

FRIENDS AND FOES

In the Mahabharata, when Yudhishthira asks Bheeshma what the right conduct of a king should be, the wise Bheeshma answers in the form of stories. Cats and mice, crows and swans, leopards and jackals, all serve to show how a king must deal in times of crisis, doubt or personal problems.

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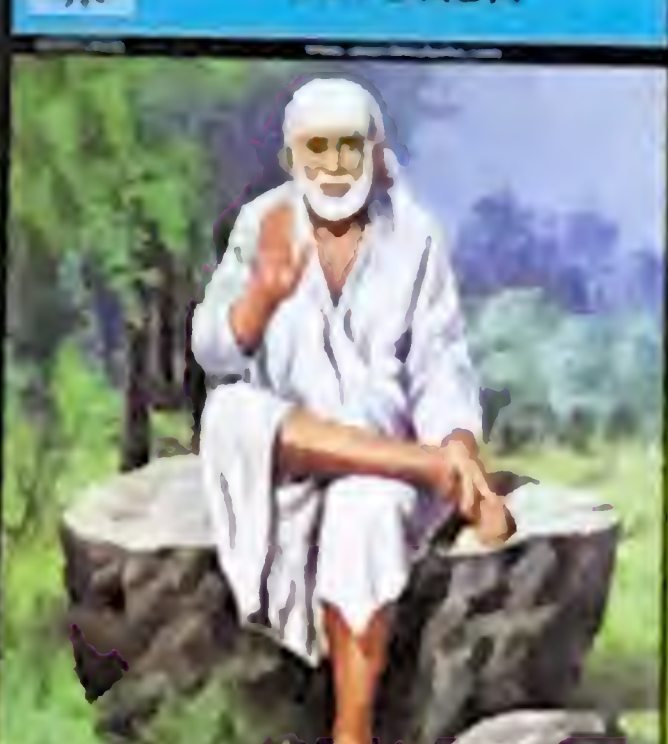
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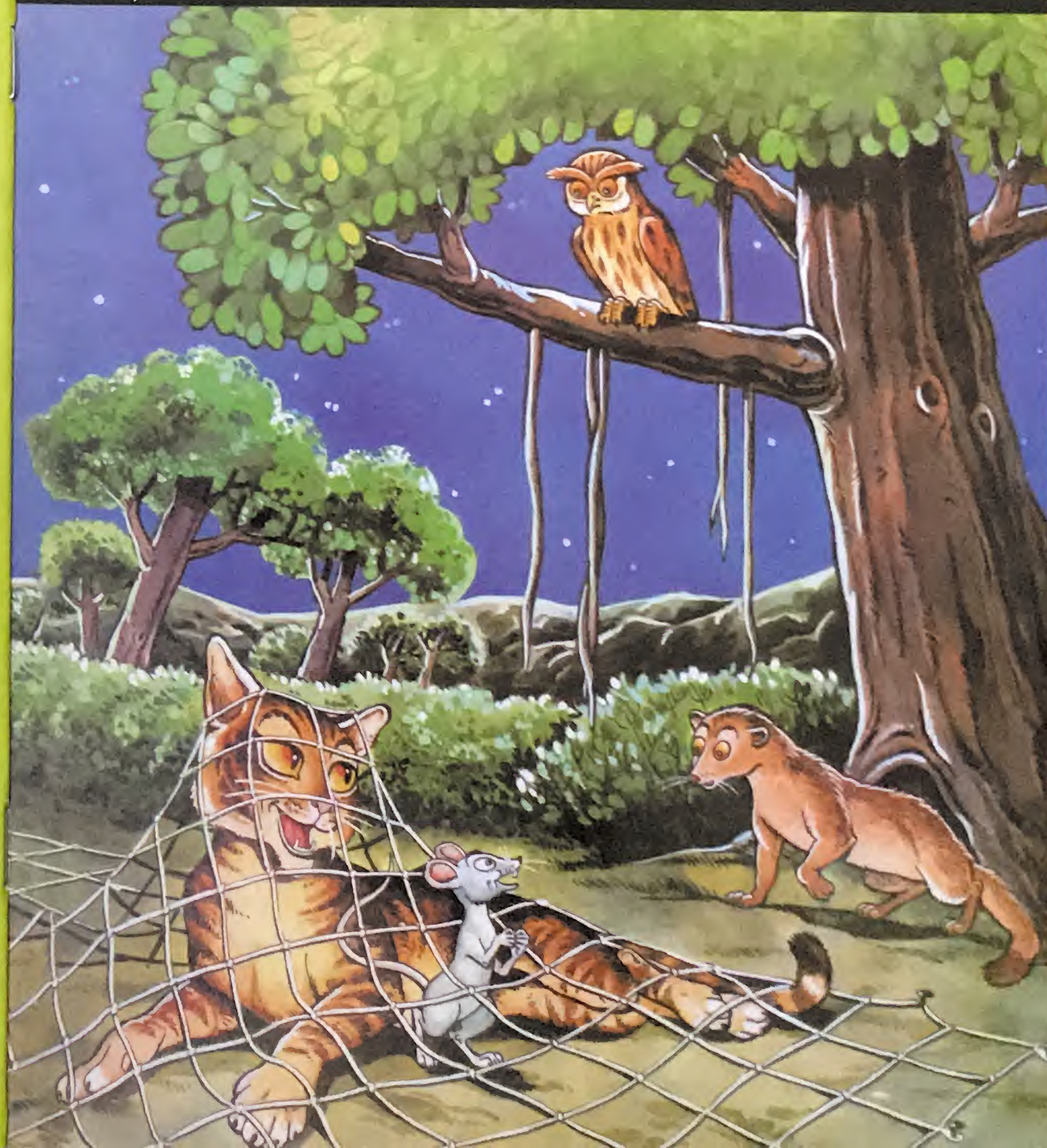
FABLES &
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FRIENDS AND FOES

ANIMAL TALES FROM THE MAHABHARATA

Vol 609 | ₹50

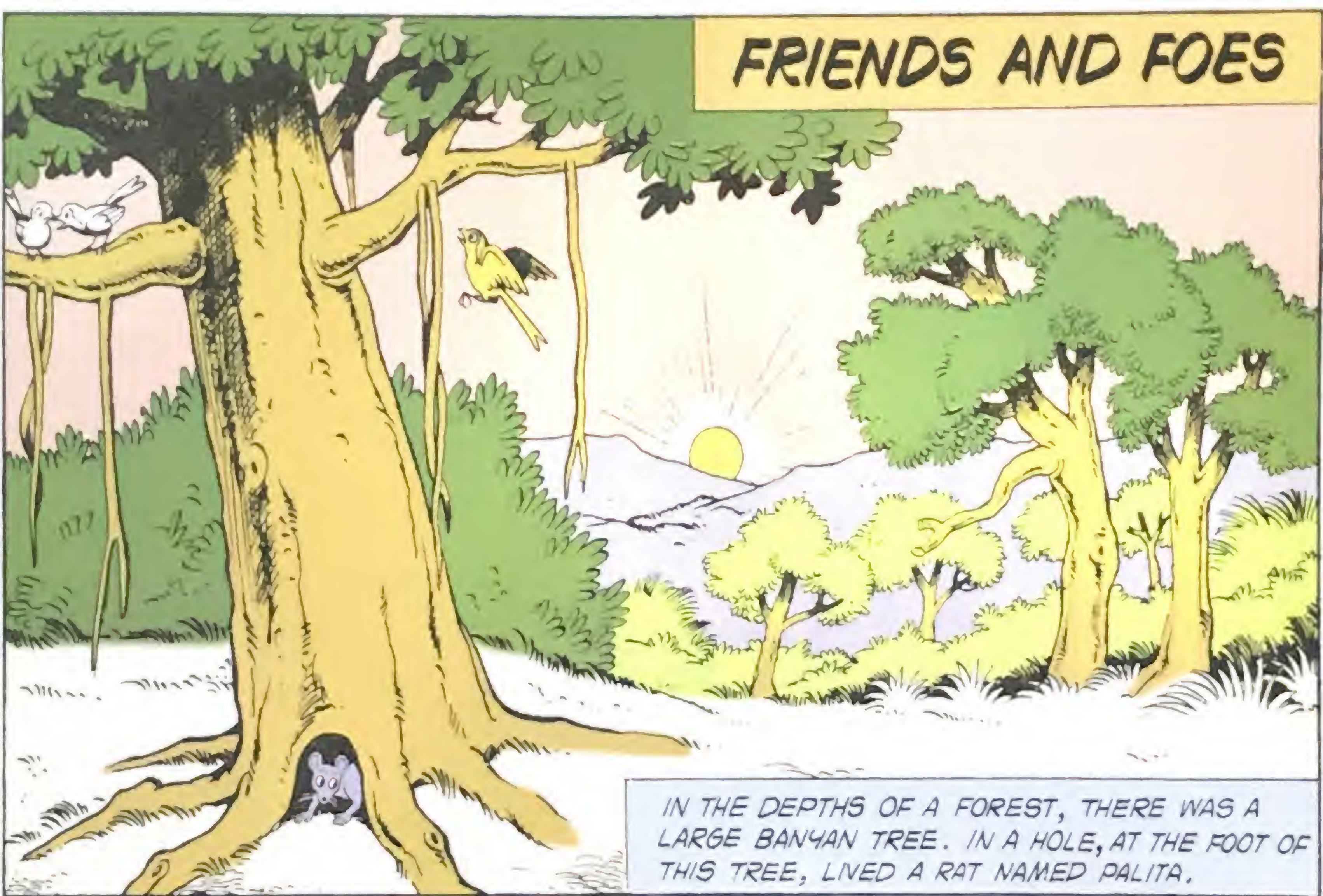


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FRIENDS AND FOES



IN THE DEPTHS OF A FOREST, THERE WAS A LARGE BANYAN TREE. IN A HOLE, AT THE FOOT OF THIS TREE, LIVED A RAT NAMED PALITA.

AMIDST THE BRANCHES OF THE SAME TREE THERE DWELT A CAT CALLED LOMASHA AND PALITA WAS IN CONSTANT FEAR OF HIM.



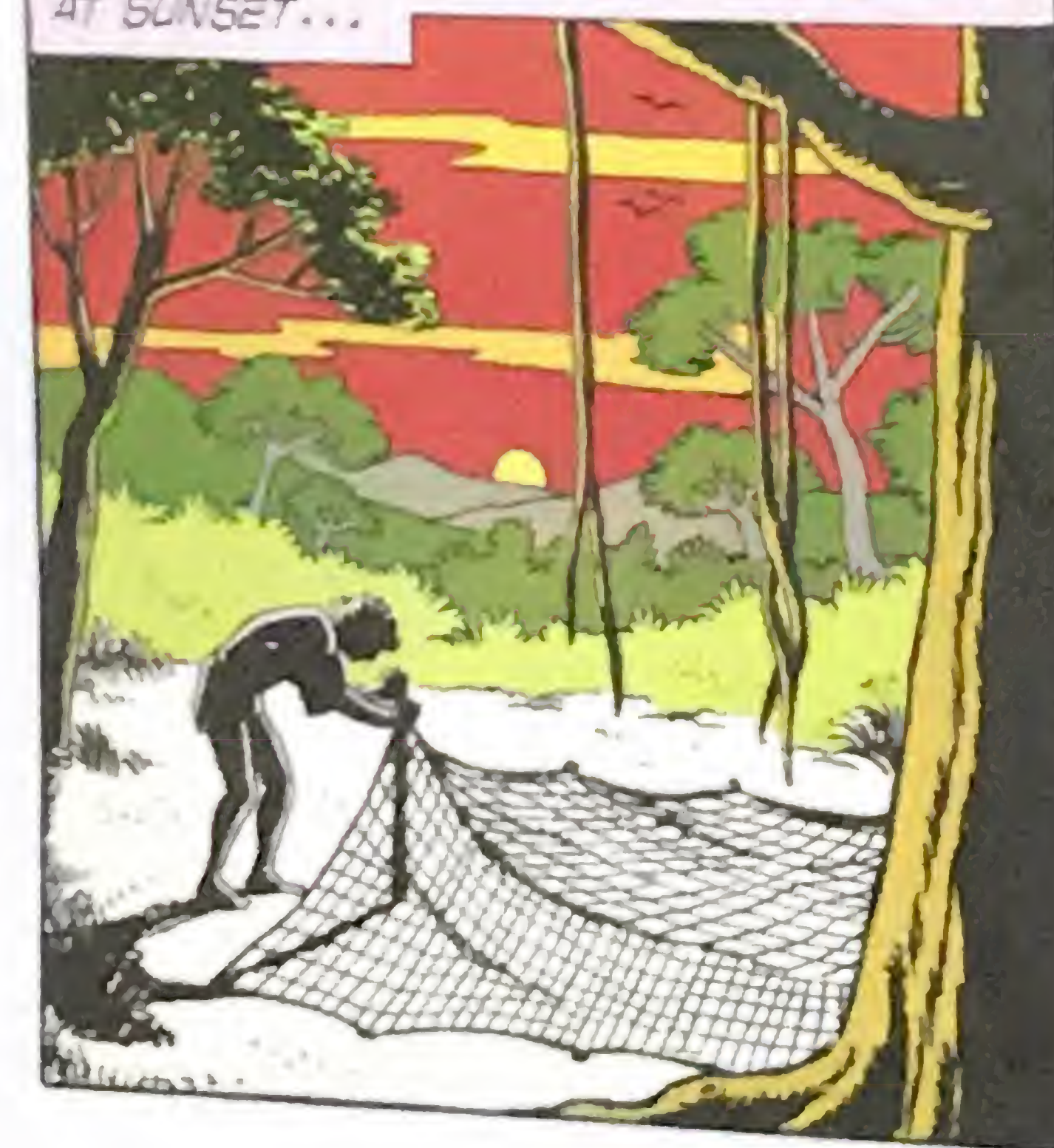
LOMASHA MUST STILL BE UP THERE. I HAD BETTER STAY HERE TILL HE LEAVES.



AH! I CAN SEE LOMASHA NOW! EVERY DAY HE DEVOURS SO MANY OF THOSE POOR BIRDS!



EACH DAY, HE WOULD SPREAD OUT HIS NET AT SUNSET...



...AND COME BACK AT DAWN THE NEXT DAY TO CHECK IF AN ANIMAL HAD BEEN TRAPPED.



WITH LOMASHA FIRMLY IN THE NET, PALITA BECAME VERY BOLD.

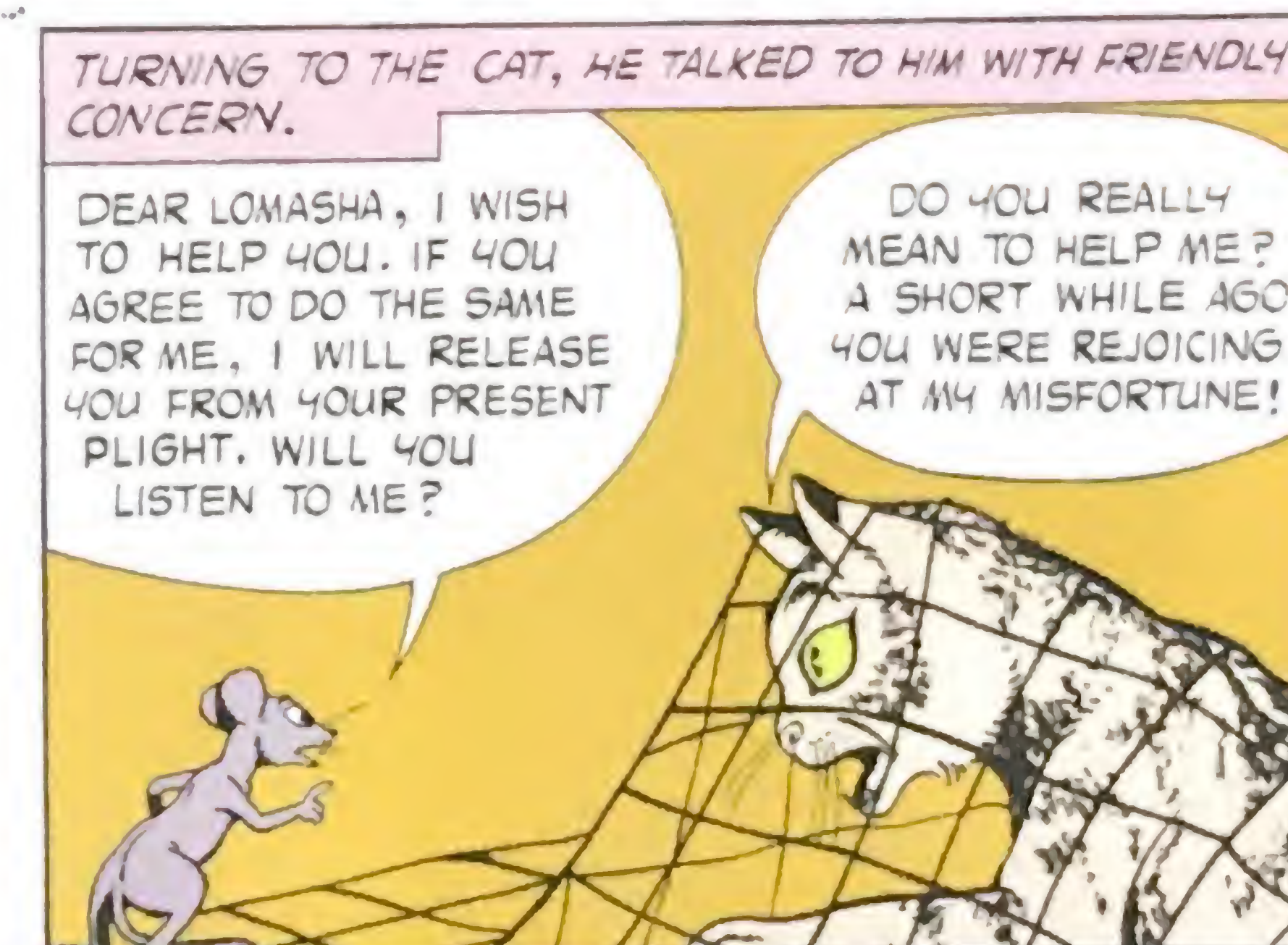
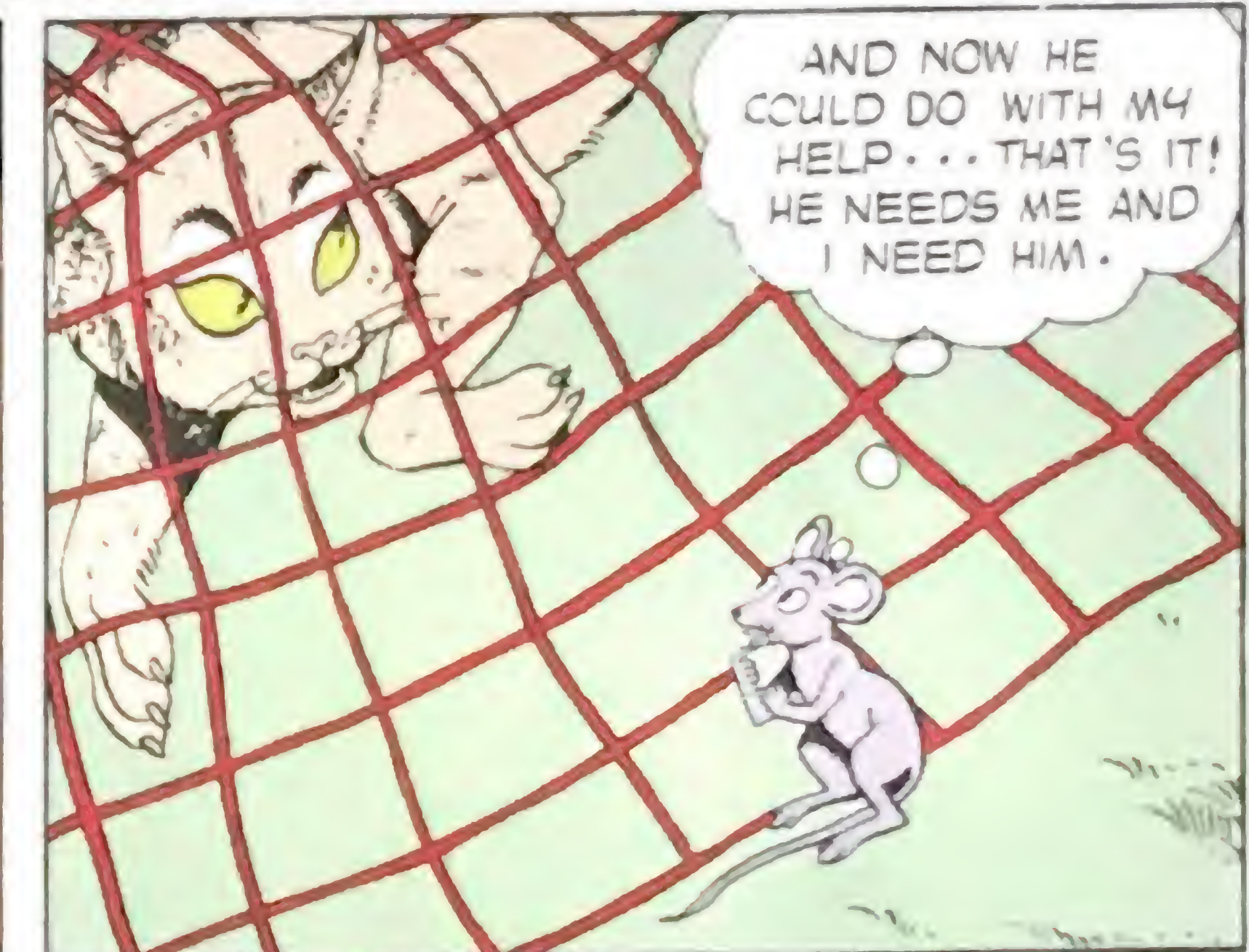
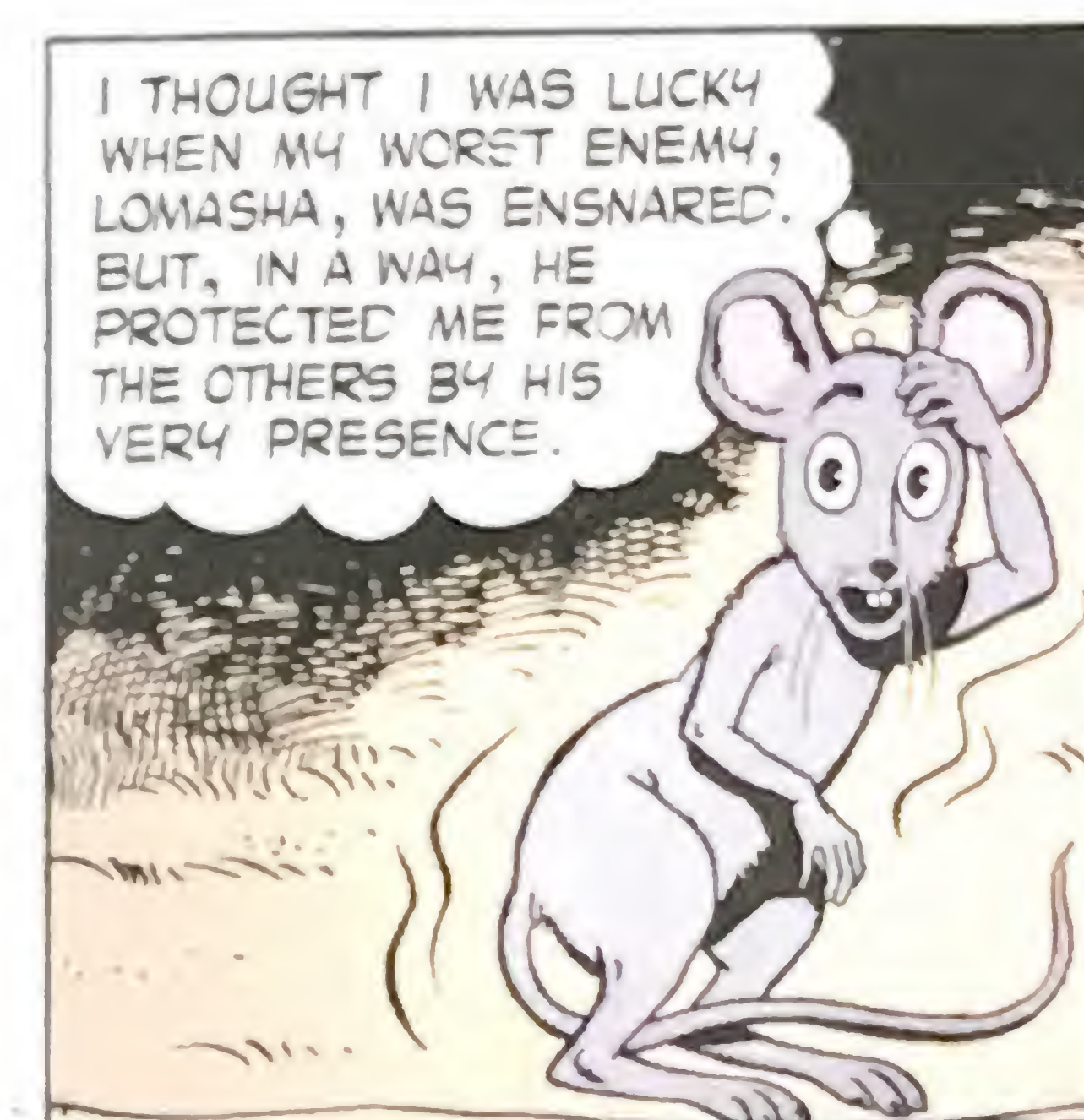
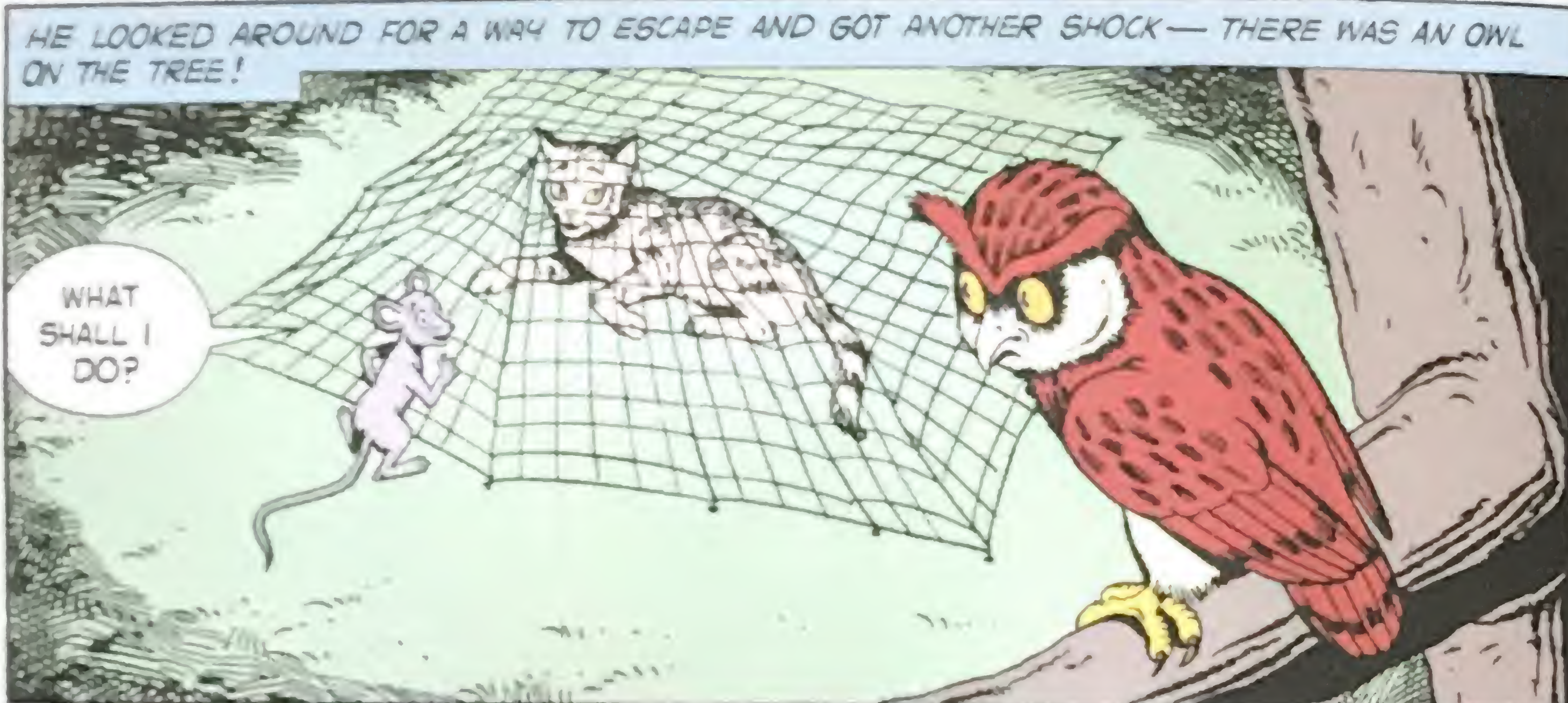


