT?

DON'T WORRY TOO MUCH ABOUT THE PRINCE. IT'S JUST THAT HE'S A LITTLE WEAK, HE WAS BORN THAT WAY...

PLEASE SLOW DOWN, DEAR! YOU'RE EMBARRASSING ME!

HOW MANY MORE COURSES? IF THEY DON'T STOP, I'LL DIE OF STOMACH DILATATION. BURP!

WHEN EVERY MEAL TAKES FOUR HOURS TO EAT, YOU DON'T HAVE TIME FOR MUCH ELSE!

SIR, HAVE YOU EVER PLAYED AT ROULETTE?

WHAT TIME'S DINNER?

IT'S A GAME OF CHANCE THAT'S ALL THE RAGE IN ROME.

WON A HEAP OF MONEY LAST TIME - OR WAS THAT A TRICK QUESTION? HA HA HA HA!

BEING PRINCE SIDDHARTHA'S AIDE MUST BE TOUGH, SIR JUMBLE, NO?

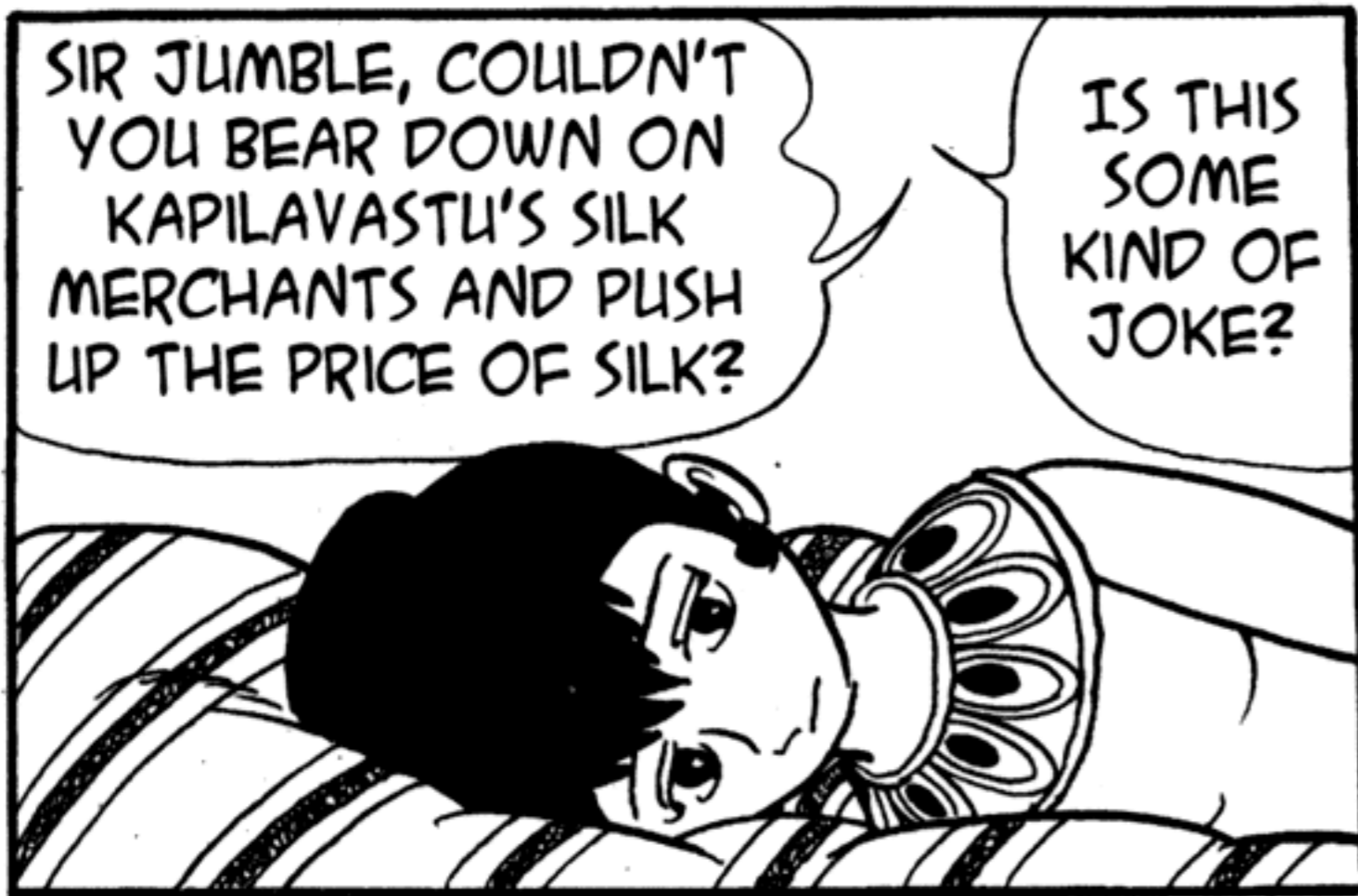
BEOPAN



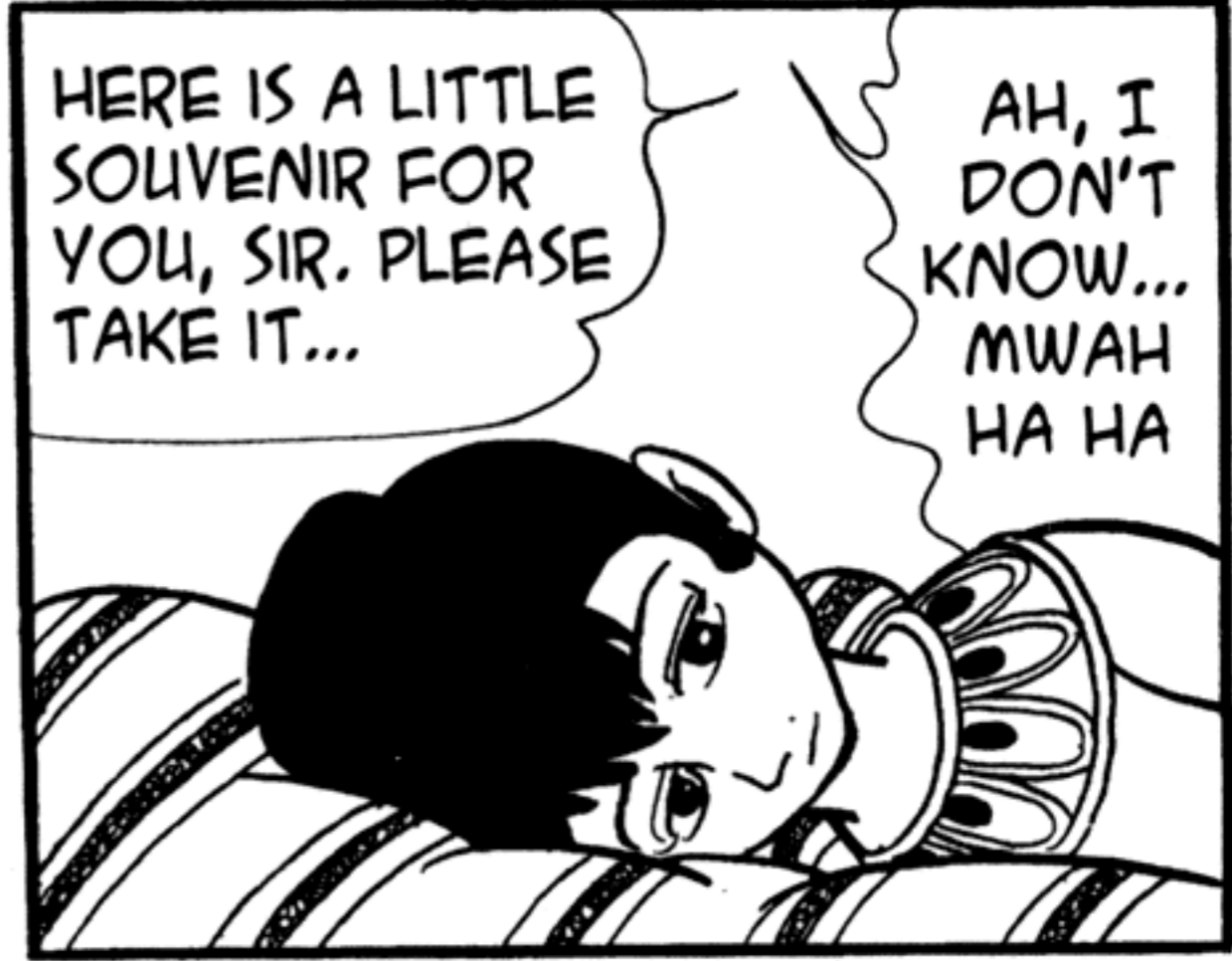
SHH!



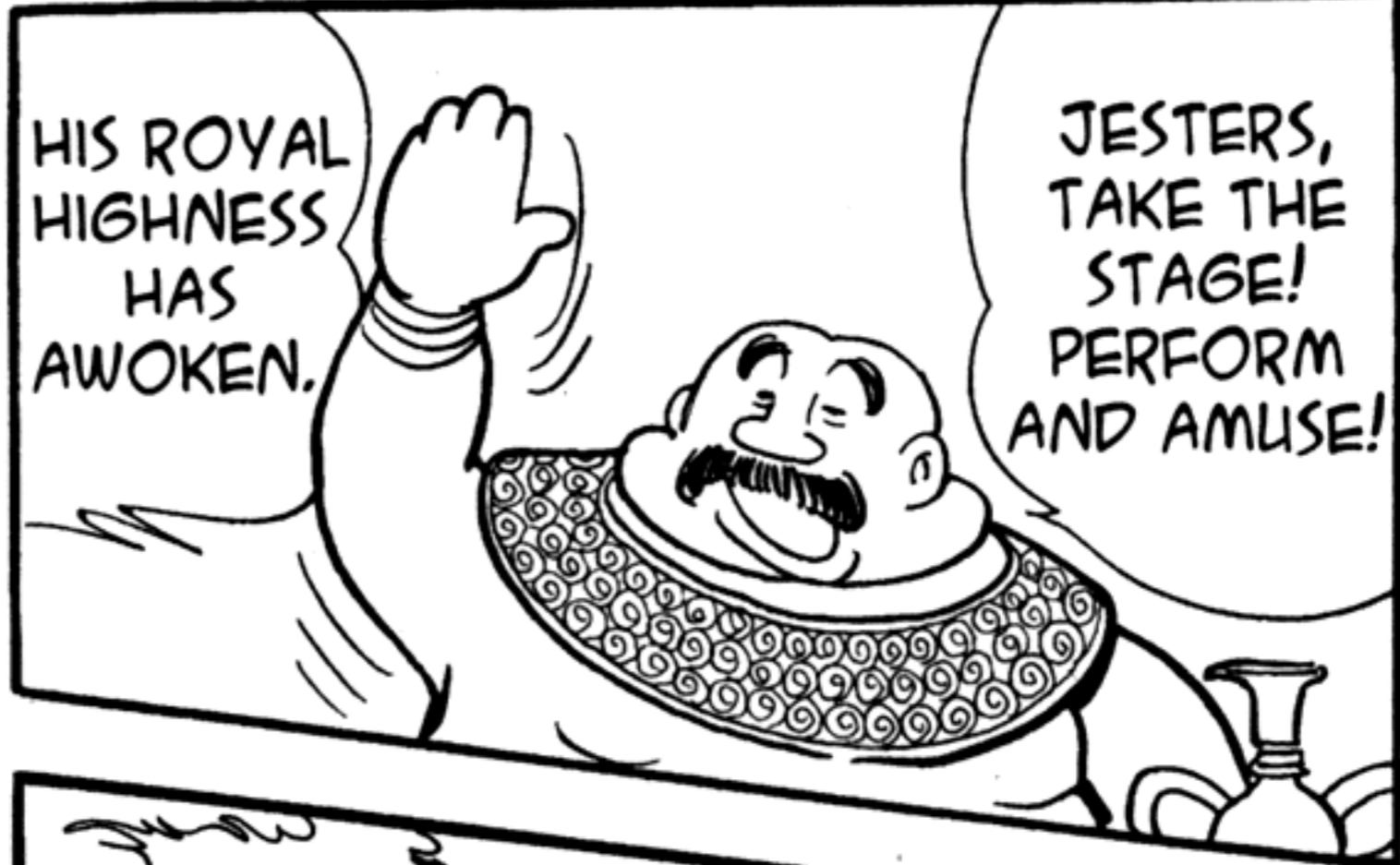
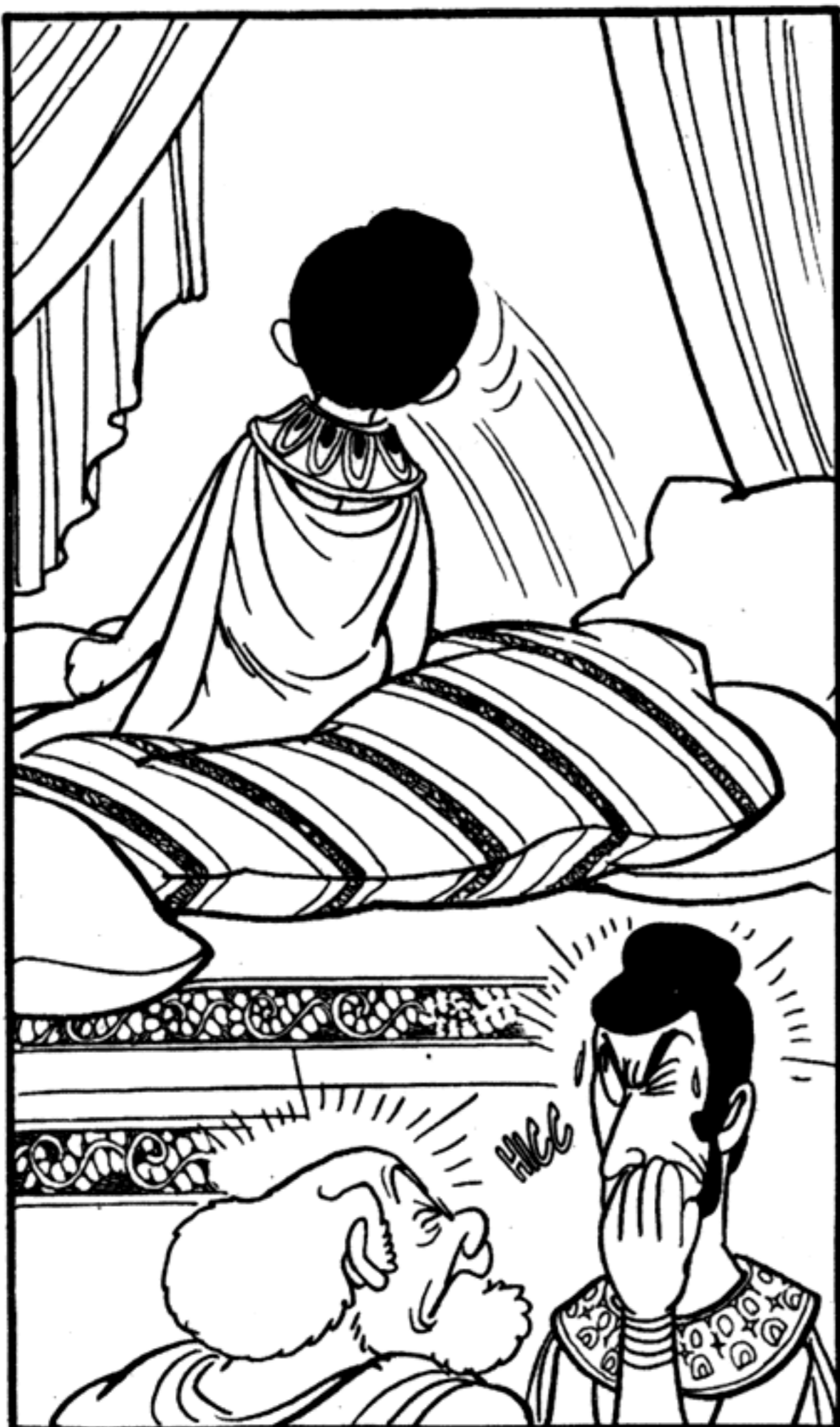
...AND SELL HERE.



IS THIS SOME KIND OF JOKE?



AH, I DON'T KNOW... MWAH HA HA

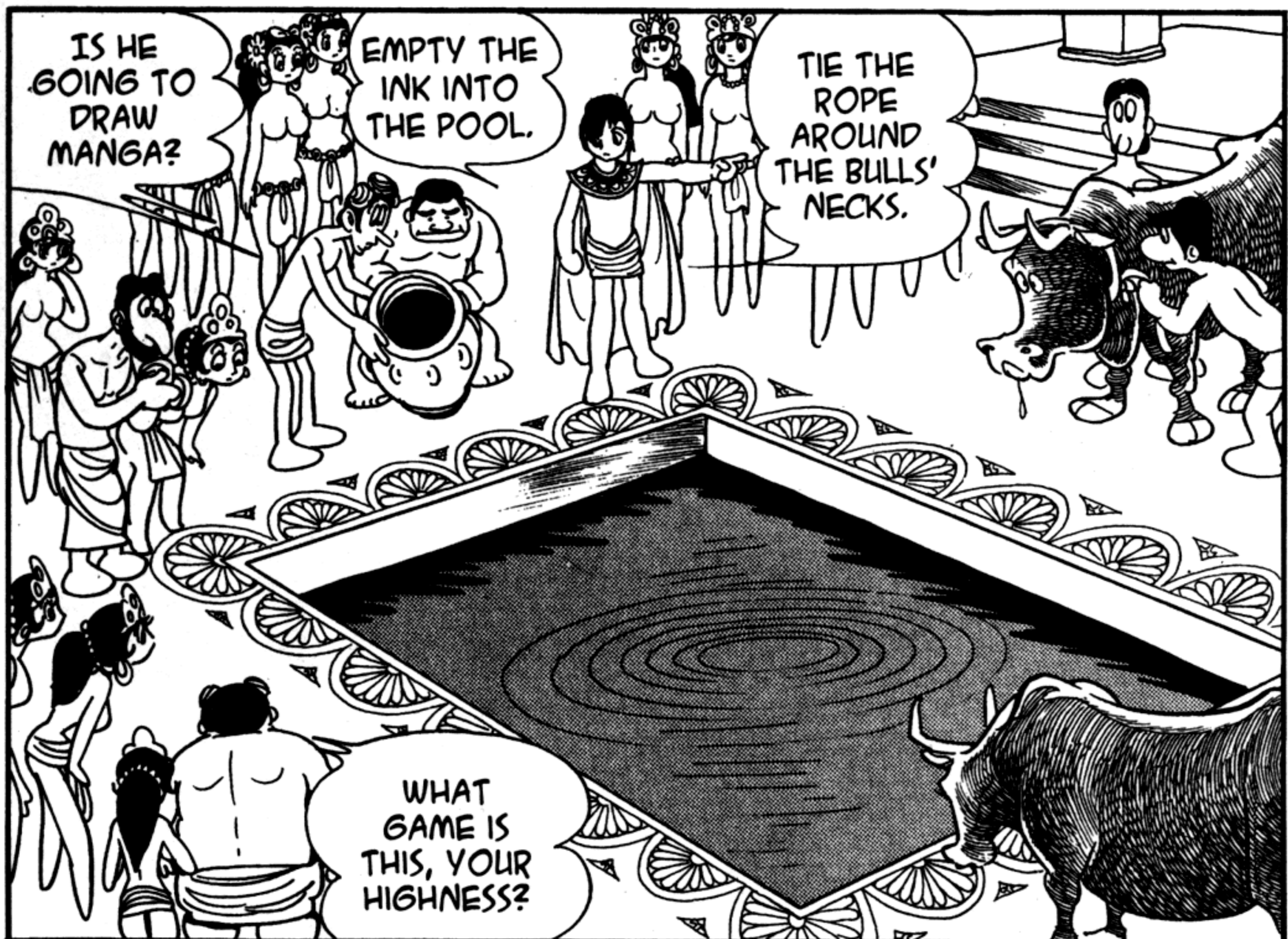


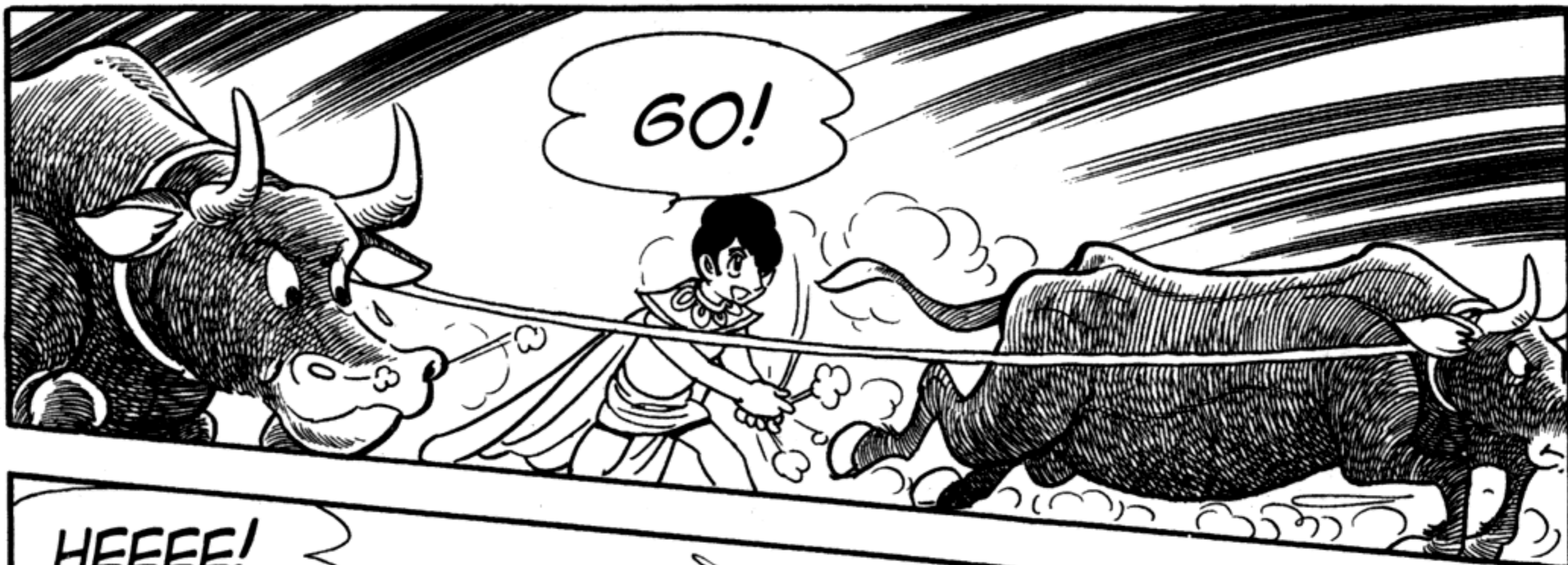
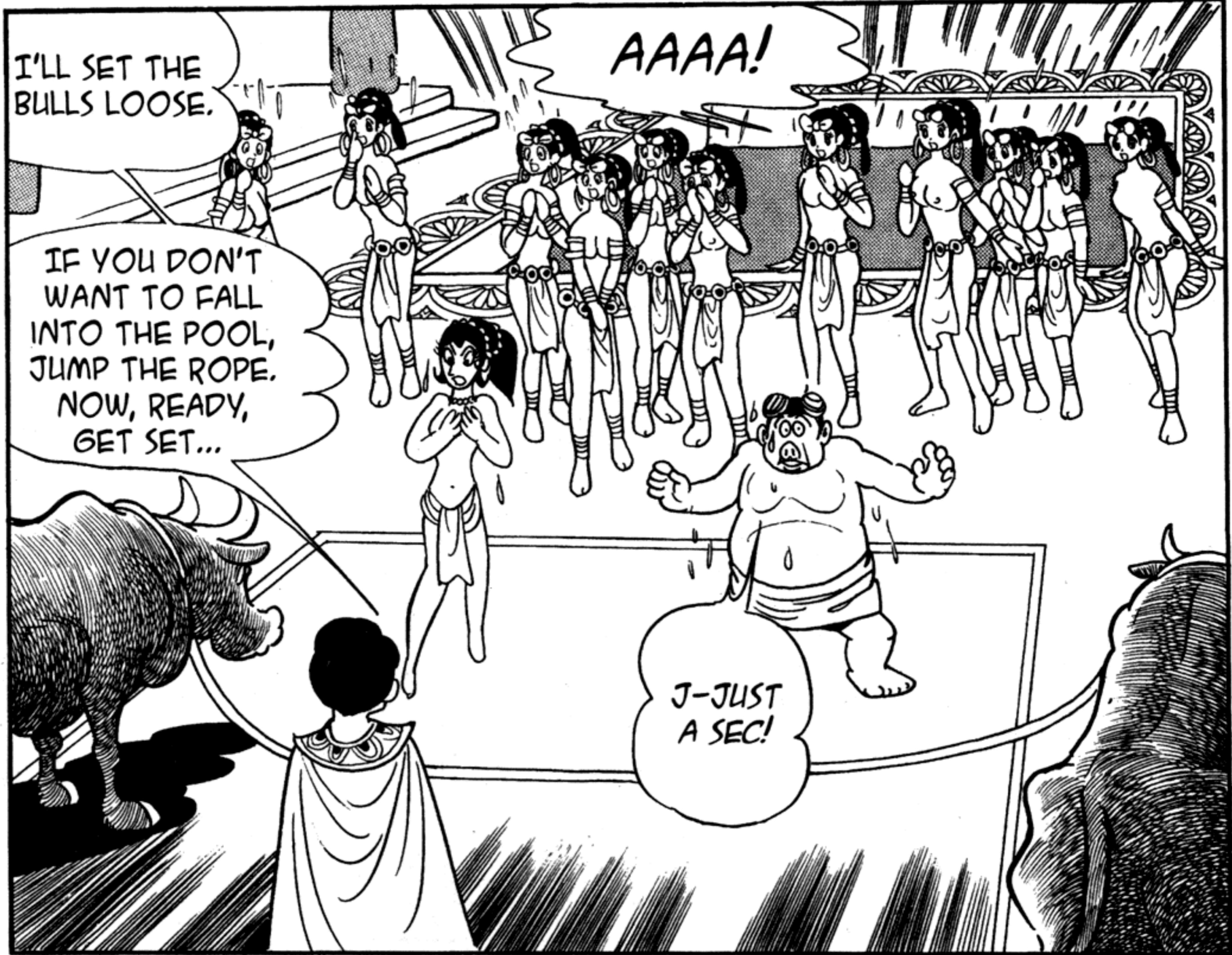
HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS HAS AWOKEN.

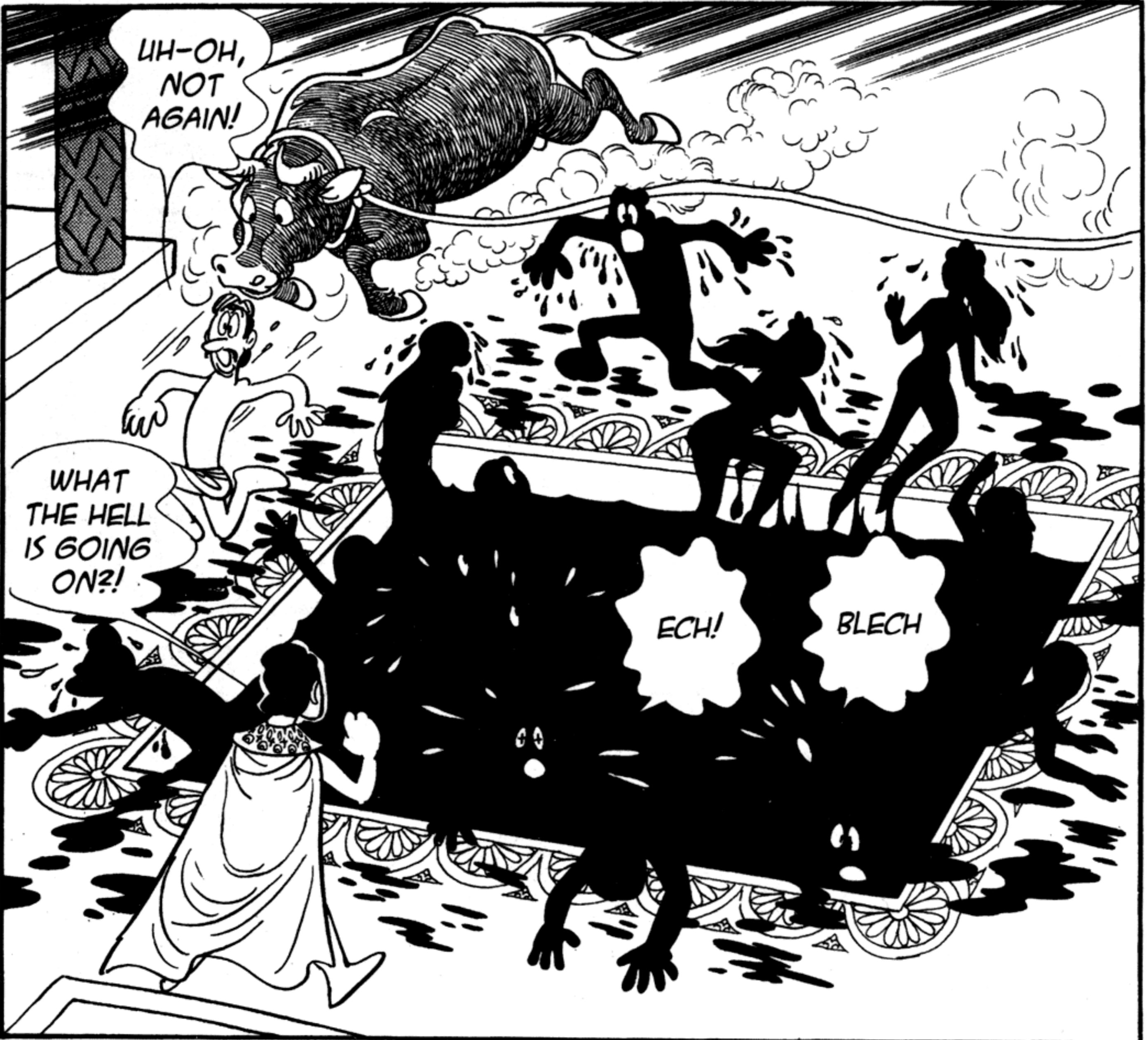
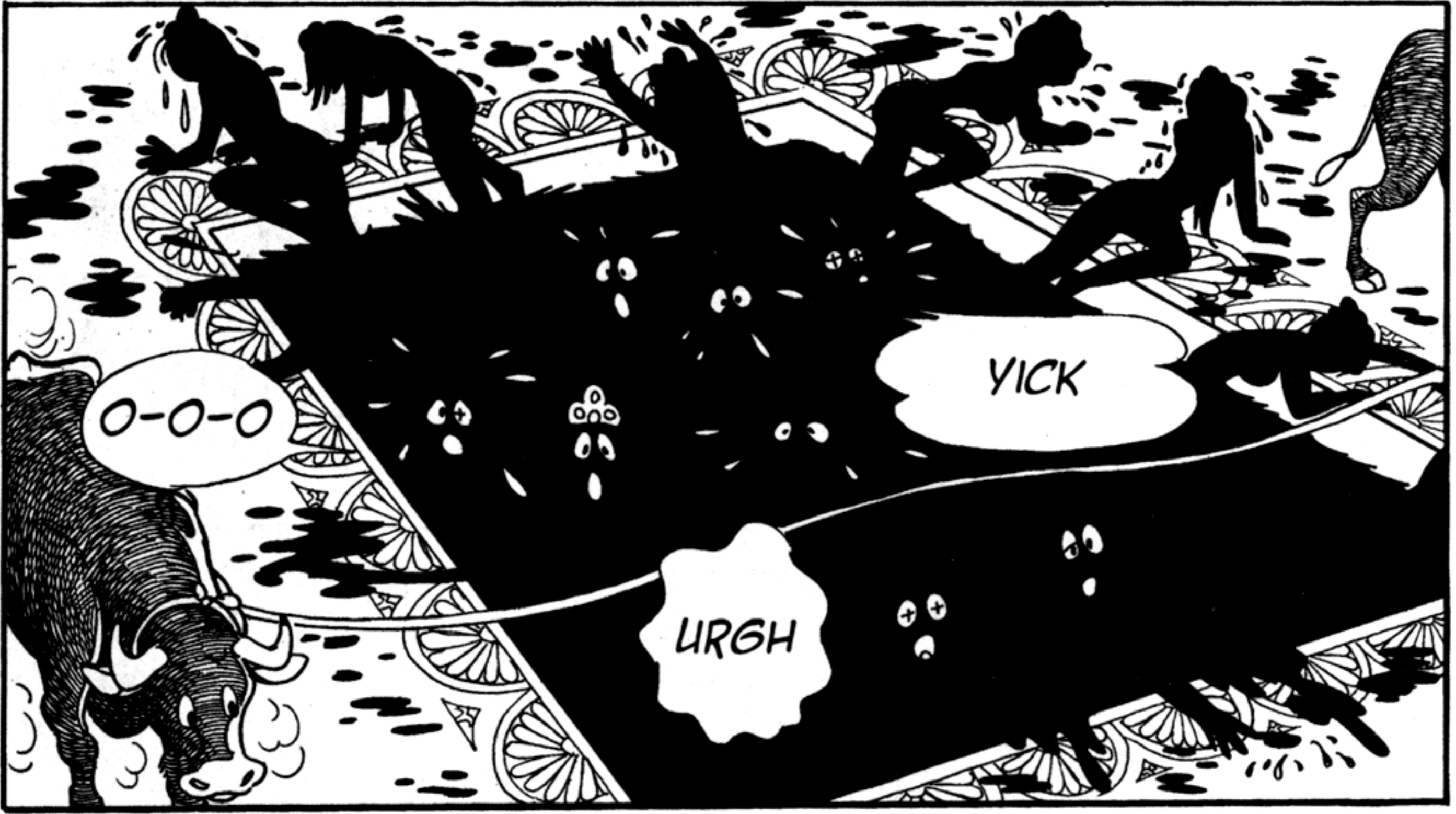
JESTERS, TAKE THE STAGE! PERFORM AND AMUSE!

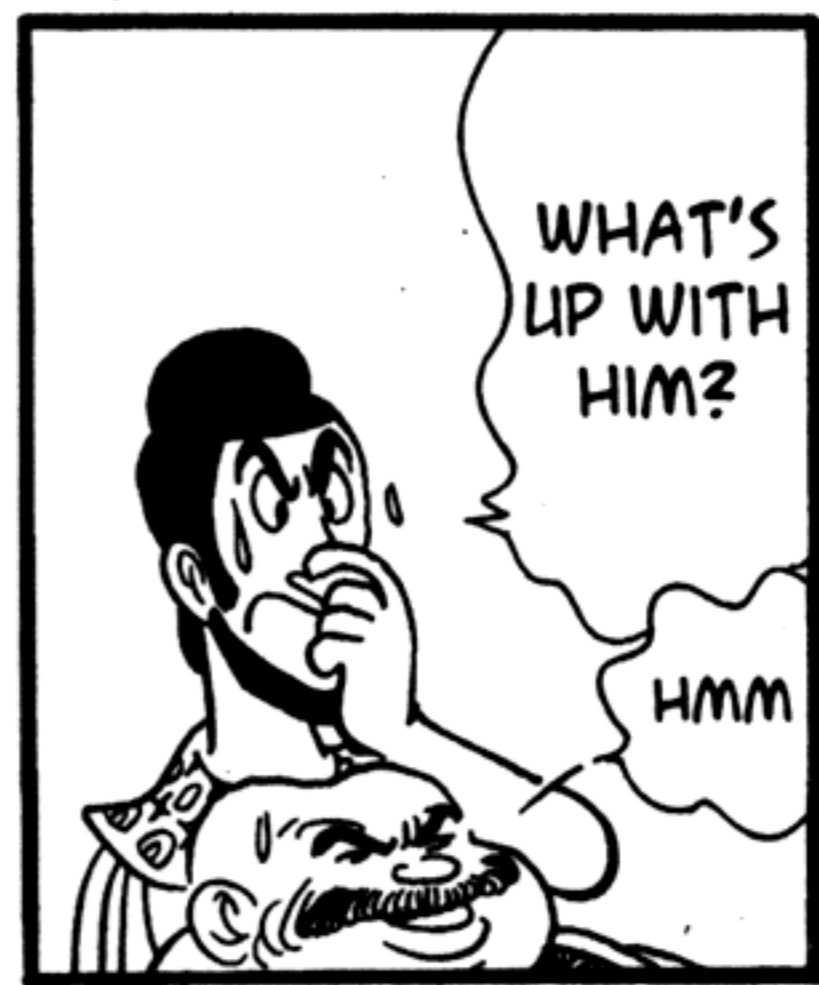
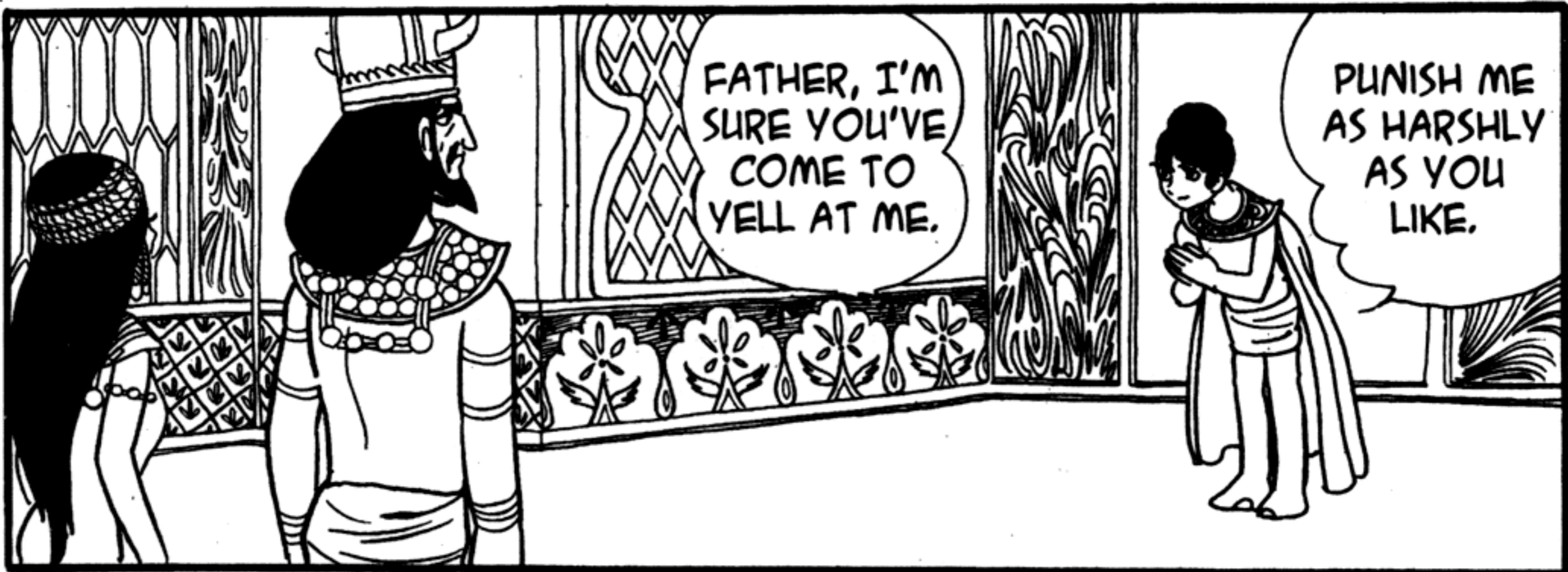


HULLO HULLO! HEH HEH HEH... HOW FARES THE PRINCE TODAY?



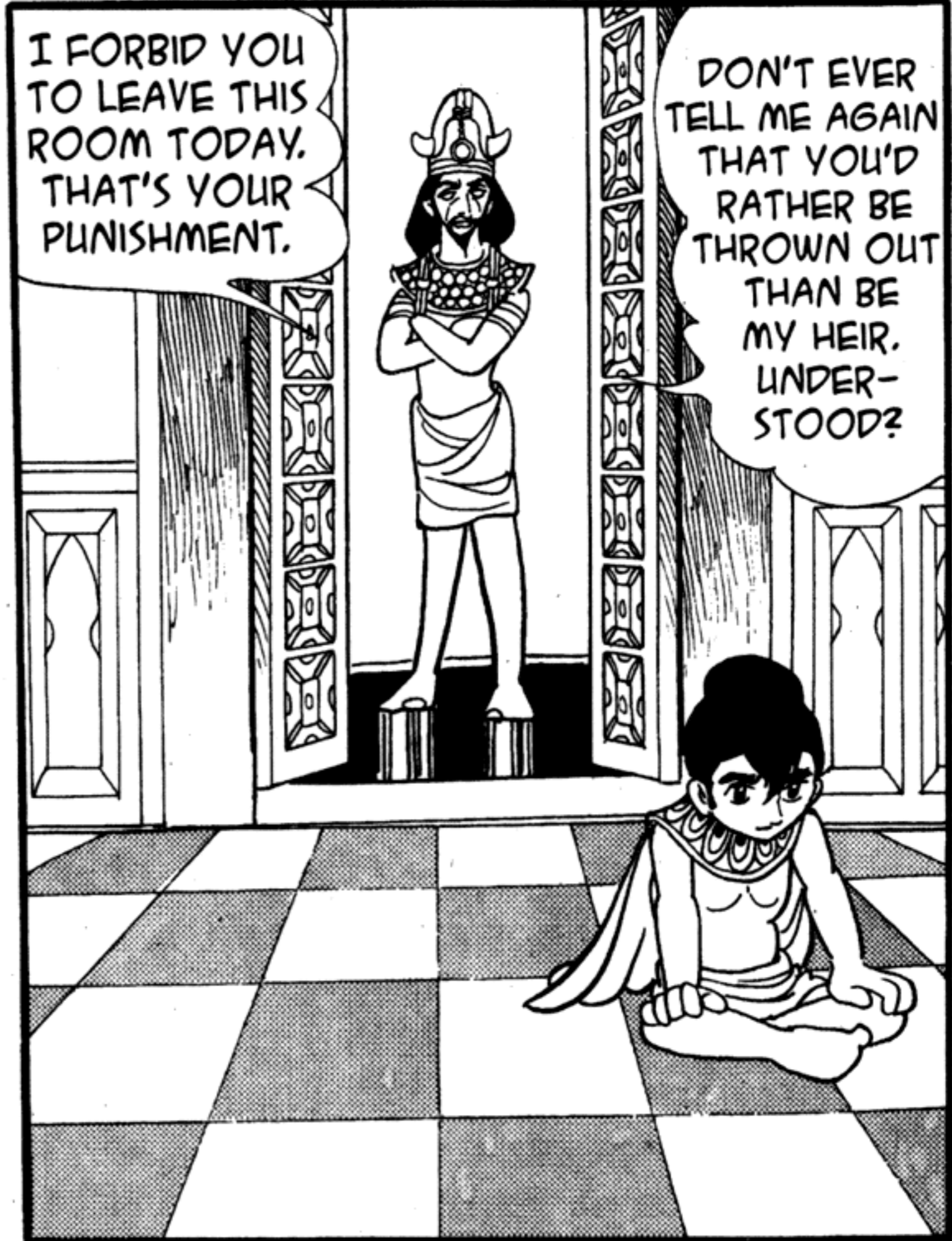








YOU,
HOLD YOUR
TONGUE!!



I FORBID YOU
TO LEAVE THIS
ROOM TODAY.
THAT'S YOUR
PUNISHMENT.

DON'T EVER
TELL ME AGAIN
THAT YOU'D
RATHER BE
THROWN OUT
THAN BE
MY HEIR.
UNDER-
STOOD?



HE IS
GETTING
MORE
DIFFICULT
BY THE
DAY...

EVERY
CHILD
GOES
THROUGH
THAT
PHASE.



MY LORD,
WHAT IF
WE LET
HIM DO
AS HE
WISHES?

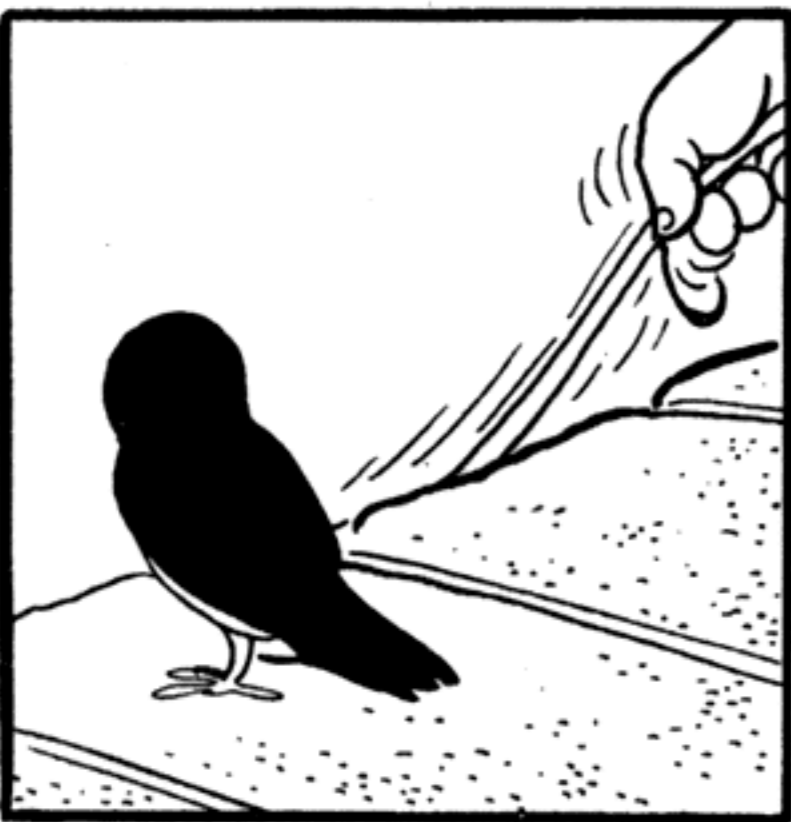
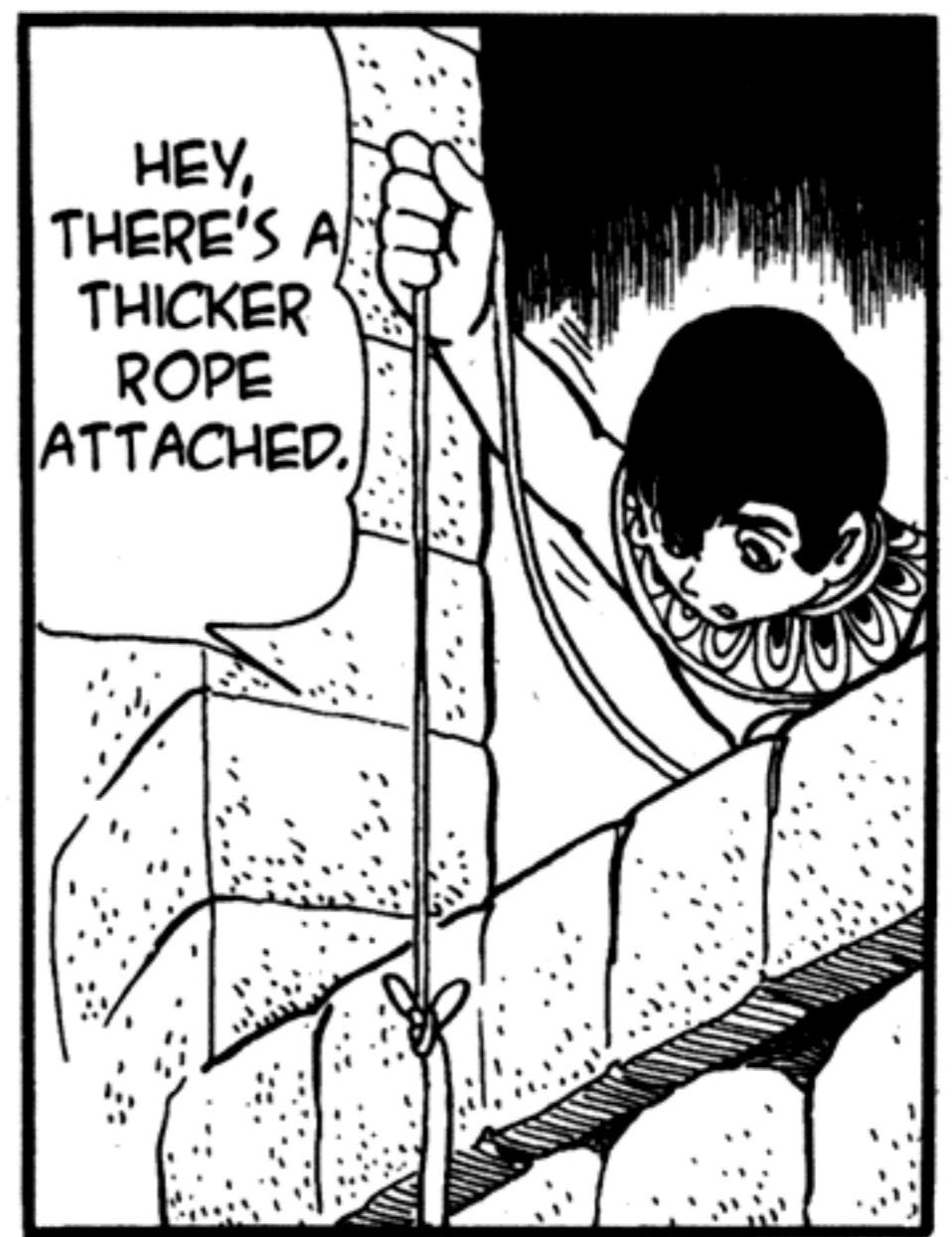
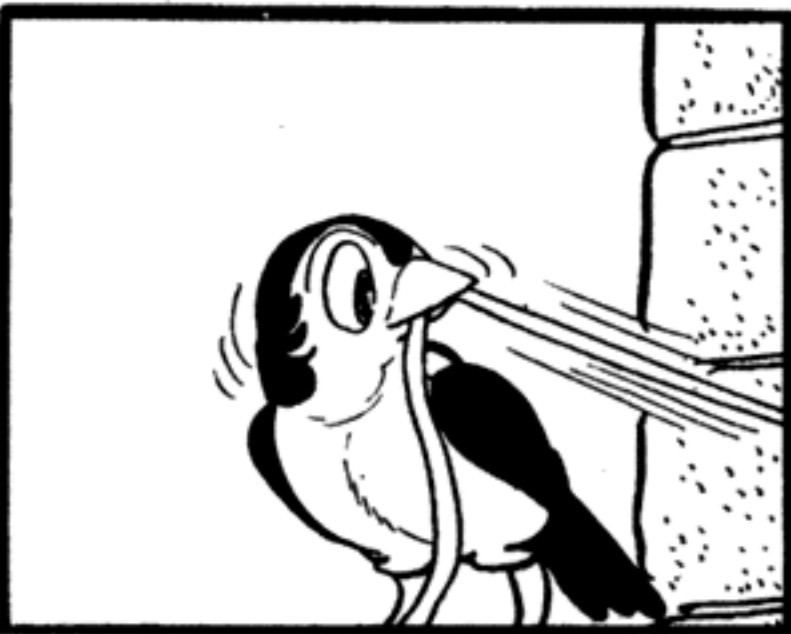
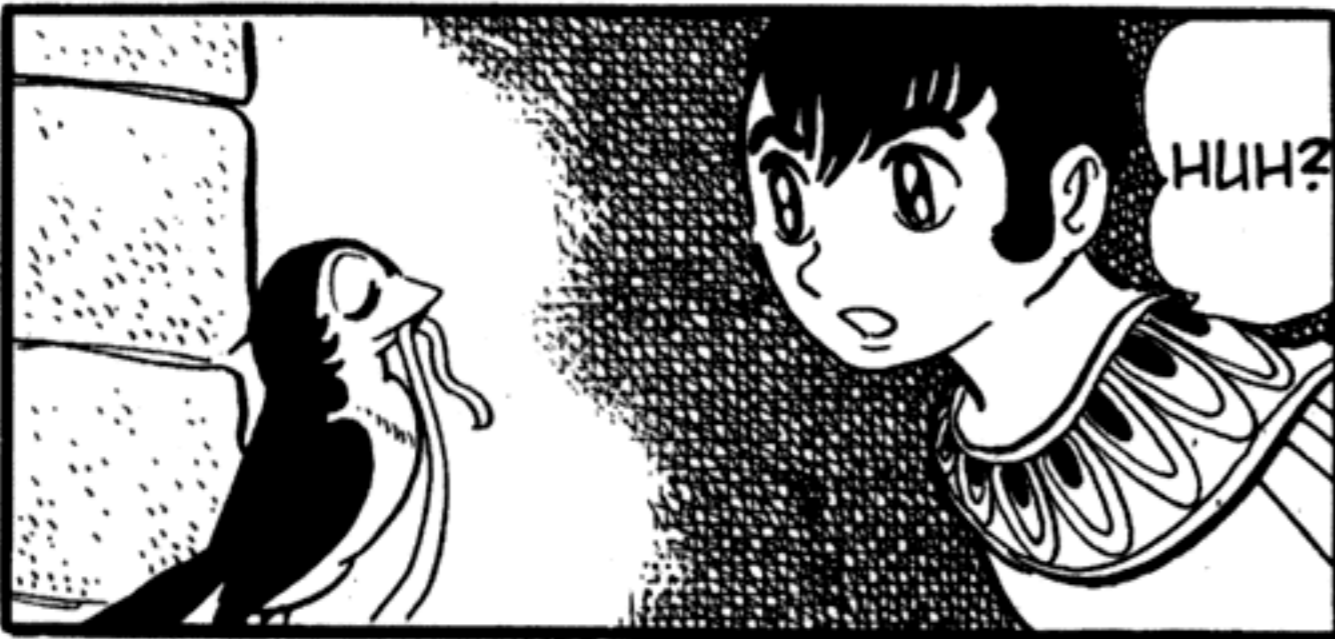
HIS MIND
IS SET,
I CAN
TELL.

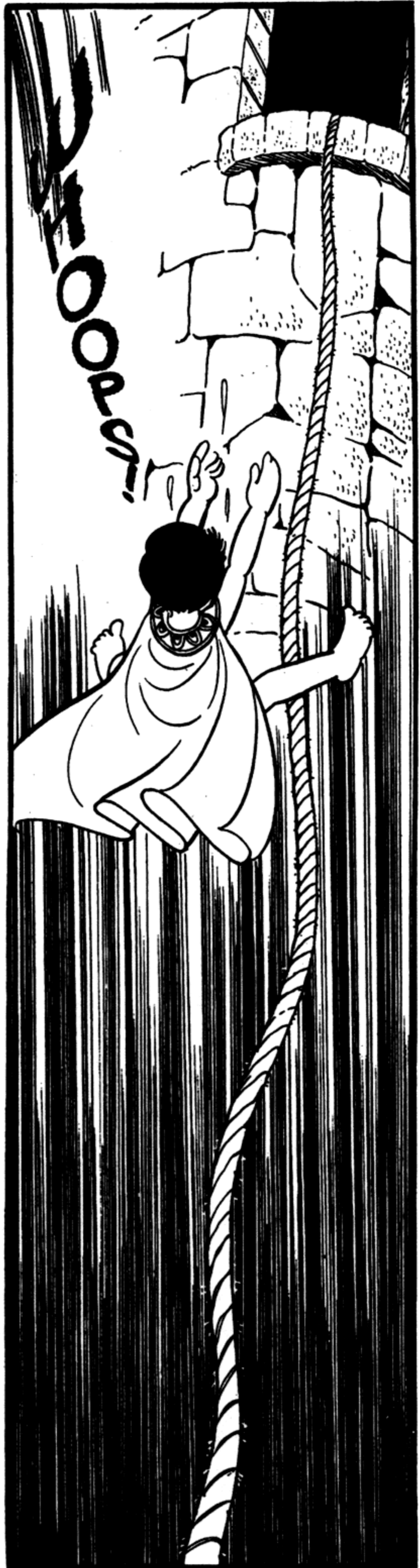
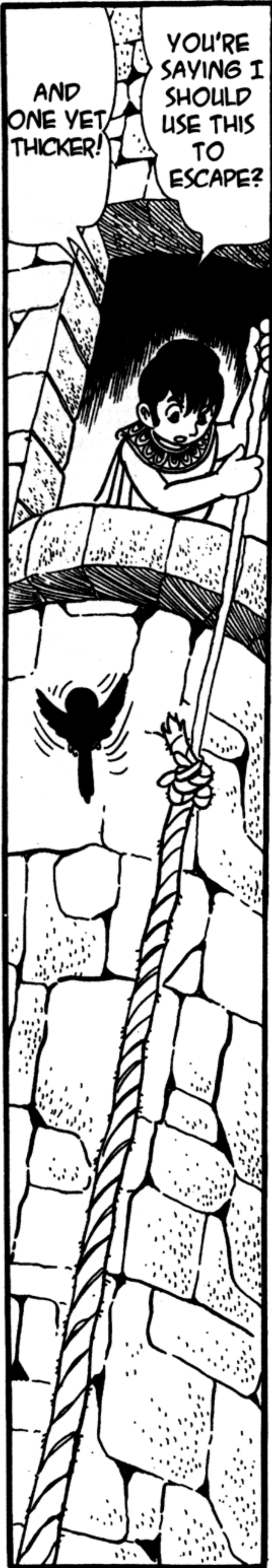
WHAT ARE
YOU SAYING,
PAJAPATI?
YOU WANT
TO LET HIM
LEAVE US
AND THE
CASTLE?

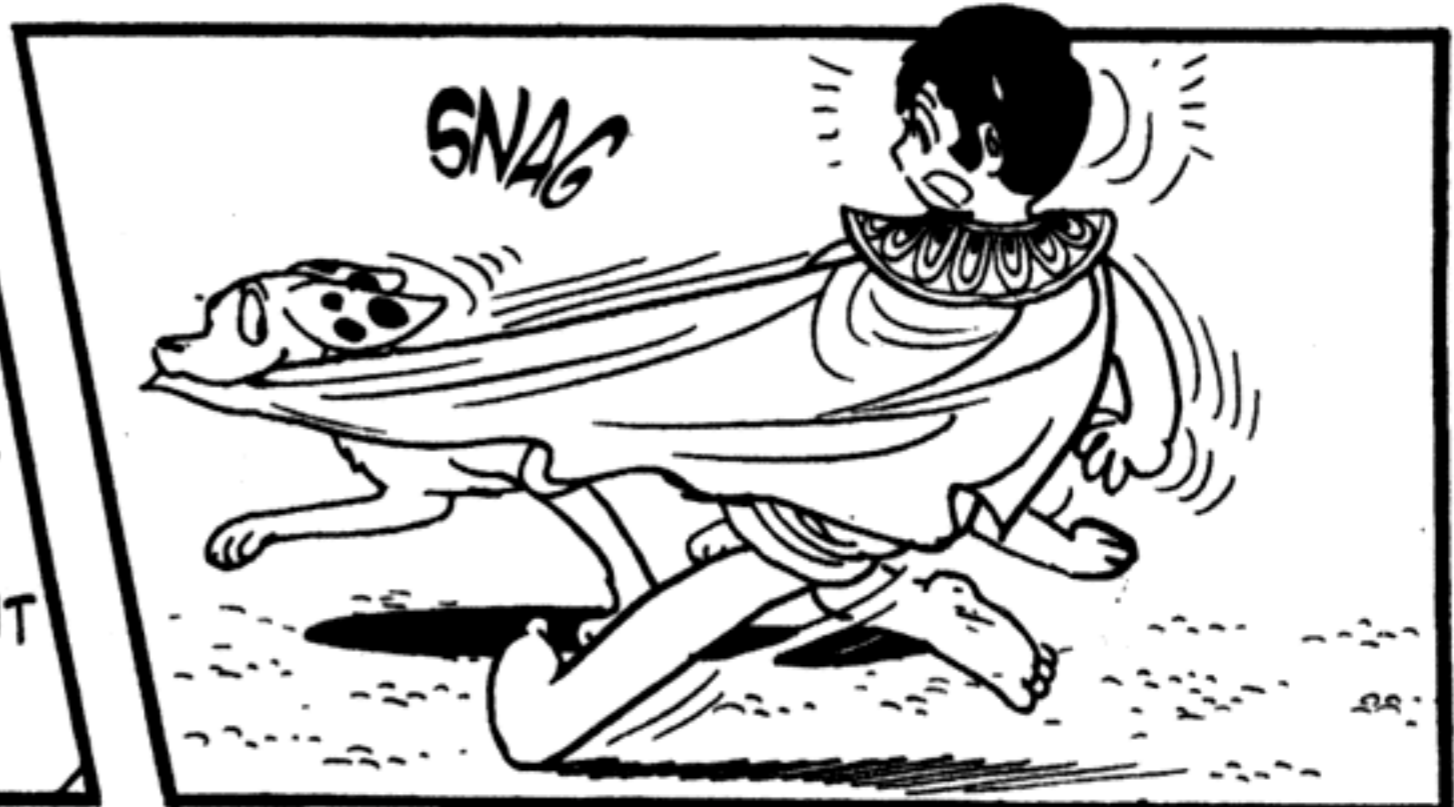
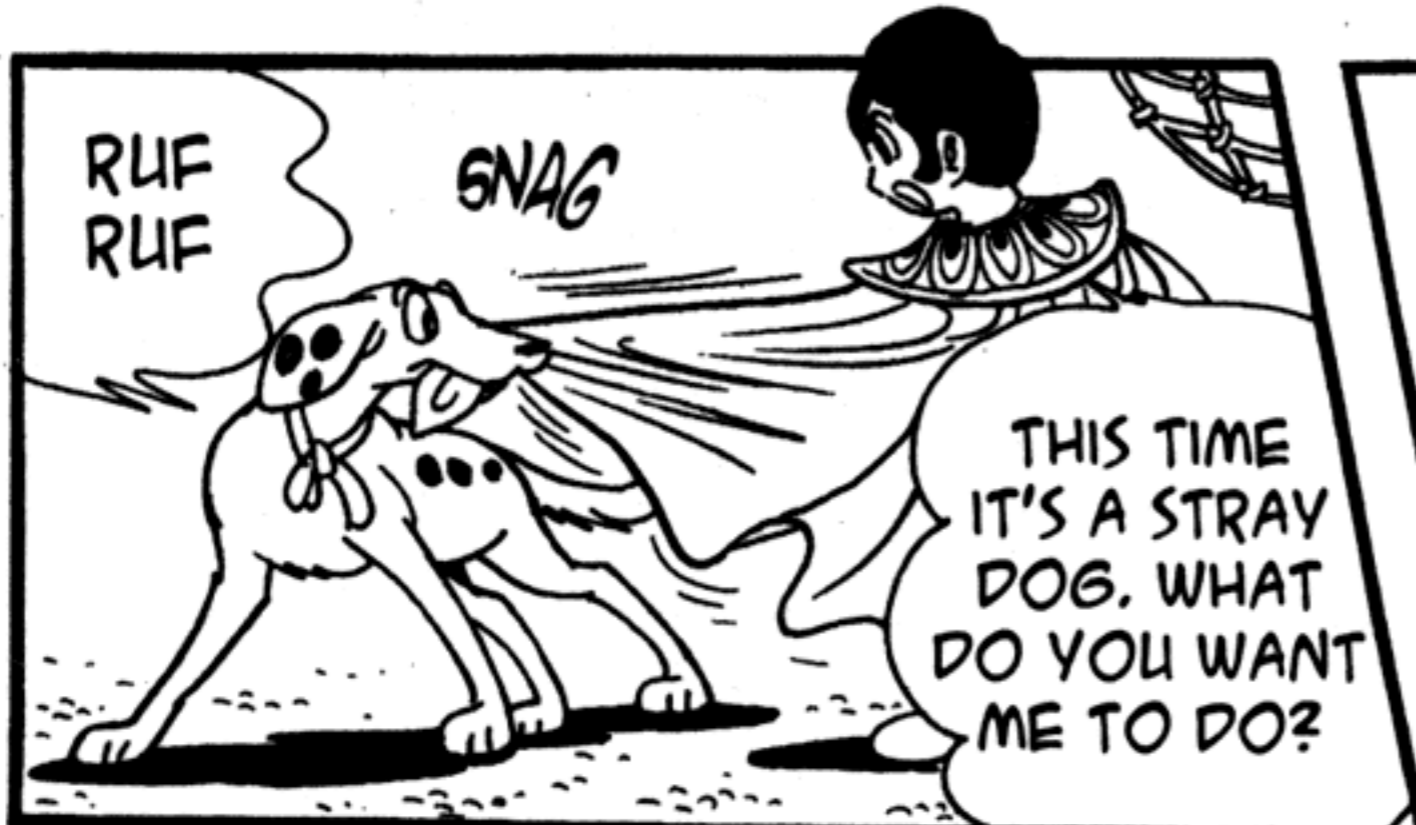
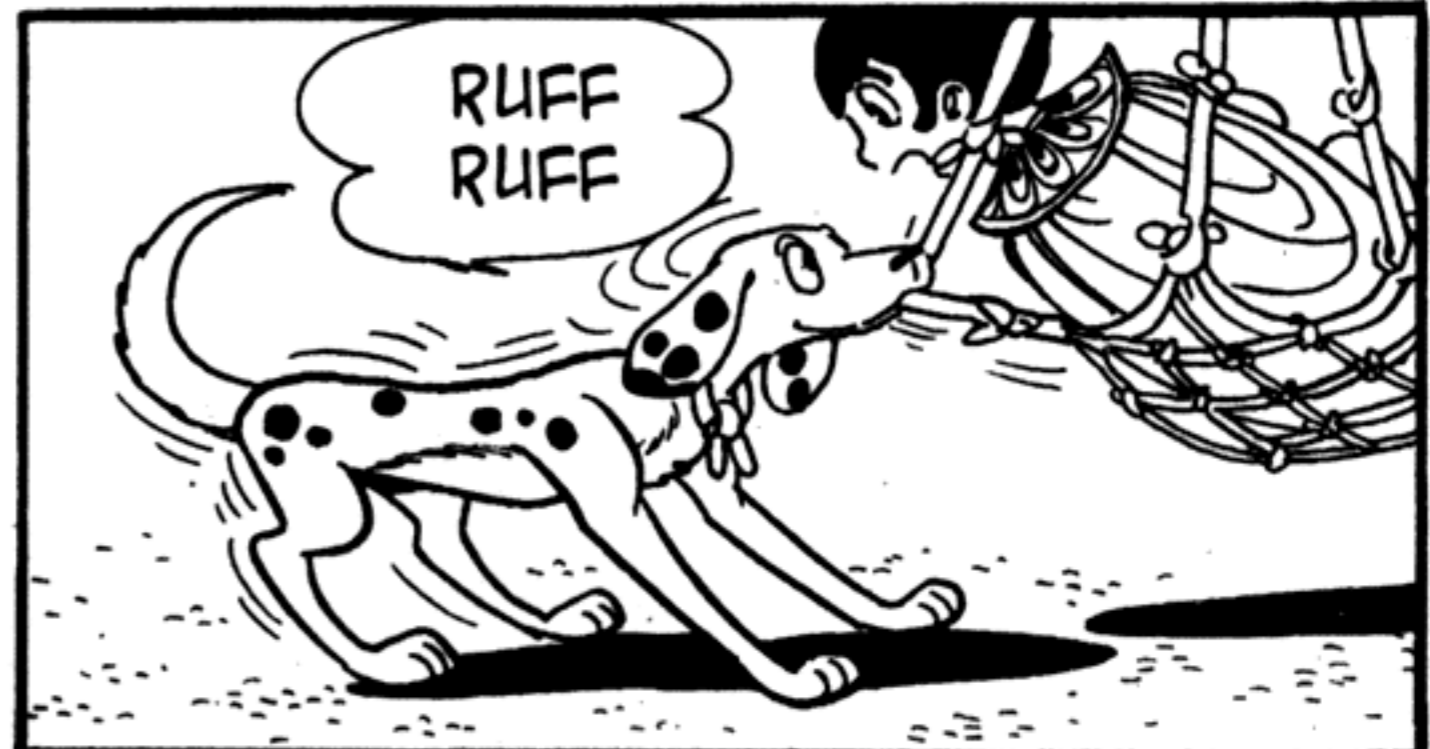
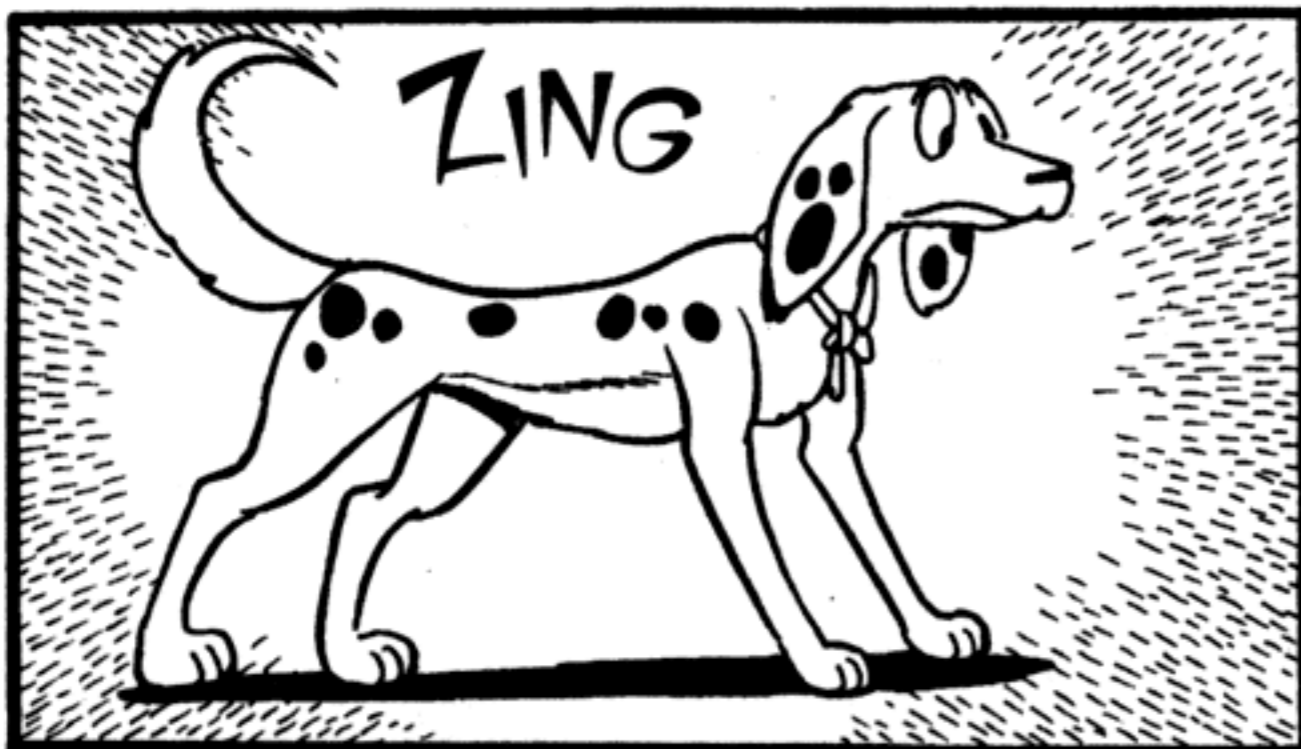
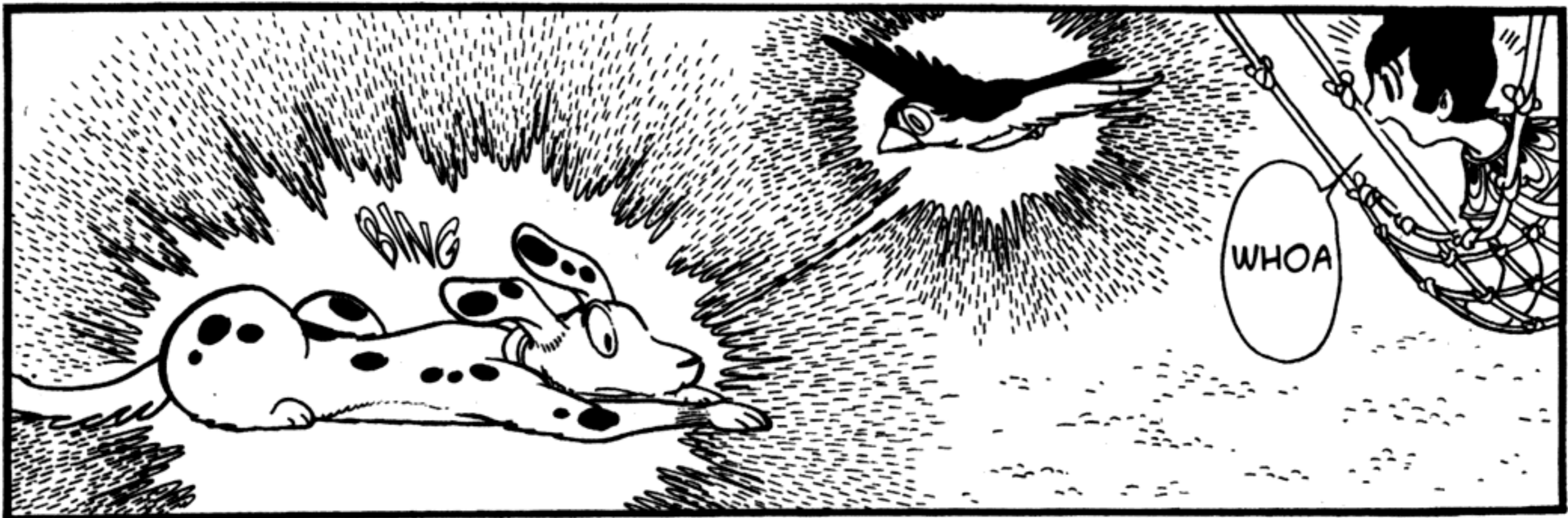
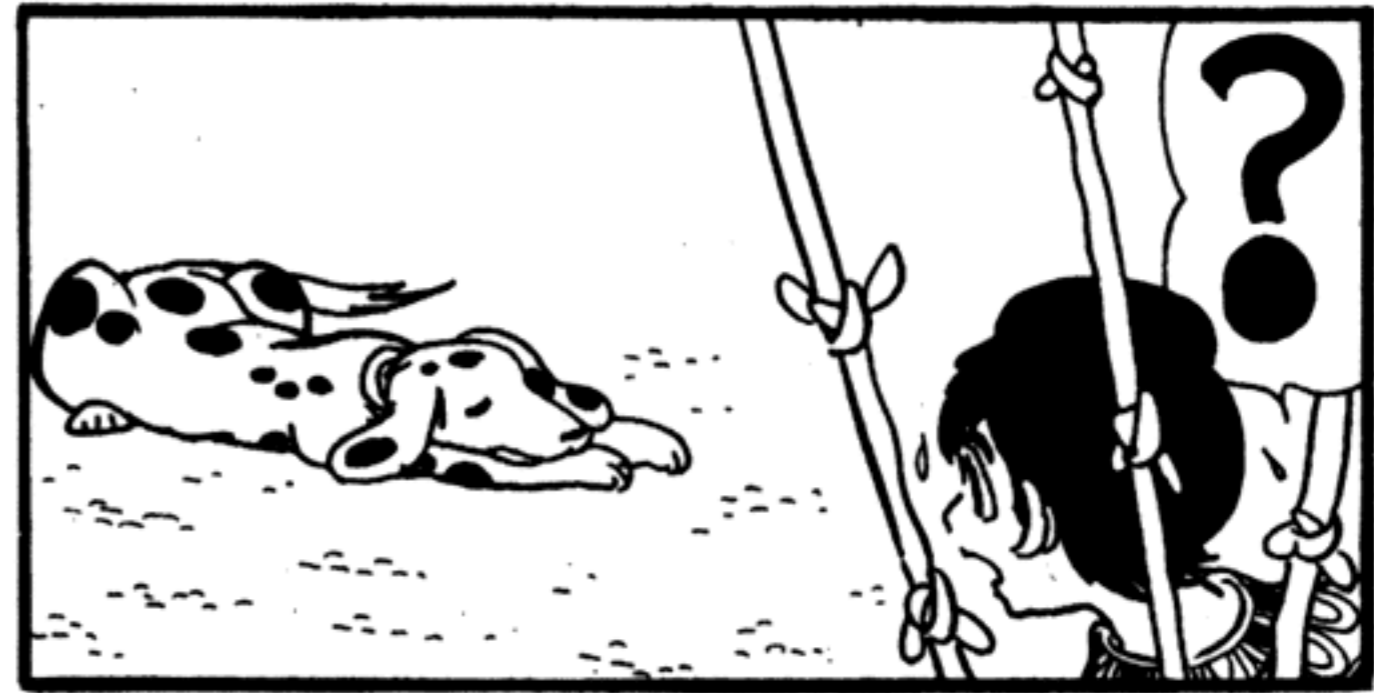


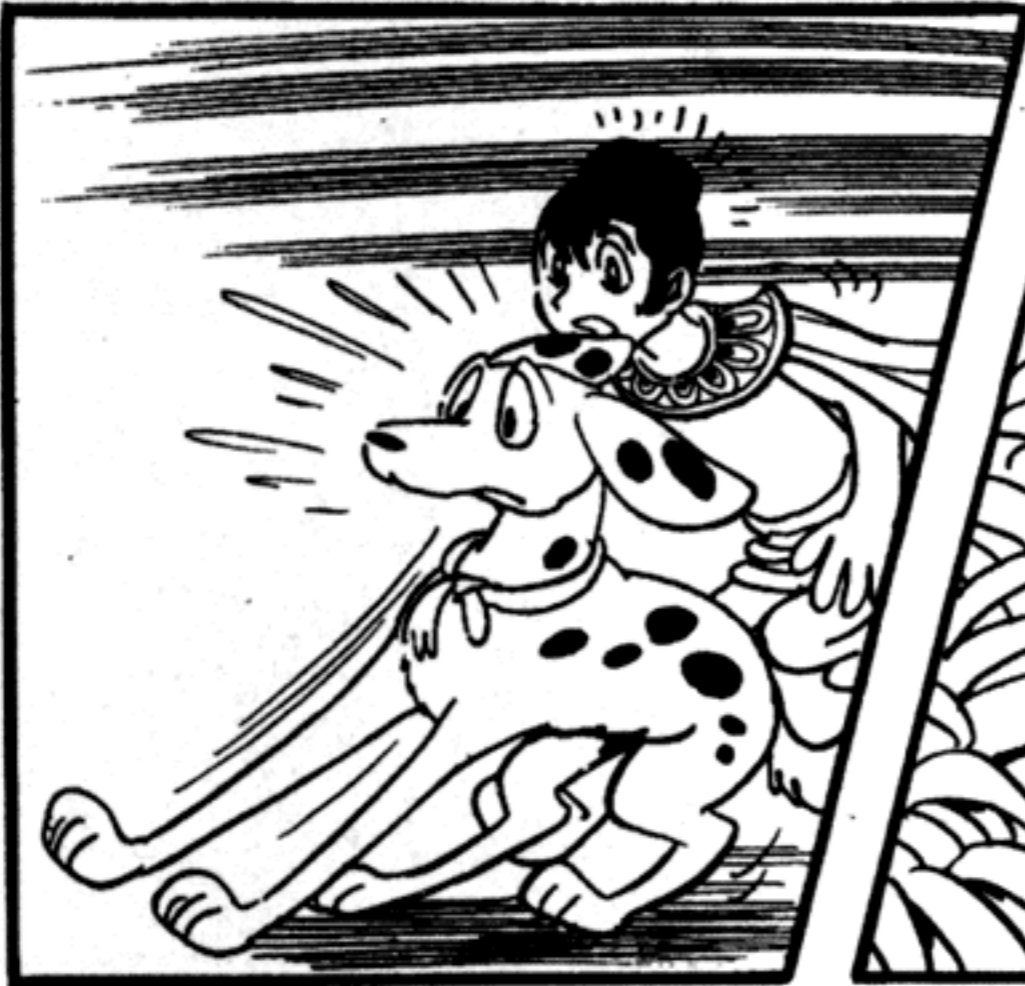
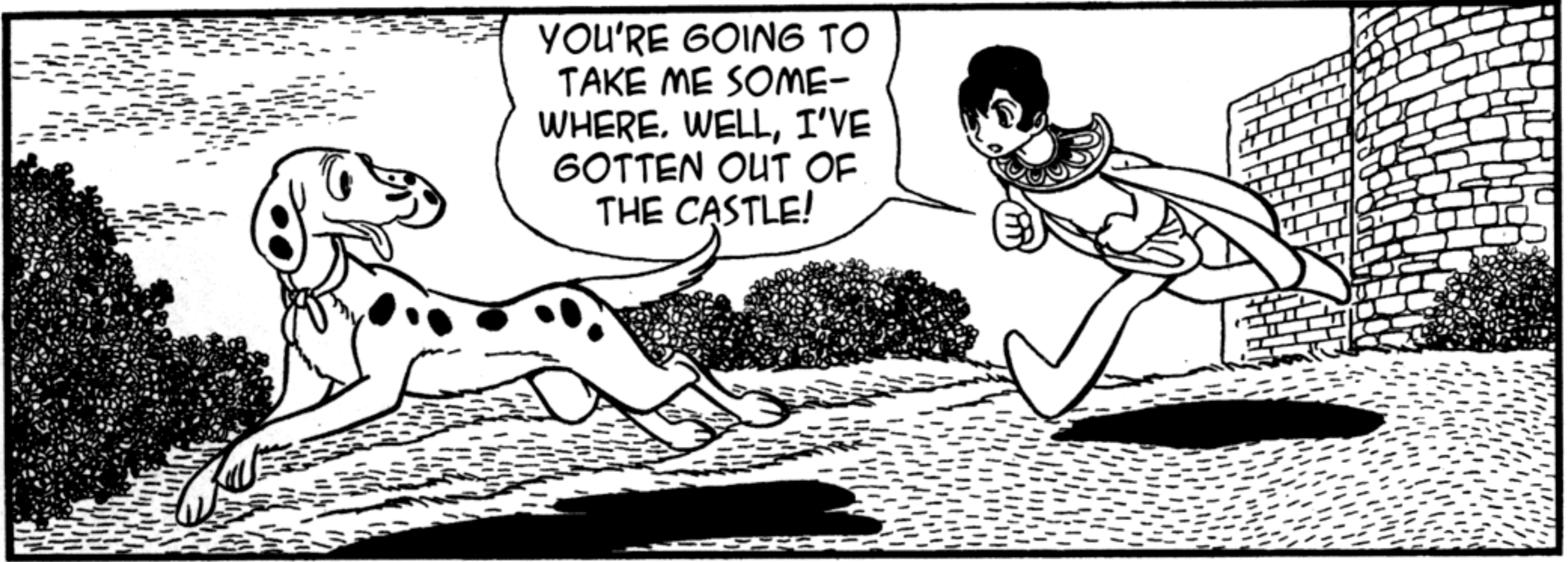
MASTER
ASITA,
NO LESS,
TOLD ME THAT
THE BOY'LL
BECOME THE
KING OF
KINGS.

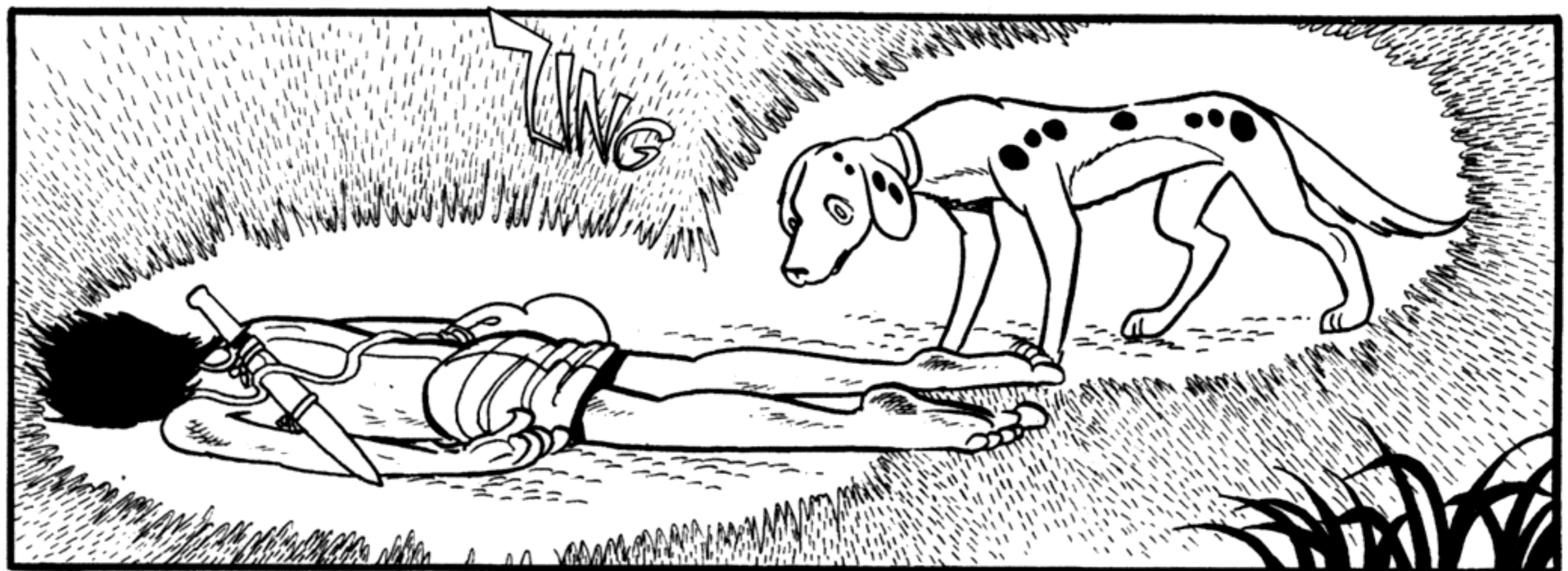
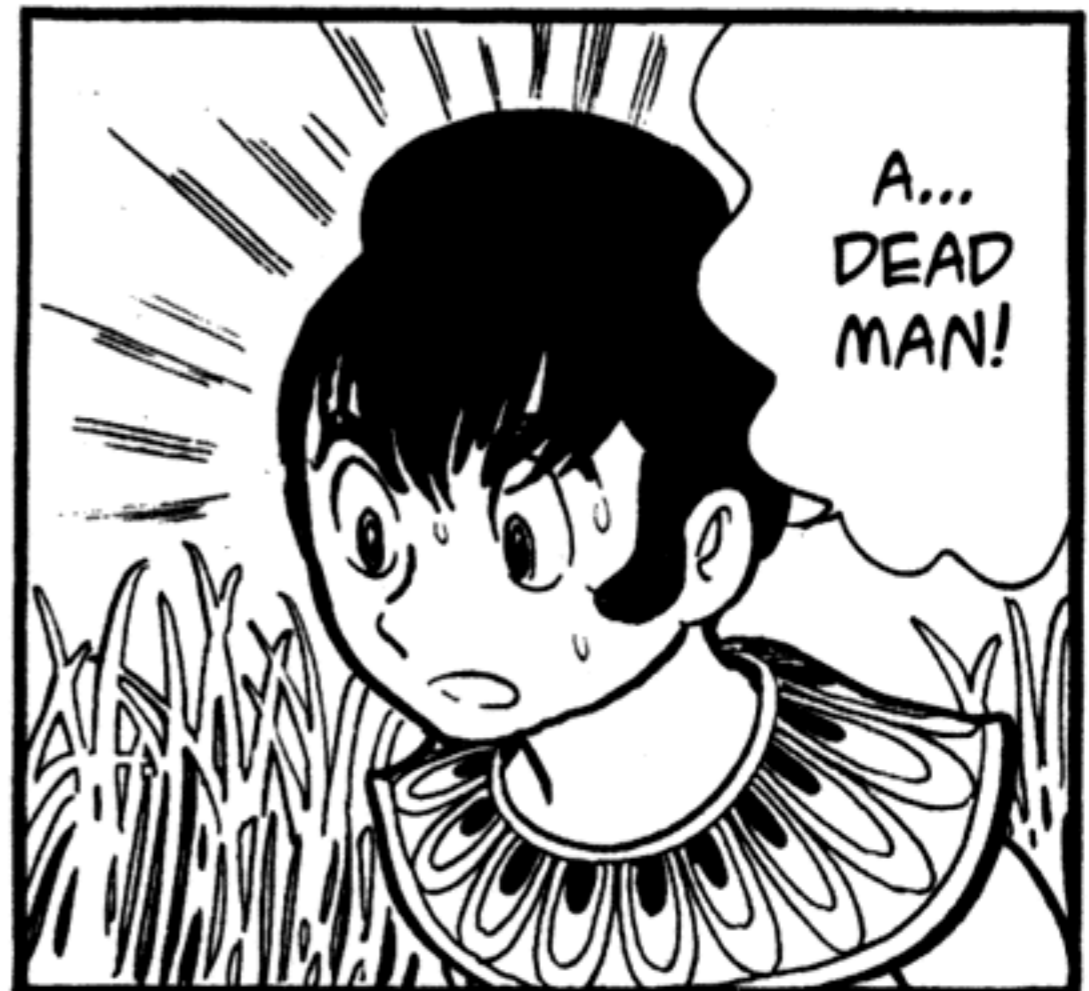
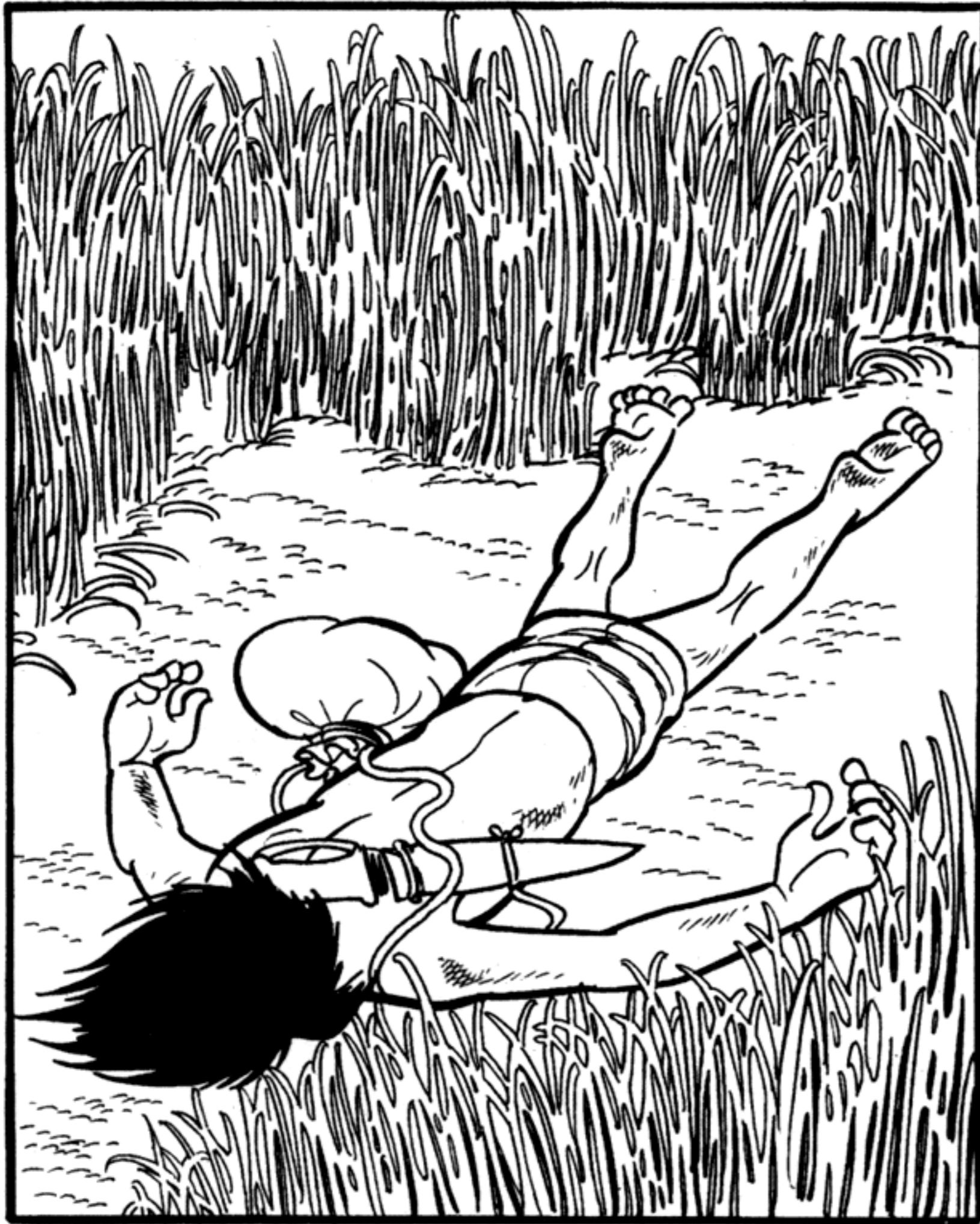
HIS
FUTURE
LIES
HERE,
AS MY
HEIR!

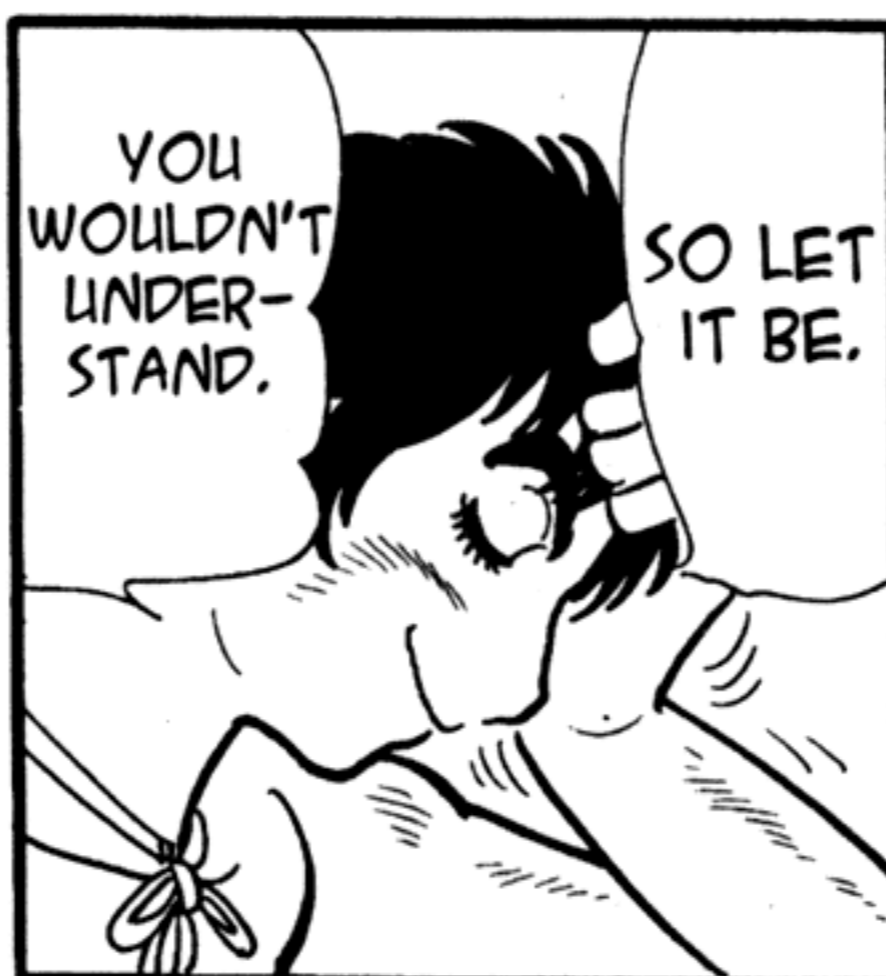
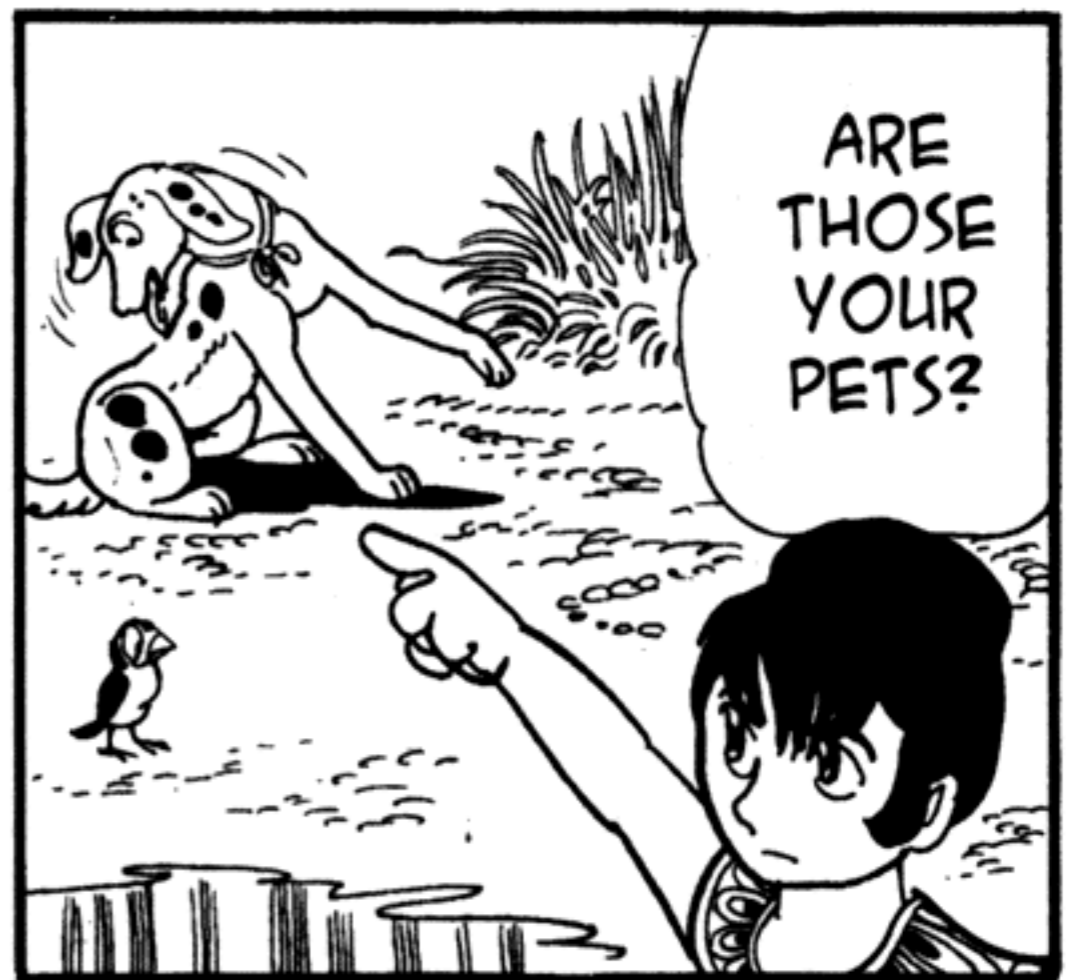
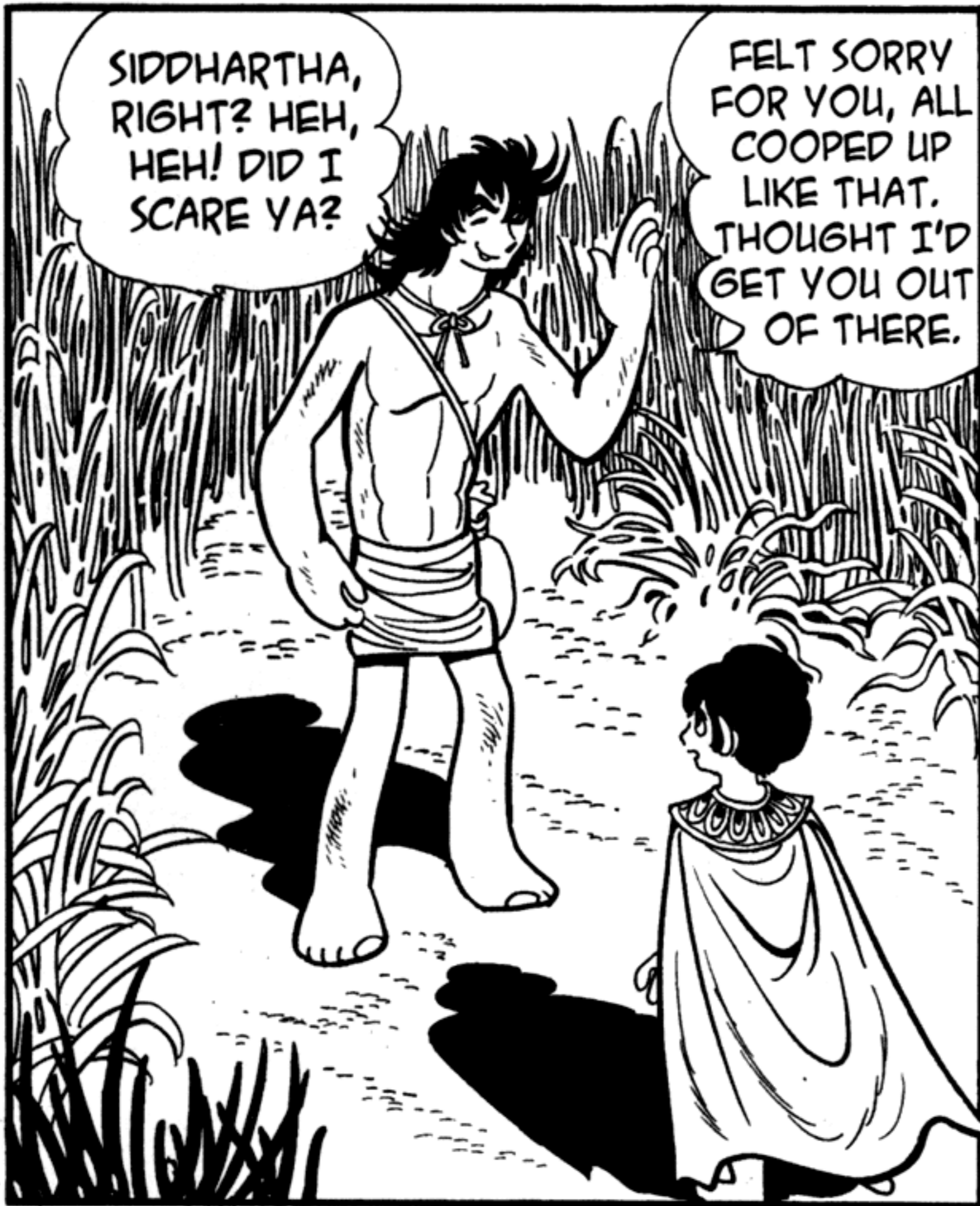


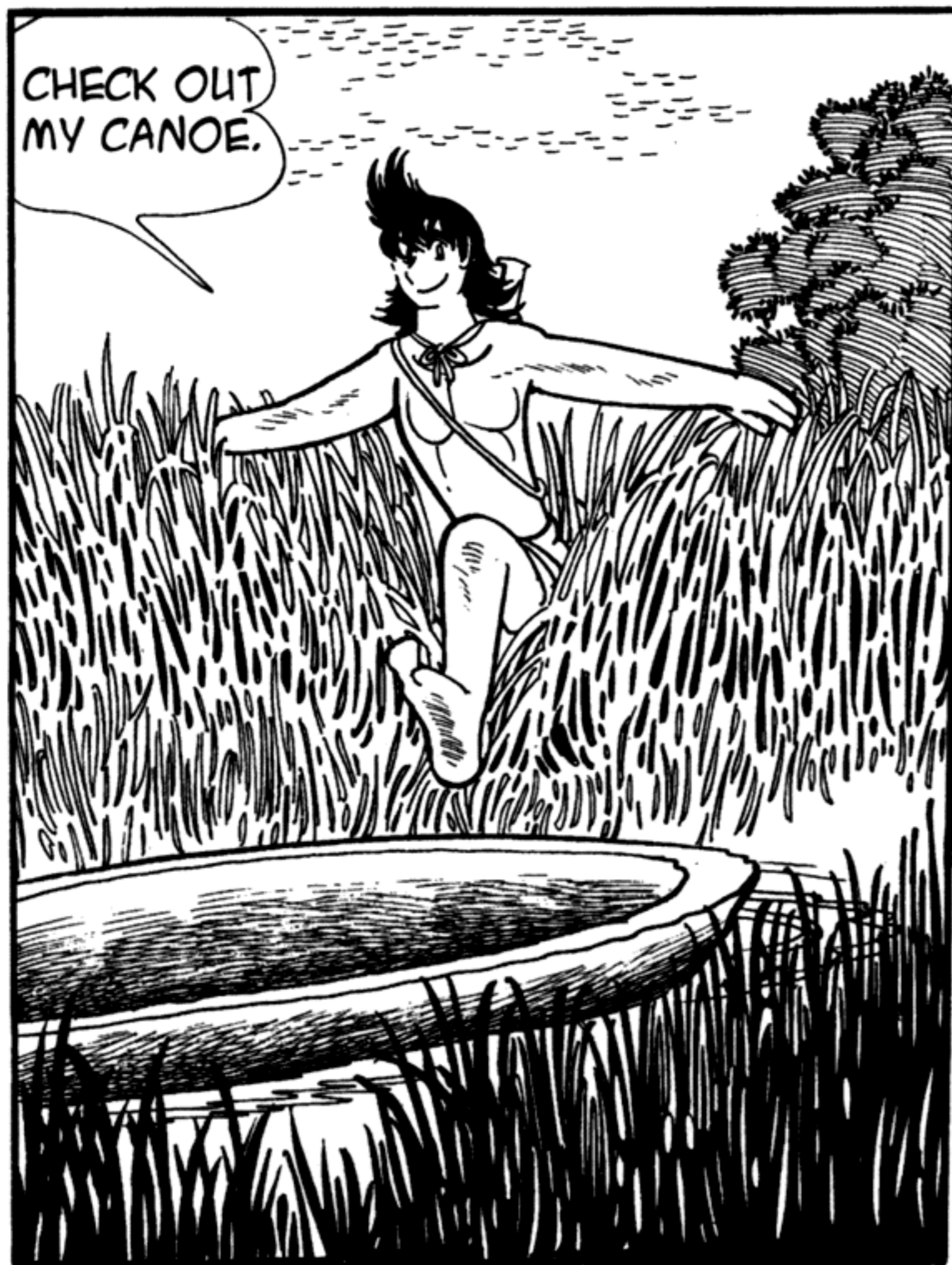
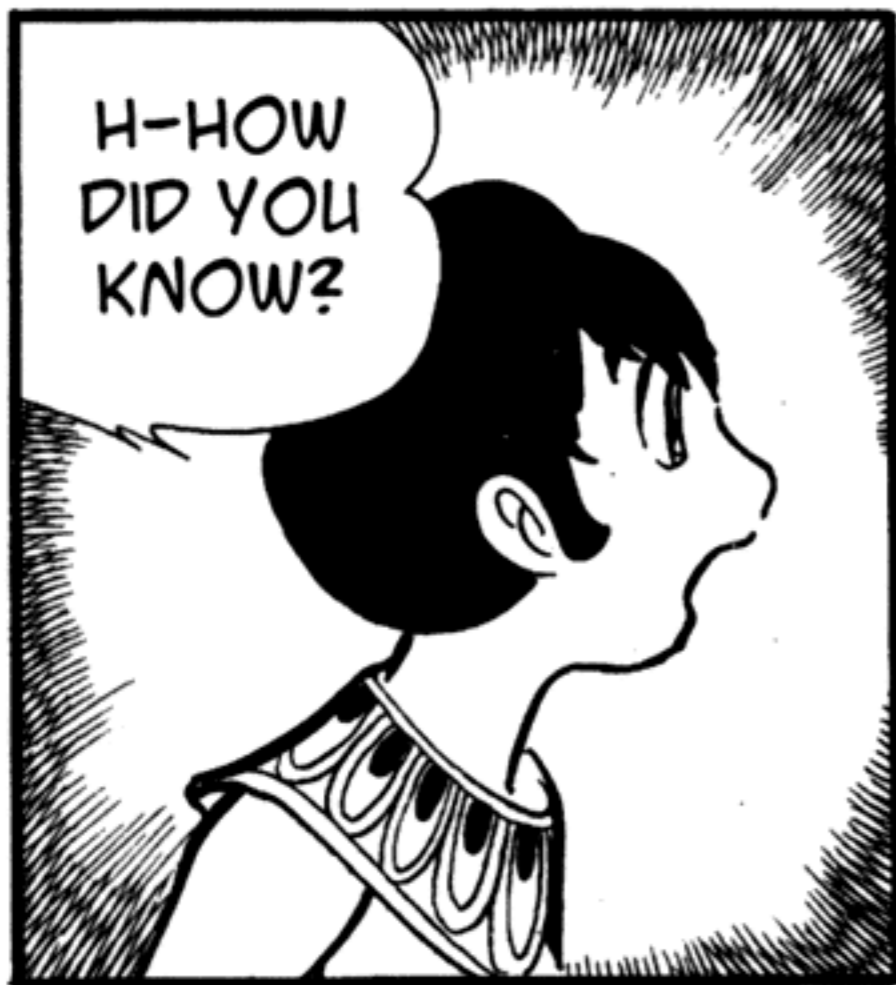
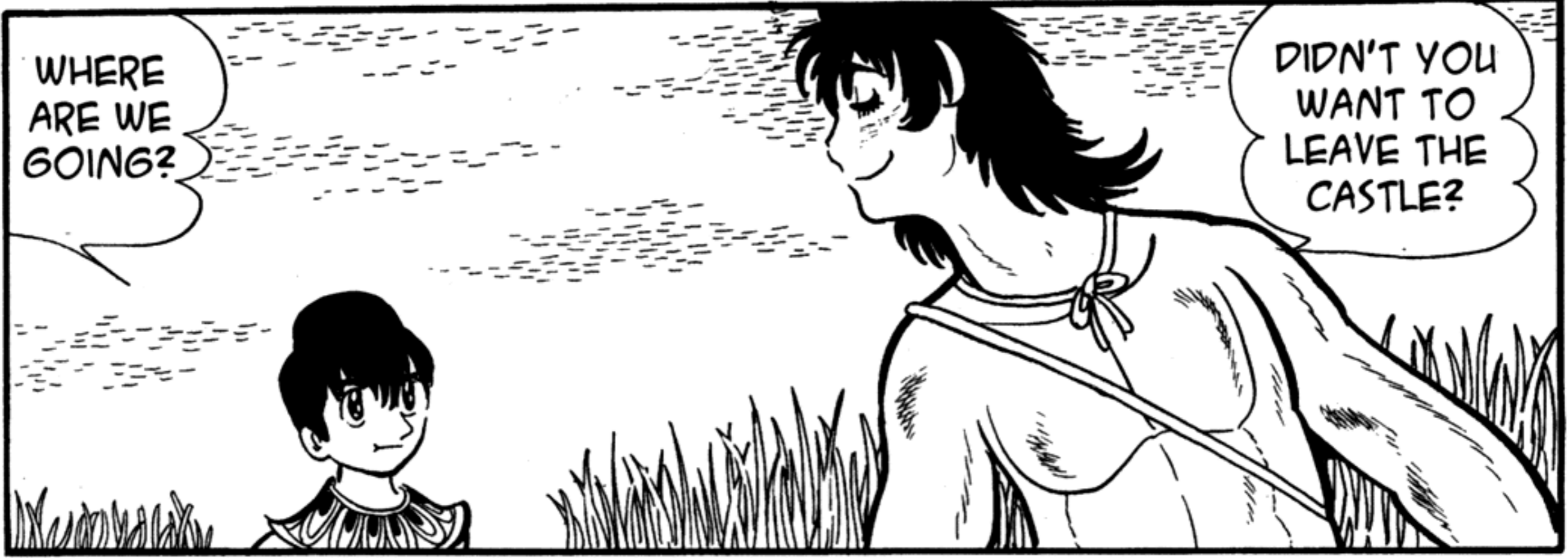








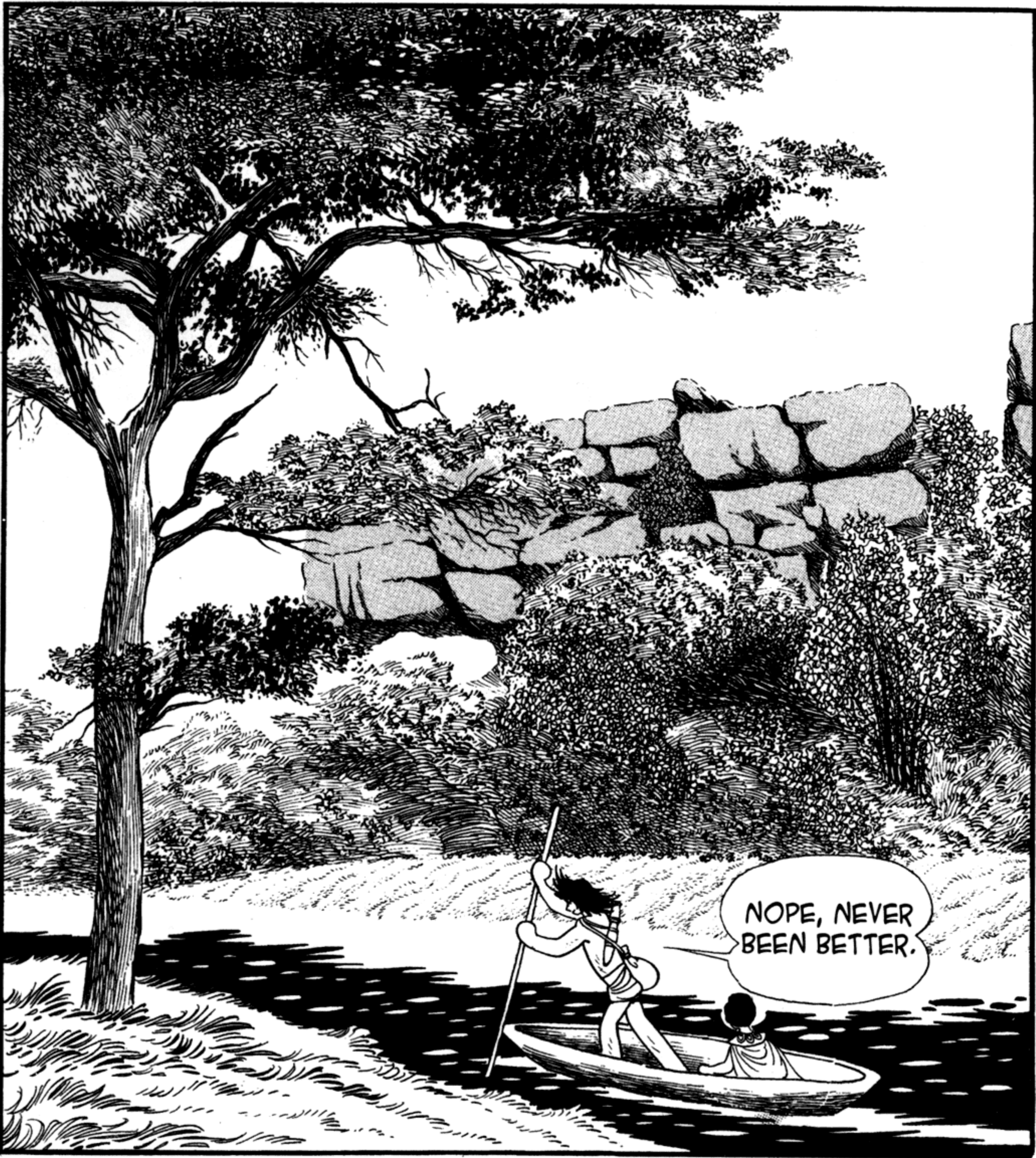




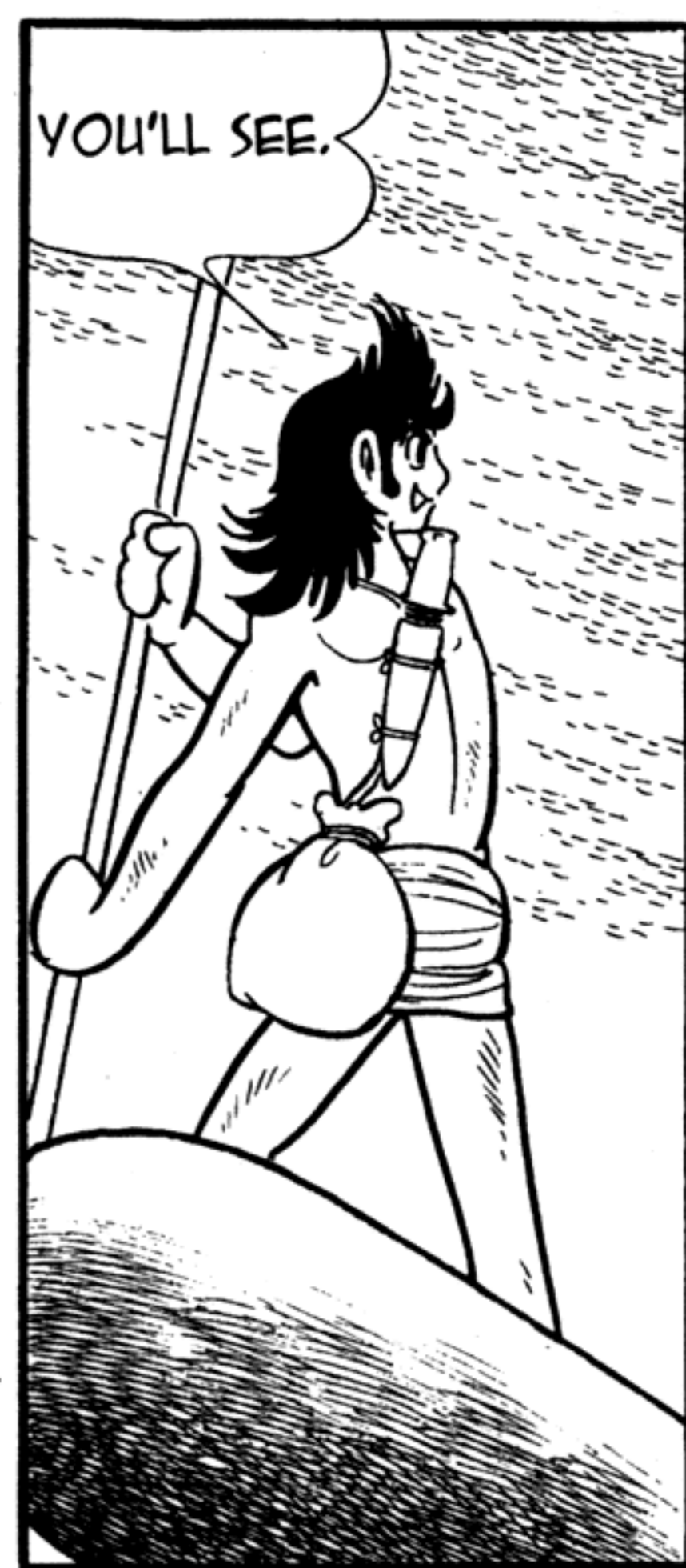
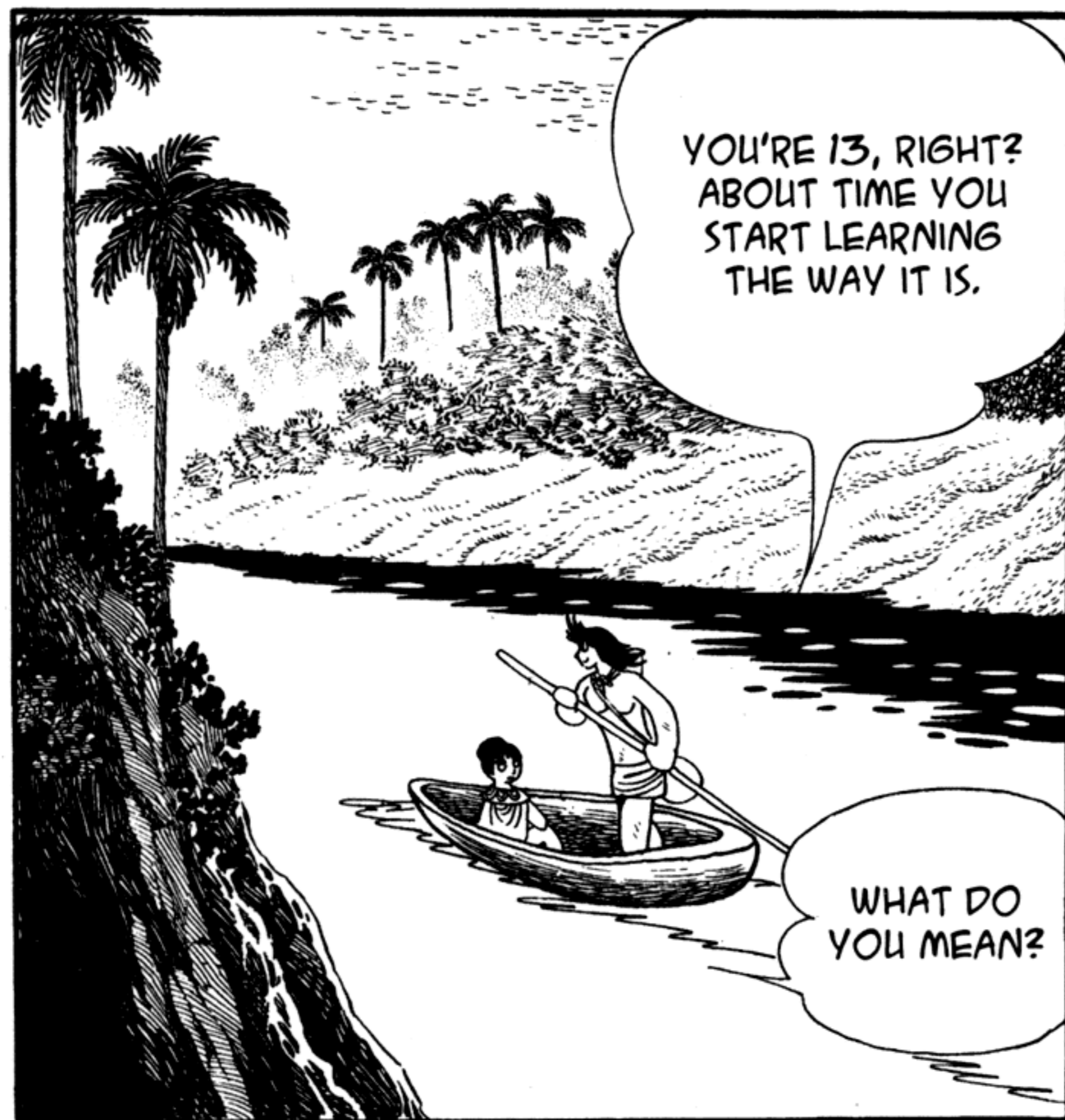
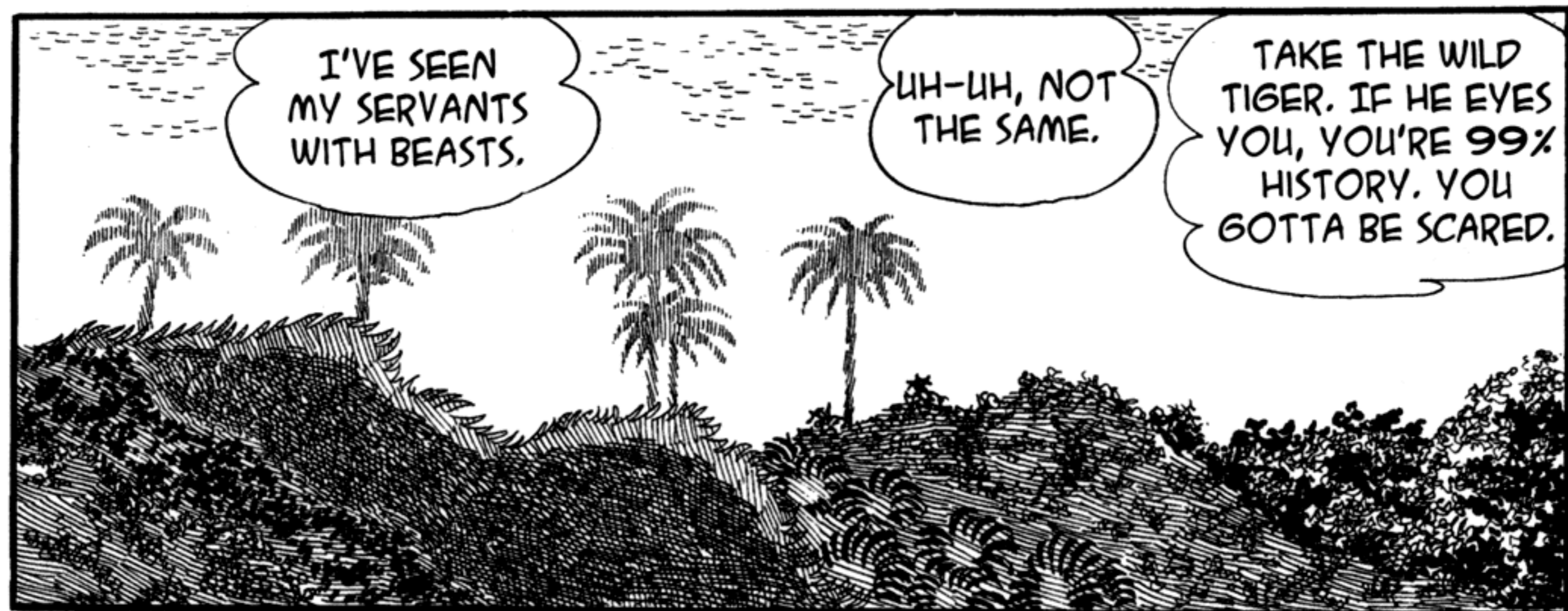
I JUST WANTED
TO GET YOU
OUT OF THE
CASTLE...

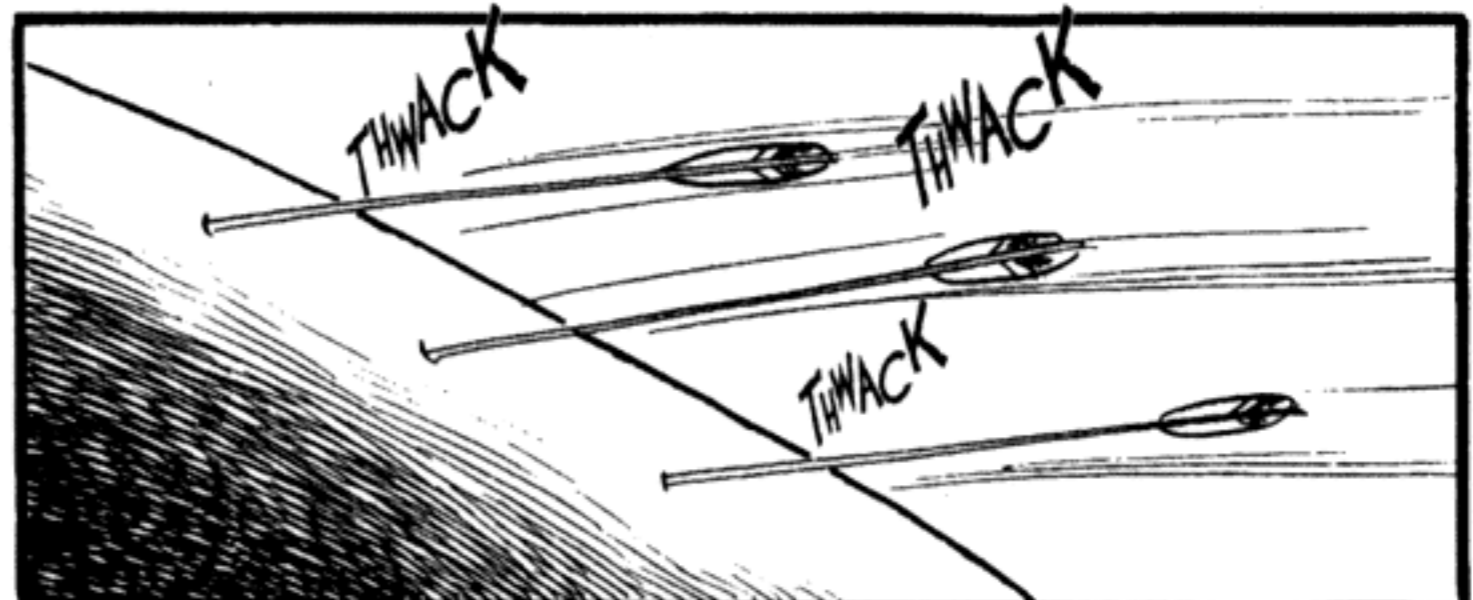
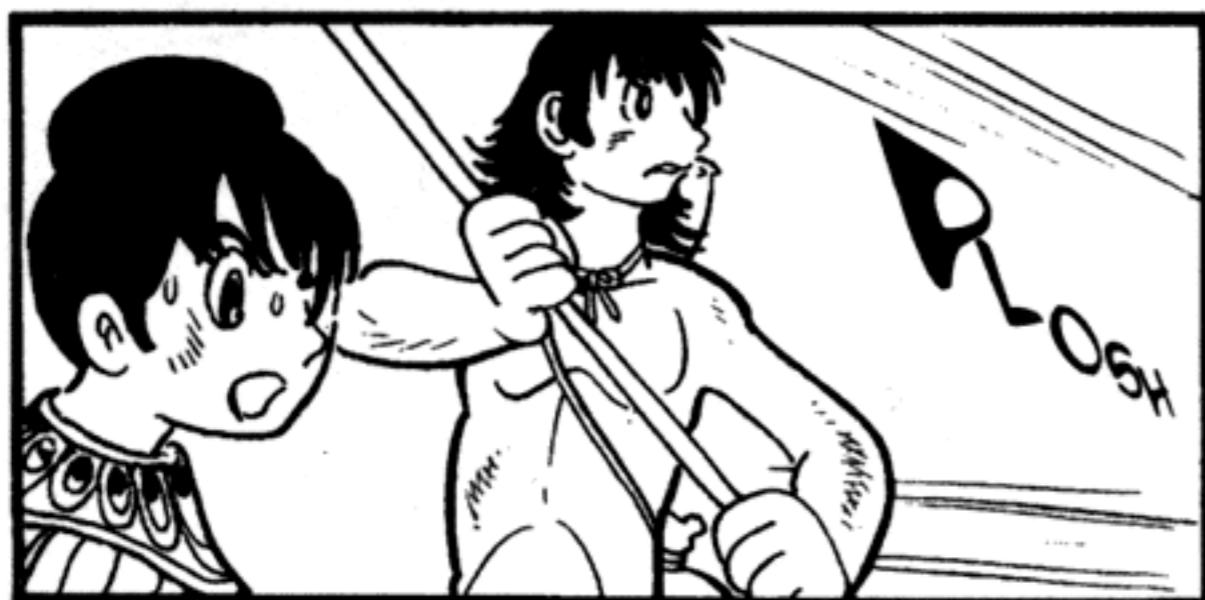
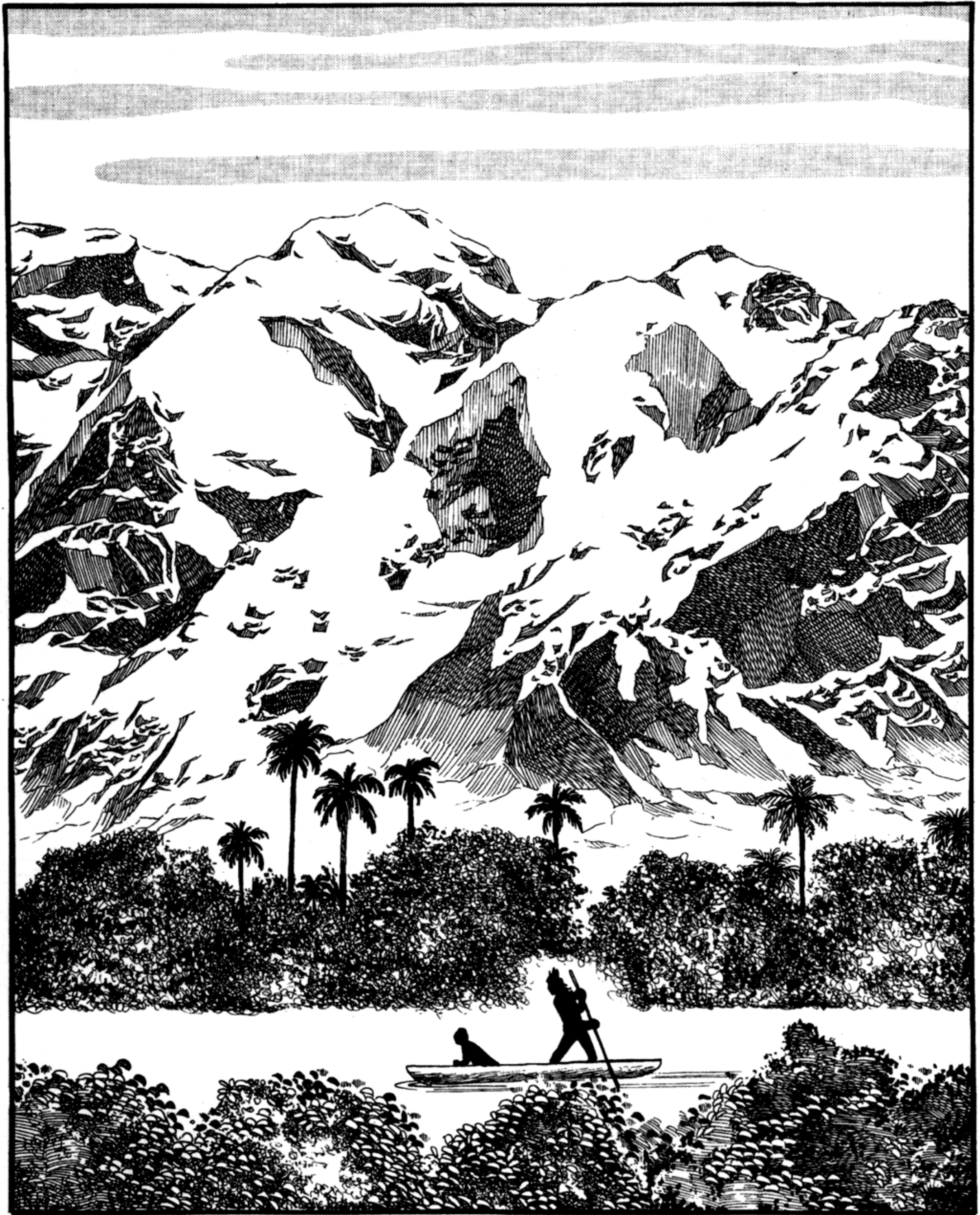
AND SHOW
YOU A THING
OR TWO ABOUT
THE WORLD.

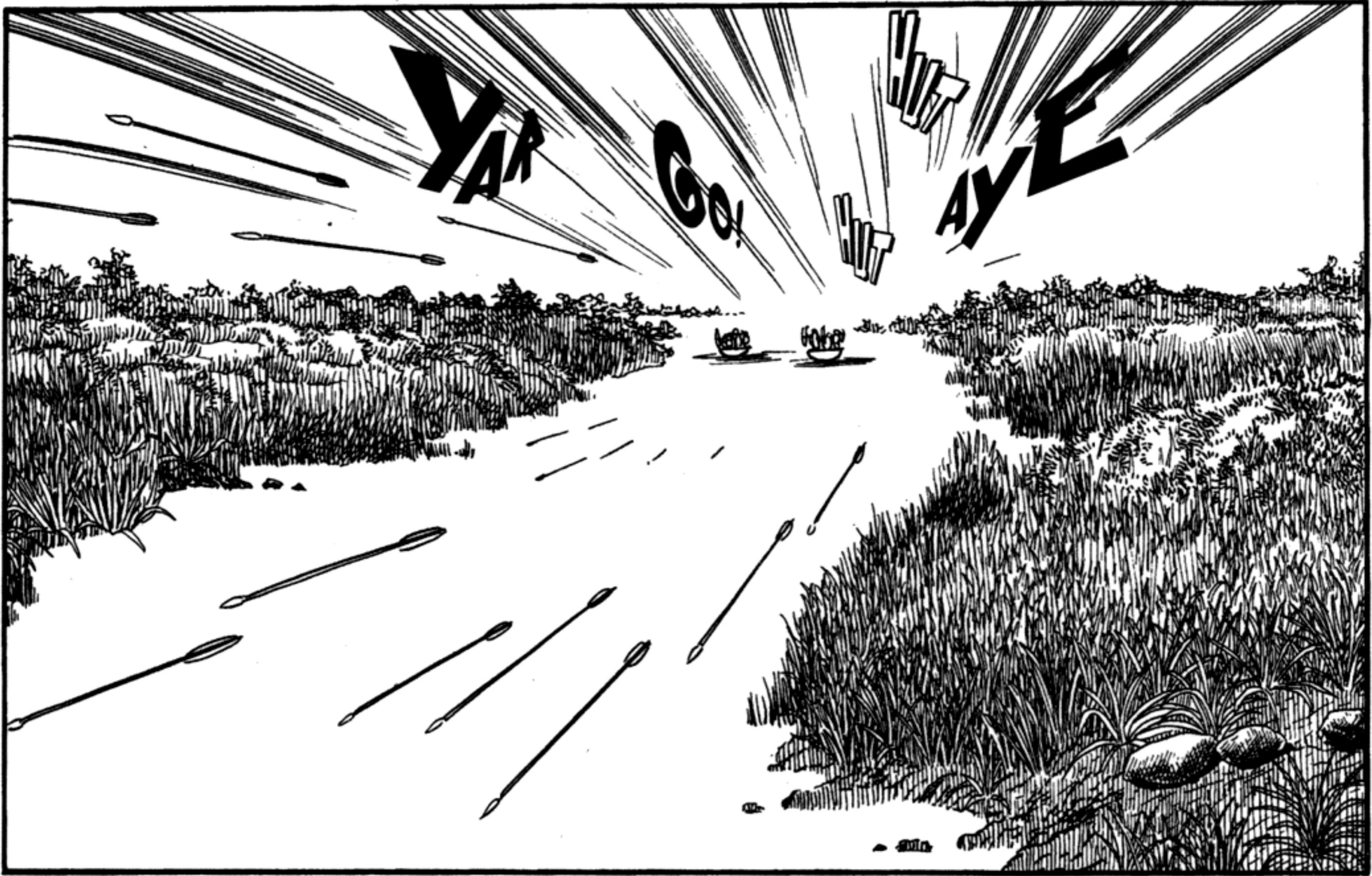
ARE YOU
CRAZY?

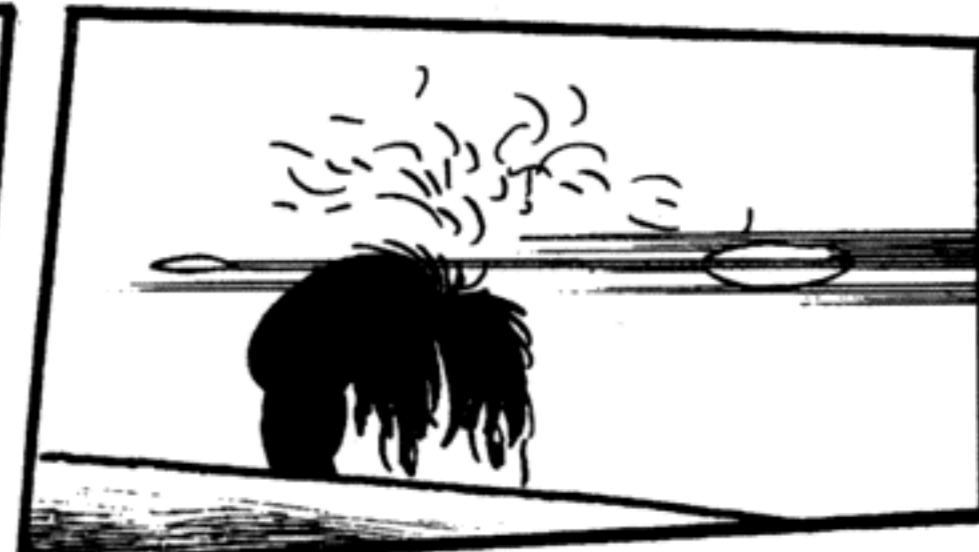
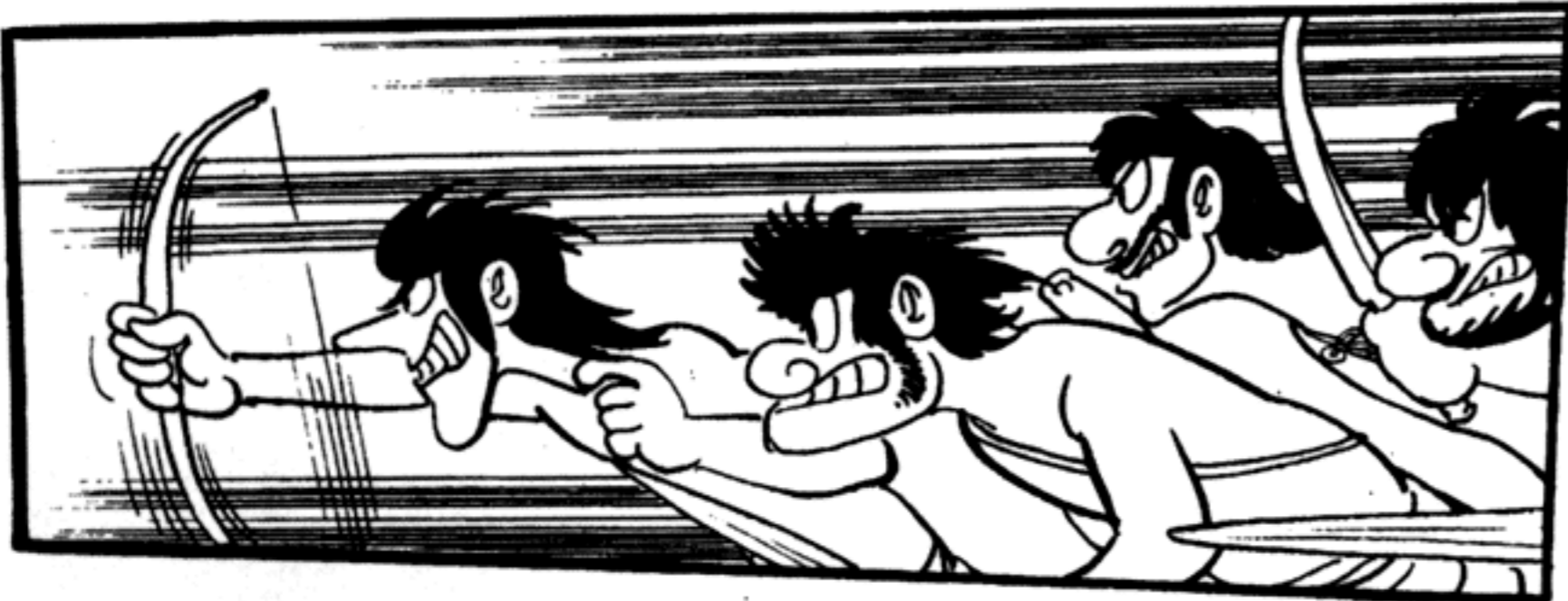


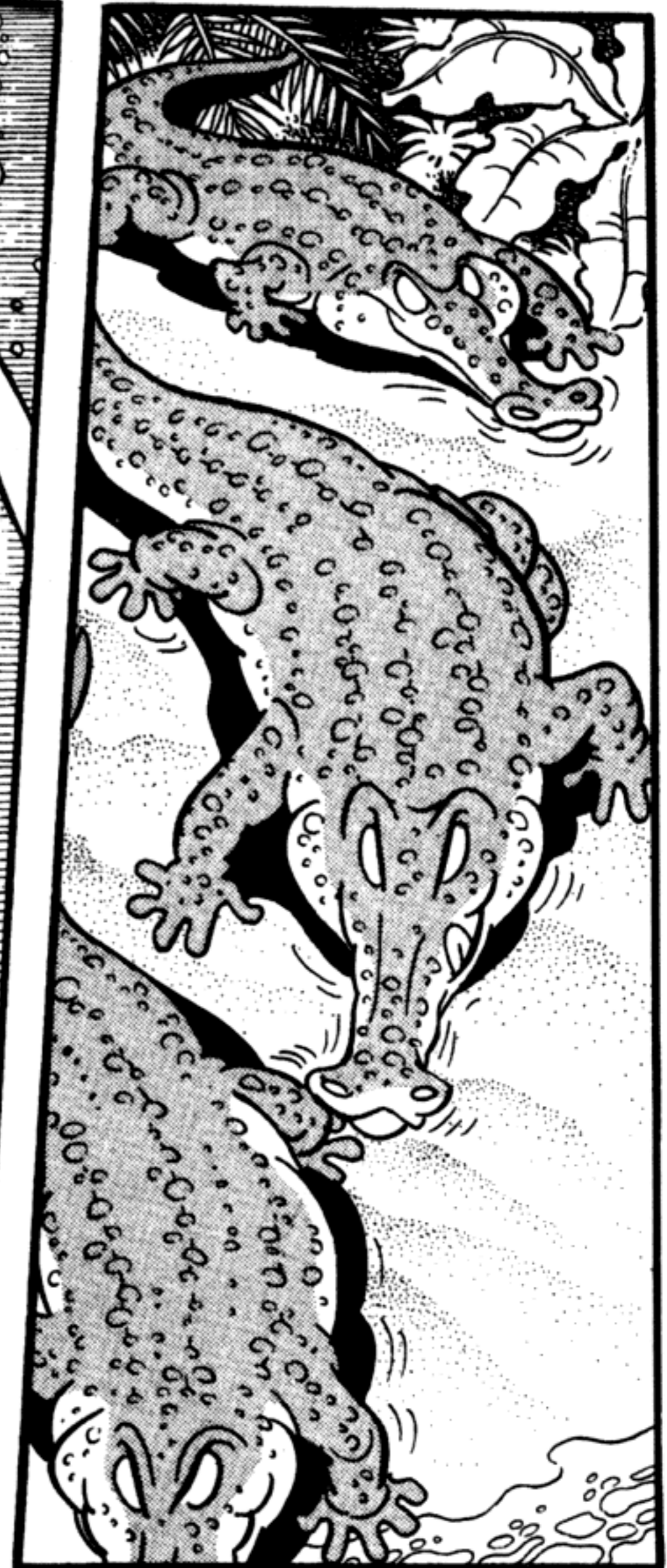
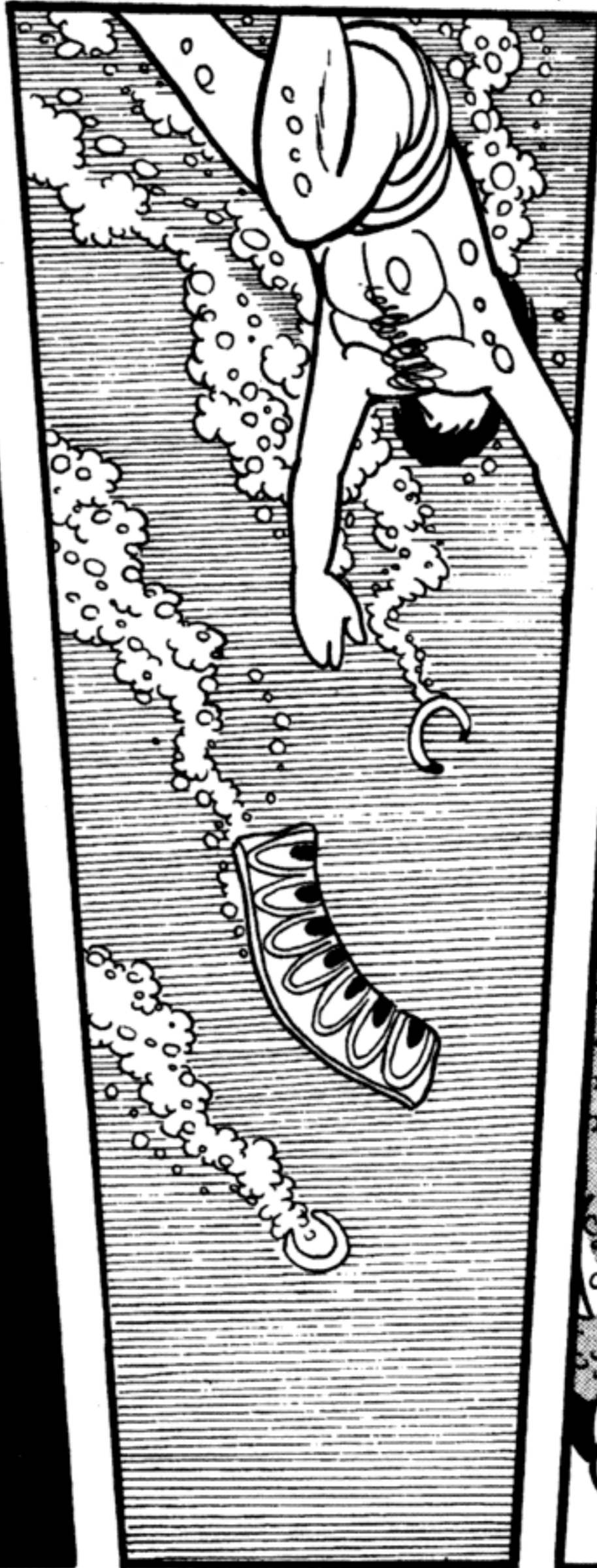
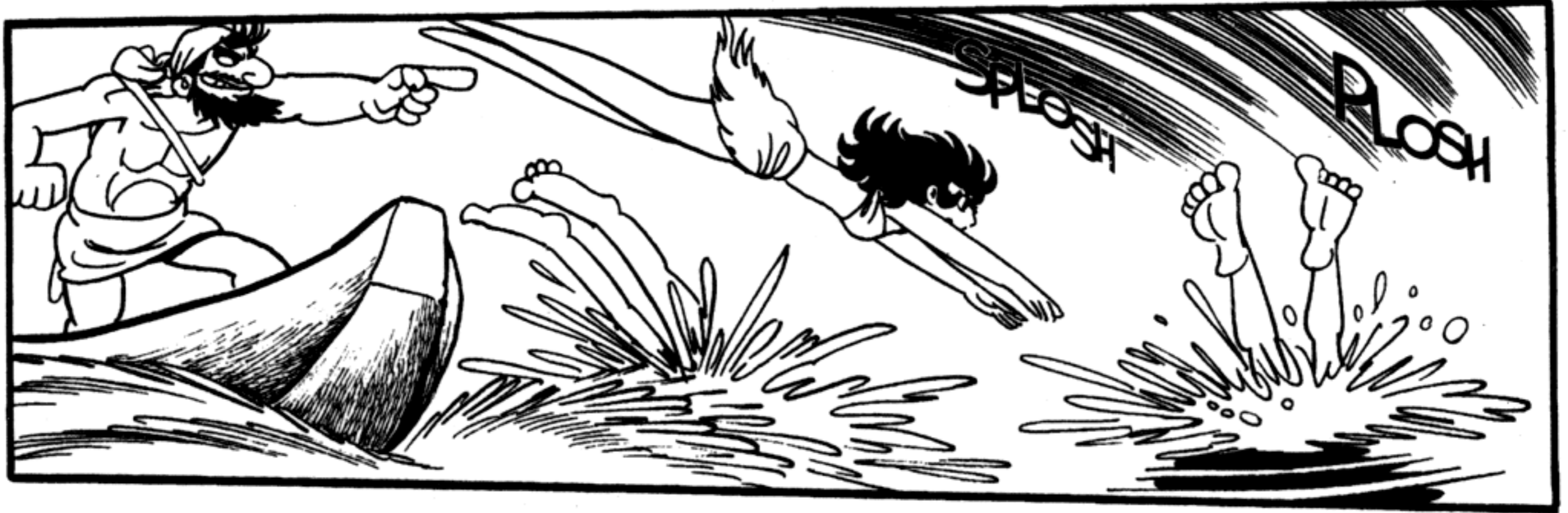
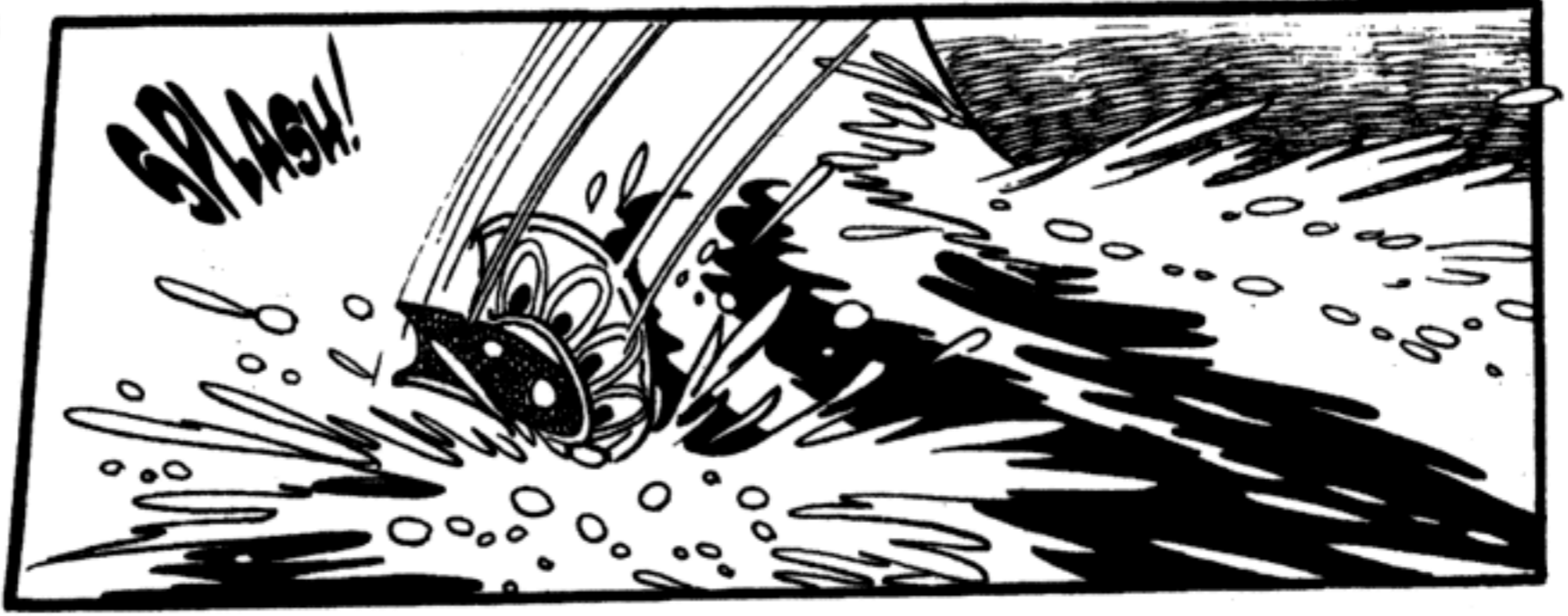
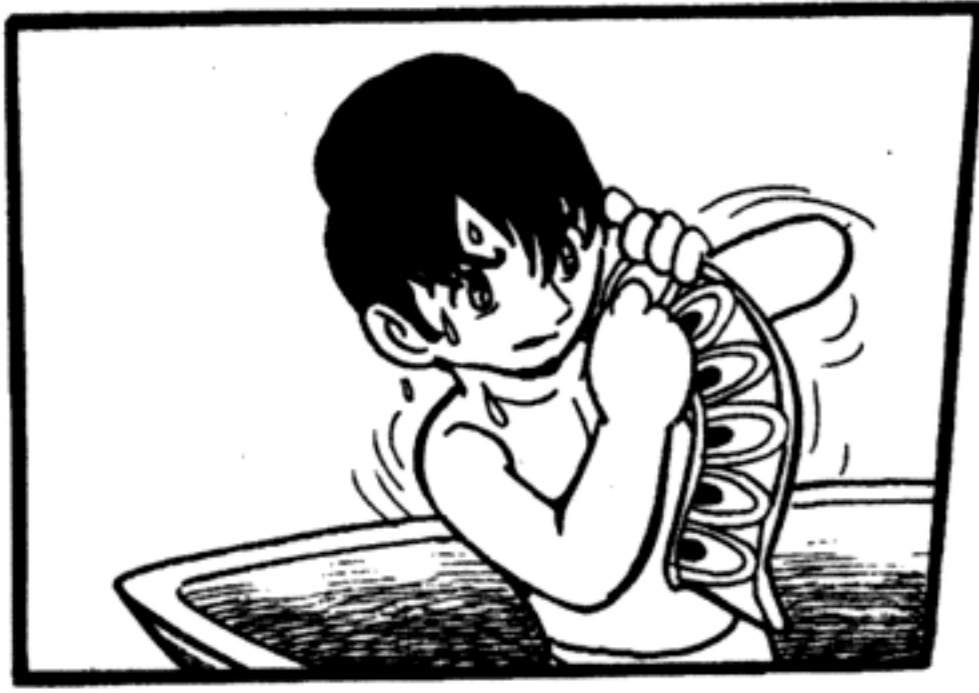
NOPE, NEVER
BEEN BETTER.

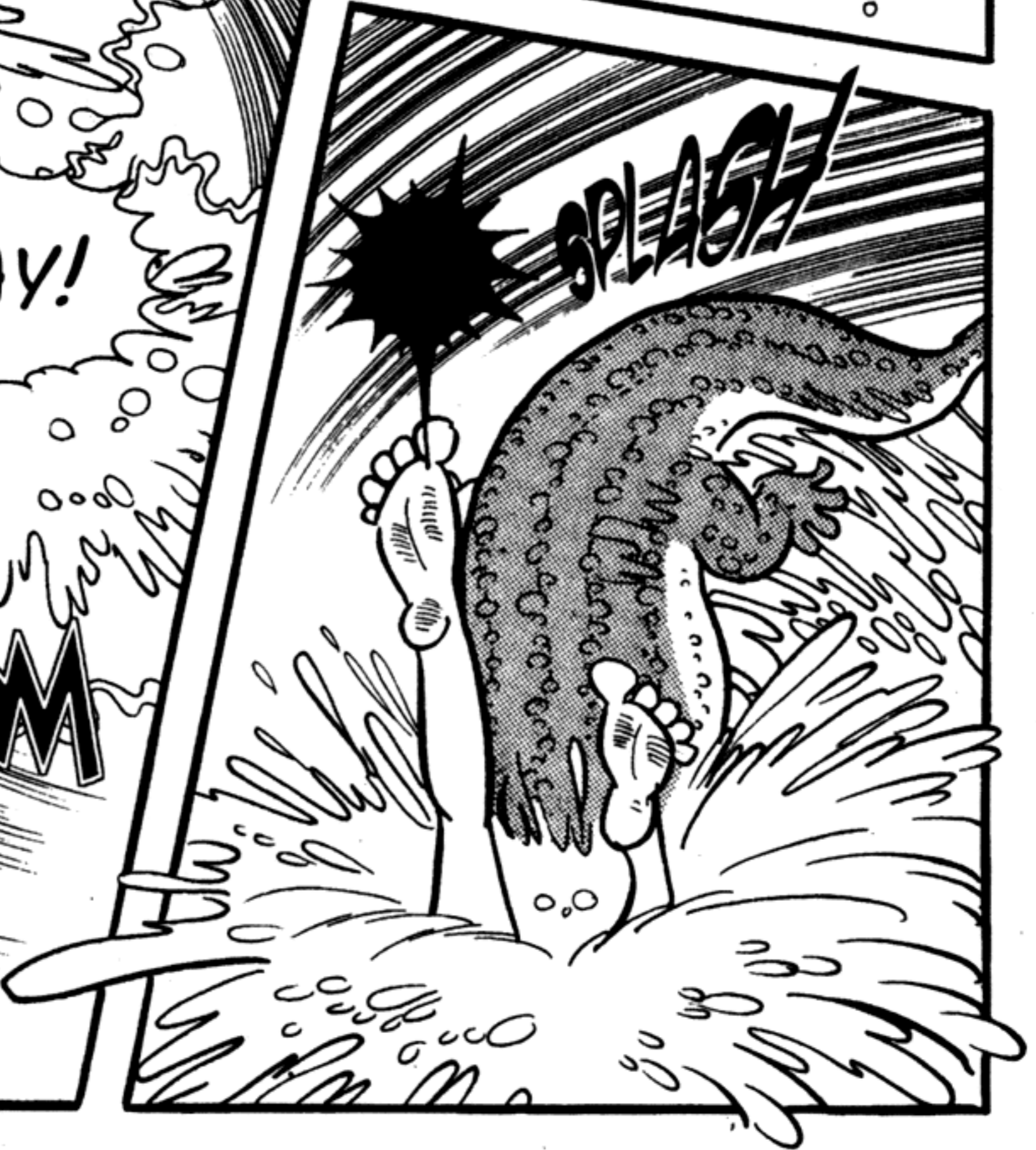
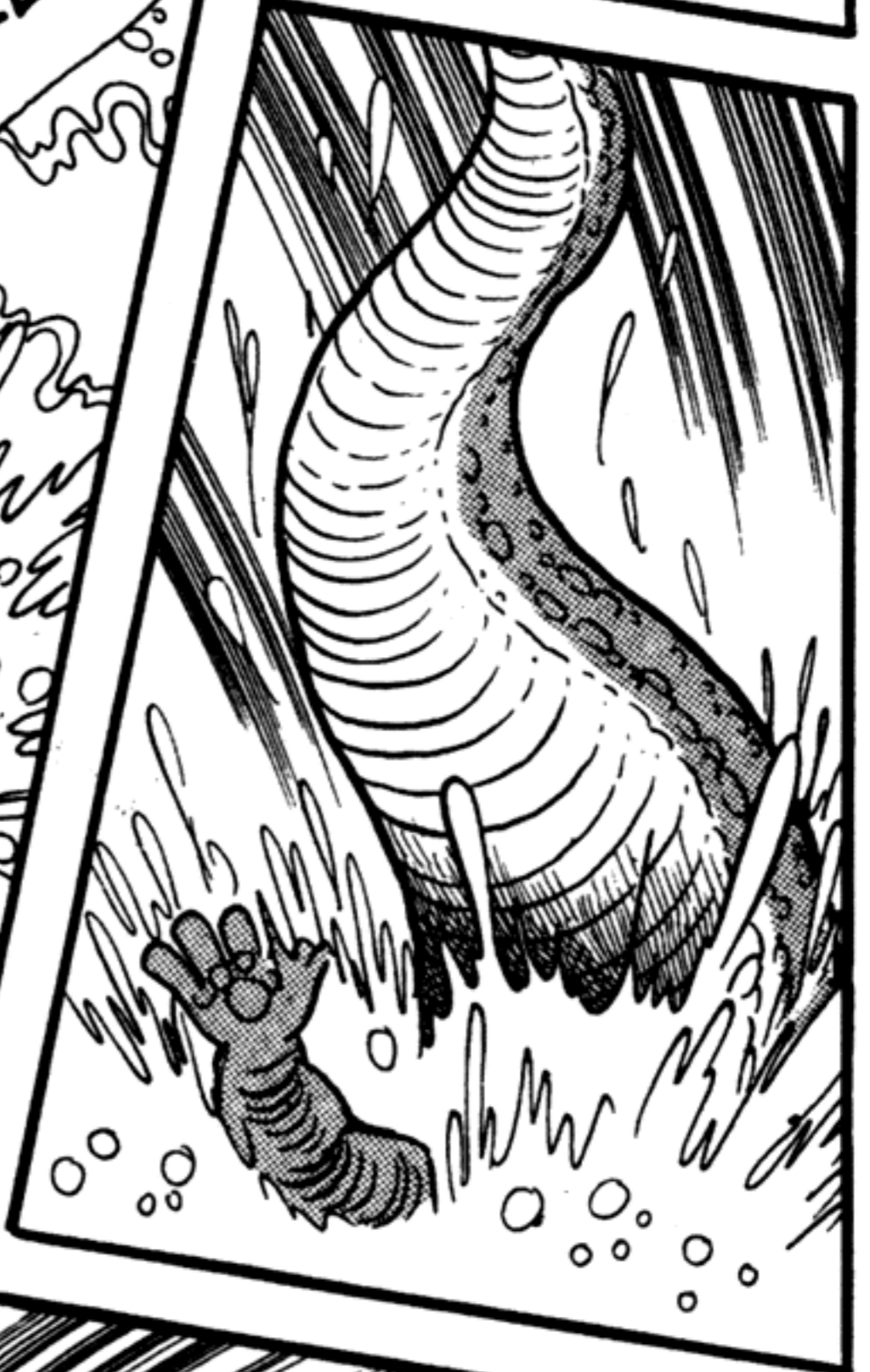
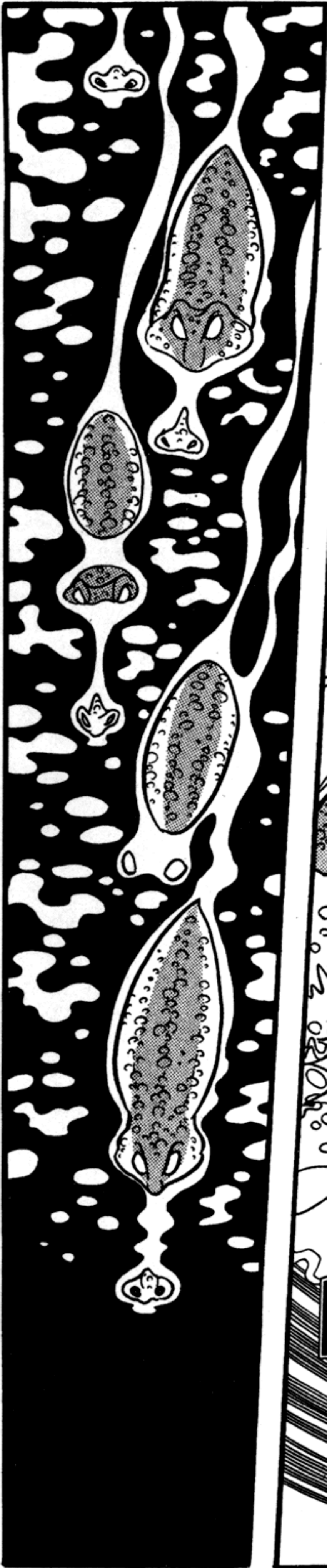


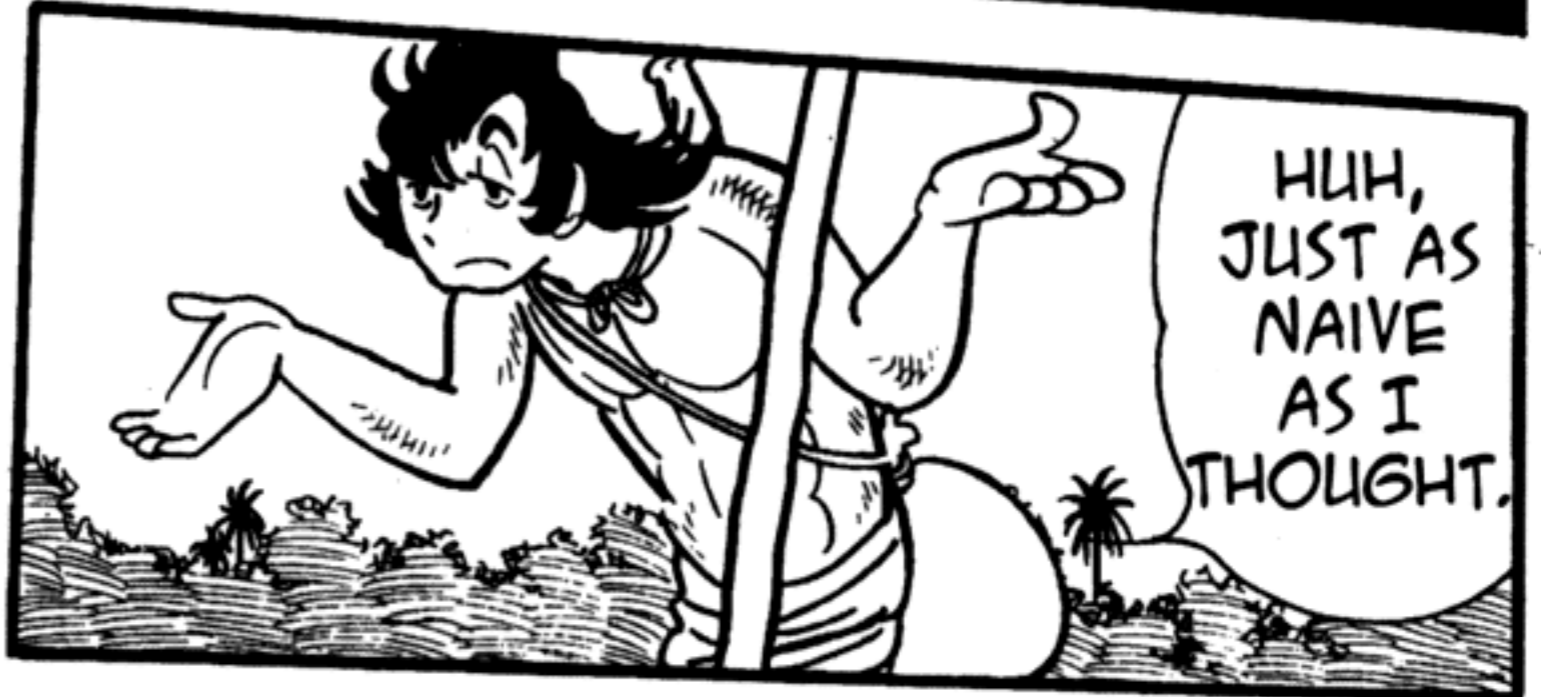


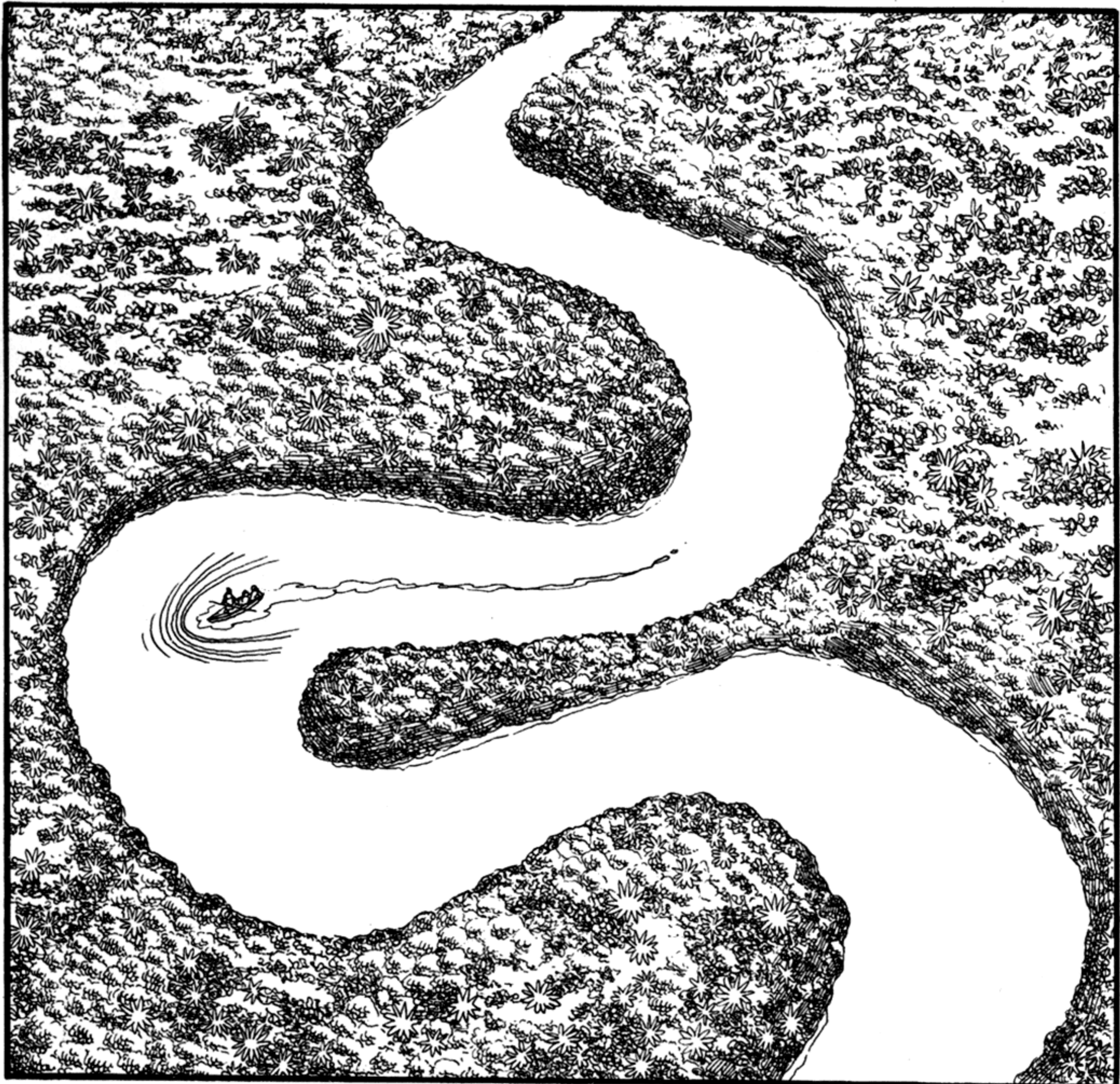
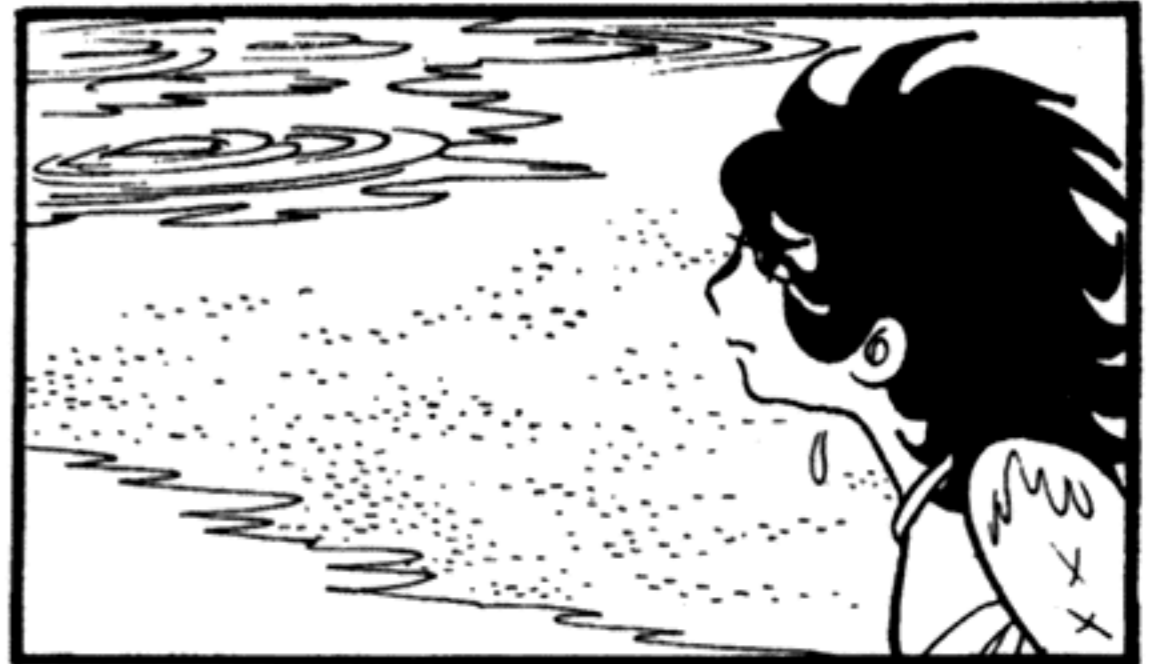
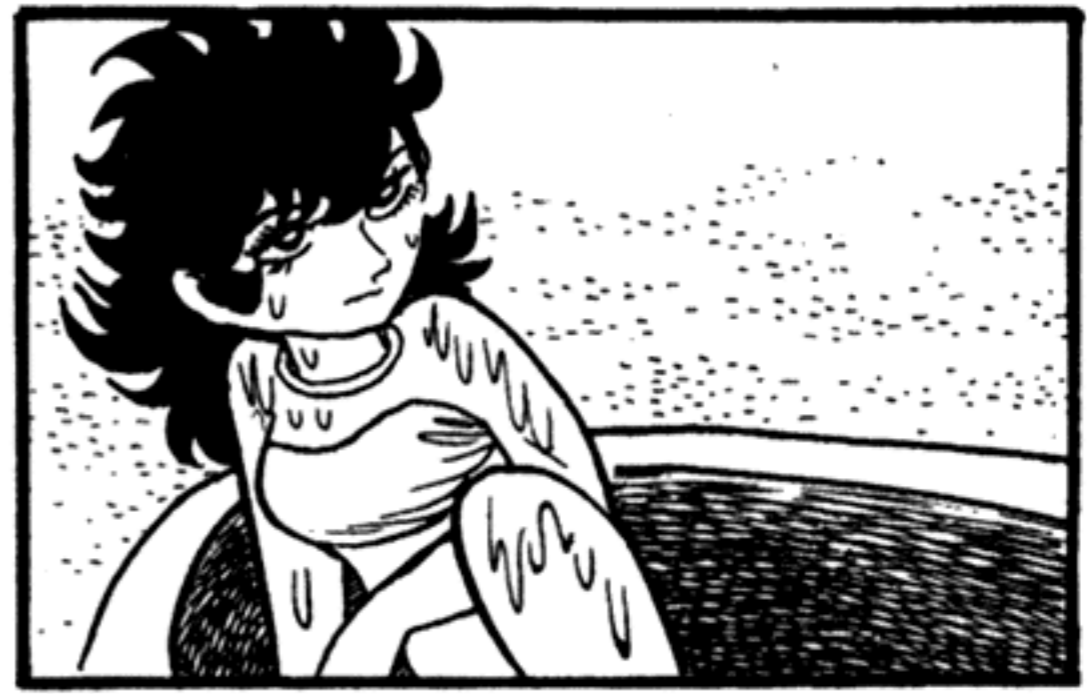


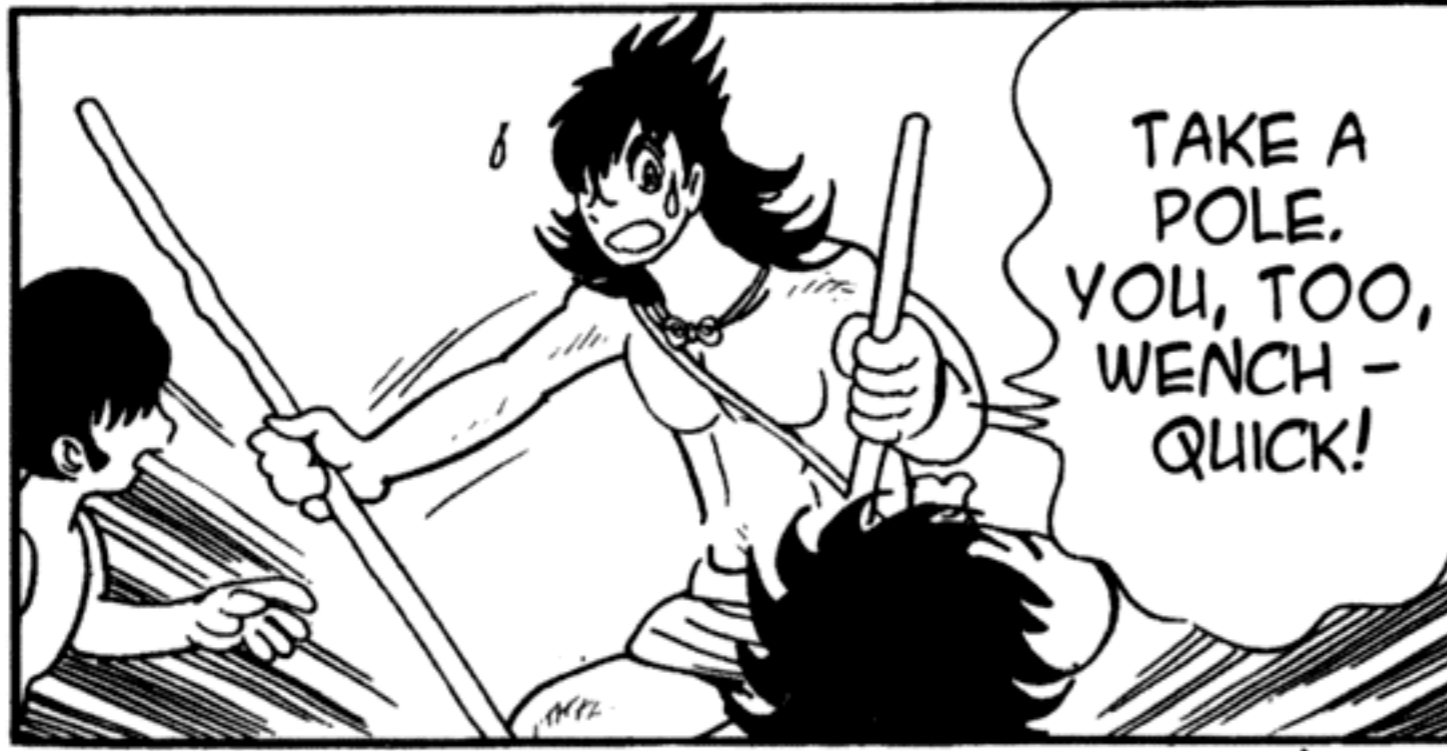


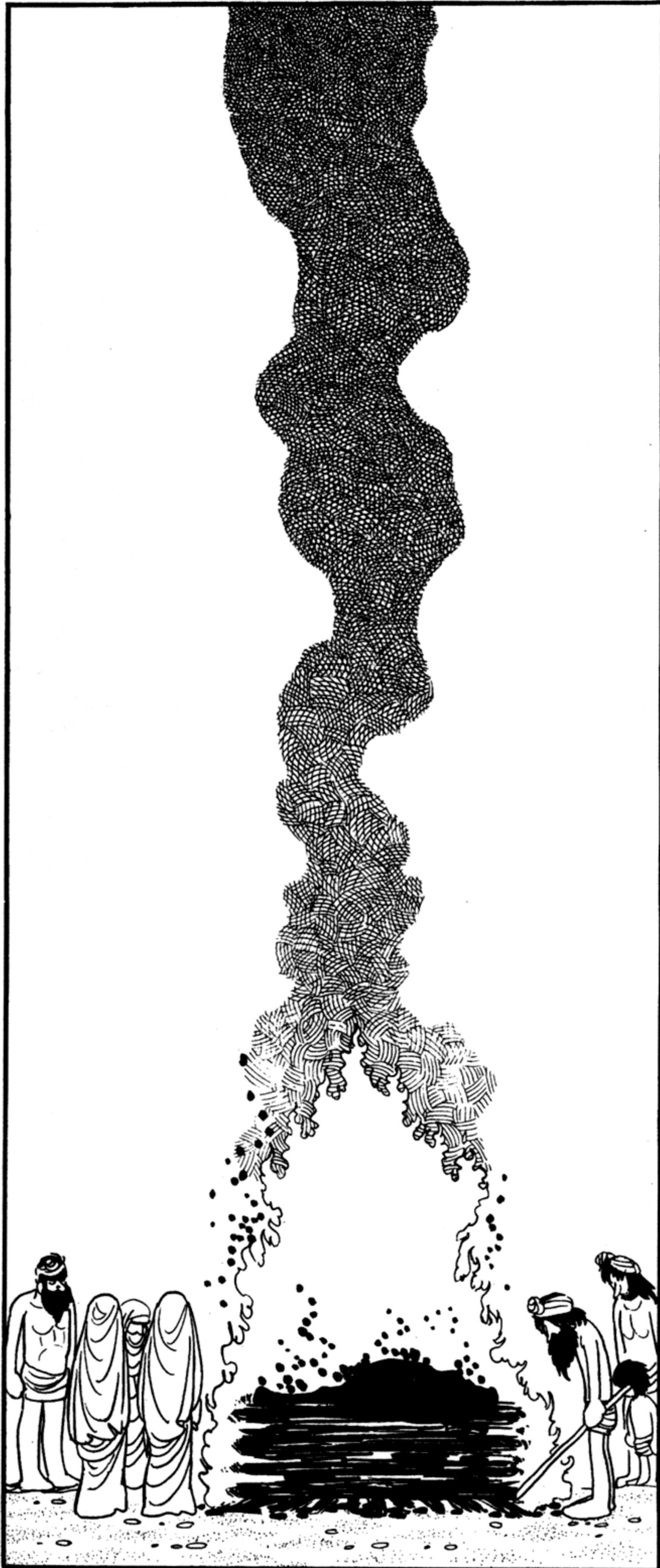


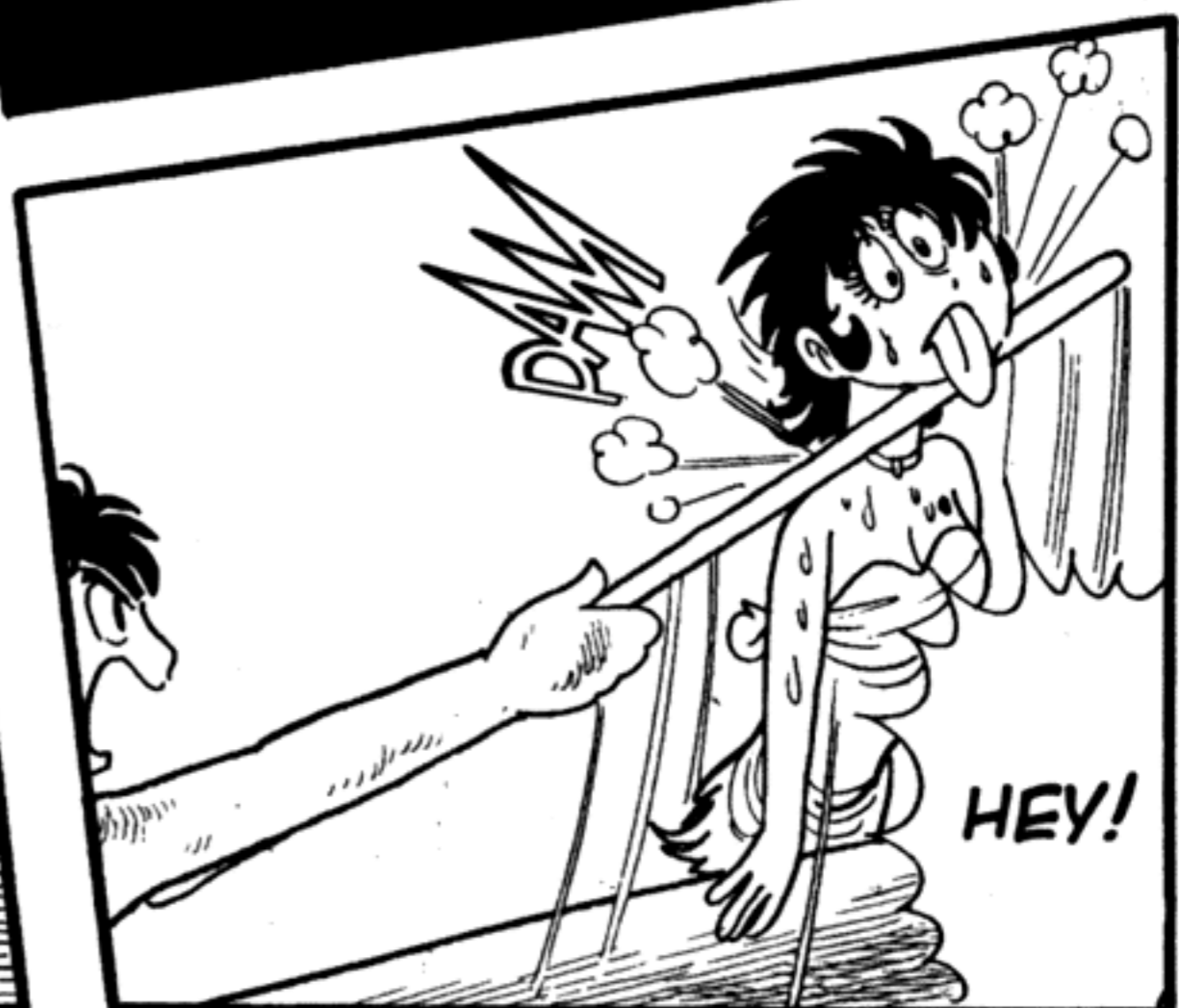
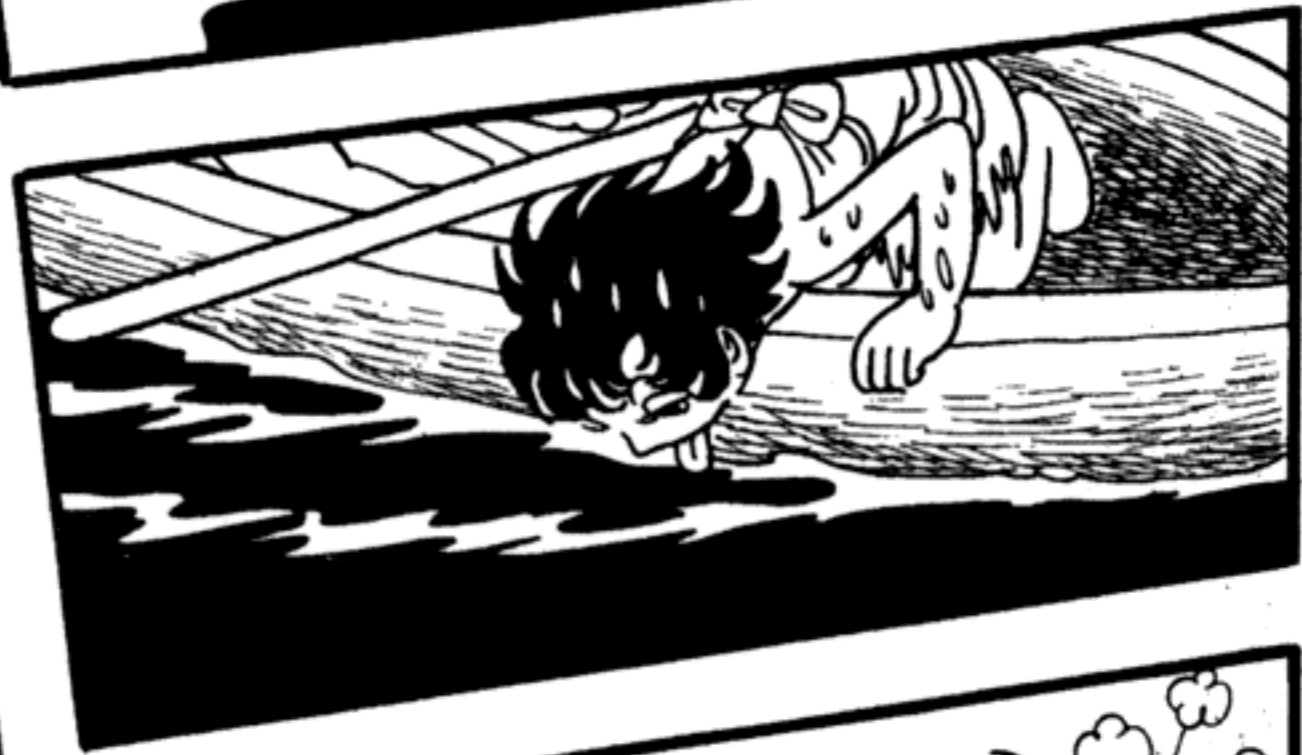
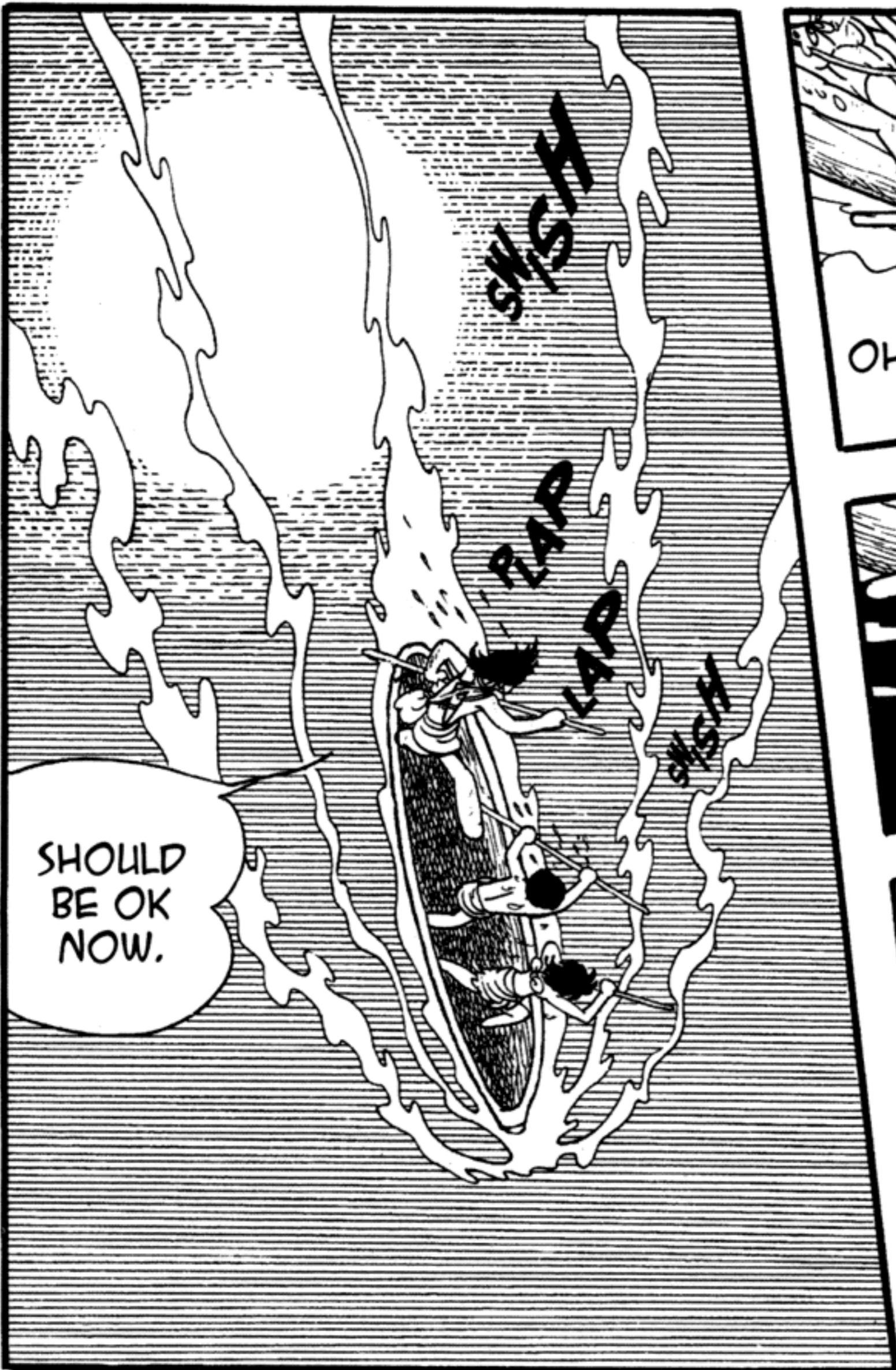




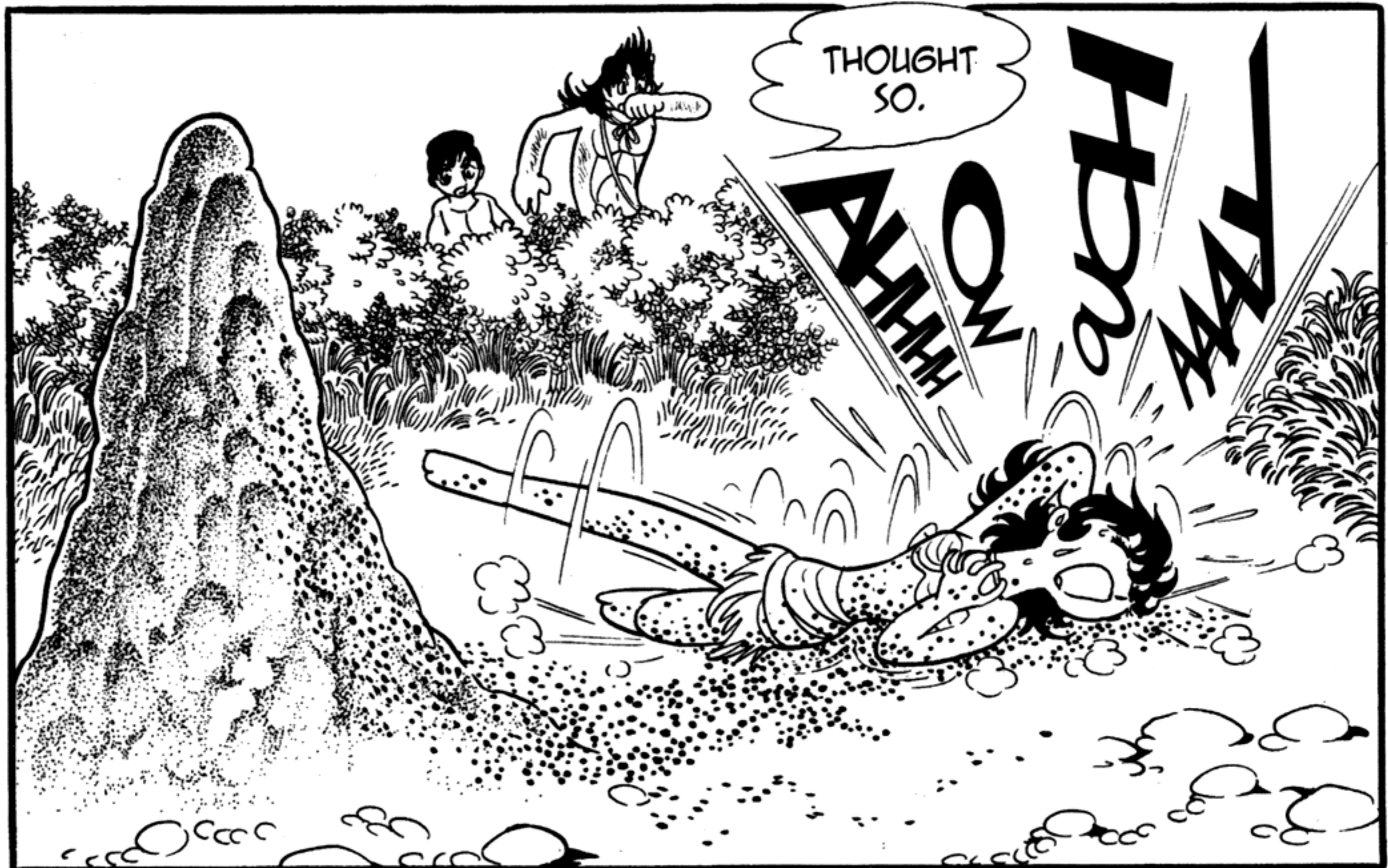
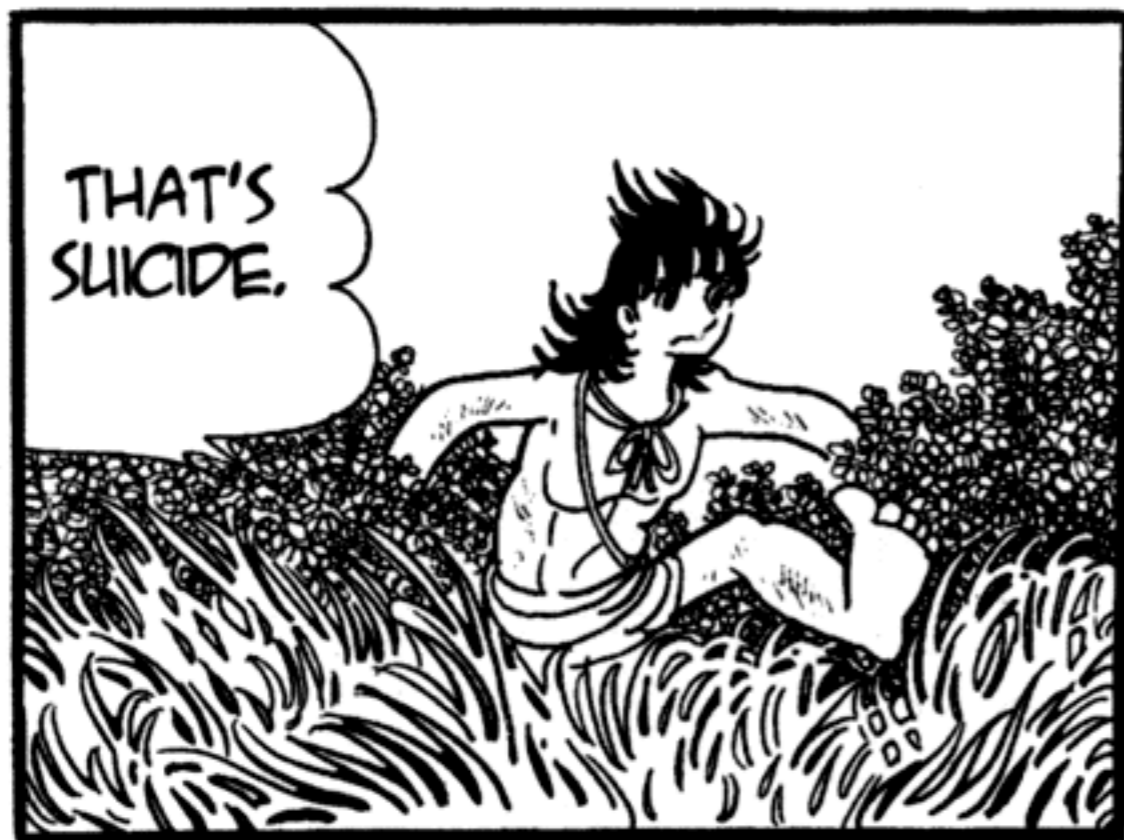
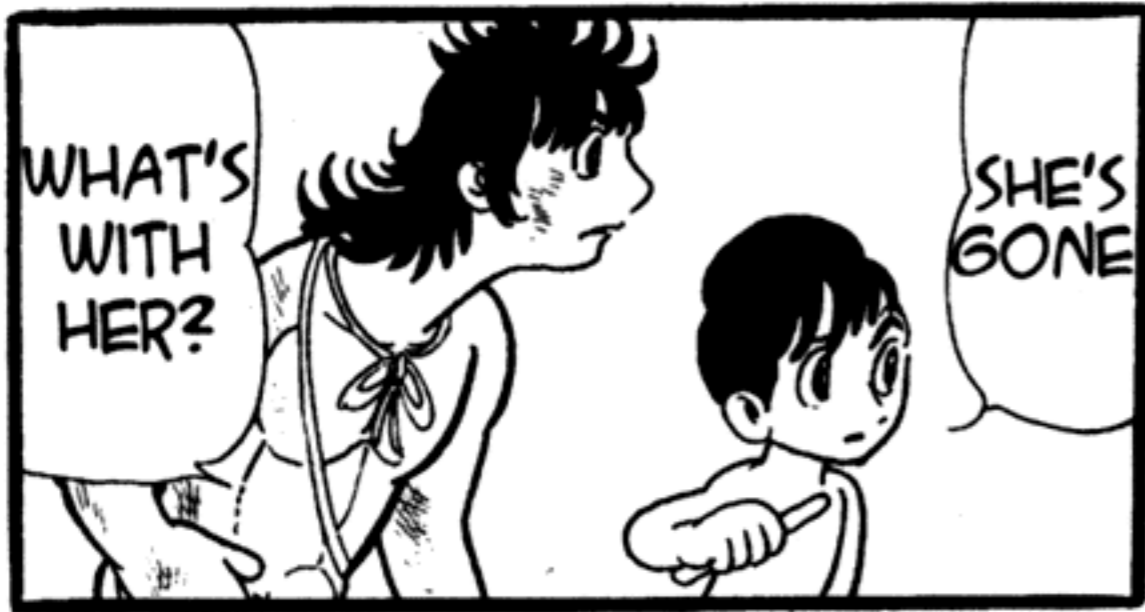


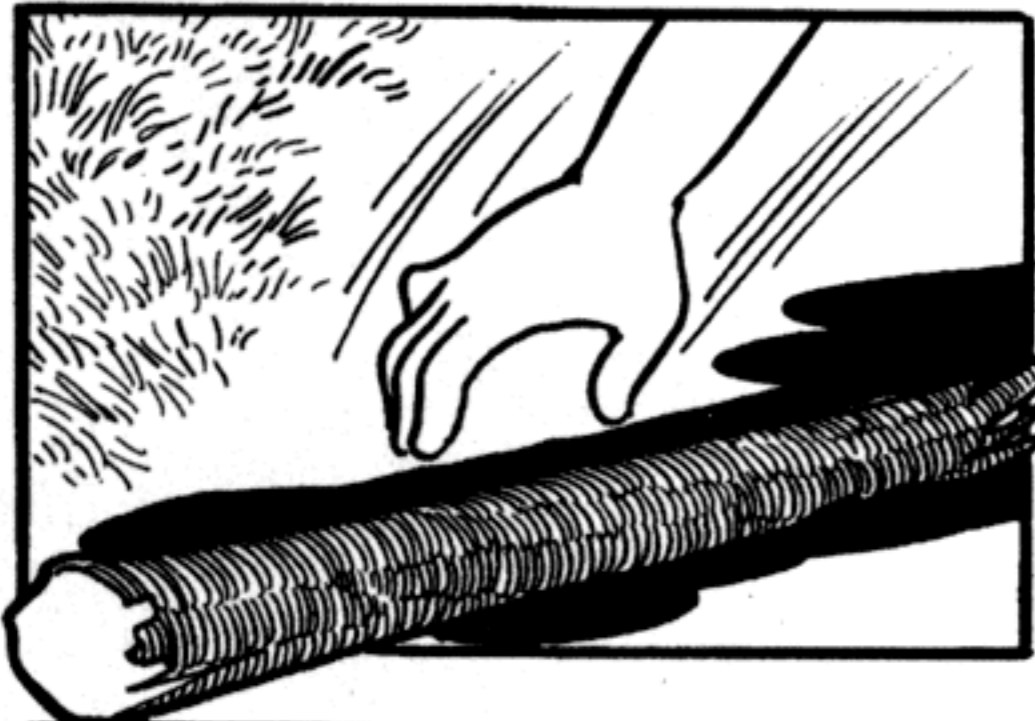


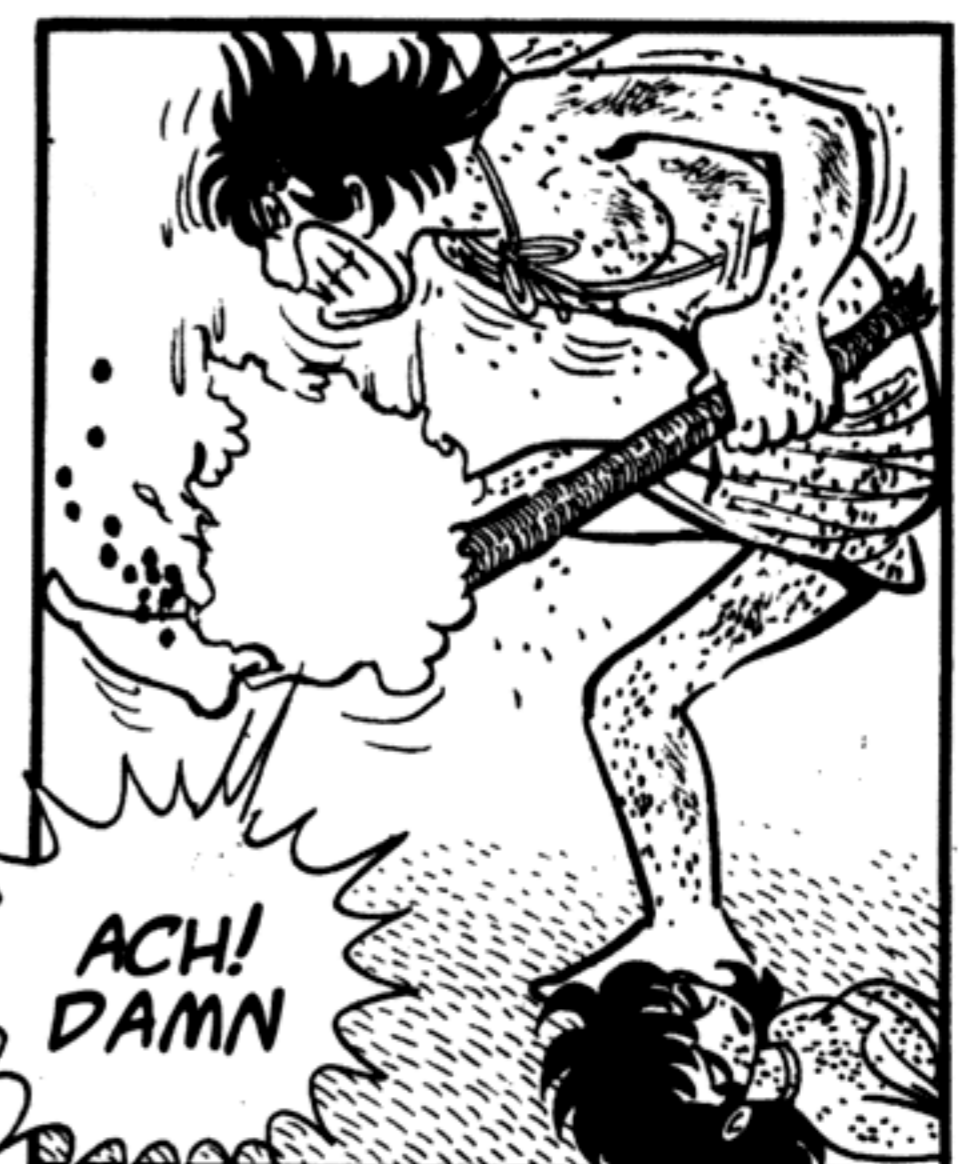
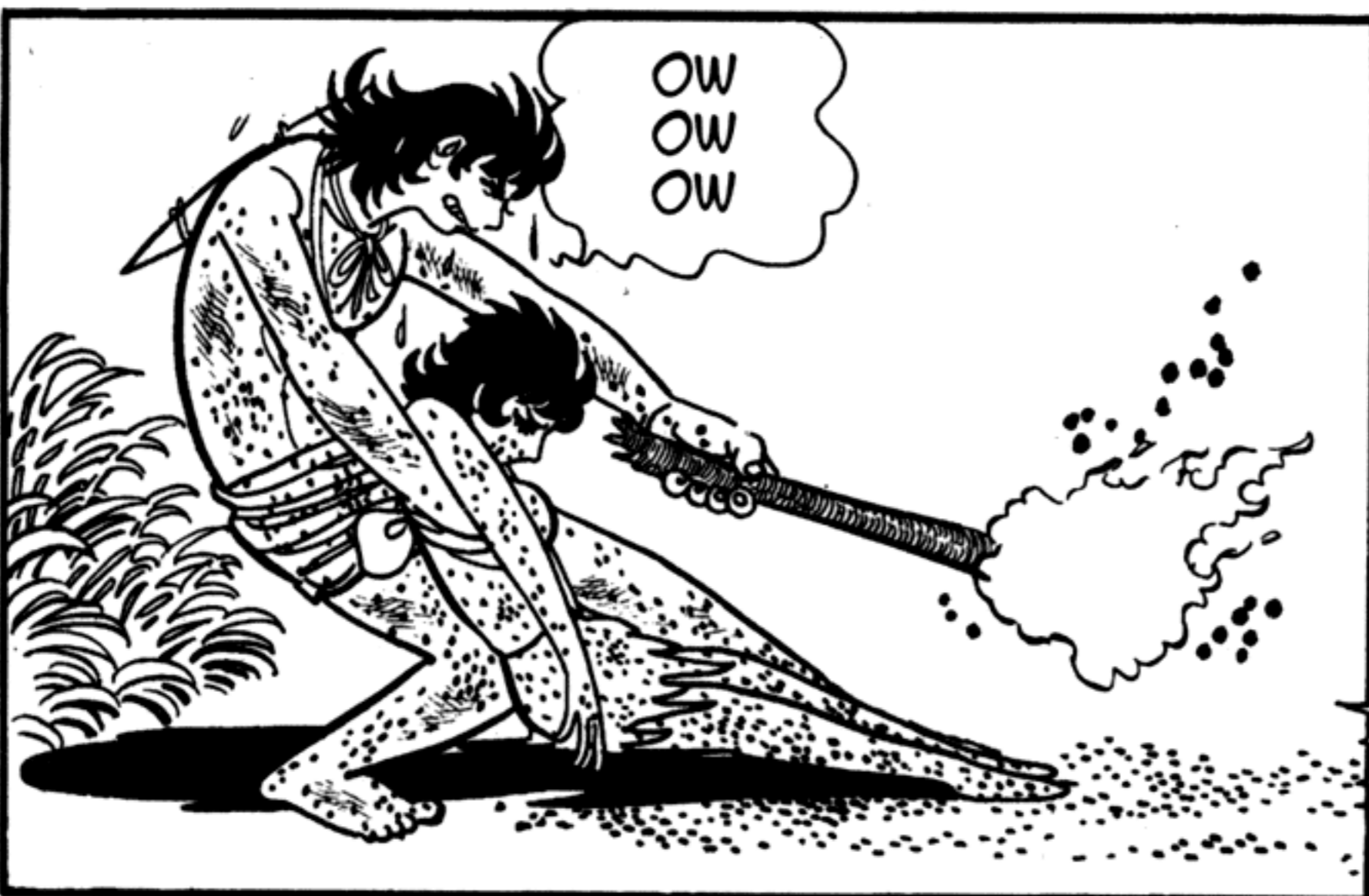
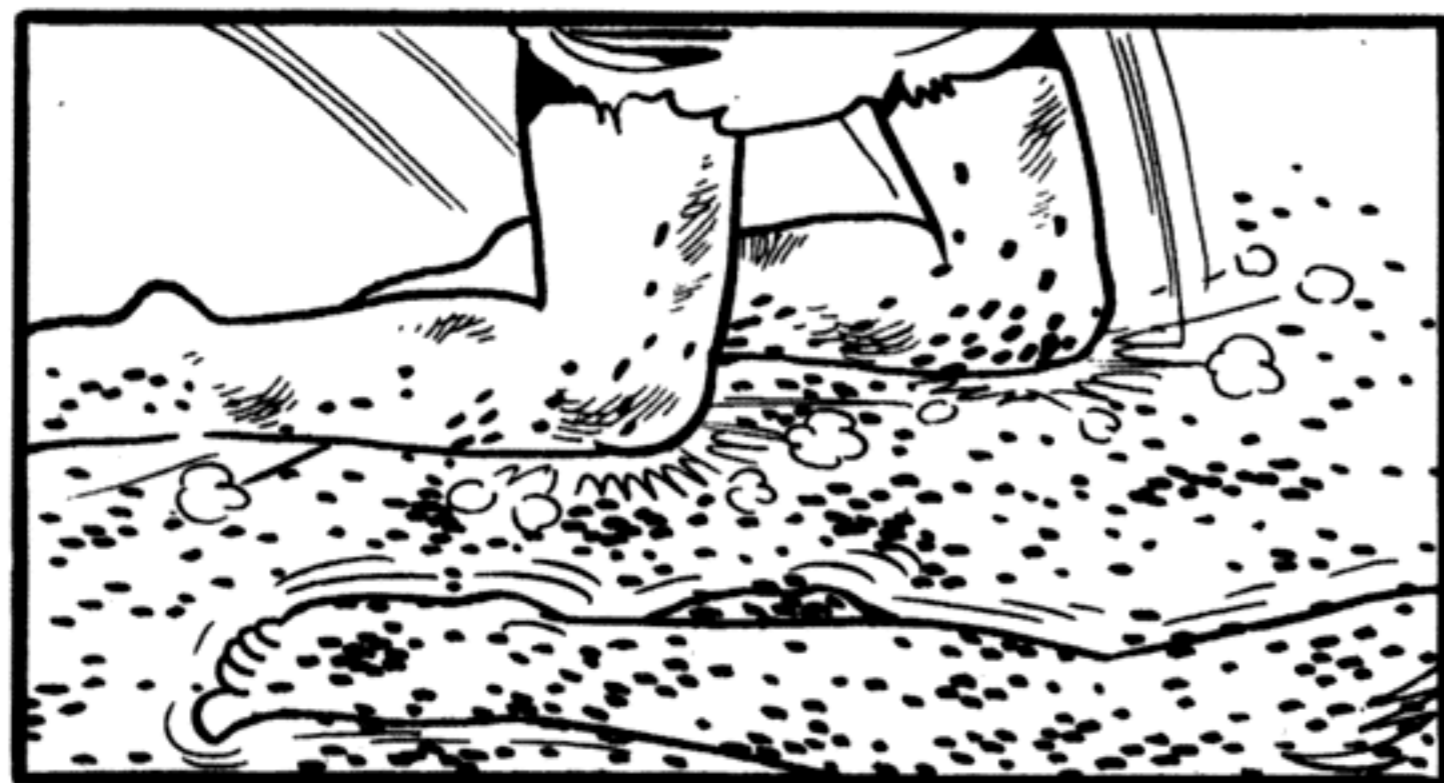
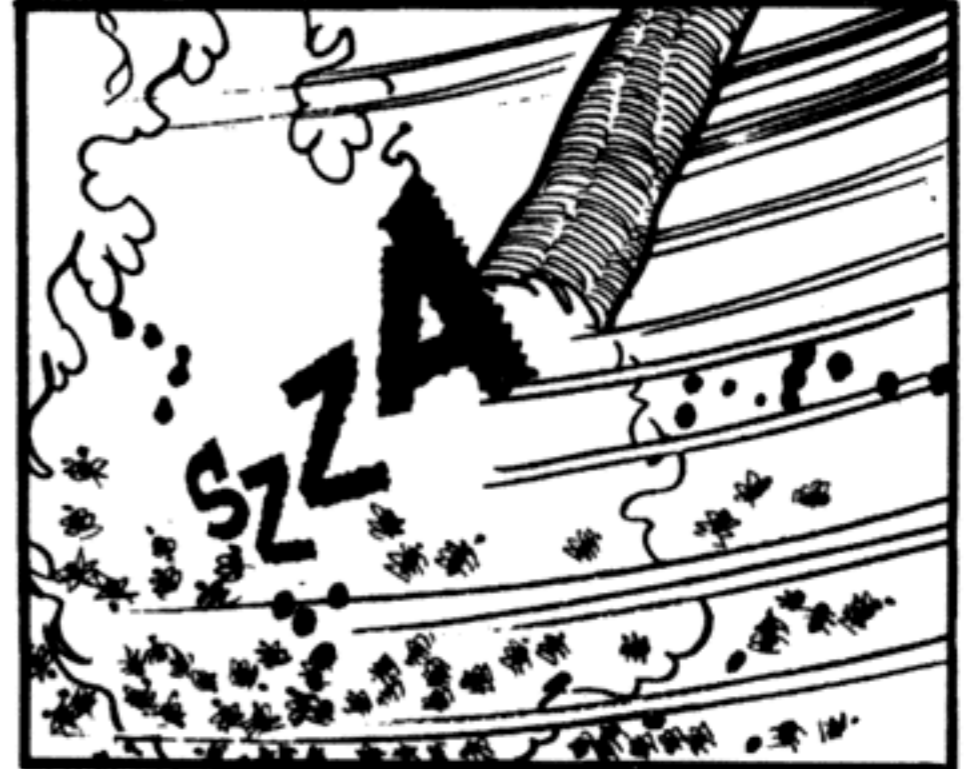
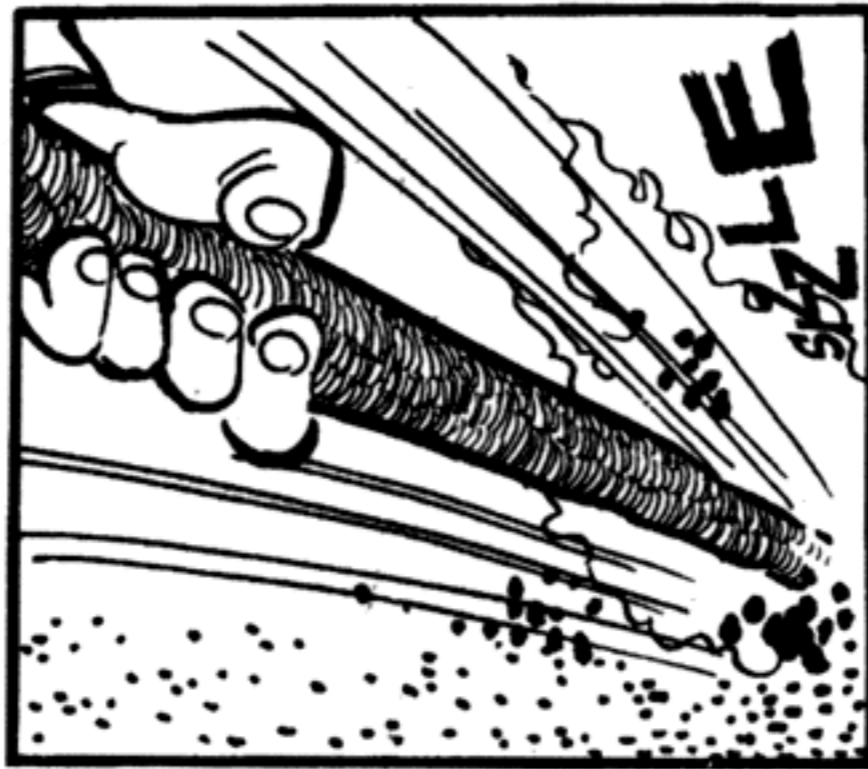
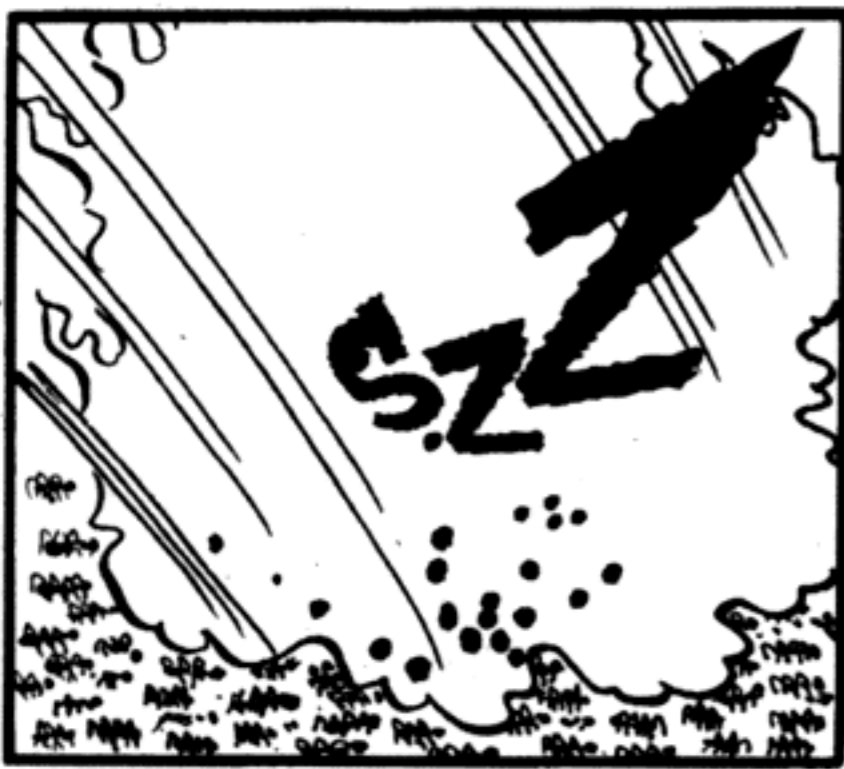
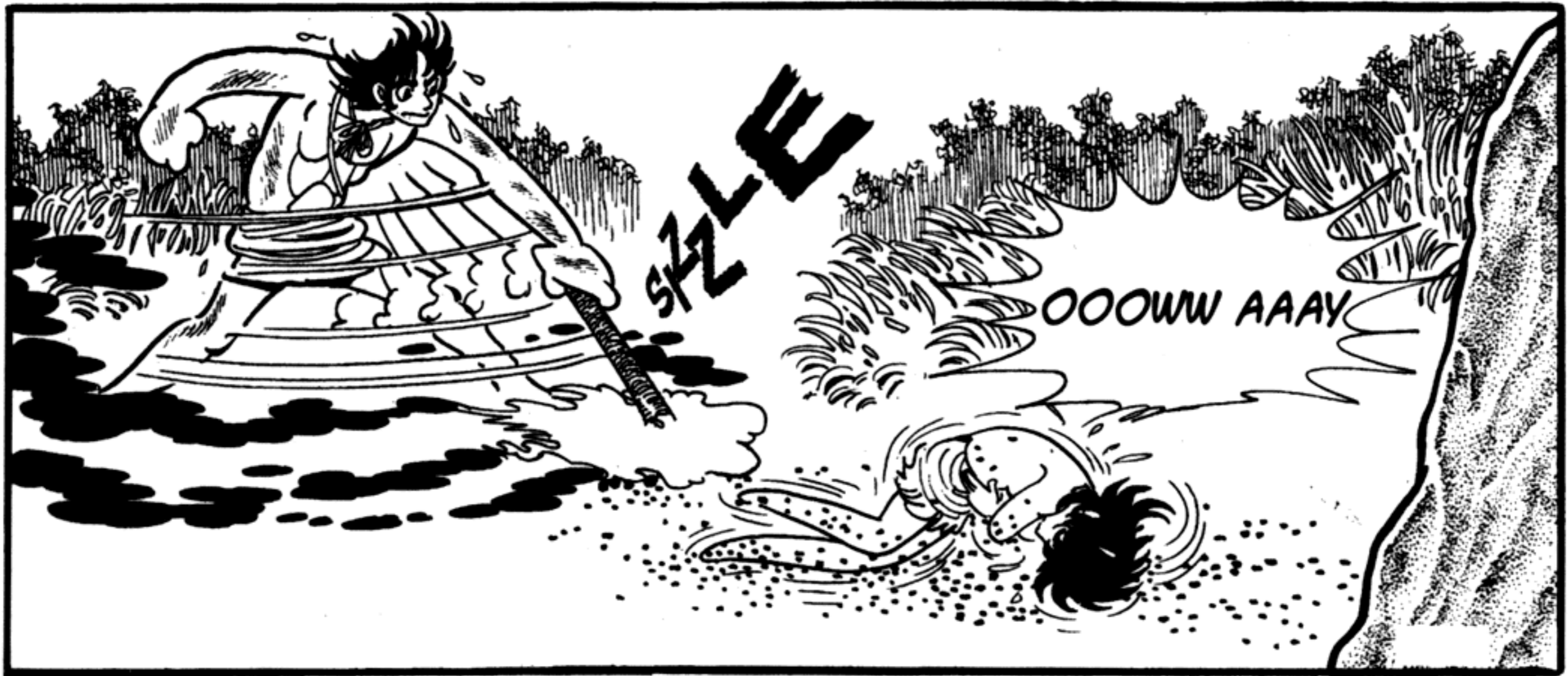


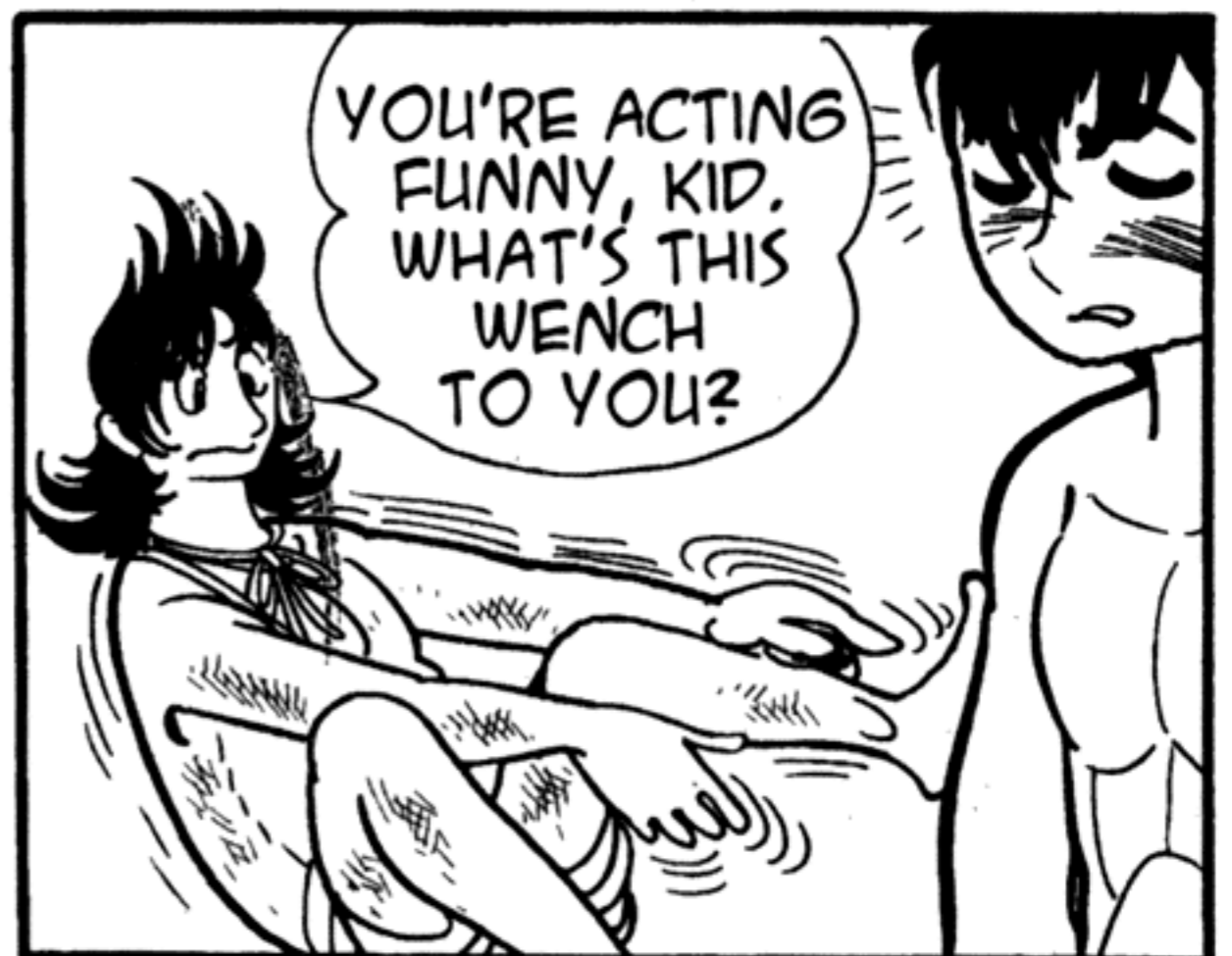
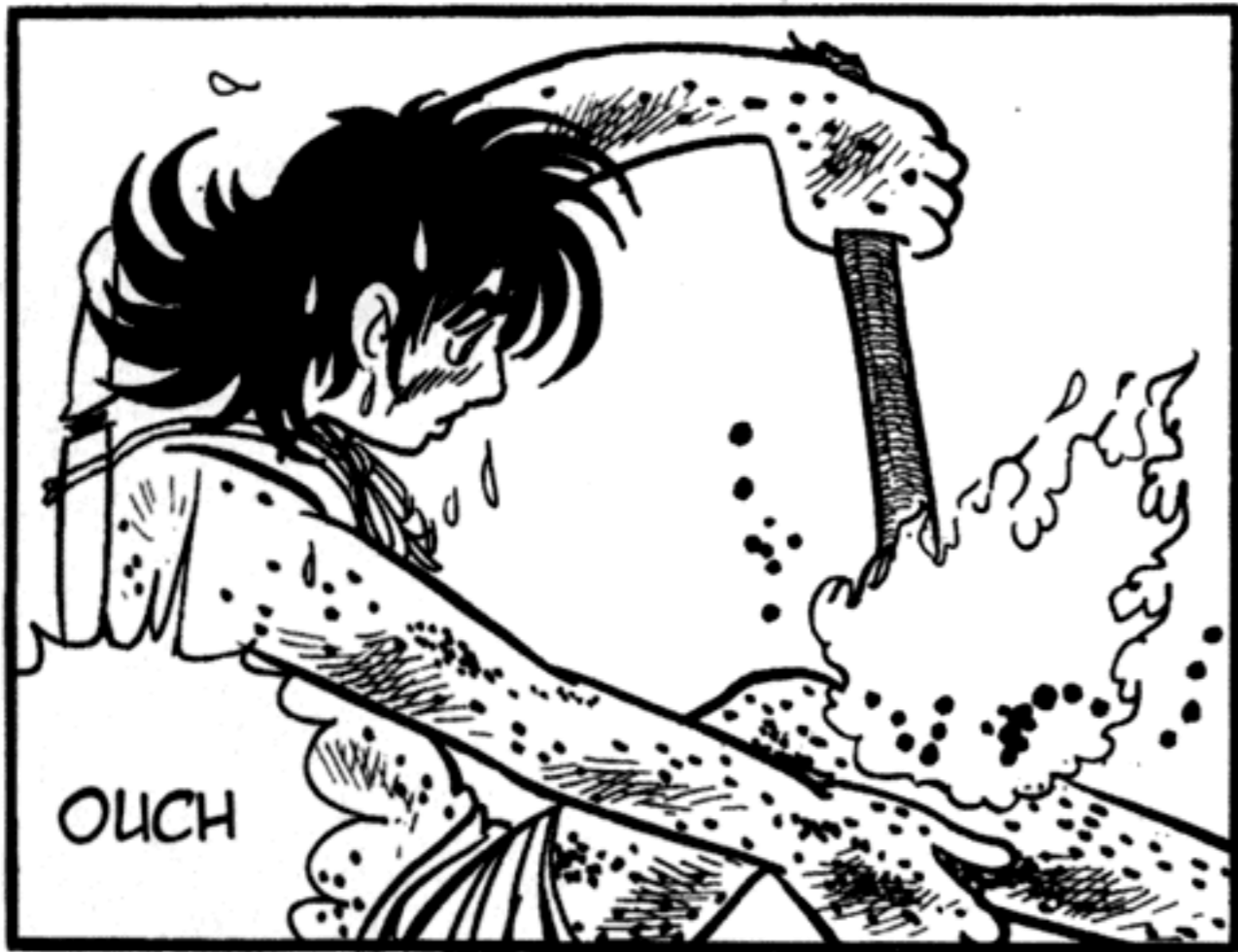


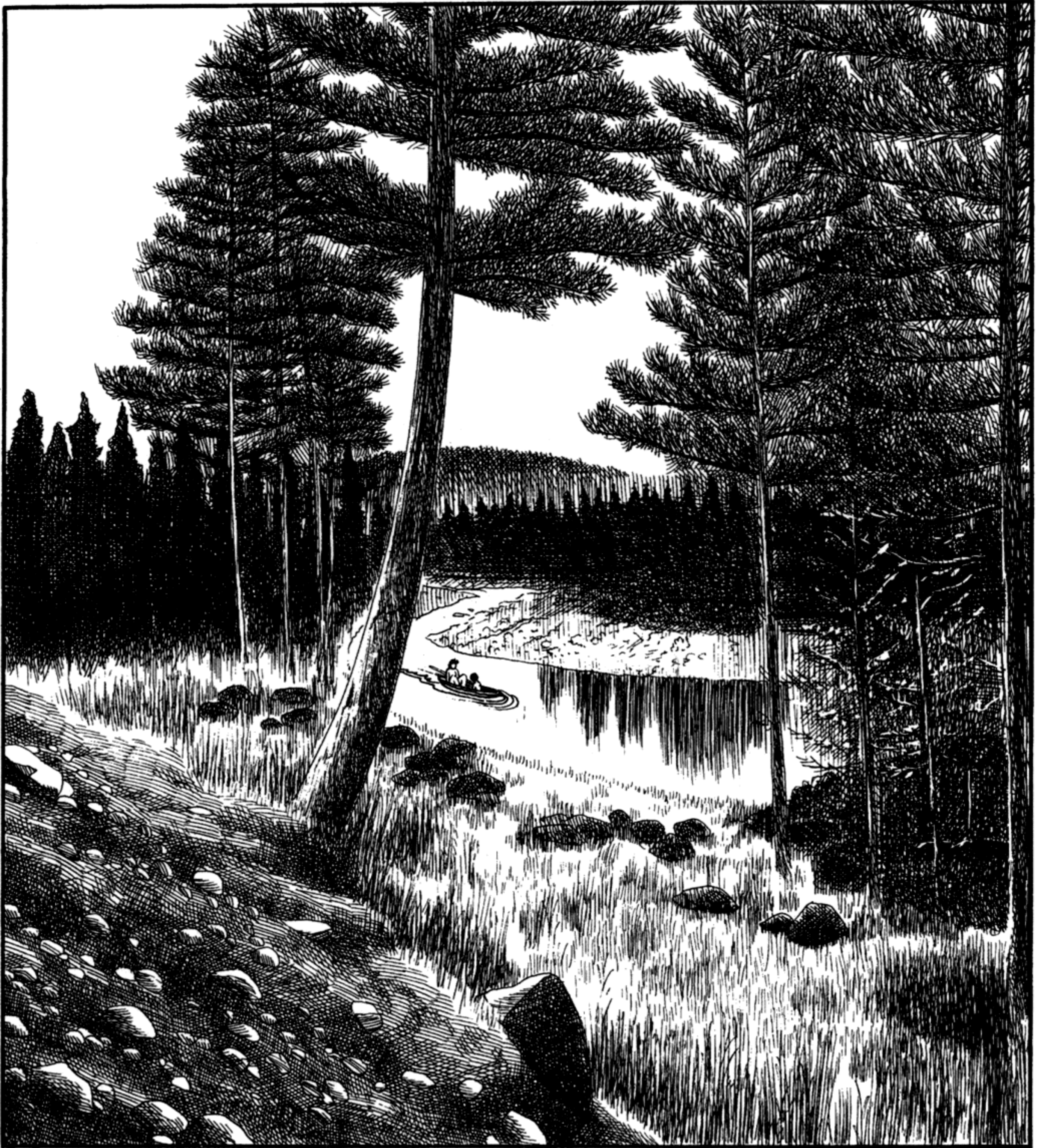








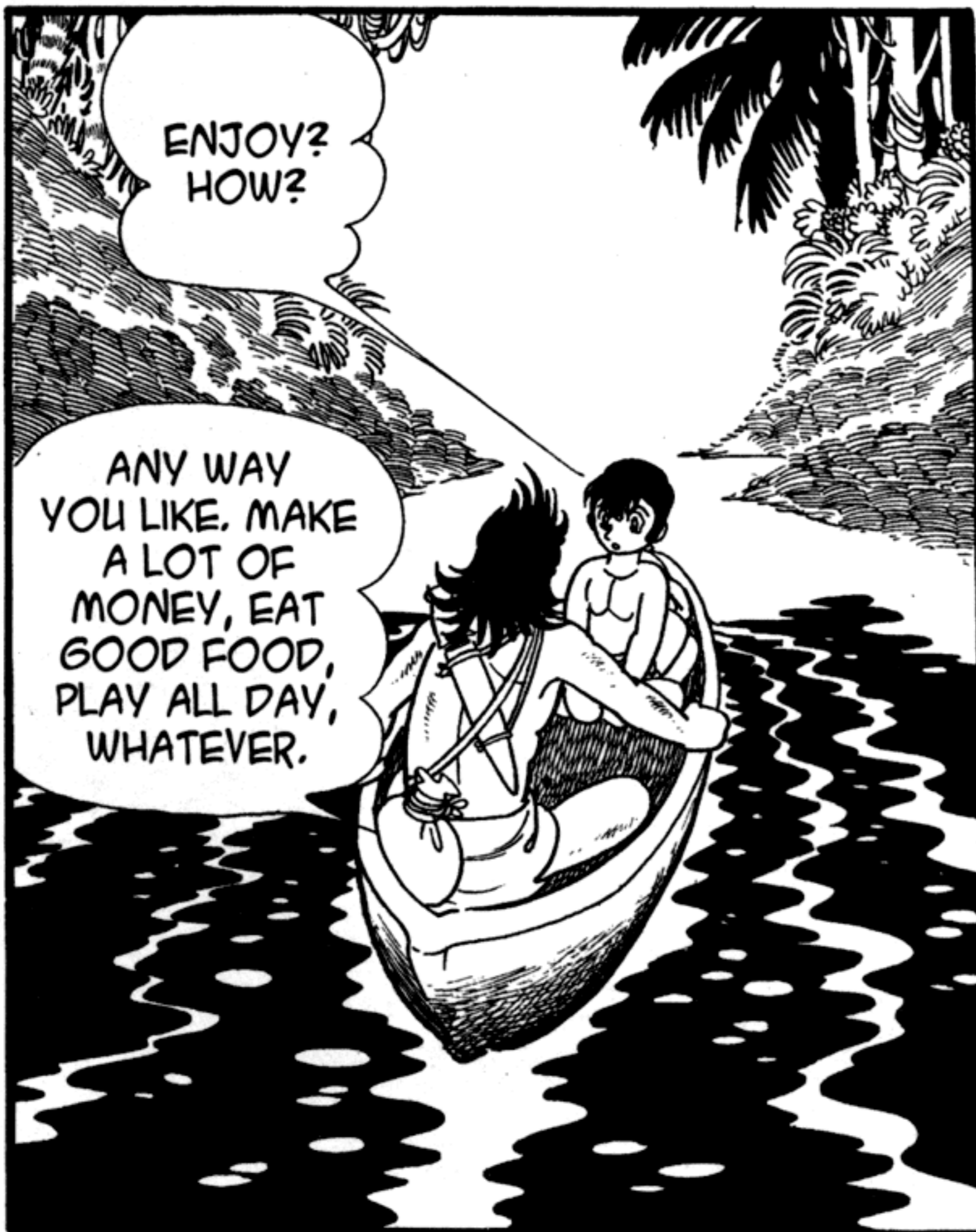
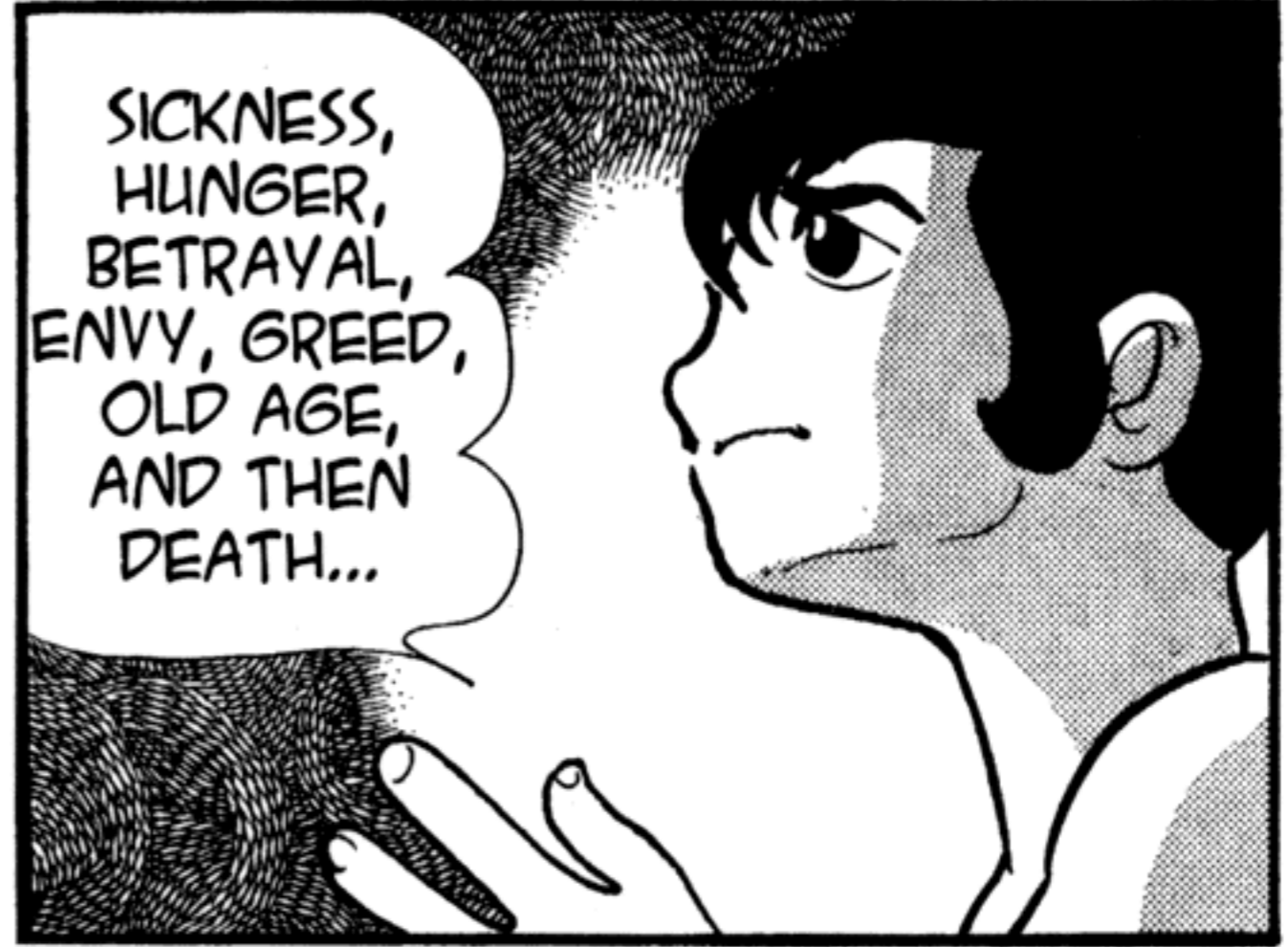
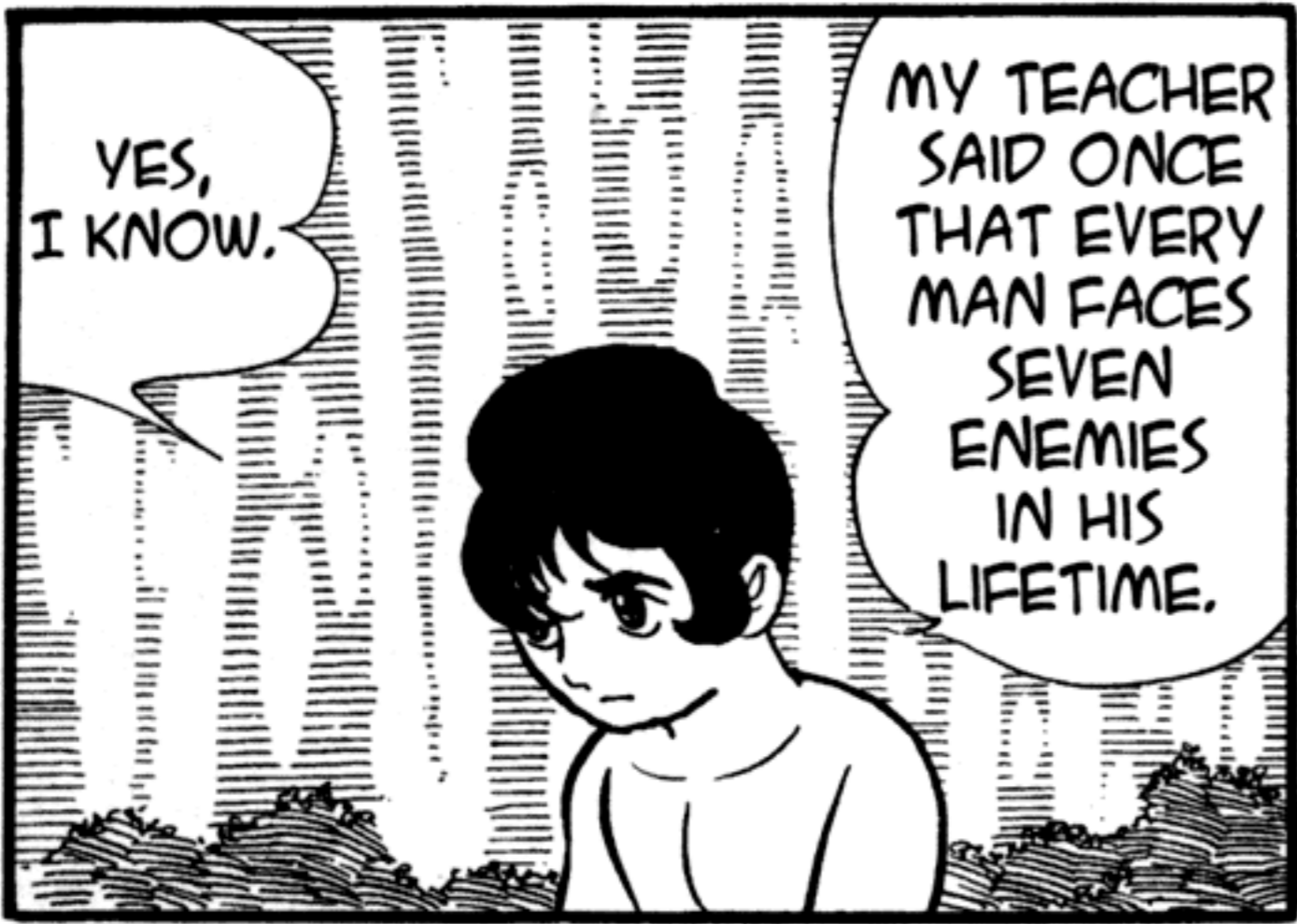


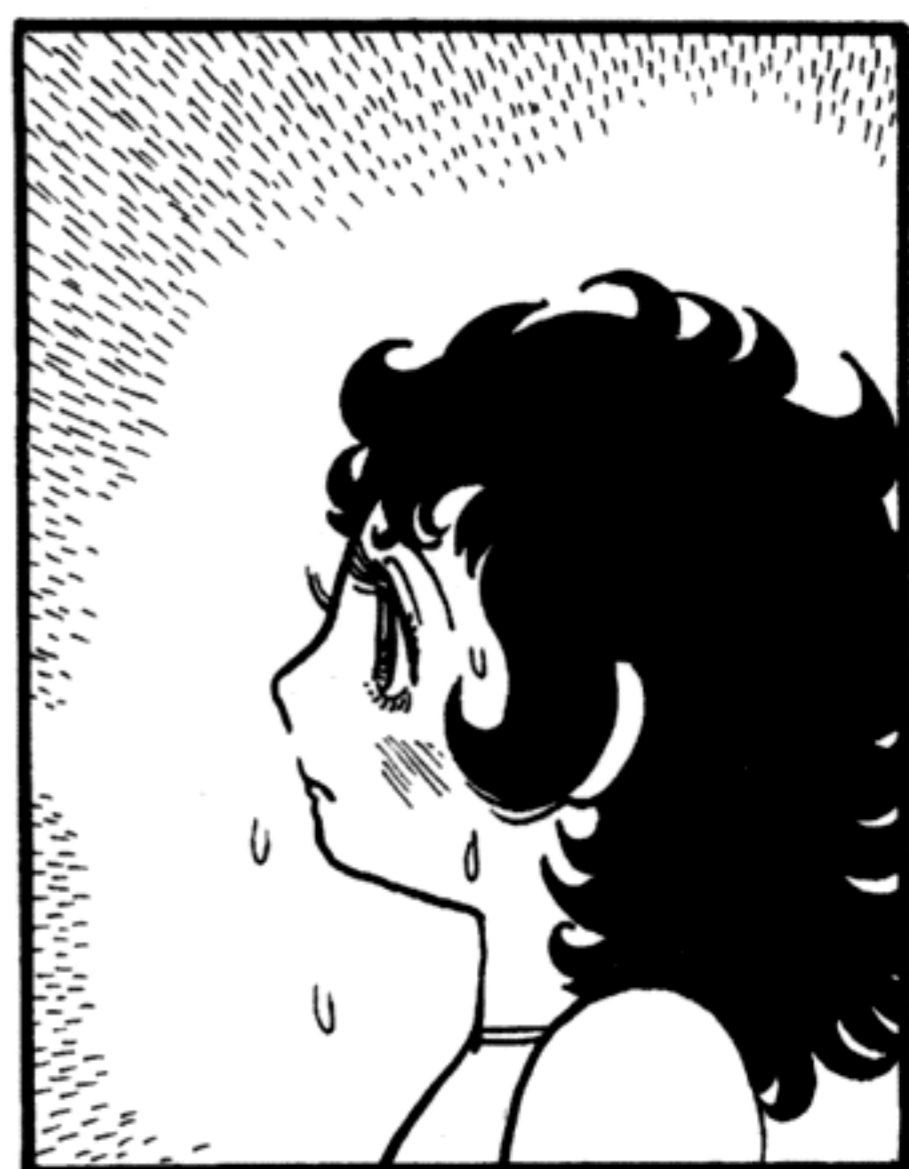


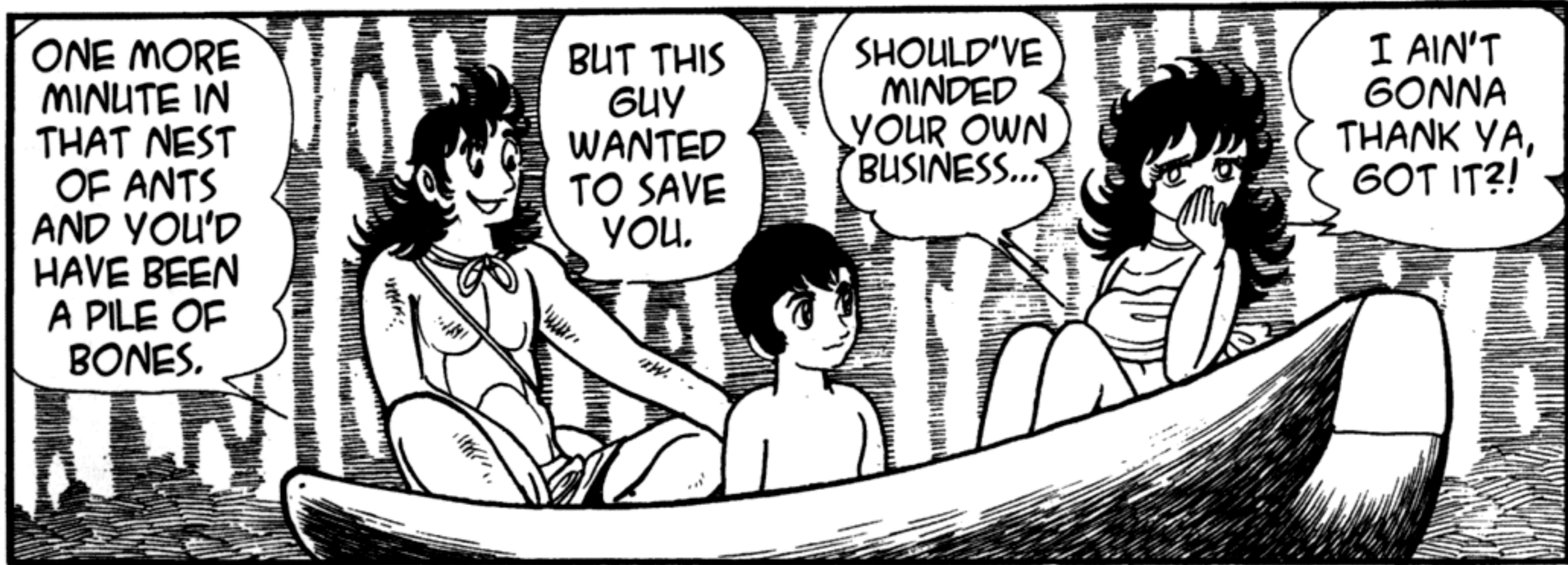
BEING ROYALTY,
ALL YOU HAVE TO DO
EVERY DAY IS ATTEND
BANQUETS AND
SLEEP, AM I RIGHT?
THERE'S LITTLE THAT
POWER CAN'T GET
FOR YOU.

BUT GROWING
OLD AND DYING IS
SOMETHING YOU
CAN'T GET
AROUND.

WE'RE ALL
SO FRAGILE! THE
END COULD BE
JUST AROUND
THE BEND.







ONE MORE MINUTE IN THAT NEST OF ANTS AND YOU'D HAVE BEEN A PILE OF BONES.

BUT THIS GUY WANTED TO SAVE YOU.

SHOULD'VE MINDED YOUR OWN BUSINESS...

I AIN'T GONNA THANK YA, GOT IT?!



MY NAME IS SIDDHARTHA. WHAT'S YOURS?



SHUT UP! WHO THE HELL CARES?!



IT'S... MIGAILA.



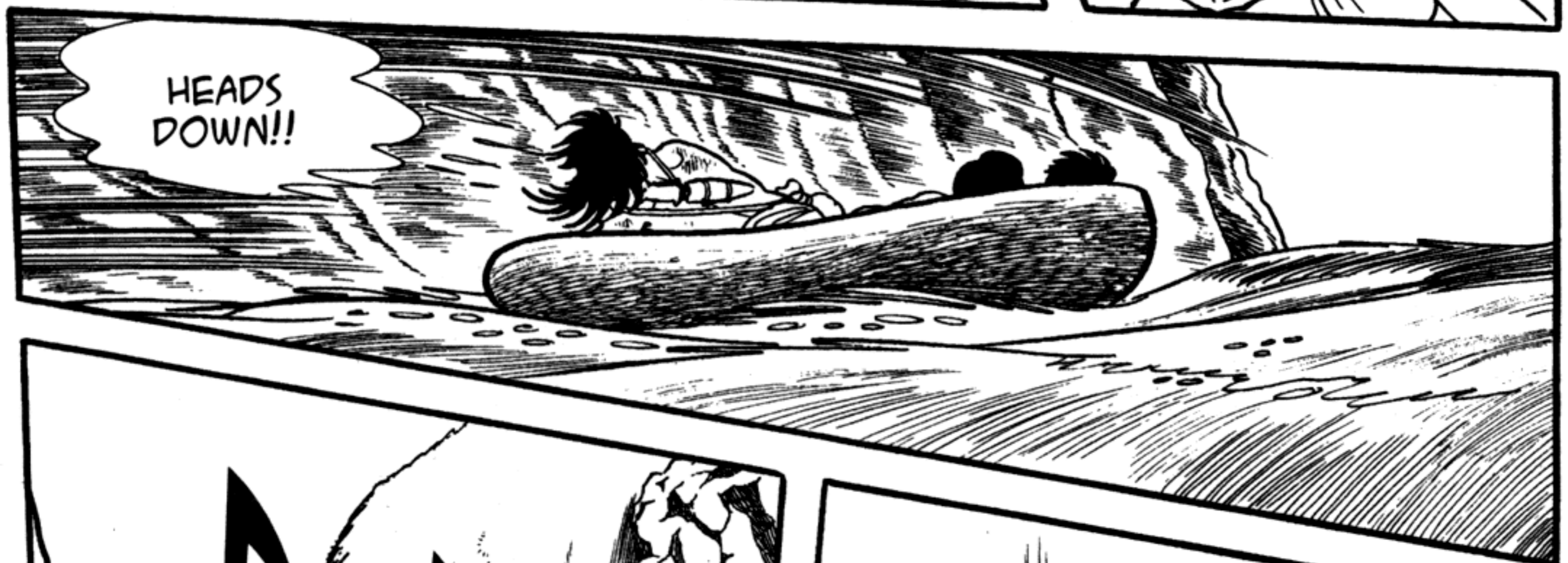
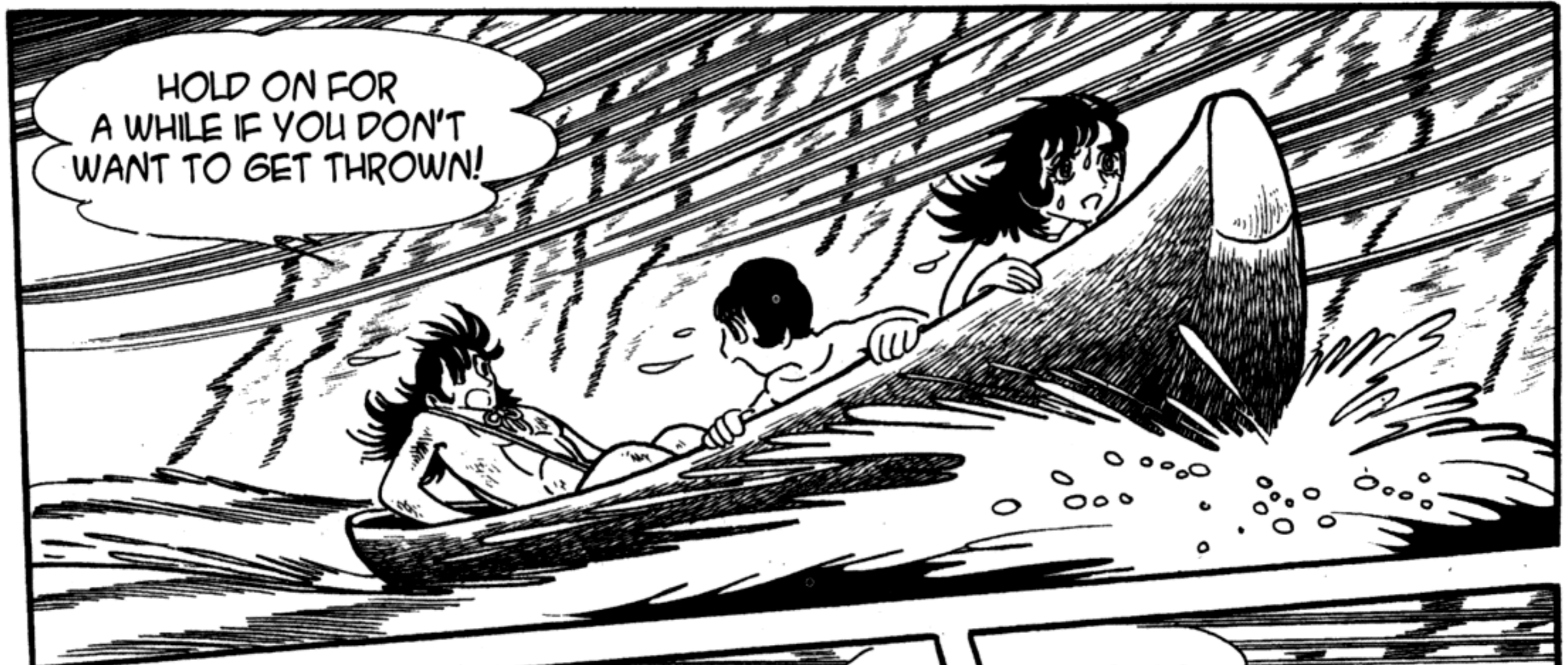
WERE THOSE MEN THE CROCS ATE YOUR GANG?

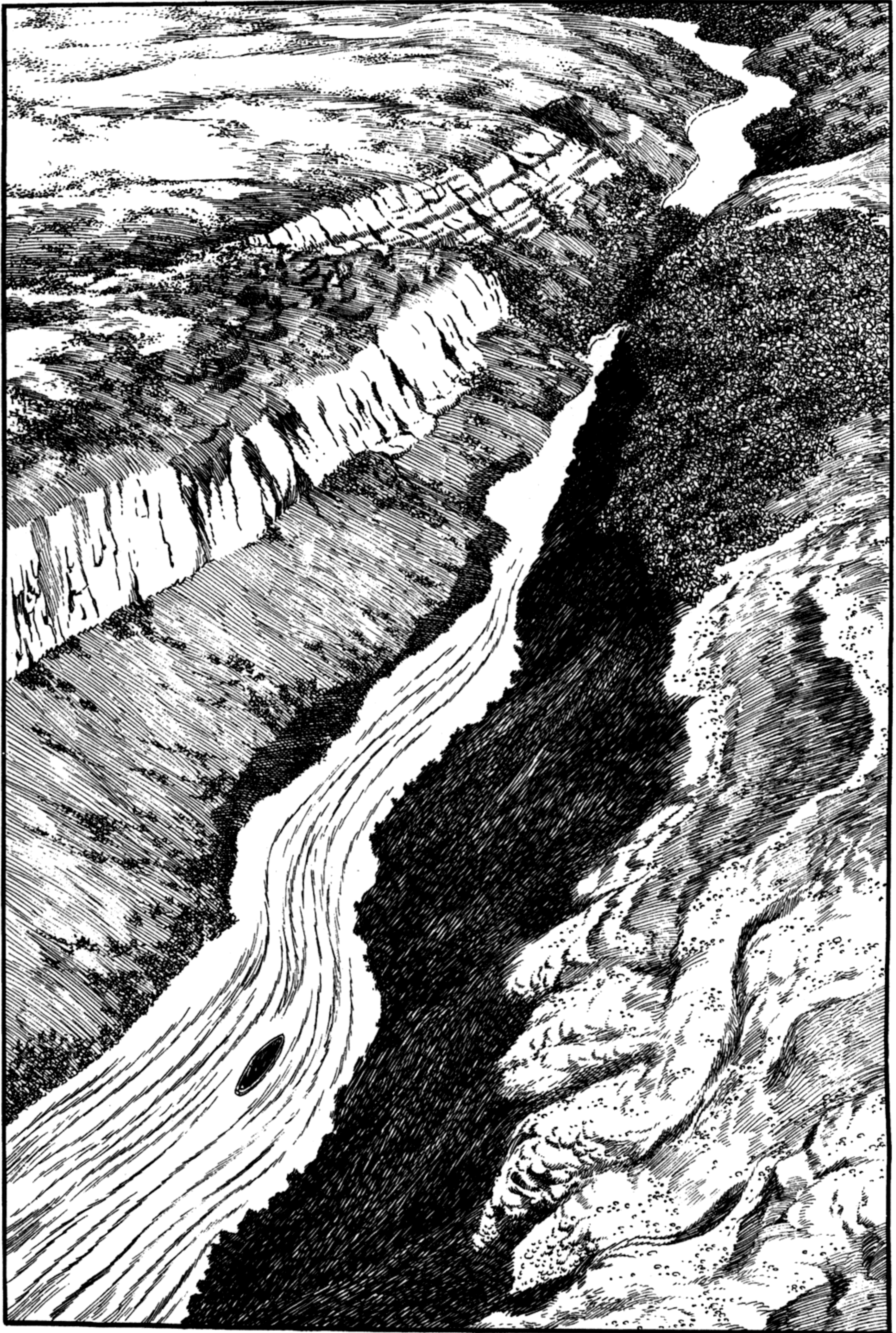


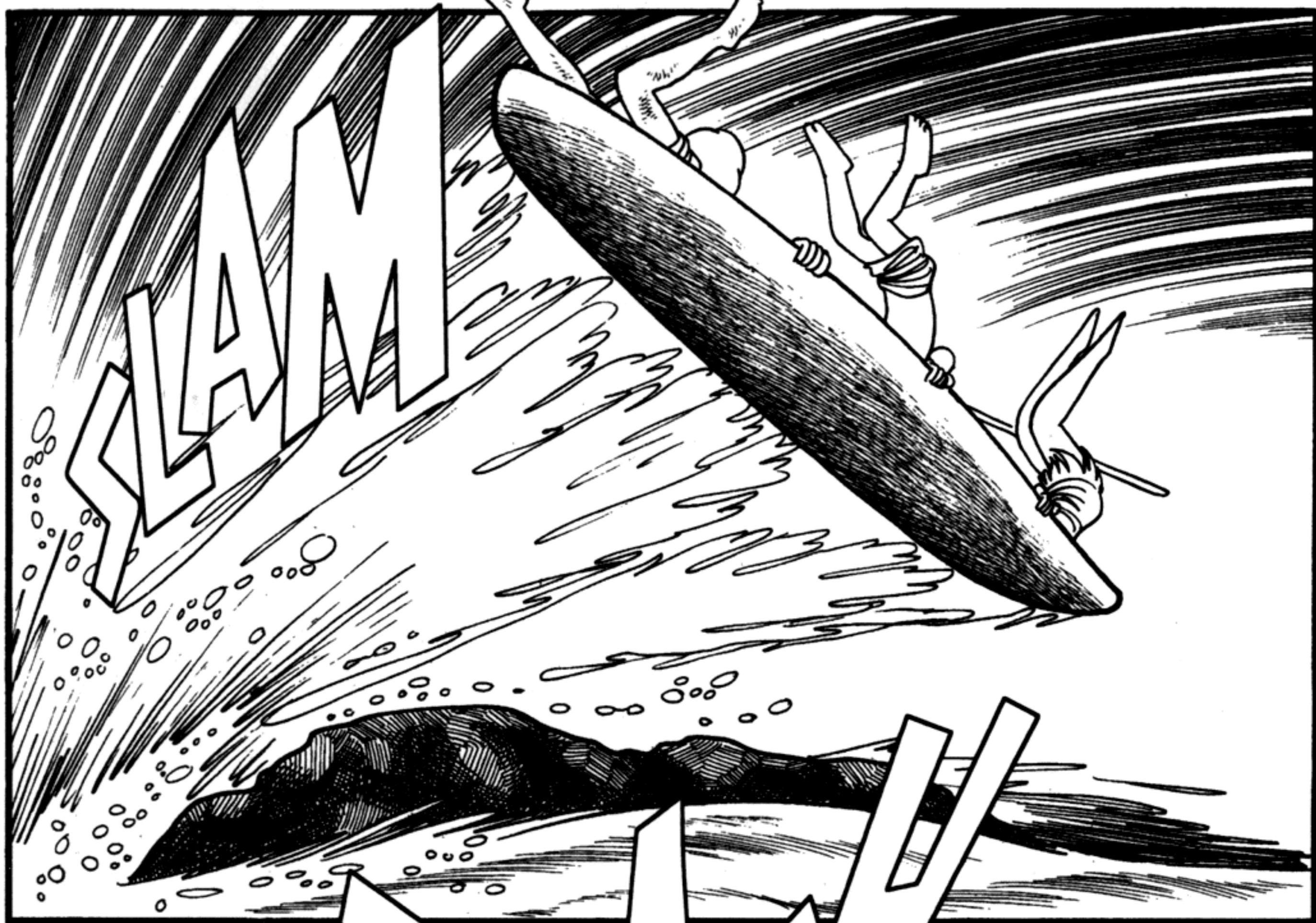
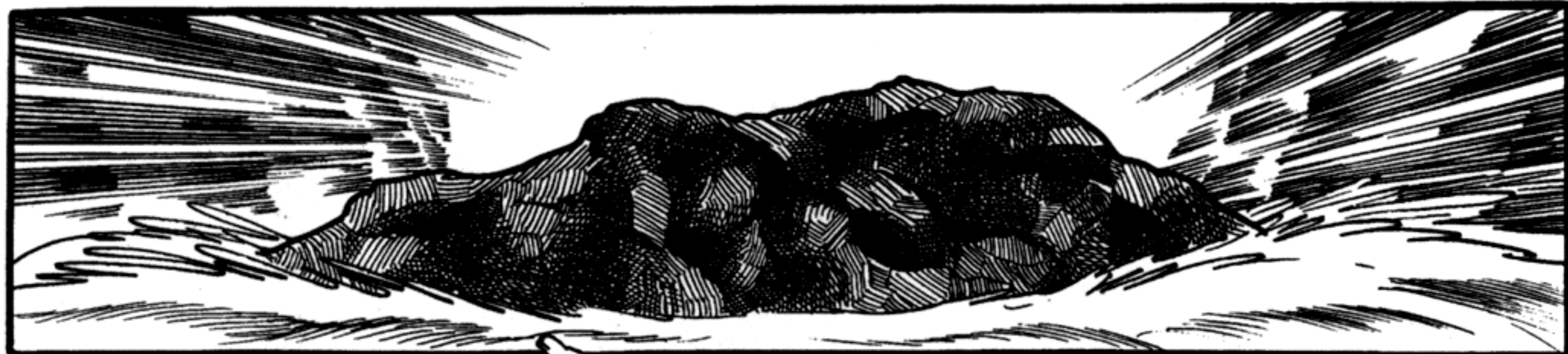
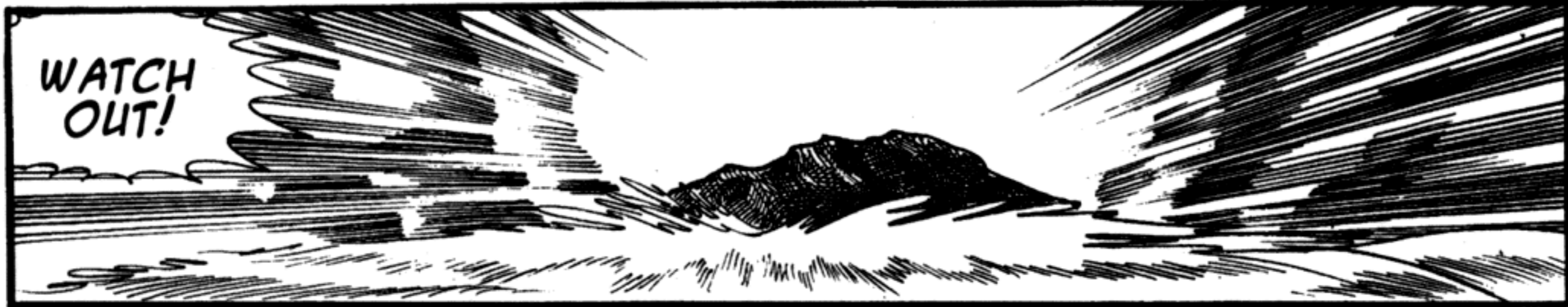
YOU BET! WE FIGURED YOU WERE SOME NOBLE SO WE TRIED TO SNAG YOU, BUT I GOT SNAGGED INSTEAD. DAMN YOU...



BE CAREFUL. WE'RE COMING TO THE MOST DANGEROUS PART OF THE RIVER.





