

THE SILENT TEACHER

King Brahmadatta of Varanasi was terribly upset. His son, Prince Abja, could neither walk nor speak. The disabilities did not trouble the queen to whom her son's silence spoke much more than words but the king was distressed. He summoned every physician in the land to diagnose the malady but no one could. What was ailing the prince?

Buddhism took root in Tibet in the 7th and 10th centuries. The sacred books written in Sanskrit and Pali were translated into Tibetan by the 14th century. Today a number of stories from those earlier years are available only in Tibetan translations. This Amar Chitra Katha is based on one of them.

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- NARAYAN MURTHY, CHIEF MENTOR, INFOSYS

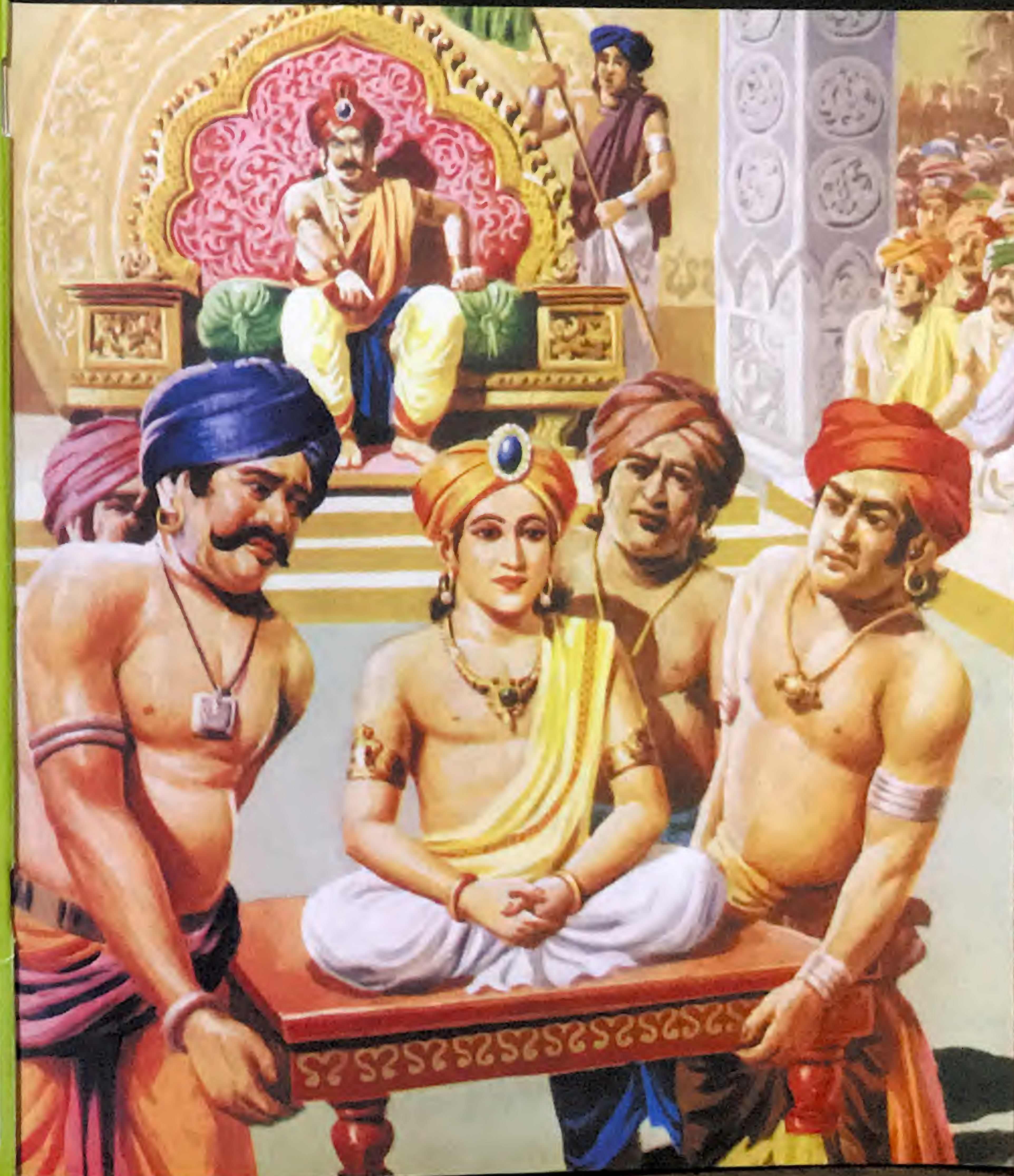
FABLES &
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THE SILENT TEACHER

THE PRINCE WHO WOULD NOT SPEAK

Vol 799 | ₹50

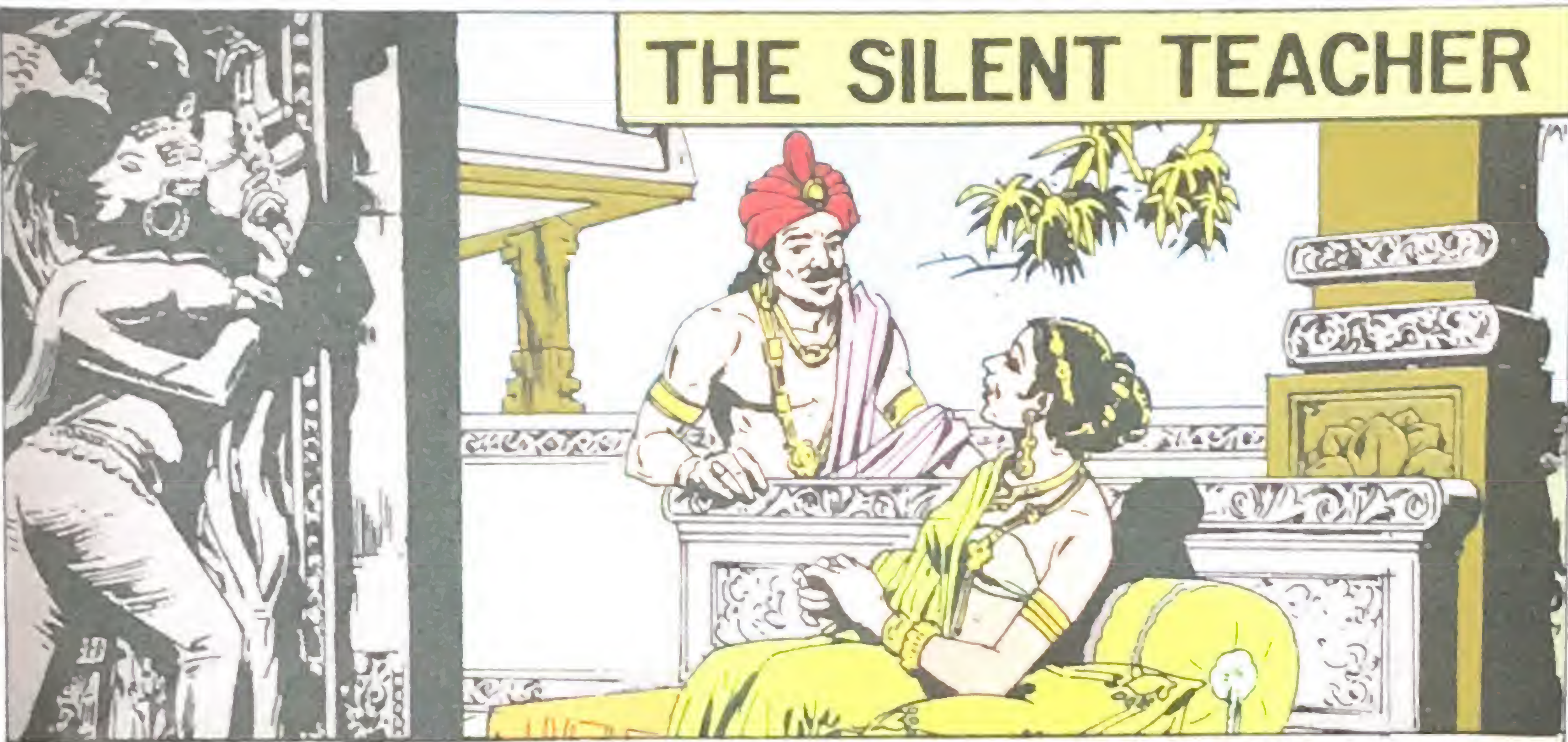


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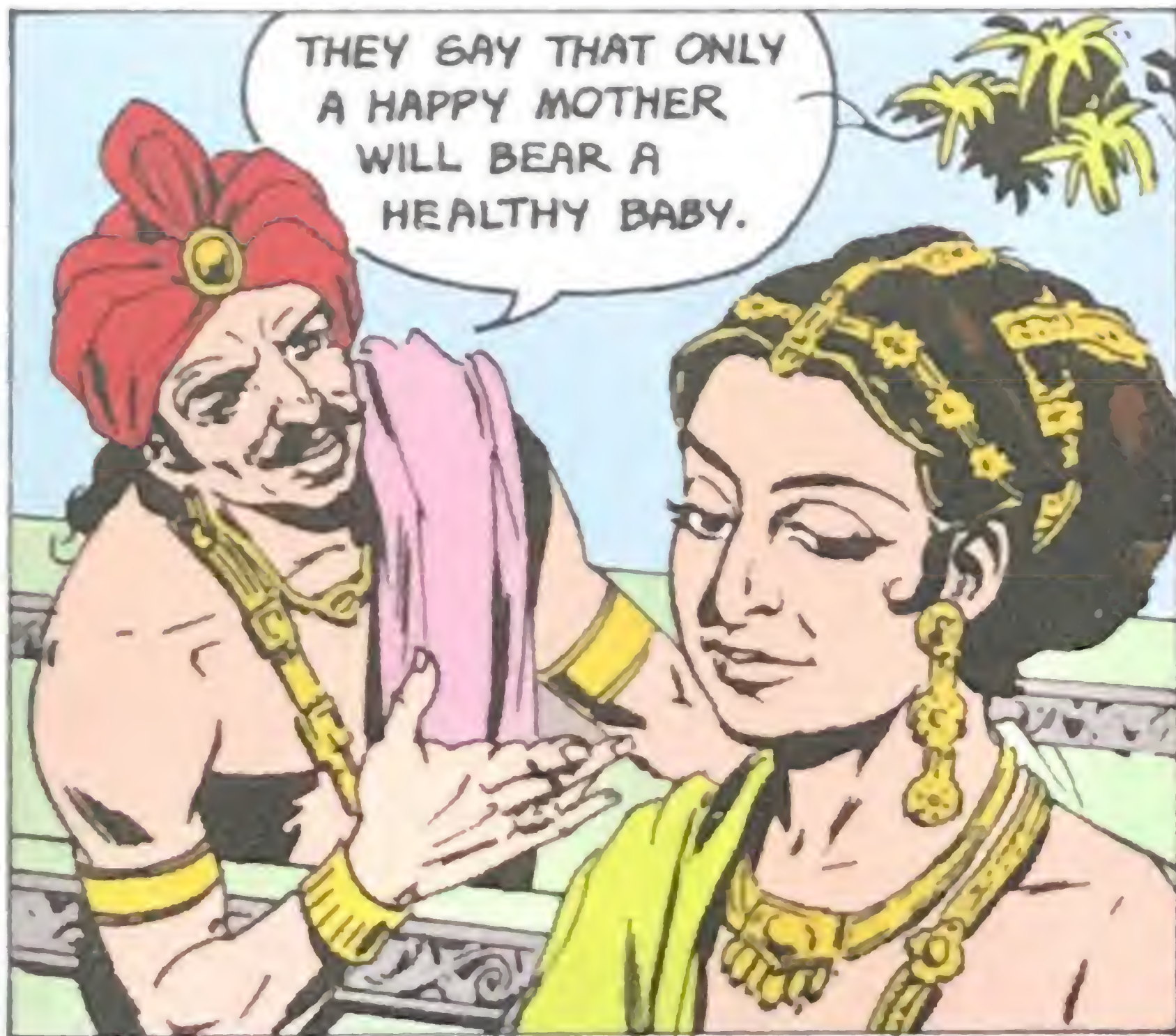


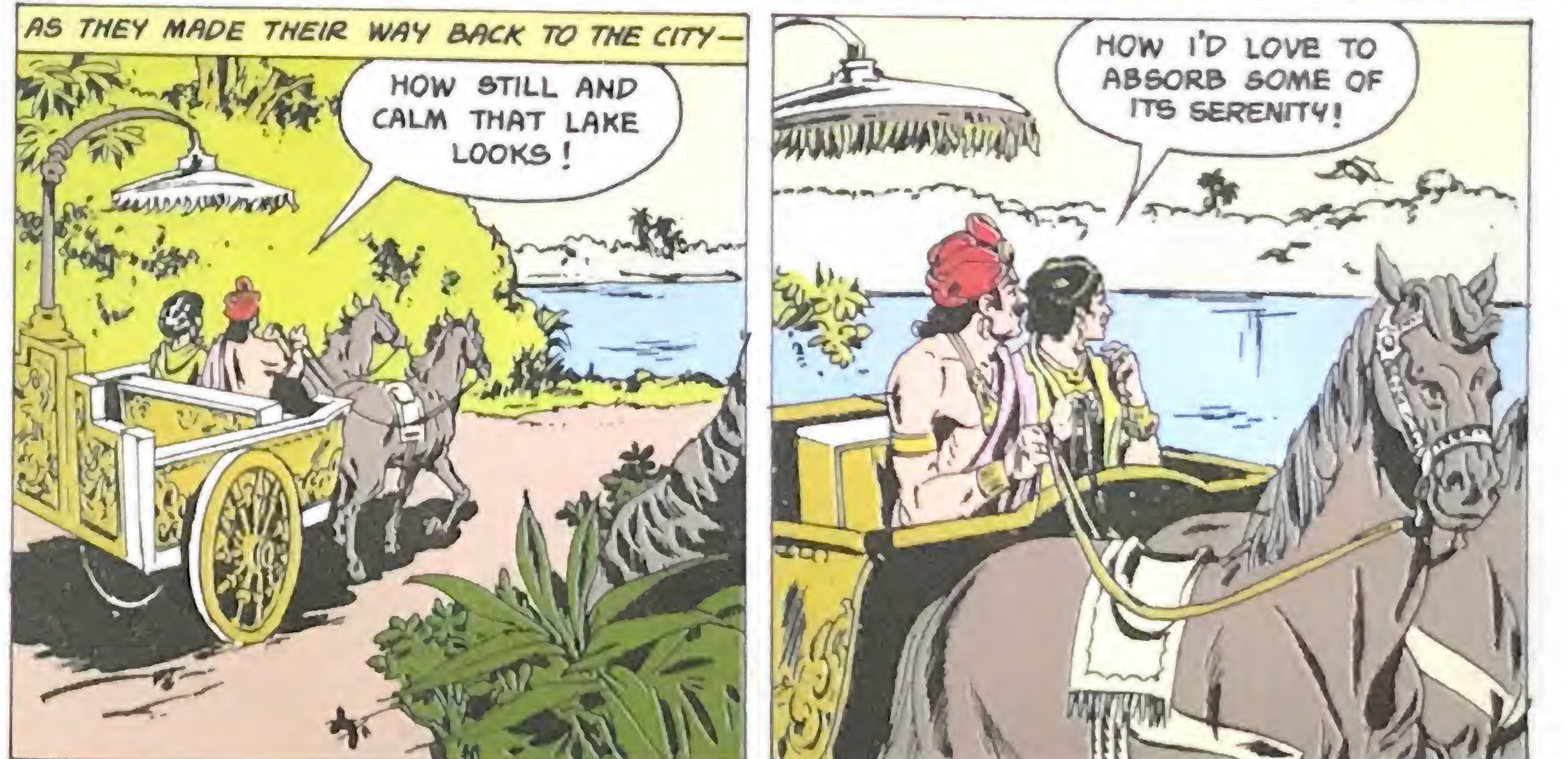
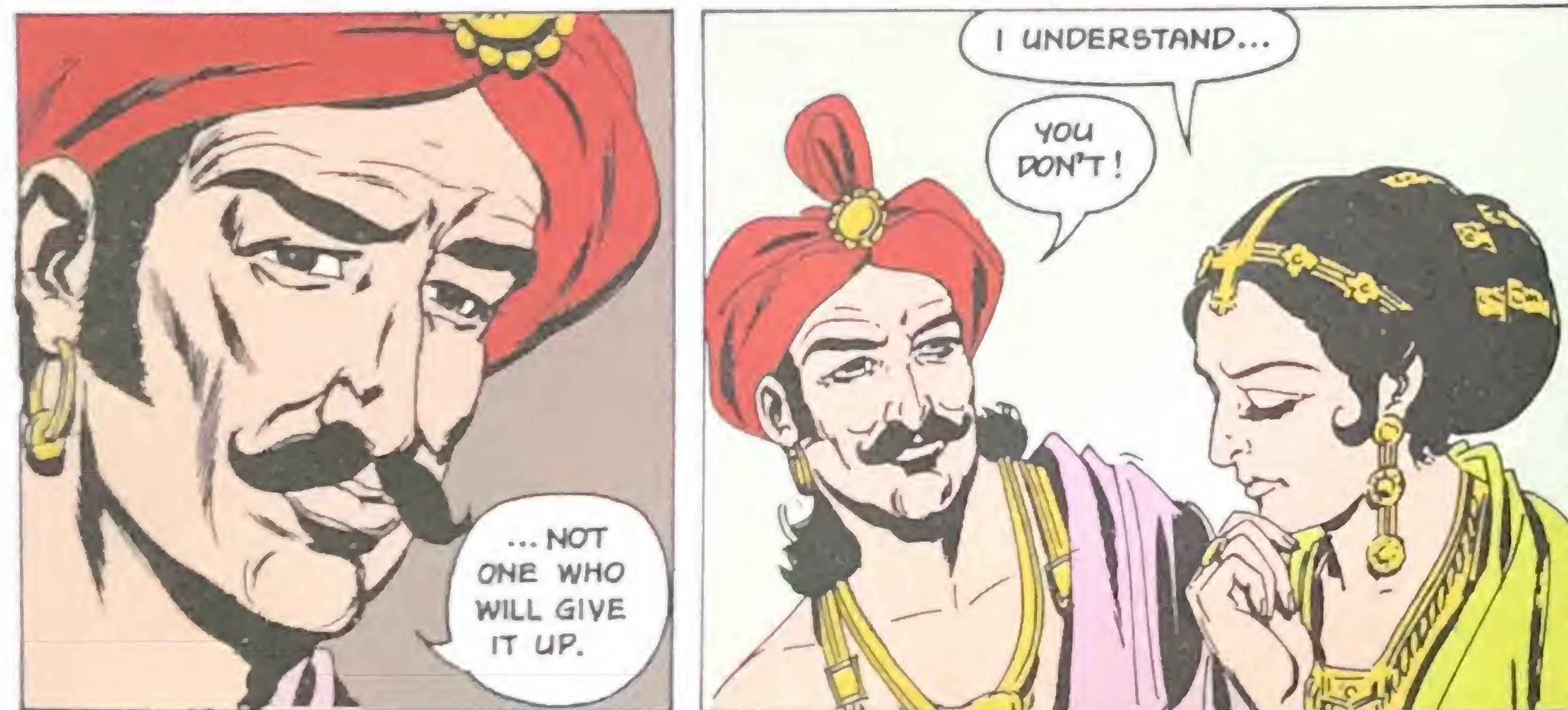
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THE SILENT TEACHER



BRAHMADATTA, THE KING OF VARANASI HAD ALWAYS BEEN A LOVING HUSBAND. BUT NOW HE FELT EVEN MORE CONCERNED ABOUT HIS QUEEN'S HAPPINESS AND WELL-BEING. FOR, AFTER YEARS OF LONGING FOR ONE, THEY WERE AT LAST GOING TO HAVE A CHILD.





THAT WISH TOO THE KING SOON FULFILLED.



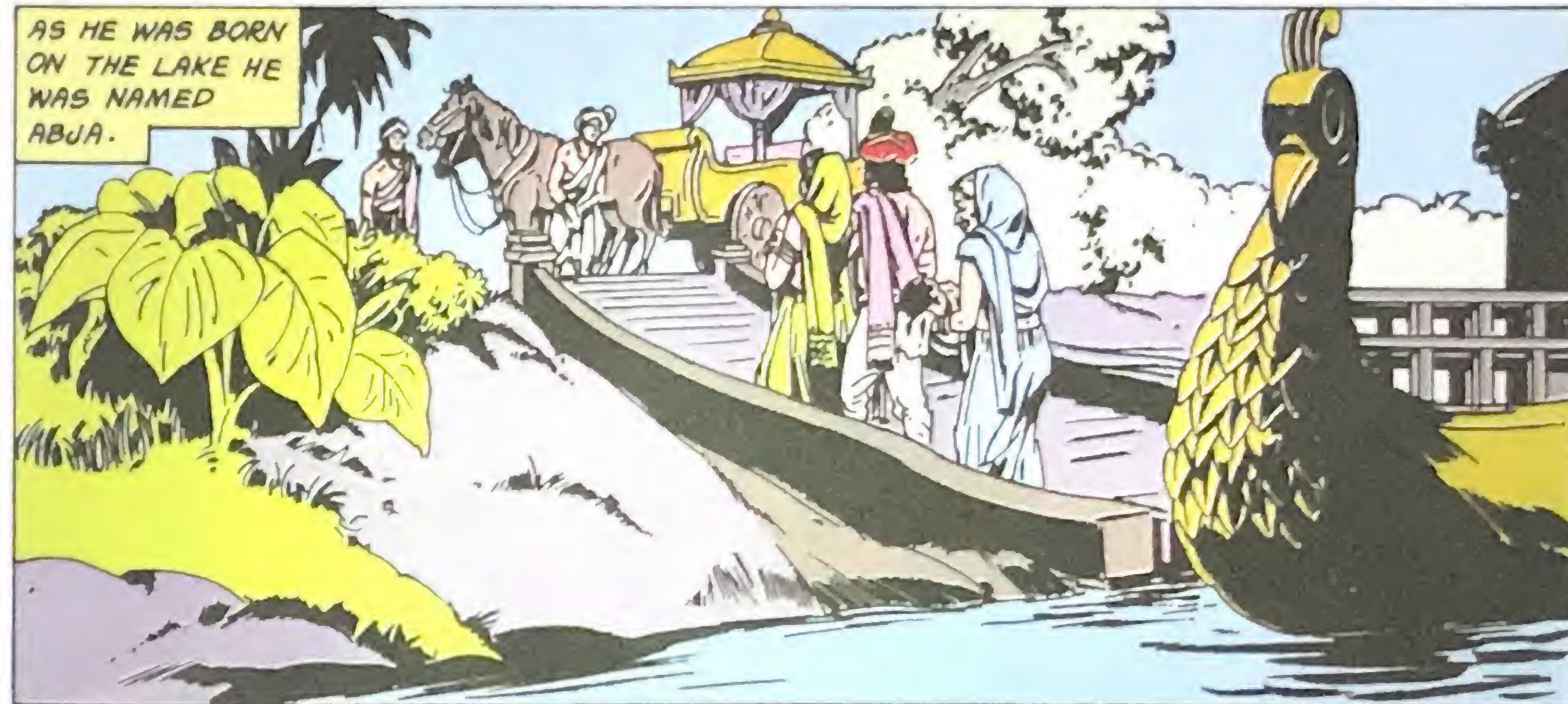
AND IN THE SILENCE OF THAT LAKE...