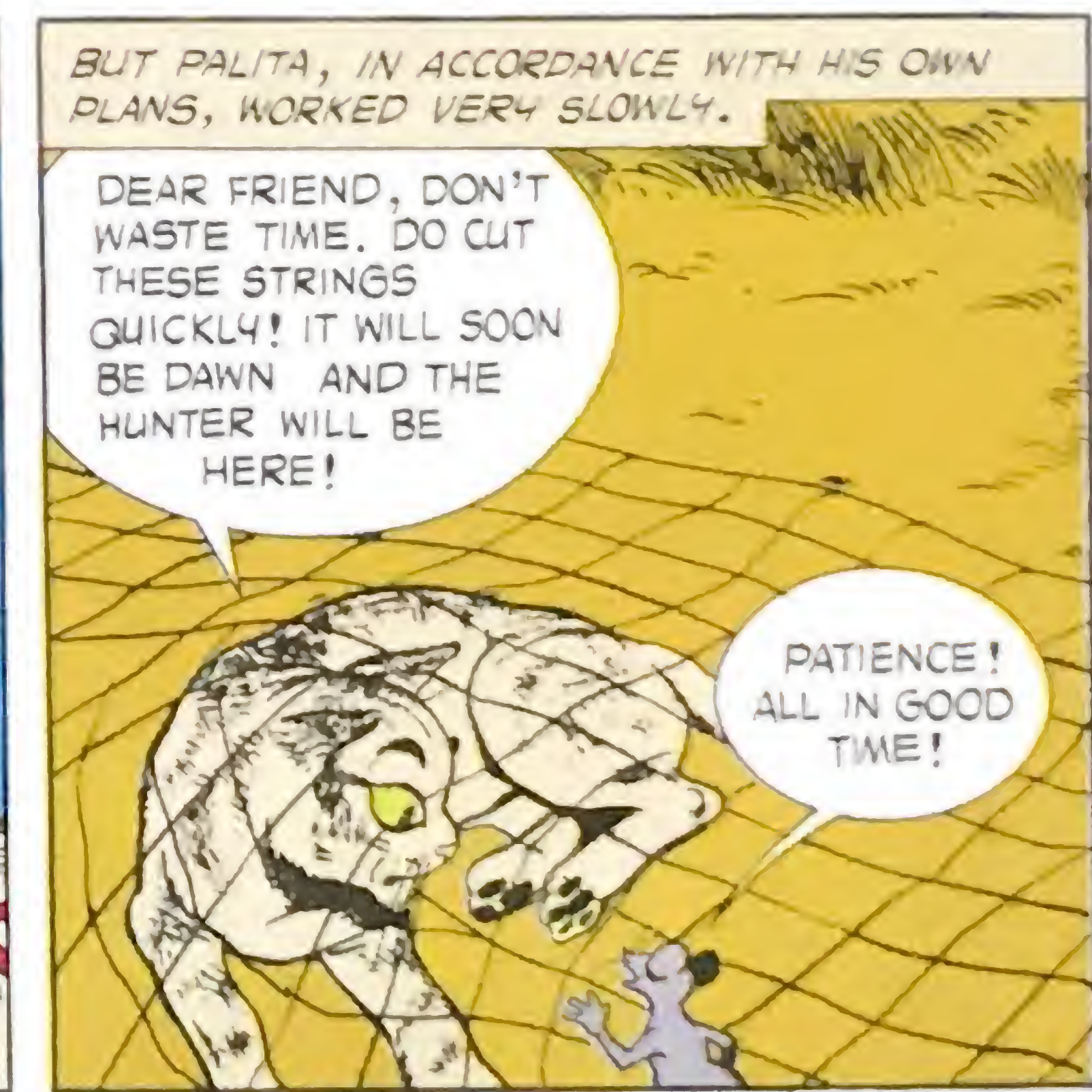
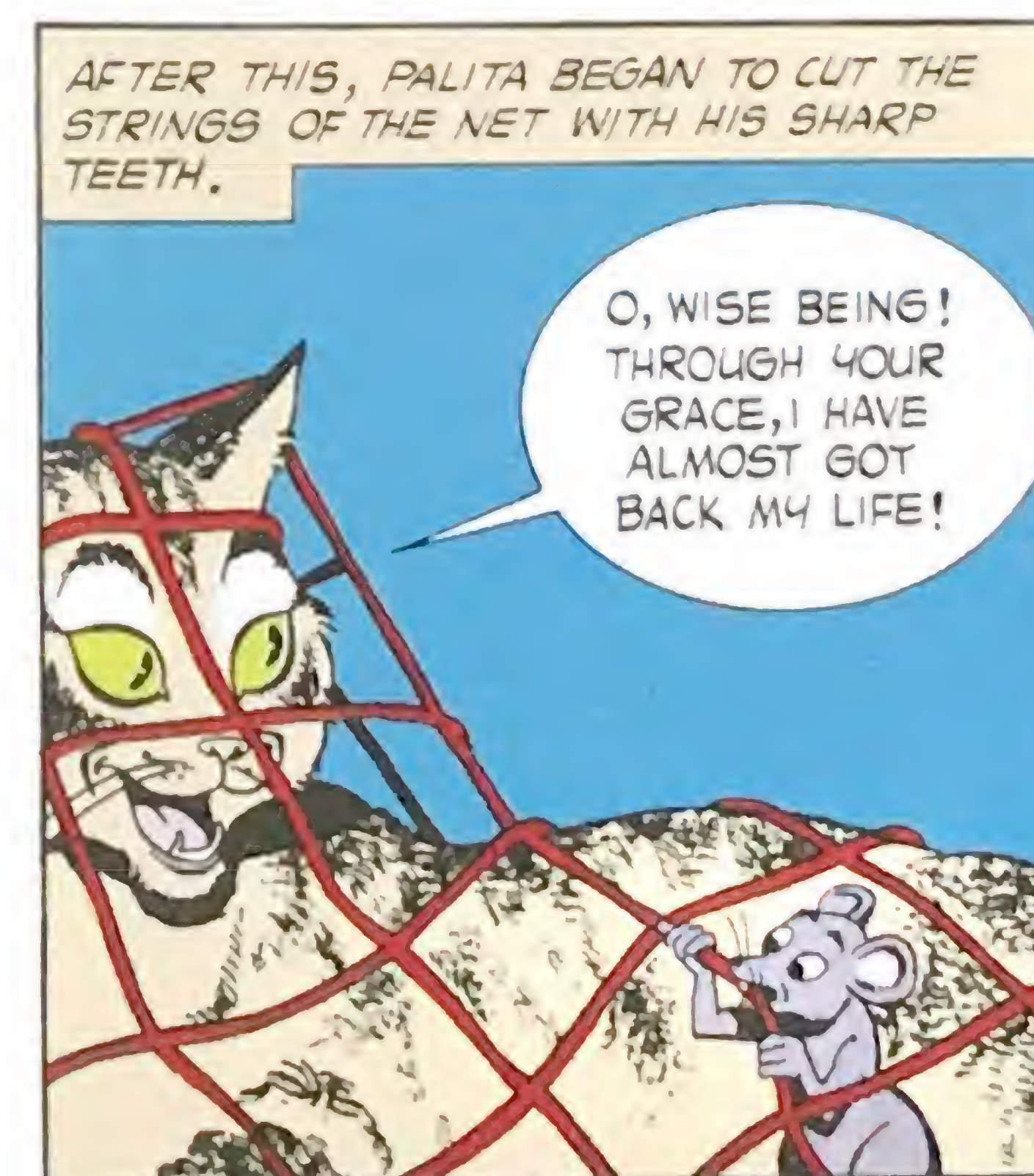
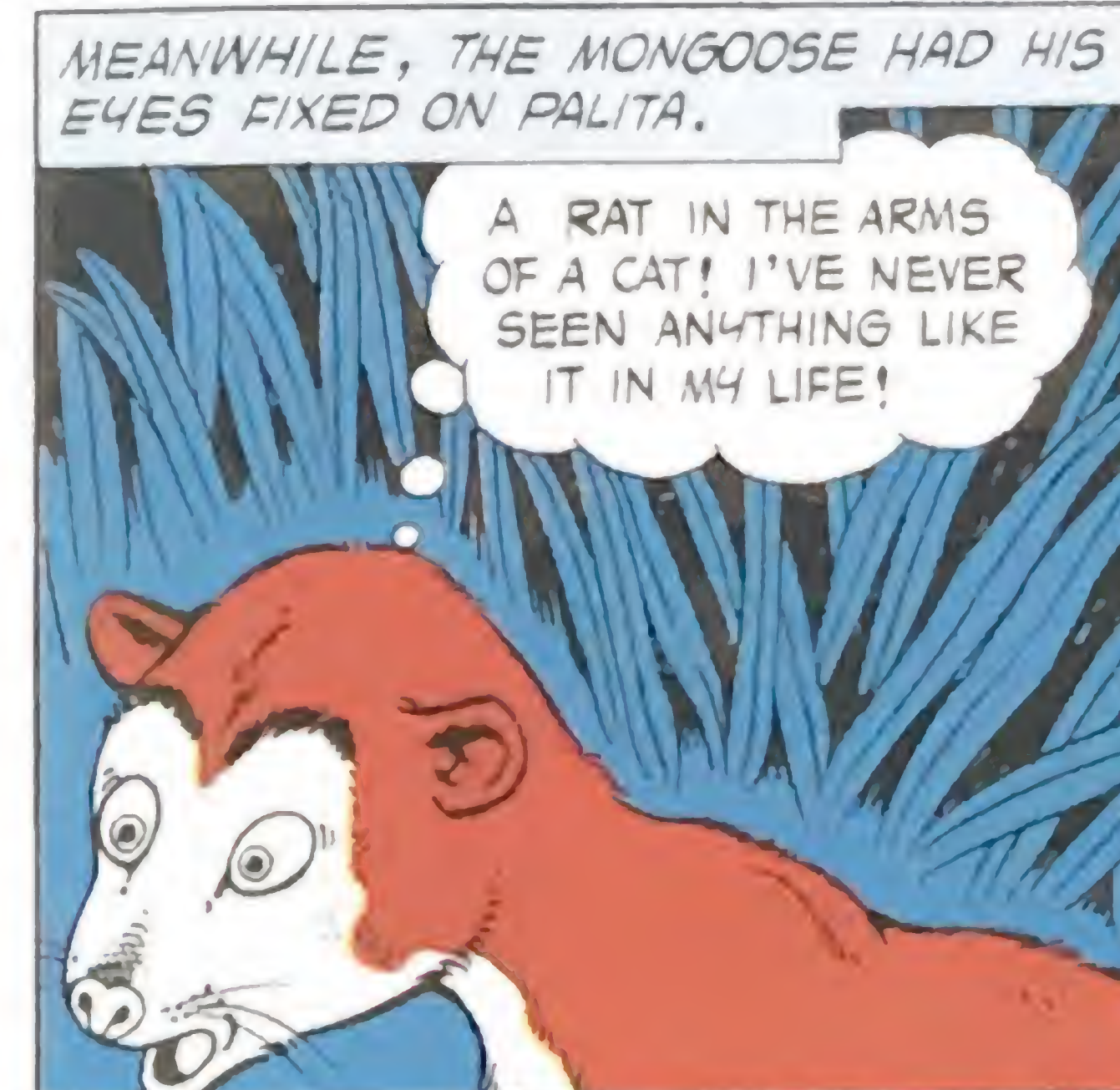
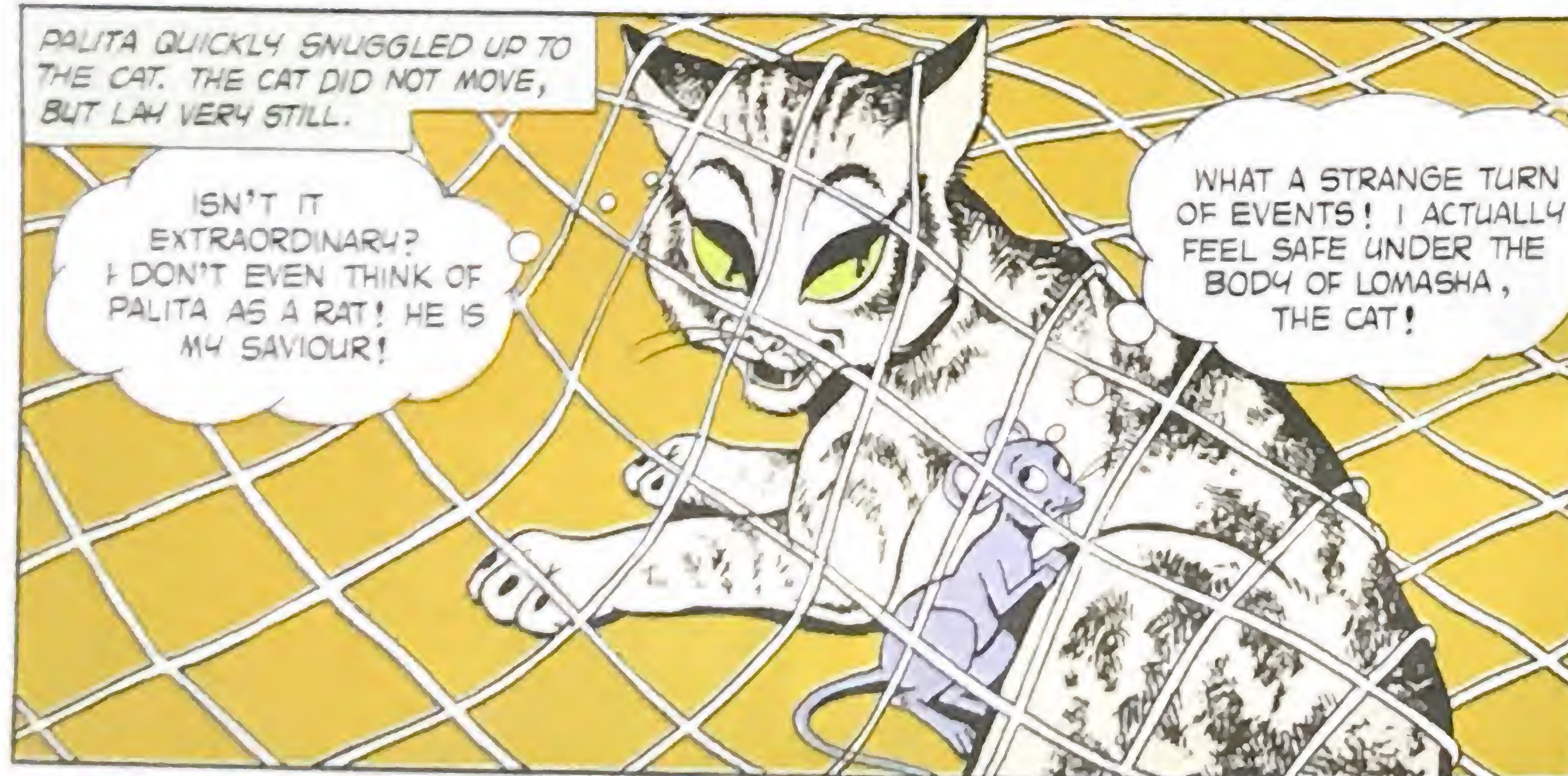
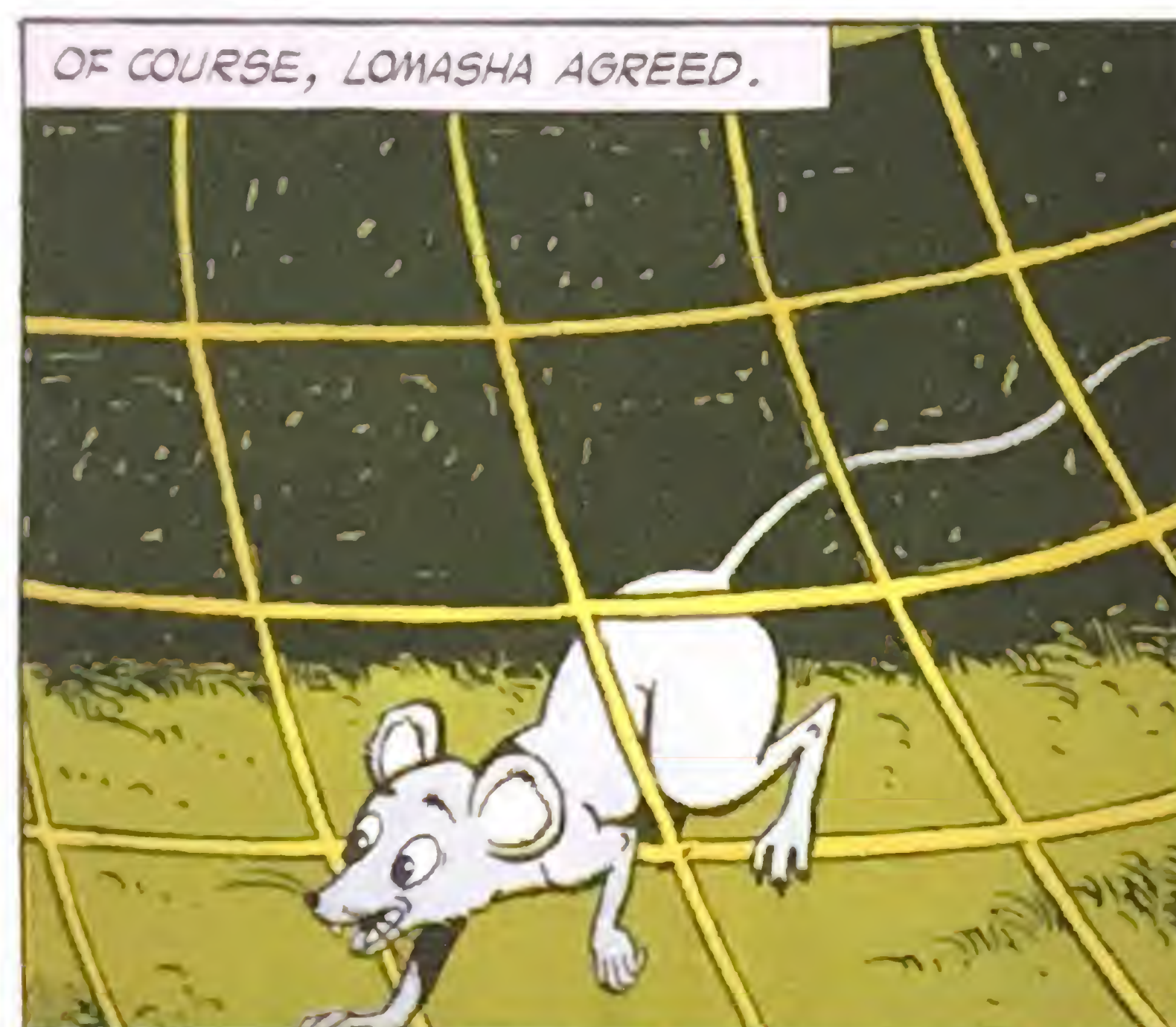
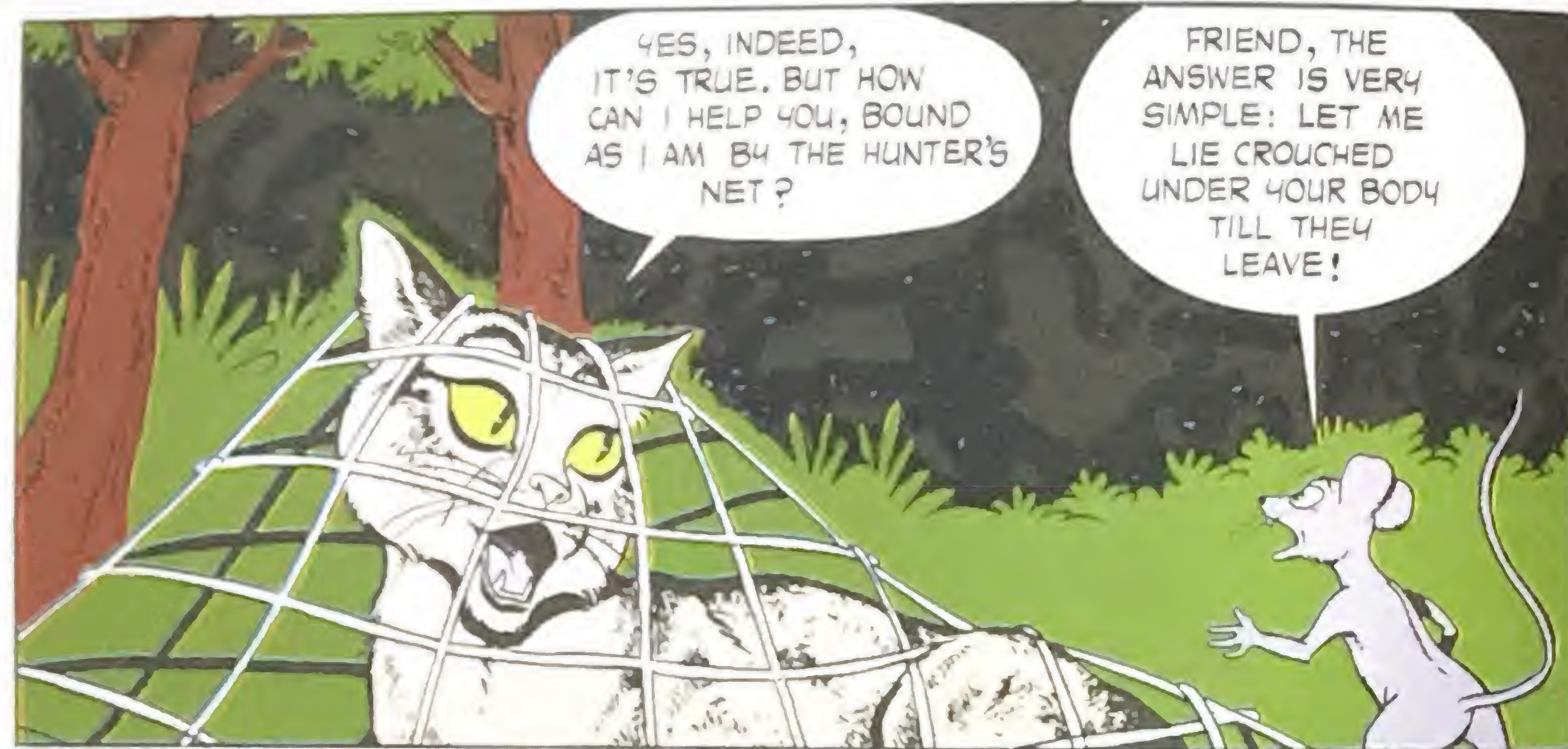
ENJOYING HIS NEW-FOUND FREEDOM, PALITA JUMPED ABOUT NEAR THE VERY SNARE WHICH HELD THE CAT PRISONER.