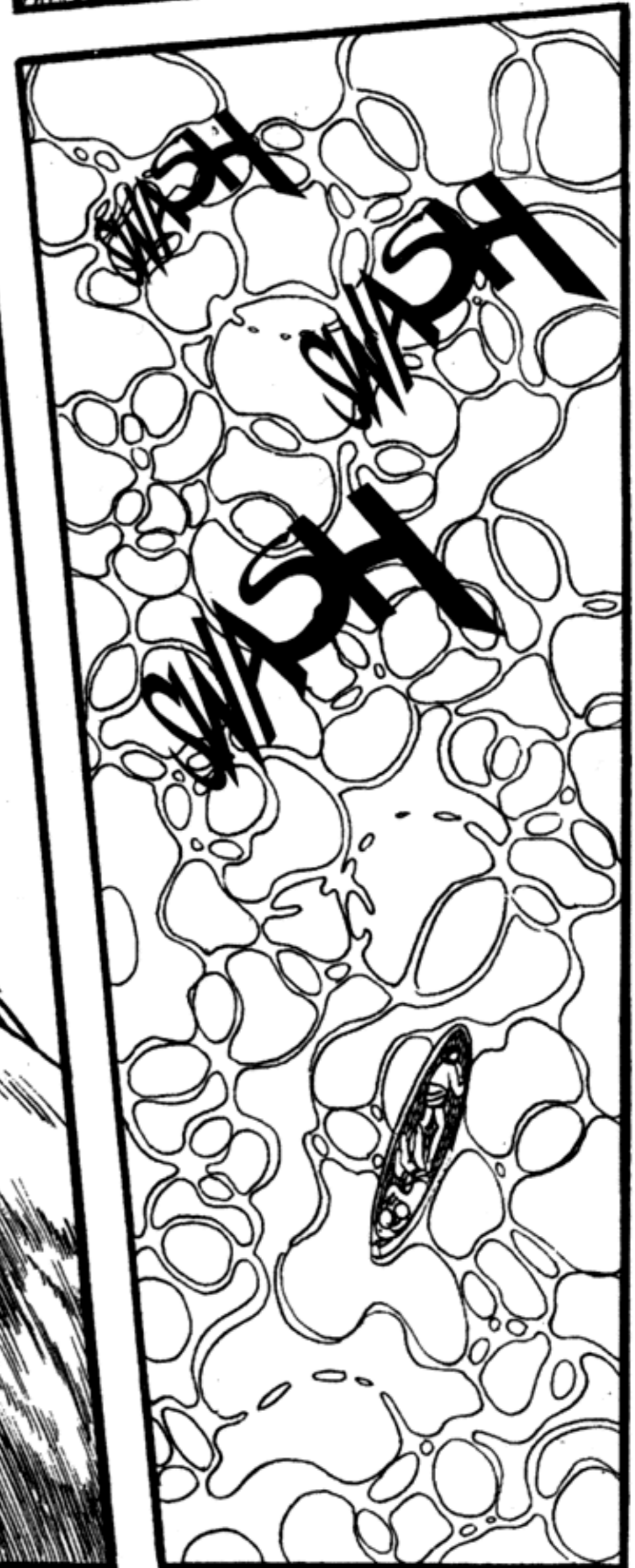


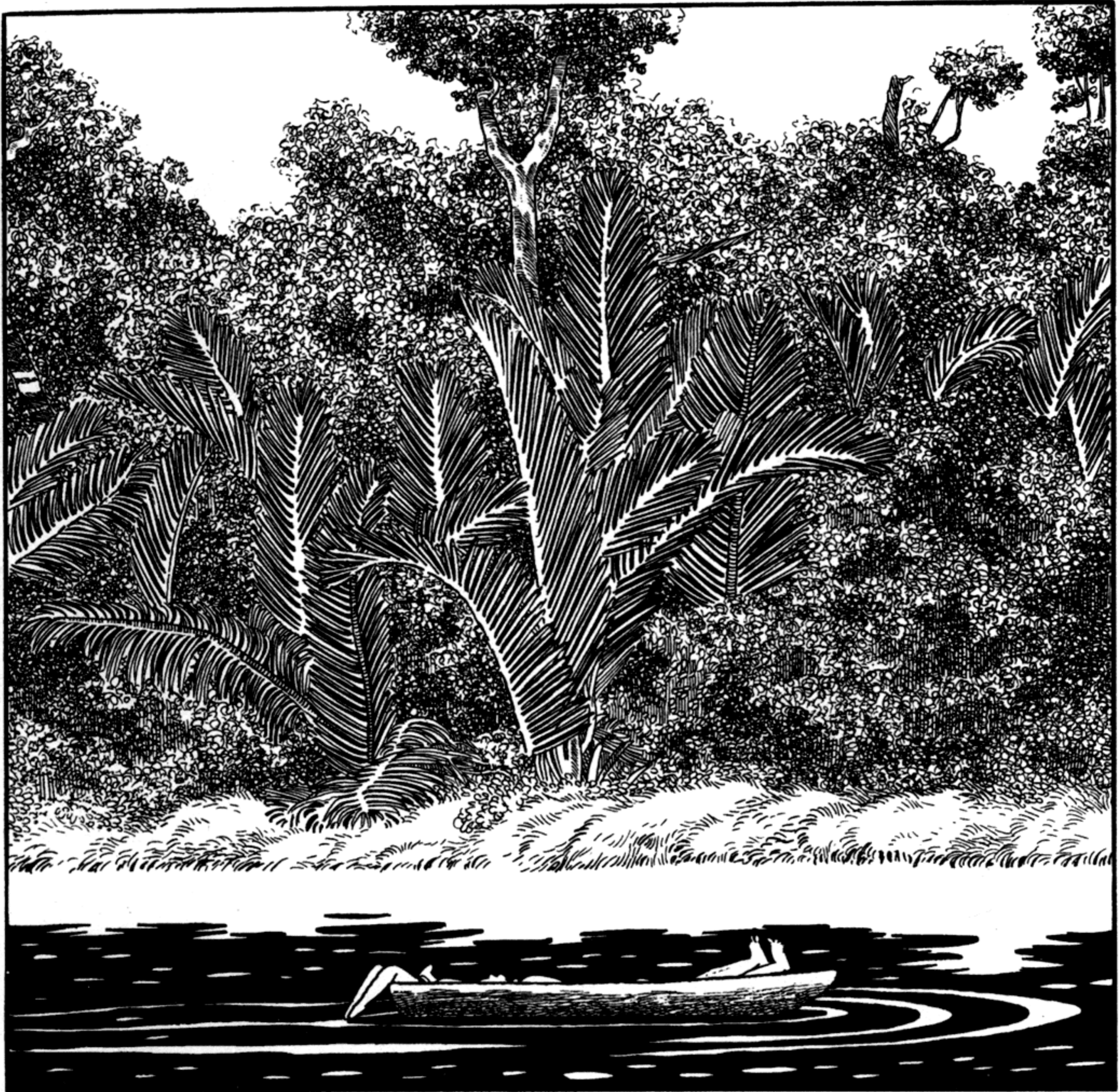


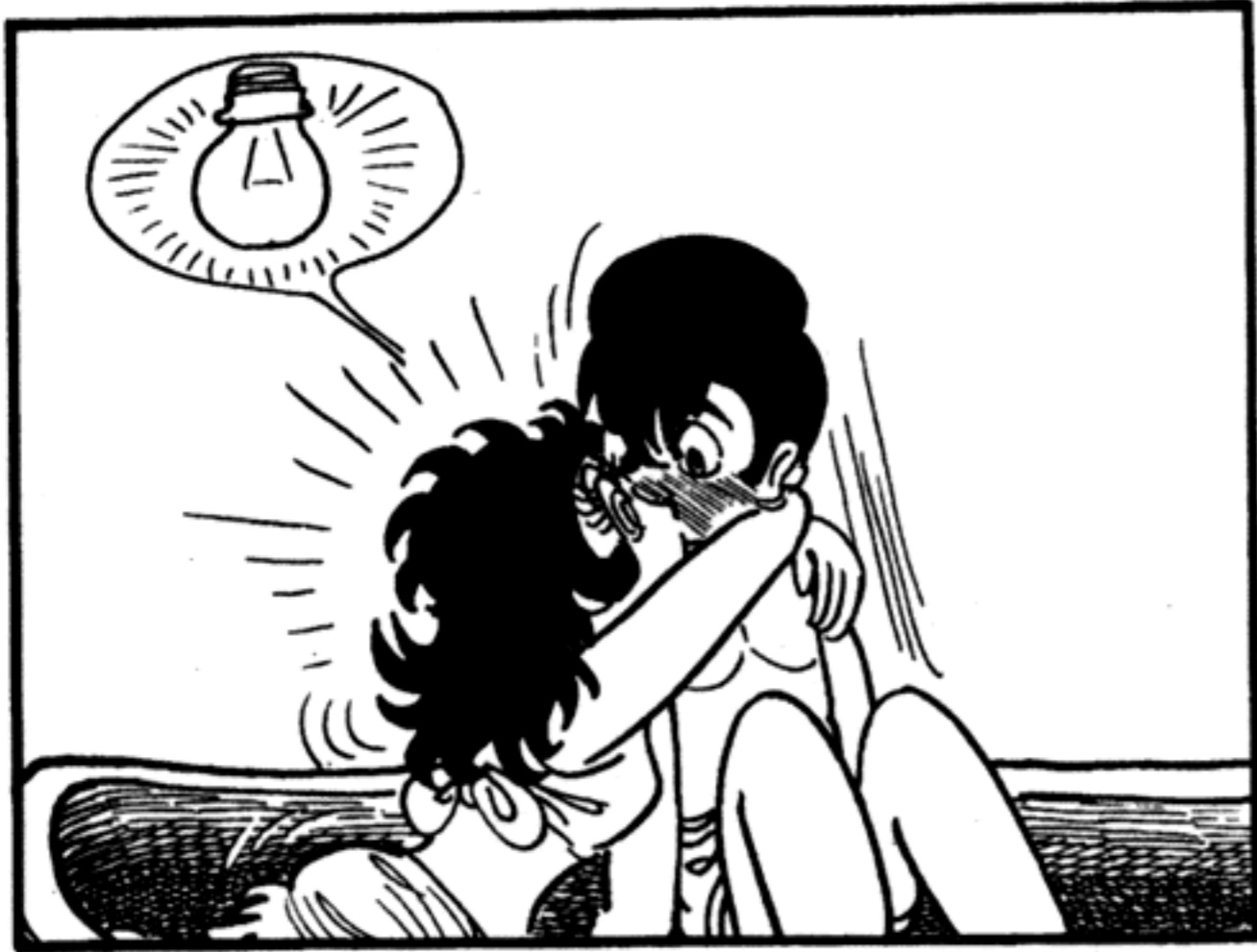
HELP!

SUUUU

AHH









WHAT'S UP AHEAD?

KINGDOM OF MAGADHA. NOT THAT I'VE EVER BEEN THERE.



THEY SAY IT'S MIGHTY, 10 TIMES LARGER THAN YOUR COUNTRY.



THEY ALSO SAY IT'S GOT A HUGE BAZAAR THAT'S A THIEF'S DELIGHT!



...OH, TRAVELERS



LOOK AT THE SHRIVELED OLD HAG - OR IS IT A MAN?

TRAVELERS... SPARE ME SOME WATER...



W-WATER, PLEASE... IN THIS BOWL...

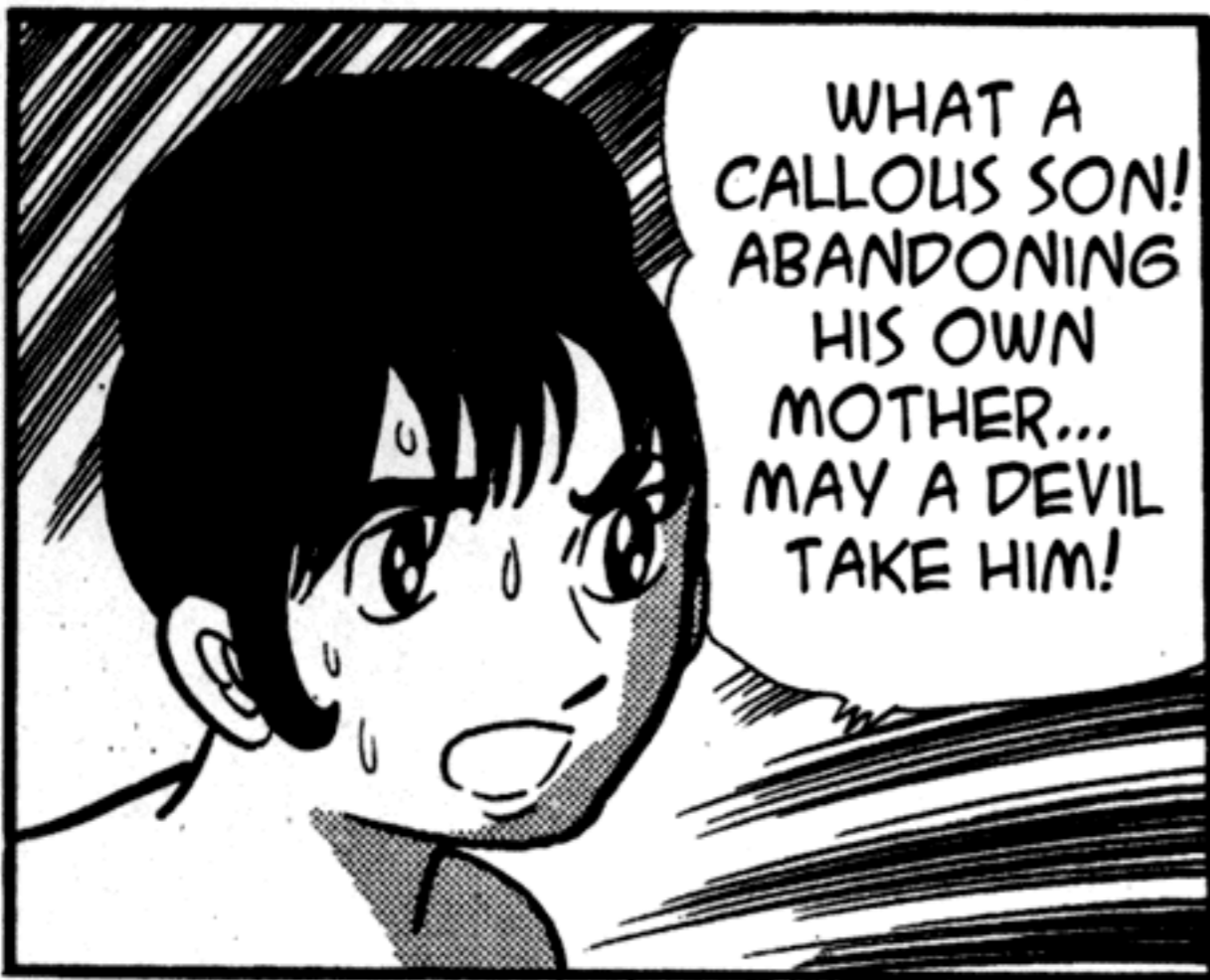
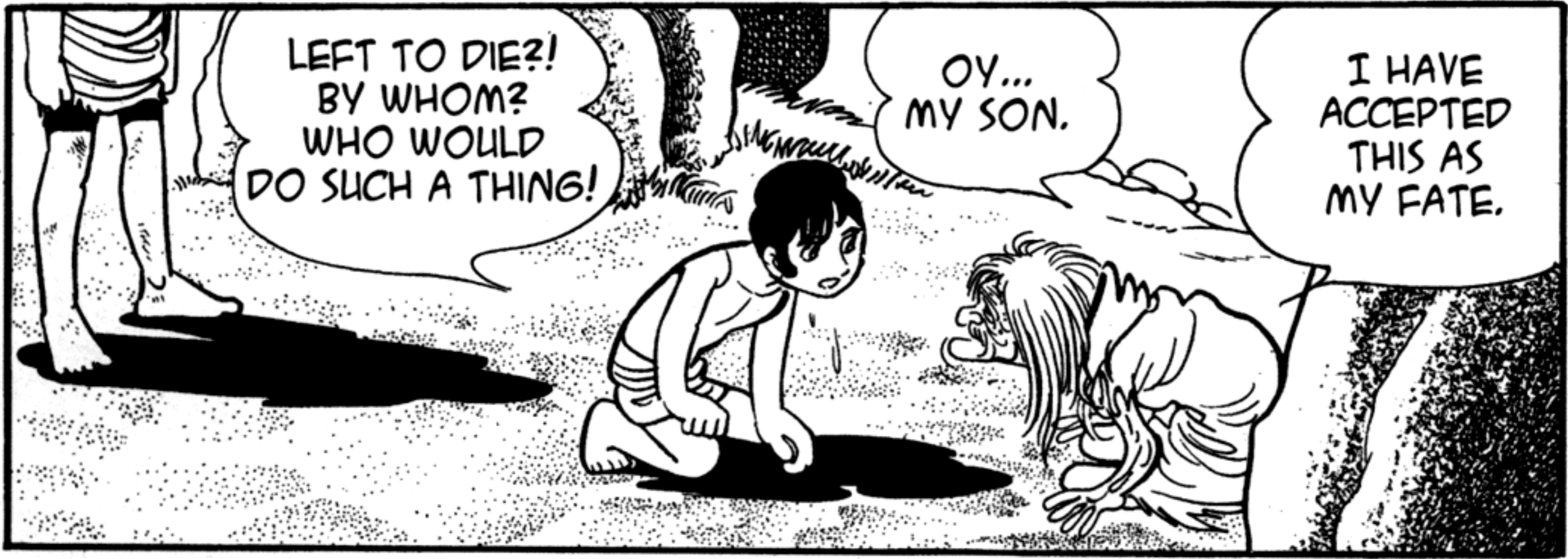


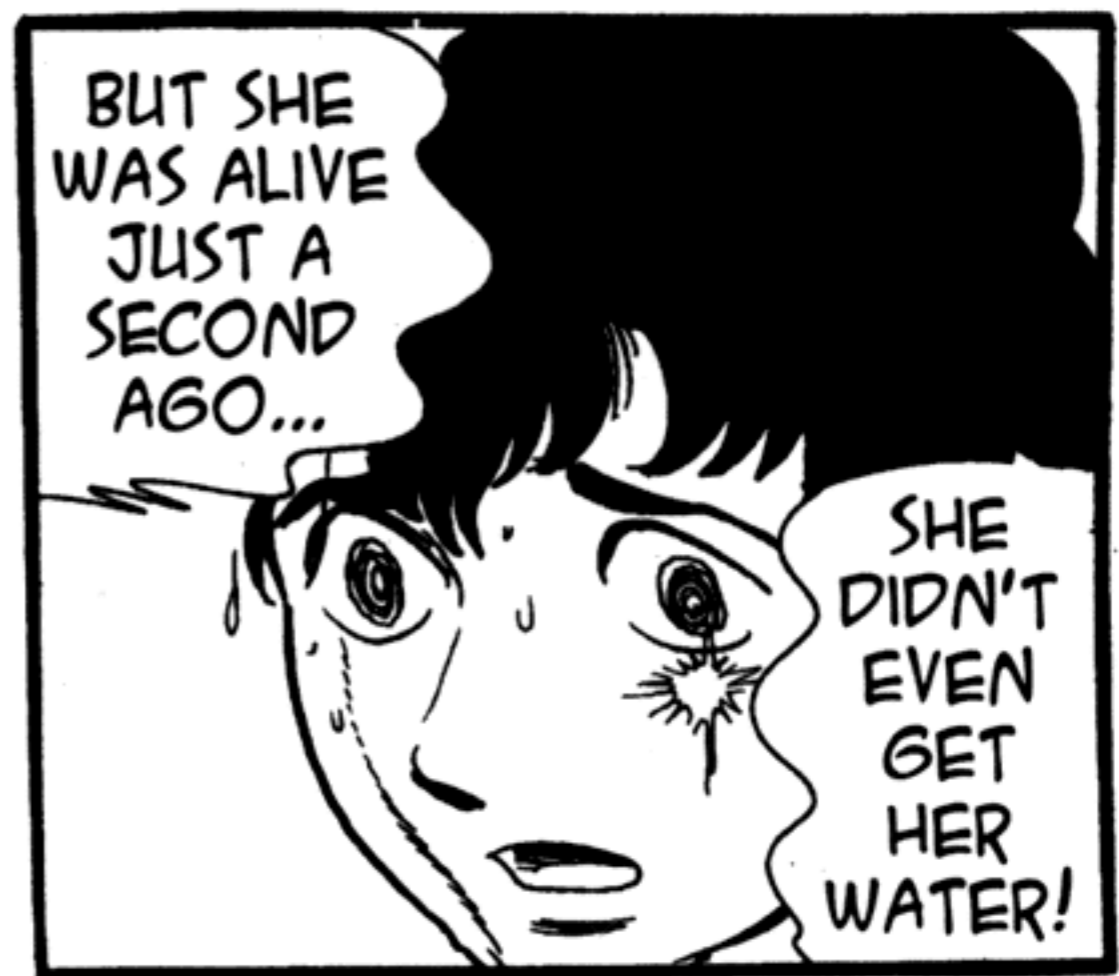
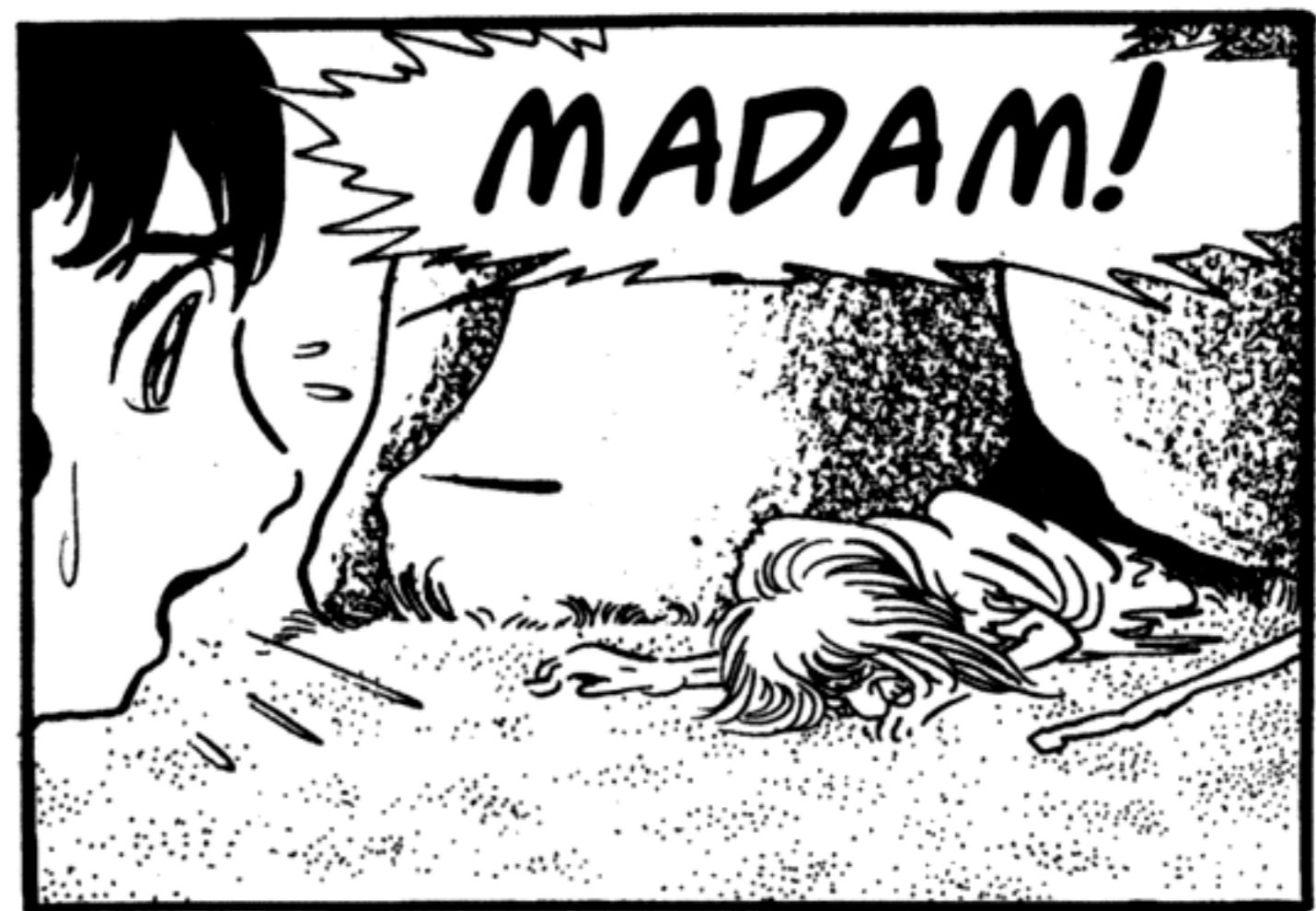
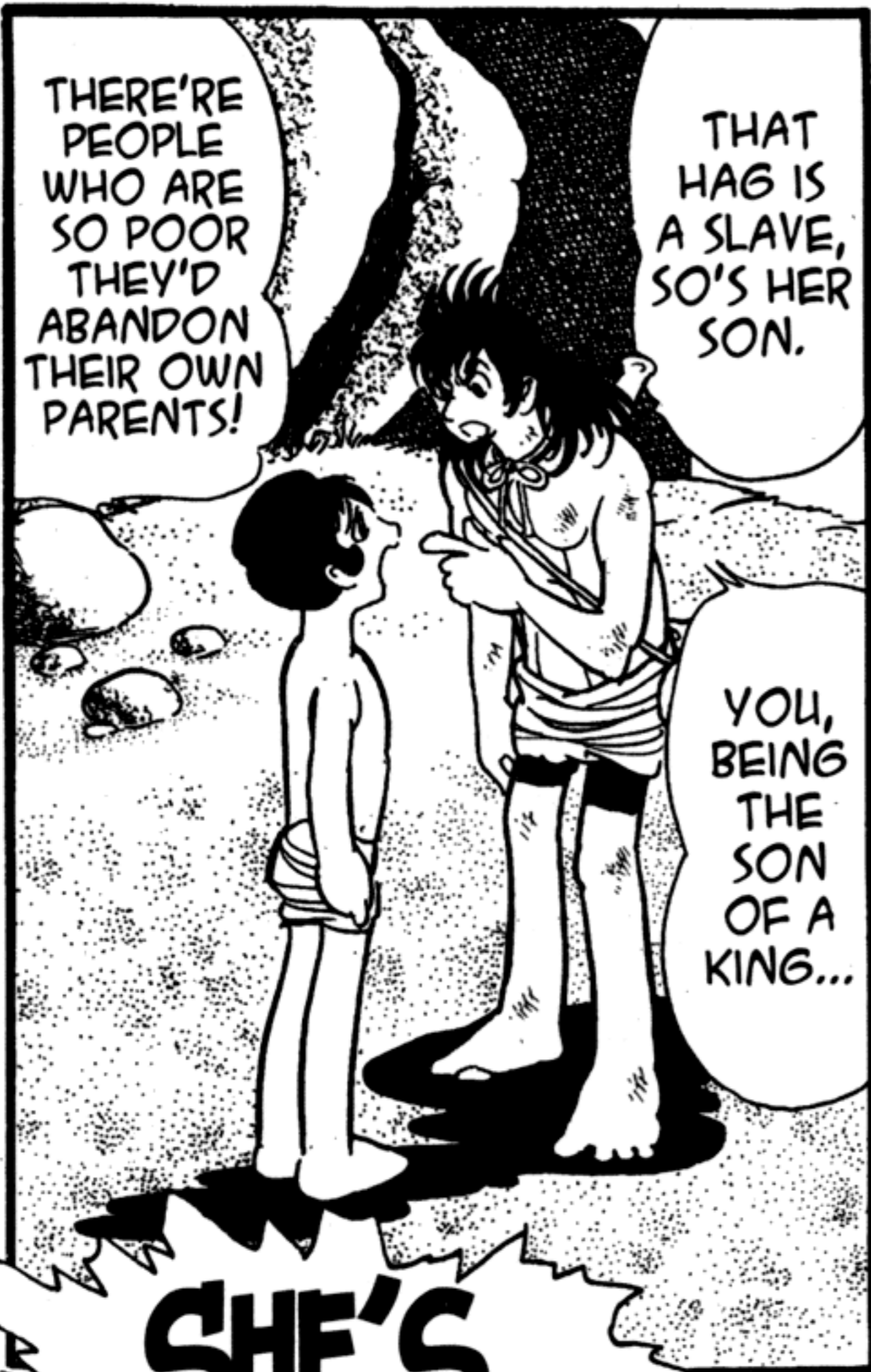
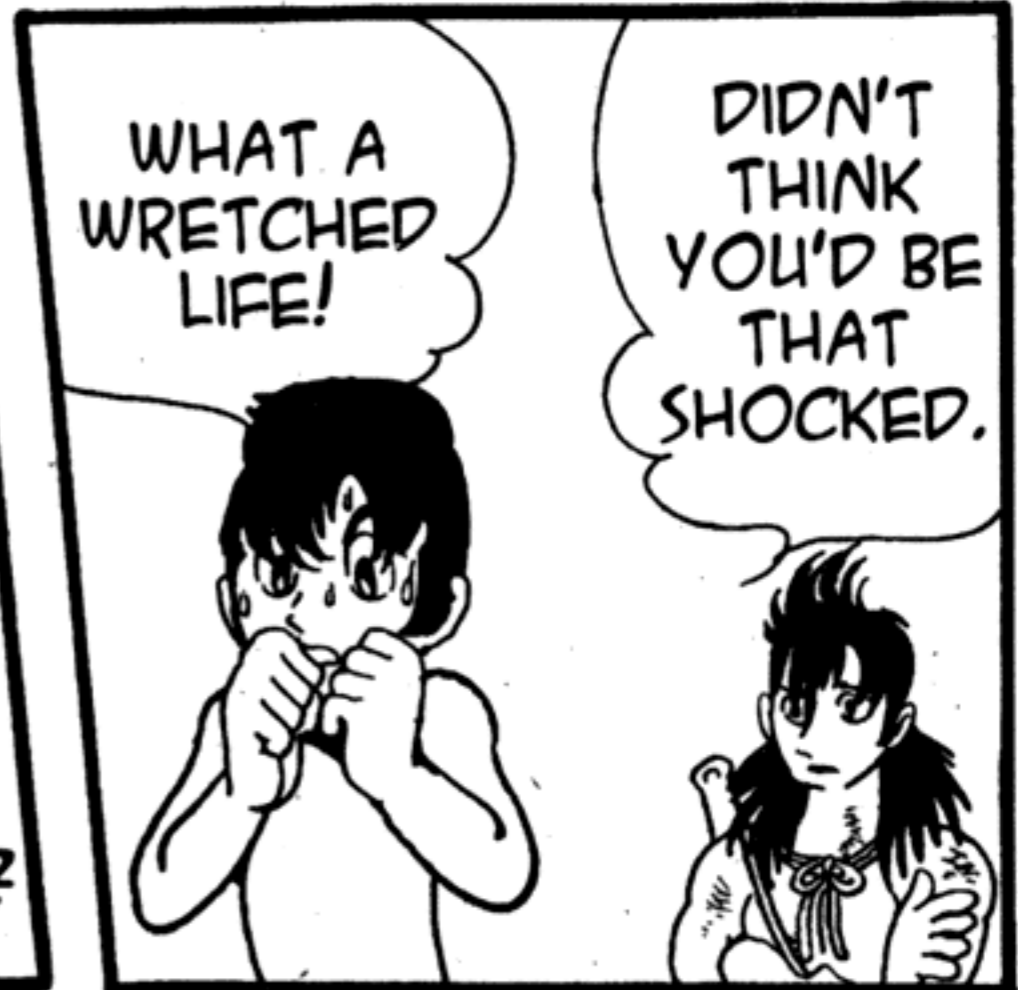
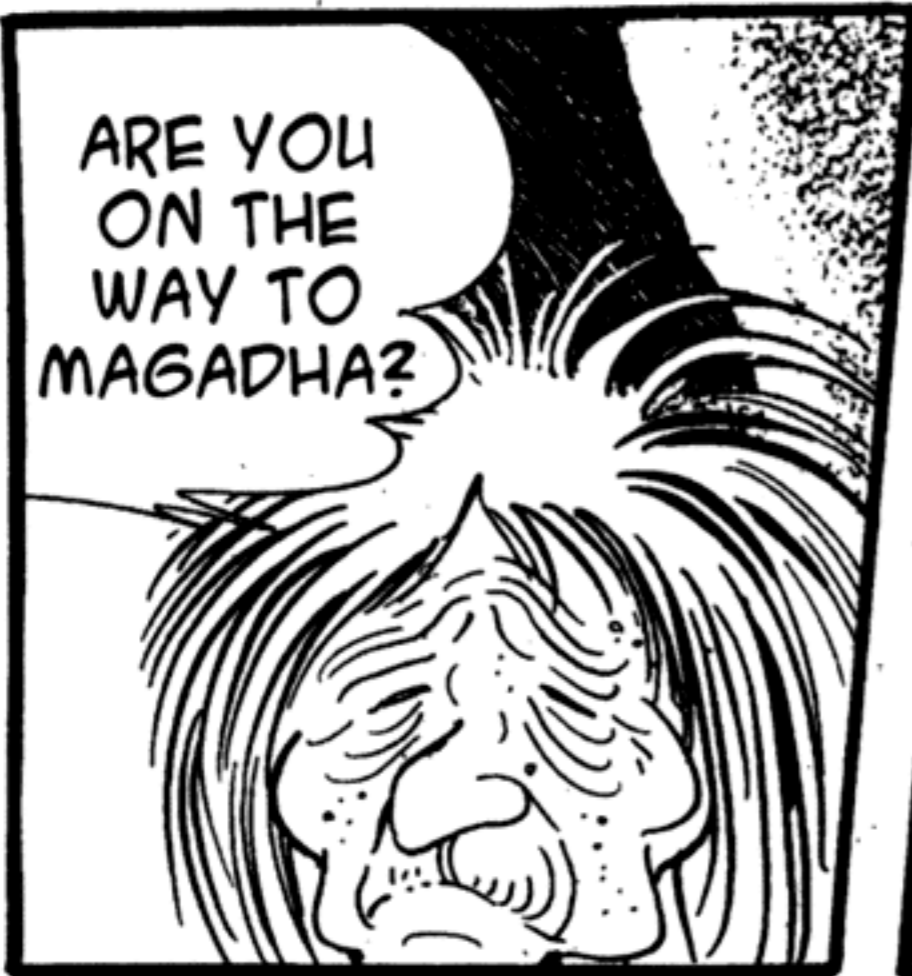
GRANNY, THE RIVER'S RIGHT THERE. GET UP AND WALK ON OVER.

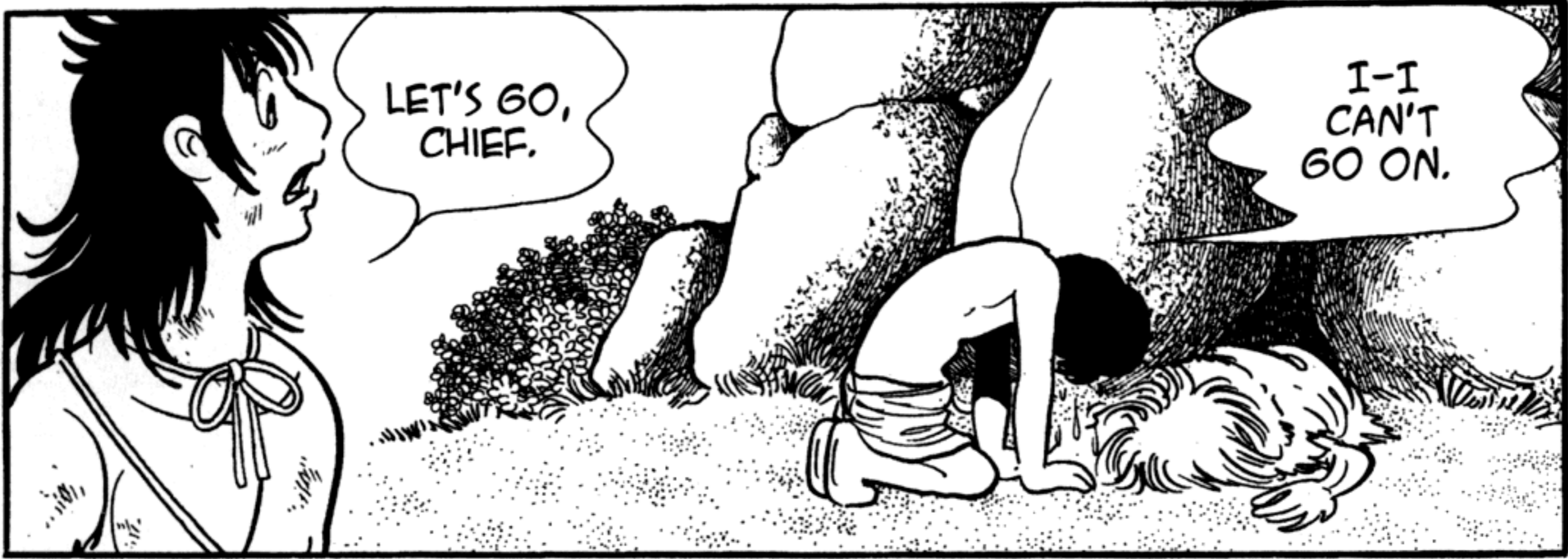


CAN YOU WALK? HOW DID YOU GET HERE?

OY...I WAS LEFT TO DIE HERE THREE DAYS AGO.

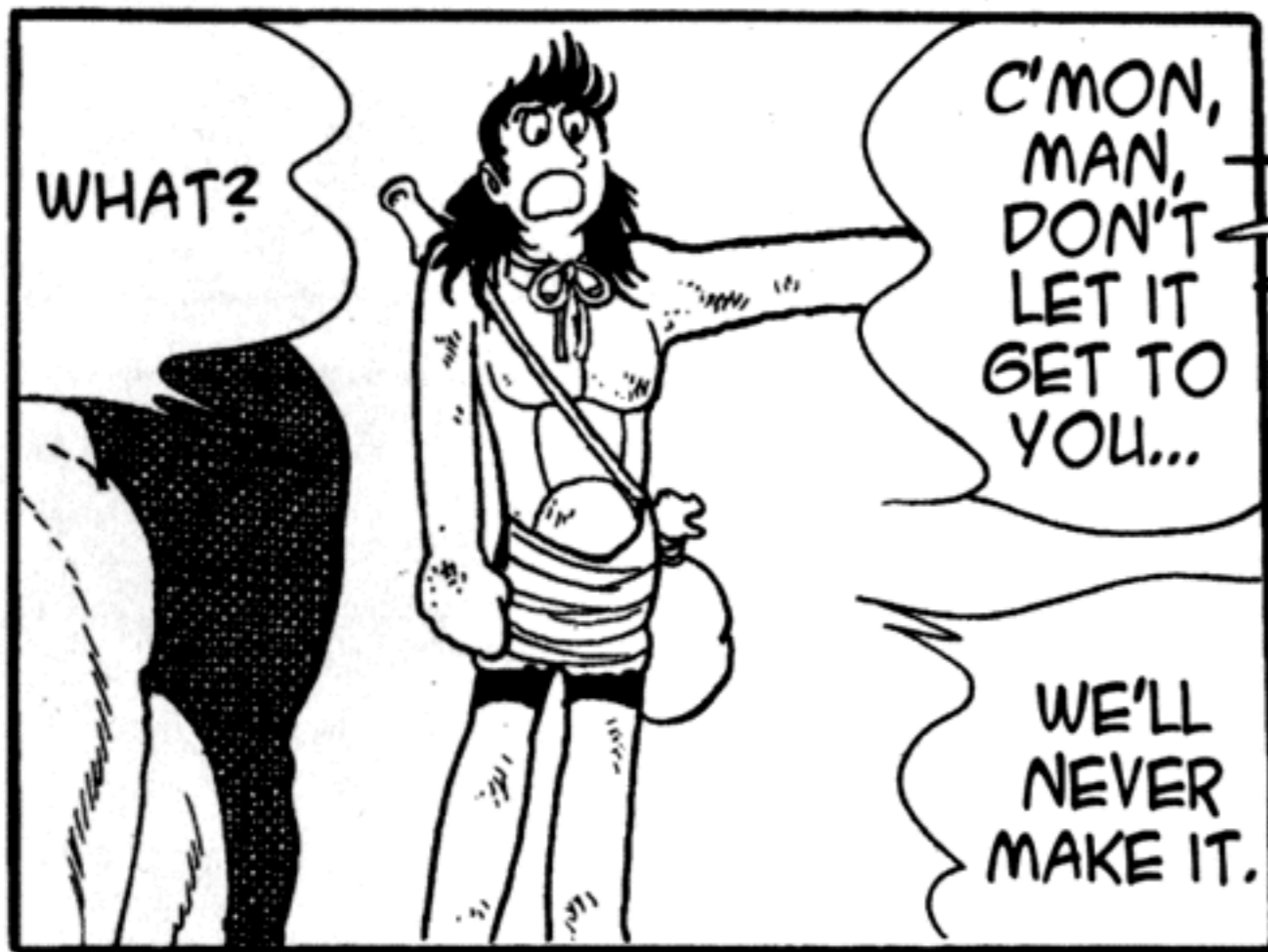






LET'S GO, CHIEF.

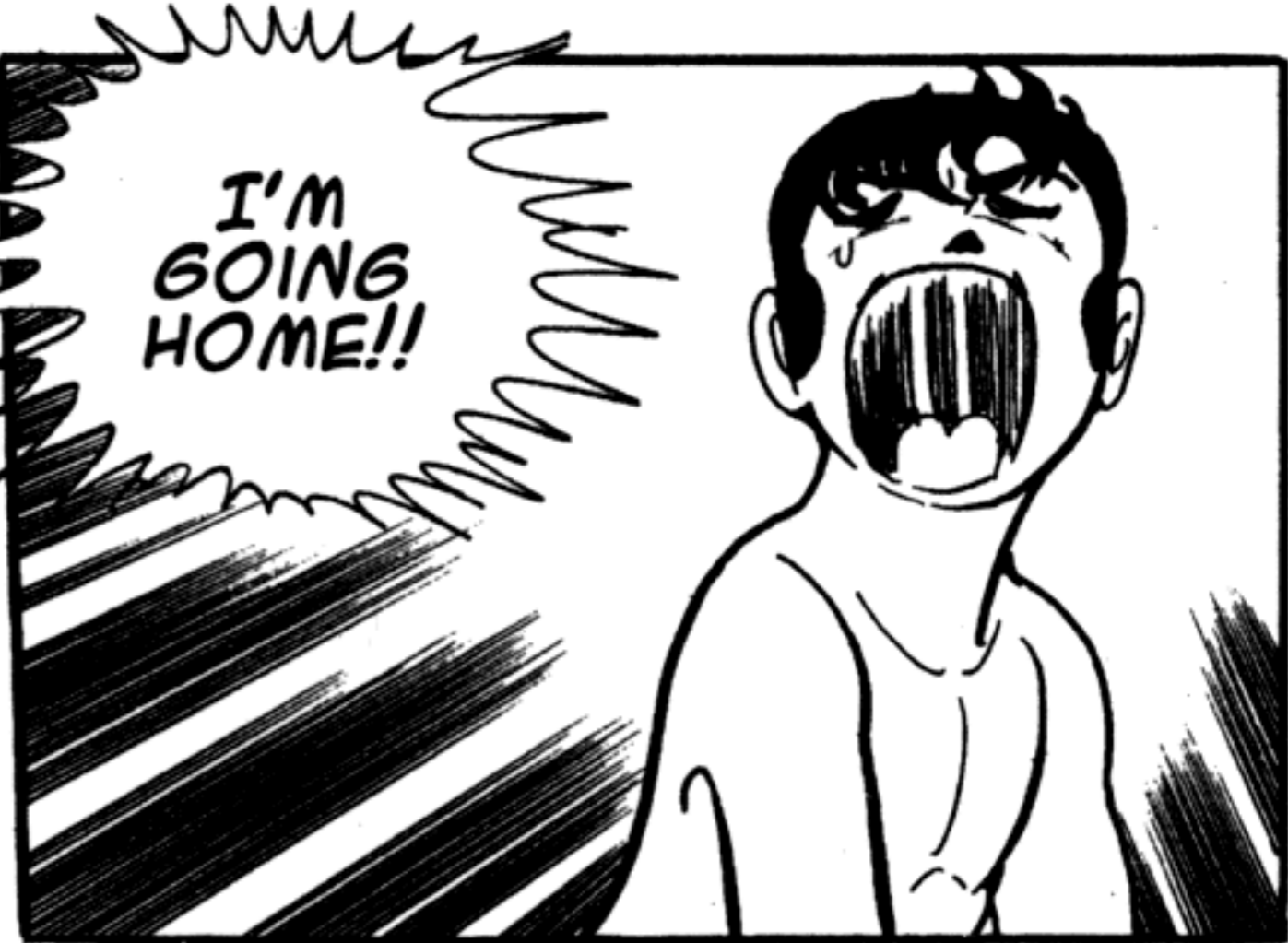
I-I CAN'T GO ON.



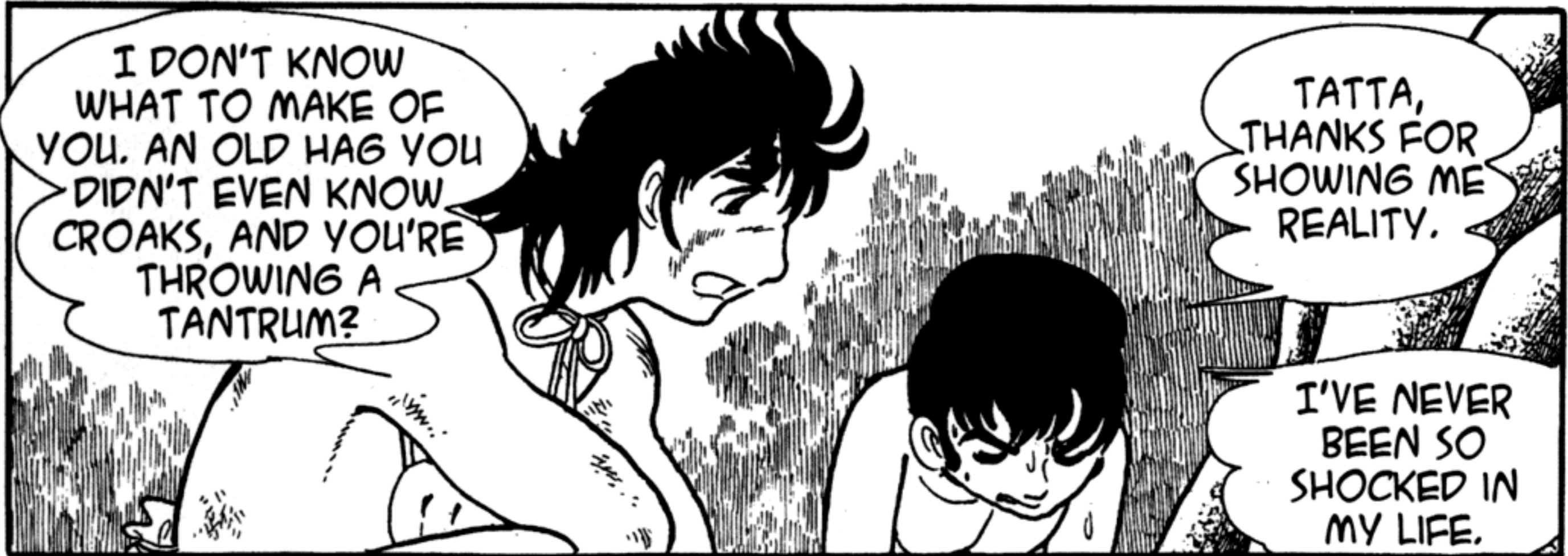
WHAT?

C'MON, MAN, DON'T LET IT GET TO YOU...

WE'LL NEVER MAKE IT.



I'M GOING HOME!!



I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO MAKE OF YOU. AN OLD HAG YOU DIDN'T EVEN KNOW CROAKS, AND YOU'RE THROWING A TANTRUM?

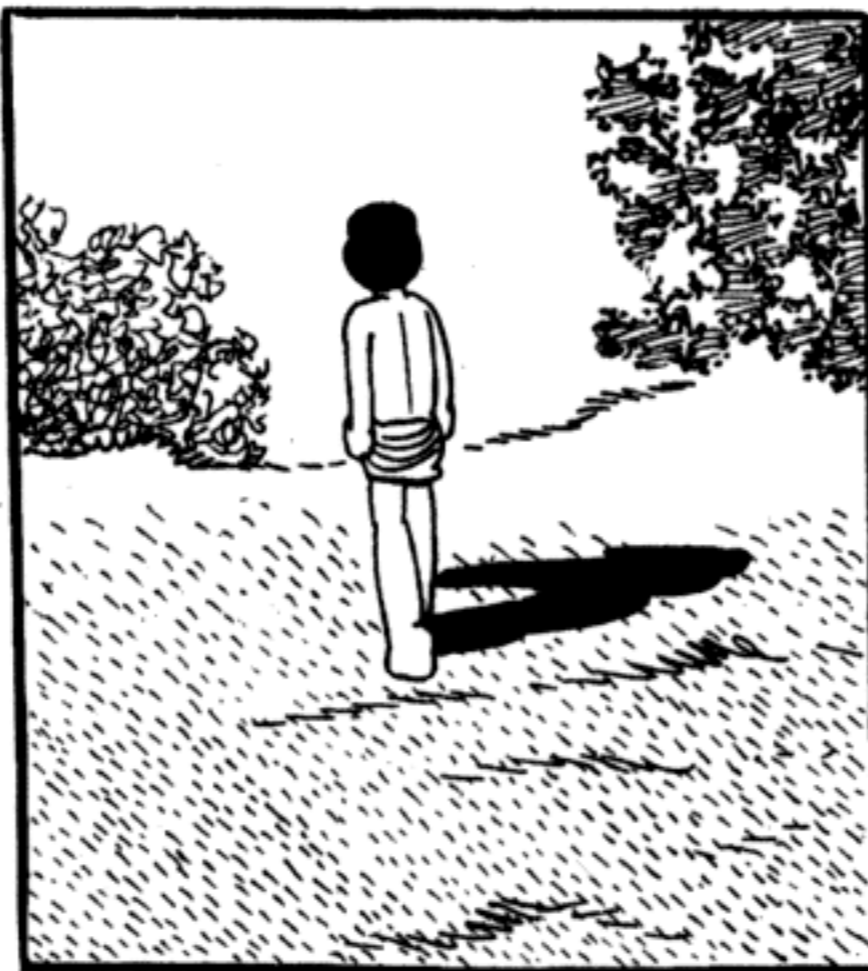
TATTA, THANKS FOR SHOWING ME REALITY.

I'VE NEVER BEEN SO SHOCKED IN MY LIFE.



I'LL GO BACK, ALONE, IF I MUST.

YOU TWO GO ON AHEAD.



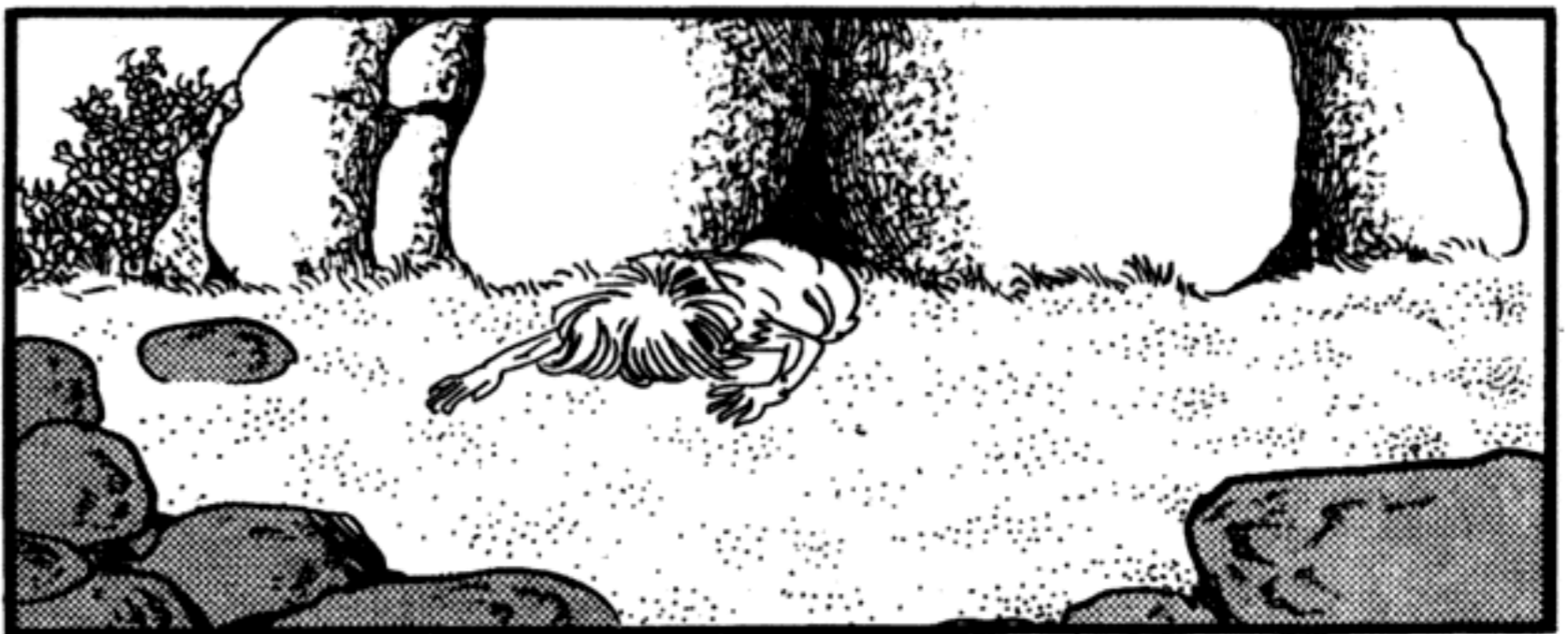
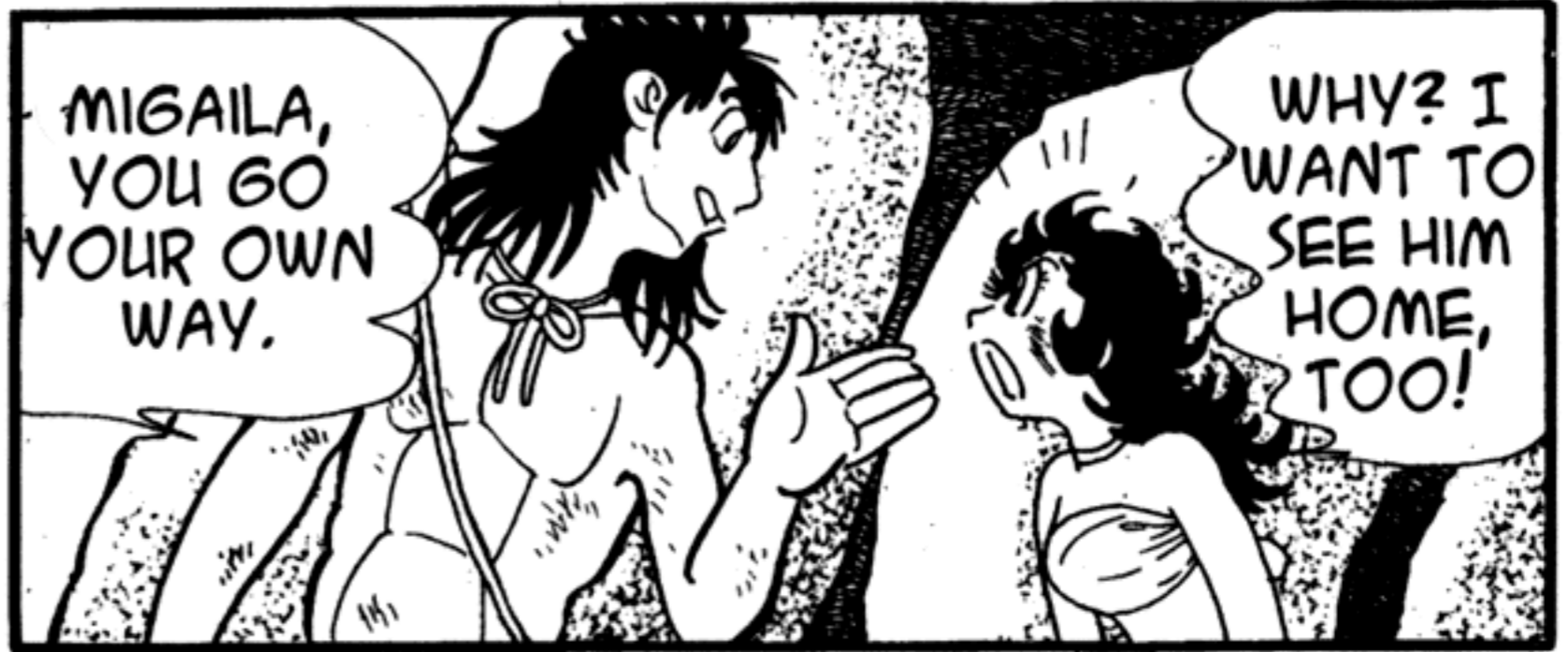
HEY, WAIT, SIDDHARTHA.



I SEE YOU MEAN IT. I'LL WALK YOU BACK TO THE CASTLE.

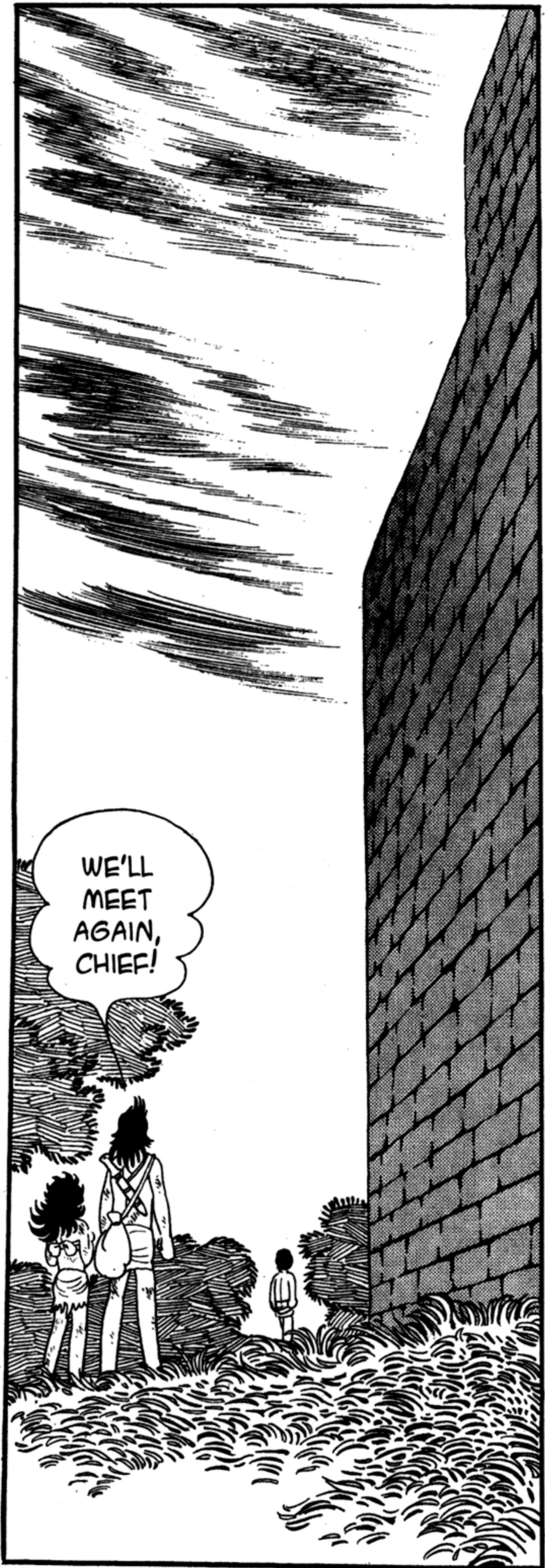
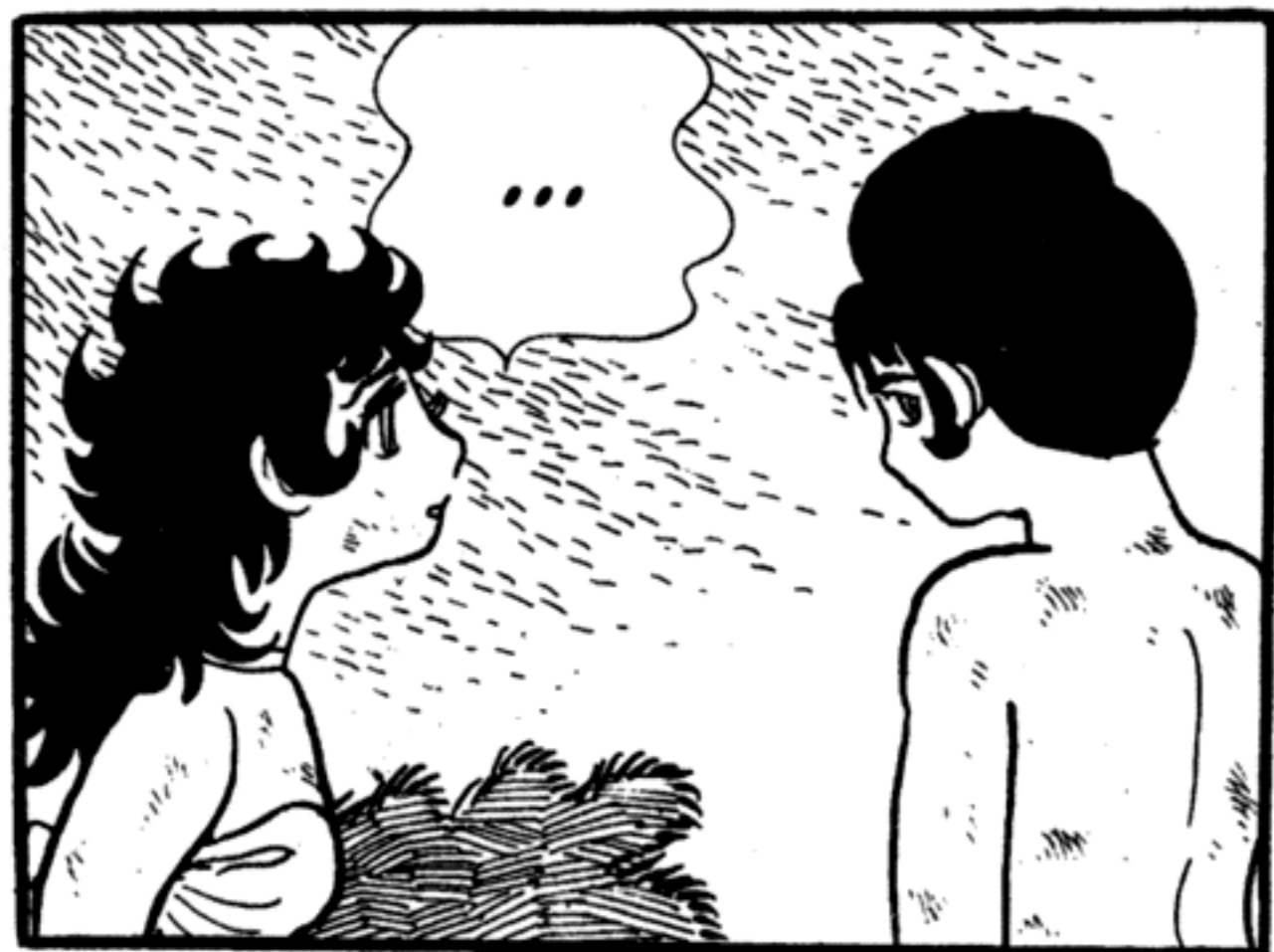
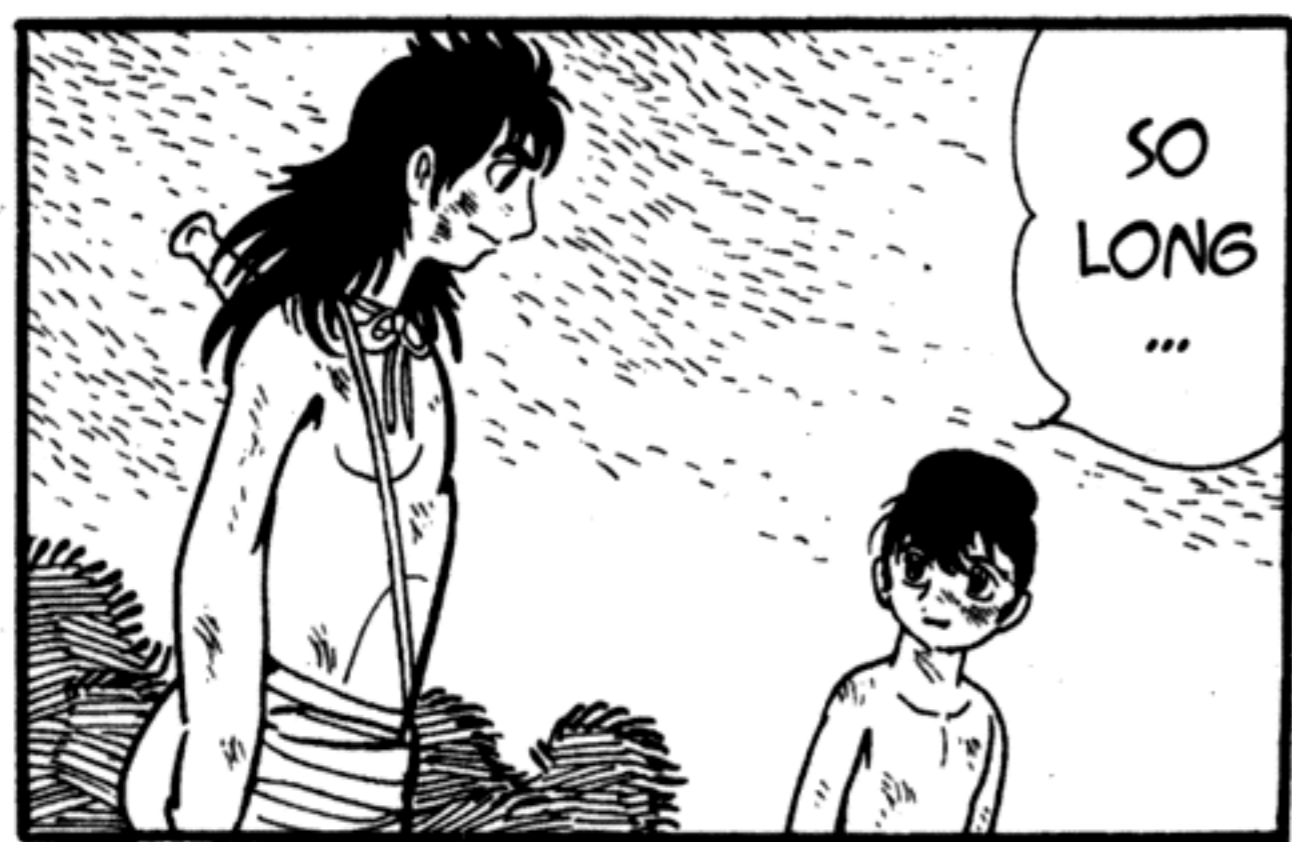
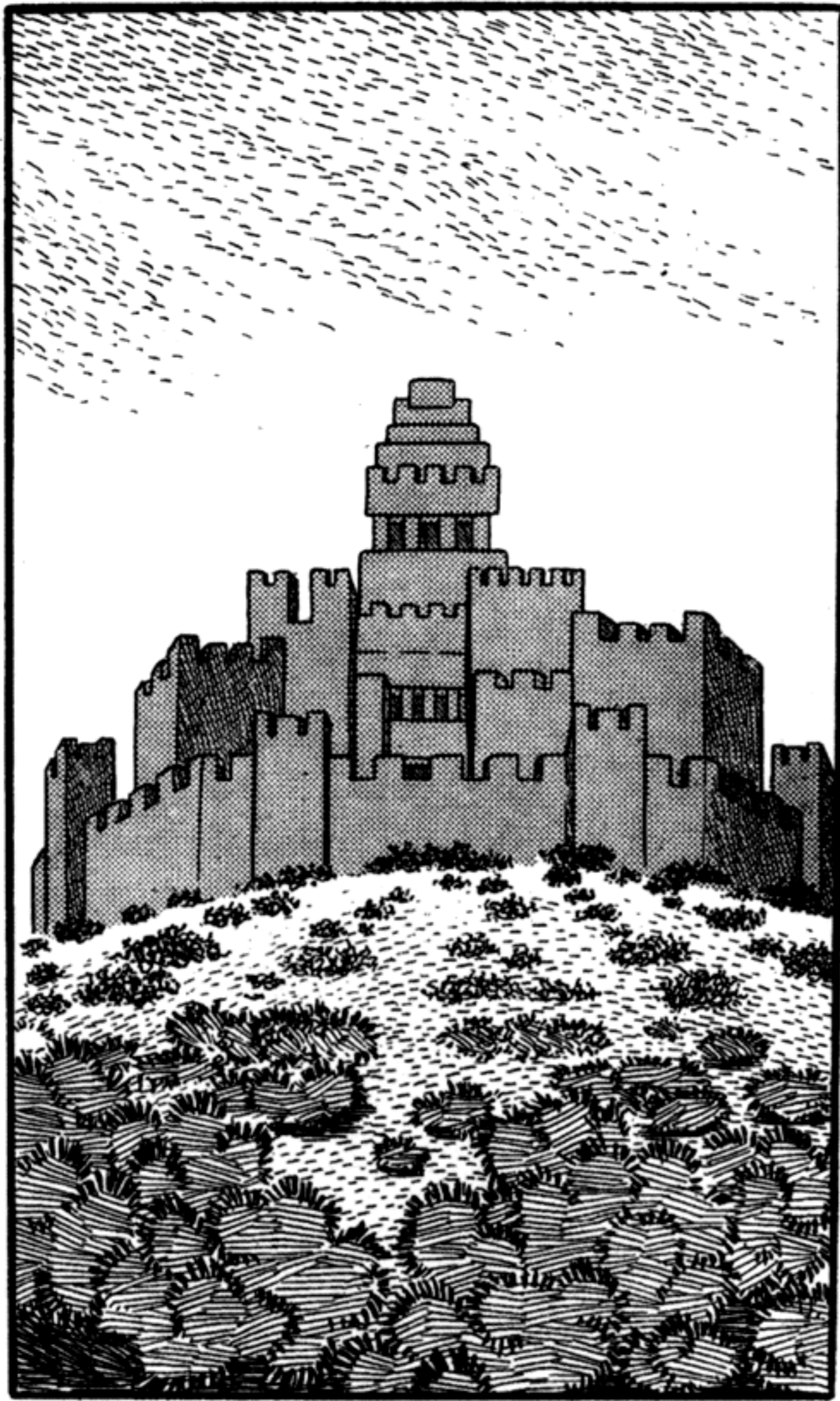
WE'LL HAVE TO GO ALONG THE MOUNTAINS...

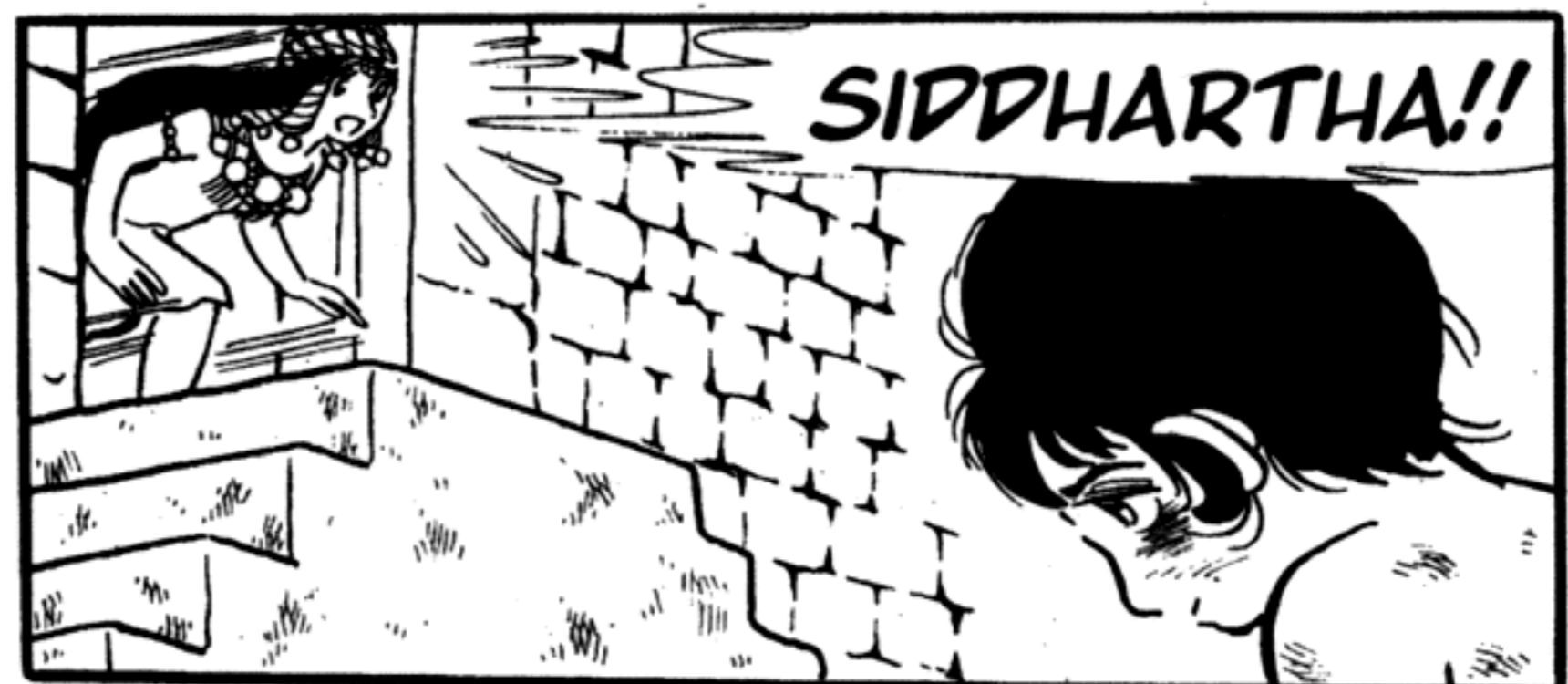
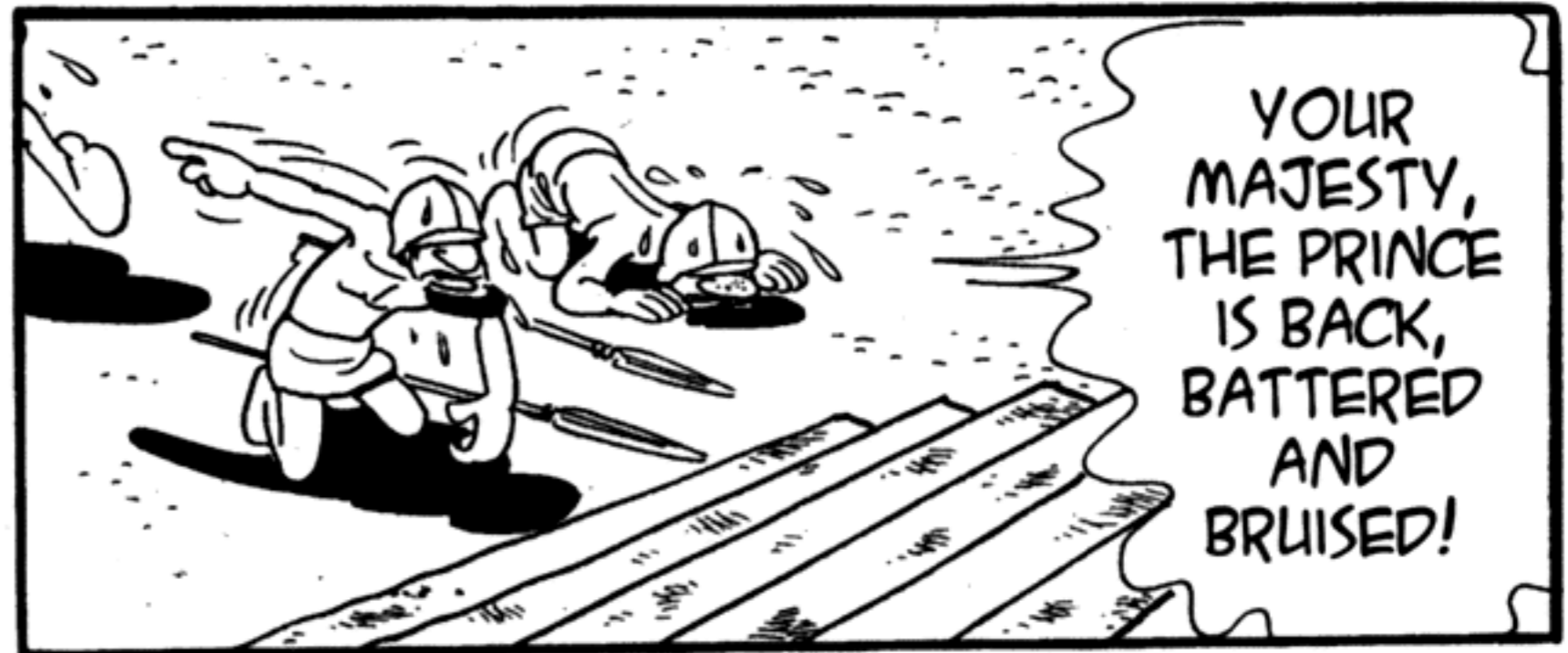
YOU WEREN'T THINKING TO GO UP THAT RIVER, WERE YOU?

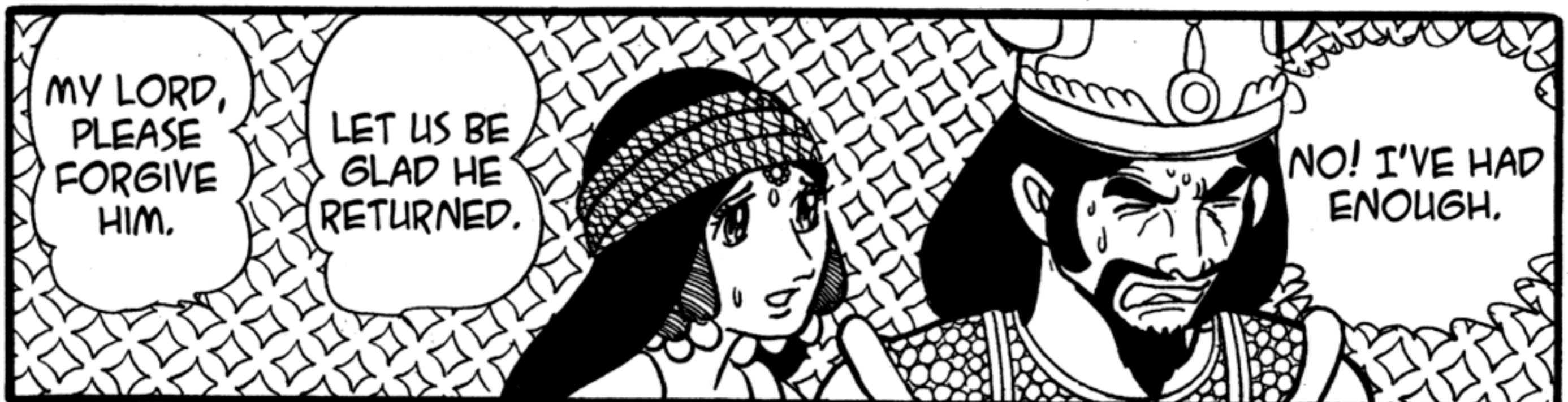


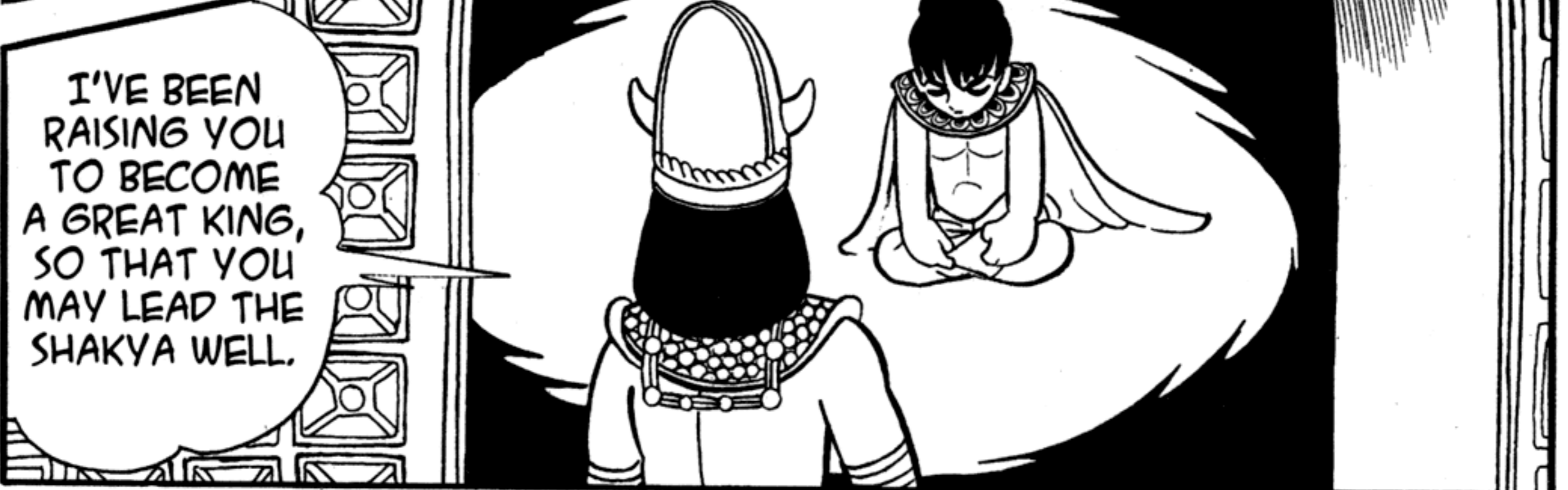
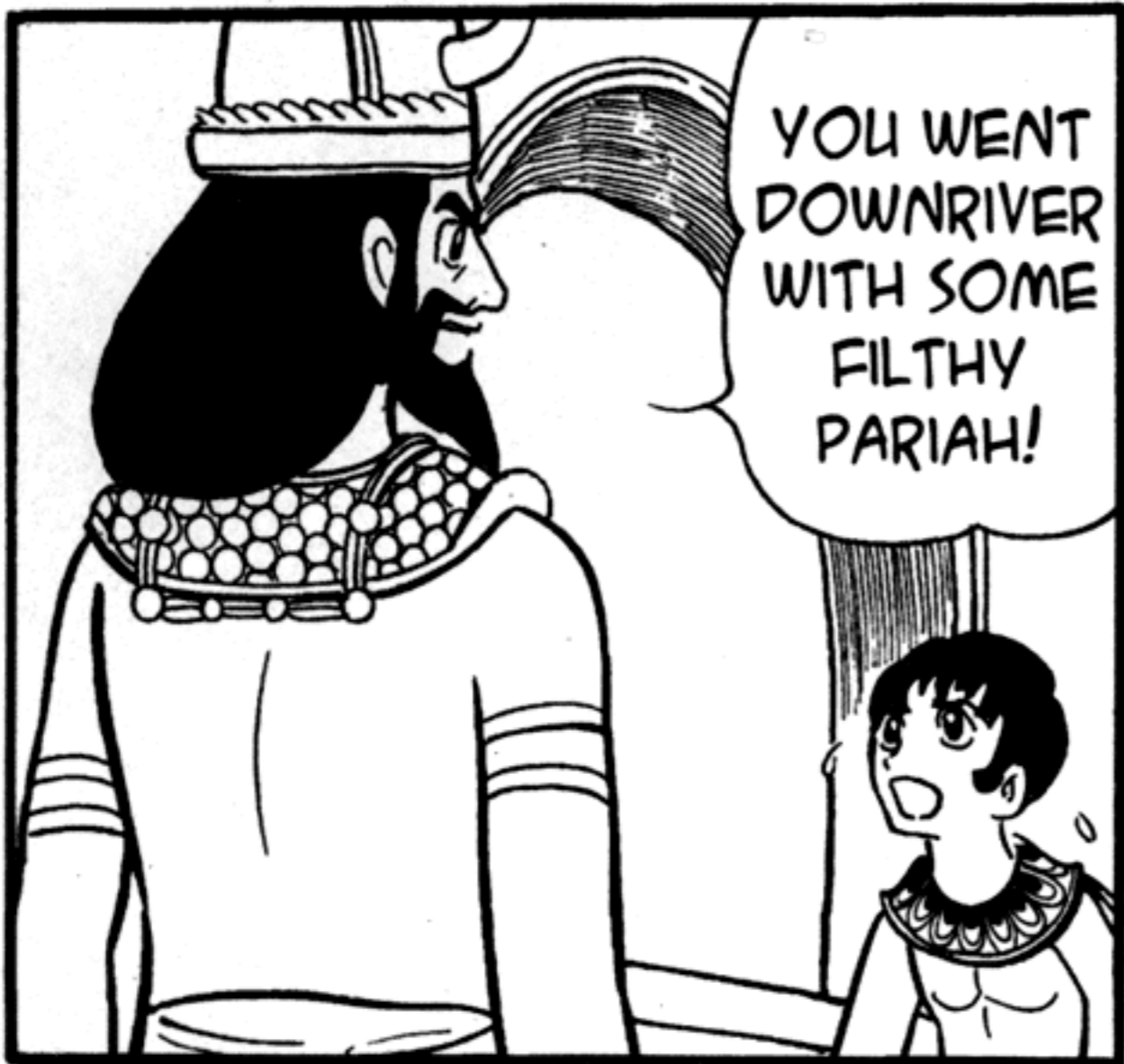
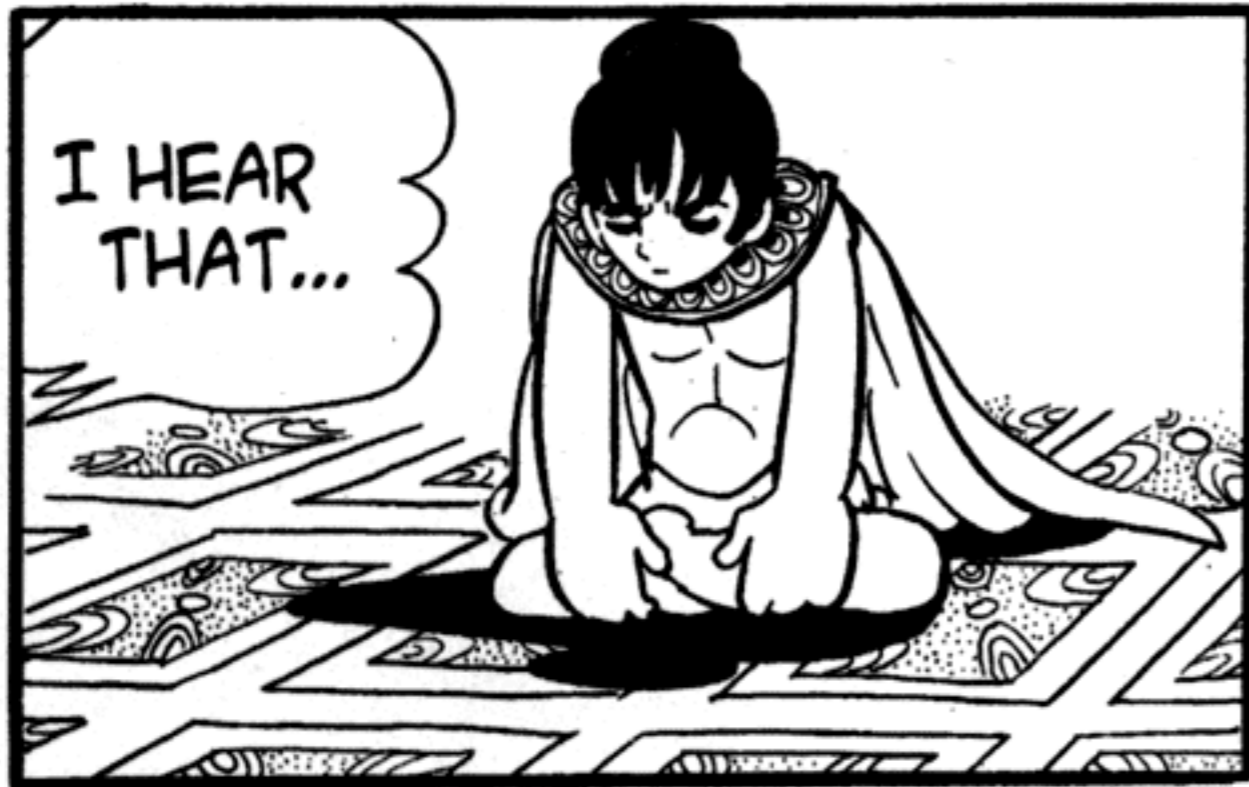
CHAPTER FOUR

YASHODARA

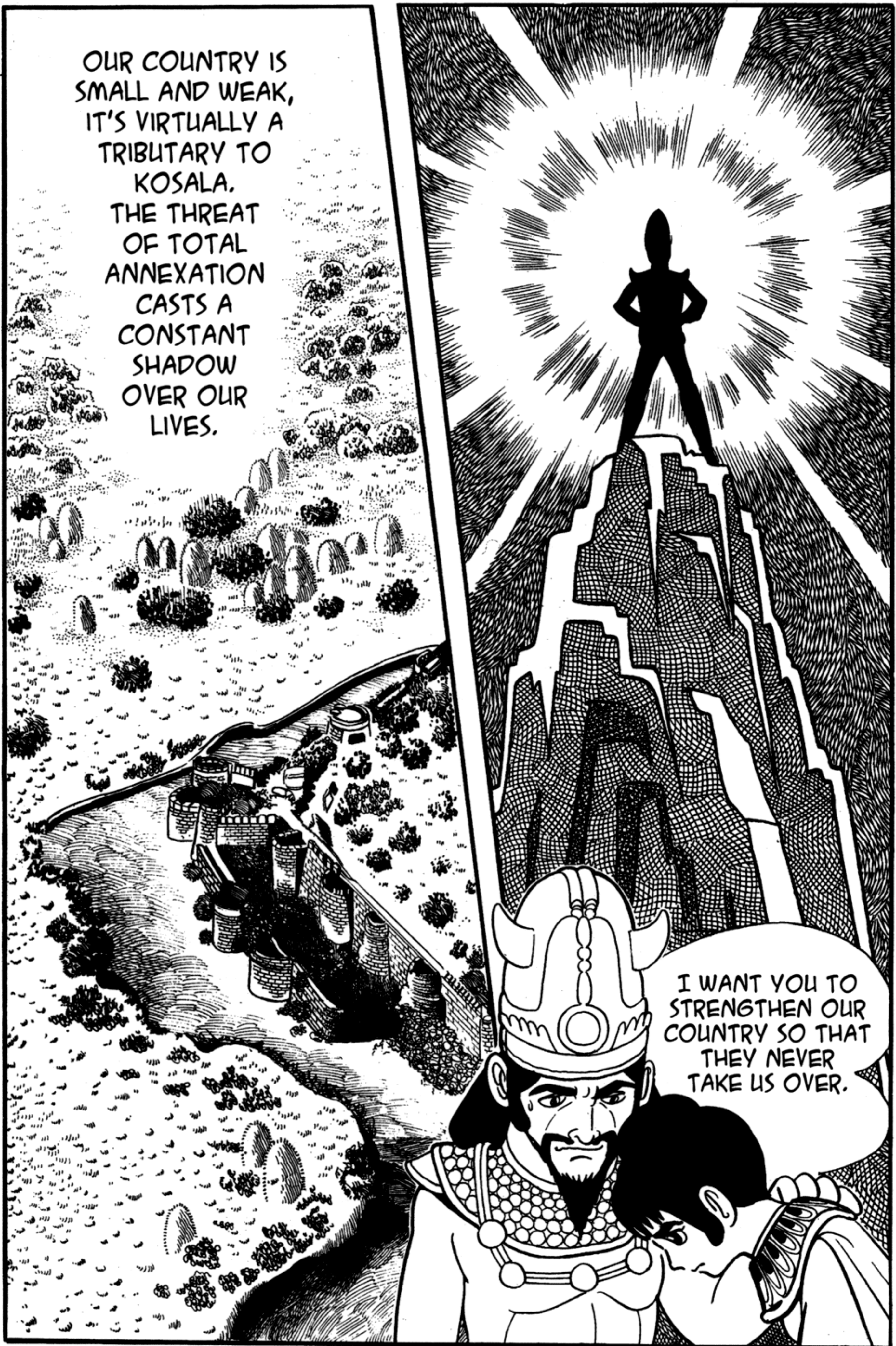




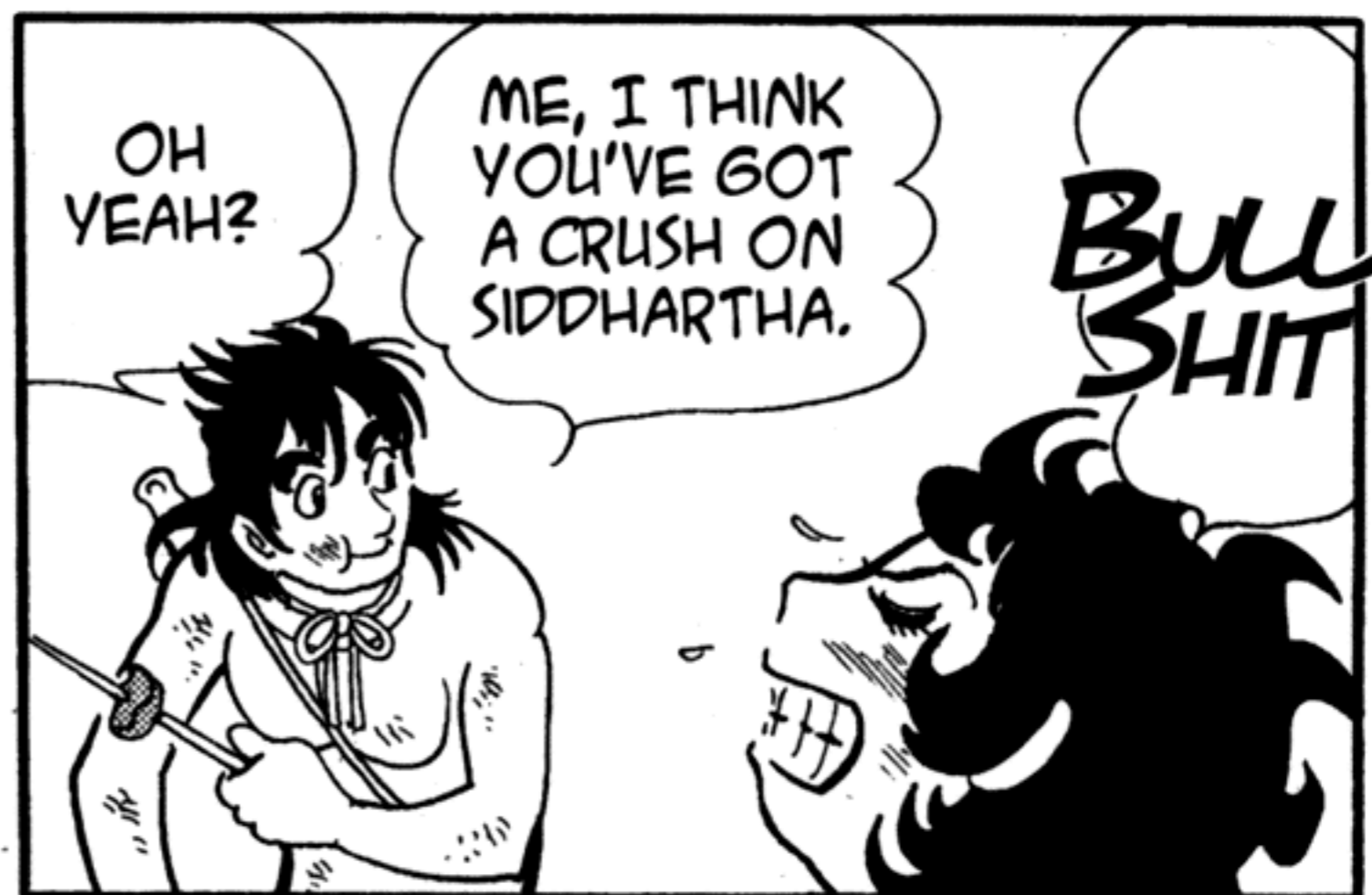
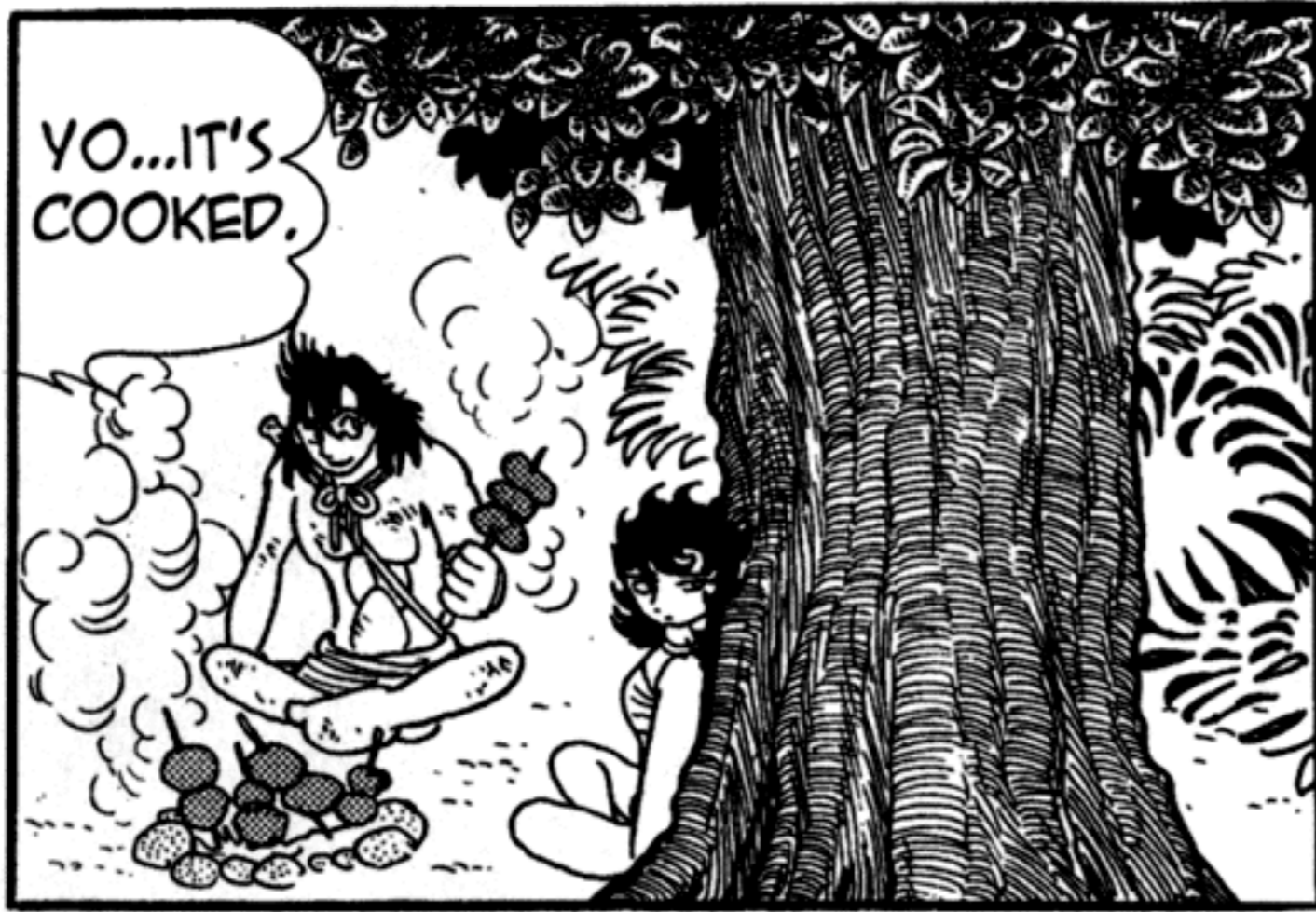


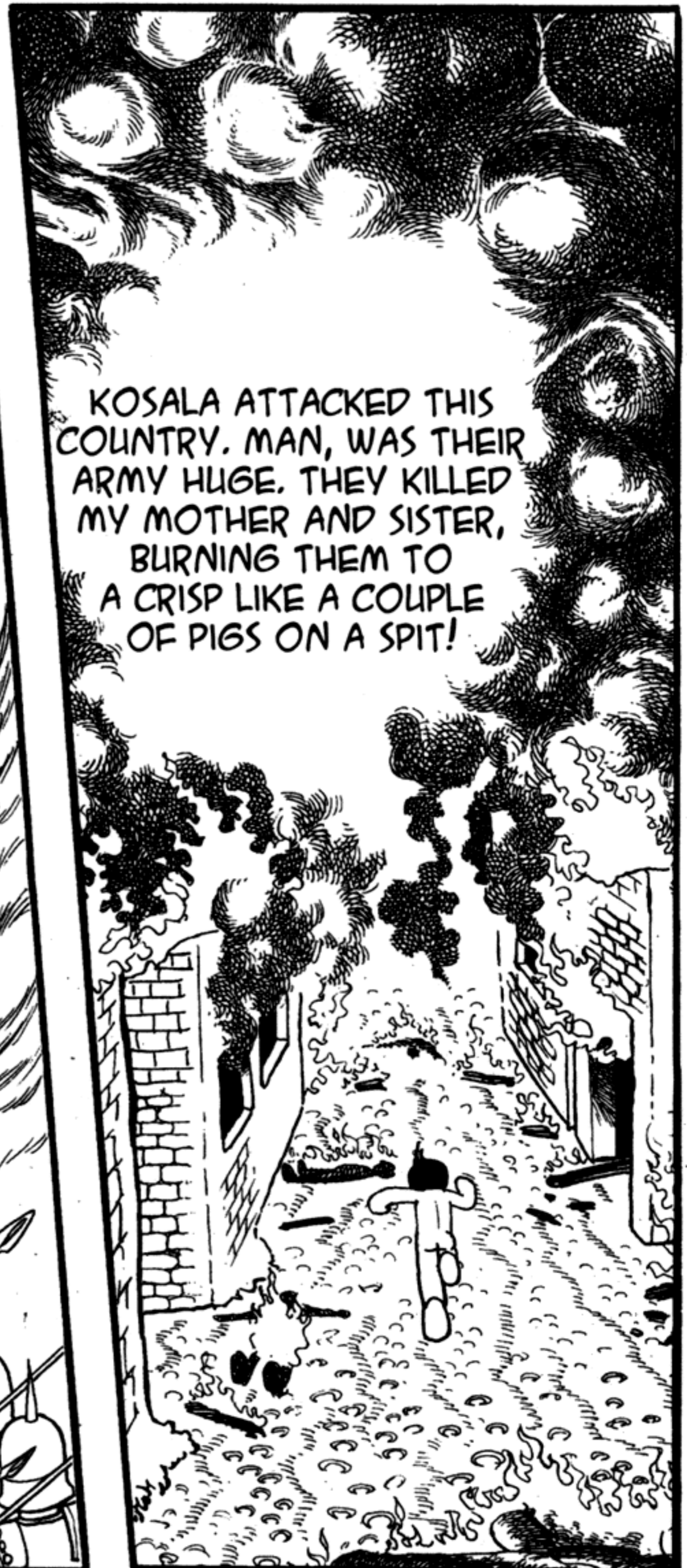
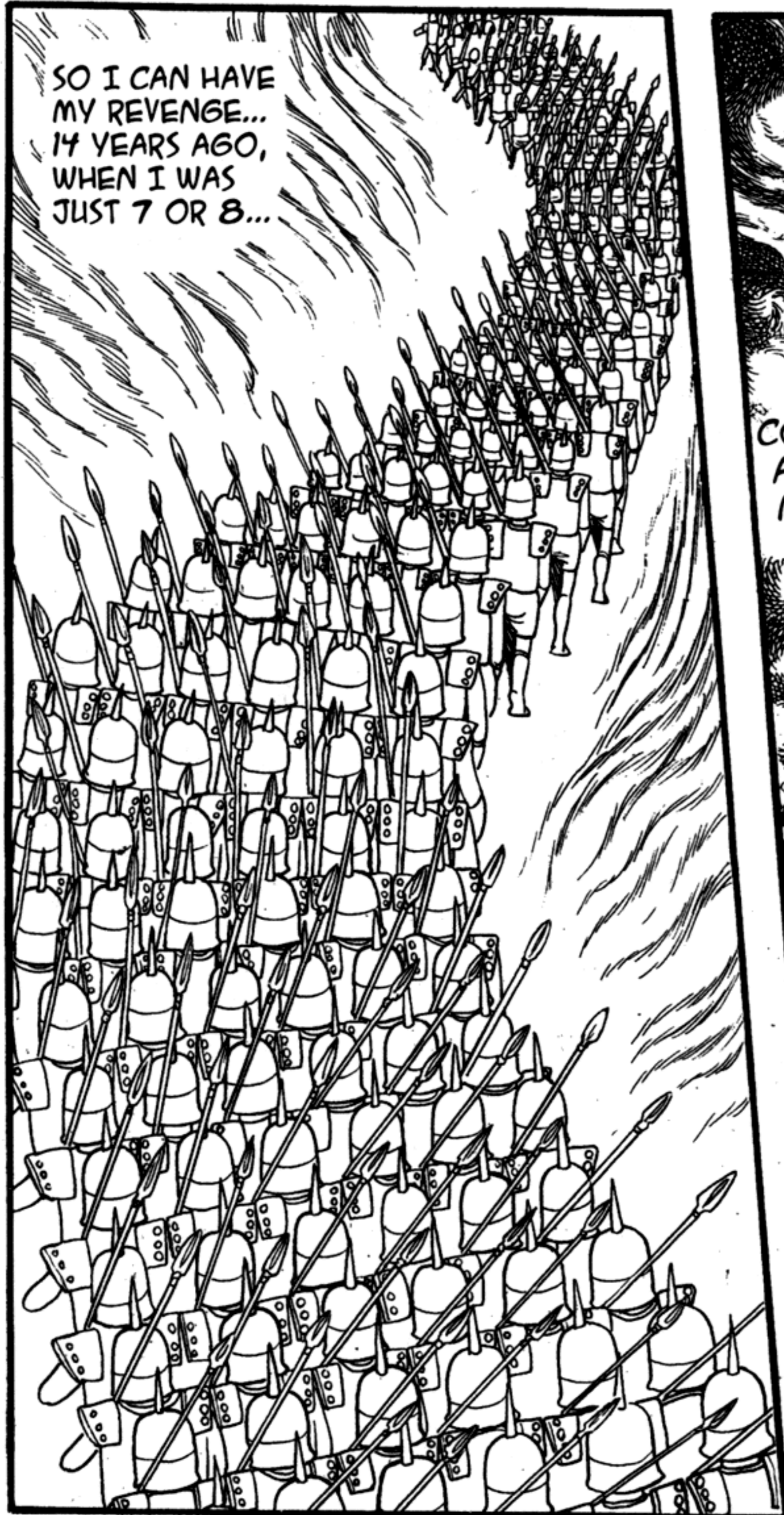
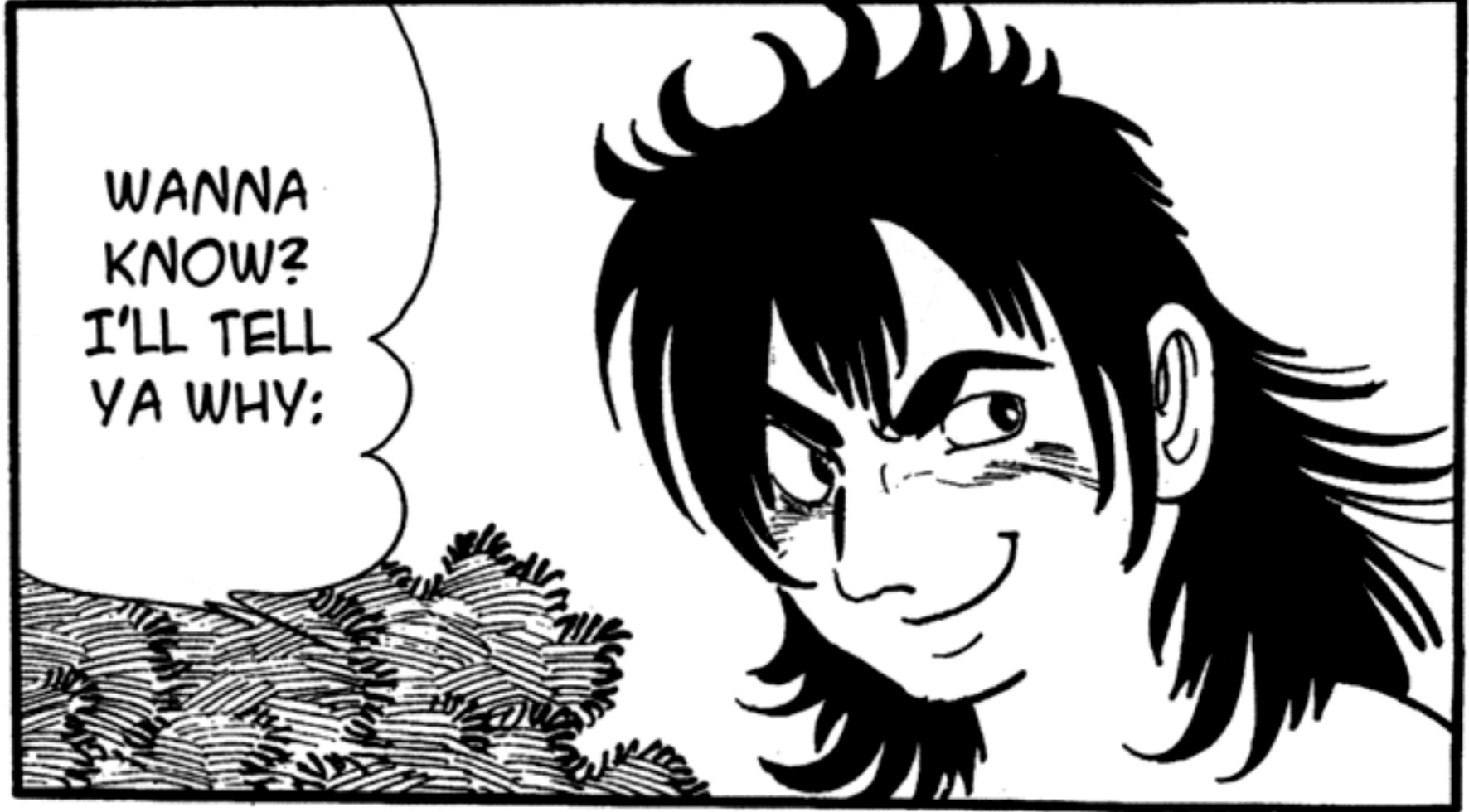


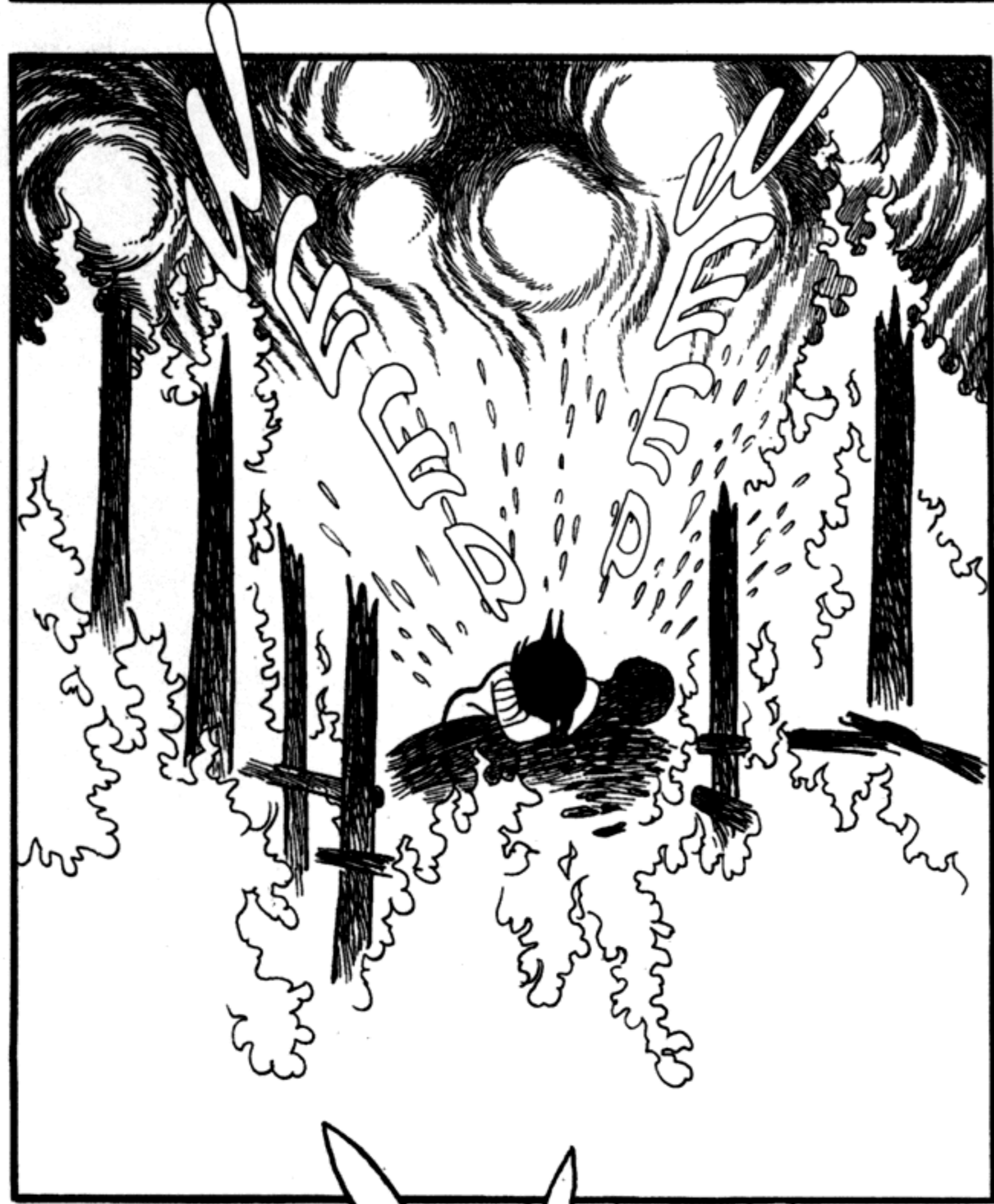
OUR COUNTRY IS
SMALL AND WEAK,
IT'S VIRTUALLY A
TRIBUTARY TO
KOSALA.
THE THREAT
OF TOTAL
ANNEXATION
CASTS A
CONSTANT
SHADOW
OVER OUR
LIVES.

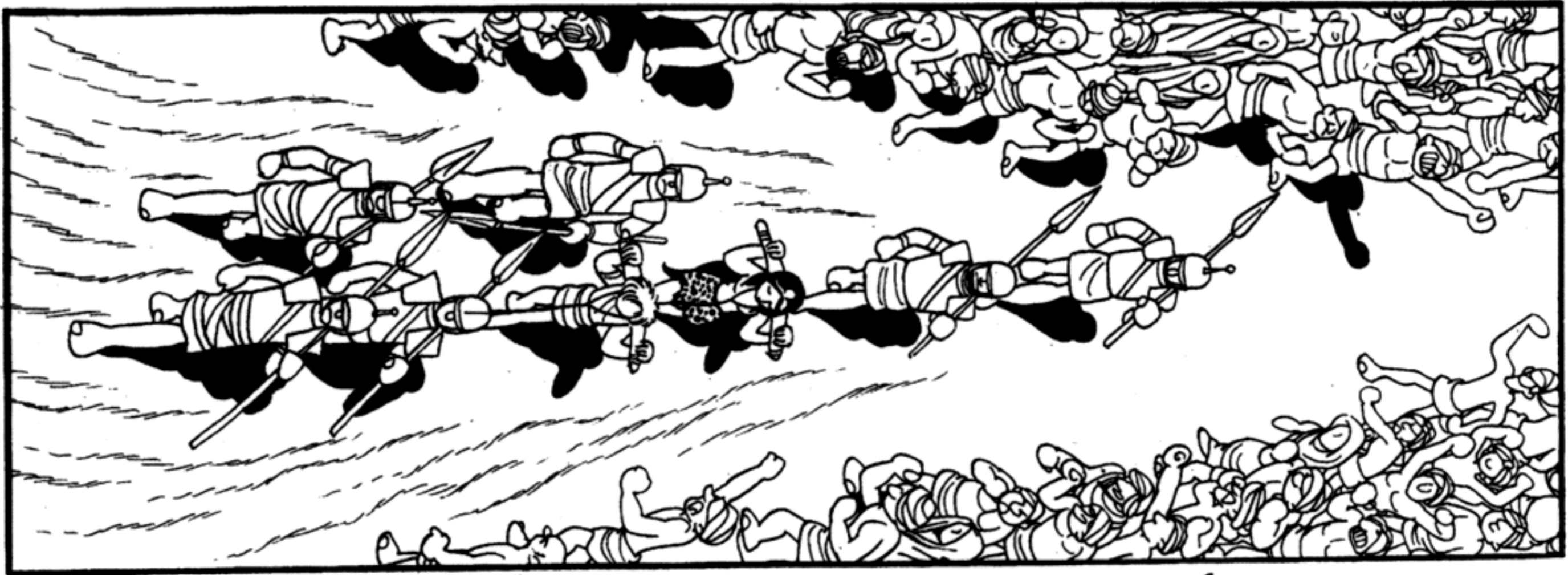


I WANT YOU TO
STRENGTHEN OUR
COUNTRY SO THAT
THEY NEVER
TAKE US OVER.



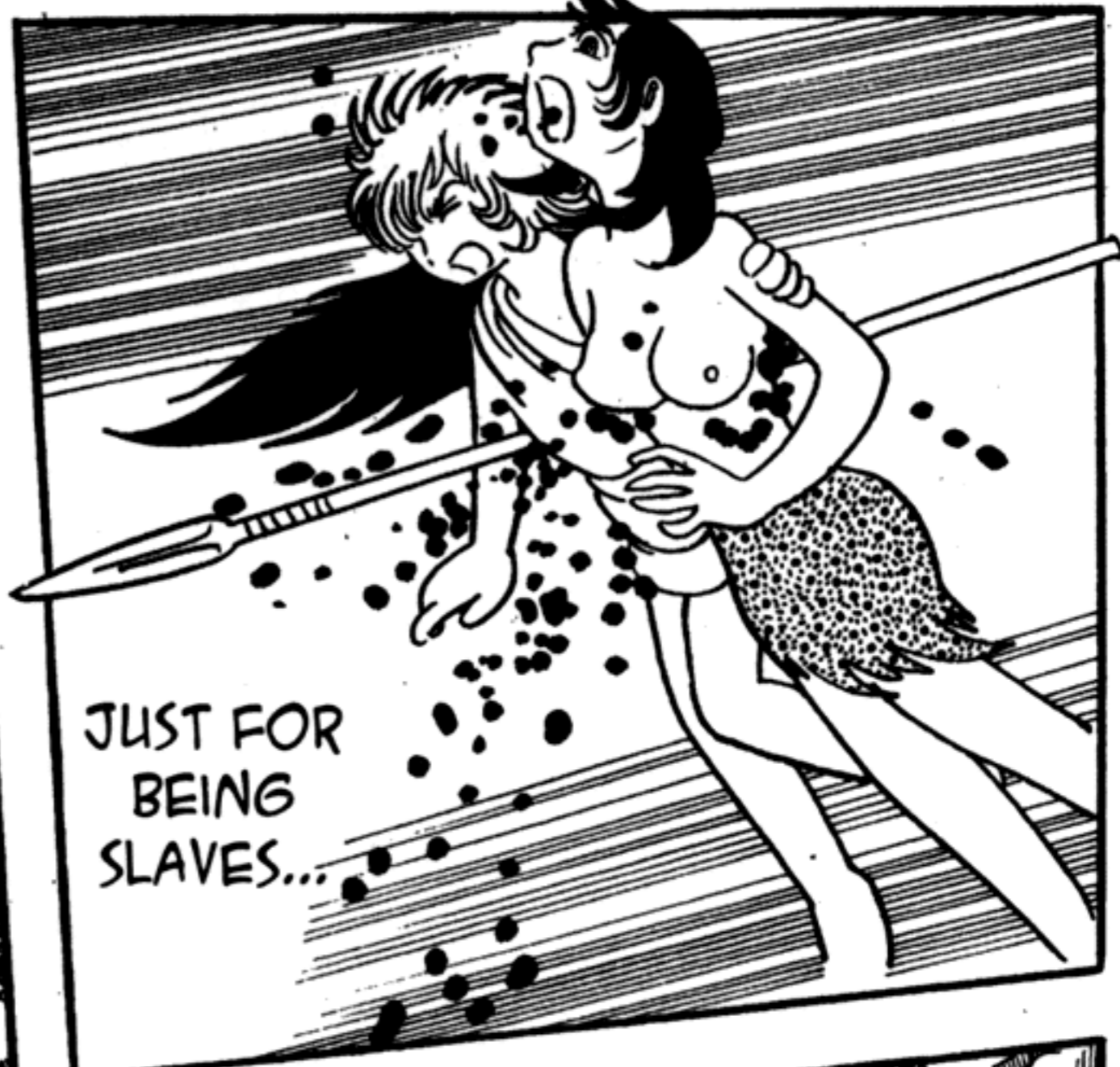




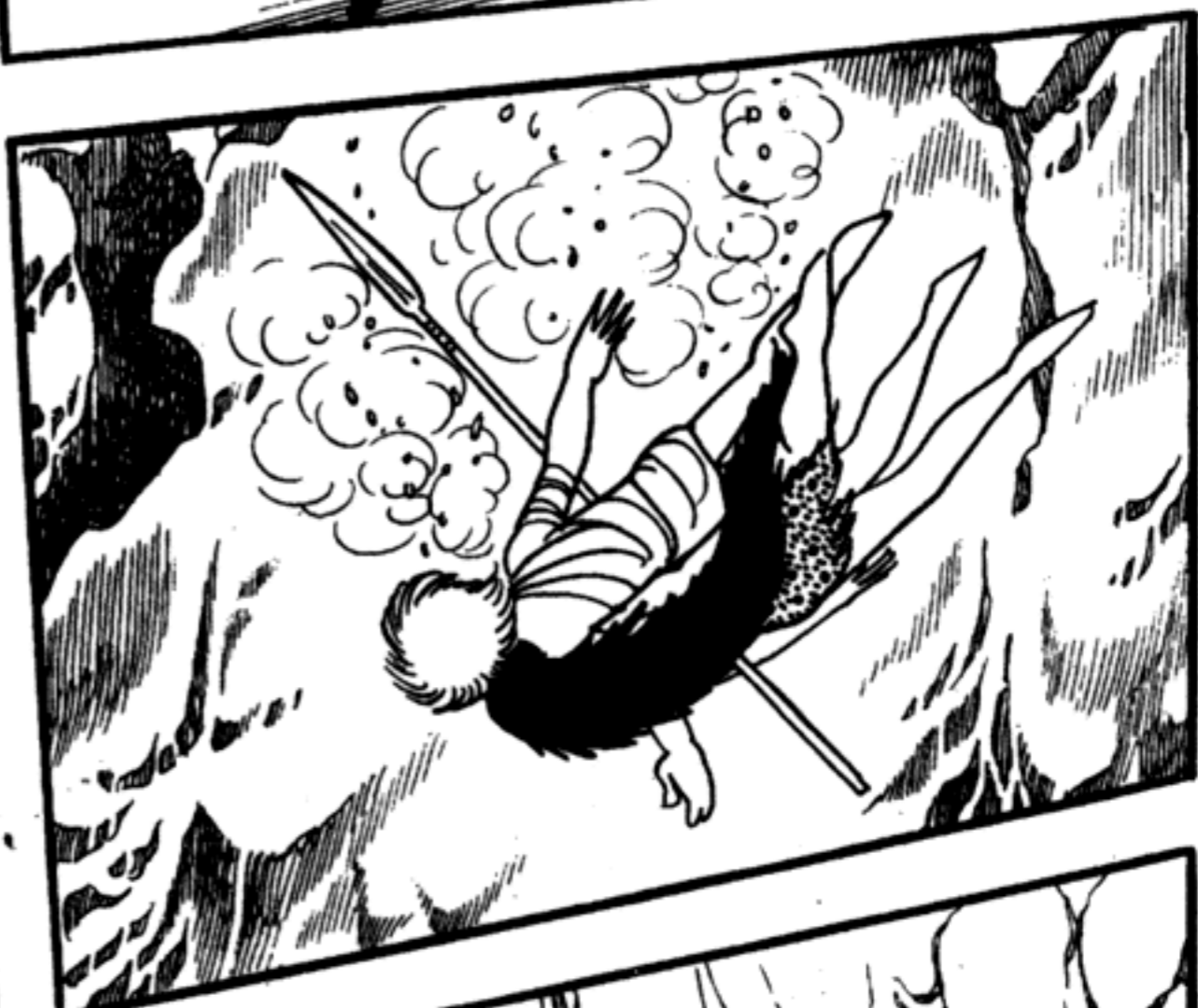


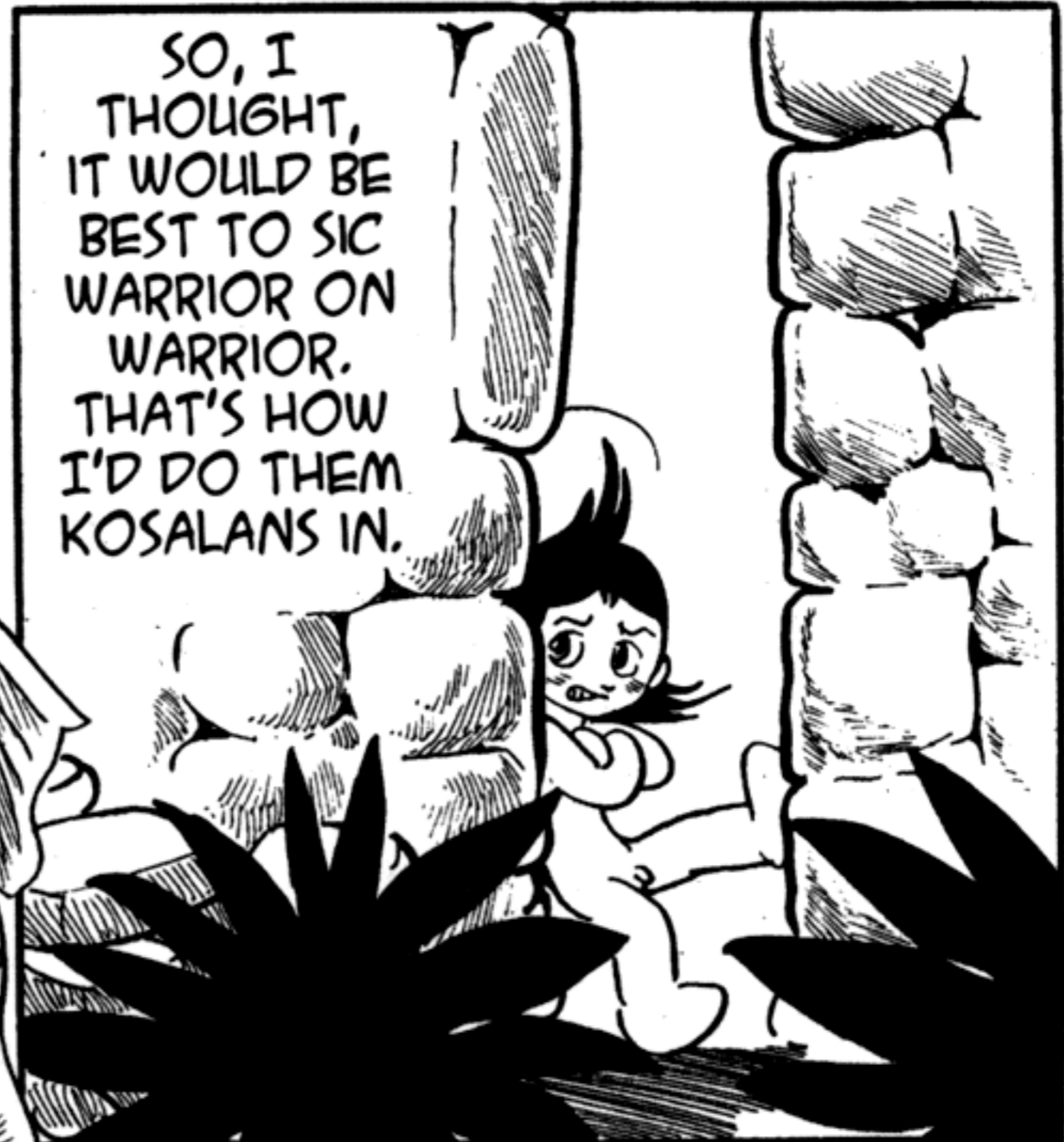
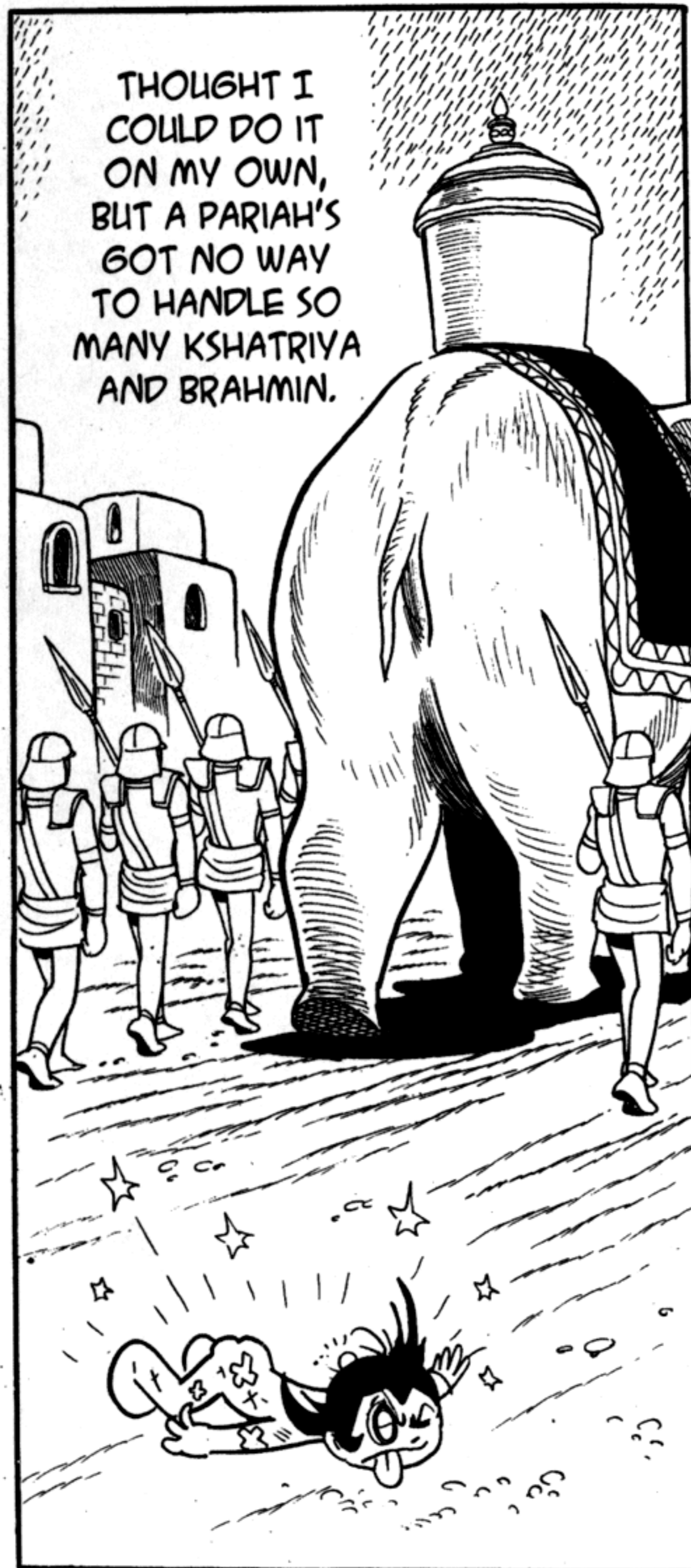
BUT IT
GOT OUT
THAT HE
WAS A
SLAVE...

AND
KOSALA PUT
HIM AND HIS
MOM TO
DEATH!



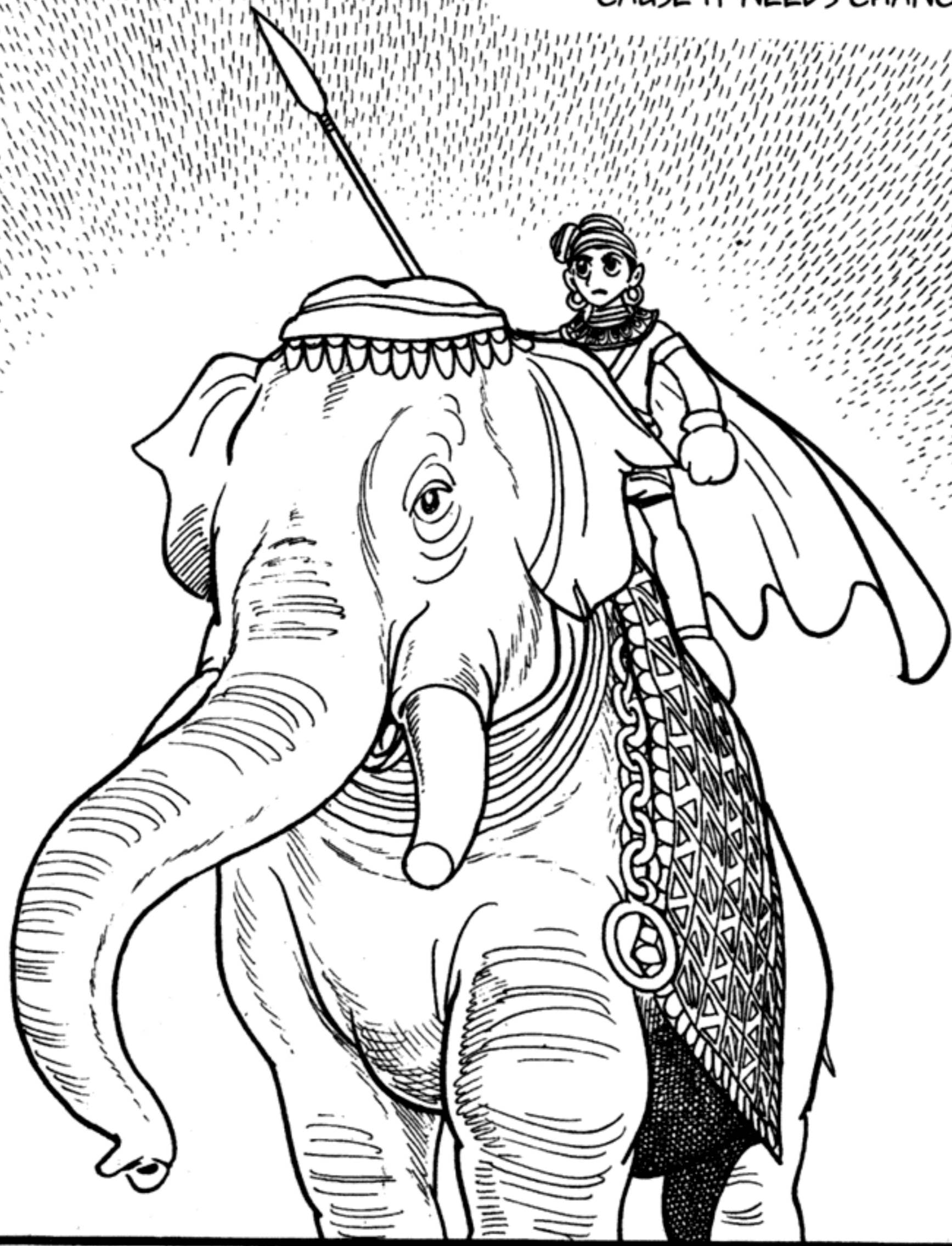
JUST FOR
BEING
SLAVES...





HE'S NO
FOP, IF YOU
ASK ME.
HE'S GOT
THE STUFF
TO BE
A GREAT
KING.

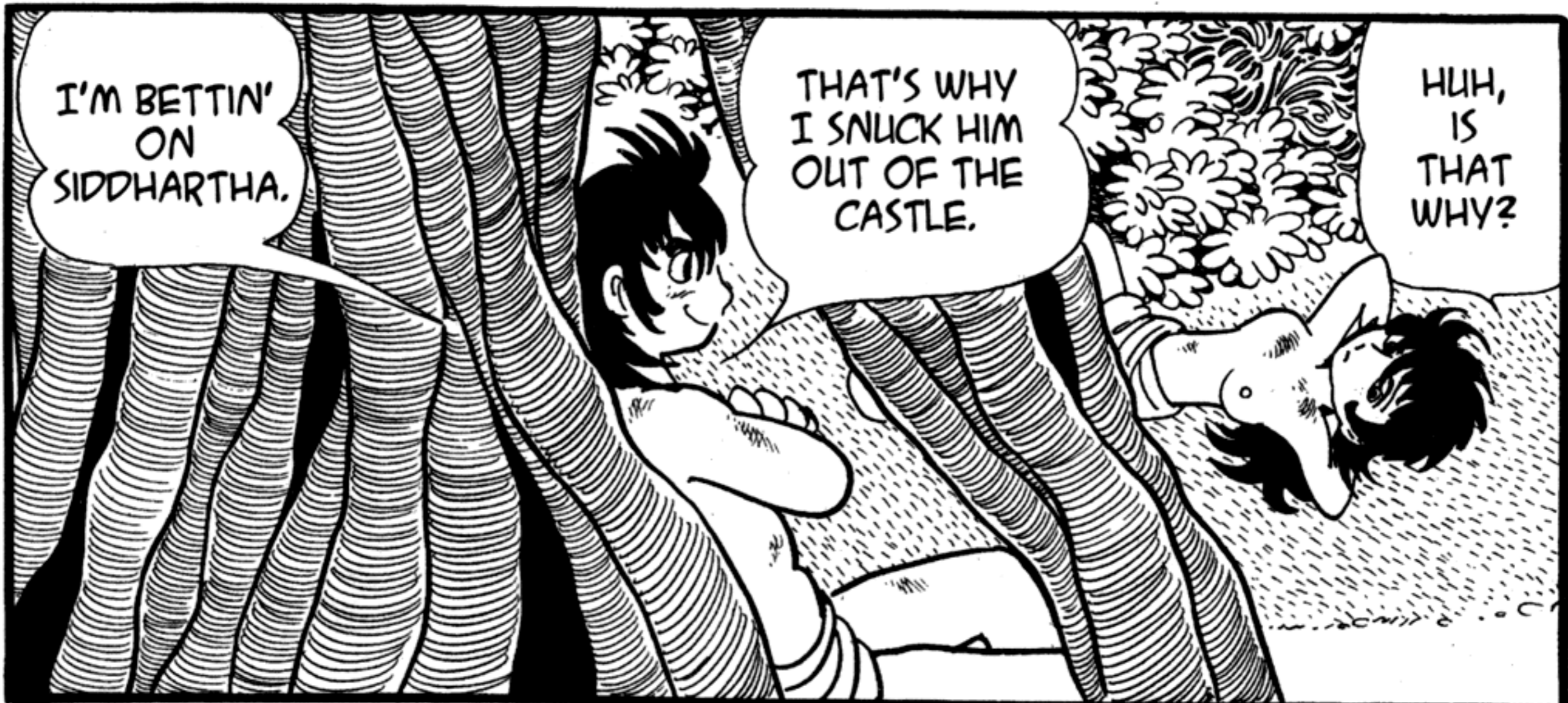
SO I'M GONNA TEACH HIM TO HATE KOSALA...
BUT THAT'S NOT ALL. I'M GONNA SHOW HIM
THE HARSH REALITY OF THE LOWER CLASSES
AND ALL THAT'S WRONG WITH THE WORLD.
I'LL HAVE HIM CHANGE THE SYSTEM...
'CAUSE IT NEEDS CHANGING!

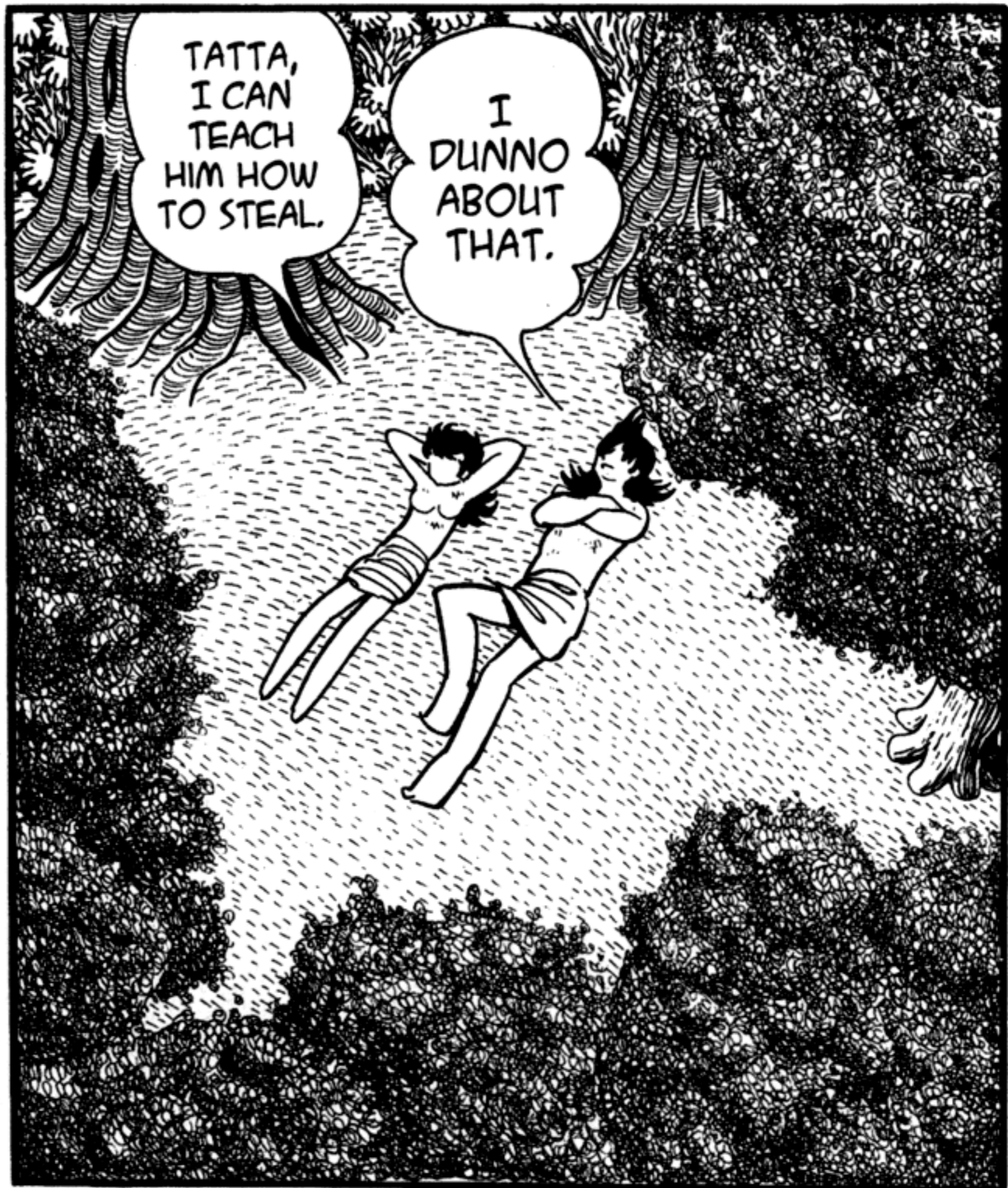
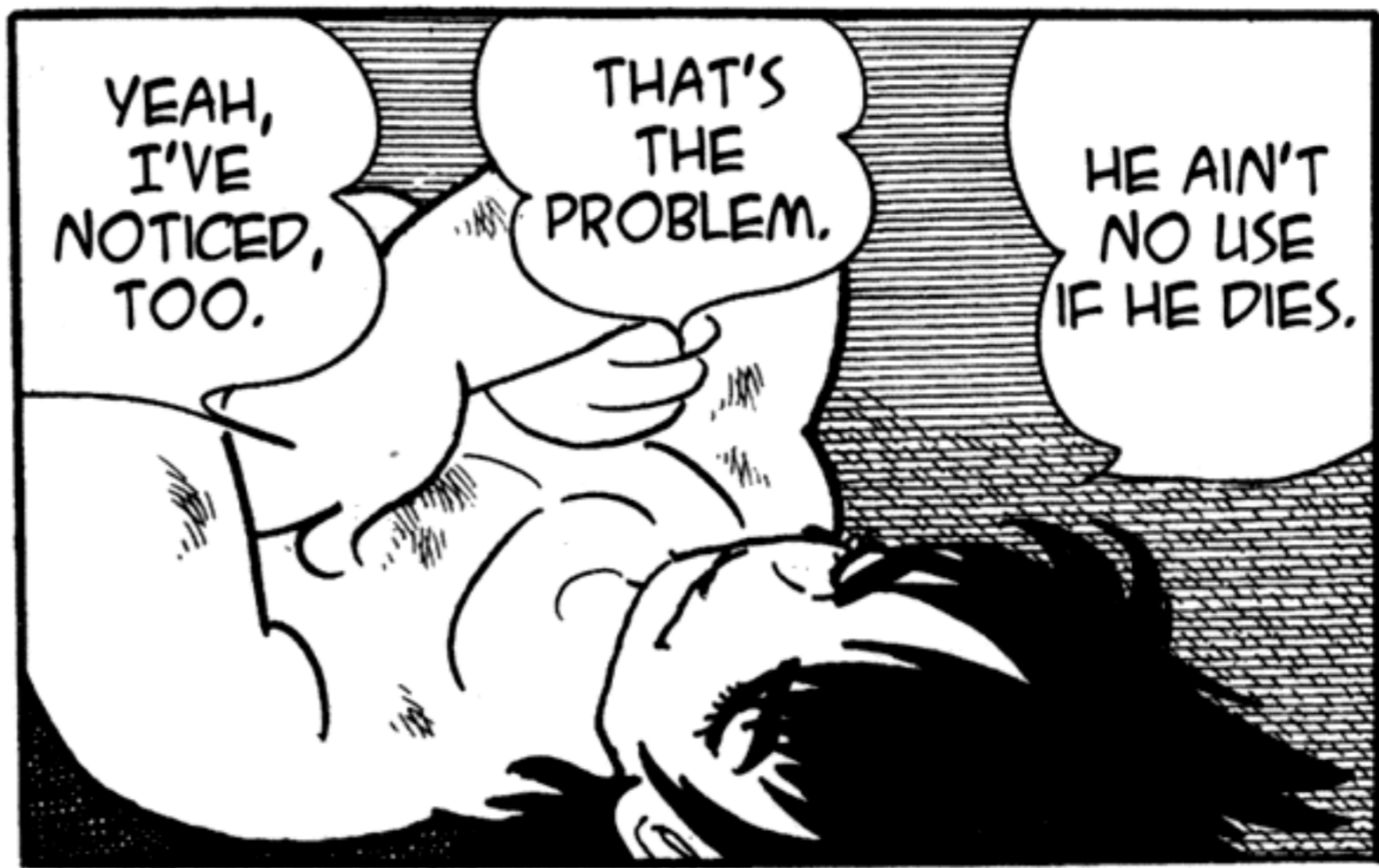
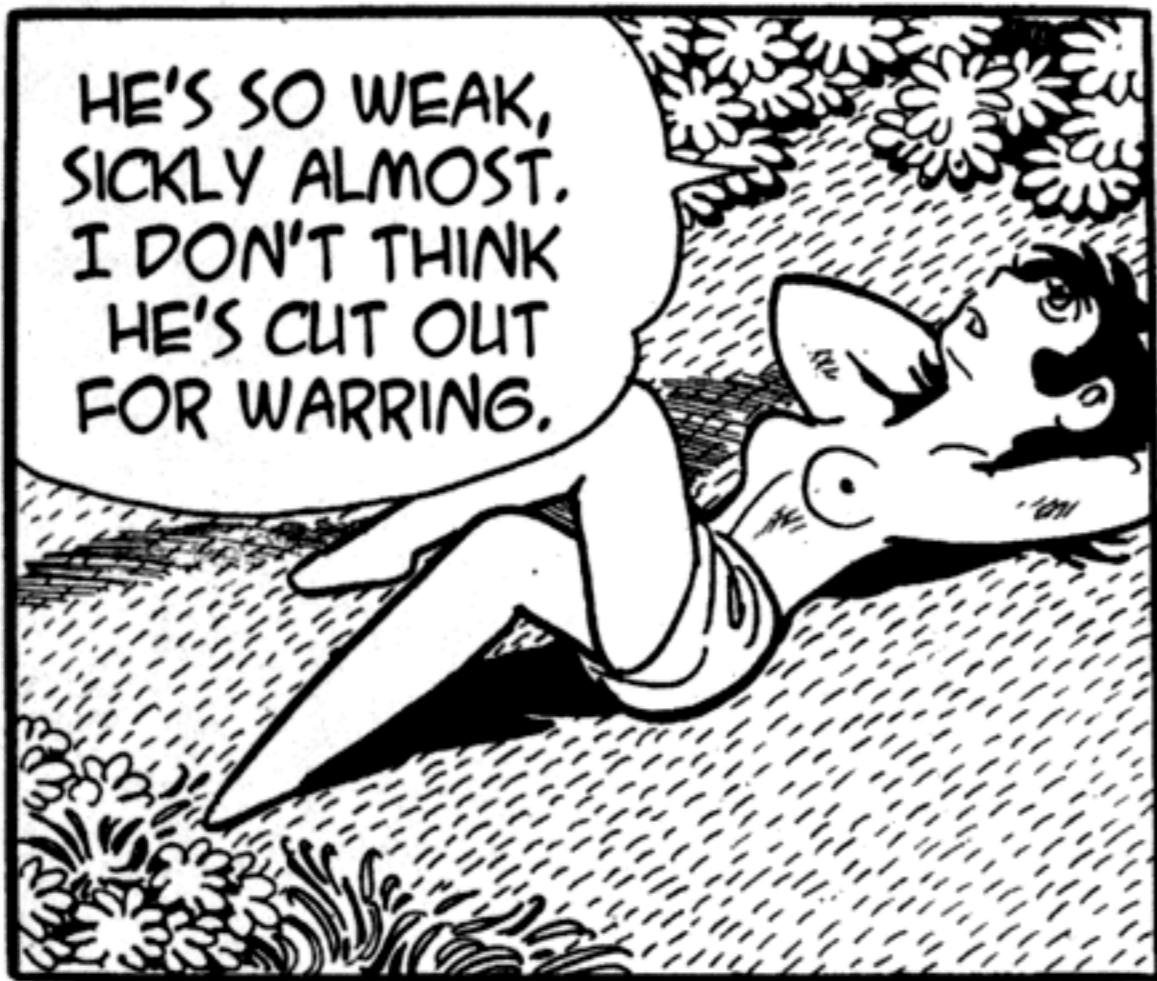


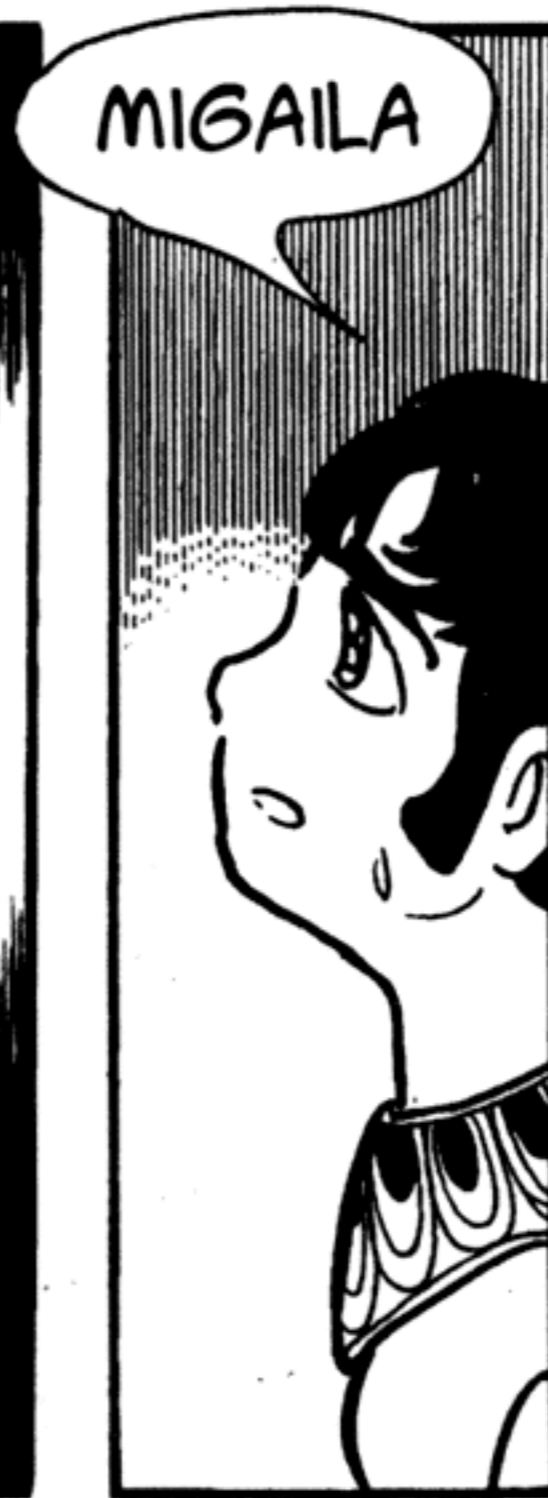
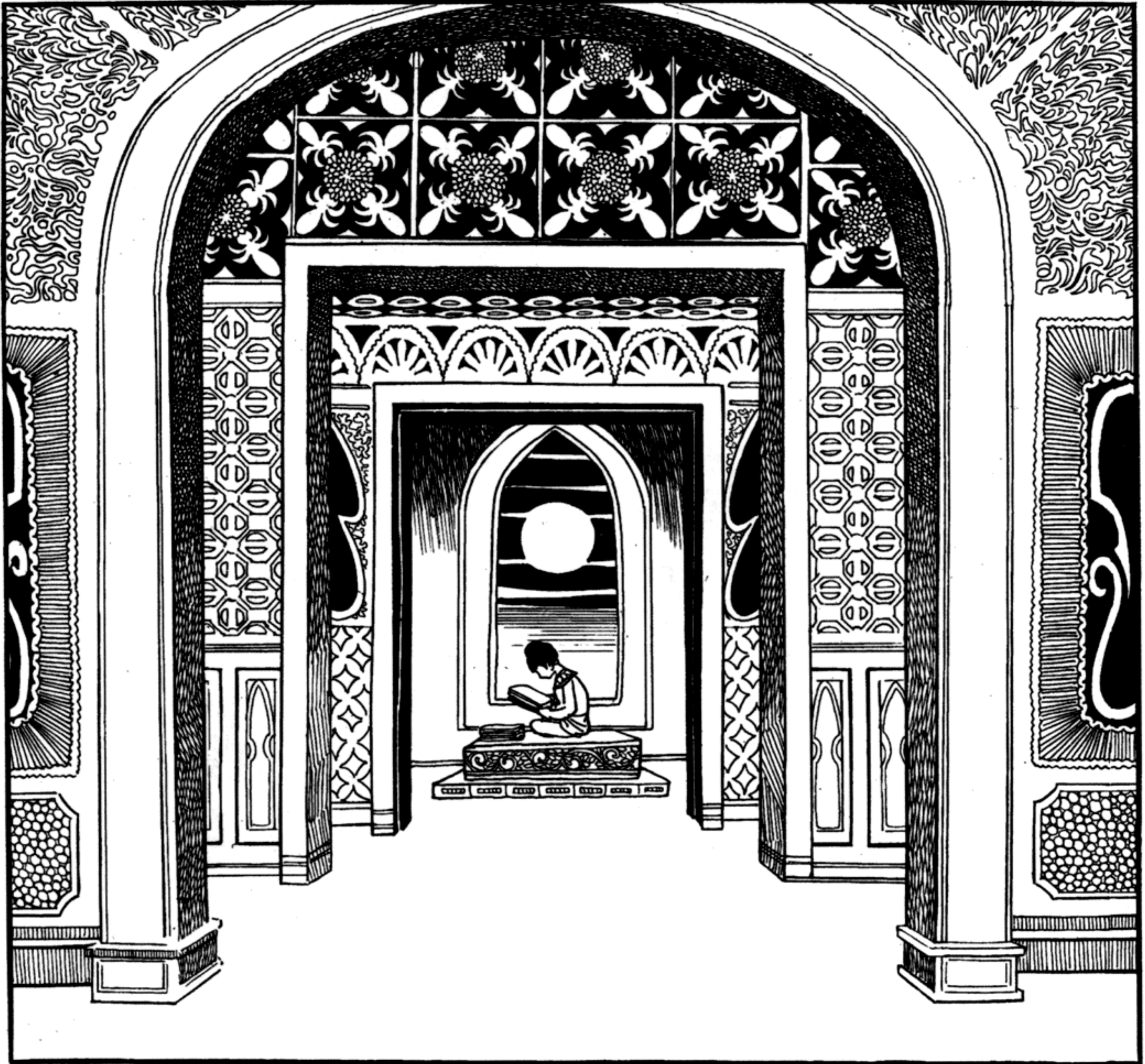
I'M BETTIN'
ON
SIDDHARTHA.

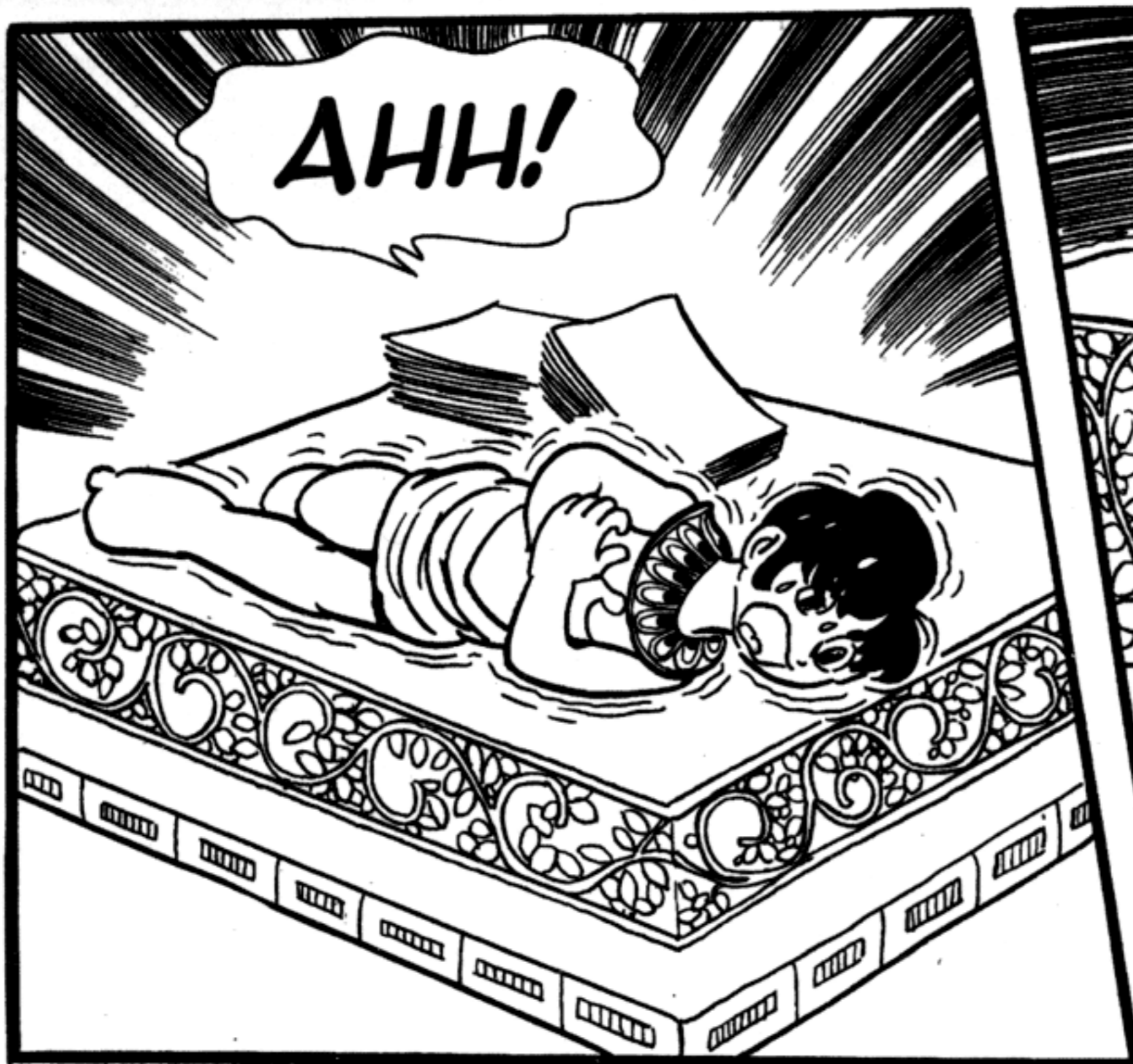
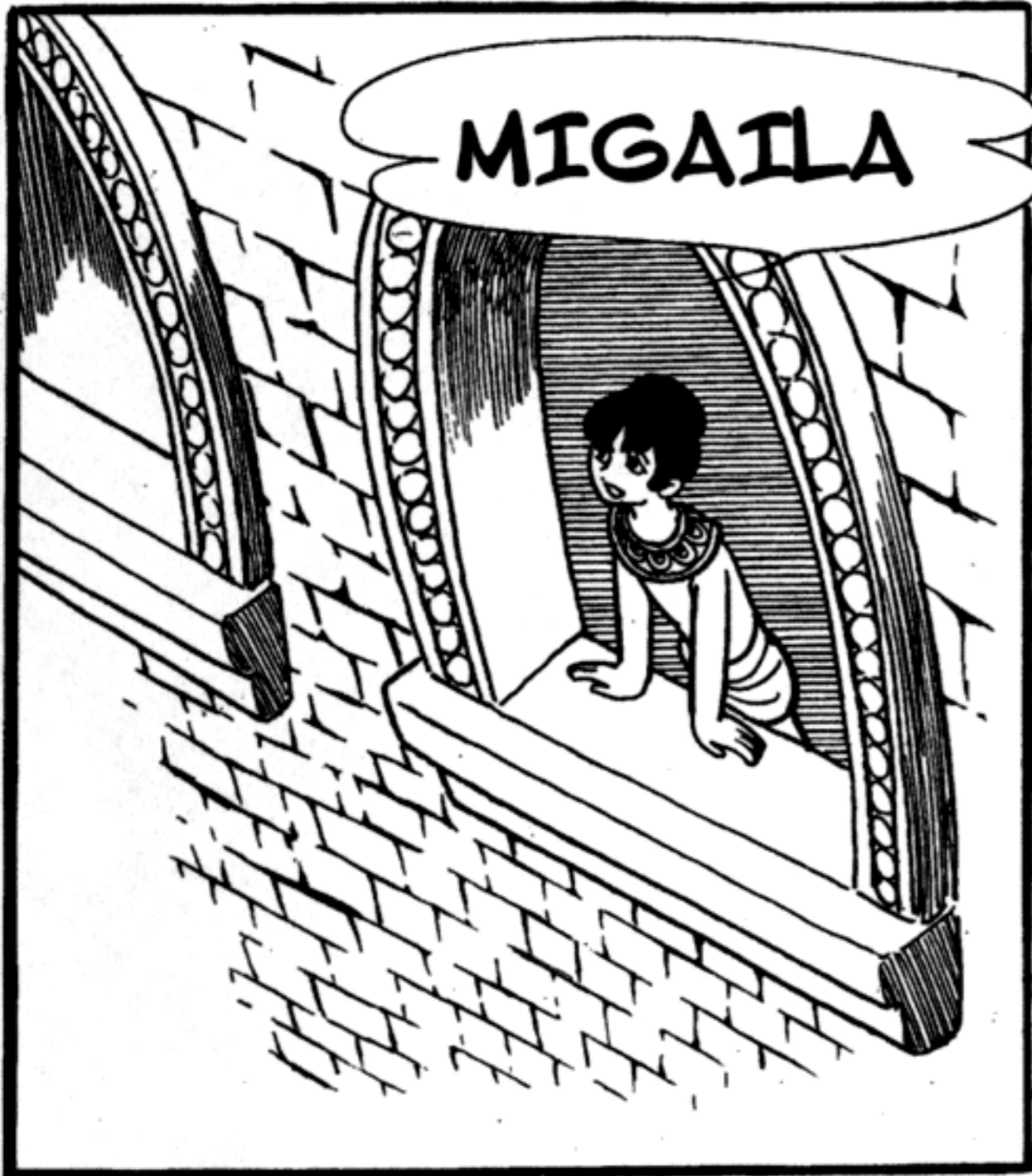
THAT'S WHY
I SNUCK HIM
OUT OF THE
CASTLE.

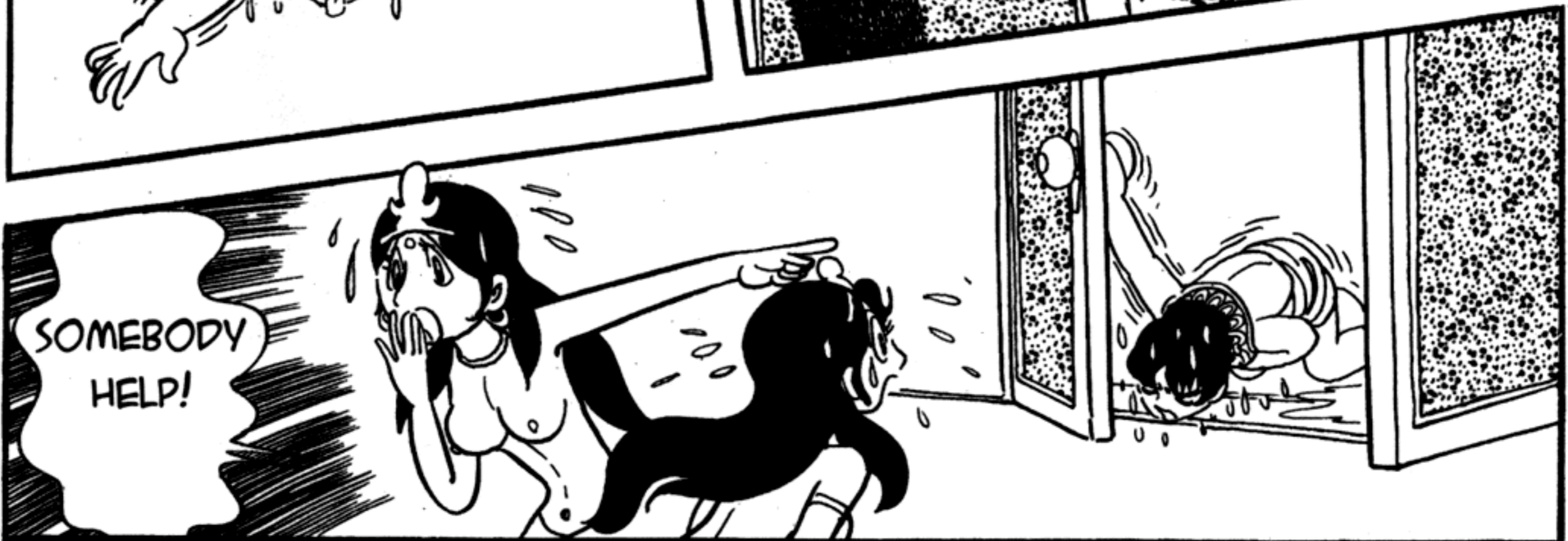
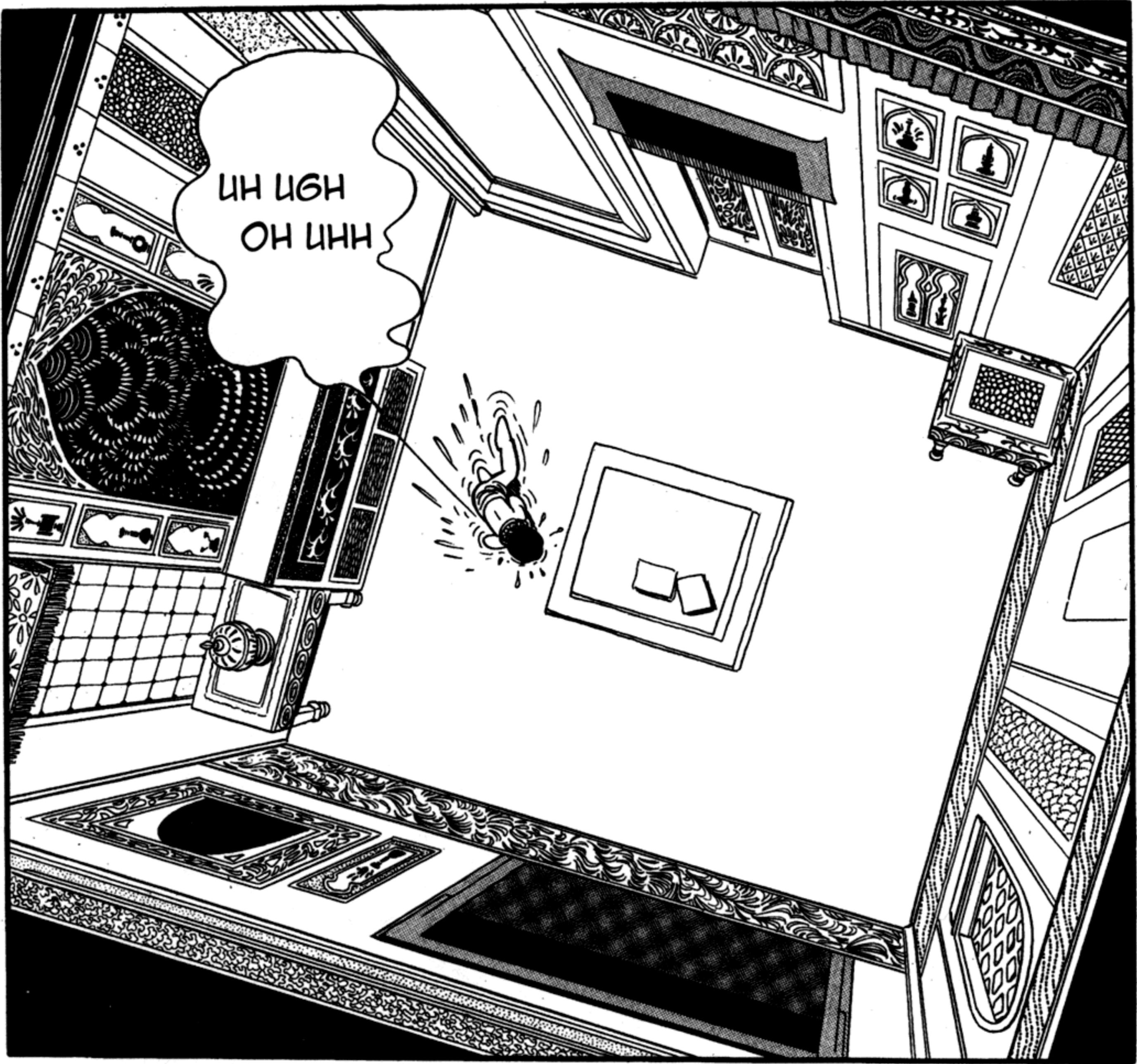
HUH,
IS
THAT
WHY?



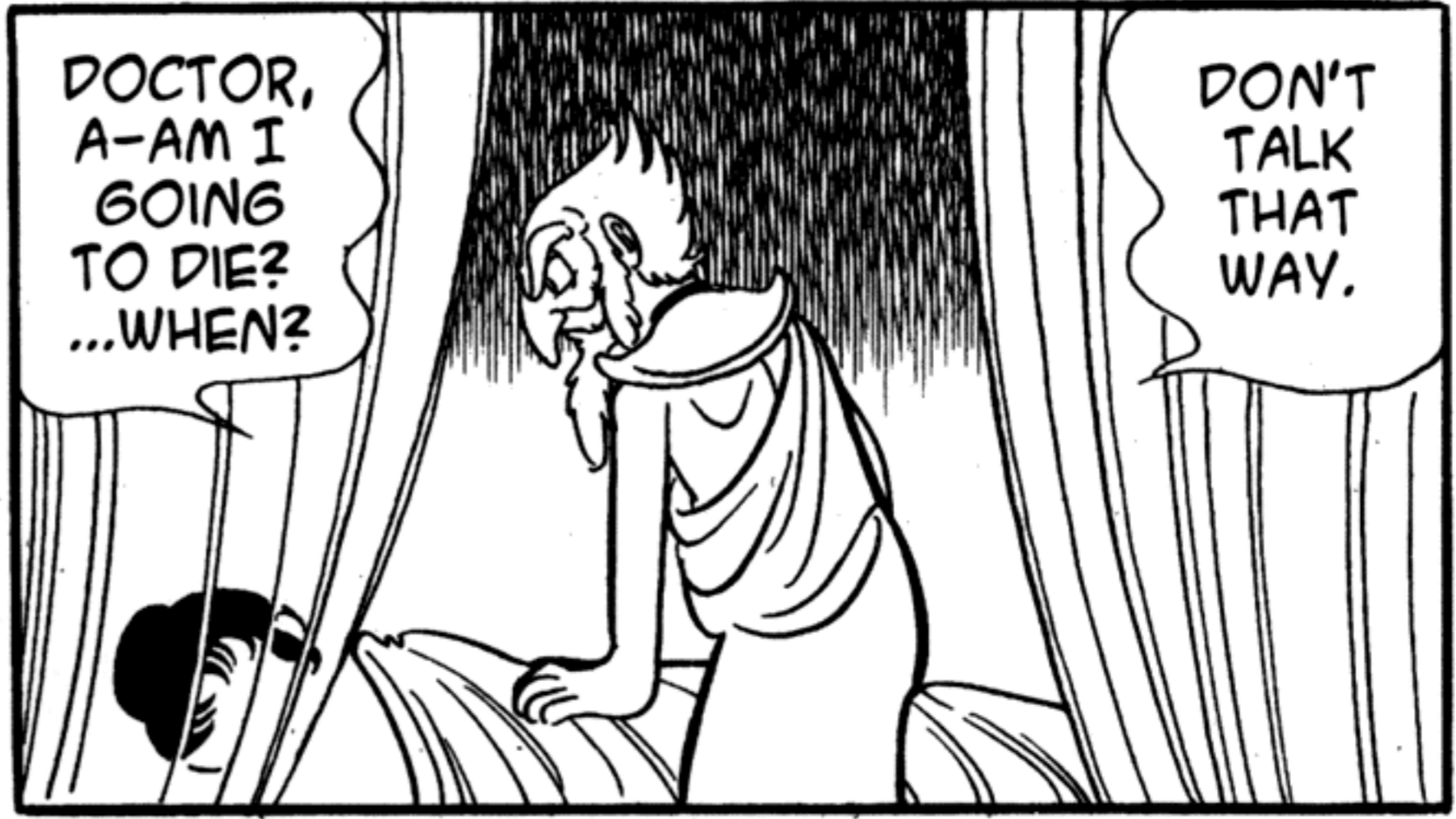


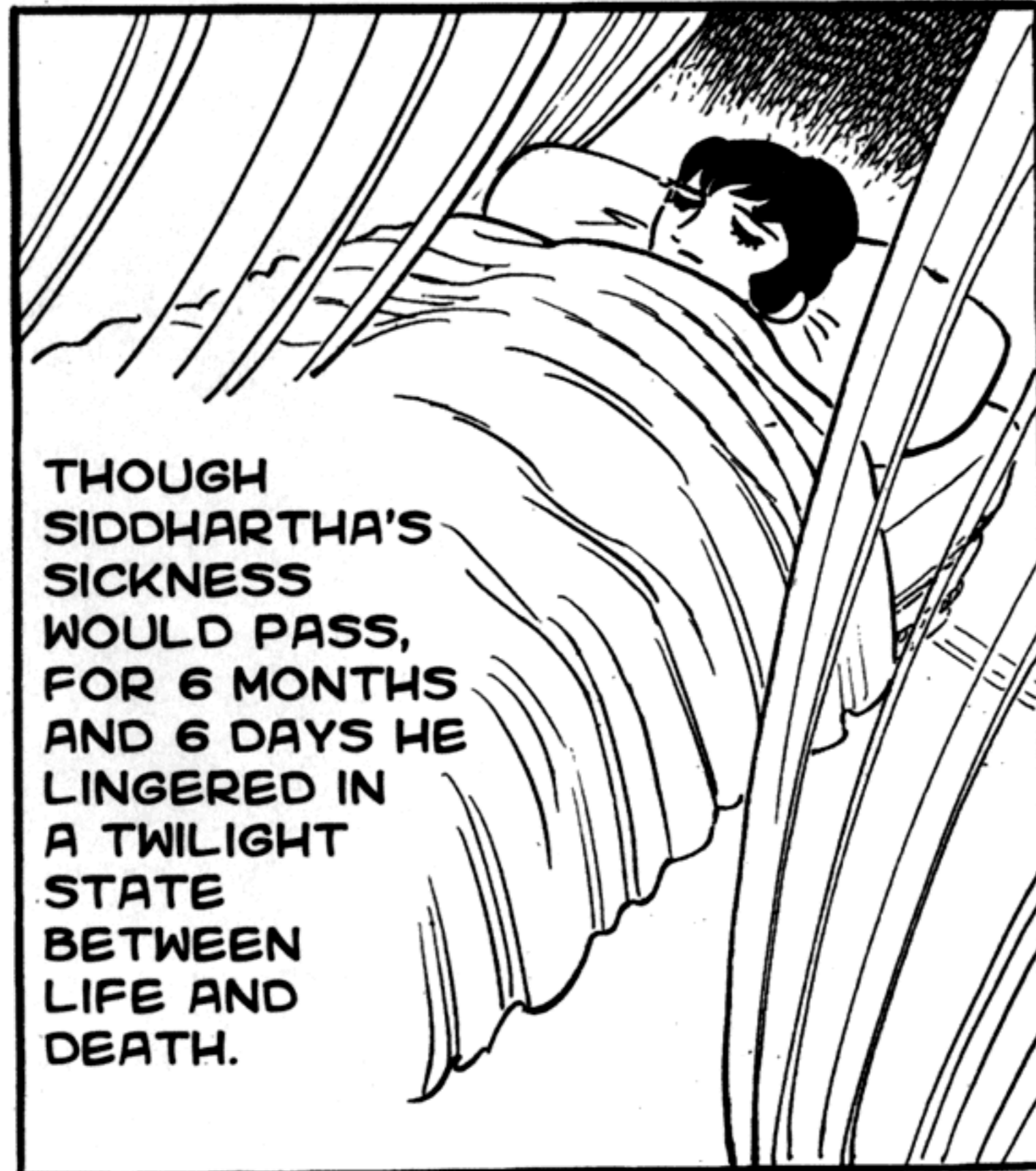




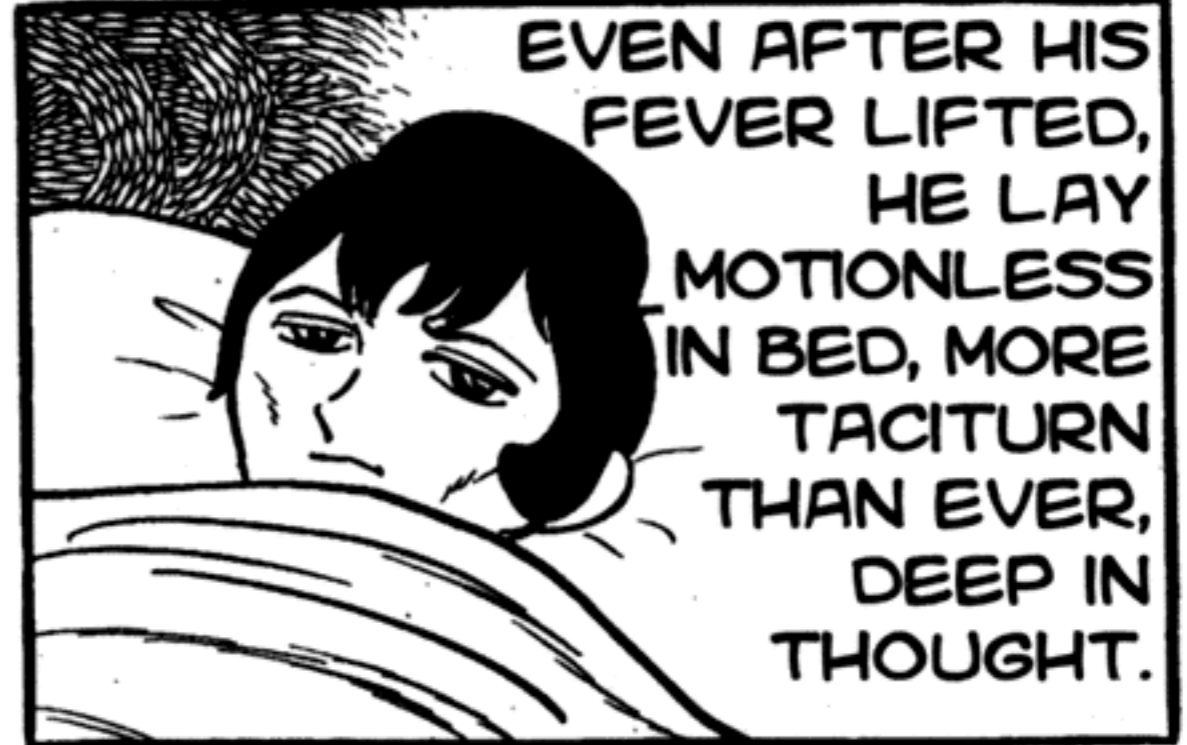




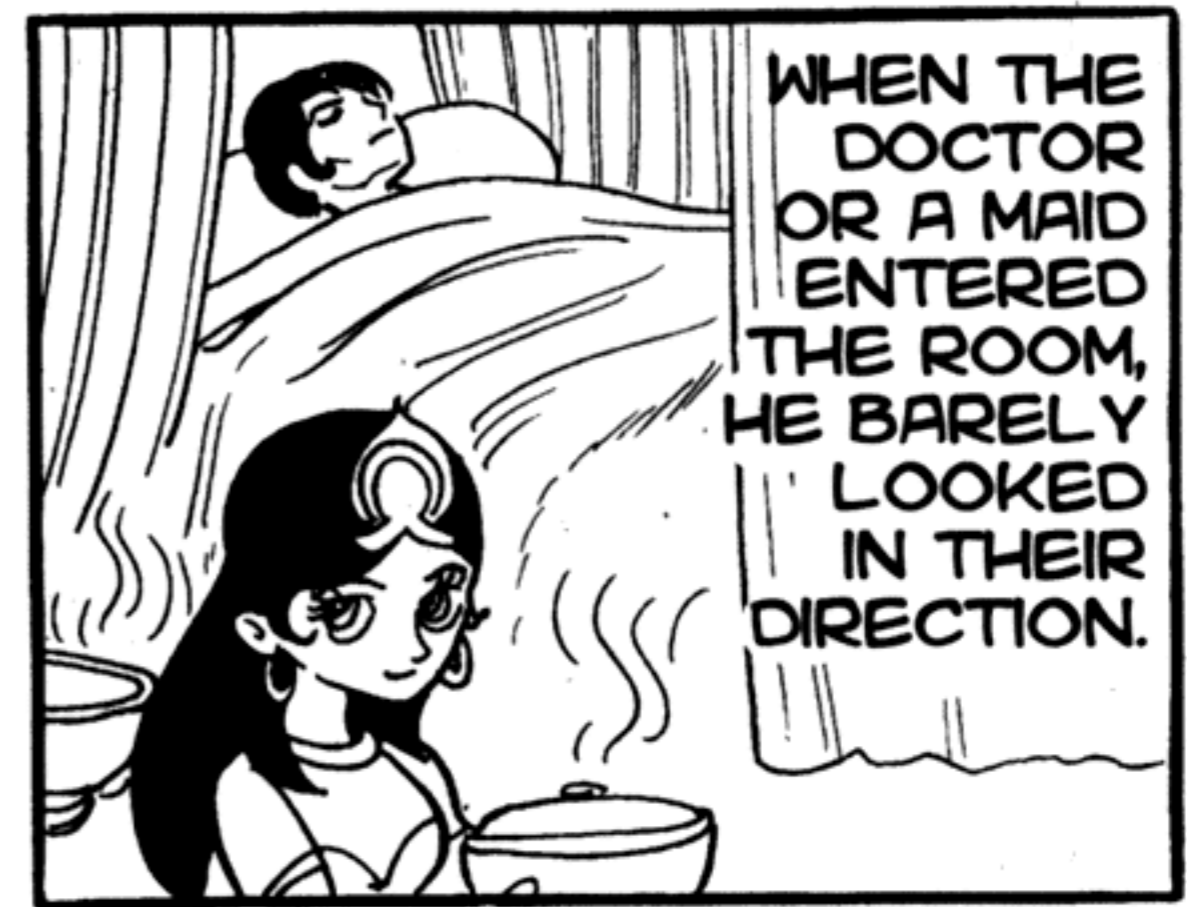




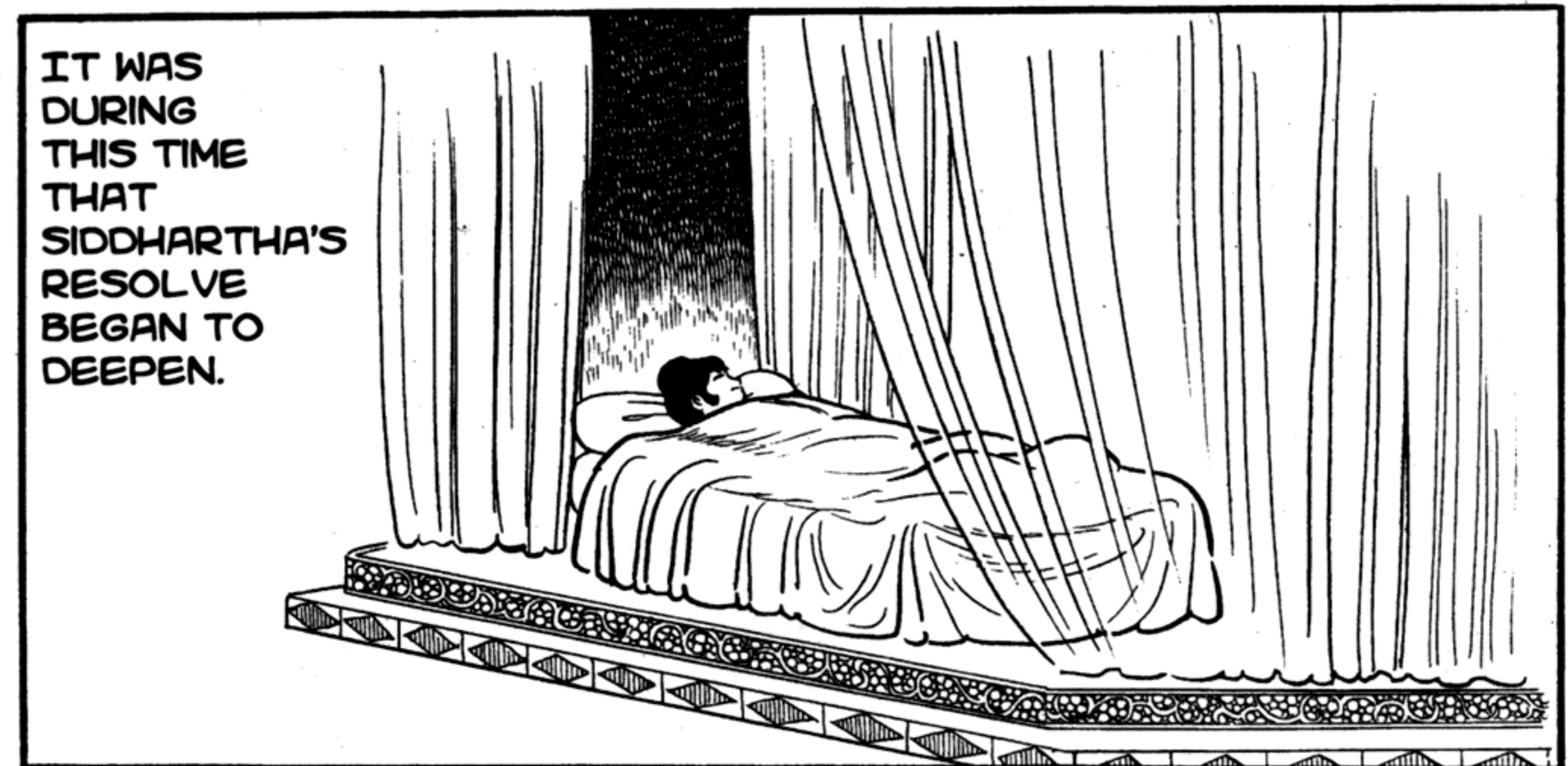
THOUGH SIDDHARTHA'S SICKNESS WOULD PASS, FOR 6 MONTHS AND 6 DAYS HE LINGERED IN A TWILIGHT STATE BETWEEN LIFE AND DEATH.



EVEN AFTER HIS FEVER LIFTED, HE LAY MOTIONLESS IN BED, MORE TACITURN THAN EVER, DEEP IN THOUGHT.

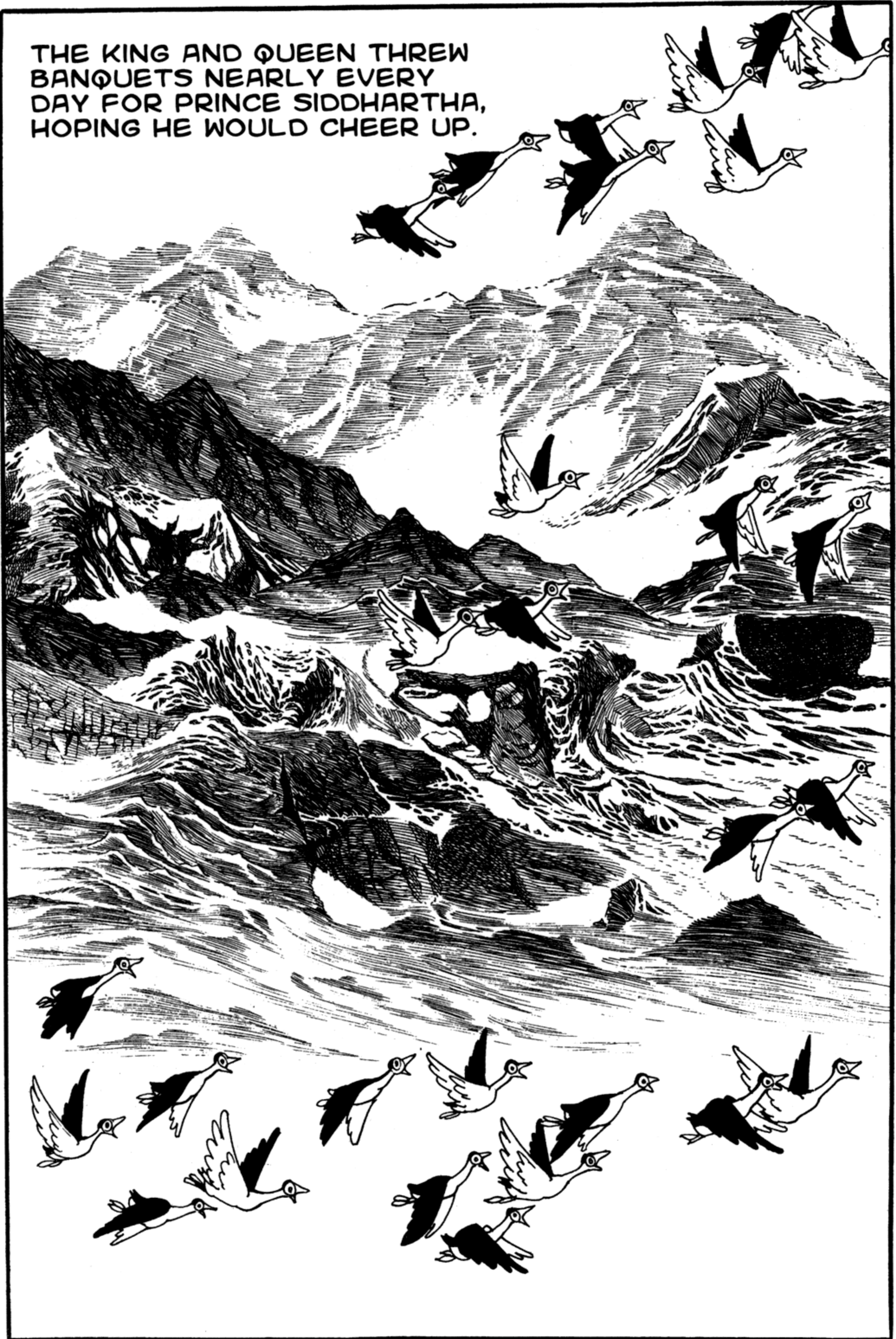


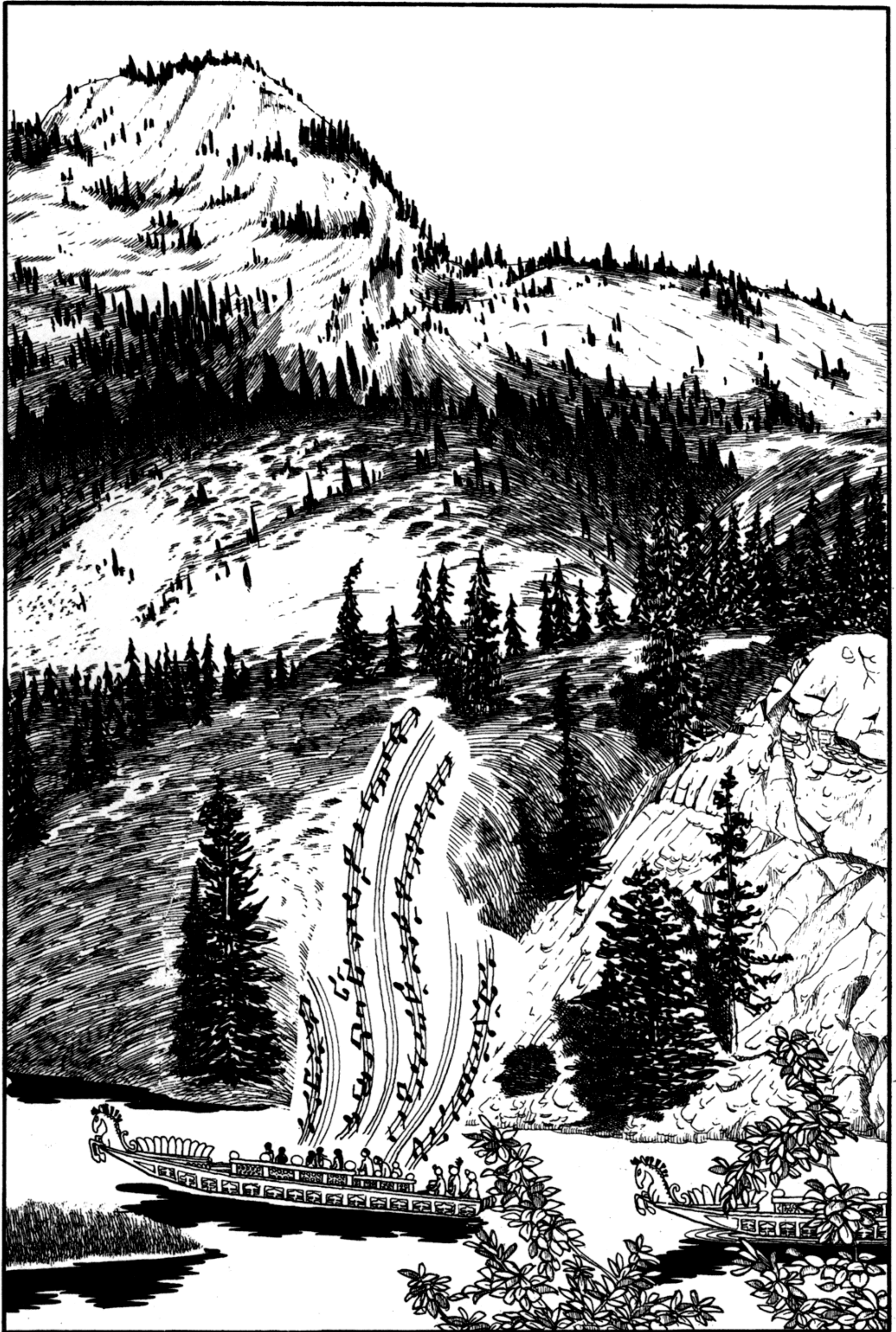
WHEN THE DOCTOR OR A MAID ENTERED THE ROOM, HE BARELY LOOKED IN THEIR DIRECTION.

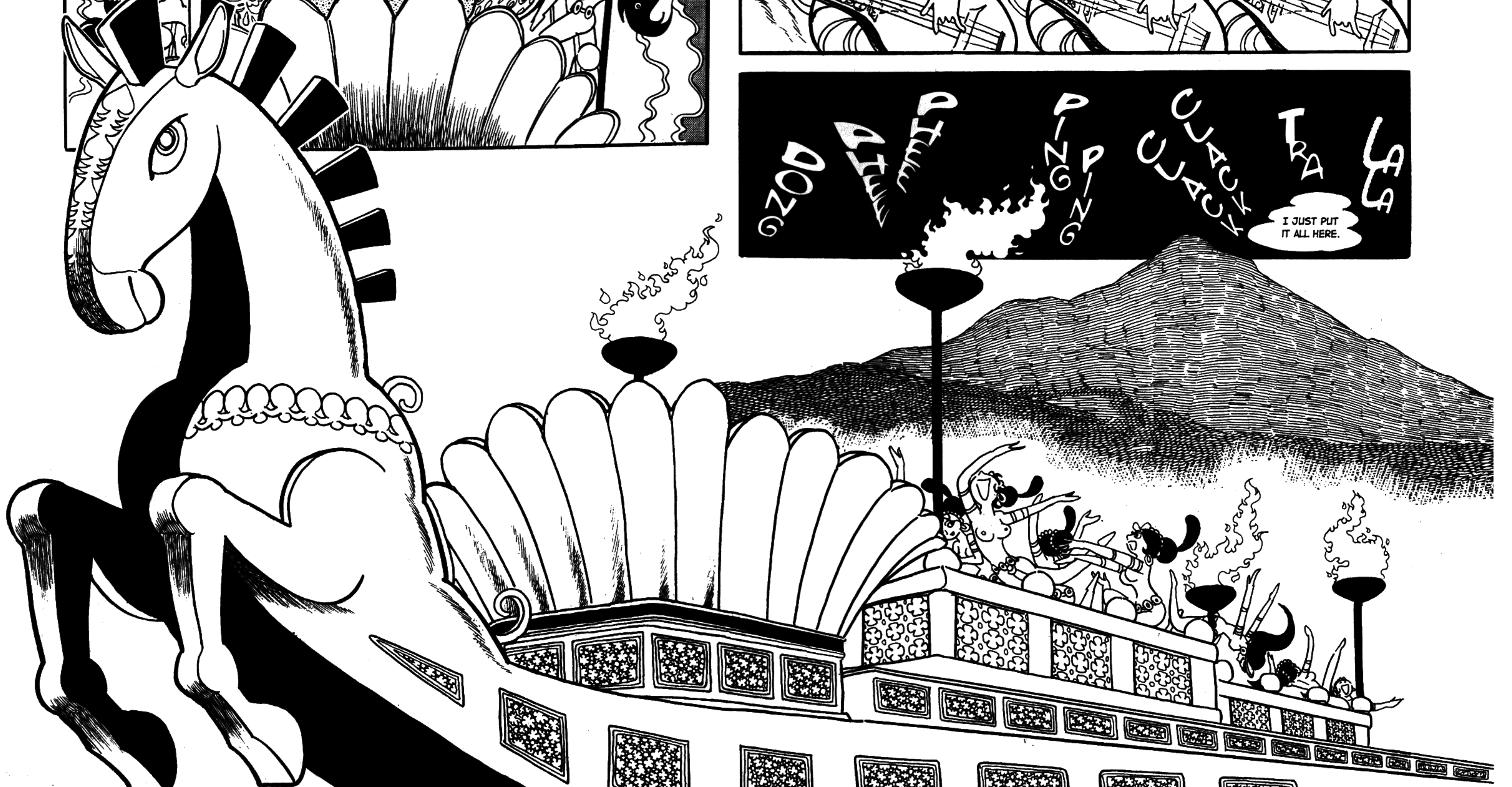
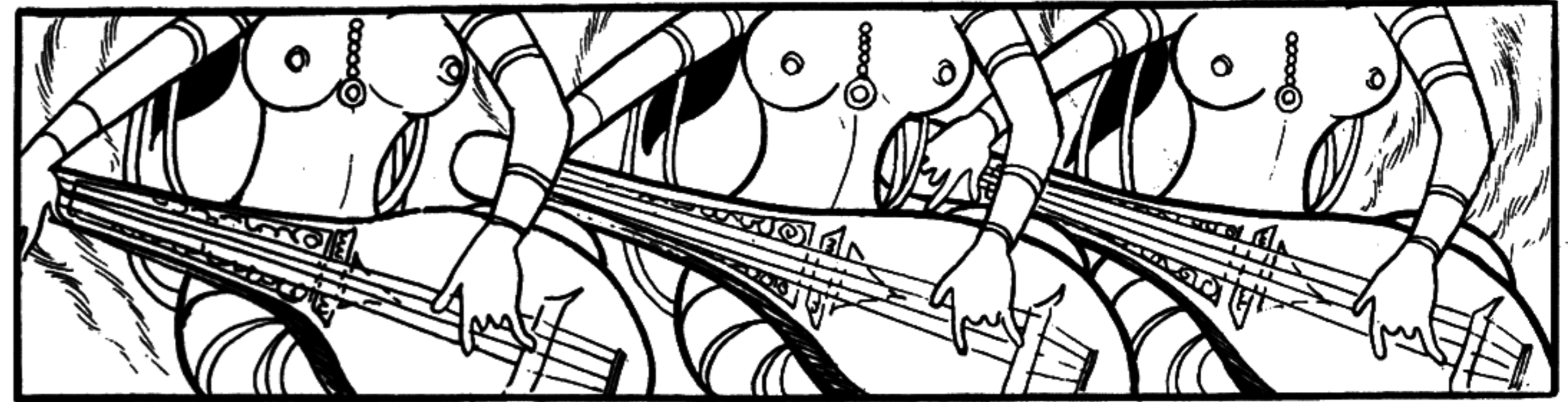
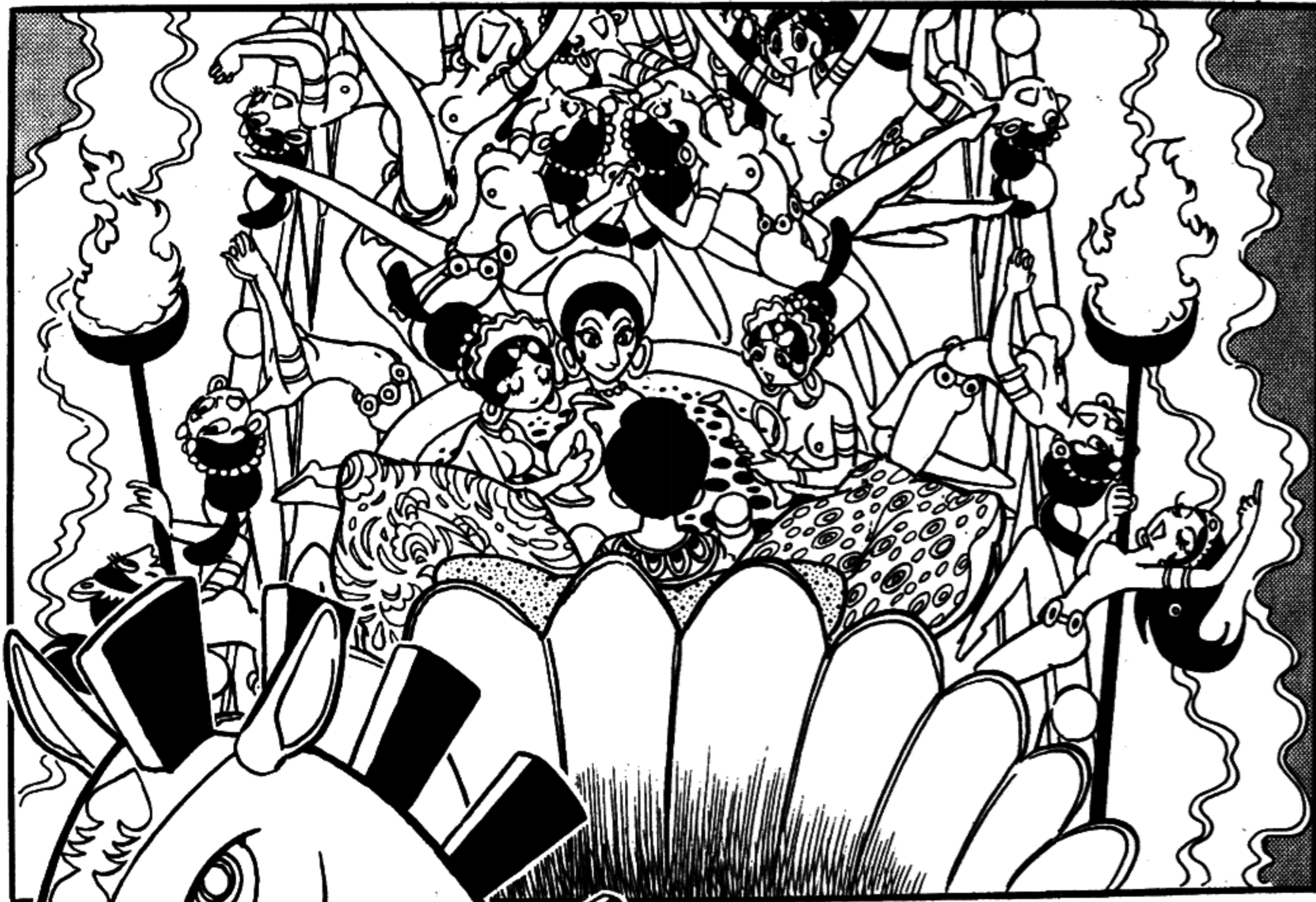


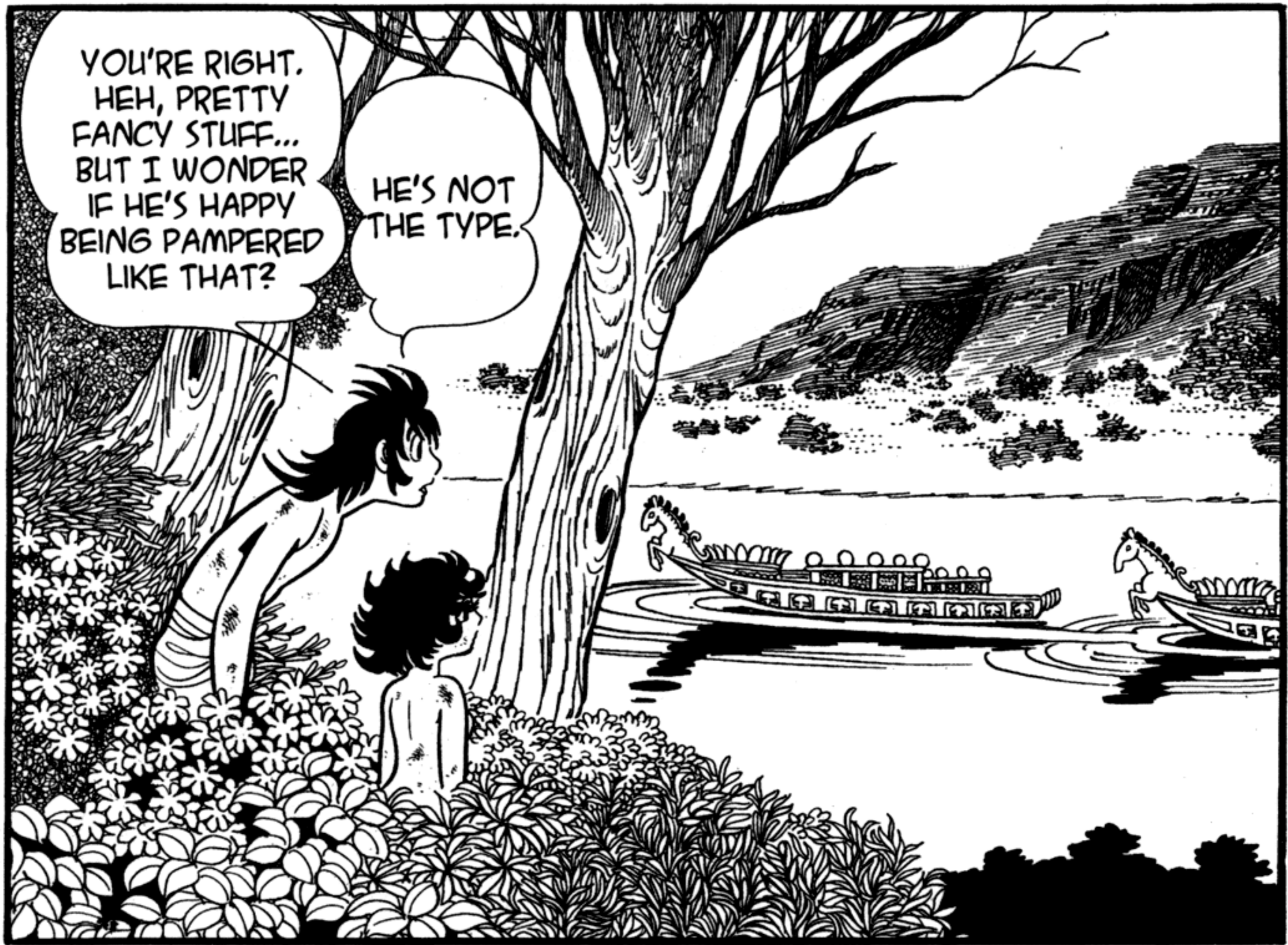
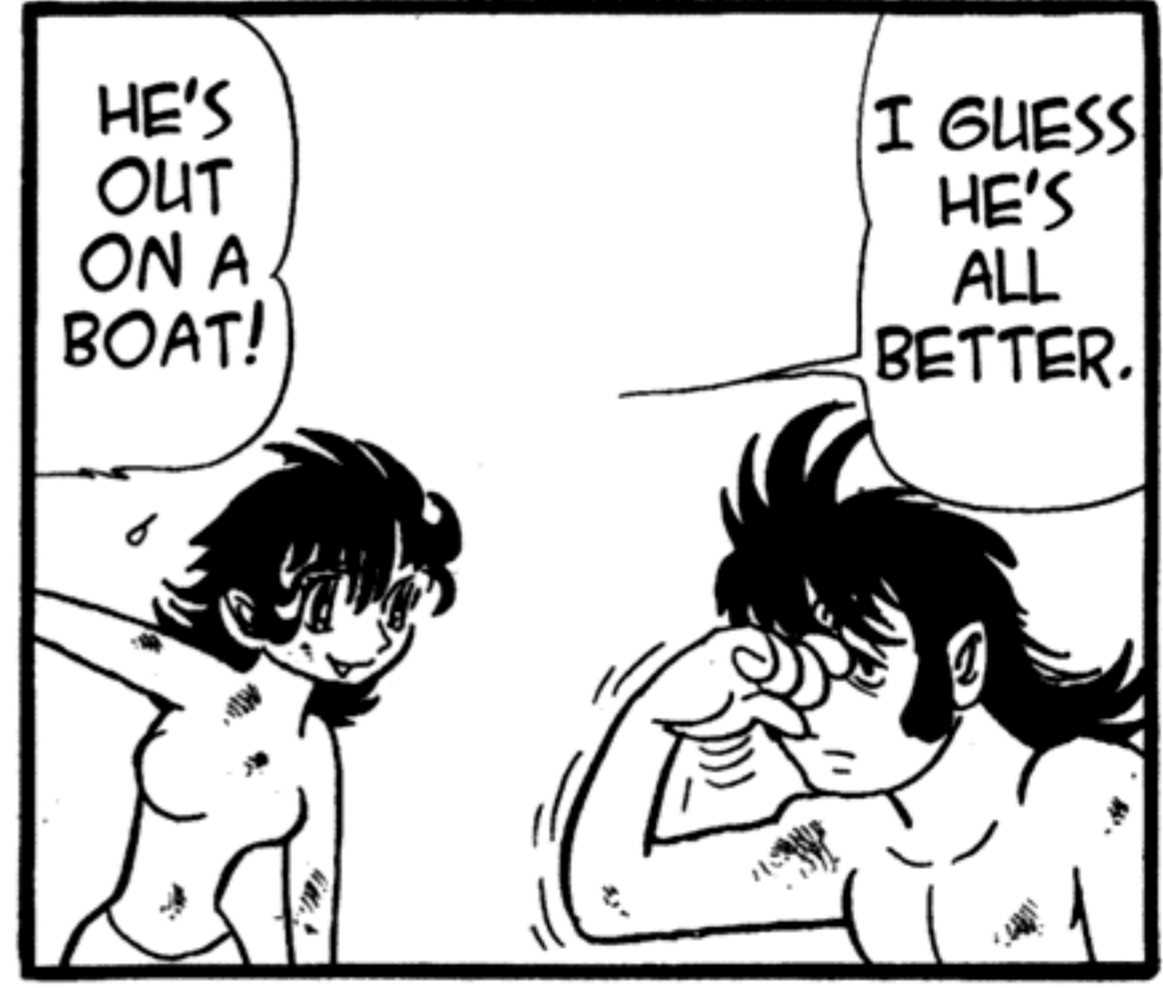
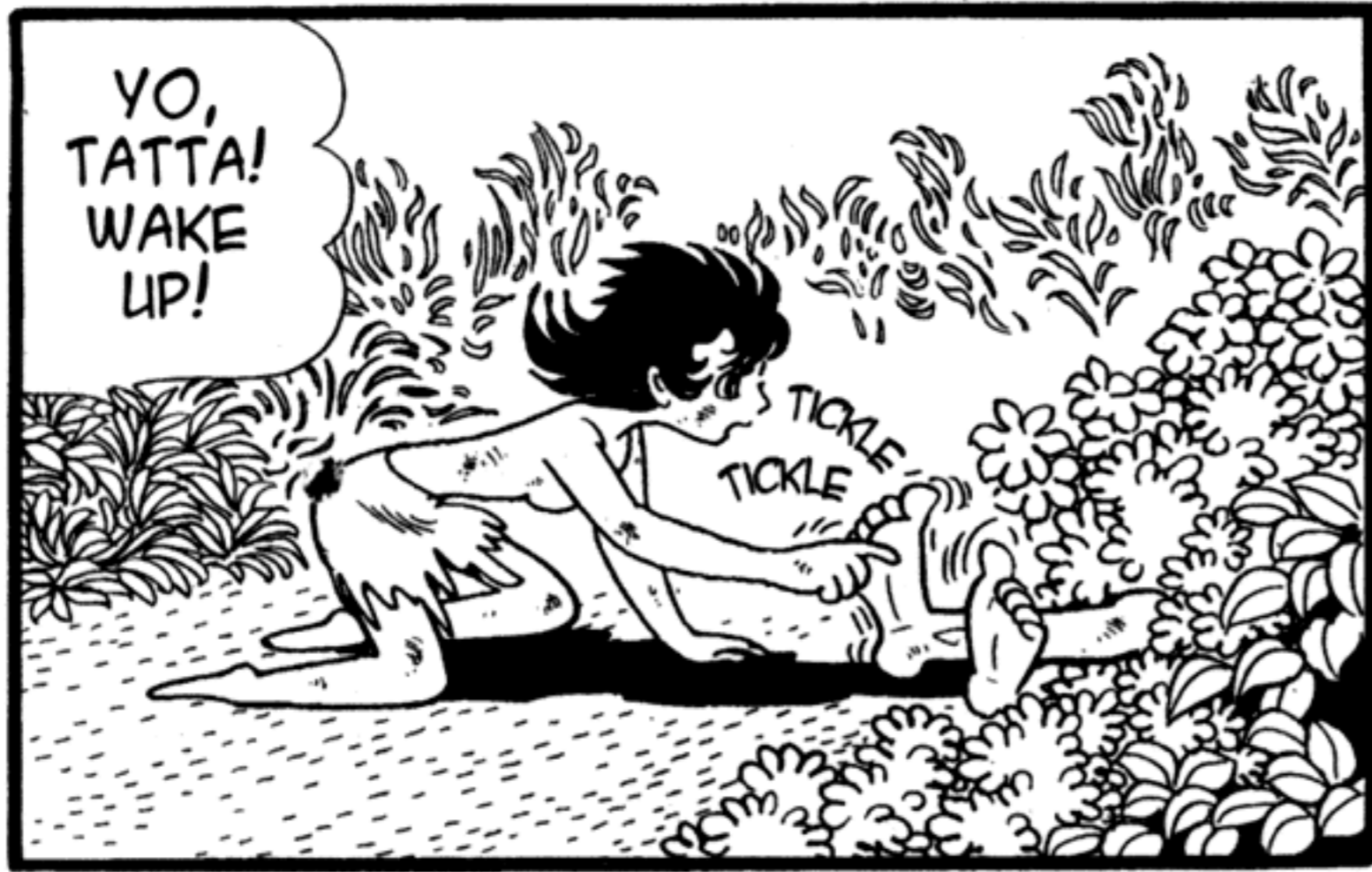
IT WAS DURING THIS TIME THAT SIDDHARTHA'S RESOLVE BEGAN TO DEEPEN.

THE KING AND QUEEN THREW
BANQUETS NEARLY EVERY
DAY FOR PRINCE SIDDHARTHA,
HOPING HE WOULD CHEER UP.













I MISS HIM SO MUCH! IF HE SAID JUST ONE WORD TO ME, I'D FEEL SO MUCH BETTER... I KNOW I SHOULDN'T WISH FOR IT,

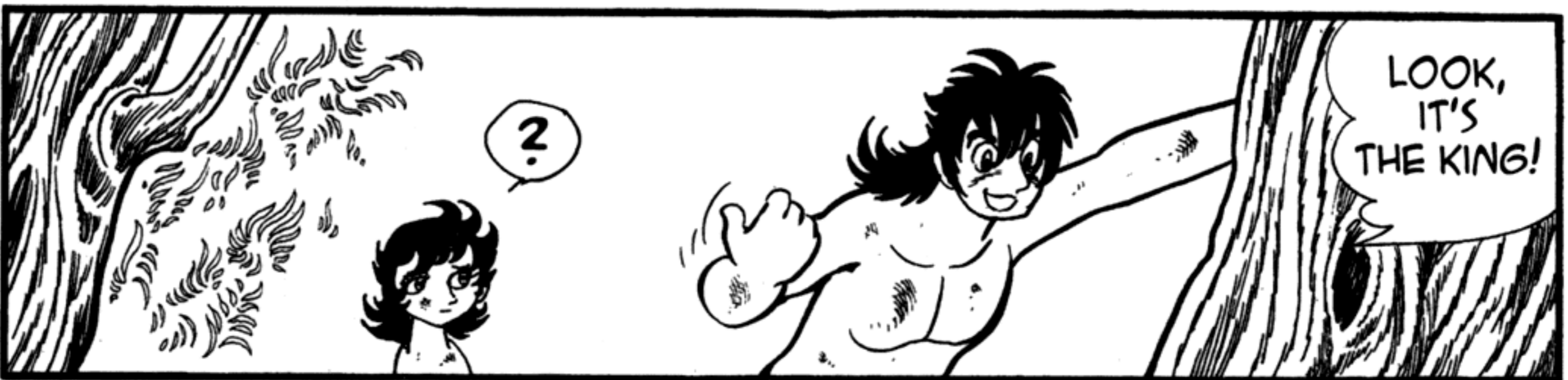
BECAUSE IT ISN'T GONNA HAPPEN. AND THAT'S BREAKING MY HEART.



THAT'S NOT HEALTHY. HOW ABOUT A DRINK? THESE DAYS, EVEN COLLEGE GIRLS GUZZLE BEER TILL THEY PUKE, YOU KNOW.



WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT A GIRL'S HEART-BREAK?



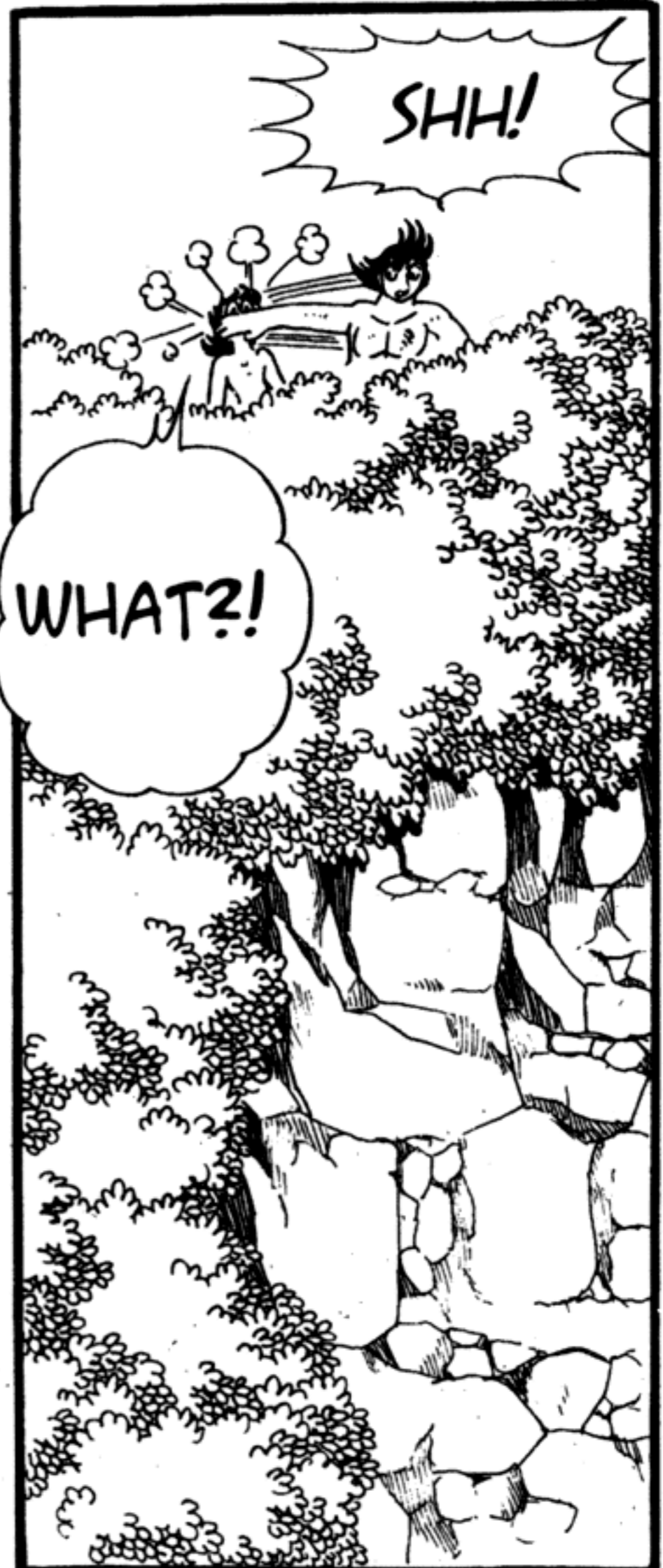
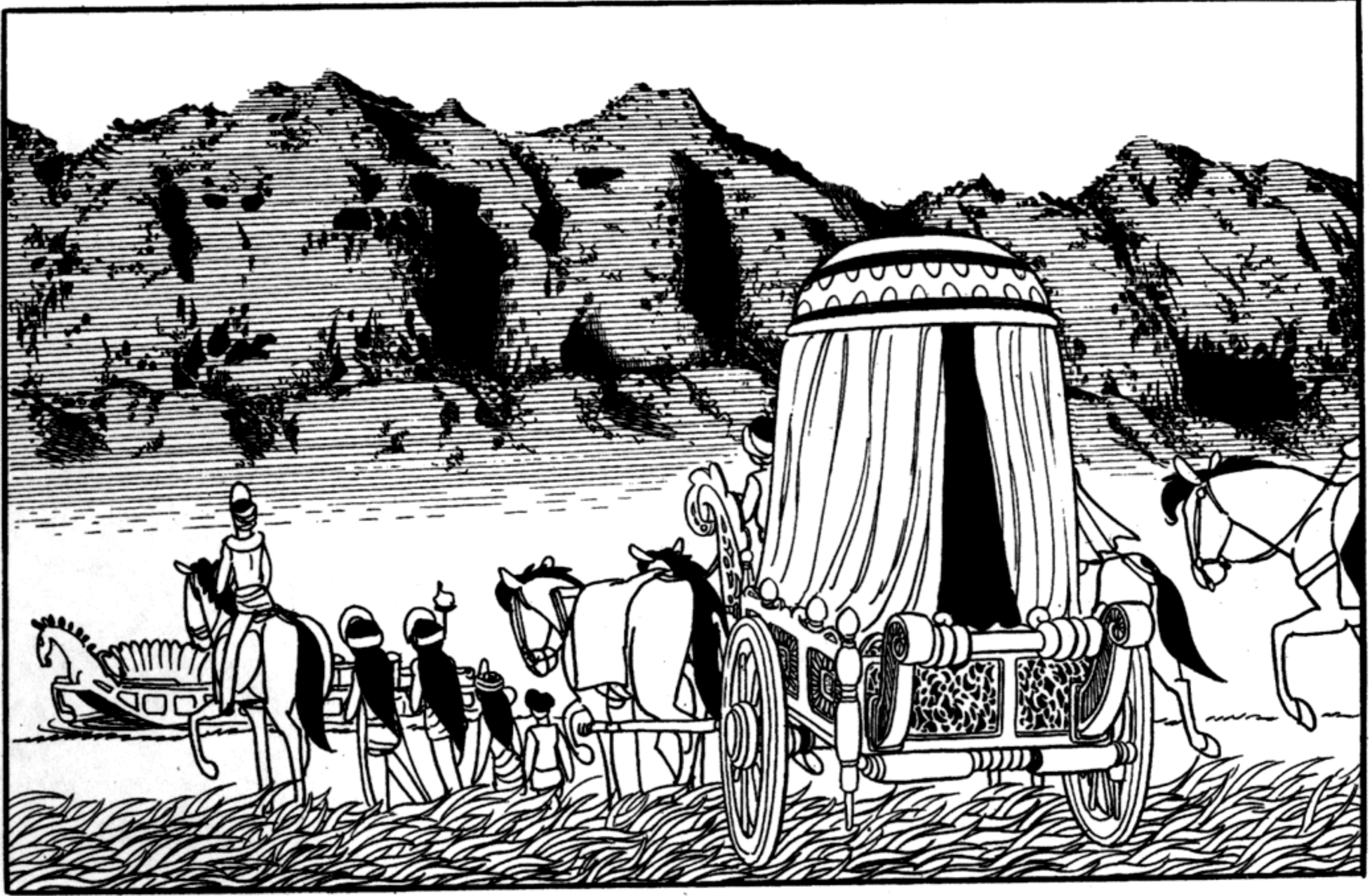
?

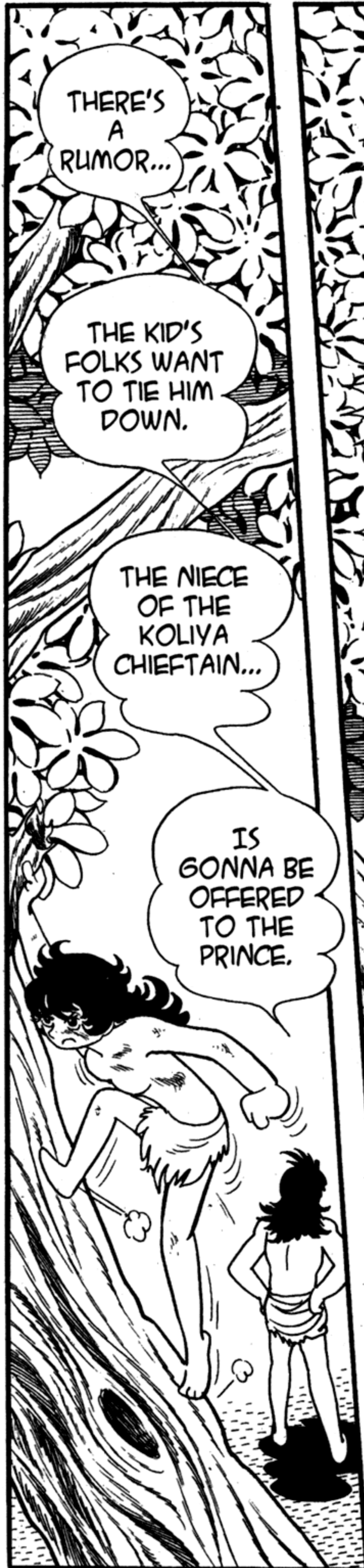
LOOK, IT'S THE KING!

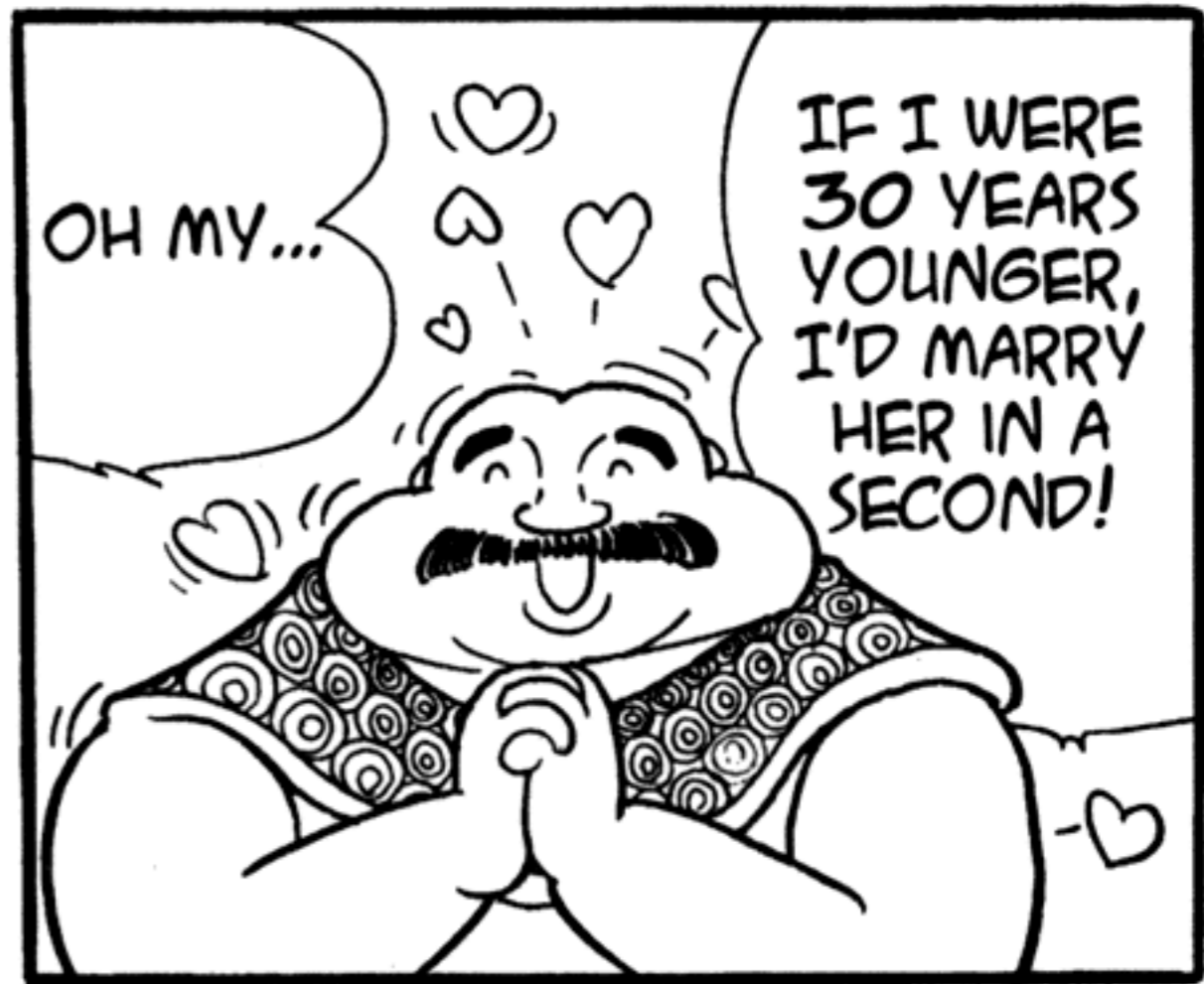
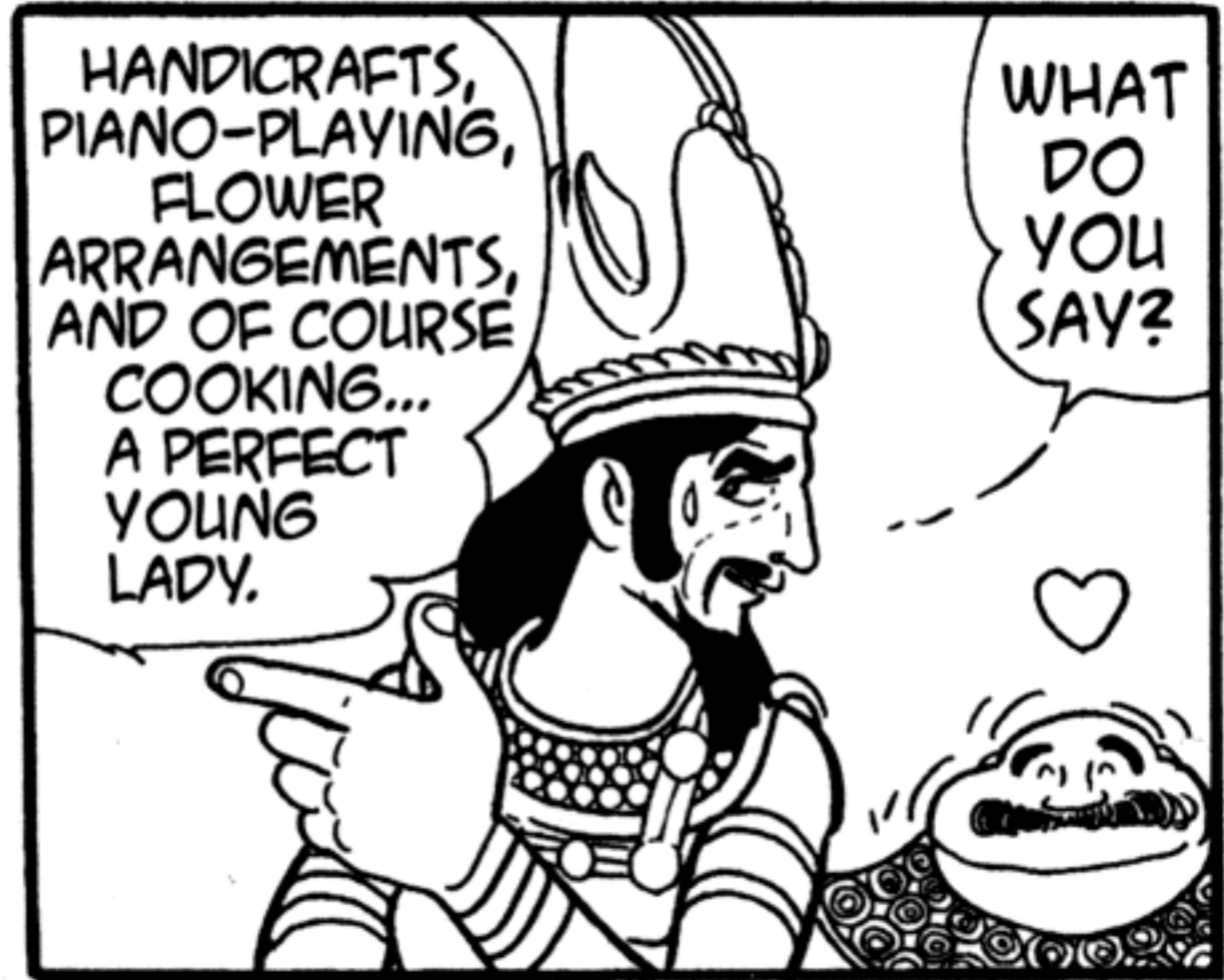


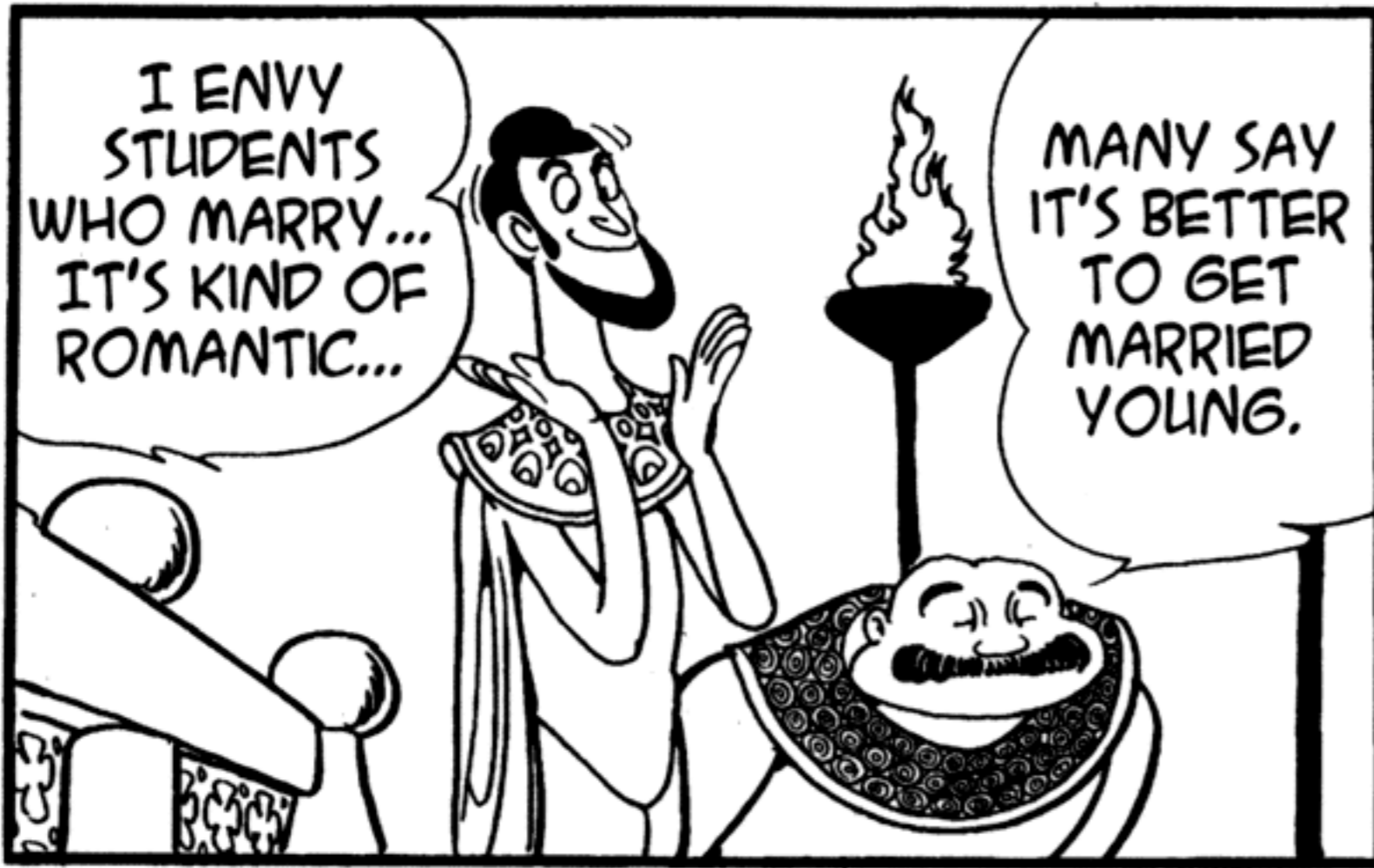
AND THAT'S SOME PRINCESS BEHIND HIM.













PAJAPATI STAYED BEHIND TODAY ON PURPOSE.

SHE WANTS THE CHOICE TO BE YOURS.

DON'T YOU LIKE HER? TAKE HER HAND AND PLEDGE YOURSELF...



FATHER, WASN'T THERE A SPECIAL CUSTOM FOR BRIDEGROOMS OF THE WARRIOR CASTE IN OUR COUNTRY?



YES, BUT YOU'RE DIFFERENT.

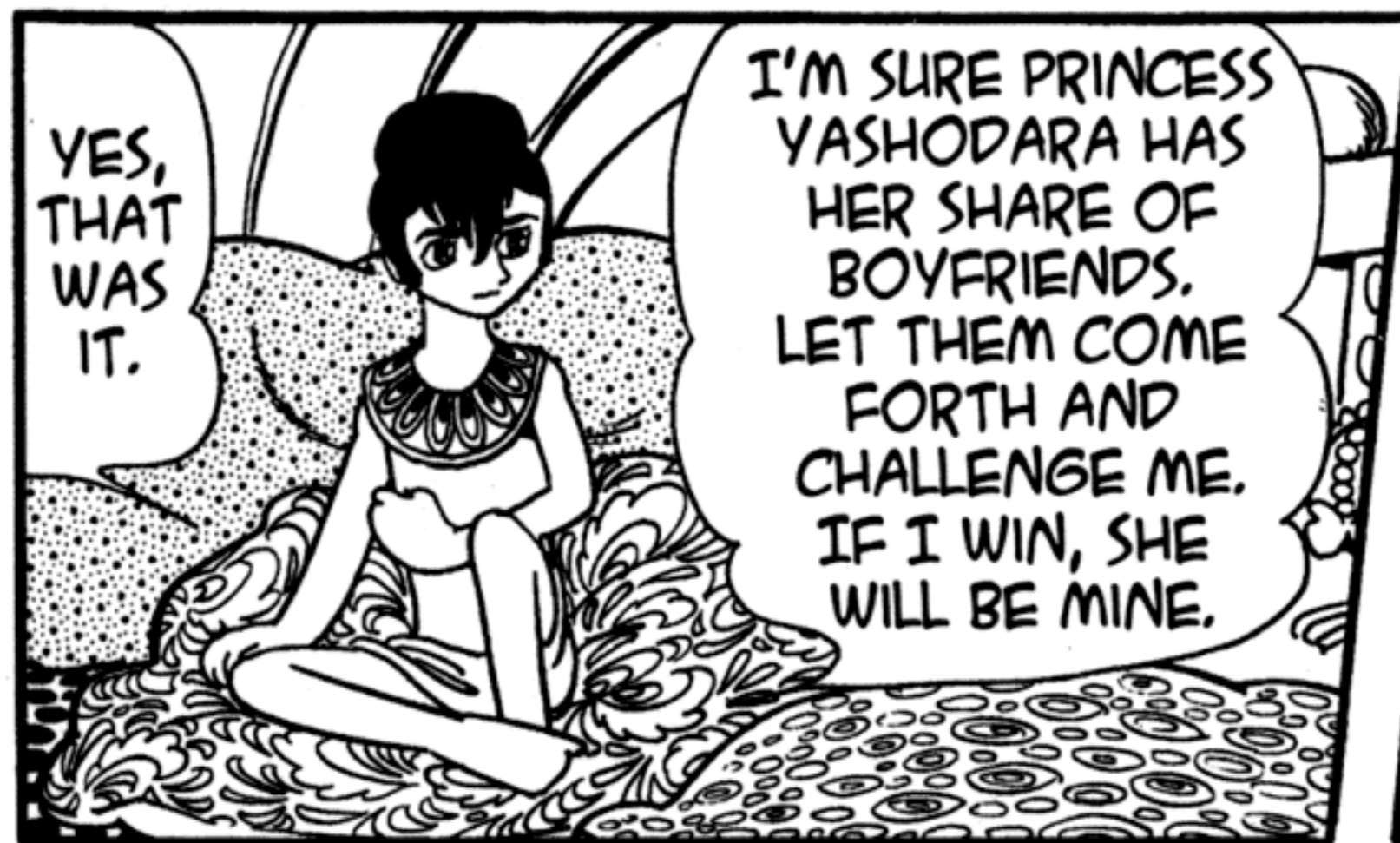
YOU'RE JUST TOO WEAK FOR IT.



I DON'T WANT TO BE SOME EXCEPTION! I MARRY PROPERLY, OR I DON'T.



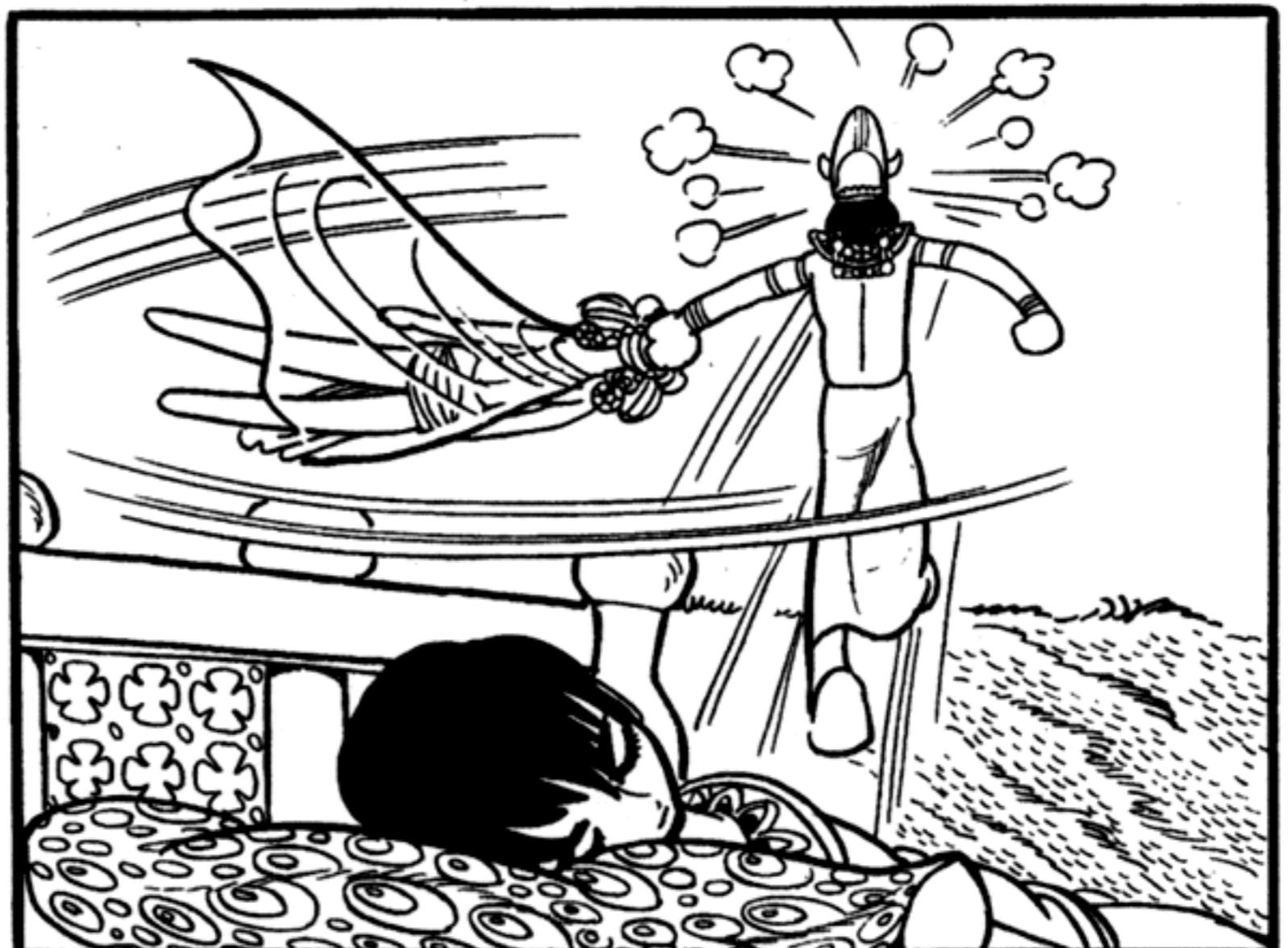
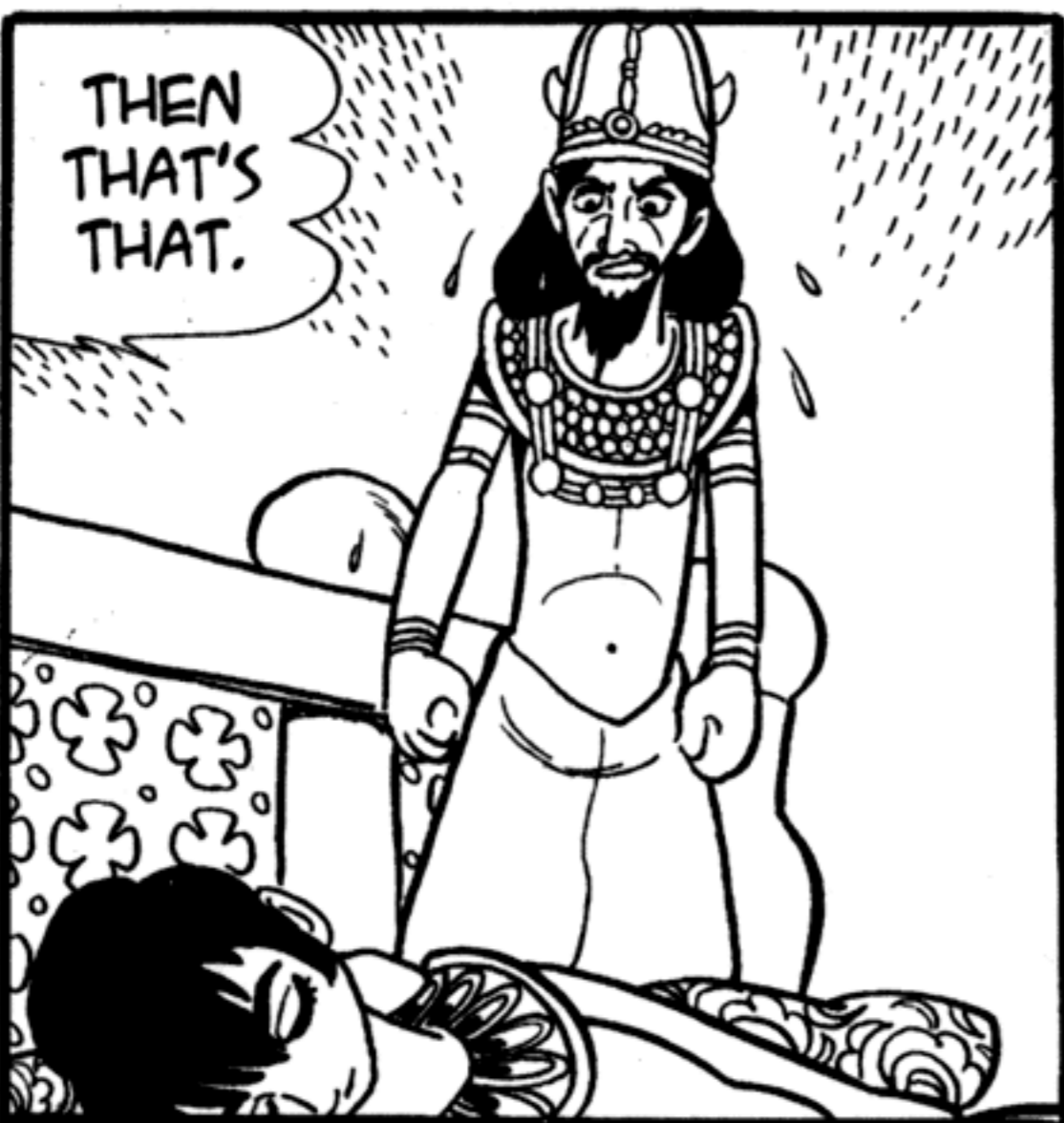
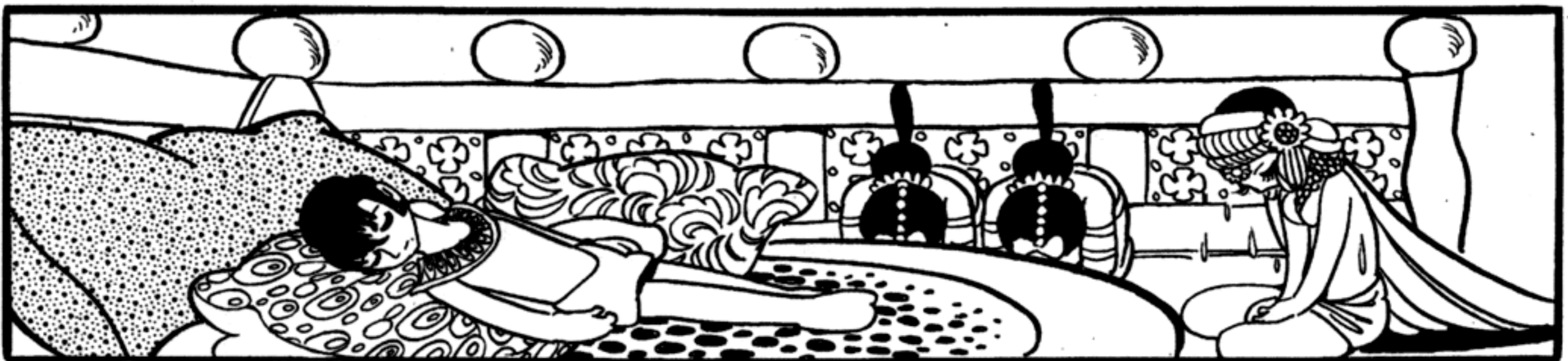
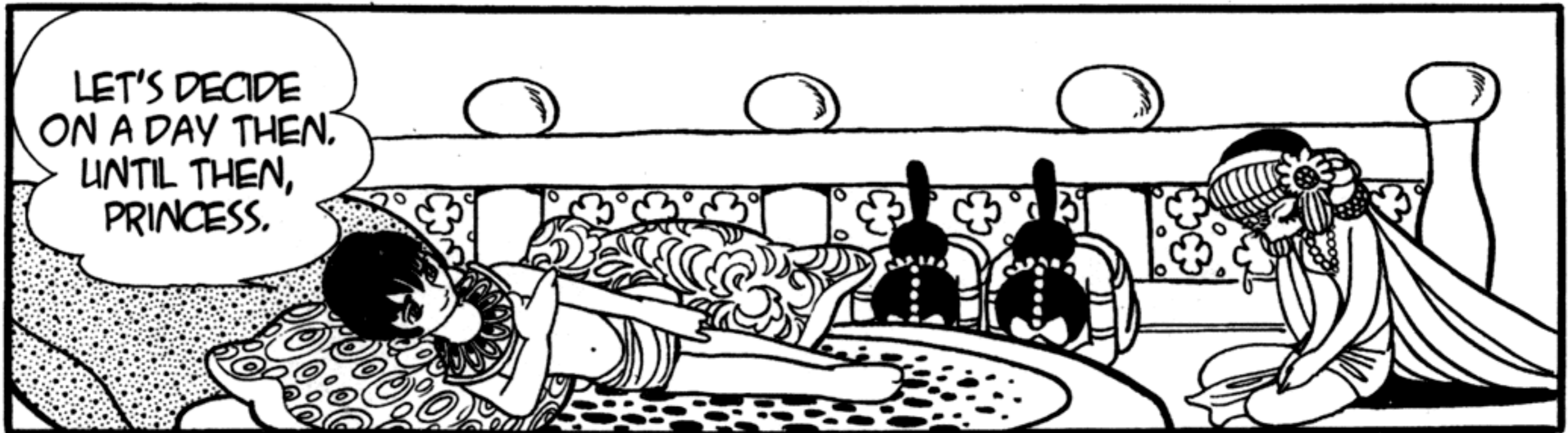
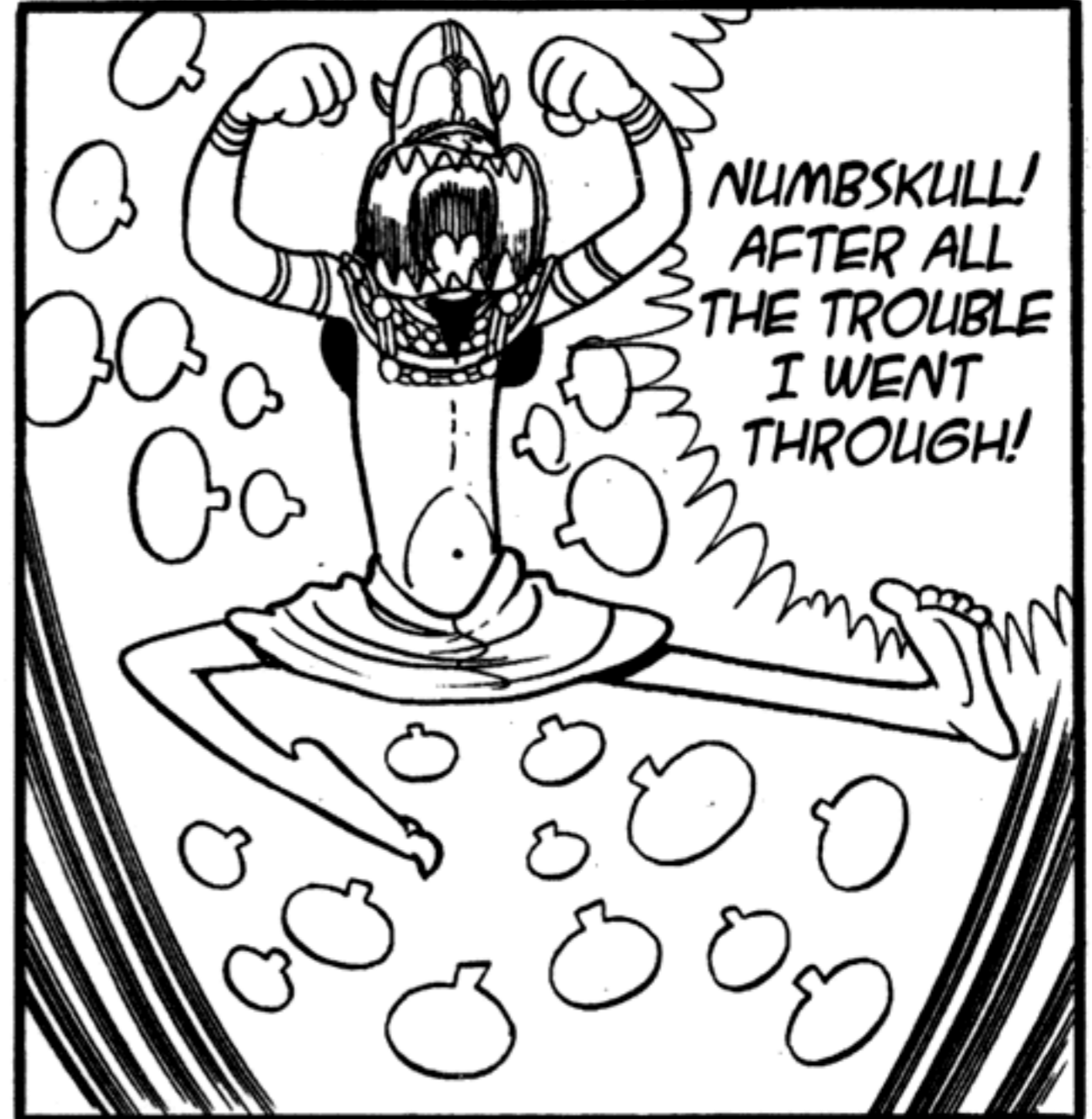
SIDDHARTHA! THE CUSTOM SAYS THAT THE GROOM MUST FIGHT ANY SUITORS THAT COME FORTH IN ORDER TO WIN THE BRIDE.



YES, THAT WAS IT.

I'M SURE PRINCESS YASHODARA HAS HER SHARE OF BOYFRIENDS. LET THEM COME FORTH AND CHALLENGE ME. IF I WIN, SHE WILL BE MINE.

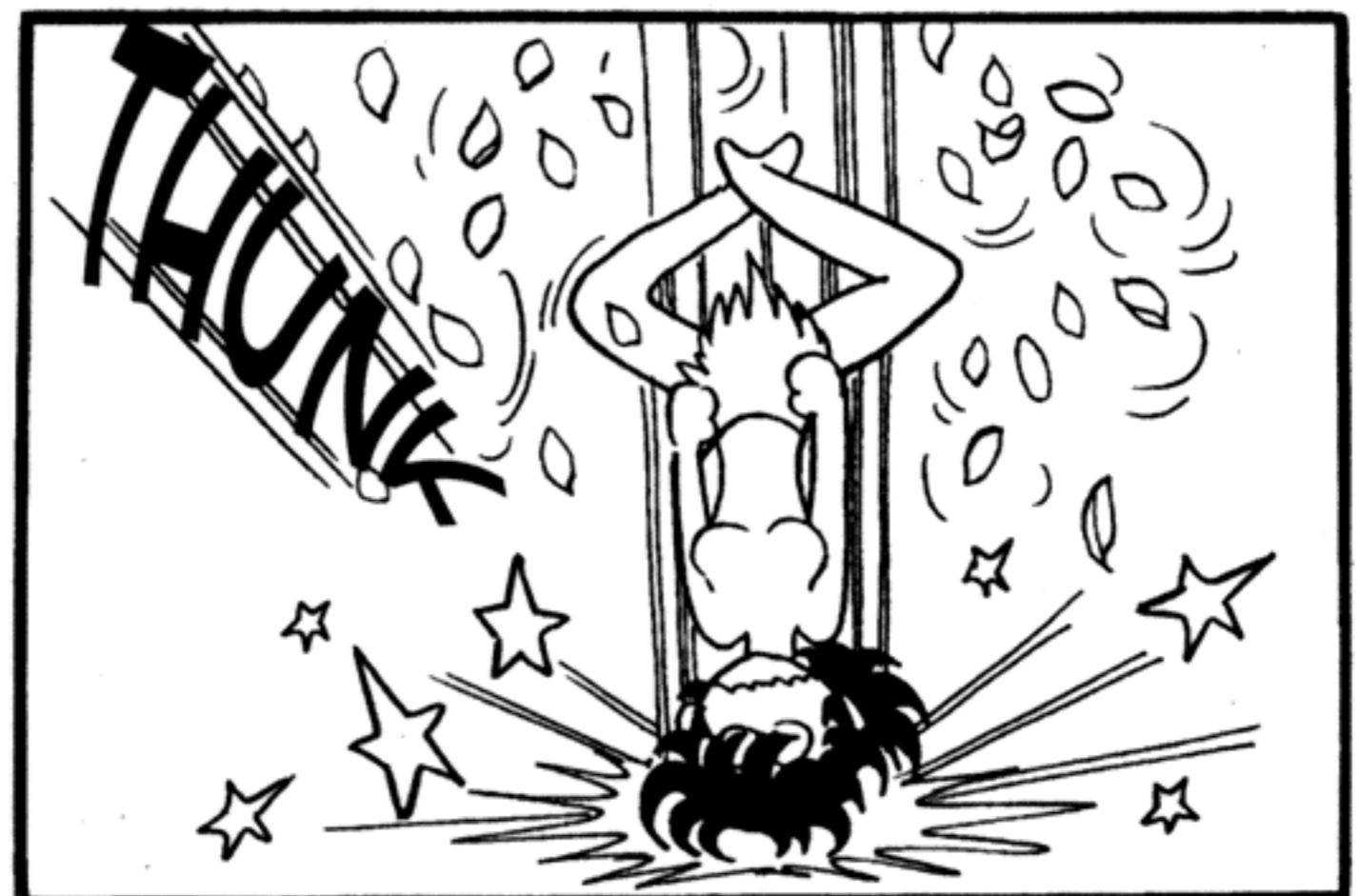
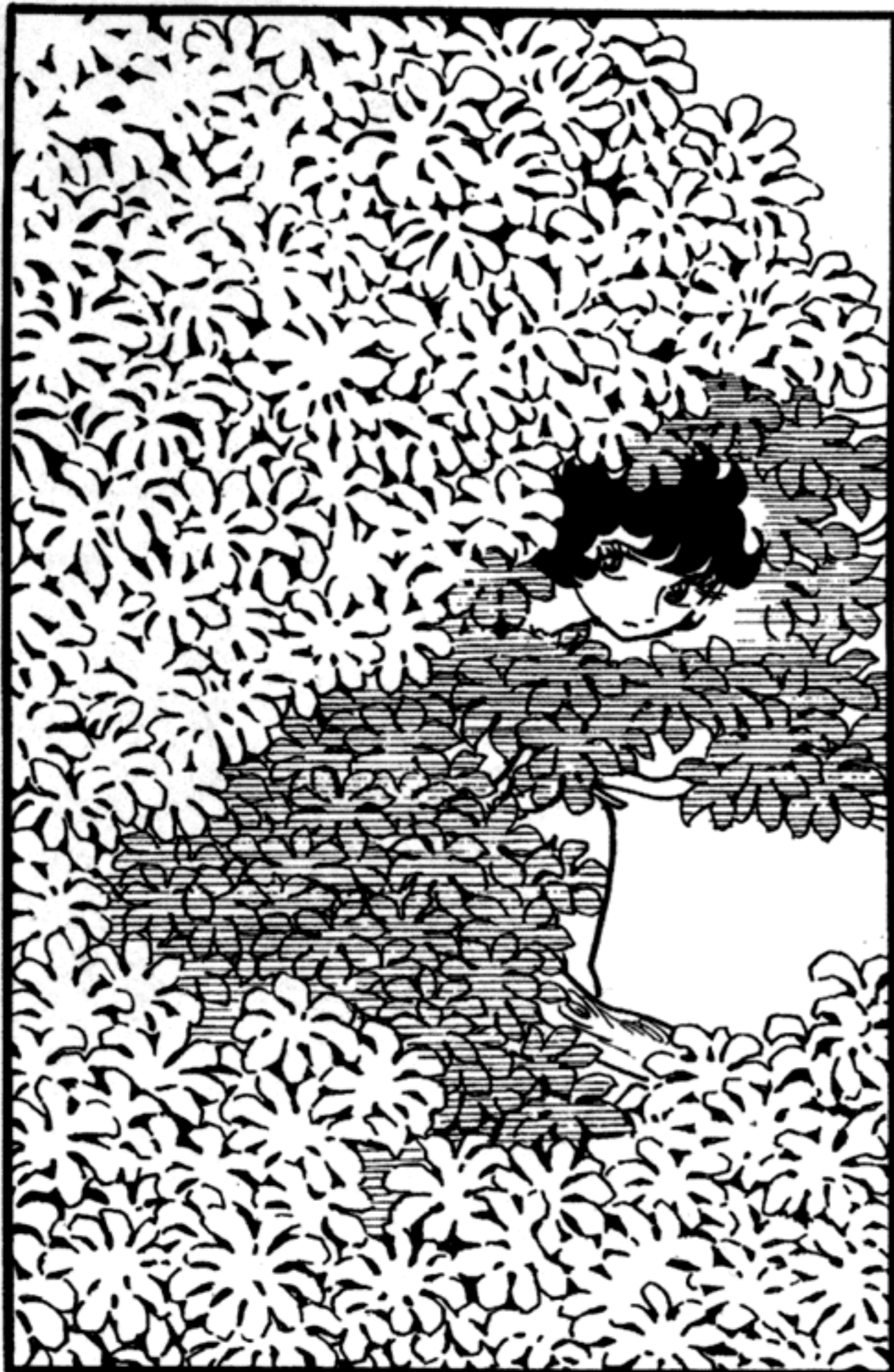






THEY'RE LEAVING. I GUESS HE TURNED HER DOWN.

NO, MIGAILA, THESE HIGH-CLASS AFFAIRS DON'T GET SETTLED SO SOON.



SHE'S A PRINCESS, ALRIGHT - WAY CUTER THAN YOU.

HA! ...I'M NOT GIVING UP.

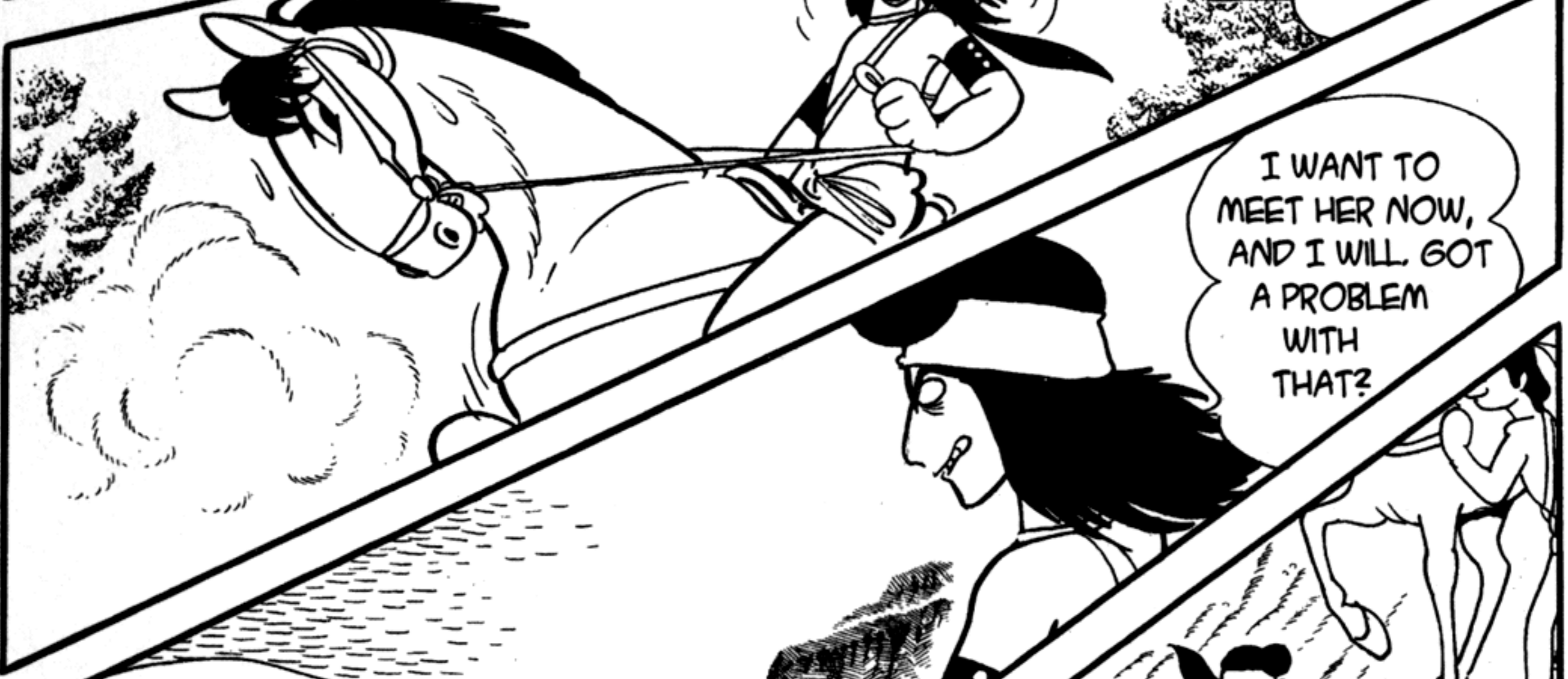




WHO GOES THERE?



I AM BANDAKA OF KOLIYA. I COME TO MEET PRINCESS YASHODARA.

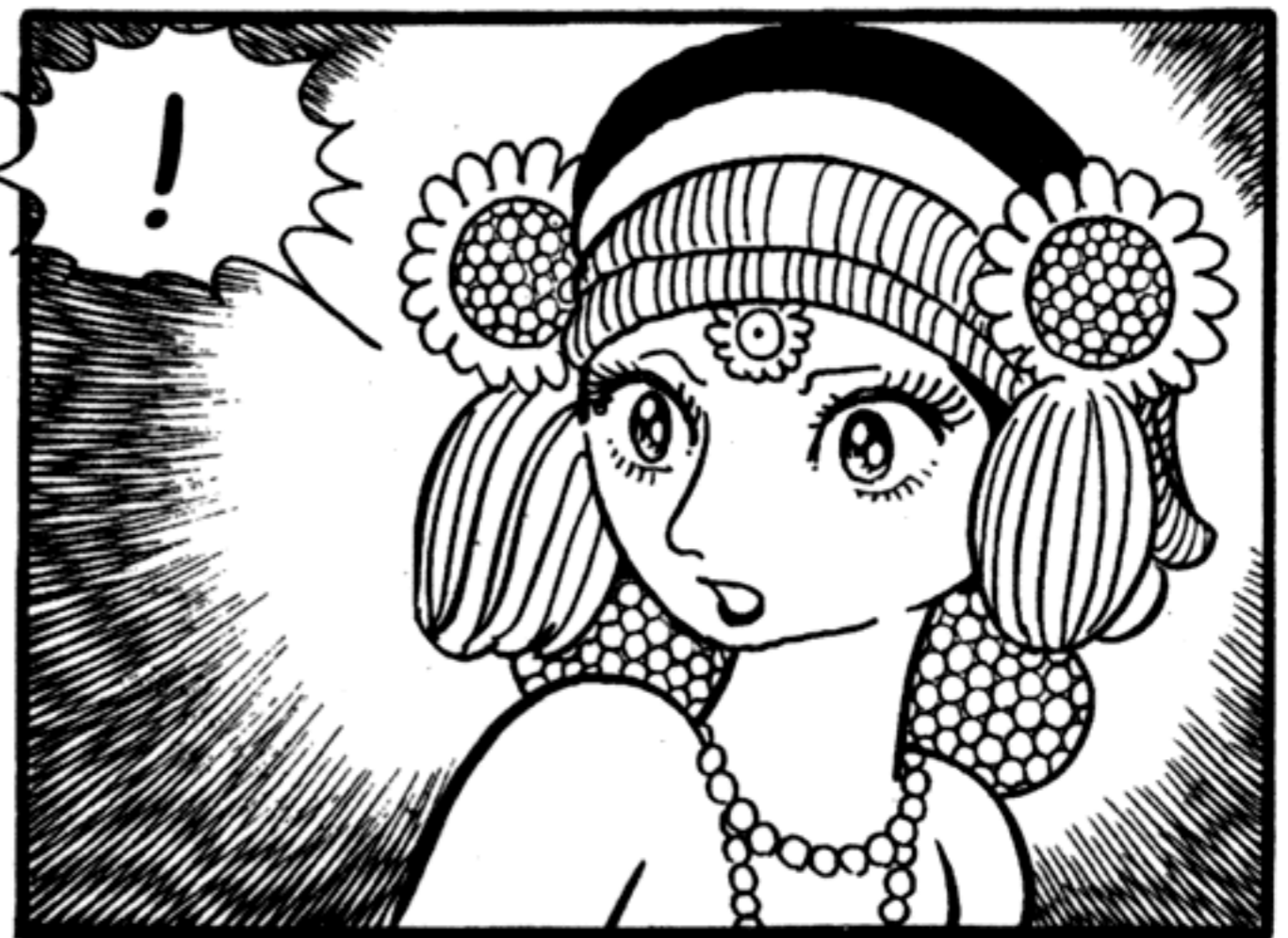


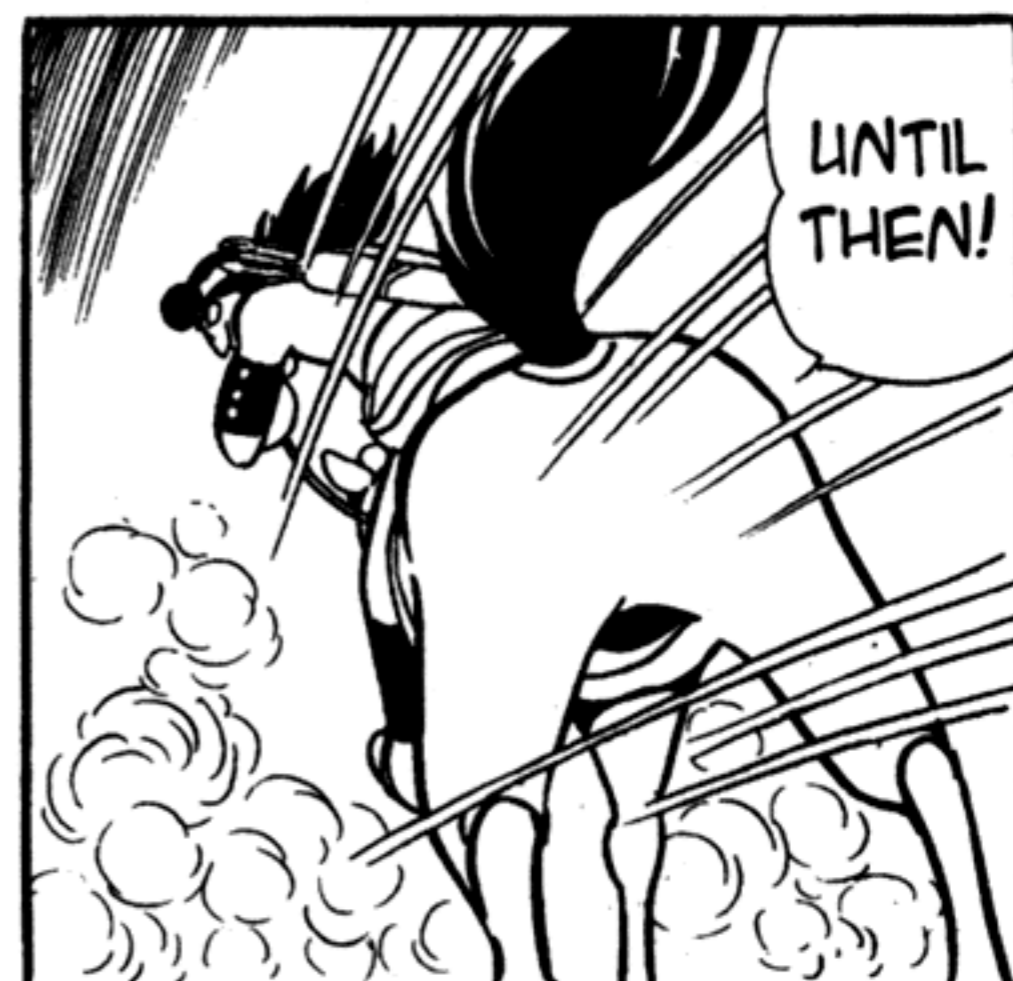
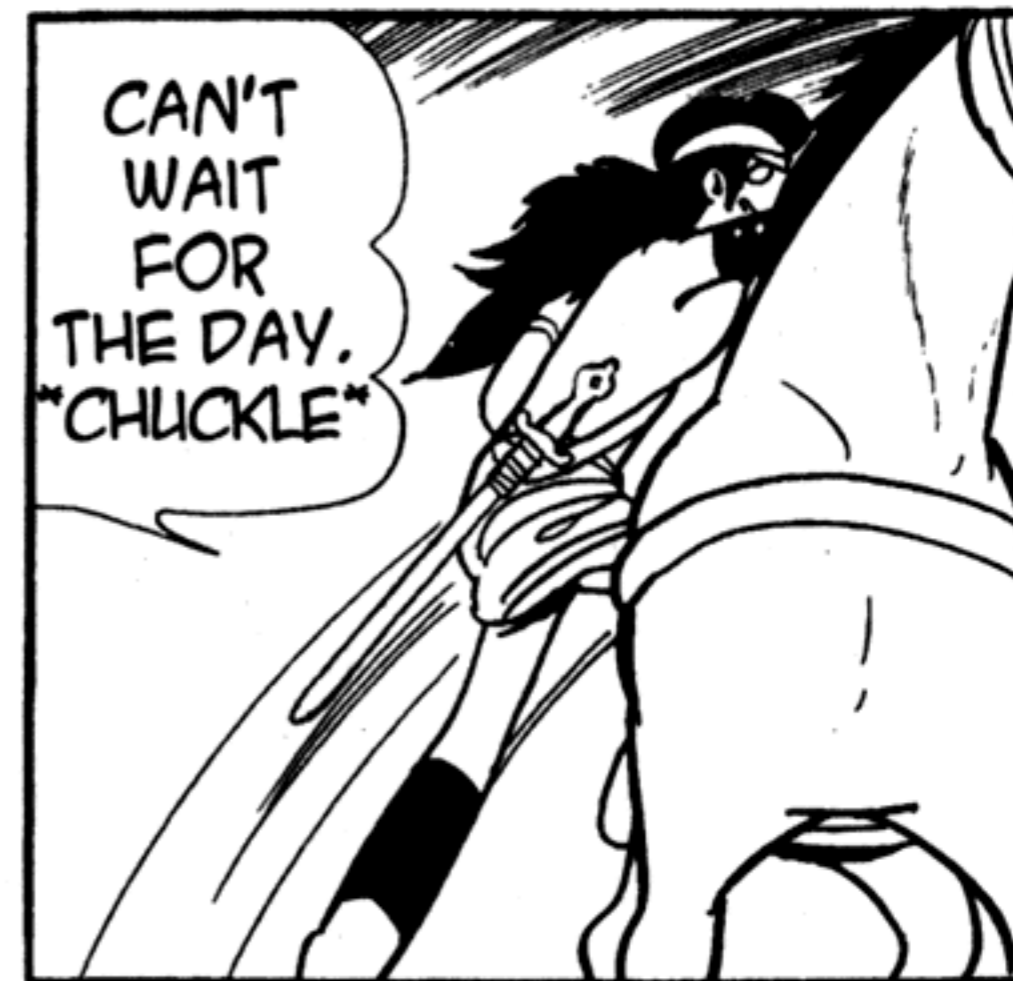
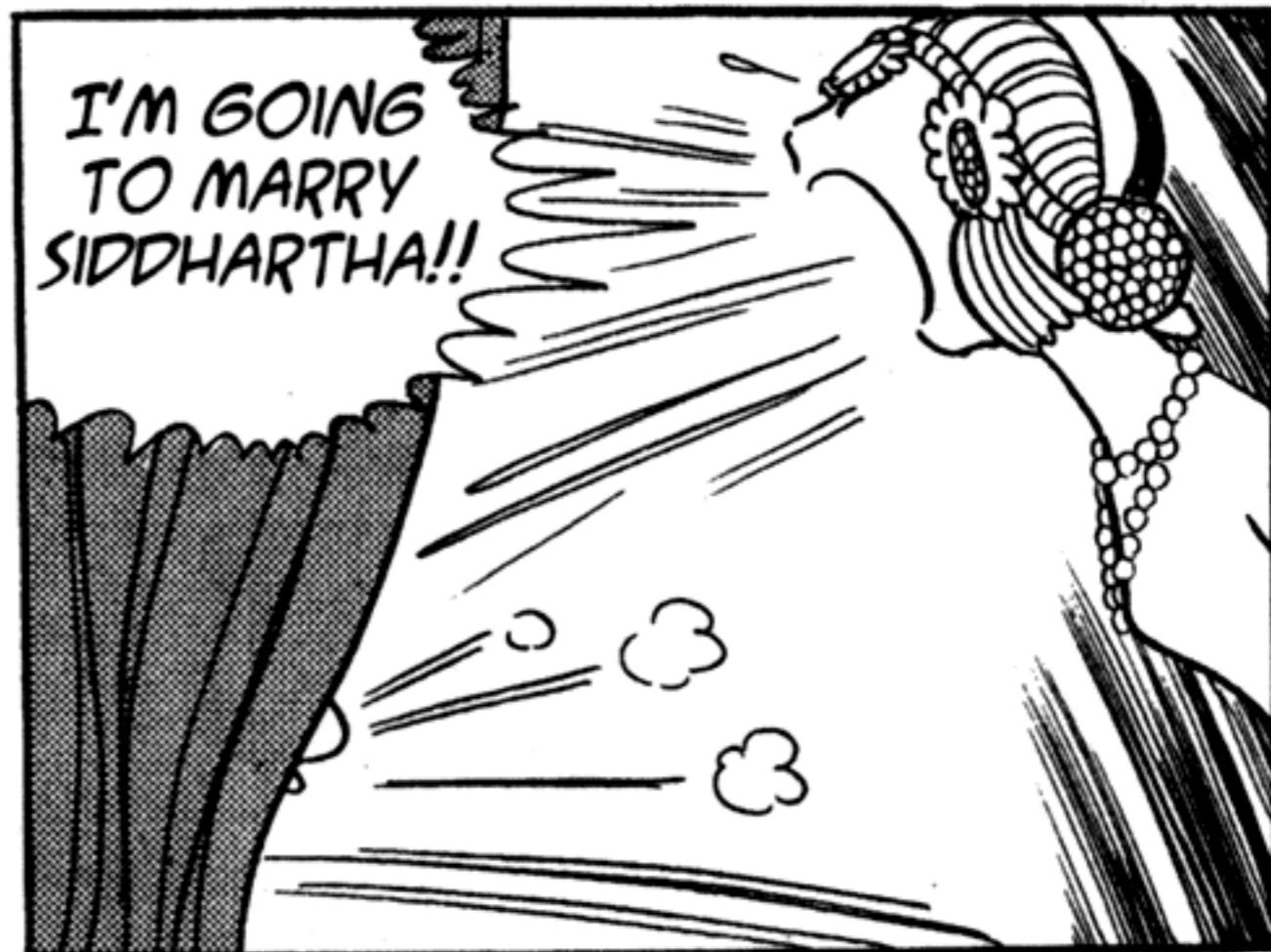
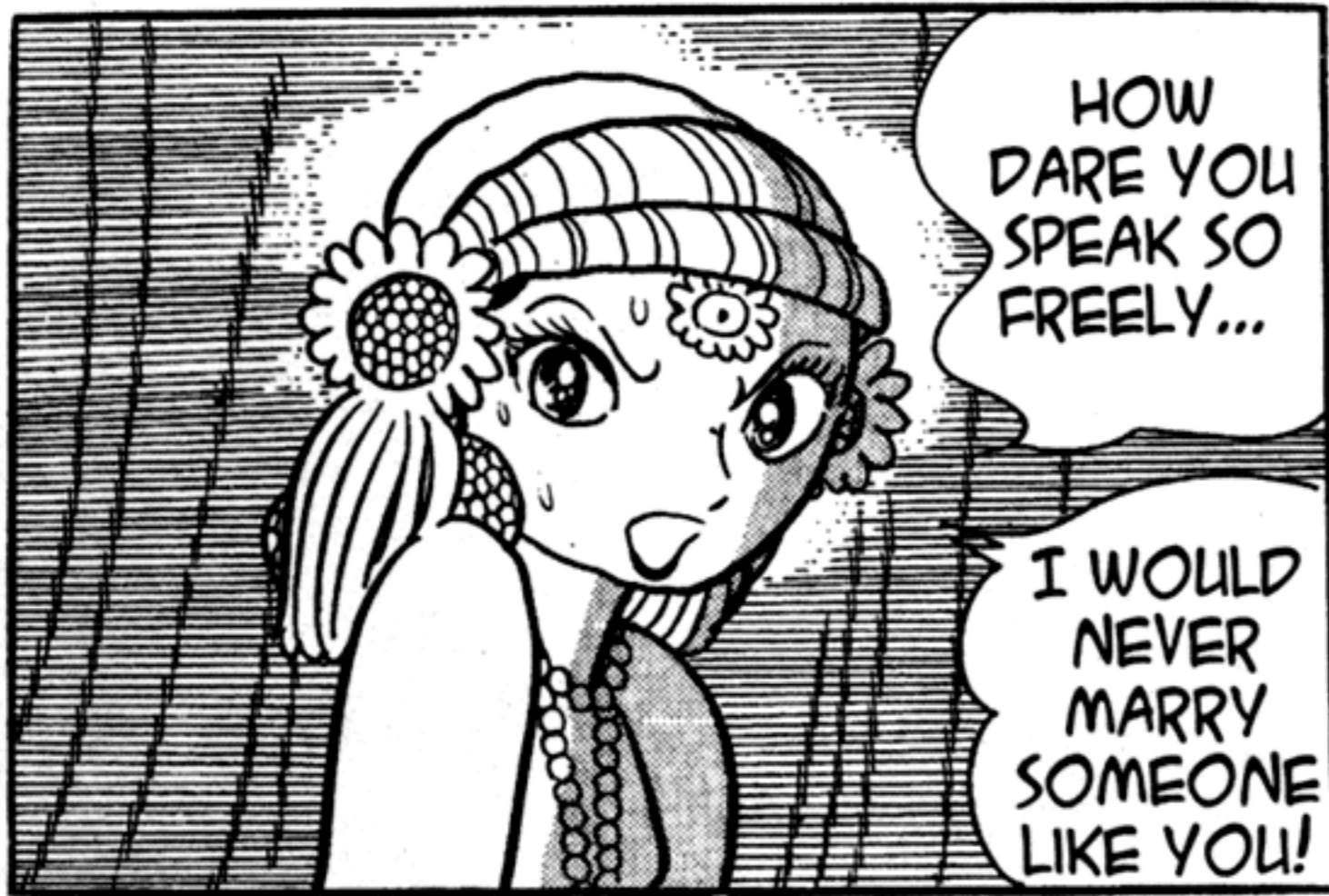
I WANT TO MEET HER NOW, AND I WILL GOT A PROBLEM WITH THAT?

