



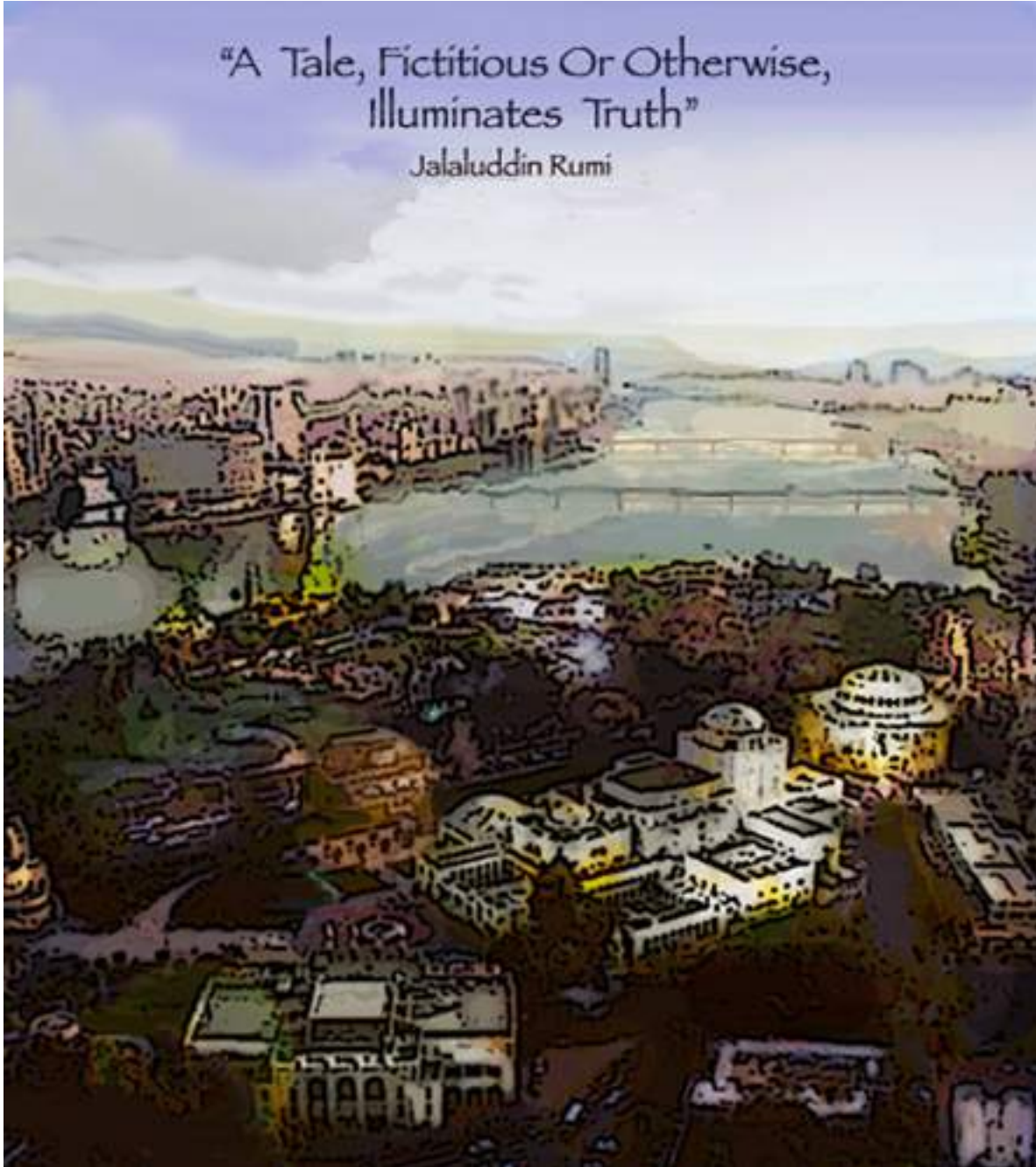
his advice
exactly!





“A Tale, Fictitious Or Otherwise,
Illuminates Truth”

Jalaluddin Rumi



A museum of antiquities in the Middle East...








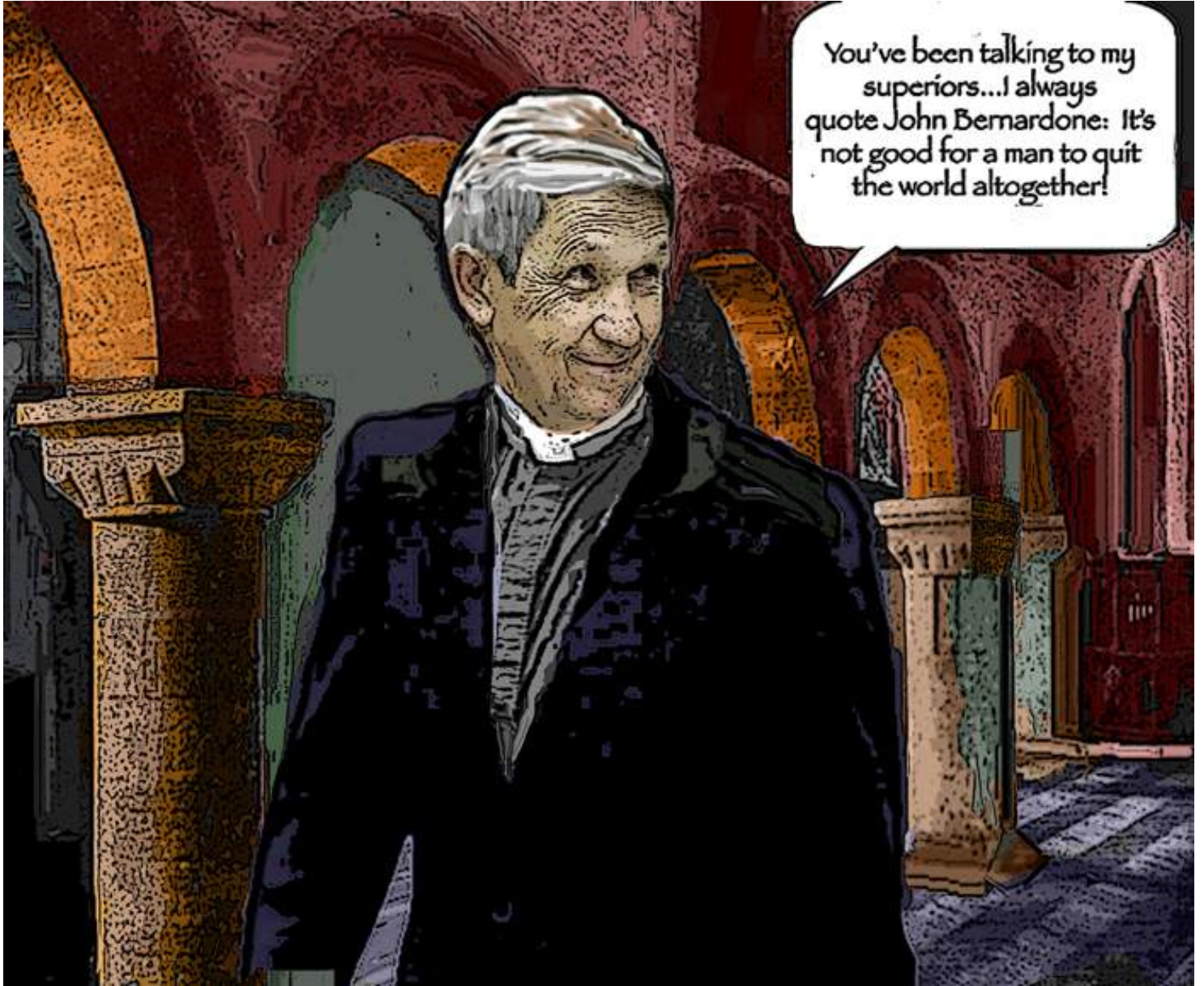


An intriguing find.





You'll be missed. I've known you now, Martin, for what--fifteen years? You've been working on one dig after another. Just what kind of a Franciscan are you exactly?




You've been talking to my superiors...I always quote John Bernardone: It's not good for a man to quit the world altogether!



John Bernadone?

Yes...St. Francis.

You don't call him
St. Francis?



To tell you the truth, I'm not much into the saint business these days.

You must be very popular with your Order...What is their reaction?



I've been around so damn long, they shrug their shouldiers and look the other way.



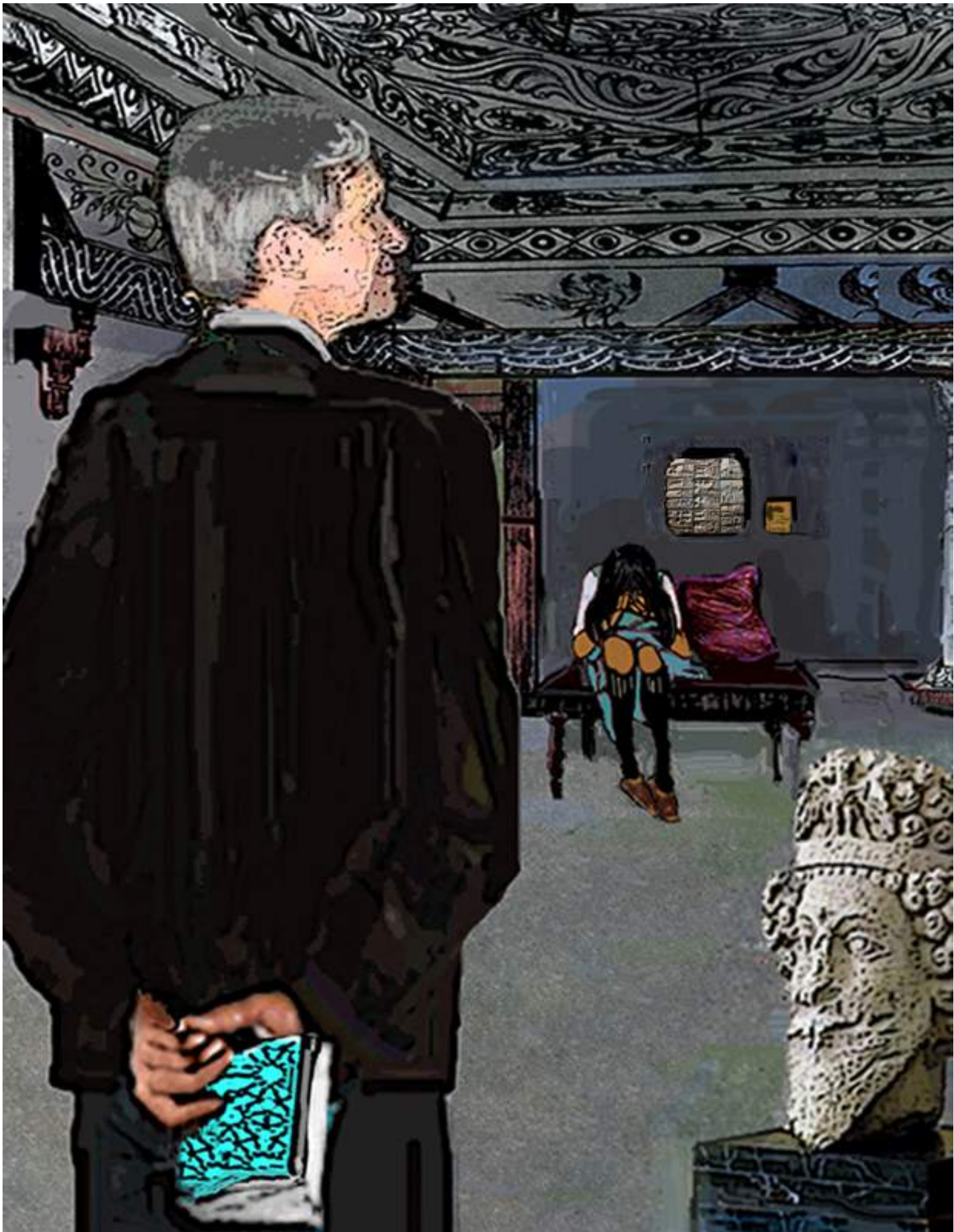
Which is almost ready, by the way. A week at the most and you can open the doors to the public. You should have no trouble finishing it...you can even take credit.

You're a controversial fellow, Martin...like your current exhibition.

Oh, I will, I will.

Did you hear that?





؟ لىلىخ، قورونىش يانداش



i'm sorry father.
i didn't think there was
anyone here.



yes, this section is
closed for the time
being.

it's all right,
don't rush.

i'm sorry.
i'll leave now.





I come here myself to escape this heat...can I help you in any way?

I like the coolness of this place.

Here, let me show you
something.



i've been a student of
middle eastern lan-
guages for quite a
while now since babylo-
nian times at least.



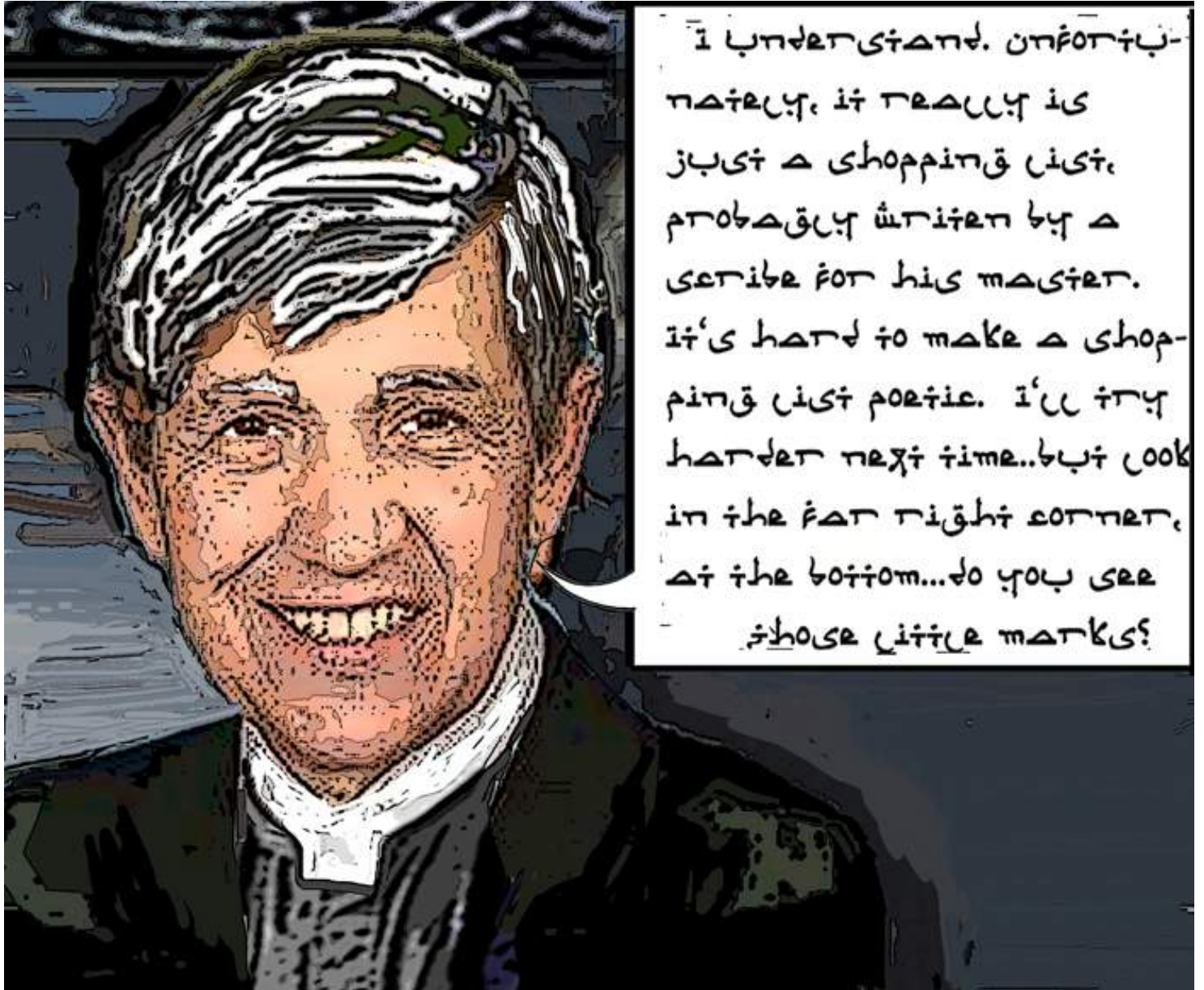
it's beautiful father...
how is it you speak
Arabic?



you don't like my
translation?

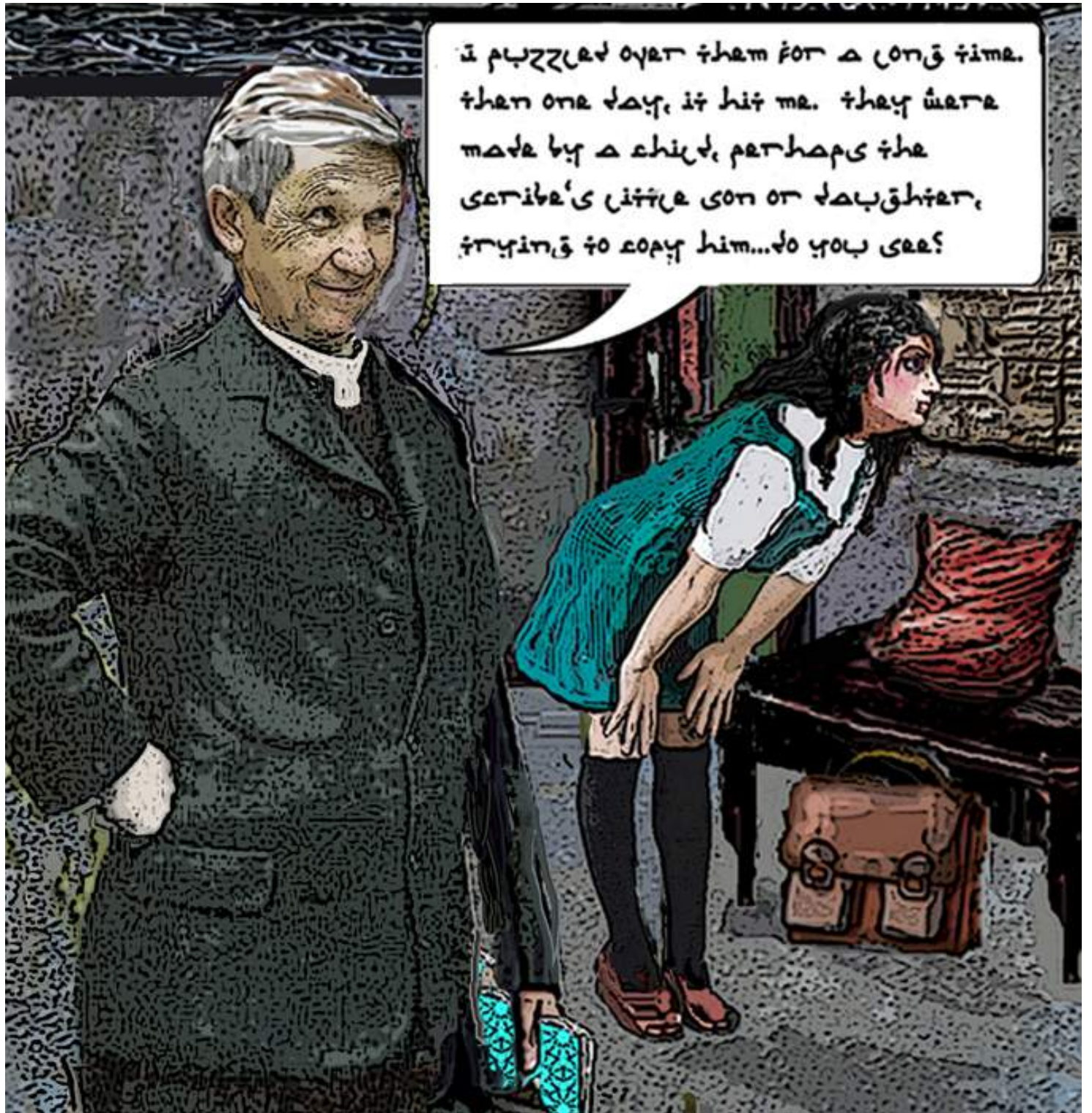
no, no, father, i didn't mean it
that way...i mean i didn't know it
was your translation. i just
hoped it would be a little more...i
don't know, poetic, i عبقى.





I understand. Unfortunately, it really is just a shopping list, probably written by a scribe for his master. It's hard to make a shopping list poetic. I'll try harder next time..but look in the far right corner, at the bottom...do you see those little marks?

I puzzled over them for a long time.
Then one day, it hit me. They were
made by a child, perhaps the
scribe's little son or daughter,
trying to copy him...do you see?



i should be saying now, father...
thank you.



hēre, takē t̄hī...it māy
hēlp.

ī l̄fān'ō ḡ... ī





PLEASE, I INSIST. PERHAPS
THESE TRANSLATIONS WILL
BE MORE TO YOUR LIKING...

FATHER...

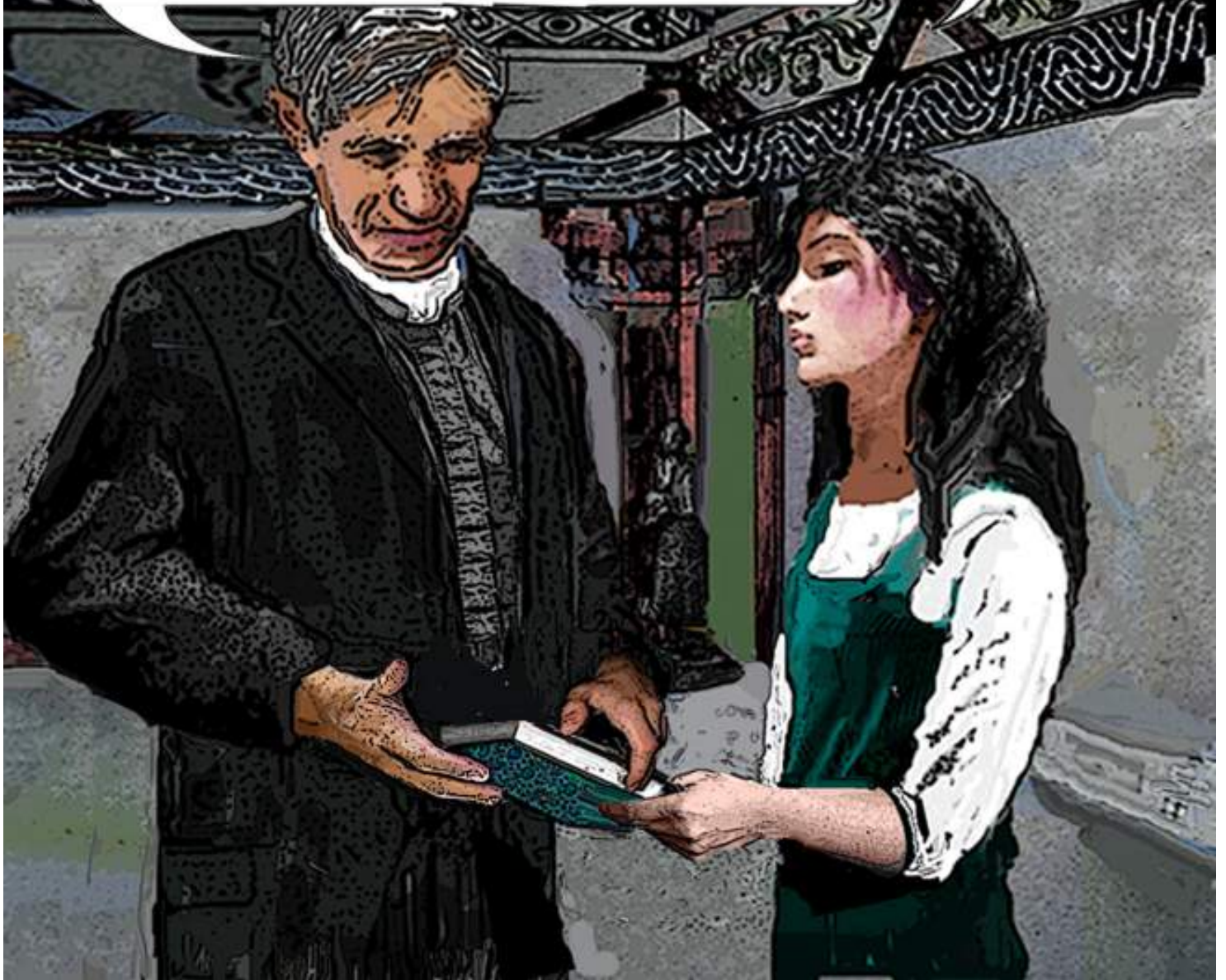


It's poetry of a highly-
refined sort. The bibli-
mystic understood some-
thing profound...I promise
you, no shopping lists in
here.

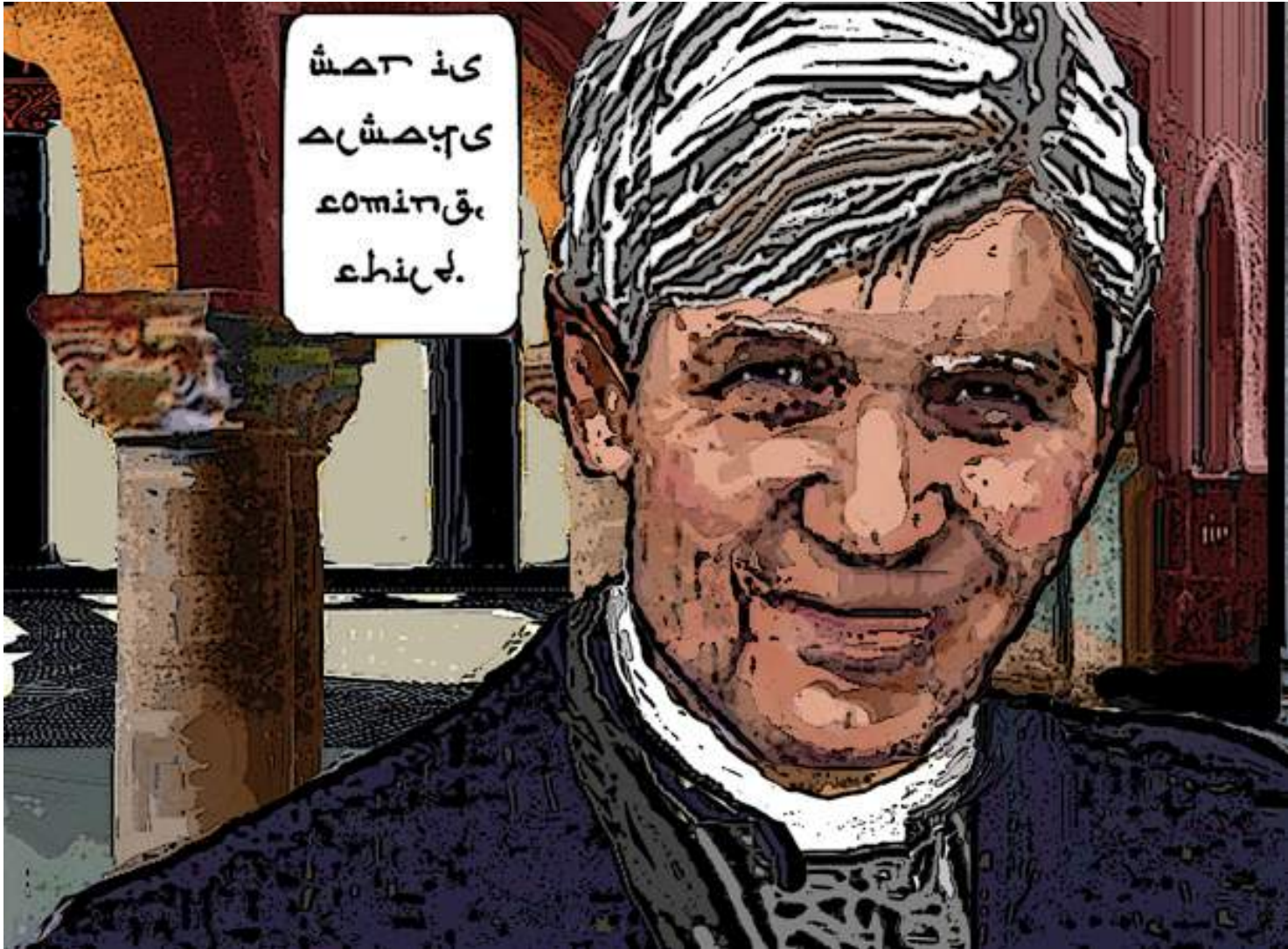


it wōlanl ōmlj hēlp if it wāy a manal ōn hōw tō
fōrfivē t hē nrfōrfivā.žē.

i hēn rē jōn, it t hāt...anl mōrē.

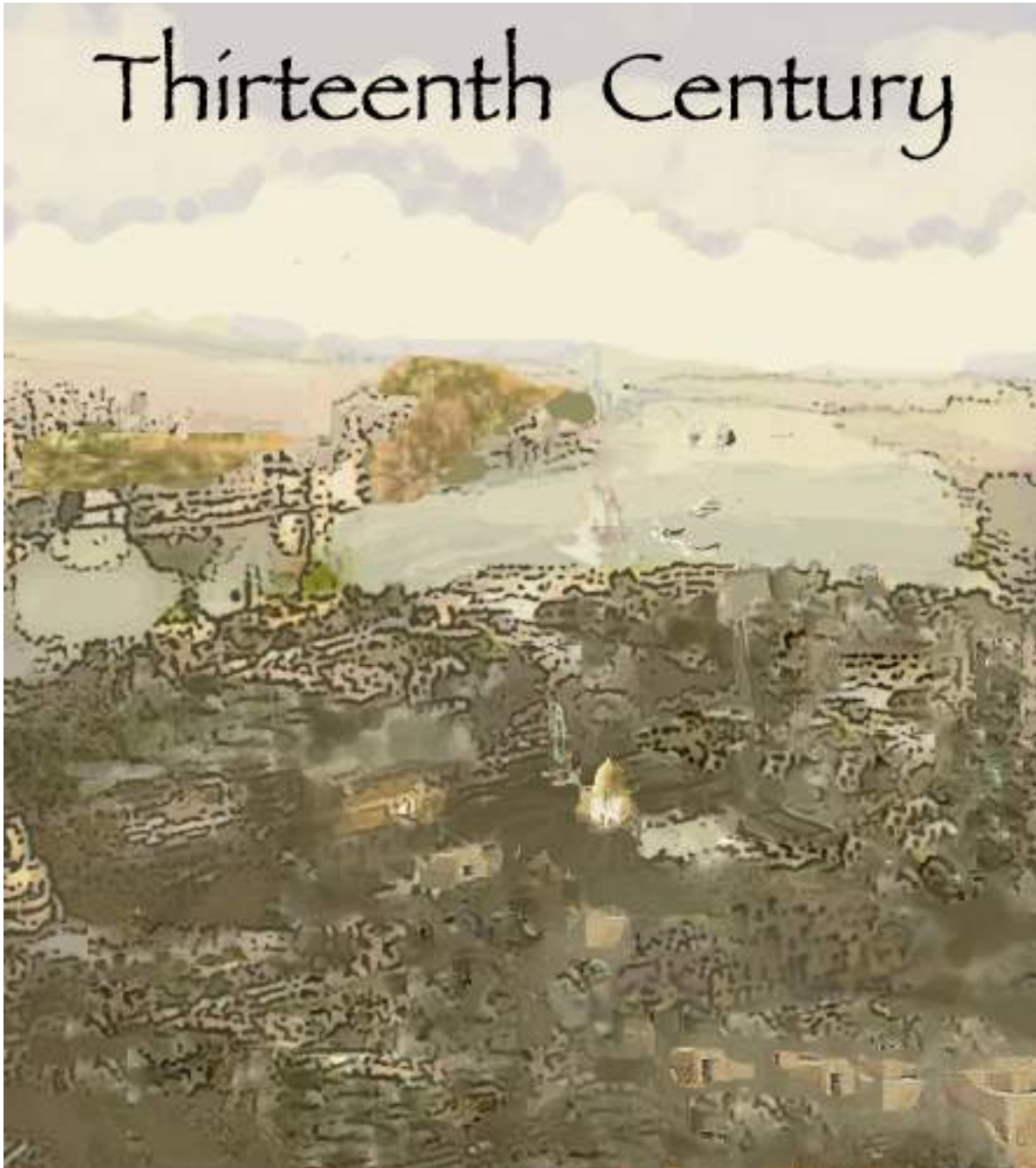




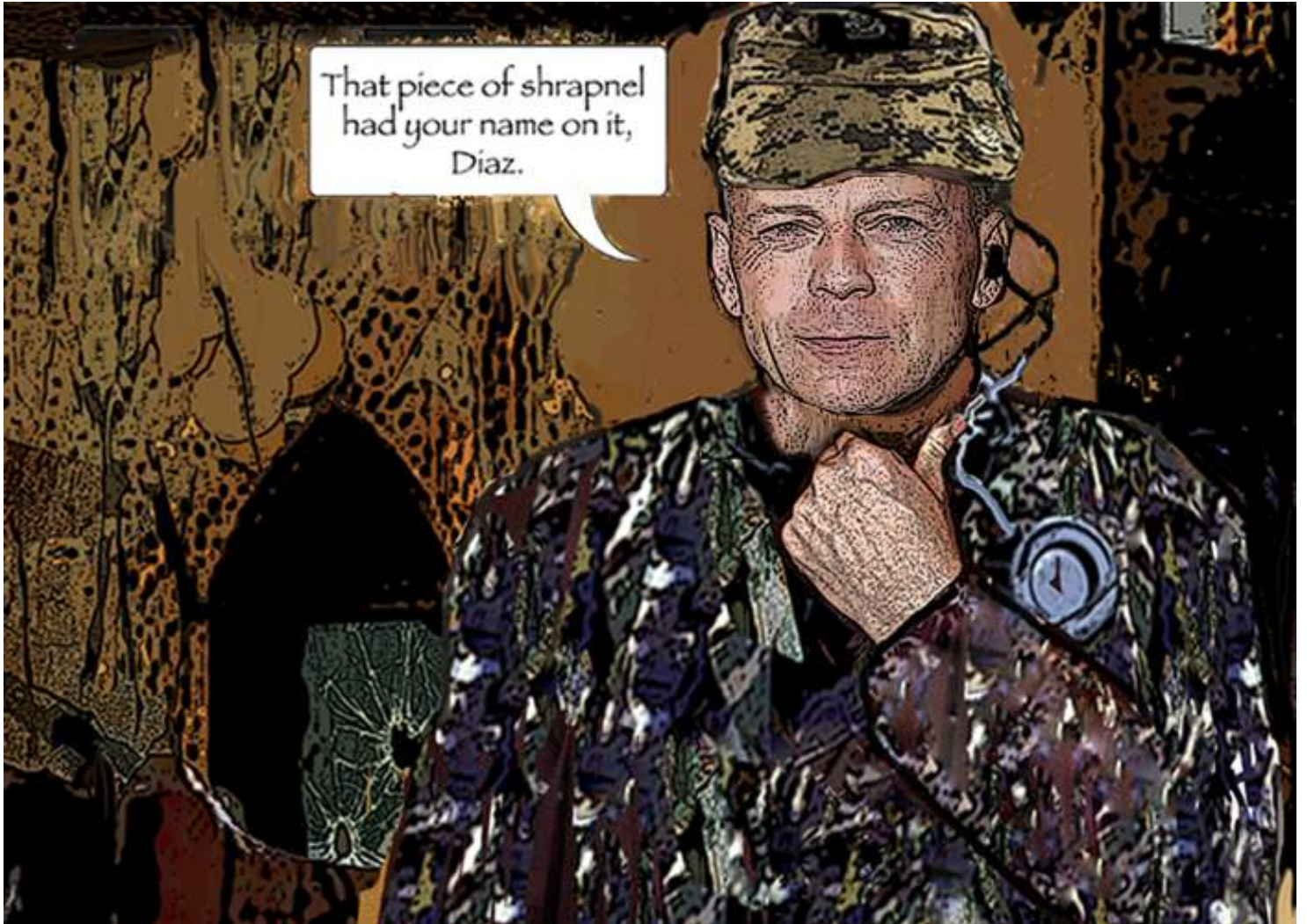


یٰ ذٰلِكَ
یٰ ذٰلِكَ
یٰ ذٰلِكَ
یٰ ذٰلِكَ

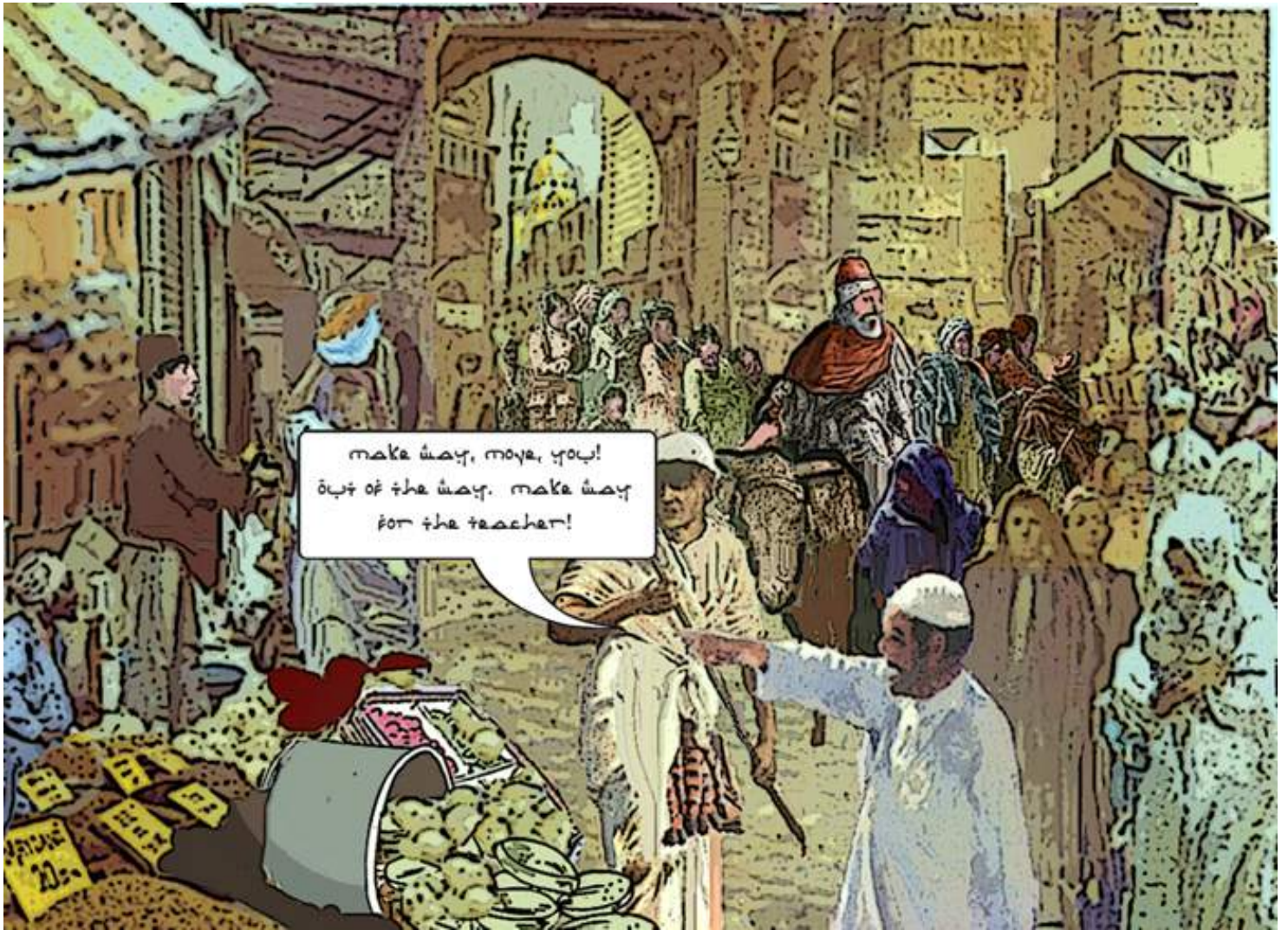
Thirteenth Century



That piece of shrapnel
had your name on it,
Diaz.









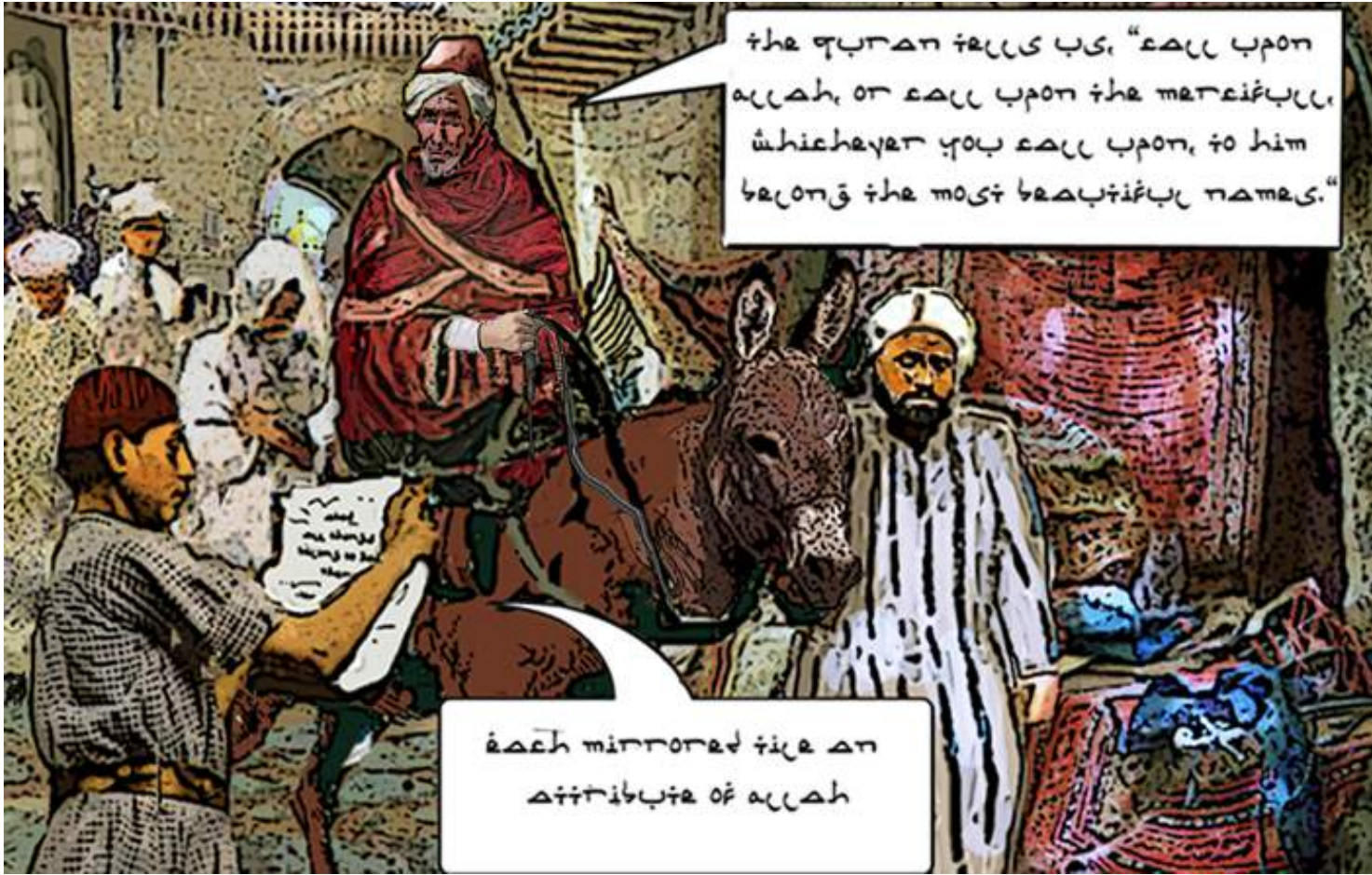
أنا سأتمكن من كسب المال ...
عندما أكون مدفوعاً على كل
شهر.

أه! ليس هو المعلم الذي
يملكه. إنه ذلك المالك من
الشارع. هو يسيطر على
المال.

he can't be too happy about
the money spent on the new
mosque.

probably not. his little
scams on the side are
going to suffer.

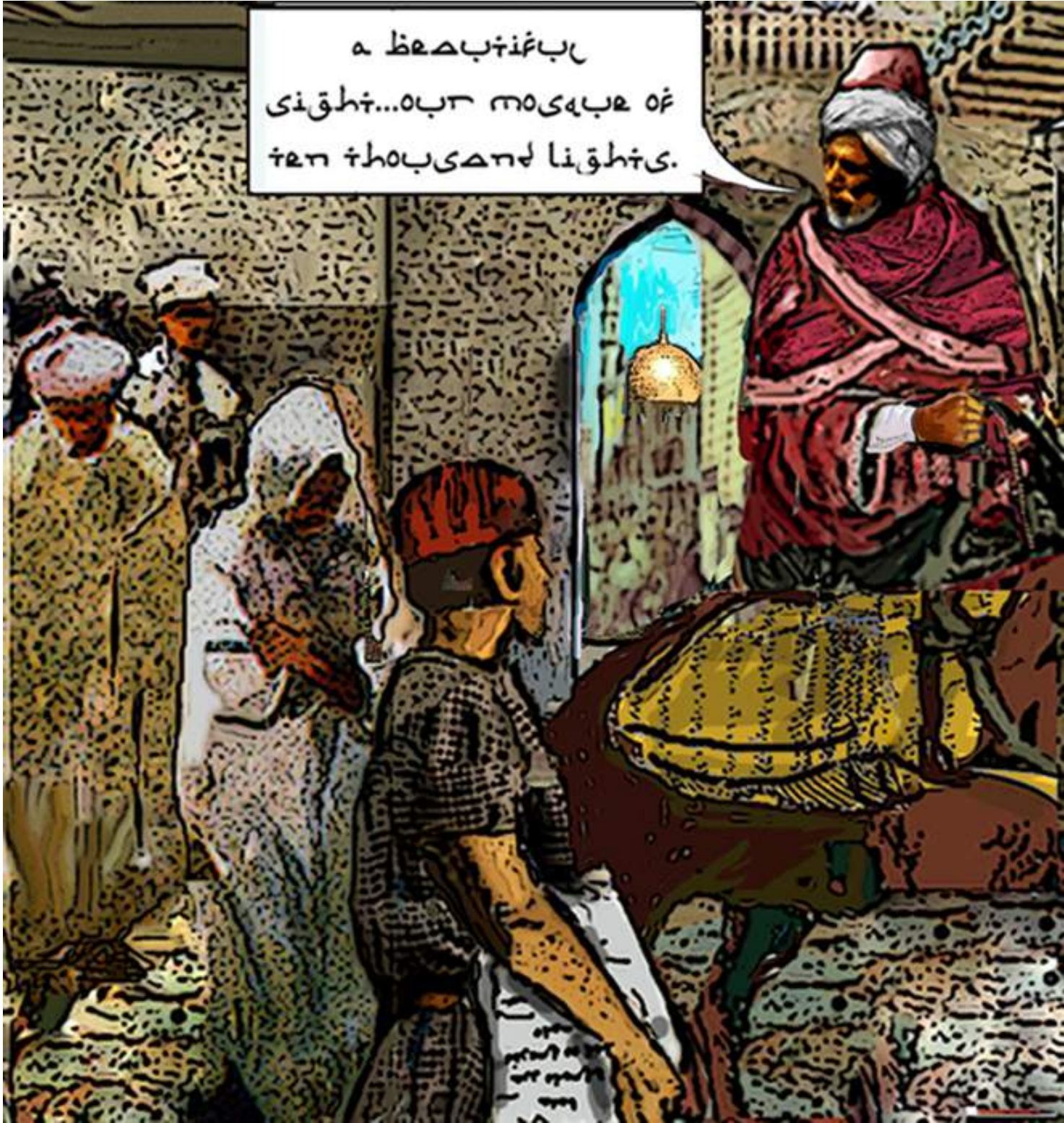


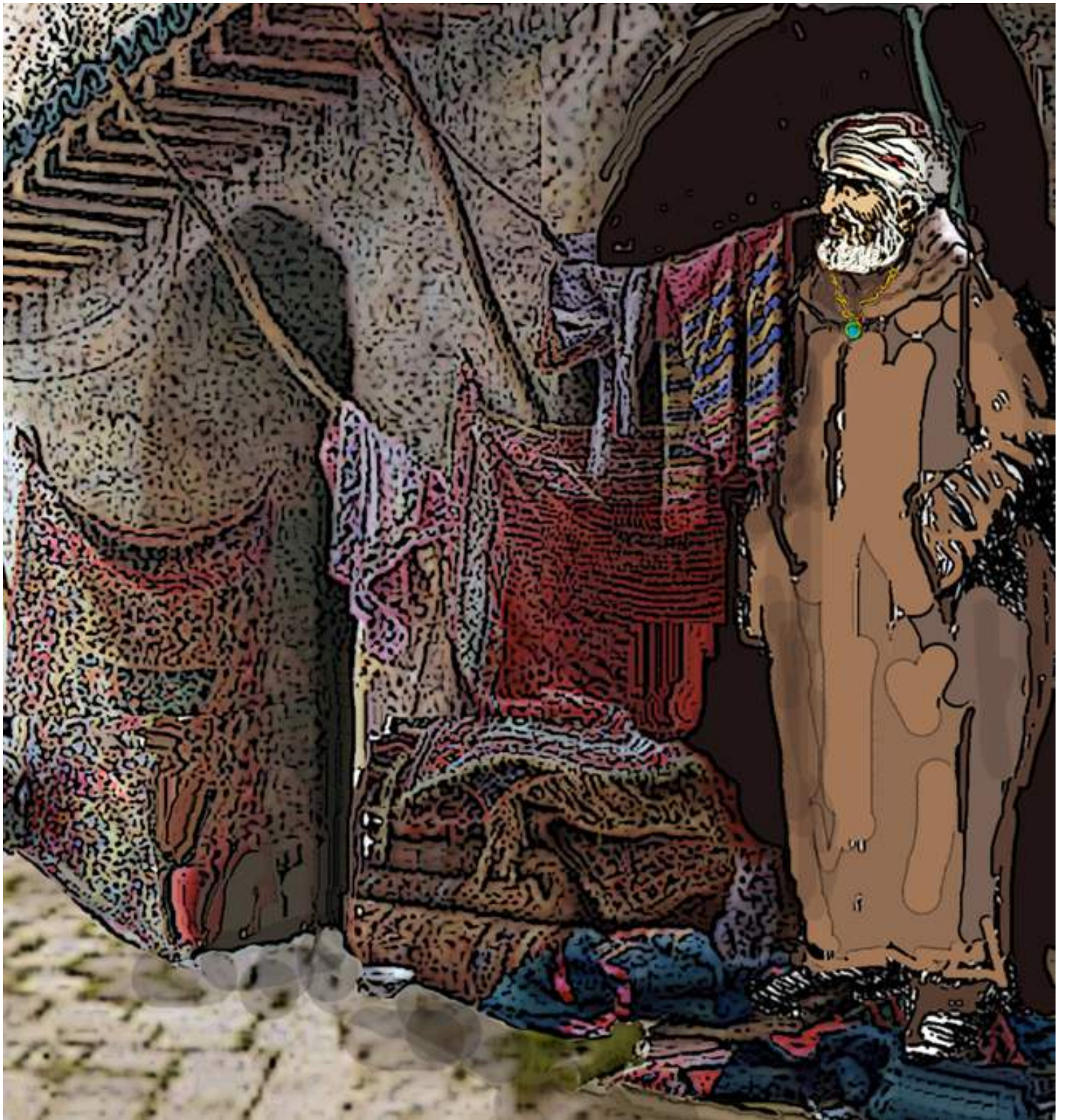


the quran tells us, "call upon
allah, or call upon the merciful,
whichever you call upon, to him
belong the most beautiful names."

each mirrored five an
attribute of allah

بغیرتعداد
ہے ہر...تو ہر
تین ہزار سے زیادہ

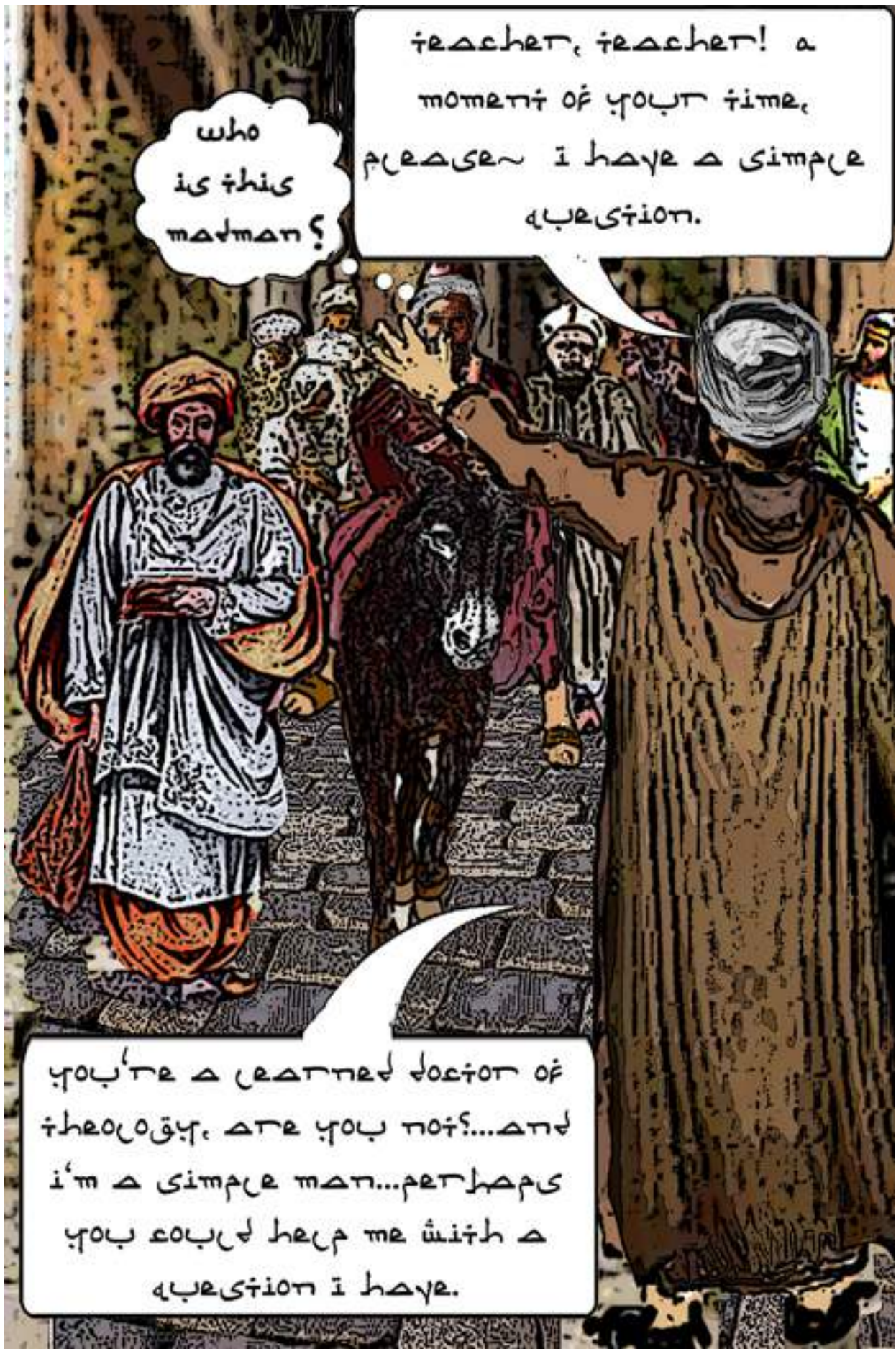




who
is this
madman?

teacher, teacher! a
moment of your time,
please. I have a simple
question.

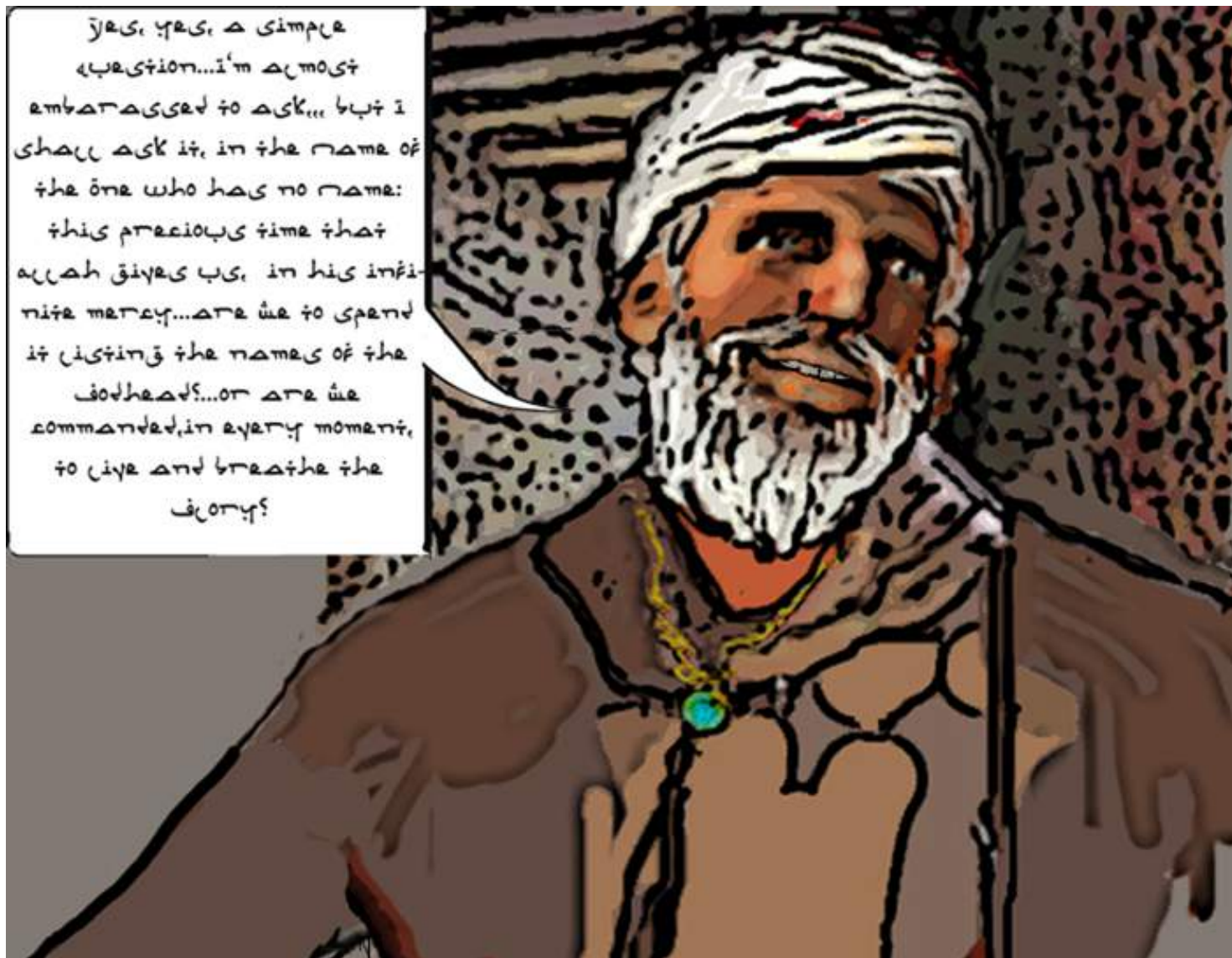
you're a learned doctor of
theology, are you not?...and
i'm a simple man...perhaps
you could help me with a
question i have.

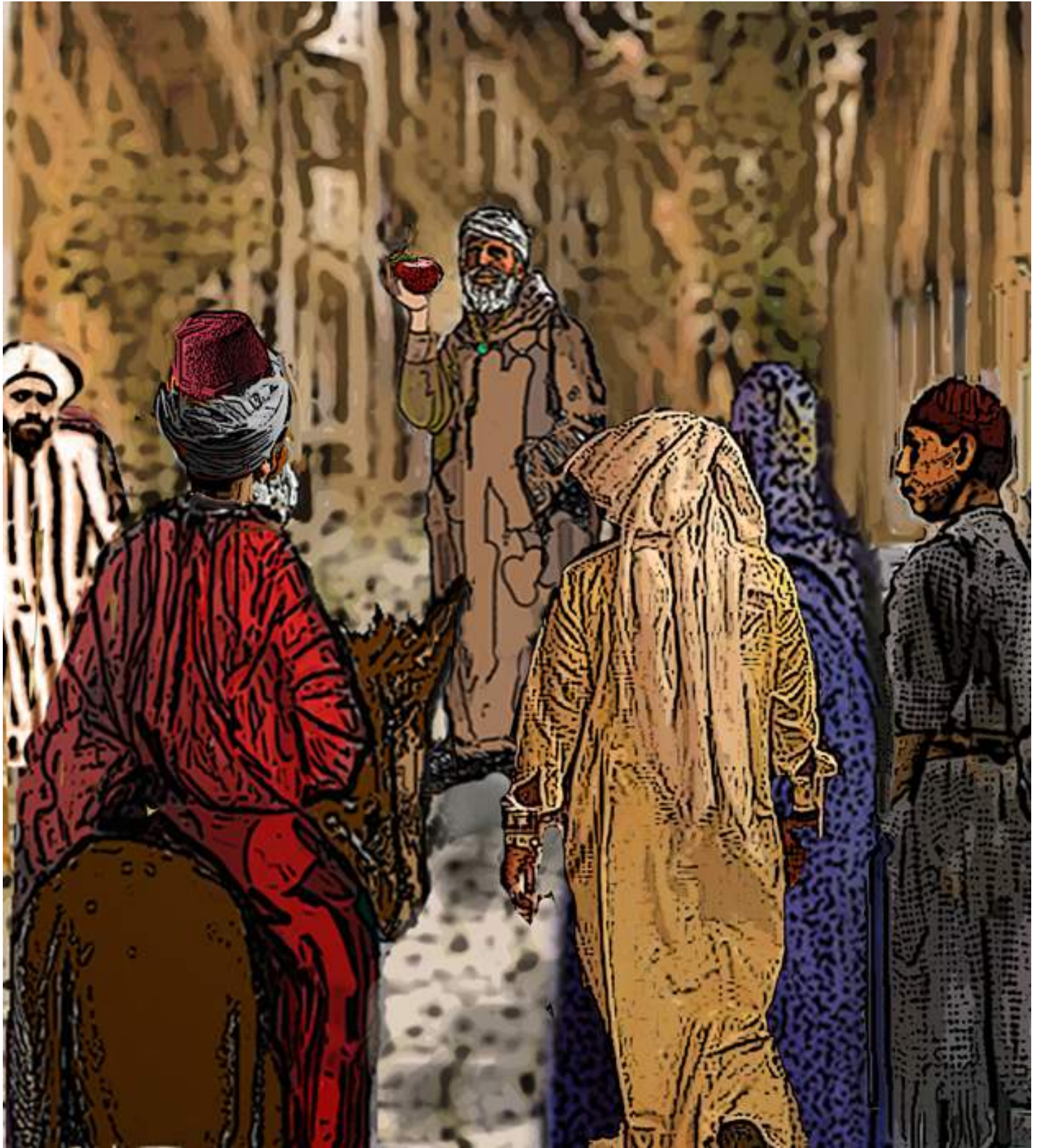


یٰٓاٰهٔء؄ گٲ؄ لٲٲٲ
هٲٲٲ ٲٲ.



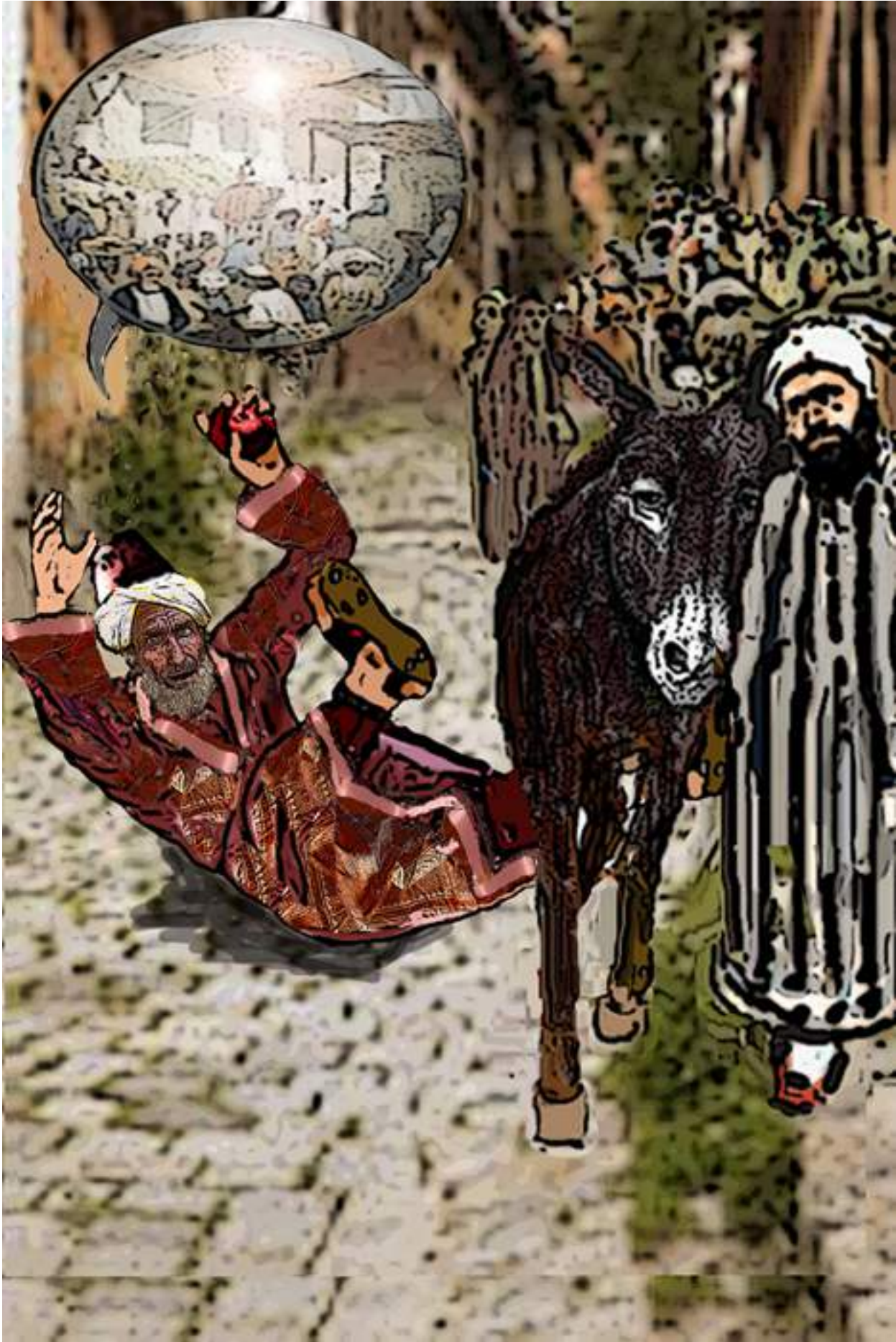
Yes, yes, a simple
question...I'm almost
embarrassed to ask... but I
shall ask it, in the name of
the one who has no name:
this precious time that
Allah gives us, in his infi-
nite mercy...are we to spend
it listing the names of the
Godhead?...or are we
commanded, in every moment,
to live and breathe the
Word?