BUT HIS JOY WAS SHORT-LIVED. SUDDENLY HIS EYE FELL UPON A NEW DANGER—THE ARRIVAL OF A TERRIBLE FOE!







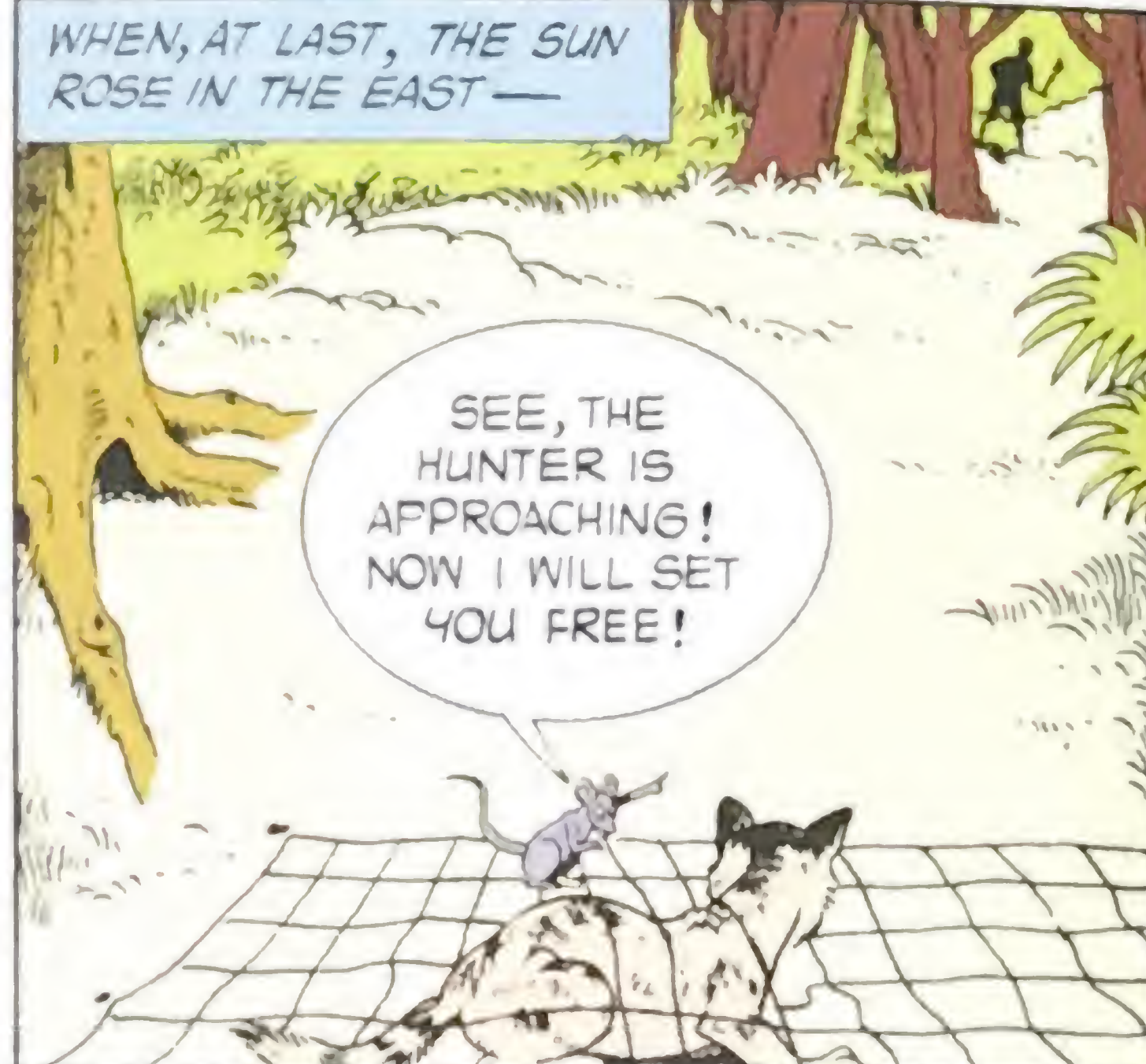
PALITA CONTINUED TO WORK SLOWLY WHILE LOMASHA WAITED TREMBLING WITH FEAR.



I SEE A RED GLOW IN THE EAST. SOON IT WILL BE DAWN. OH, DO HURRY!

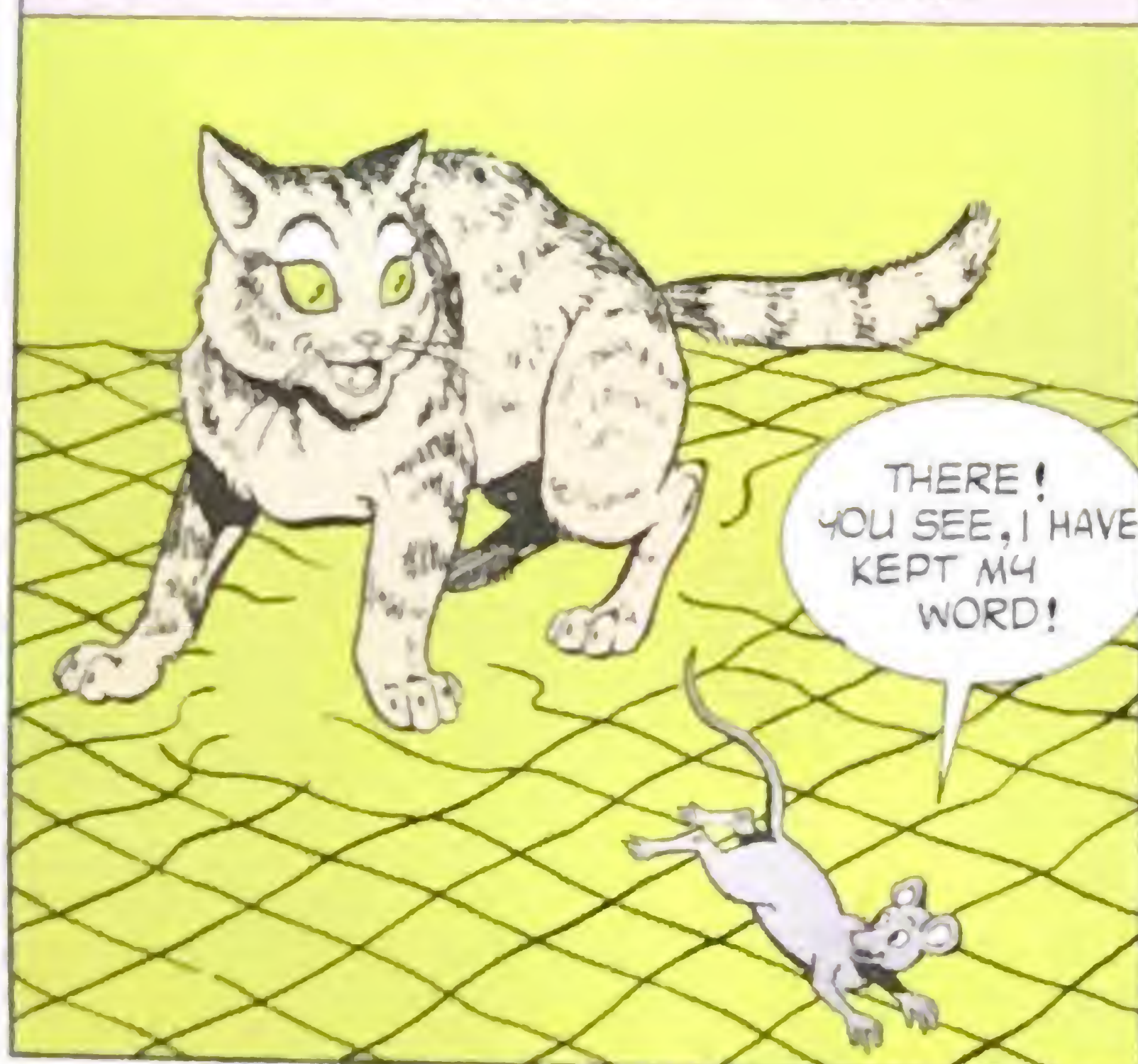
PATIENCE, FRIEND, PATIENCE!

WHEN, AT LAST, THE SUN ROSE IN THE EAST —



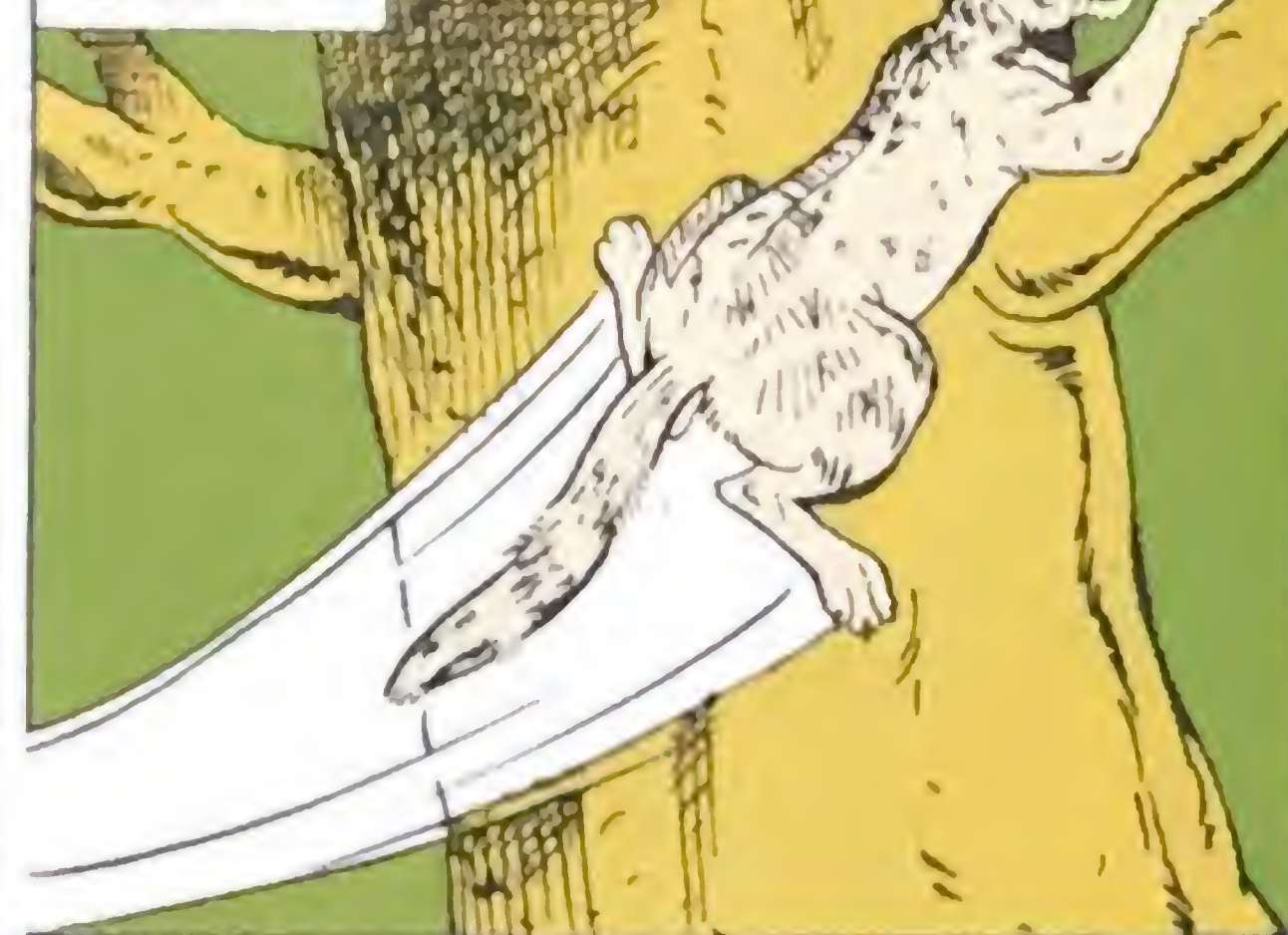
SEE, THE HUNTER IS APPROACHING! NOW I WILL SET YOU FREE!

PALITA CUT THE LAST STRINGS THAT HELD LOMASHA, JUST AS THE HUNTER REACHED THE SCENE.

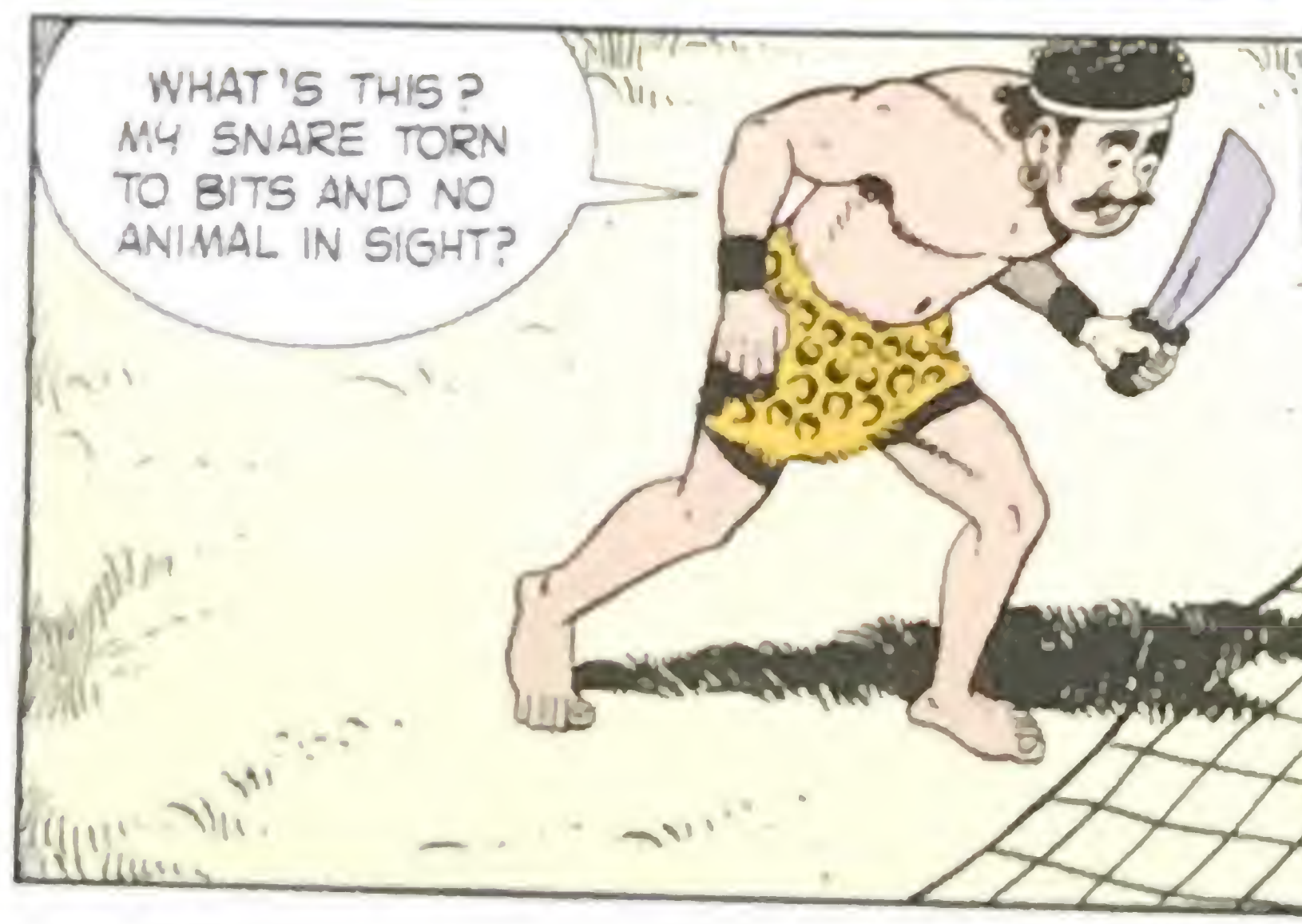
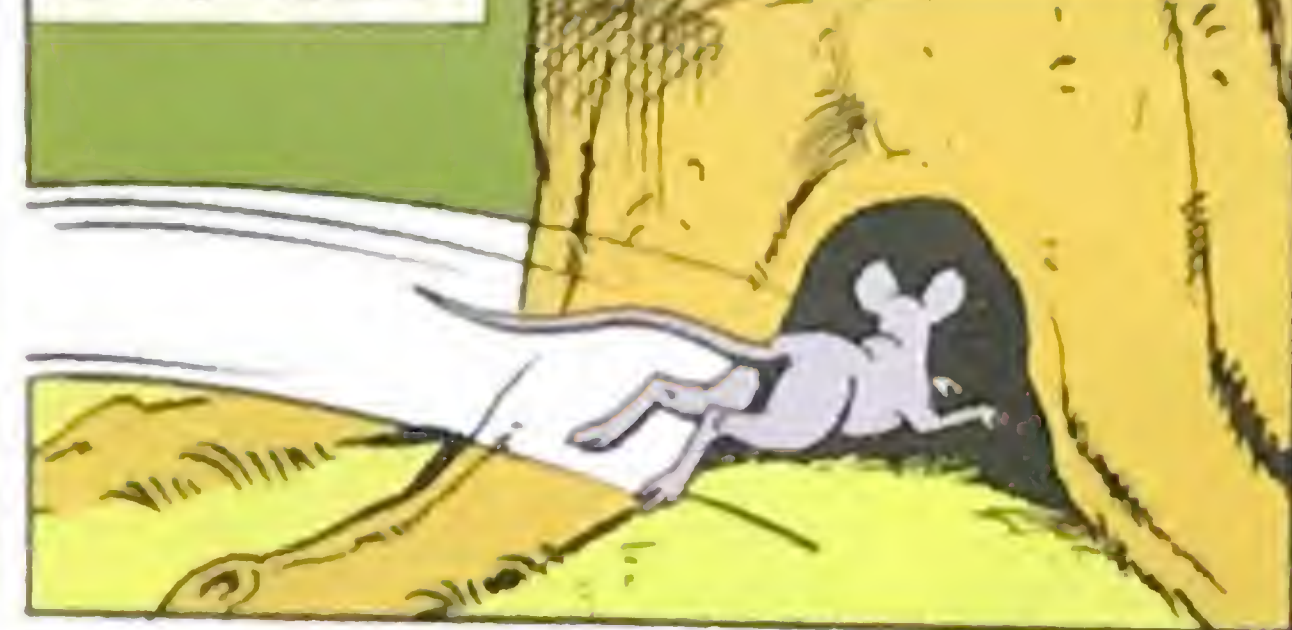


THERE! YOU SEE, I HAVE KEPT MY WORD!

THE CAT BOUNDED AWAY...



...WHILE THE RAT QUICKLY LEAPED TO HIS HOLE.



WHAT'S THIS? MY SNARE TORN TO BITS AND NO ANIMAL IN SIGHT?

WHEN THE PUZZLED HUNTER HAD GONE AWAY, THE CAT ADDRESSED HIS NEW-FOUND FRIEND.



OH, PALITA, I AM VERY GRATEFUL TO YOU FOR SAVING MY LIFE! LET THERE BE PEACE BETWEEN US ALWAYS! I WILL ASK ALL MY KINSMEN AND FRIENDS NOT TO HURT YOU.

BUT THE RAT WAS WISE.



YOU ARE MISTAKEN, O LOMASHA! THERE ARE TIMES WHEN SELF-INTEREST CAN MAKE A FOE A FRIEND. BUT SOONER OR LATER THEY WILL BECOME ENEMIES.



NO, NO. NOT IF ONE OF THEM HAS SAVED THE OTHER'S LIFE!



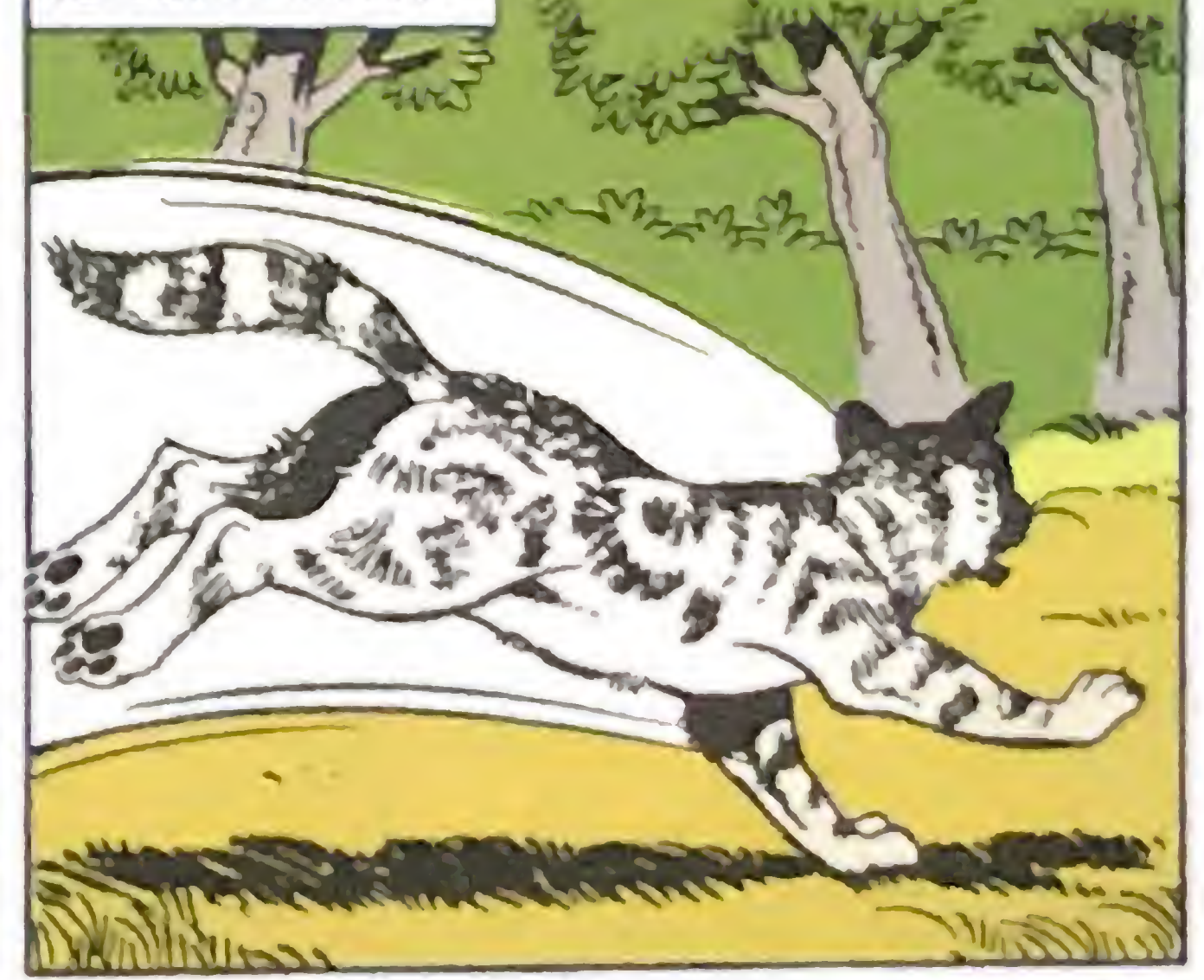
IT IS POSSIBLE YOU ARE PRETENDING TO BE MY FRIEND — JUST TO CATCH ME THE MORE EASILY!