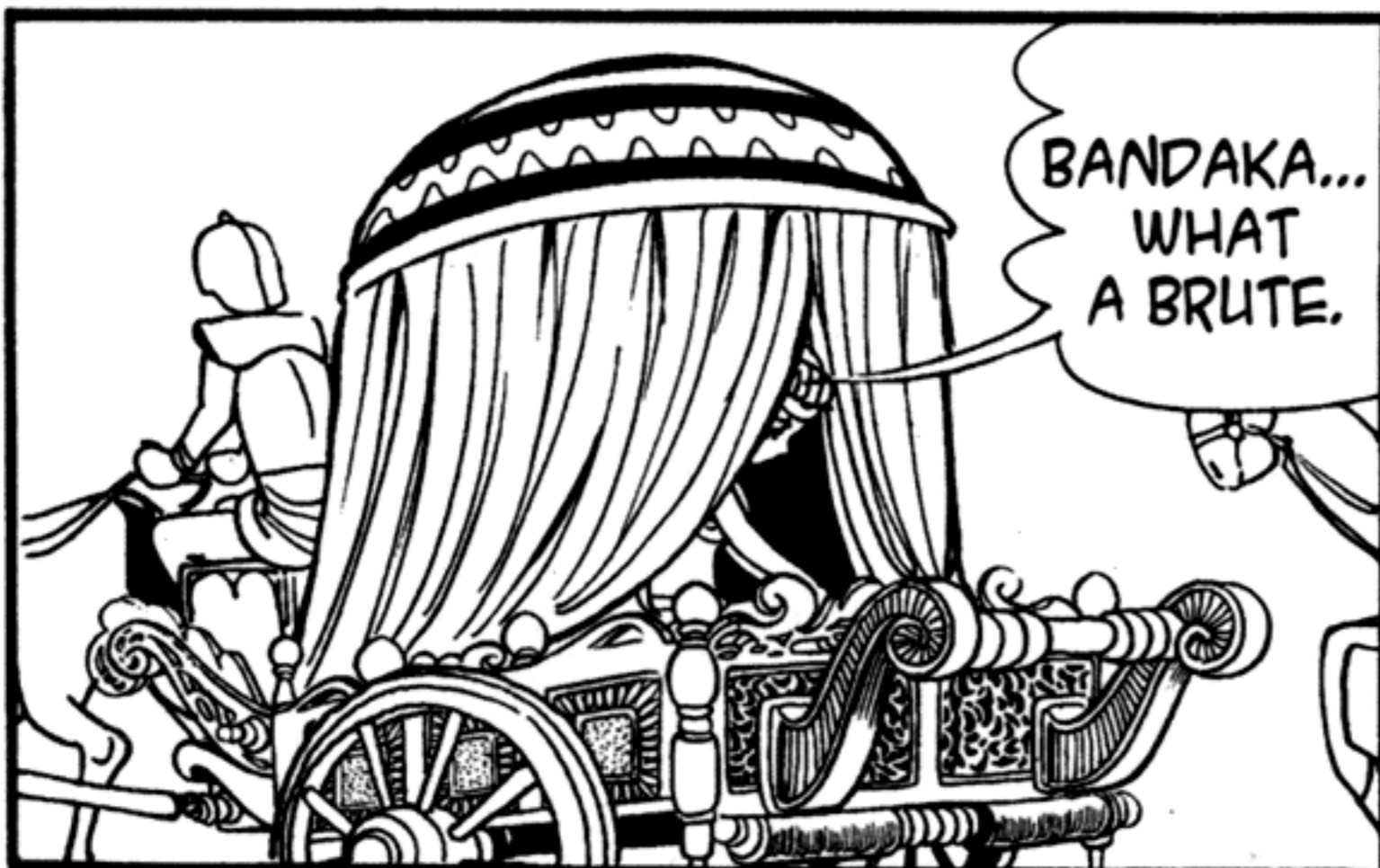


THE PRINCESS IS ON HER WAY HOME; IF YOU CARE TO WAIT AT THE PALACE...









CHAPTER FIVE

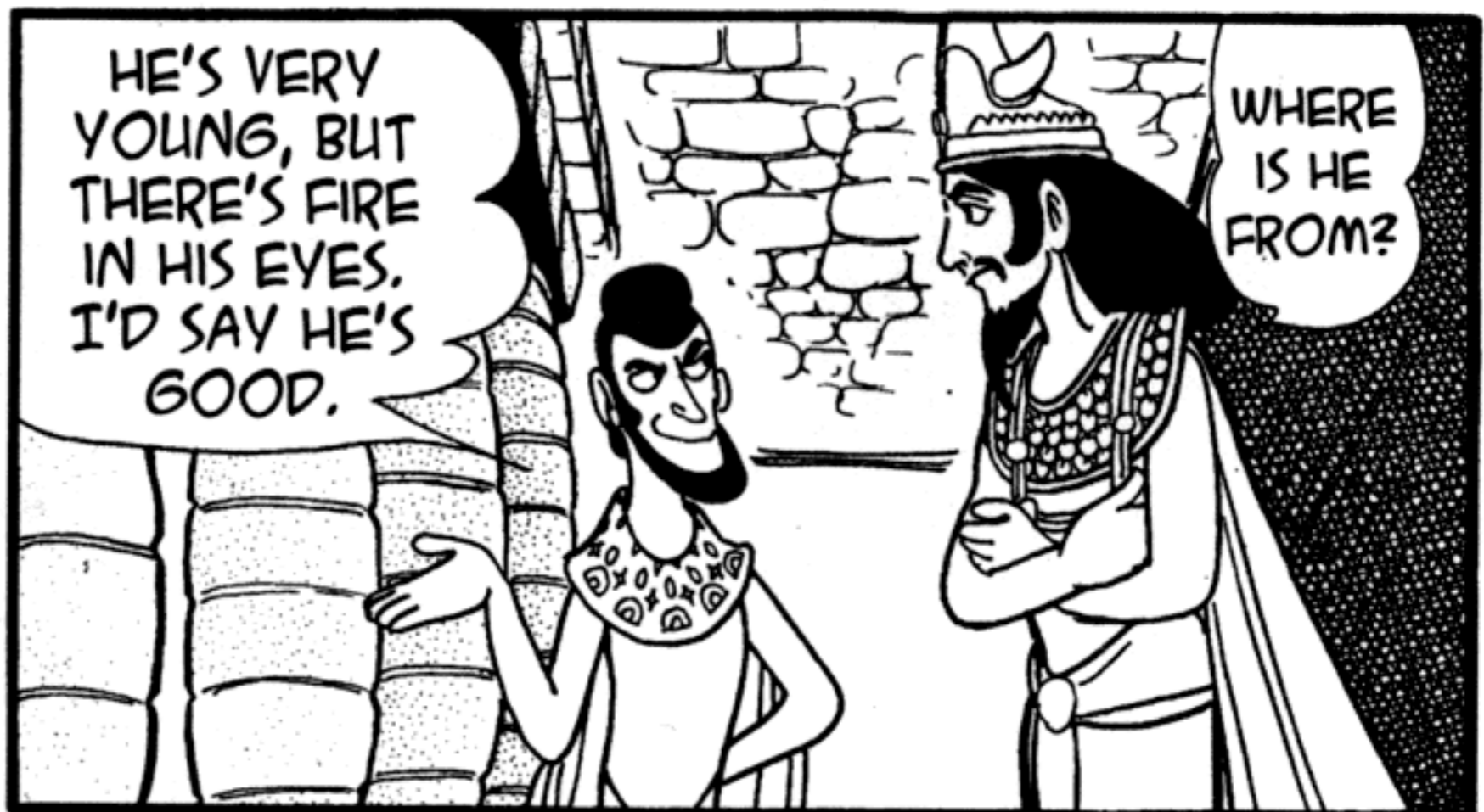
MIGAILA



VASHODARA'S GOT QUITE A REPUTATION! A SUITOR CAME FORTH AS SOON AS WE MADE THE ANNOUNCEMENT.

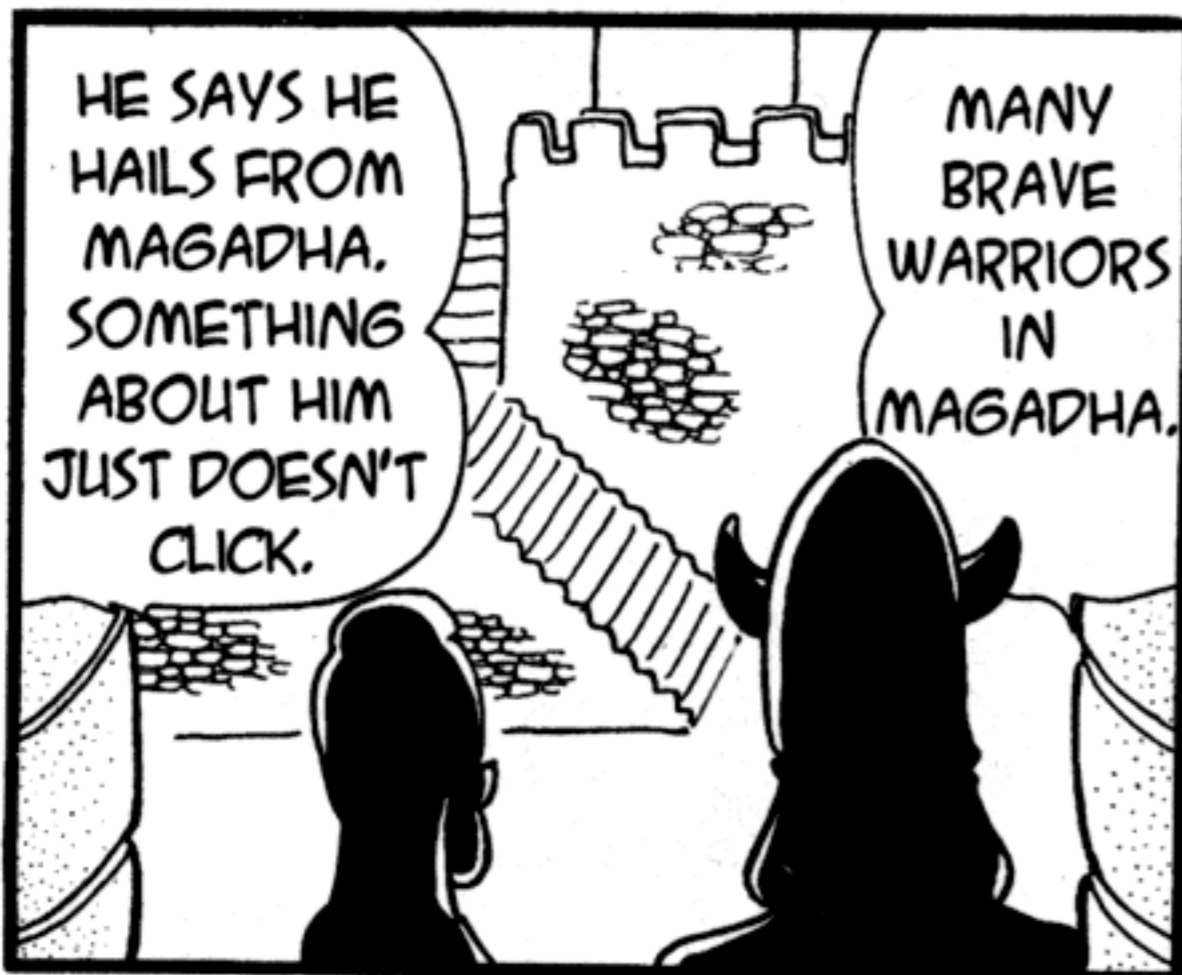


DOES HE LOOK STRONG?



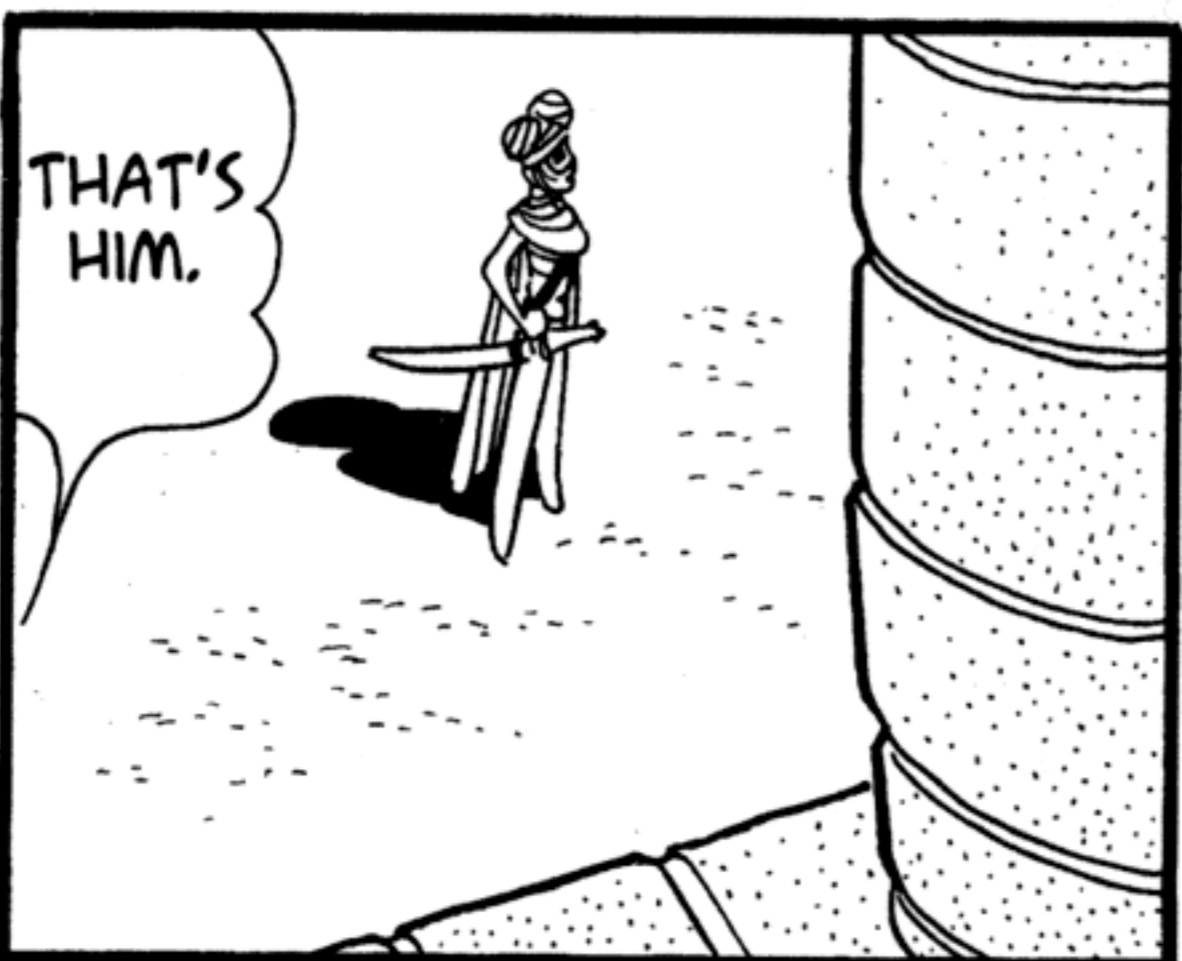
HE'S VERY YOUNG, BUT THERE'S FIRE IN HIS EYES. I'D SAY HE'S GOOD.

WHERE IS HE FROM?

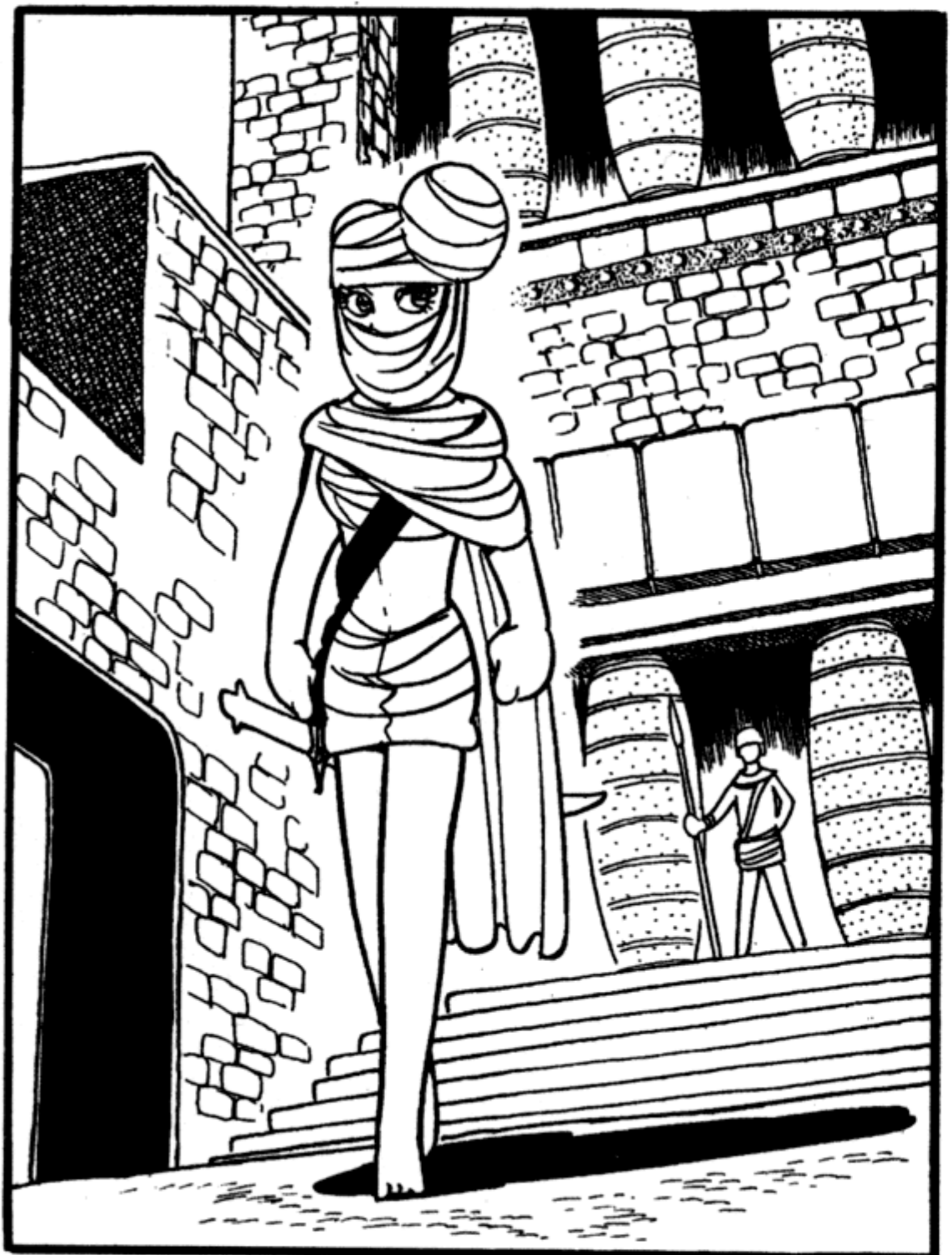


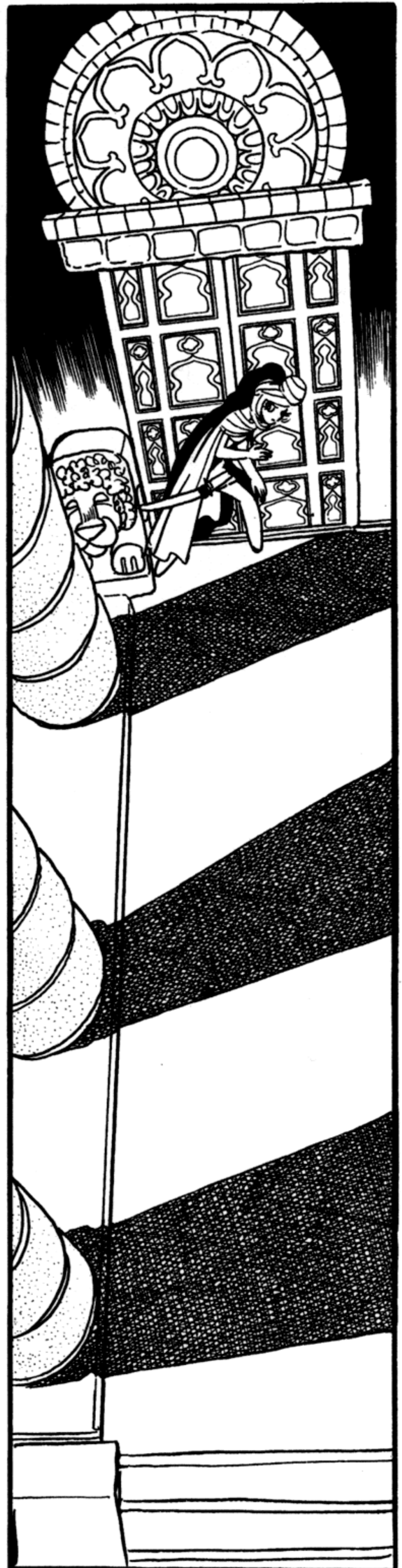
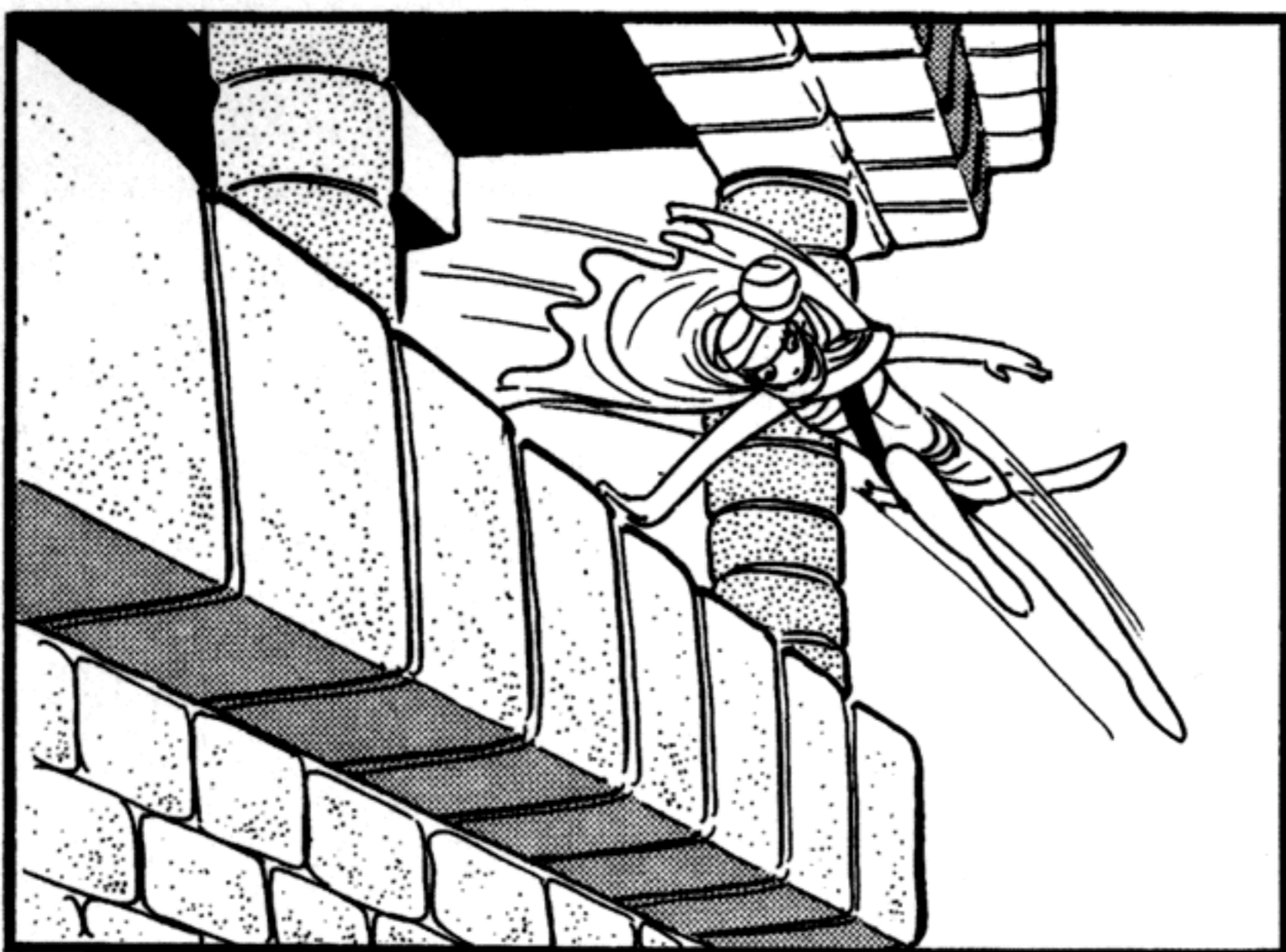
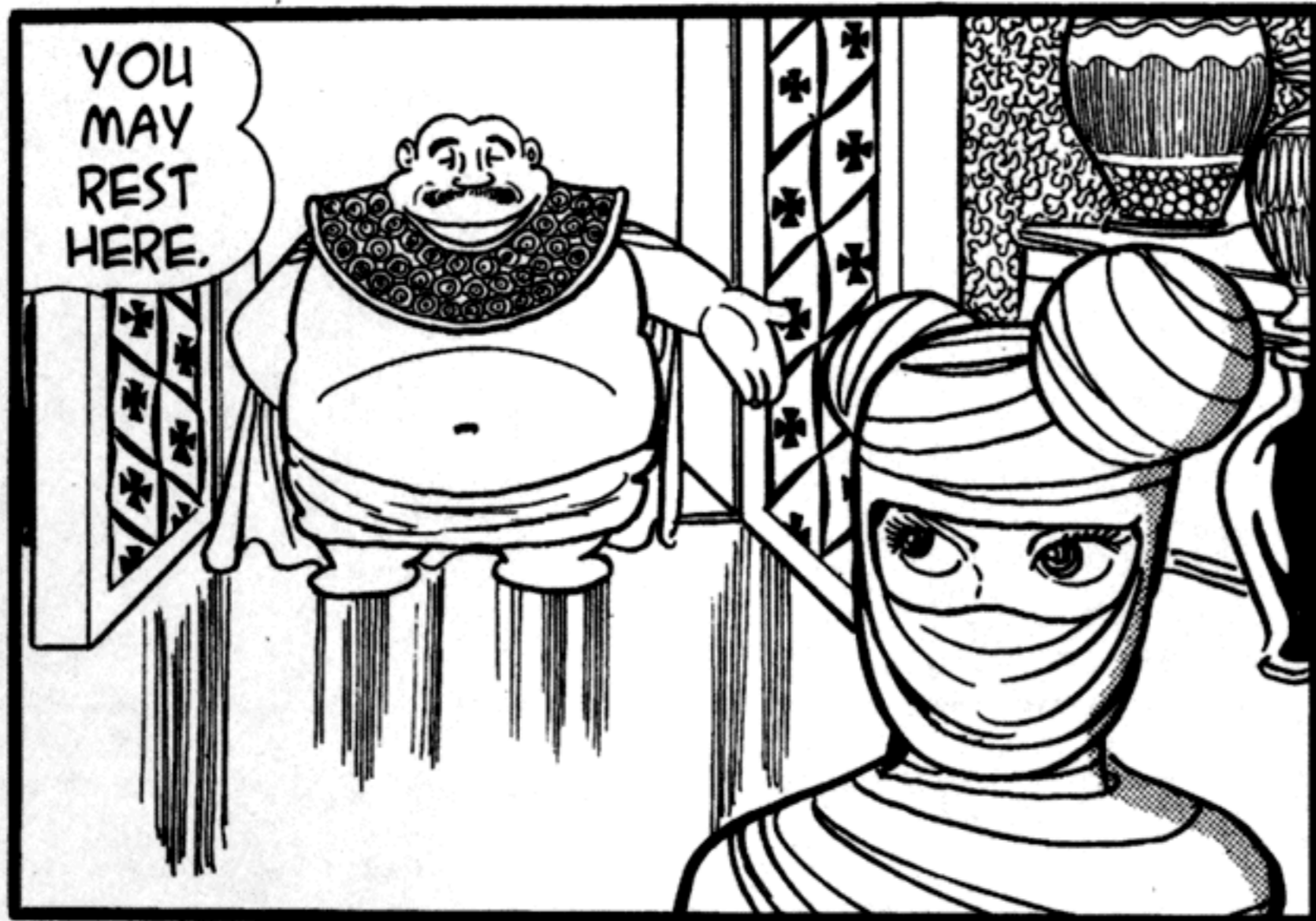
HE SAYS HE HAILS FROM MAGADHA. SOMETHING ABOUT HIM JUST DOESN'T CLICK.

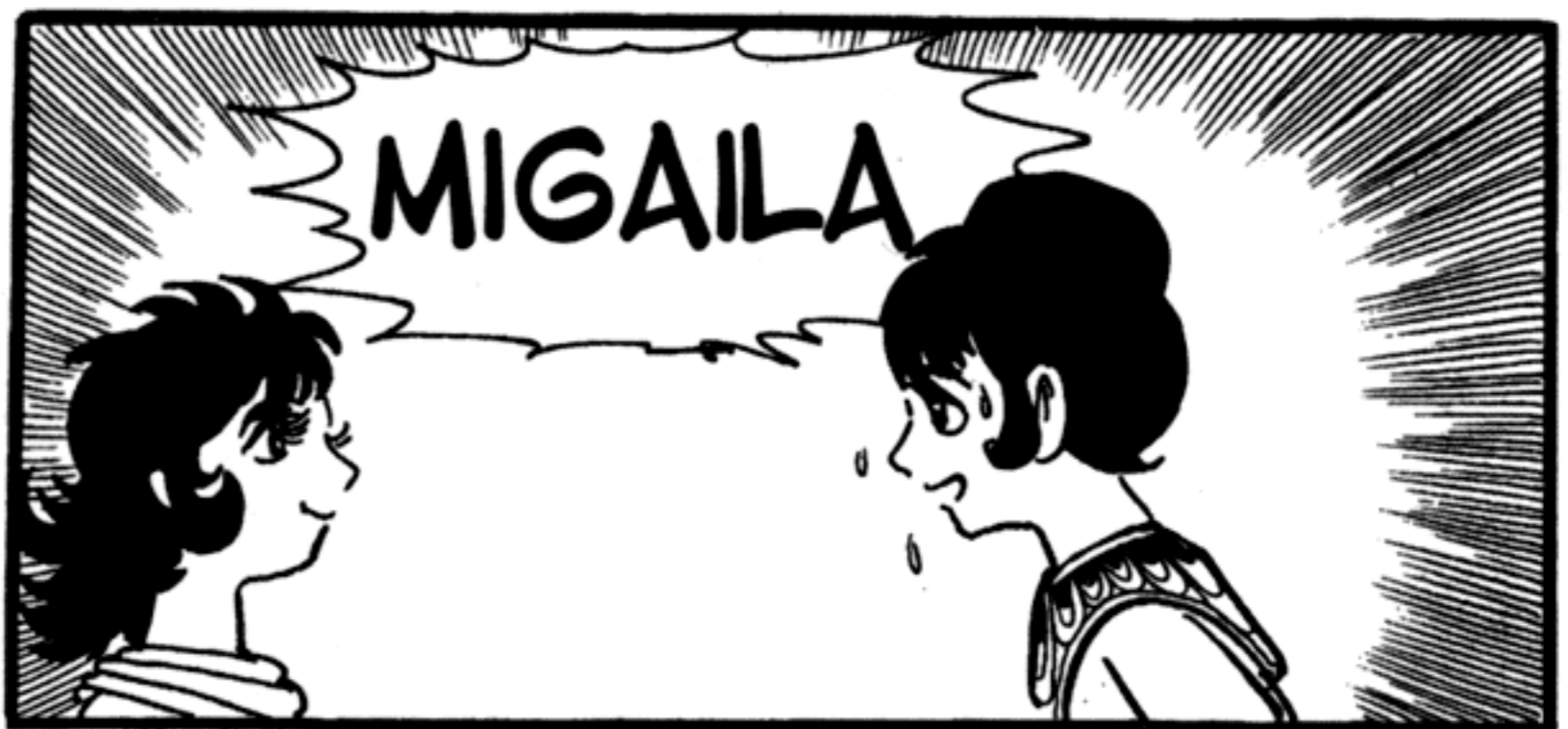
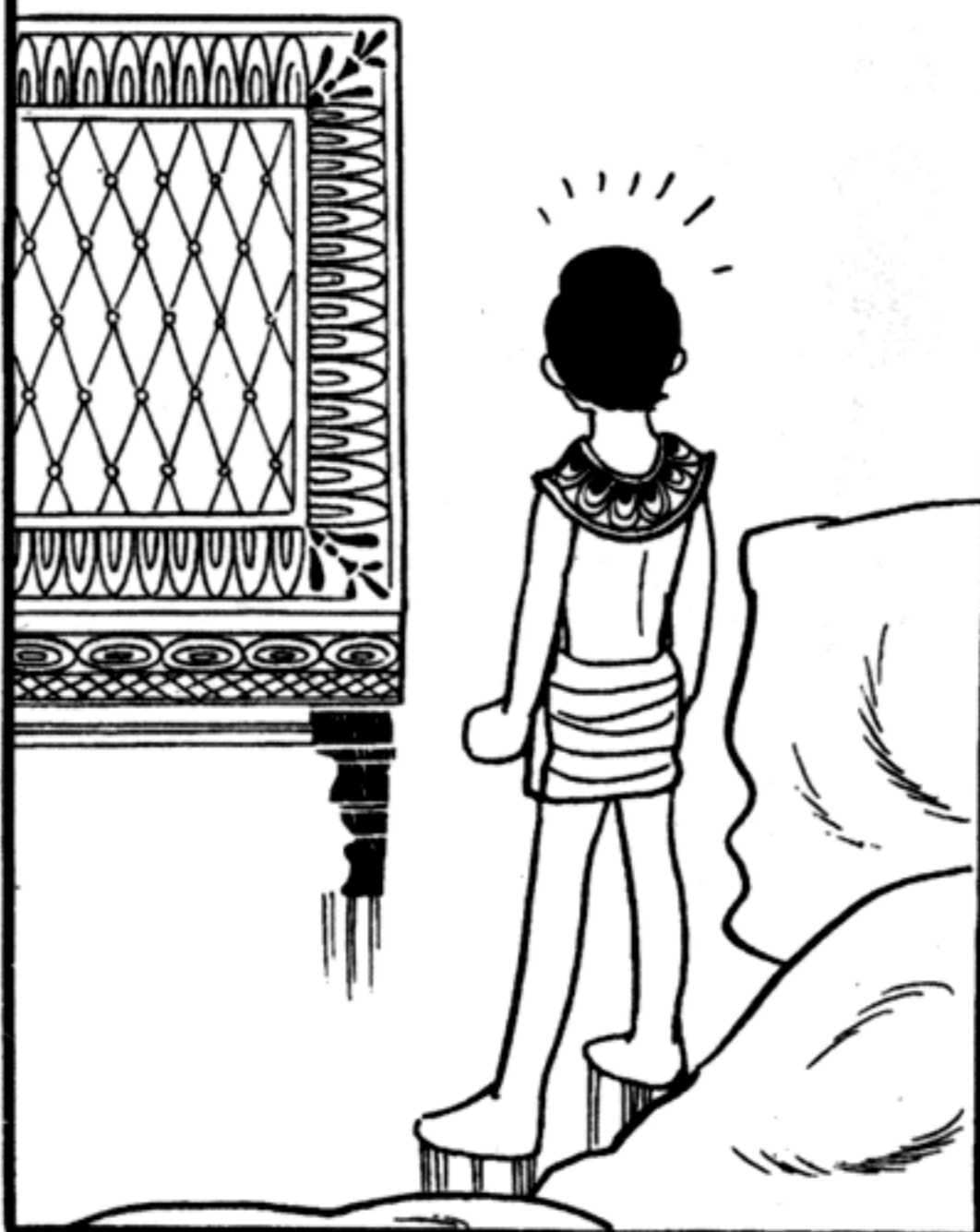
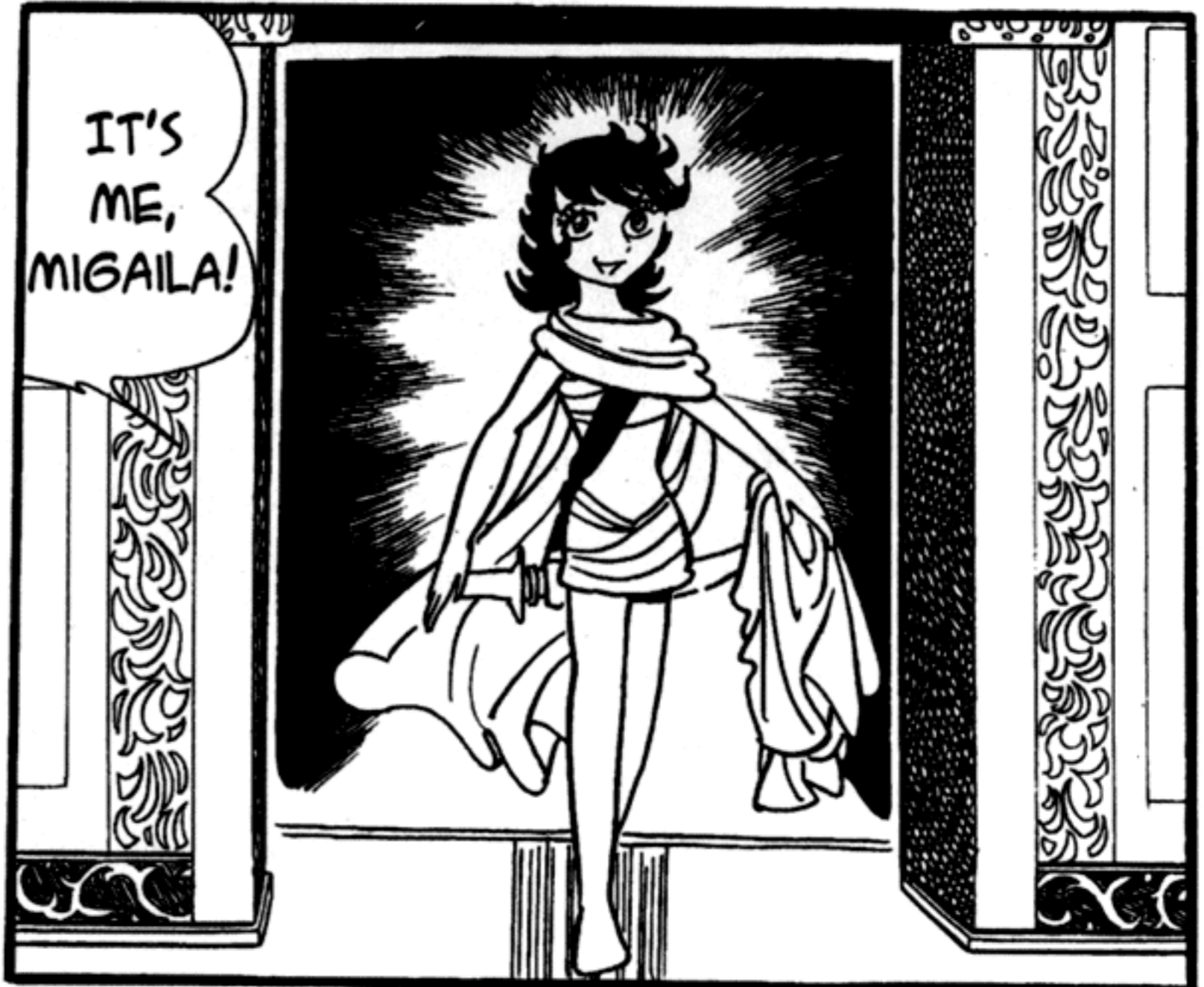
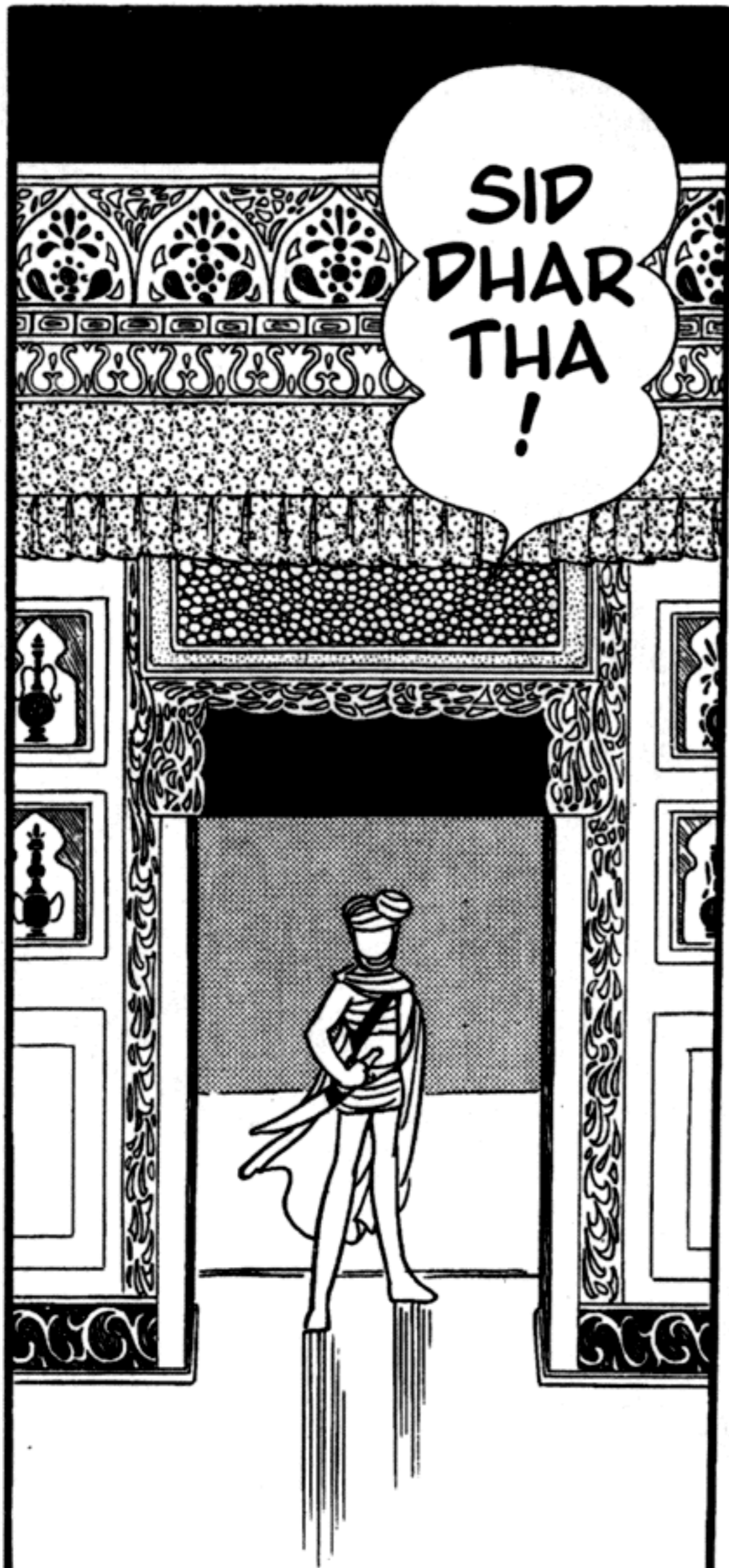
MANY BRAVE WARRIORS IN MAGADHA.



THAT'S HIM.





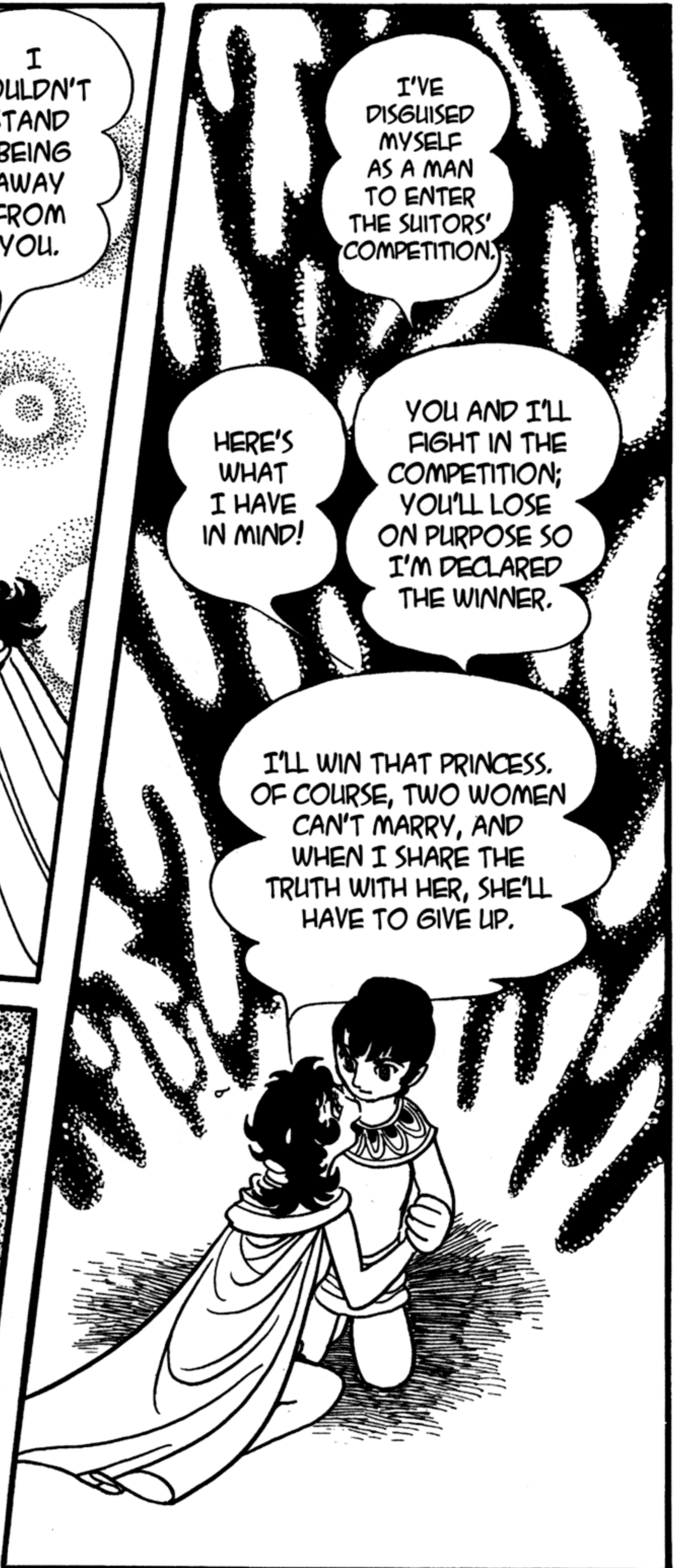




I
COULDN'T
STAND
BEING
AWAY
FROM
YOU.



I THOUGHT
OF YOU,
TOO, AS I
GAZED AT
THE MOON
AND STARS...

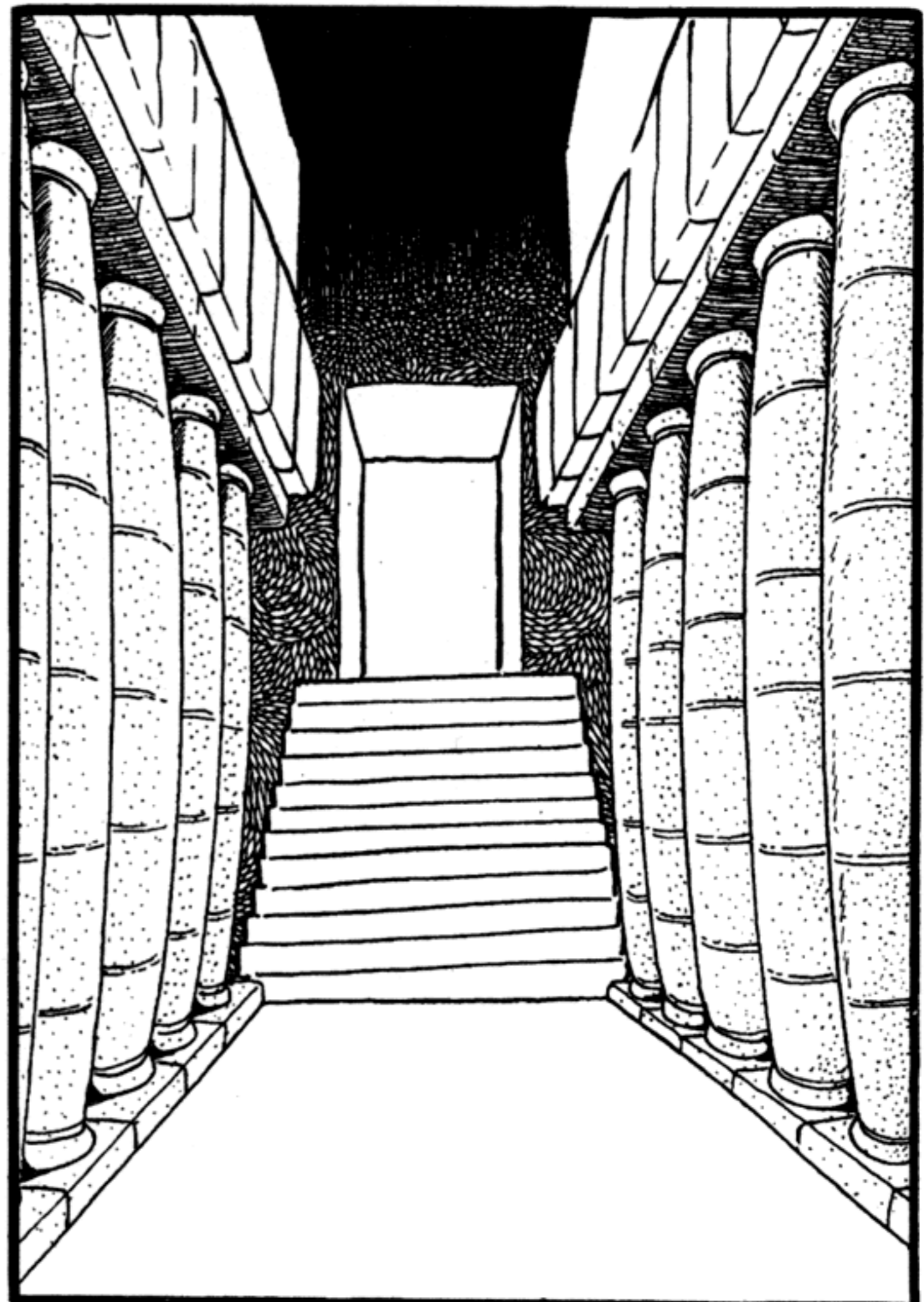
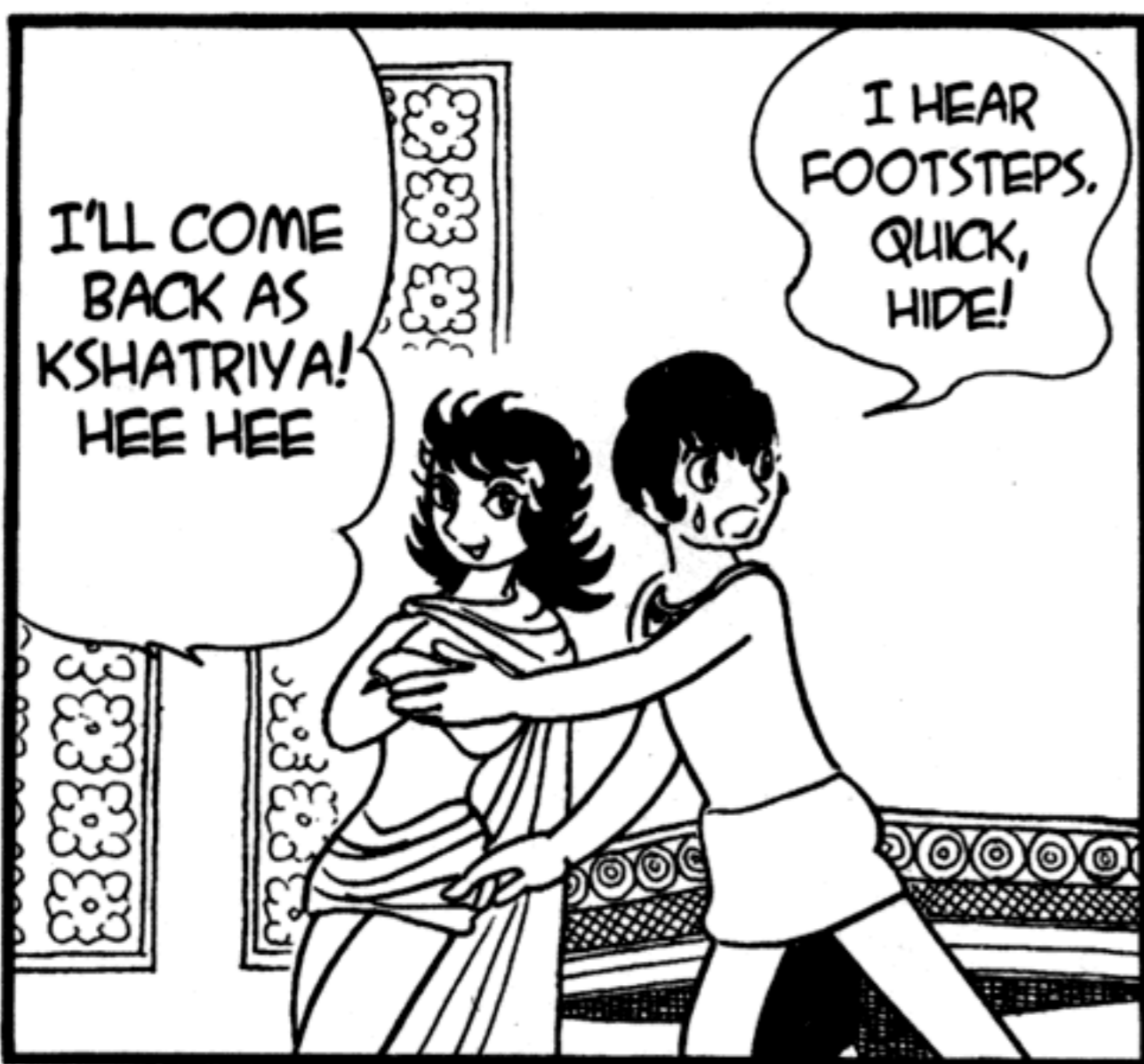


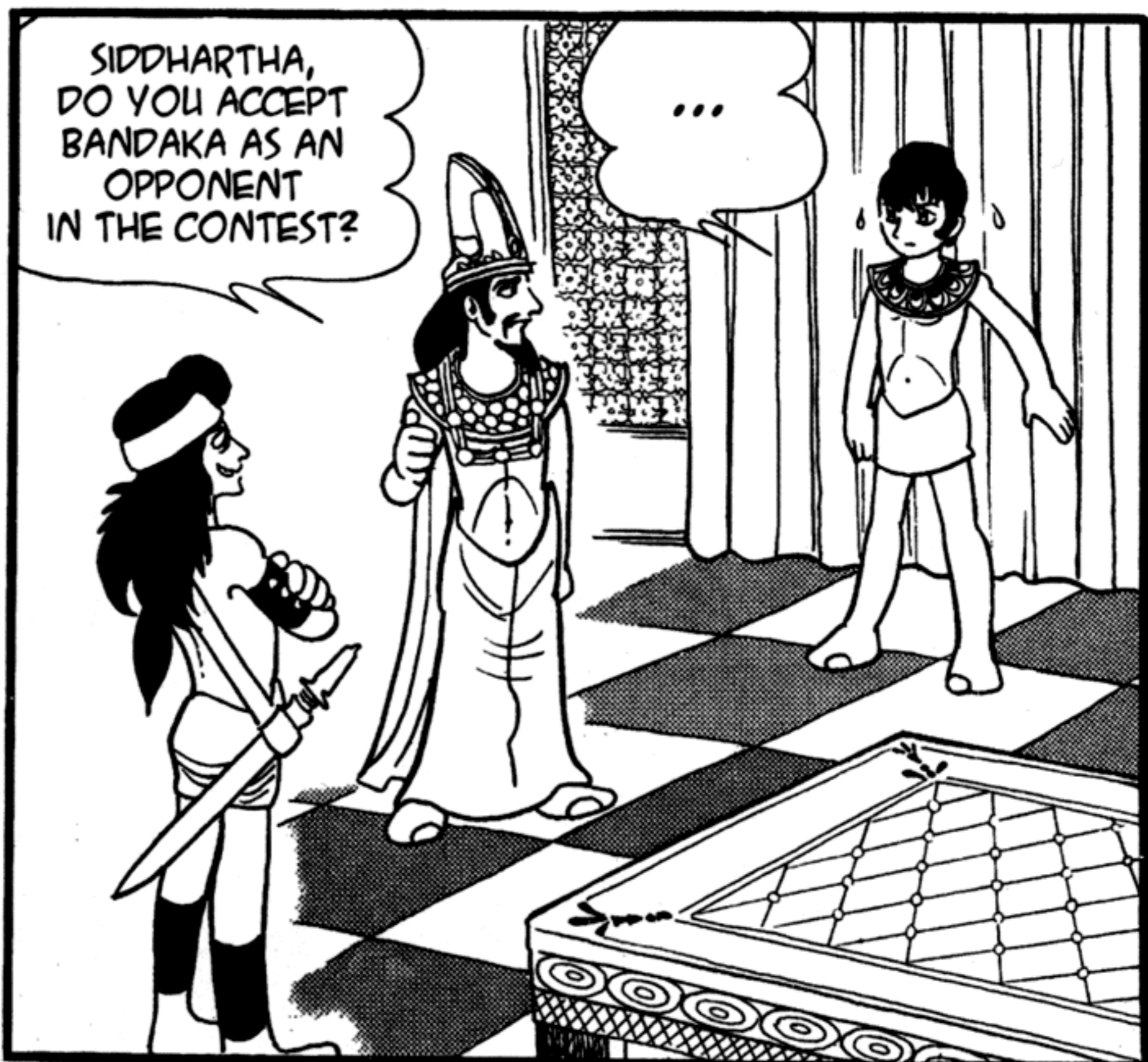
I'VE
DISGUISED
MYSELF
AS A MAN
TO ENTER
THE SUITORS'
COMPETITION.

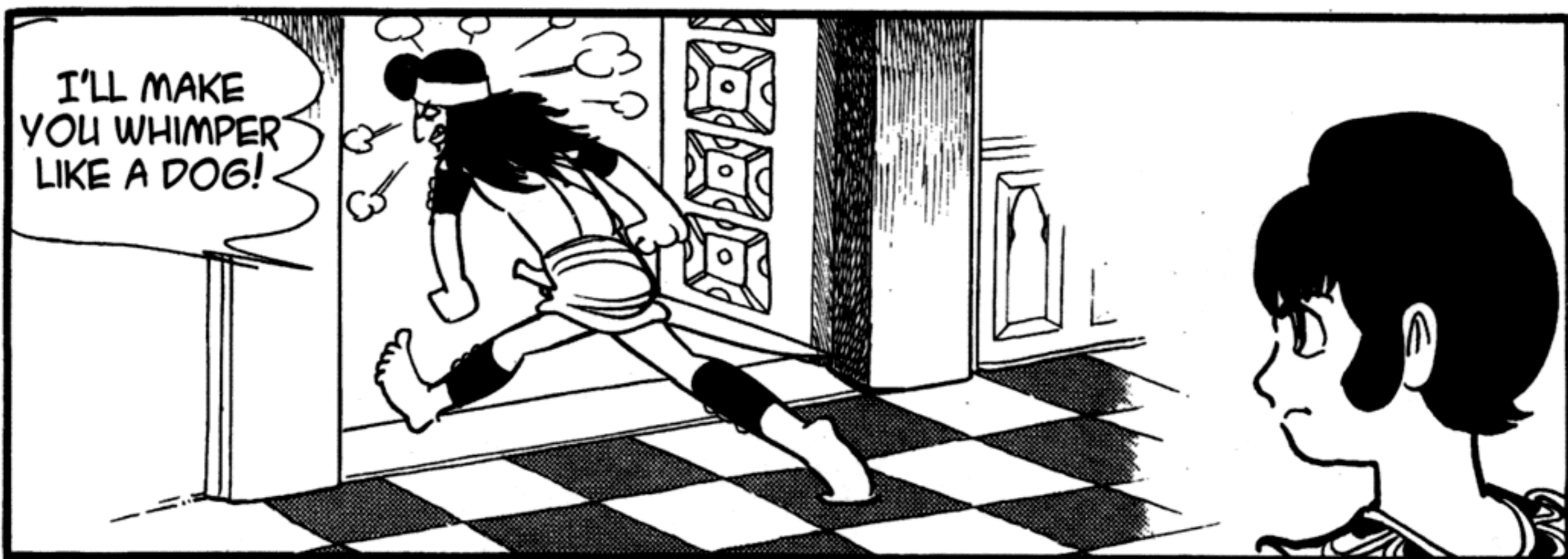
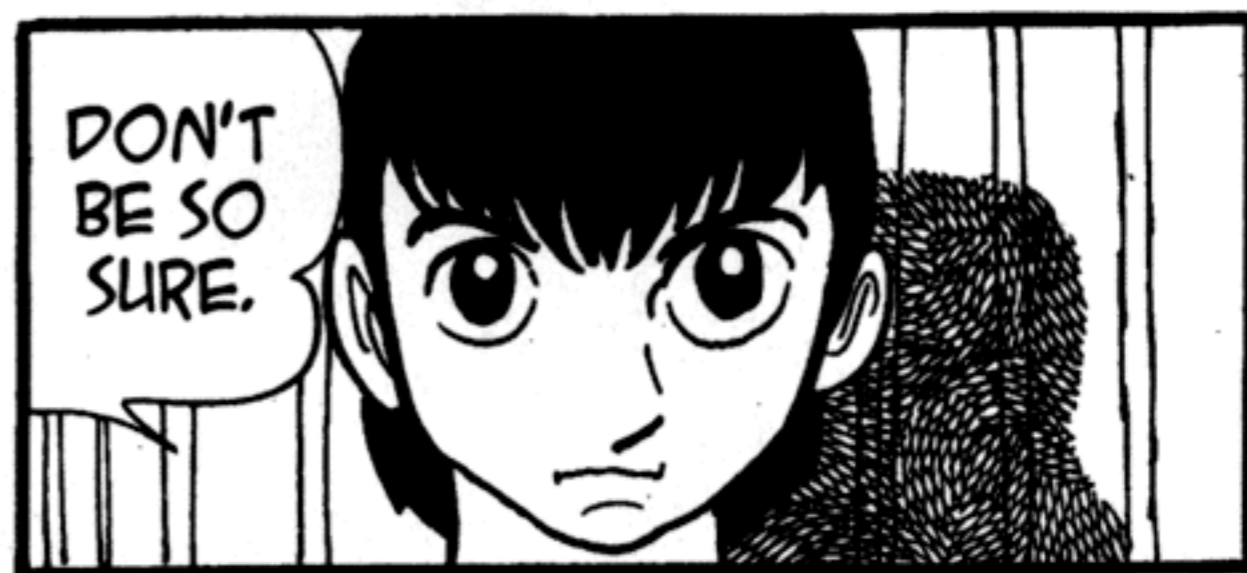
HERE'S
WHAT
I HAVE
IN MIND!

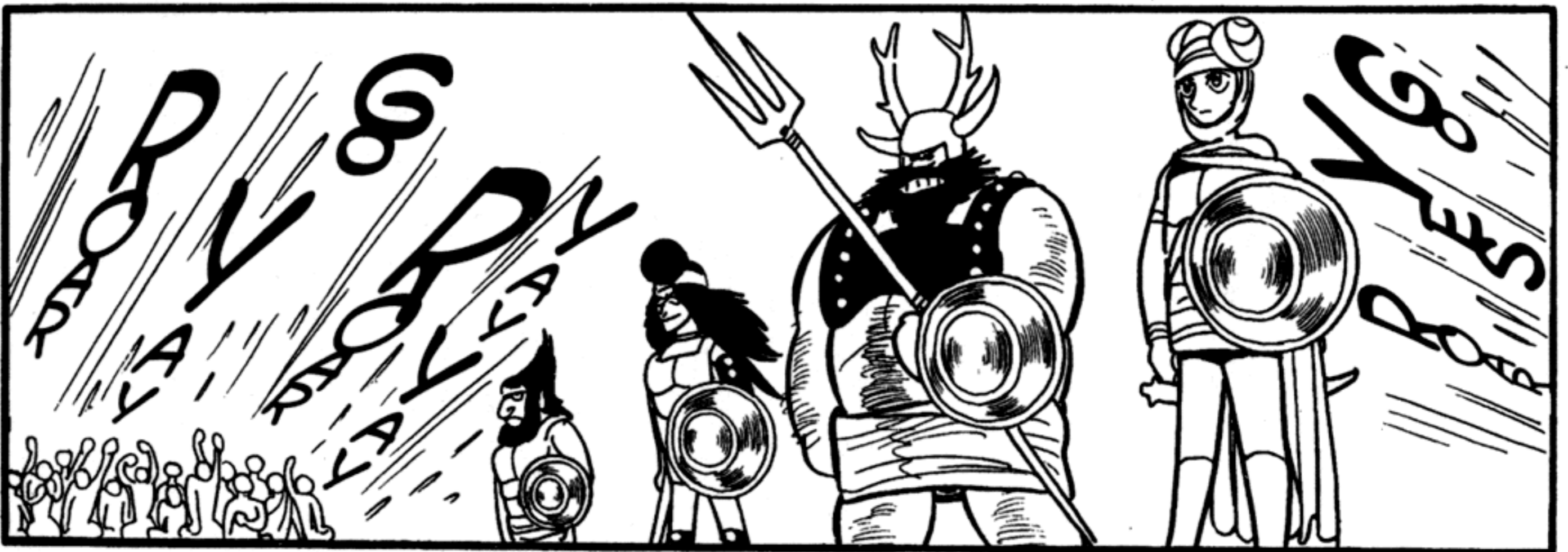
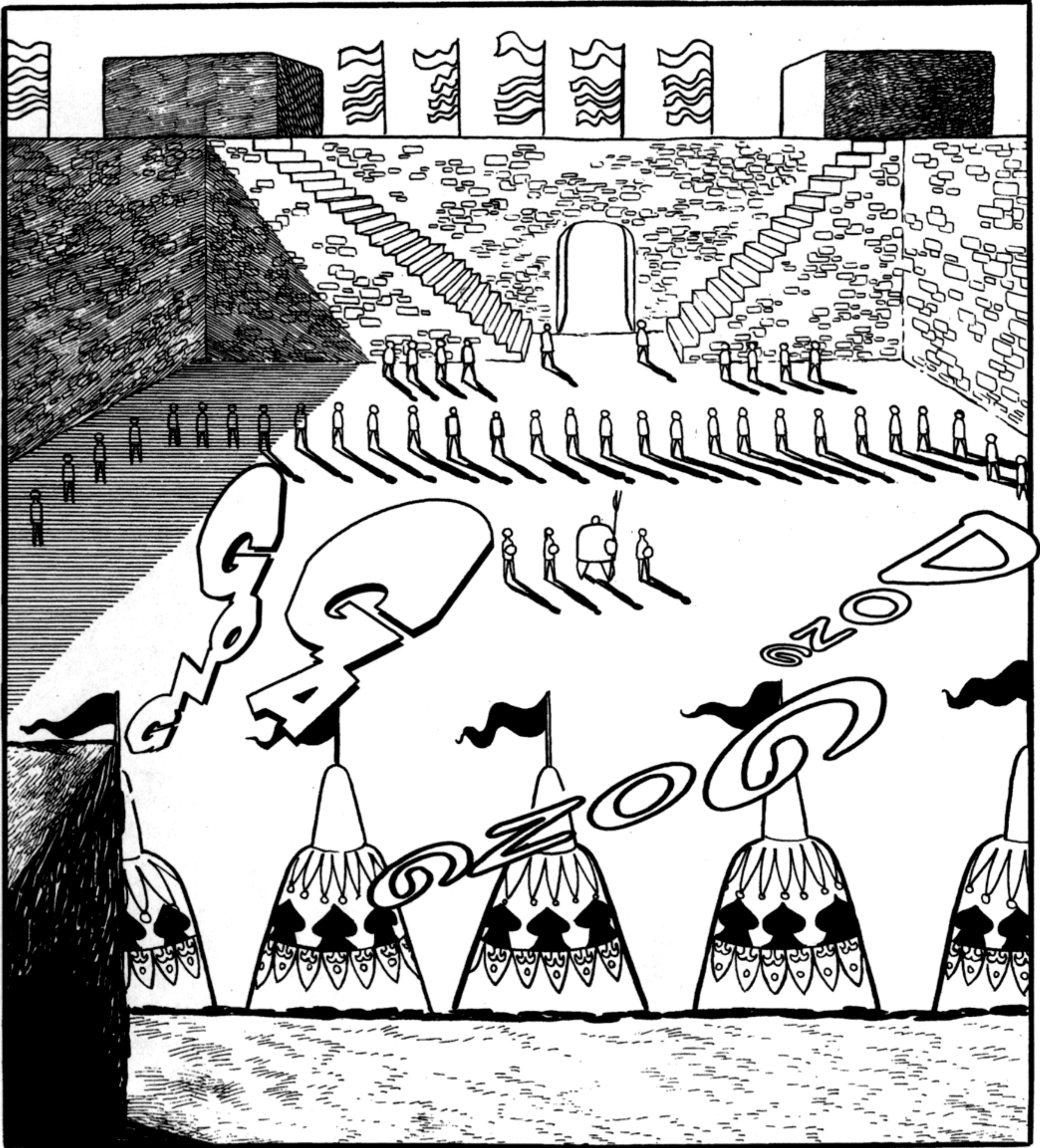
YOU AND I'LL
FIGHT IN THE
COMPETITION;
YOU'LL LOSE
ON PURPOSE SO
I'M DECLARED
THE WINNER.

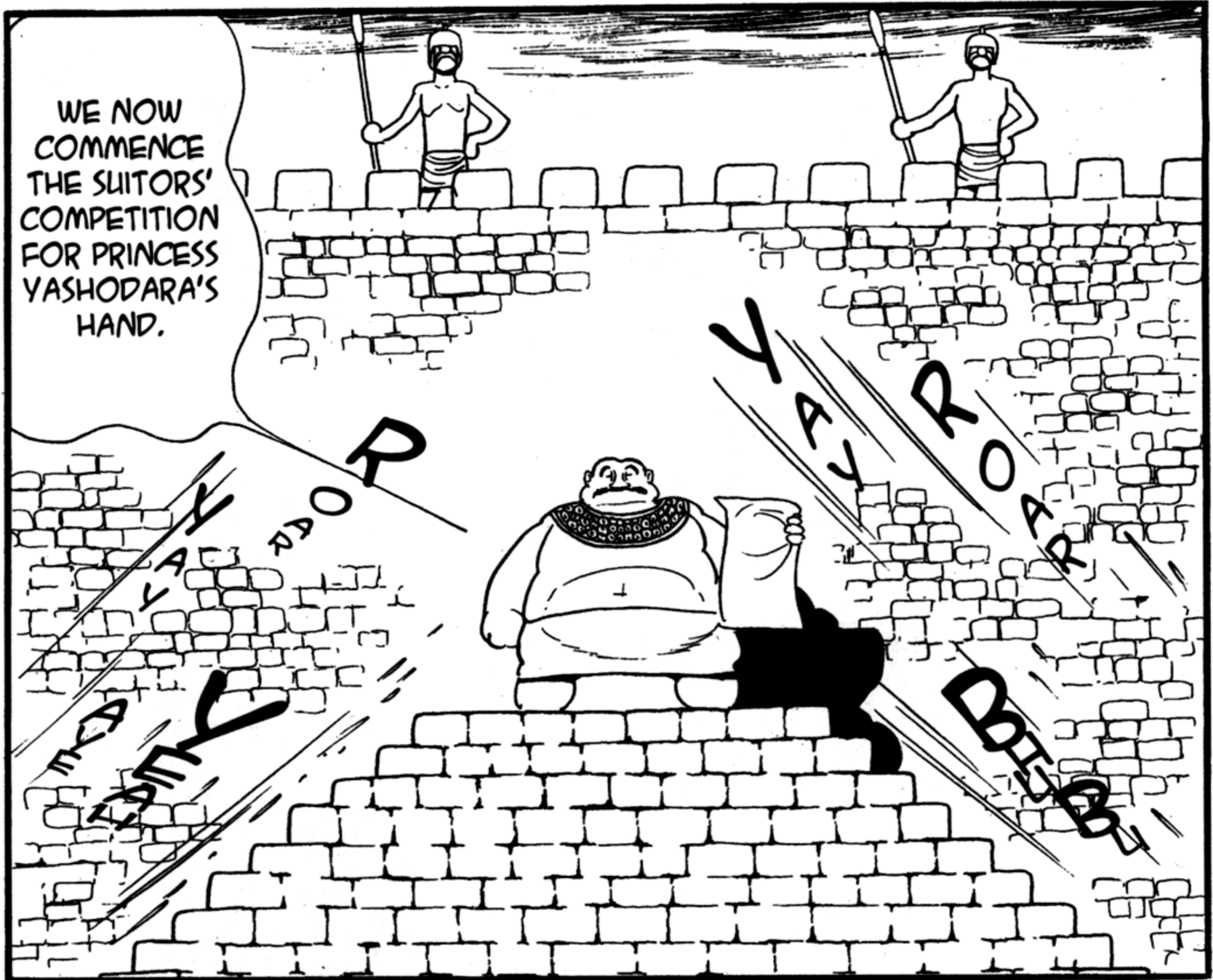
I'LL WIN THAT PRINCESS.
OF COURSE, TWO WOMEN
CAN'T MARRY, AND
WHEN I SHARE THE
TRUTH WITH HER, SHE'LL
HAVE TO GIVE UP.







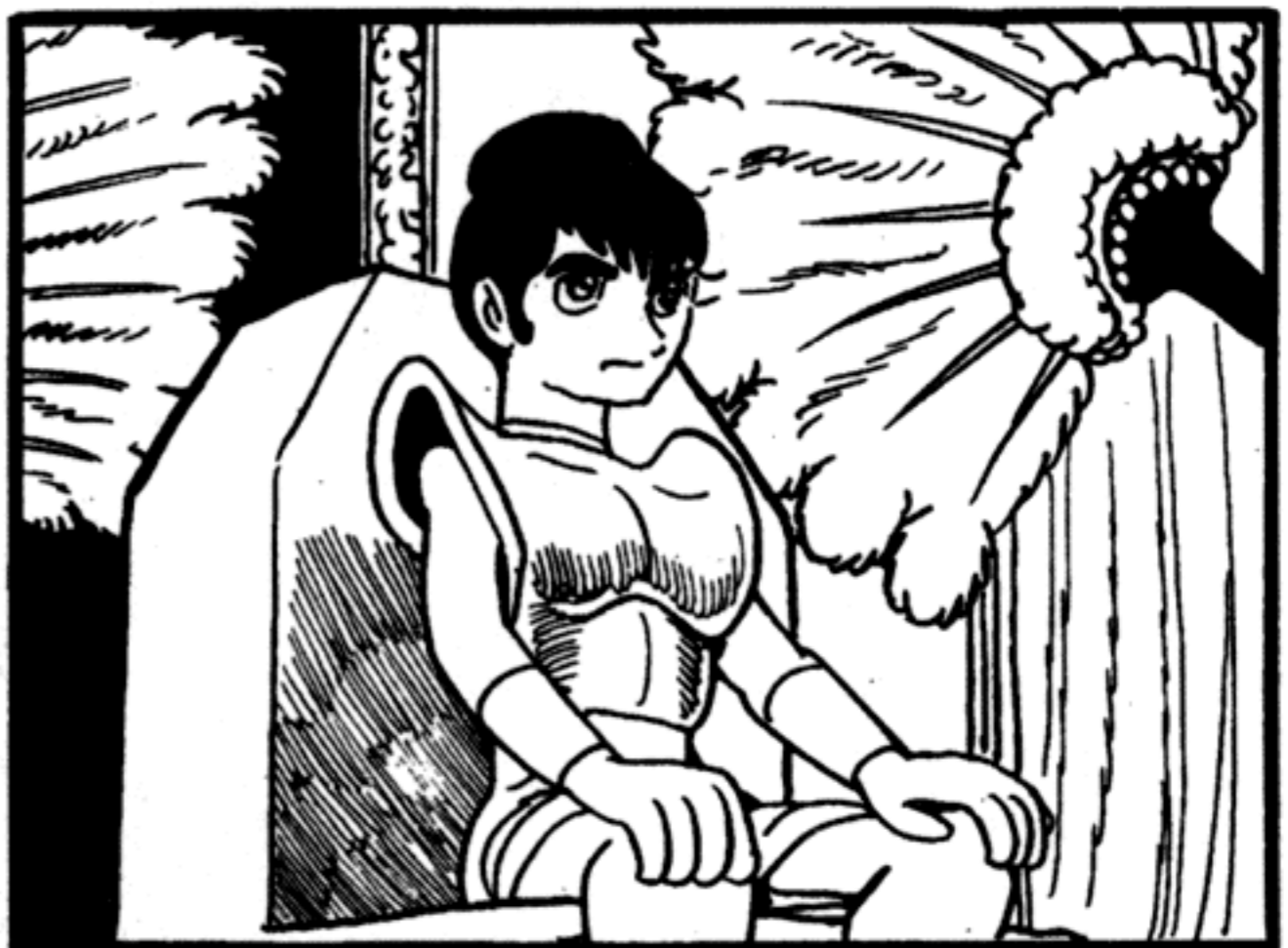


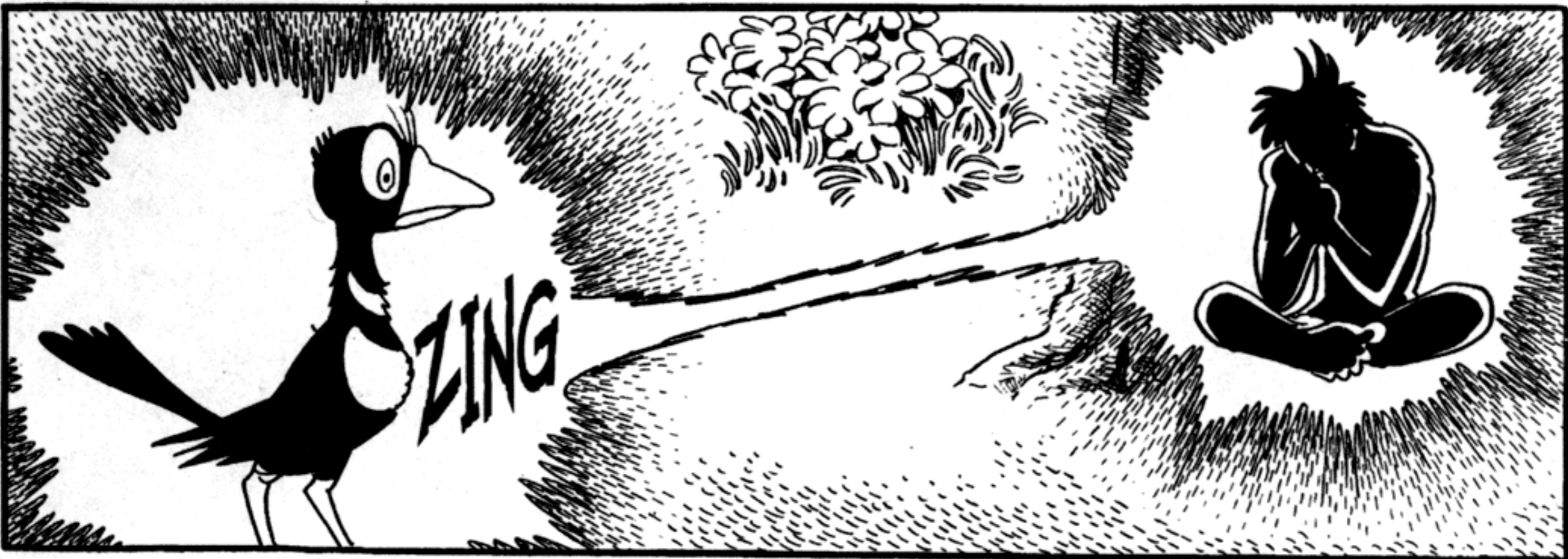
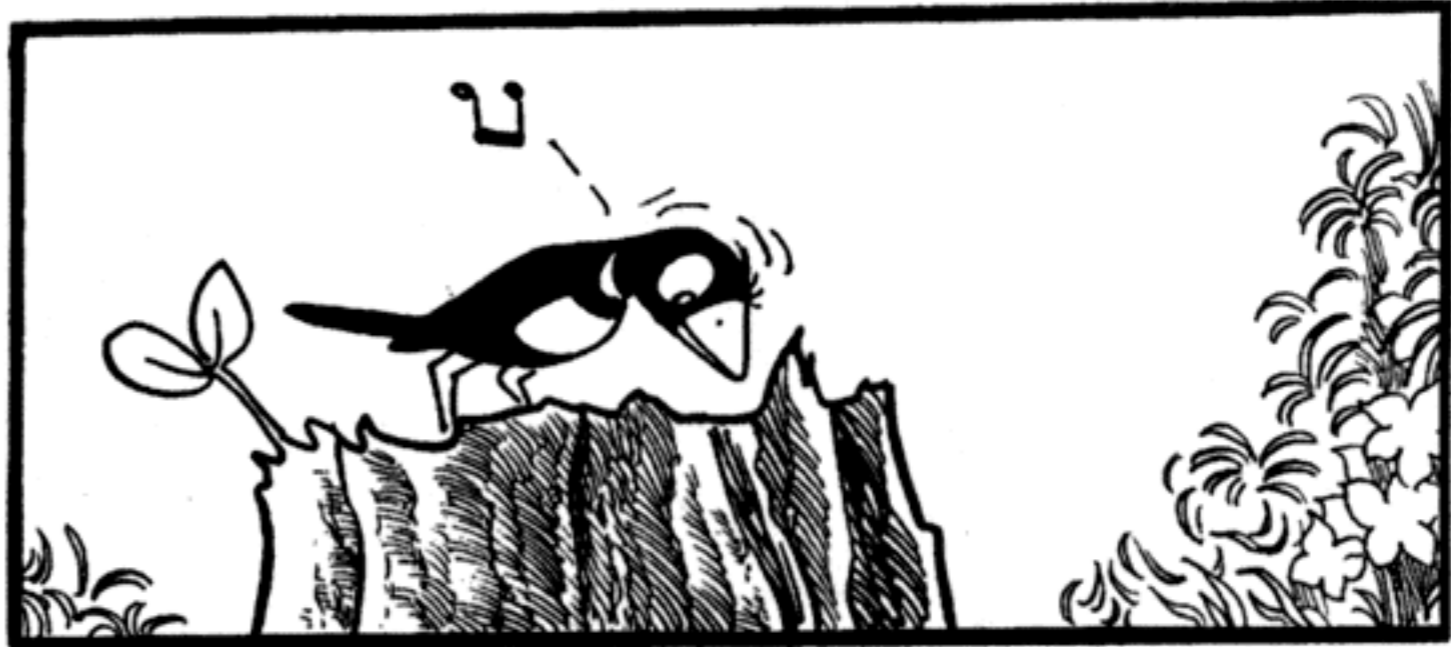
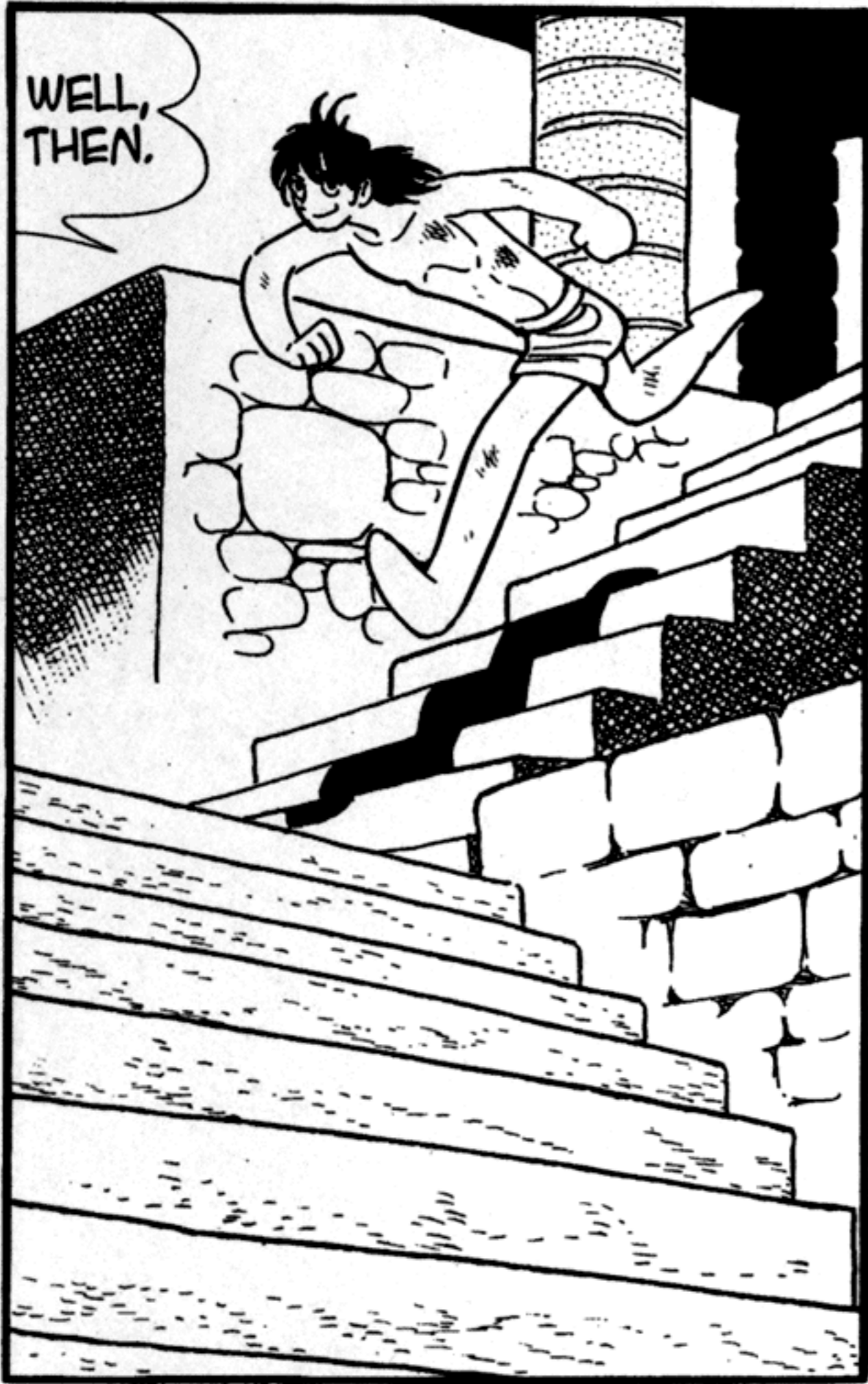
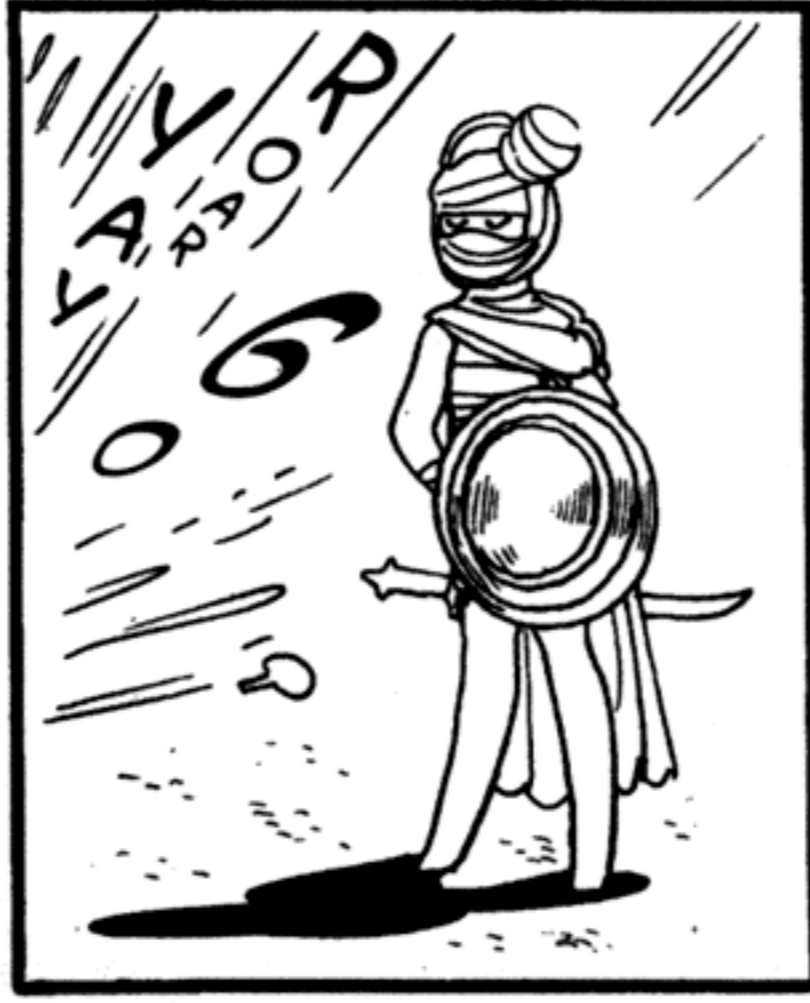


WE NOW COMMENCE THE SUITORS' COMPETITION FOR PRINCESS YASHODARA'S HAND.

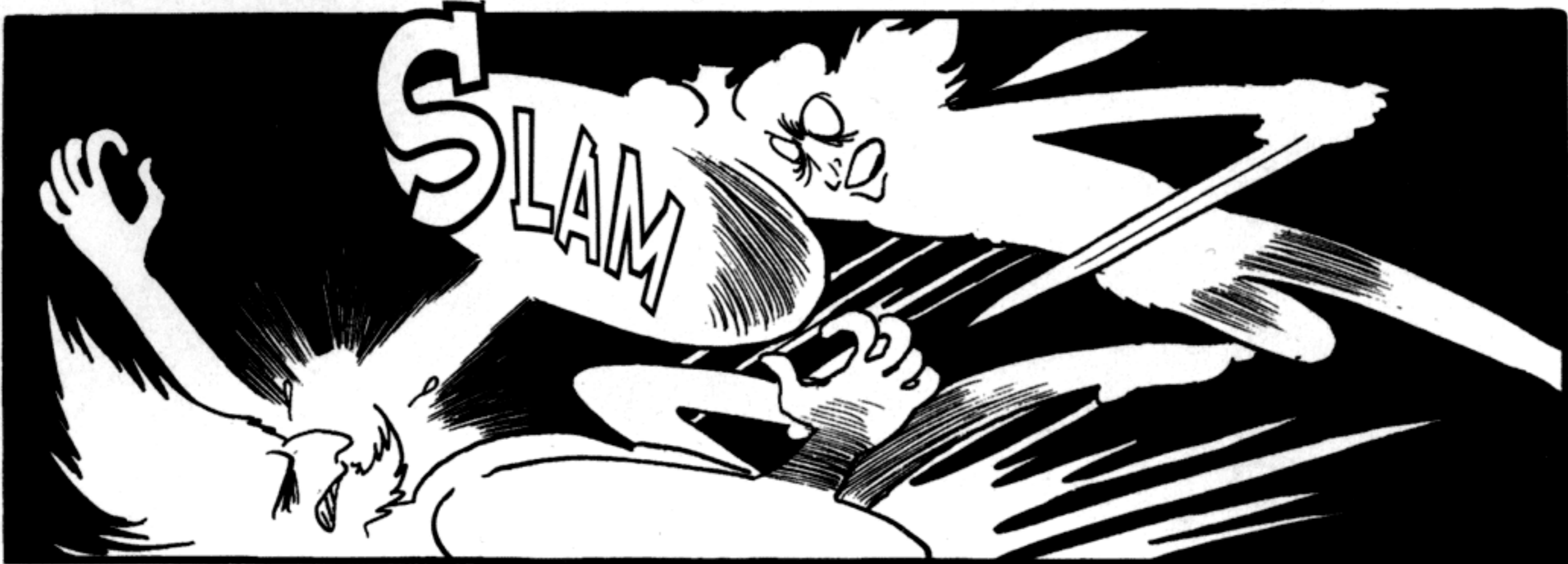
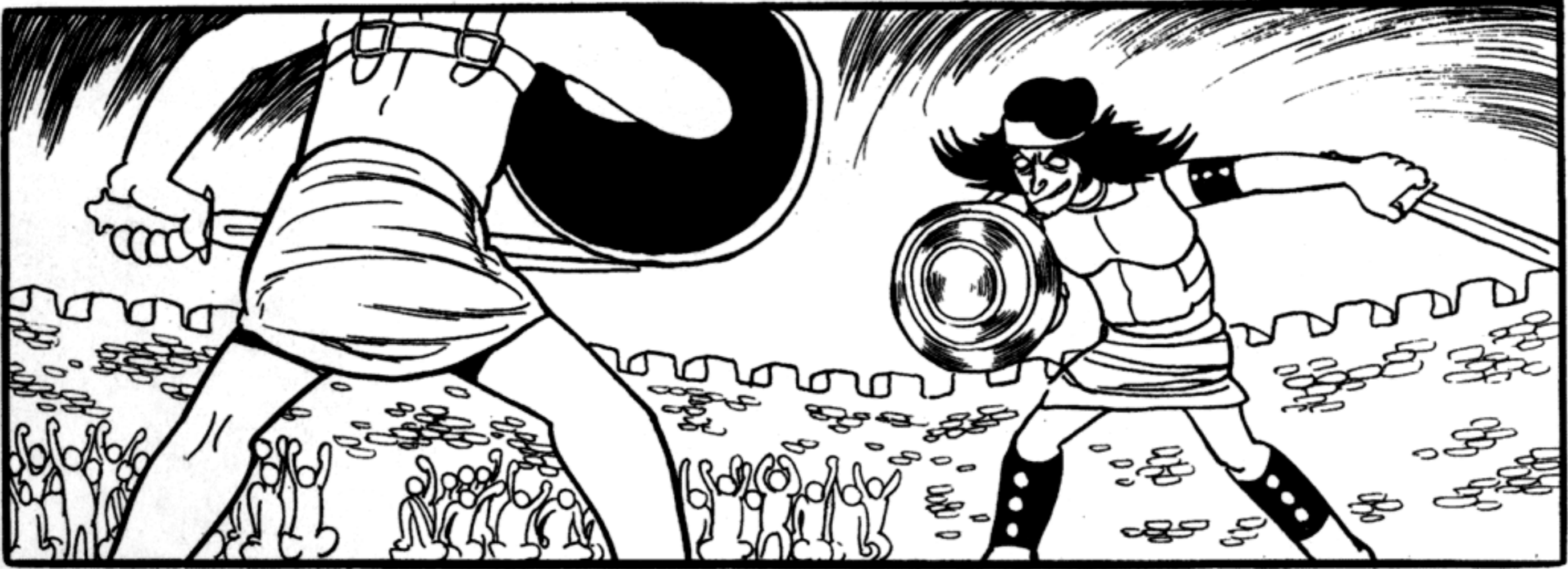
THERE ARE 4 CONTESTANTS: PUKSATEE, KACHANNA, BANDAKA AND BERATTA. THEY SHALL COMPETE AGAINST EACH OTHER...

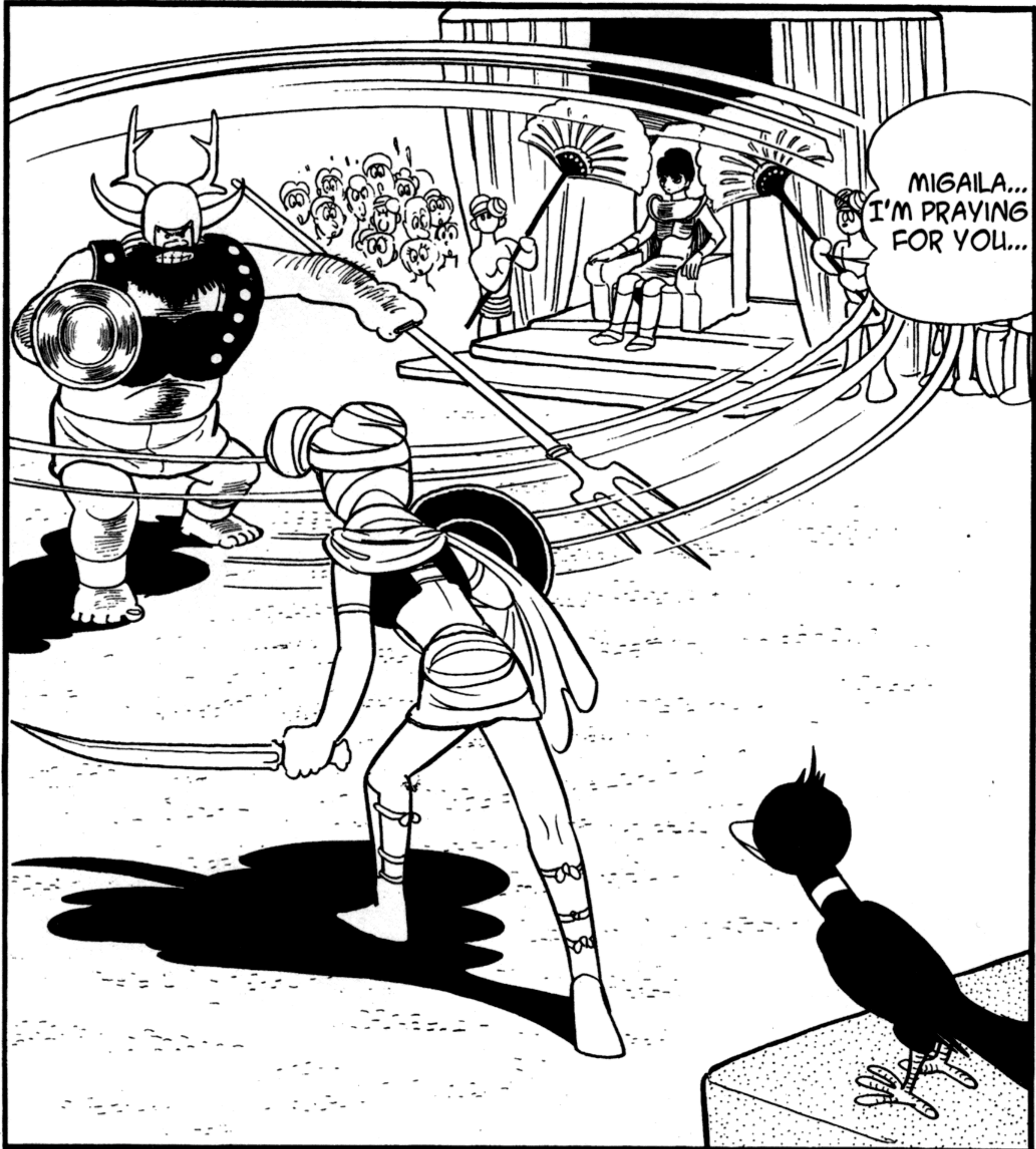
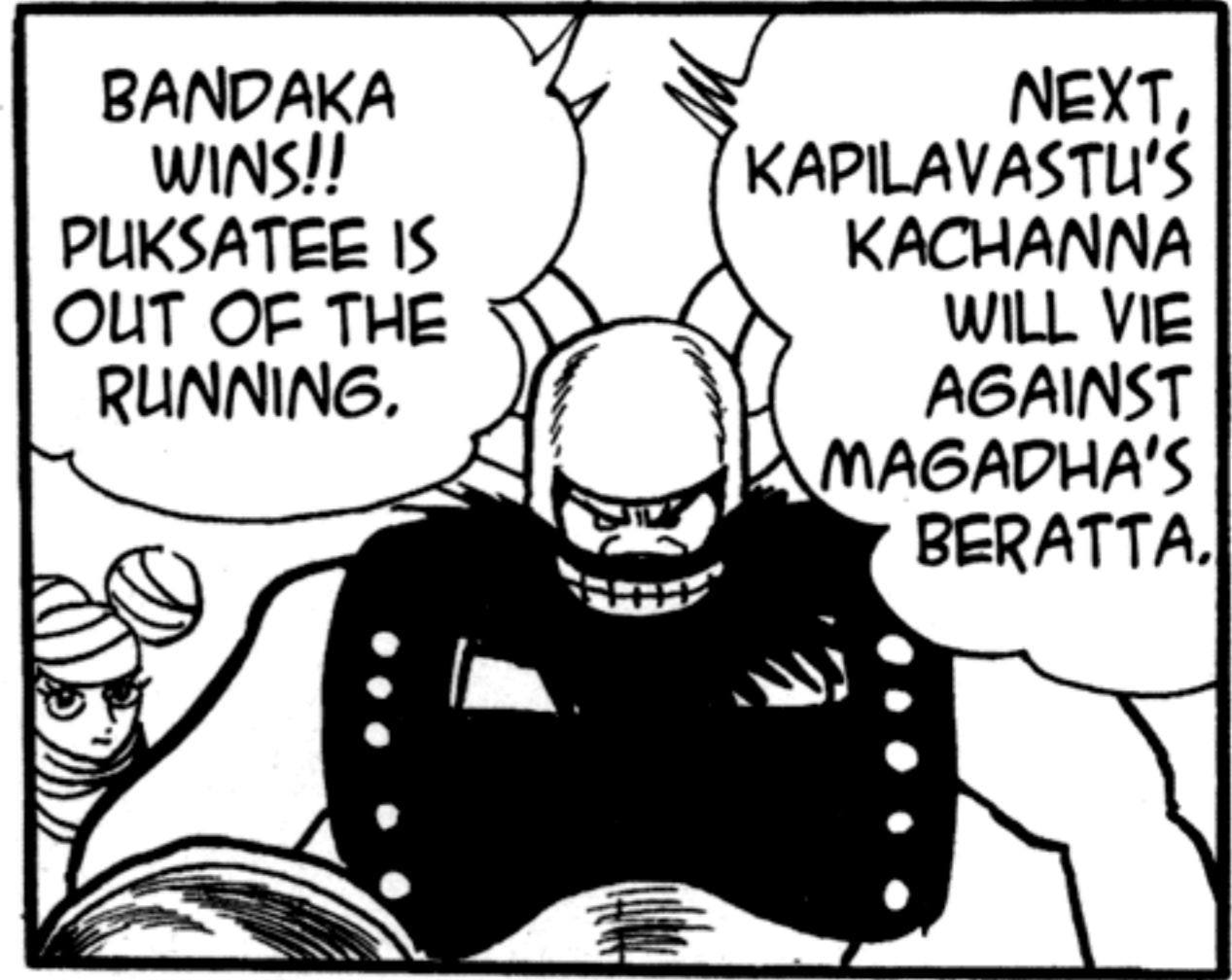
AND THE WINNER WILL FIGHT PRINCE SIDDHARTHA!

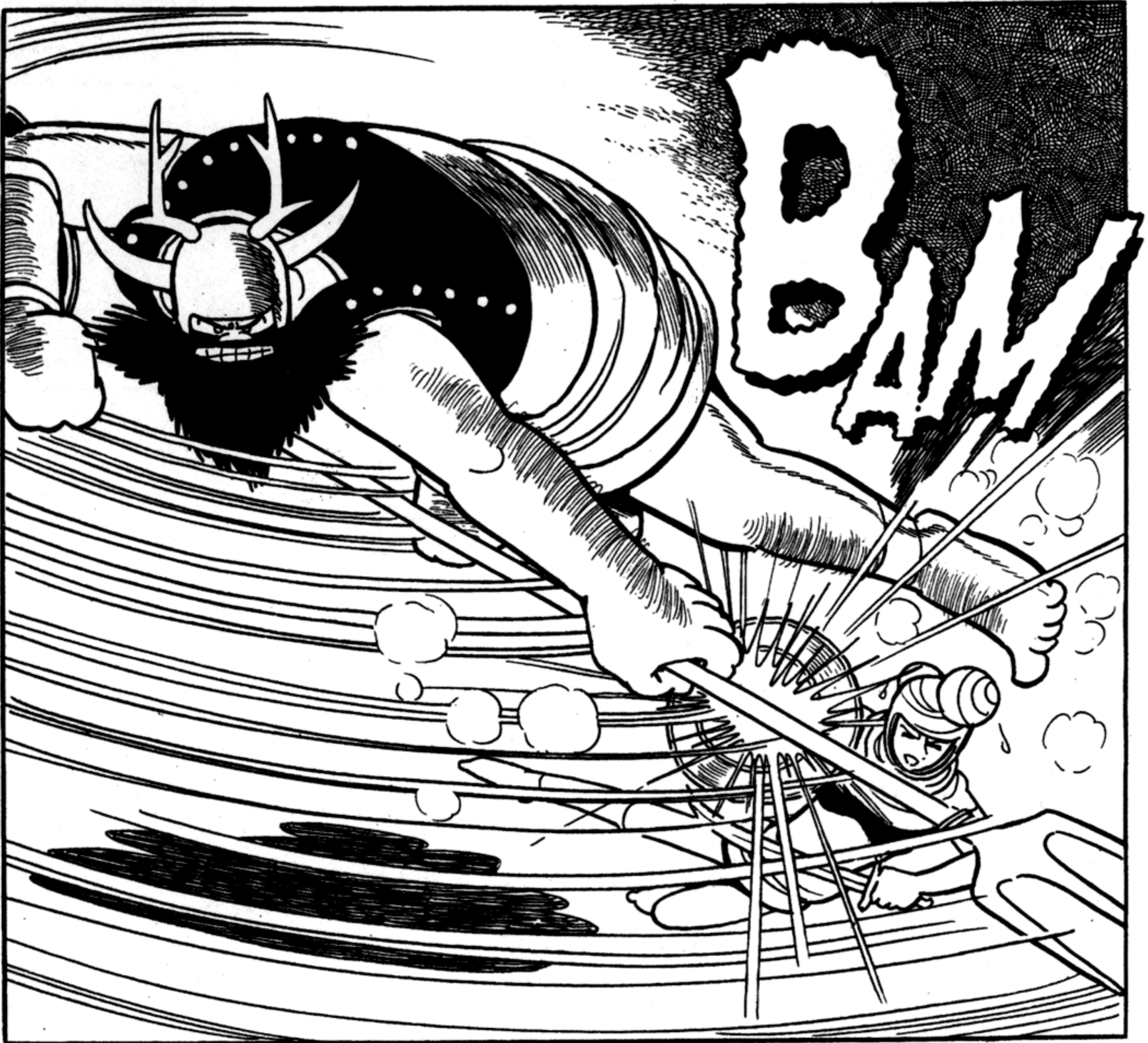
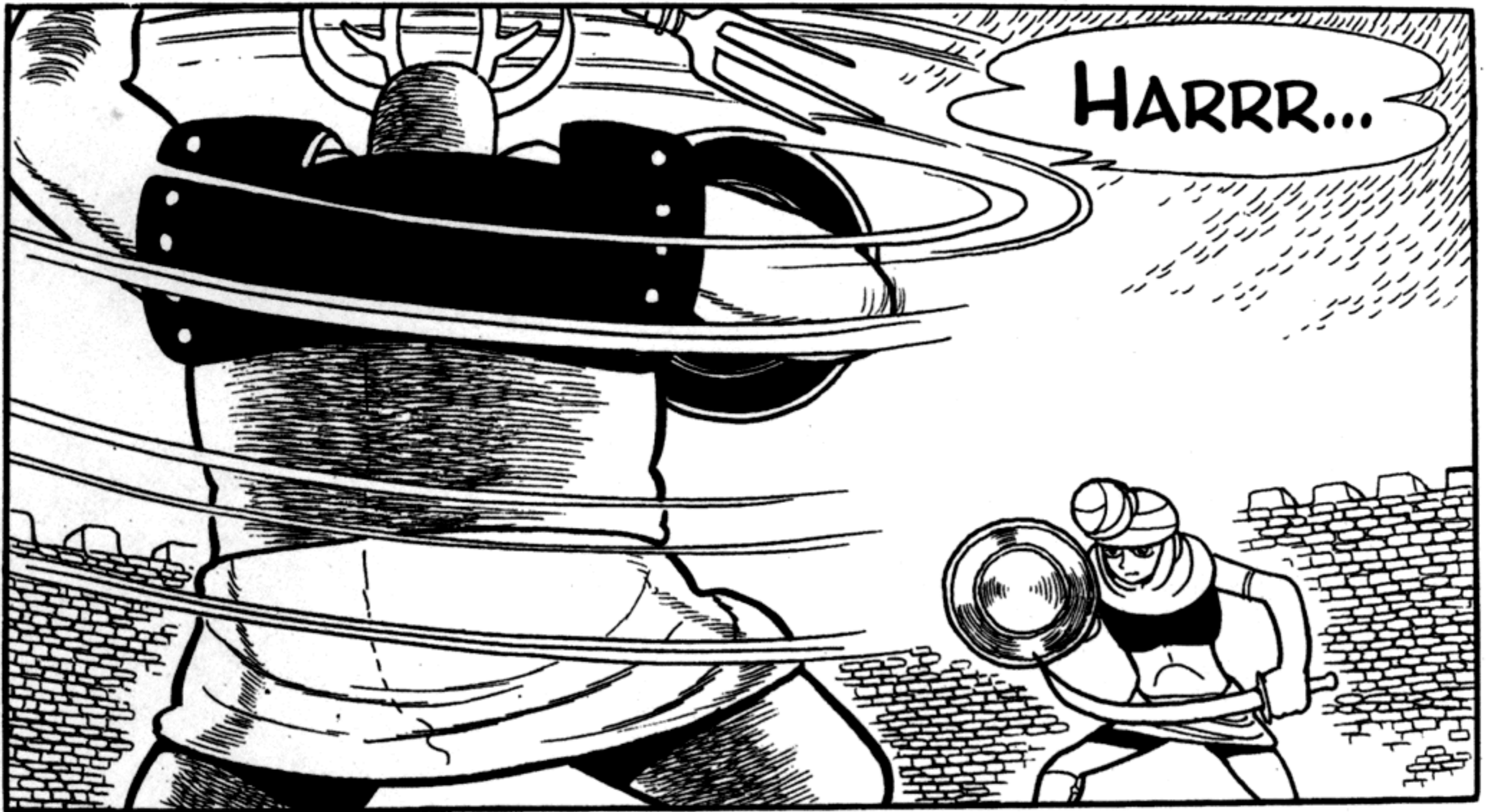


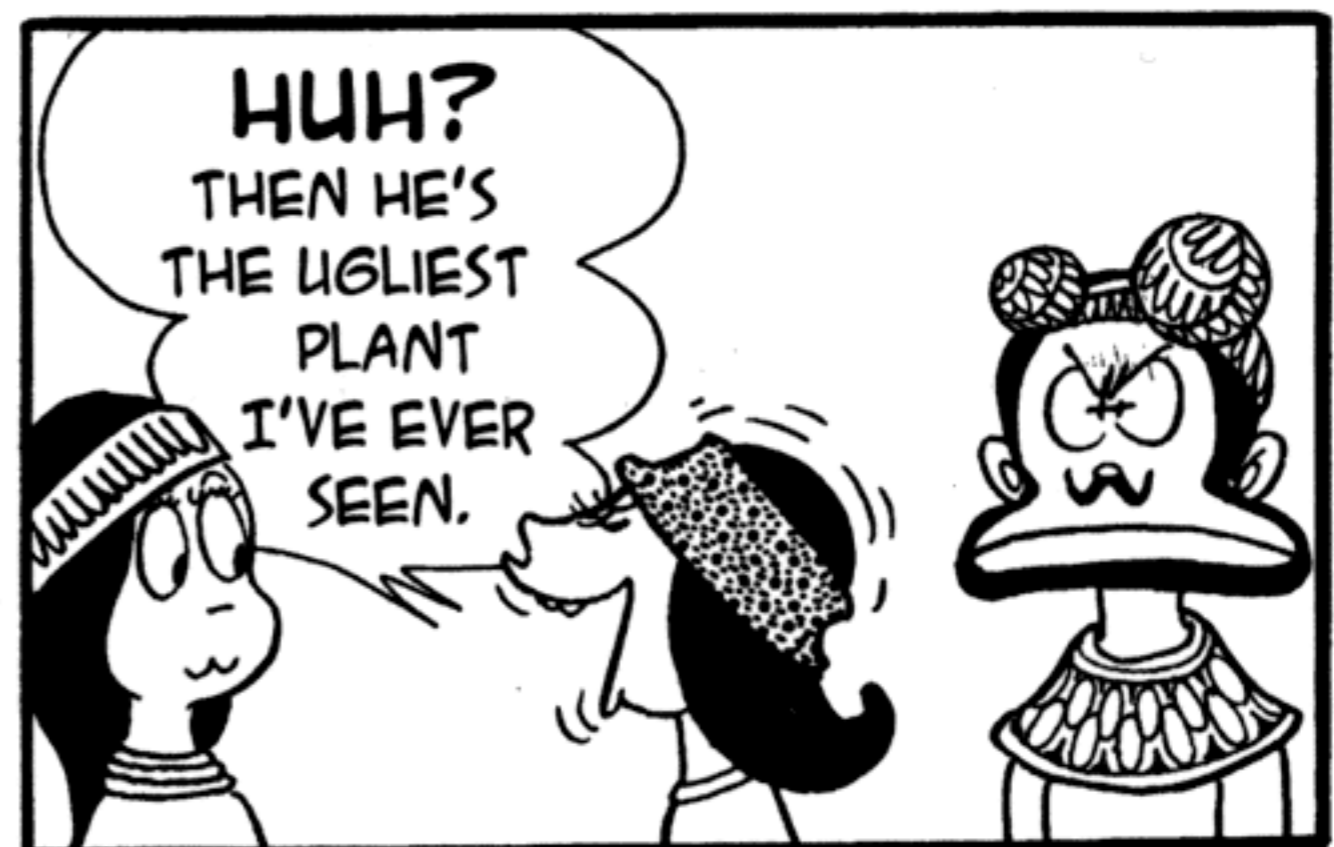
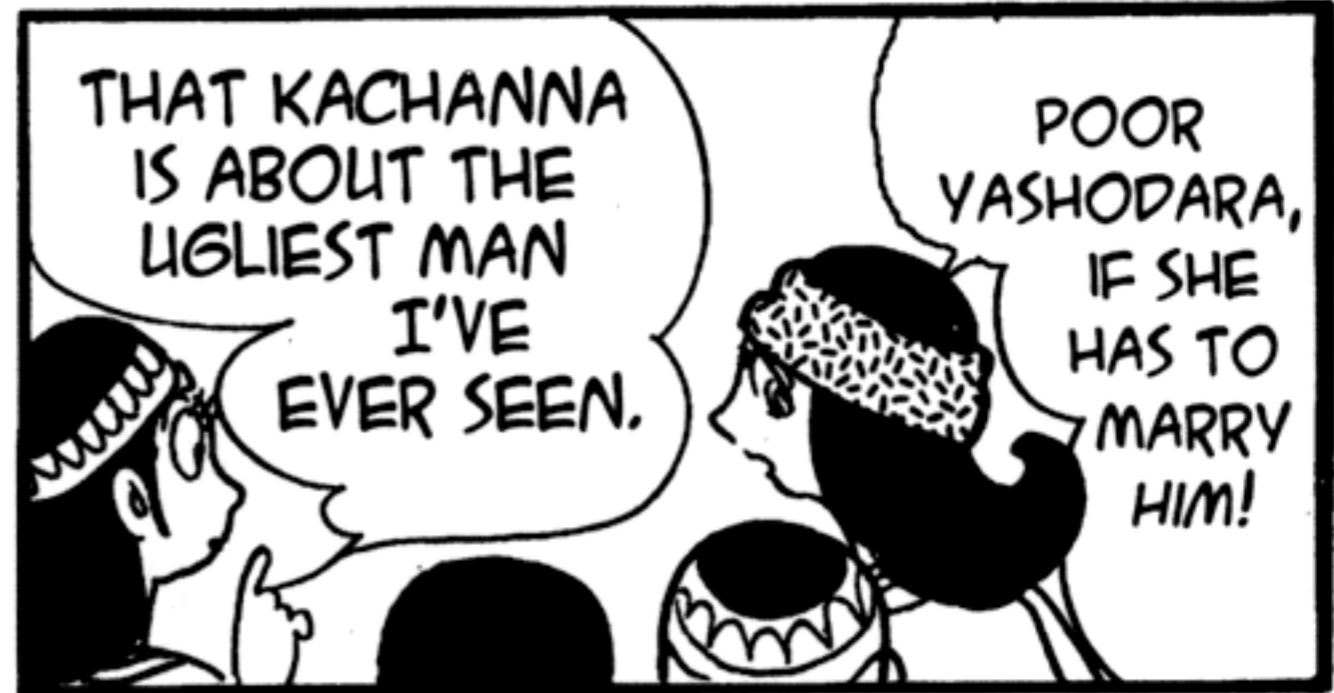
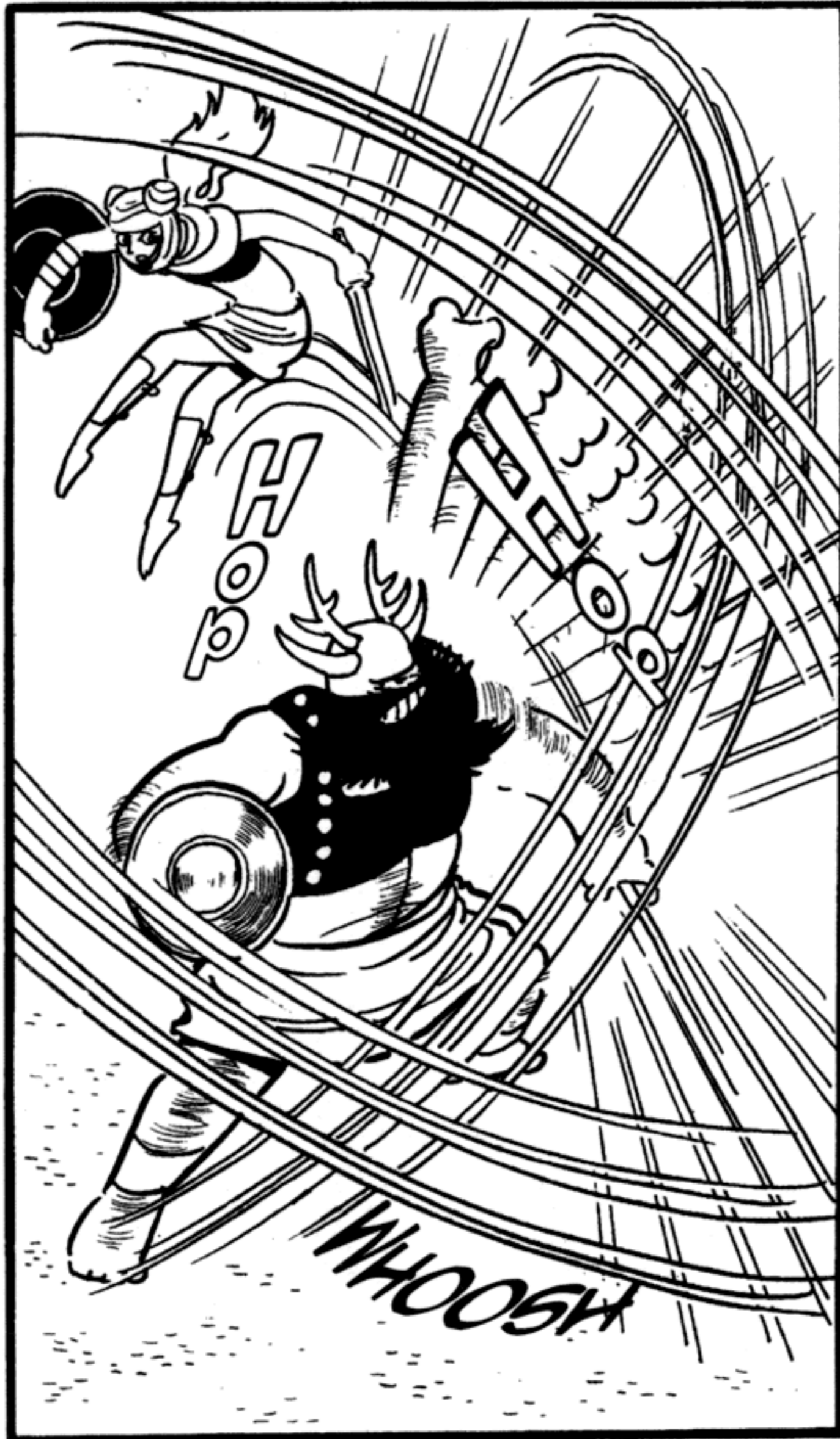
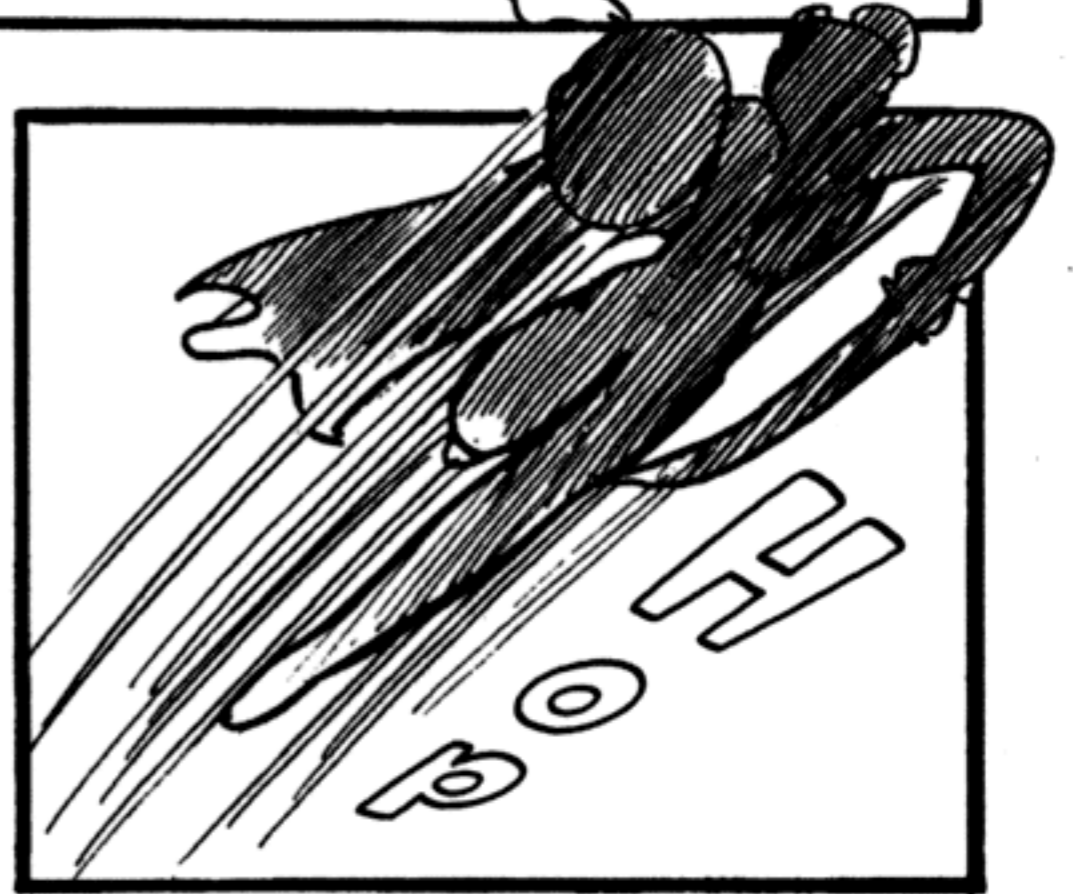
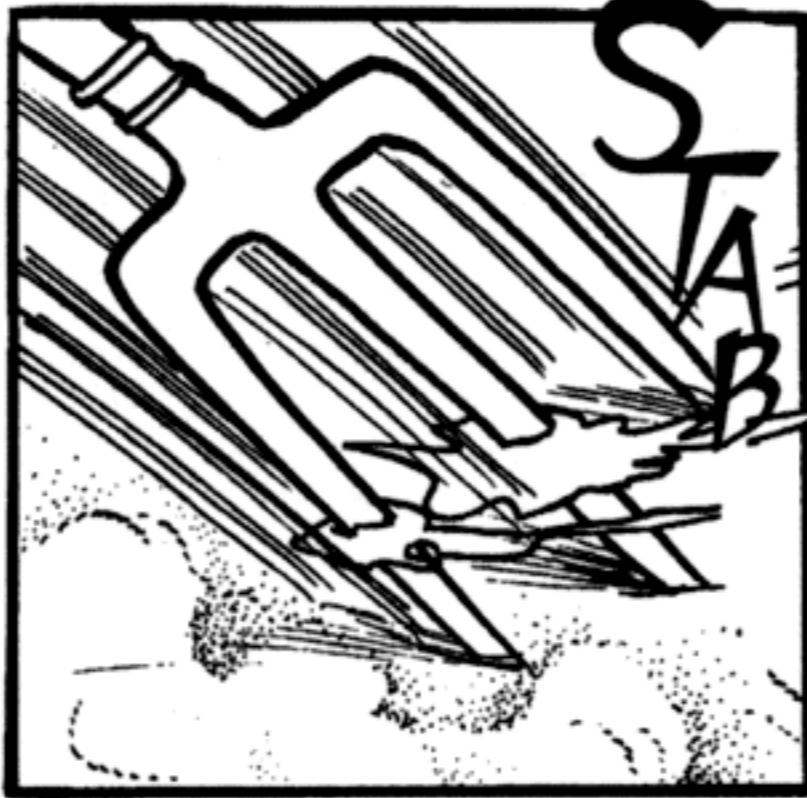


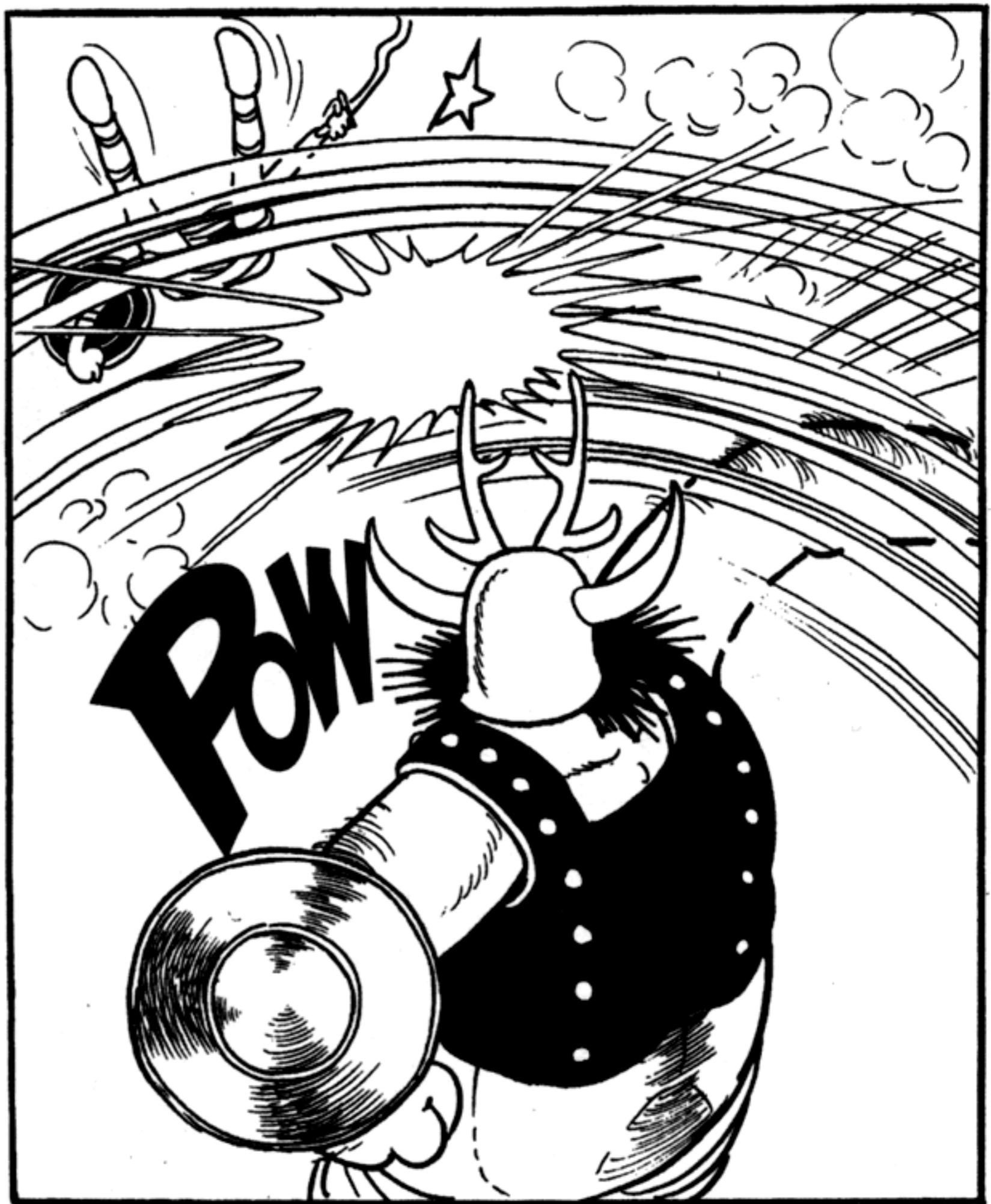
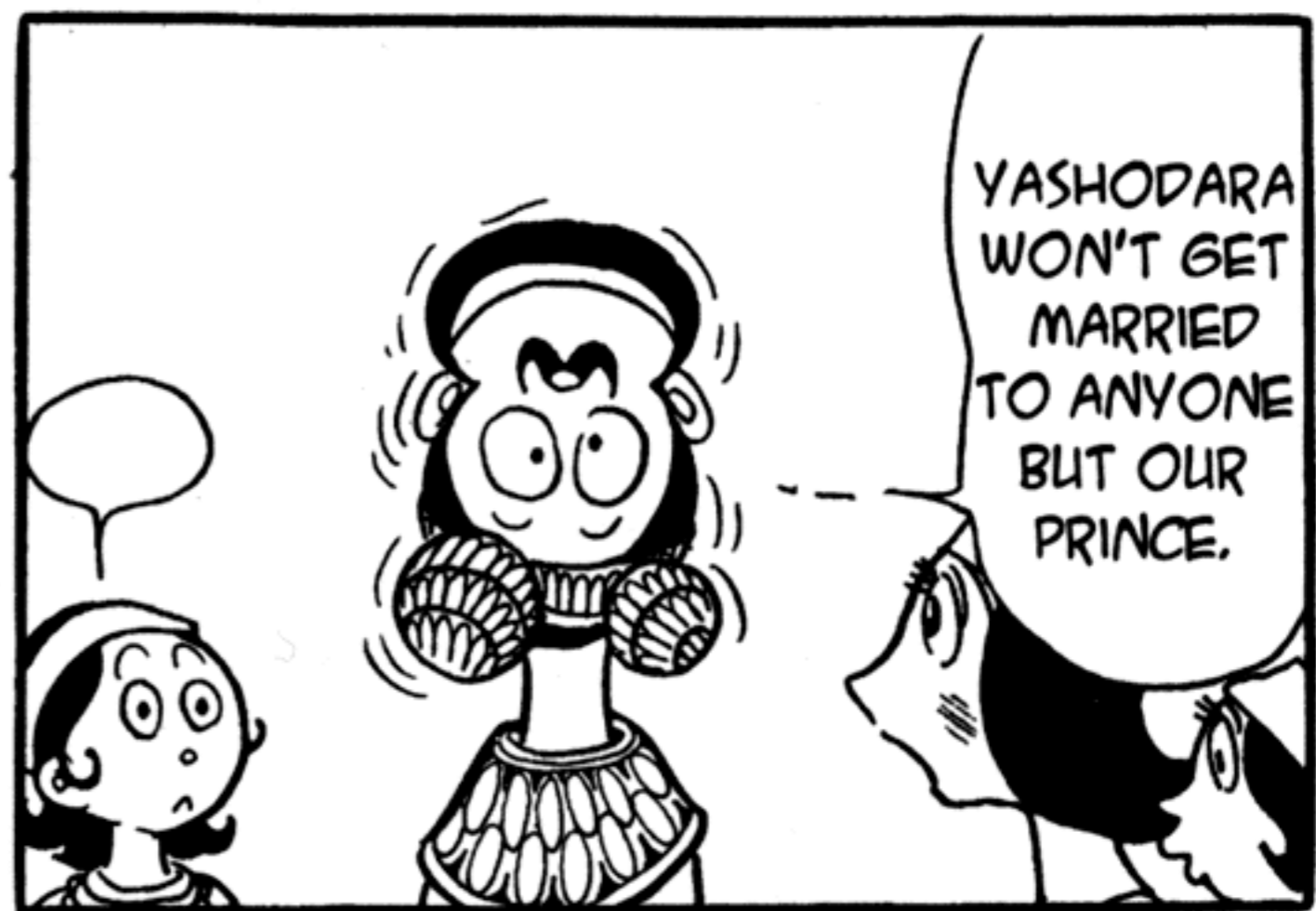
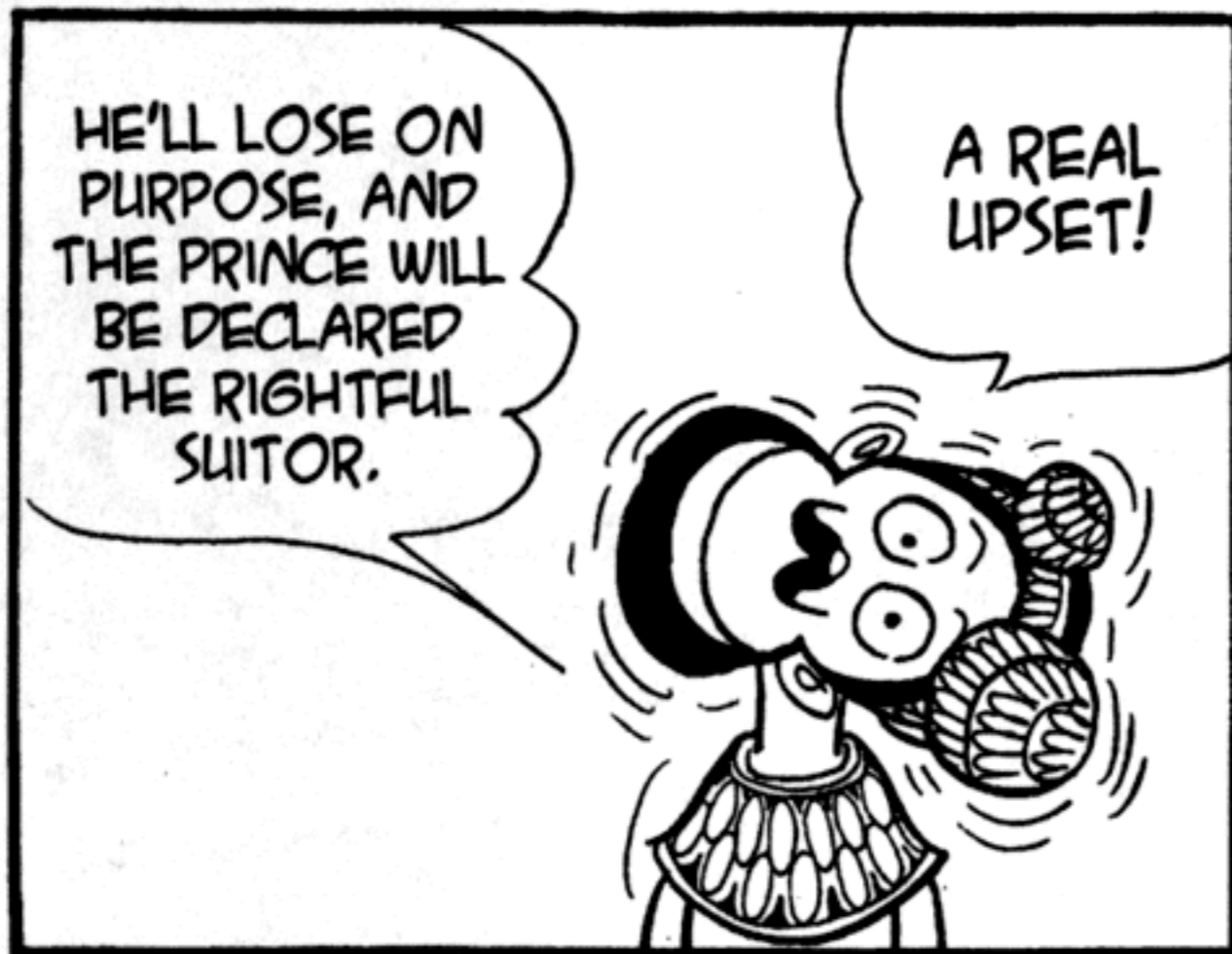
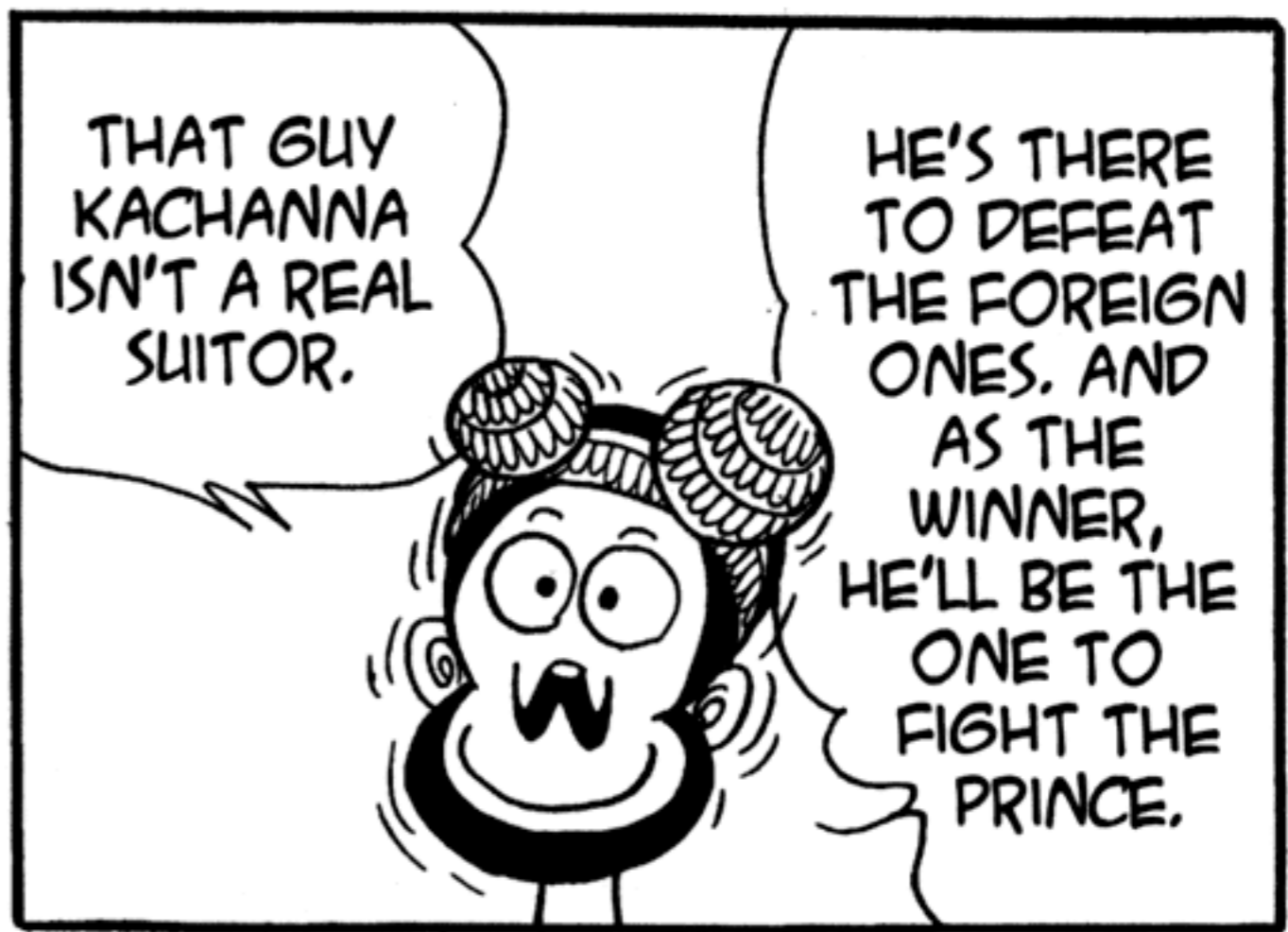


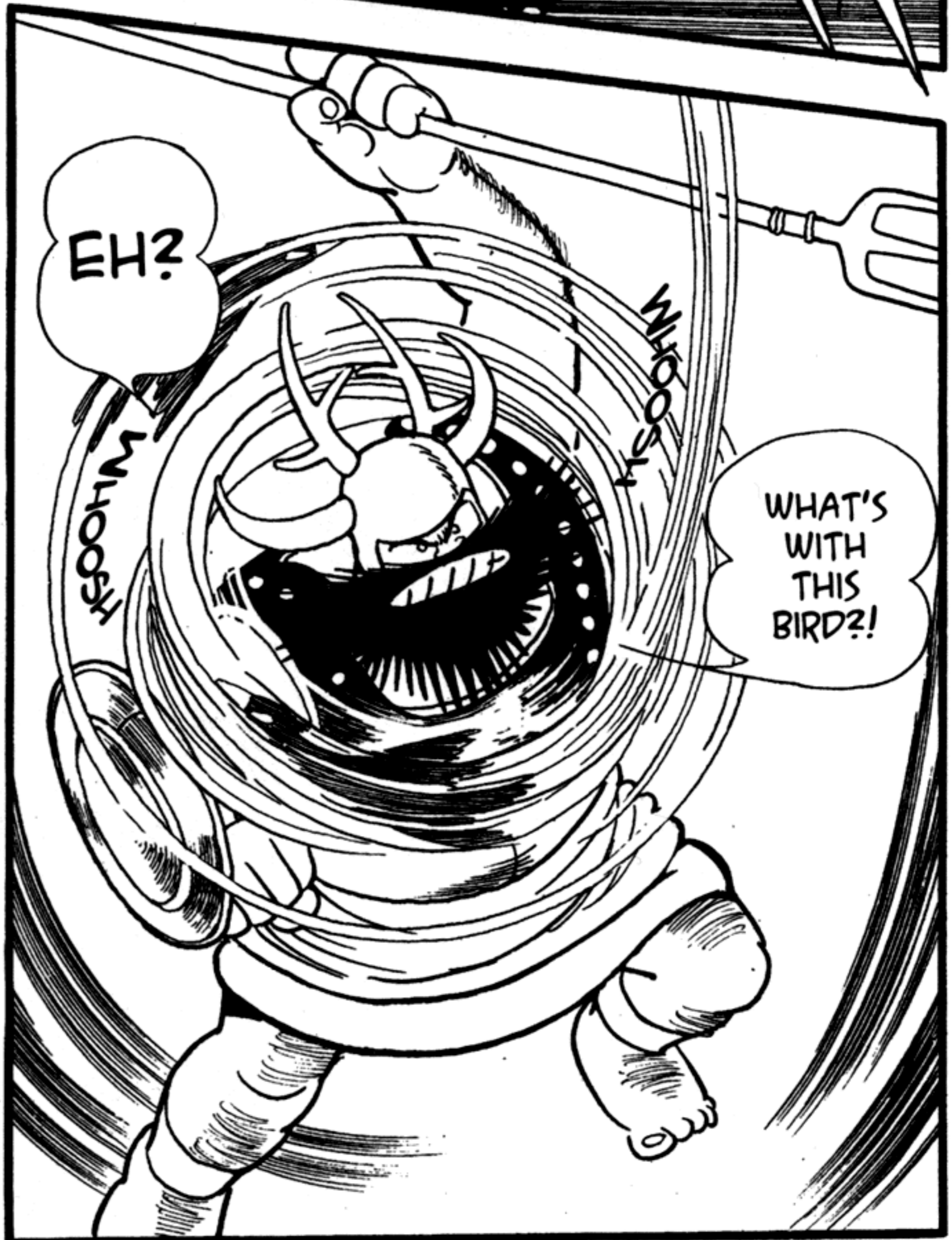
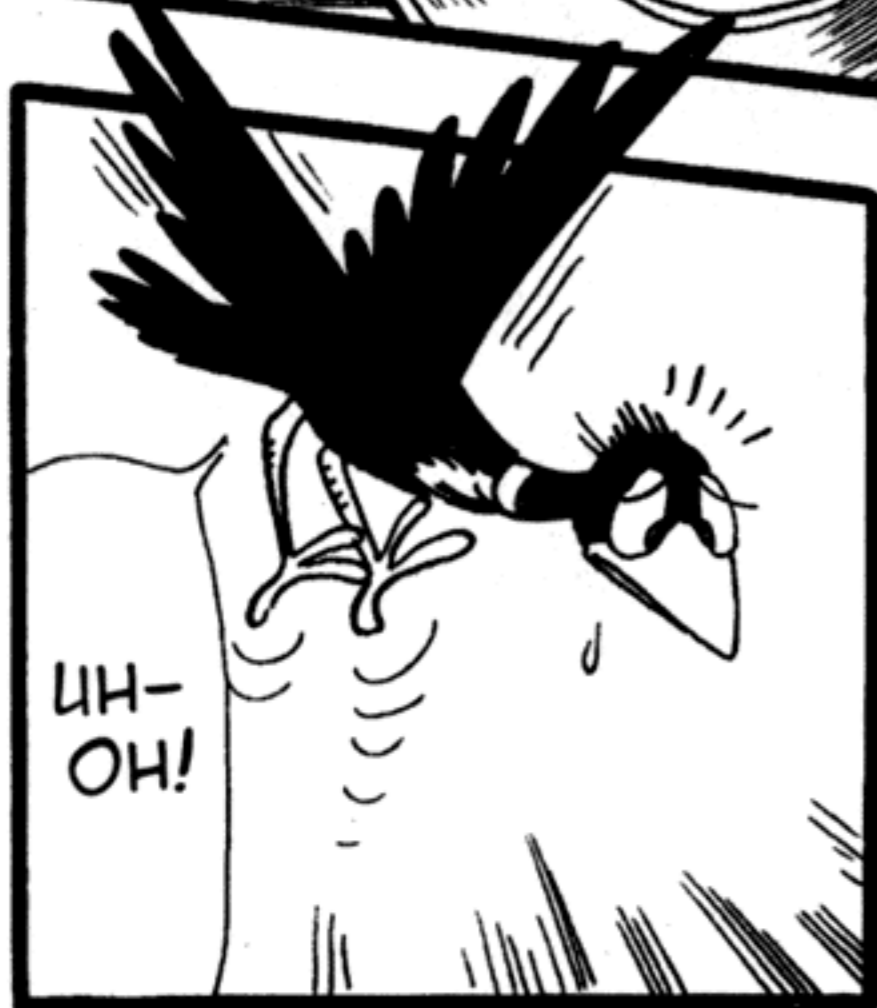
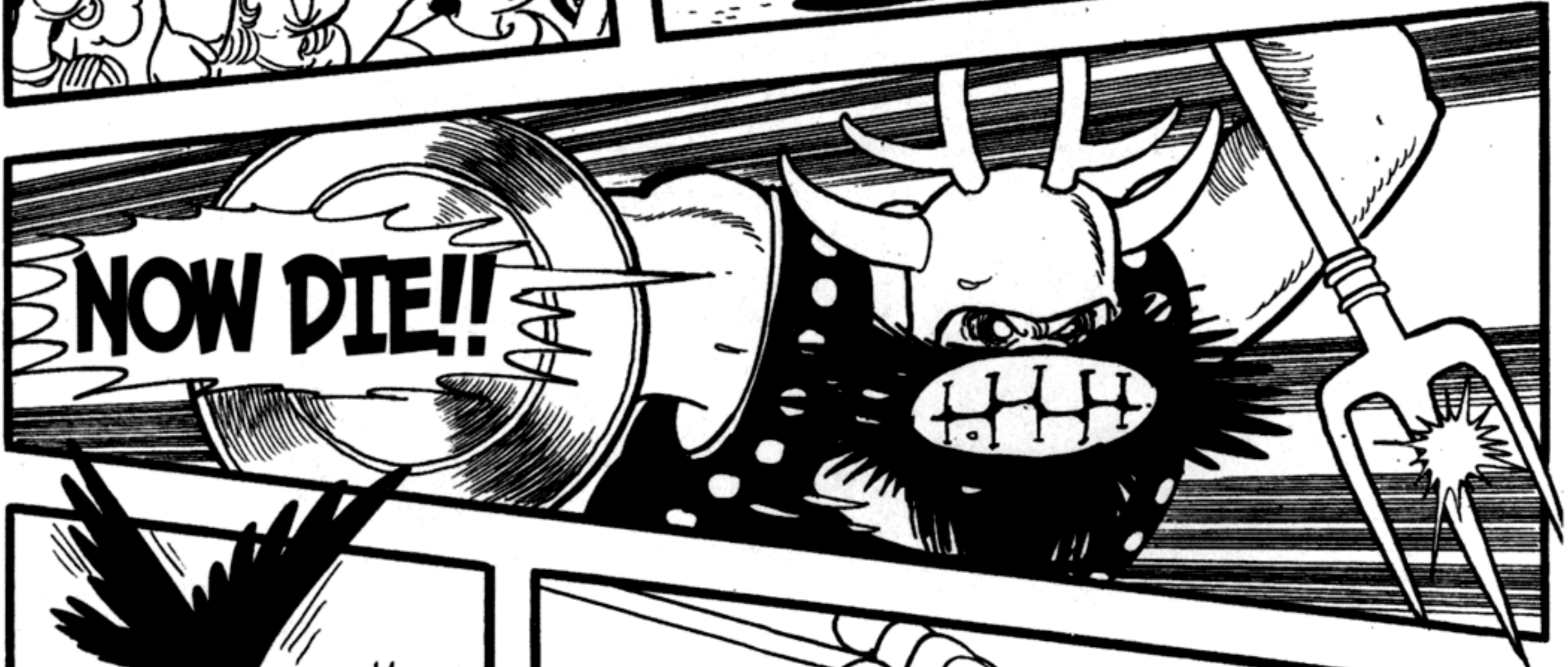


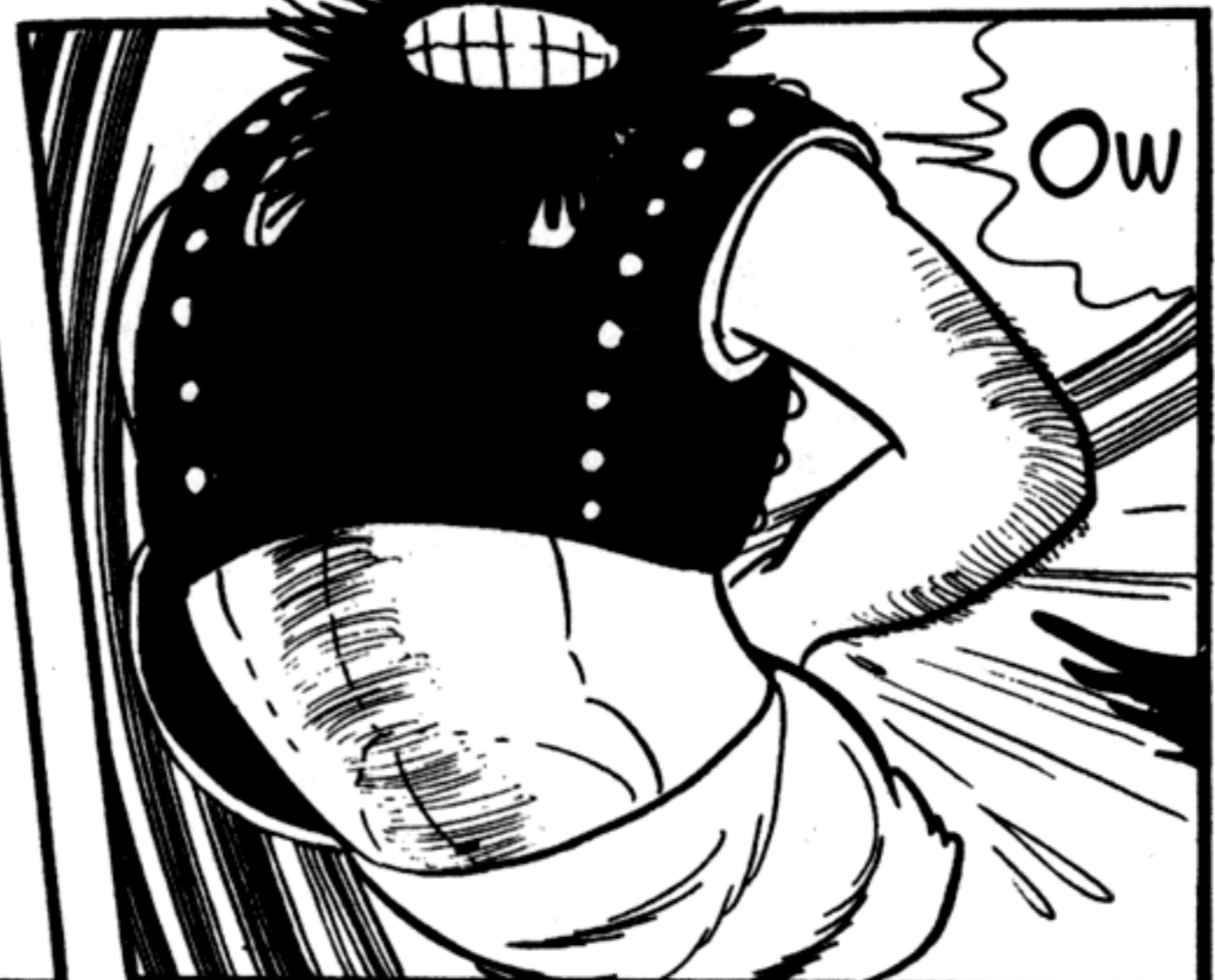
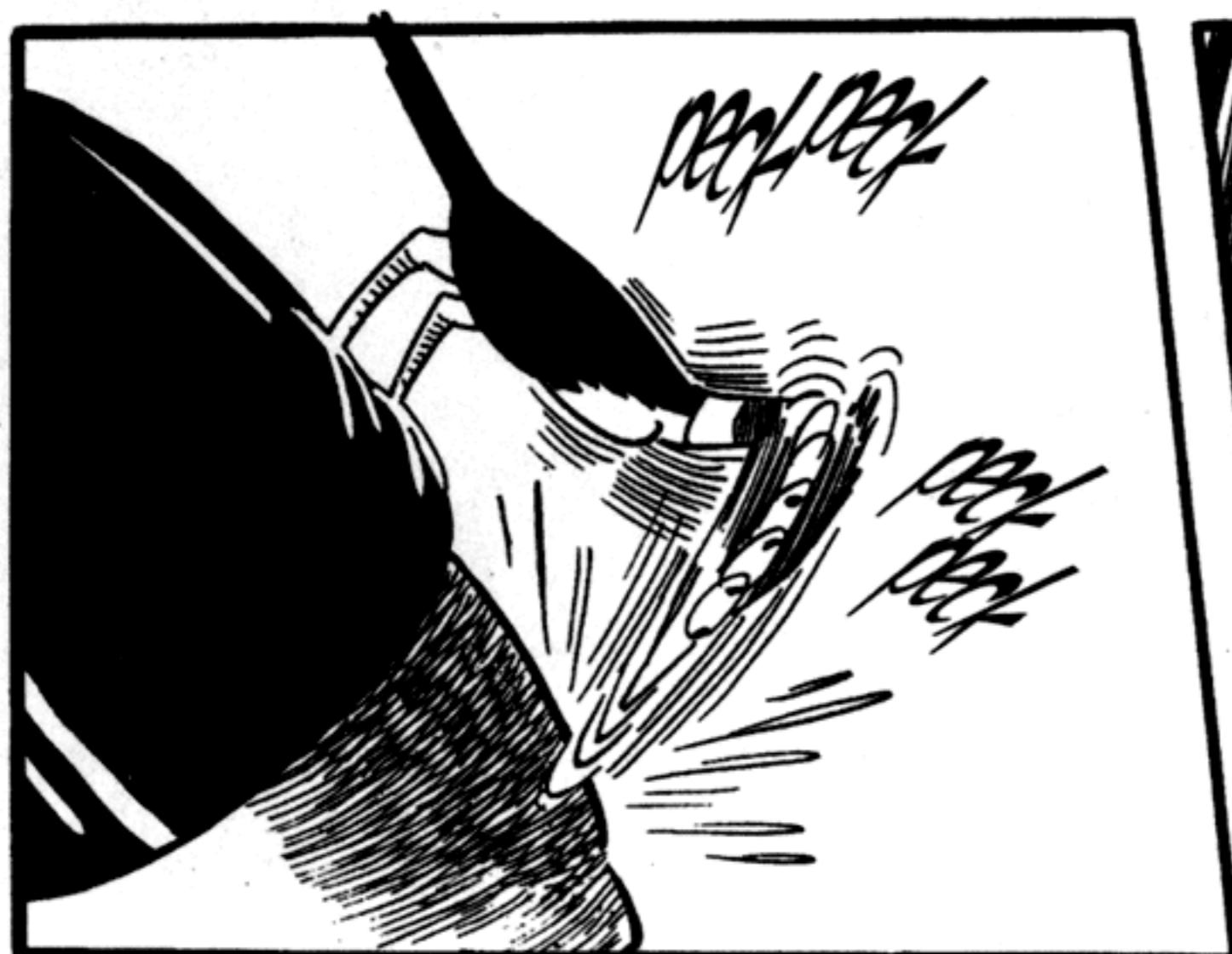
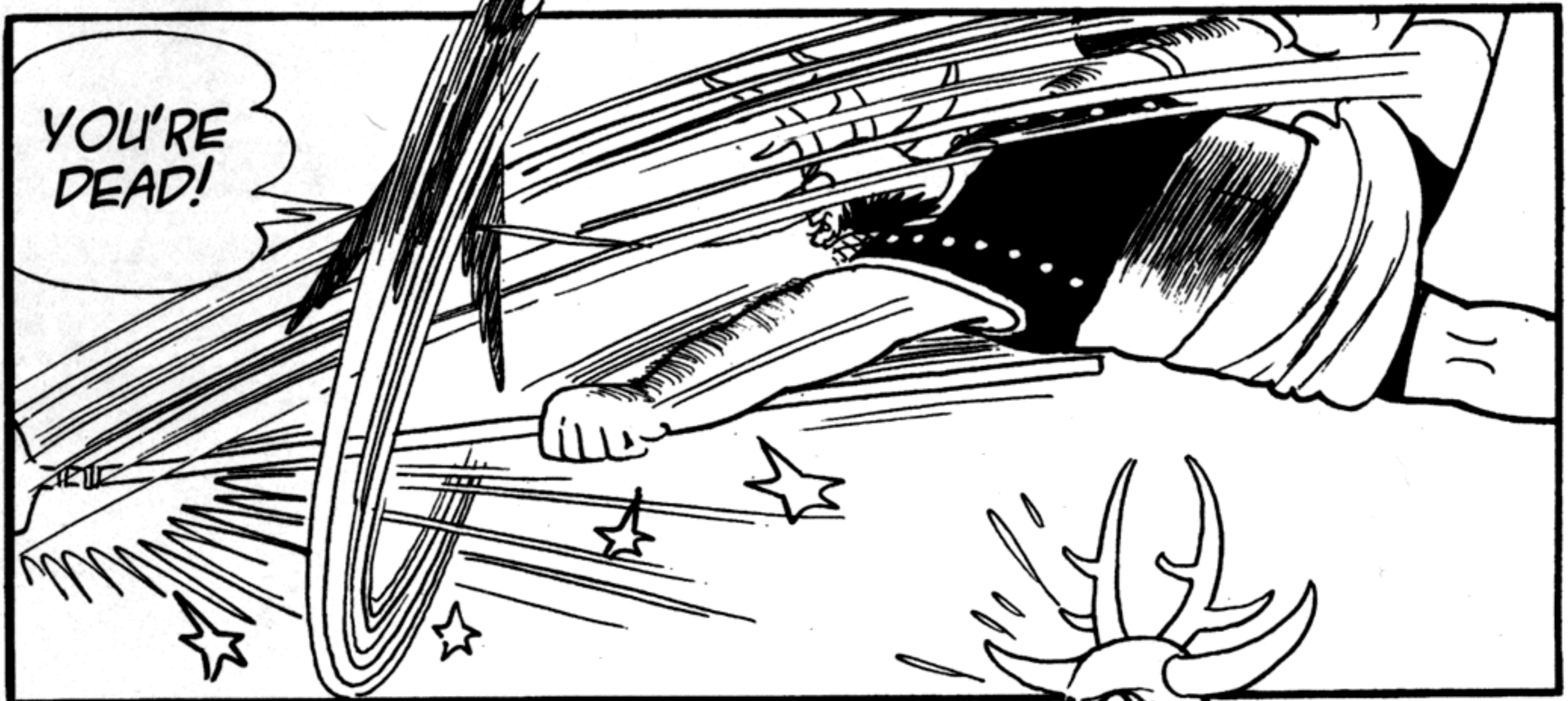
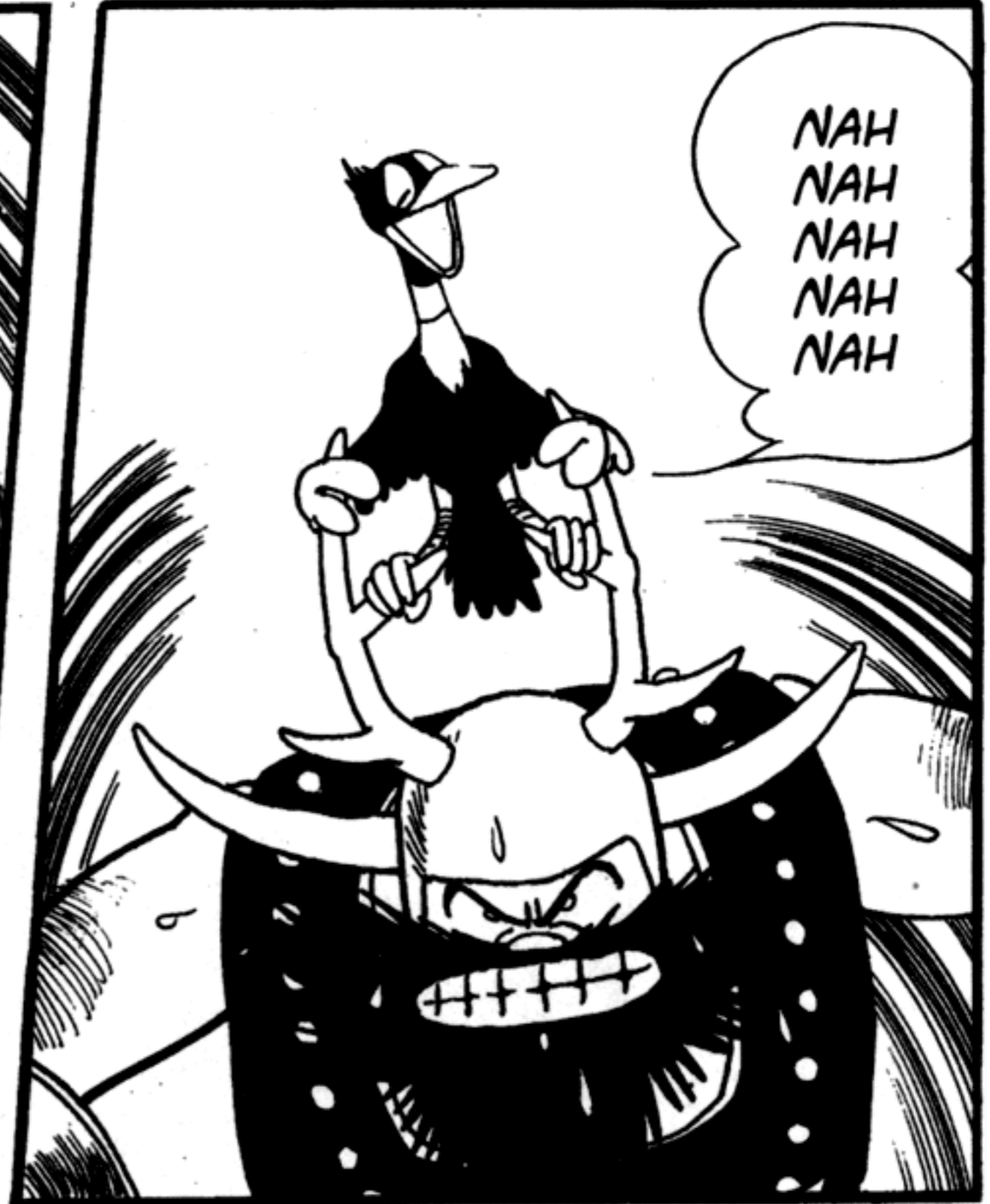


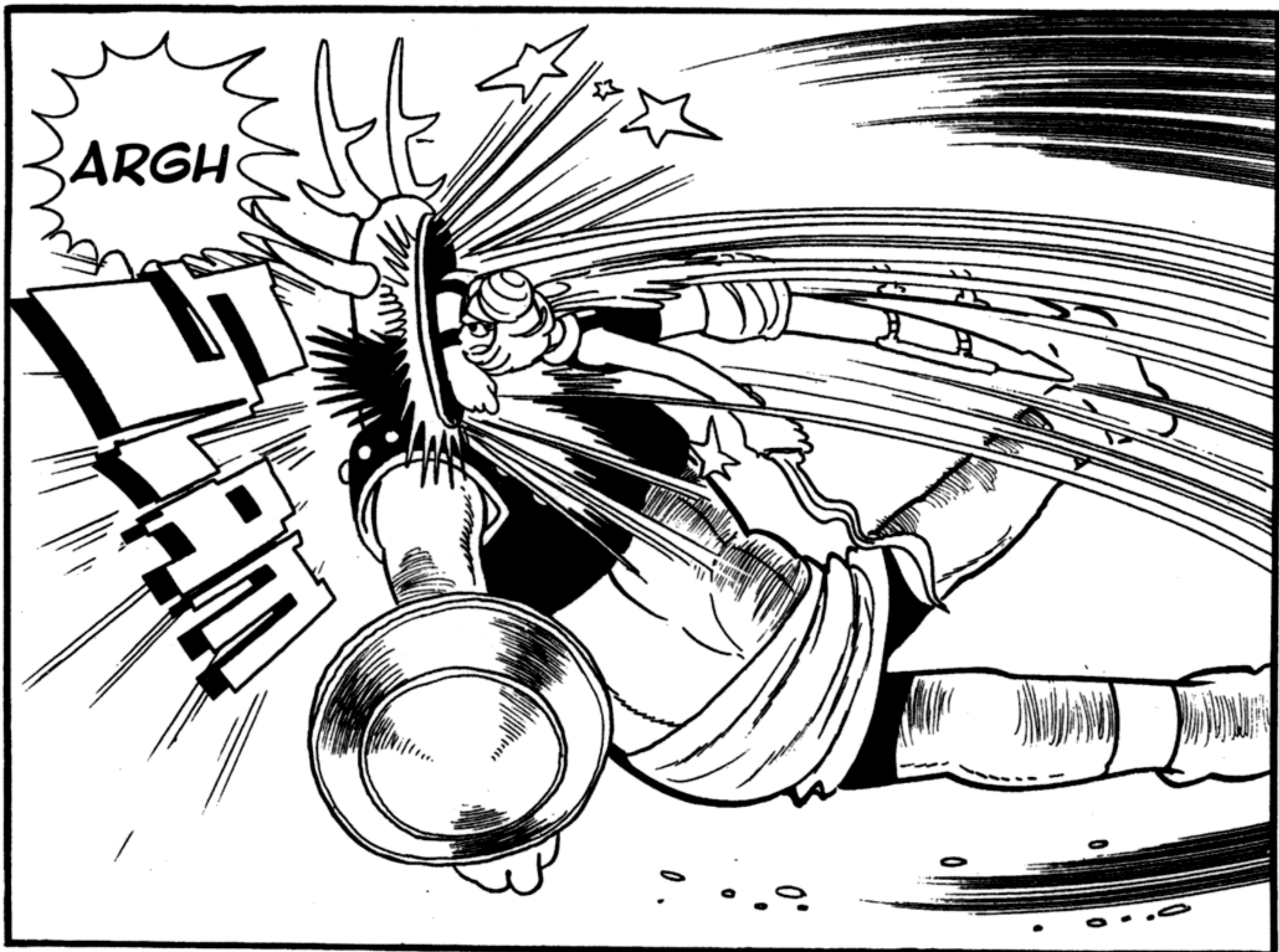
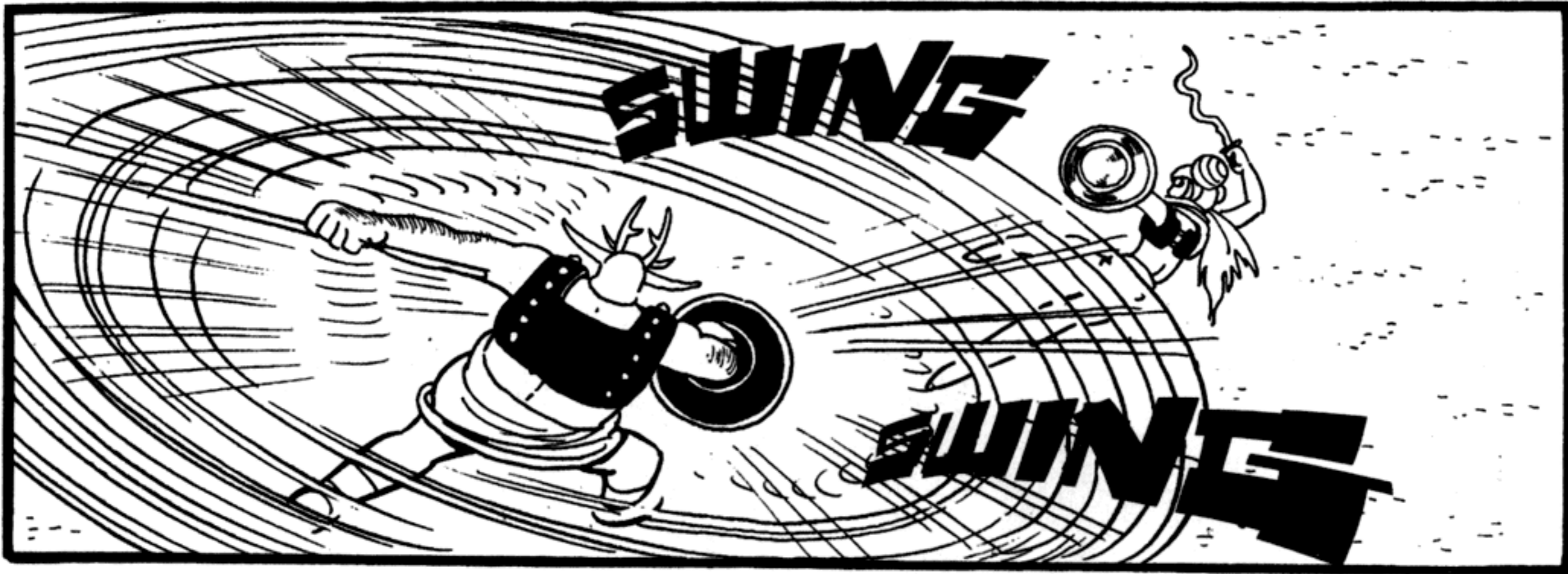




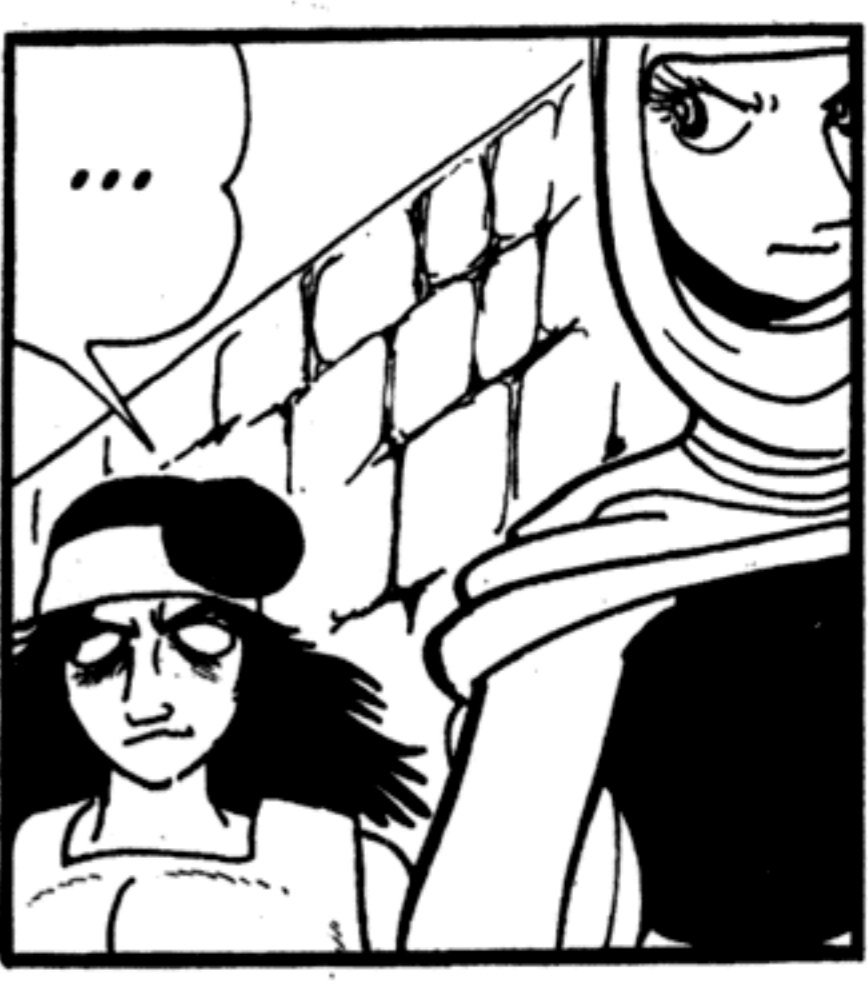
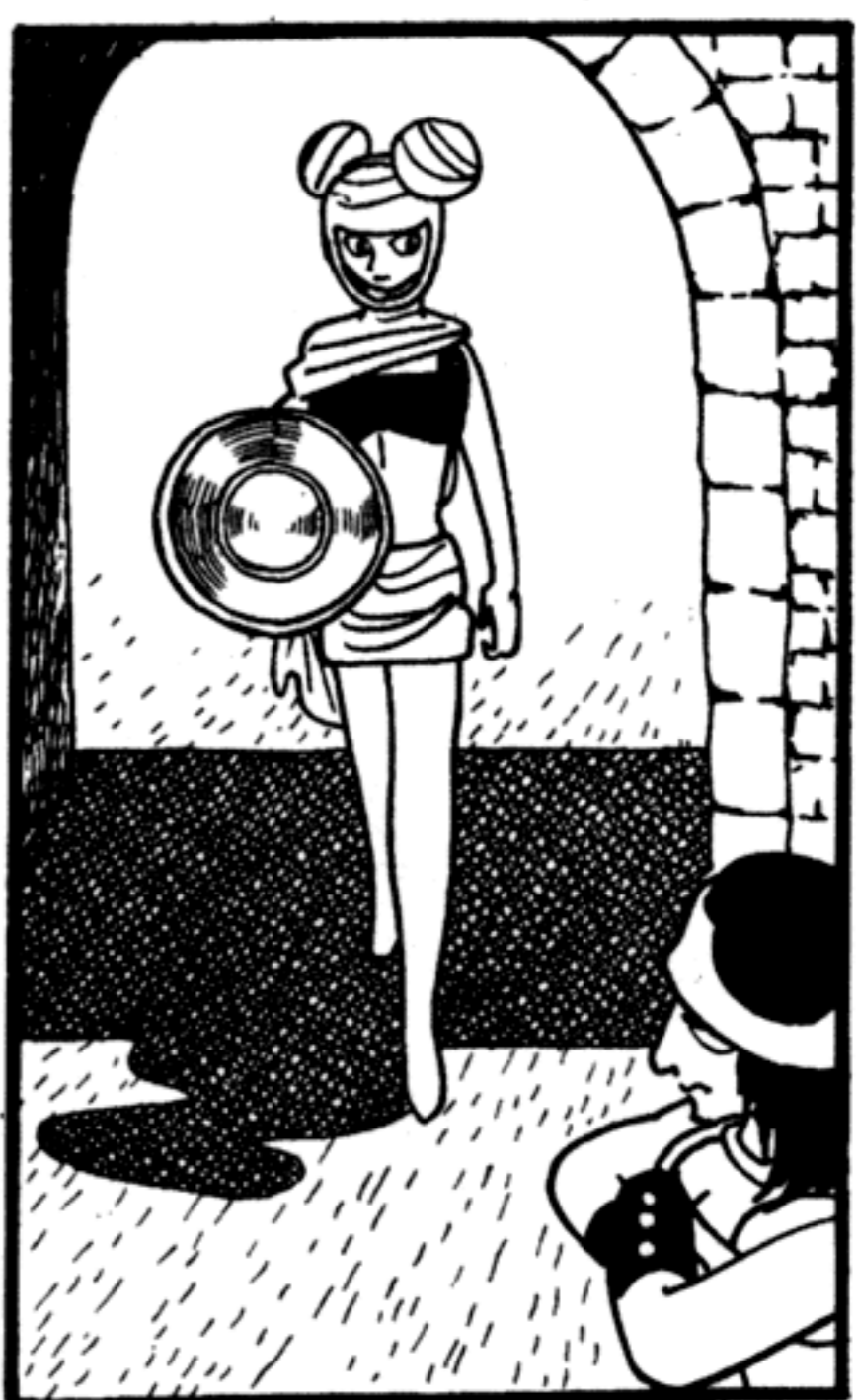


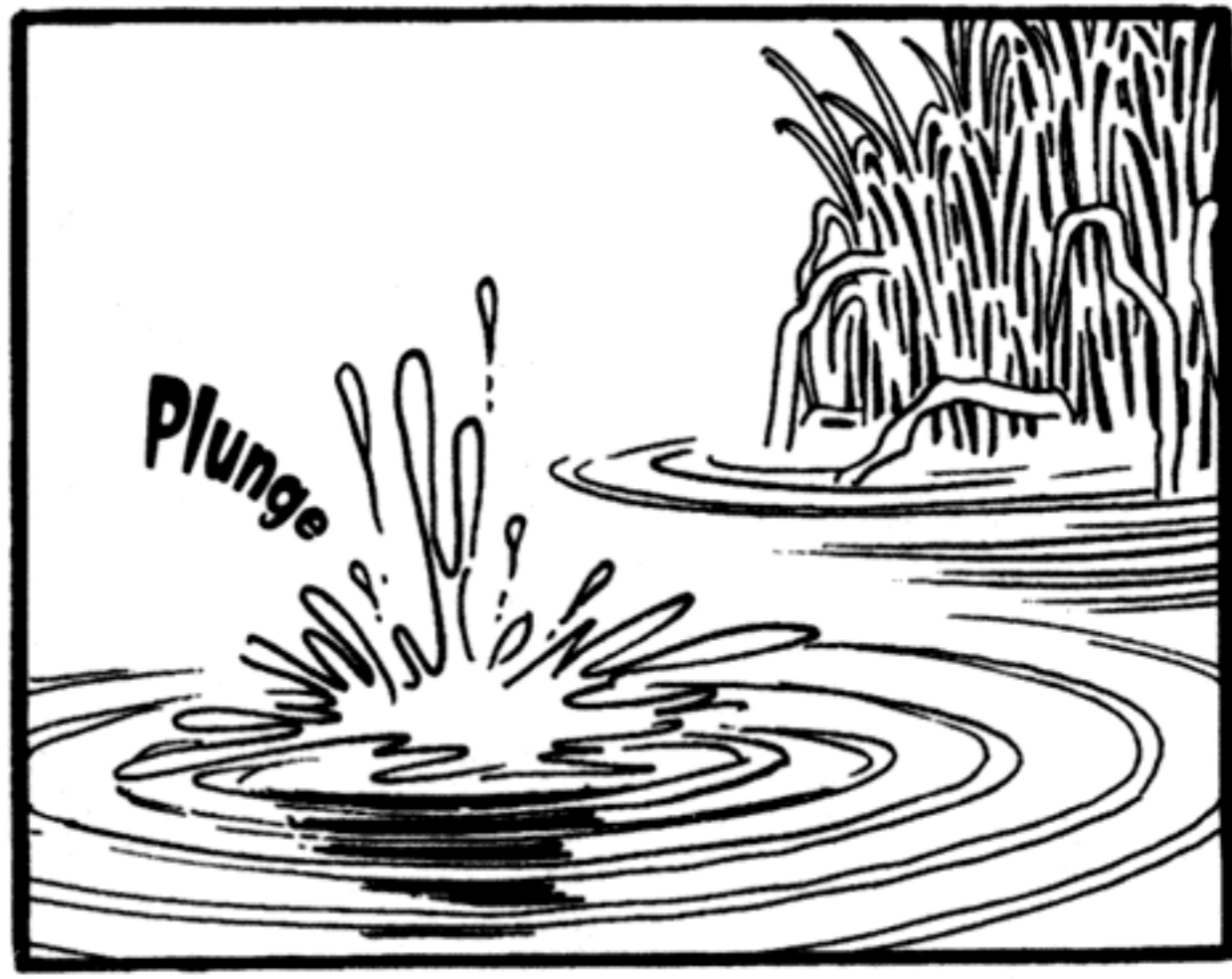
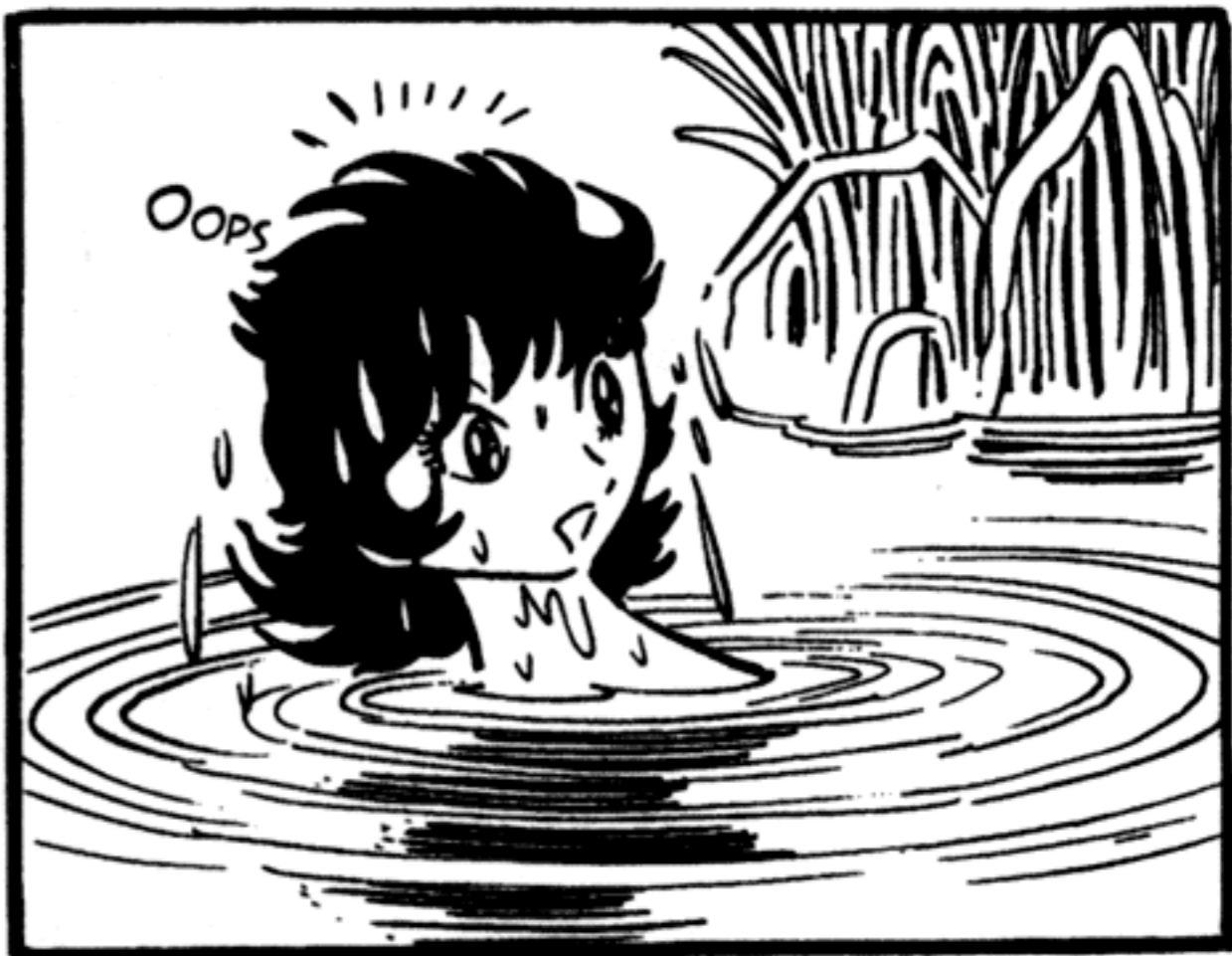
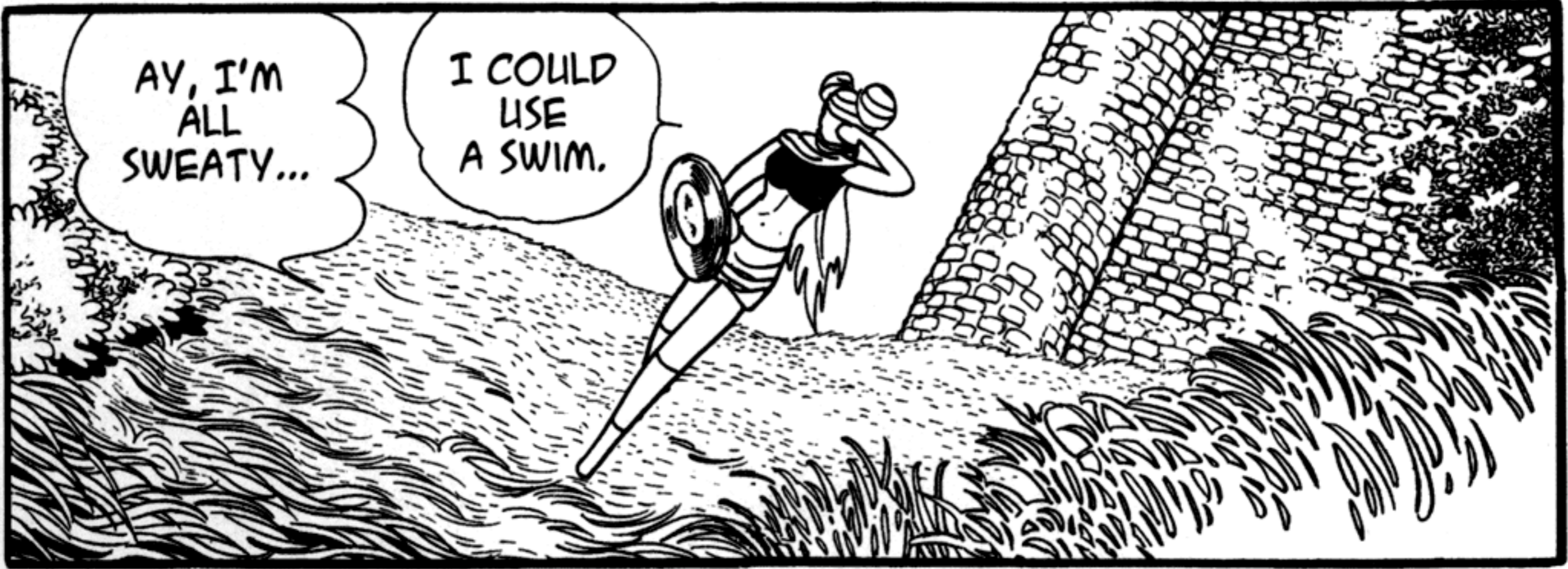


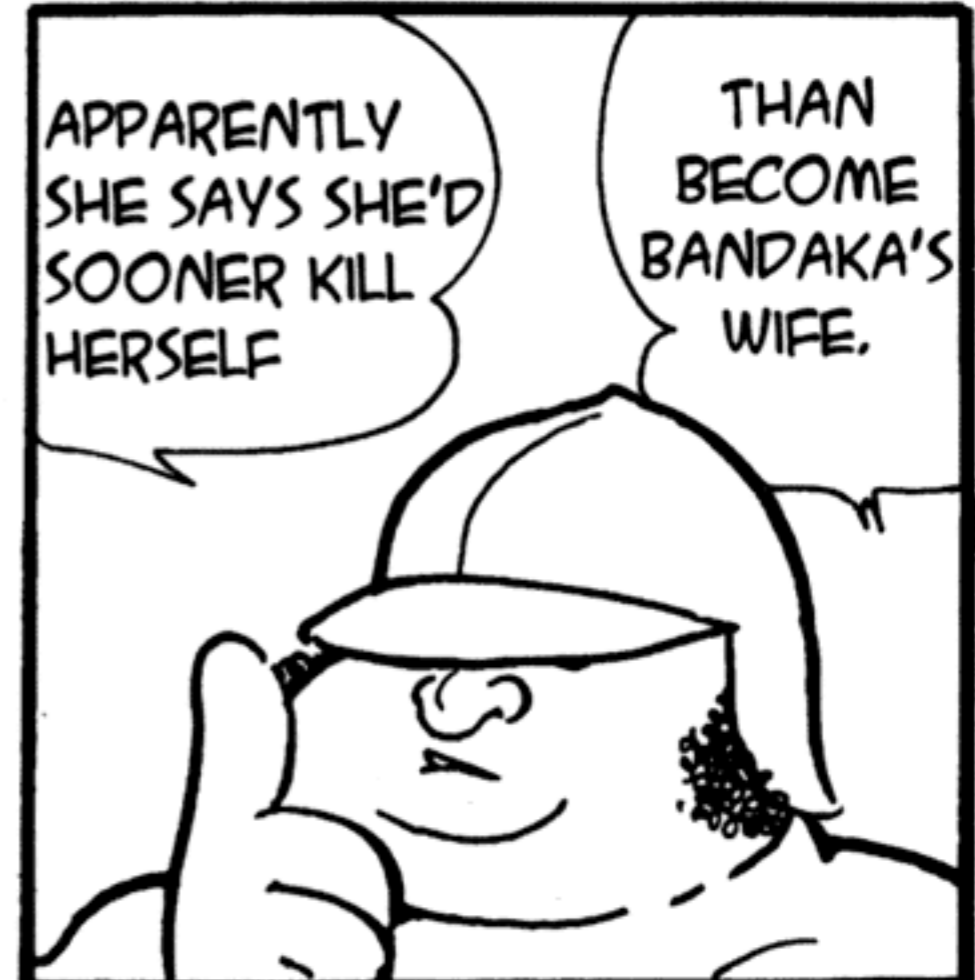
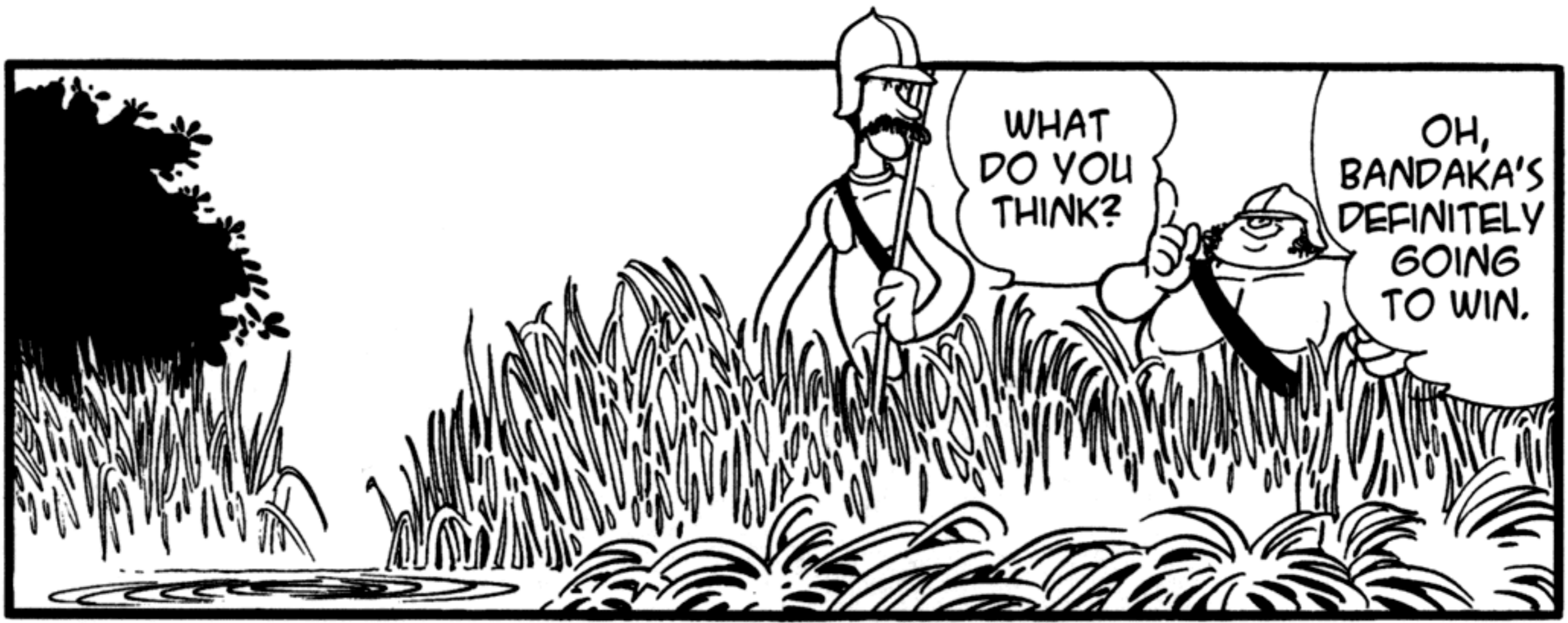


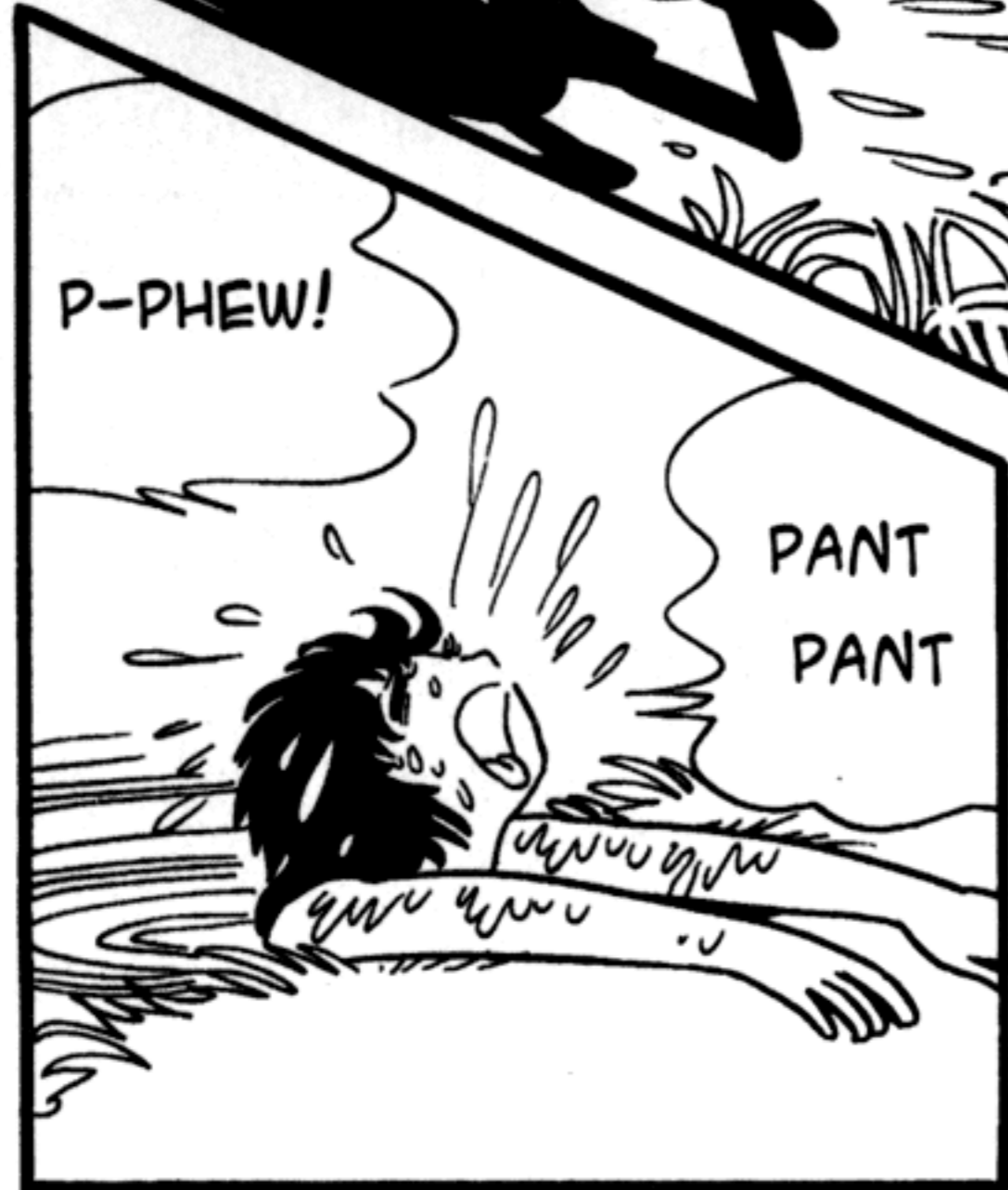
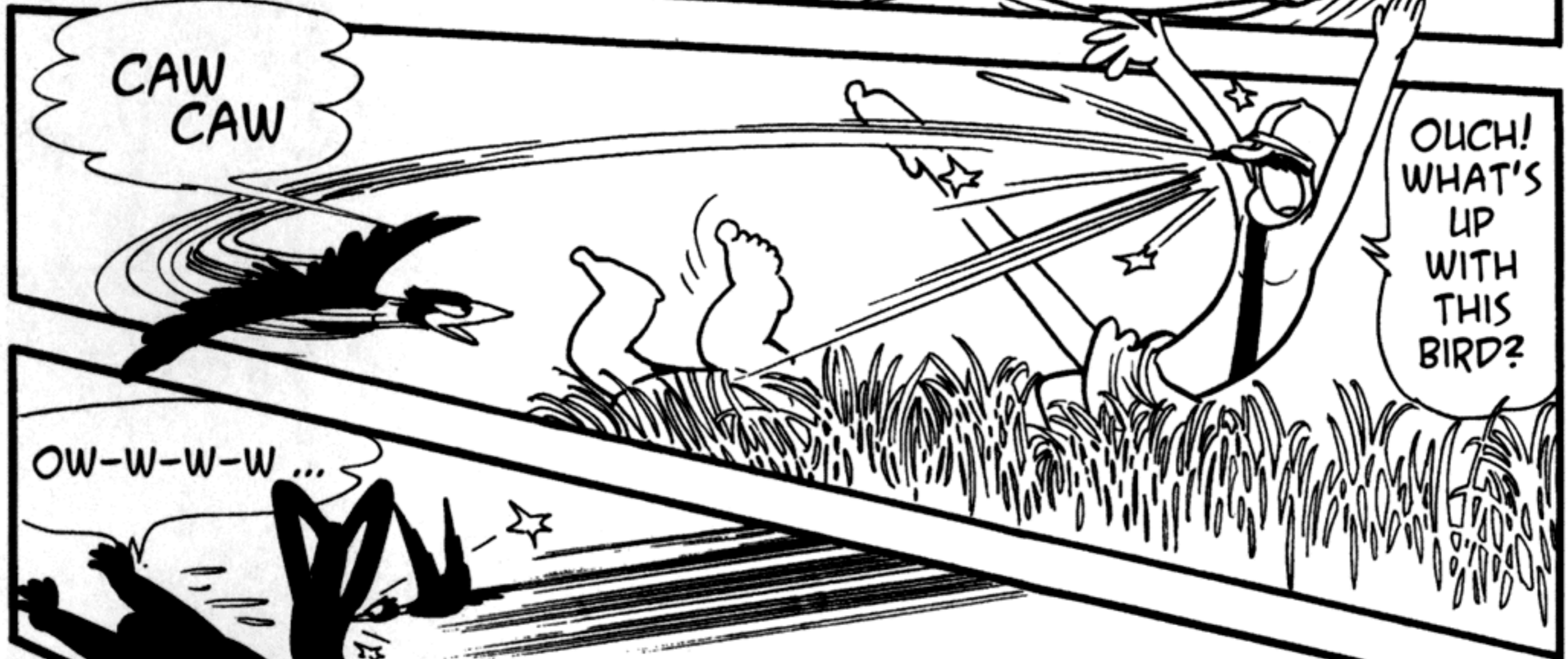
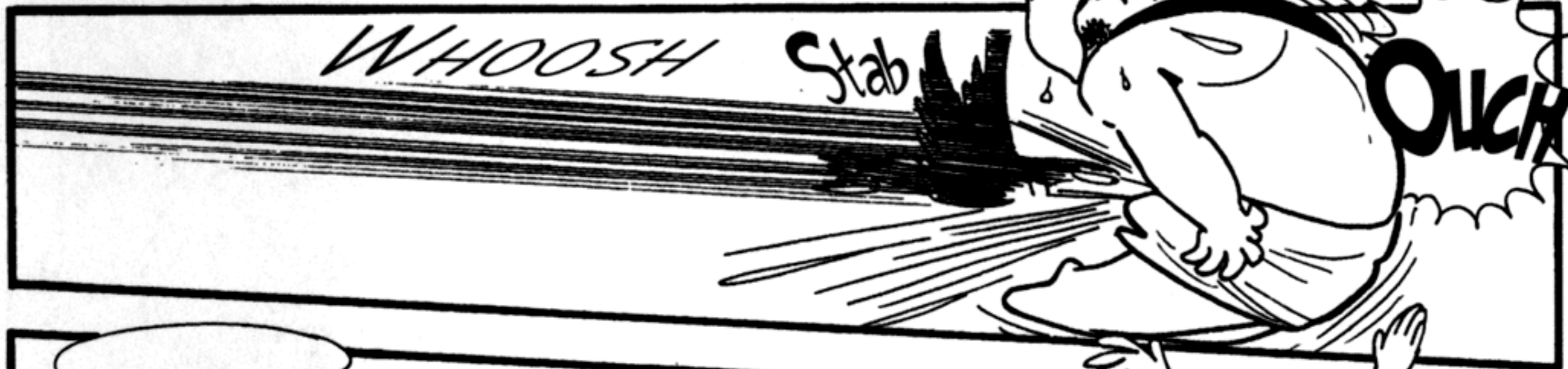
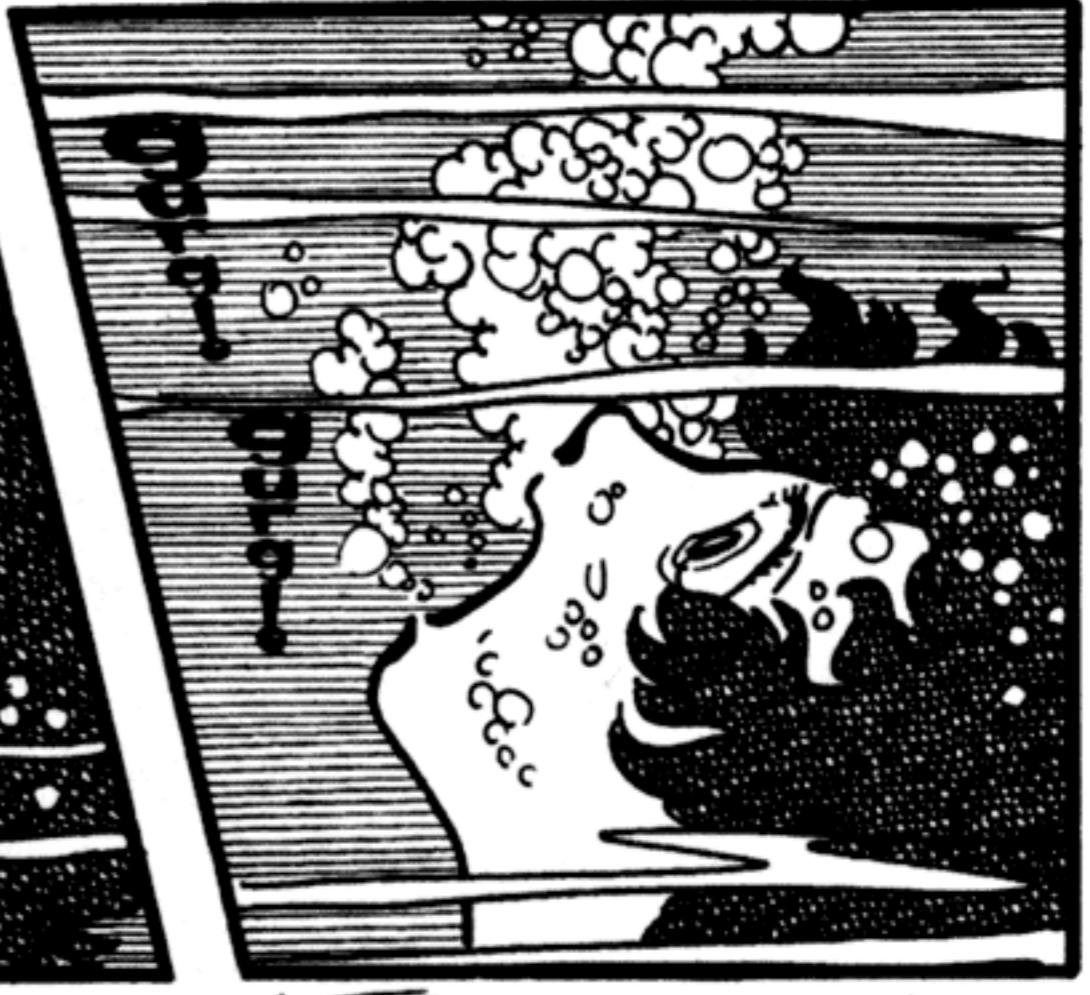


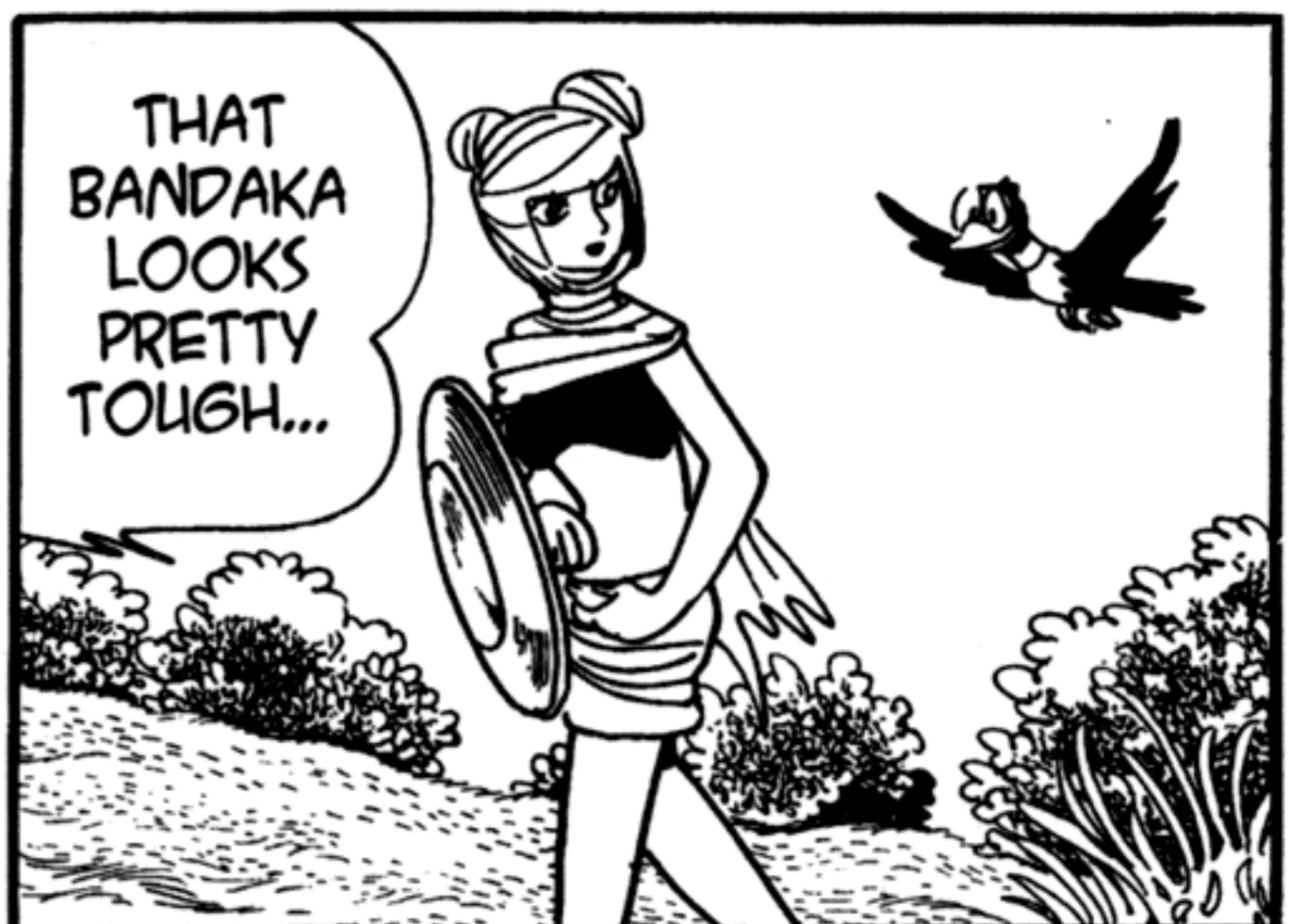
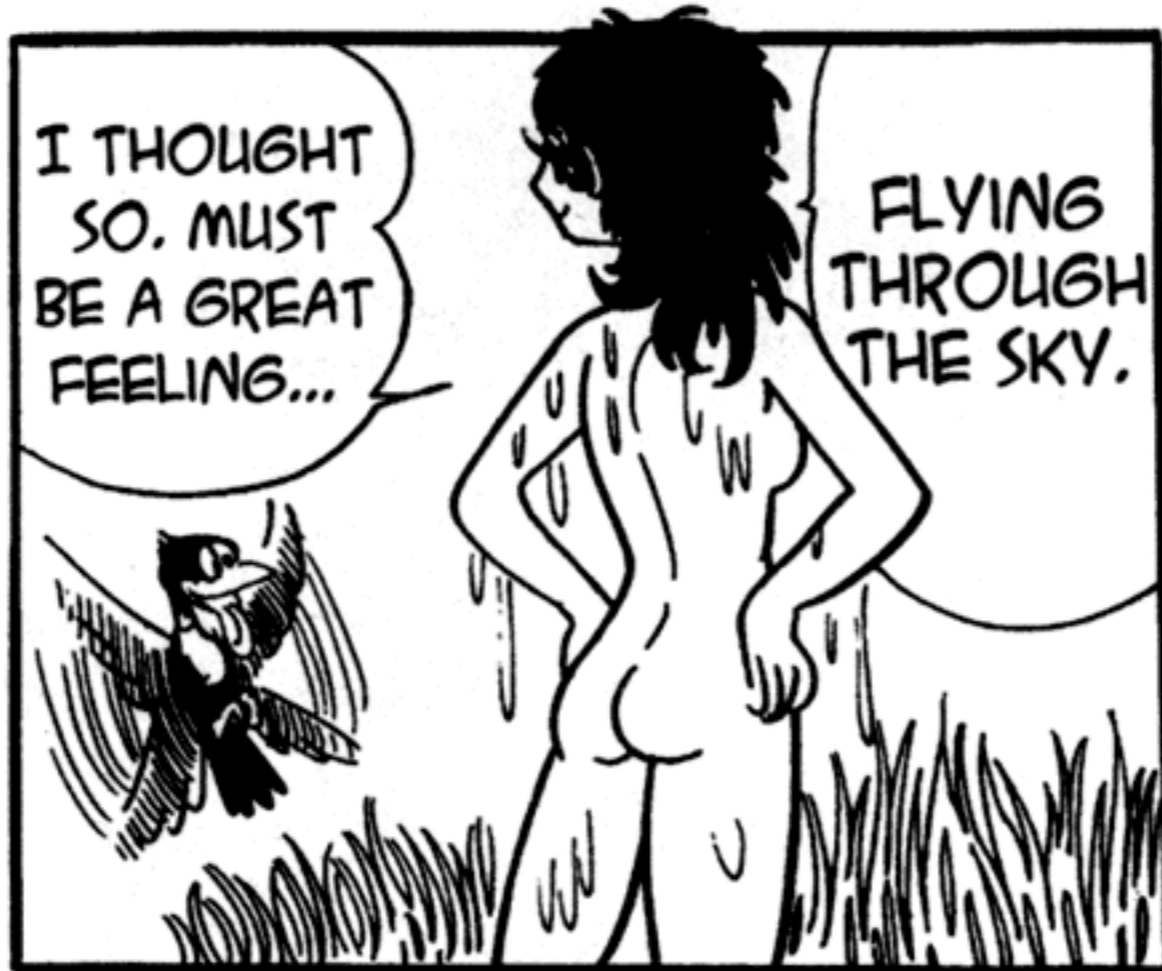
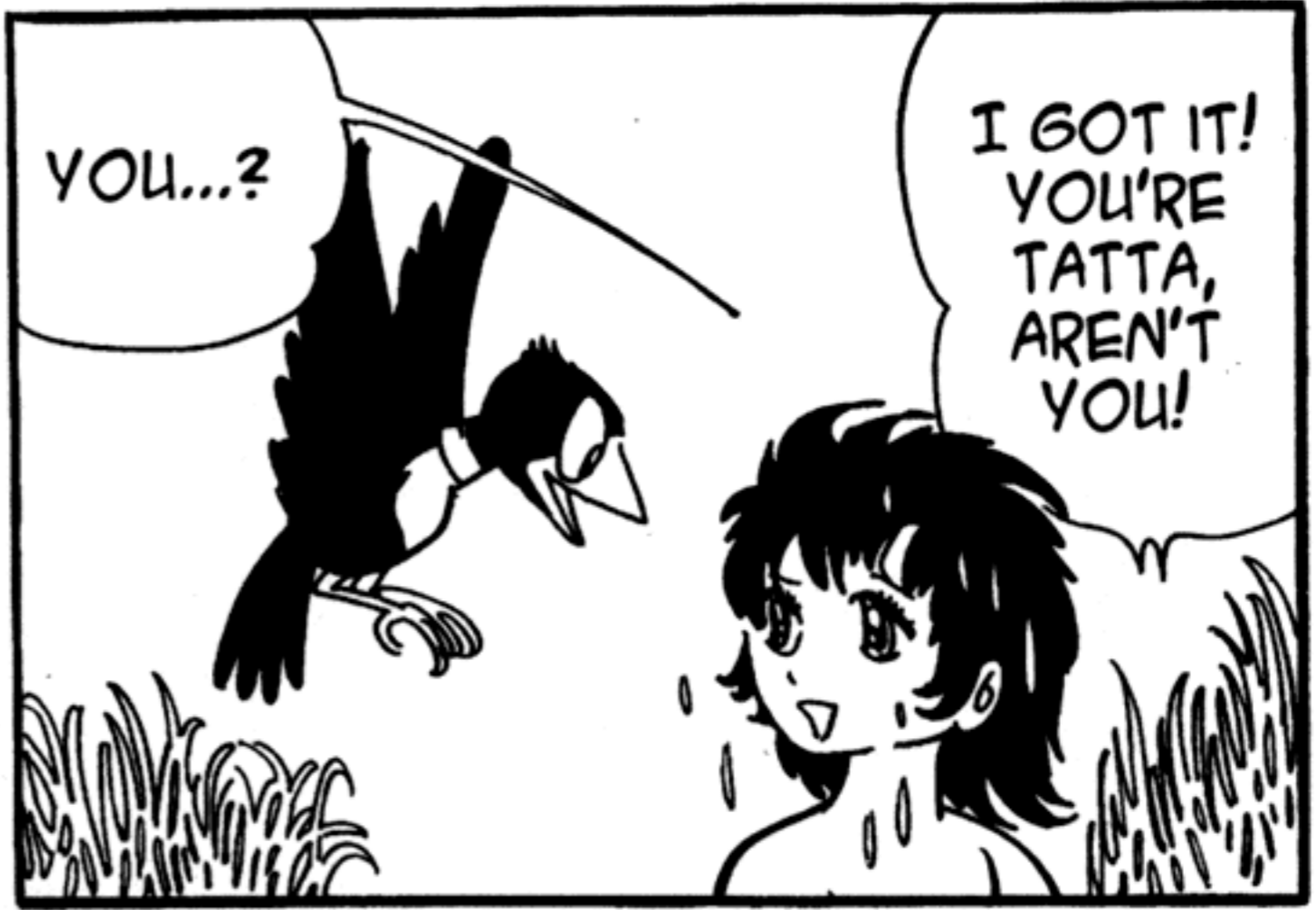


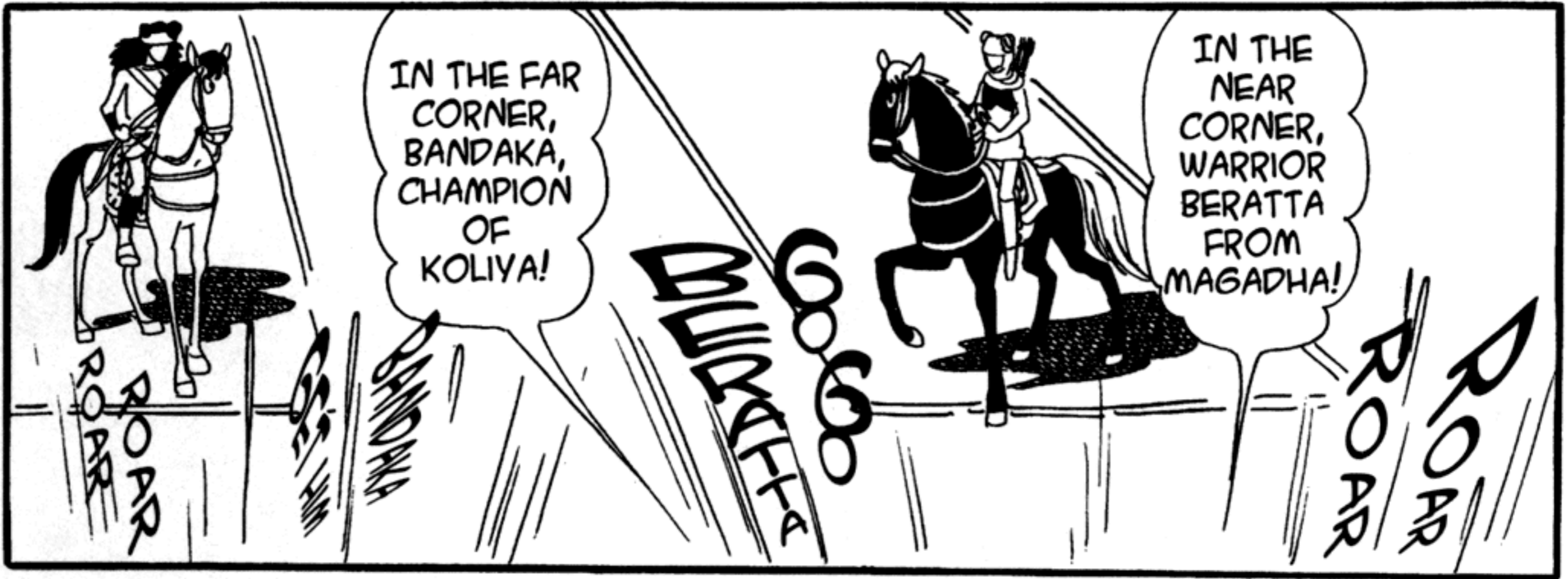


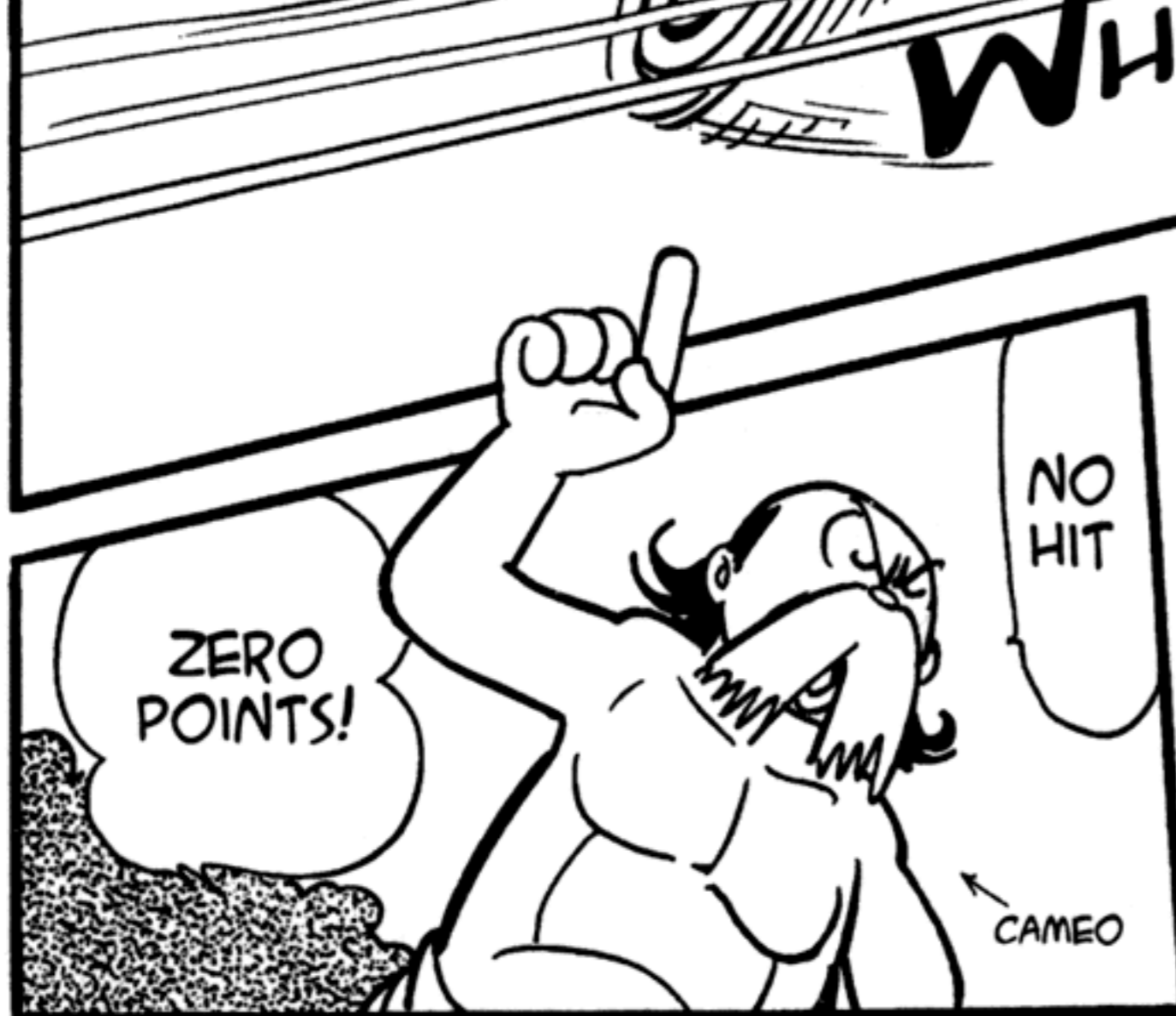
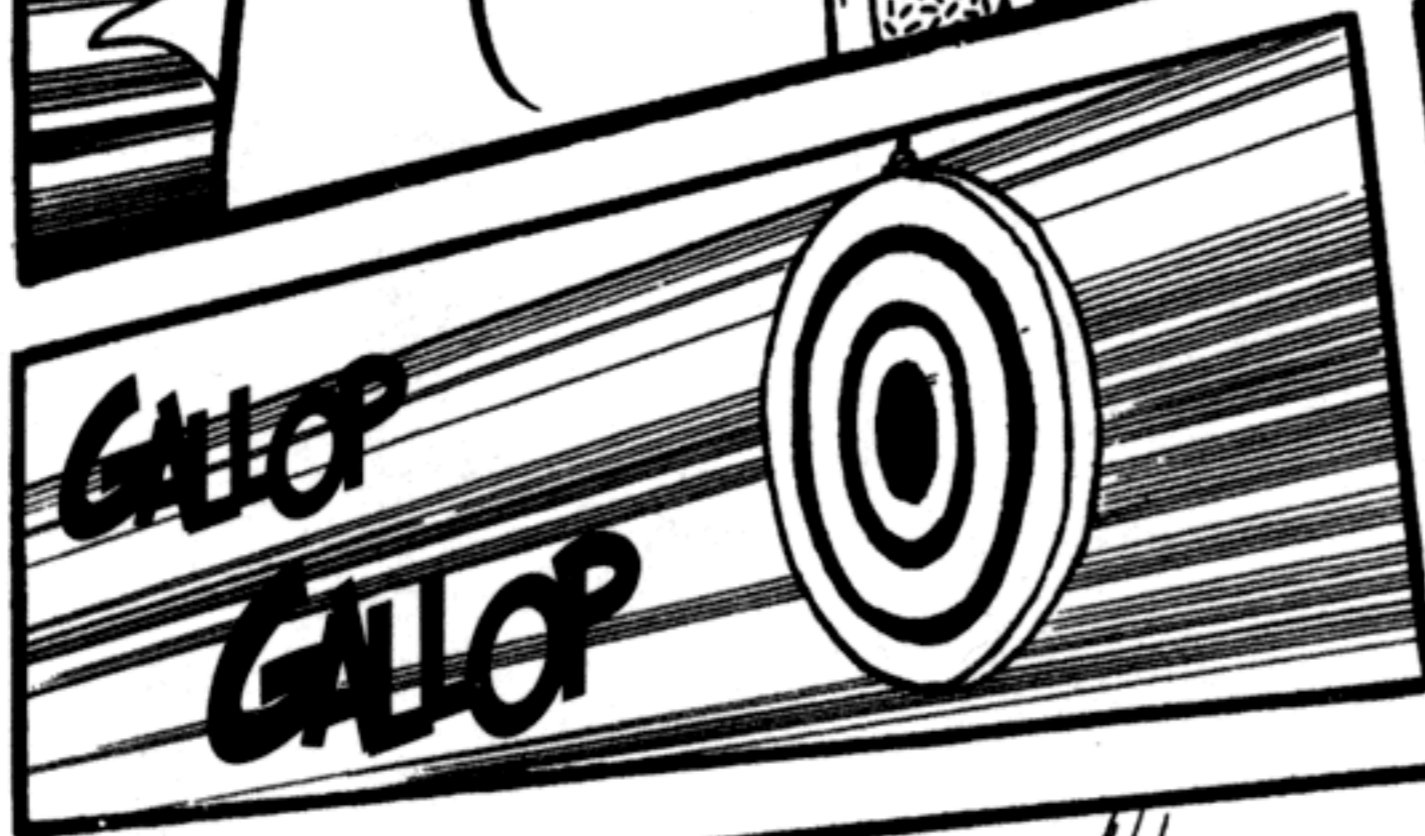


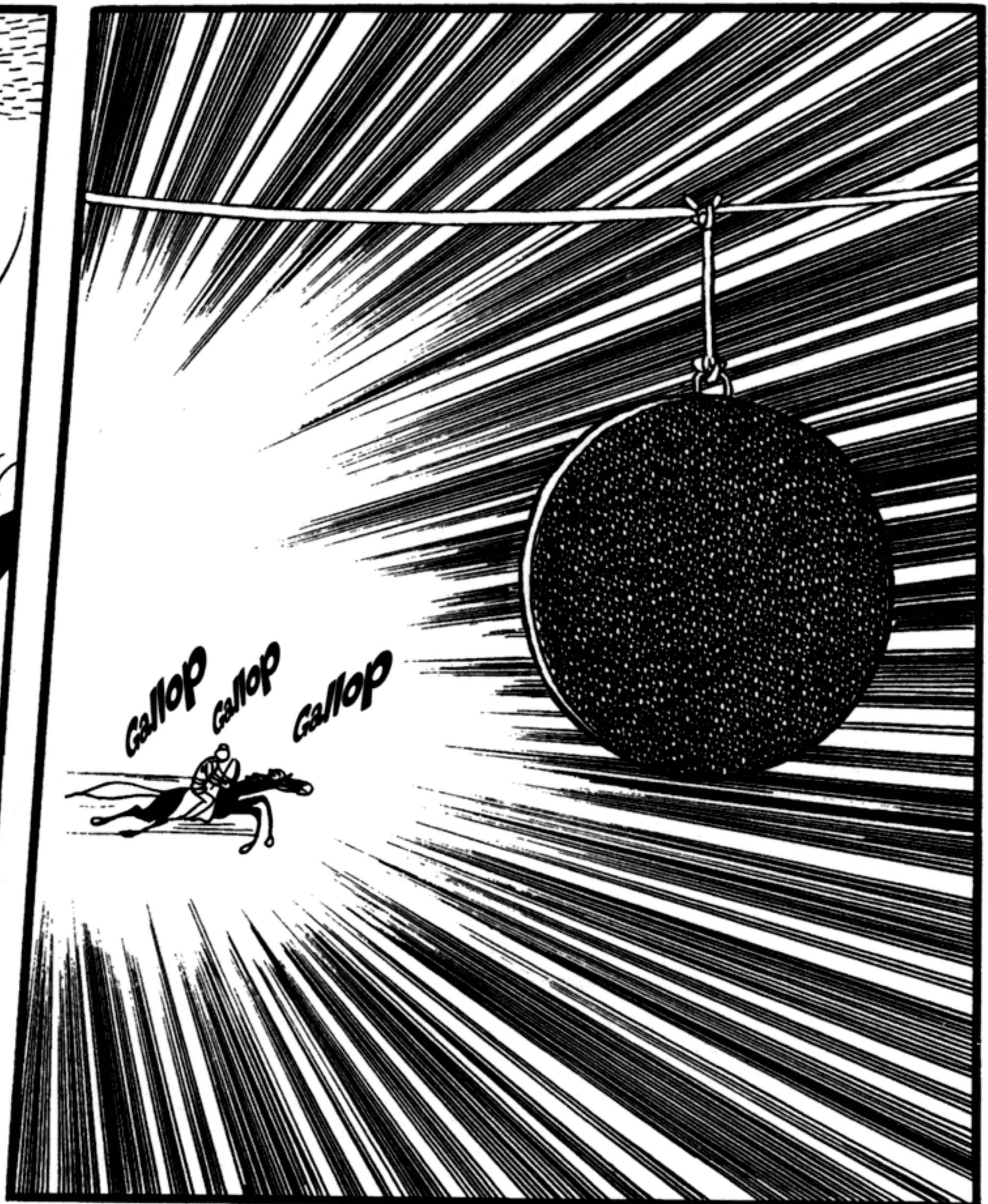
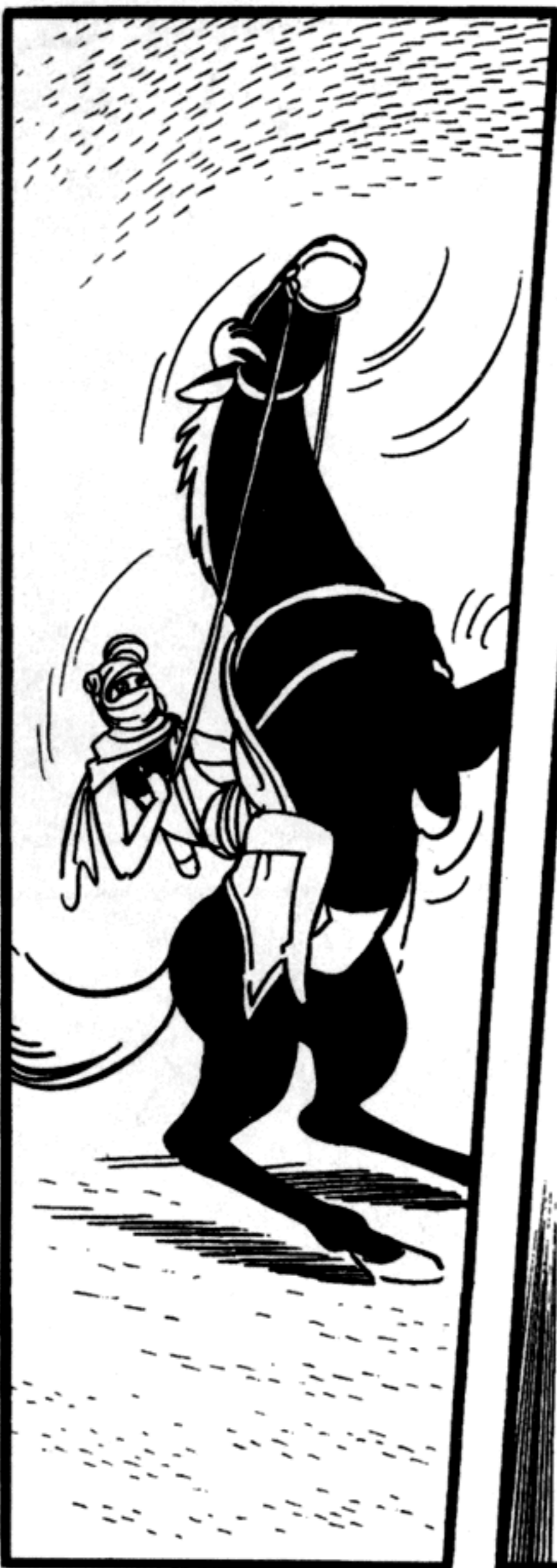
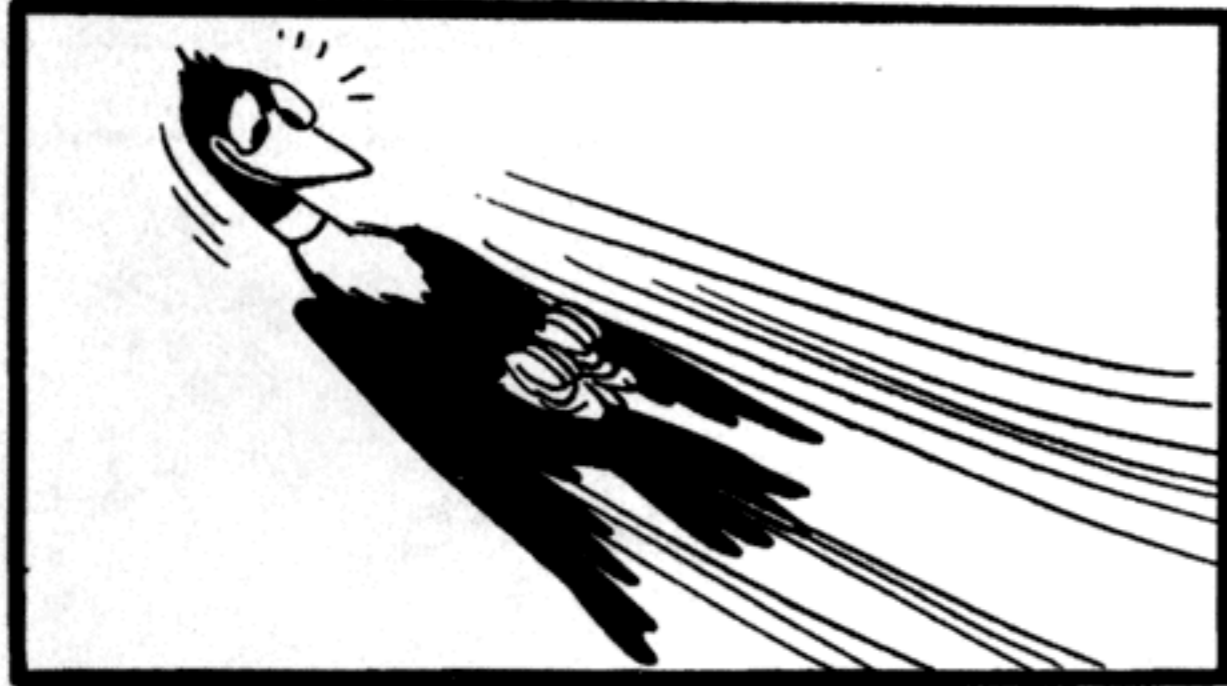
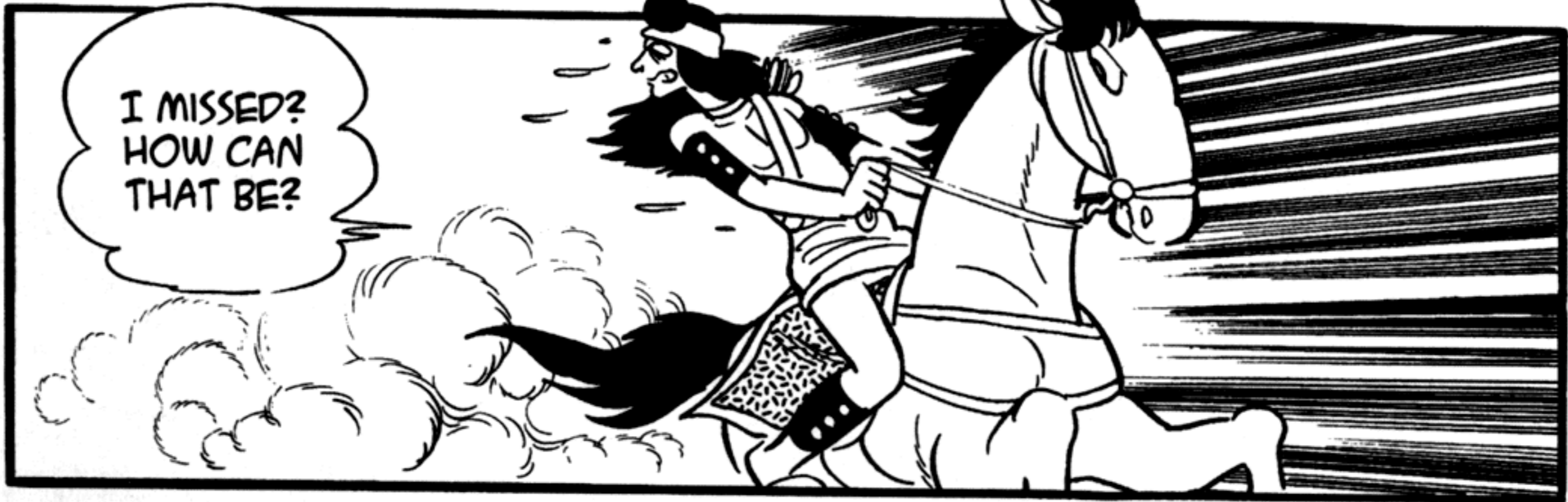


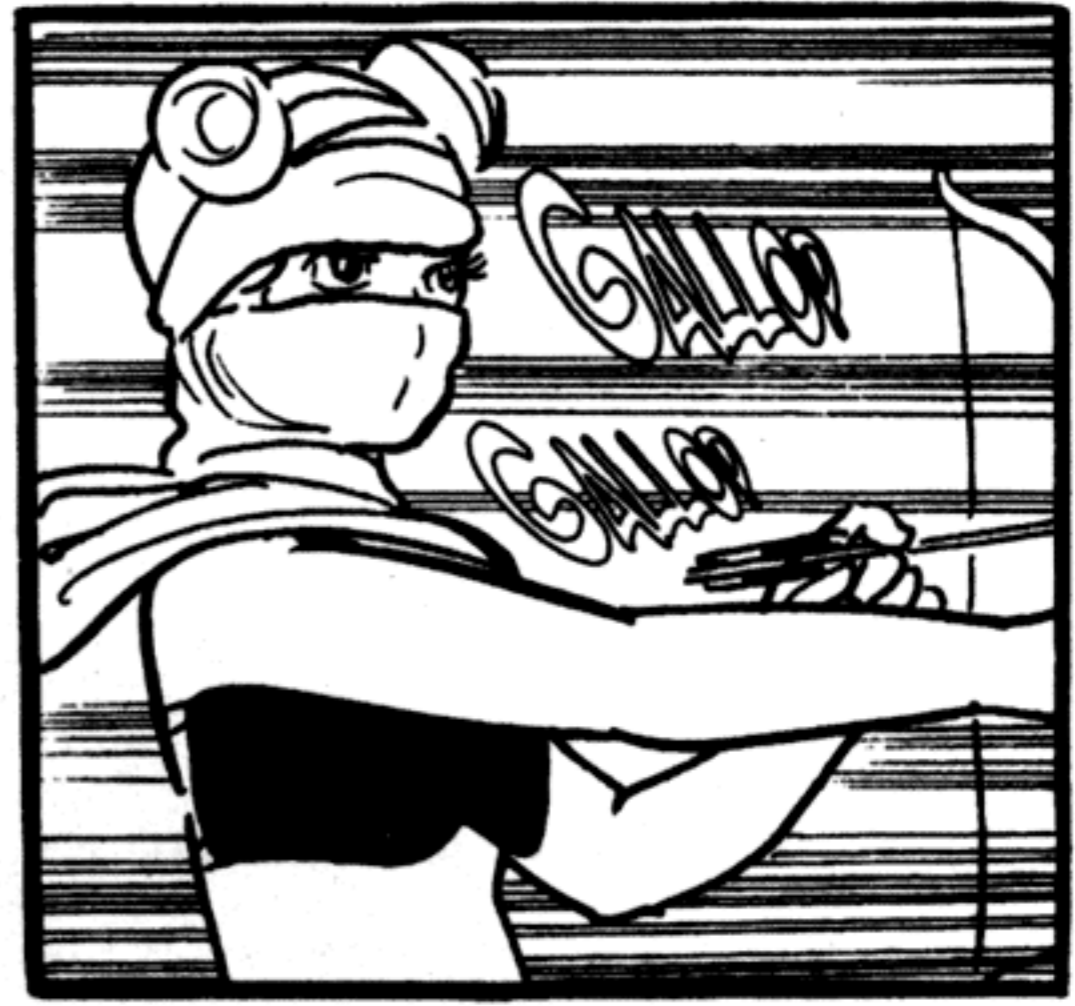
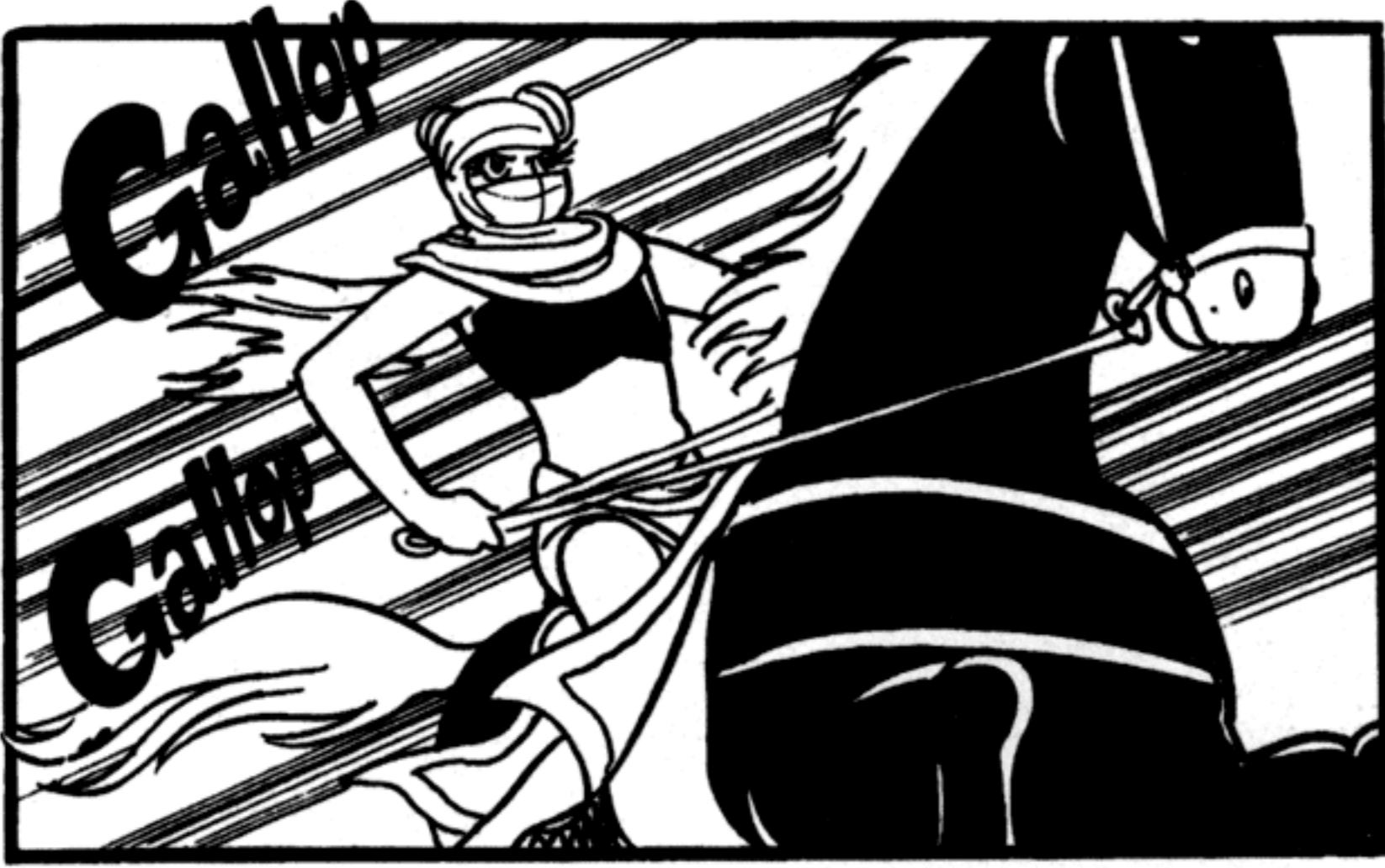


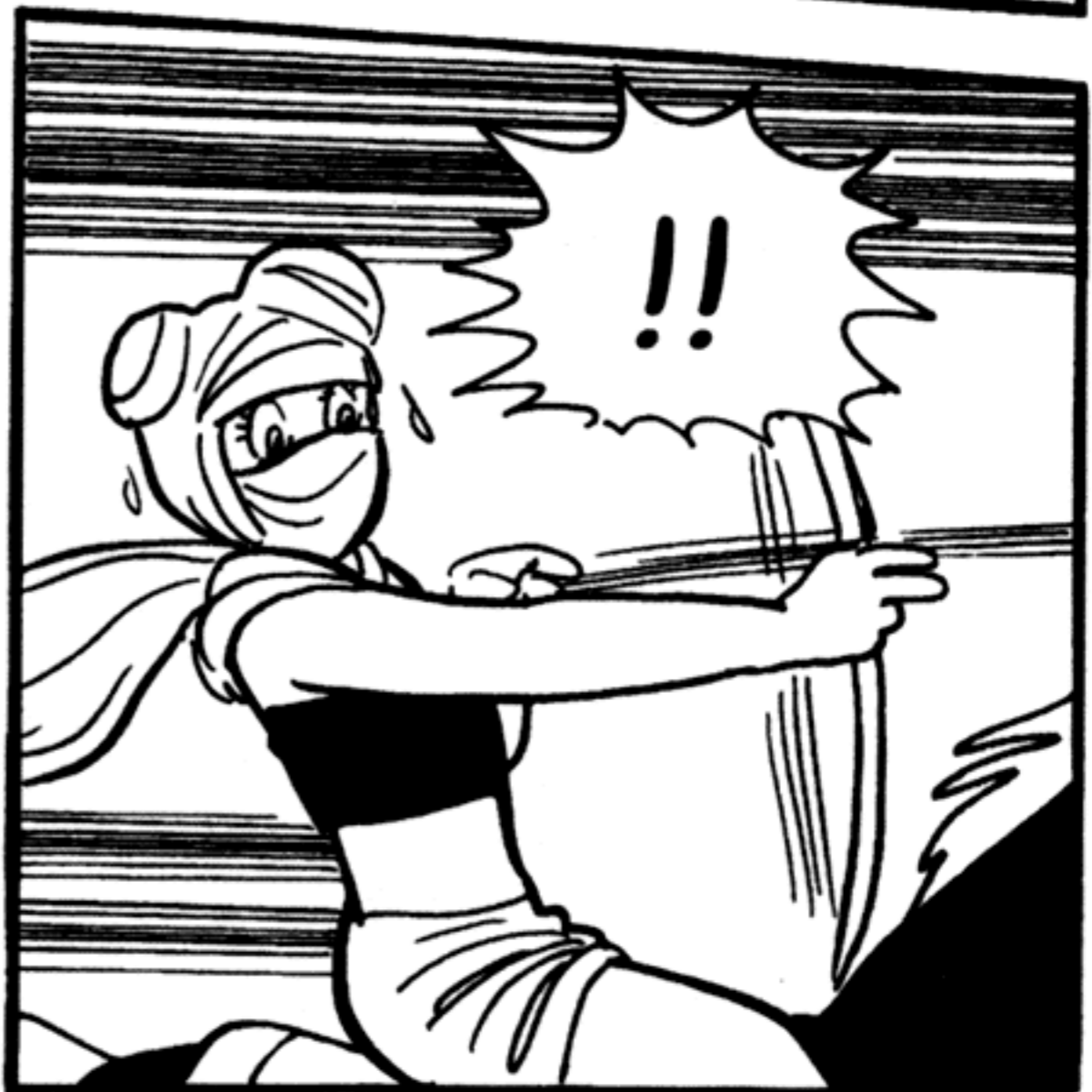
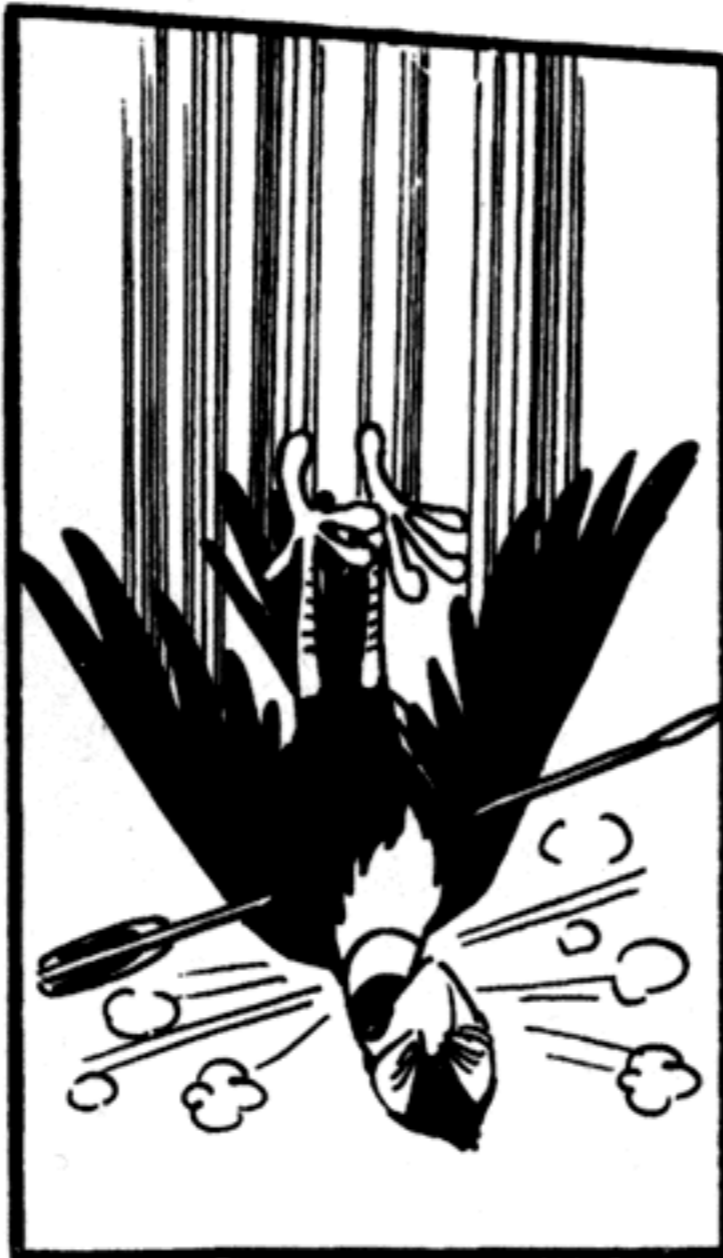
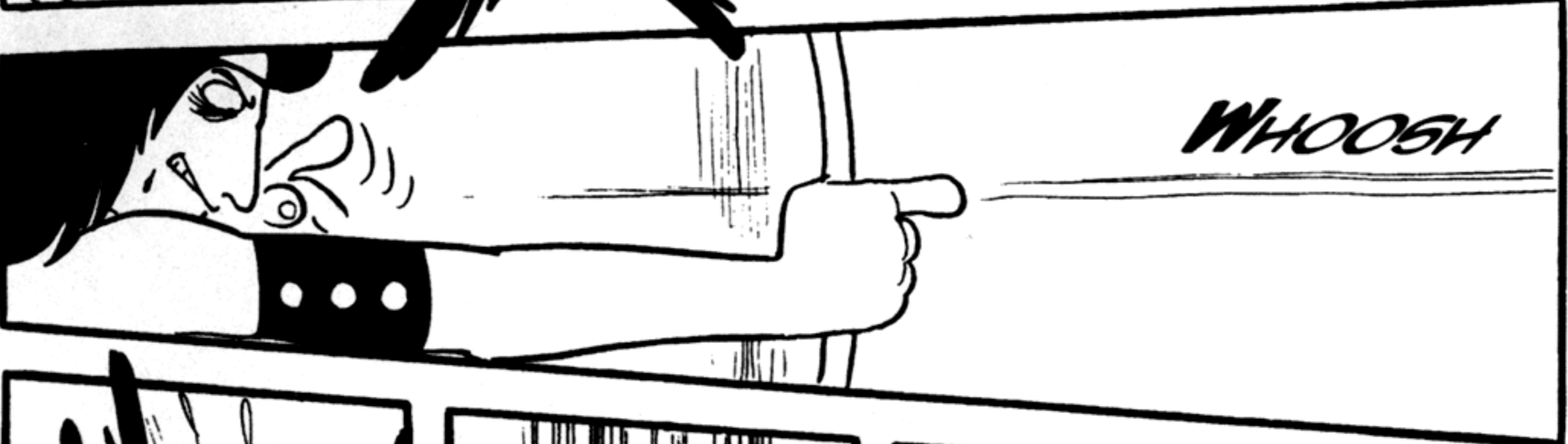
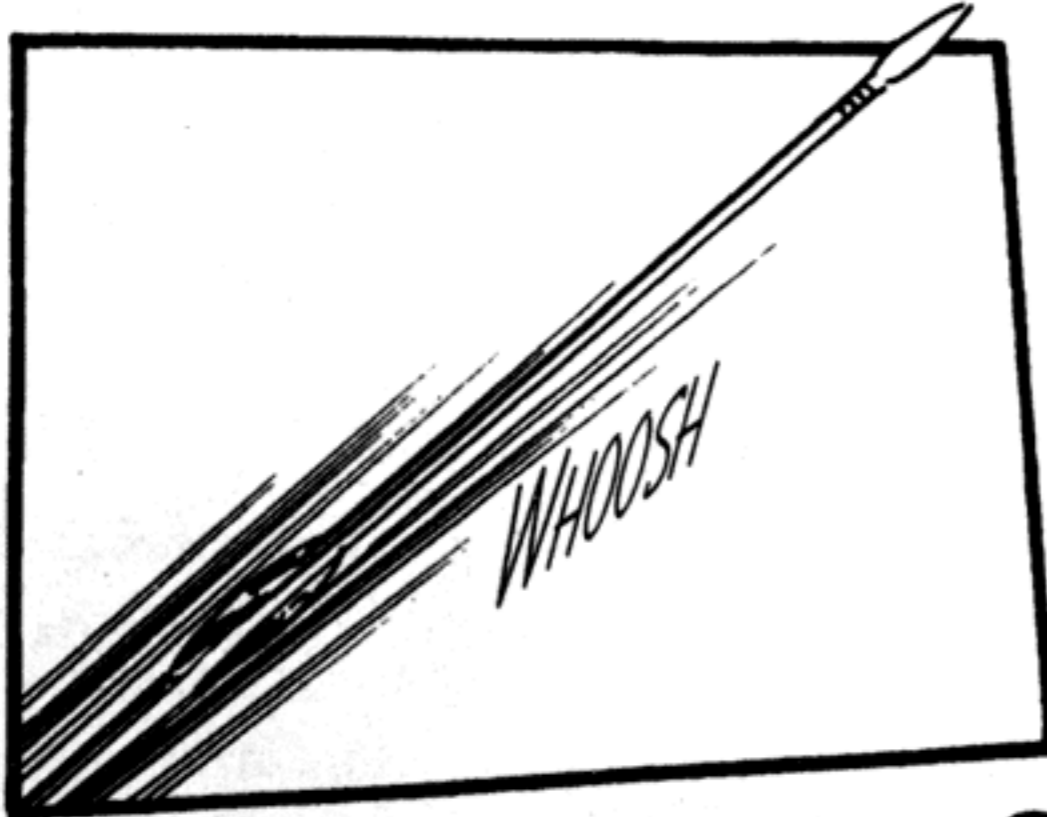


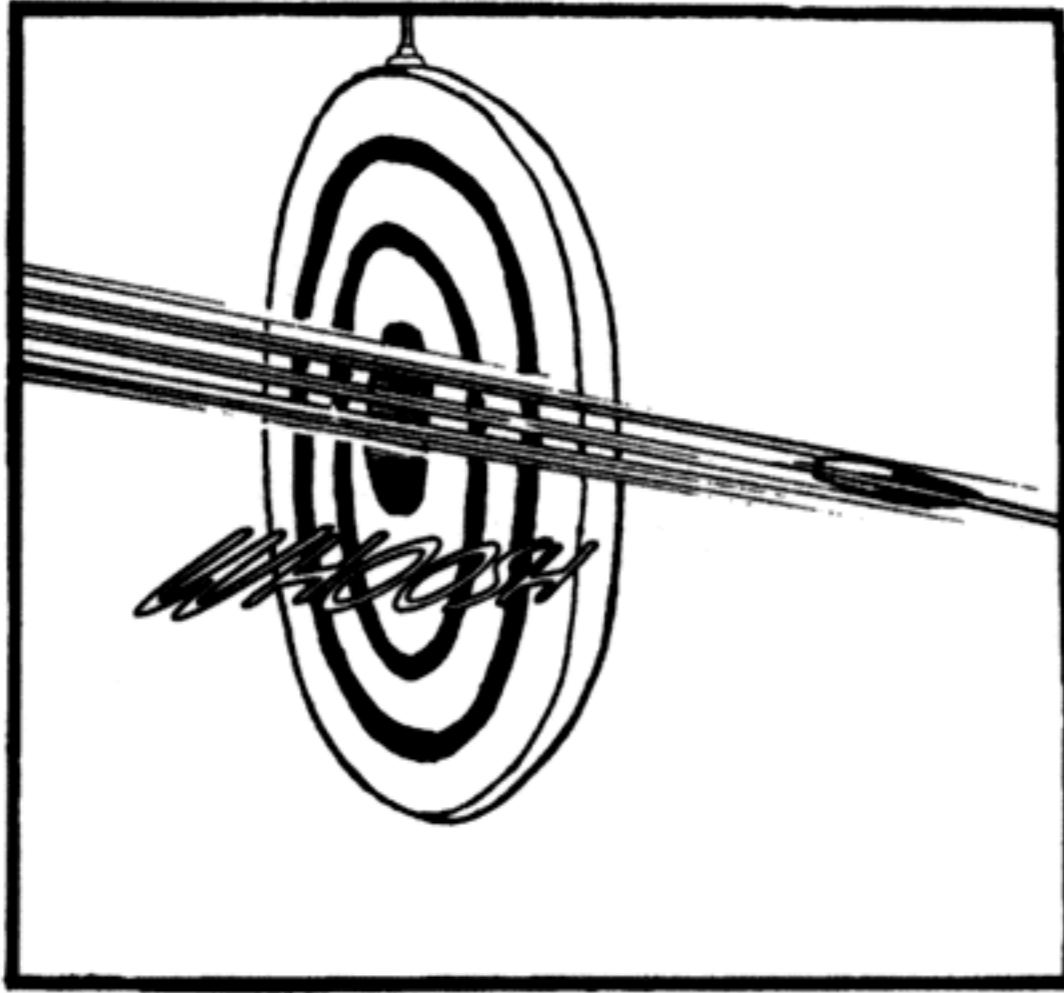








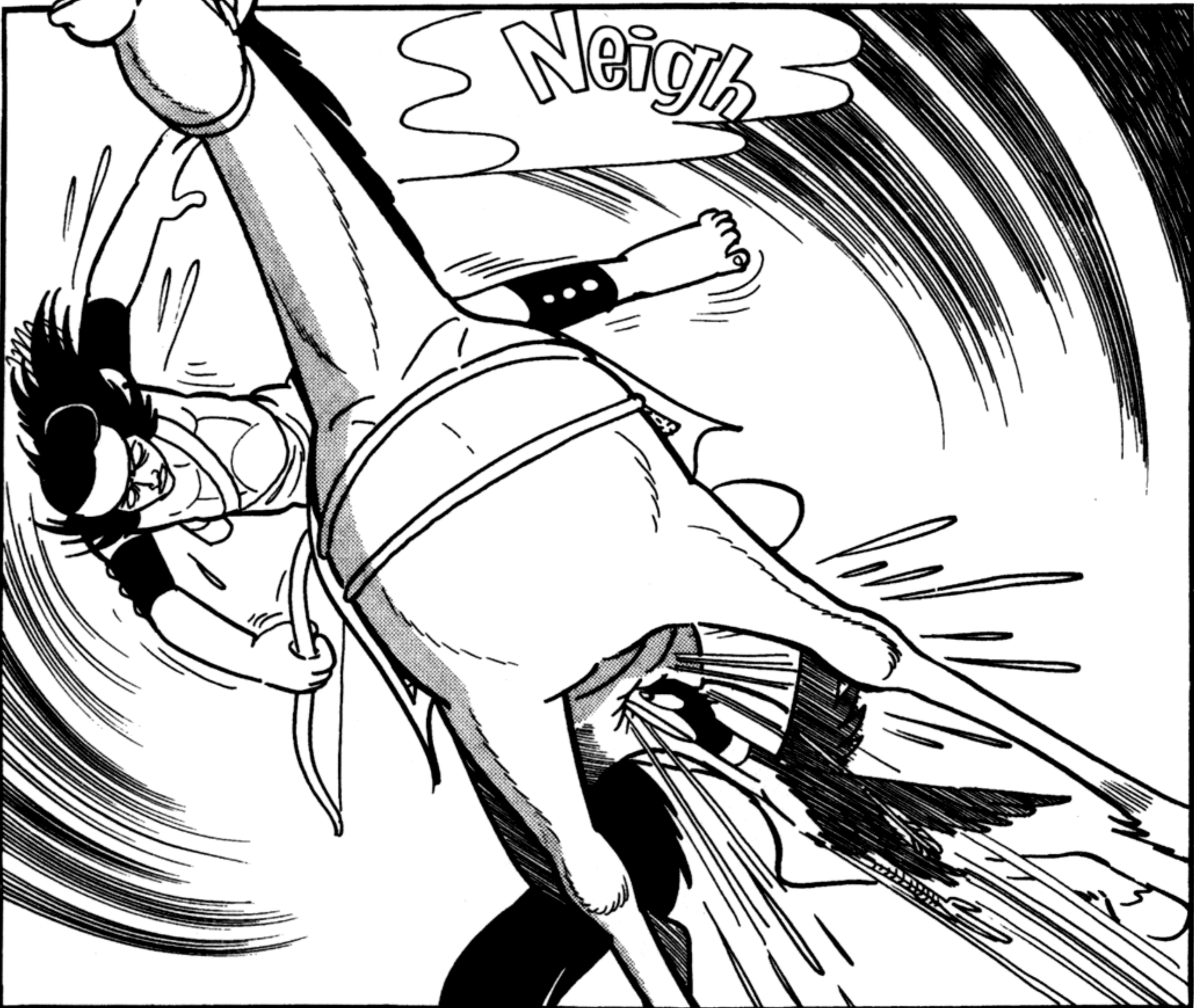




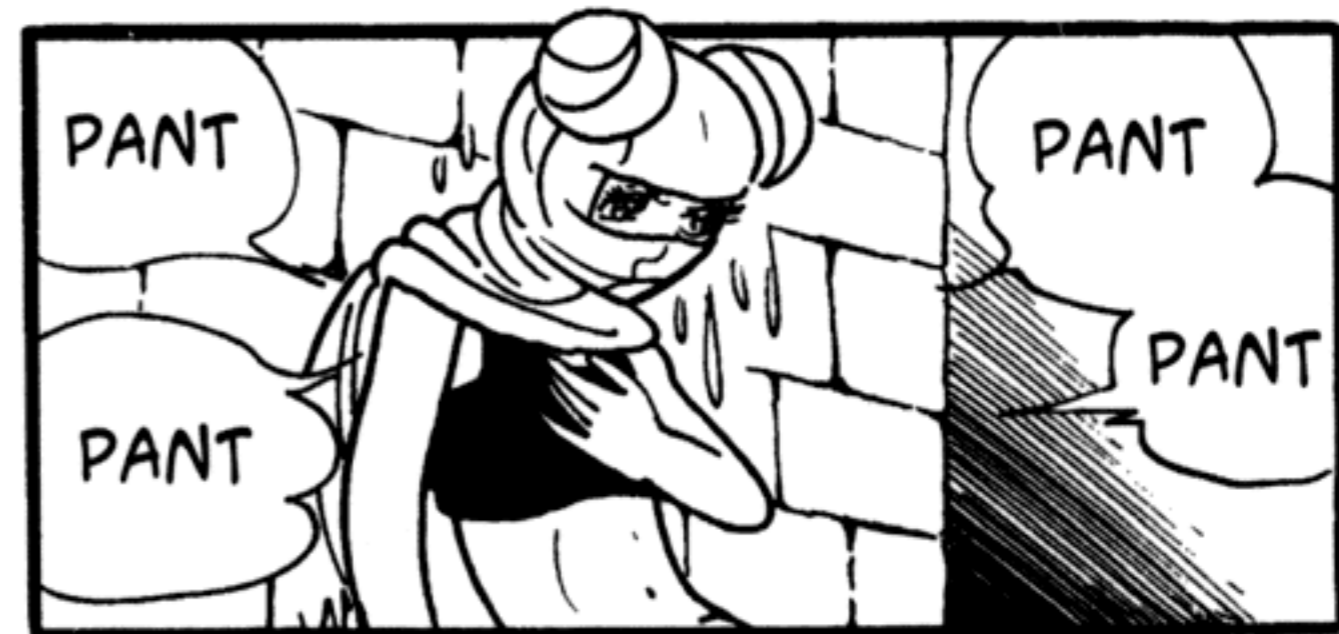
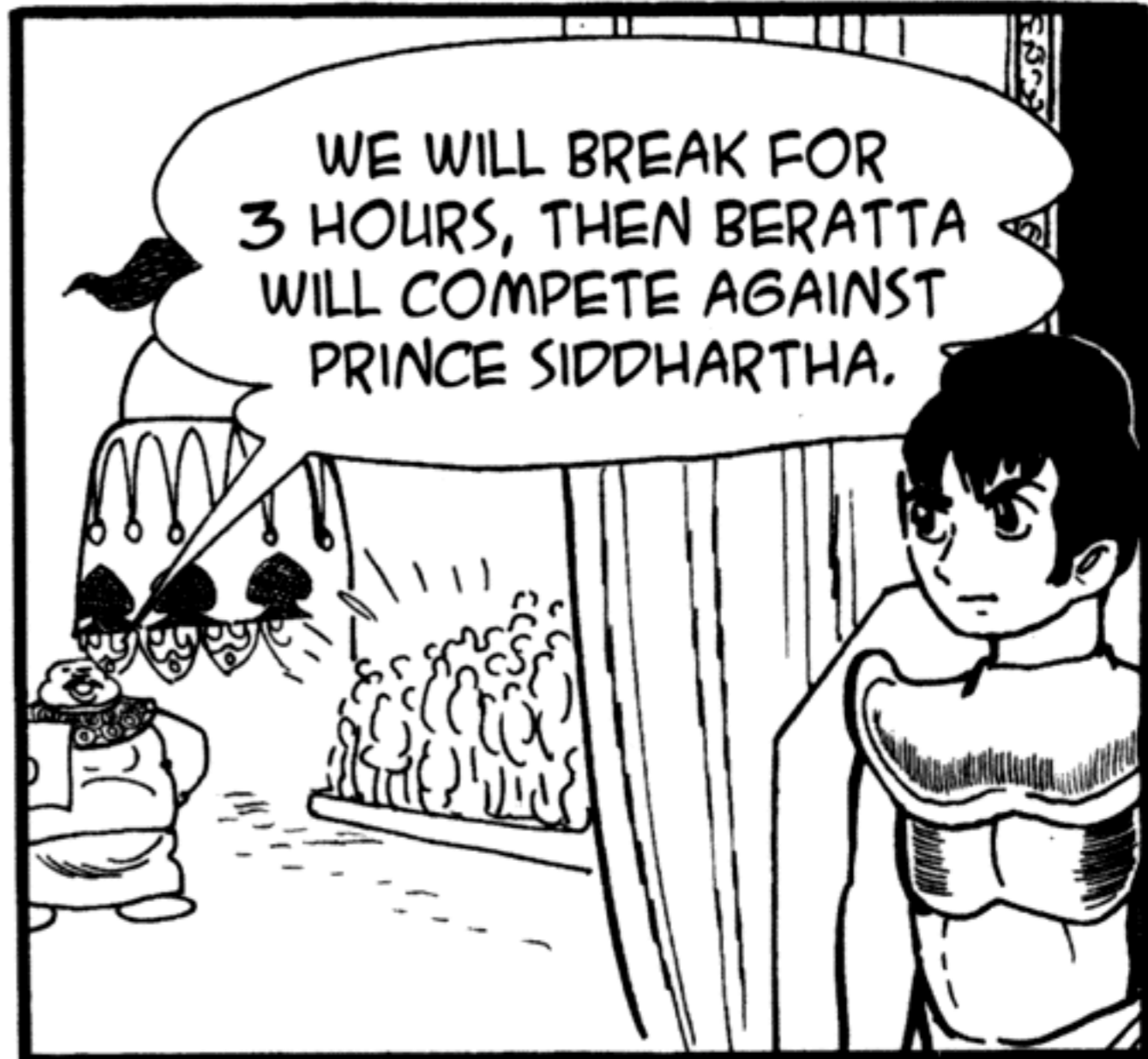
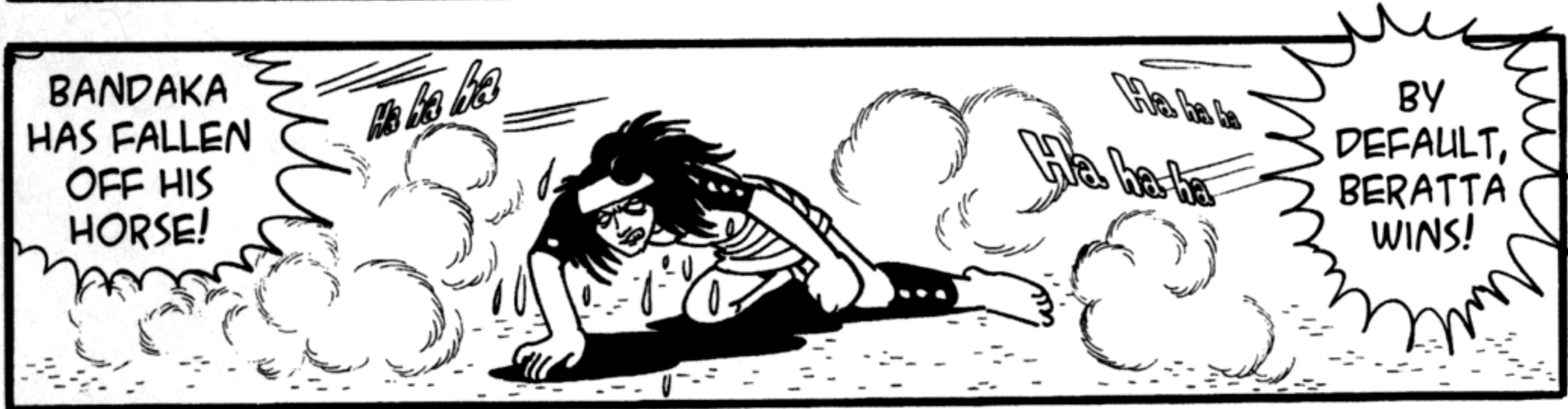
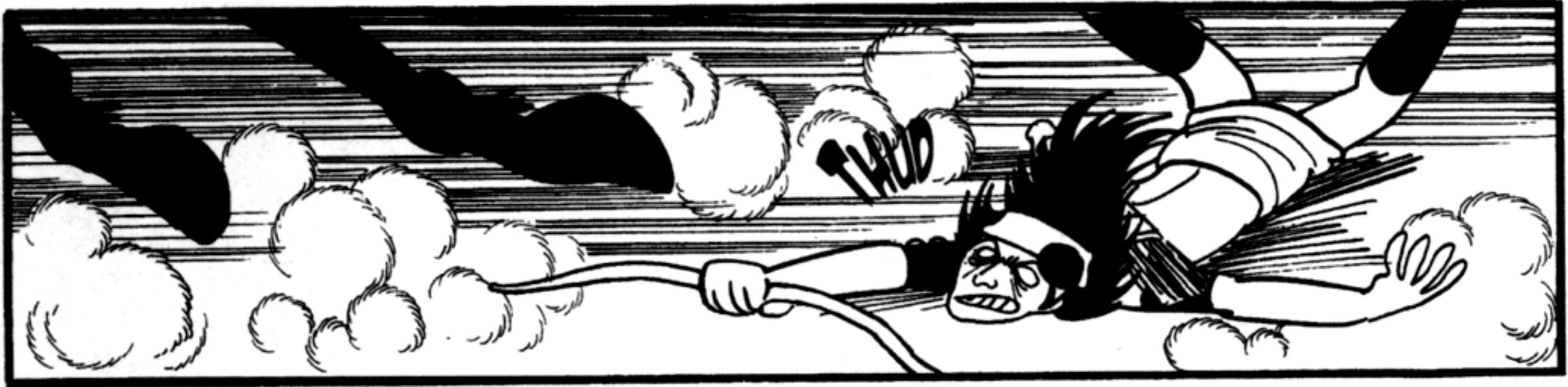
BERATTA MISSES!!

