

Previously in

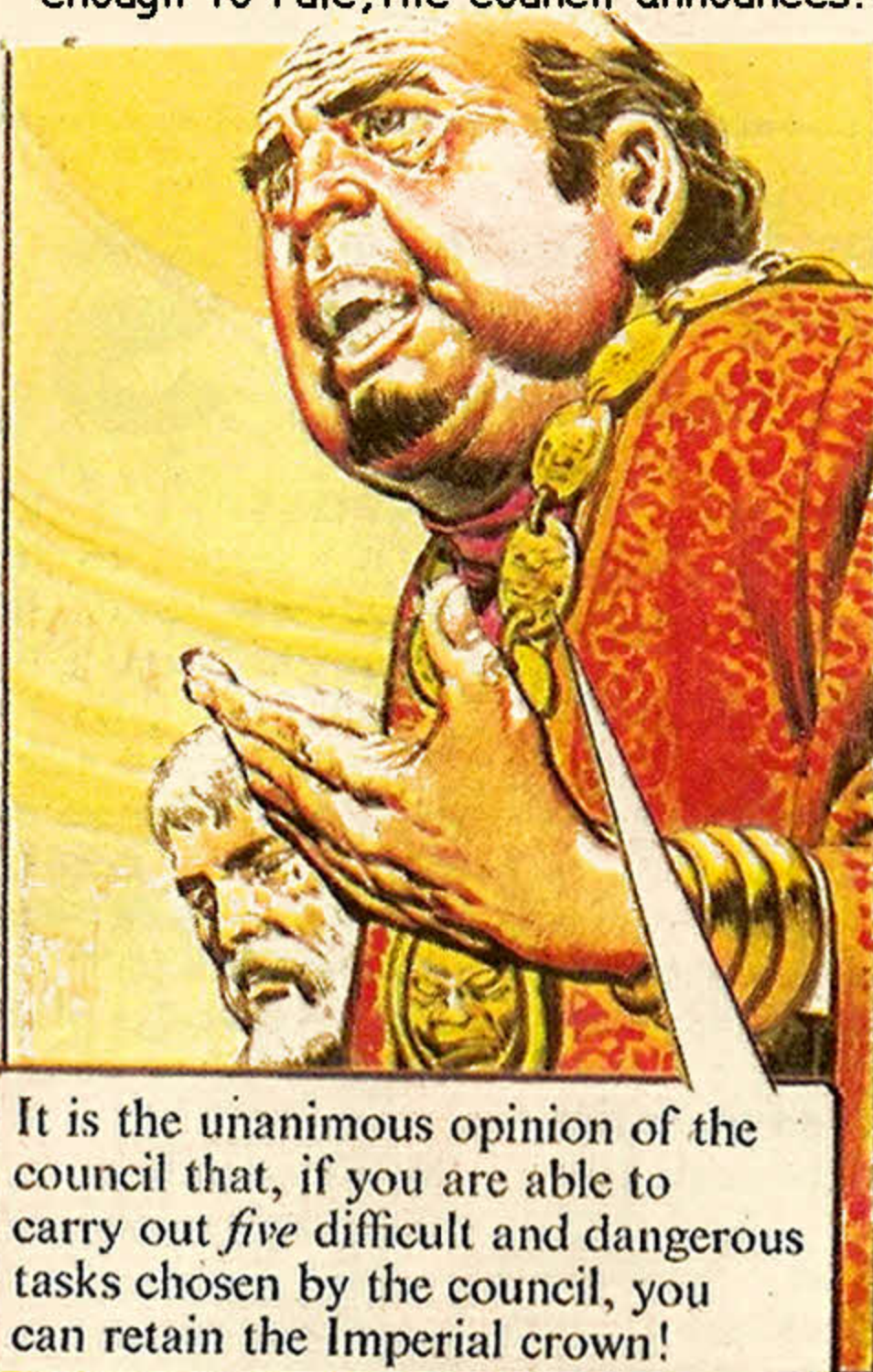
# THE TRIGAN EMPIRE

In the eighteenth year of Neva the Lokans rebelled against the Empire. The Emperor Trigo led the ground forces into battle against the rebels.

The battle ended in victory for the Trigans, though Trigo was gravely wounded.



Fearing the Emperor was no longer fit enough to rule, the council announces...



It is the unanimous opinion of the council that, if you are able to carry out *five* difficult and dangerous tasks chosen by the council, you can retain the Imperial crown!

...to capture and bring back alive - the Mormonth of Morv!



...to find the Lost Cohort of Trigan Guards in the Desert of Errid.



..to encircle the planet in thirty days

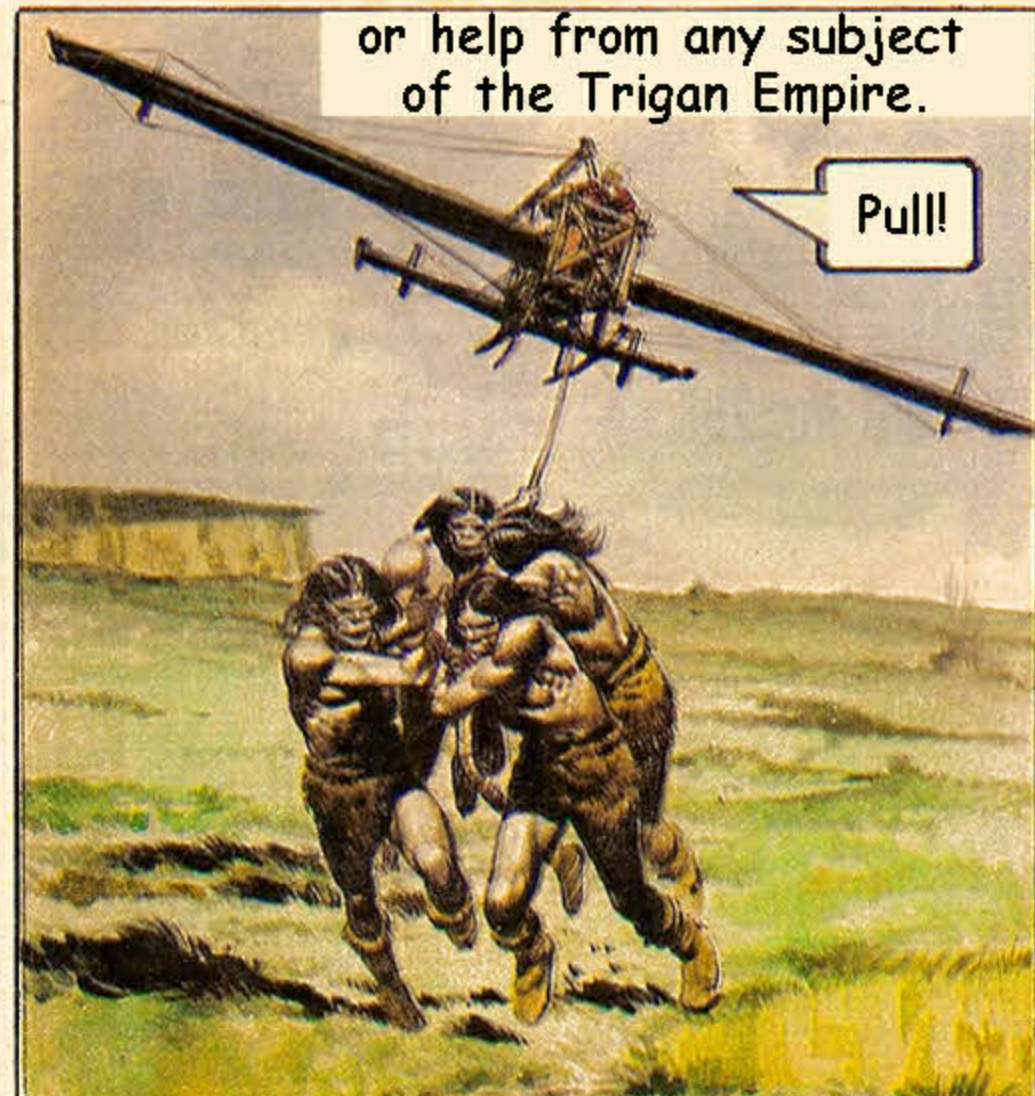


Faster, Icar, faster.

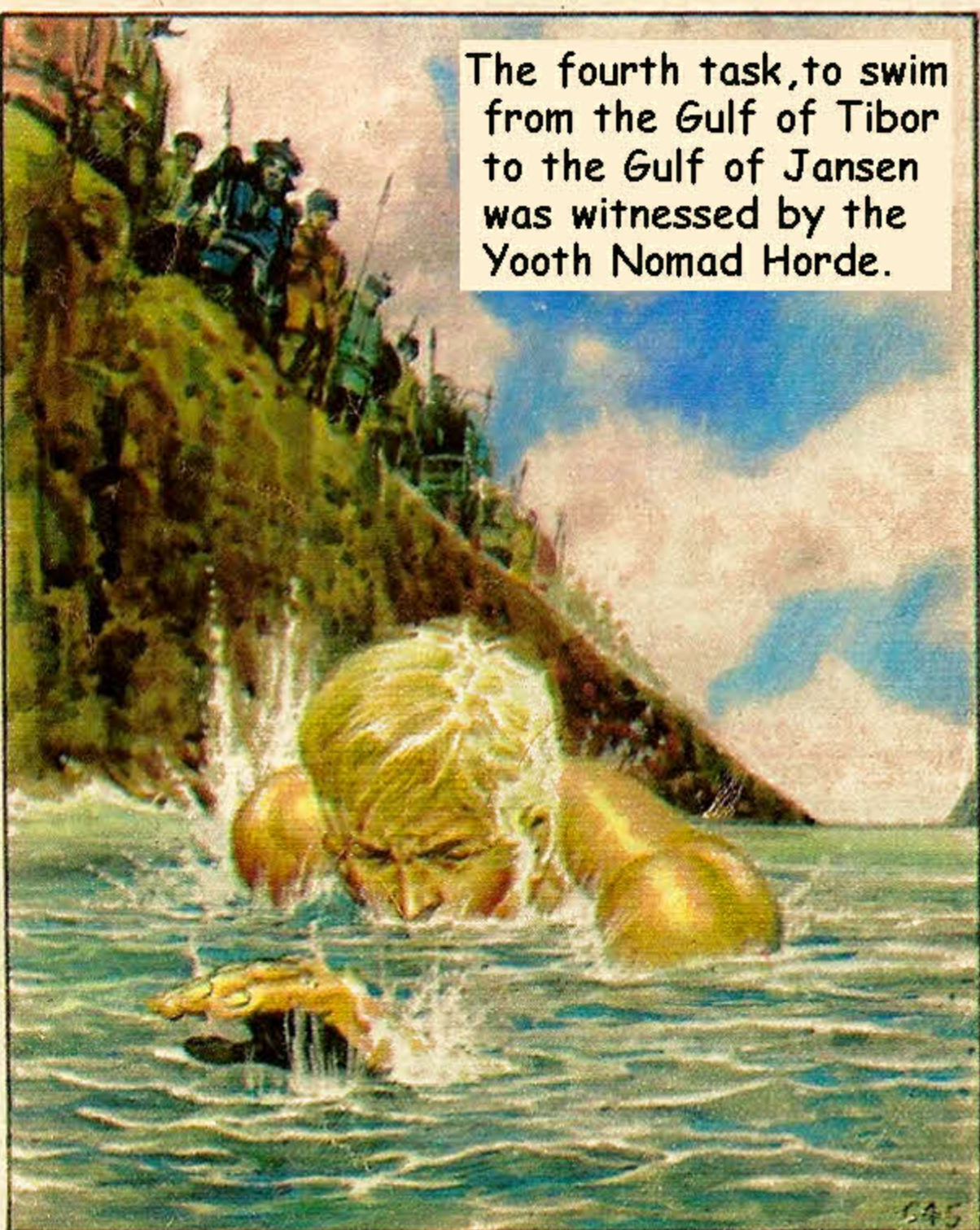
without the aid of mechanical propulsion,



or help from any subject of the Trigan Empire.



The fourth task, to swim from the Gulf of Tibor to the Gulf of Jansen was witnessed by the Yooth Nomad Horde.



Imperial Majesty! One thing I ask on behalf of my people - let us be received into the Trigan Empire!

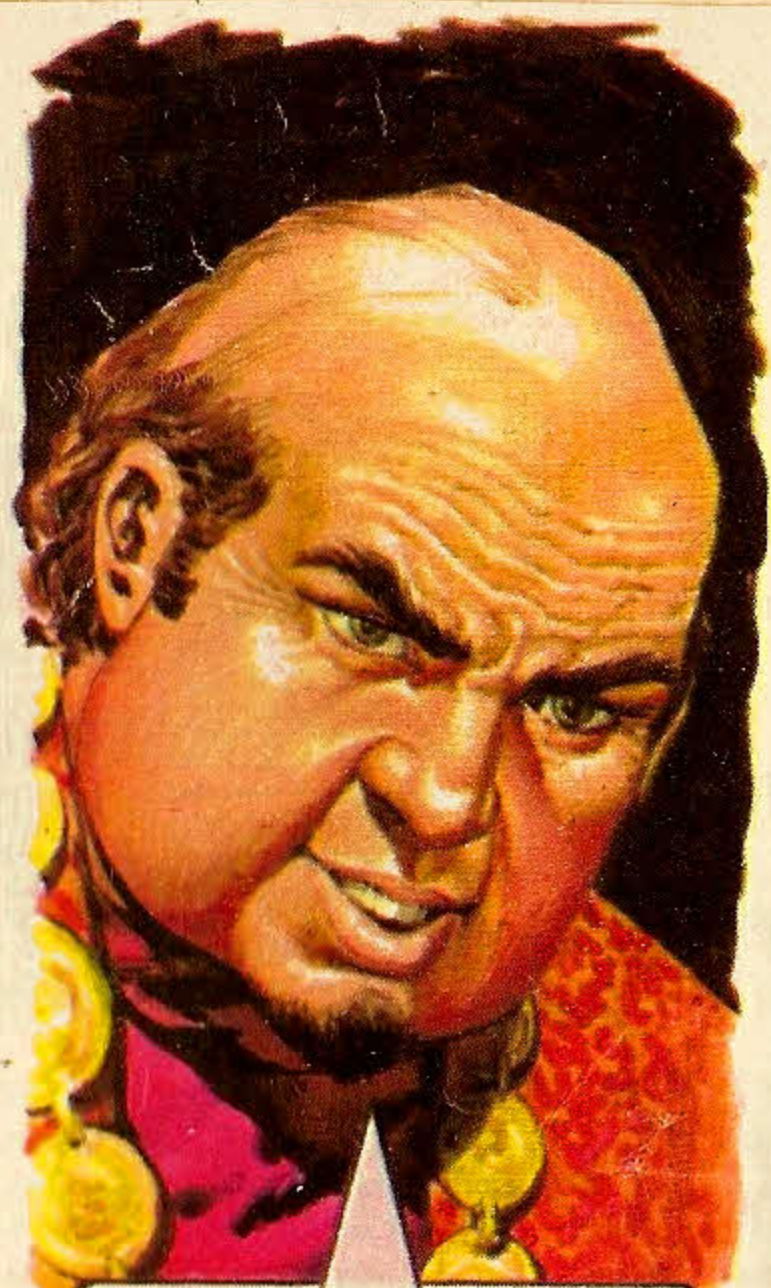
Trigo replied.



From this instant, the Yooth Nation enter into the Brotherhood of the Trigan Empire!

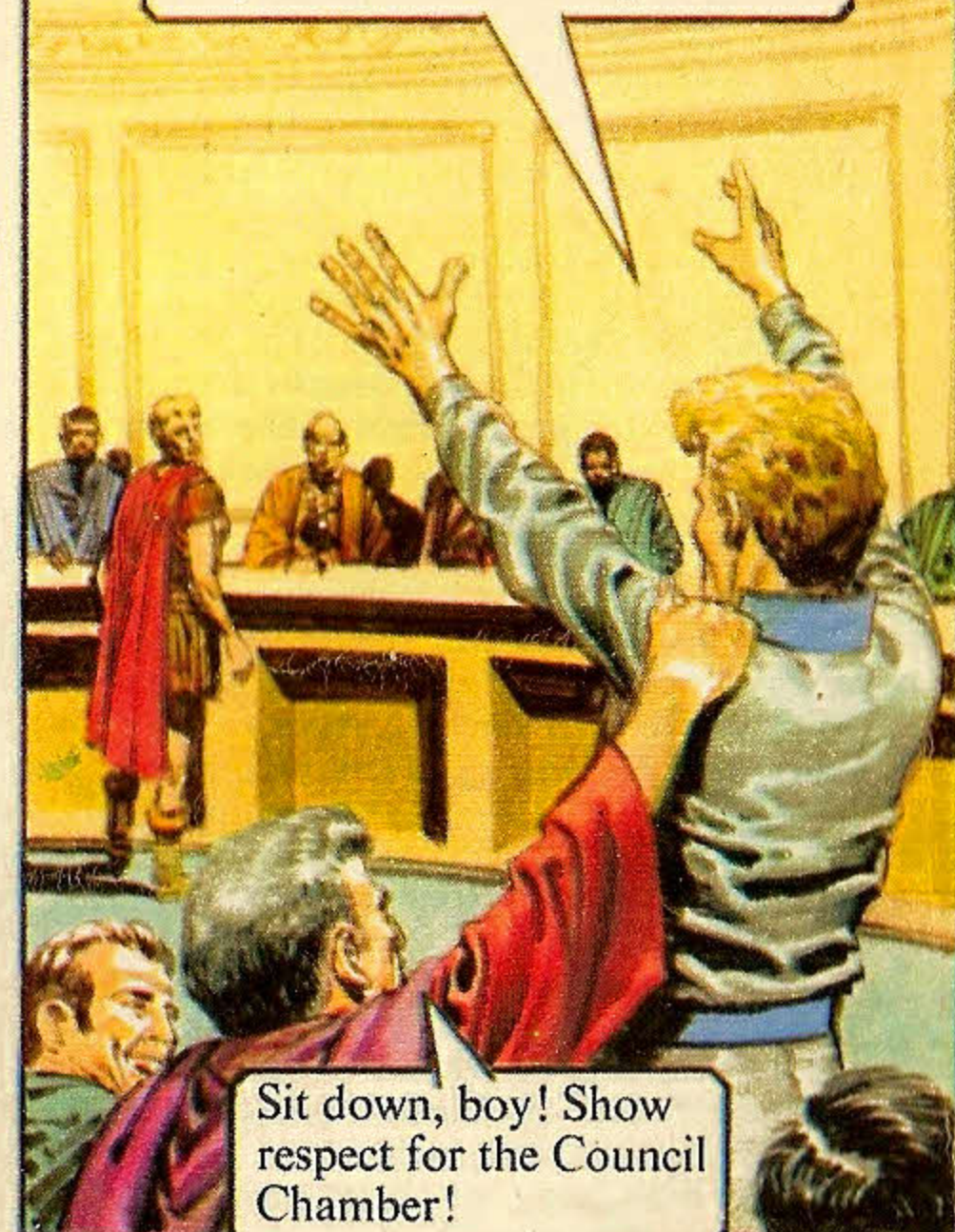
Next day, Trigo stood before the Council of the Trigan Empire.

I, myself, will read aloud the instructions for the *fifth* task!



You will bring a new New Nation into the membership of the Trigan Empire!

YA—HAAAAAAAAA!—Uncle's just done that! The council aren't the fools we took them for!



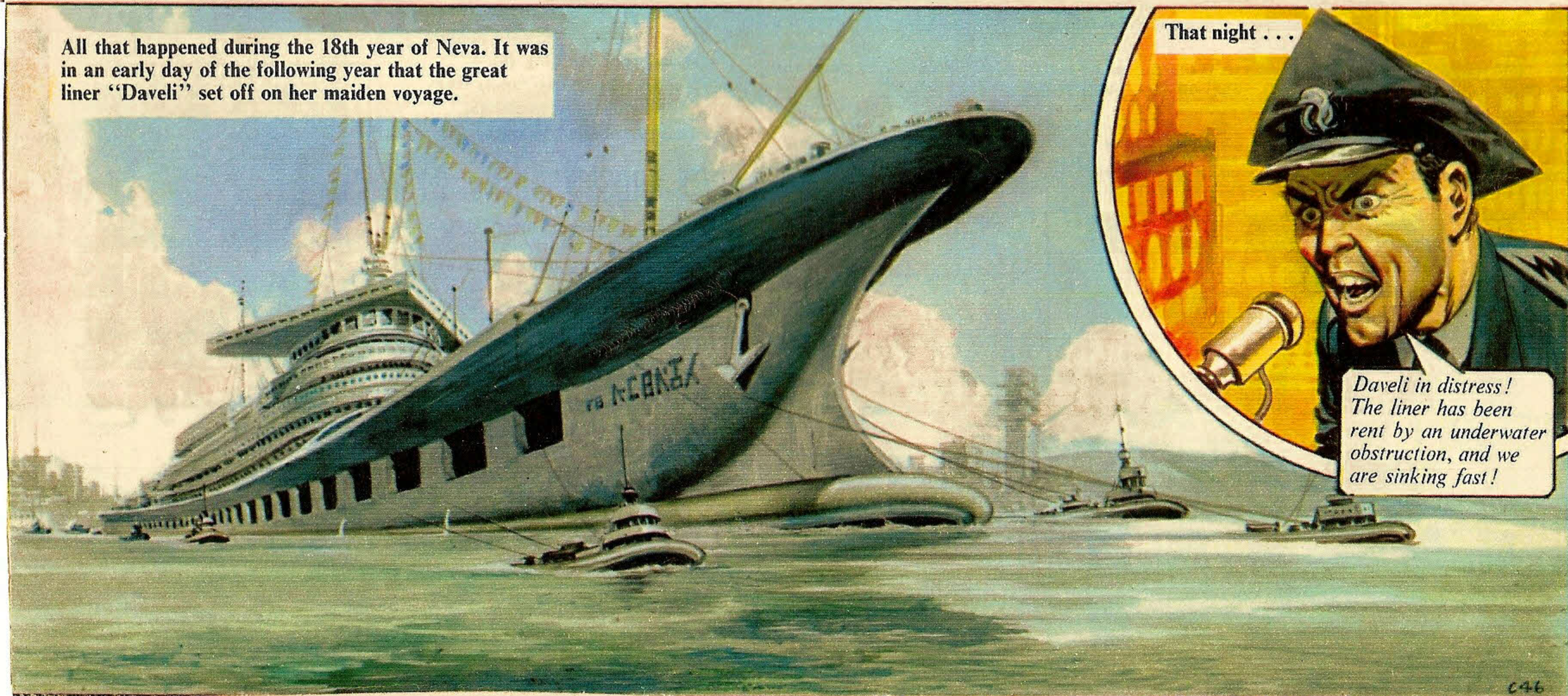
Sit down, boy! Show respect for the Council Chamber!

His dynasty secure for ever, Trigo was adorned with the Imperial Regalia and driven in triumph through the streets of his capital.



Long Live the Emperor!

All that happened during the 18th year of Neva. It was in an early day of the following year that the great liner "Daveli" set off on her maiden voyage.



That night . . .



Daveli in distress! The liner has been rent by an underwater obstruction, and we are sinking fast!

# THE TRIGAN EMPIRE

Disaster! The great liner Daveli, largest and newest passenger ship on the planet Elekton, is sinking on her maiden voyage!



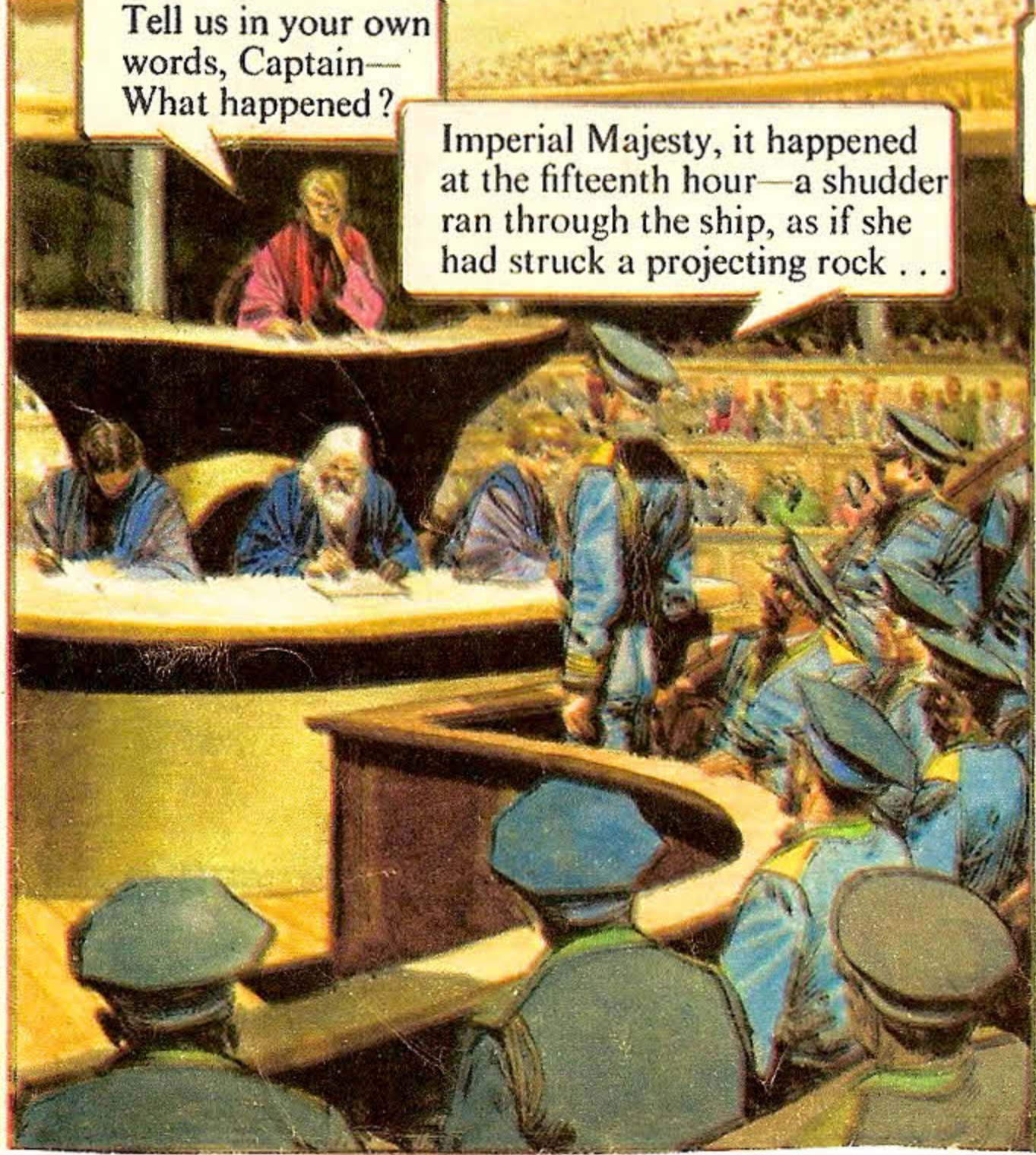
By the time rescue craft arrived, the Daveli was nearly gone!

The Emperor Trigo himself watched the vast hull go to its grave at the bottom of the Tibor ocean



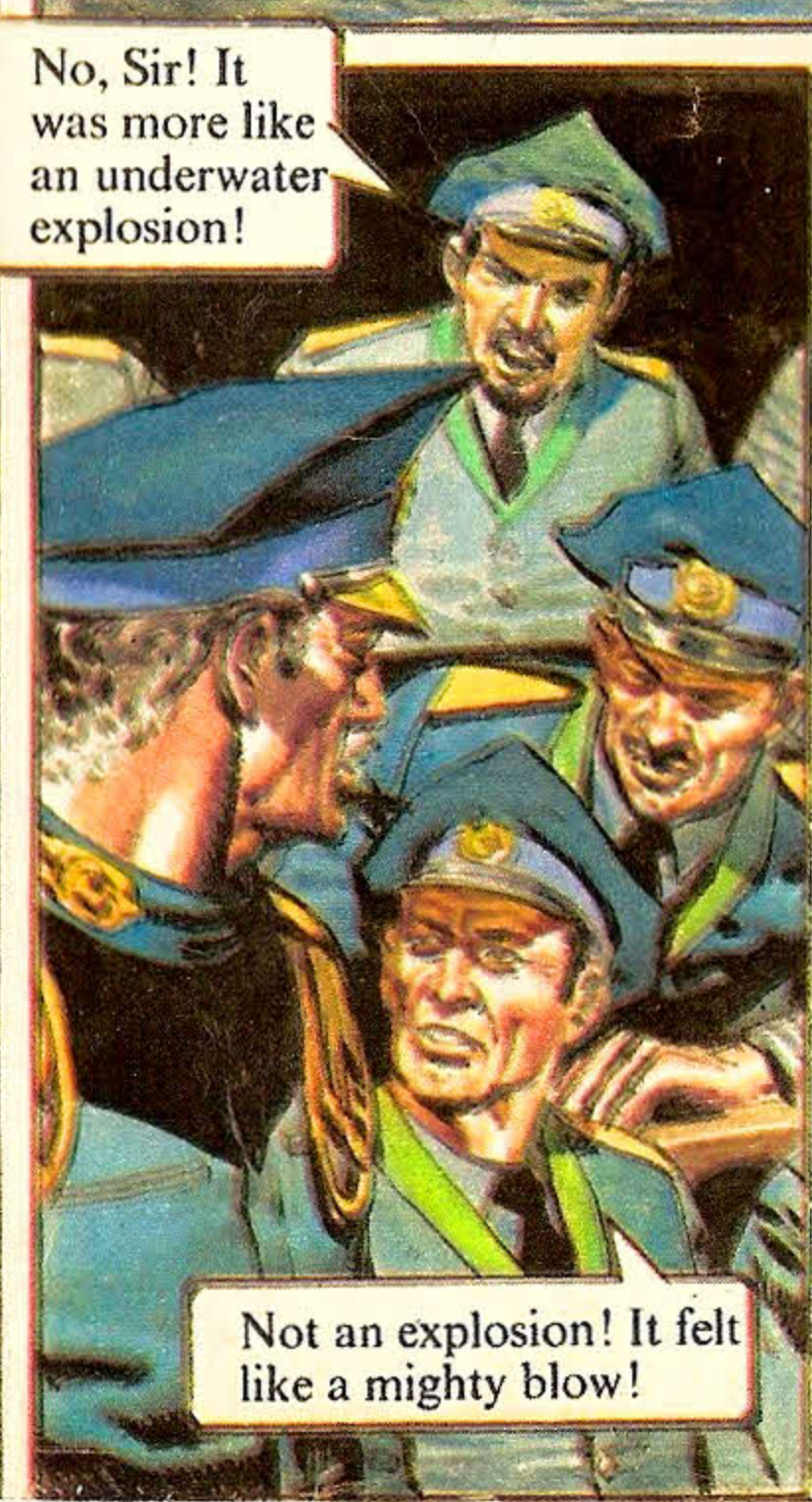
Why?—How could it happen?

An Imperial Court of Enquiry was summoned a few days later.



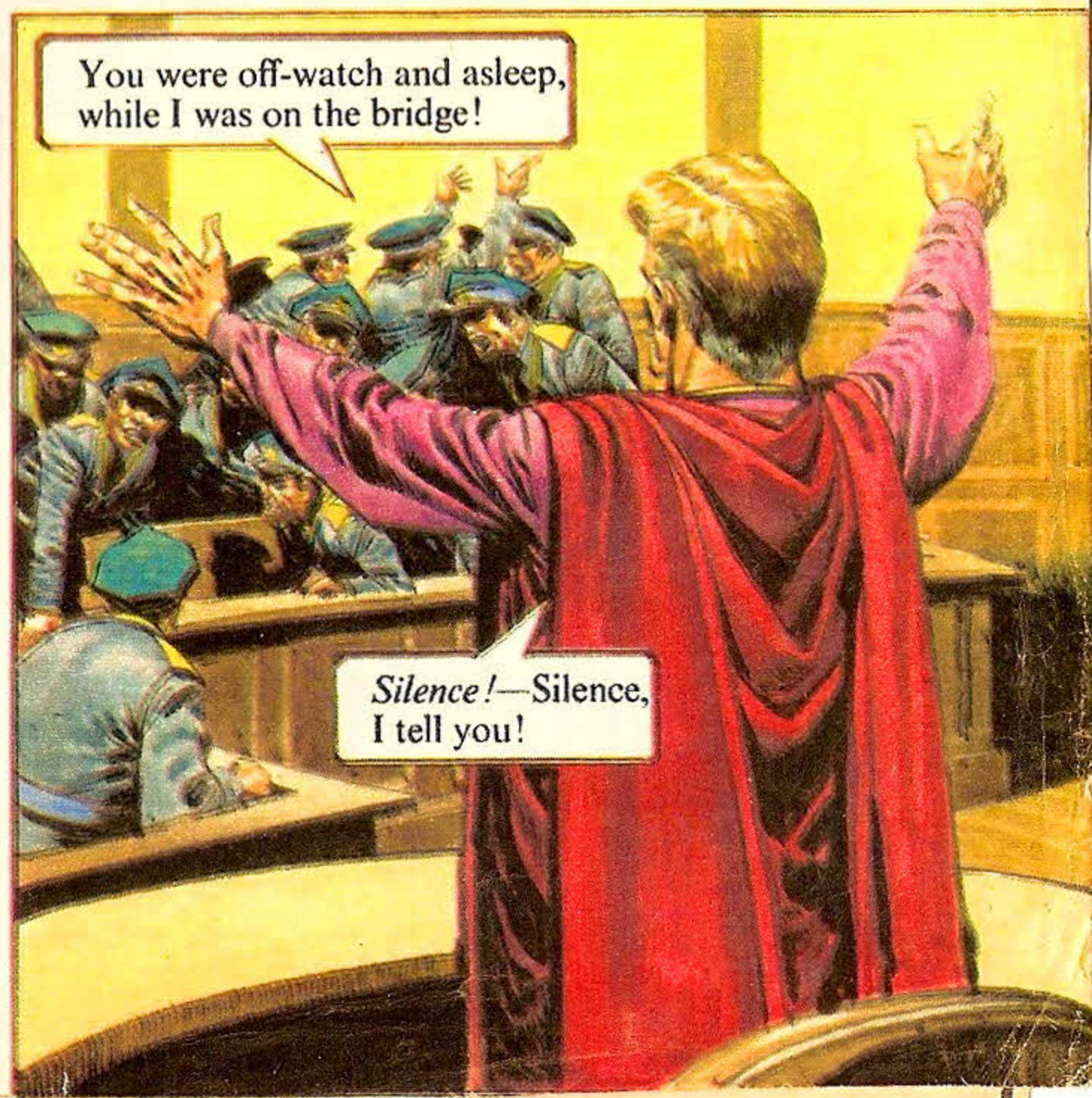
Tell us in your own words, Captain—What happened?

Imperial Majesty, it happened at the fifteenth hour—a shudder ran through the ship, as if she had struck a projecting rock . . .



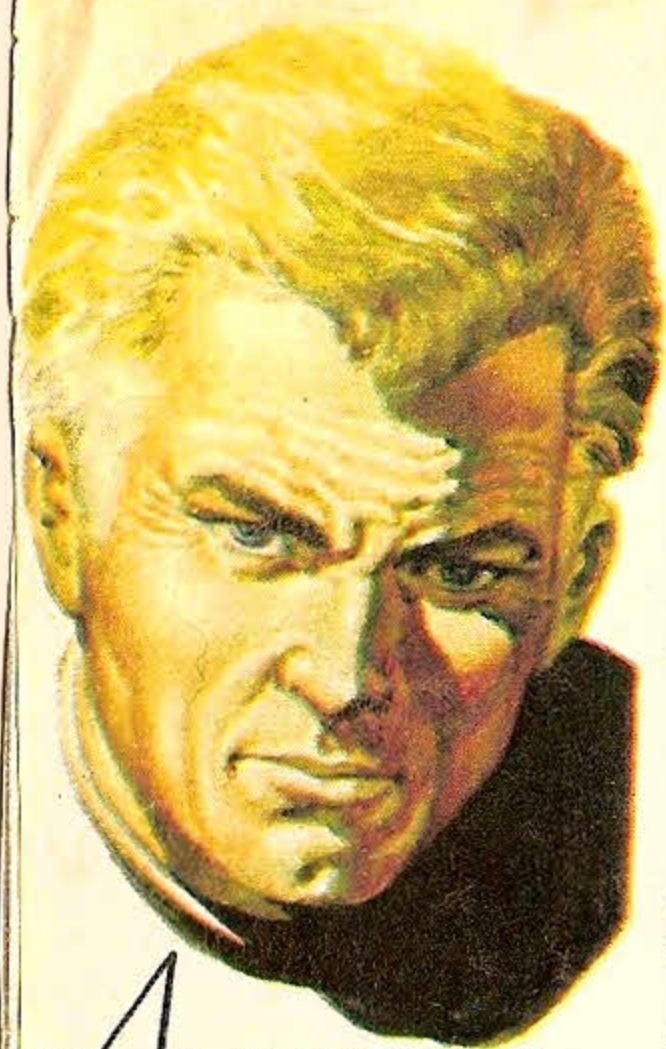
No, Sir! It was more like an underwater explosion!

Not an explosion! It felt like a mighty blow!



You were off-watch and asleep, while I was on the bridge!

Silence!—Silence, I tell you!

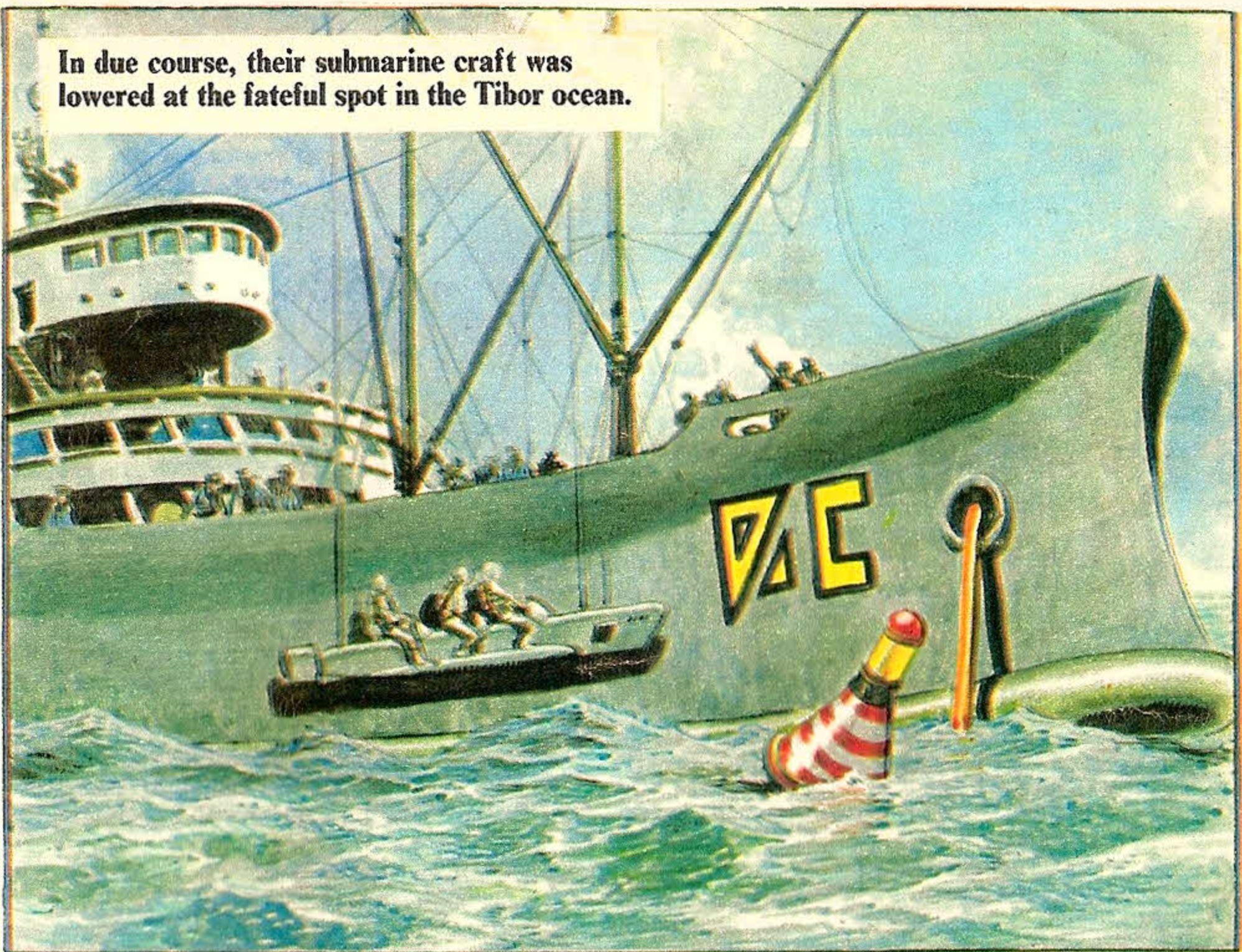


Since your evidences do not tally, this Imperial Court has no other course but to order an inspection of the sunken hull of the Daveli!

The Emperor's nephew Janno and his two comrades volunteered for the hazardous task of diving to the wreck. They were given special instruction.



Your gear will protect you from the massive pressures you will encounter. But at that profound depth, there are many *unknown* hazards!



In due course, their submarine craft was lowered at the fateful spot in the Tibor ocean.

Down—Down—into the unfathomable deep they went . . .

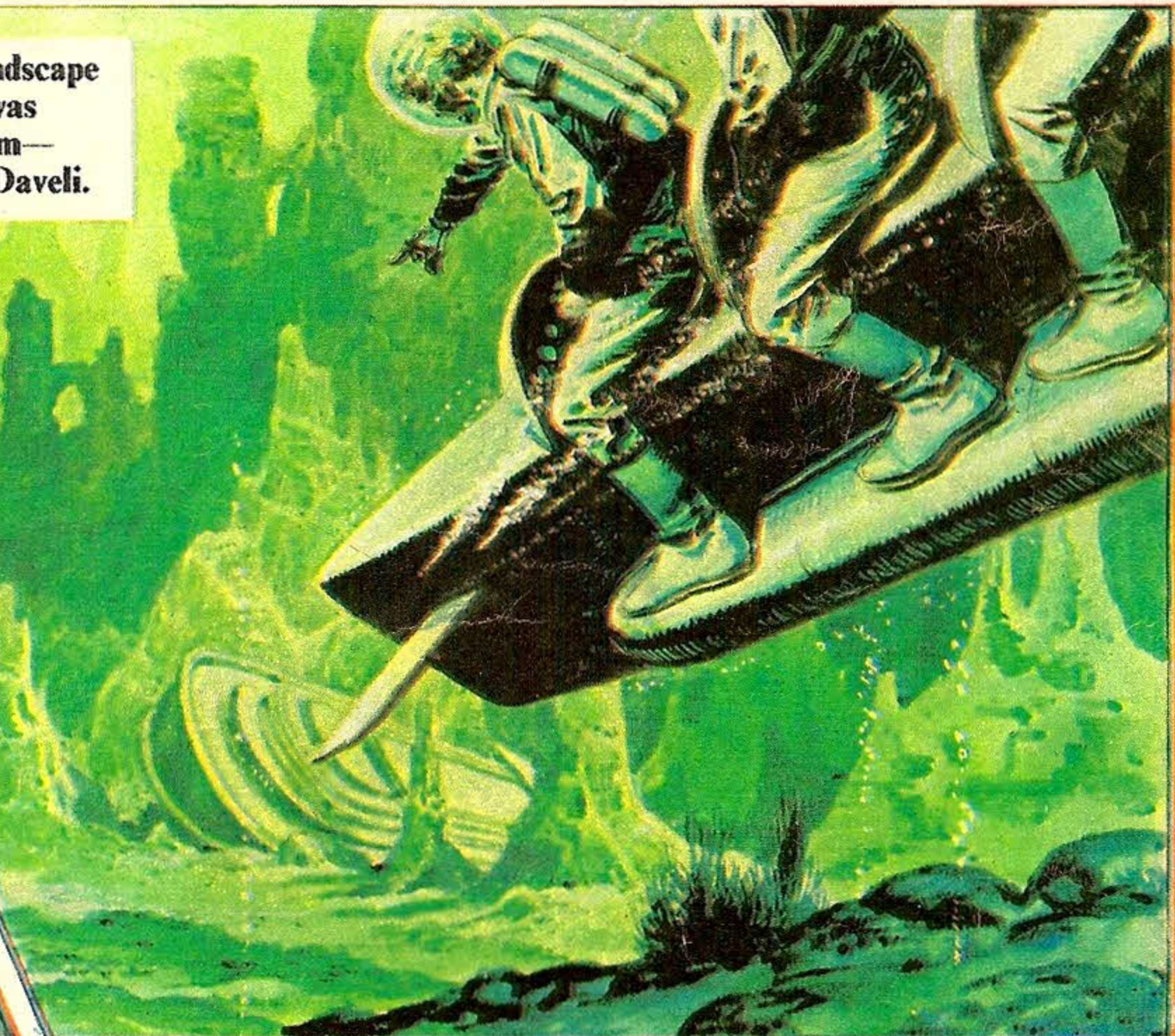


Testing communications .

Receiving you.

Receiving you.

The nightmare landscape of the ocean bed was laid out below them—and they saw the Daveli.