PLEASE, LISTEN TO ME...

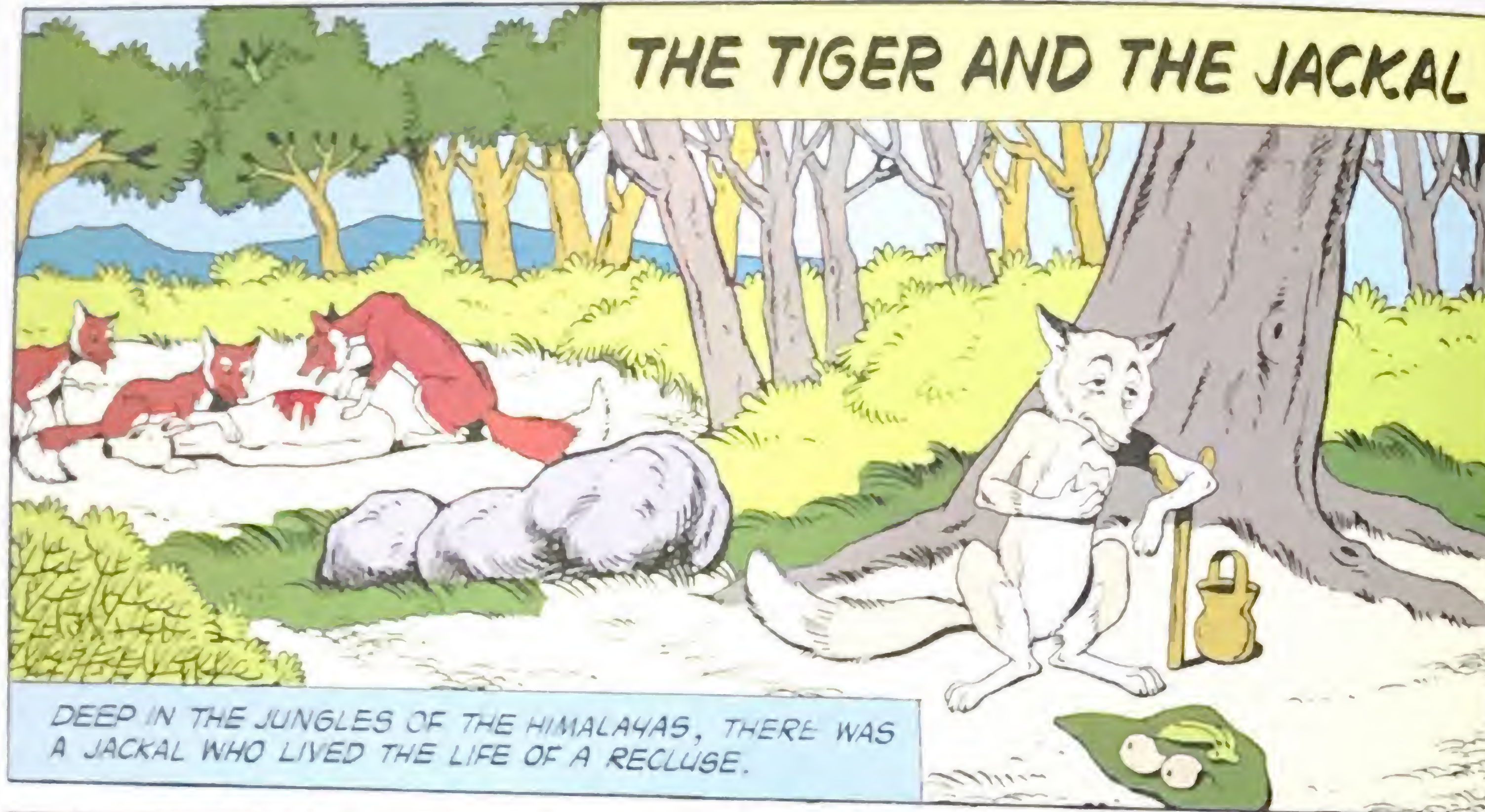


NO, LOMASHA, GO YOUR WAY — AND KEEP YOUR DISTANCE FROM THE EVIL HUNTER!

THE CAT SHIVERED ON HEARING THE WORD 'HUNTER' AND MADE HASTE TO RUN AWAY.



THE TIGER AND THE JACKAL



THIS JACKAL WAS COMPASSIONATE AND TRUTHFUL WHEREAS HIS COMPANIONS WERE CRUEL AND RAPACIOUS.

WHAT STRANGE BEHAVIOUR IS THIS? ONE WOULD THINK HE WAS AN ASCETIC PRACTISING AUSTERITIES!

AND WE JACKALS RELISH FLESH.



SUCH BEHAVIOUR IS PERVERSE! EVERY ONE MUST REMAIN TRUE TO HIS NATURE!

LET'S GO AND GIVE HIM A BIT OF ADVICE.



LOOK, FRIEND, THE WAY IN WHICH YOU LIVE WON'T DO! WE DON'T LIKE IT!

ALL OF US WILL GIVE YOU MEAT. YOU DON'T HAVE TO LIVE LIKE AN ASCETIC!



THANK YOU FOR YOUR KIND CONCERN, BUT I AM QUITE HAPPY LIVING ON FRUIT.

HA! DO YOU IMAGINE THAT BY IMITATING A HIGHER CASTE YOU CAN CHANGE YOUR POSITION IN SOCIETY?

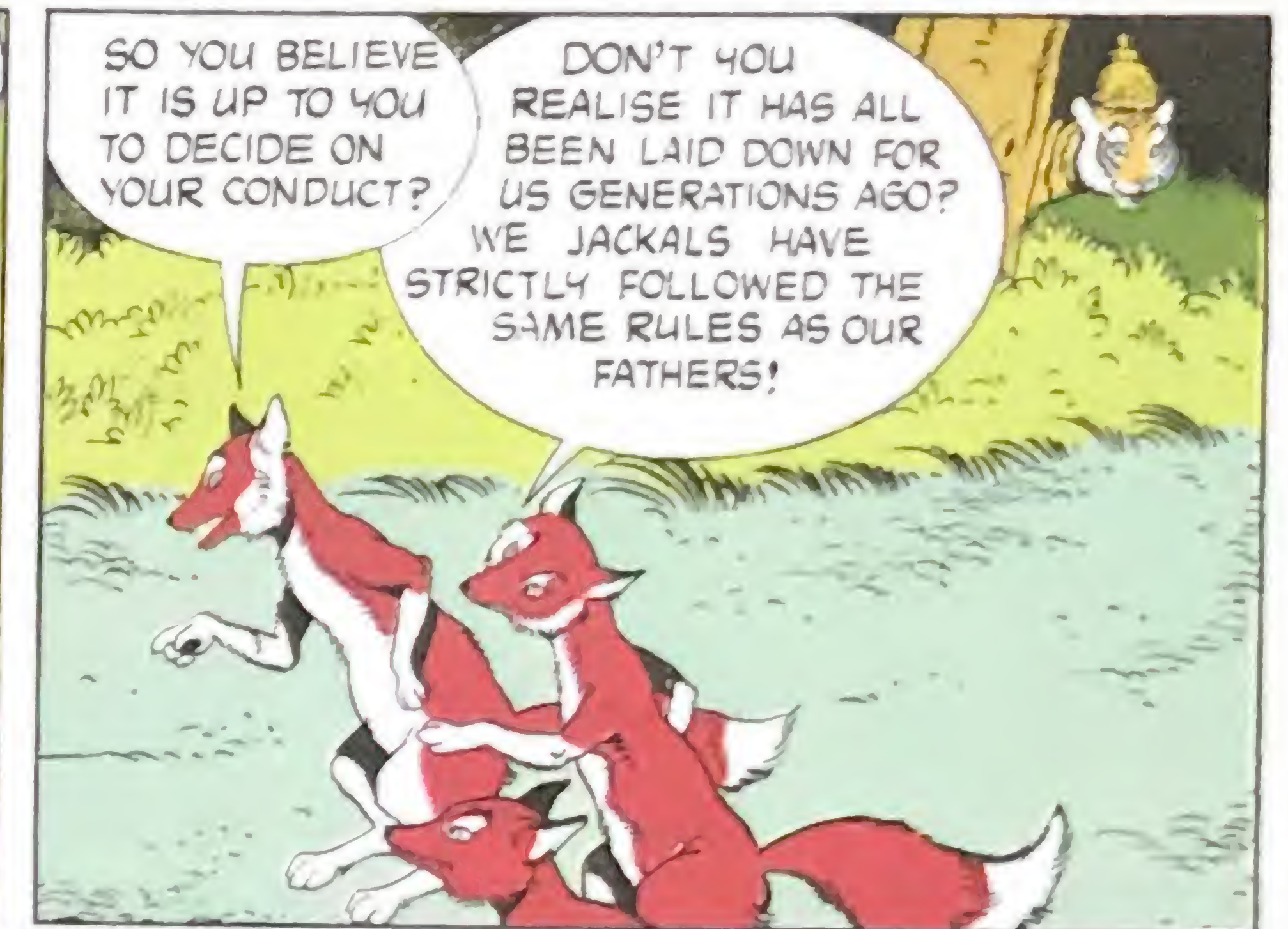


FRIENDS AND FOES



SO YOU BELIEVE IT IS UP TO YOU TO DECIDE ON YOUR CONDUCT?

DON'T YOU REALISE IT HAS ALL BEEN LAID DOWN FOR US GENERATIONS AGO? WE JACKALS HAVE STRICTLY FOLLOWED THE SAME RULES AS OUR FATHERS!



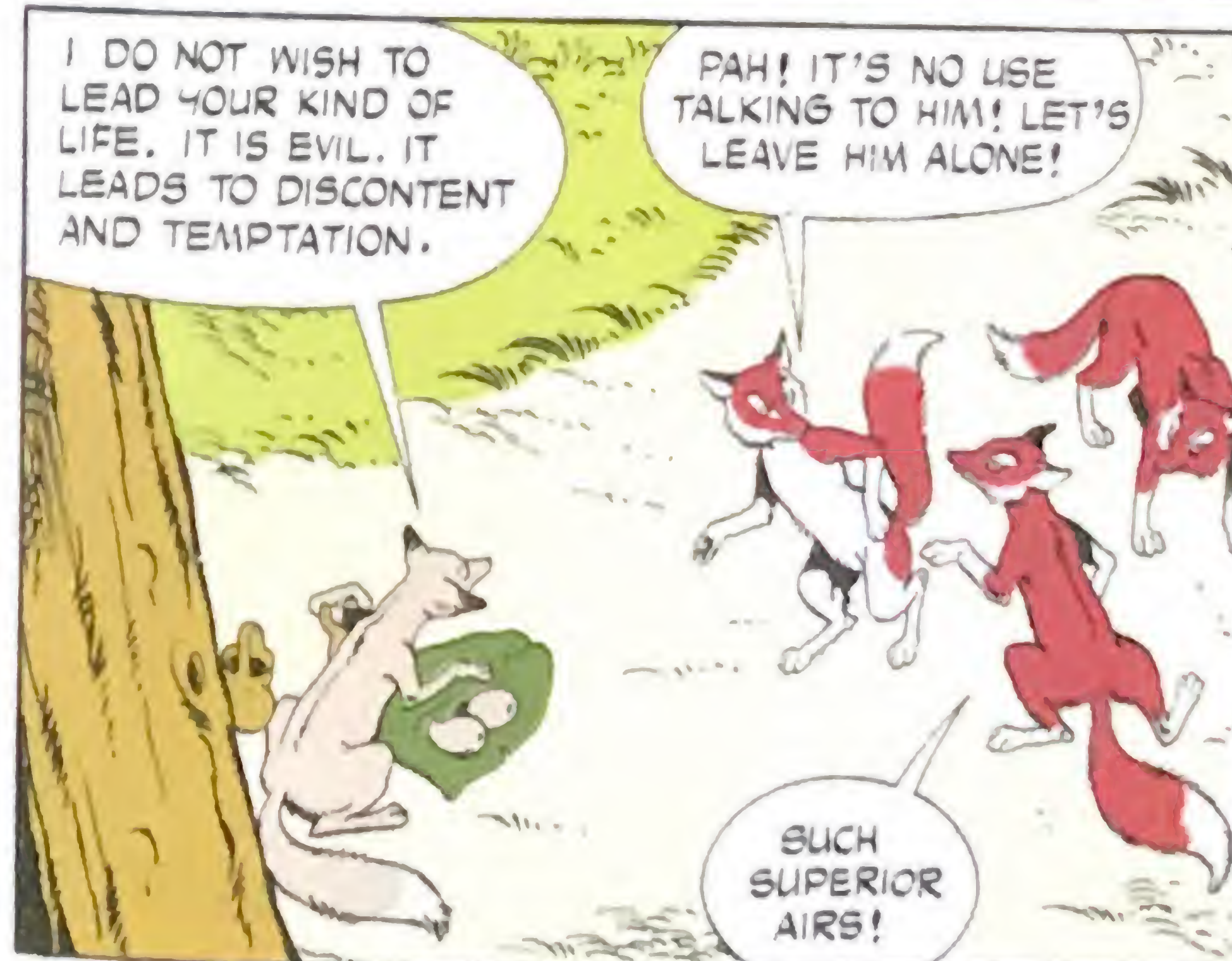
FRIENDS, SINCE WE ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR OUR ACTIONS DOES IT NOT FOLLOW THAT WE HAVE A CHOICE OVER OUR ACTIONS?

HE SEEMS TO BE A TRULY LEARNED PERSON OF BLAMELESS CONDUCT.



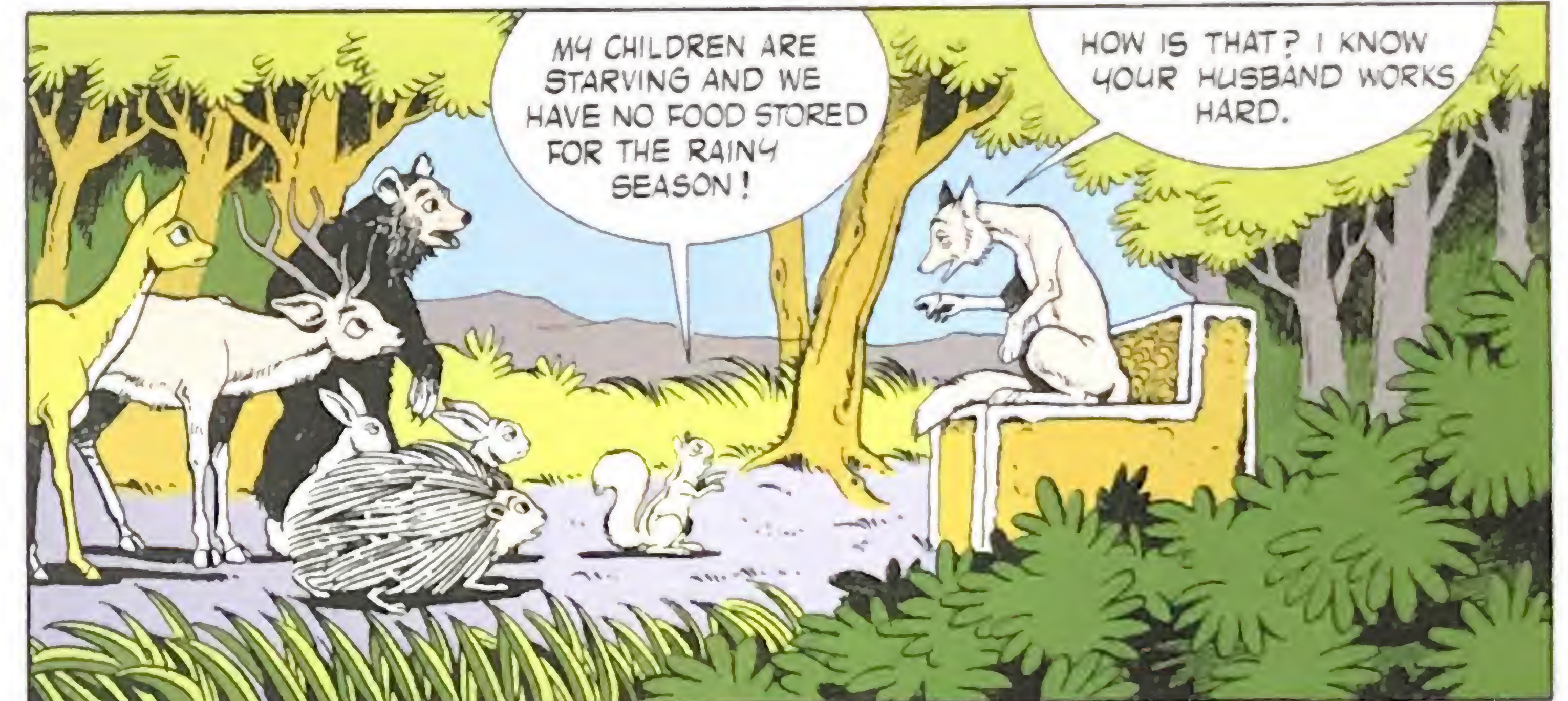
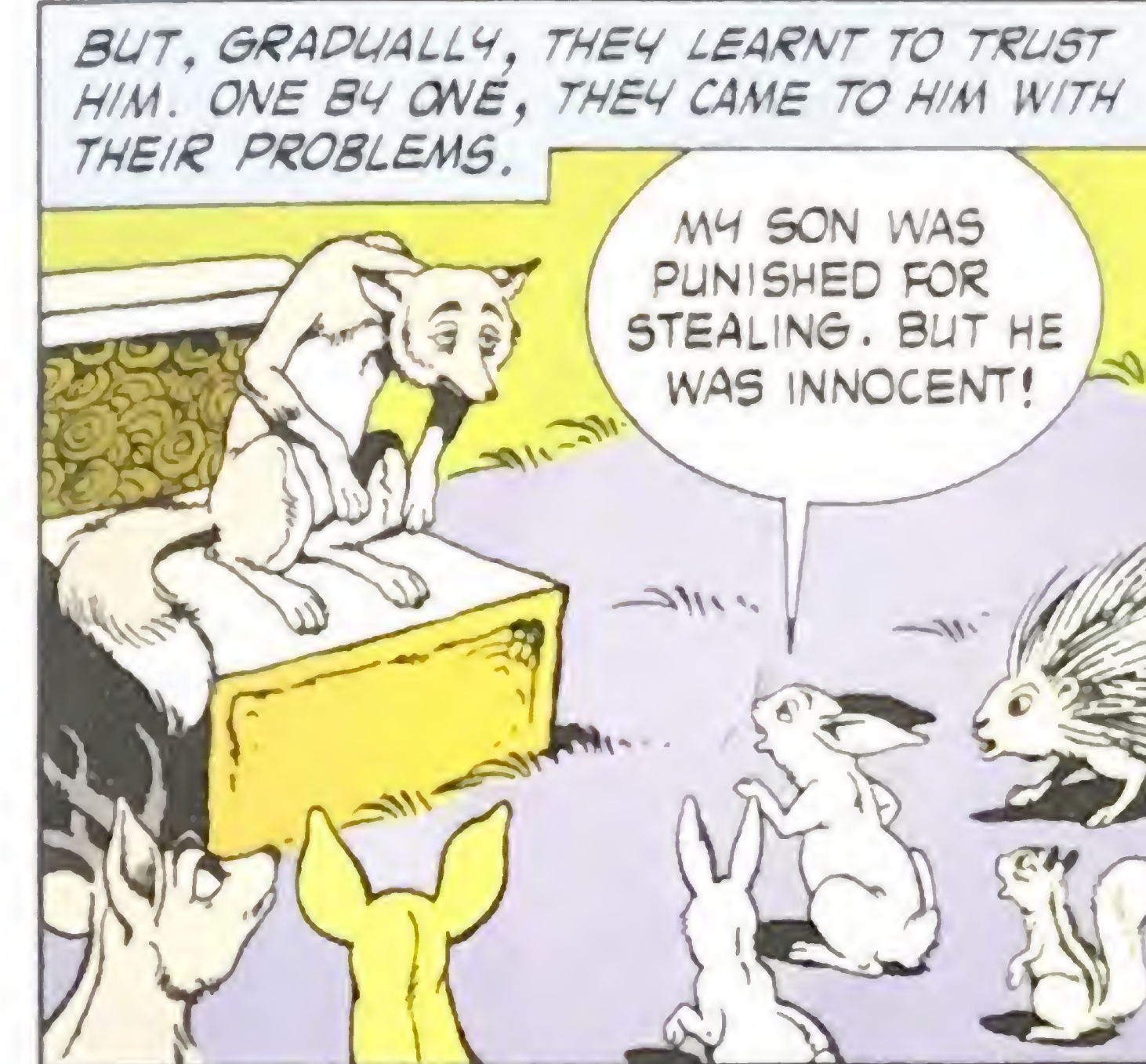
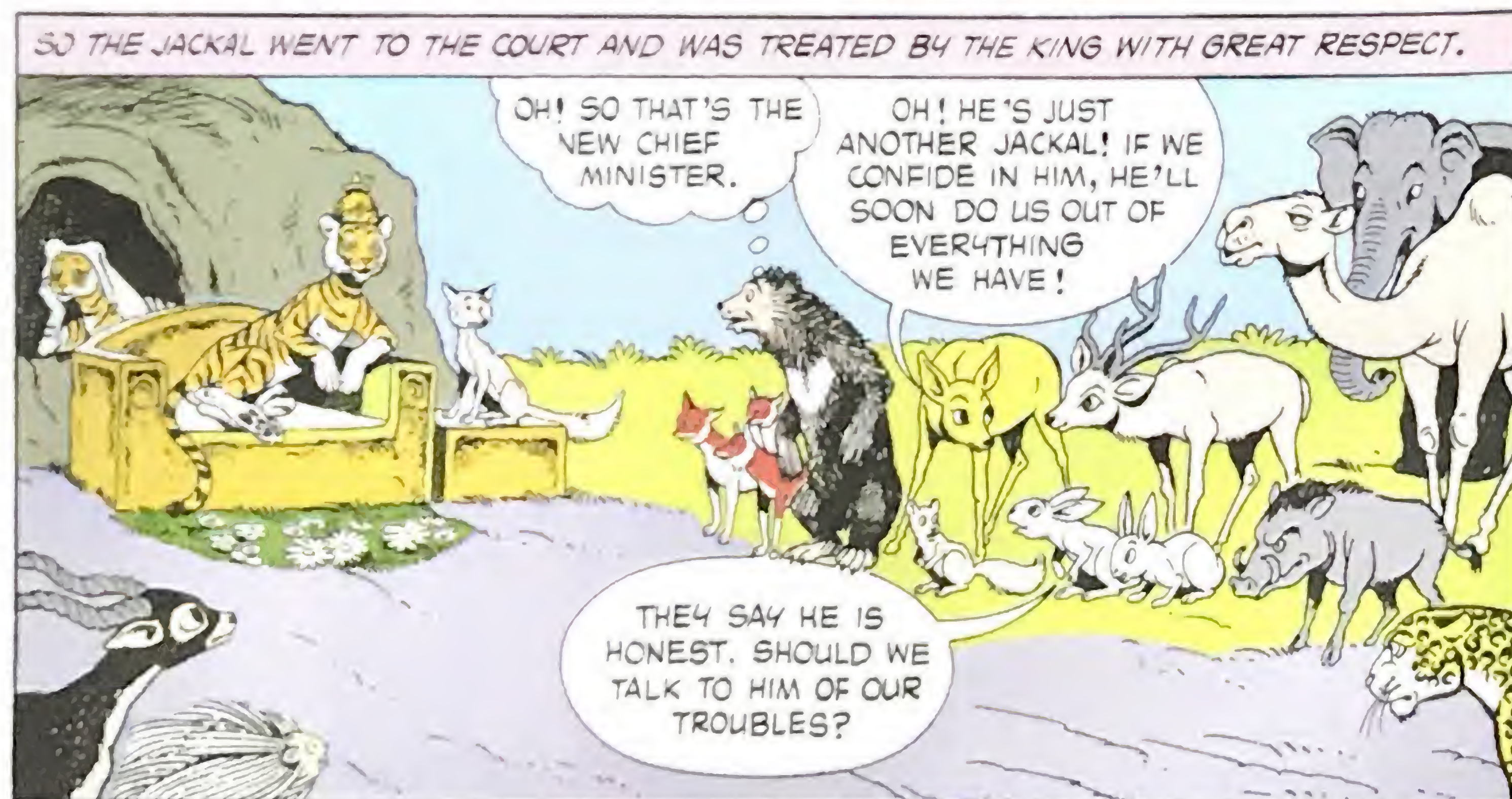
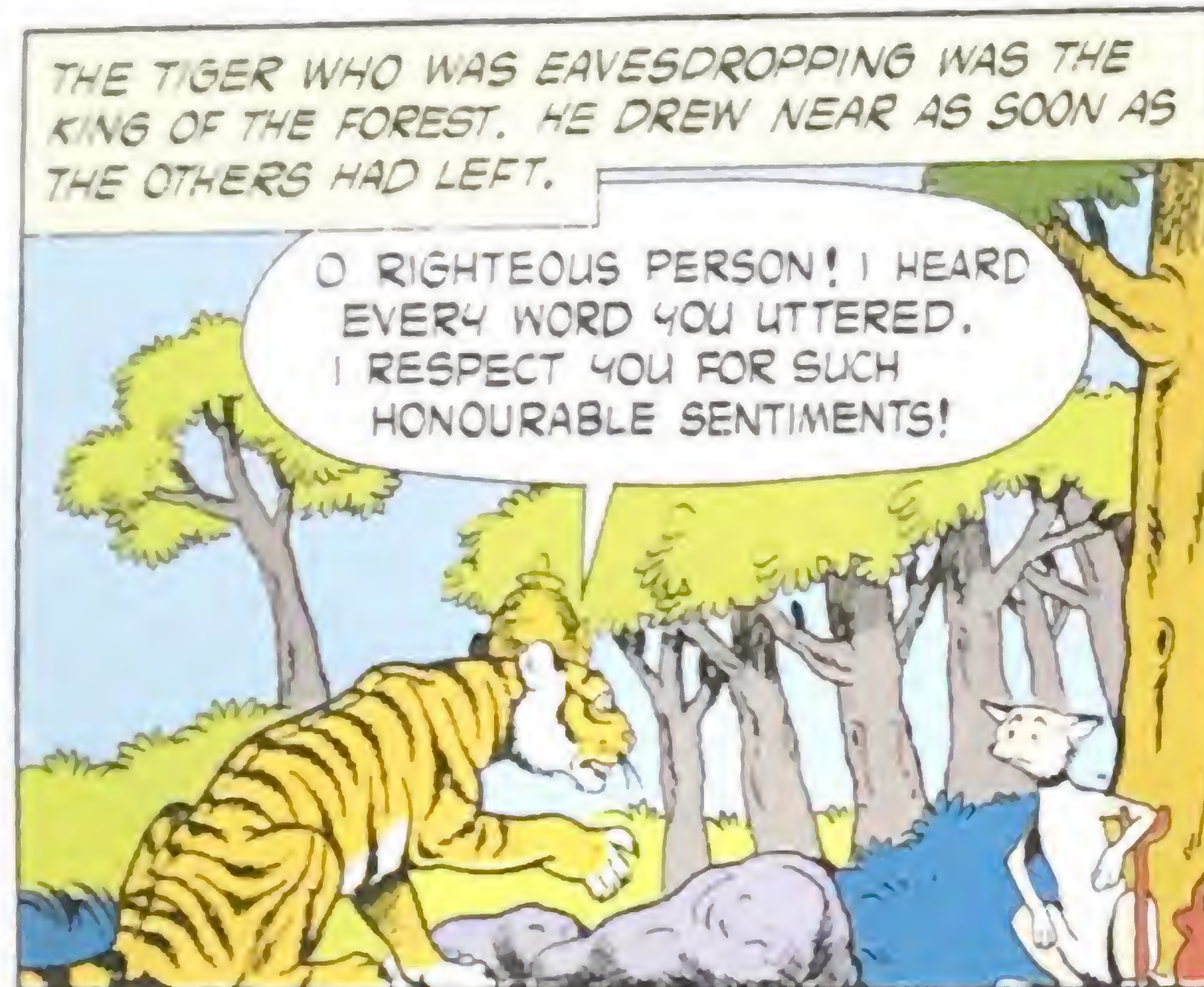
I DO NOT WISH TO LEAD YOUR KIND OF LIFE. IT IS EVIL. IT LEADS TO DISCONTENT AND TEMPTATION.