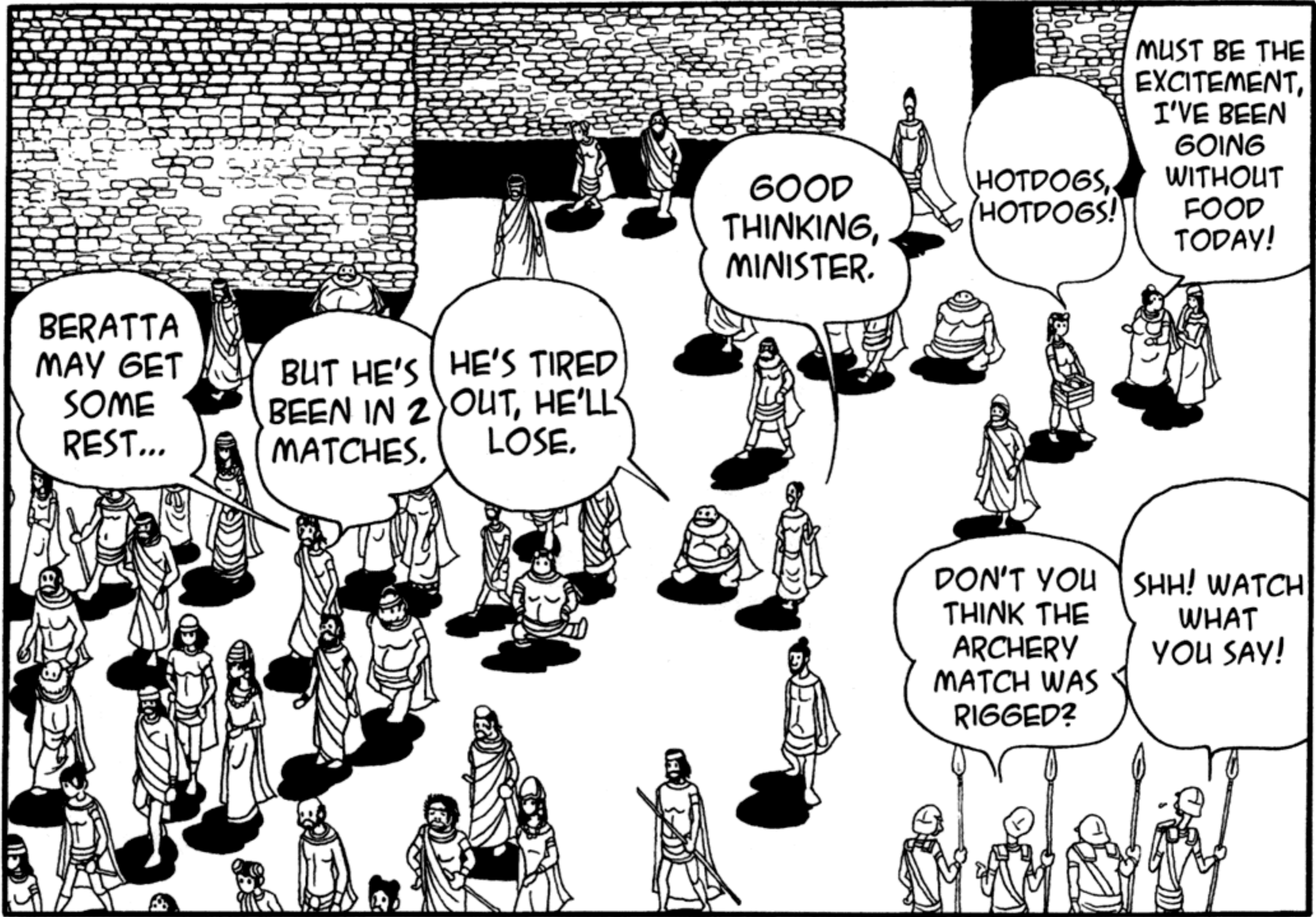


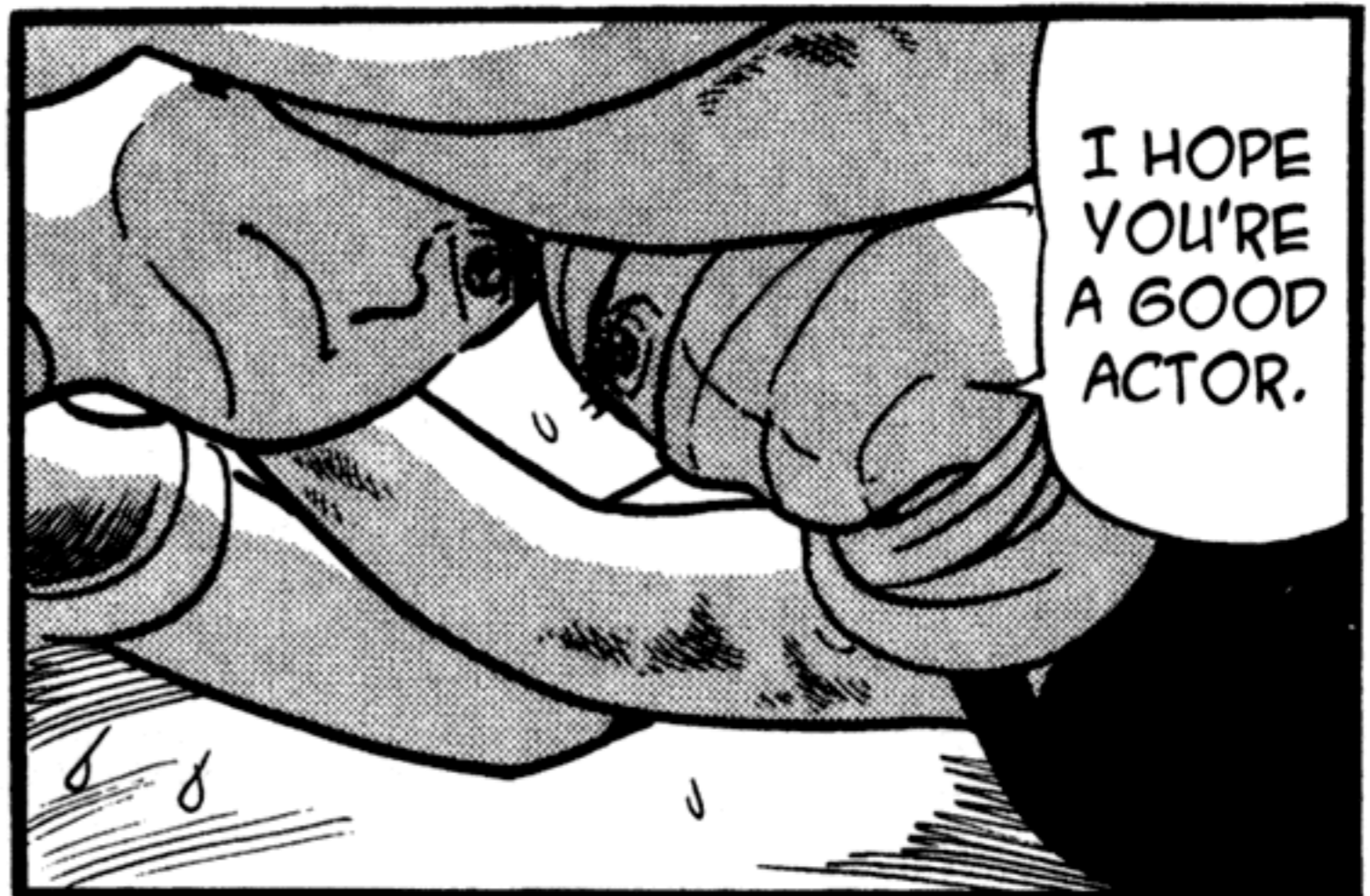
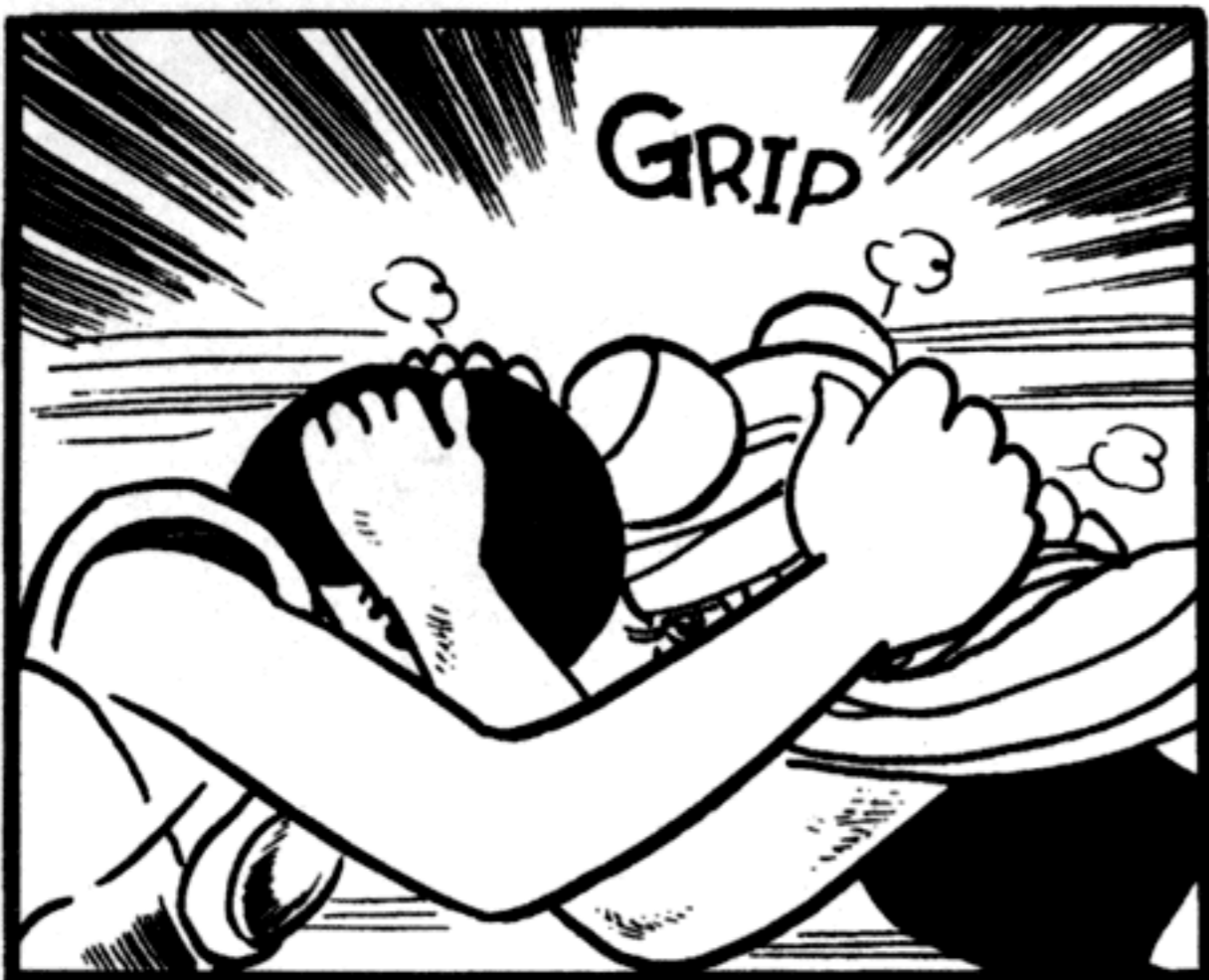
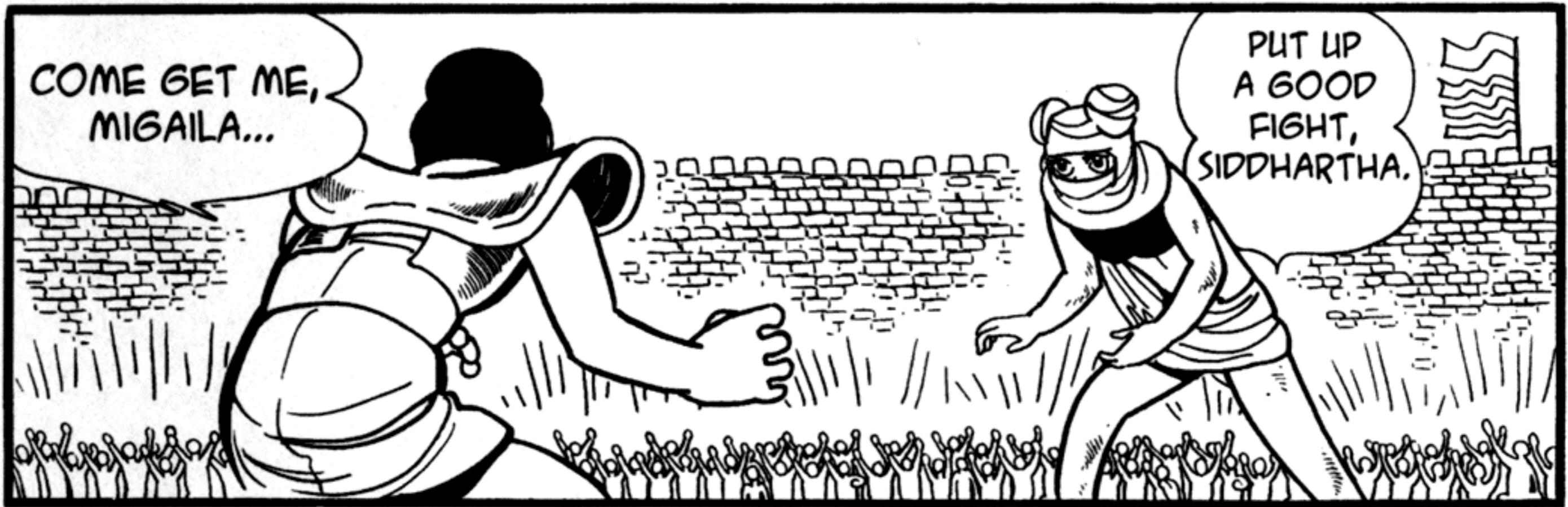
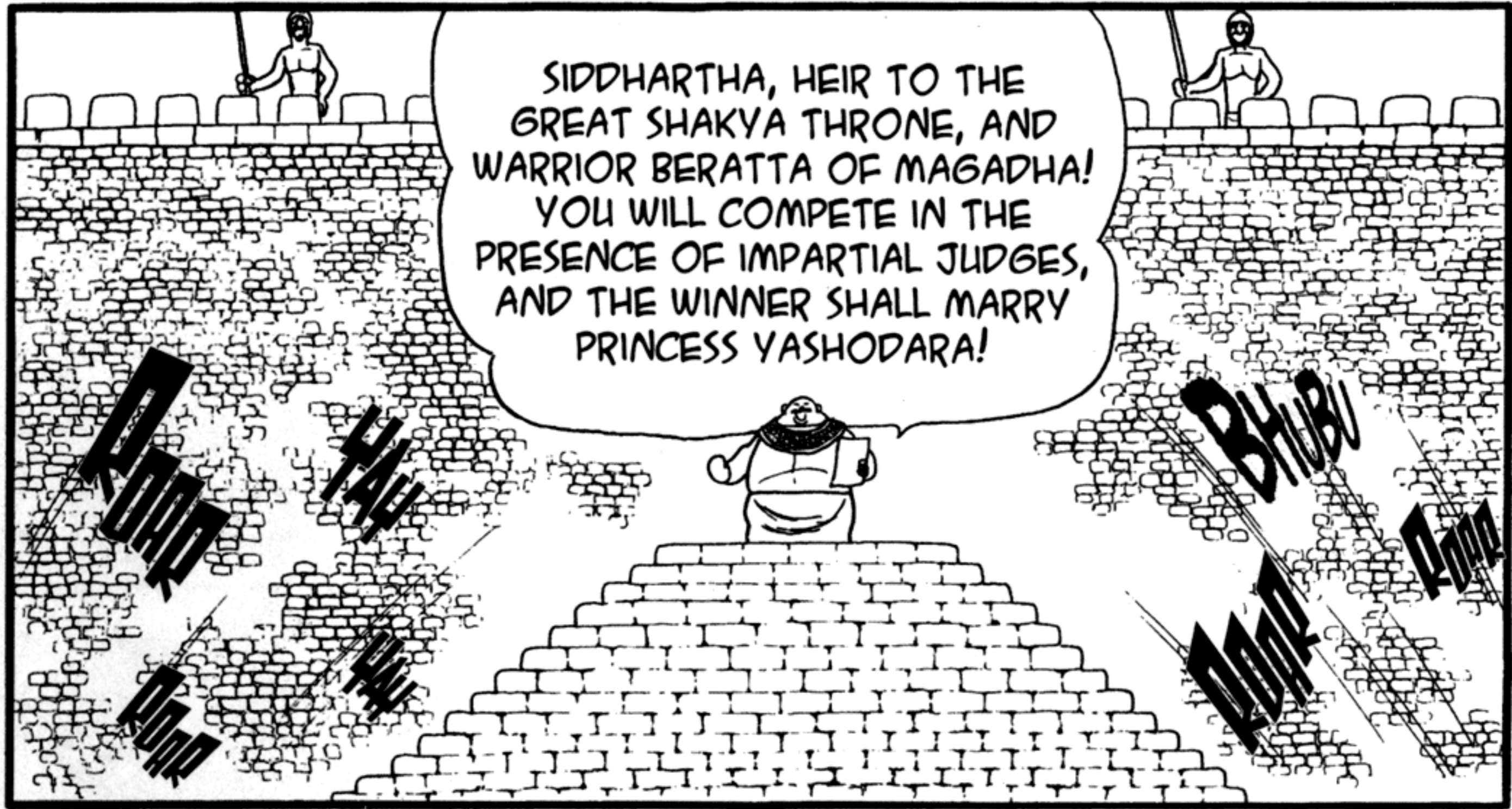
CAWK

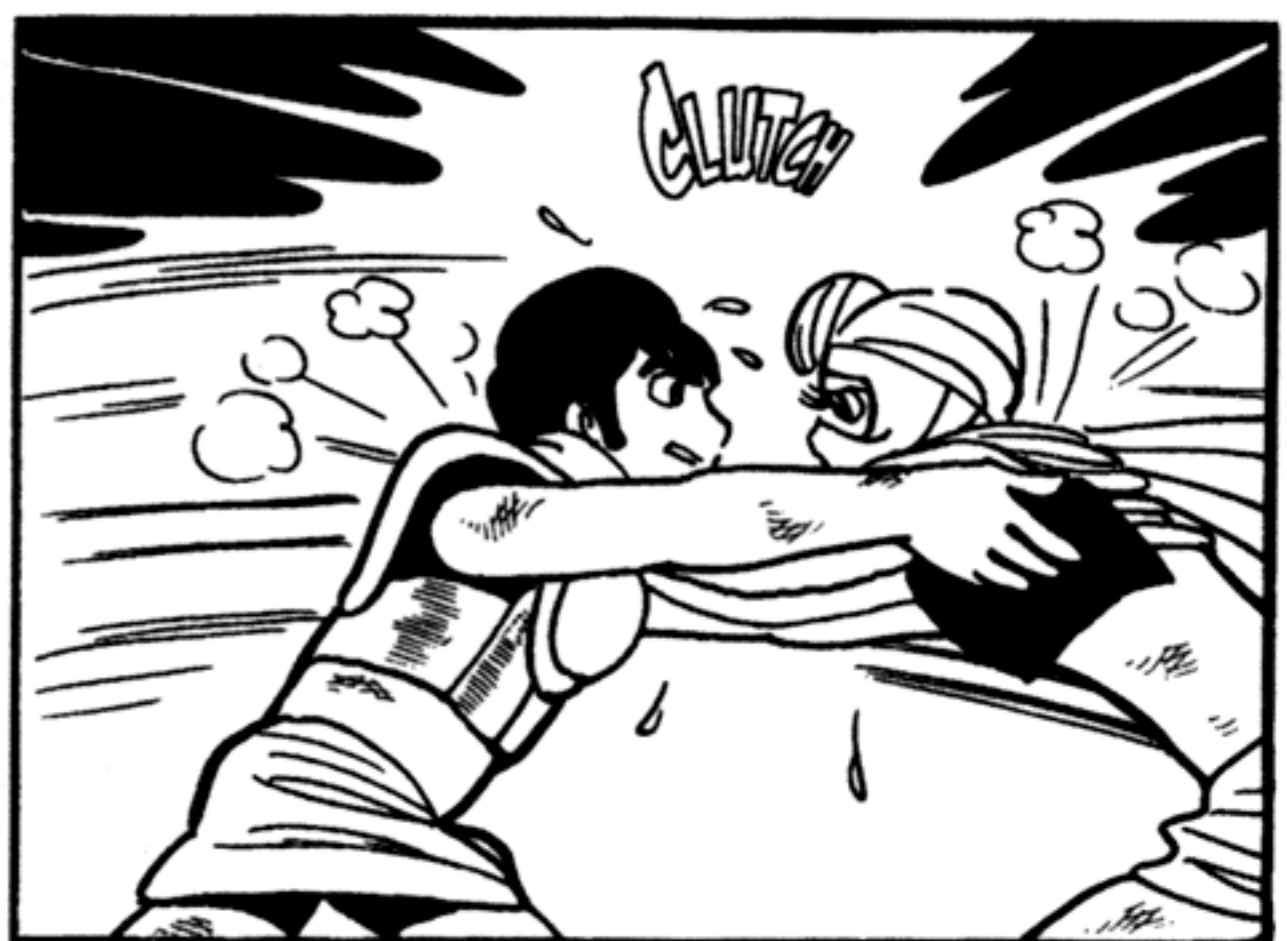
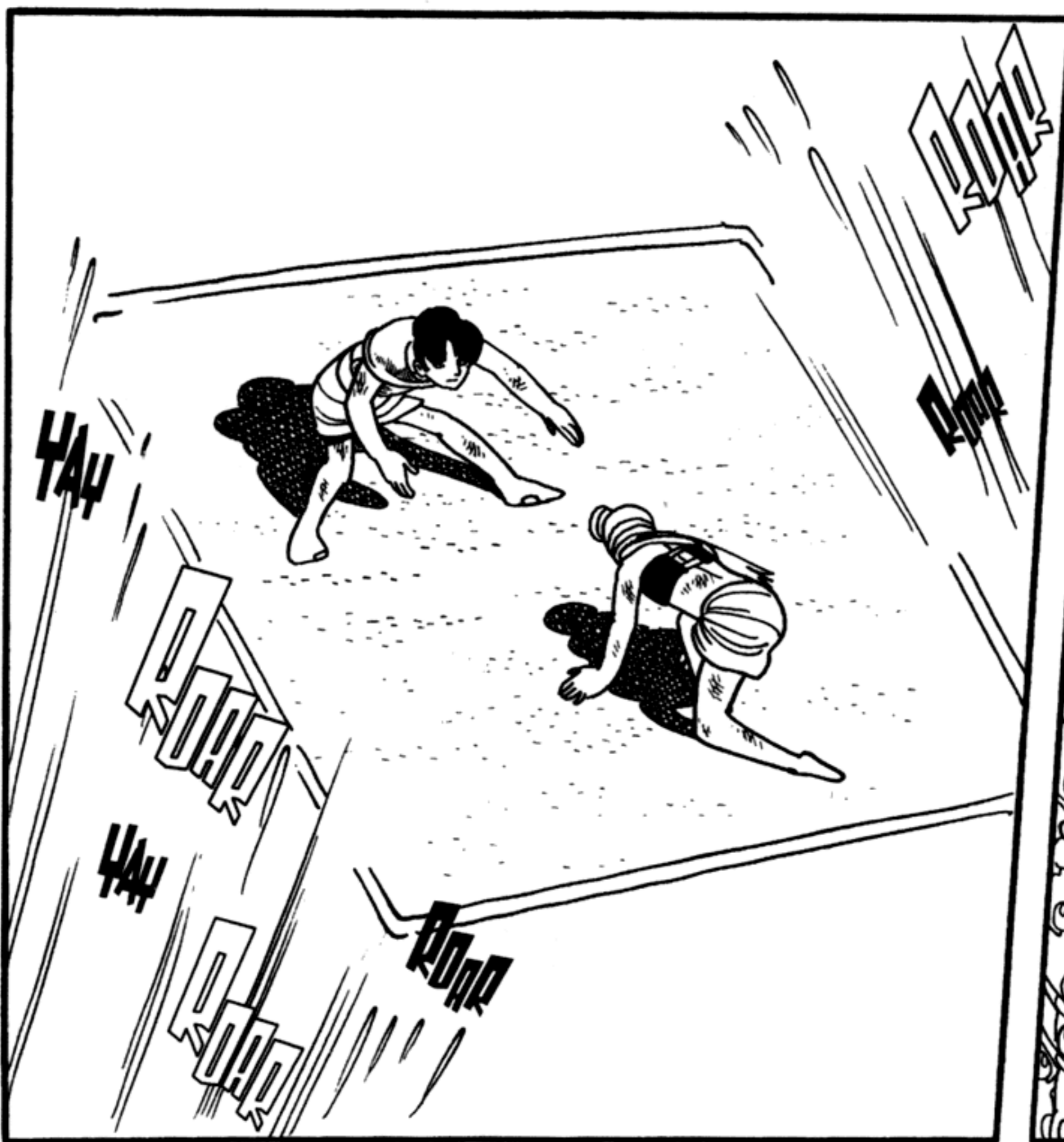
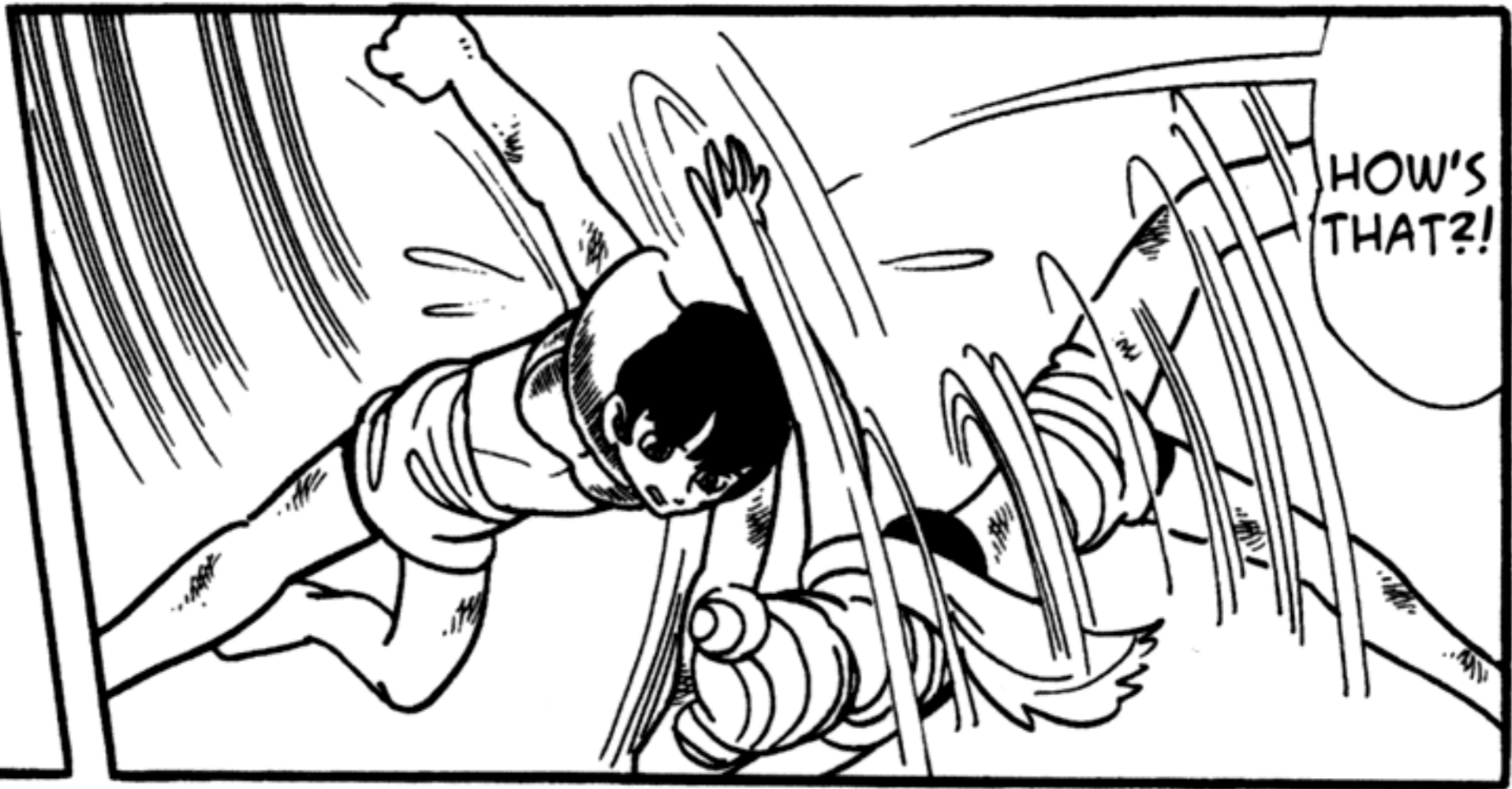
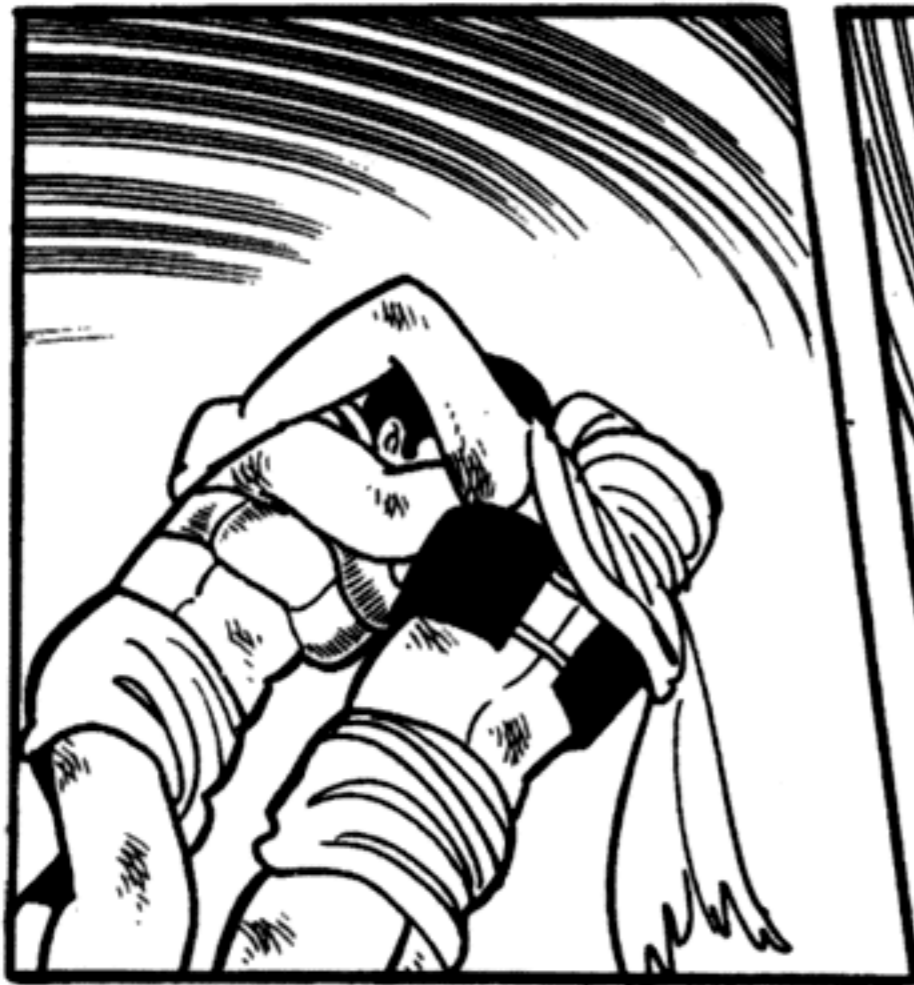


Neigh









EVEN SUPERMAN DOESN'T HIDE HIS FACE. WHY DOES BERATTA?



NOW THAT YOU MENTION IT, HE HASN'T SHOWN HIS FACE ALL DAY! STRANGE.

YAA!

WE'LL DO THIS FOR JUST 3 MORE MINUTES, OKAY?

POM

HUIP

GRAB

AH!

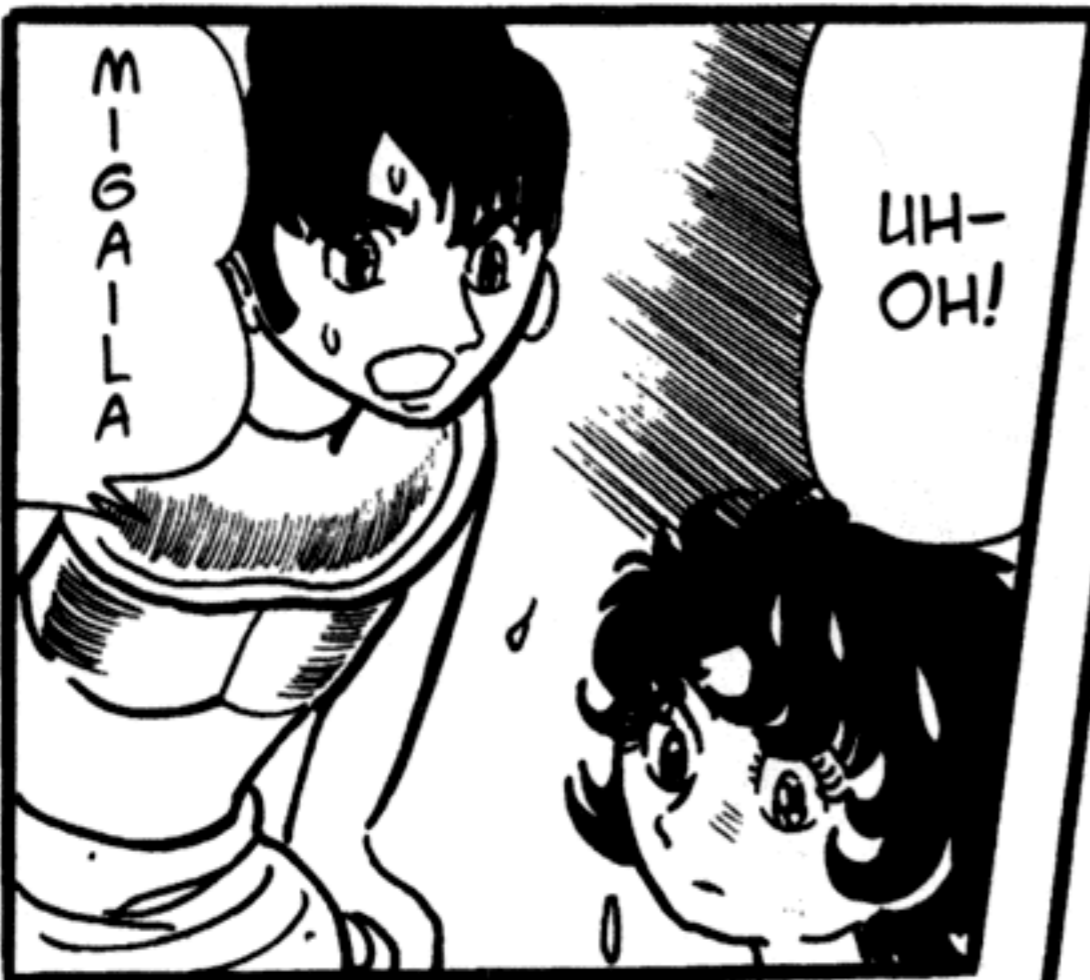


LOOK! GODS!

BERATTA'S A WOMAN!

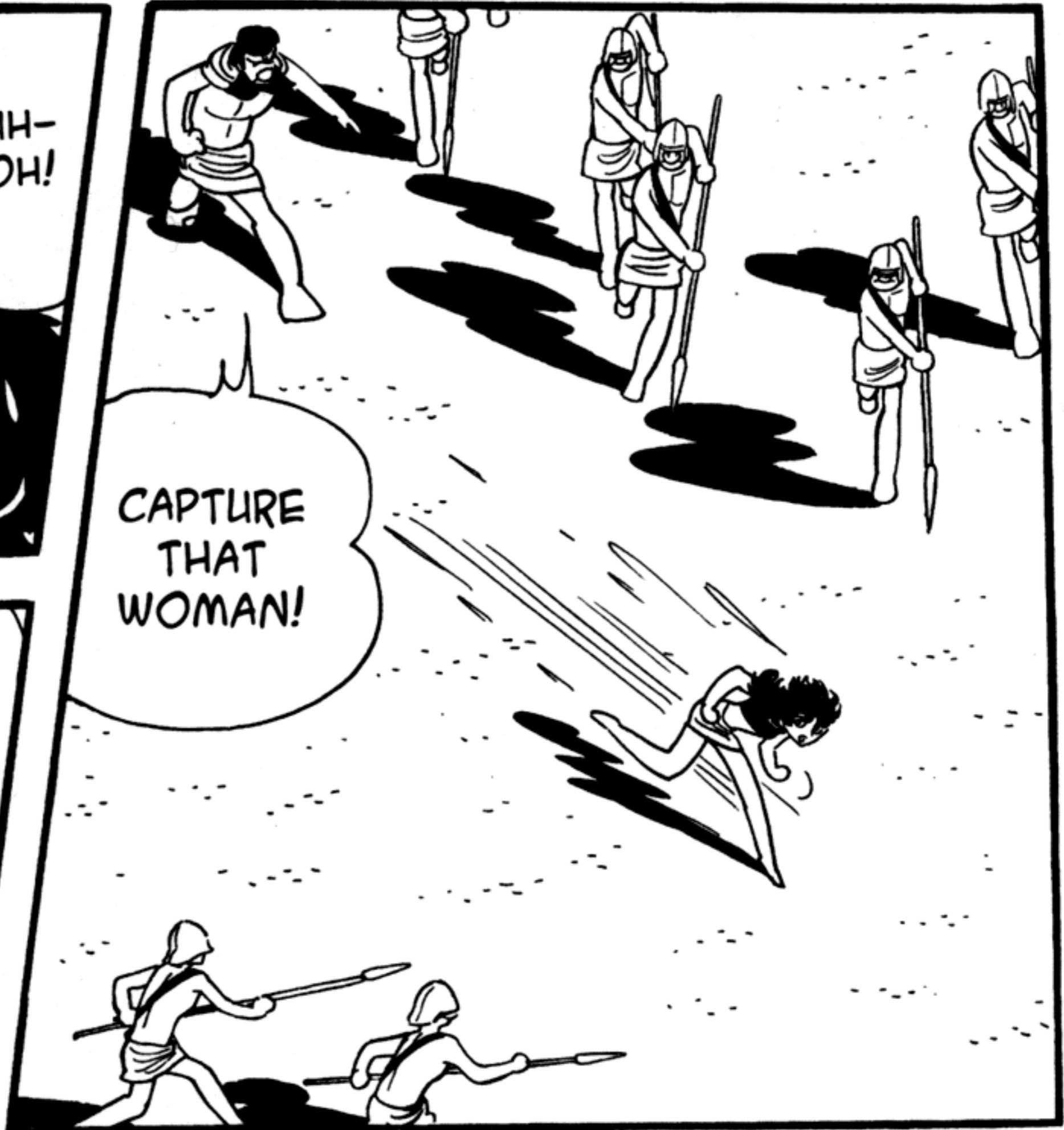
WOMAN?

A WOMAN, A WOMAN!

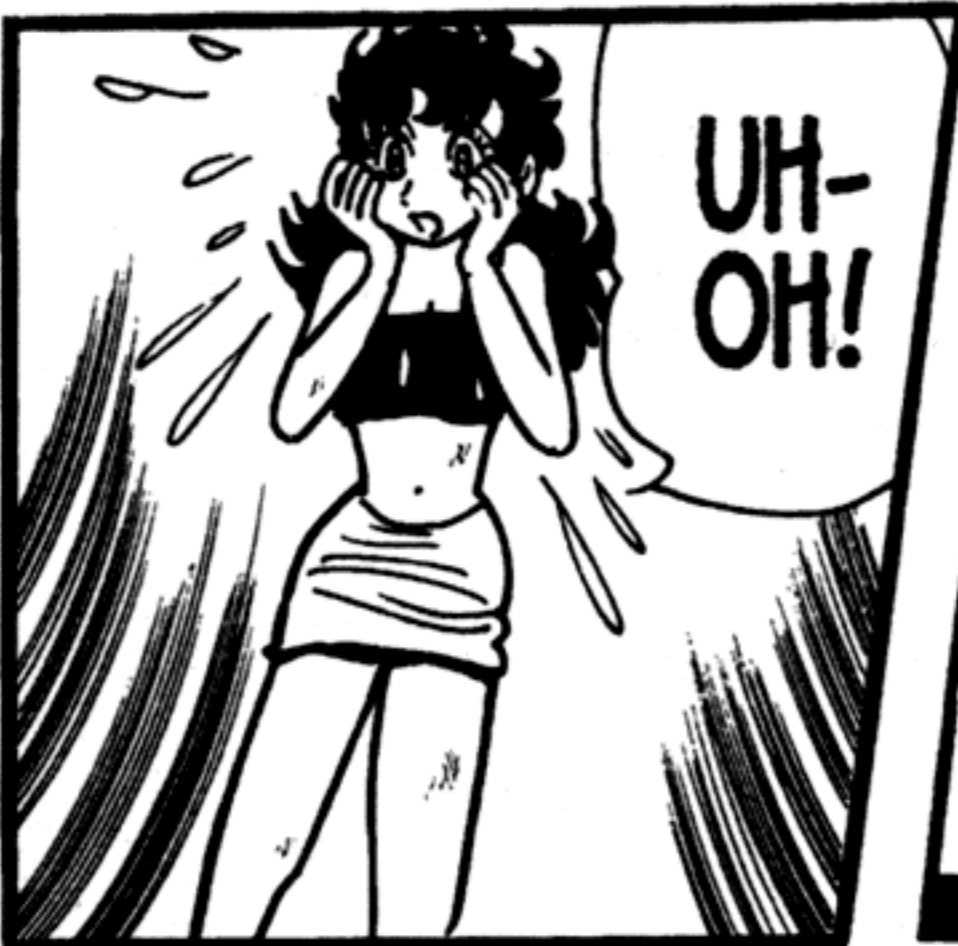


MIGAILA

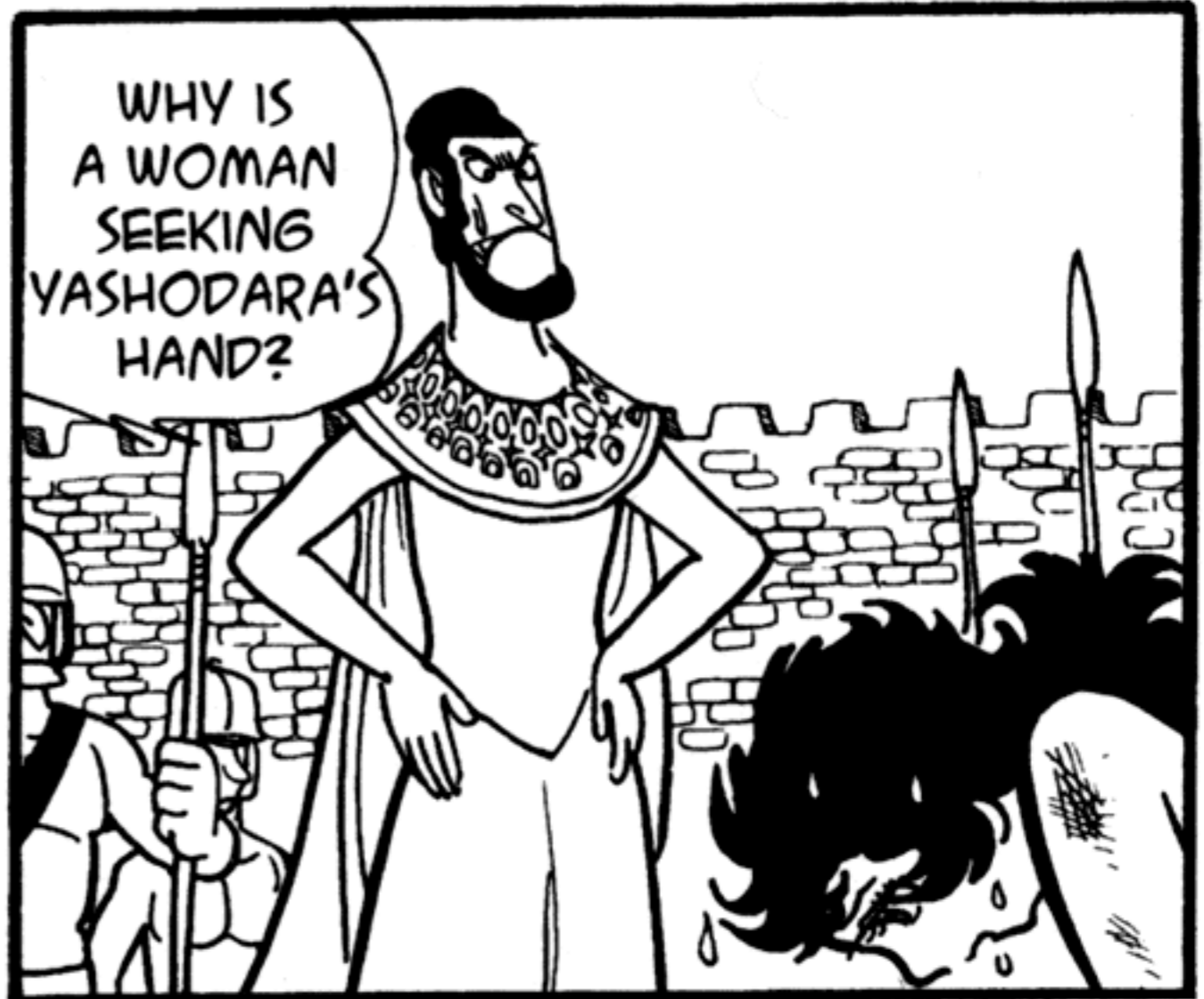
UH-OH!

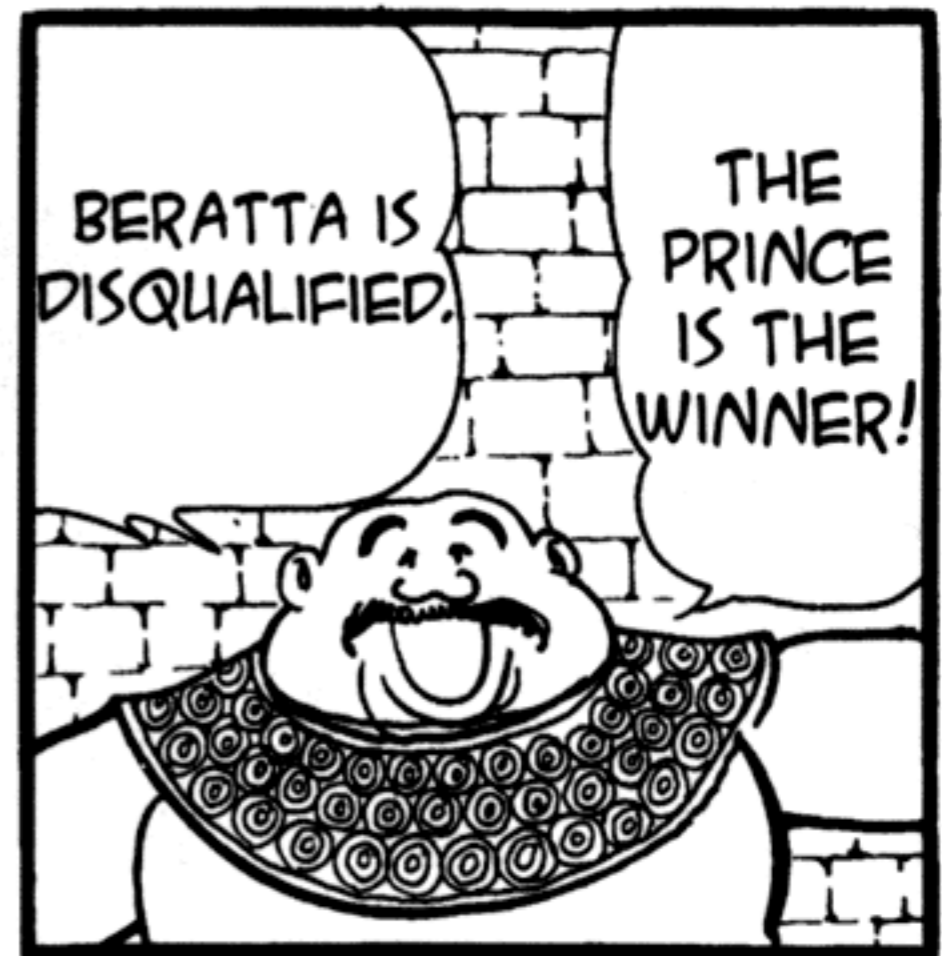
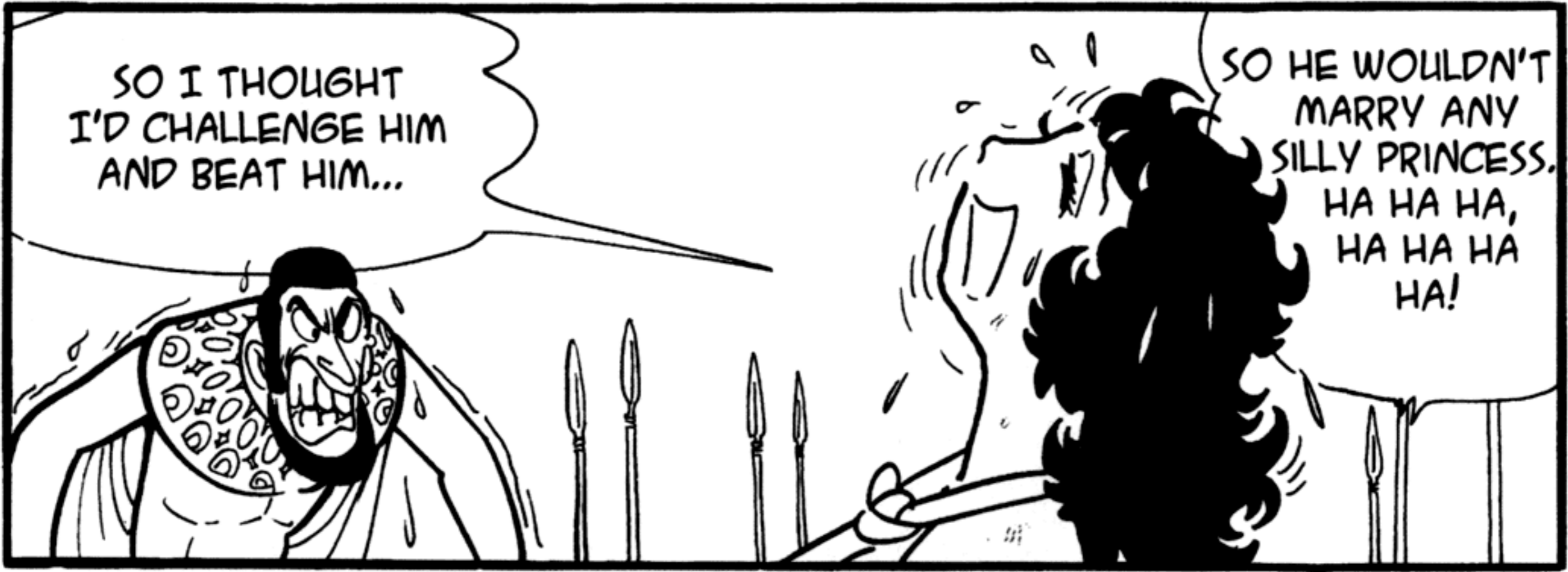


CAPTURE THAT WOMAN!

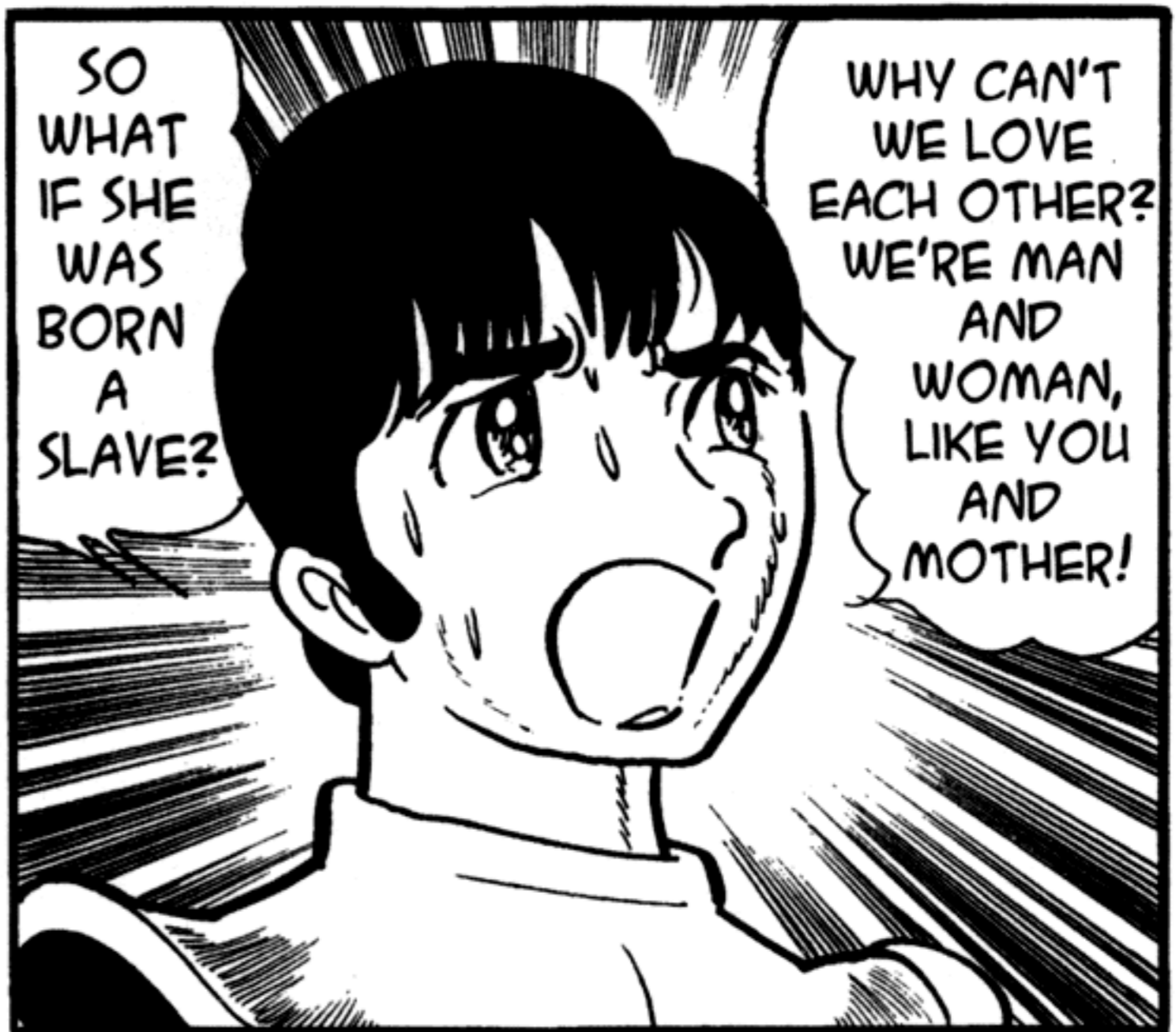
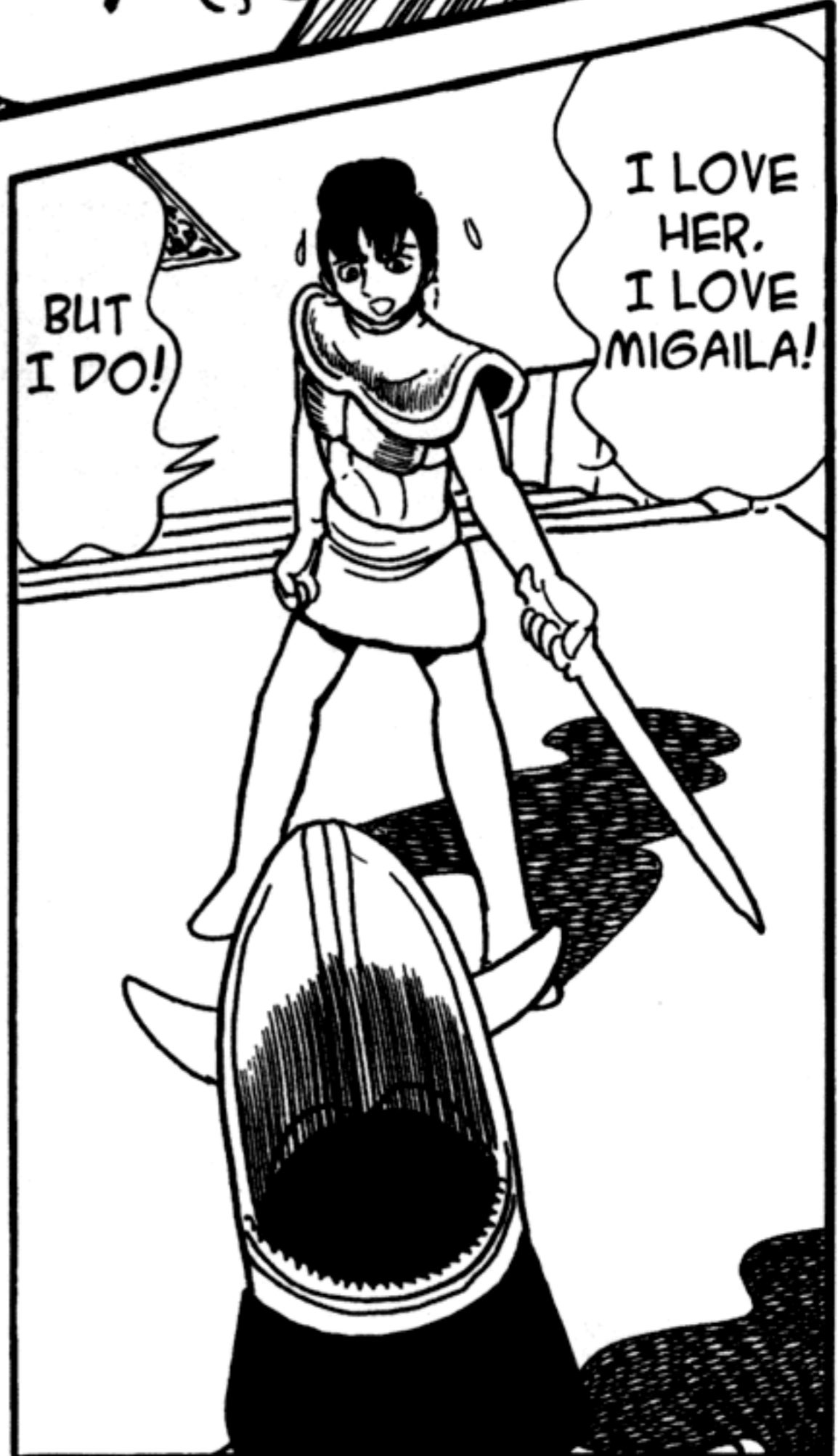
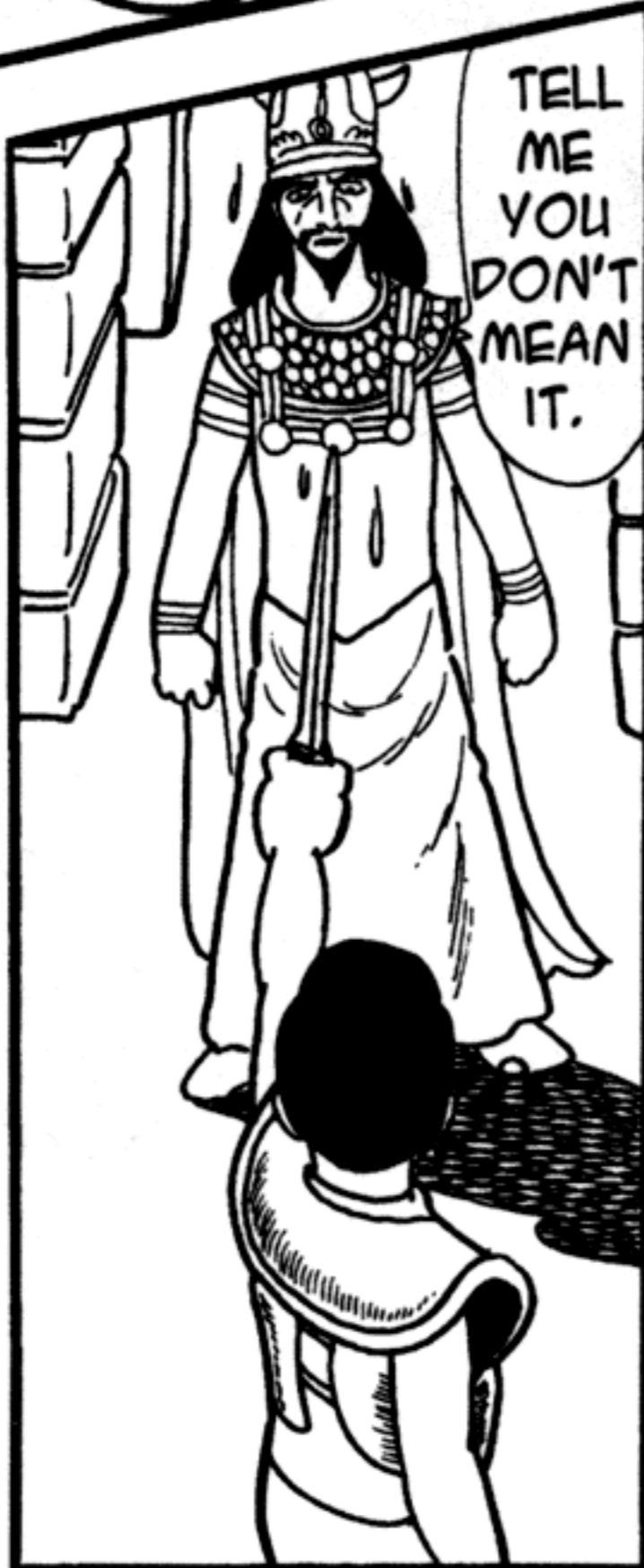


UH-OH!











IF MEN AND WOMEN GOT TOGETHER JUST BECAUSE THEY LIKED EACH OTHER, WE WOULD BE NO BETTER THAN BEASTS!!

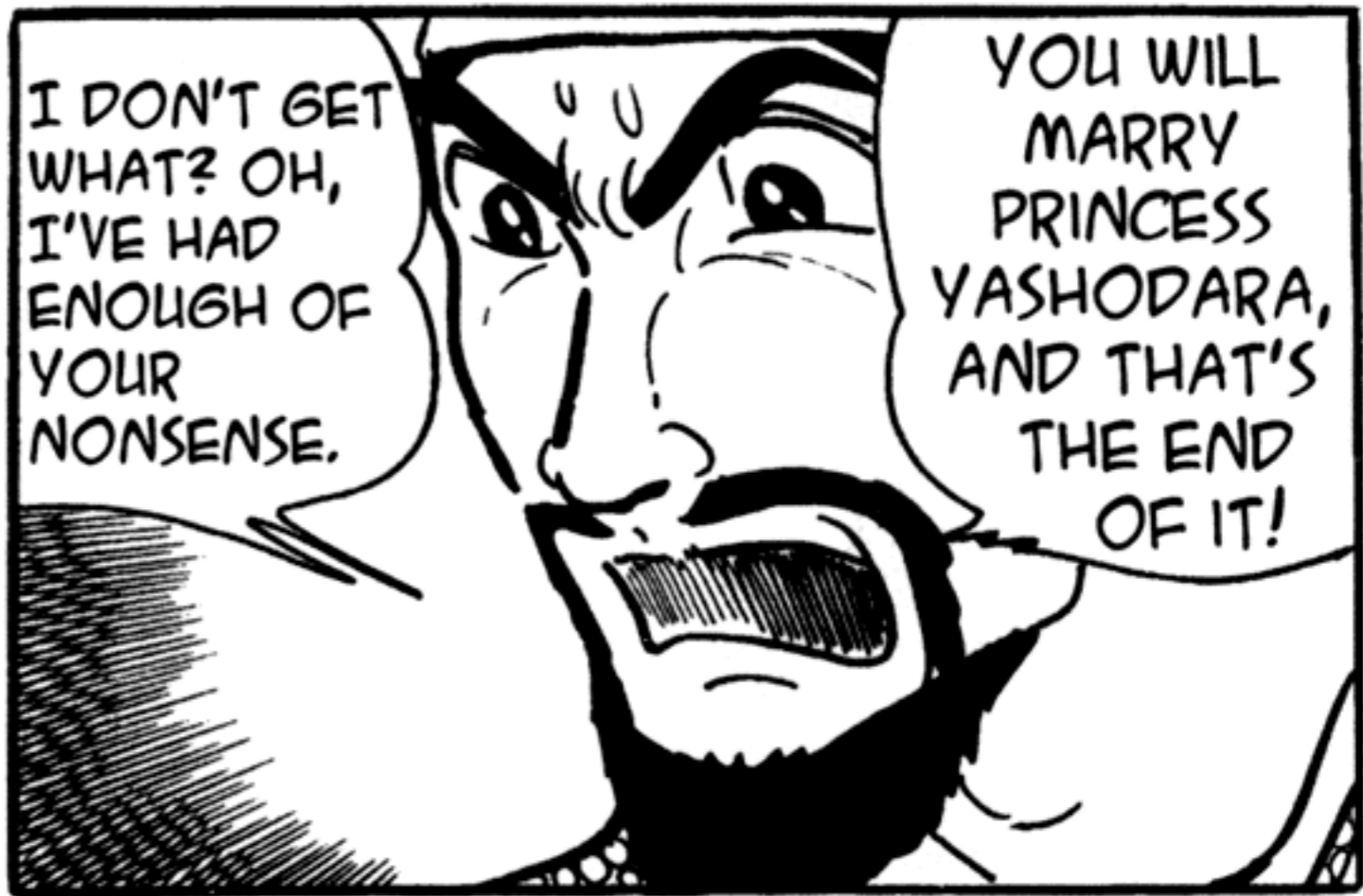
WHAT MAKES HUMAN BEINGS SPECIAL IS THE SANCTITY OF CLASS.

HUMANS CHOOSE PARTNERS OF THEIR OWN CLASS.



NO... THAT'S SO WRONG

FATHER, YOU DON'T GET IT, DO YOU? YOU JUST DON'T GET IT!



I DON'T GET WHAT? OH, I'VE HAD ENOUGH OF YOUR NONSENSE.

YOU WILL MARRY PRINCESS YASHODARA, AND THAT'S THE END OF IT!



...



IF IT'S SO IMPORTANT TO YOU THAT I MARRY HER...

I WILL DO AS YOU WISH.

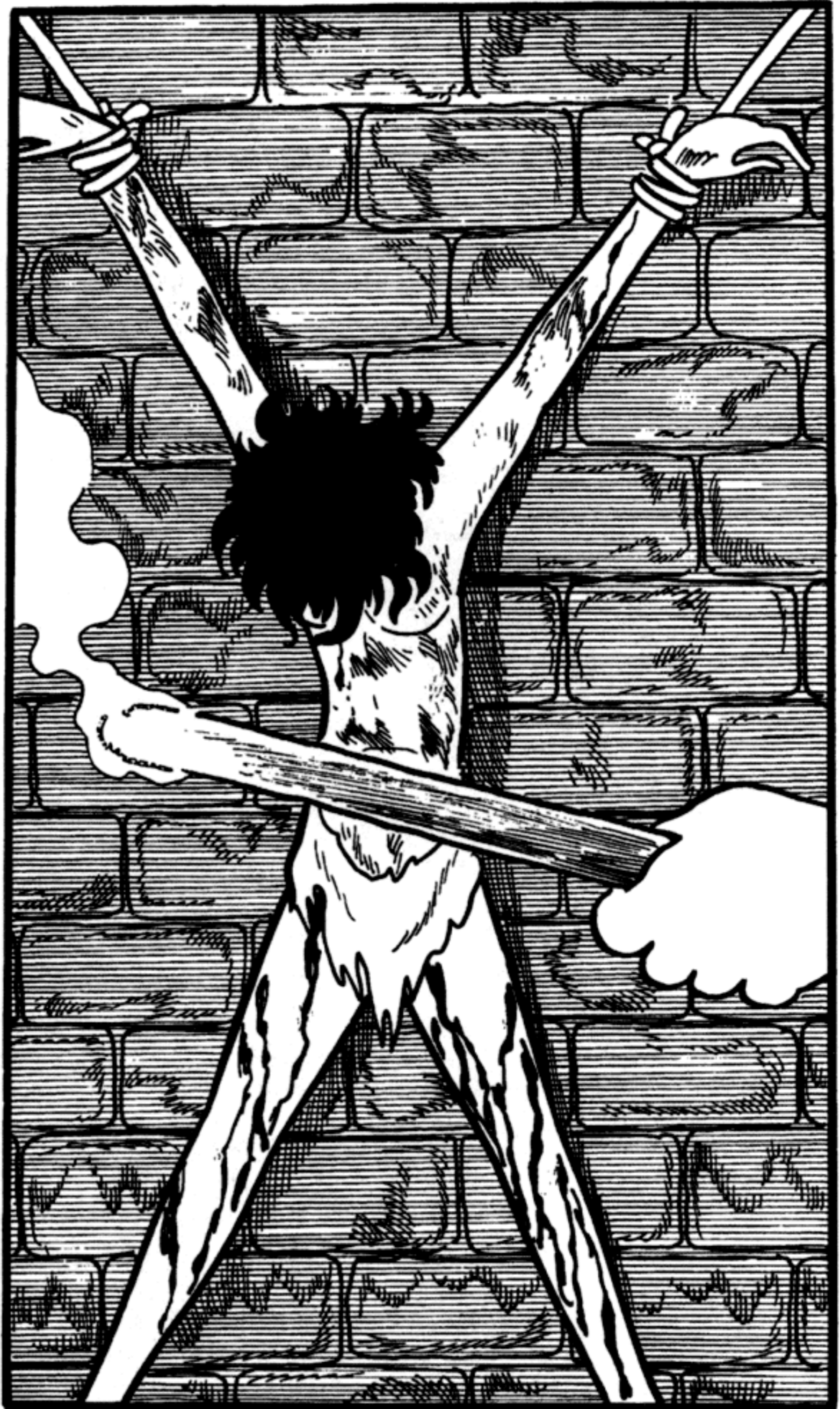
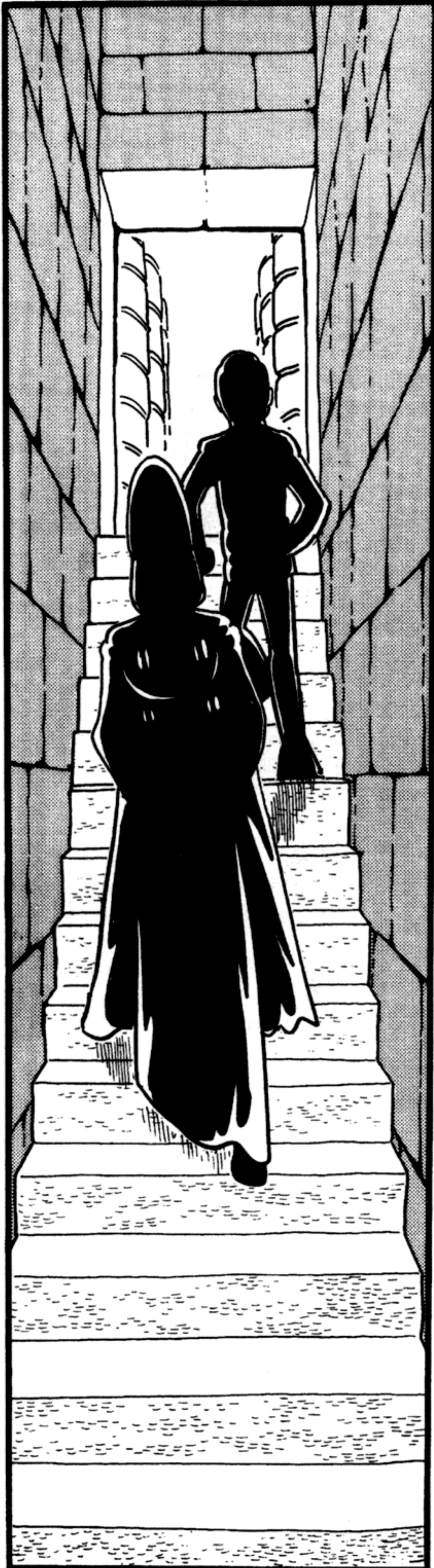


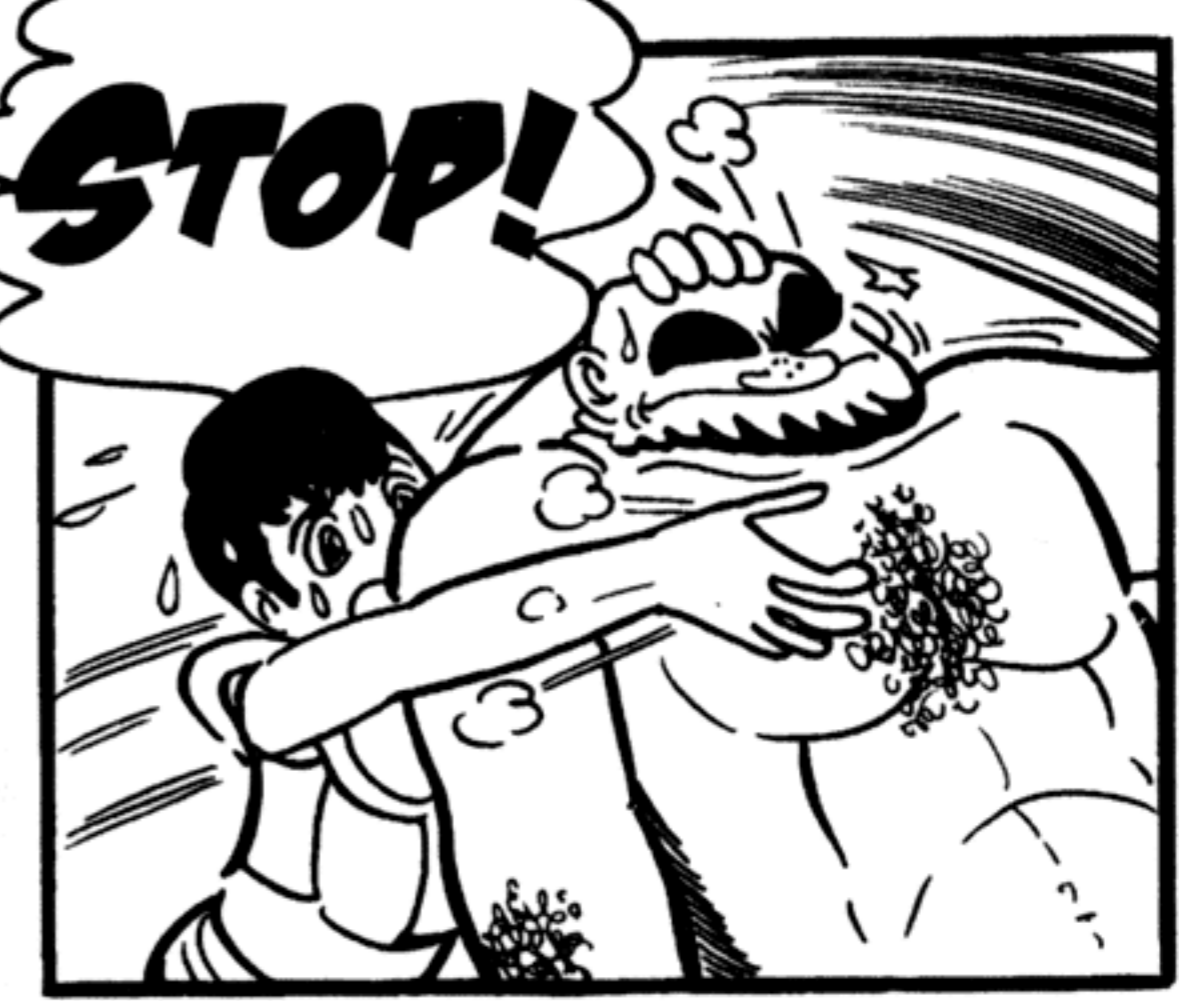
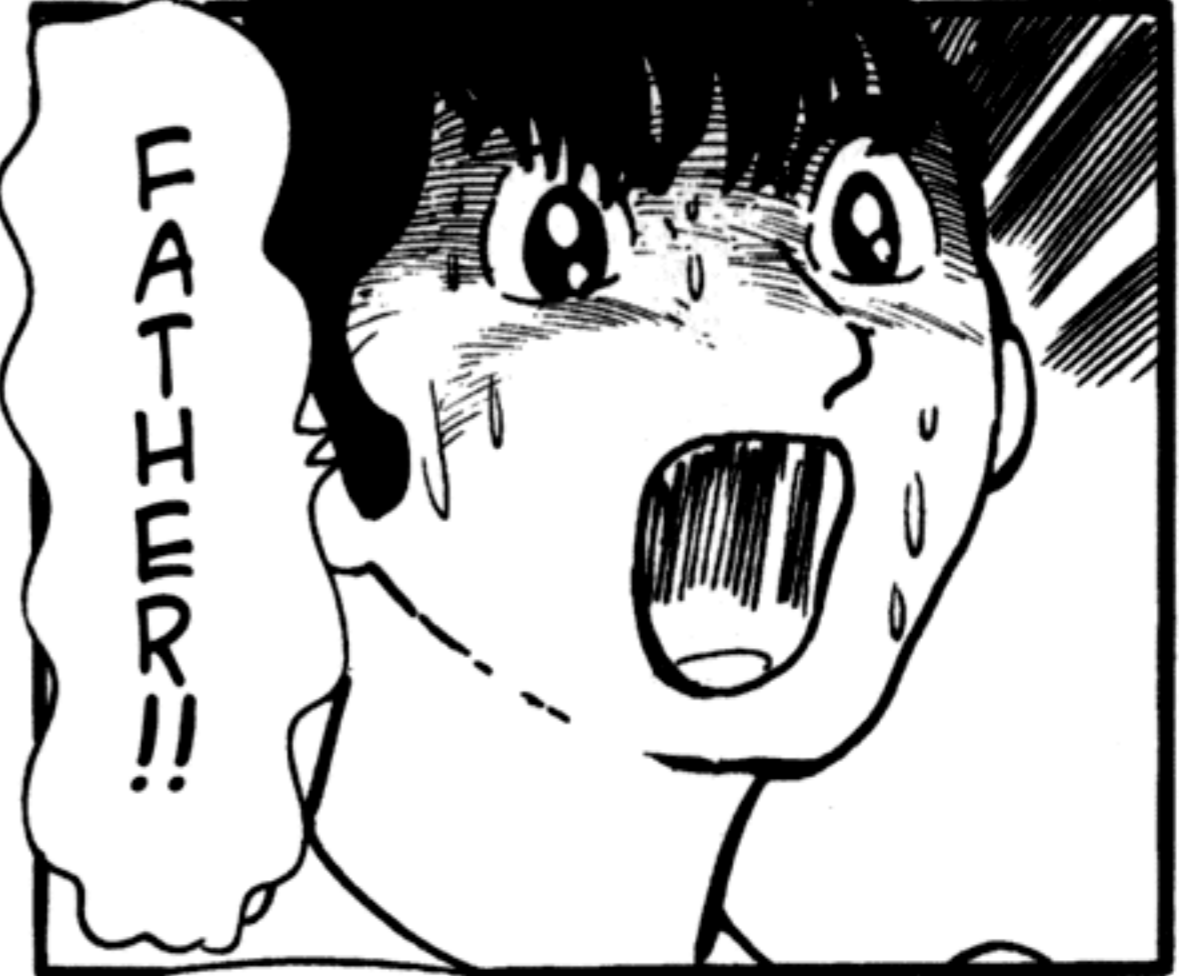
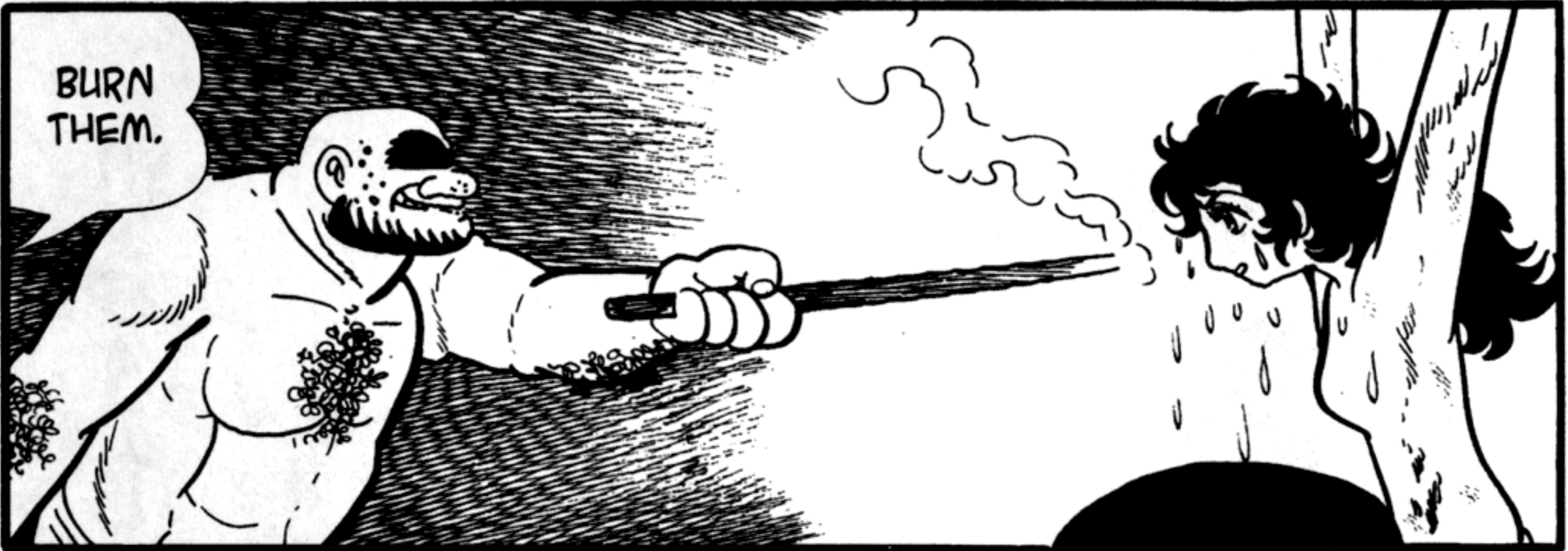
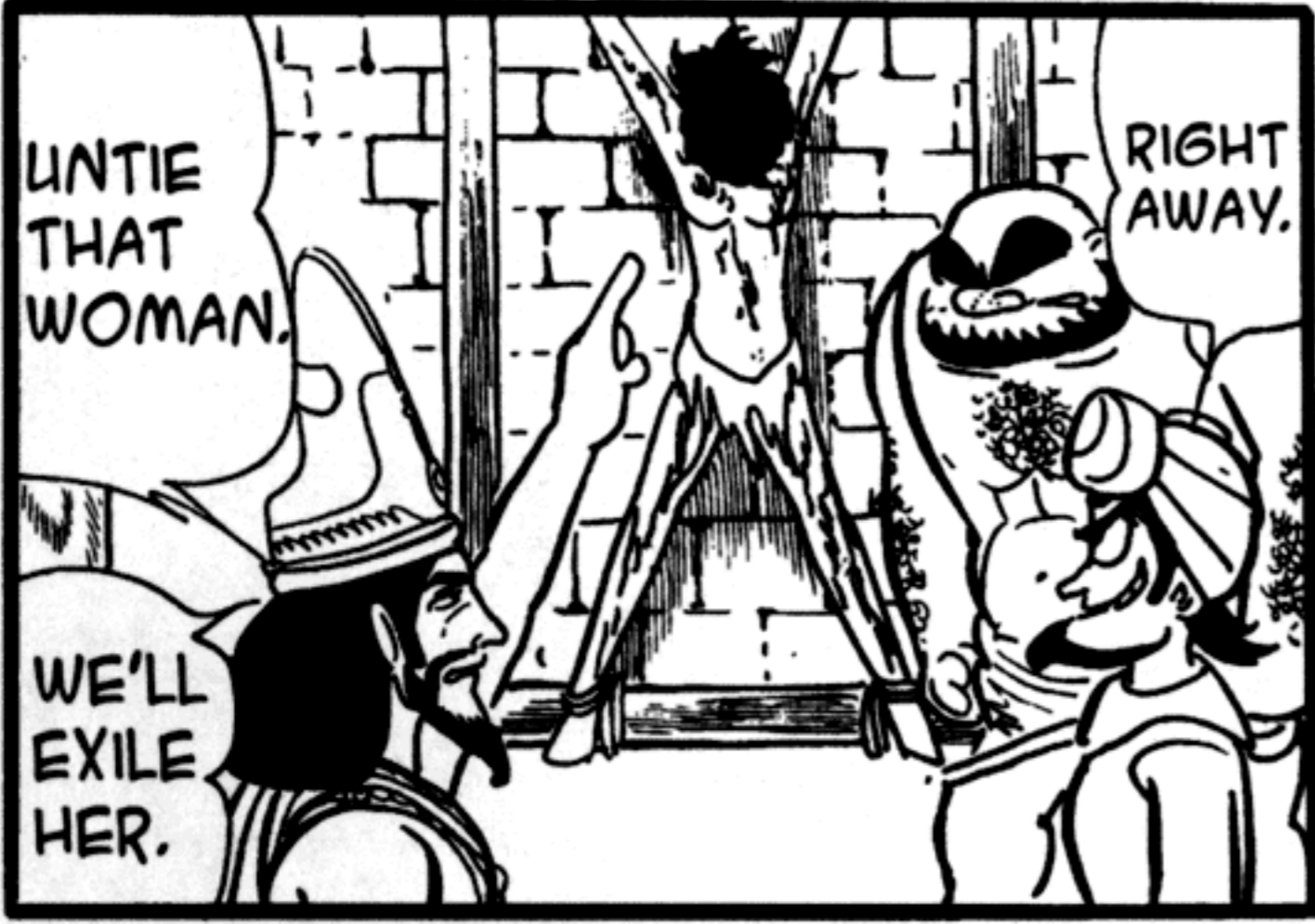
BUT

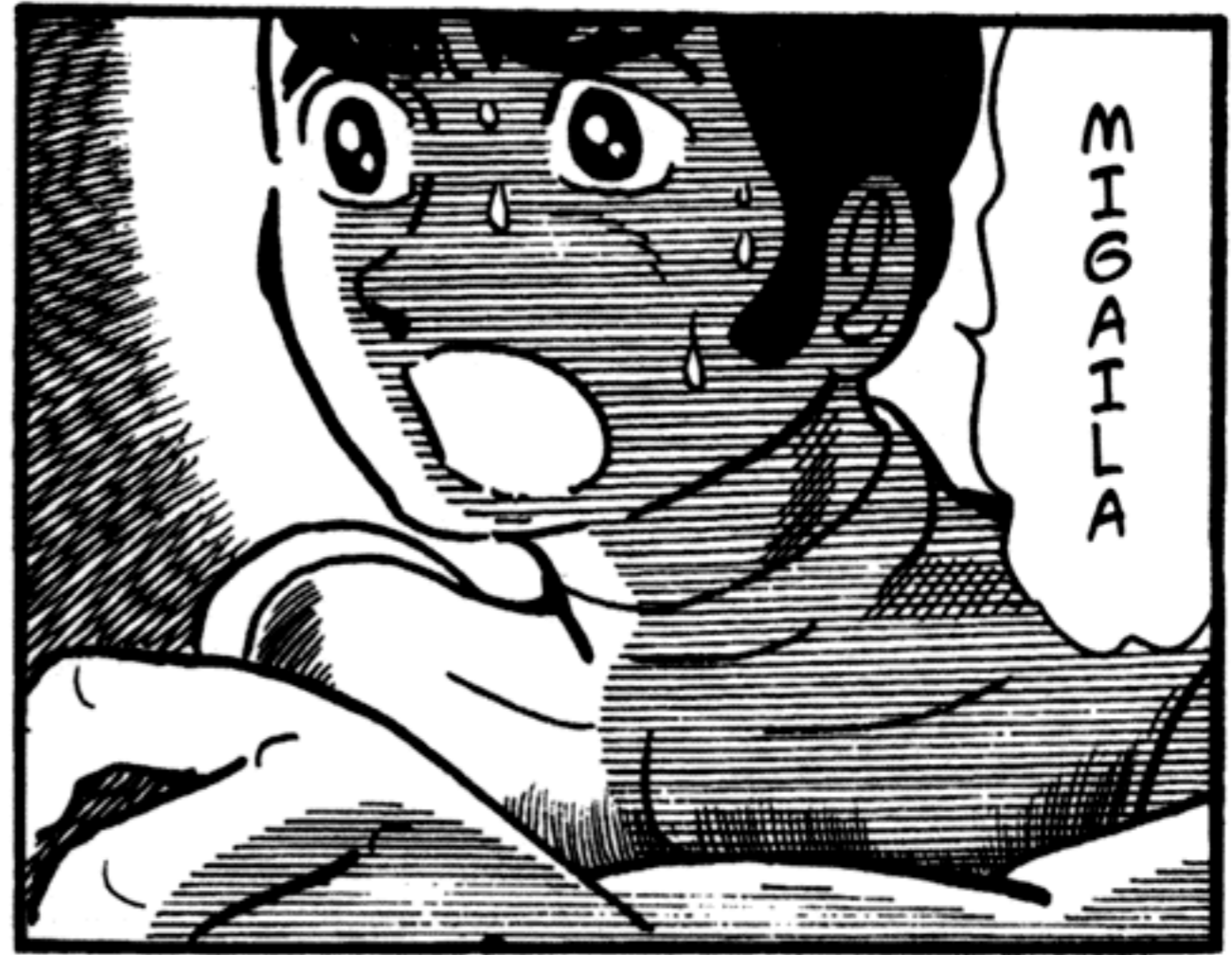
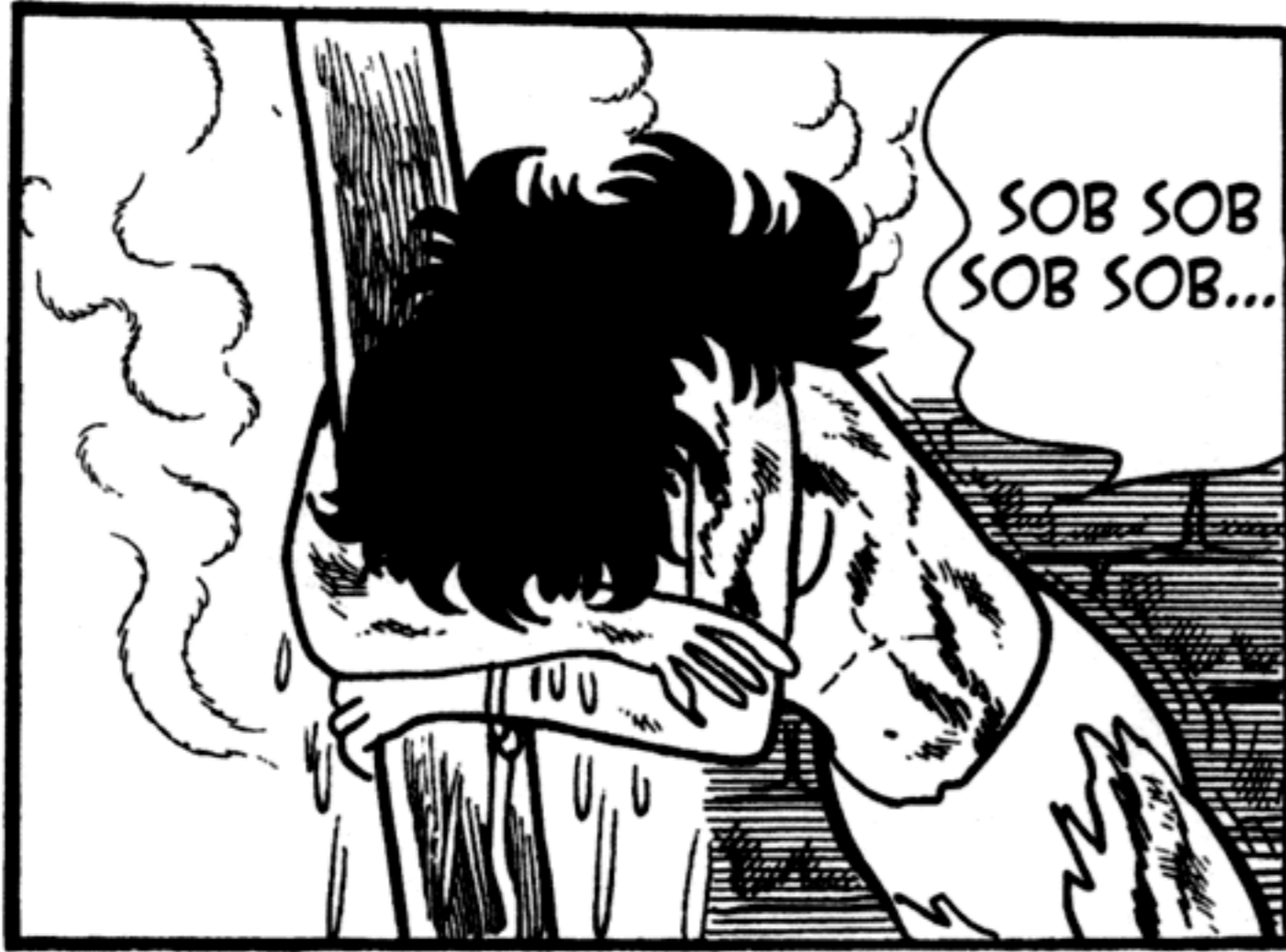
IN RETURN, YOU MUST SET MIGAILA FREE.



VERY WELL

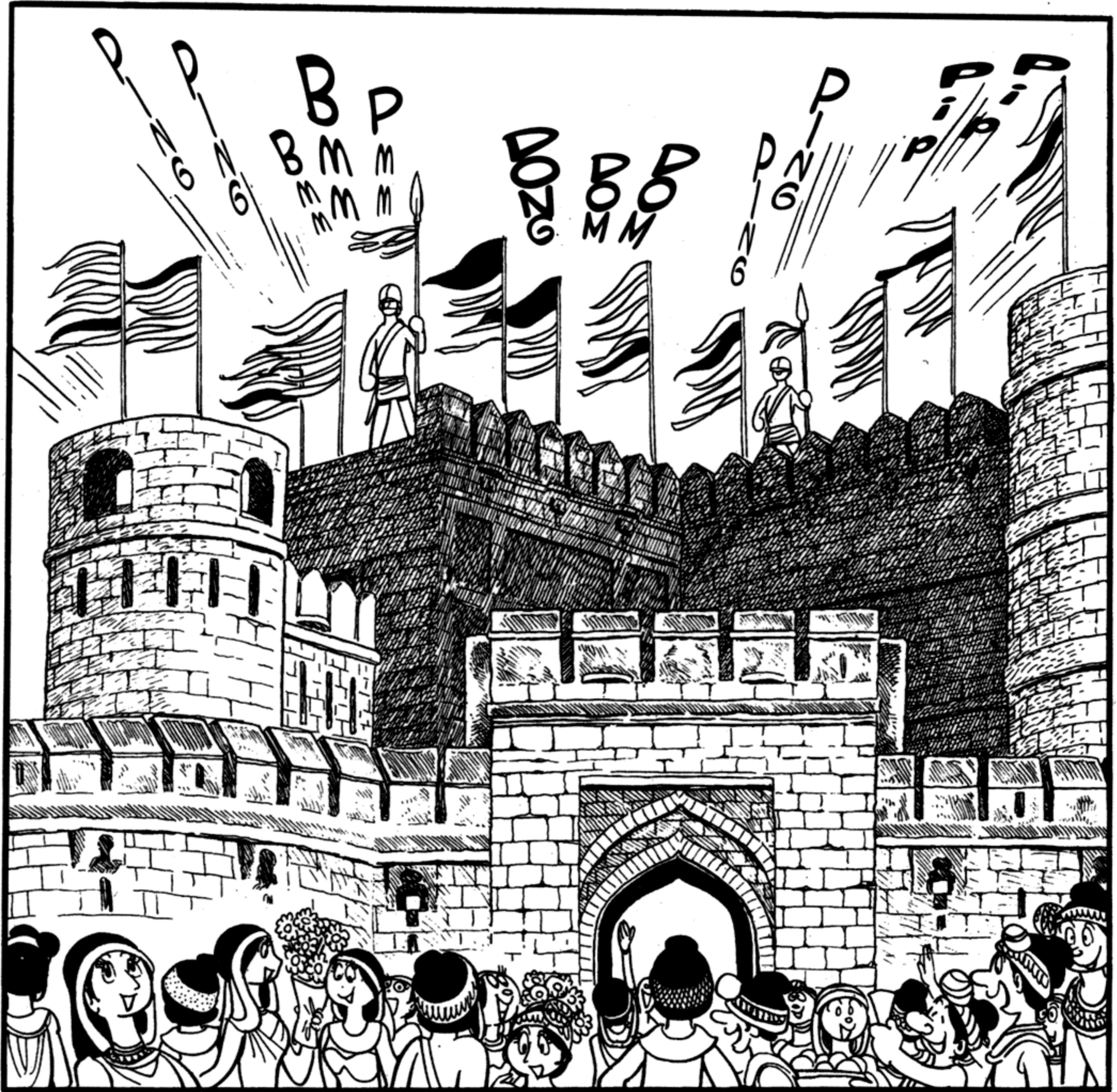


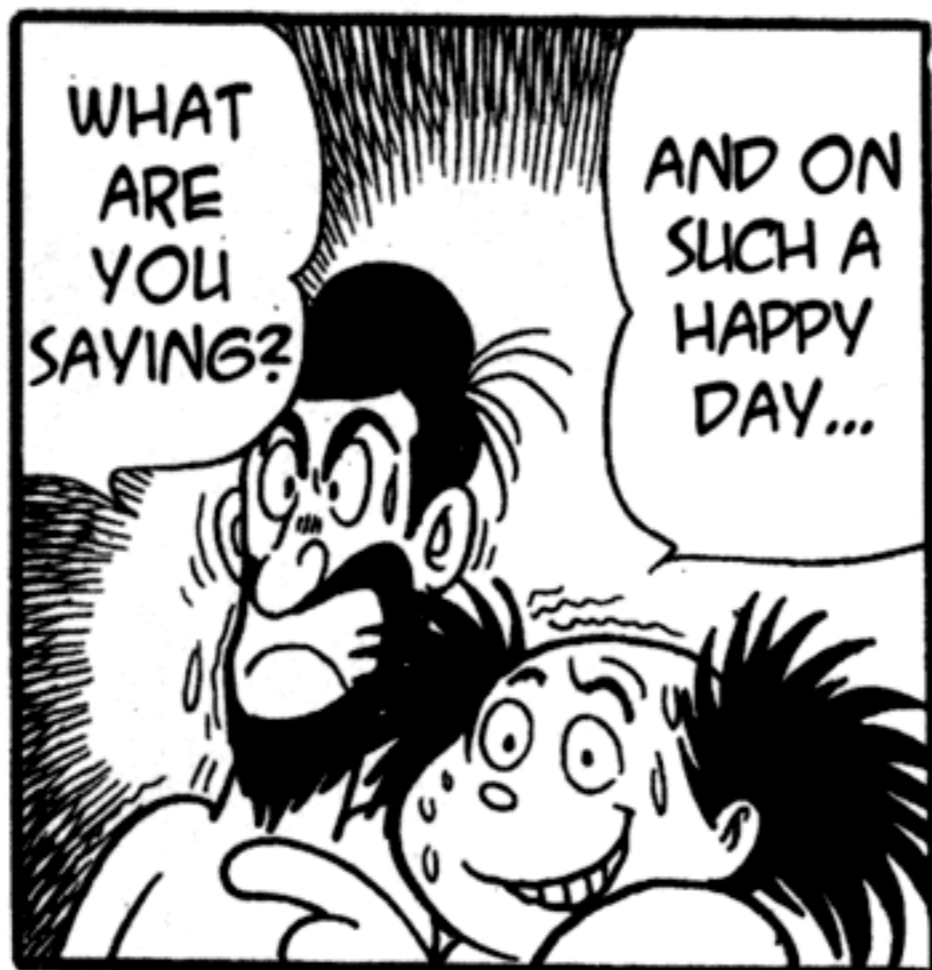
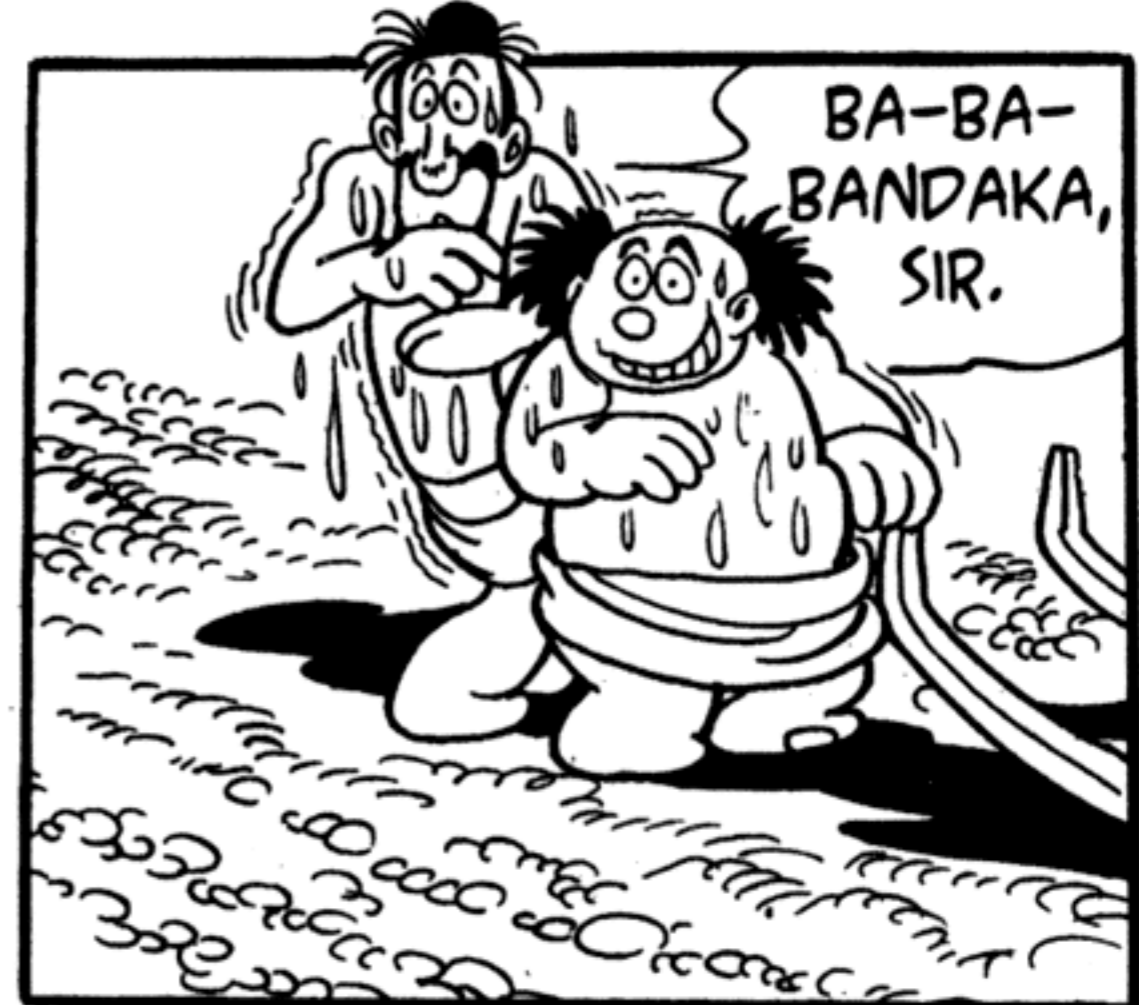


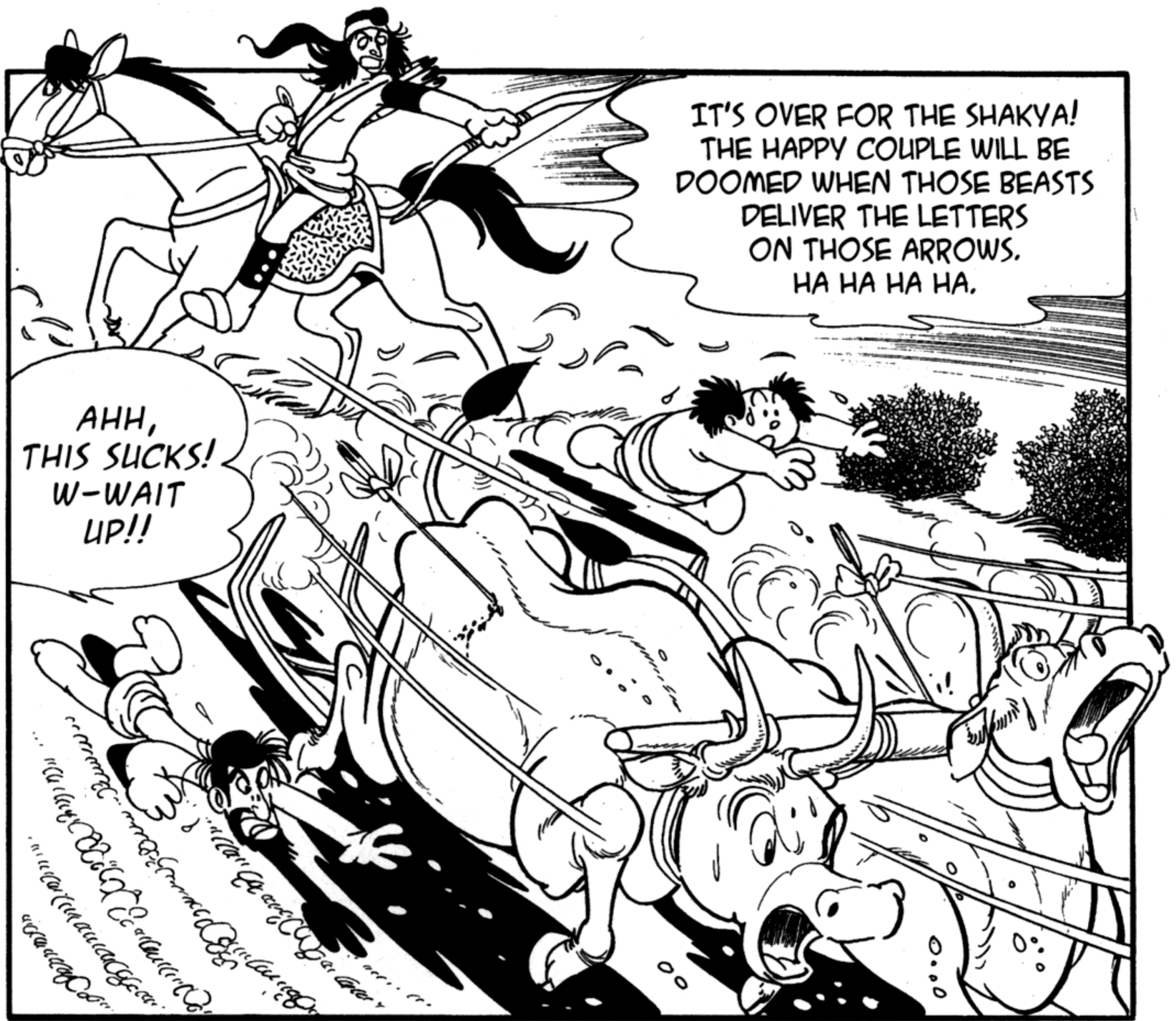


CHAPTER SIX

THE FOUR ENCOUNTERS





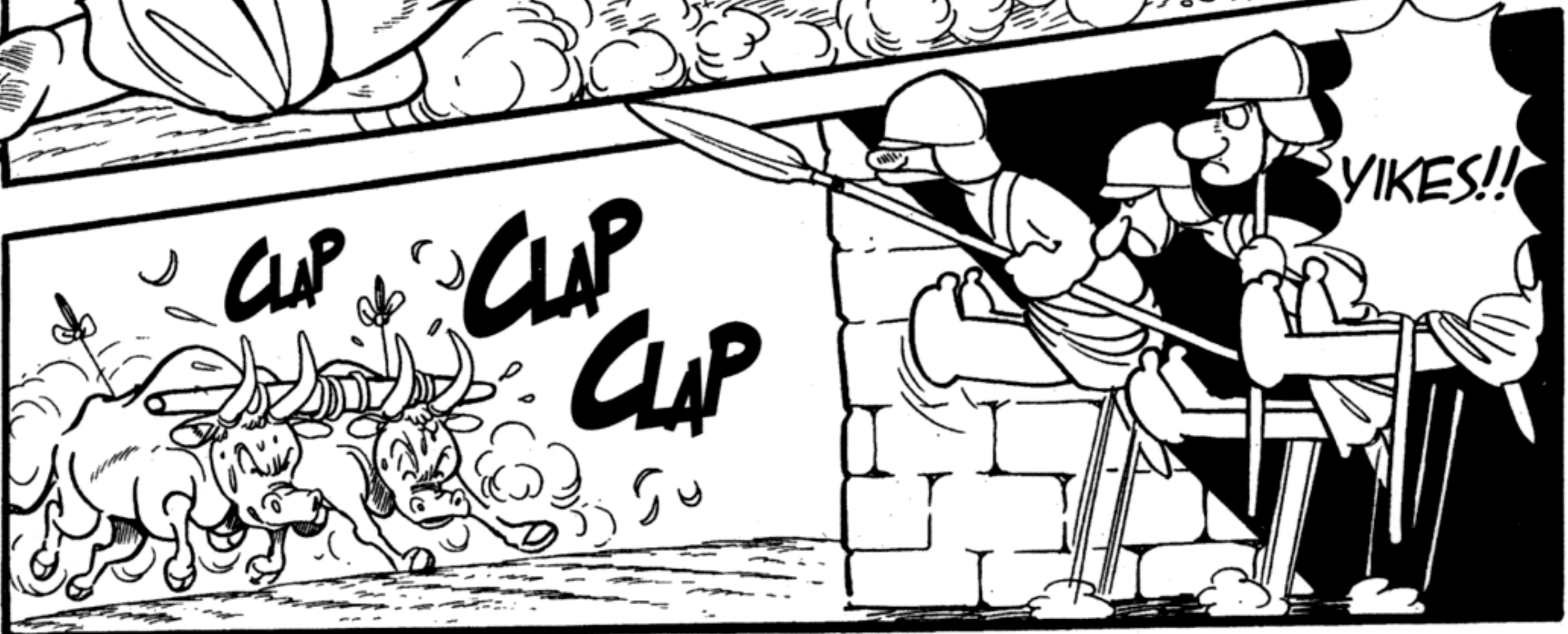


IT'S OVER FOR THE SHAKYA!
THE HAPPY COUPLE WILL BE
DOOMED WHEN THOSE BEASTS
DELIVER THE LETTERS
ON THOSE ARROWS.
HA HA HA HA.

AHH,
THIS SUCKS!
W-WAIT
UP!!

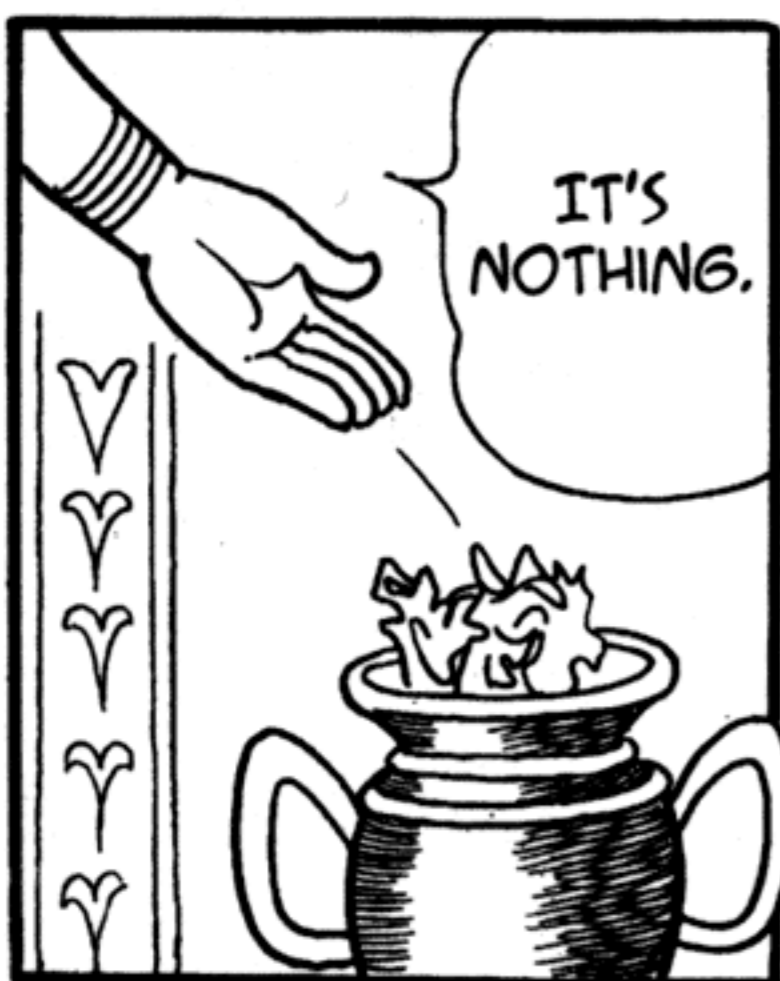
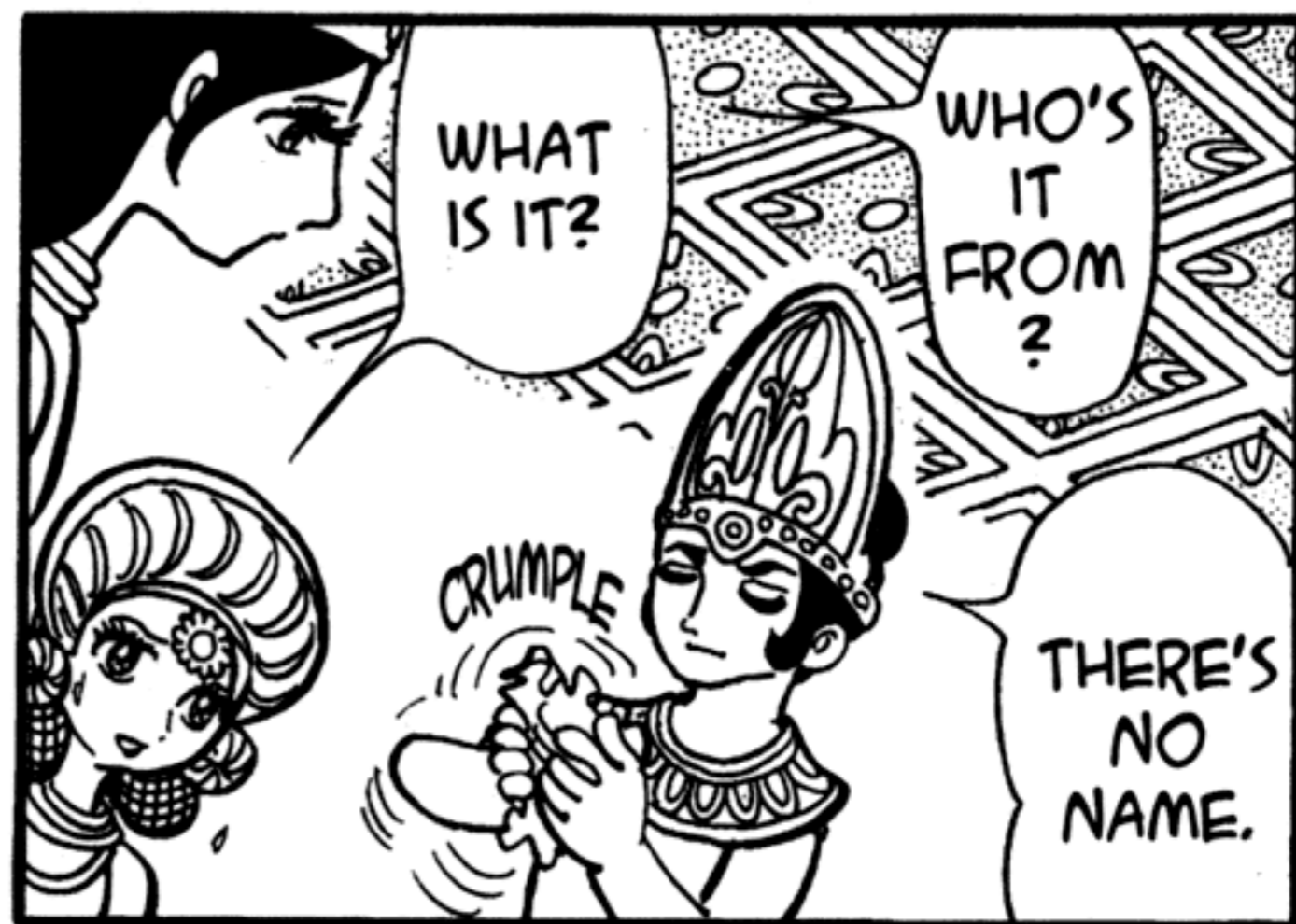
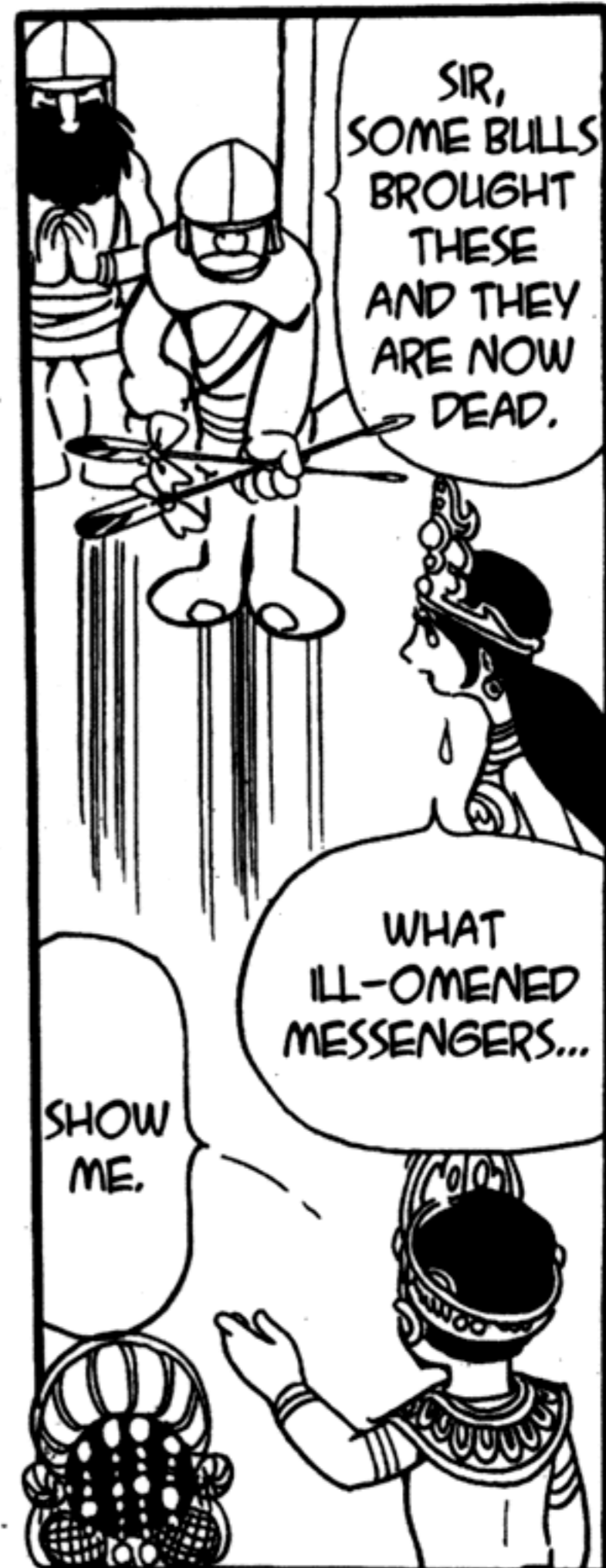


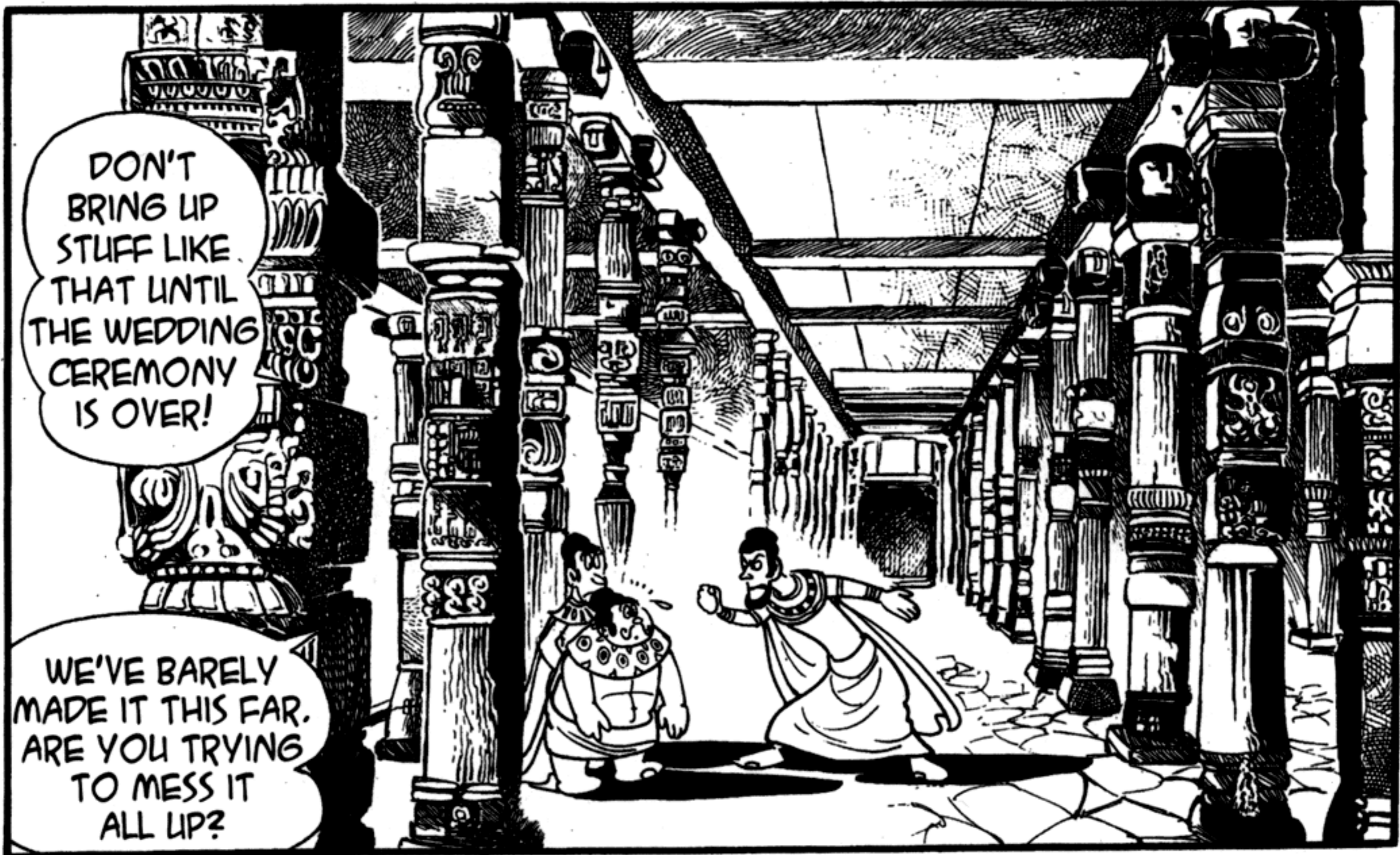
H-HELP,
SOMEONE!
...MY
CATTLE...



YIKES!!

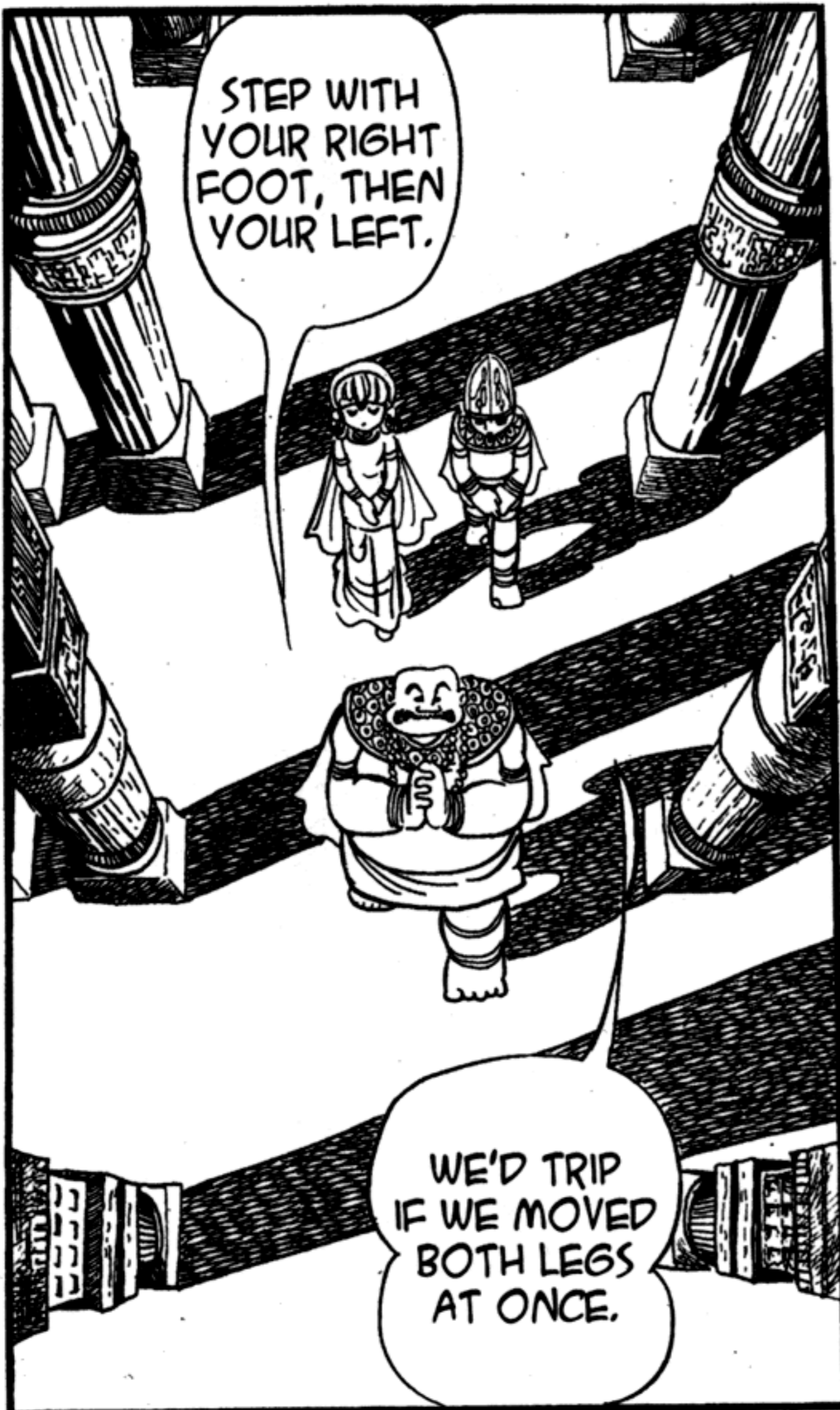
CLAP
CLAP
CLAP





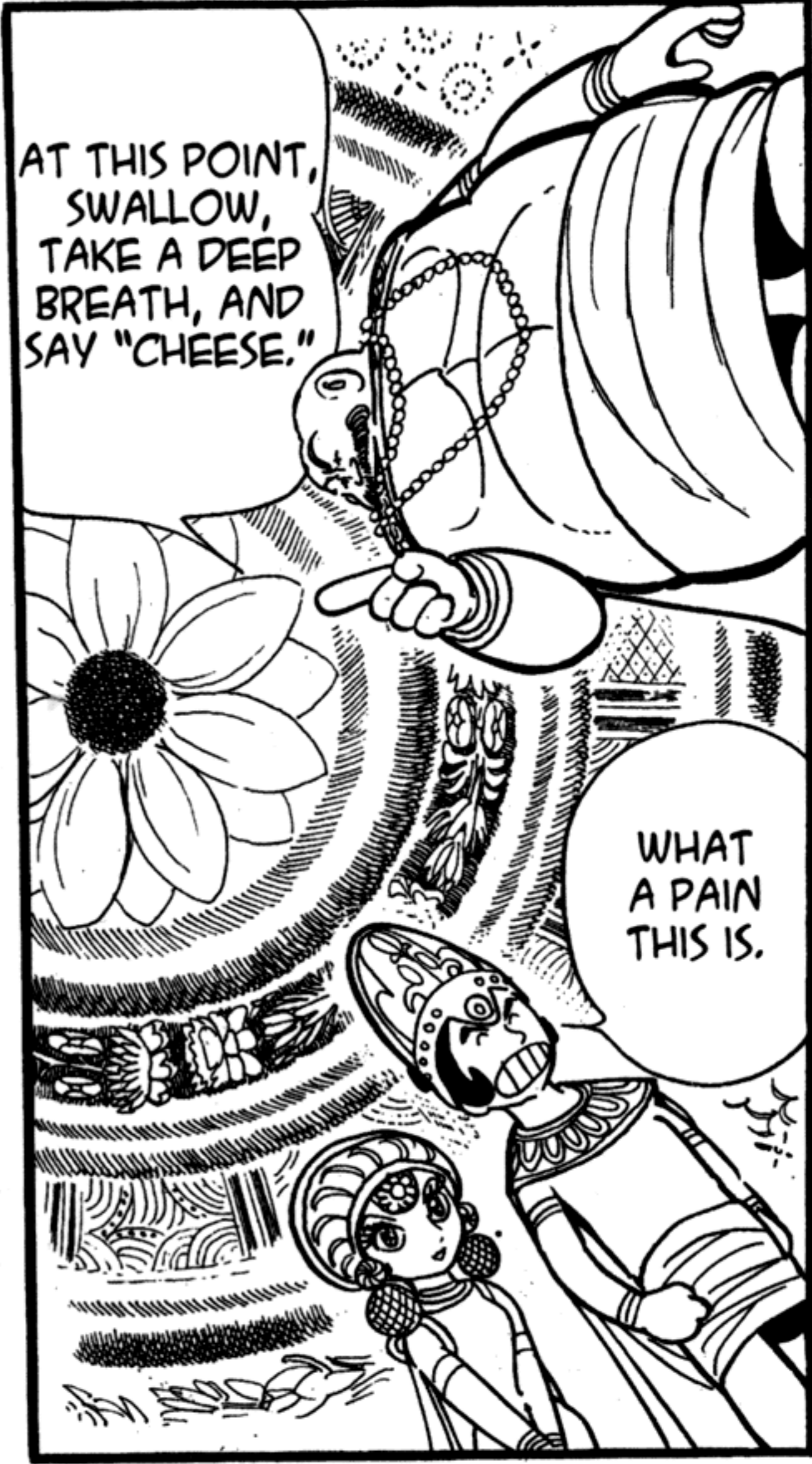
DON'T BRING UP STUFF LIKE THAT UNTIL THE WEDDING CEREMONY IS OVER!

WE'VE BARELY MADE IT THIS FAR. ARE YOU TRYING TO MESS IT ALL UP?



STEP WITH YOUR RIGHT FOOT, THEN YOUR LEFT.

WE'D TRIP IF WE MOVED BOTH LEGS AT ONCE.



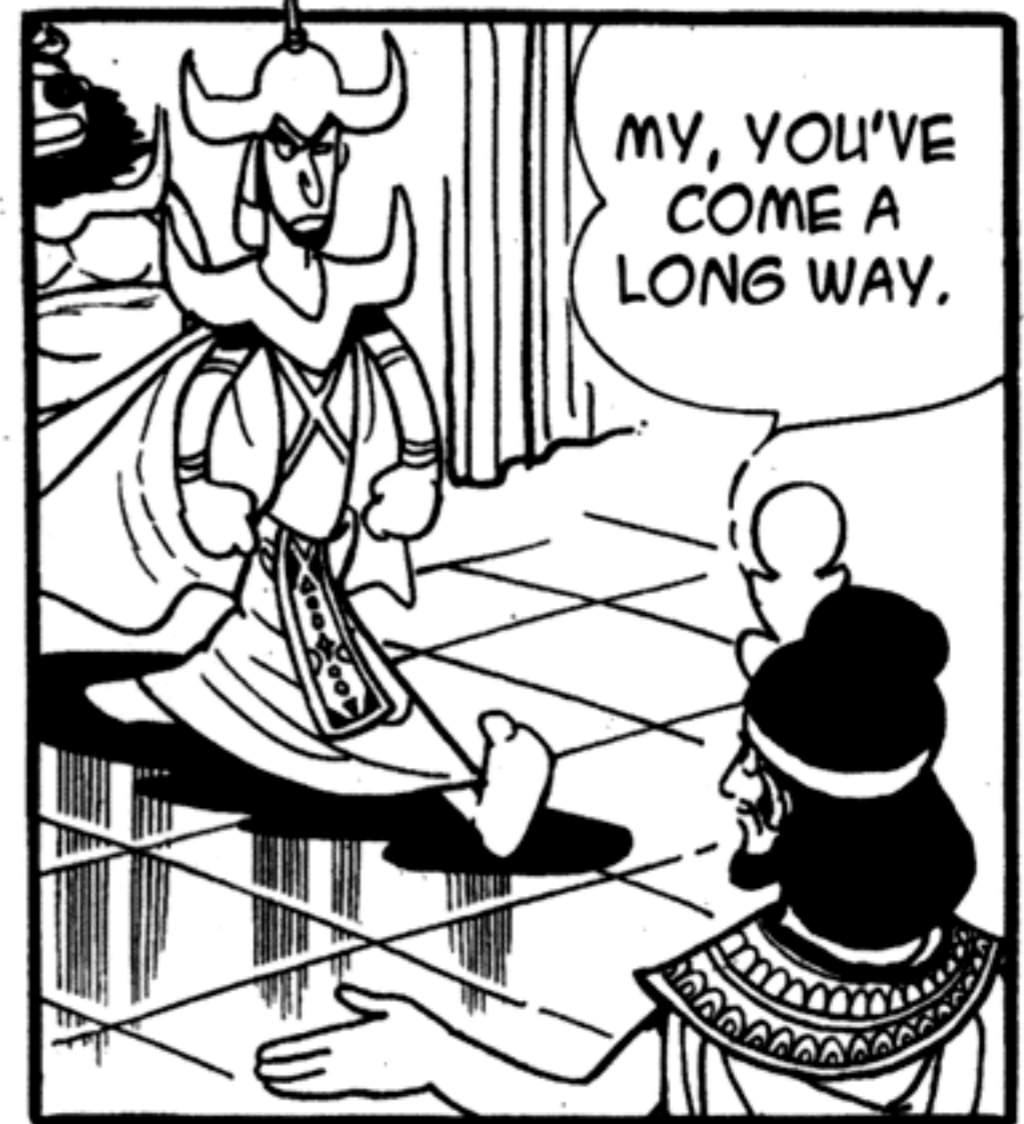
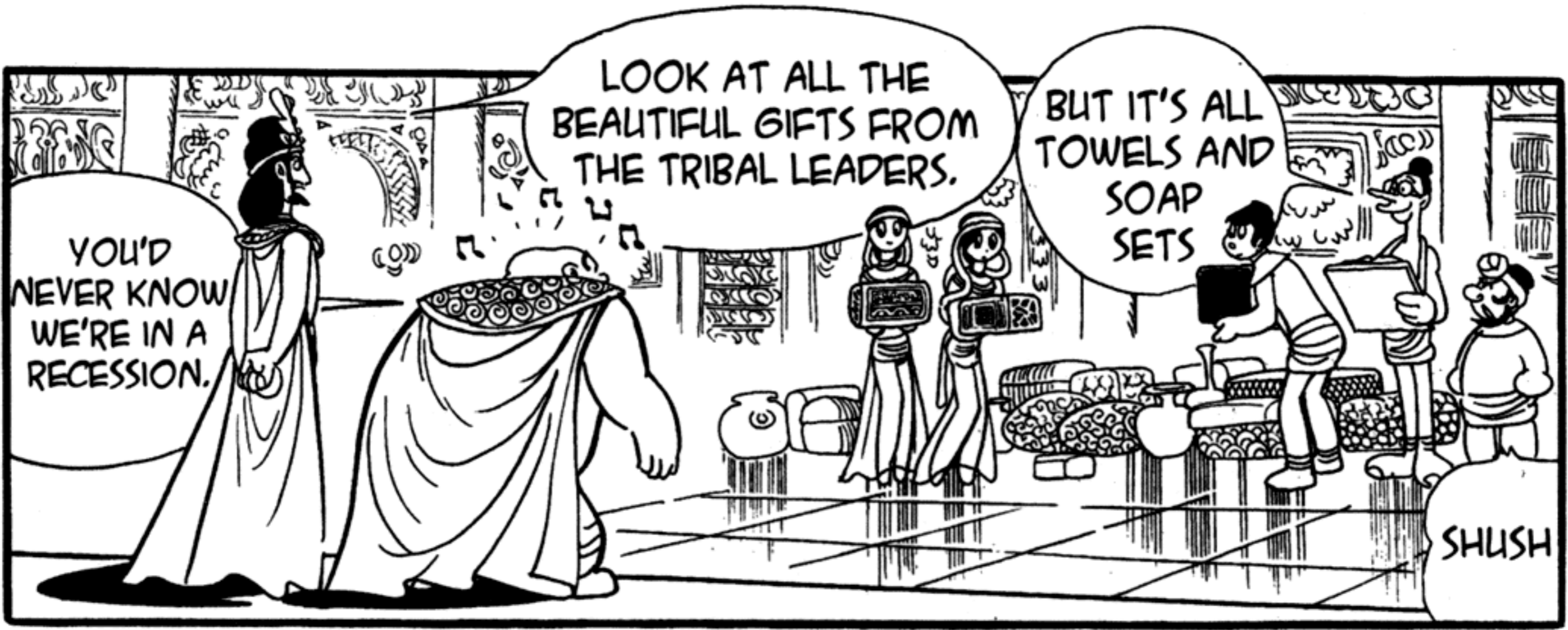
AT THIS POINT, SWALLOW, TAKE A DEEP BREATH, AND SAY "CHEESE."

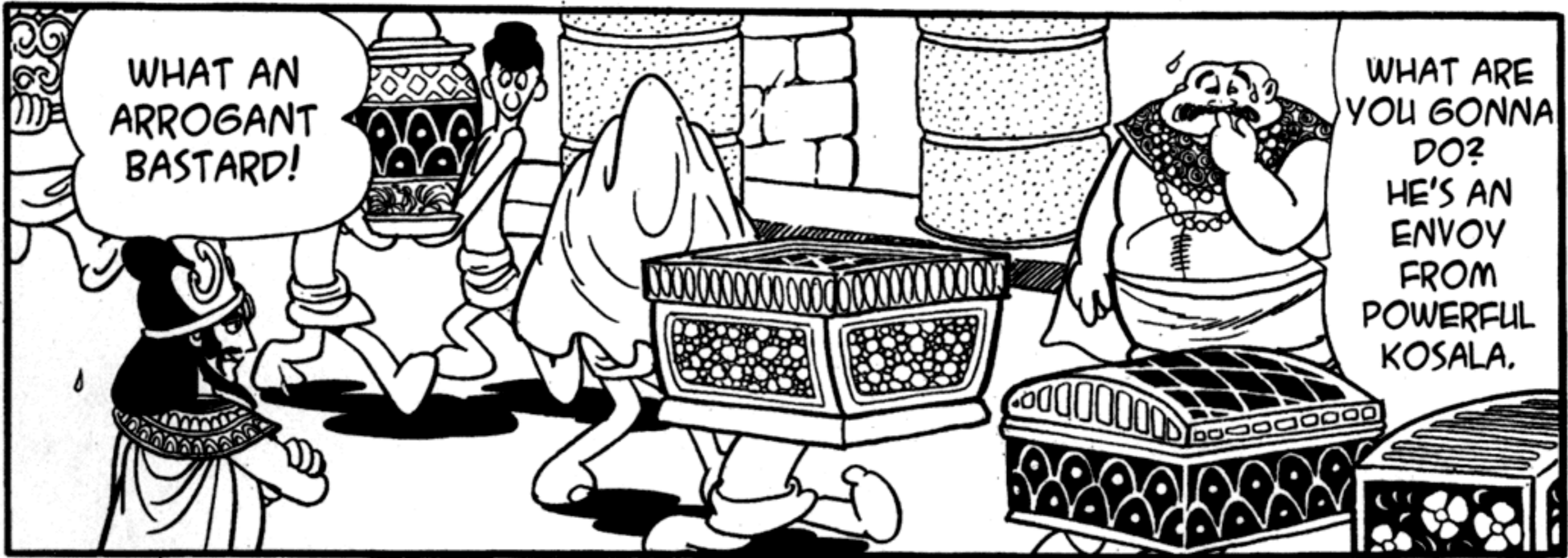
WHAT A PAIN THIS IS.



PRINCE SIDDHARTHA, SON OF OUR GREAT KING SUDDHODANA AND HEIR TO THE SHAKYA THRONE; PRINCESS YASHODARA, DAUGHTER OF KING SUDDHODANA'S SISTER, THE LADY AMITA, AND BEARER OF THE KOLIYA LINEAGE: HERE IN THE PRESENCE OF THE GODS SHALL THEY EXCHANGE WEDDING VOWS.

CON-GRAT-TUL-A-TIONS,
AND CE-LE-BRA-TIONS...





WHAT AN ARROGANT BASTARD!

WHAT ARE YOU GONNA DO? HE'S AN ENVOY FROM POWERFUL KOSALA.



SO YOU'RE PRINCE SIDDHARTHA?

I COME BEARING GIFTS FROM THE KING OF OUR GREAT KOSALA.



THANK YOU.



YOU'VE GOT QUITE A REPUTATION IN OUR LAND.

THEY SAY THE STARS ARE ALIGNED IN YOUR FAVOR.

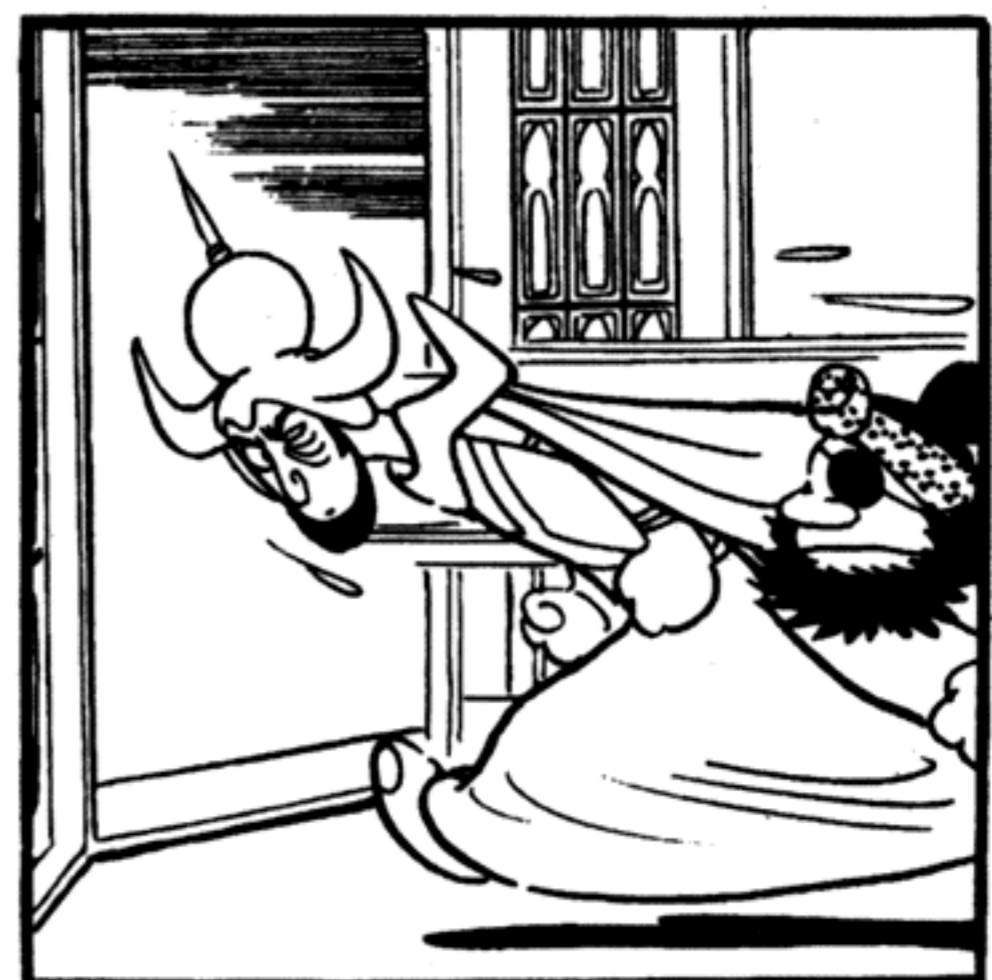
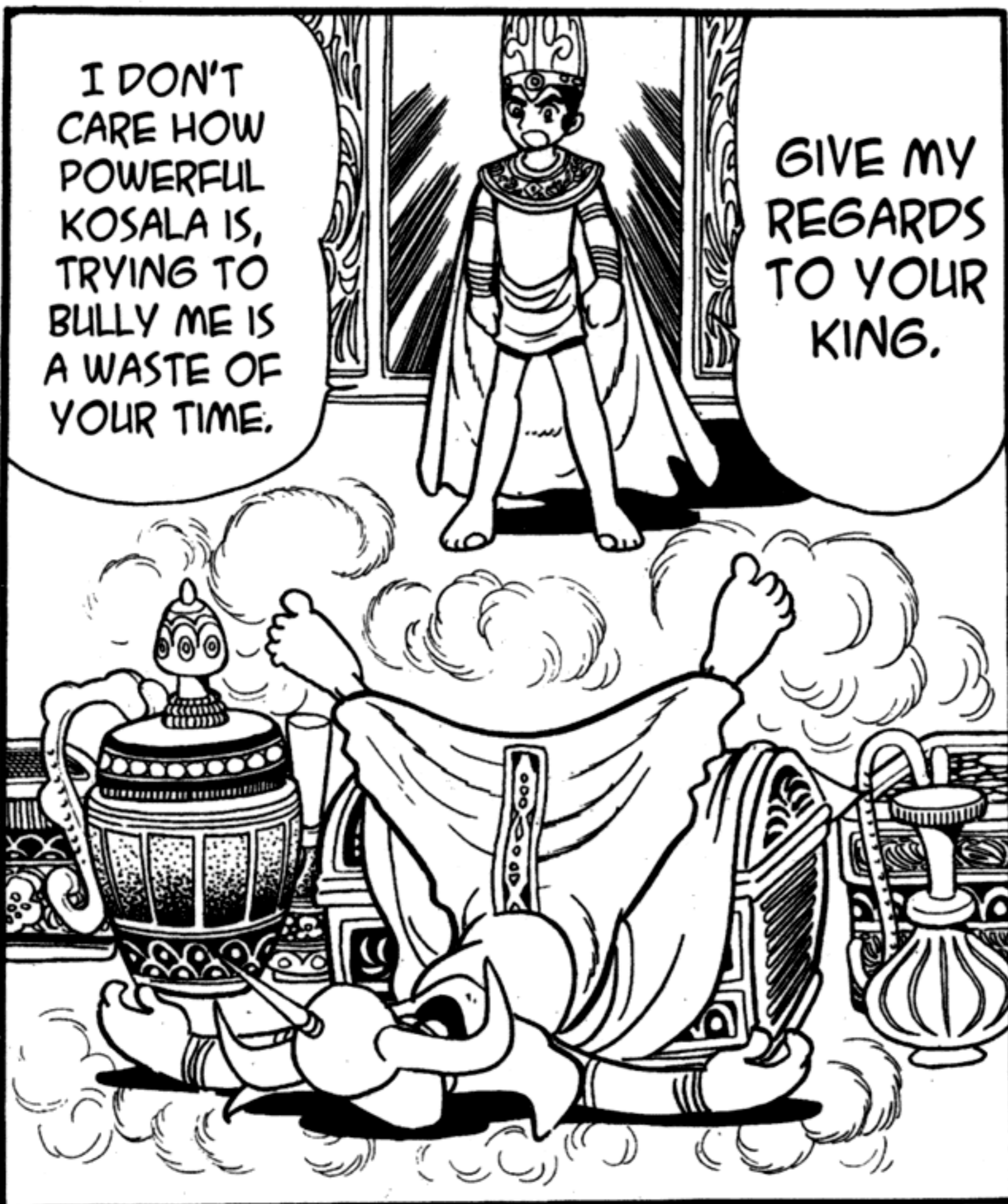
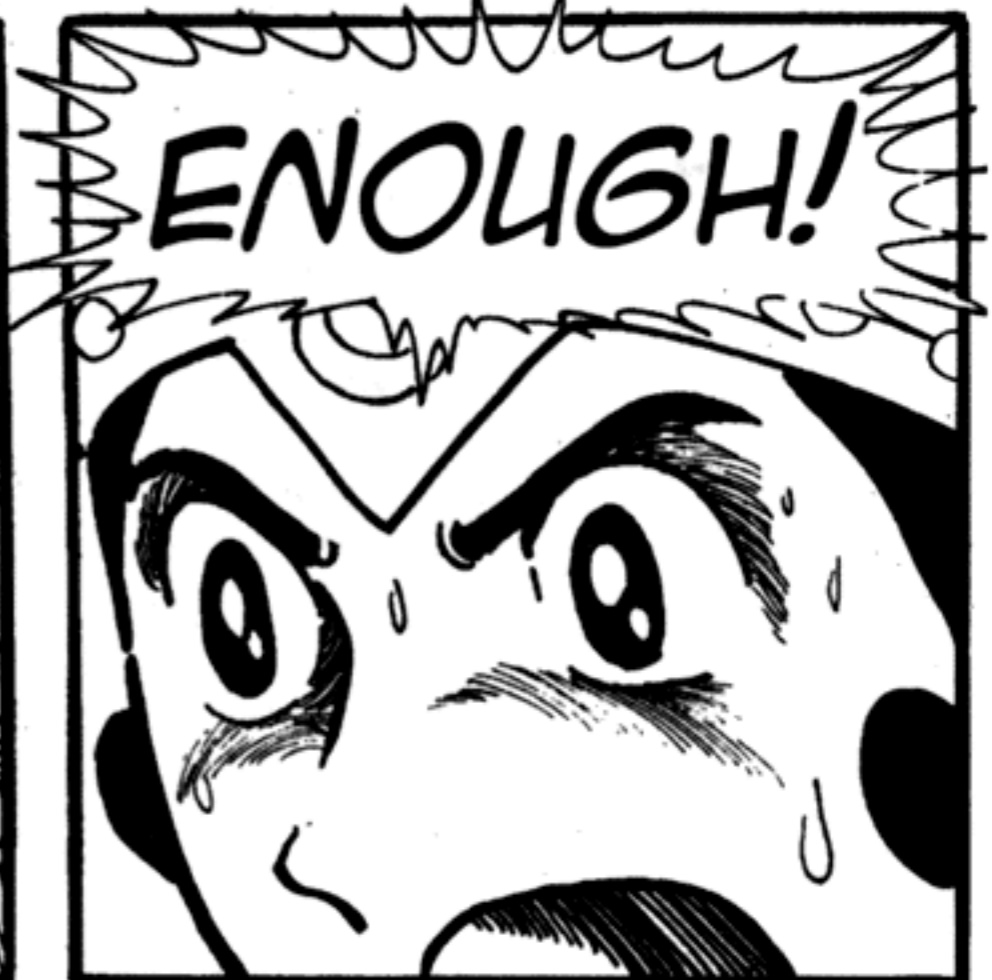
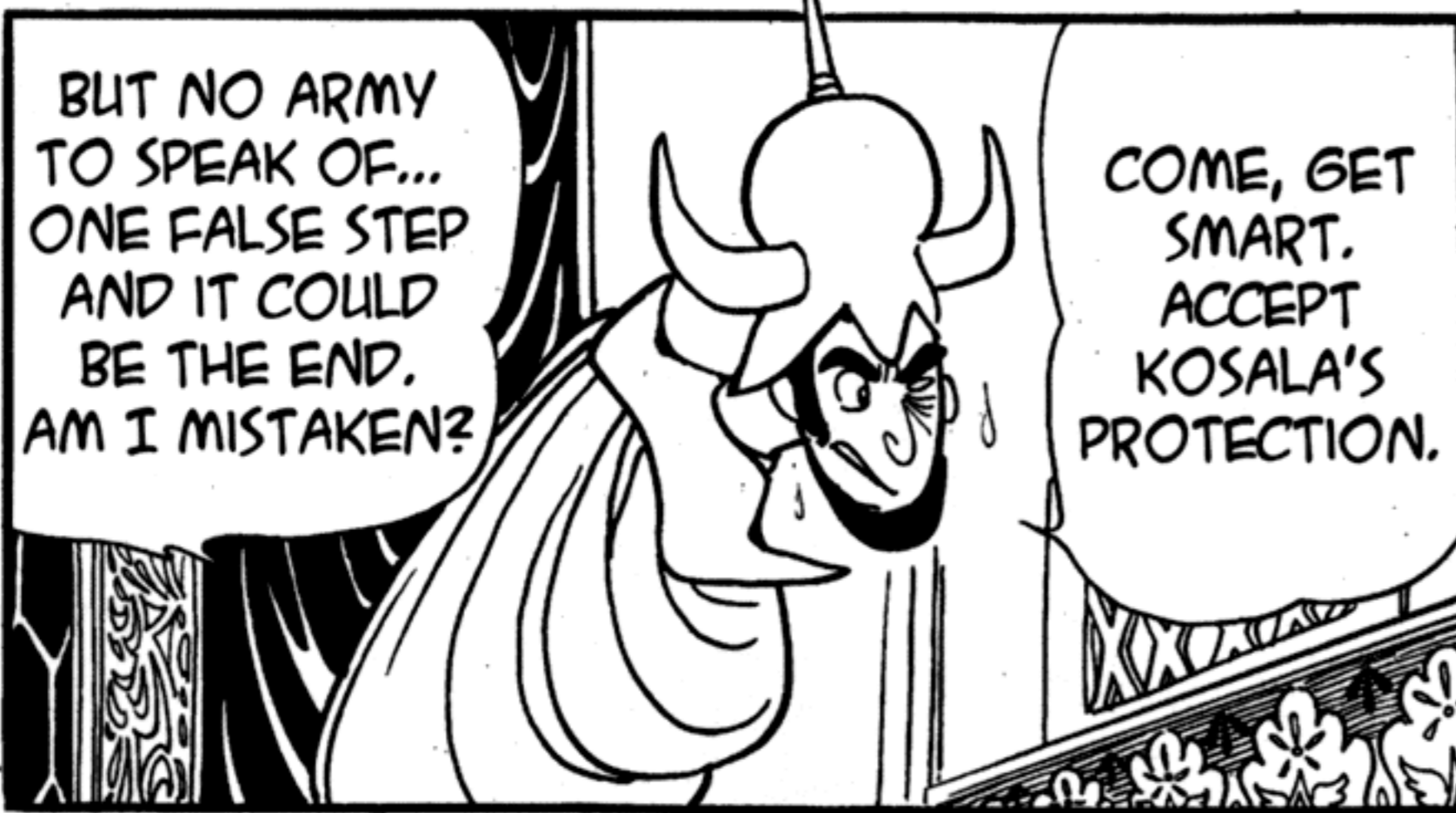


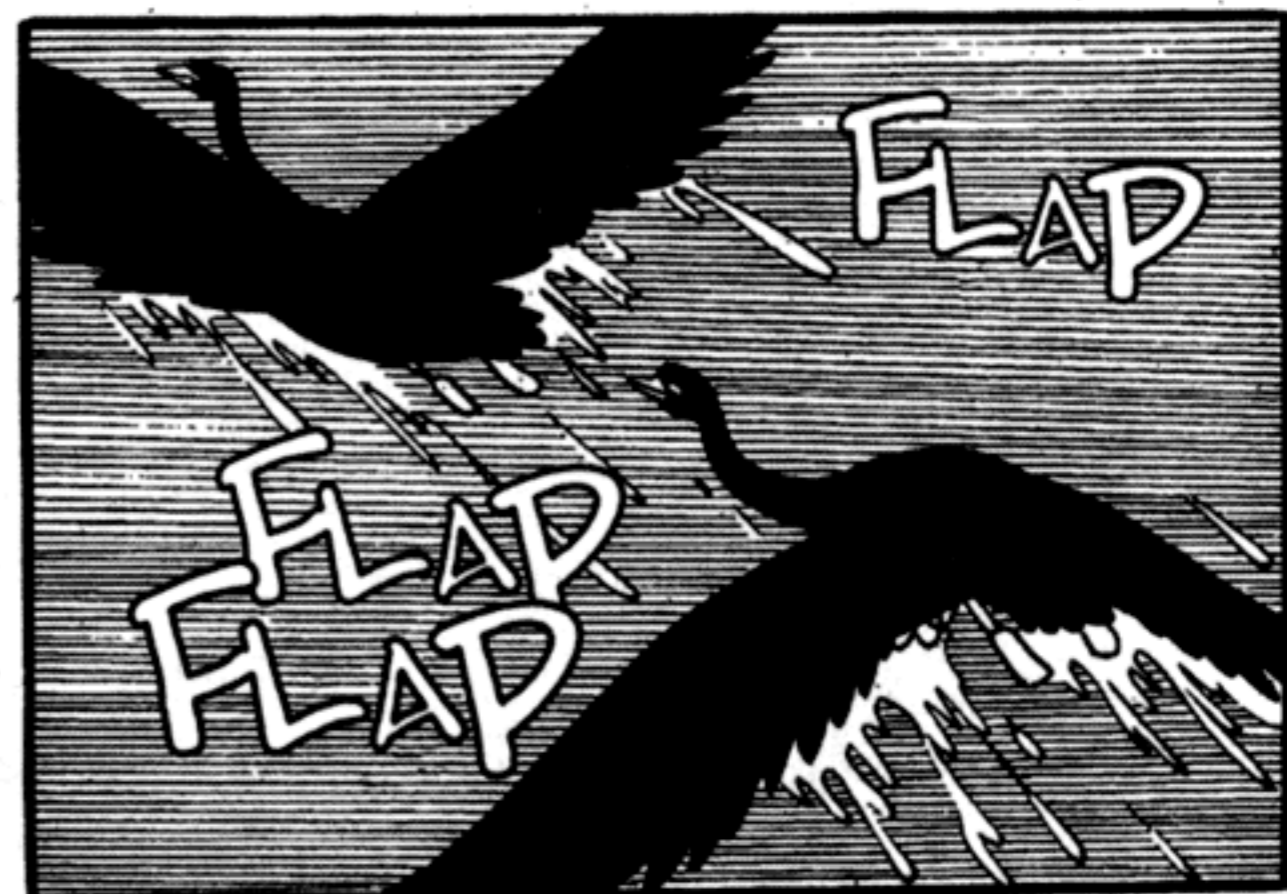
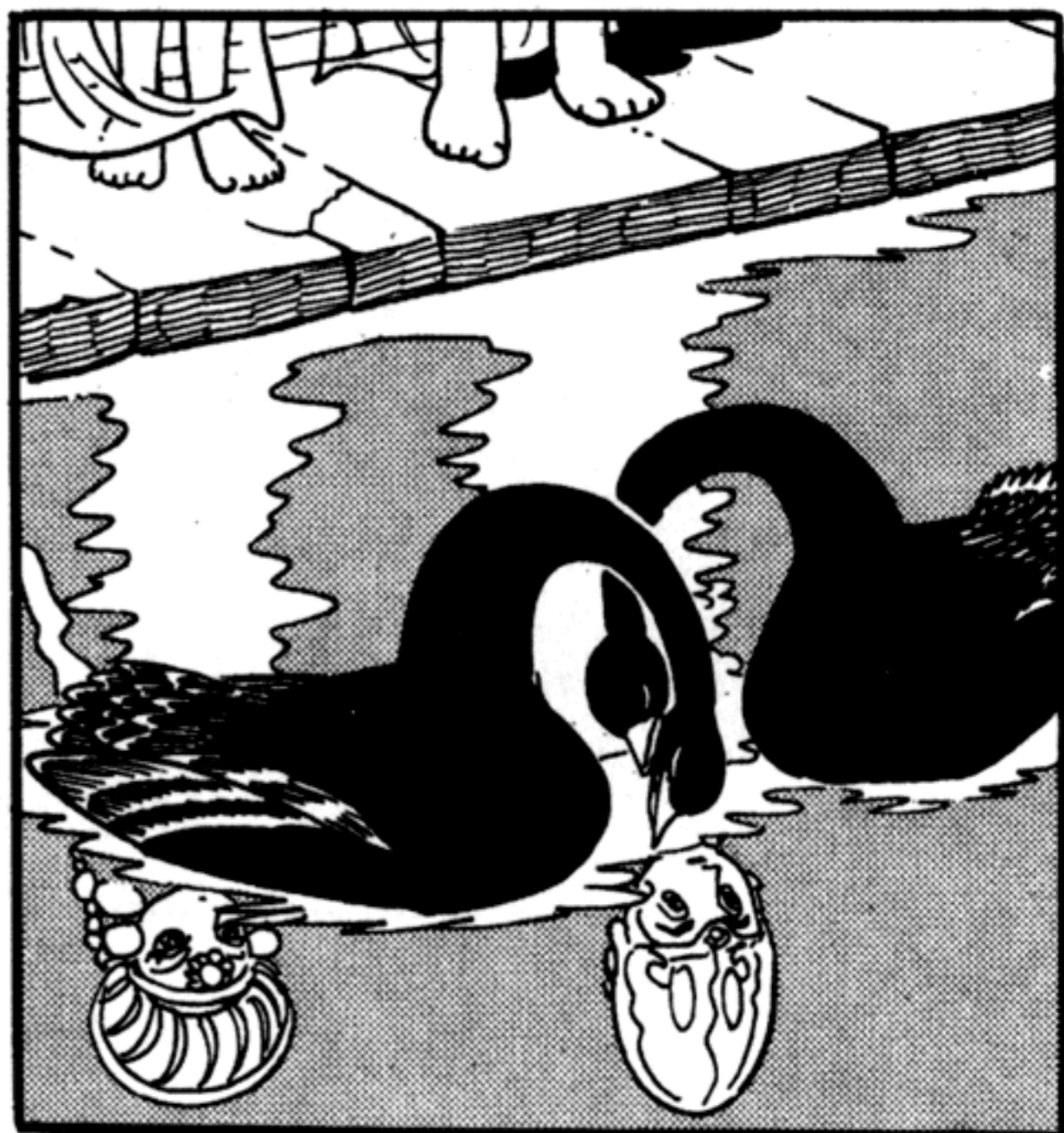
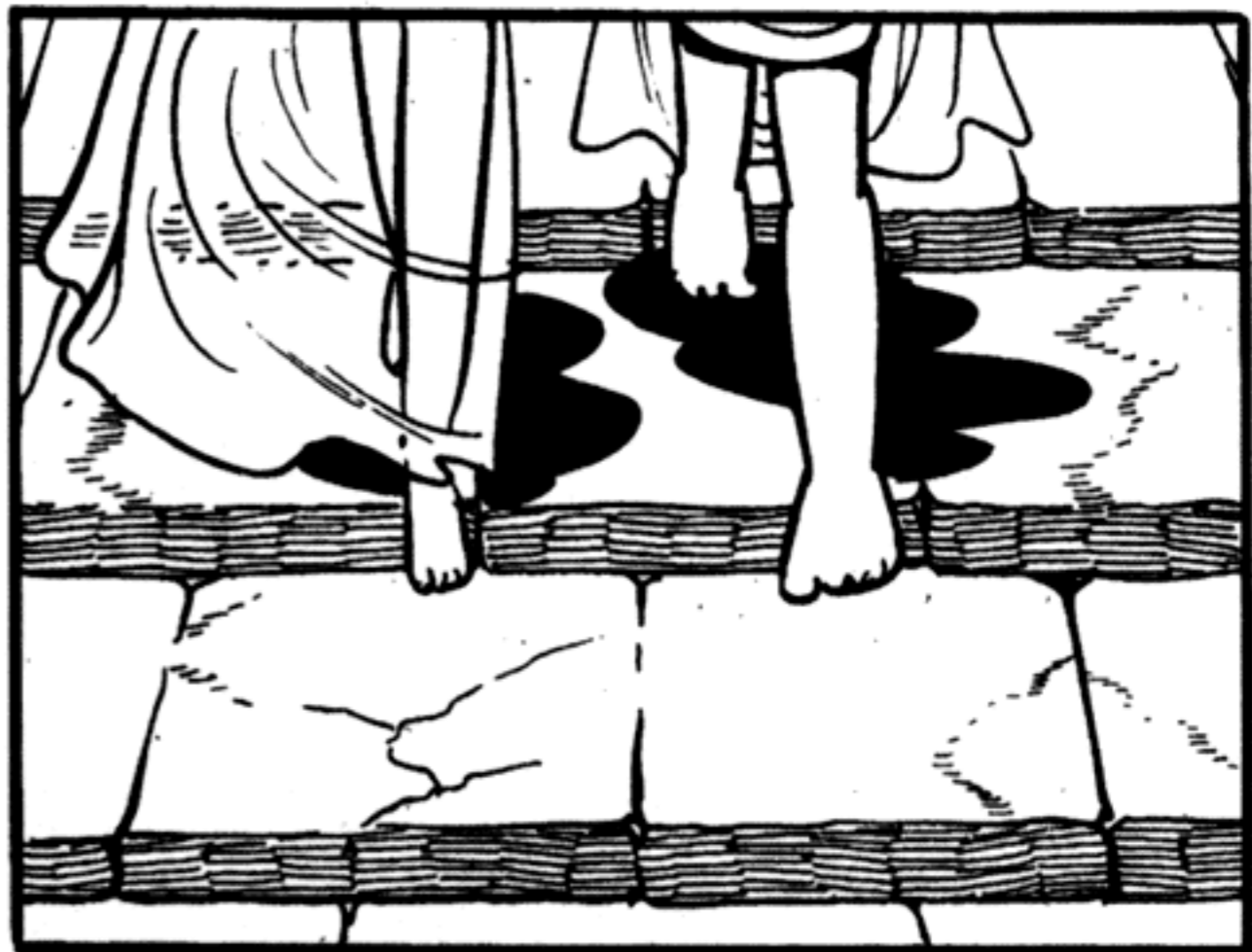
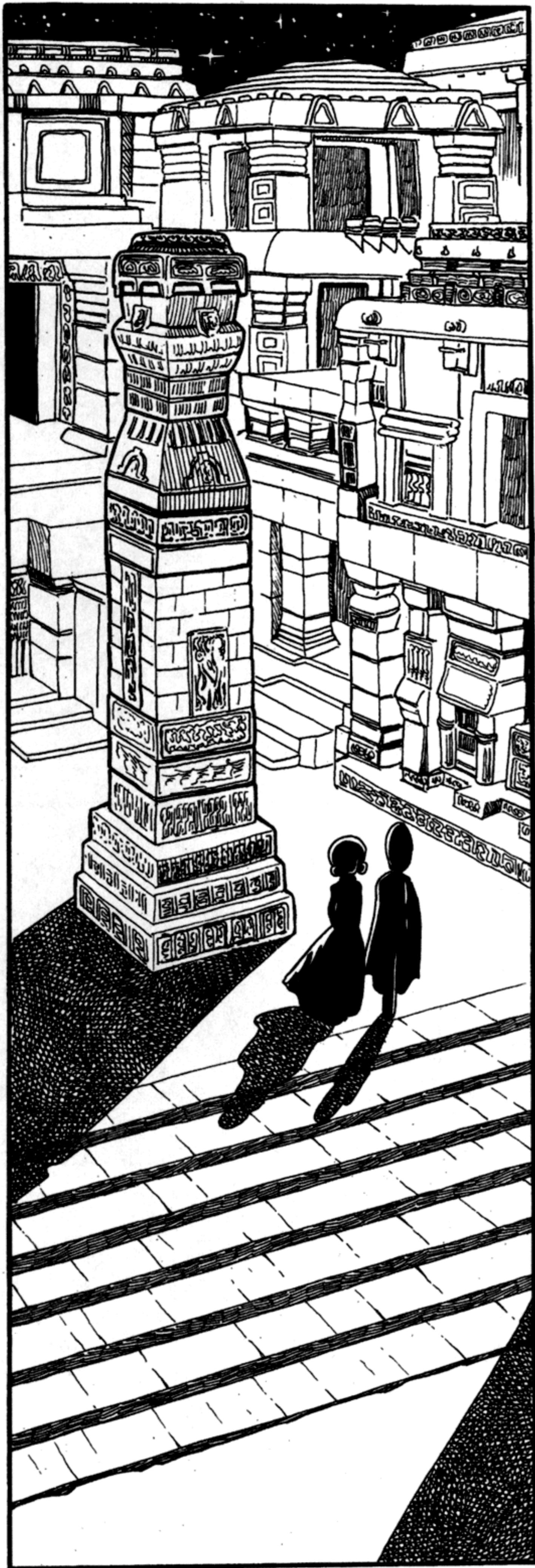
IT IS HIS MAJESTY KING PRASENAJIT'S WISH...

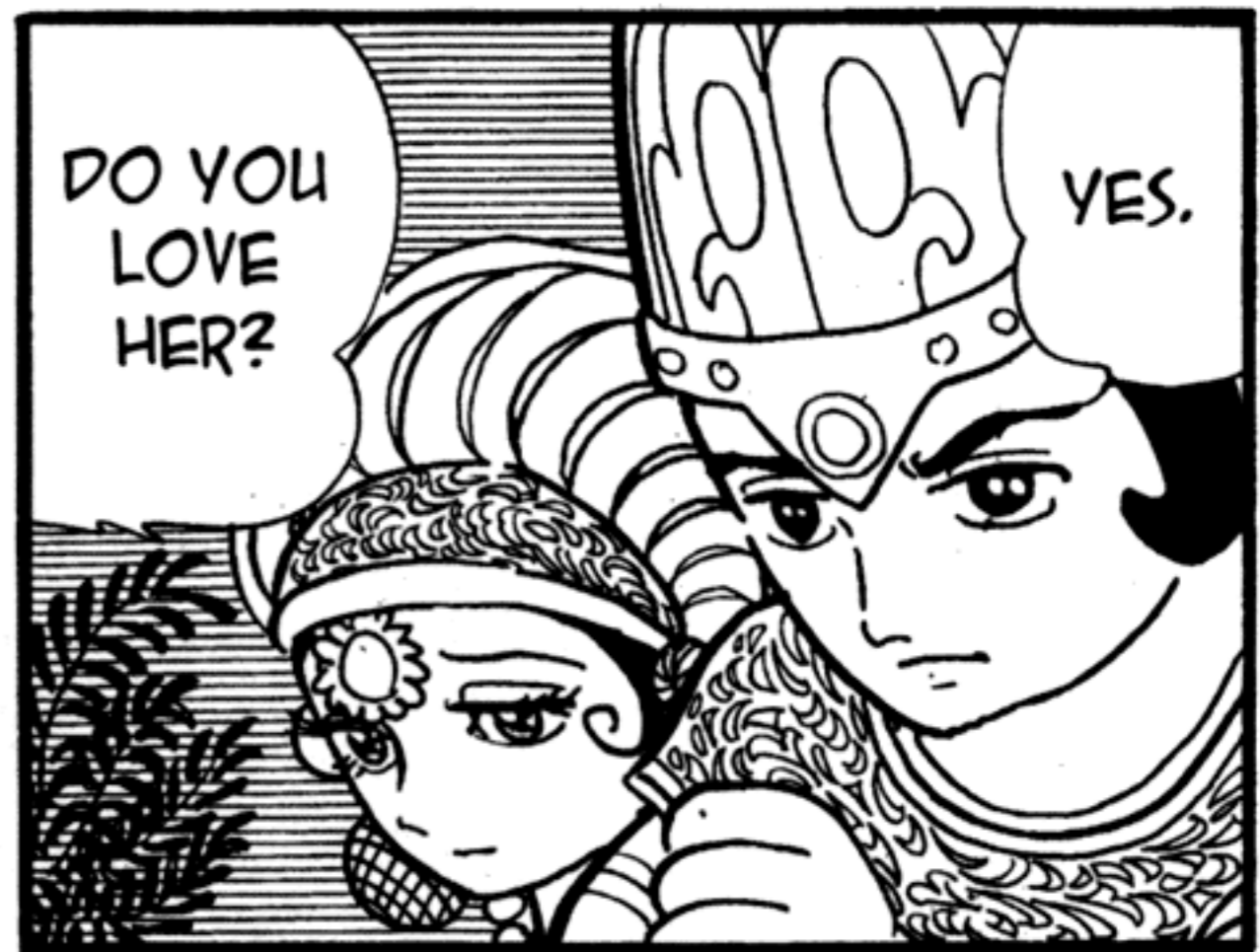
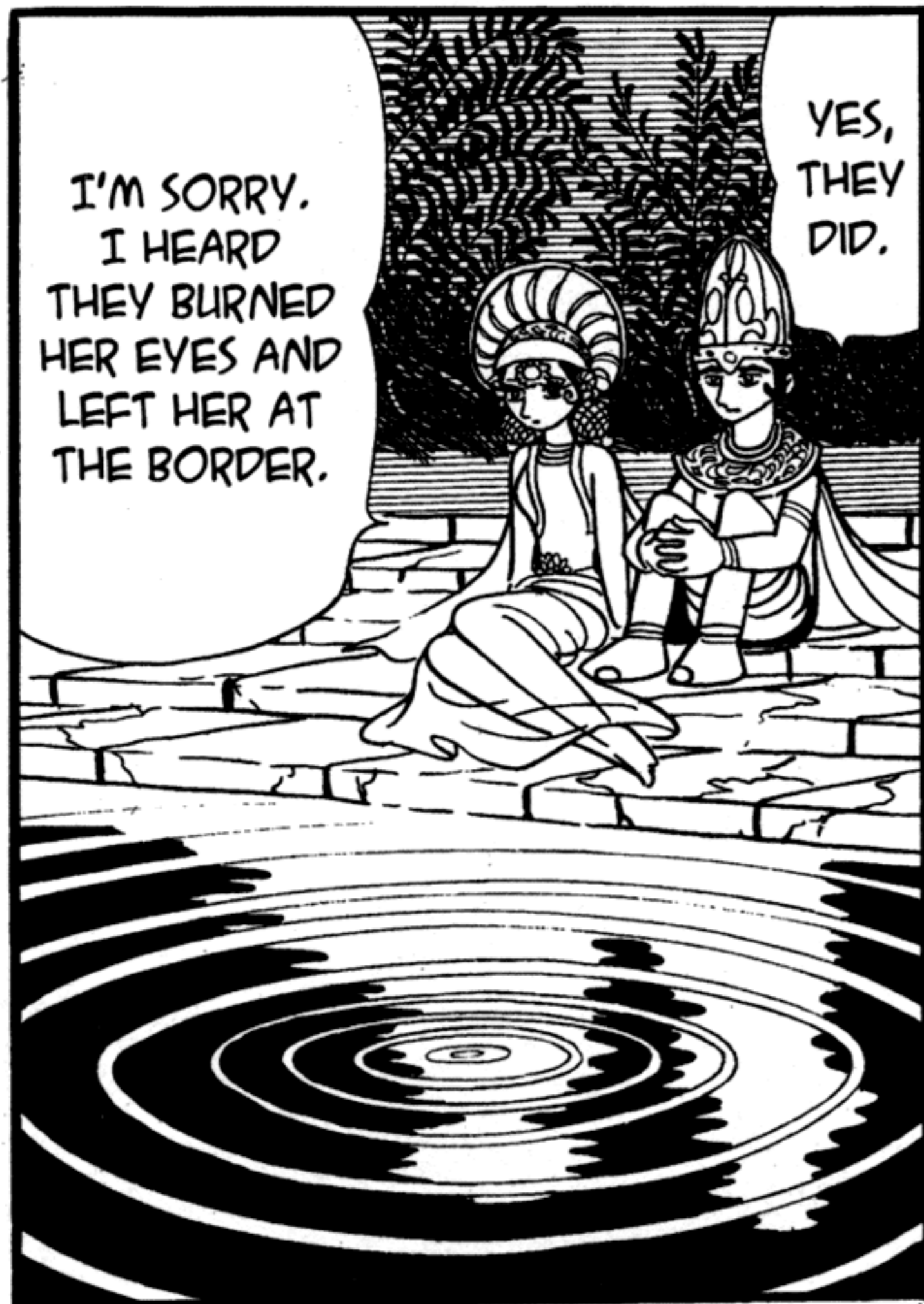
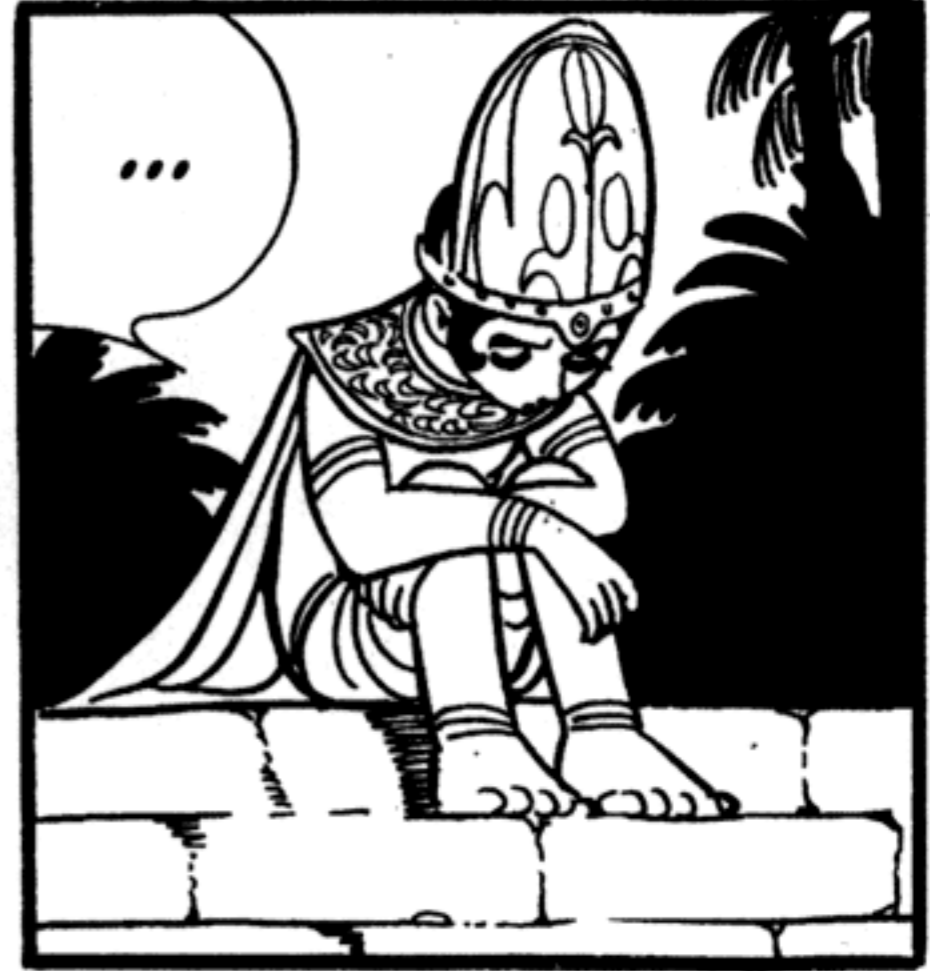
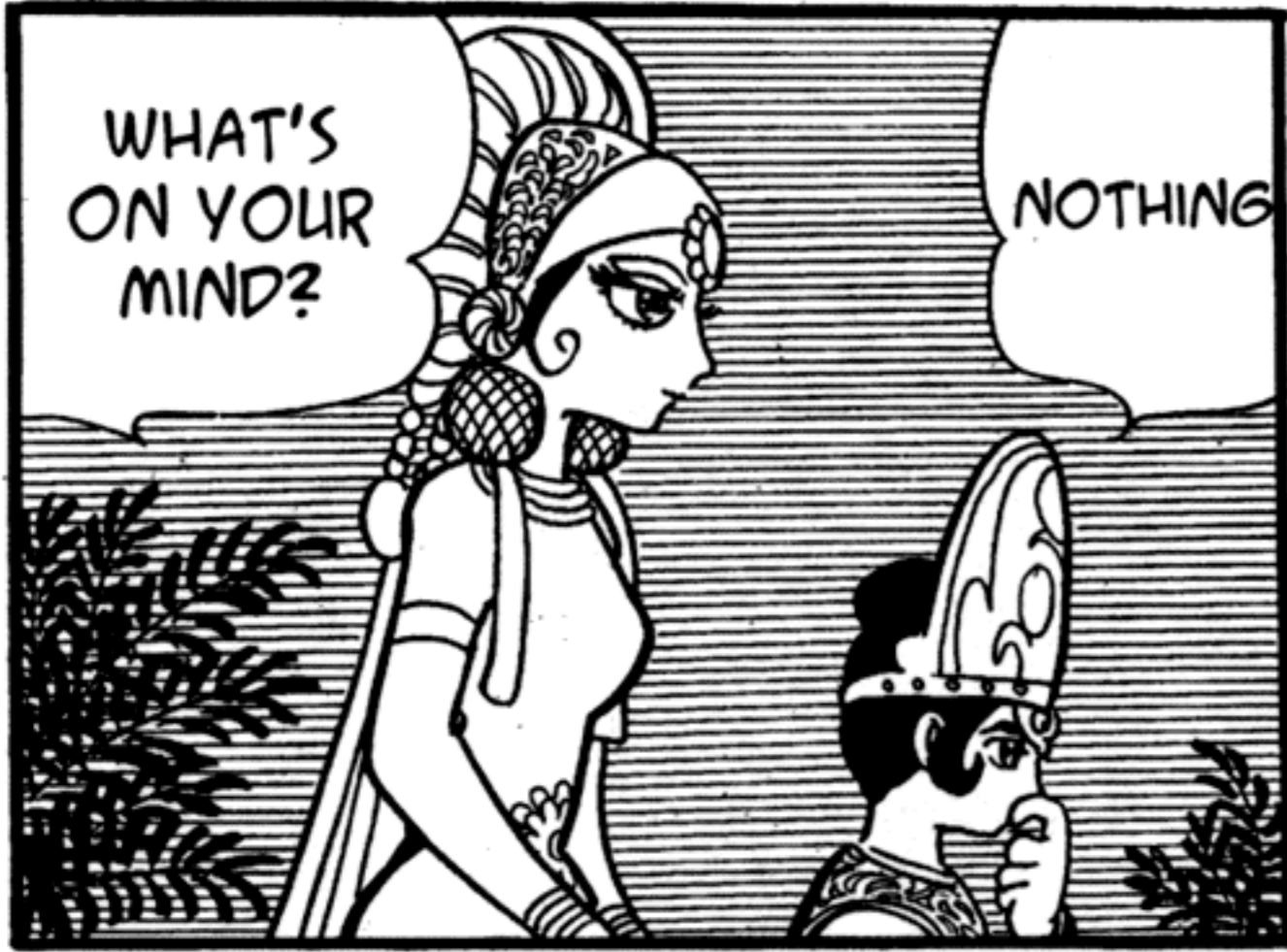


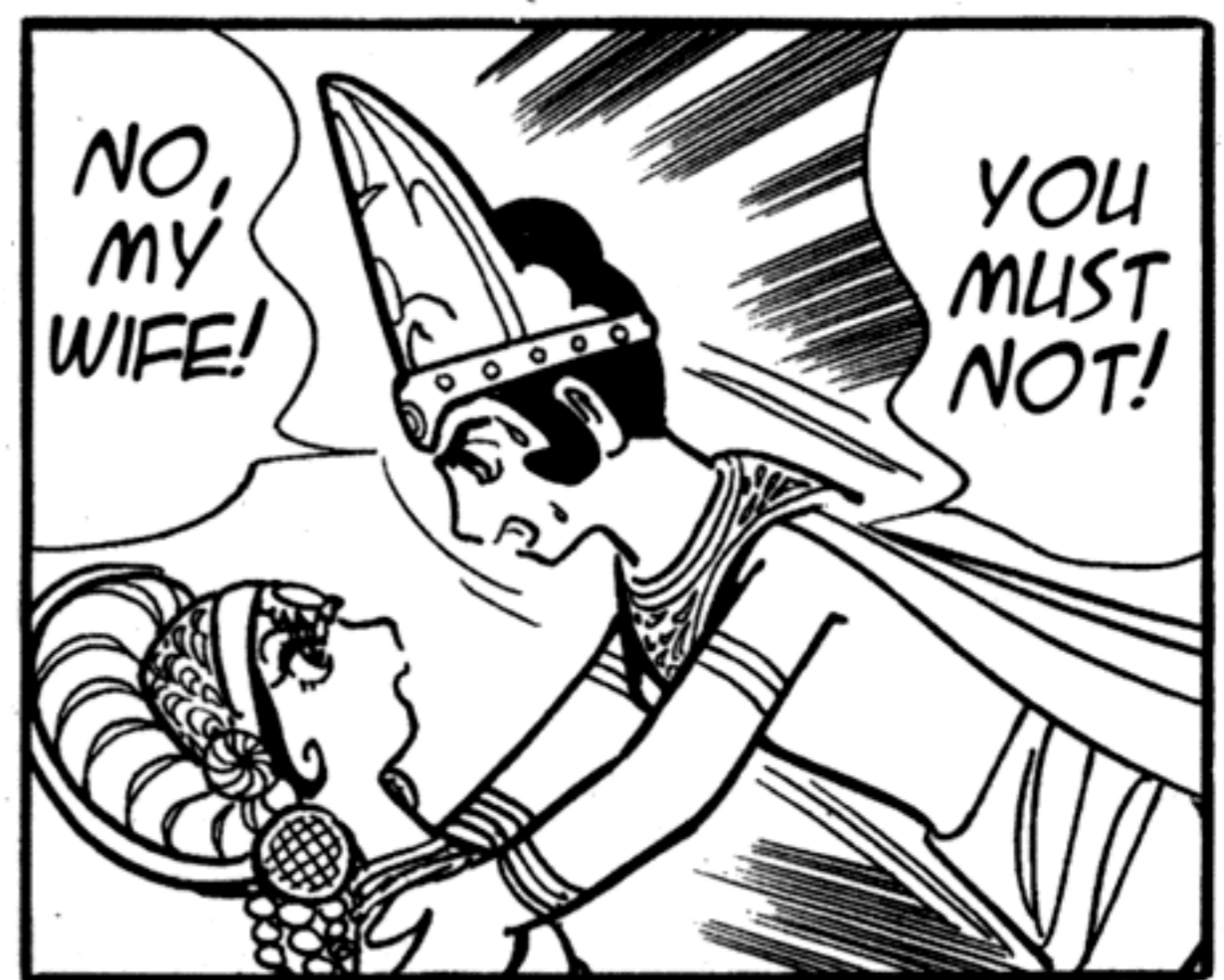
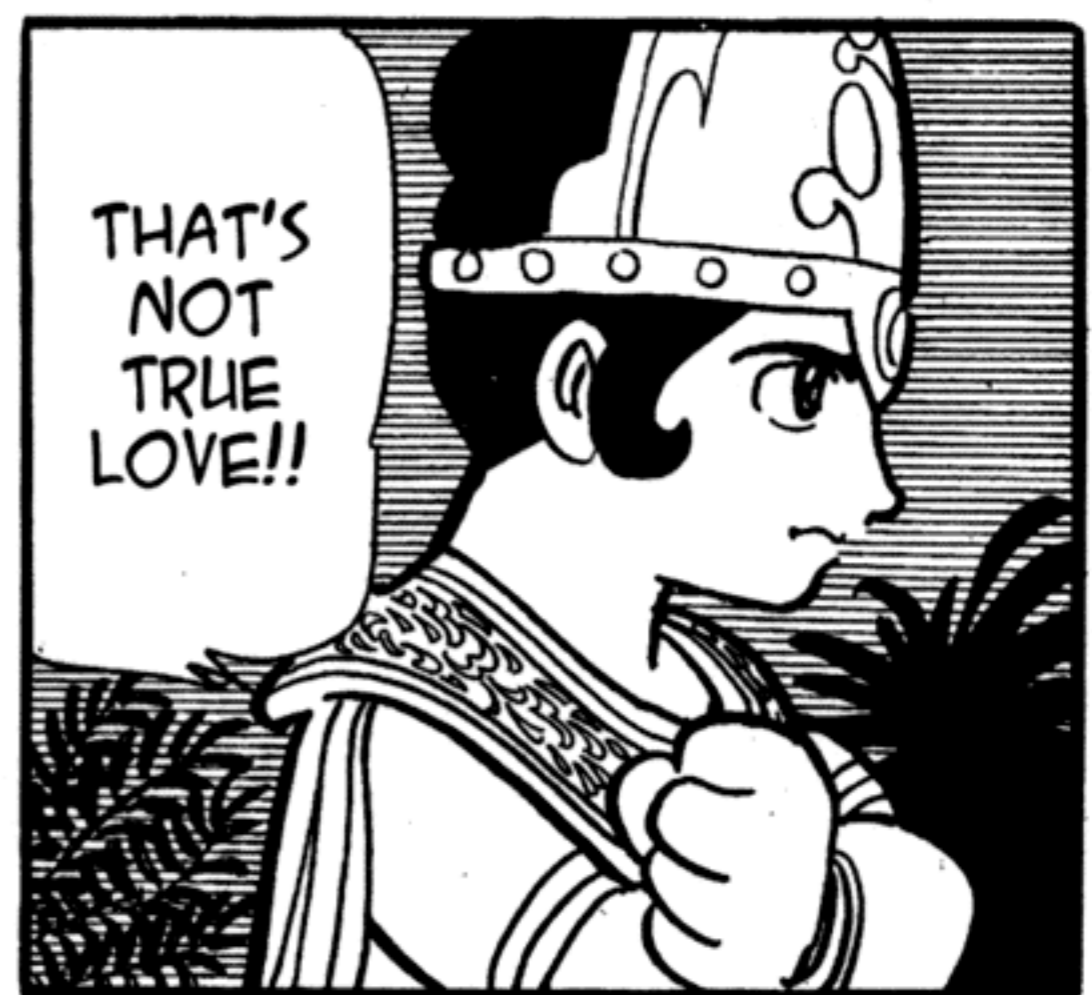
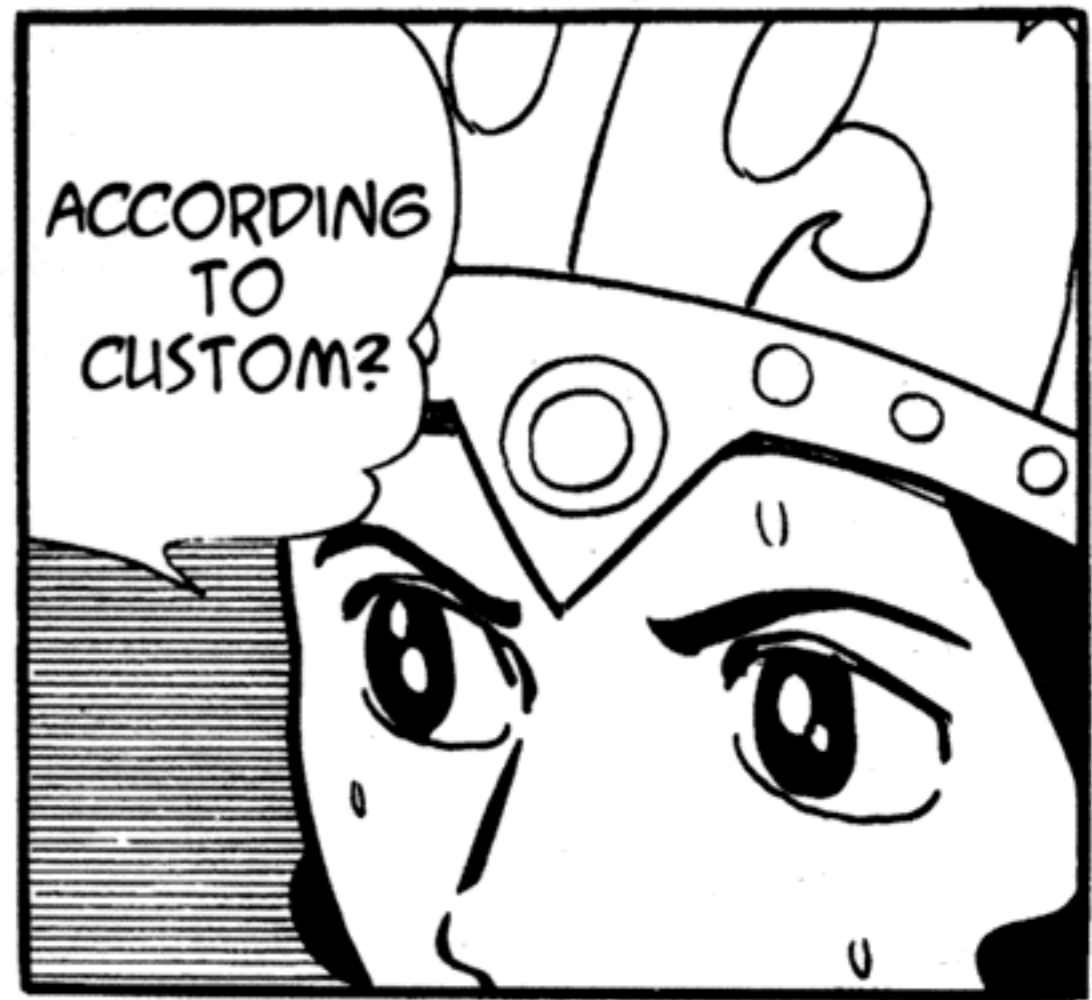
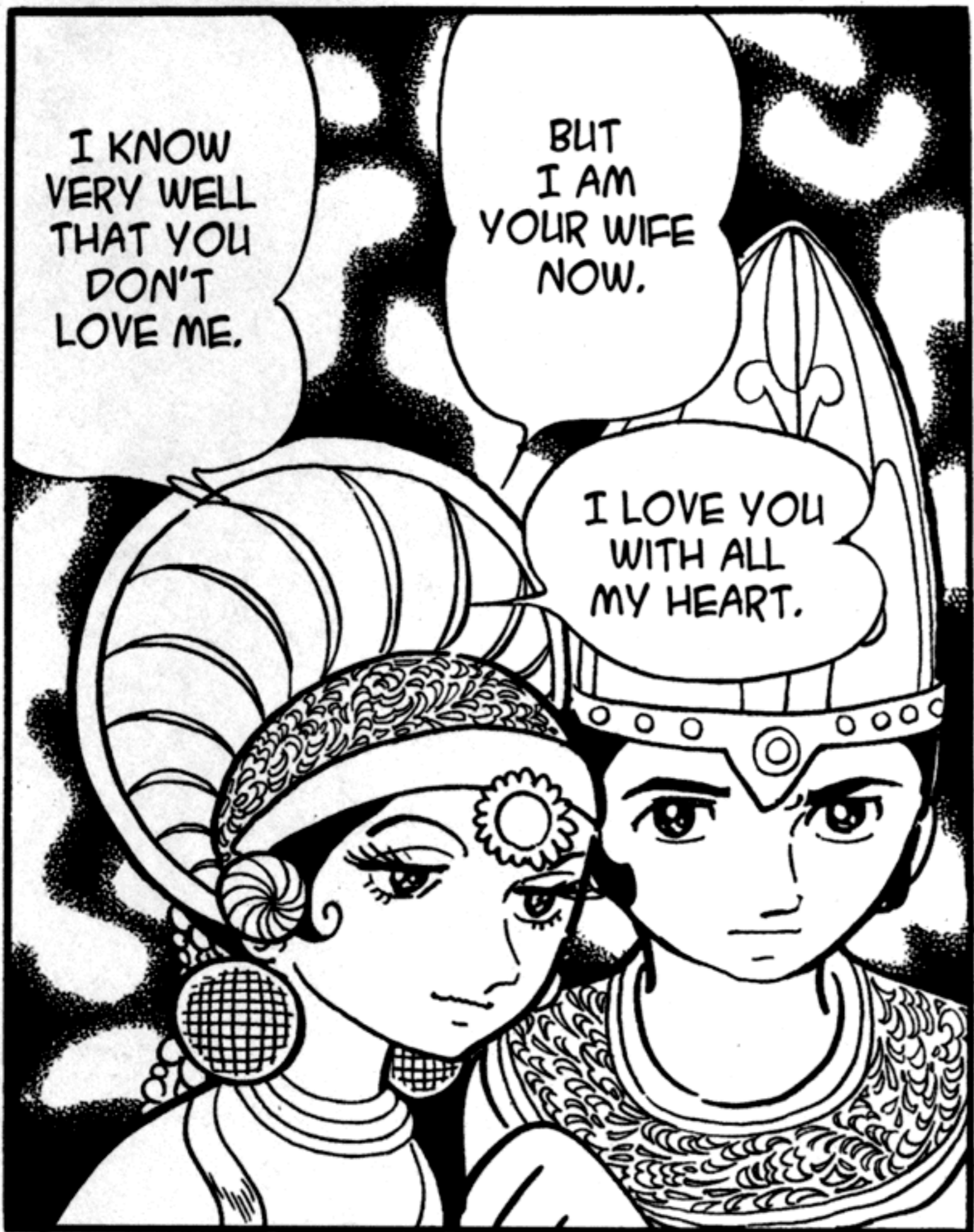
FOR YOU TO COME STUDY IN KOSALA.

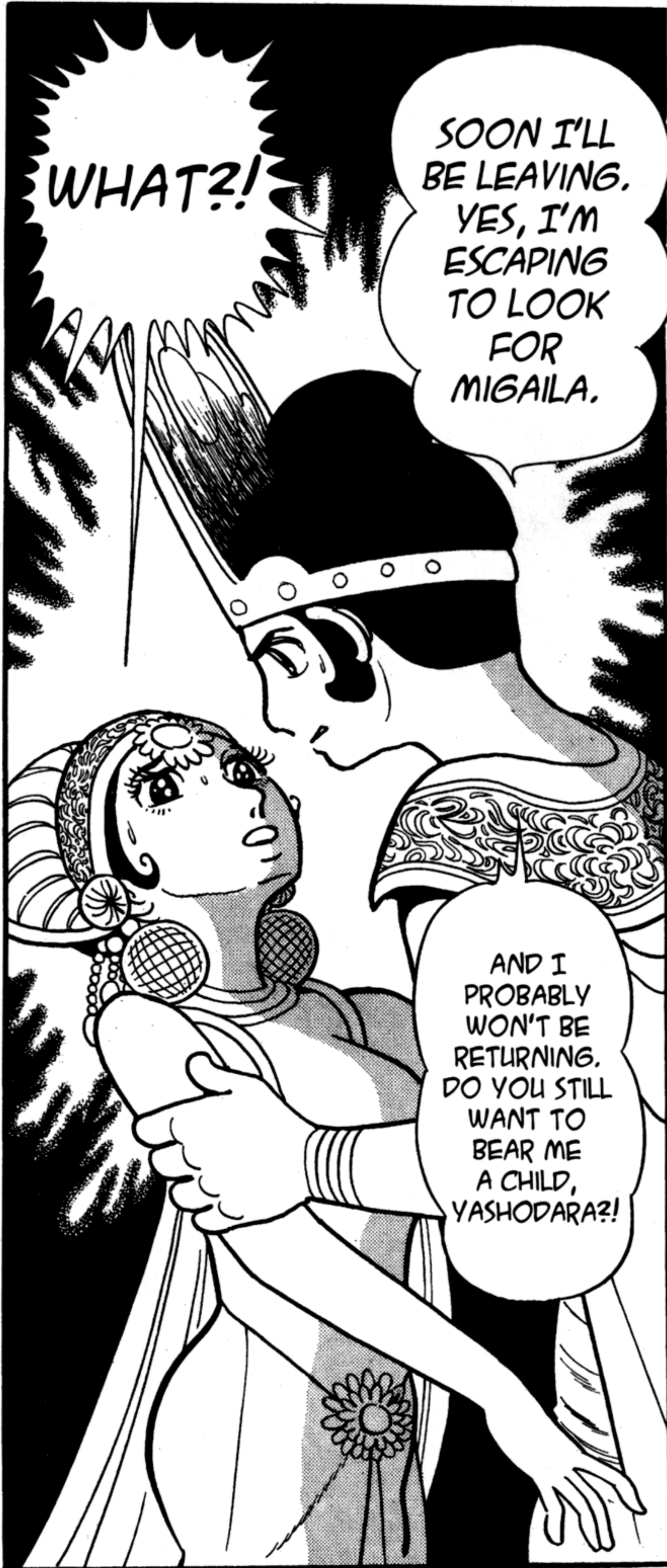
FOR THE SAKE OF YOUR COUNTRY, AND FOR YOUR OWN.











WHAT?!

SOON I'LL
BE LEAVING.
YES, I'M
ESCAPING
TO LOOK
FOR
MIGAILA.

AND I
PROBABLY
WON'T BE
RETURNING.
DO YOU STILL
WANT TO
BEAR ME
A CHILD,
YASHODARA?!

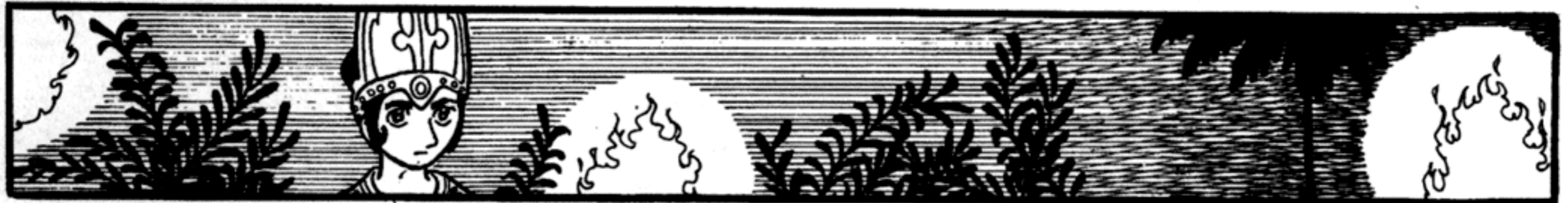
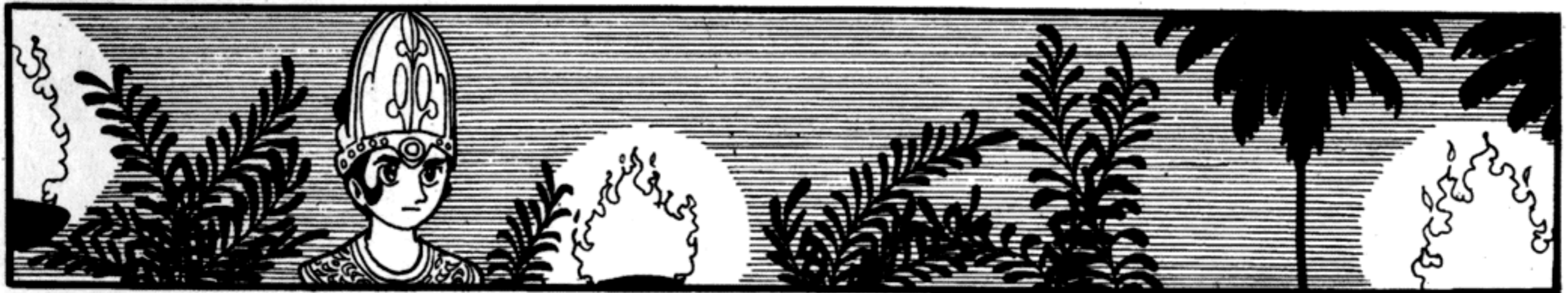
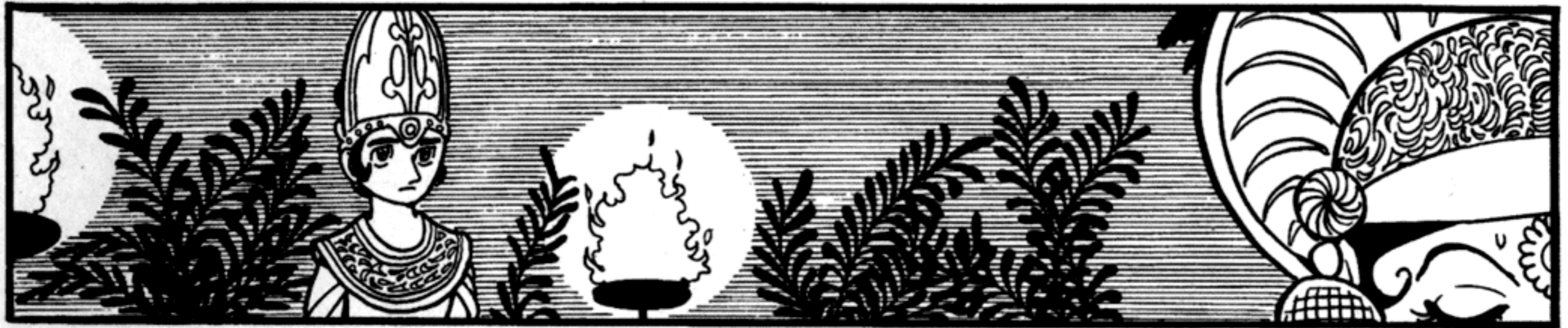


WHAT ARE
YOU SAYING?!
YOU CAN'T
LEAVE THE
CASTLE!!
PLEASE!



IF I
BEGET
A CHILD,
THAT
WILL BE
THE END.

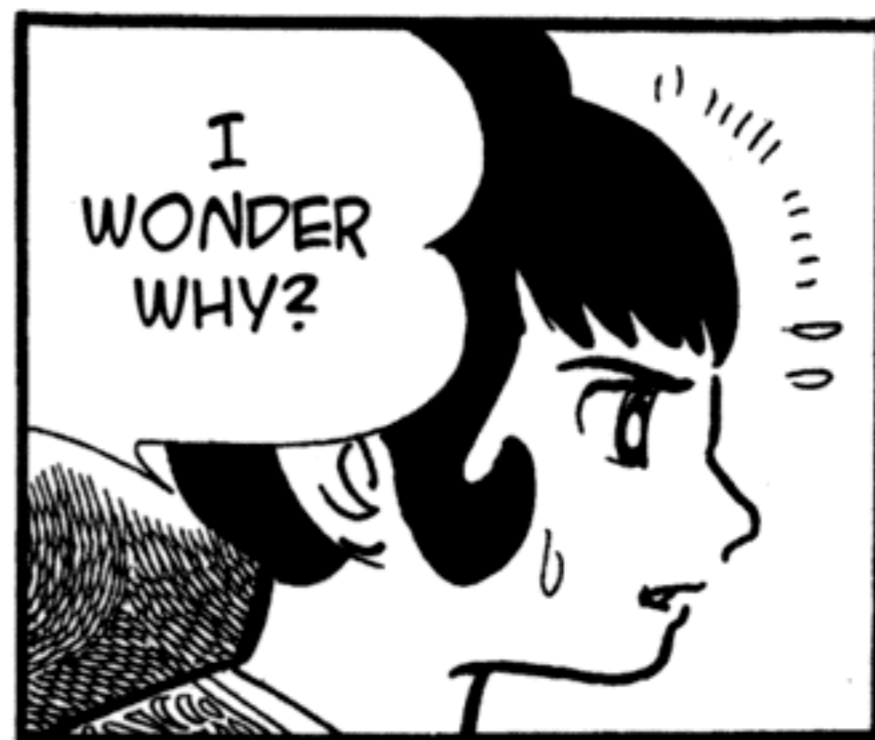
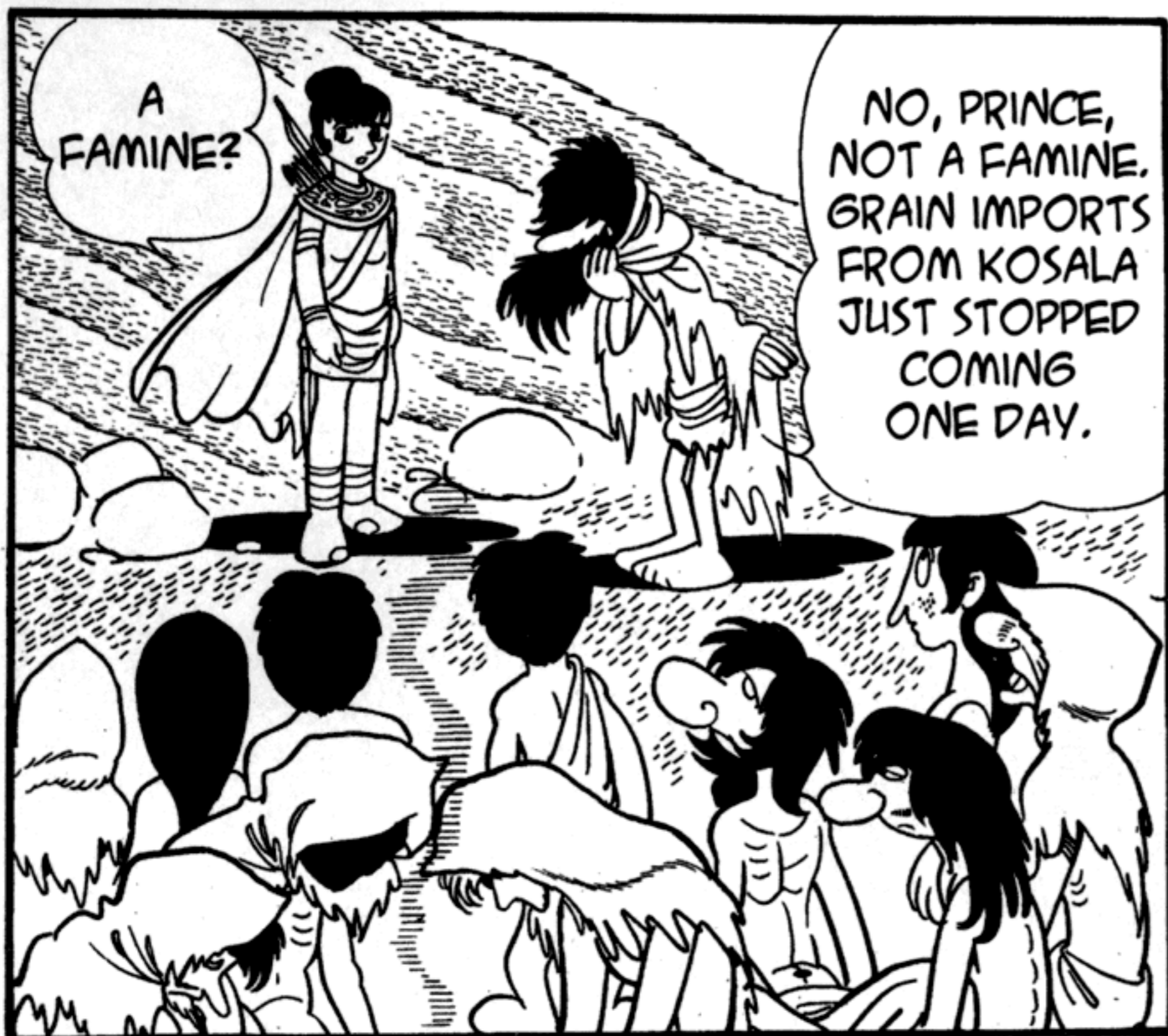
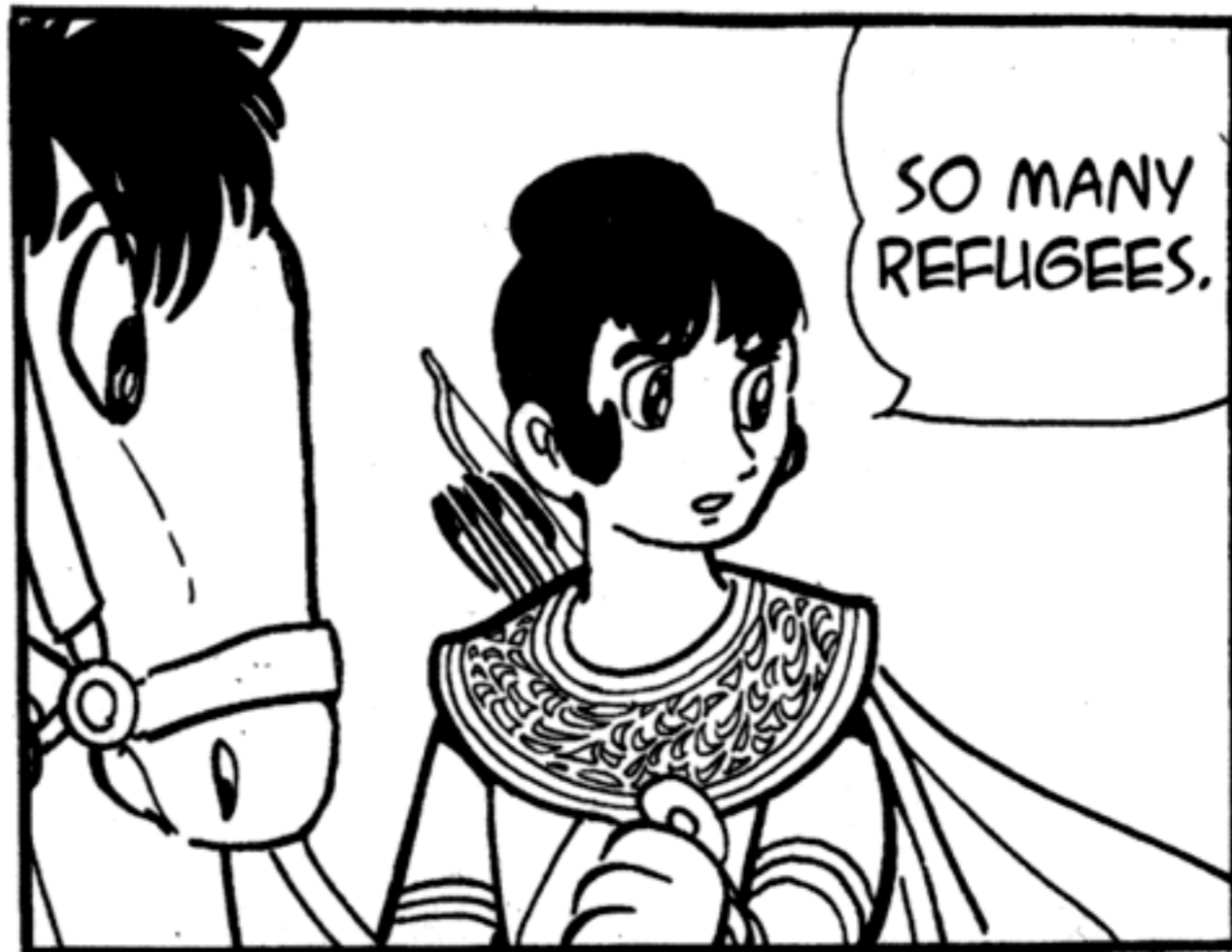
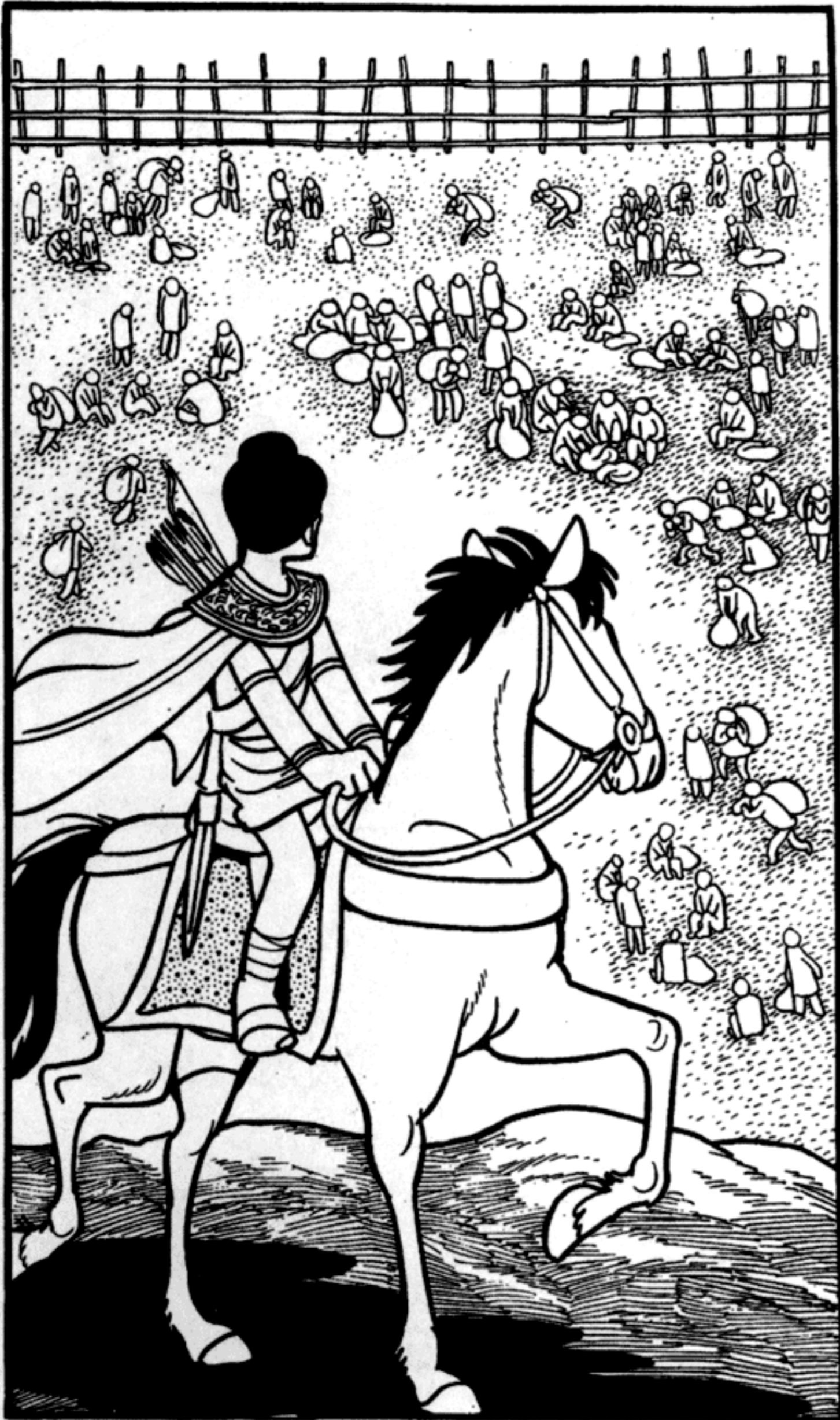
THE CHILD
WILL BE MY
SHACKLES,
AND I'LL BE
TIED DOWN
FOREVER.

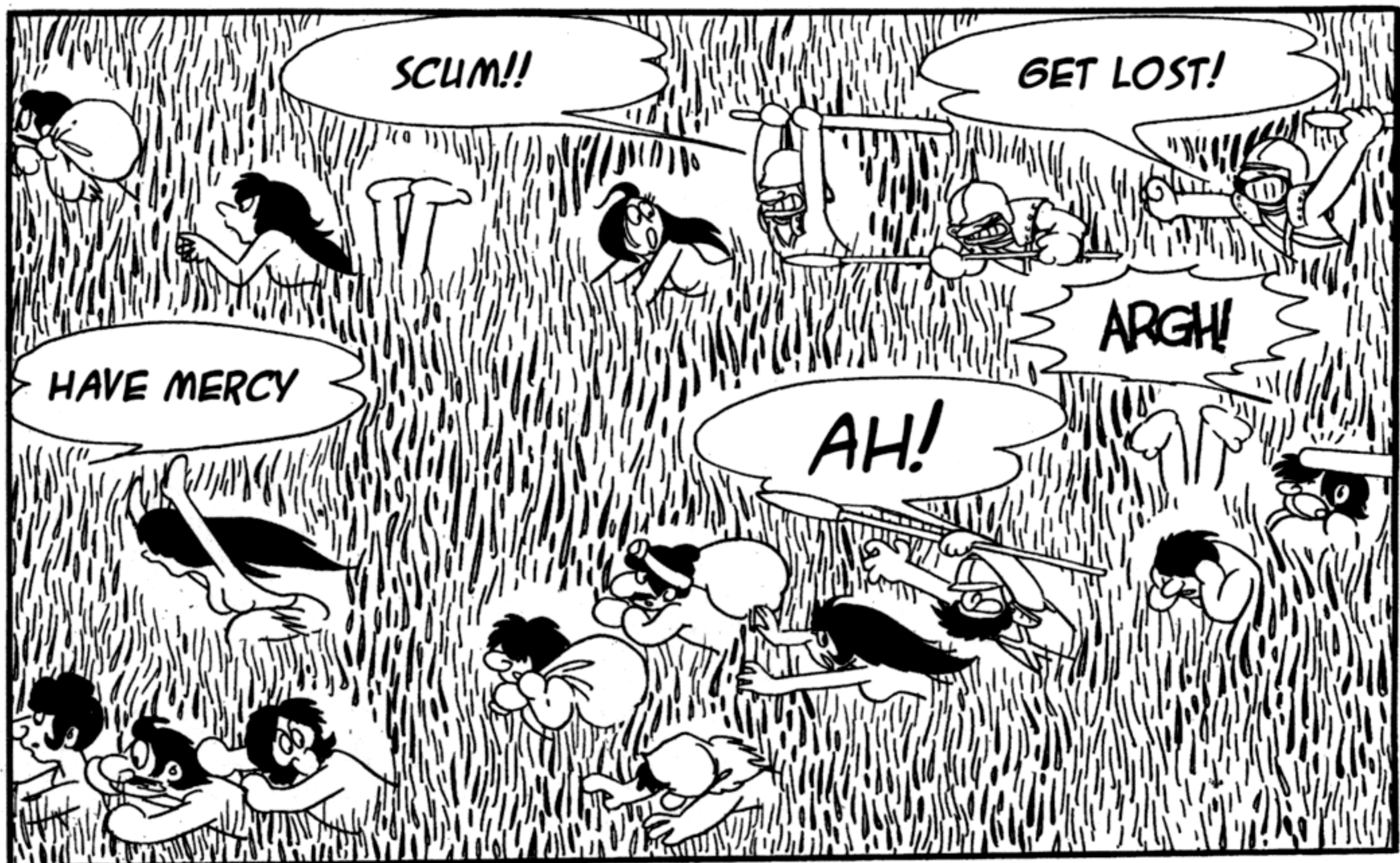
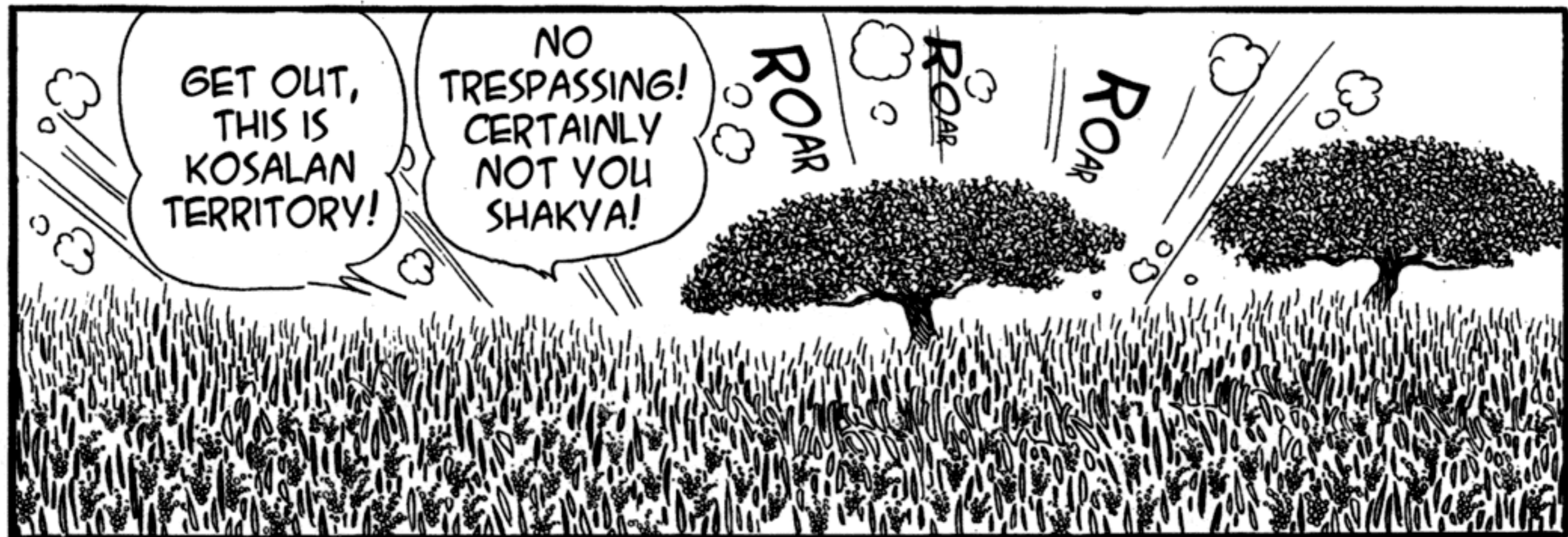
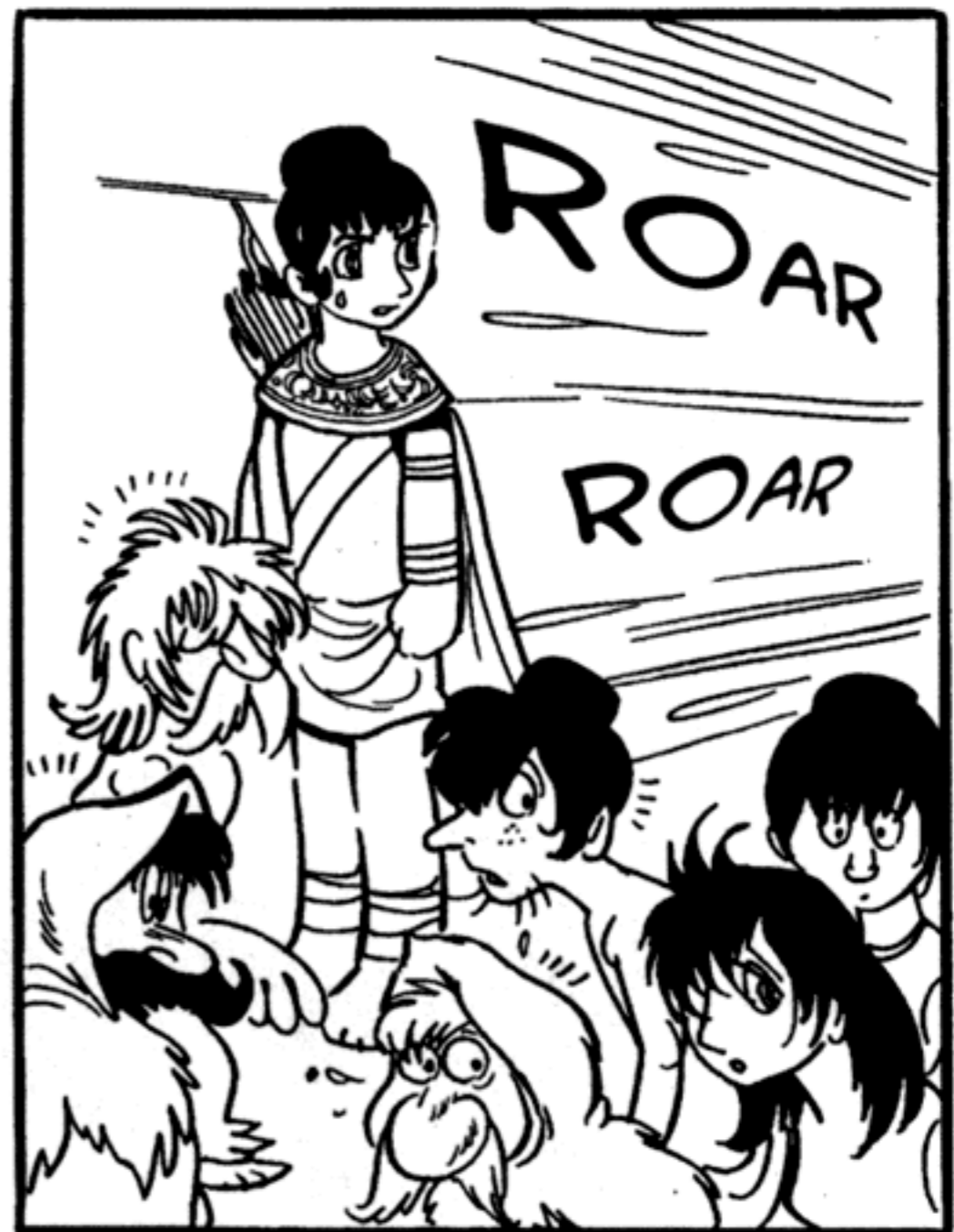


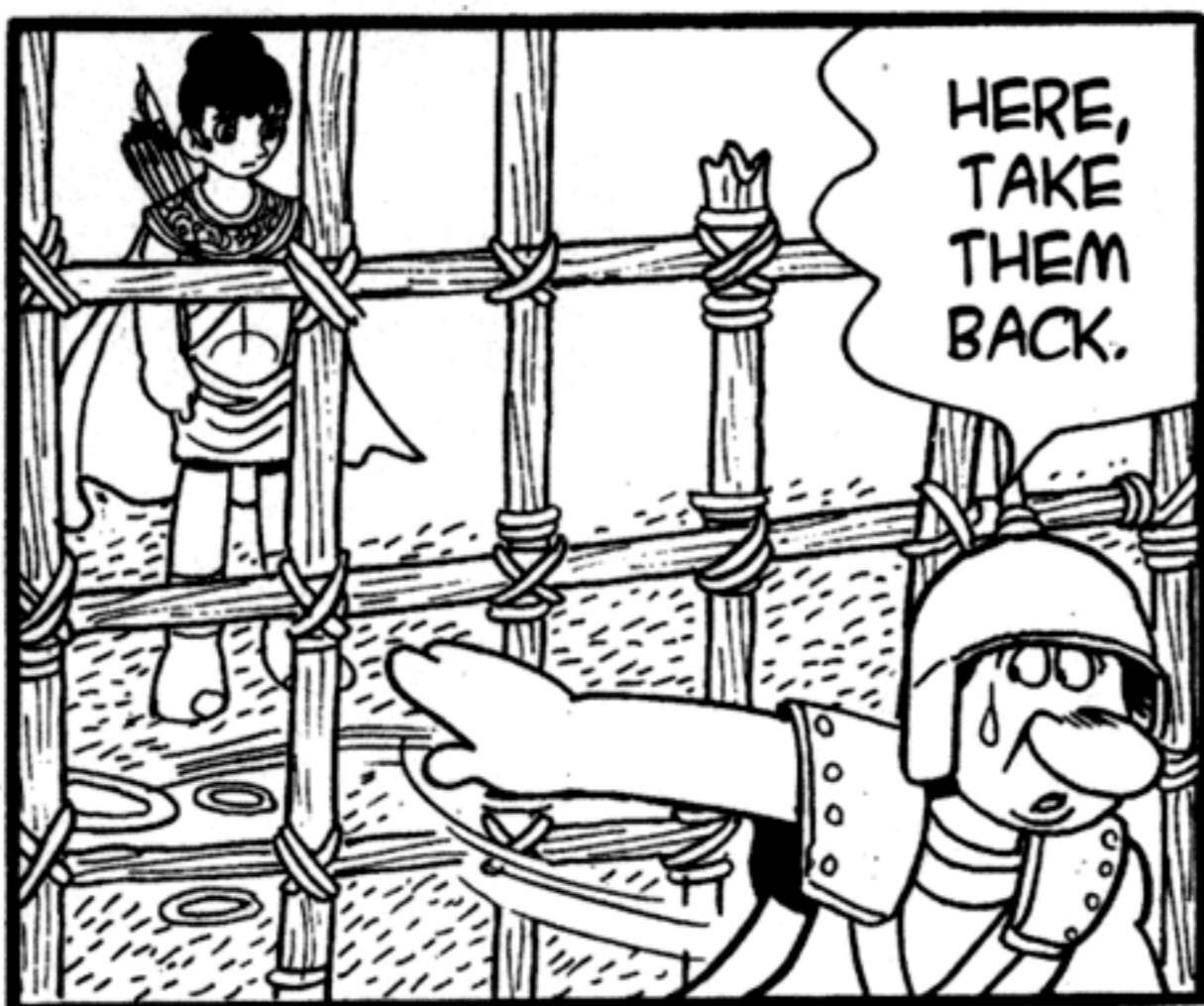
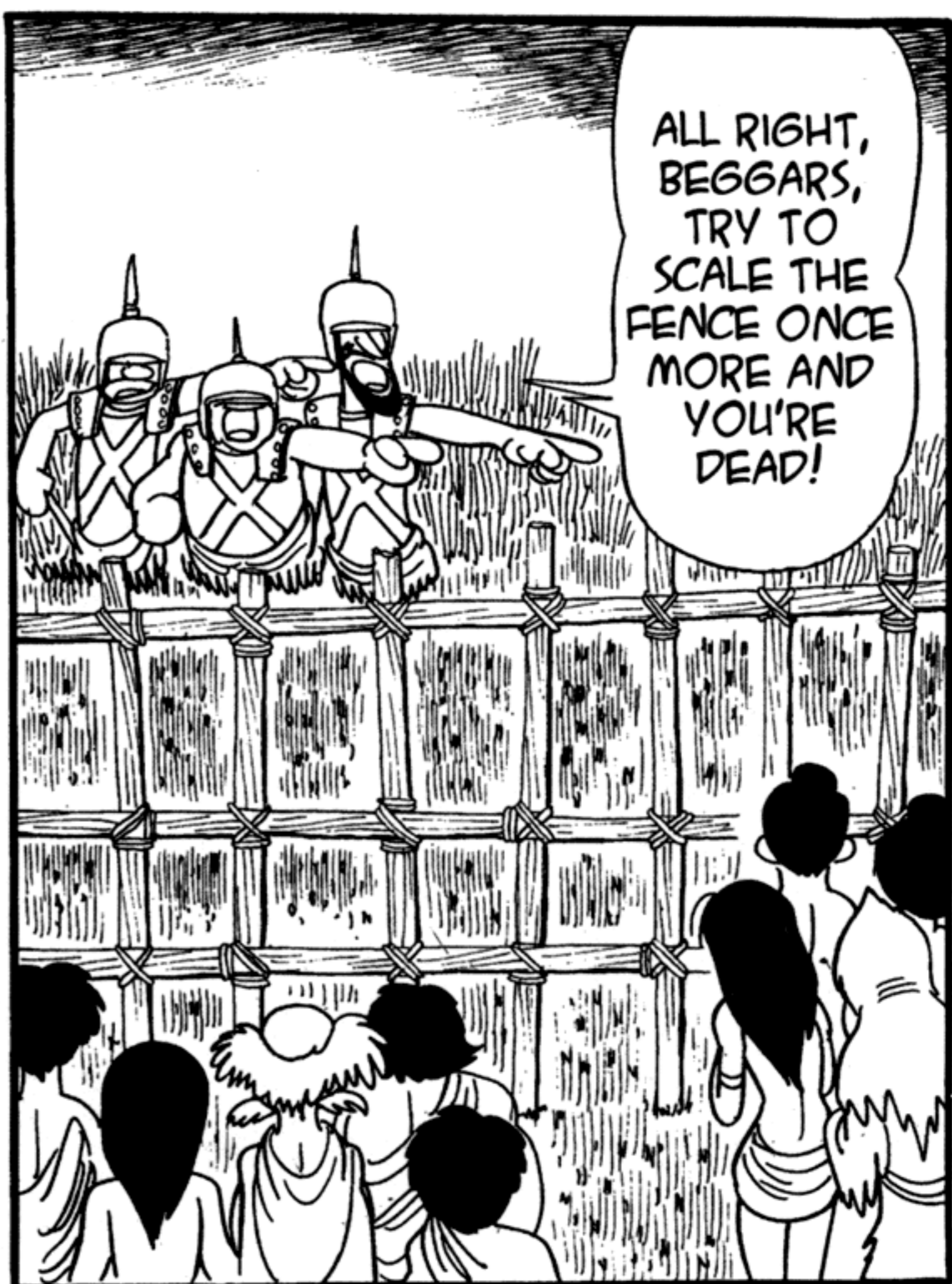
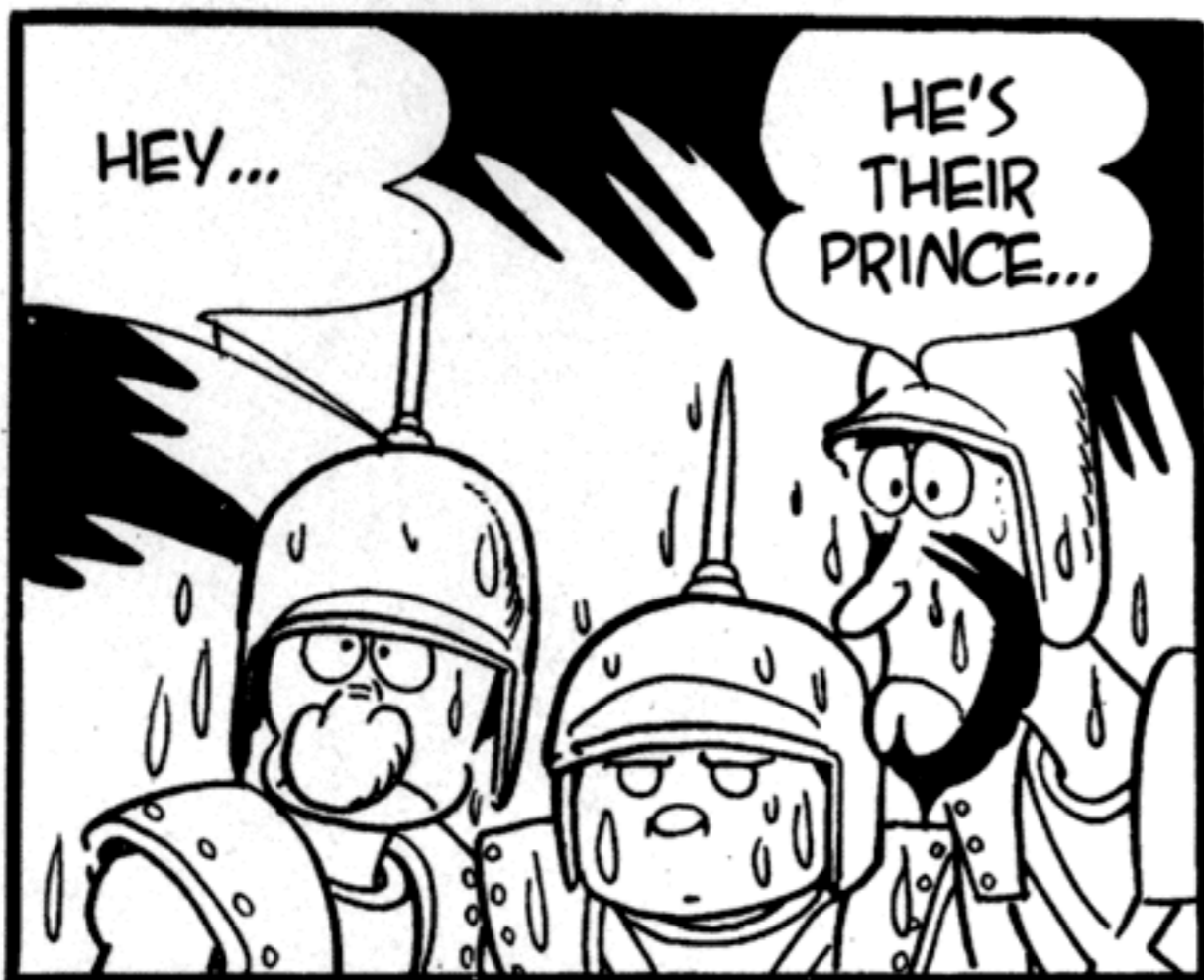
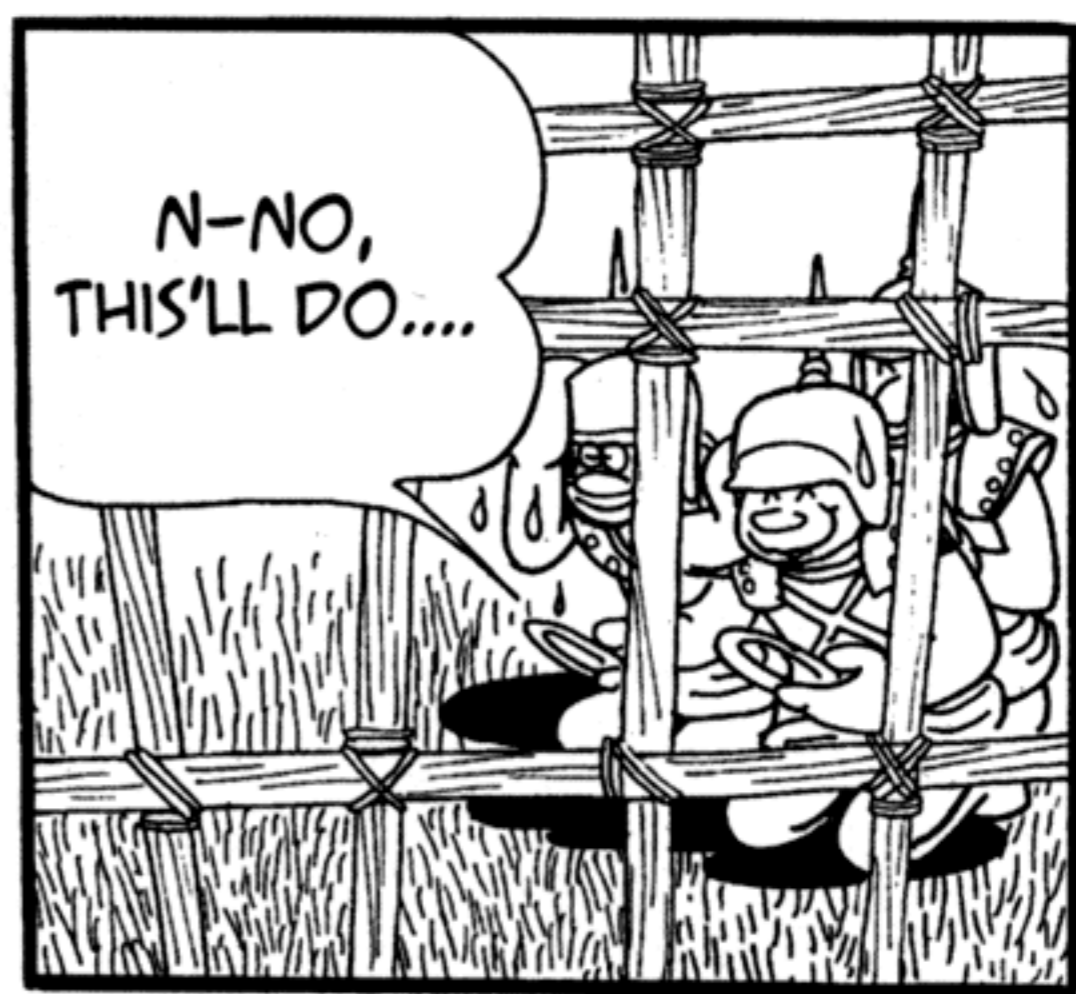
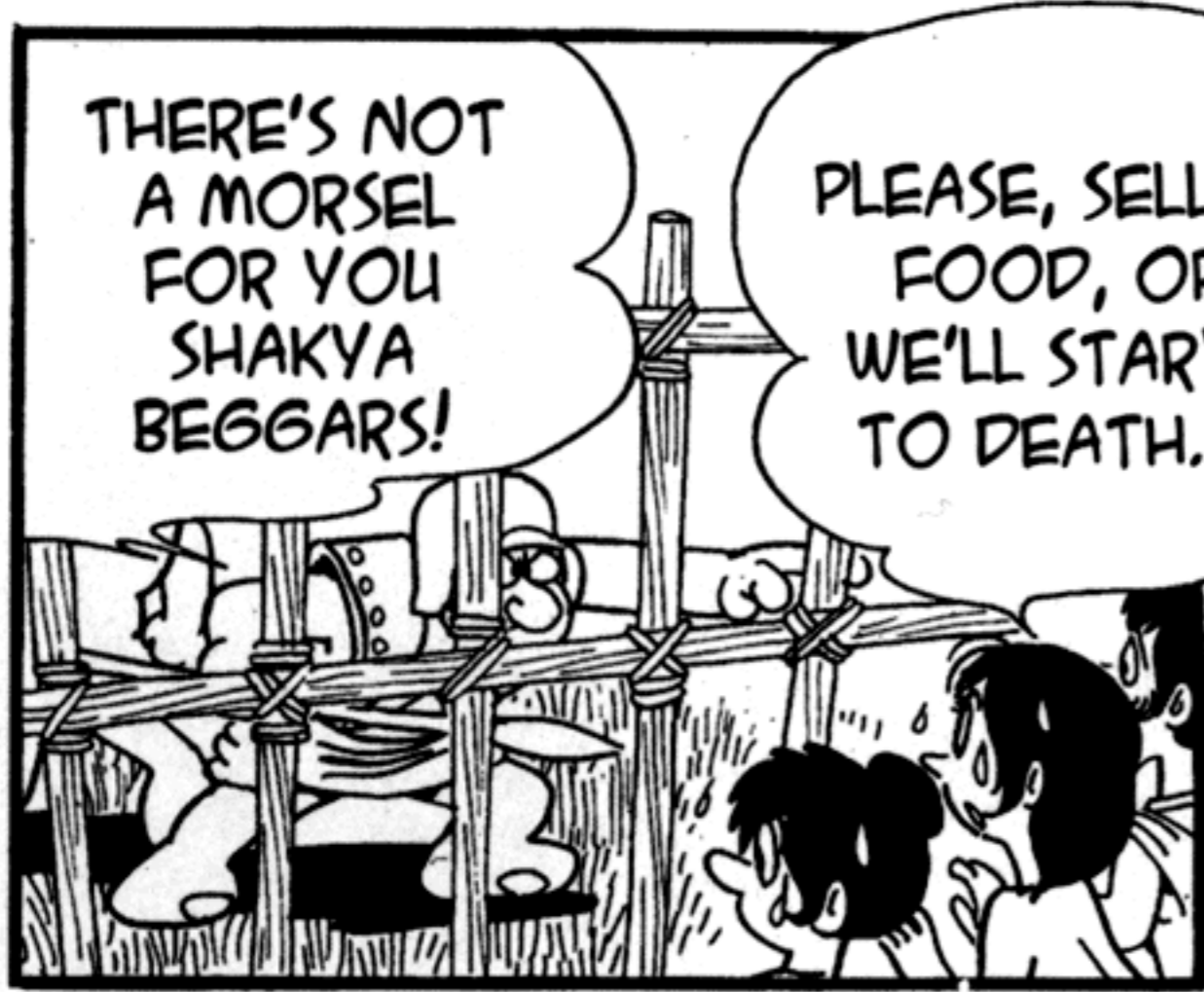


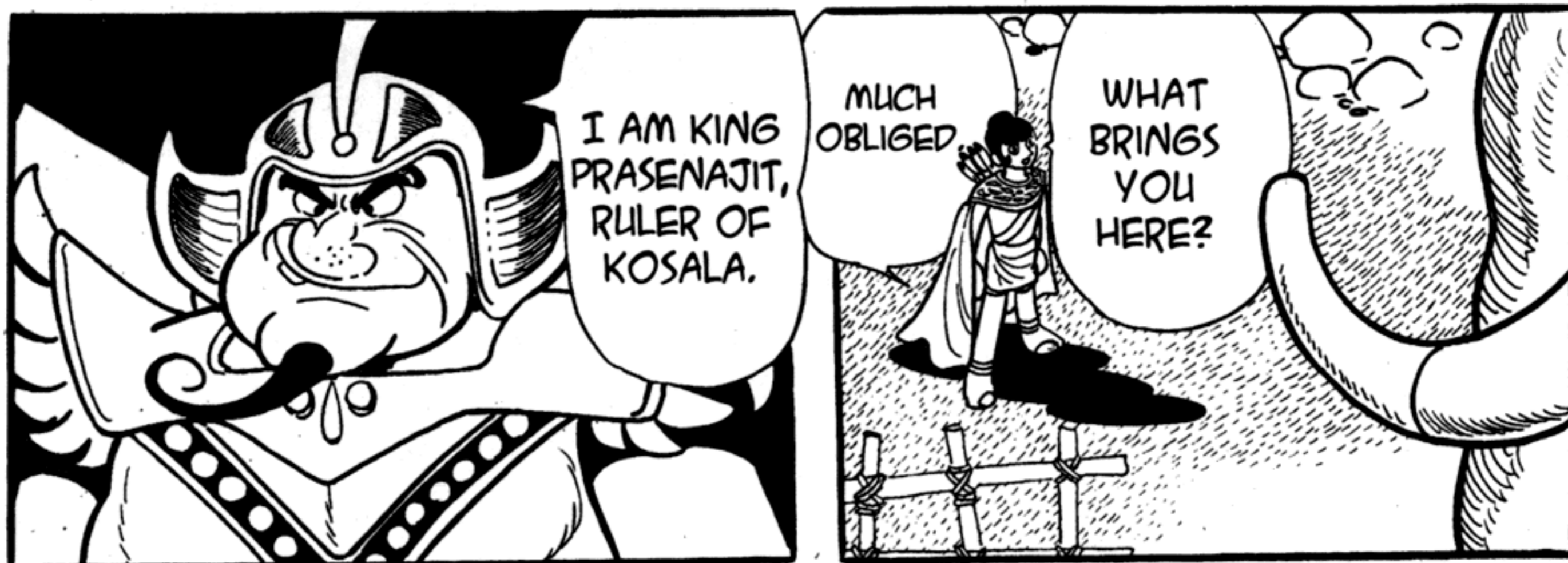
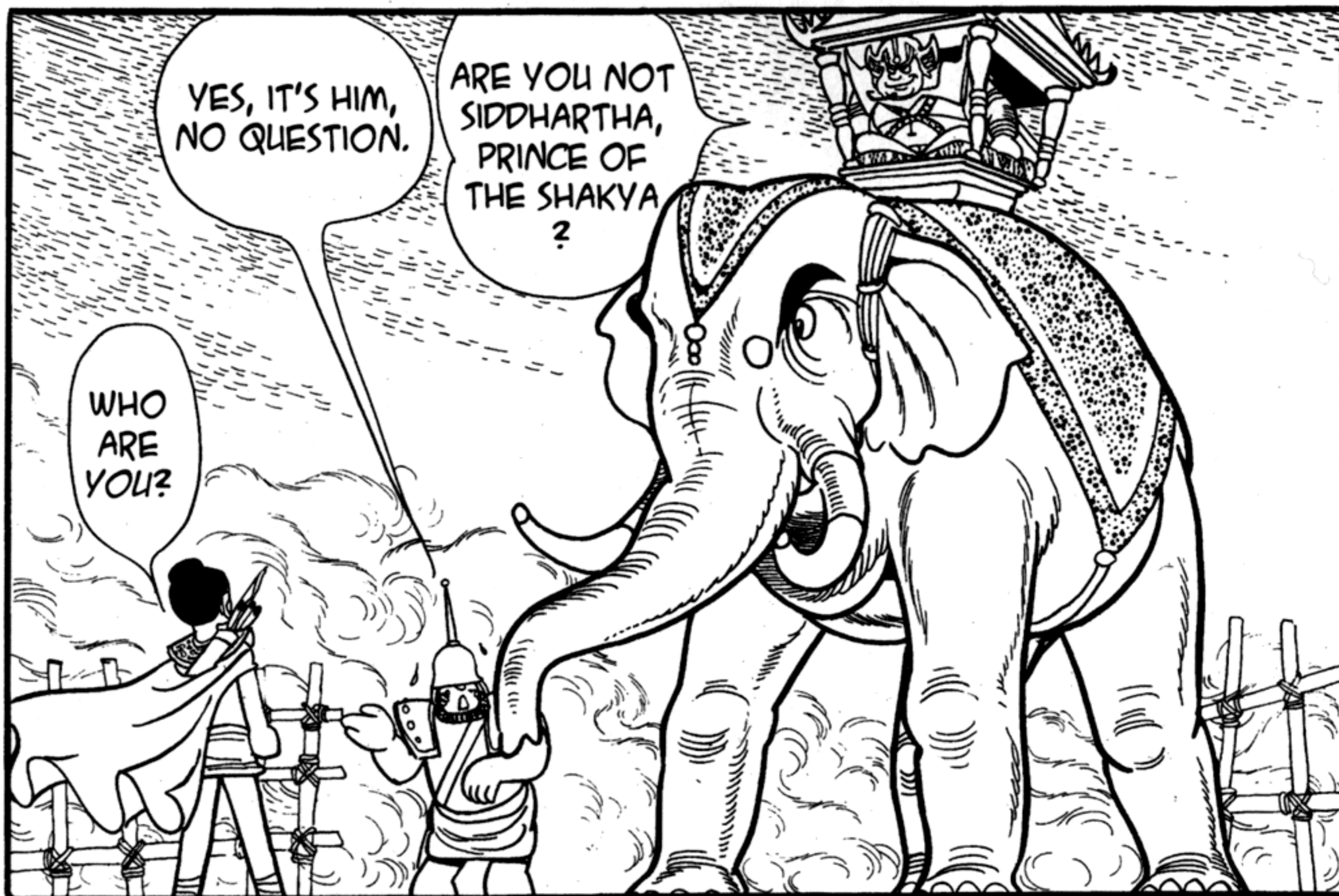
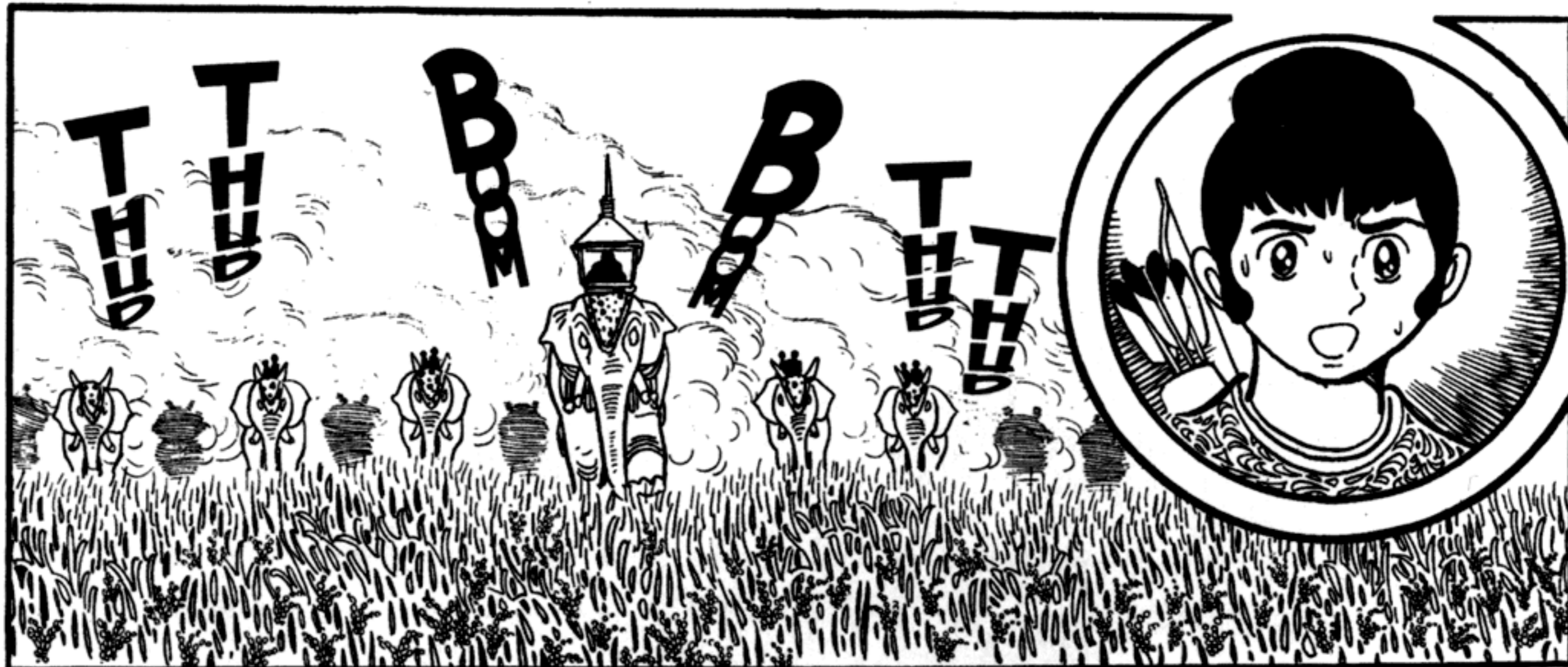


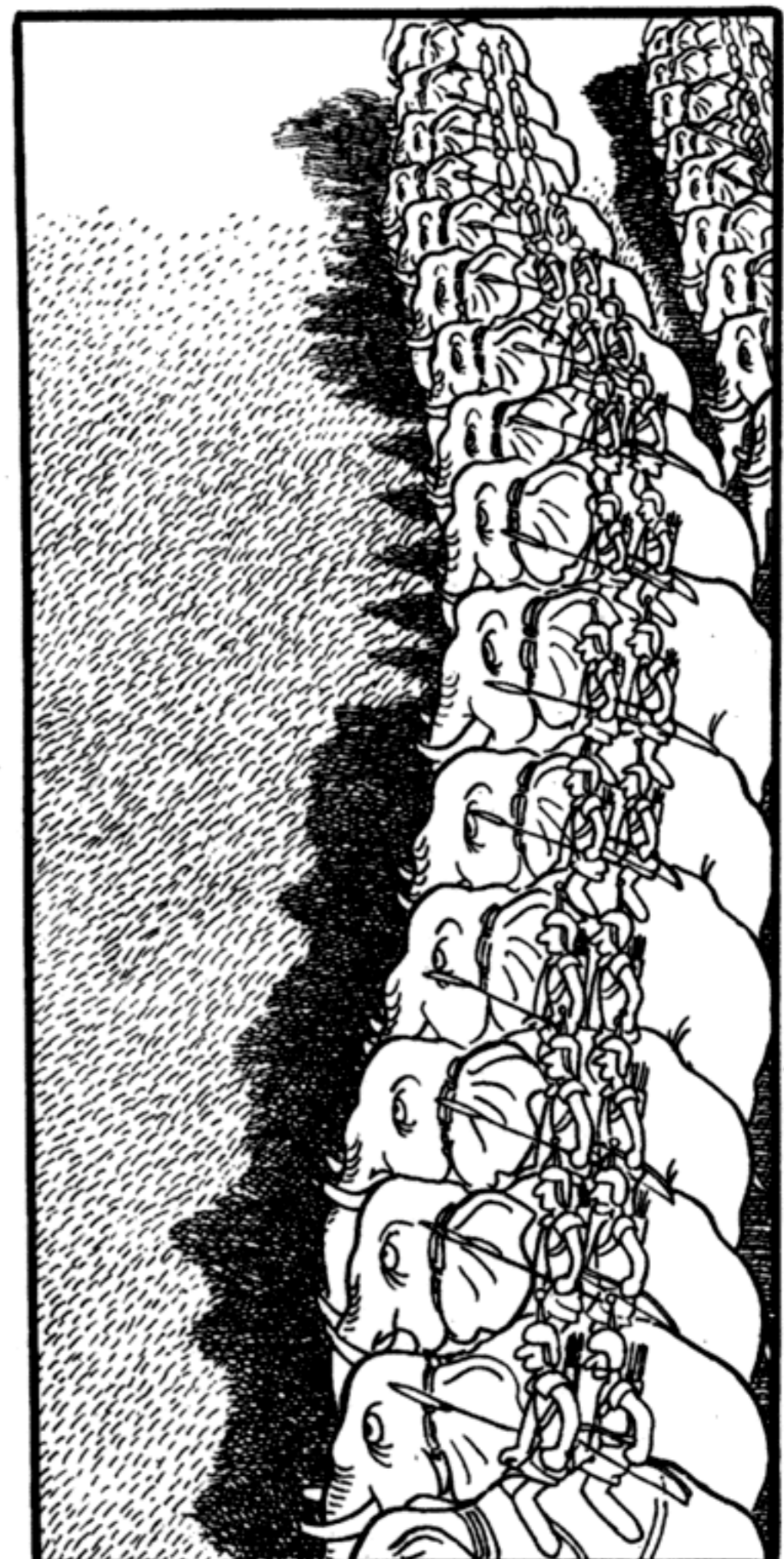
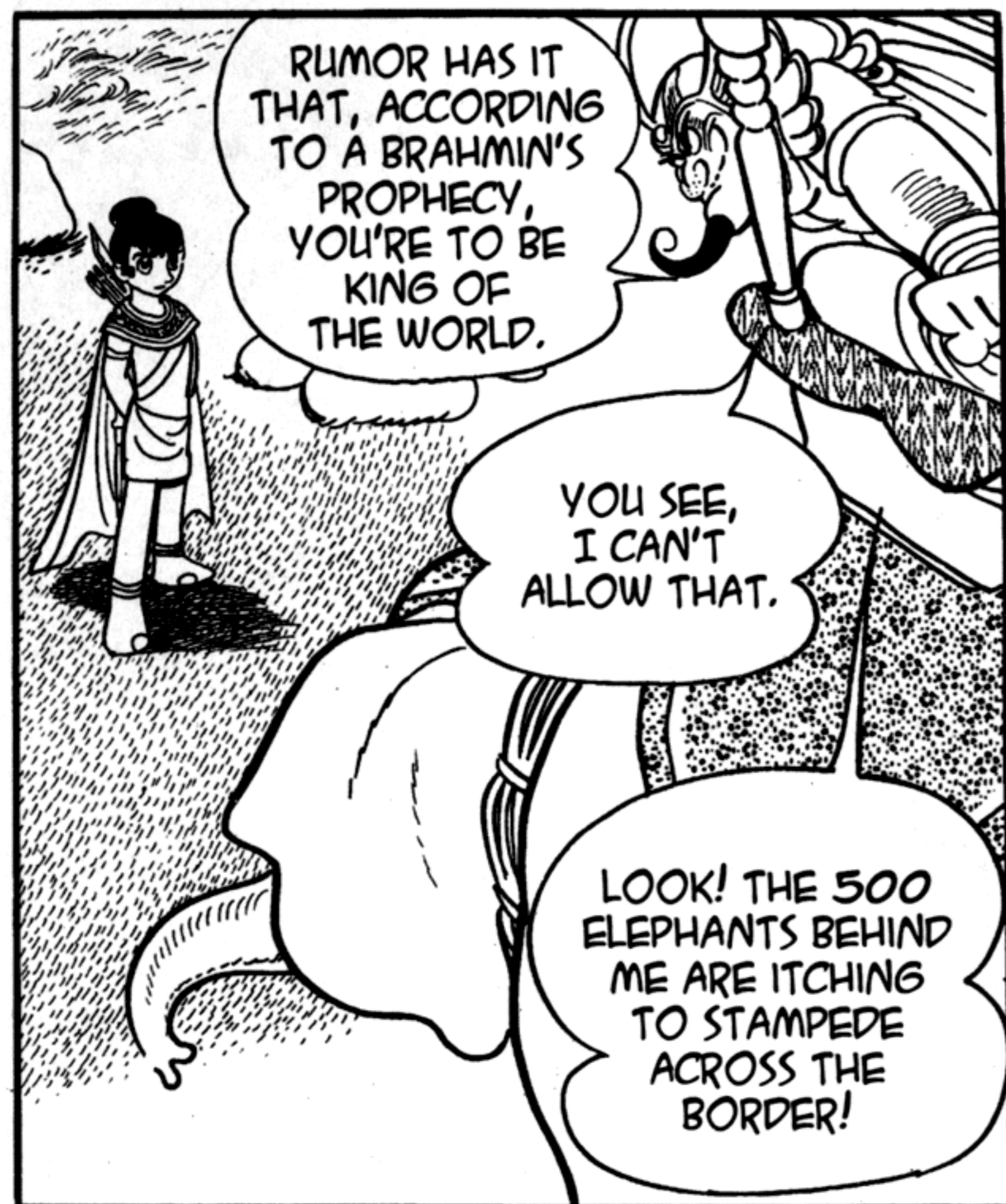
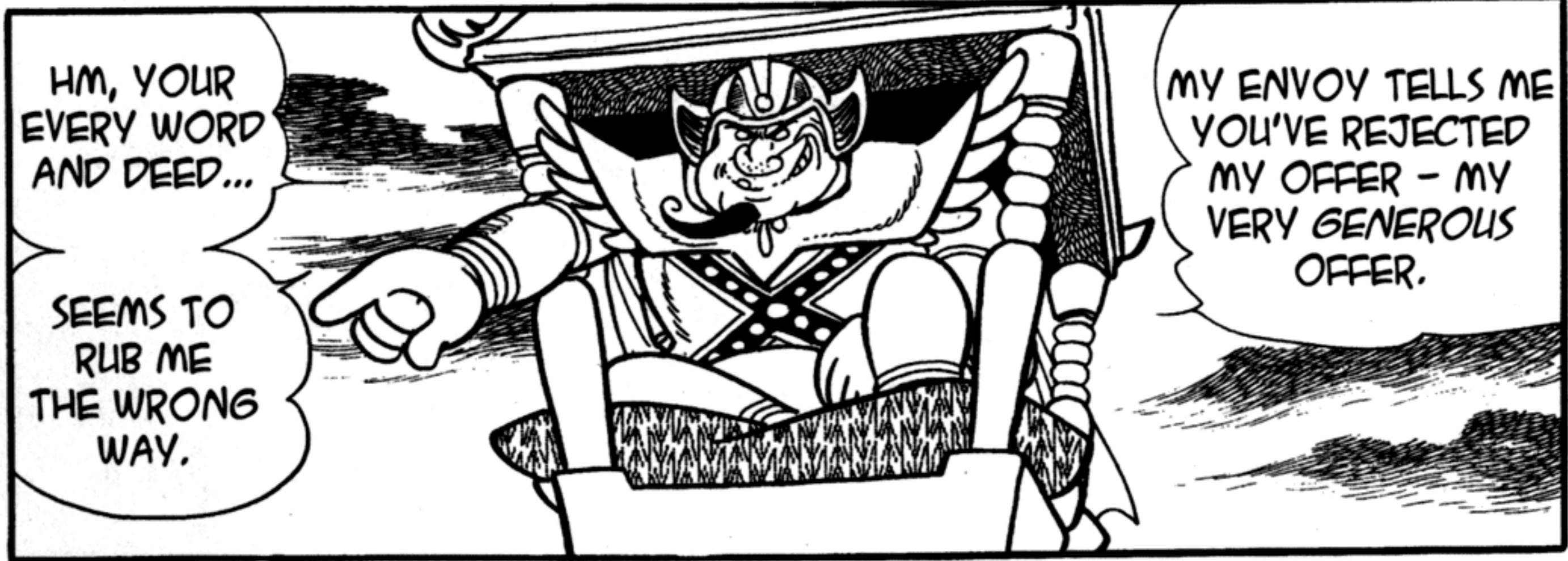


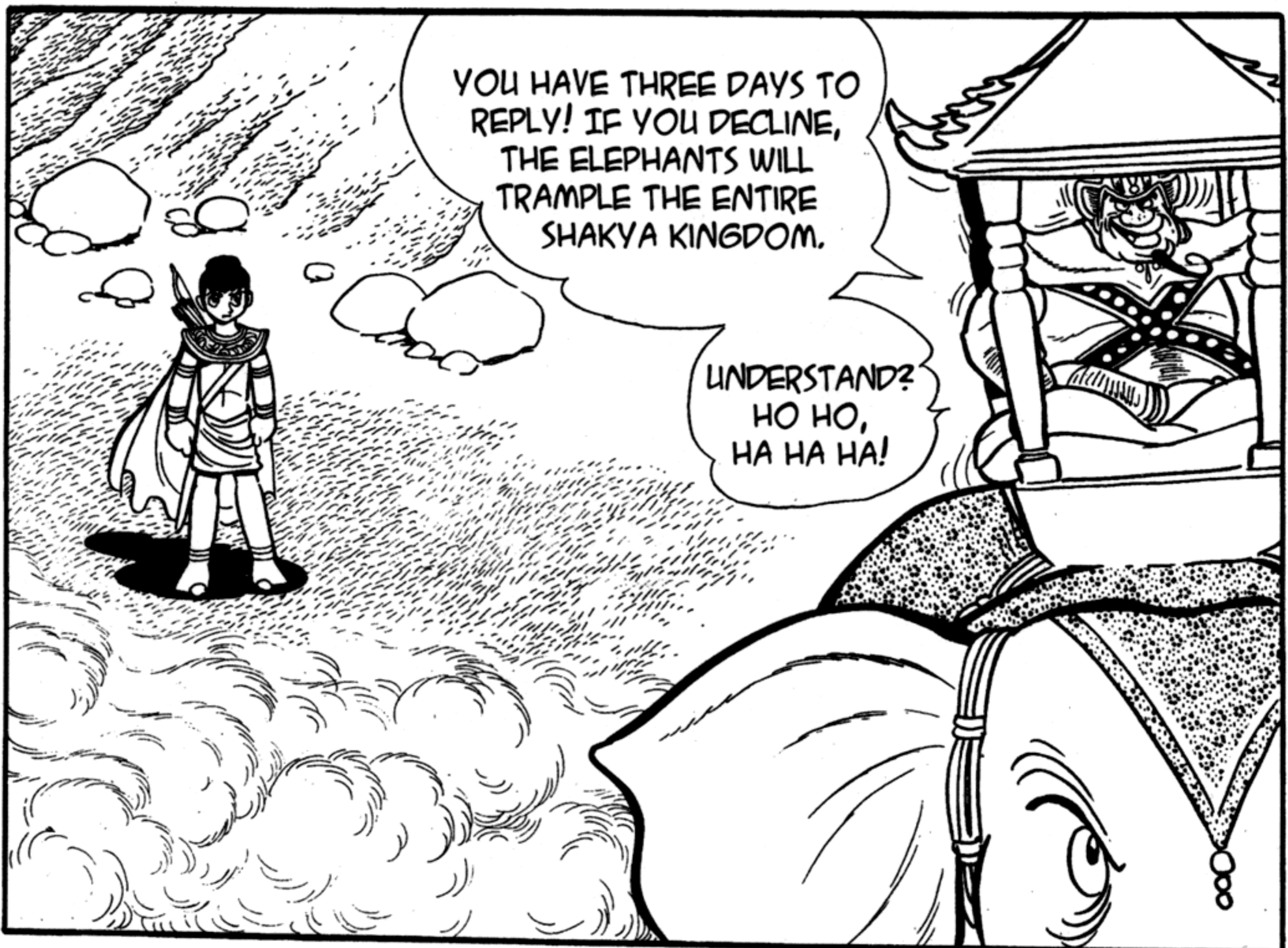


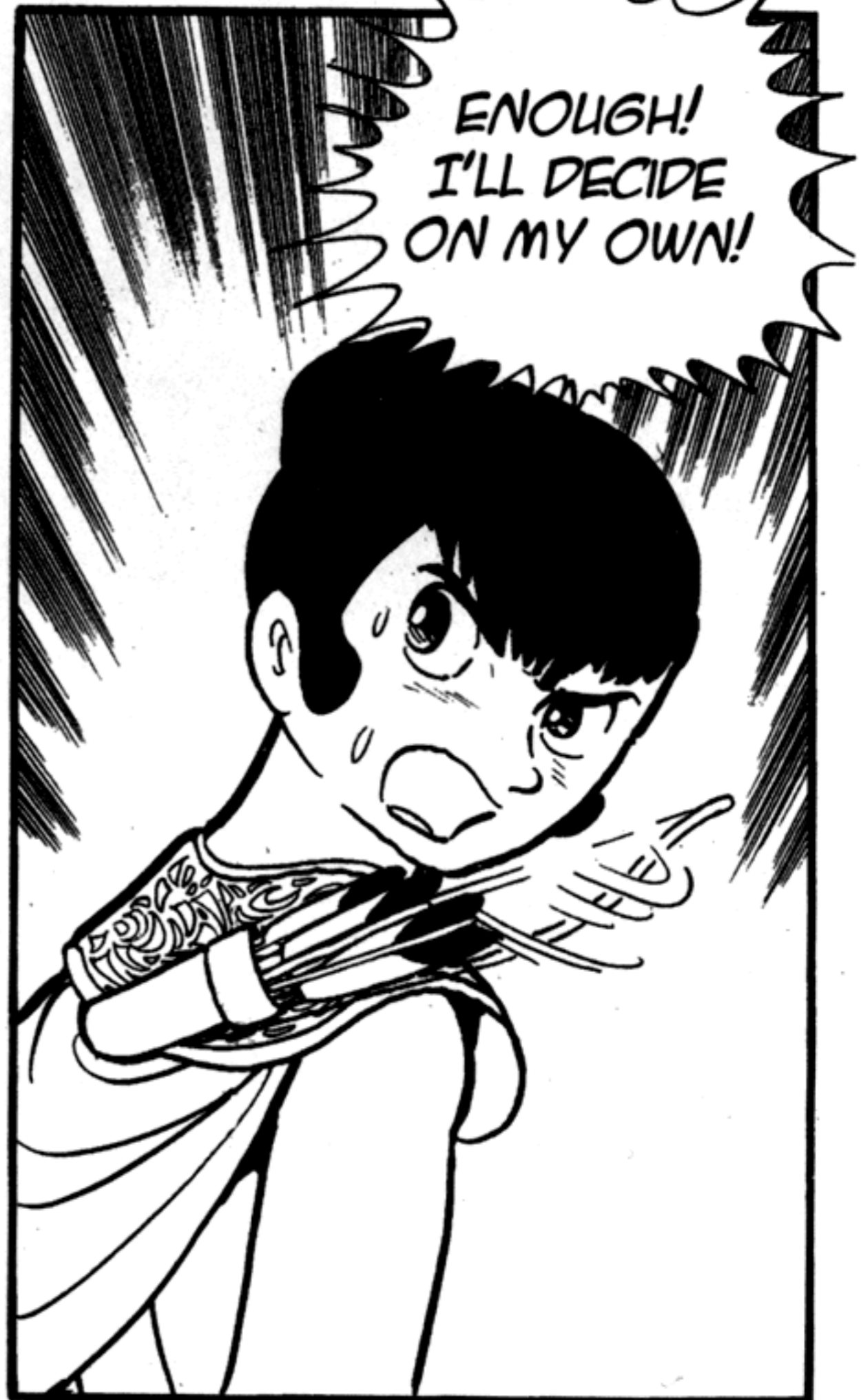
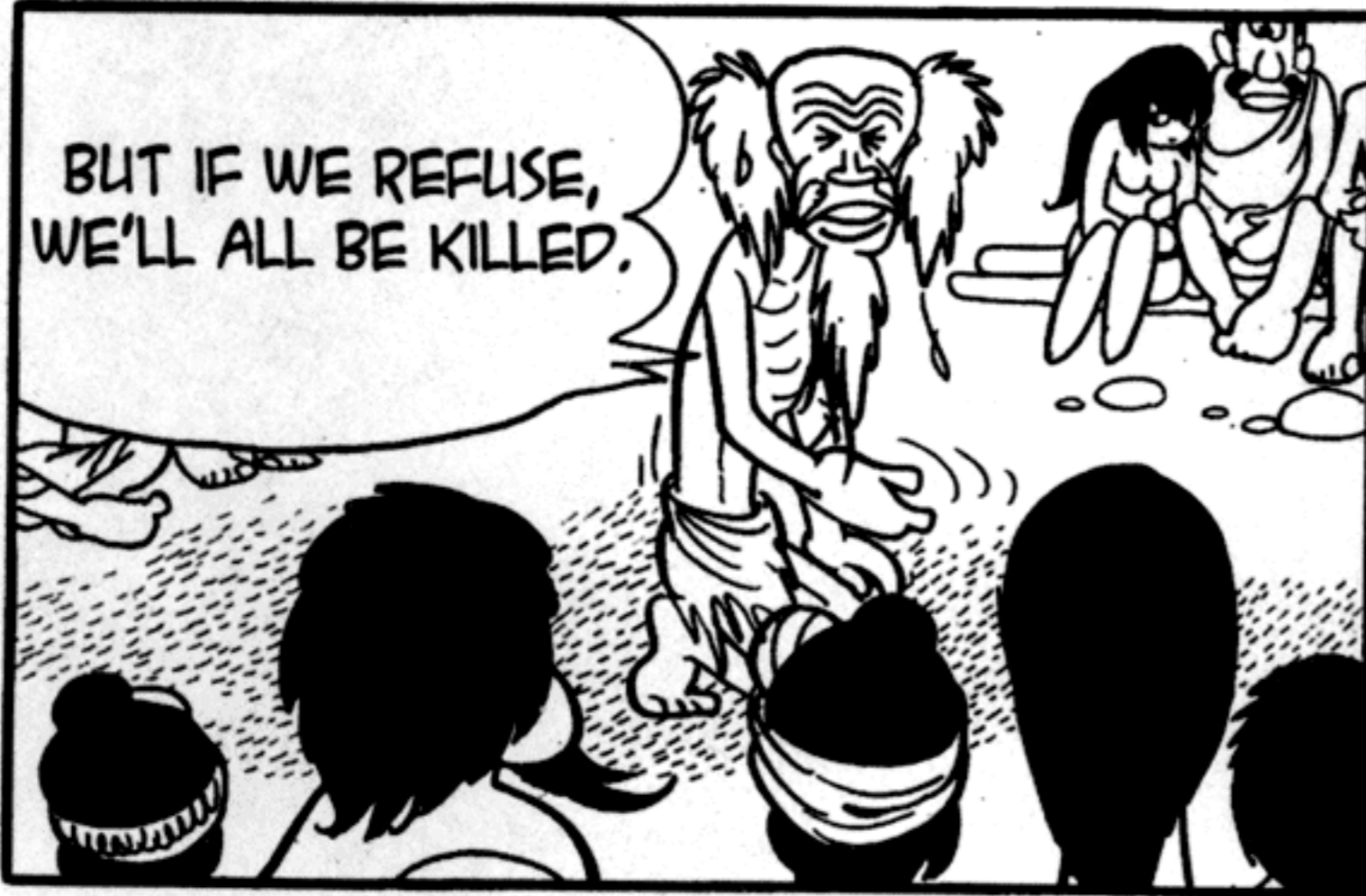


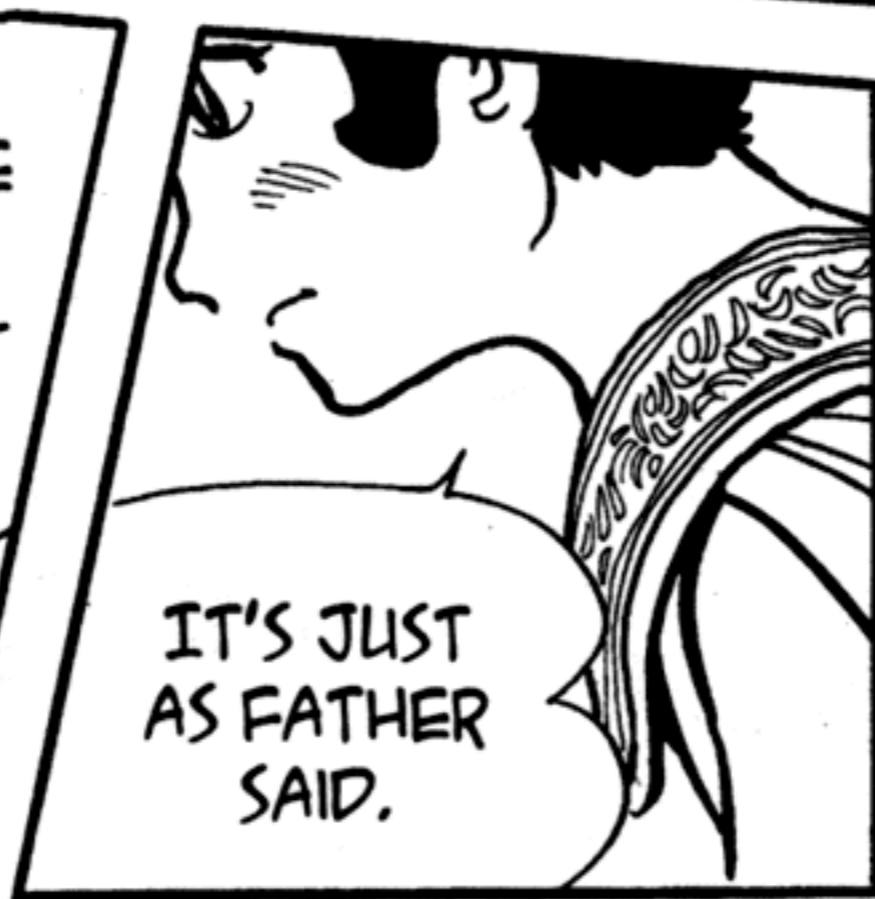
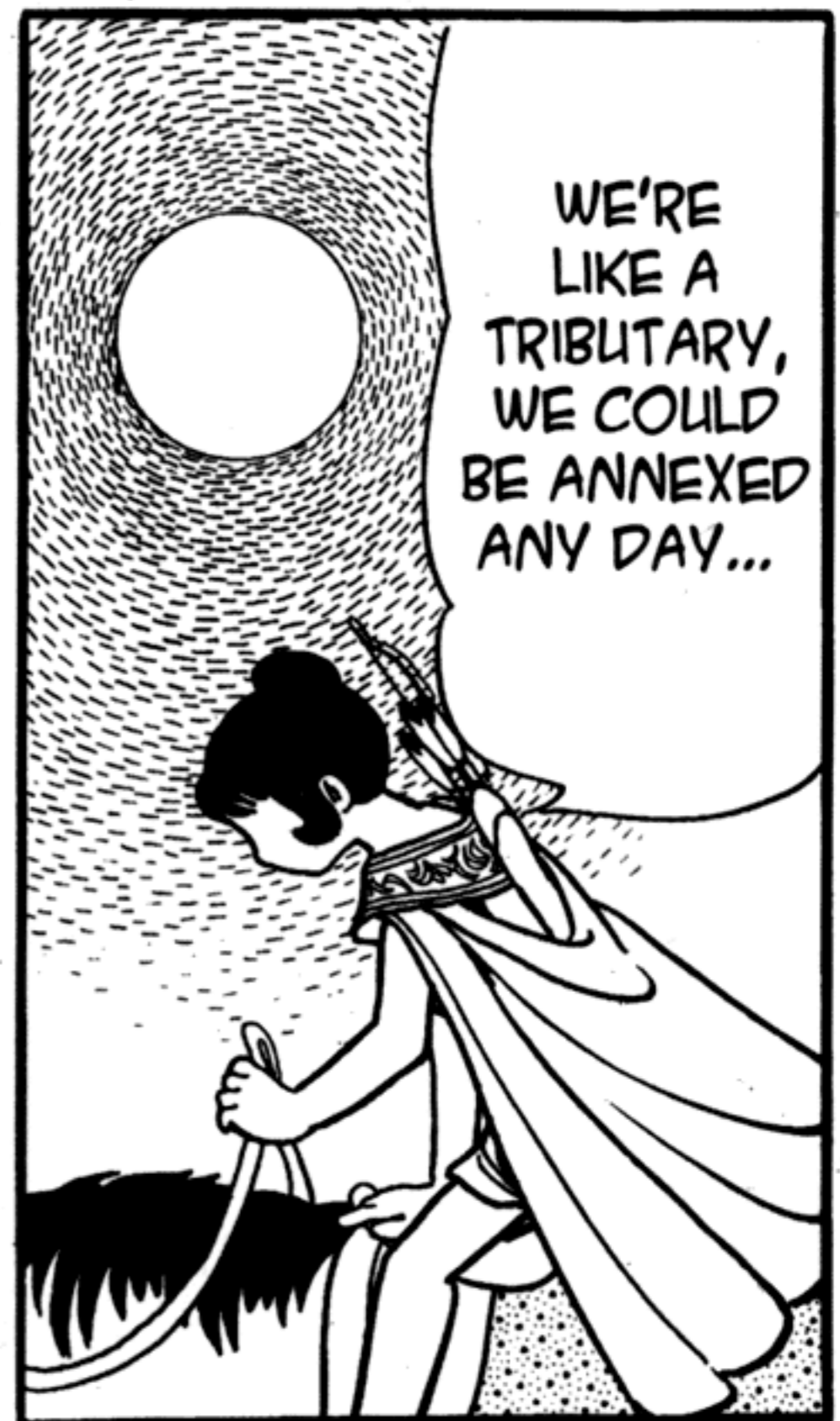


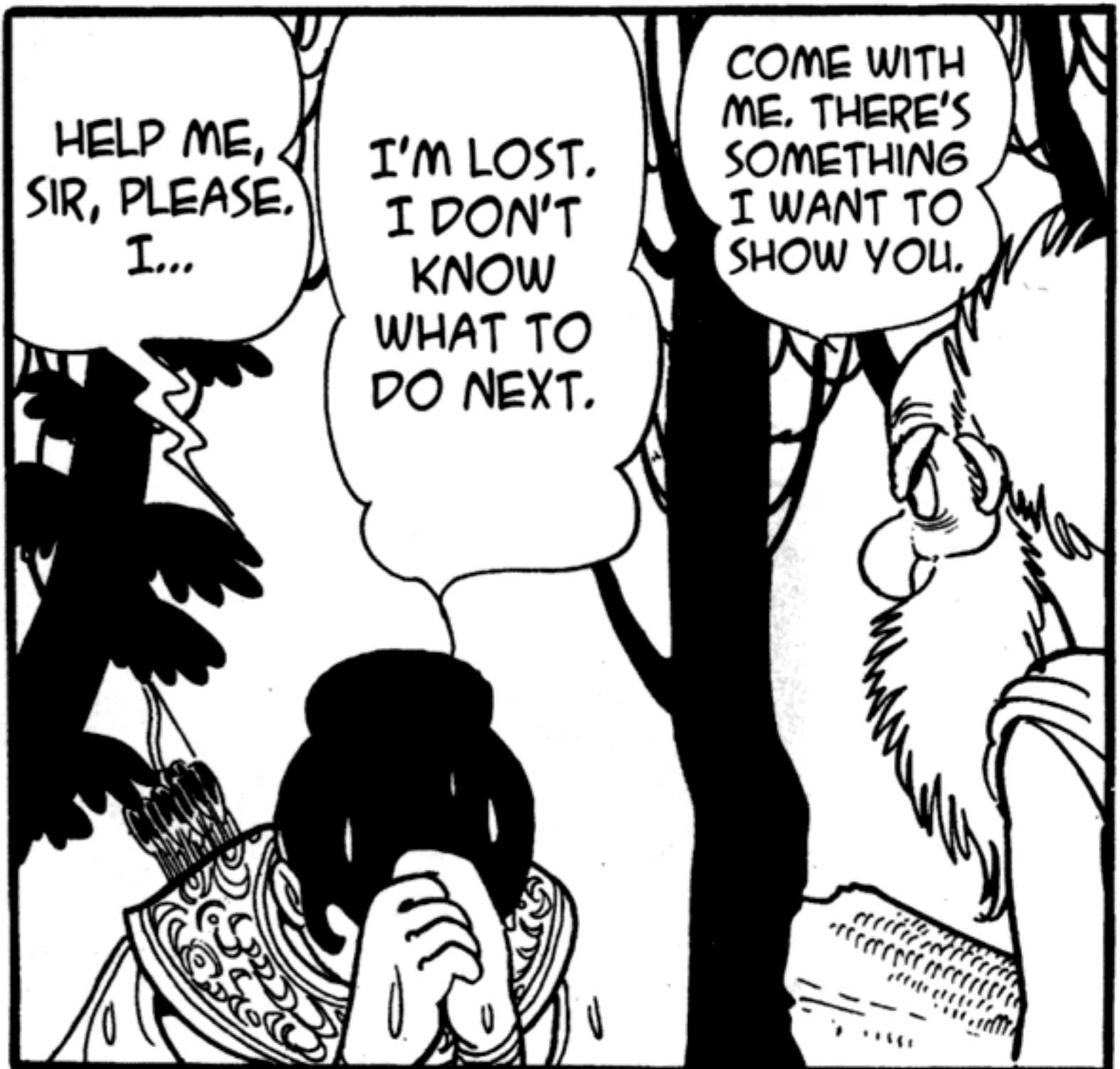


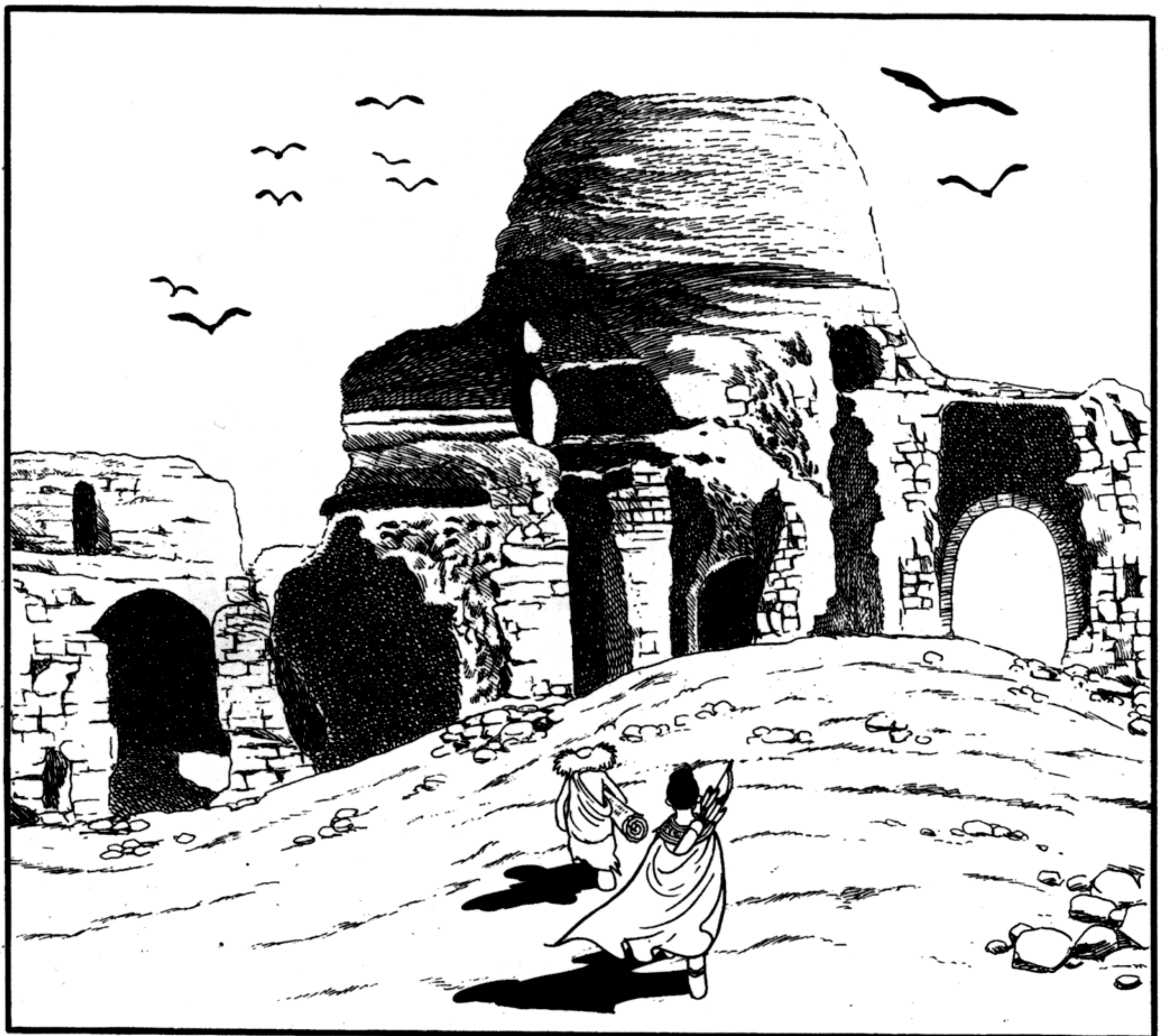








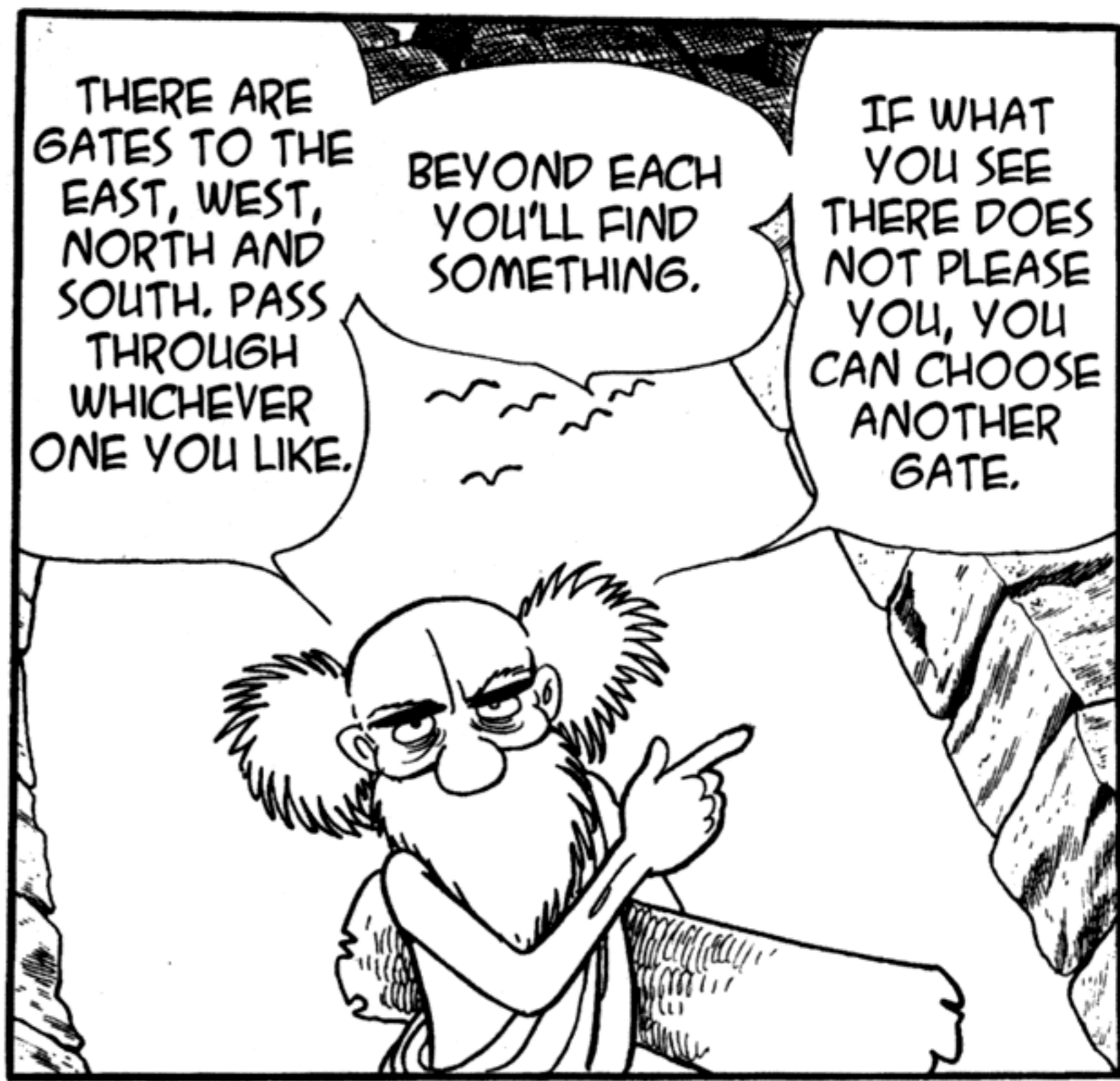






?

