THE TRIGAN EMPIRE

The planet Elekton lies in the galaxy of Yarna, and the greatest power on Elekton is the empire of Triga, ruled over by its founder the emperor Trigo.

Our next strange story begins in the month of Yuss, on the day of the Imperial Examinations.

A raggedly-dressed student named Robi took his seat among candidates from all over the Trigan Empire.

The questions are simple enough. If I had bothered to go through the drudgery of study, I could have answered them all. . . .

. . . as it is, I shall have to rely on this tablet, which contains all the information I need!

Robi was a brilliant scholar but lazy. He cheated, and passed out top of the Imperial Examinations.

At the head of the list is . . . Robi!

Ha!—that should get me a top job in the Imperial Service!

Indeed, the cheat was appointed assistant to none other than Peric, the most brilliant scientist on Elekton!

My boy! With all the great work I am carrying out, it is an enormous relief to have the assistance of such a promising young scientist as yourself. And when I am gone, all this will be yours!

Pompous old windbag! Does he think I'm going to wait around to step into his shoes? Not me! If I haven't lied and cheated my way into fame and fortune within the next lunar year, my name isn't Robi!

THE TRIGAN EMPIRE

The planet Elekton lies in the galaxy of Yarna, and the greatest power on Elekton is the empire of Triga, ruled over by its founder the emperor Trigo.

One day, while practicing low flying, Janno the Emperor's nephew, felt his craft give a frightening shudder.

By all the stars! The engine is overheating! I've got to get out of here before it blows up!

He used the ejector device to swiftly leave the falling craft.

Aaaaaah!

Janno was lucky. He survived the crash with nothing worse than a broken leg which was fixed by Elekton's best surgeon, Peric.

Yes, Master.

I have fixed the break in the bone. You may remove the patient to reception,Robi.

Later, during his convelesance, Janno visited Peric in his laboratory.

This is my new assistant. His name is Robi and he earned the distiction of passing the top of the Imperial examinations. I will have help in here now

I am so pleased you are going to assist Peric, it's the greatest honour on Electon, Robi.

You are too kind, Lord Janno.

And how are things with you, Peric? Working on any exciting experiments? ..... This looks like an intresting piece of apperatus. What is it?

It is the challenge of my life! I have been working on it for many years and have been so close to success, but.....

It's a device for transmitting an object from one place to another by breaking it up into it's individual atomic particles! It was going to move objects from the left to the right hand compartment..... Unfortunately it remains sitting in a pile of metallic dust.

Master, i would consider it an honour to be allowed to work on the device - in my own spare time of course

Certainly you can Robi. A young fresh mind is just what's needed to solve this problem.

Translated from Indonesian copy and thumbnails

Translated from Indonesian copy

Later that day, while cleaning up the laboratory, Peric's assistant turned.....

What's this? A signet ring! It's like the one the Emperor's nephew was wearing when he was here. He might have dropped it!

Why, it's Janno's ring!

Robi was in short, a liar and a thief, but he was also brilliant and ambitious. He sacrificed many long nights at Peric's device.

The problem with the whole thing is that this side fails to completely move the particles. Now if I were to make certain fundamental changes to the polarity.

That night...

Now to see if it works. First we take the ring that formerly belonged to the pilot, Lord Janno and place it in the left hand compartment.....

Haaaaa... It's working! It's working!

This is not a device for transporting matter but a device for duplicating matter!! From the left hand compartment we take Lord Janno's ring - and from the right we take the ring's duplicate!

This device is going to make me the richest and most powerful man on Electon!

Translated from Indonesian copy

THE TRIGAN EMPIRE

7 o o e

It happened in a dark alleyway in a rough district of Trigan City. A figure lunged out at a passer-by and a heavy cudgel was raised for a murderous blow!

But the blow never fell!

Hmmm. What have I caught?A petty thief, the rotten and most commonplace type. But he will serve my purpose.

Uuuuuh!

Later the brigand recovered consciousness.

Aaaaah! Where am I? Don't kill me, master. I- I intended no harm, I swear it!

You meant the old woman harm, you thief - but i am willing to overlook it.

Robi smirked.

In fact, I will make you better than that. I will make you the richest thief in Trigan City if you obey my every command!

The following morning, Robi went to Air Fleet Headquarters, his importance as Electon's top scientist had awarded a pass that allowed him in the air base.

Here comes Janno now. I'll speak to him when he gets out of hs craft. It's a great idea to be good friends with a member of the Imperial Family!

Translated from Indonesian copy

Janno recognised the young scientist.

Hello! Robi isn't it? As you see my leg is healed and I'm back on flying duty.