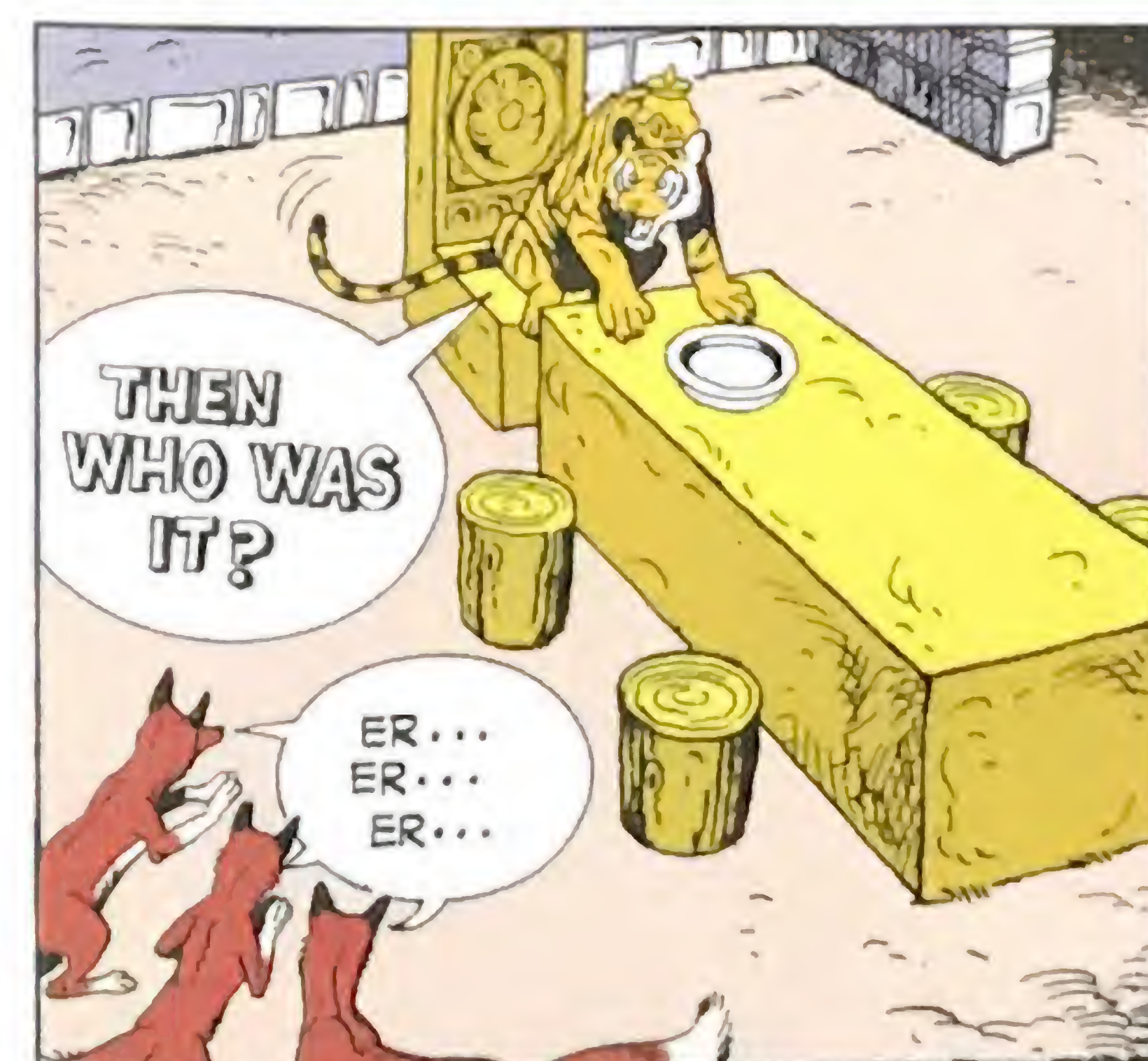
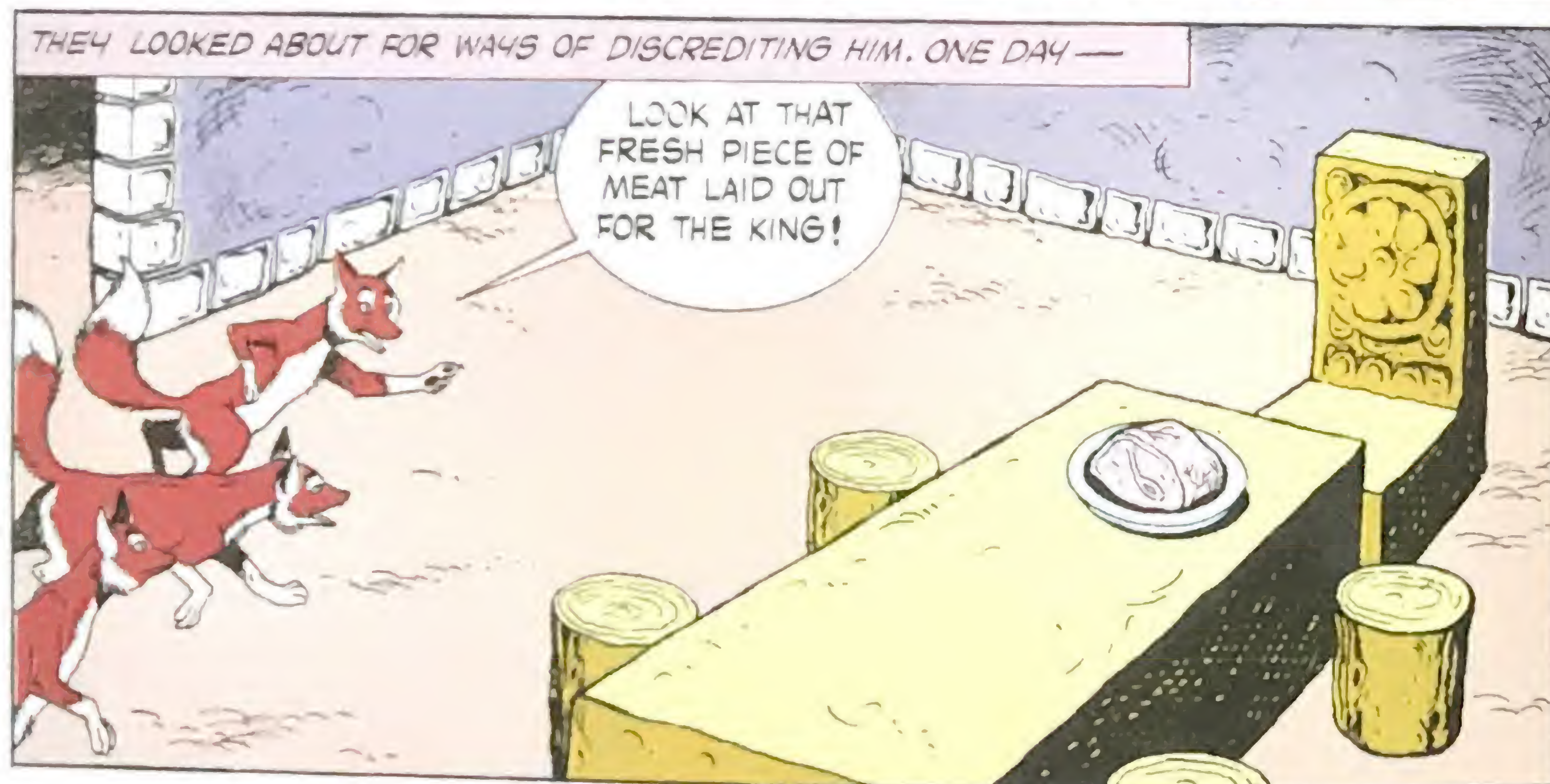
PAH! IT'S NO USE TALKING TO HIM! LET'S LEAVE HIM ALONE!

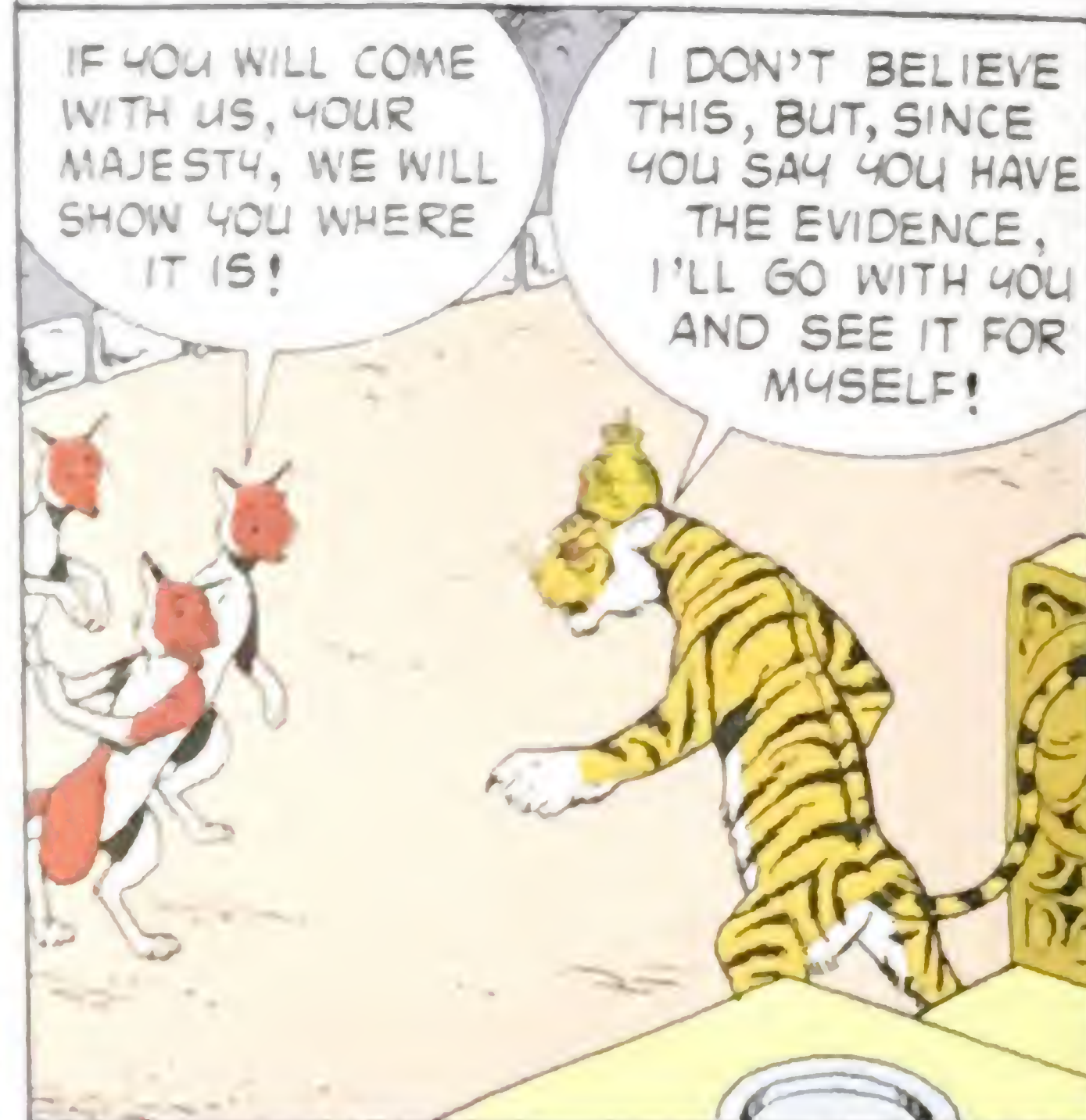


MOST UNUSUAL FOR A JACKAL! HE IS WORTHY OF RESPECT!











ALL RIGHT, YOU MAY GO THOUGH YOU HAVE BEHAVED LIKE A COWARD!



THE KING THEN SENT FOR THE CHIEF MINISTER.

GOOD JACKAL, I WAS WRONG TO MAKE SO HASTY A JUDGEMENT AGAINST YOU. PLEASE RESUME YOUR DUTIES.

O KING, FIRST YOU BESTOWED UPON ME THE HIGHEST HONOURS OF THE LAND. THEN YOU TREATED ME AS YOUR ENEMY.



I HAVE WRONGED YOU, I SHOULD HAVE JUDGED BY YOUR ACTIONS WHICH HAVE ALWAYS BEEN JUST.

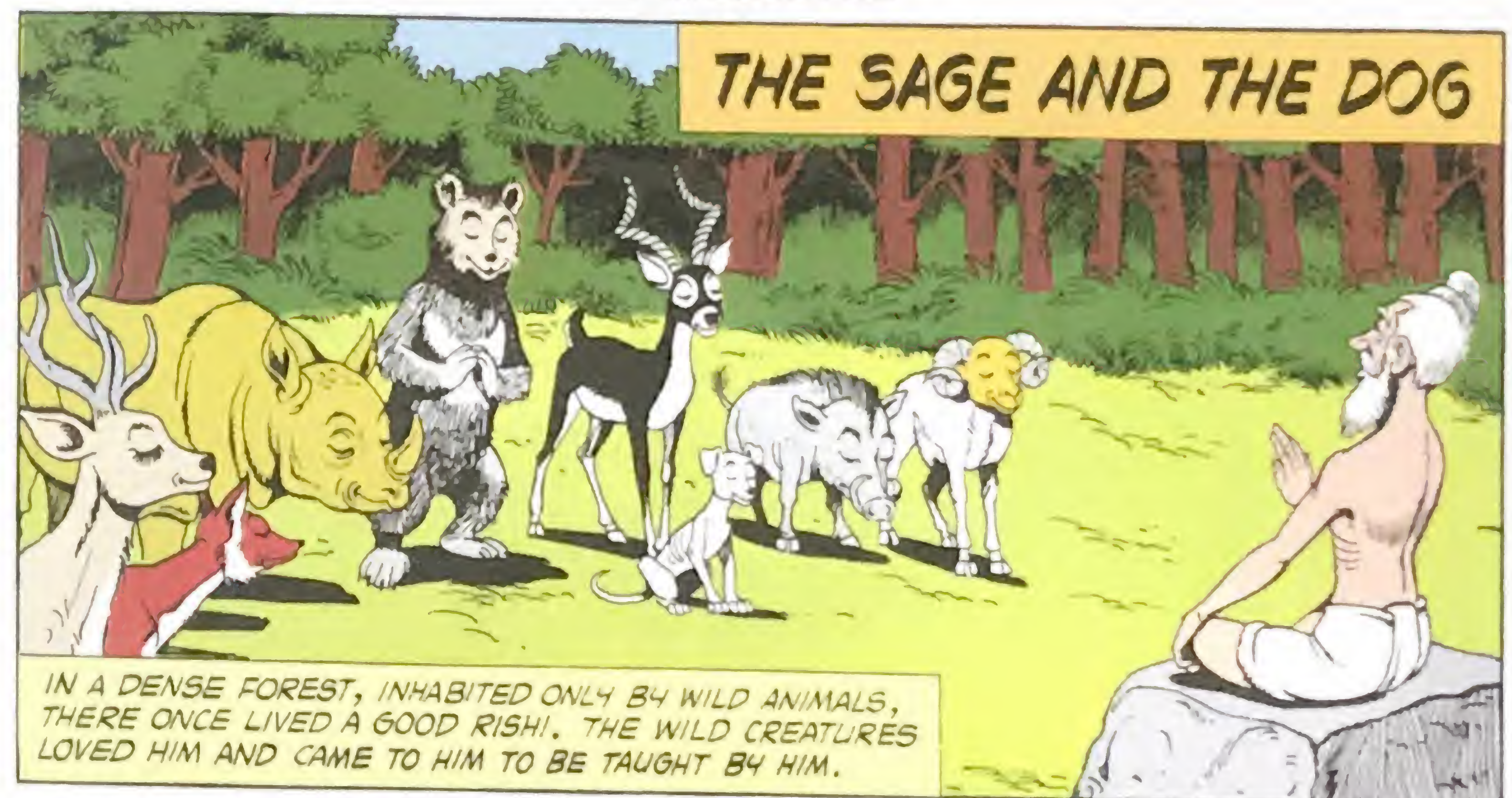


TRUST ONCE LOST CANNOT BE REGAINED. SUCH A SCAR PERMANENTLY MARS RELATIONSHIPS. PLEASE GIVE ME YOUR PERMISSION TO GO AWAY.



HE THEN WENT AWAY AND SPENT THE REST OF HIS DAYS IN SOLITUDE IN THE FOREST.

THE SAGE AND THE DOG



IN A DENSE FOREST, INHABITED ONLY BY WILD ANIMALS, THERE ONCE LIVED A GOOD RISHI. THE WILD CREATURES LOVED HIM AND CAME TO HIM TO BE TAUGHT BY HIM.

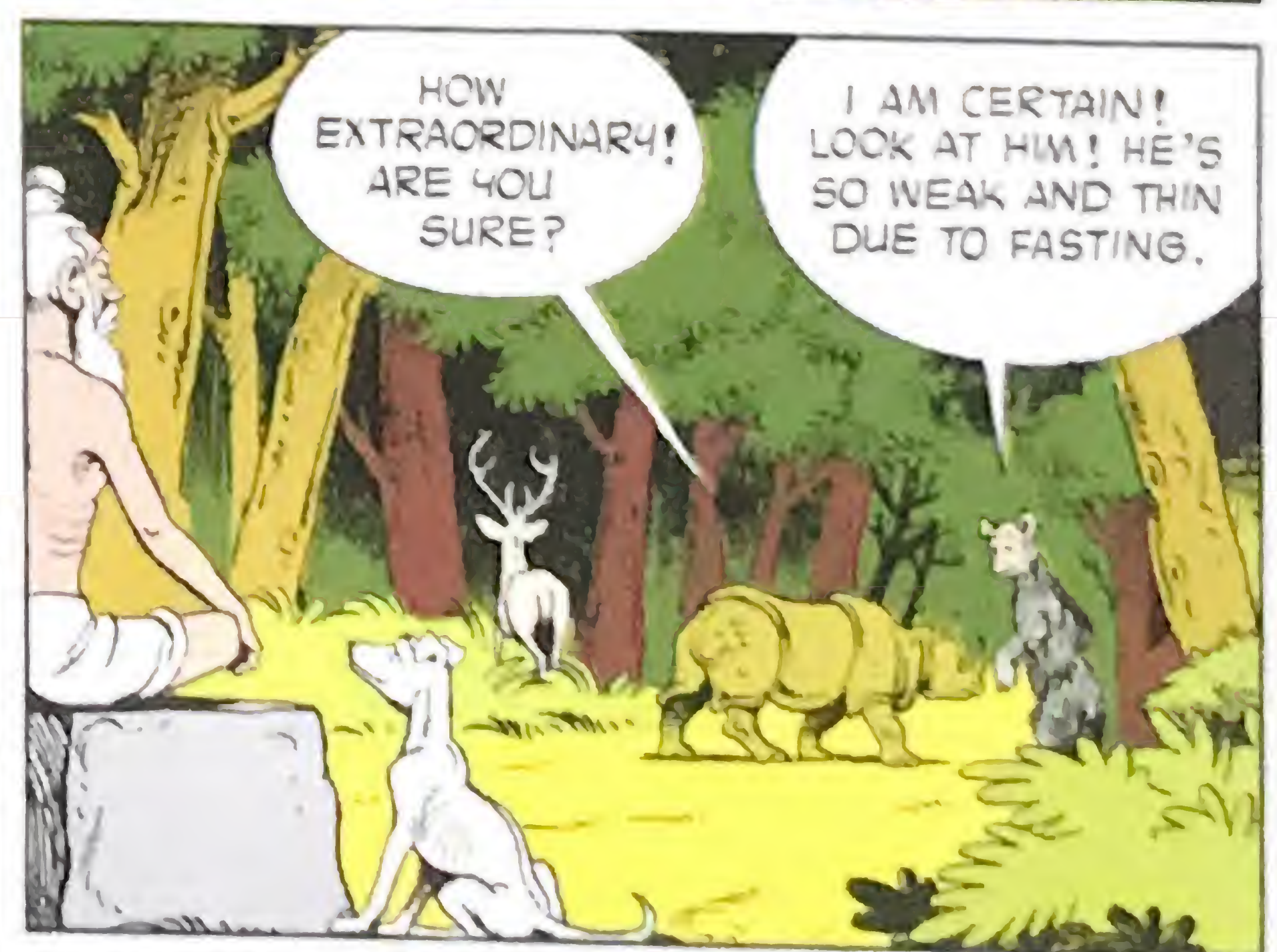


THAT DOG IS THE MOST DEVOTED OF ALL HIS DISCIPLES!