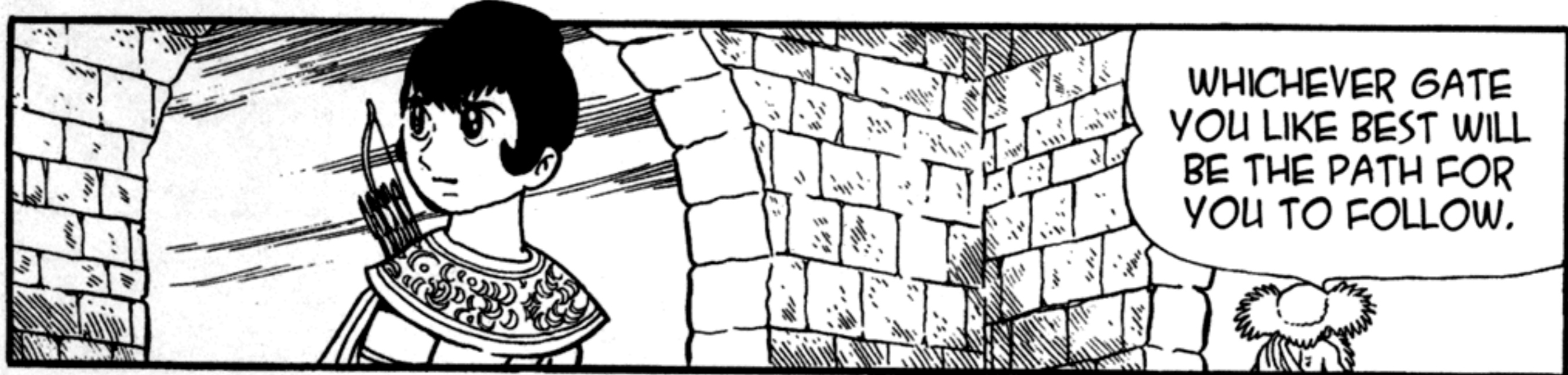
THESE ARE THE RUINS OF A FORT.



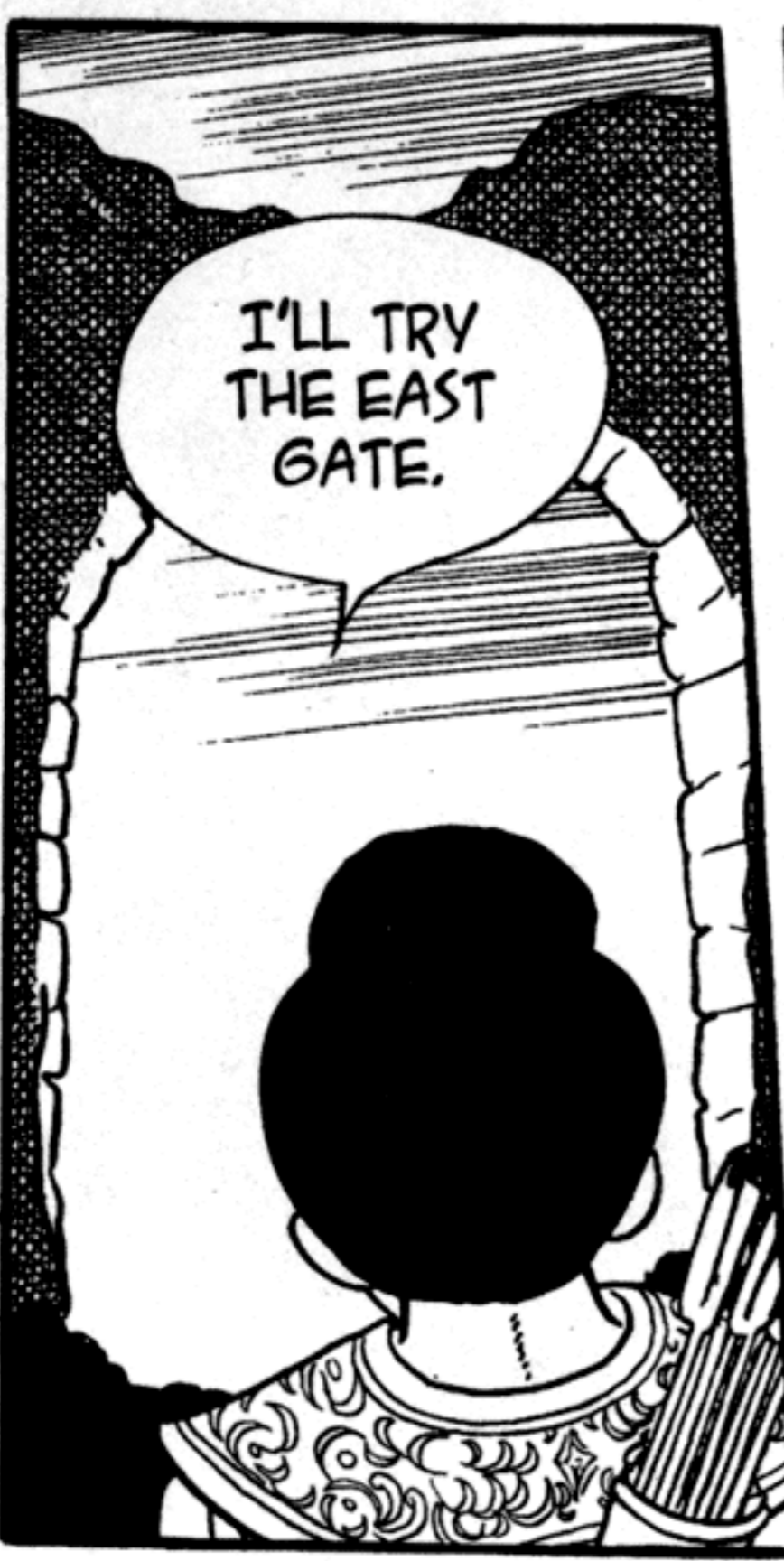
THERE ARE GATES TO THE EAST, WEST, NORTH AND SOUTH. PASS THROUGH WHICHEVER ONE YOU LIKE.

BEYOND EACH YOU'LL FIND SOMETHING.

IF WHAT YOU SEE THERE DOES NOT PLEASE YOU, YOU CAN CHOOSE ANOTHER GATE.



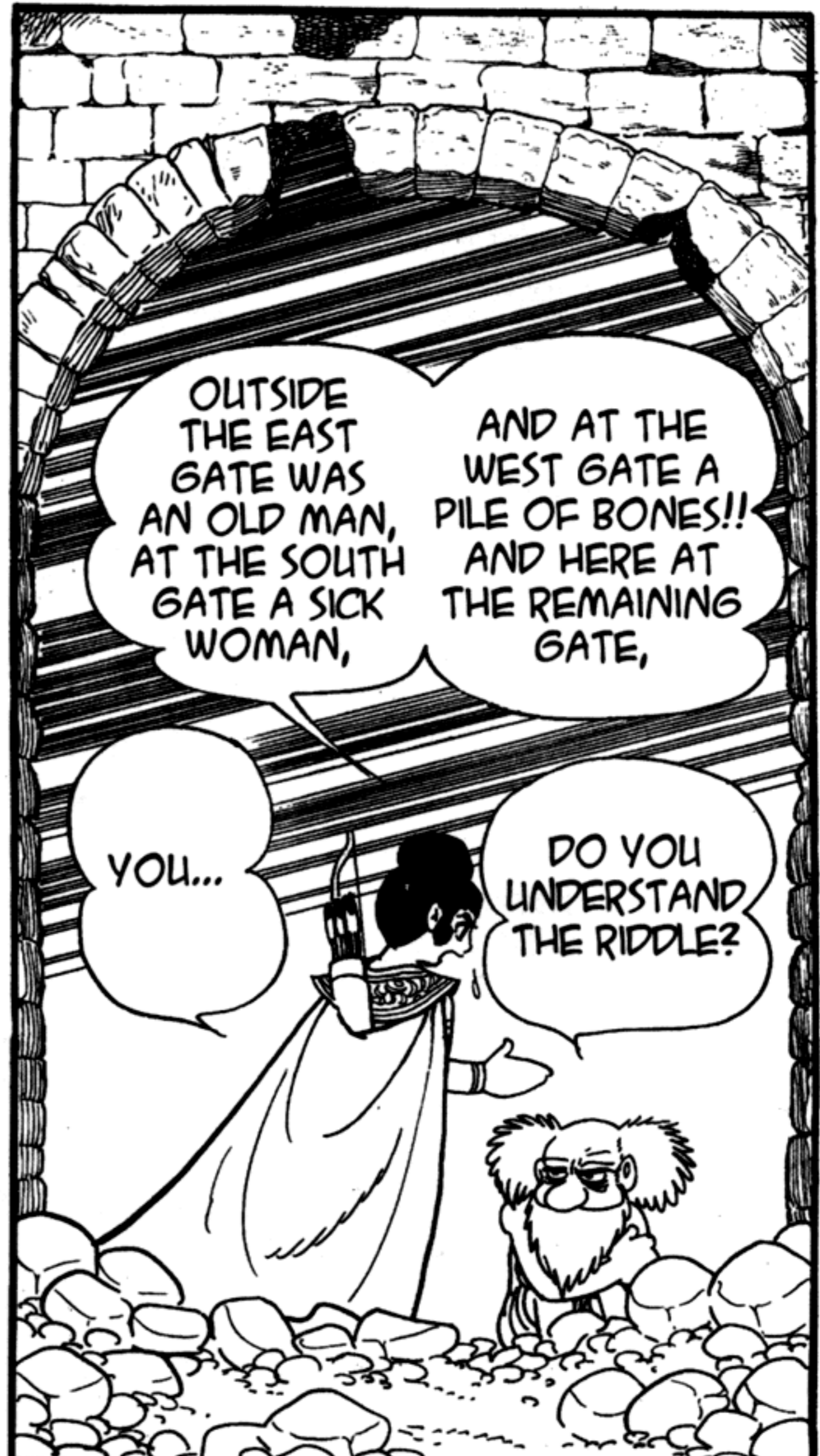
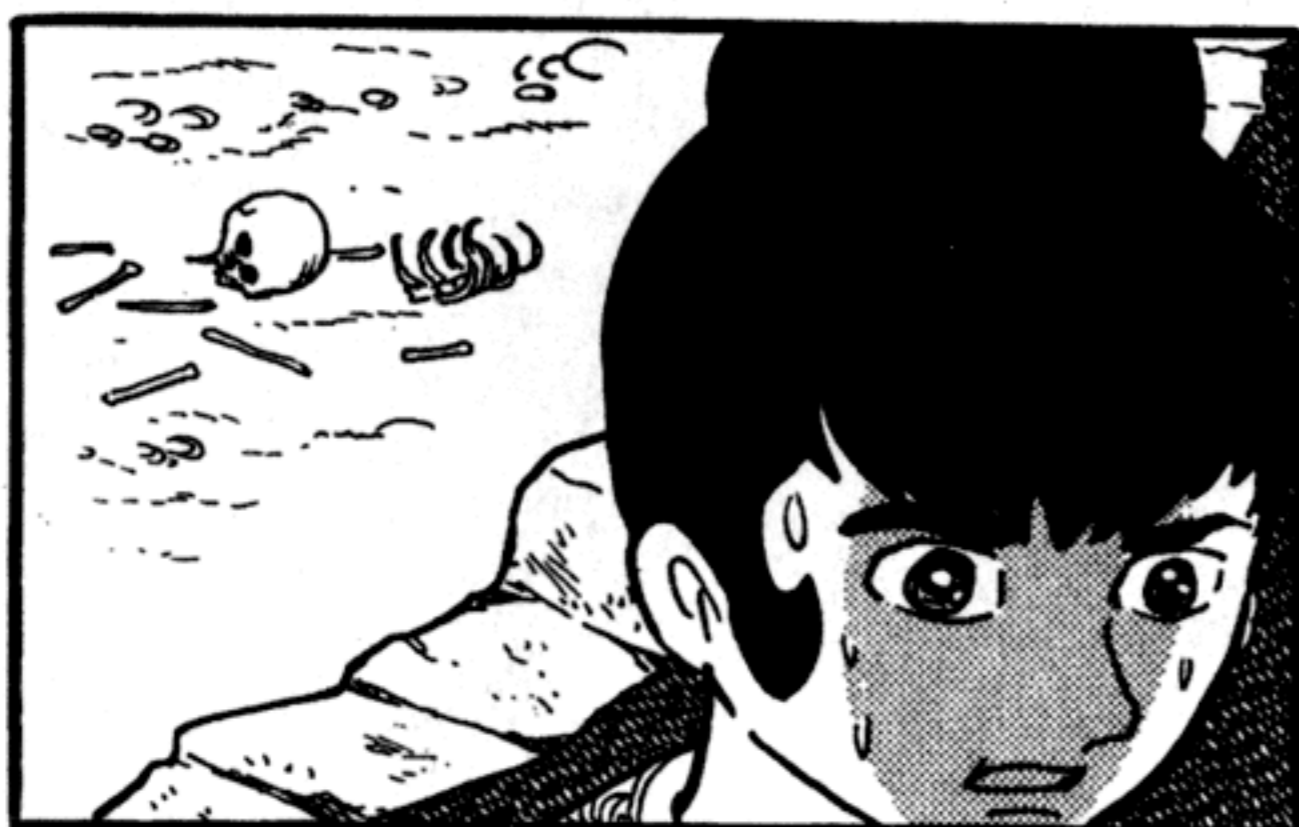
WHICHEVER GATE YOU LIKE BEST WILL BE THE PATH FOR YOU TO FOLLOW.

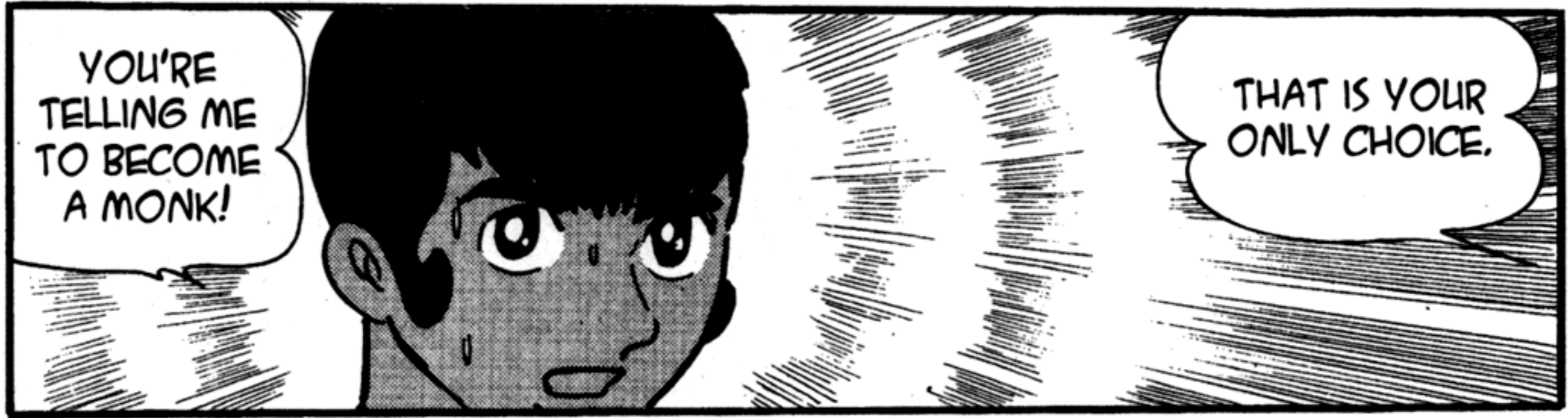


I'LL TRY THE EAST GATE.









YOU'RE TELLING ME TO BECOME A MONK!

THAT IS YOUR ONLY CHOICE.



IF YOU WANT TO SAVE YOUR COUNTRYMEN AND OTHERS ALL OVER THE WORLD...

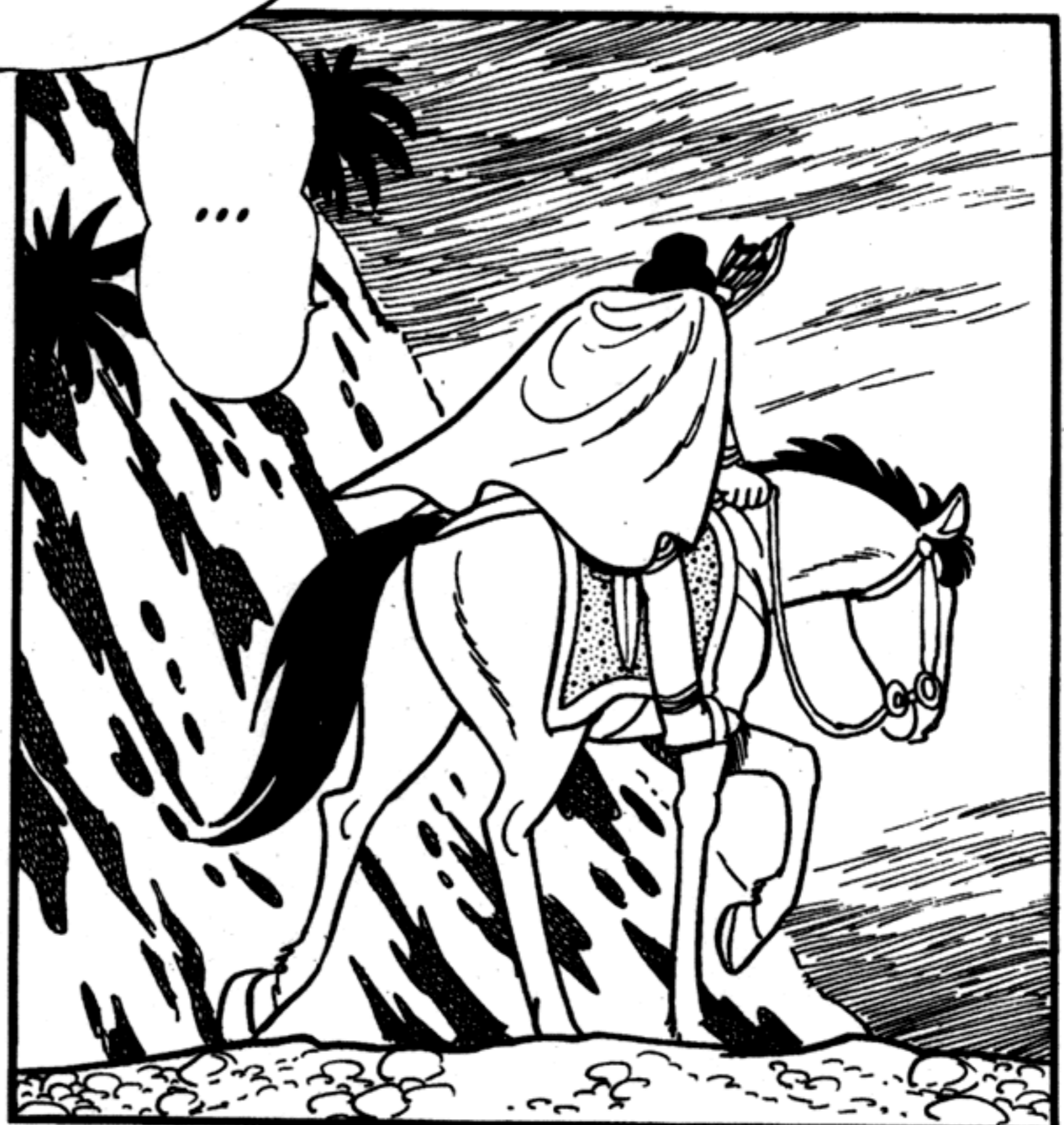
AND IF YOU CARE TO SAVE YOURSELF, YOU MUST BECOME A MONK.

YOUR LOT IS TO TEACH OTHERS UNTIL THE DAY YOU DIE...

AS I TOLD YOU LONG AGO, YOU MUST LEAVE THE CASTLE AND GO SIT UNDER A PIPPALA TREE. THERE YOU WILL SEE THE LIGHT.

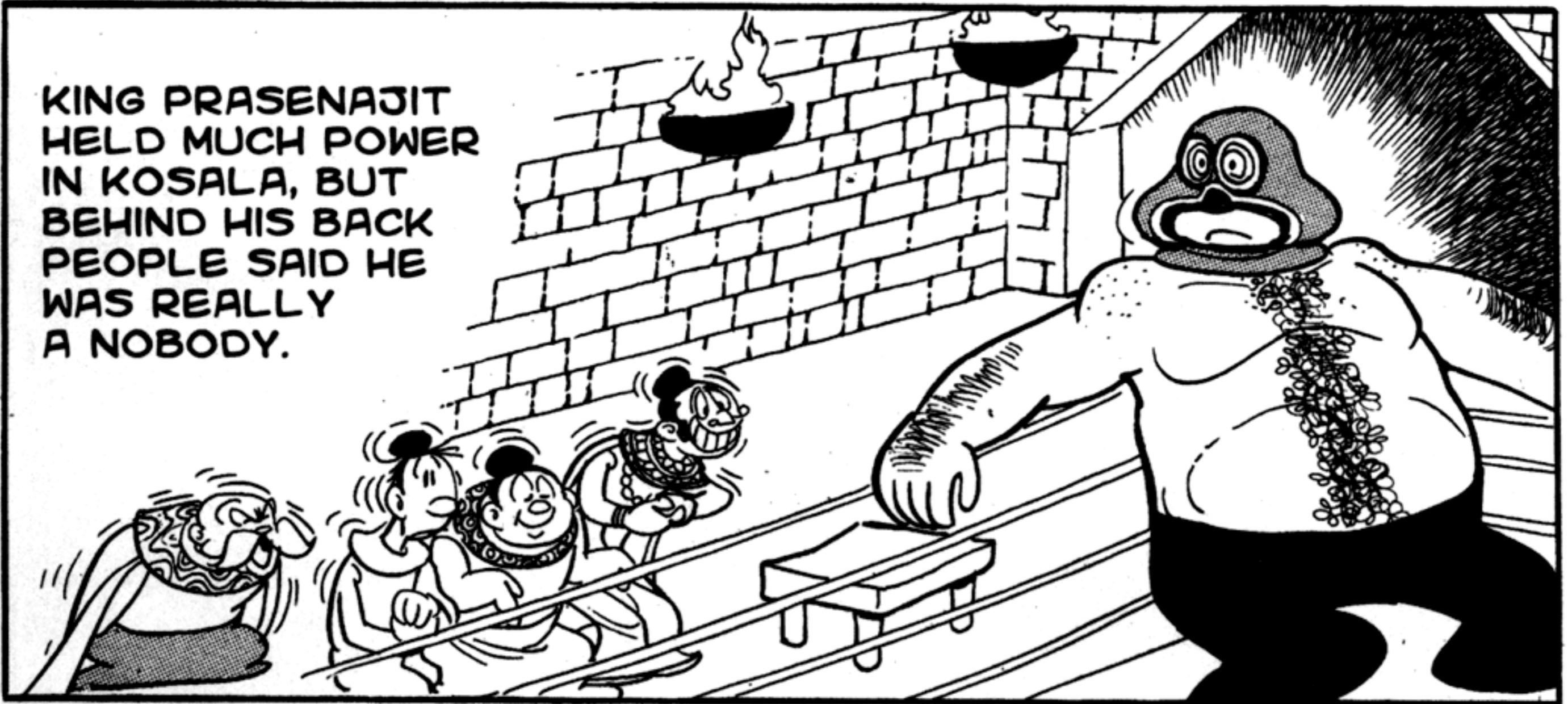


GO.

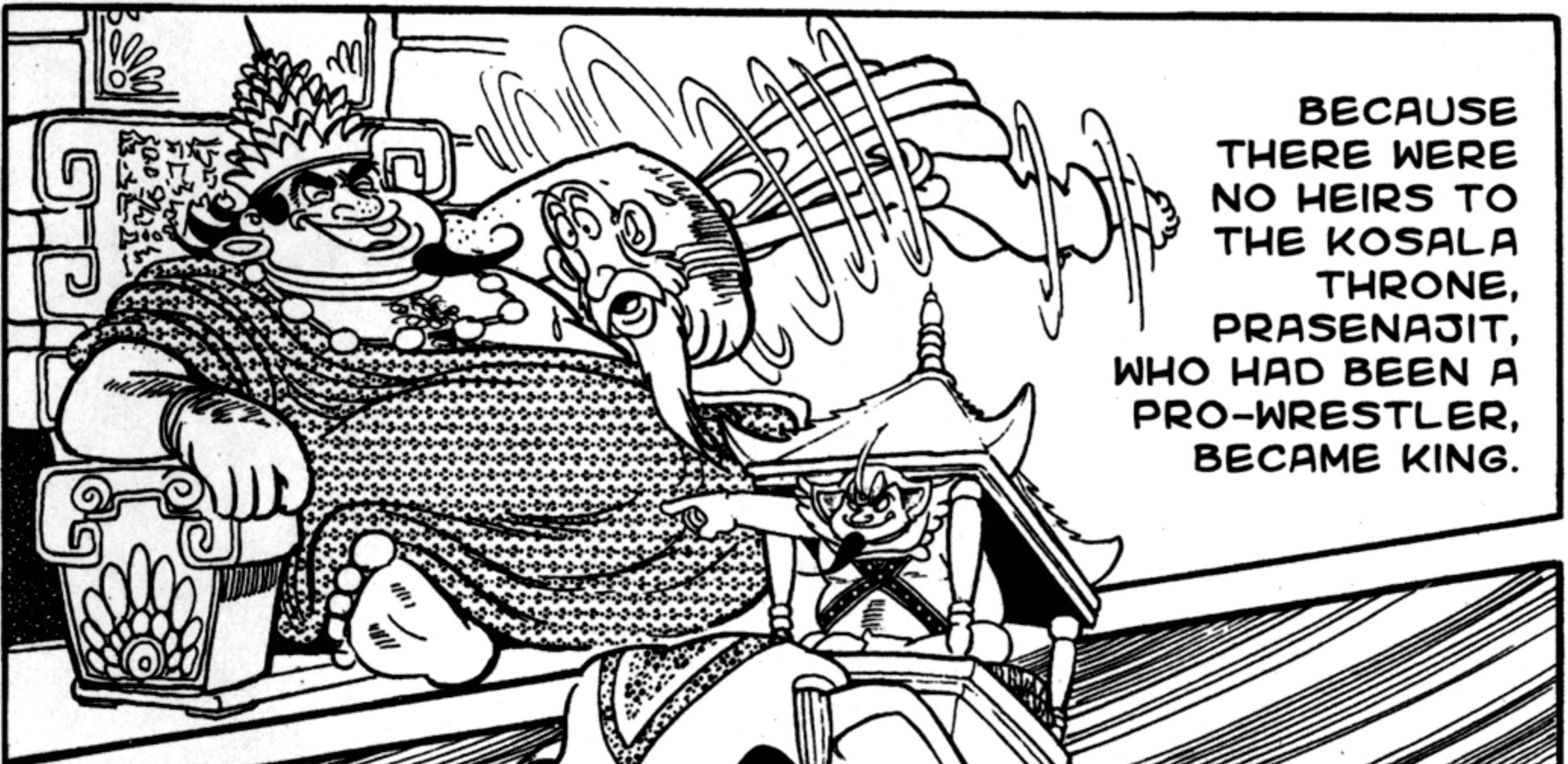


FAREWELL

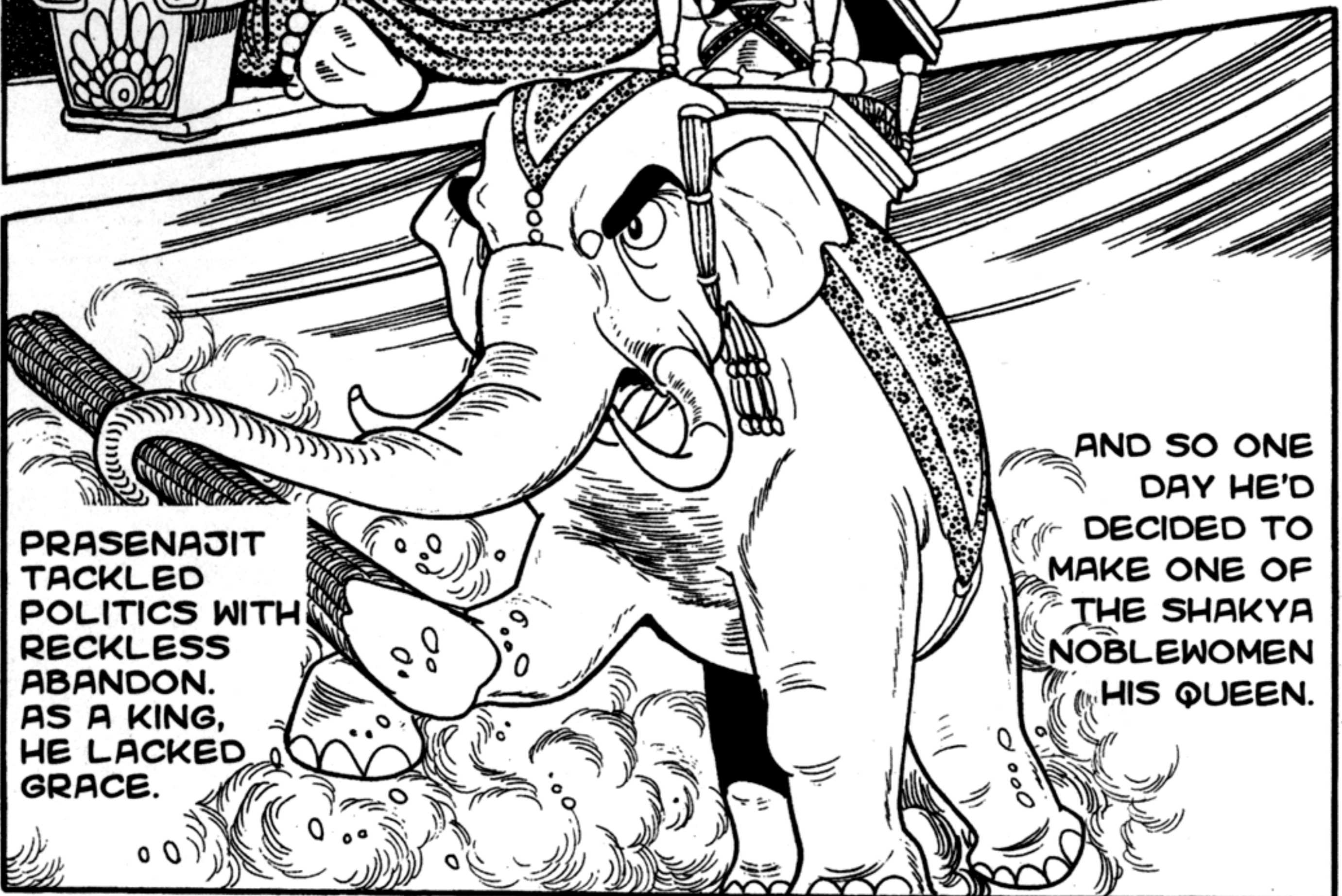
KING PRASENAJIT
HELD MUCH POWER
IN KOSALA, BUT
BEHIND HIS BACK
PEOPLE SAID HE
WAS REALLY
A NOBODY.



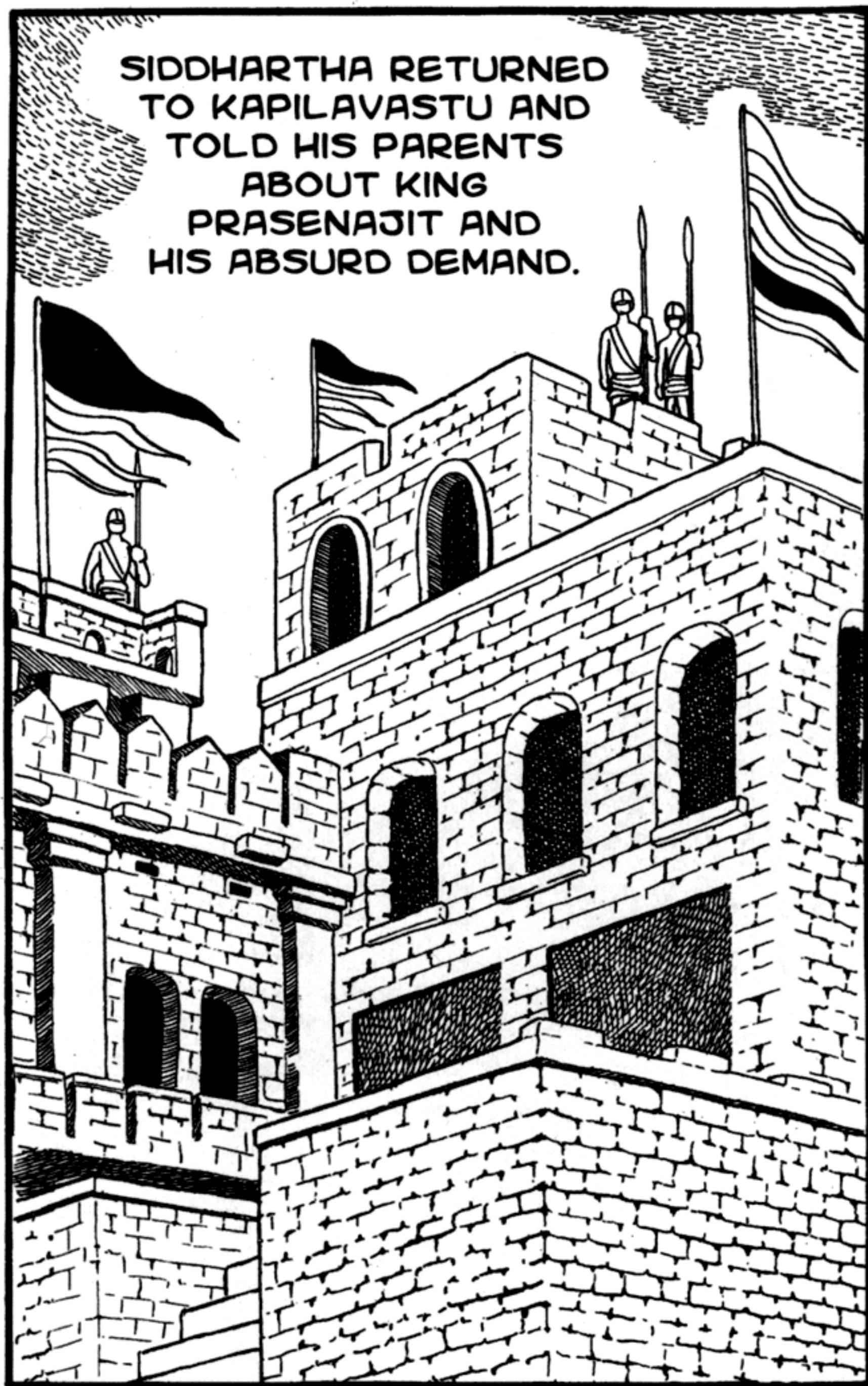
BECAUSE
THERE WERE
NO HEIRS TO
THE KOSALA
THRONE,
PRASENAJIT,
WHO HAD BEEN A
PRO-WRESTLER,
BECAME KING.



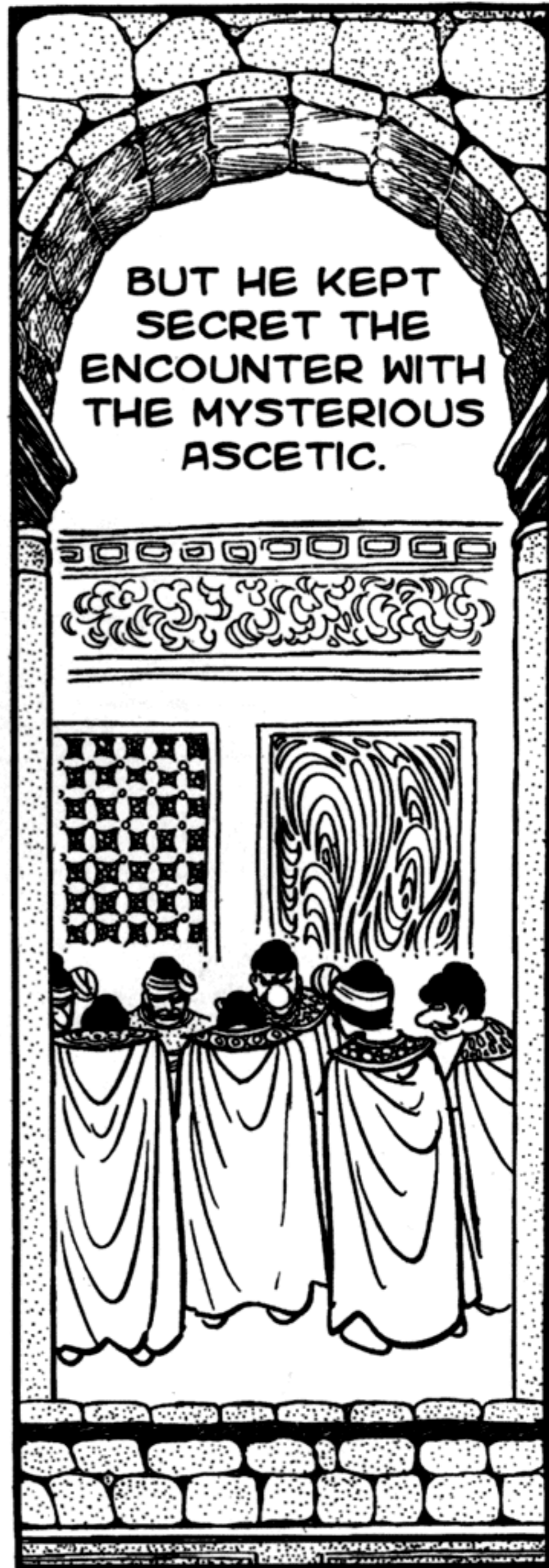
PRASENAJIT
TACKLED
POLITICS WITH
RECKLESS
ABANDON.
AS A KING,
HE LACKED
GRACE.



AND SO ONE
DAY HE'D
DECIDED TO
MAKE ONE OF
THE SHAKYA
NOBLEWOMEN
HIS QUEEN.



SIDDHARTHA RETURNED TO KAPILAVASTU AND TOLD HIS PARENTS ABOUT KING PRASENAJIT AND HIS ABSURD DEMAND.



BUT HE KEPT SECRET THE ENCOUNTER WITH THE MYSTERIOUS ASCETIC.

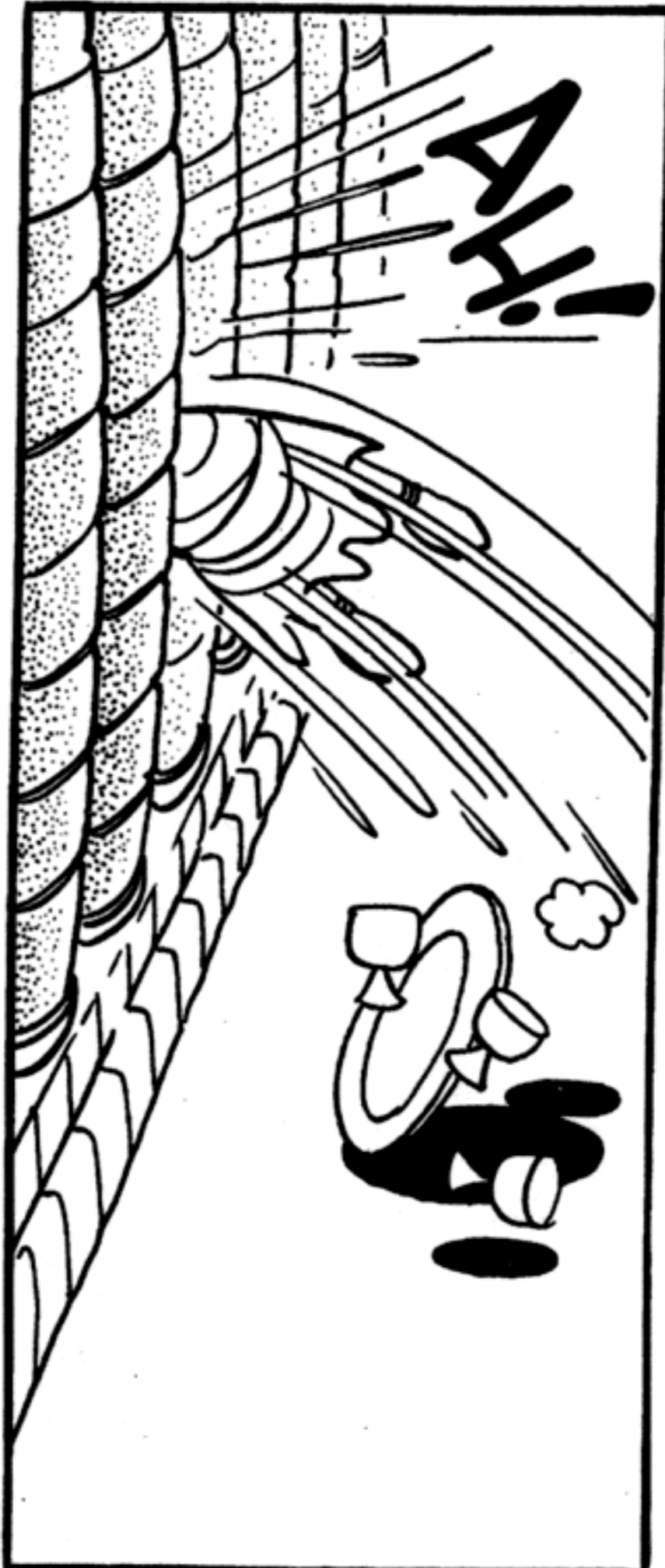


WE MAY BE WEAK, BUT WE ARE THE PROUD SHAKYA.

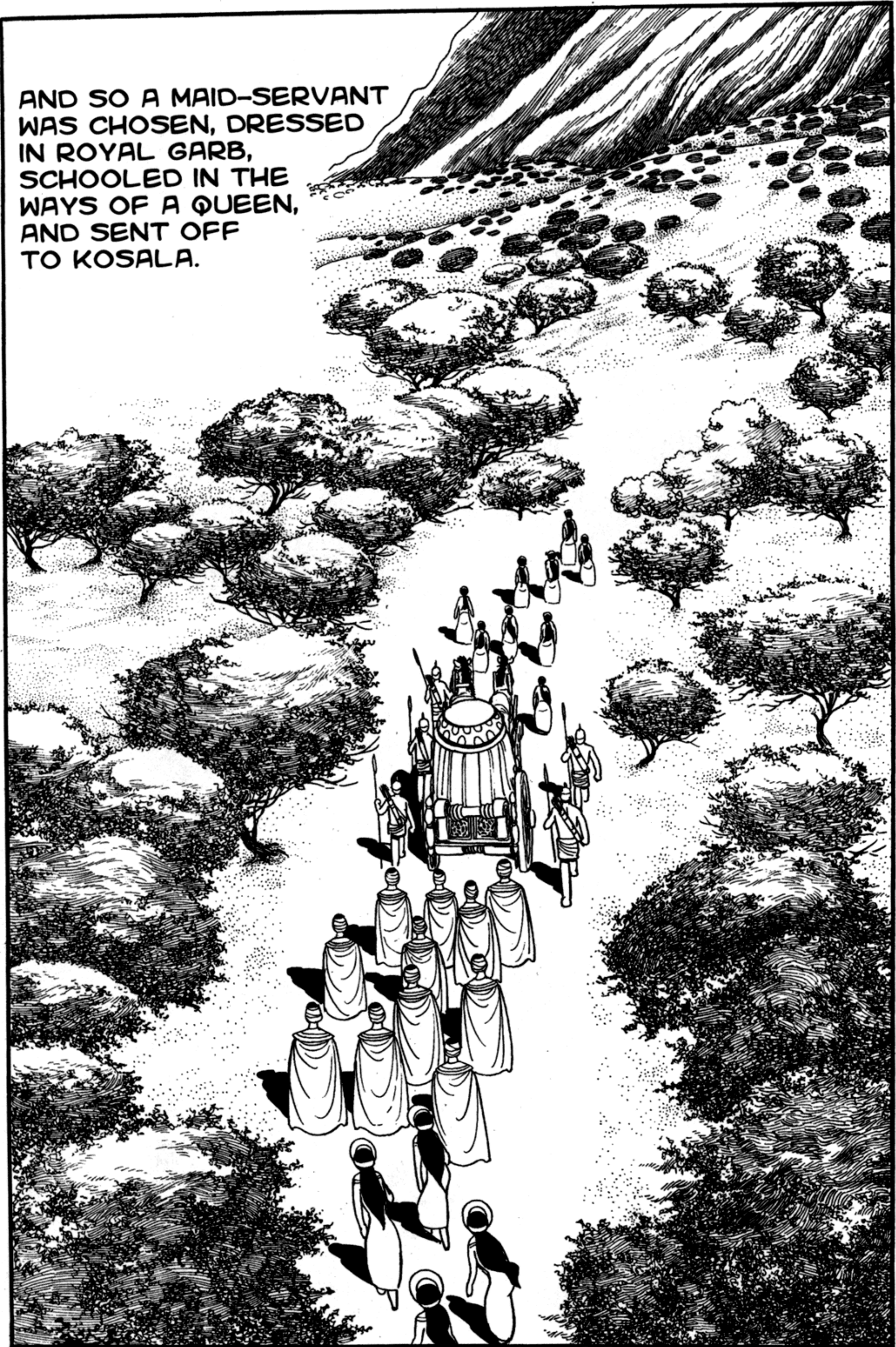
HOW COULD WE HAND OVER ONE OF OUR WOMEN TO THAT BEASTLY UPSTART?

THE CLAN LEADERS WERE SUMMONED BY THE KING

WE SHOULD RESIST. SECONDED!

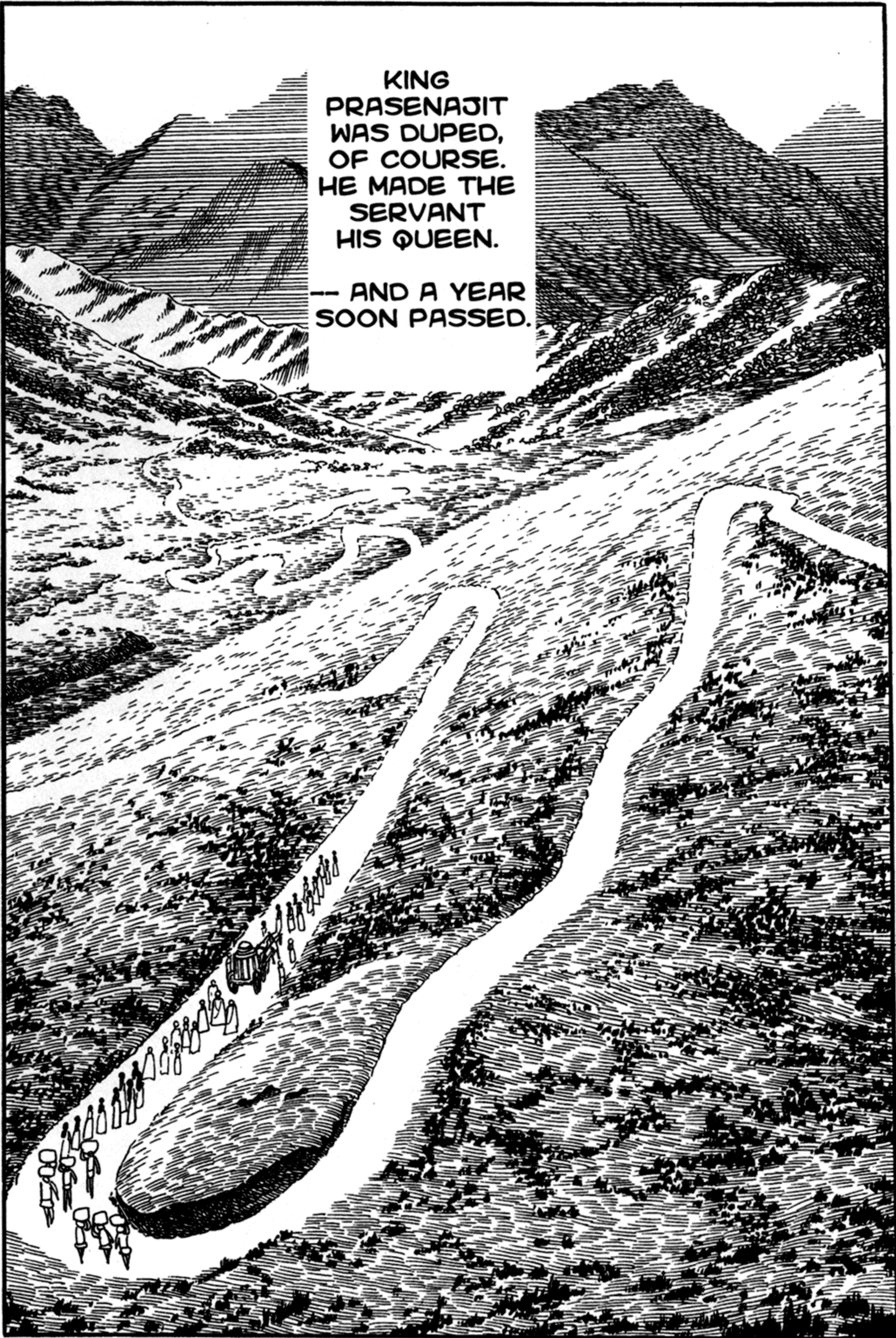


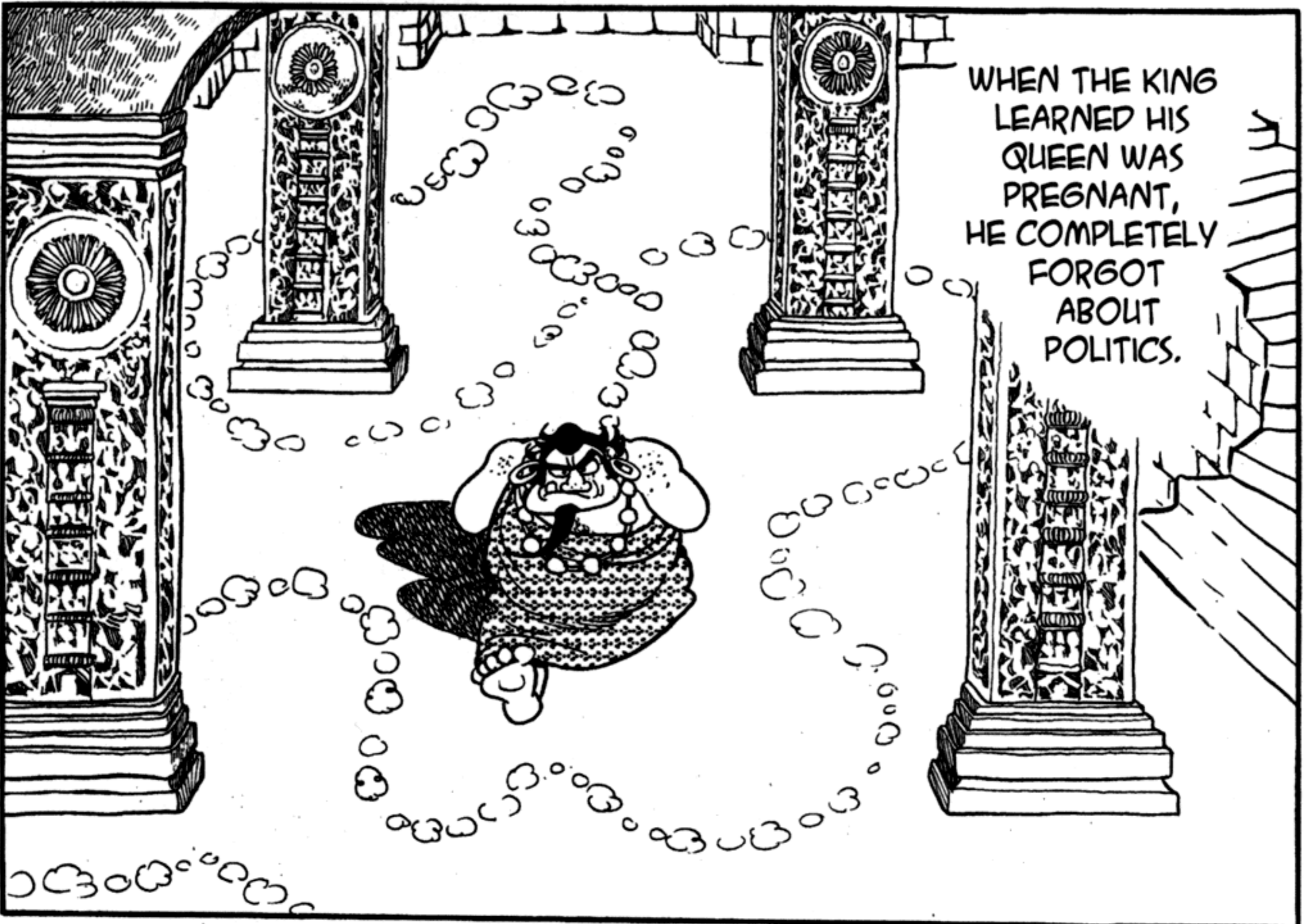
AND SO A MAID-SERVANT
WAS CHOSEN, DRESSED
IN ROYAL GARB,
SCHOOLED IN THE
WAYS OF A QUEEN,
AND SENT OFF
TO KOSALA.

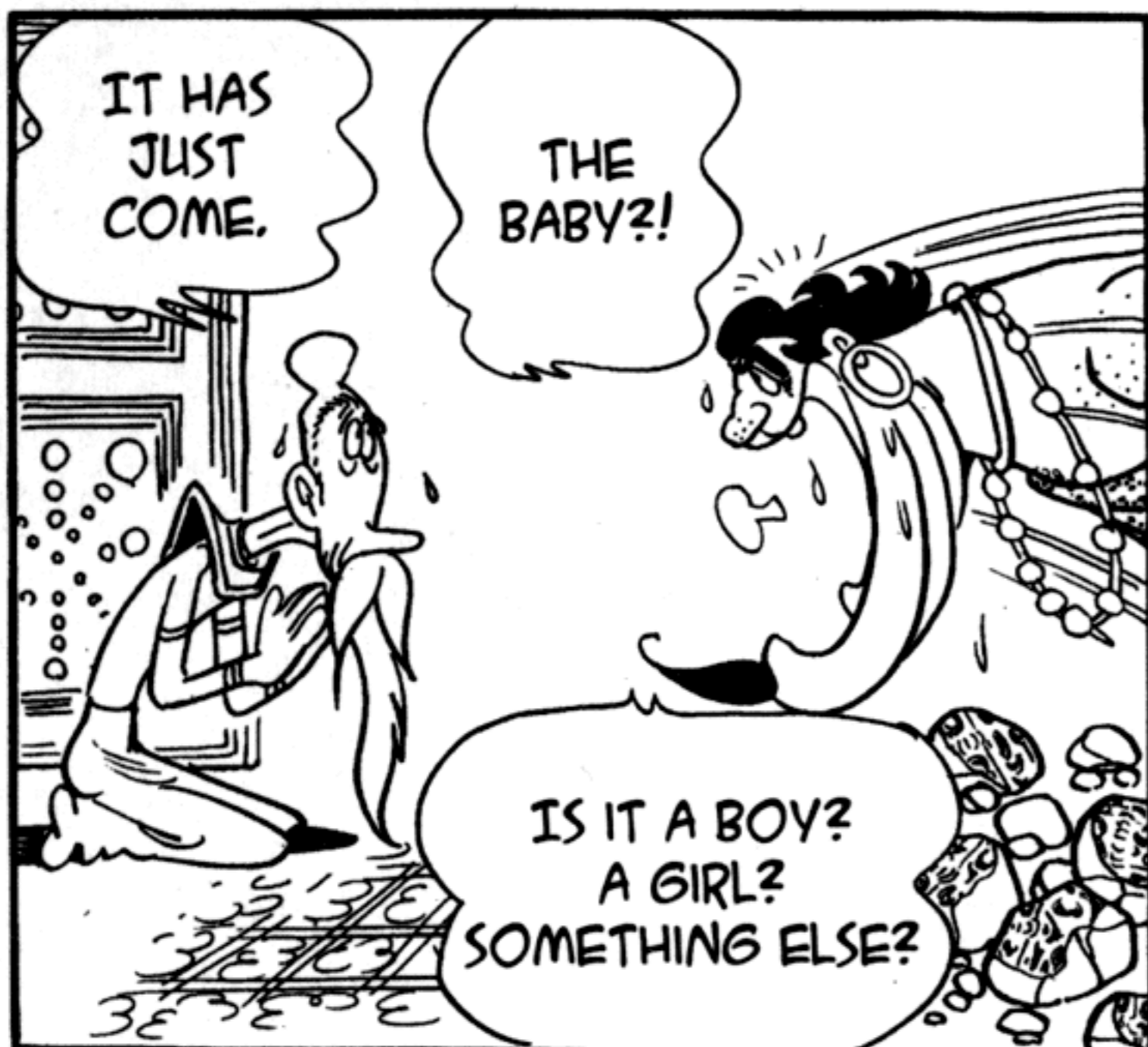
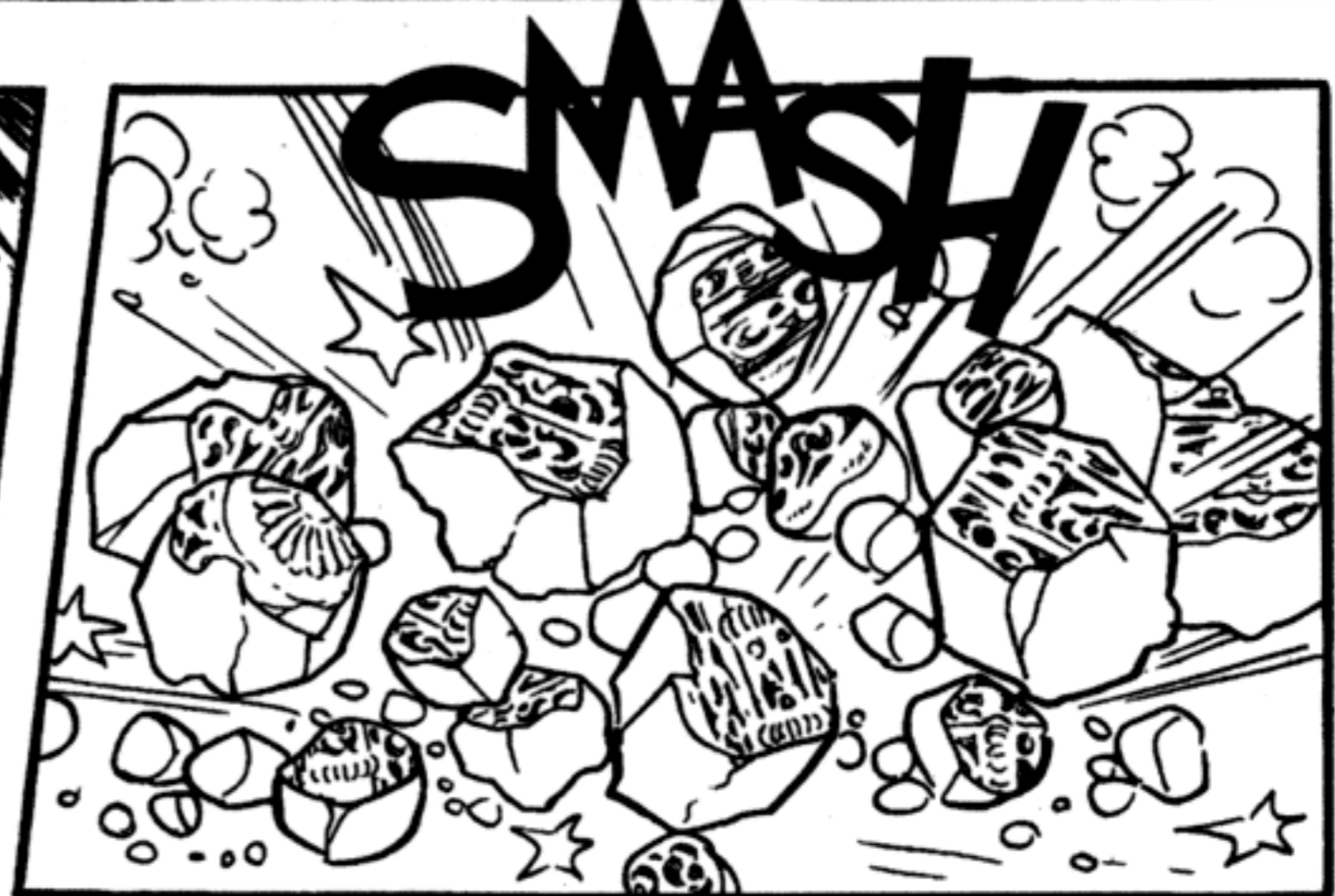
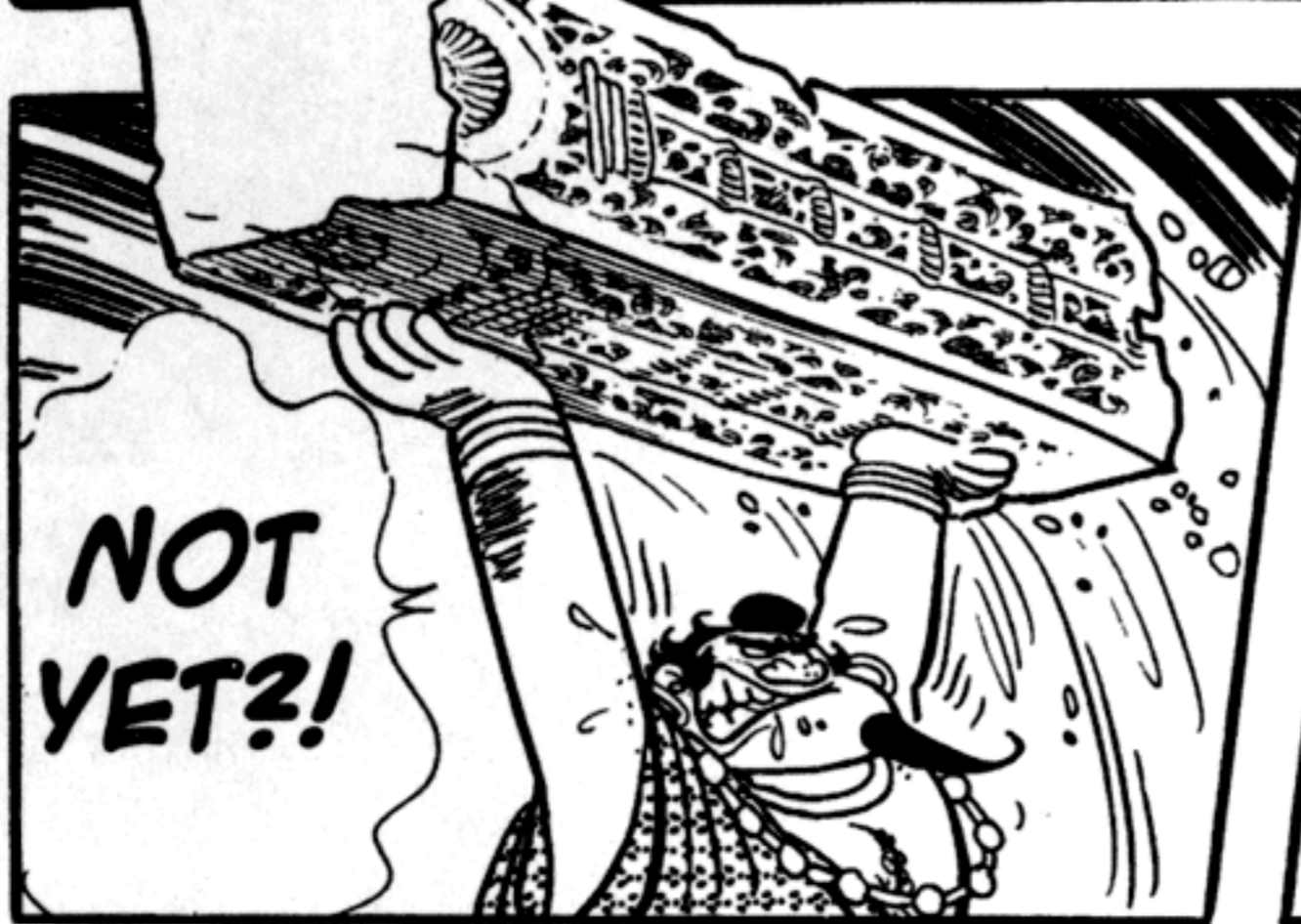


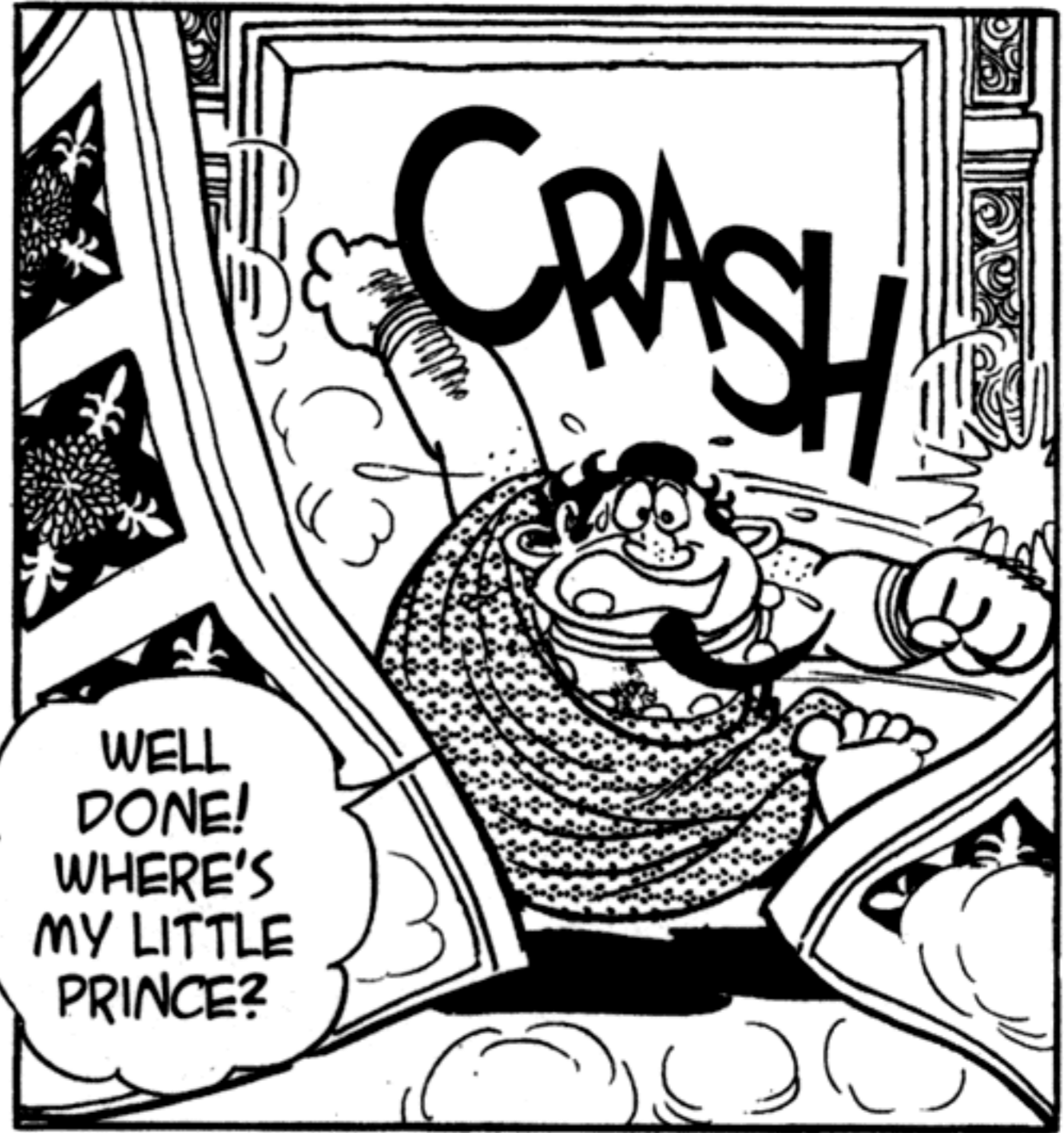
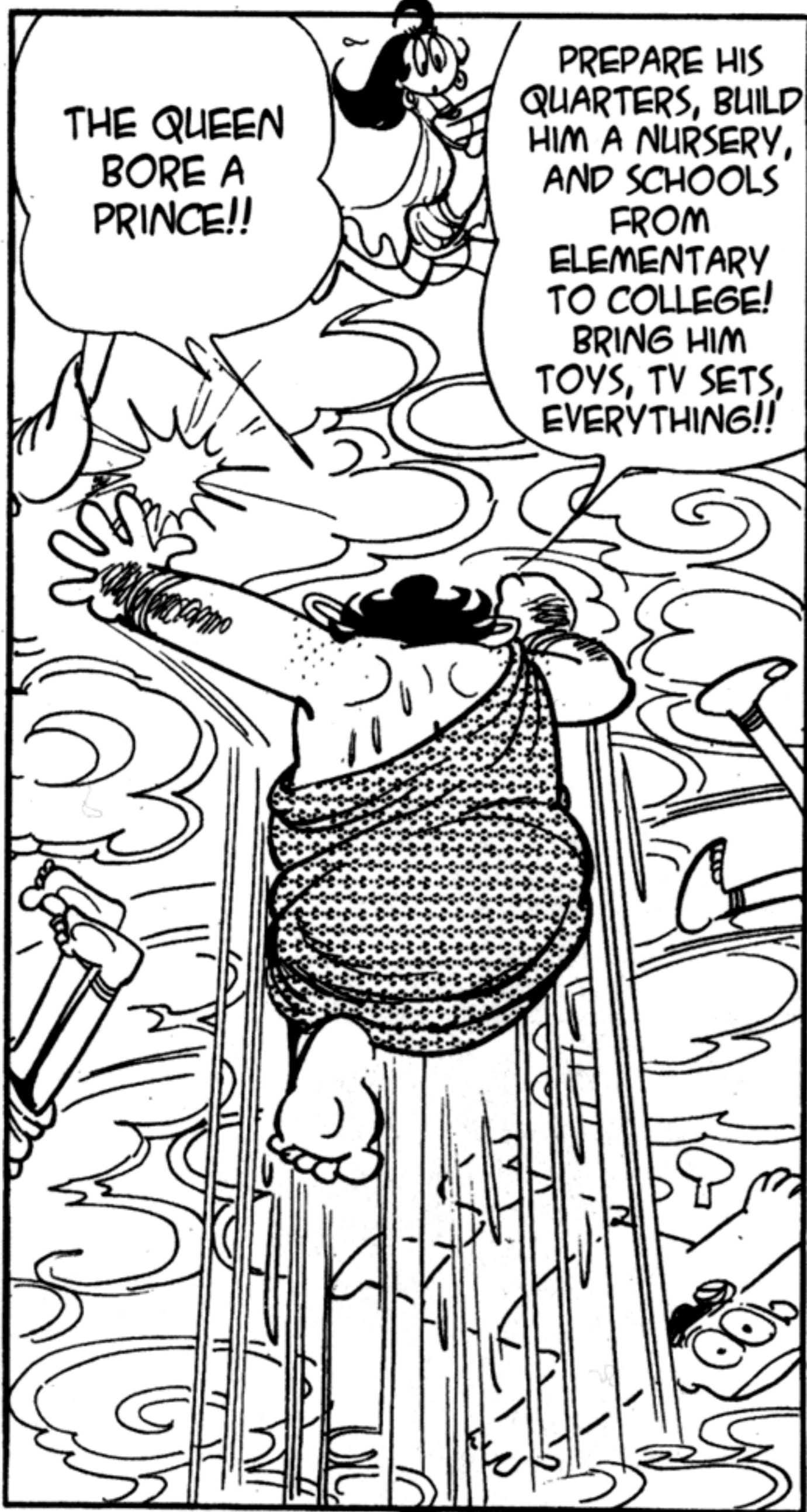
KING
PRASENAJIT
WAS DUPED,
OF COURSE.
HE MADE THE
SERVANT
HIS QUEEN.

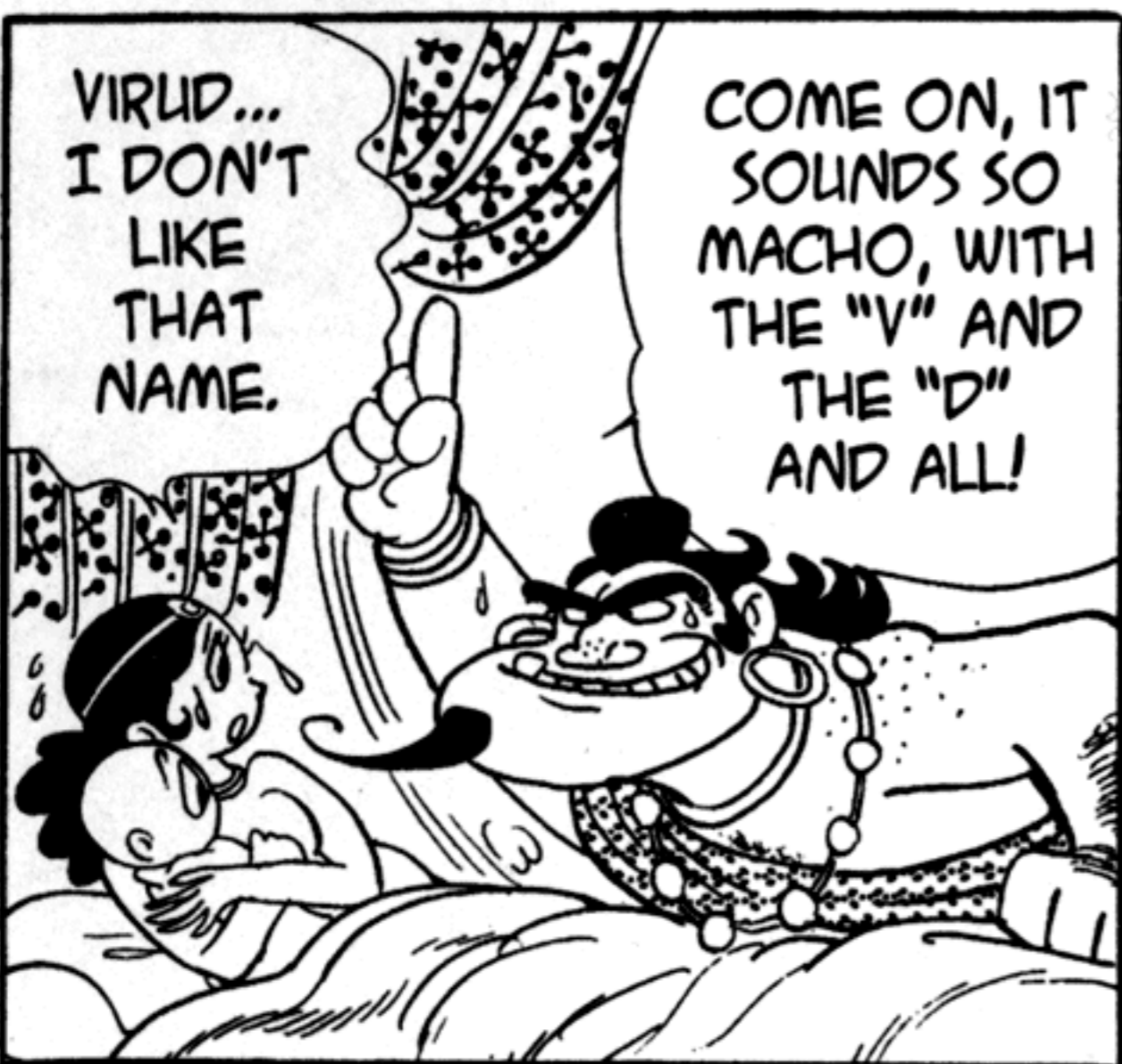
-- AND A YEAR
SOON PASSED.

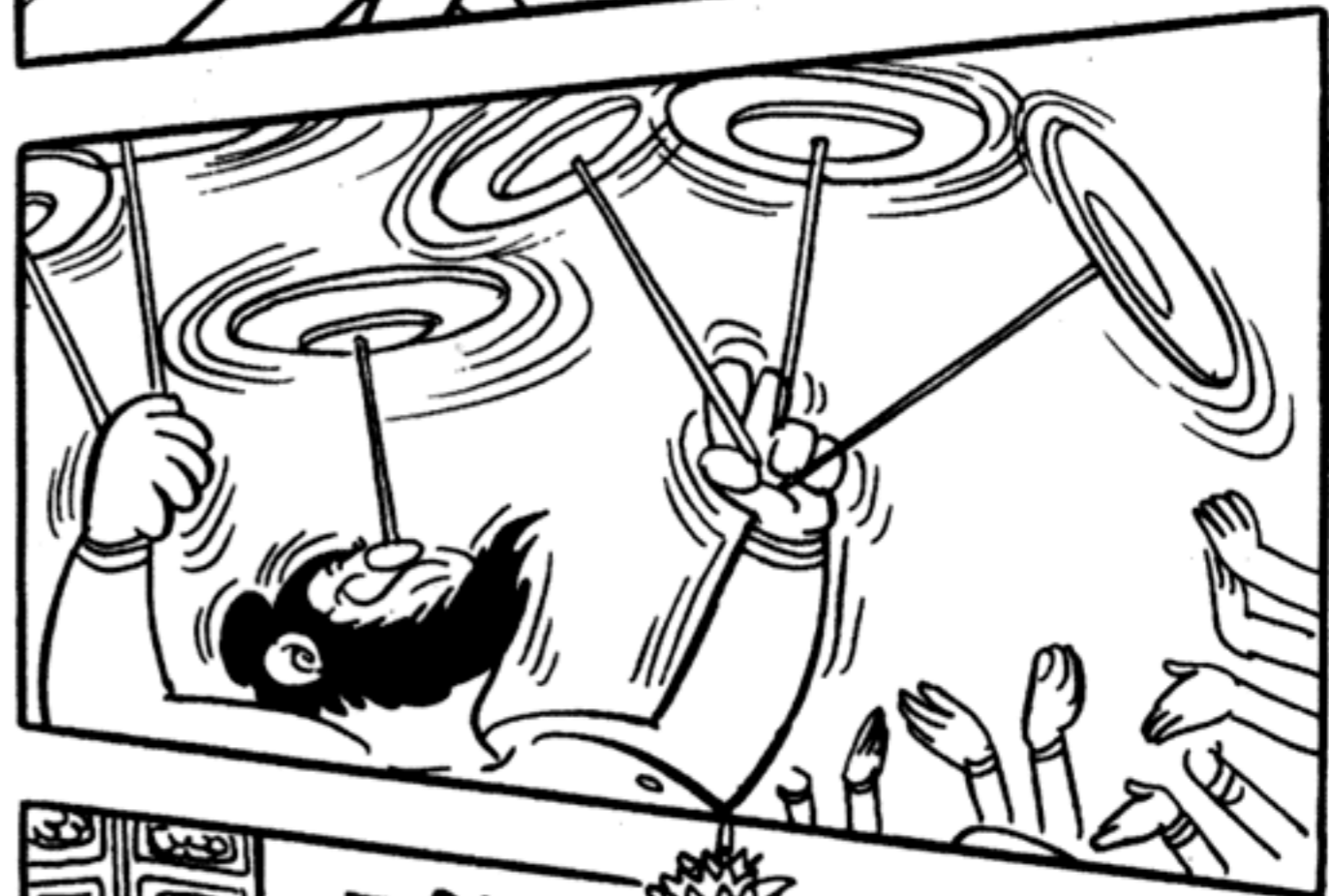
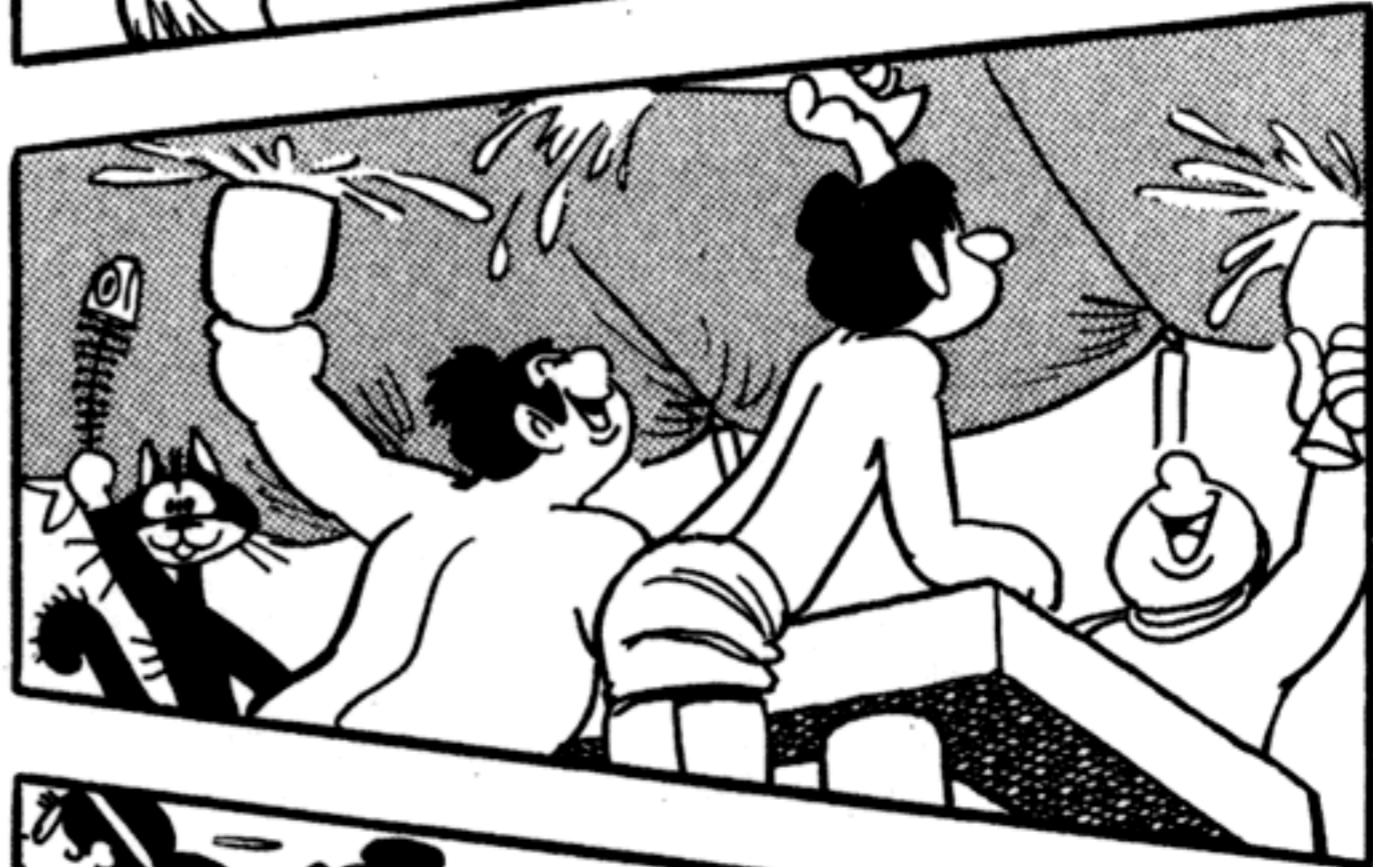






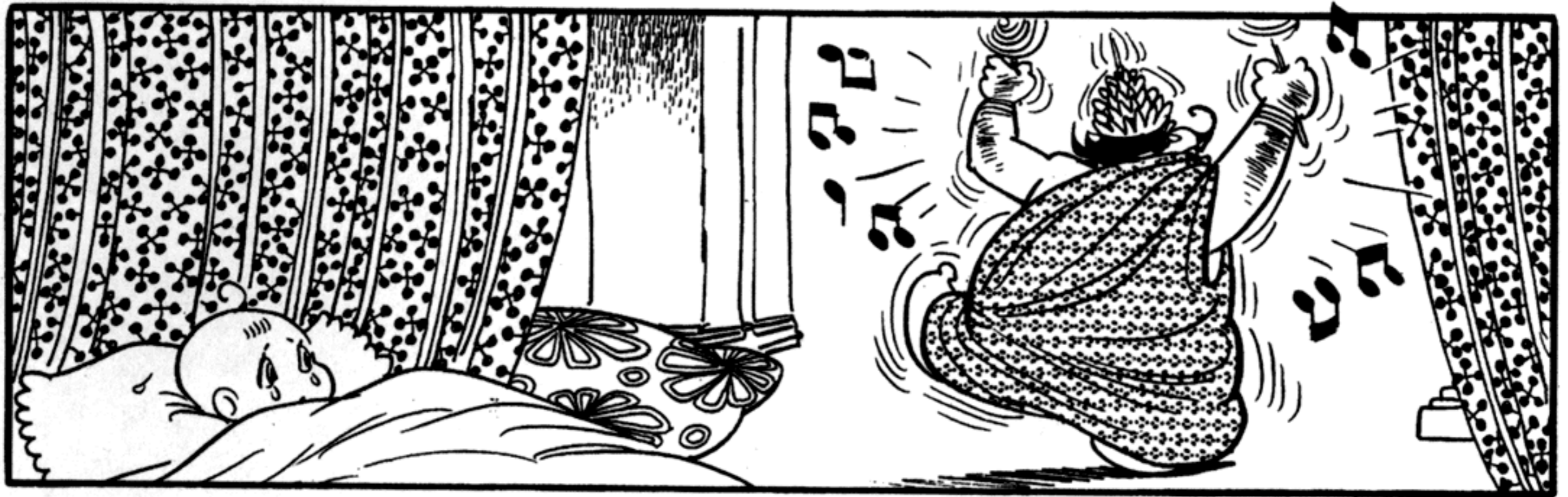


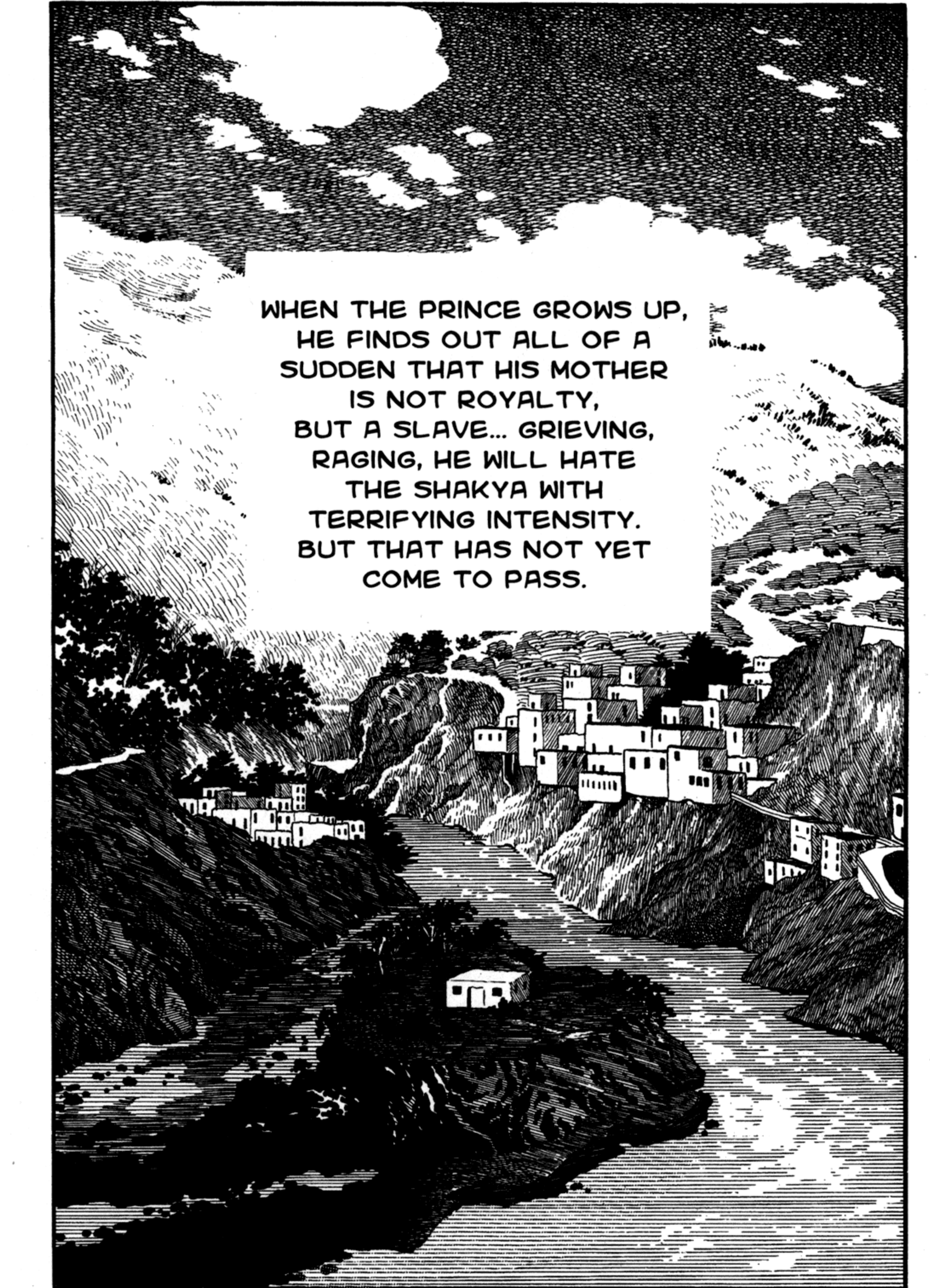






FOR KING
PRASENAJIT,
THE BIRTH
OF A CHILD
MEANT THAT
HE FINALLY
HAD AN HEIR
TO THE
KOSALA
THRONE.

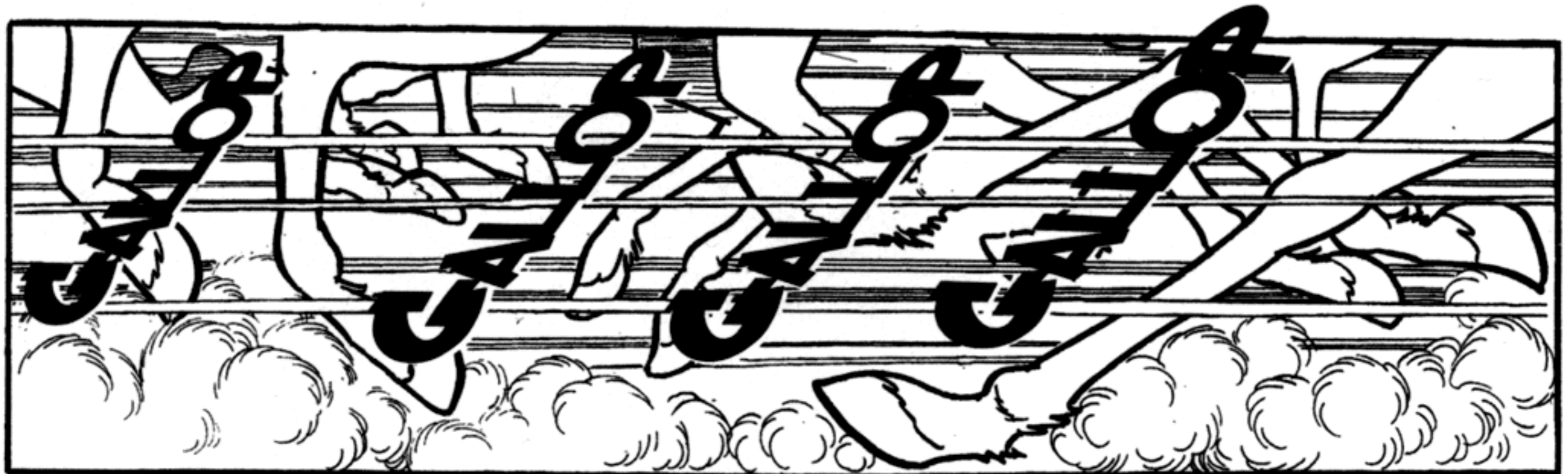
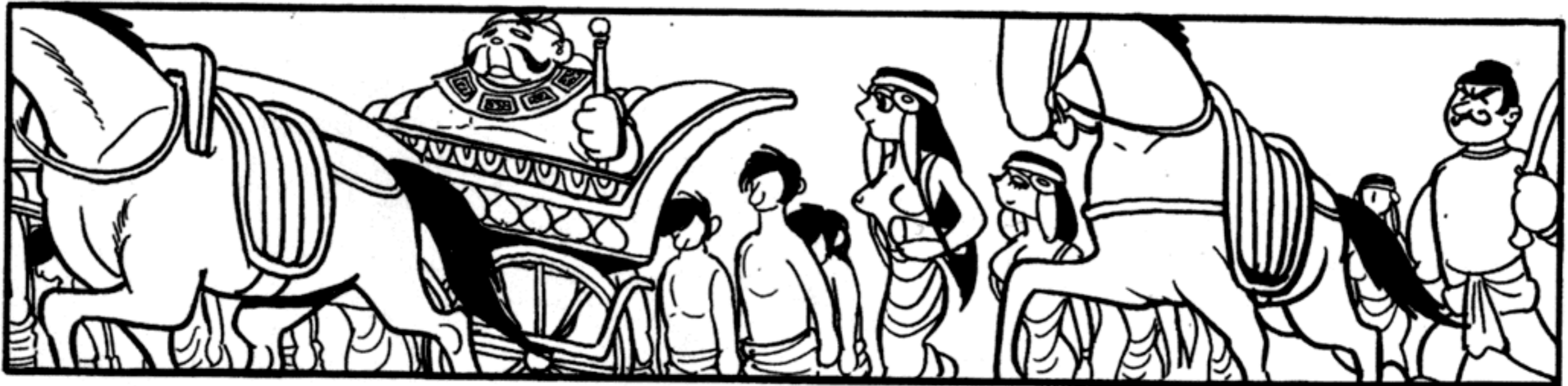
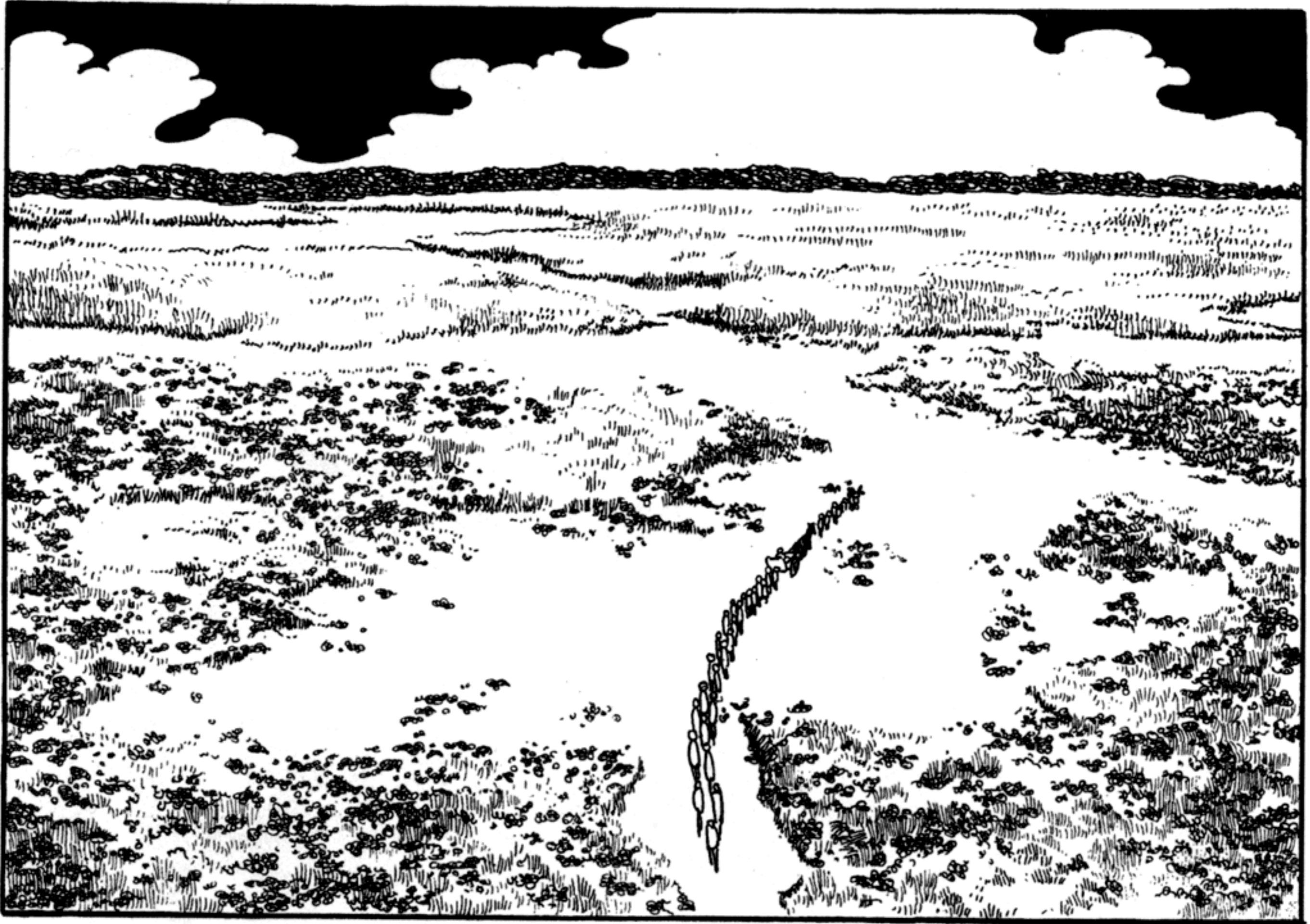


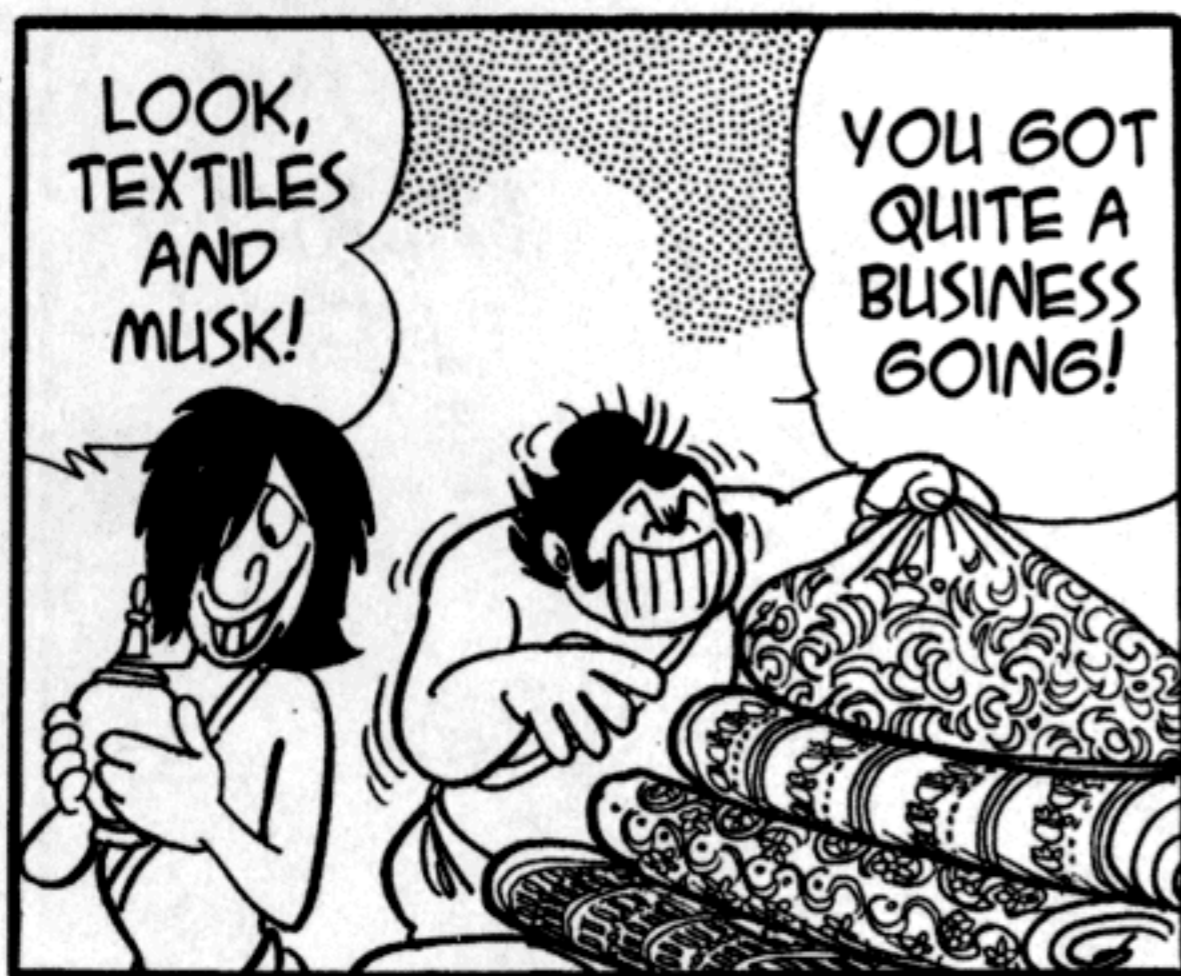
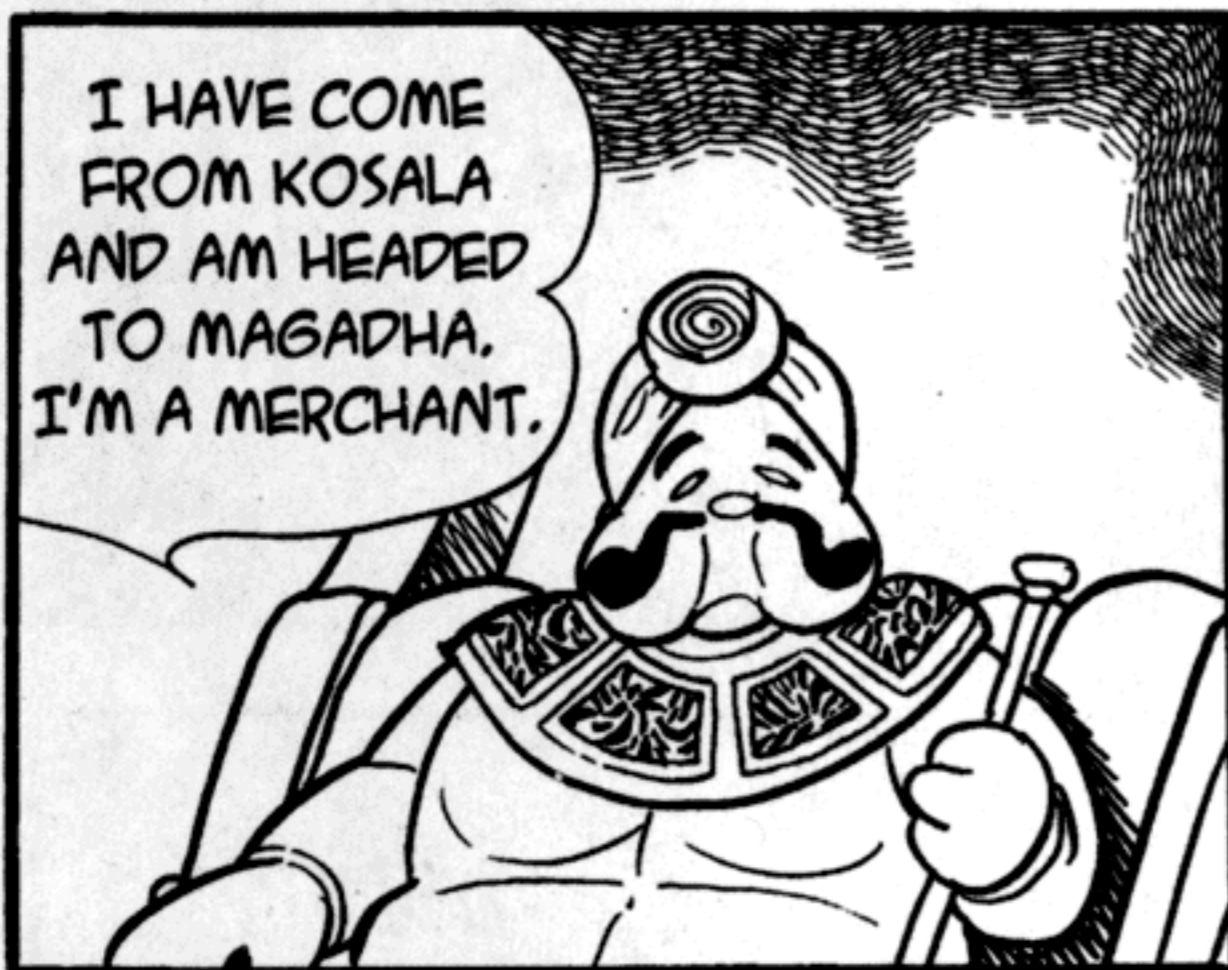
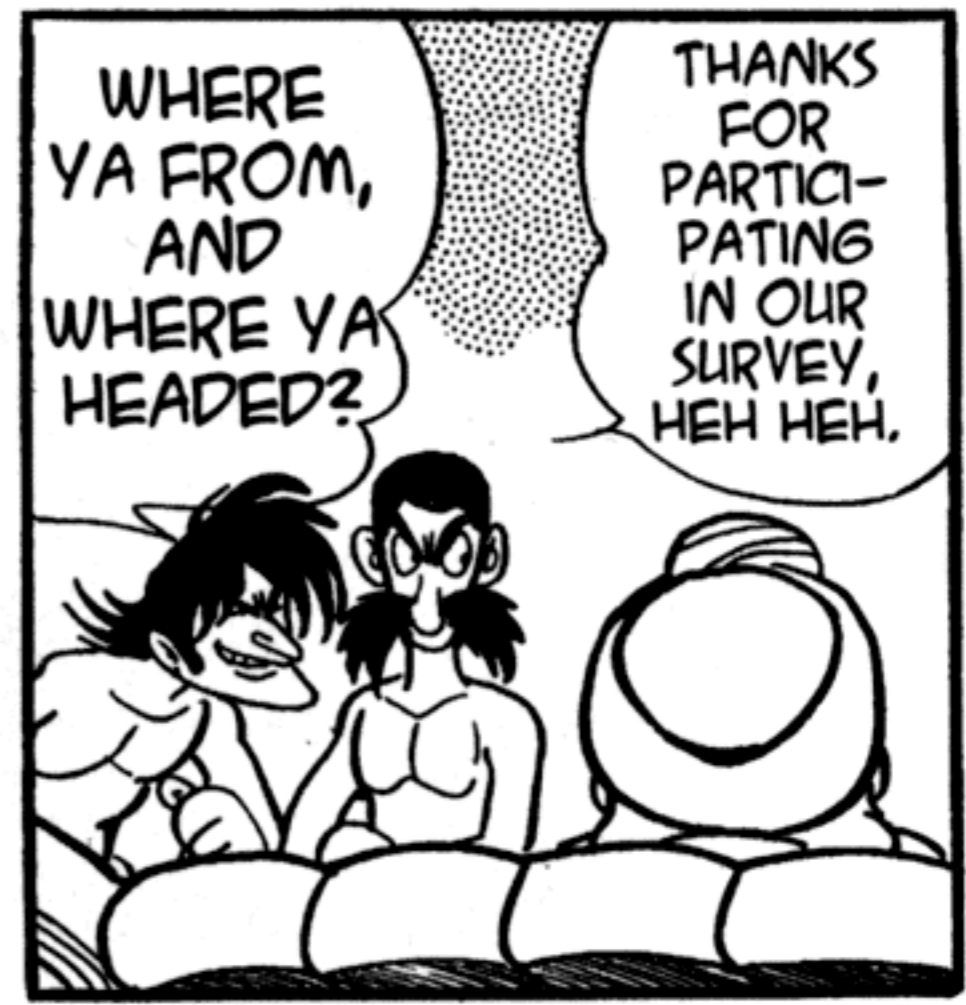


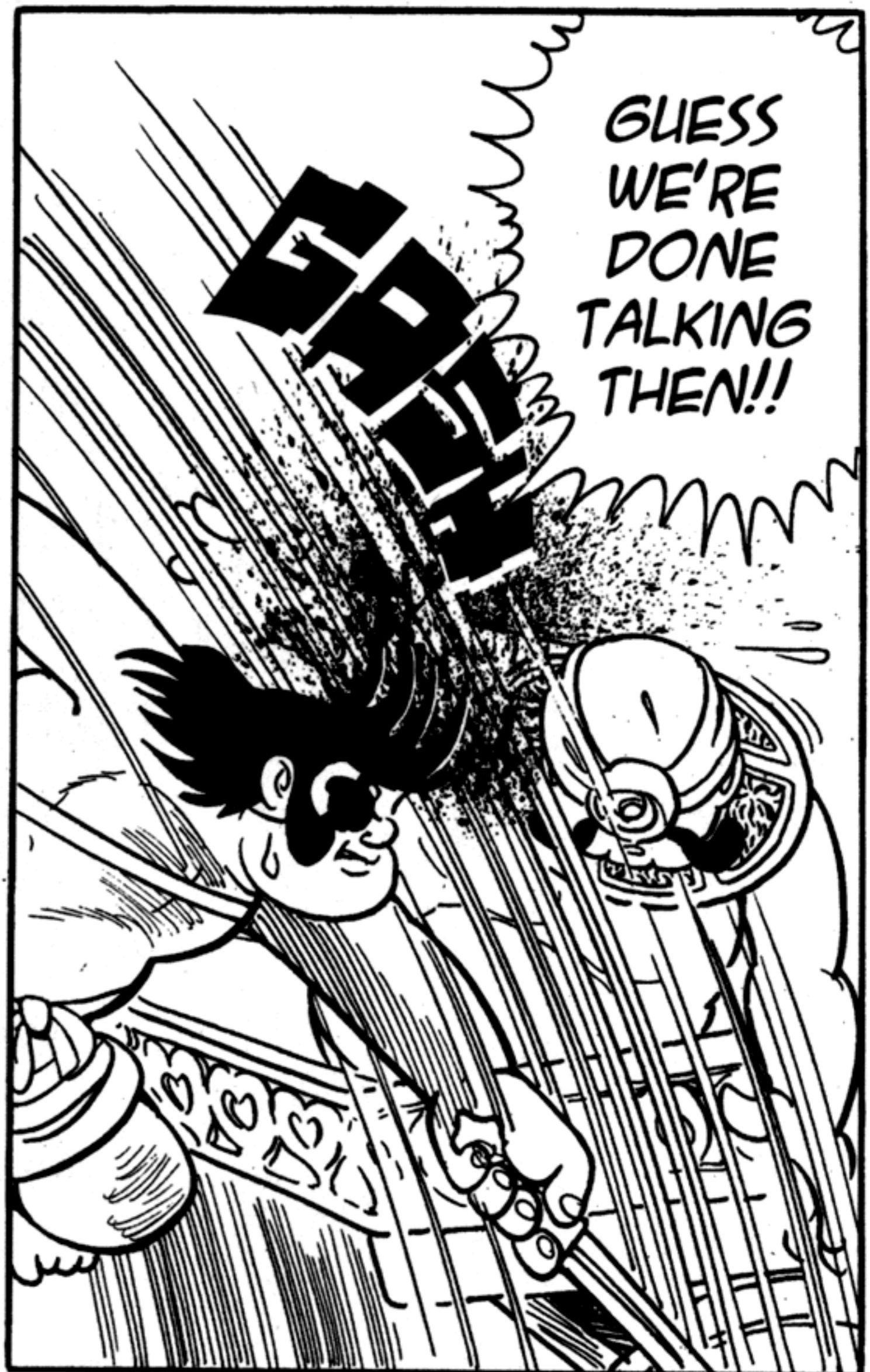
WHEN THE PRINCE GROWS UP,
HE FINDS OUT ALL OF A
SUDDEN THAT HIS MOTHER
IS NOT ROYALTY,
BUT A SLAVE... GRIEVING,
RAGING, HE WILL HATE
THE SHAKYA WITH
TERRIFYING INTENSITY.
BUT THAT HAS NOT YET
COME TO PASS.

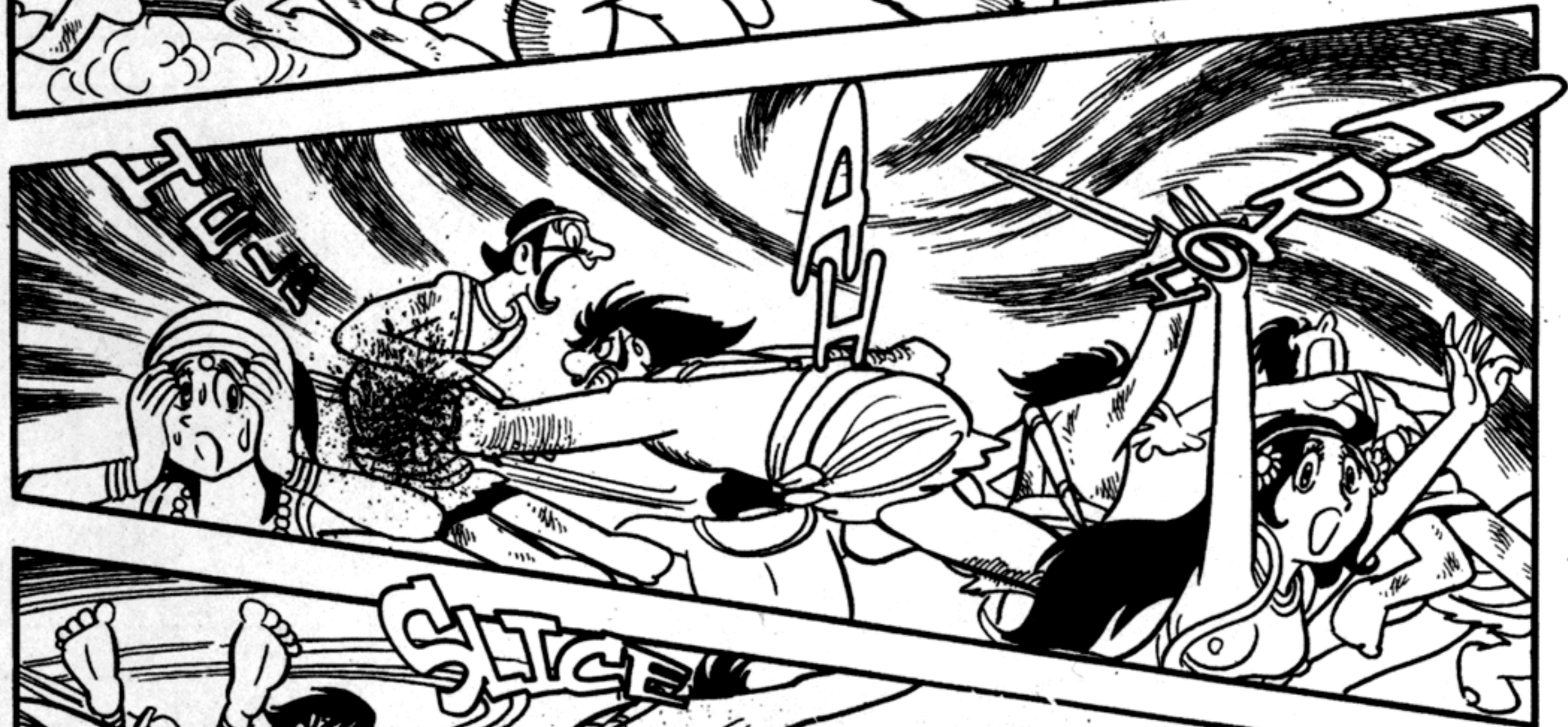
CHAPTER SEVEN

RAHULA



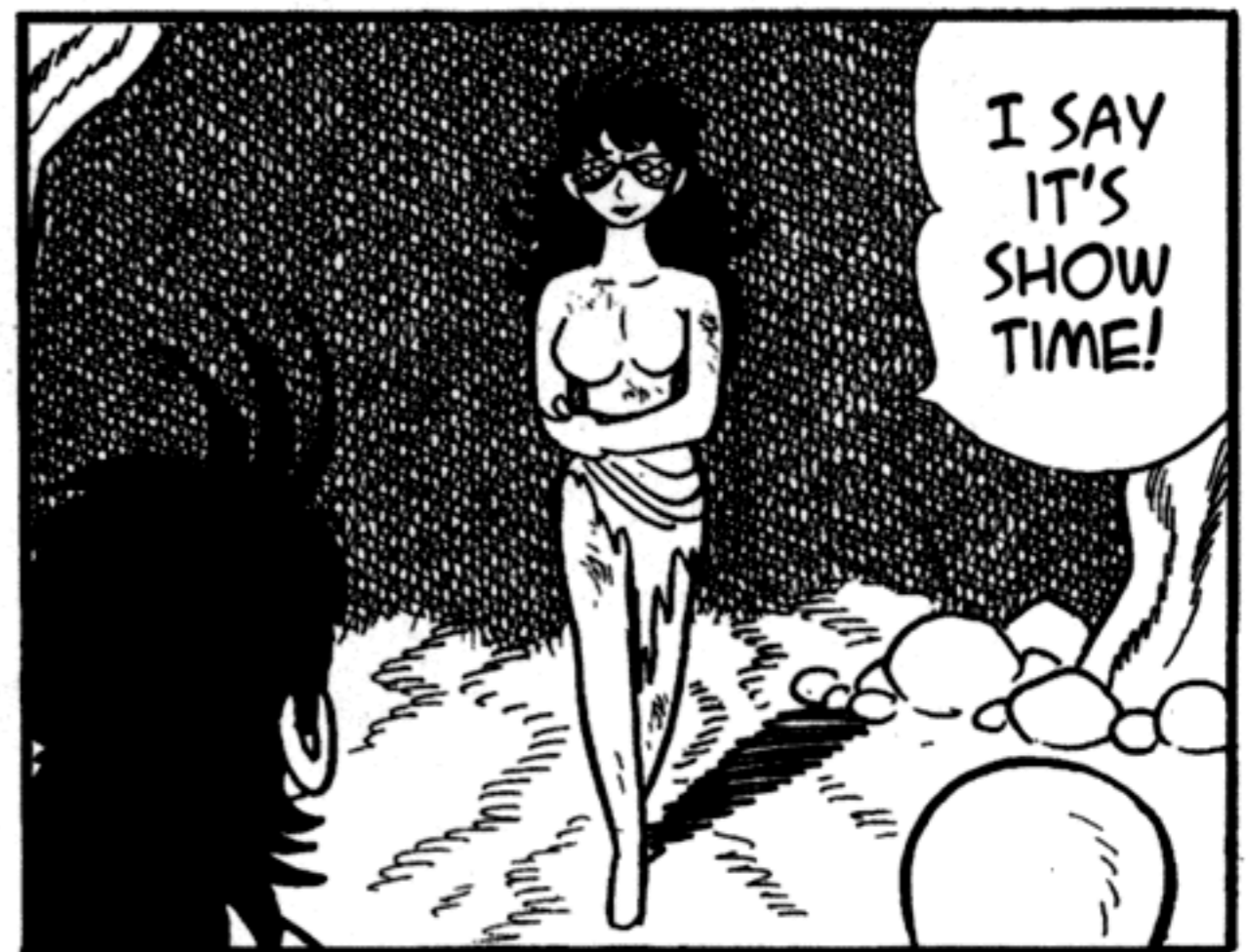
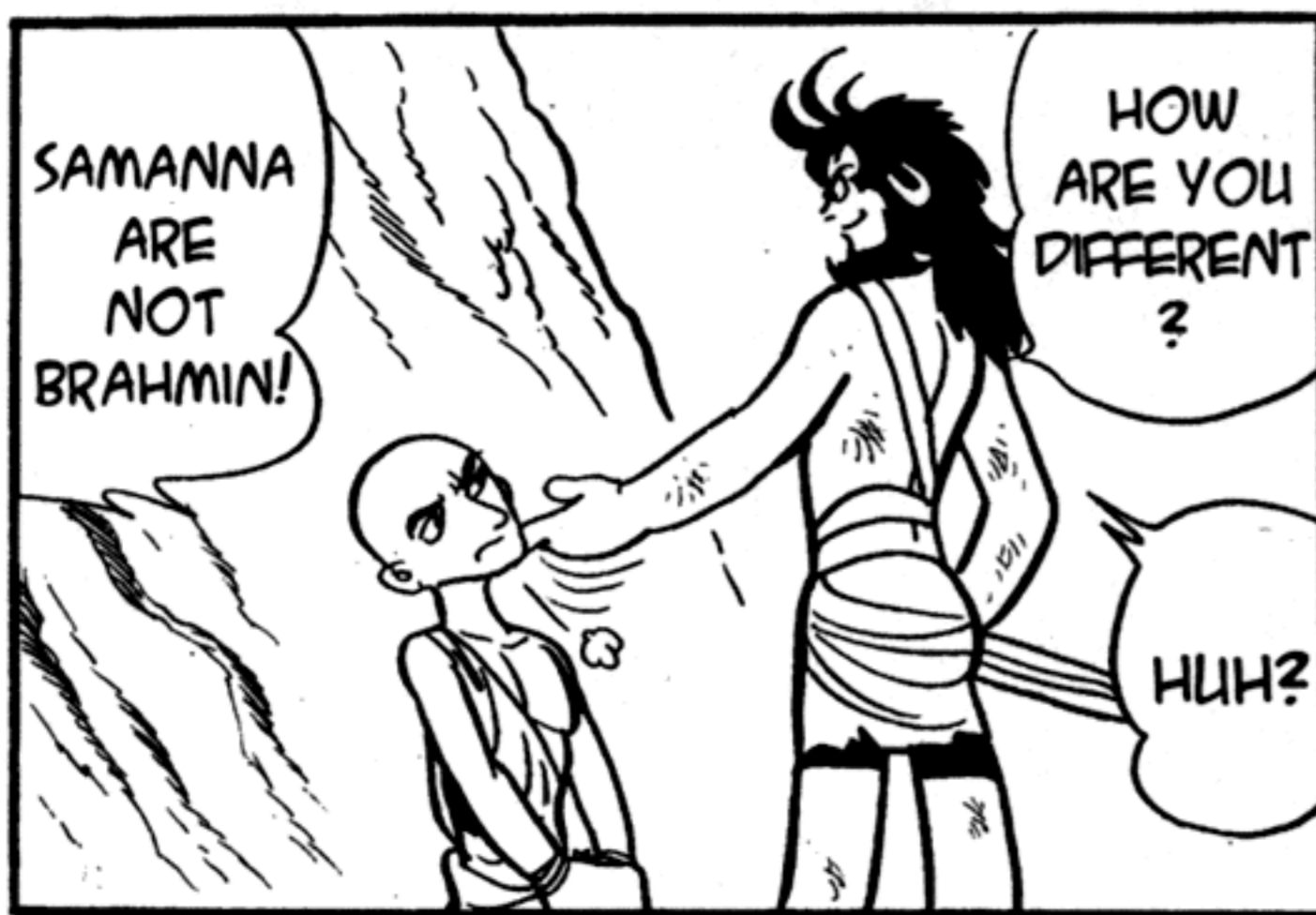


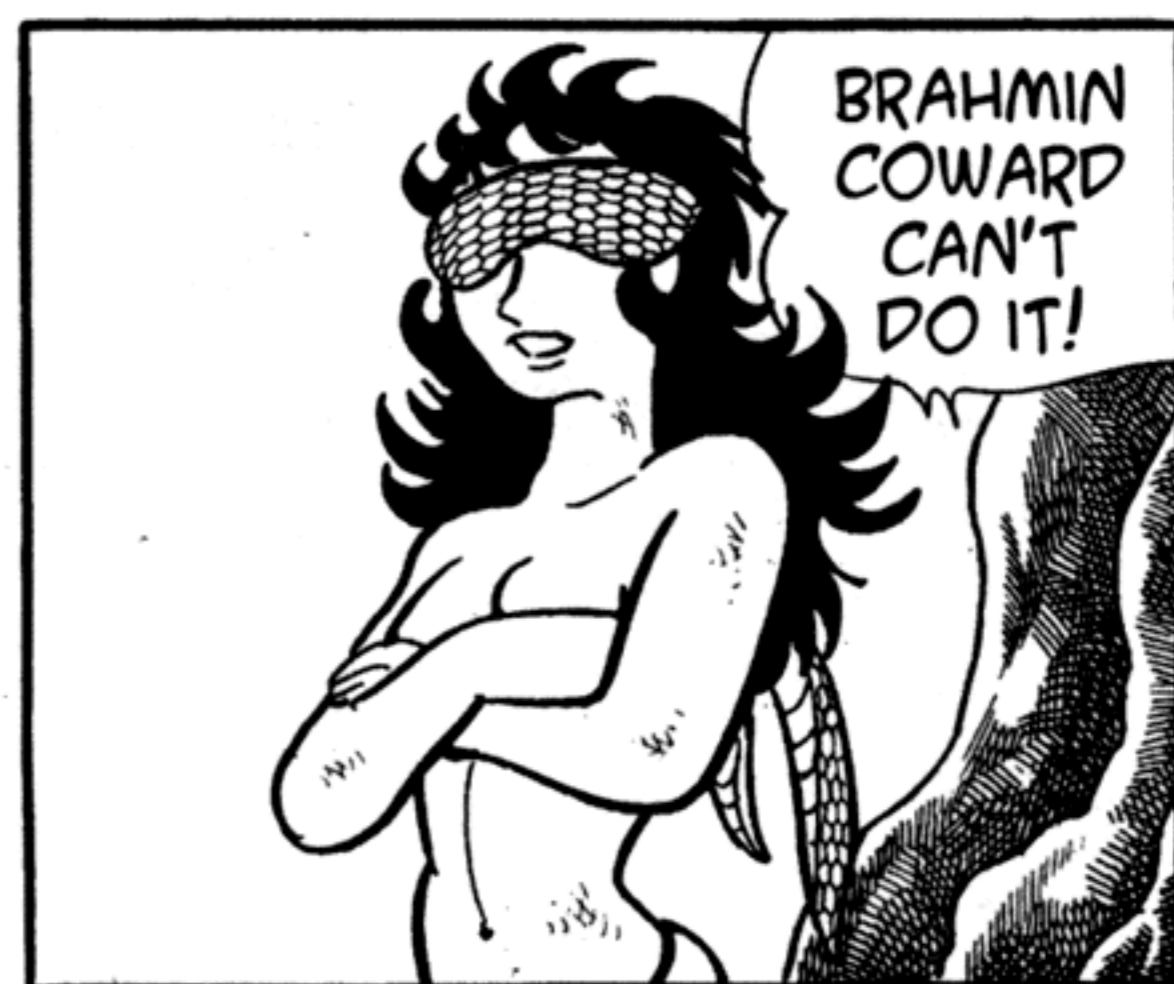
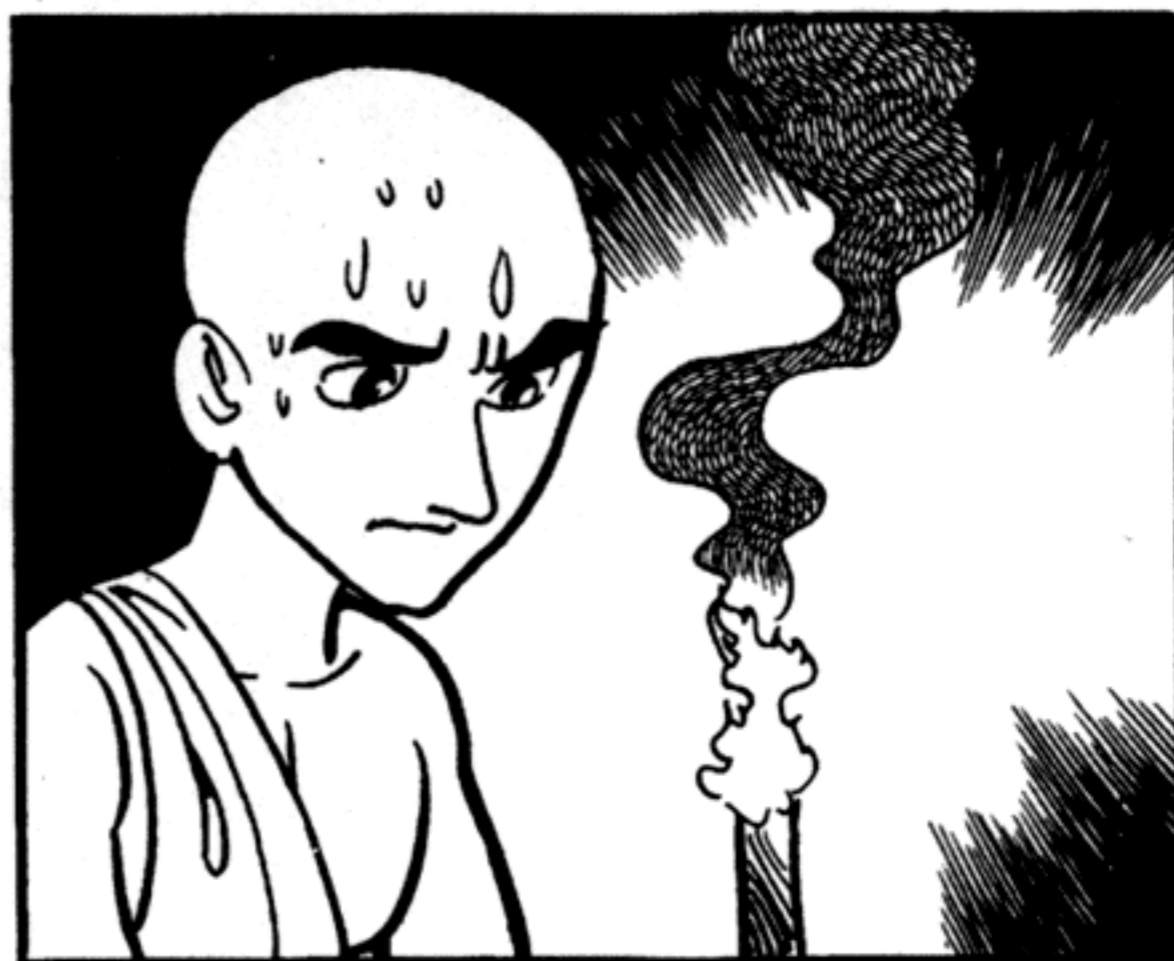
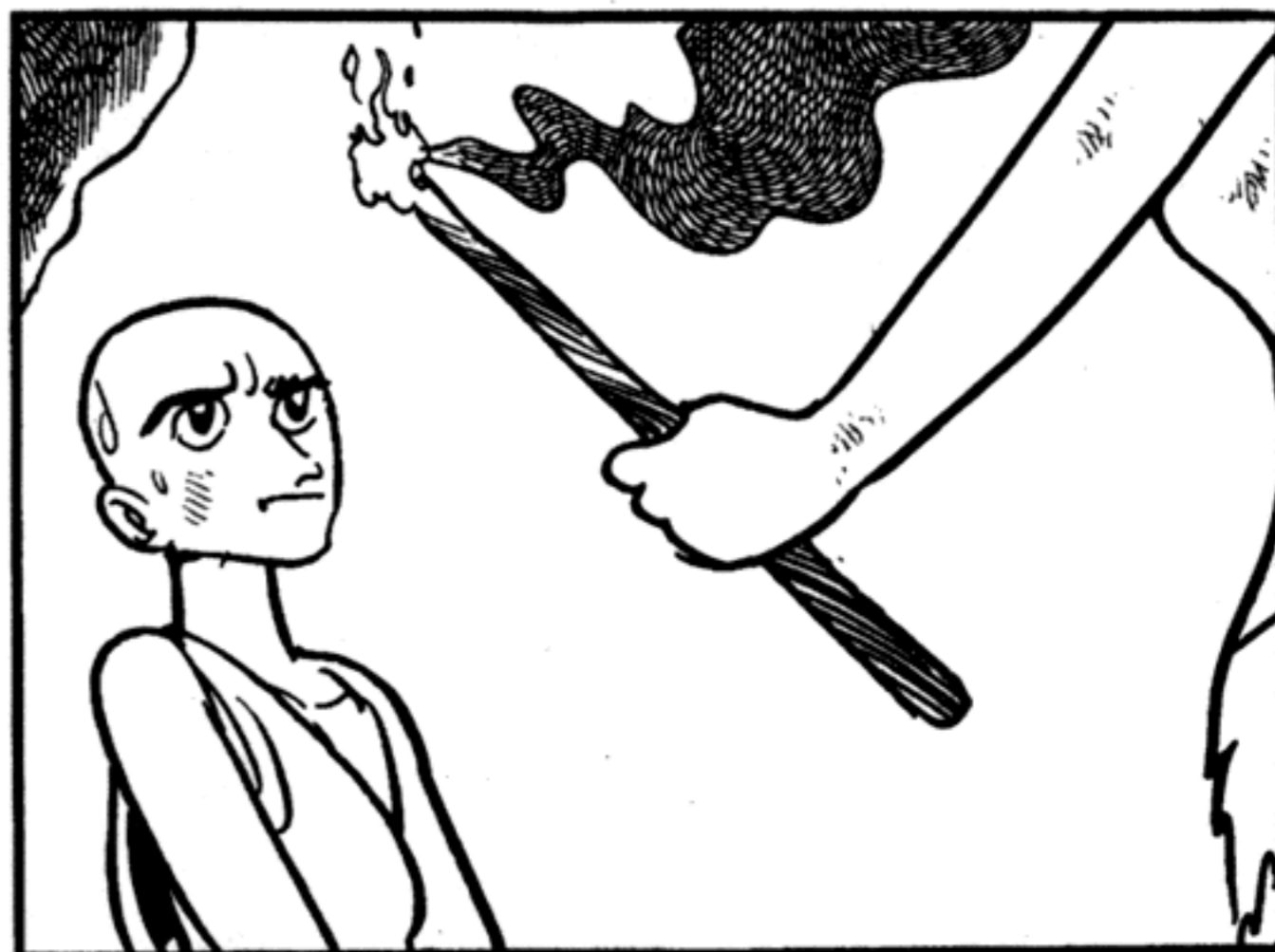


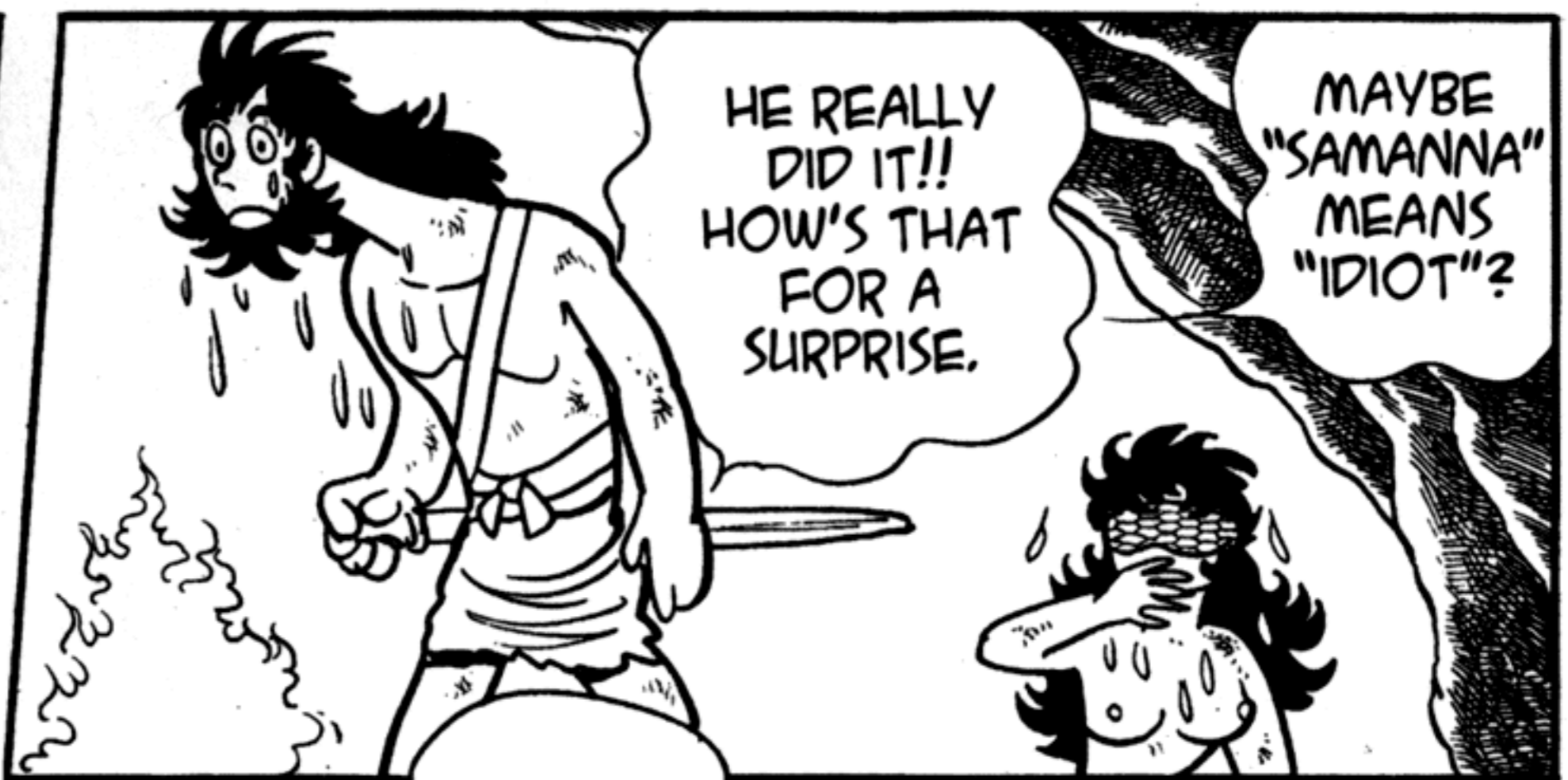
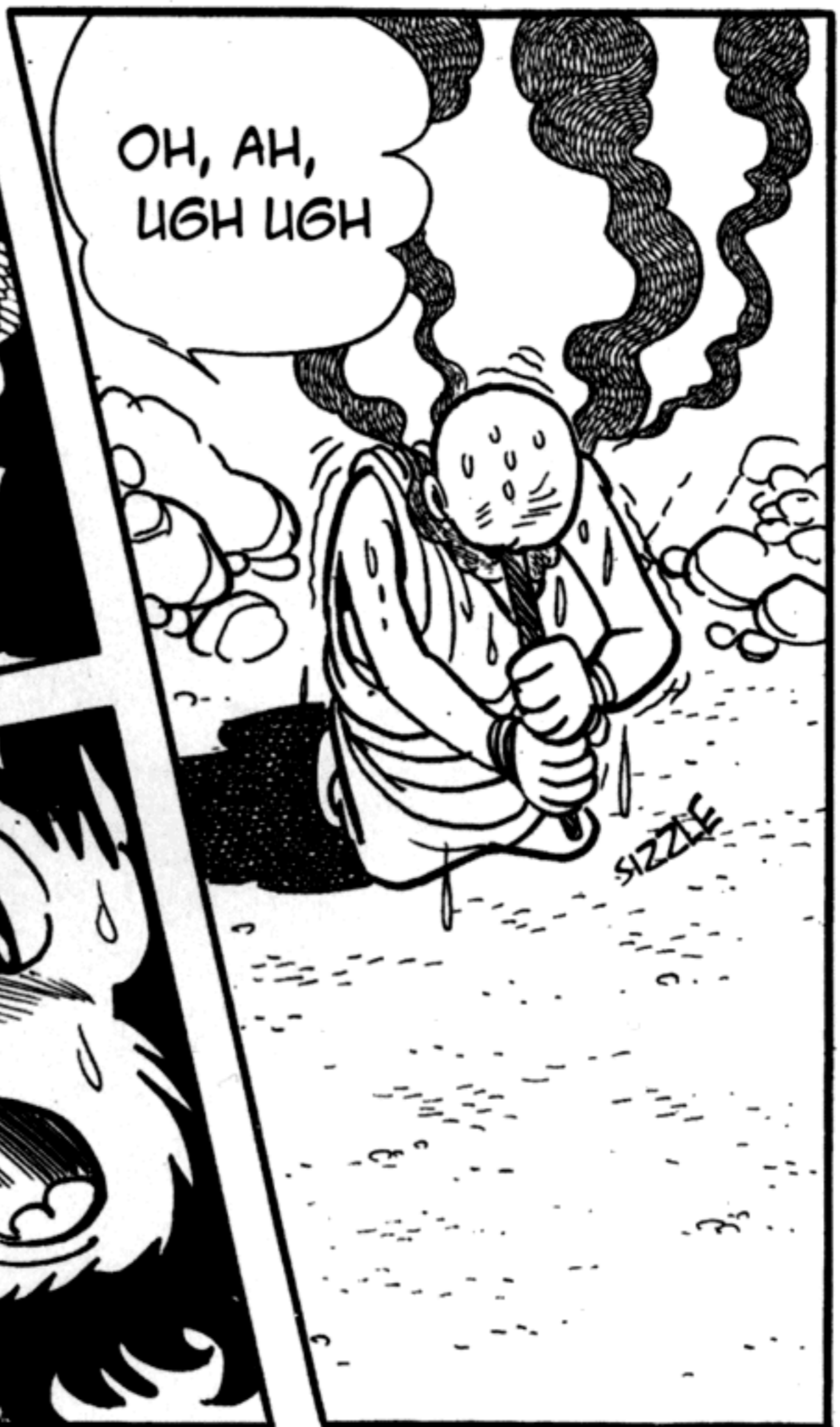


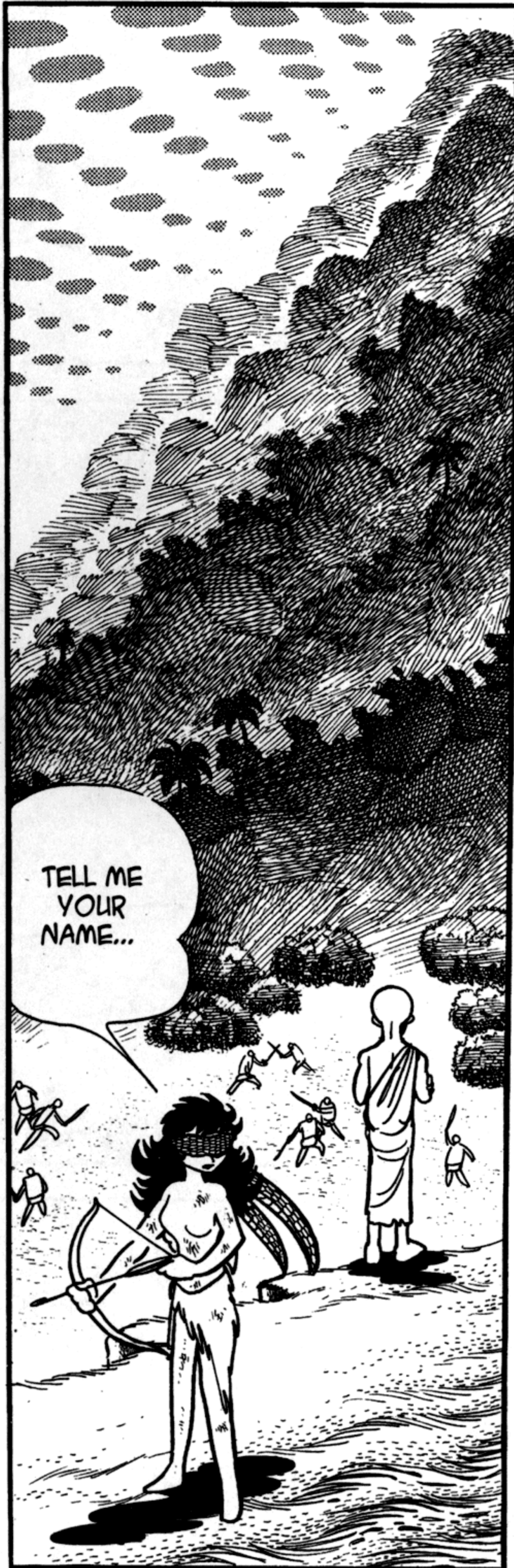












TELL ME YOUR NAME...



I AM DHEPA, SON OF A KOSALAN WARRIOR.

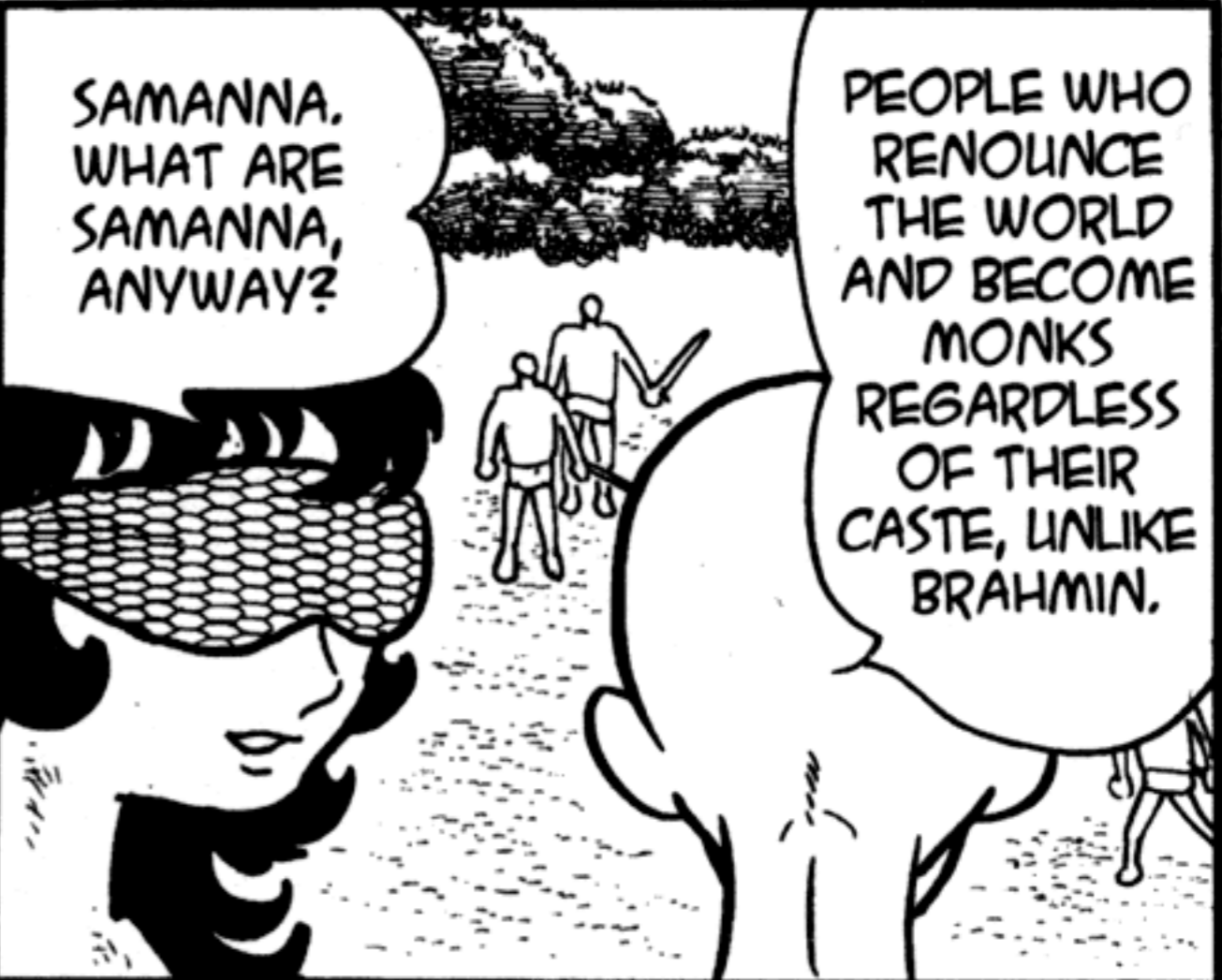


YOU'RE WARRIOR CASTE? THAT'S WHY YOU'RE SO STOIC.



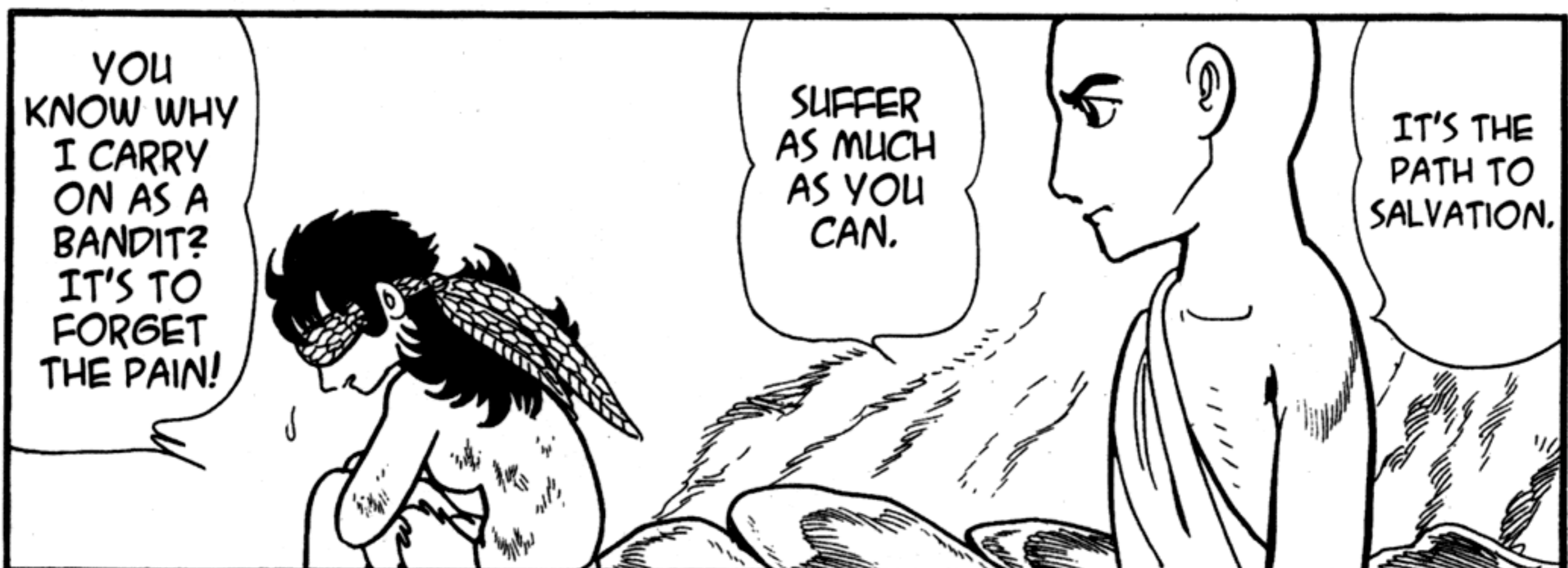
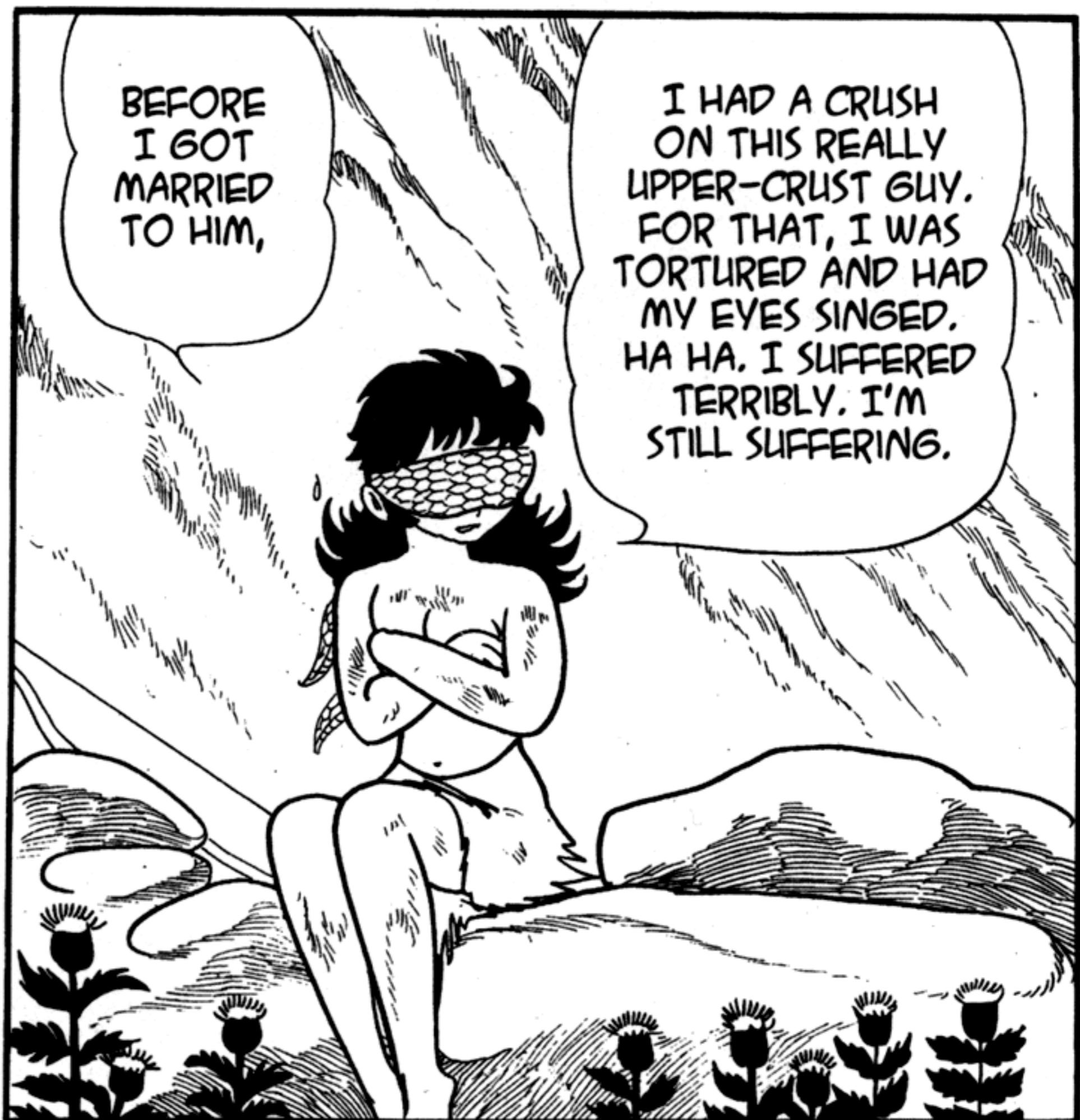
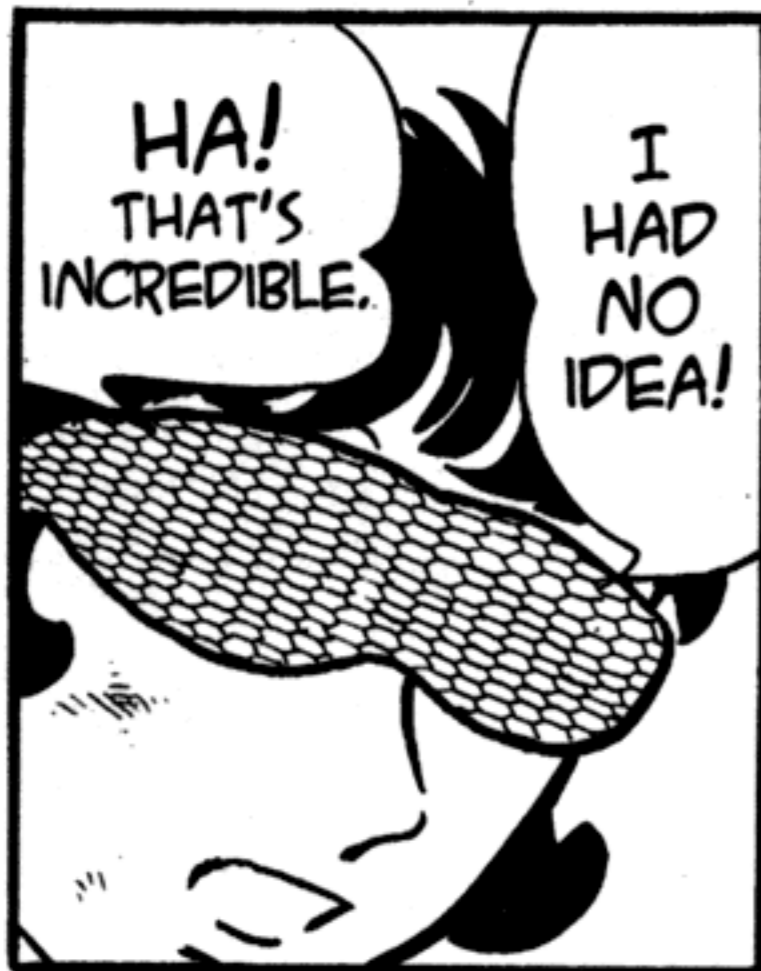
I GREW SKEPTICAL OF THE BRAHMIN TEACHINGS AND LEFT HOME...

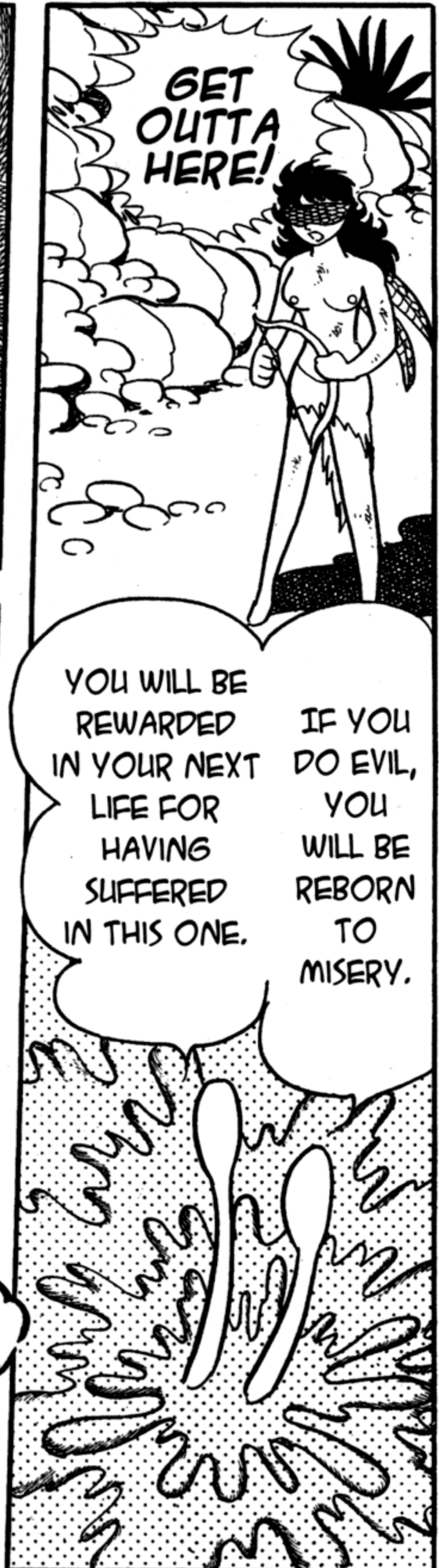
AND ENTERED THE PATH OF A SAMANNA.

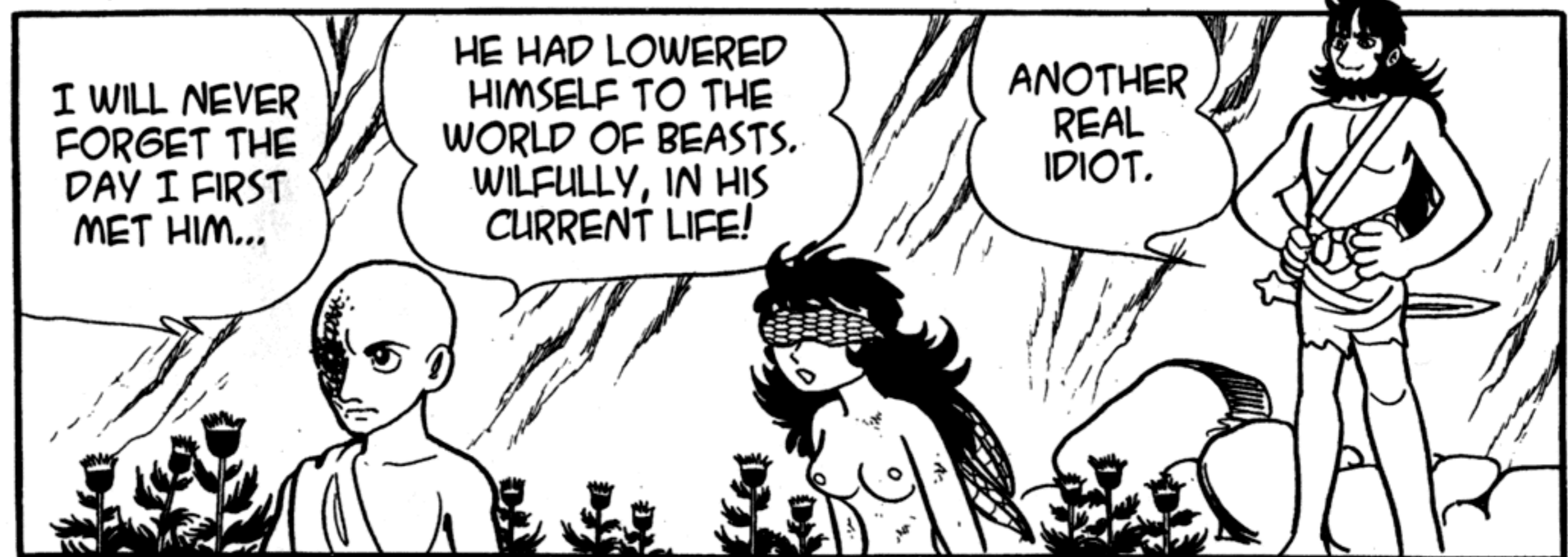
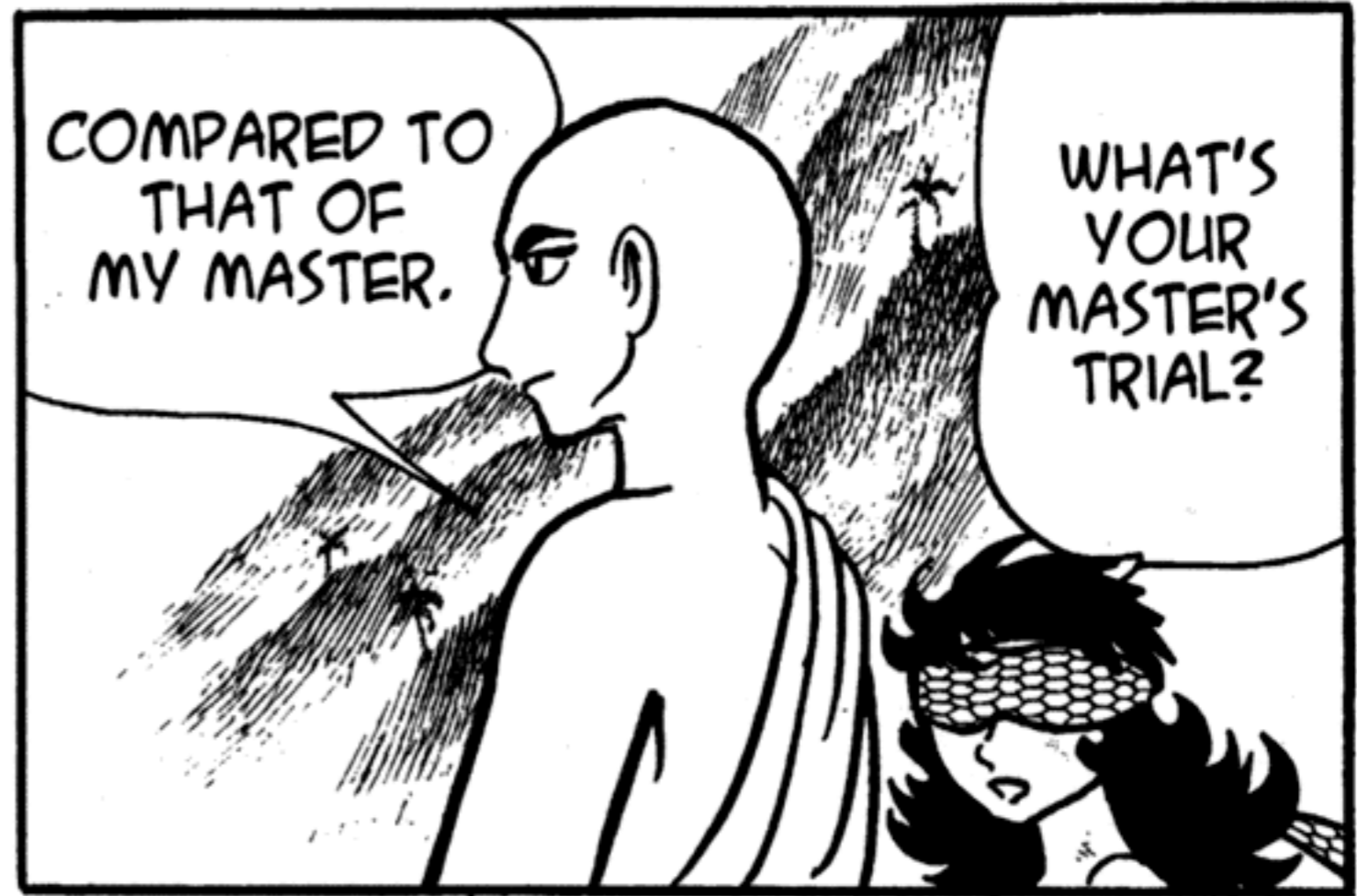
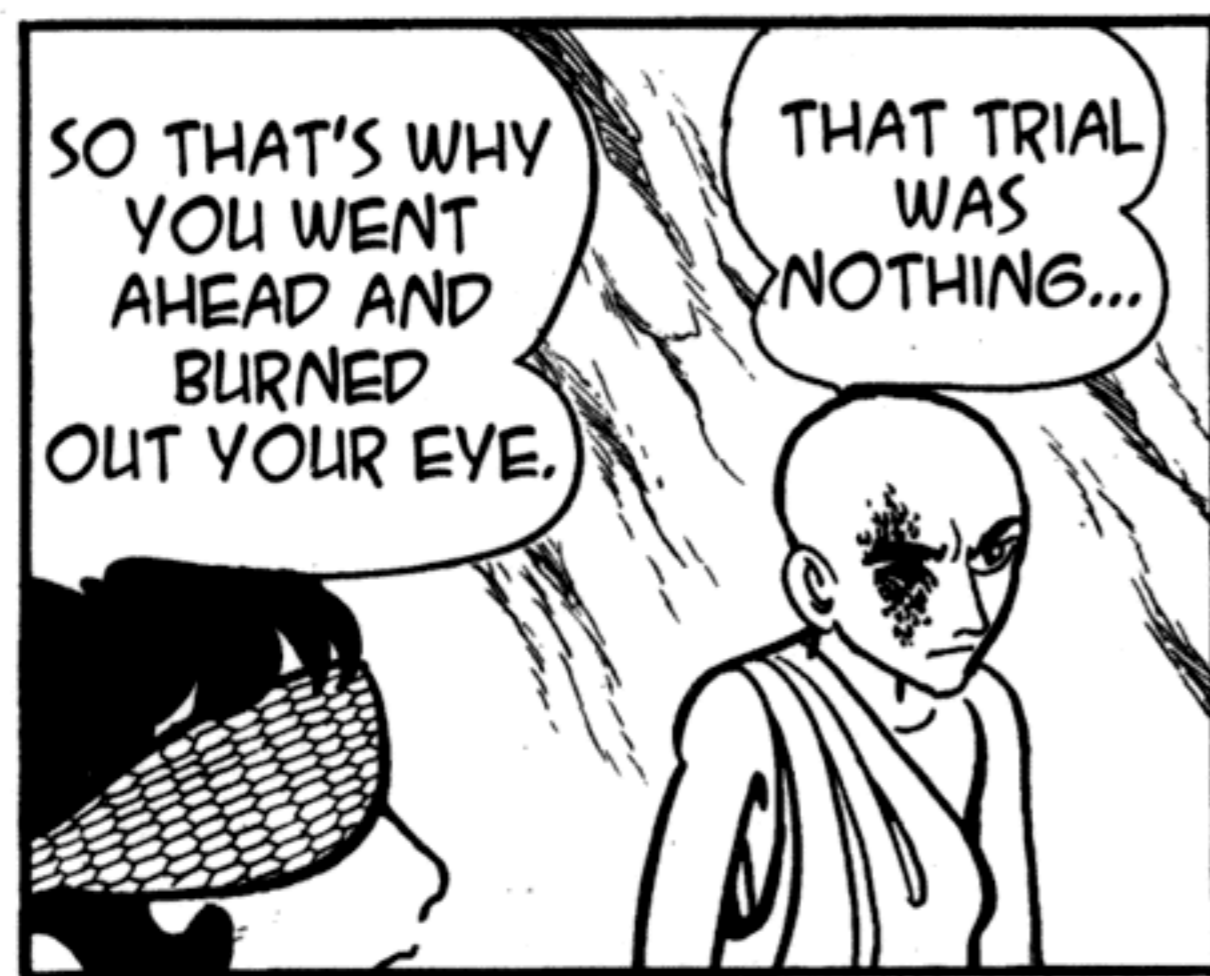
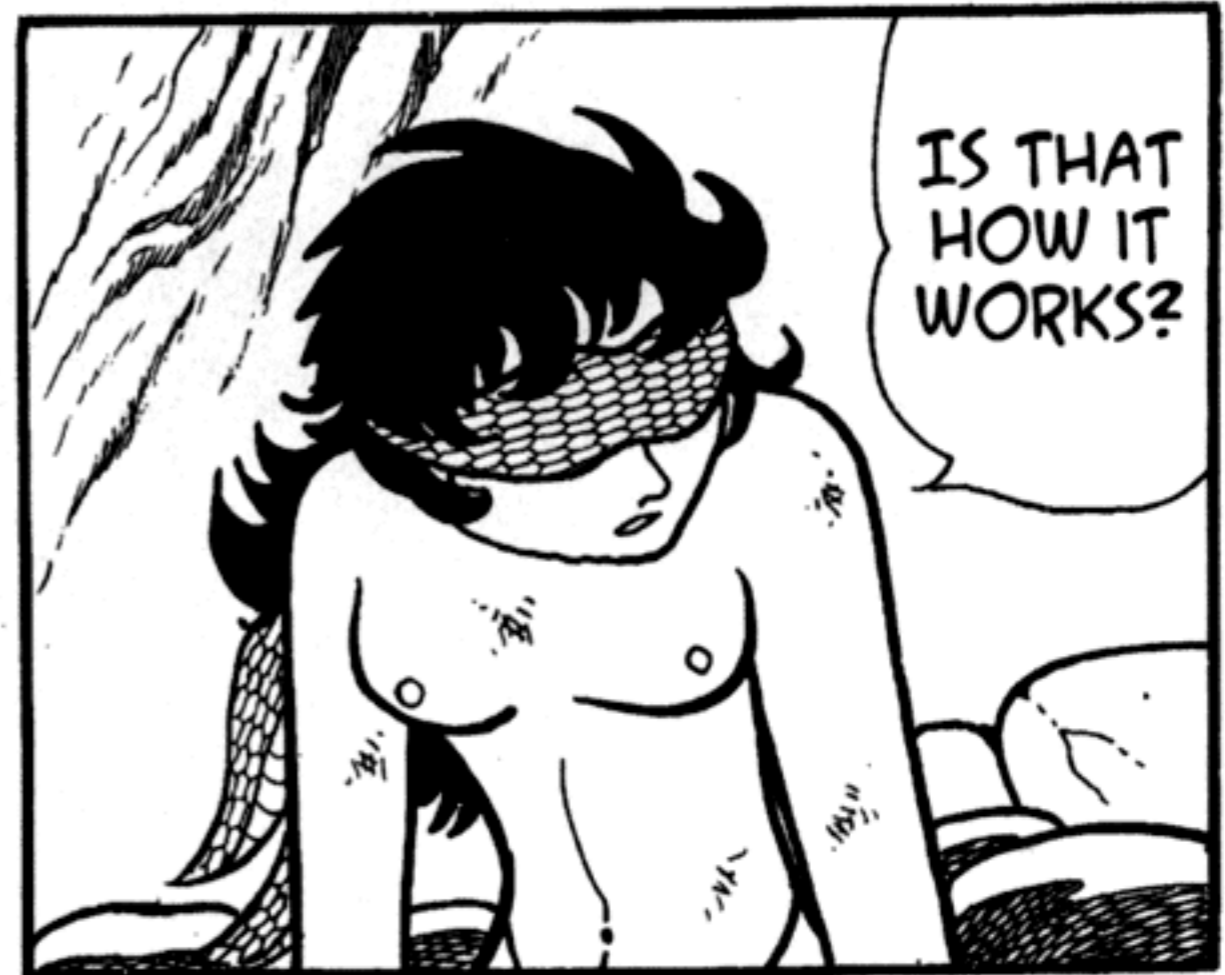
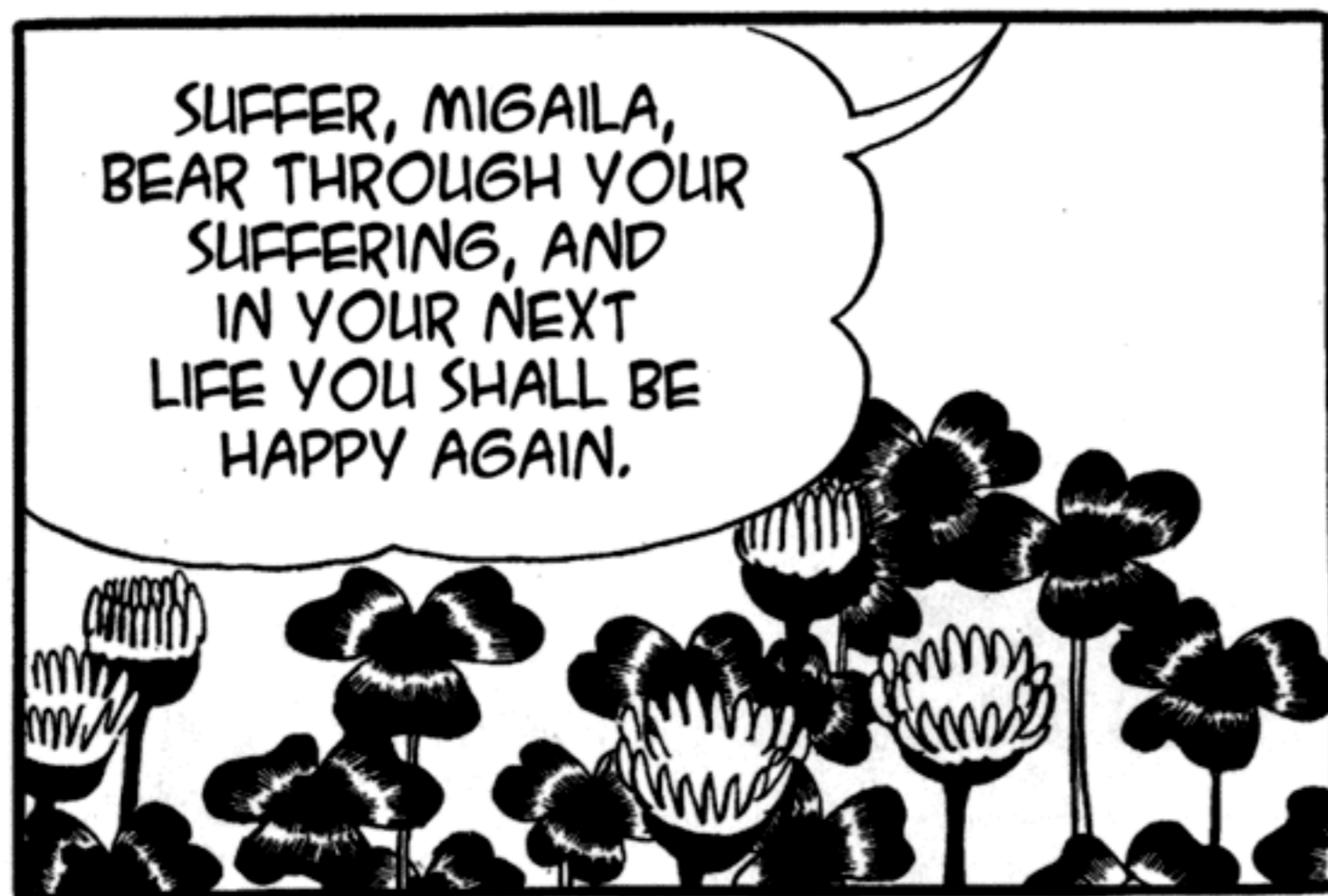
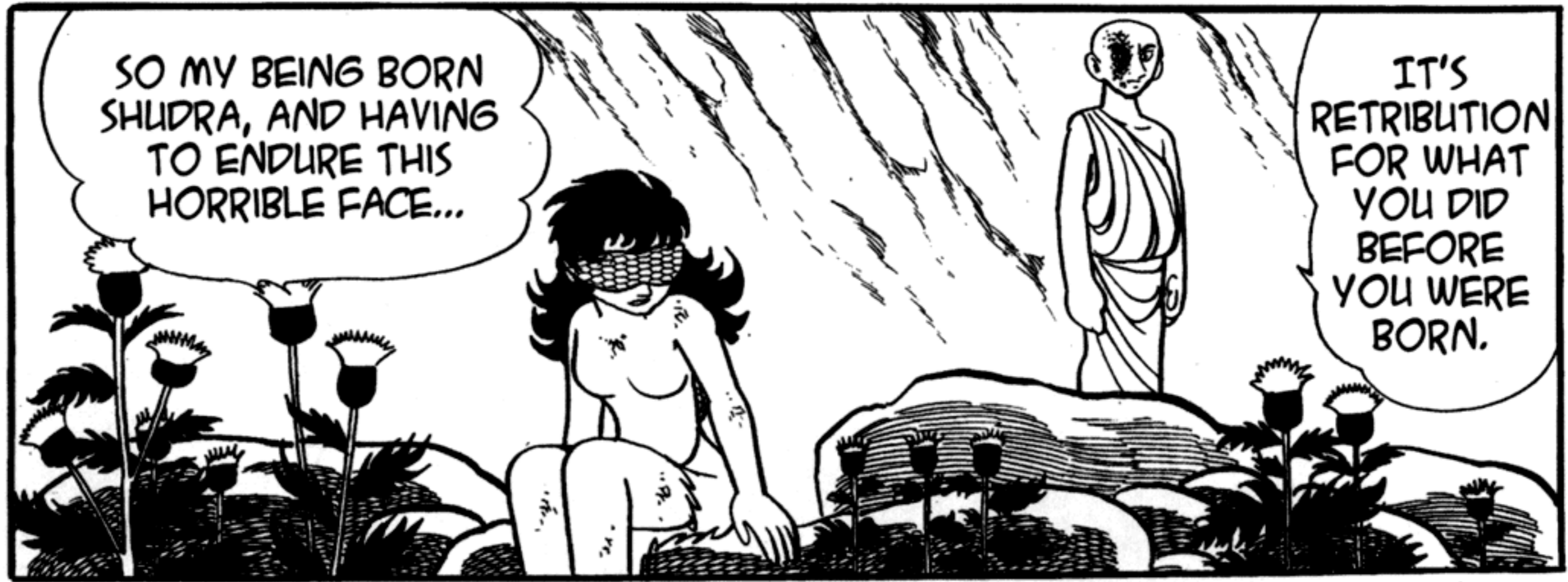


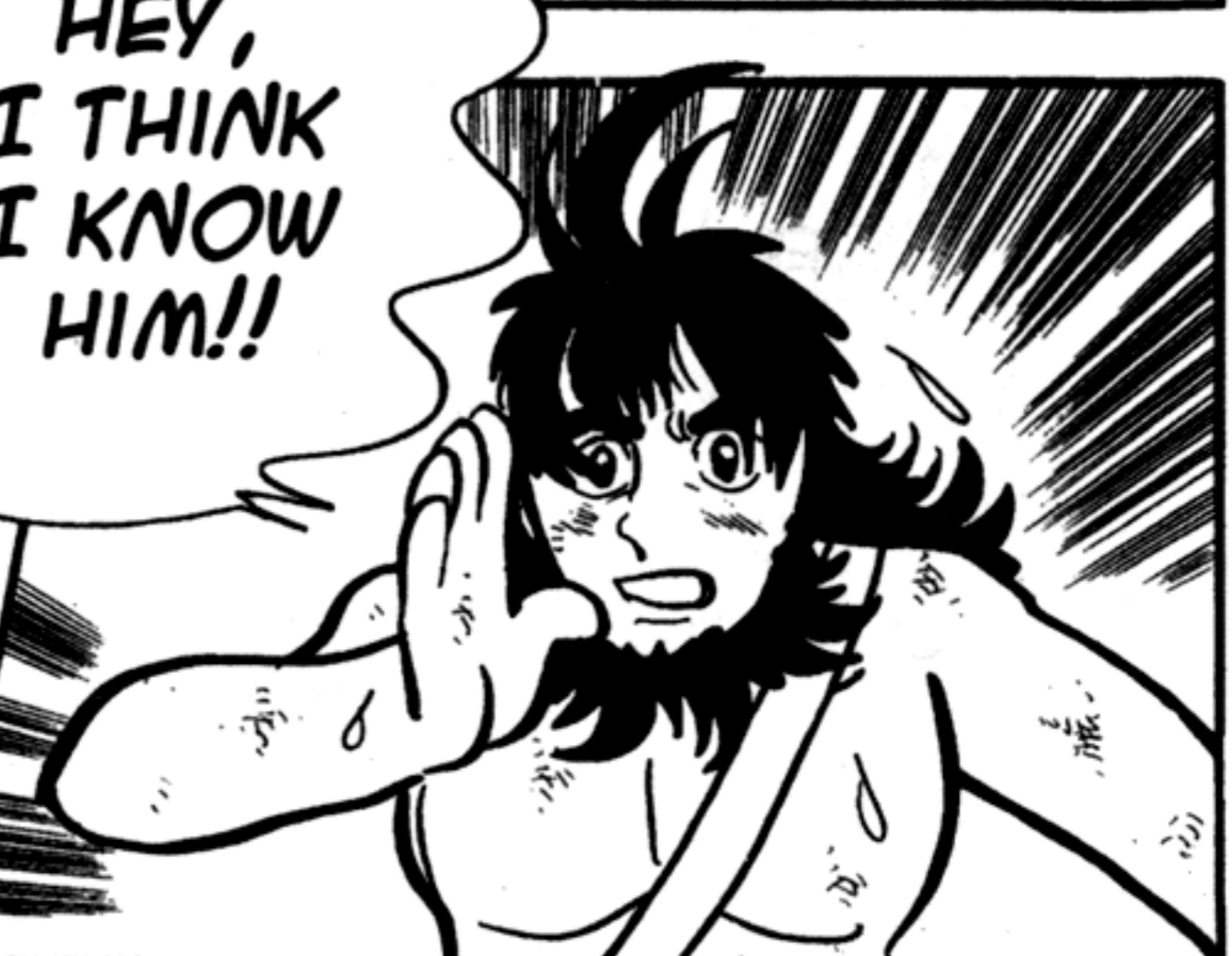
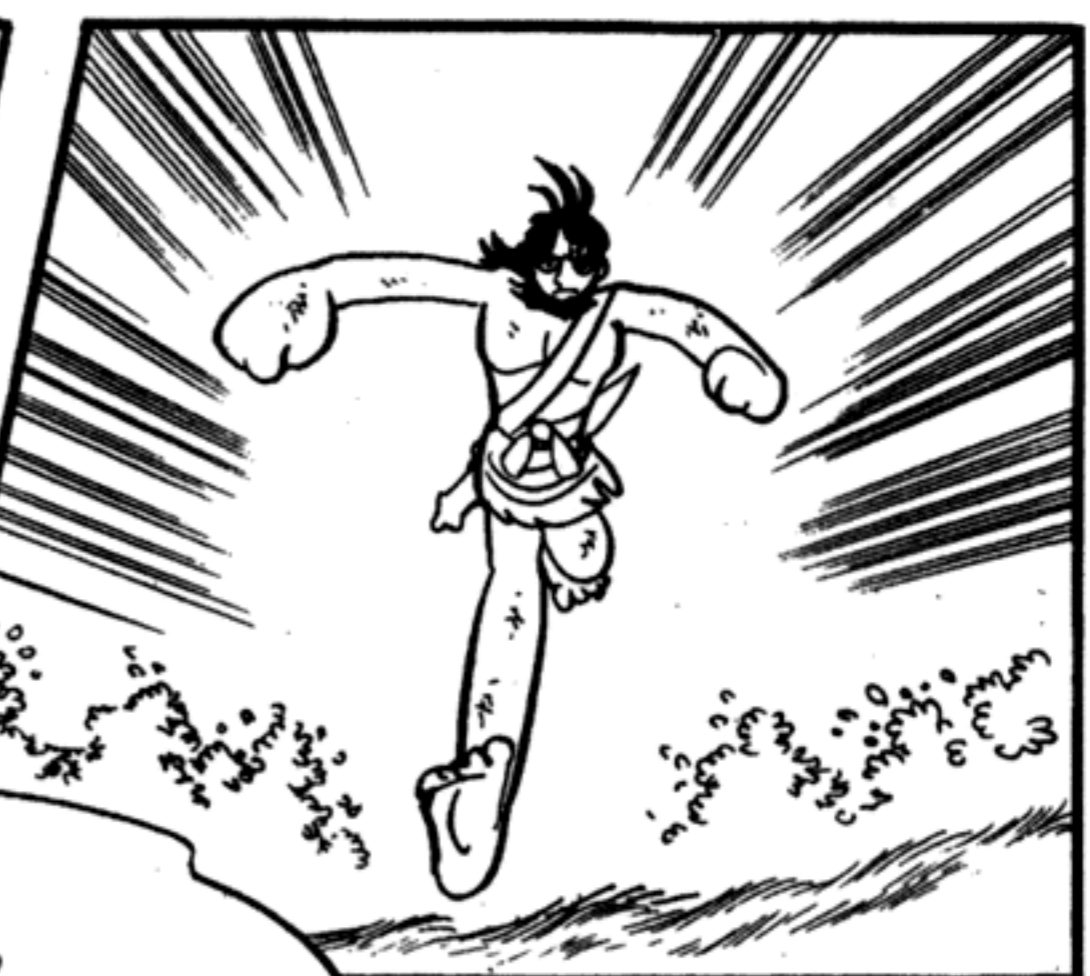
SAMANNA, WHAT ARE SAMANNA, ANYWAY?

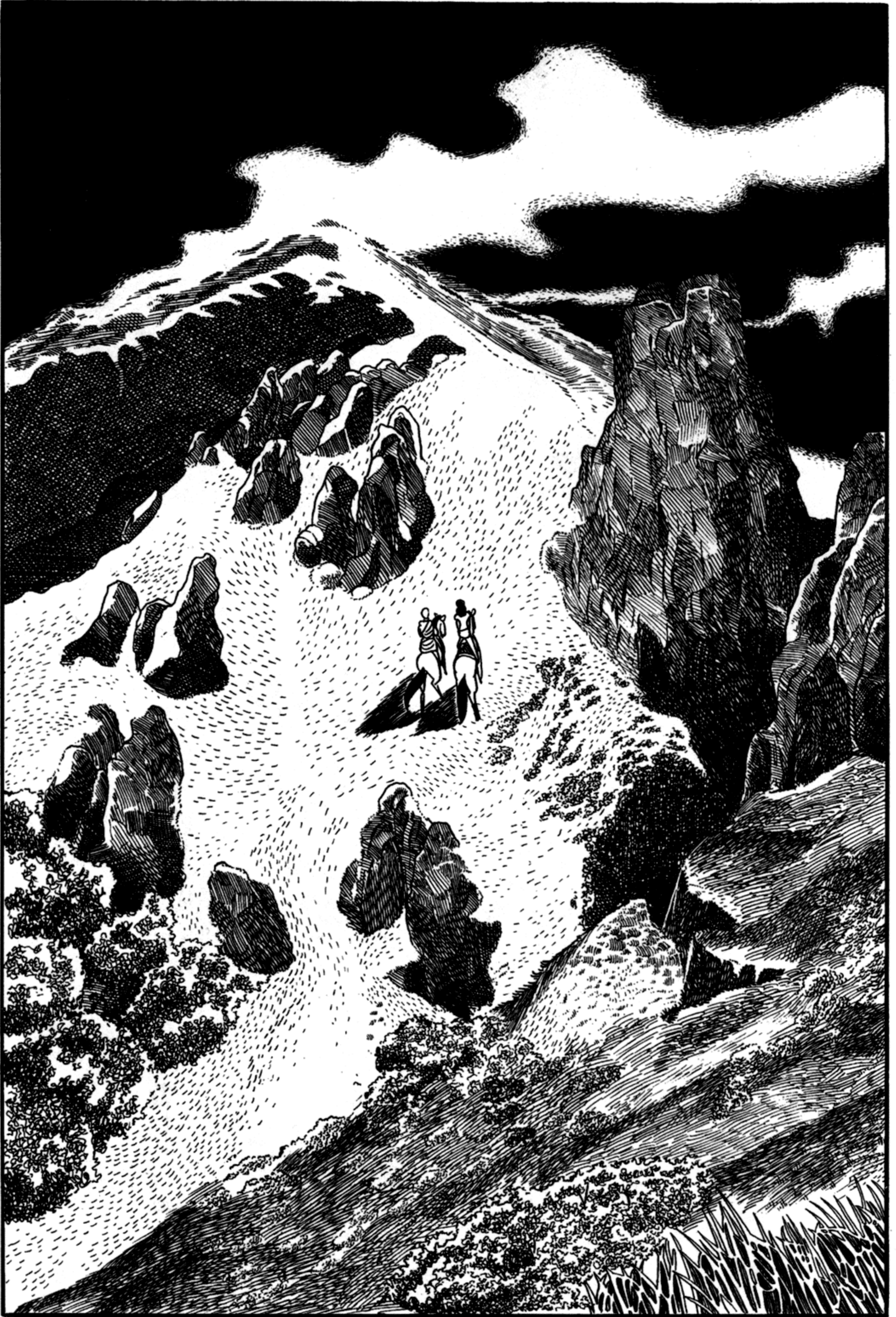
PEOPLE WHO RENOUNCE THE WORLD AND BECOME MONKS REGARDLESS OF THEIR CASTE, UNLIKE BRAHMIN.

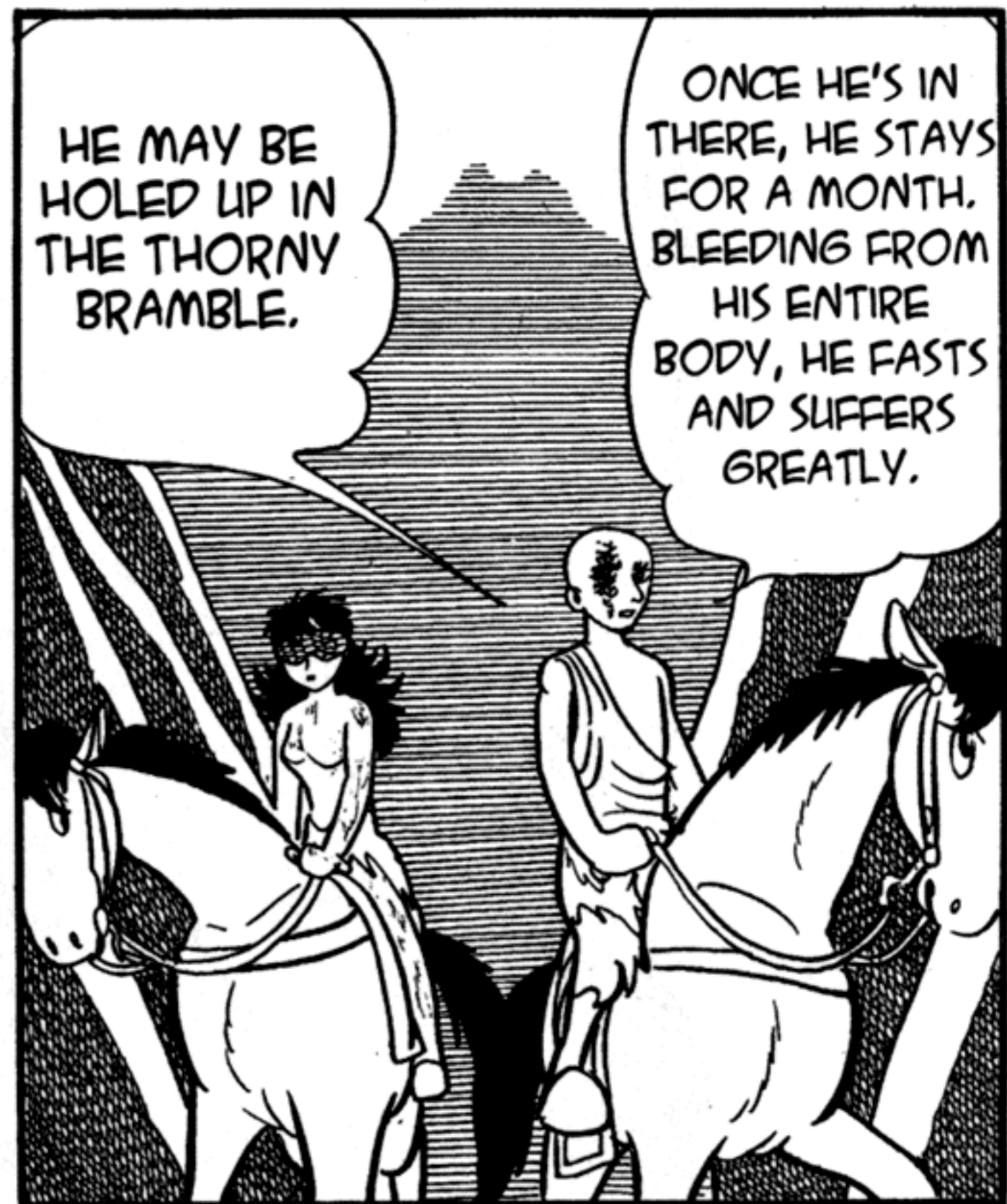




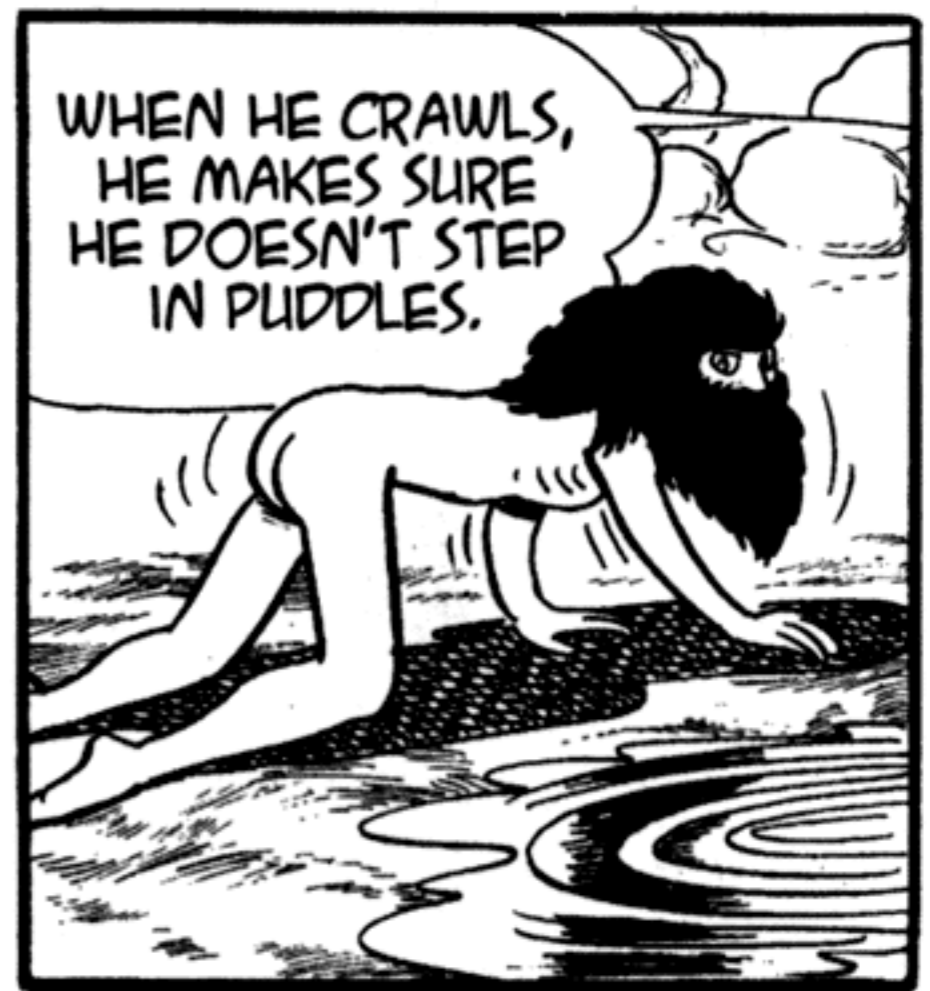


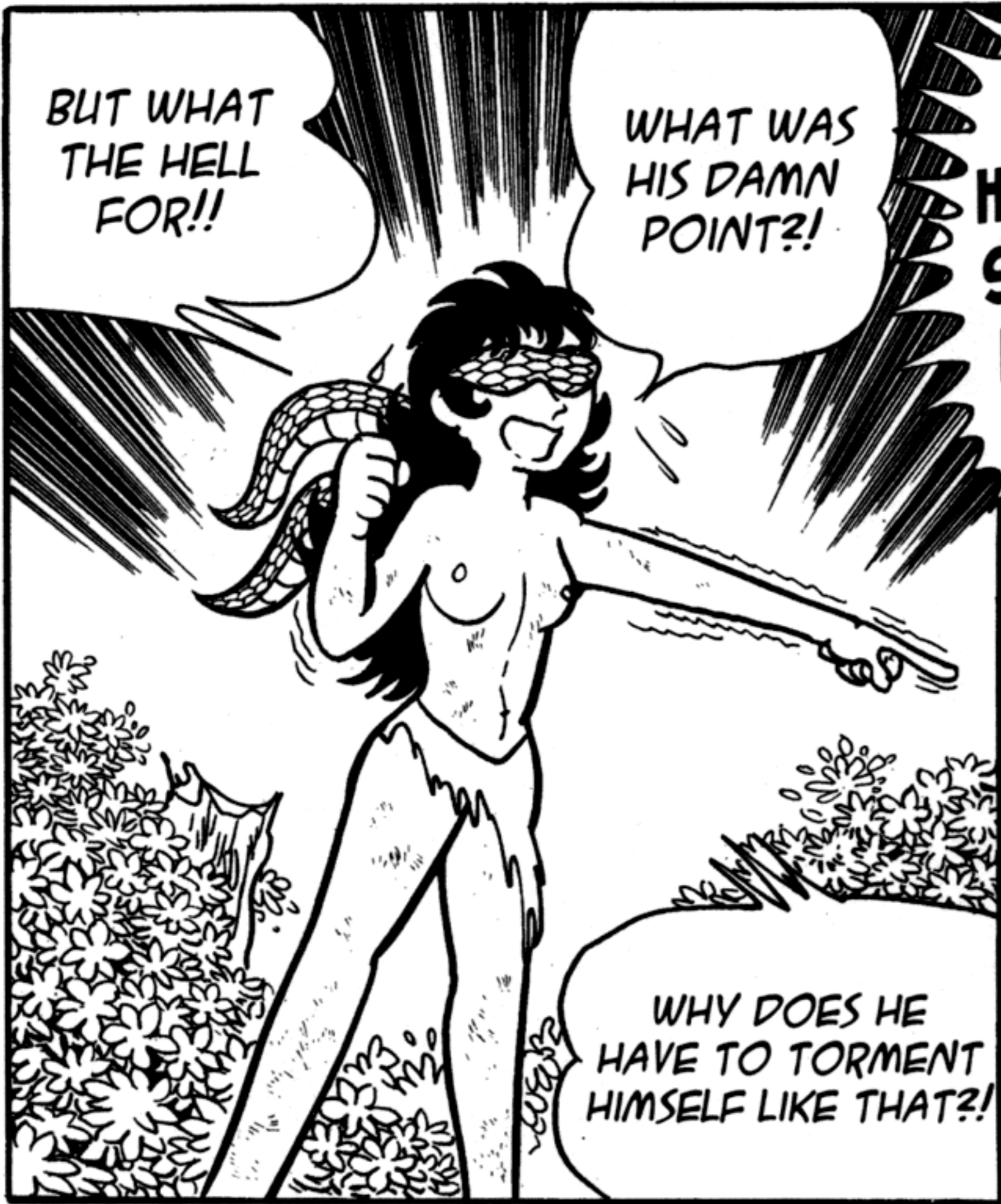










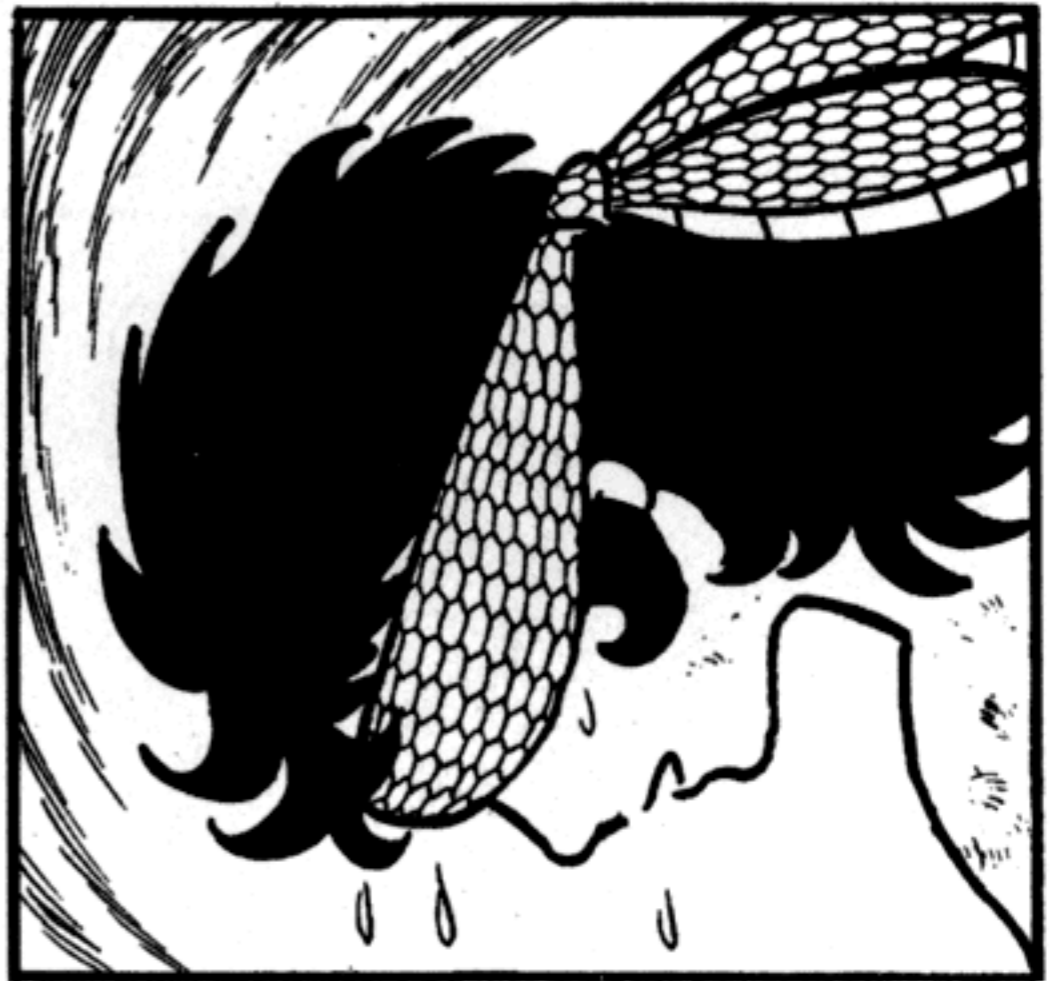


BUT WHAT THE HELL FOR!!

WHAT WAS HIS DAMN POINT?!

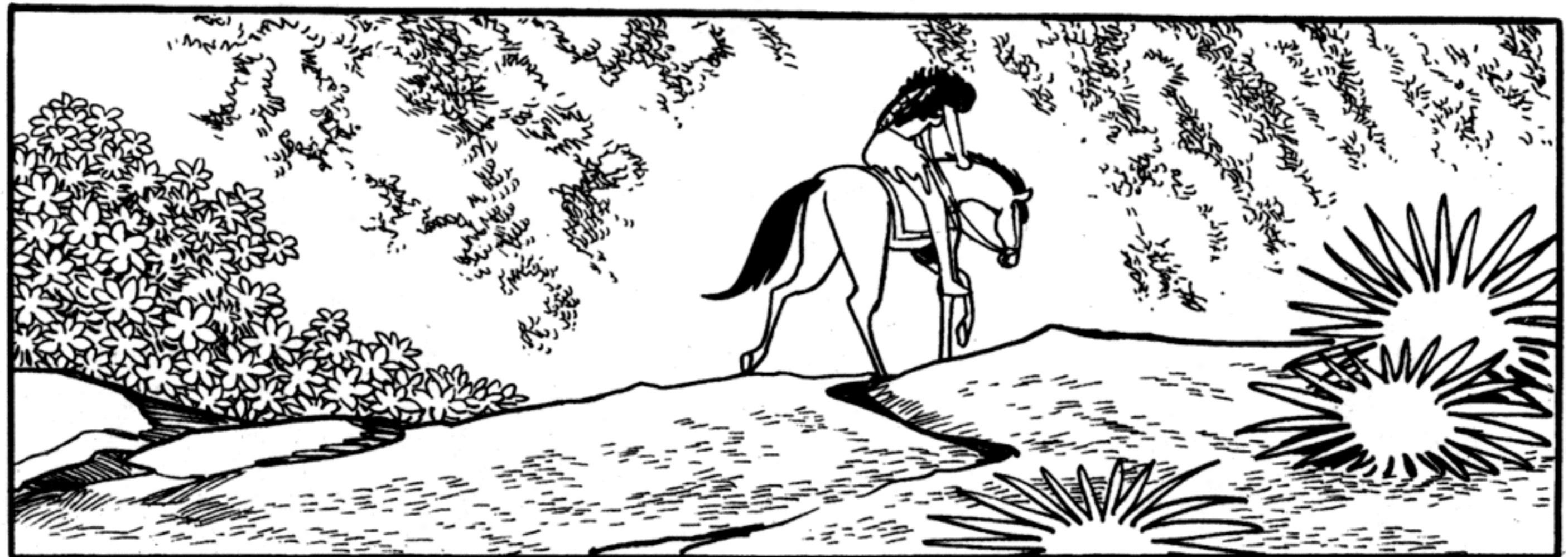
WHY DOES HE HAVE TO TORTURE HIMSELF LIKE THAT?!

WHY DO HUMANS EXIST? SO THAT THEY MAY SUFFER!

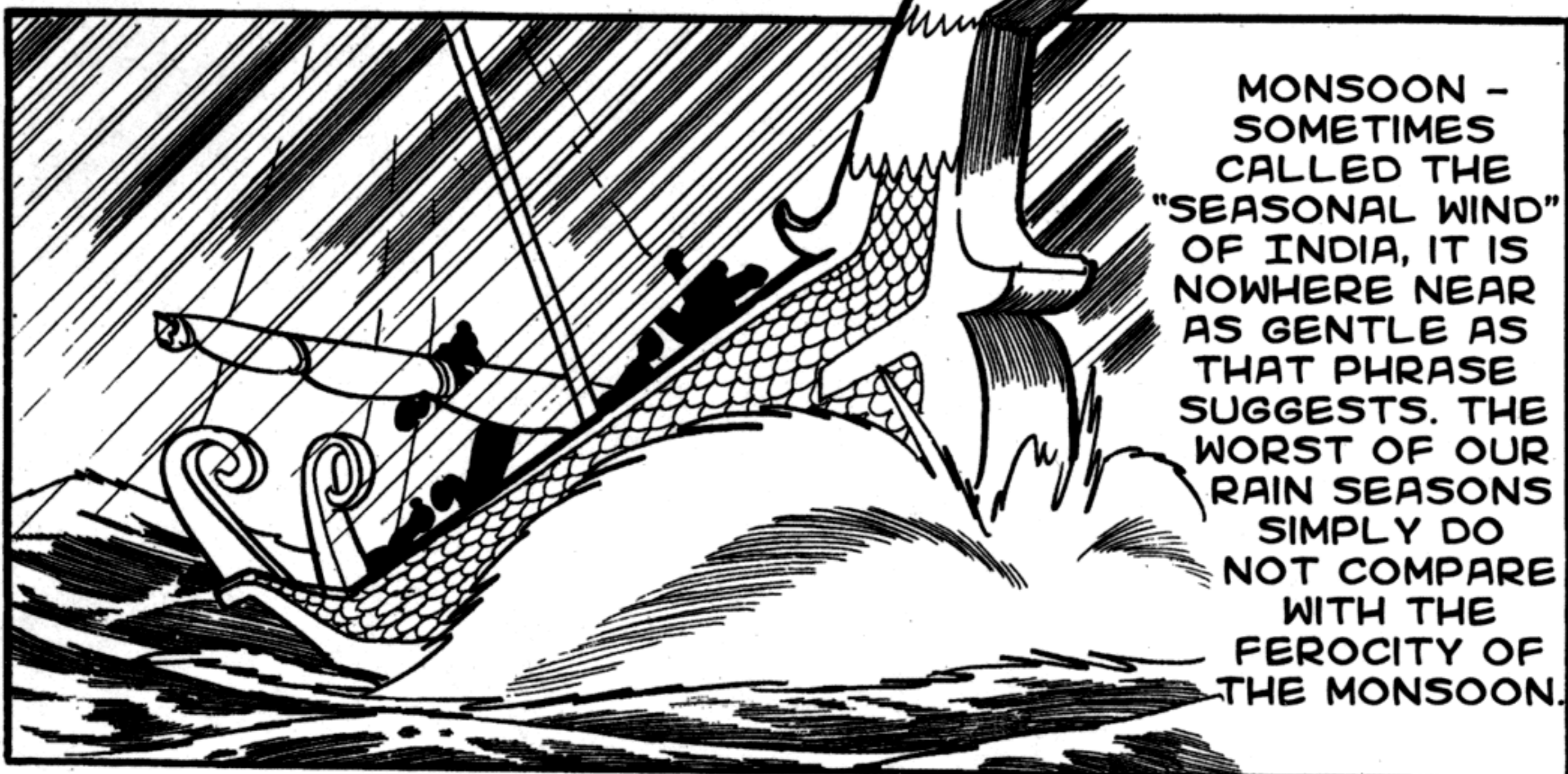
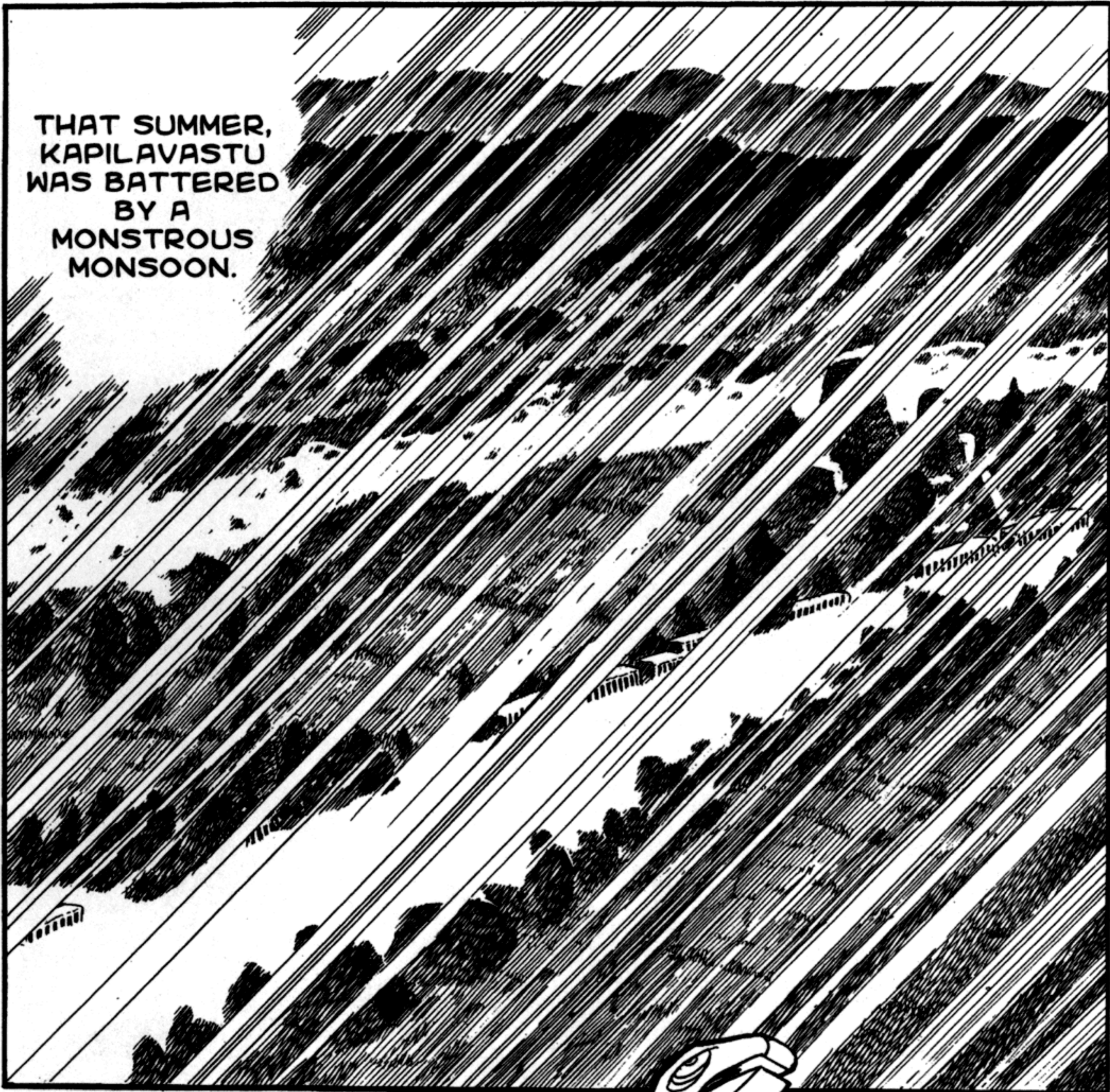


....
....


EVERYONE SHOULD SUFFER! OR ELSE THERE WILL BE NO REWARD!



THAT SUMMER,
KAPILAVASTU
WAS BATTERED
BY A
MONSTROUS
MONSOON.



MONSOON -
SOMETIMES
CALLED THE
"SEASONAL WIND"
OF INDIA, IT IS
NOWHERE NEAR
AS GENTLE AS
THAT PHRASE
SUGGESTS. THE
WORST OF OUR
RAIN SEASONS
SIMPLY DO
NOT COMPARE
WITH THE
FEROCITY OF
THE MONSOON.



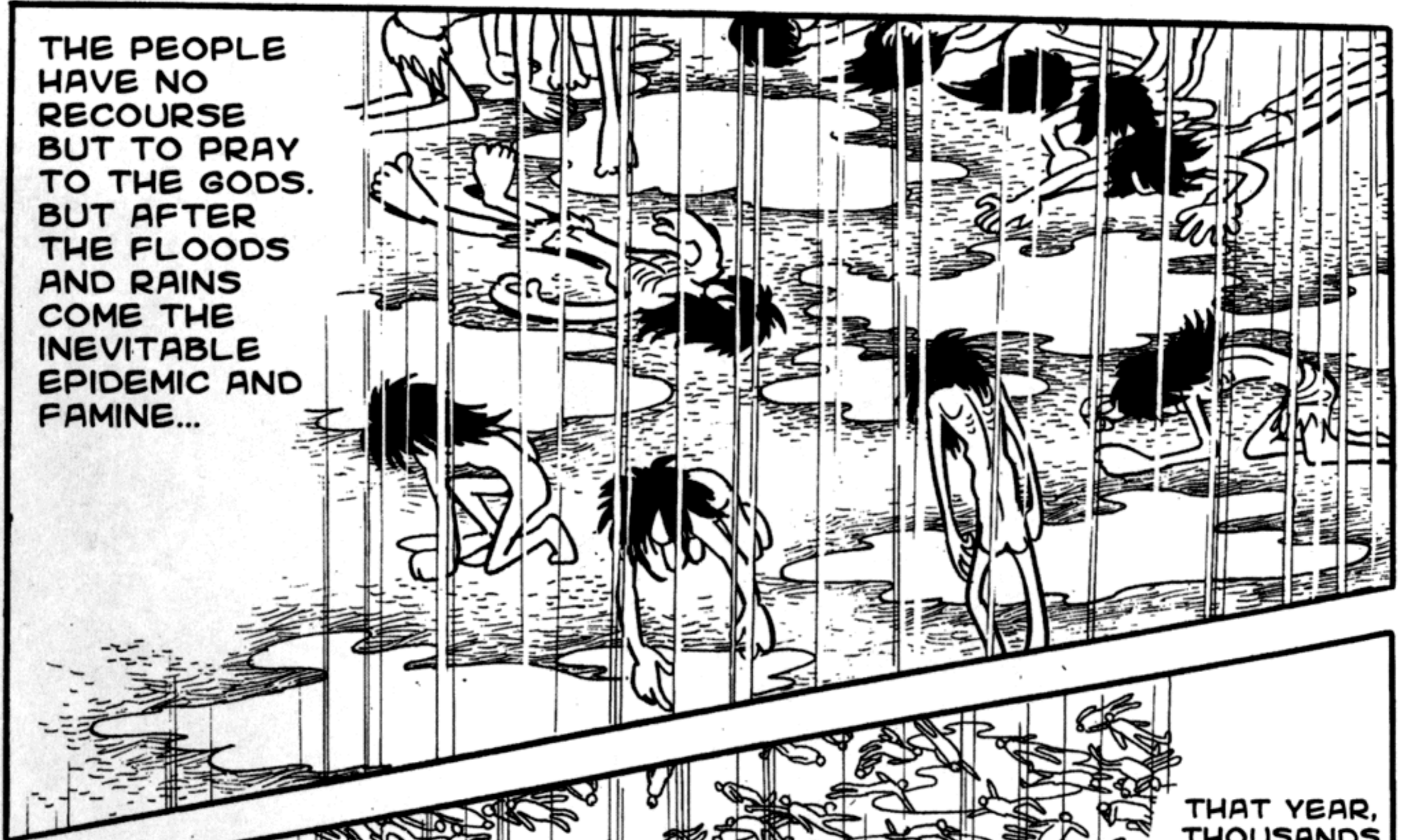
IN NORTHERN
INDIA,
PARTICULARLY
IN THE HIGH-
LANDS SOUTH
OF THE
HIMALAYAS,
THE MONSOON
BRINGS MORE
THAN 1,000
MILLIMETERS
OF RAIN A
SUMMER. SOME
LOCALES SEE
OVER 5,000
MILLIMETERS
OF RAINFALL.



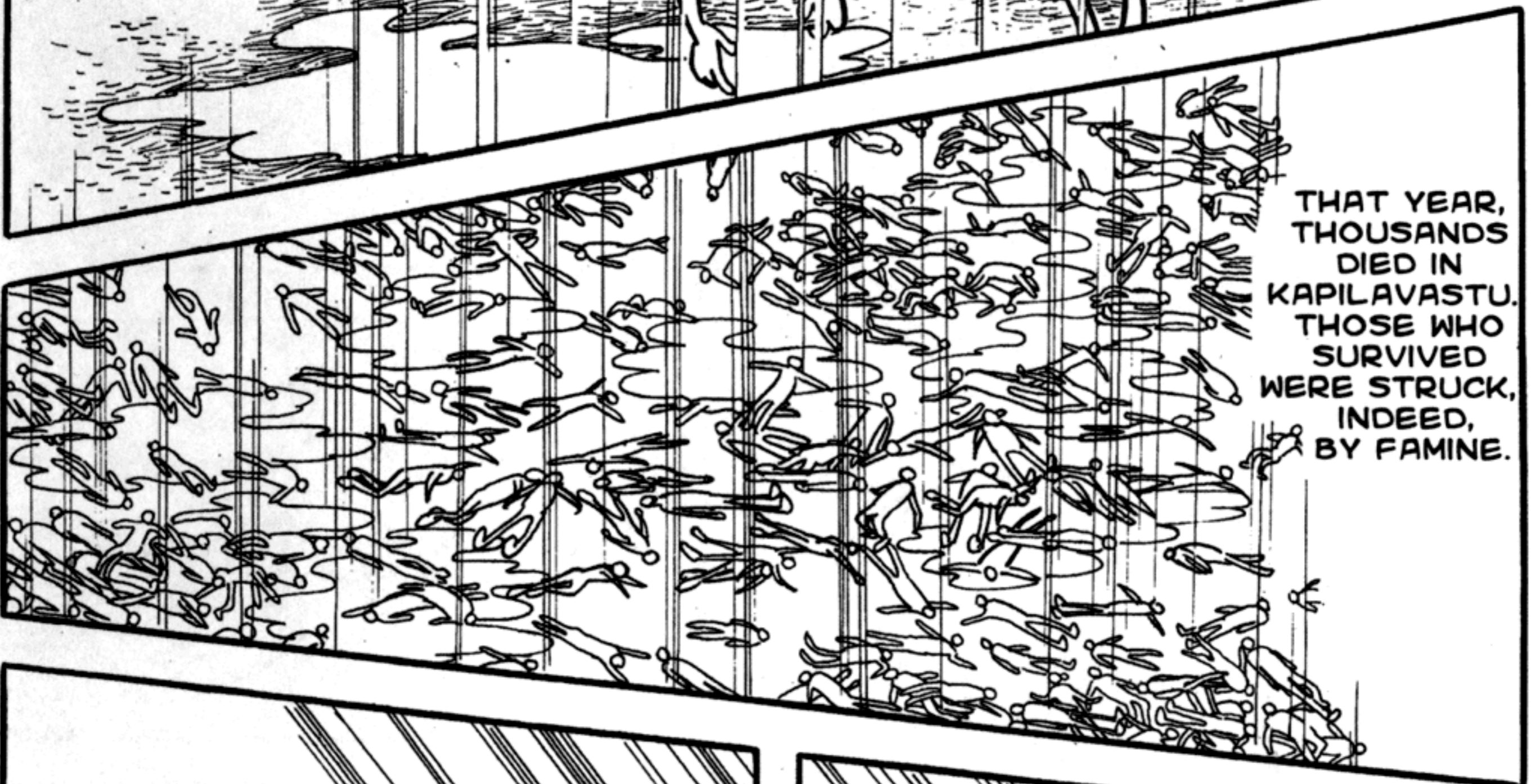
IMAGINE
5 METERS
(16 FEET)
OF RAIN
IN ONE
SUMMER!

RIVERS
OVERFLOW,
DROWNING
EVERYTHING
IN THEIR
PATH.
NO TREE,
NO BLADE
OF GRASS
IS LEFT
INTACT.

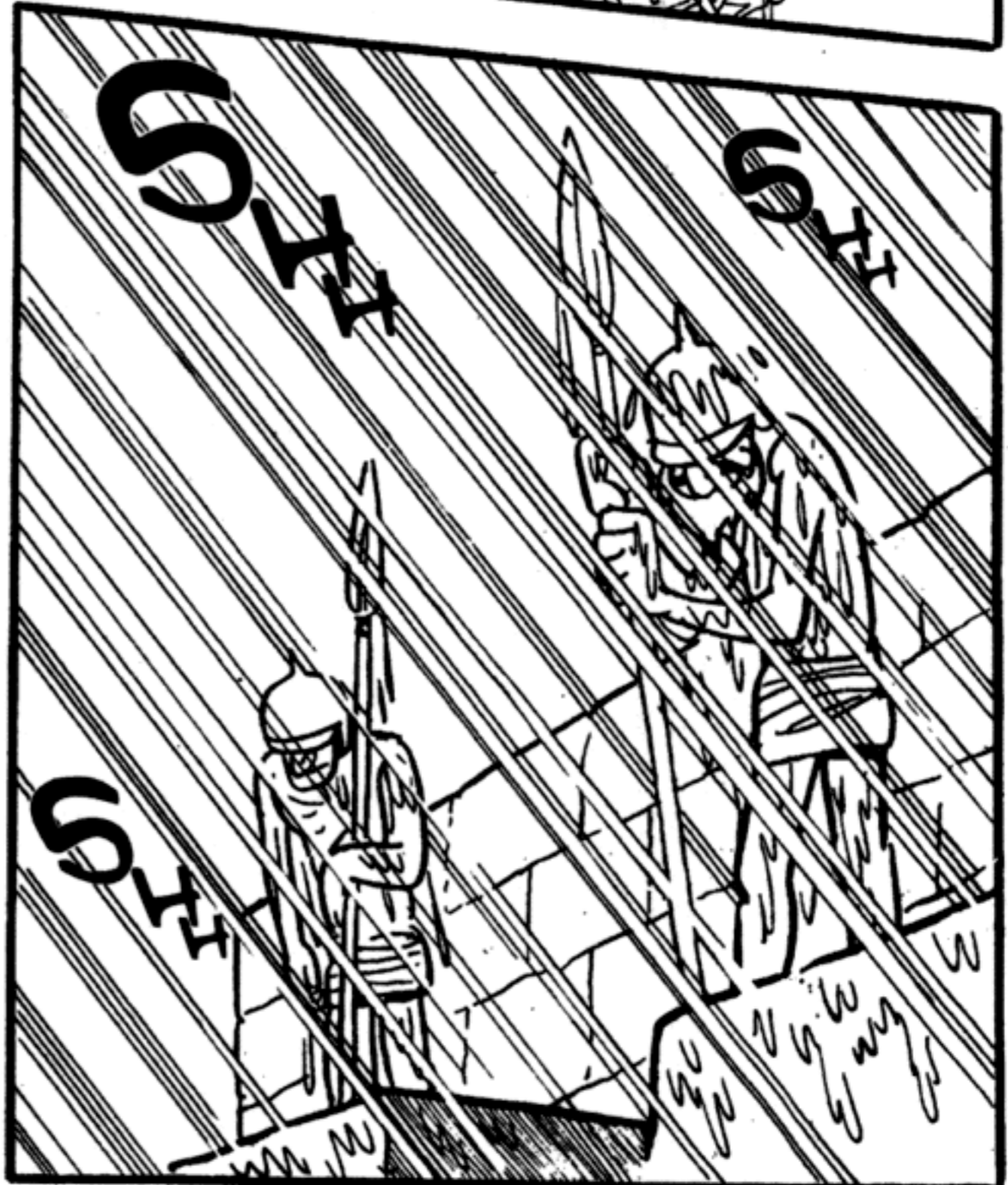
THE PEOPLE
HAVE NO
RECOURSE
BUT TO PRAY
TO THE GODS.
BUT AFTER
THE FLOODS
AND RAINS
COME THE
INEVITABLE
EPIDEMIC AND
FAMINE...



THAT YEAR,
THOUSANDS
DIED IN
KAPILAVASTU.
THOSE WHO
SURVIVED
WERE STRUCK,
INDEED,
BY FAMINE.

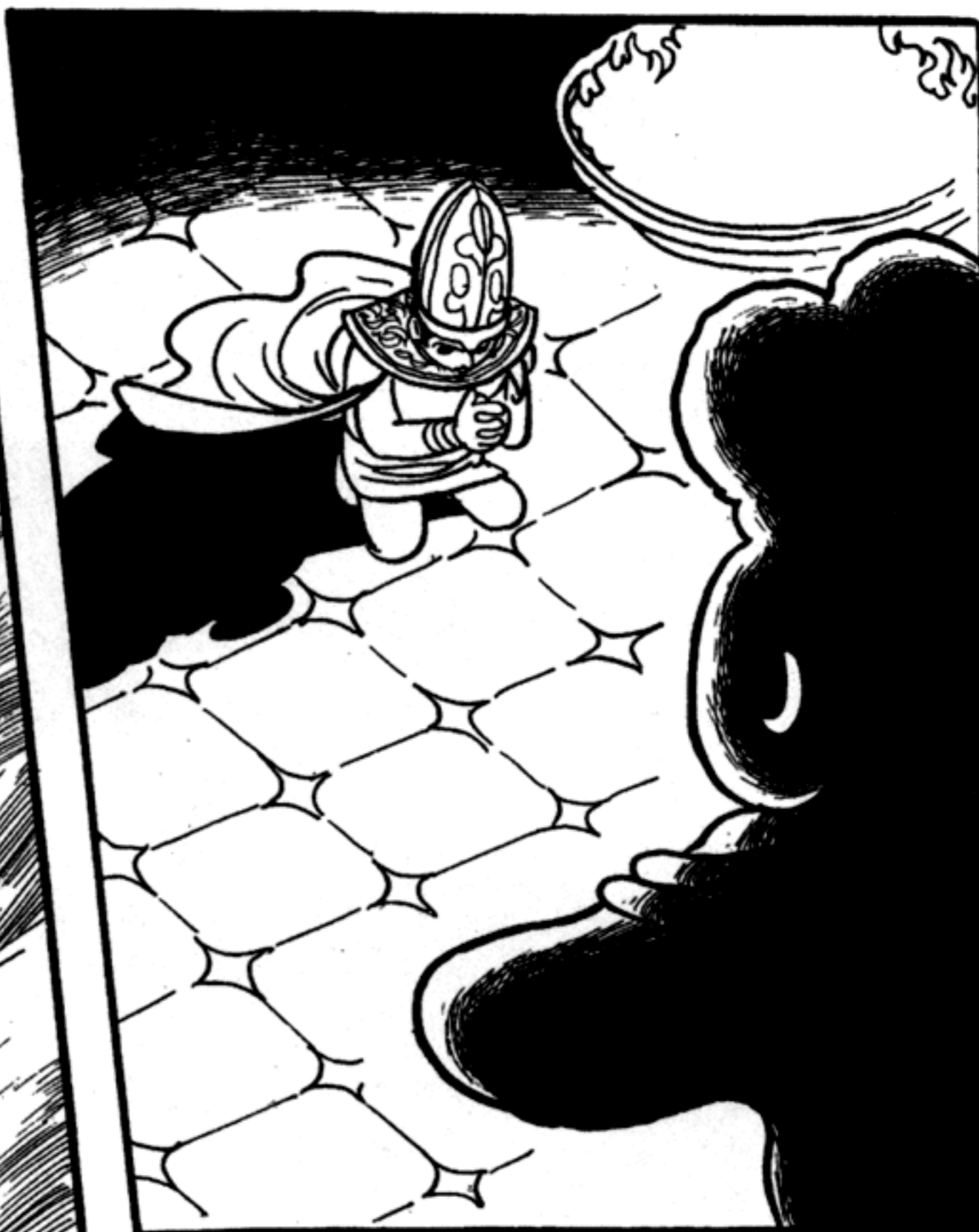


KOSALA
DENIED
REQUESTS
FOR AID.





THE SHORES OF THE LUMBINI RIVER TURNED INTO A SEA OF MUD FILLED WITH ROTTING CORPSES.



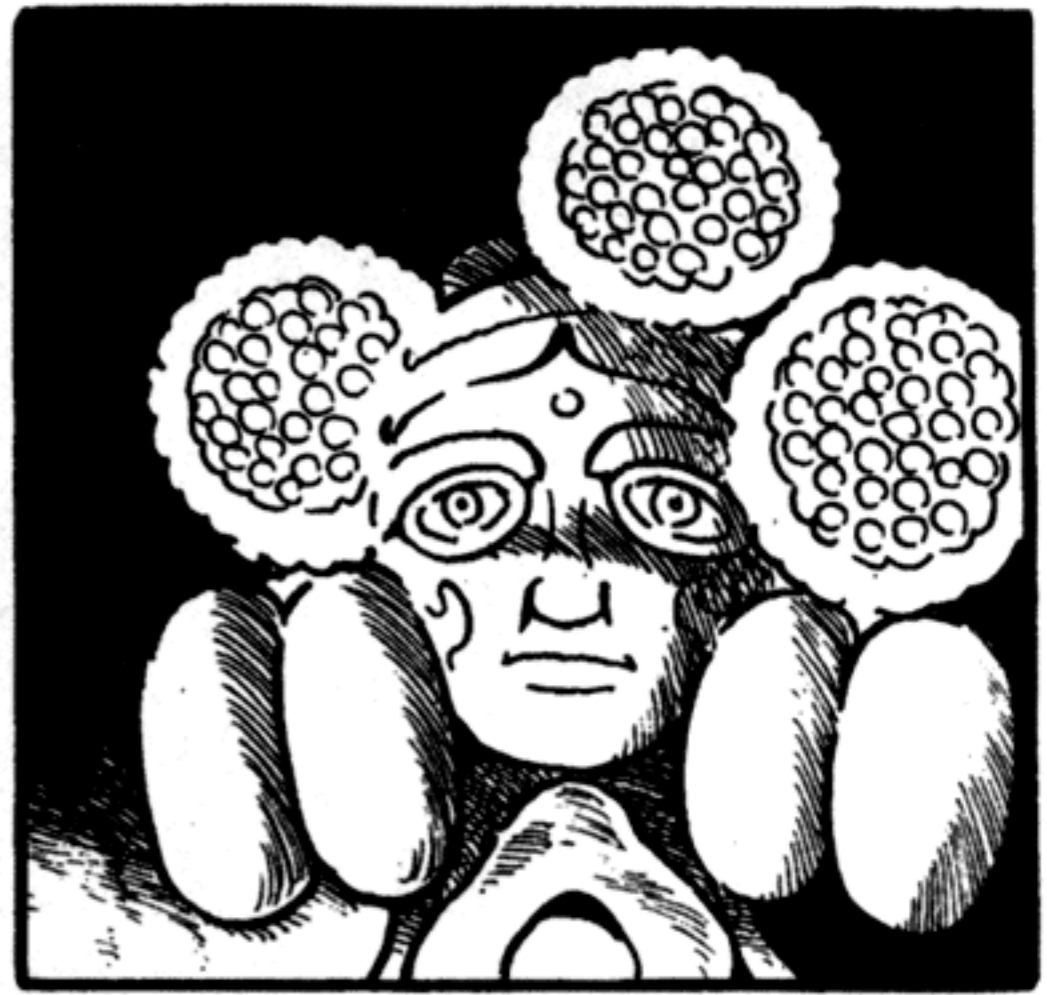
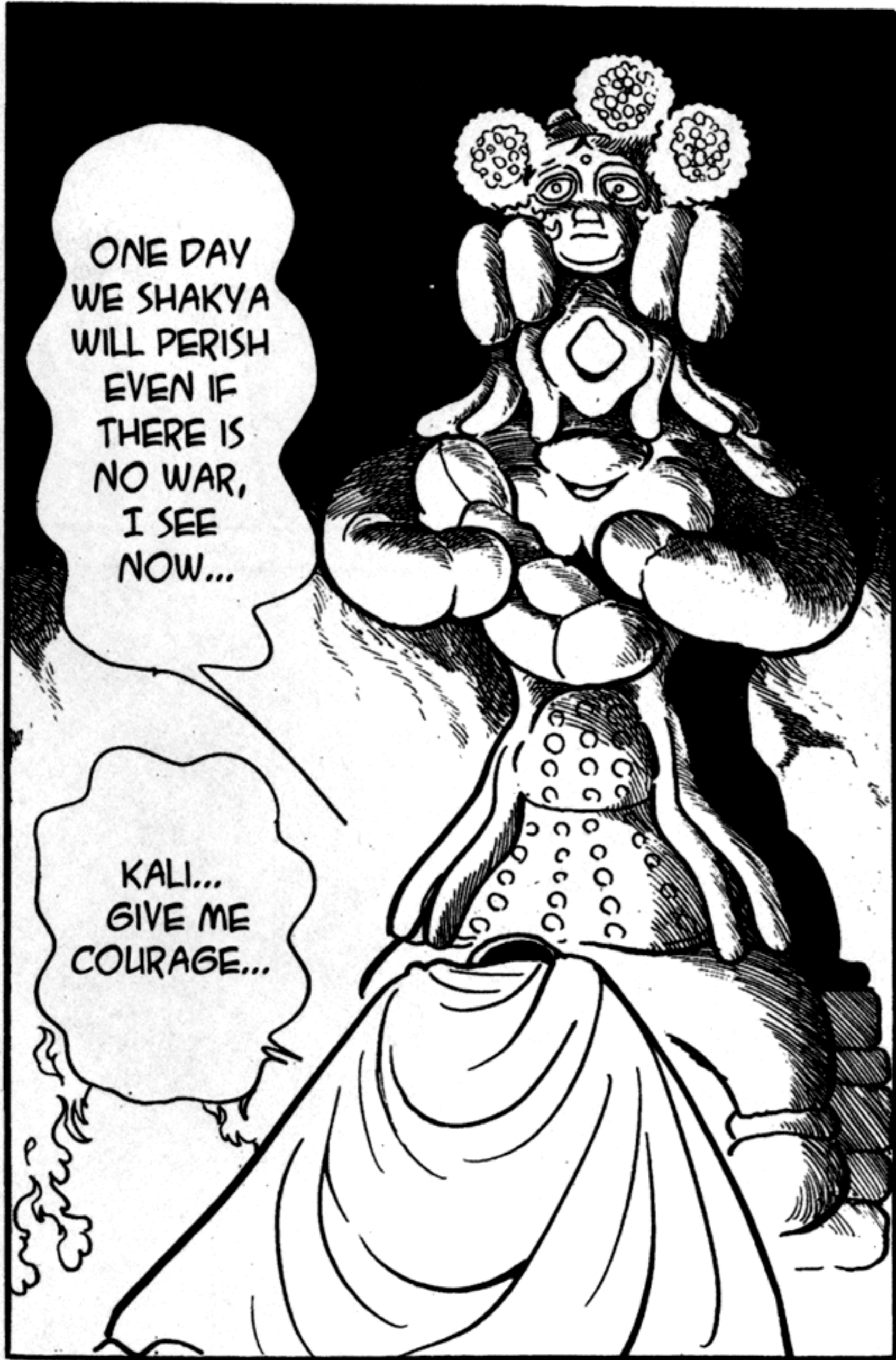
GODDESS KALI, DIVINE MOTHER, WHY MUST HUMANS SUFFER SO?



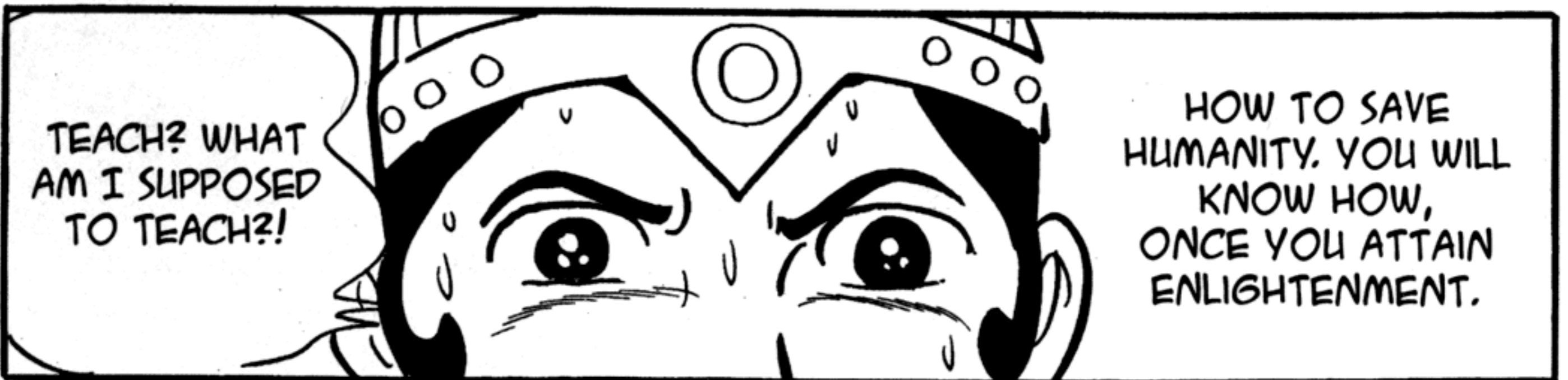
PEOPLE, ANIMALS AND BIRDS ARE DYING IN DROVES. WHAT ARE WE TO DO?

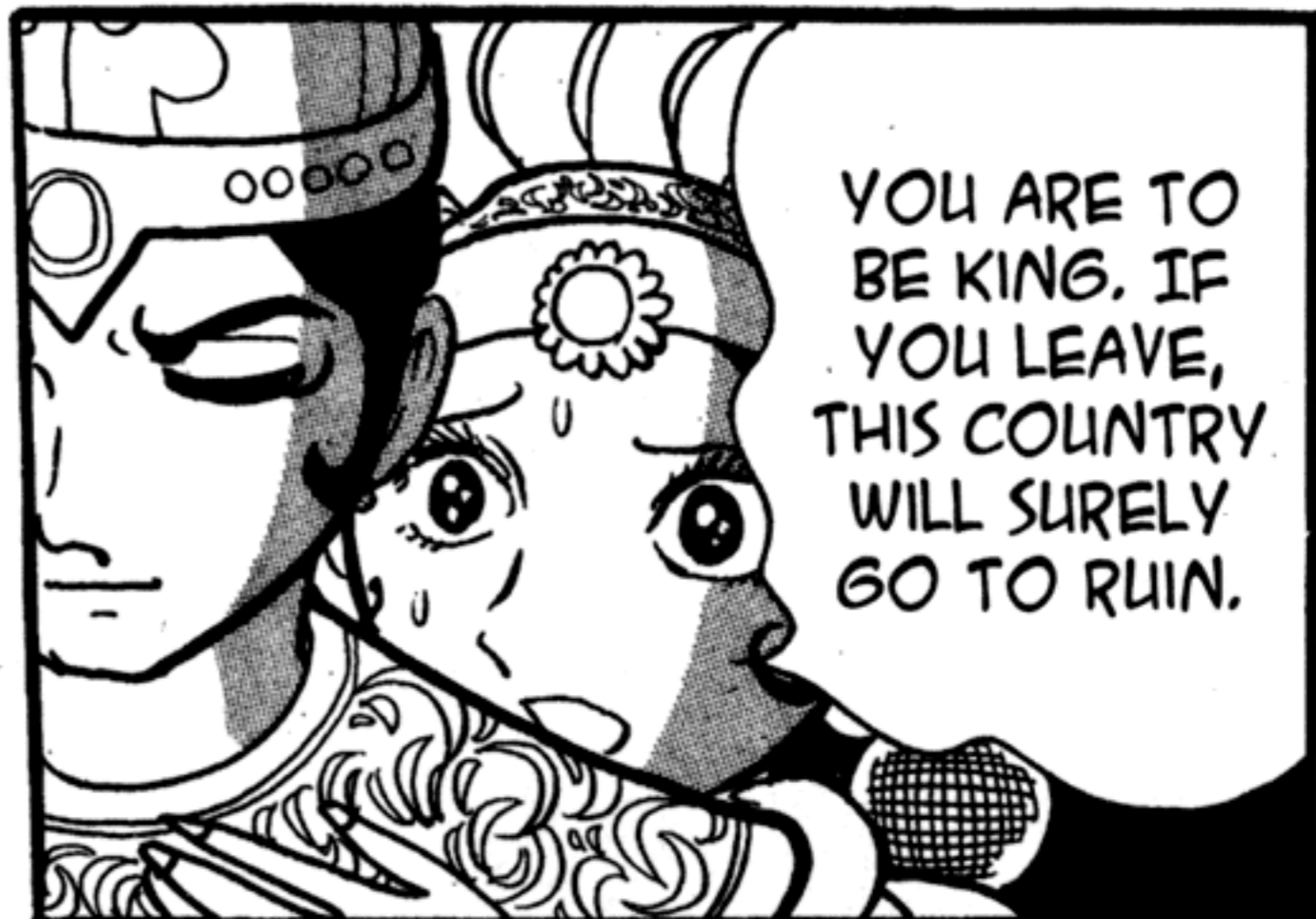
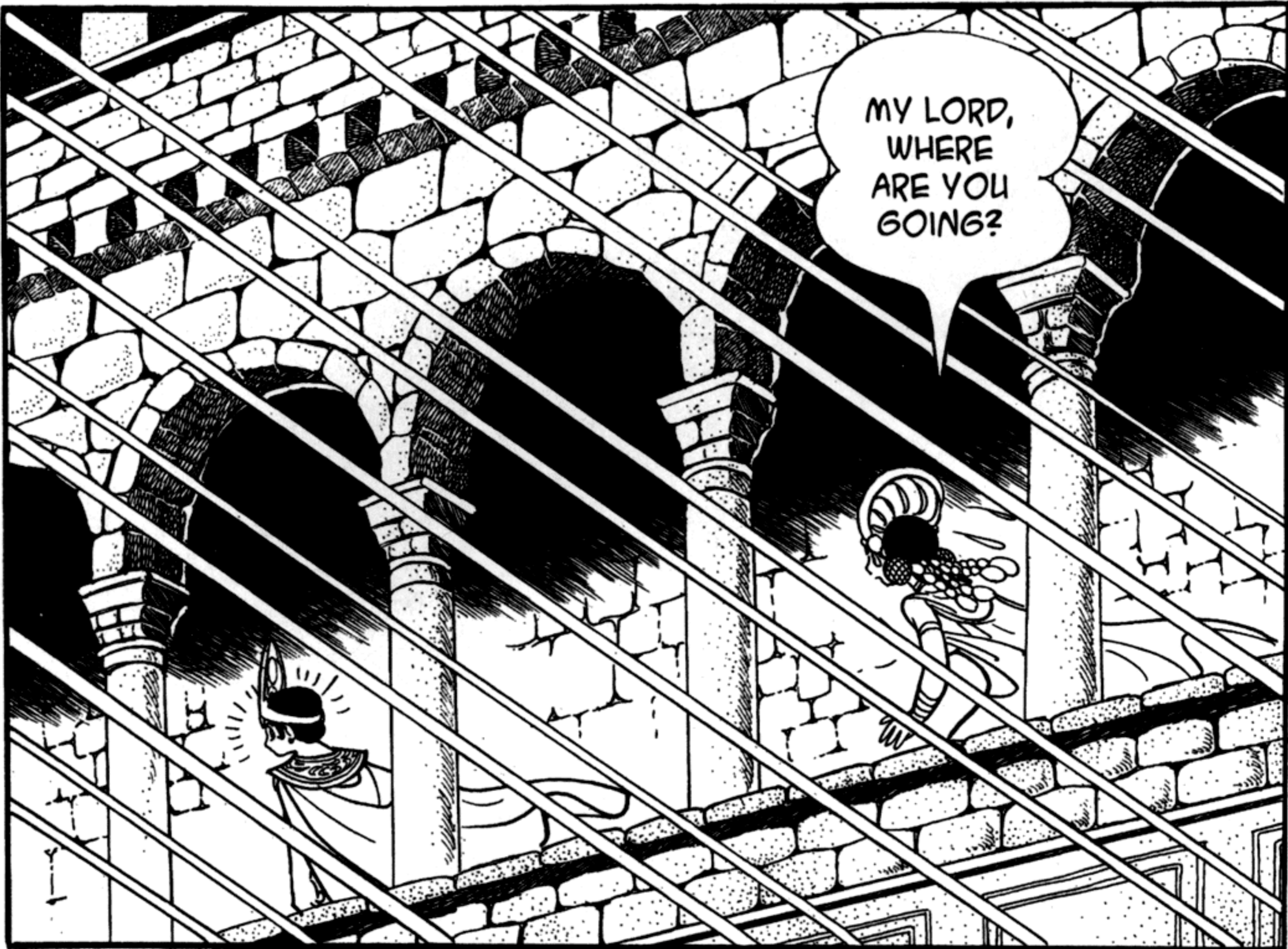
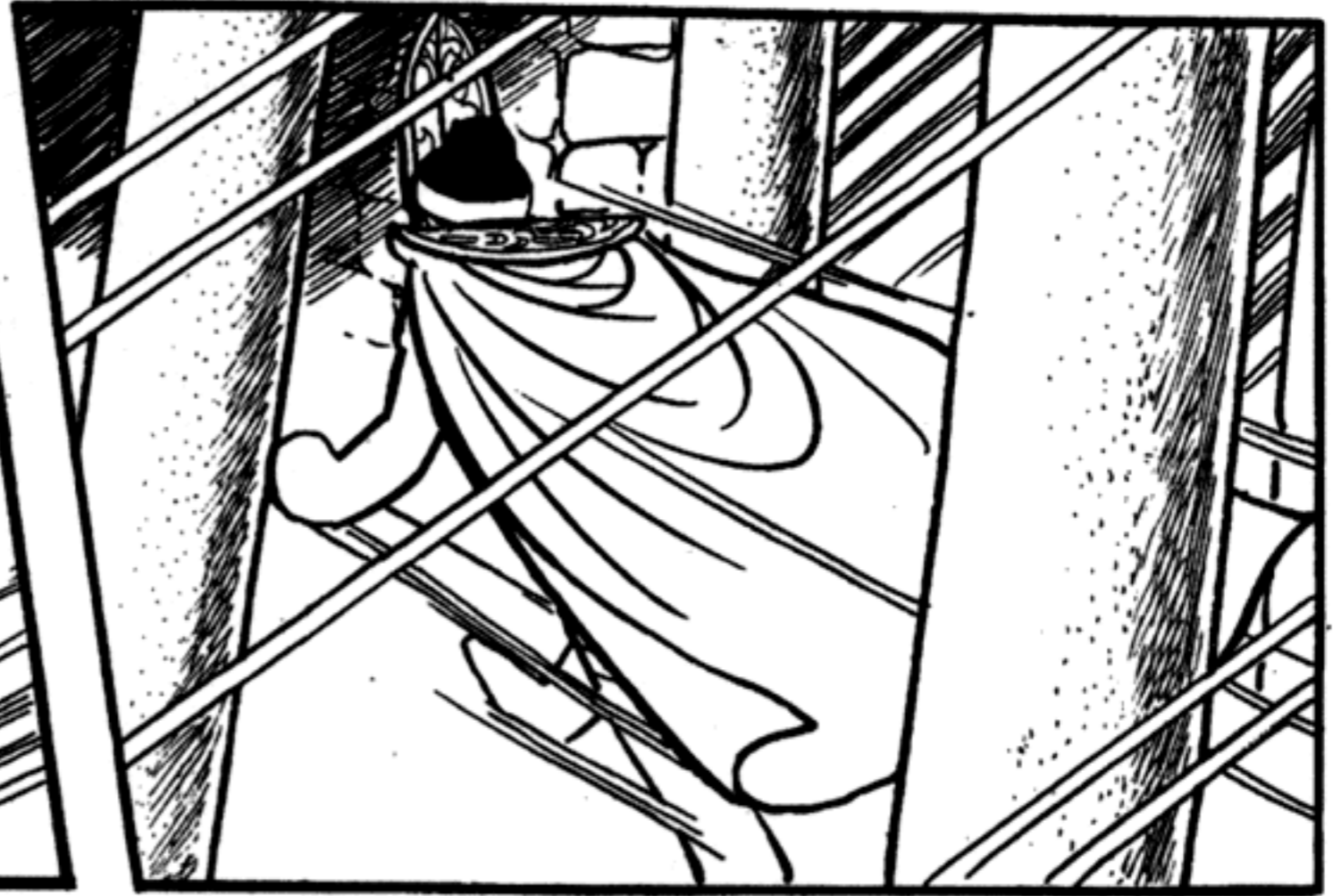
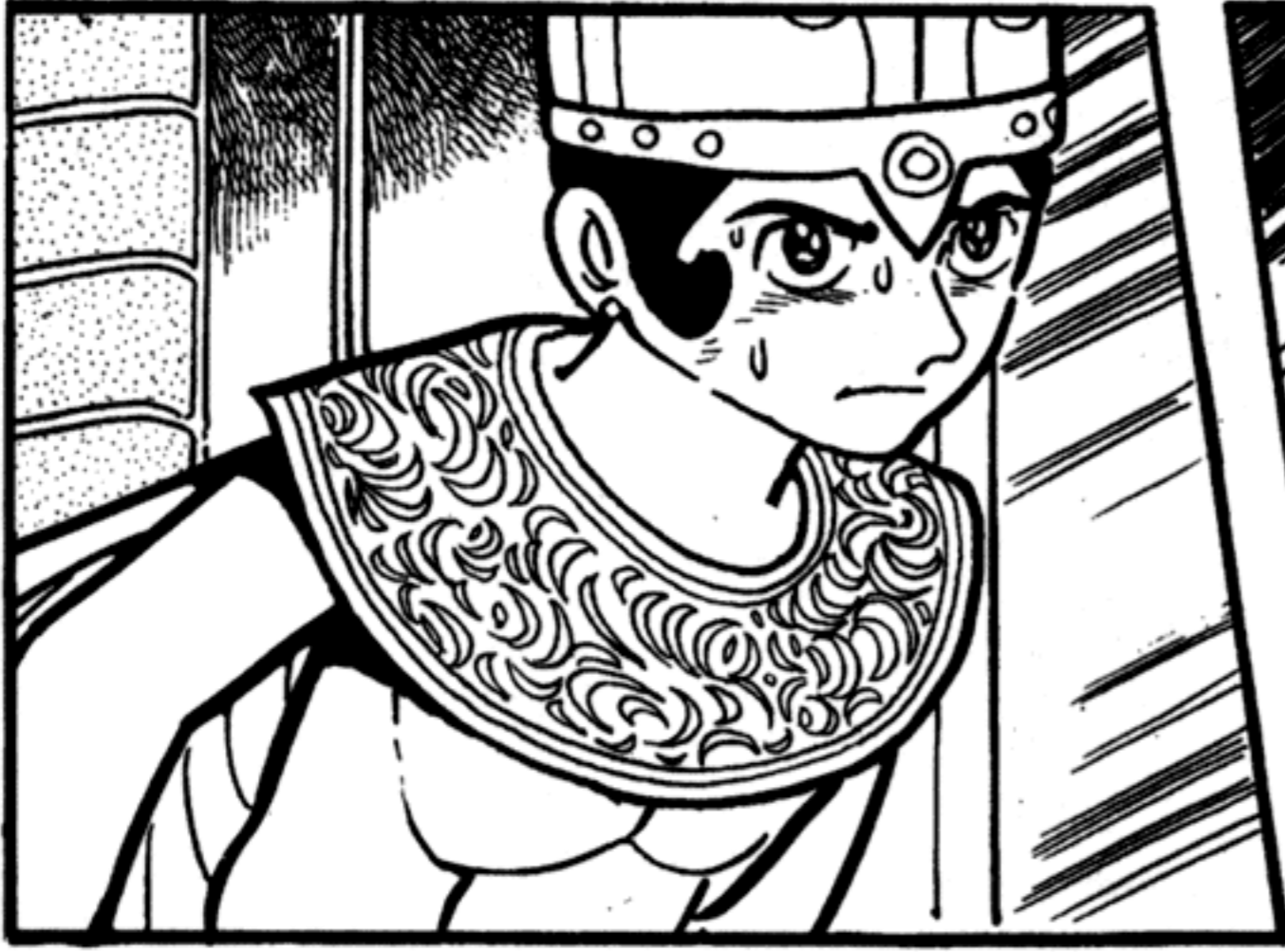
MUST I SIMPLY CLOSE MY EYES AND BEAR IT?

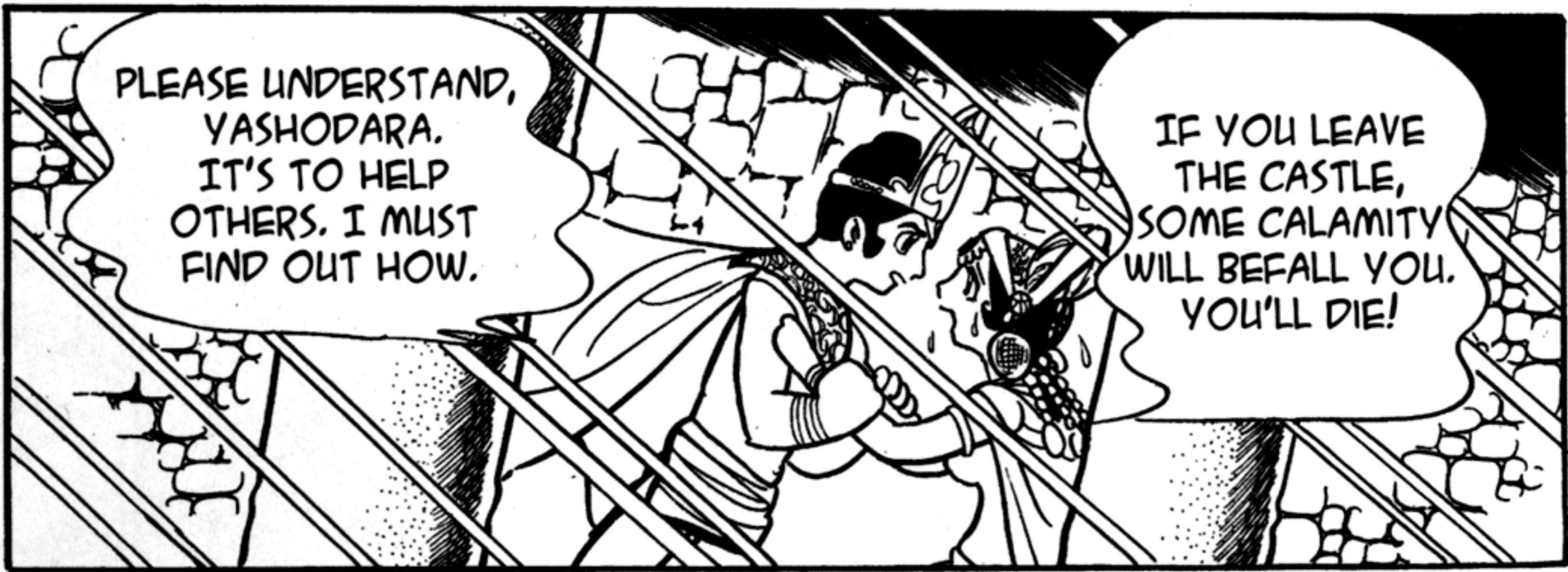




ROUSE YOURSELF, PRINCE!
YOUR SOLE PURPOSE FOR
THE REST OF YOUR LIFE IS
TO TEACH OTHERS!