Very glad to see you've recovered, Lord Janno. I've brought something for you, something you probably thought you'd lost for ever....

My signet ring!

You dropped it the day you visited the laboratory, Lord Janno. I found it when I was sweeping up this morning.

Janno was gracious in his thanks. He would have been surprised to have seen what Robi held in his hand as he walked away.

Everybody's happy! Lord Janno has his ring back and I have a real duplicate of it!

That night, Trigan City suffered the first of many inexplicable thefts. Robi's hoodlum stole a collection of gems from the homeof a millionaire.

Cry out - and it will be the last sound you will make!

Aaaagh! Take the jewels! Take anything- just don't hurt me!

He delivered them to the Imperial Laboratories where Robi worked.

Good! Now wait outside 'till I call you. I will have need of your services again before dawn.

With the use of the strange device he had secretly repaired, the brilliant young scientist duplicated the precious gems!!

Ha ha! Nothing can stop me now..... nothing! By the end of the lunr year I shall be able to buy and sell the Trigan Empire!

There was a surprise in store for his henchman later,

You want me to return this loot to where I stole it from? Master... Have you gone mad?

No my friend, I have not gone mad.I have merely discovered the perfect crime!

THE TRIGAN EMPIRE

Robi, the brilliant but unscrupulous assistant to Elekton's top scientist, Peric, has stumbled on a scientific principle that must in time make him the richest and most powerful man on the planet.

Nightly and in great secrecy, Robi made use of the strange device in his master's laboratory.

Nothing can stop me now—nothing!

The device was capable of duplicating any precious object placed within it. There was only one snag—it would only make one copy of each object, and the duplicates could not be copied.

What's more, the law cannot touch me—for I commit no crime!

The activities of Robi's henchmen mystified and worried the Commissioner of the Trigan City Police. He reported it to the Emperor.

. . . a series of the strangest thefts that has ever come into my experience, Imperial Majesty! Only items of the greatest value are taken —and then returned to where they belong within a few hours!

This raises a puzzling point of law, Commissioner—is it a crime, in the Trigan Empire, to borrow another person's possessions without asking permission?

Er—I rather fancy it *isn't*, Imperial Majesty!

Nightly the strange thefts continued.

Peric, meanwhile, had no inkling of what his device was doing.

By the way—have you managed to get any sense out of this confounded contraption?

Not yet, master. Maybe its workings are too difficult for me to comprehend—but I live in hopes. It would be simpler if I could remove it from the laboratory and work on it at home.

Take it with my blessing. I don't think it will ever work properly.

Thank you, master!

You old fool! Little do you know that you are giving away a fortune!

Once the device was set up in his own lodgings, Robi was able to spend all his spare time in adding to his hoard.

What about this! I sneaked it out of the State Museum!

Wonderful! Wonderful!

But what's this? By all the stars, this ring you're wearing was supposed to have been returned days ago! What happened to its companion pieces, you rogue?

I—I sold them! Well, why not? I'm sick of taking stuff and then having to return it.

Sold them? You blundering dolt! Don't you realise, that if the city police trace these pieces back to you, we could both spend the next ten lunar years in the mines?

Get out and stay out! I've finished with you!

Aaaaaaaaaaagh!

I've not finished with you, master!

Robi was in despair. All night long, he racked his brains for a solution to his problem.

What am I to do! I could pick another thief out of the gutter—but the same thing would happen again. If only I had an accomplice I could trust!

And then—his eyes fell upon the strange device. And a wild idea sprang into his mind!

Supposing I were to make a duplicate of my own self?

There is only one person on Elekton I can really trust—myself!

THE TRIGAN EMPIRE

Robi, the brilliant but crooked assistant to Elekton's top scientist Peric, has stumbled upon a scientific principle which must in time make him the richest and most powerful man on the planet—he is able to duplicate anything—and anybody!

It is at this point in time that fate intrudes upon our strange story. A Trigan warship, voyaging in thick fog, collided with a passenger liner from Cato.

Stop engines!

Aaah! The accursed Trigan is going to ram us!

The Caton vessel sank with appalling casualties.

The mishap was twisted to their own advantage by an extremist party in the Caton senate who wished to crush the Trigan Empire.

I say that it was a deliberate attack upon one of our unarmed passenger liners. How much longer is Cato going to swallow these outrages?

On the day that Cato declared war upon the Trigan Empire, Robi completed certain adjustments to his strange device.

And now— to see if it is capable of duplicating me!

Krakkkk-kkkk-kkkk! . . . As the machine began to work . . .

AAAEEEEEAAAGH!

When it was all over, he stepped out and came face-to-face with— *himself!*

By the stars! It has worked!

You are me!