...A SON WAS BORN TO THEM.



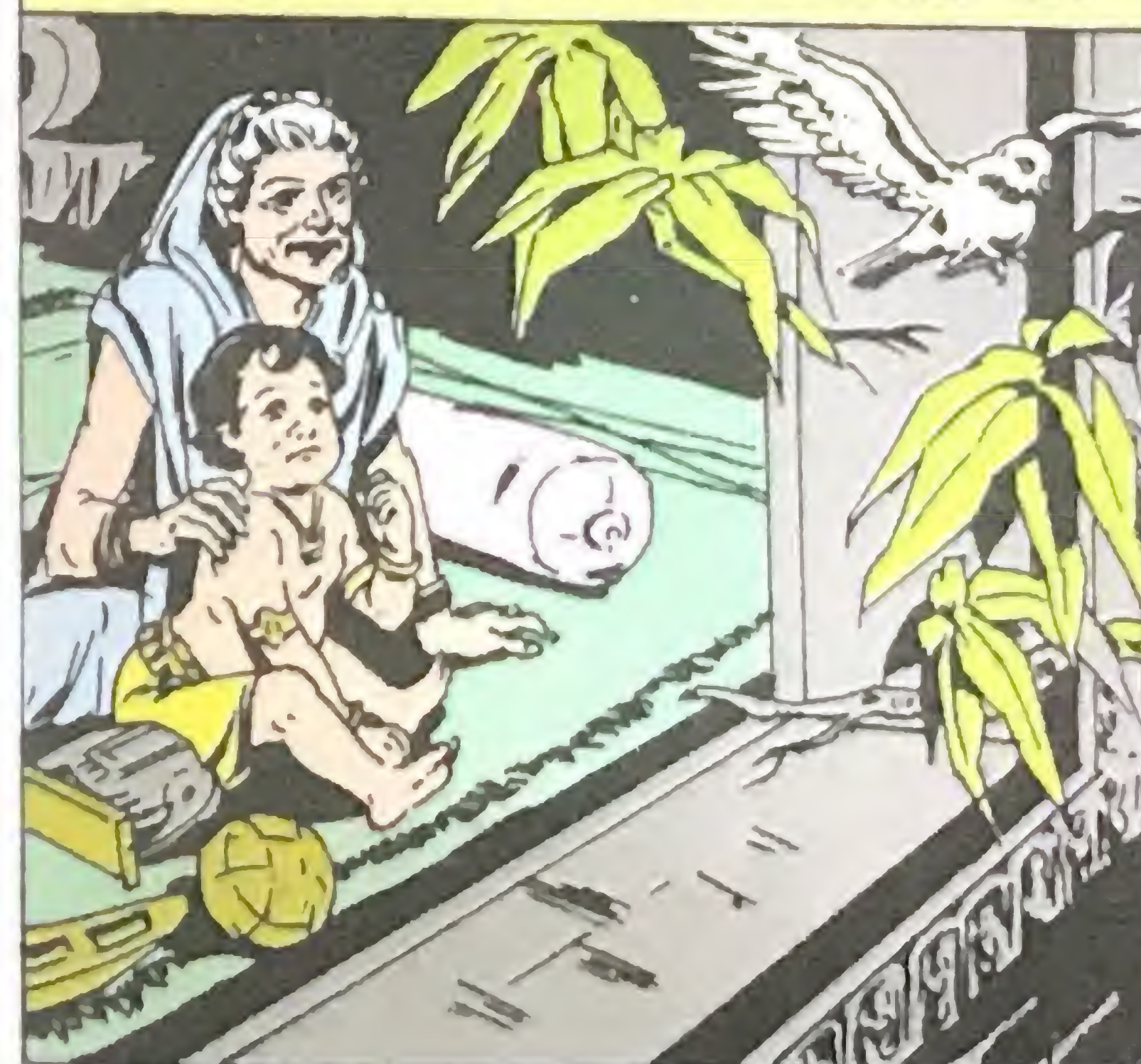
AS HE WAS BORN ON THE LAKE HE WAS NAMED ABJA.



ABJA DID EVERYTHING A CHILD WAS EXPECTED TO DO...



...BUT HE MADE NO ATTEMPT TO STAND UP.

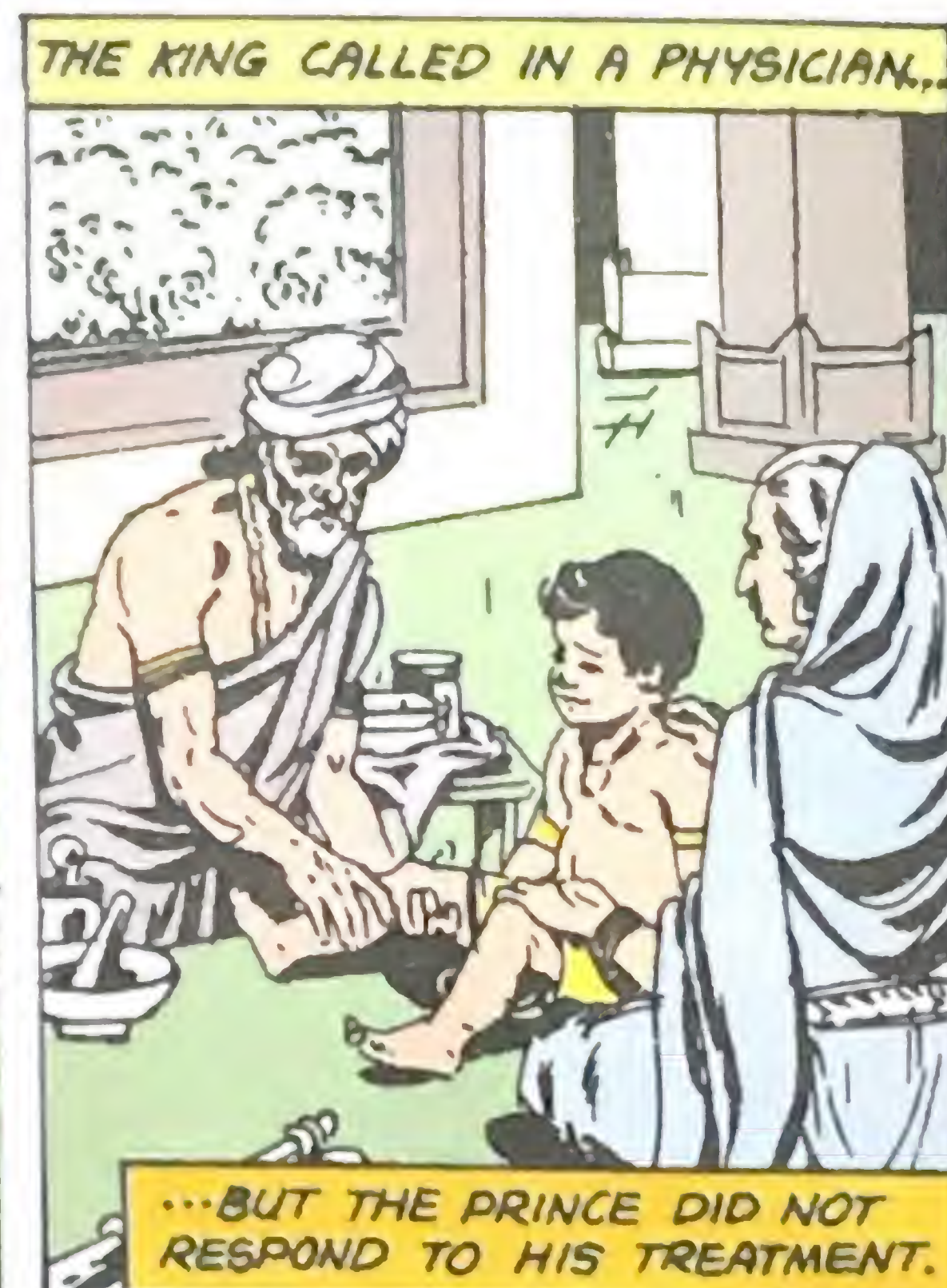


THE NURSE TRIED PROPPING HIM AGAINST A WALL.



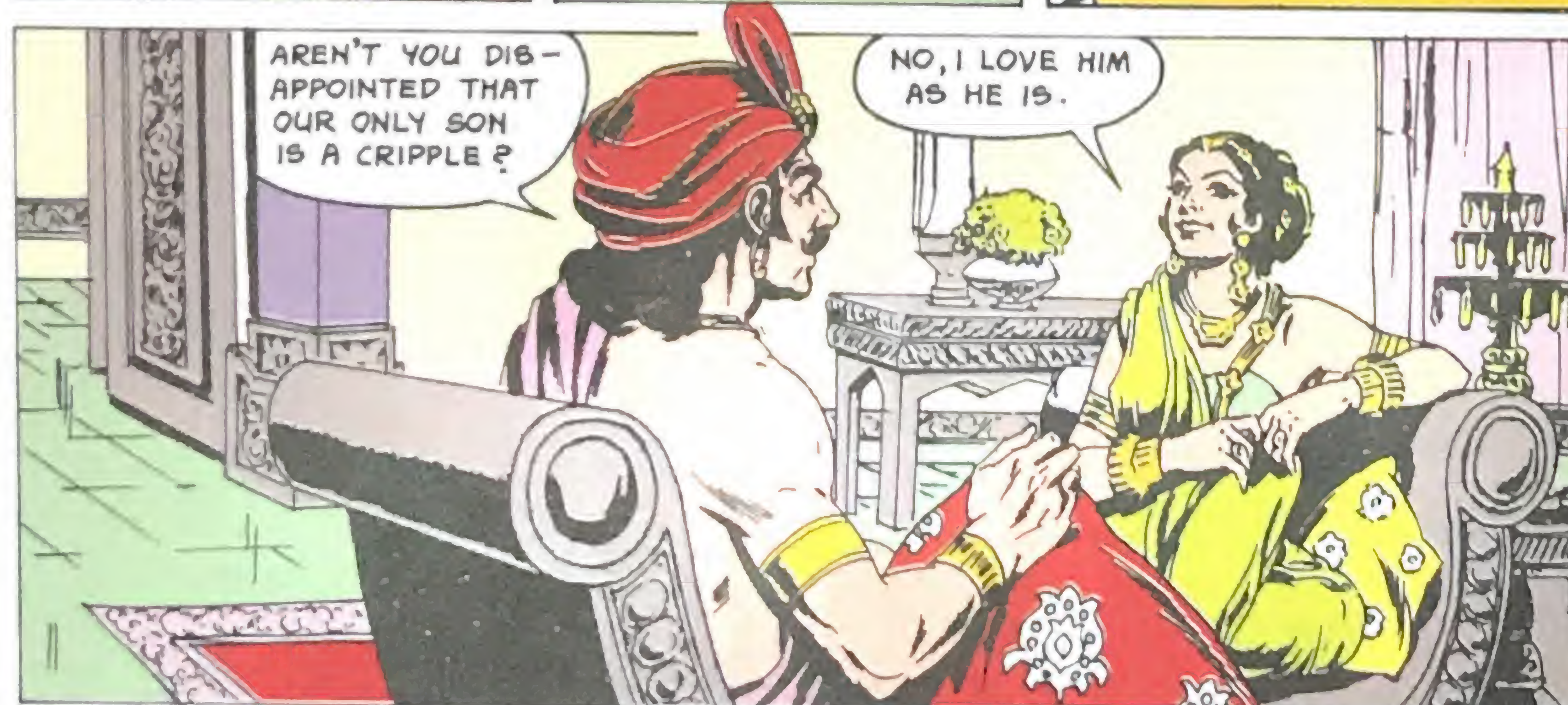


BUT —



THE KING CALLED IN A PHYSICIAN...

...BUT THE PRINCE DID NOT RESPOND TO HIS TREATMENT.

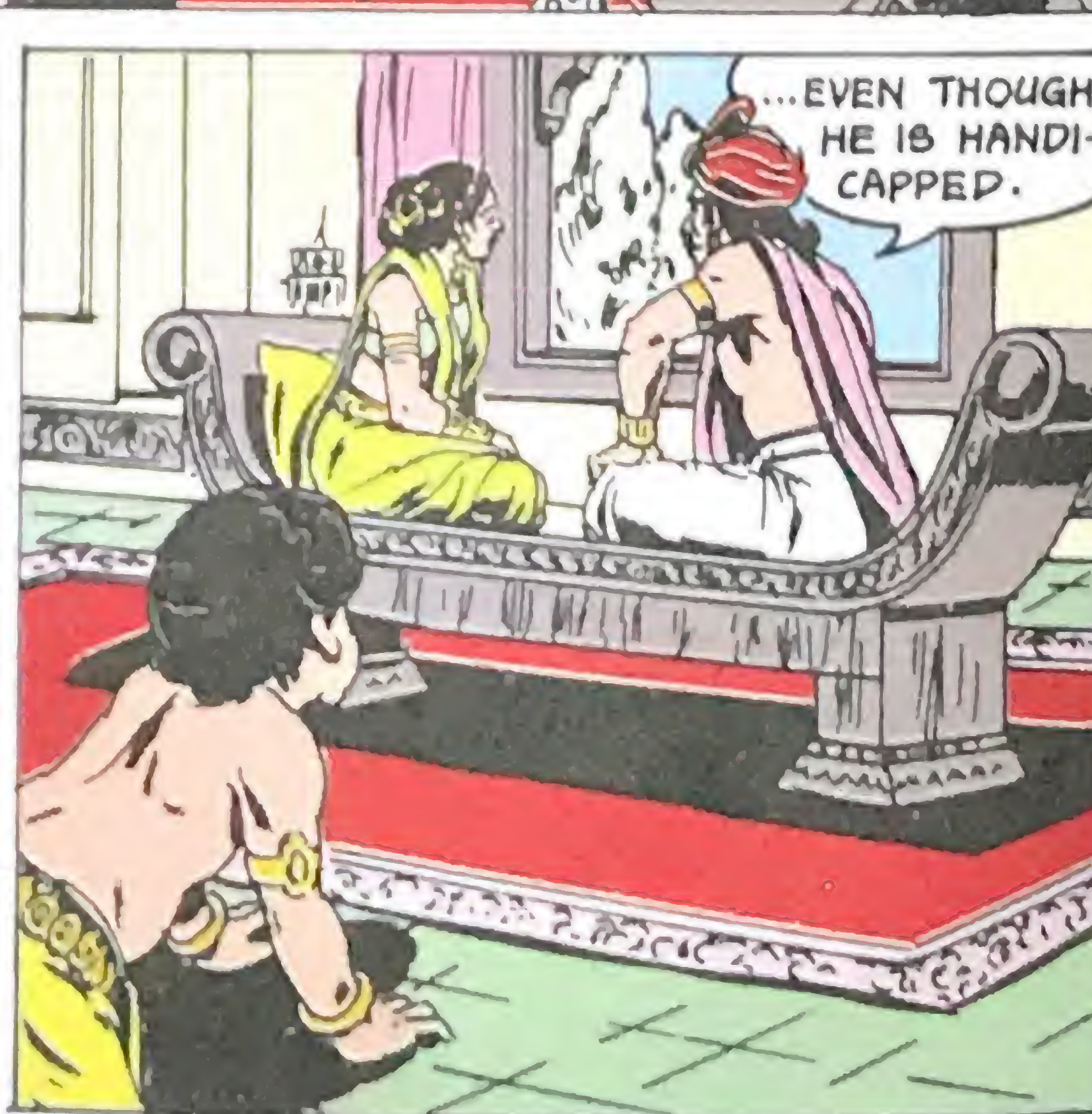


AREN'T YOU DIS-APPOINTED THAT OUR ONLY SON IS A CRIPPLE?

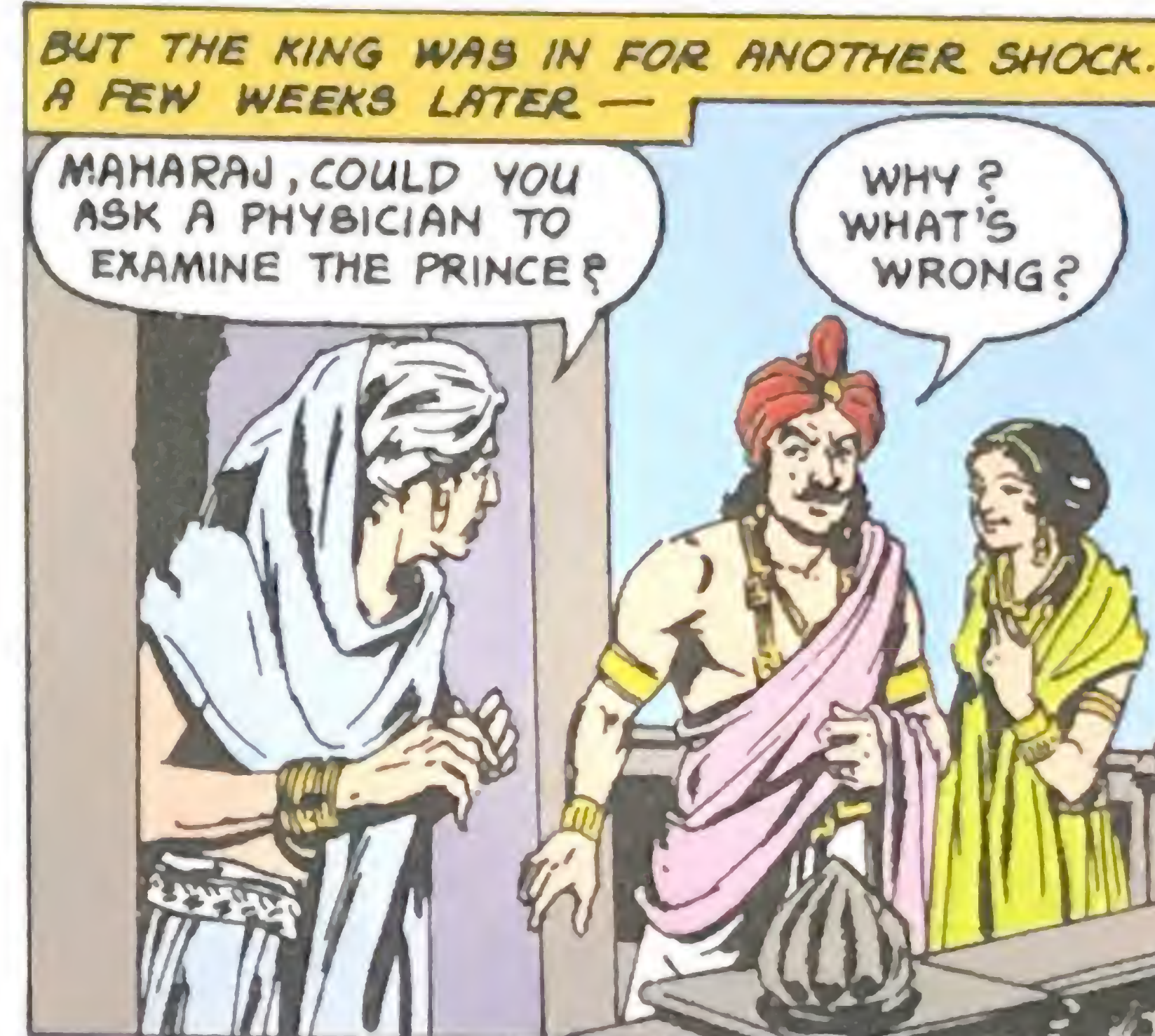
NO, I LOVE HIM AS HE IS.



I'M GLAD. BECAUSE I HAVE DECIDED THAT HE SHALL SUCCEED ME...



...EVEN THOUGH HE IS HANDI-CAPPED.



BUT THE KING WAS IN FOR ANOTHER SHOCK. A FEW WEEKS LATER —

MAHARAJ, COULD YOU ASK A PHYSICIAN TO EXAMINE THE PRINCE?

WHY? WHAT'S WRONG?