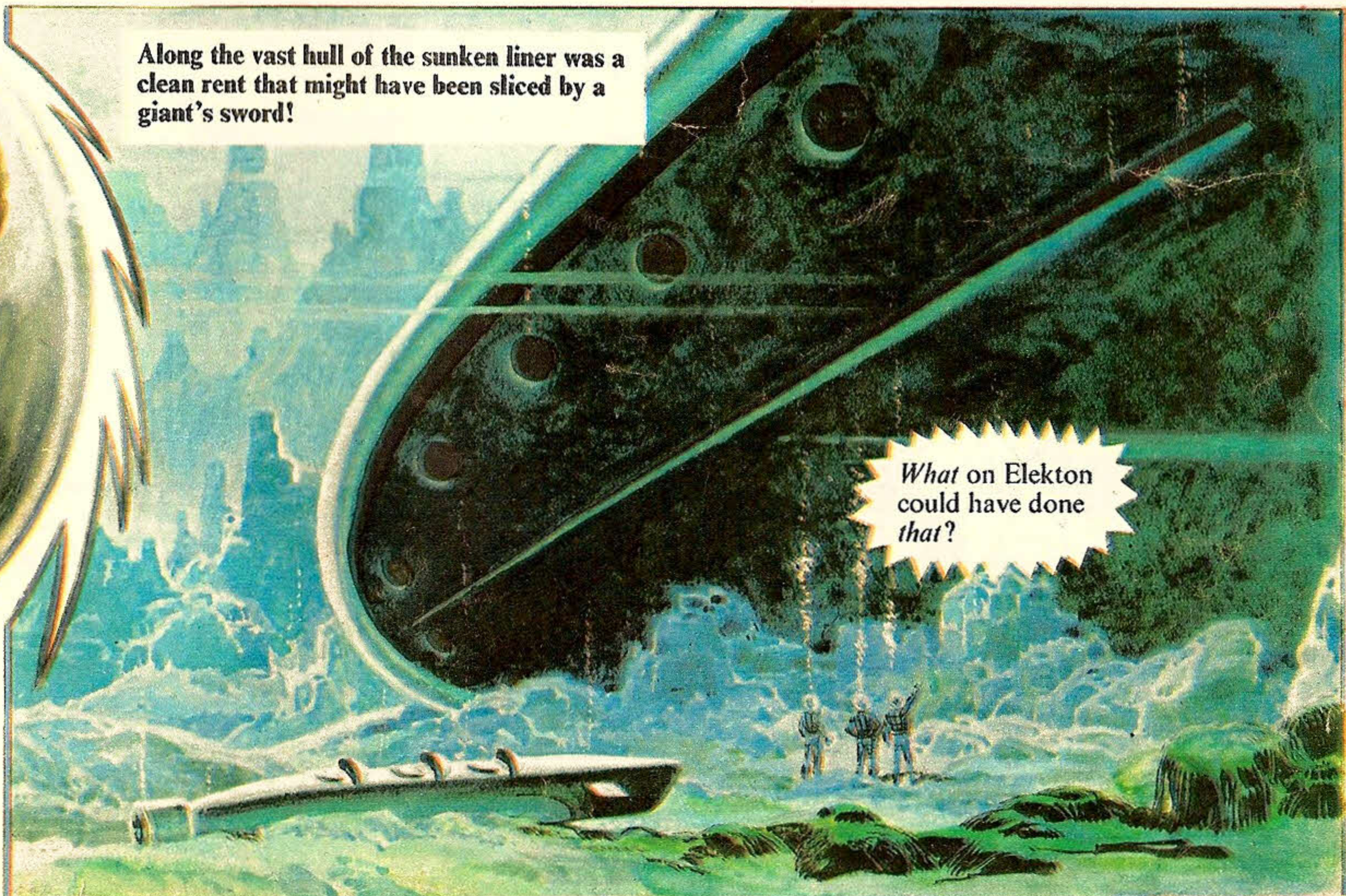


And then . . .

Along the vast hull of the sunken liner was a clean rent that might have been sliced by a giant's sword!



By all the stars!—LOOK!



What on Elekton could have done that?

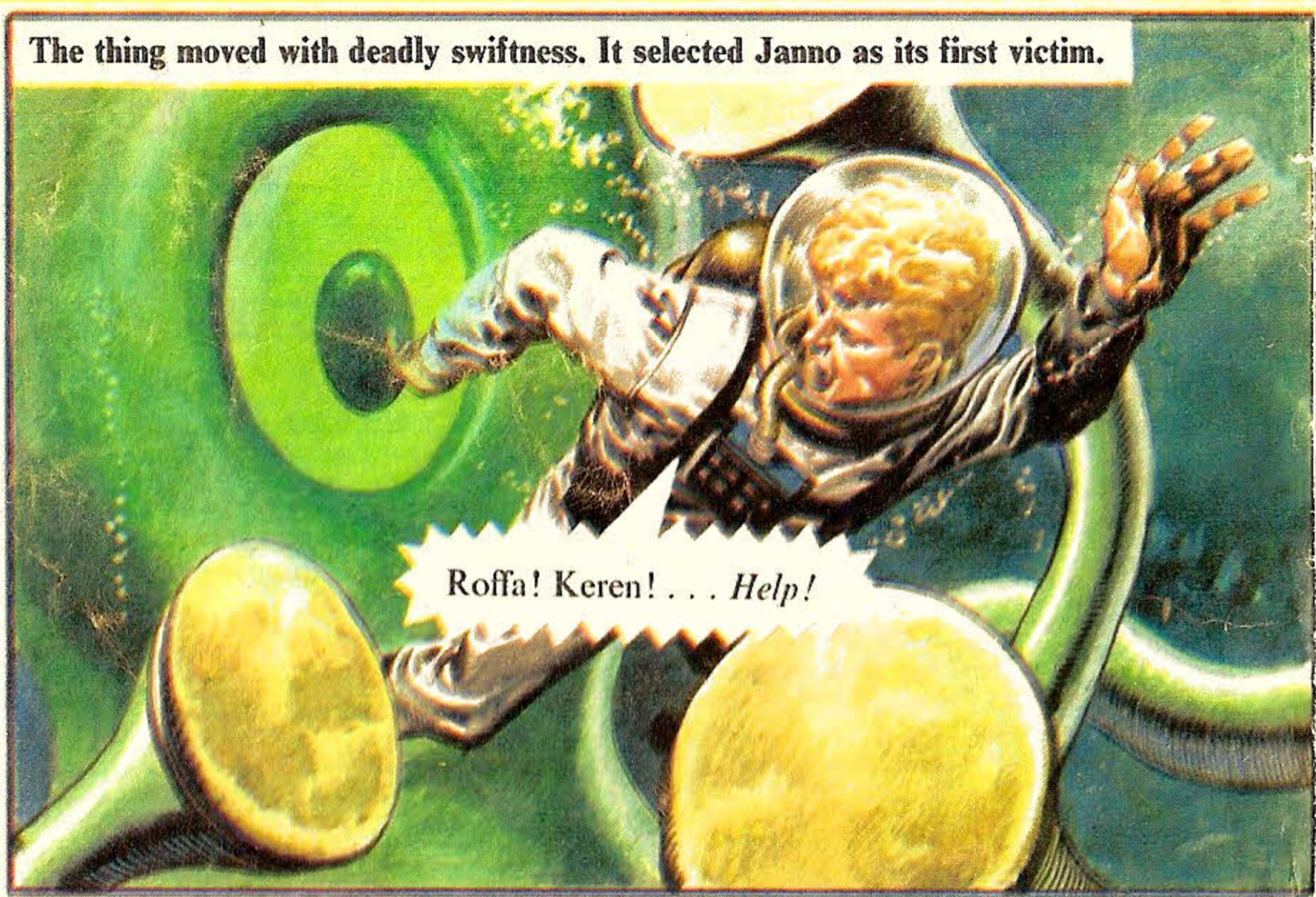
# THE TRIGAN EMPIRE

Janno and his comrades have dived to the bed of Tibor ocean to investigate the sunken wreck of the "Daveli," the largest and newest passenger liner on the planet Elekton.

And then—they saw—It!

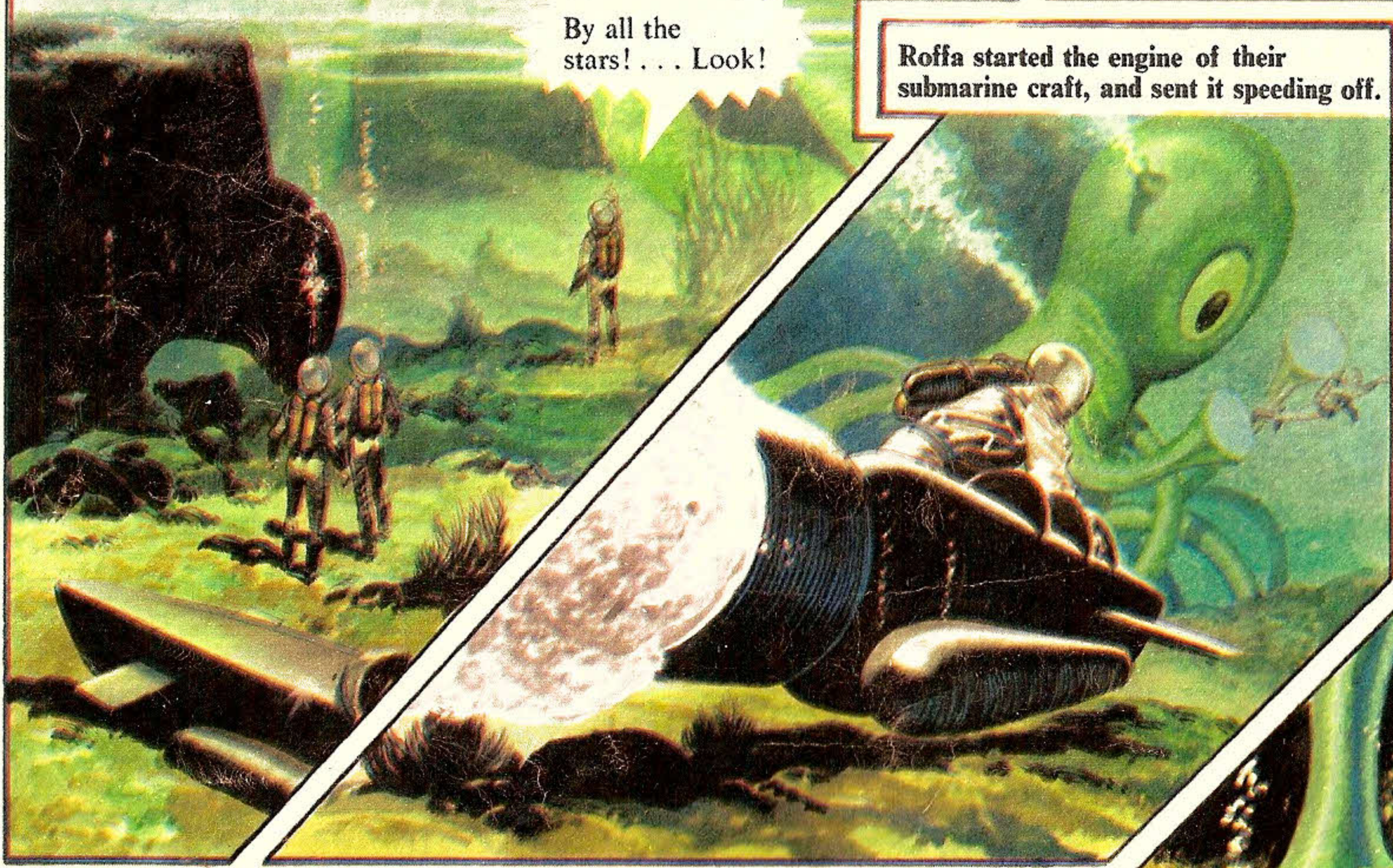


The thing moved with deadly swiftness. It selected Janno as its first victim.

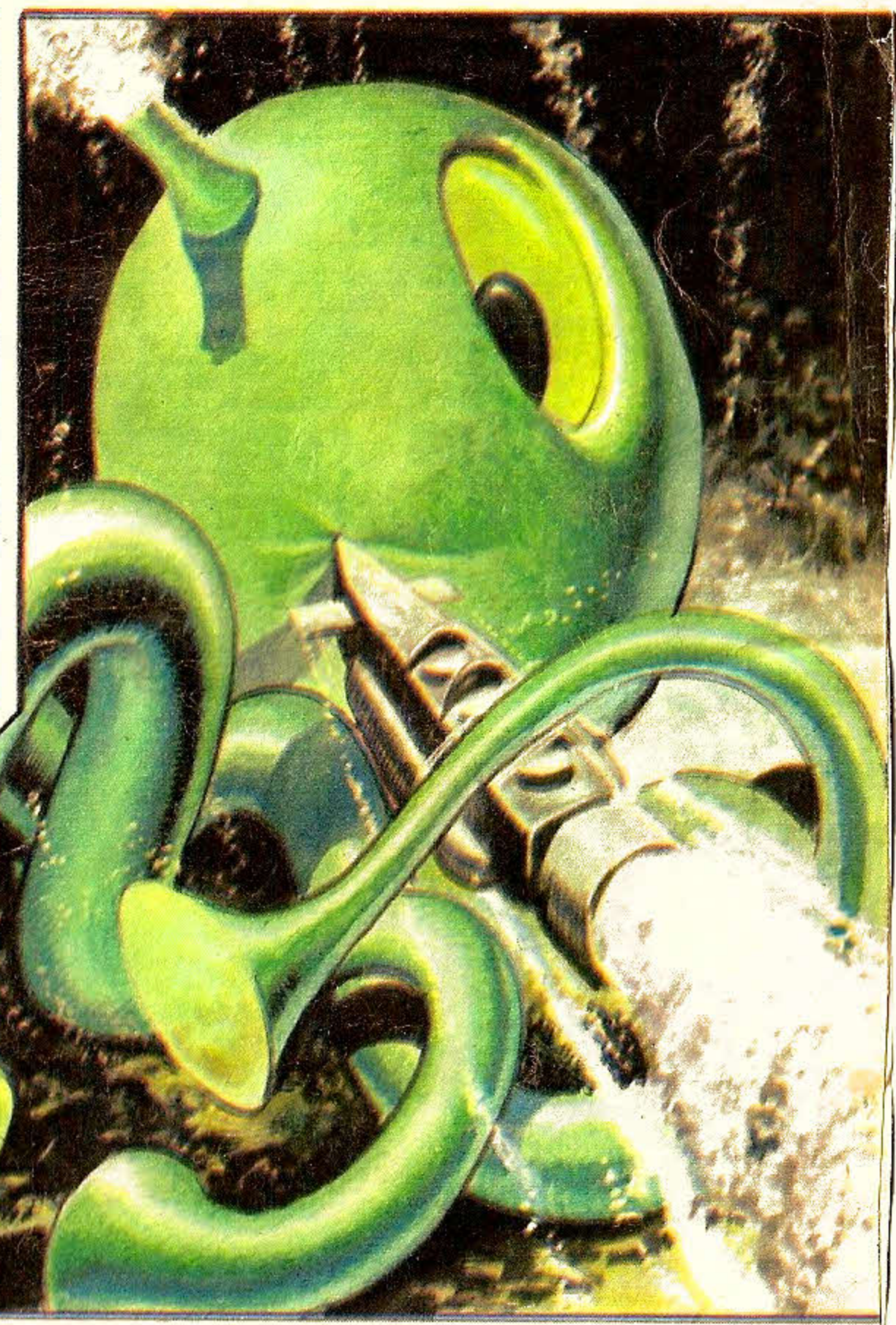


Roffa! Keren! . . . Help!

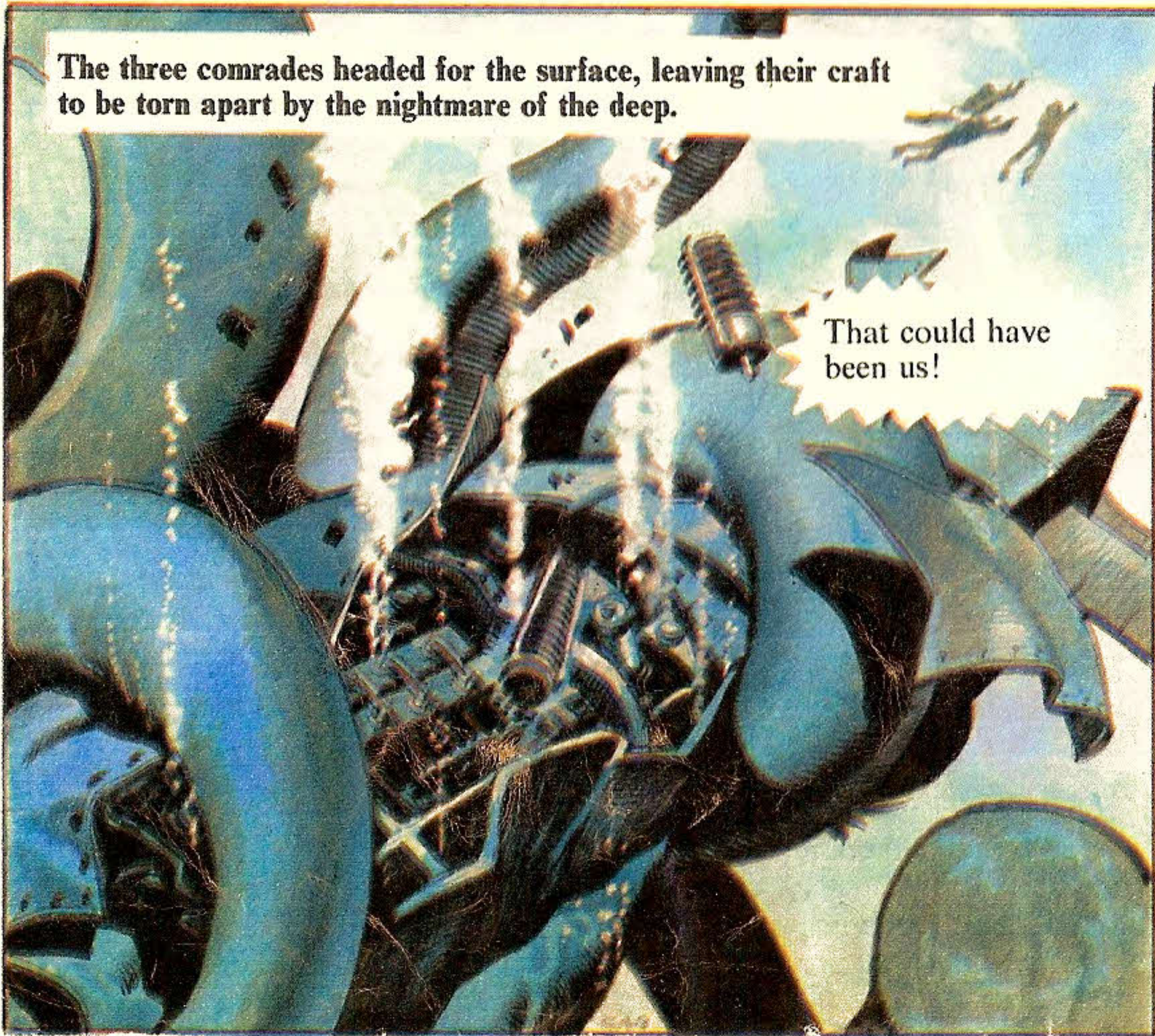
By all the stars! . . . Look!



Roffa started the engine of their submarine craft, and sent it speeding off.



The three comrades headed for the surface, leaving their craft to be torn apart by the nightmare of the deep.



That could have been us!

They were soon being helped aboard the diving ship.



Did you find what you were seeking?

Yes! we know *why* the "Daveli" sank, but *how* it could have happened is another matter!

That evening, the comrades reported to the Emperor.

Trigo turned round to Peric.

A hole scored along the underside of the ship's hull, you say?

What could have done such a thing, Peric?

Yes, uncle! From stem to stern—not a rent that could have been made by a projecting rock, but one that looked as if it had been cut by some giant mechanical tool!

No natural phenomenon, that's for sure, and I know of no mechanical device that could have caused such damage to a speeding ship!

So what can we do?

Nothing! We can only wait!

You mean? . . .

The damage was obviously the deliberate work of some malevolent intelligence. If it happened once—*It could happen again!*

The Trigan bay Bridge was one of the supreme engineering feats of the planet. It stretched as far as the eye could see, from headland to headland.

Three days after the sinking of the "Daveli"—*It happened!*

Aaaaaaaagh!—  
The bridge is collapsing!

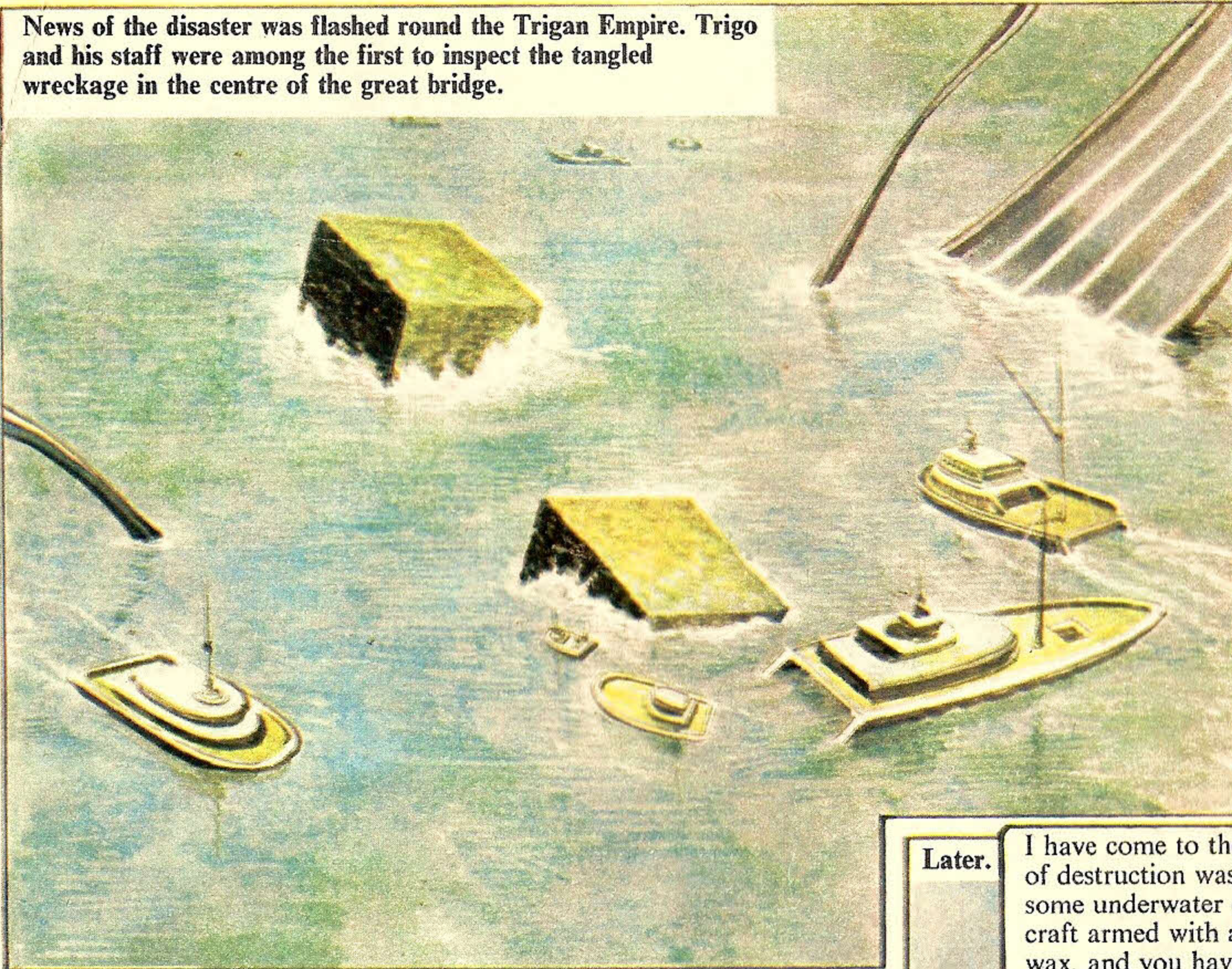
The *second* disaster!

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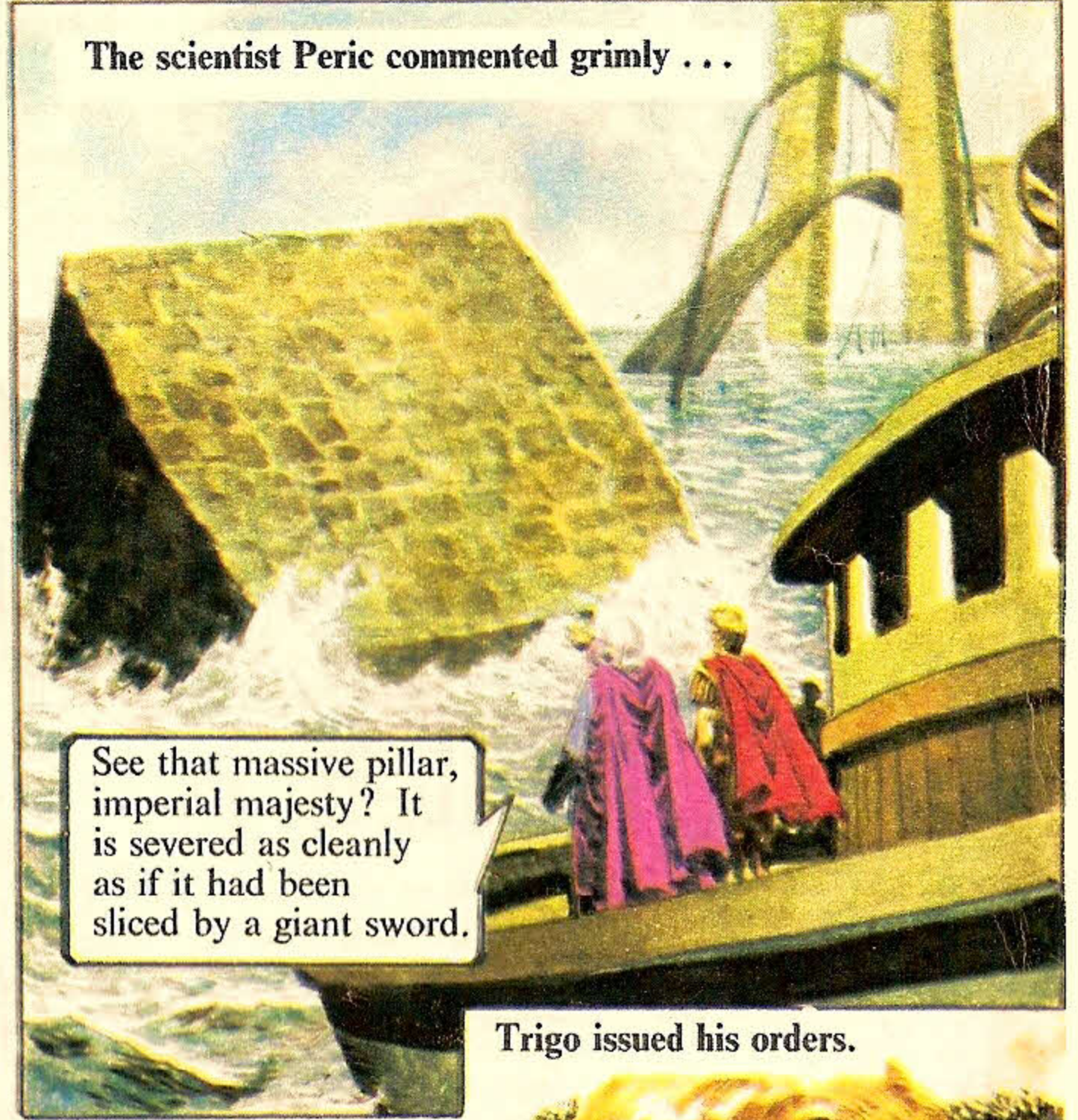
# THE TRIGAN EMPIRE

Following the mysterious sinking of the great liner "Daveli," the mammoth Trigan bridge had collapsed!

News of the disaster was flashed round the Trigan Empire. Trigo and his staff were among the first to inspect the tangled wreckage in the centre of the great bridge.



The scientist Peric commented grimly . . .

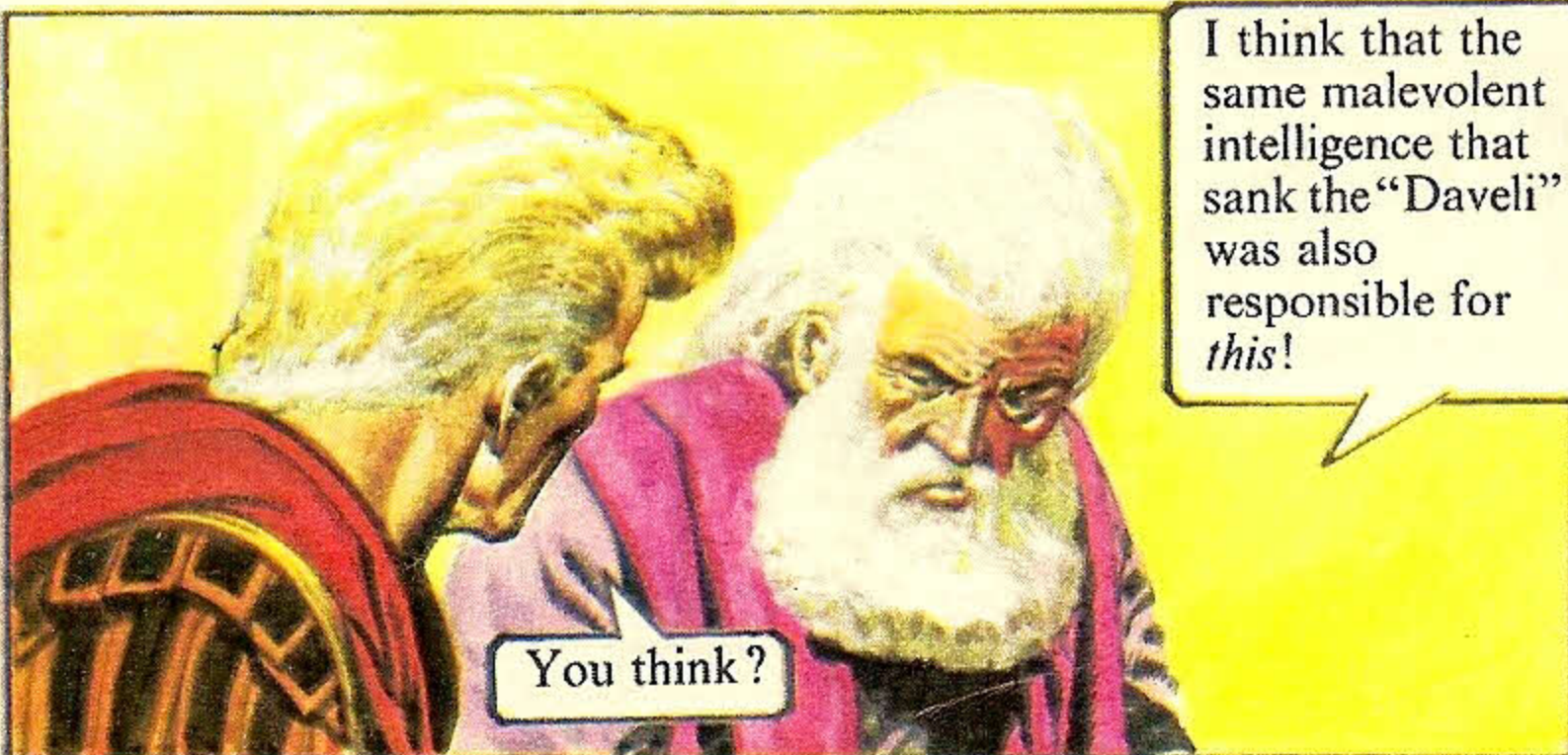


See that massive pillar, imperial majesty? It is severed as cleanly as if it had been sliced by a giant sword.

Trigo issued his orders.

Later.

I have come to the conclusion that the instrument of destruction was sea-borne—probably carried in some underwater craft. Find an alien underwater craft armed with a weapon that can cut metal like wax, and you have the answer.

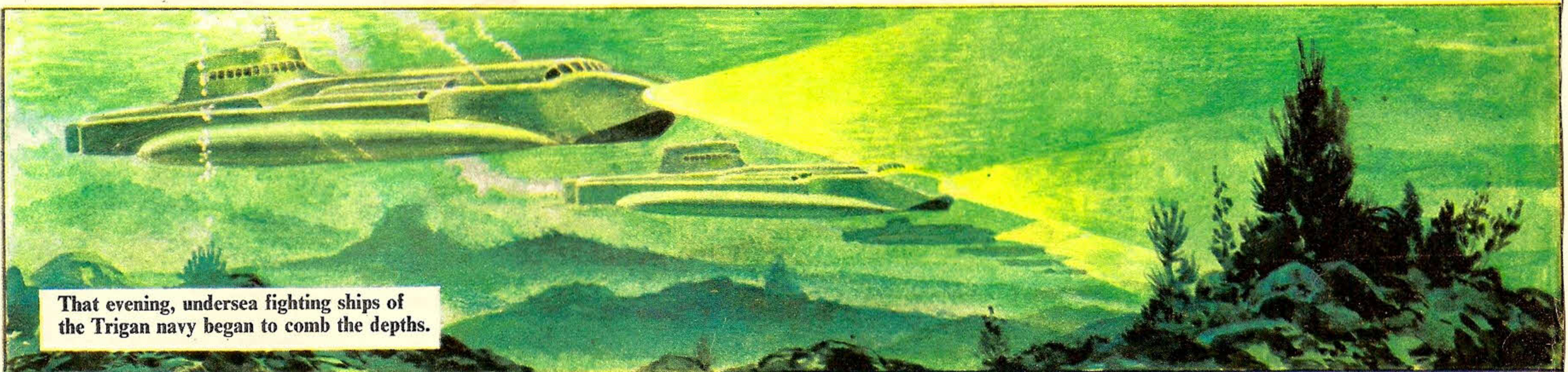


I think that the same malevolent intelligence that sank the "Daveli" was also responsible for this!

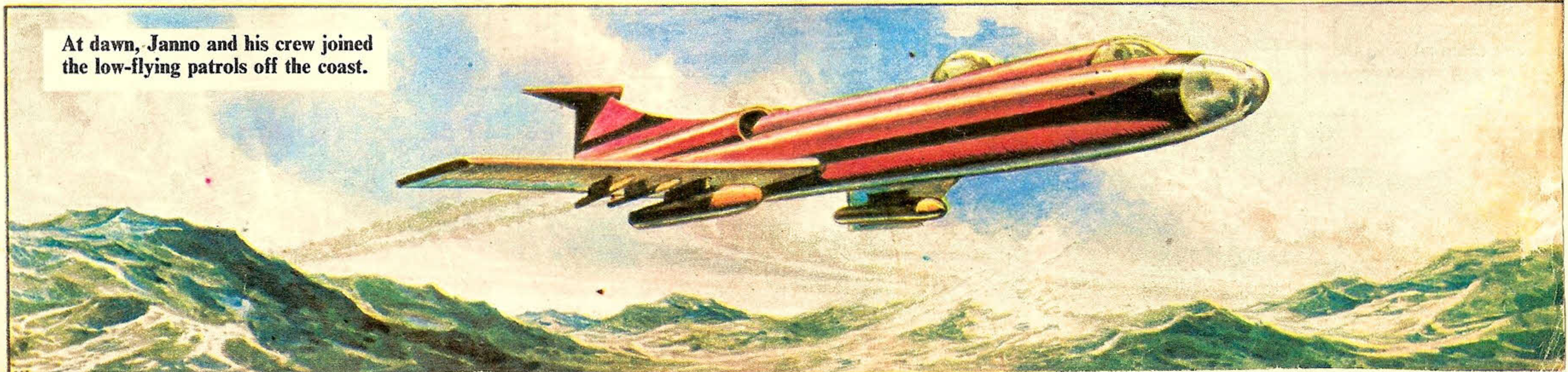
You think?



From now until further notice, constant air and underwater patrols will be carried out around the Trigan coastline. Alert the fleets. No man rests till this menace is found—and destroyed.



That evening, undersea fighting ships of the Trigan navy began to comb the depths.



At dawn, Janno and his crew joined the low-flying patrols off the coast.

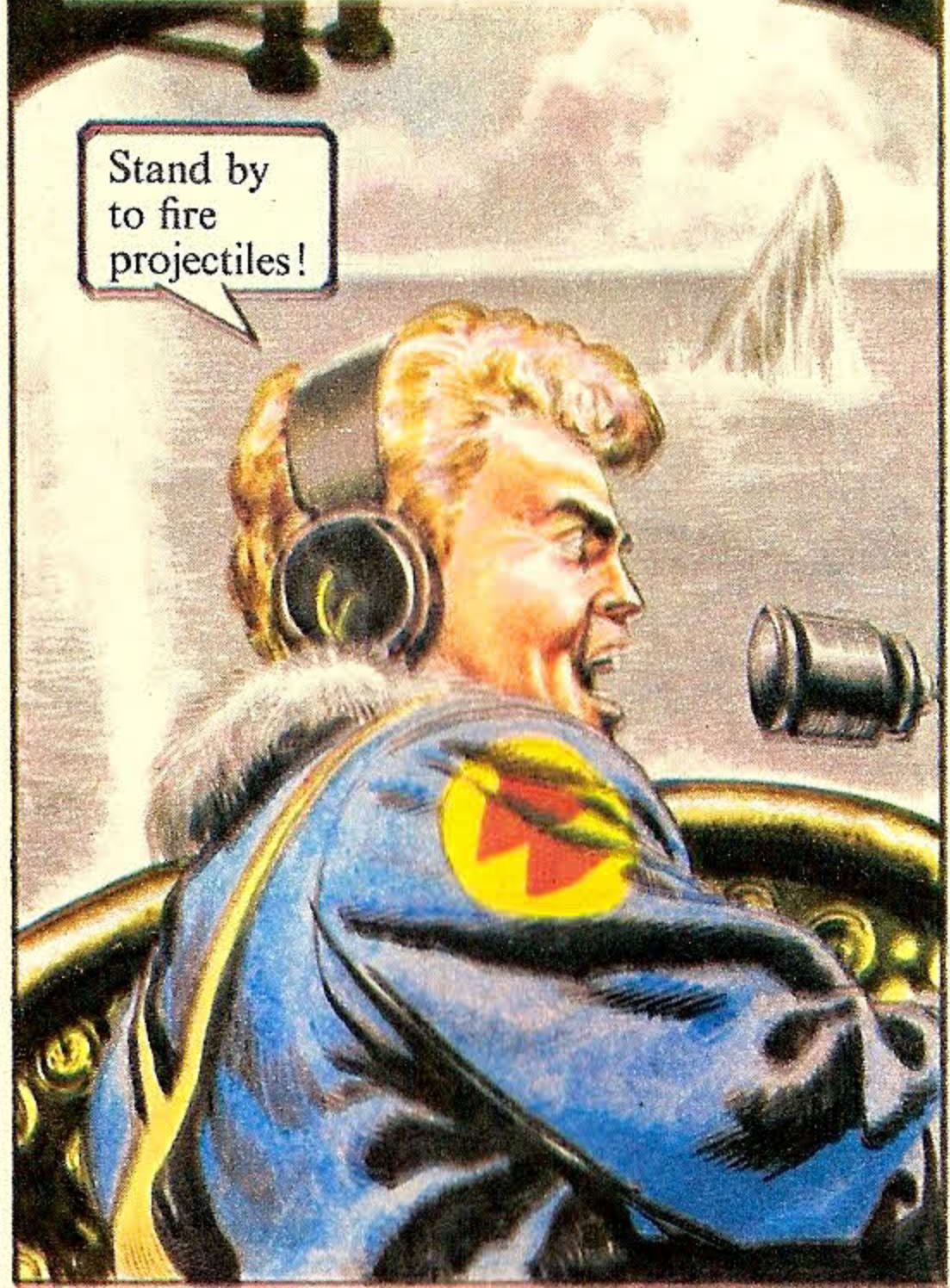
Suddenly, Roffa gave the alarm.

An object has just risen out of the sea—dead ahead.



Janno sighted the shape in the water.

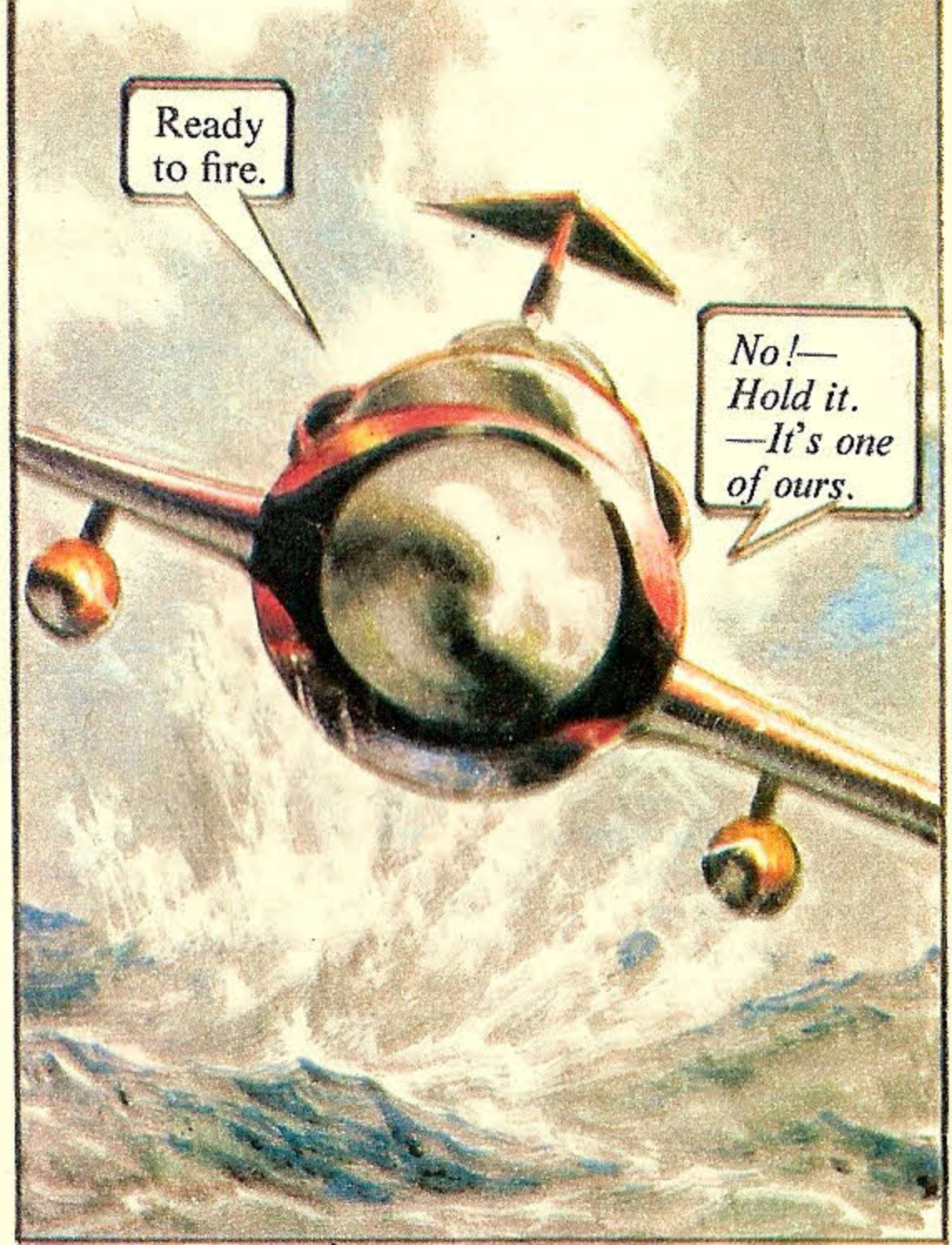
Stand by to fire projectiles!



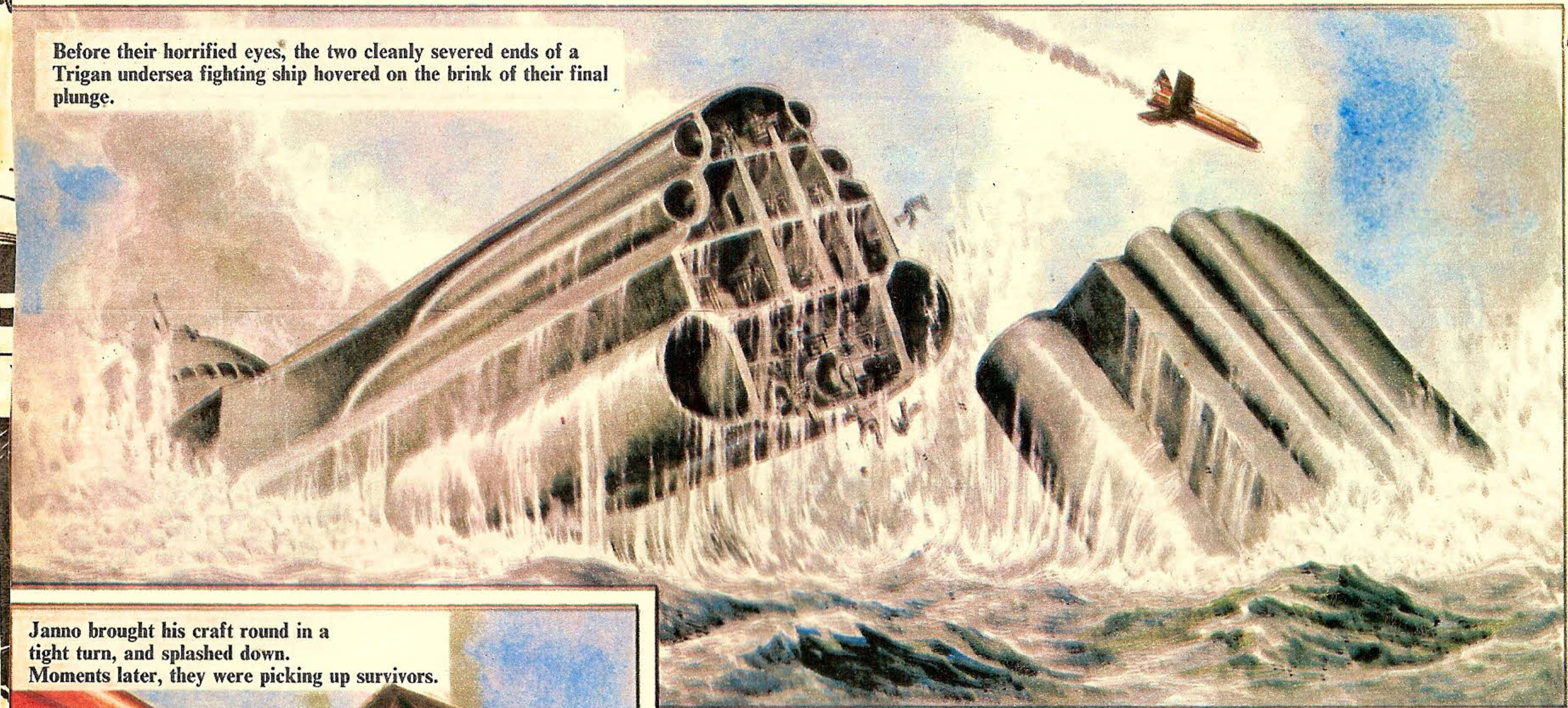
And then . . .