And I am you —we are *duplicates!*

Because you are a duplicate of myself, I can trust you implicitly. Together, we can become the richest and most powerful inhabitants of this planet. Listen, and I will tell you the details of my plan . . .

Meanwhile, in a low tavern in the roughest part of Trigan city, the sneak thief who had formerly been Robi's accomplice was doing business with a pair of cut-throats.

All right! You want us to get rid of this Robi fellow—what are you going to pay us?

How about this ring?—worth an Emperor's ransom!

Done! Robi is as good as dead.

Later that day . . .

There he is —he fits the description of Robi!

Right— let's get him!

One . . . two . . .

Three! and away he goes!

Uuuuh . . .

They hurled the limp form of their victim from the highest clifftop near Trigan city.

Translated from Indonesian copy

THE TRIGAN EMPIRE

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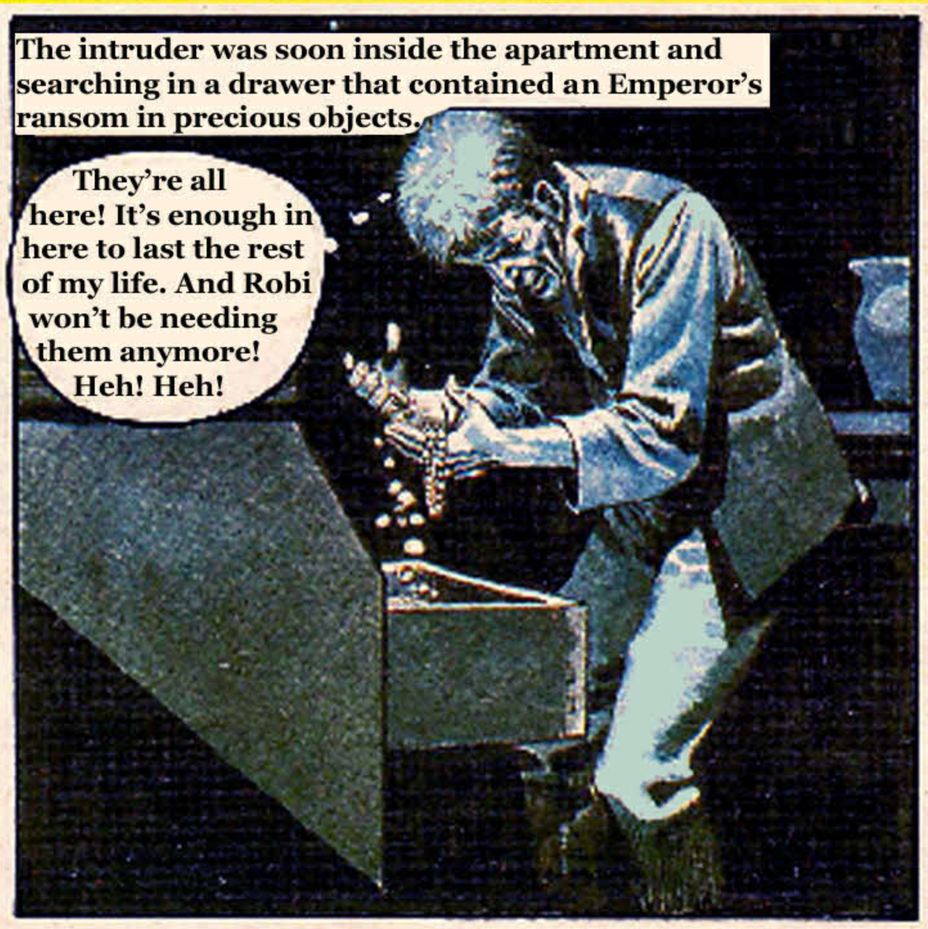
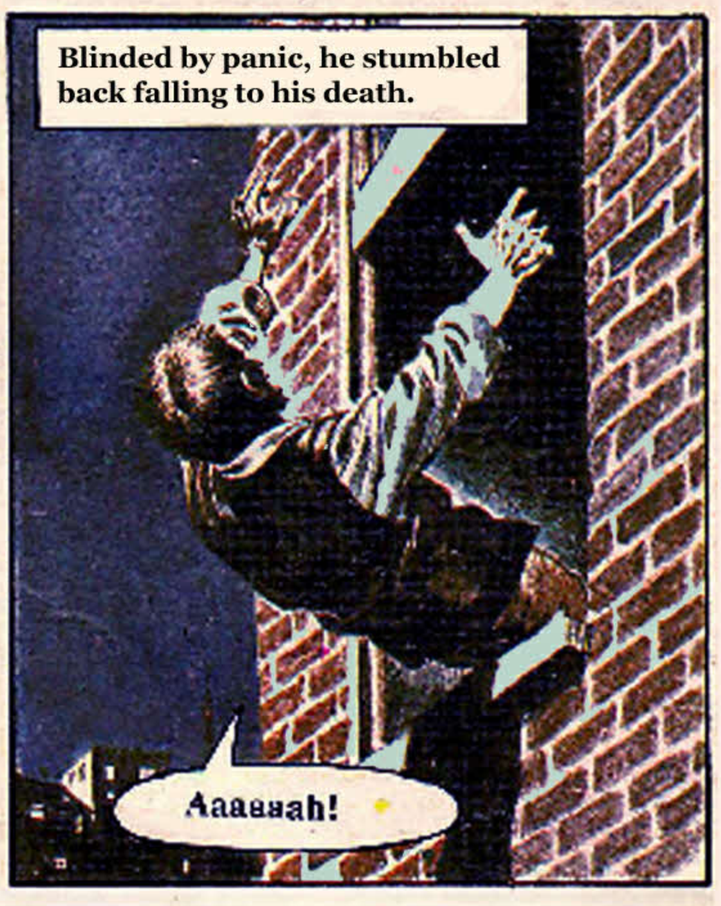
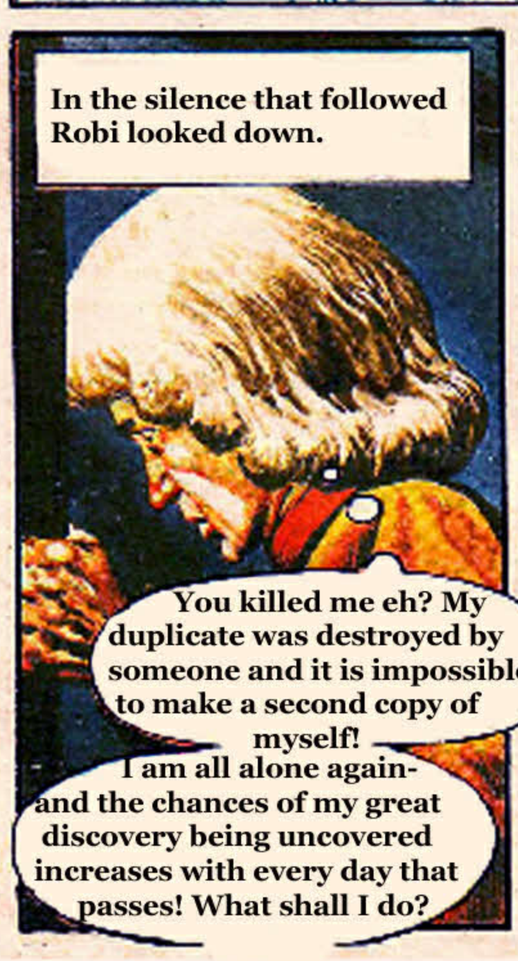
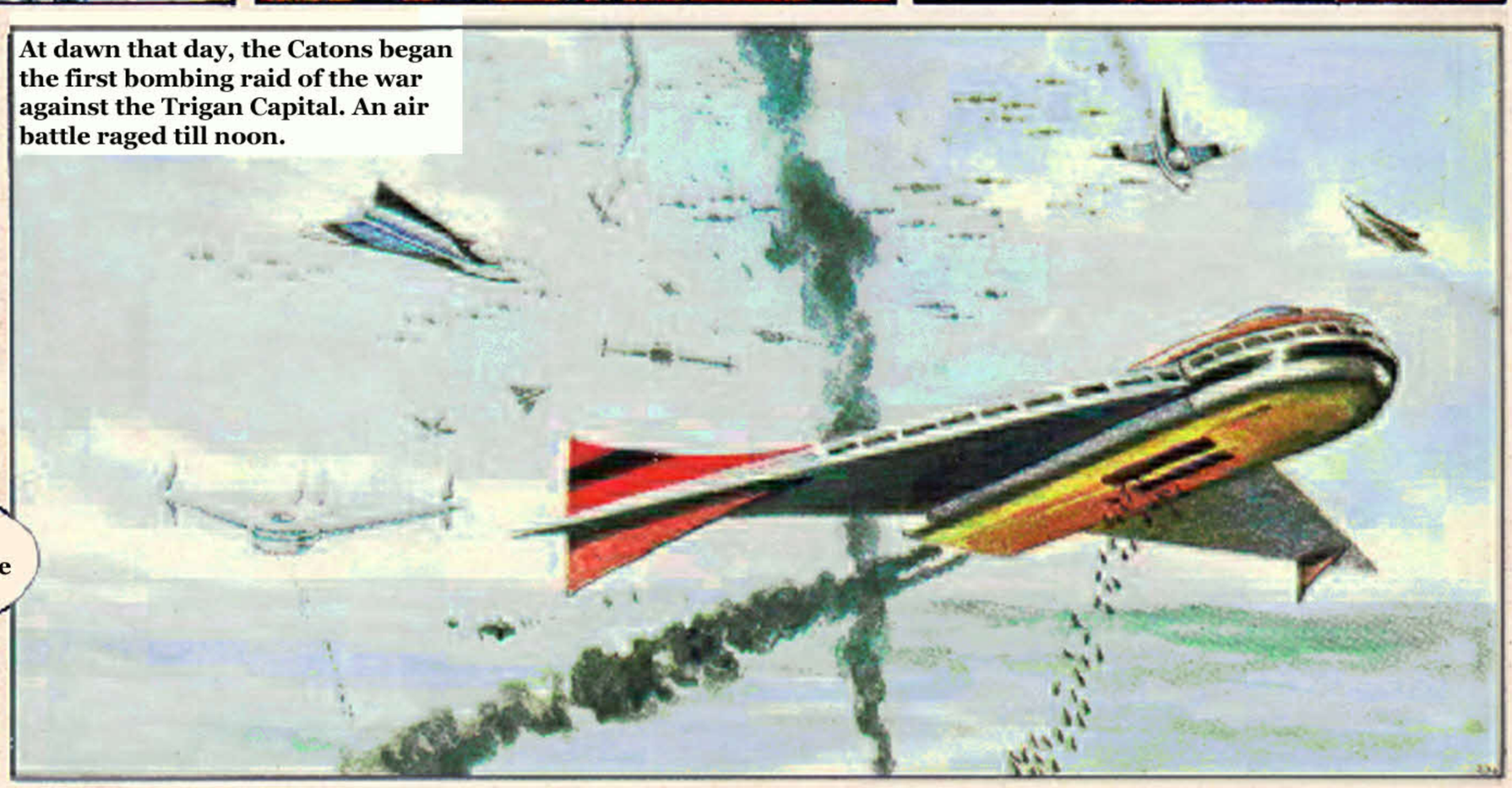