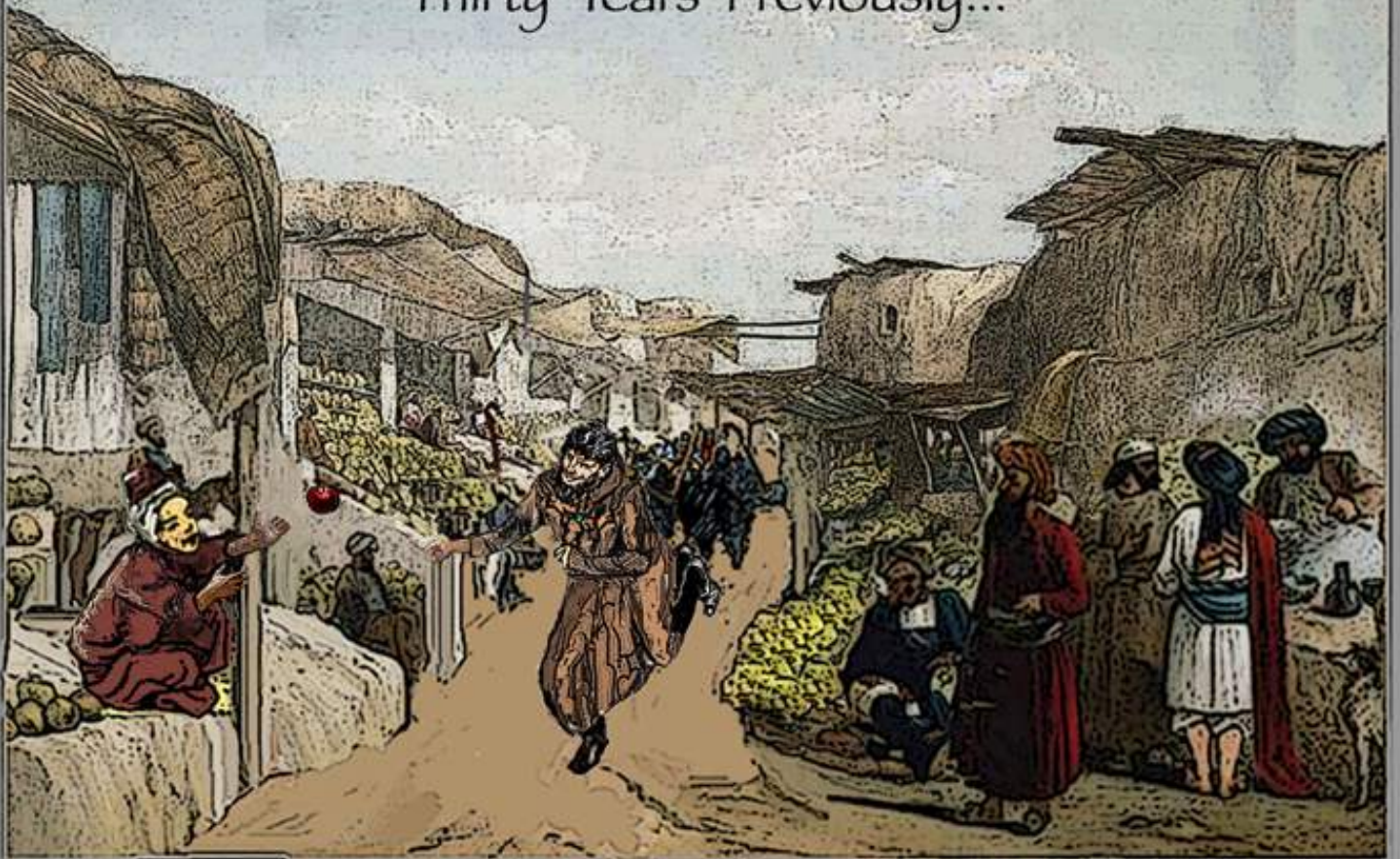








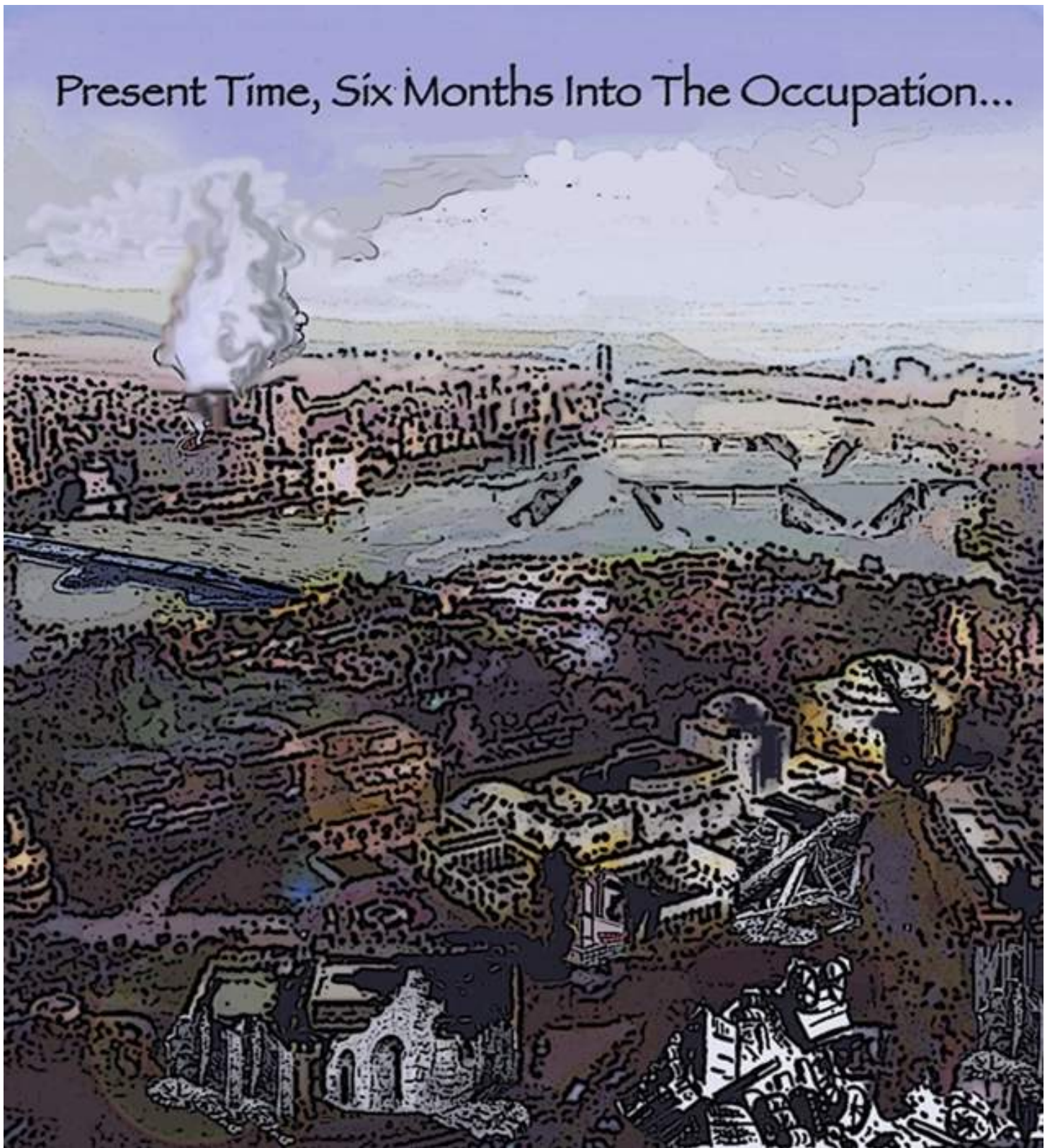
Thirty Years Previously...

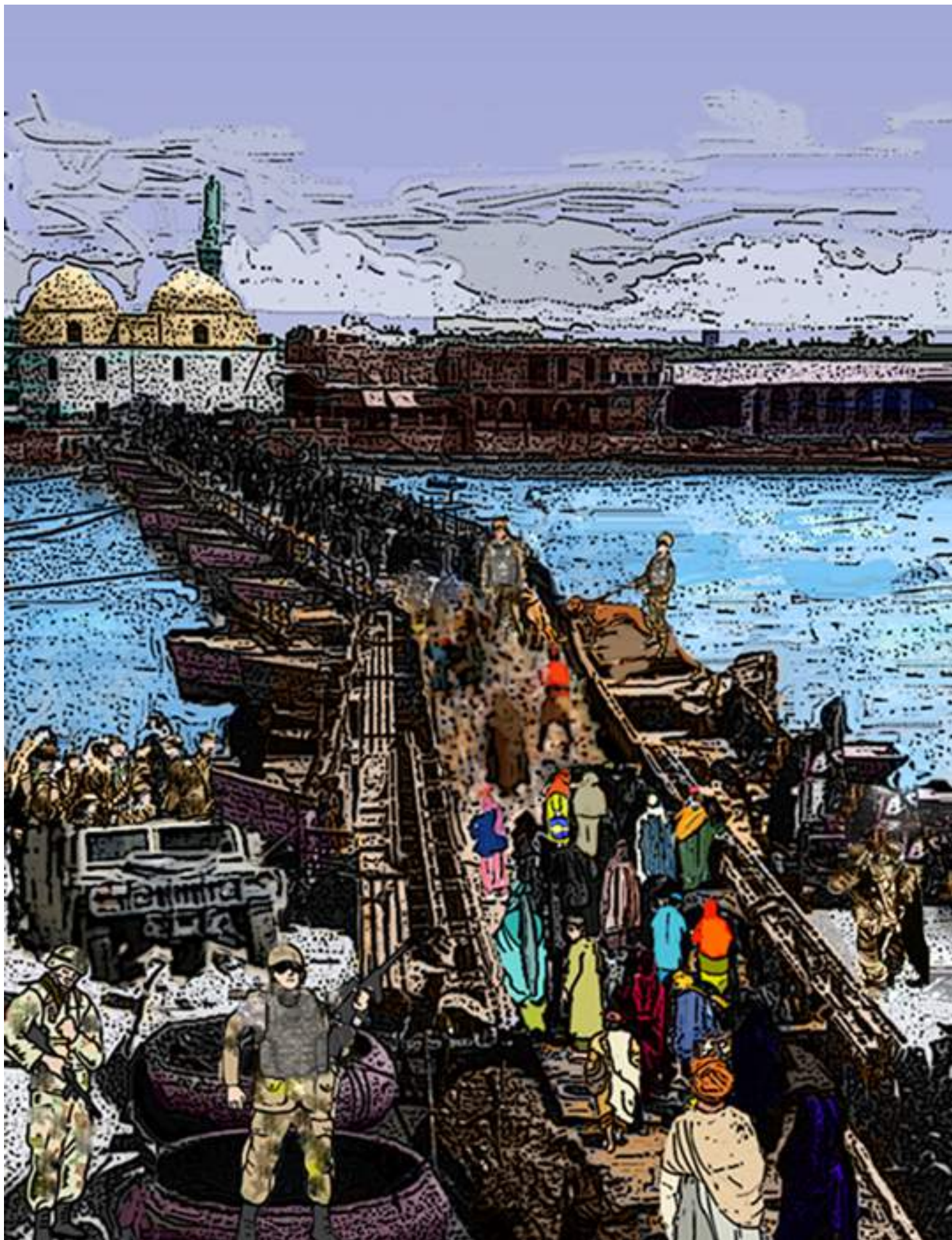






Present Time, Six Months Into The Occupation...



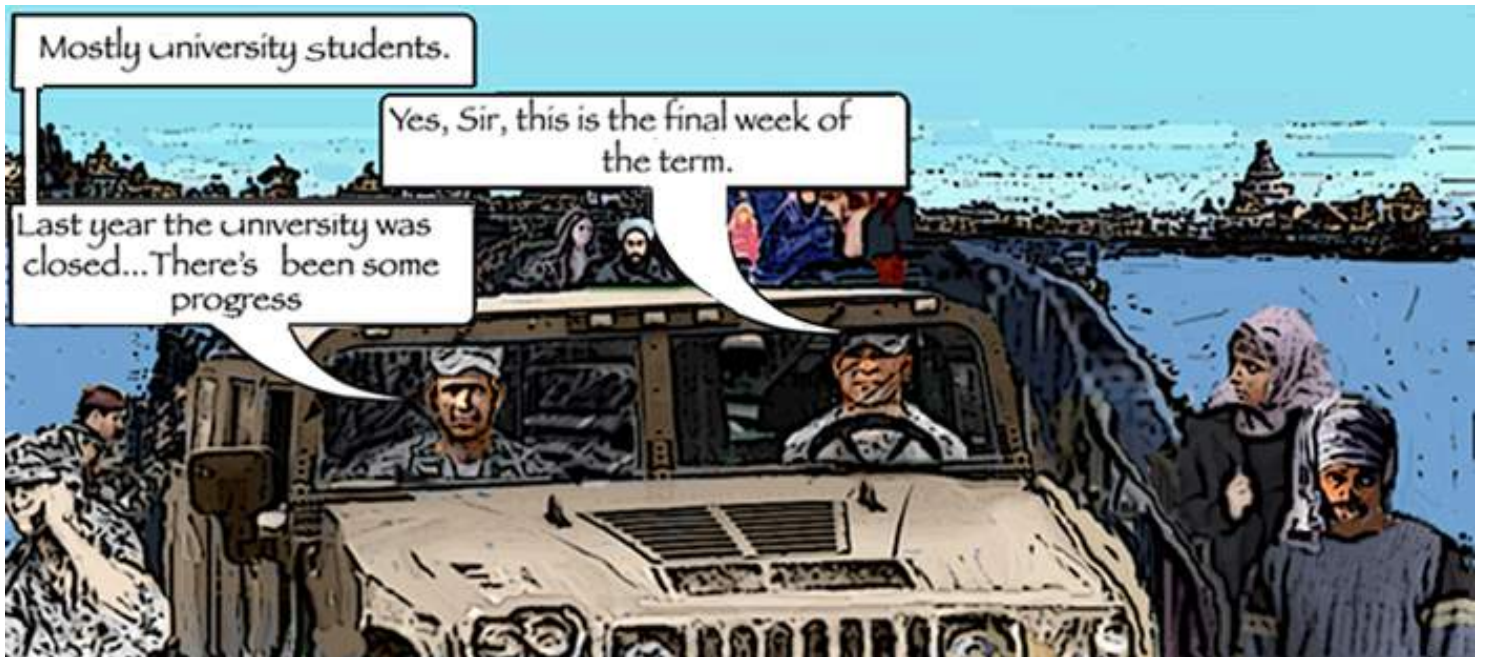




Mostly university students.


Yes, Sir, this is the final week of the term.

Last year the university was closed... There's been some progress



We still have problems in the northern neighborhoods...but, its been mostly quiet for the last three months.





I just got back from the eastern zones. Still a lot of bombings going on...
Where did you go to school, Corporal?

Sir, a small High School in What Cheer, Iowa...

What Cheer?




Yes Sir, What
Cheer, ...and
after that, a
few years at
Drake in Des
Moines. Then
I dropped out
and enlisted in
the corps...



Why did you drop out?

Well...I didn't actually drop out, Sir. It was highly recommended.



Just as well. I wanted a
little adventure.

And did you find
your adventure,
Corporal?

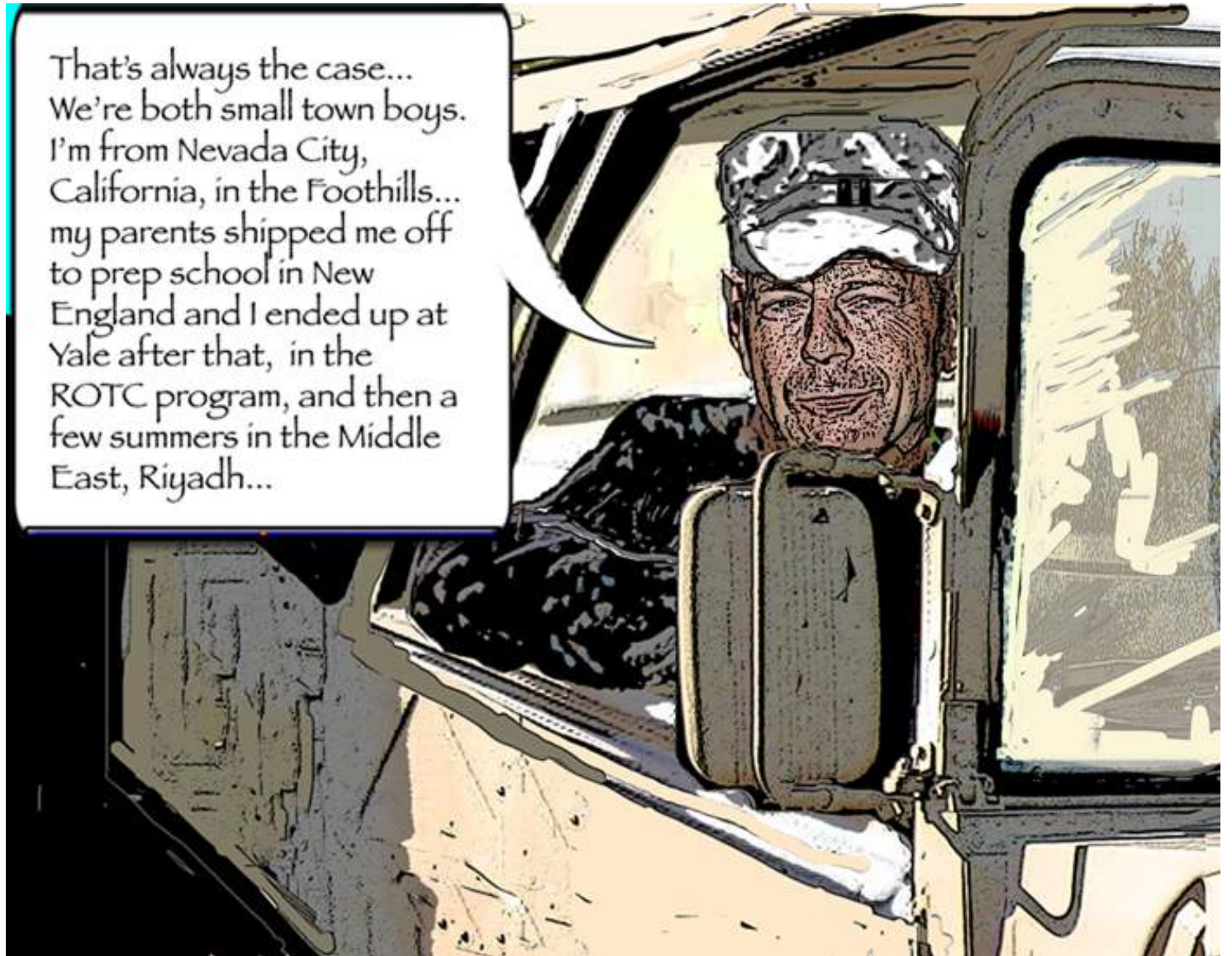


Friend, I see victory on that request...well done.



More than I
bargained for,
Sir.

That's always the case...
We're both small town boys.
I'm from Nevada City,
California, in the Foothills...
my parents shipped me off
to prep school in New
England and I ended up at
Yale after that, in the
ROTC program, and then a
few summers in the Middle
East, Riyadh...



You were originally Army then, Sir?

Yes... now don't let that get around, Corporal.

No, Sir, I won't.... You spent time out here, between the wars?



And before that,
yes...

That explains
your Arabic,
Sir...you rattle it
it off like a
regular Haji.





Yes, that explains it...

Sheikh, I'd like you to meet Michael Briggs, one of our more promising students...comes from a long line of military people,



...Michael, Sheikh Ali ibn
Ahmed Al-Fulani.



Good afternoon, Michael. My sons will be attending your school in a few weeks. Perhaps you will be able to help them with their English.



His pronunciation is very good. I will inform Khalid and Naasir of their good fortune.



do your sons
play soccer?

indeed, they do. as a matter of
fact, Khalid is quite good at it.
why do you ask?



the soccer
program here
is terrible...



Mr. Briggs says he loves to play soccer. My older son, Khalid, is an outstanding player...the boy is poetry in motion.



I'll make a deal with you, Michael.
Help my sons learn English and I'll
see to it you get some good coaching.
Their personal trainer played in
several World Cups.






mr. briggs,
your observation is
safe with me.

fantastic, sir...
consider it done.



Thank you, Briggs .
You can go back to your
studies now.



Very good,
Sir...

Good to meet you,
Colonel Anderson.



Mr. Briggs, could you come by my office tonight after dinner...around 1900...I have some matters to discuss with you.


Yes, Sir...1900 hours.

Very good then.

Henry, you didn't mention
my name to anyone?

Of course not, Colonel.
Frankly, I don't know how he
knew.





What was your
impression,
Sheikh?

A bright young man...he'll
probably end up in your
intelligence services.

He's shown an exceptional aptitude for languages.

We can usually count on three or four graduates every year. That's Henry's specialty.



Where is his family?

California. There's been a recent divorce.

That'll make your job easier... have him to stay for the summer term. We're sending some intelligence officers here for a seminar. See how he interacts with them.



I can have your sons assigned to Briggs as roommates, if you like?

Thank you...It hasn't worked out for them at the Madrassa, especially for the younger one, he's the wild one. My older son is more serious...I want them to take over my export business one day. They need this exposure.

We'll make all the necessary arrangements to help them adjust. You've done the State Department some big favors favors in the past.



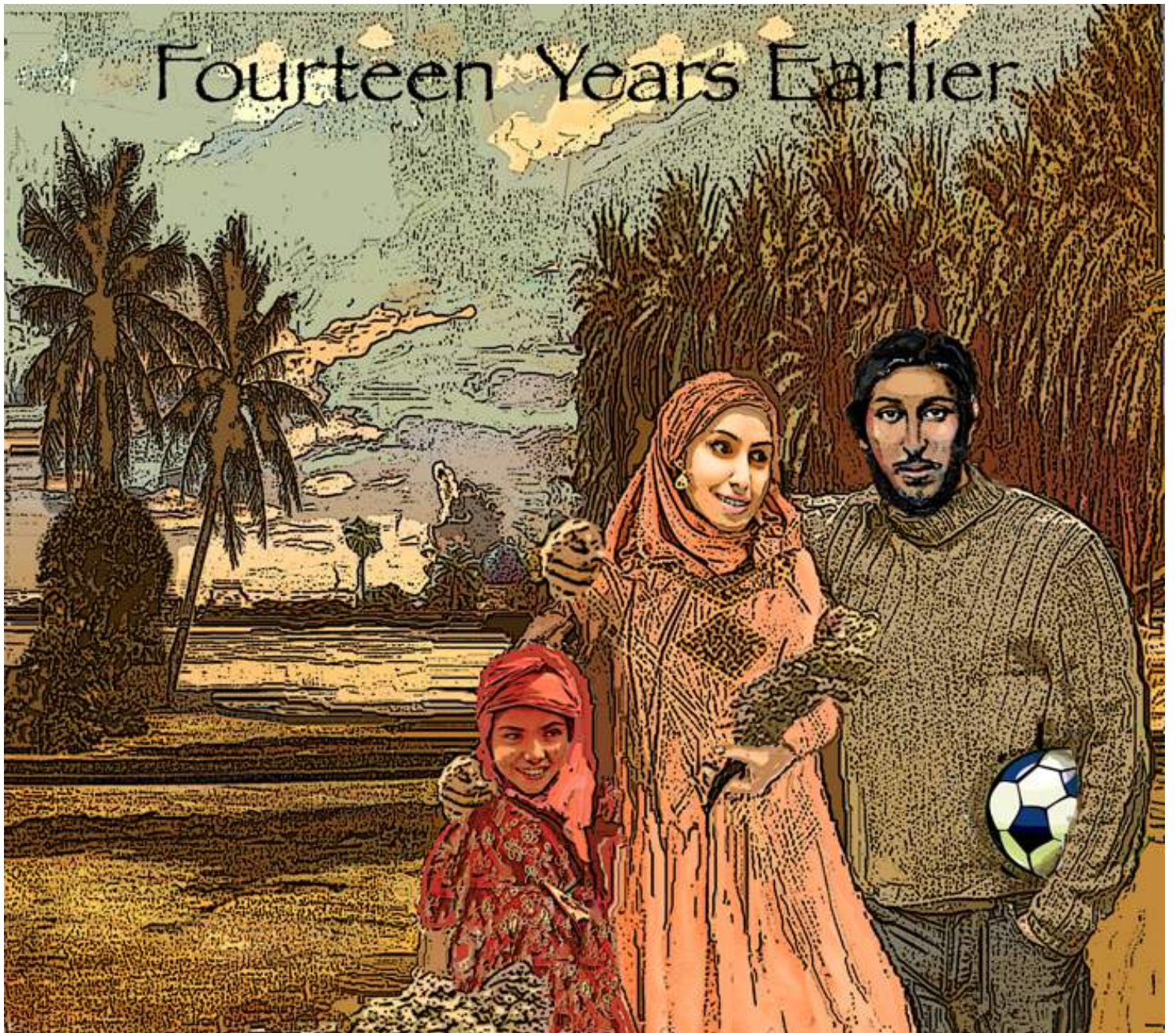


Present Day...





Fourteen Years Earlier









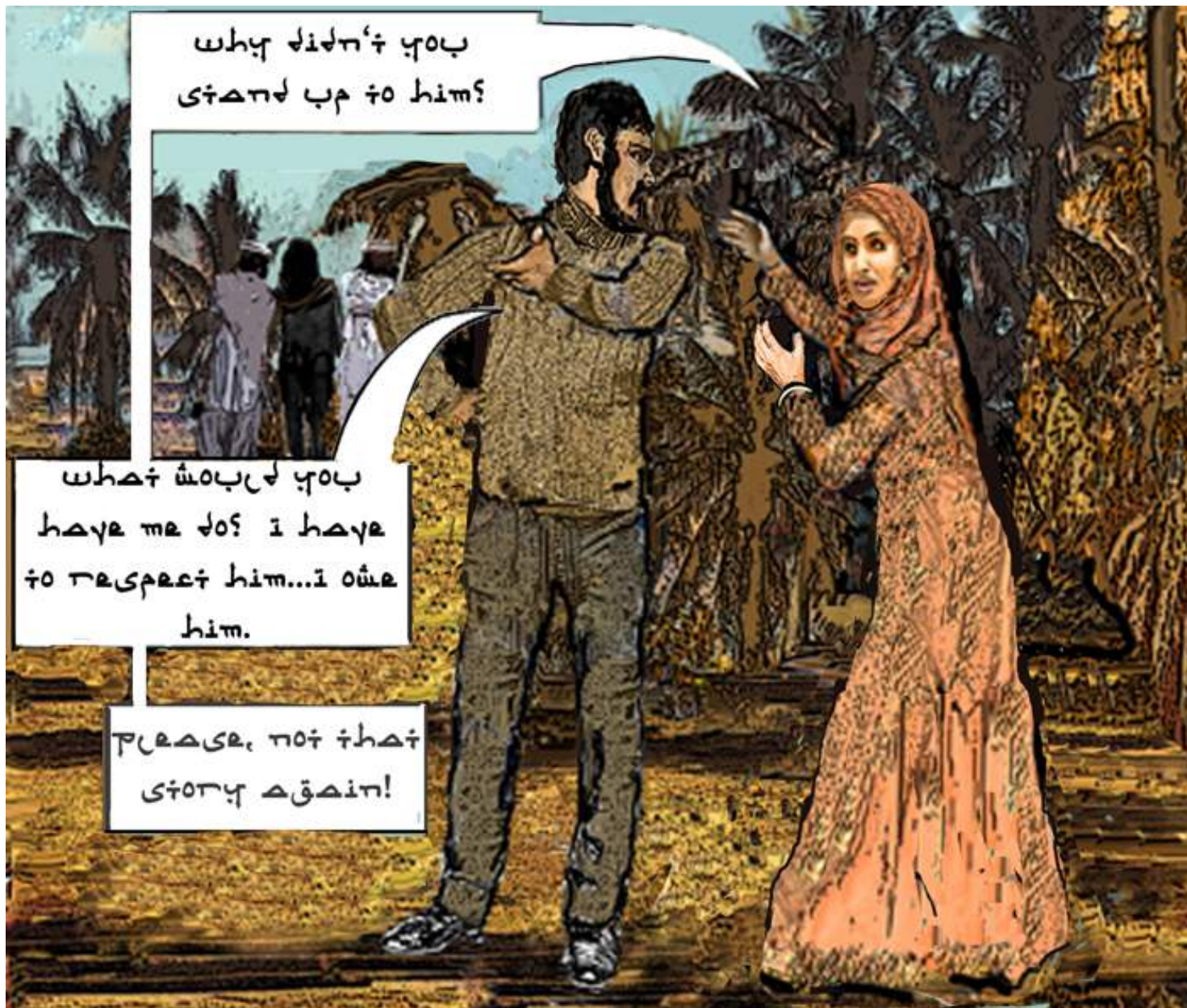




why didn't you
stand up to him?

what would you
have me do? i have
to respect him...i owe
him.

PLEASE, not that
story again!



who do you think kidnapped me
after my father was killed?
Nasir and I came back from
the
american school
practically infidelis.

i know, i know!
and mullah
hamed put you on
the path again.
he could have
condemned you but
he didn't. i've
heard it all
before, khaid
does it never
occur to you he's
بسينق
you like a مشن?





سكوت!

أنا لم أكن!

كانت لا تنسى
بني من قبله
لا. لم يكن
يخونني
بني.

I sometimes think you're
afraid of that backward man.

هولدي، هولدي
فولدي فونقوب.
ايم نوت فونقوب
بم فونقوب
انف امام،
فونقوب نوت
فونقوب.



your brother mocks him every
chance he gets. even your fellow
Muslims couldn't abide him...they
chased him out, remember?

إنه يهين! you
don't know all
the details but
reporting that
event...don't even
go there...for
your own safety,
remain igno-
rant. I gave up
family ties when
I left with
Hamud...
his teachings
are the pure
Islam---



hah!

the pure islam according to
hameed. there are more rivers
to the tradition than the
stagnant water he allows in.



I won't give up the teaching
again... I'm not afraid of
him. Over his objections I
married you, remember?



Khalid, you have to look around
now to make sure it's safe to kiss
your own wife. We're moving back-
wards in time here...the country
was free before...this
wahhabism is eating each part.
Now the other imams are
starting to sound like him.



How easy do we convert the
influence from the West?

He's changed you,
Khalid...he never approved of
me, not your brother, and I
think I know why...we see
through his charade!



my brother, now there's a topic
for discussion... i'll grant him
one thing though, he knows how to
drink and gamble with rich
westerners.



your brother loves life,
Khalid.

He loves
everything
we're doing,
especially
if it means
a skin.



راي هيدا!



the imam is strict,
but your place is
not to question my
authority, certainly
not in public.

and if the imam
told you to beat
me?







Present day





your university
id will expire in
2 weeks, ma'am.

i'll have it
renewed,
thank you.



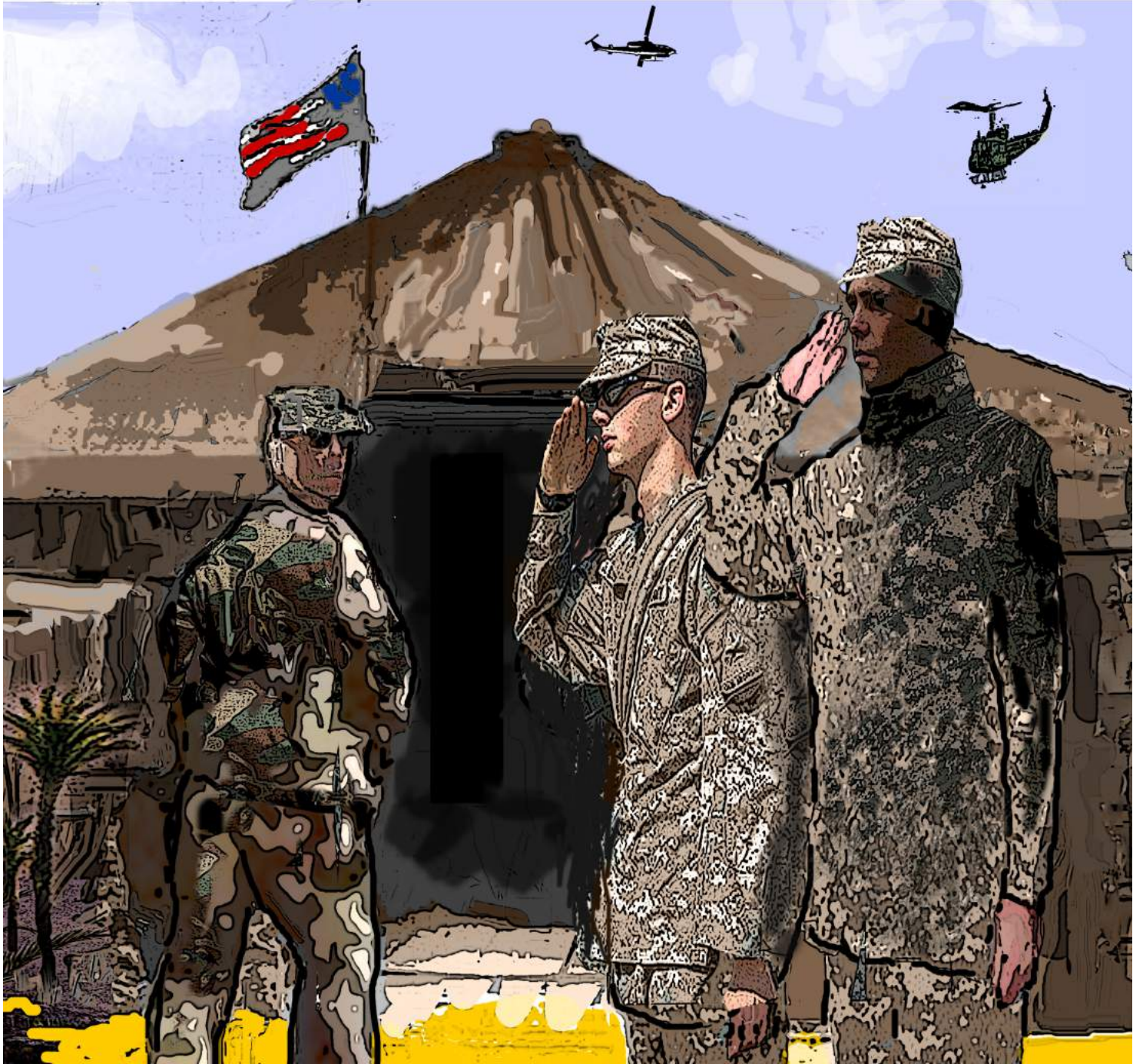


Get some shots of the girl with the briefcase for Captain Briggs and the recon group.





Check, Lieutenant.



Captain, you'll want
to see this, sir.



Who is she?



A possible connection to Hameed,
maybe to Viper ...that's their
thinking on the bridge. He's
rumored to have a daughter.



Bring up the resolution...still no name on him?

No family name. Our informant thinks his first name is Khalid.





How reliable is your source?

Par for the course...that narrows the search down to roughly fifty-million Khalids in the Middle East...

On a scale of one to ten, I'd give him a two.



She looks a lot like my own daughter.



How old is your daughter, Sir?


She'd be twenty four now... so who do we have on the bridge?

Your man Harrison is there.

Good. Have him follow her...and tell him I don't want a repeat of Beirut. He'll understand.

You still want a tail on Gamma ?



A close-up, stylized illustration of a man's face, rendered in a comic book or graphic novel style. The man has short, dark hair and is looking slightly to the right. A white speech bubble with a black outline is positioned on the left side of his face, containing the text "What's the word from your informant?". The background is a solid light brown color. The man's face is detailed with various shades of brown, tan, and black, giving it a textured, almost painterly appearance. The speech bubble is a simple white rectangle with a tail pointing towards the man's mouth.

What's the word from
your informant?

Word on the street has
it their feud is
heating up.





Keep an eye on him.
Somebody will lead us up the
chain of command eventually ...I
want the puppetmaster
here...someone above Hameed.

One of our
"Friends" on the ruling
council, no doubt.

Diaz is supposed to
arrive today. Assign him
to the squad surveilling
Gamma.

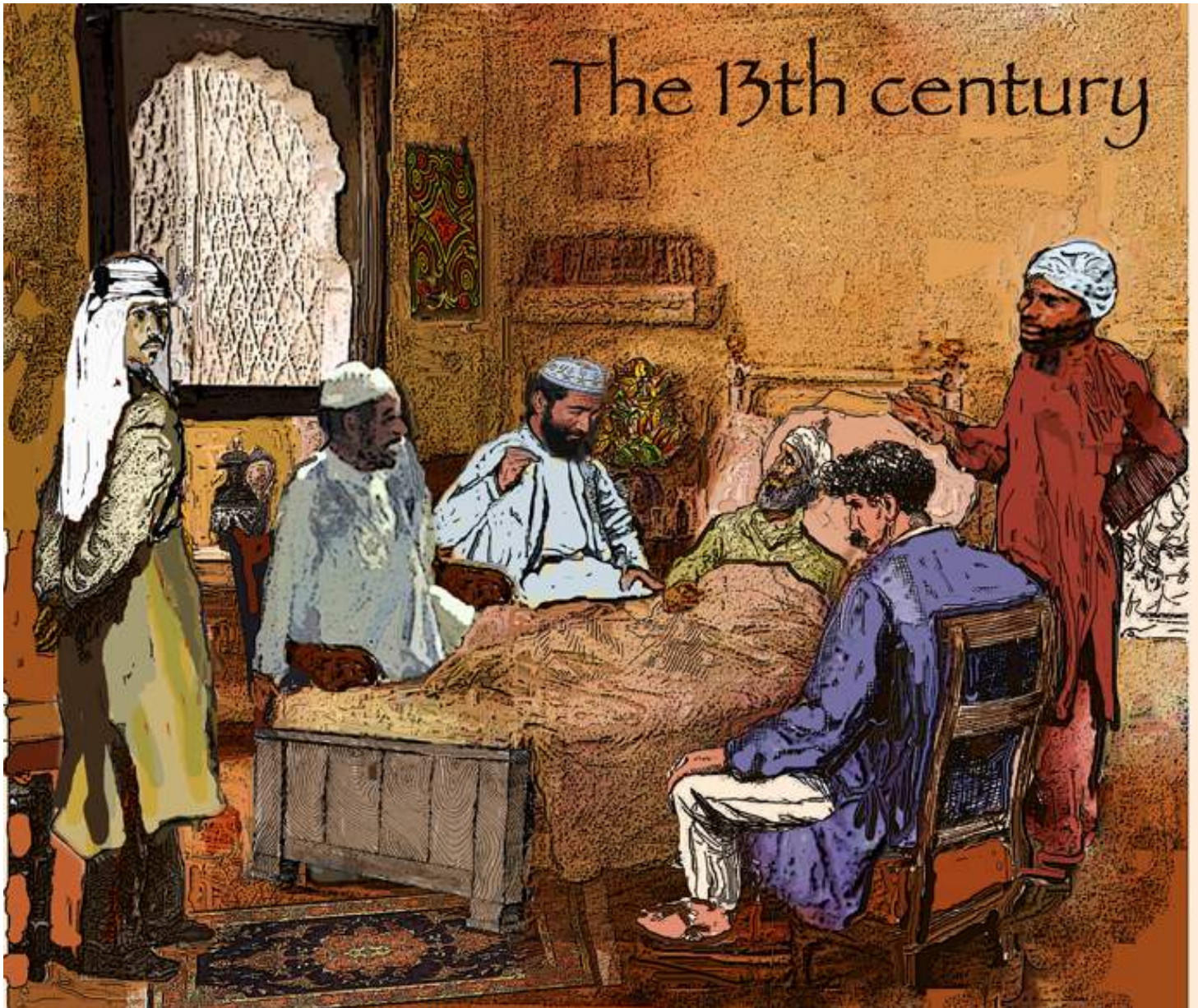
I'll see to it, Sir.








The 13th century





هائے قون شون
i been here?

لابغ مشه
آنی، ی بده

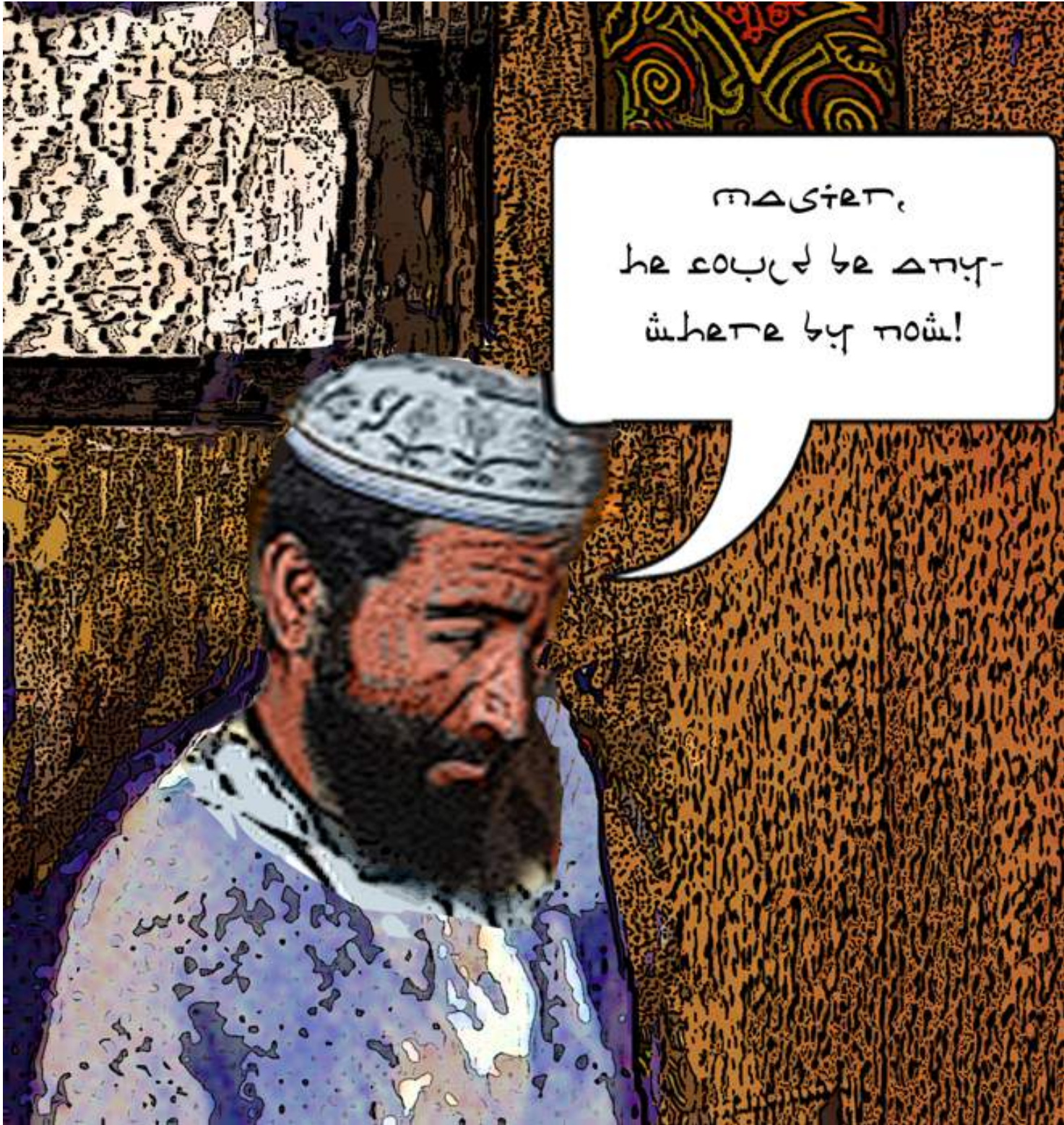


where is he? where is
the monk?

Master, everything has
been taken care of. I or-
dered the students to run
the beqqaat out of town.

no, no, no! quick, bring him
back. i must talk to him. i've had
the most amazing dreams.

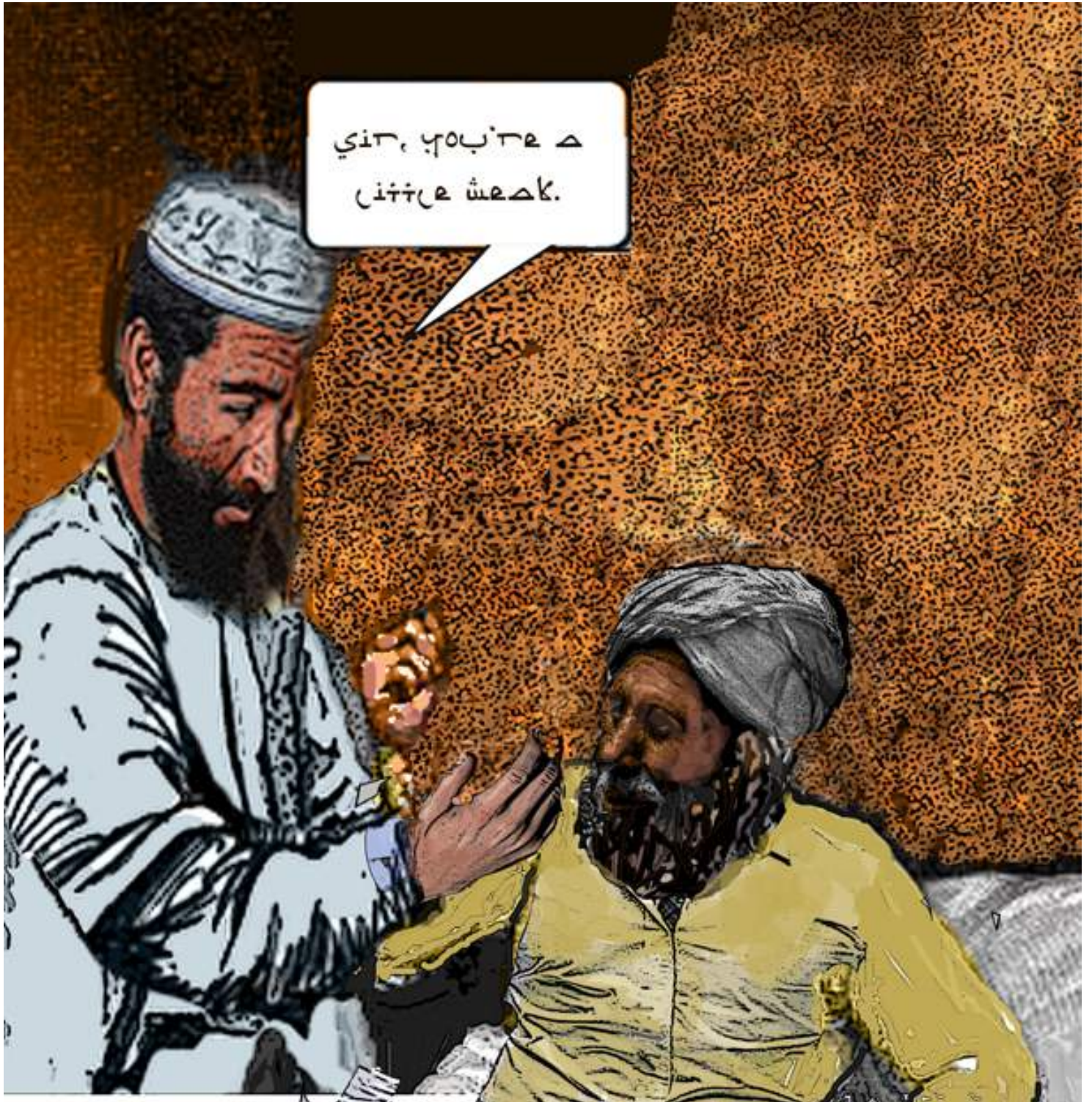




ΜΑΣΤΕΡ,
he could be any-
where by now!



يا، يوتي ا
little weak.

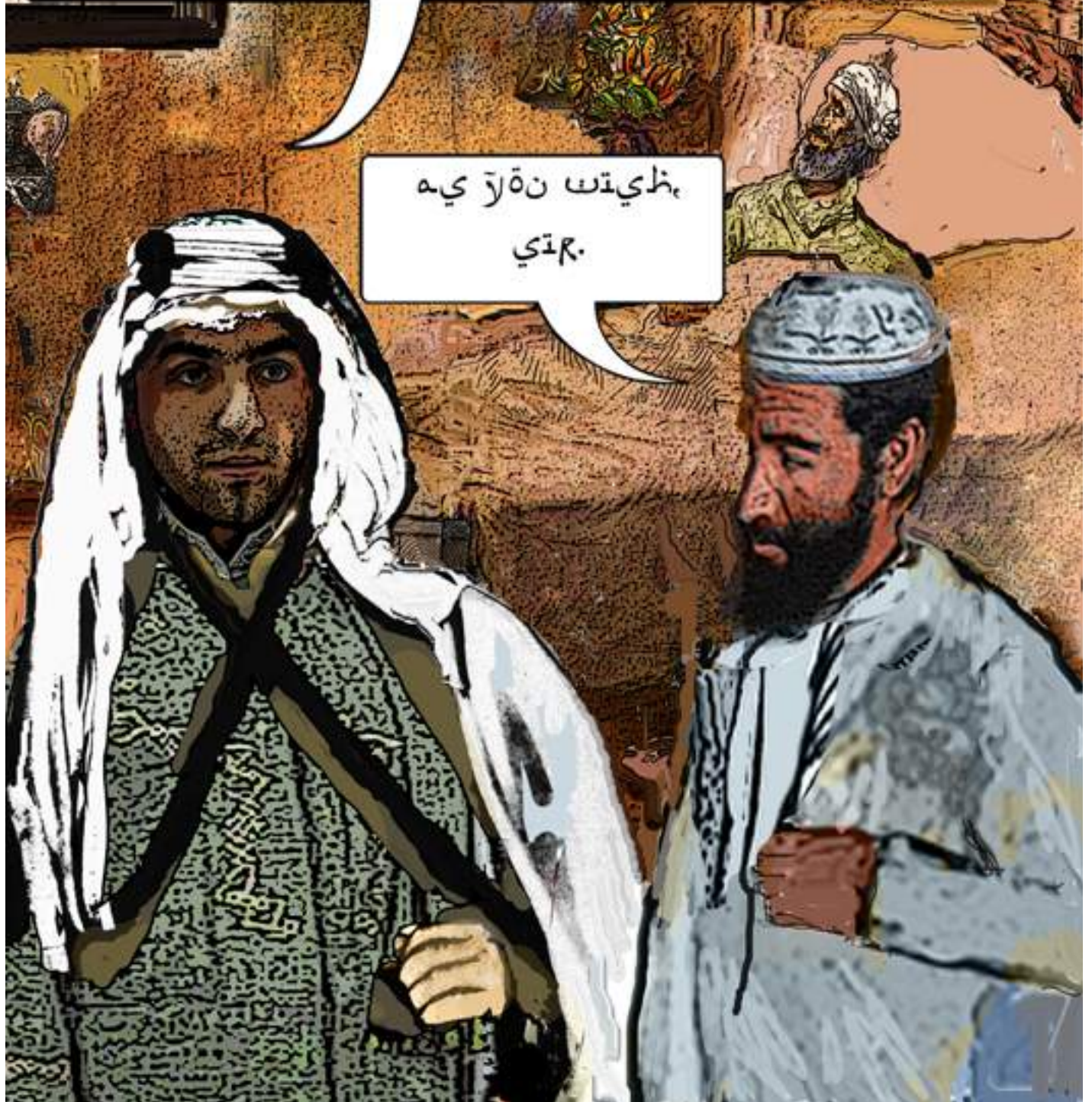


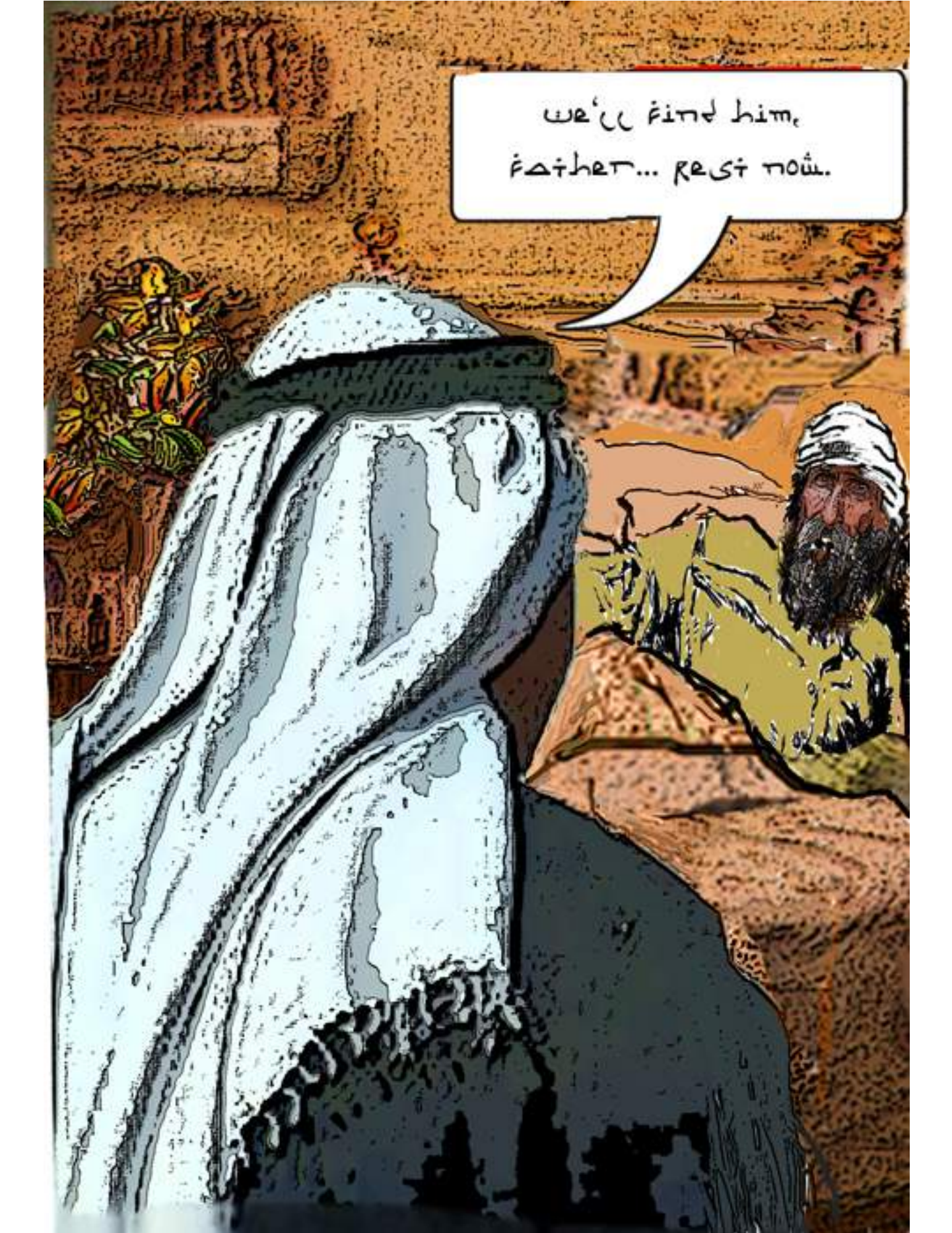
إني قد كتبت في قلبه. أنا يجب أن
أكتب كلماتي في هذا القلب...



have my lieutenant help me. the monk
will go with the caravan
for me.

هذه نة راي
سي.





we'll find him,
father... rest now.

Present
Day







הי ללו בנעל, סורי יו ערופ יח בן-
אנובנעל, י קנש ירוב'רע לבבי.

נור א פרובלעם. י'מ
אשביי לבבי תרע
ערב'י אנד ירוב'רע
אשביי שערע. לר'י הו
באק יו מיי אפיסע.



how is your
music coming?

i've been able to get much
of the poetry to music.

i'm not surprised.
your mother had the
gift of music.



the music is flowing out of me,
and...it's as if the poetry
and the music have fused
and I am being propelled
towards some
resolution...and...well, I've come to
an important decision, but
I need your help...and...well.



anything for you, Rasheed.
do you need money?



no, no, it's not about money.
i have a huge favor to ask.

just name it.



Can you get this letter to
father though Hameed?



i'm not sure. the americans are
after him...not just the americans
either...i haven't had any contact with
your father for four years now. no
one even suspects we're related, or i
would have been handed in for
questioning...it like to keep it that
way...i'm the only one in this crazy
family making money. if people knew we
were brothers i don't think the
business would survive.



جی، حامد شوبل کو،
but it's dangerous around
him, Rashee. The factions
are at each other's throats.
He plays one against the
other. You can't get mixed up
in this mess.

حامد شوبل کو
his whereabouts.



if i succeed in contacting him,
you must promise me
one thing.

and that is?



γού'ε τριβήττ το πατρίς.



I can't promise you that,
uncle. I studied there for
four years, and I'm really
grateful to you for that,
really grateful. Do you
know what I found out
there? I discovered I'm not a
Western woman, I am a
Muslim woman---a modern,
Muslim woman. I belong
here, change is happening
here. I want to be a part of
that change.



...but in Paris you help...

قالت لي، انا اتي من سوريا. هل يمكنك
تغيير ذلك. هل يمكنك مساعدتي
او لا؟



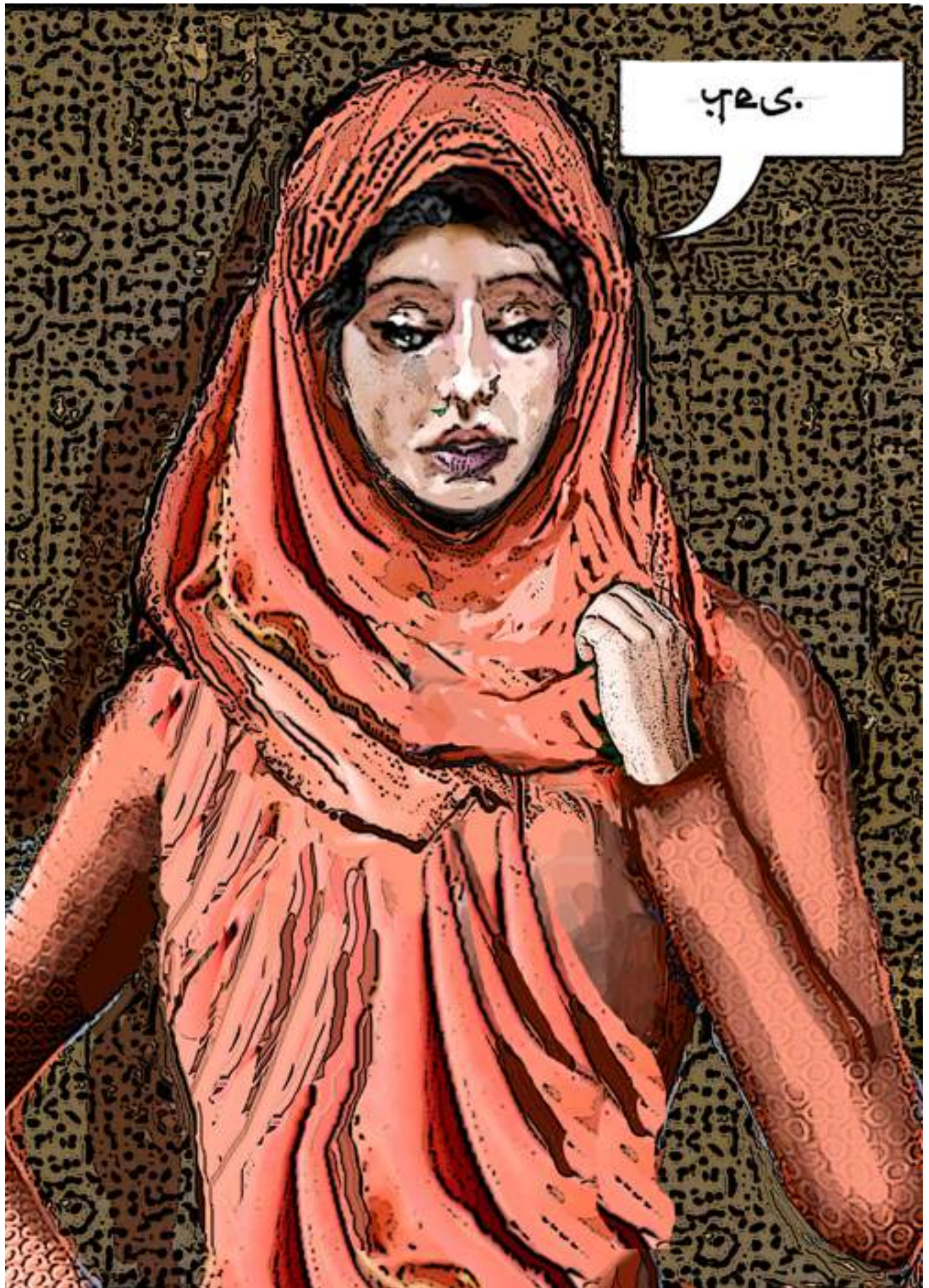
i'll have to spread some
money around, see if
it's even possible.

thank you, please...
you won't regret it.
يبعد بق ننته امره.



I'm sorry I wish I regret it. You are your mother's
daughter. I know you. If I don't do this, you'll start
making inquiries yourself. You'll snoop around, poke
your nose into things you shouldn't and that could put
you in real danger, Kazheeda. Do you realize that?





Mrs.

you've backed me into a corner
here...it has to be done discreetly
...are you going on to university
now?



Yes, I have
some work
to do in
preparation
for a
review on
Monday.



OK, i'll have one of my employees
drive you. wait until i contact
you, and please, do exactly what
i tell you, exactly!
no deviation, rashee, you hear?
no deviation. this is not a game





تو... بچه‌ها رو نشو
می‌پوشی.









Hey Briggs, too good to play with us?

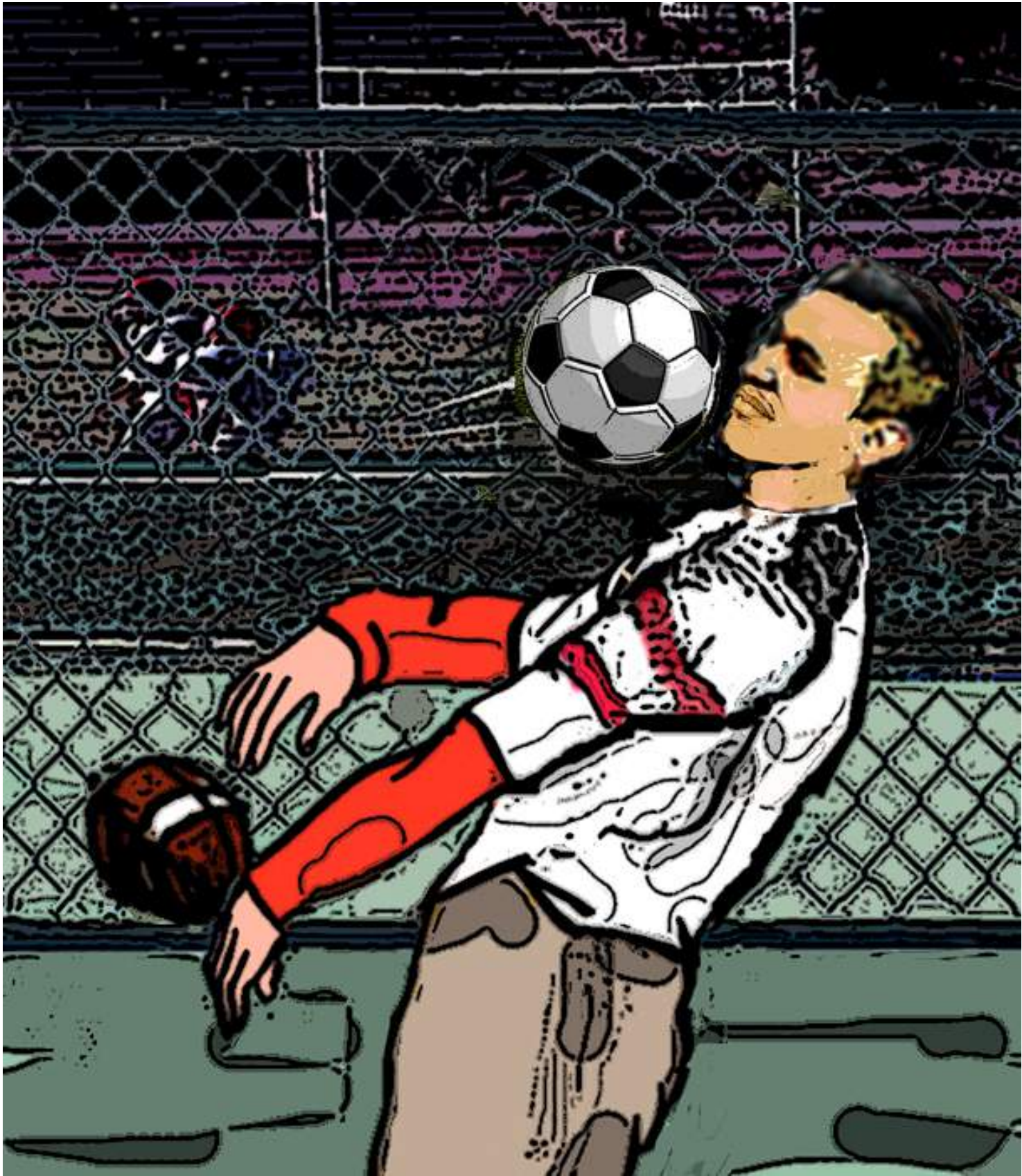
He prefers to play that sissy sport with the camel-jockey boys.

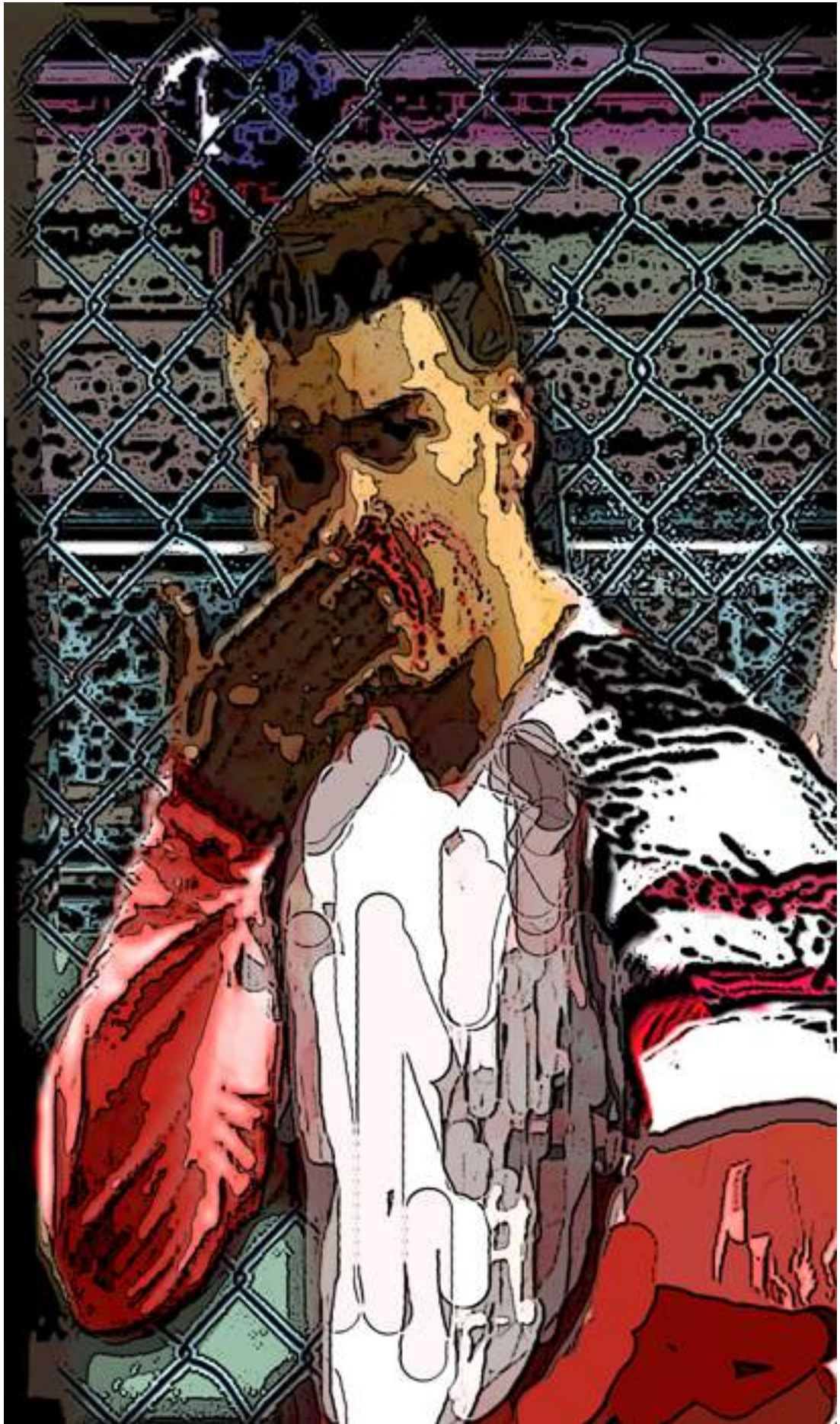
What a first class ignorant you are, Schultz.

Hey Khalid, say something in that camel language you speak.















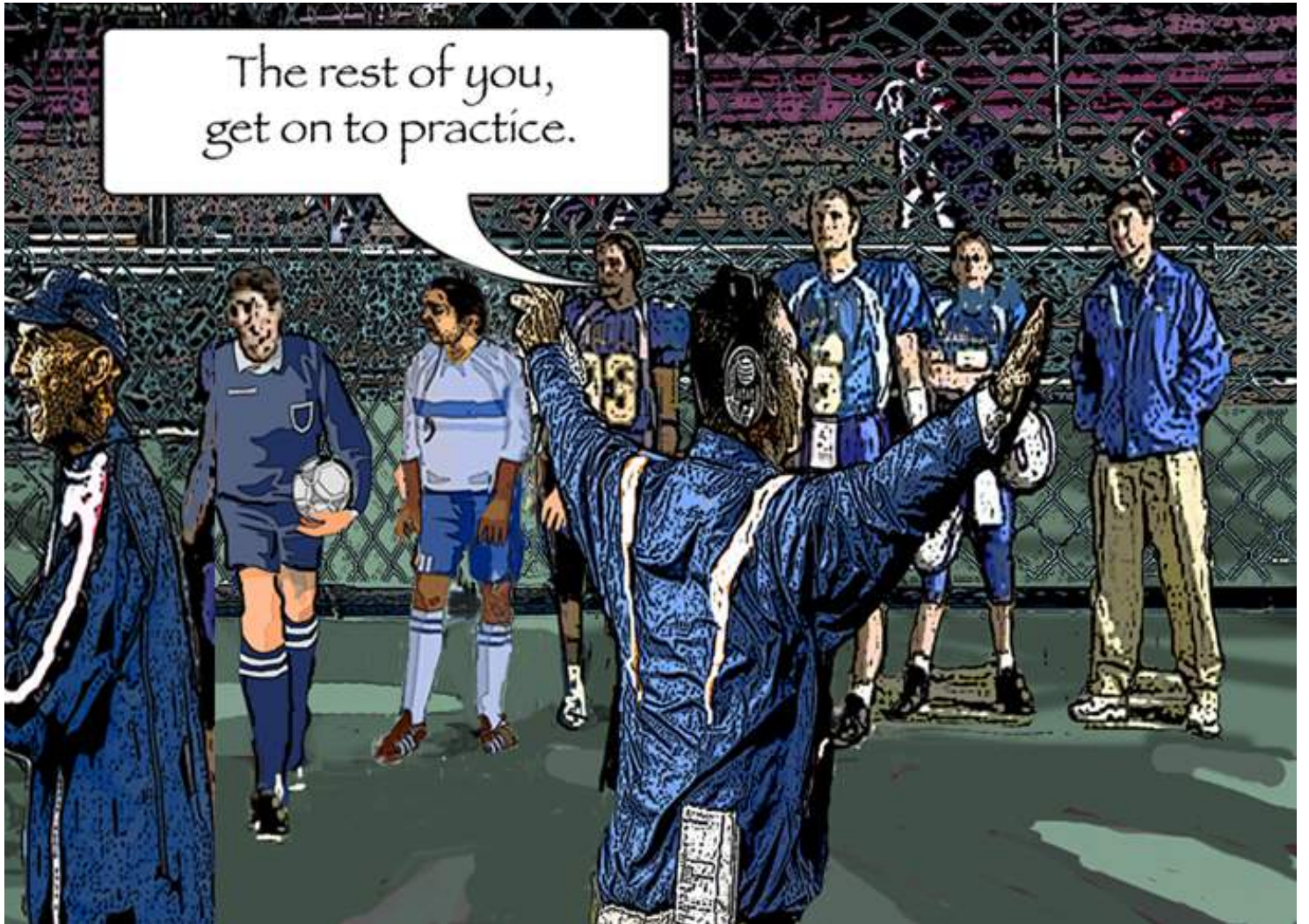
Briggs, get him over to
the infirmary!