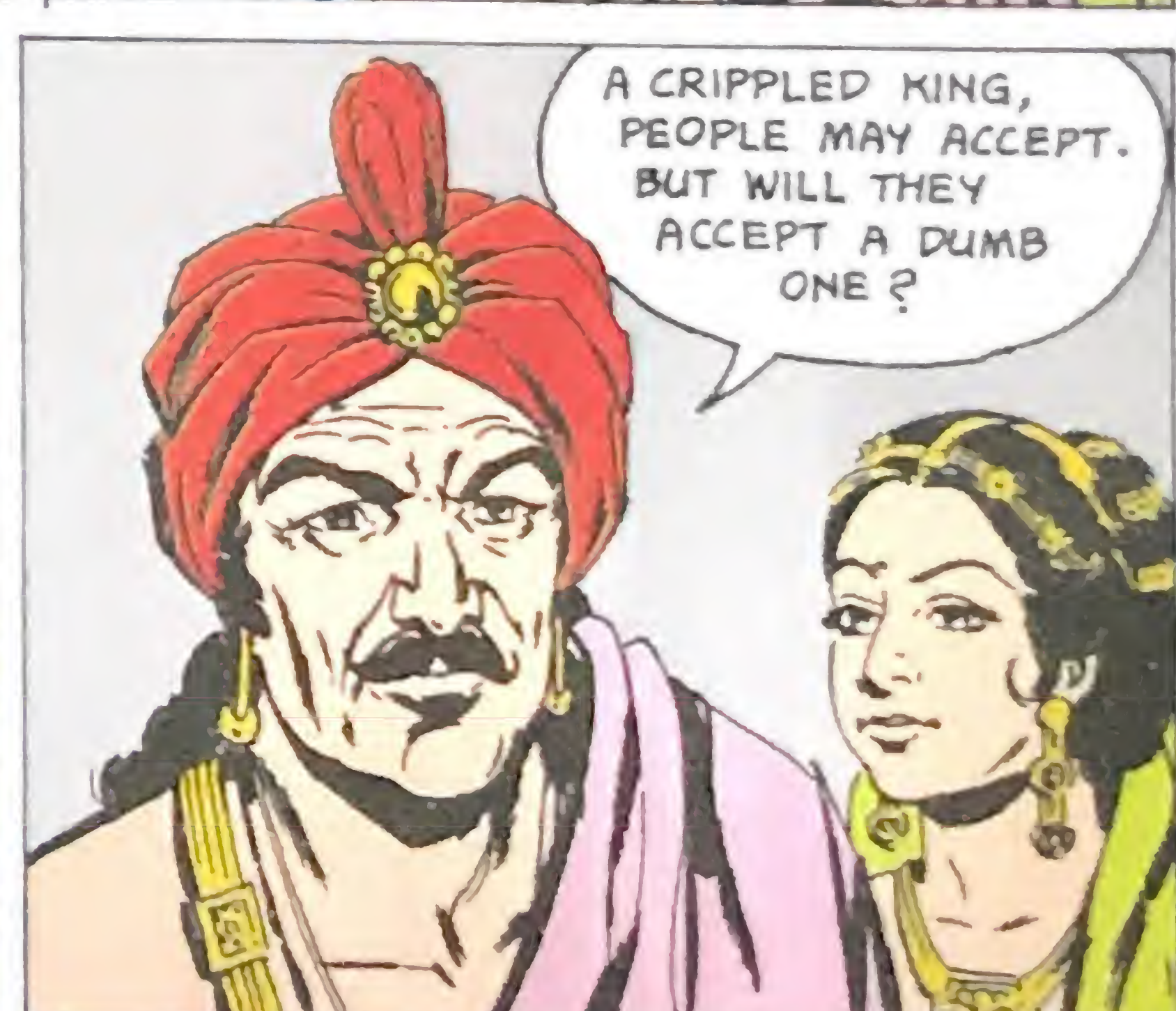


CHILDREN OF HIS AGE SPEAK FLUENTLY. AND THE PRINCE HAS NOT UTTERED EVEN ONE WORD.



IS THAT TRUE?

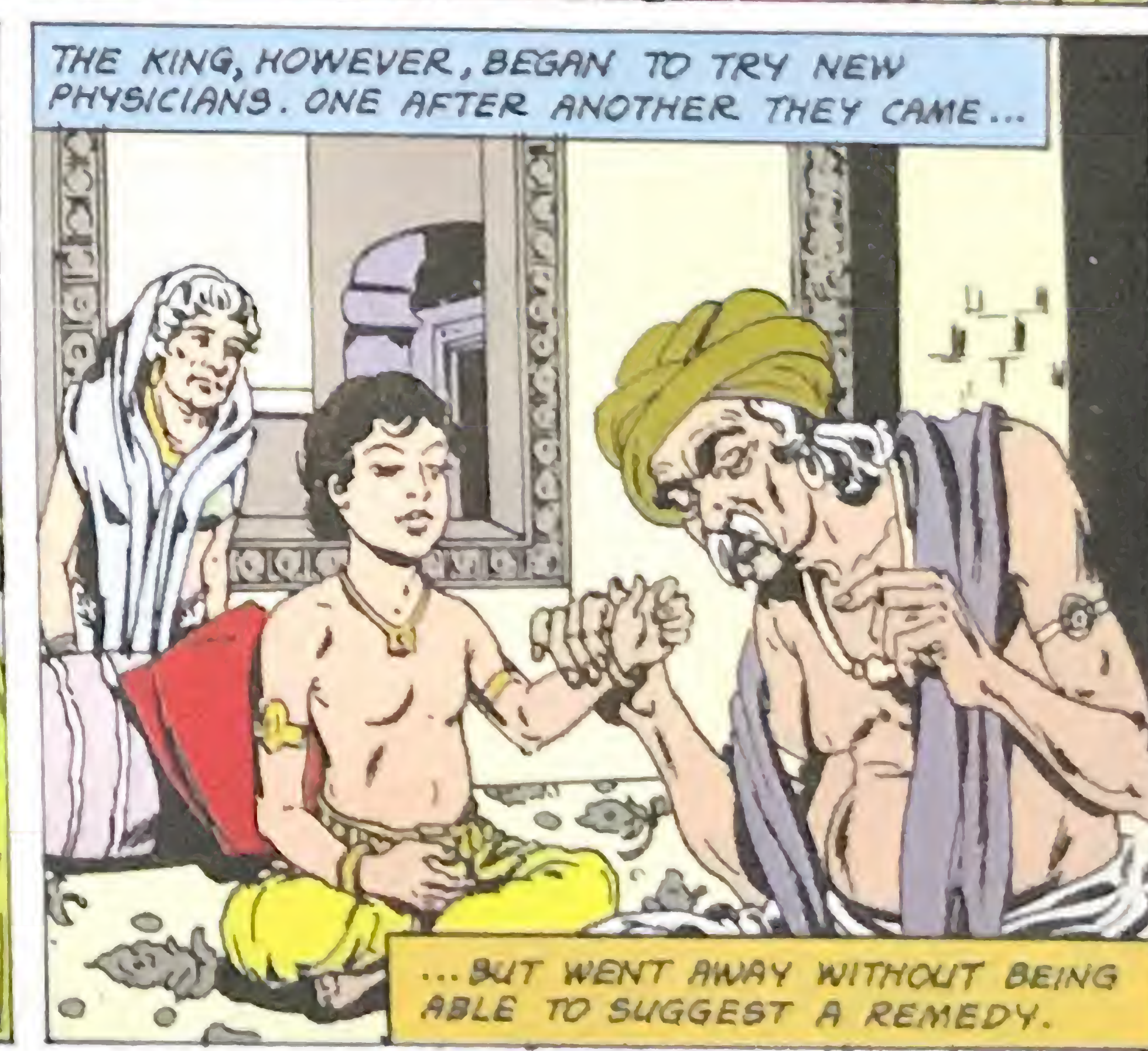
YES.



A CRIPPLED KING, PEOPLE MAY ACCEPT. BUT WILL THEY ACCEPT A DUMB ONE?

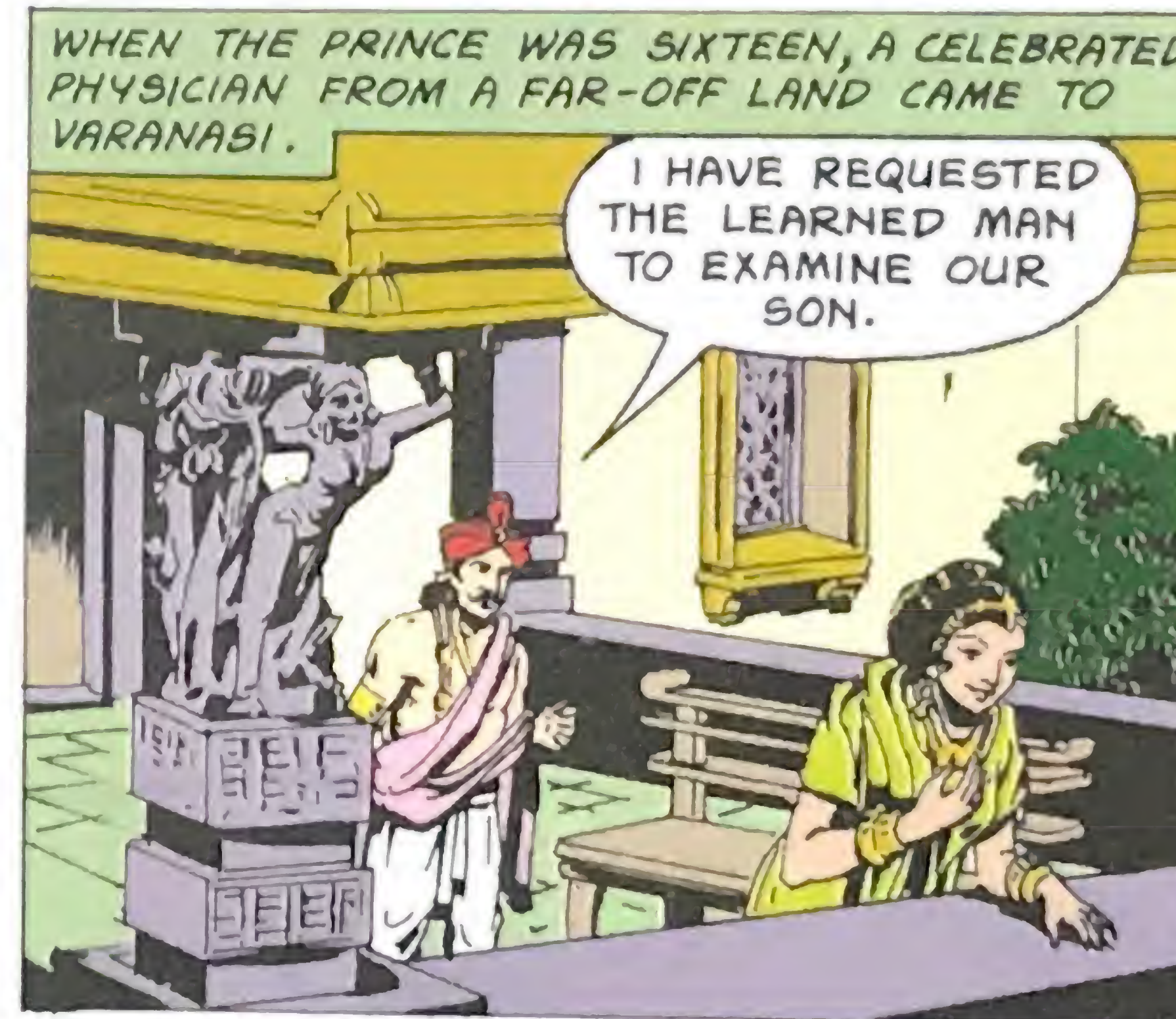
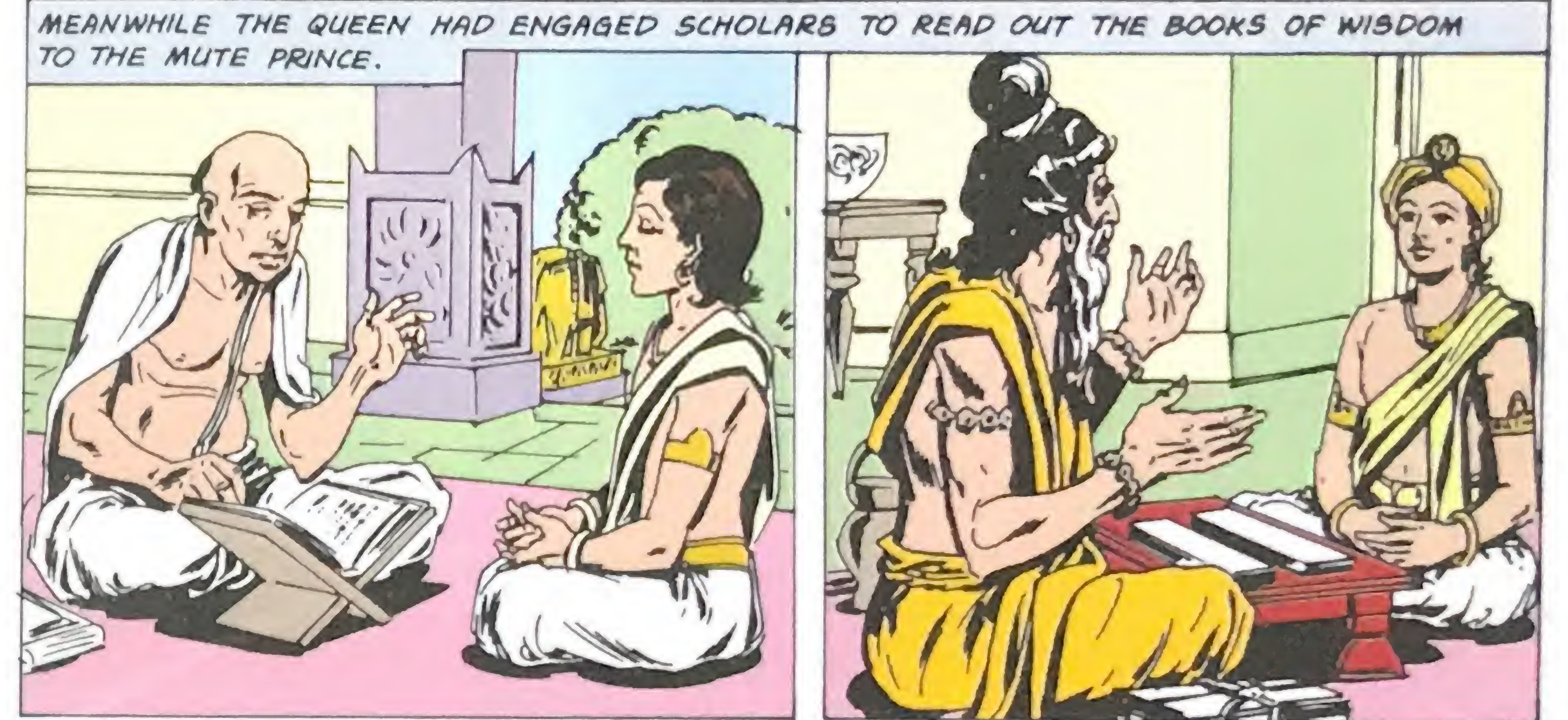
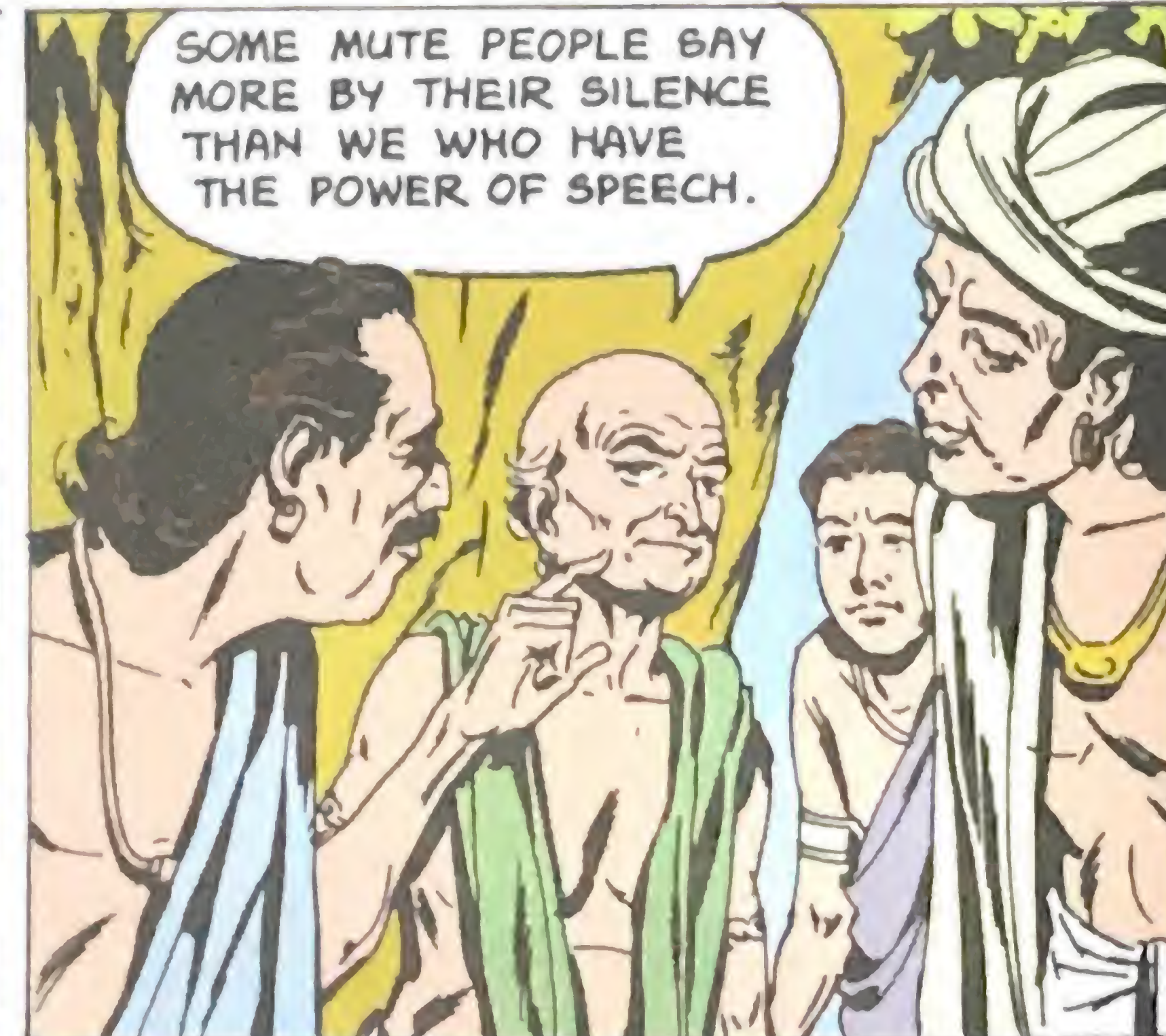


LAME OR MUTE, HE IS MY SON. I ACCEPT HIM AS HE IS.