Ready to fire.

No!—Hold it.—It's one of ours.

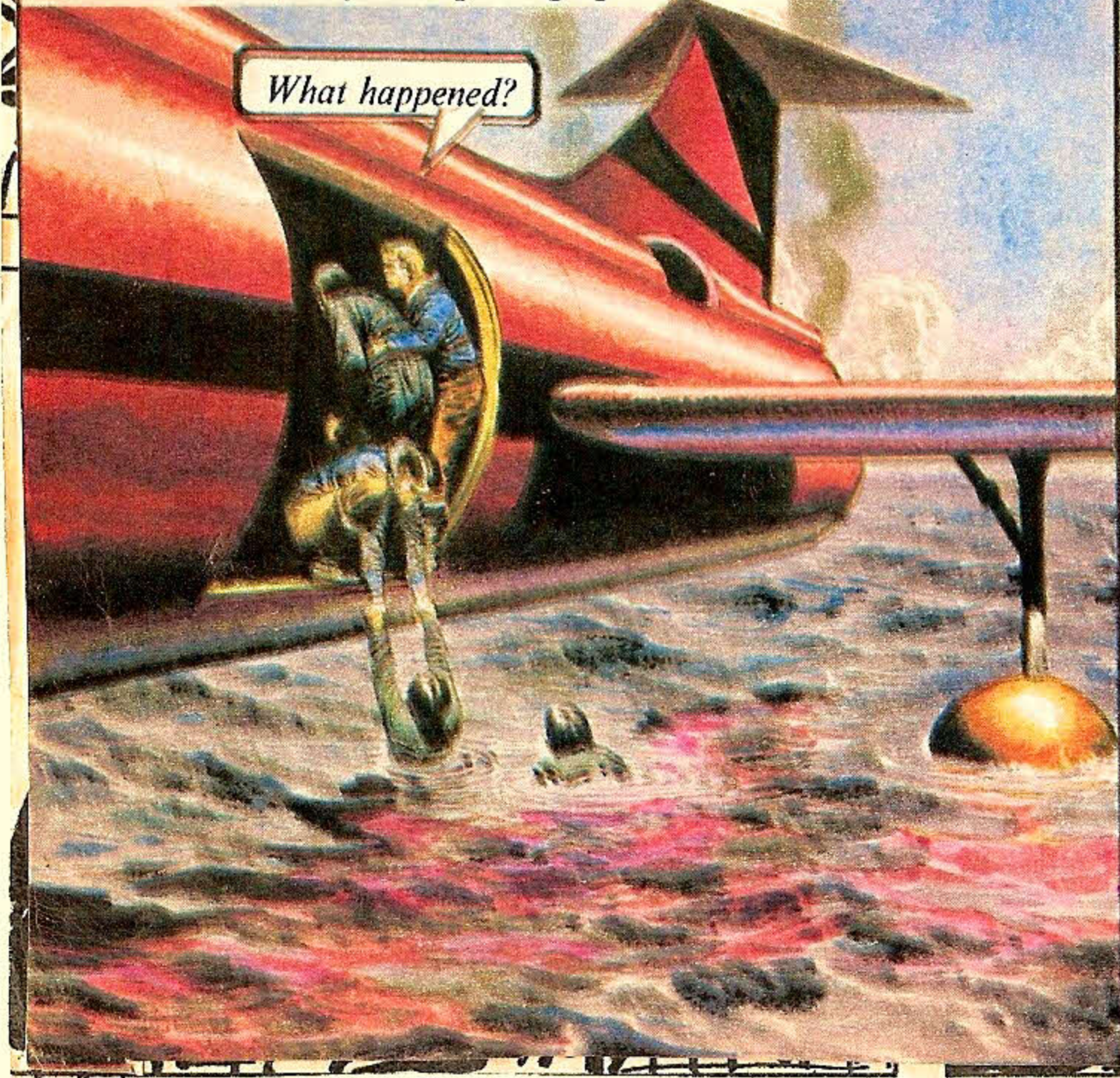


Before their horrified eyes, the two cleanly severed ends of a Trigan undersea fighting ship hovered on the brink of their final plunge.

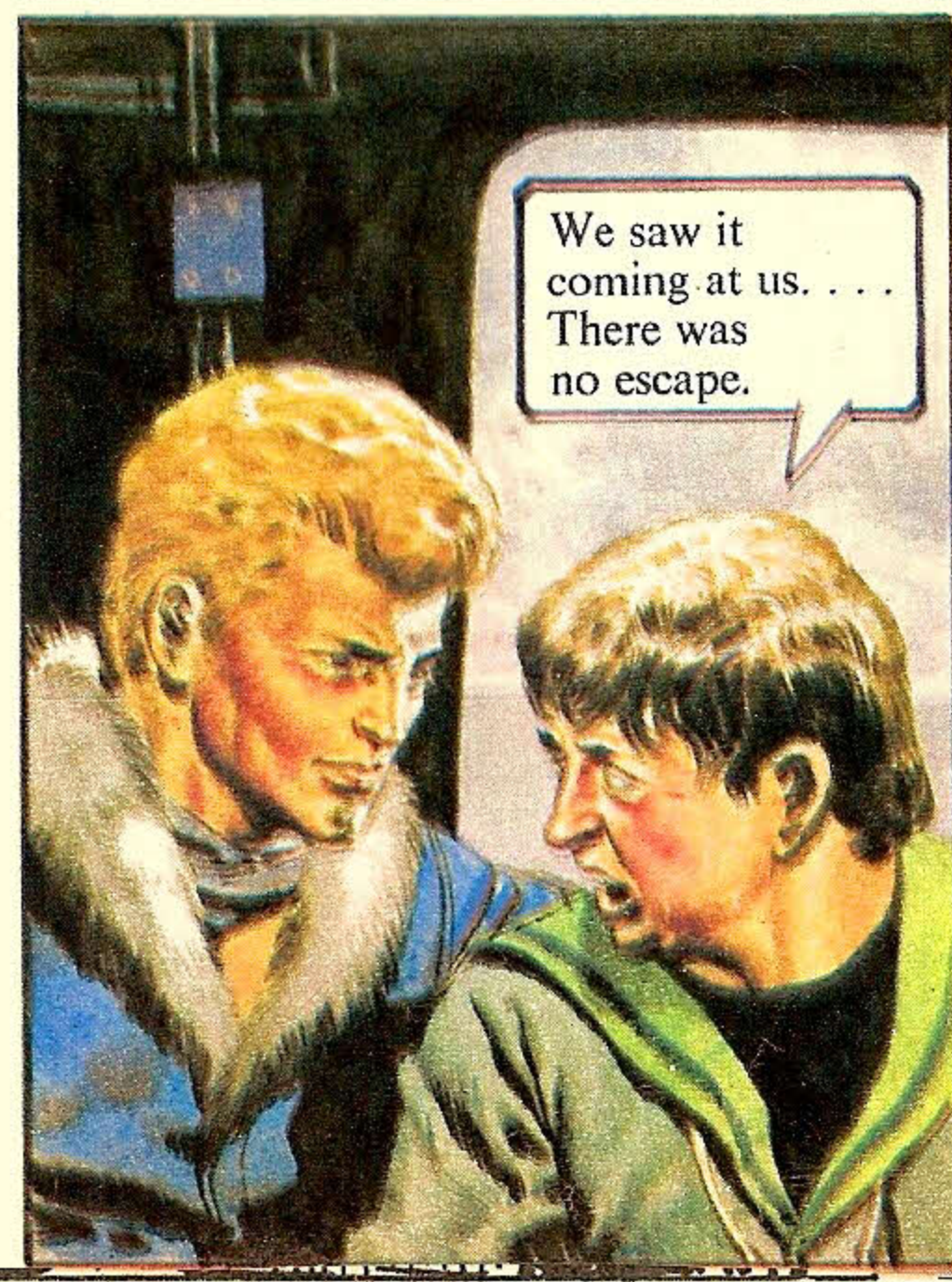


Janno brought his craft round in a tight turn, and splashed down. Moments later, they were picking up survivors.

What happened?



We saw it coming at us. . . . There was no escape.



And then . . .

By all the stars.

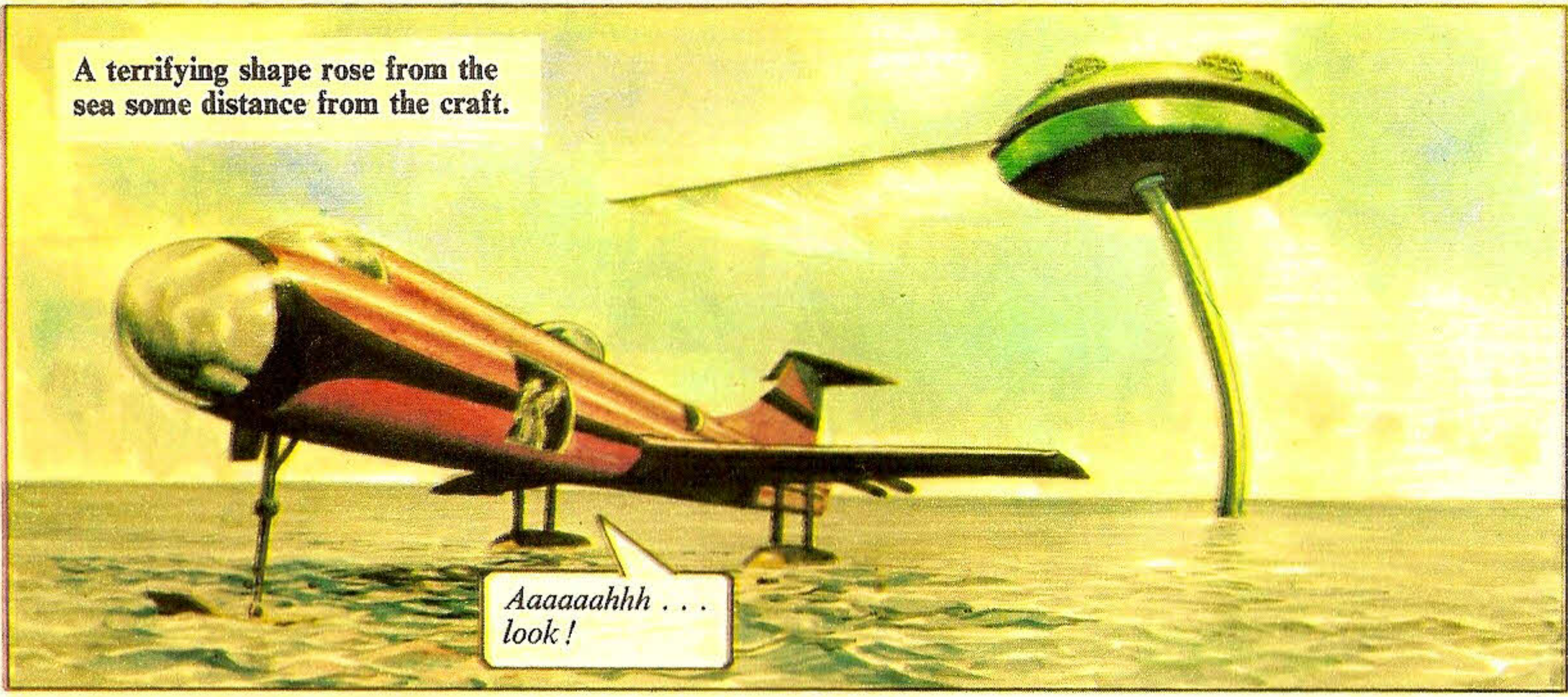
Aaaaaagh! There it is again.





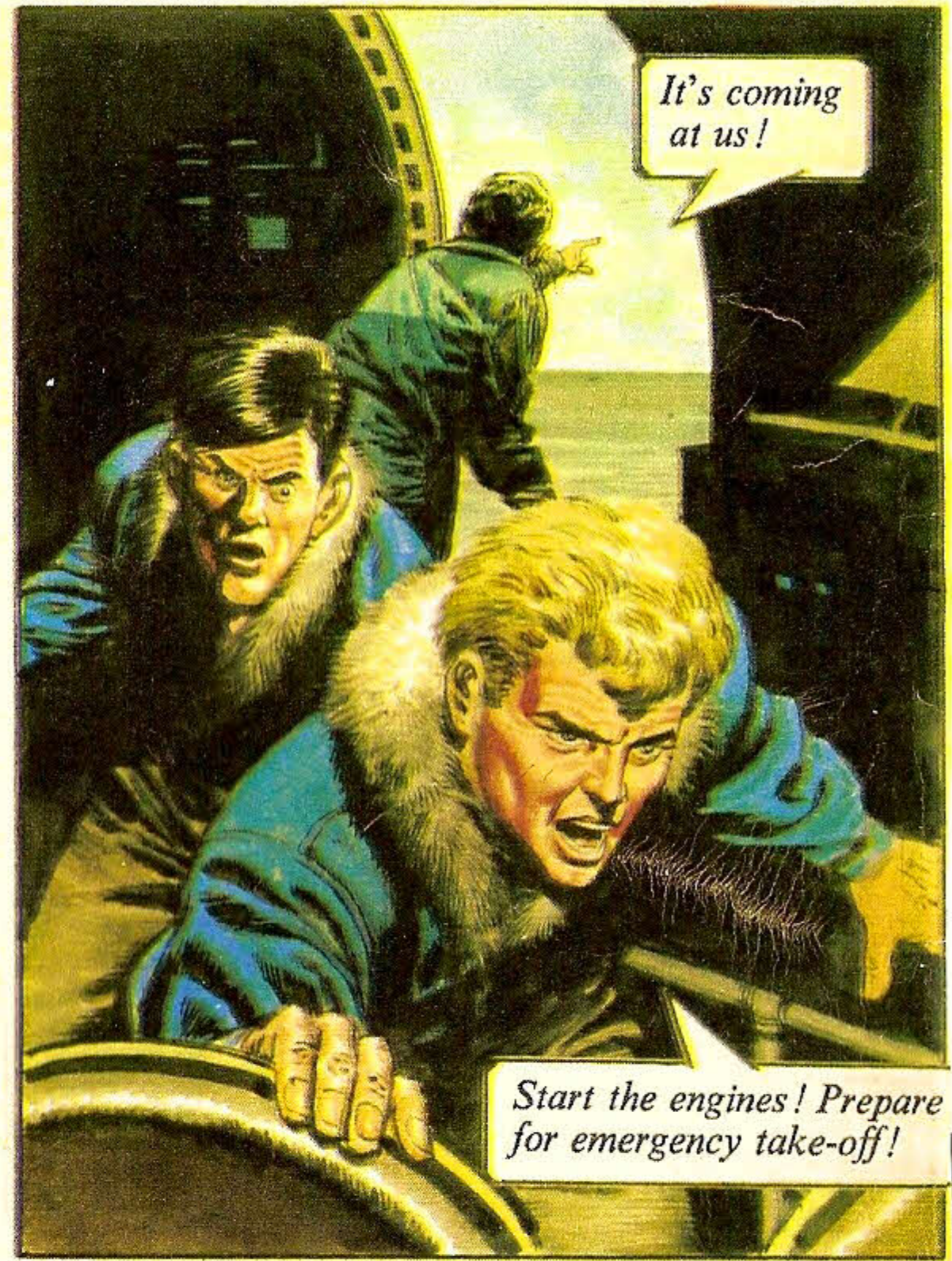
# THE TRIGAN EMPIRE

Following the destruction of the Trigan Bay Bridge, it is feared that some malevolent intelligence is at work on the planet Elekton. While rescuing survivors from a wreck, Janno sees something strange . . .



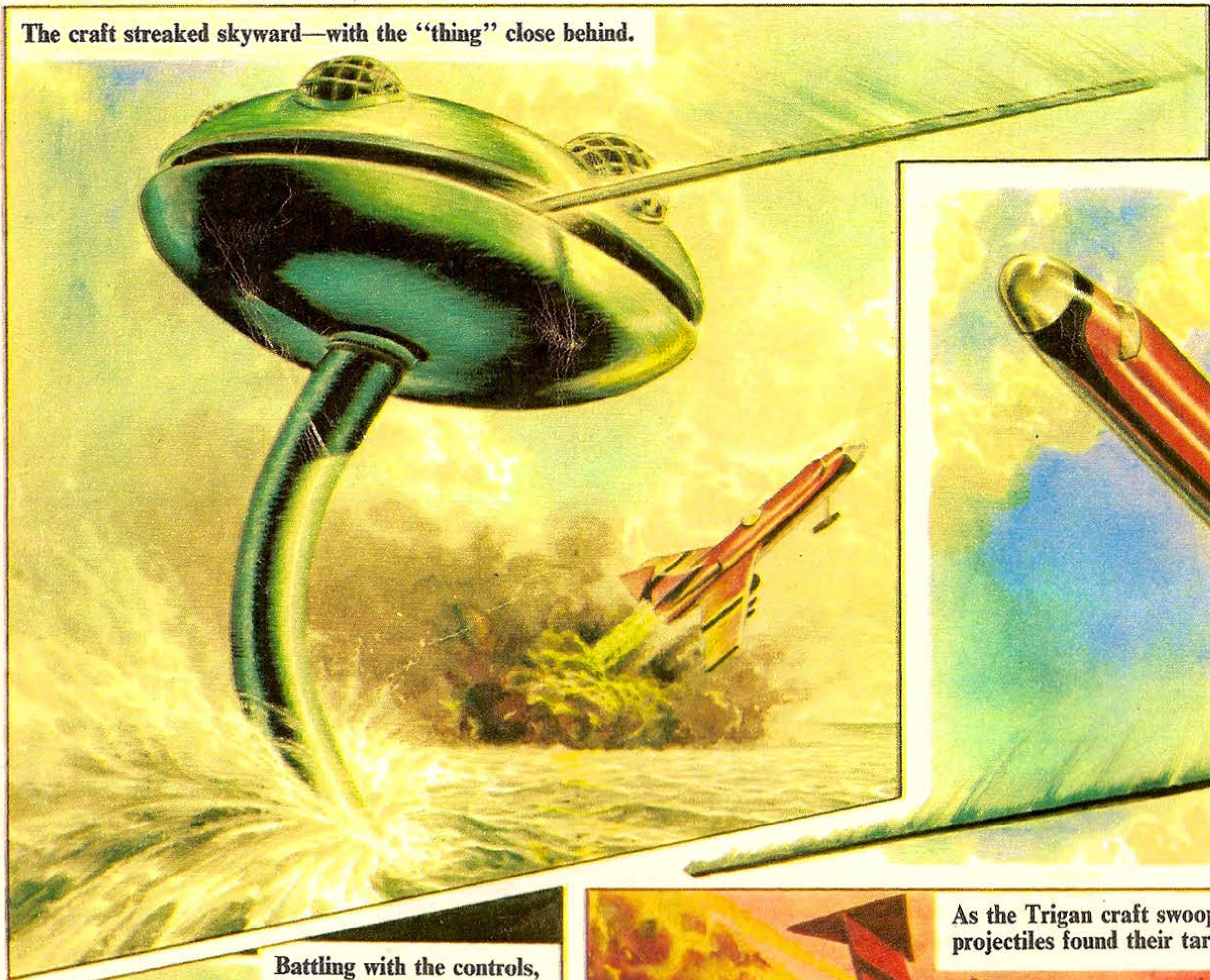
A terrifying shape rose from the sea some distance from the craft.

Aaaaaahhh . . . look!

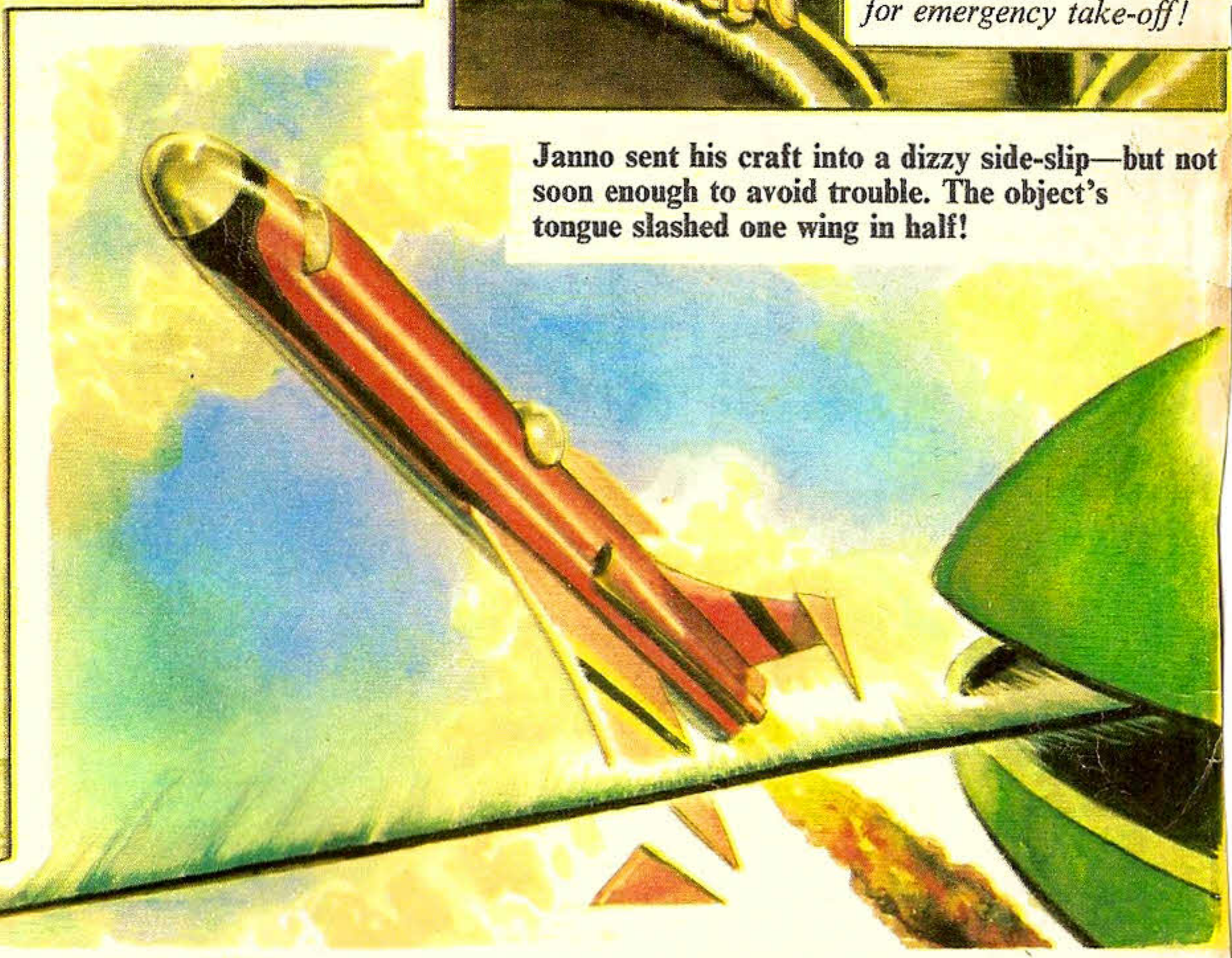


It's coming at us!

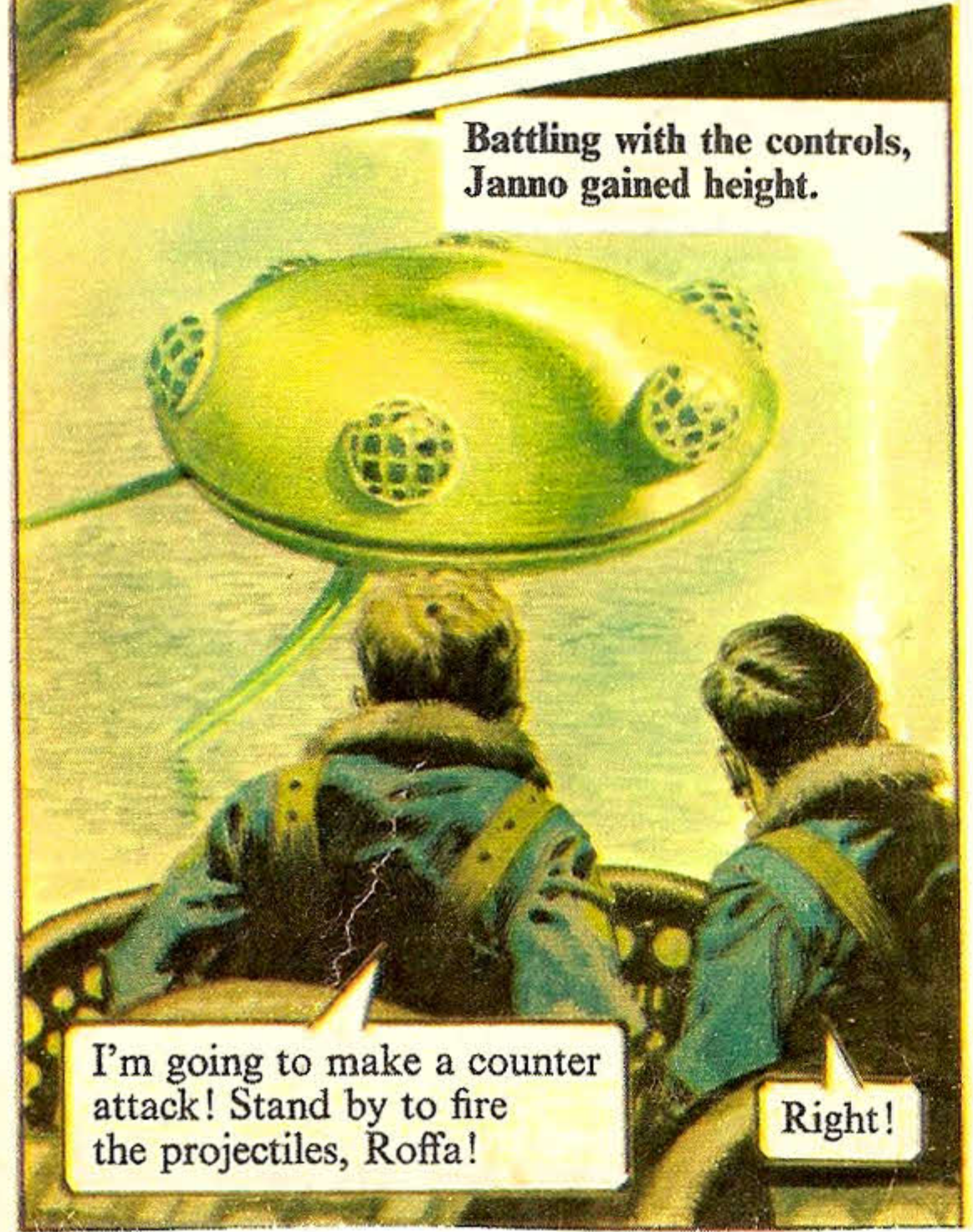
Start the engines! Prepare for emergency take-off!



The craft streaked skyward—with the "thing" close behind.



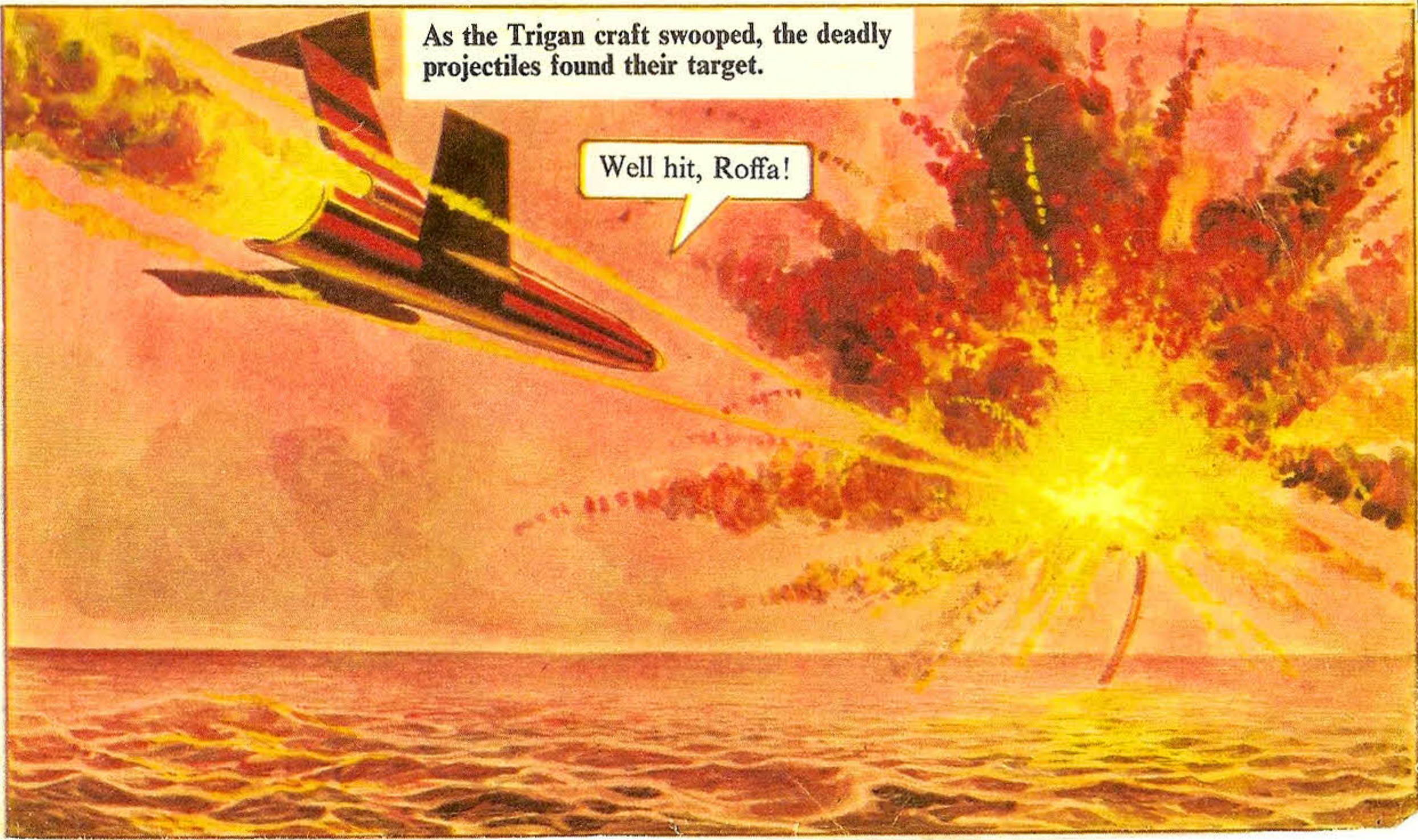
Janno sent his craft into a dizzy side-slip—but not soon enough to avoid trouble. The object's tongue slashed one wing in half!



Battling with the controls, Janno gained height.

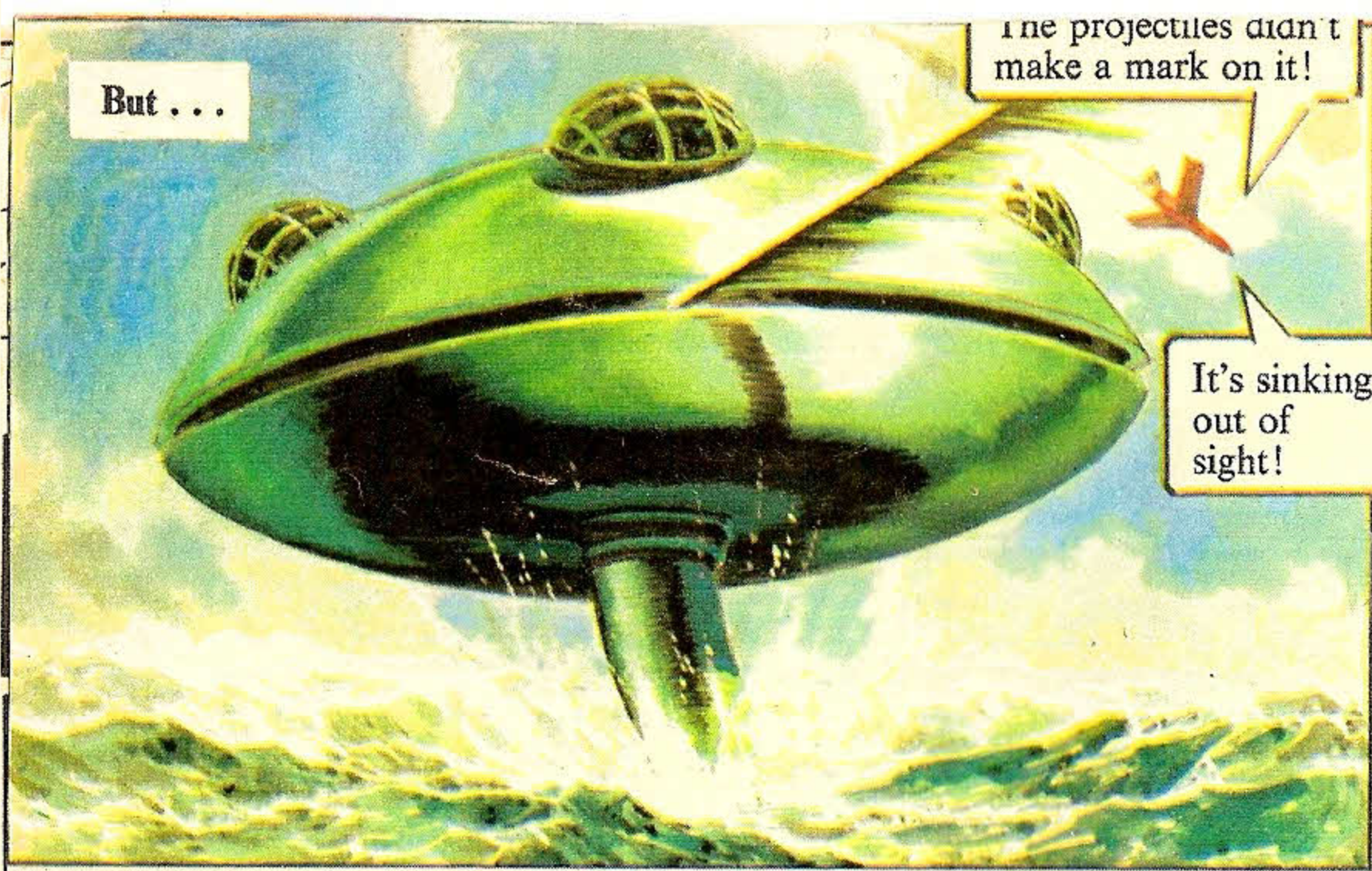
I'm going to make a counter attack! Stand by to fire the projectiles, Roffa!

Right!



As the Trigan craft swooped, the deadly projectiles found their target.

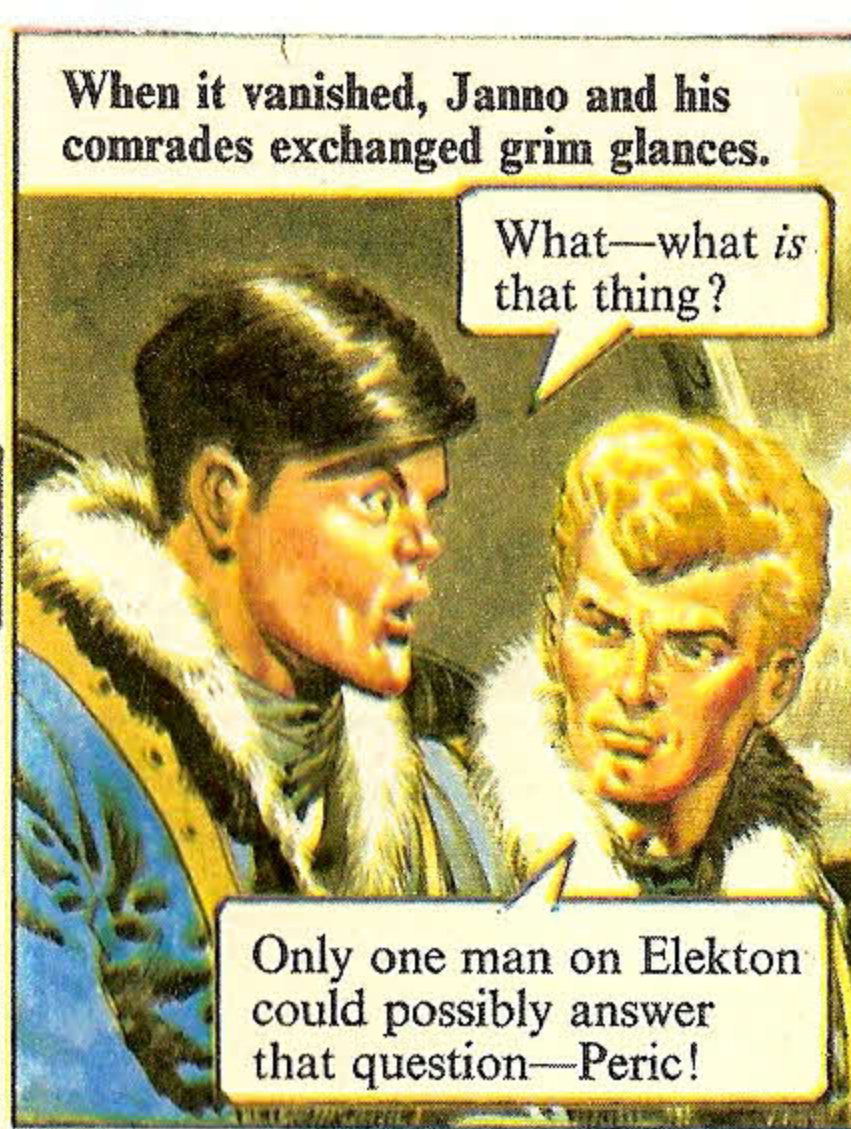
Well hit, Roffa!



But . . .

The projectiles didn't make a mark on it!

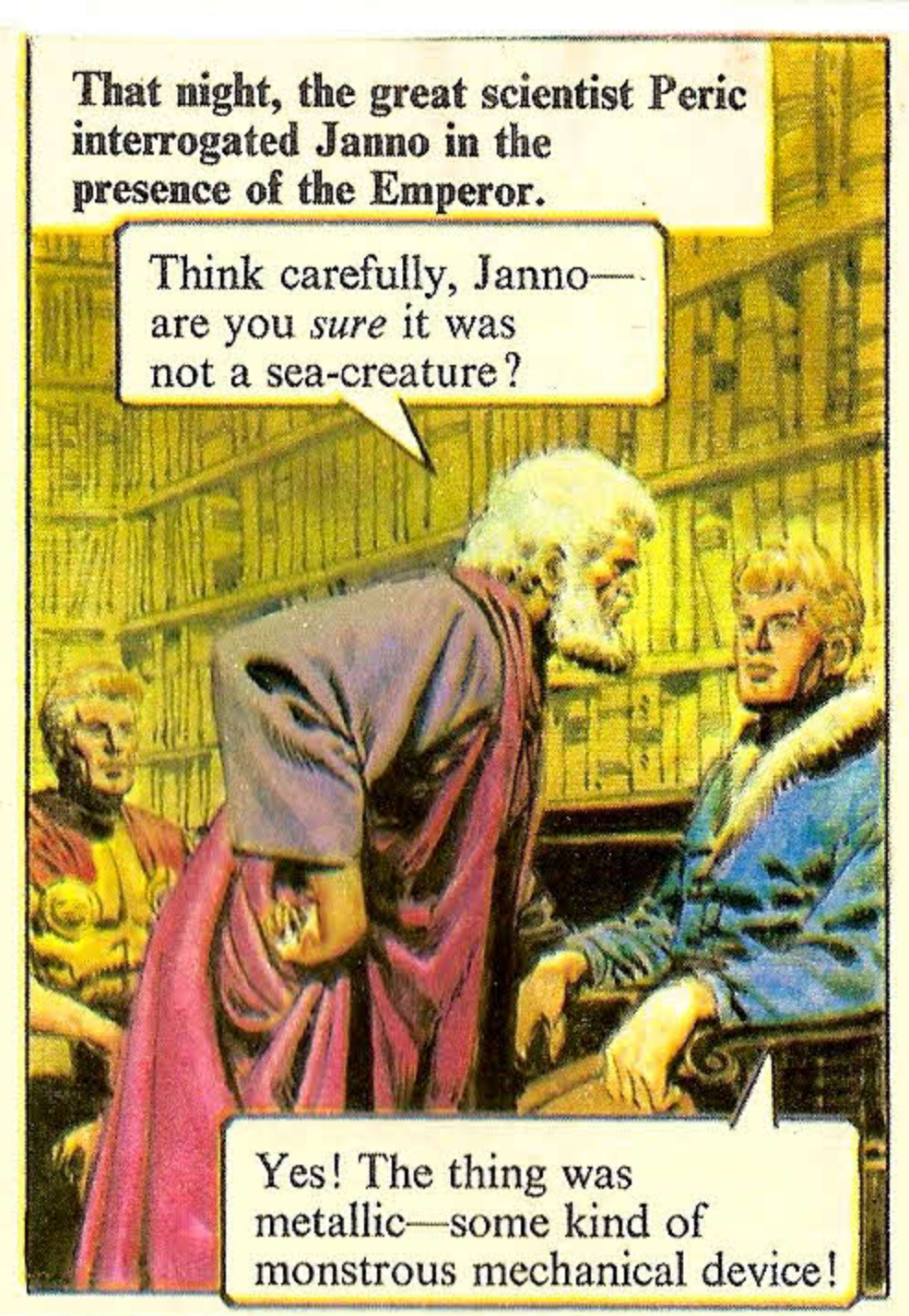
It's sinking out of sight!



When it vanished, Janno and his comrades exchanged grim glances.

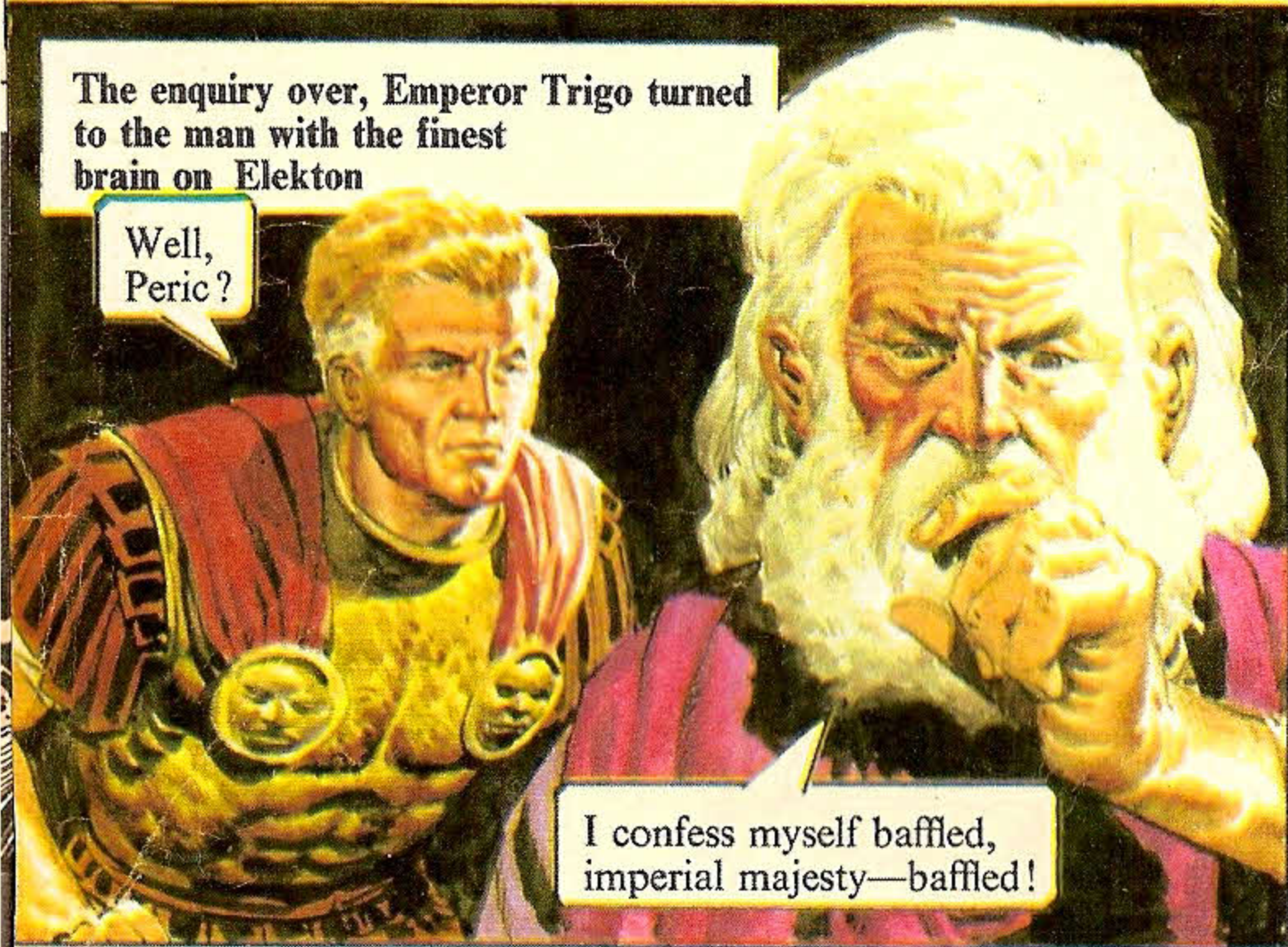
What—what *is* that thing?

Only one man on Elekton could possibly answer that question—Peric!



That night, the great scientist Peric interrogated Janno in the presence of the Emperor.