PLEASE UNDERSTAND,
YASHODARA.
IT'S TO HELP
OTHERS. I MUST
FIND OUT HOW.

IF YOU LEAVE
THE CASTLE,
SOME CALAMITY
WILL BEFALL YOU.
YOU'LL DIE!



NEITHER YOU
NOR MY
FATHER CAN
STOP ME.

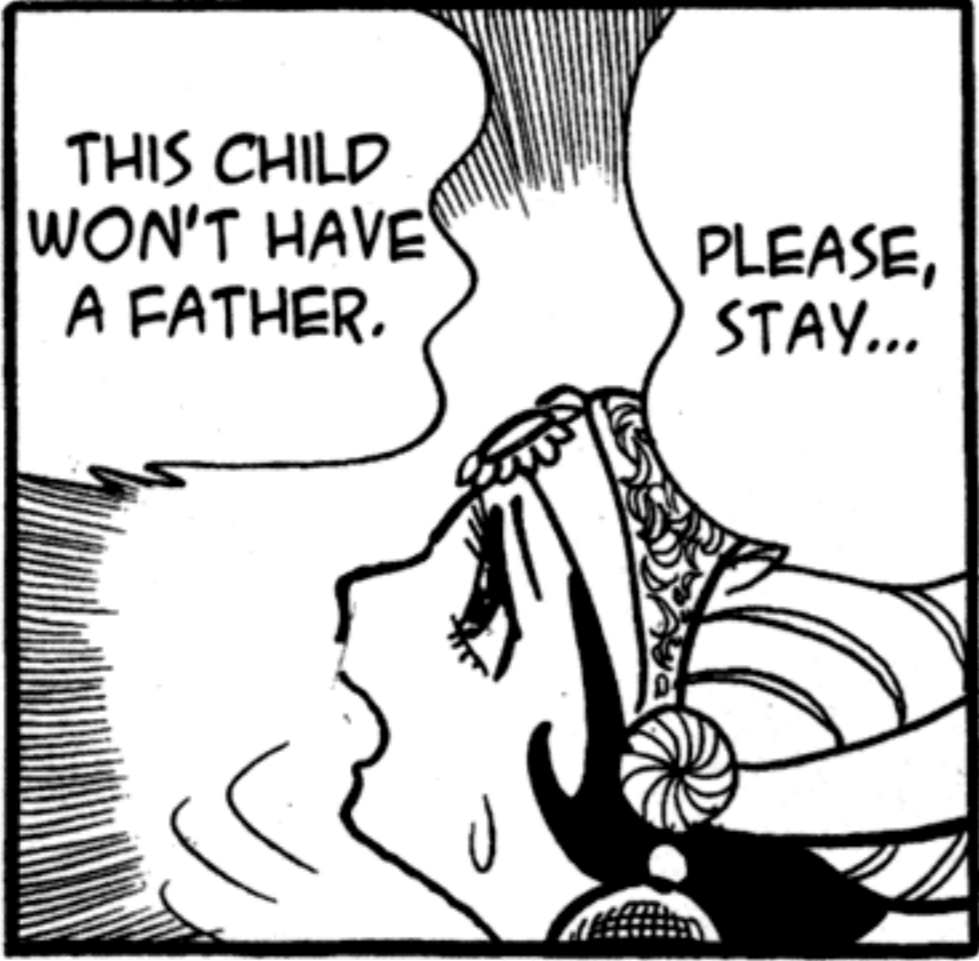
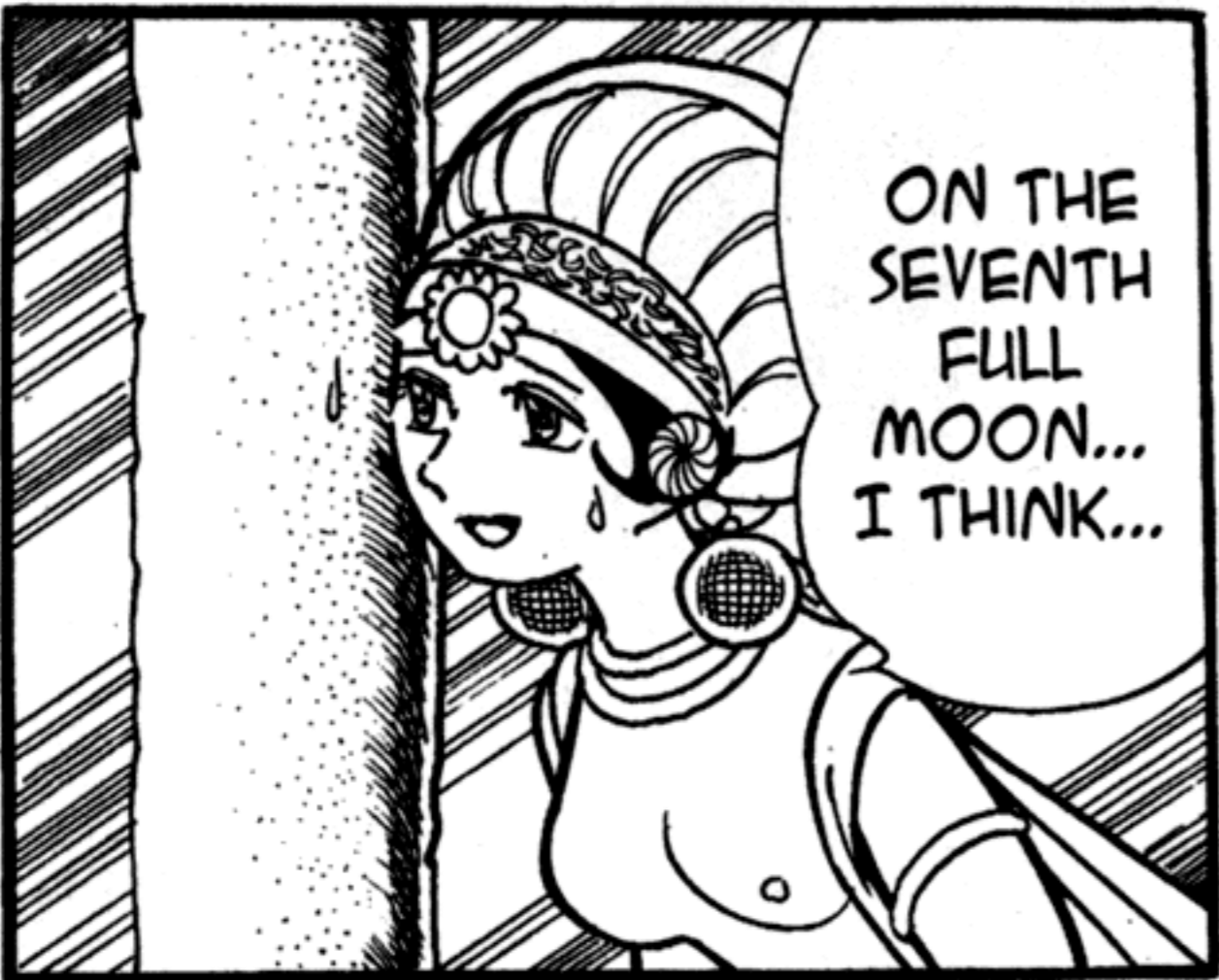
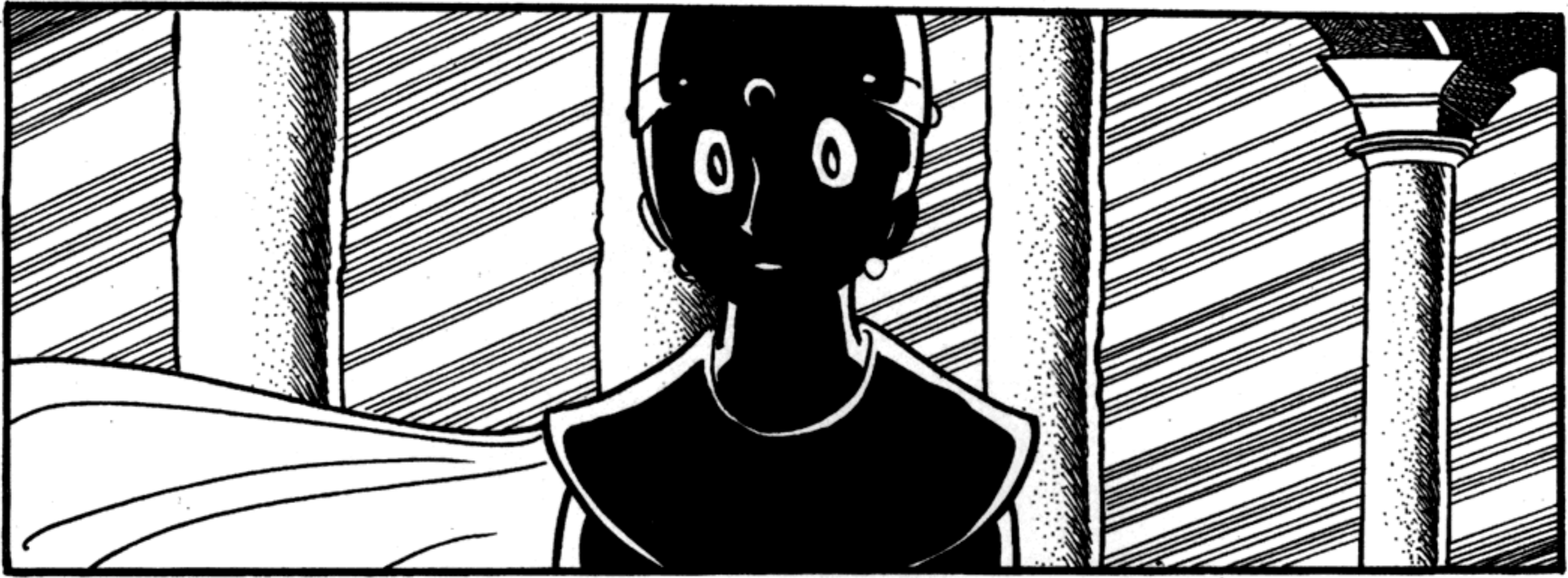
IT'S MY
DESTINY.

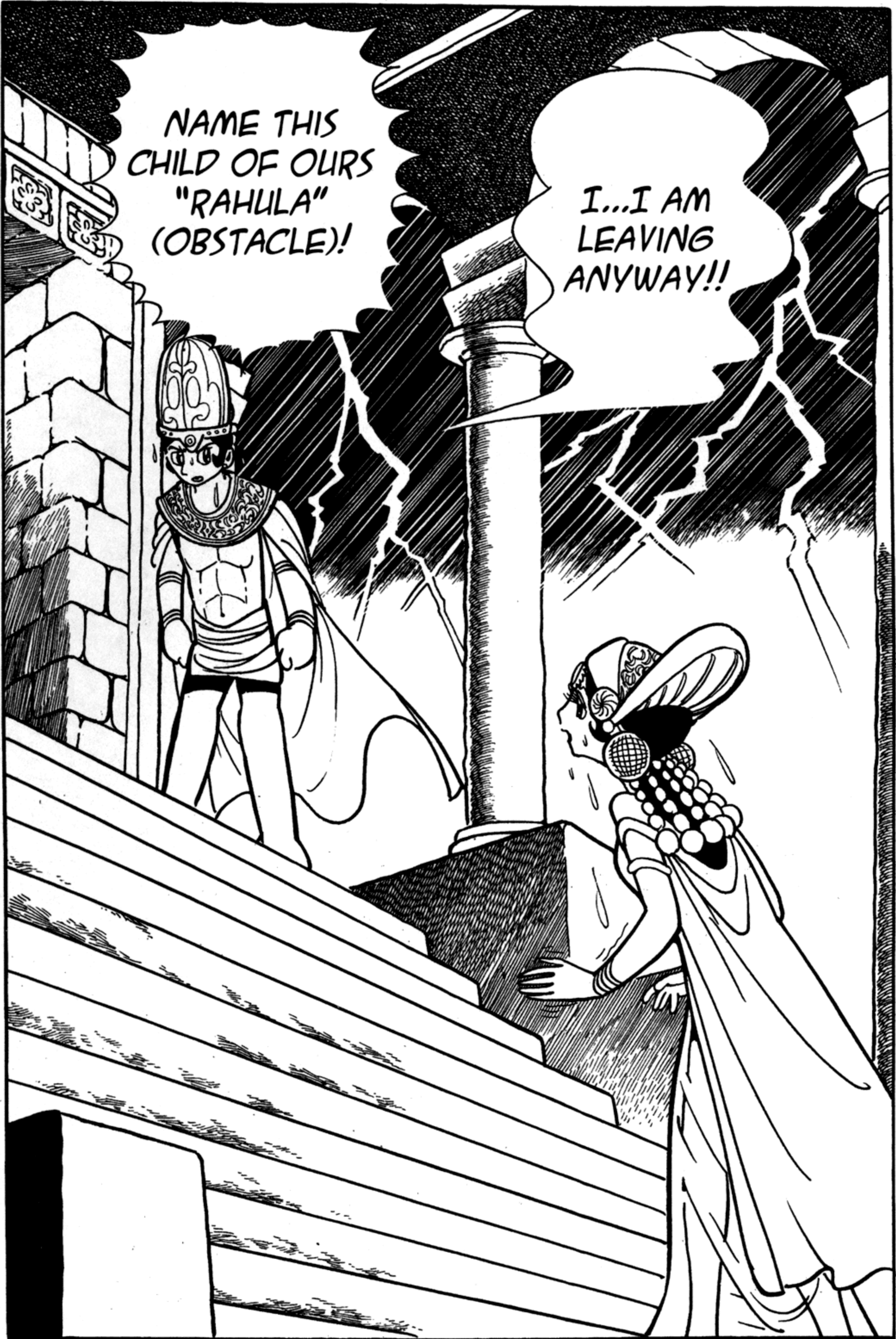


MY
LORD...!

YOUR
CHILD...

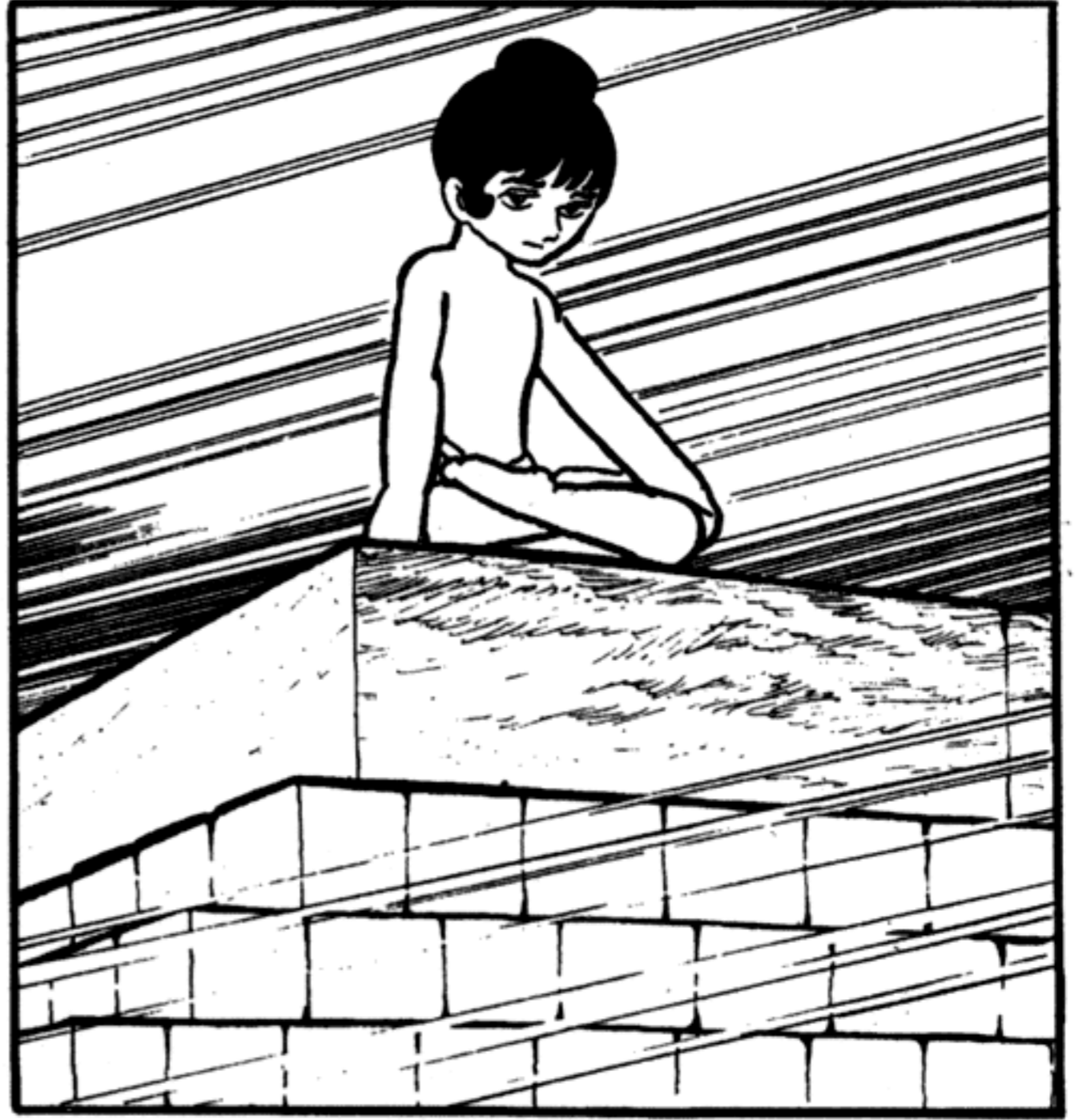
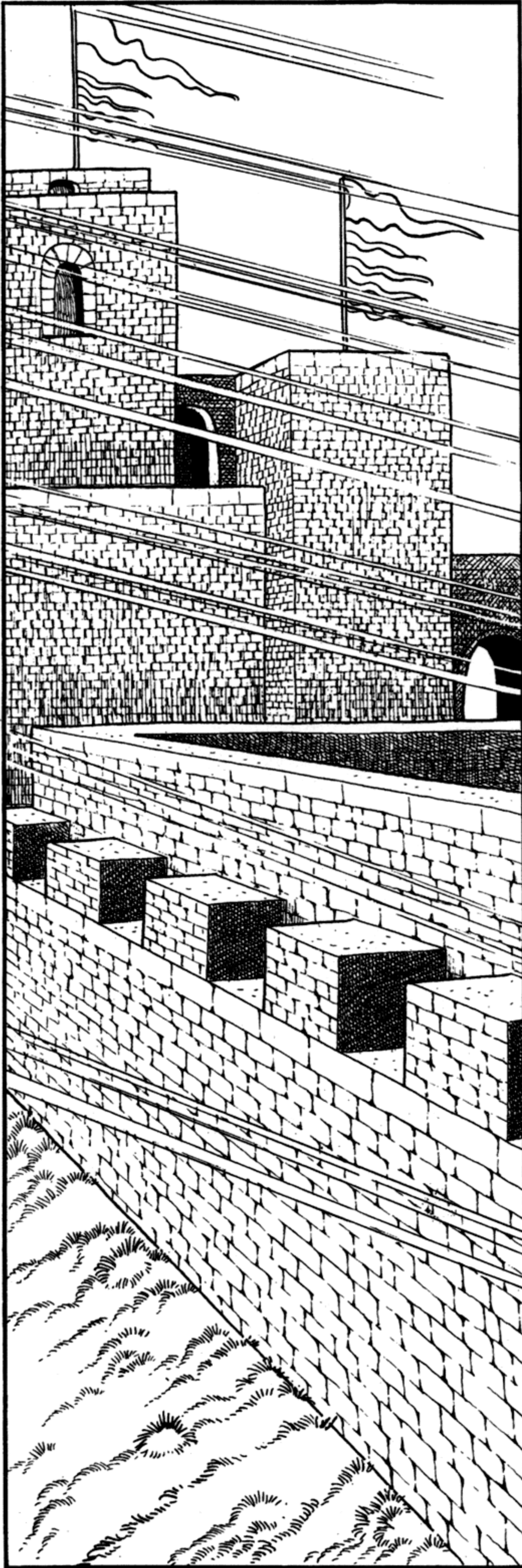


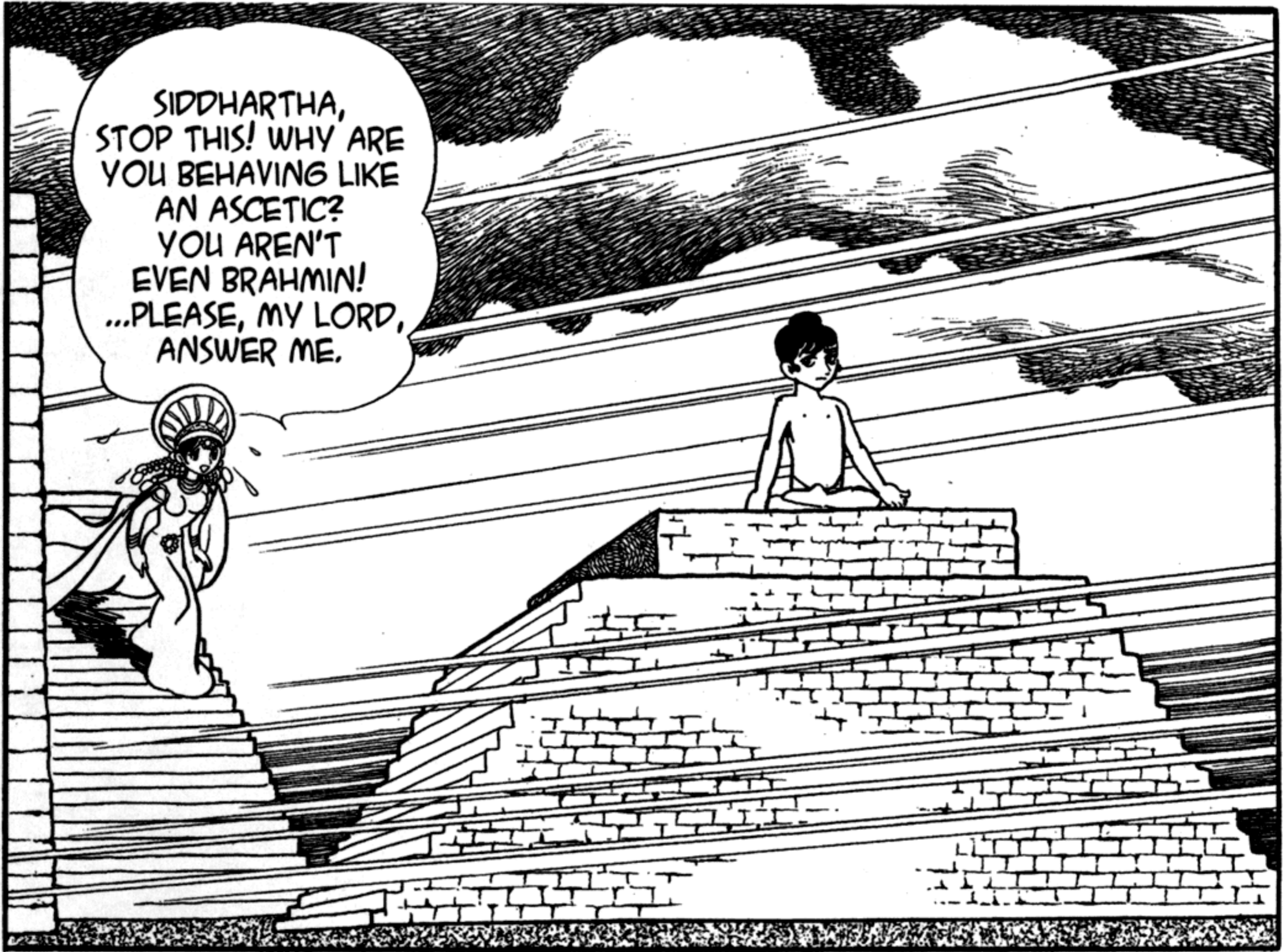




NAME THIS
CHILD OF OURS
"RAHULA"
(OBSTACLE)!

I...I AM
LEAVING
ANYWAY!!





SIDDHARTHA,
STOP THIS! WHY ARE
YOU BEHAVING LIKE
AN ASCETIC?
YOU AREN'T
EVEN BRAHMIN!
...PLEASE, MY LORD,
ANSWER ME.



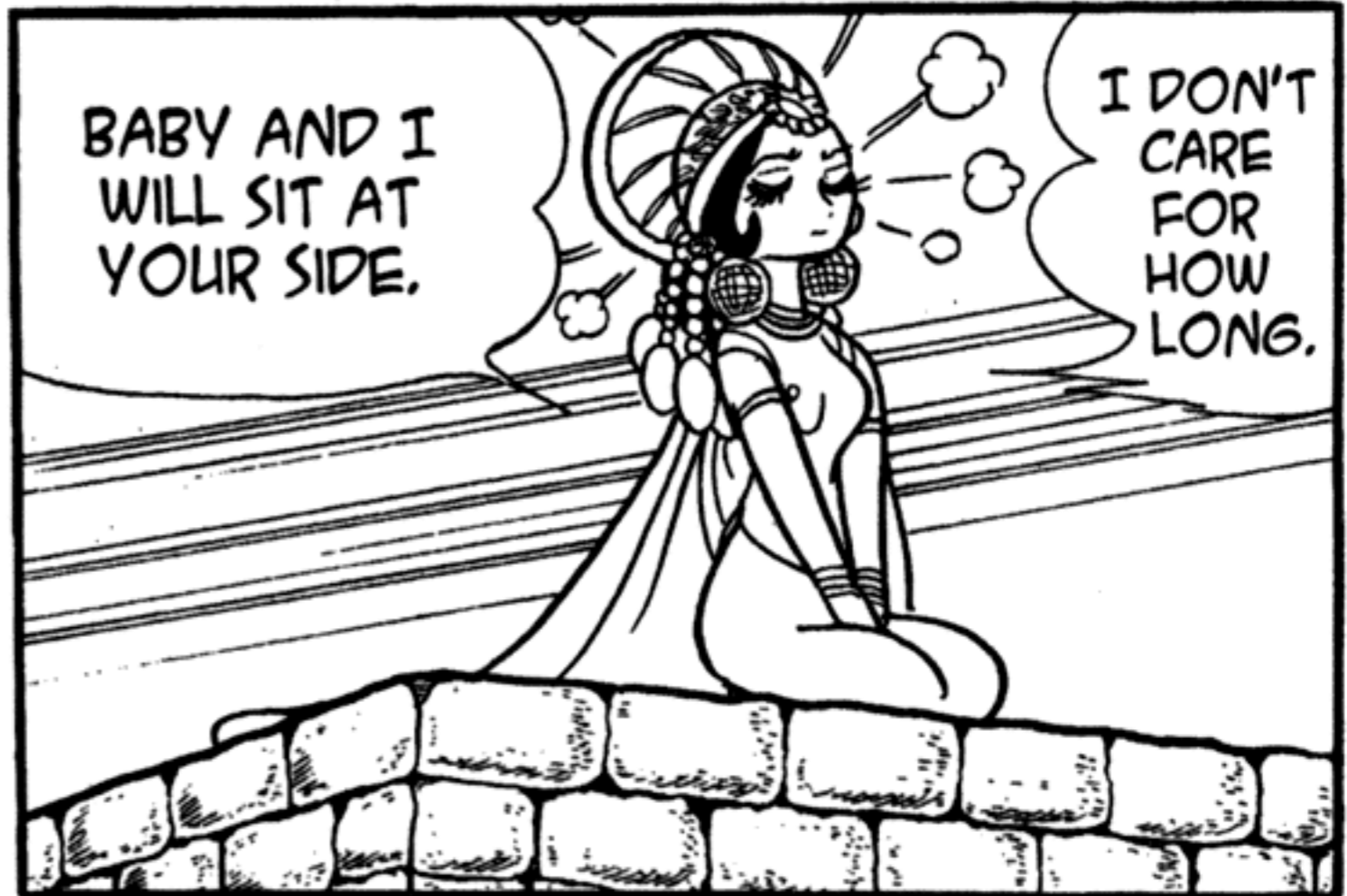
YOU'VE BEEN UP
HERE 5 DAYS
ALREADY...WHEN
YOU'RE WEAK TO
BEGIN WITH...



PLEASE,
DON'T DO
THIS
ANYMORE.

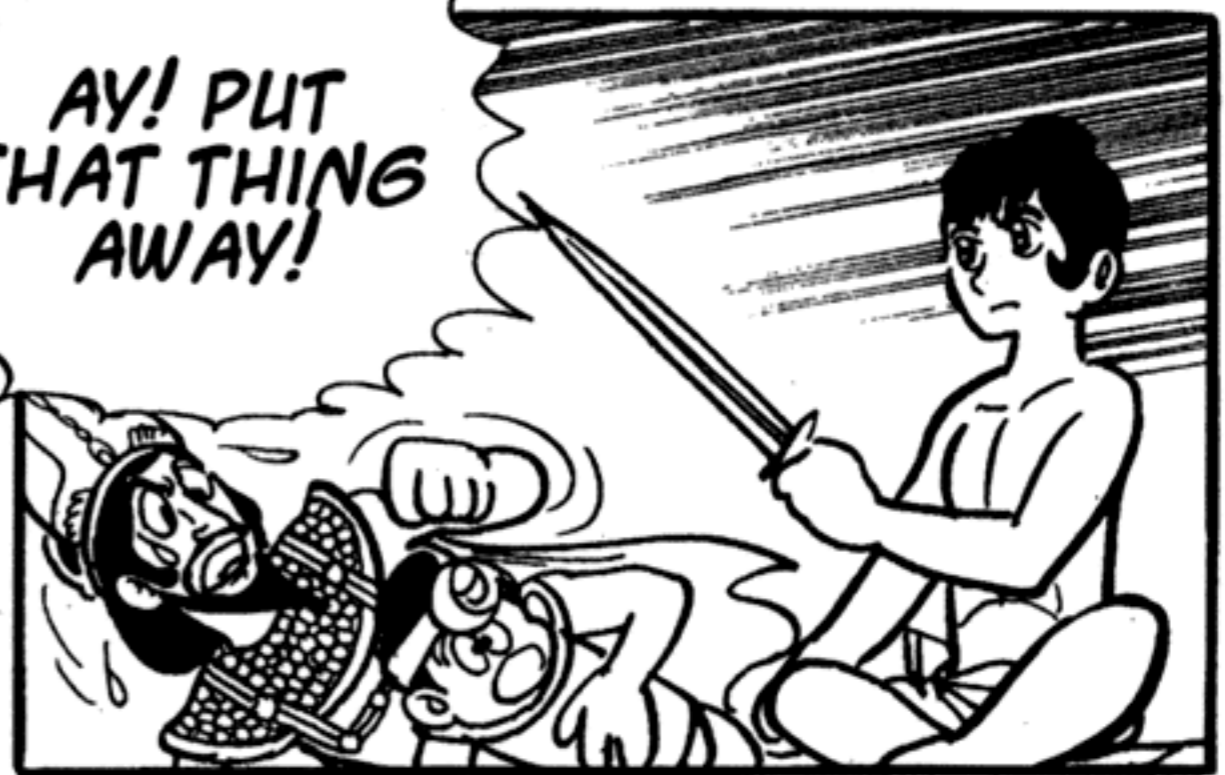


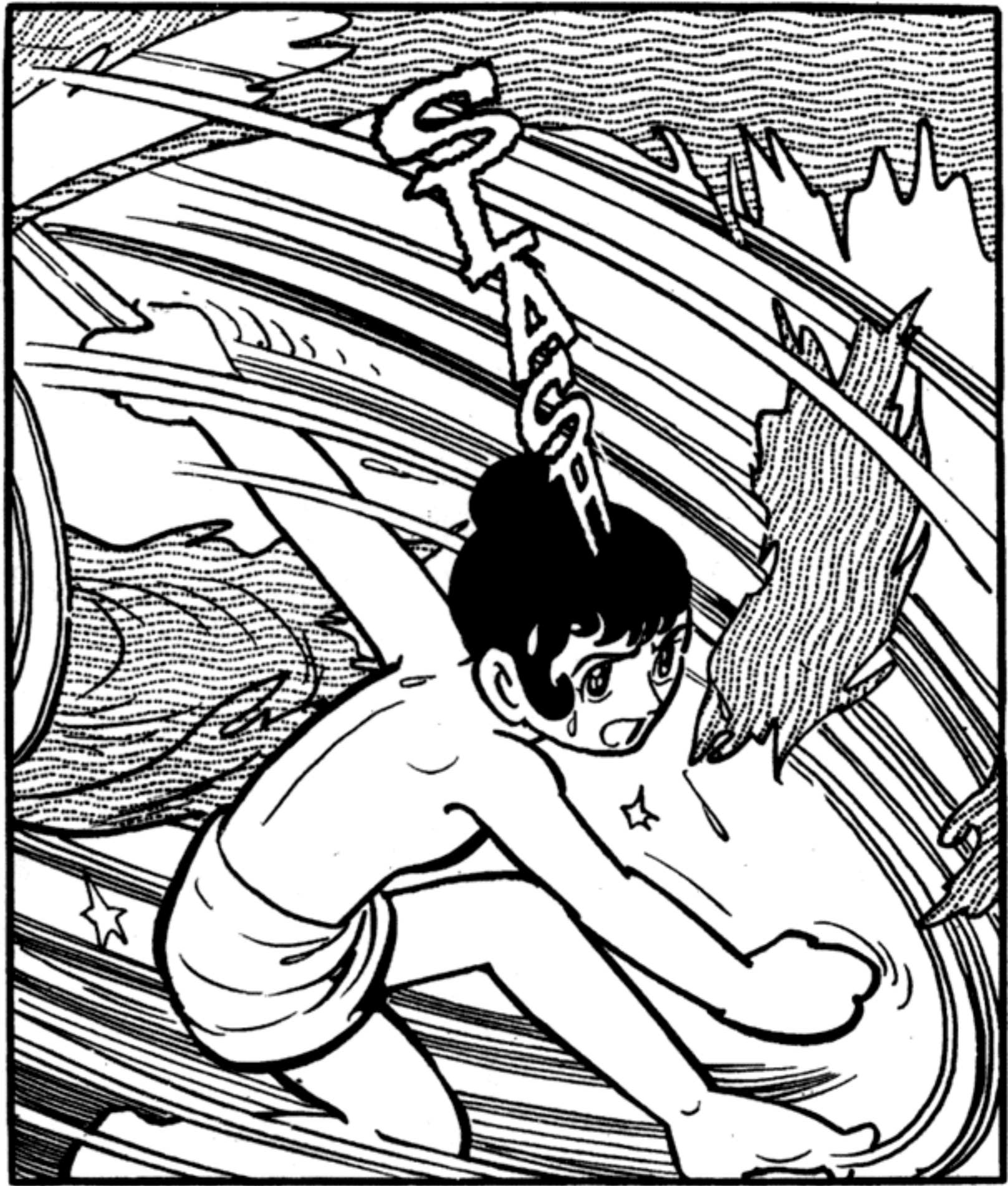
IF YOU
WON'T LEAVE
THIS SPOT,
THEN NEITHER
WILL I!



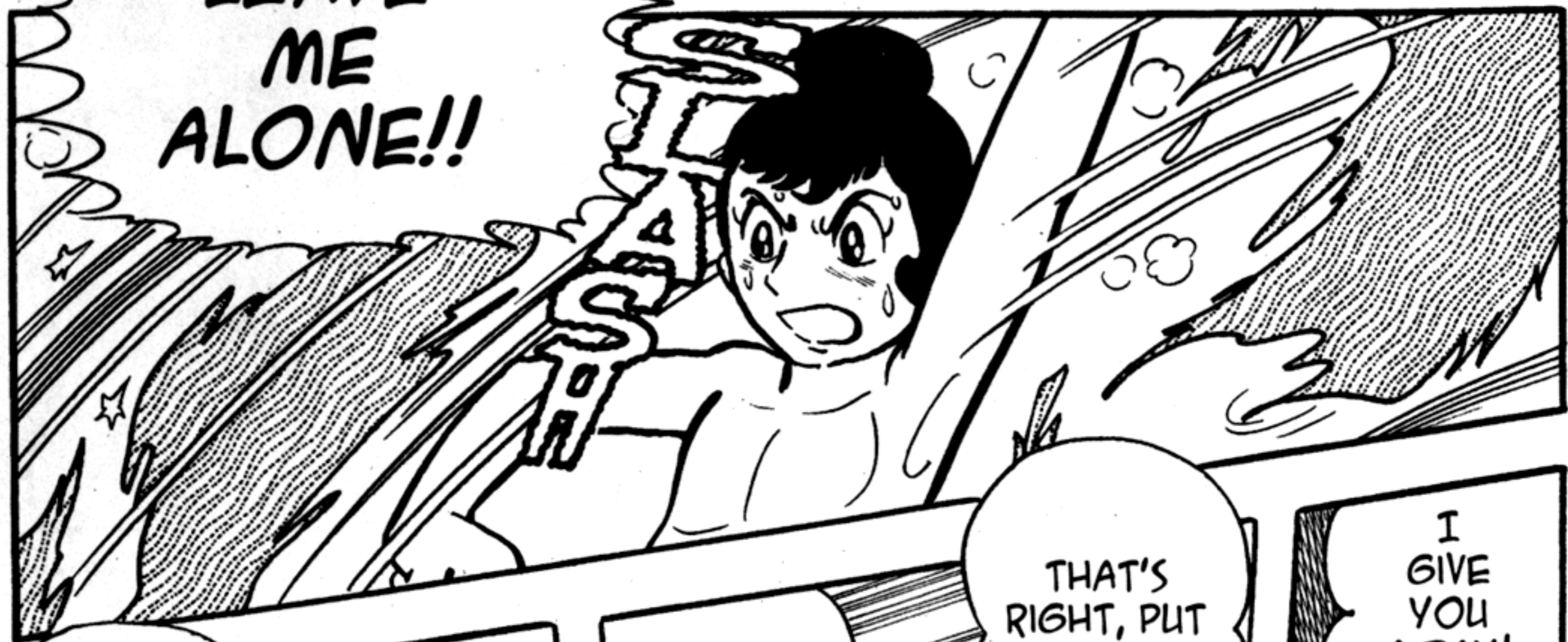
BABY AND I
WILL SIT AT
YOUR SIDE.

I DON'T
CARE
FOR
HOW
LONG.





LEAVE
ME
ALONE!!



OH,
MAN!

VERY WELL,
BUILD
A ROOF
OVER THE
TURRET.



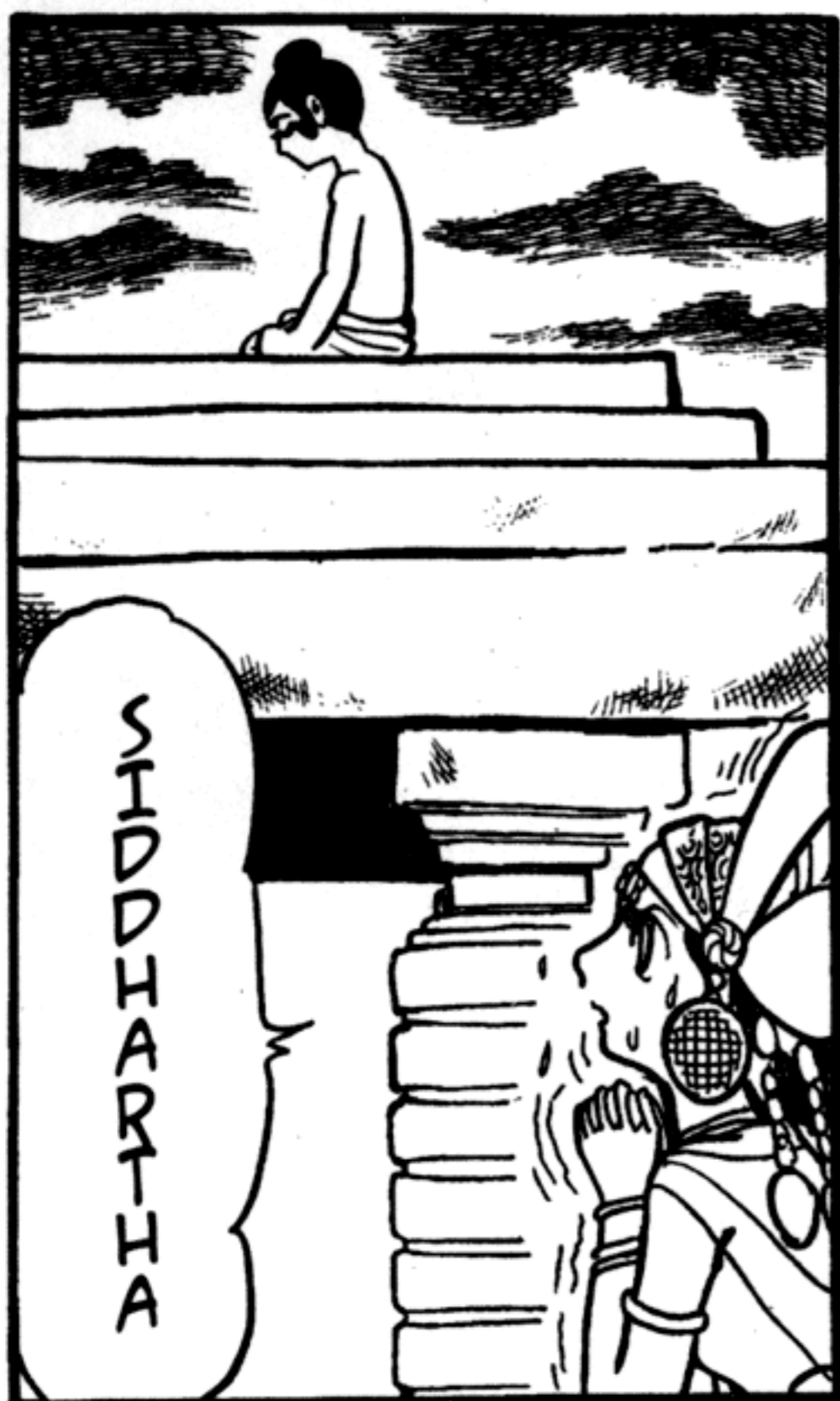
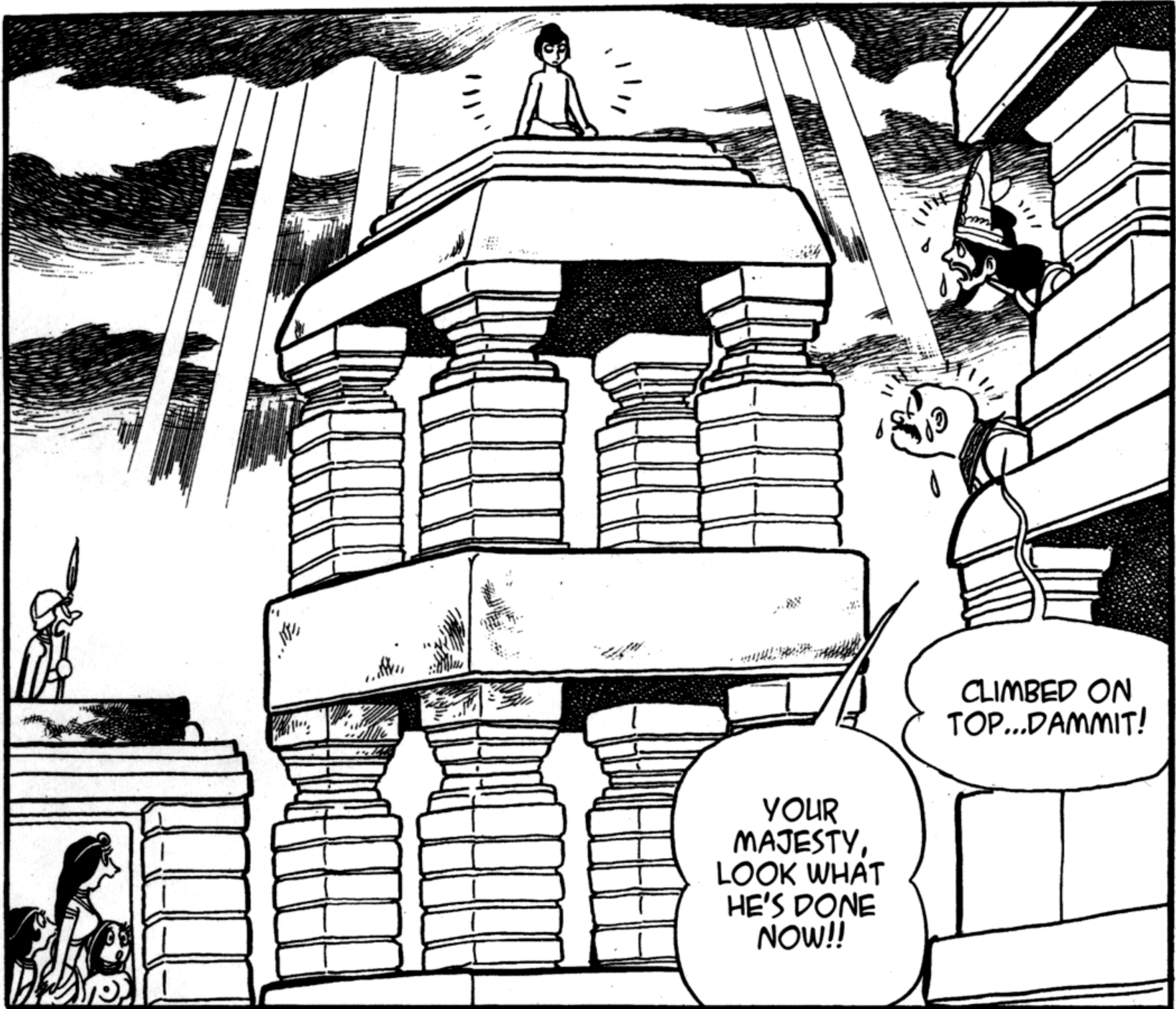
THAT'S
RIGHT, PUT
UP WALLS
AROUND HIM,
SO HE'LL BE
SITTING IN
A ROOM.

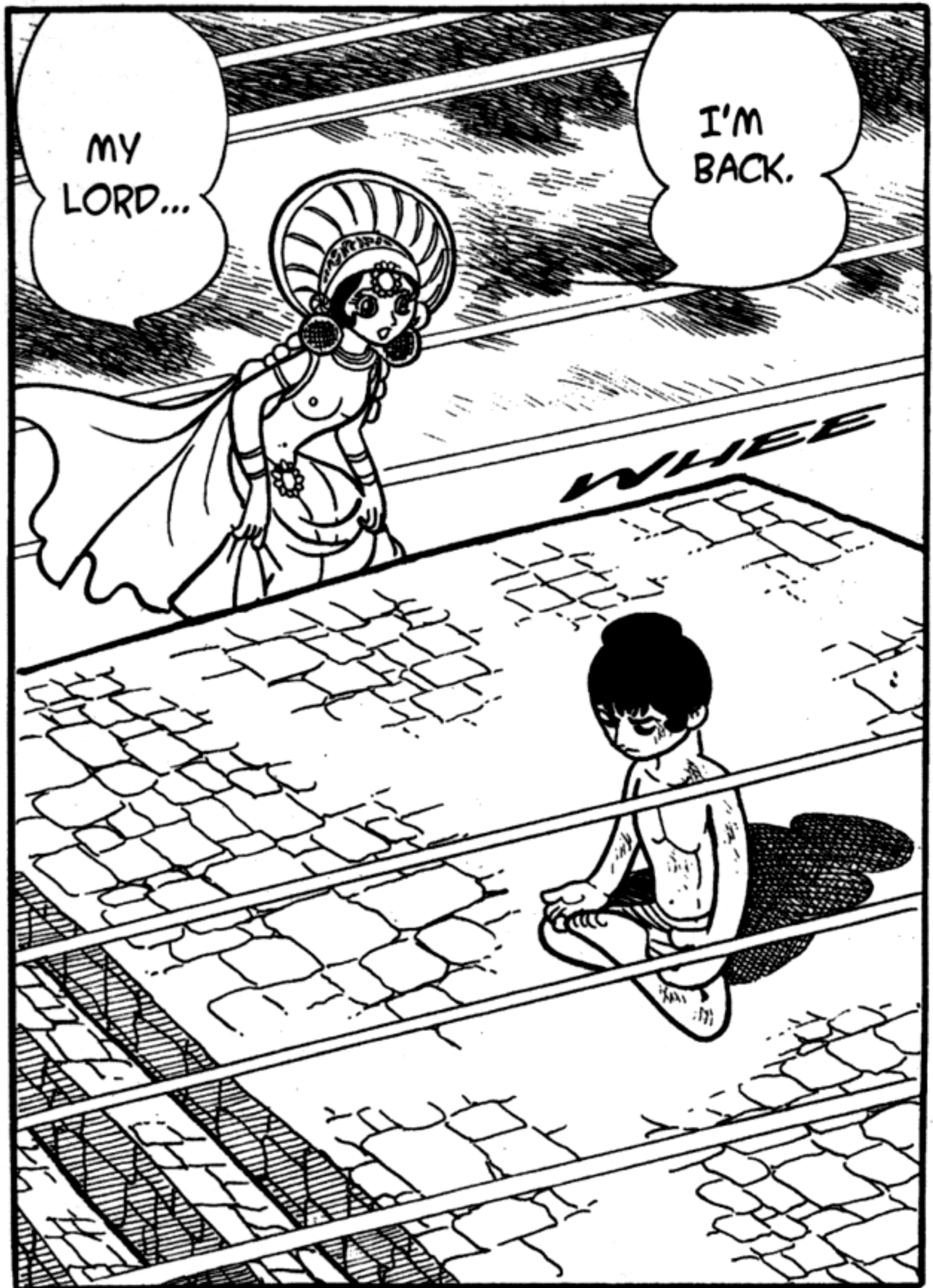
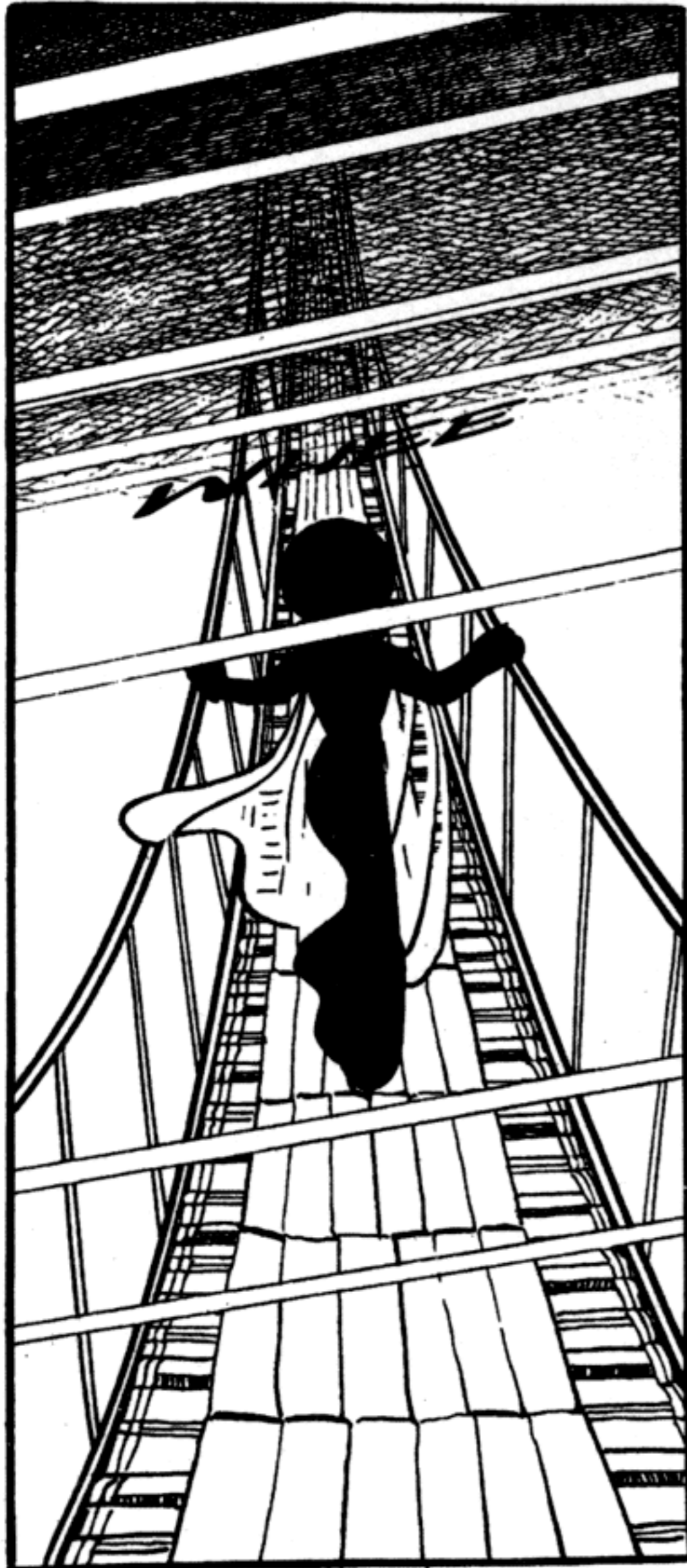
HE'S
NUTS
TOO

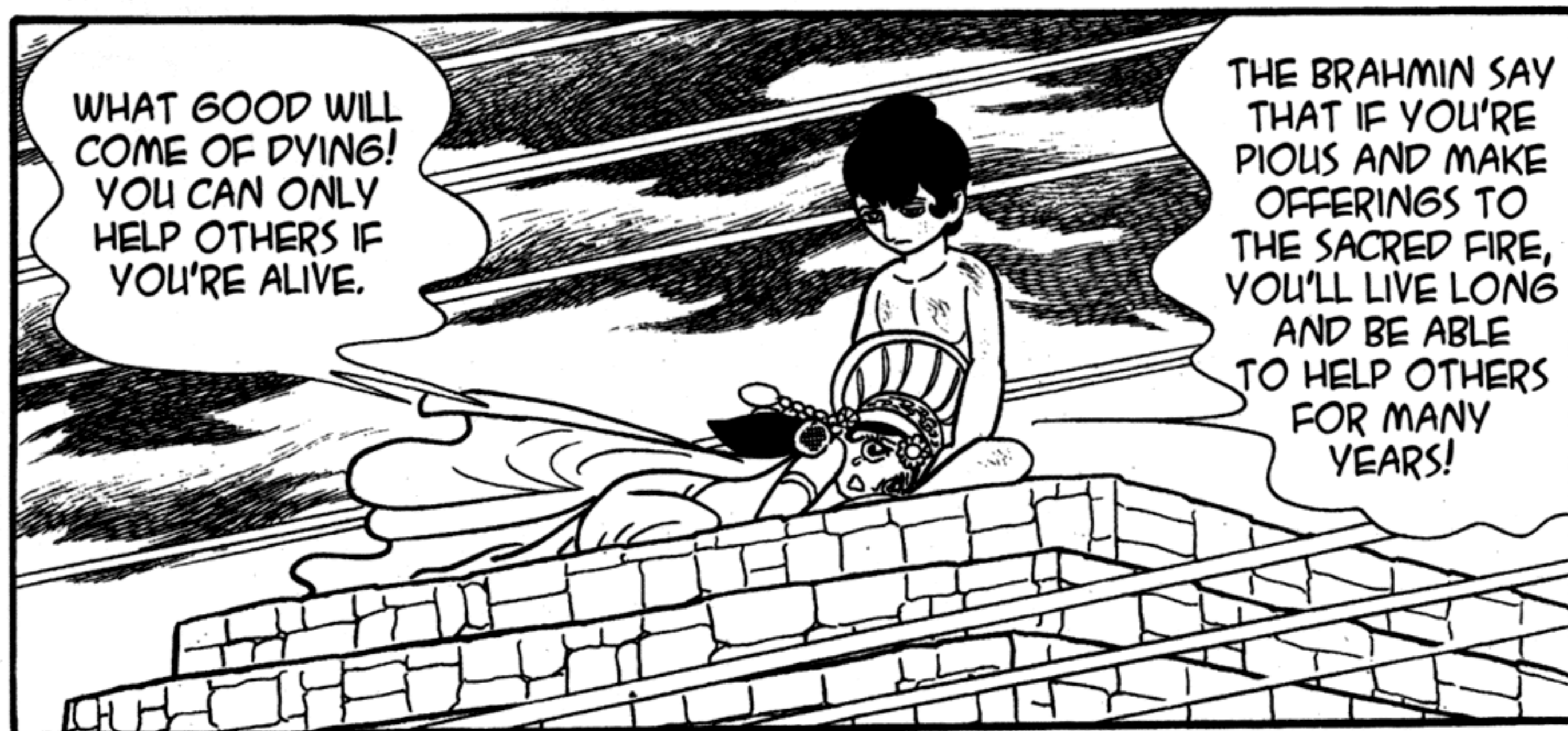
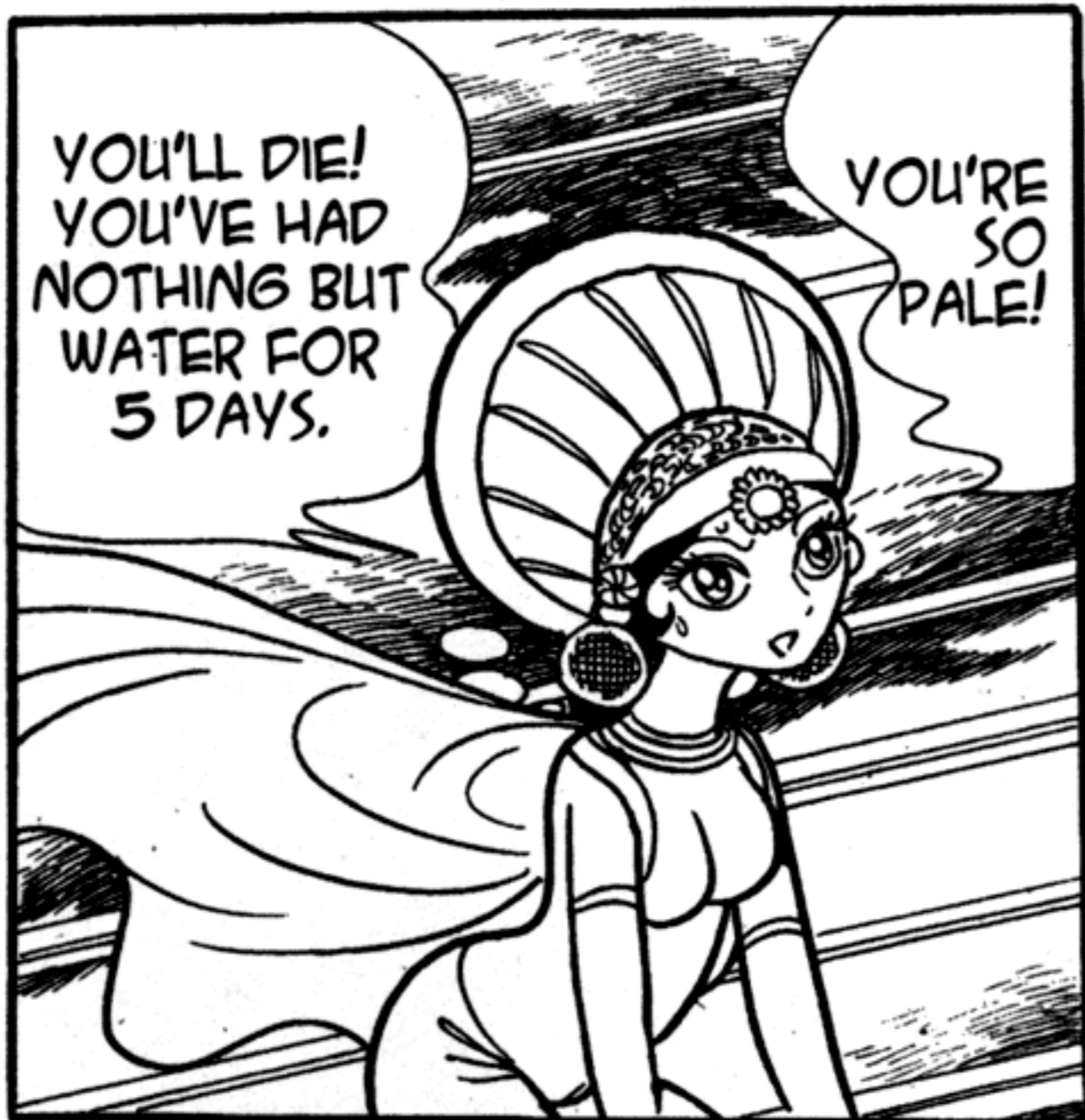


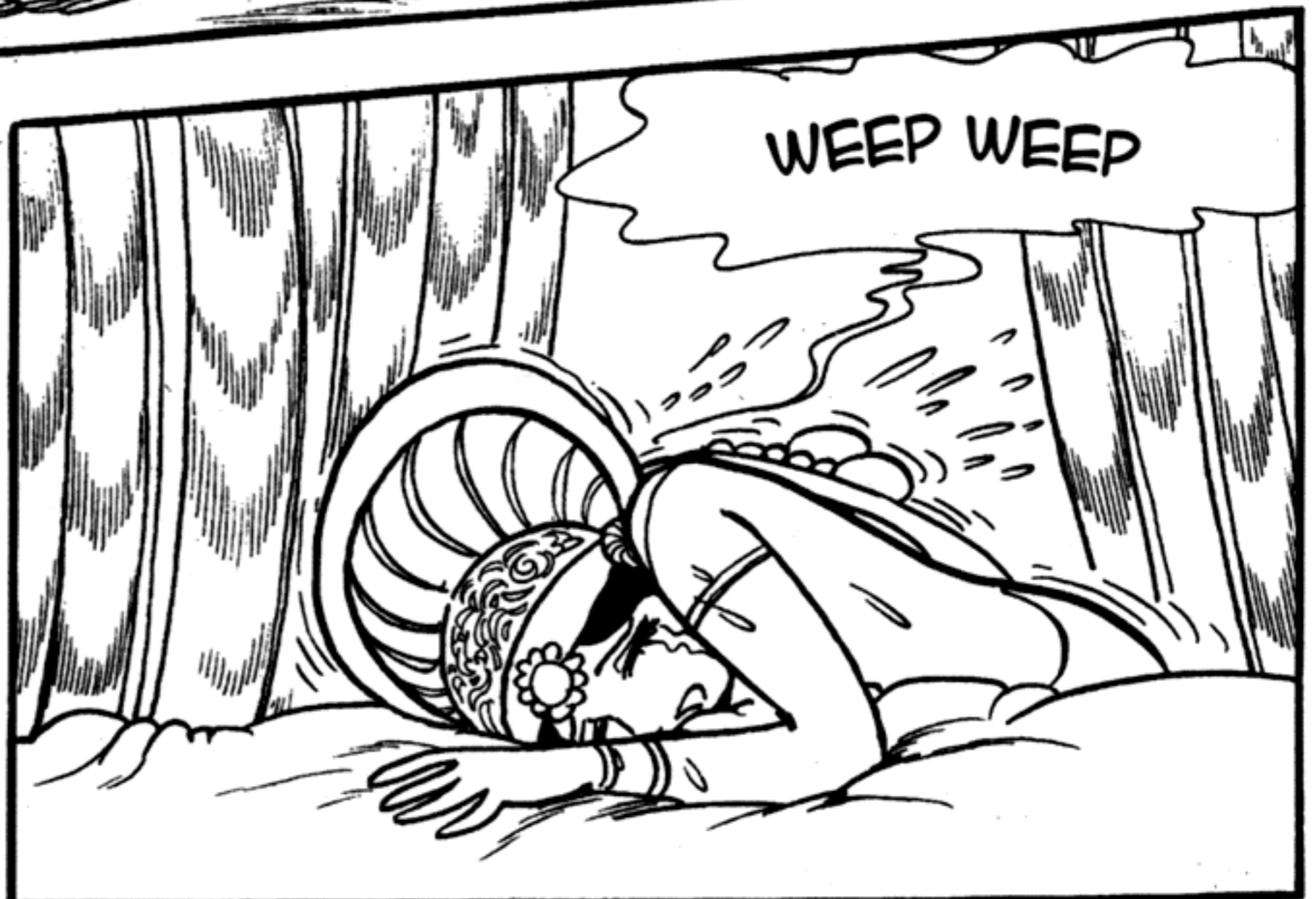
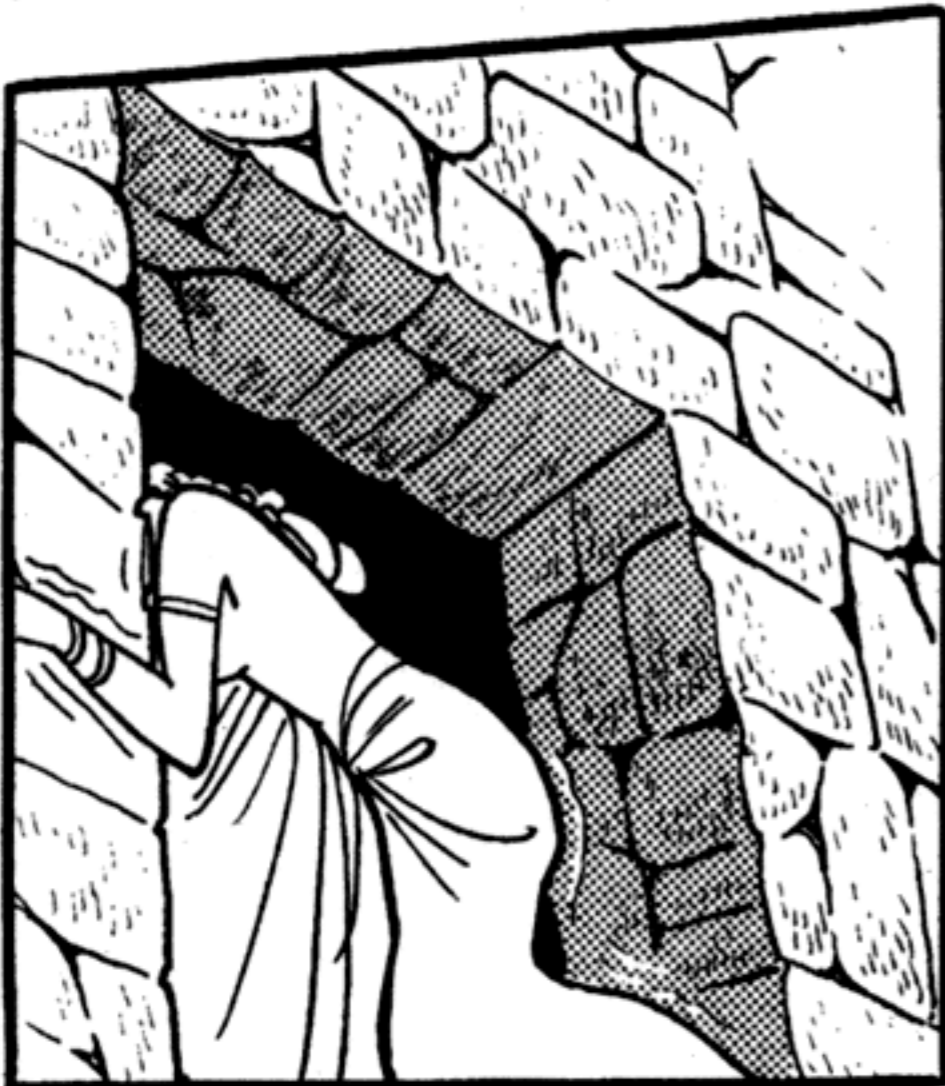
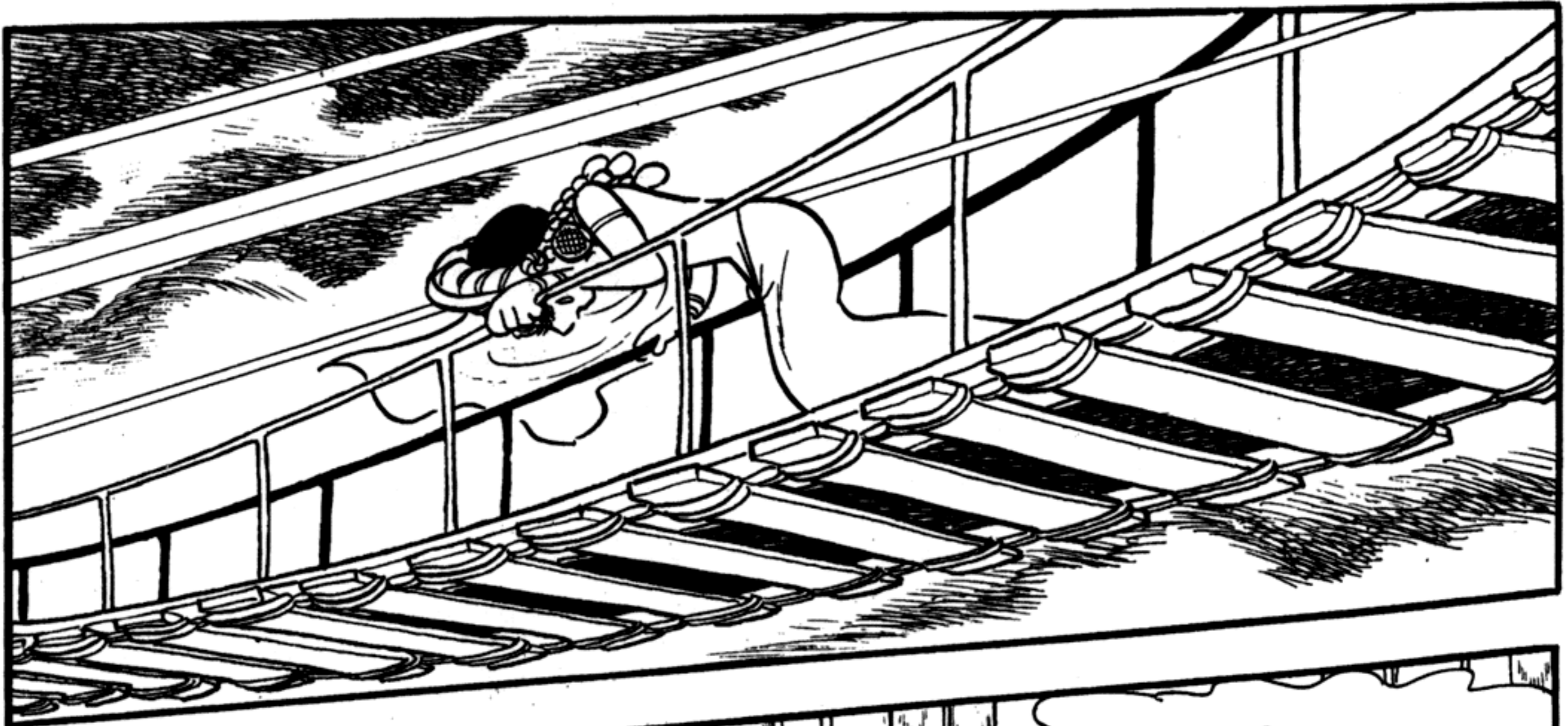
I
GIVE
YOU
A DAY!





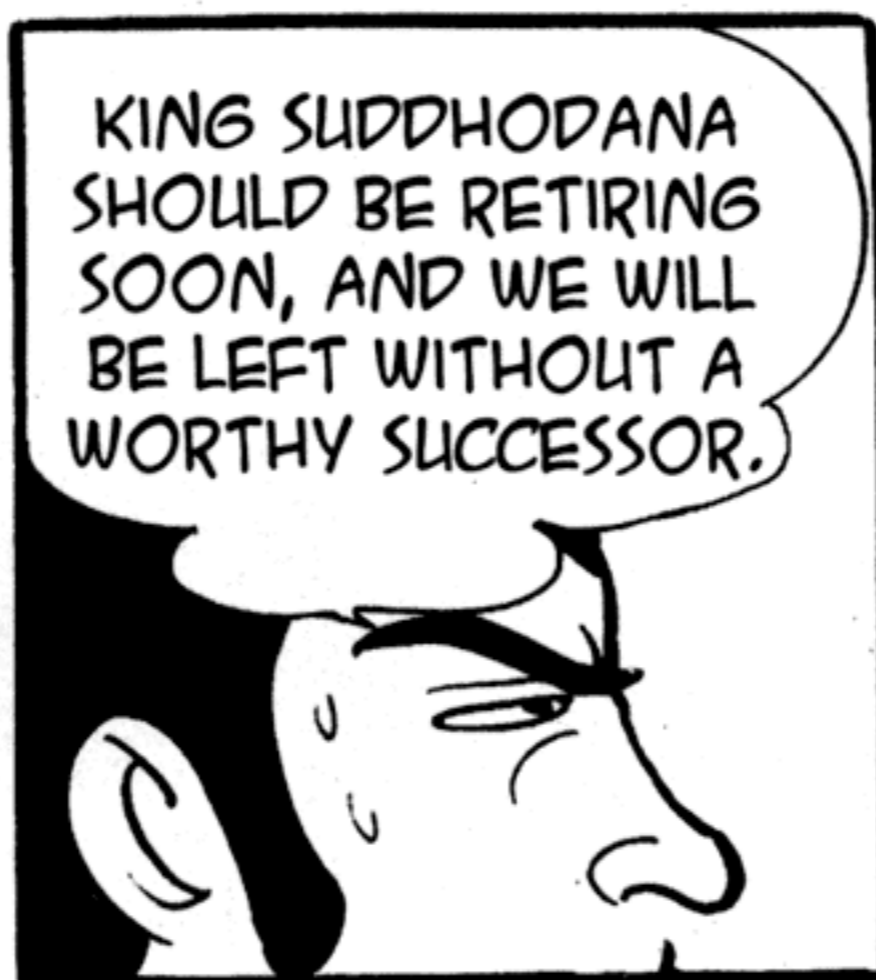


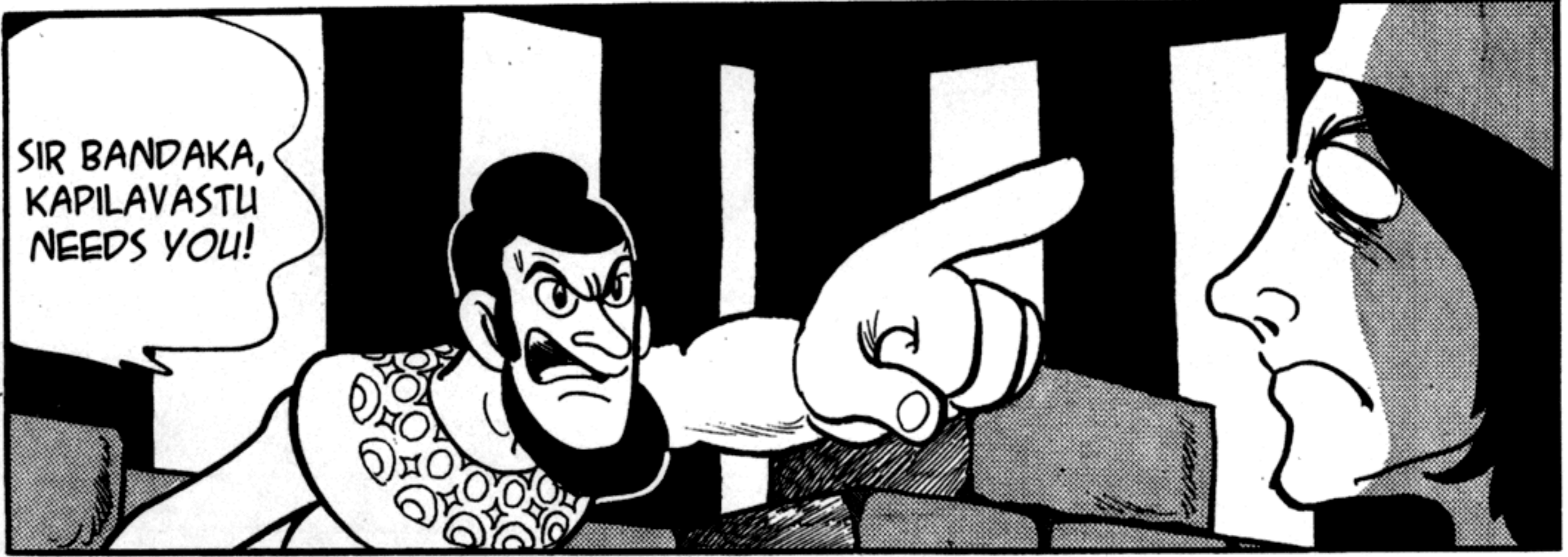




CHAPTER EIGHT

THE FIVE ASCETICS





SIR BANDAKA,
KAPILAVASTU
NEEDS YOU!



YOU'RE
SUGGESTING
I BECOME KING
OF KAPILAVASTU,
SIR JUMBLE?



THIS IS YOUR
CHANCE. IF
YOU WANT YOUR
DREAM TO COME
TRUE, IT'S NOW
OR NEVER!



MY
DREAM?

WHAT
DREAM
IS THAT?



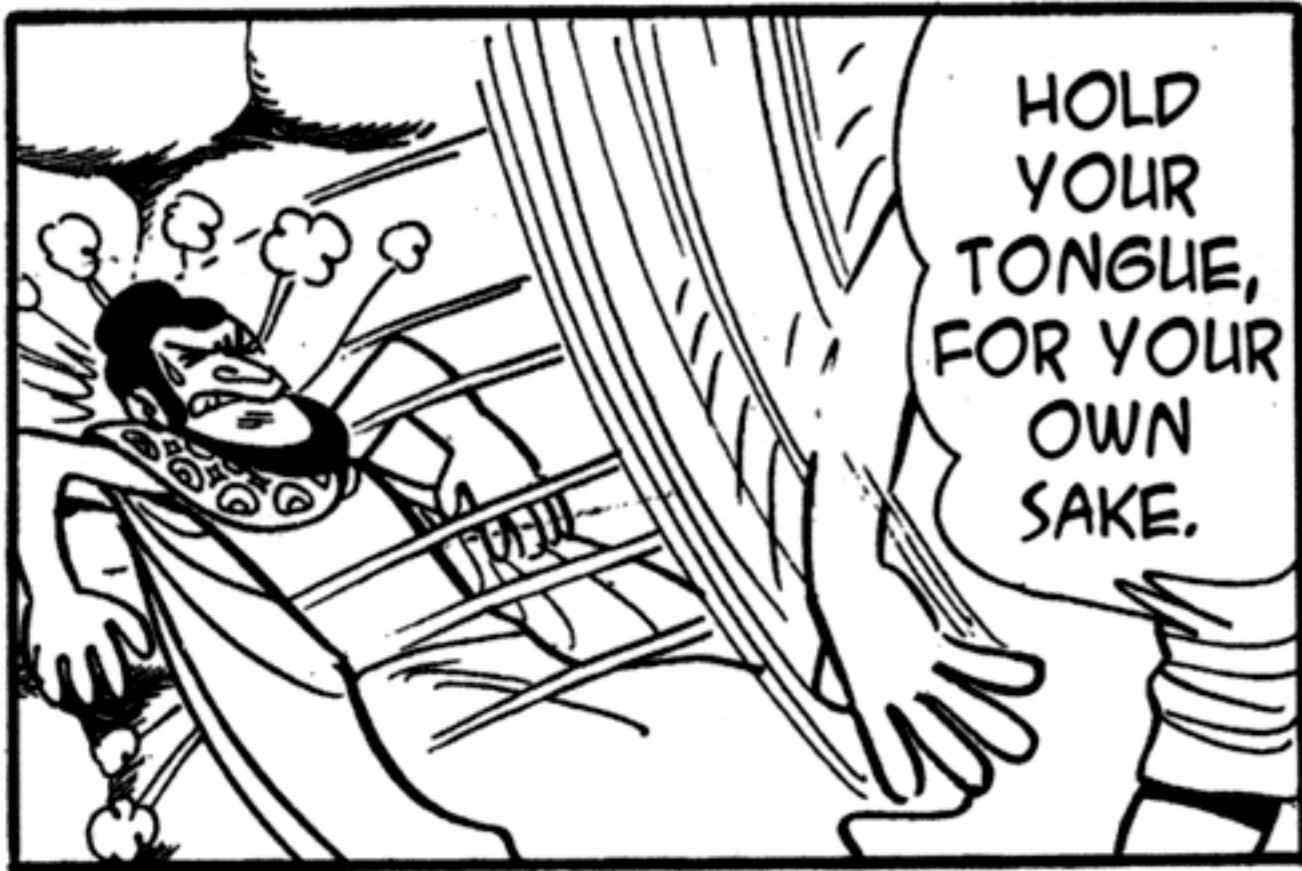
THE ONE
WRITTEN
ALL OVER
YOUR
FACE...



YOU WANT
STATUS, GLORY
AND POWER.

THOUGH
YOU ARE A
KOLIYA AND
A CHAMPION,
YOU ARE
NOTHING...

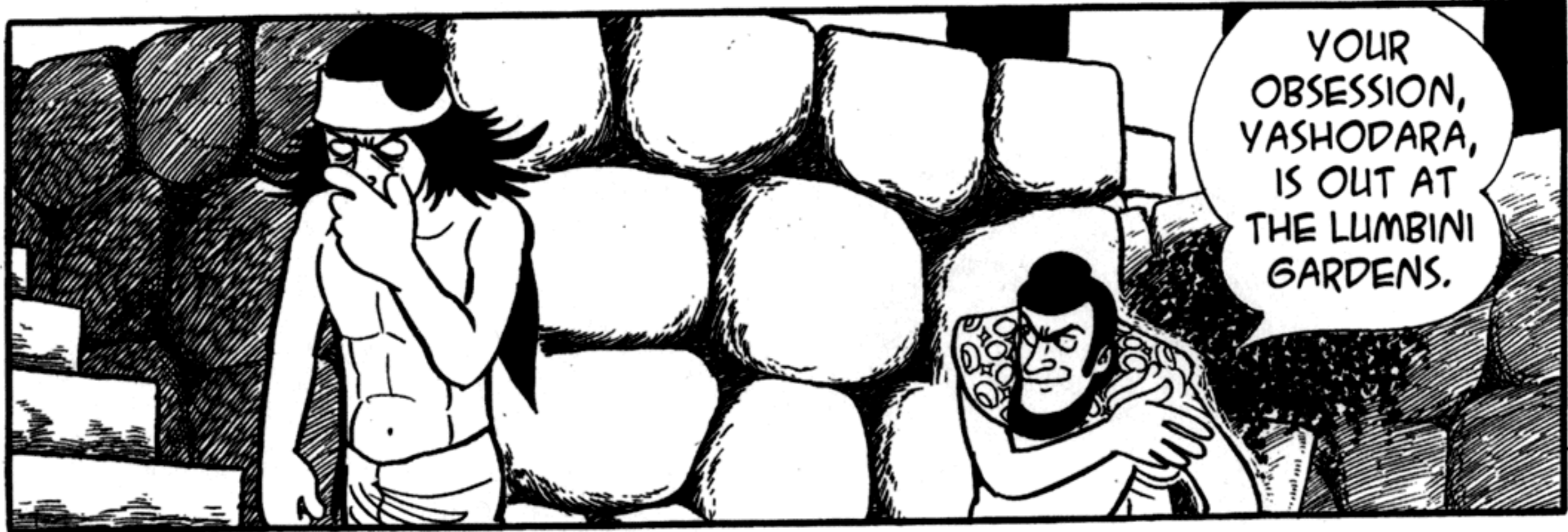
WHEN IN FACT
YOU DESIRE NO
LESS THAN
THE THRONE
ITSELF!



HOLD YOUR TONGUE, FOR YOUR OWN SAKE.



NOW'S THE TIME TO GET RID OF THE PRINCE.



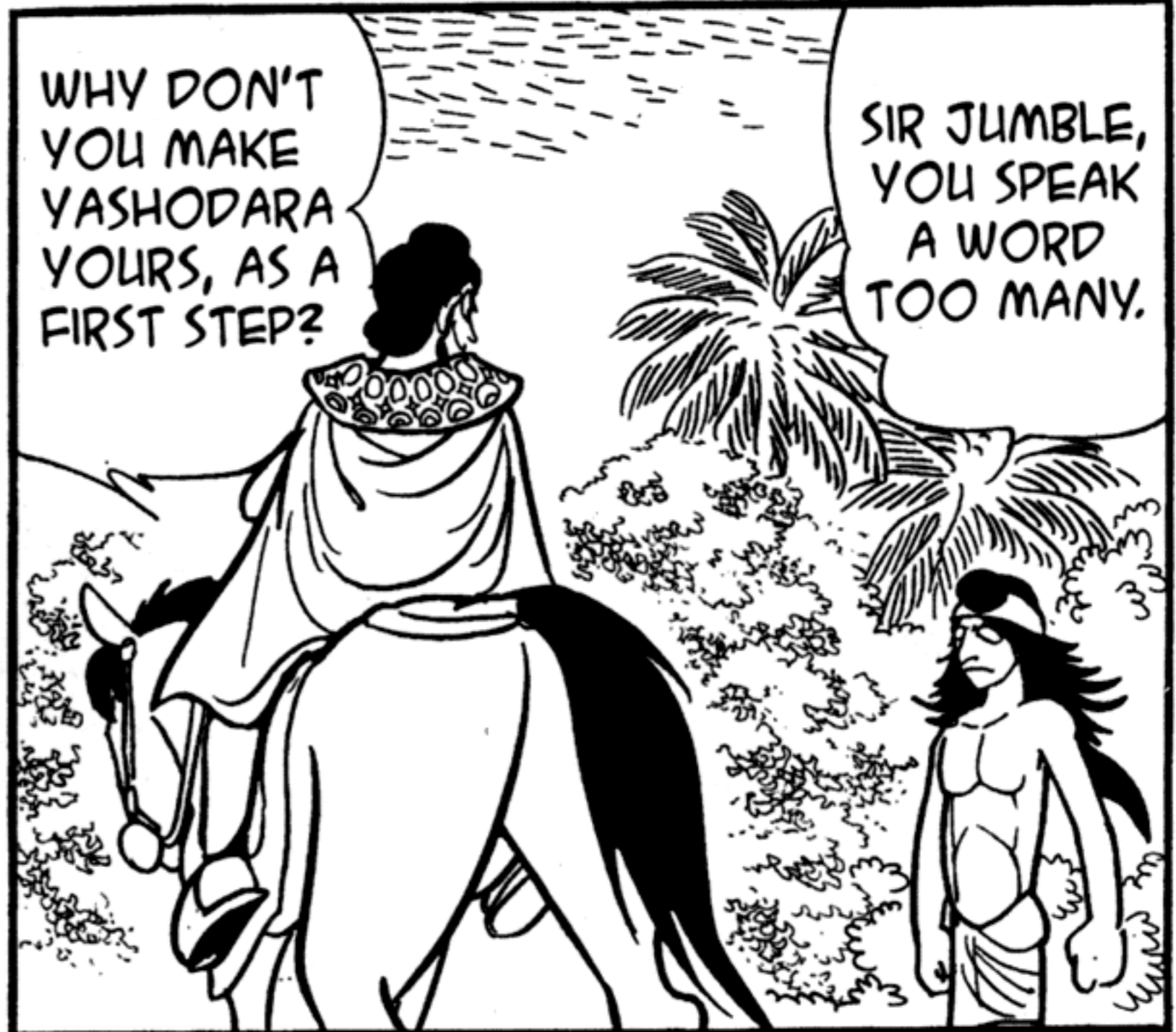
YOUR OBSESSION, YASHODARA, IS OUT AT THE LUMBINI GARDENS.



SHE'S NEARBY?

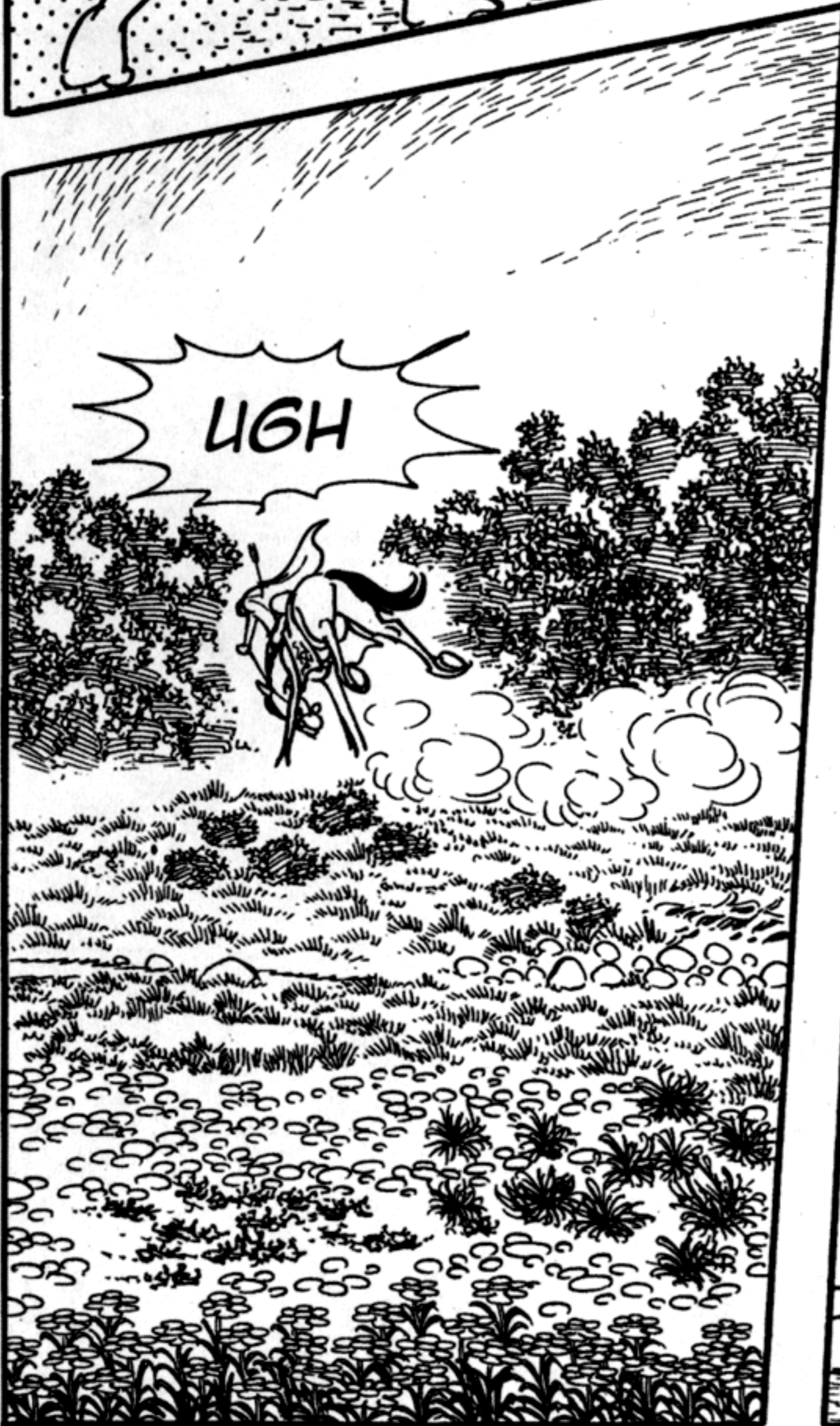
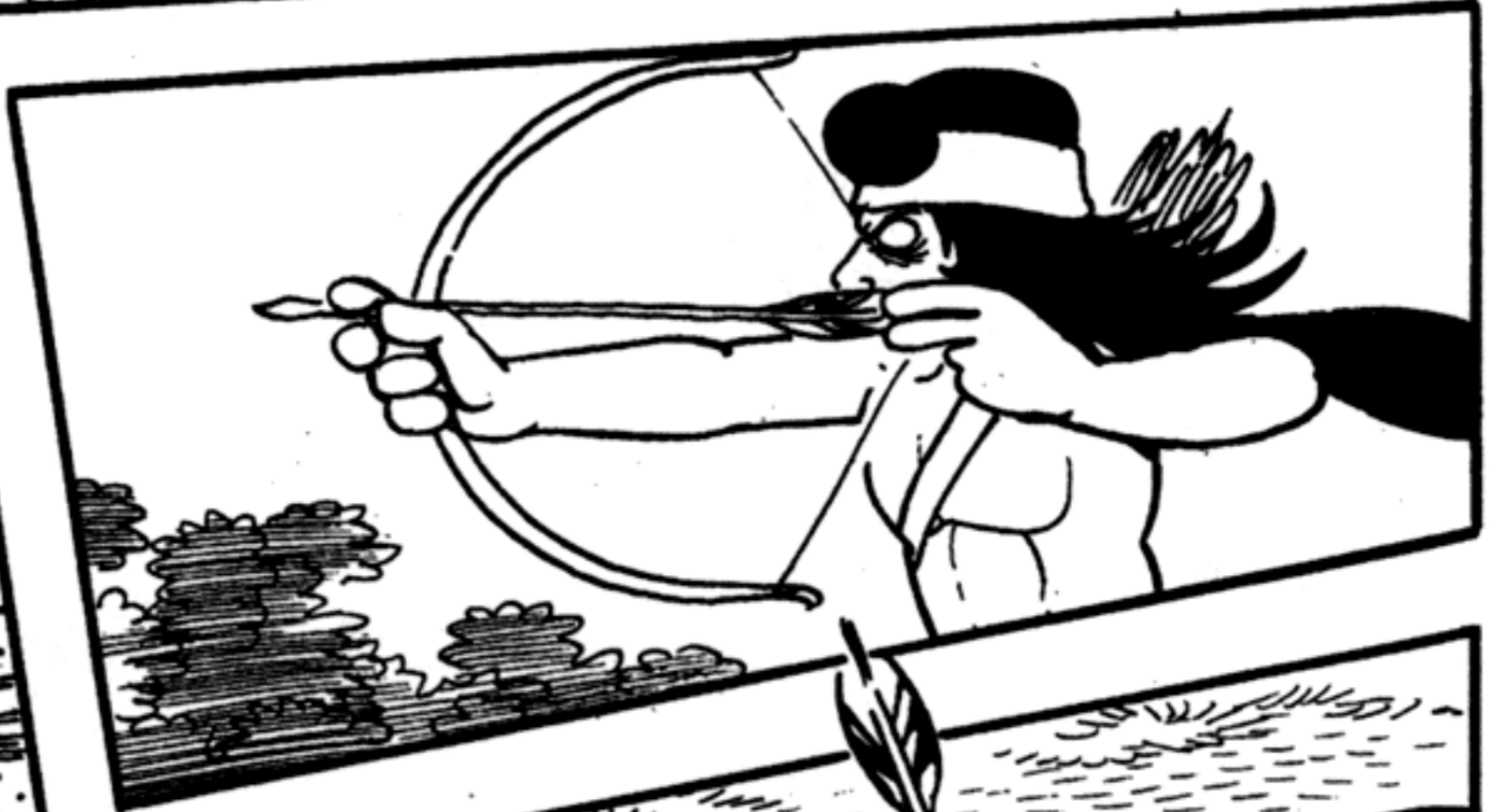
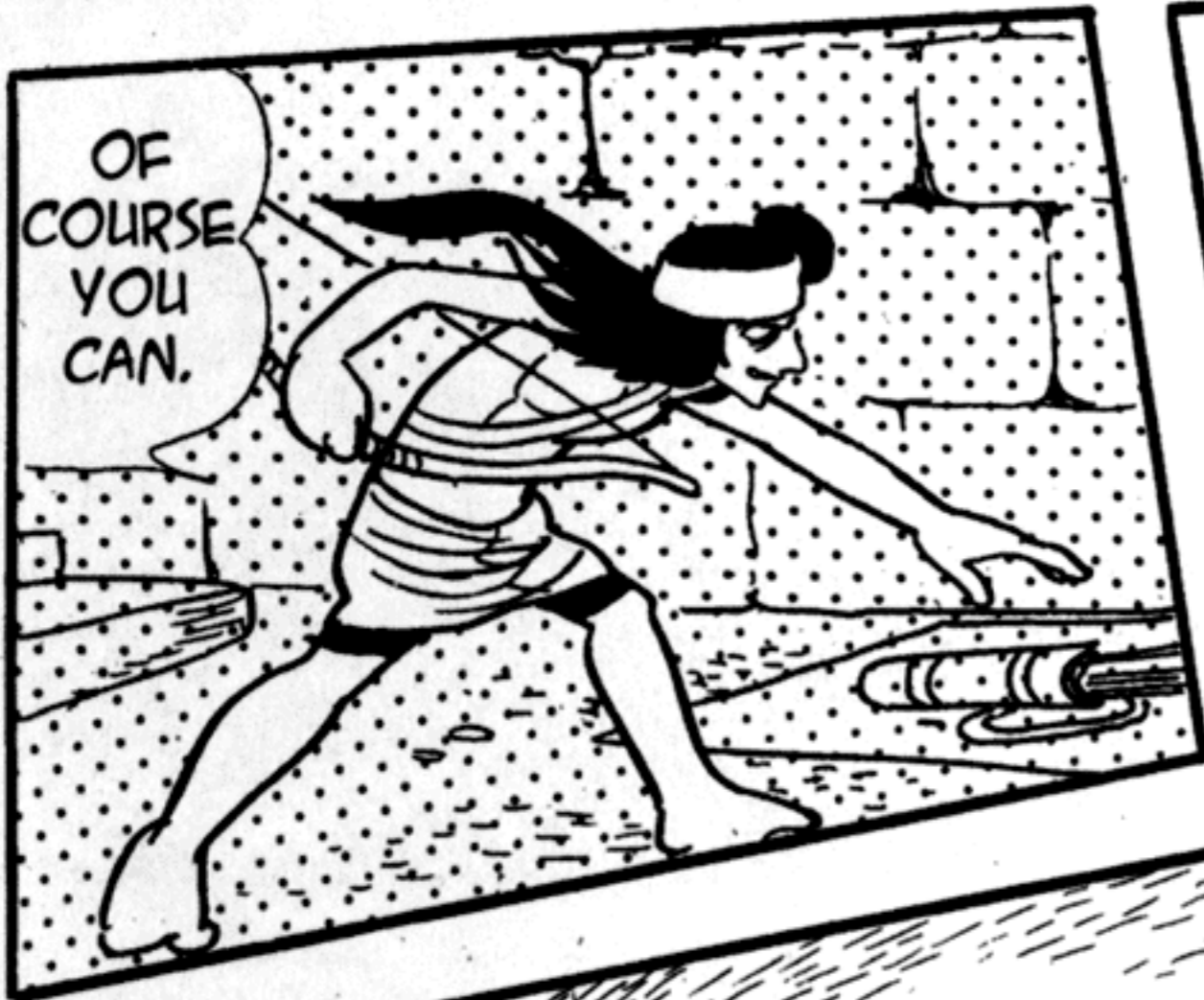


LET'S SHAKE ON IT, SIR BANDAKA. I'LL HELP IN ANY WAY I CAN.

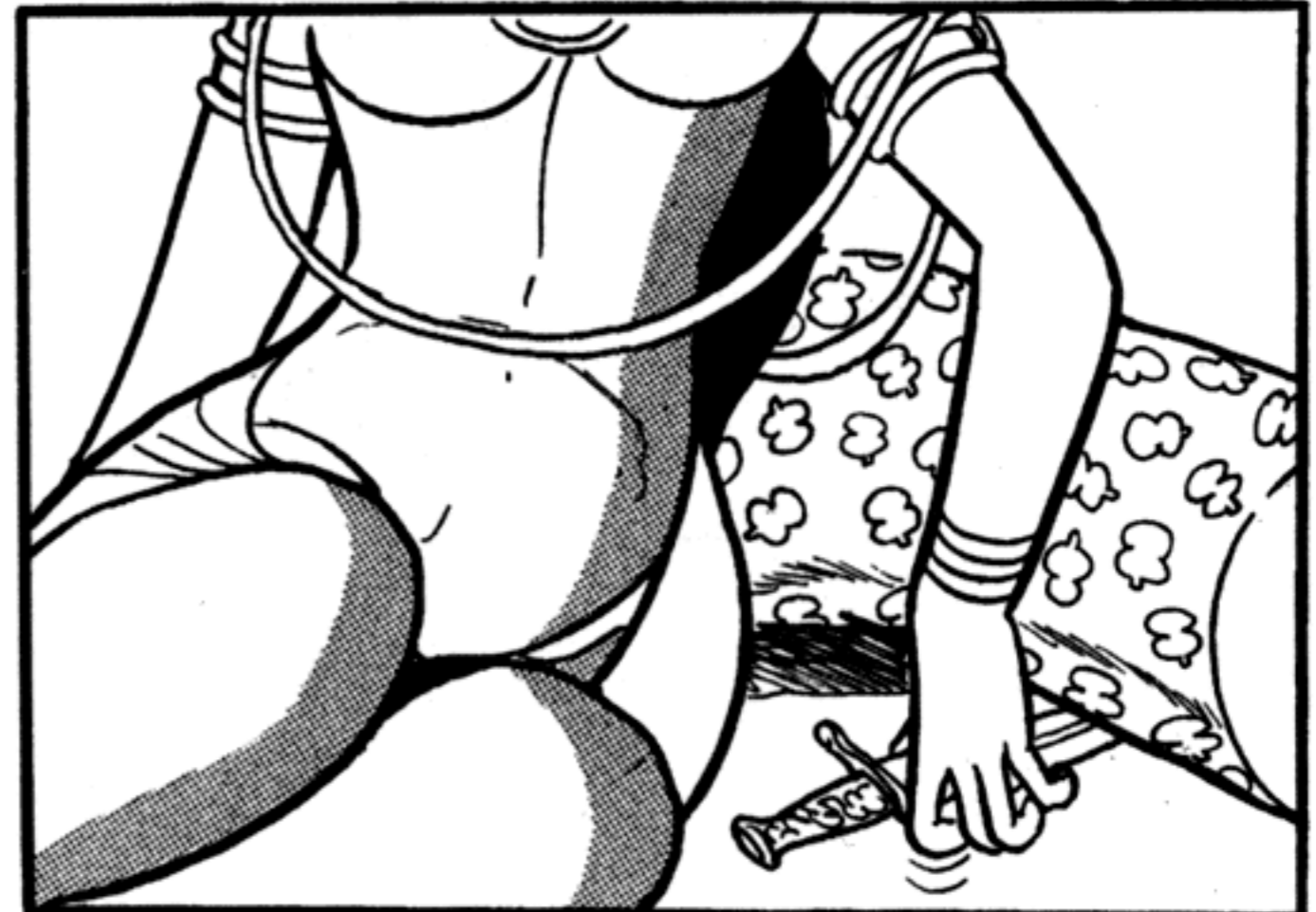


WHY DON'T YOU MAKE YASHODARA YOURS, AS A FIRST STEP?

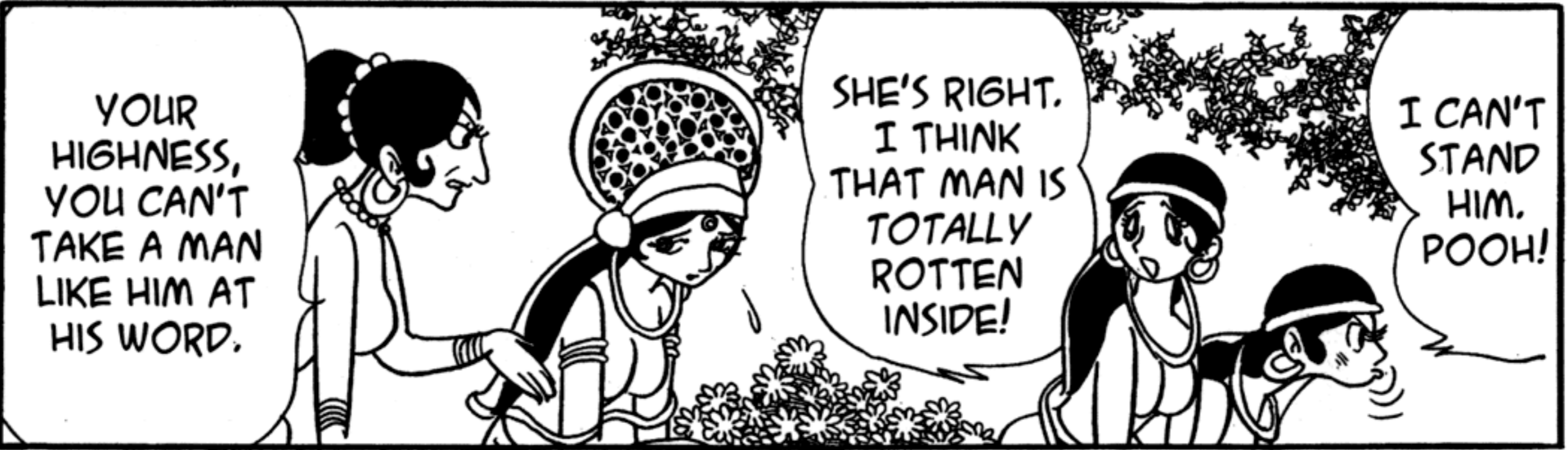
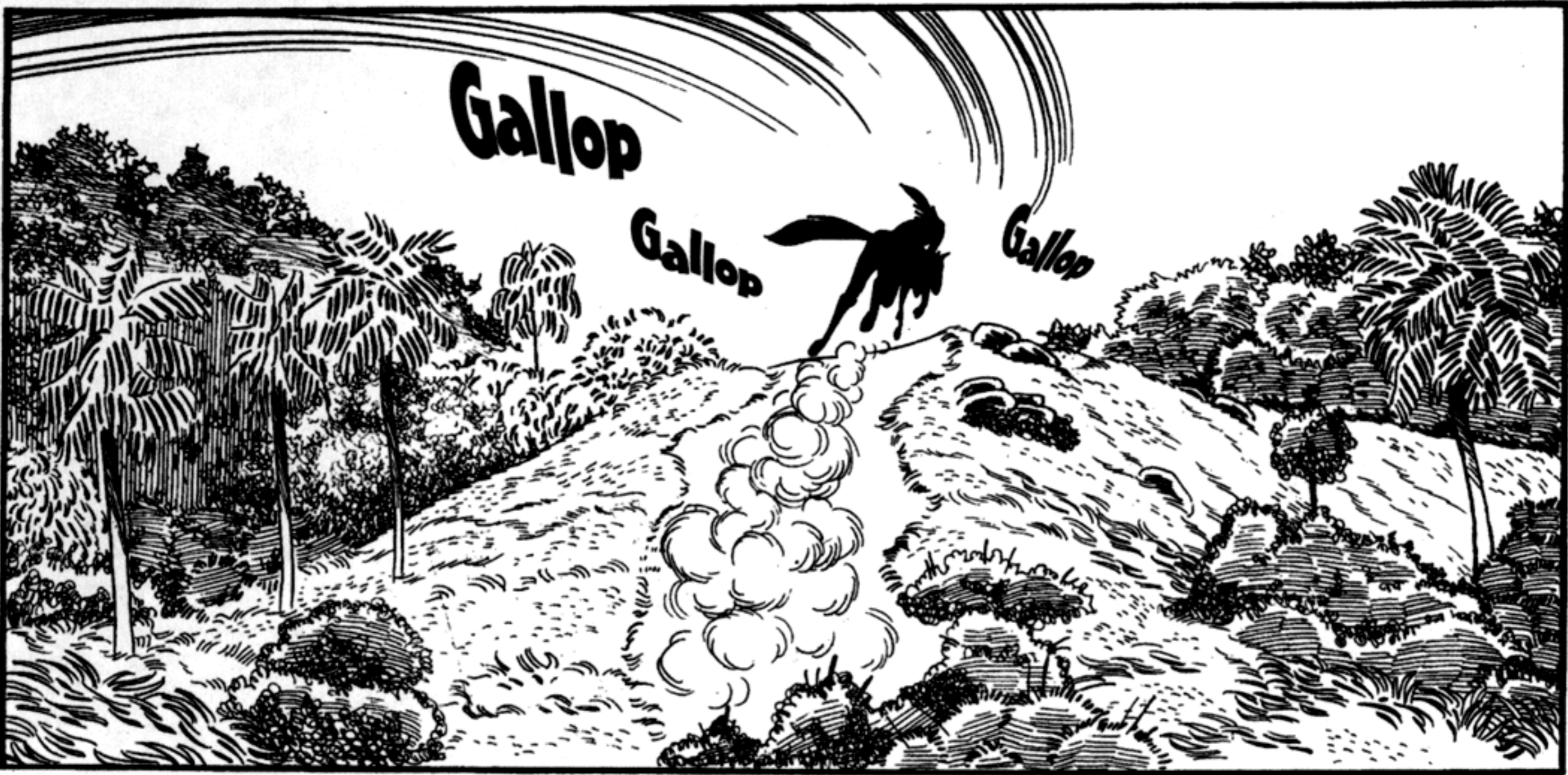
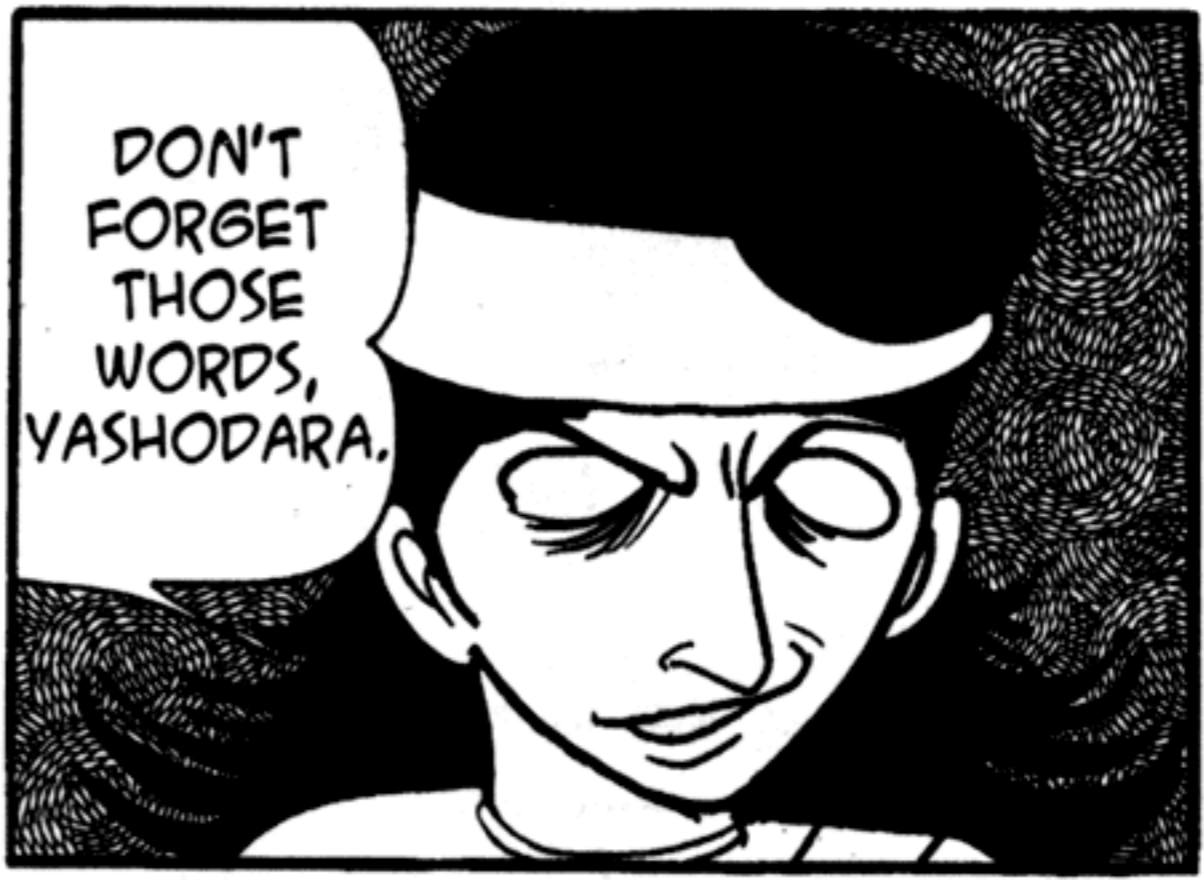
SIR JUMBLE, YOU SPEAK A WORD TOO MANY.

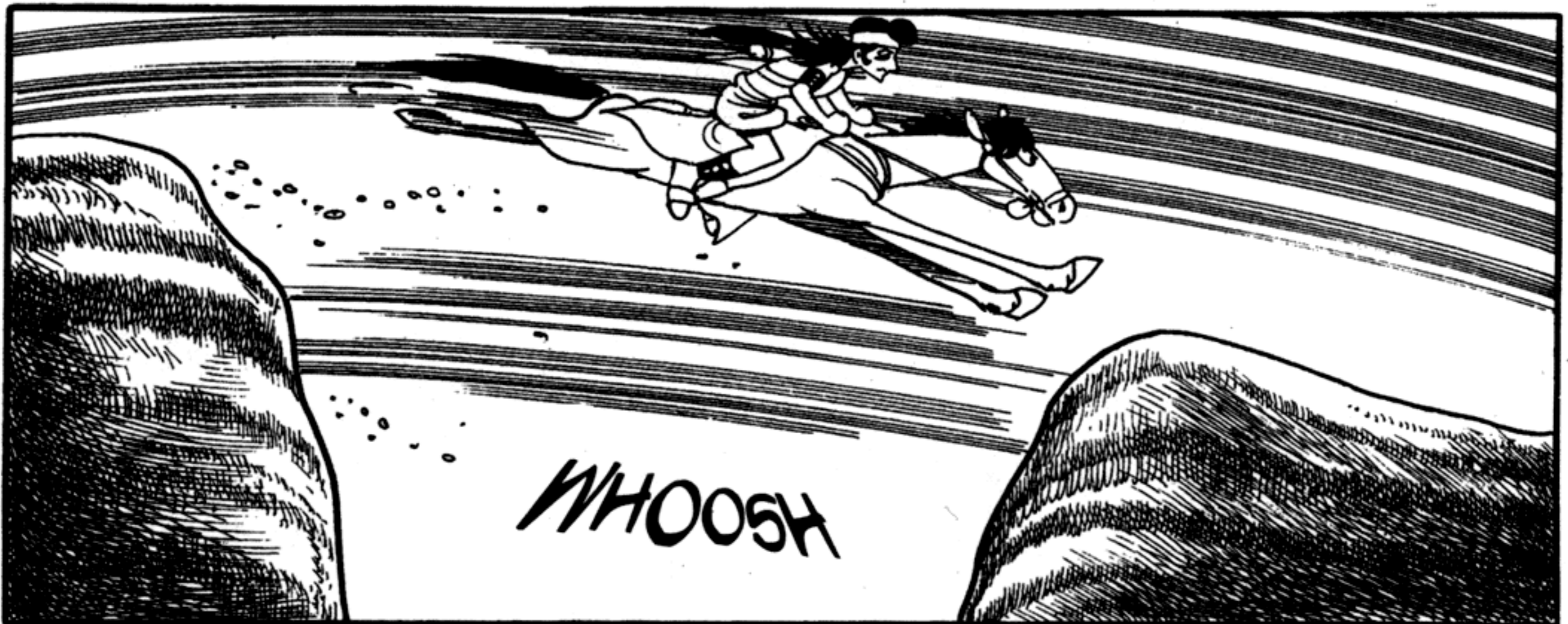


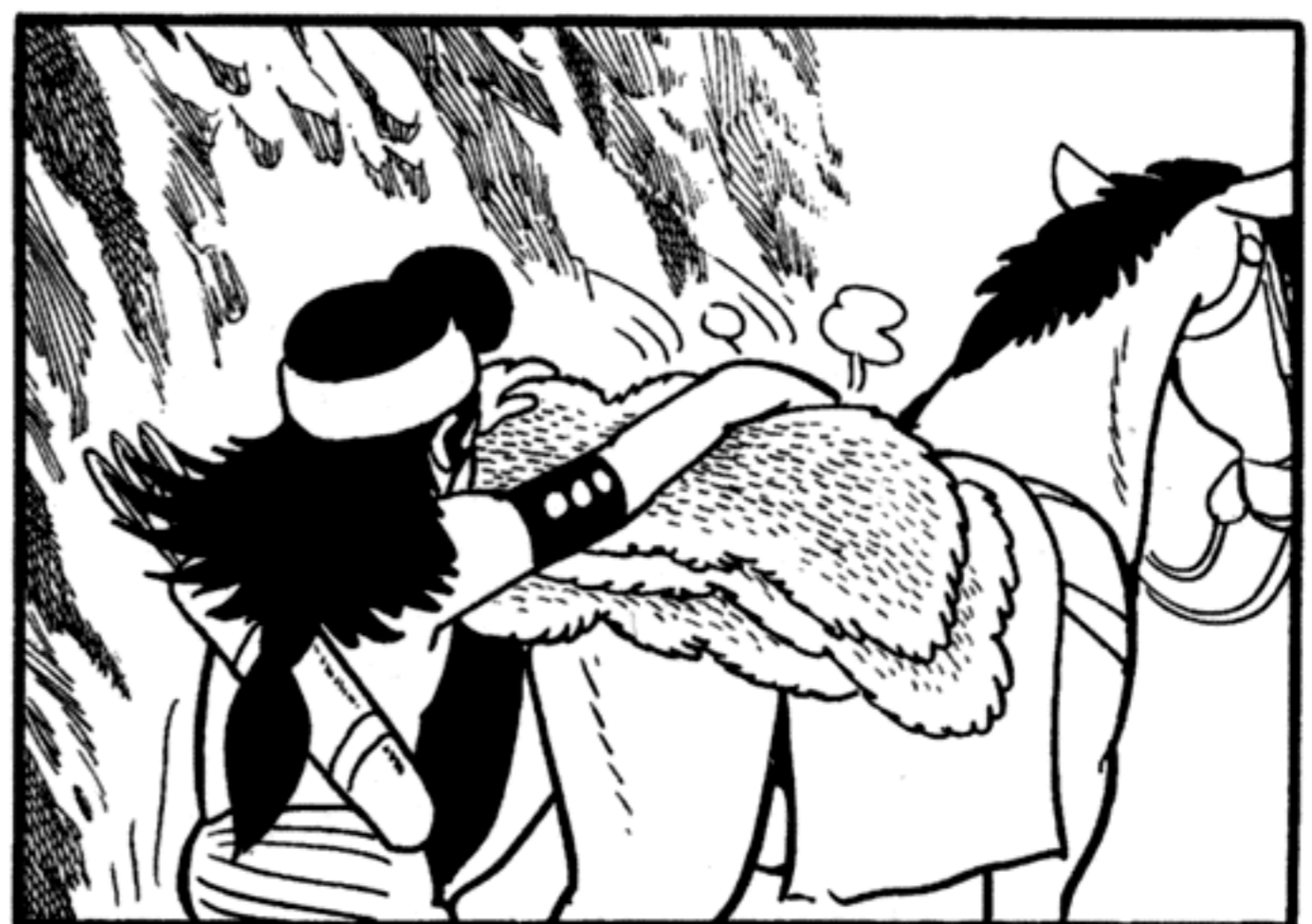
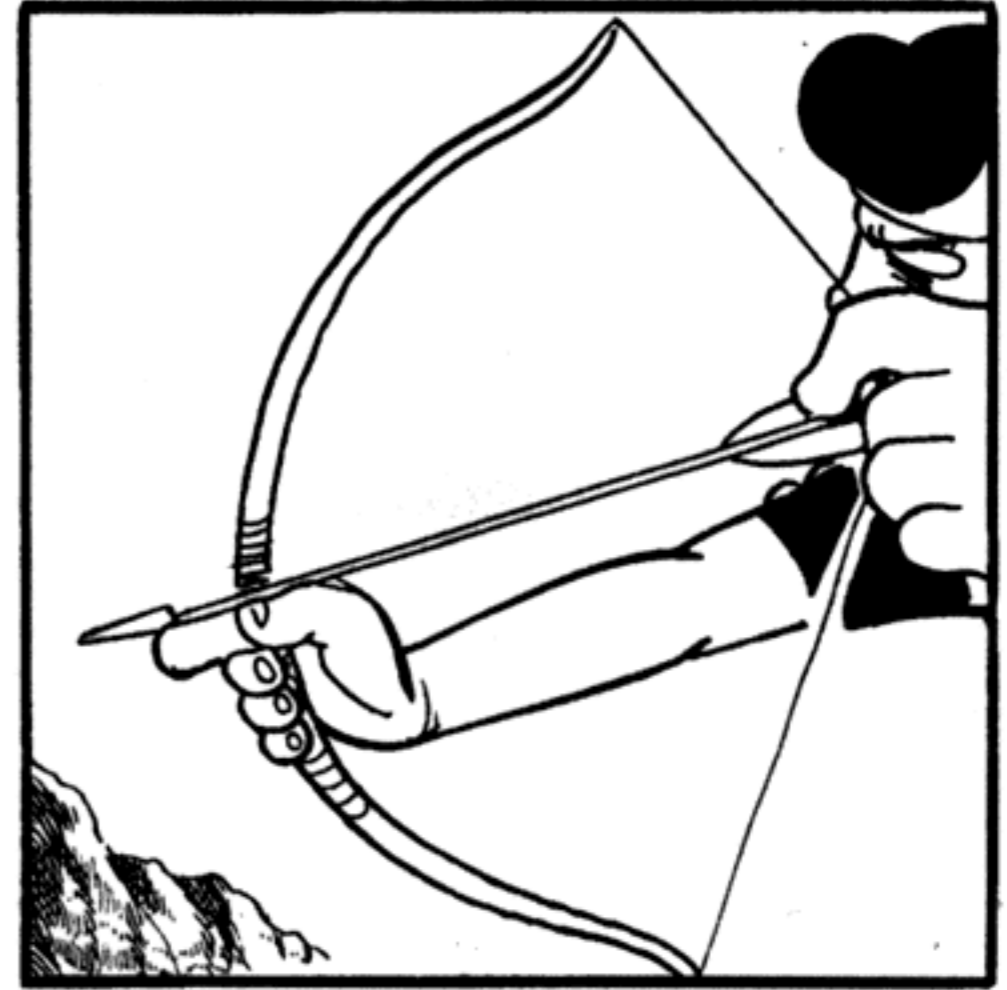




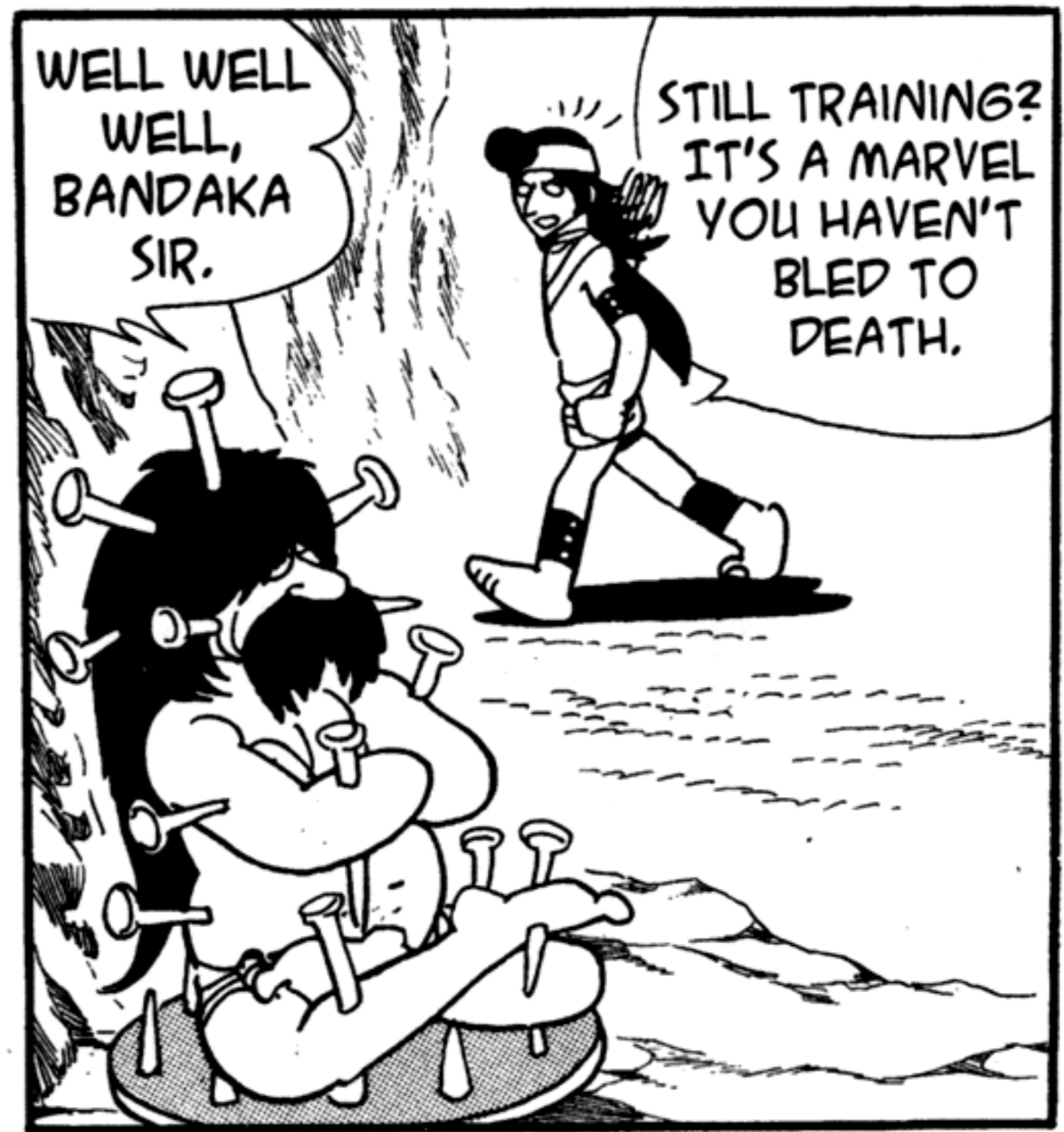
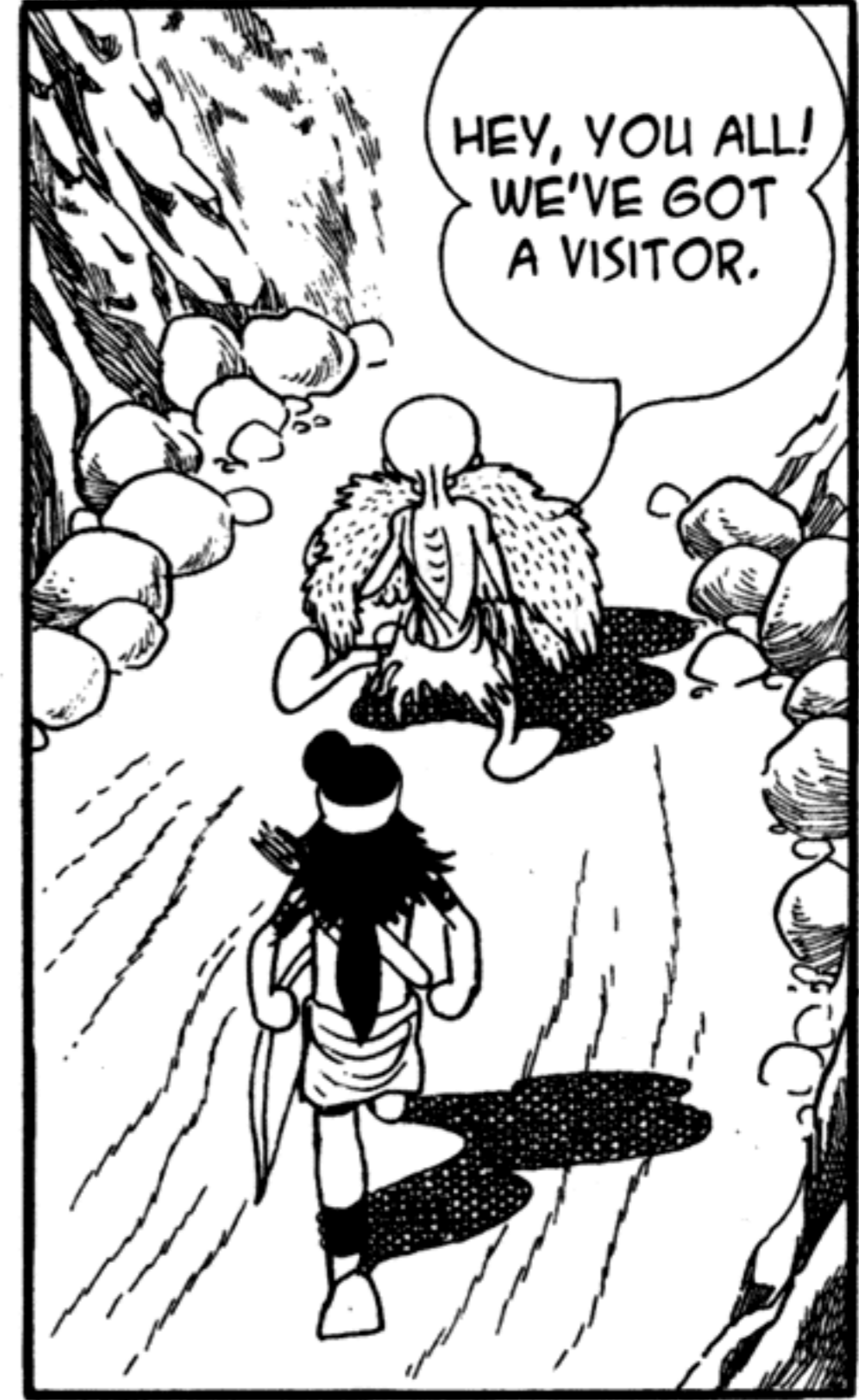
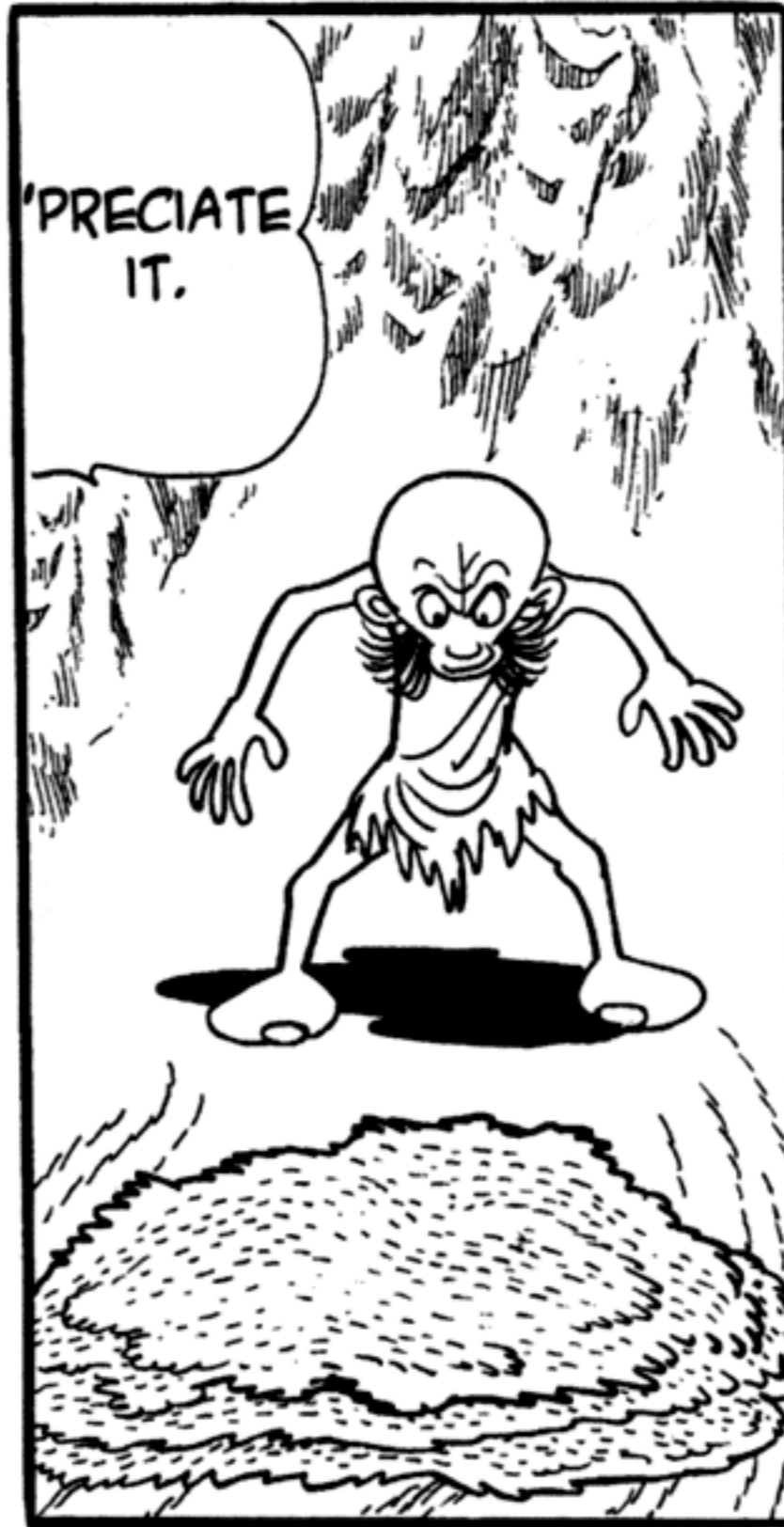
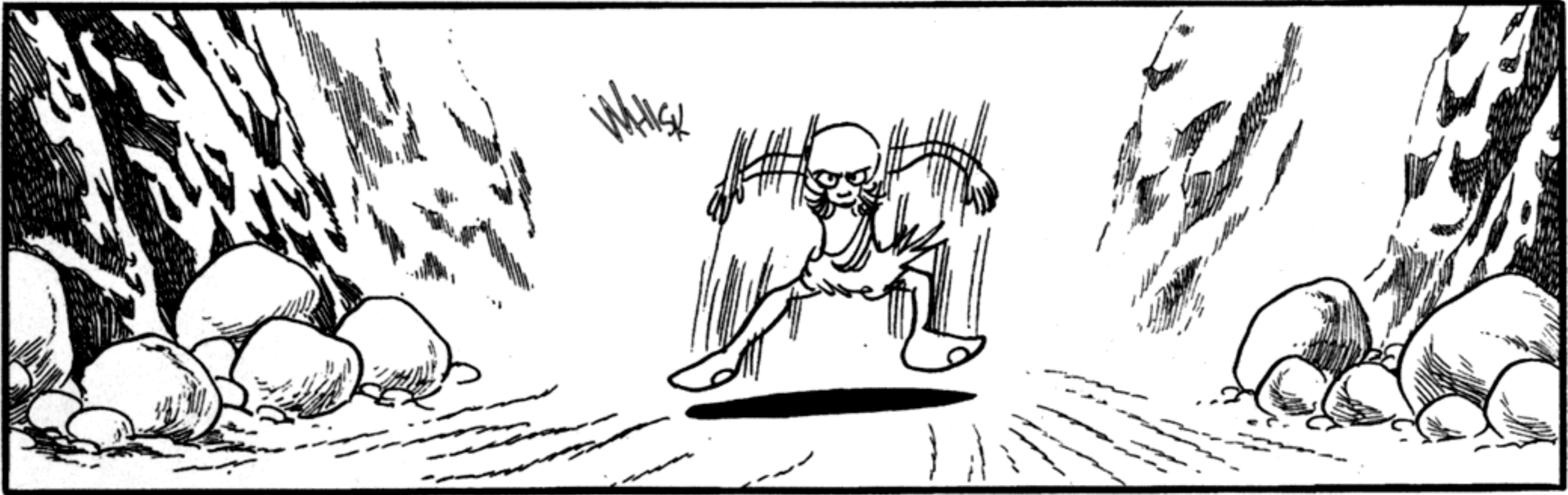


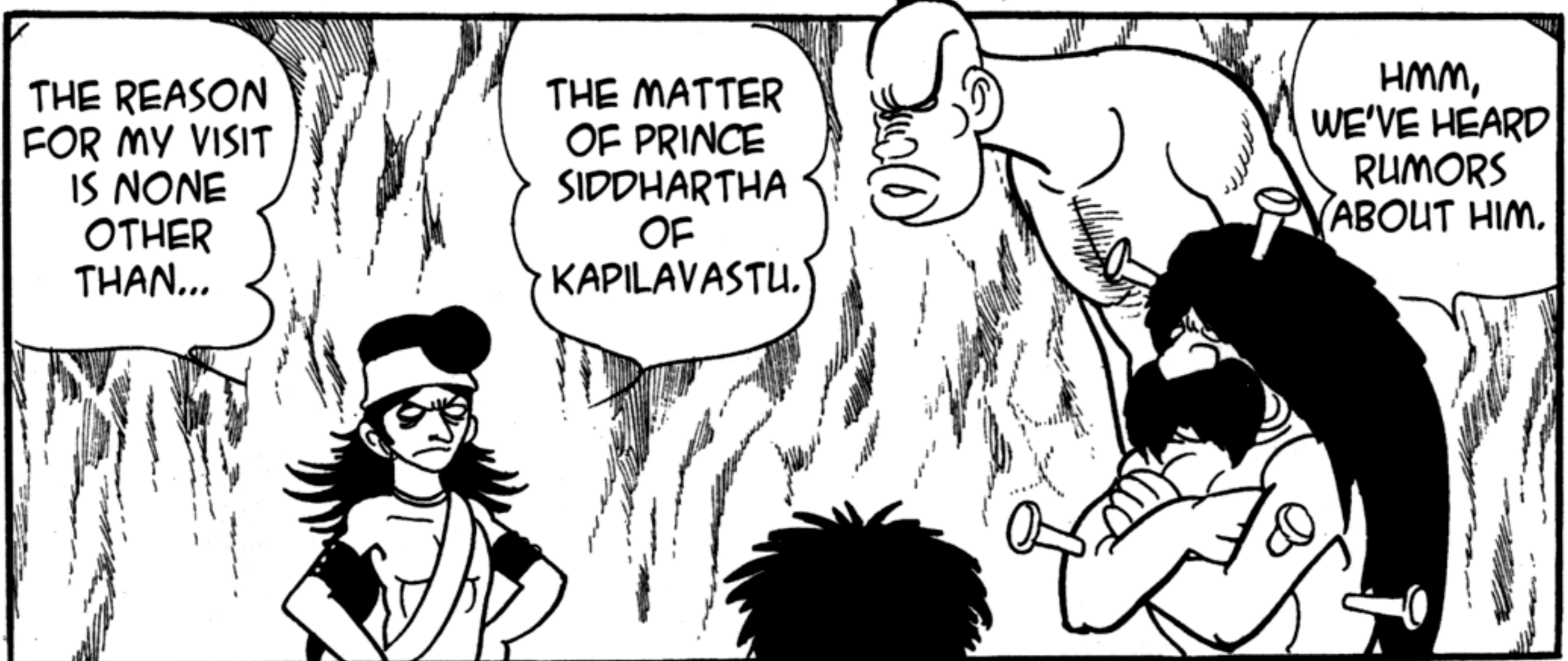
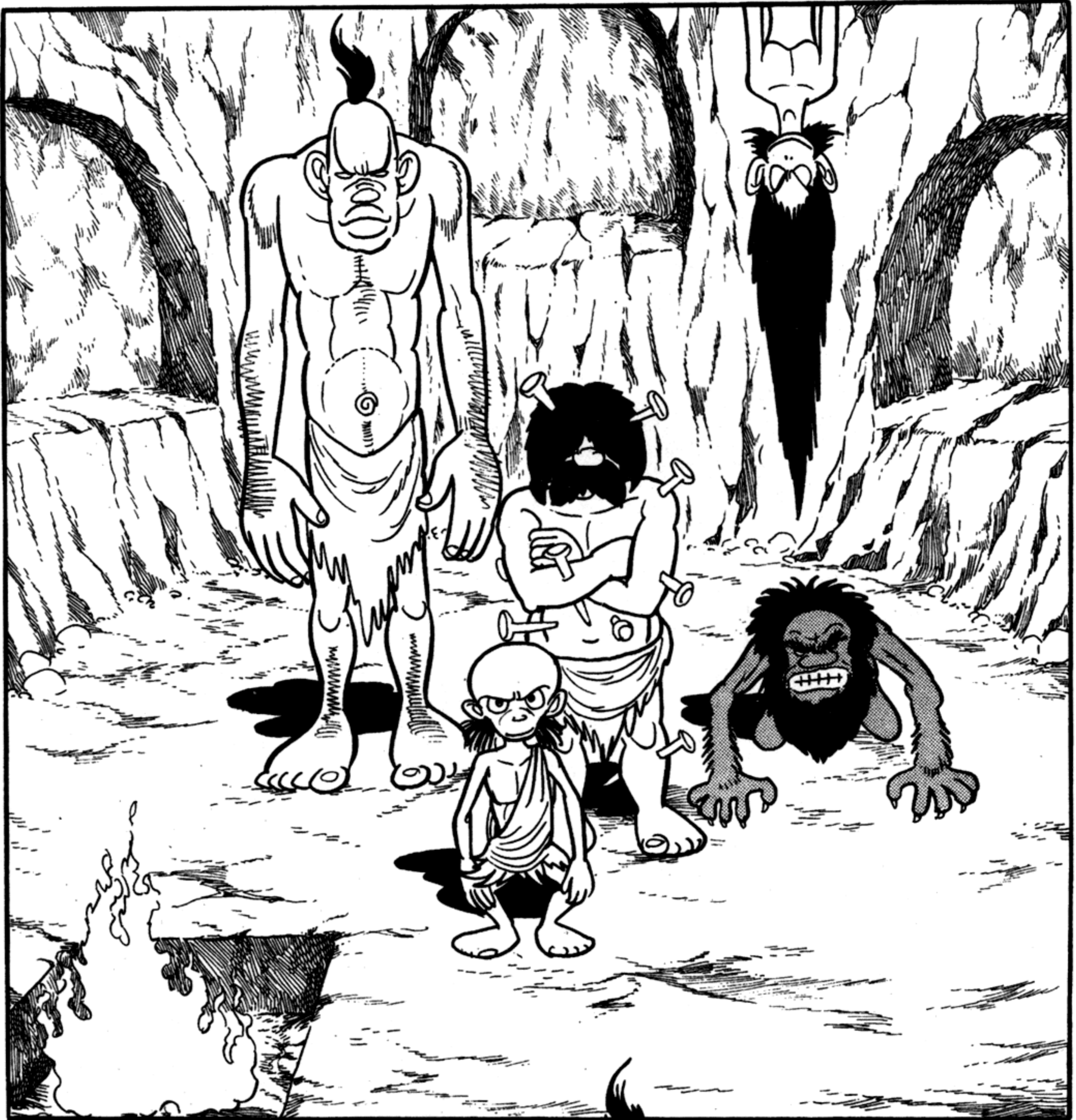












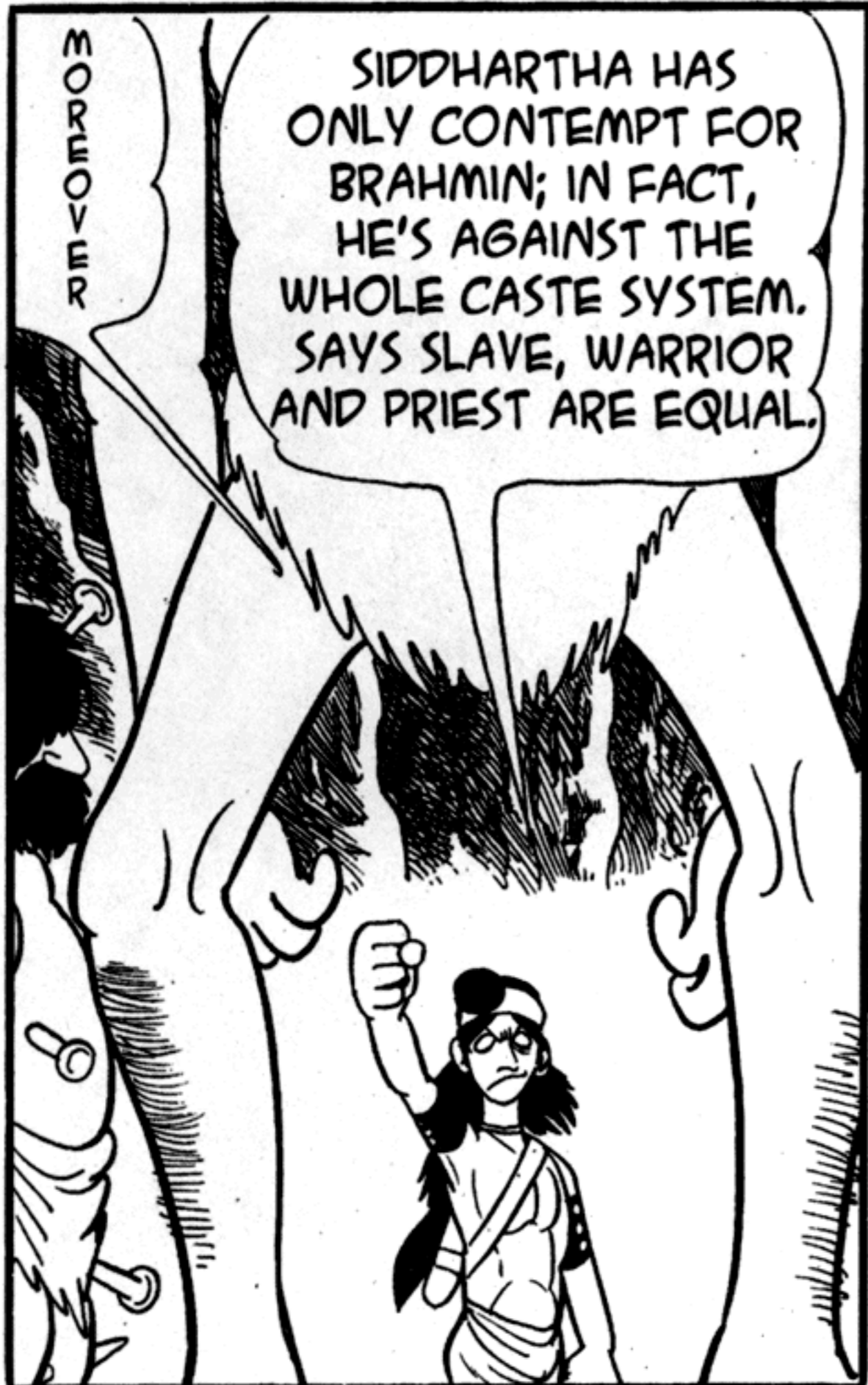


SIDDHARTHA'S ALWAYS THOUGHT TOO HIGHLY OF HIMSELF, BUT NOW HE'S ACTUALLY ATOP A FOUR-WALLED TOWER...

WHAT'S HE DOING THERE, DANCING?



NO, FASTING!



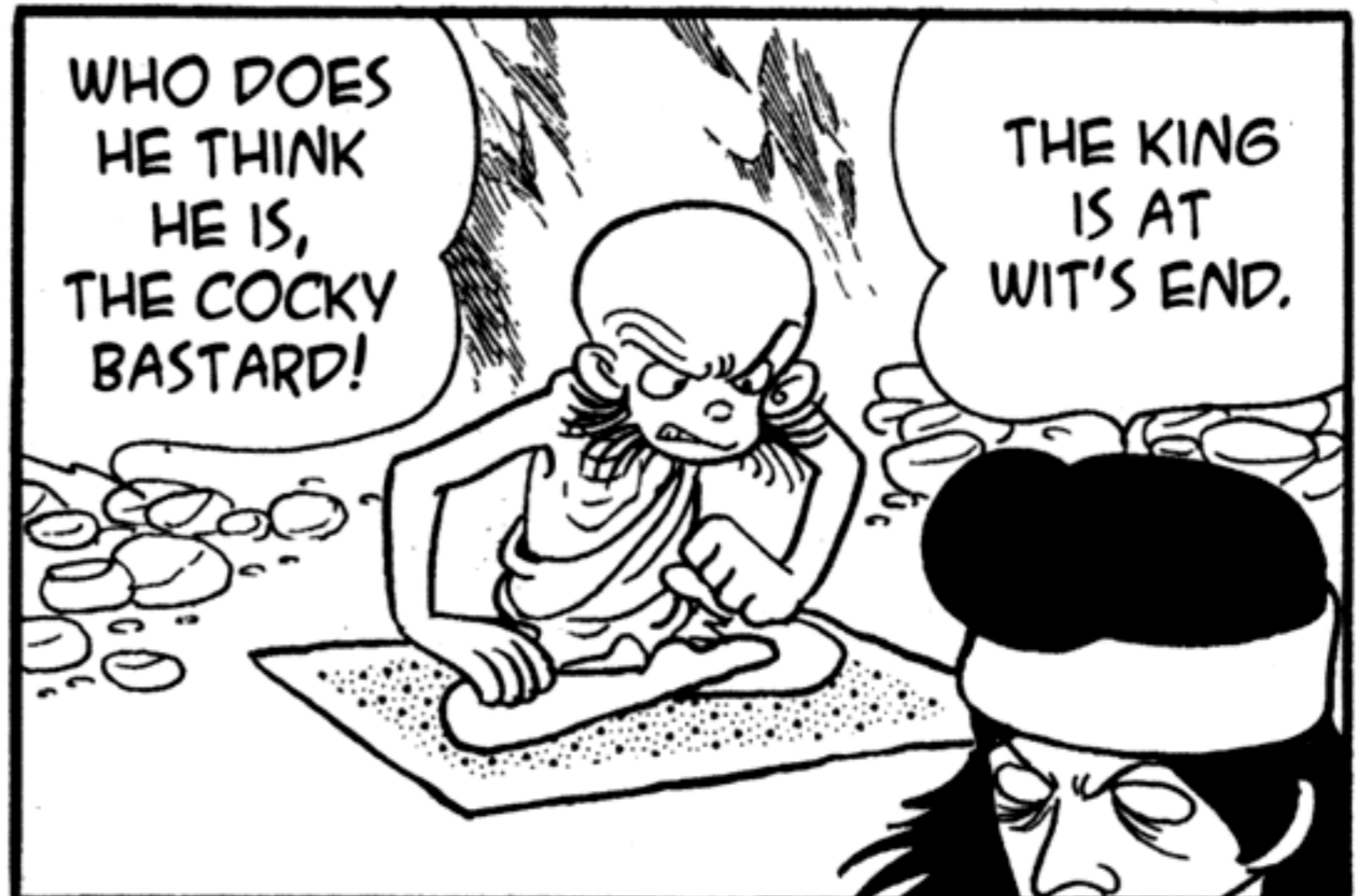
MOREOVER

SIDDHARTHA HAS ONLY CONTEMPT FOR BRAHMIN; IN FACT, HE'S AGAINST THE WHOLE CASTE SYSTEM. SAYS SLAVE, WARRIOR AND PRIEST ARE EQUAL.



WE BRAHMIN, THE SAME AS SLAVES?

THAT'S WHAT HE SAYS. HE ALSO PRATTLES ON ABOUT WANTING TO TEACH PEOPLE ALL OVER THE WORLD.



WHO DOES HE THINK HE IS, THE COCKY BASTARD!

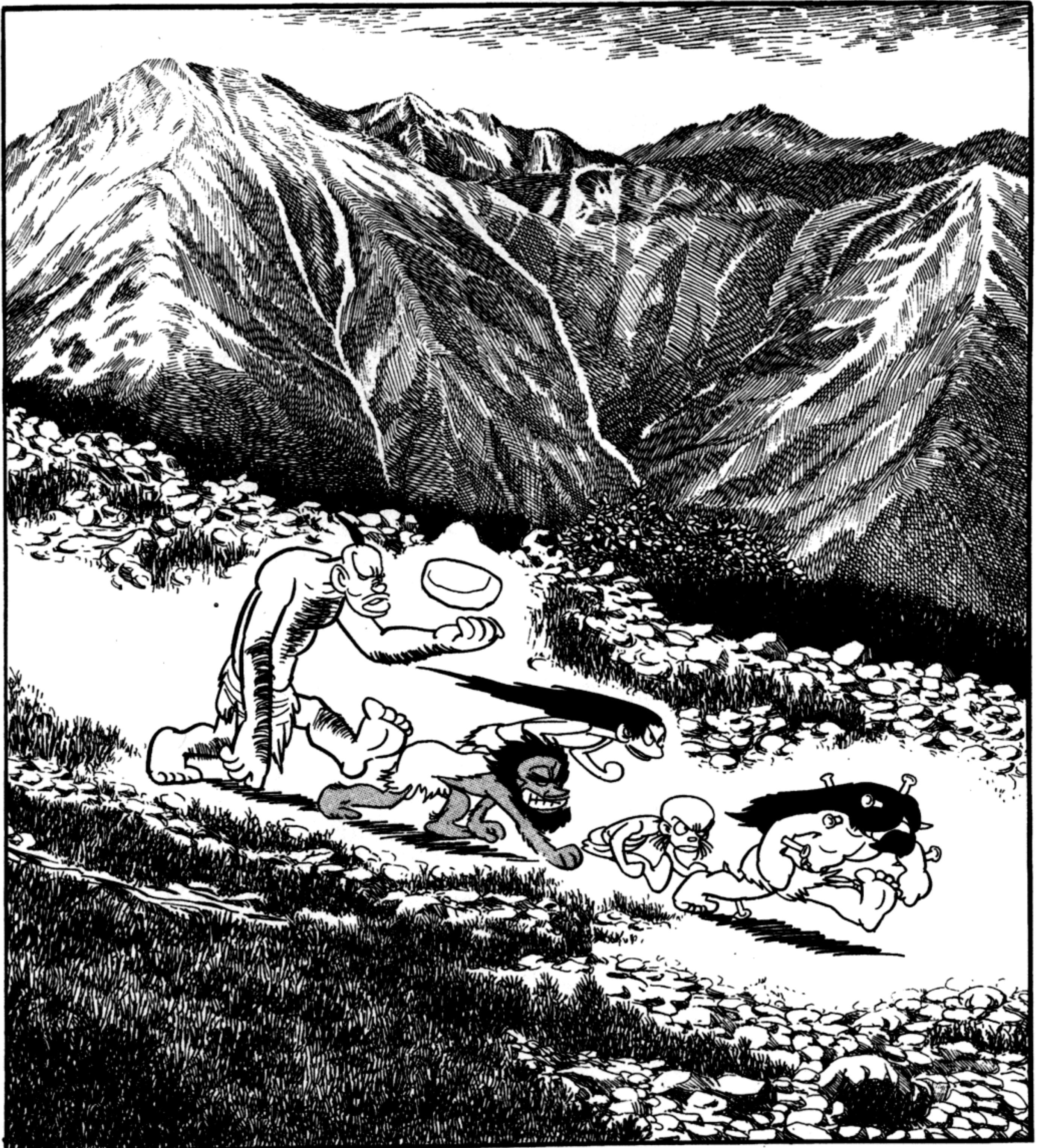
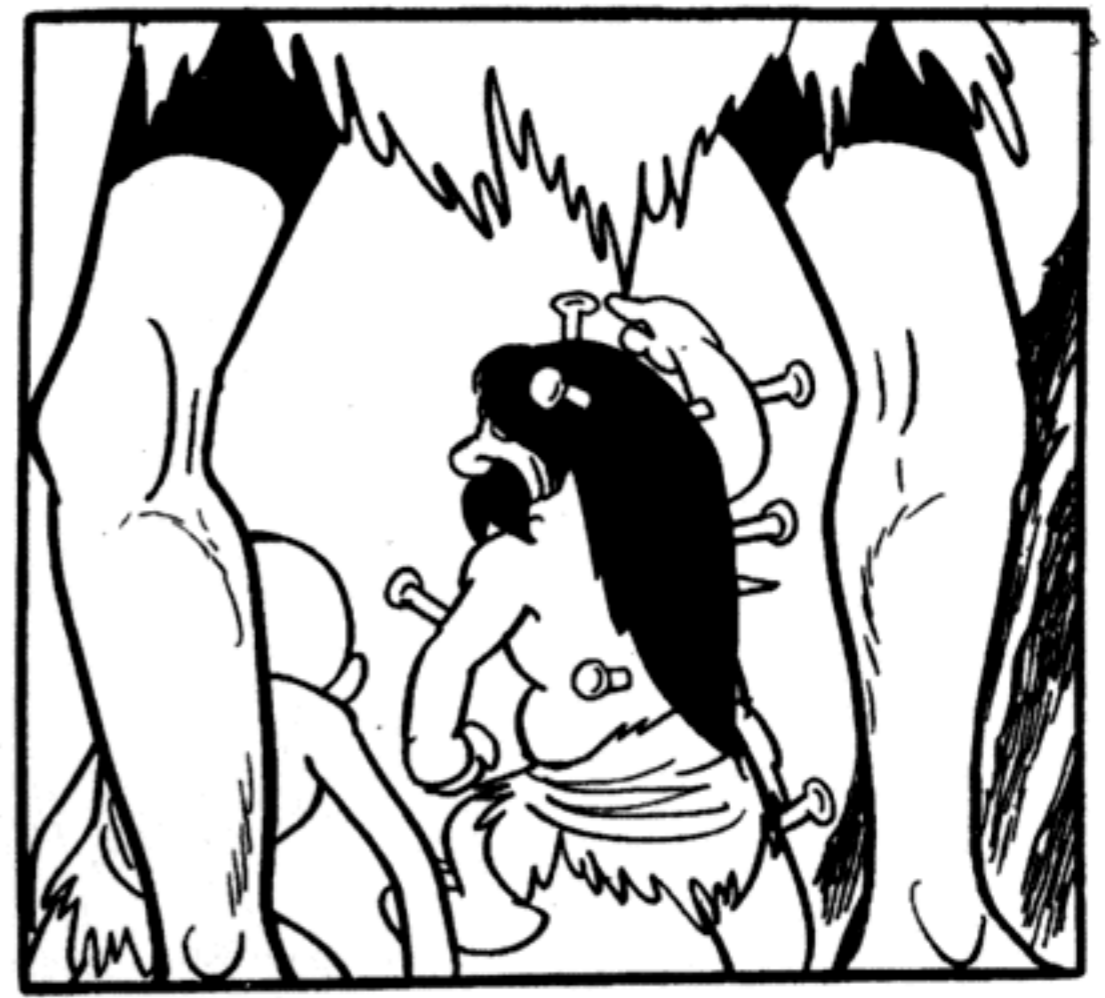
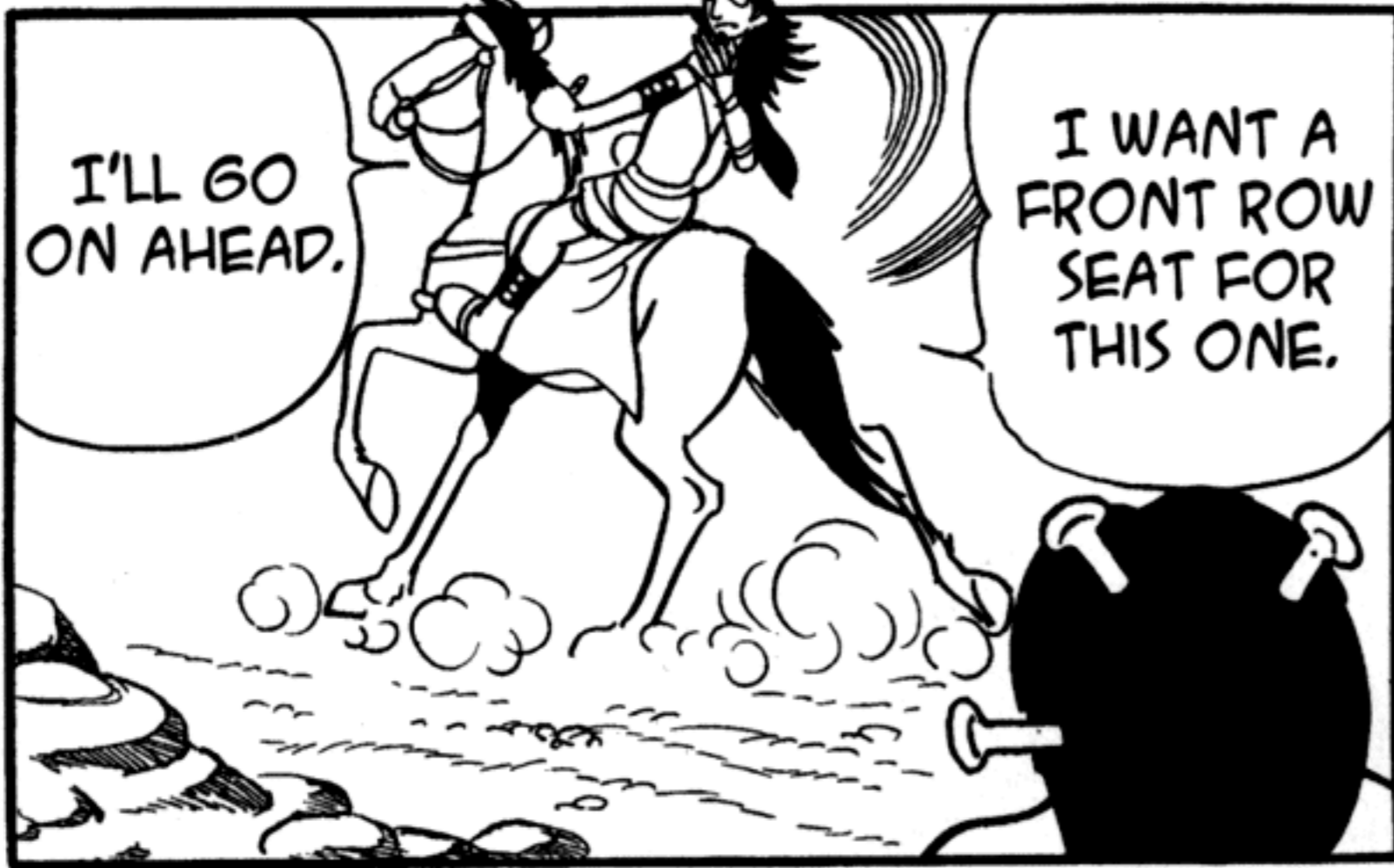
THE KING IS AT WIT'S END.

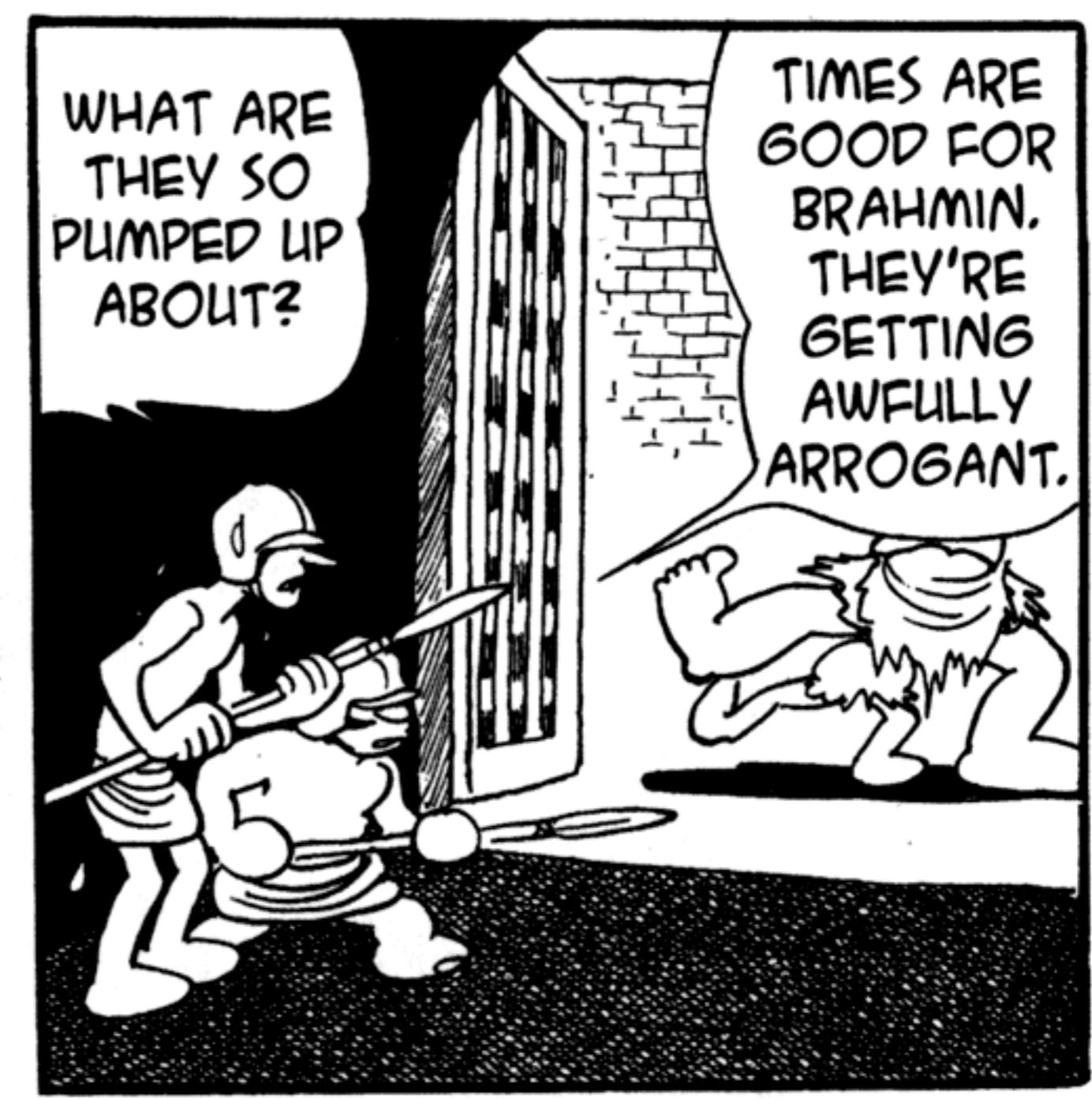
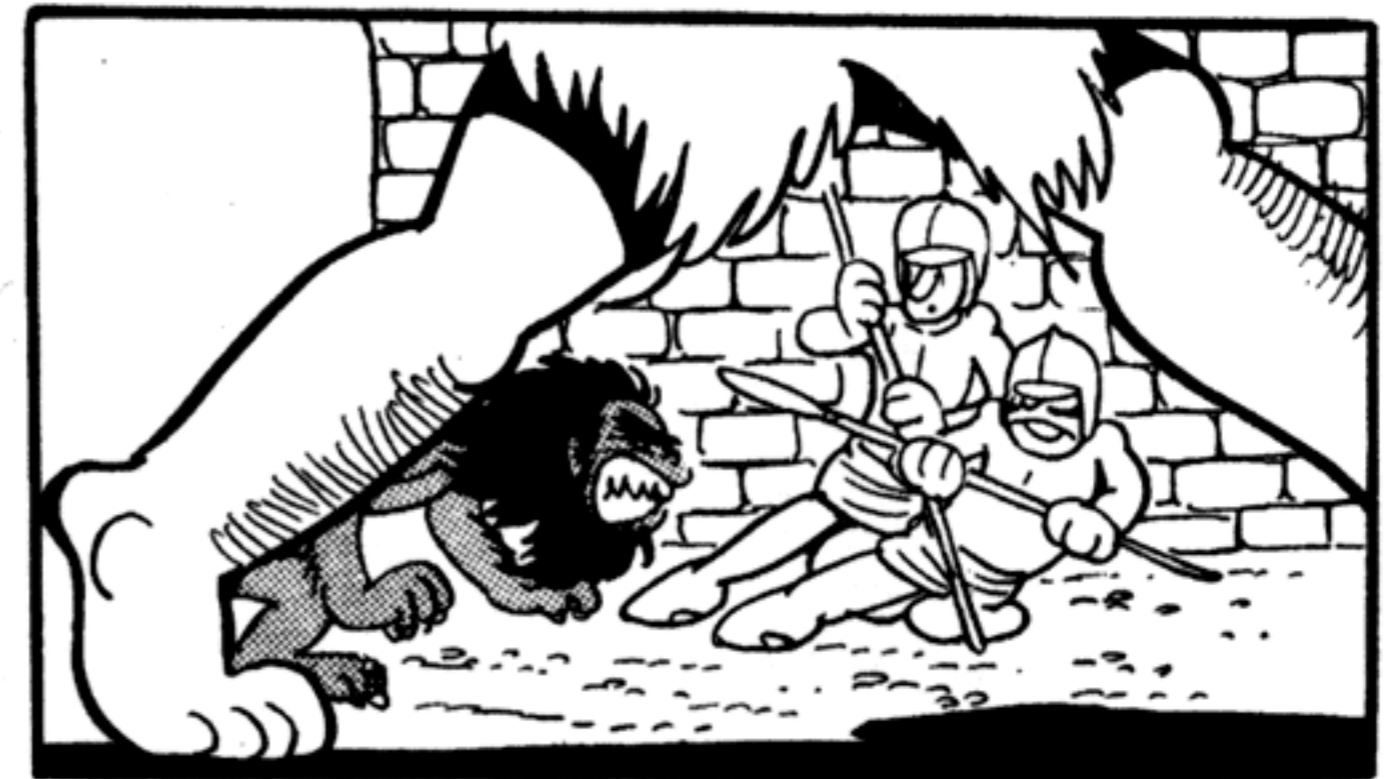
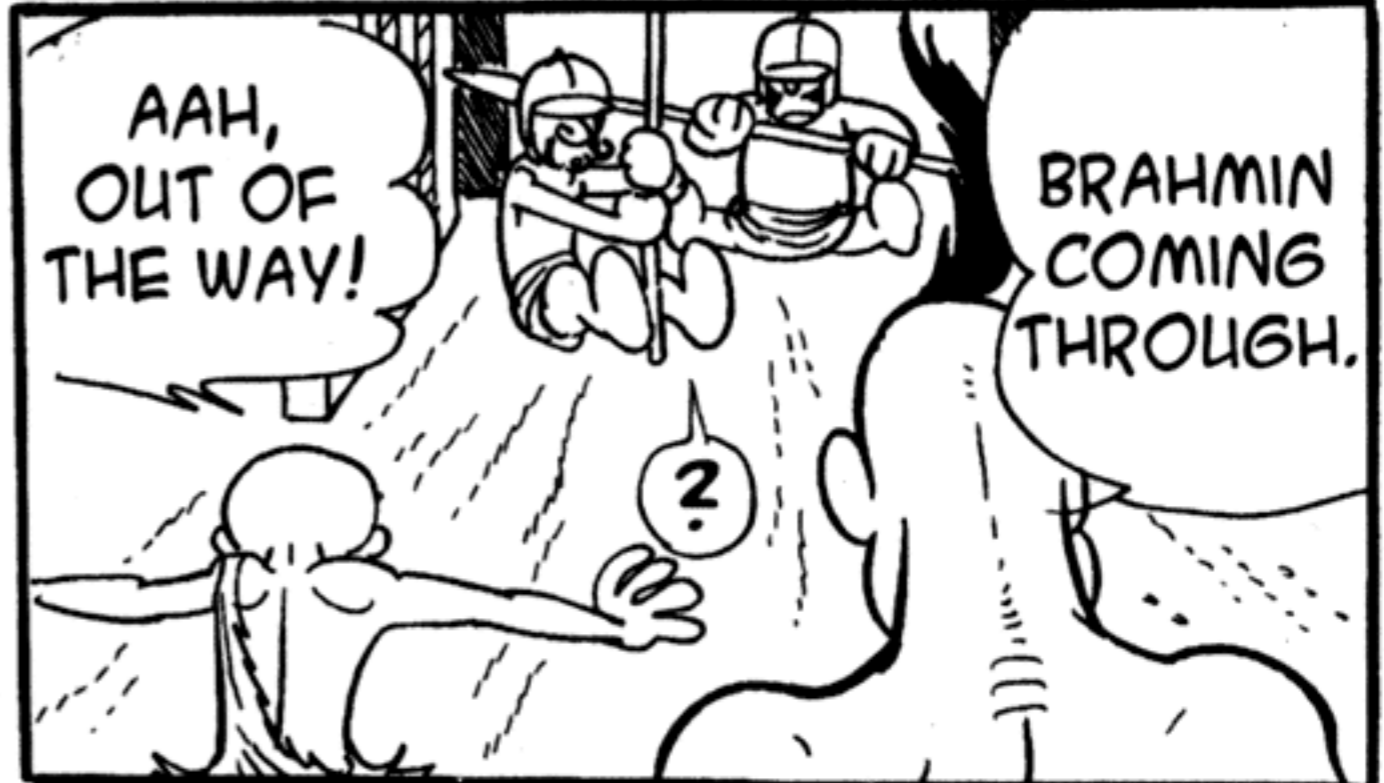


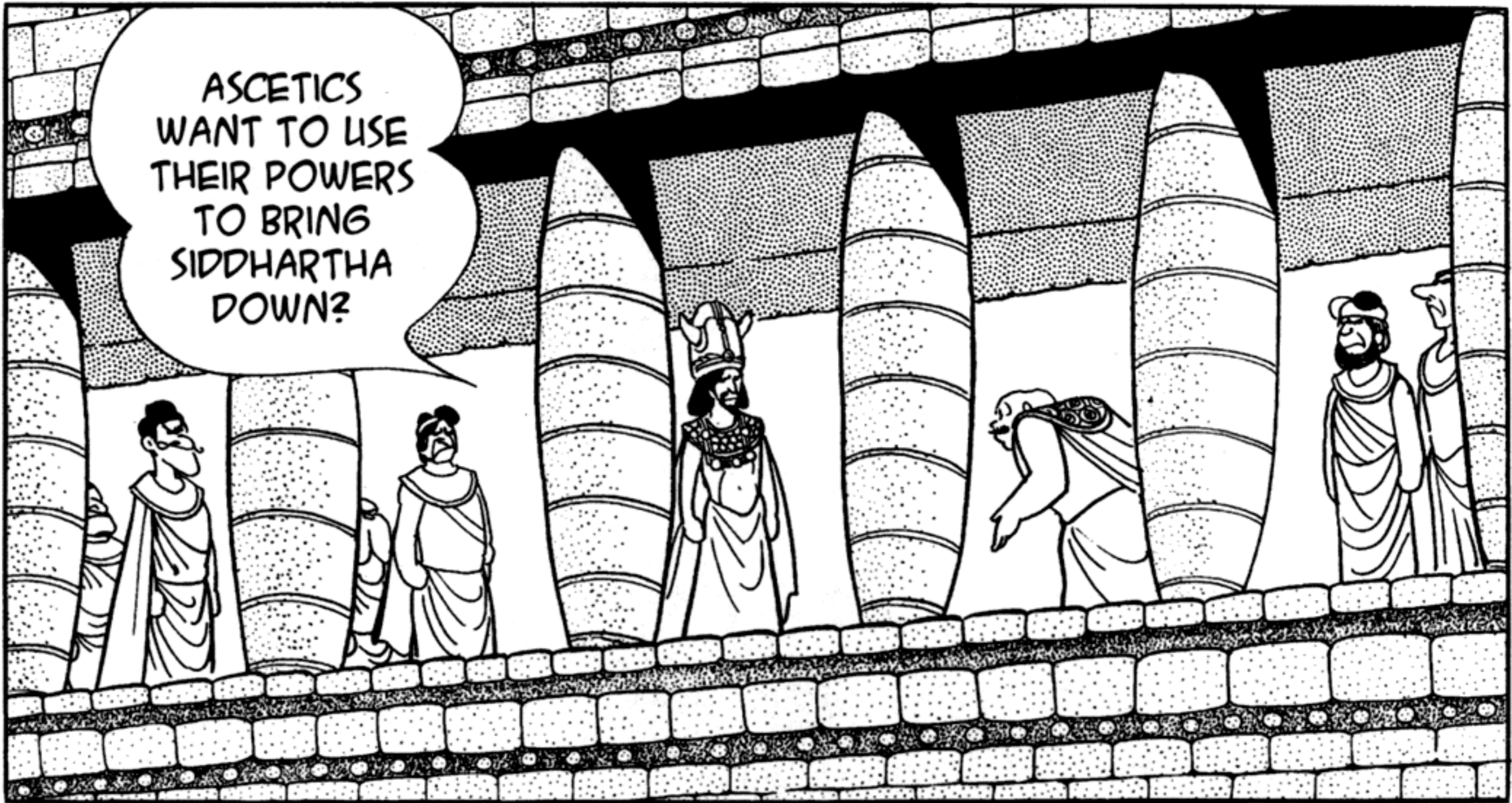
SAYS HE'LL GIVE ANY REWARD TO WHOEVER CAN MAKE THE PRINCE COME DOWN.

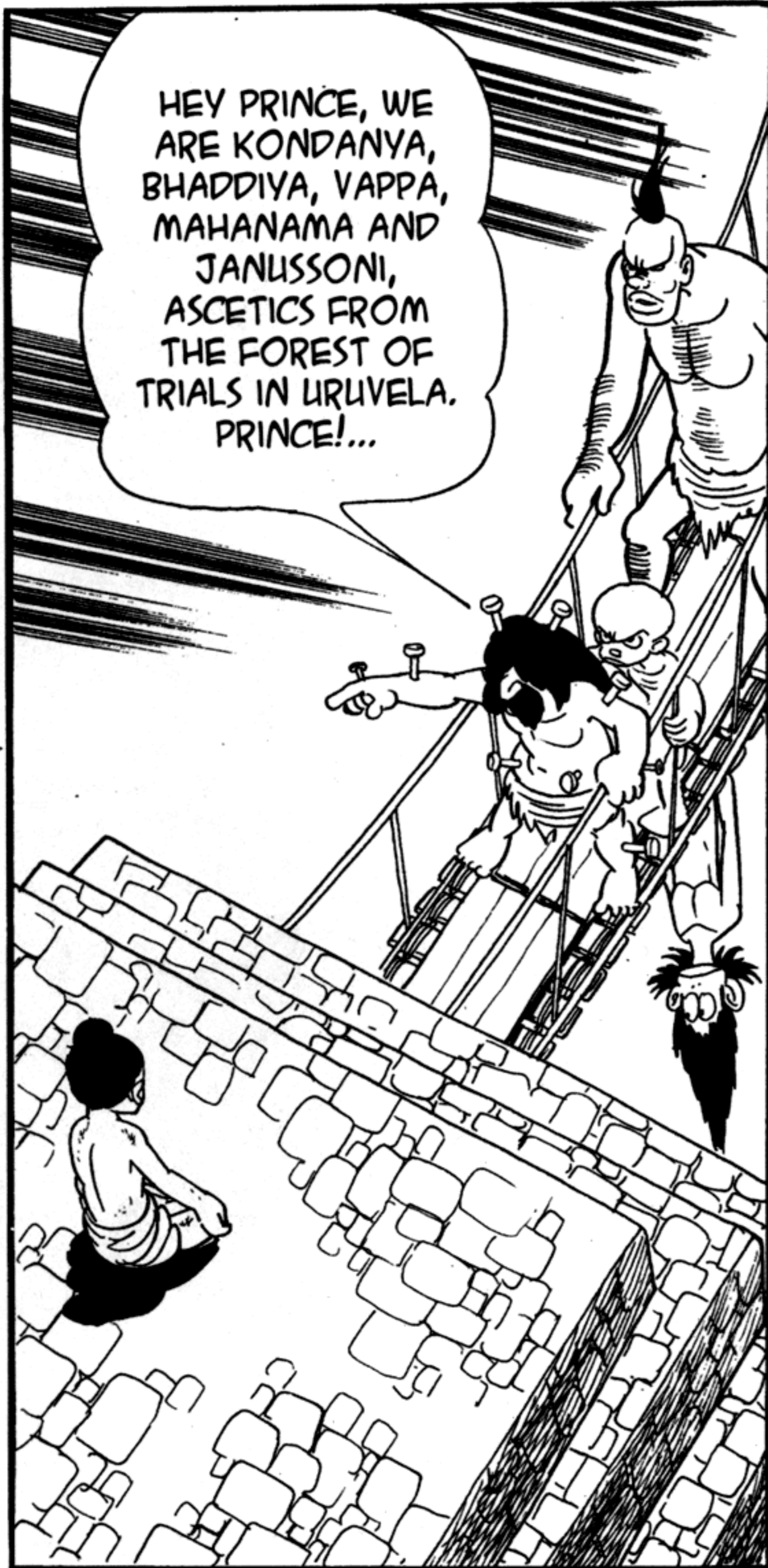
THINK YOU GUYS CAN USE YOUR OLD TRICKS TO DRAG HIM DOWN?

IF HE GOES NUTS ON YOU, YOU CAN ROUGH HIM UP A LITTLE, TEACH HIM SOME SENSE.

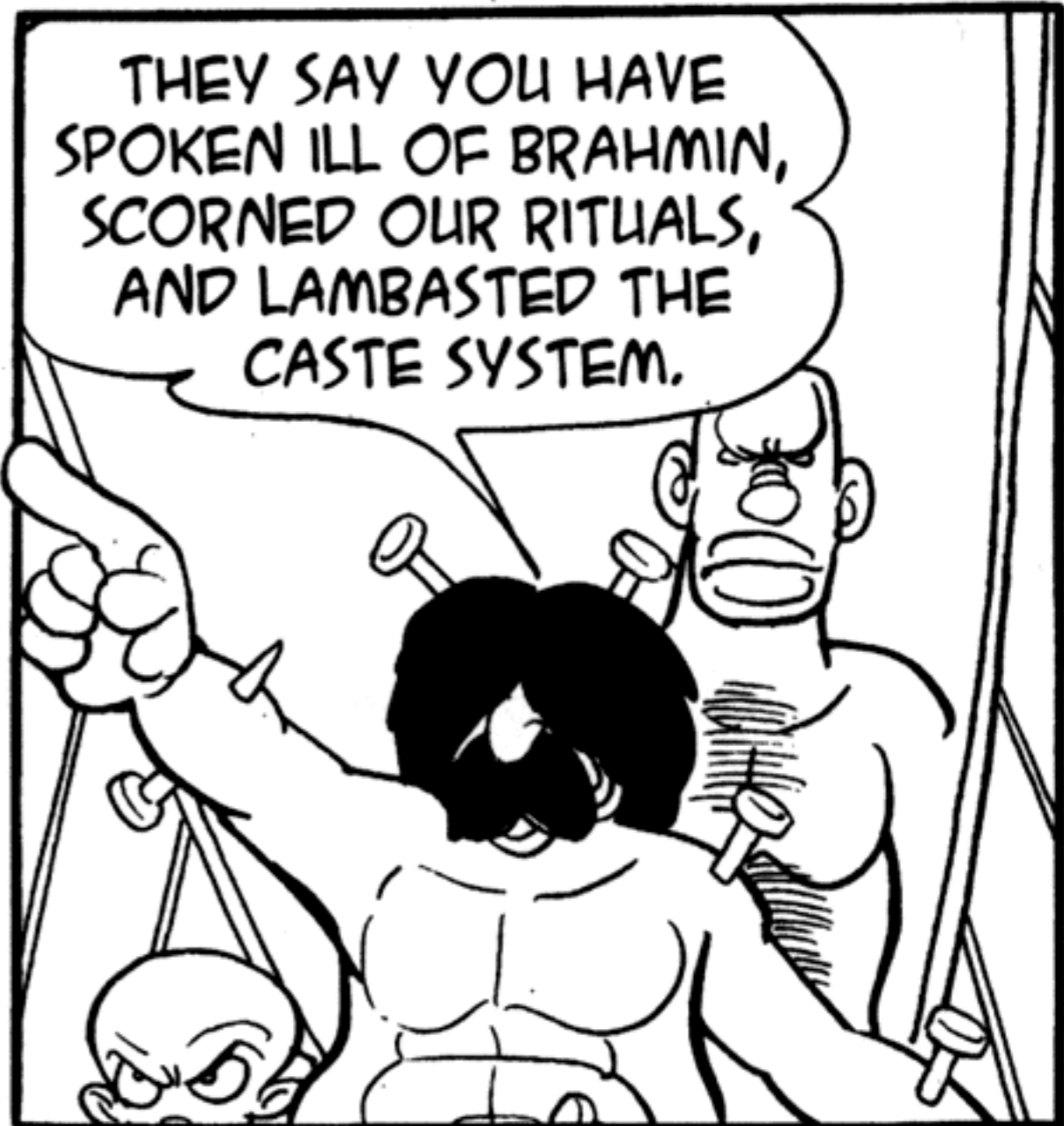
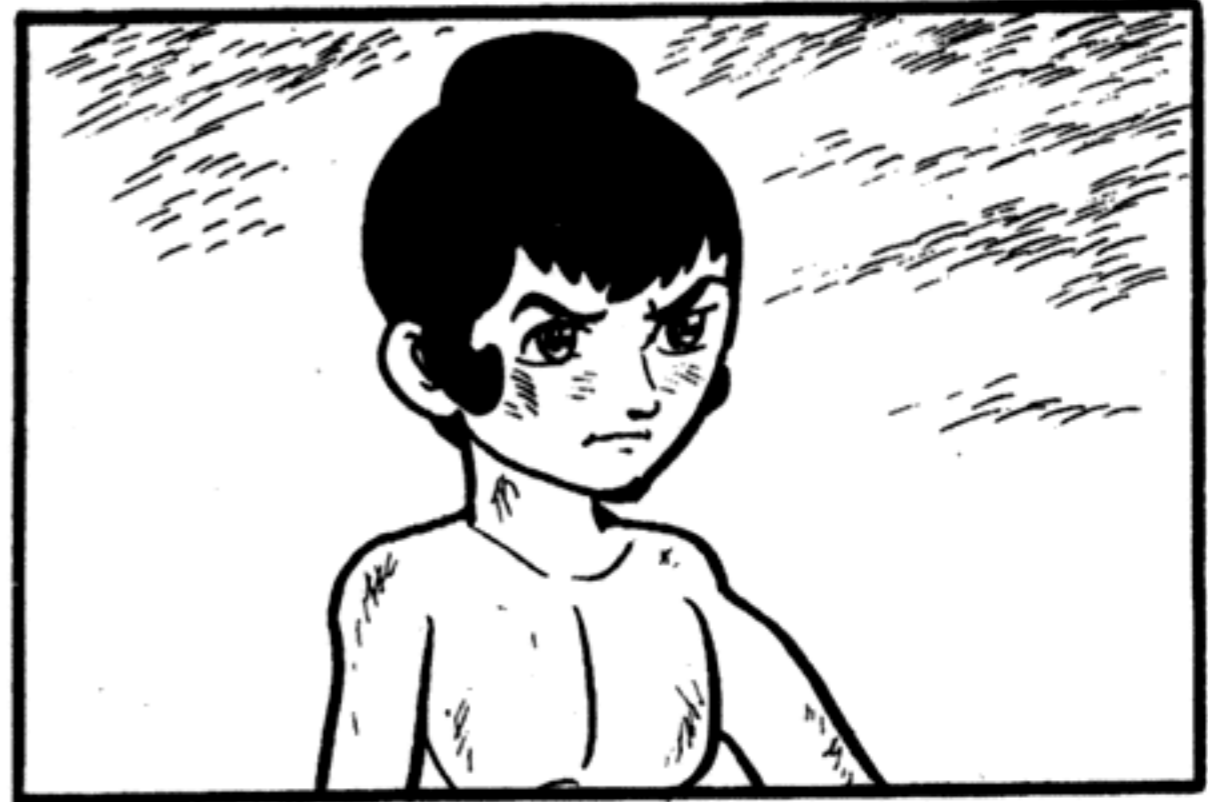




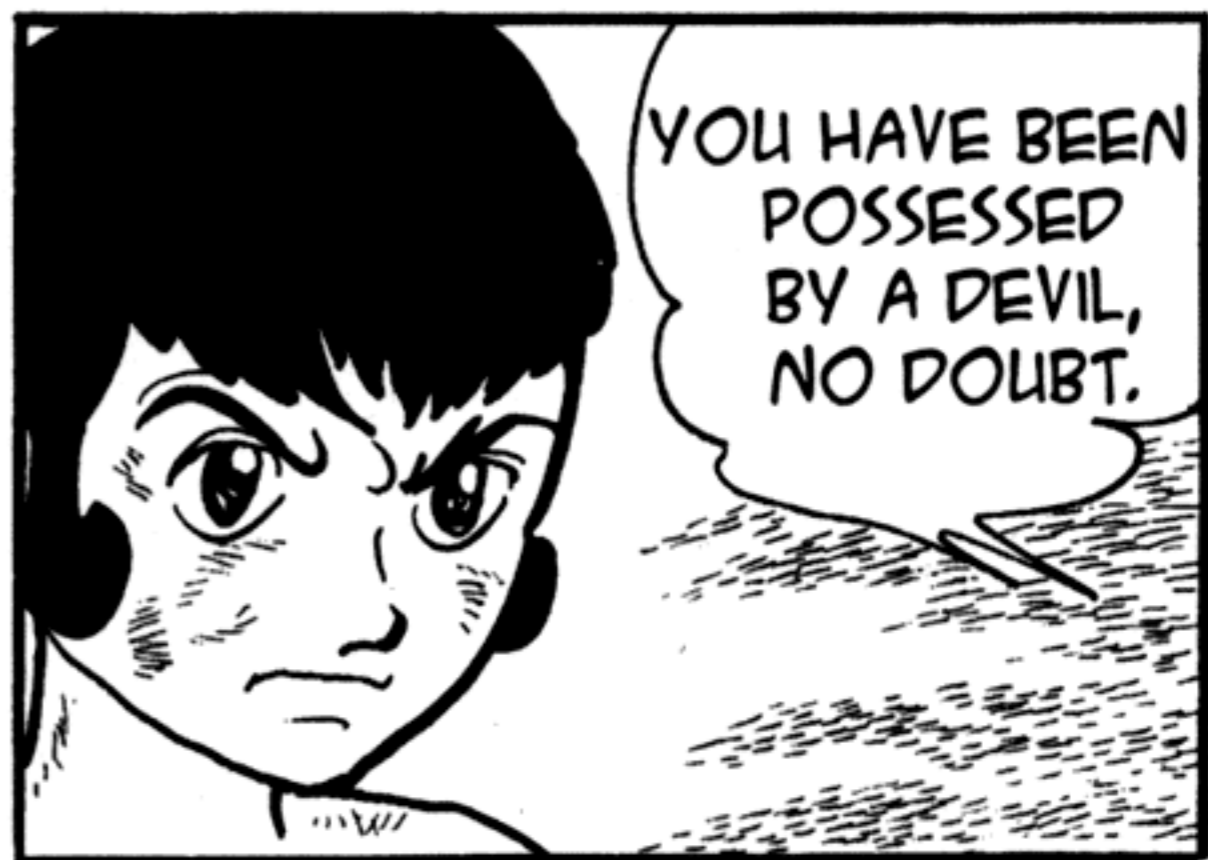




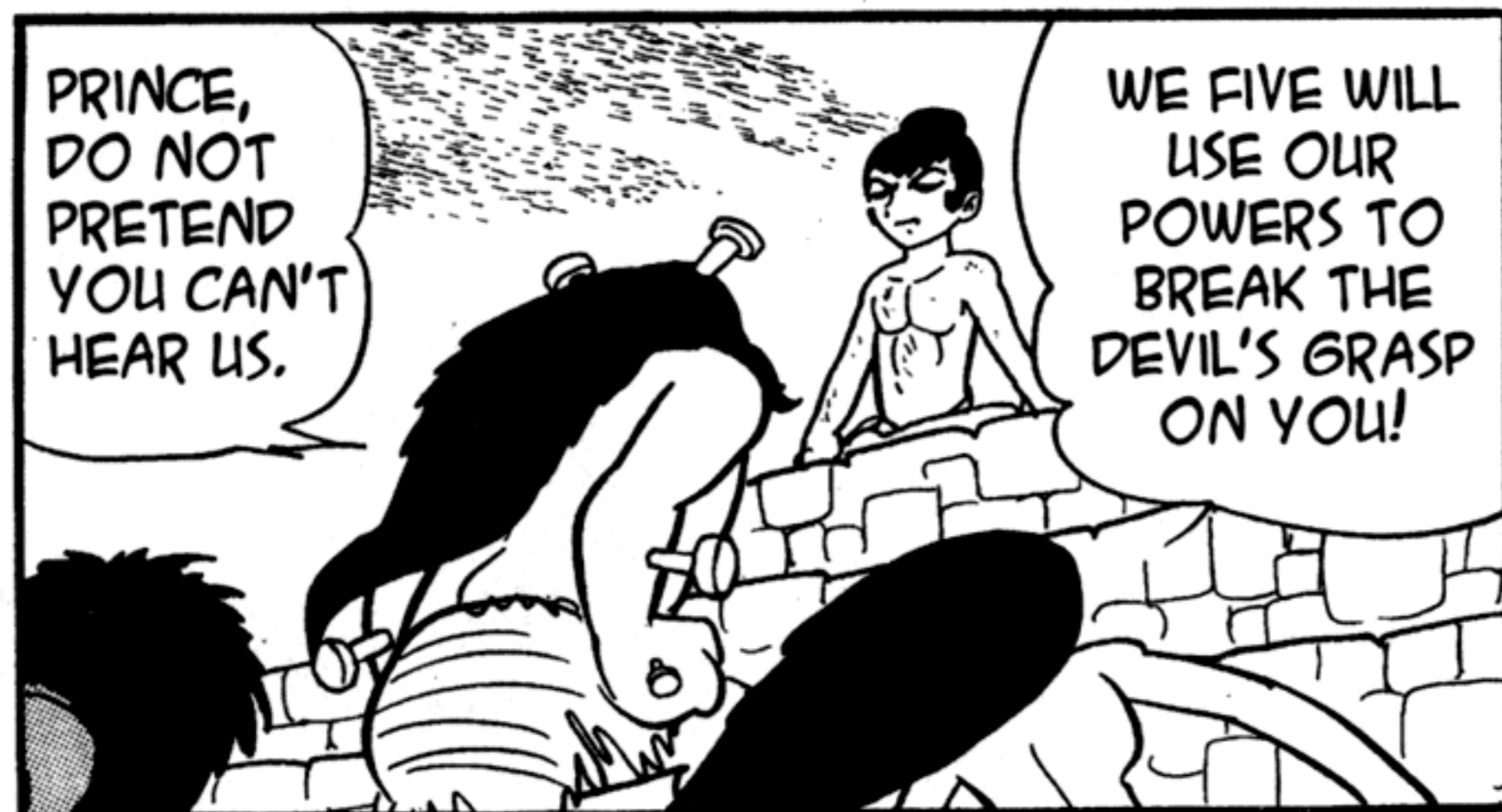
HEY PRINCE, WE ARE KONDANYA, BHADDIYA, VAPPA, MAHANAMA AND JANUSSONI, ASCETICS FROM THE FOREST OF TRIALS IN URUVELA. PRINCE!...



THEY SAY YOU HAVE SPOKEN ILL OF BRAHMIN, SCORNEED OUR RITUALS, AND LAMBASTED THE CASTE SYSTEM.



YOU HAVE BEEN POSSESSED BY A DEVIL, NO DOUBT.

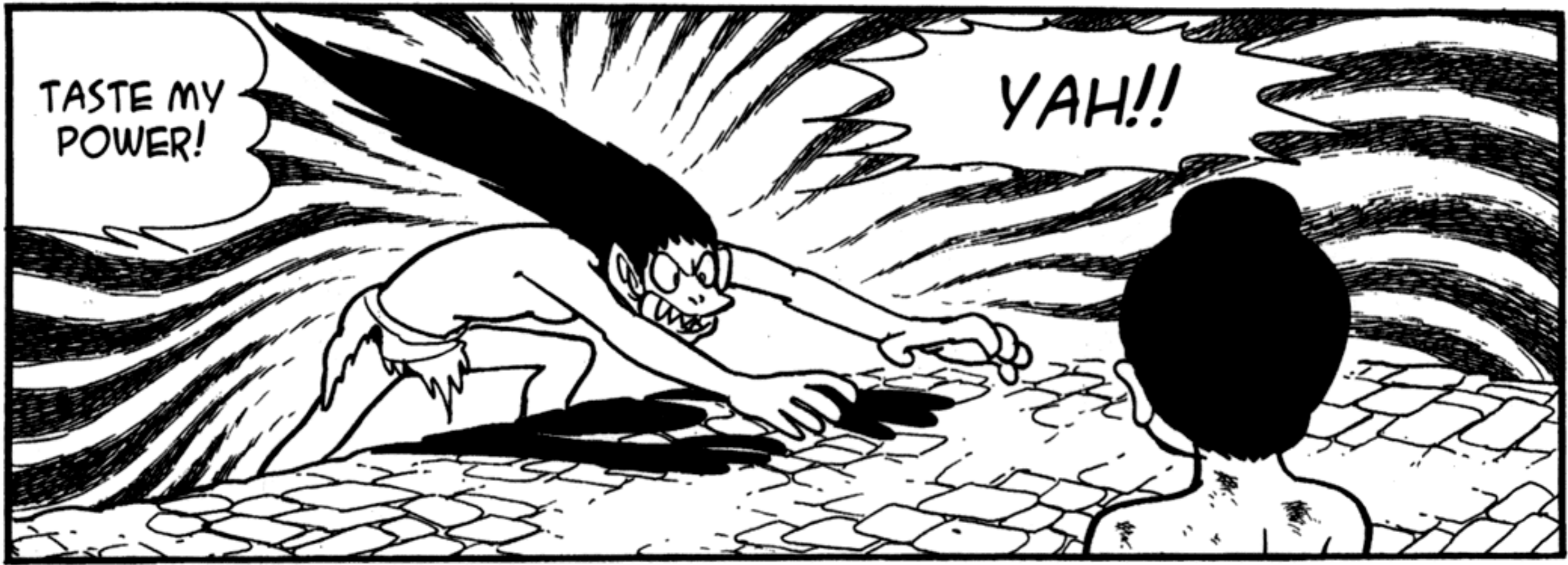


PRINCE, DO NOT PRETEND YOU CAN'T HEAR US.

WE FIVE WILL USE OUR POWERS TO BREAK THE DEVIL'S GRASP ON YOU!

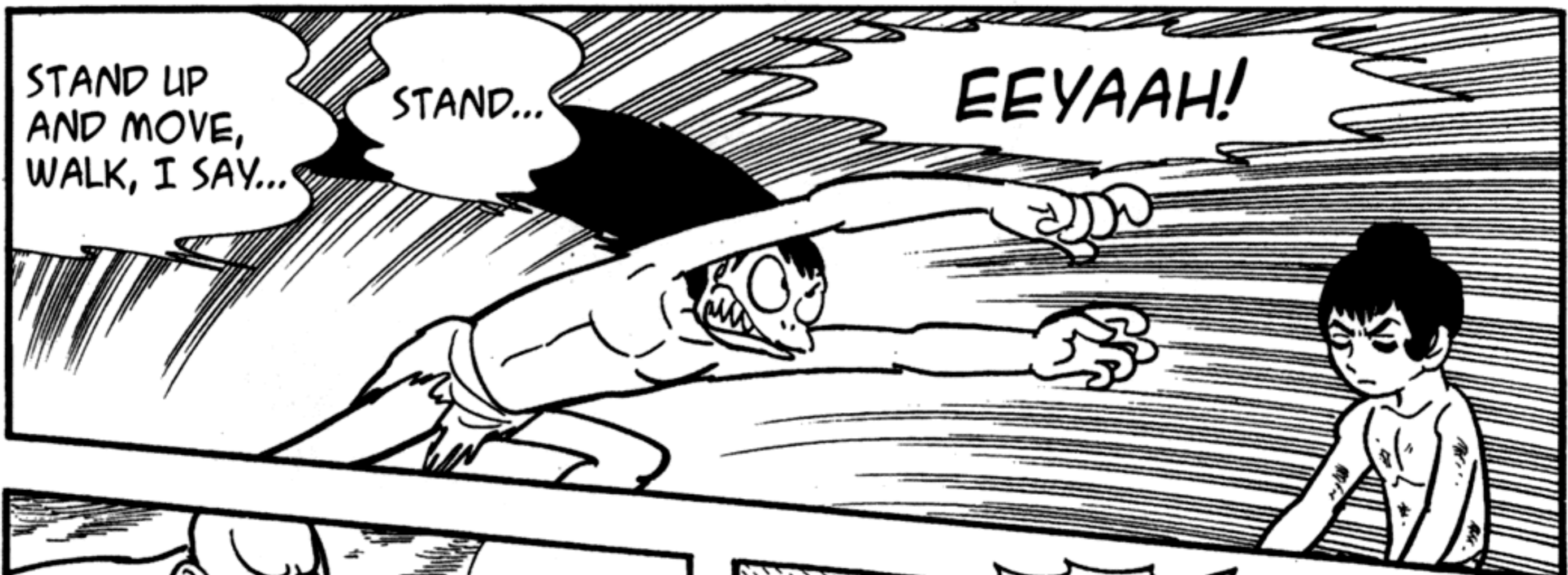


I GO FIRST!



TASTE MY POWER!

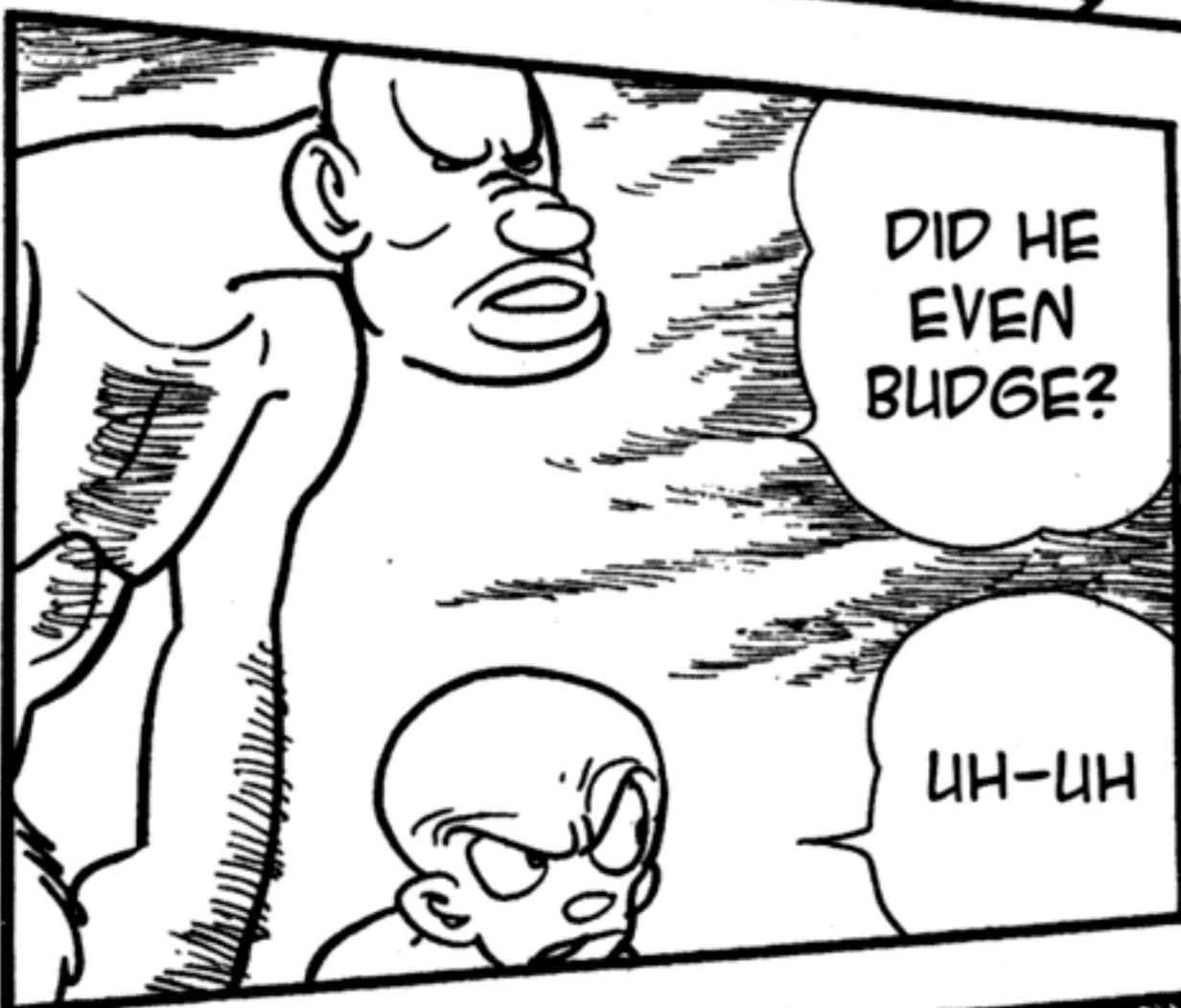
YAH!!



STAND UP AND MOVE, WALK, I SAY...

STAND...

EEYAAH!



DID HE EVEN BUDGE?

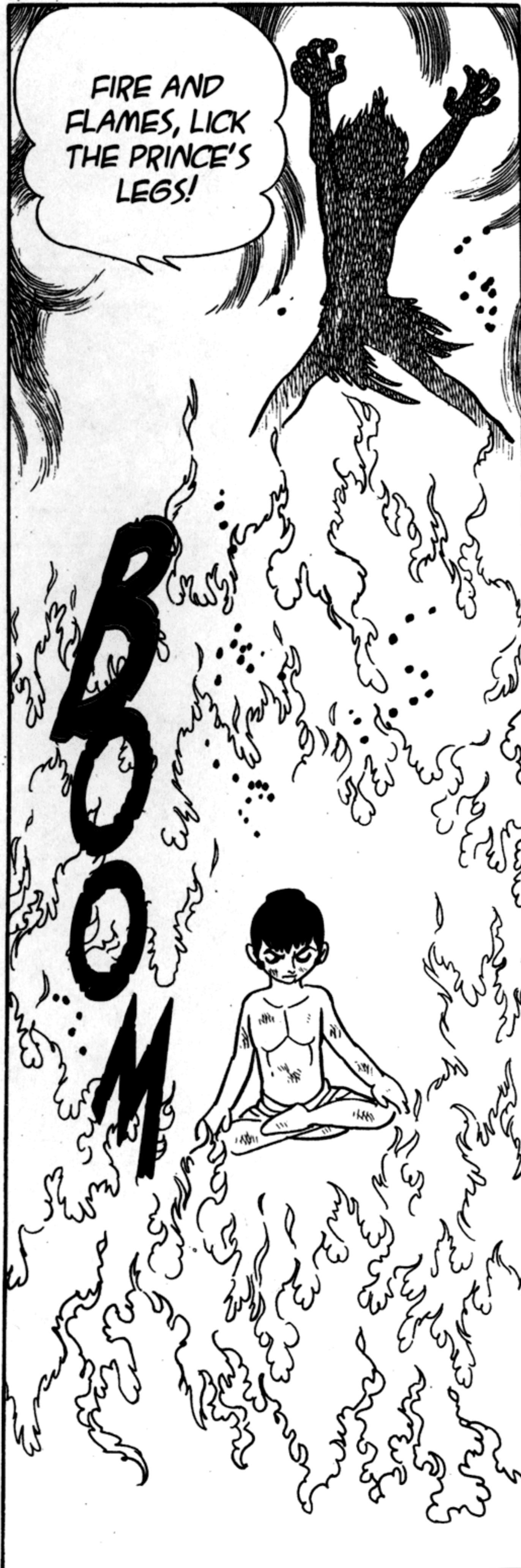
UH-UH



MY POWER ISN'T SO EASY TO IGNORE.

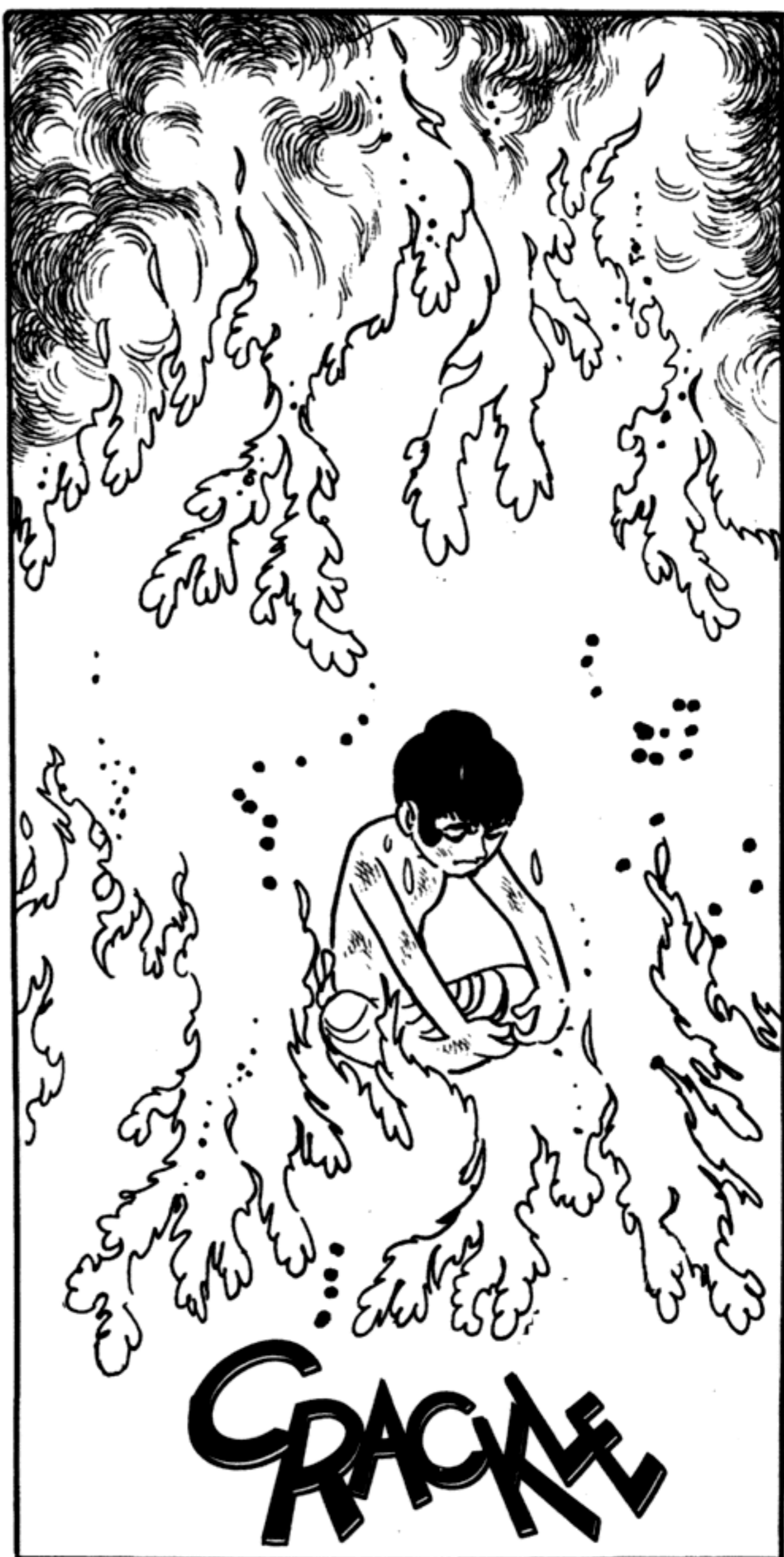


ANUSSOLIA!



FIRE AND
FLAMES, LICK
THE PRINCE'S
LEGS!

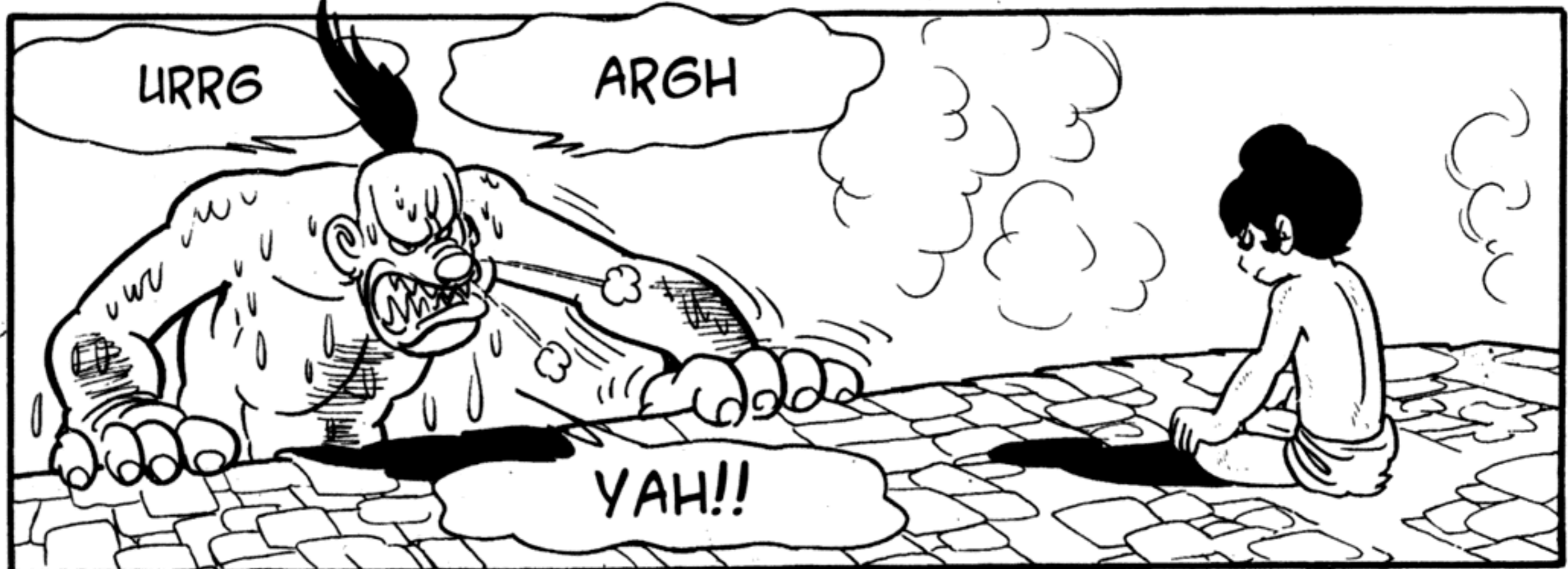
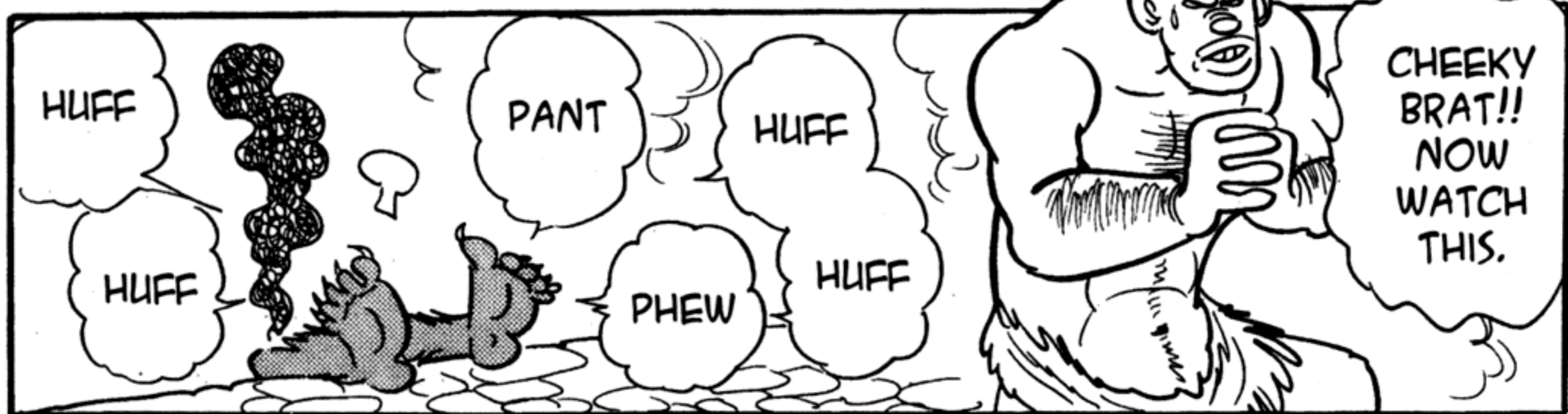
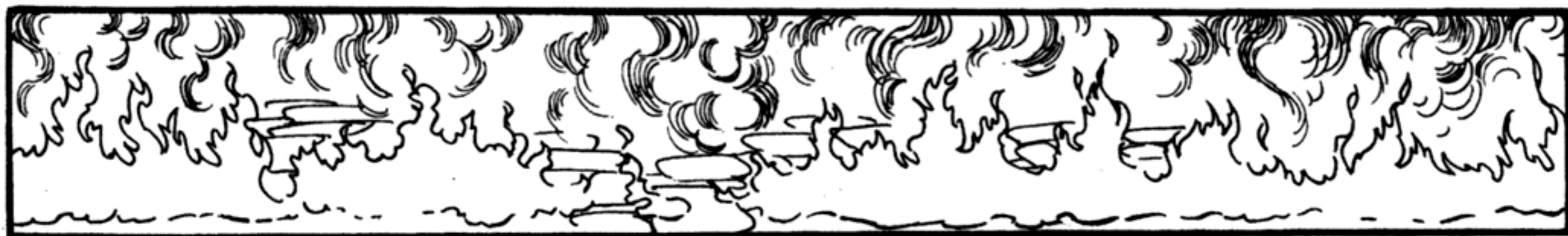
BOOM
M

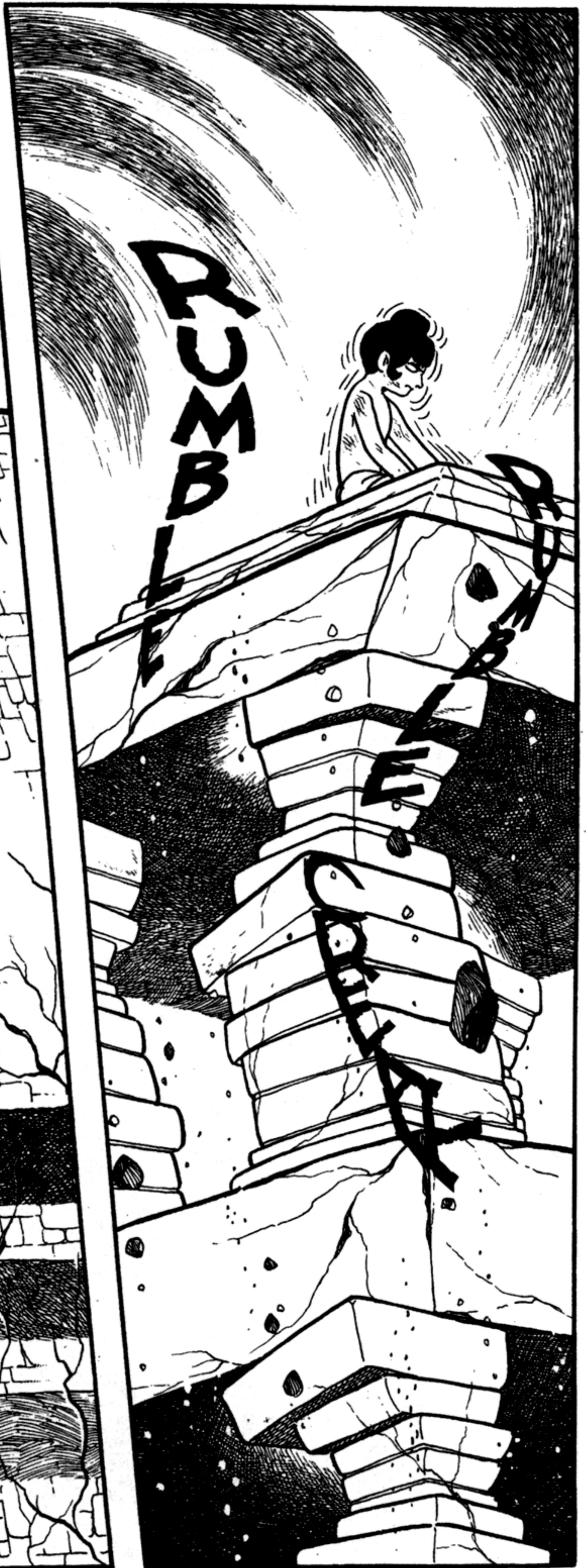
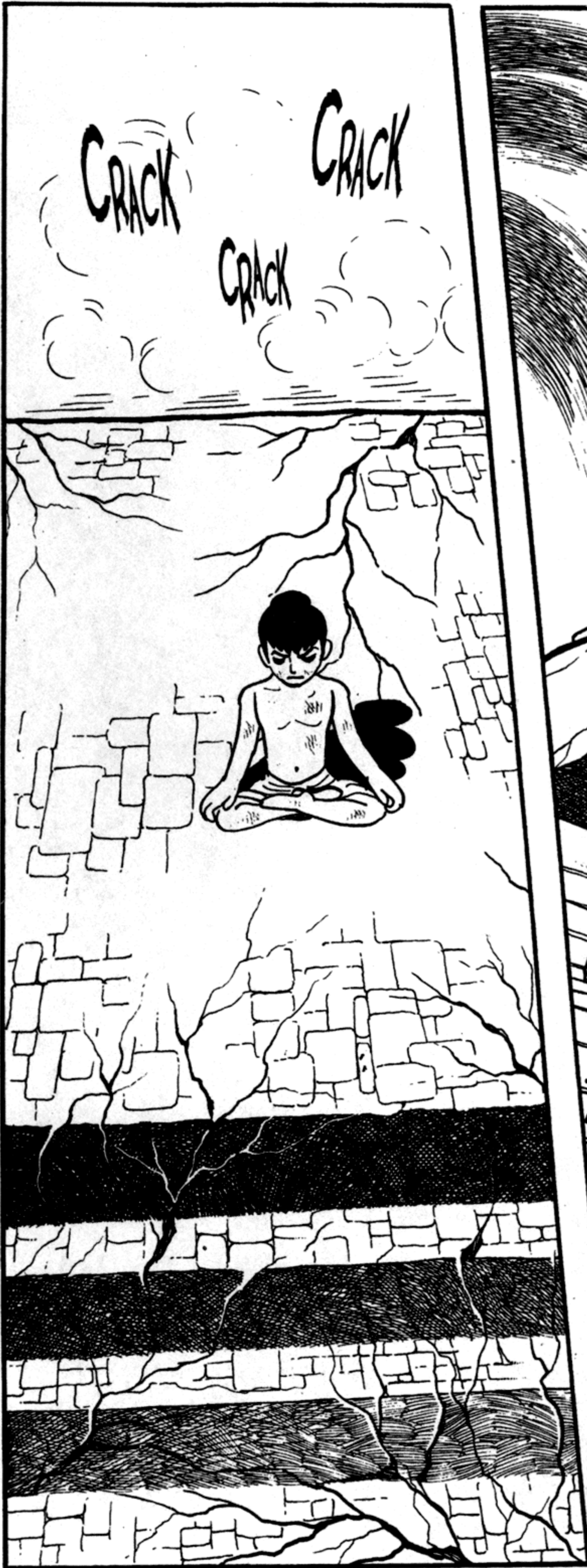


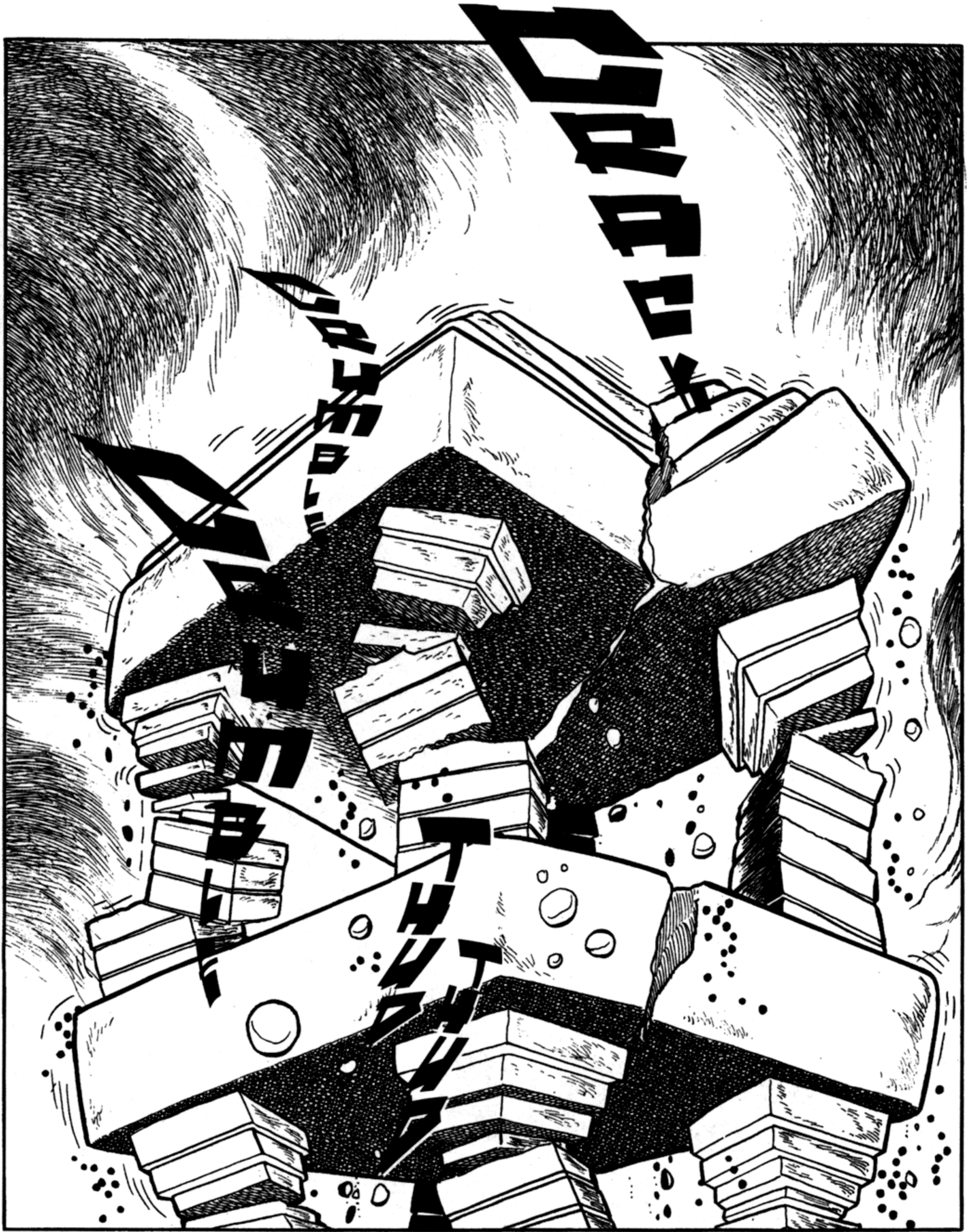
CRACKLE

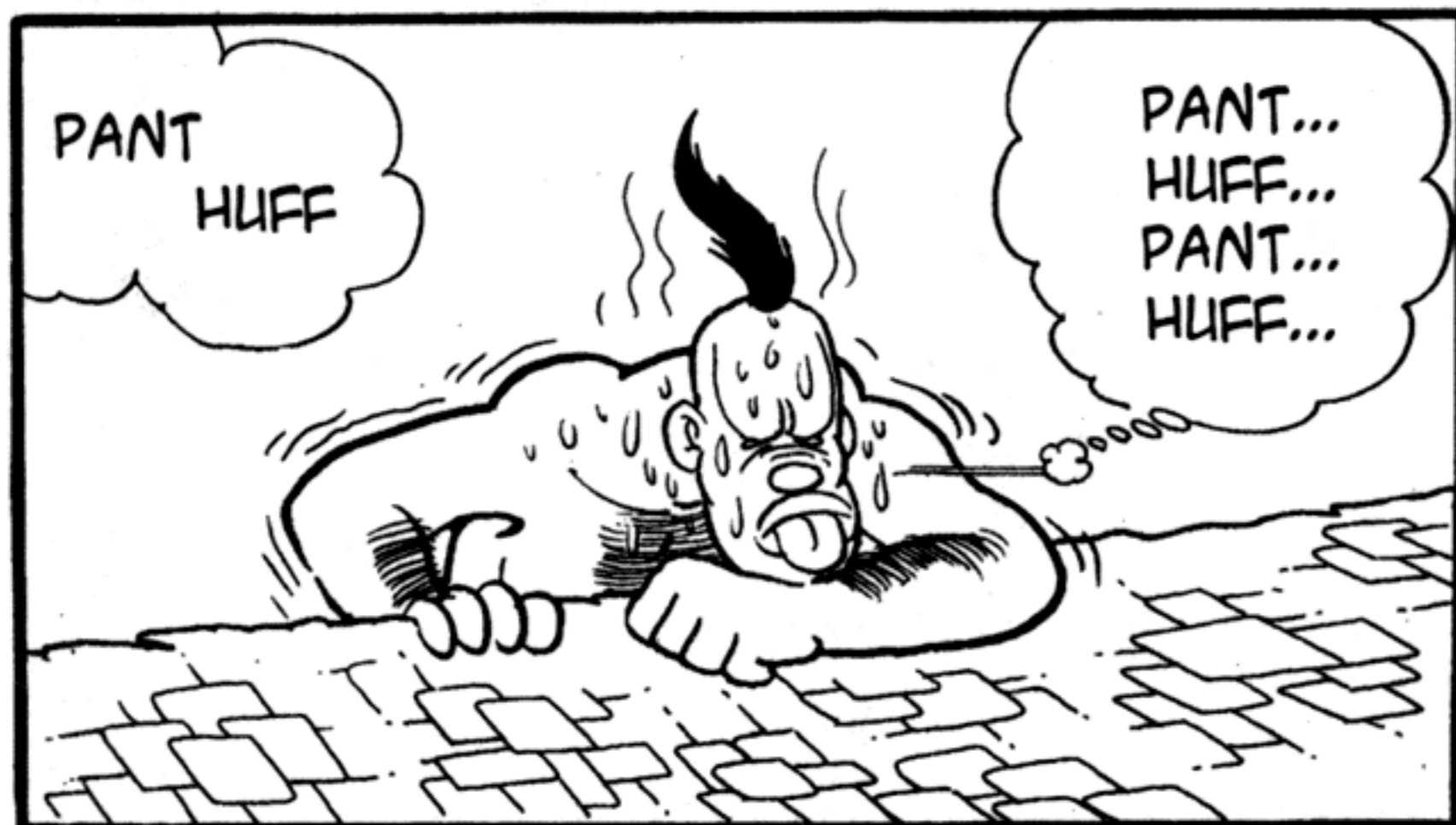
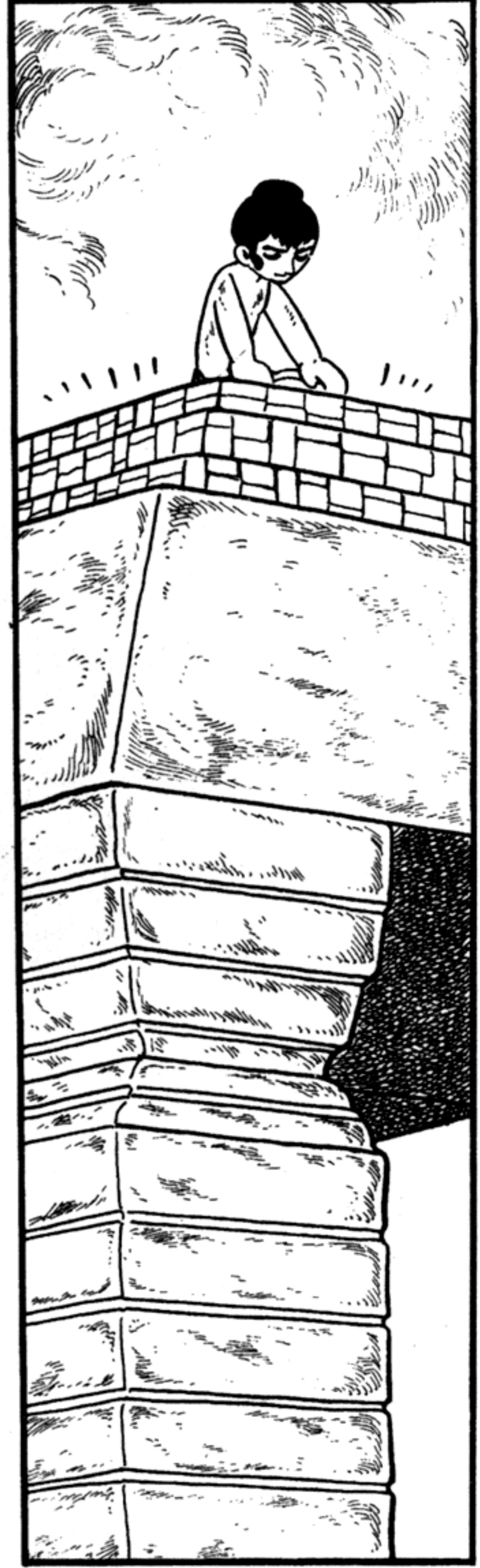


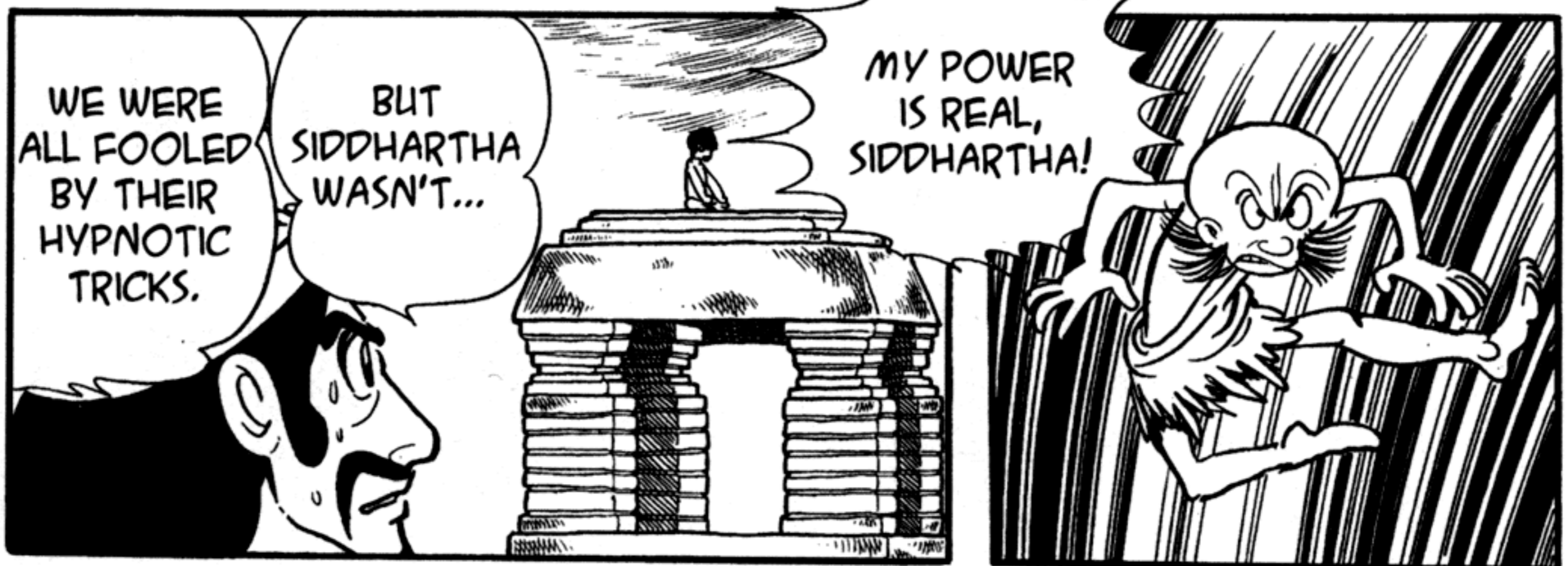
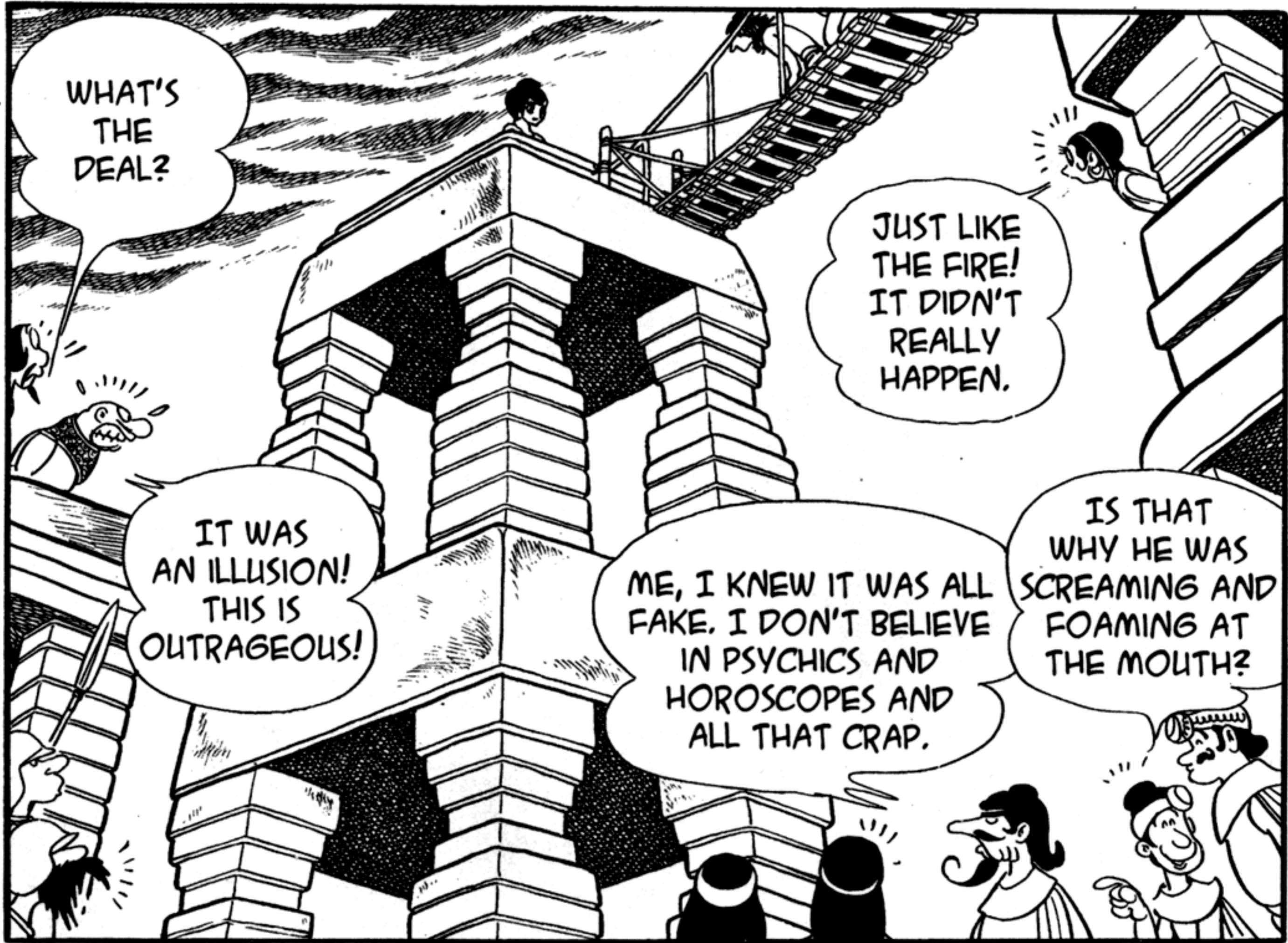
BRAHMIN,
STOP THIS
RIGHT NOW!
HE'LL BURN
TO DEATH!!

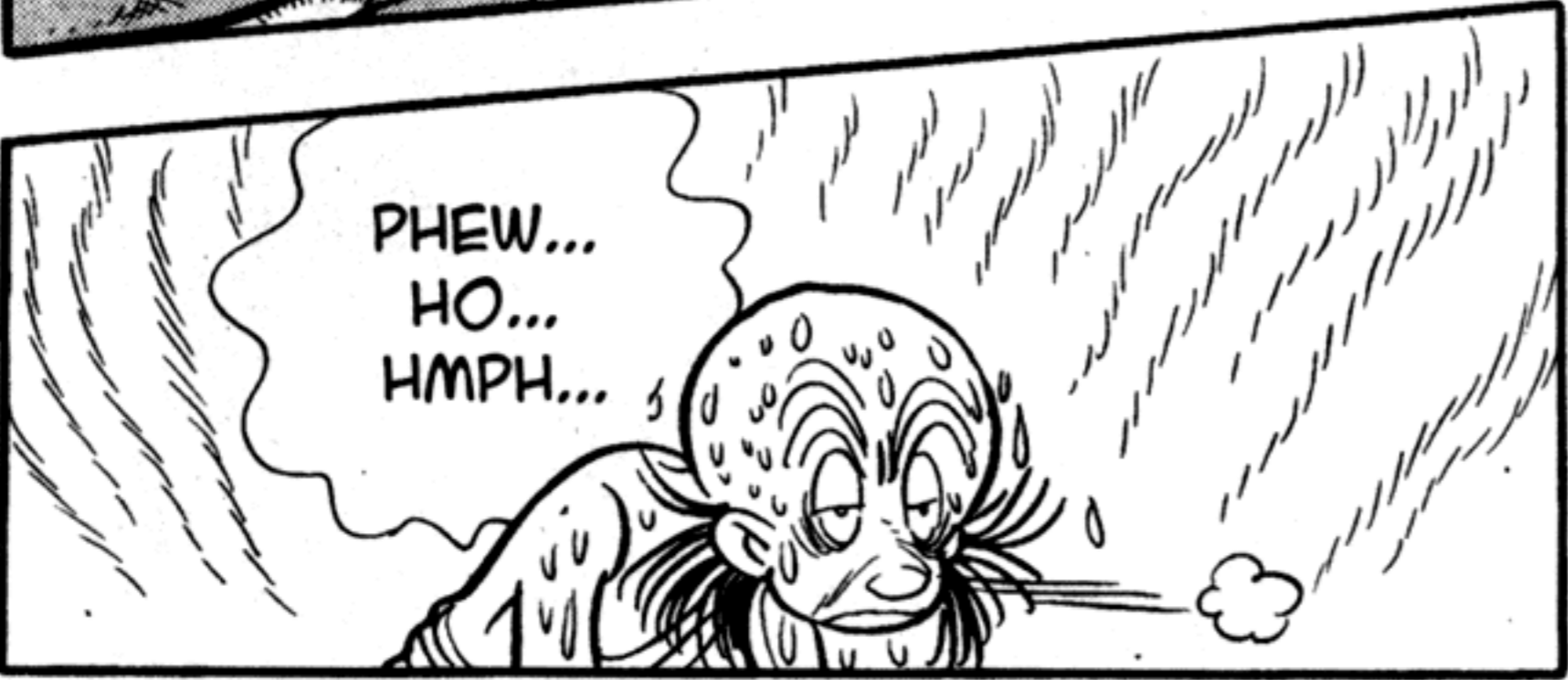
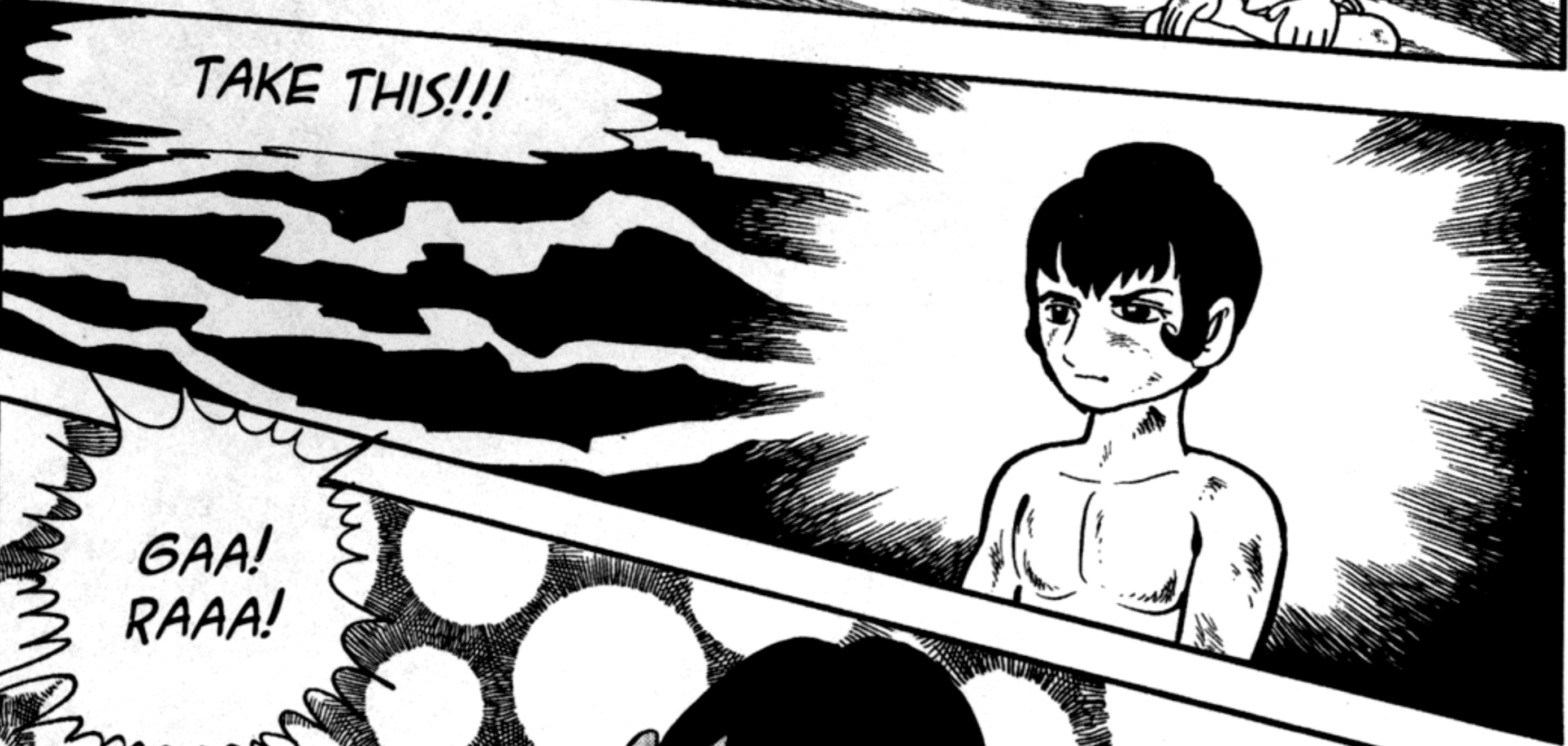
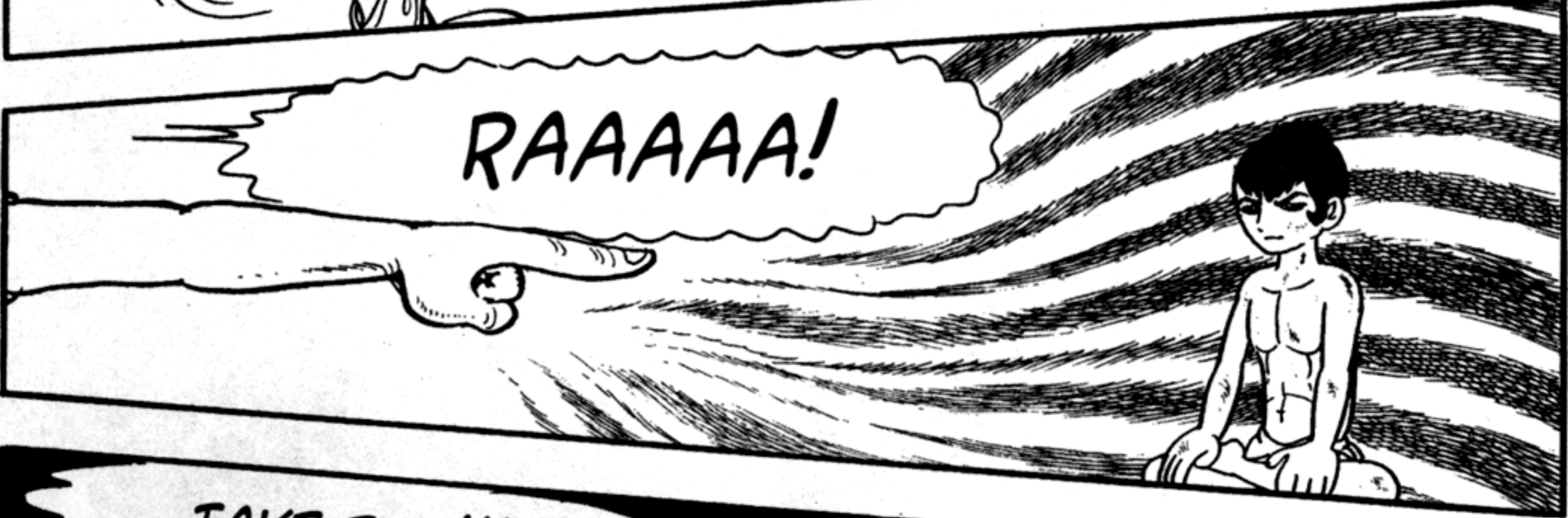


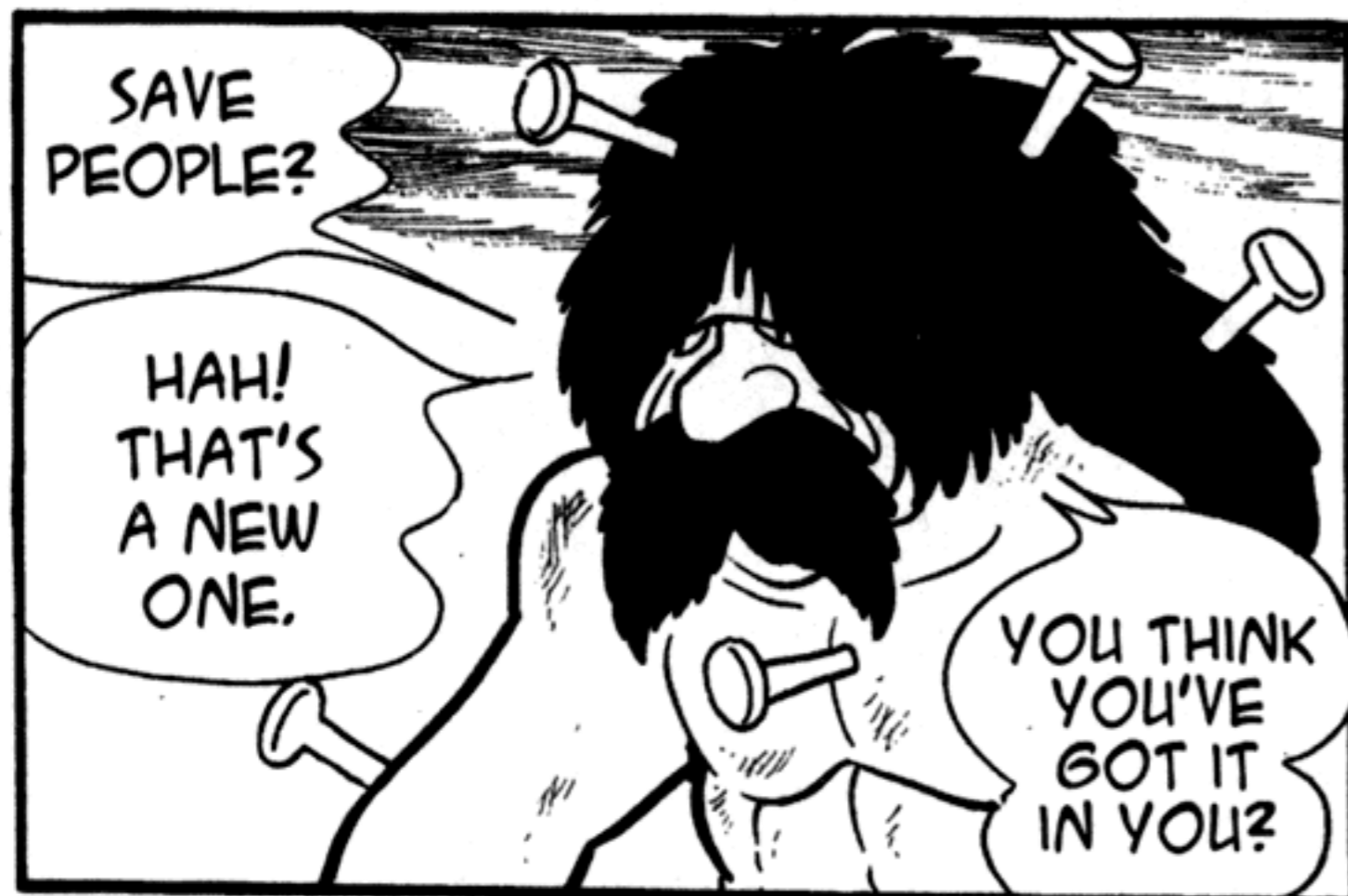


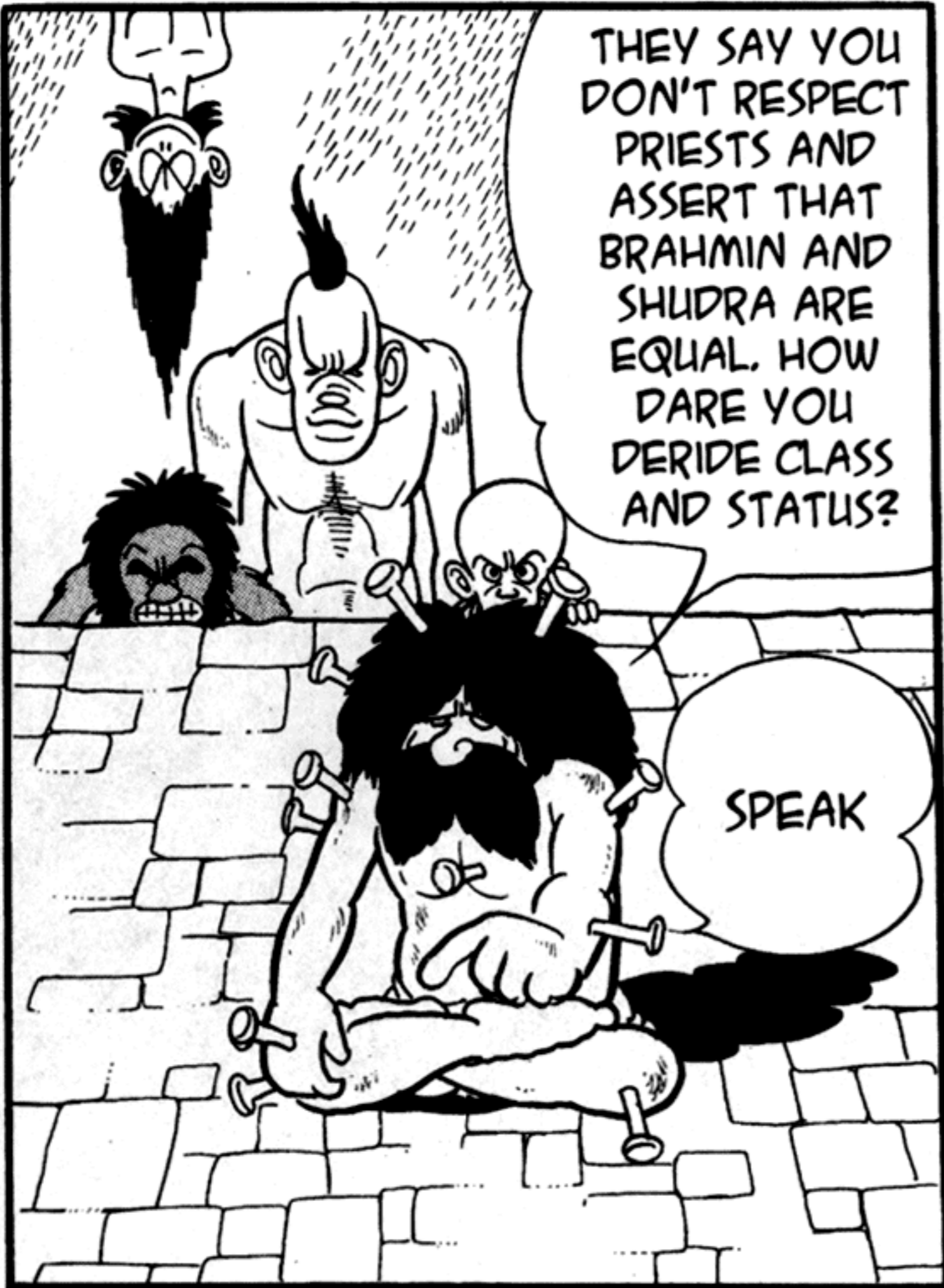












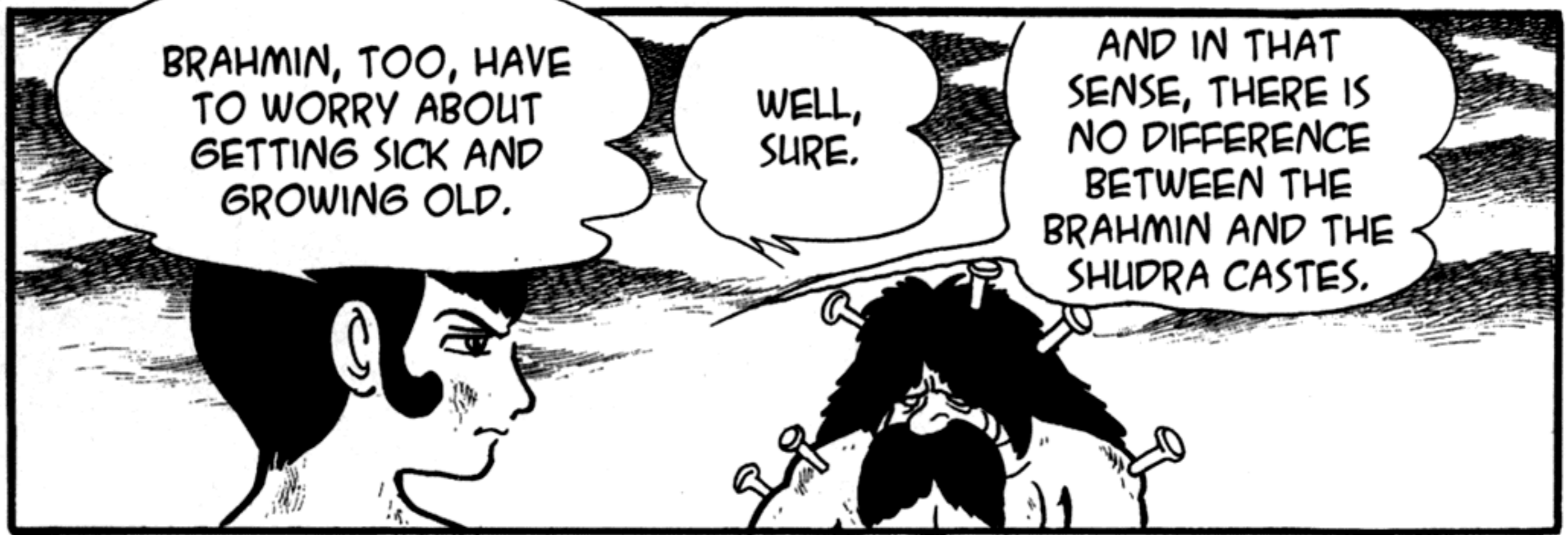
THEY SAY YOU DON'T RESPECT PRIESTS AND ASSERT THAT BRAHMIN AND SHUDRA ARE EQUAL. HOW DARE YOU DERIDE CLASS AND STATUS?

SPEAK



BRAHMIN, KSHATRIYA, VAISYA, OR SHUDRA, WE ALL MUST DIE ONE DAY!

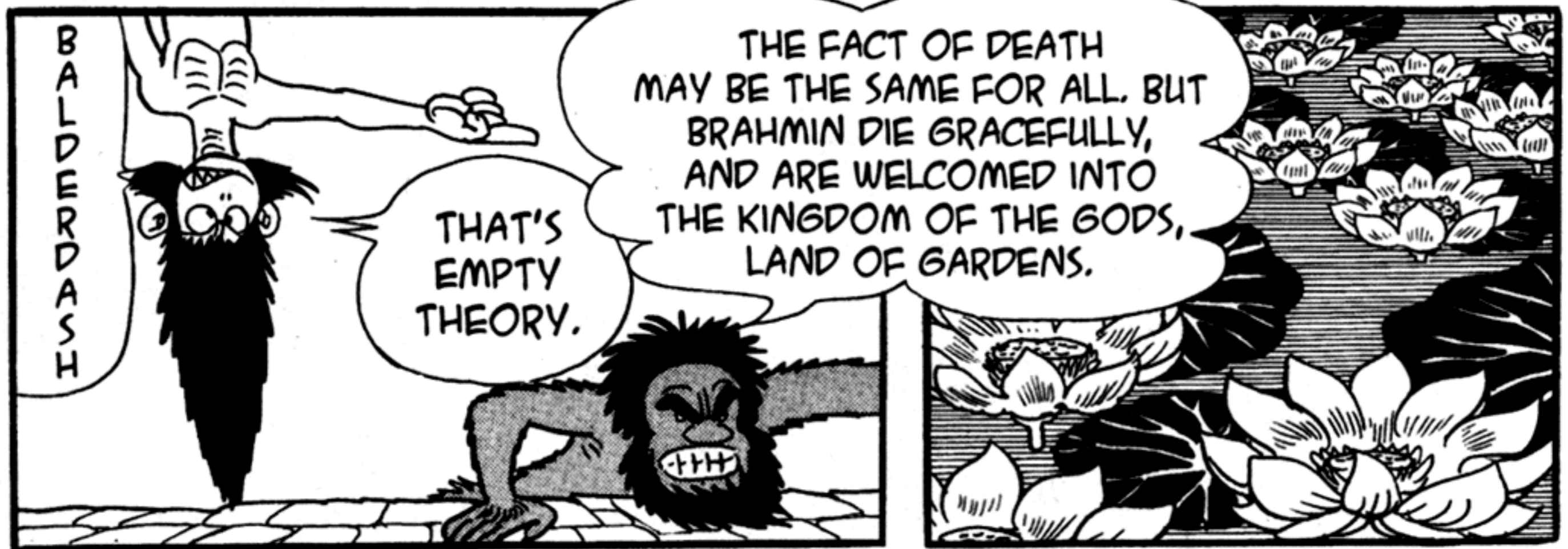
BEING BRAHMIN WILL NOT KEEP YOU FROM DYING, WILL IT?



BRAHMIN, TOO, HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT GETTING SICK AND GROWING OLD.

WELL, SURE.

AND IN THAT SENSE, THERE IS NO DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE BRAHMIN AND THE SHUDRA CASTES.



BALDERDASH

THAT'S EMPTY THEORY.

THE FACT OF DEATH MAY BE THE SAME FOR ALL. BUT BRAHMIN DIE GRACEFULLY, AND ARE WELCOMED INTO THE KINGDOM OF THE GODS, LAND OF GARDENS.

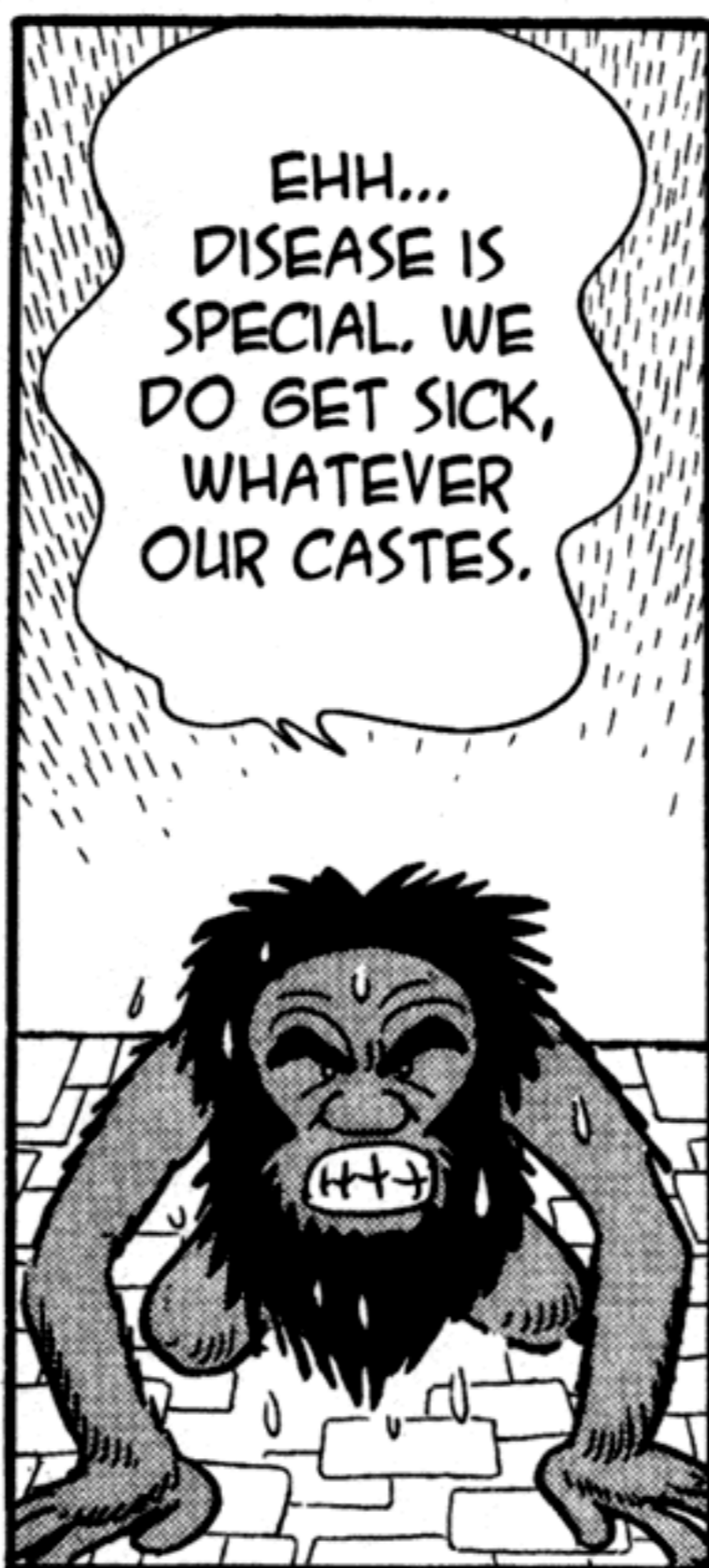


LOWLY SHUDRA,
ON THE OTHER
HAND, DIE LIKE
DOGS AND GET
THE FLESH
RIPPED OFF
THEIR BONES
BY WOLVES, IN
SOME DARK PIT.

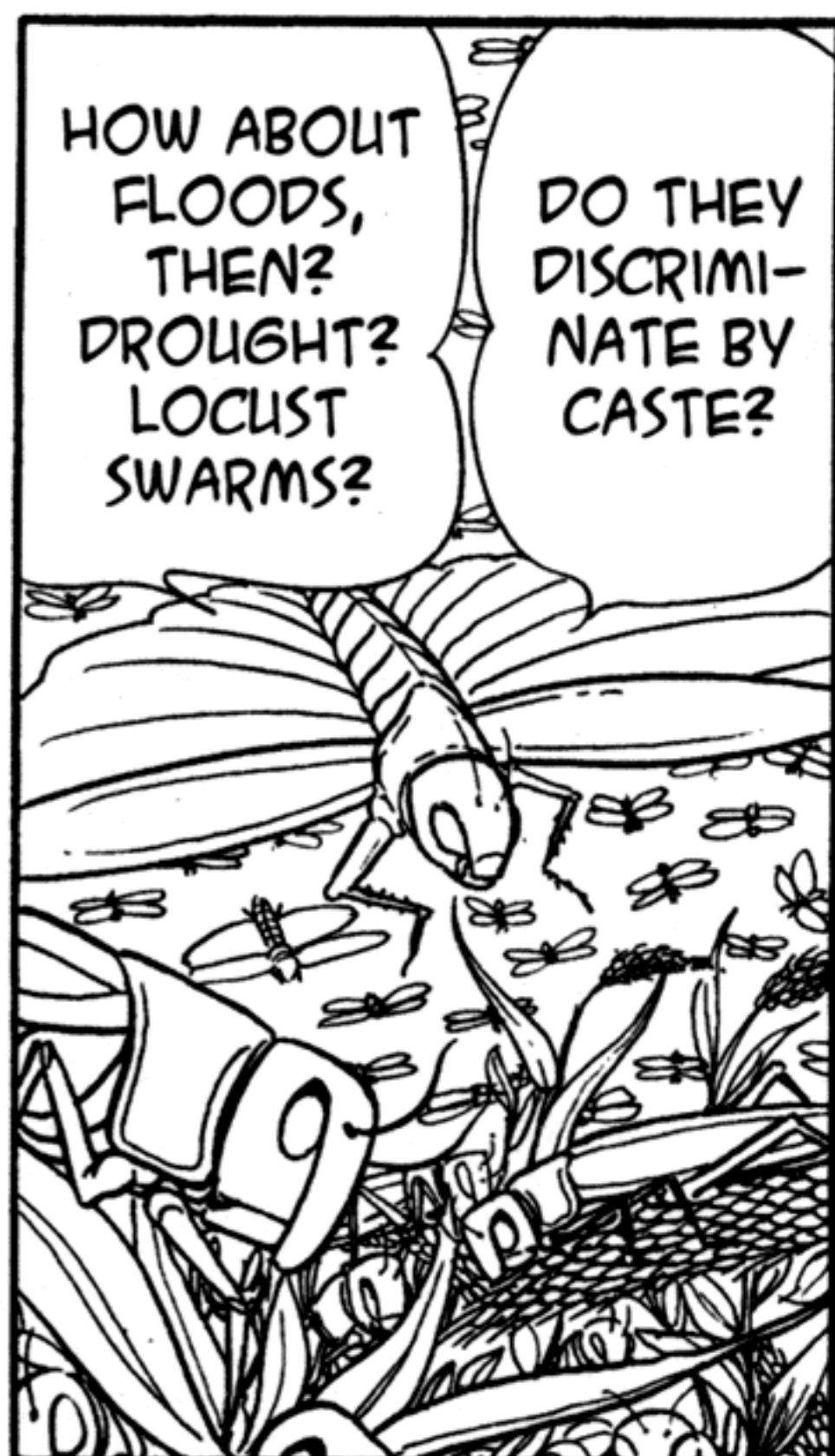
HOW'S THAT
FOR DYING
ALL THE
SAME?



I ONCE SAW
HUNDREDS DIE FROM
AN EPIDEMIC. DOES
DISEASE DISTINGUISH
BETWEEN SHUDRA
AND BRAHMIN?



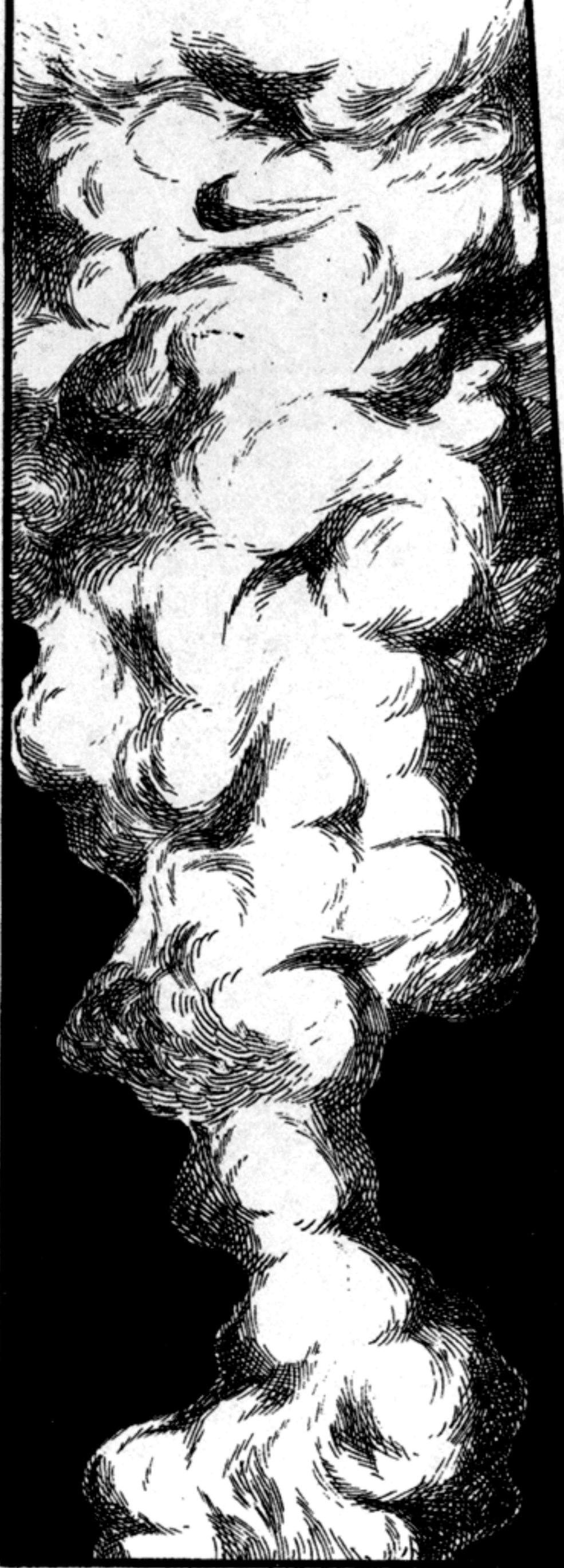
EHH...
DISEASE IS
SPECIAL. WE
DO GET SICK,
WHATEVER
OUR CASTES.



HOW ABOUT
FLOODS,
THEN?
DROUGHT?
LOCUST
SWARMS?

DO THEY
DISCRIMI-
NATE BY
CASTE?

PEOPLE CREATED CASTES, AND IT'S PEOPLE WHO SUFFER FROM IT. IT'S SIMPLY NOT PART OF NATURE. FLOODS, TEMPESTS AND DROUGHT DON'T CHOOSE THEIR VICTIMS BY CASTE. IF THE WORLD COMES TO AN END, EVERY HUMAN WILL PERISH.



EXACTLY!
AND THE END
WILL SURELY
COME ONE DAY.
KNOWING THAT,
WHY TRY TO
SAVE PEOPLE?



A MAN IS
FELLED BY
A POISON
ARROW. HIS
FRIENDS
AND FAMILY
FRET...

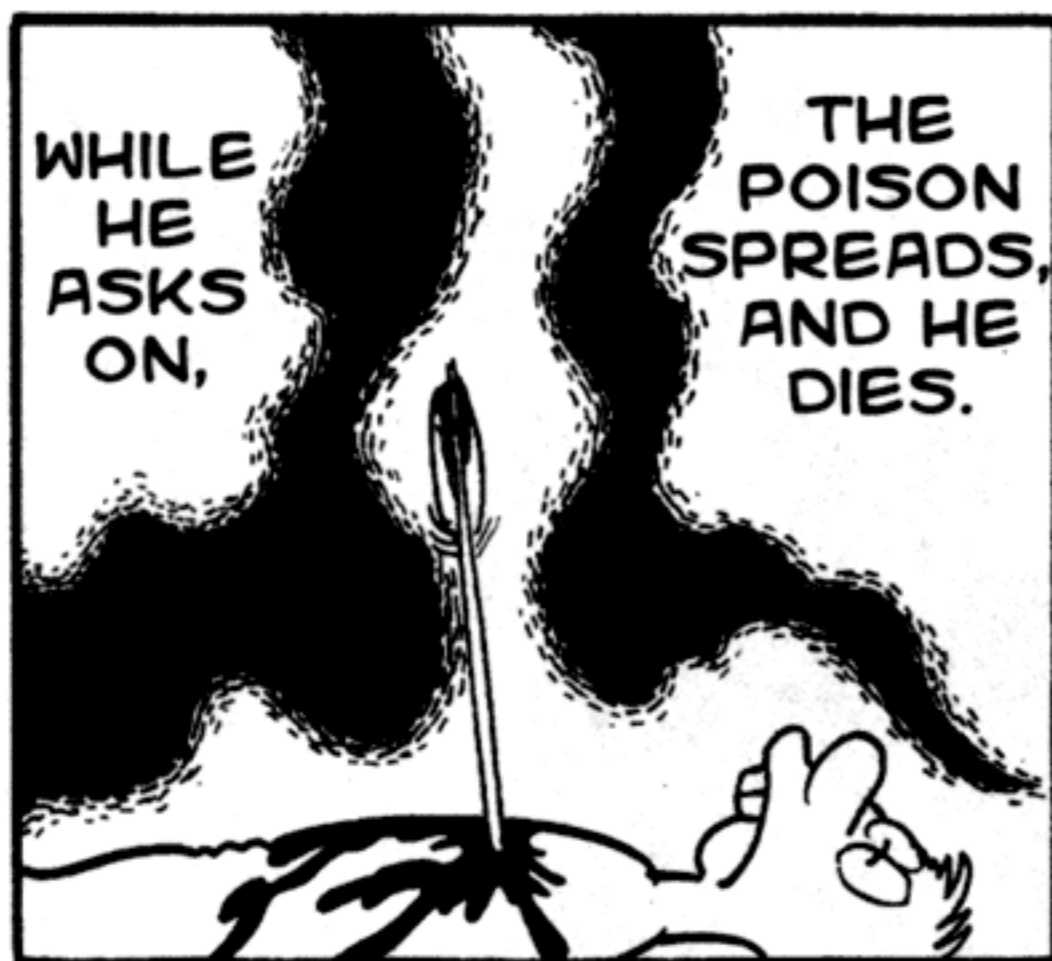


THEY WANT TO
CALL A DOCTOR
BUT THE MAN SAYS,
"UNTIL I KNOW
THE FOLLOWING,
I WON'T HAVE THE
ARROW REMOVED."





"WHO SHOT THE ARROW? A KING, A BRAHMIN, OR A SHUDRA? WHAT IS HIS NAME, AND IS HE TALL OR SHORT? IS HIS SKIN WHITE, YELLOW OR BLACK? IS HE A VILLAGER OR A CITY DWELLER? IS HIS BOW ORDINARY OR STRONG?"



WHILE HE ASKS ON,

THE POISON SPREADS, AND HE DIES.