NEVER ONCE HAS HE LEFT THE SIDE OF HIS GURU!



AND WOULD YOU BELIEVE IT? THE DOG LIVES ON NOTHING BUT FRUITS, ROOTS AND WATER!



HOW EXTRAORDINARY! ARE YOU SURE?

I AM CERTAIN! LOOK AT HIM! HE'S SO WEAK AND THIN DUE TO FASTING.

ONE DAY, IT SO HAPPENED THAT A LEOPARD STRAYED INTO THE HERMITAGE.



HUNGRY AND THIRSTY, AND HIS JAWS WIDE OPEN, THE LEOPARD LOOKED LIKE A SECOND YAMA.* AND HE WANTED TO PONCE UPON THE DOG.



TREMBLING WITH FEAR, THE DOG TURNED TO HIS GURU.



* THE LORD OF DEATH

THERE WAS A BLINDING FLASH LIKE A SUN EXPLODING. THE DOG WAS TRANSFORMED INTO A LEOPARD WITH A COAT WHICH GLEAMED LIKE BURNISHED GOLD!



SEEING THIS MAGNIFICENT ANIMAL OF HIS OWN SPECIES, THE LEOPARD WHO HAD COME TO EAT HIM FLED.



SOME TIME LATER, A FIERCE TIGER CAME TO THE HERMITAGE.



THE LEOPARD WHO WAS REALLY A DOG, CROUCHED IN FEAR.



WITH HIS INNER VISION, THE RISHI SENSED THE DANGER AND QUICKLY TRANSFORMED HIM INTO A POWERFUL TIGER.



SEEING THIS NEW TIGER, THE HUNGRY TIGER LEFT AT ONCE.

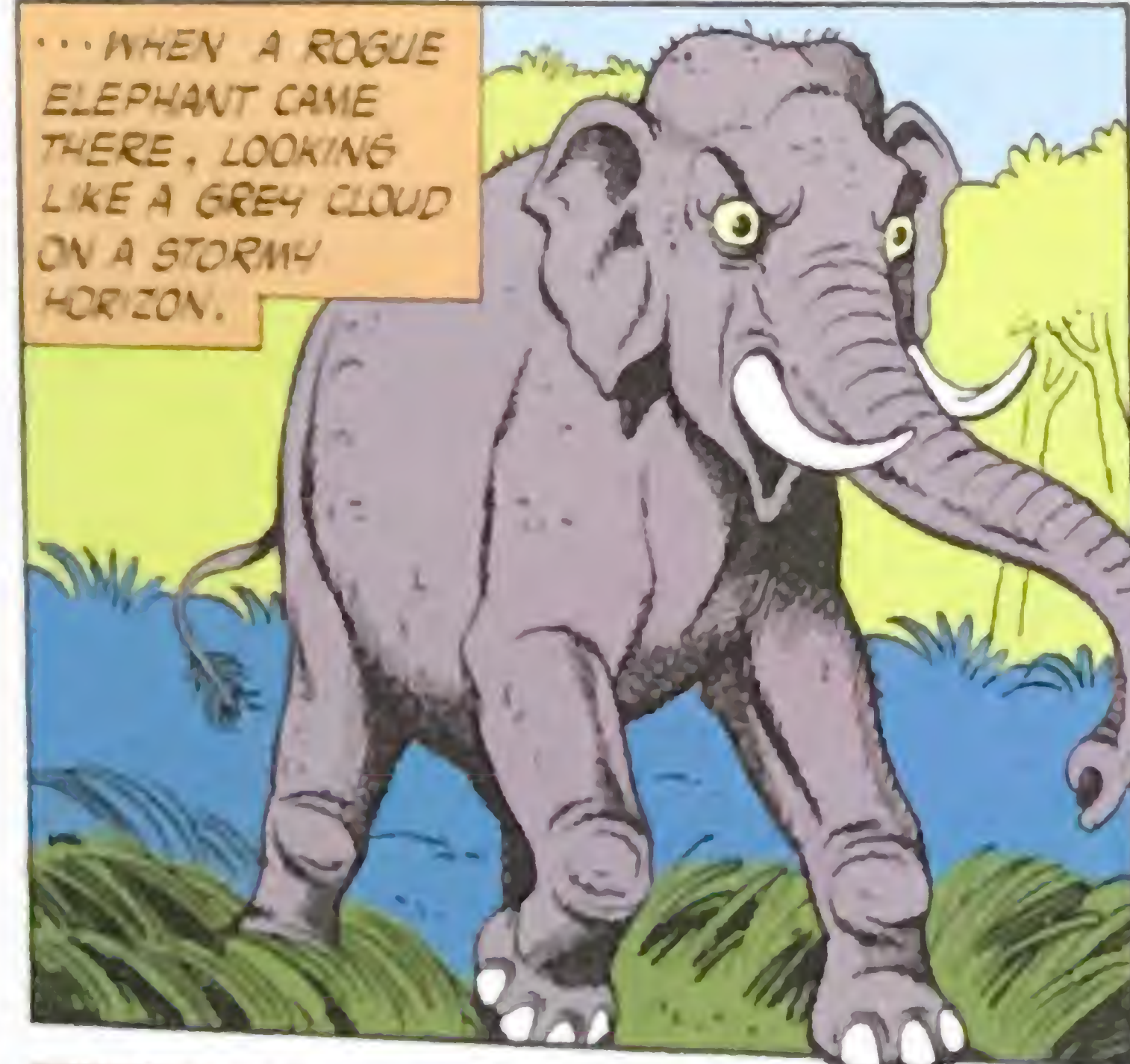
THE DOG, NOW TRANSFORMED INTO A REGAL TIGER, GAVE UP HIS FORMER AUSTERE DIET AND BEGAN TO SUBSIST ON OTHER ANIMALS.



ONE DAY, HAVING HAD A LARGE MEAL, HE WAS SLEEPING IN THE YARD OF THE HERMITAGE...



...WHEN A ROGUE ELEPHANT CAME THERE, LOOKING LIKE A GREY CLOUD ON A STORMY HORIZON.



AS THIS ELEPHANT OF TERRIFYING PROPORTIONS APPROACHED, THE TIGER WHO WAS FORMERLY A DOG RUSHED TO THE RISHI FOR PROTECTION.



IN AN INSTANT, THE RISHI TRANSFORMED HIM INTO A MAGNIFICENT ELEPHANT!



I MUST BE GOING MAD! I THOUGHT I WAS CHASING A TIGER BUT HE APPEARS TO BE ONE OF MY OWN SPECIES!

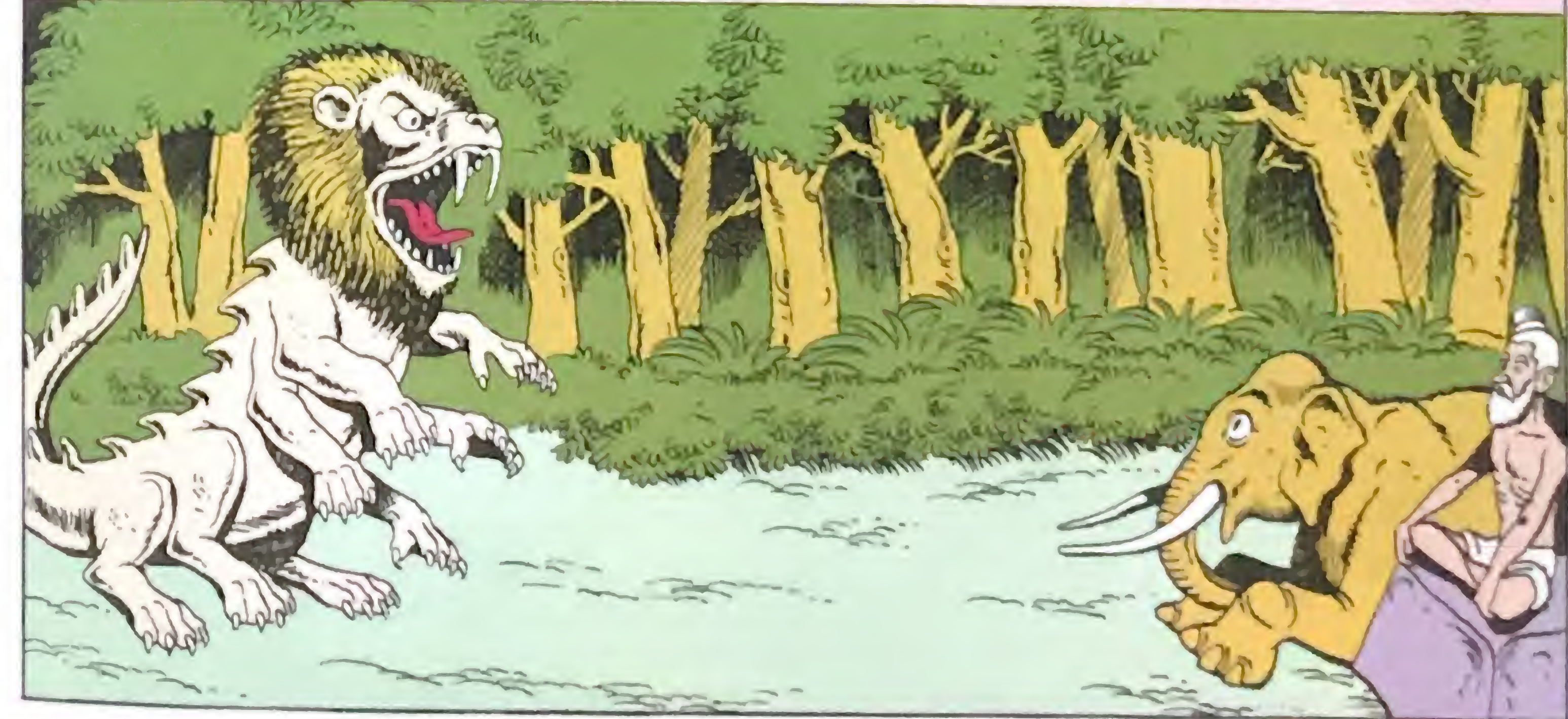


HA! HA! HE'S GONE!

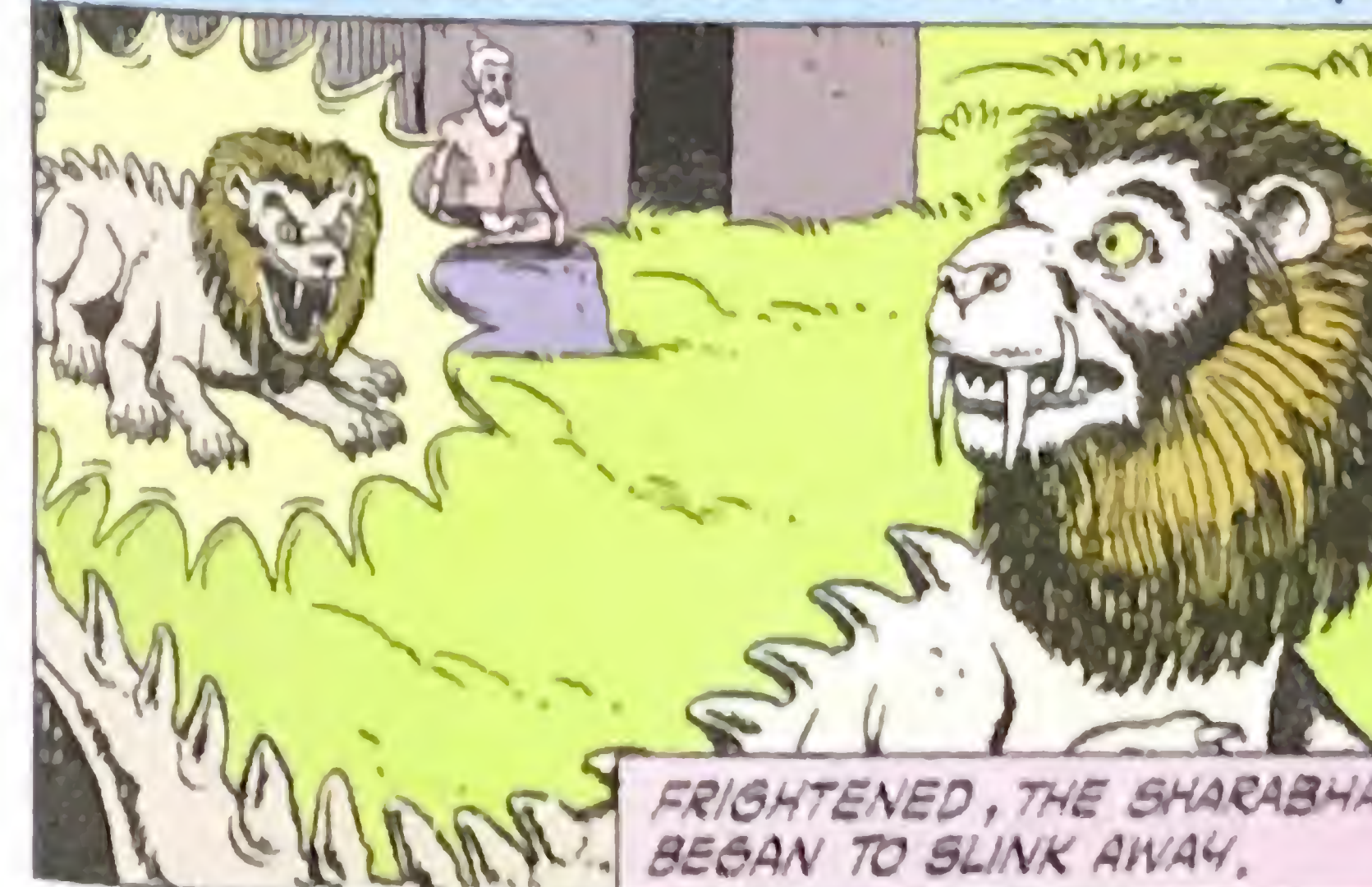
DELIGHTED WITH HIS NEW FORM, THE RISHI'S ELEPHANT WANDERED OFF TO A NEARBY LAKE, ENJOYING THE COOL WATER.



THEN ONE DAY, A SLAYER OF ALL ANIMALS CAME TO THE SPOT. IT WAS A SHARABHA, A TERRIBLE ANIMAL WITH EIGHT LEGS AND HE MADE STRAIGHT FOR THE RISHI'S ELEPHANT!



BUT THE ELEPHANT, THROUGH THE RISHI'S GRACE, HAD BECOME A SHARABHA, TOO. ONLY HE WAS BIGGER AND MORE FIERCE THAN THE OTHER ONE!



FRIGHTENED, THE SHARABHA BEGAN TO SLINK AWAY.

NOW OUR SHARABHA POSSESSED THE FIELD. BUT, WITH THE SUCCESSIVE CHANGES, HE HAD CHANGED IN OTHER WAYS TOO. NO LONGER DID HE LIVE ON FRUITS AND ROOTS. HE WAS NOW CONFIRMED IN THE HABITS OF A CARNIVOROUS BEAST.

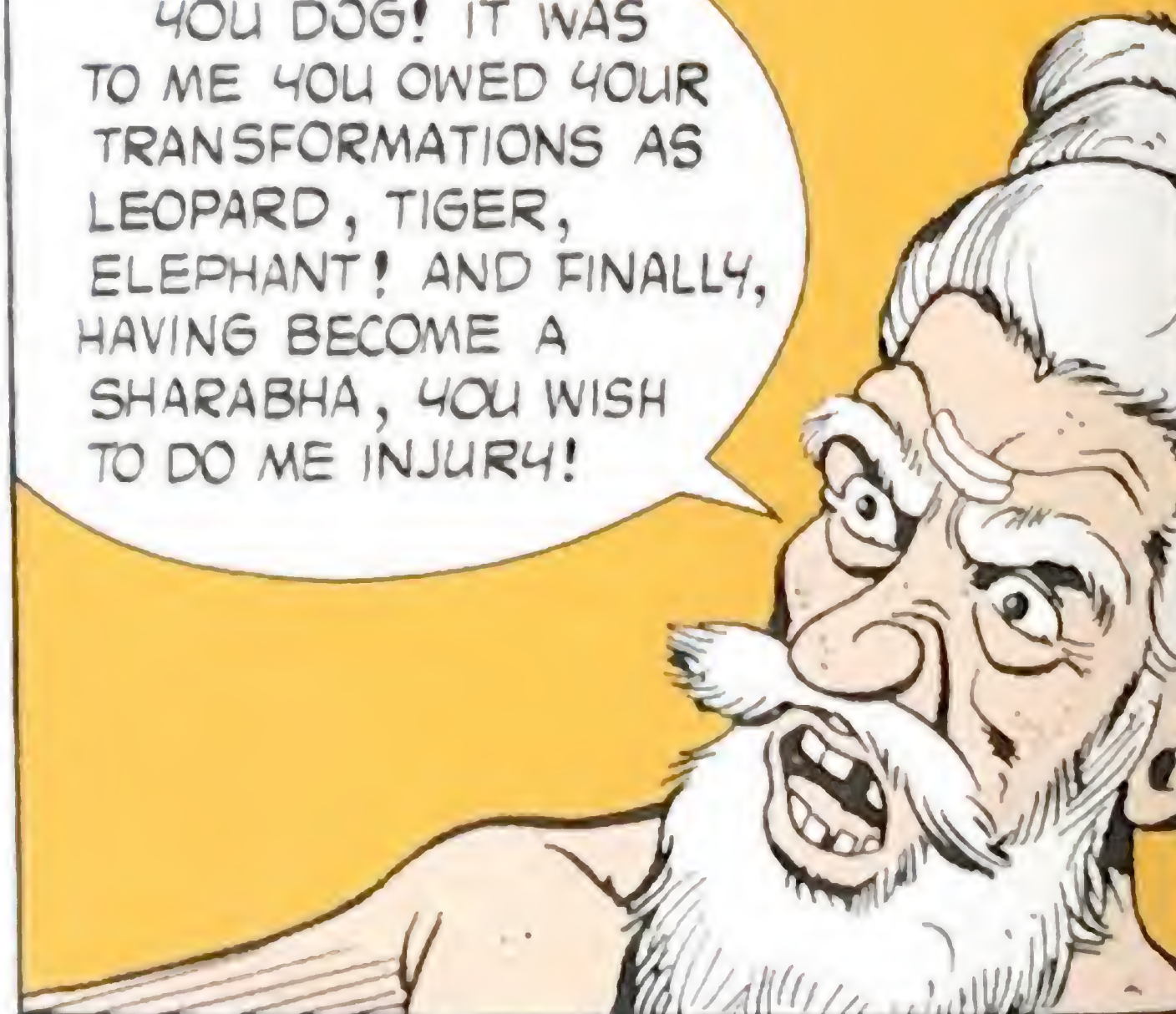


AND NOW, EVER THIRSTING FOR FRESH BLOOD, HE WISHED TO SLAY THE SAGE!

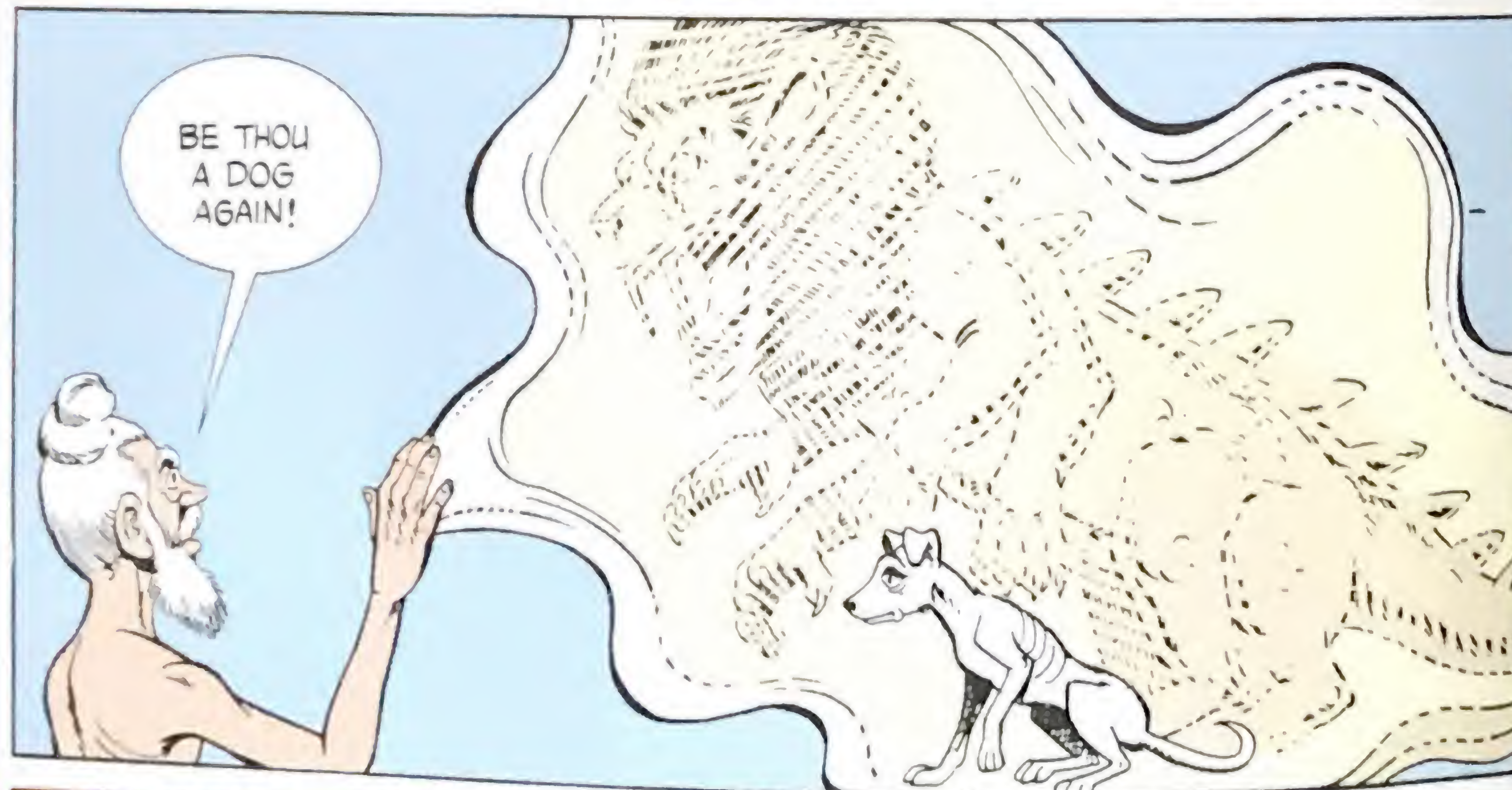


THE SAGE DIVINED HIS INTENTION AT ONCE.

YOU DOG! IT WAS TO ME YOU OWED YOUR TRANSFORMATIONS AS LEOPARD, TIGER, ELEPHANT! AND FINALLY, HAVING BECOME A SHARABHA, YOU WISH TO DO ME INJURY!



BE THOU A DOG AGAIN!



AS BEFORE, THE DOG RESTED AT THE FEET OF HIS GURU...