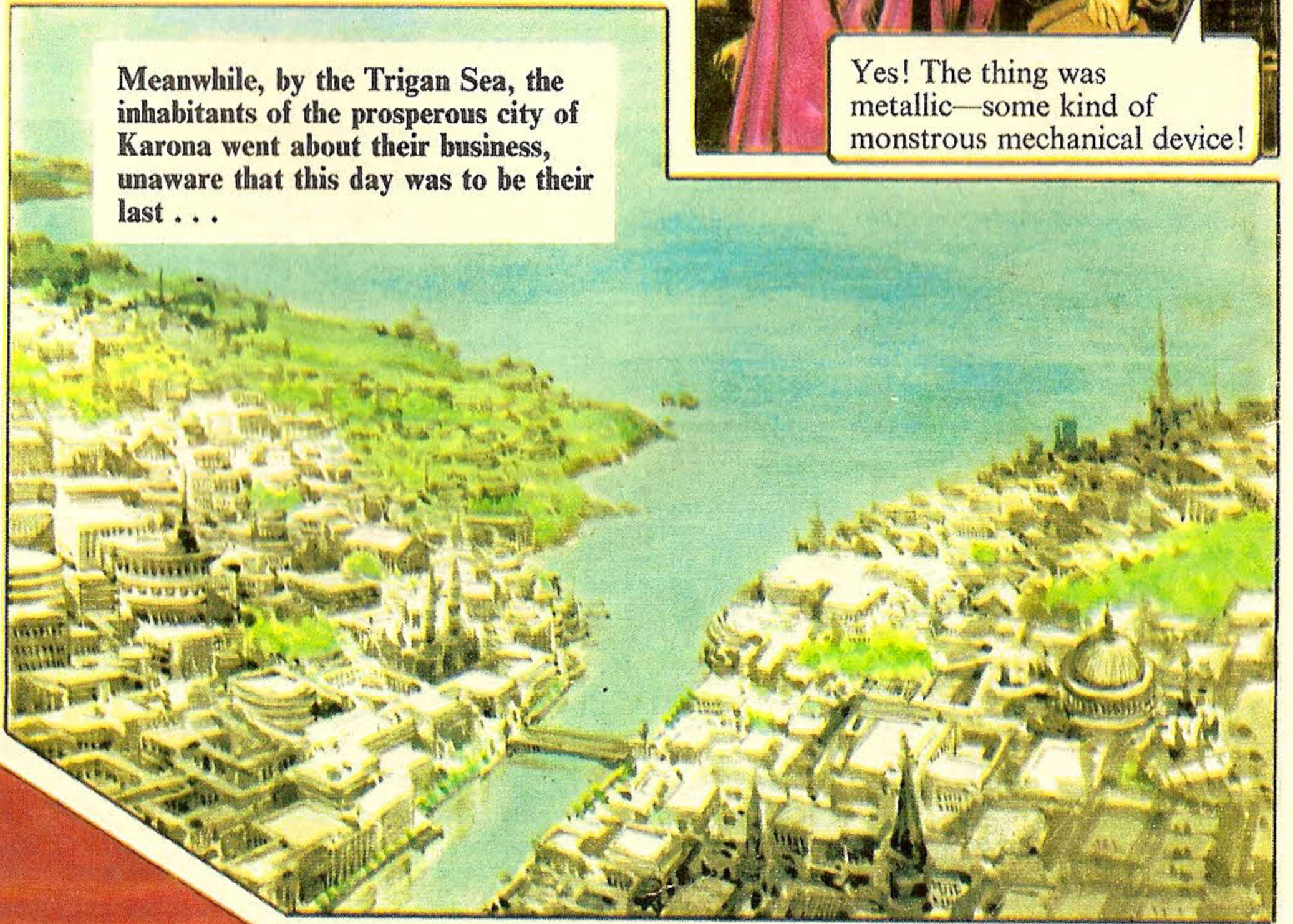
Think carefully, Janno—are you *sure* it was not a sea-creature?



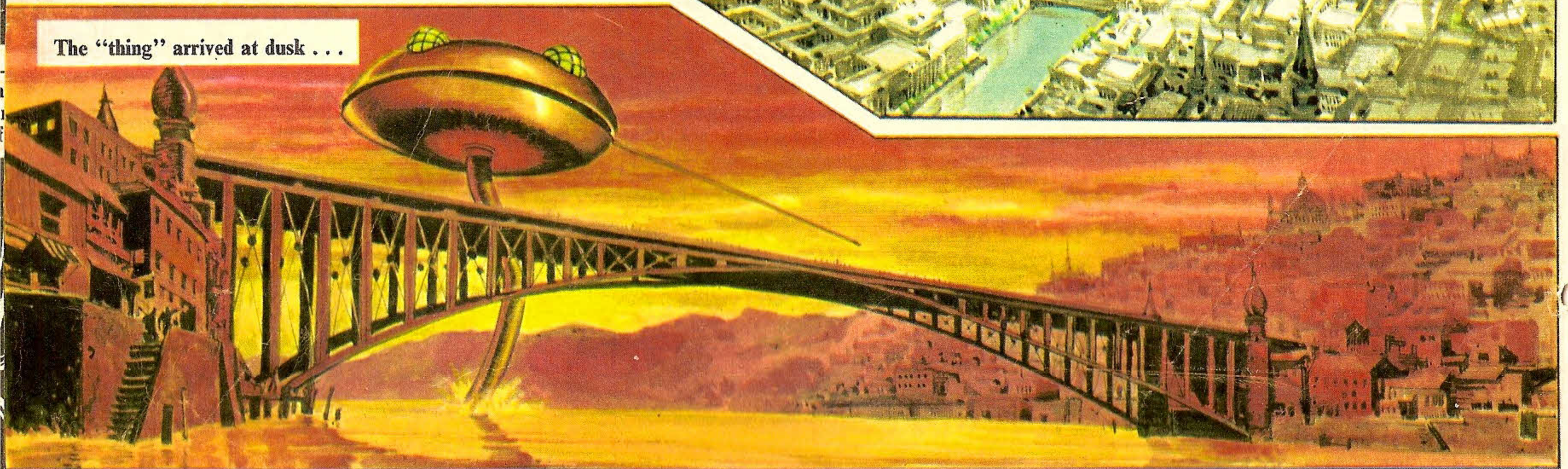
The enquiry over, Emperor Trigo turned to the man with the finest brain on Elekton

Well, Peric?

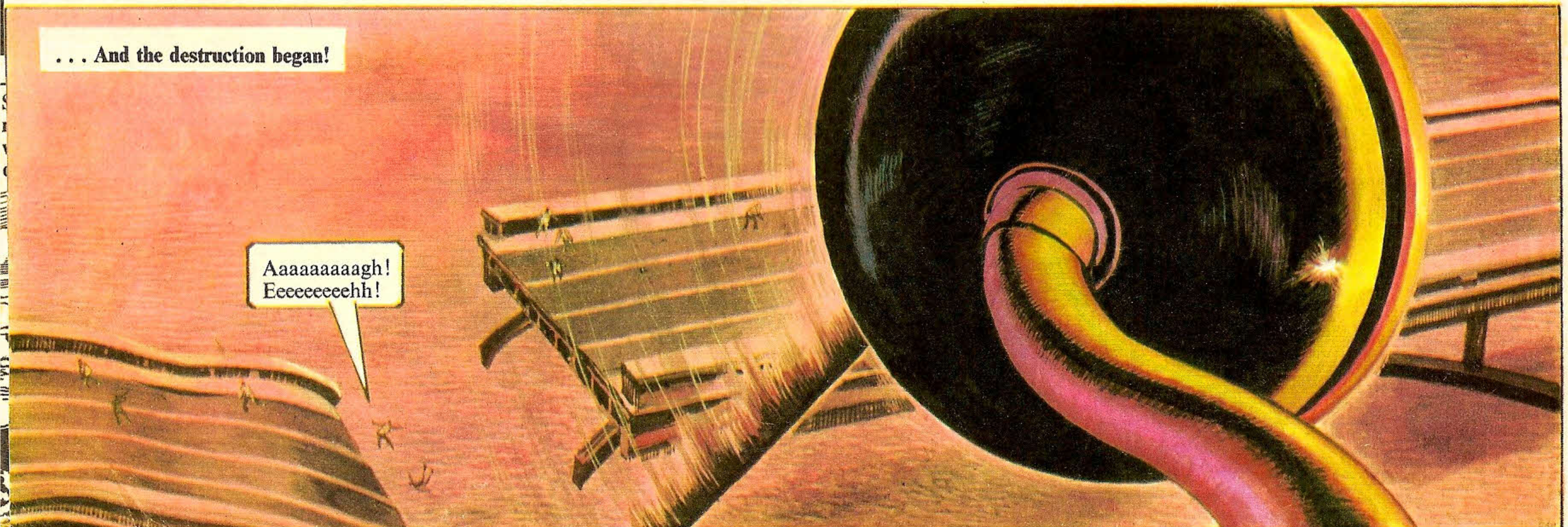
I confess myself baffled, imperial majesty—baffled!



Meanwhile, by the Trigan Sea, the inhabitants of the prosperous city of Karona went about their business, unaware that this day was to be their last . . .



The "thing" arrived at dusk . . .

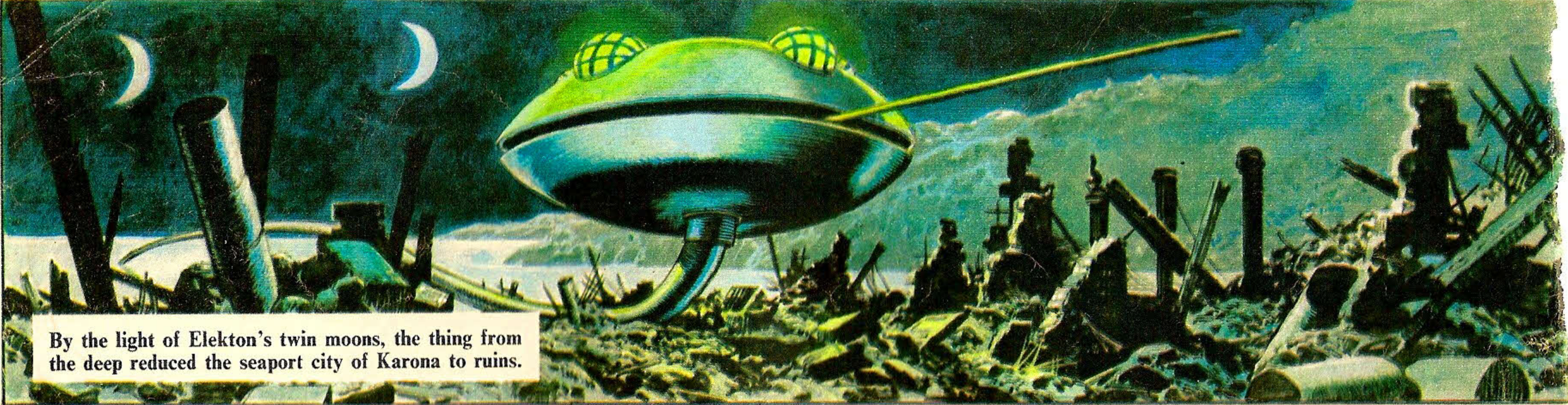


. . . And the destruction began!

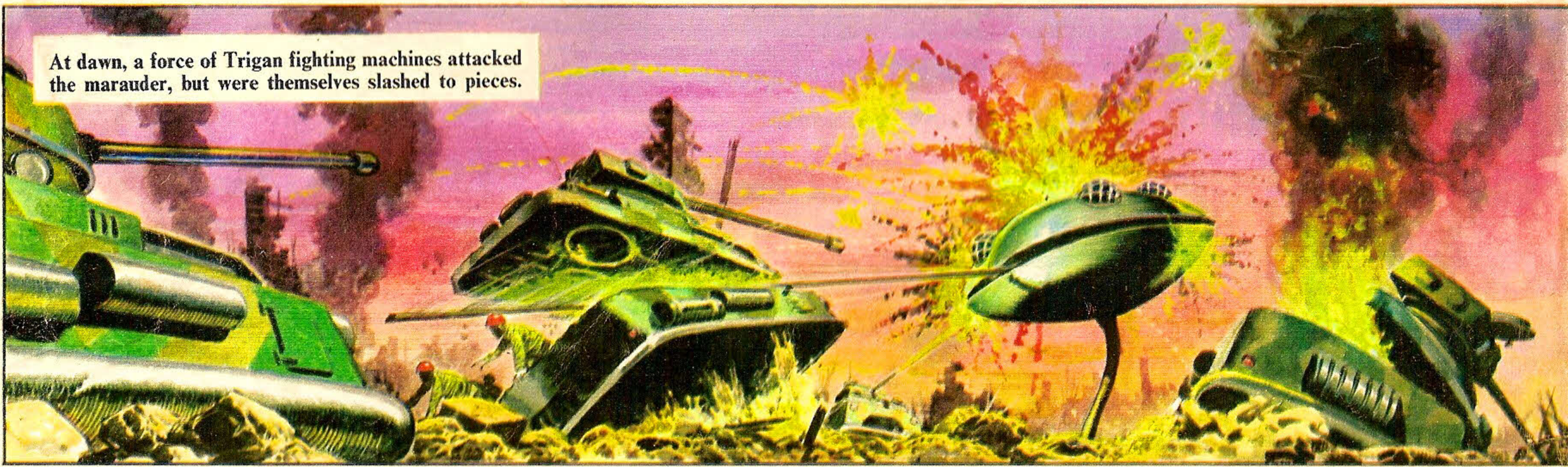
Aaaaaaaagh!  
Eeeeeeechh!

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**THE TRIGAN EMPIRE**

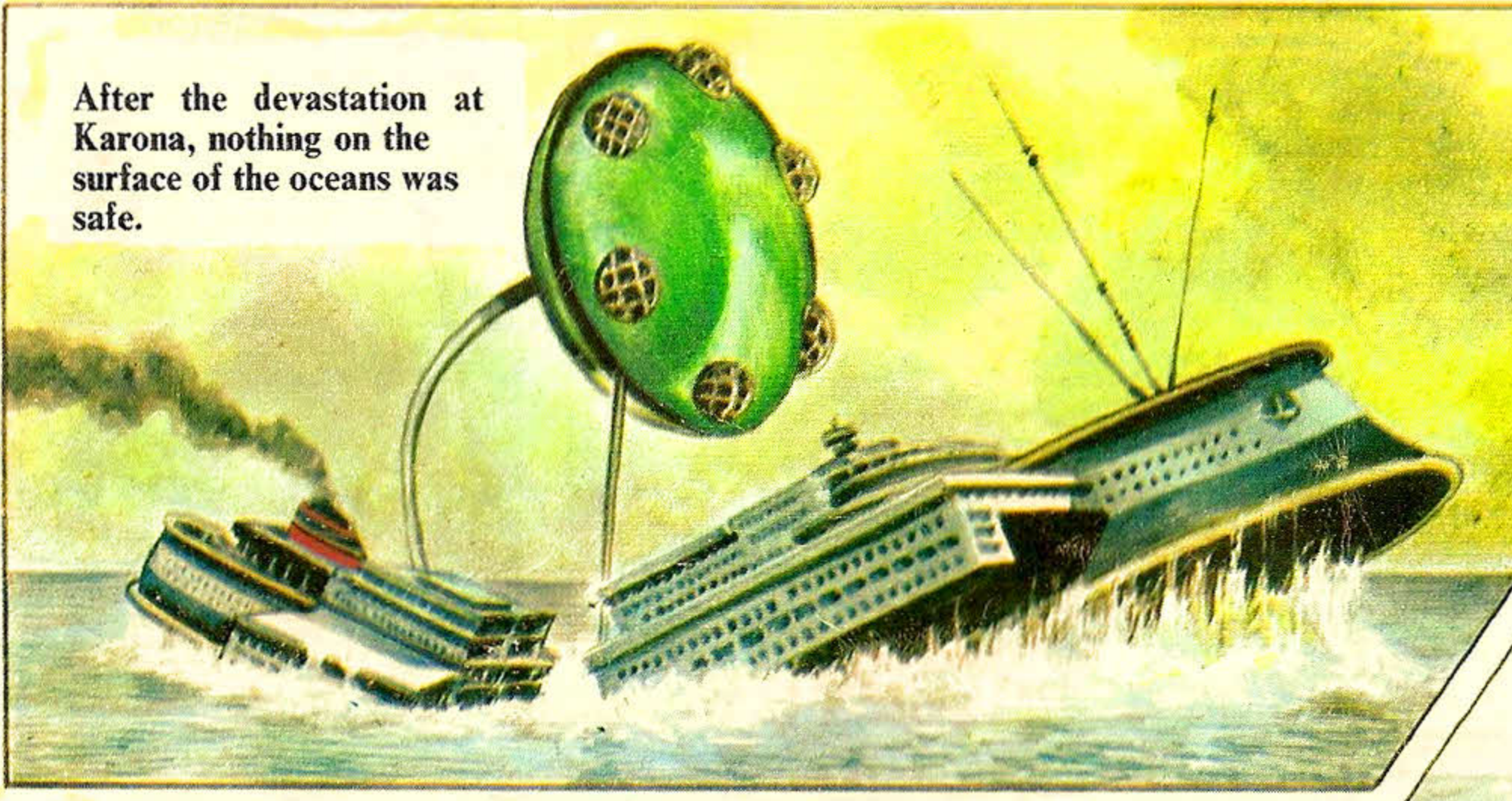
A malevolent intelligence is at work on the planet Elekton. It takes the form of a monstrous mechanical device that inhabits the sea, and is able to destroy at will—slicing through metal like a giant sword.



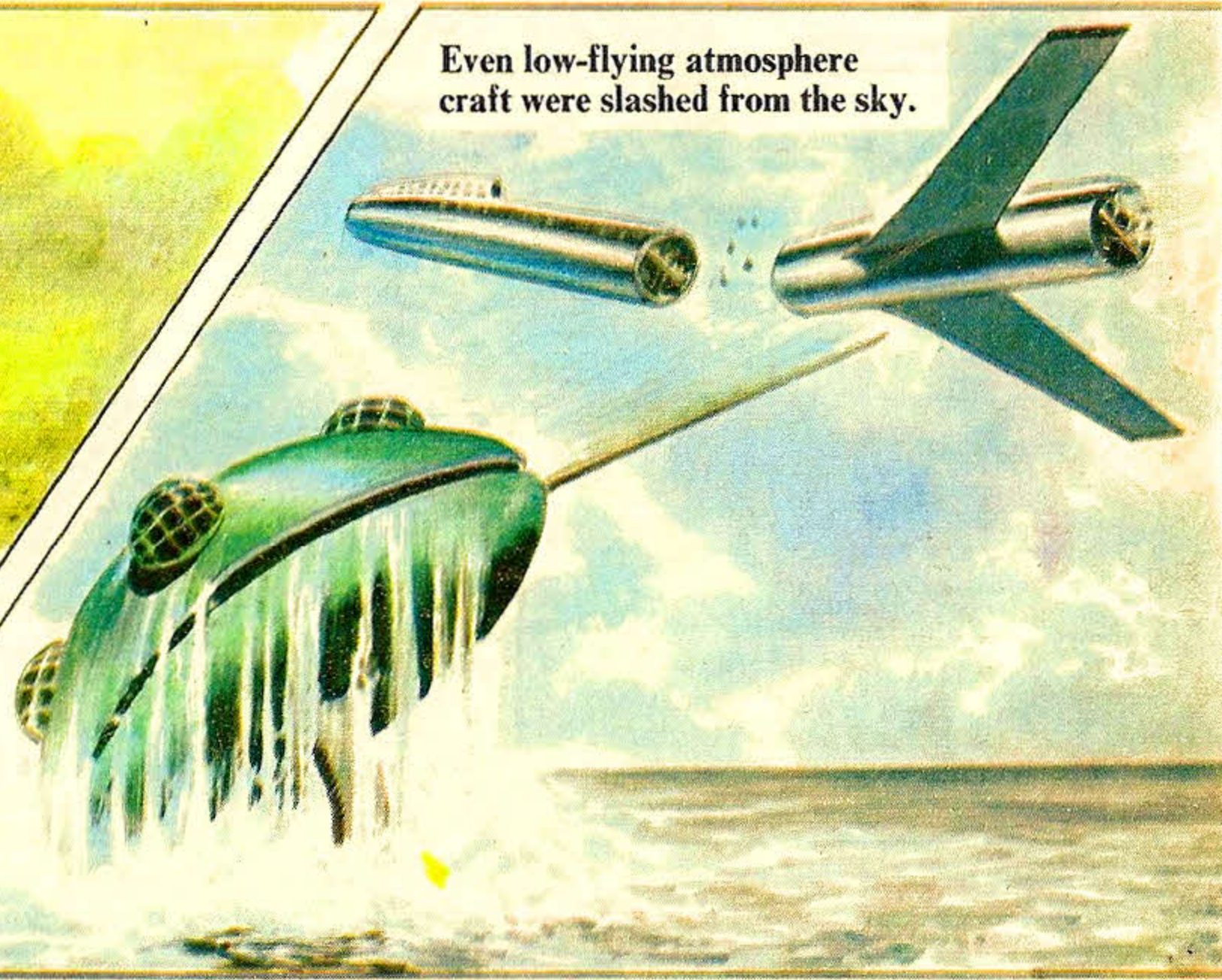
By the light of Elekton's twin moons, the thing from the deep reduced the seaport city of Karona to ruins.



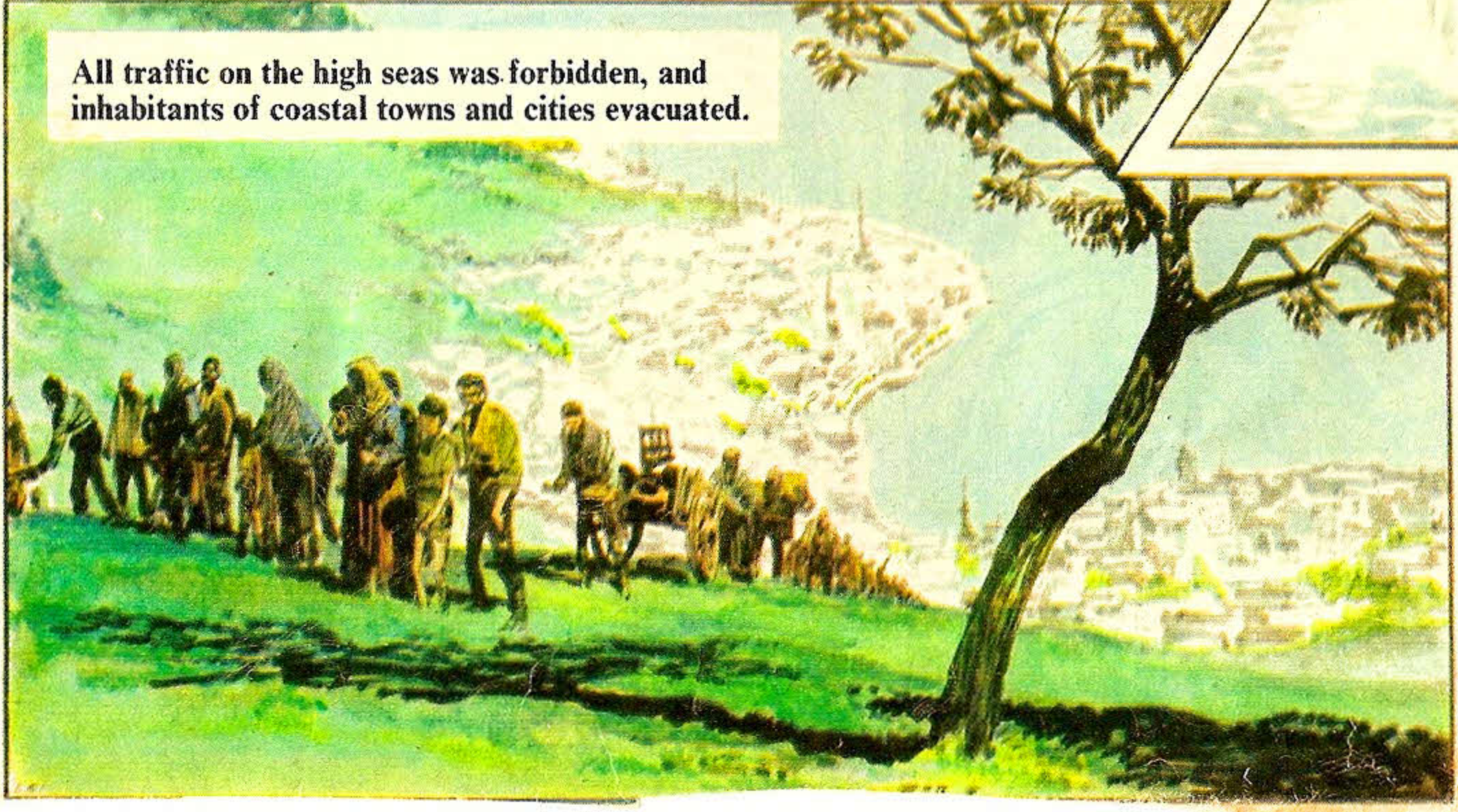
At dawn, a force of Trigan fighting machines attacked the marauder, but were themselves slashed to pieces.



After the devastation at Karona, nothing on the surface of the oceans was safe.

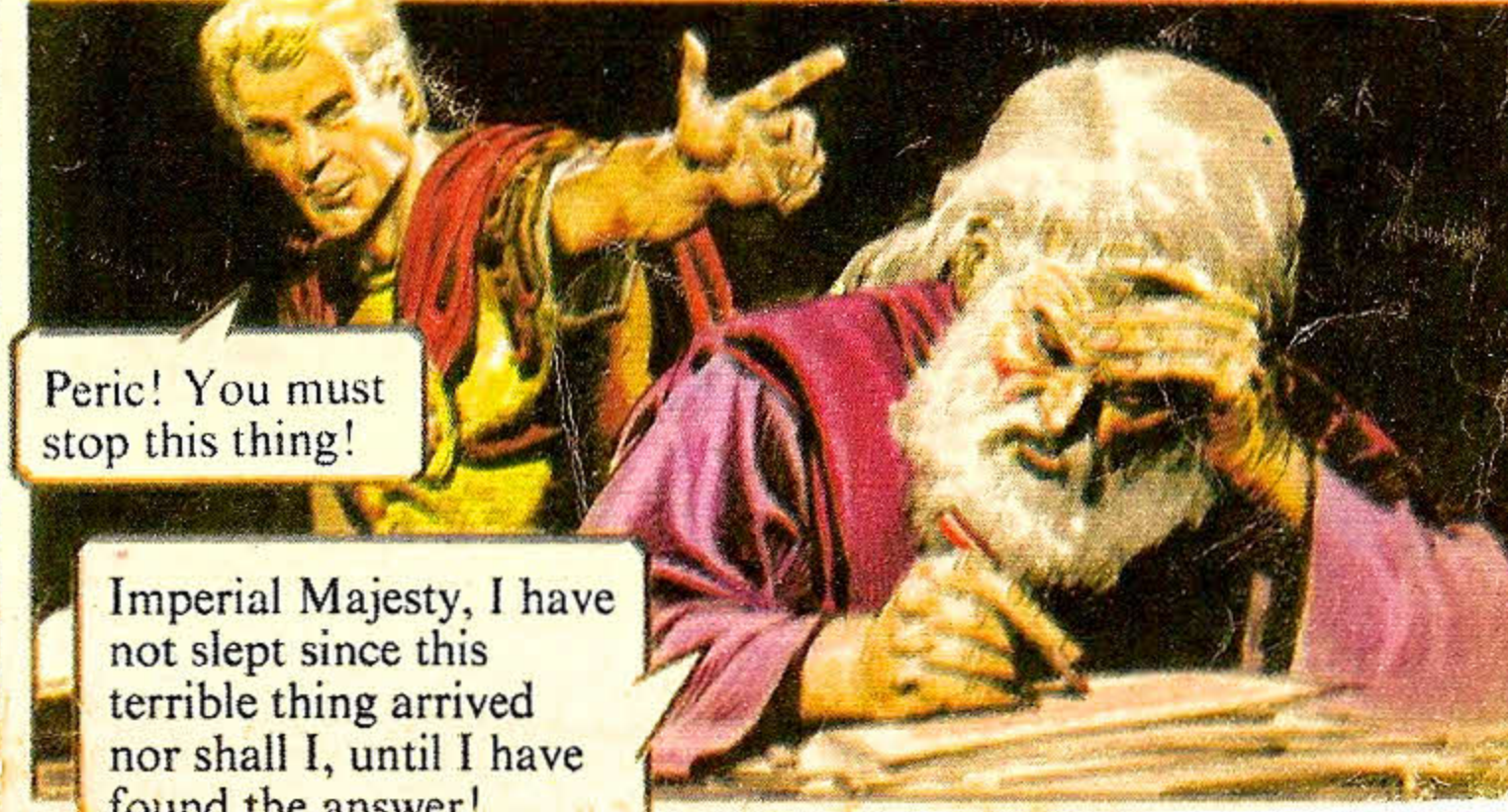


Even low-flying atmosphere craft were slashed from the sky.



All traffic on the high seas was forbidden, and inhabitants of coastal towns and cities evacuated.

The Trigan Empire and all Elekton was in turmoil. Emperor Trigo looked to his top scientist for advice—in vain!



Peric! You must stop this thing!

Imperial Majesty, I have not slept since this terrible thing arrived nor shall I, until I have found the answer!

One night a group of divers waded ashore on a deserted stretch of the Trigan coast.



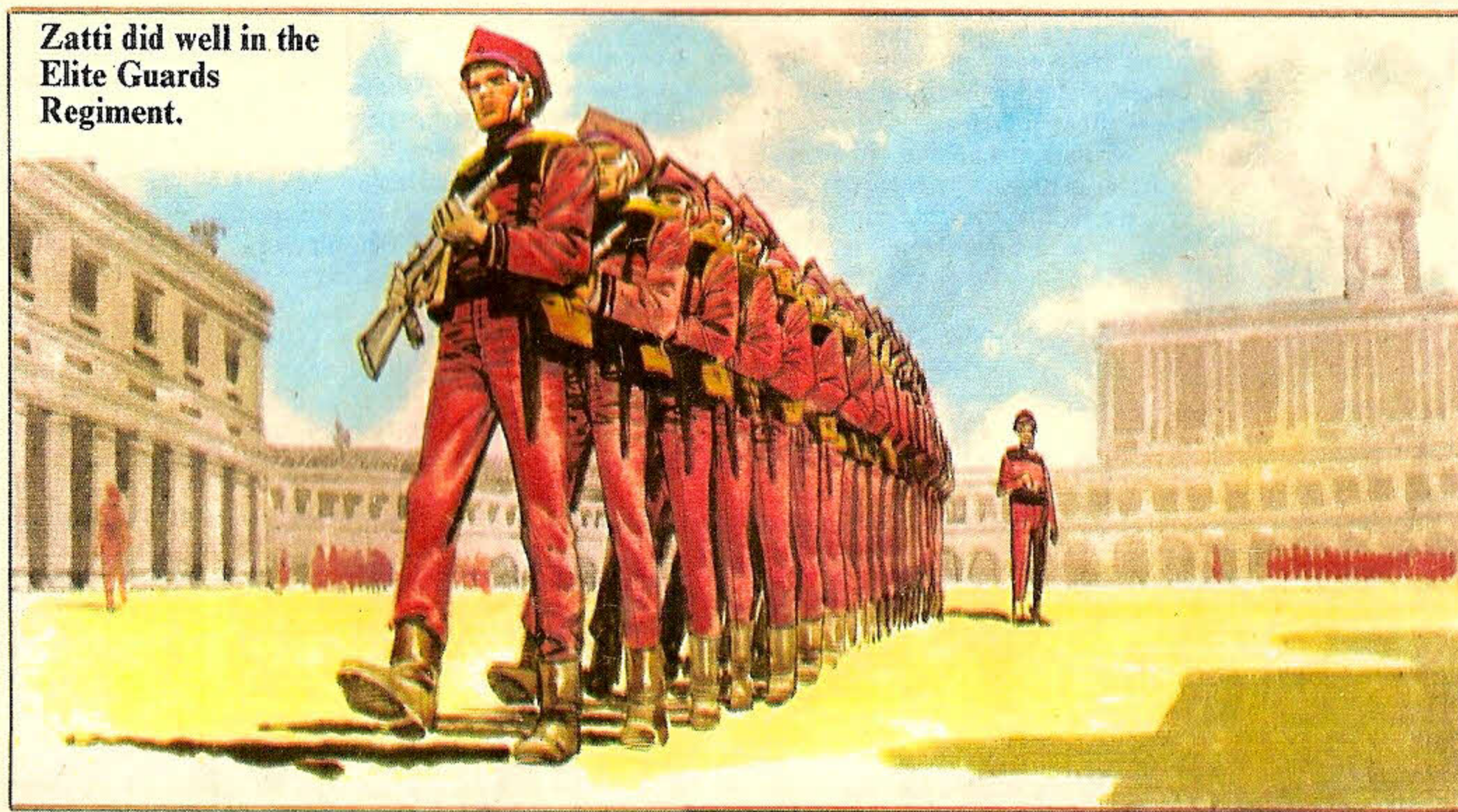
A brief order was given, in an alien tongue.



Next day, one of these strangers joined the army.



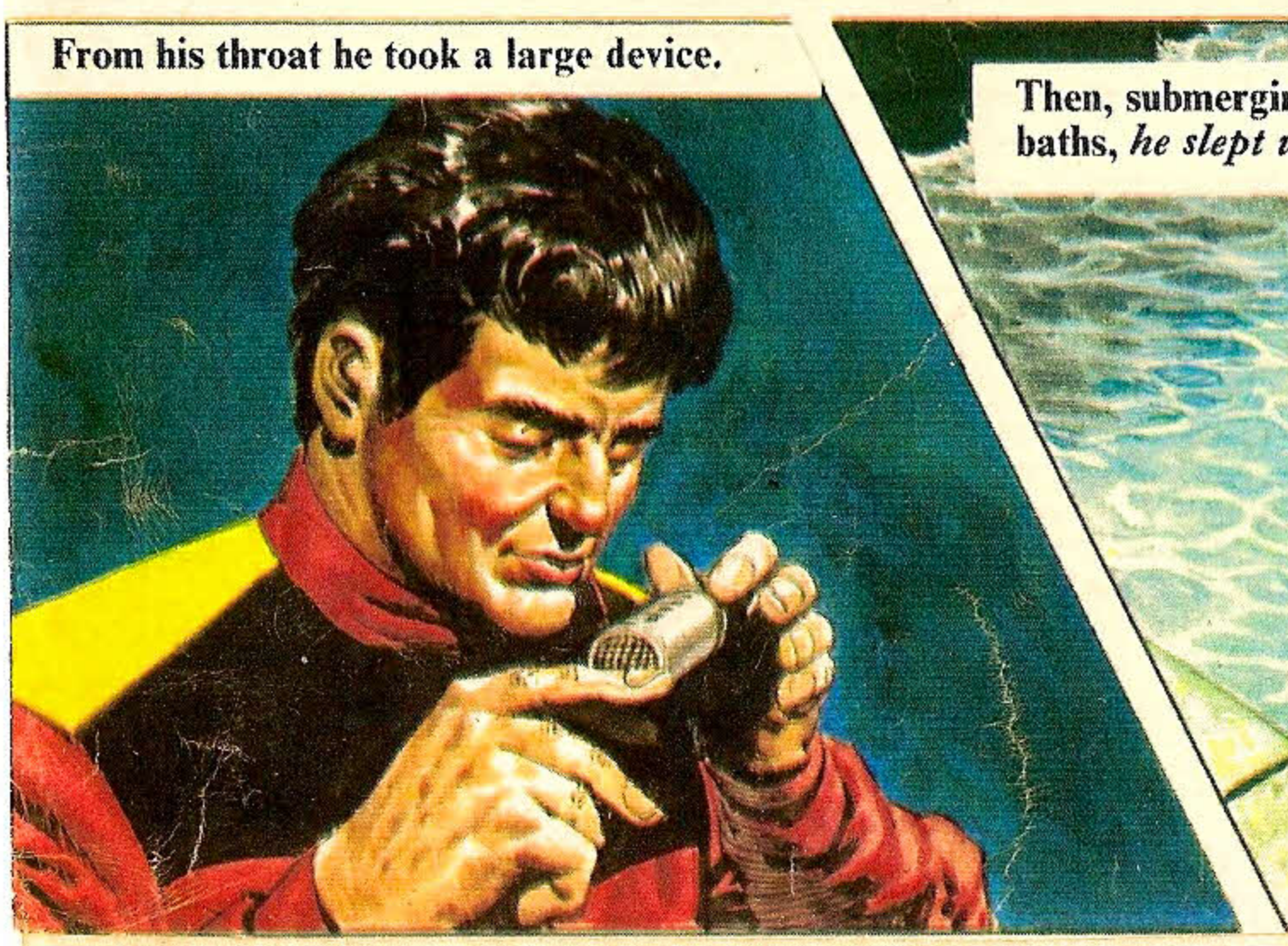
Zatti did well in the Elite Guards Regiment.



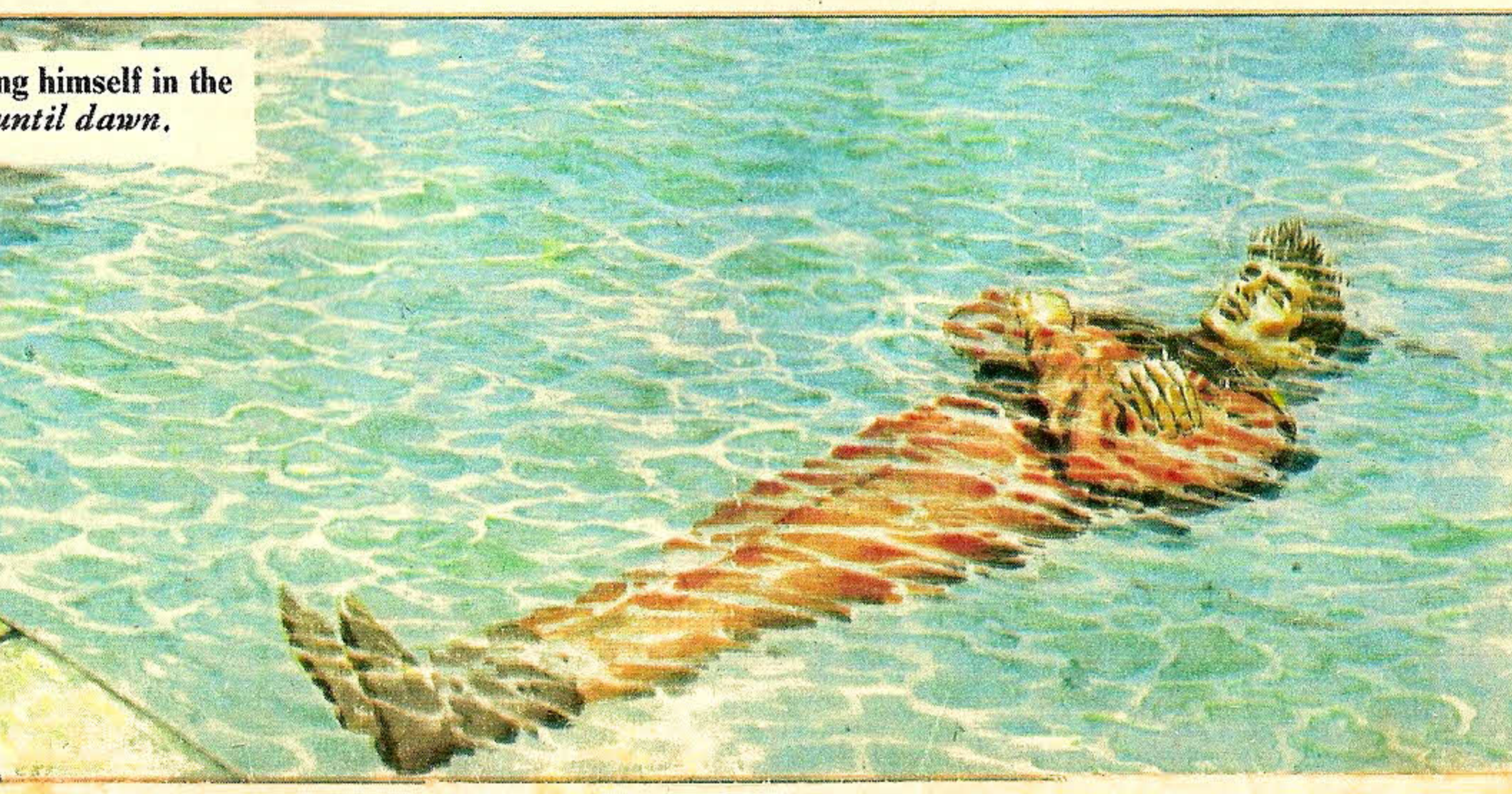
To all appearances a normal individual, Zatti had a strange habit. At night, he crept into the deserted regimental baths . . .



From his throat he took a large device.



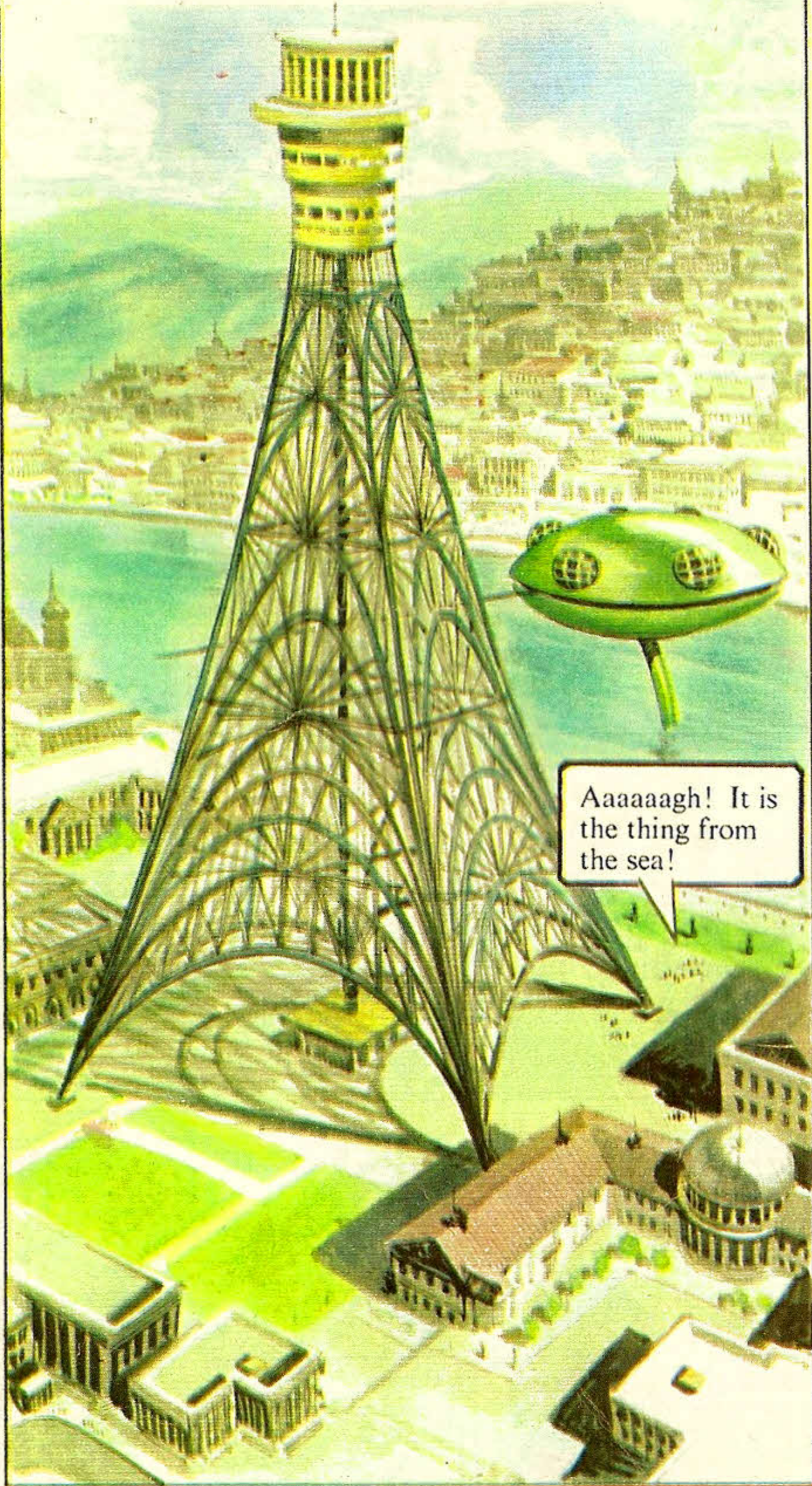
Then, submerging himself in the baths, he slept until dawn.



# THE TRIGAN EMPIRE

A malevolent intelligence is at work on the planet Elekton. A mechanical monster from the sea is able to destroy anything, and a group of strangers has emerged unseen from the sea, among them Zatti, who has joined the Imperial Guards.

One evening, the now-familiar menace rose from the river near the great tower in the city of Yannis.



Aaaaaagh! It is the thing from the sea!

One slash of the strange antenna—and the tower was riven!