Schultz, you'd better tag along with Hamilton. His nose is broken, Nice going, guys...shit.



The rest of you,
get on to practice.



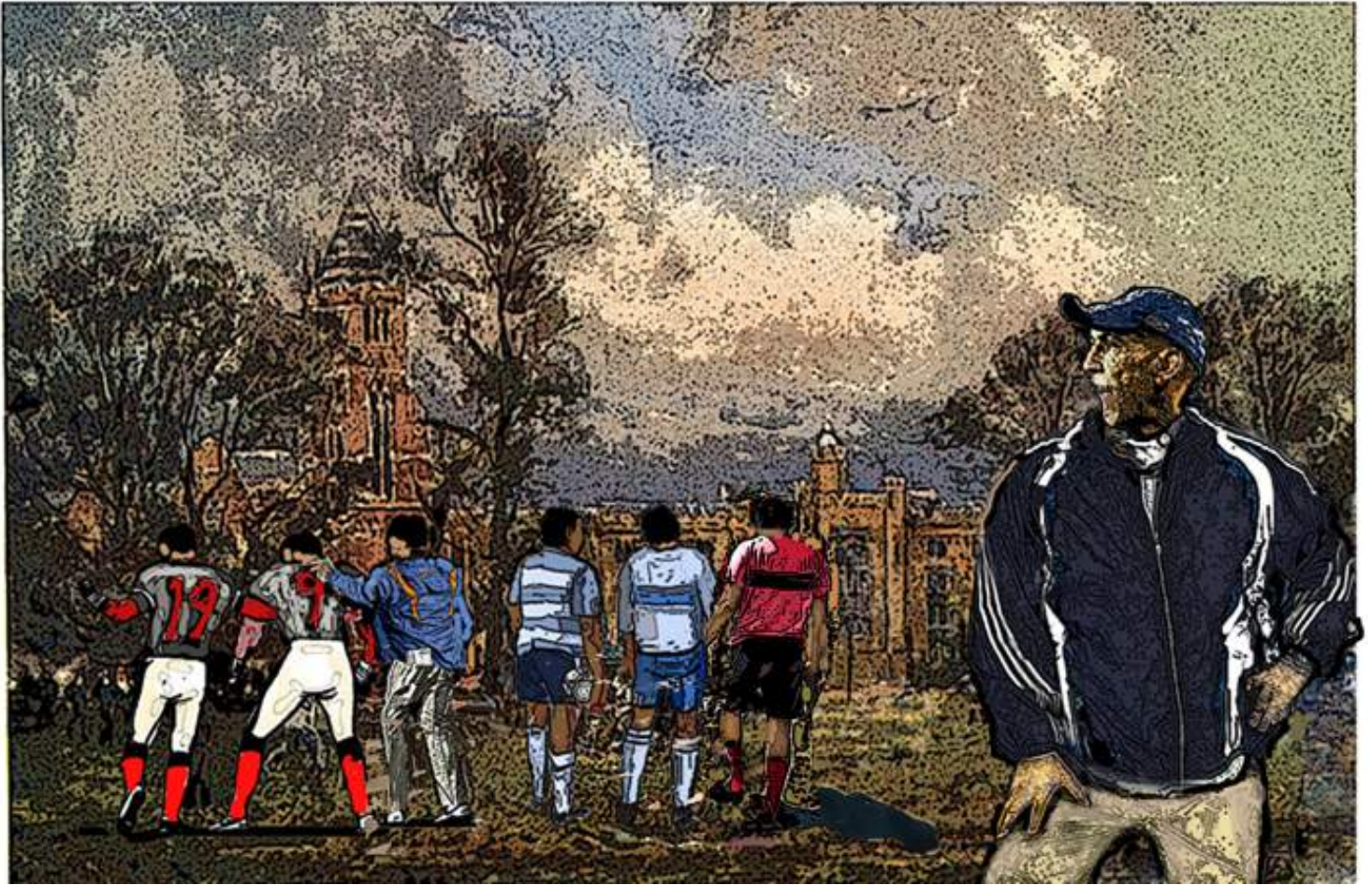
But coach, Khalid attacked first...

Yeah, I saw it---a ferocious attack with a soccer ball!
Give me a break, Mr. Schultz, that was a sorry-ass
spectacle...



Better go to the infirmary with these numbskulls.

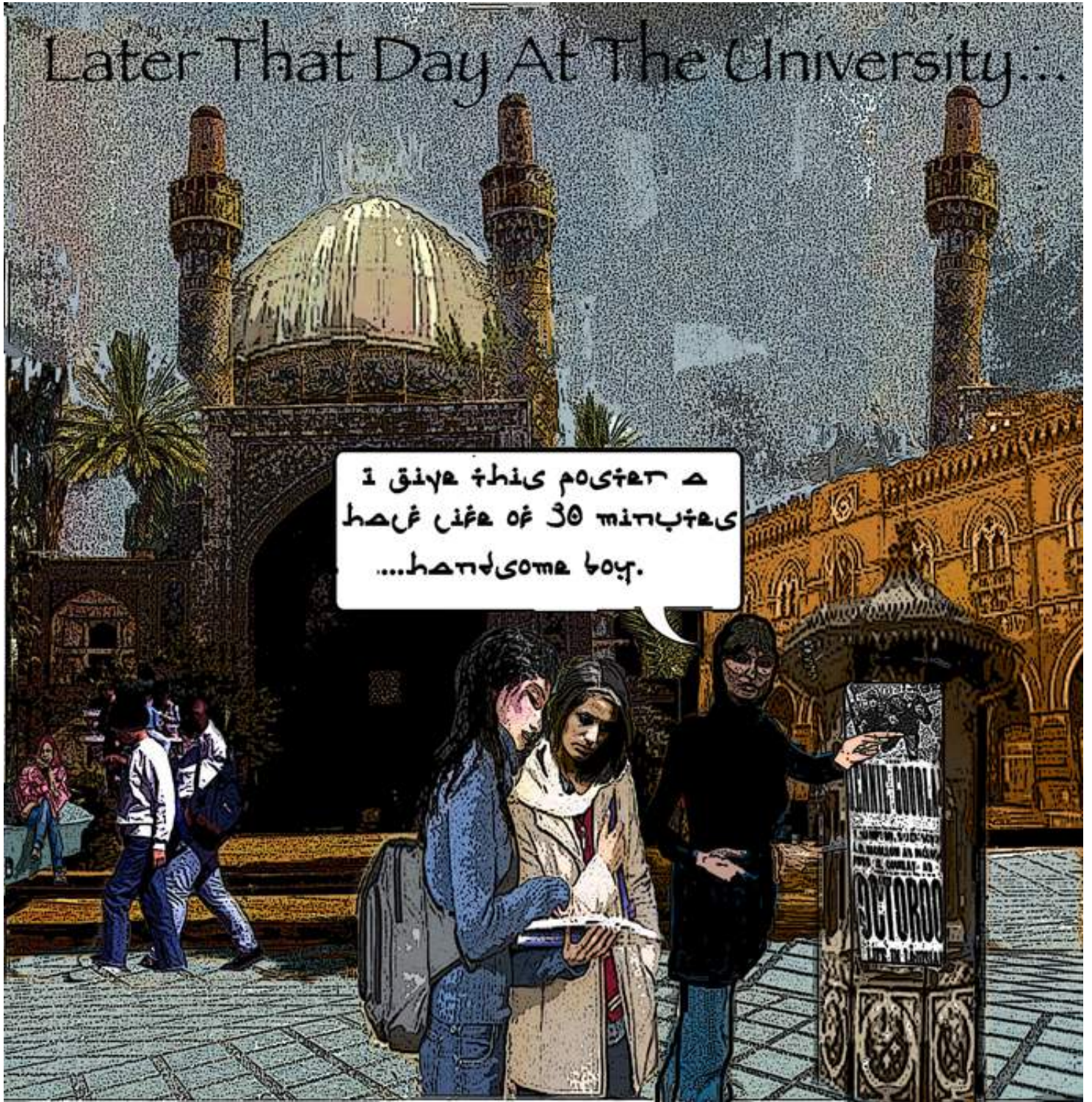






Later That Day At The University...

I give this poster a
half life of 30 minutes
....hate some boy.





هستاره کی؟

his name is öted.

յես, շեւ թաղիւ, իւր ճաթըր իսթաւ, իւր
մօթըր իսթաւ... ը թաւ թօմօ քոմօ
քոմօ իսթաւ.



Whoa, I can imagine!
How do you know all
this?

He was in one of my
classes. We exchanged
a few words. He got kicked
out a few weeks ago.



that is interesting...four
years in Paris and you
come back here to graduate
school---why i don't
quite understand---and
already you're on
speaking terms with the
campus rabble-rouser,
and he's half Jewish.





Well, what if once or
twice if twice?


We've only said hello
once or twice...

twice...now stop
it...he talked to me
about this
demonstration.



آیا می‌روید؟


نه... او مرا
مستحق می‌داند



i sure hope they don't expect
protection from the UN troops.

no danger of that. they
refuse to go into the
neighborhoods.

the americans won't
budge from their sector
either.


A woman with long, wavy black hair and a blue leopard-print top is looking directly at the camera. She is standing in a city at night, with a large, ornate building and a minaret in the background. The scene is lit with warm, golden light, suggesting streetlights or building lights. The woman's expression is serious and contemplative.

can you blame them? politics
here is a rat's nest---we can't
follow the shifting sands,
how can they even begin
to understand?

Of course, every faction has
Allah on its side.

Of course. Isn't that how
it's always been? I immerse
myself totally in my tribe...
maybe I'm a socialist. I would
be out in the streets with them.






ہیں کچھ نہ تو ہے
عربی میں تو ہے کچھ نہ تو ہے.

I want it to make a difference,
that's all I know. maybe it's
just a silly schoolyard
dream... I really admire his
courage though... I pray for him.





i think you
really like this
idea.

i've only talked to him briefly
on two occasions. i would
like to get to know him...
allah help me!

ق، time is coming
RASHED...

، حق ،
ی، ف، م، ت، ع، ش.





هههه! هذا ليس
صحيحاً... لماذا لا
يصرحون لي بمشورتي
في هذا التعليل
في هذا التعليل؟





come here, baby!



“when it’s cold and raining,
you are more beautiful
and the snow brings me eyes
to your lips.”





The longer you play, the better you
will get. It's not just
about the music, but also about
the discipline and the hard work
that goes into it.

"the inner secret, that which was
never born, you are that
presence, and I am with you now.
I can't explain the offering, or
the coming."





"you enter suddenly, and i am
nowhere again.
inside the majesty."









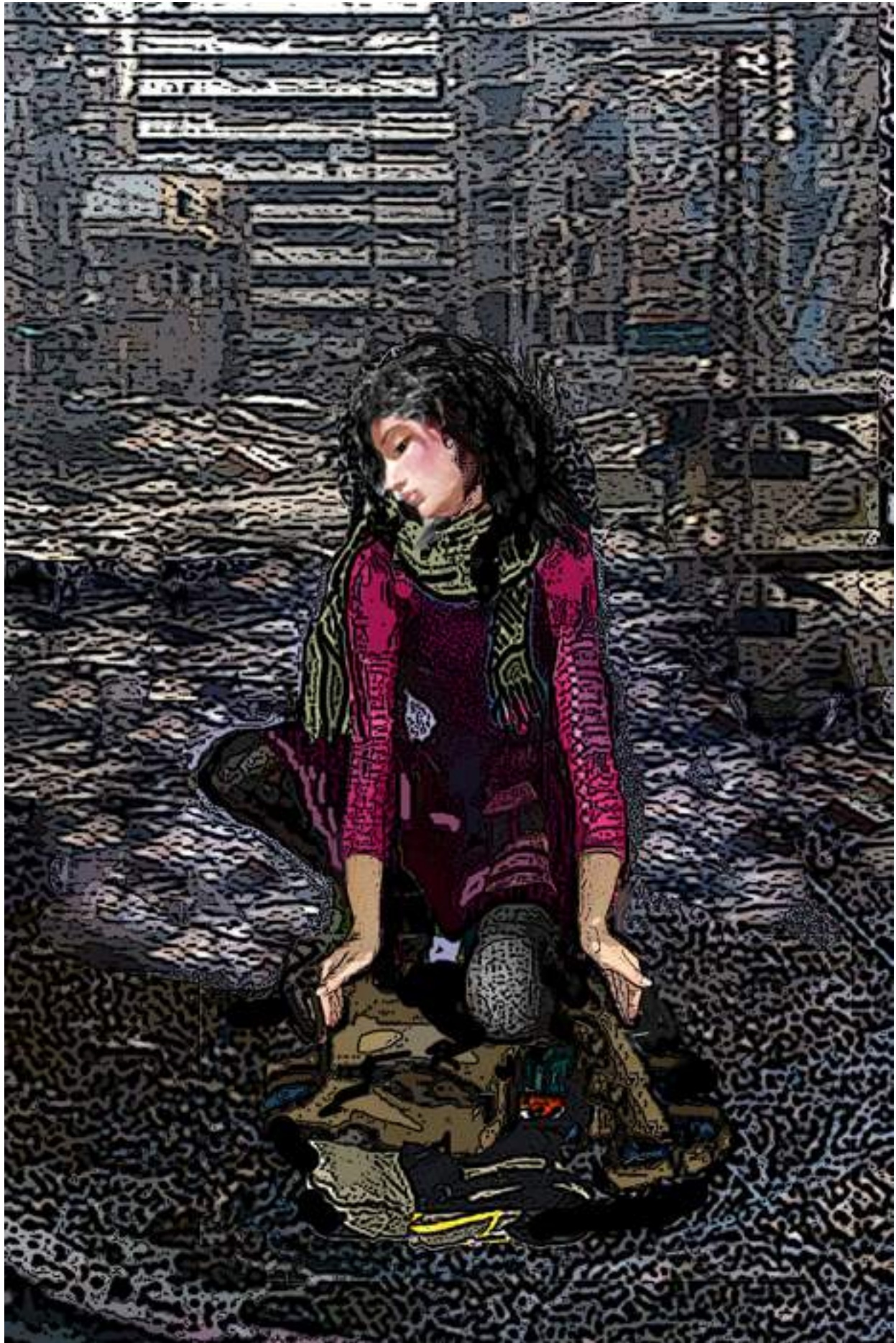






2 days later

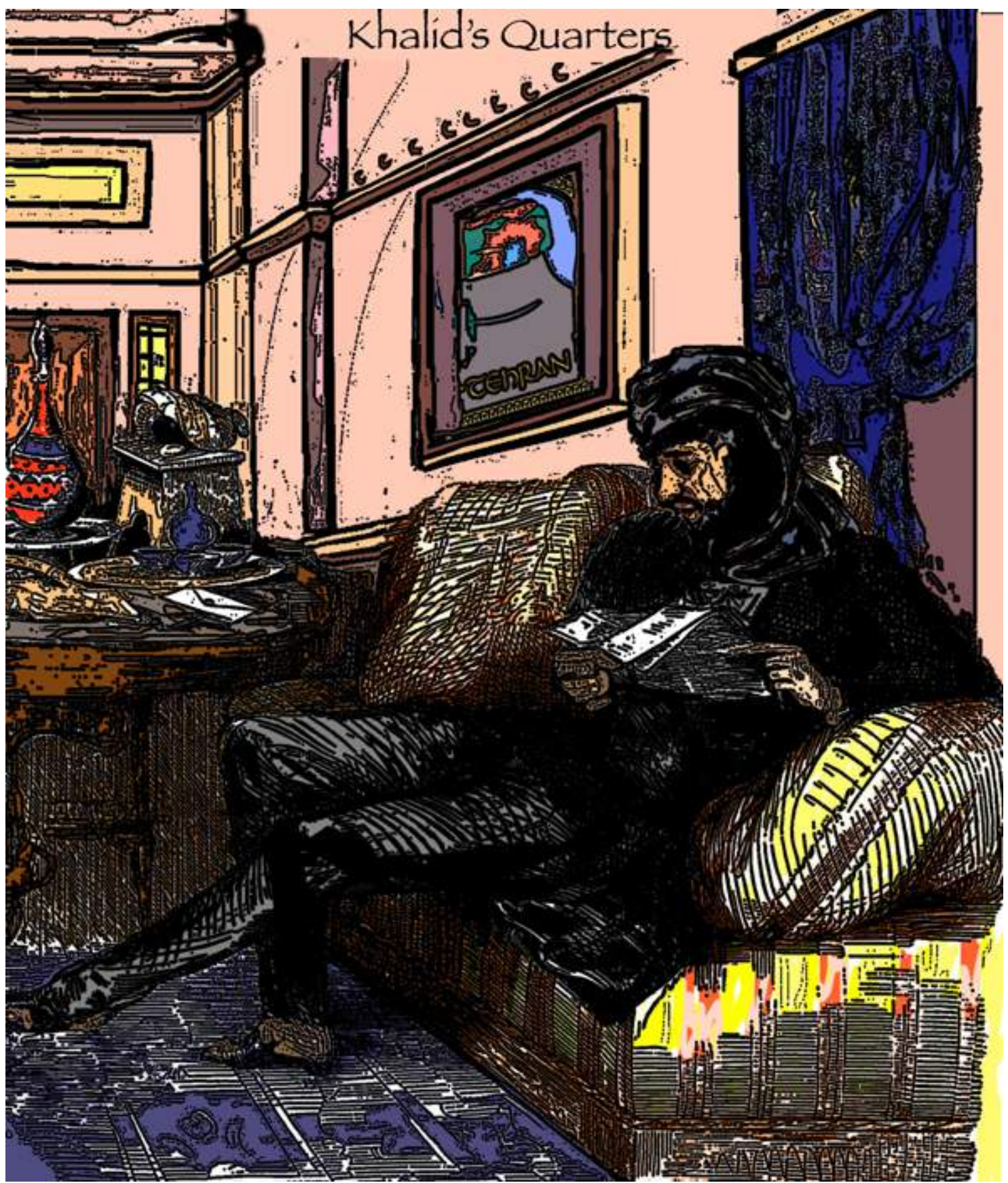


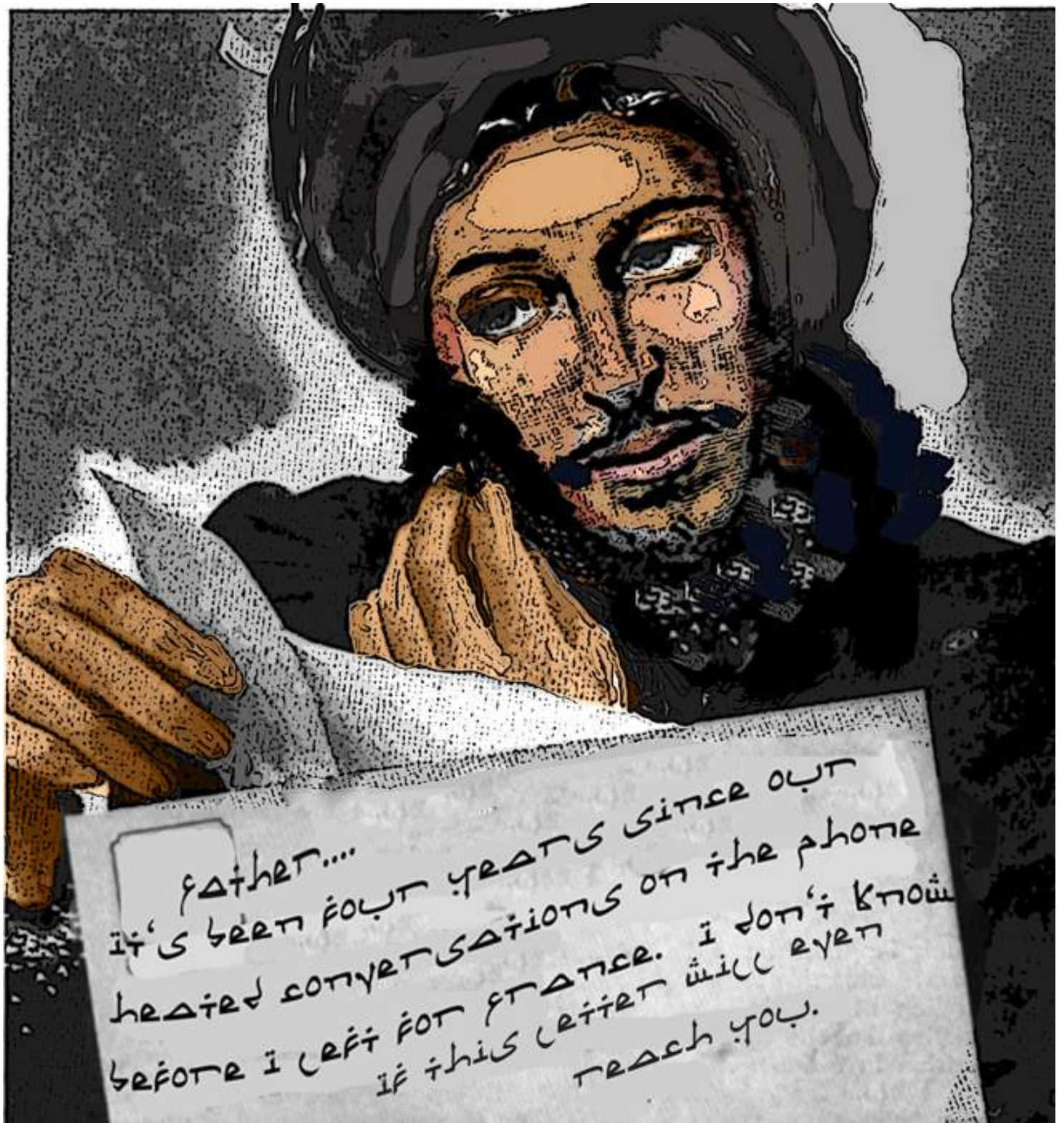






Khalid's Quarters

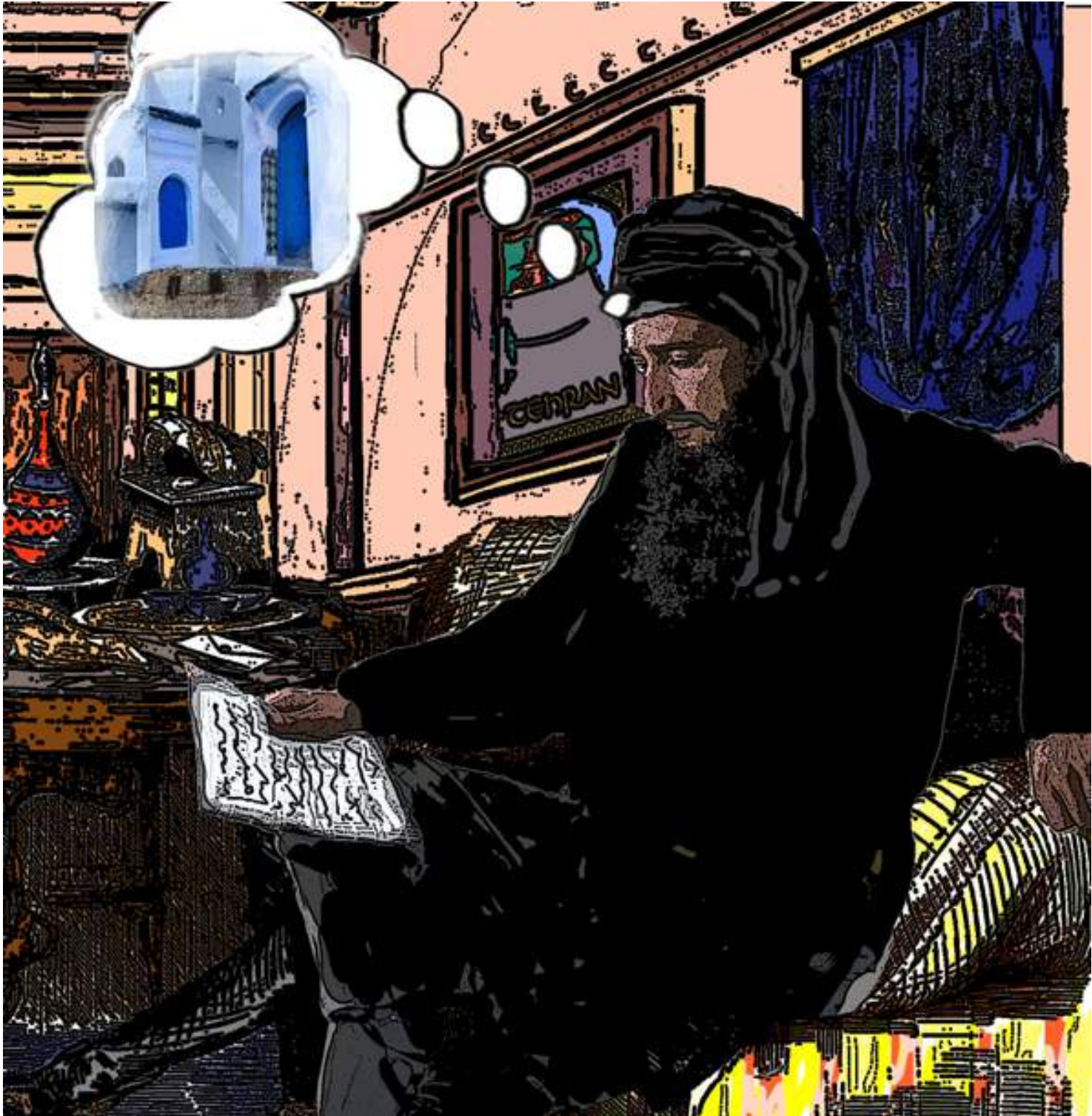




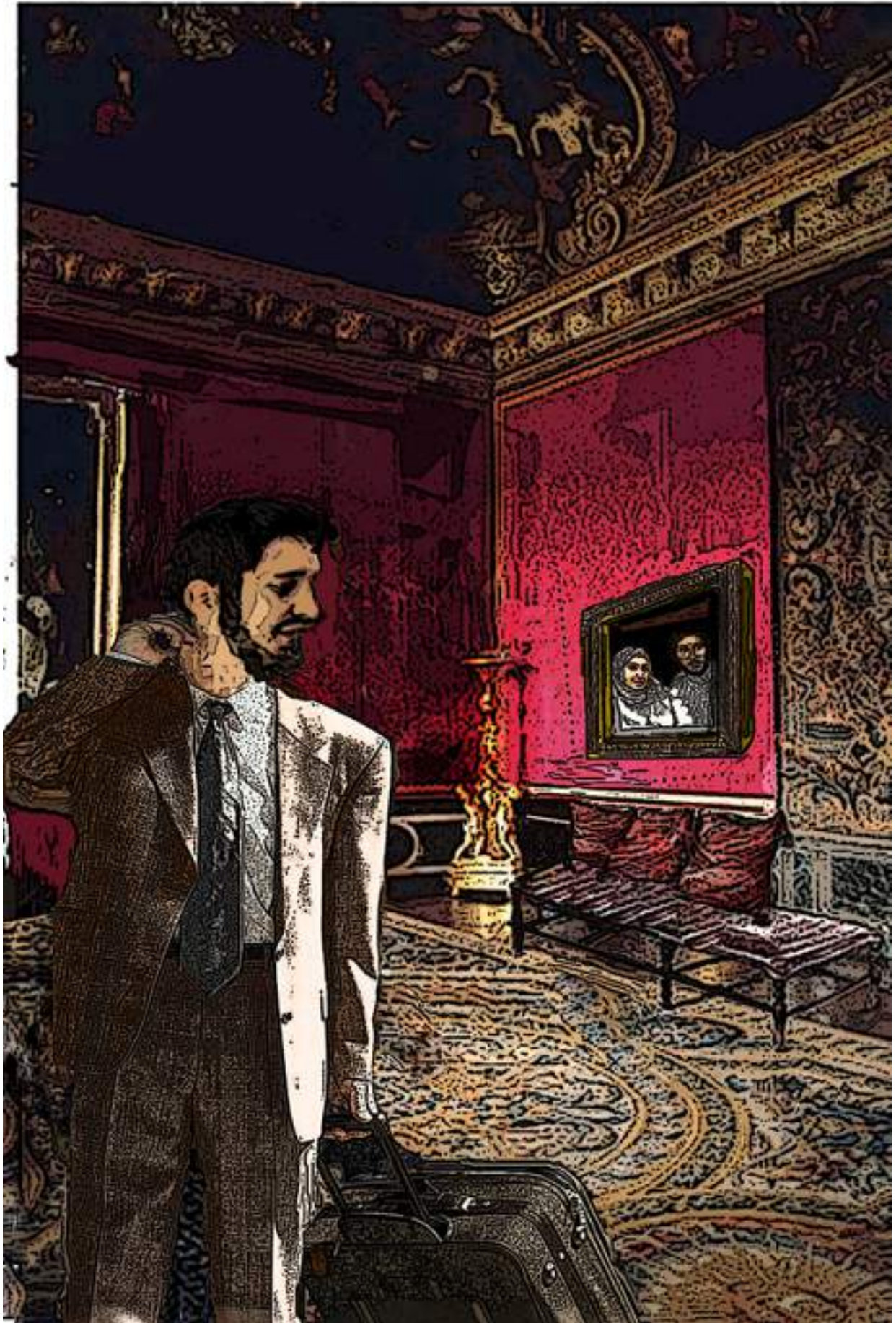
FATHER....
IT'S BEEN FOUR YEARS SINCE OUR
HEATED CONVERSATIONS ON THE PHONE
BEFORE I LEFT FOR FRANCE. I DON'T KNOW
IF THIS LETTER WILL EVER
REACH YOU.

Trisha, Trisha?

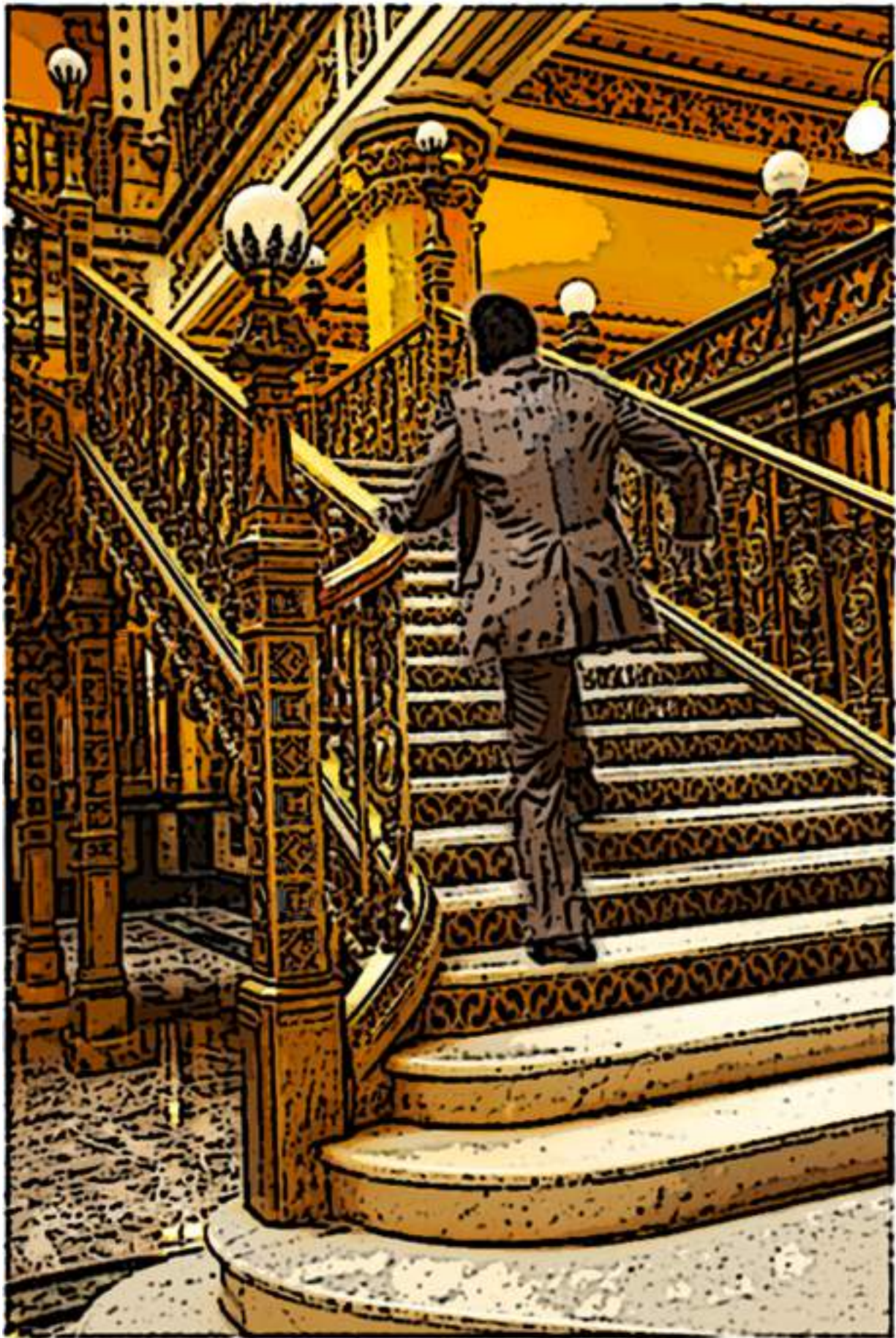






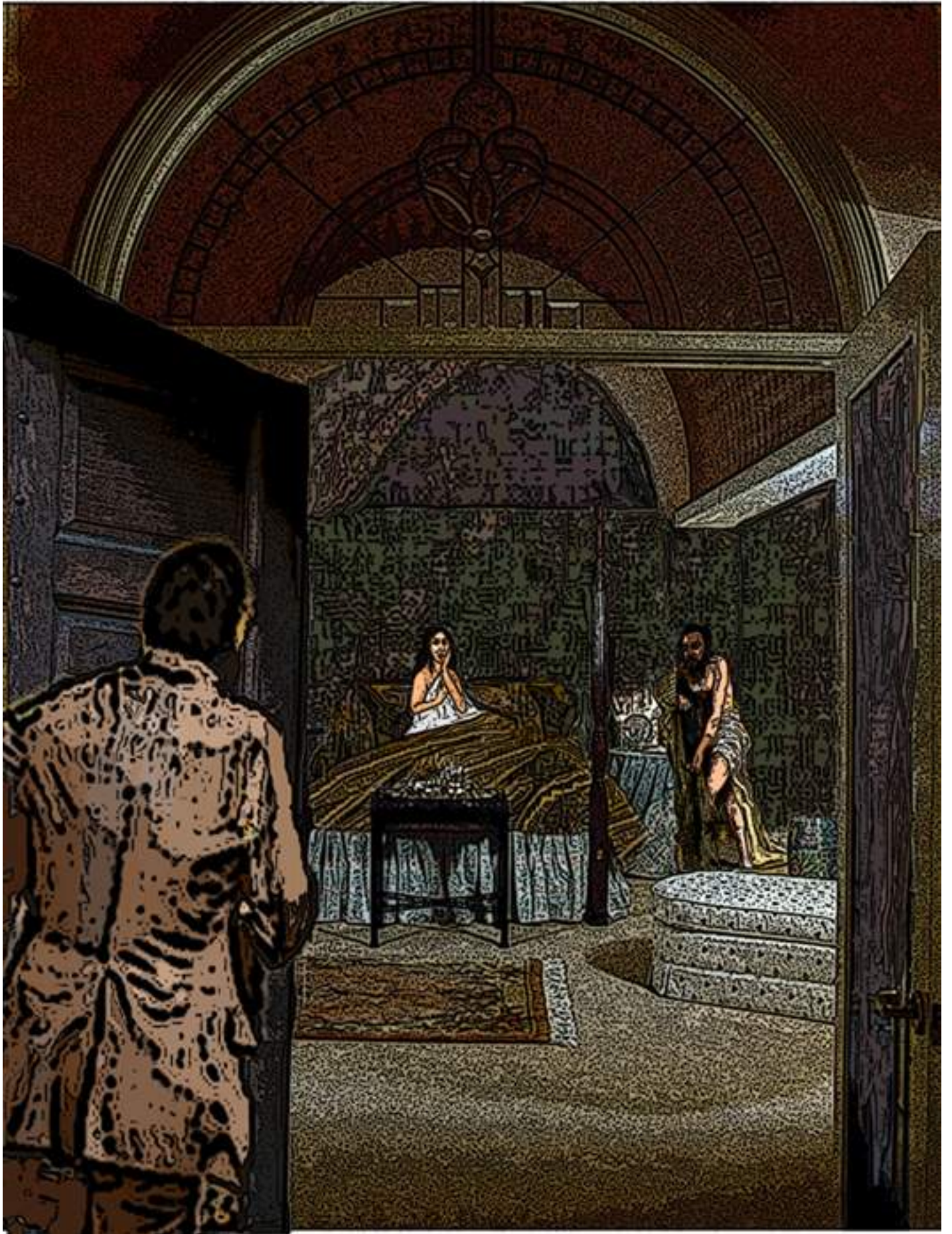








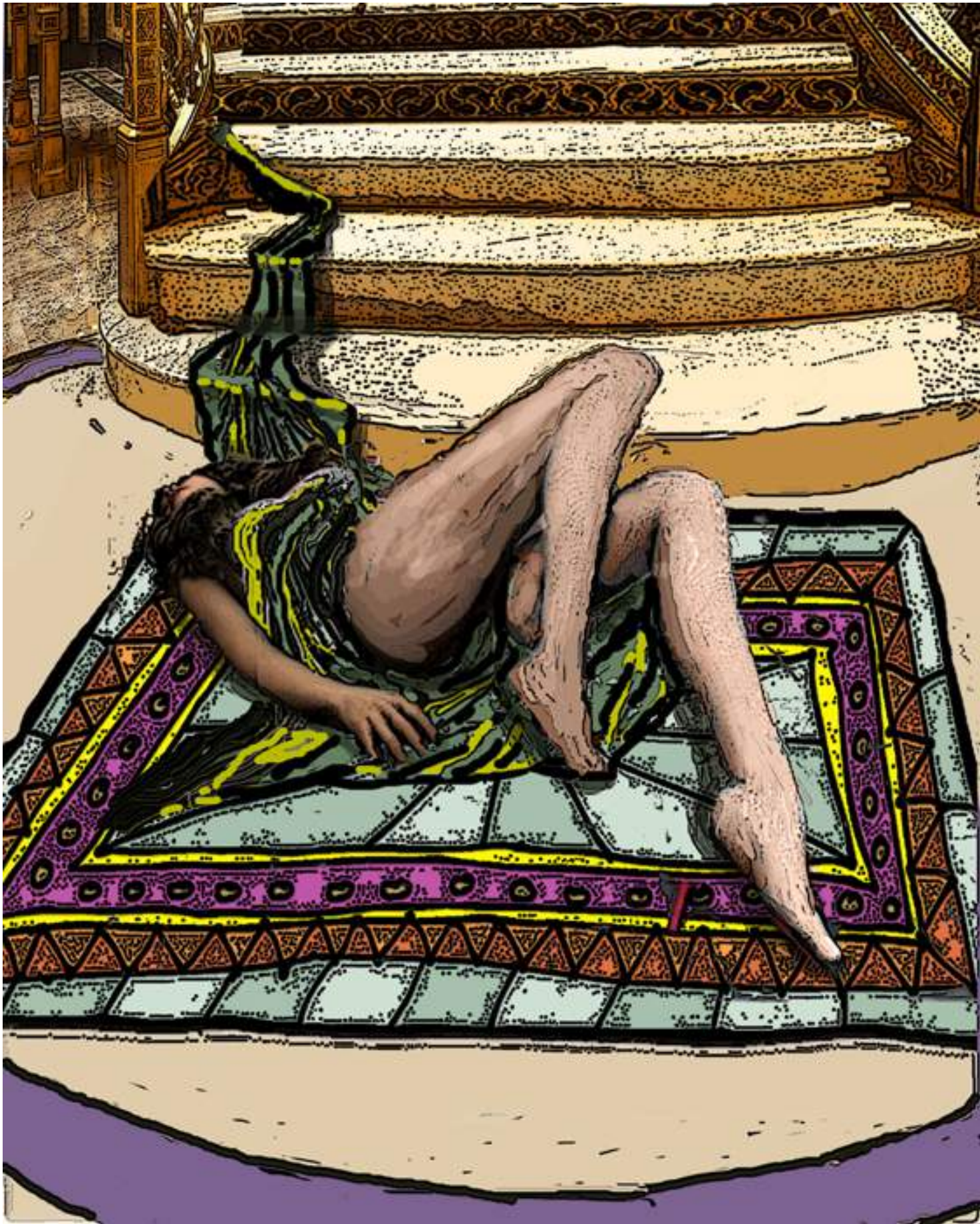




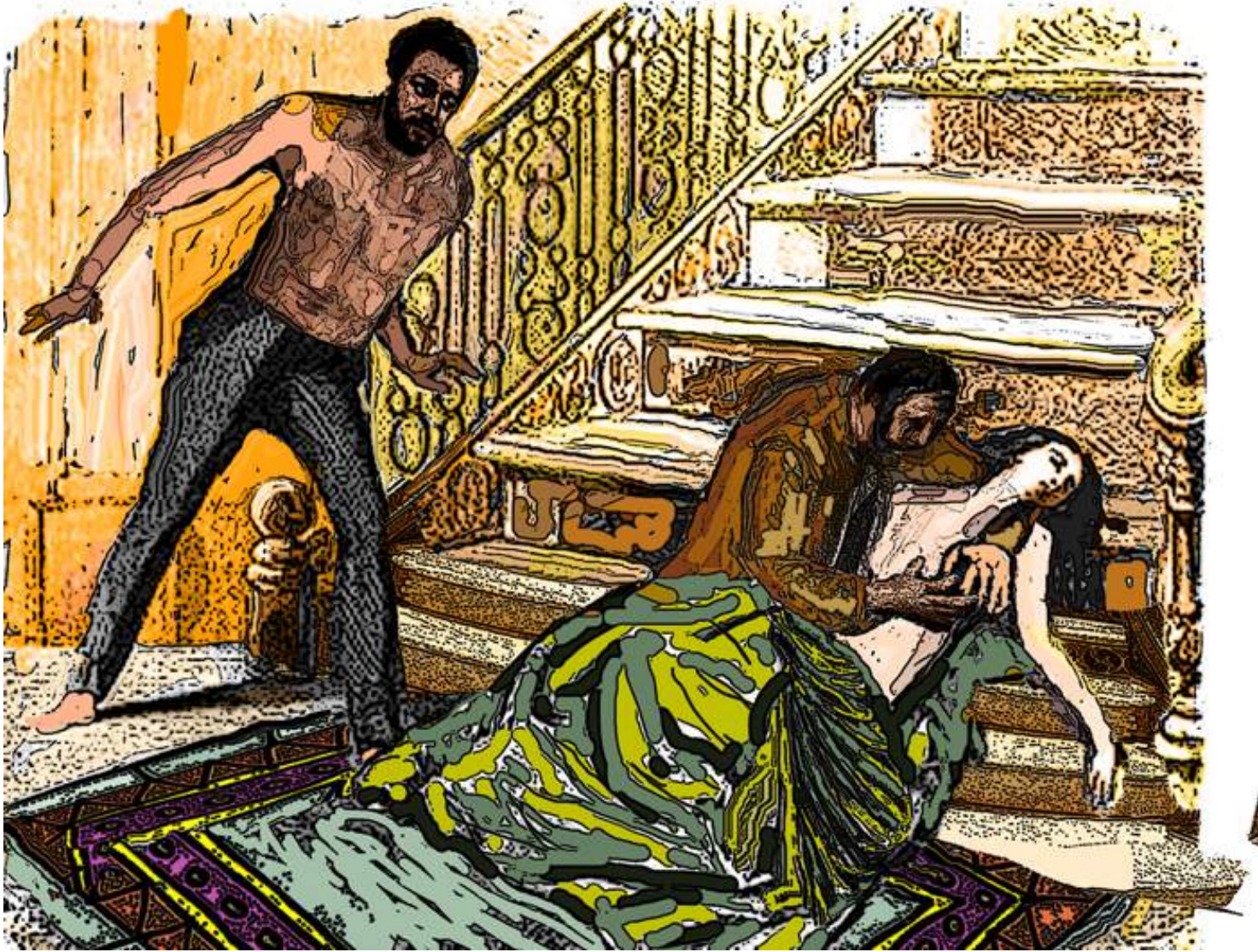


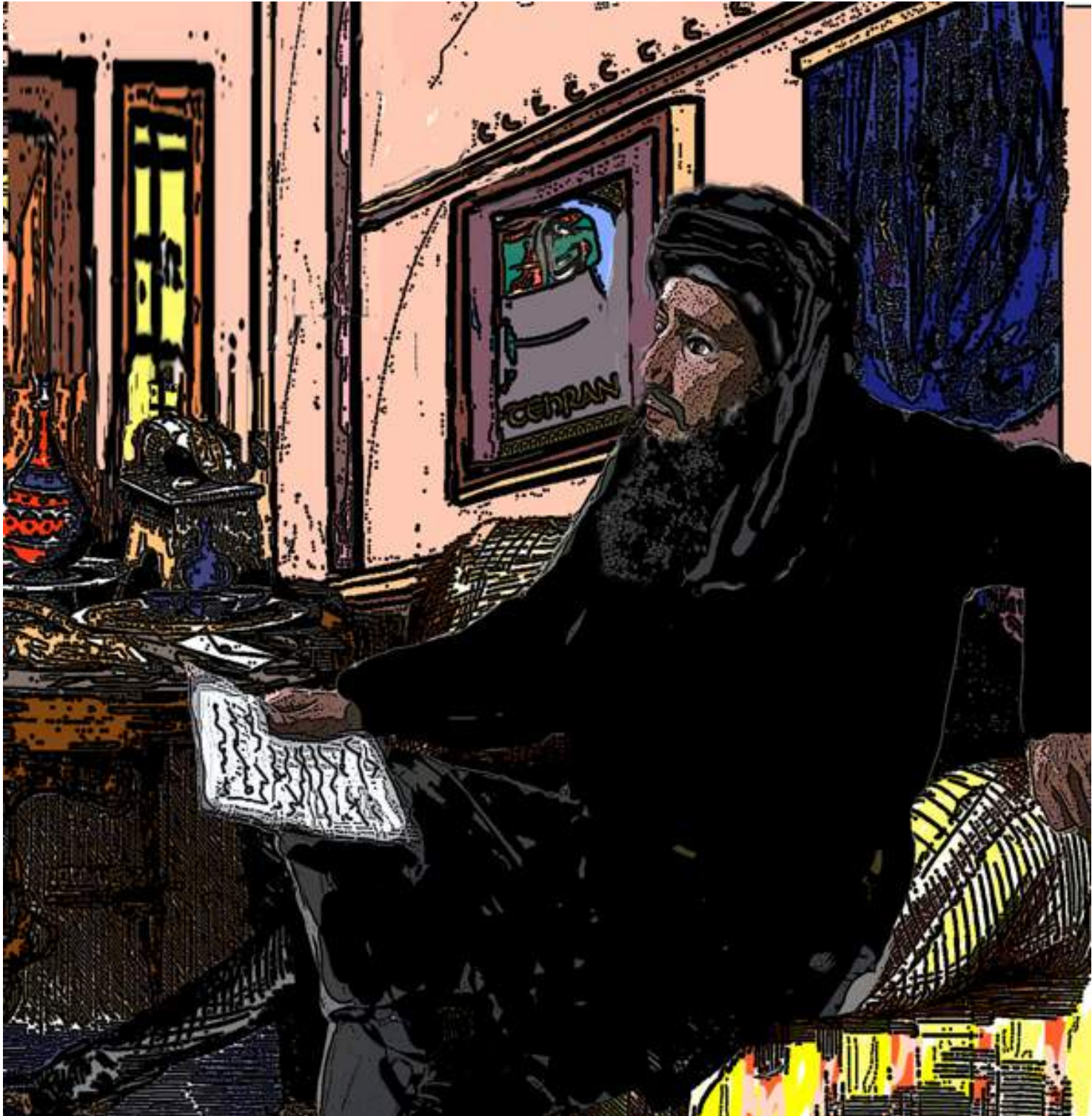






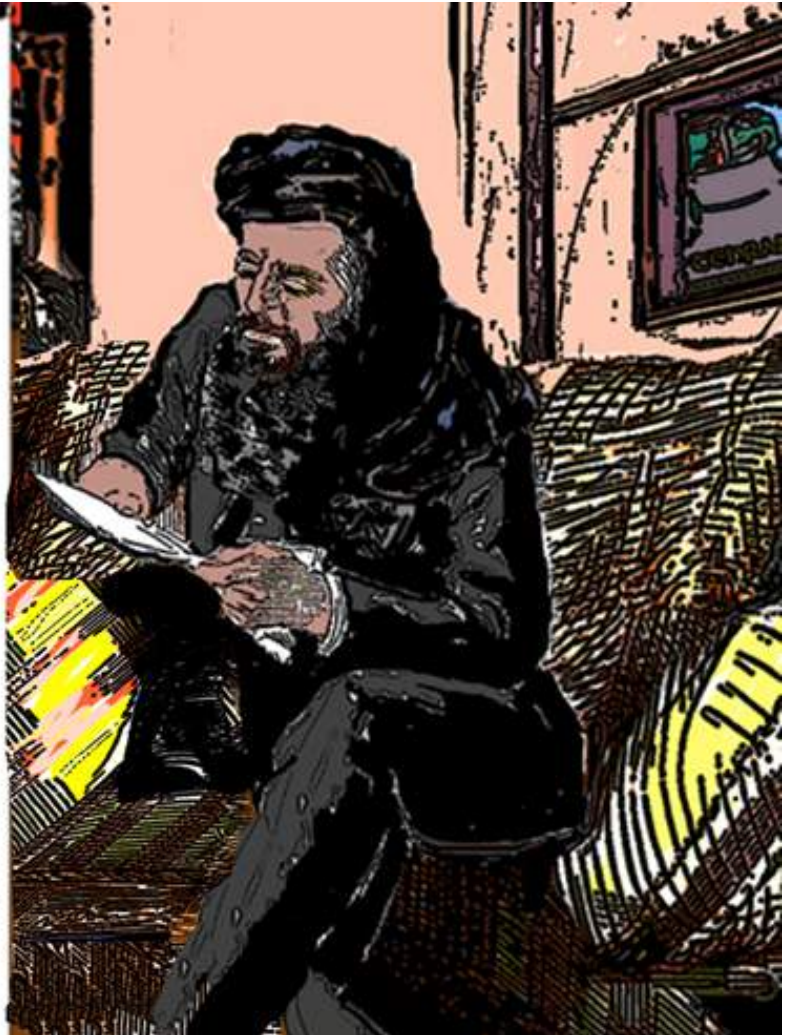






i lost both of you that year.
you disappeared shortly after
the funeral and my world was
overturned.

father, all these years i've
hated you for leaving. no one
told me the complete truth about
the events surrounding
mother's death, but i know what
happened. i knew it even then, as
a child.



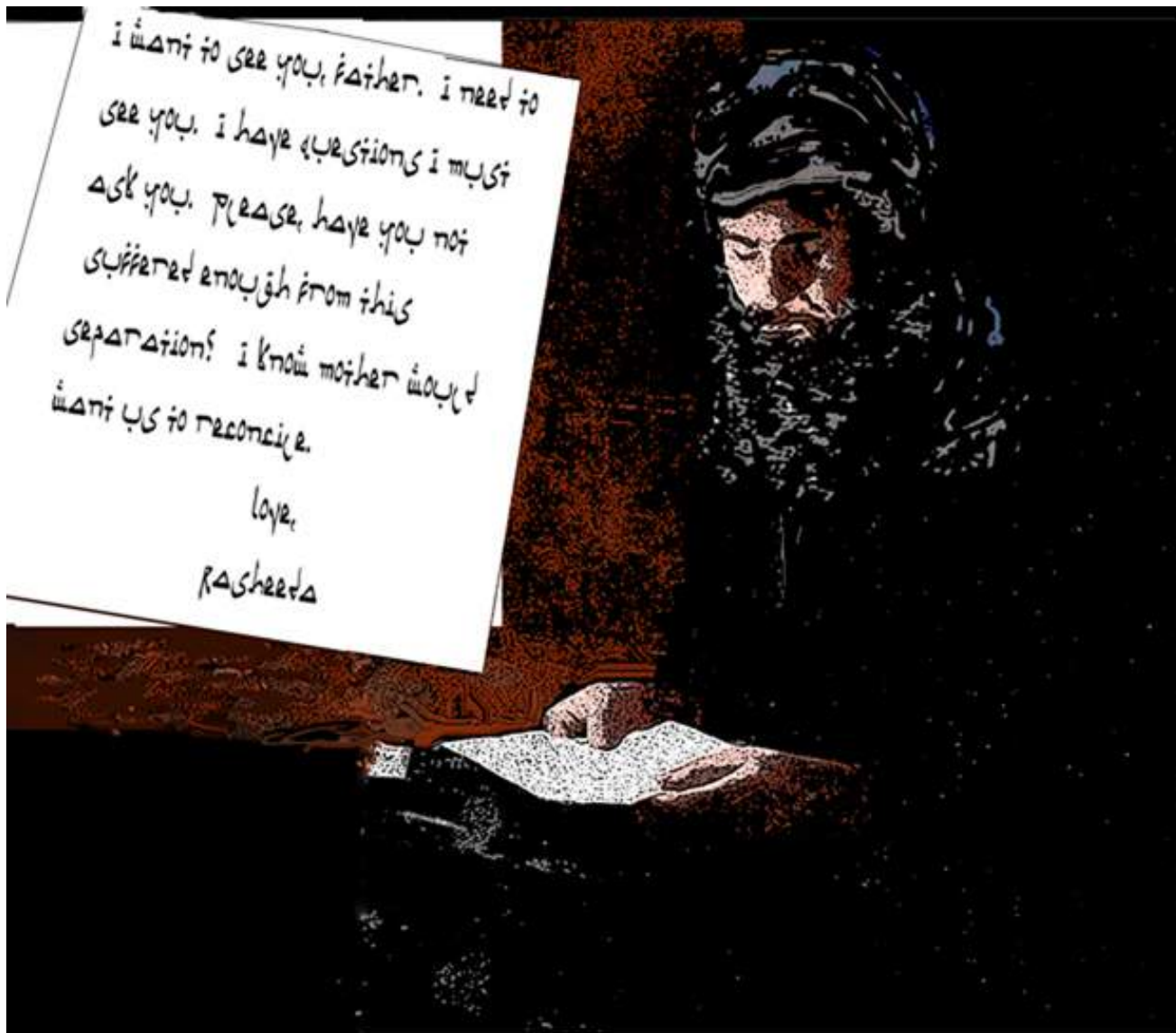
now something has
changed in me. i no
longer hate
you...something is
shifting in me. i can't
describe it in words,
but i hear it in my
music. i have yielded to
some
immensity. i surrender
to the mind of allah.



i want to see you, father. i need to
see you. i have questions i must
ask you. please, have you not
suffered enough from this
separation? i know mother would
want us to reconcile.

love,

Rasheeda

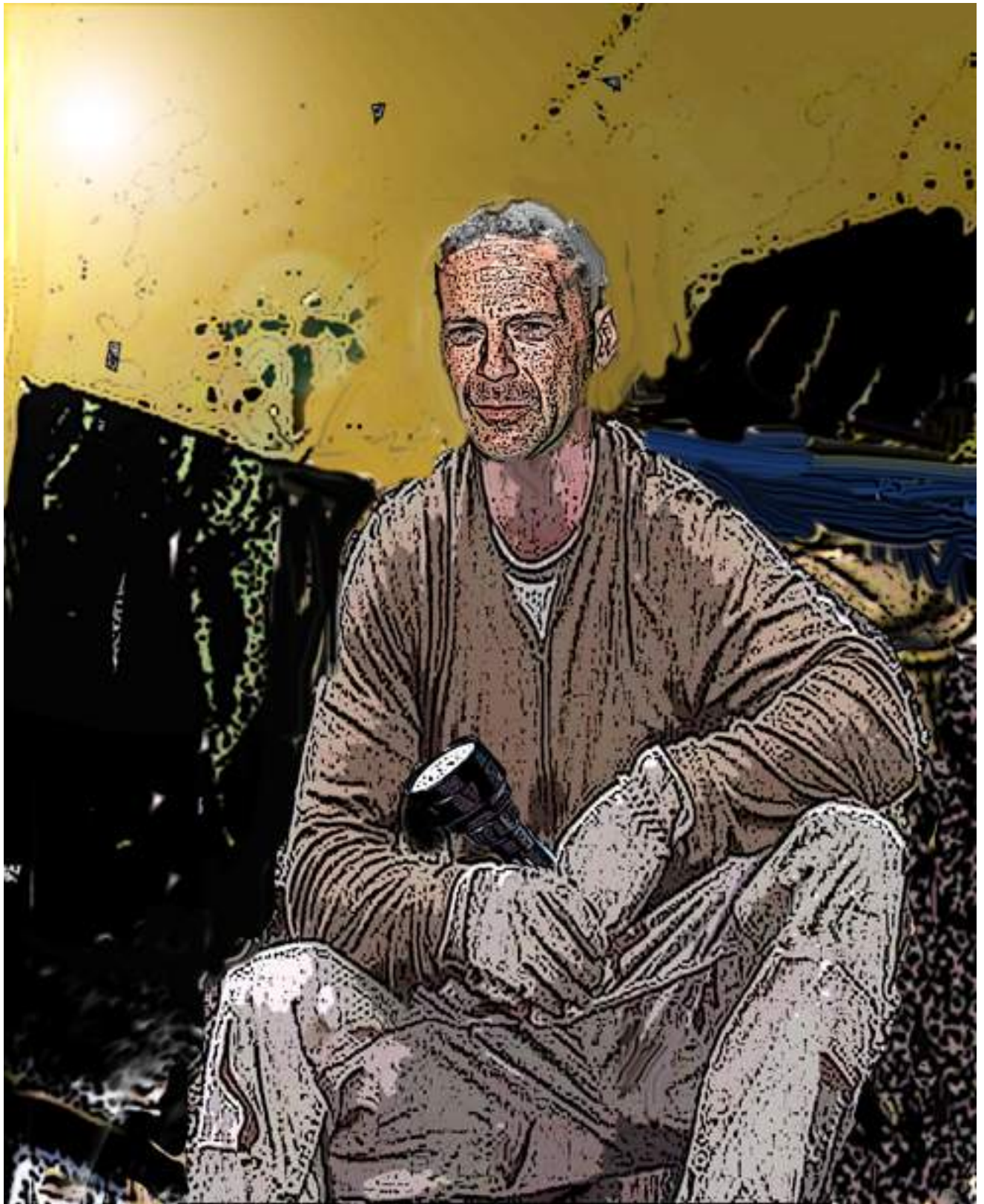


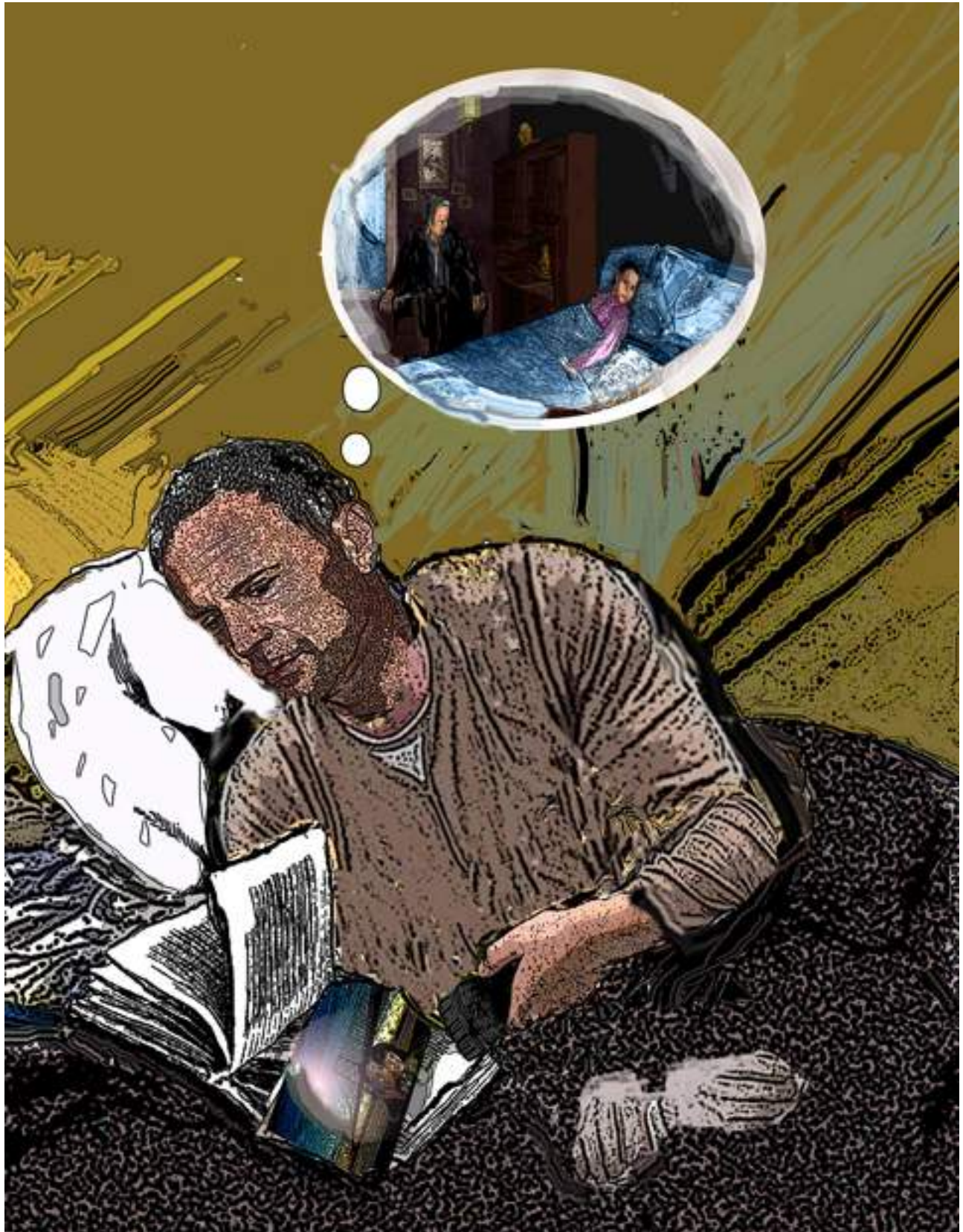
Briggs' quarters that same night



Briggs' quarters. . . that same night

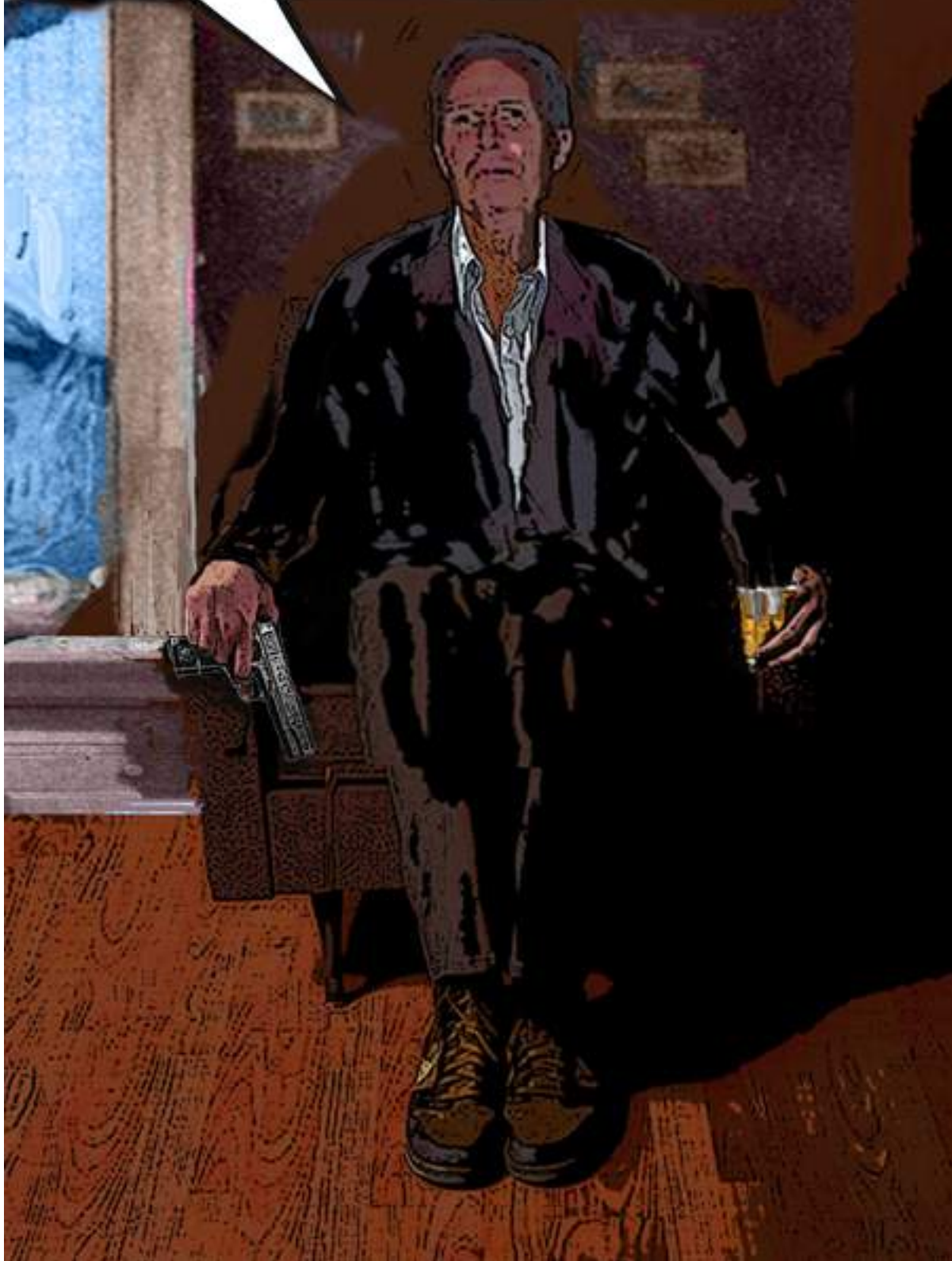








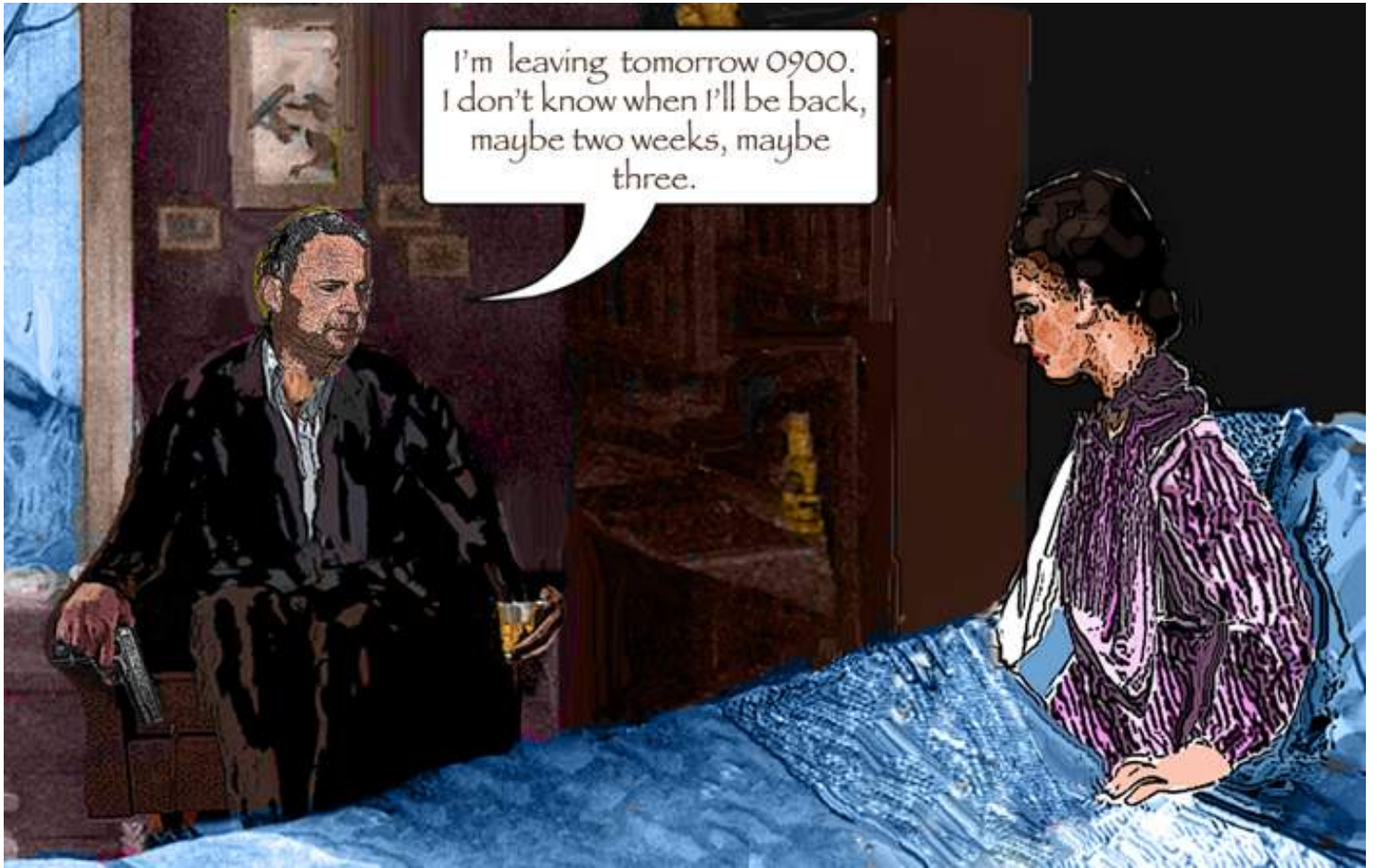
Wake up, Trisha, goddam it!
I have to tell you something.