Translated from Indonesian copy

Robi watched the conflict in the sky.....and it gave him food for thought.

That's it! It's Cato I will fool to make my fortune! I will provide them with a rich prize for which they will pay me anything I demand!

When Janno, the emperor's nephew, landed his fighter craft later that day,....

Message for you, Lord Janno.

What's this?....You will remember me, Lord Janno, I am Peric's assistant, Robi. I have something of great importance to show you if you will come to my apartment!...

Intrigued and mystified by the strange letter, Janno went to Robi's apartment that evening. He found the door ajar.

Robi..... are you in there?

From out of the shadows Robi came and struck Janno!

Uguuh!...

Moments later, Robi was hauling the unconscious body of the emperor's nephew into the strange device.

I must work quickly - before he comes to his senses.

It was not long before Janno's shape began to appear..... *duplicated*!

THE TRIGAN EMPIRE

Robi, the brilliant but crooked assistant to Elekton's top scientist, has stumbled on a way to **duplicate** things — even **people!**. Now he has lured the Emperor's nephew, Janno, to his apartment to duplicate him.

Some time later, Janno recovered consciousness and raised his aching head.

Uuuuugh...

Lord Janno! – Why are you here? – What's happened to you?

Confound it, man, you know very well what I'm doing here! I came in answer to your message, and no sooner did I set foot inside the door than I was struck down from behind!

Message, Lord Janno? – What message?

Janno handed the young scientist the note that had been delivered to the air fleet base.

But, my Lord, this is not from me – it is not even in my handwriting! Someone must have lured you here to rob you!

By all the stars!

My jewelled identity medallion – gone! And my ring! And a considerable amount of money too! Curse the thief, whoever he is!

And that the thief should have used my name and my home – this puts me in a terribly embarrassing position!

Forget it, Robi – You are not to blame! Farewell.

Farewell, my Lord – you are very kind.

When Janno's footfalls had died away, the scheming Robi flung open the door of a back room.

Ha!

There, bound and gagged, sat Janno's exact diplicate!

You are worth a fortune to me! Trigo's nephew! Third in succession to the proud throne of the Trigan Empire!

I can sell you to the empire's enemies for an emperor's ransom!

That night, Robi put out to sea in a small boat.

Caton undersea warships are patrolling every part of our coastline. If I fail to meet one tonight, I will try again tomorrow, and the next night...

Suddenly!...

It is a Trigan! – Bring him aboard for questioning!

I came to make contact with a Caton warship! – I have a proposition to put to your rulers!