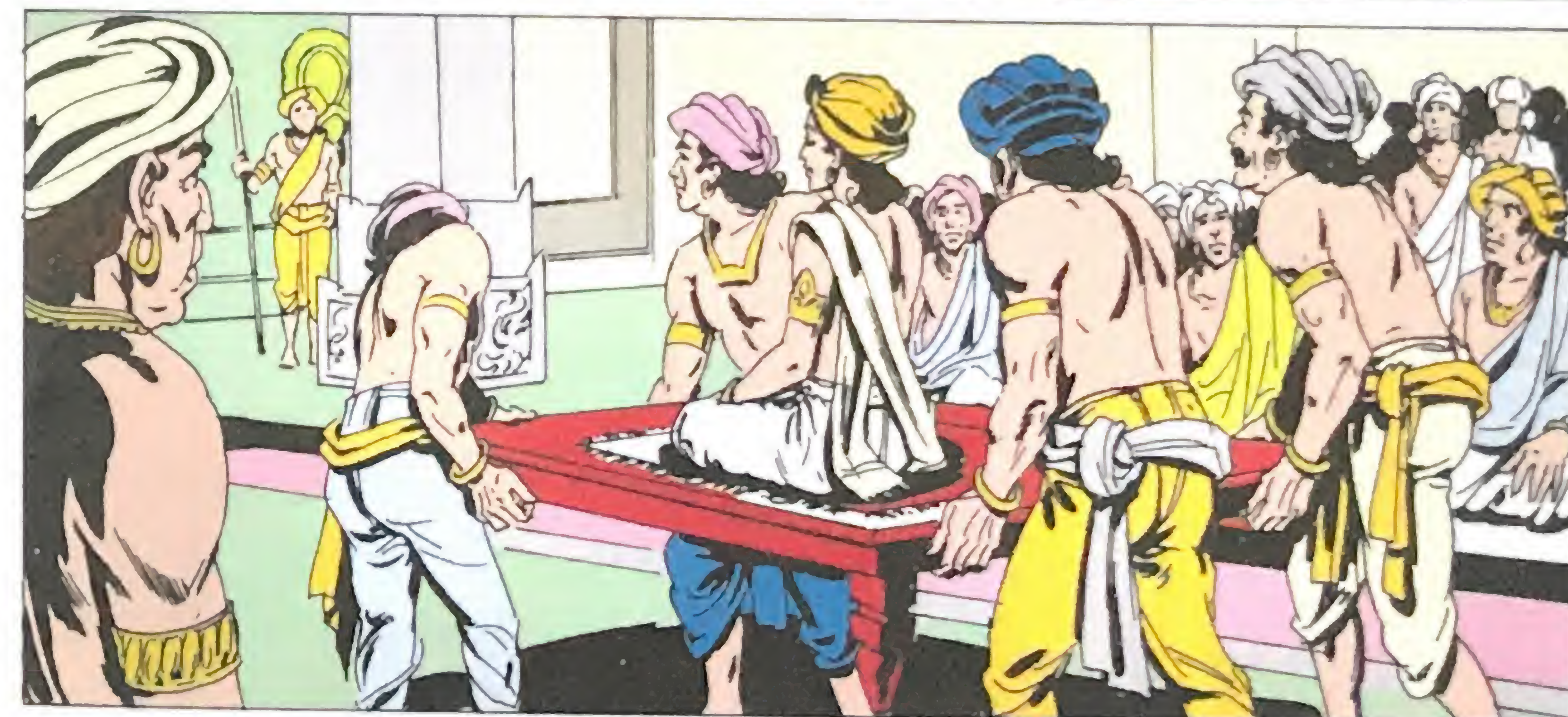
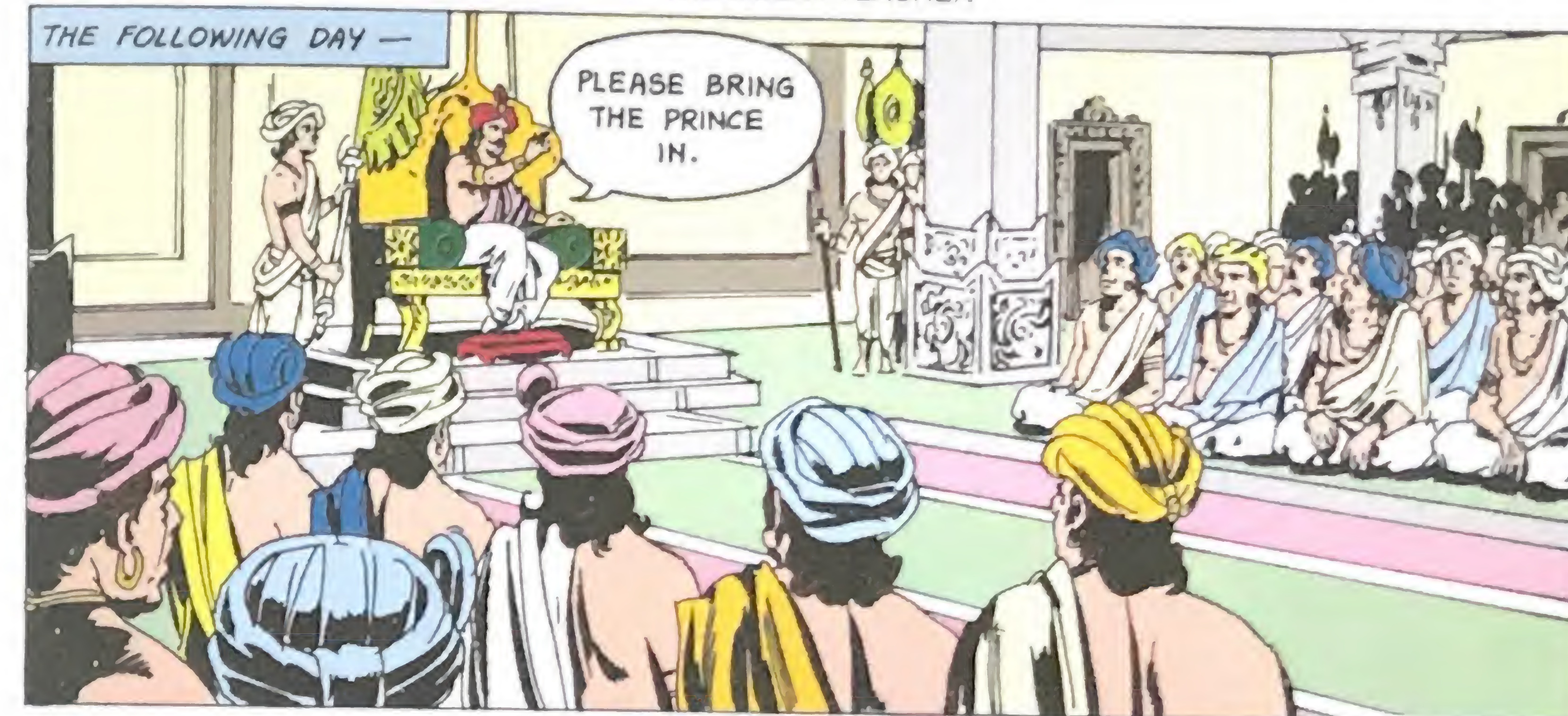
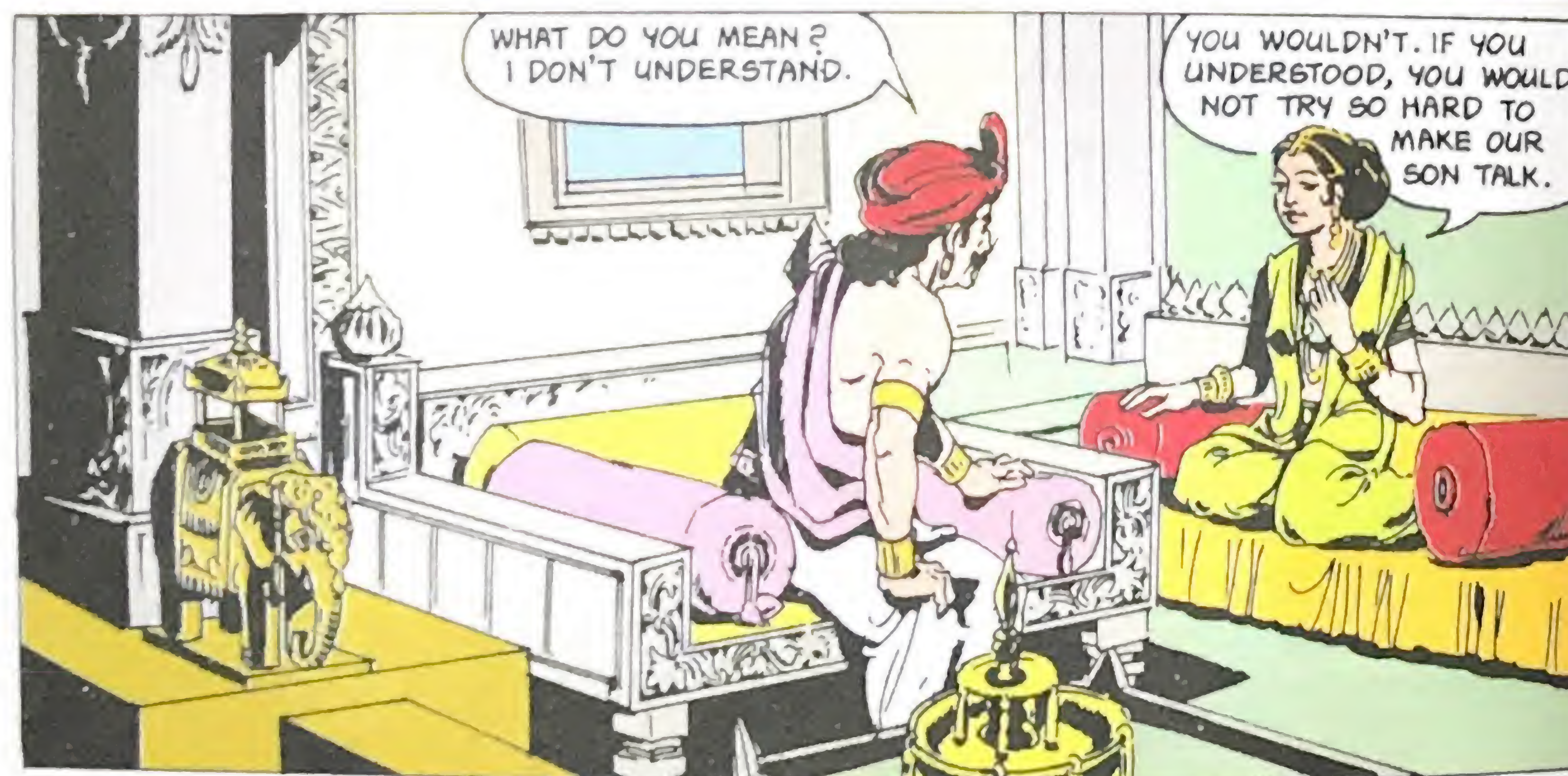
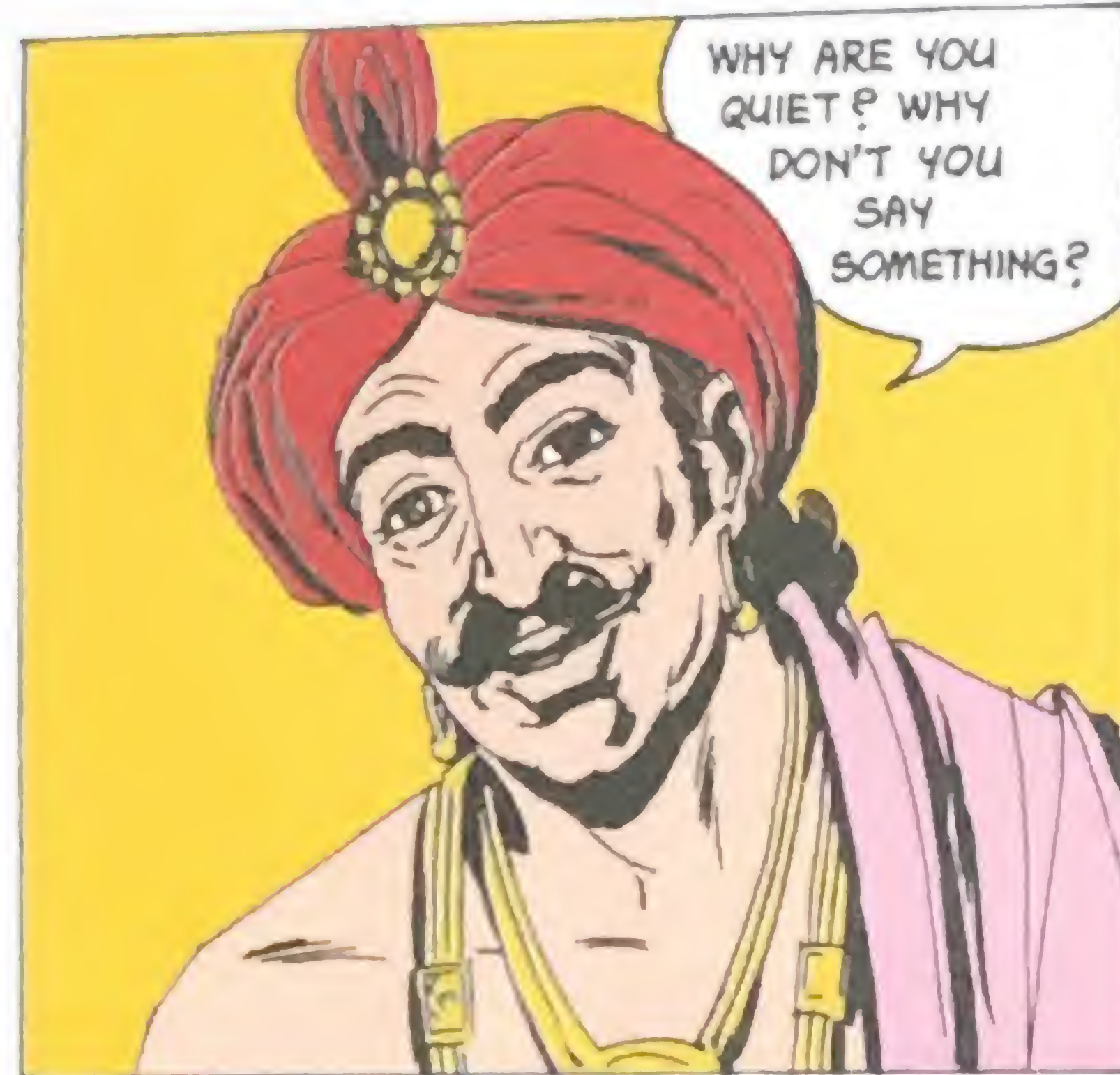
THE KING, HOWEVER, BEGAN TO TRY NEW PHYSICIANS. ONE AFTER ANOTHER THEY CAME...

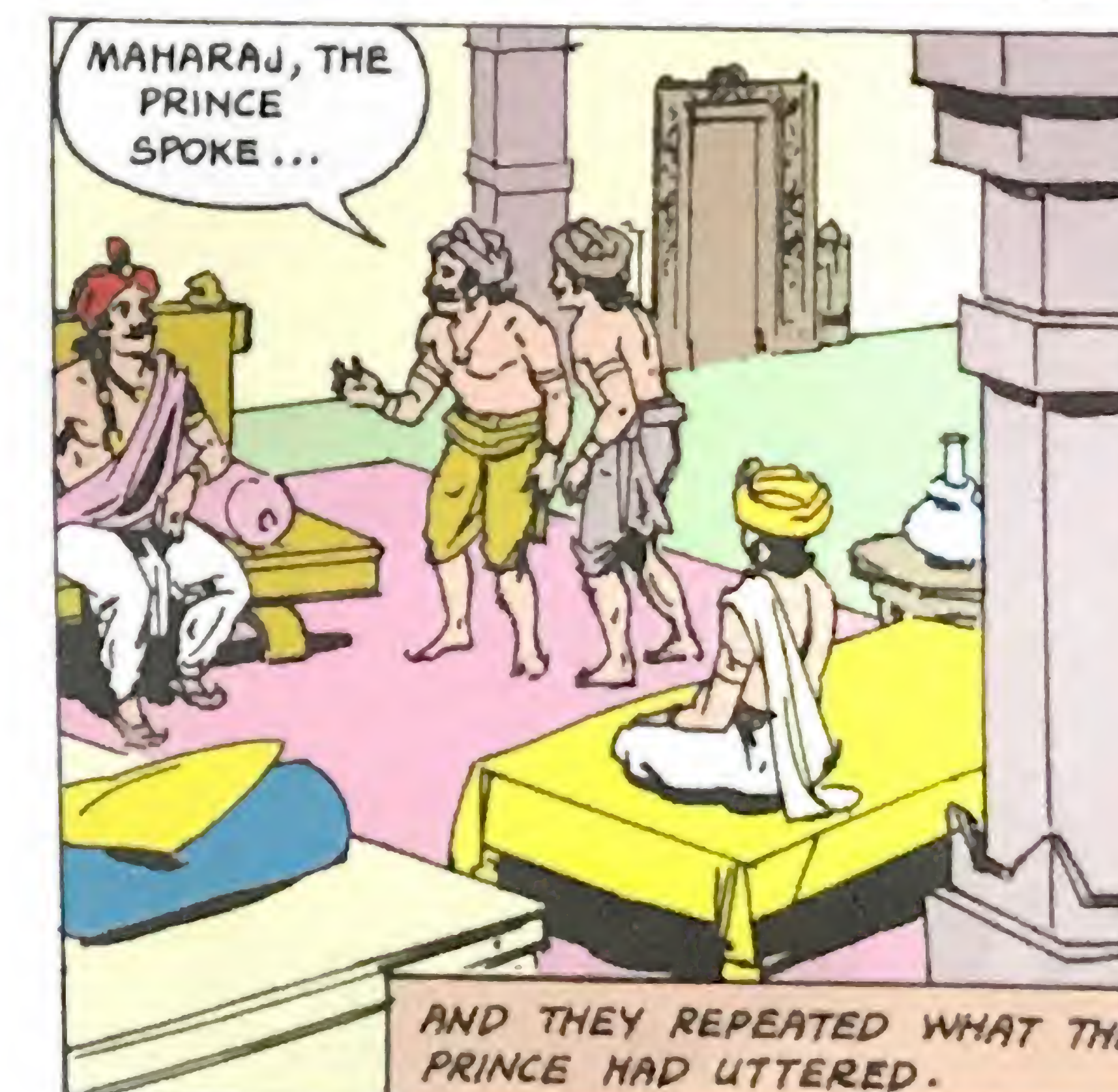
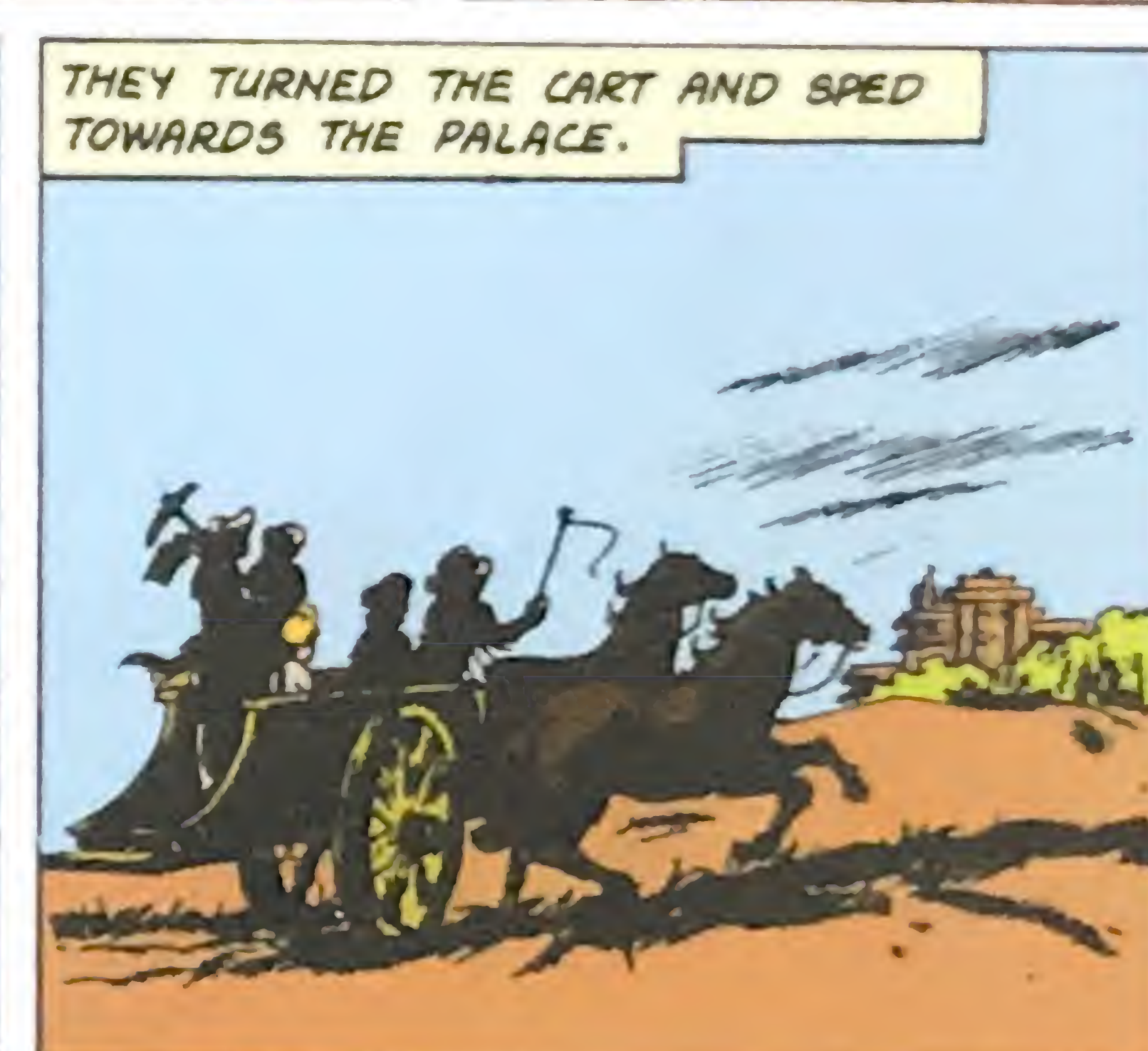
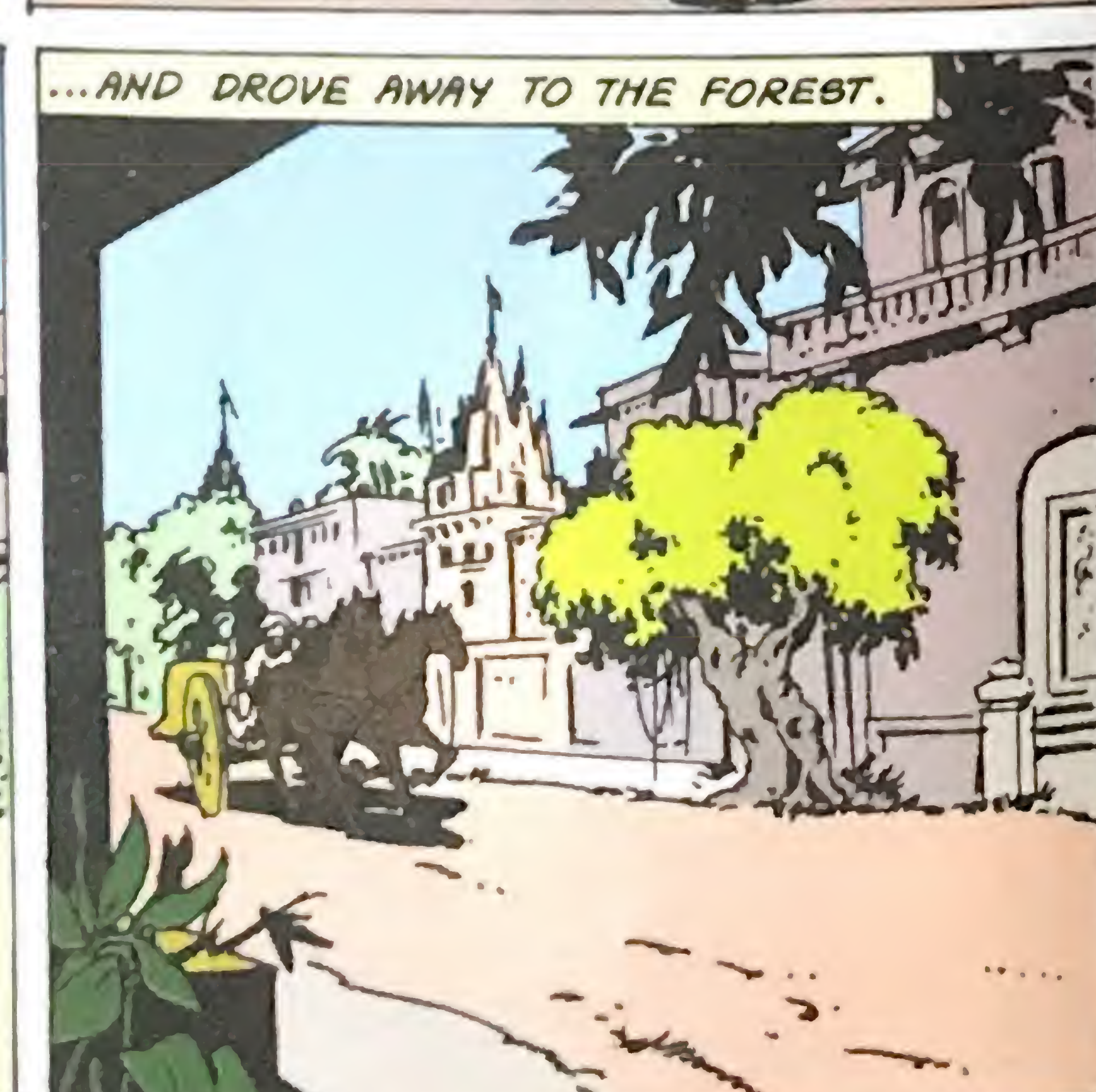
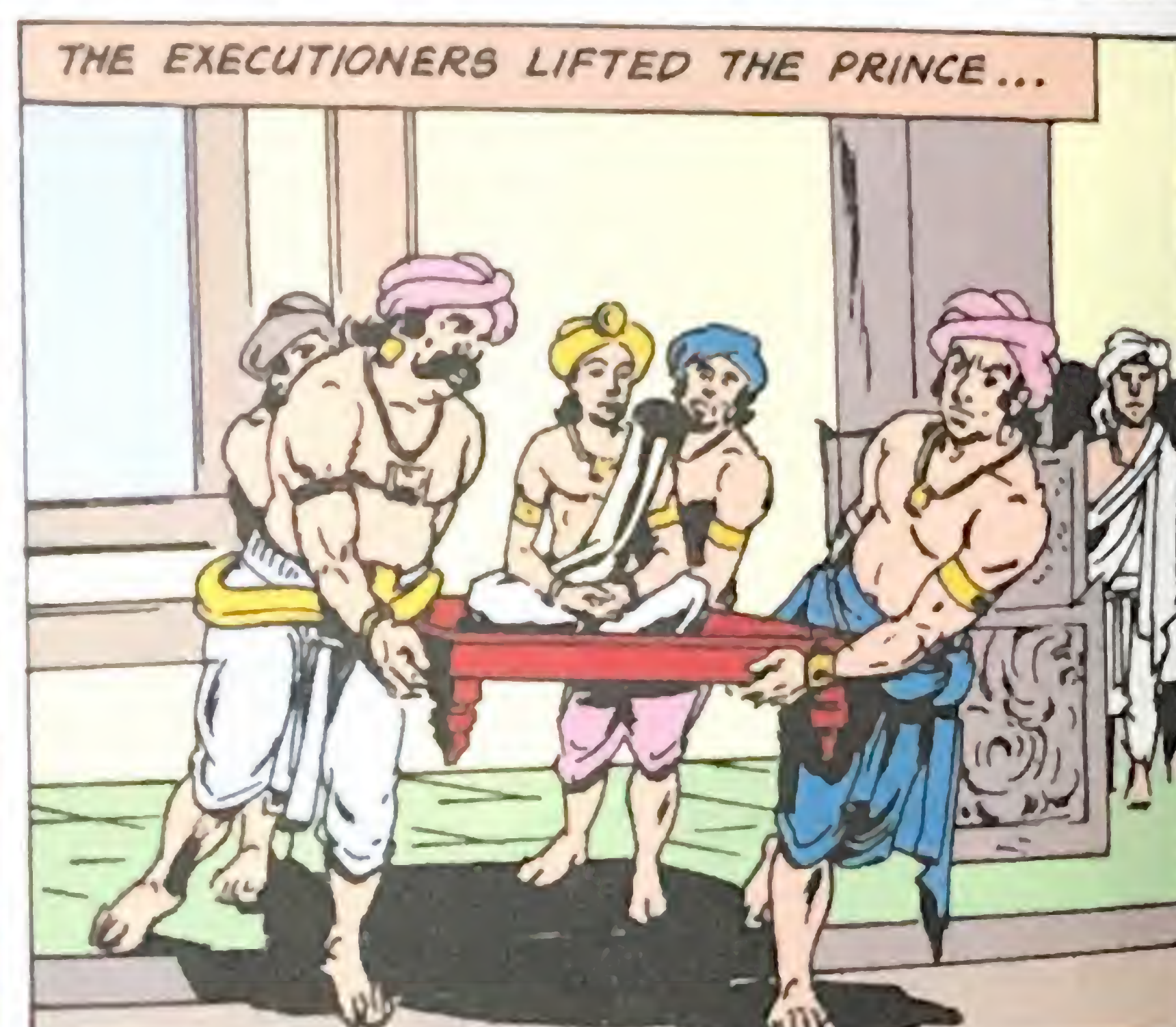
...BUT WENT AWAY WITHOUT BEING ABLE TO SUGGEST A REMEDY.