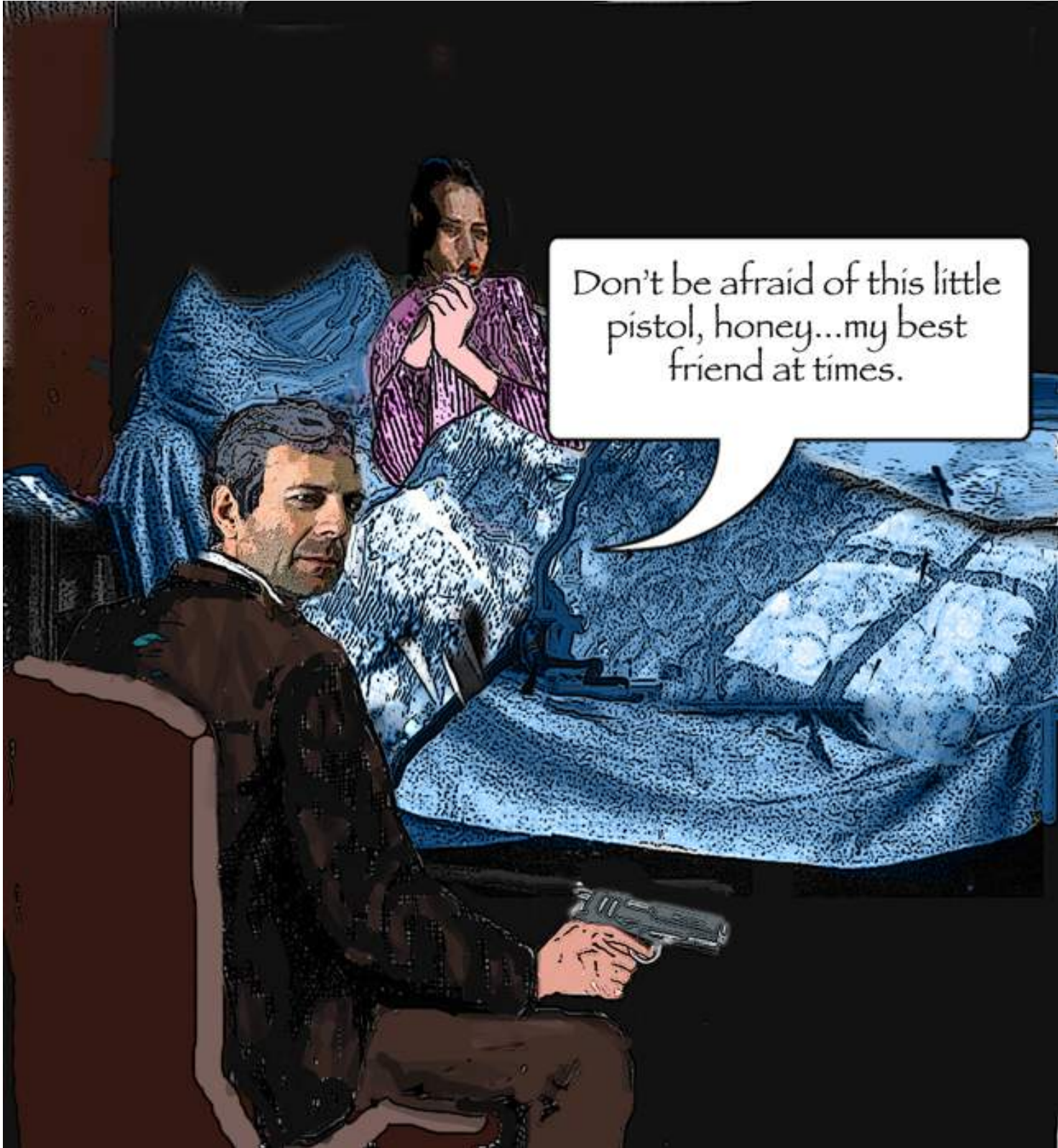


Michael, put the pistol
down. You're scaring me!



I'm leaving tomorrow 0900.
I don't know when I'll be back,
maybe two weeks, maybe
three.

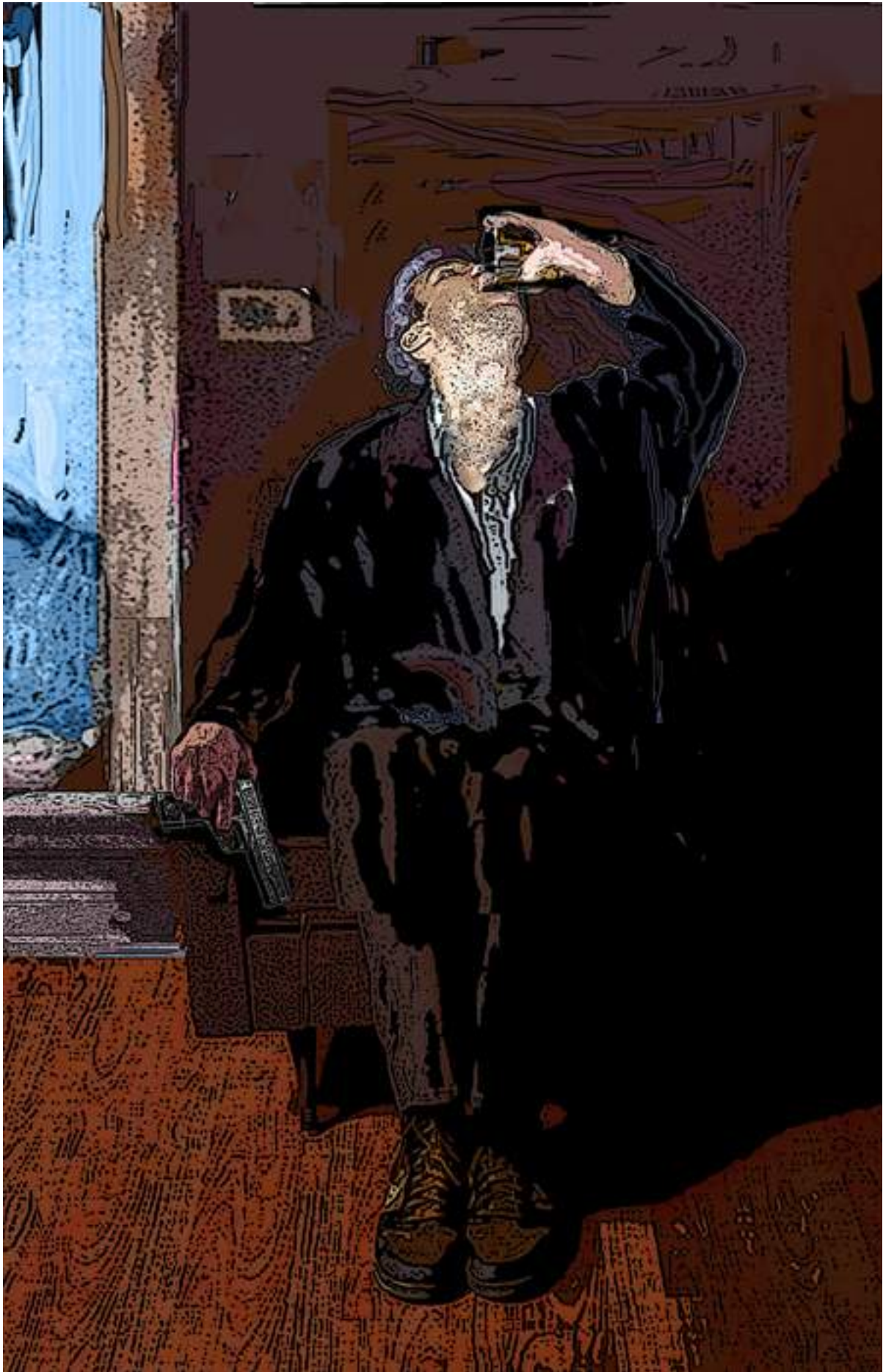




Don't be afraid of this little pistol, honey...my best friend at times.

Why do you get like this before every assignment, Michael? I never know when you're going to go. You take off, you come back weeks later, you drink yourself into oblivion for a week, and then you act like nothing's wrong. I'm left talking to a shadow, and then you're off again on some other mission. What the hell kind of life is this for us, or for Katy? What are they doing to you?





Get some help for god's sake, I can't take it anymore. We're living a lie. There's something terribly wrong here, I don't know what it is, and you're not telling.



Well that's what this little session is all about, Trish. Let's just find out how much you can take. Here, write it down for me. I can't focus.



Take it!

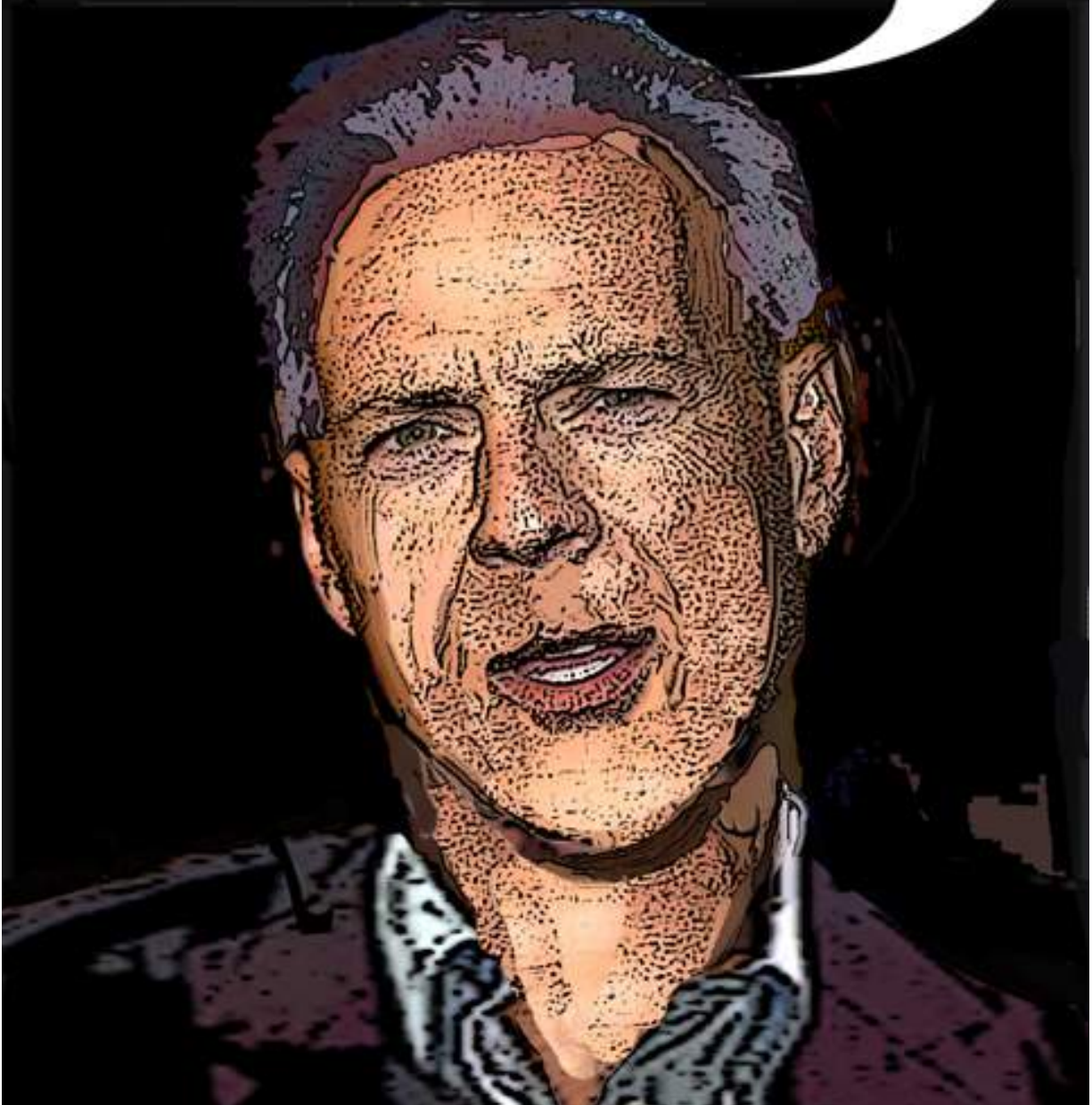
I really want you to know what your husband does on these little junkets, courtesy of the American taxpayer.



Let's see, where do I begin---I call the last assignment "Operation Play Along With Uncle Sam". Go ahead, just write it down.



You don't like the title?...Haas didn't go for it either, that stuffed shirt son of a bitch...no sense of humor whatsoever...never had one, never will. Go ahead, write it down, that's what I'm going to call it. I have the right to name the goddamn mission...



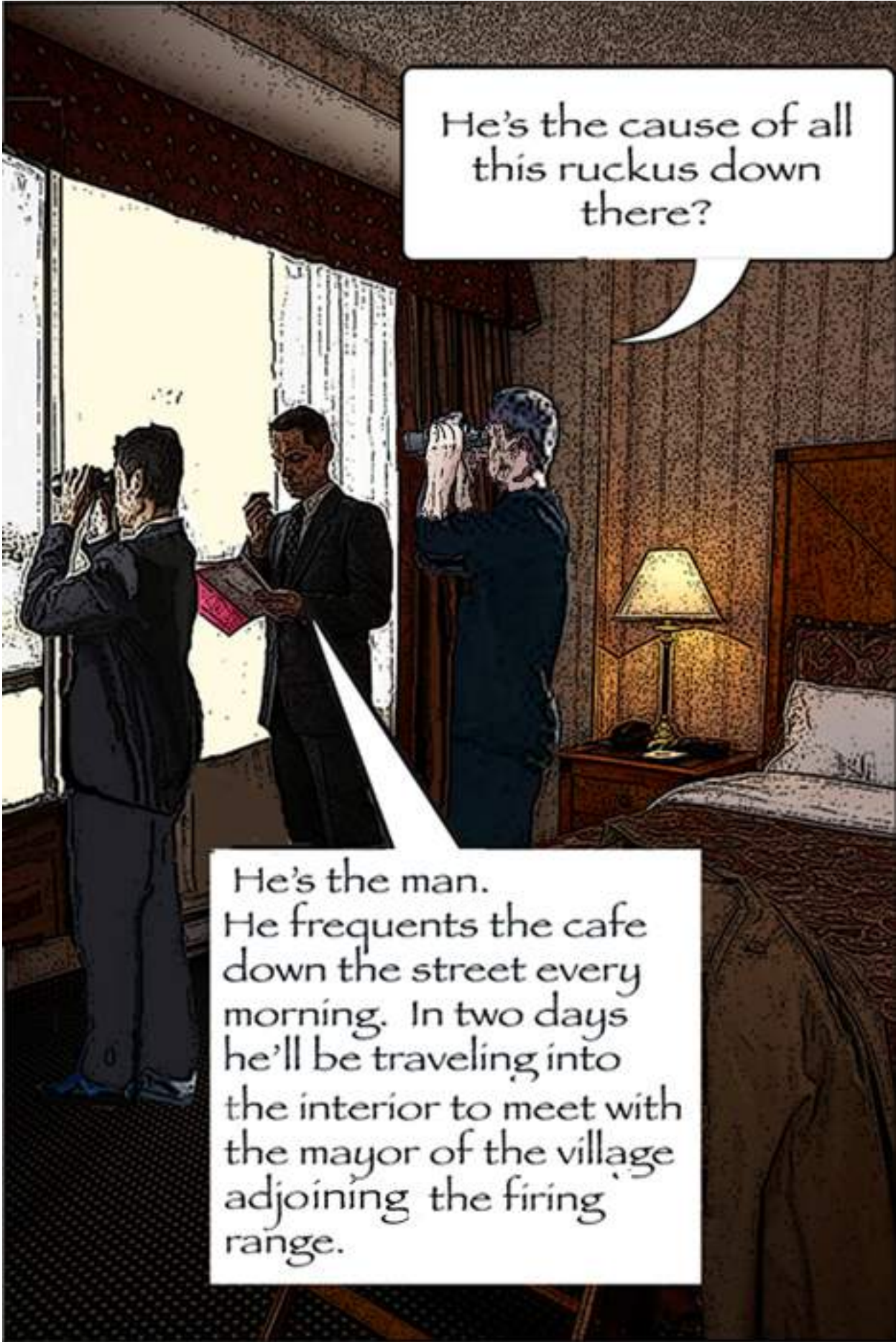


Latin America

That's him on the corner...with his bodyguards. Gaitan is the smaller of the three men.







He's the cause of all
this ruckus down
there?

He's the man.
He frequents the cafe
down the street every
morning. In two days
he'll be traveling into
the interior to meet with
the mayor of the village
adjoining the firing
range.

We have a man already positioned in the village---Rodríguez, a local guy who's done some work for us in the past.

How do I get in touch with this Señor Rodríguez?



We have a man already positioned in the village—Rodriguez, a local guy who's done some work for us in the past.

How do I get in touch with this Señor Rodriguez?



He'll be calling your room tonight, 1900 hours.

My men are arriving this afternoon.

They'll be brought directly here.

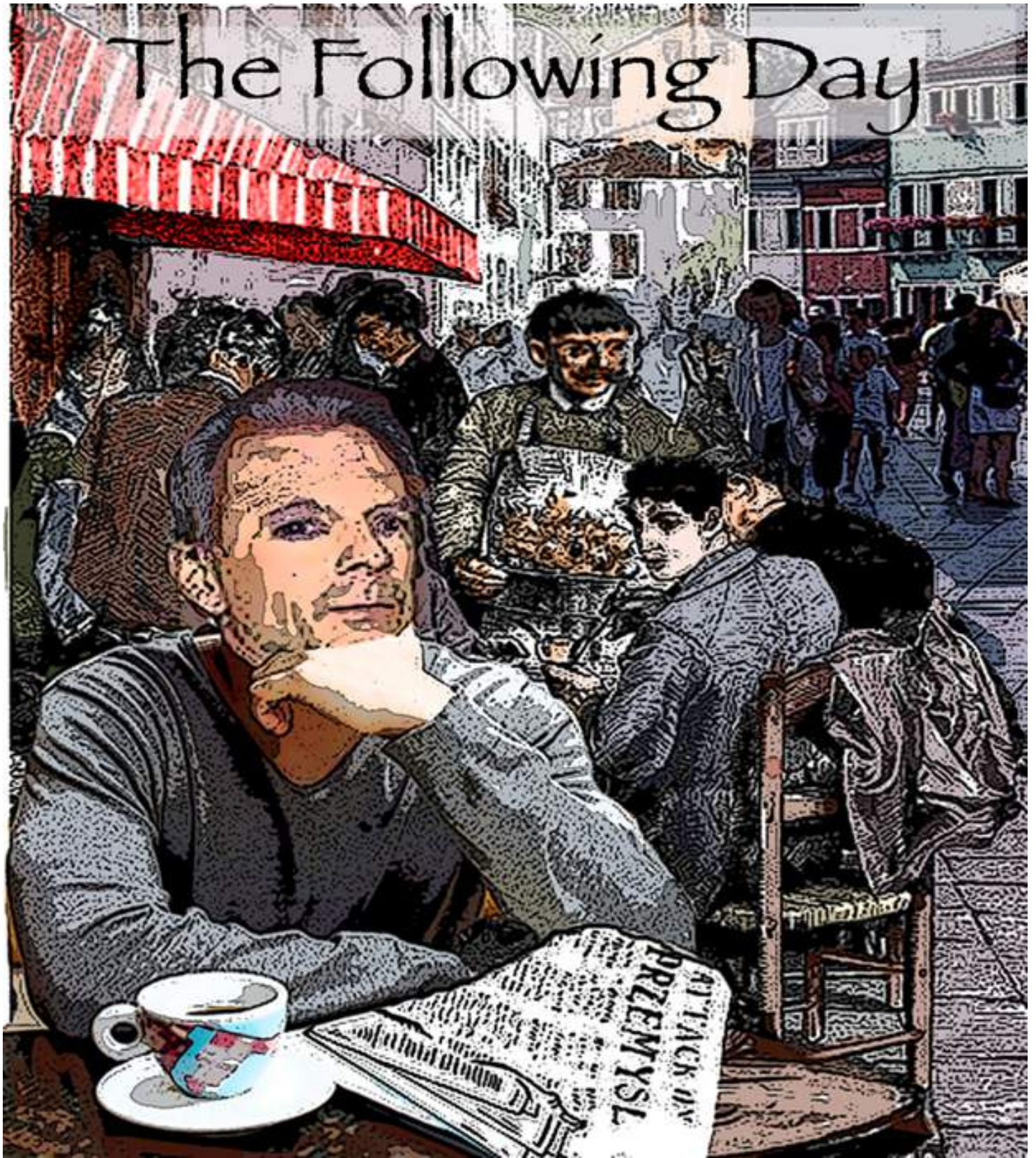



OK, then, everything's in place. We do the final planning to-
night, 1900 hours. Gentlemen, I gotta get some rest.
It was a long flight.

Certainly, Lieutenant. We'll meet back here, say
1800 hours, and finalize the plan.



The Following Day





Señor, may I share this table with you? It seems they are all taken.

By all means, Señor. But please speak in Spanish. I need the practice.

I don't think so. You speak without an accent. Very unusual for...an American, I presume.



Thank you, yes, I've had to study the language rather closely in my line of work. I do consulting for construction firms here and in Columbia.



*I'm honored to have coffee with you,
Señor Gaitan. You are quite well
known.*

Anthony Bridges.

*And your name,
Señor?*





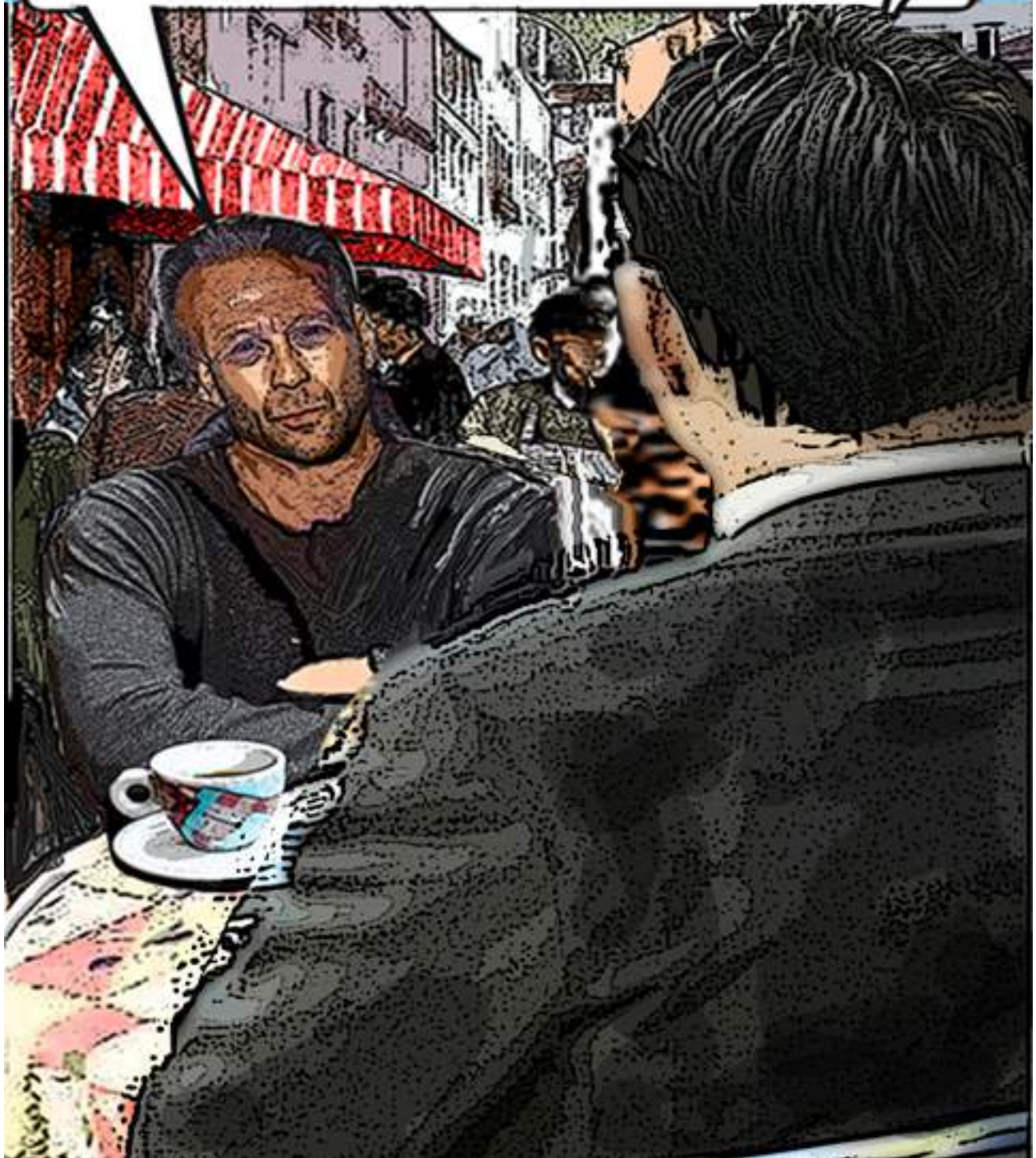


*A double espresso for me, please,
and for you, Señor Bridges, can I
get you anything?*

*No thank you.
I've had mine.*


So, you're in the construction business.

*Yes, I'm here consulting on a project
financed by the IMF.*



Ah yes, the ubiquitous IMF. I'm afraid your employers aren't very enamored of me at the moment. As you read there in the paper, I oppose their plans for development of the U.S. military's abandoned firing range.



A man with dark hair, wearing a grey sweater, is seated at a table in what appears to be a market or a public square. He has a thoughtful expression, with his right hand resting against his face. The background is filled with the activity of a market, including other people and buildings. A speech bubble originates from the man, containing the following text:

Yes, I read that. I can't say I understand your reasoning. Why are you so deadset against this project? It could bring billions into your country.

A fair question. Long ago I remember reading a humorous comment attributed to one of your senators---

'A billion here, a billion there, pretty soon we're talking real money.'

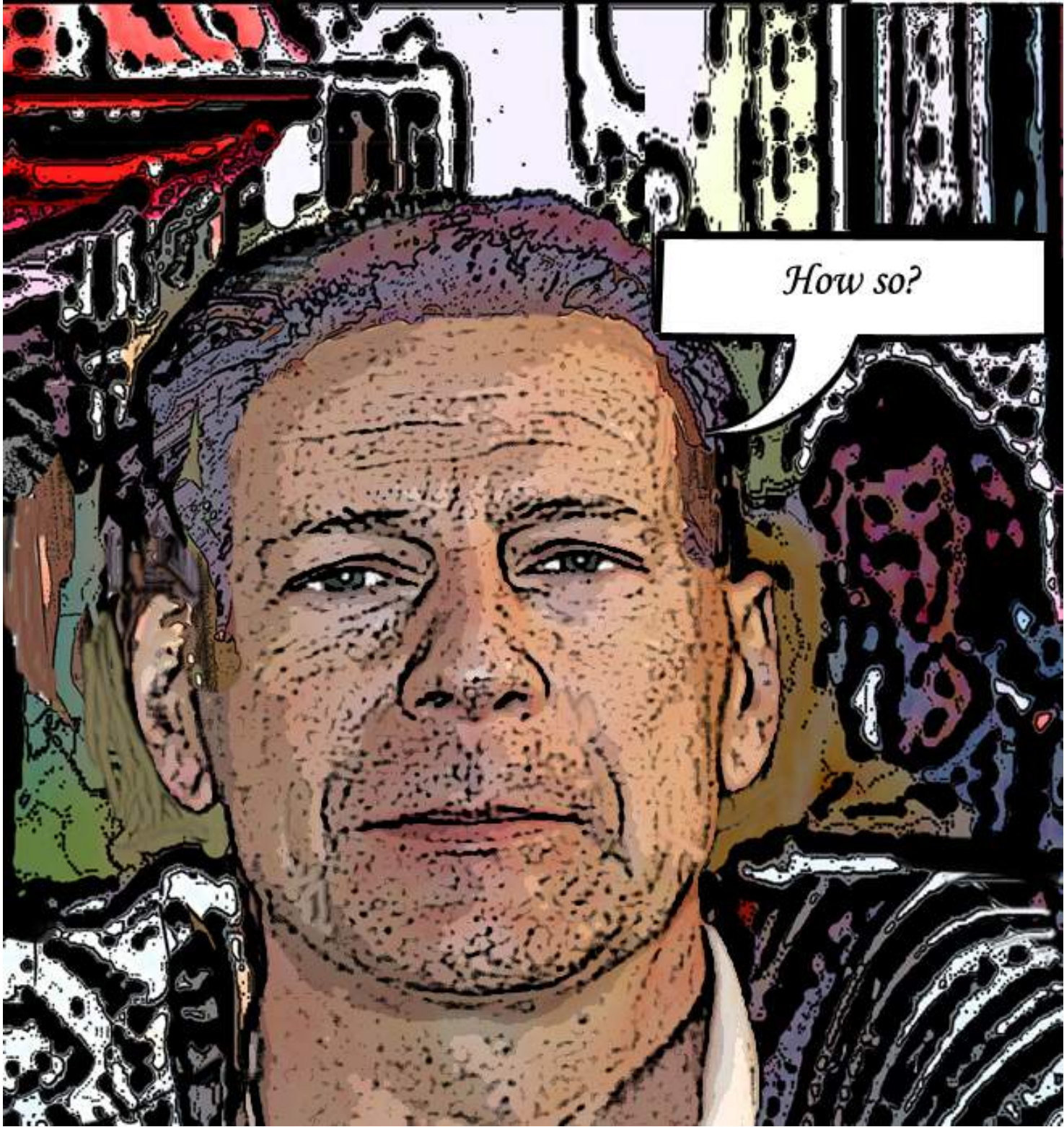


There is no charge for your coffee, Señor Gaitan, nor for your friend, compliments of the management.



Please, don't misunderstand me, Señor Bridges. I have nothing against development. My countrymen need it desperately, especially those affected by the reclamation project. But they and I understand one thing very clearly: they will receive little benefit ultimately.

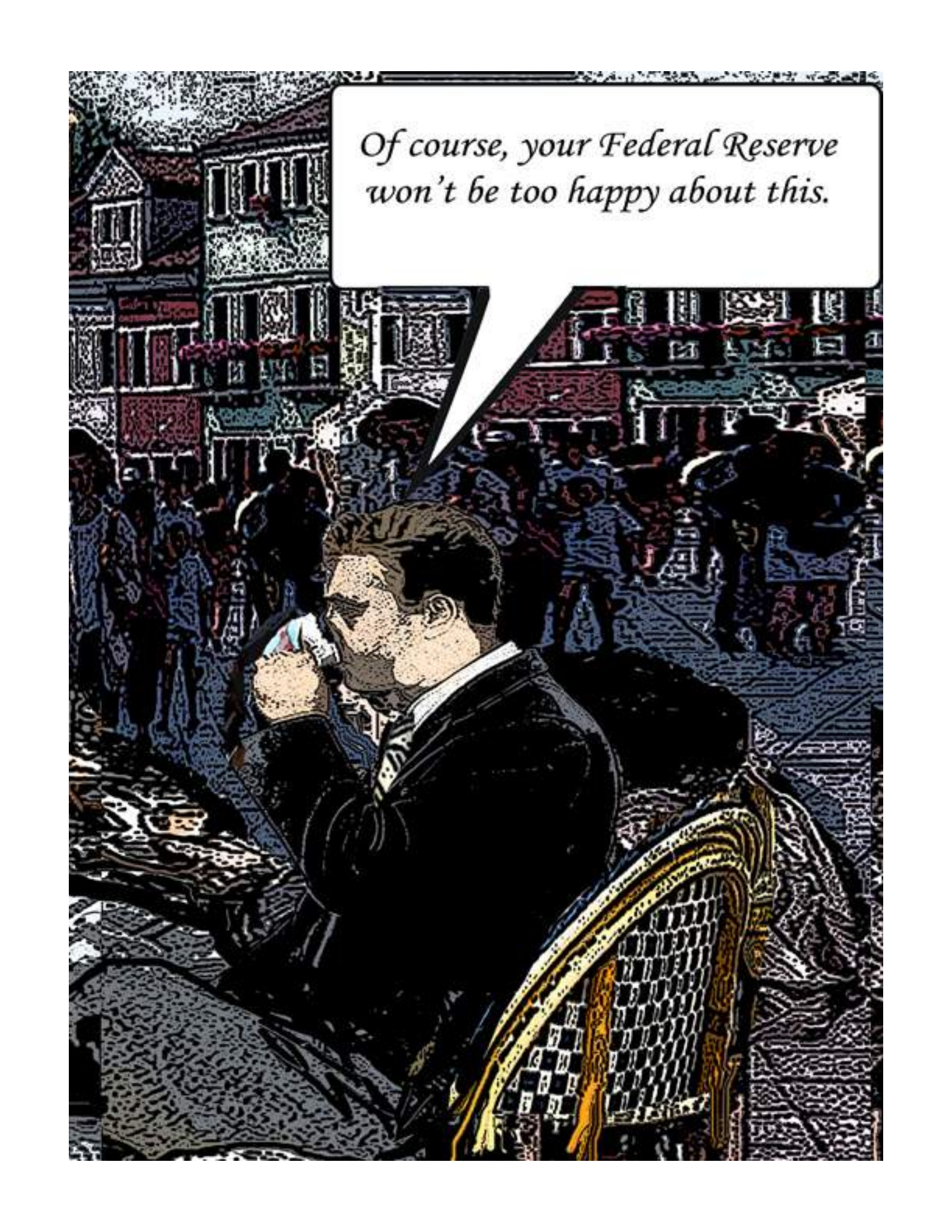





How so?

To be sure, some families here in the capital will profit, but the average citizen--no. He'll just be left with the tab, the interest payment on the loans for decades to come, the depreciation of the purchasing power of our currency if we inflate to pay for it...one of the unseen consequences behind the glittering facade...no, no, I prefer we find another way to finance our growth, without all the political strings attached to IMF money.




A man in a dark suit and tie is seated in a gold-trimmed chair on a busy city street. He is holding a mobile phone to his ear. The background is a dense crowd of people and buildings, rendered in a high-contrast, stylized manner. A speech bubble is positioned above him, containing the text:

Of course, your Federal Reserve won't be too happy about this.

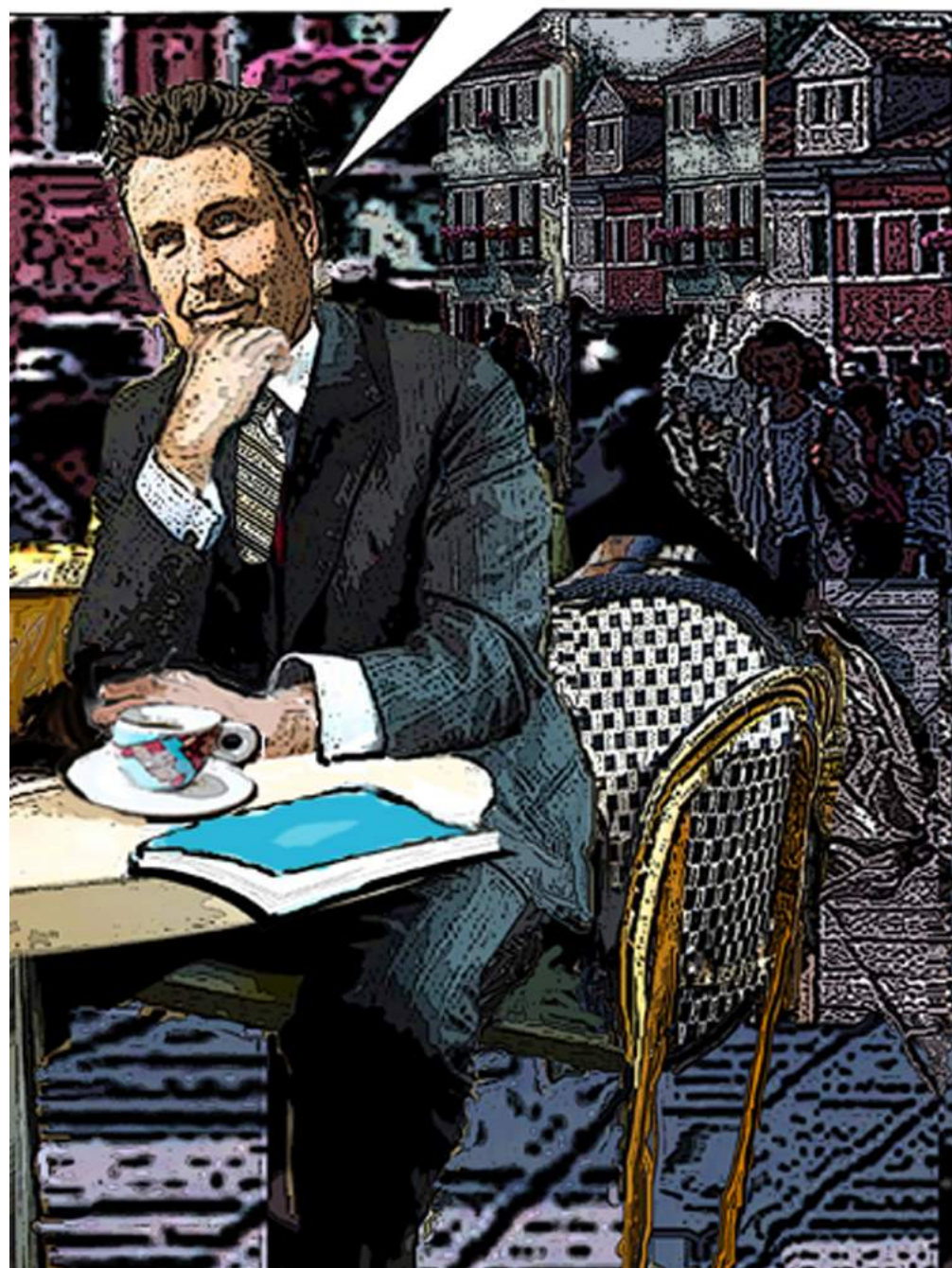


That's where the money ultimately comes from, no? A few entries in a spreadsheet on a computer screen somewhere---voila, the money is there...what a racket these bankers have !

A man in a blue suit and tie is shown in profile, reading a newspaper. He is surrounded by a dense crowd of people, depicted with a high-contrast, halftone-style background. The scene is set outdoors, with buildings and trees visible in the distance. A speech bubble is positioned above the man, containing the text:

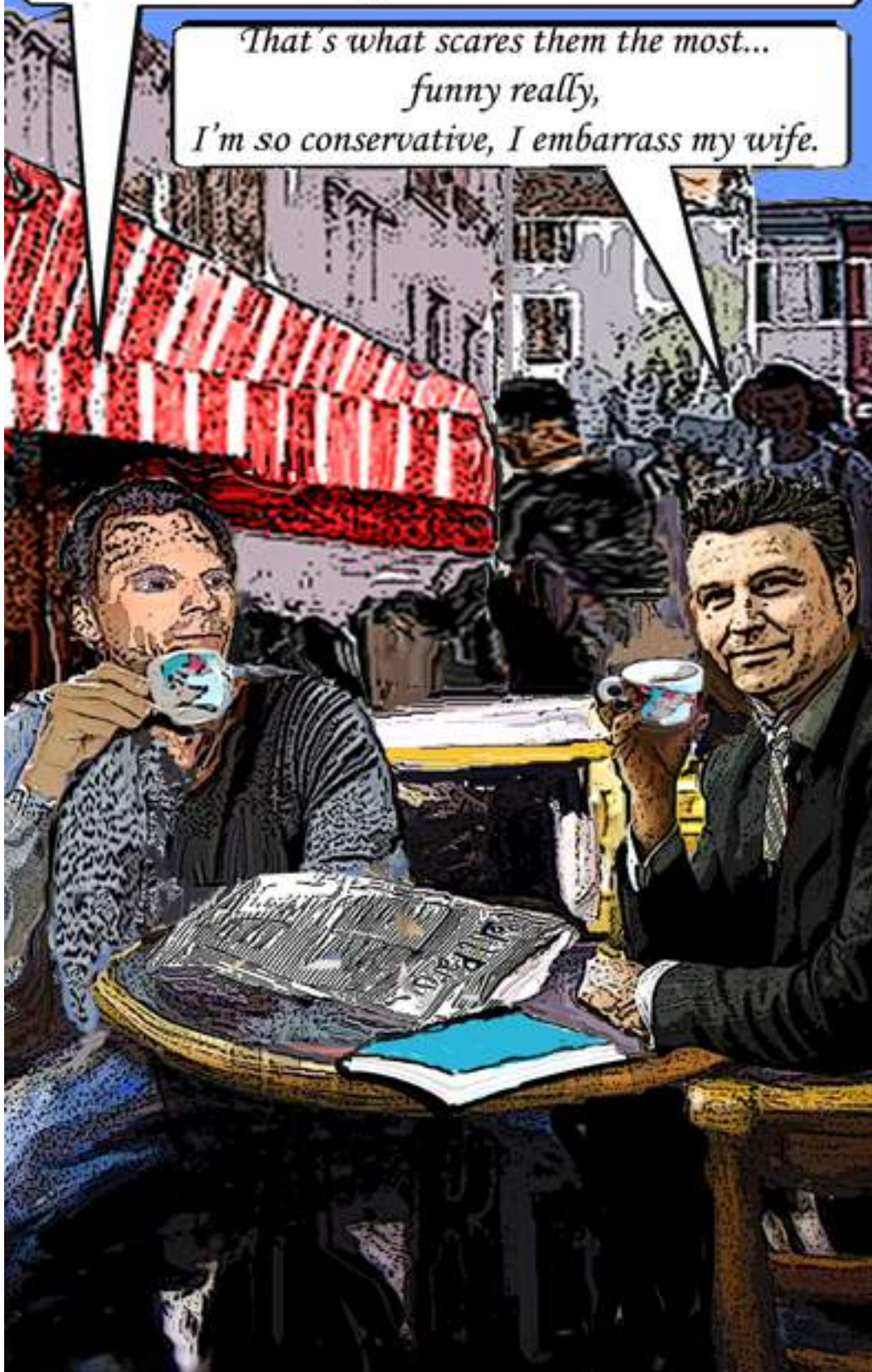
You've become popular as a result of your stand.

That's what I am afraid of, Señor Bridges...a little too popular. I never wanted political influence. I align myself with none of the standard parties, right, left, socialist, communist. Their supporters are all obnoxious ideologues as far as I'm concerned. The truth be told, I can't stand politicians. In fact, I would prefer to be just an ordinary businessman...a pure capitalist, if you will. No mixing of politics and economics at all...I bet that surprises you? All the papers describe me as socialist or communist. Idiots!



*You certainly don't fit the image
of a radical.*

*That's what scares them the most...
funny really,
I'm so conservative, I embarrass my wife.*

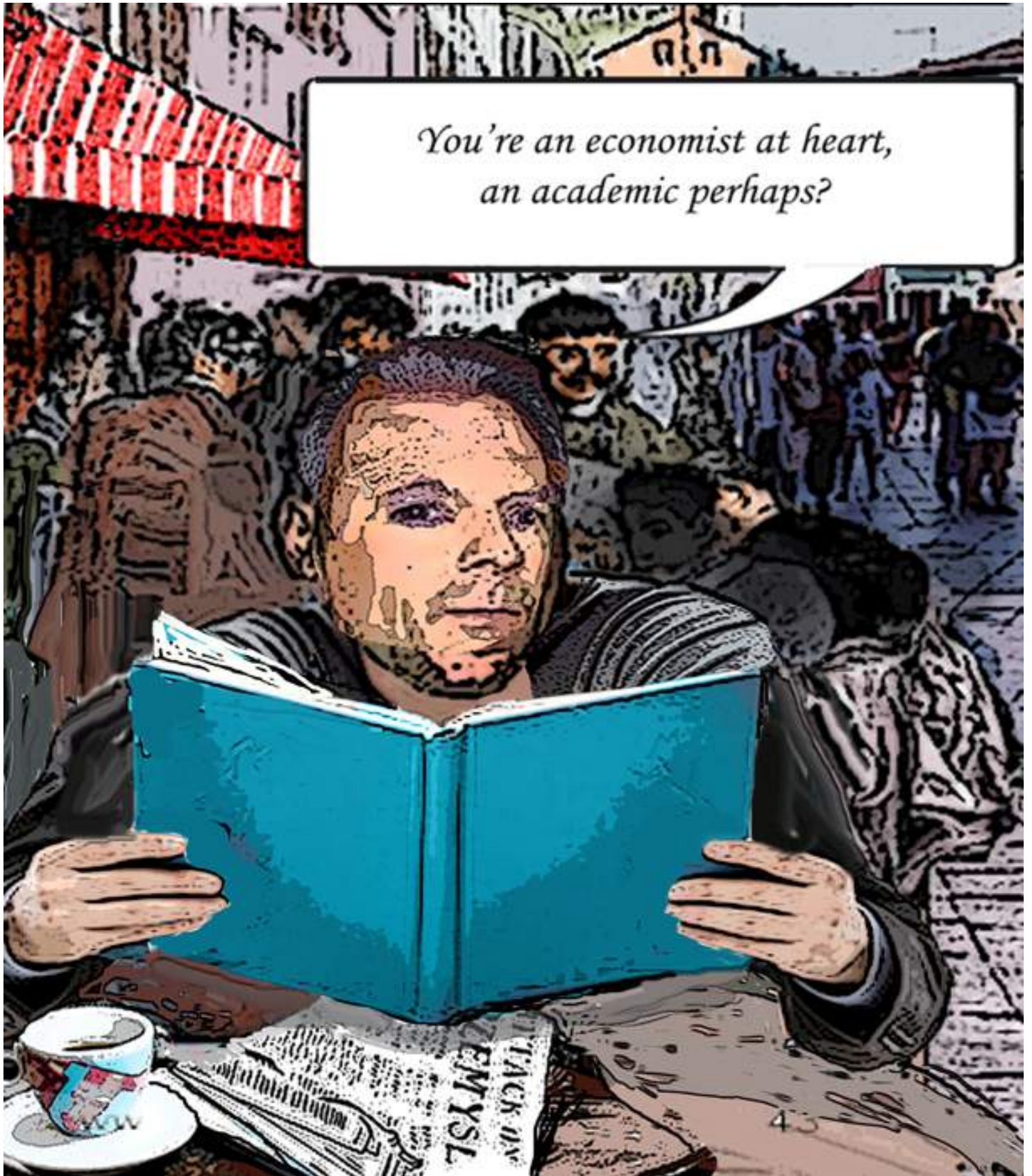


A pure capitalist...

The rarest of all breeds. No lobbying for special privileges from politicians---they hate that. They don't know what to do with themselves if they can't interfere and get a piece of the action.



*You're an economist at heart,
an academic perhaps?*

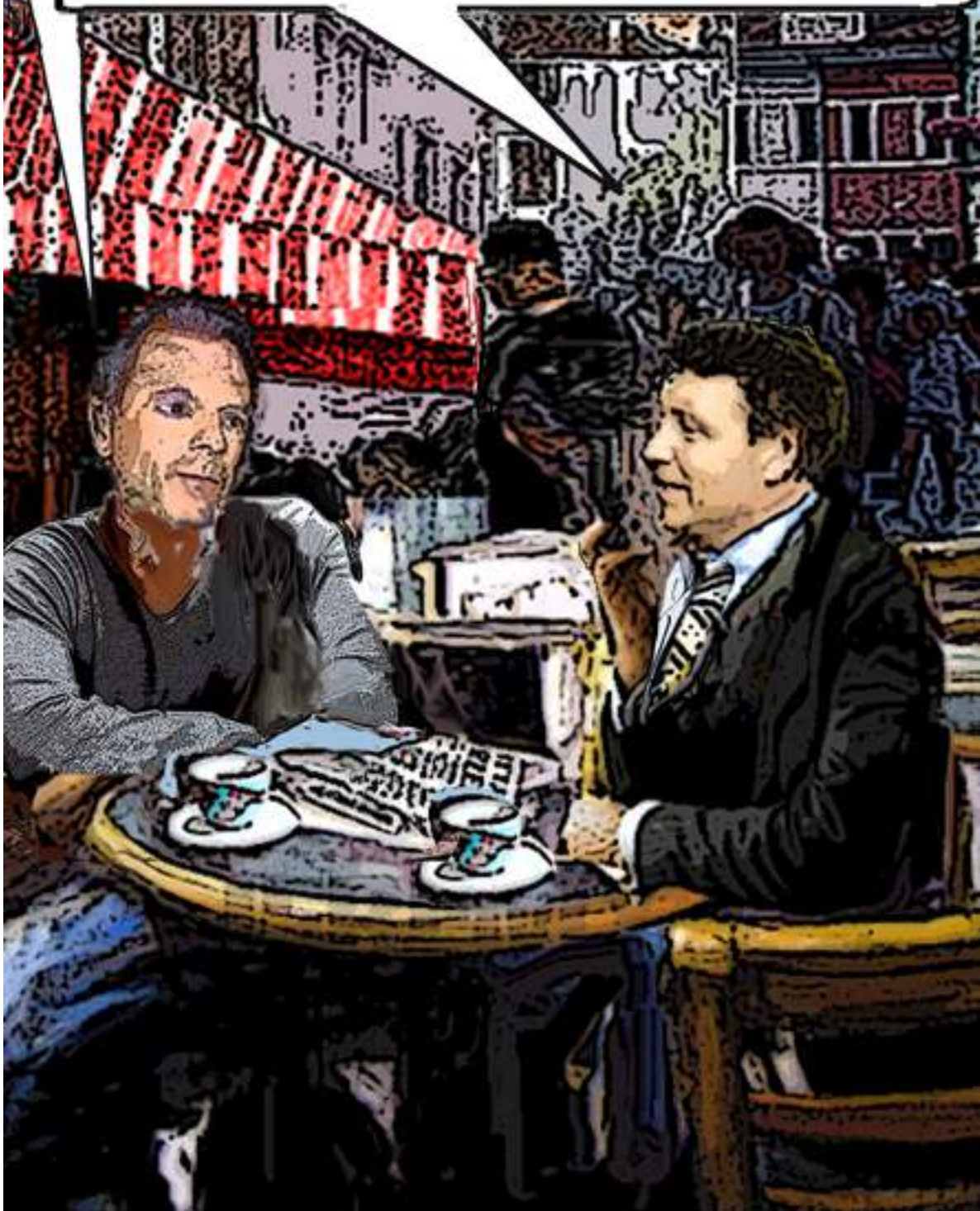


That would have been my first choice, Señor Bridges. Ever since my father returned from a series of lectures in Argentina many years ago, all fired up, as he put it, "with the final understanding of economics". I have to laugh. My father was always finding the 'final understanding' of something or other. Actually though, this was that rare instance when he did. I was a college student at the time.



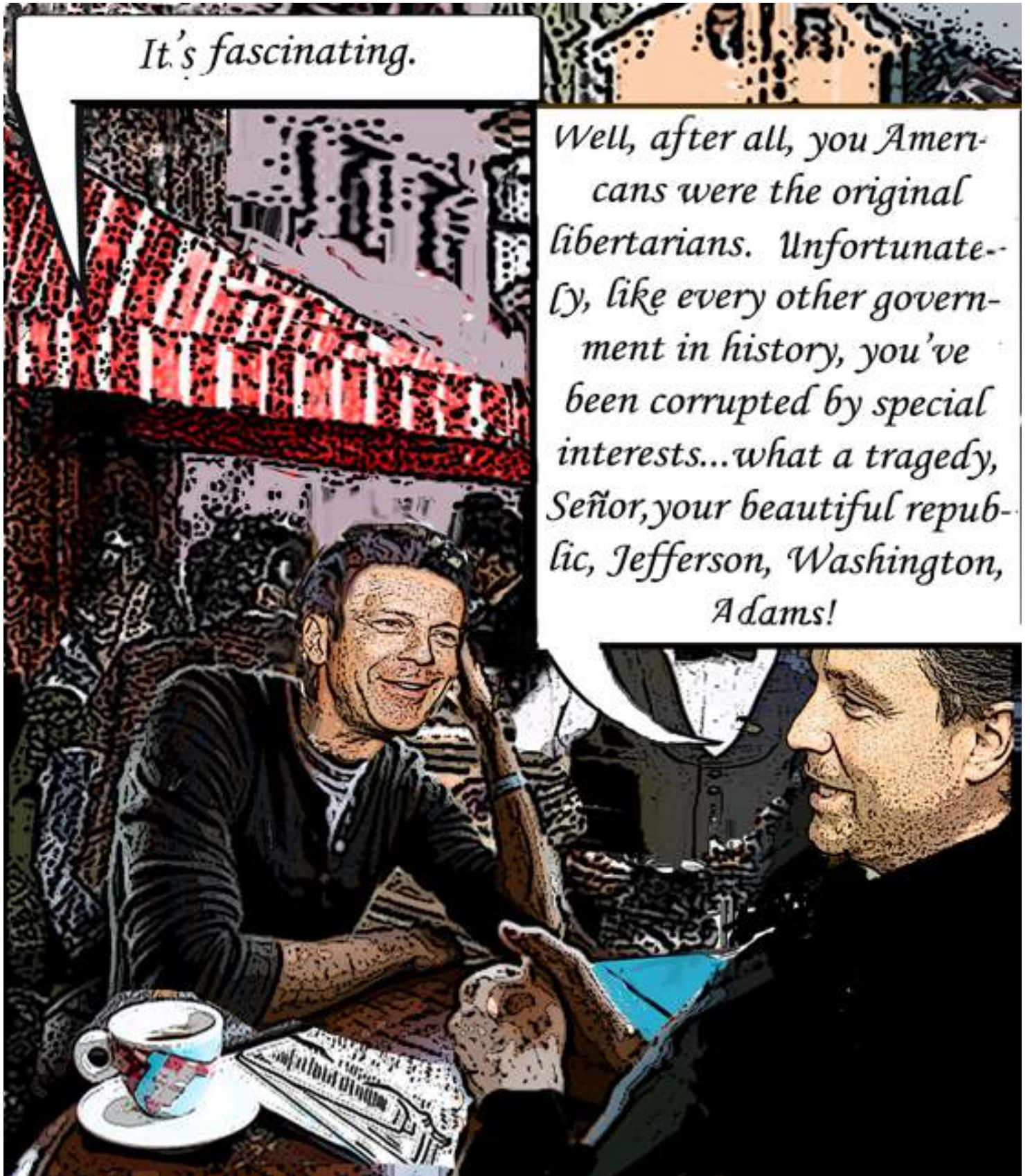
And this book you're reading?

Coincidentally, the lectures that fired him up were by the author of this very book...but here I go on and on about politics and economics on this beautiful morning, ruining a perfectly good cup of coffee. Forgive me. I can't help myself.



It's fascinating.

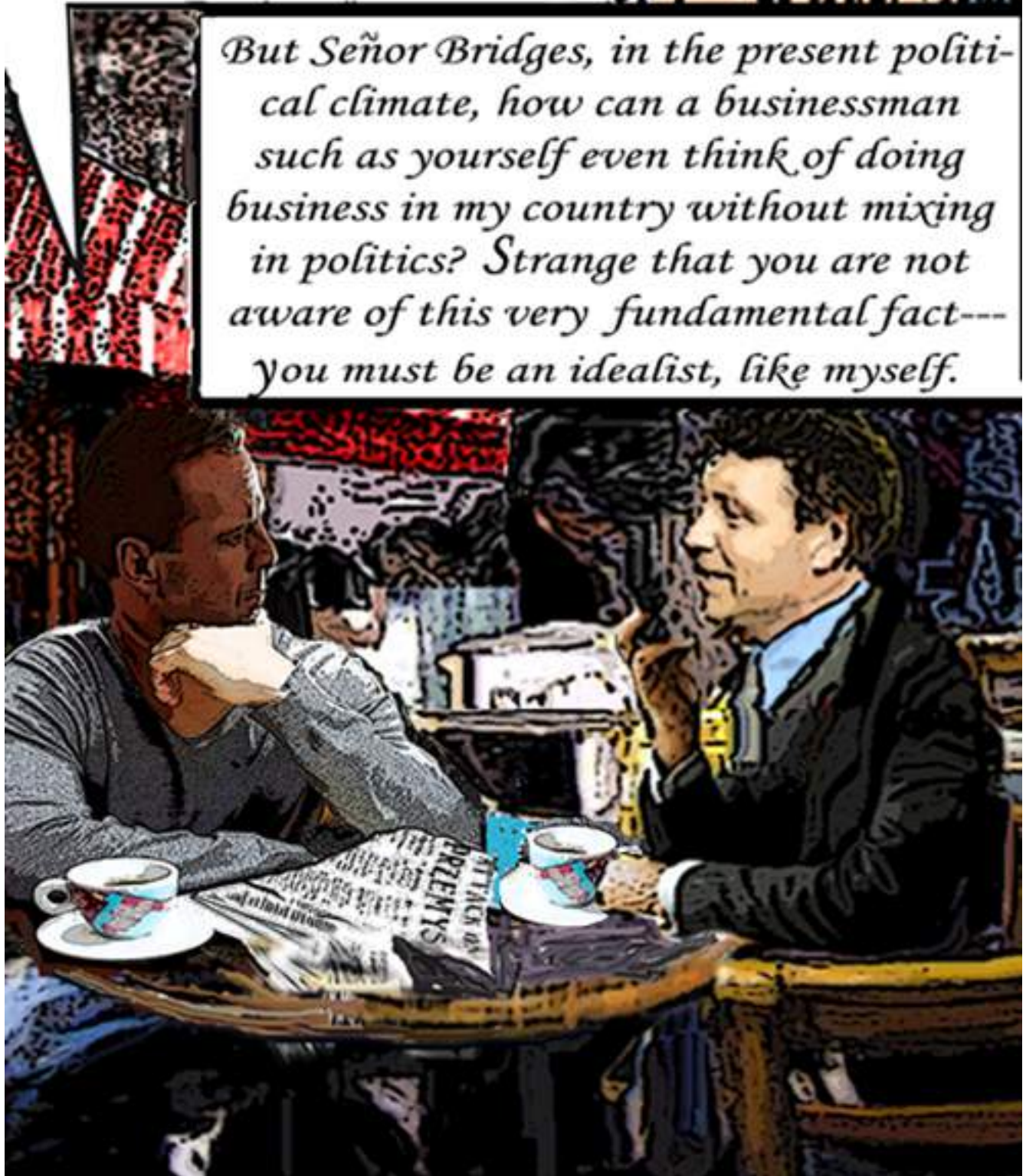
Well, after all, you Americans were the original libertarians. Unfortunately, like every other government in history, you've been corrupted by special interests...what a tragedy, Señor, your beautiful republic, Jefferson, Washington, Adams!



Actually, I avoid politics in my own country. Of course, I know little of the politics in yours.



But Señor Bridges, in the present political climate, how can a businessman such as yourself even think of doing business in my country without mixing in politics? Strange that you are not aware of this very fundamental fact--- you must be an idealist, like myself.



Government should protect the rights of the individual, nothing more. But corruption enters the picture sooner or later and the state ends up protecting the so-called rights of the special interest groups, the elites. It is an ancient story, Señor, is it not? One I would like to change in my country. My wife thinks I'm a reincarnation of don Quixote.





*I see you are hard at
work, Señor.*



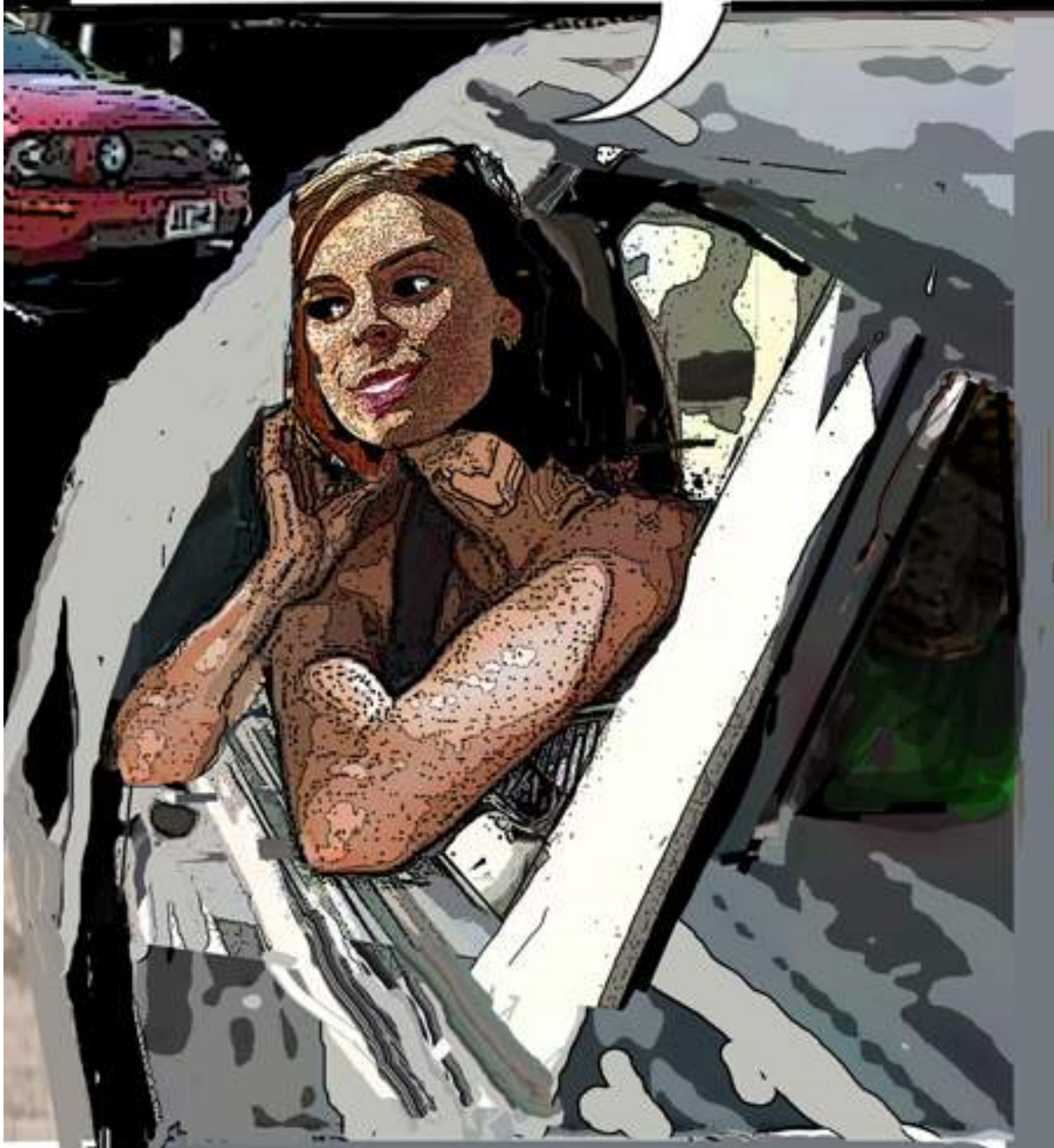


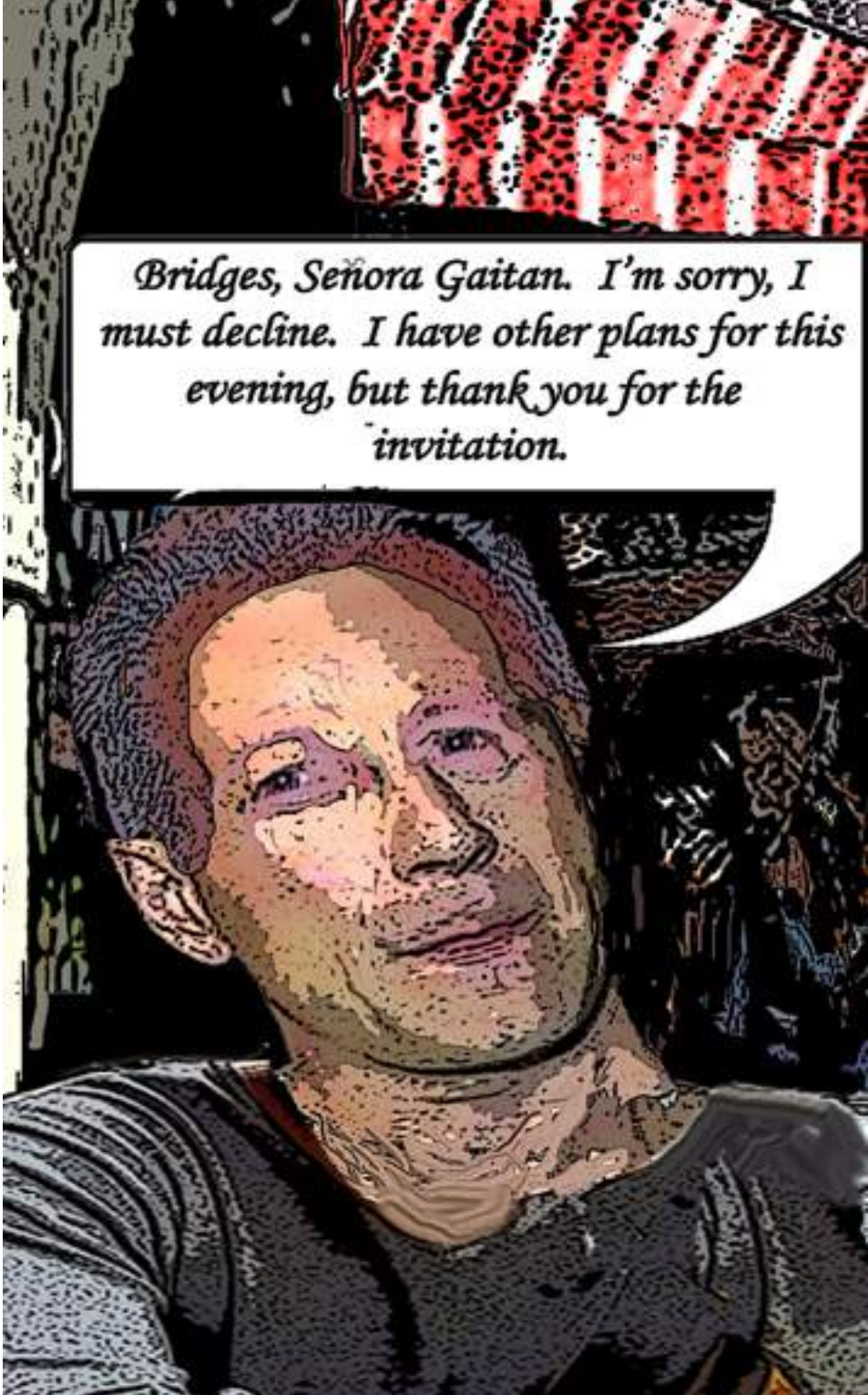
My pleasure, Señora and Señorita.

Señor Bridges, may I present my wife. the lovely slave-driver Esme and my daughter Carlita, who hopefully will not pick up that character trait.

Likewise, Señor.


Antonio, don't forget the barbecue tonight, six o'clock sharp...and bring your new found friend, Señor...






Bridges, Señora Gaitan. I'm sorry, I must decline. I have other plans for this evening, but thank you for the invitation.