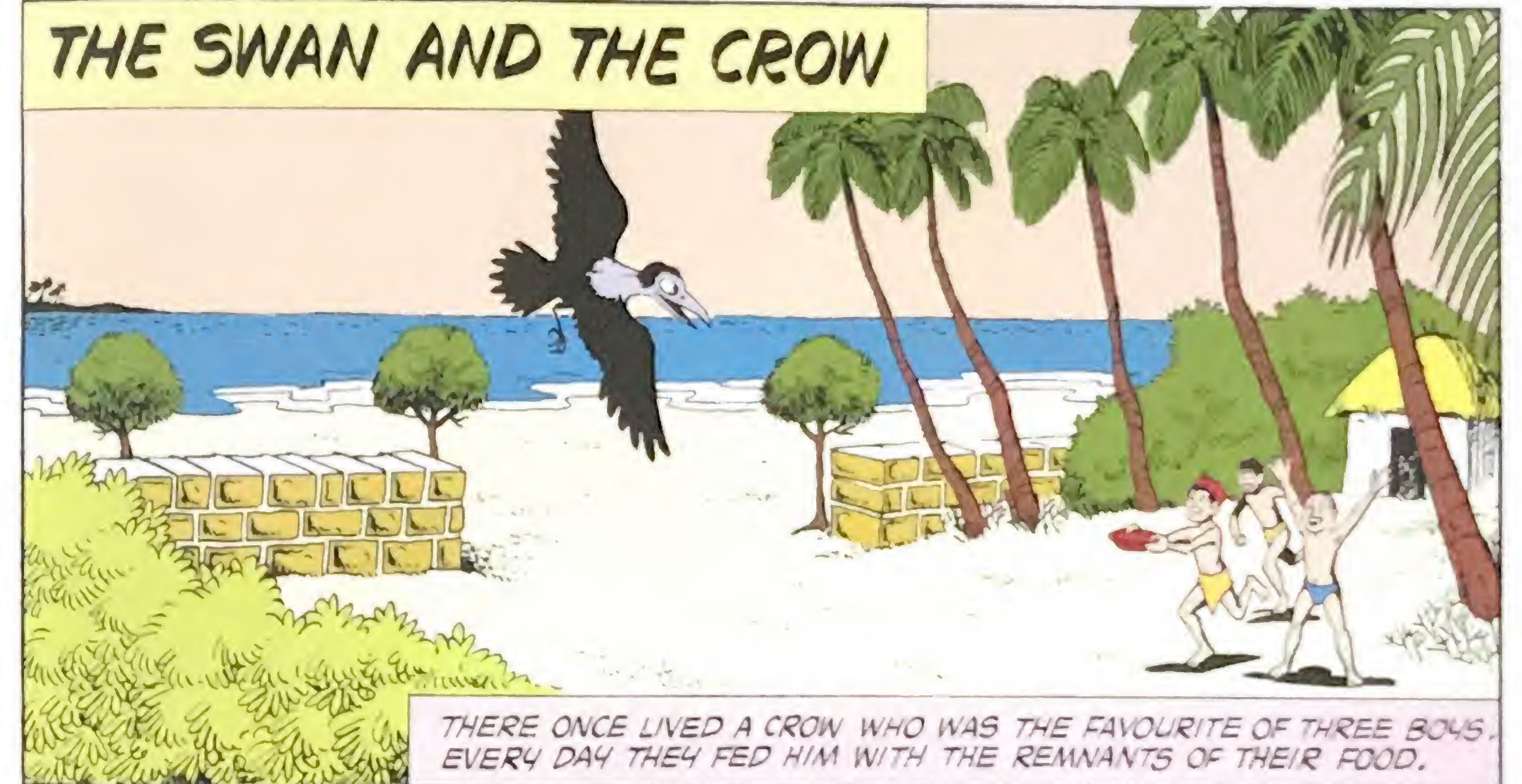


... BUT HE HAD BECOME VERY CHEERLESS, SO THE RISHI DROVE HIM AWAY.

GO AWAY, SINFUL CREATURE! NO ONE SHOULD BE PLACED IN A POSITION FOR WHICH HE IS NOT SUITED! YOU ARE CERTAINLY FIT ONLY TO BE A DOG!



THE SWAN AND THE CROW



THERE ONCE LIVED A CROW WHO WAS THE FAVOURITE OF THREE BOYS. EVERY DAY THEY FED HIM WITH THE REMNANTS OF THEIR FOOD.

COME, LOVELY CROW, WE WON'T HARM YOU!



EAT! EAT!

DOESN'T HE LOOK LOVELY?

LOOK AT HIS GLOSSY WINGS!



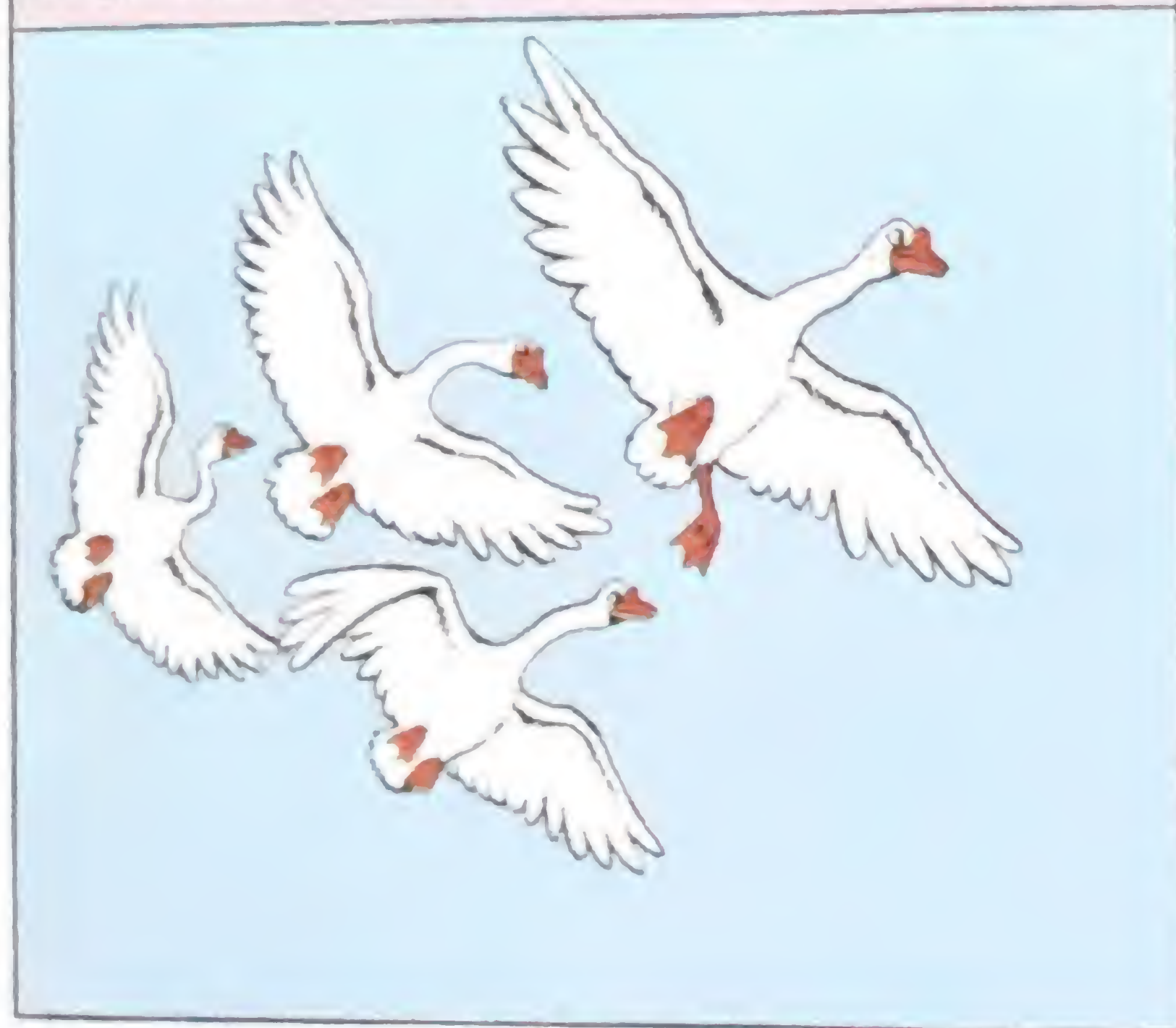
THE ADMIRATION OF THE CHILDREN FILLED THE CROW WITH PRIDE...



... AND HE BELIEVED HIMSELF TO BE THE HANDSOMEST, CLEVEREST BIRD IN THE LAND.



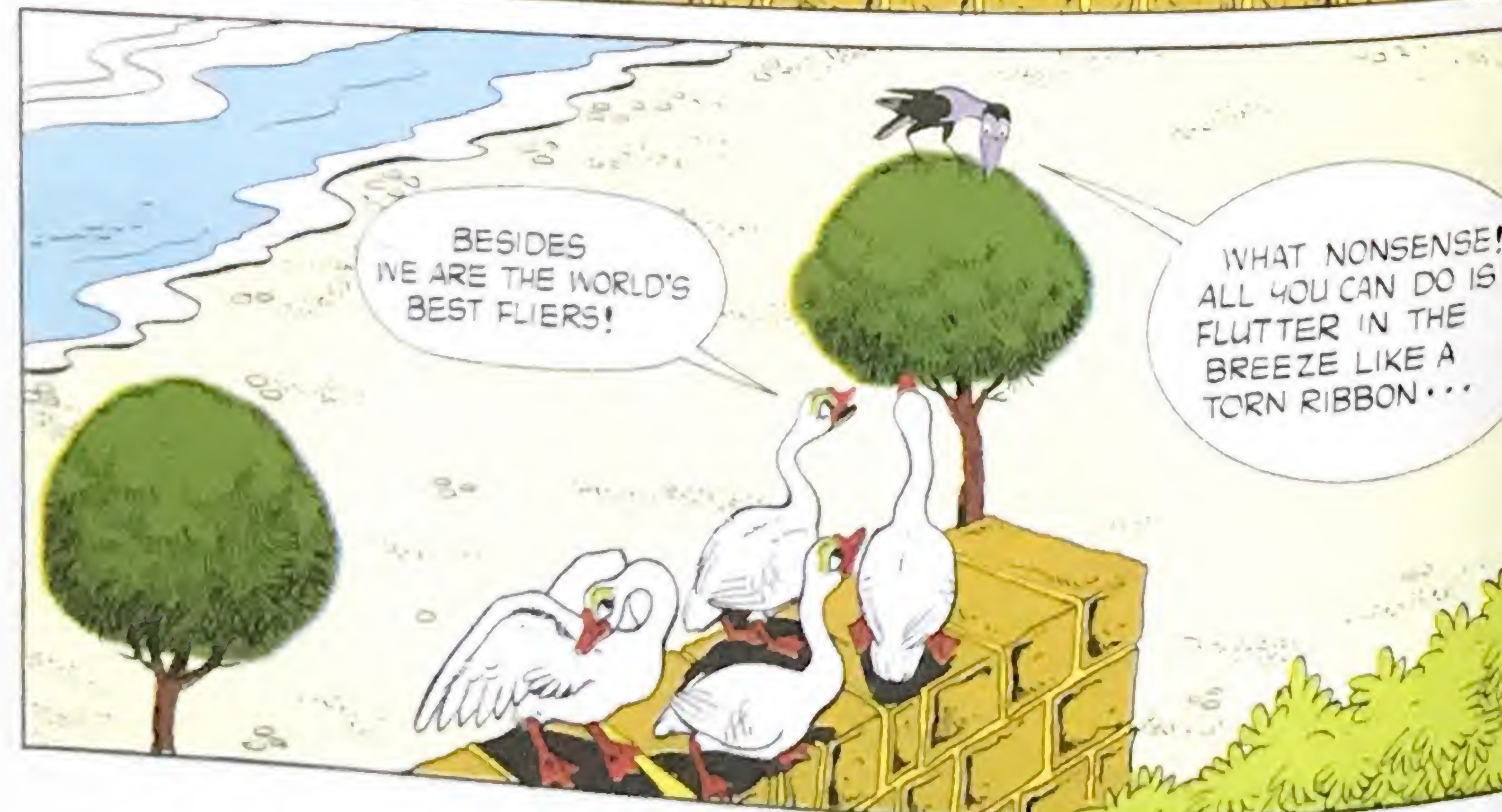
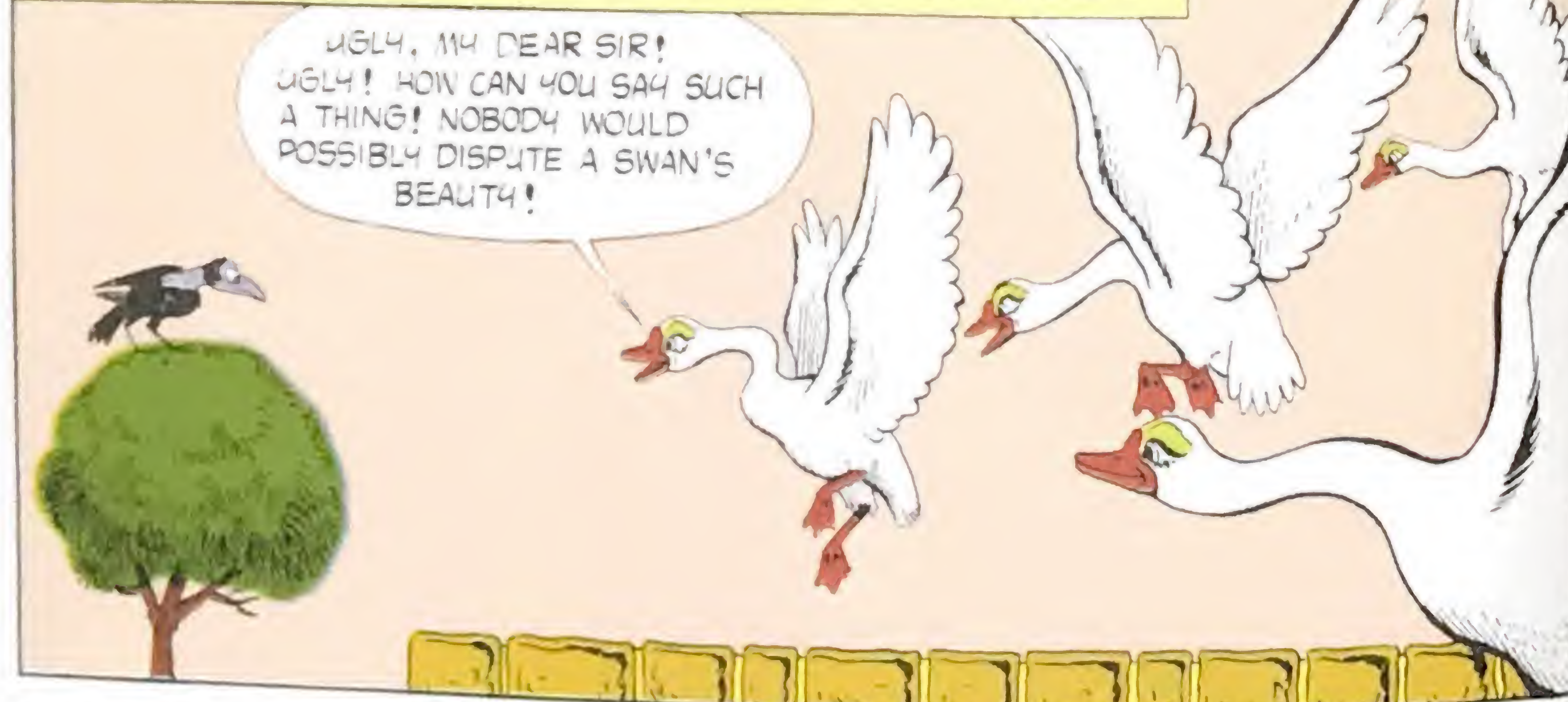
JUST THEN HE SPOTTED A FLOCK OF SWANS...



...AND THE SIGHT IRRITATED HIM!



THE LEADER OF THESE SWANS HEARD THIS AS HE WAS GLIDING BY.



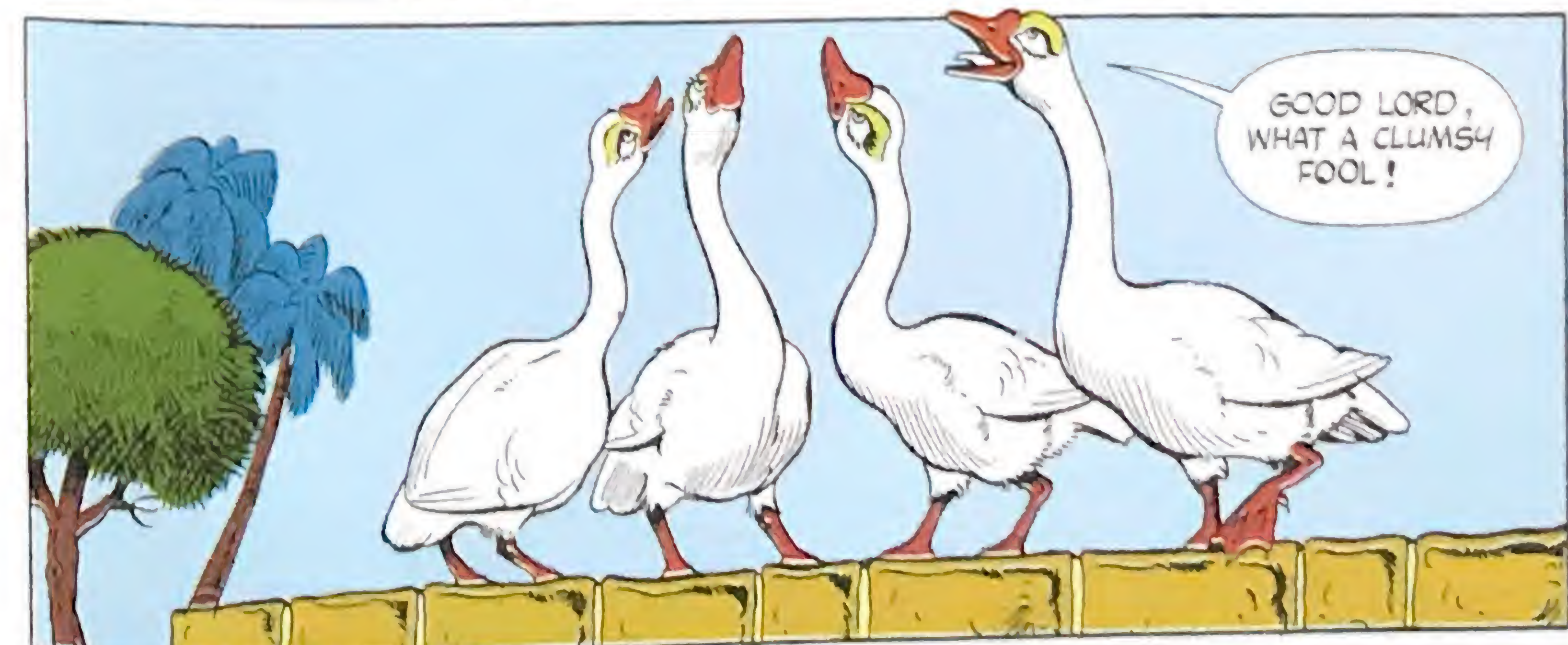
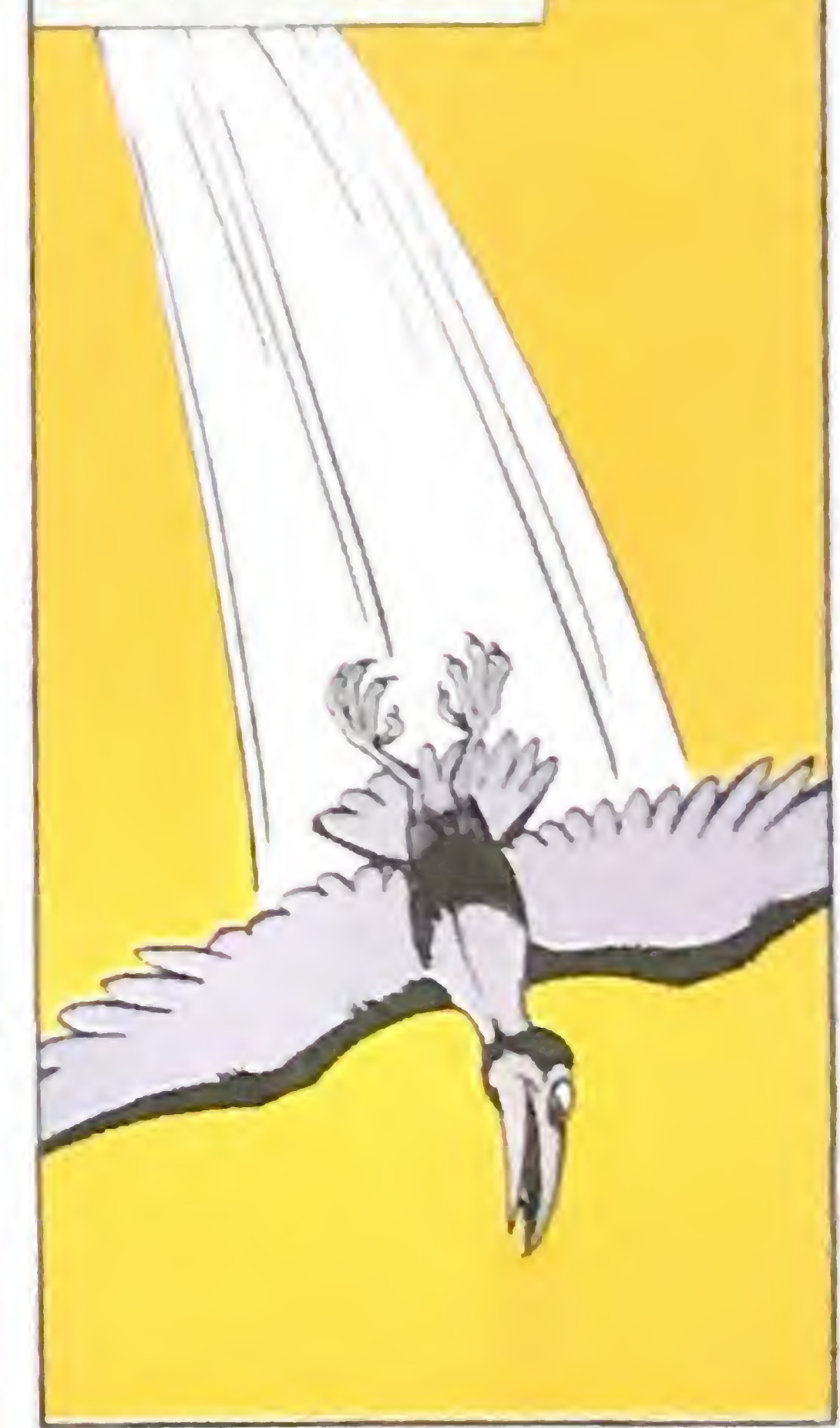
HE TURNED SEVERAL TIMES IN THE AIR LIKE AN ACROBAT.