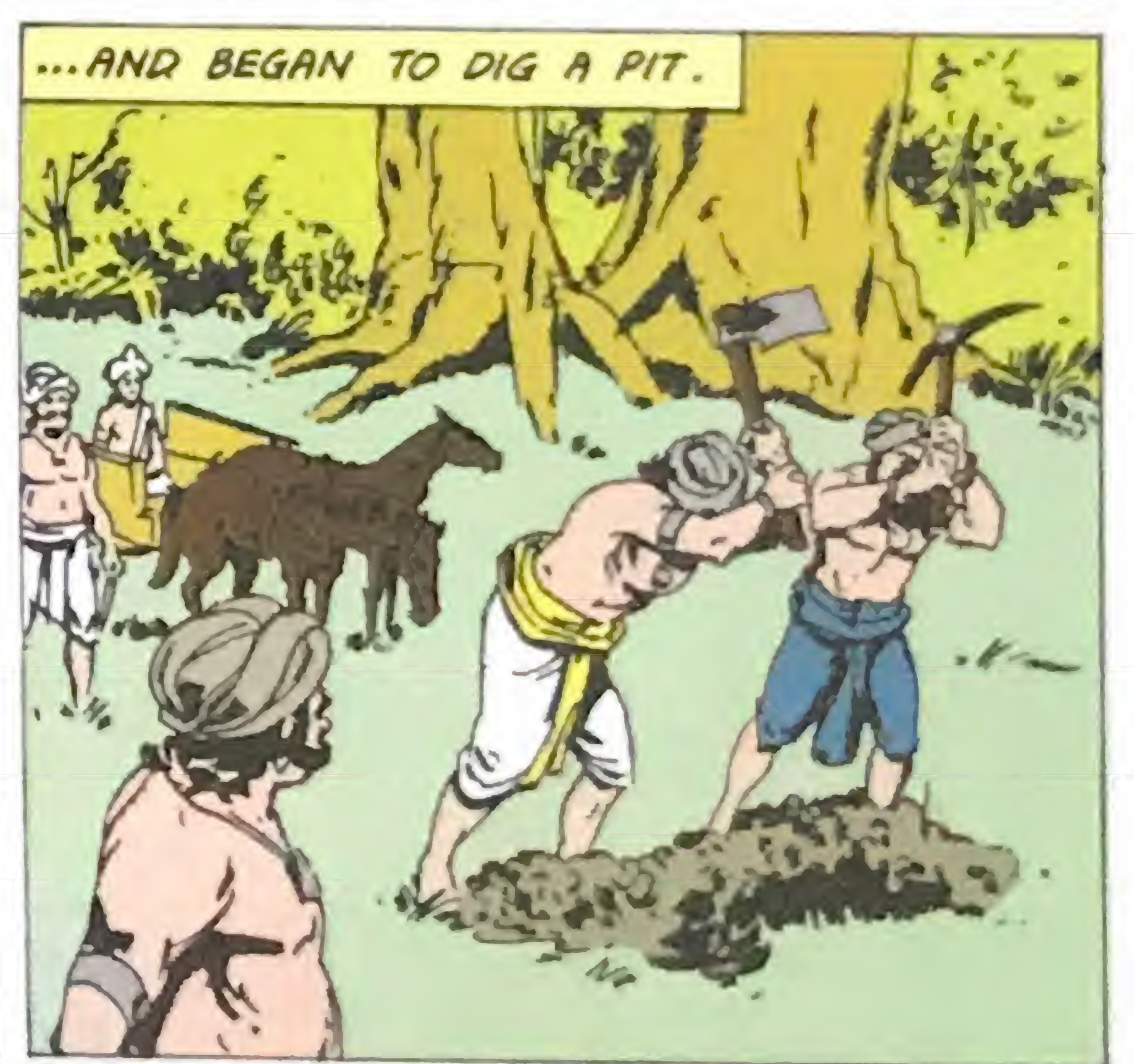
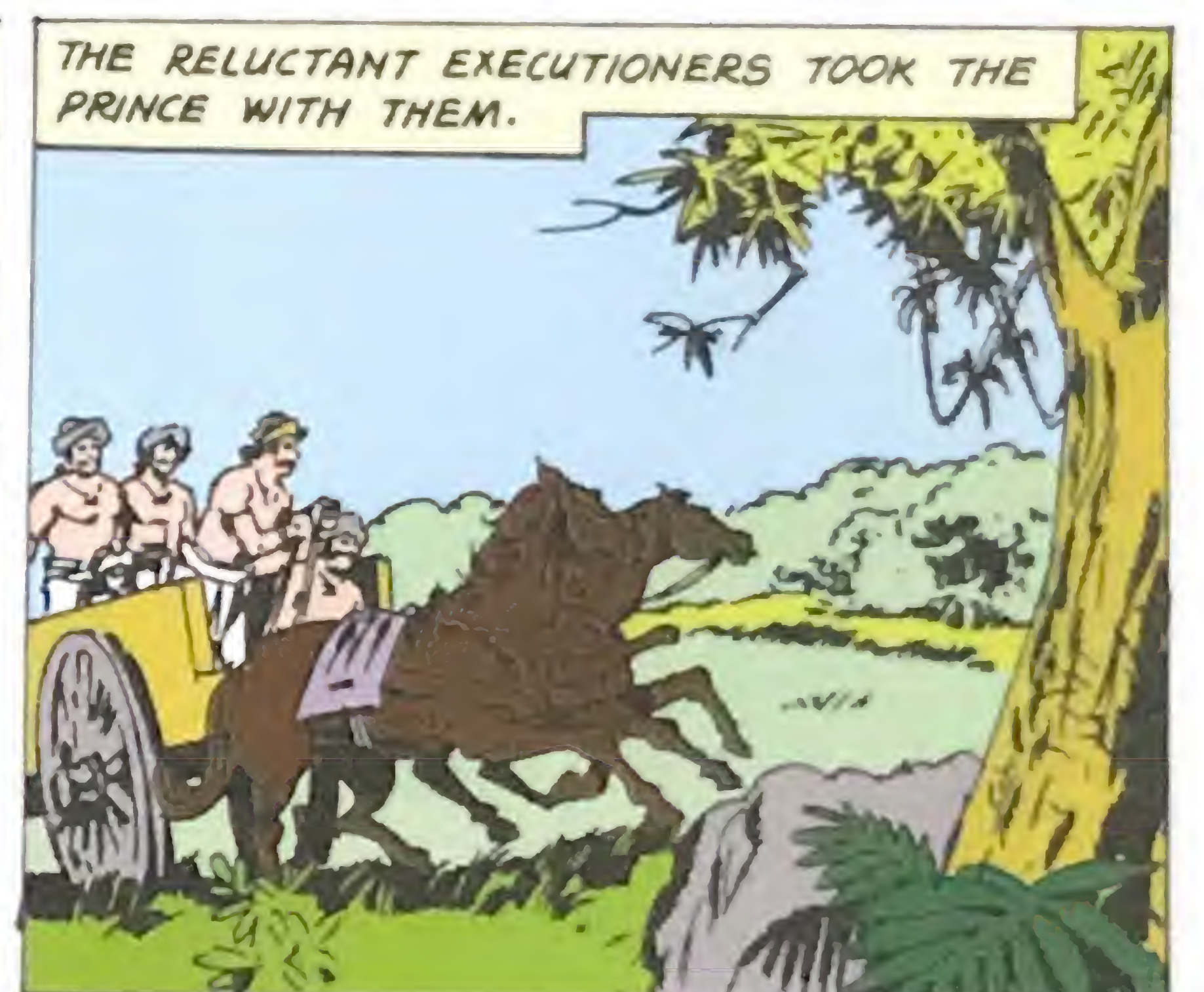
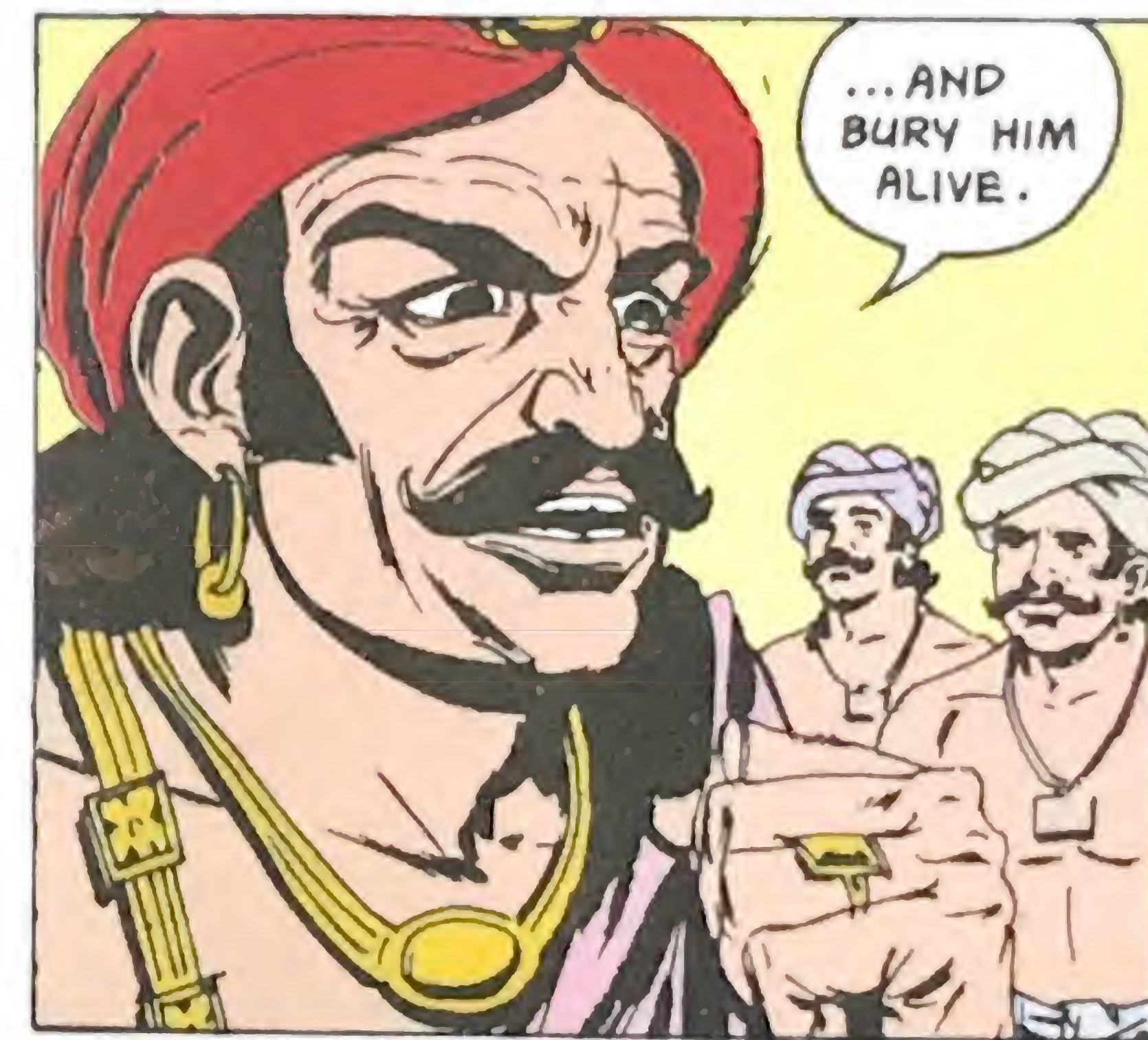
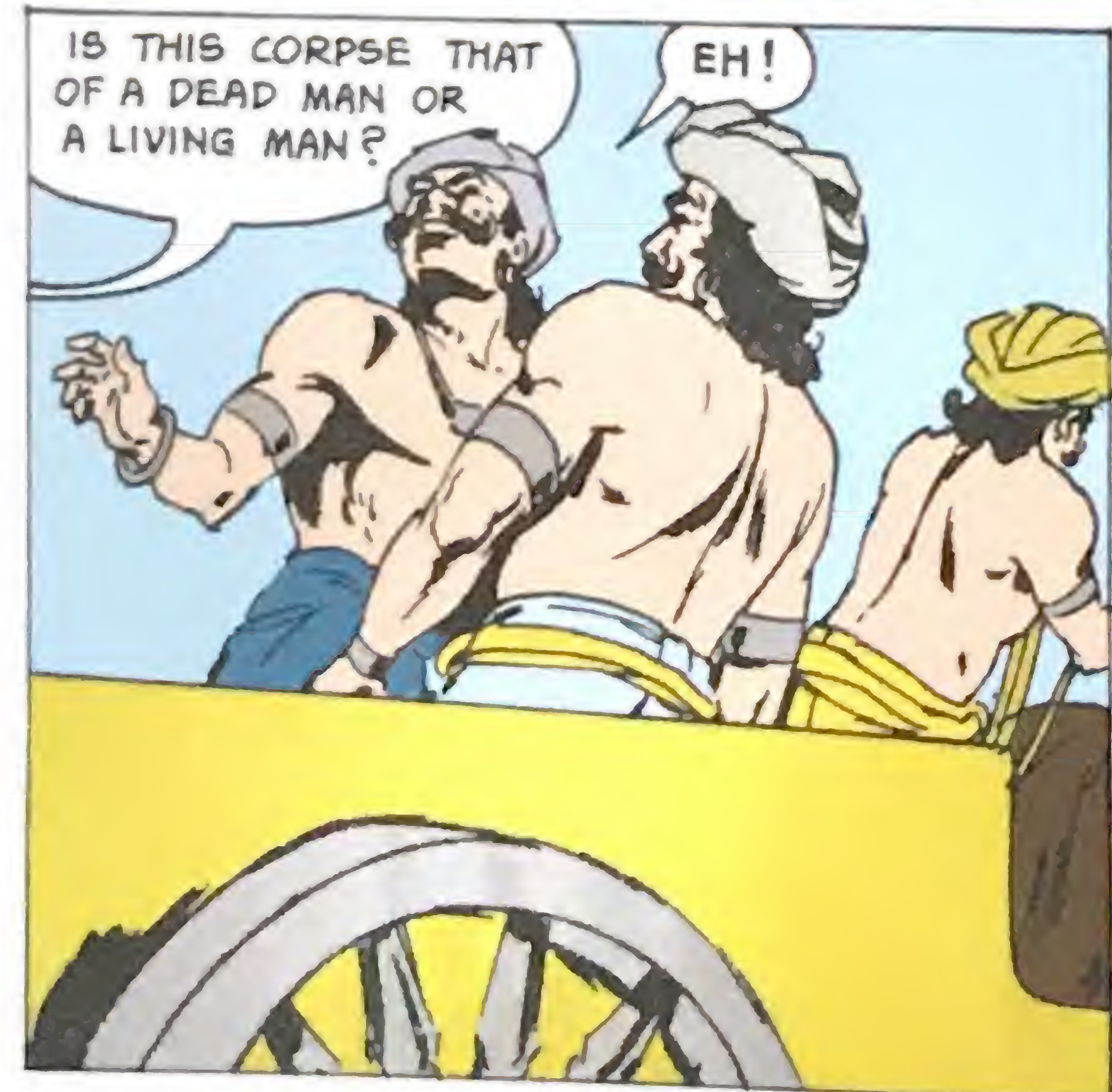
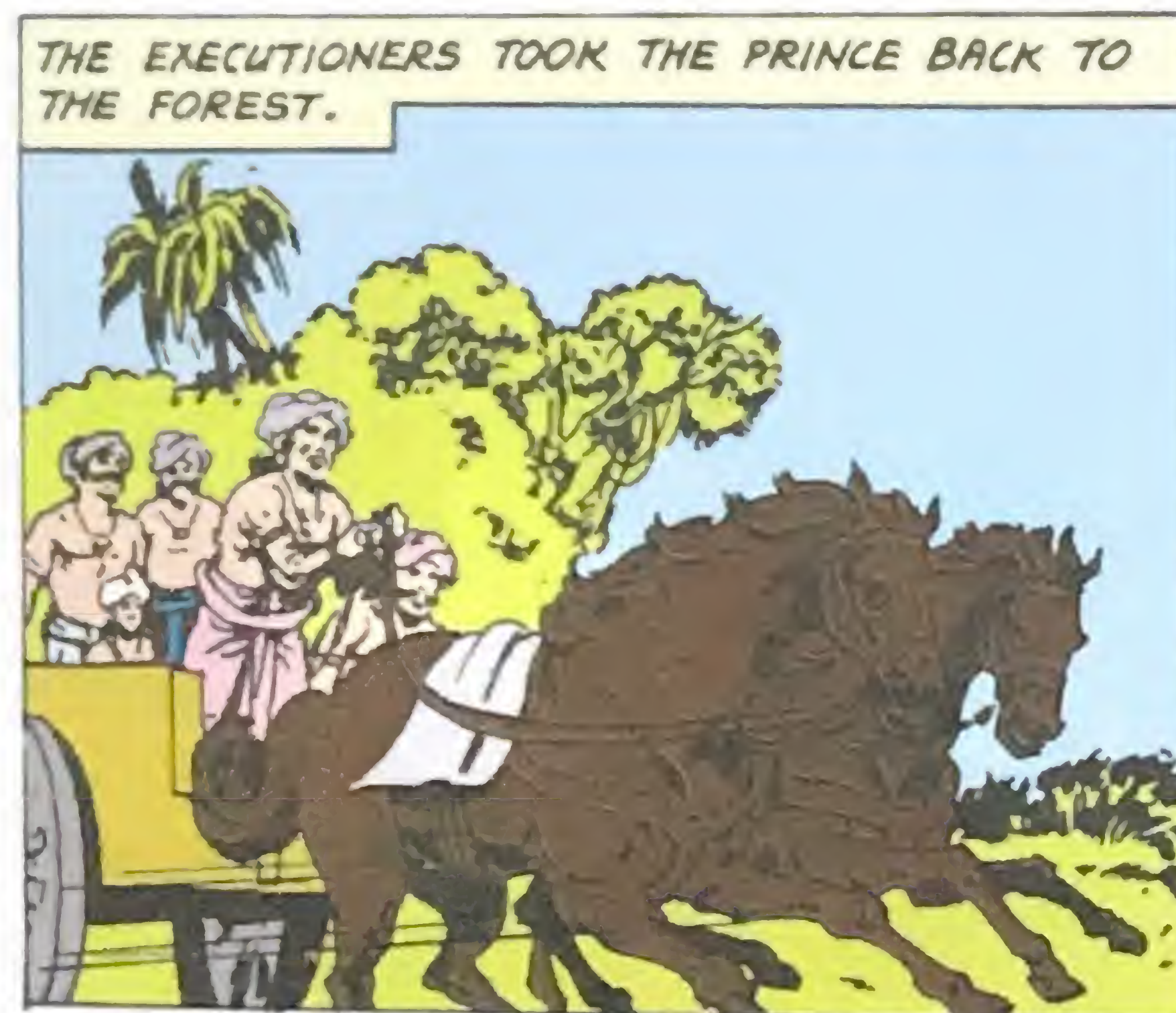