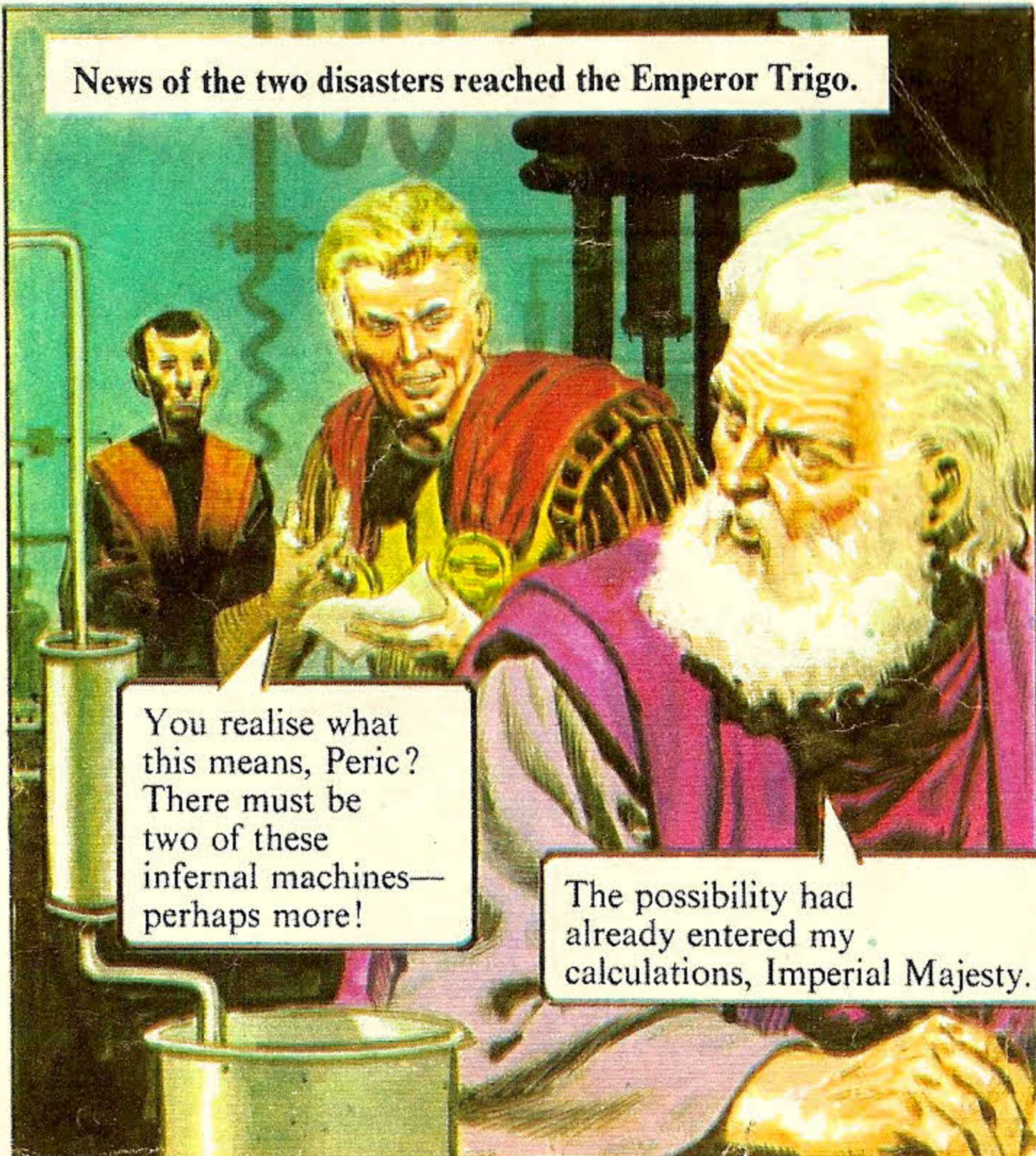


At almost the same moment, on the distant isle of Zooth, the lighthouse met the same fate!



Peric took the Emperor to another part of his laboratory.

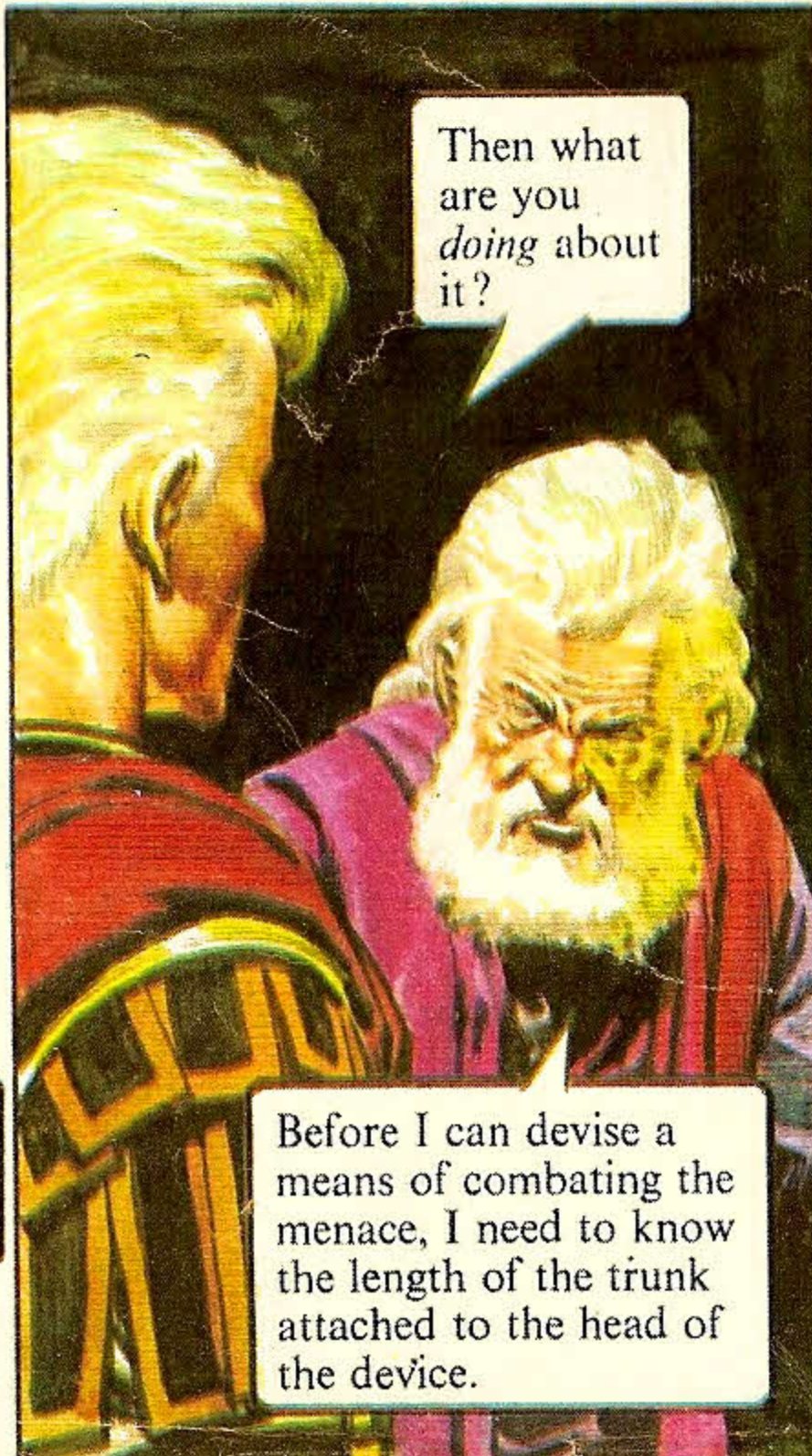
News of the two disasters reached the Emperor Trigo.



You realise what this means, Peric? There must be two of these infernal machines—perhaps more!

The possibility had already entered my calculations, Imperial Majesty.

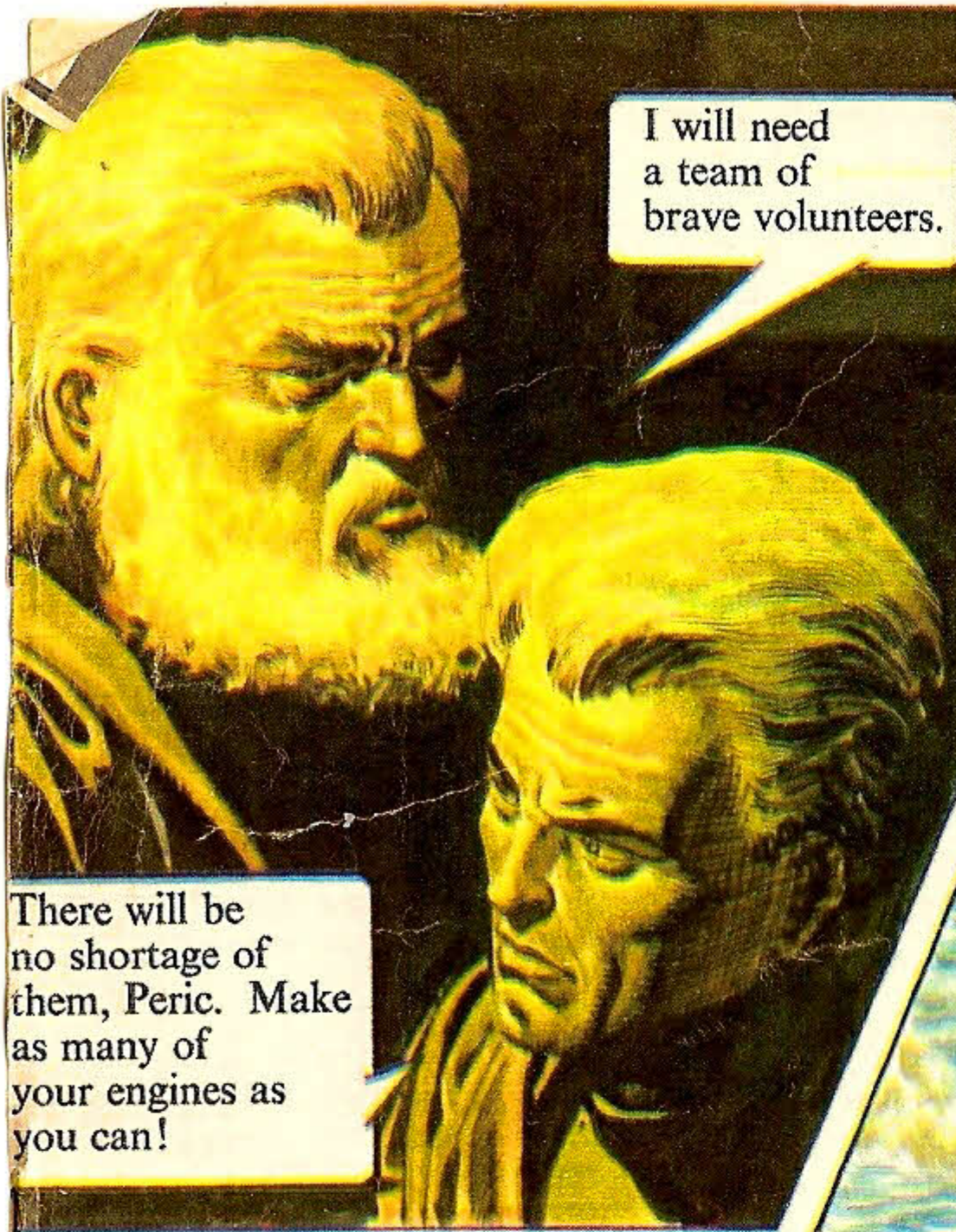
Then what are you doing about it?



Before I can devise a means of combating the menace, I need to know the length of the trunk attached to the head of the device.

This high-speed underwater engine should enable a diver to pursue the menace and bring back the information I need.





I will need a team of brave volunteers.

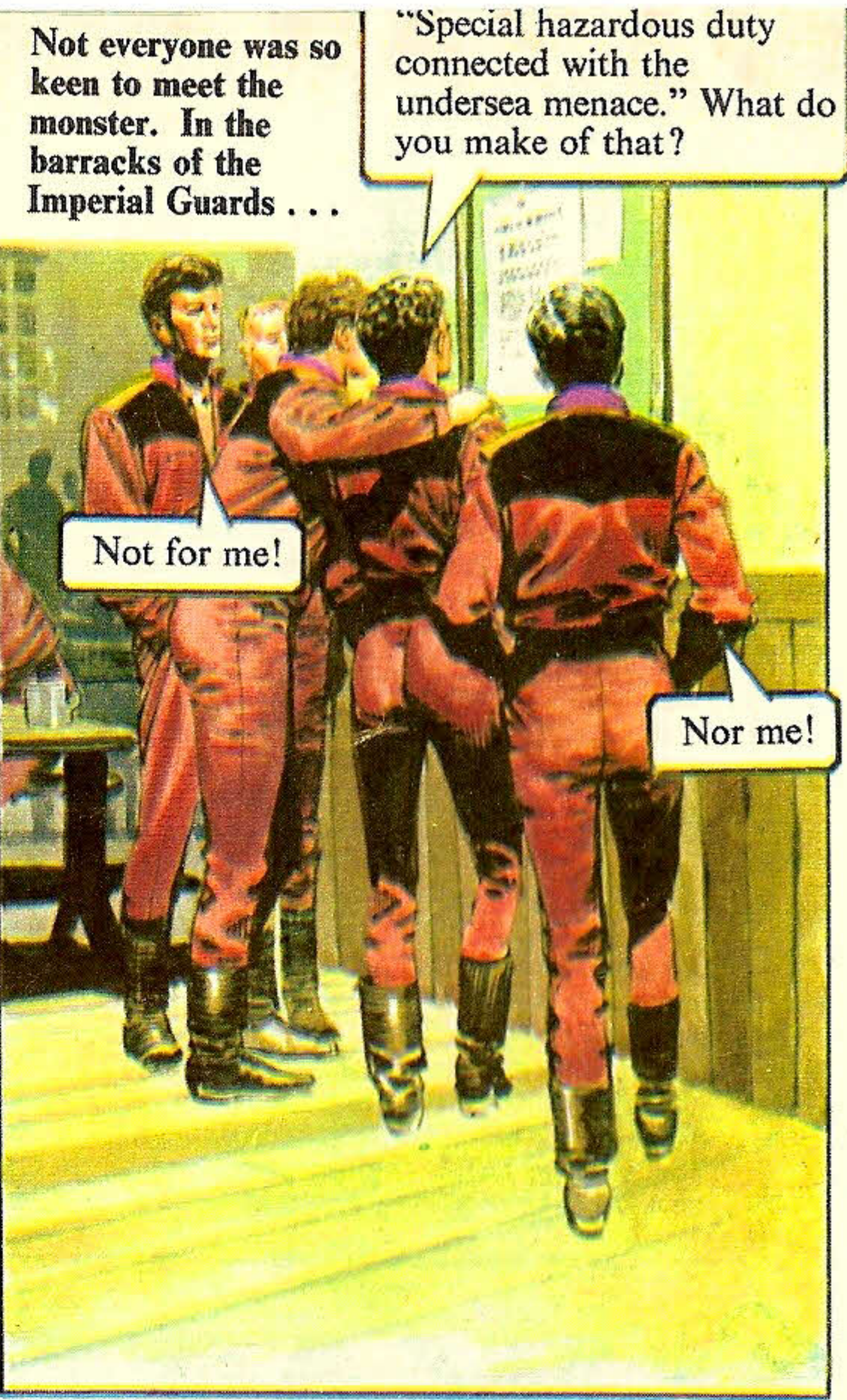
There will be no shortage of them, Peric. Make as many of your engines as you can!



It works, Peric!

Yes. And remember that he is only travelling at half speed!

Janno and his comrades Keren and Roffa were among the first to volunteer. Janno tested the engine.

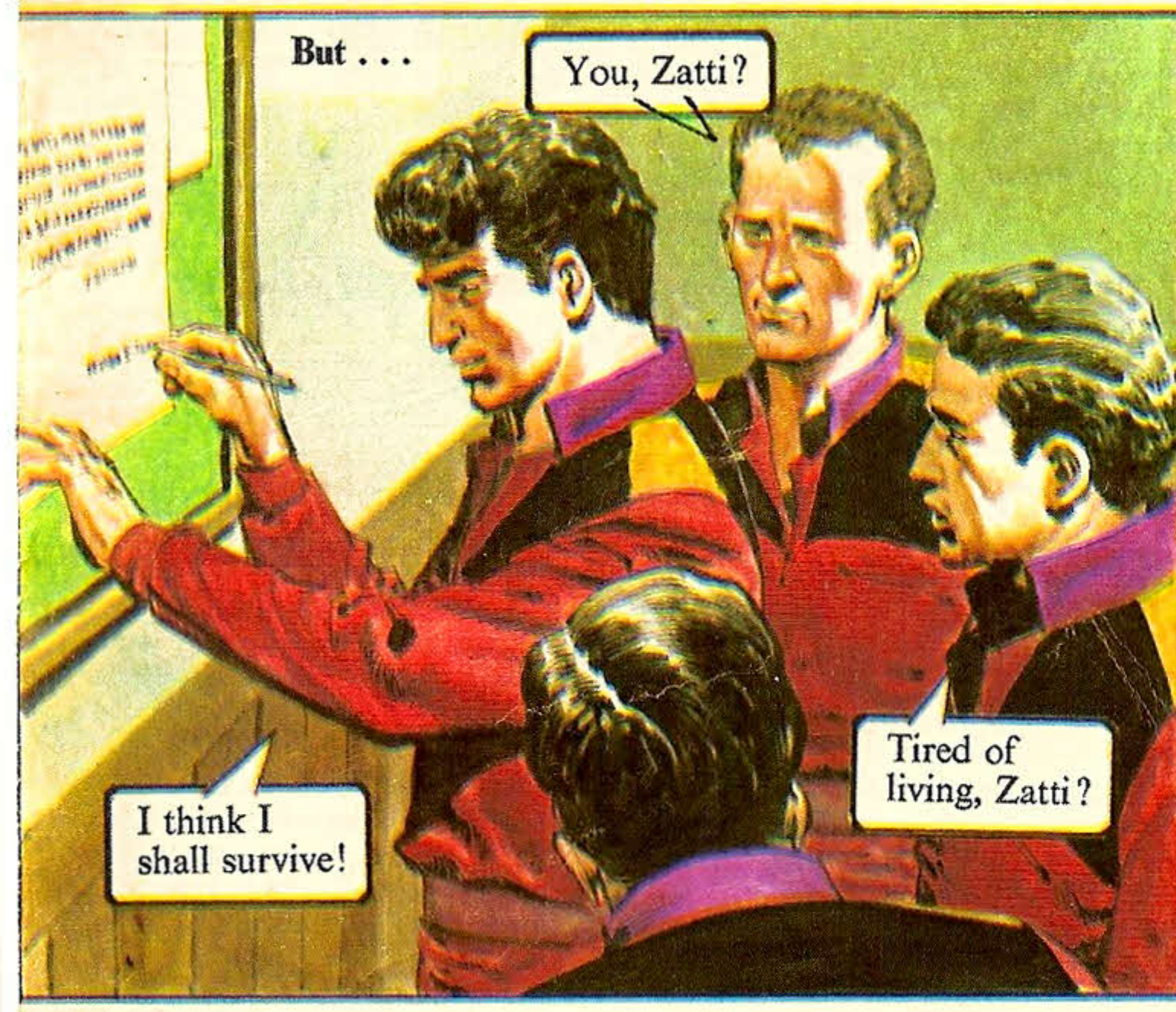


Not for me!

Nor me!

"Special hazardous duty connected with the undersea menace." What do you make of that?

Not everyone was so keen to meet the monster. In the barracks of the Imperial Guards...

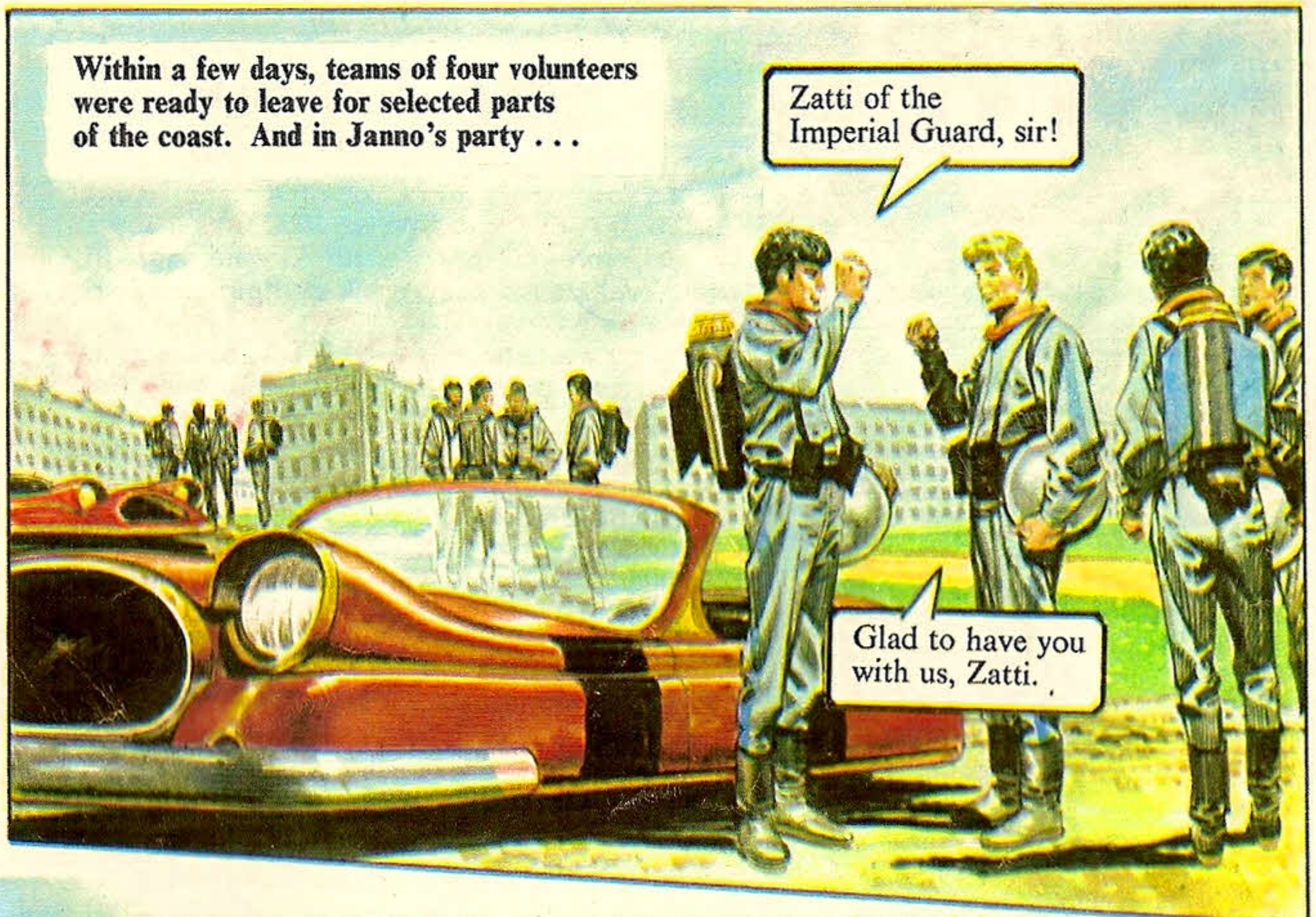


But...

You, Zatti?

I think I shall survive!

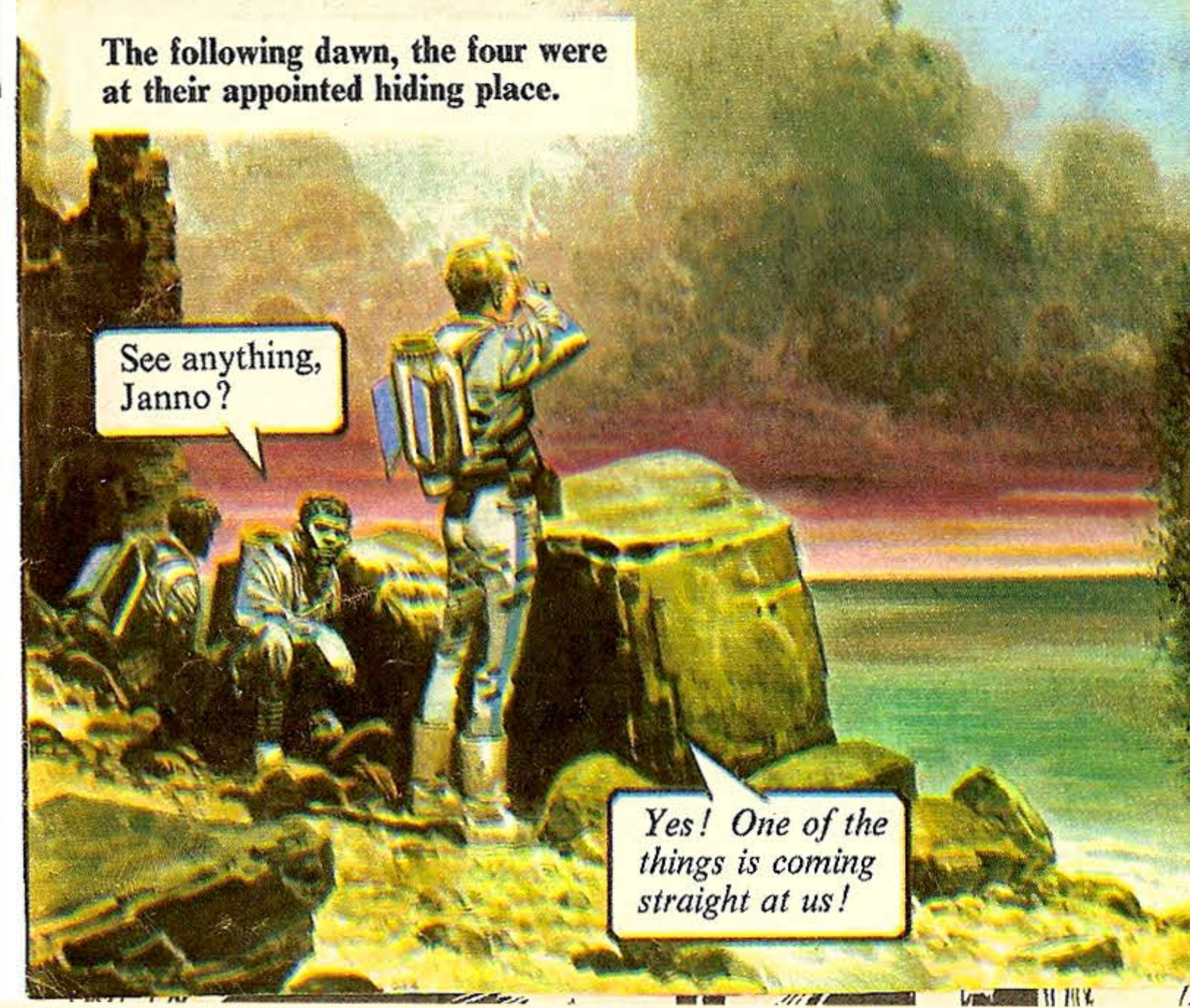
Tired of living, Zatti?



Within a few days, teams of four volunteers were ready to leave for selected parts of the coast. And in Janno's party...

Zatti of the Imperial Guard, sir!

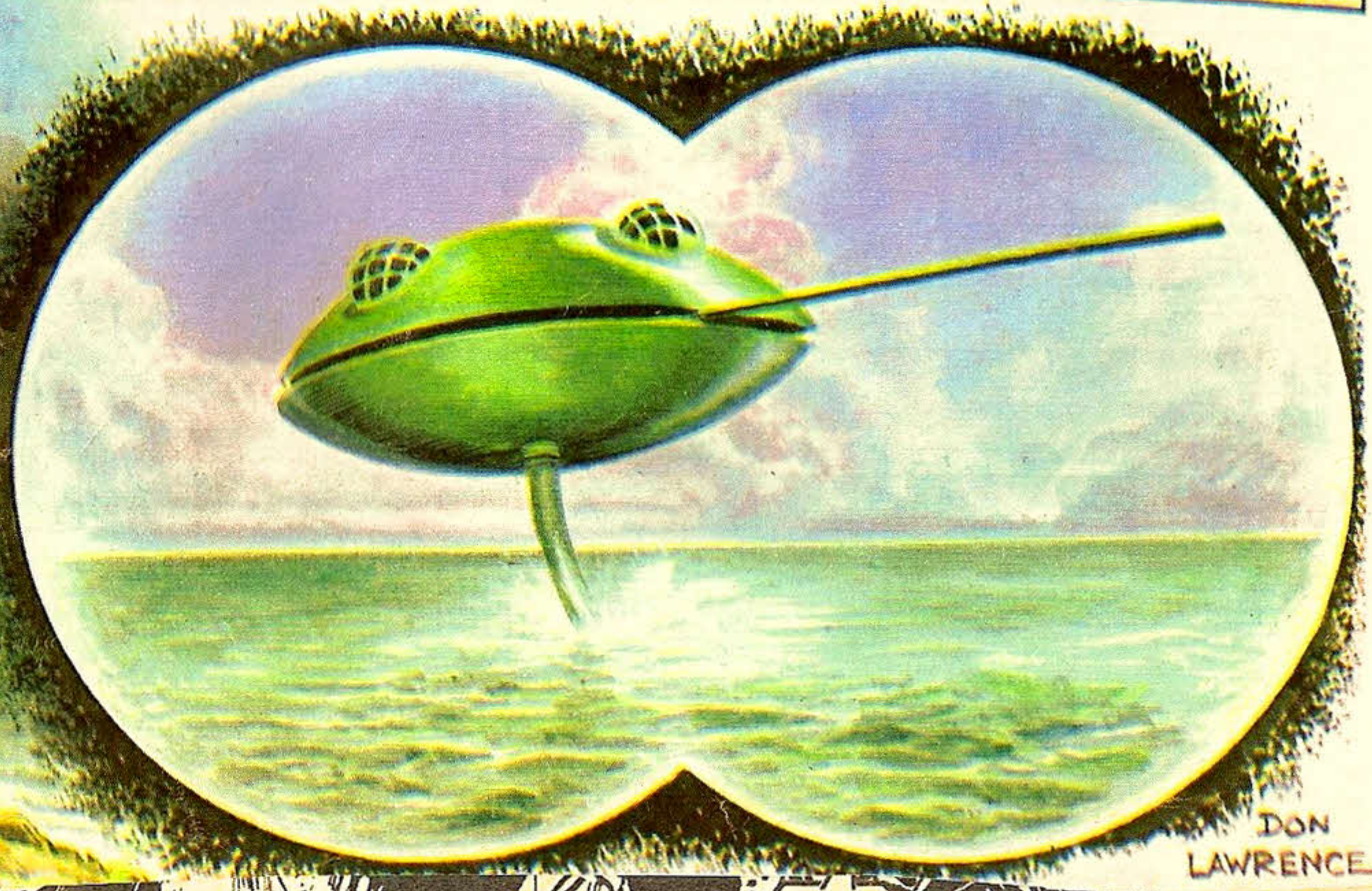
Glad to have you with us, Zatti.



The following dawn, the four were at their appointed hiding place.

See anything, Janno?

Yes! One of the things is coming straight at us!



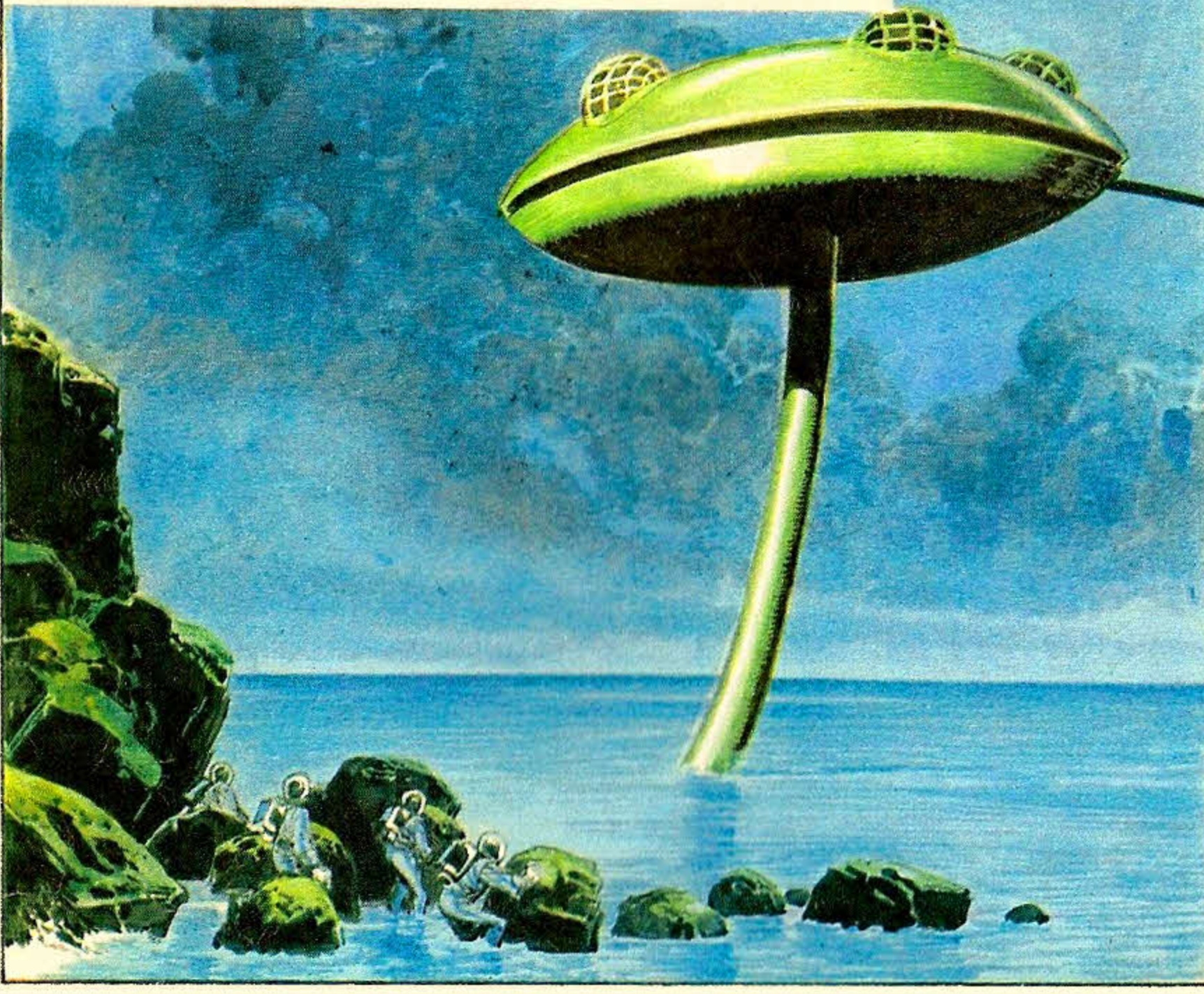
DON LAWRENCE

locked us in!

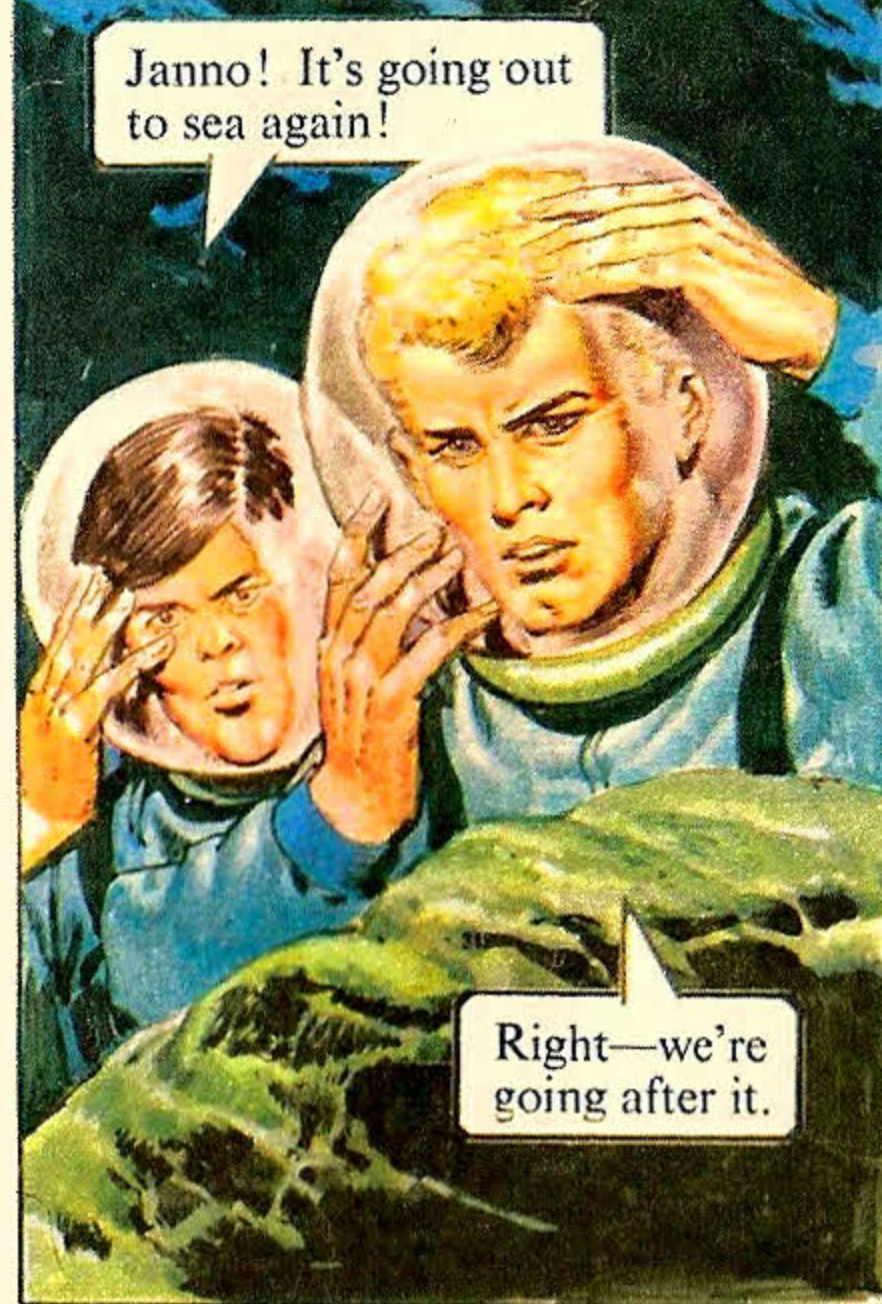
# THE TRIGAN EMPIRE

Janno and his comrades are investigating the mechanical devices which have been terrorising the planet Elekton. Janno is unaware, though, that one of the crew, Zatti, is an alien from the sea.

Janno and the others flattened themselves against the rocky ground as the thing from the sea reared high above them.

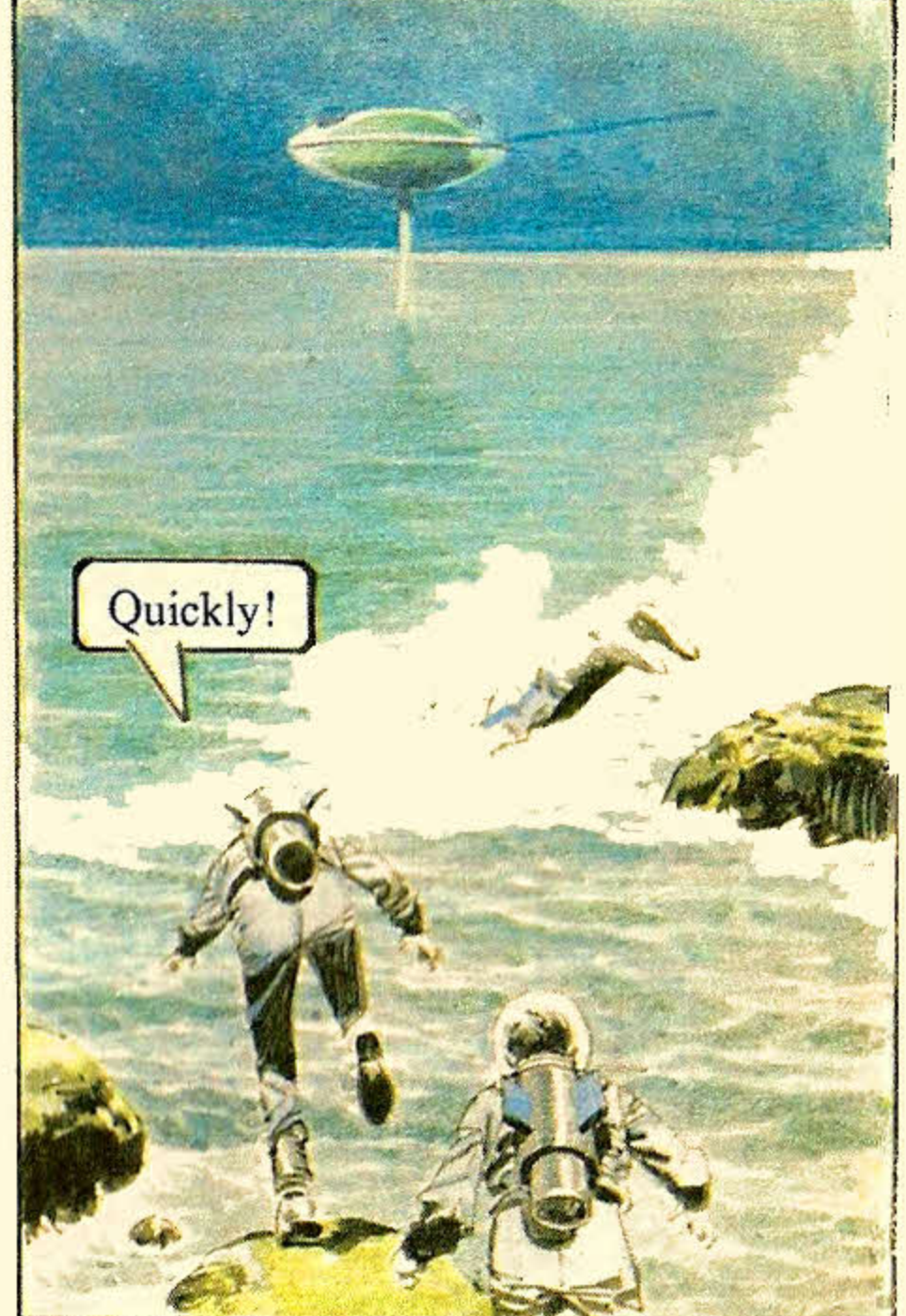


And then . . .



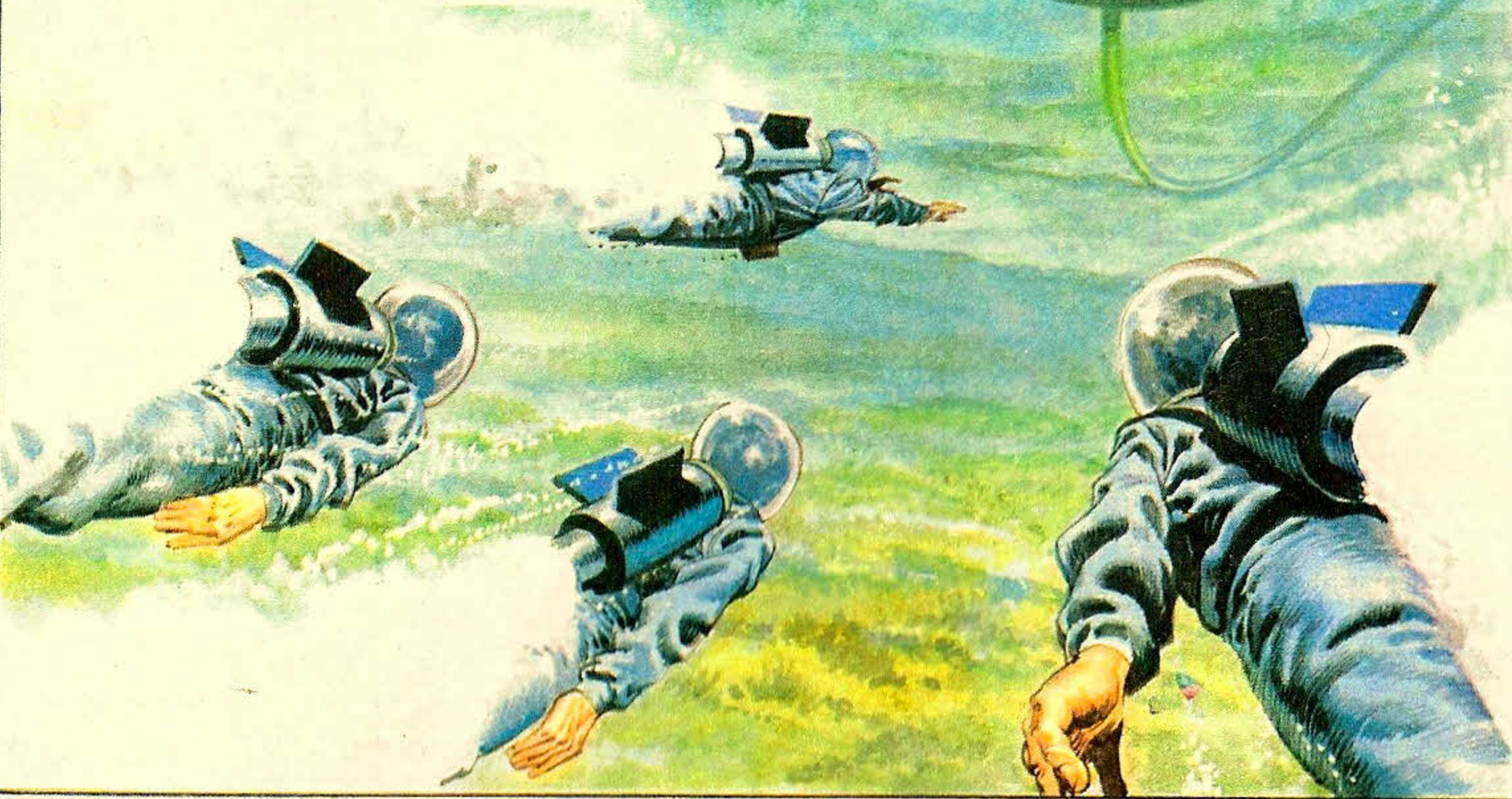
Janno! It's going out to sea again!

Right—we're going after it.