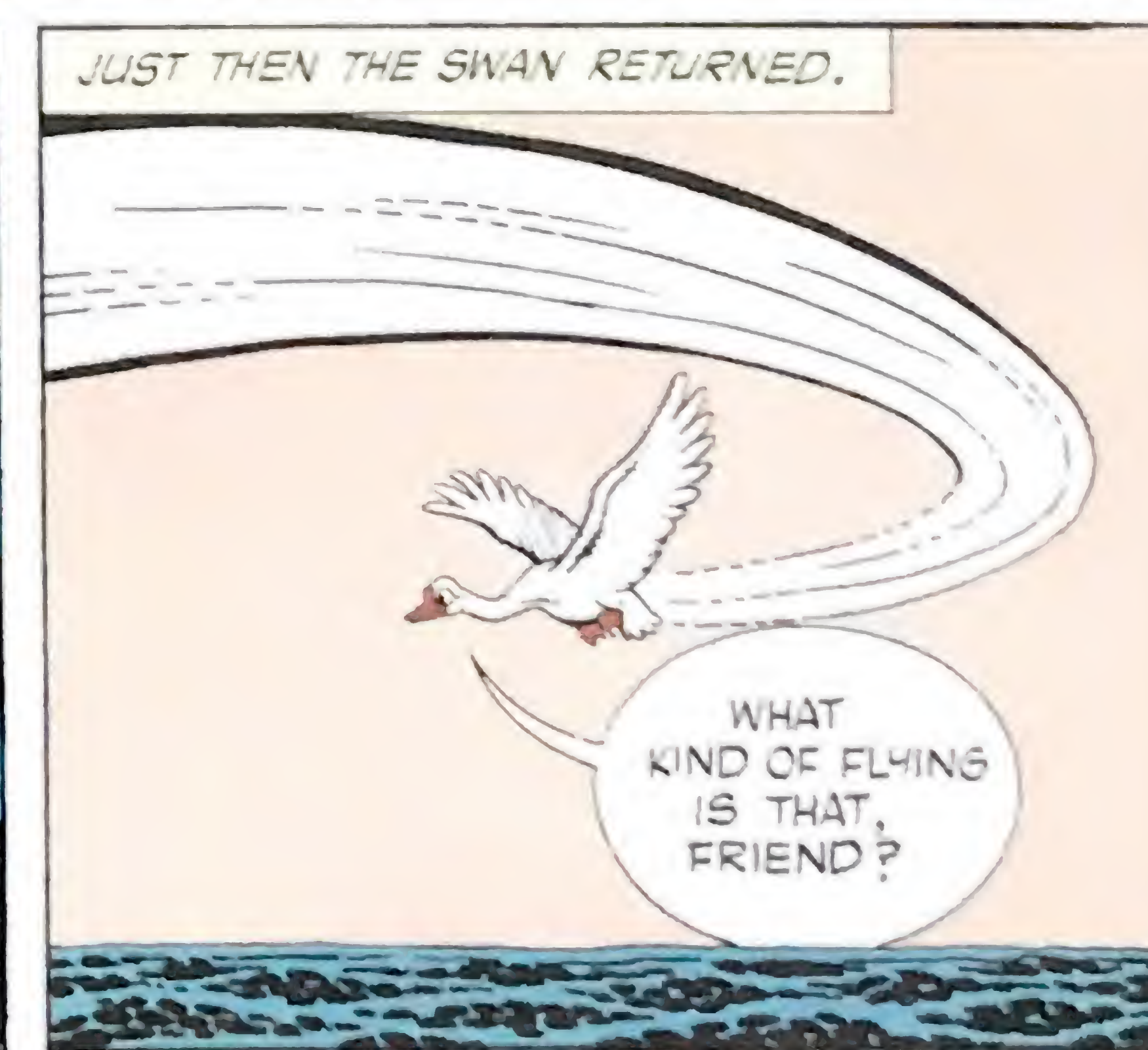
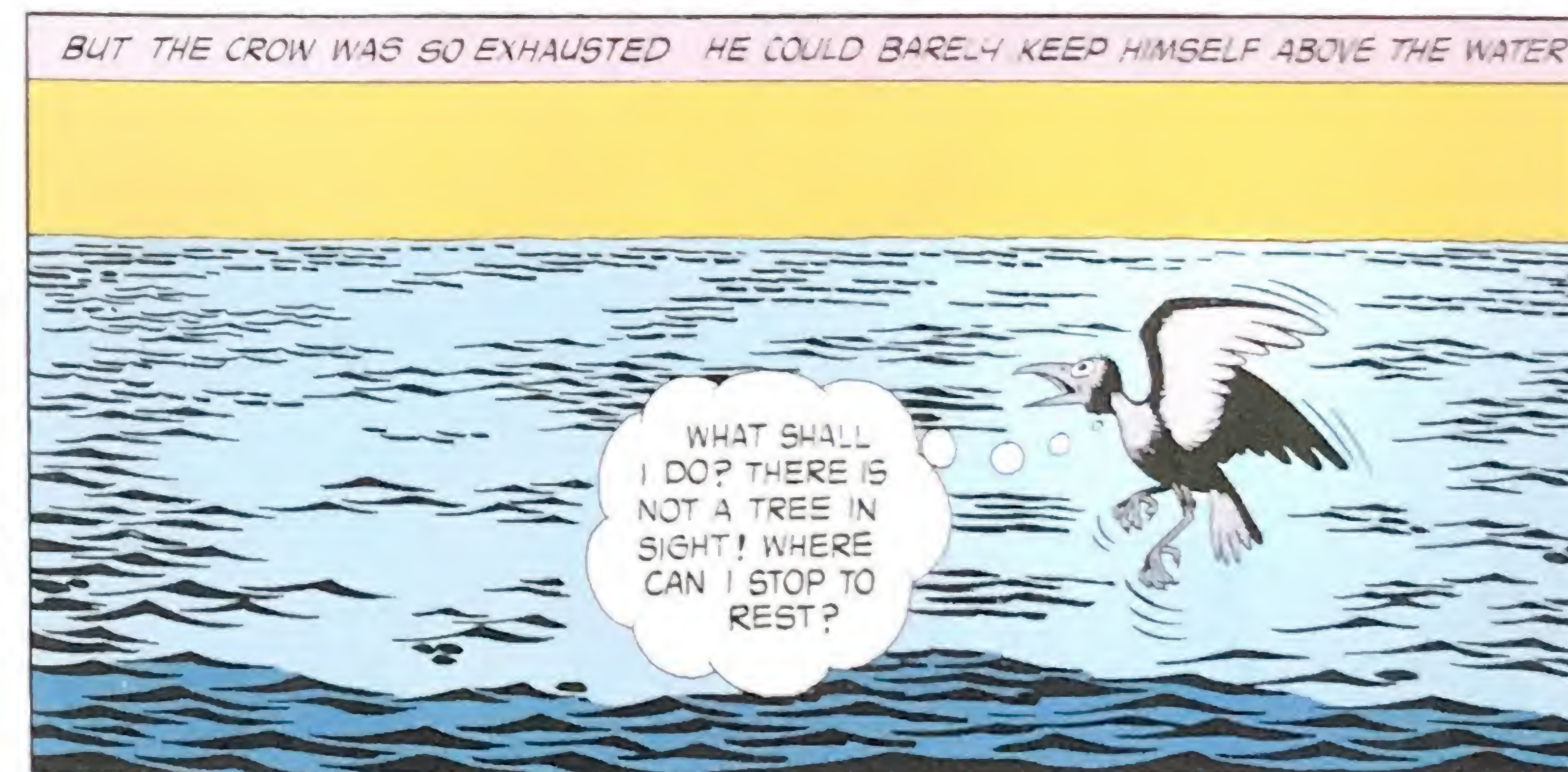
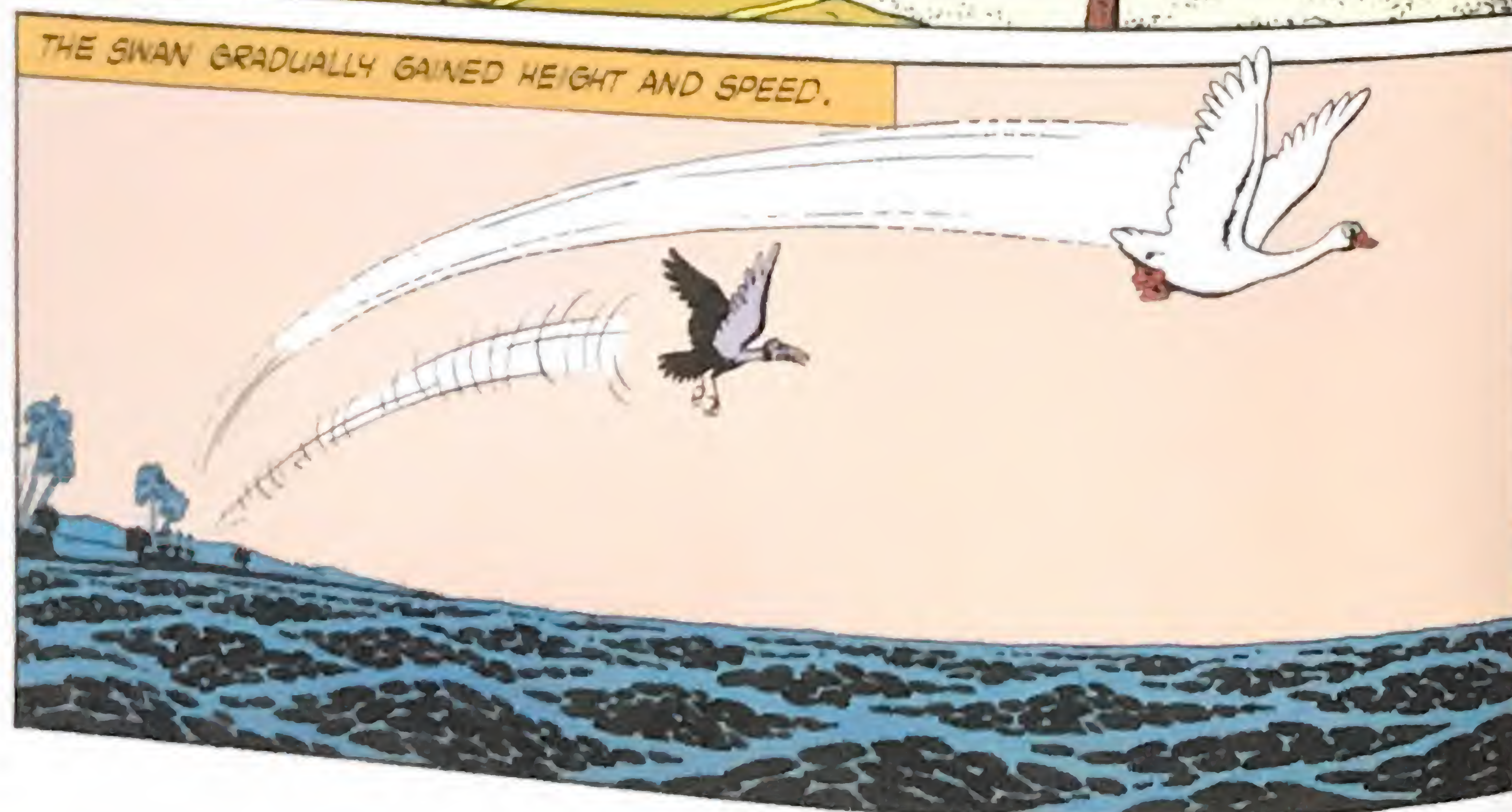
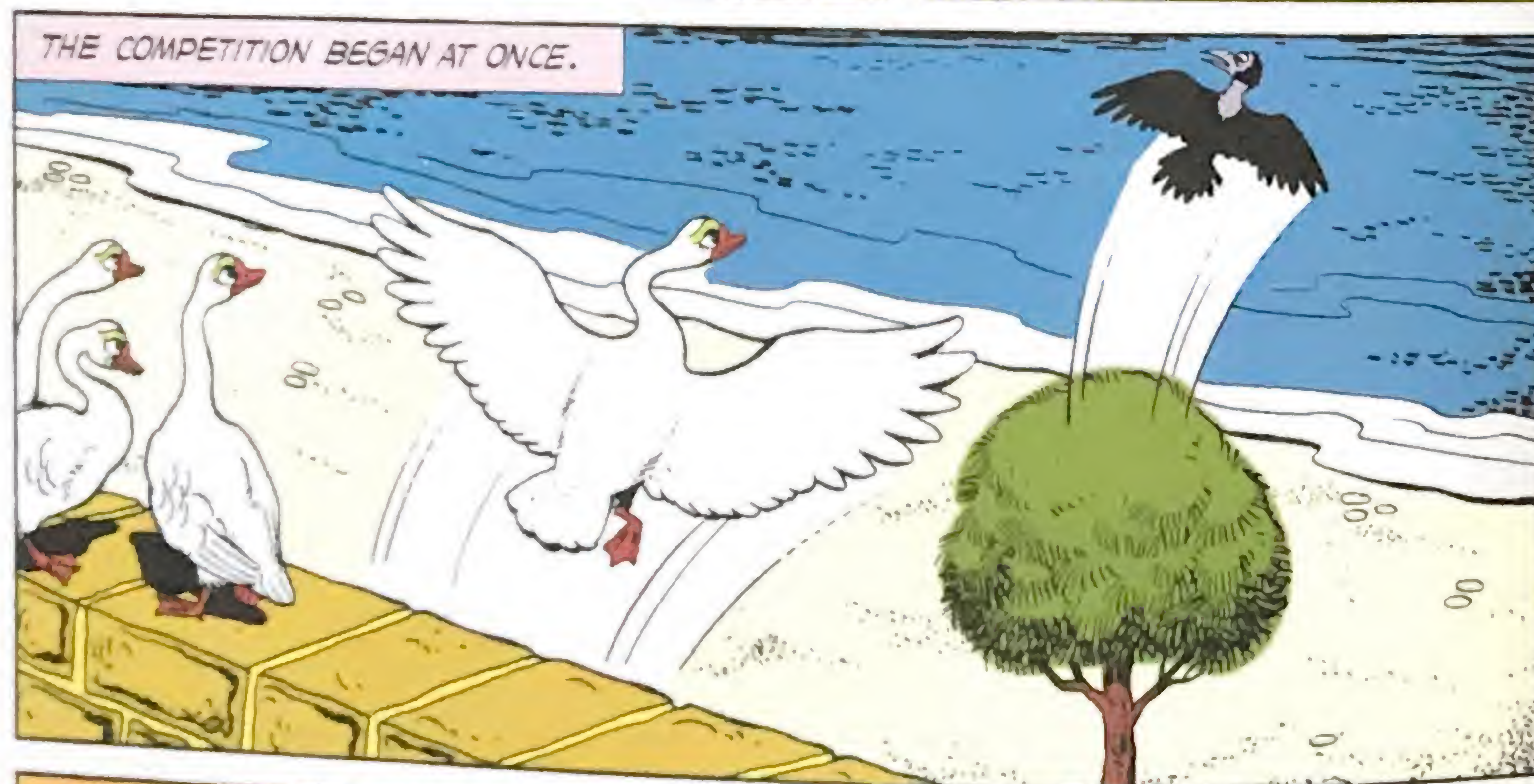


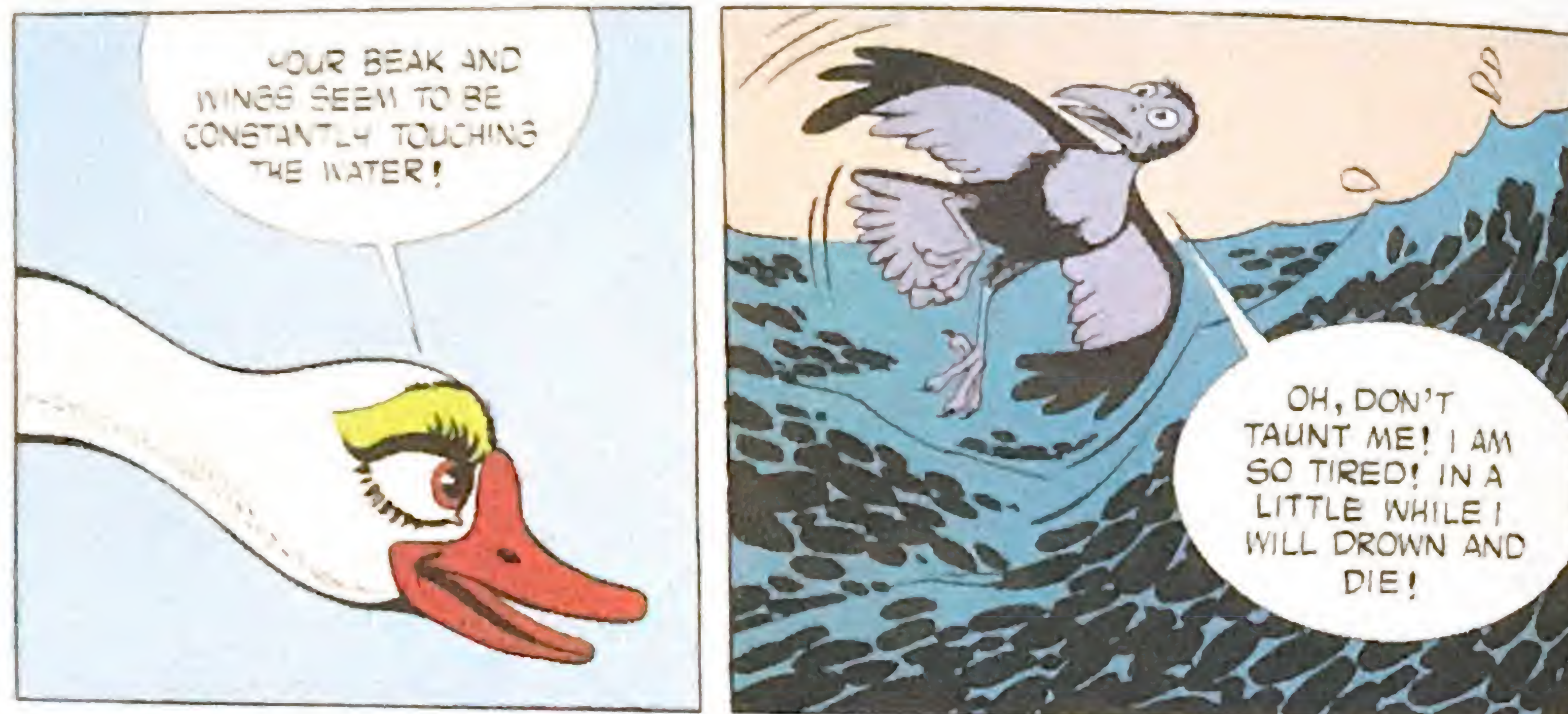
HE MADE ZIG-ZAG PATTERNS IN THE AIR AND...



...EVEN FLEW UPSIDE DOWN FOR A BIT.



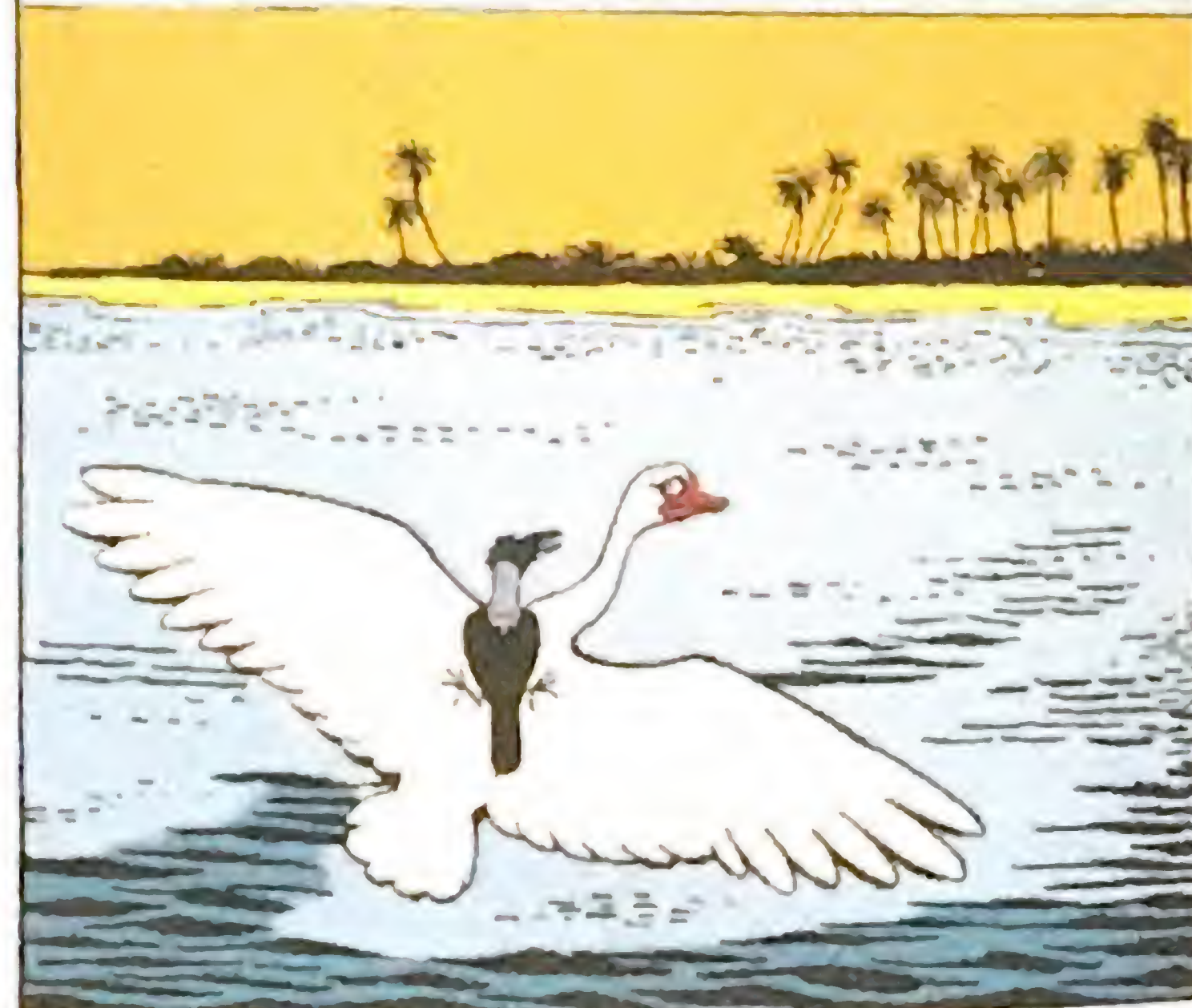




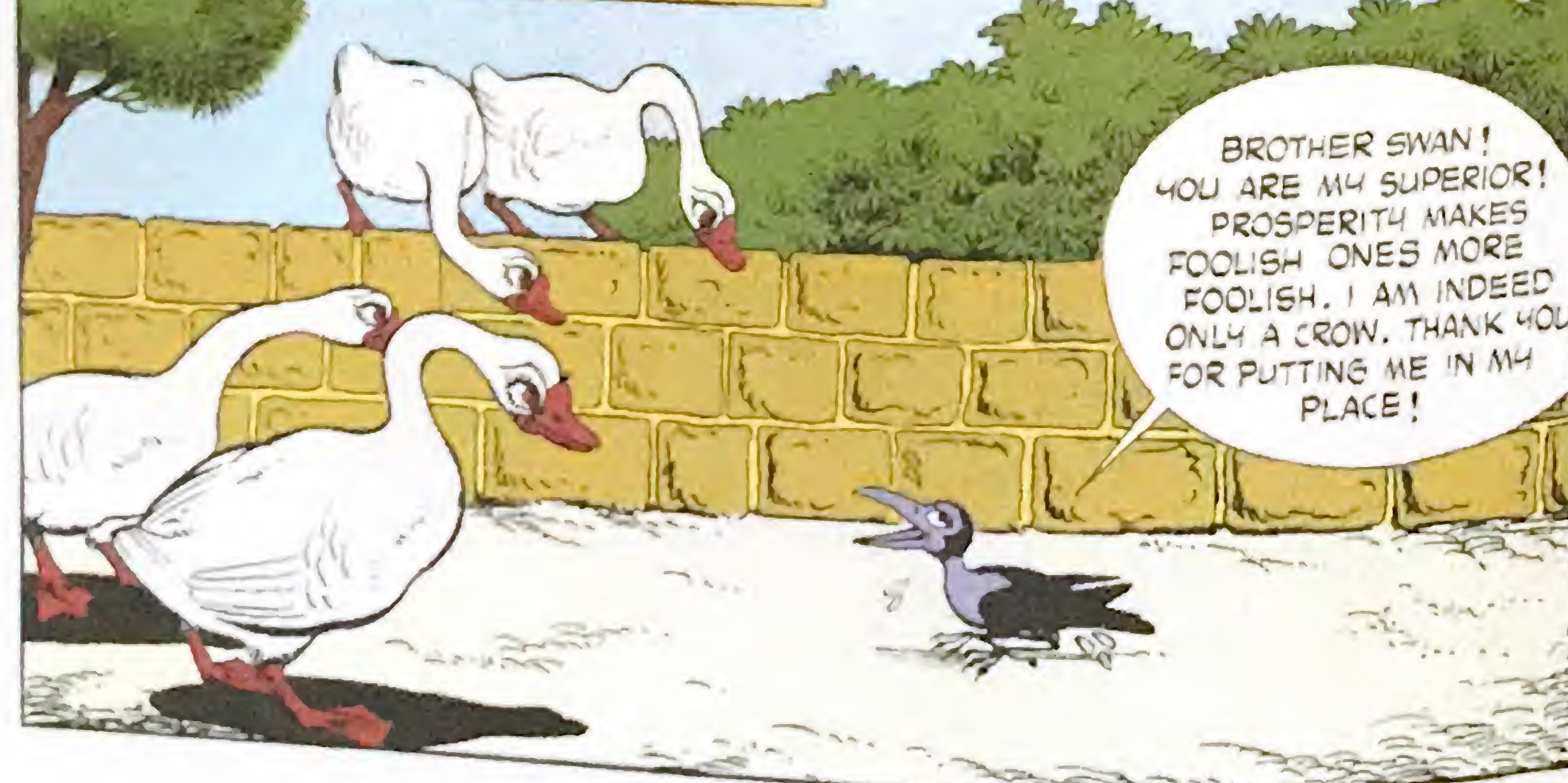
TAKING PITY ON HIM, THE SWAN THEN TOOK HIM ON HIS BACK...



... AND FLEW TOWARDS THE SHORE.



HE PLACED THE CROW GENTLY ON THE SAND.



ONE TOON ONE STORY ONE-OF-A-KIND... IT'S TINKLE TALL TALES!

TINKLE PRESENTS,
FOR THE FIRST
TIME EVER,
LONGER, LOONIER
ADVENTURES OF
YOUR FAVOURITE
TINKLE TOONS.
COMING YOUR WAY
THIS MAY!



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