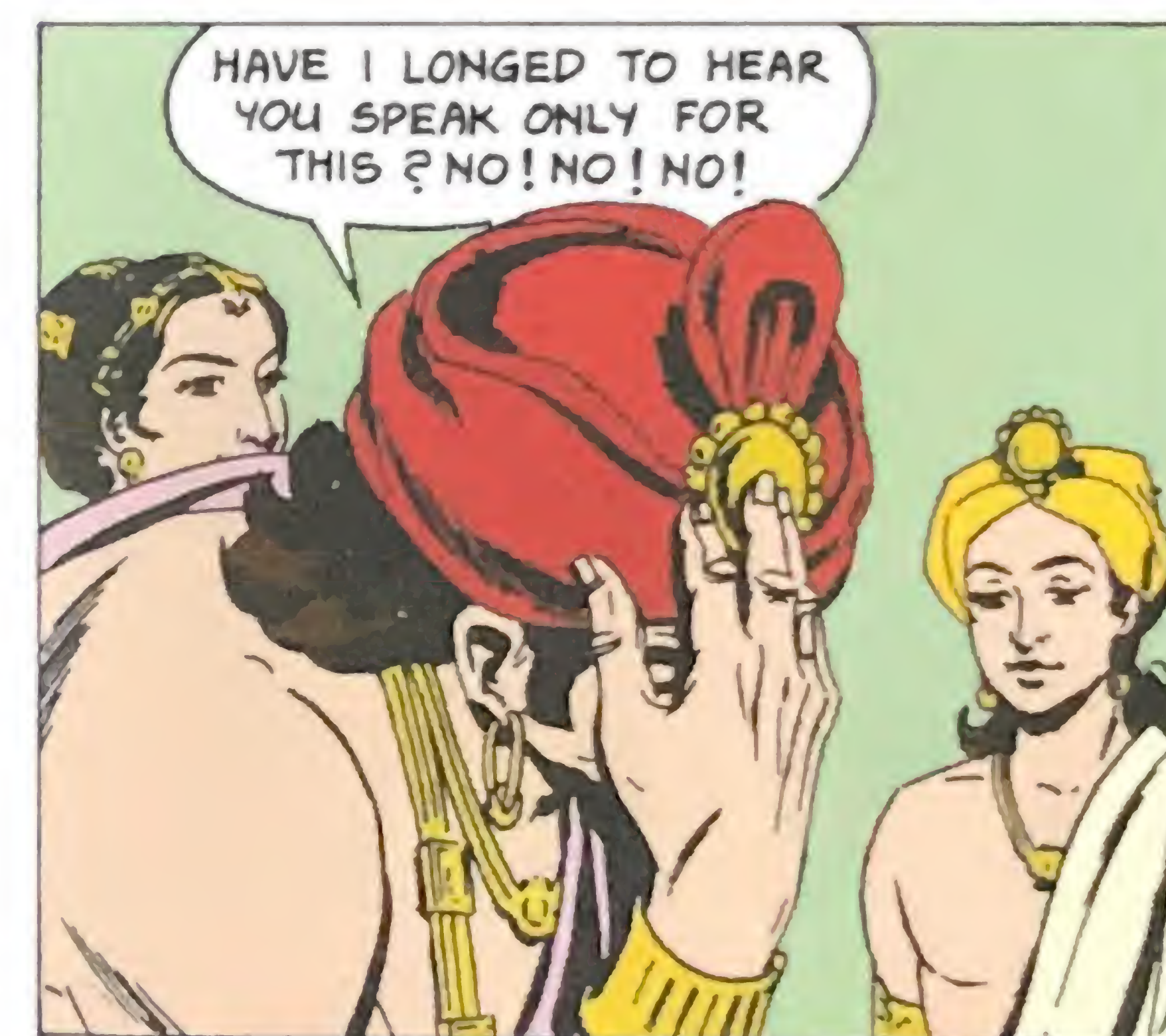
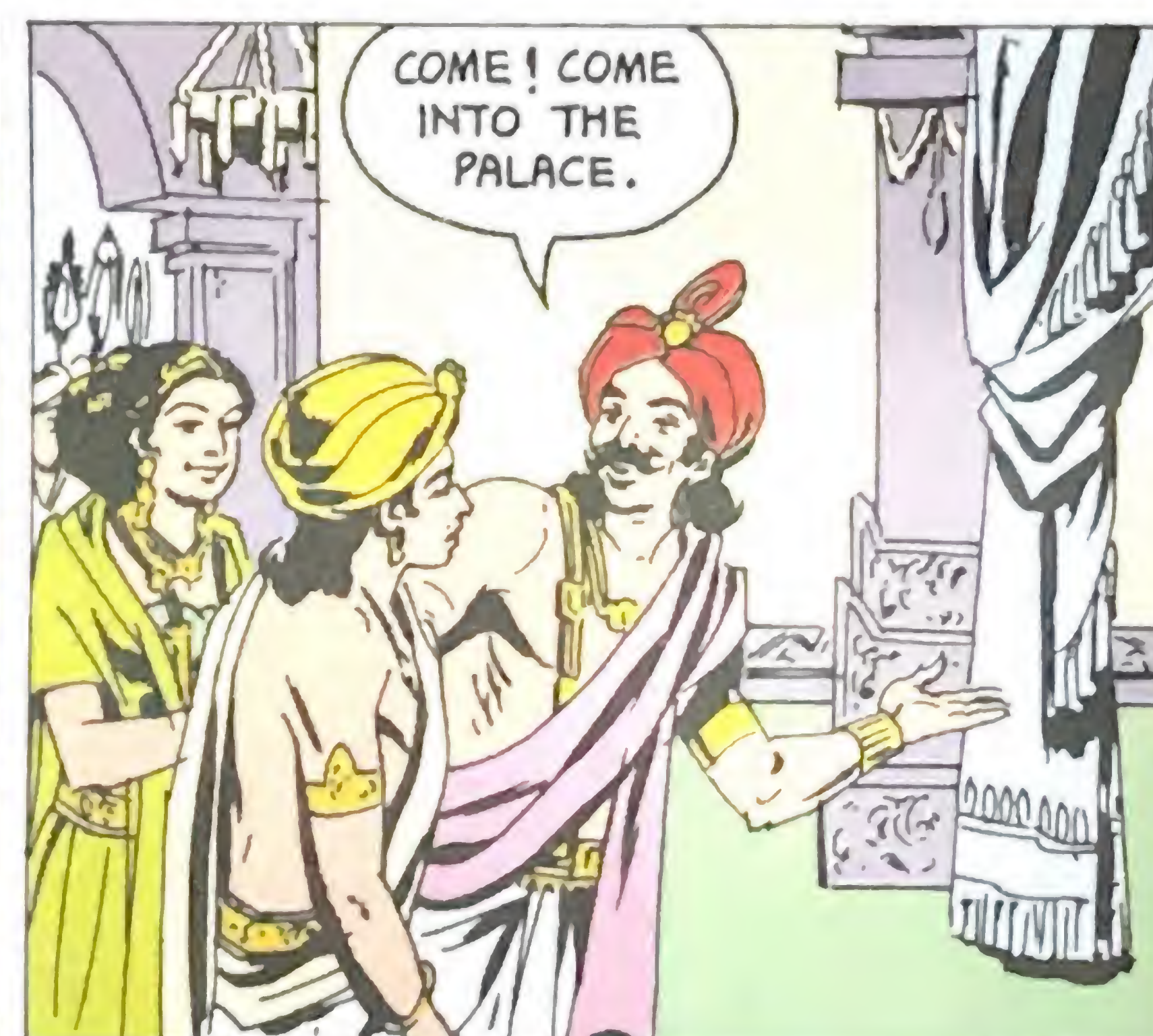
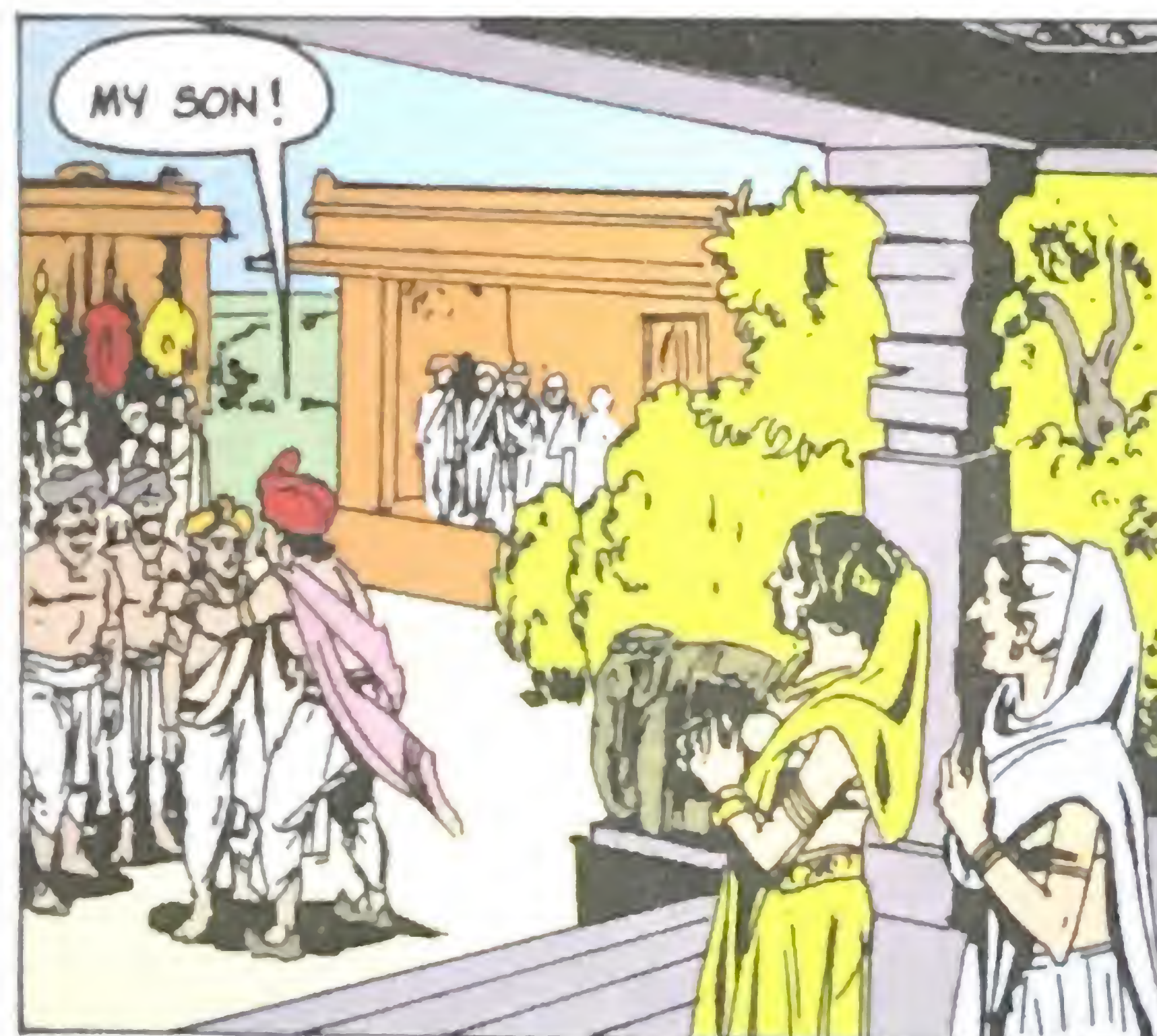
AND THEY REPEATED WHAT THE PRINCE HAD UTTERED.

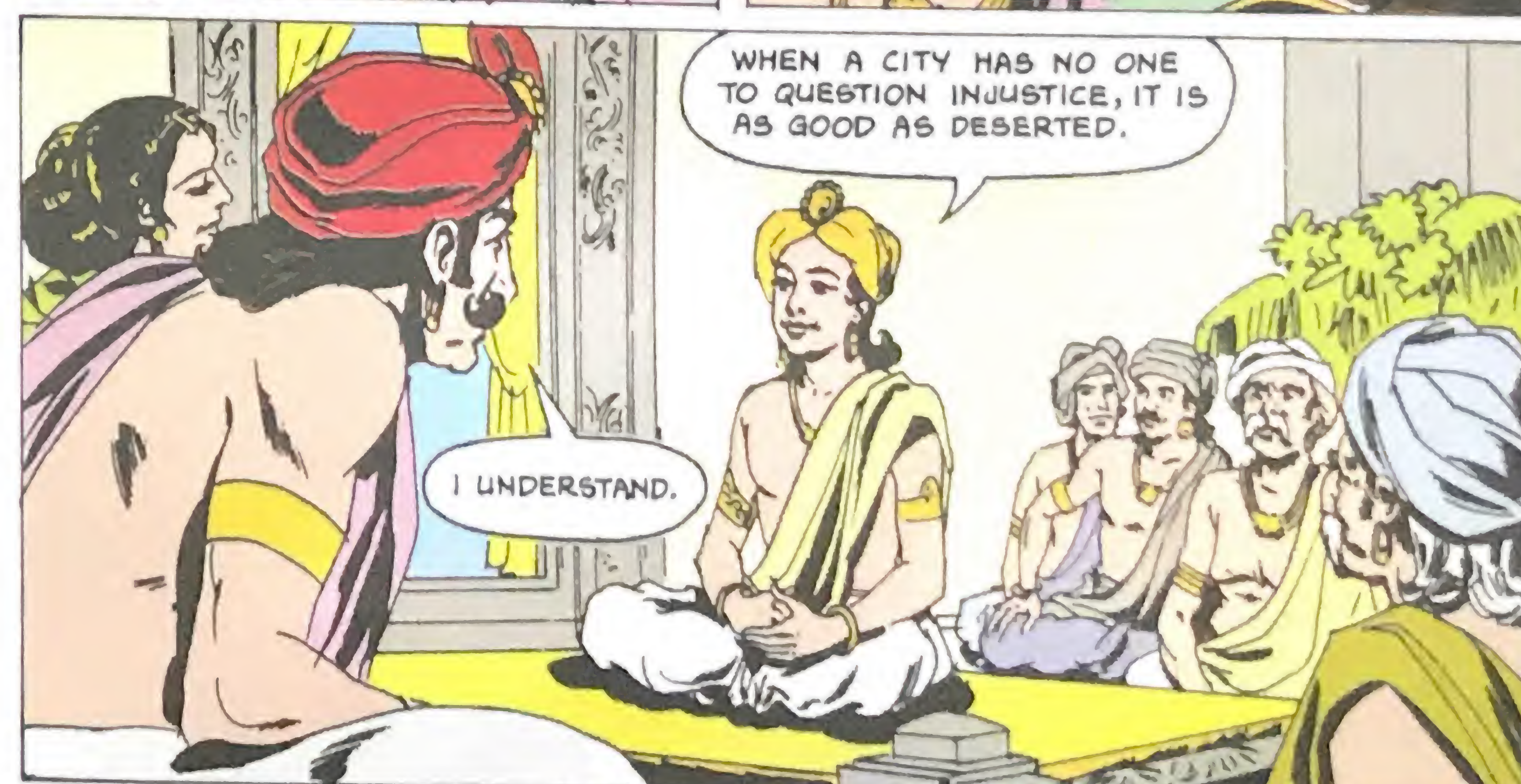
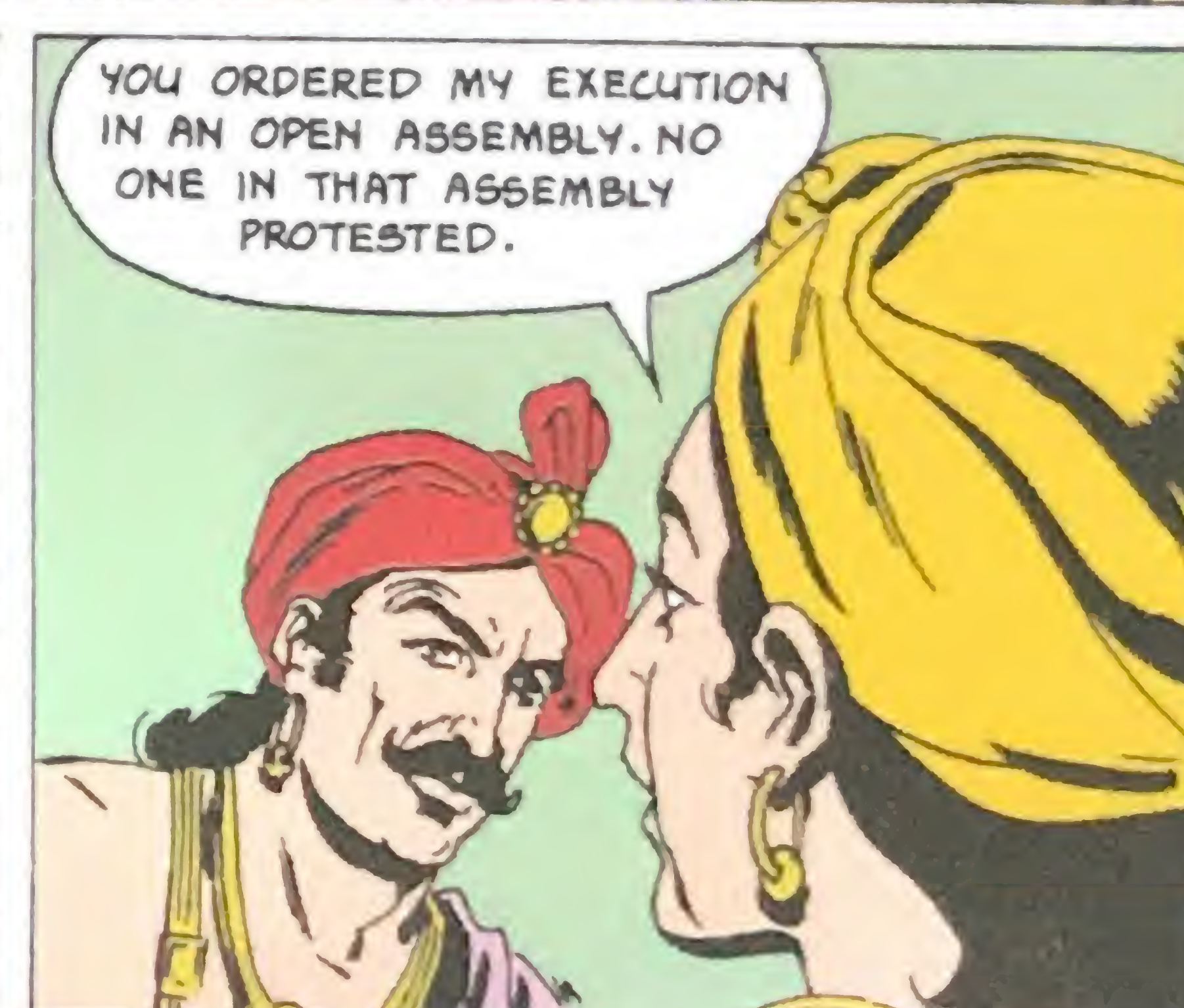
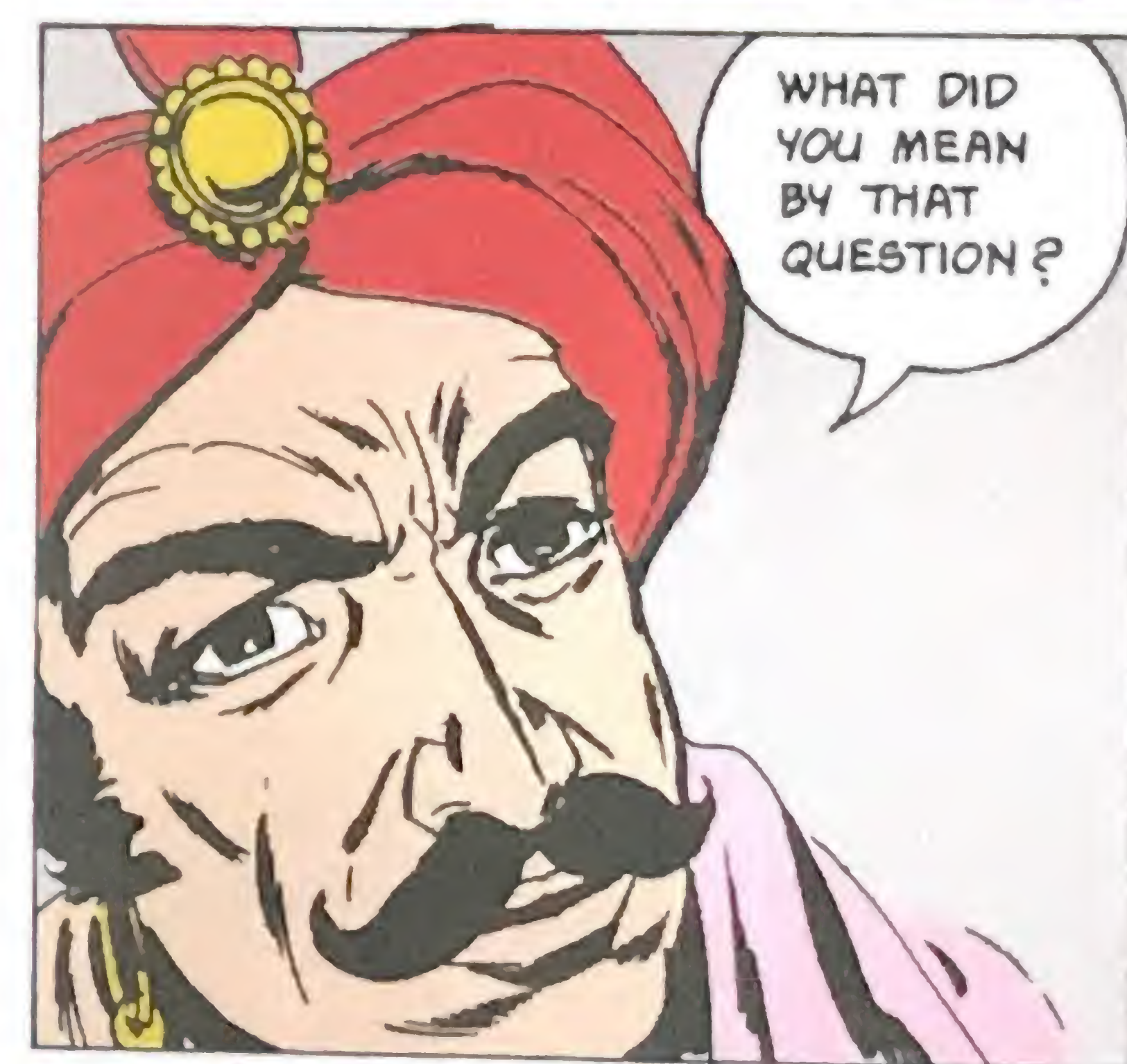
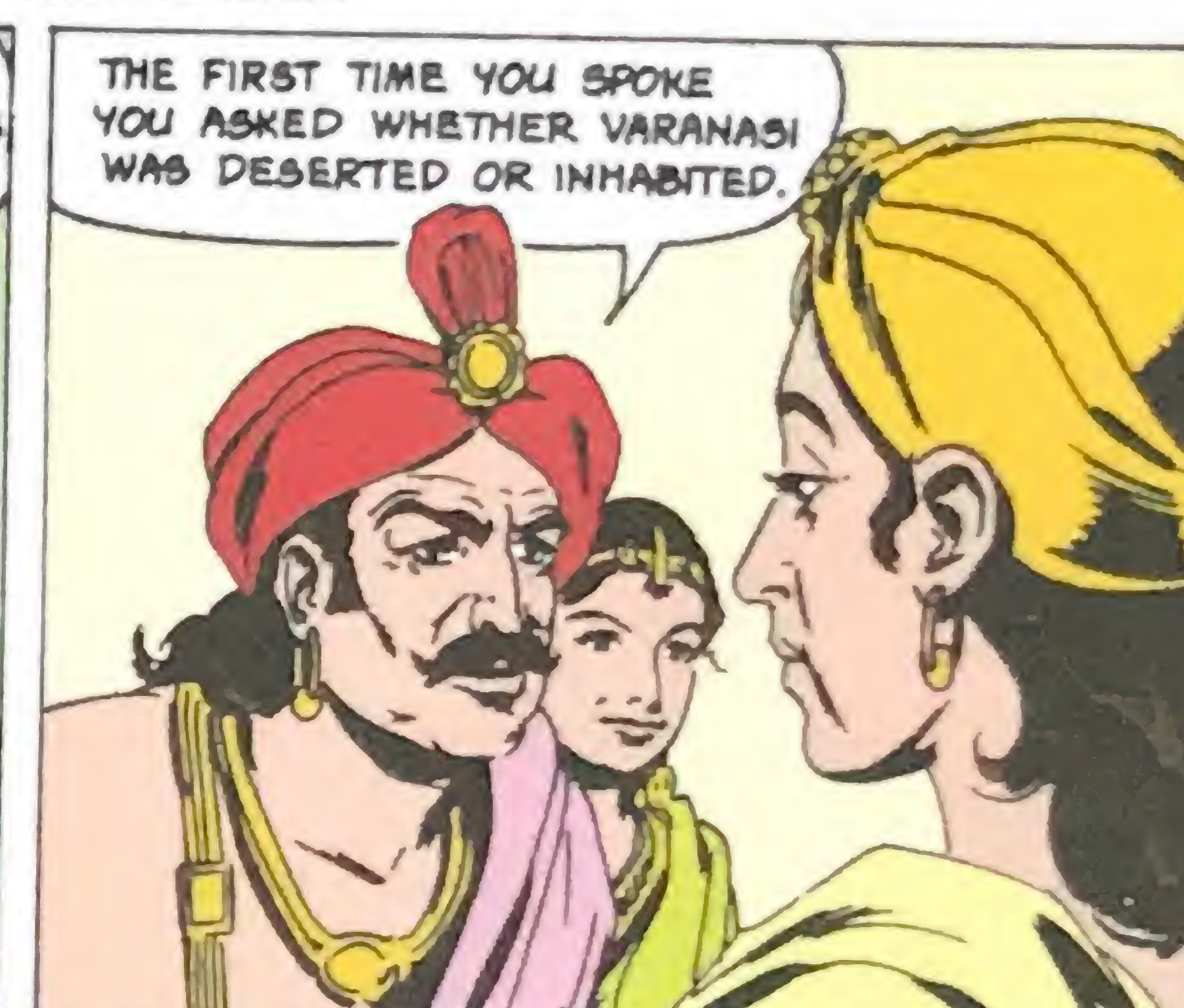
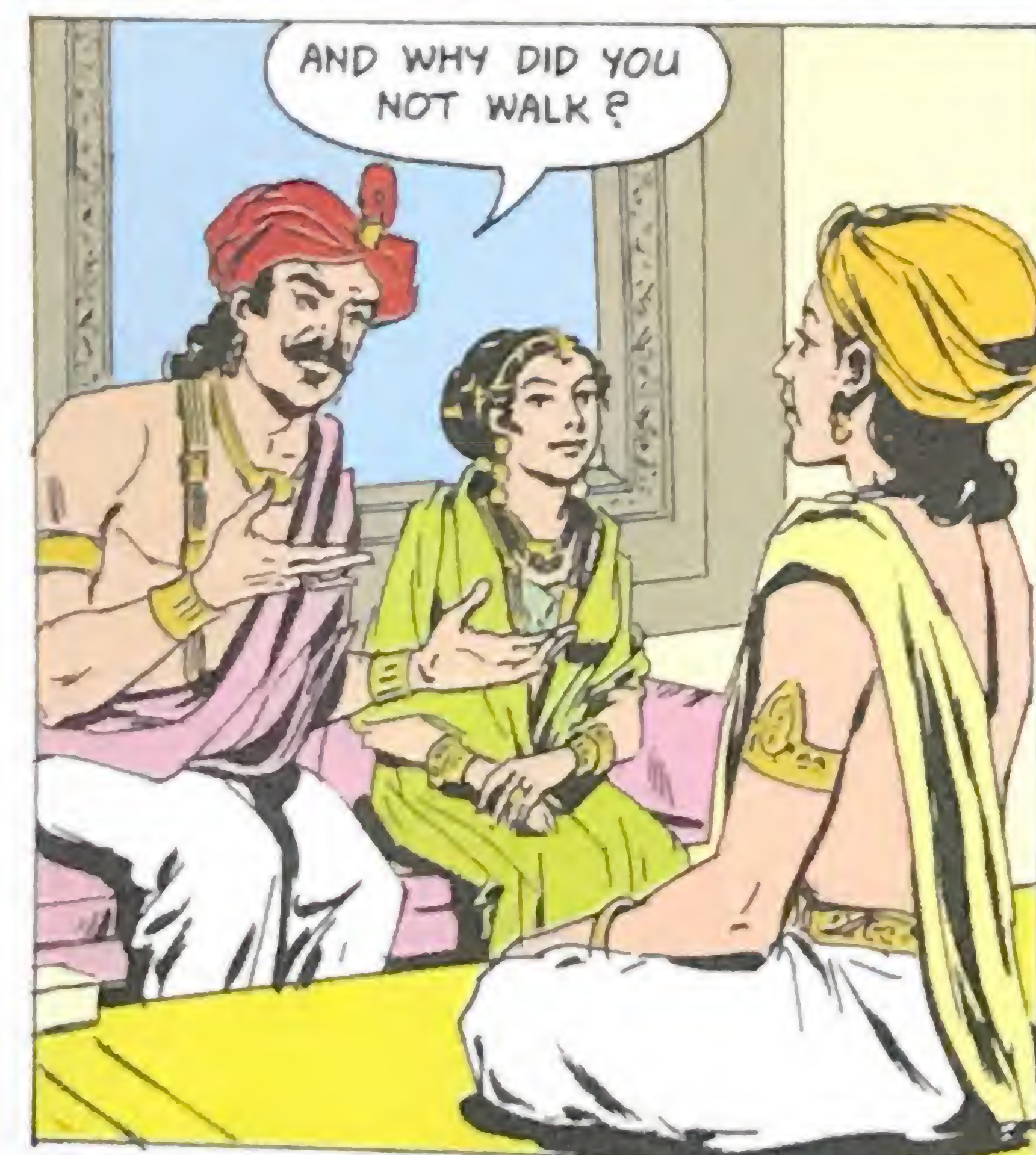
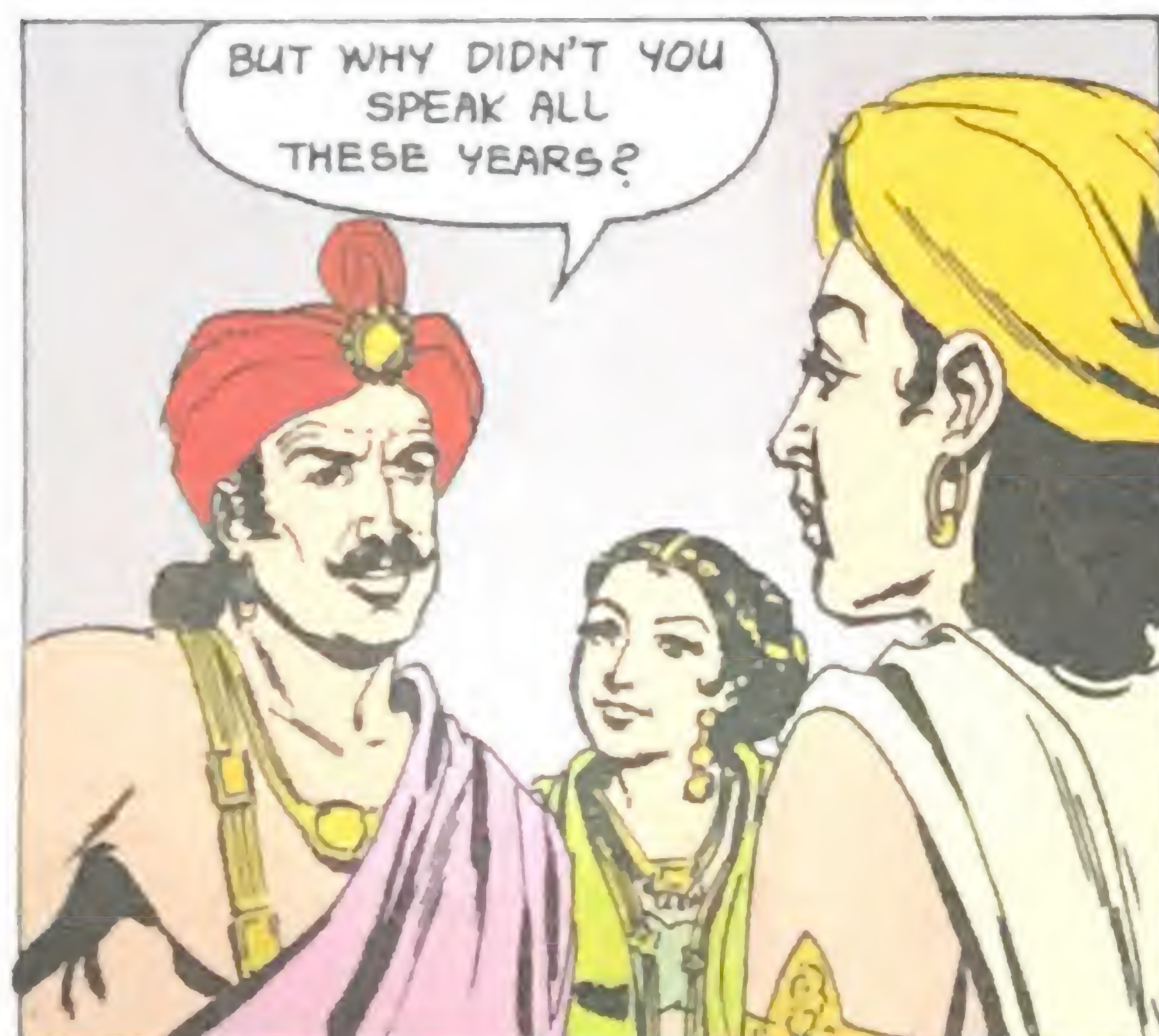