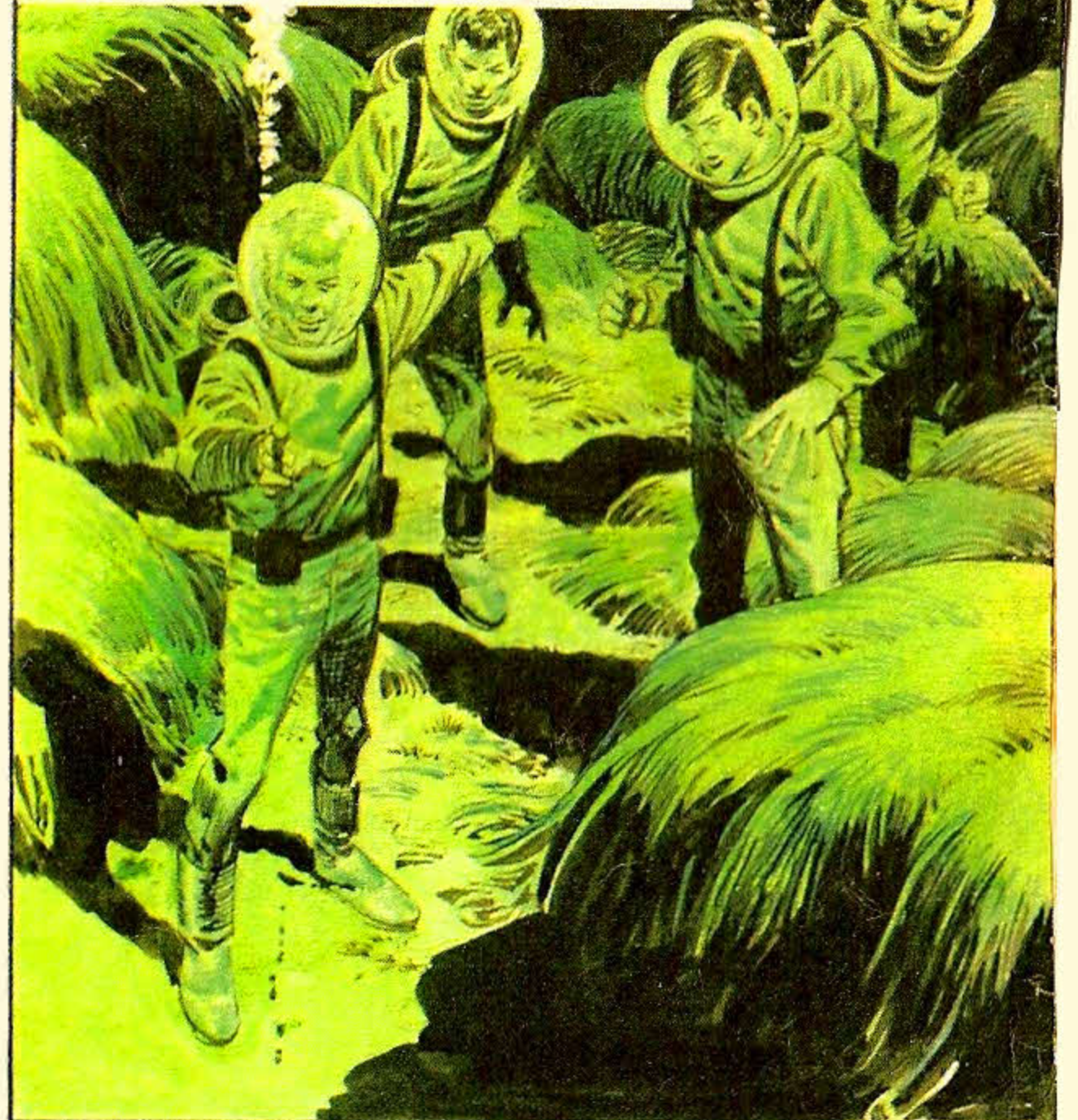


Quickly!

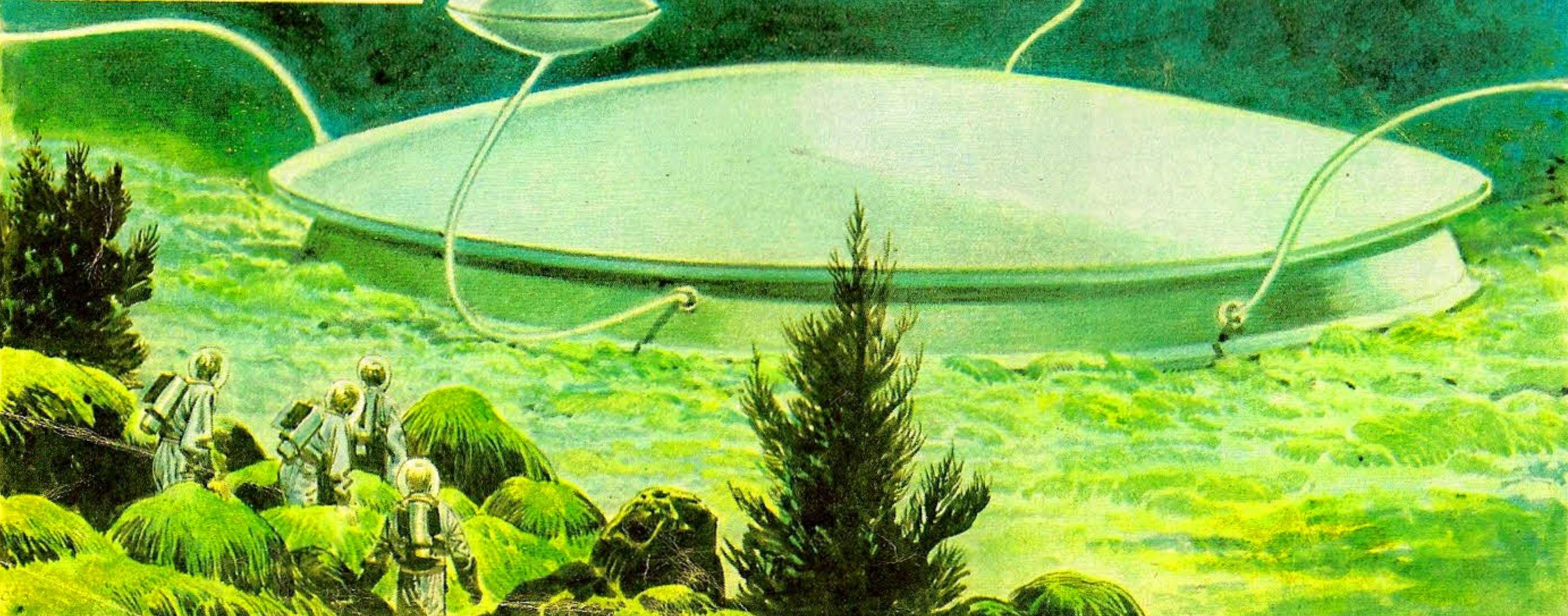
Propelled by the special high-speed machines on their backs, they followed it.



After what seemed an eternity, Janno signalled his companions to halt.



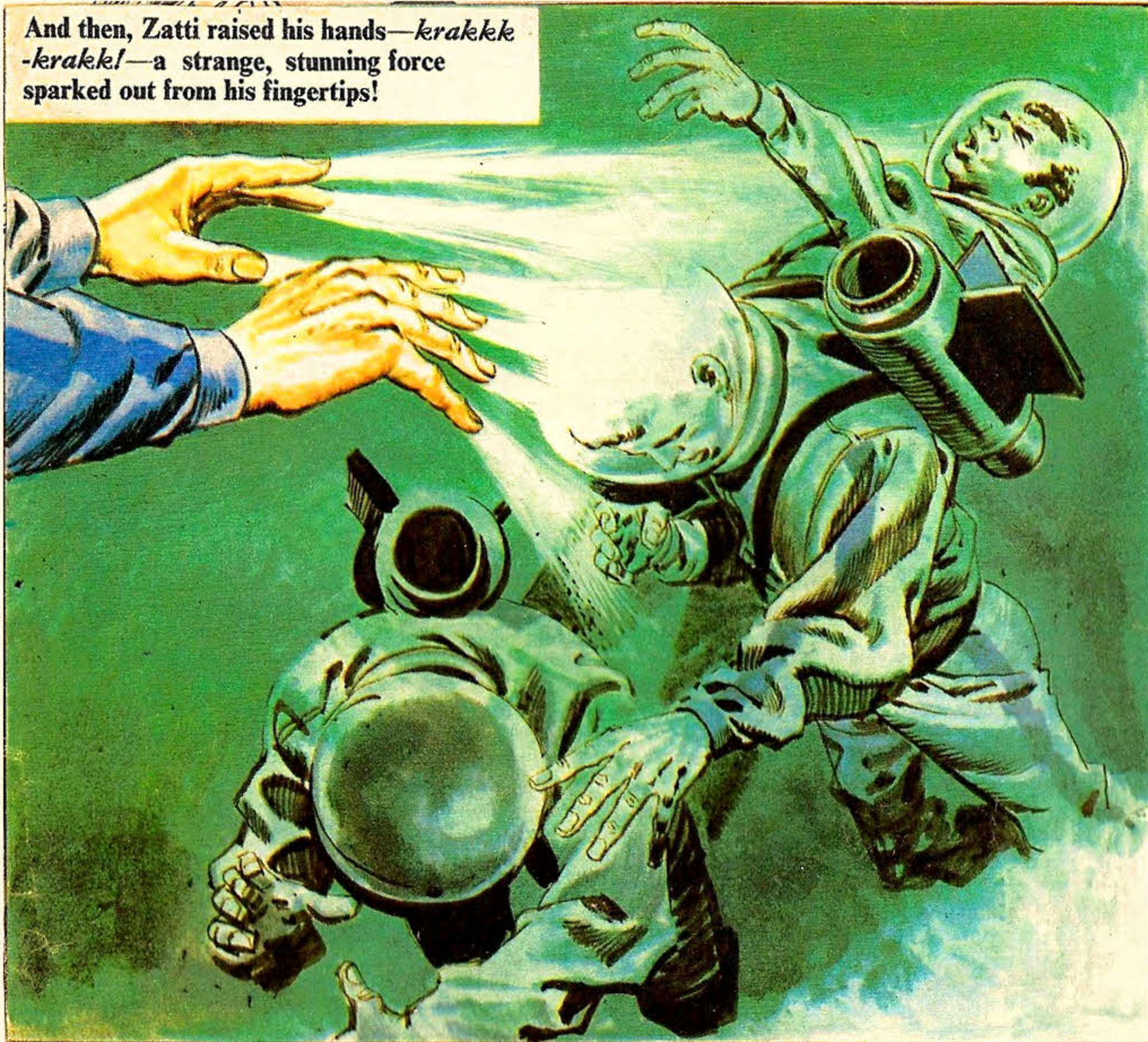
Before their eyes lay the secret thing that menaced Elekton.



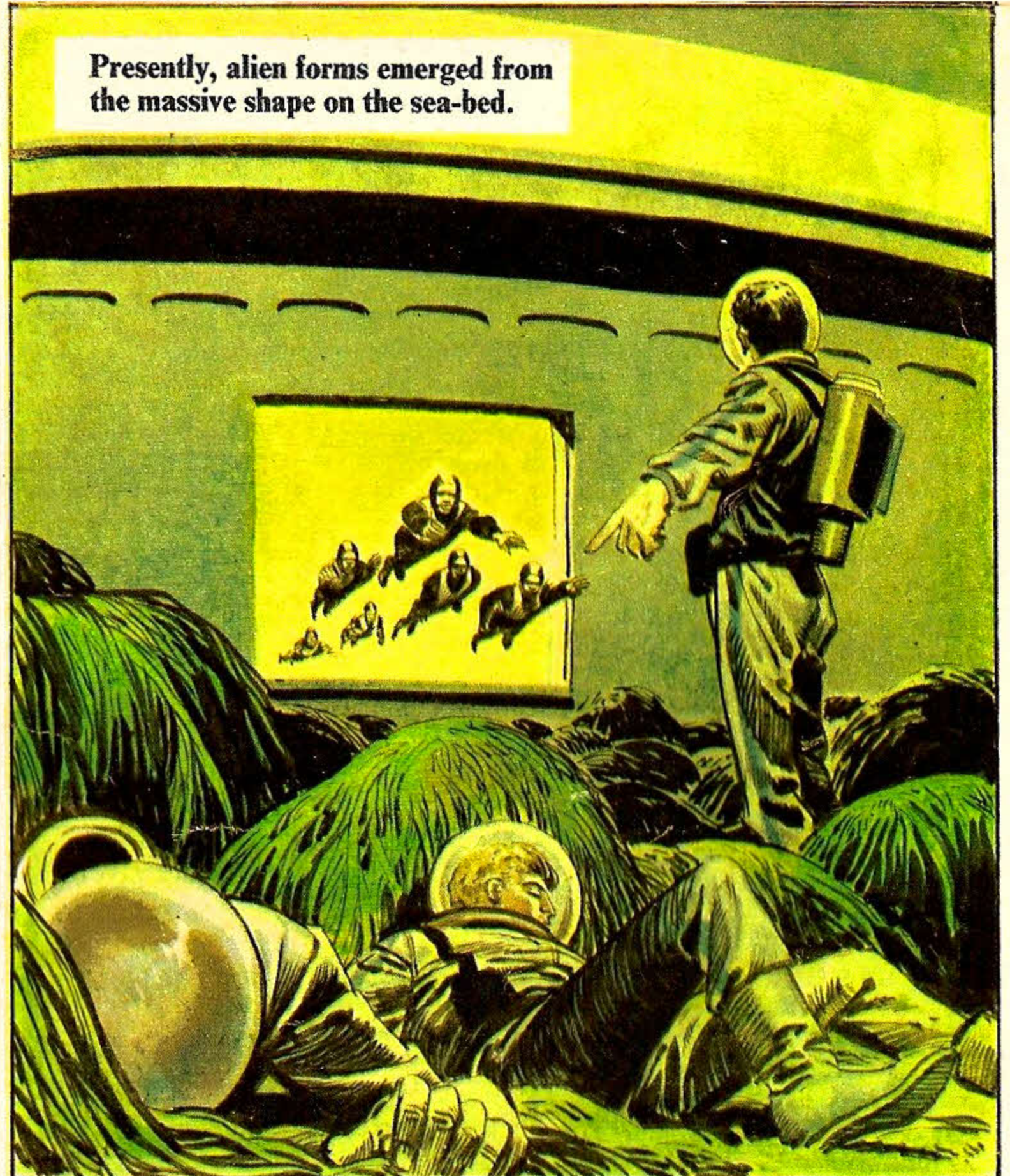
Janno had seen all he needed to know. He made the pre-arranged signal for their return.



And then, Zatti raised his hands—*krakkek*—*krakkek!*—a strange, stunning force sparked out from his fingertips!



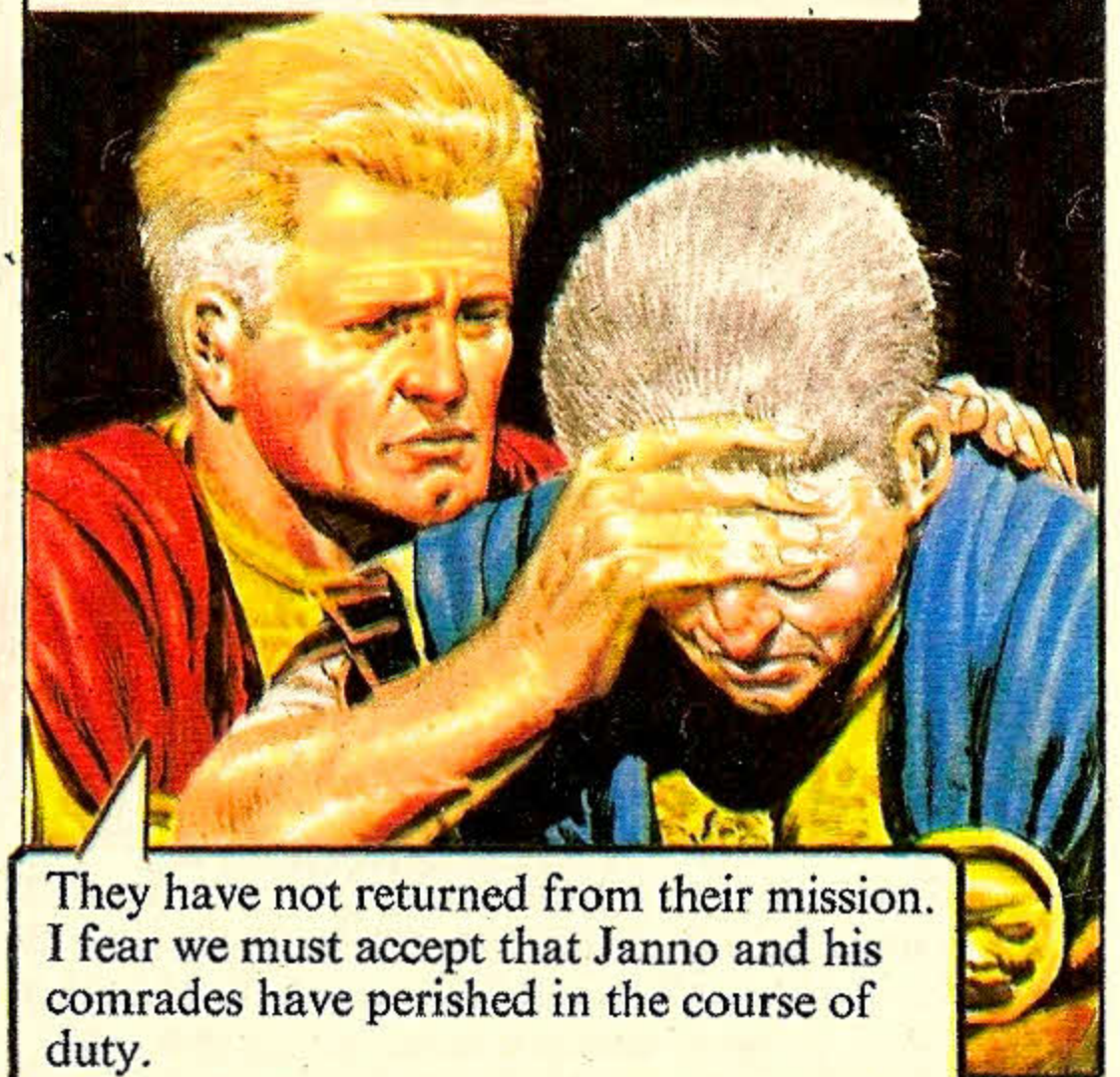
Presently, alien forms emerged from the massive shape on the sea-bed.



The three unconscious Trigans were carried away.



After three days had passed, the emperor summoned his brother Brag, who was Janno's father.



They have not returned from their mission. I fear we must accept that Janno and his comrades have perished in the course of duty.

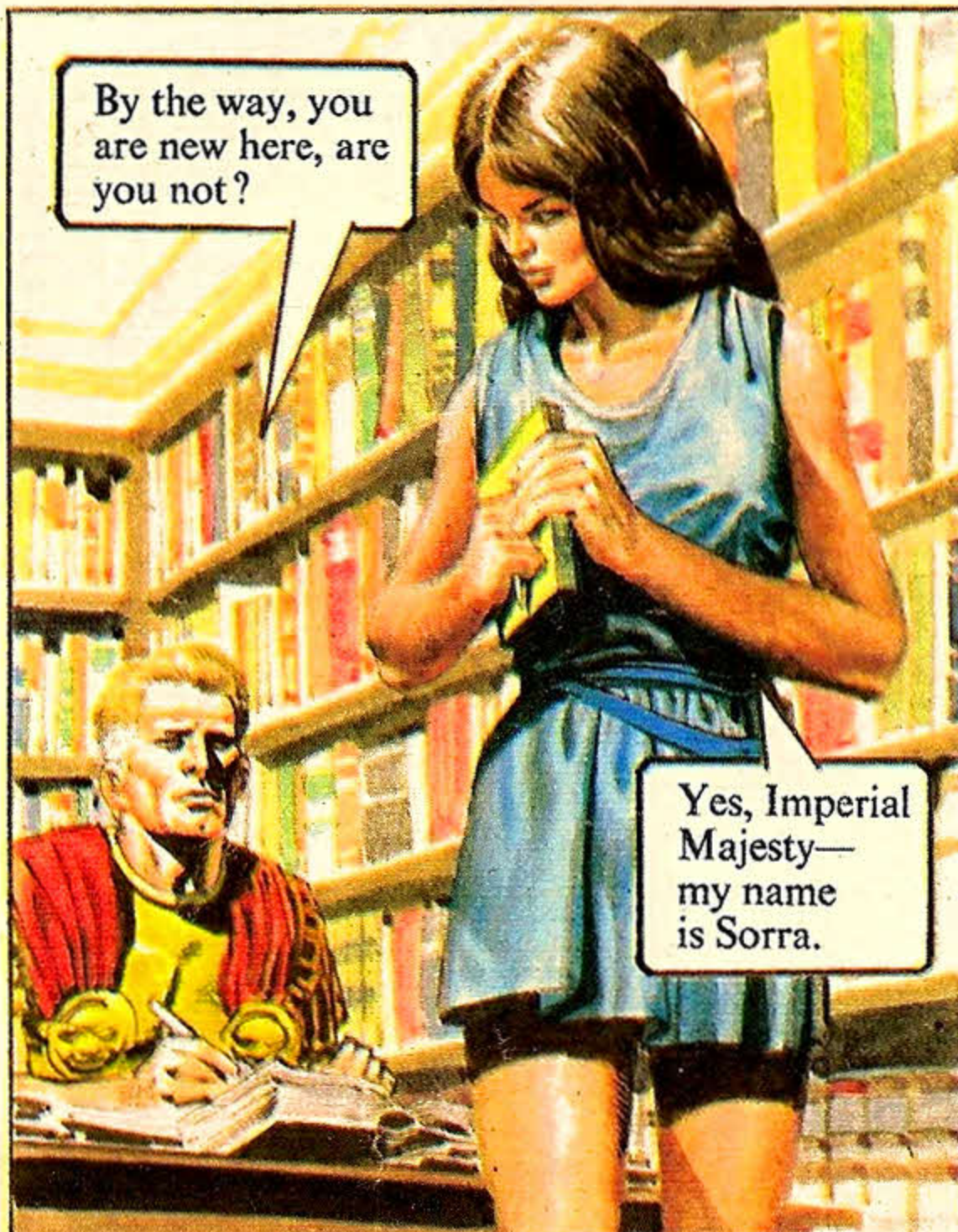
Later, he called for one of the palace secretaries.

I will dictate further plans for the location and destruction of the menace. You will send copies to the captains of my armed forces.



Yes, Imperial Majesty.

By the way, you are new here, are you not?



Yes, Imperial Majesty—my name is Sorra.

That night, the girl called Sorra slept submerged in the water of the palace baths! She belonged to the same alien race as Zatti!





# THE TRIGAN EMPIRE

Janno and his comrades are investigating the mechanical devices which have been terrorising the planet Elekton. Janno is unaware, though, that one of the crew, Zatti, is an alien from the sea.

Janno and his friends are inside the underwater station that controls the "monsters".



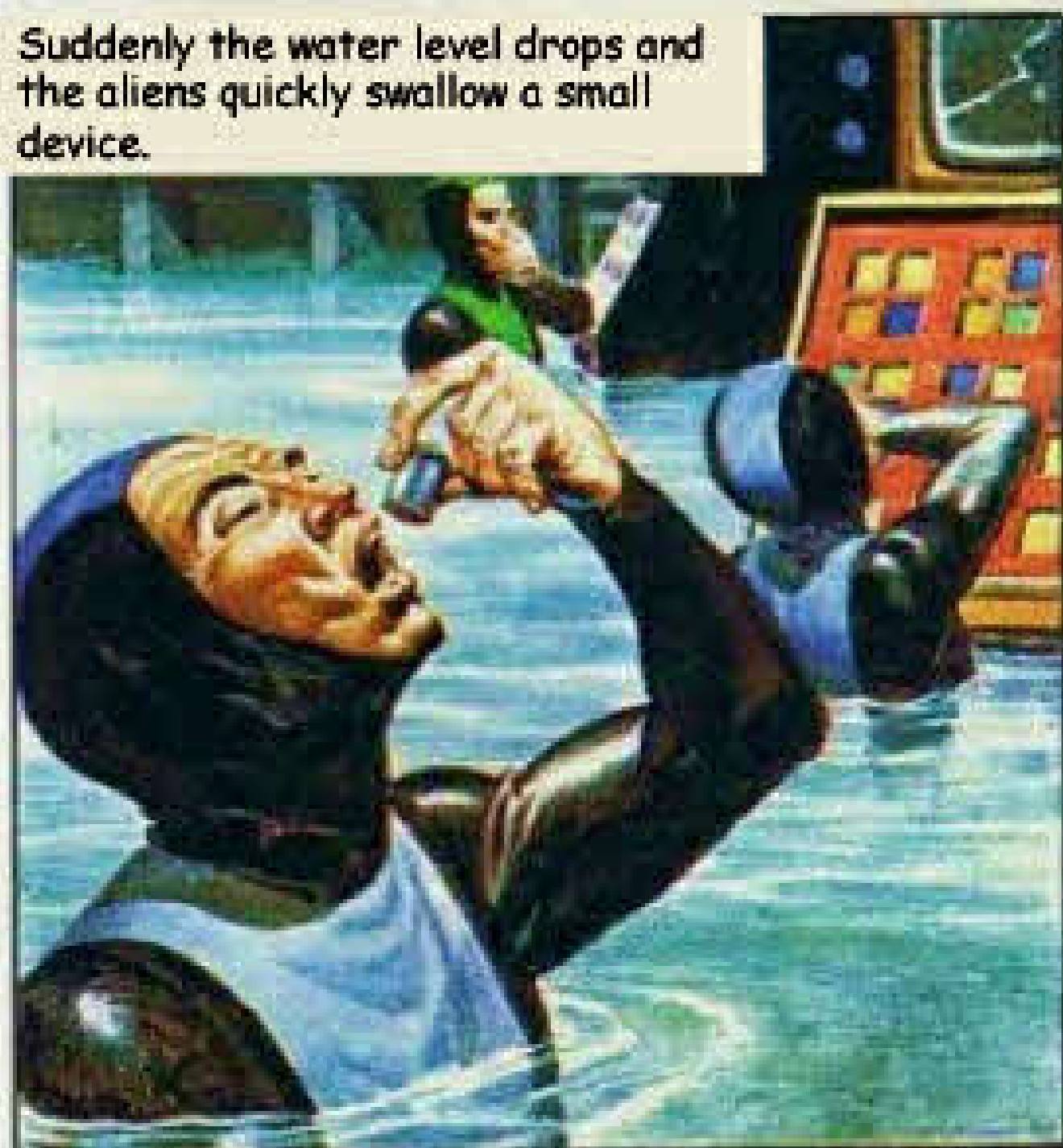
Janno, Keren and Roffa find themselves in an airtight, transparent material.



The prisoners watch as strange aliens are busy working in the water filled rooms!



Suddenly the water level drops and the aliens quickly swallow a small device.



No sooner had the water been dispersed then the three prisoners were freed from their capsules and brought before the station



I am Ura Zircon. The ruler of the Planet Thalla.

Our planet is in the far away system of Cerris and the planet is covered in water, in which we breathe. Unfortunately our planet's orbit had shifted closer to the sun resulting in the water boiling off the planet's surface.

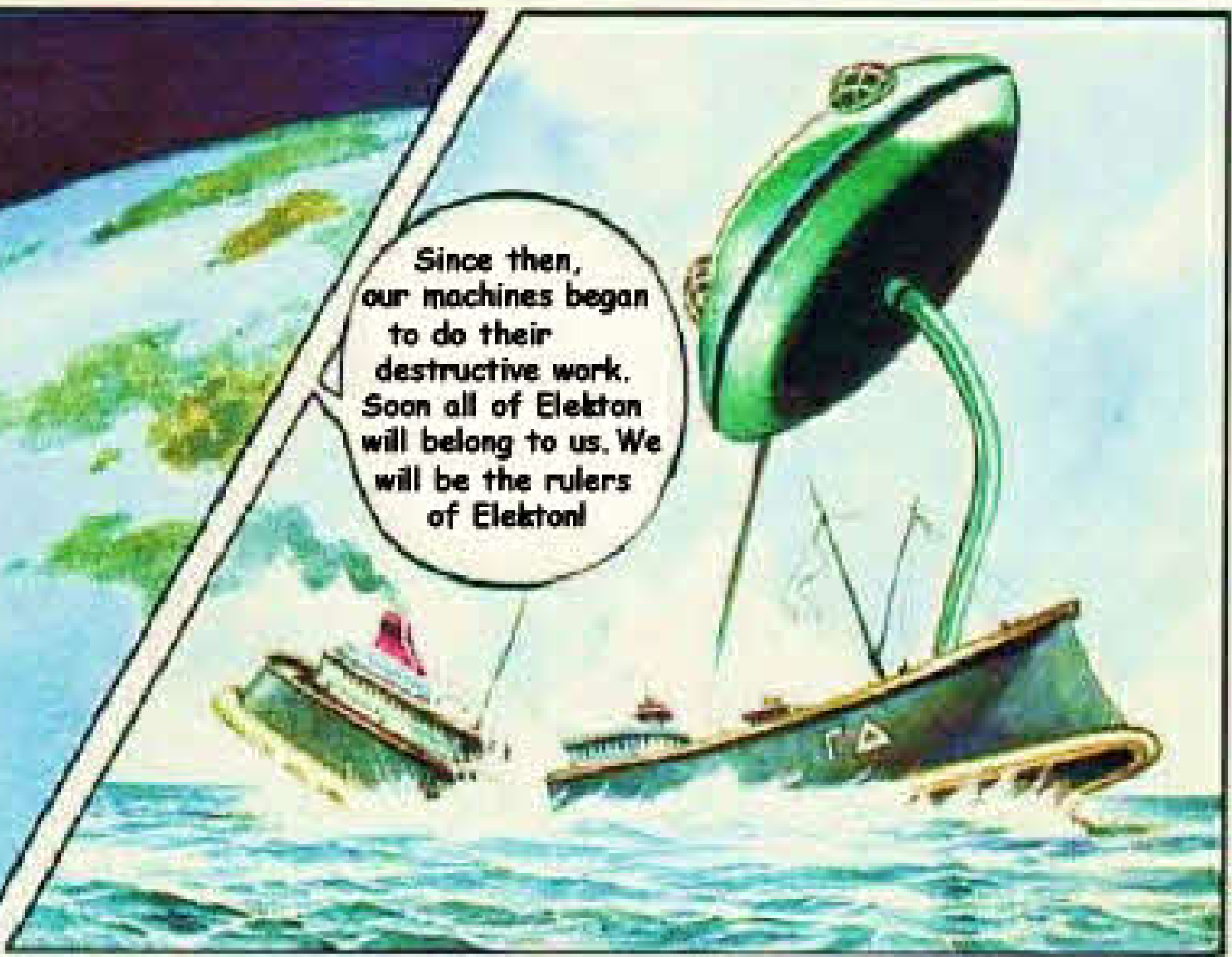


For the survival of my people, we created this conquering machine, with which to invade other planets to make our new home.



When everything was ready, we headed to Elekton. From our long distant scanners we learned your customs.

Since then, our machines began to do their destructive work. Soon all of Elekton will belong to us. We will be the rulers of Elekton!



The three Trigans were surprised and dismayed to hear Ura Zirkon's explanation.

With the breathing devices that allow us to live above the water, some of my people infiltrated the Trigan population. My daughter, Sorra is one of those people.



She works at the Imperial court. Her instructions are to destroy the Emperor!

At that moment, in the Royal Palace at Trigan City, the Emperor was with his new secretary..

Well done Sorra. I am very pleased with you.

Thank you, Majesty!



# THE TRIGAN EMPIRE

Janno and his comrades are prisoners in the monstrous submerged conquest-machine, with which Ura Zircon and his people from the alien planet Thalla plan to take over Elekton.

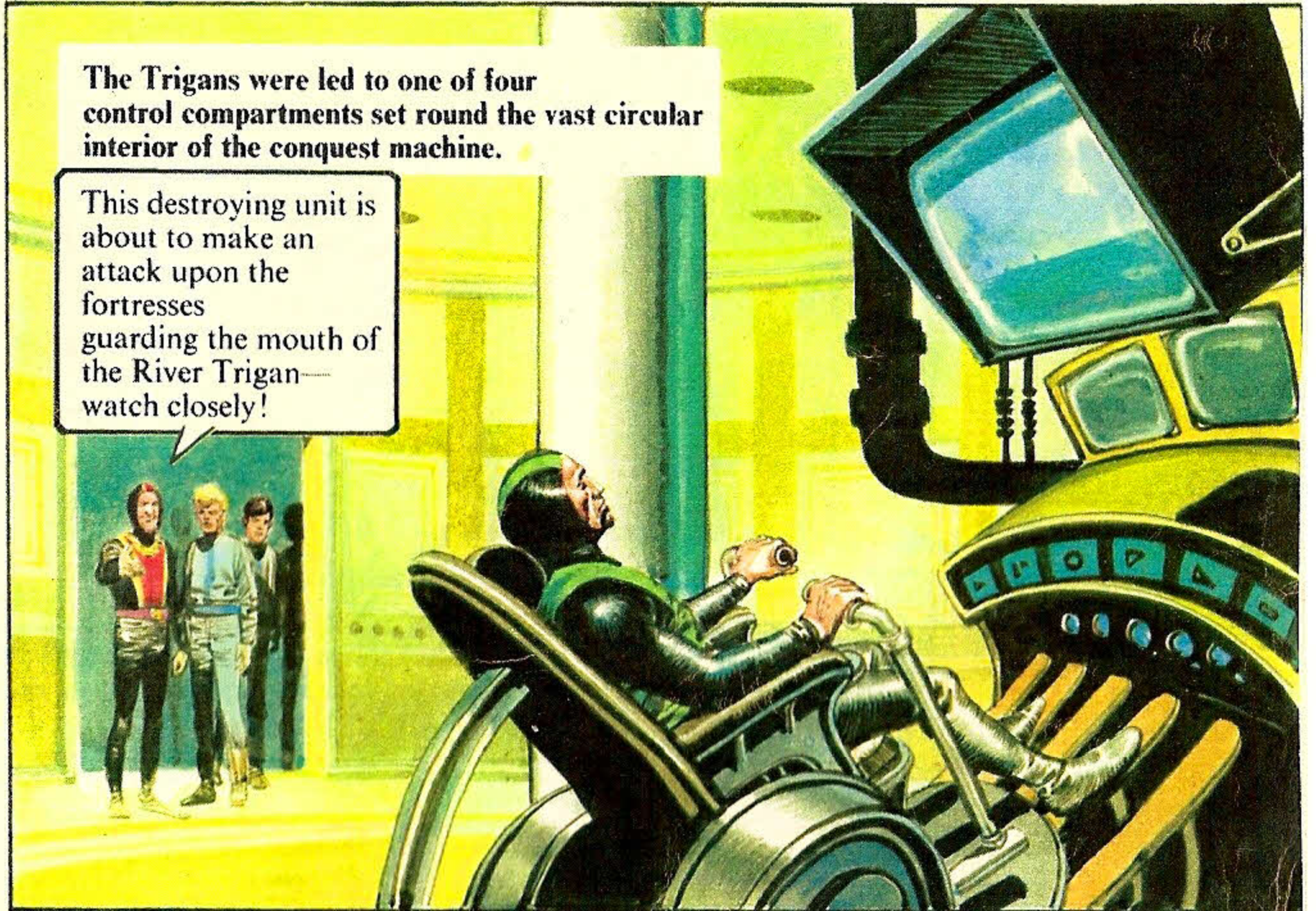
It seemed to give Ura Zircon a savage pleasure to display his might before the Trigan prisoners.

My plan of destruction is fast approaching its climax. You shall see one of the four destroying units at work!

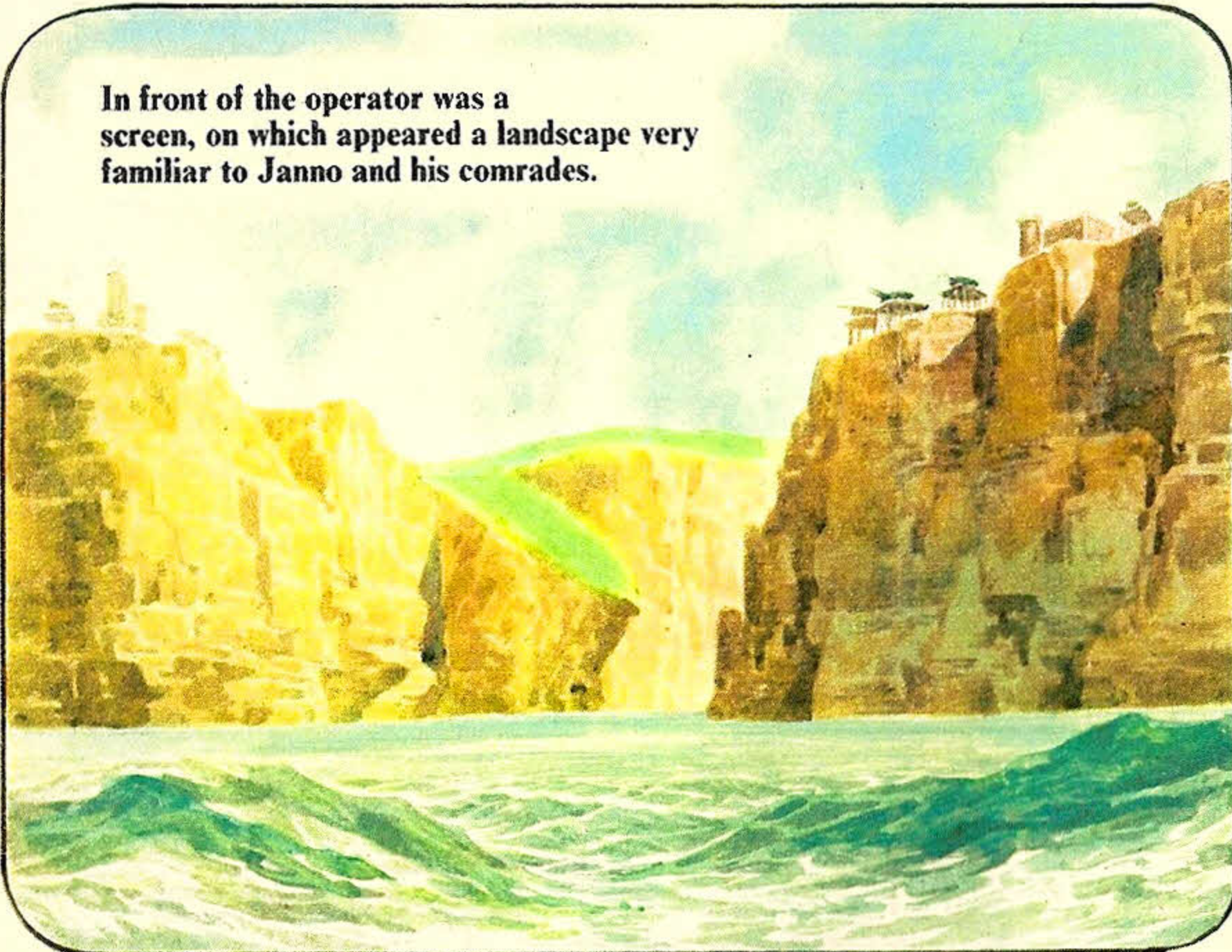


The Trigans were led to one of four control compartments set round the vast circular interior of the conquest machine.

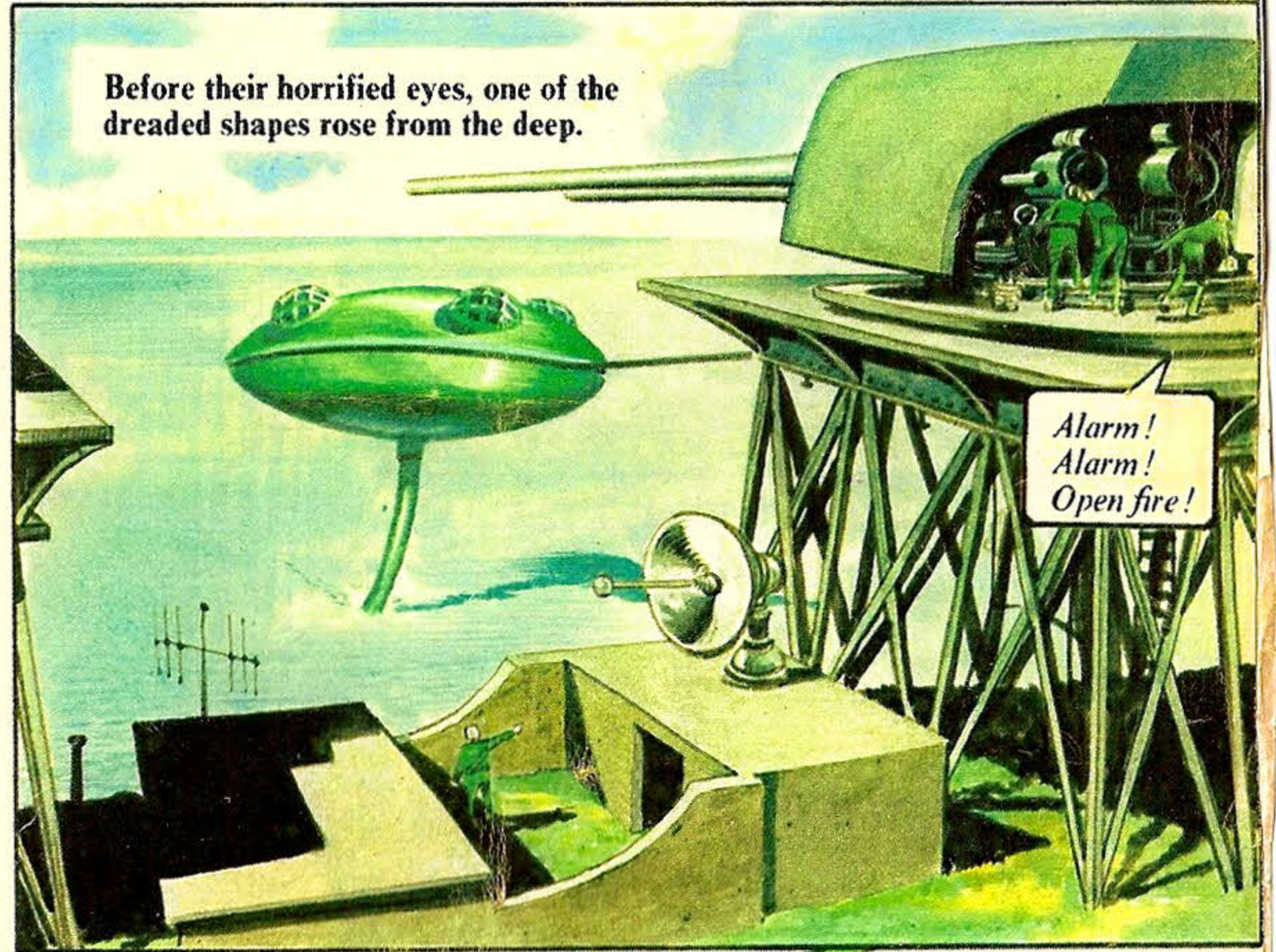
This destroying unit is about to make an attack upon the fortresses guarding the mouth of the River Trigan—watch closely!



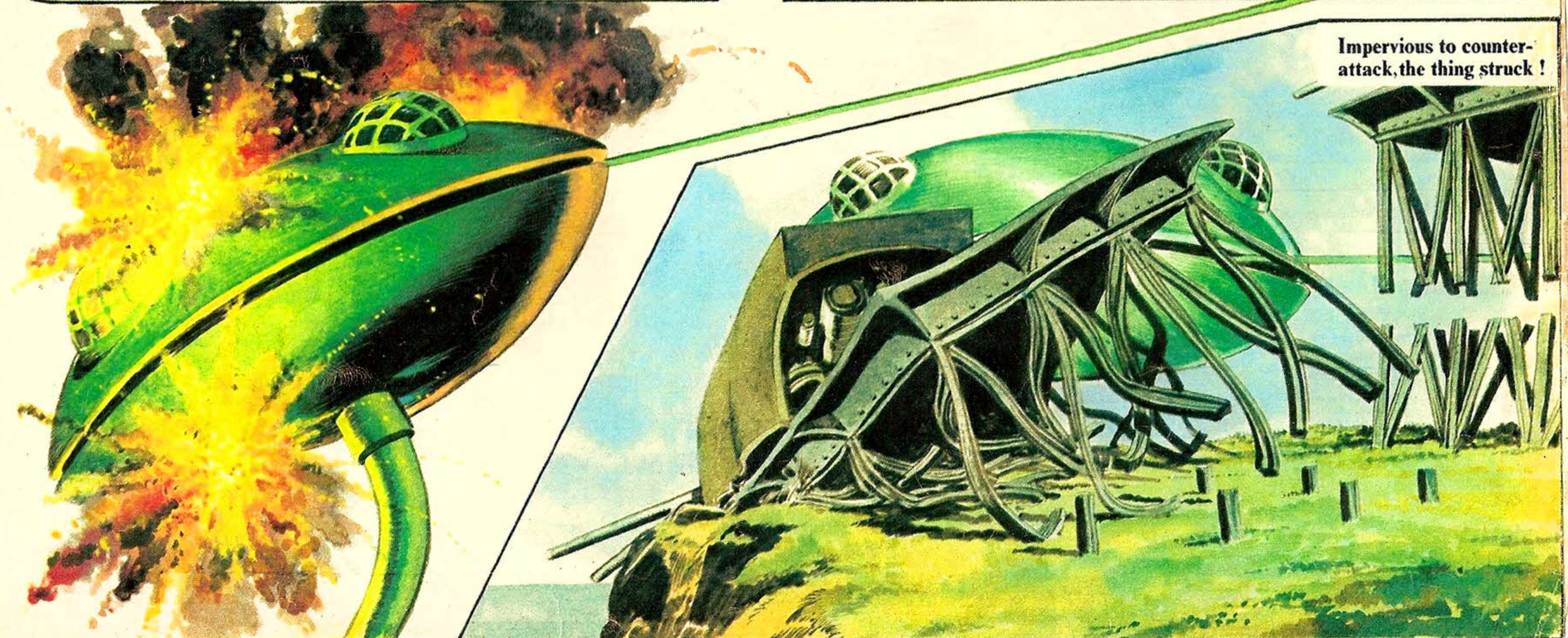
In front of the operator was a screen, on which appeared a landscape very familiar to Janno and his comrades.