What are you – a civilian – doing at sea in the war zone?

It was at dawn the following day that a Caton bombing force was chased off, with heavy losses, by Trigan fighter craft.

An early casualty in the running battle was – Janno!

I'm done for!

THE TRIGAN EMPIRE

Robi, the brilliant but crooked assistant to Elekton's top scientist, has stumbled on a way to duplicate things — even people. He has duplicated the Emperor's nephew Janno and offered him to Elekton's enemies. The original Janno has just been shot down in an air battle . . .

Janno's craft plummeted into the sea.

A comrade circled over the wreckage for some time – but . . .

I reget to report that Lord Janno has departed to join his ancestors!

That night, at a lonely spot off the coast of Trigan . . .

Is that you? – Do you have the prisoner?

Yes! – I have him!

The duplicate Janno was dragged aboard the Caton undersea warship.

Well – now do you believe me? Is this not indeed Lord Janno the Emperor's nephew?

By all the stars, so it is!

Then give me my money and let me depart, Admiral! Ten thousand Trigan pieces, as agreed!

You will be paid for your treachery, fellow – but my orders are to take you back to Cato!

A cold finger of terror traced its course down Robi's spine.

I'm done for! As soon as the Catons announce that they have Janno, the Trigans will issue a statement that it is a lie!

AAAAAH! Then the Catons will torture the truth out of me!

But fate was on Robi's side. Some time later, Janno's father, Brag, brought the news to his brother, the Emperor Trigo.

Trigo! – He's all right! Janno's all right! He survived the crash after all, and he's a prisoner-of-war!

Thank the stars! – What else do the Catons say?

As you might expect, they're using Janno to exert pressure on us. They demand an instant cease-fire, pending a conference to discuss peace terms.

Then we will agree! And I will be willing to agree to any reasonable peace terms to save Janno's life!

Robi was in Caton City when he heard of the Emperor's reply to the enemy demands. And he thanked his stars.

Fate smiles upon the clever! The Trigans accept the duplicate Janno, which can only mean that the original Janno is missing in battle. Robi, my fine fellow, you are made for life!

The duplicate Janno was brought before the rulers of Cato – a triumvirate of warmongers bent on the destruction of the Trigan Empire.

Greetings, my Lord! You will be unhappy to hear that your presence here is shortly going to lead to the utter annihilation of all you hold dear. I will explain...

In accordance with our demands, a cease-fire is in progress throughout the Trigan Empire. Your air fleet is grounded and all defence systems are relaxed. Like a sleeping giant, Trigan's powerful forces lie helpless...

He pointed from the balcony.

Not so in Cato! At dawn tomorrow, our air fleet – which you see there being prepared – will take off to blast Trigan City from the face of Elekton! And there will be nothing to oppose it!

Treacherous animal! – UUUUGH!

Convey Lord Janno to a dungeon – and see that it is both dark and damp!

THE TRIGAN EMPIRE

Robi, the brilliant but crooked assistant to Elekton's top scientist, has stumbled on a way to duplicate things — even people. He has duplicated the Emperor's nephew Janno and offered him to Elekton's enemies. The original Janno has just been shot down in an air battle . . .