*Some other time, then...
Antonio, don't be late,
promise me.*

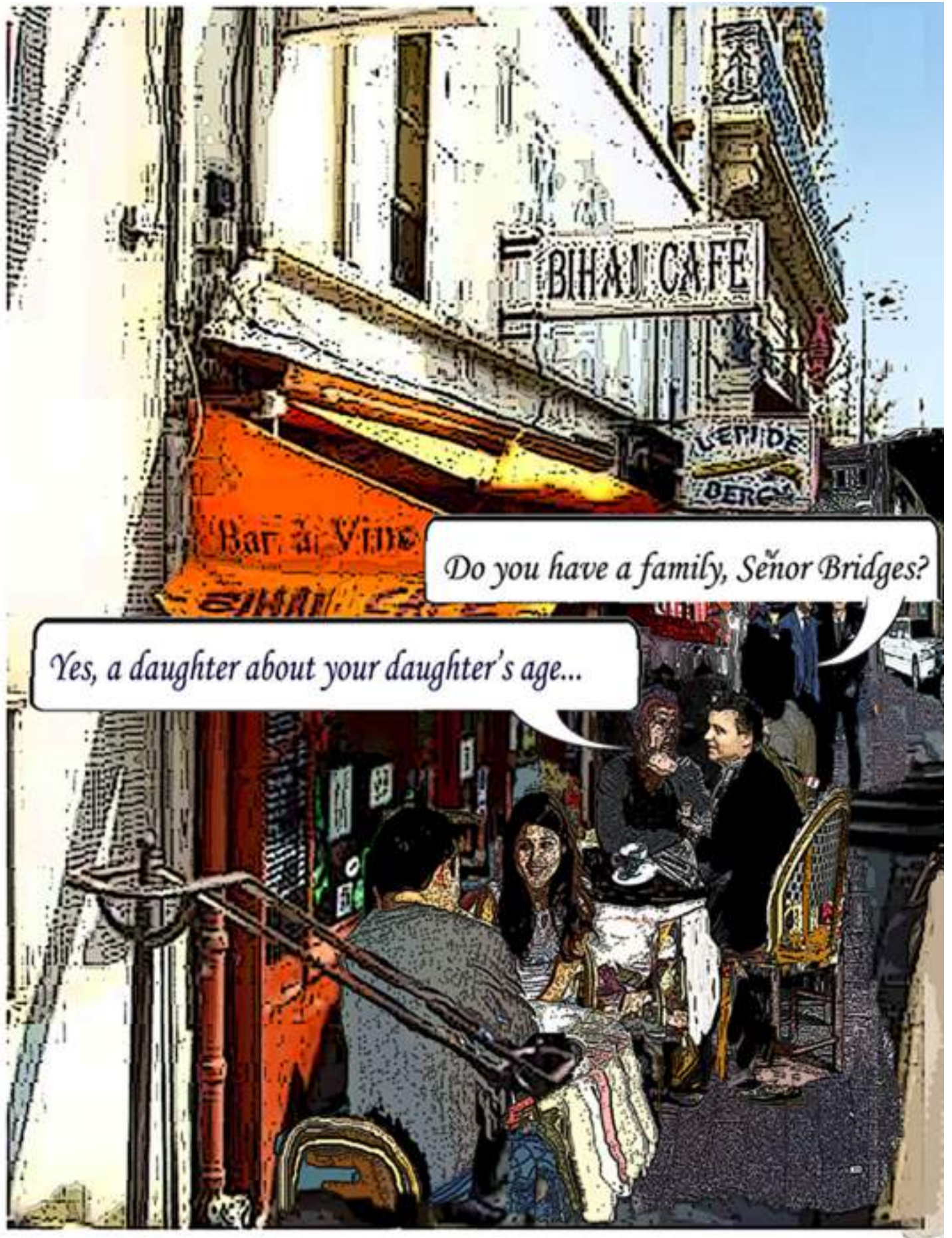
*I will not be late,
sweetheart.*

A man in a dark suit and patterned tie is holding the hand of a smiling woman in a white dress. The scene is set in a room with patterned curtains. Two speech bubbles are overlaid on the image. The first speech bubble, pointing to the woman, contains the text "Promise me?". The second speech bubble, pointing to the man, contains the text "I promise you."

Promise me?

I promise you.





Do you have a family, Señor Bridges?

Yes, a daughter about your daughter's age...

Jungle Ridge Interior of Country
A Day Later

Lieutenant, Rodriguez says
the chopper has taken off.



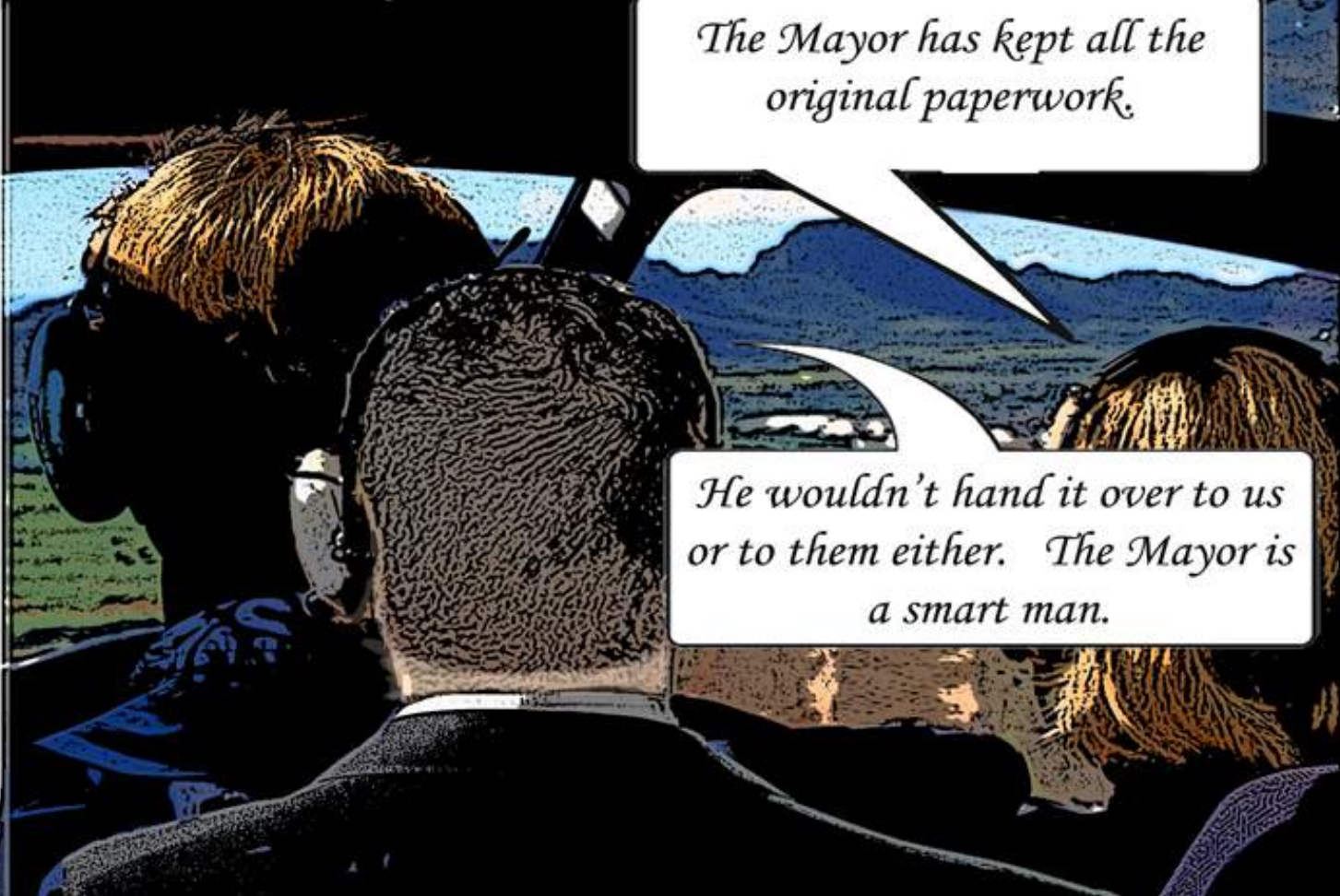


Can you believe the nerve of the American State Department? They actually started to survey the hillside above the village.

The people won't stand for it.

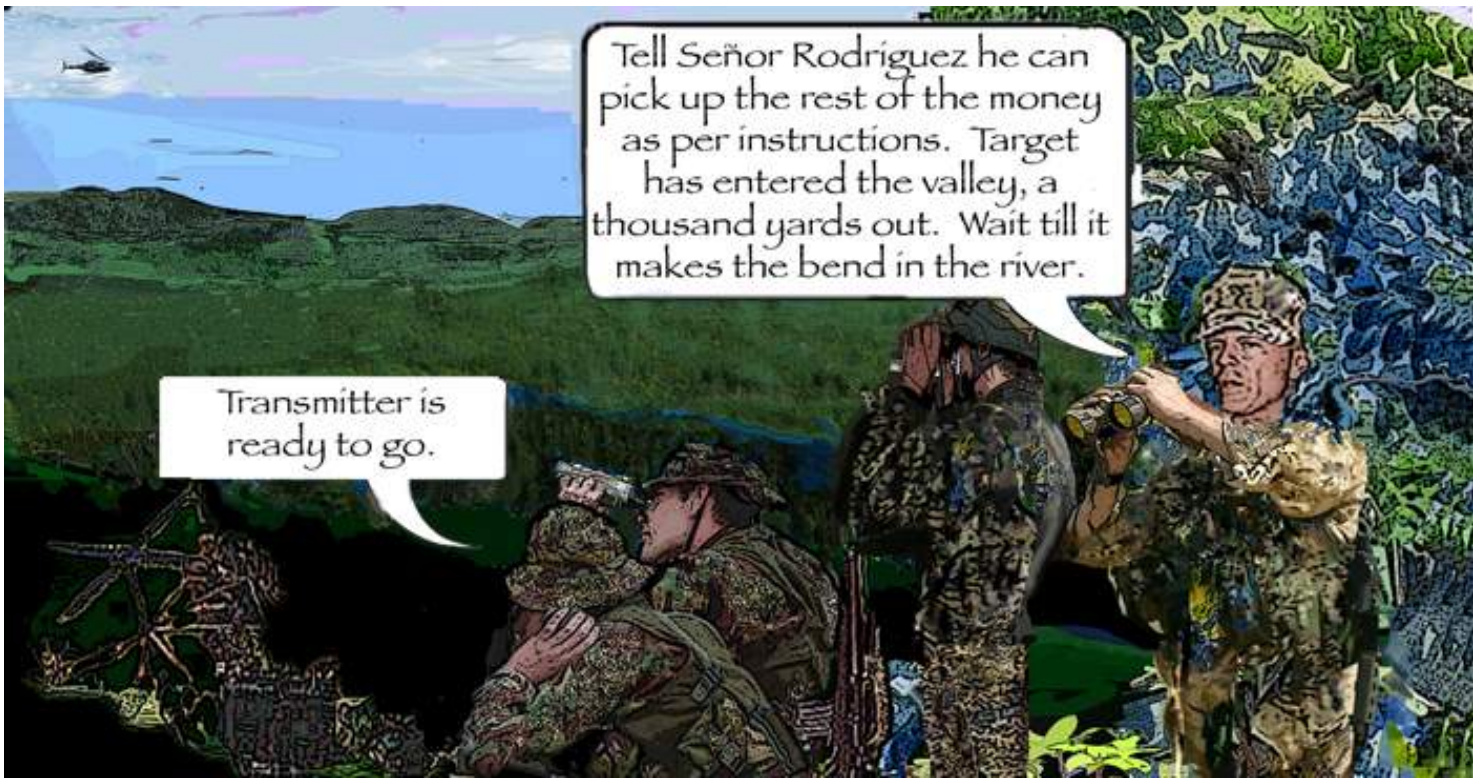
No, you're right, this time they won't.





The Mayor has kept all the original paperwork.

He wouldn't hand it over to us or to them either. The Mayor is a smart man.

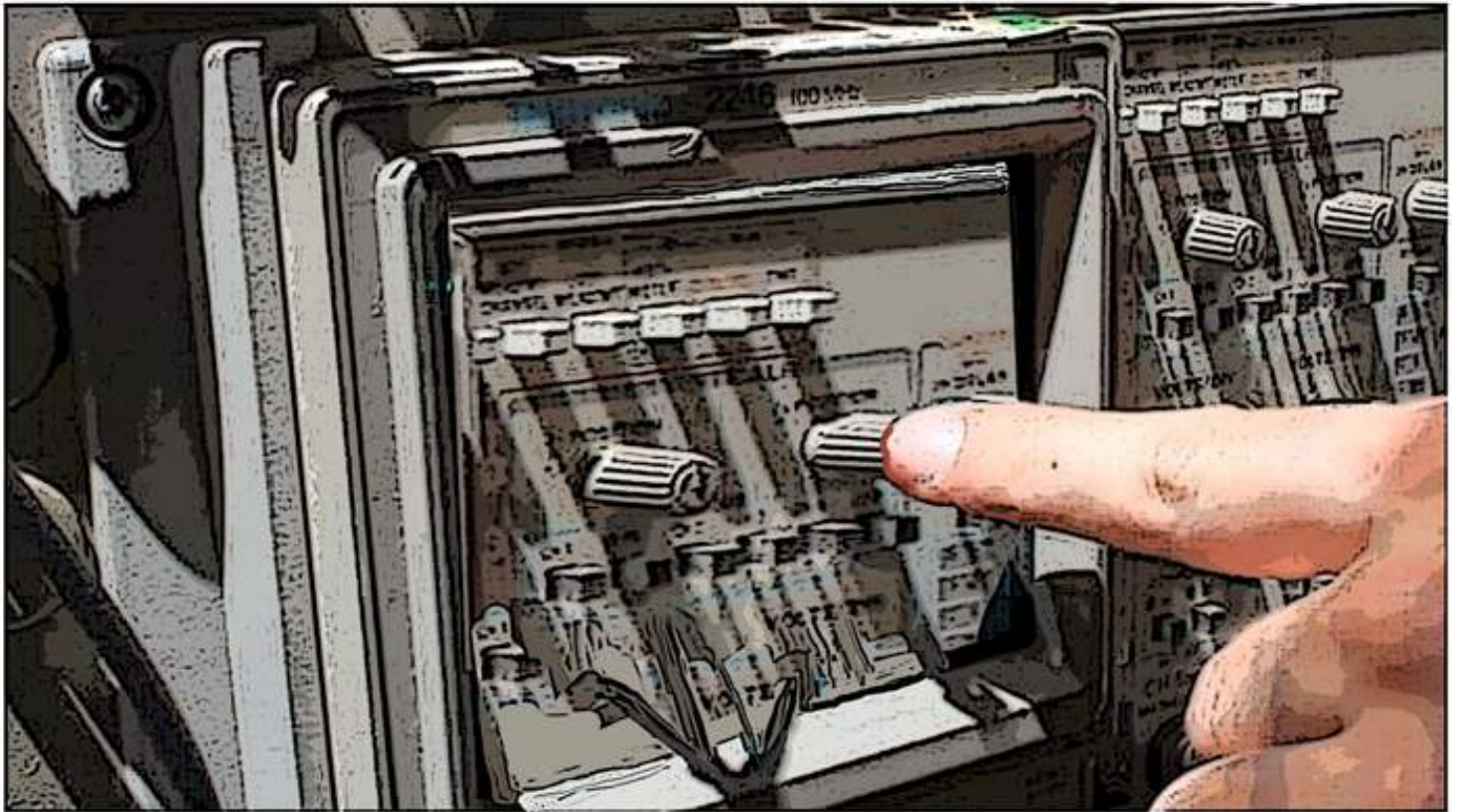


Tell Señor Rodriguez he can pick up the rest of the money as per instructions. Target has entered the valley, a thousand yards out. Wait till it makes the bend in the river.

Transmitter is ready to go.









So unnecessary... Esme, Carlita.





Esme... Carlita







Nobody's walking
away from that one,
Lieutenant



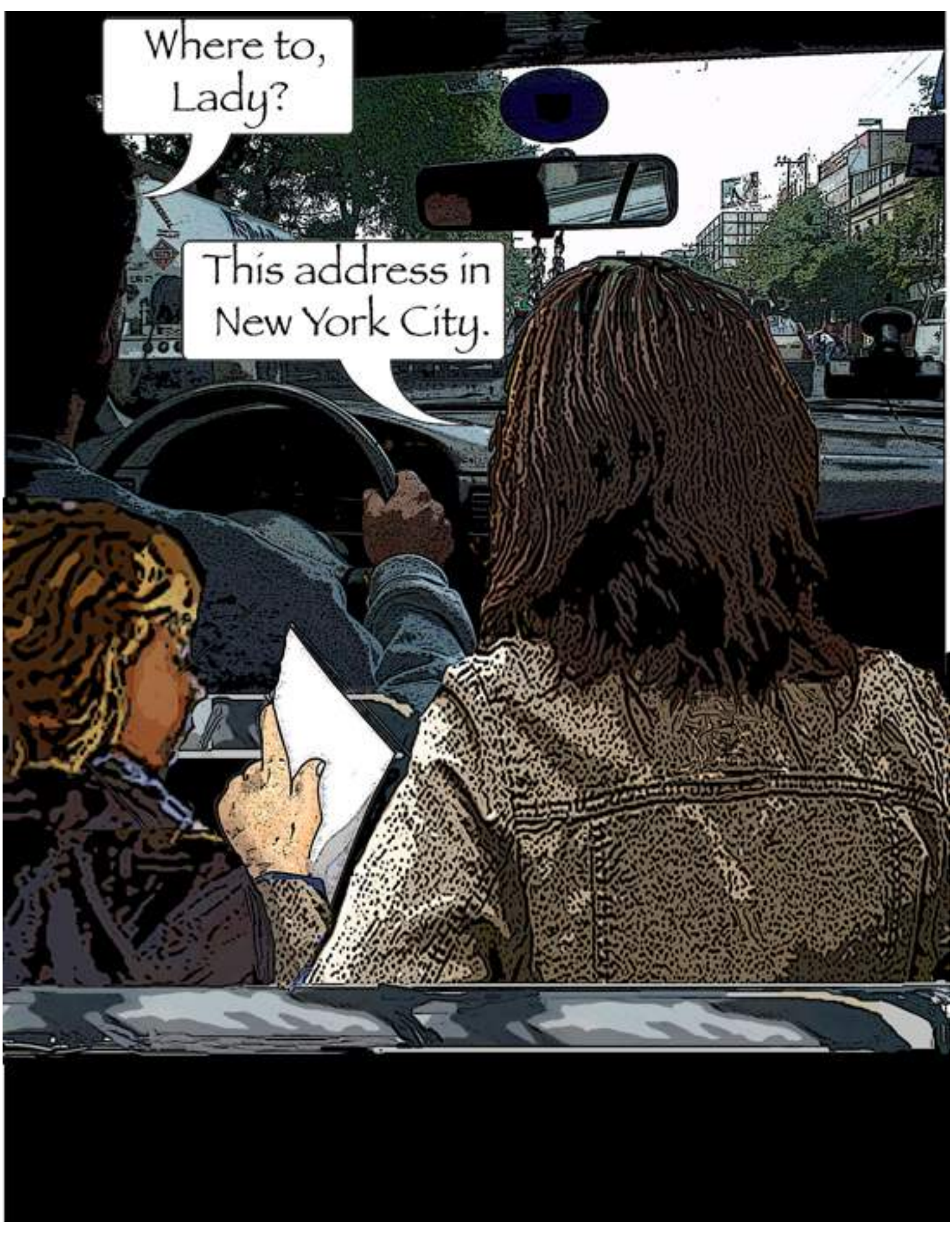












Where to,
Lady?

This address in
New York City.

Very. Call your dispatcher and tell him you got an out-of-town fare....I'll pay you \$500 over the meter to get us safely to that address tonight, and another \$200 to stay at some hotel in NYC before you return tomorrow.







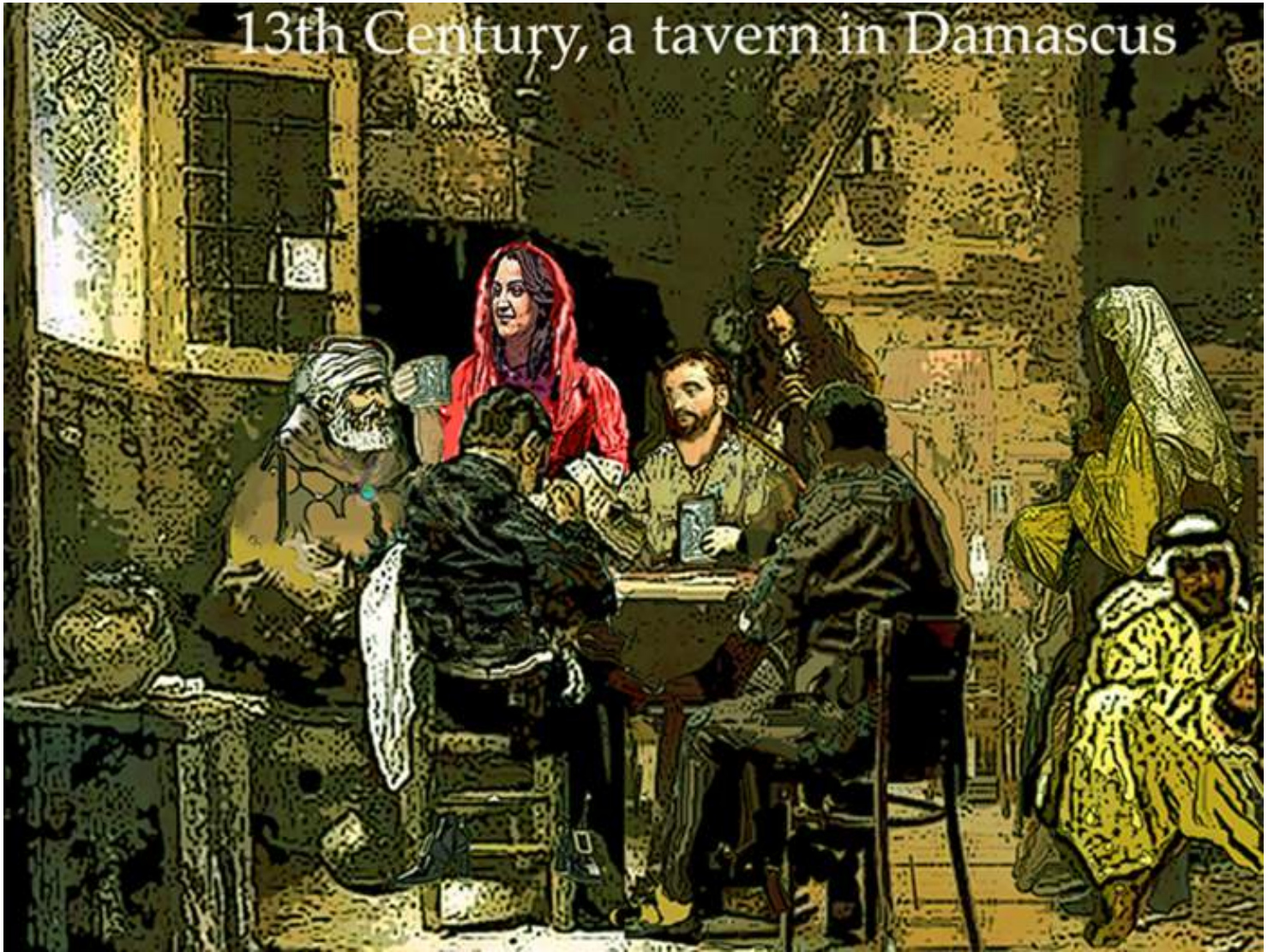


Trisha, Trisha?





13th Century, a tavern in Damascus



you've sold your country!...i have you
this time. i've no money left, the only
thing i can offer is this
beautiful stone....





Let's have a look
at it, old man.


ما نعلمى هى 'ى' تى
about the stone?




it was יתנן תו מה
a few יראי אפ
a man of יונן reli-
ינתף

Per ינא יון... in pal-
estine. יון are a
roman christian,
are יון not?





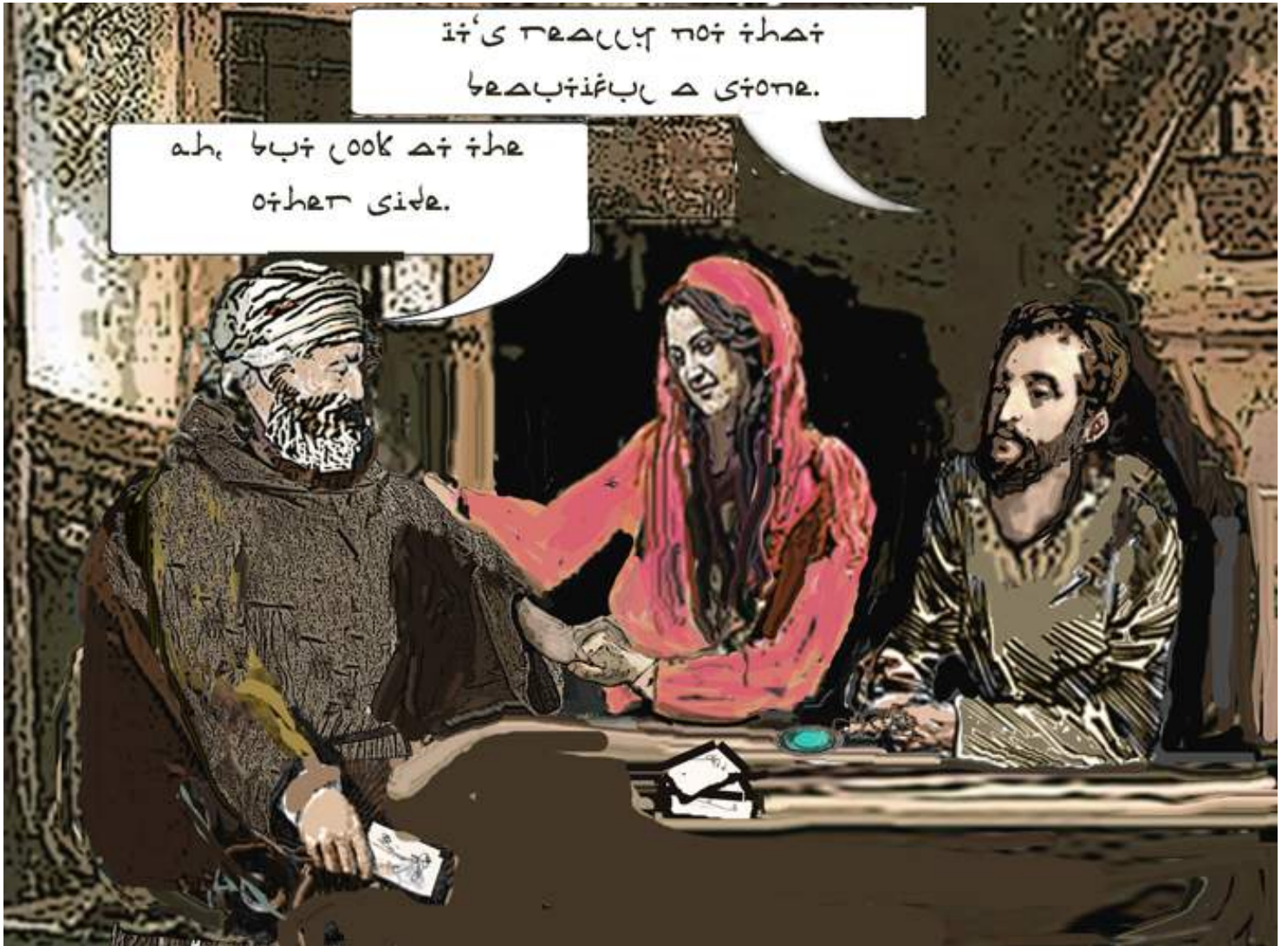
yes ...a little surprised,
i have to admit.



yes ...a little surprised,
i have to admit.

it's really not that
beautiful a stone.

ah, but look at the
other side.






the man who gave it to me had been
living in a cave for fifty two years.
he was a jew but he had converted to
your religion. he still observed all
the jewish rites, an enigma really,
a christian formerly a jew, and
living in a muslim community under
the protection of the
caliph of Baghdad.



why was that?

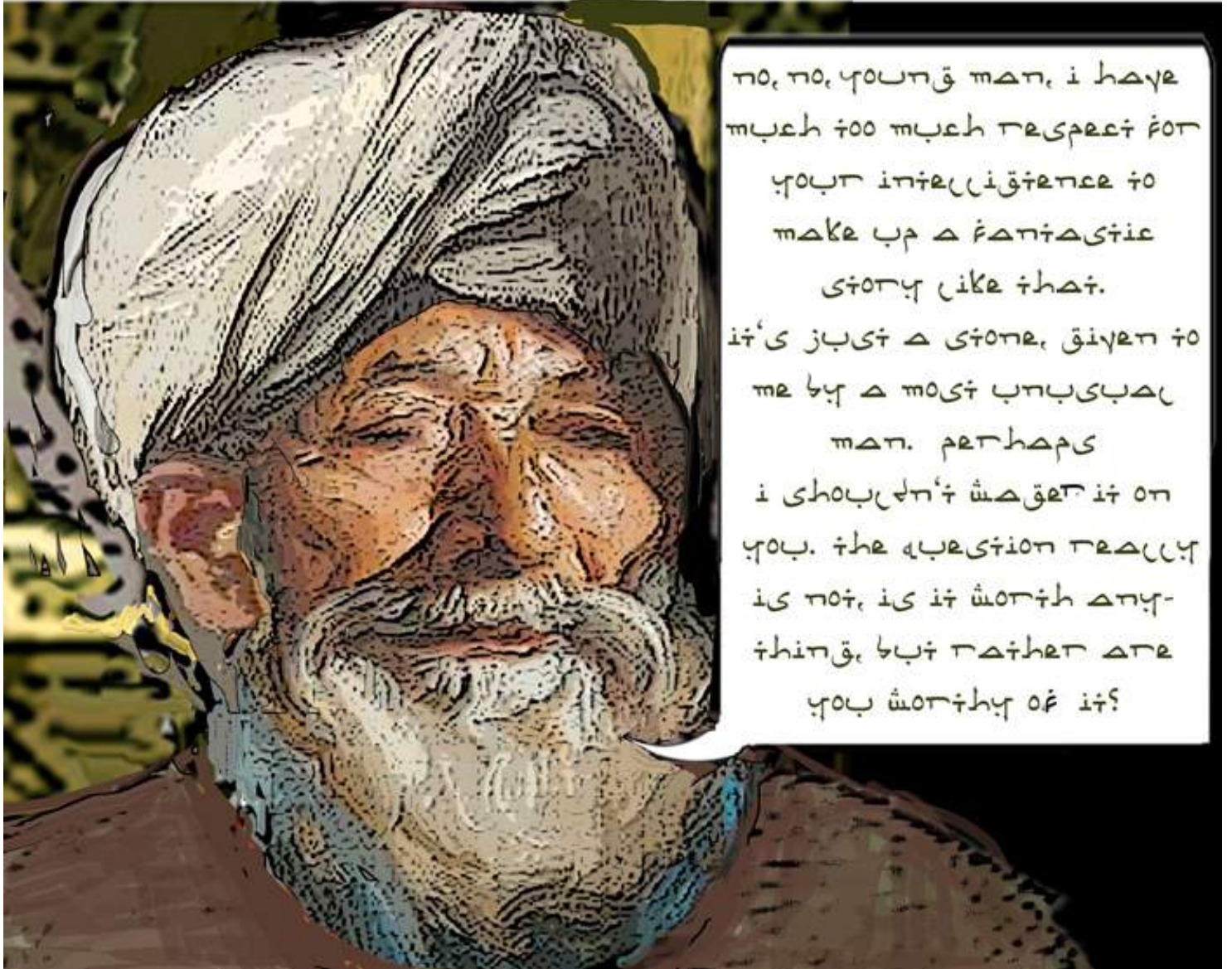
the man had sheltered a
nephew of the caliph from
a band of marauding
عربيات...





I forget who was in charge of
that particular folly.

Yes, yes, old man... now I
suppose you're going to
tell me the stone has
some magical power?



no, no, young man, i have
much too much respect for
your intelligence to
make up a fantastic
story like that.
it's a stone, given to
me by a most noble
man. perhaps
i should not set it on
you. the question really
is not, is it worth any-
thing, but rather are
you worthy of it?

i accept your bet then. let's
find out my worthiness.
show me your cards.



i'm sorry old man.
this just isn't
your day.







NOT YOURS, I'M
AFRAID.

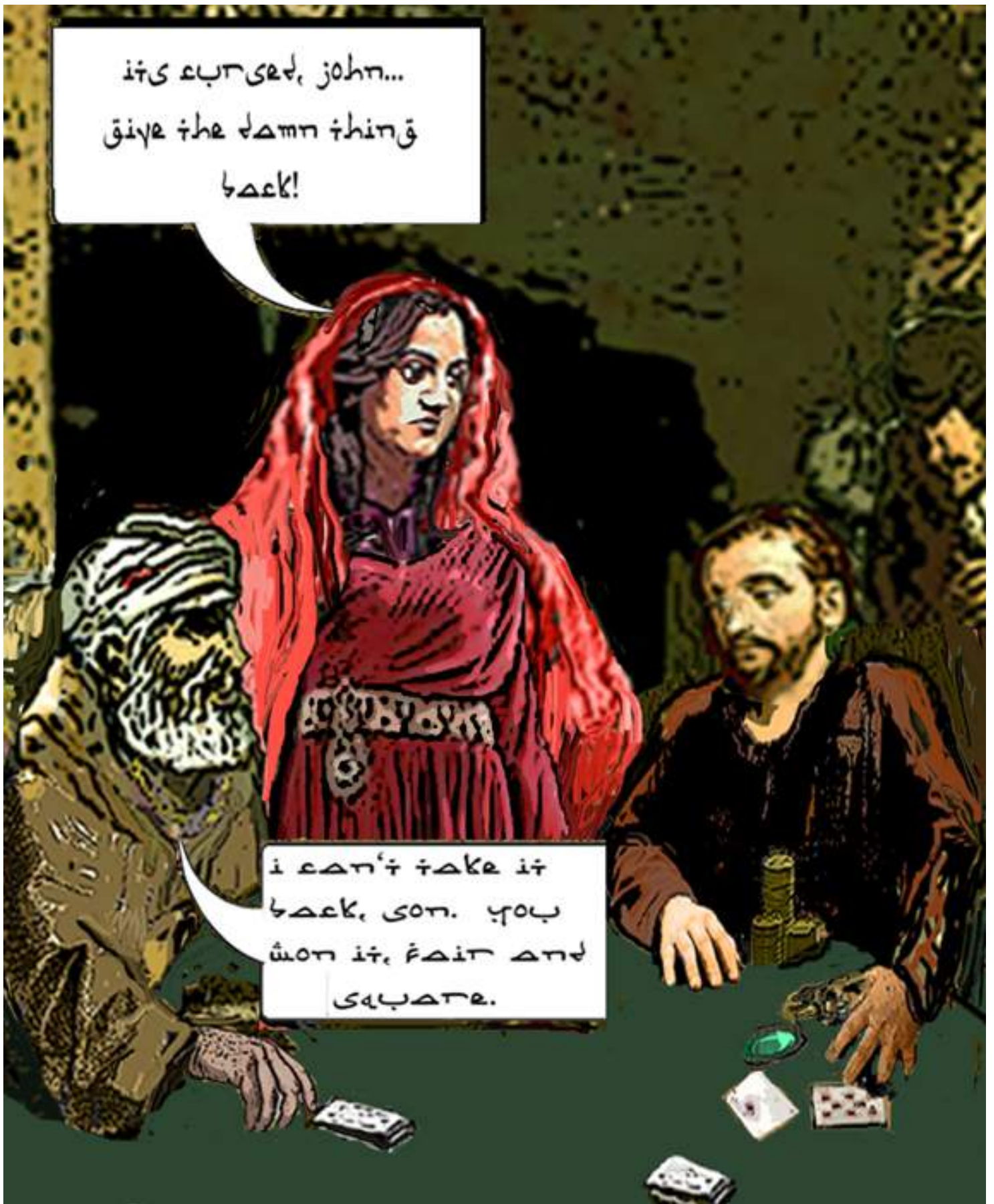
öoh...it feels a little

warm.

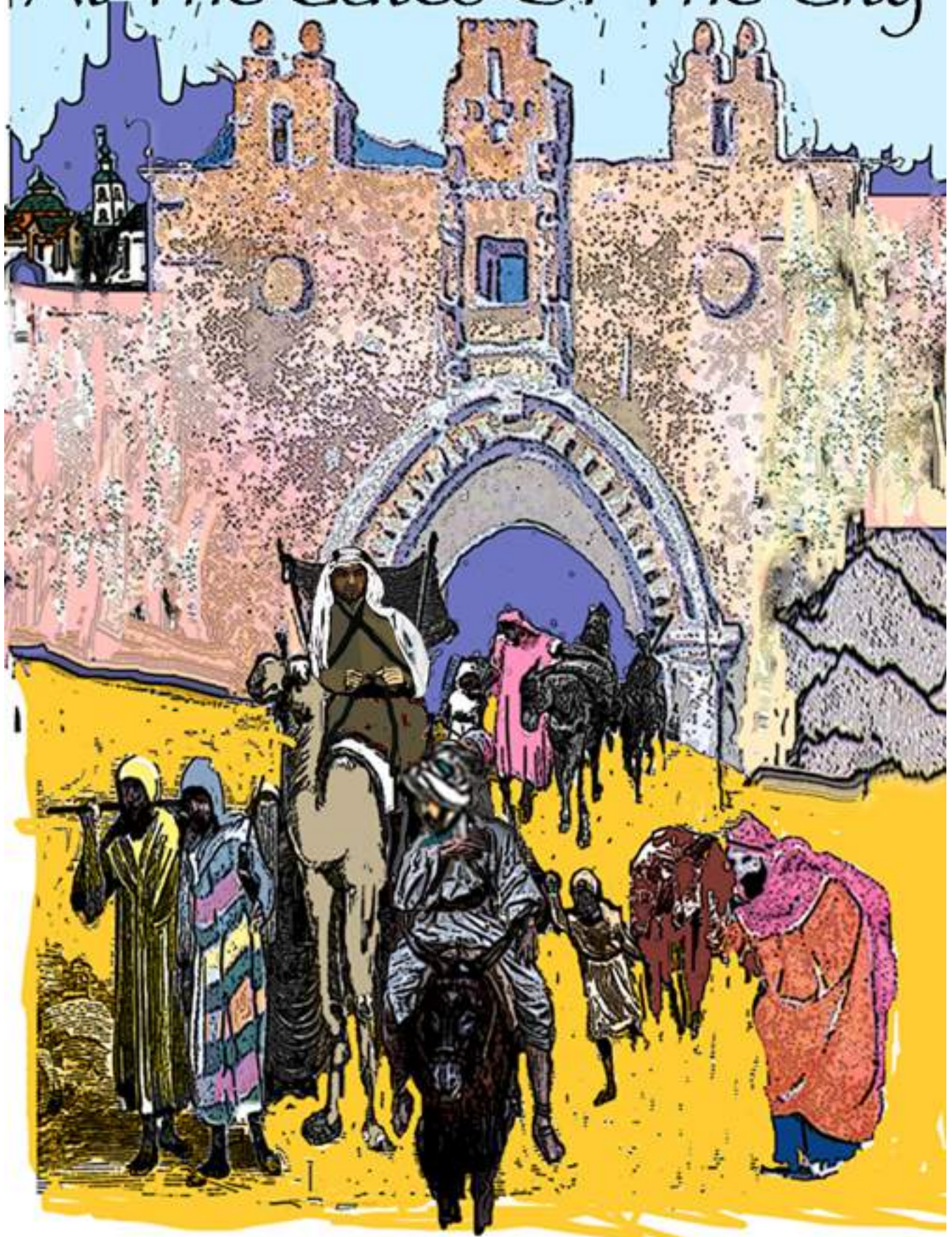


it's not set, John...
give the damn thing
back!

i can't take it
back, son. you
won it, fair and
square.



At The Gates Of The City





we're seeking a wandering monk, bushy beard, wild hair, half crazy. we're offering a substantial reward to anyone with information on his whereabouts.



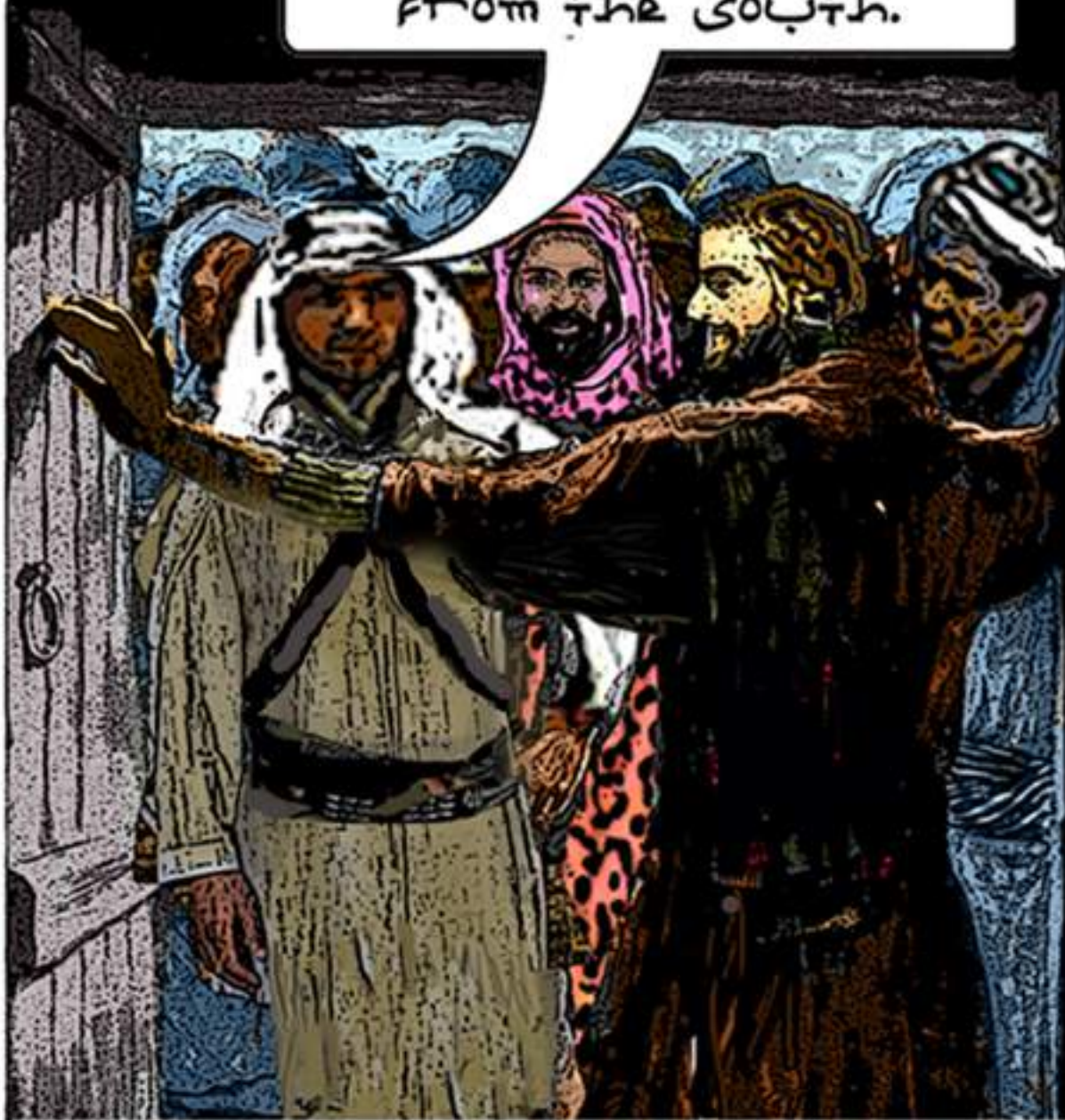
Does this monk
have a fortune
for gambit?

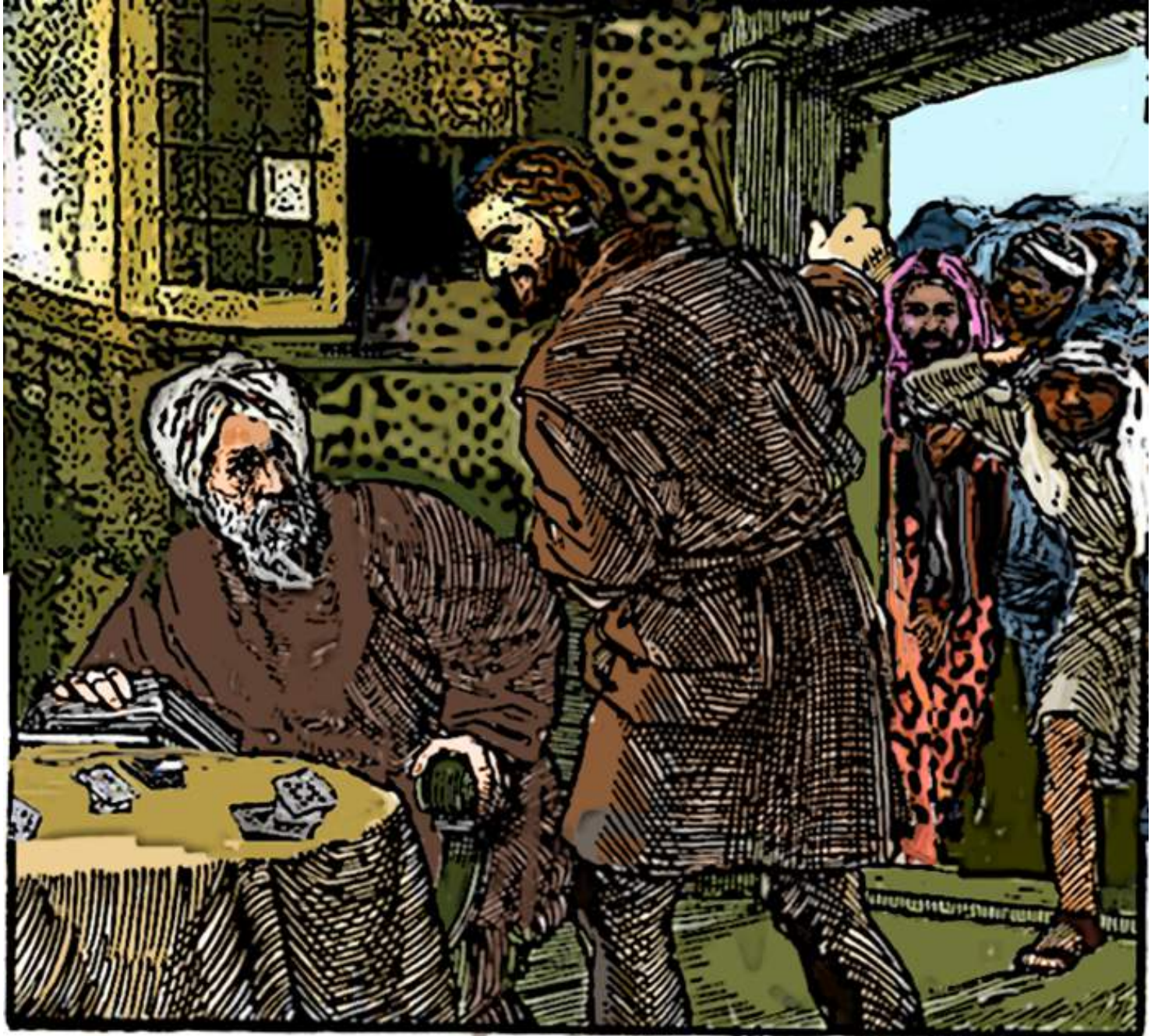
You shall be
all the
reward.



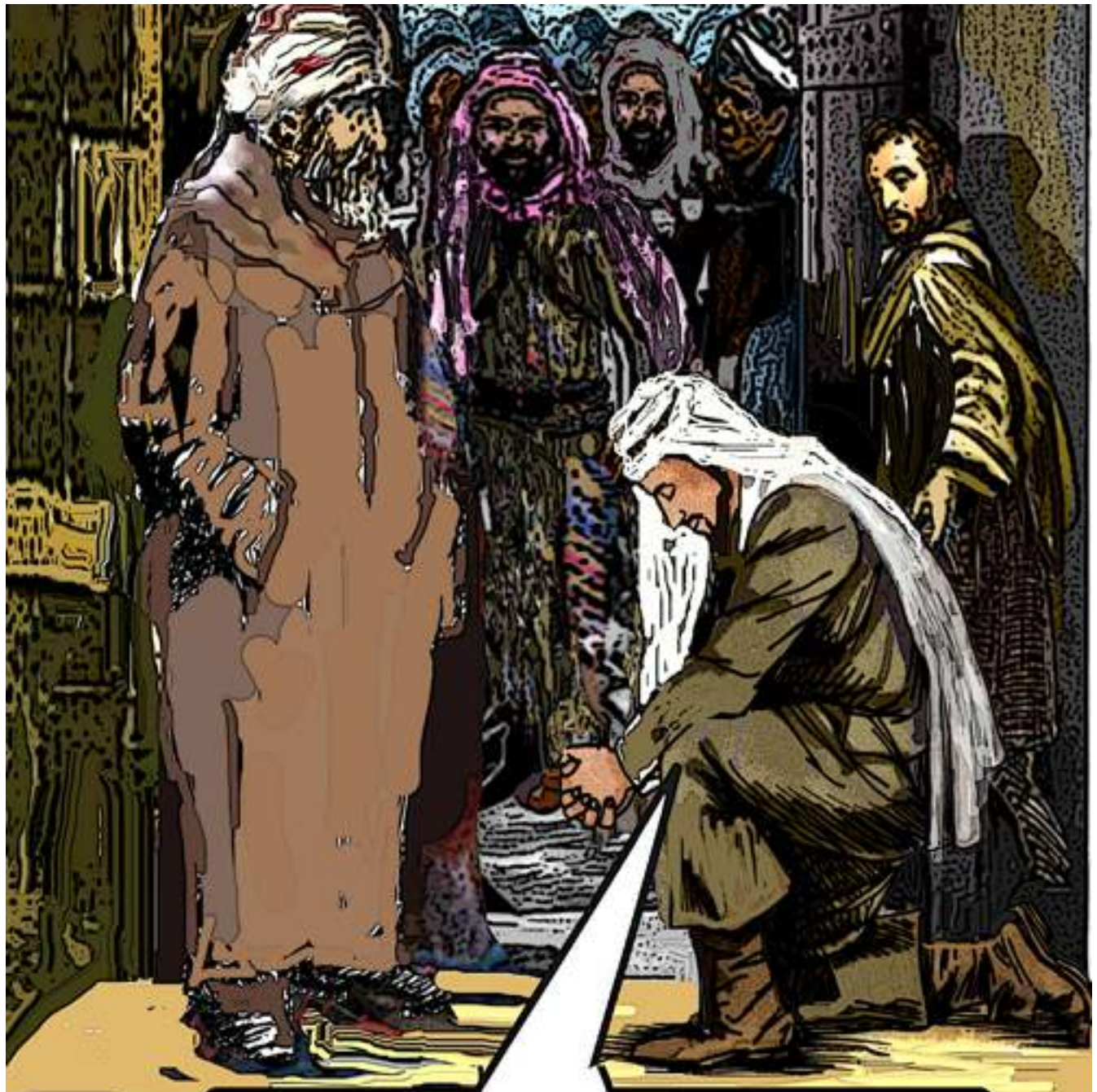


We're looking for a wandering monk. He may have come with the last caravan from the south.



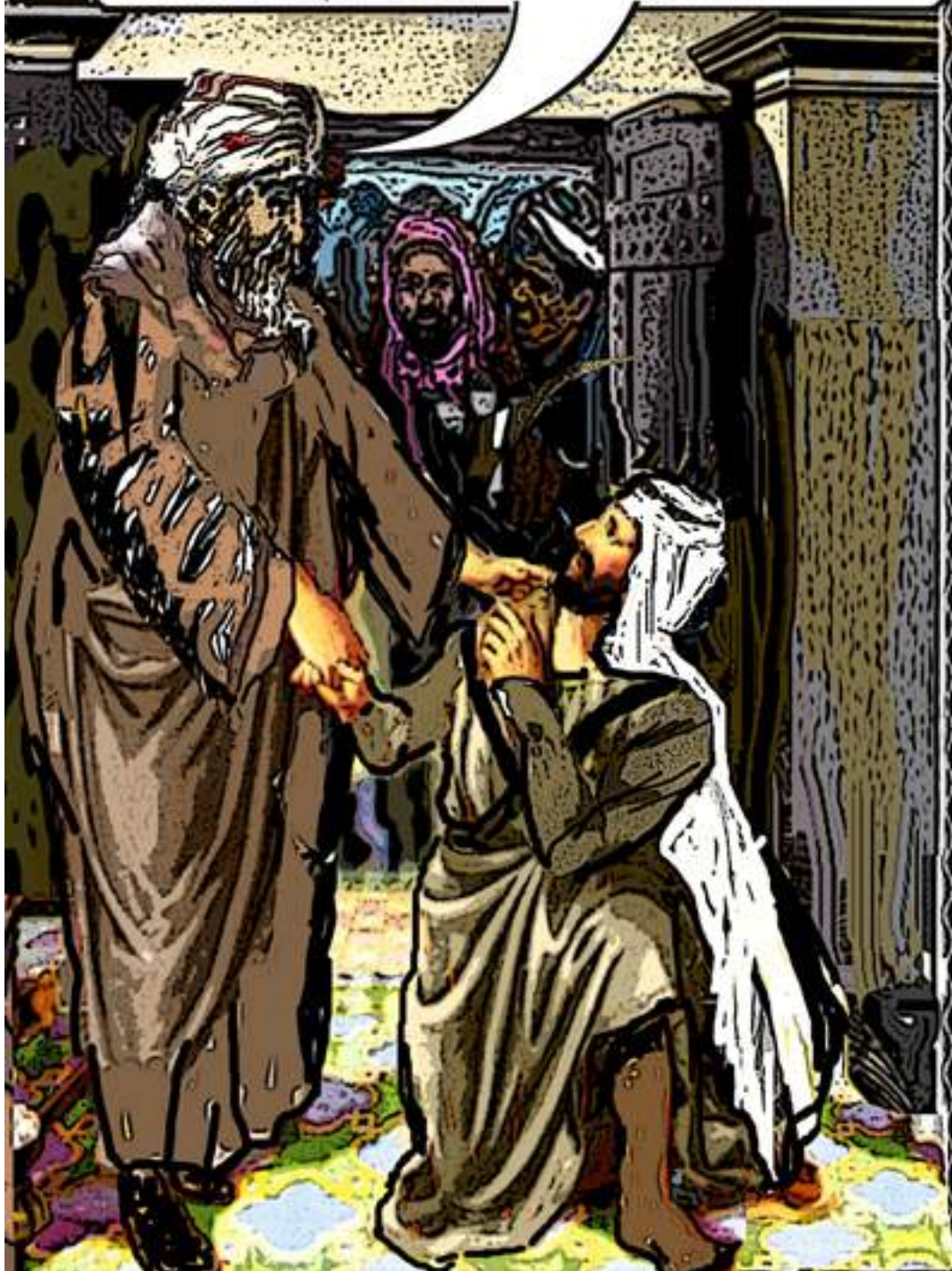






Sir, my father has asked me to seek you out, to apologize to you for the treatment you received at the hands of his students. Sir, he begs you to return in order that he make amends.

allah is indeed great. i
be delighted to return...i'm a
little down
on my back at the moment.





all praise to
allah...
he holds the
earth.



Yes, do you need
anything? Can we
bring you anything
from your residence?

My residence?...that's a good
one.....

No, no...I have everything
right here. Where's my
sheep?

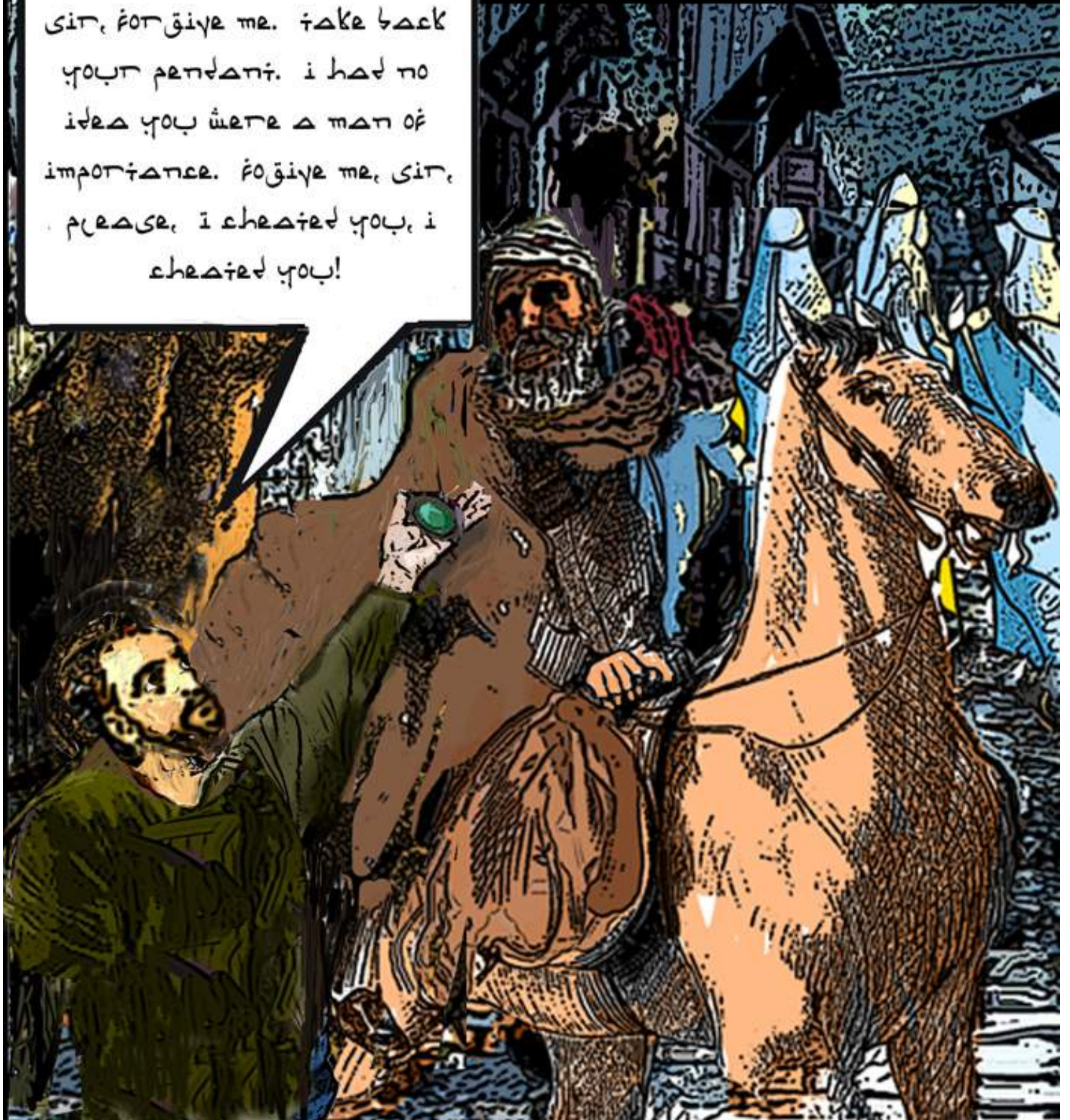









سیت، فوجیوے مے. تاکہ بک
چوہن پندانی. ای ہاڈ نو
ایڈا چوہن شے ڈے ا مان او
ایمپورٹانسی. فوجیوے مے، سیت،
پلےسی، ای شےڈیڈ چوہن، ای
شےڈیڈ چوہن!





where did you say you
were from?
the land of the Franks?

no, sir, from the town
of Assisi, in Umbria,
to the west.



better go back
and work on
your card tech-
nique, you
going to get
yourself killed
you man.
may the grace
of Allah go with
you, wherever
you go.







Present Time...

How long has she been inside?



About fifteen minutes, sir. What do you want me to do?



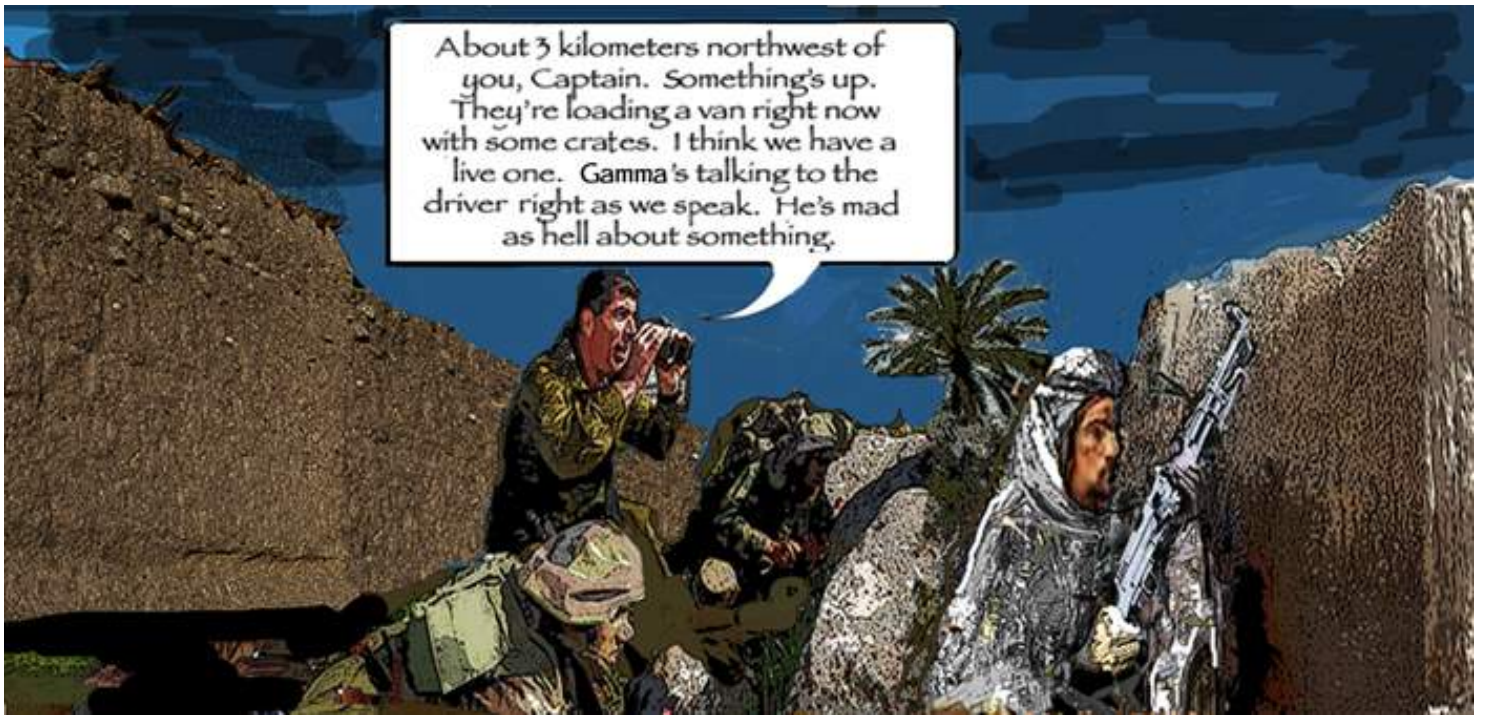


I see you clearly. Join up with us here...you've got good cover from the street, walk behind the wall on your left...keep low.

Díaz, where are
you?



About 3 kilometers northwest of you, Captain. Something's up. They're loading a van right now with some crates. I think we have a live one. Gamma's talking to the driver right as we speak. He's mad as hell about something.



Keep your team
out of sight.





Captain, there are kids all over the place...a soccer game in the lot next to the van. We can't take the van out here.



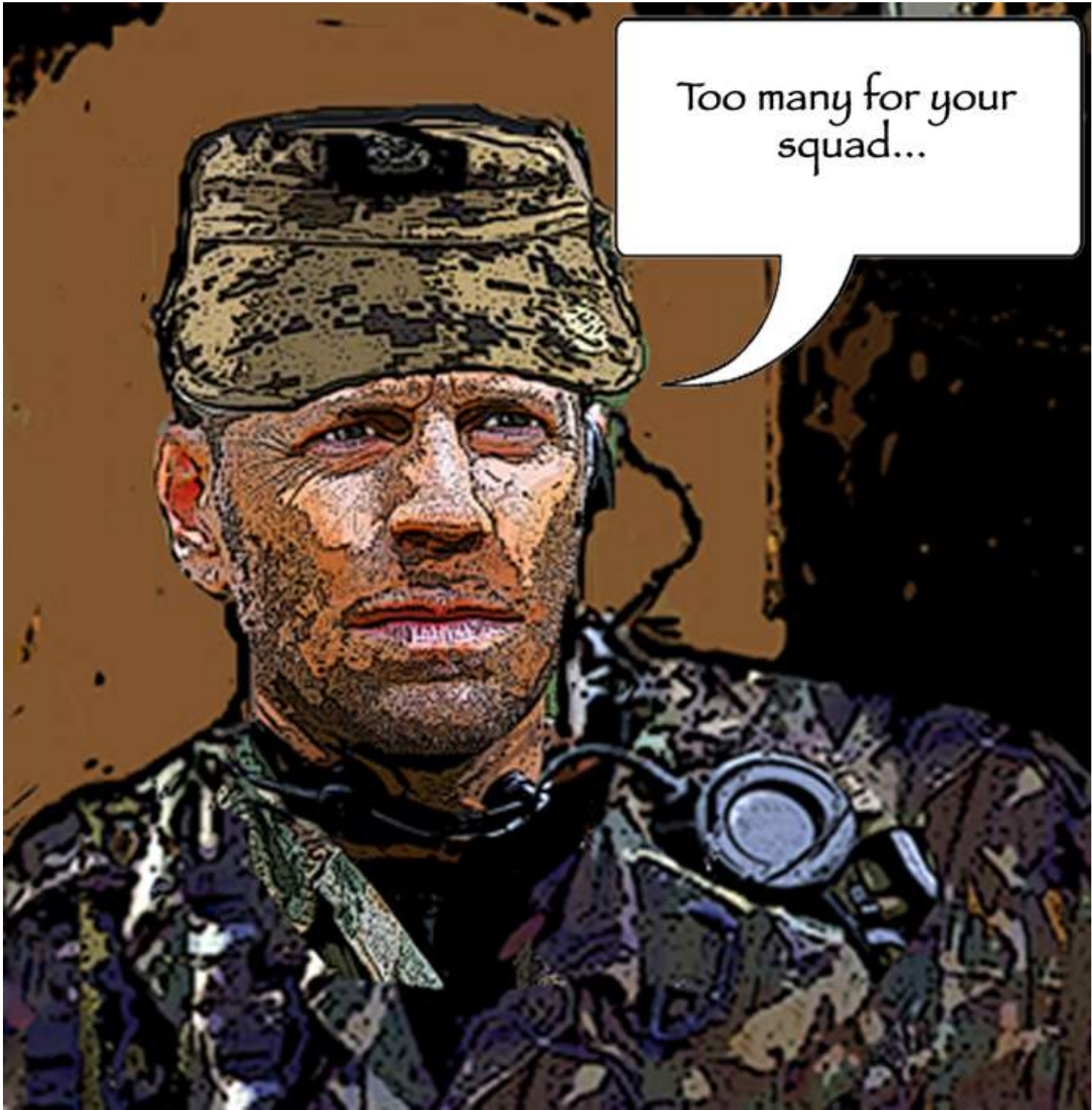
Captain, there are kids all over the place...a soccer game in the lot next to the van. We can't take the van out here.



How many men are with him?

I've counted about 15 going in and out of the warehouse.





Too many for your squad...



What's the make of the van?

Looks like an old Ford, white, vintage 1989 or 90, can't tell exactly...driver's door is a replacement, painted dark green or brown, can't make it out in this light...doesn't match the rest of the van and has a stripe through it. Driver is wearing western dress, t-shirt, baseball cap, dark jacket, late twenties, Jester is kissing him and talking to him now.

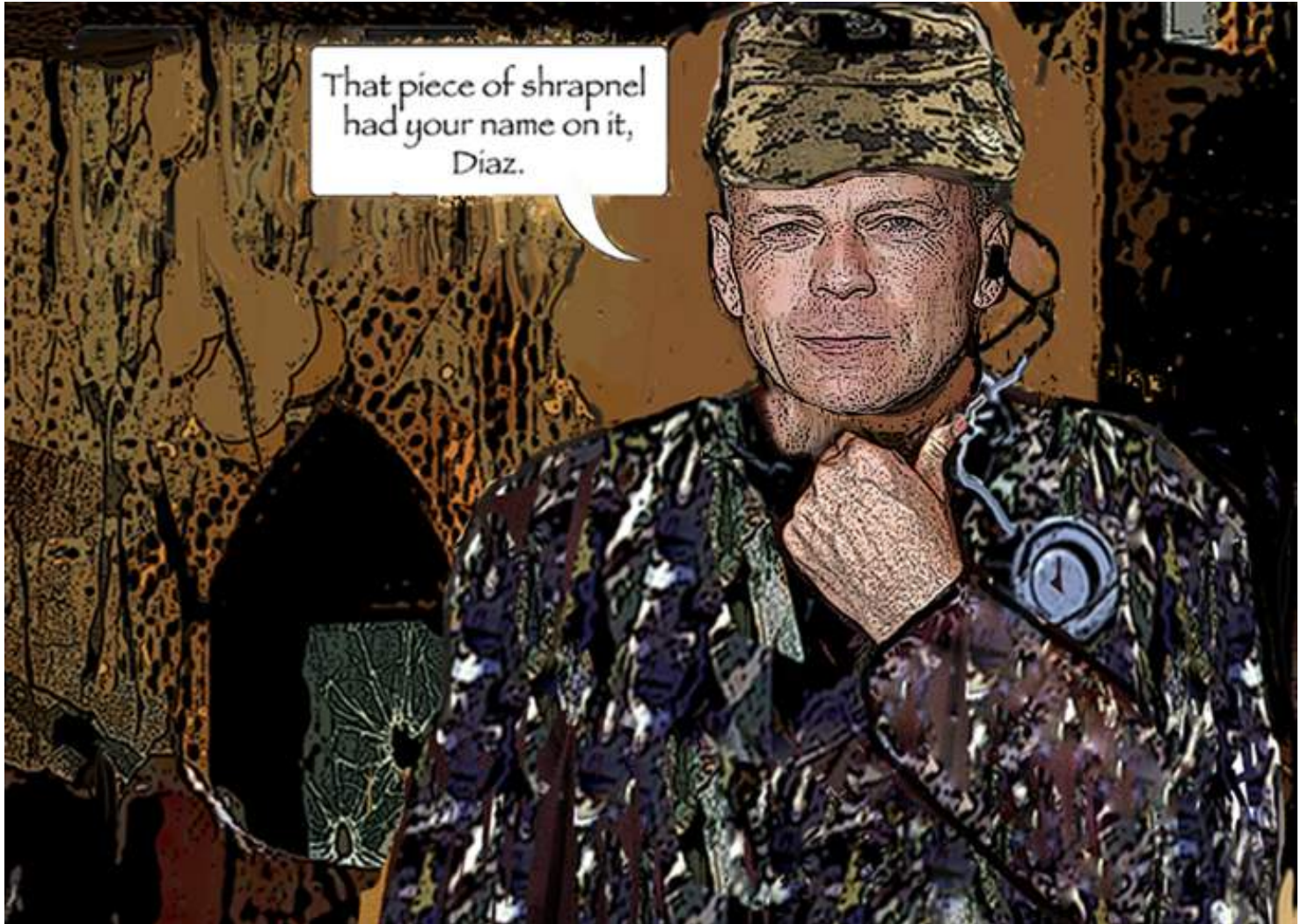


OK, Díaz, good job. Let me know when the van takes off. Hold your position, we'll bring you out later...no heroics.