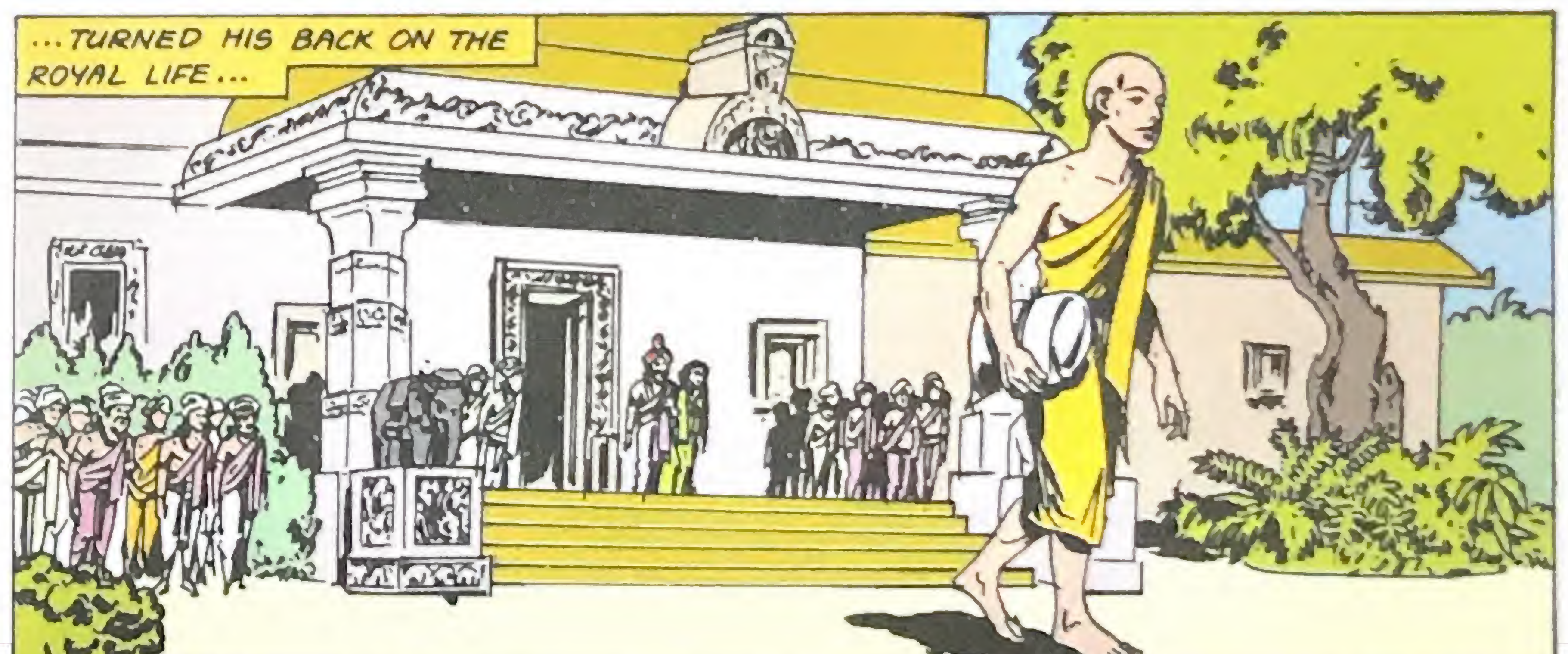
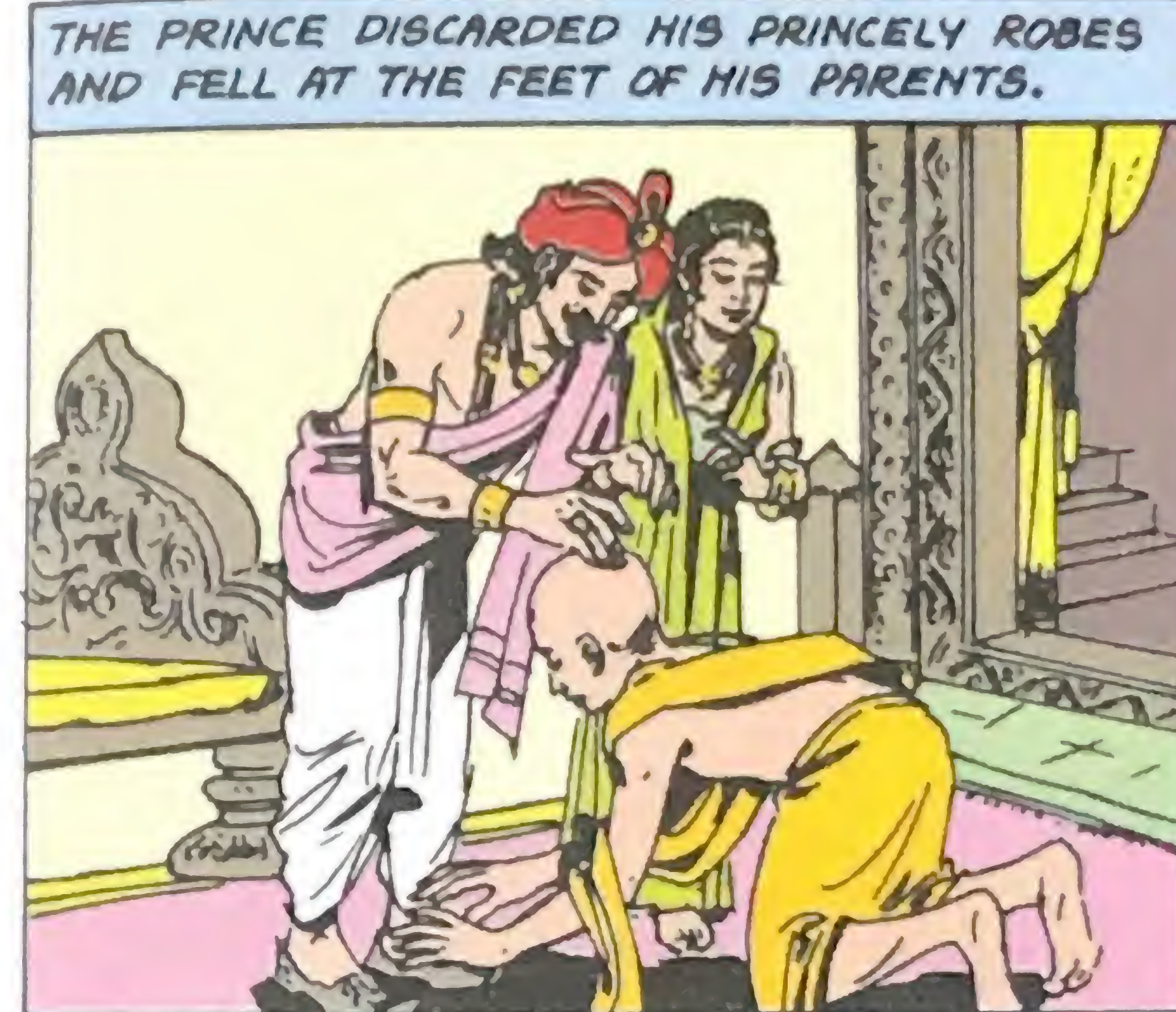
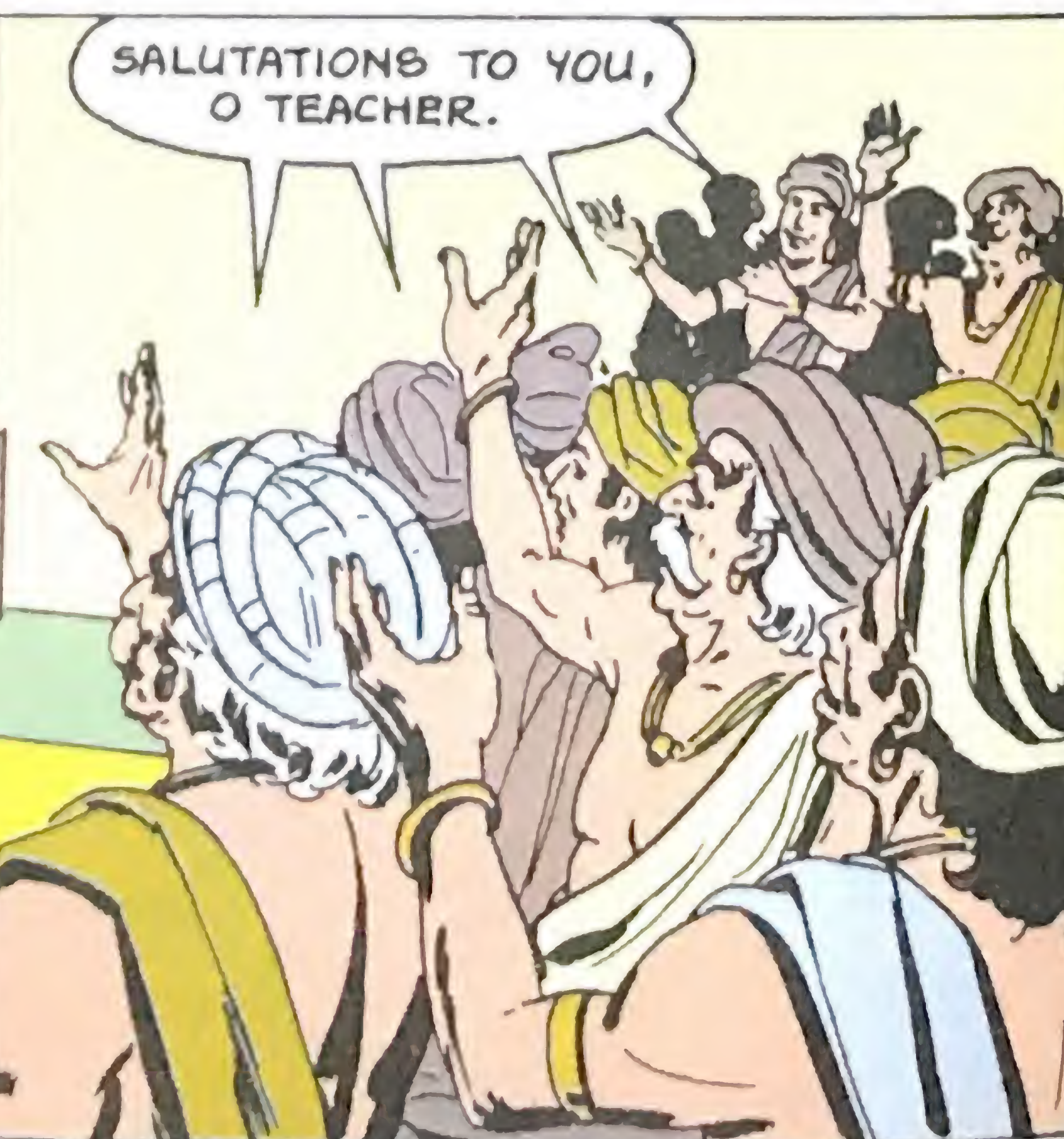
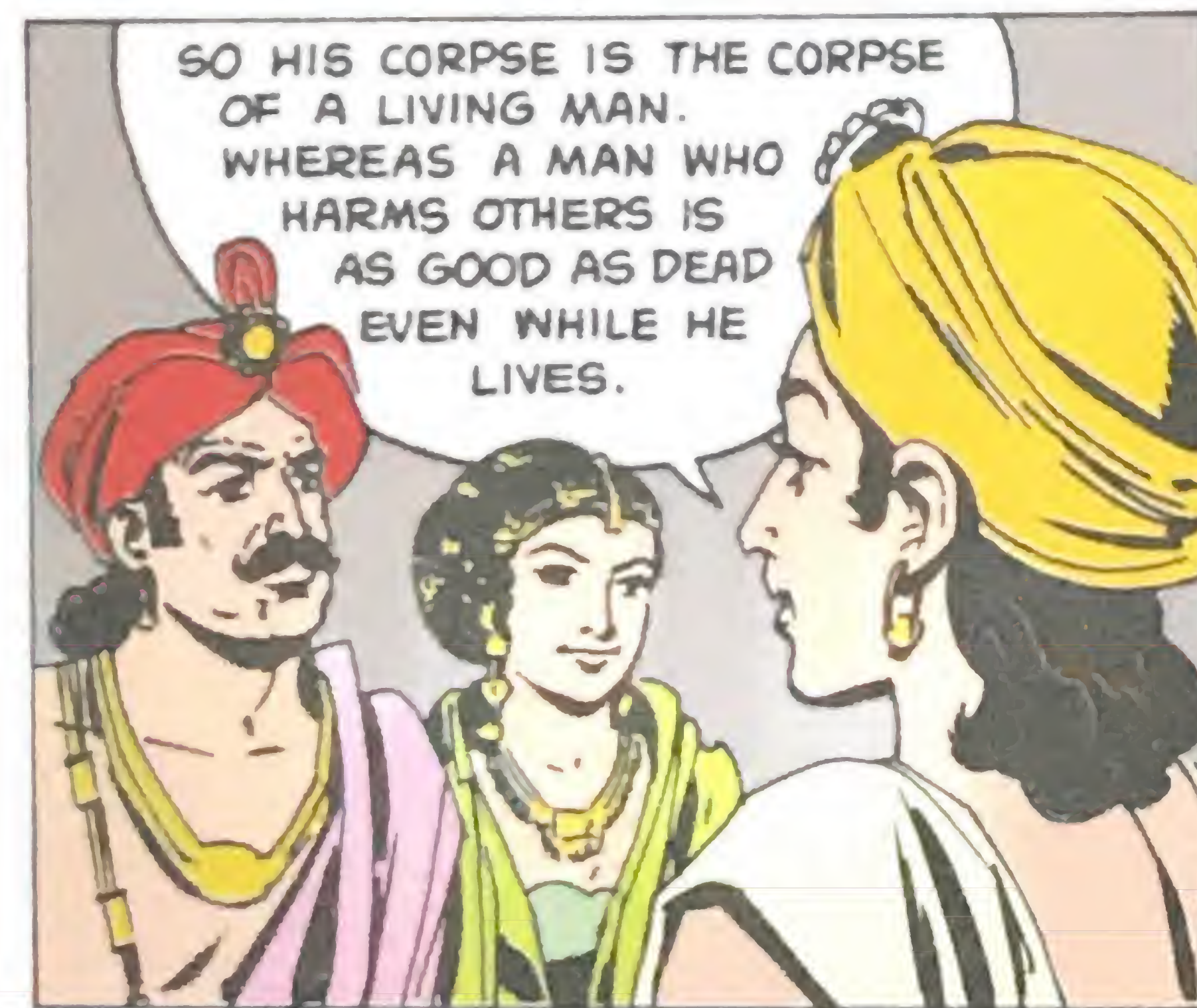
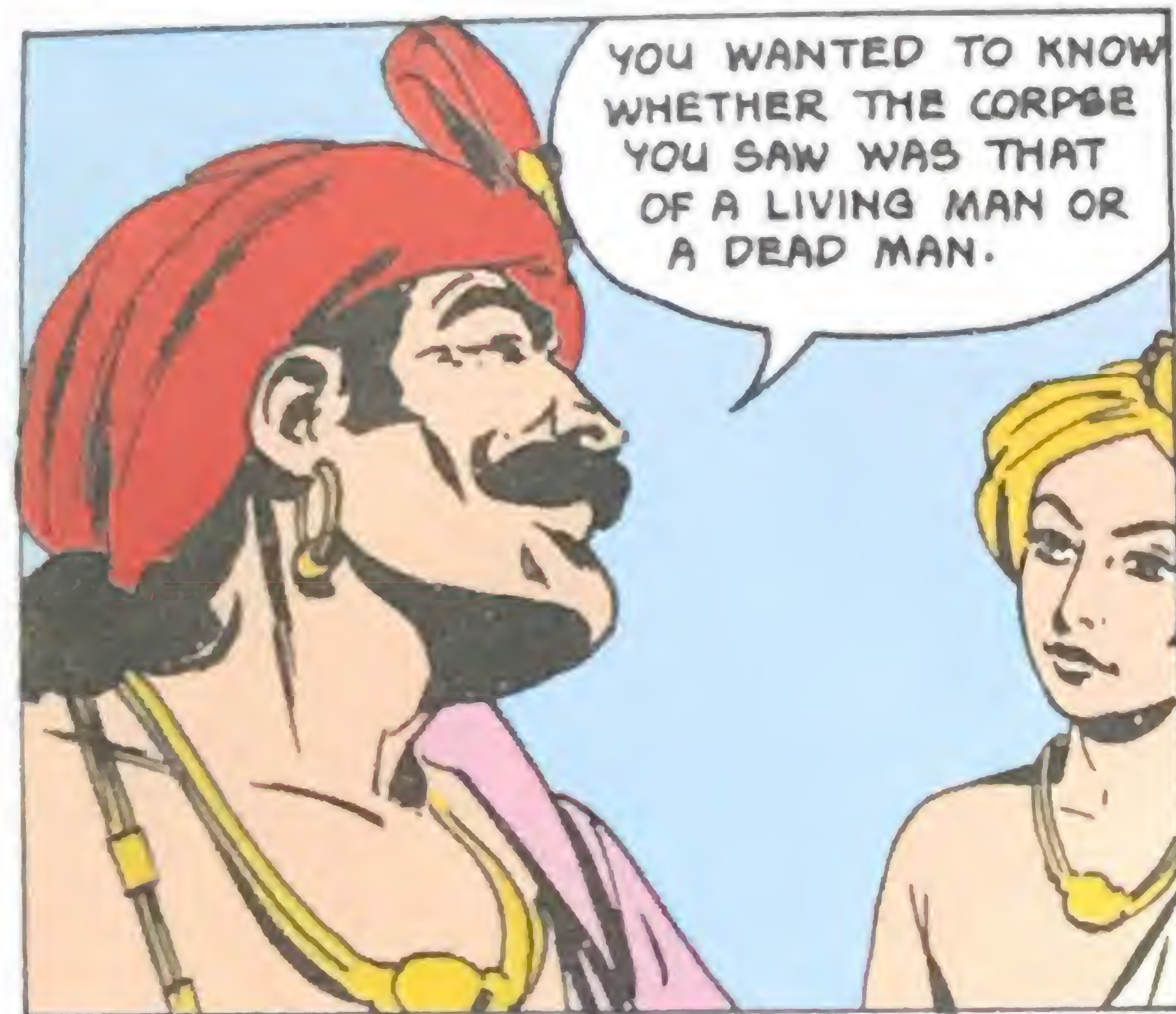