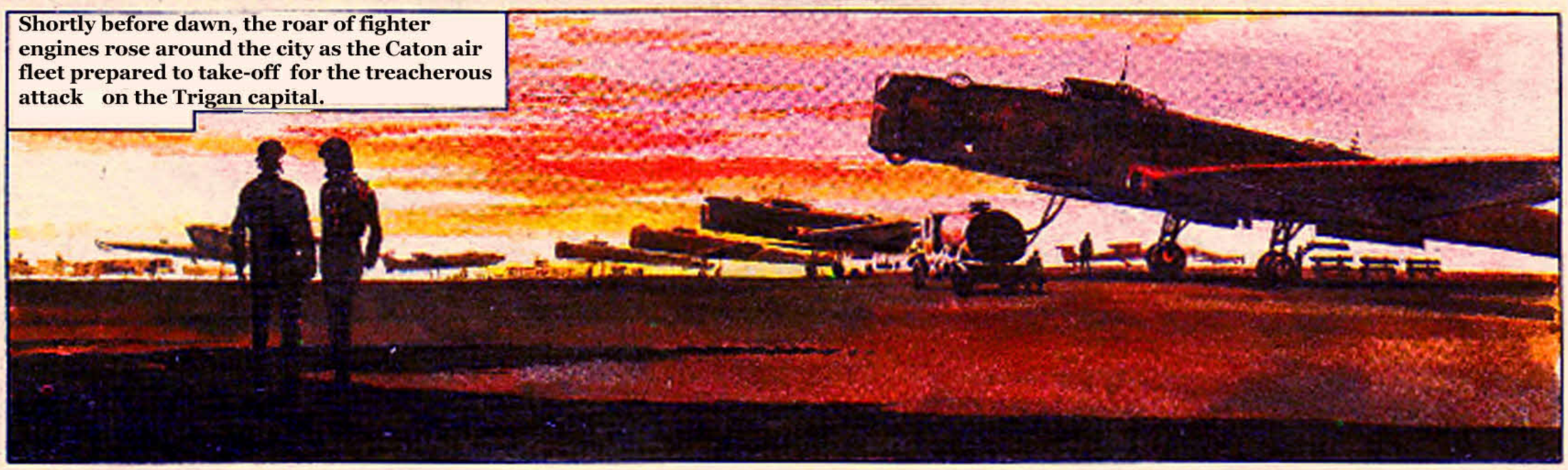
Translated from Indonesian copy

The duplicate Janno was led to the dark dungeons deep below the palace of Cato's rulers.

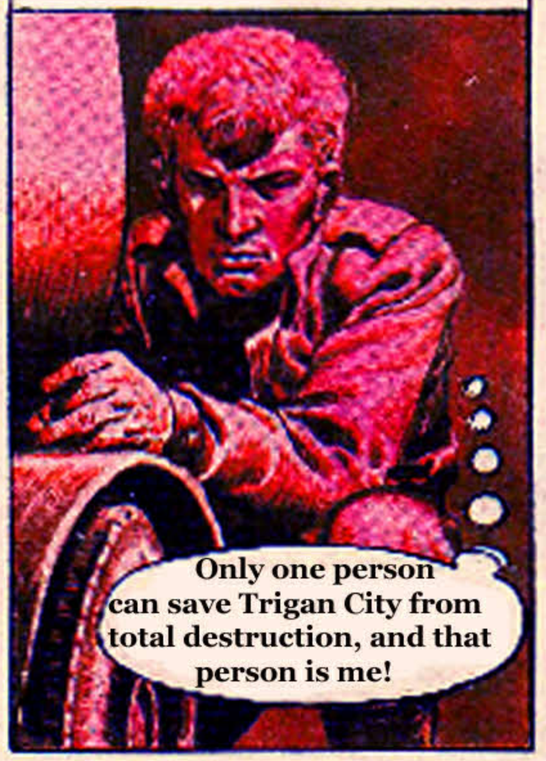
Then - he acted!

The jailers crashed to the bottom of the steep steps and lay there. Janno opened an empty cell door and dragged them inside....

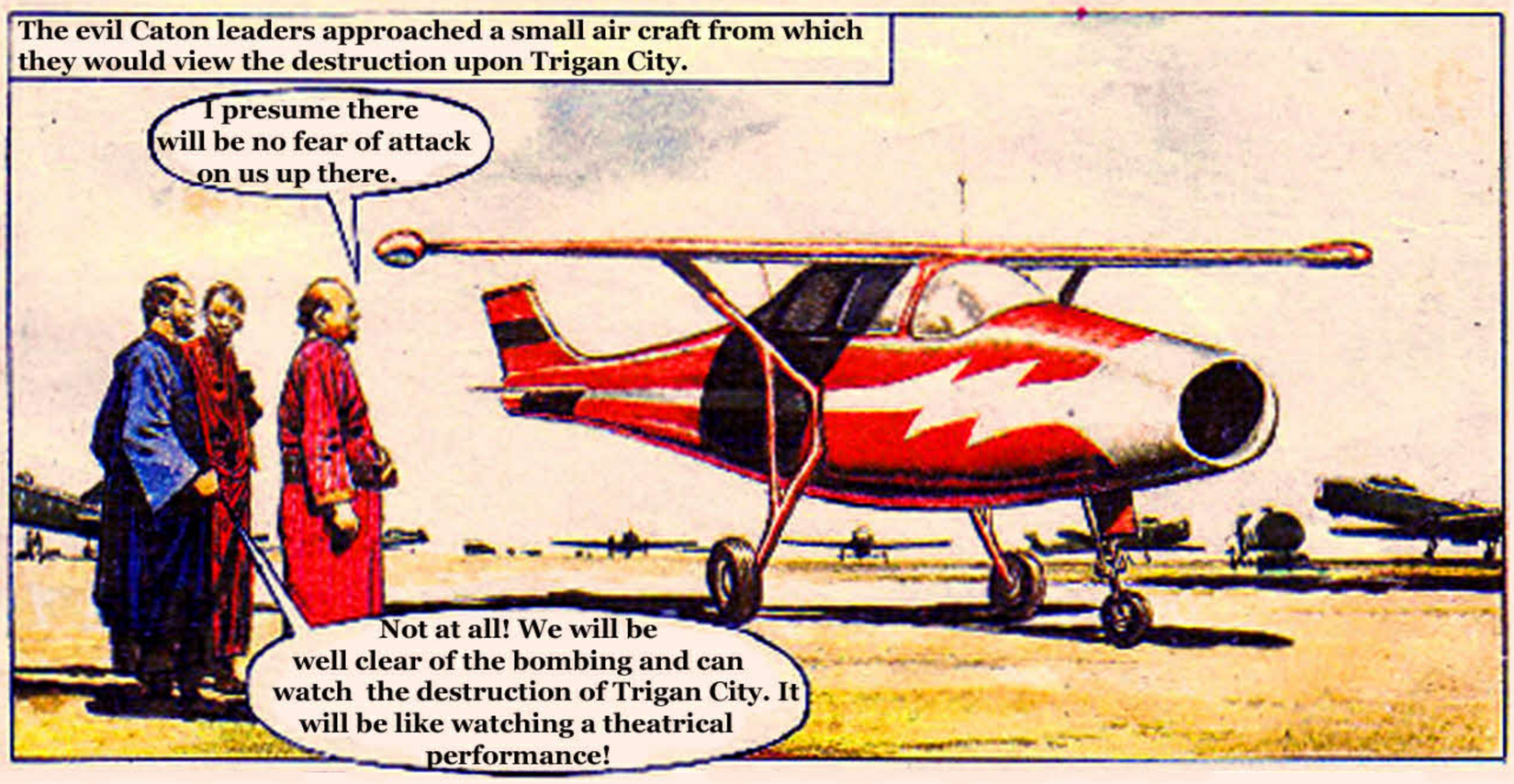
Shortly before dawn, the roar of fighter engines rose around the city as the Caton air fleet prepared to take-off for the treacherous attack on the Trigan capital.