That's your department, Sir.



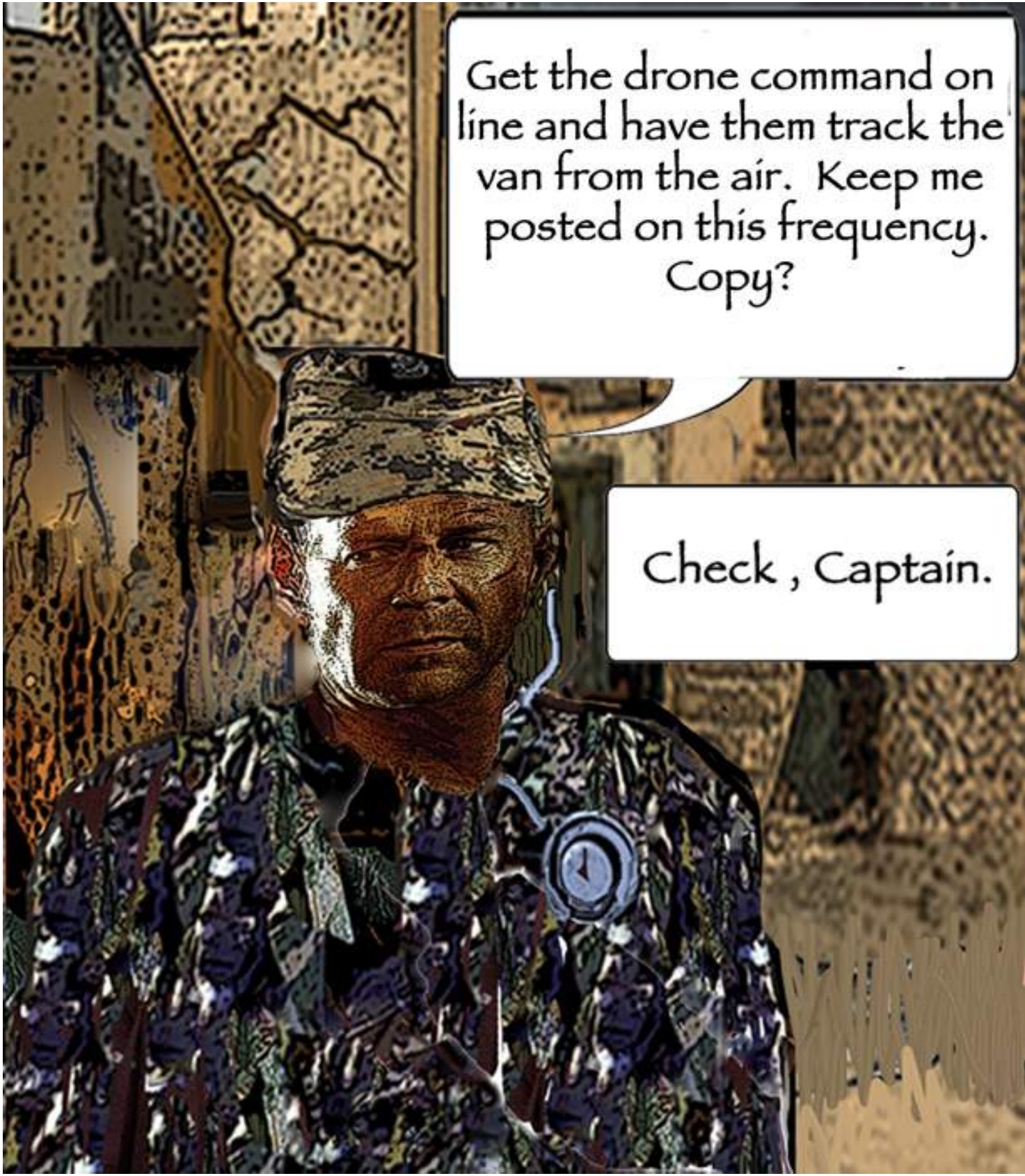
That piece of shrapnel
had your name on it,
Diaz.



You take every opportunity to remind me, Captain...look at it this way, it gives your voice a huskier quality...oh-oh, the driver just climbed into the van...they're shutting the backdoor...the little guy is off and running.





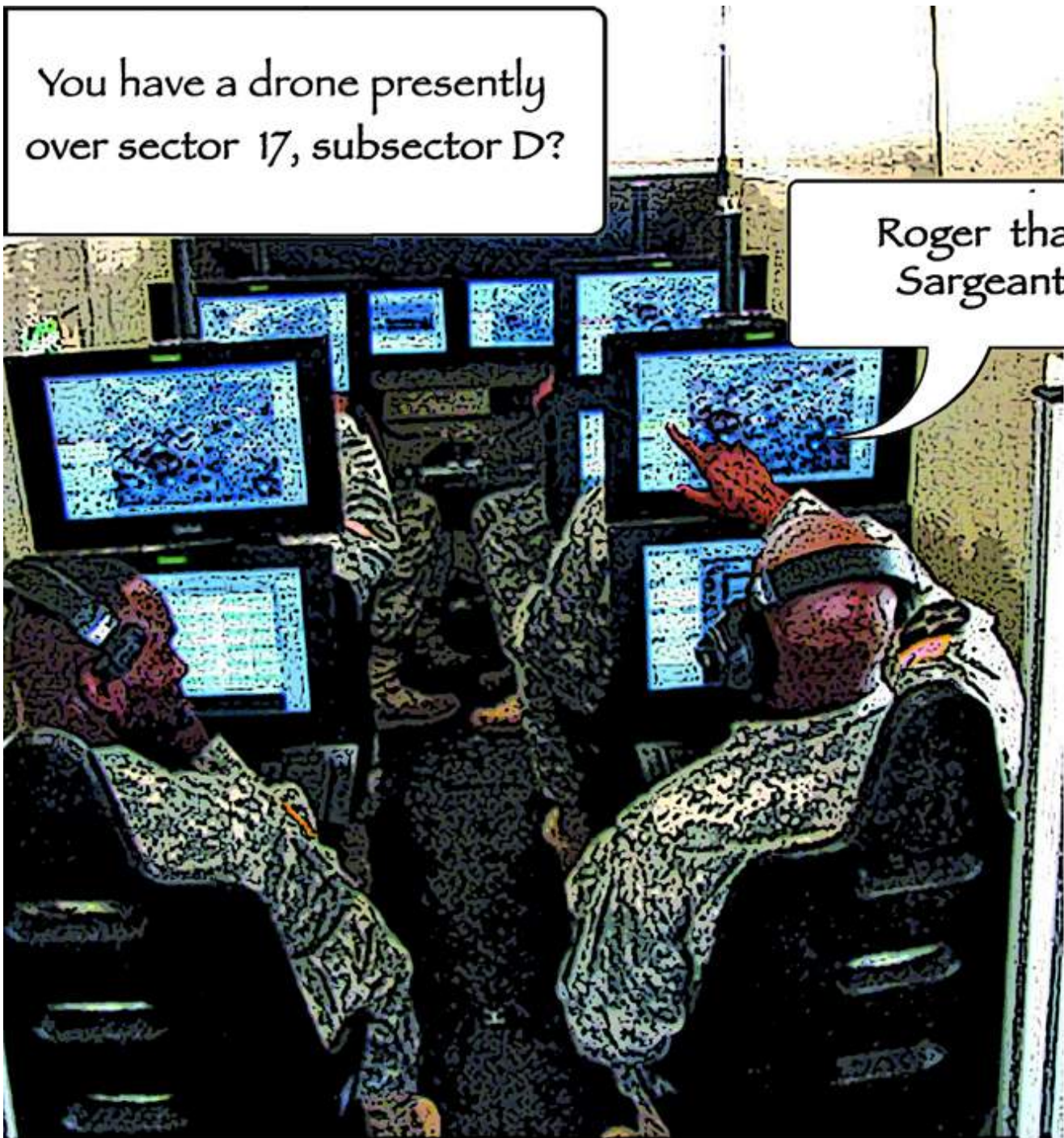
A soldier in a camouflage uniform and cap is shown from the chest up, speaking into a microphone. The background is a textured, brownish wall. Two speech bubbles are present: one above the soldier's head and one to his right.

Get the drone command on line and have them track the van from the air. Keep me posted on this frequency.
Copy?

Check , Captain.

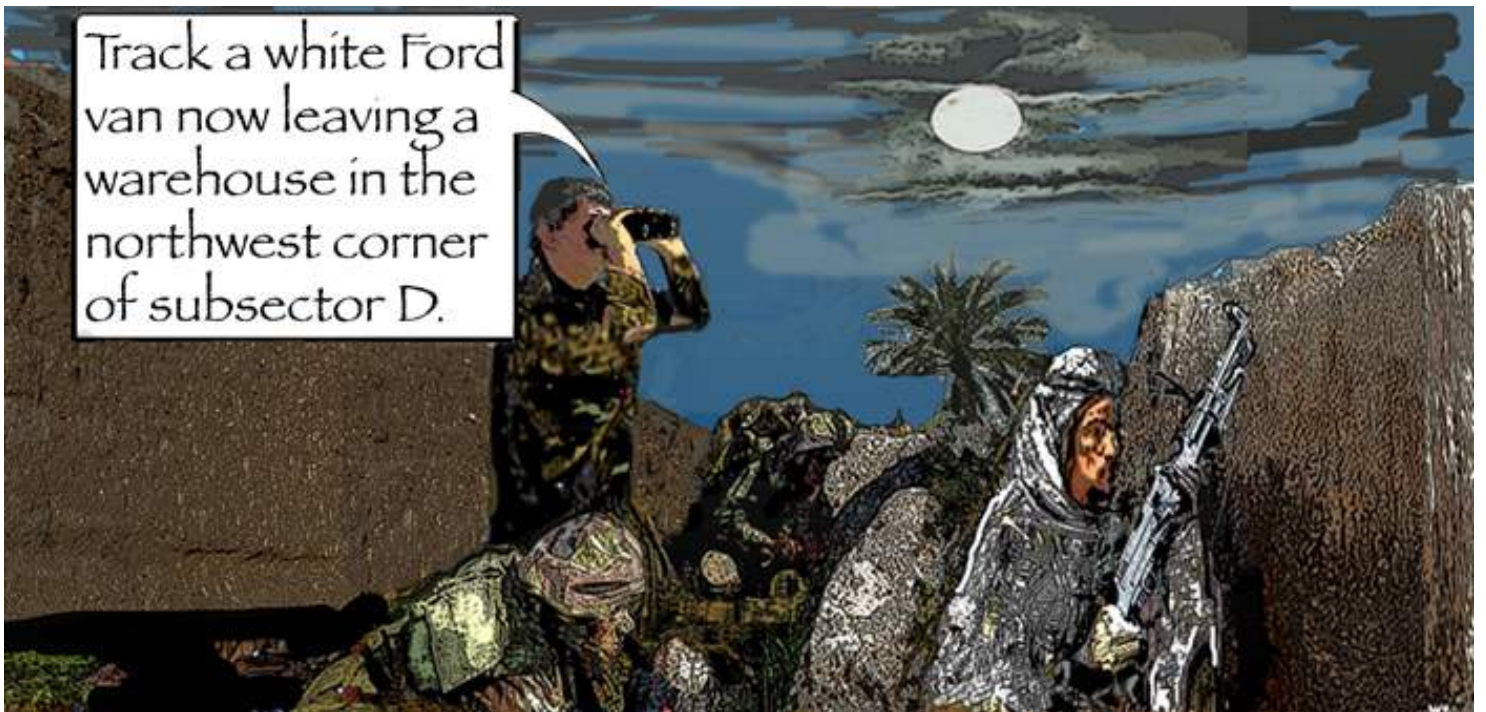
You have a drone presently
over sector 17, subsector D?

Roger that,
Sargeant.





Track a white Ford van now leaving a warehouse in the northwest corner of subsector D.






Got it. Van is moving
east on the
boulevard

Stay on it.
We have a live one.

Do we strike when it's
in the open?





Ready the strike drone but hold for Briggs's command---repeat, strike on Briggs's command only. Do you copy?

Copy, Sargeant. Strike on Captain Briggs's command only.



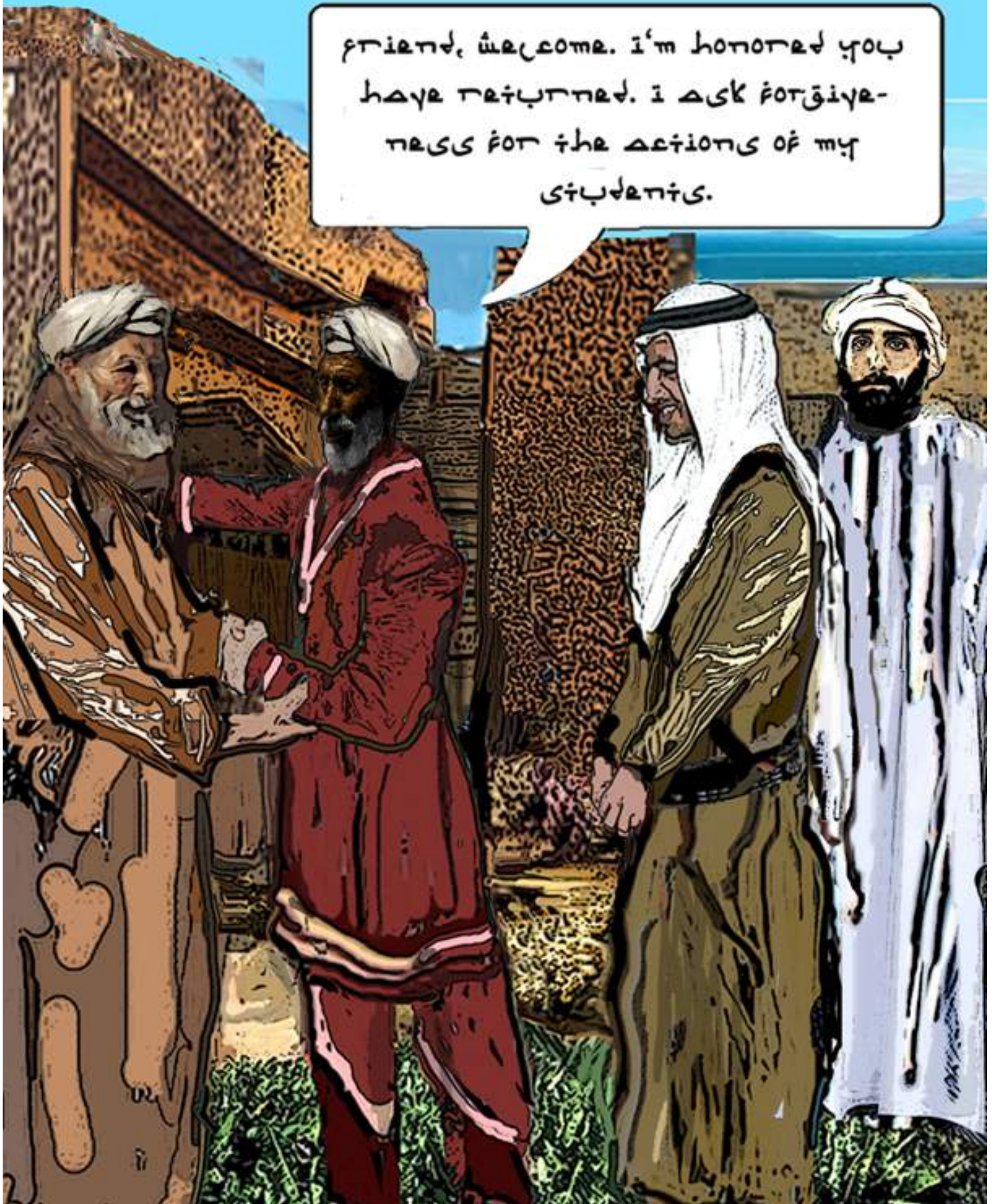
The 13th Century



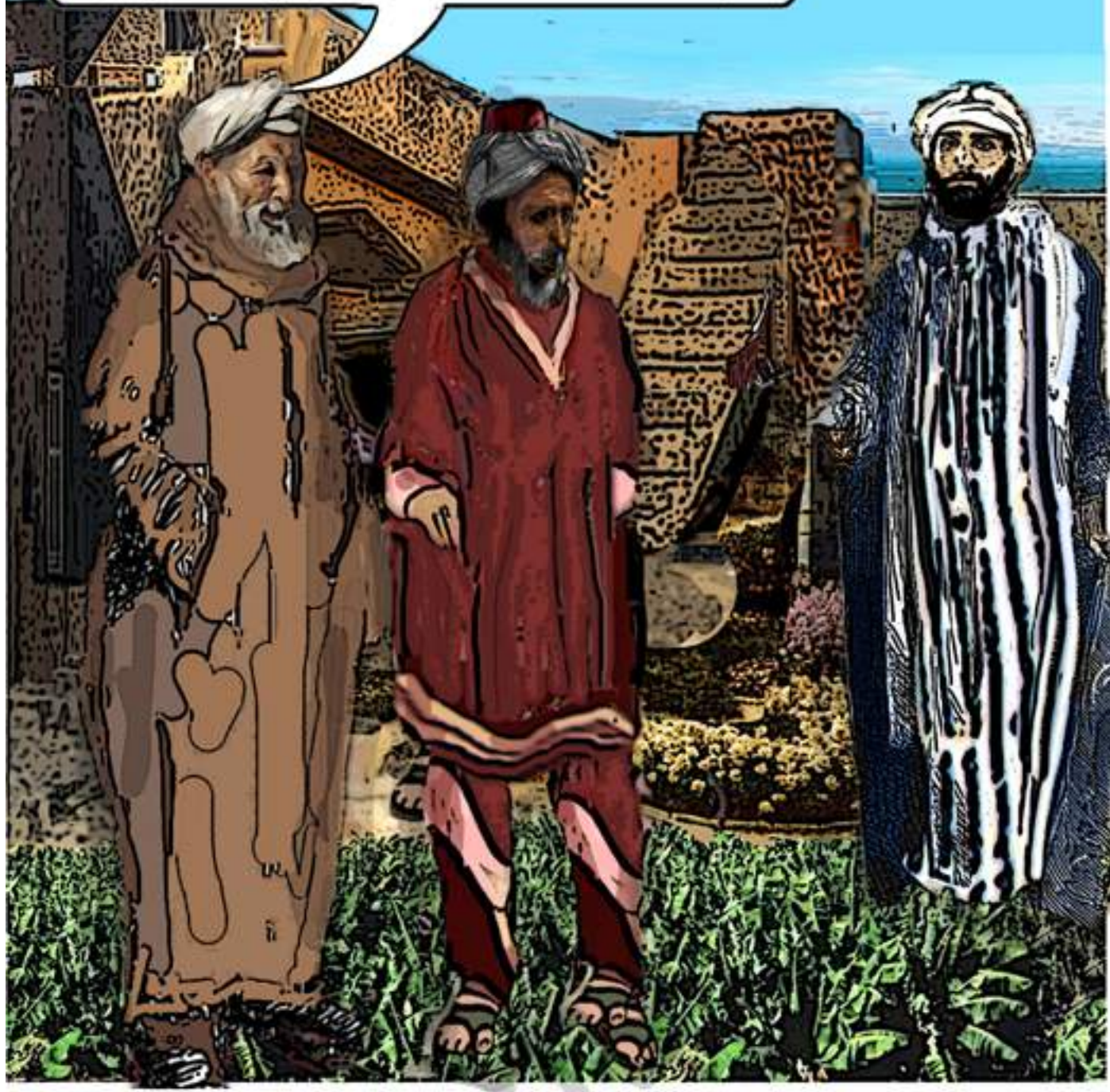
welcome back son.



friends, welcome. i'm honored you
have returned. i ask forgive-
ness for the actions of my
students.



ΥΟΥΣ ΣΙΒΕΡΗΤΙΣ ΦΟΡΜΕΔ ΟΤΗ ΟΦ
ΤΗ ΜΟΤΕ ΕΟΠΡΕΤΙΔΑ ΜΟΒΙ Ι'ΥΕ
ΔΕΔΤ ΣΙΤΗ ΙΝ ΜΥ ΤΓΔΥΕΛΙ.
ΥΟΥΣ ΣΙΒΕΛΑΤΔ ΣΑΙ ΕΣΡΕΔΙΔΥ
ΣΟΛΙΕΙΤΟΥΣ ΔΙ ΗΕ ΓΑΠ ΜΕ ΟΥΤ.



my ἀπολογίαι, a thousand
times over.



i've been run out of
more things than i
care to remember.
it must be
something i say


oh, i have the
answer to your
question.



it better be the
right answer. i
left a very good
game of cards.

my heart has been
softened by this
answer, sir.





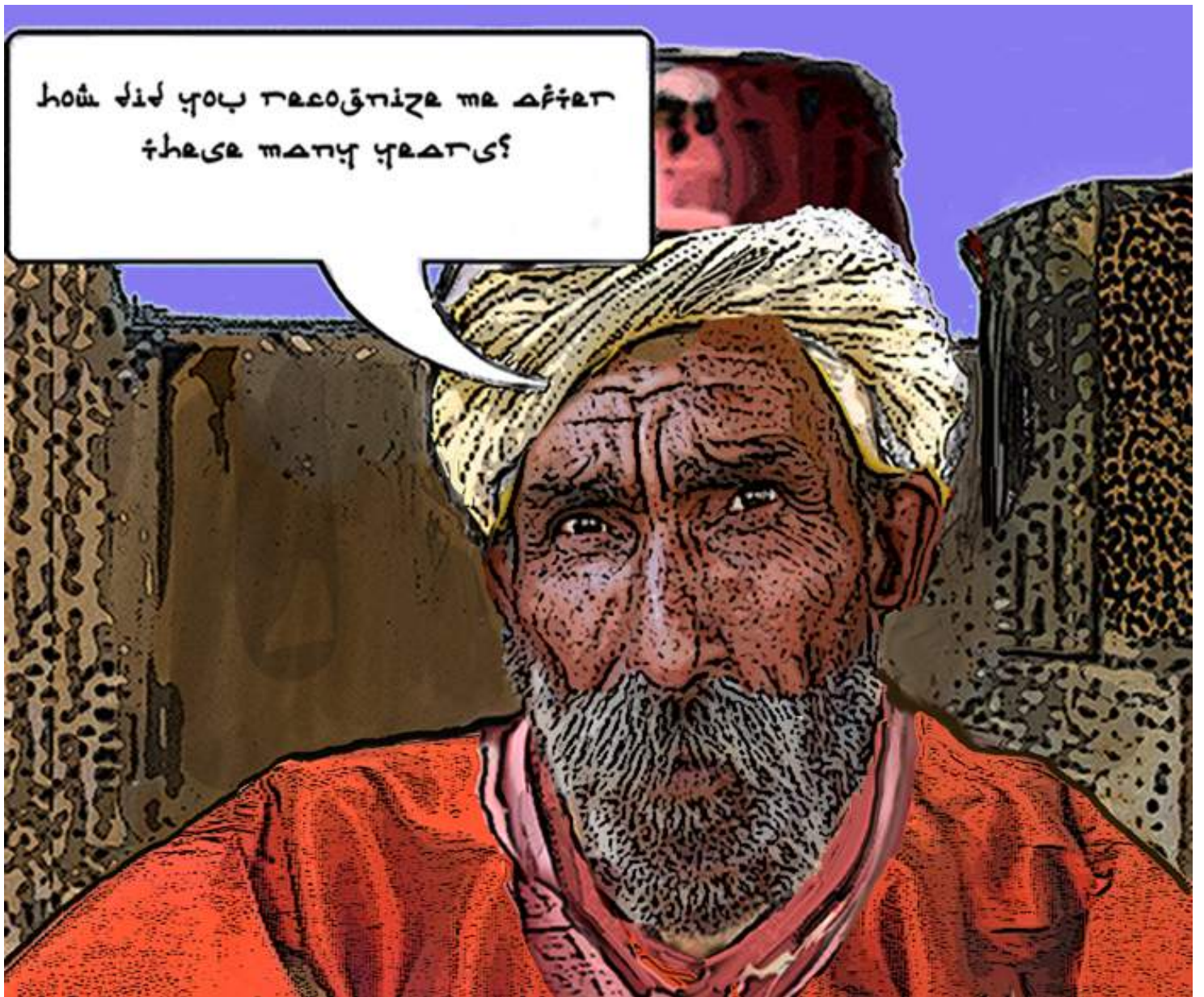
I take it you've
stopped counting the
names of Allah?

Yes, the counting
is over.

ܝܘܢܐ ܡܝܢ ܡܝܢ ܡܝܢ ܡܝܢ
ܡܝܢ ܡܝܢ ܡܝܢ ܡܝܢ ܡܝܢ
ܡܝܢ ܡܝܢ ܡܝܢ ܡܝܢ ܡܝܢ.



How did you recognize me after
these many years?

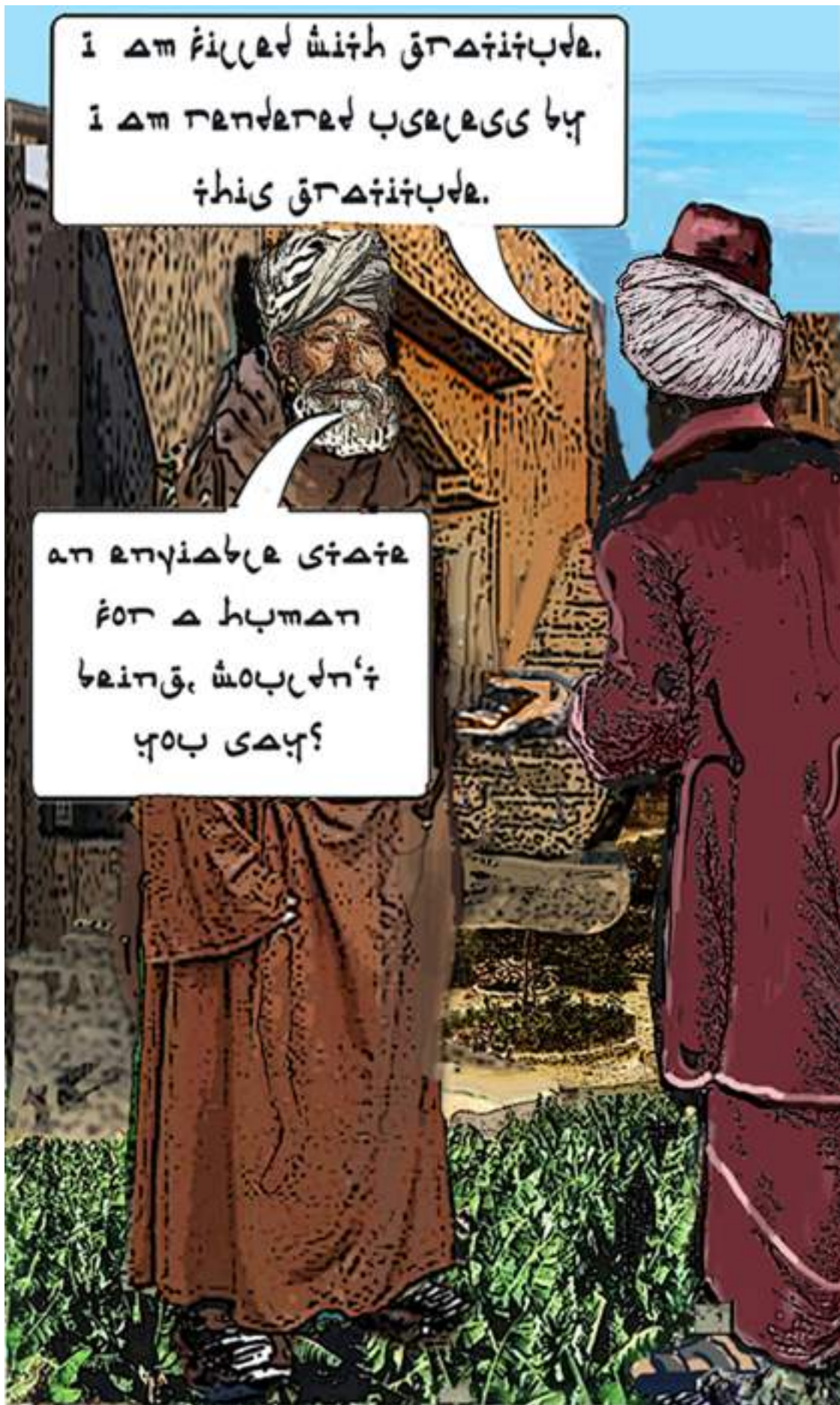


الله بهتے ا mark on بی
الله. i see that mark...it's
my particular gift...now
but mathis story yet
again, this time courtesy
of a rich man's son---your
son.



Իմ փրկման համար իմ
մեջ ընդունվել է
հիմարտություն.

Երկրի վրա չկա
մի մարդ
հարկազան, ով
չի մեղացրել
քեզ?



indeed, the question you
posed was undoubtedly
pondered by the mesen-
ger himself... perhaps by
Basil, that wild monk
who ran around half-
naked shouting that he
and God were one.



i'm sure they
both wrestled
with this very
question.

my head swim for days. i saw the
prophet's life unfolding in an ever-
increasing, hard-won understand-
ing of qur'an. i saw beisi, how he
let himself be seized by qur'an. for
him, all things ooze qur'an.



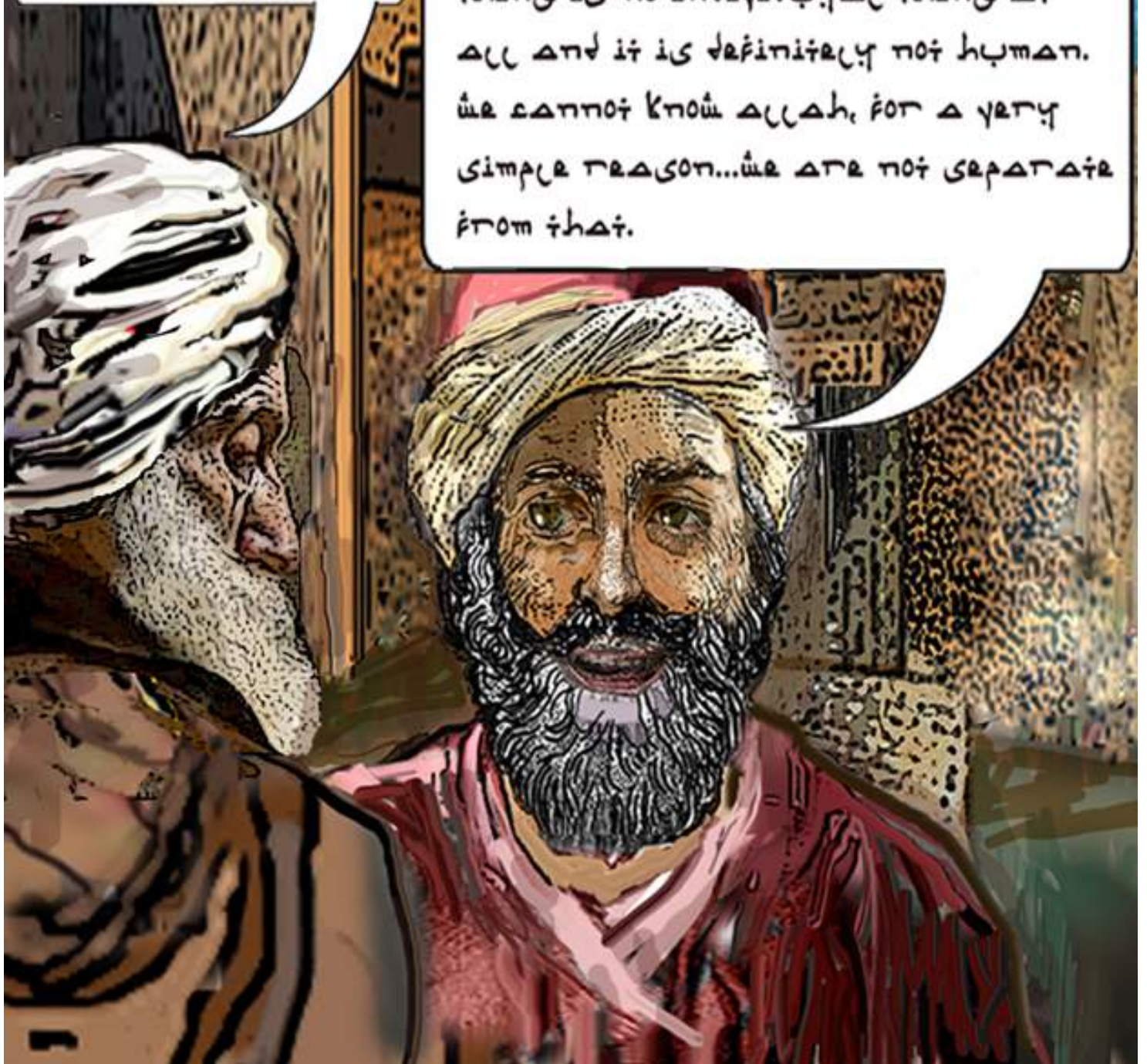
γὼς κτῶς, ἰφ γὼς
ἀπὸς ἐστὶν ἐστὶν
γὼς ἐστὶν γὼς.
ἐστὶν ἐστὶν ἐστὶν
ἐστὶν ἐστὶν ἐστὶν
ἐστὶν ἐστὶν ἐστὶν.

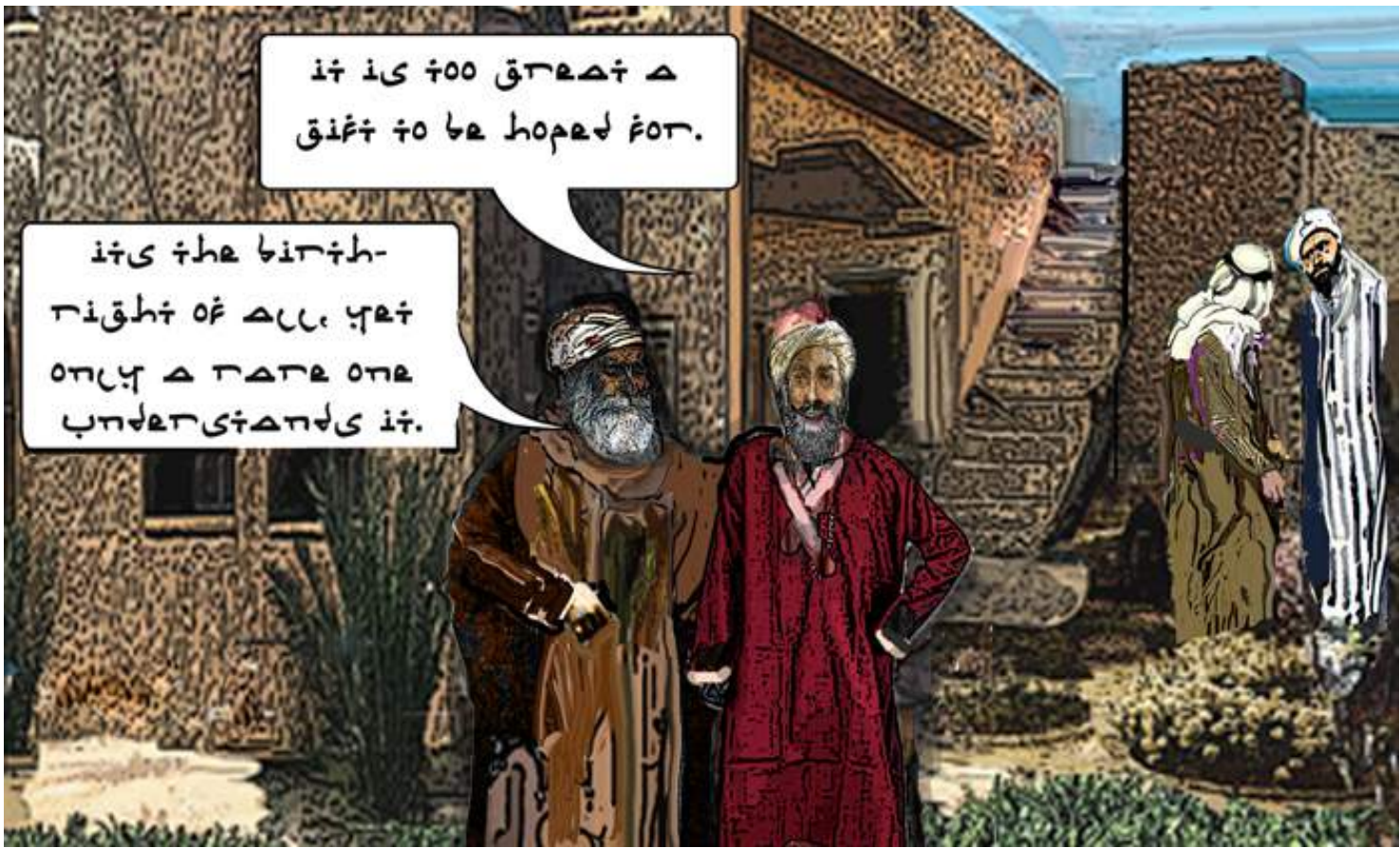
i have no choice but to take that
chance... ἰφ, ἰφ ἰφ ἰφ ἰφ ἰφ
ἰφ ἰφ ἰφ ἰφ ἰφ ἰφ ἰφ
ἰφ ἰφ ἰφ ἰφ ἰφ ἰφ ἰφ
ἰφ ἰφ ἰφ ἰφ ἰφ ἰφ ἰφ.



ہرے، قی ۵۱۱...

Allah is not a being separate from us, from life or creation. This thing is no individual thing at all and it is definitely not human. We cannot know Allah, for a very simple reason...we are not separate from that.






it is too great a
gift to be hoped for.

it is the birth-
right of all, yet
only a rare one
understands it.



do you know how
to play the new
game from the
indus valley?

'al-biruni's
chaturanga?
yes, a fasci-
nating game.



we should play
that game when-
ever you feel
overwhelmed.

we can play
here in the
garden.


Present Day



What the hell
is Briggs up to?

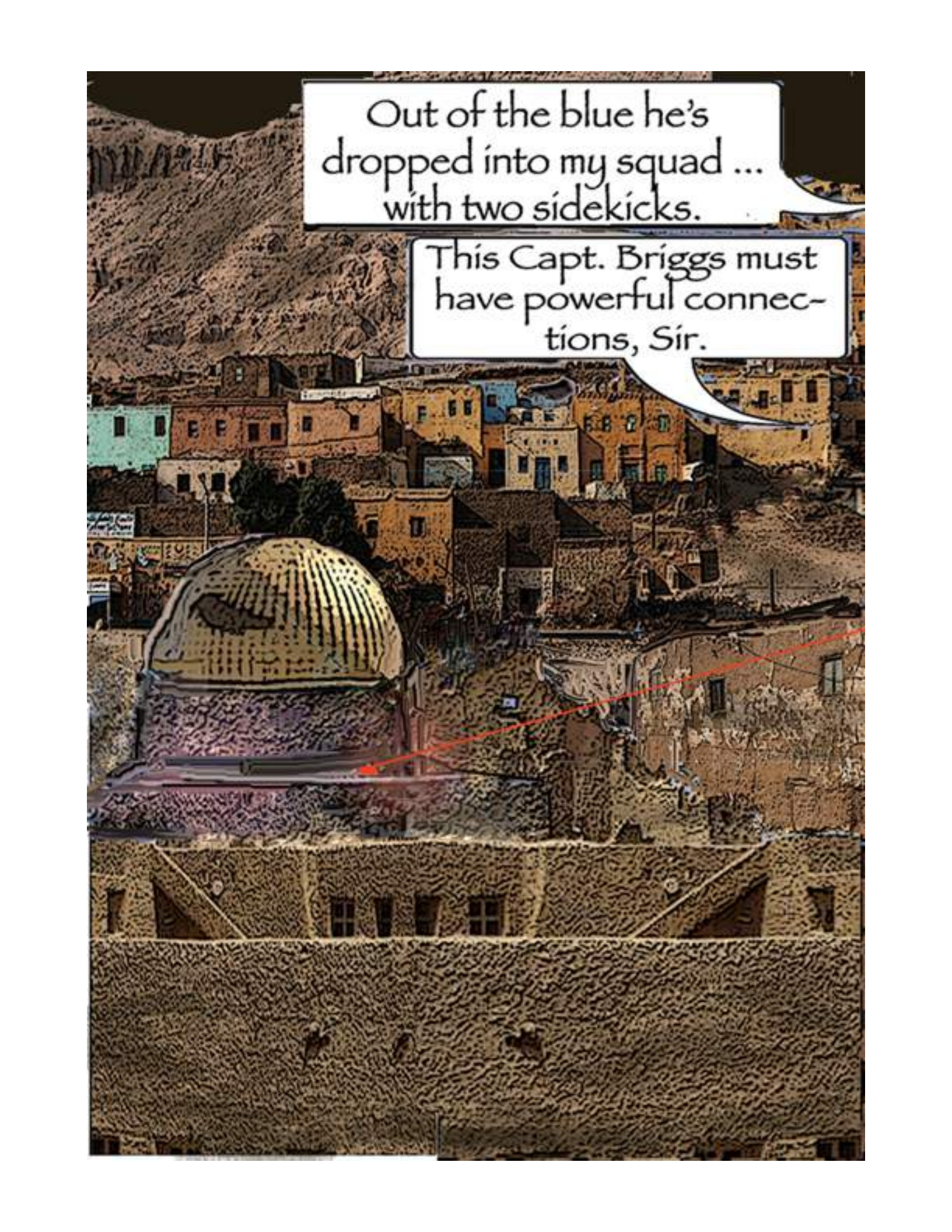
Land the recon
drone on the south-
west corner of the
dome, see that flat
spot?...on top of the
wall, near the ventila-
tion opening...






I have a bad feeling
about this, Sir.

That makes two
of us.



Out of the blue he's
dropped into my squad ...
with two sidekicks.

This Capt. Briggs must
have powerful connec-
tions, Sir.

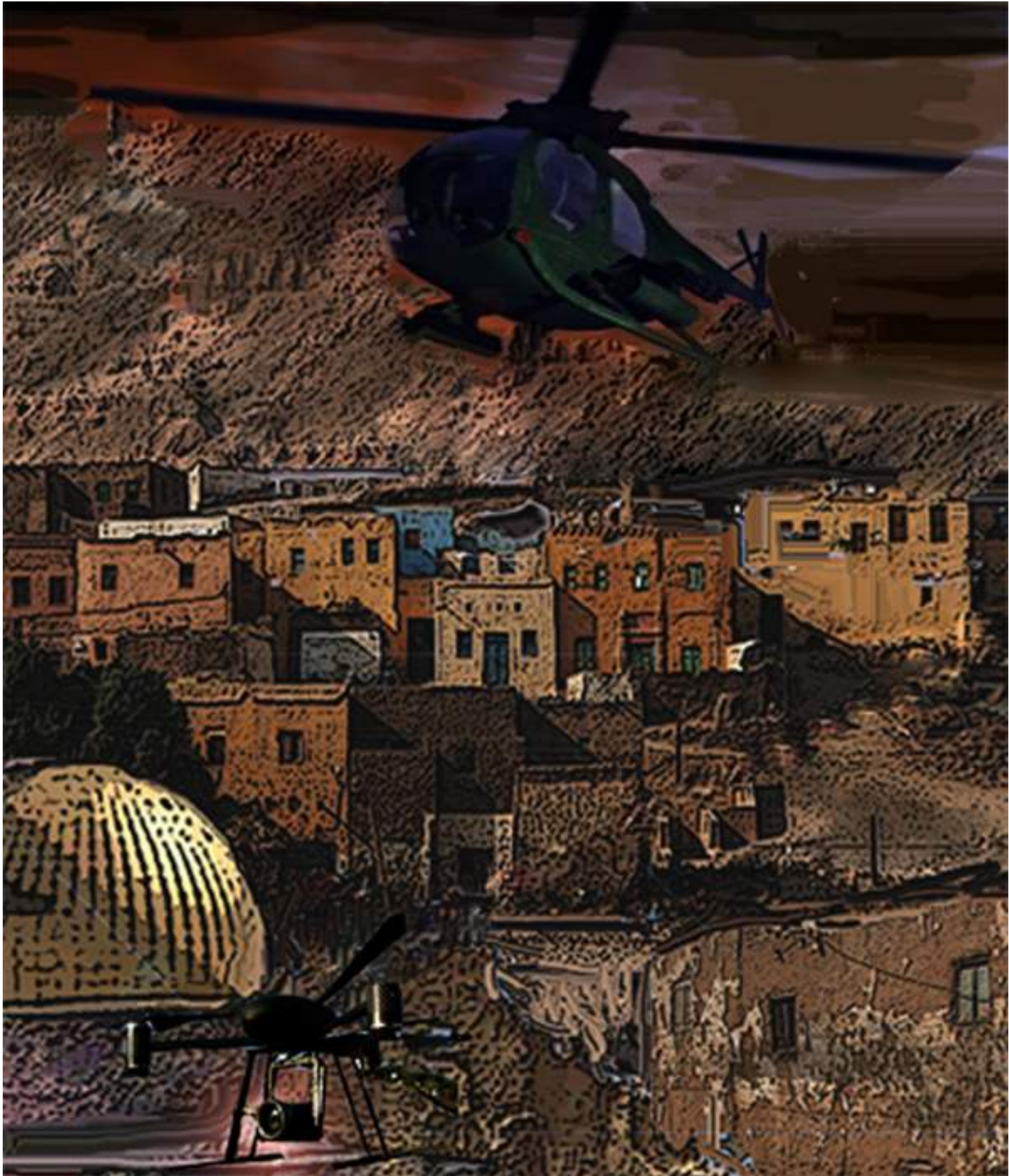


He gets whatever he wants,
gentlemen...that's straight from
command.



The chopper's
in position, Sir.

Drop the
drone.













now that we meet, everything i planned
on saying escapes me. i can only think
of superficial things to say. it feels
so strange even calling you "father"
after all these years. i can't call
you Khalid...certainly not Khalid--a
daughter doesn't address her father
by a nickname.

no need to say anything, Rashee. it's
obvious i haven't been much of a father all
these years. i'm at a loss for words,
too. it's good to see you.

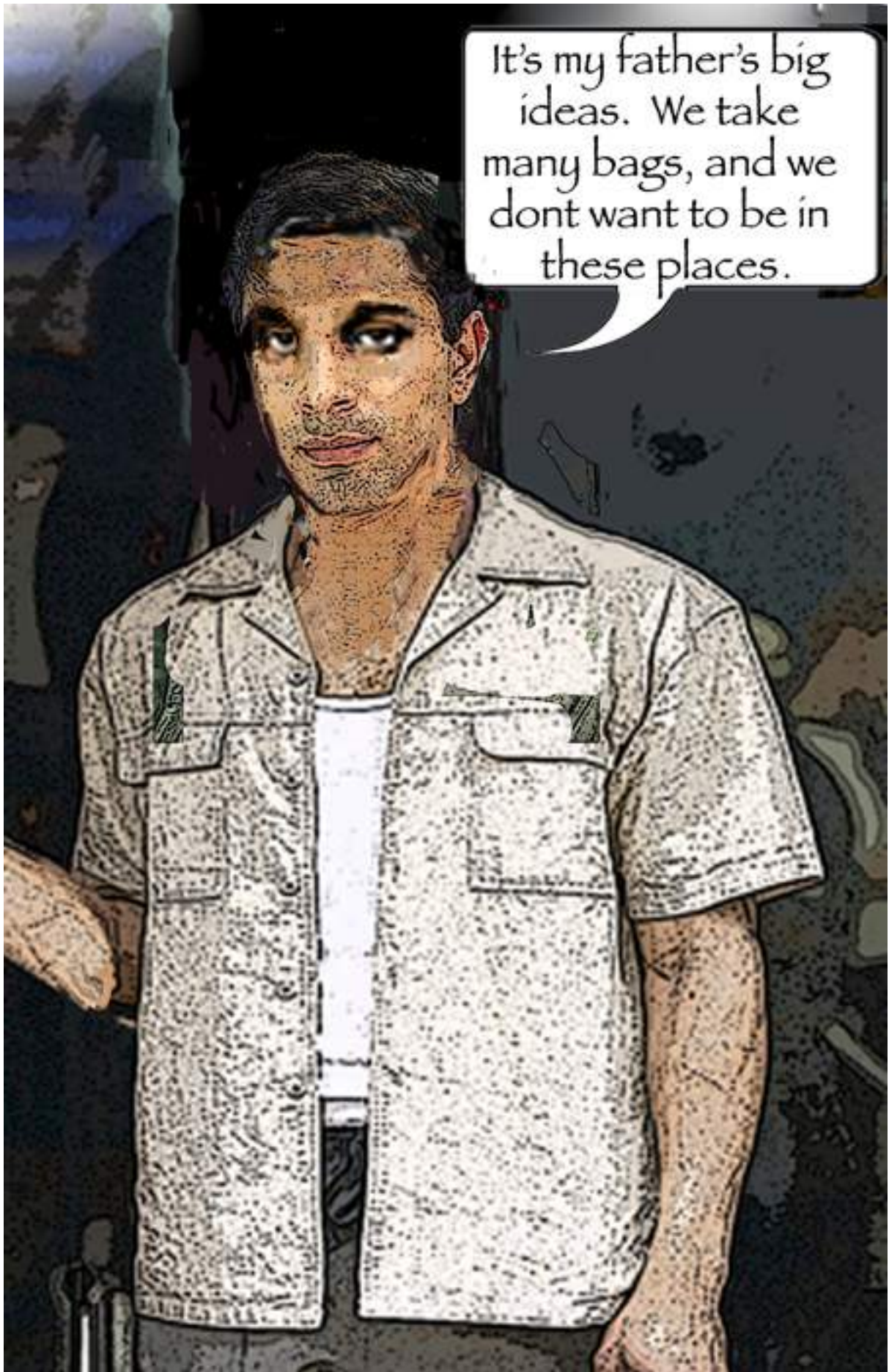






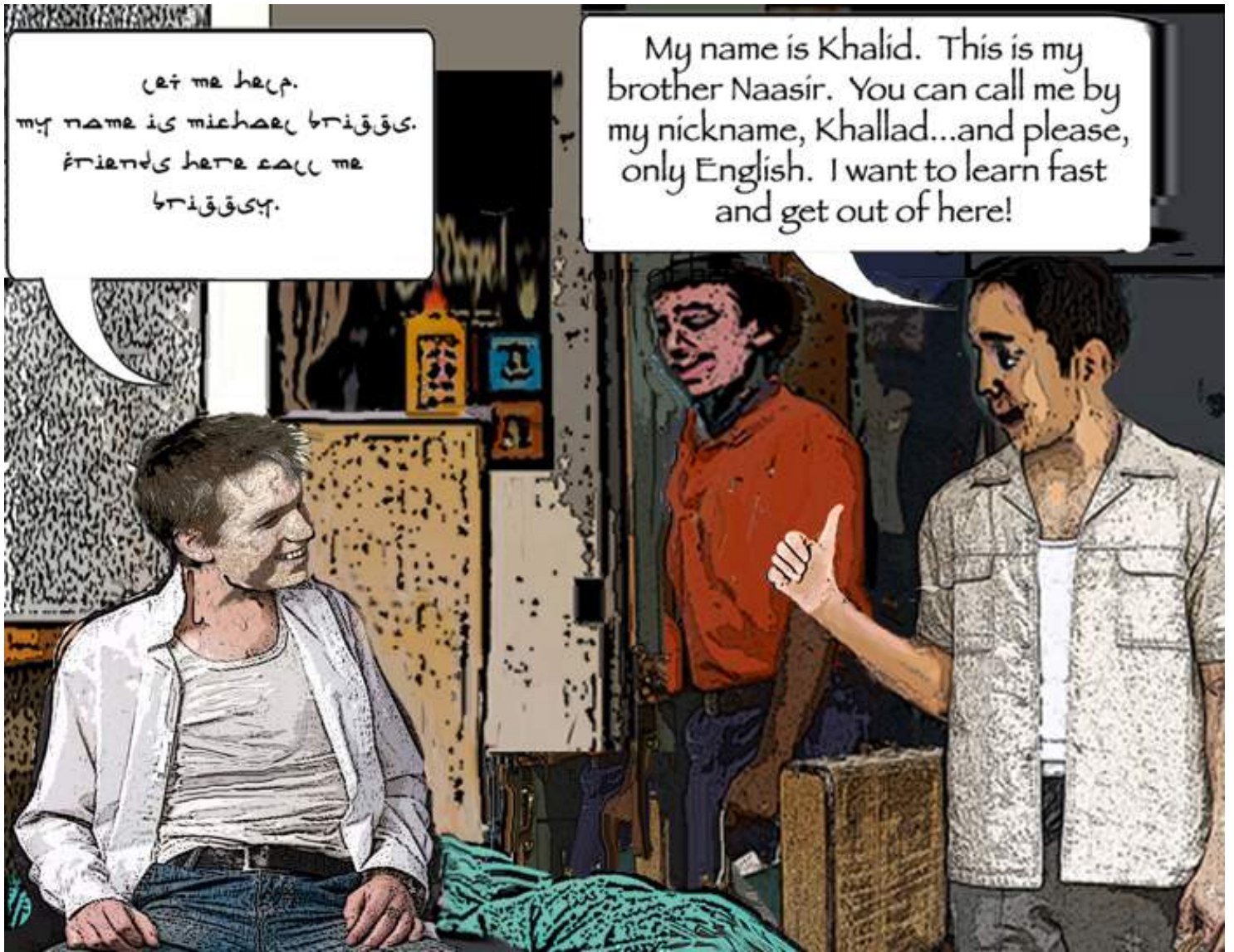
Military Prep School New England

It's my father's big ideas. We take many bags, and we don't want to be in these places.



let me help.
my name is michael بريقق.
friends here call me
بريقق.

My name is Khalid. This is my
brother Naasir. You can call me by
my nickname, Khallad...and please,
only English. I want to learn fast
and get out of here!



Yeah, but I want to learn Arabic, too. We'll have to compromise.



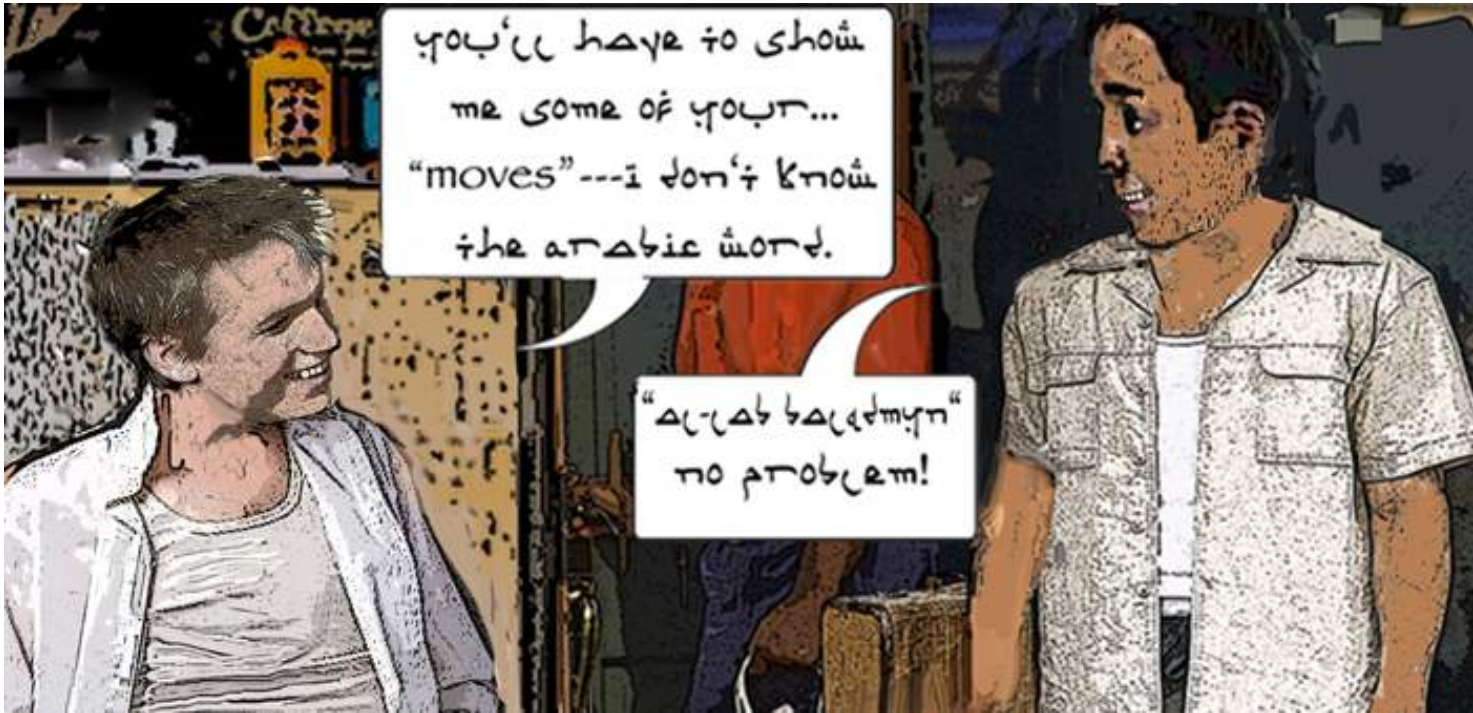


Nice to meet you.
Nice to meet
America girls, too.



"Khalid" ...it means silver, right?

yes, that's right. my father gave me the nickname. he says i'm a silver bullet on the soccer field.



you'll have to show
me some of your...
"moves"---i don't know
the arabic word.

"δεν ε̄χεῑ β̄λᾱστη̄μᾱ"
no problem!

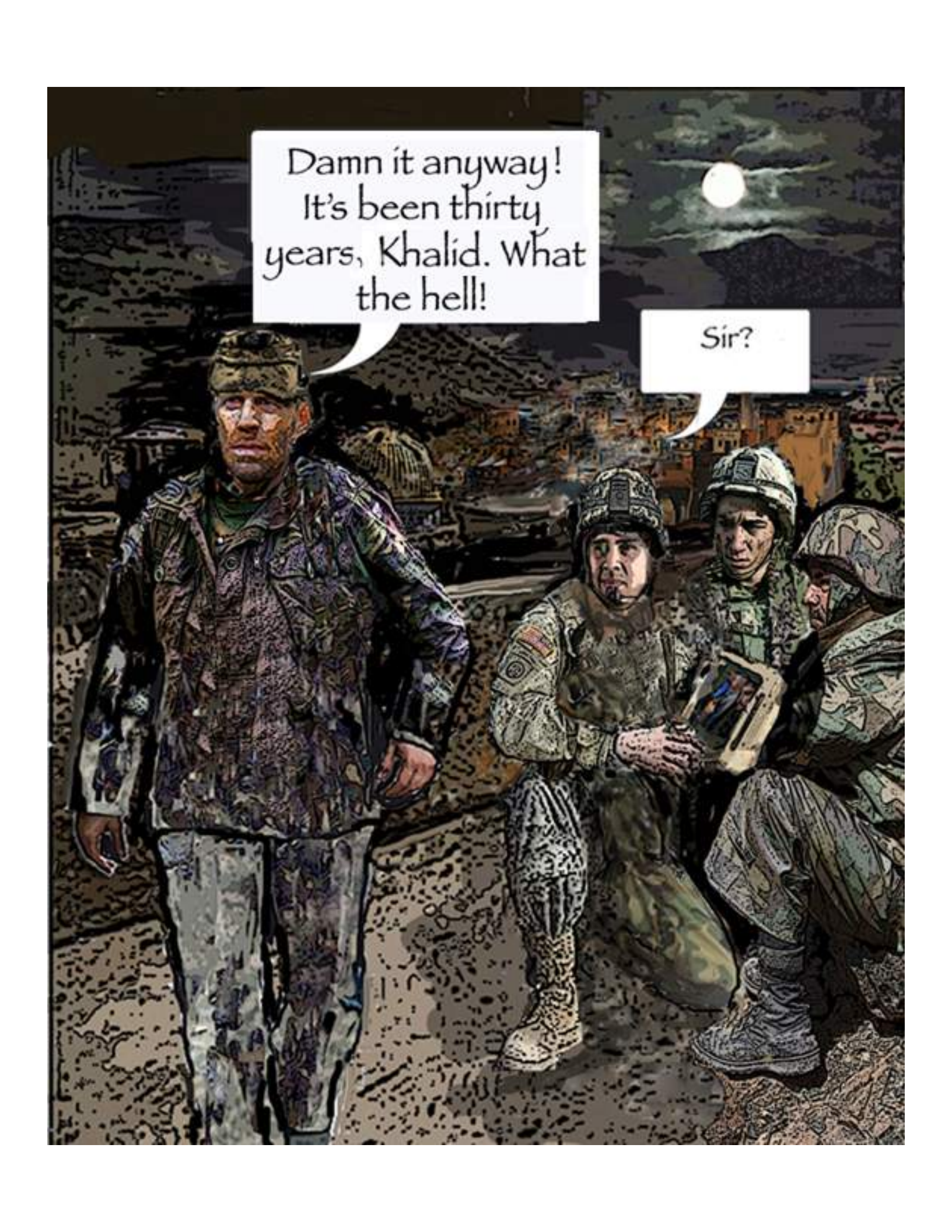
Maybe we look
for girls too.



Present Day


Not good at all,
damn it! What
the hell are you
doing here, Khalid!



A comic book panel depicting a scene in a desert at night. A soldier in full combat gear, including a helmet and a jacket, stands in the foreground with a speech bubble. In the background, other soldiers are visible, some sitting on the ground. The scene is illuminated by a full moon in a dark sky. The overall style is that of a comic book illustration with detailed shading and a gritty atmosphere.

Damn it anyway!
It's been thirty
years, Khalid. What
the hell!

Sir?



Captain, Sir, they're speaking too fast for me. I only had six months at that language school. You gotta help me out here, Sir.

They're speaking a Saudi dialect.

your beard has some
silver in it, father.

you're still as
handsome as ever


the years have taken a
toll, Rasheed. my nickname
is more appropriate now
than ever, don't you think?...



...look at you, you're...
a woman... a student
no...
ی.

i have a
to thank for
that, father. he got
me into the
program.





it's as if your mother herself were
standing in front of me. you've become
an independent thinker like her, no
doubt. do you follow any of the
teaching?

SOME, YES, SOME NO...
DOES THAT MAKE ME LESS
ACCEPTABLE IN YOUR
EYES? THE HEART OF
THE TEACHING, YES.
IT IS IN ME DEEPLY.



ah, the same conflict...



father, what happened
all this year? أف؟ نون
never spoke of it. not
one word.



it's a closed book,
Tashree...there's
nothing to talk
about.


for years the loss, the
not knowing, tore me
apart.



only my music saved
me...and the poetry of
the mystic.







the quran is the only
book you should con-
cern yourself with.

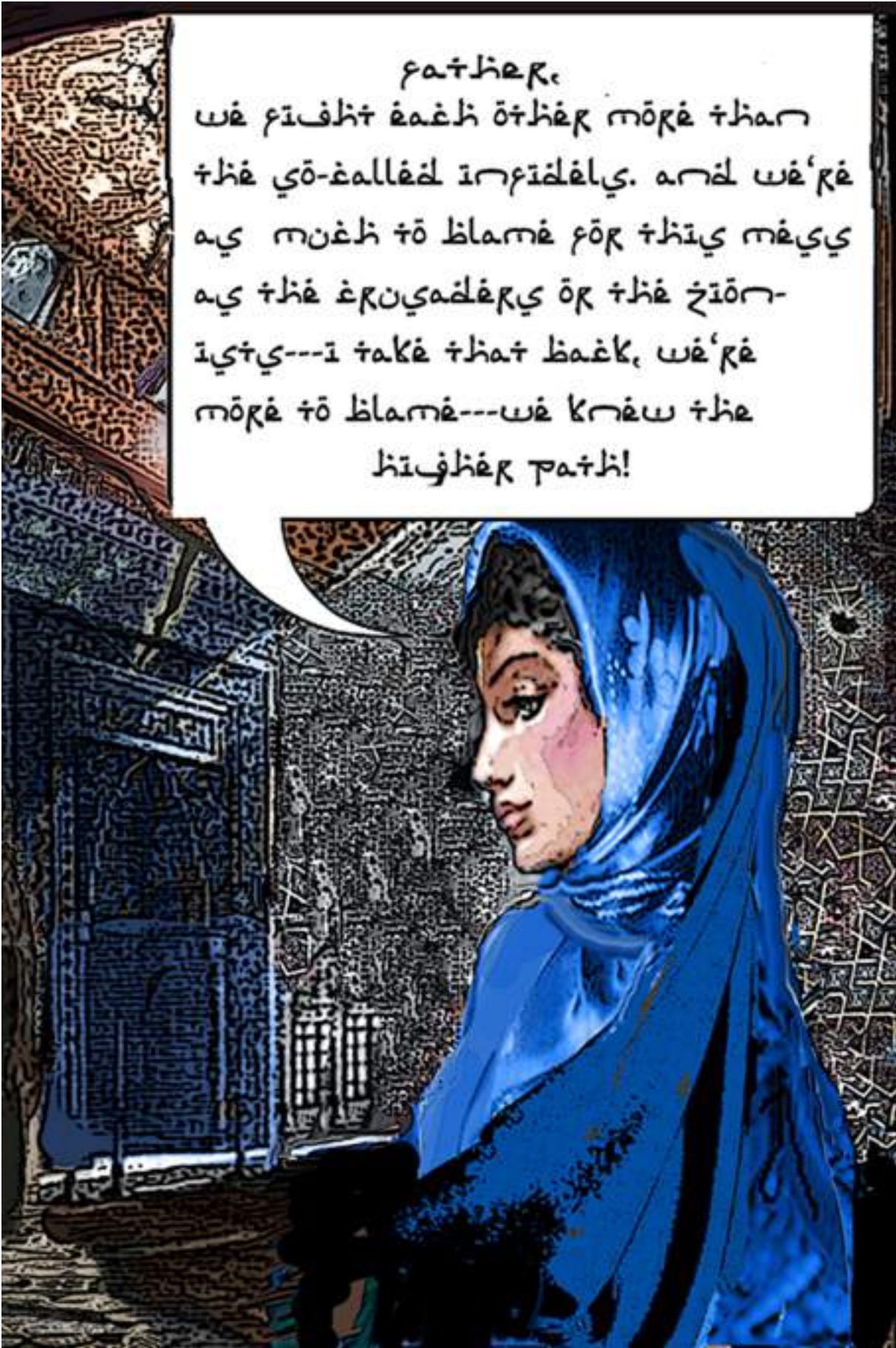
yes, father, i know.
i've been told that
often.

It has allowed you
too many independence. It
doesn't baptize me,
Frankly. This is rubbish,
written by men who
strayed from the path.



ṯōn ḥavēn'it ēvēr rēad ḥē ḥōōk,
fathēr, ḥōw wān ṯōn ḥōw?
ṯē ṯē mīyī ṯōn ṯē ṯē ṯē
rēad ṯē wēr ḥōnḥēṯēd ṯō ḥē ṯē
ṯē, a ḥōnḥēṯēd, ṯē ṯē ṯē
ṯē, ḥē ṯē ṯē ṯē.



A woman wearing a blue hijab is shown in profile, looking towards the left. She is in a room with walls covered in intricate, repeating geometric Islamic patterns. The lighting is dramatic, with strong highlights and deep shadows. The overall style is reminiscent of a comic book or a stylized illustration.

father,
we fight each other more than
the so-called infidel. and we're
as much to blame for this mess
as the crusaders or the Zion-
ists---i take that back, we're
more to blame---we knew the
higher path!

you overlook the central fact
of our age...the lands of
Islam are being infiltrated
by the non-believer. it has to
be stopped and the only
method they seem to under-
stand is force.



Don't get me wrong father, I'm no apologist for any side...not the Americans, not the British--they started this whole damn mess--not the UN, certainly not the Israeli government, they've hounded the Palestinians into a stretched corner...no, the atrocities mount on both sides...father, there is no victory in blood. Someone must take the high ground. Why not Islam?

You overlook who is to blame.