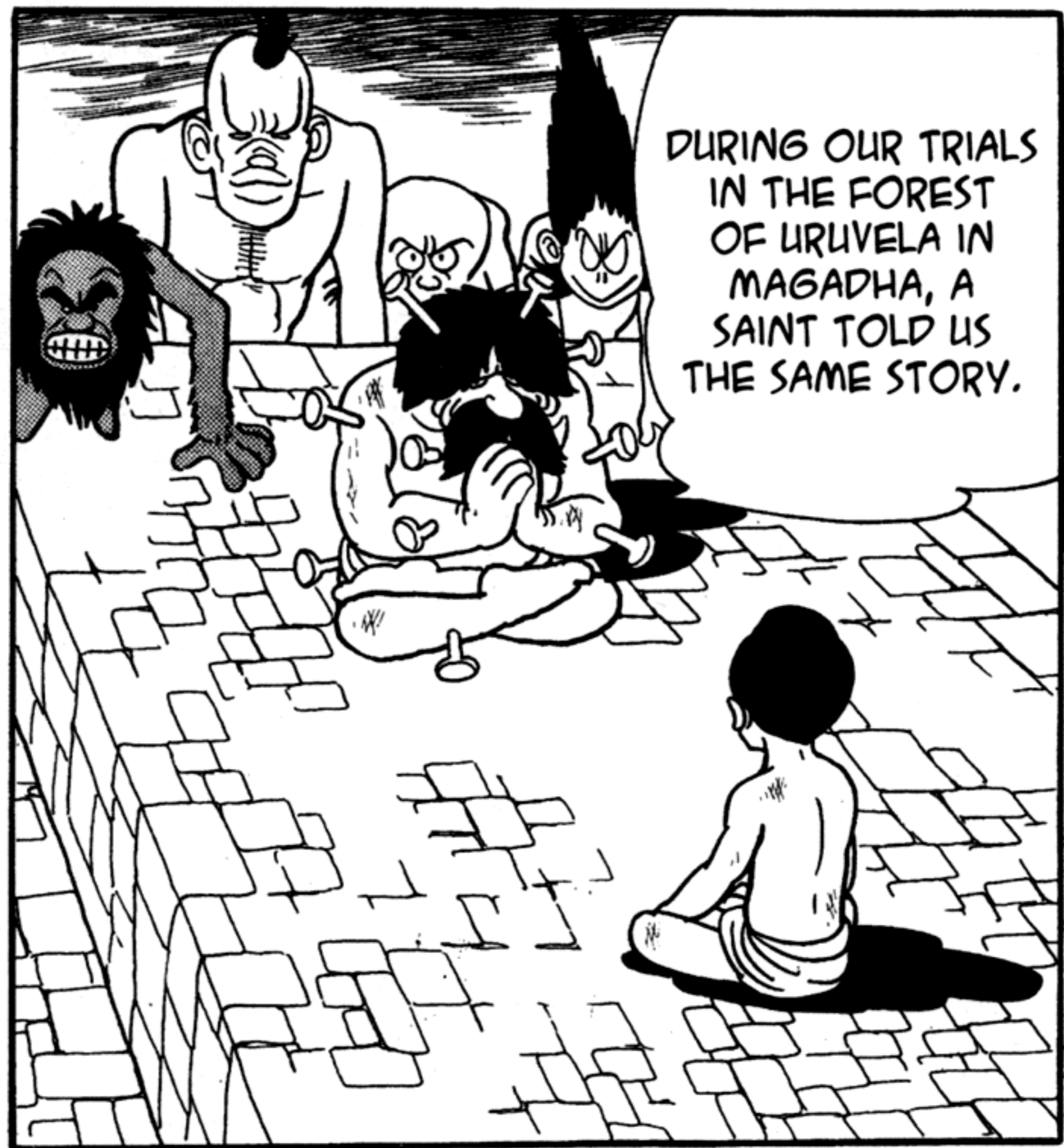
WHAT YOU SAID IS NO DIFFERENT. WHILE I WORRY ABOUT WHETHER THE WORLD WILL END, I WILL AGE AND DIE. BEFORE I DO...

I MUST DO WHAT I CAN. DO YOU SEE?

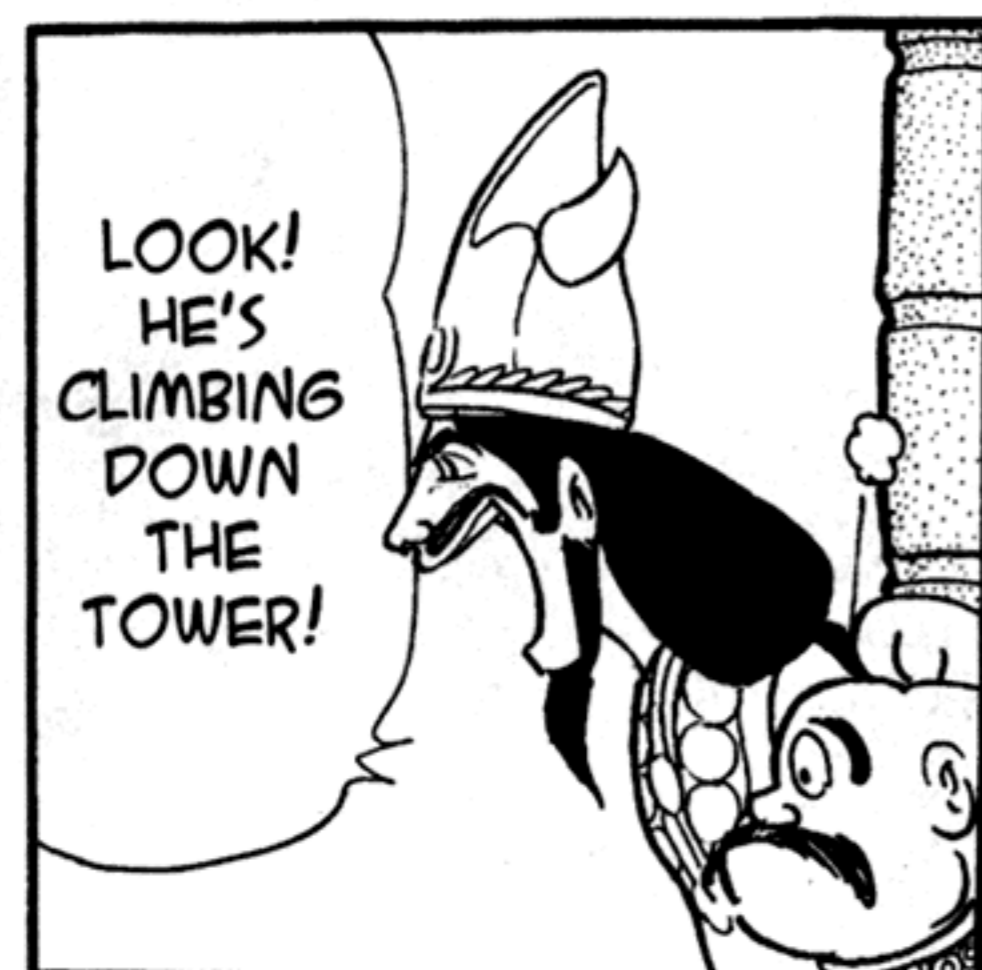
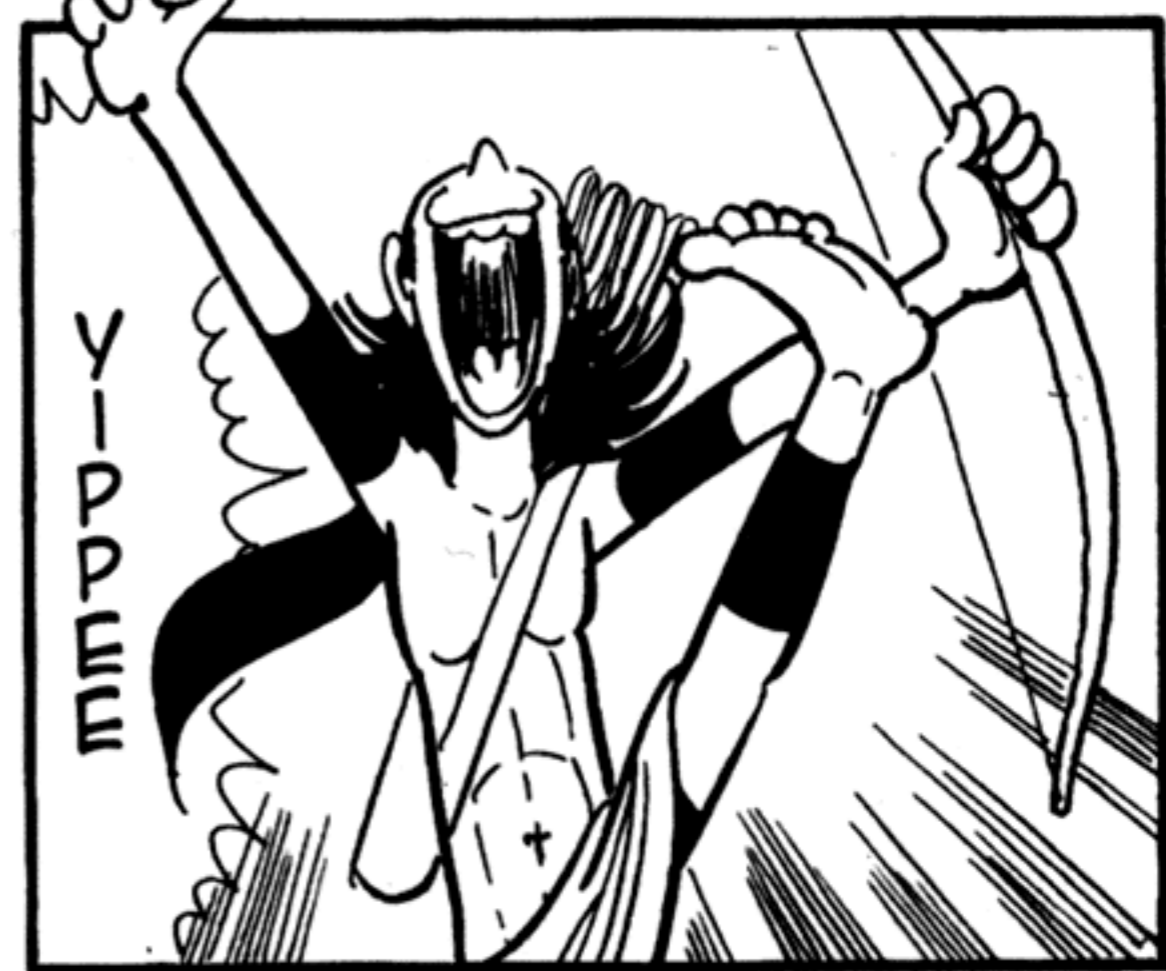
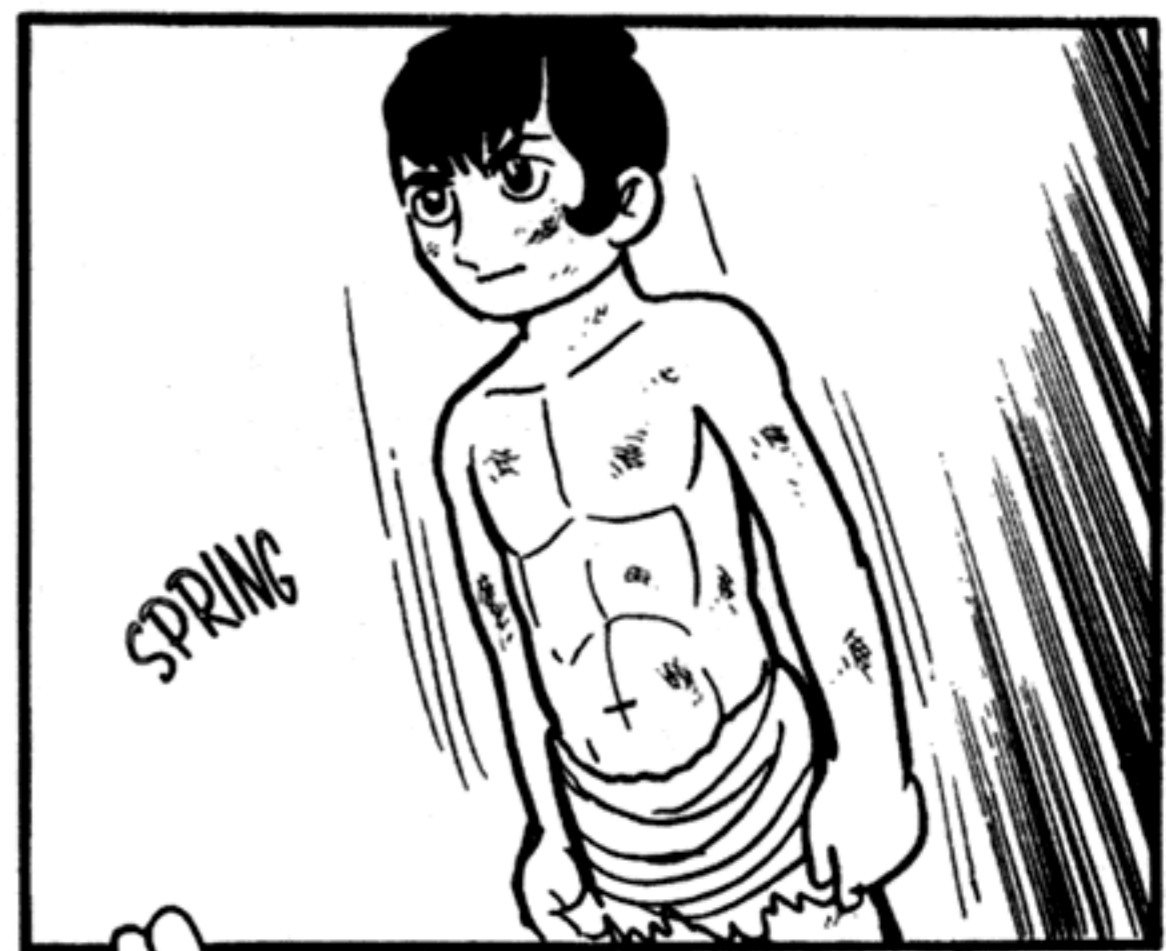
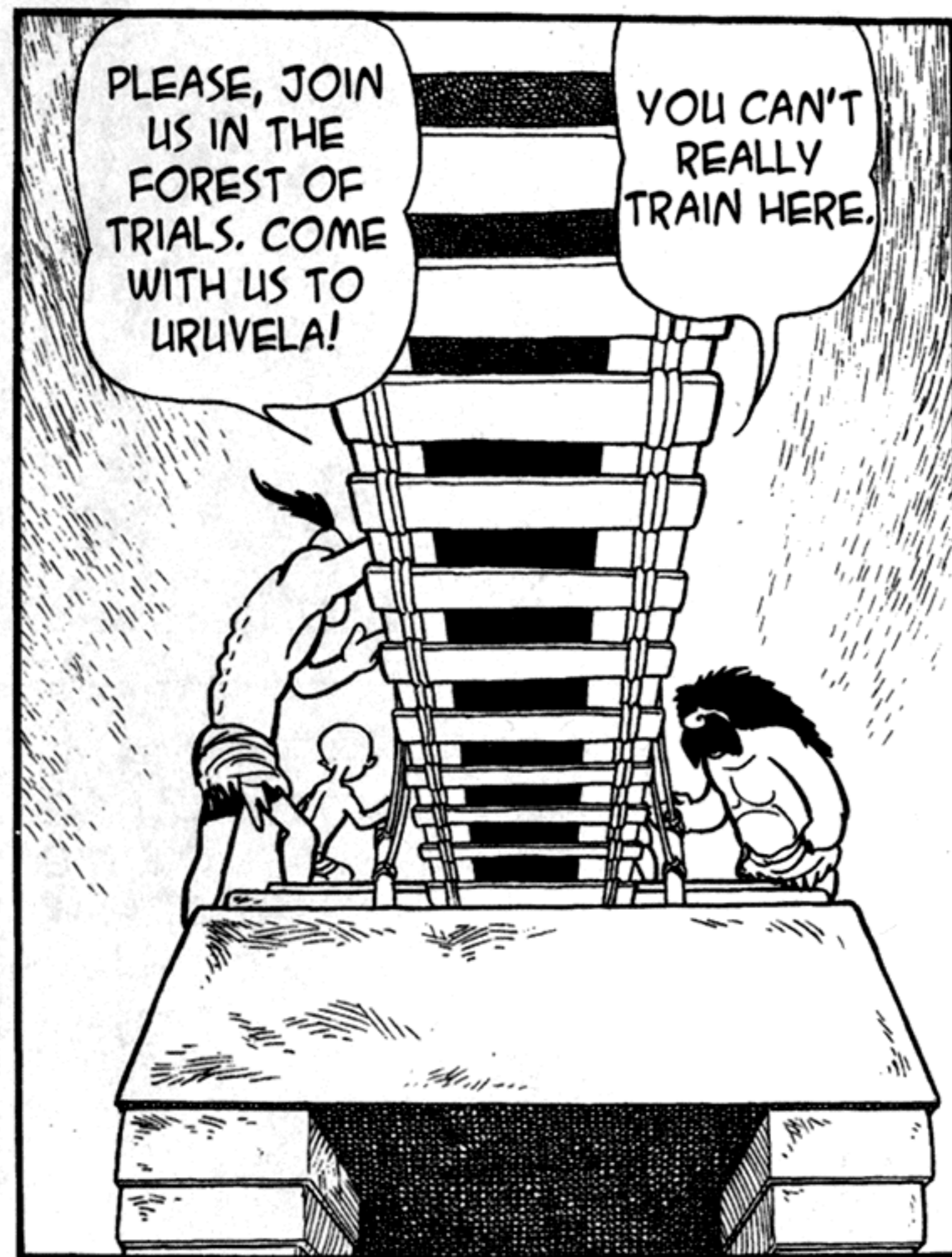
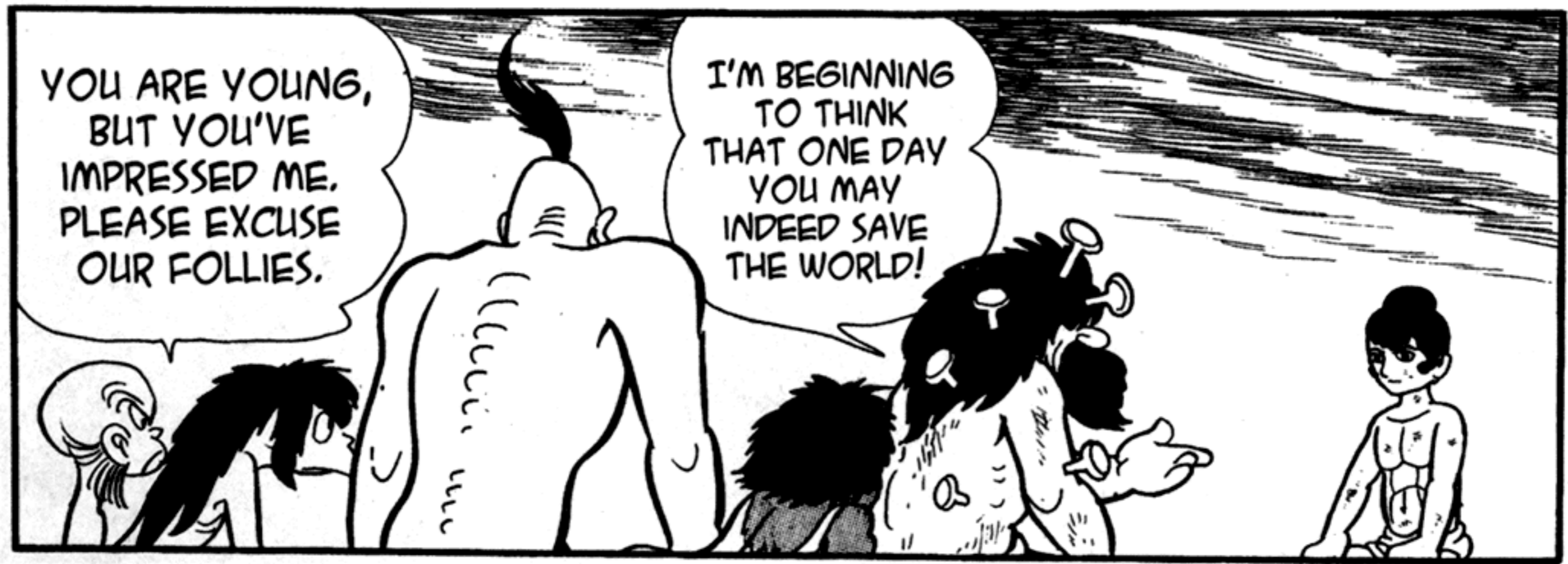


HMM

YOU PUT US TO SHAME.



DURING OUR TRIALS IN THE FOREST OF URUVELA IN MAGADHA, A SAINT TOLD US THE SAME STORY.

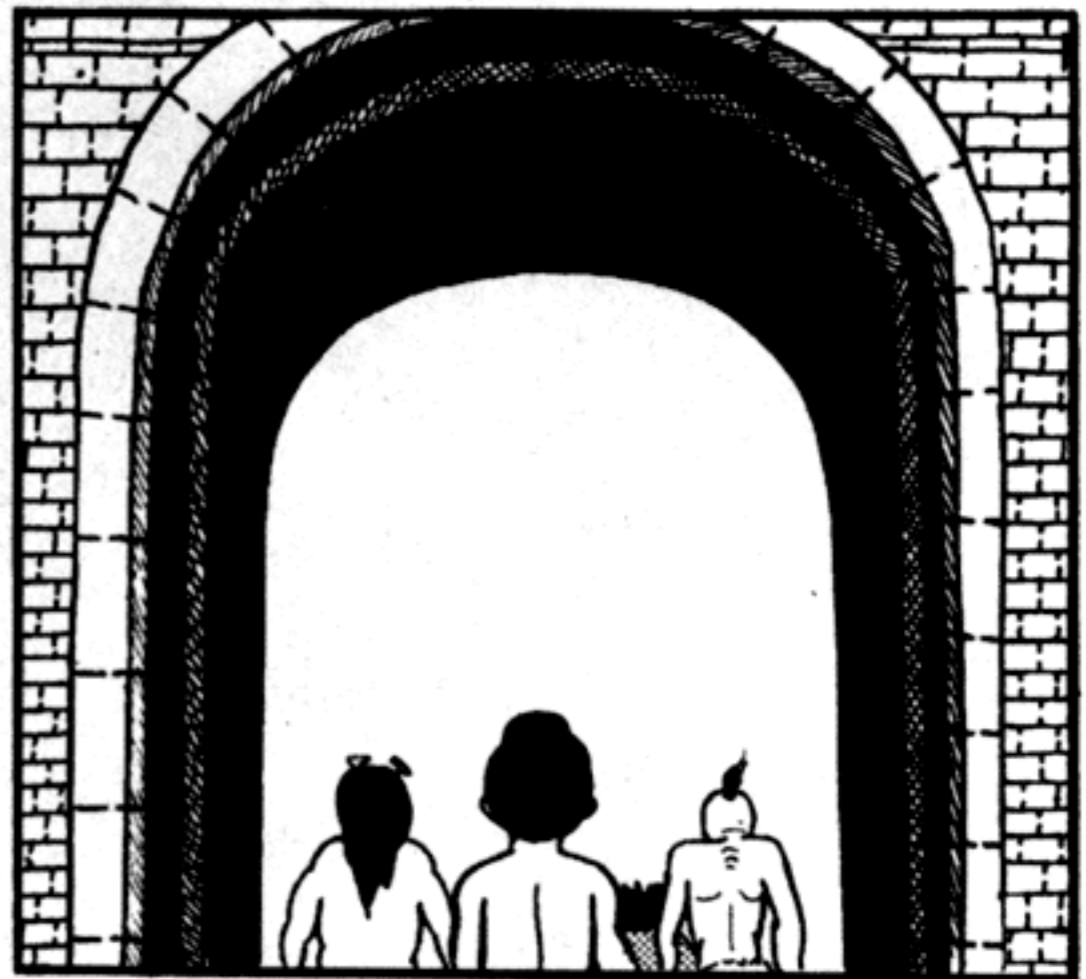




SIDDHARTHA



DON'T GO!



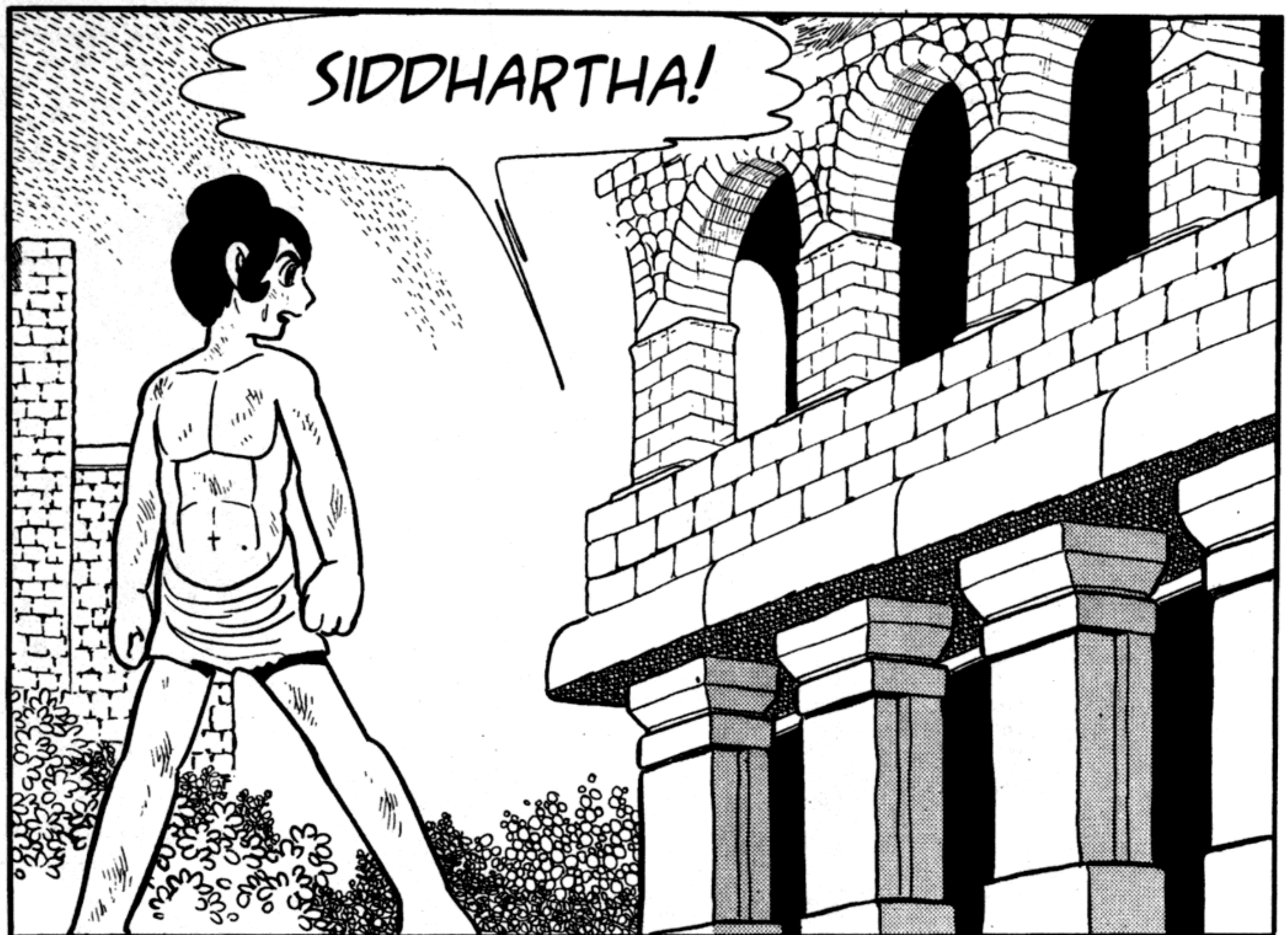
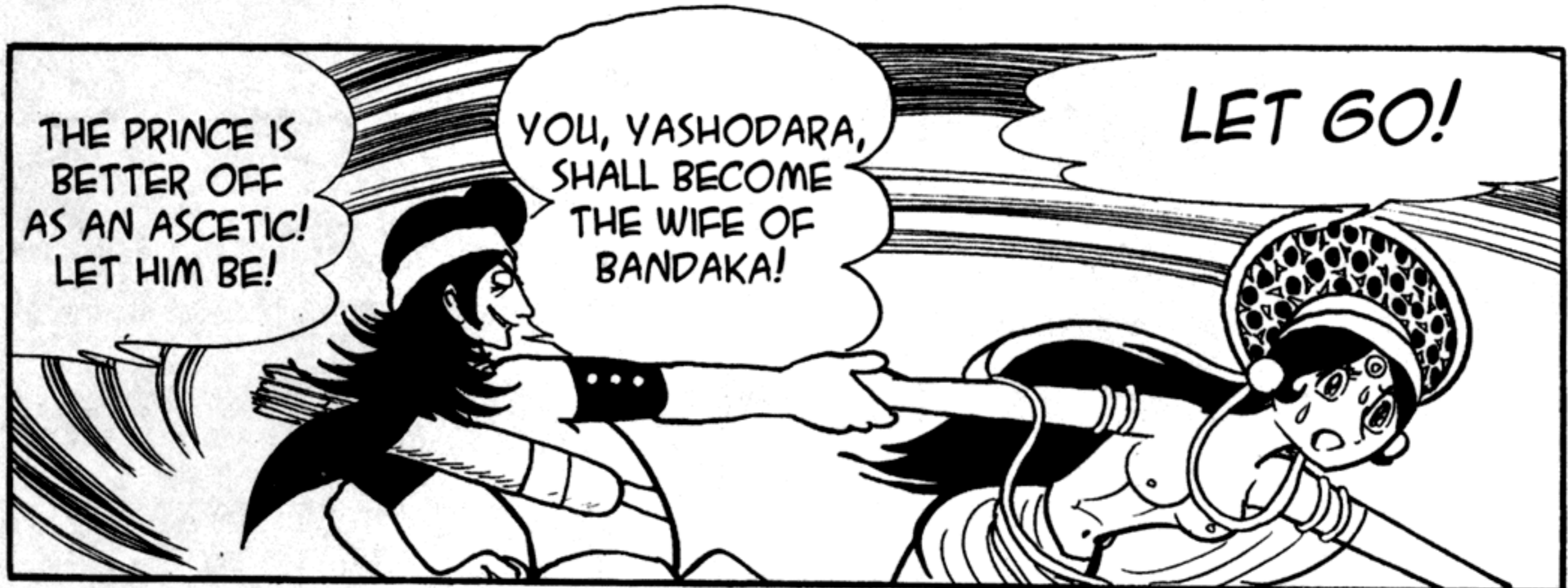
YASHODARA,
YOU MUST NOT
FOLLOW THE
PRINCE. HEH
HEH HEH.



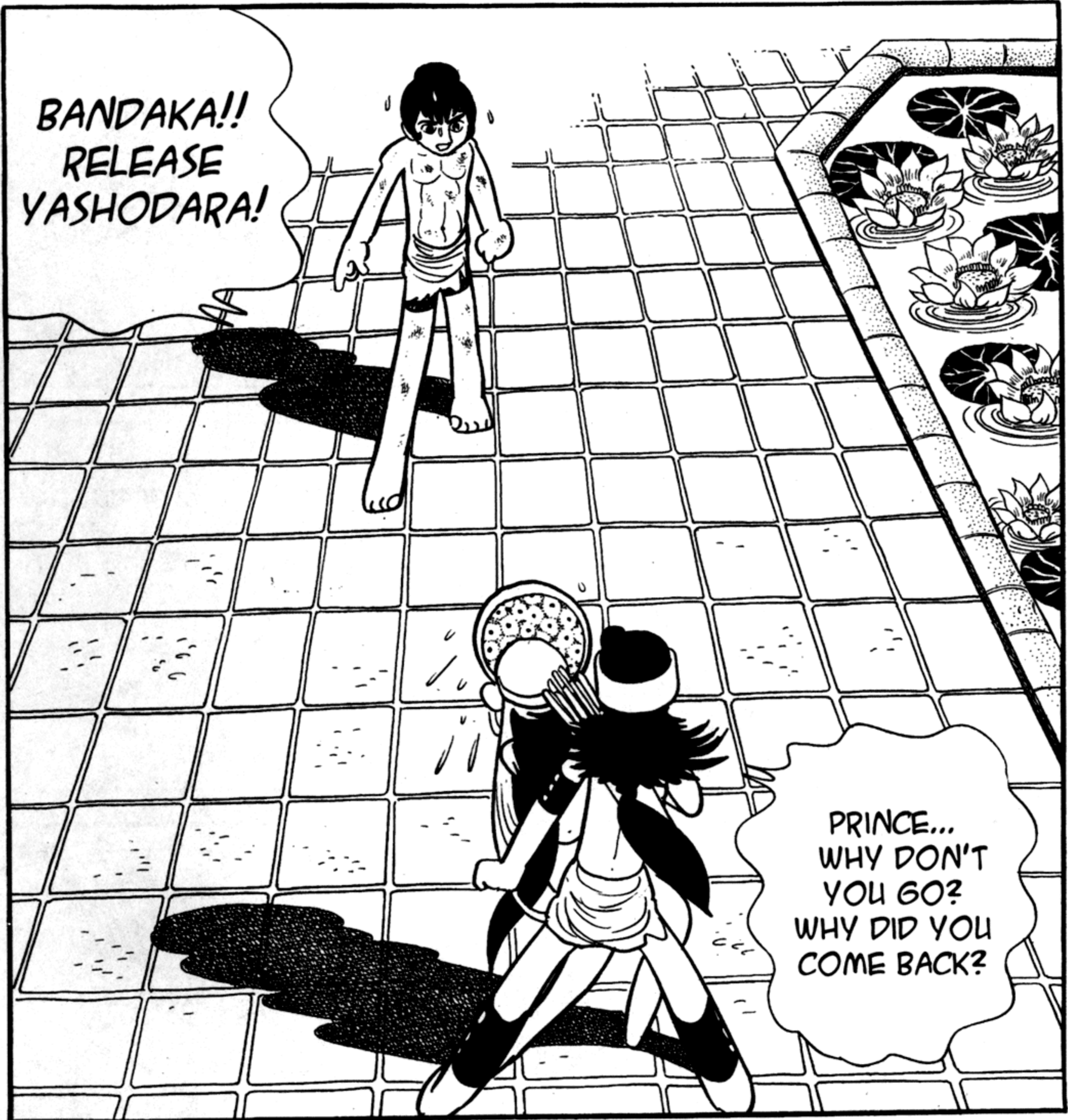
YOU CAN'T
GO!! YOU
CAN'T LEAVE
ME AGAIN!
MY LORD,
NO!



STEP ASIDE!!
I'M GOING
TO STOP HIM!

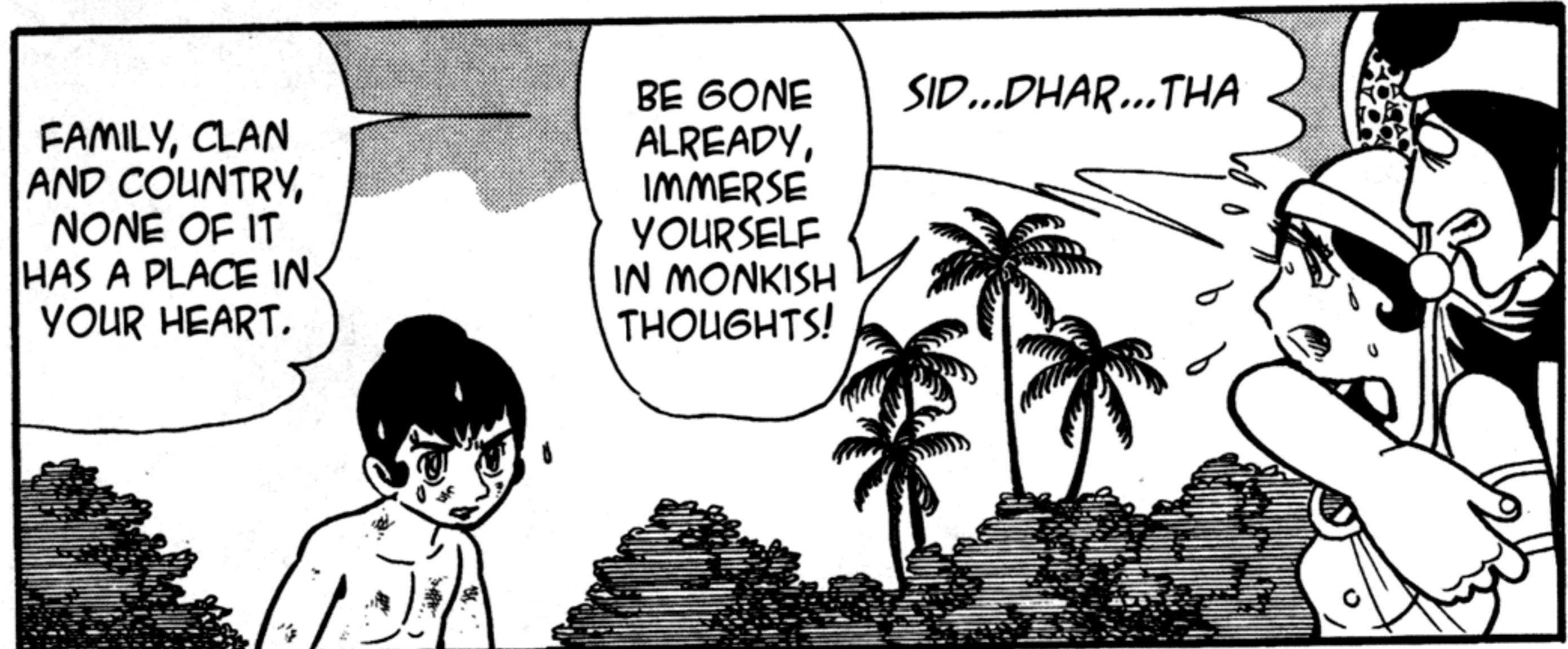






BANDAKA!!
RELEASE
YASHODARA!

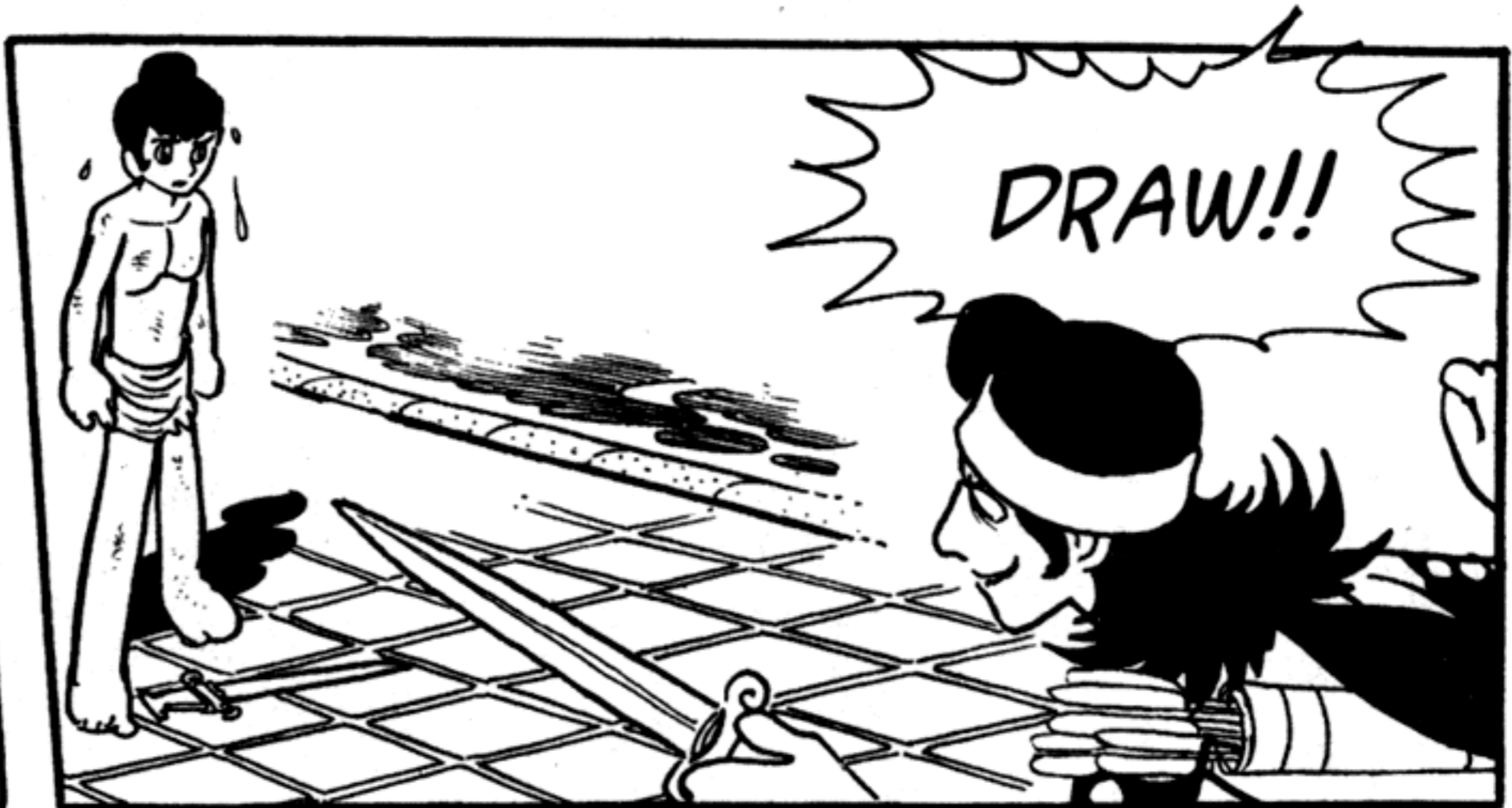
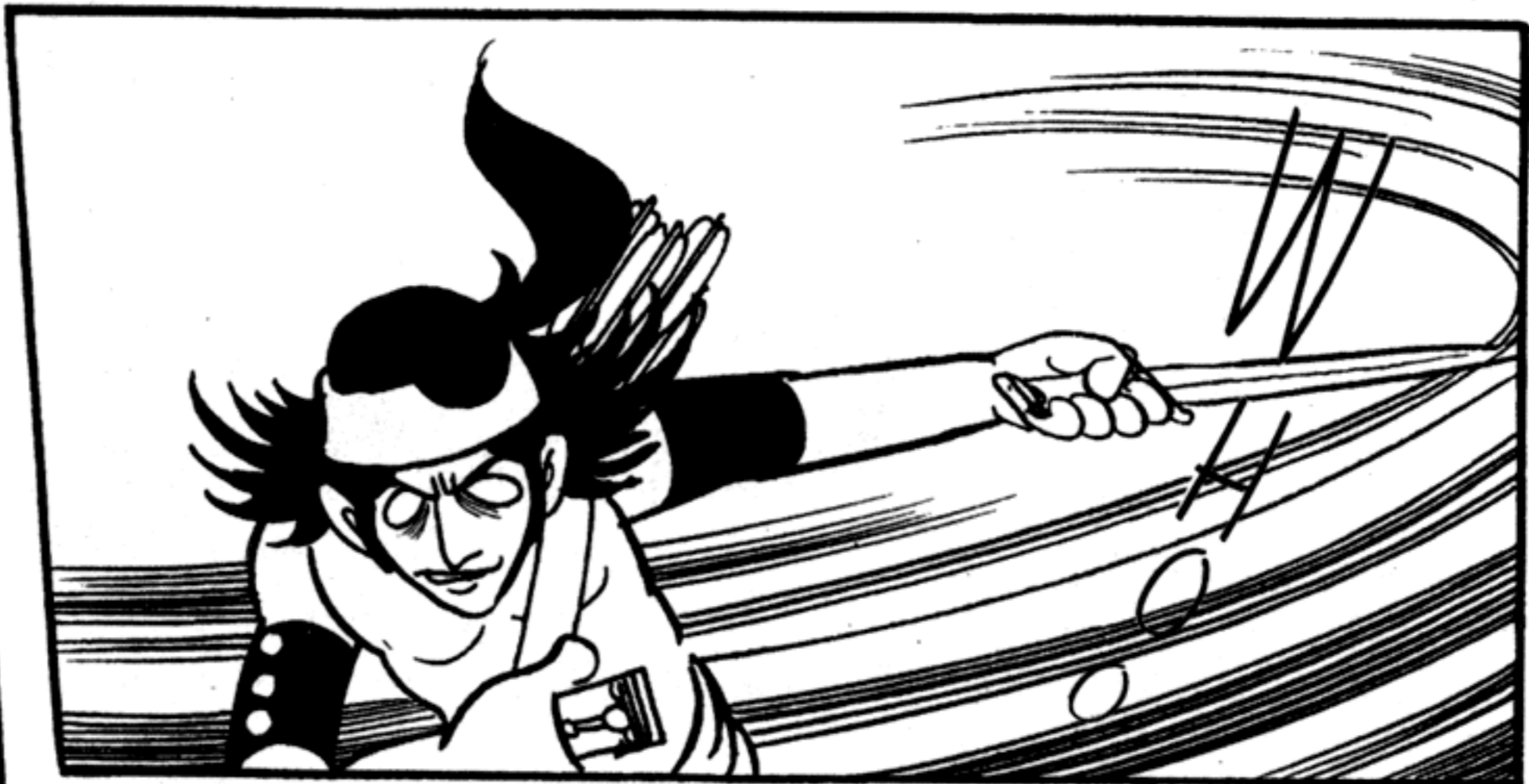
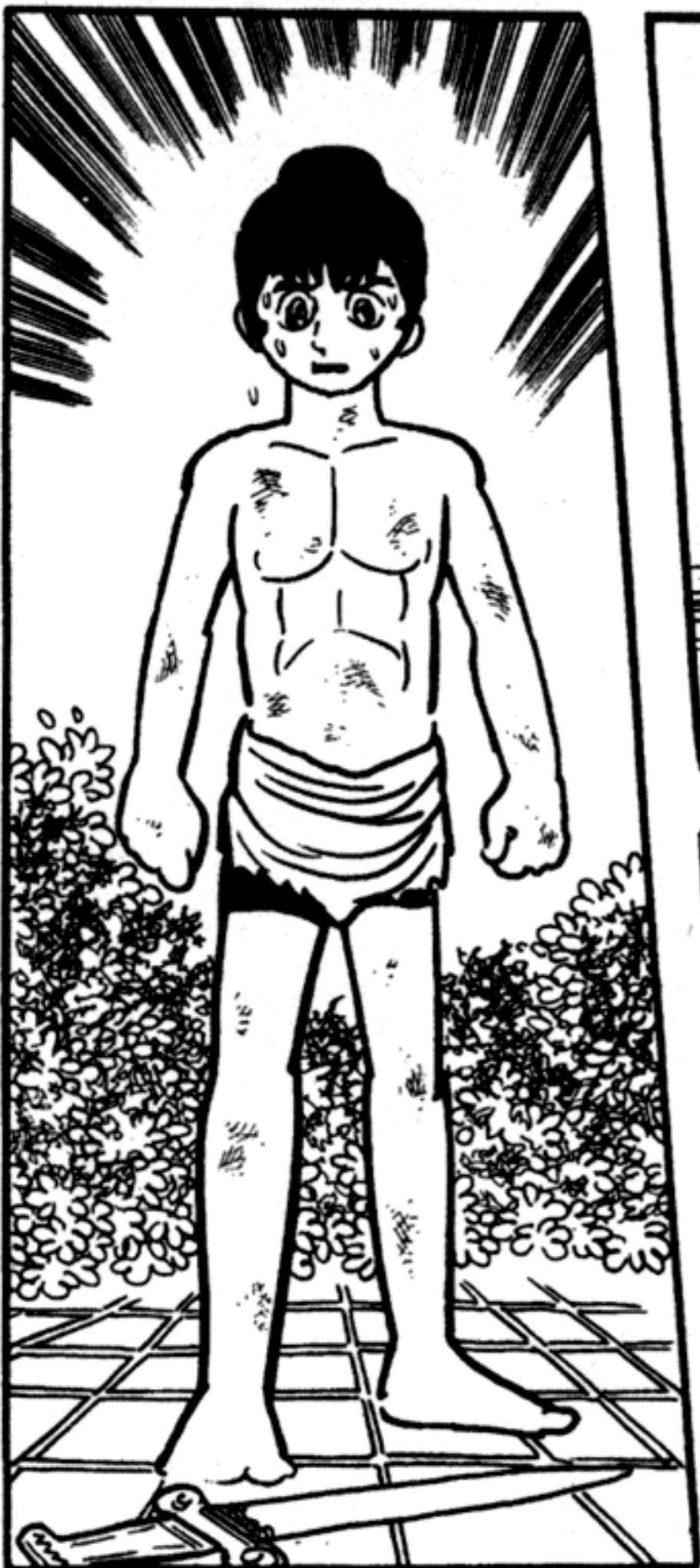
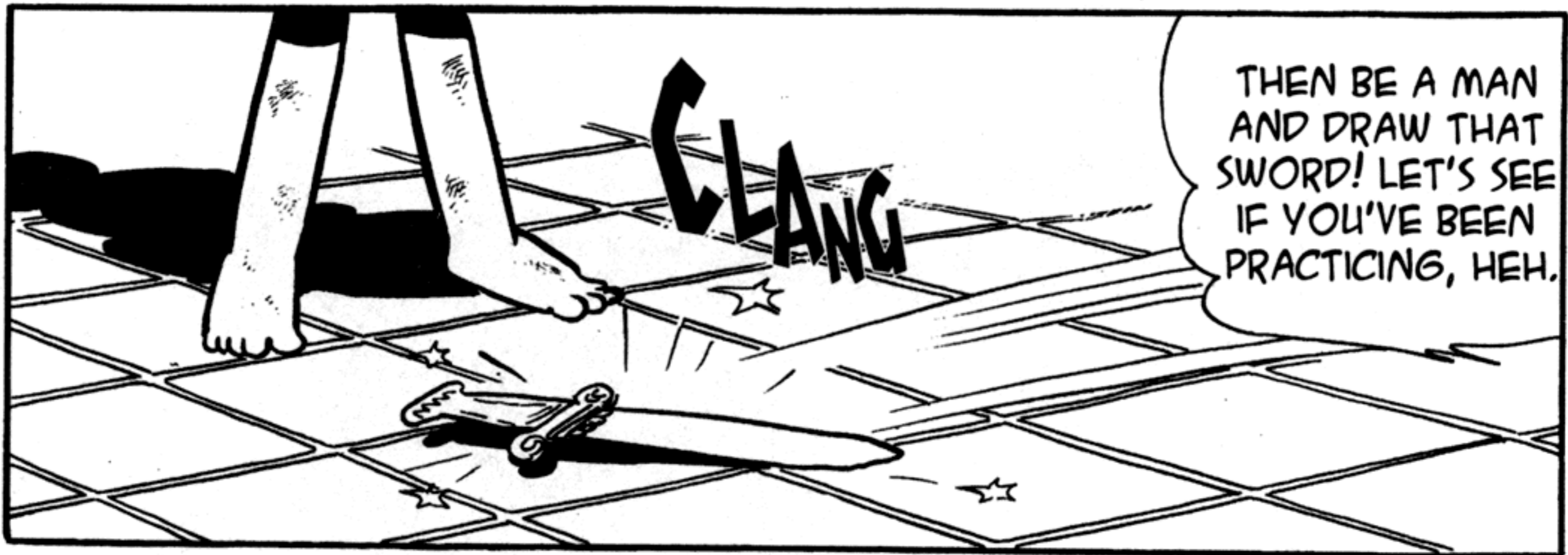
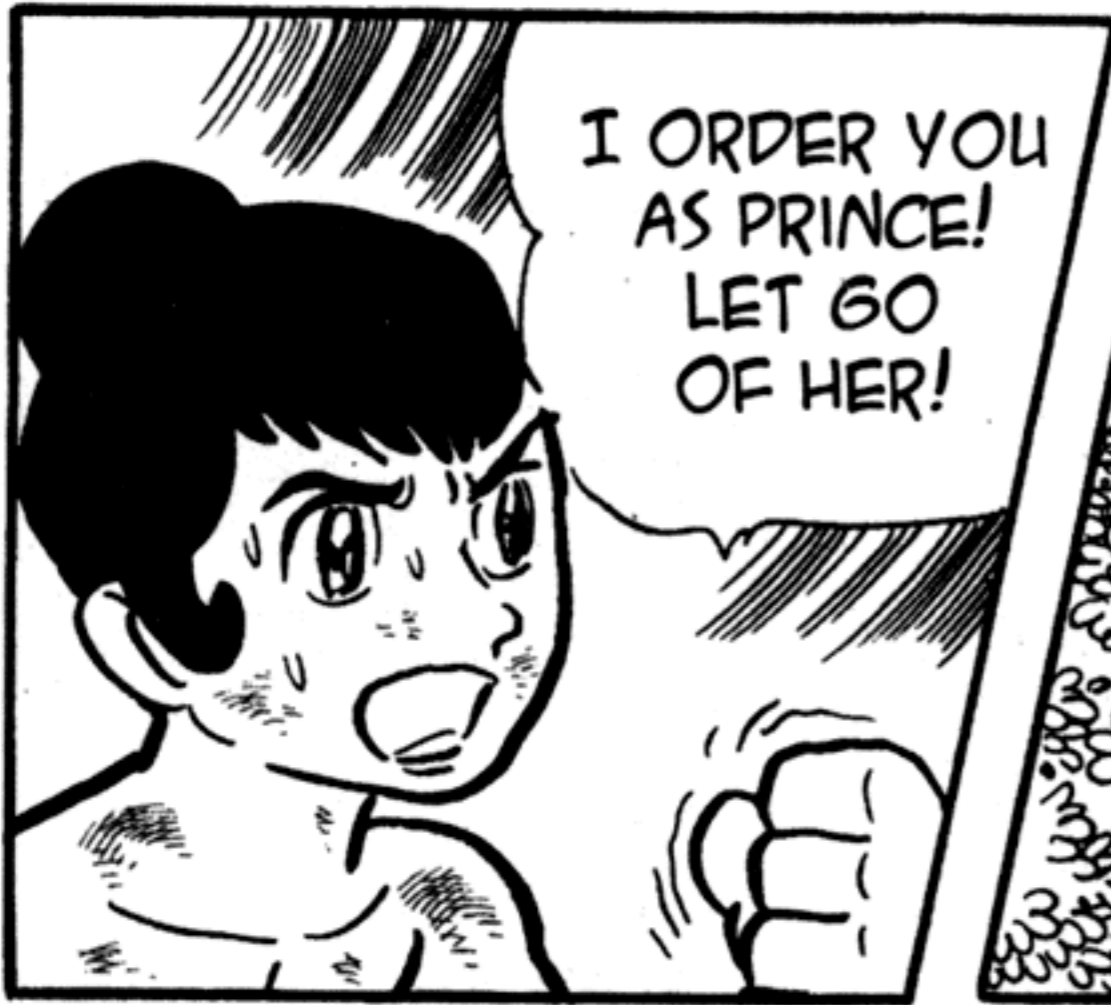
PRINCE...
WHY DON'T
YOU GO?
WHY DID YOU
COME BACK?

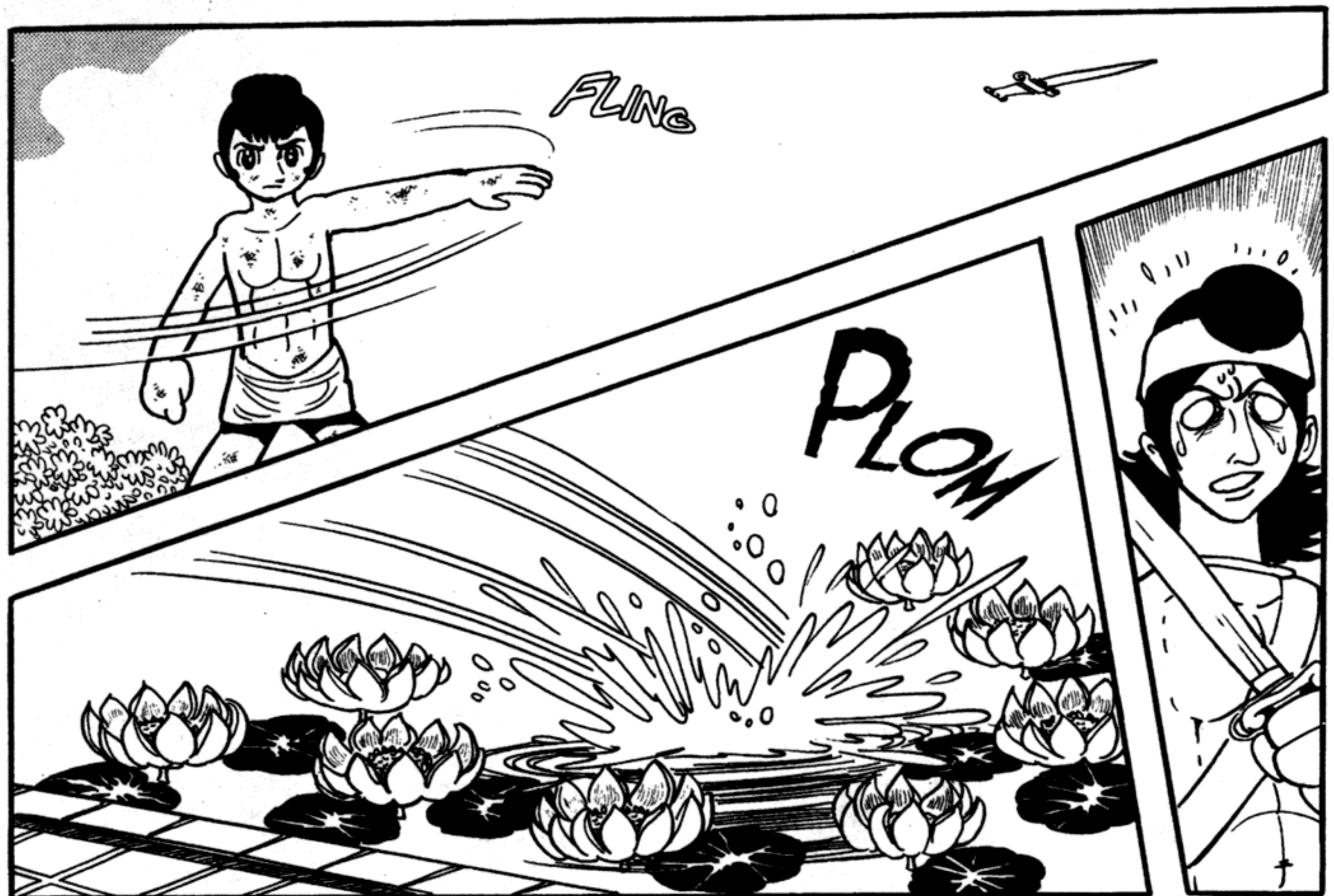
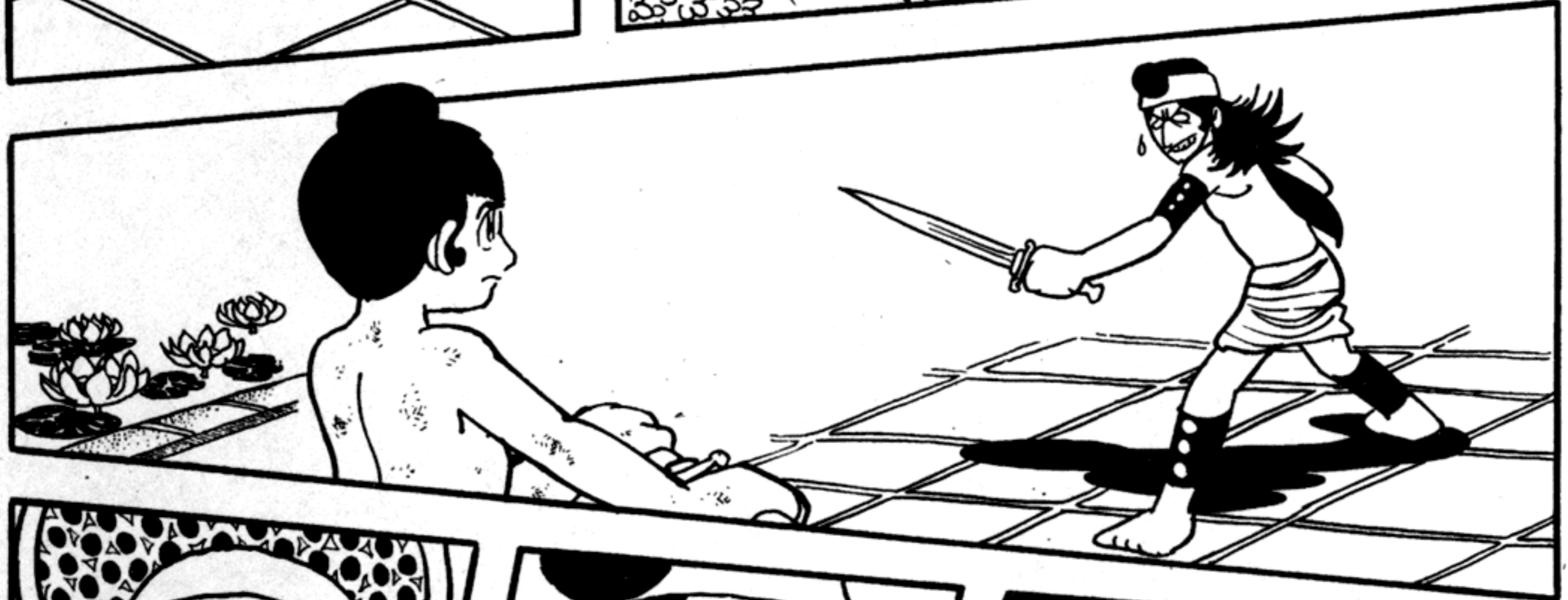
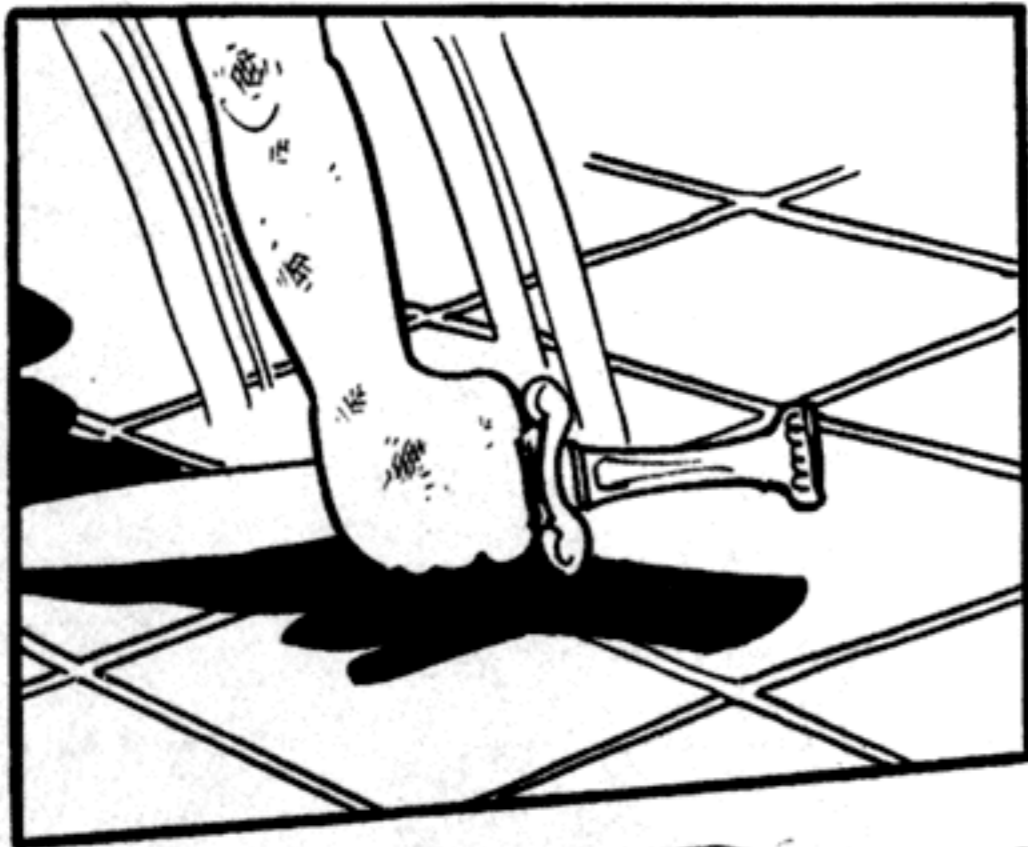


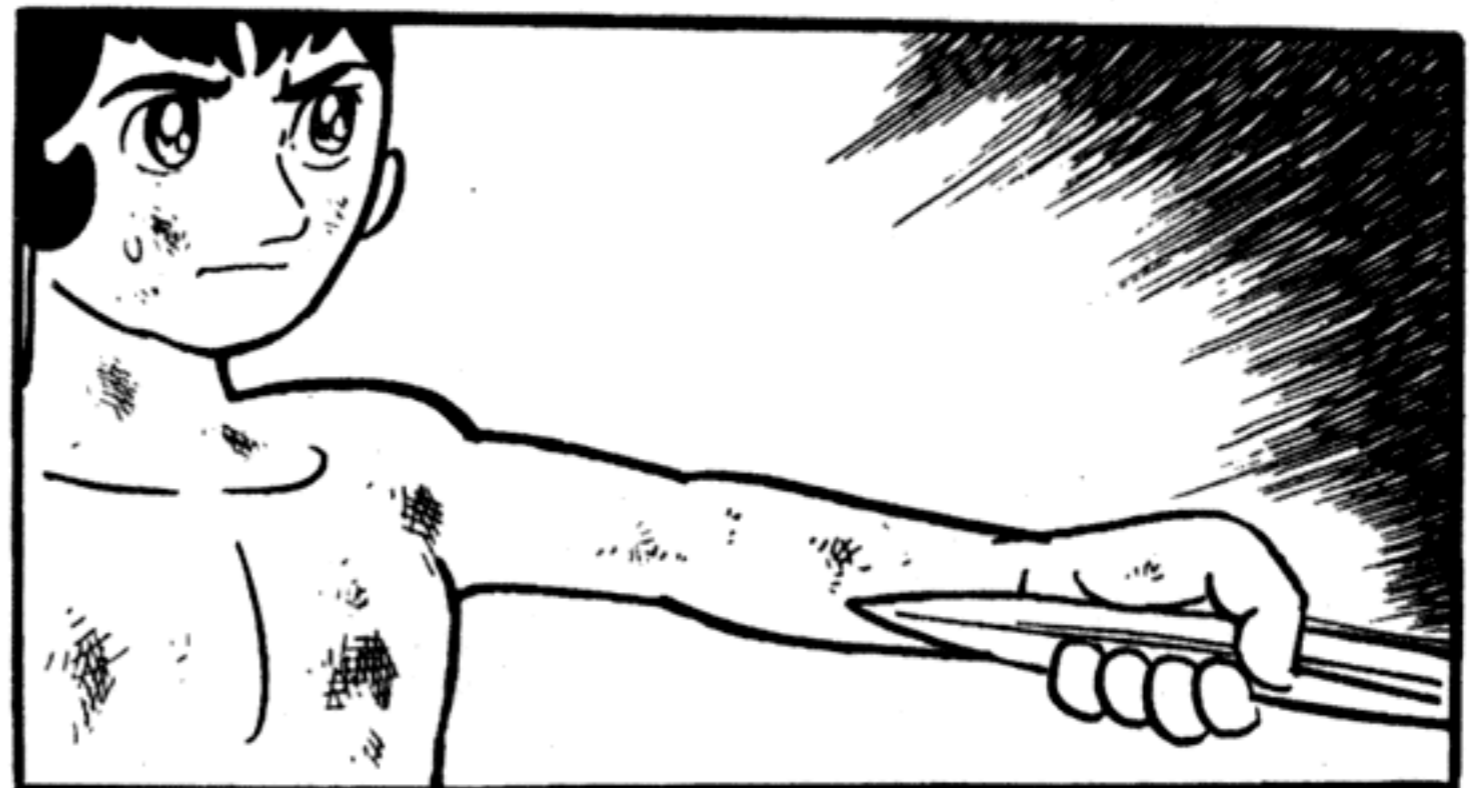
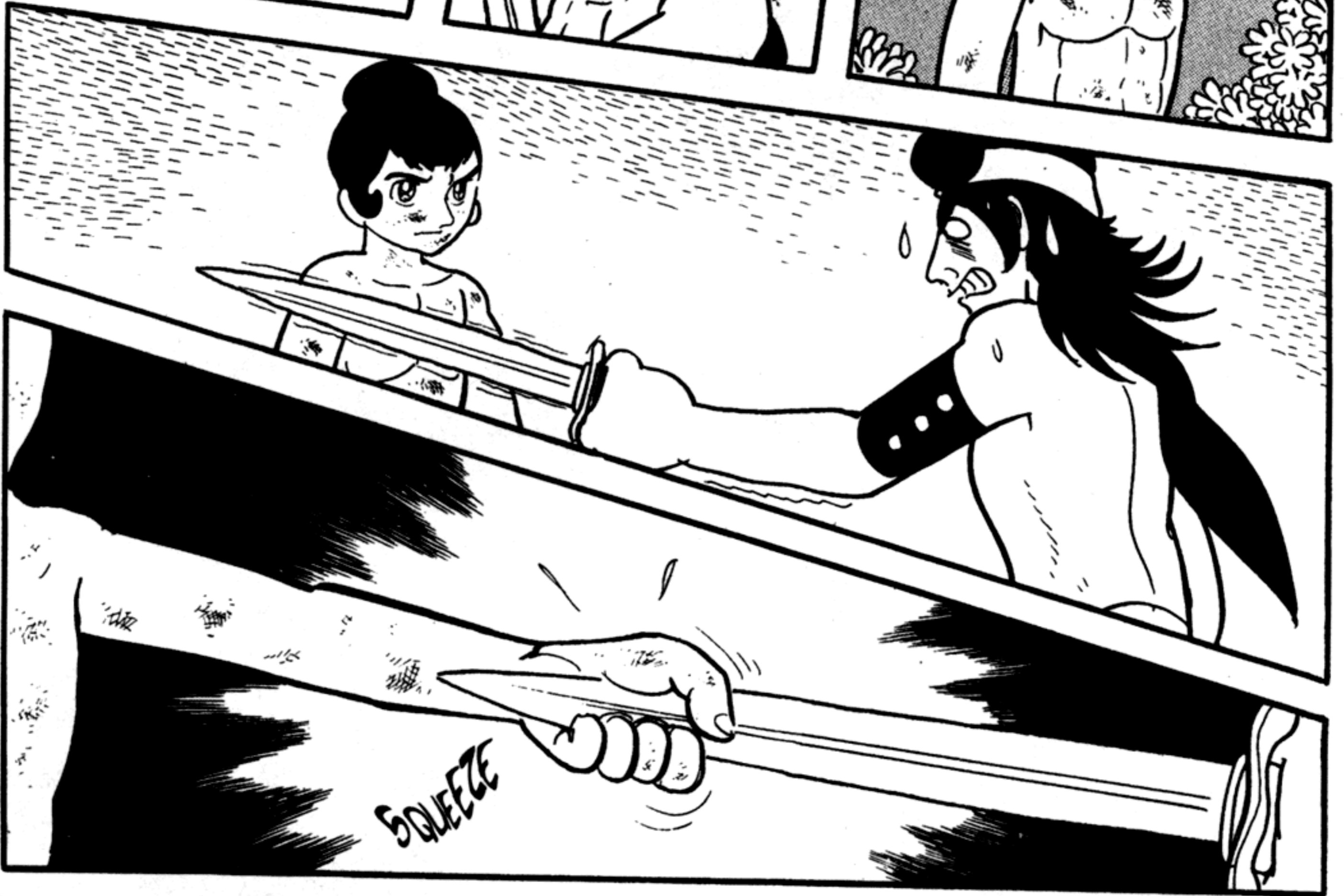
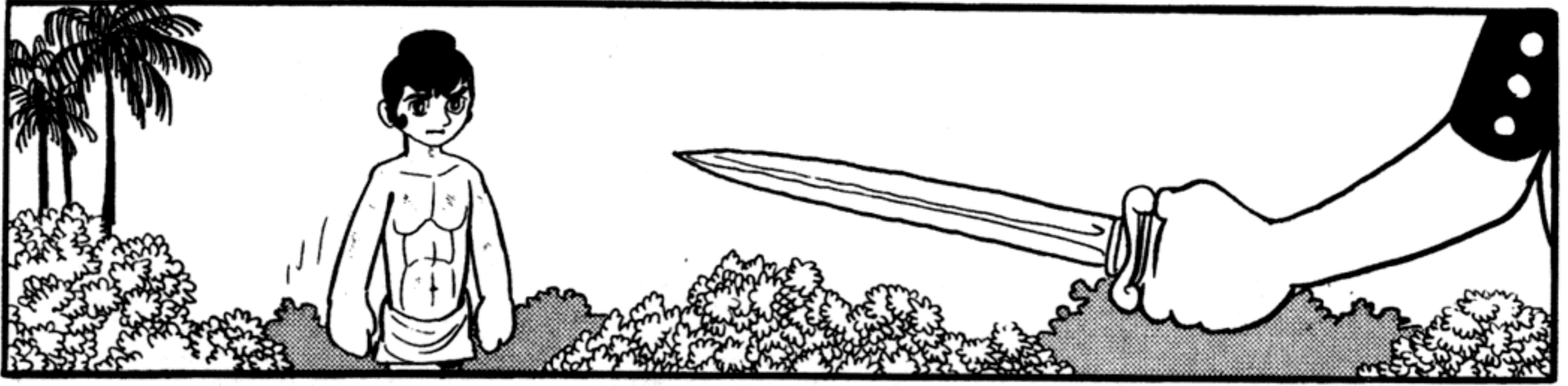
FAMILY, CLAN
AND COUNTRY,
NONE OF IT
HAS A PLACE IN
YOUR HEART.

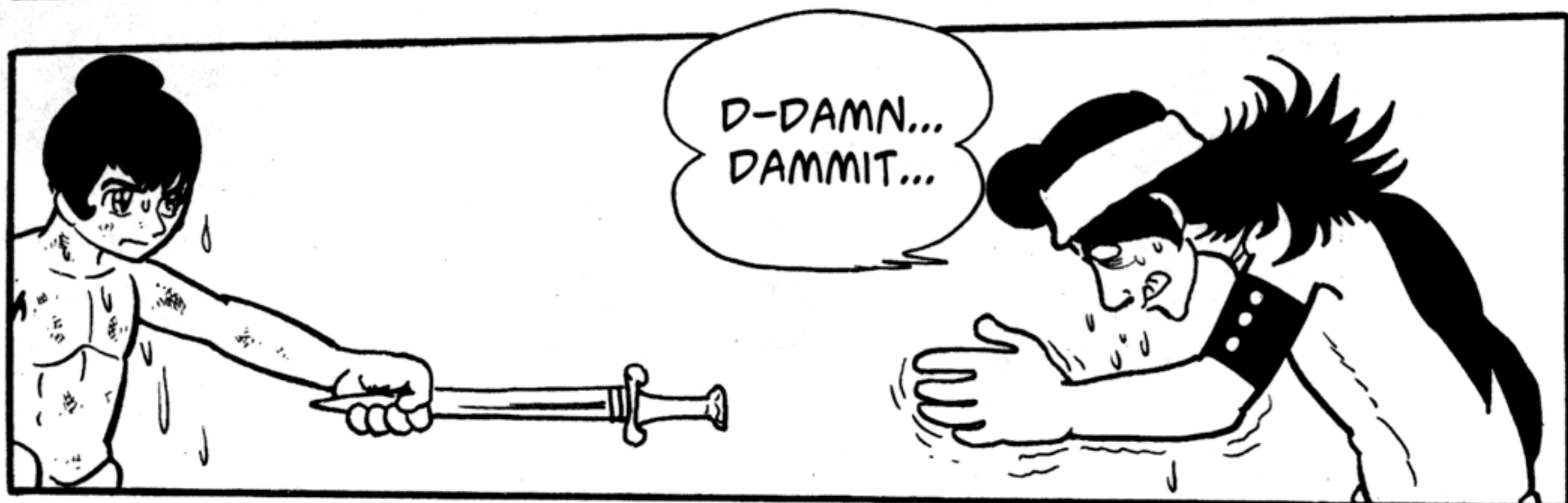
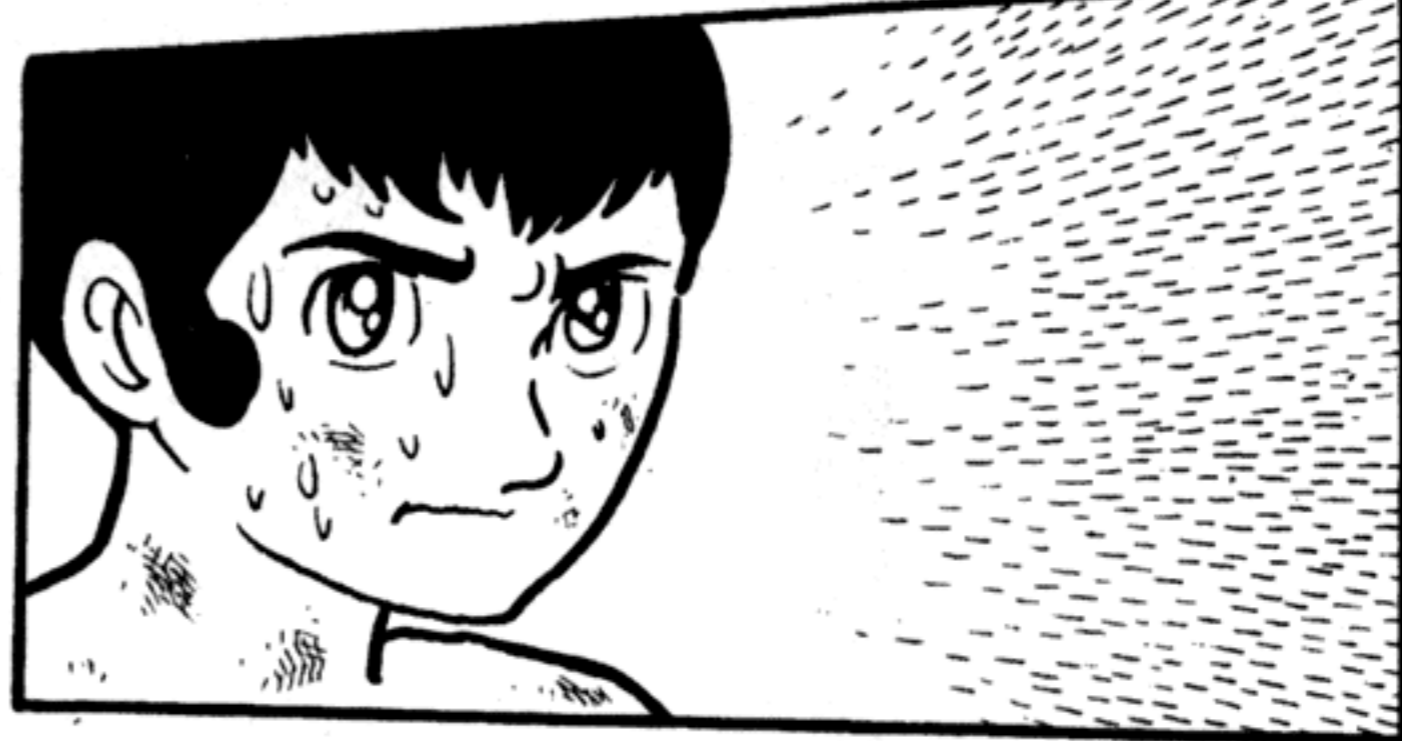
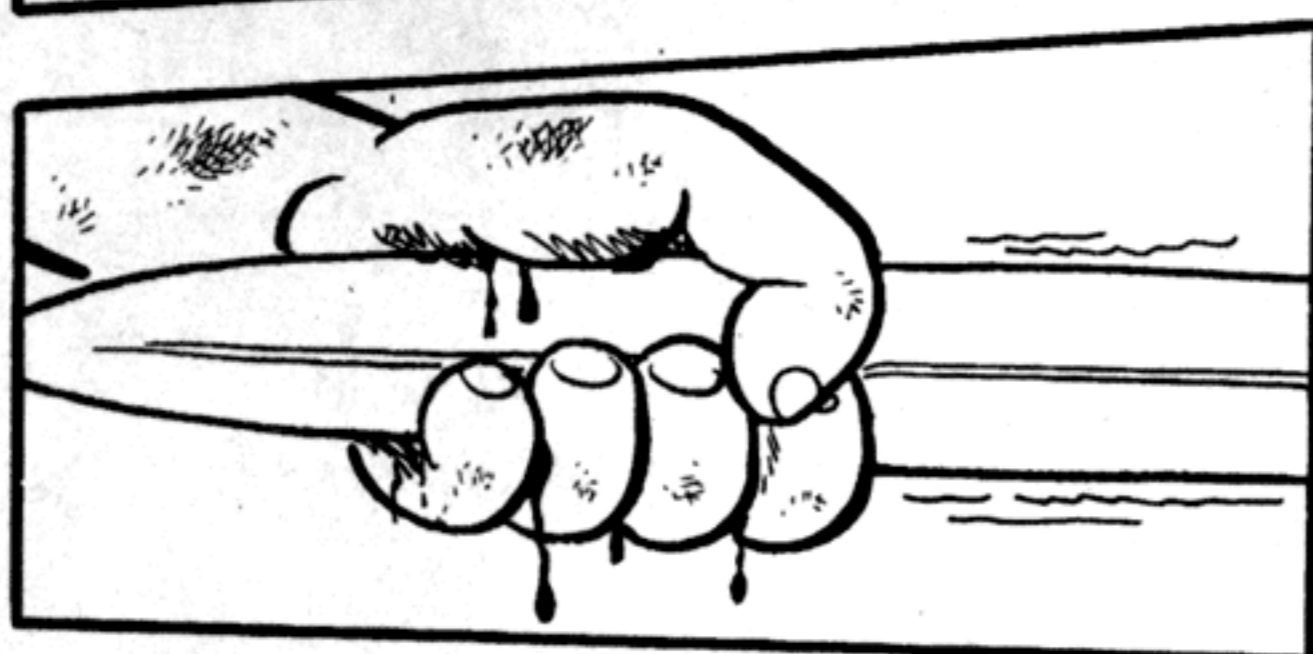
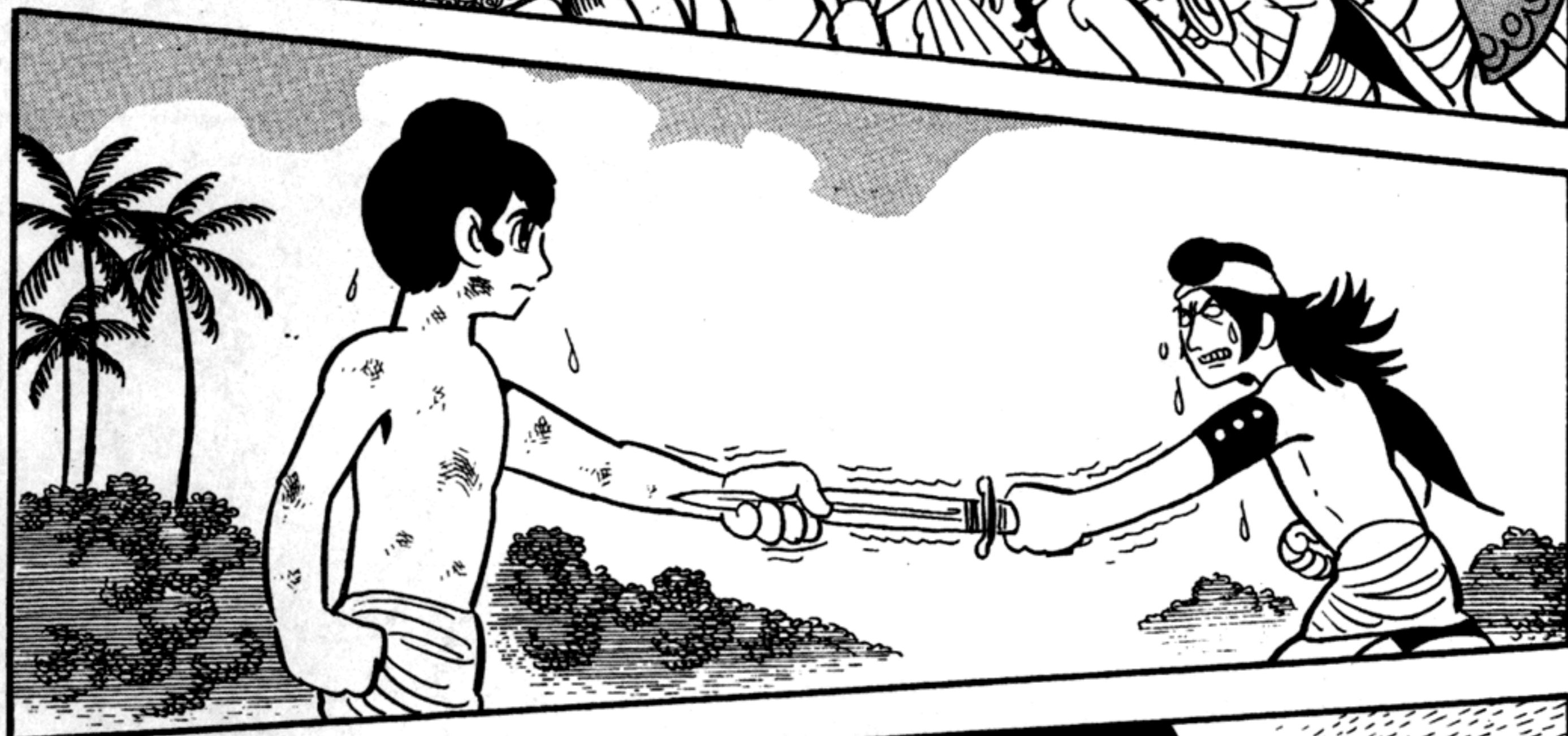
BE GONE
ALREADY,
IMMERSE
YOURSELF
IN MONKISH
THOUGHTS!

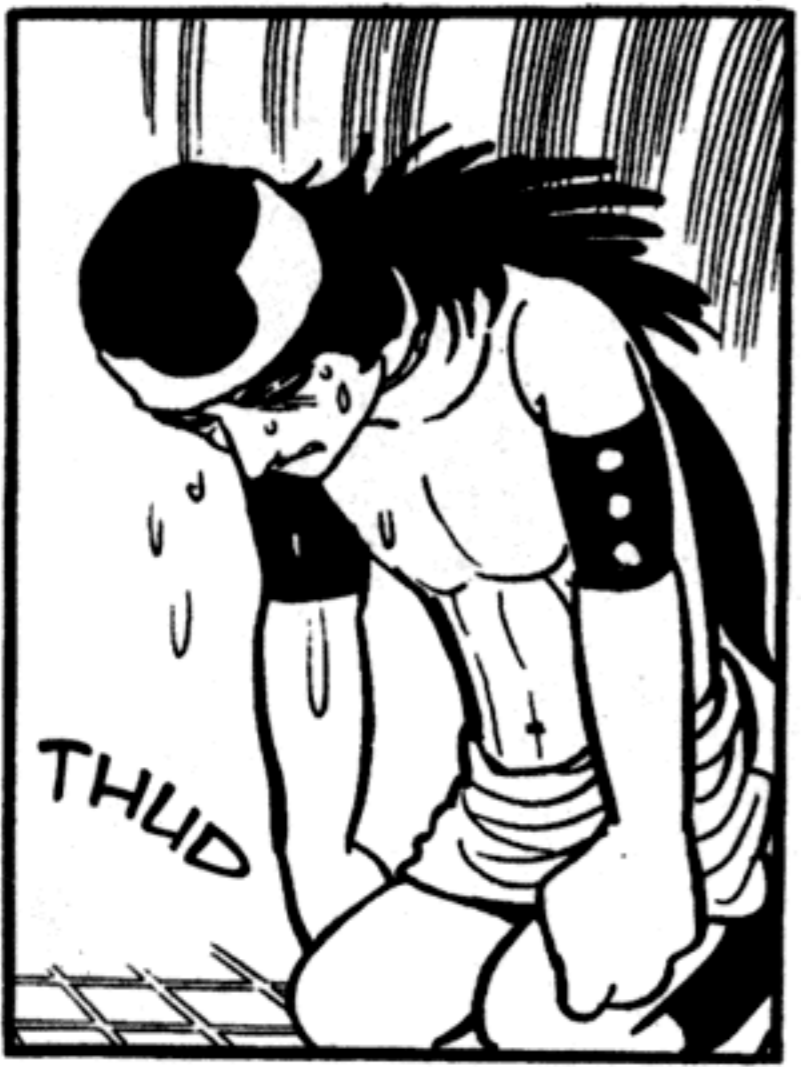
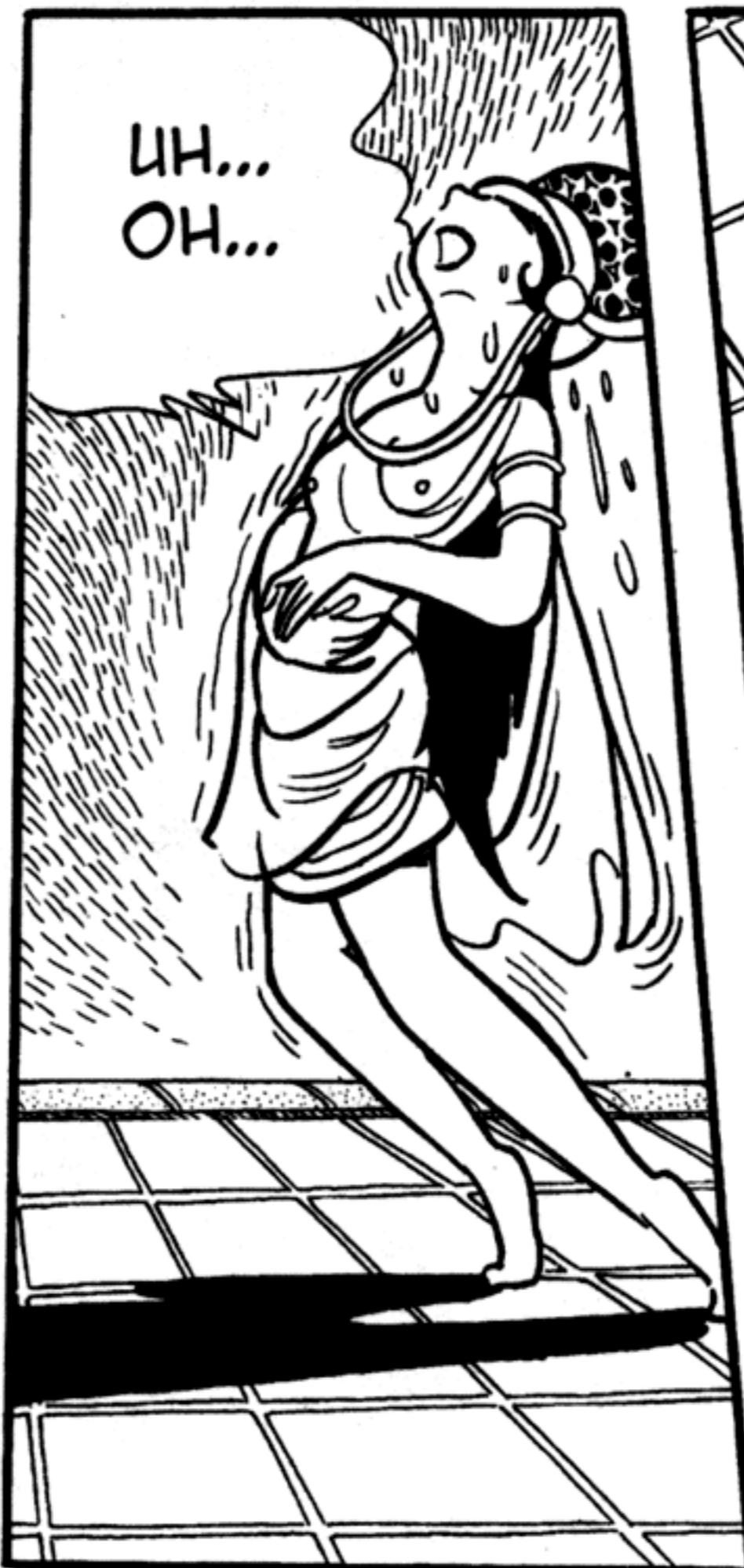
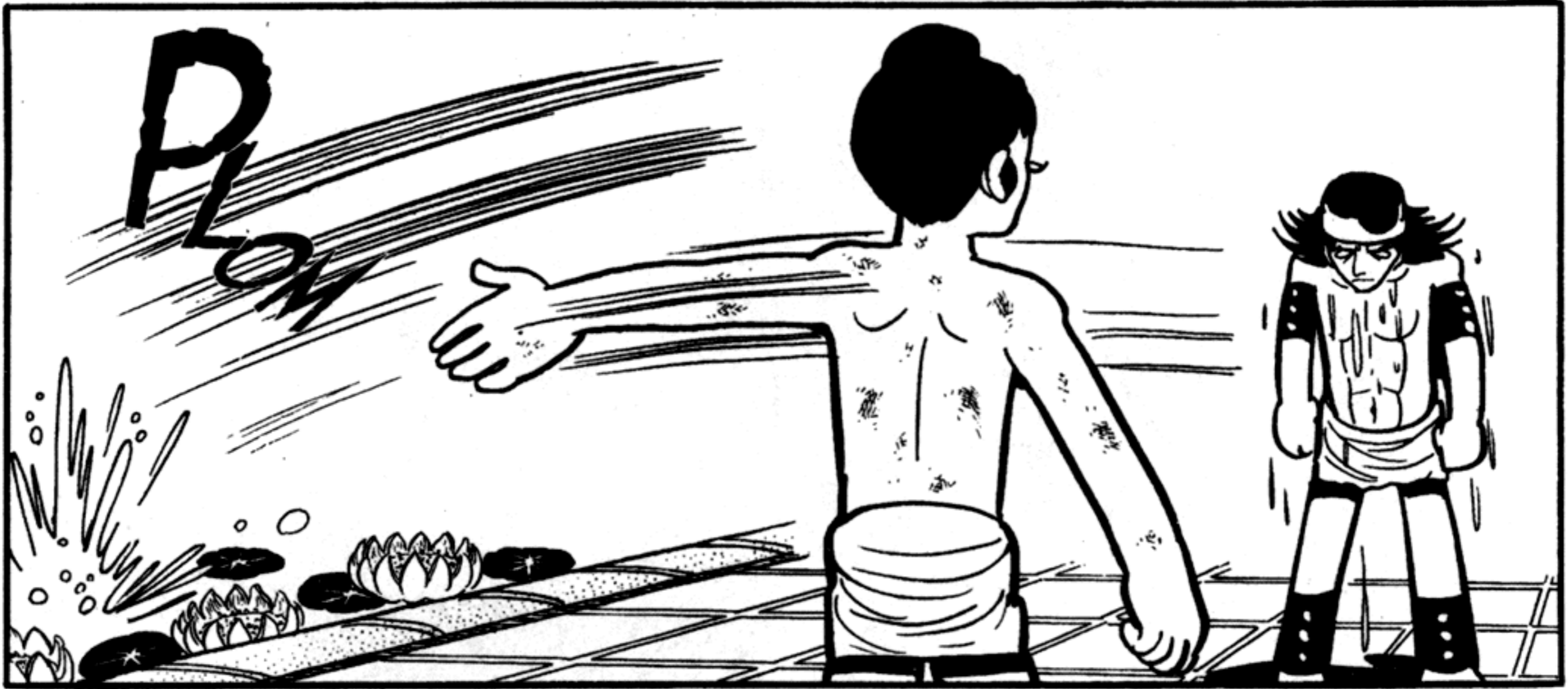
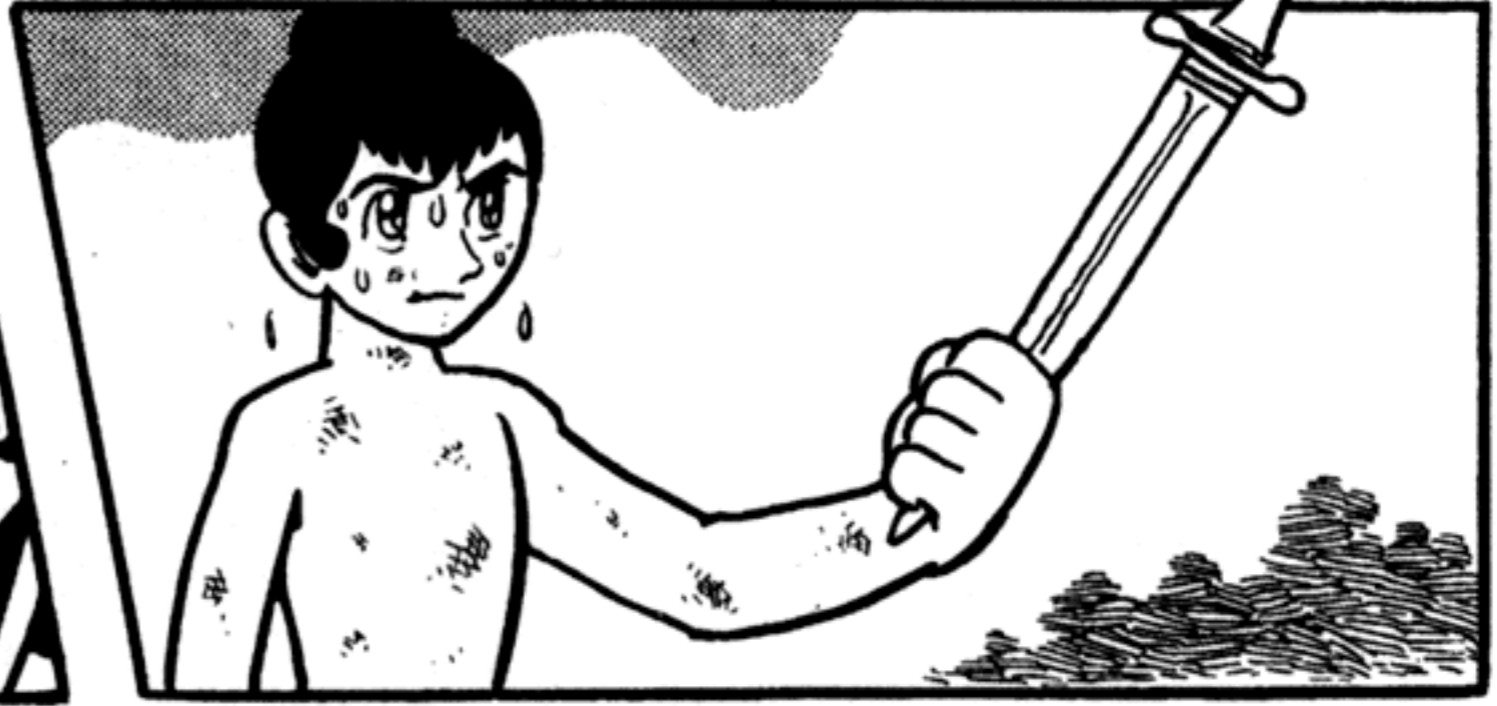
SID...DHAR...THA











CHAPTER NINE

DAWN OF THE JOURNEY



HOW IS YASHODARA, FATHER?

THE BABY WILL BE BORN BY TONIGHT...



SIDDHARTHA, YOUR BRAVERY IN DEFENDING YASHODARA WAS COMMENDABLE.

IT'S NOT TOO LATE TO GO ON AND REFORM YOUR WAYS.



NO. I AM FREE TO DO AS I WISH AND I DON'T WANT TO BE A CARETAKER.



IF IT IS A BOY, I WILL STEP DOWN IN 7 DAYS AND YOU WILL TAKE OVER THE THRONE.



THIS IS MY FINAL WISH...



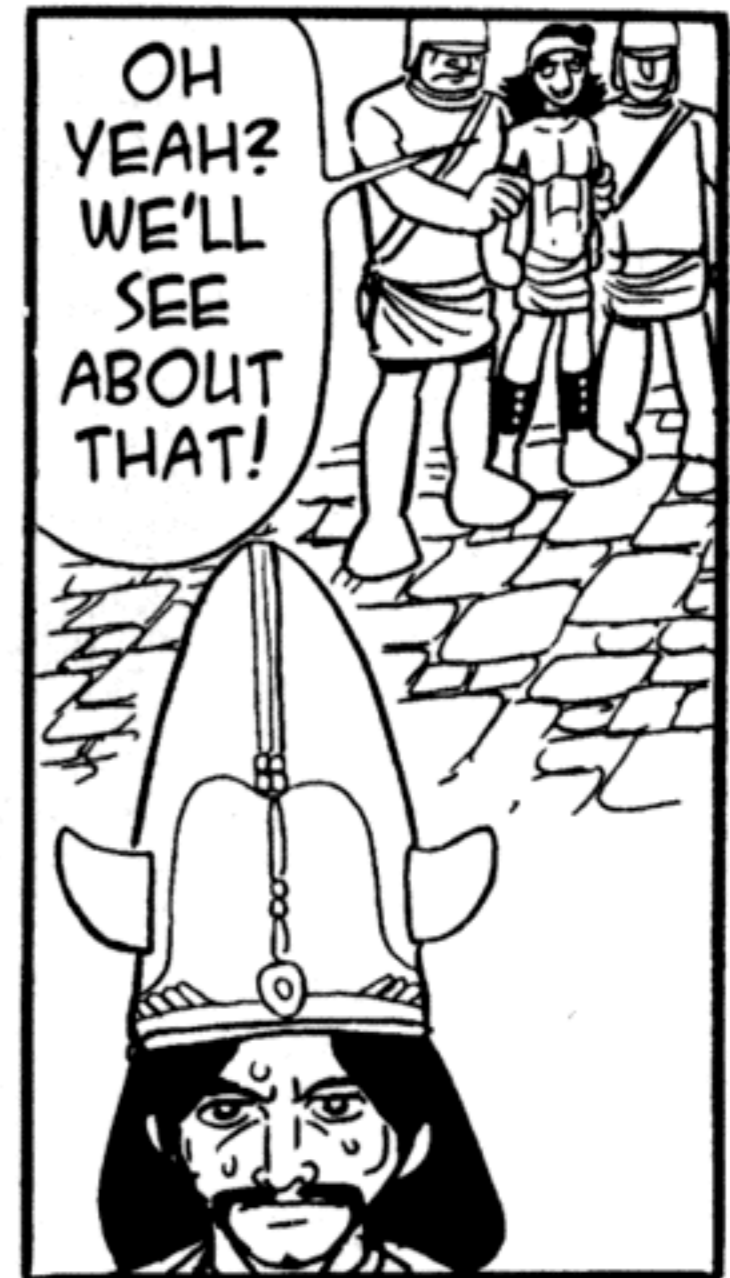
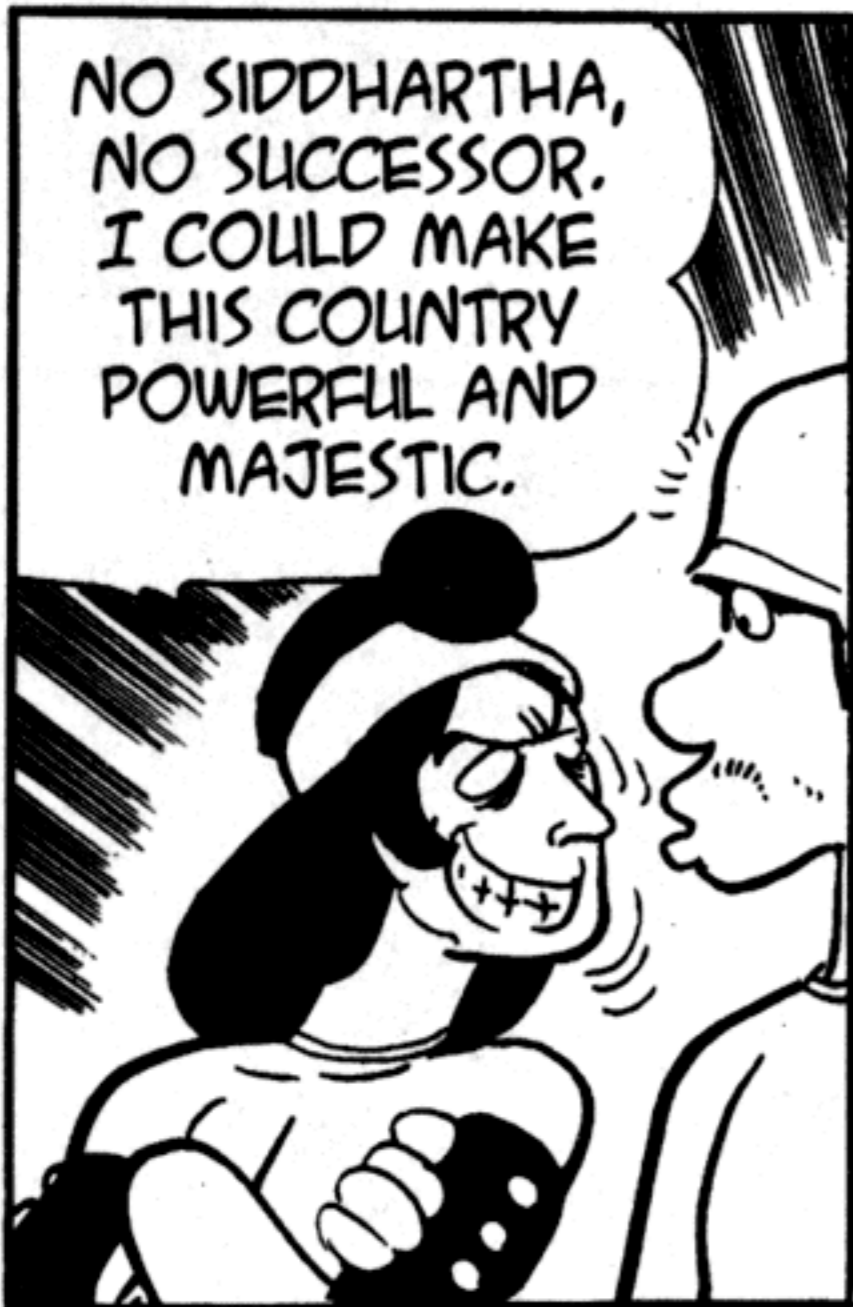
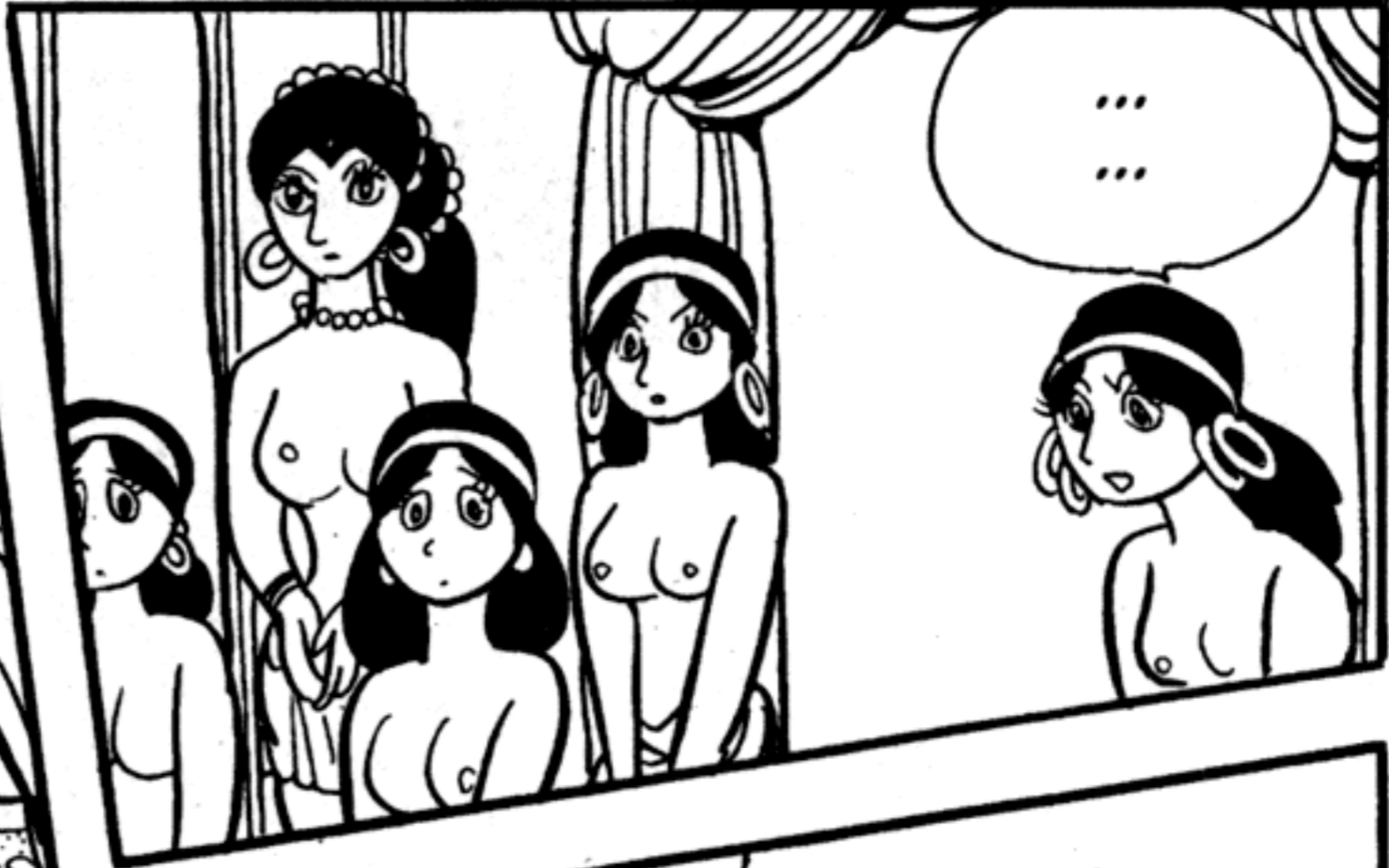
FATHER, EVEN IF I SUCCEED YOU AS KING, IN A FEW YEARS THE COUNTRY WILL FALL.

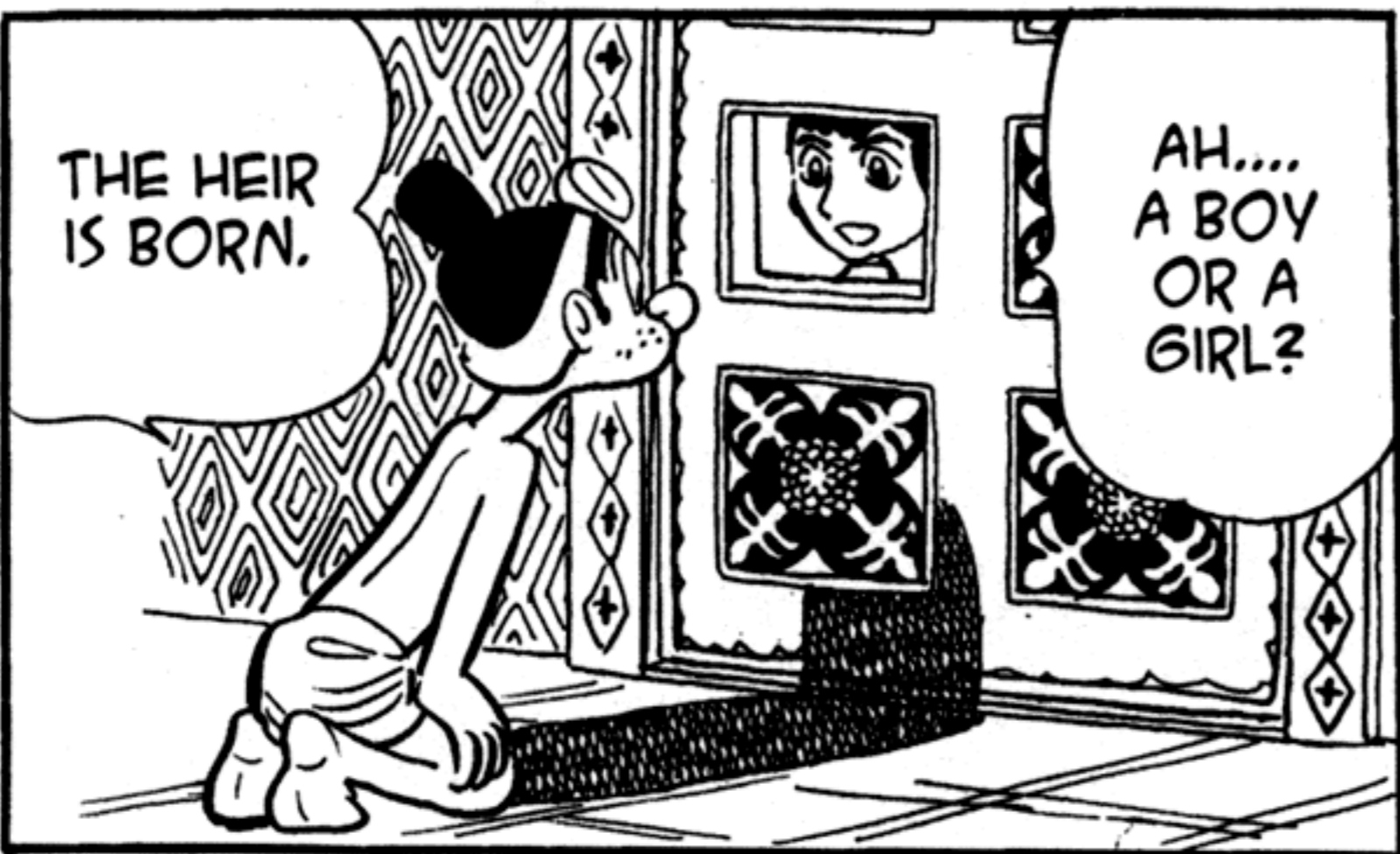
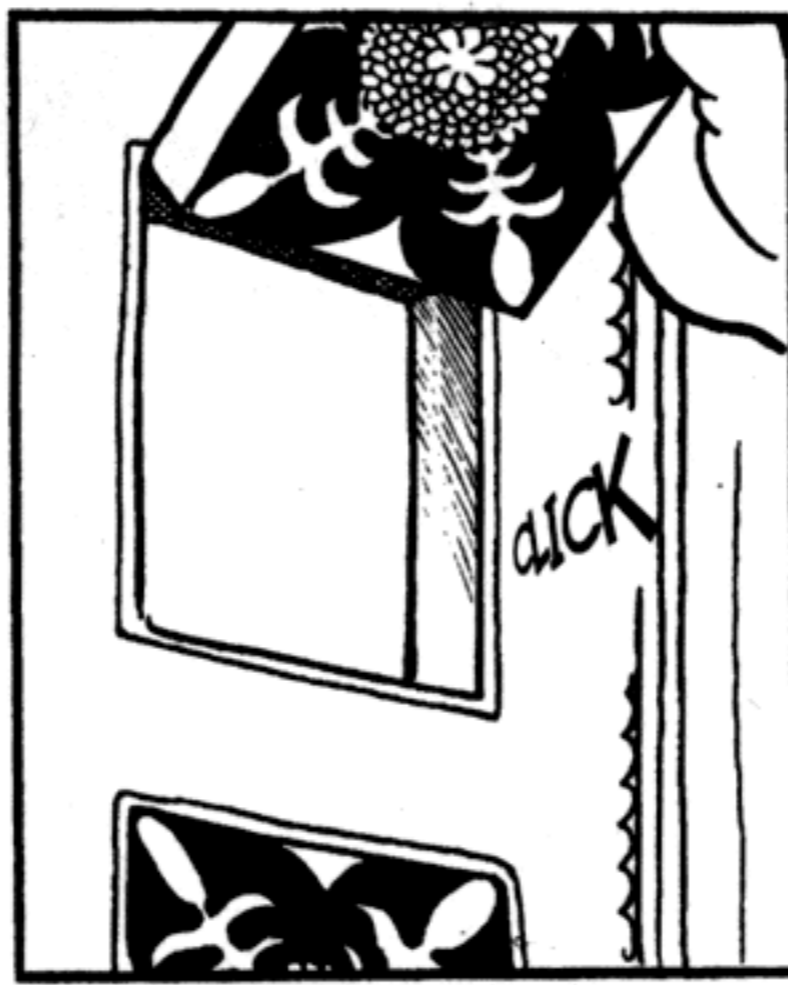
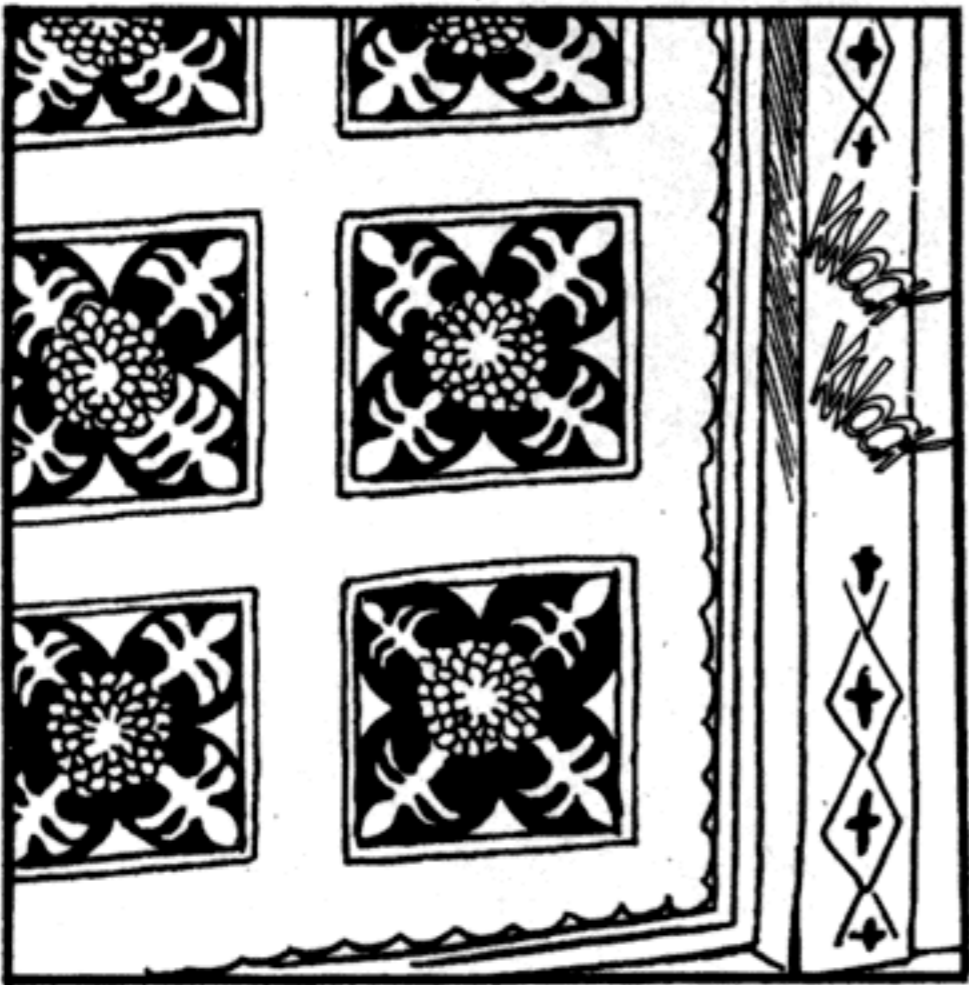
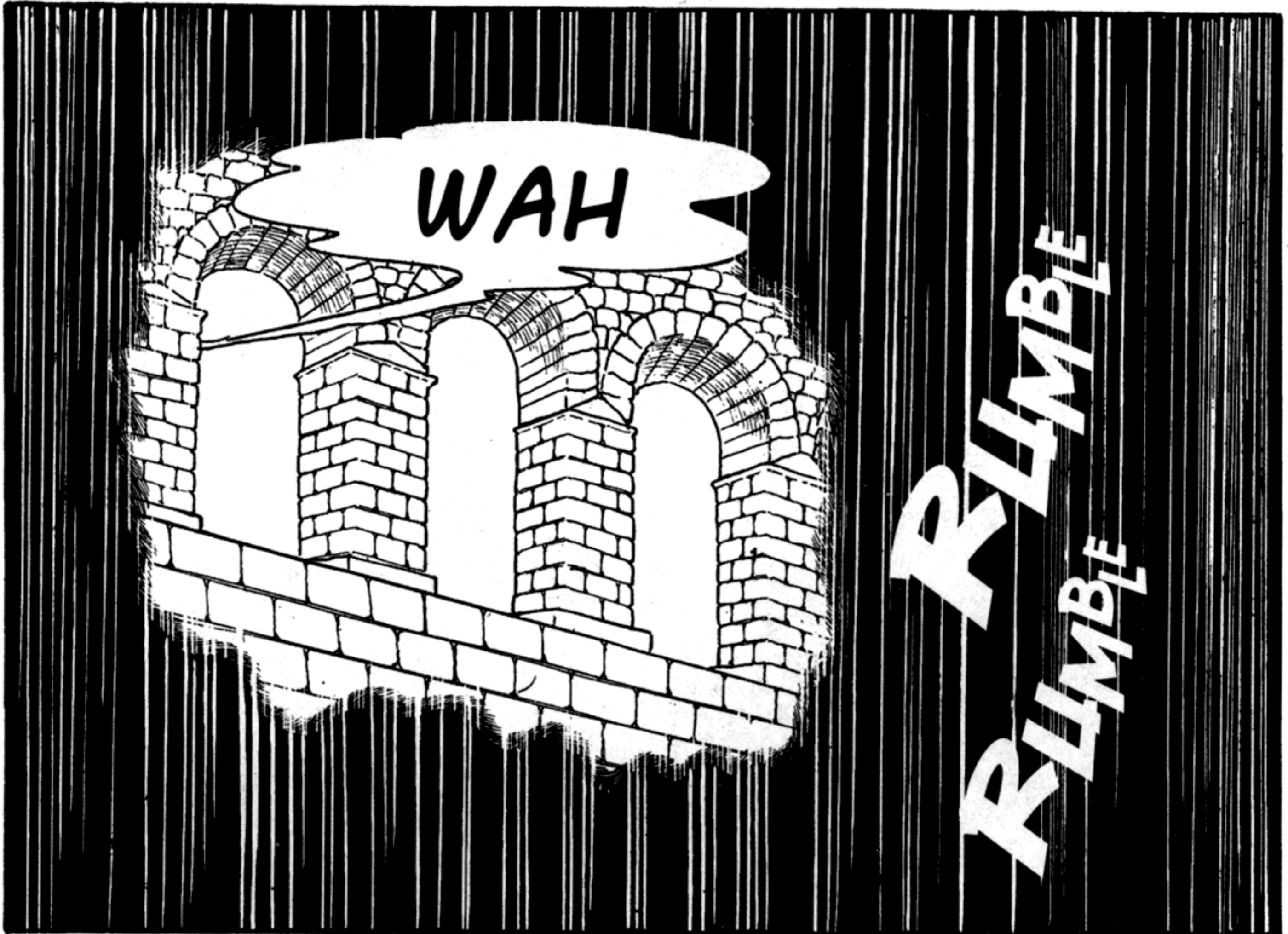


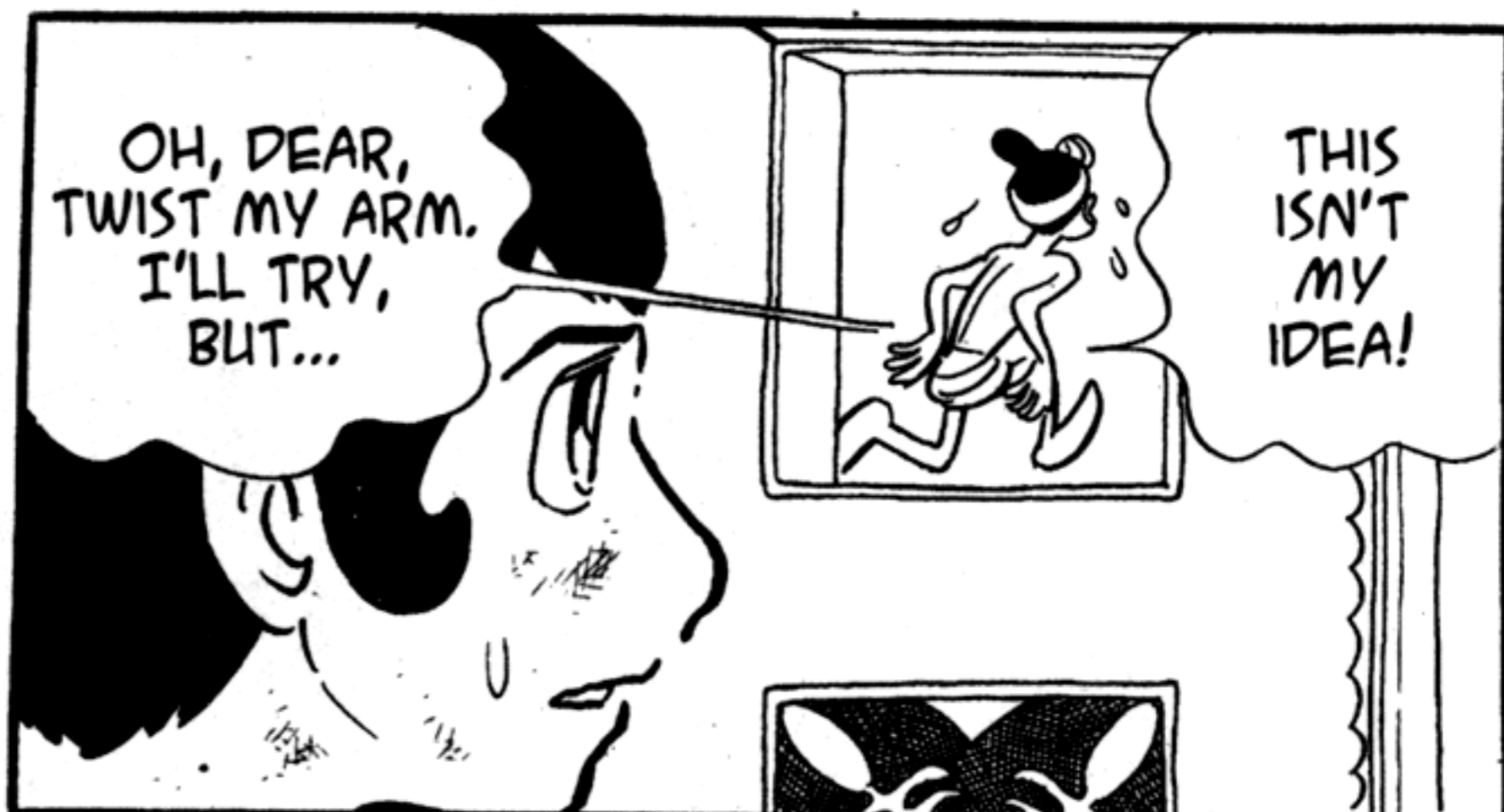
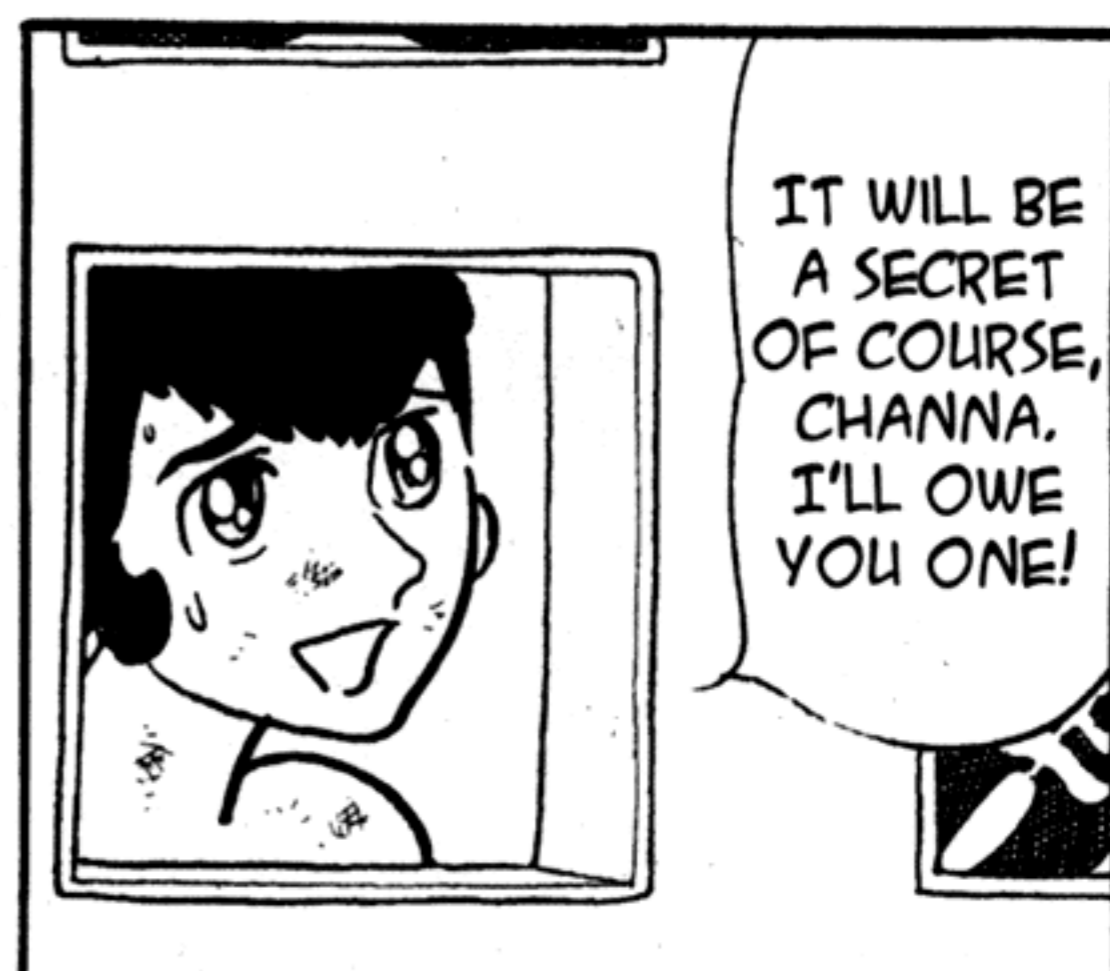
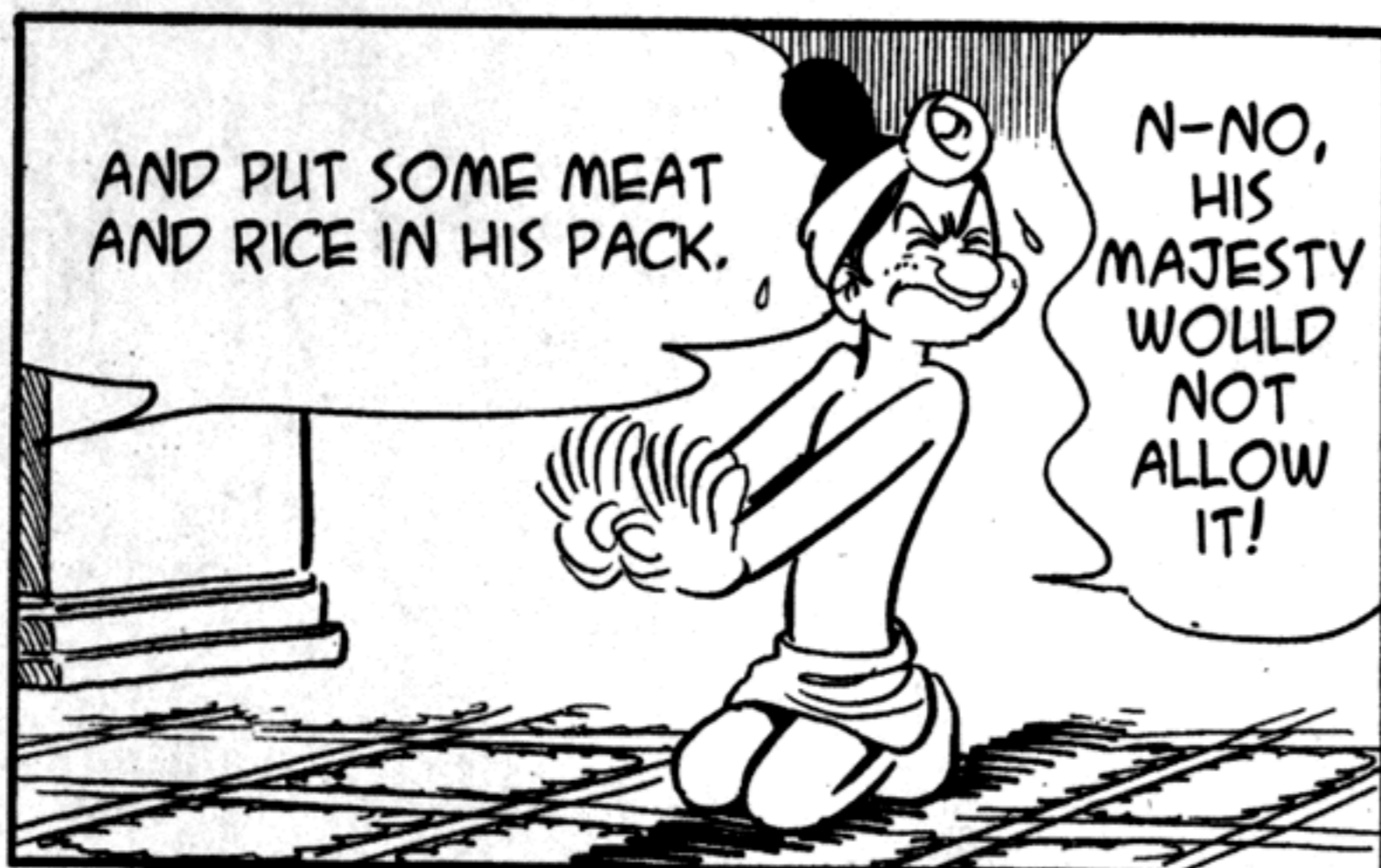
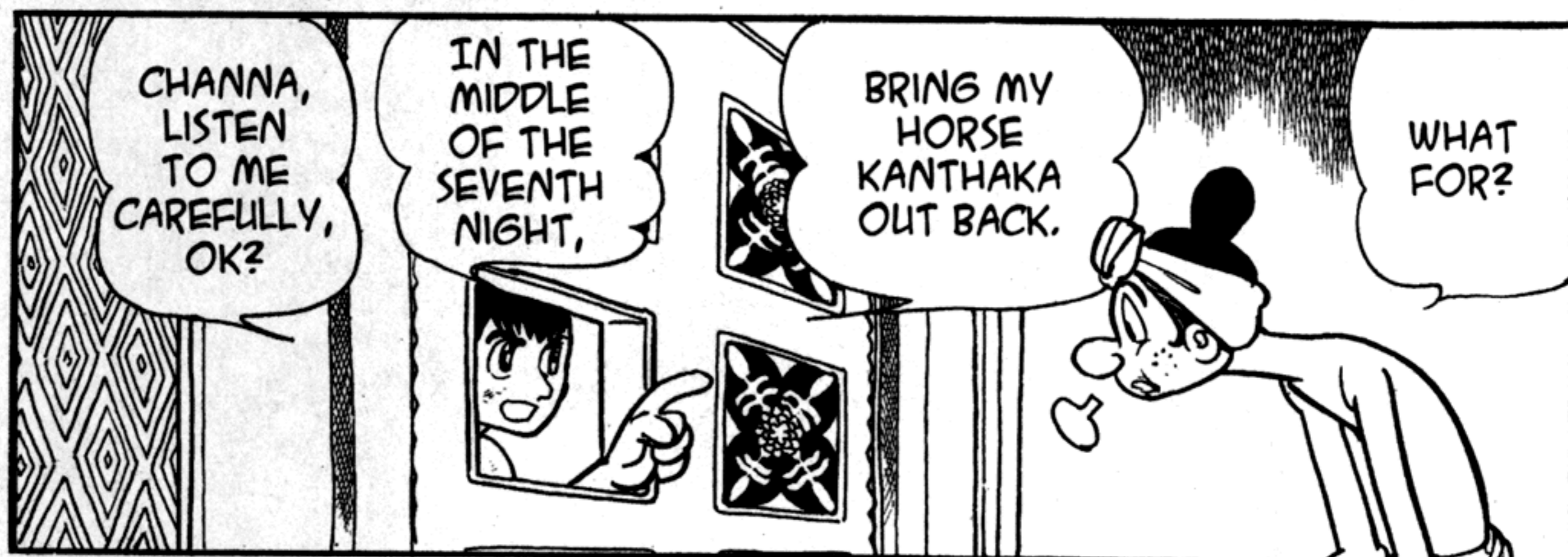
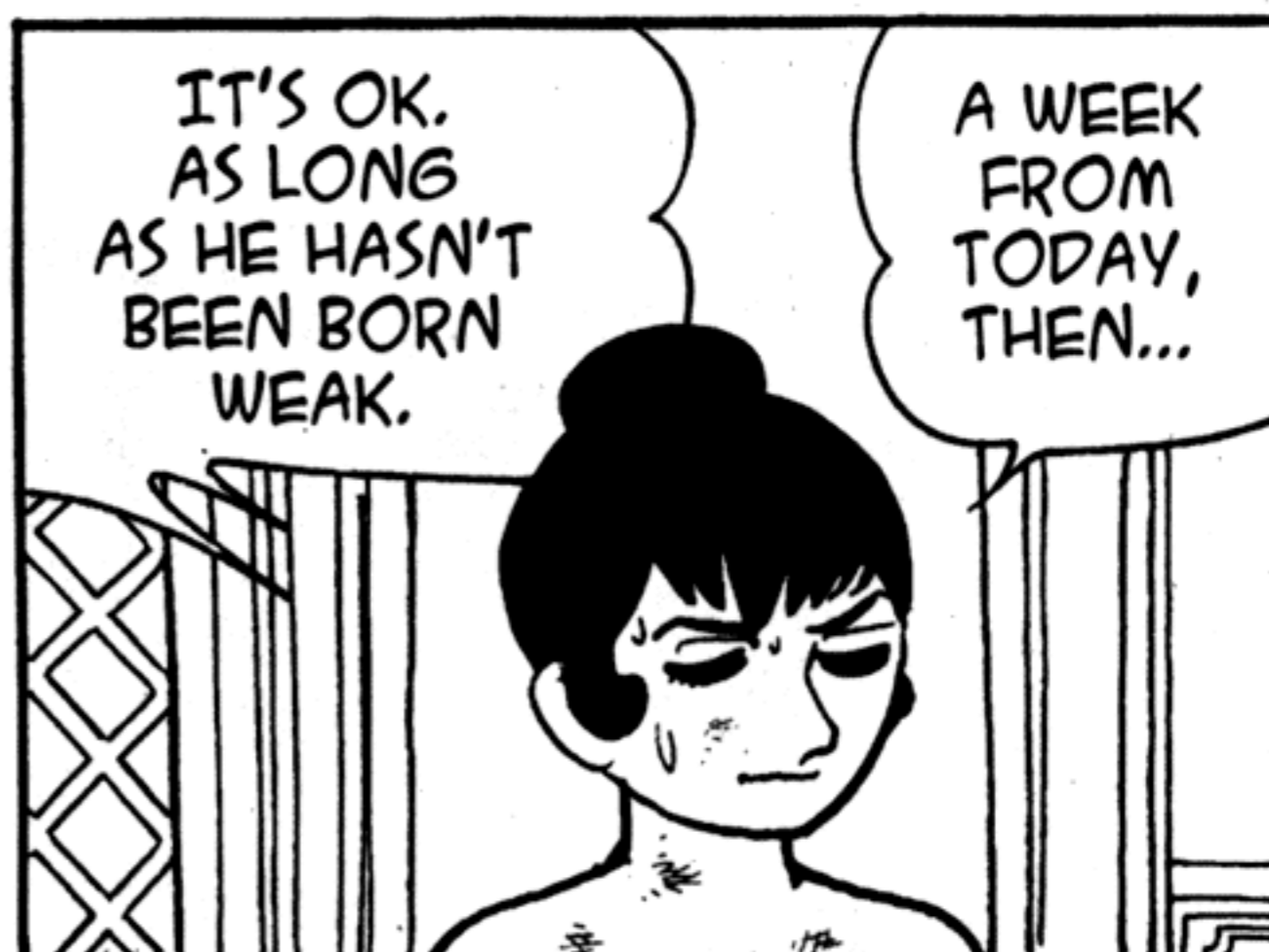
HOW FAR WILL YOU TAKE THIS GRUDGE?!

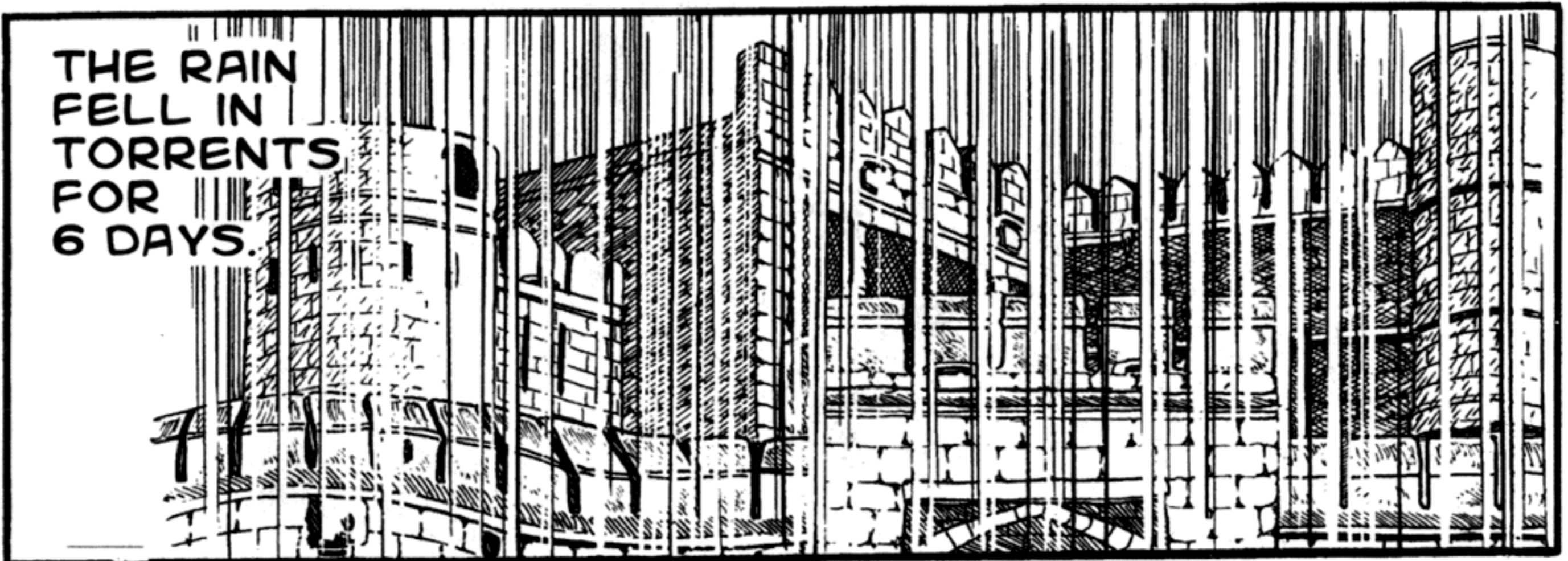
CHANNA WILL BRING YOUR MEALS.

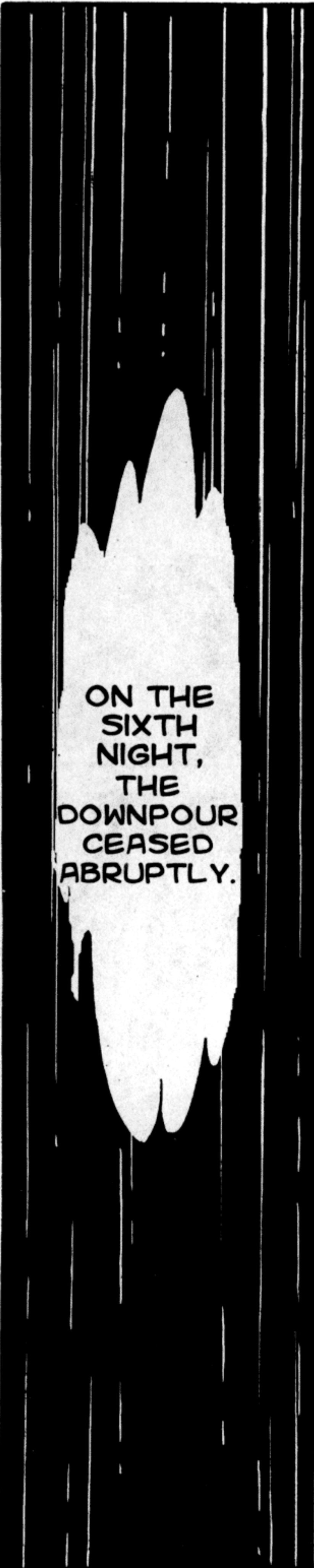
YOU'RE BEYOND MY CONTROL... IN THE 7 DAYS UNTIL THE THRONE IS CEDED, I'LL HAVE YOU LOCKED UP IN HERE.



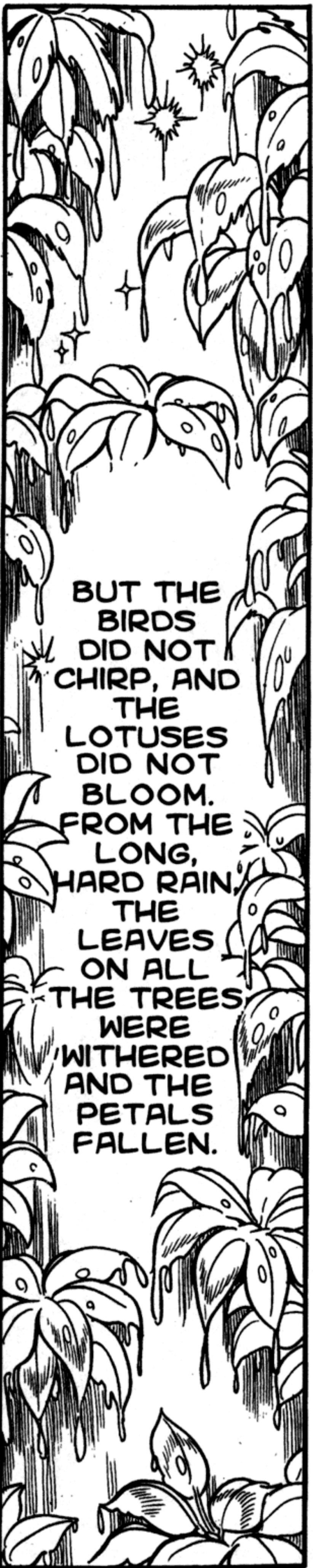








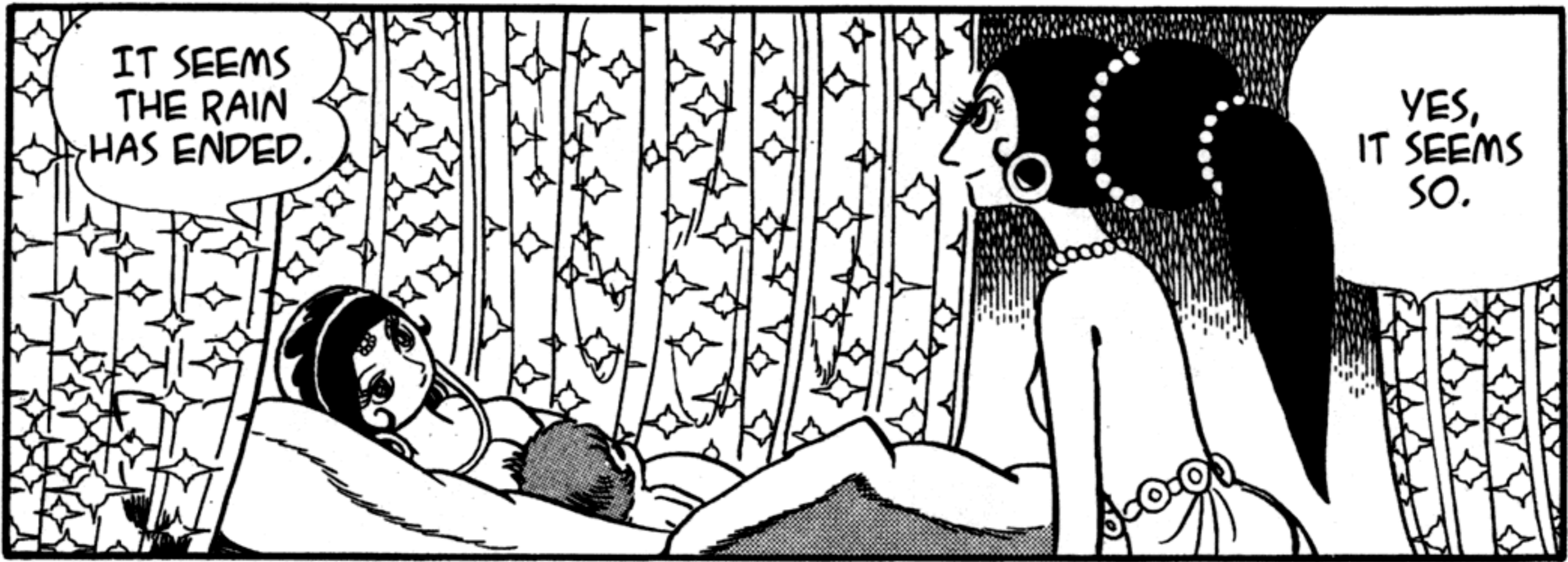
ON THE
SIXTH
NIGHT,
THE
DOWNPOUR
CEASED
ABRUPTLY.



BUT THE
BIRDS
DID NOT
CHIRP, AND
THE
LOTUSES
DID NOT
BLOOM.
FROM THE
LONG,
HARD RAIN,
THE
LEAVES
ON ALL
THE TREES
WERE
WITHERED
AND THE
PETALS
FALLEN.

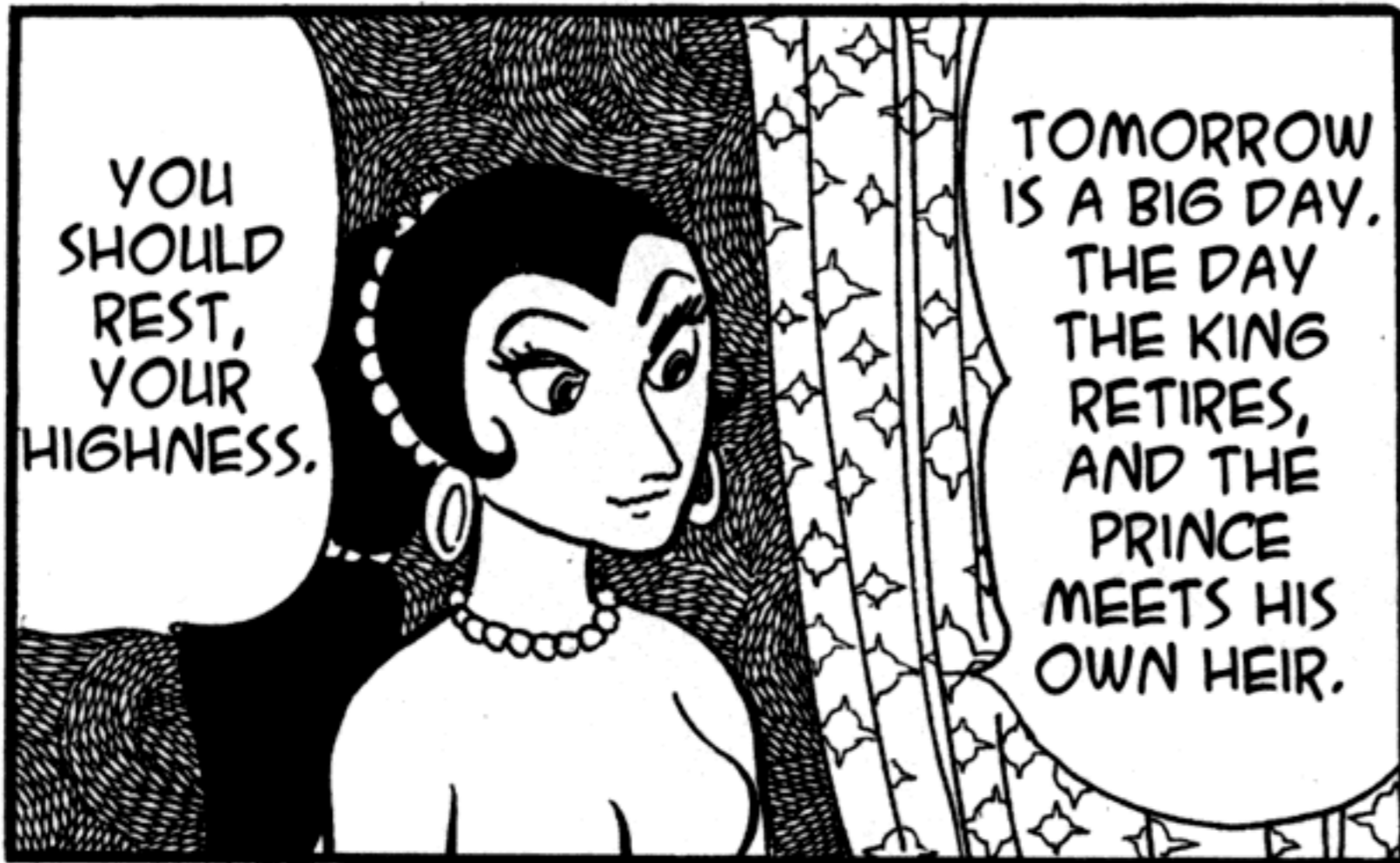


IT
WAS LIKE
A PROPHECY
OF SOME
MOMENTOUS
THING SOON
TO OCCUR.



IT SEEMS
THE RAIN
HAS ENDED.

YES,
IT SEEMS
SO.



YOU
SHOULD
REST,
YOUR
HIGHNESS.

TOMORROW
IS A BIG DAY.
THE DAY
THE KING
RETIRES,
AND THE
PRINCE
MEETS HIS
OWN HEIR.



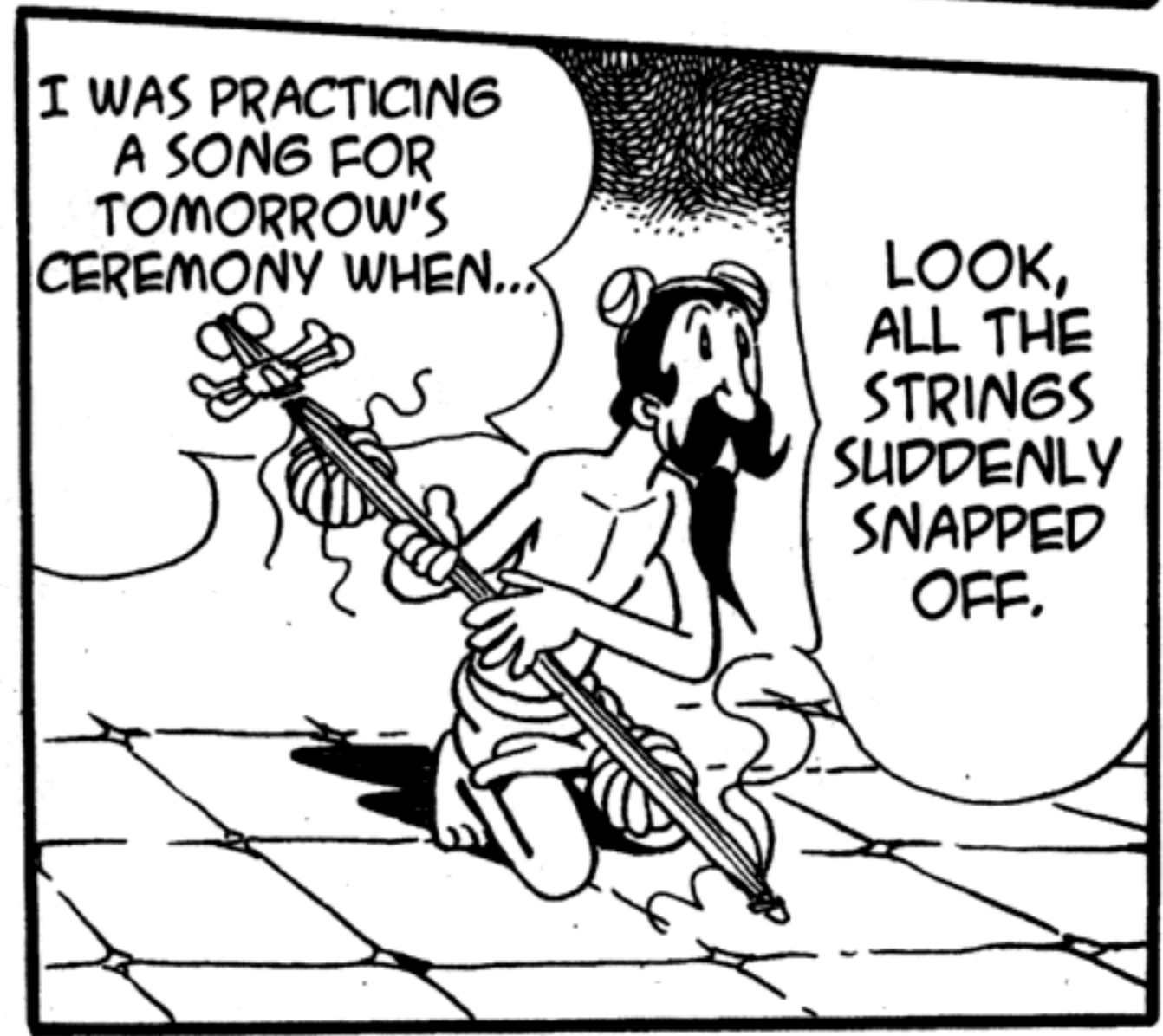
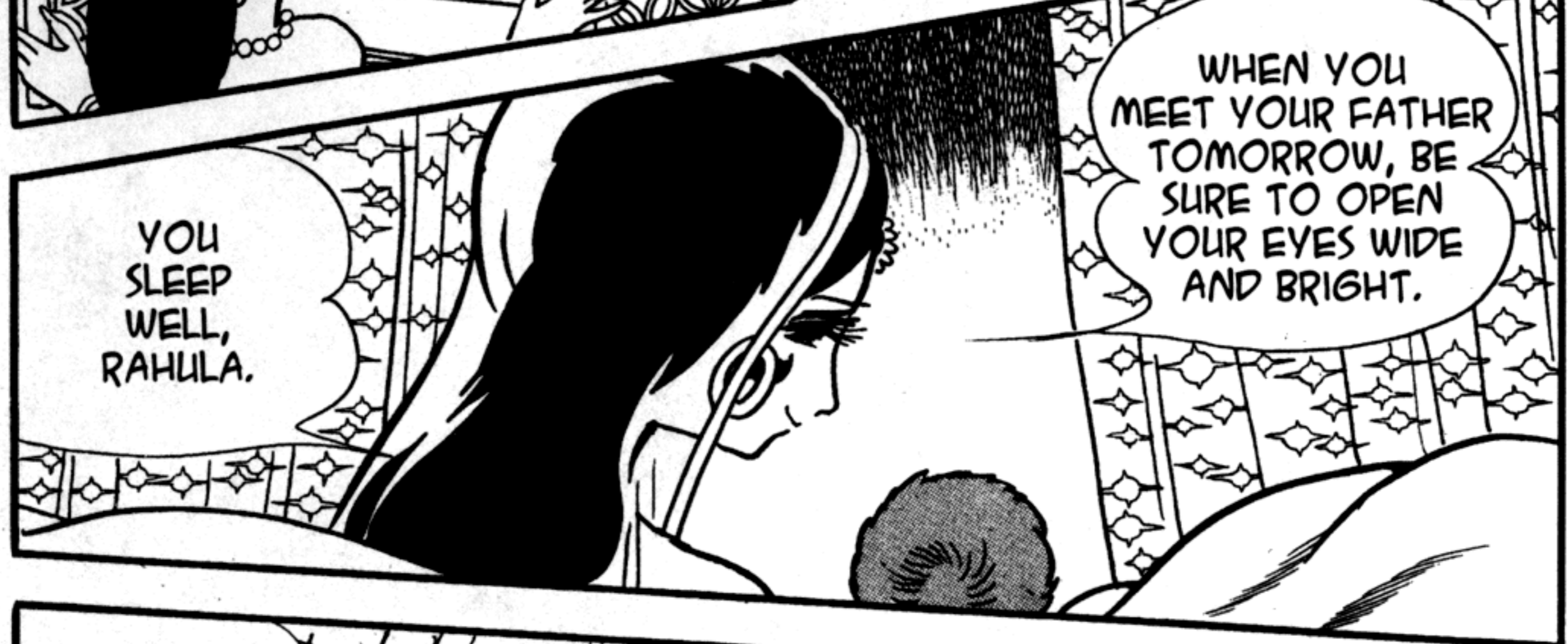
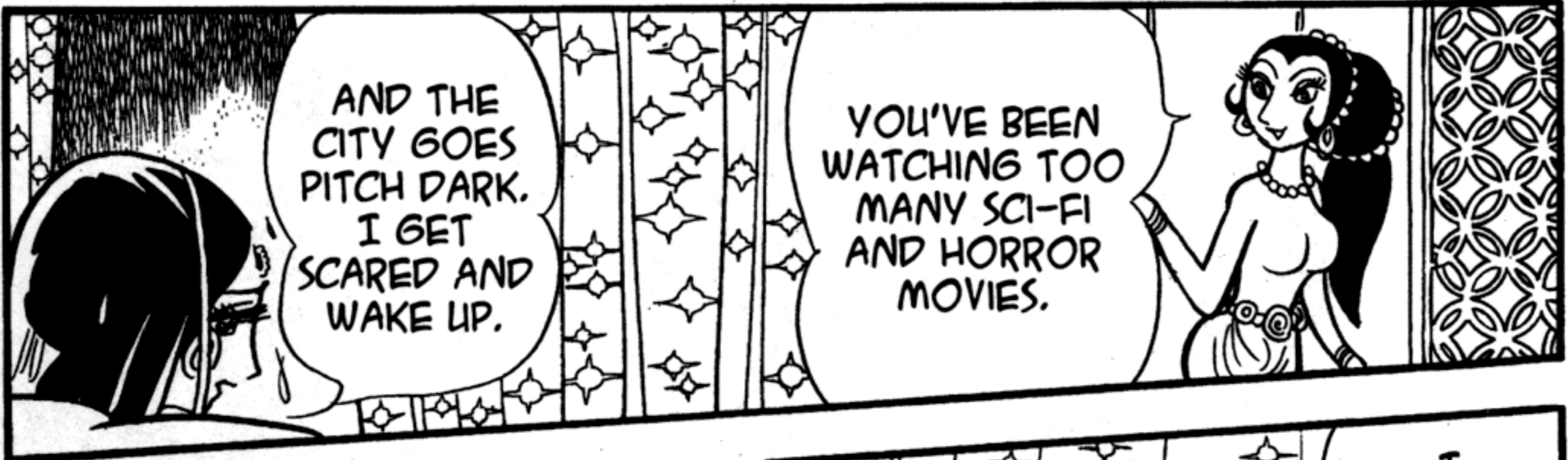
YES...
THAT'S
WHY I
CAN'T
SLEEP.

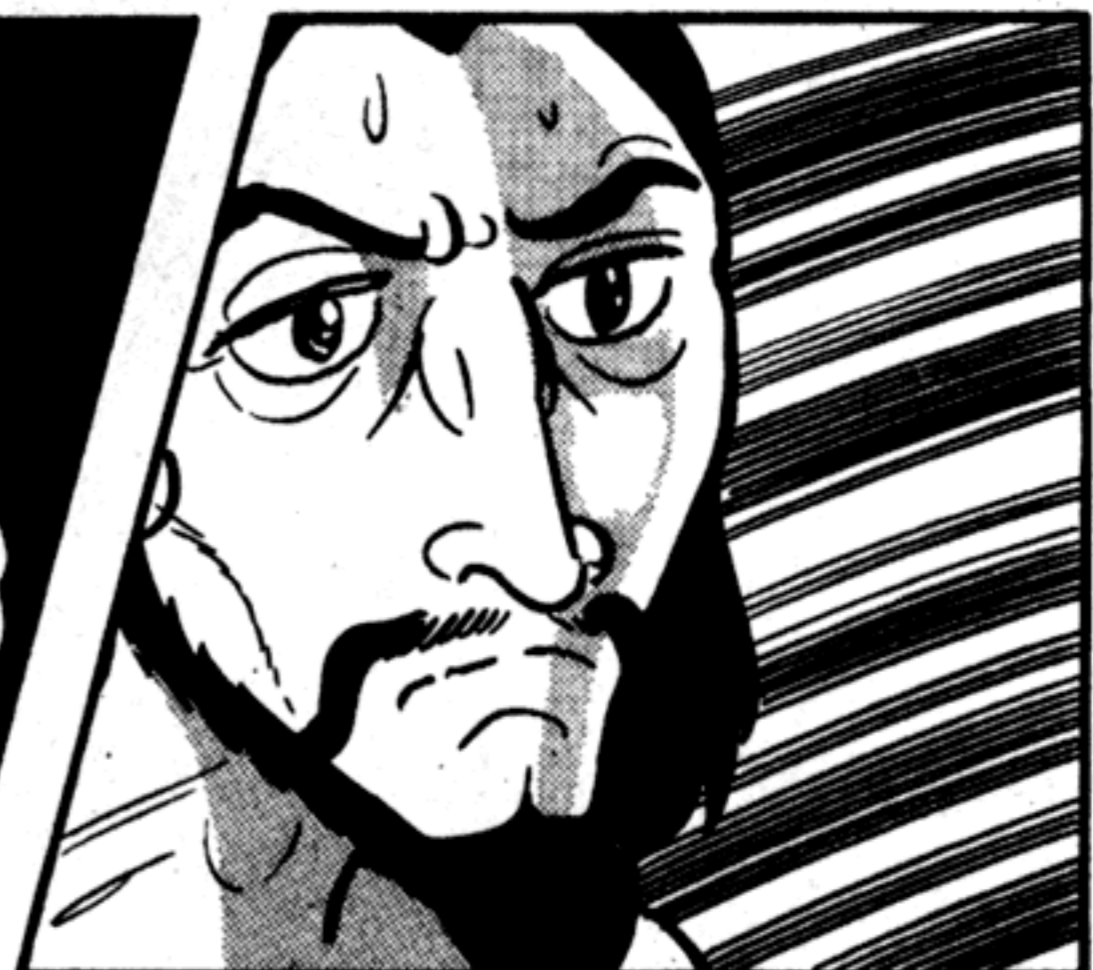
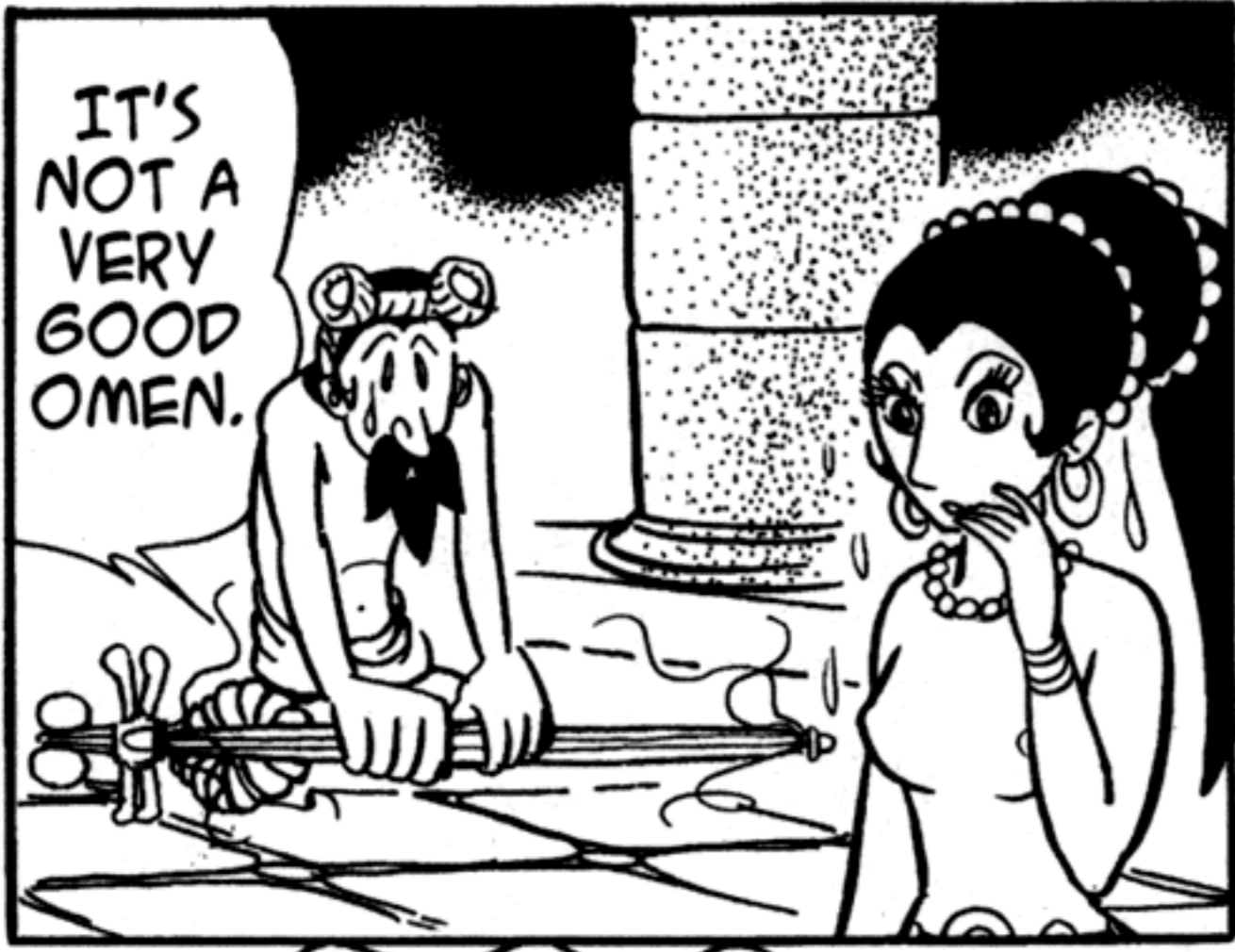


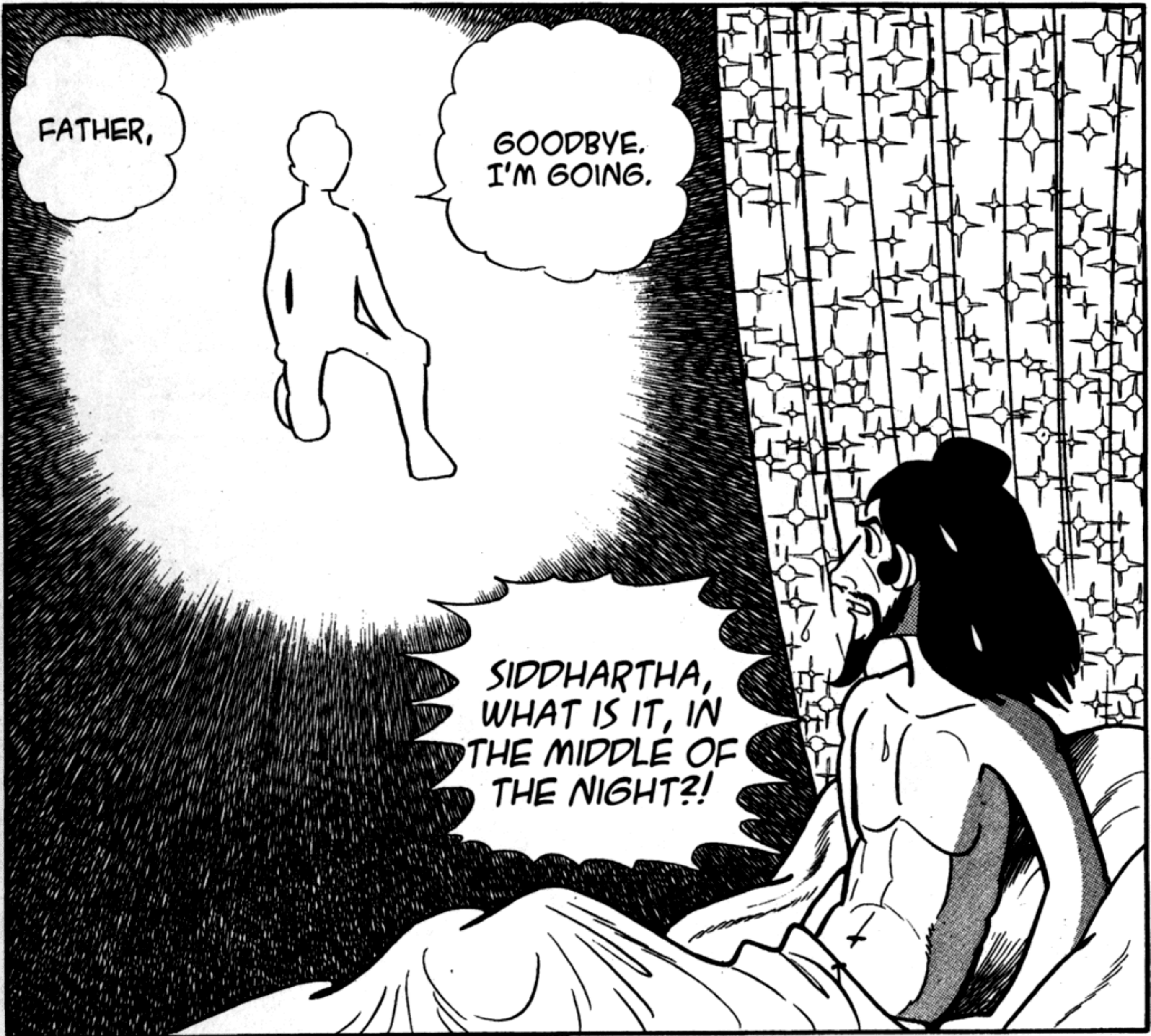
WHEN I CLOSE
MY EYES, I HAVE
NIGHTMARES. THE
EARTH SHAKES
AND TREES ARE
UPROOTED...

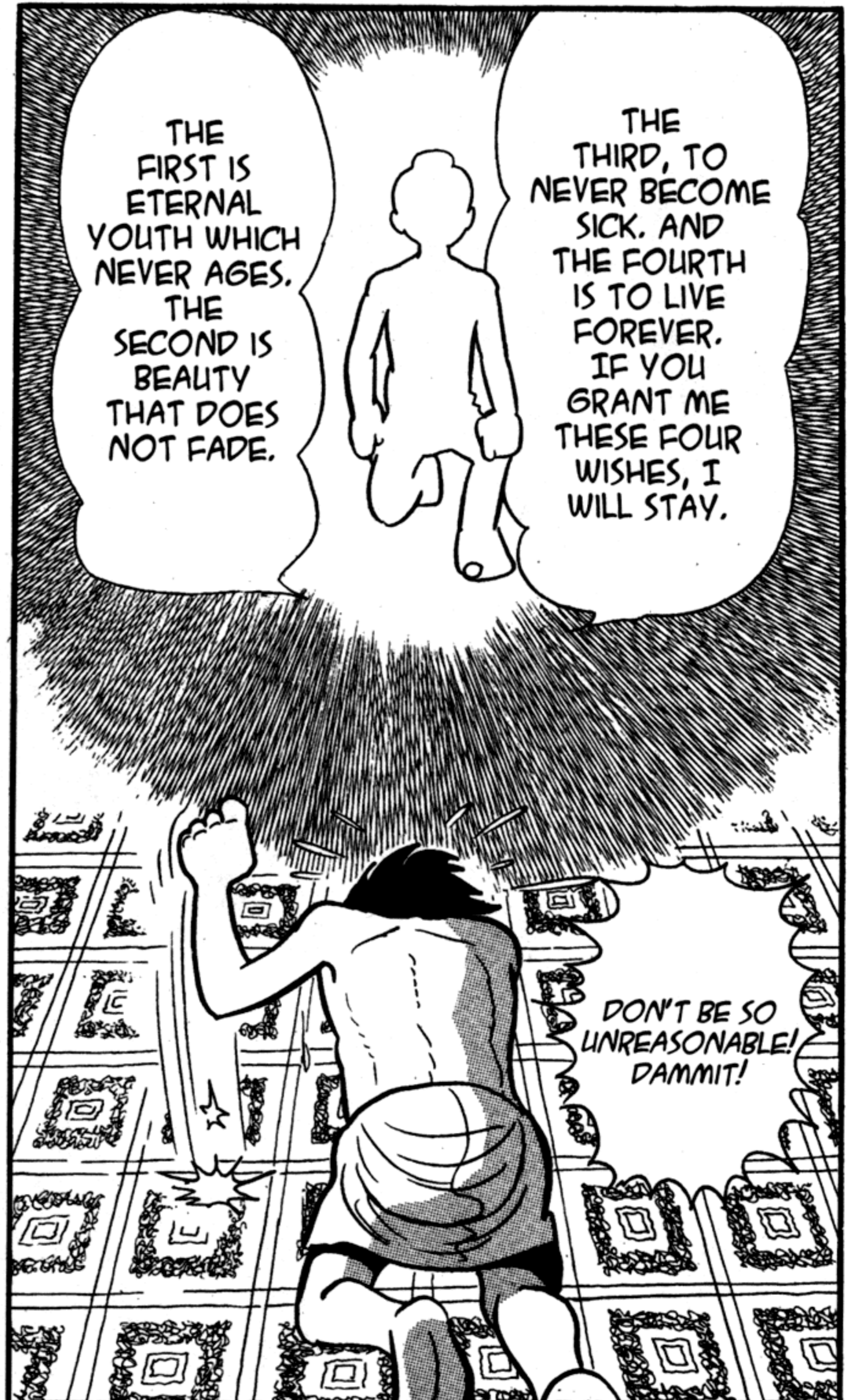
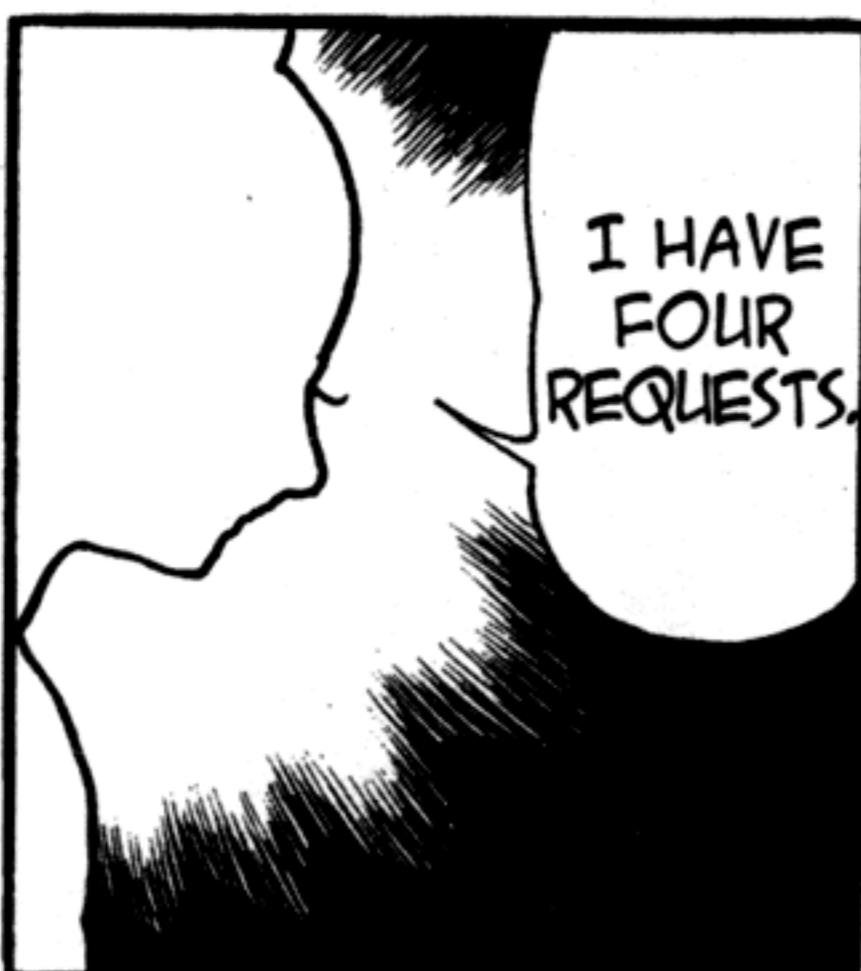
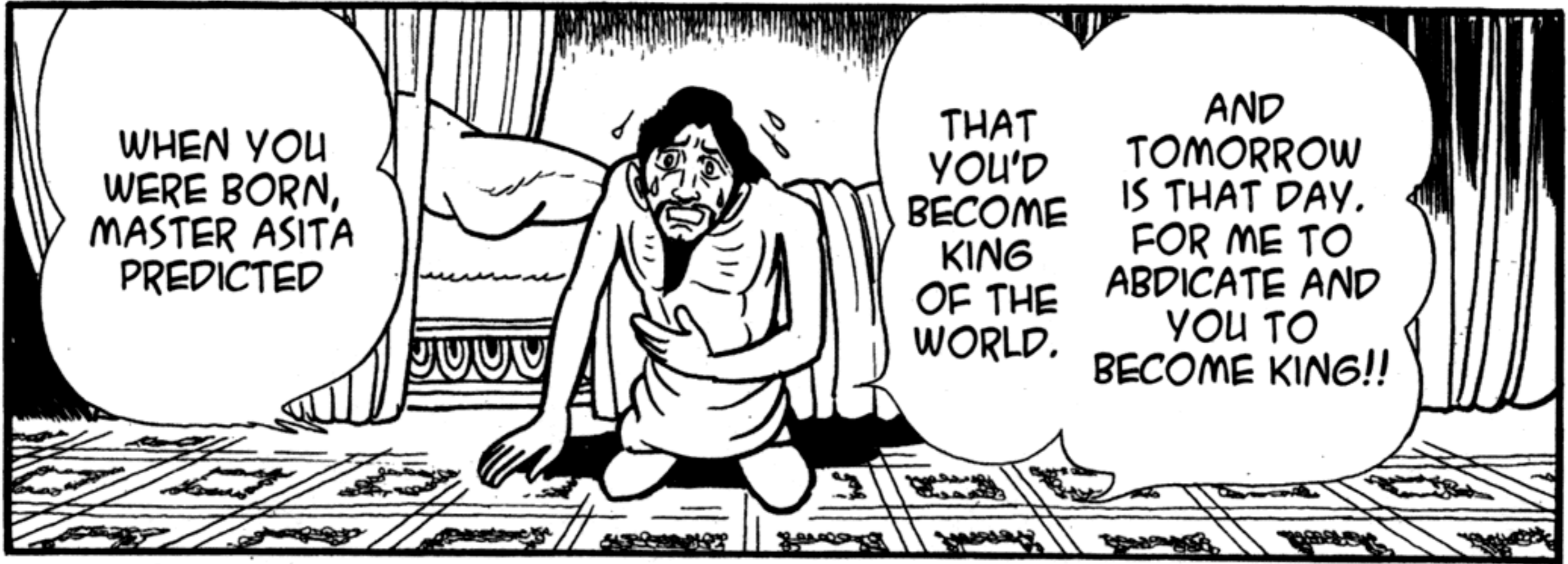


A STAR
FALLS FROM
THE SKY...



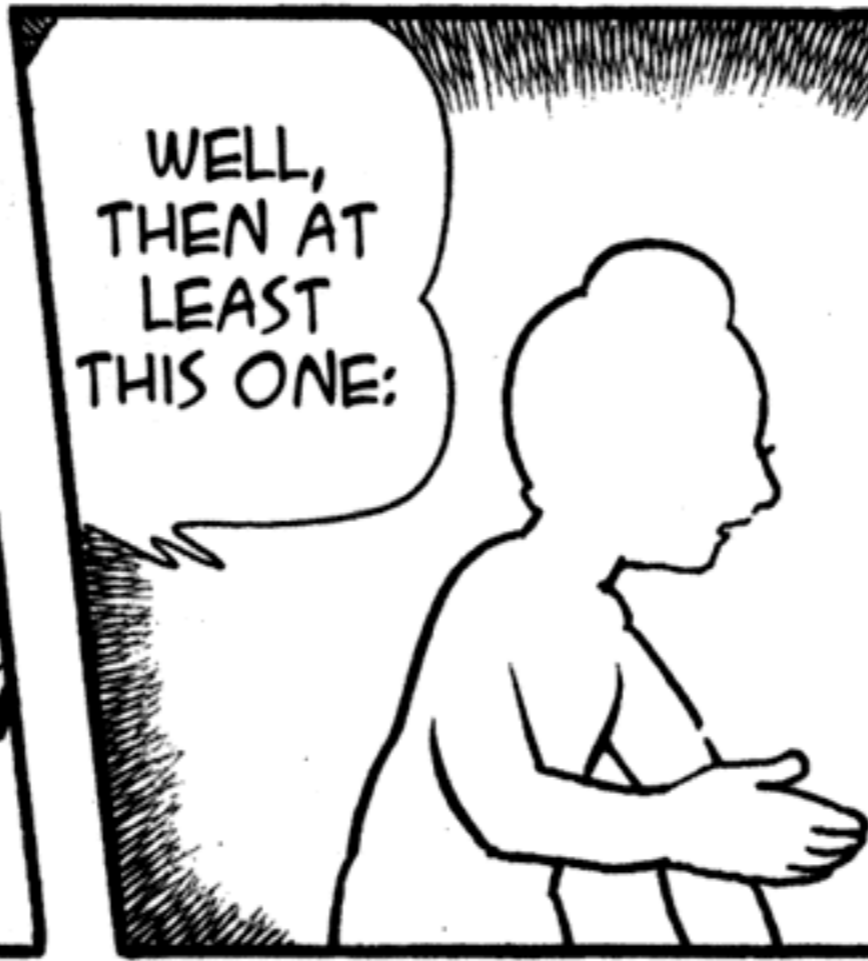




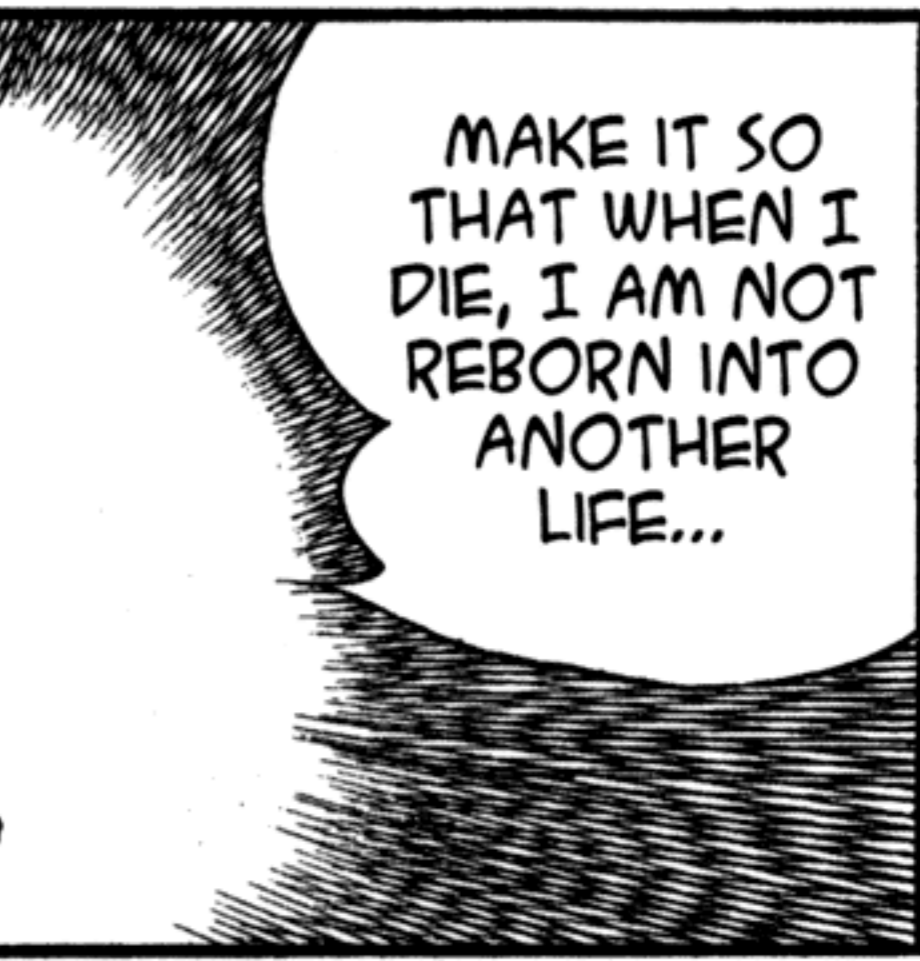




NO KING
COULD
GRANT
SUCH
THINGS...



WELL,
THEN AT
LEAST
THIS ONE:



MAKE IT SO
THAT WHEN I
DIE, I AM NOT
REBORN INTO
ANOTHER
LIFE...



WHY MUST
YOU
BE THAT
WAY?



VERY WELL,
GO IF YOU MUST.
I CAN'T
STOP YOU.

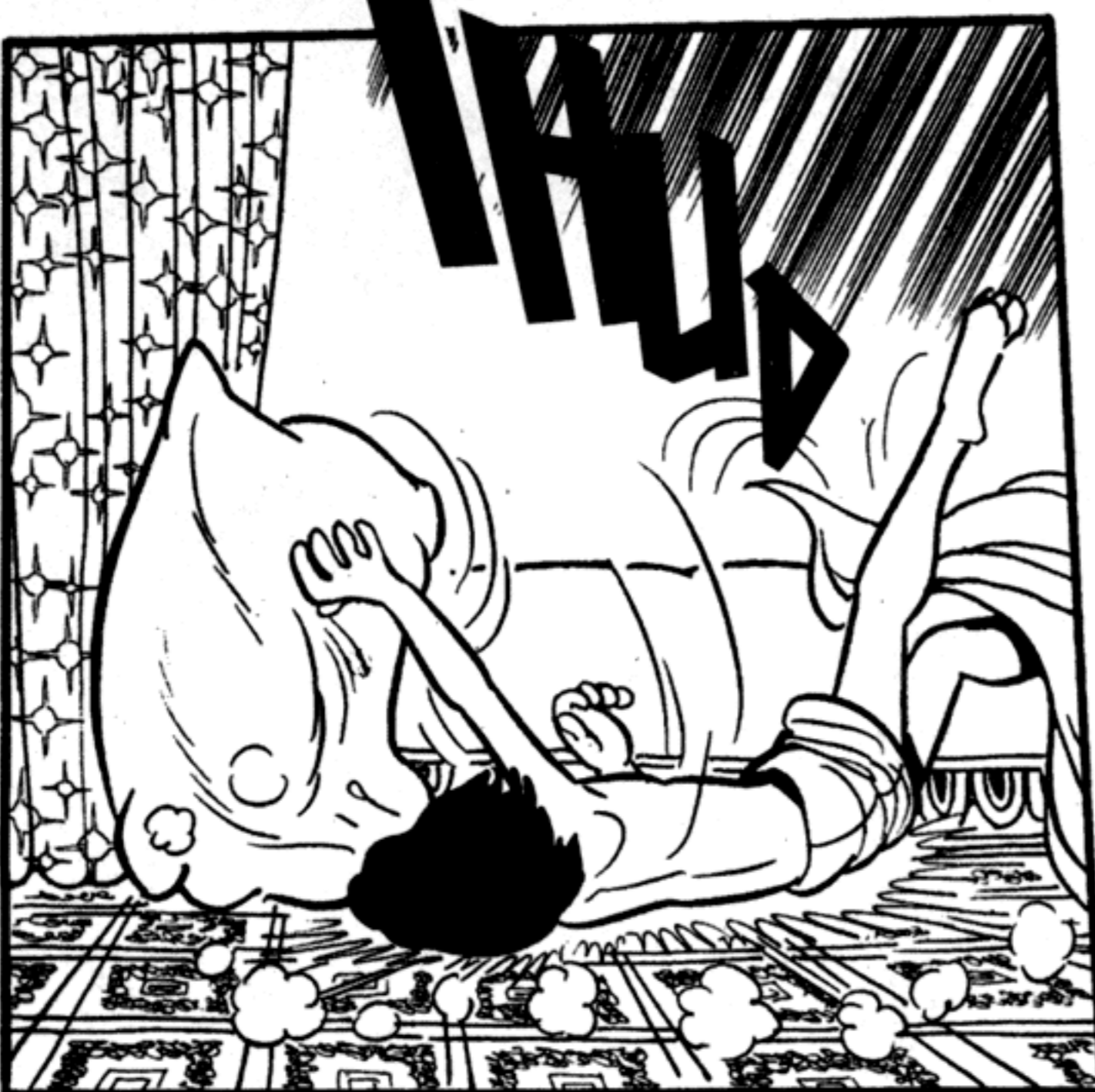
FOOL



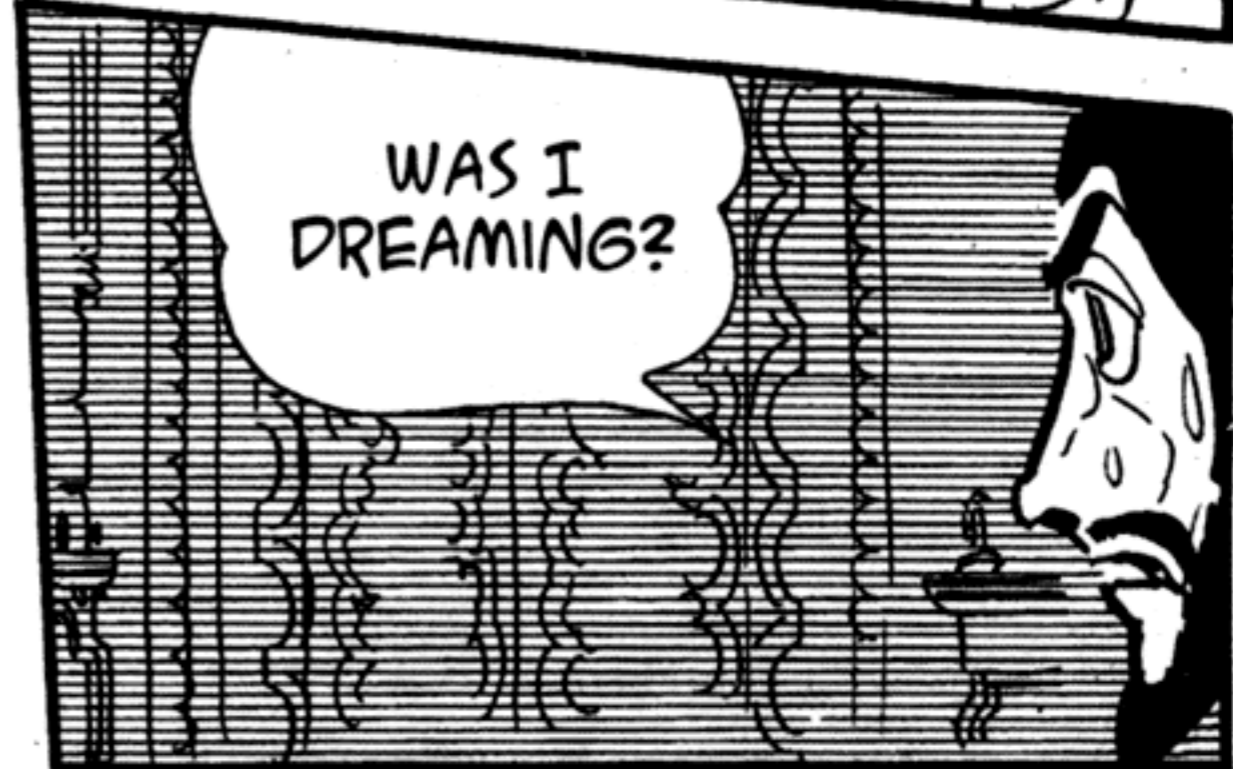
YOUR
FATHER,
SON AND
QUEEN,

AND YOUR
COUNTRYMEN -
LEAVE US ALL!

GO IF
YOU HAVE
TO.



THUD



WAS I
DREAMING?



WHO GOES THERE?

SHH - IT IS I. WHERE IS THE PRINCE?

HE'S SLEEPING SOUNDLY.

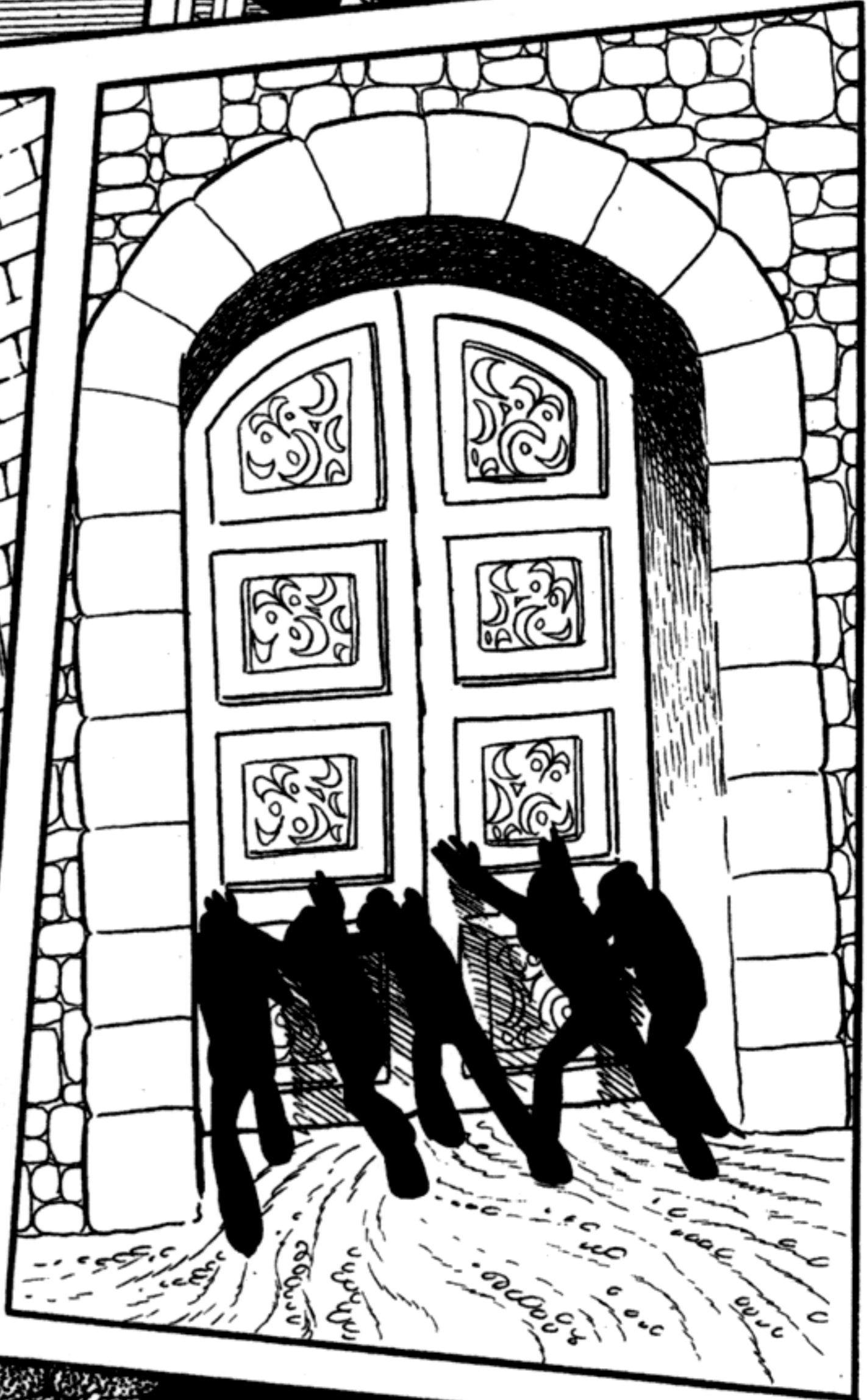
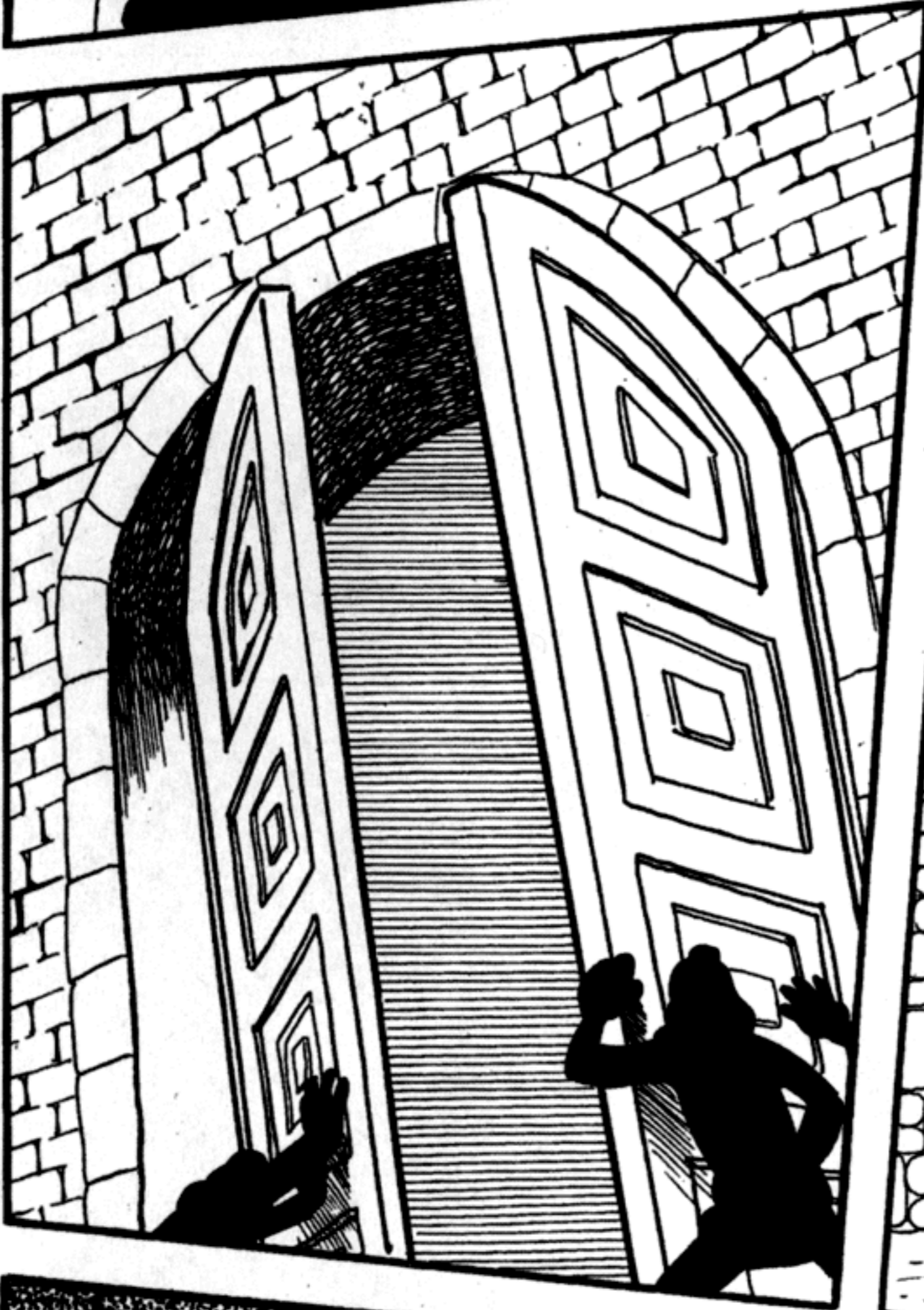
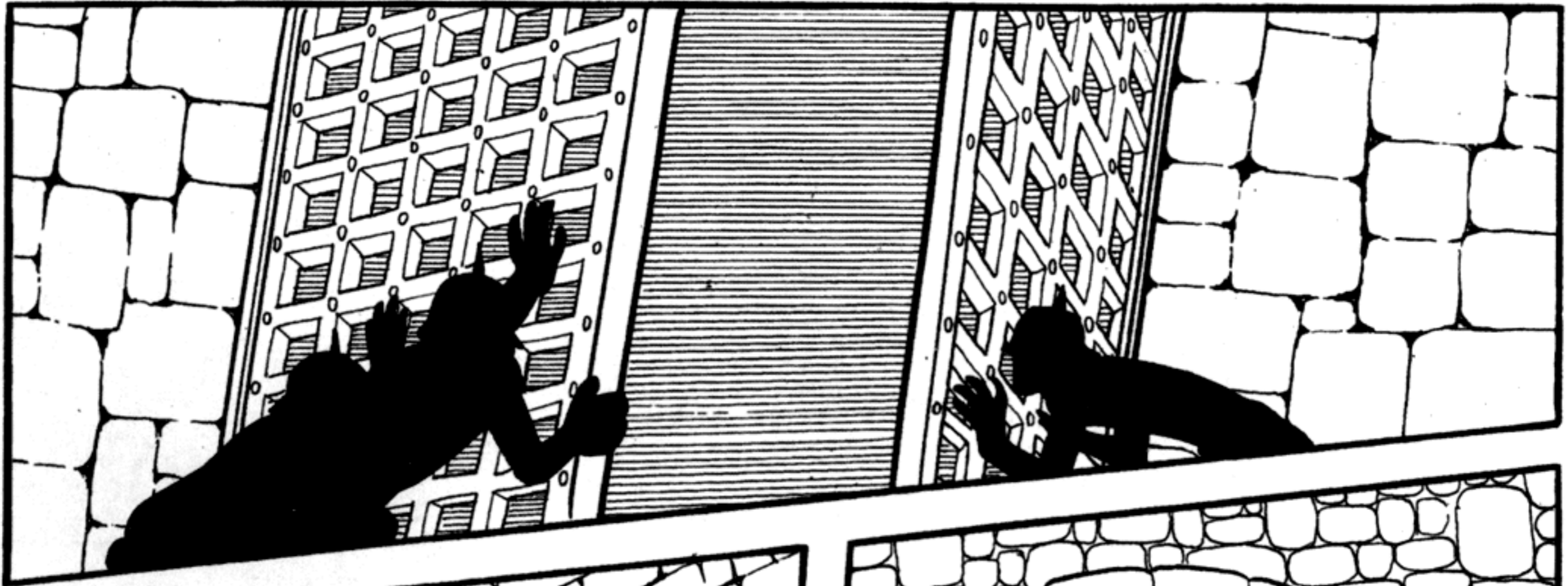
LOCK THE MAIN GATES, AND THE EASTERN AND SOUTHERN GATES TOO - BIND THEM WITH ROPE, NAY CHAINS, BY DAWN.

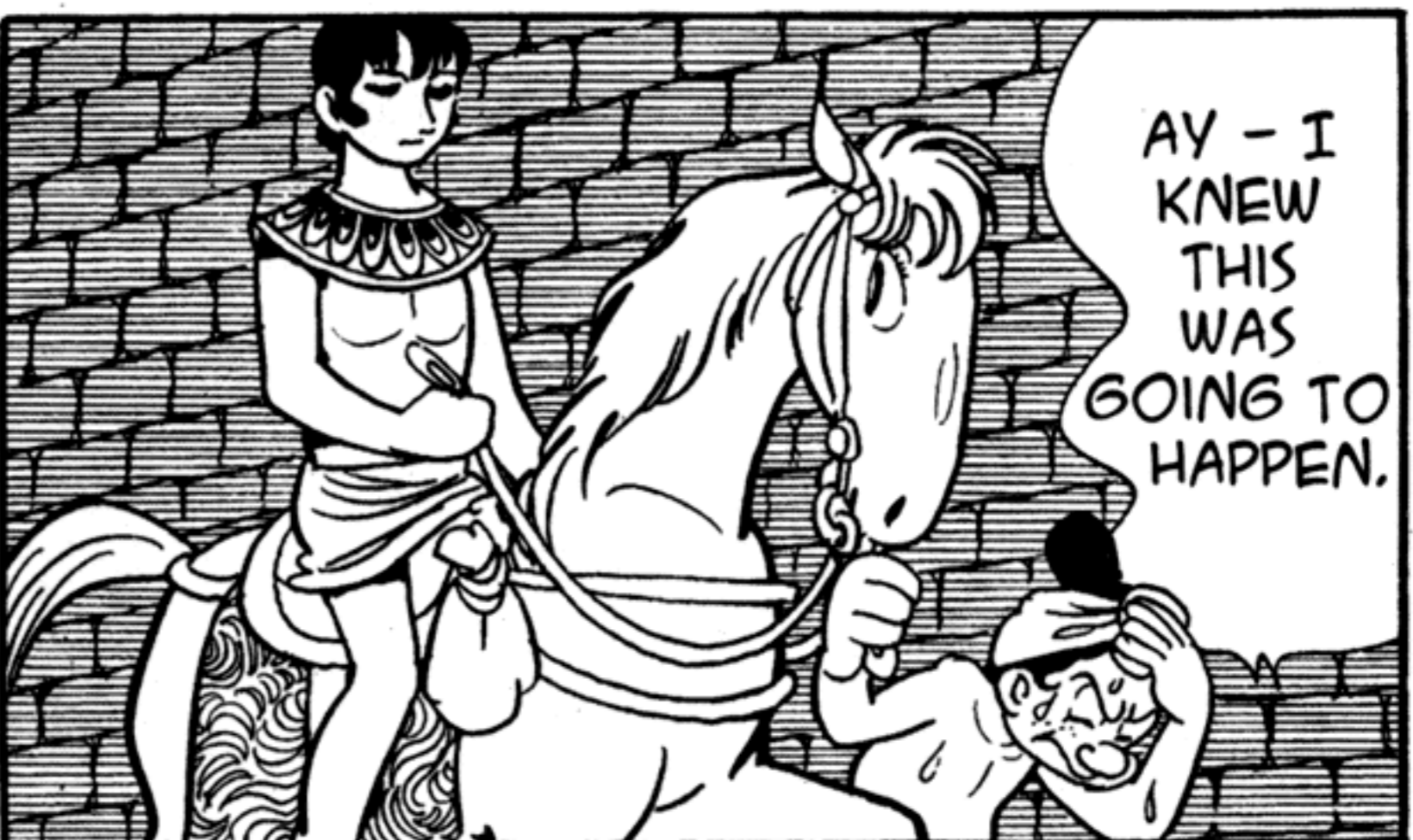
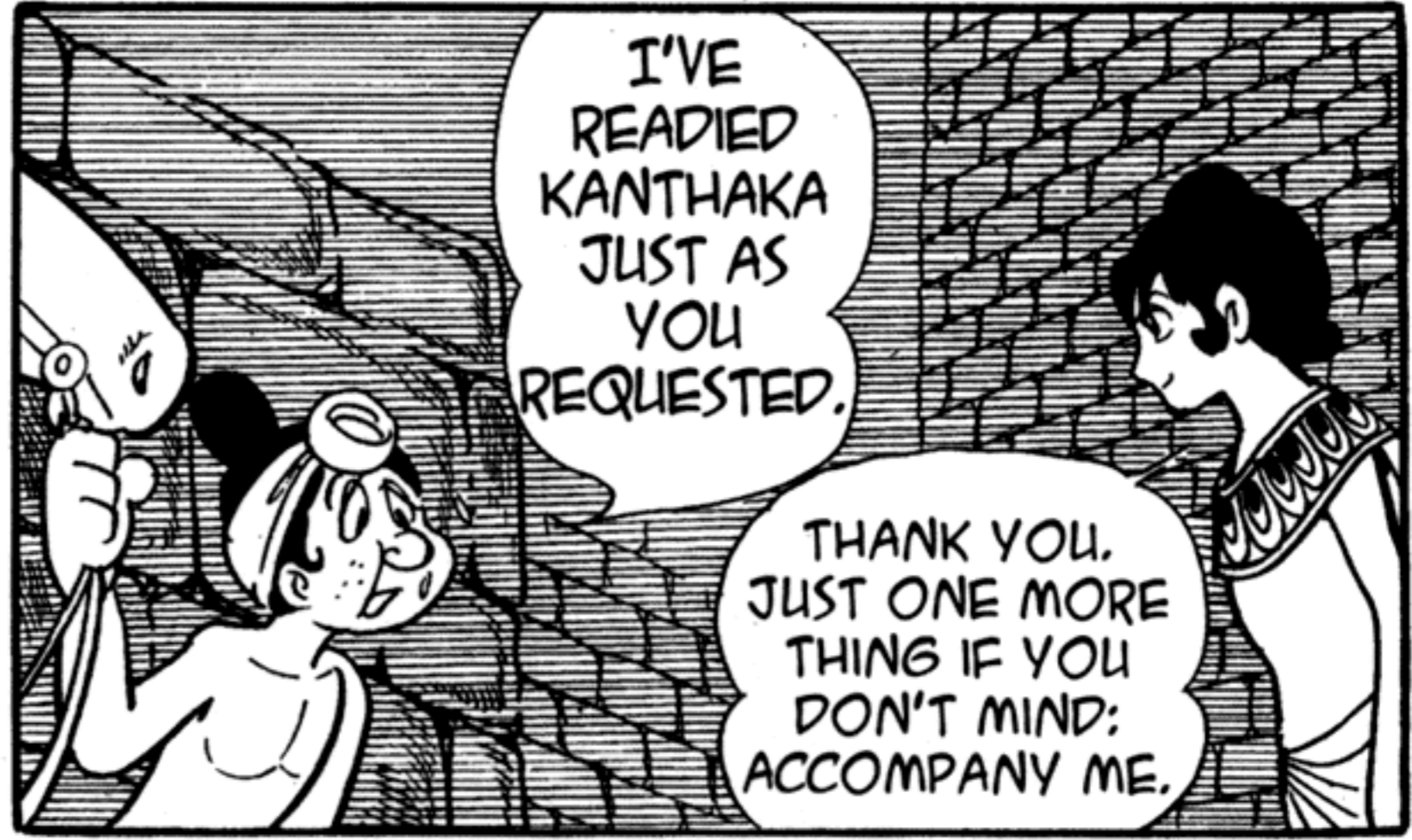
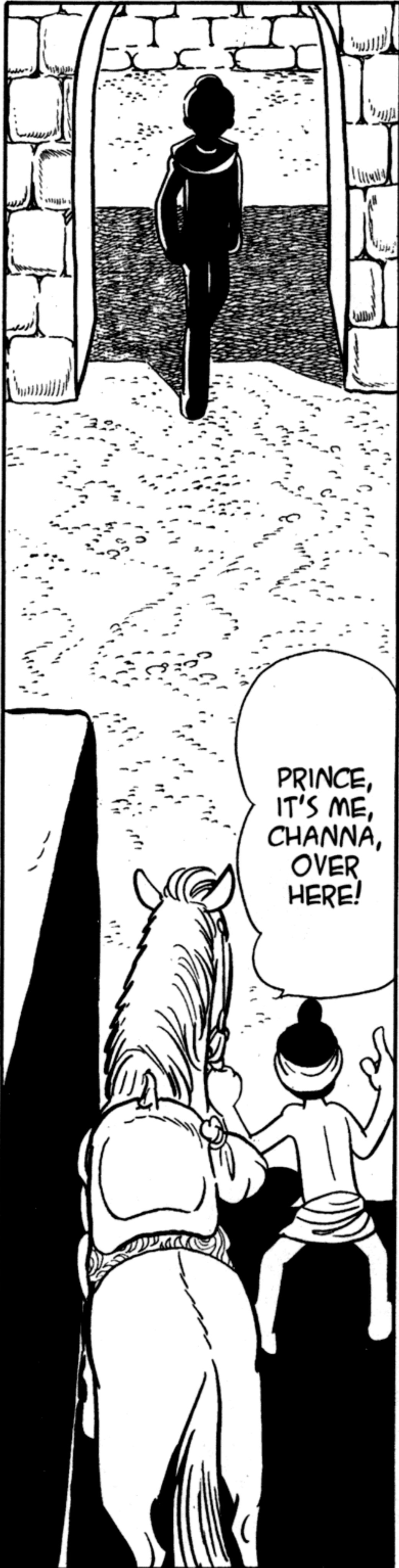
HOLY!

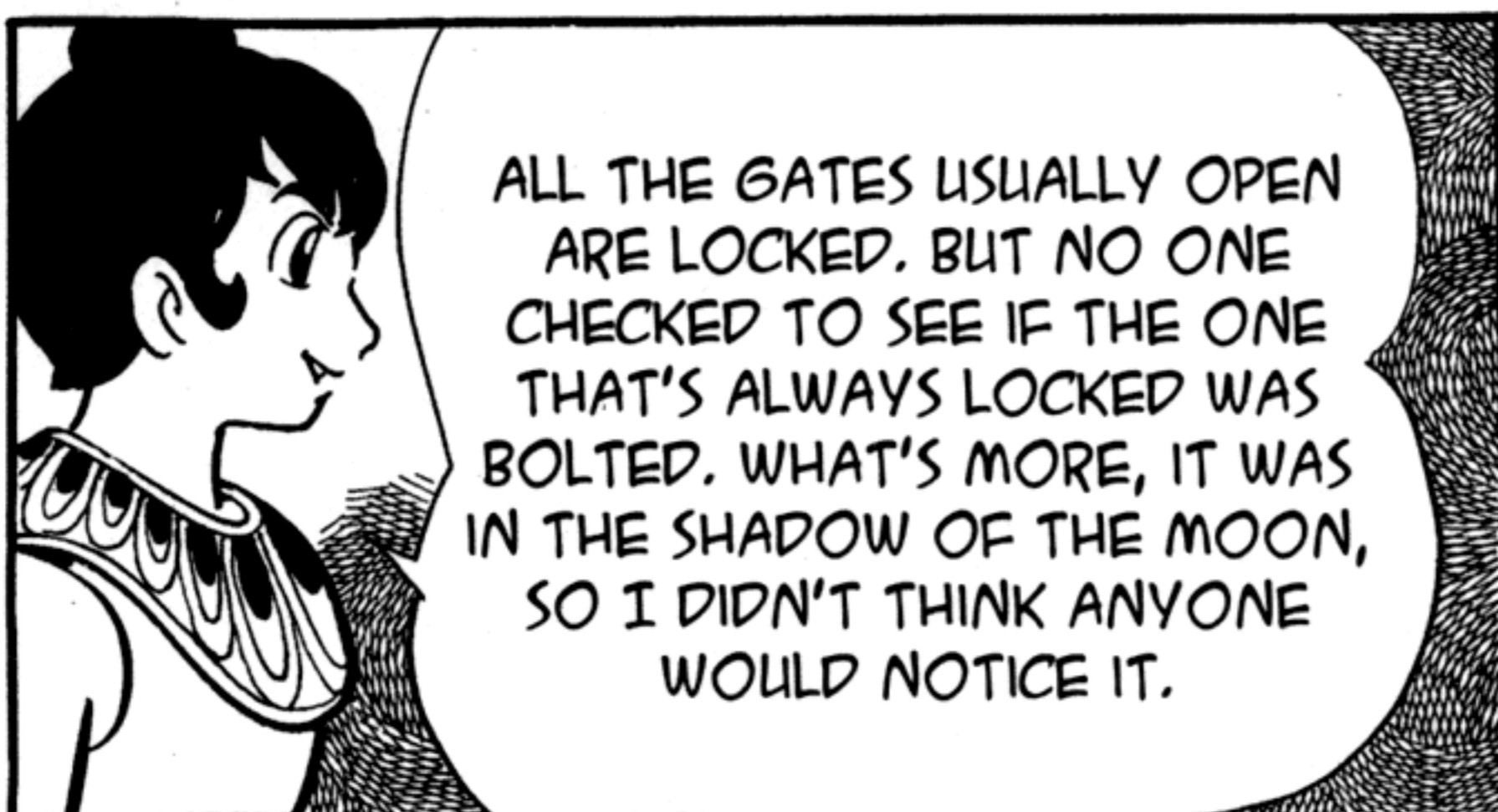
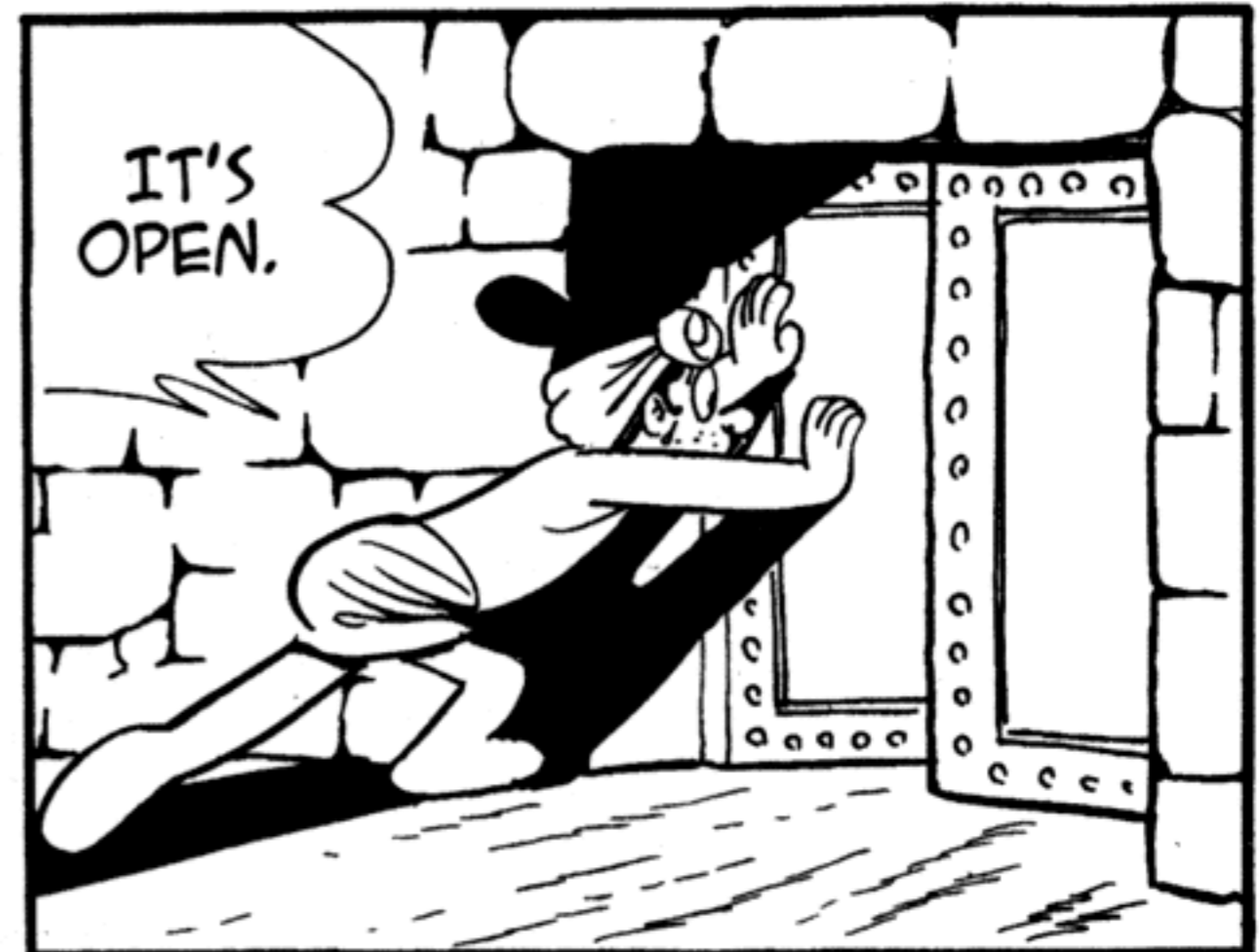
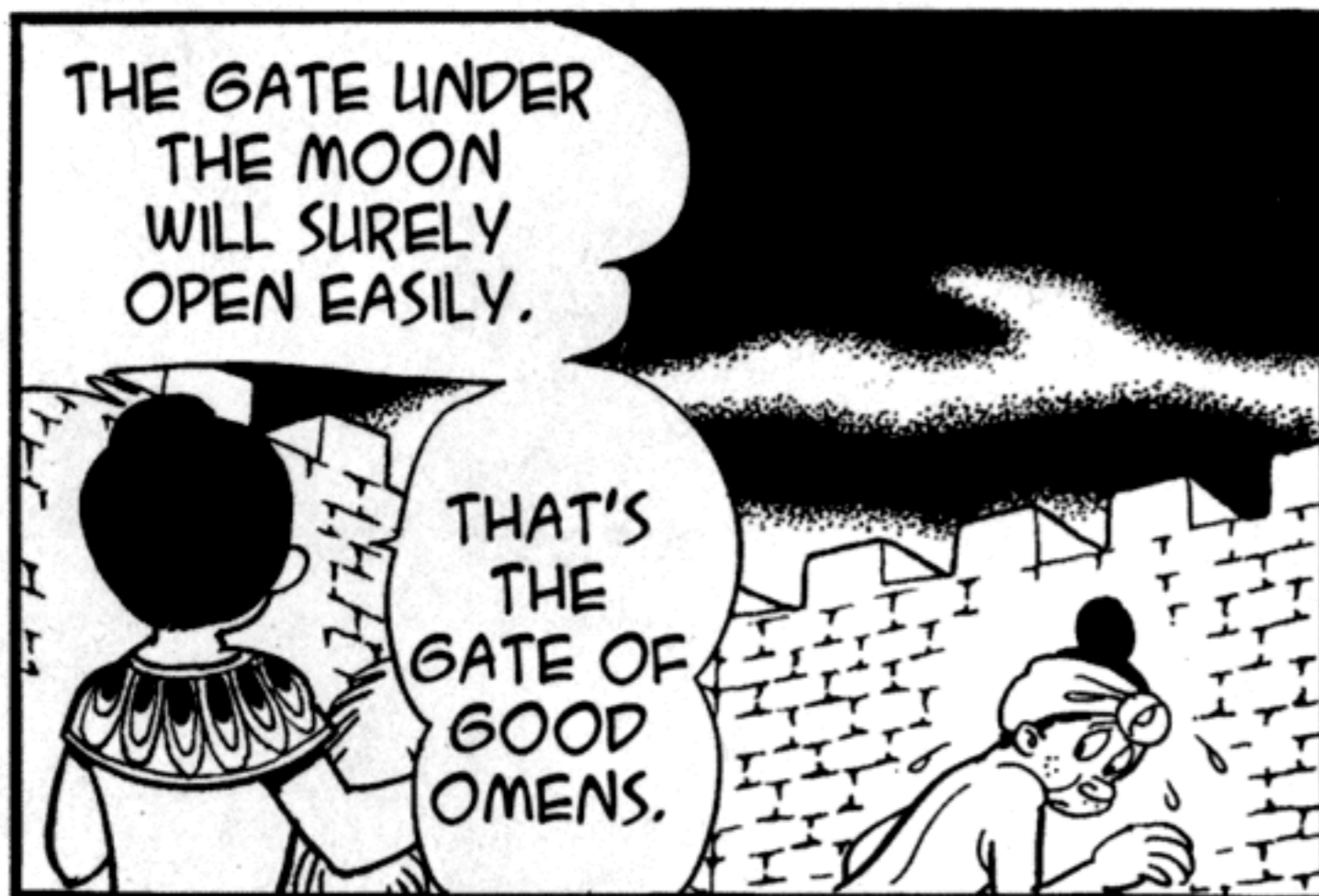
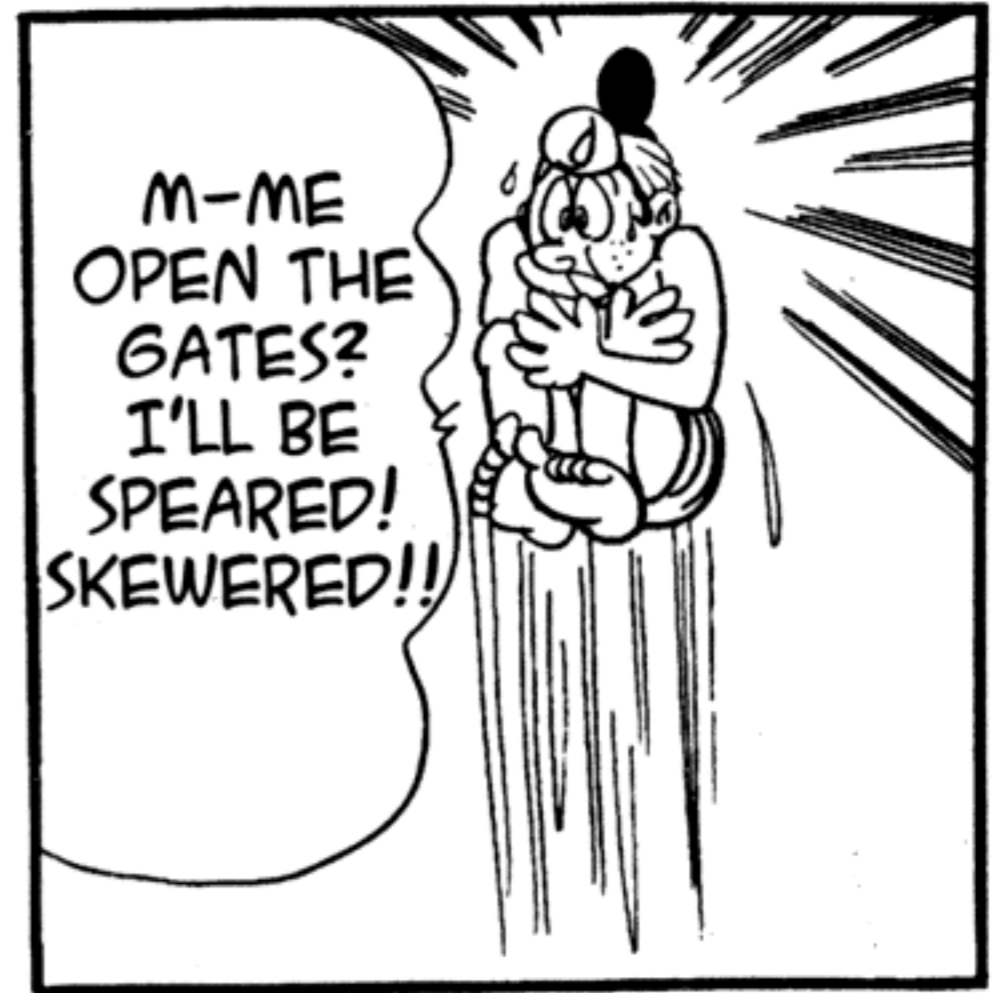
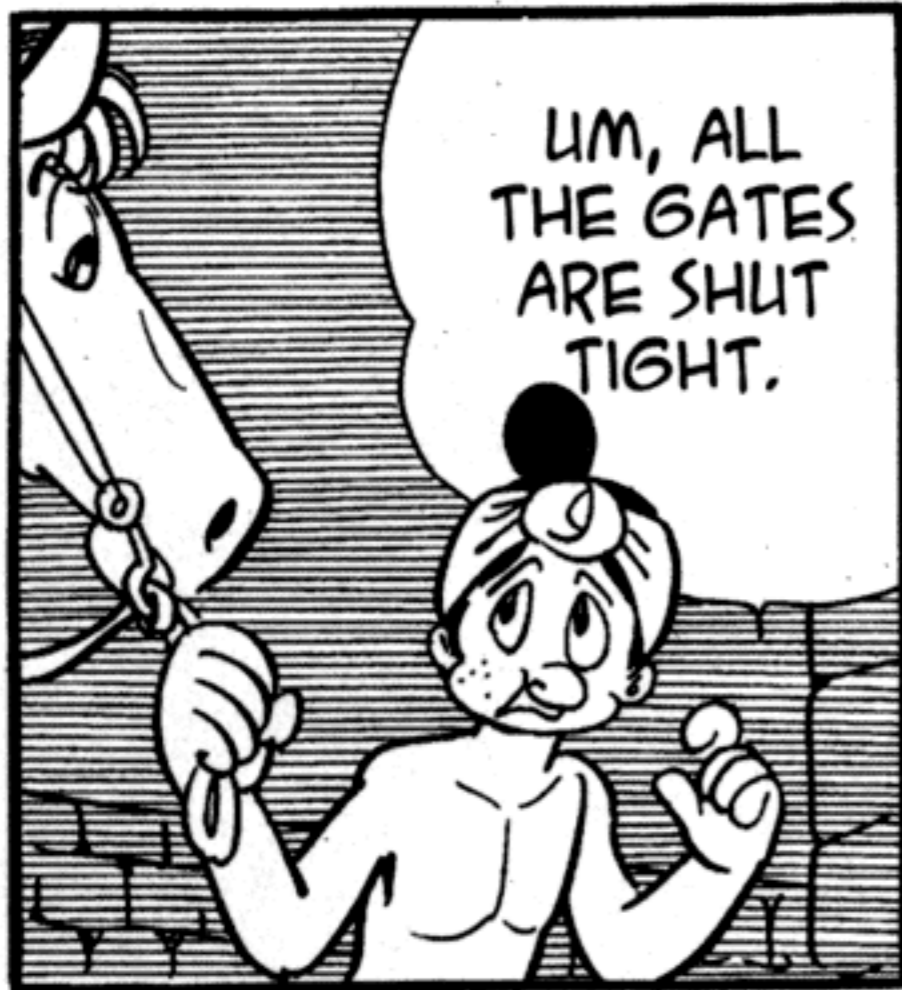
IS THE KING A SLEEP-WALKER?

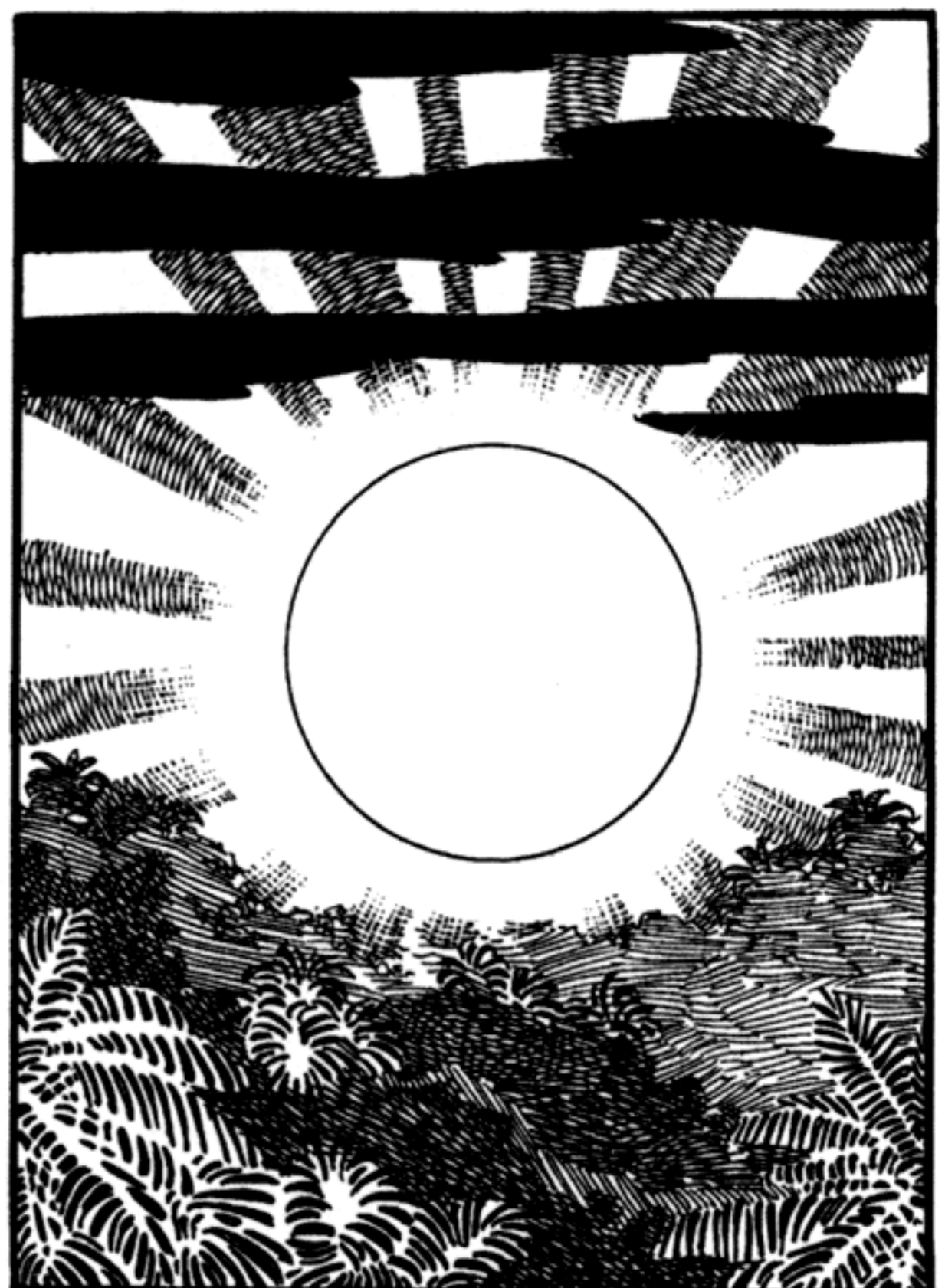
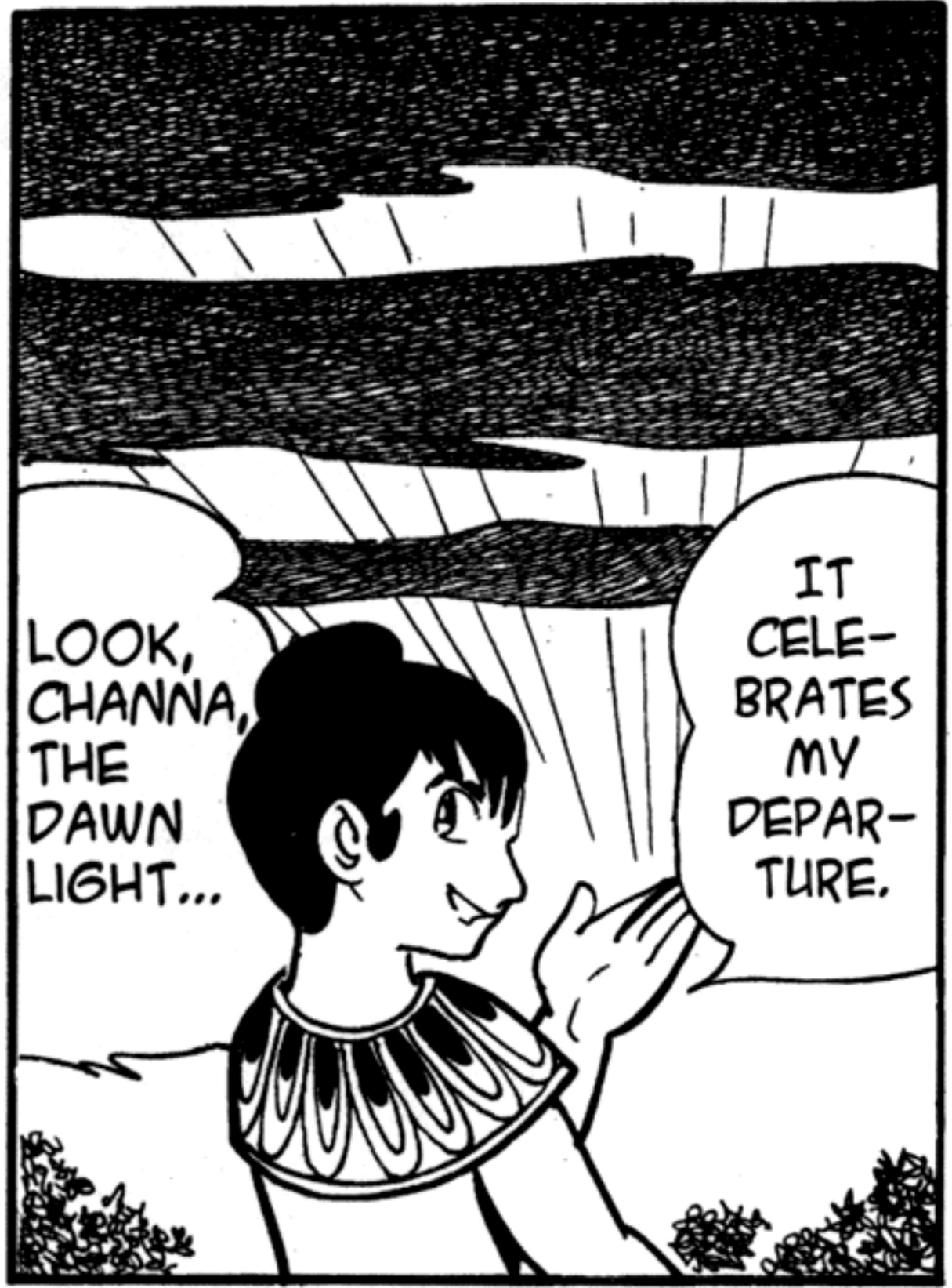
IT WAS A DREAM...

Y-Y-Y-YES MAJESTY.

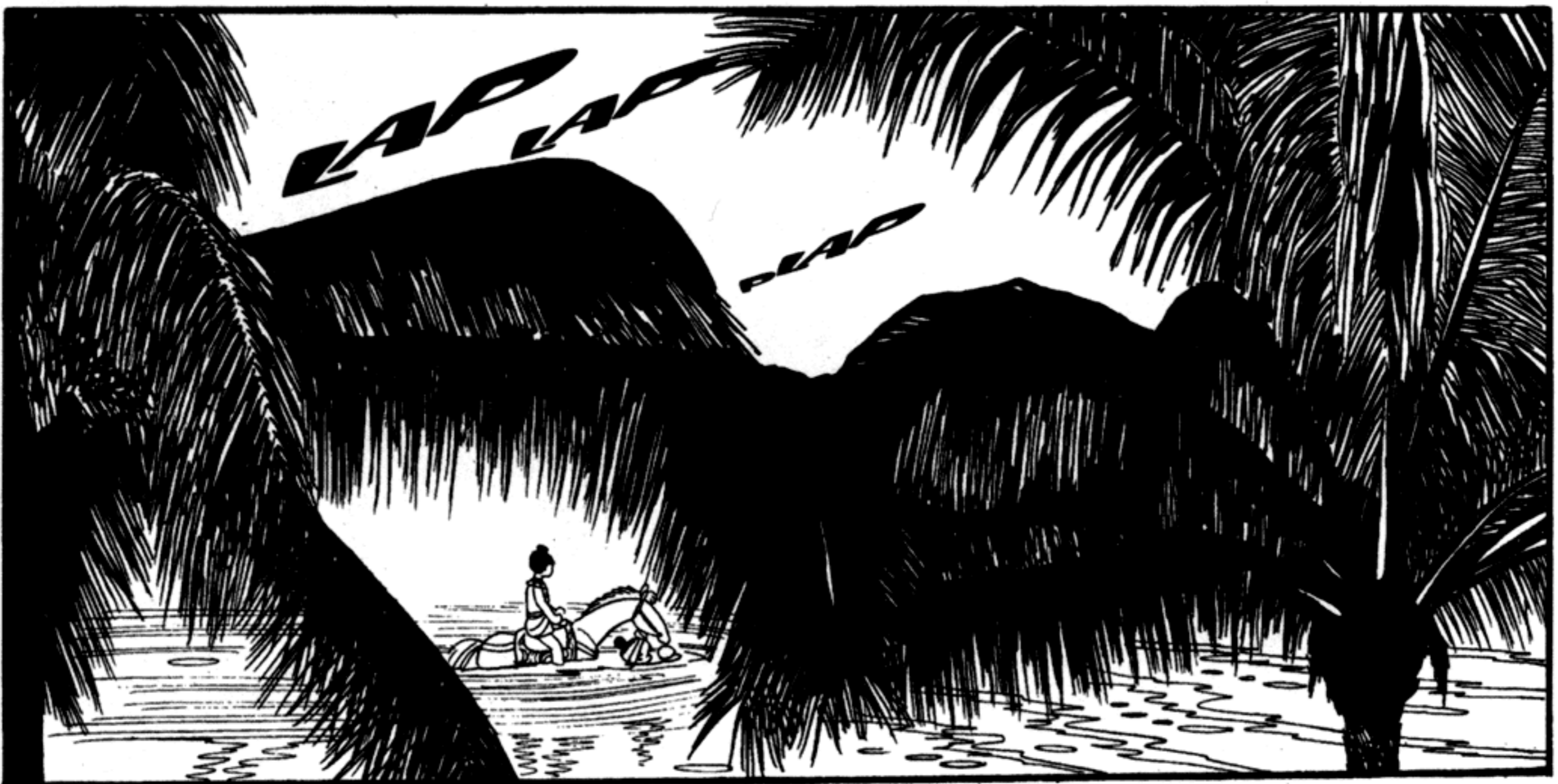




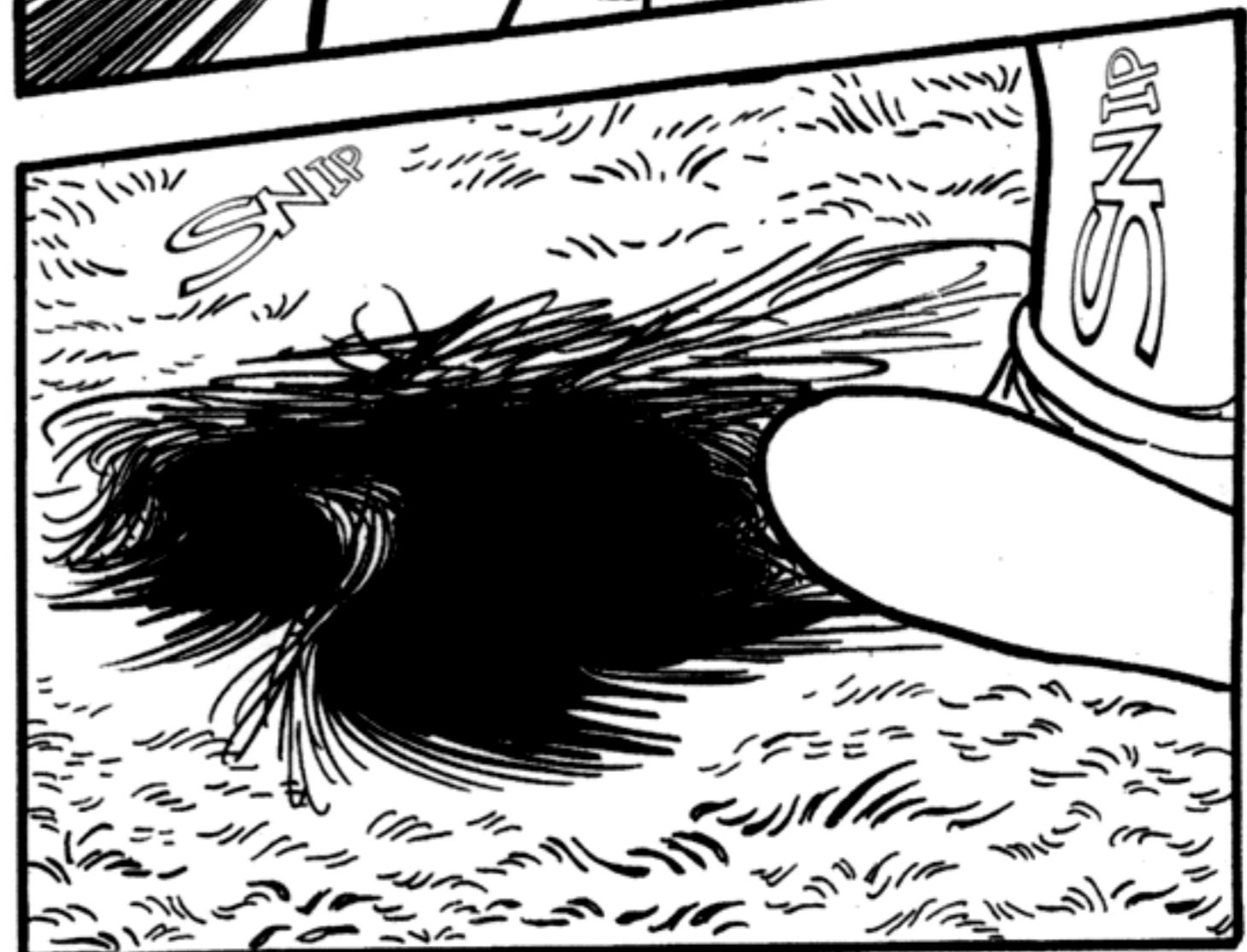
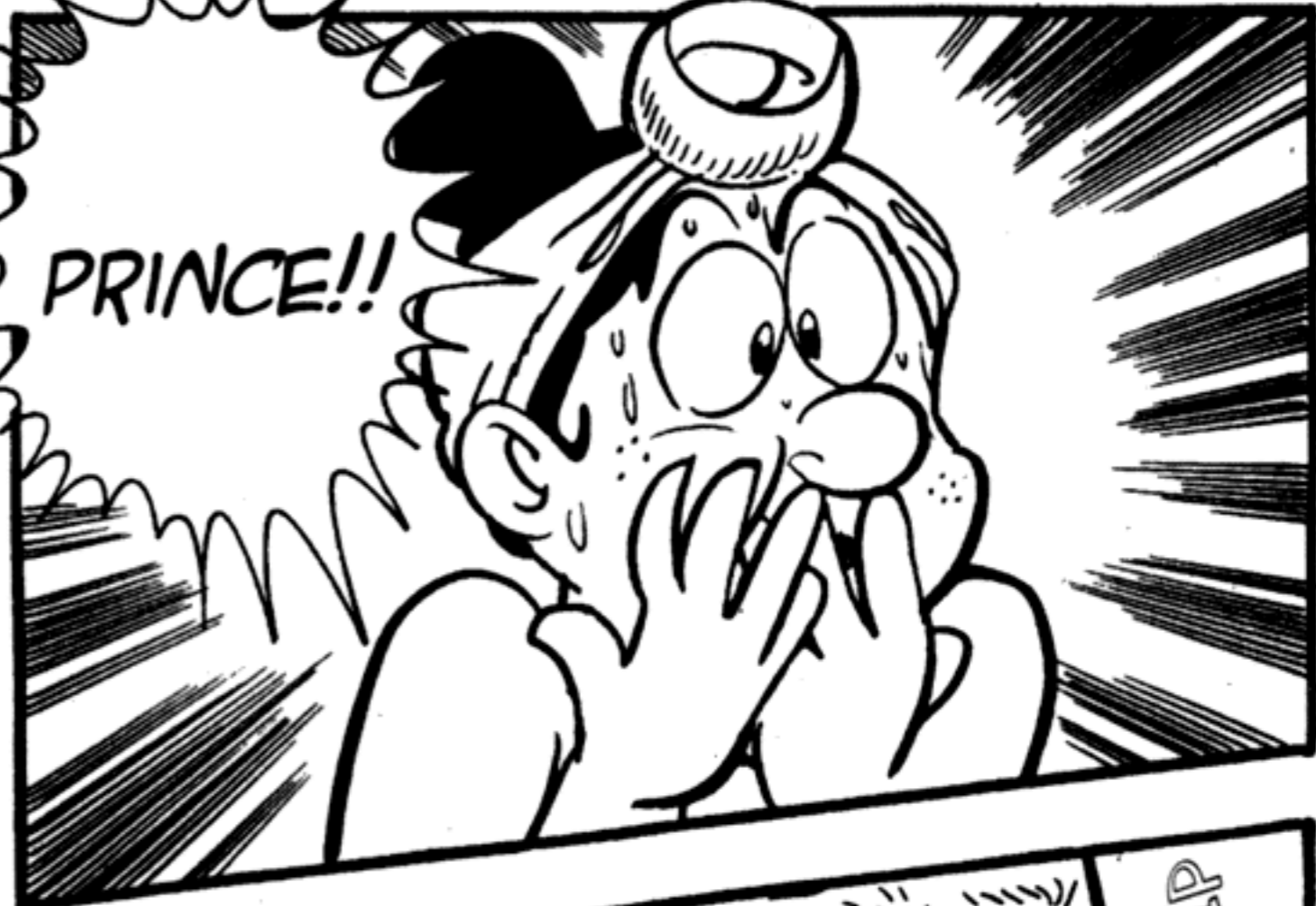
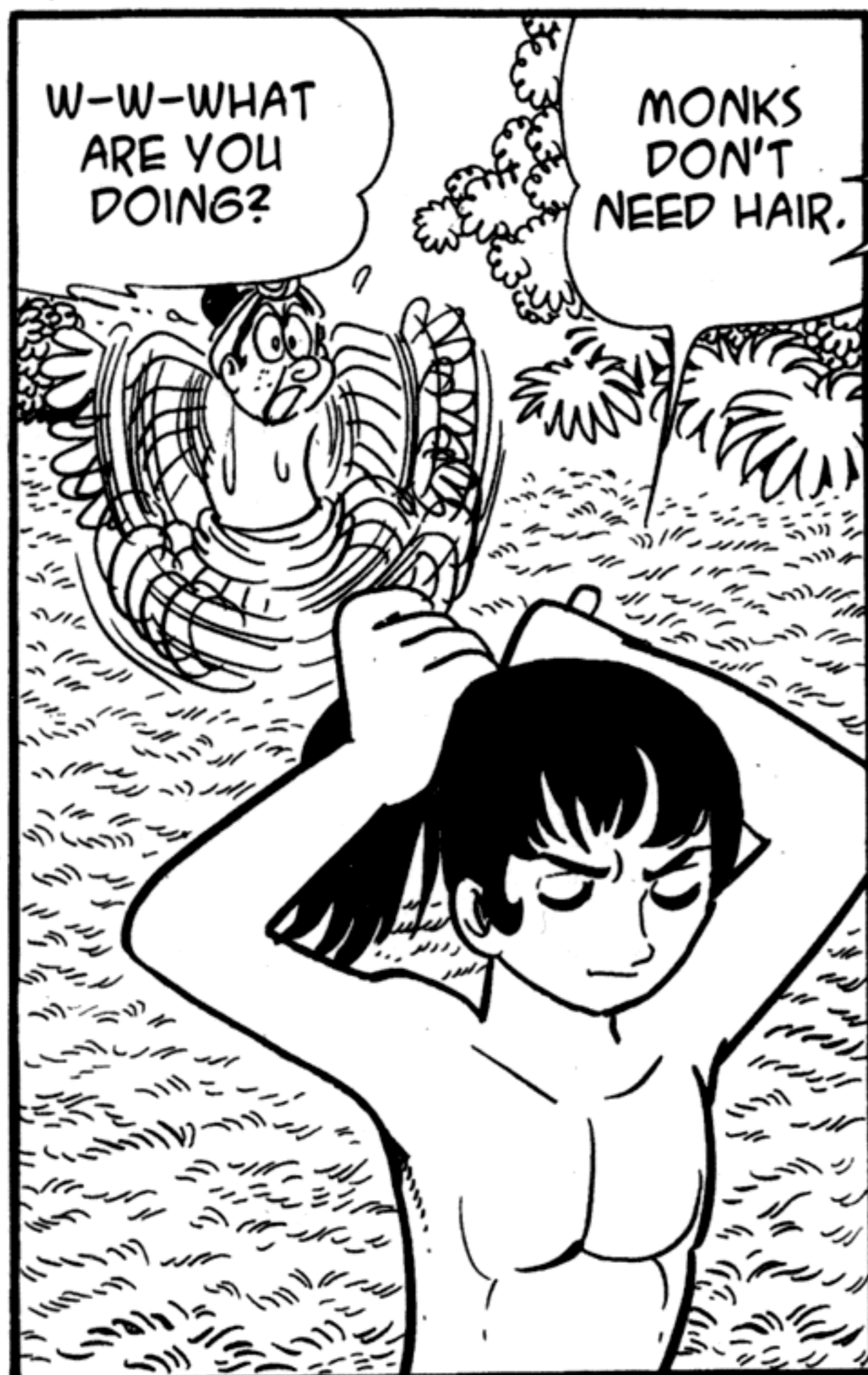
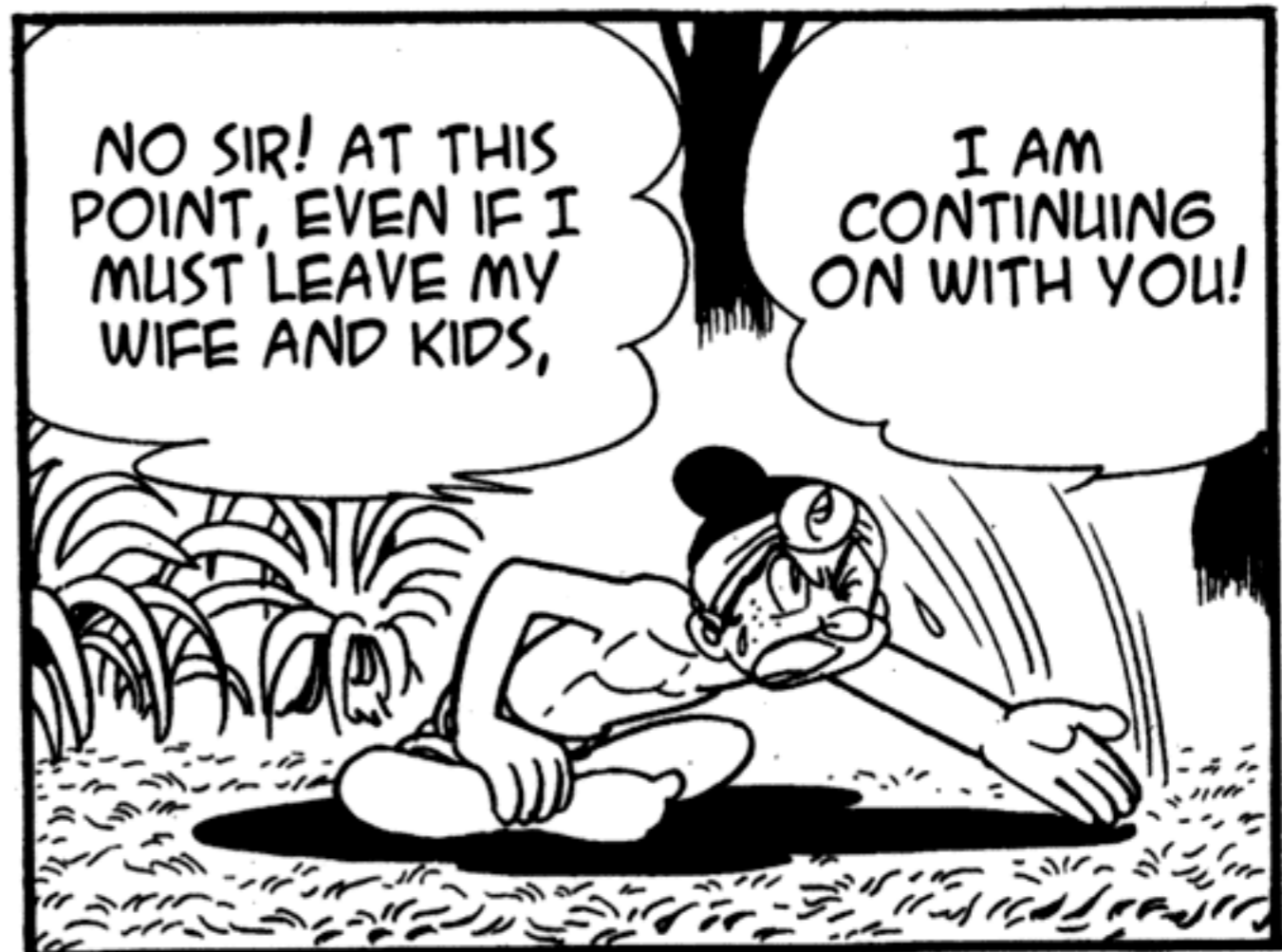


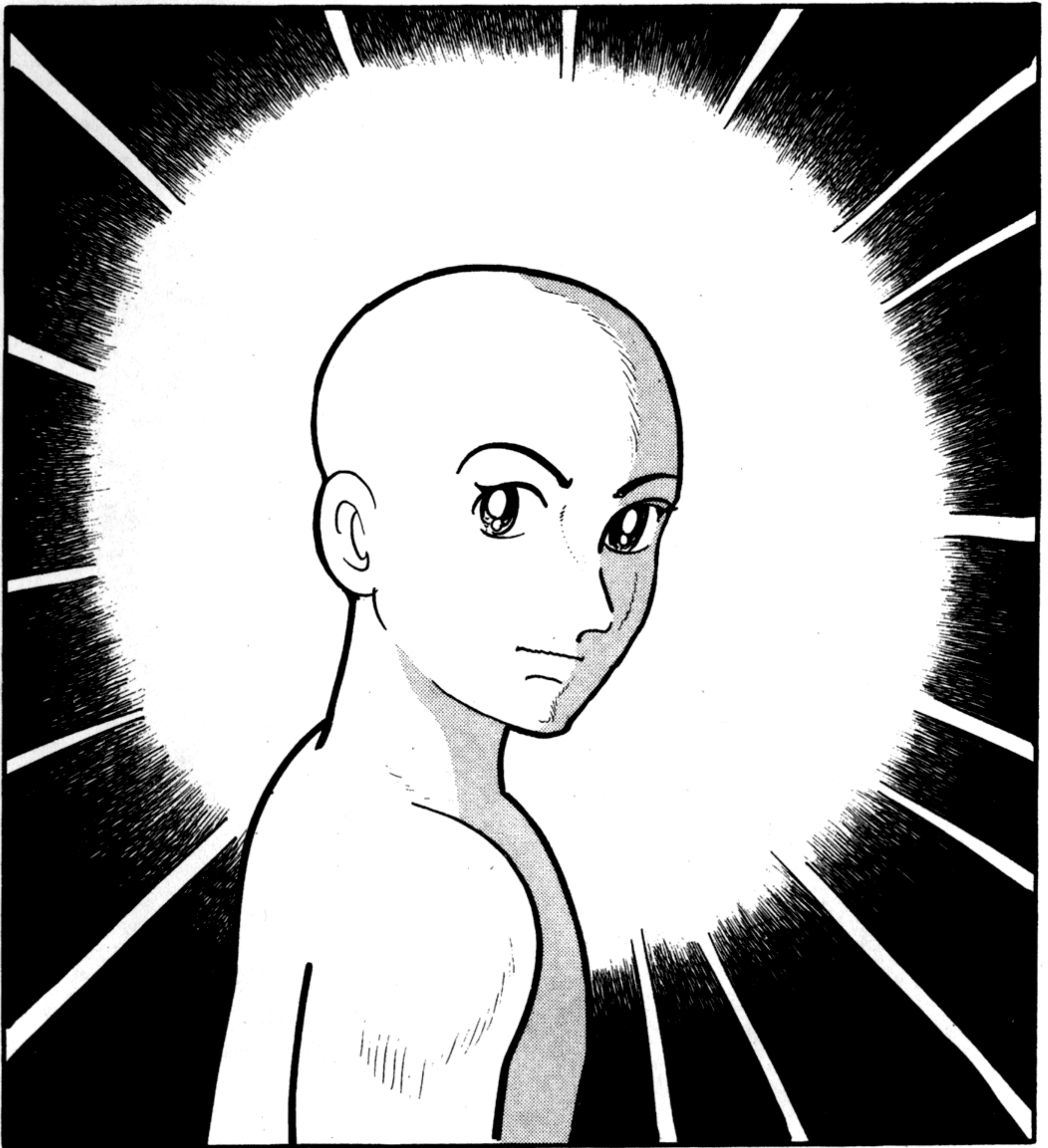


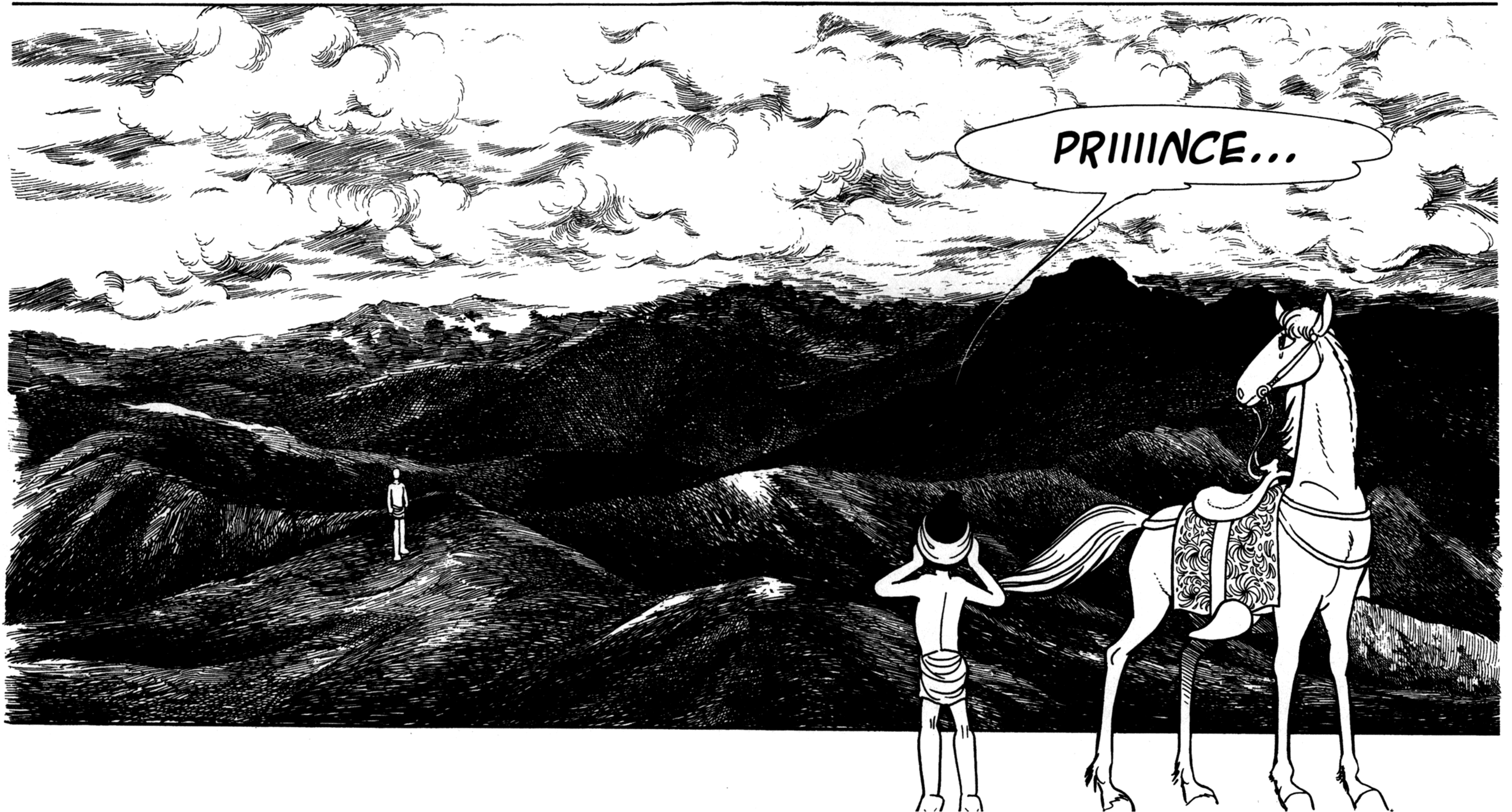
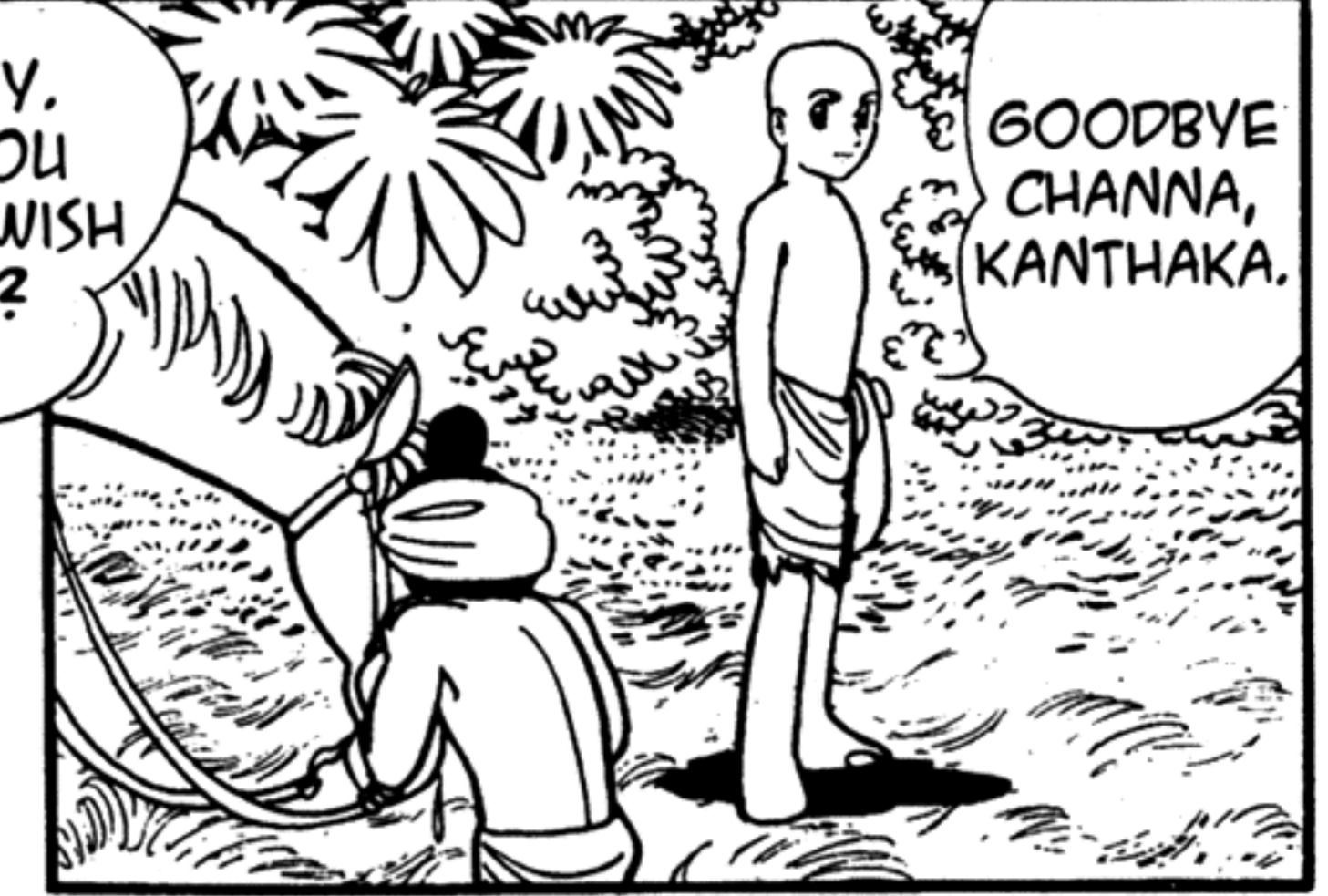
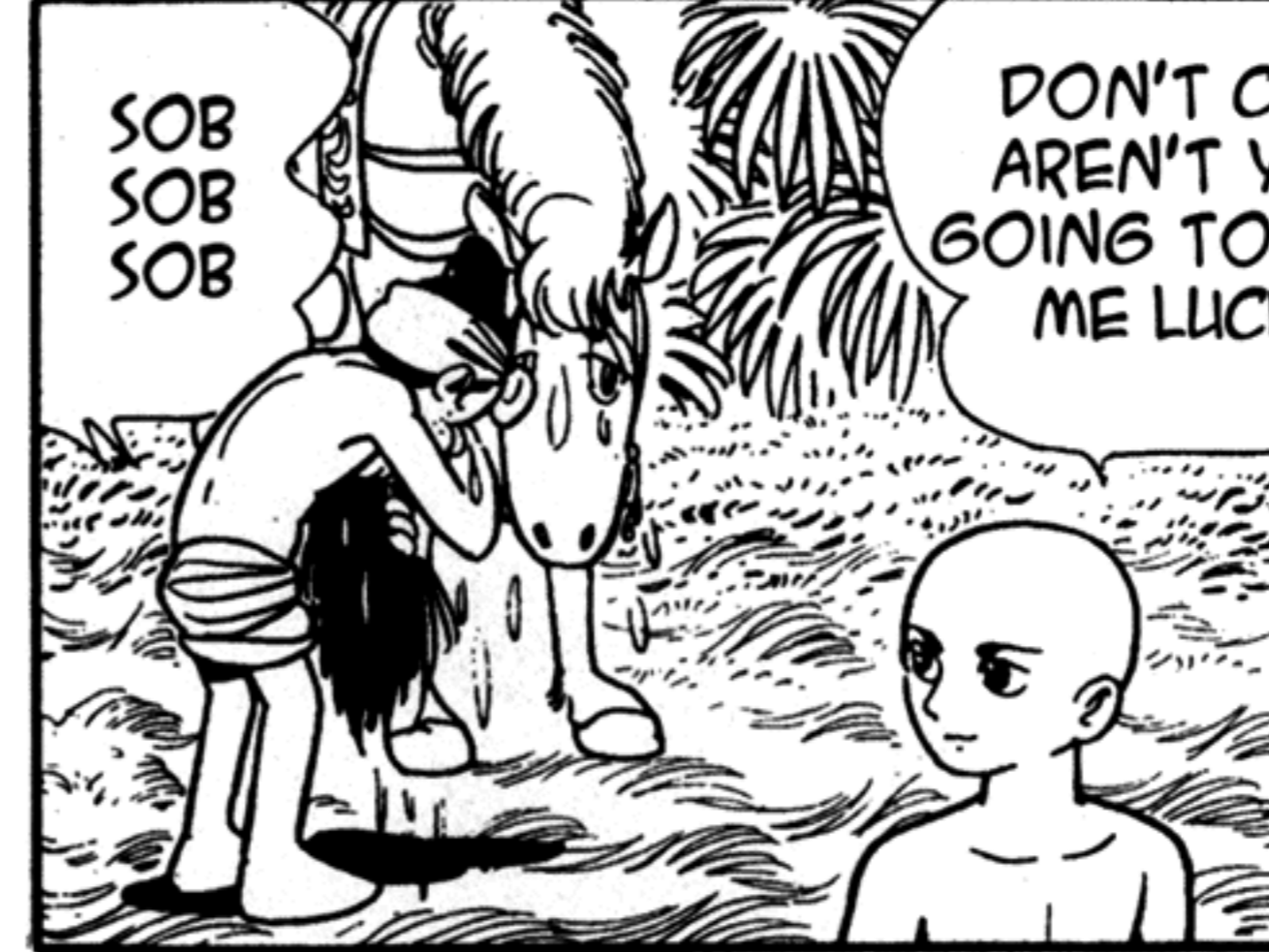




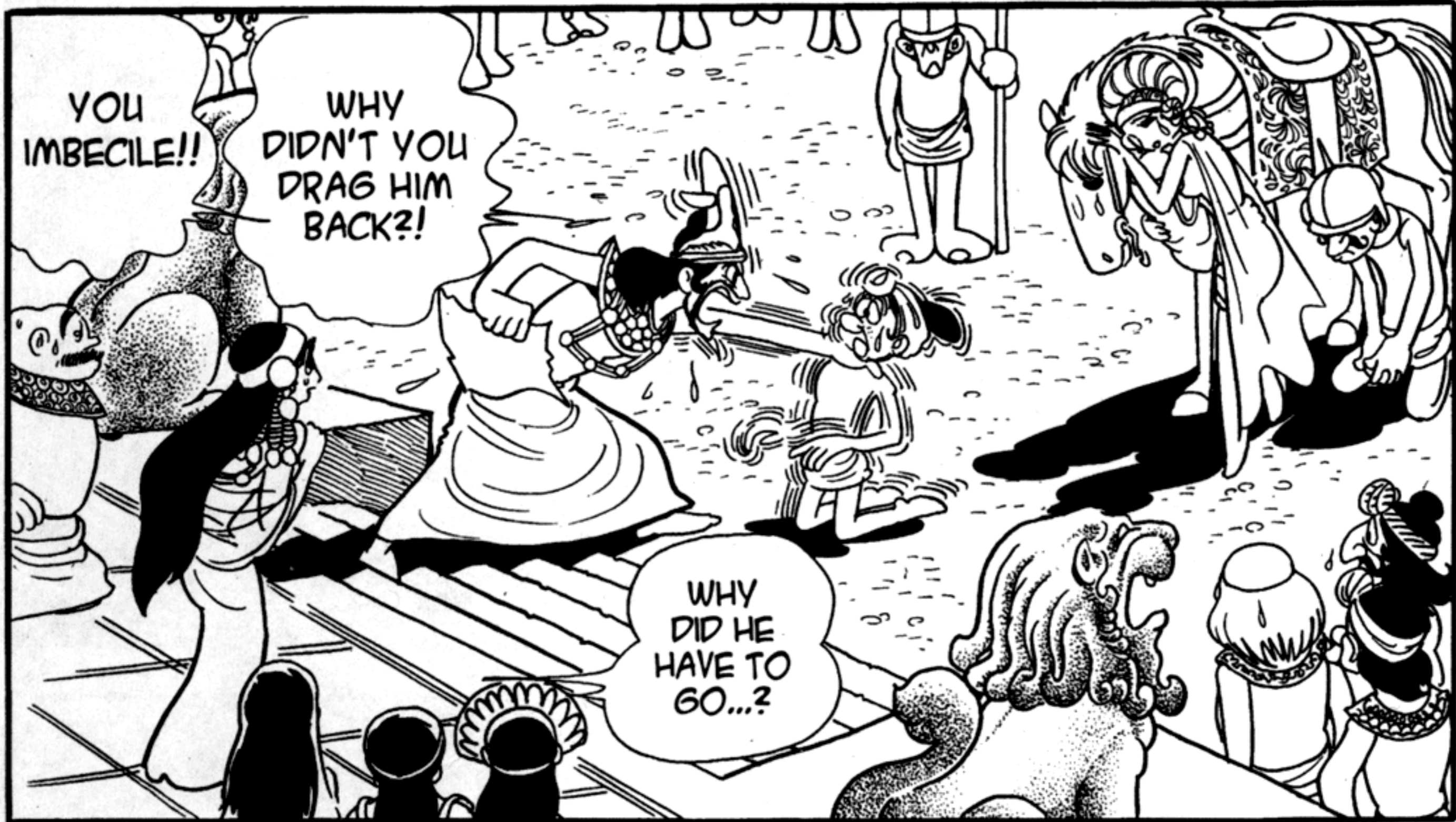
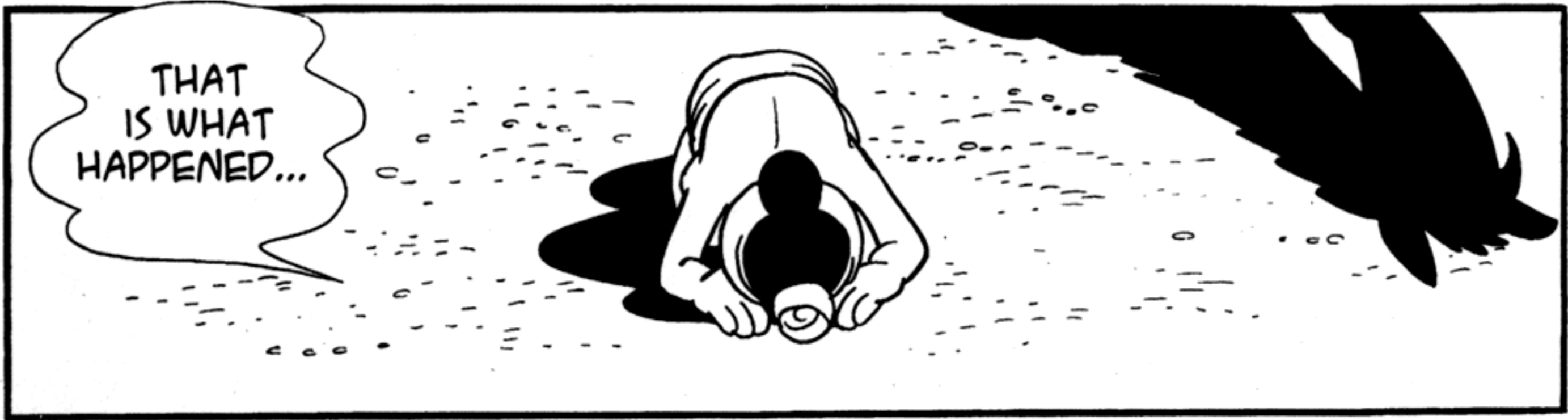






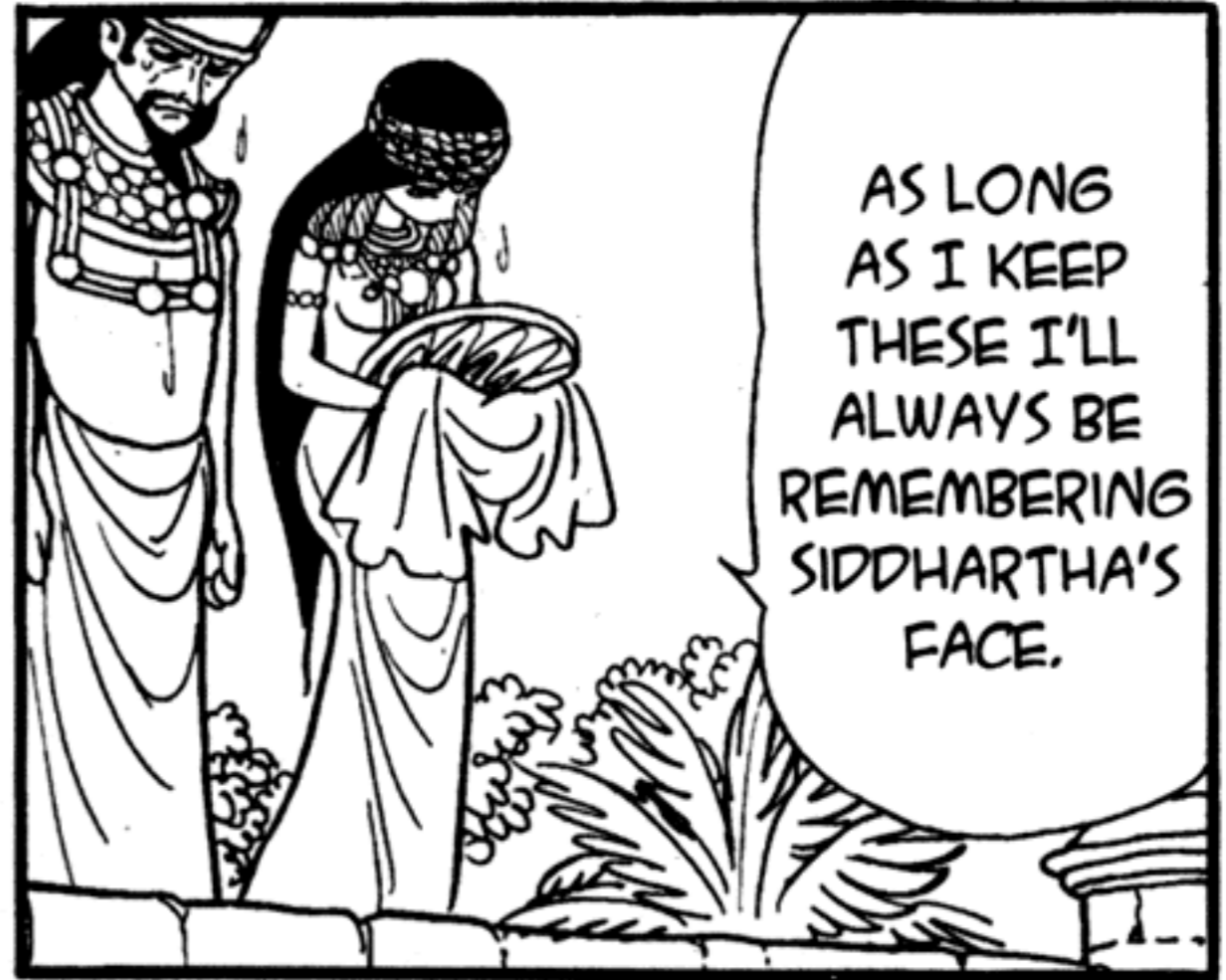




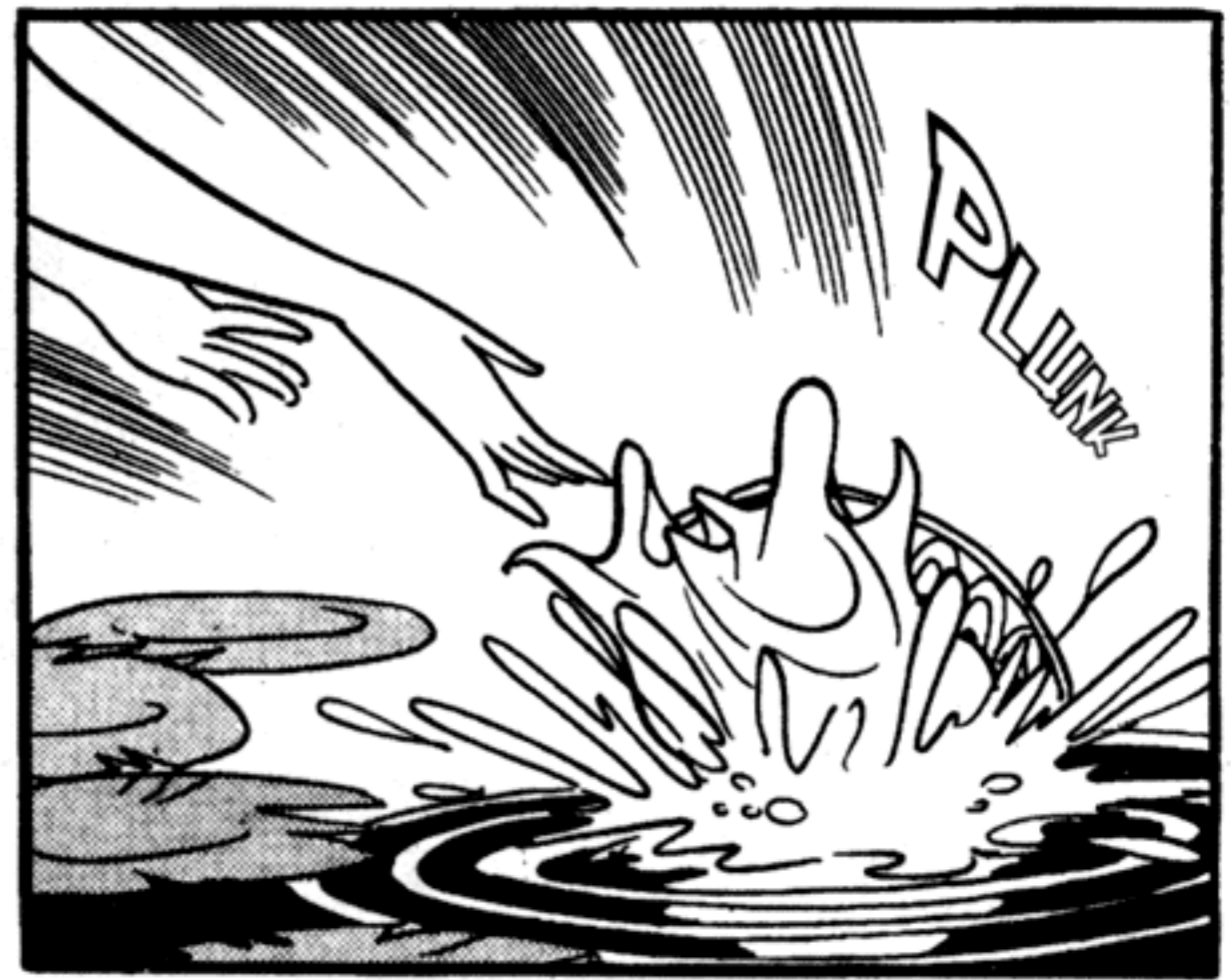




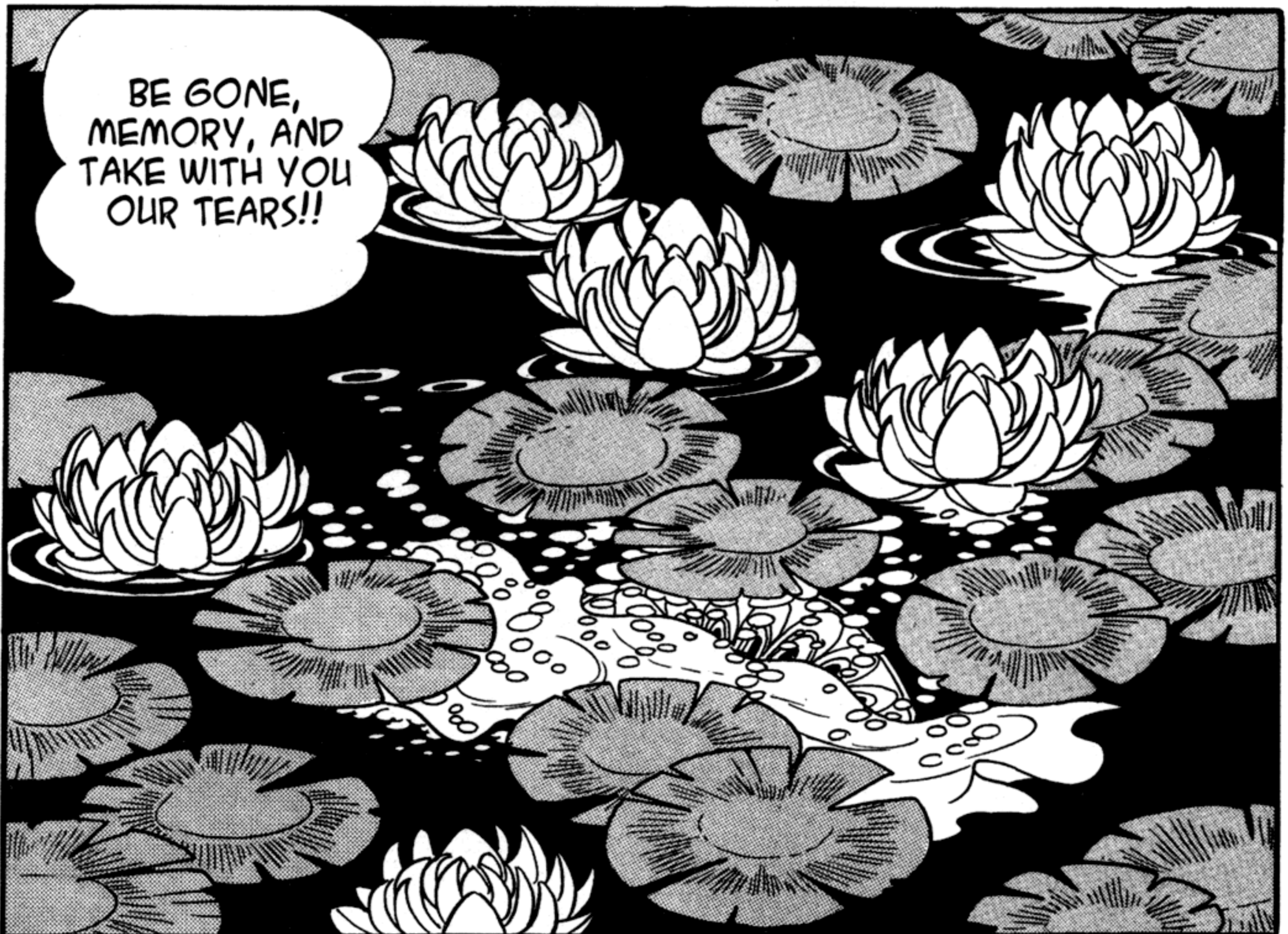
KANTHAKA,
I HATE YOU.
WHERE DID YOU
TAKE MY
HUSBAND?