SO THE CITY WAS DECORATED AND THE CITIZENS STOOD ON EITHER SIDE OF THE ROAD TO SEE THE LAME PRINCE WALK HOME.



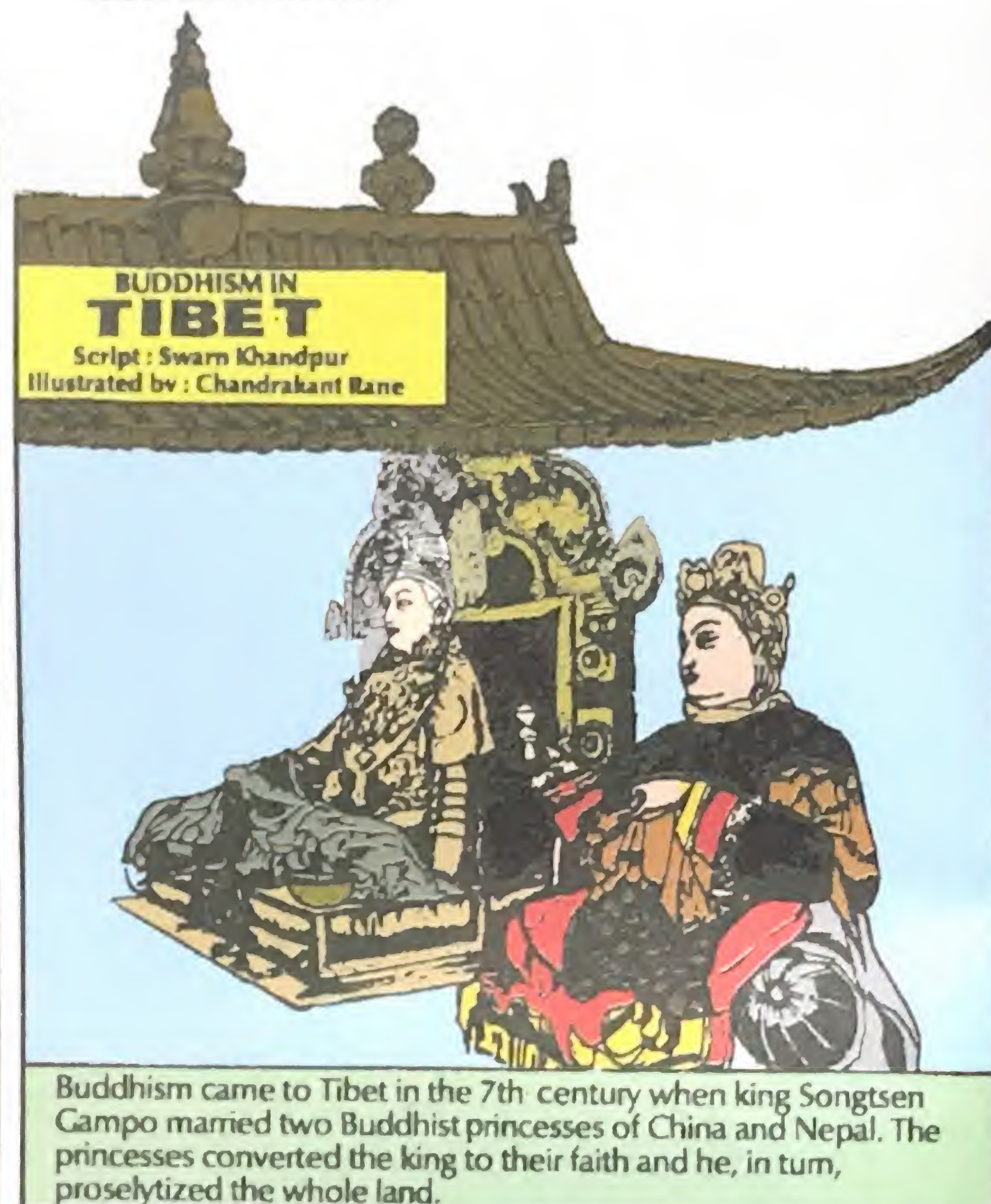






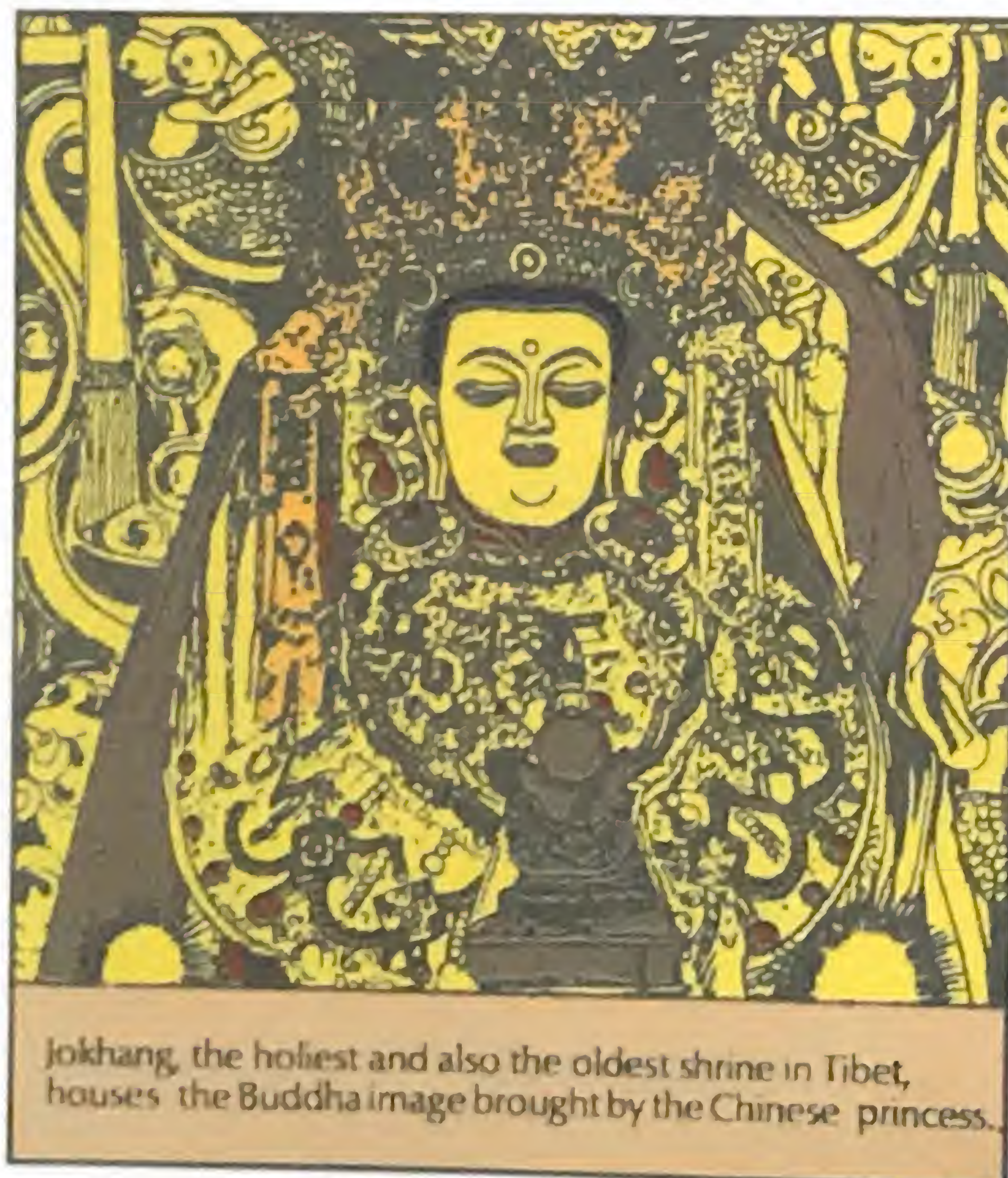


Tibet, the Roof of the World, is a land of Buddhist shrines, monasteries and monks.



BUDDHISM IN TIBET
Script : Swarn Khandpur
Illustrated by : Chandrakant Rane

Buddhism came to Tibet in the 7th century when king Songtsen Gampo married two Buddhist princesses of China and Nepal. The princesses converted the king to their faith and he, in turn, proselytized the whole land.



Jokhang, the holiest and also the oldest shrine in Tibet, houses the Buddha image brought by the Chinese princess.



Devotees from all over Tibet visit the shrine with their offerings of butter candles.



In 775, a famous Buddhist teacher, Padmasambhava, was invited from India. Under his guidance, the first monastery, Samye, was built and Tibetan monks were ordained.

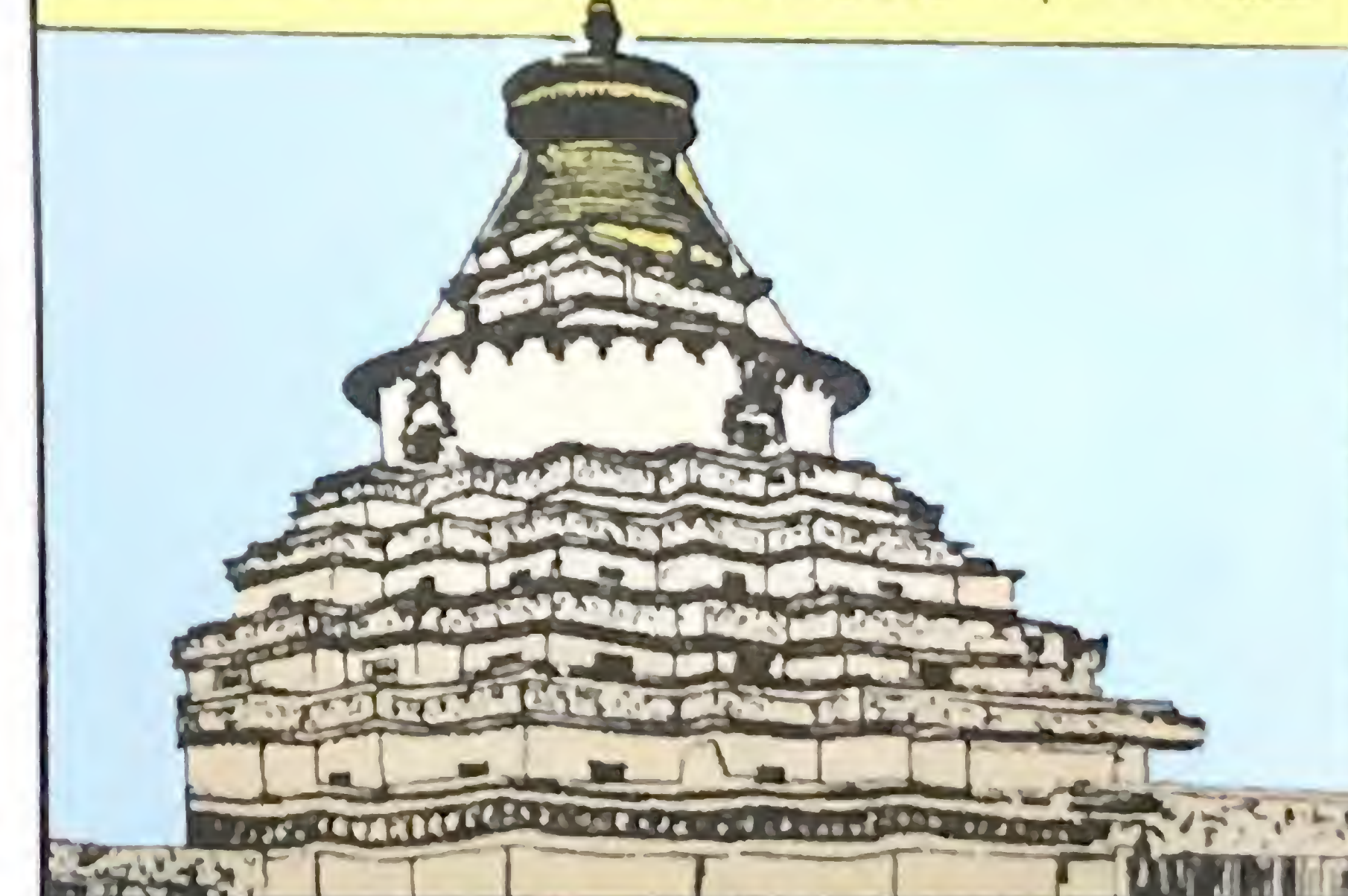


Every monastery is a treasure-house of Tibetan art.



There are several hundreds of Tibetan books and Buddhist scriptures – hand-written as well as block-printed. One of the treasures is the Buddhist canon written on palm leaves.

Associated with the monastery are small and large chortens or commemorative shrines, similar to the stupas of India.



During annual festivals, people gather in the courtyards of monasteries, to watch masked dancers enacting scenes from Buddha's life.



Believing that prayers need not be uttered to be heard, the Tibetans continuously spin the prayer-wheel. The prayer-wheel contains strips of paper on which are written the words "OM MANI PADME HUM" which mean - The jewel is within the lotus.



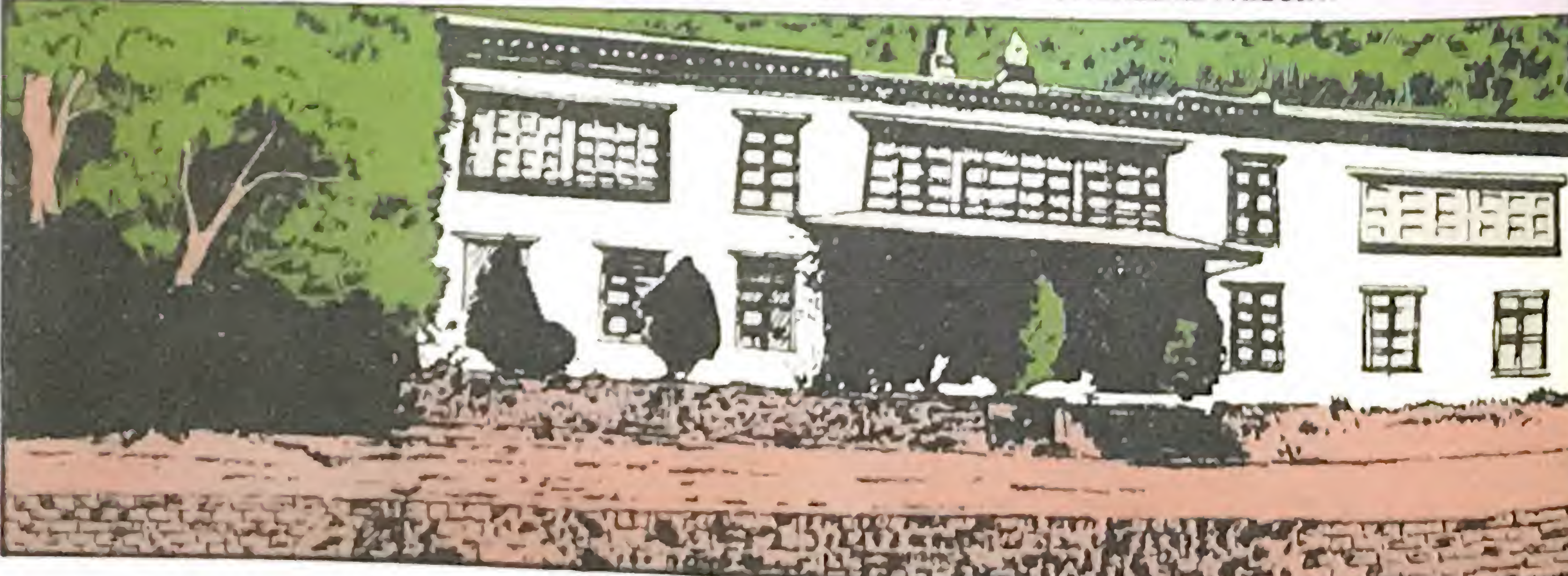
According to the Tibetans, Chenrezi, the Buddha of Mercy, took earthly form in the first Dalai Lama and was reincarnated in each subsequent Dalai Lama.



The Potala Palace in Lhasa is the official residence of the Dalai Lama. It is the most majestic building in the whole of Asia.



Till 1959, when the Chinese took it over, Tibet was ruled by the 14th Dalai Lama and a hierarchy of monks. The Dalai Lama sought asylum in our country and now lives at Dalhousie in Himachal Pradesh.



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