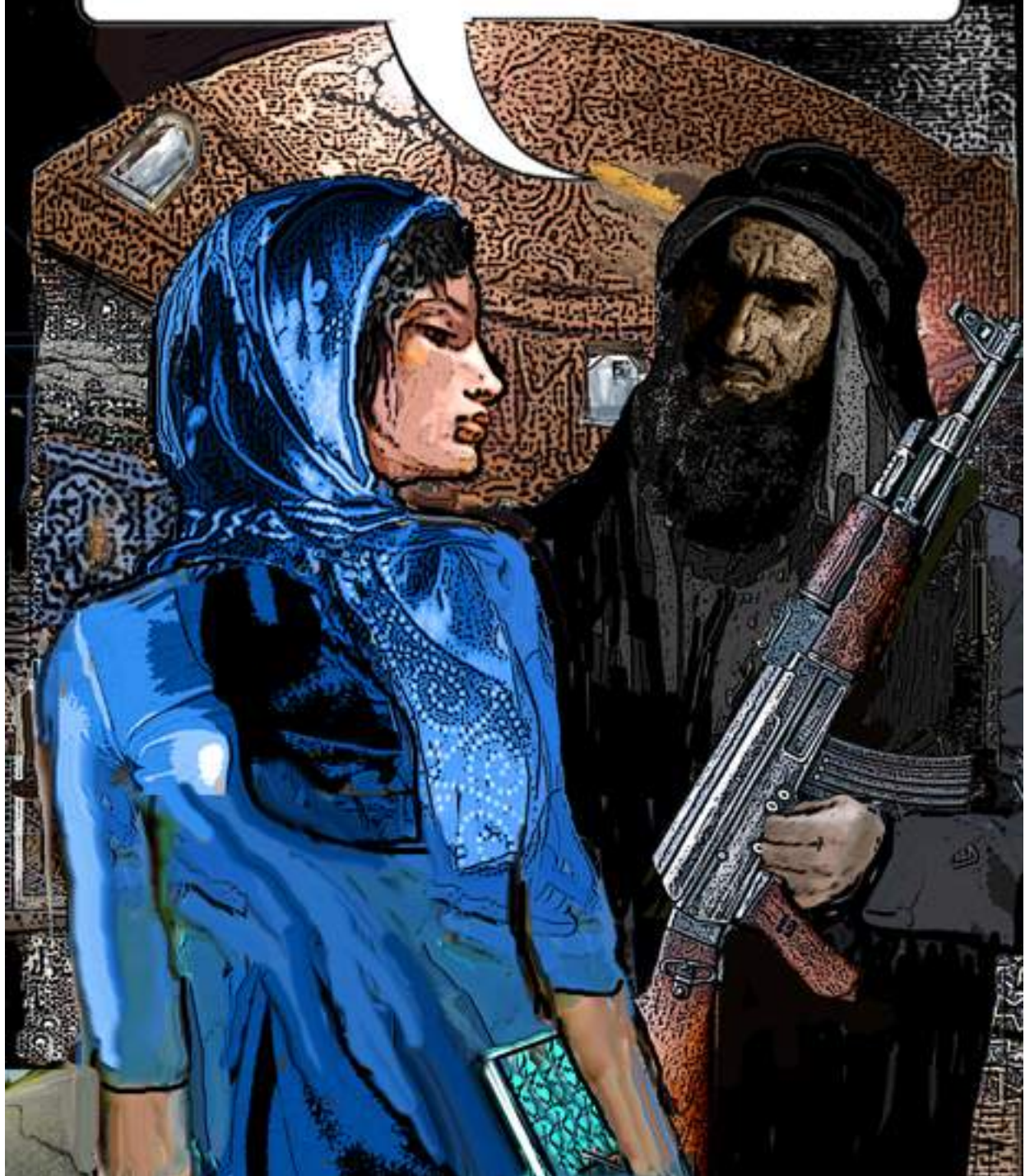


my fear is that the violence
will never end, that it will
just feed on itself until we
are all consumed, reduced
to fighting over a piece of
bread and cheese. Look
around, it's come to that now.

Allah will not allow
us to be defeated.



دا بقیہ، you can't deviate from the path
laid down by the prophet. All these other
issues are unimportant. He showed us the
way. We cannot abandon it to the west. We
cannot allow these injustices to continue.



EVERYONE PRESUMES TO KNOW
THE MIND OF GOD.

HOW CONVENIENT. IT'S CERTAINLY COMFORTING TO BE RELIEVED OF THE RIDDLE OF OUR EXISTENCE BY THESE CONVICTIONS WE ARE WILLING TO KILL OTHERS FOR. FATHER, TELL ME, THE THINGS THEY SAY ABOUT YOU, ARE THEY TRUE?



what do people say?

that you are cruel and merciless...that you're
the one responsible for the jihad bombings
bombing the mosque. but our people
organized that match. i knew one of them.



they were nothing but a bunch of zionist
sympathizers, a perfect propaganda tool
for the jews and their american and
british supporters.



i saw footage of the match, father. they were
peaceful people. not every jew is a Zionist.
there were jews in the match who longed for
peace with all their hearts, they bravely
walked down that boulevard with our people...i
should have been with them, only my conscience
held me back...but no more...by Allah's grace,
no more.



there was a truce, father...a truce. do you
think mother would want this for our people-
this terrorism, this
fanaticism, this endless river of blood? i am
so sick of blood i can't stand the sight of any-
thing red. i avoid the color red. i see red
and i get sick.





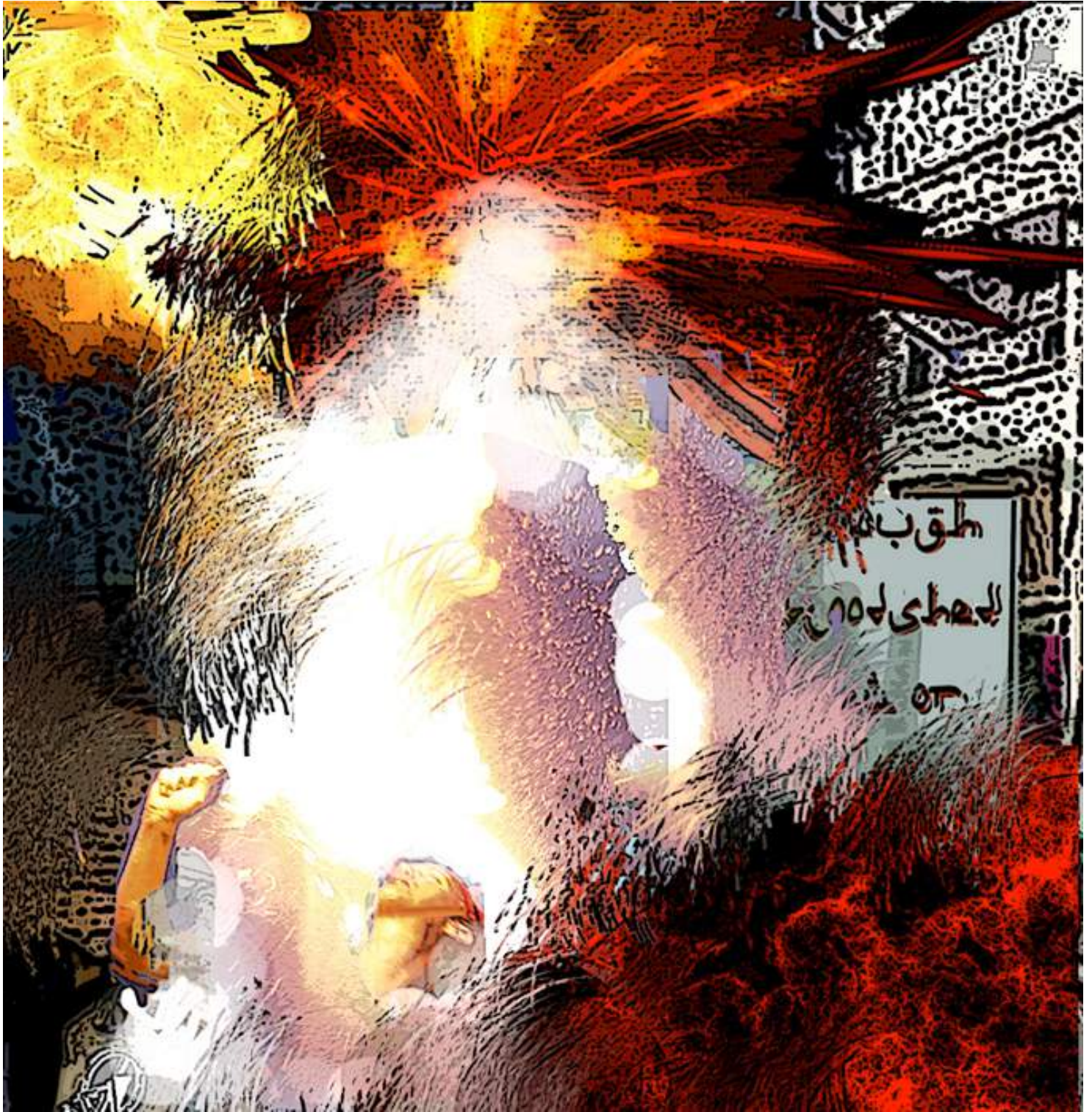






ملقوب ۲۰۱۰
للهي لودى
شهر
۳۳۳

the favorite
cry of rabbis
and mullahs:
let's you and
him fight



all those young people,
father, they were tired of
bloodshed, tired of endless
rhetoric of violence. my gen-
eration wants to contribute,
we want to produce, to create
we're sick of endless coffee-
house talk of victimization
that leads only to
revenge... my friend, oded, he
believed in man's ultimate
decency...





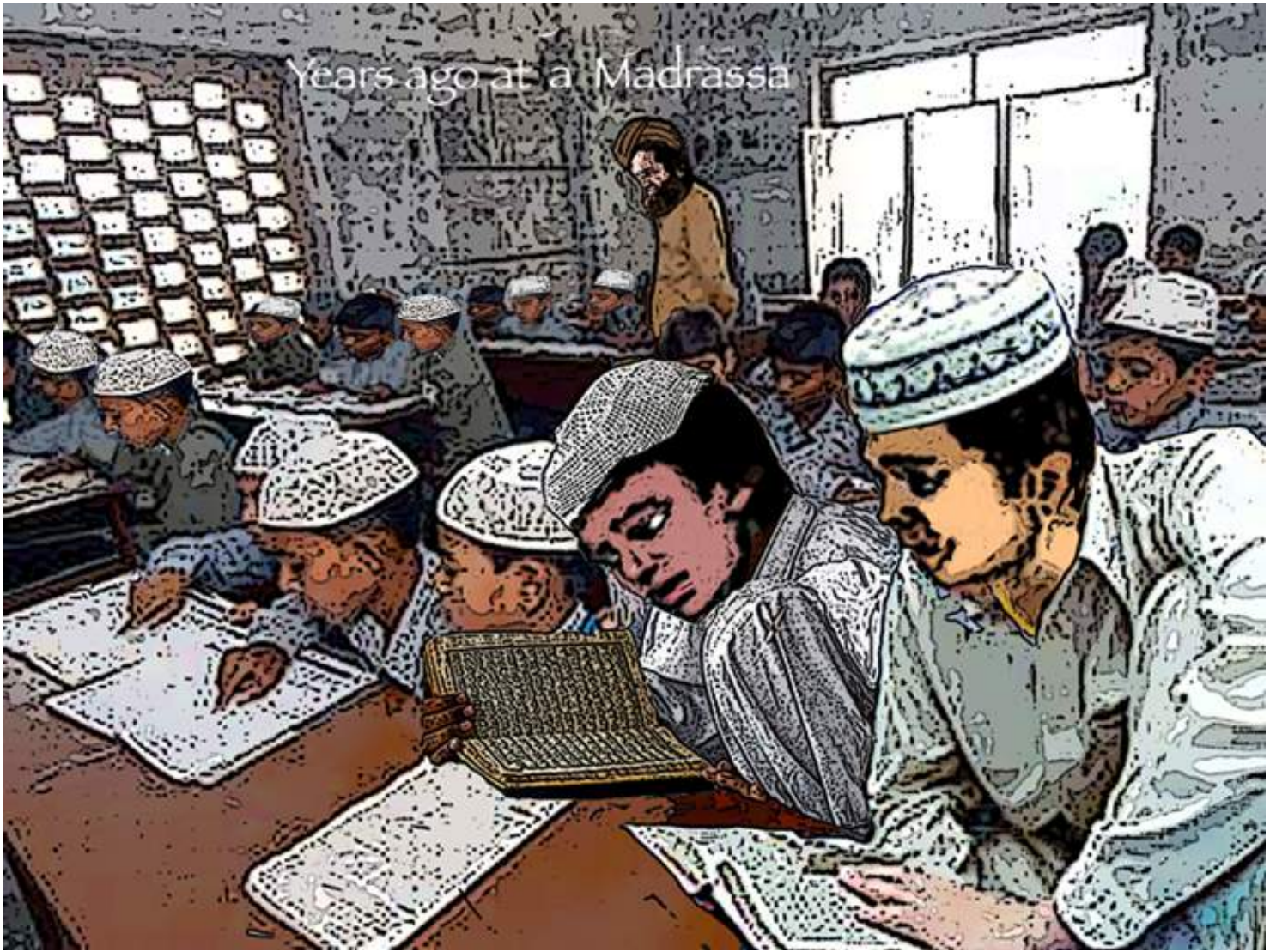
tell me yōu didn't
have anything to
do with that
bōmbing, father...

tell me you didn't.
tell me to my face.
tell me you didn't!

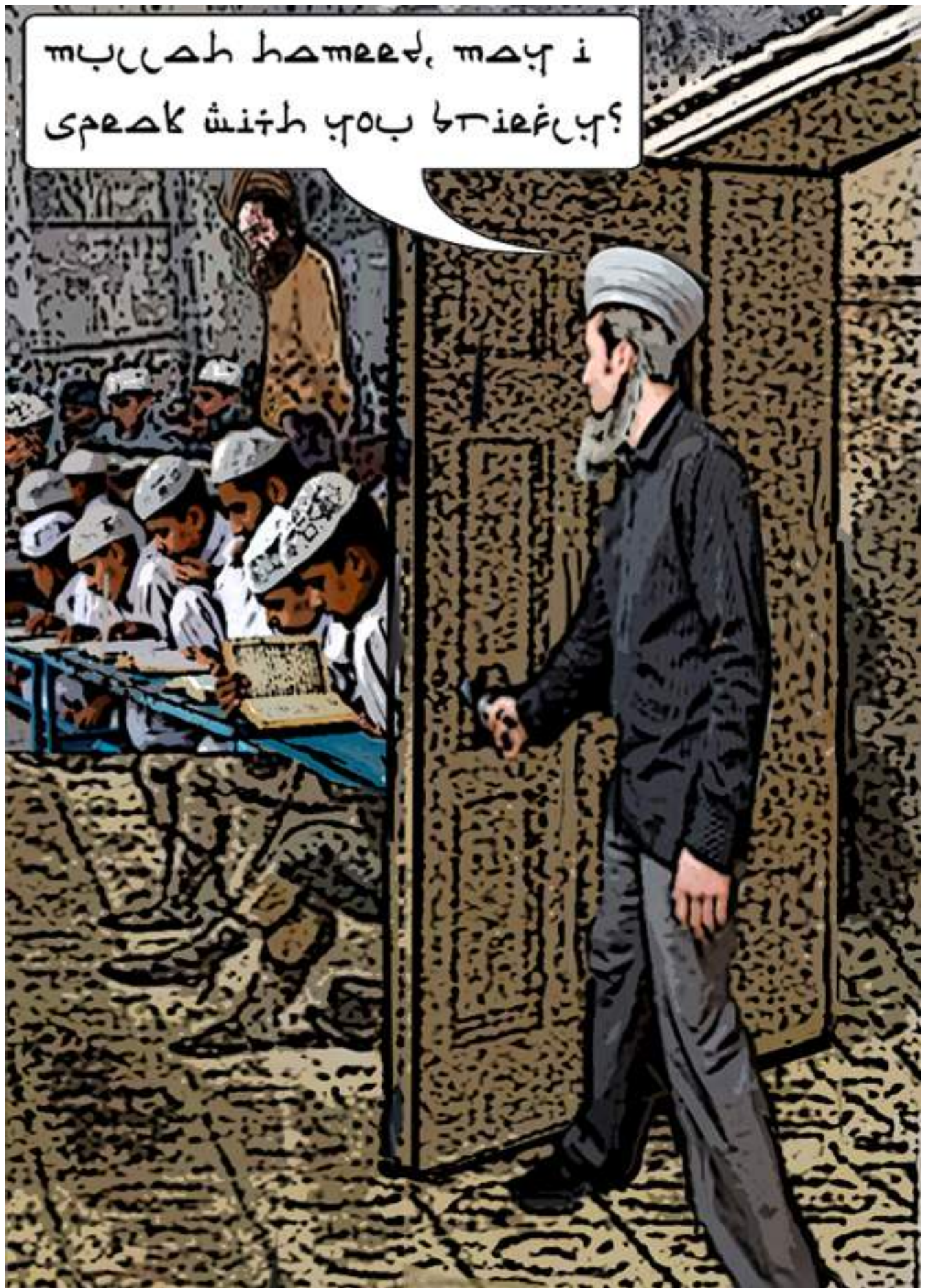


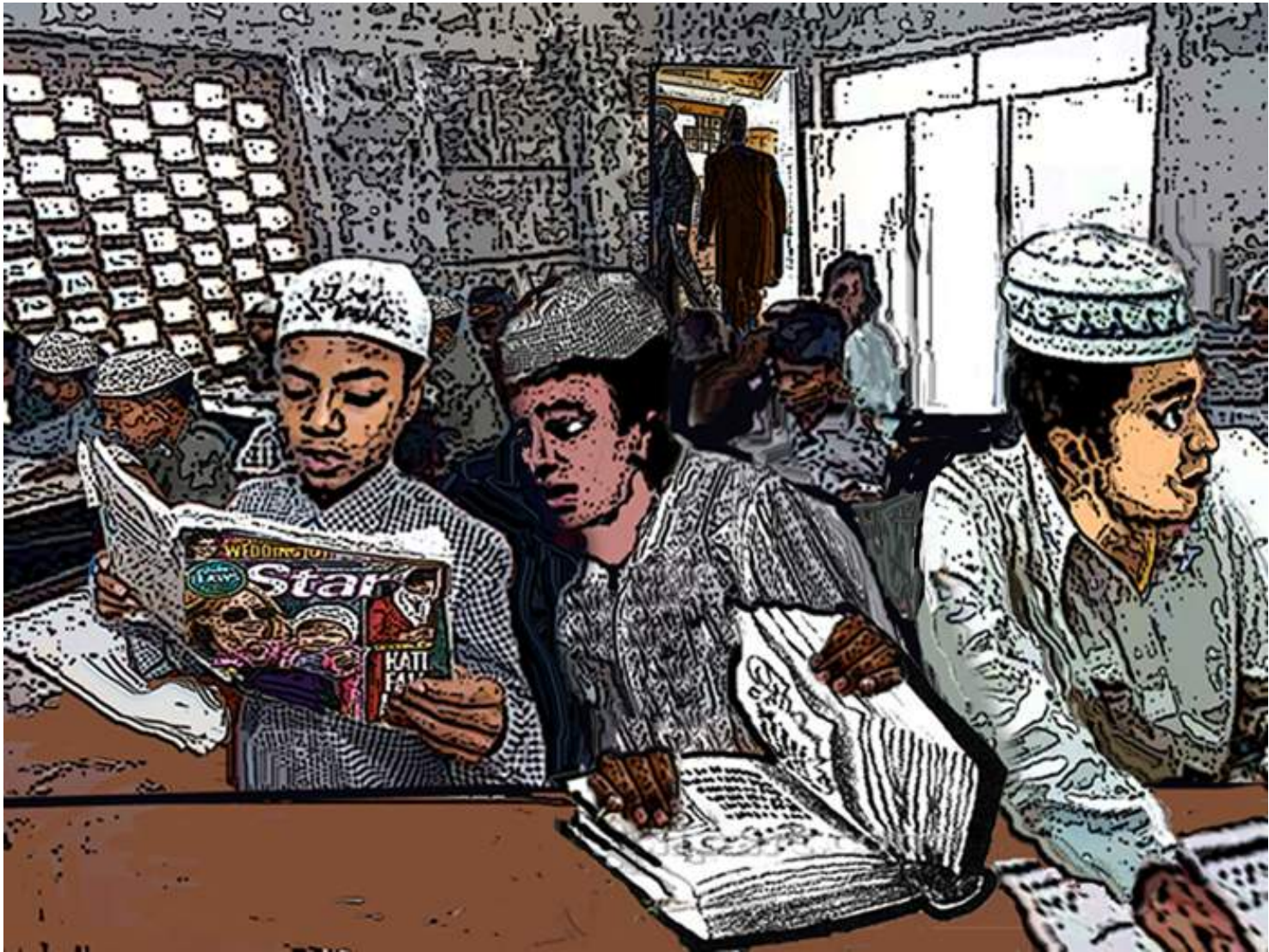


Years ago at a Madrassa



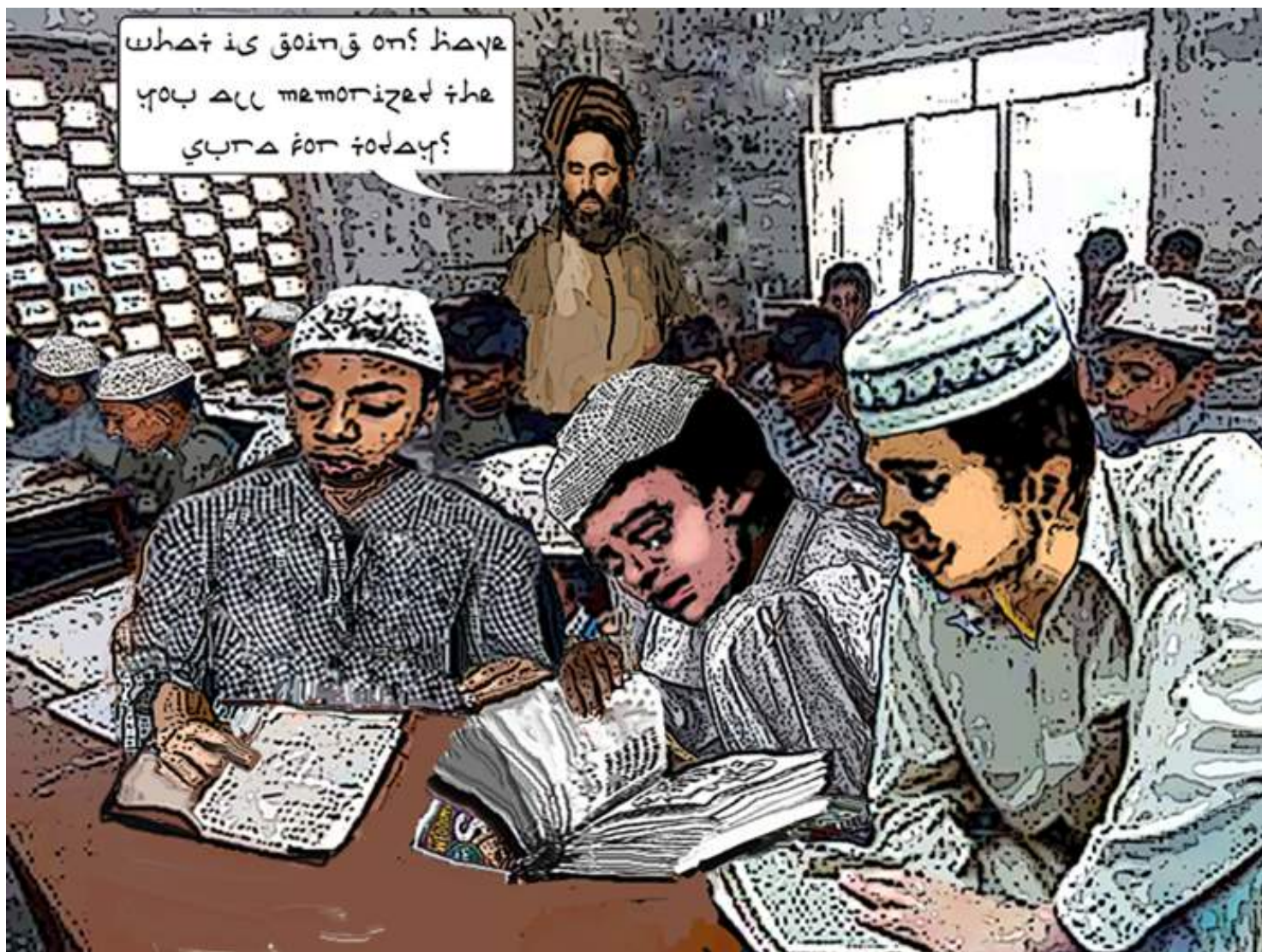
مبلسا هومرء، ماى ا
سپك شىث بو بترىفلى؟

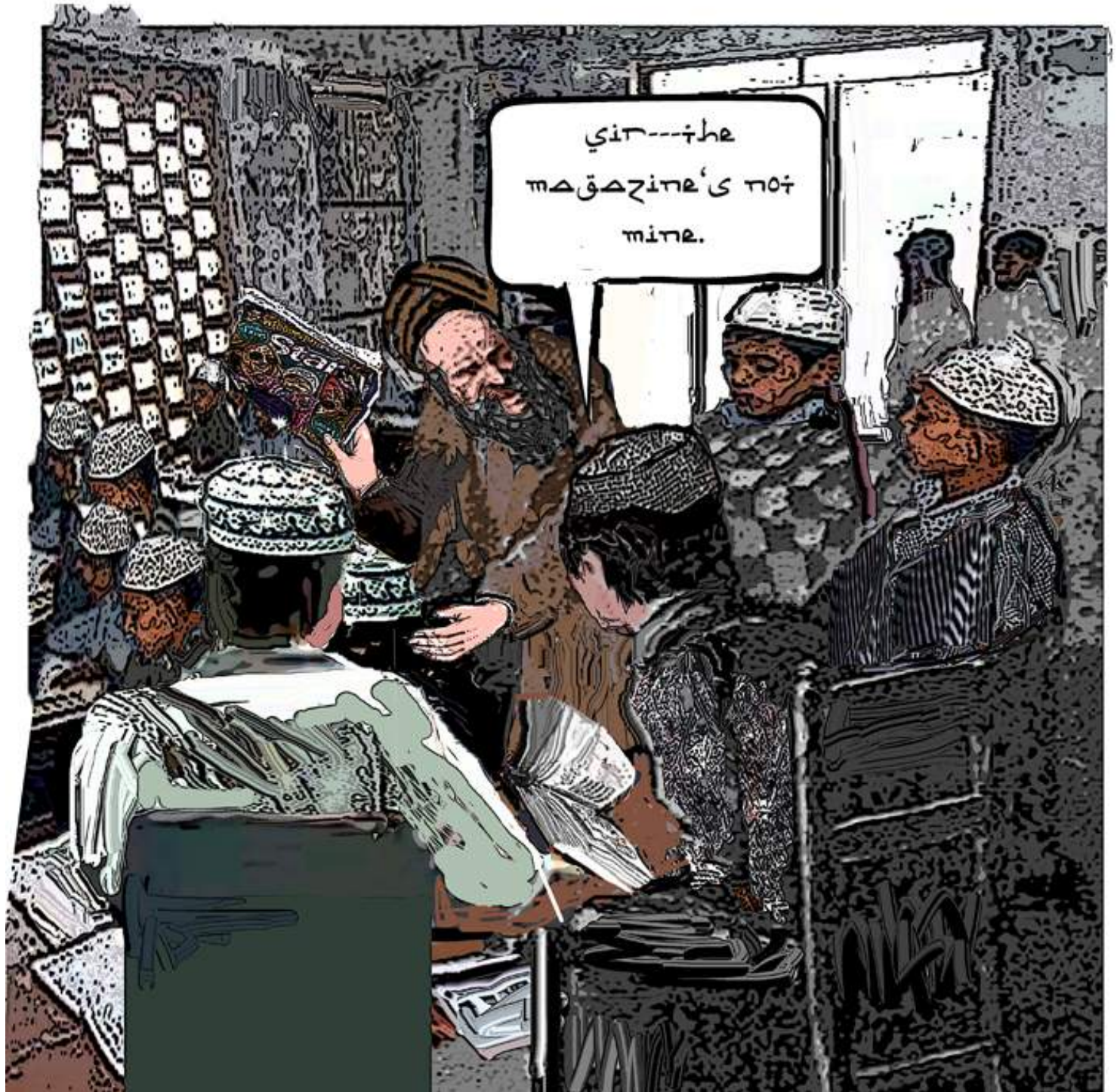






What is going on? Have
you all memorized the
Surah for today?

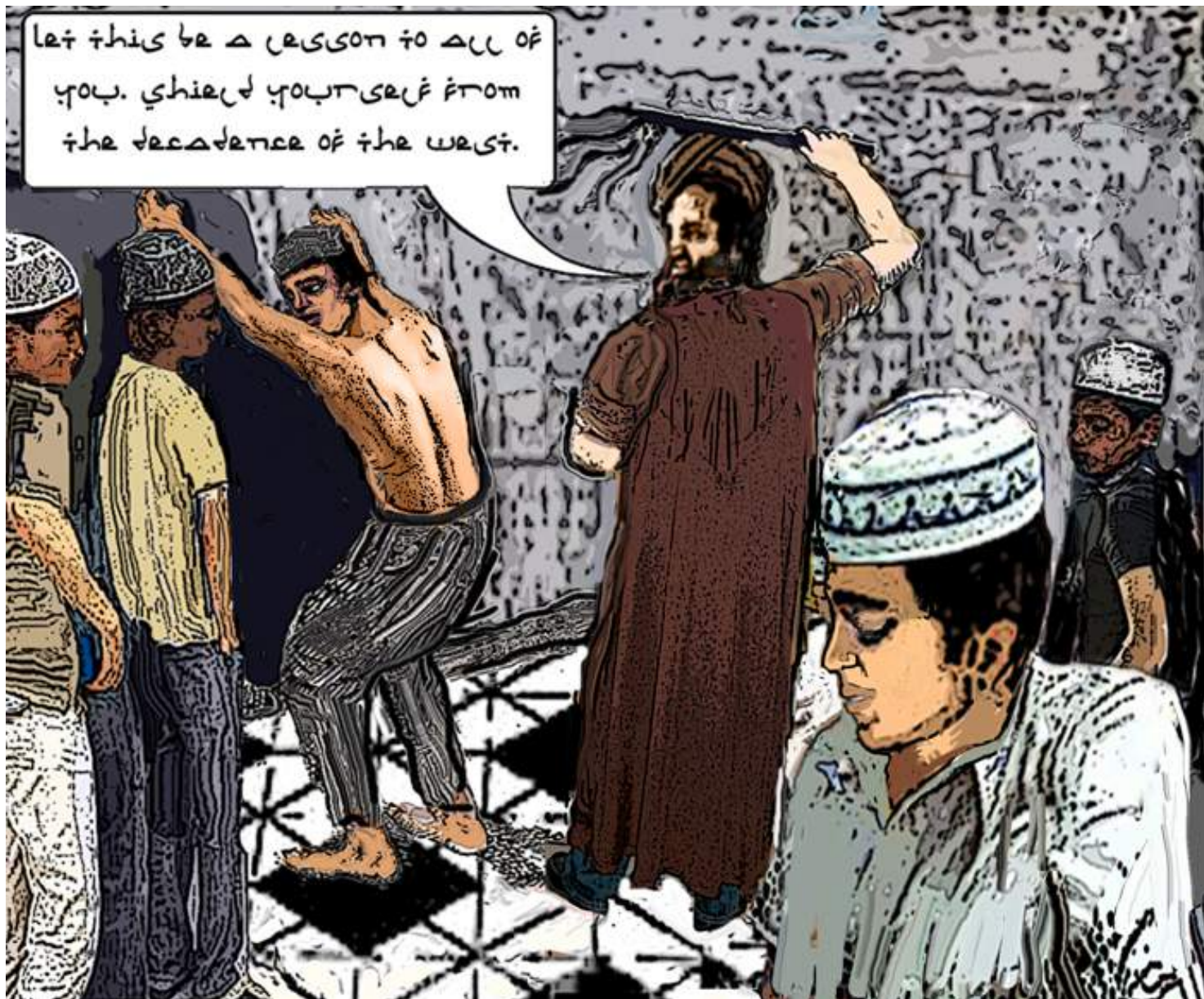




Don't add pain to your transi-
sions, nashit. You have your family.



Let this be a lesson to all of you. Shield yourself from the decadence of the West.




Back To Present Day ...

it doesn't matter.



i've tried for two months, and for years before that. the one thing i seem to have perfected is this stupid art of crying, but even i am running out of tears. i know better. this illusionary drama is of no further use to me---i go through the motions, that's for sure--- but of habit i cry---but in truth, father, i'm out of it.



A woman with dark hair, wearing a blue headscarf, is shown from the chest up. She has a serious expression. A white speech bubble with a black border is positioned to her right, containing text. The background is a brown and black leopard print pattern.

i only know one thing for
sure, on the path to infin-
ity i won't indulge any-
more. i choose to awaken. i
can't hate you, i can't
hate the infidel.



For me hatred is like a knife going in, my heart skips beats, I feel as though I'm going to die. and you know something? I'm ready to die when I feel those missing beats, yet that little muscle keeps doing its thing unbidden. who is doing the beating for me, father? it is not this little emoting, drama-laden personality I parade around in, that's for damn sure!

se'ida had a passionate
heart, like yours,
داق هيا.



i'm a suspect of something,
something only people on
death's doorstep know.





i know that all
this beauty...

what is that,
داق هتت؟

...یہ سب کیلئے یہ...



... ARE BROUGHT INTO BEING
ONLY BY THIS BEATING HEART.
THESE PHENOMENA ARE HELD IN
PLACE ONLY BY A THIN FILM OF
BLOOD, BUT FATHER, I AM NOT
THAT! I AM THE OTHER.



i am too young to know this. how can i
have any normalcy now that i know
with conviction the only thing worth
knowing? everything we humans do is
a fraud.



We don't see what comes
before the beginning, so
we can't even begin to imagine
what comes after it ends.
We worship the gods, as if it
were something outside of us,
some alien thing, far there in
the sky. But, father, I finally
understand.



WE ARE THE
مُؤْتَف!



i haven't forgotten. when your
mother died, i retreated inward,
i couldn't face you. even now, it's
hard. so much has happened,
the baklanis, beiruti, iraq, af-
ghanistan, now this filthy epi-
sode. yet all that was easier to
face than you. perhaps i've been
a fool on a fool's mission all
along, and here my own daughter
betrayed the confidence
me.



it can't be false, this road i've fol-
lowed is faithful. there's been too
much suffering. the path is there
for us to follow, we must adhere to it,
الحق هو الحق، أو نلحقه كرجال.



WE ARE LOST
ANYWHERE, FATHER.
WE ARE NOT MEN...

..ah, the small breeze is so
nice and cool after
the day's heat.
shall I sing a song
for you, father? one of
my songs?



but beyond ideas of
مشروع دینق or rightdo-
ing, there is a field.
i'll meet you there



When the boy lies down
in that grass, the
world is too full to talk
about. Ideas, can't be,
even the phrase 'each
other' doesn't make any
sense.



even the phrase 'each other' doesn't
make any sense...
i'll meet you there.



فیتل، یو بیټر
نوت مایه فوټ
ټھی شوټل.

ی شانت ا سټیپ اوټ ټهټ.



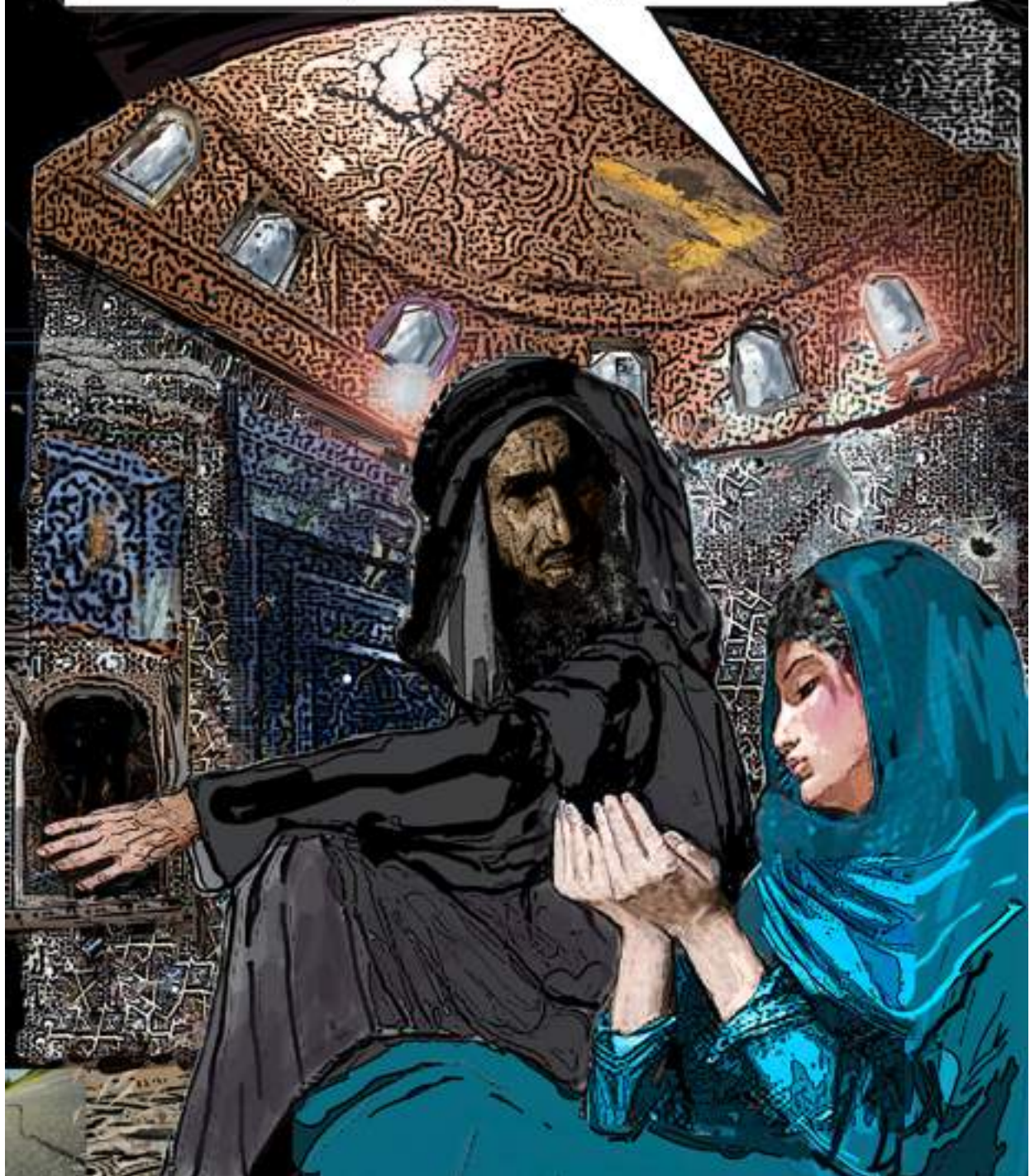
ideas, لا يتفق، even the
phrase 'each other'
doesn't make sense any-
more. *2010*



the 'other' doesn't make sense to me. an understanding
came over me last year. it went through me, like a power-
ful shudder. then, as mysteriously as it came, father,
it left.



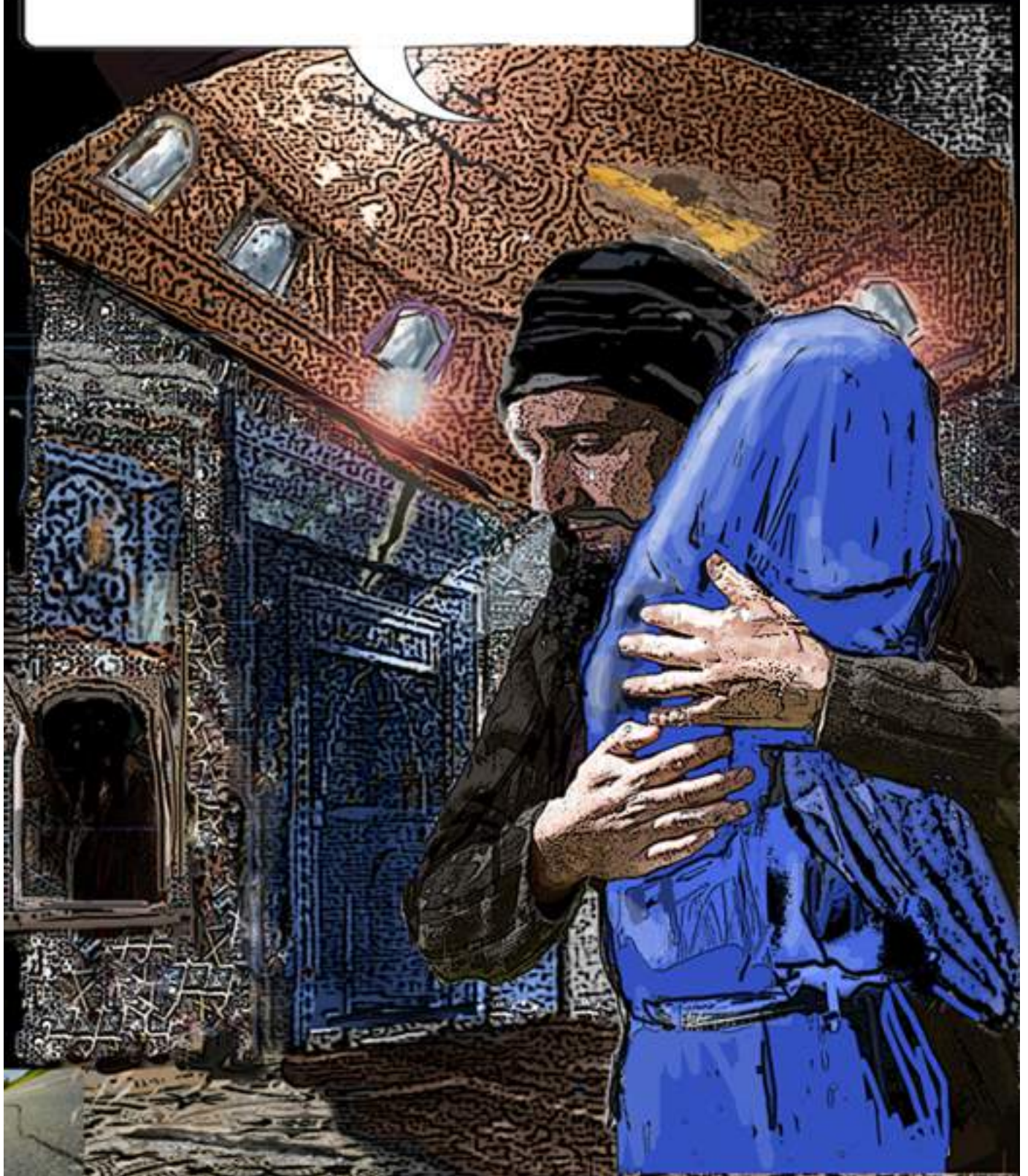
I wanted to die. The understanding was the only thing that mattered to me, the only thing that made any sense, and it was gone. Everything lost its taste. I was like a robot, going through the motions. A few weeks ago, while composing, it came back to me in full force, all praise be to Allah.



there is no other, father,
because there is no me that is
separate from Allah's creation.
Allah is the totality. we live and
breathe Allah. there is only Allah.
i love Allah with all my heart
and soul.
how could it be otherwise.-
there is no separation.



praise Allah for your gift,
الحمد لله.





The 13th Century

Rumi's garden 4 years after the return of Shams



جوب'ye become an accom-
plished player.

How can you possibly say
that? I haven't won a
single game in four
years!

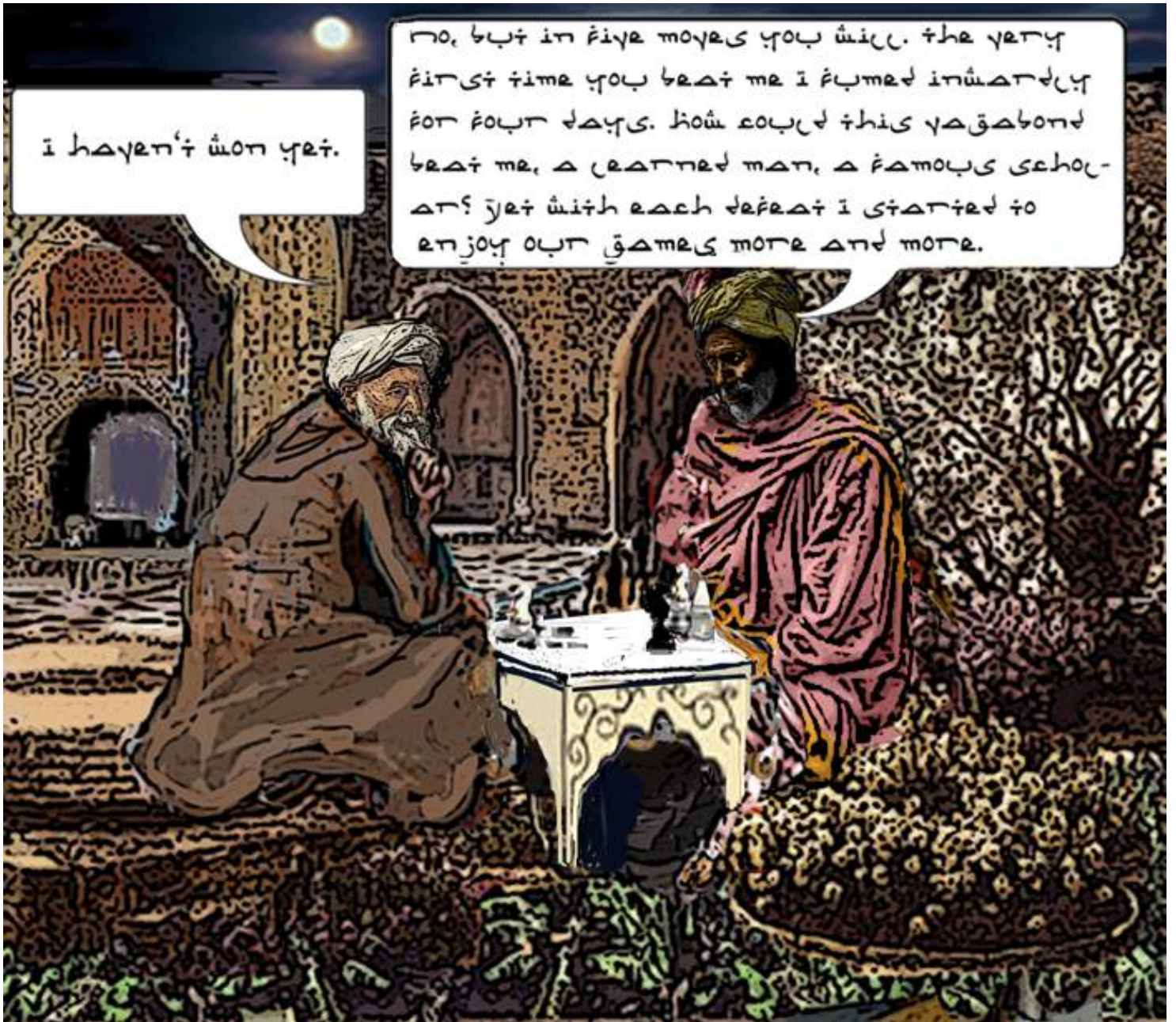


από το δούπι μου
σε πο εξερατιση,
υπηροτιυπαδτελυ.



i haven't won yet.

no, but in five moves you will. the very first time you beat me i fumed inwardly for four days. how could this vaqabond beat me, a learned man, a famous scholar? yet with each defeat i started to enjoy our games more and more.



١٥٥٥ هـ ق، شهن شہ کامپد ٲن
شہ ٲدٲشہ، ٲوٲ ٲرل ٲنٲو ا ٲرٲ
ٲرٲٲٲ.

ٲر



i pointed to the caravan in the
distance. what did i say
to you?



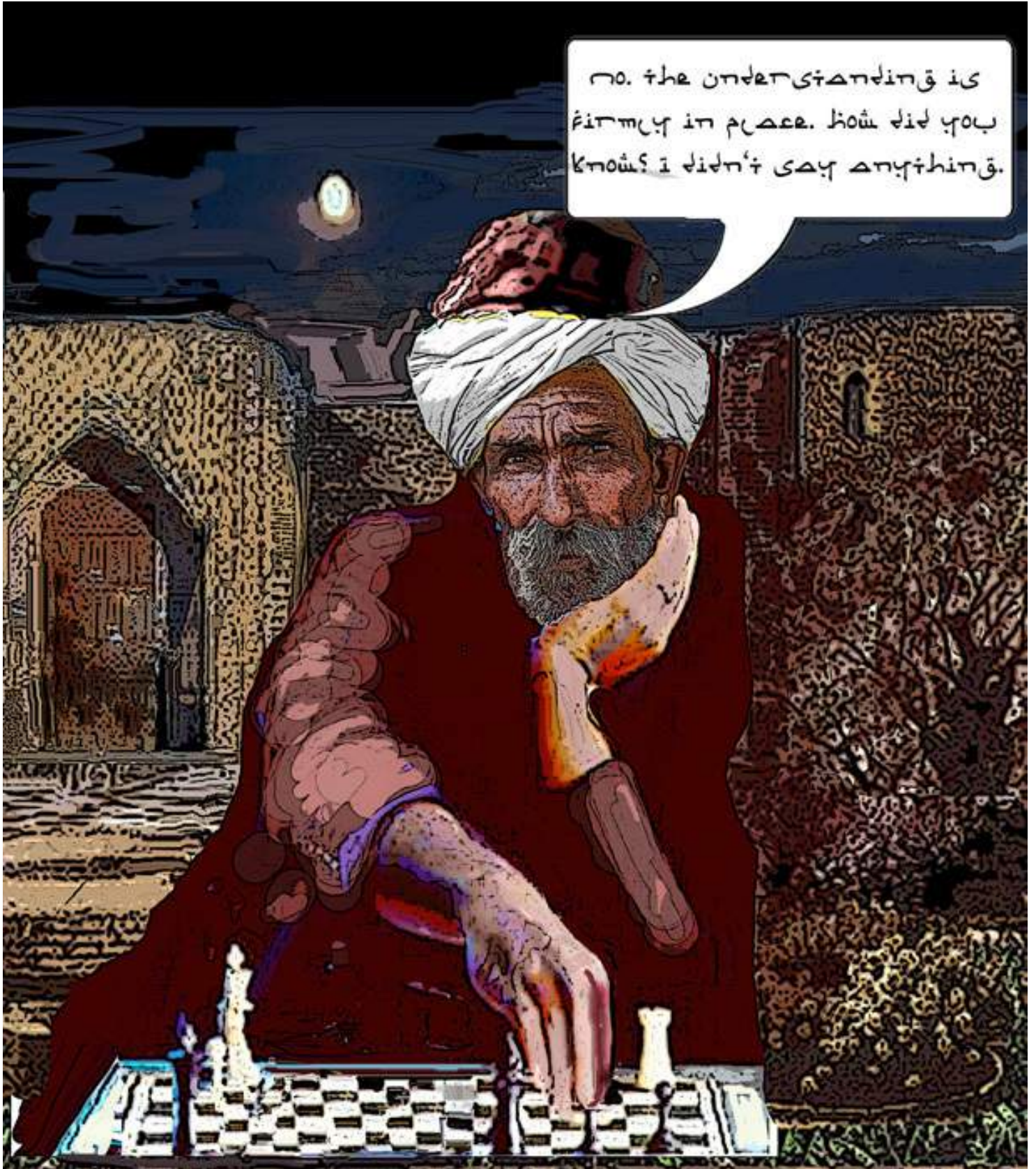


if i wanted
to join
with them!

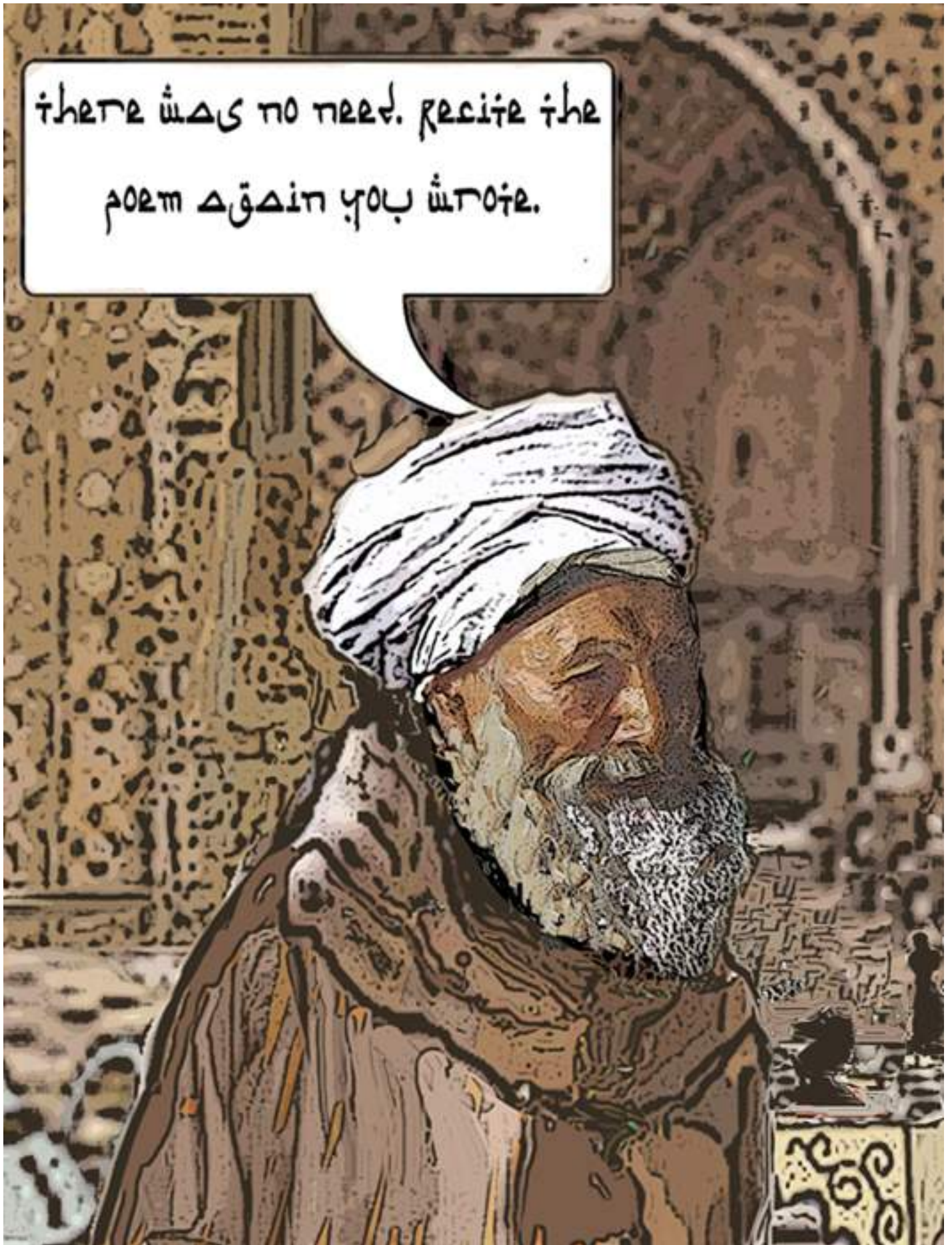
تو به هیچ وجه نباید بدانی که اینطوری است
محقق.

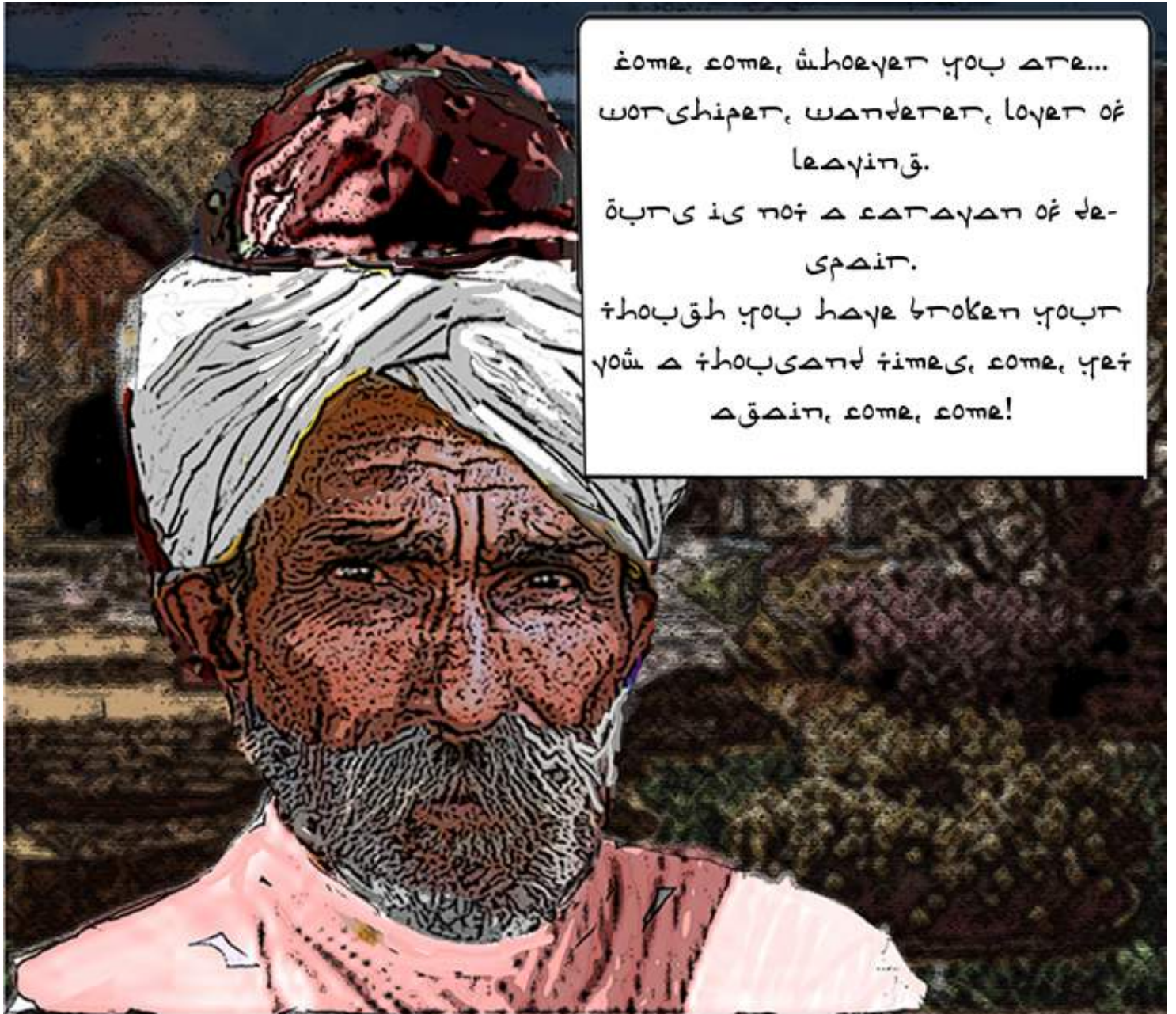


no. the understanding is firmly in place. how did you know? i didn't say anything.



there was no need. recite the
poem again you wrote.

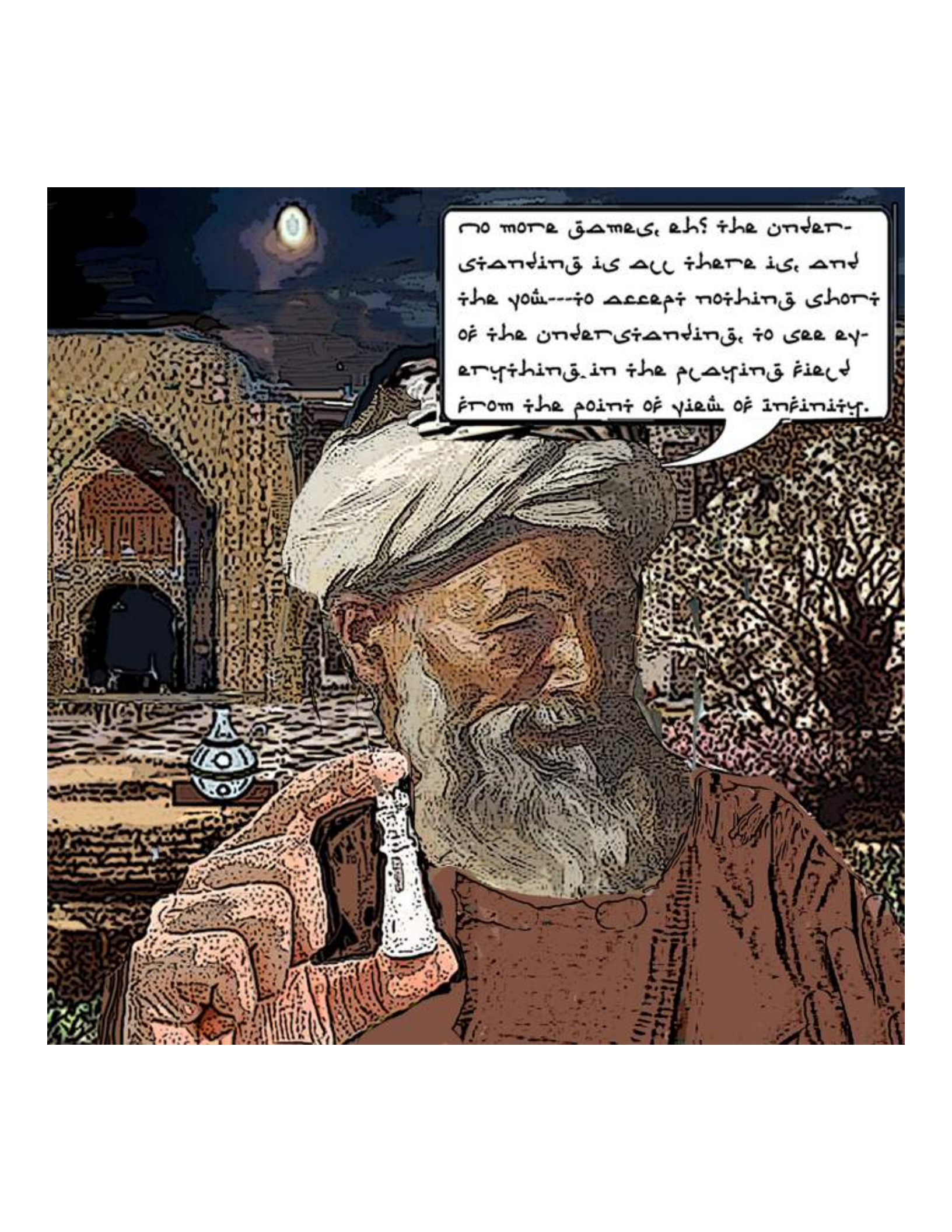




come, come, whoever you are...
worshiper, wanderer, lover of
leaving.

آبتي هي نوت ا ساتدان اف دة-
سائت.

ثوبقك بوب هاف بركن بوب
بوش ا ثوبساند تيمس، come, yet
ا قائت، come, come!



no more games, eh? the understanding is all there is, and the you---to accept nothing short of the understanding, to see everything in the playing field from the point of view of infinity.





Drone Command Headquarters Present Day

The van just
entered Briggs's
sector.

Captain Briggs, do you
read me?



Go ahead.

Captain, the white van
has entered your sector.
What's your situation?

Viper and at least four of his men are in the Mosque. His daughter is there with him. Seems that we're having some sort of family reunion.

Family reunion or not, the van is roughly a kilometer and a half from your position and closing.





Looks like we have an
uninvited guest.

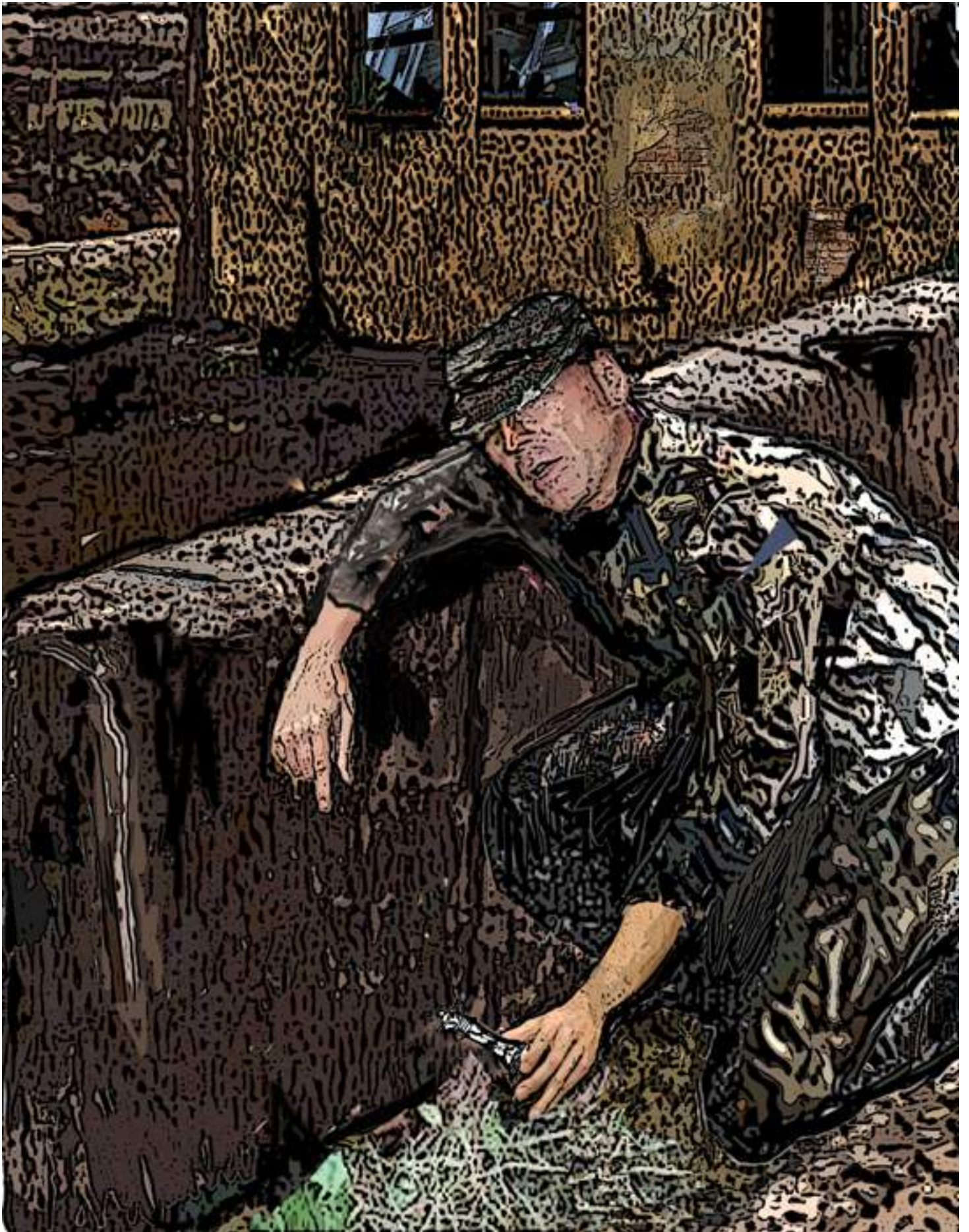
Hold your position,
Lieutenant. I'm going
down to street level.



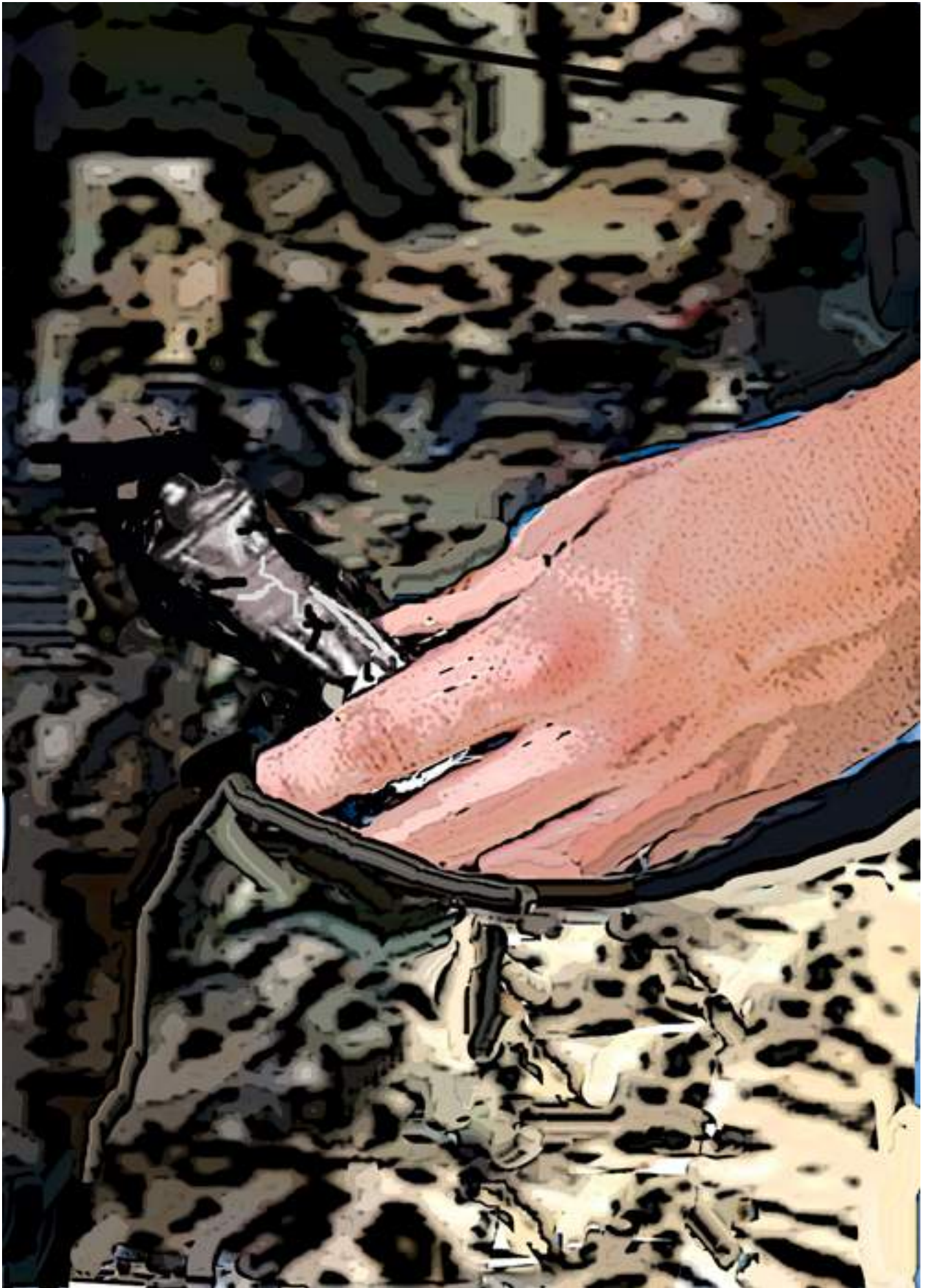
Harrison, you with me?