AS LONG
AS I KEEP
THESE I'LL
ALWAYS BE
REMEMBERING
SIDDHARTHA'S
FACE.



PLUNK

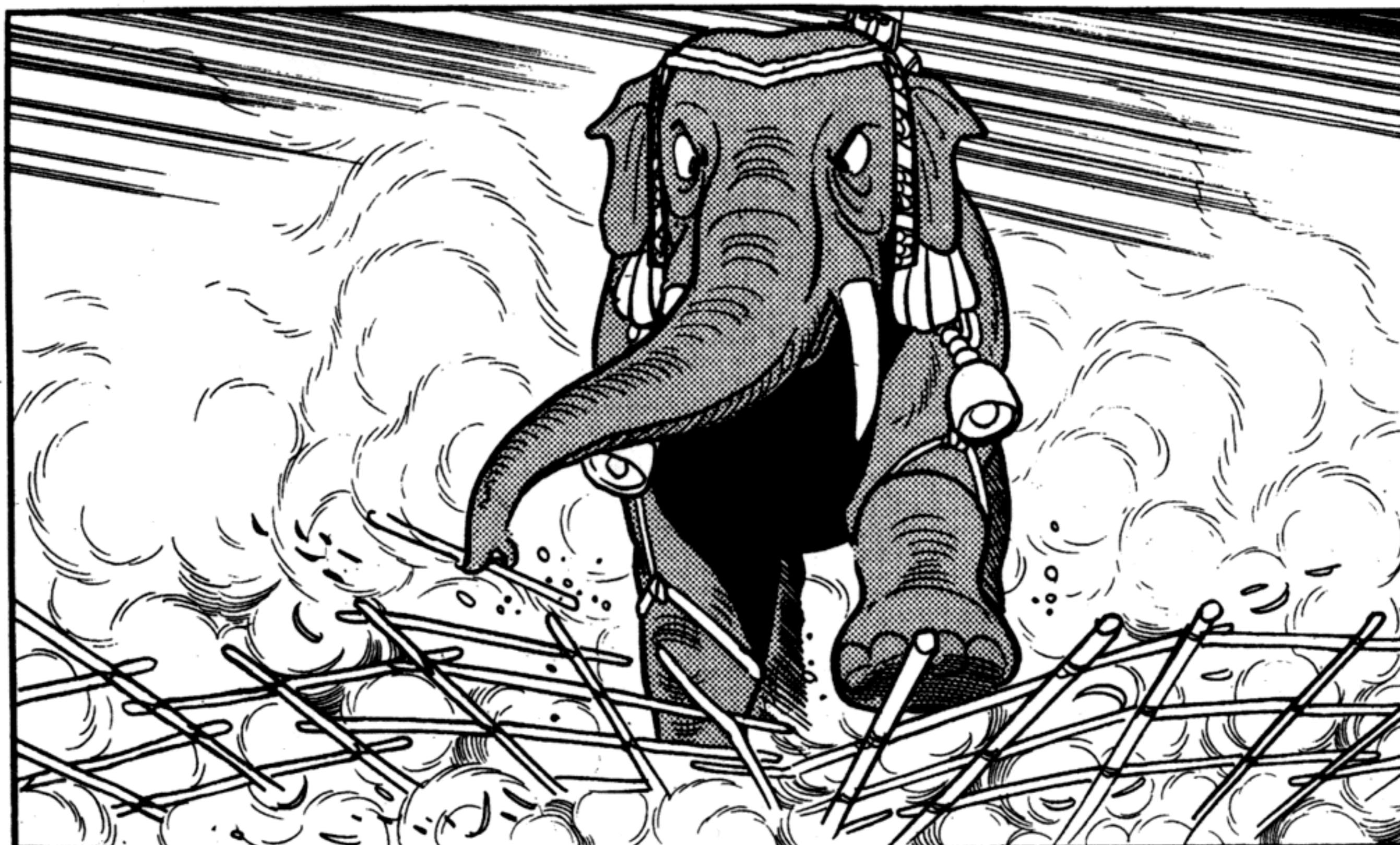
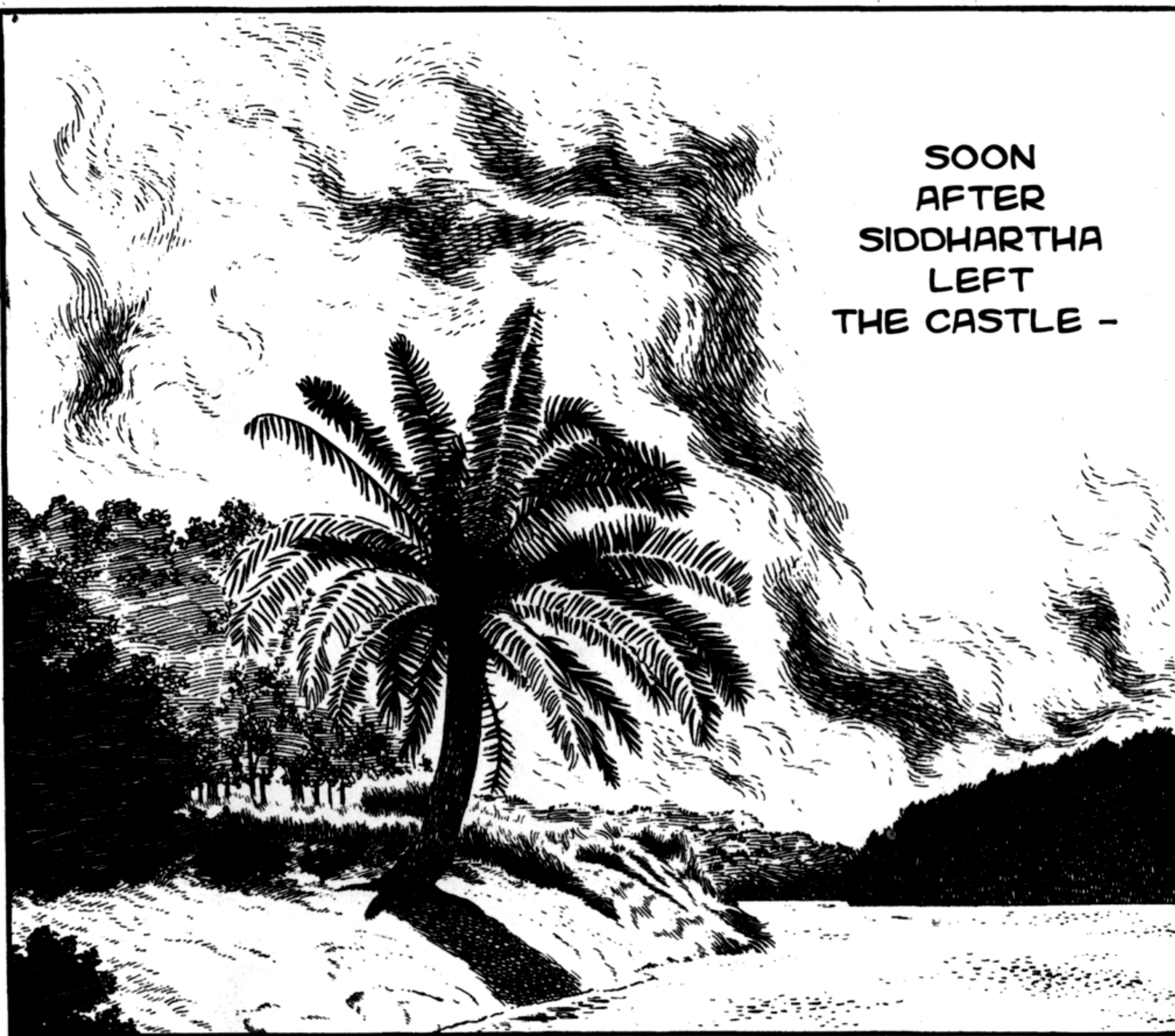


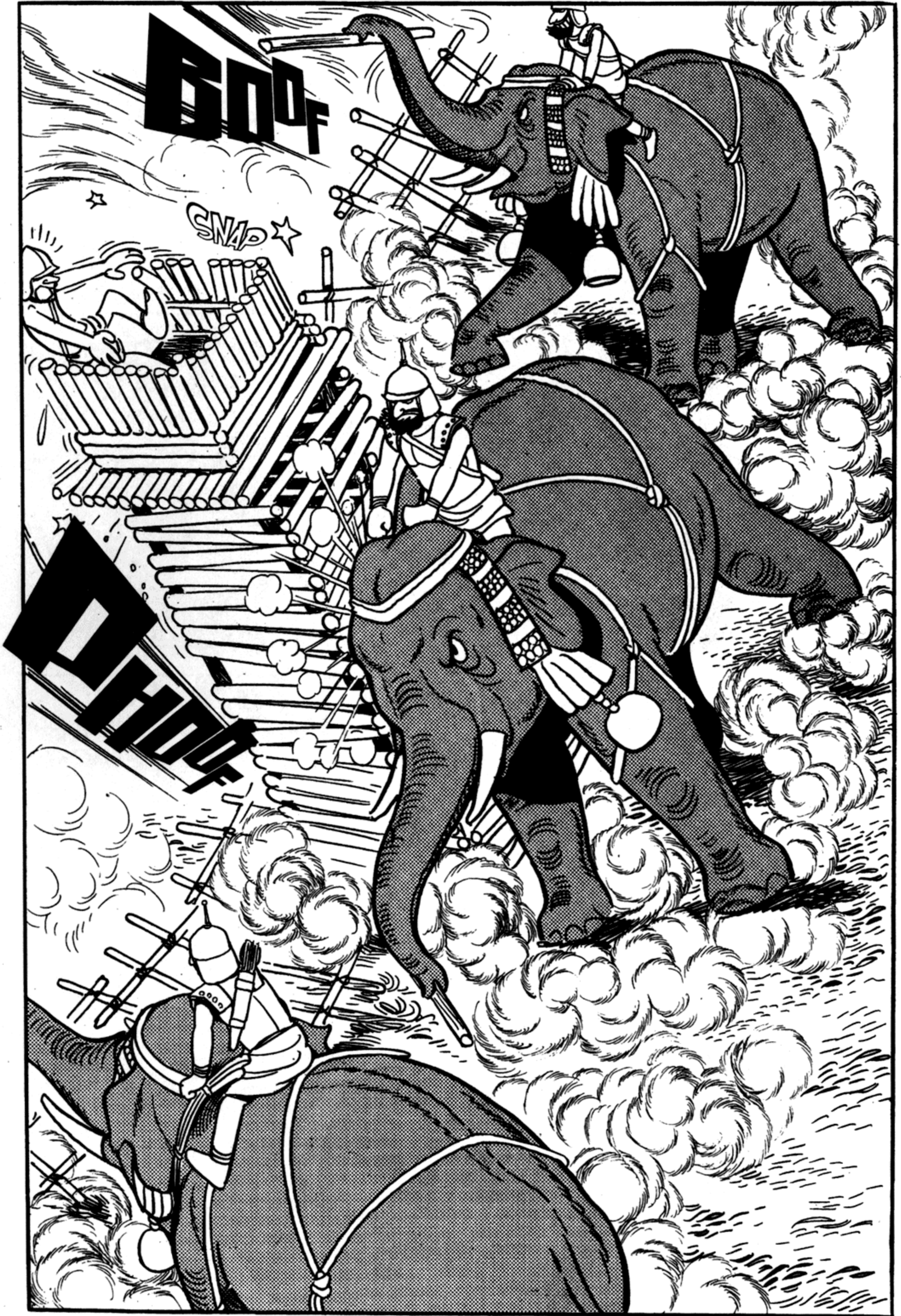
BE GONE,
MEMORY, AND
TAKE WITH YOU
OUR TEARS!!

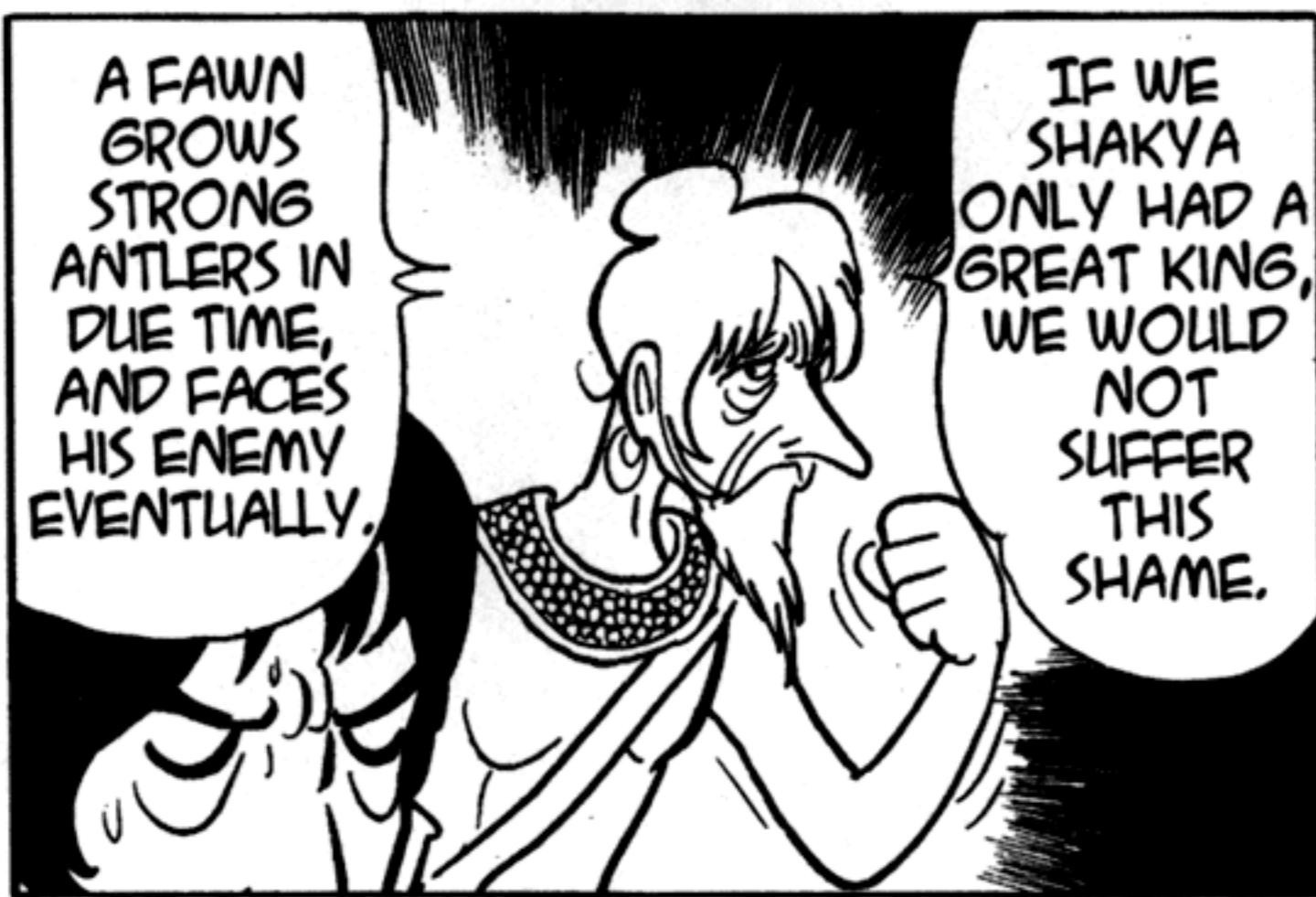
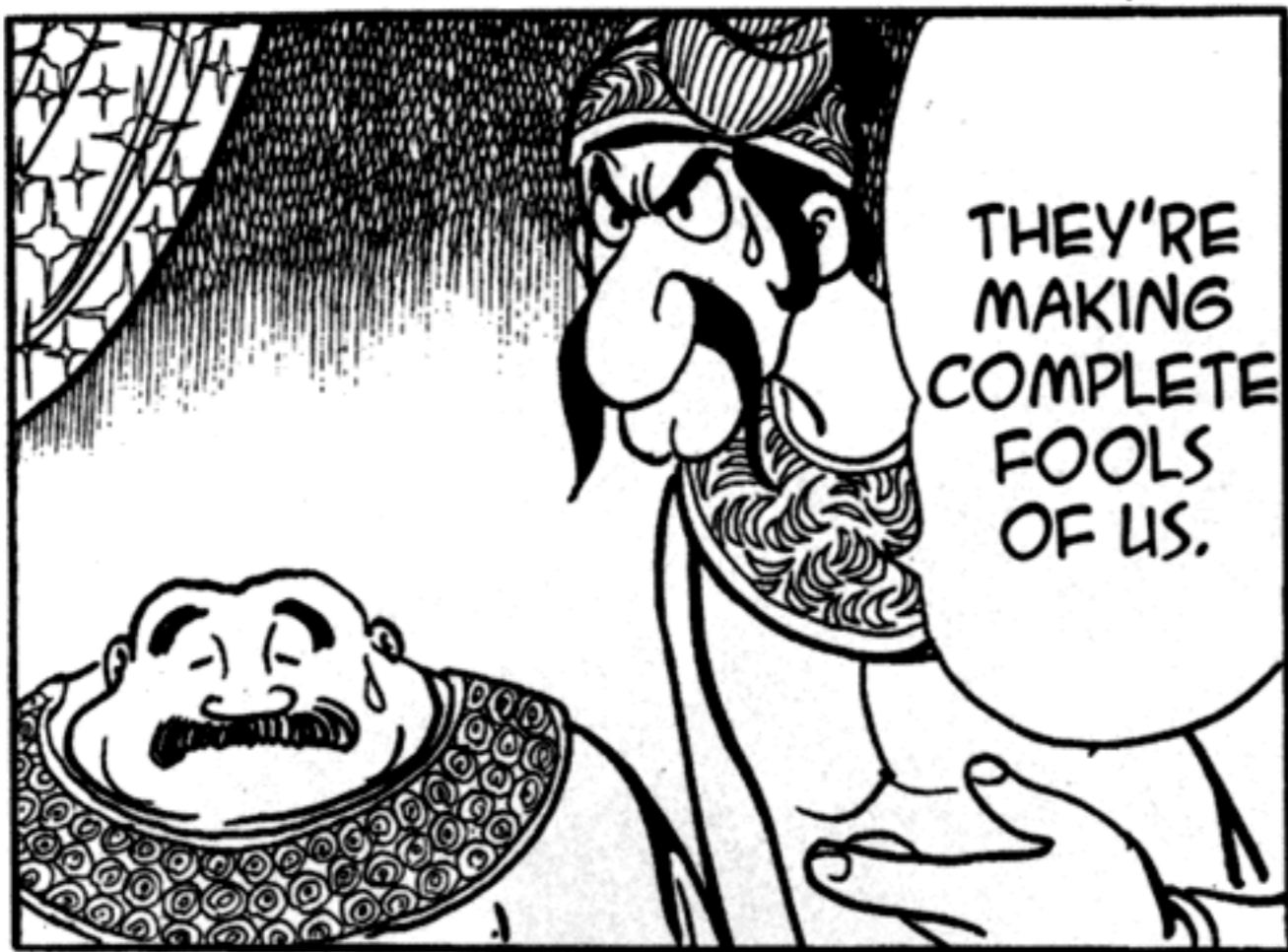
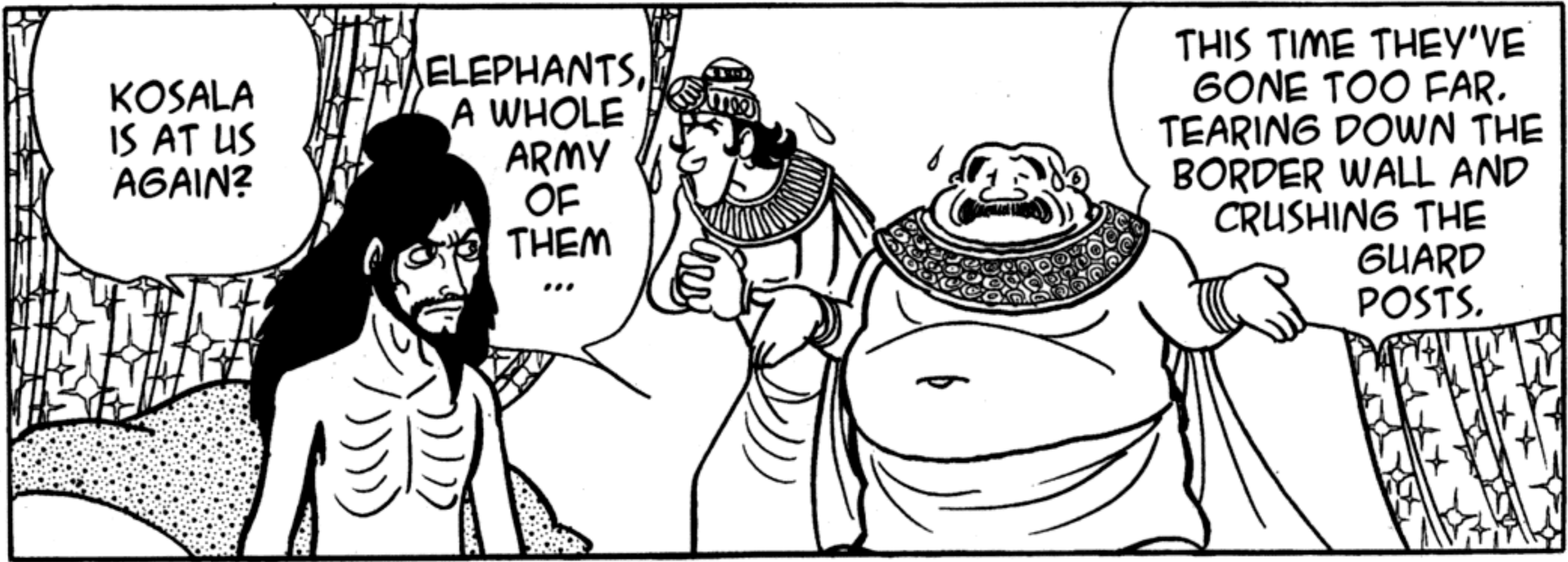
CHAPTER TEN

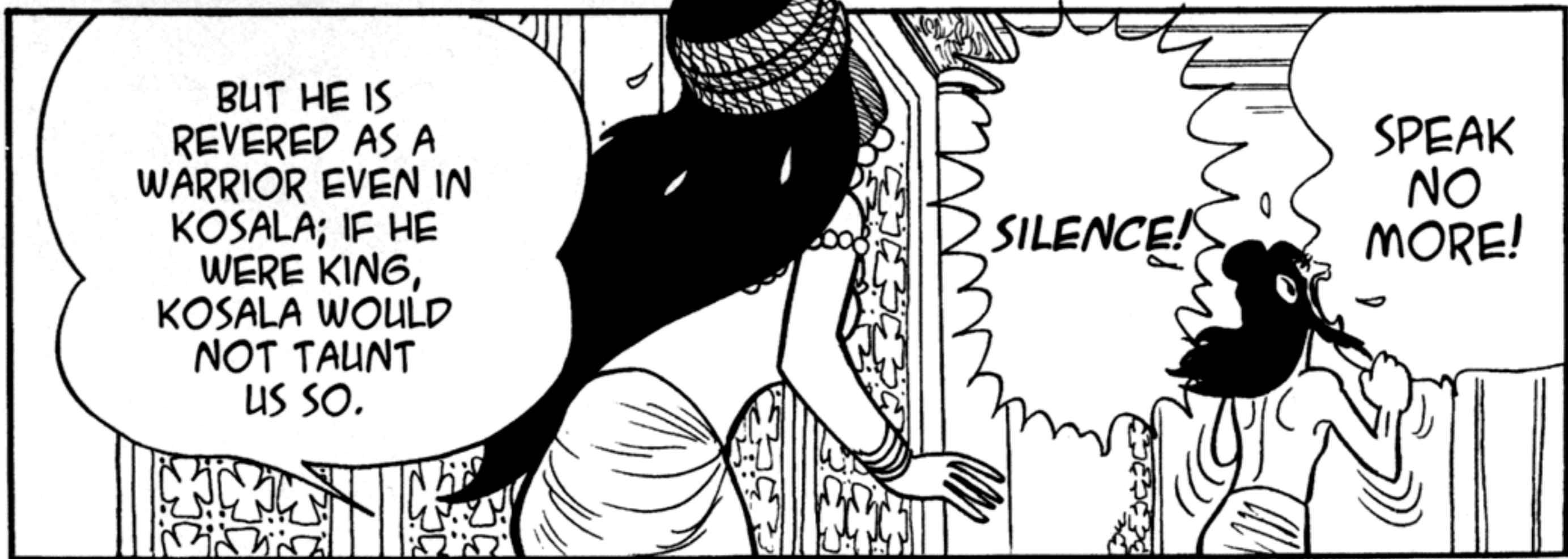
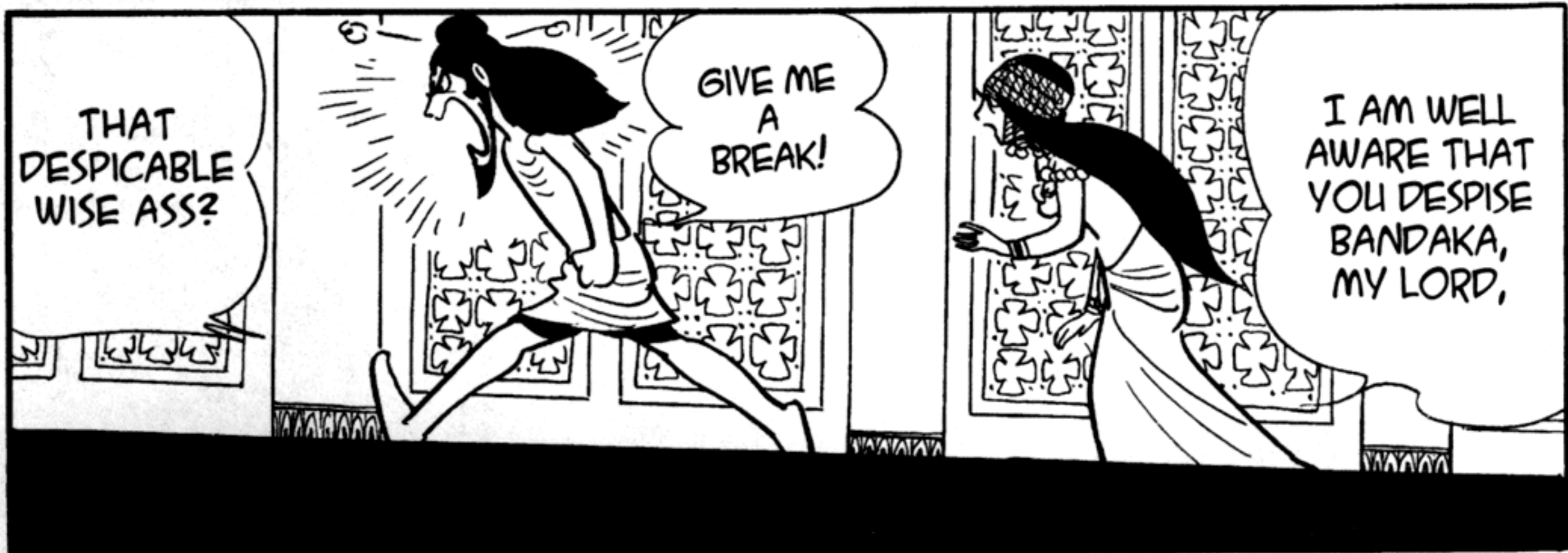
THE DEATH OF BANDAKA

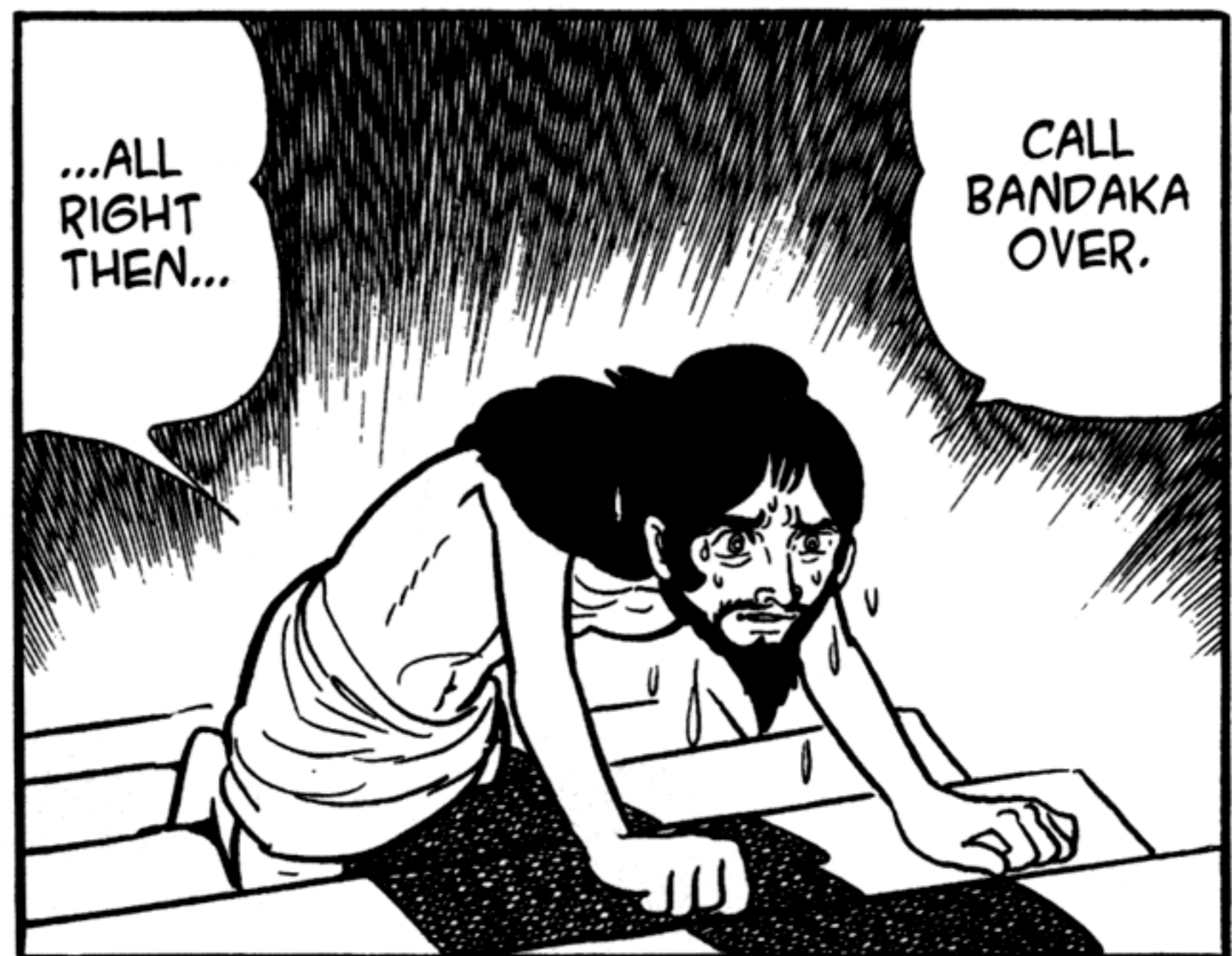
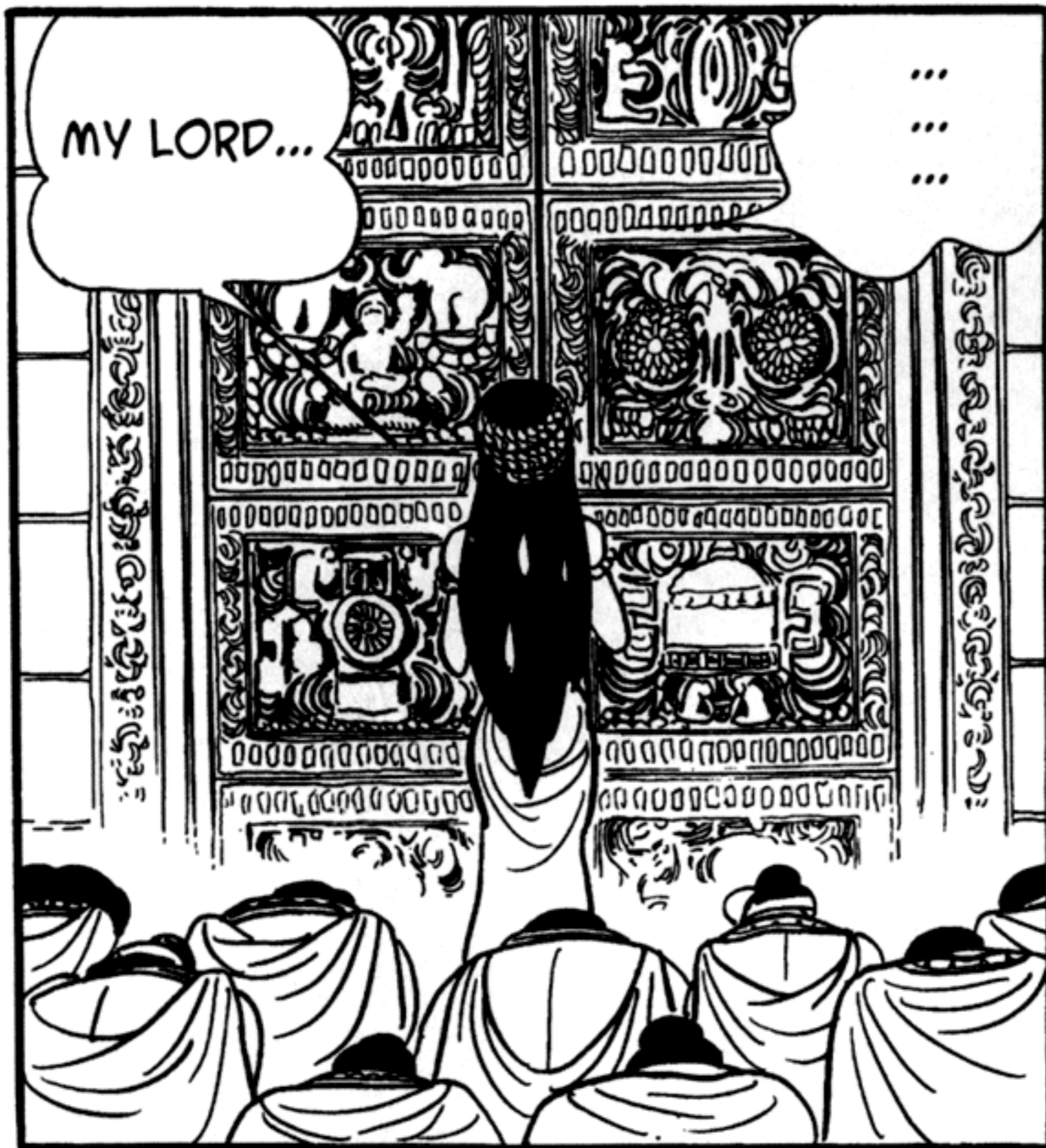
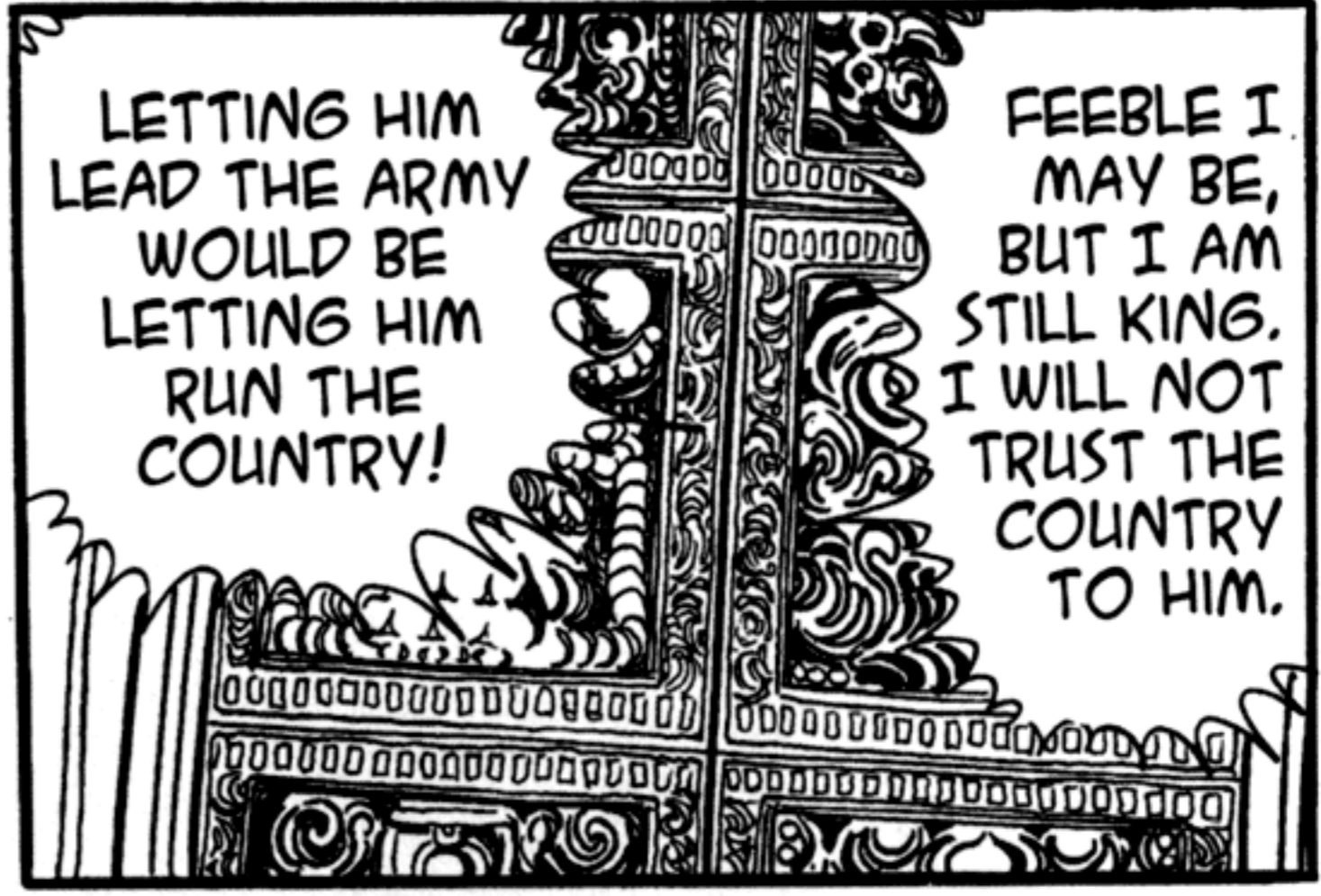
SOON
AFTER
SIDDHARTHA
LEFT
THE CASTLE -

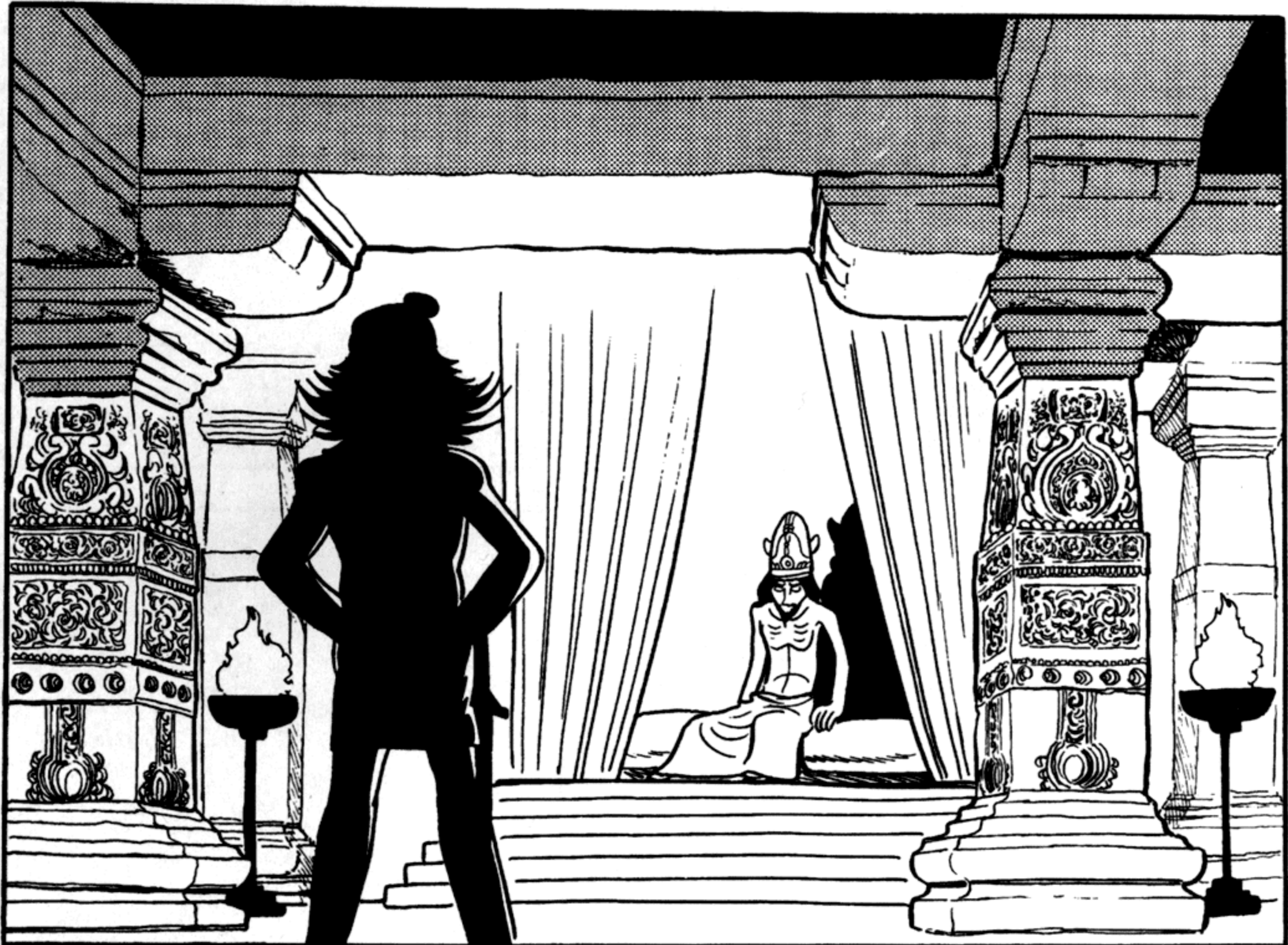
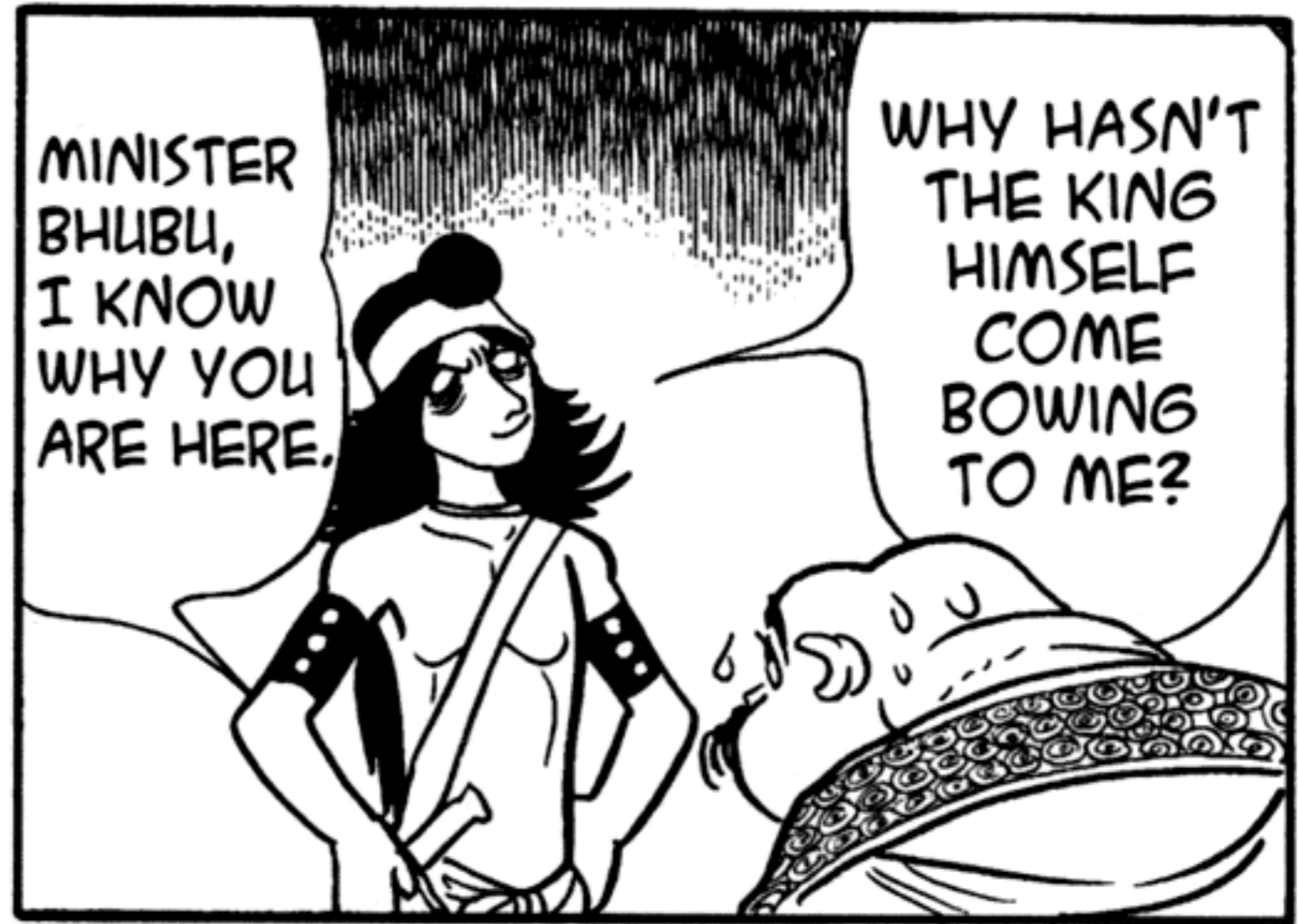


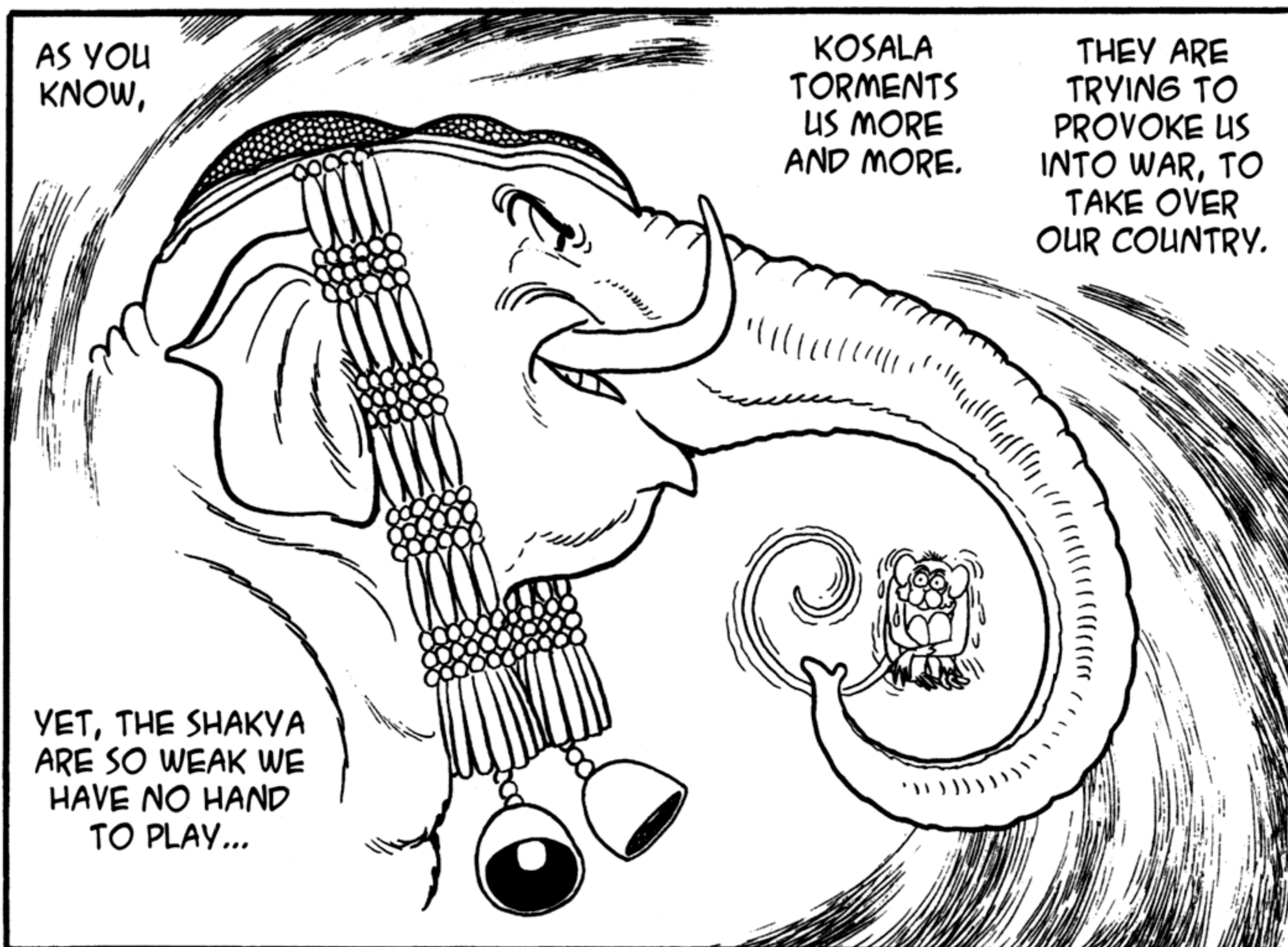
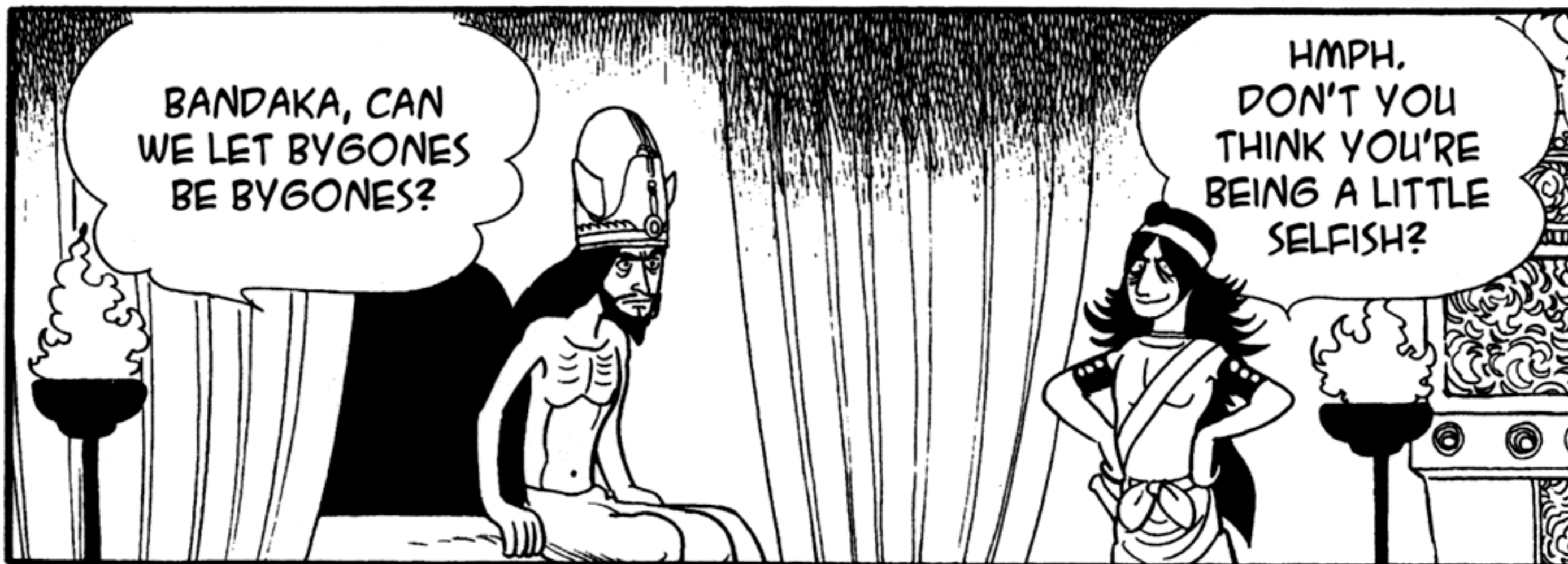


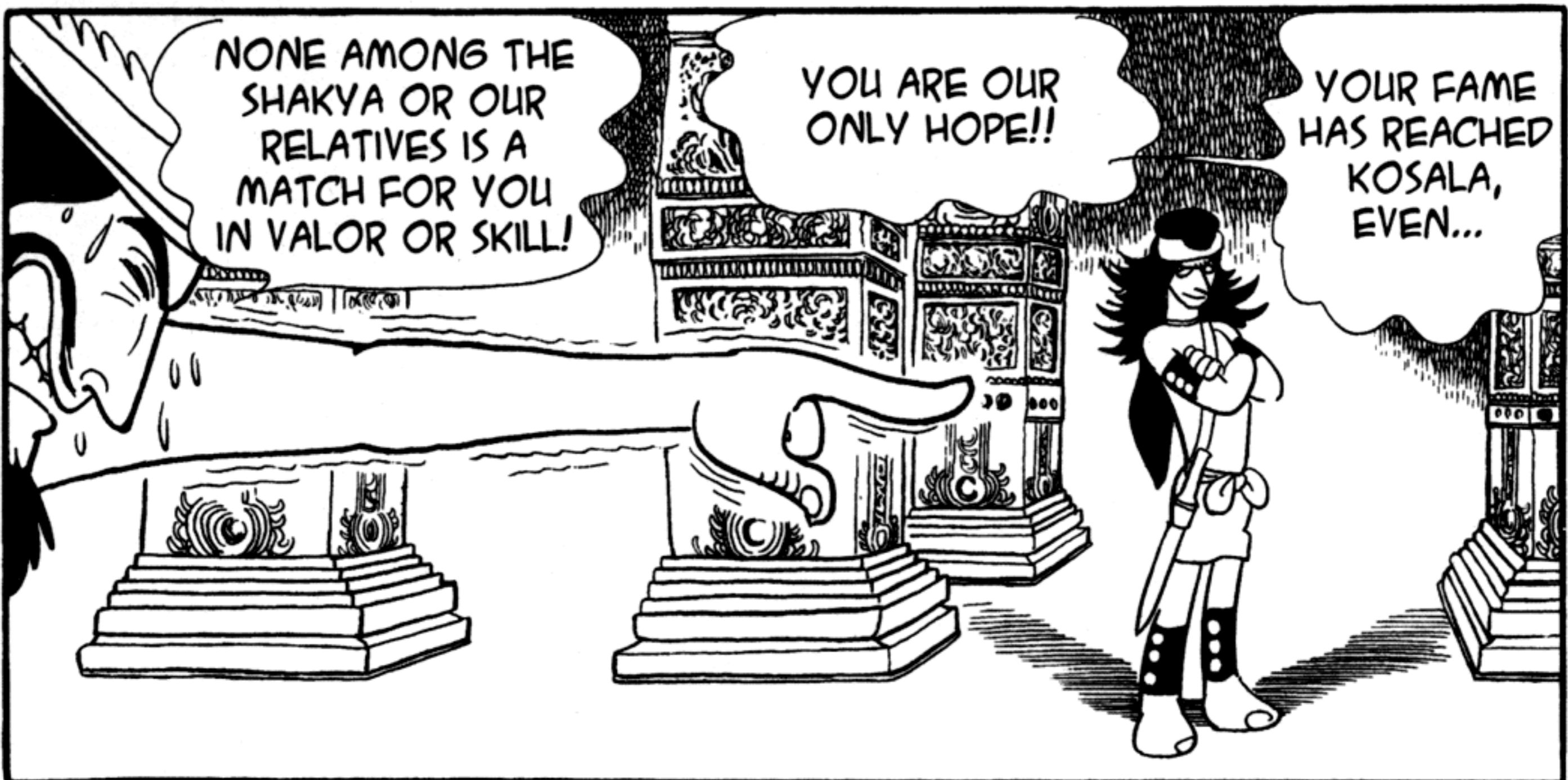
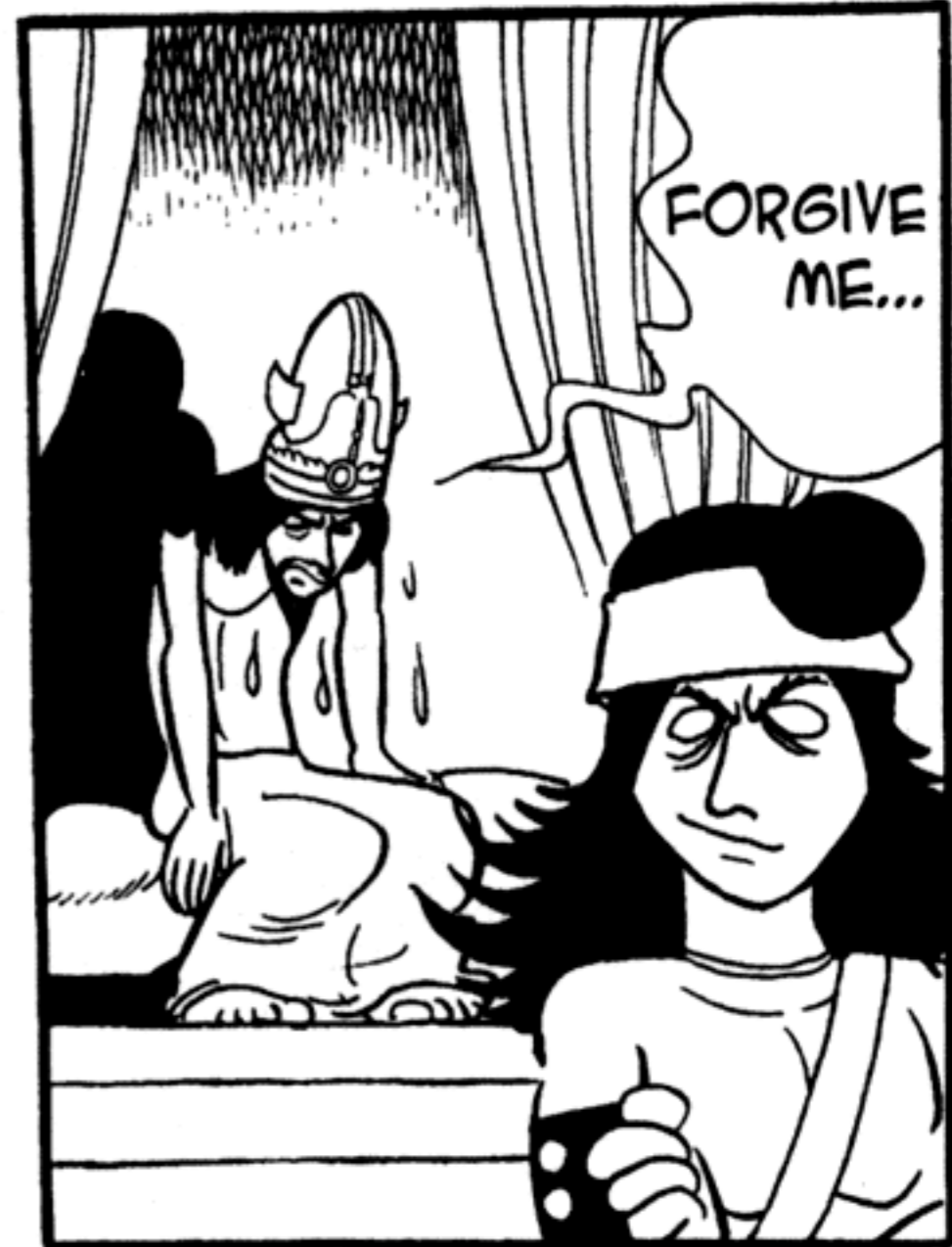
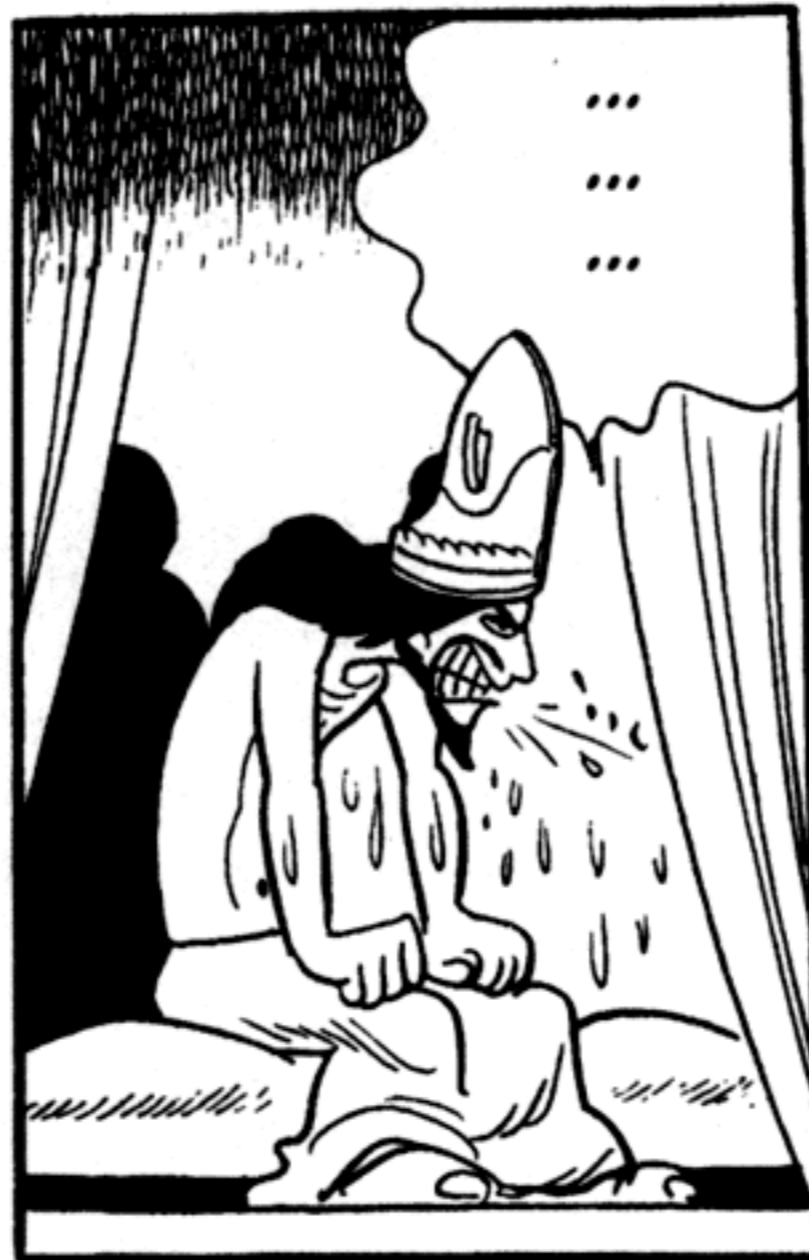
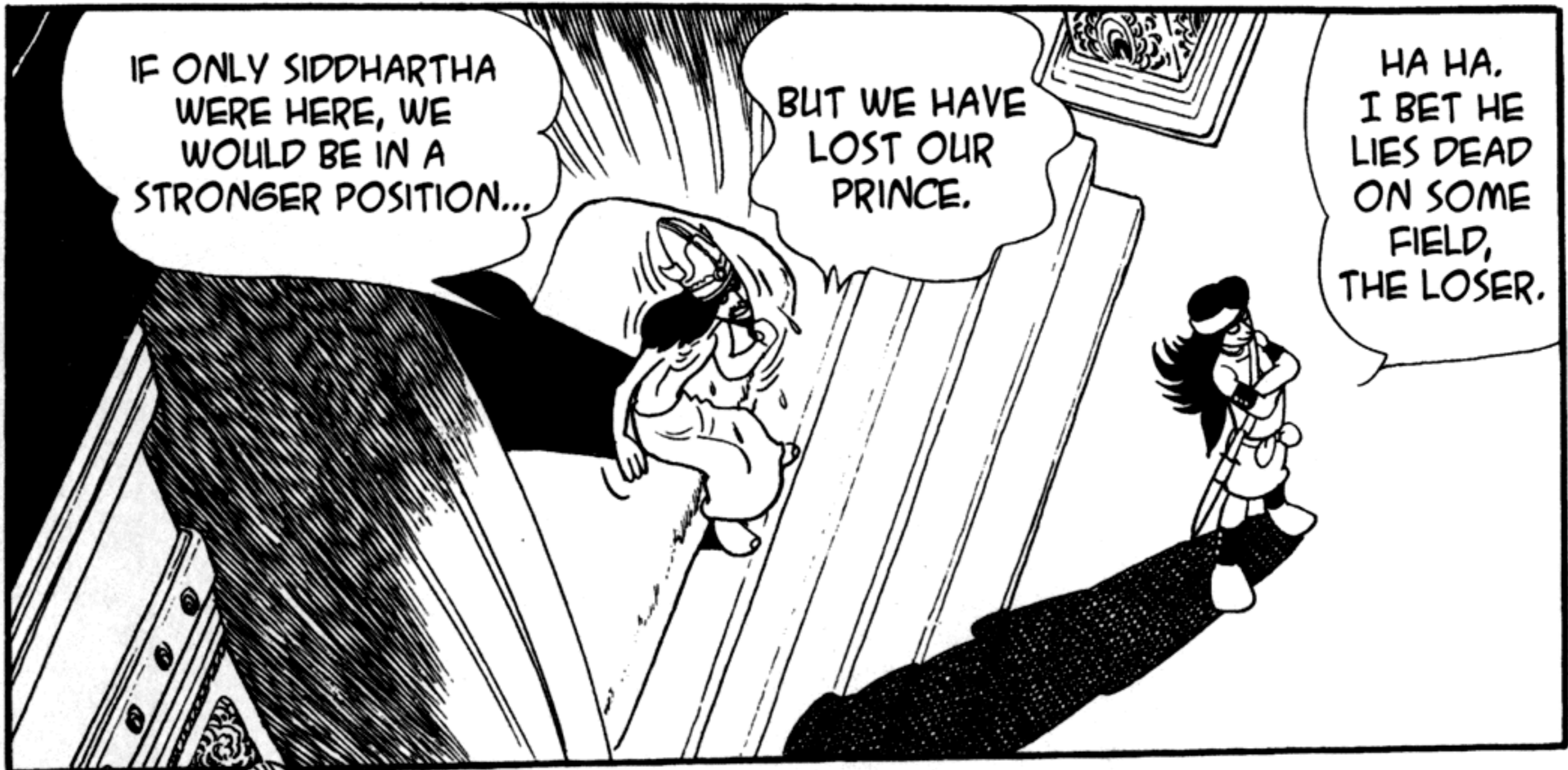


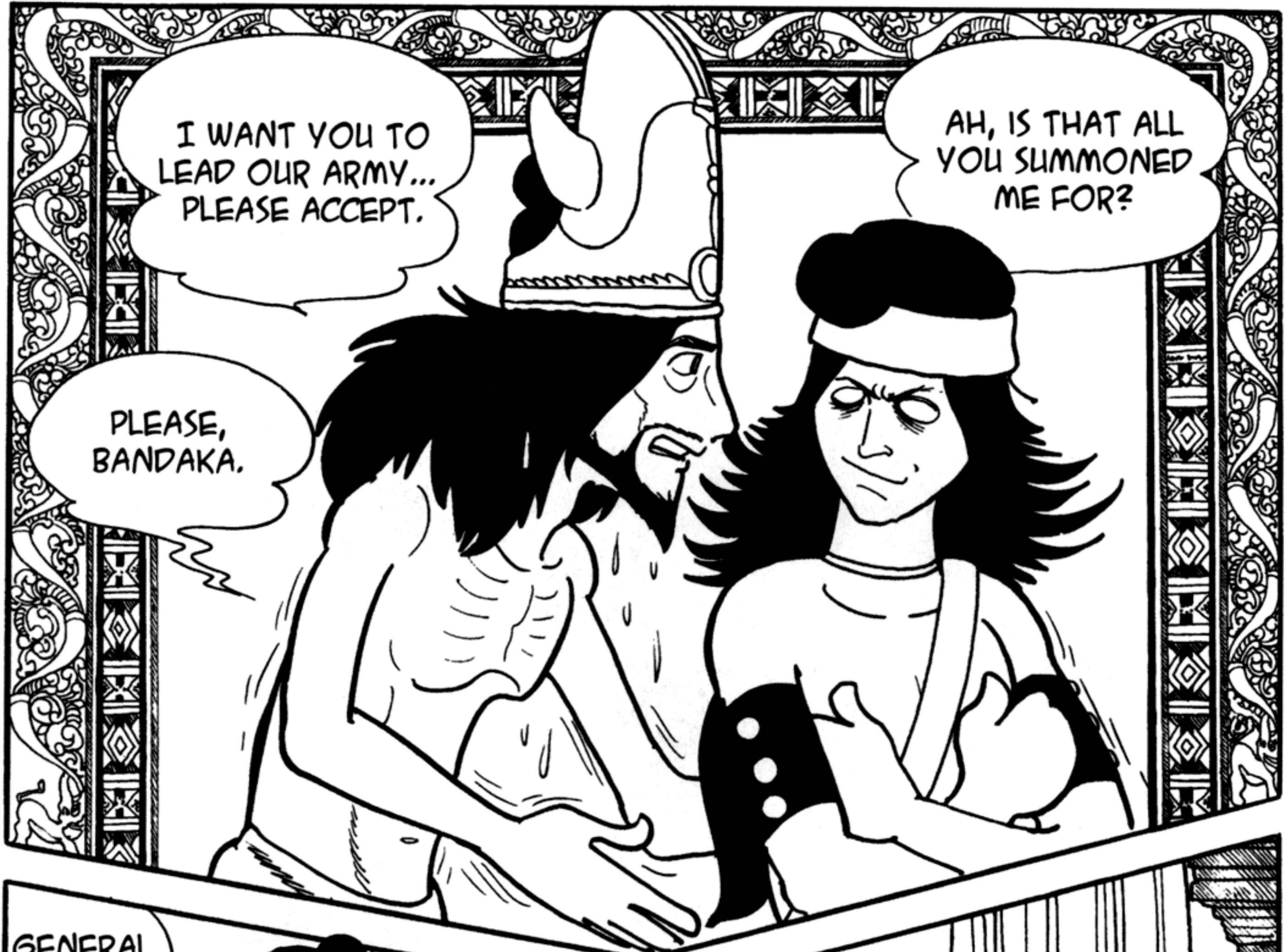












I WANT YOU TO LEAD OUR ARMY... PLEASE ACCEPT.

AH, IS THAT ALL YOU SUMMONED ME FOR?

PLEASE, BANDAKA.



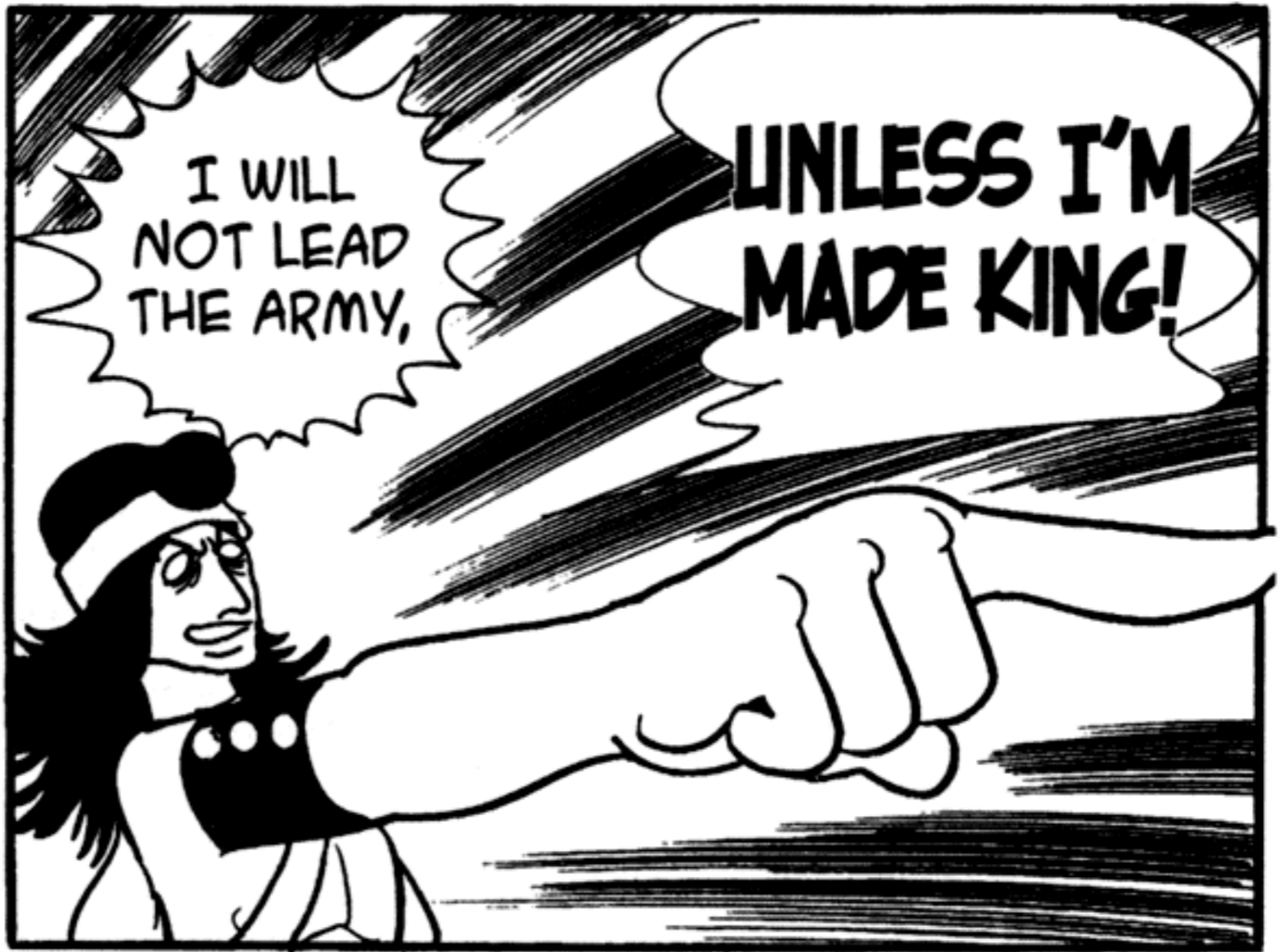
GENERAL OF THE ARMY, EH?

I DIDN'T KNOW YOU TOOK ME FOR A CHUMP!

WHILE I PUT OUT MY NECK, YOU WANT TO SIT THERE DECREPIT ON YOUR THRONE, AND REMAIN KING?

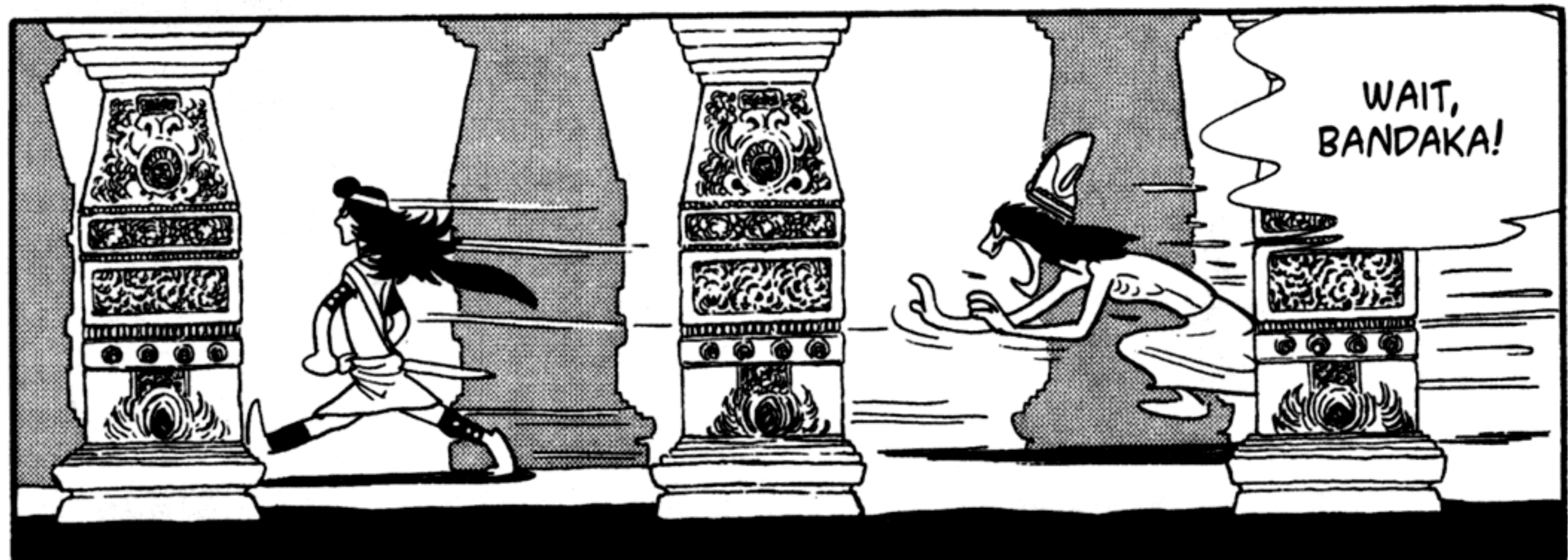


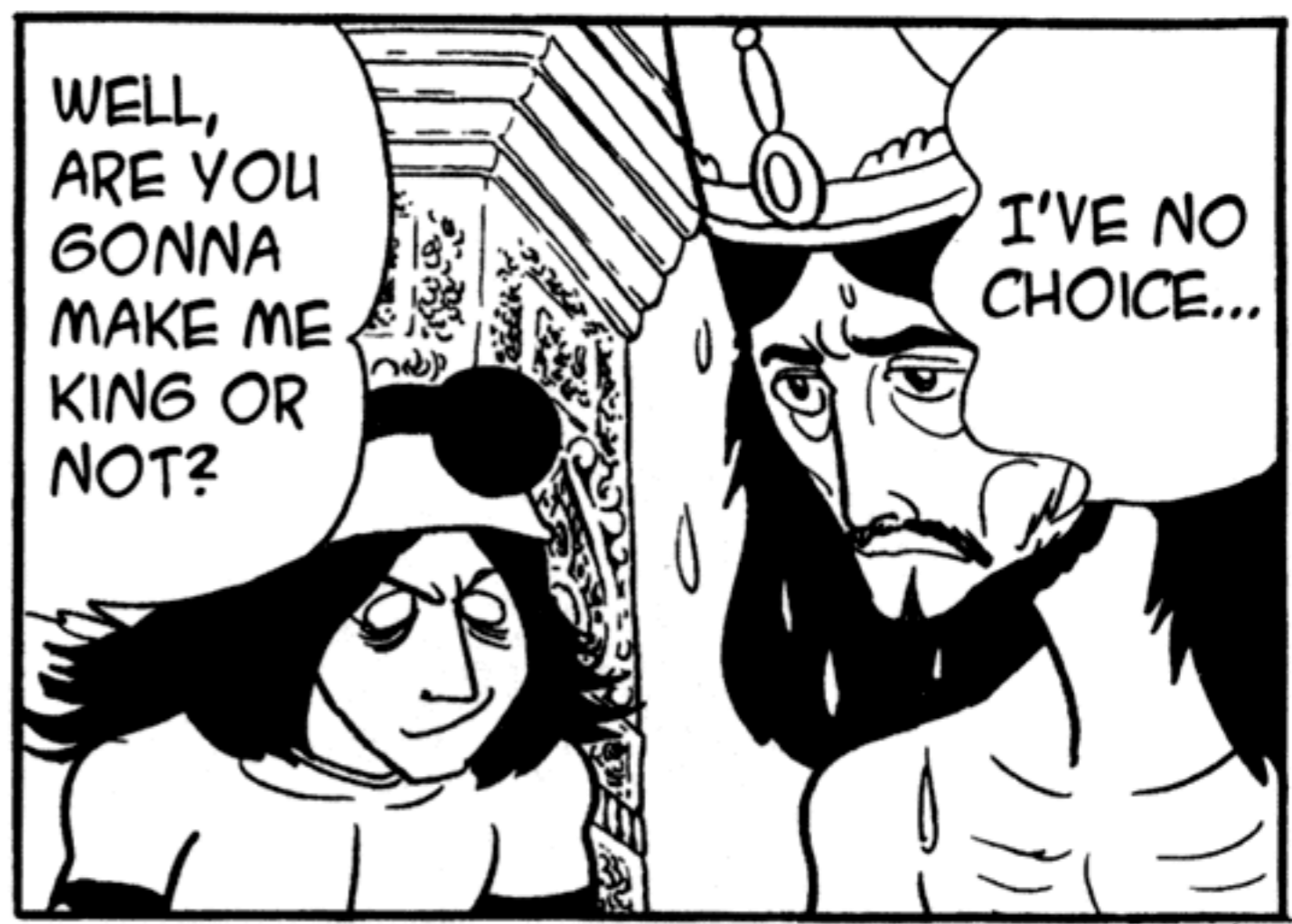
AS USUAL, YOU PULL NO PUNCHES...



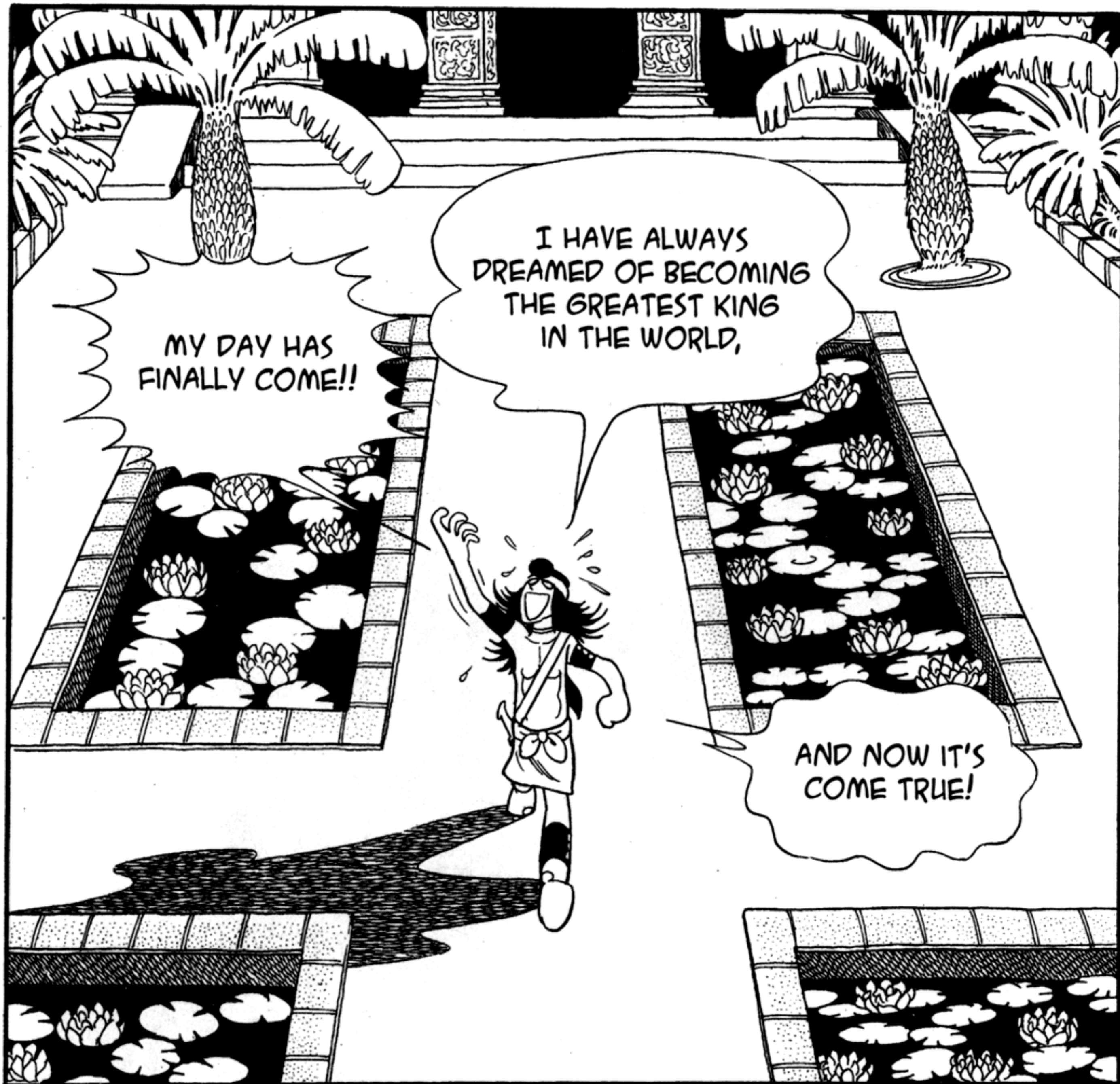
I WILL NOT LEAD THE ARMY,

UNLESS I'M MADE KING!





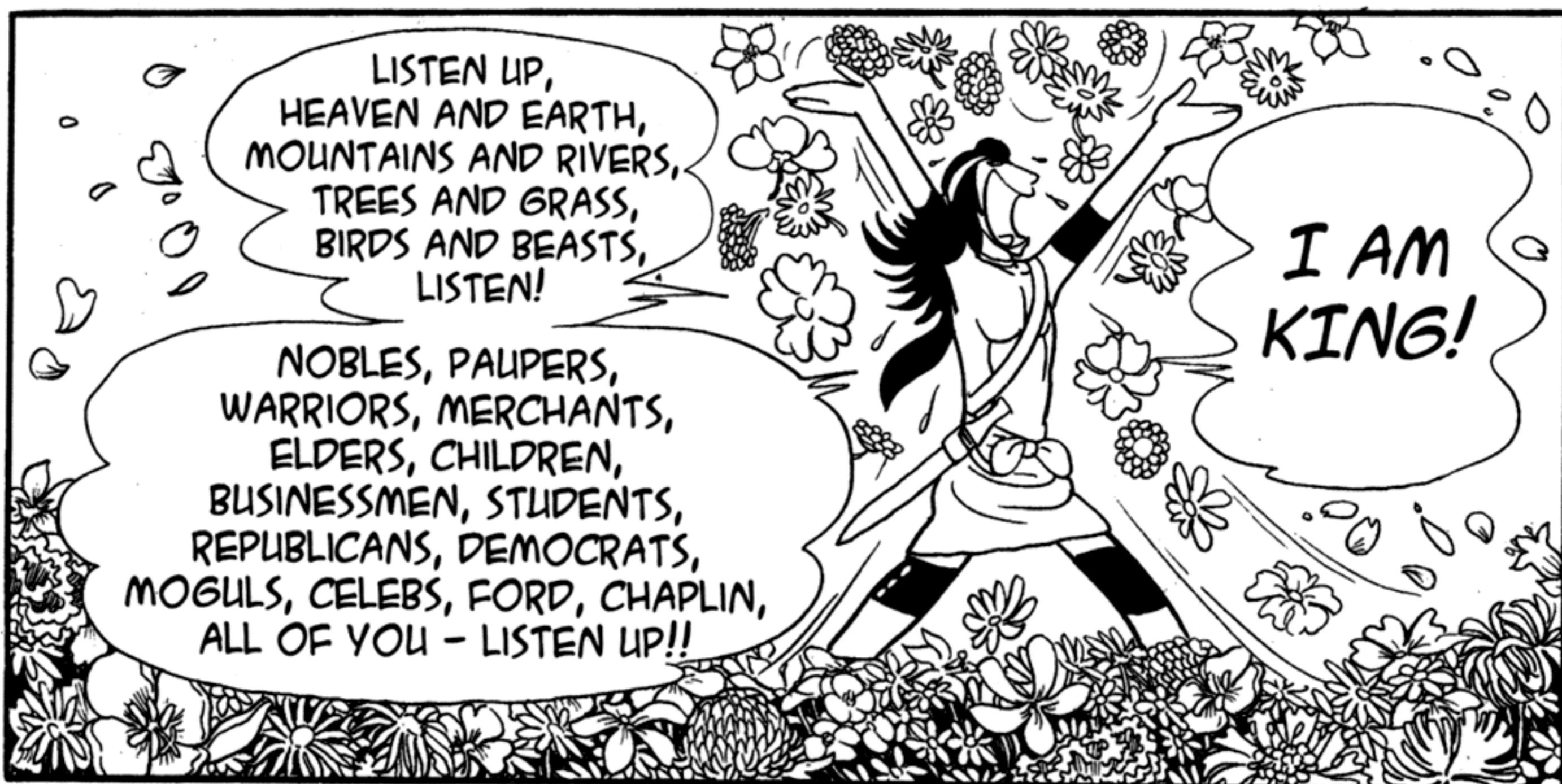




MY DAY HAS
FINALLY COME!!

I HAVE ALWAYS
DREAMED OF BECOMING
THE GREATEST KING
IN THE WORLD,

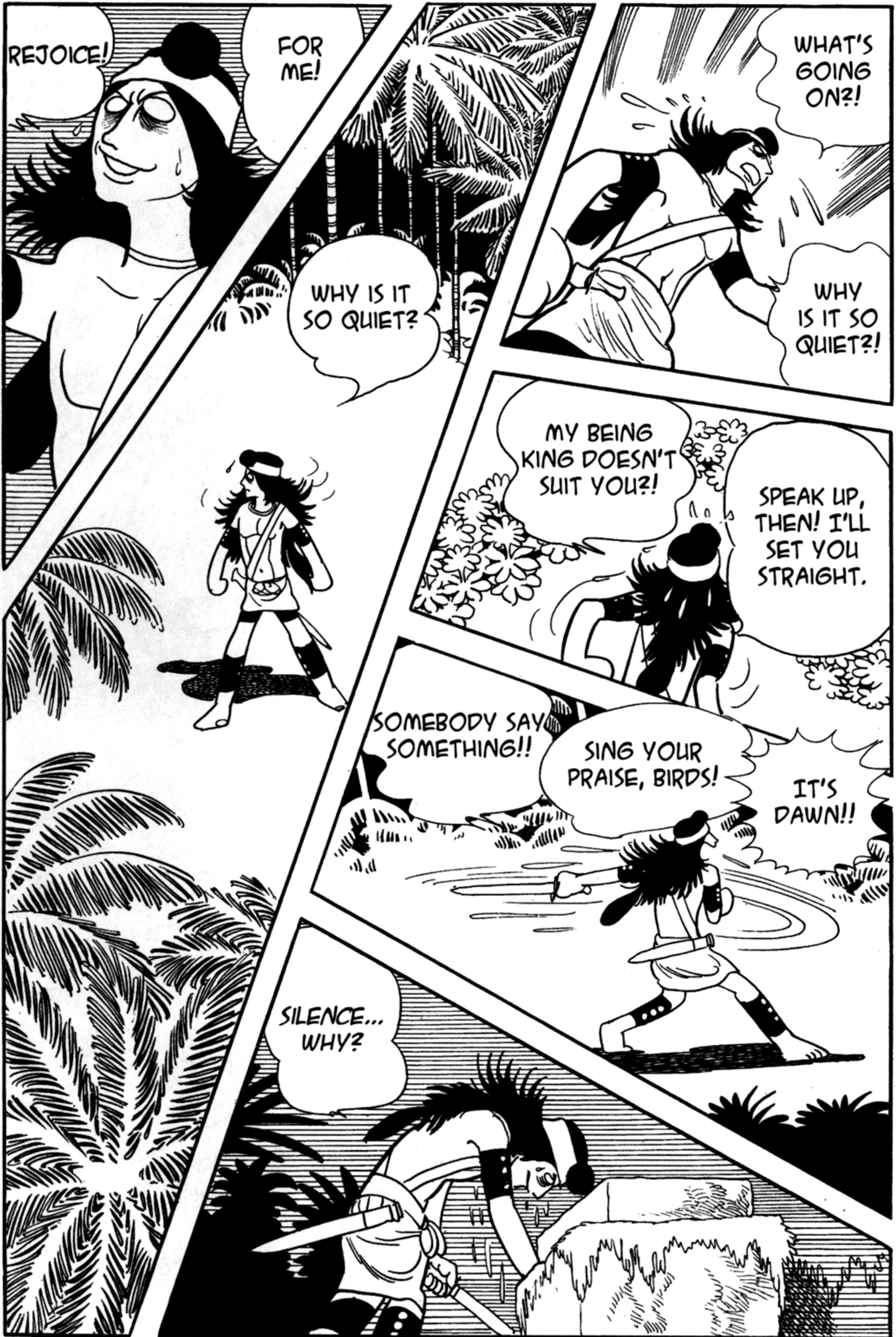
AND NOW IT'S
COME TRUE!



LISTEN UP,
HEAVEN AND EARTH,
MOUNTAINS AND RIVERS,
TREES AND GRASS,
BIRDS AND BEASTS,
LISTEN!

NOBLES, PAUPERS,
WARRIORS, MERCHANTS,
ELDERS, CHILDREN,
BUSINESSMEN, STUDENTS,
REPUBLICANS, DEMOCRATS,
MOGULS, CELEBS, FORD, CHAPLIN,
ALL OF YOU - LISTEN UP!!

I AM
KING!



REJOICE!
FOR ME!

WHY IS IT SO QUIET?

WHAT'S GOING ON?!

WHY IS IT SO QUIET?!

MY BEING KING DOESN'T SUIT YOU?!

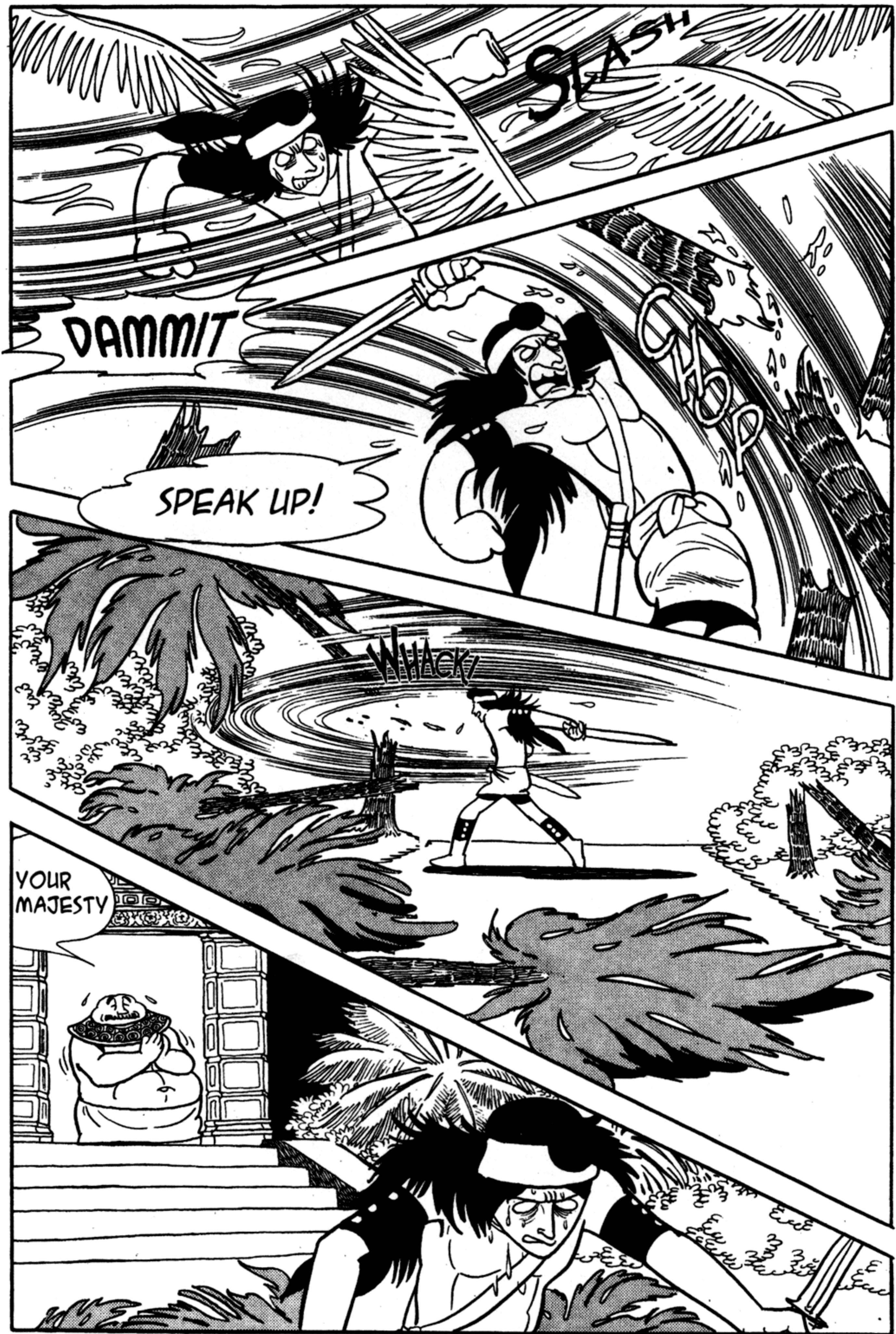
SPEAK UP, THEN! I'LL SET YOU STRAIGHT.

SOMEBODY SAY SOMETHING!!

SING YOUR PRAISE, BIRDS!

IT'S DAWN!!

SILENCE... WHY?



DAMMIT

SLASH

SPEAK UP!

WHACK!

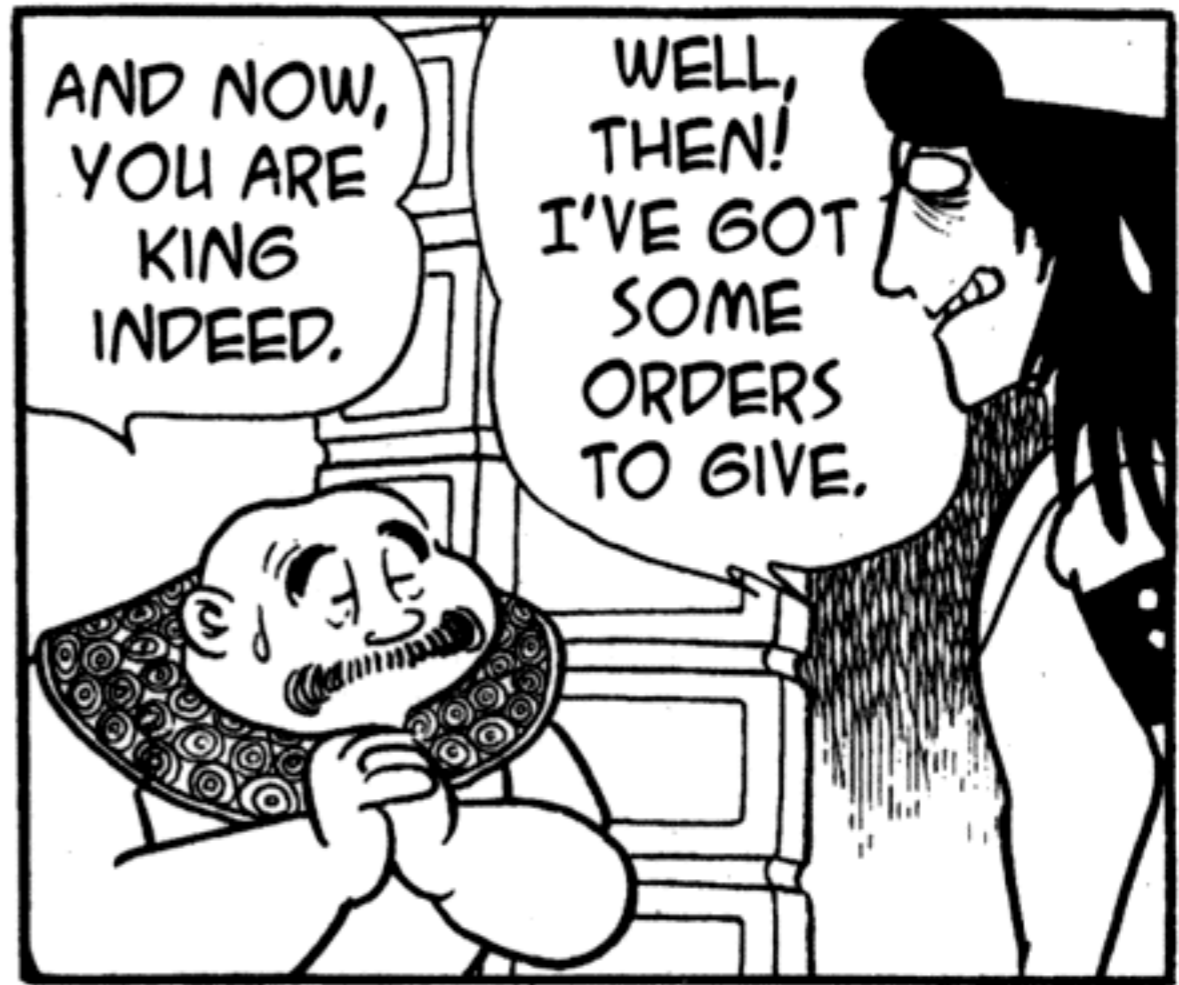
YOUR MAJESTY



DID YOU SAY "MAJESTY" ?

YOU RECOGNIZE ME AS KING, MINISTER BHUBU?

WHY SHOULD I NOT, LIEGE? I WAS THE ONE WHO CAME UP WITH THE IDEA.



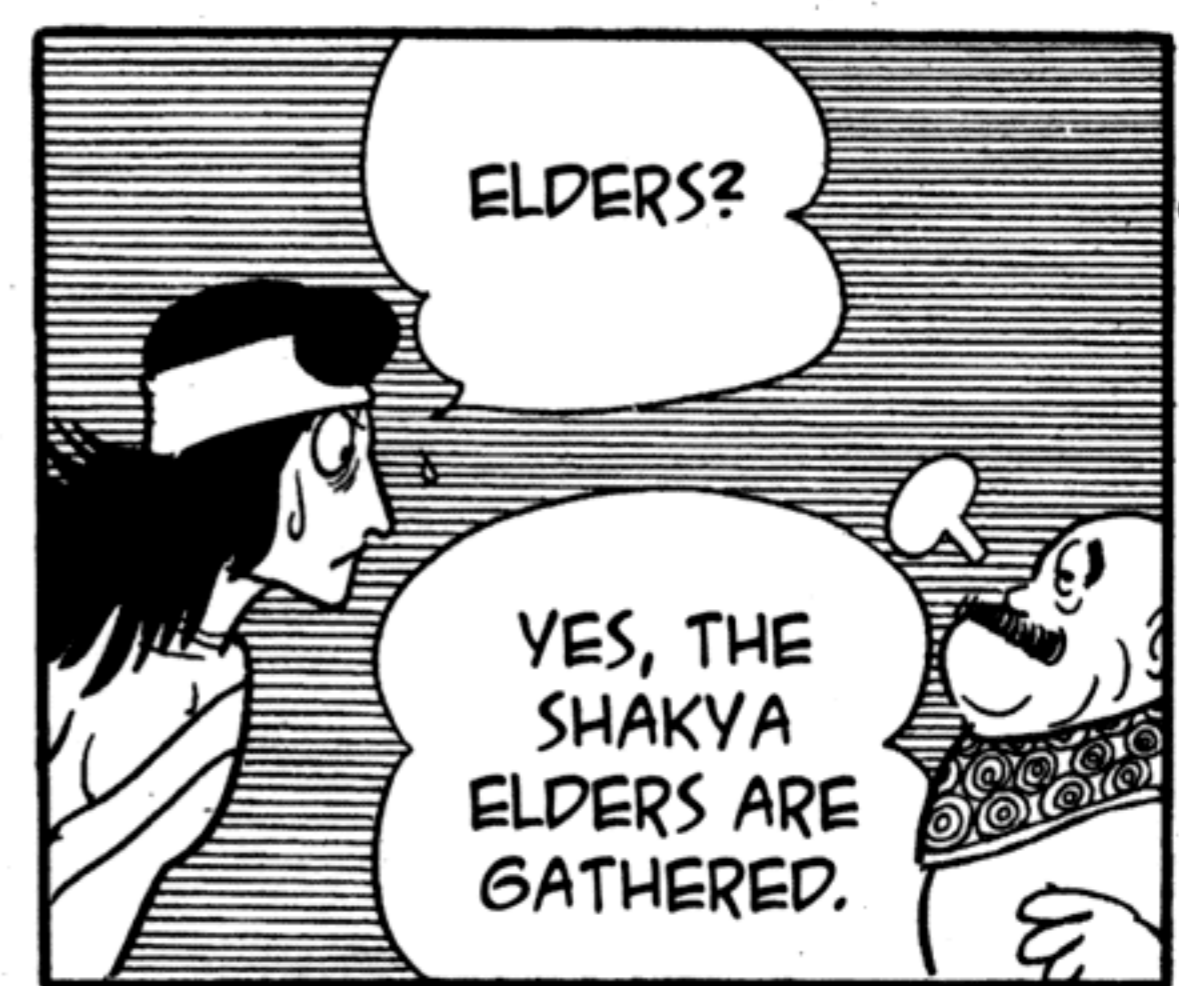
AND NOW, YOU ARE KING INDEED.

WELL, THEN! I'VE GOT SOME ORDERS TO GIVE.



NOT JUST YET.

WE MUST FIRST GO TO THE COUNCIL OF ELDERS.



ELDERS?

YES, THE SHAKYA ELDERS ARE GATHERED.

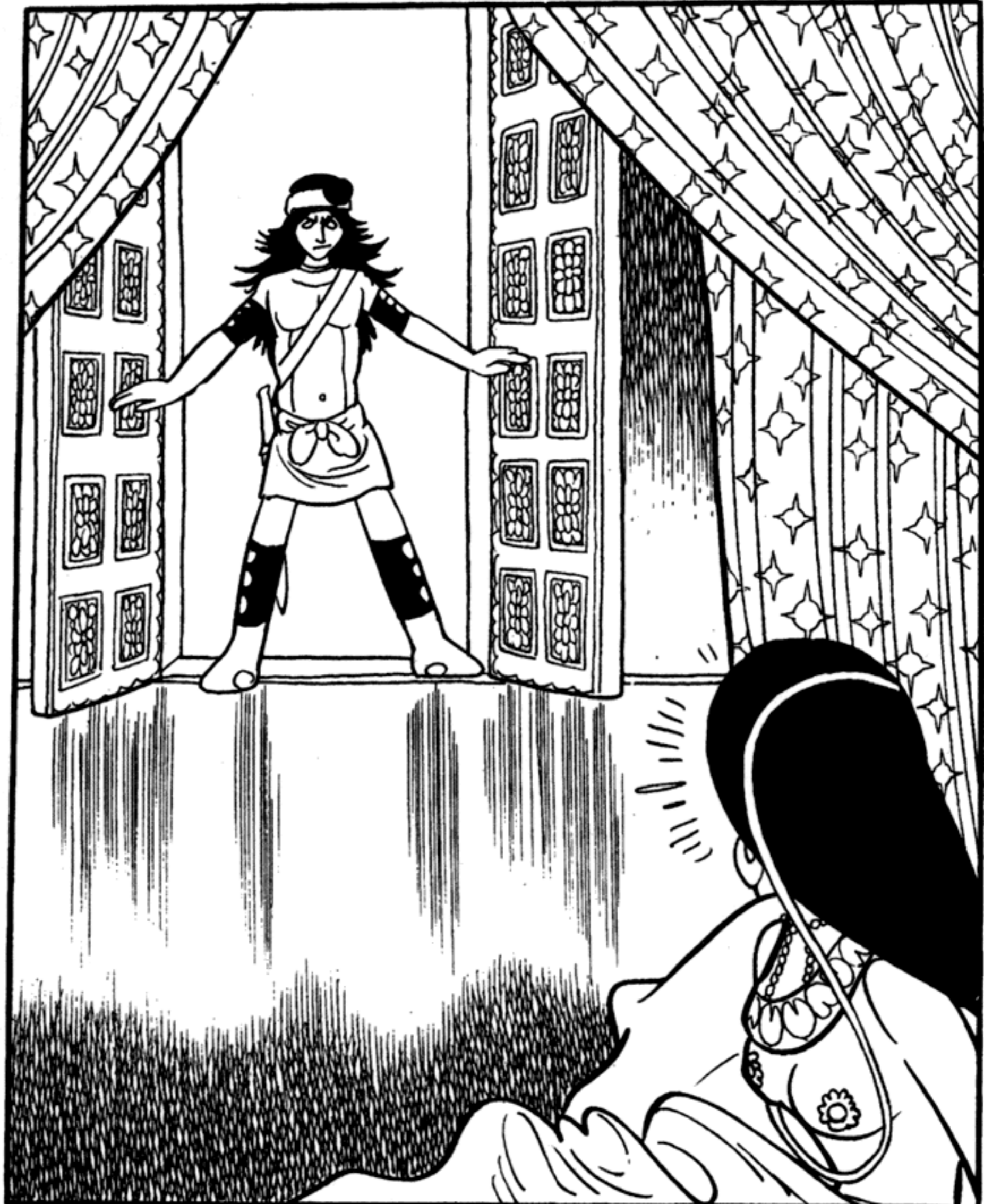
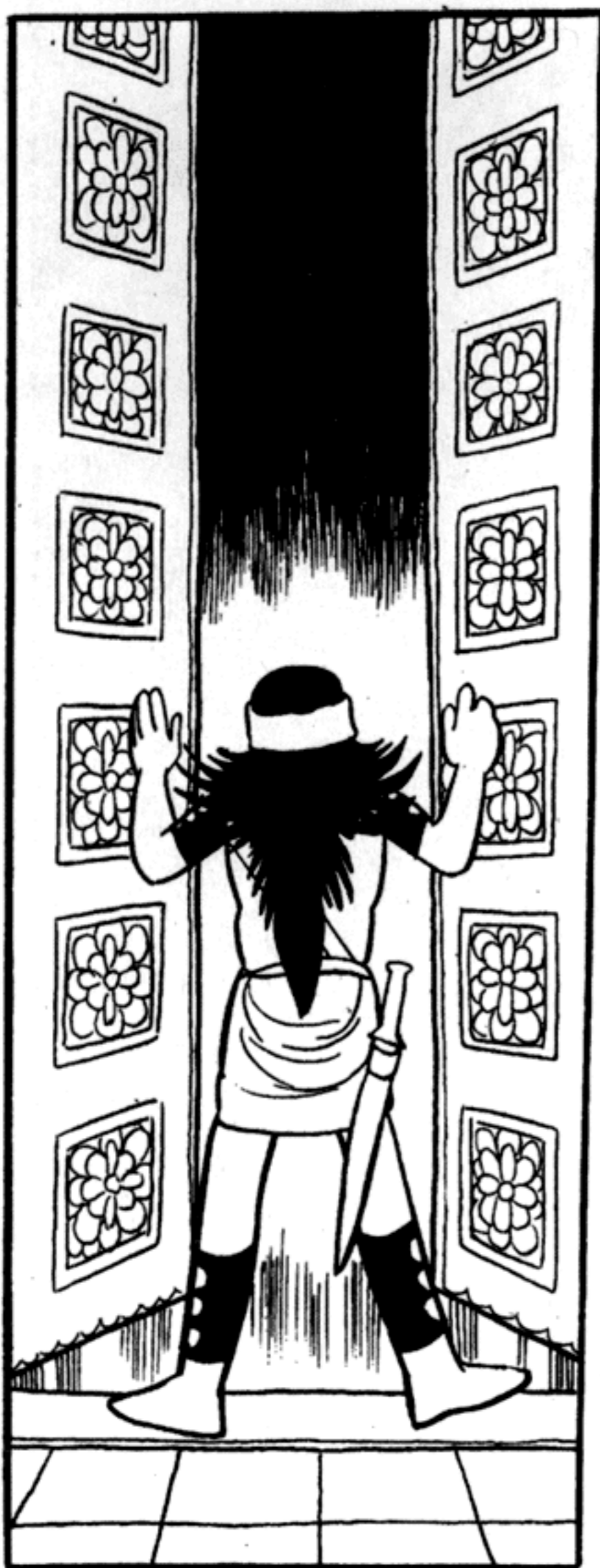
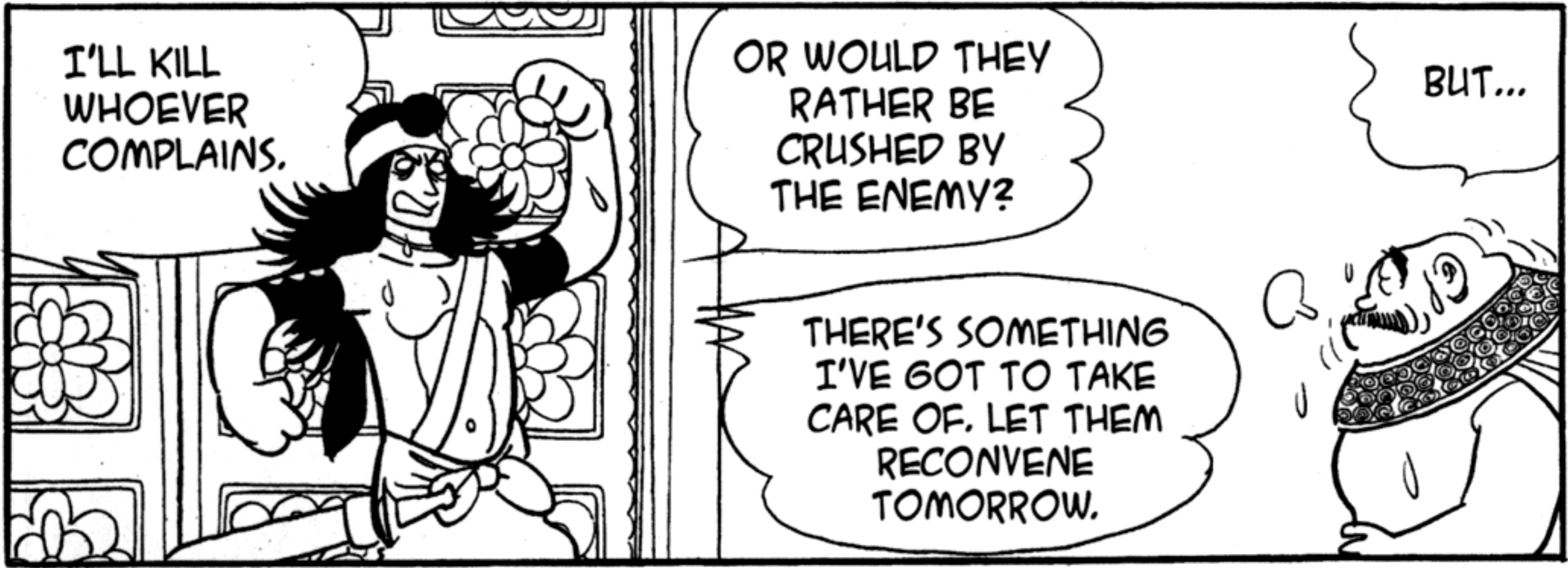


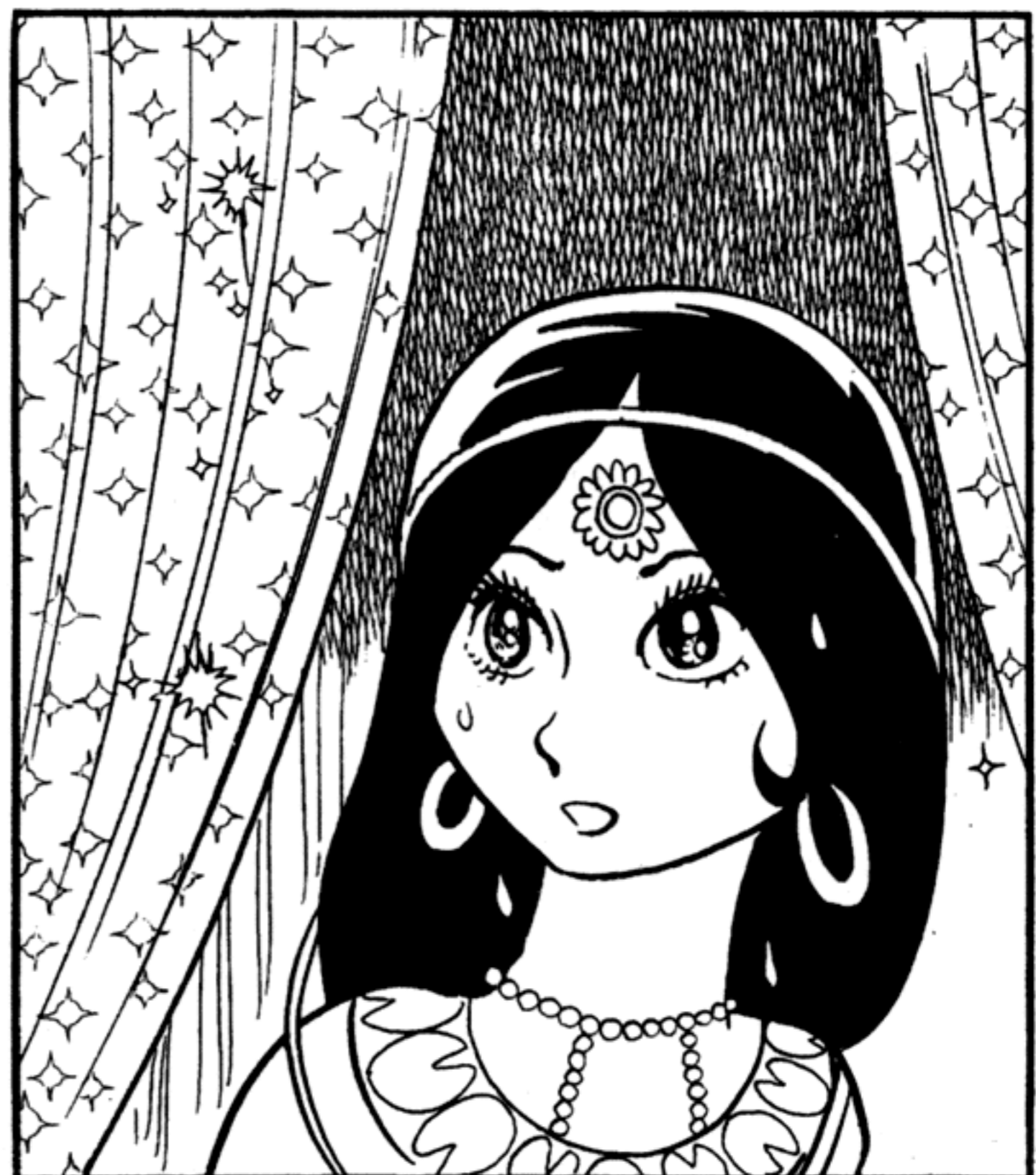
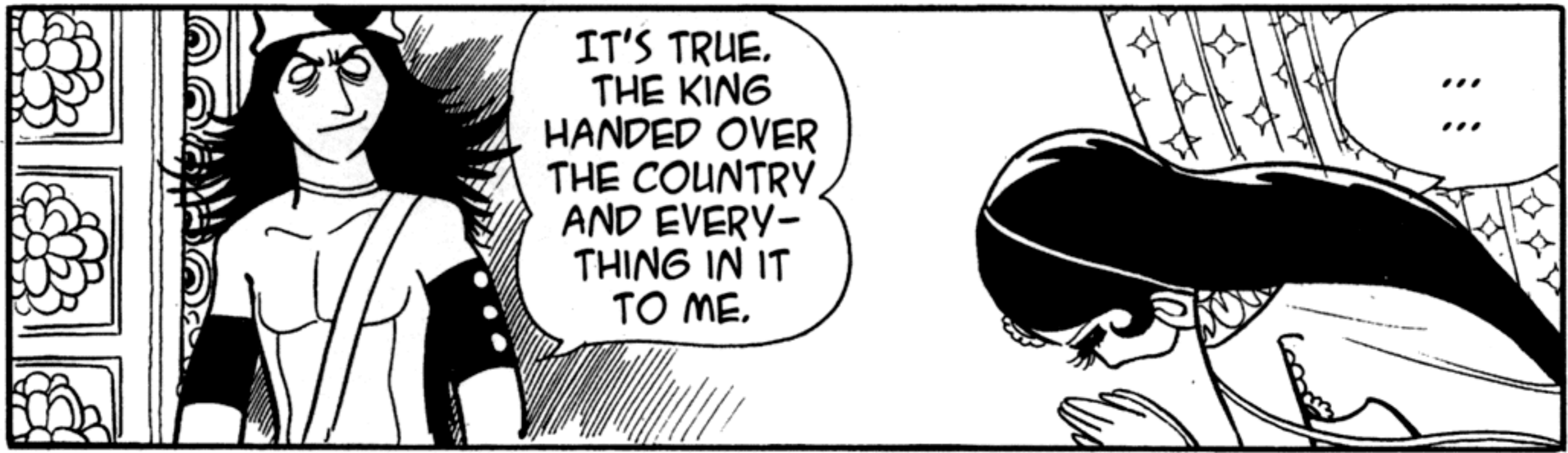
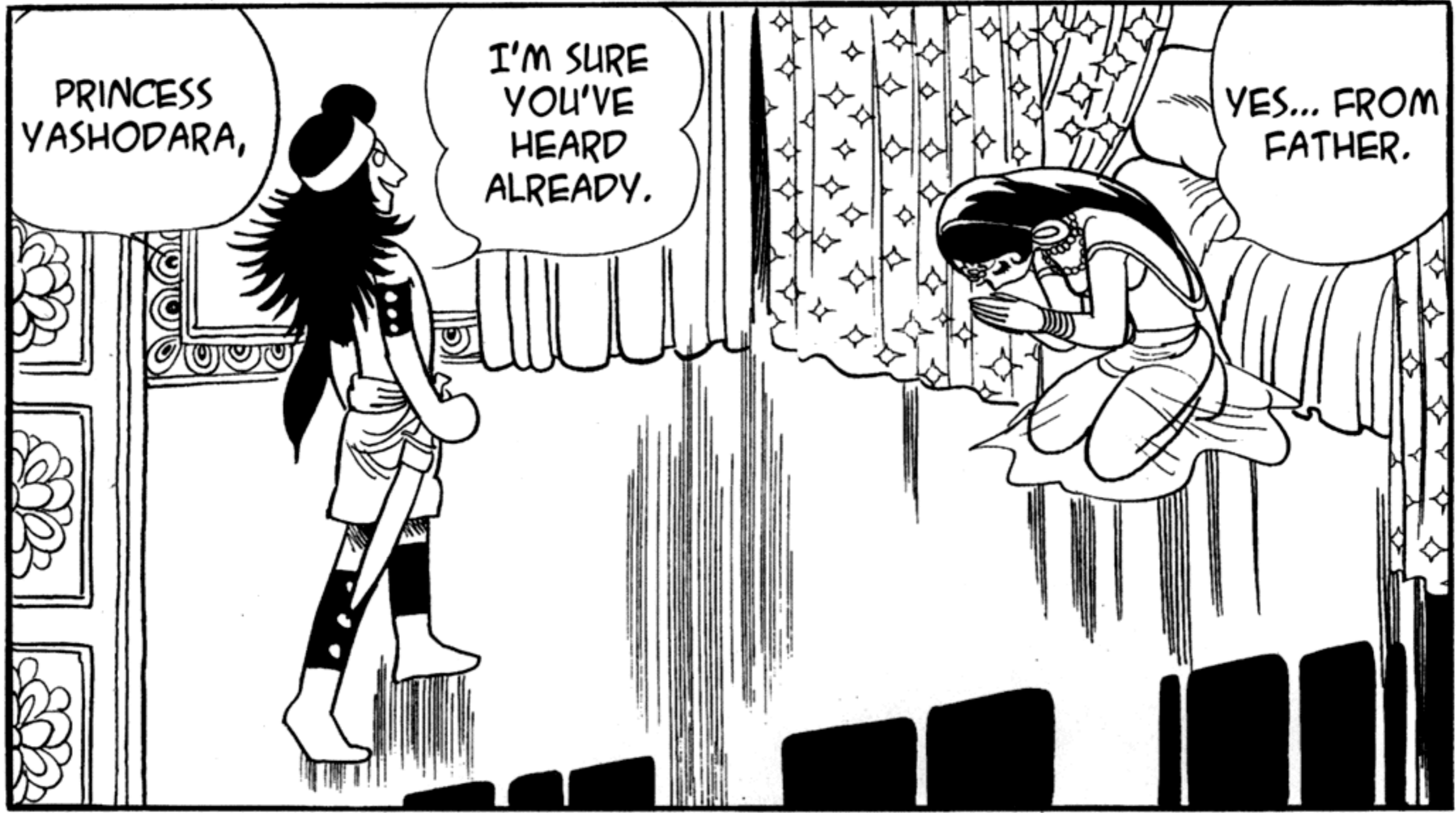
THEY WILL CONFIRM YOU AS THE CLAN'S LEADER.

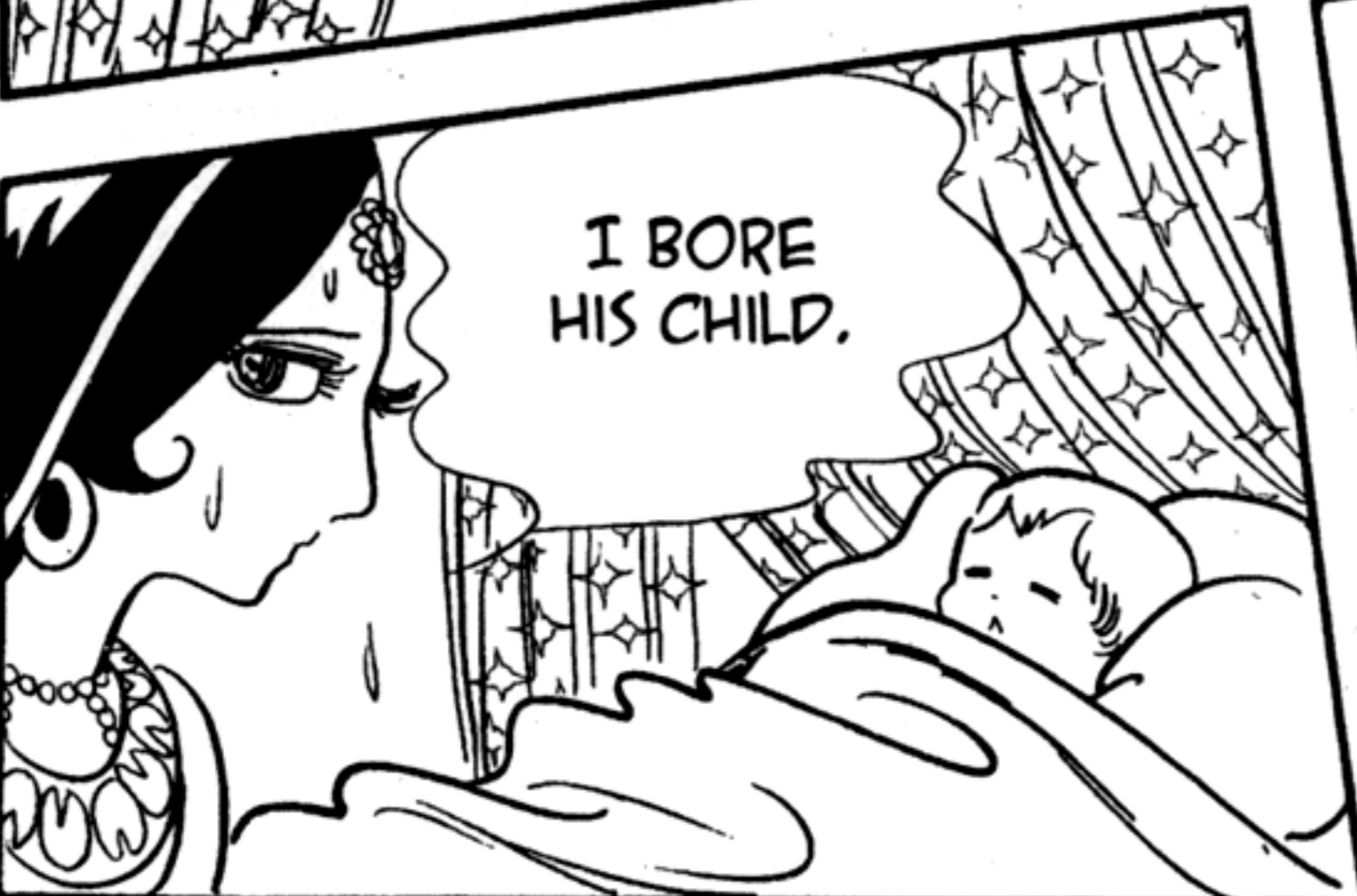
OFFICIALLY.

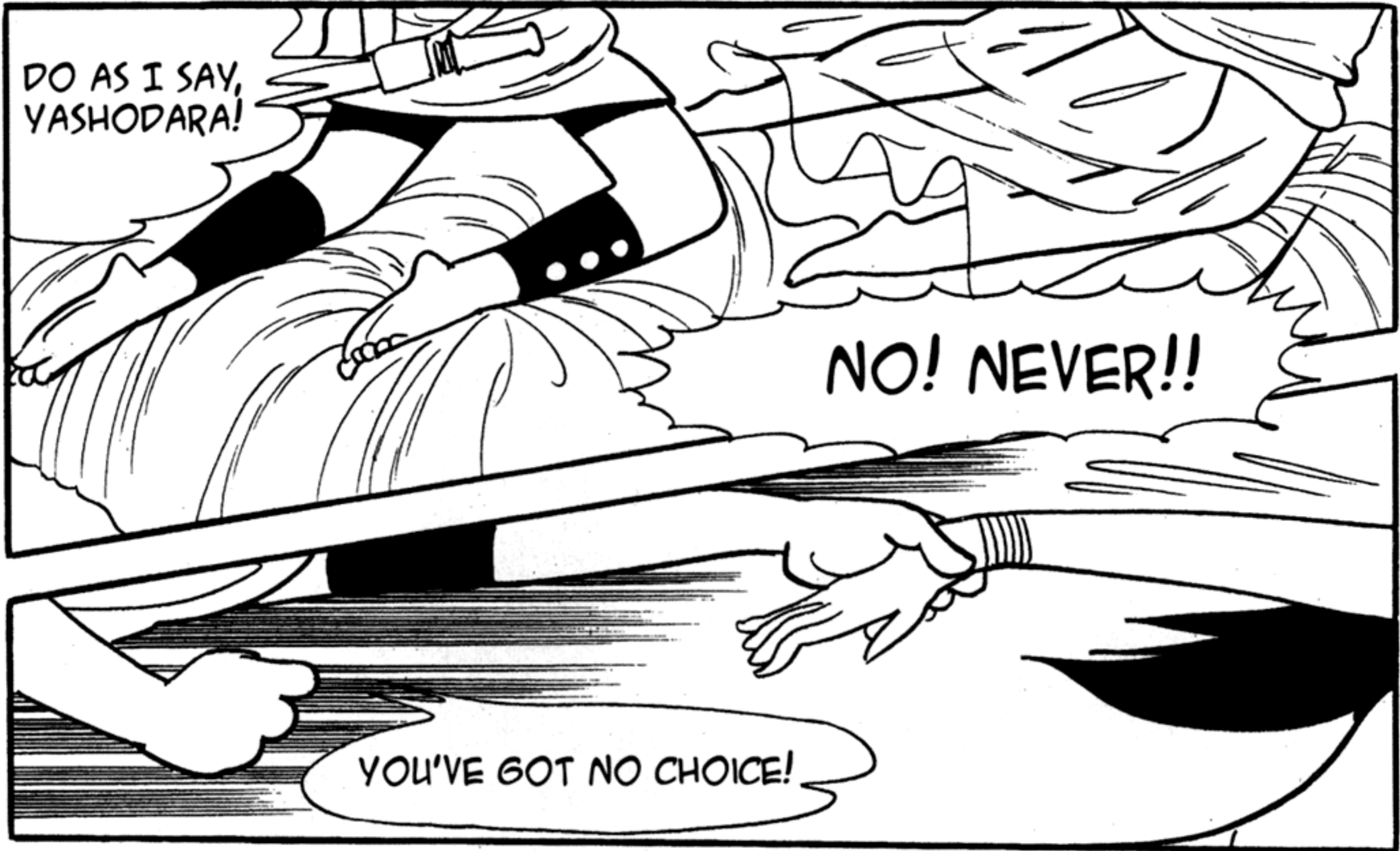
I'M NOT GOING TO BE PART OF THAT BULLSHIT!!







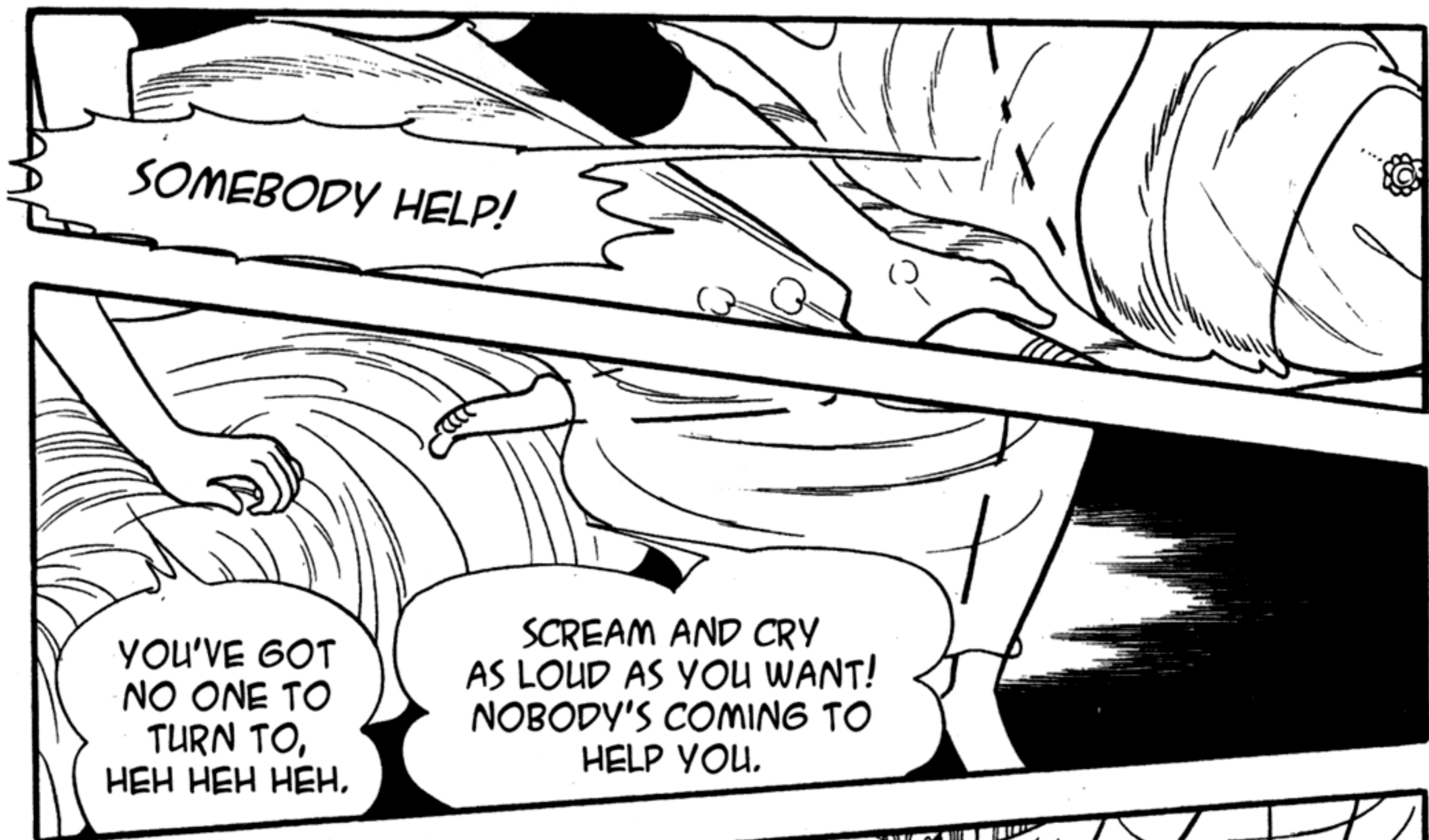




DO AS I SAY,
YASHODARA!

NO! NEVER!!

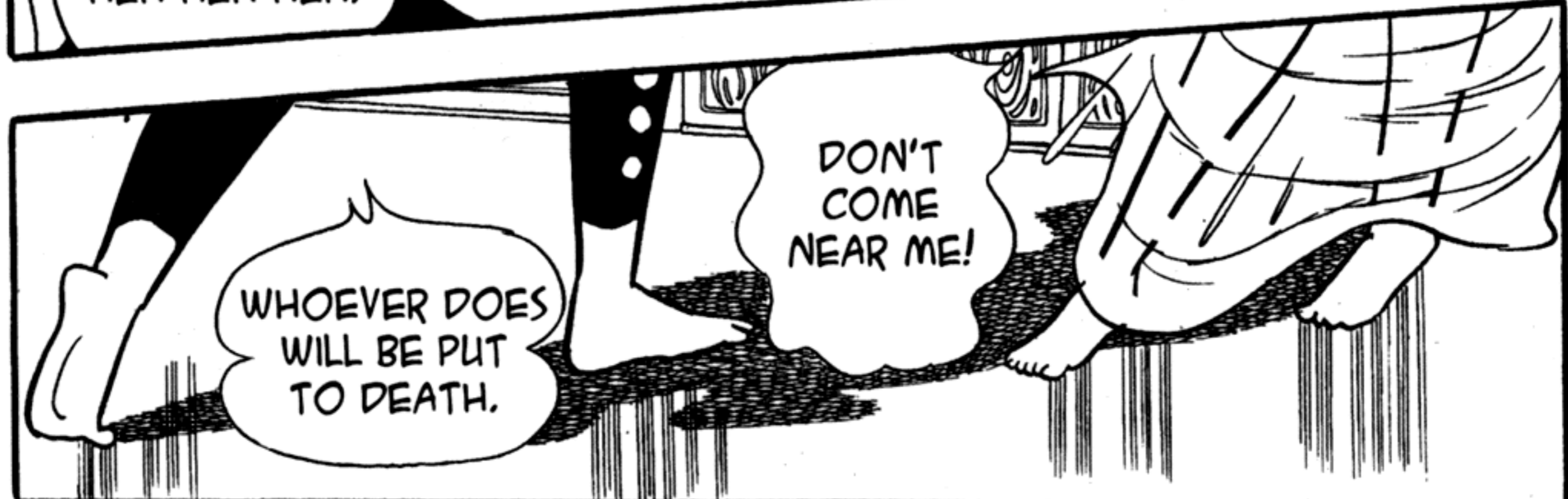
YOU'VE GOT NO CHOICE!



SOMEBODY HELP!

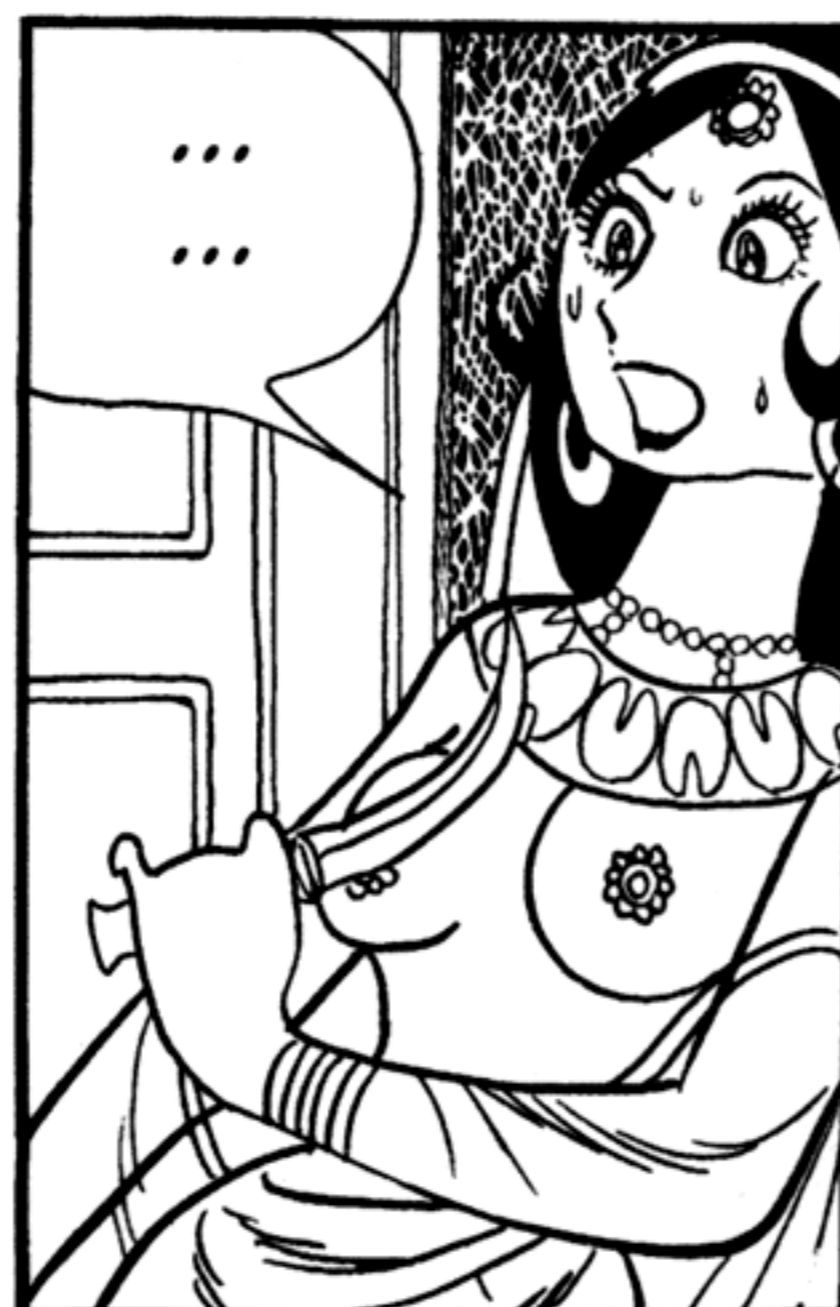
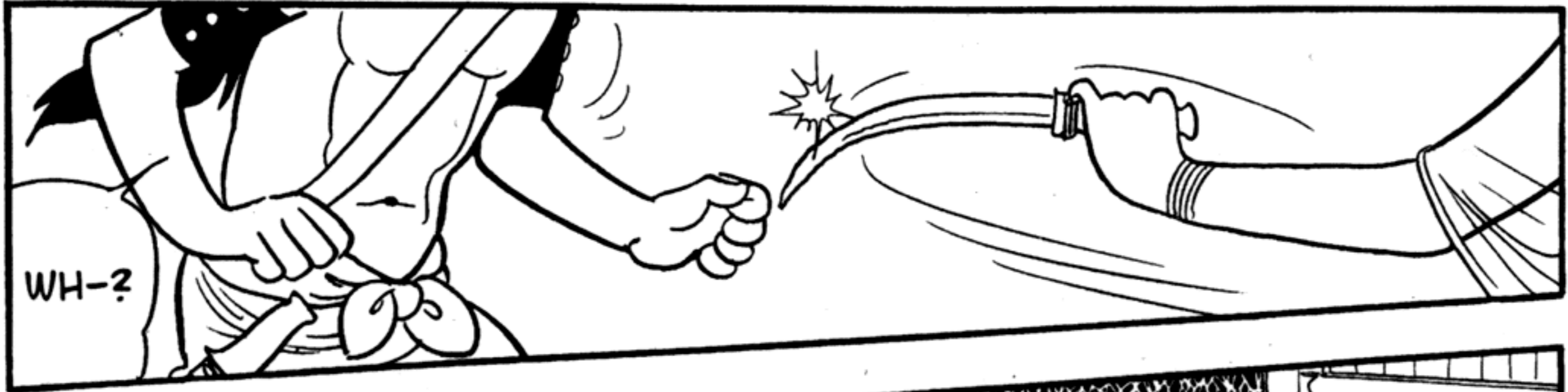
YOU'VE GOT
NO ONE TO
TURN TO,
HEH HEH HEH.

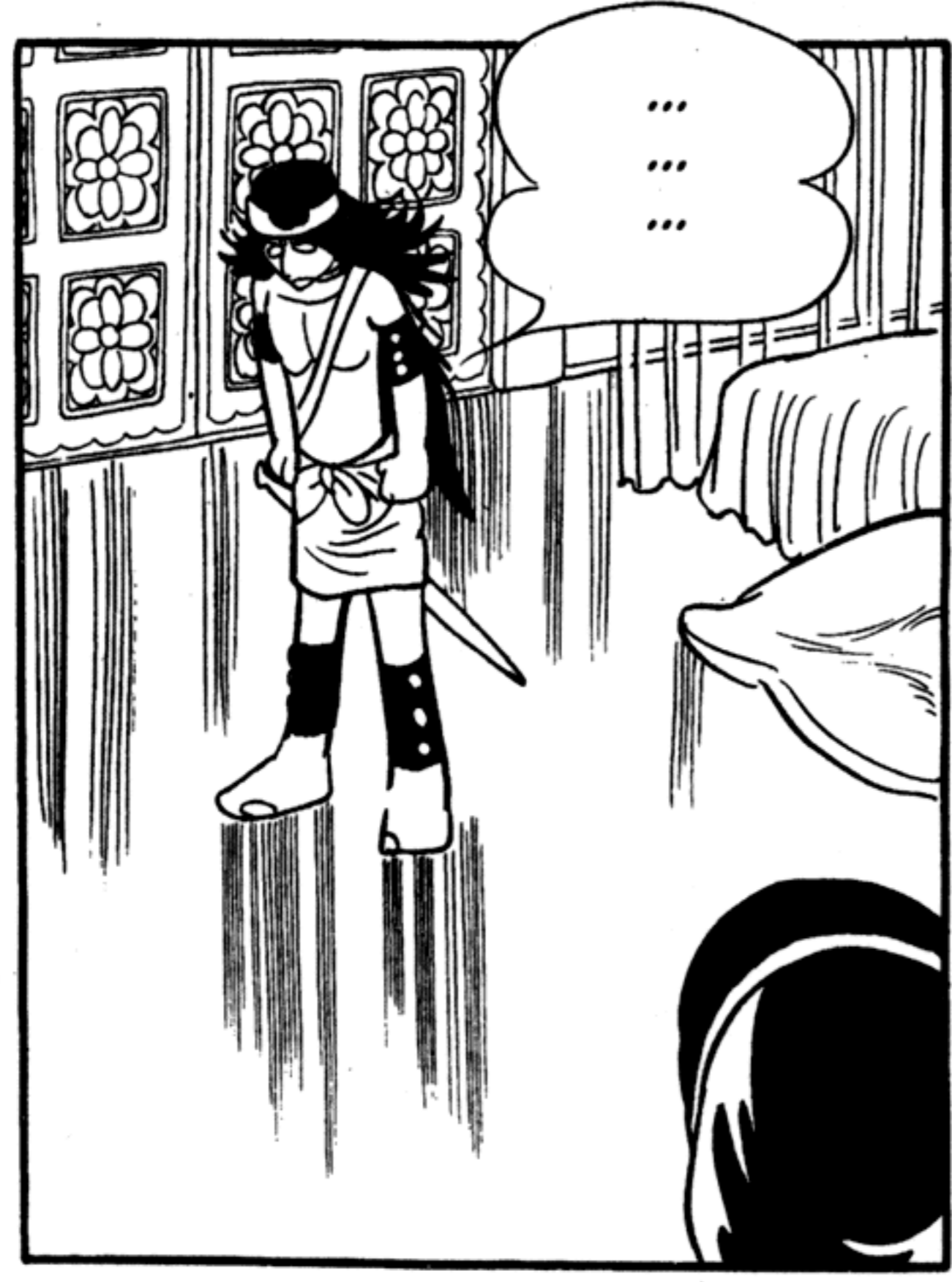
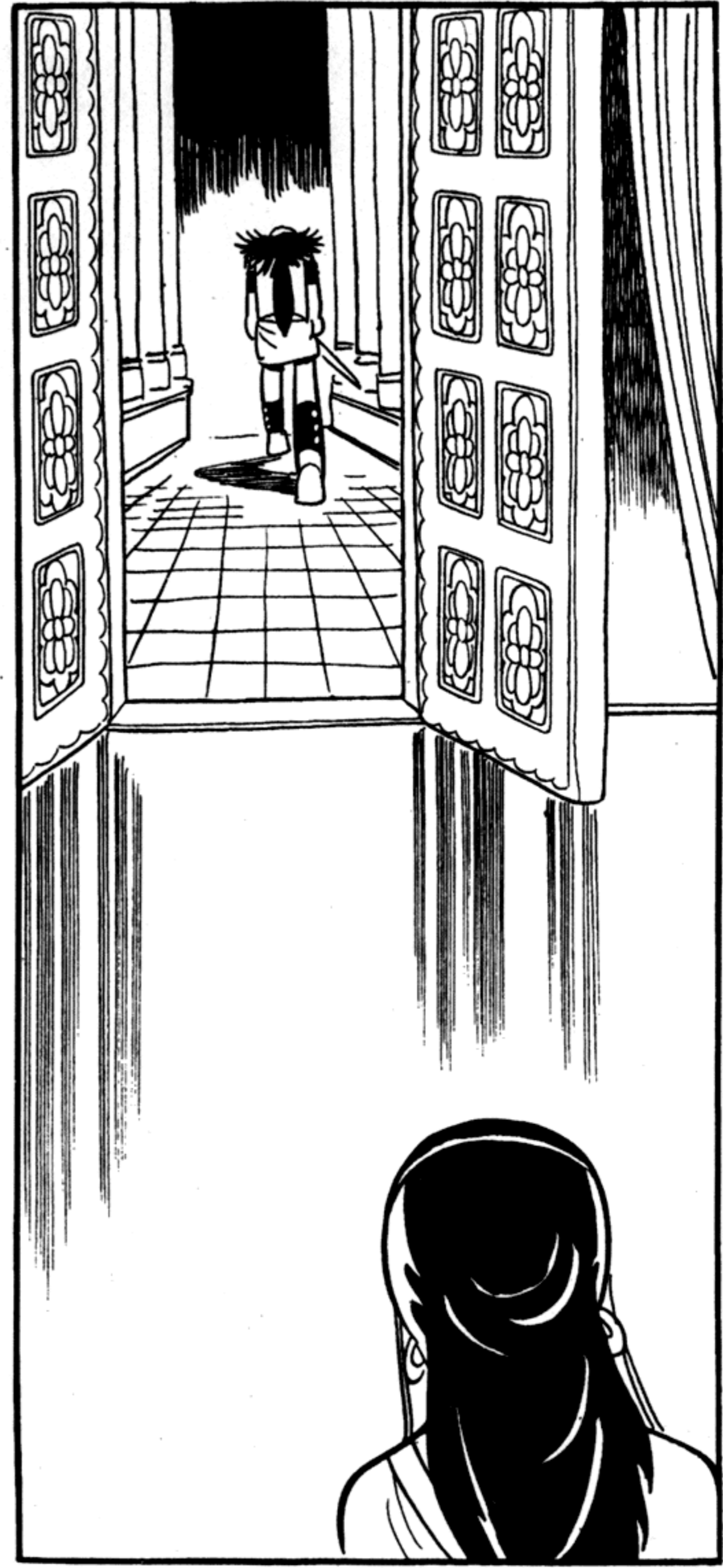
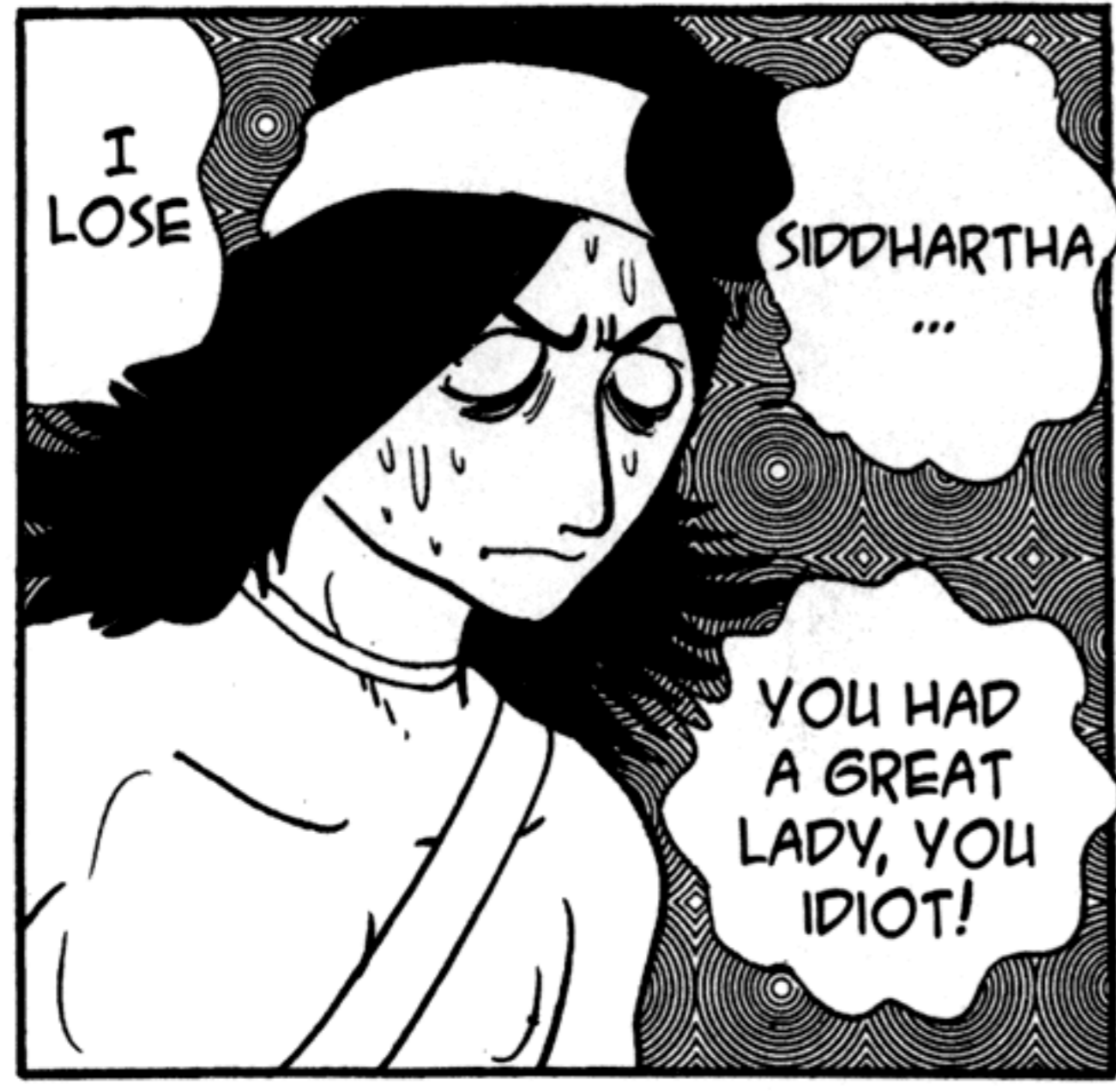
SCREAM AND CRY
AS LOUD AS YOU WANT!
NOBODY'S COMING TO
HELP YOU.



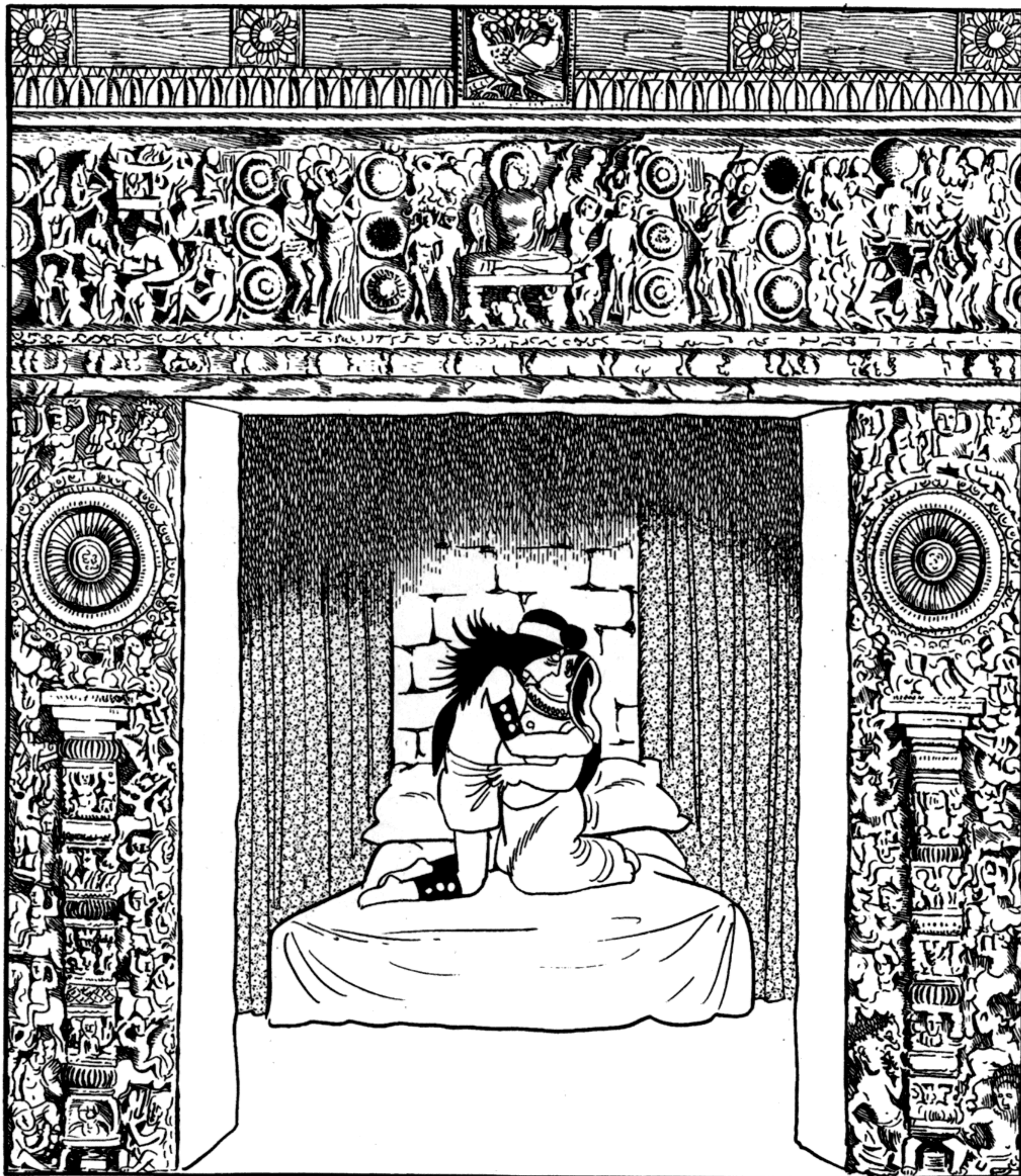
WHOEVER DOES
WILL BE PUT
TO DEATH.

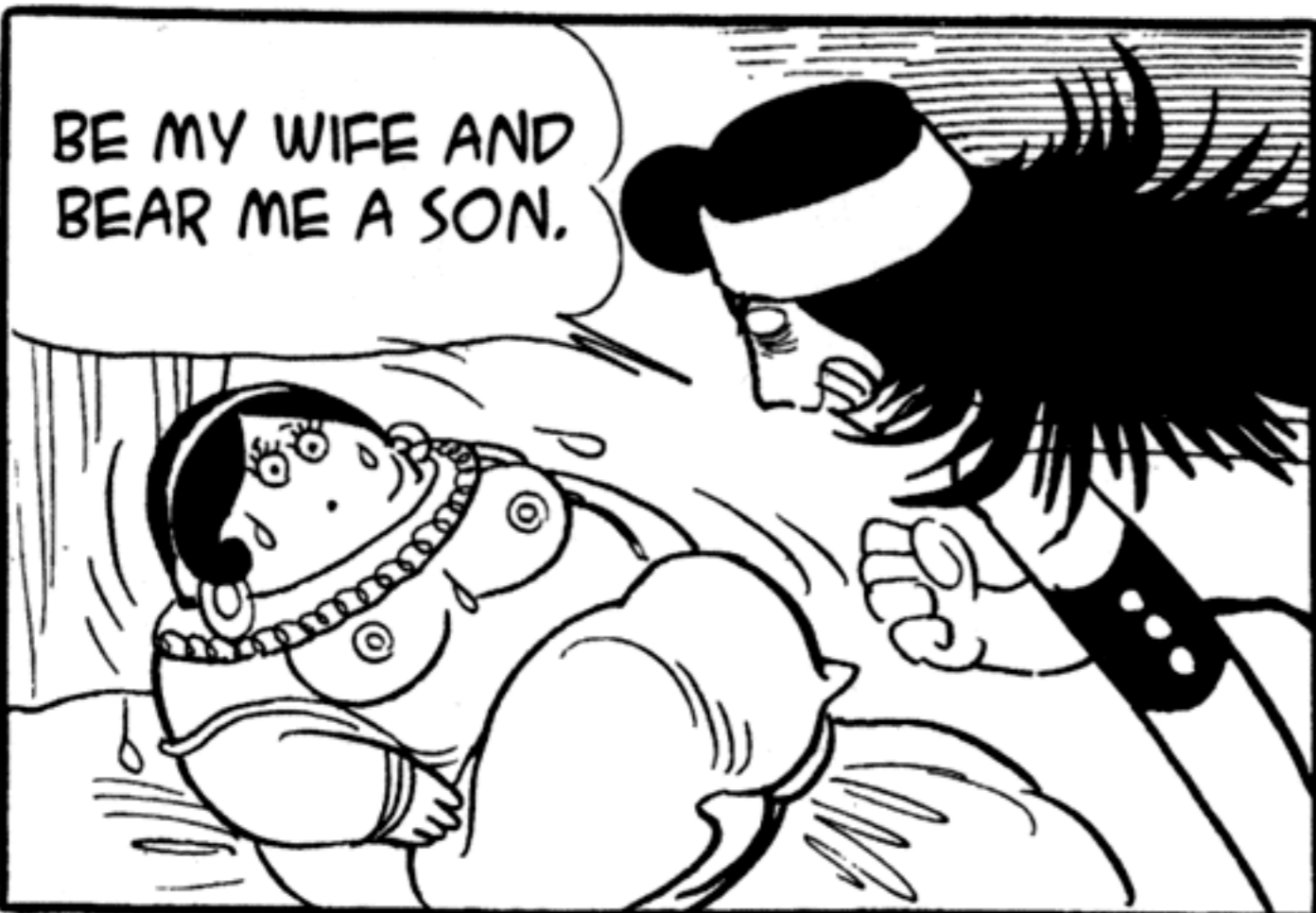
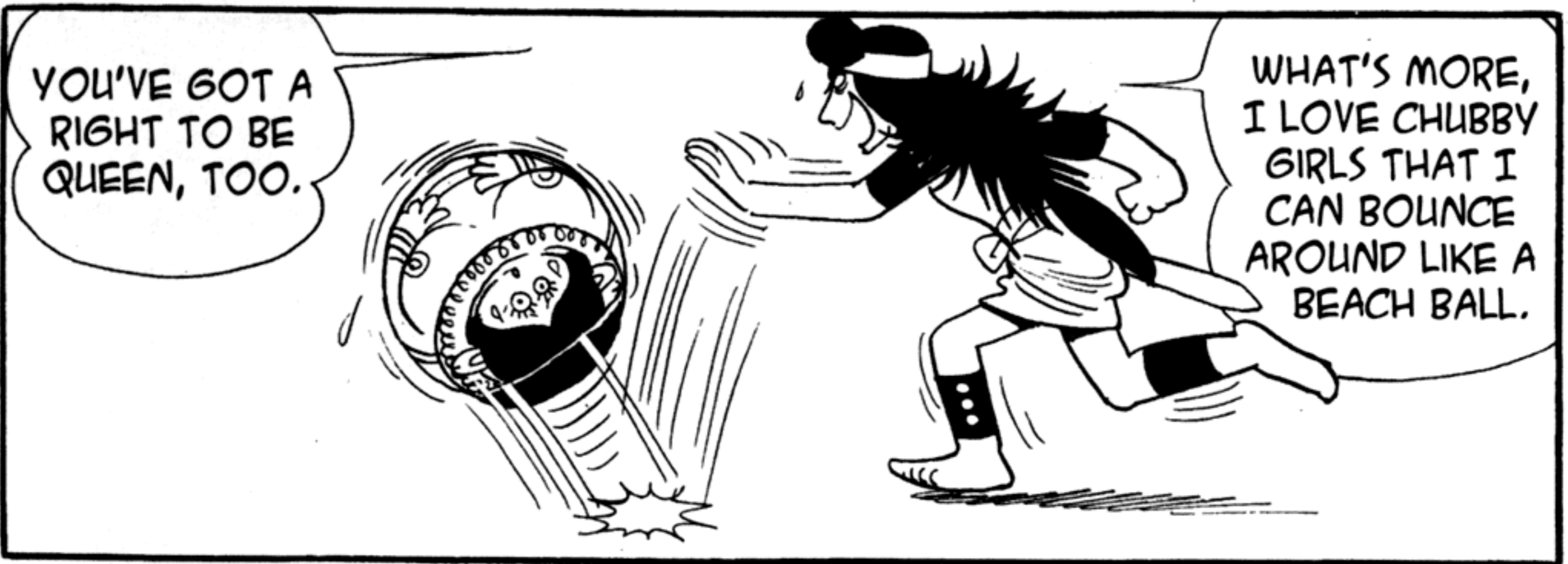
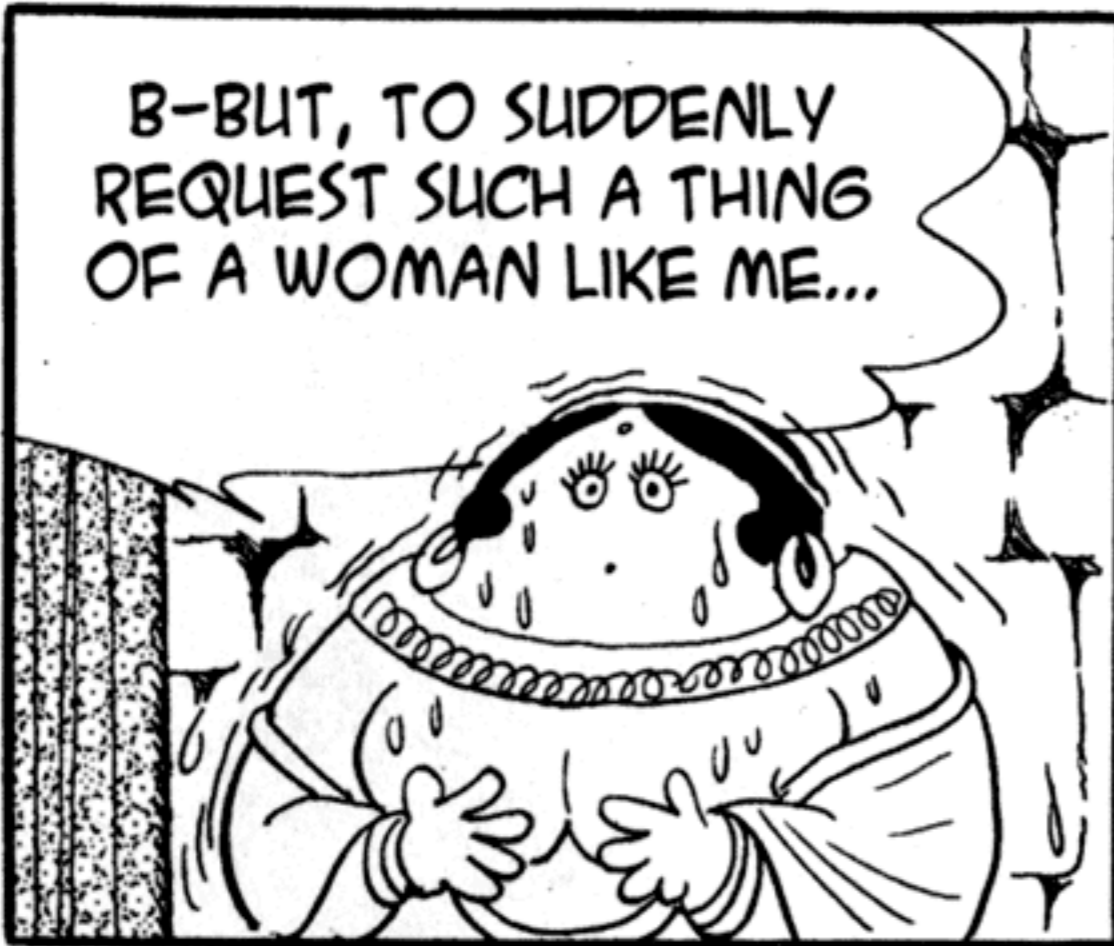
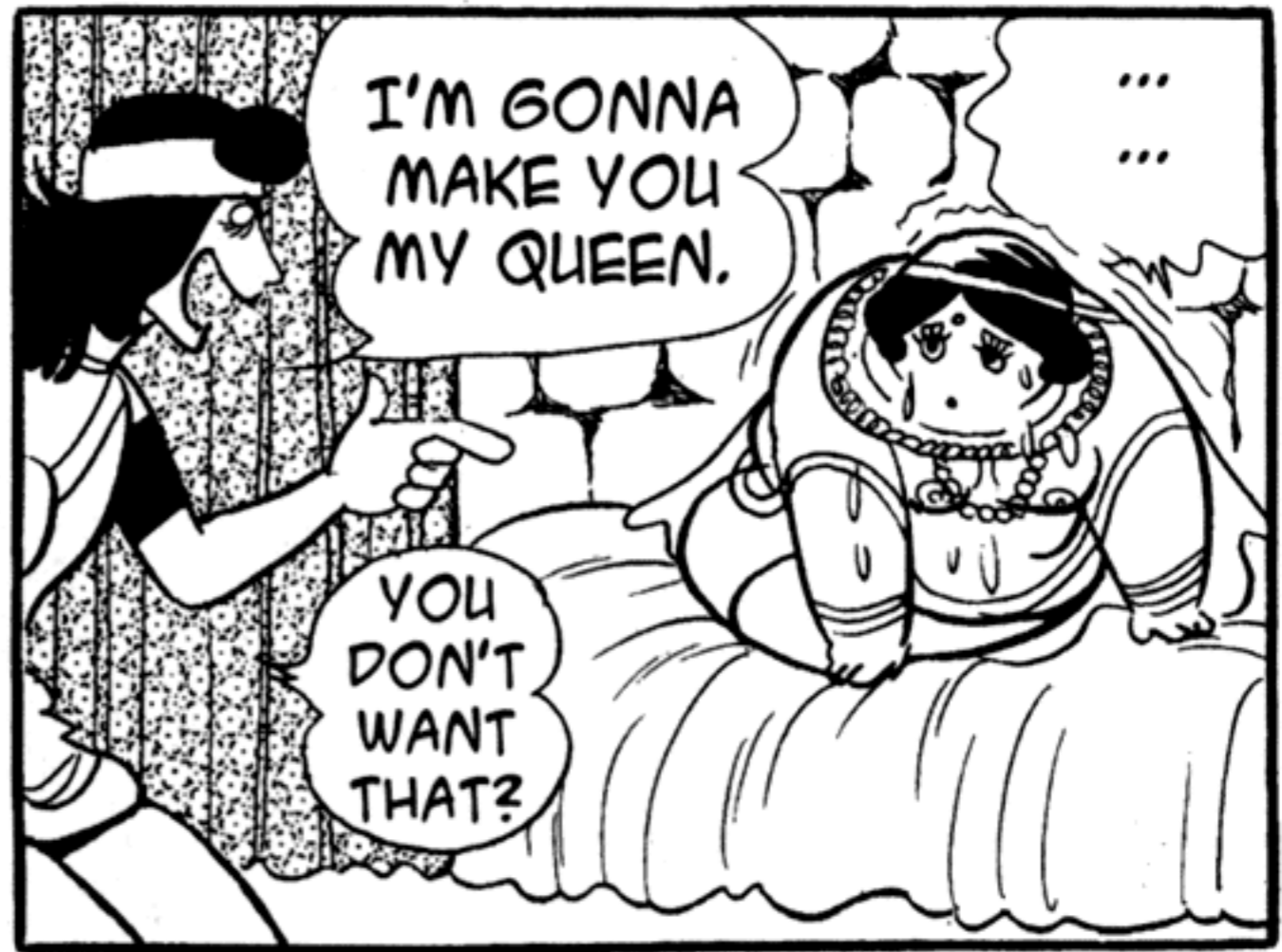
DON'T
COME
NEAR ME!

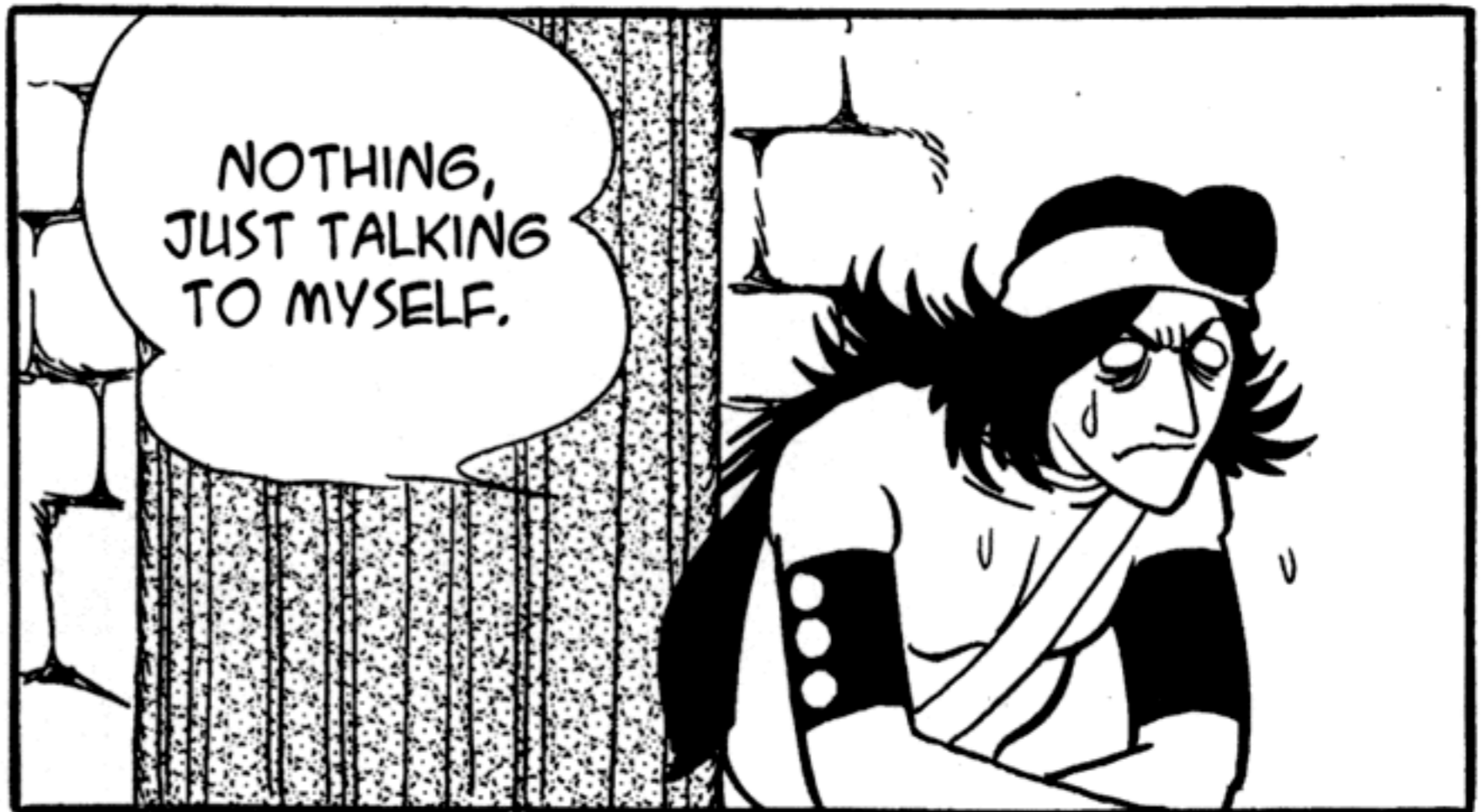
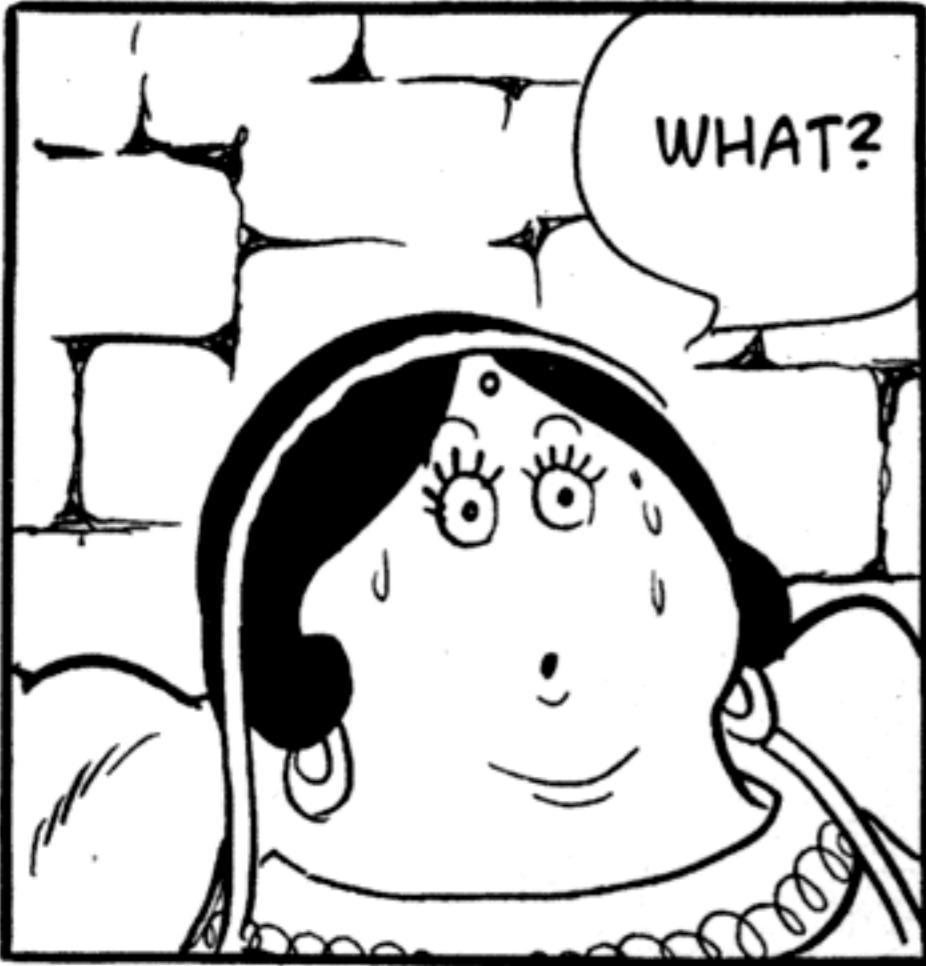


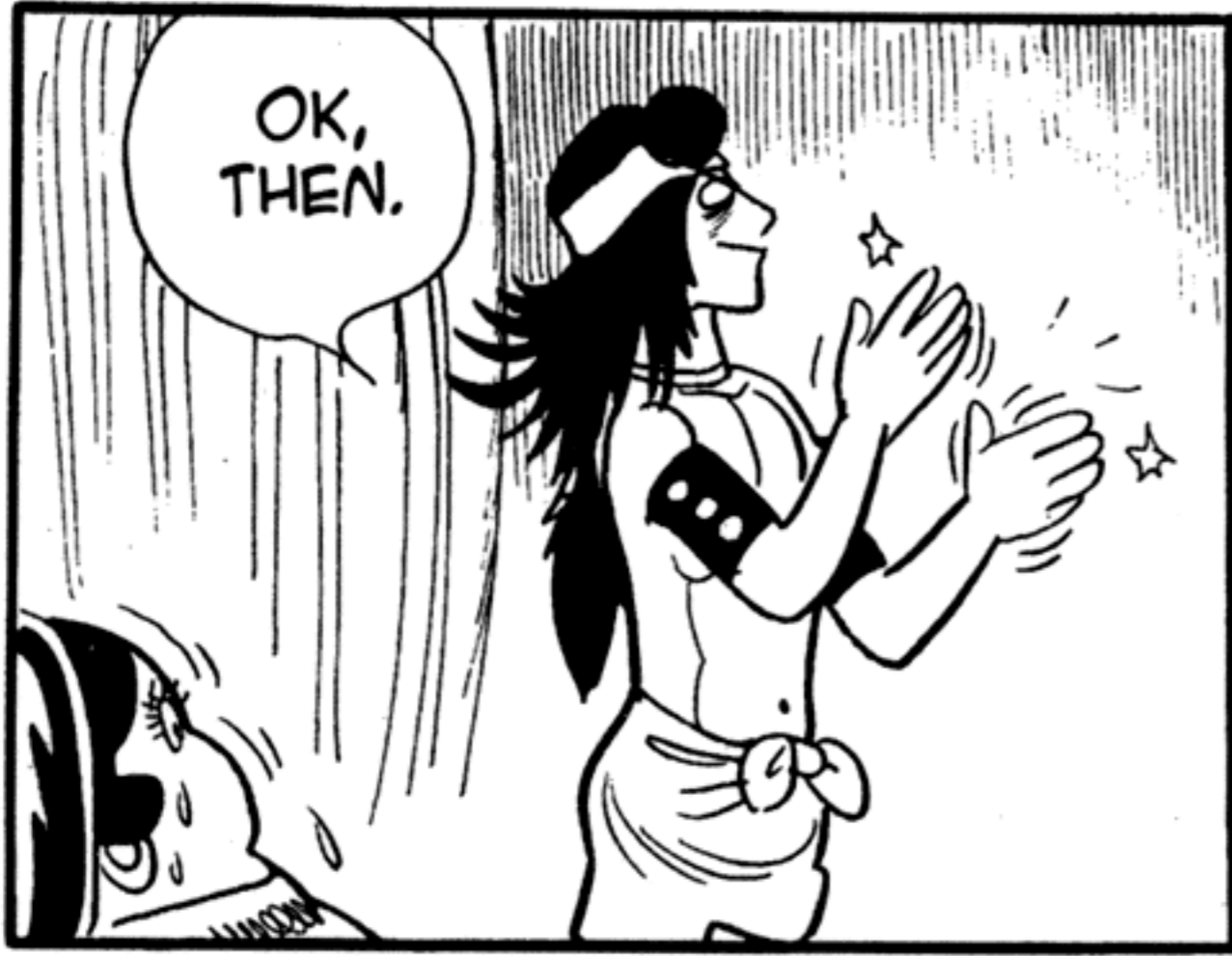




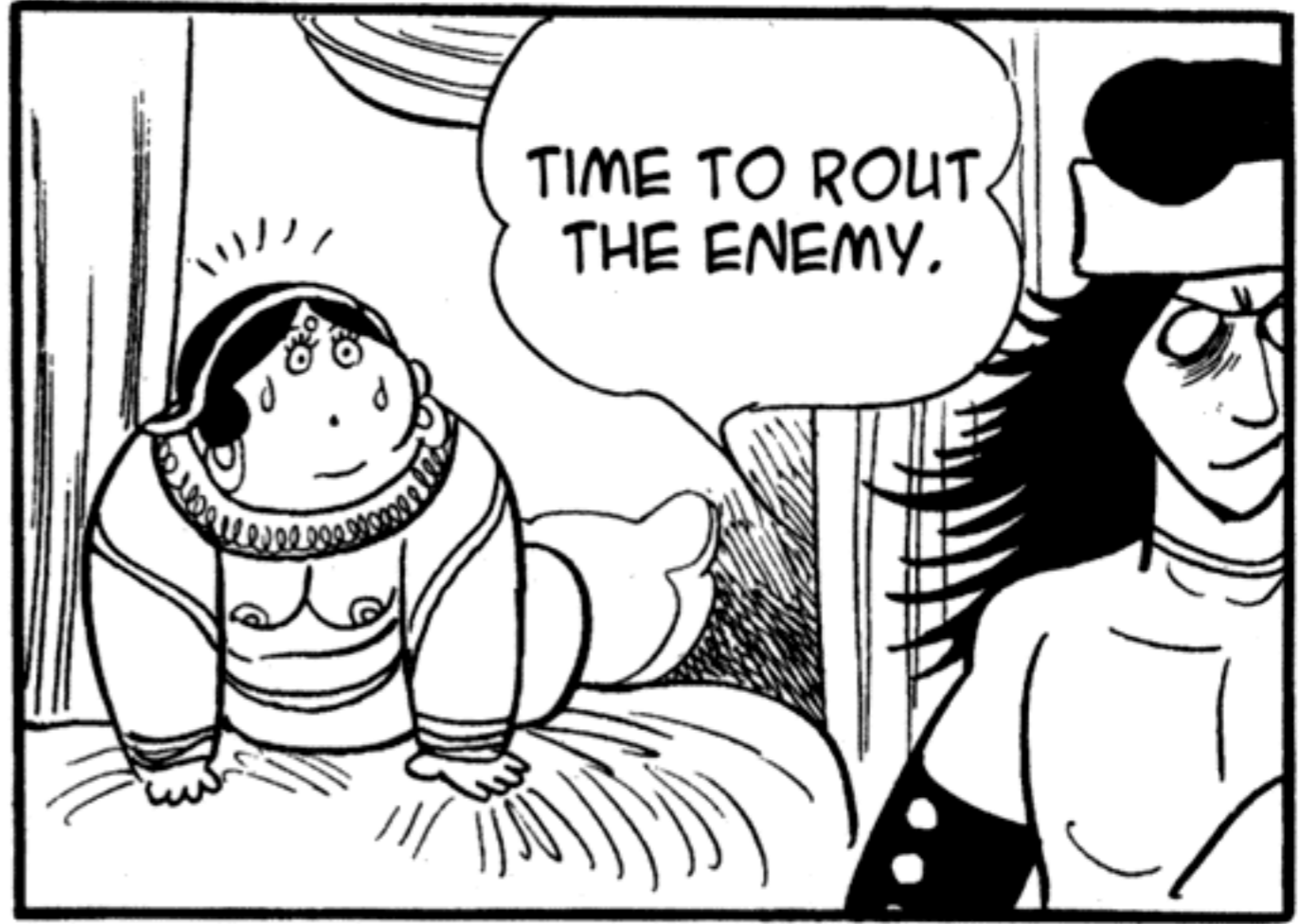








OK, THEN.



TIME TO ROUT THE ENEMY.



THERE'S A RUCKUS AT THE BORDER.

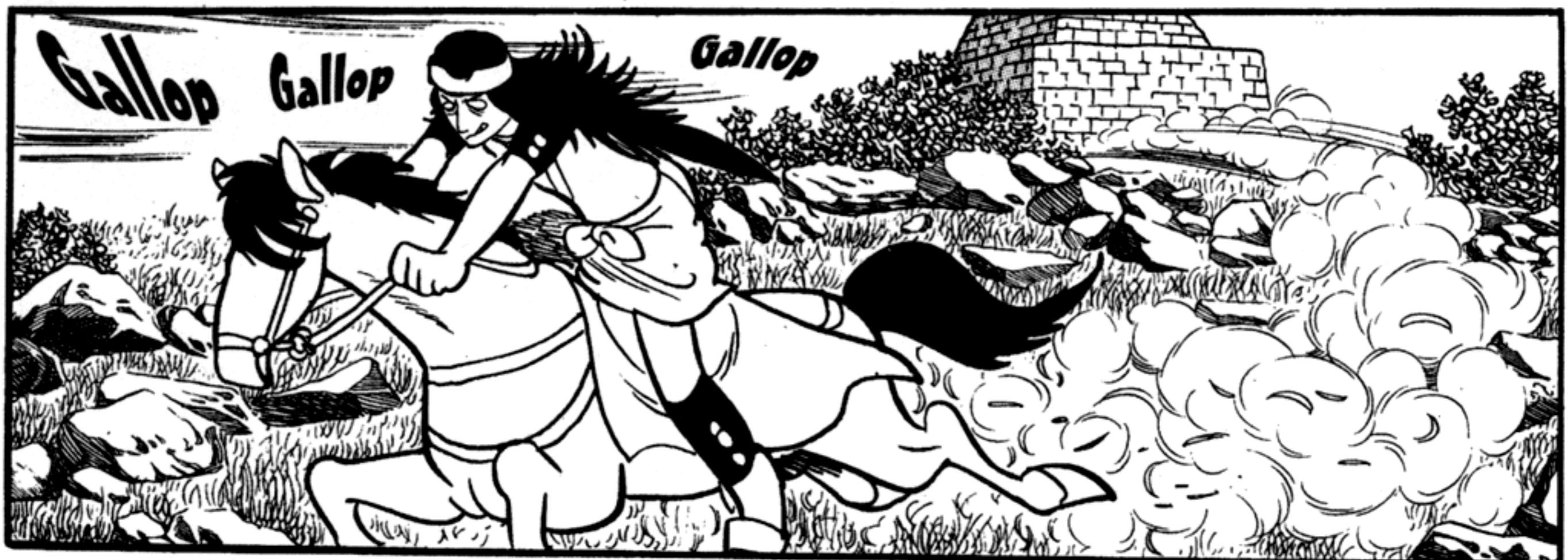
I CAN PUT AN END TO IT IN NO TIME.

I HAVE TO GO, BUT WHEN I GET BACK...



IT'LL BE WEDDING BELLS AND CORONATION TIME!

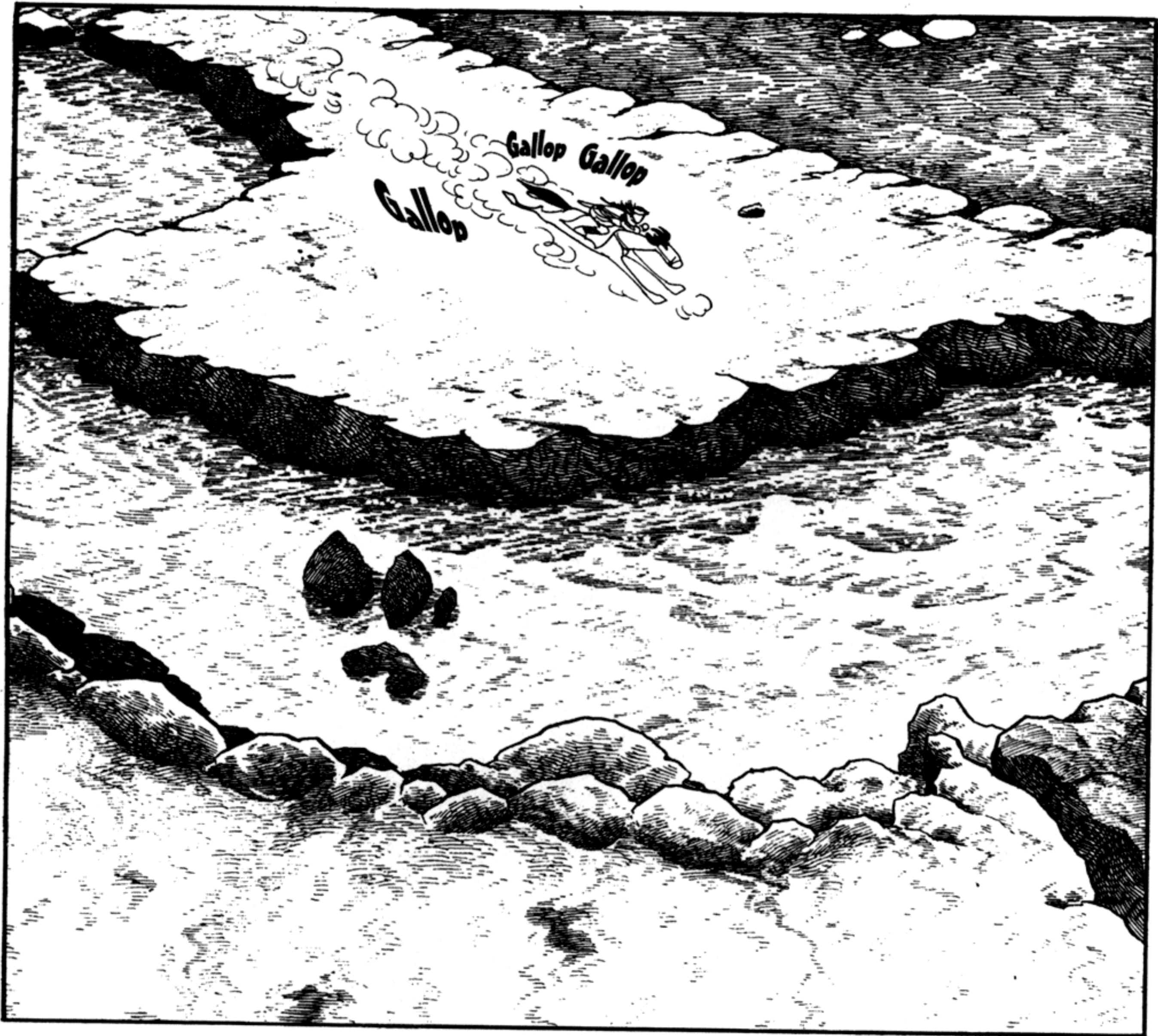
SEE YA.

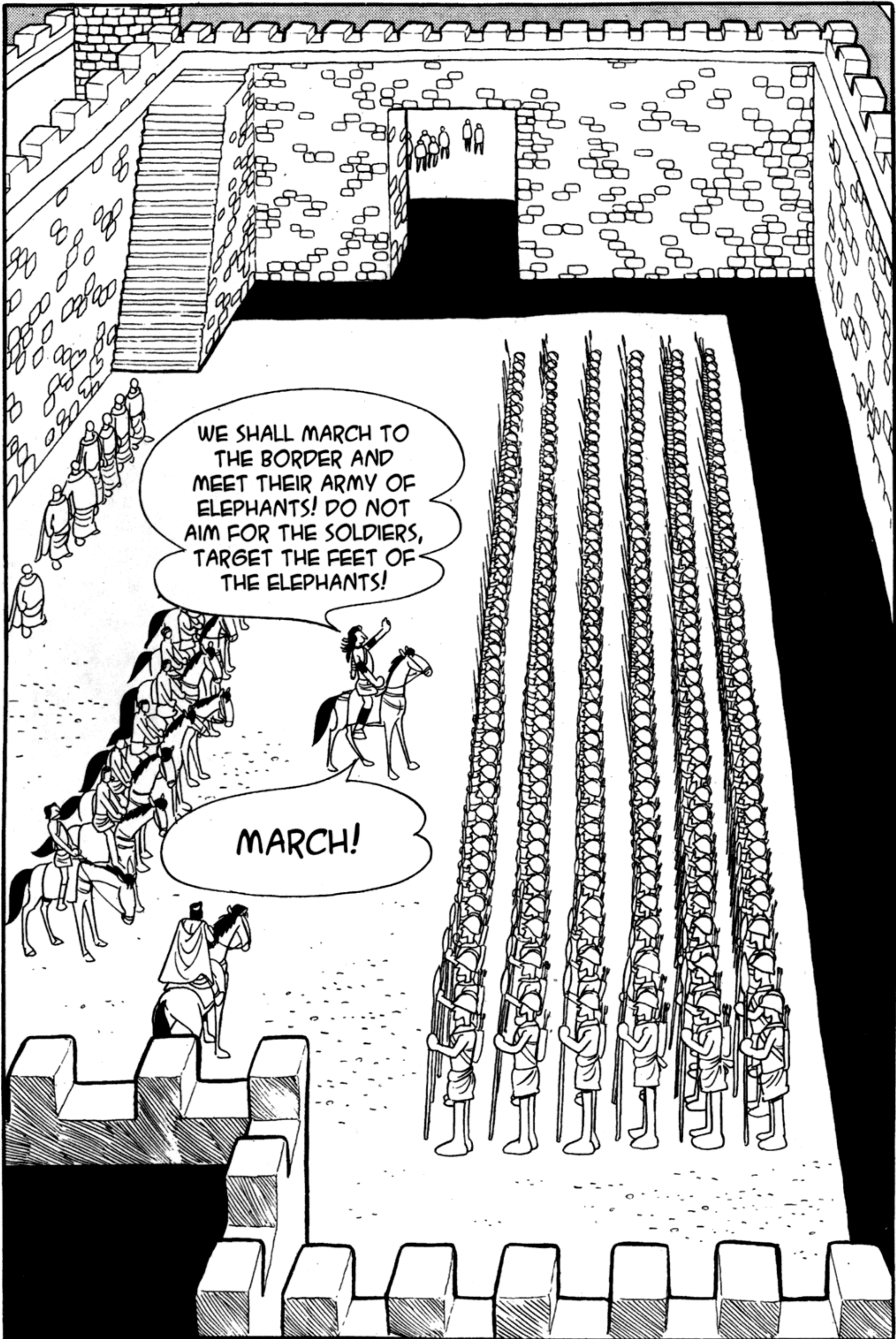


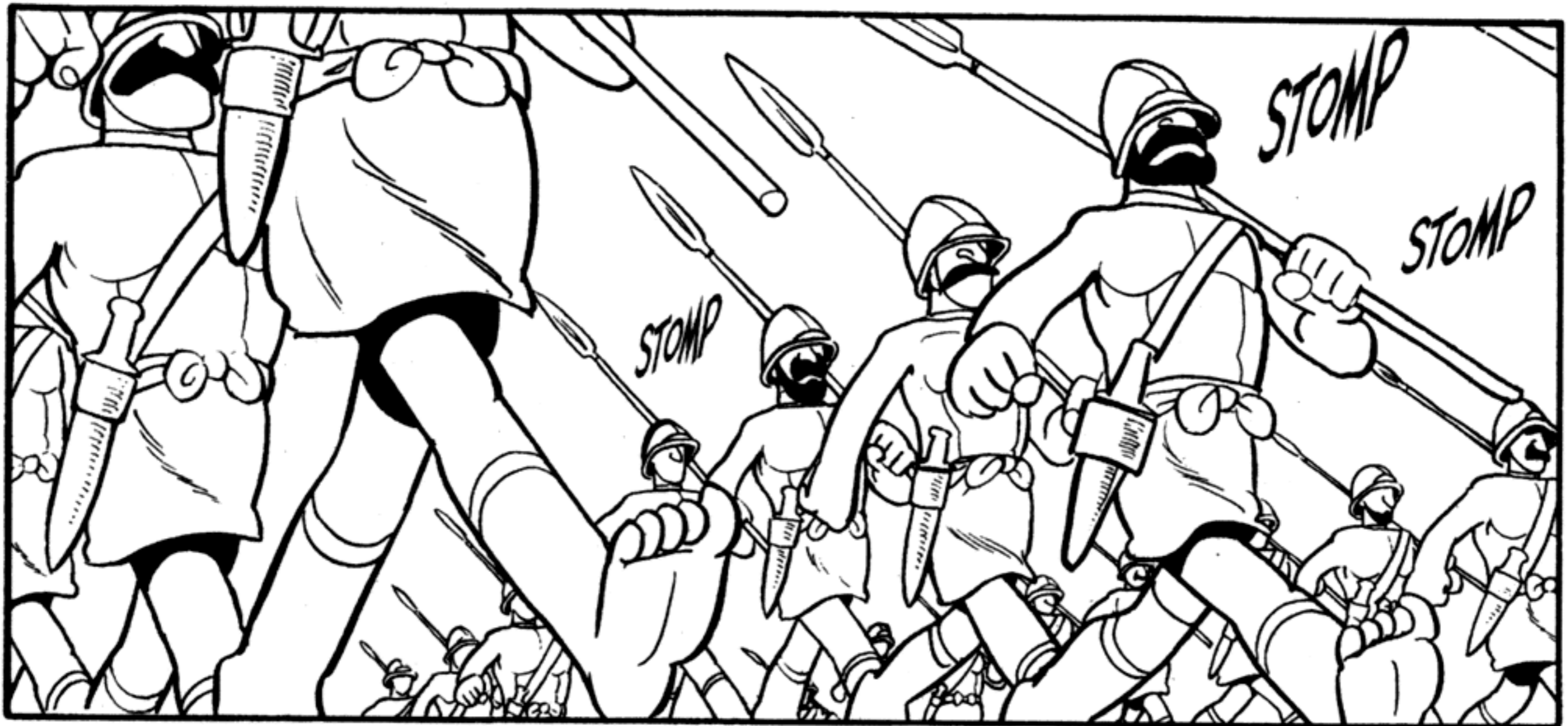
Gallop

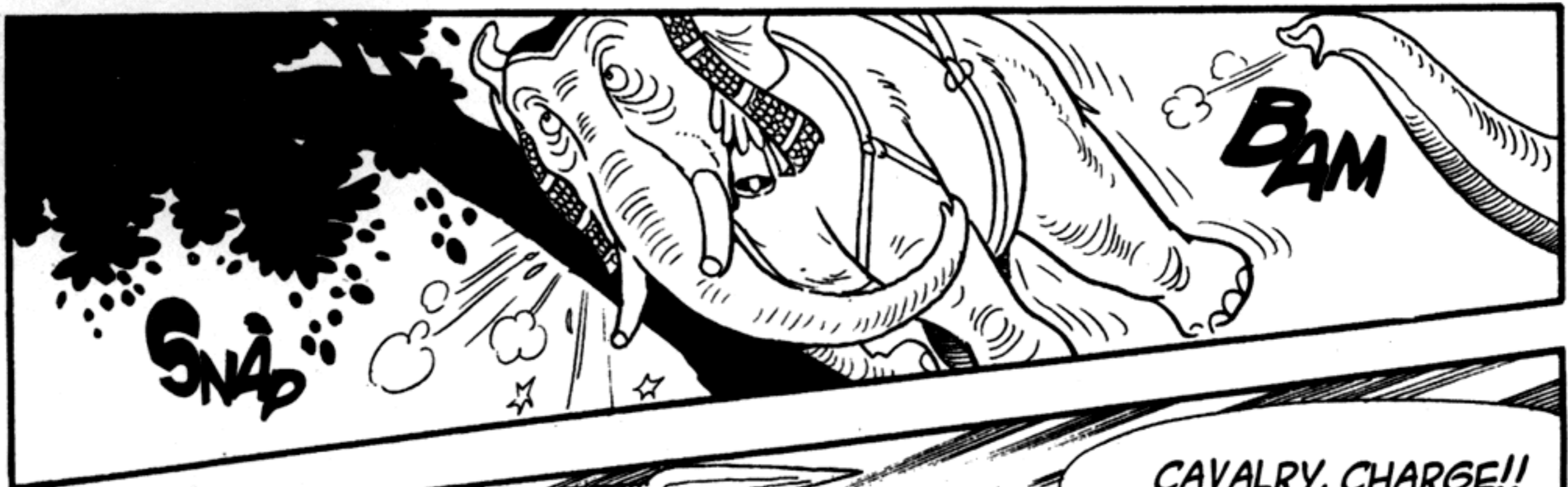
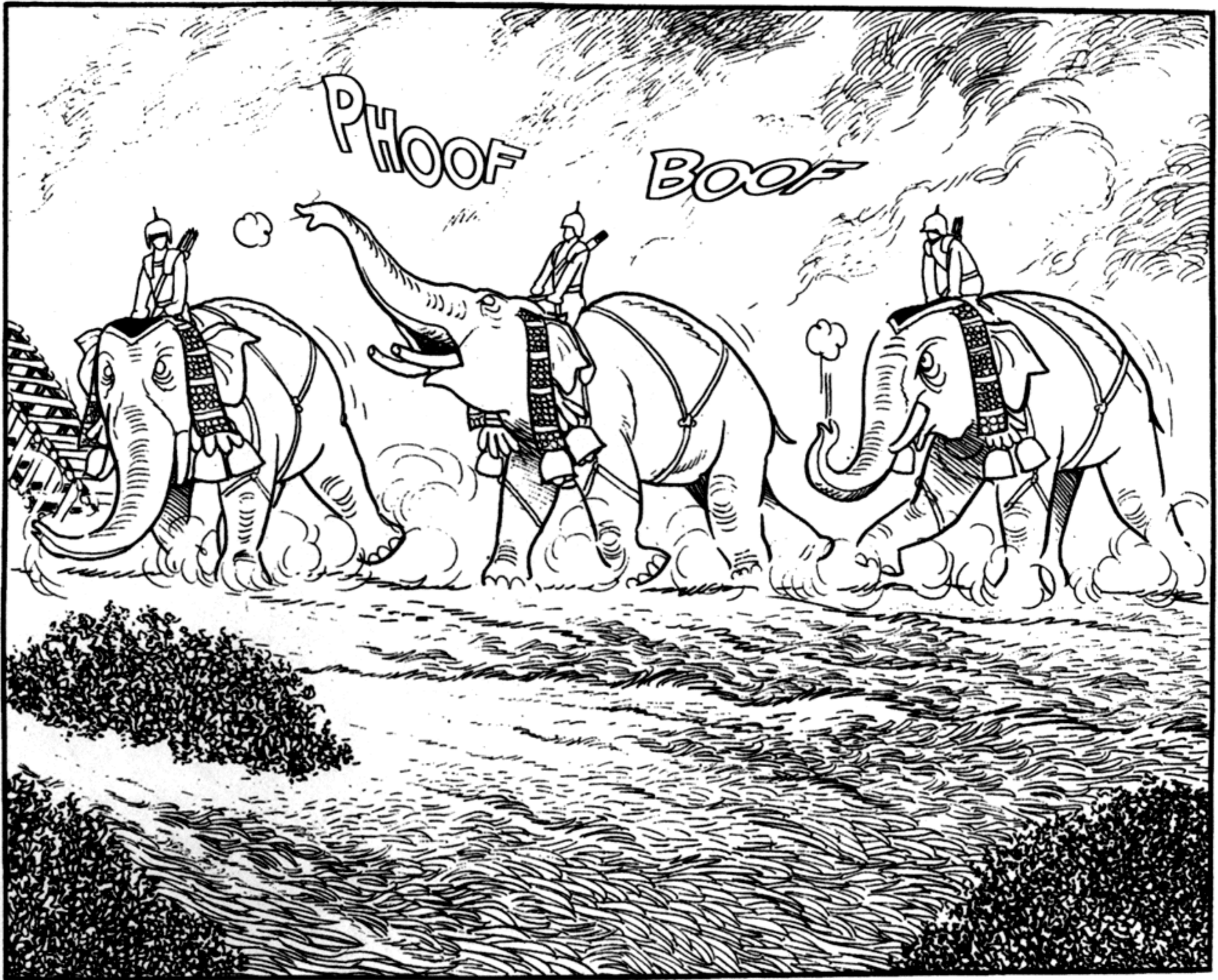
Gallop

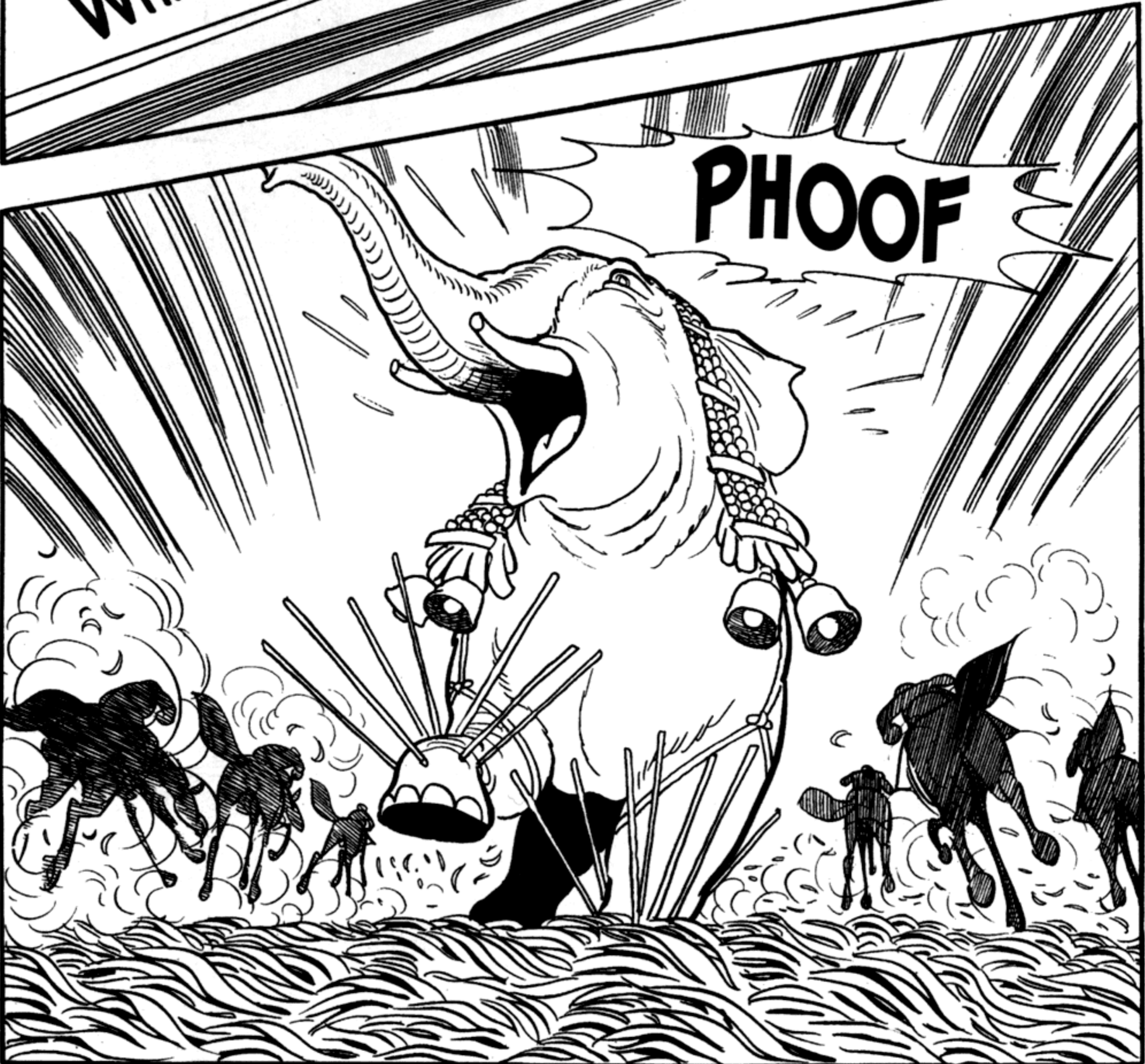
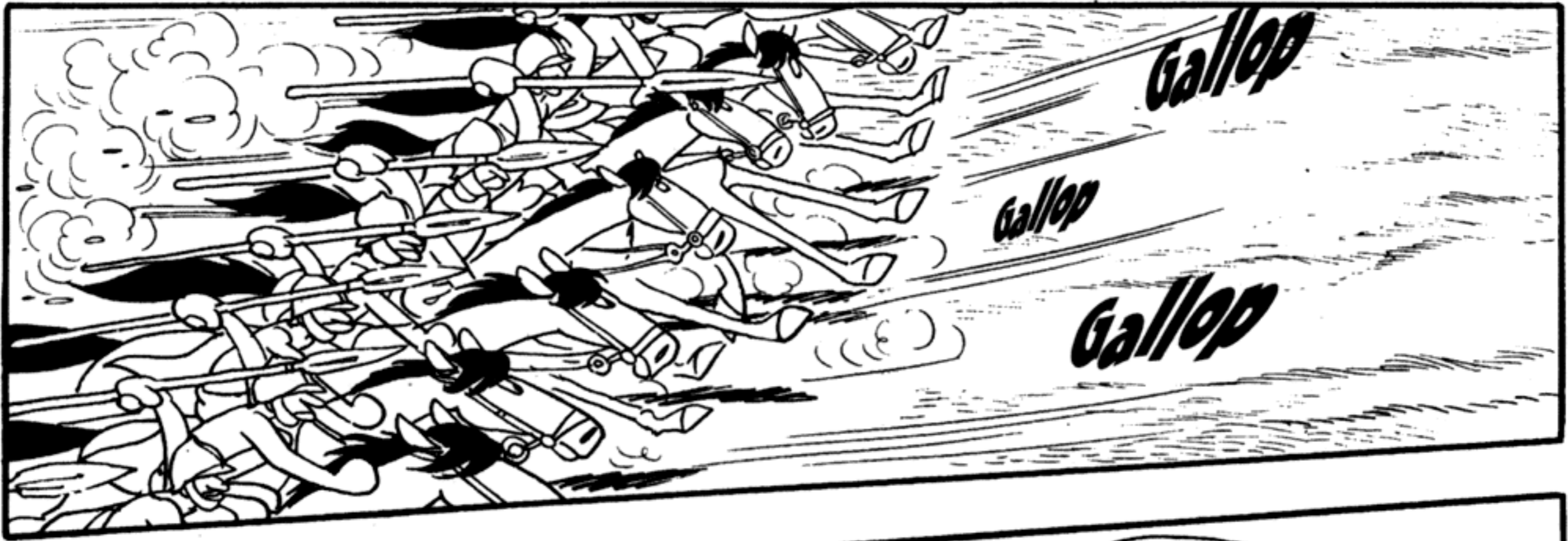
Gallop

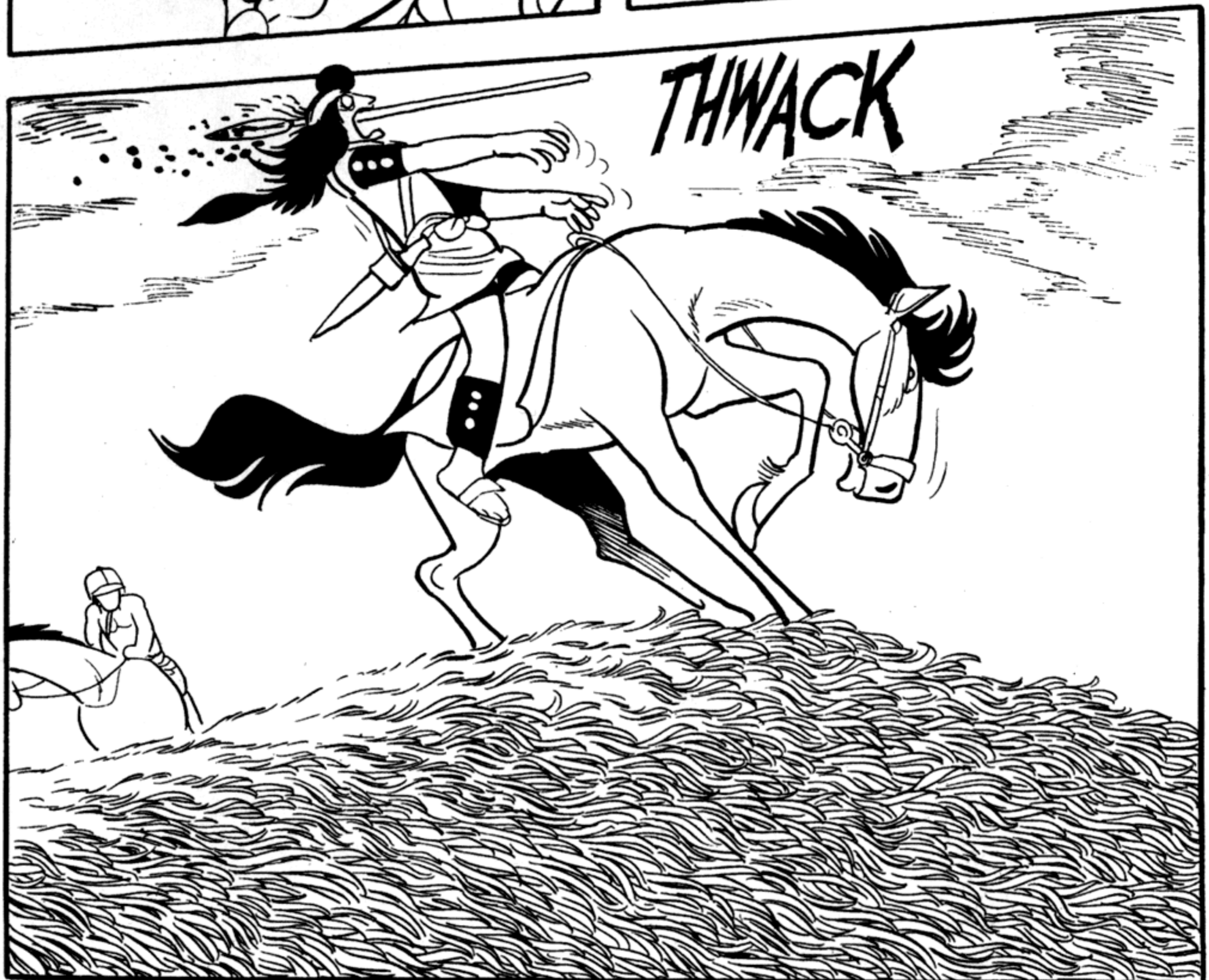
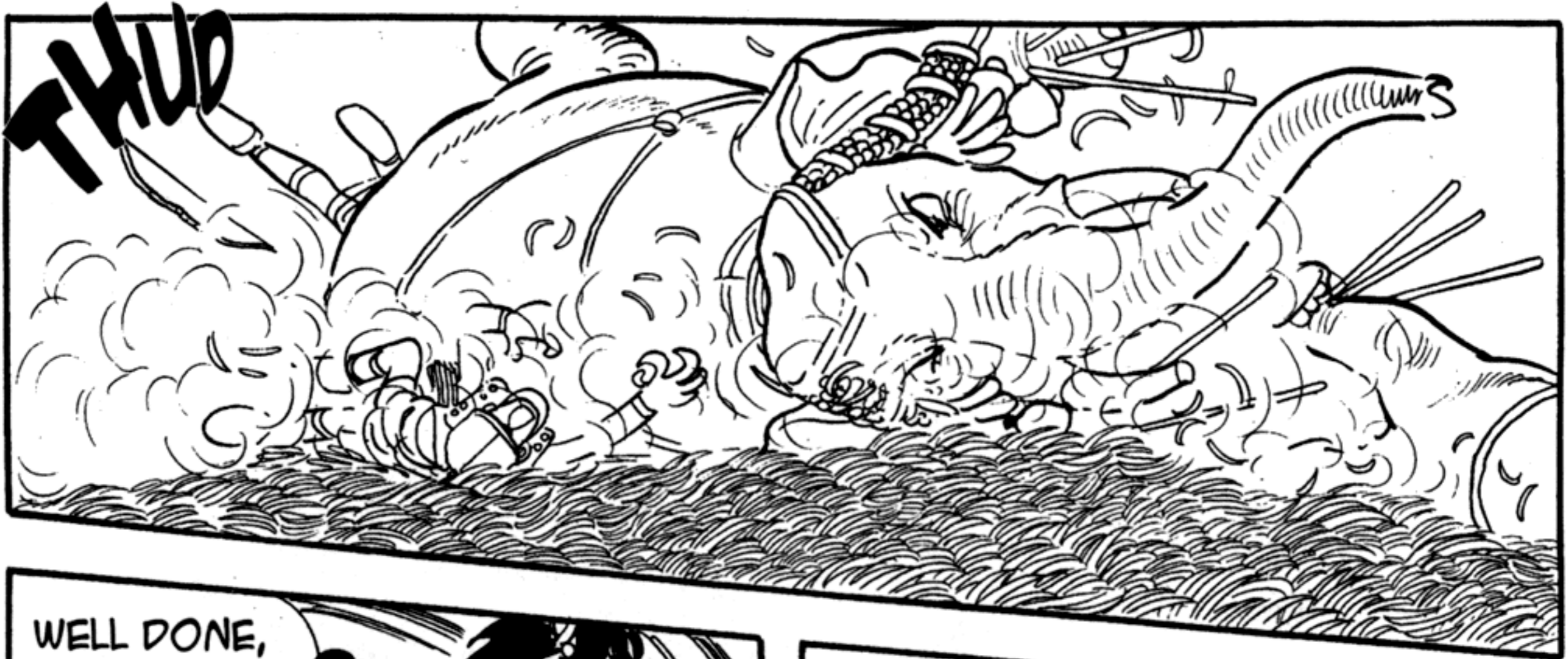


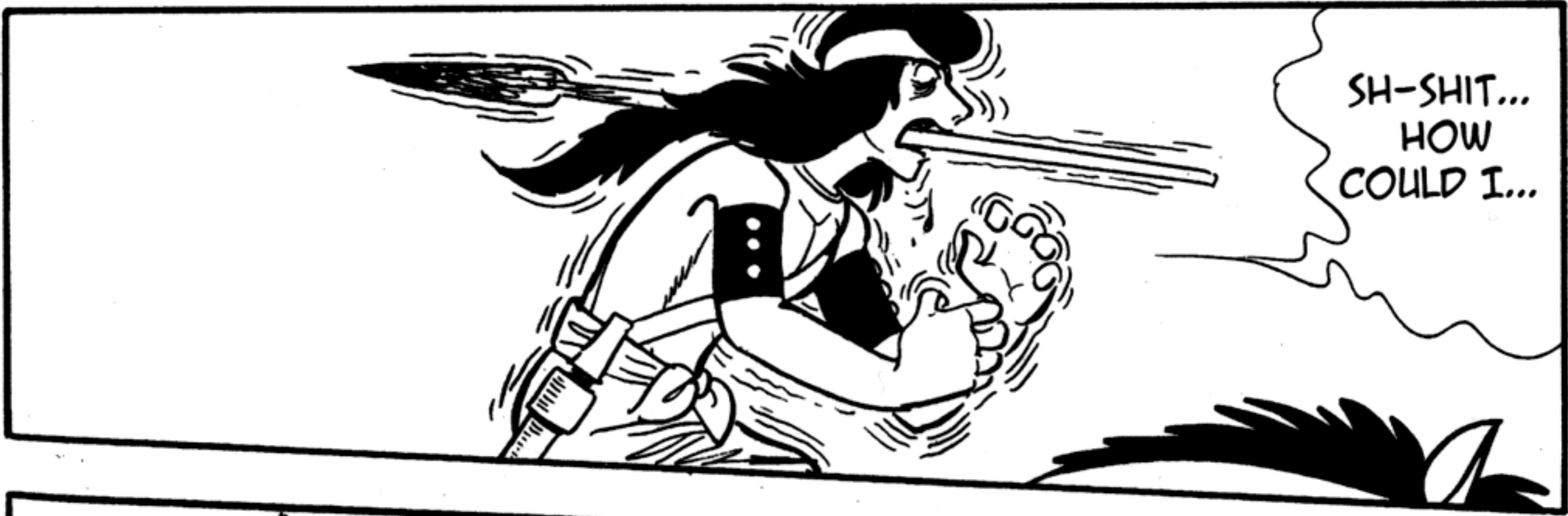


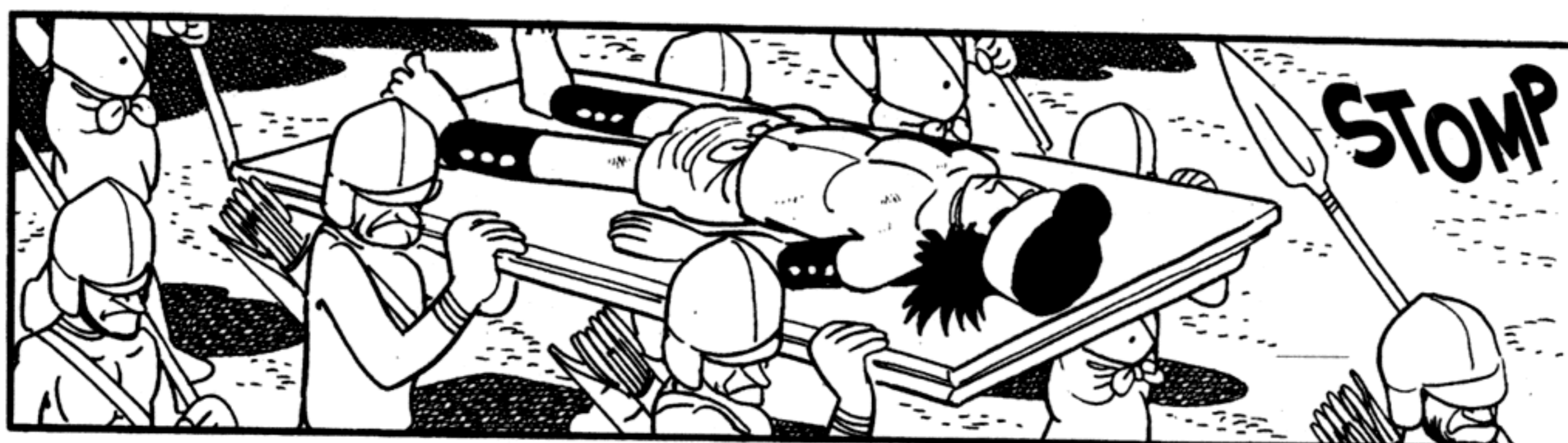
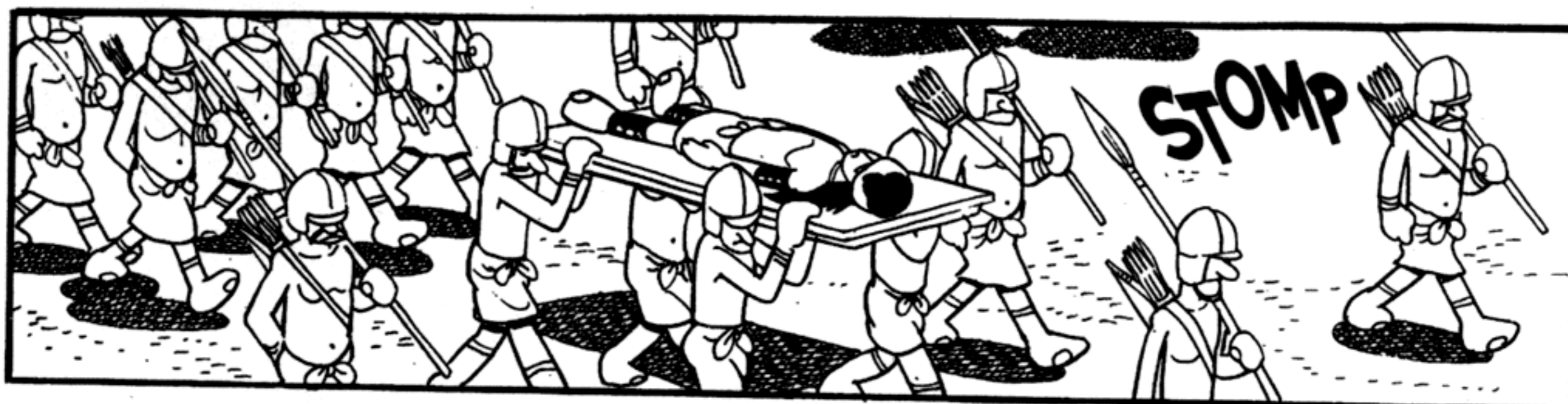


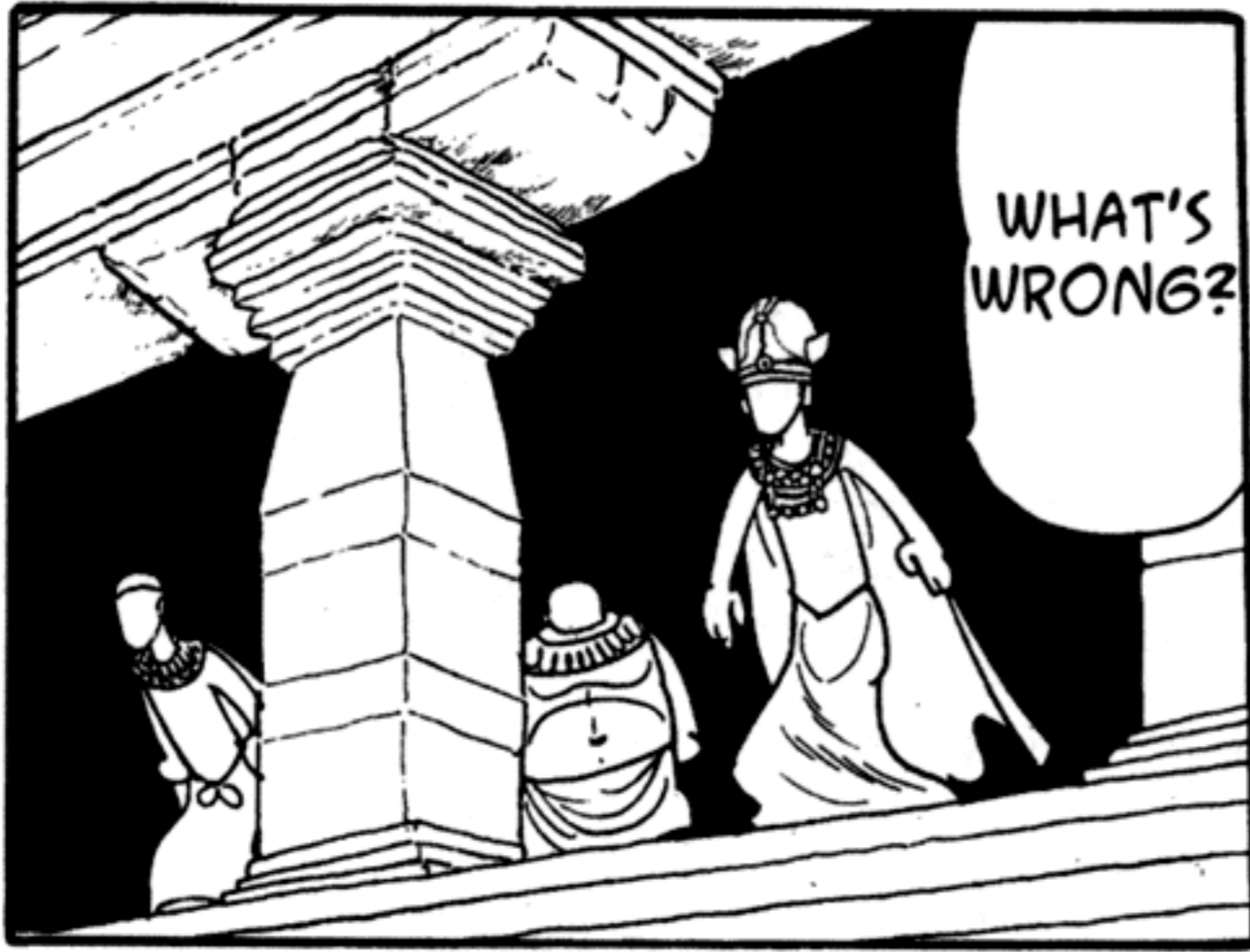




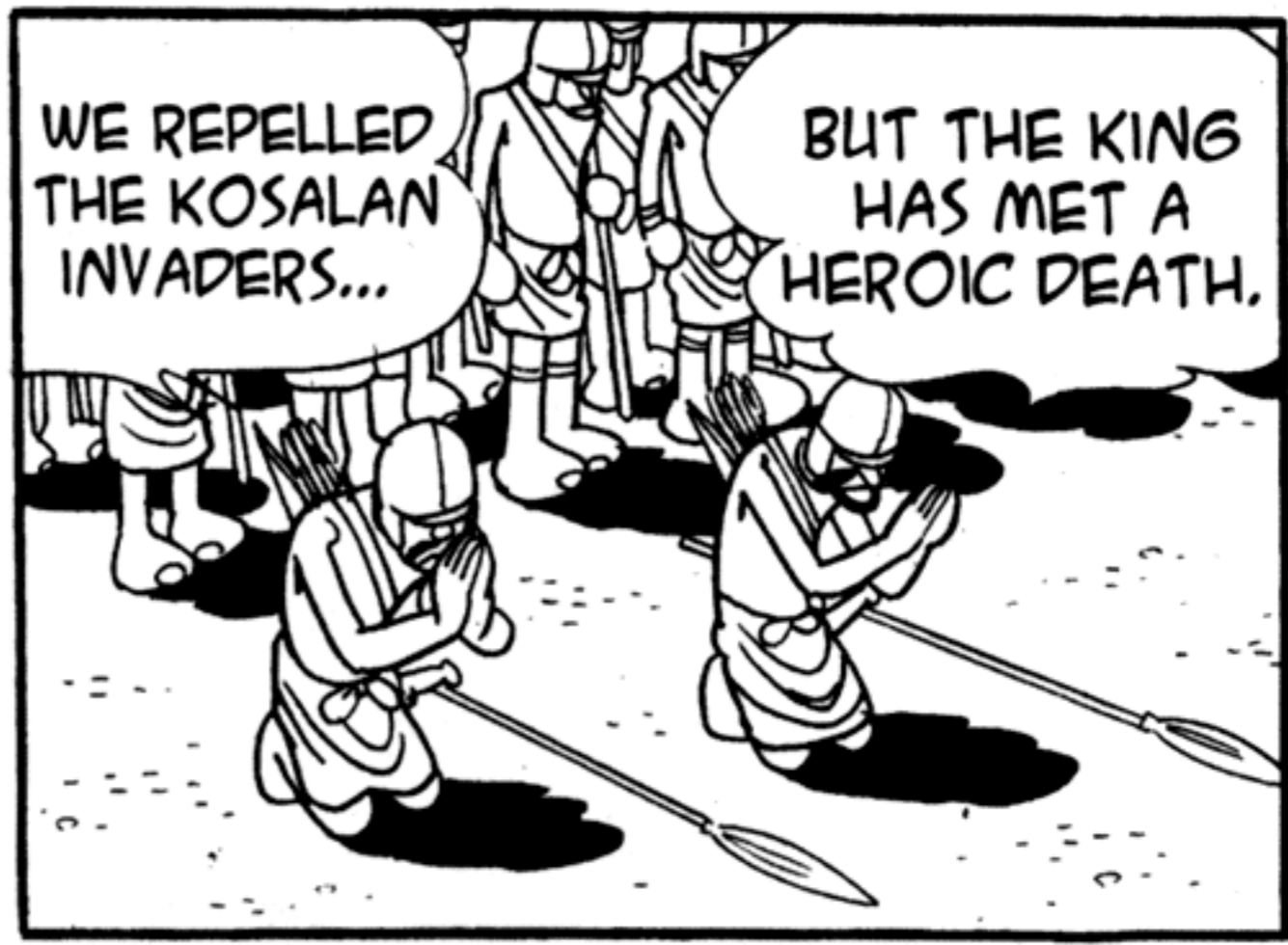






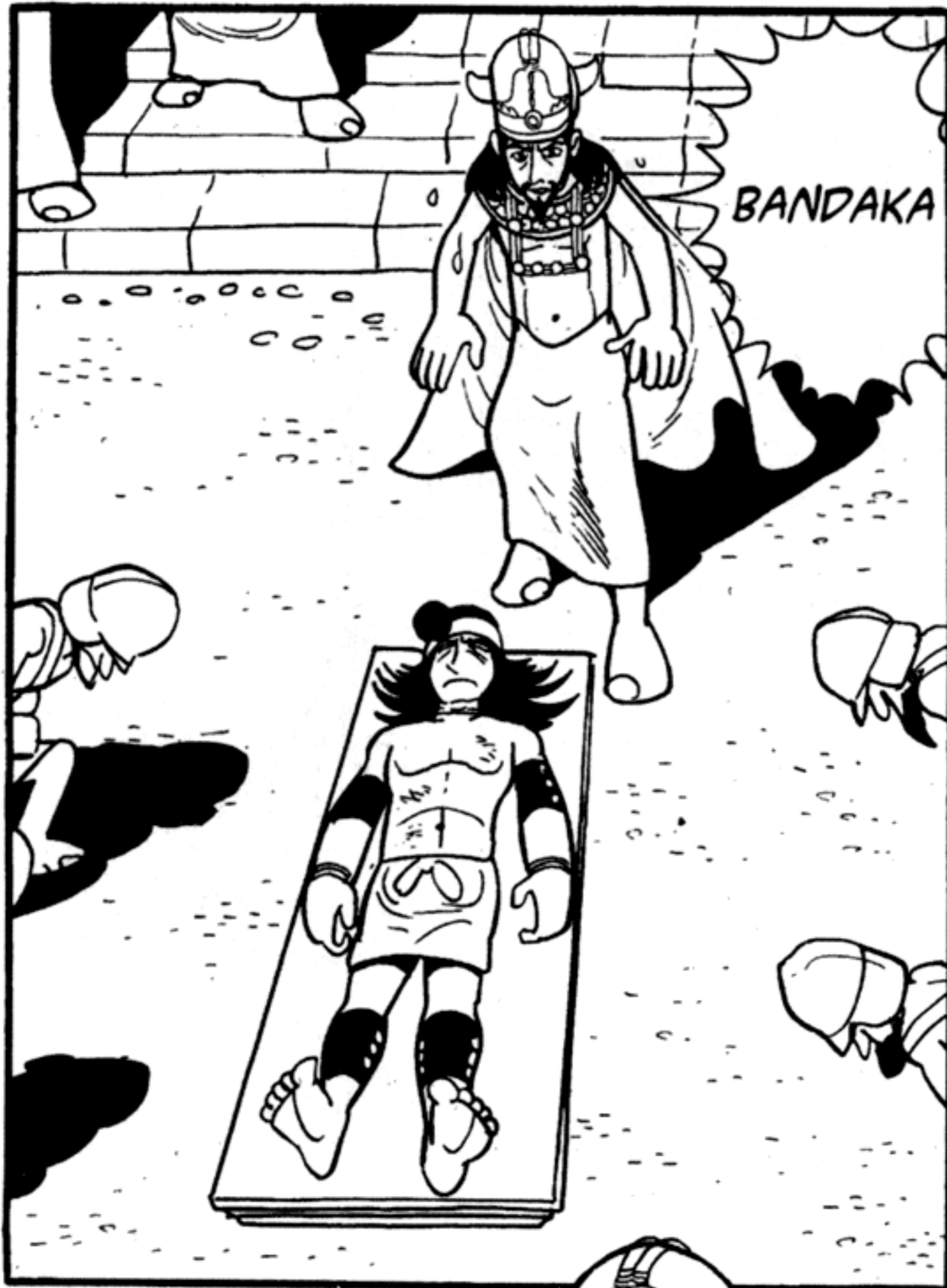


WHAT'S WRONG?



WE REPELLED THE KOSALAN INVADERS...

BUT THE KING HAS MET A HEROIC DEATH.



BANDAKA



WHAT AN UNLUCKY MAN YOU ARE.

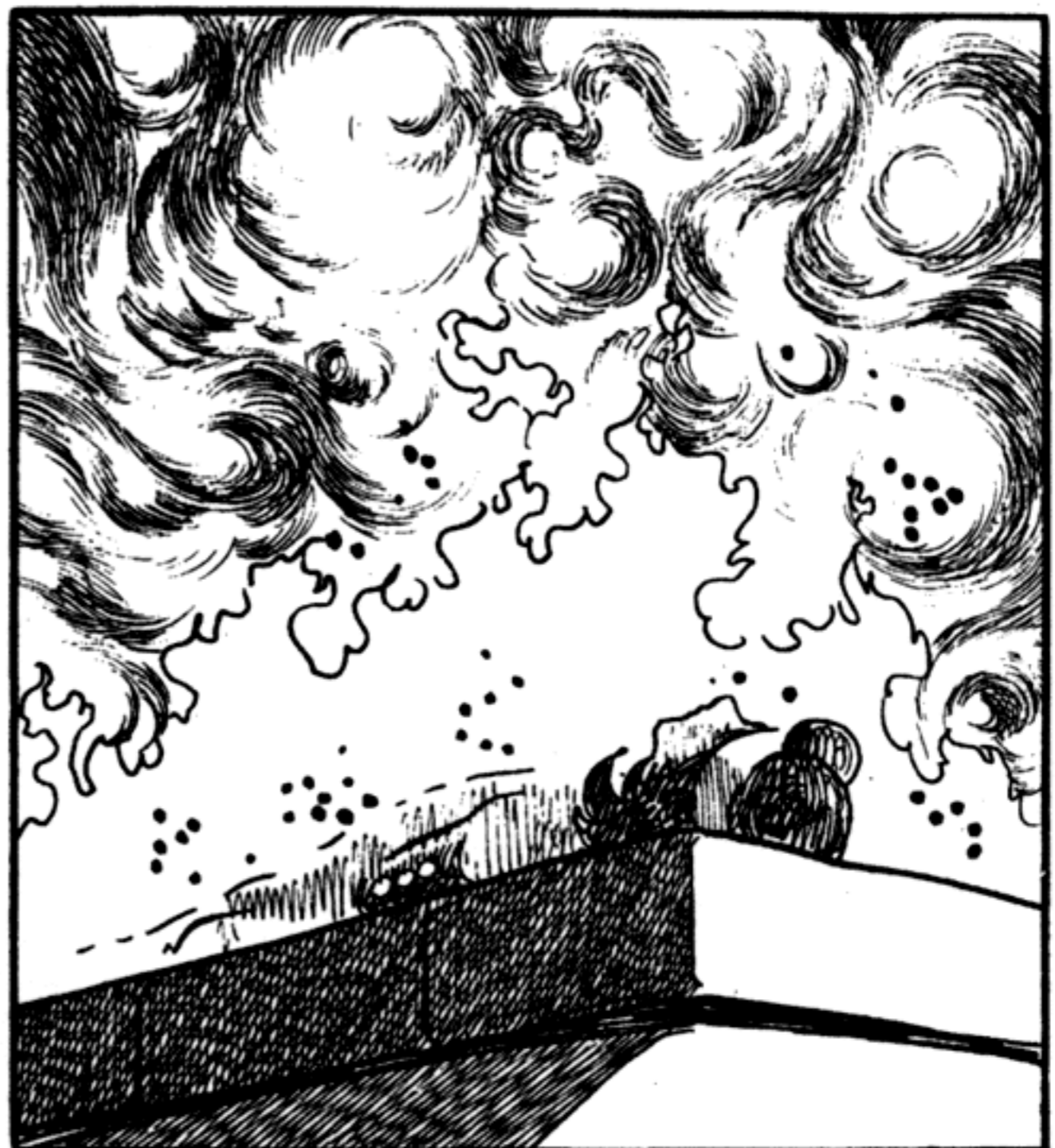
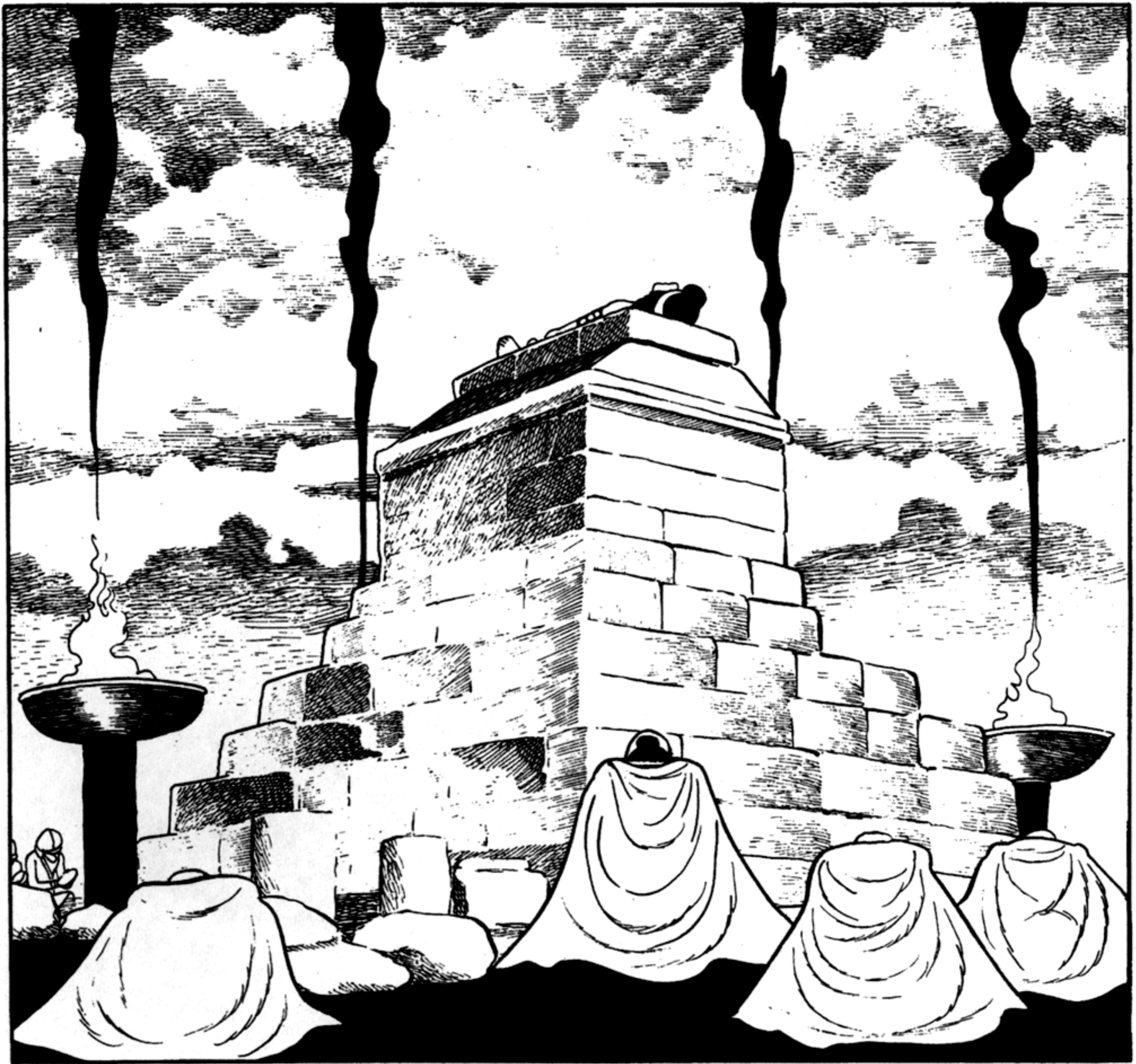
THE KINGDOM YOU COVETED FINALLY YOURS, YOU HAD TO LEAVE FOR THE KINGDOM OF DEATH...



BUILD A TOMB FIT FOR A KING!

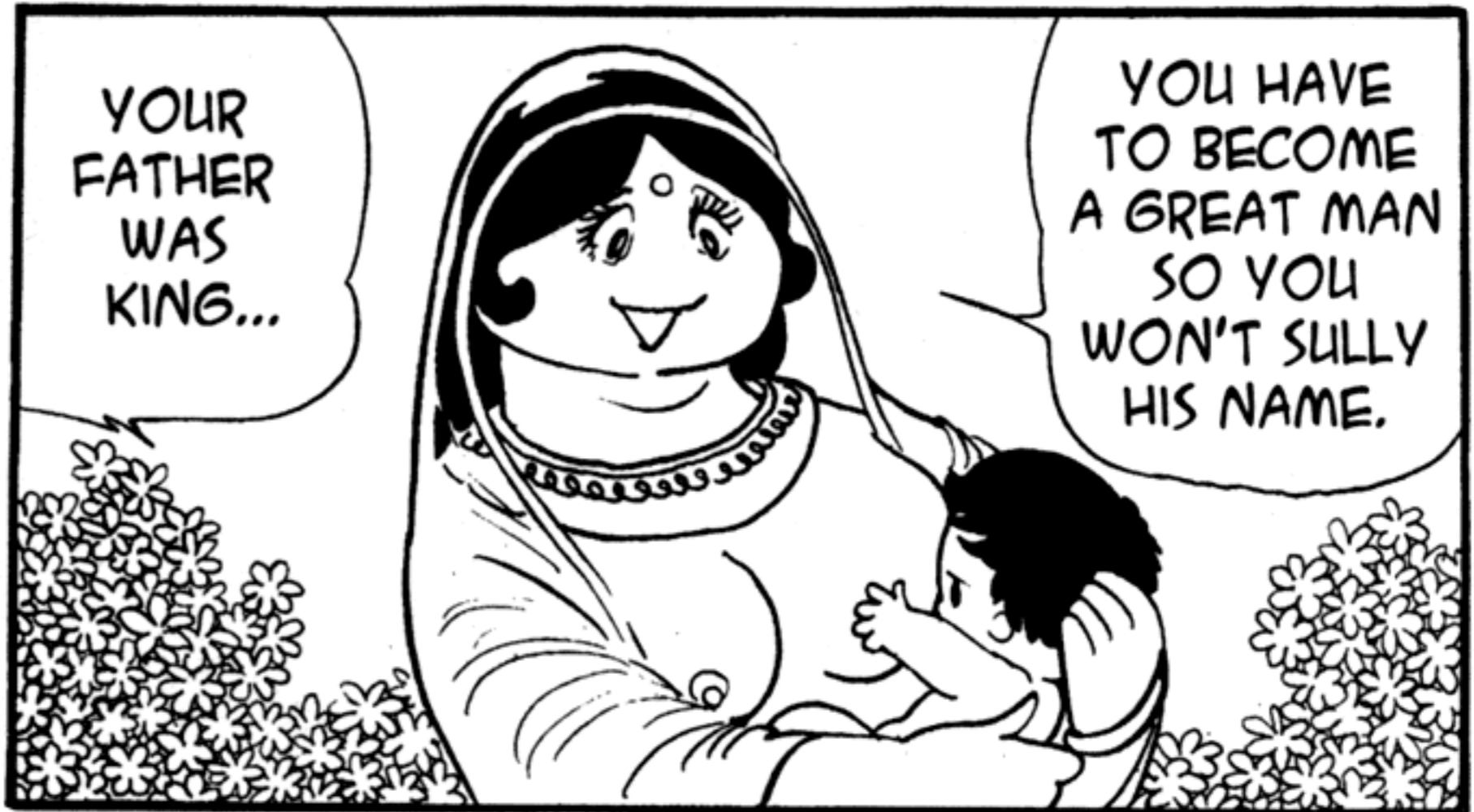
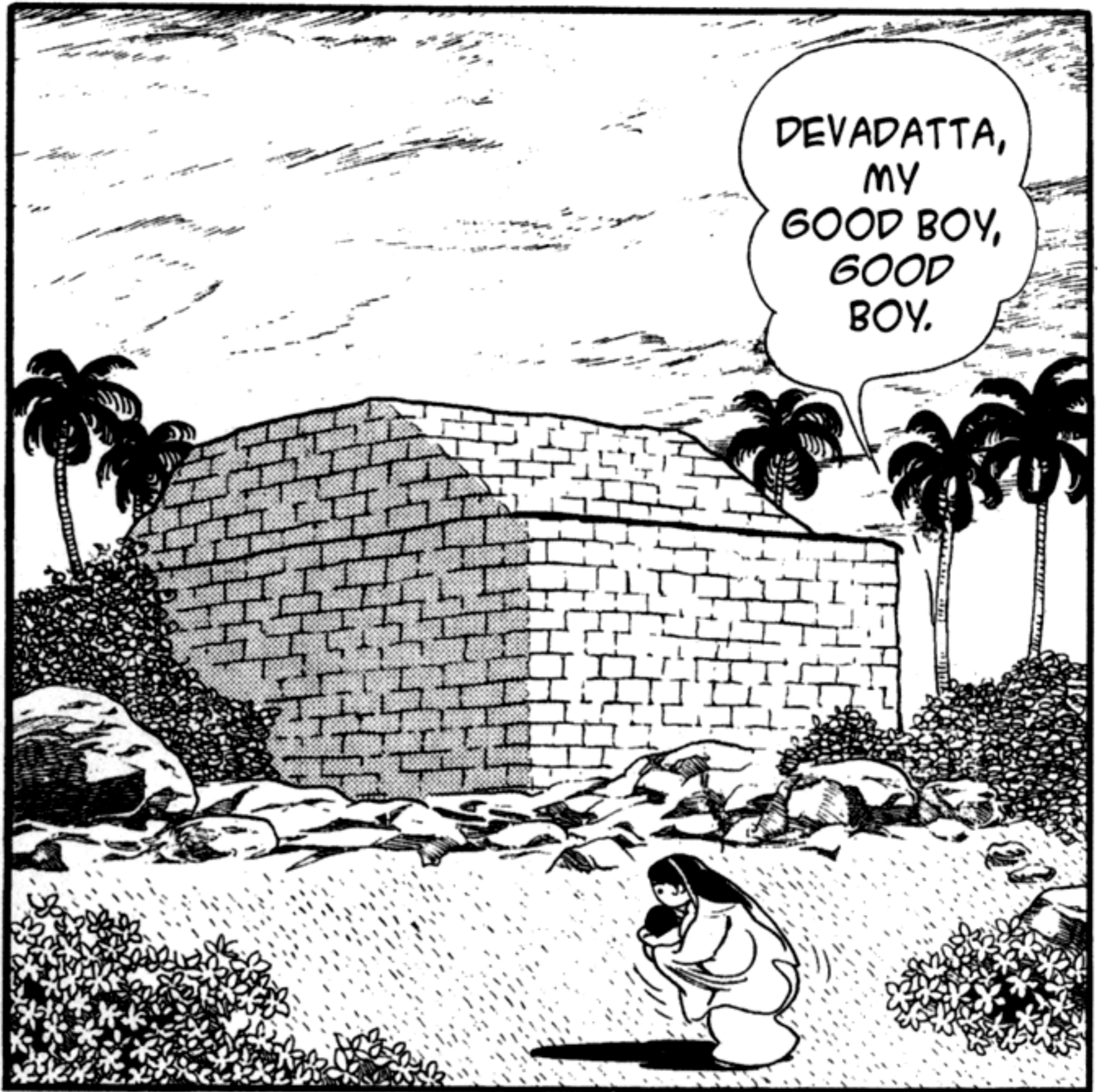
SOUND THE BELLS OF SORROW; LIGHT INCENSE!

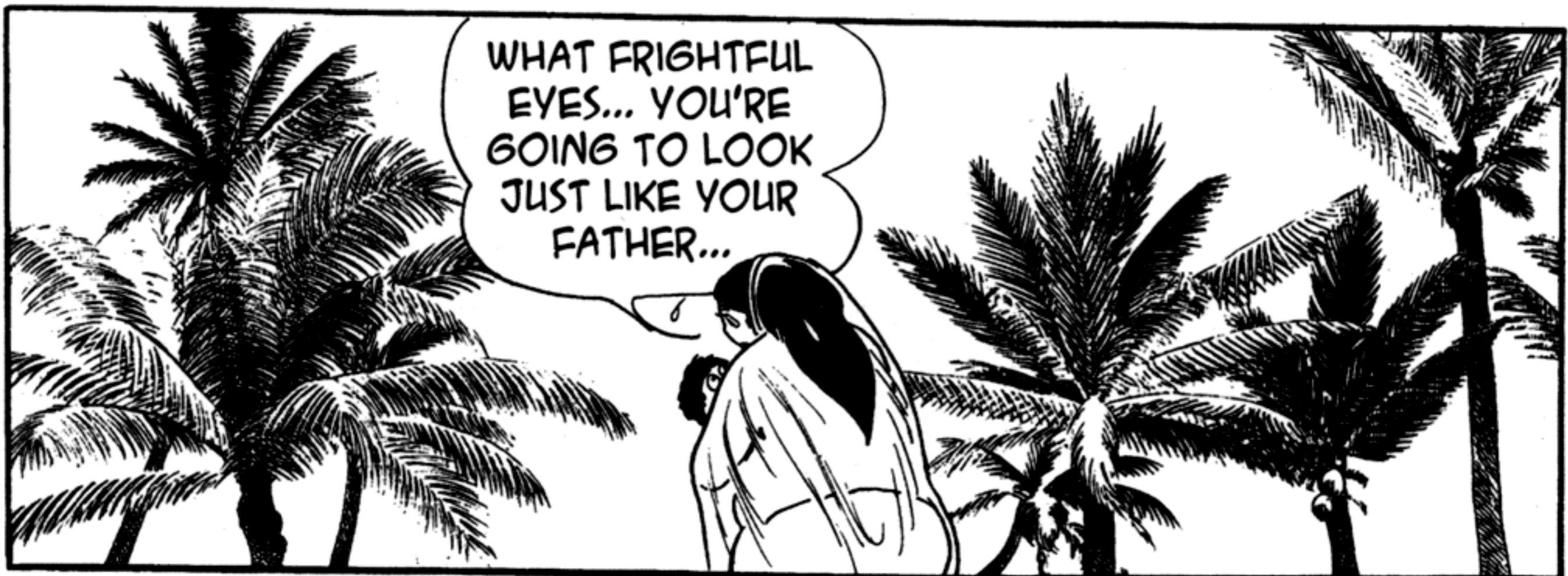
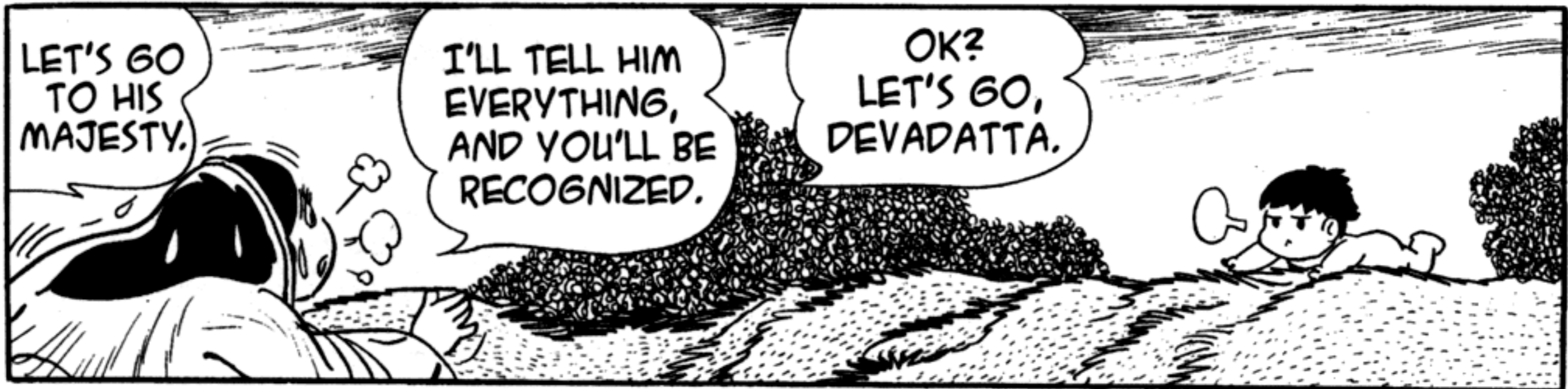
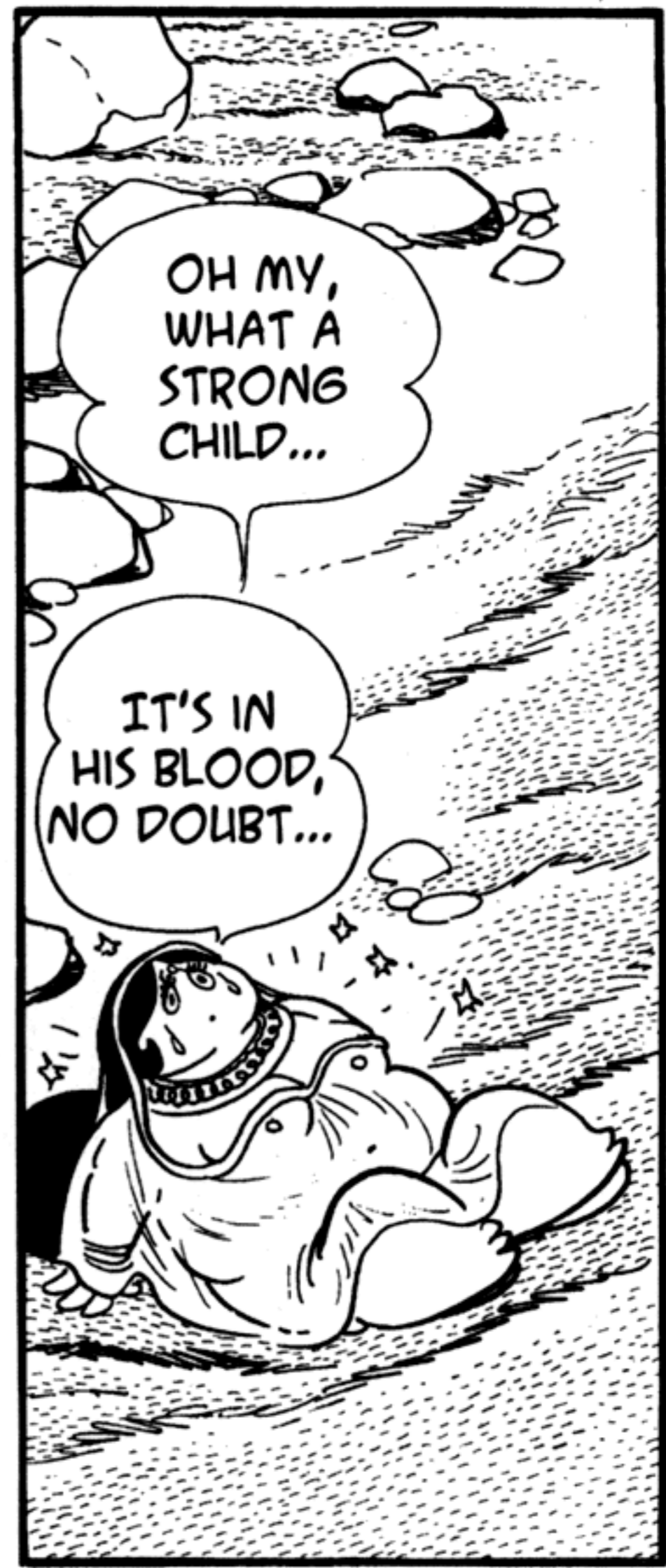
THERE SHALL BE A GRAND FUNERAL FOR BANDAKA!!





OVERWHELMED
BY HIS
INTENSITY,
THE KOSALAN
ARMY
RETIRED.

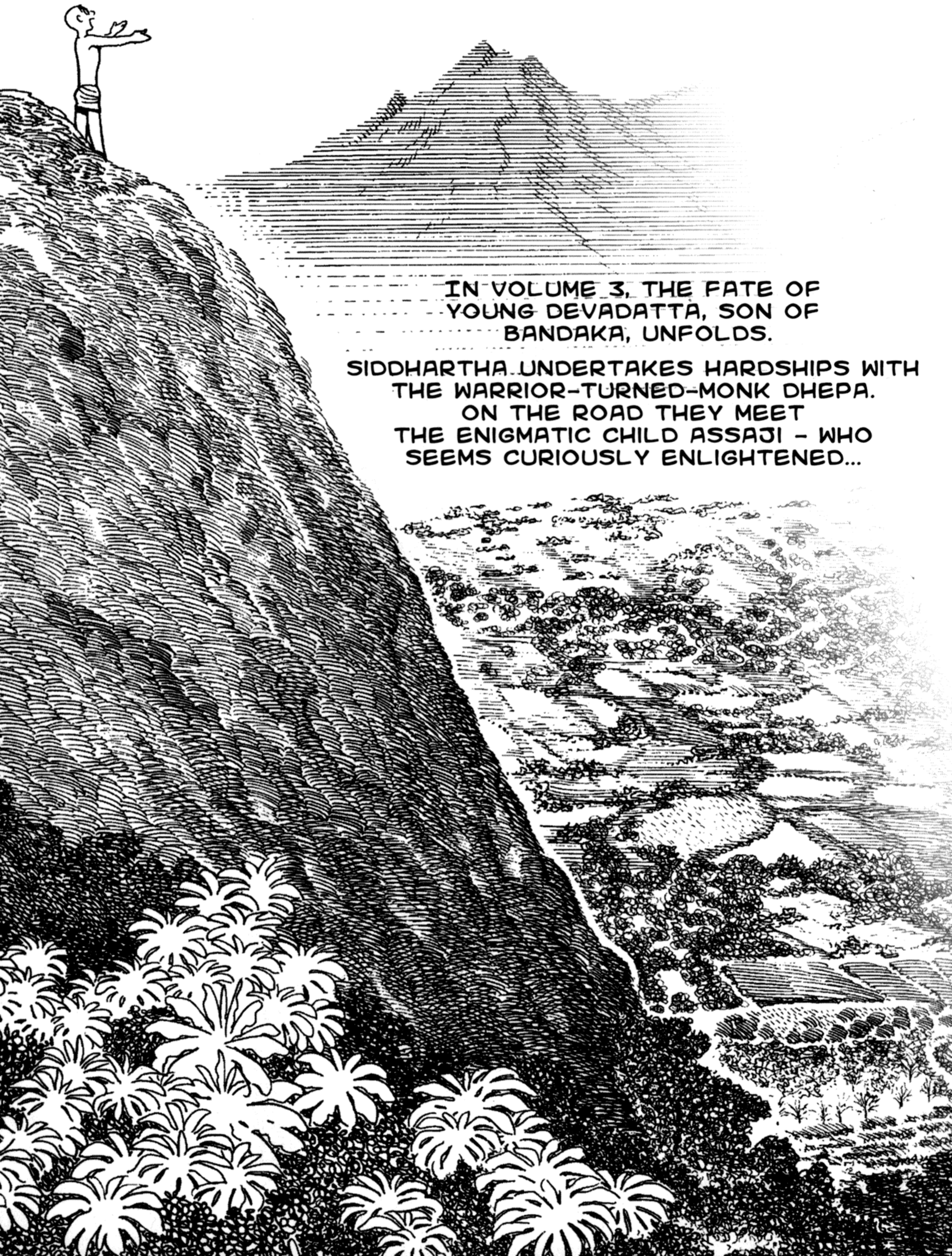




DEVADATTA, SON OF
BANDAKA, WOULD MEET
HIS FATHER'S ARCHRIVAL
SIDDHARTHA IN 20 YEARS'
TIME... AND CAUSE HIM
TERRIBLE MISFORTUNE.
BUT NO ONE KNOWS
THIS YET.



TO BE CONTINUED...



IN VOLUME 3, THE FATE OF
YOUNG DEVADATTA, SON OF
BANDAKA, UNFOLDS.

SIDDHARTHA UNDERTAKES HARDSHIPS WITH
THE WARRIOR-TURNED-MONK DHEPA.
ON THE ROAD THEY MEET
THE ENIGMATIC CHILD ASSAJI - WHO
SEEMS CURIOUSLY ENLIGHTENED...