The duplicate Janno was there!



The evil Caton leaders approached a small air craft from which they would view the destruction upon Trigan City.



Translated from Indonesian copy

The pilot of the ruler's craft....

...Never knew what hit him!

Uuugh!

You will take off now. I will give you further orders when we are in the air.

Very good O Mighty One!

The duplicate Janno sent the craft climbing skywards with all the skill of his original.

You will take a position away from the fleet, keeping the troops well behind us. There is no reason for you to take any risks!

That's what you think!

A twist of the joystick and the craft swooped down in breath-taking dive to sea level!

What do you think you are doing?

Have you taken leave of your senses?

Don't move! We are heading straight to Trigan City to sound the alarm. Then you will see the might of the Trigan air fleet send your men to hellfire!

THE TRIGAN EMPIRE

Robi, the brilliant but ruthless assistant to Elekton's top scientist, invents a machine to duplicate things — even people. He duplicates Trigo's nephew Janno and sells him to the empire's Caton enemies. But Janno escapes and pilots the Caton ruler's aircraft back towards Trigan . . .

Reaching the Trigan coast well ahead of the Caton air fleet, the duplicate Janno dropped flares and fired his guns.

That should wake up the defences!

A cease-fire was in operation, but the Trigan coastal gunners quickly roused themselves.

It's a Caton craft! – Sound the alarm! Action stations!

The evil triumvirate who ruled Cato were also in the craft. One of them struck wildly at the duplicate Janno.

Fool - Get away from here! Do you want to get us all killed?

With no hand on the controls, the craft swerved towards the coast.

Open fire!

Meanwhile, the alarm had reached Trigan city – and the fighting craft of the air fleet were screeching up into the dawn sky.

All-unsuspecting, the Caton fleet flew into a trap. Silhouetted against Elekton's rising suns, they were mauled to tatters by the Trigans! The war was over!

Later that day, a Trigan naval patrol craft found an unconscious figure lying on the shore of a lonely islet.

By the stars! – It's Lord Janno, the Emperor's nephew!

In due course, Robi was brought from Cato and questioned by Peric. He confessed his secret to the great scientist.

I think his Imperial Majesty will agree with me when I say that your execution or imprisonment will only deprive Elekton of a brain it cannot afford to lose. But the infernal duplicating device will be destroyed – and you will speak of it to no one!

Never, master – I promise you!

One thing puzzles me – is the Janno who was found on that lonely beach the original Janno, or the duplicate Janno?

That we shall never know for sure, Imperial Majesty! And neither will he! As to the circumstances leading up to his crash, his mind is a blank!

A statue was erected in the great square of Trigan city to the Lord Janno who saved the Empire at the cost of his own life.

Janno often pondered on the great question mark of his life.

Am I the original me or my own duplicate?