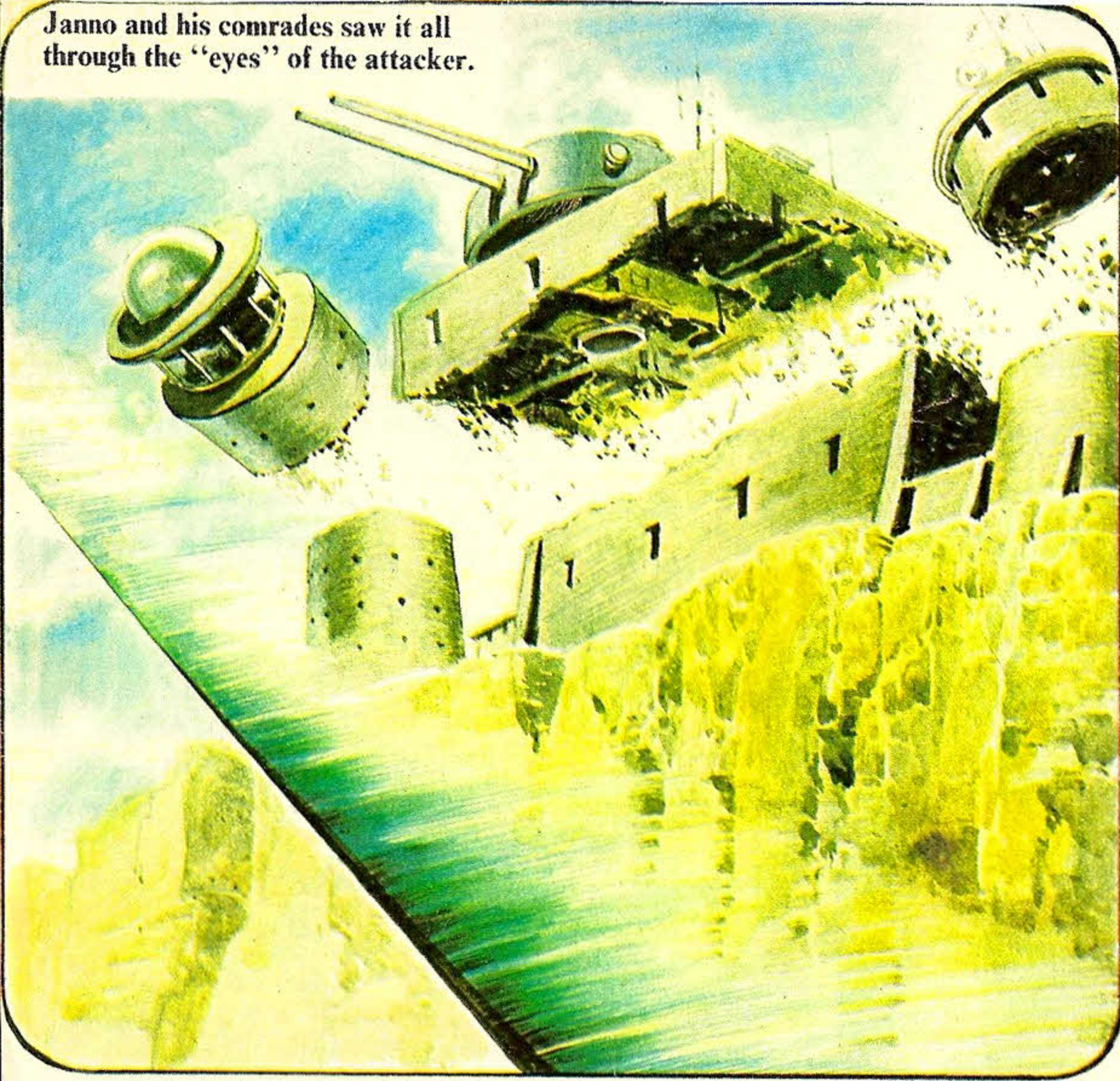
Before their horrified eyes, one of the dreaded shapes rose from the deep.



Impervious to counter-attack, the thing struck!

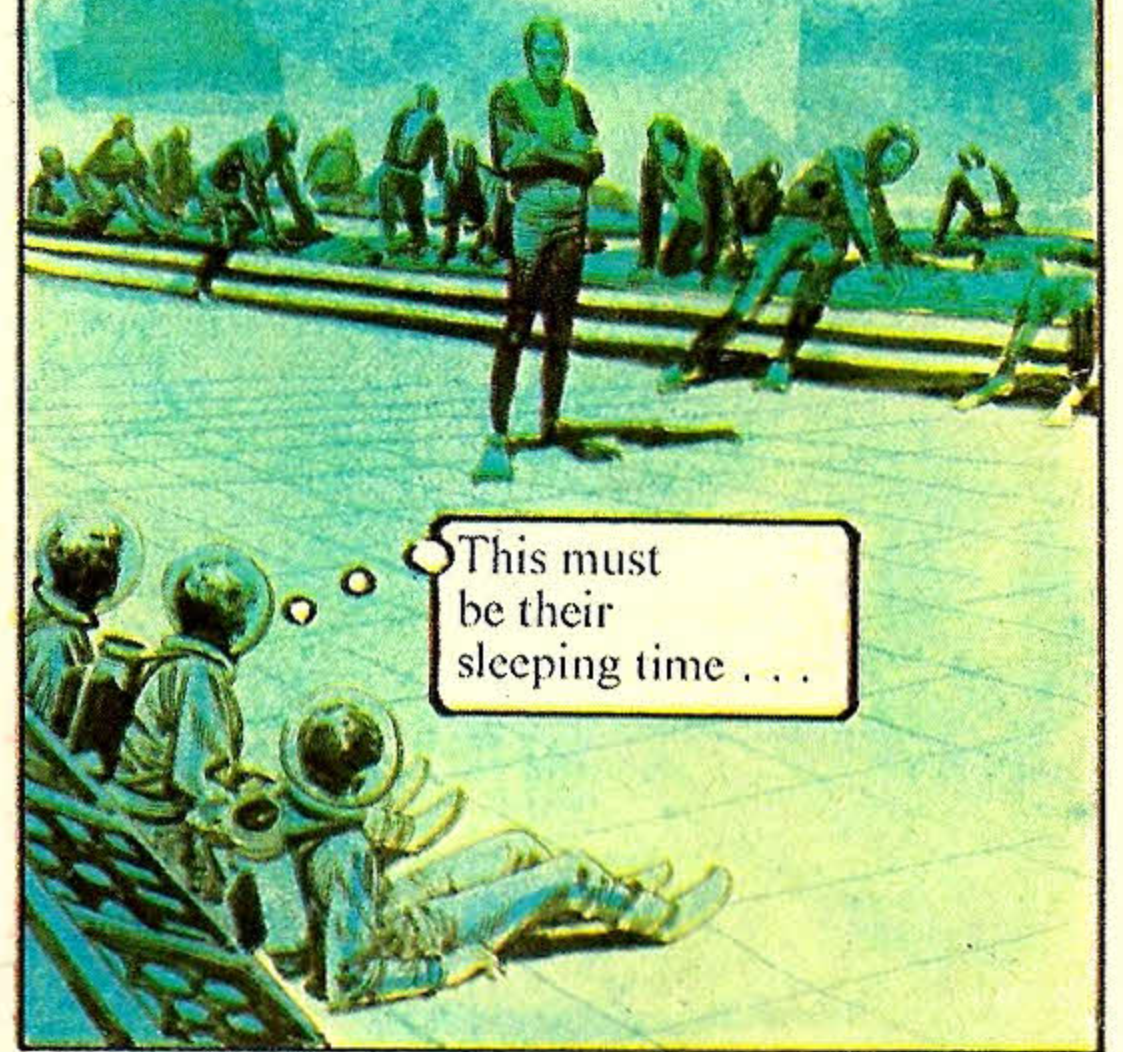


Janno and his comrades saw it all through the "eyes" of the attacker.

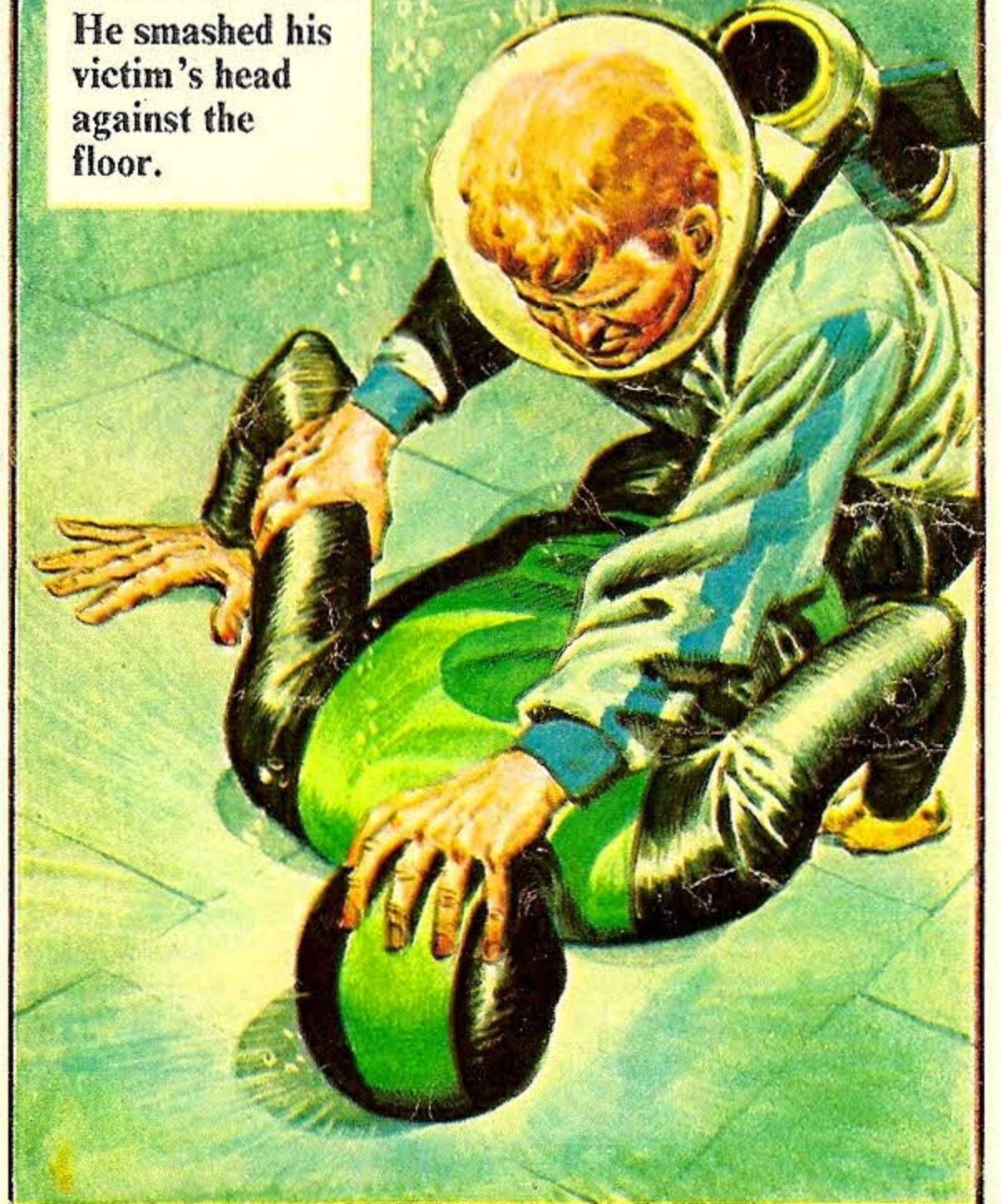


So! And now we must flood the conquest machine. We are familiarising ourselves to breathe air, but our devices work for only half the day—for the remainder we must breathe water.

Janno, Roffa and Keren were provided with their underwater breathing masks. Soon the vast interior was flooded, and their captors relaxed.

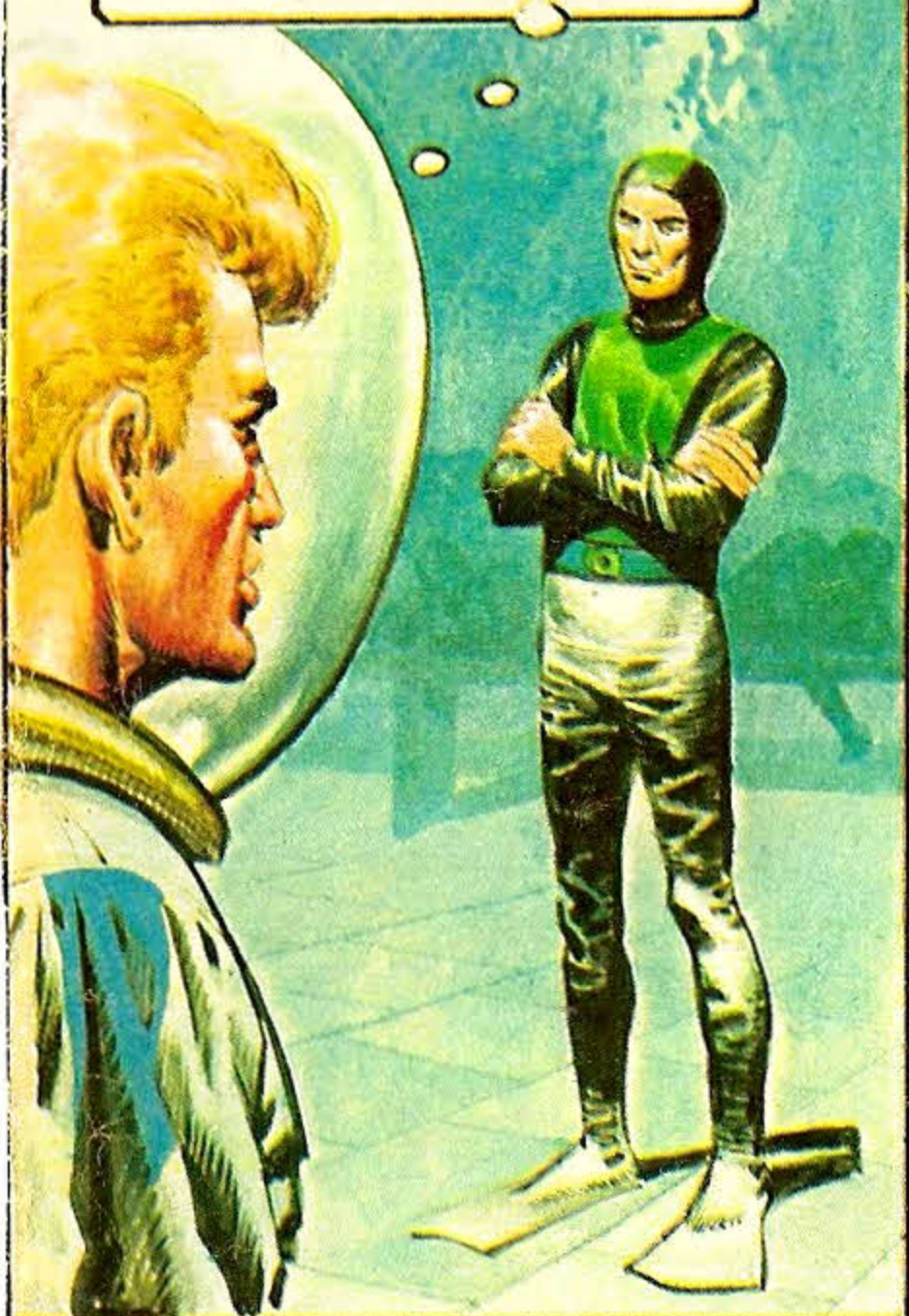


This must be their sleeping time . . .

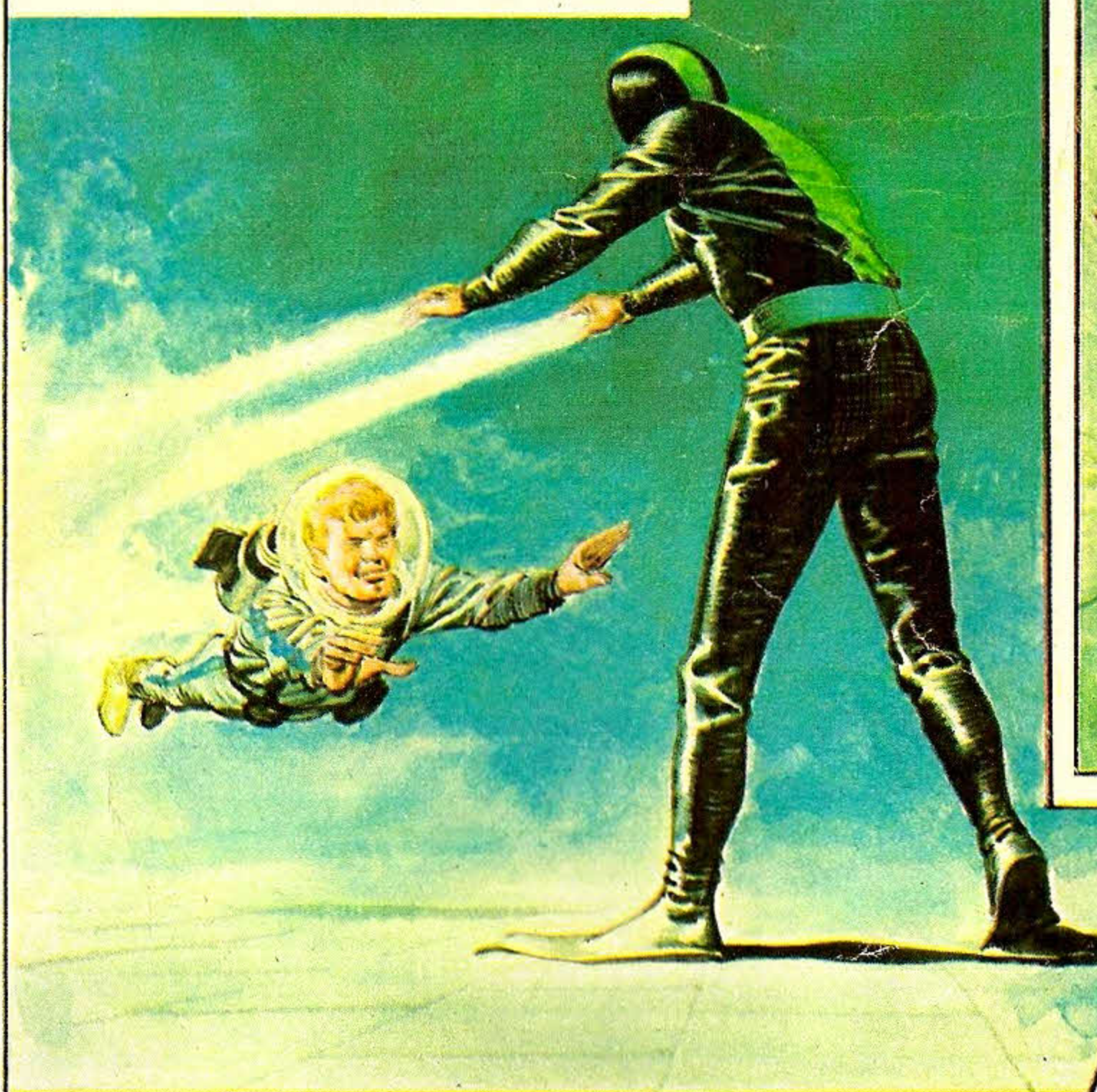


He smashed his victim's head against the floor.

Our guard isn't armed—but I know from experience that these brutes have some fiendish means of destruction.



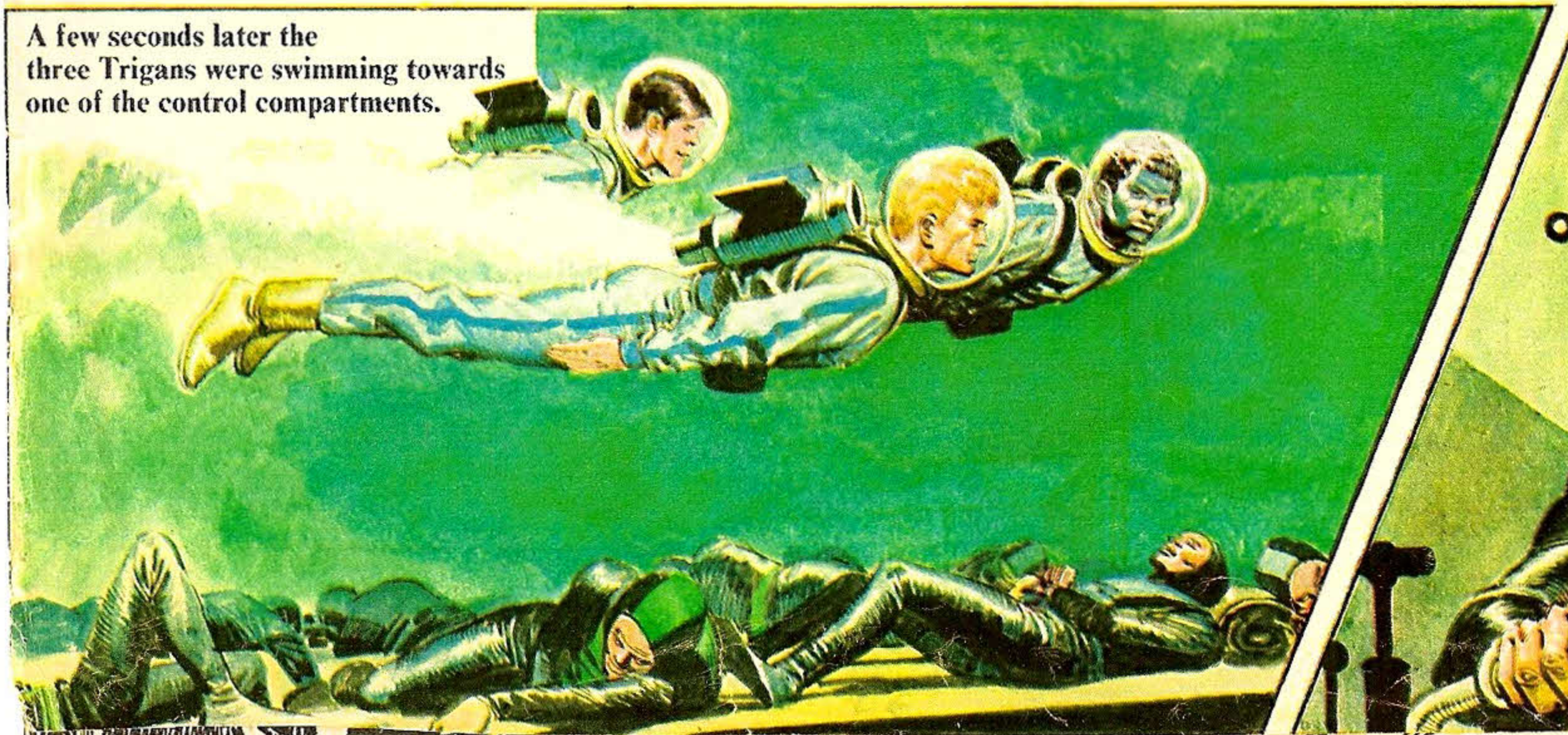
Janno dived towards the guard, dodging the forked light which seared the water.



Now! We'll put that destroying machine to our own use!



A few seconds later the three Trigans were swimming towards one of the control compartments.



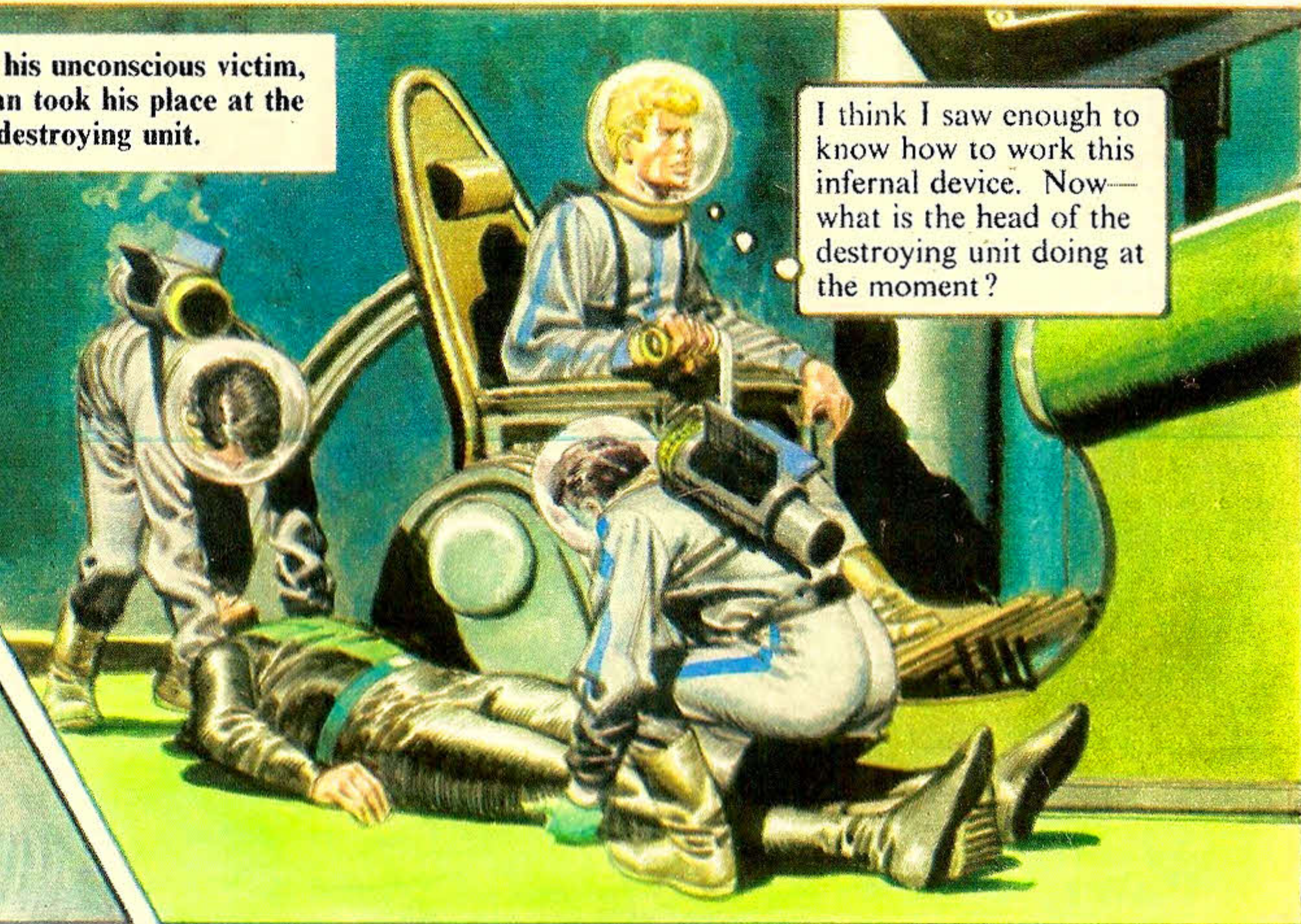
# THE TRIGAN EMPIRE

Janno and his comrades are trying to seize the controls of the submerged conquest machine, with which the people of the alien planet Thalla plan to take over Elekton.

Janno's arm encircled the Thallan's throat.

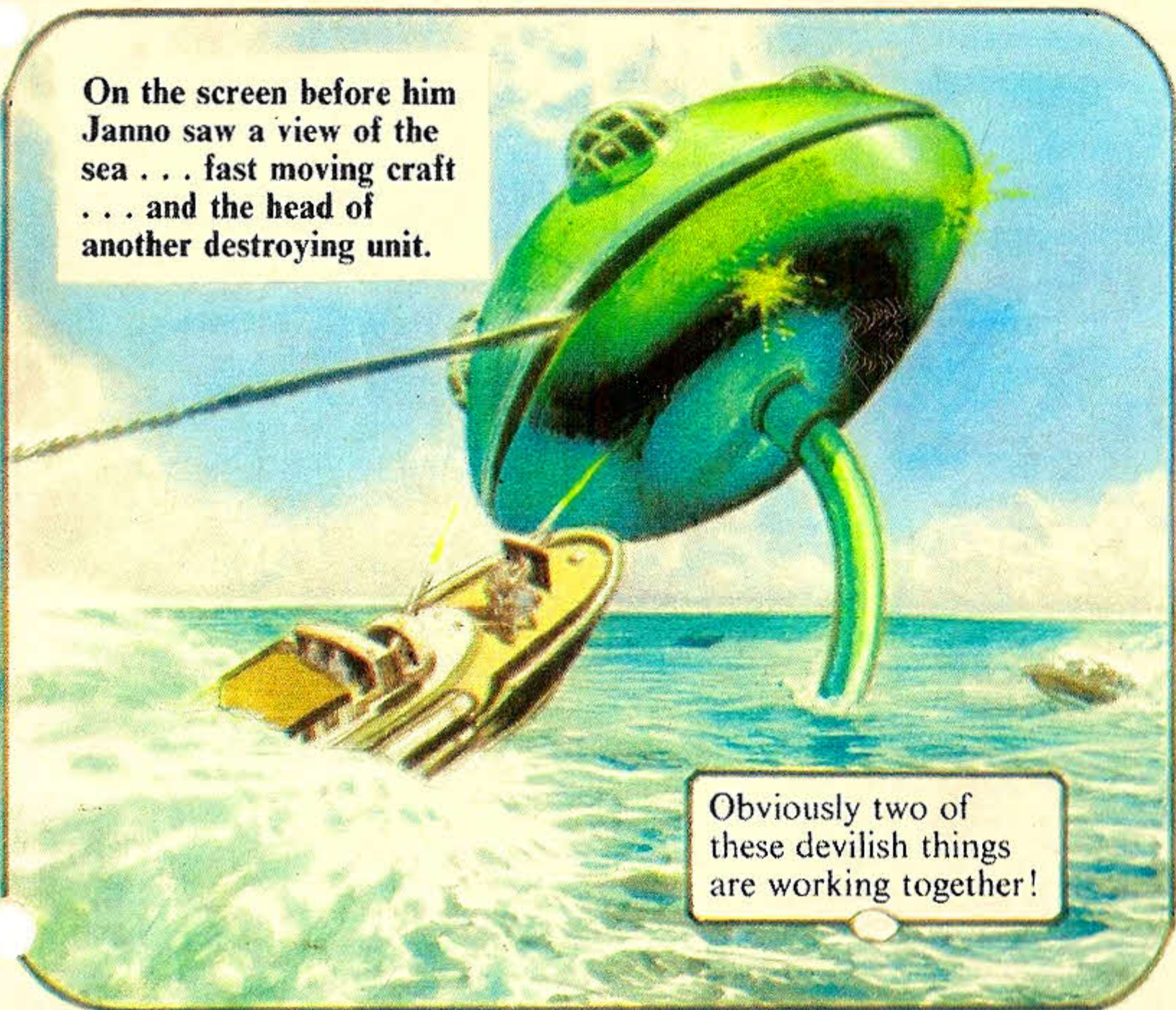


Dragging aside his unconscious victim, the young Trigan took his place at the controls of the destroying unit.

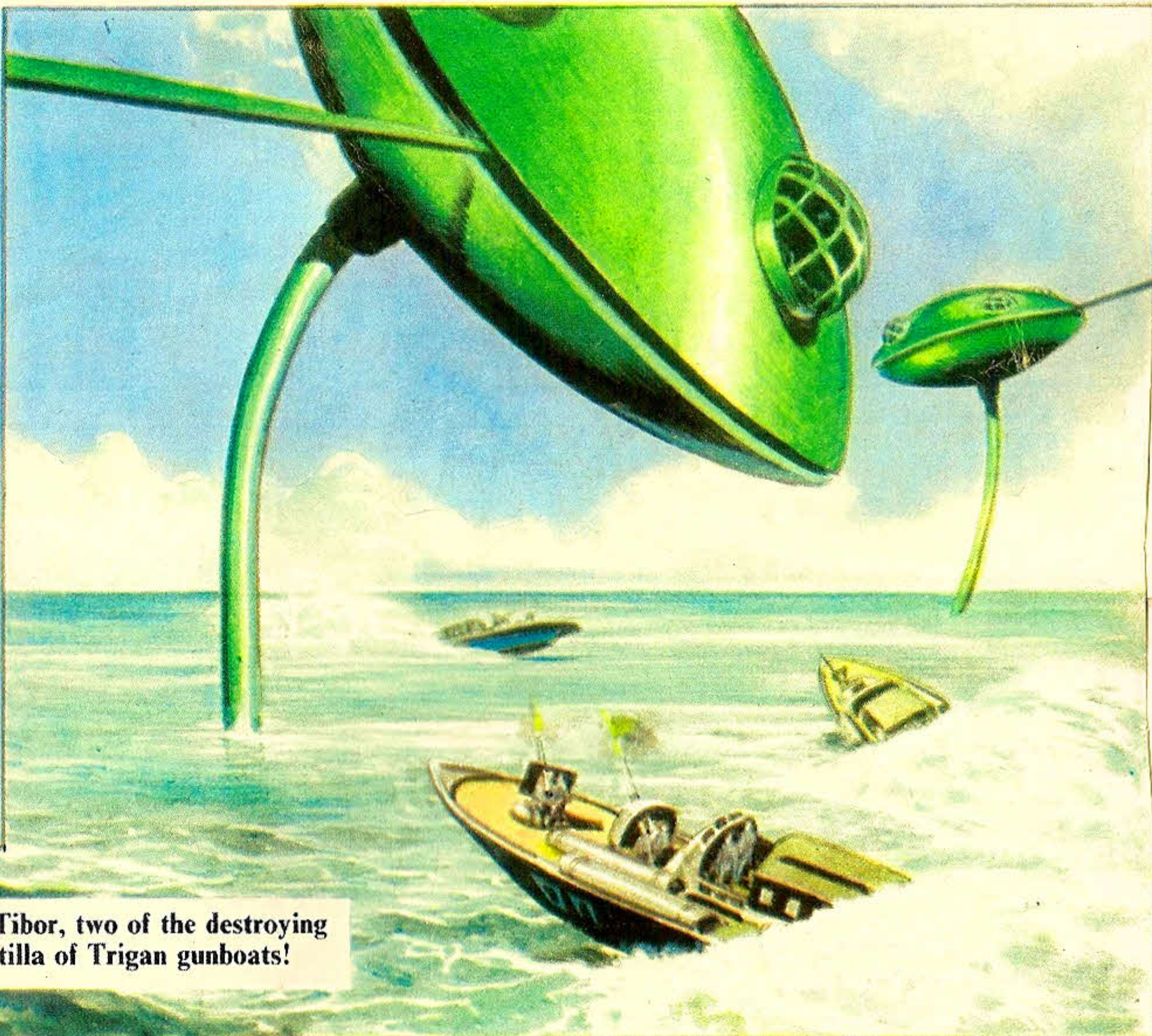


I think I saw enough to know how to work this infernal device. Now—what is the head of the destroying unit doing at the moment?

On the screen before him Janno saw a view of the sea . . . fast moving craft . . . and the head of another destroying unit.



Obviously two of these devilish things are working together!



Then, to the sailors' astonishment . . .

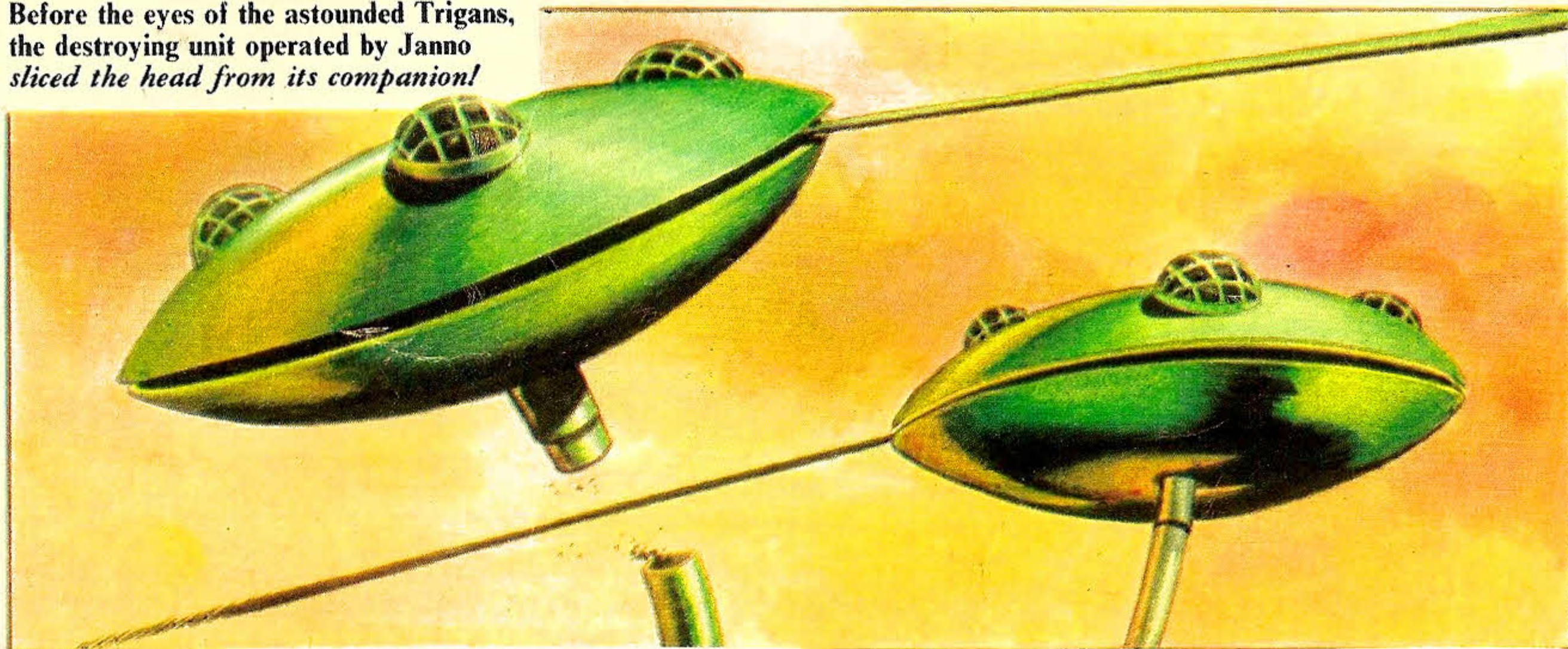


Look, sir!

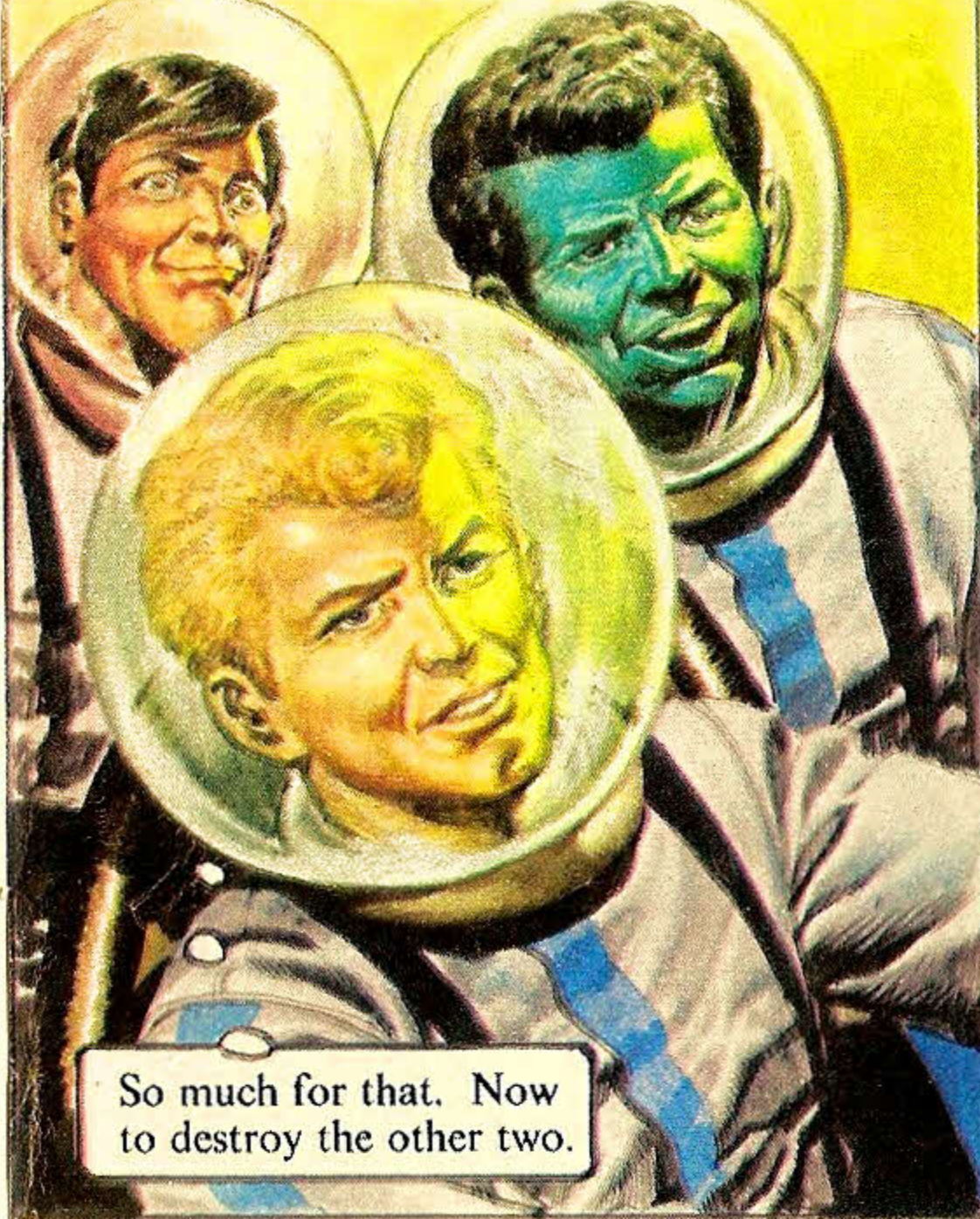
By all the stars! They're attacking each other!

Somewhere in the sea of Tibor, two of the destroying units were attacking a flotilla of Trigan gunboats!

Before the eyes of the astounded Trigans, the destroying unit operated by Janno sliced the head from its companion!

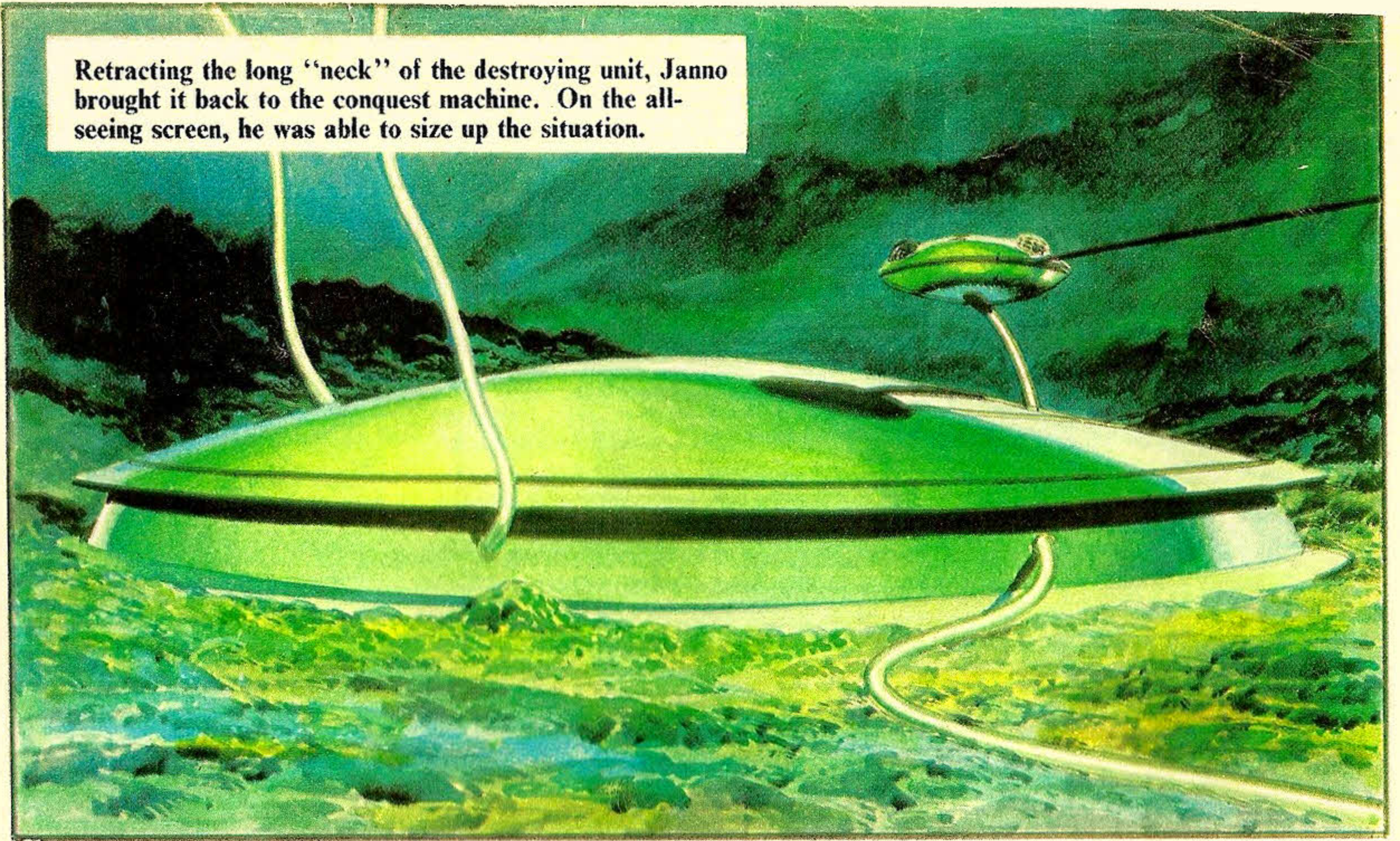


Janno's eyes danced with triumph.

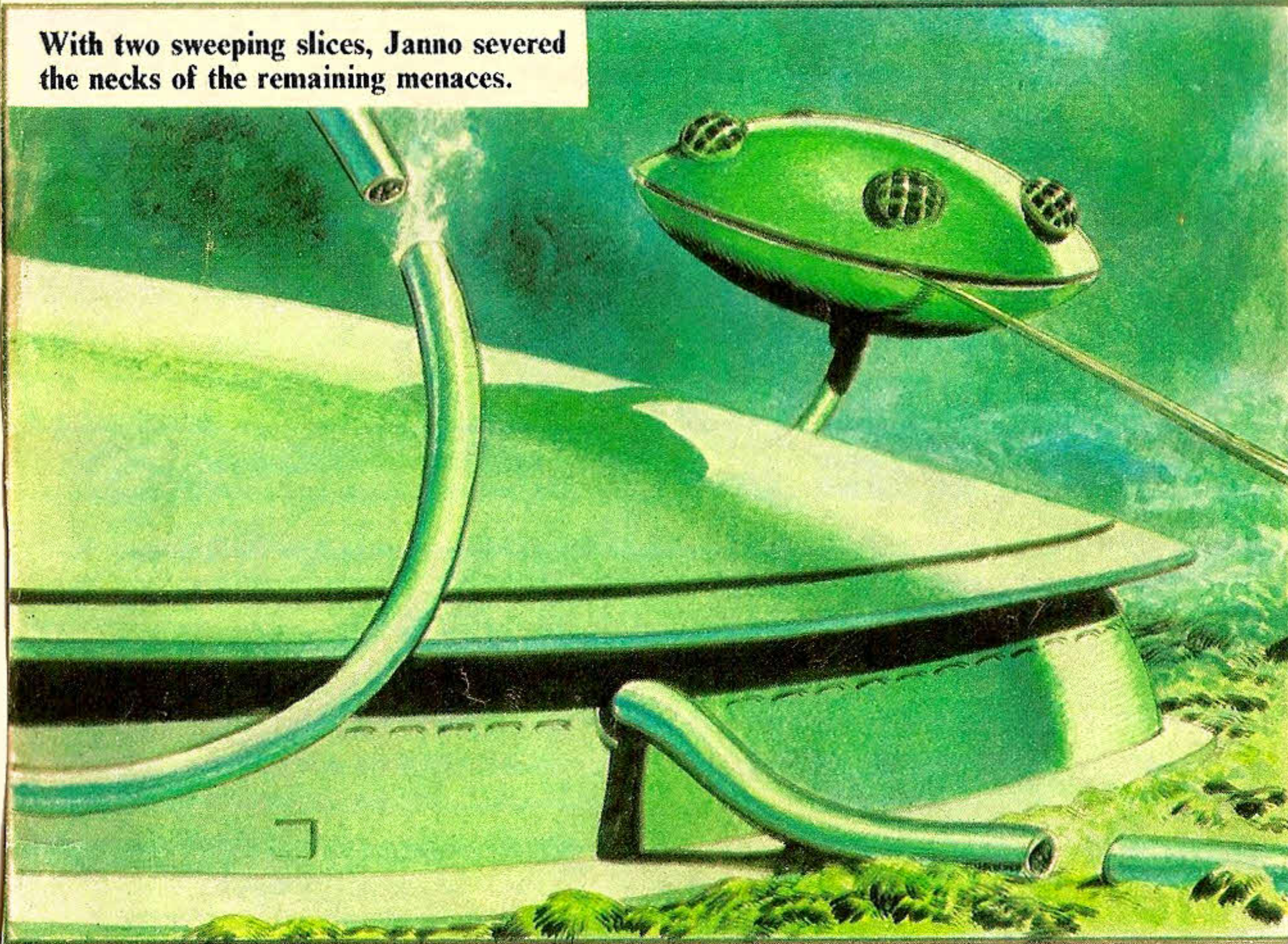


So much for that. Now to destroy the other two.

Retracting the long "neck" of the destroying unit, Janno brought it back to the conquest machine. On the all-seeing screen, he was able to size up the situation.

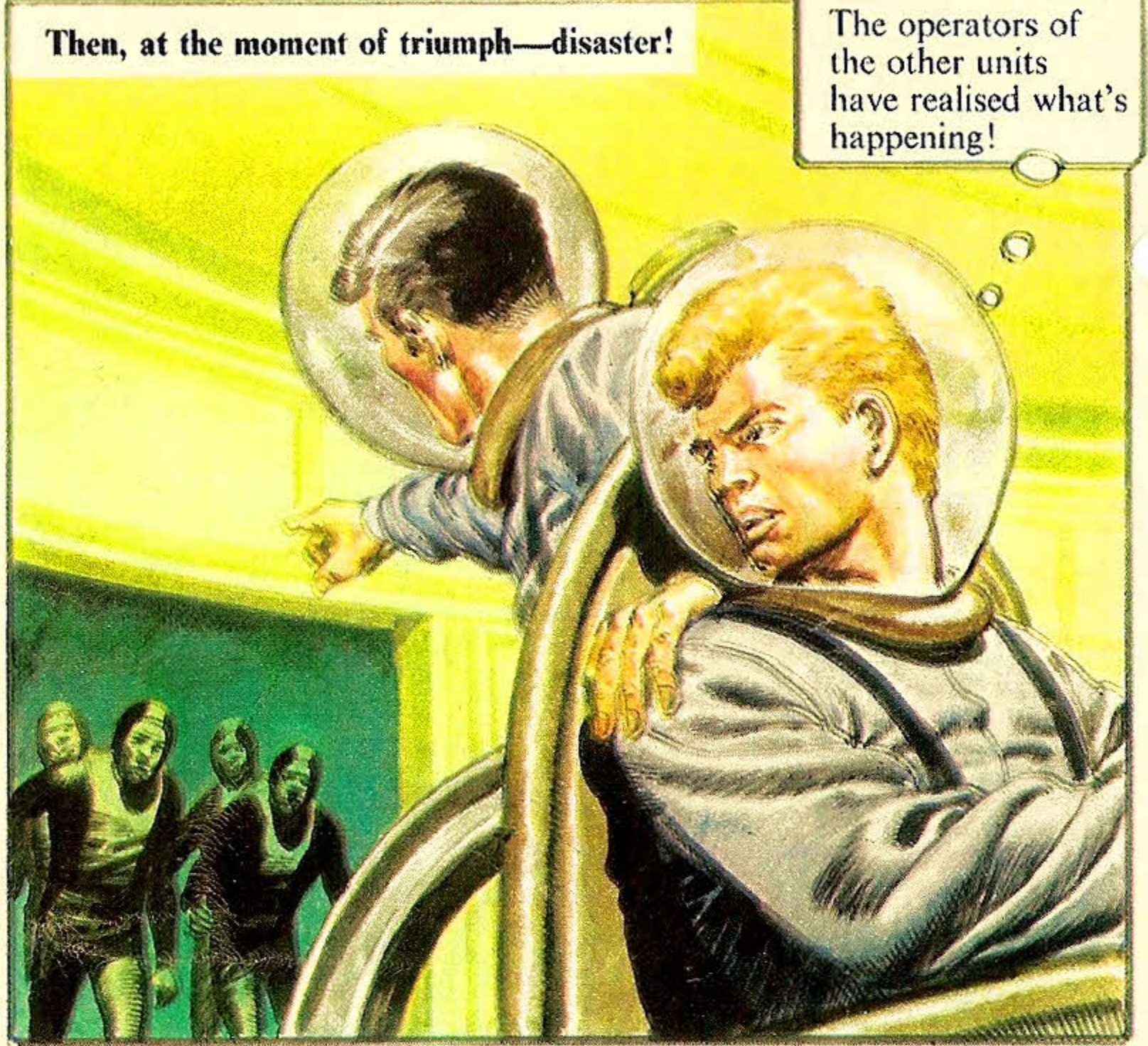


With two sweeping slices, Janno severed the necks of the remaining menaces.



Then, at the moment of triumph—disaster!

The operators of the other units have realised what's happening!



Do I have time to destroy the conquest machine itself?



As the first of the Thallans entered the control compartment, Keren and Roffa launched themselves forward to the attack.



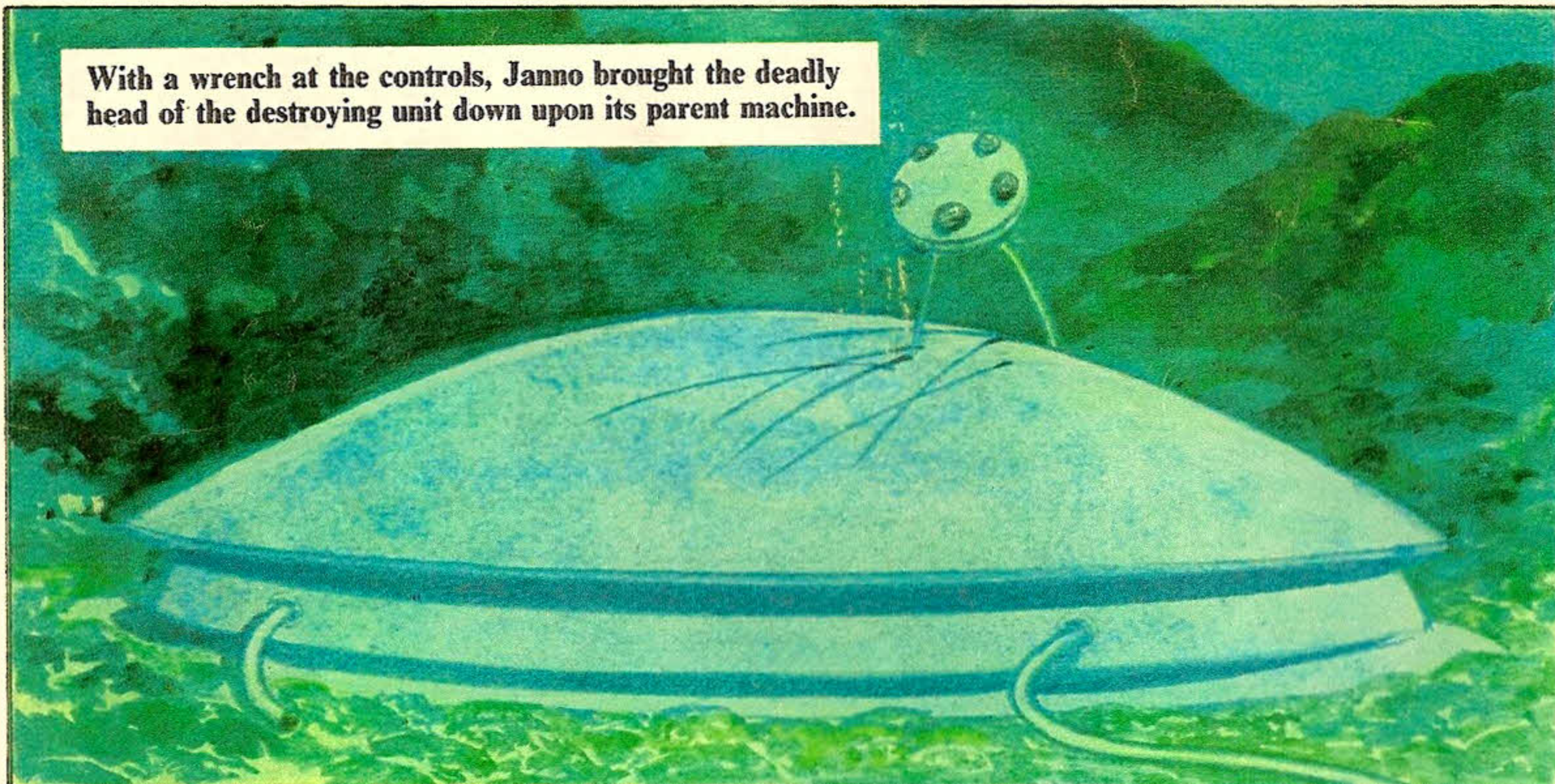
Krakkk-krakkk! Streaks of searing light dashed the two gallant Trigans to unconsciousness!



# THE TRIGAN EMPIRE

*Janno and his comrades are on the point of destroying the conquest machine from the planet Tholla. Janno has only a few seconds to complete the operation before he is overpowered.*

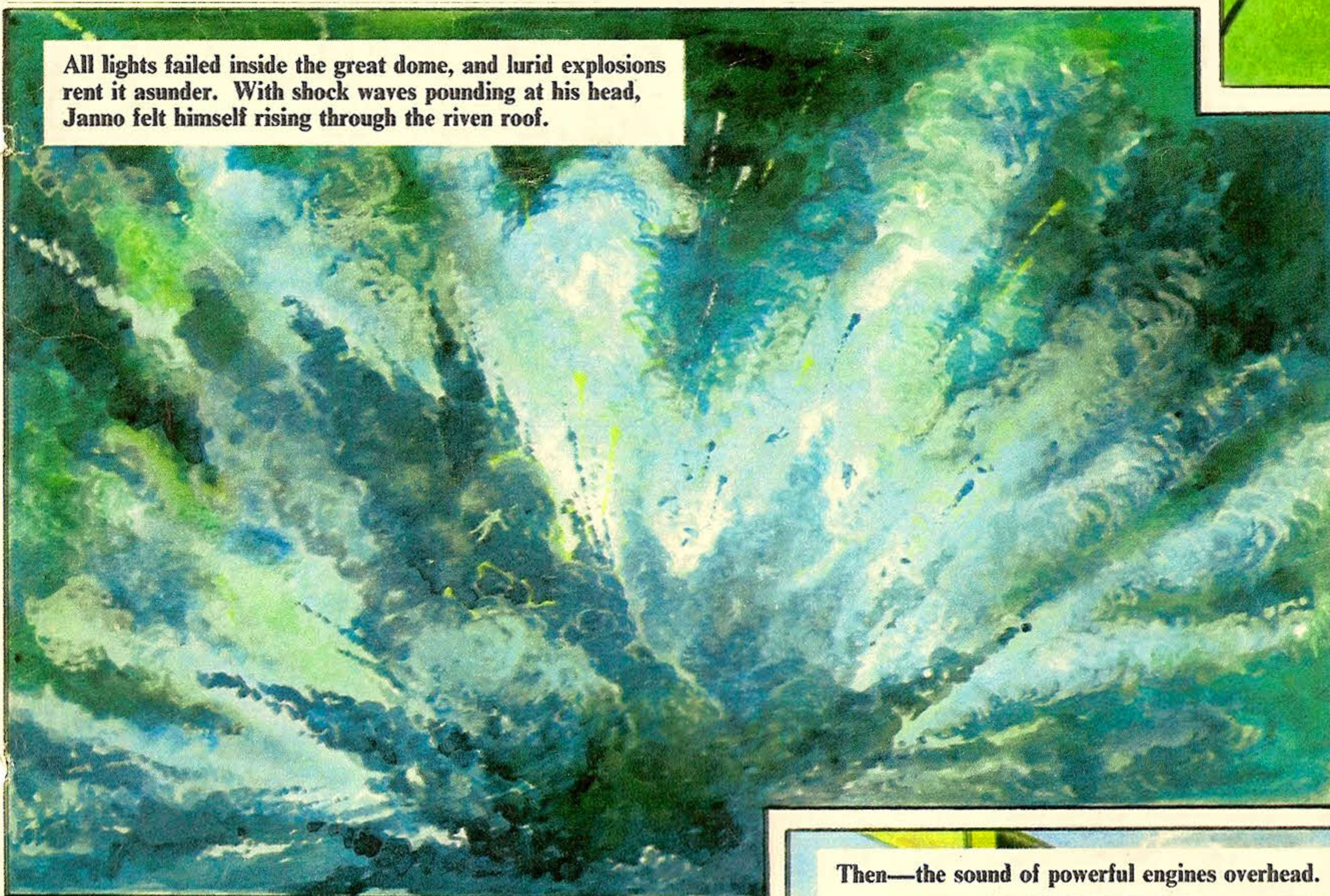
With a wrench at the controls, Janno brought the deadly head of the destroying unit down upon its parent machine.



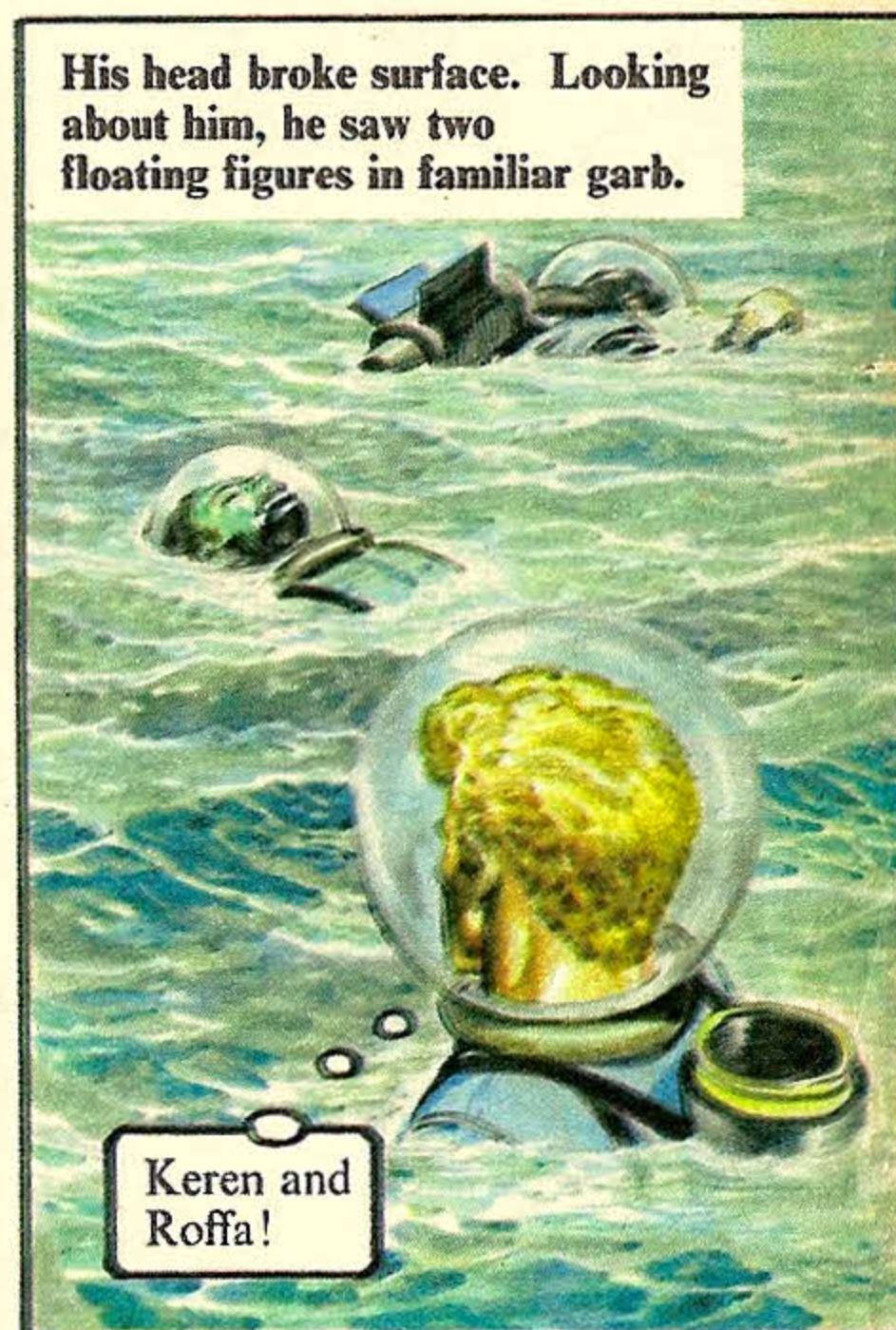
The work of destruction was swift—and final!



All lights failed inside the great dome, and lurid explosions rent it asunder. With shock waves pounding at his head, Janno felt himself rising through the riven roof.



His head broke surface. Looking about him, he saw two floating figures in familiar garb.



Keren and Roffa!

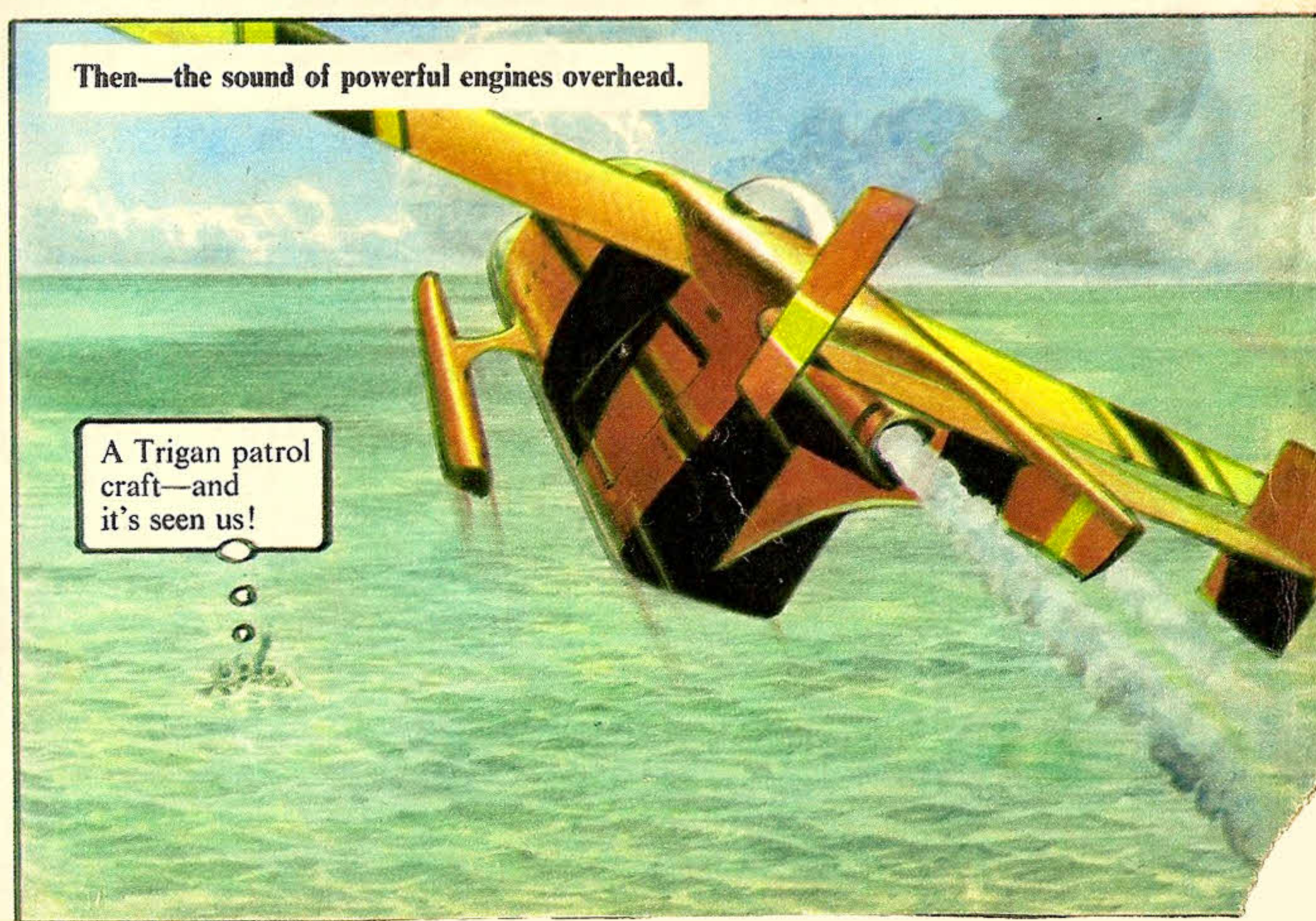
He seized his comrades.

They are still alive!

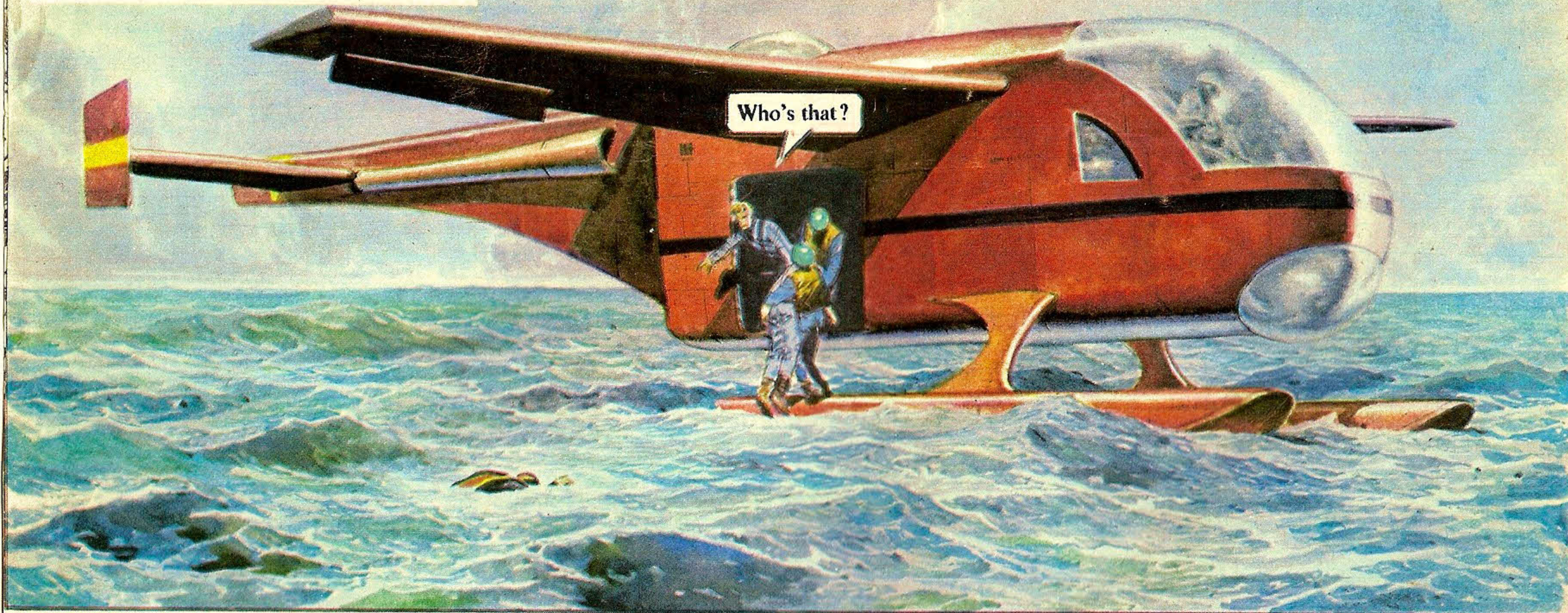


Then—the sound of powerful engines overhead.

A Trigan patrol craft—and it's seen us!



Moments later, willing hands were lifting Janno and his companions aboard the craft.



Who's that?

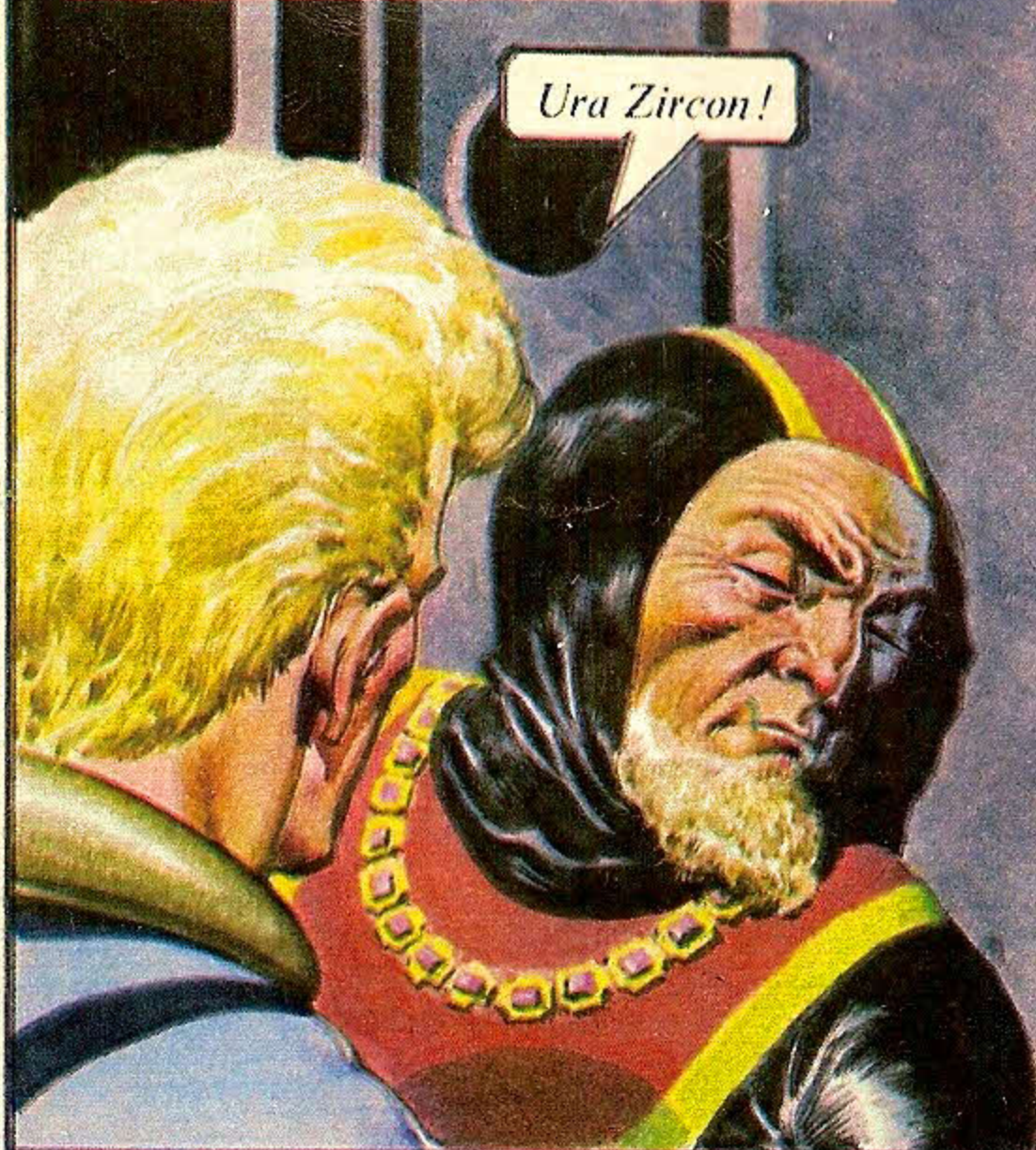
It was one of the Thallans.



Who is he, then?

One of our enemies!

And then—Janno found himself staring into the face of Ura Zircon!



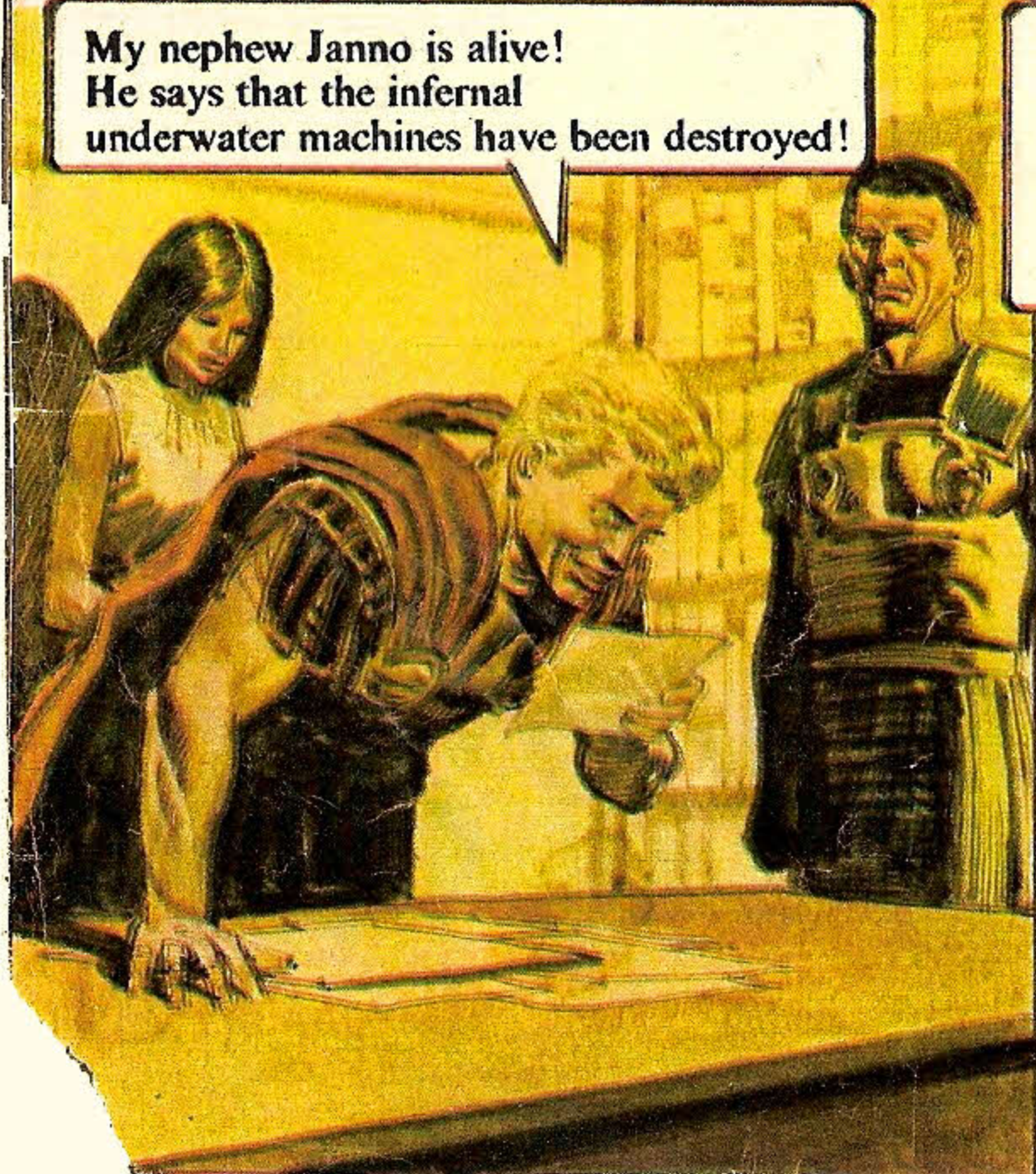
Ura Zircon!

Send a message to His Imperial Majesty—tell him that the menace is destroyed, and that we are returning with Ura Zircon, Lord of the planet Thalla!



The message reached the Emperor Trigo.

My nephew Janno is alive! He says that the infernal underwater machines have been destroyed!



Alone with his secretary, the Emperor pondered.

He says he is returning with Ura Zircon, Lord of the planet Thalla—who might he be?

That you will not live to discover, proud Emperor!



Ura Zircon's daughter extended her hands . . .



You will receive the full force of my destructive power—the killing force!



# THE TRIGAN EMPIRE

Having destroyed the conquest machine from the Planet Thalla, Janno and his companions return to Trigan City with a prisoner. But the Emperor Trigo is in great danger from his Thallan secretary.



As Sorra raised her hands to strike—Janno entered.

Uncle! We've returned—and all's well!

Nephew!

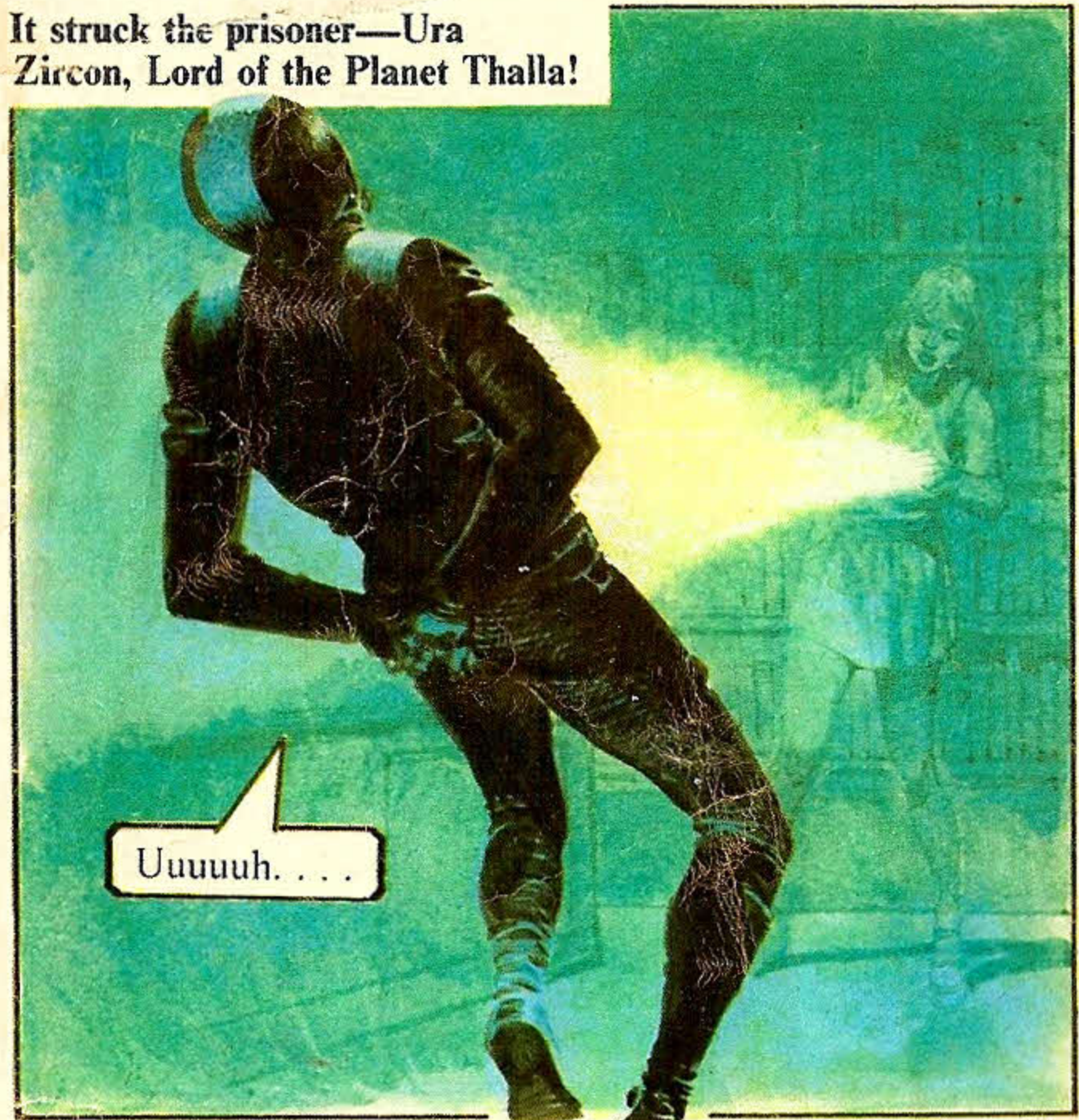


Sorra switched her aim to Janno.

You shall be the first to perish!

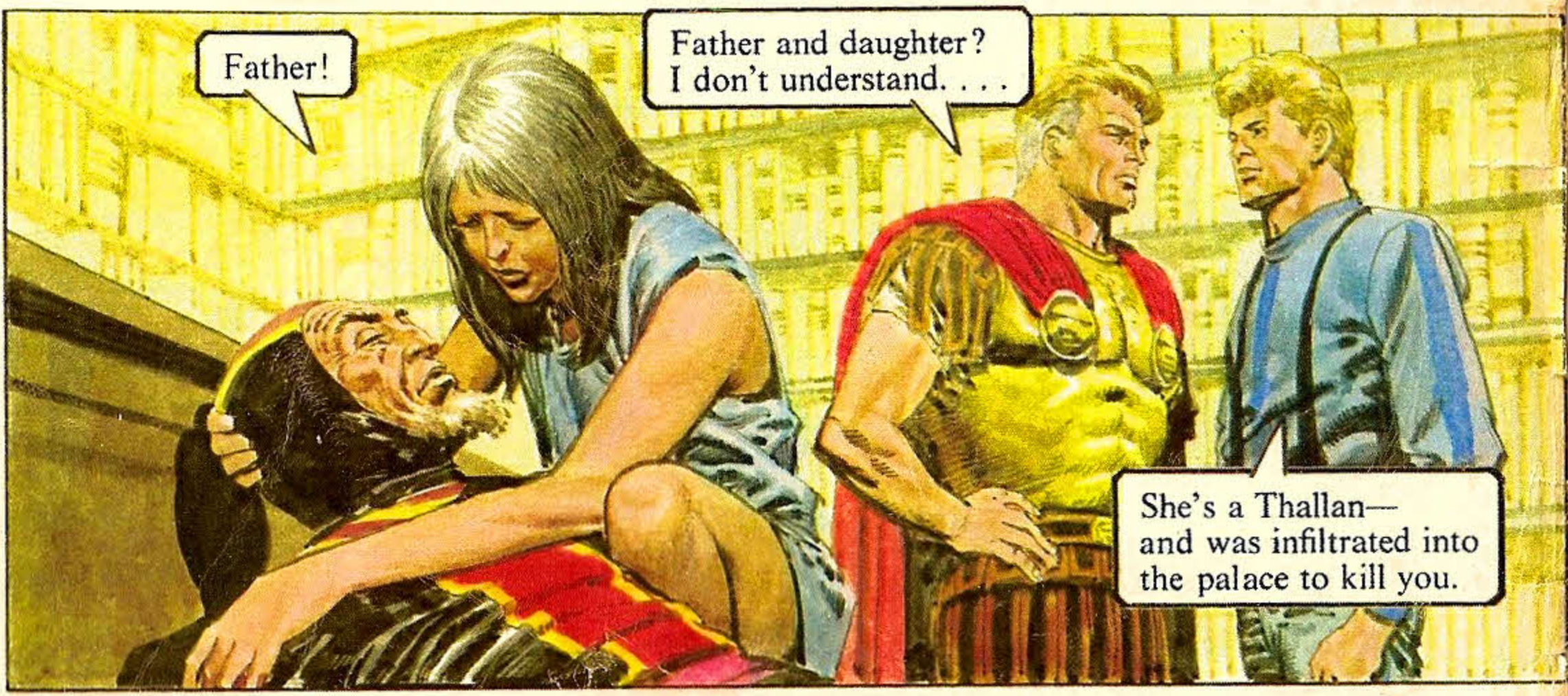
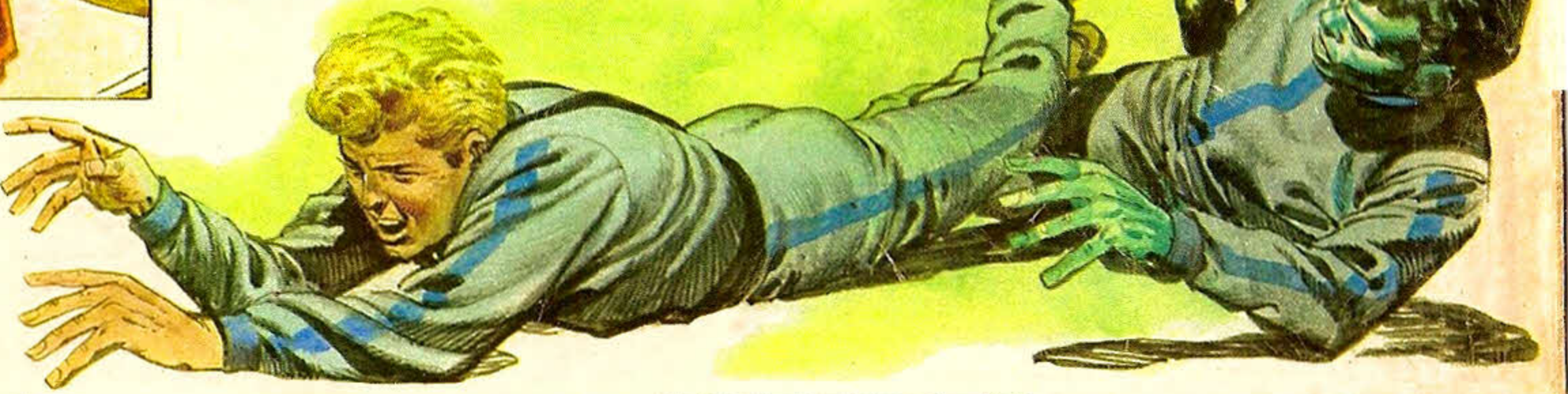


The three Trigans threw themselves aside as the searing green flame tore past.



It struck the prisoner—Ura Zircon, Lord of the Planet Thalla!

Uuuuuh. . .



Father!

Father and daughter? I don't understand. . .

She's a Thallan—and was infiltrated into the palace to kill you.



Janno told his uncle about the Thallans' search for a new planet.

What's this strange power she has?

It's some kind of electro-magnetic force they can aim from the fingertips—they all have it, which is why we tied Ura Zircon's hands behind hi



And then—Ura Zircon opened his eyes.

Oh, Father. . .

It is fortunate that the force which would have killed a Trigan was only sufficient to stun me.



There was no fight left in the Lord of Thalla.

I have failed. My people are at your mercy—what are you going to do with us?

That is for the Imperial Council to decide.

That same day, the council of the Empire met to decide the fate of the Thallans. Trigo listened to their views.

These monsters should be destroyed!

No—send them back where they came from!

Kill them, I say!

And then . . .

I say *NO!* There will be no more killing. The Trigan Empire has absorbed many peoples within its boundaries—why not the Thallans?

So it was that the Thallan survivors were brought before the Emperor.

You will be given a vast area on the bed of the Great Ocean. Develop it—build your cities—raise your crops—and live in peace.

Thank you, Imperial Majesty!

Later, Trigo spoke with Ura Zircon.

Tell me—why did you choose Elekton for conquest?

It was the most suitable for our needs. We made many exploratory journeys to other planets. . . .

Ura continued . . .  
“including Earth. No doubt we alarmed them. . . .”

I wonder if the people of that planet could have defeated you—as we did!