Always, Captain.













Drone Command,
where's the van now?



Sir, about a kilometer
from your position
and closing.

You need to take it
out.




Uh...not possible,
Captain. It's in heavy
traffic on the
boulevard.





It's got to turn off onto one of two streets---al Madares or al Diyafah. Take it out as soon as you have a clear shot, when it turns off the boulevard.





I only have the one helo available, Captain. It's headed back.

Where's the drone?



Well, Sir, we've had a malfunction with the weapon launcher.

Goddamn it, I told you
to keep me posted!

We've always been
able to override
the glitch.



Goddamn it, Harrison!



Captain, I know what you're thinking. There's nothing we can do, Sir. The girl's trapped.

I know, Sargeant. I know.



The Pentagon - Years Earlier










Present Time

Sir...

Get back up
on the roof,
Sargeant,
now!





Drone Command, where's
the van?

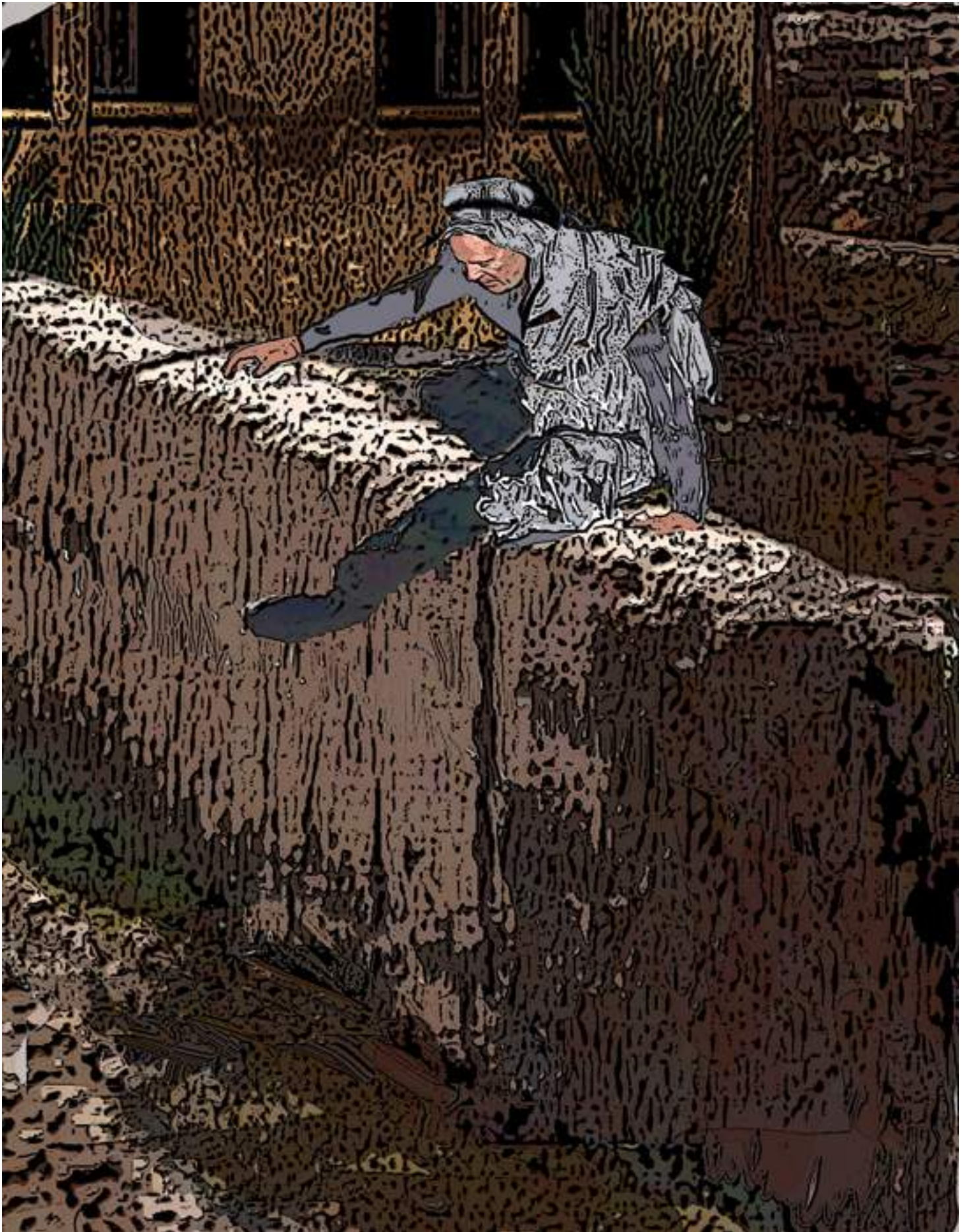
Sir, it's turned off the
boulevard about six
blocks from your position.
The chopper's on the
way.

I don't think there's time.

Roger, Captain, we'll do our best.







With all due respect,
Captain...

Lieutenant, I want you and your men to stay right where you are, do you hear me? Don't move. If anything happens to me, pull the men out---that's an order. Don't stop to pick up the pieces. No blowback this time. Just get the hell out!



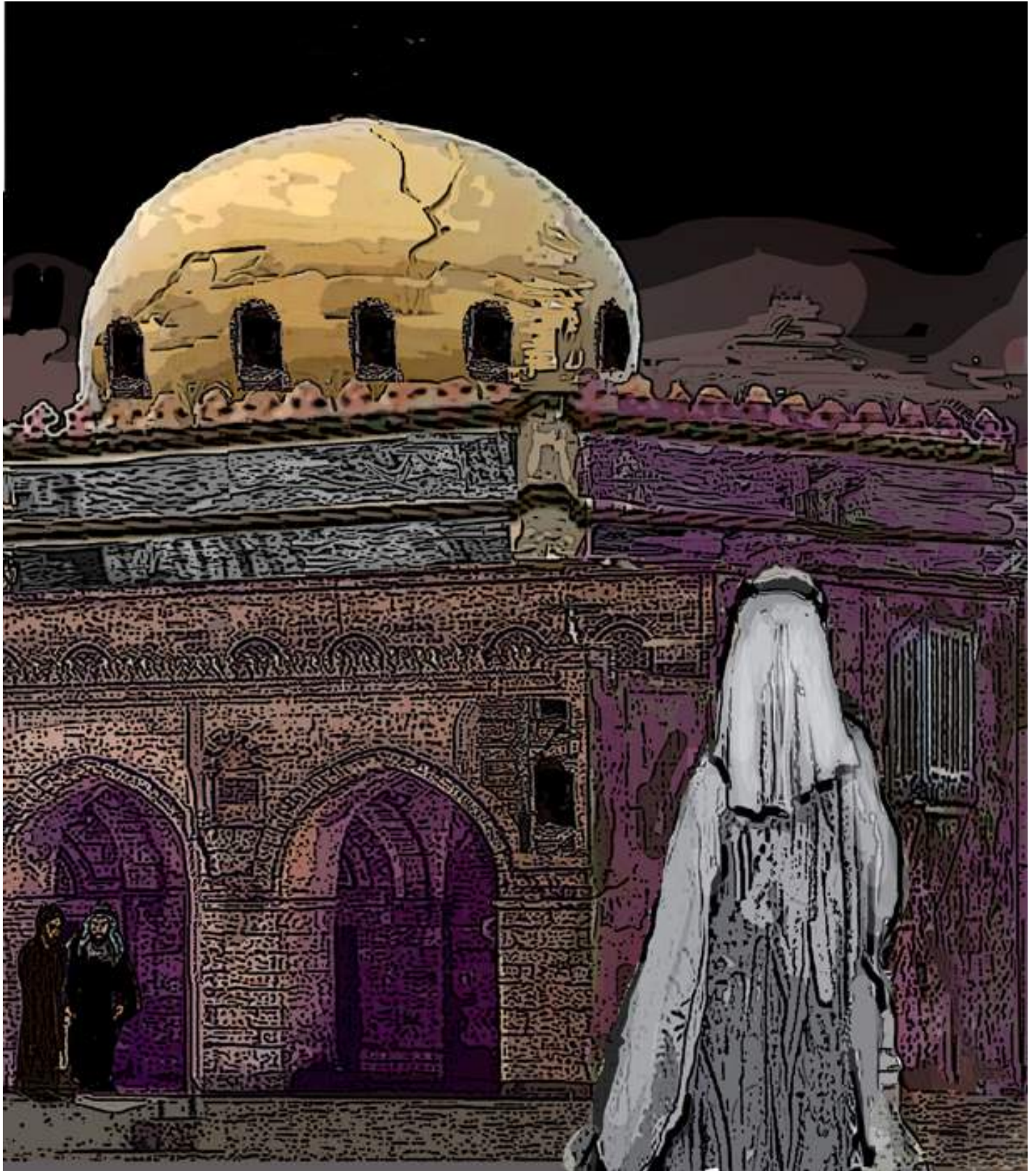
Check, Captain. This is... irregular, Sir.



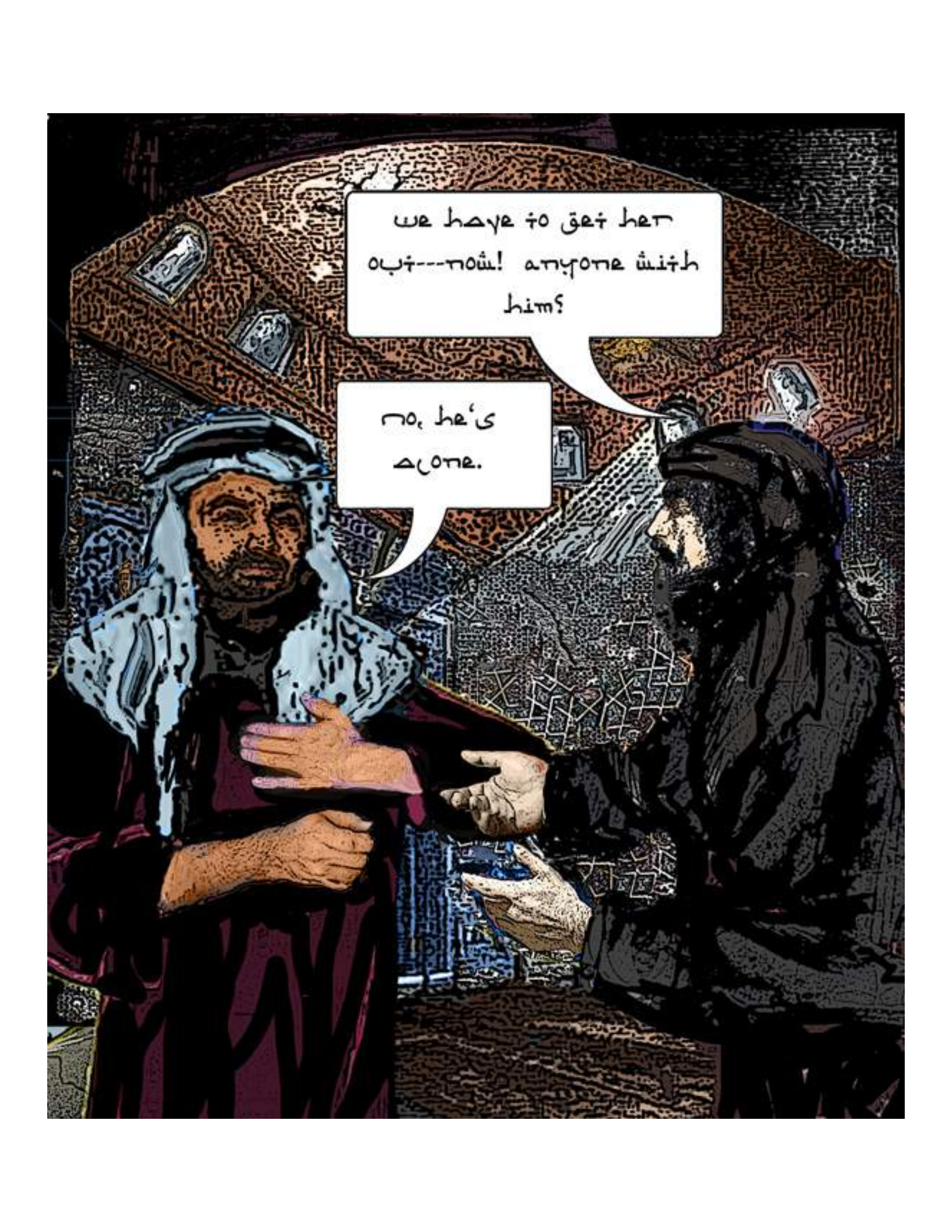
Someday you and I may have the opportunity to debate the operational definition of 'regular', Lieutenant. In the meantime, do what I say and all your men'll walk away from this one. I'm the one to get Viper. He's an old friend.







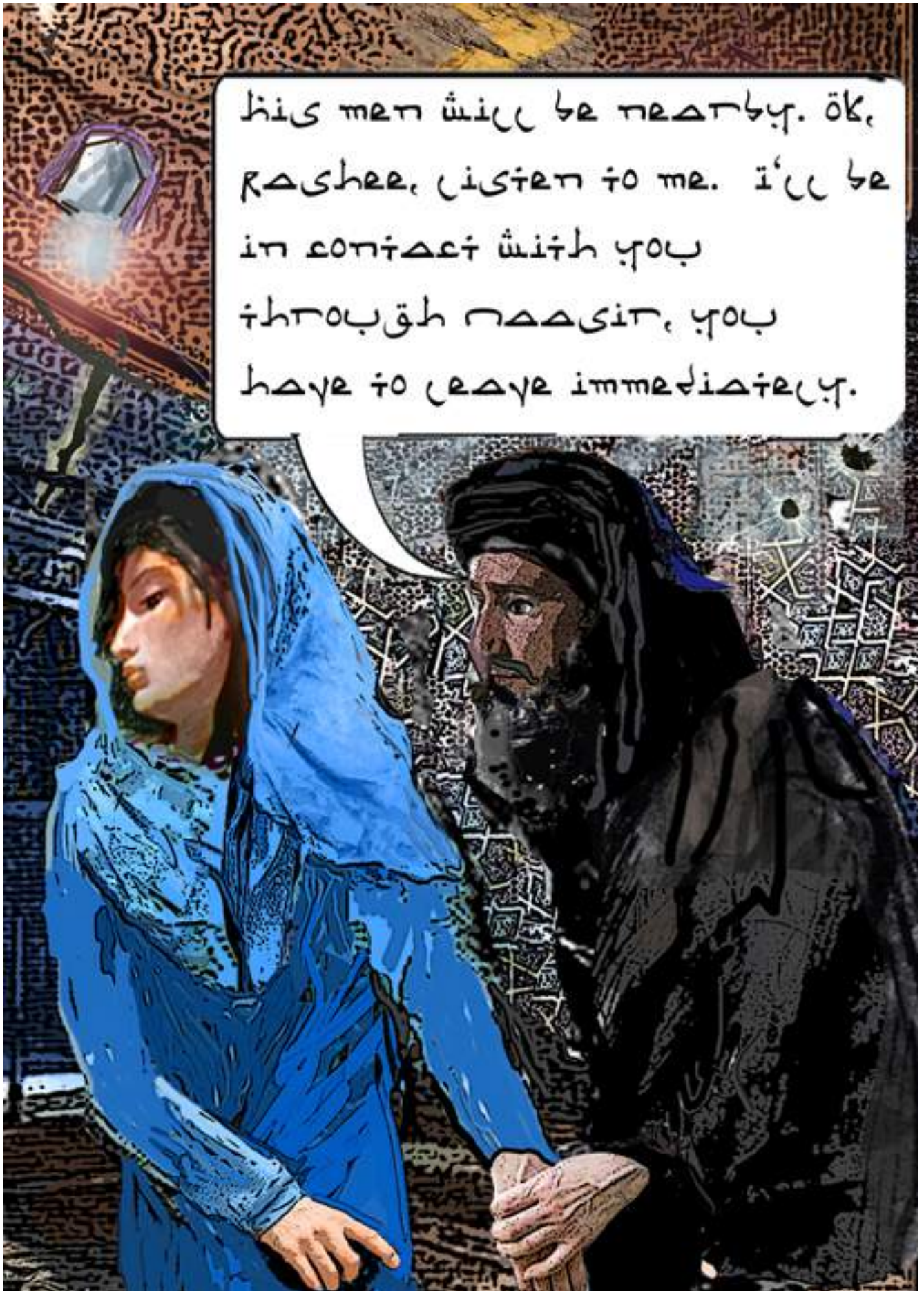




we have to get her
out---now! anyone with
him?

no, he's
alone.

His men will be nearby. Ok,
Rashid, listen to me. I'll be
in contact with you
through Nadia, you
have to leave immediately.



come with me, father.





we'll be family
again, Rashee!

I swear by the dagger
of our tradition.




13th Century



Good evening, Master Steu-
ard. What is that in your
hands?


A little gift from the
Council of Mullahs.





So, this is the final
act Allah has
arranged.

لە ٢٠٠٠ بەرێ.



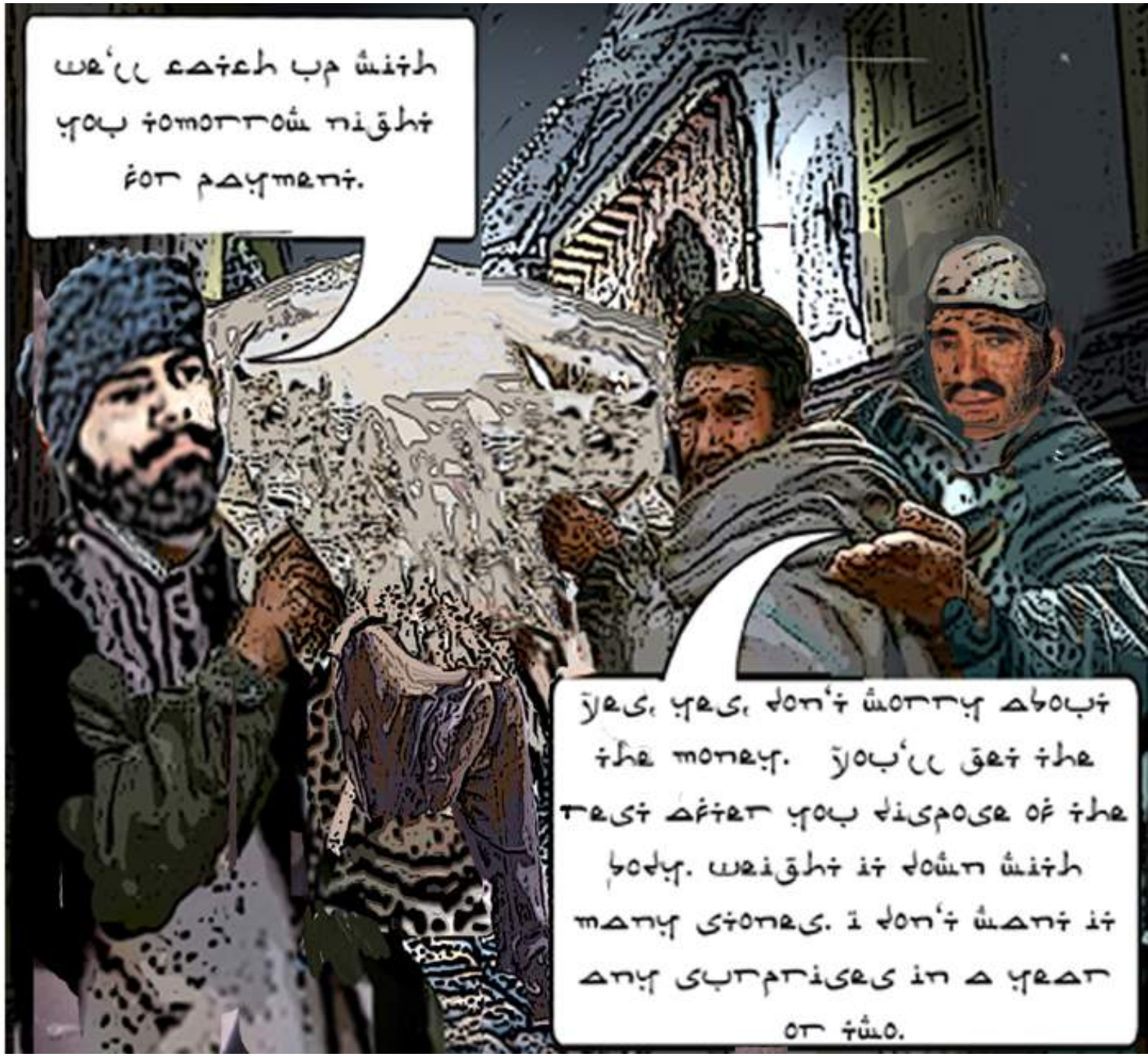
So, this is the final
act Allah has
arranged.

موت باهرا.



Get rid of the body in the quarry. No one must find it. Do you understand?



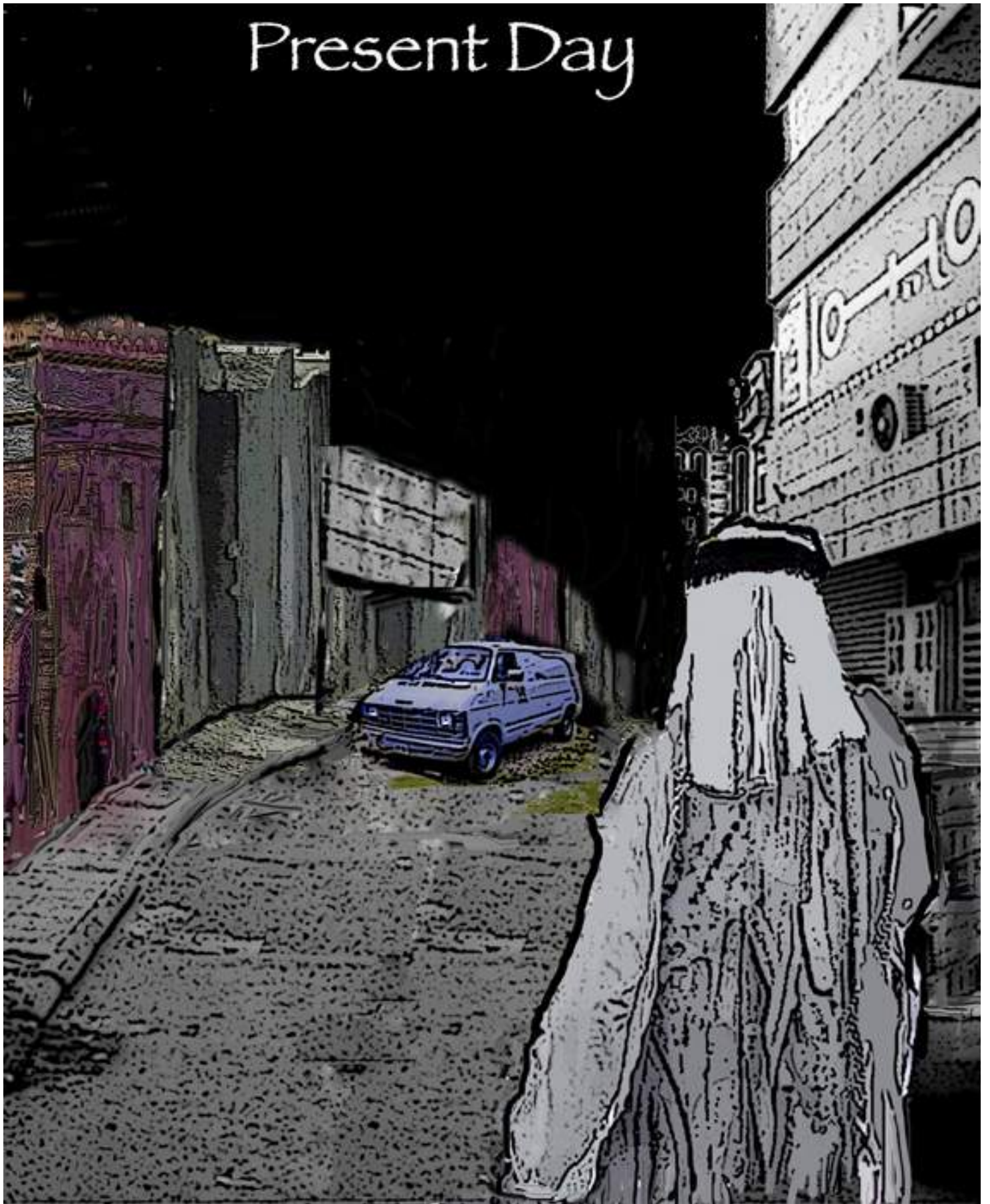


we'll catch up with
you tomorrow night
for payment.

yes, yes, don't worry about
the money. you'll get the
rest after you dispose of the
body. weight it down with
many stones. i don't want it
any surprises in a year
or two.



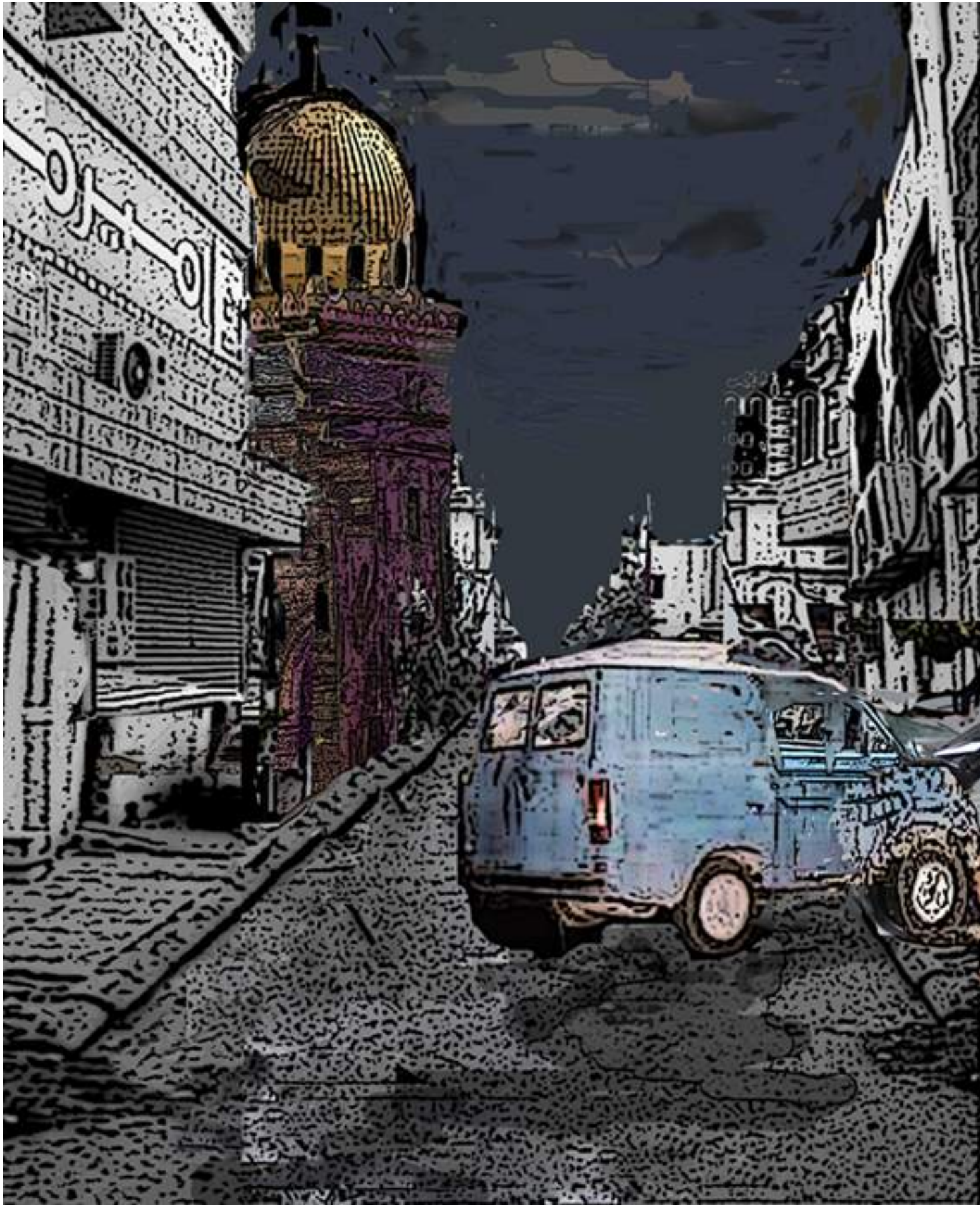
Present Day

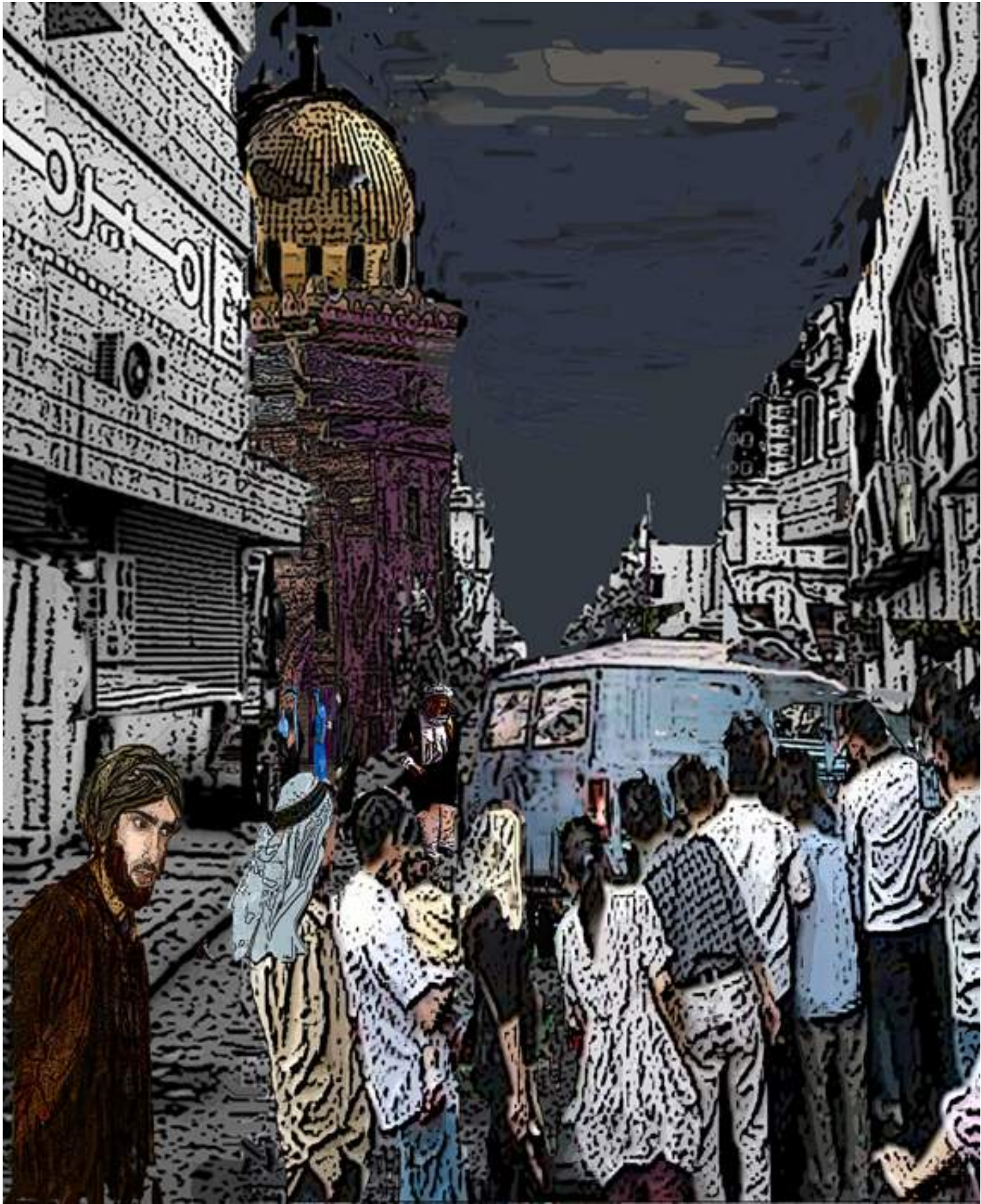


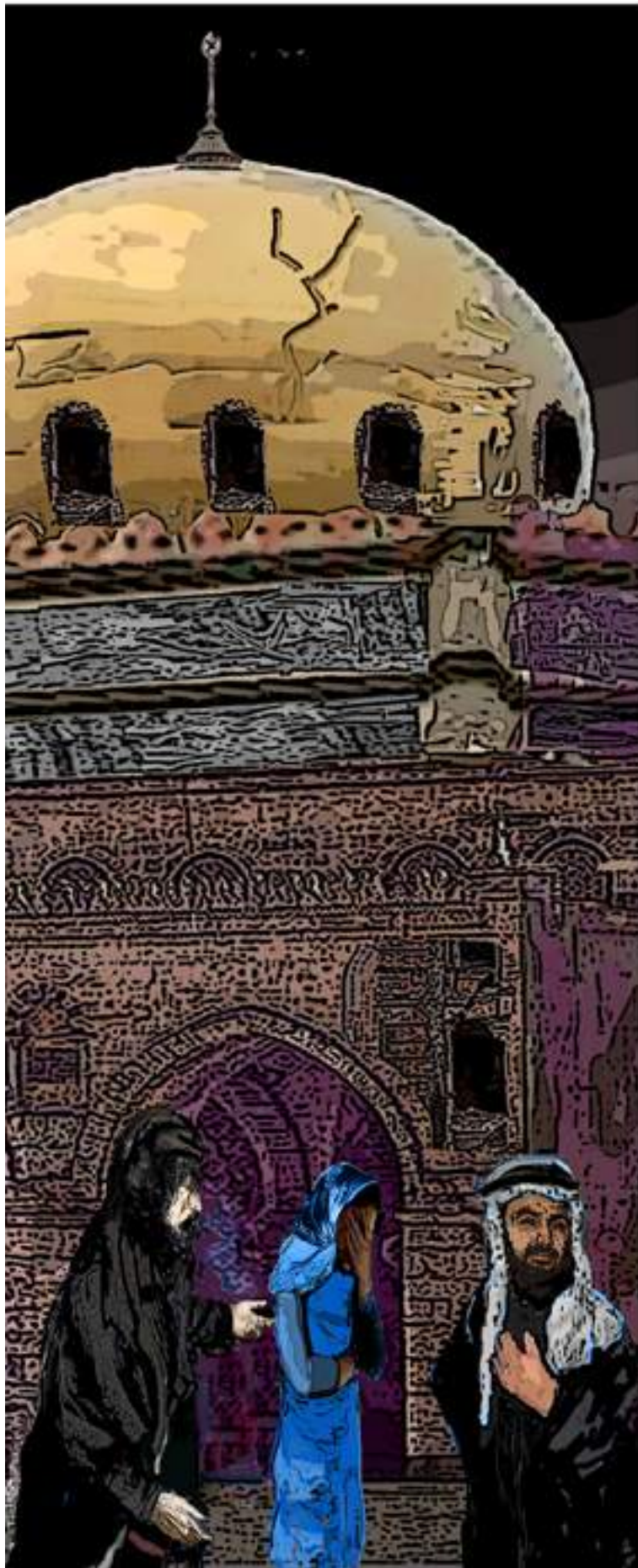














یہ تو کچھ عجیب ہے۔ وہ تو
میں نے پہلے ہی دیکھا ہے۔





it's taria!
he's been shot!

he's supposed to be
in Damascus.





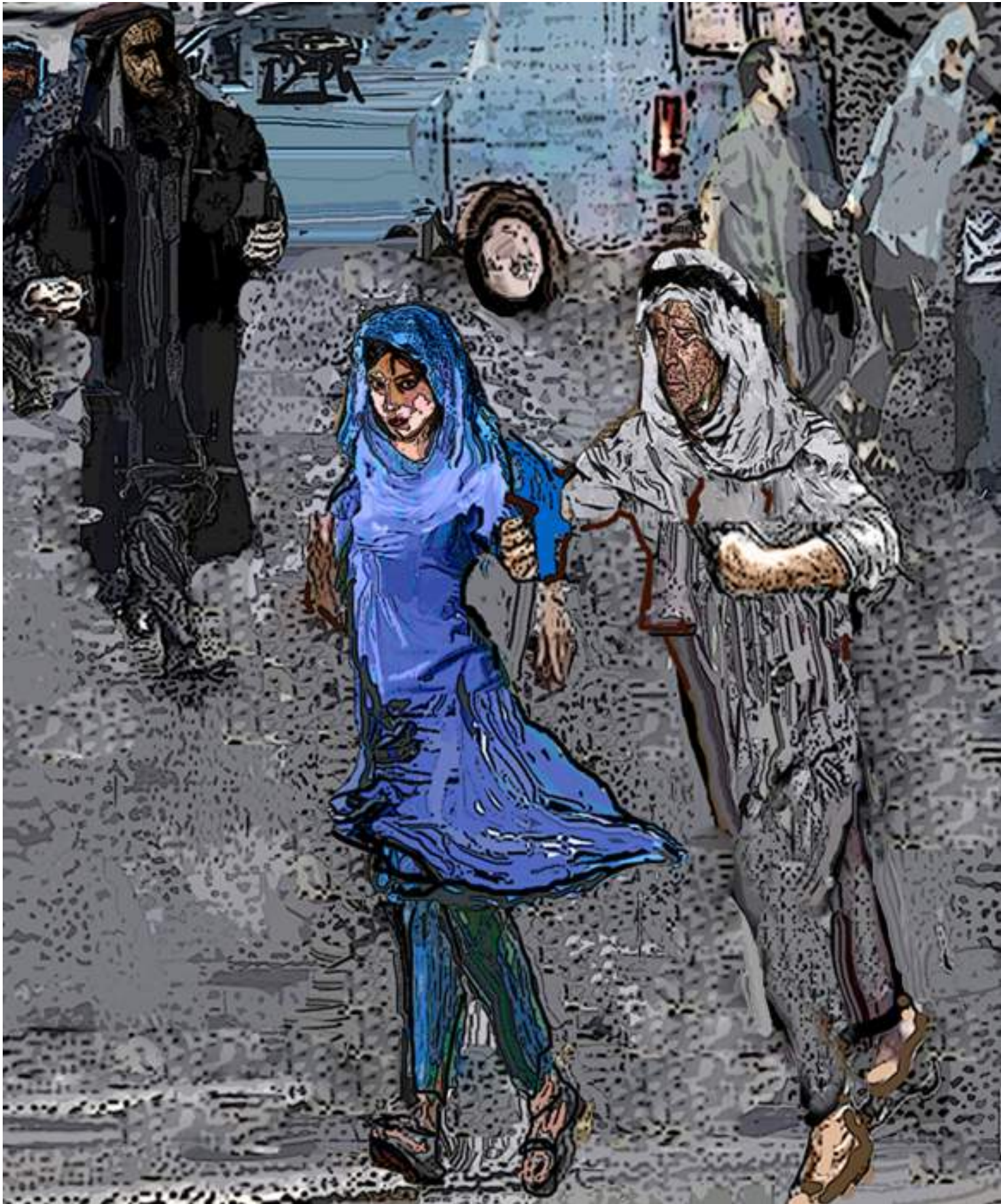
Get back! Get away
from the van!



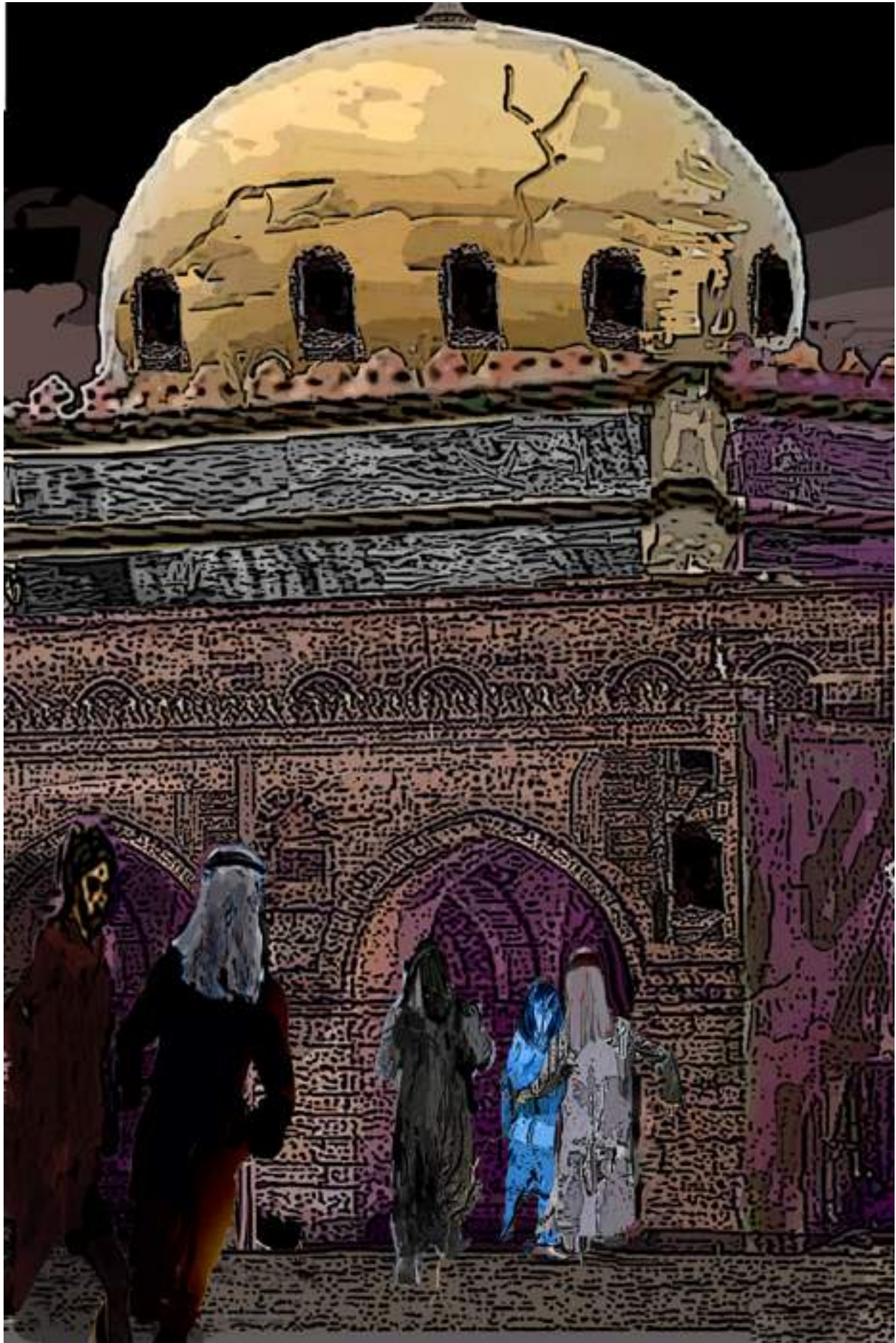


inside
rashee!

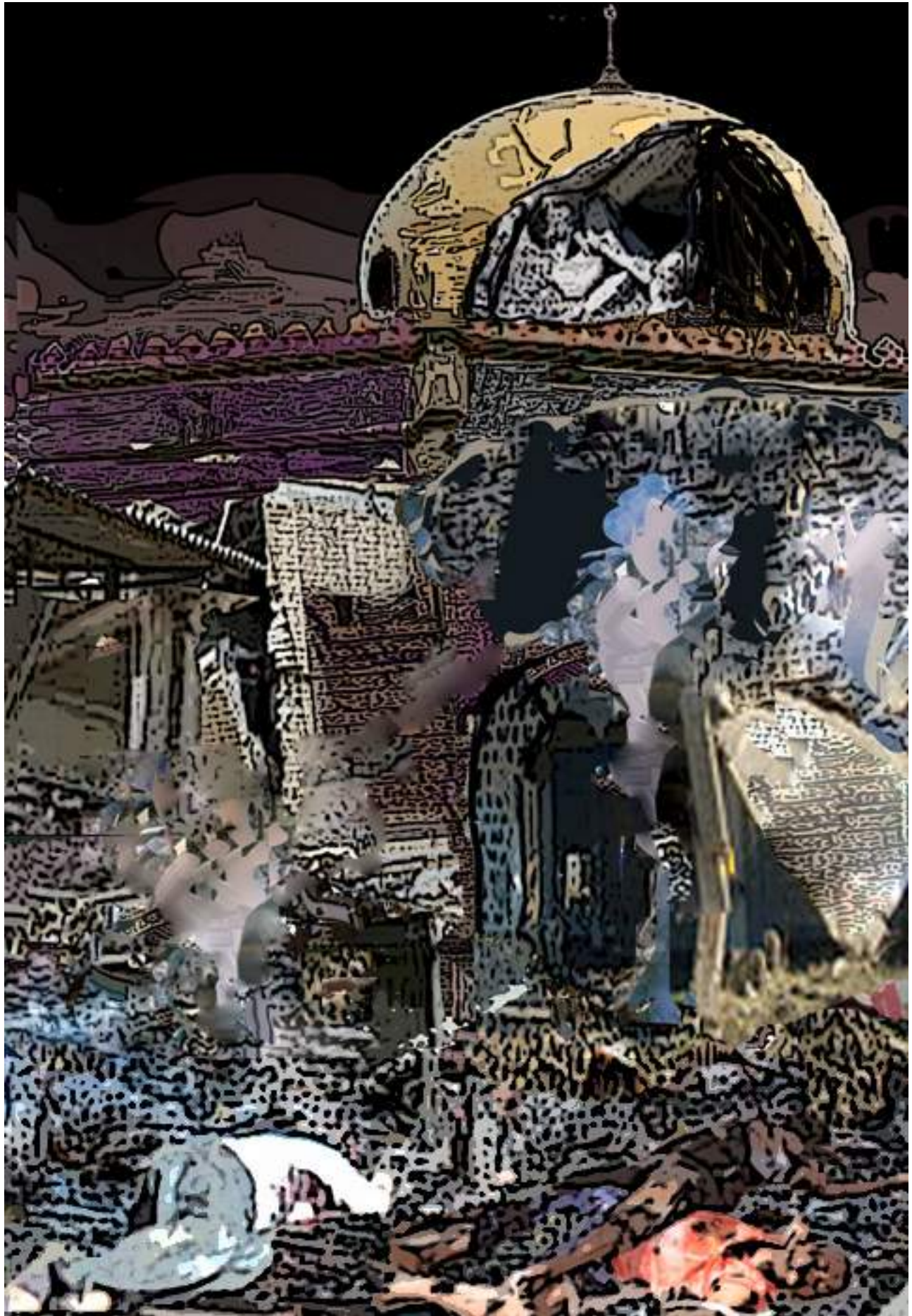


















i should never
have let you come.

there was
no stopping
me.



are you
bleeding?

no...i don't think so. i
can't move my left
shoulder.



ہی بے یٰ اے۔

taria! i can't believe it. the
americans must have put
him up to it.





either they're not
attacking our
mosques.

then how do you ex-
plain the american
over there?



he shielded me
from the blast.
why would he
risk his life?





get back here
Rasheedah

he's hurt.



father, he tried
to save me.

let him be!



γούτρε
σάφε.



کلمہ ہی ہوڑ
arabic.

my life is
broken.



take this field
to you quickly. quick,
it is yours!





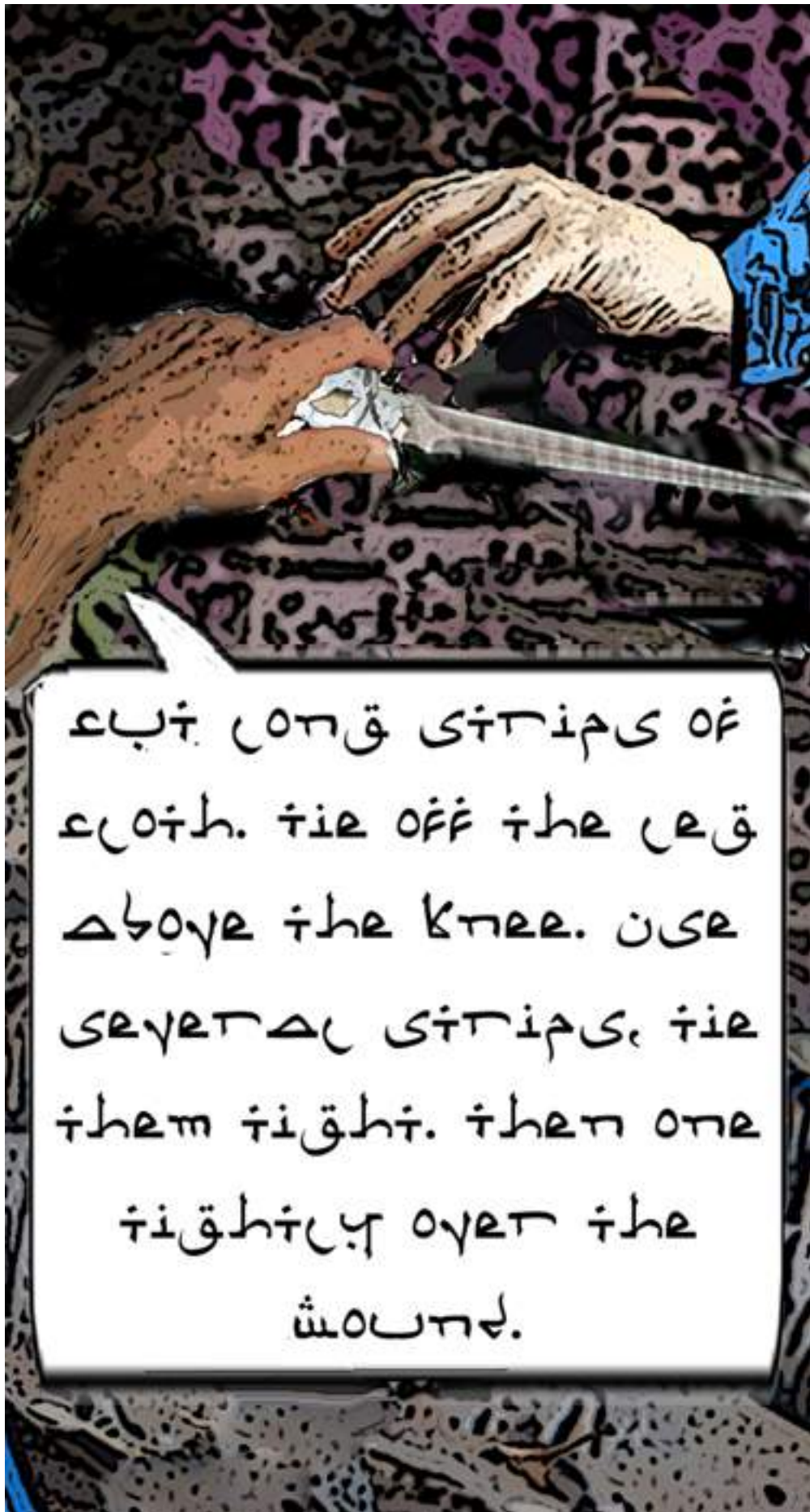


it won't tighten.
father! what do
i do?

let him bleed,
ragheeda. let him
bleed.

he'll go
into shock!






لبت. لوق سترپس OF
cloth. tie off the لوق
above the knee. use
several سترپس, tie
them tightly. then one
tightly over the
wound.

my voice, Khalid,
لا، you don't
recognize it?



Whoever you are, I don't care. My
men will finish you off when they
dig you out.





it's been
thirty years,
khallad.

that is? پی قونظ
it ی می...no...بہ؟
so. it's.

i'm afraid

it is.

old friend.



no, no...i prayed i'd
never cross you on the
battlefield. why can't
you stupid americans
stay where allah put
you?





أنا لم أطلب مني أي شيء
أكثر.

أنا لم أطلب مني أي شيء
أكثر. كنت صديقاً لك
لعدة سنوات. لا تتوقع
أي اعتبار من رجالنا
عندما يطلبون منا. أنا
لا أطلب منك.

i'm not alone
either.




an infidel says my
life is 'haram'.



infidel? فيف اي بى،
khalid. i'm بى
neither of بى be-
lieves in anything
anymore. what the
hell happened to you
anymore?





father, who is this
american? how do you
know him?

i know him from
the time in america,
when i was young...
before your grandfather
was killed.



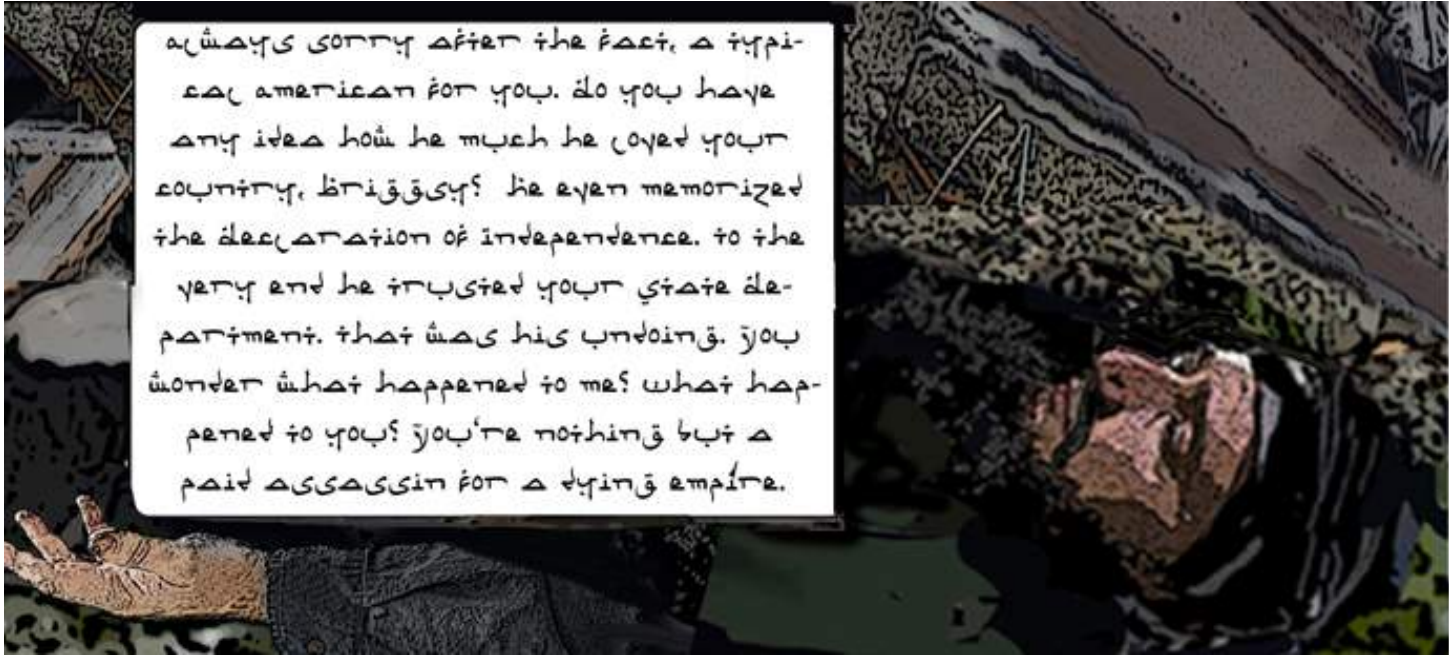
أنا أتذكر ذلك اليوم
بوضوح، عندما أتوا
لأخذك وأبي،
بعد أن مات الشيخ.

after he was murdered!
you americans had a
hand in it, did you know
that? hammed told me the
whole goddam story.





يشكك في
أمر جيد، أنا
سوف



always sorry after the fact, a typical American for you. do you have any idea how much he loved your country, عزيزي؟ he even memorized the declaration of independence. to the very end he trusted your state department. that was his undoing. you wonder what happened to me? what happened to you? you're nothing but a paid assassin for a dying empire.

Who are you to talk? I remember all your big plans, you'd return to the kingdom, modernize, new ideas. You ended up a terrorist, pure and simple. You lose people for sport!



of course, it's not in
known in your profession.
The good thing is that
I remember your
fascination with
secret missions and intel-
ligence and all that stuff.



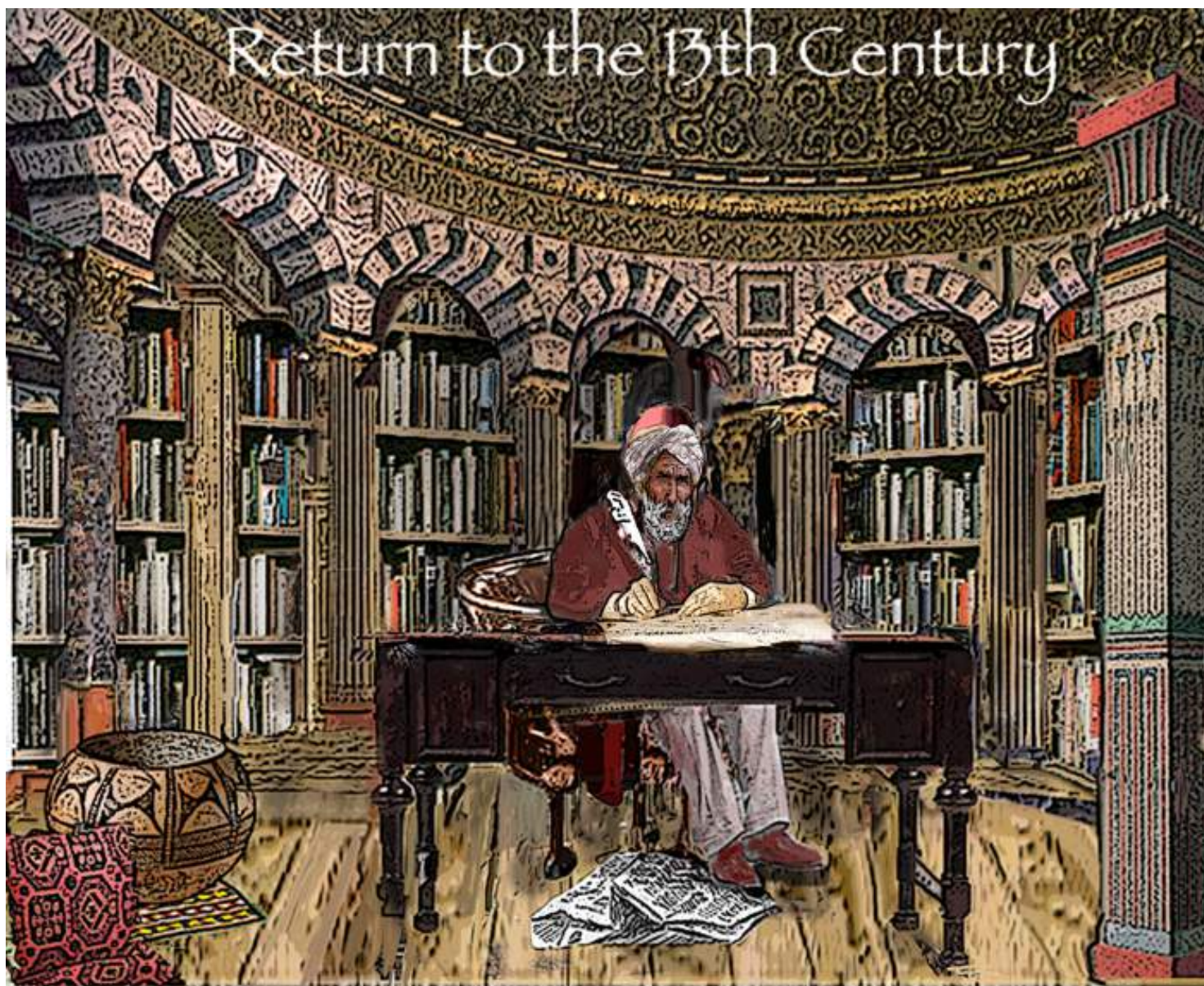
How has it worked out, friend? Still protecting American
business interests wherever they are threatened?
Still fighting Israel's wars, are you?



both of you, shabab! in the name of
allah, shabab! are you totally mad? by
allah's name, she are alive, she're safe.
not five minutes by and you are
politicians! you men are totally insane.
you'd devastate all of creation to prove
a point. are you deaf to the suffering
you cause?



Return to the 13th Century








come in, come
in.

father, it's
important.



no need to say anything. it's written all over your face.

my men have looked every-where. i've sent emissaries to baghdad, to damascus. they even betrayed the mongols and made inquiries to the north. there's just no trace of him, it's as if the earth swallowed him up.



i know.
it's time to end the search.
our friend is gone.

i'm sorry, father. it's
a mystery.

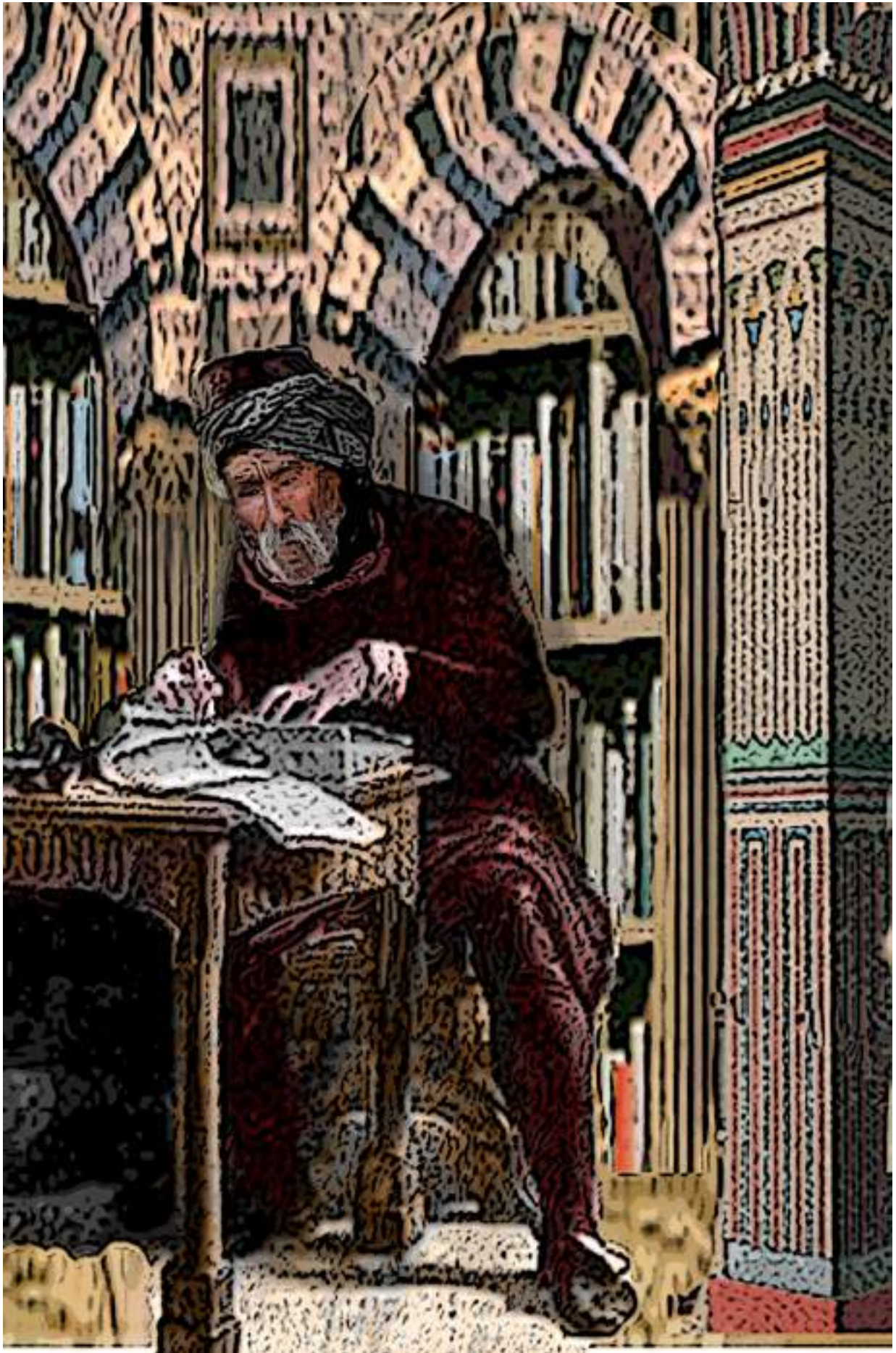
قو home now, قو
home to your family.





WE'LL MEET LATER. BRING
YOUR SONS, I HAVEN'T
SEEN THEM IN A WHILE.

I WILL, FATHER.



Why should I seek?
I am the same as
he.

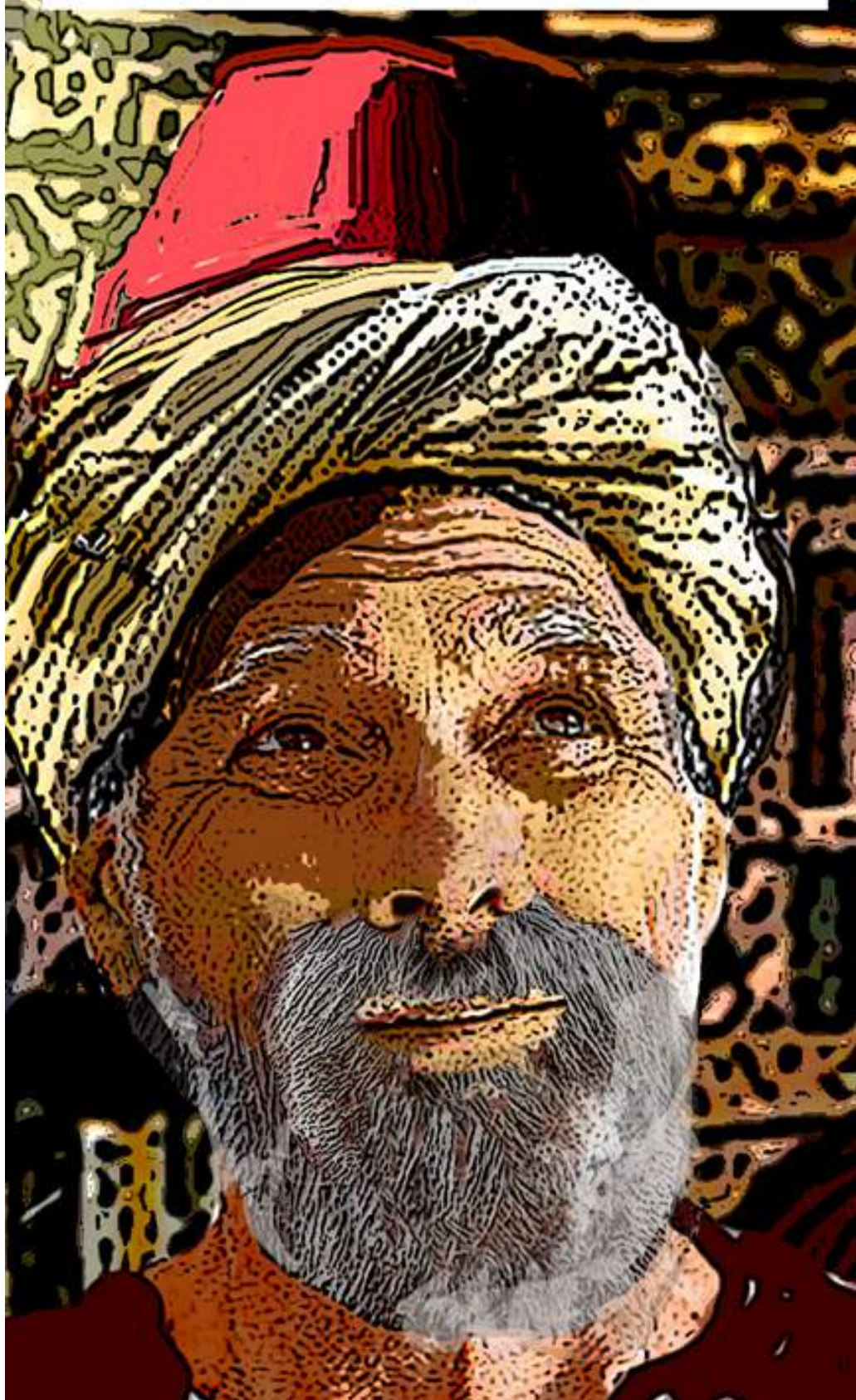
His essence speaks
through me.
I have been searching
for myself.







"i have been searching
for myself"





Khalid's men inside destroyed Mosque





Rashee,
just rest, daughter.
I hear my men.
they're digging out.














Cease fire!
Marines, cease
fire!

ببلا، مارين، ابله!
موني! موني!

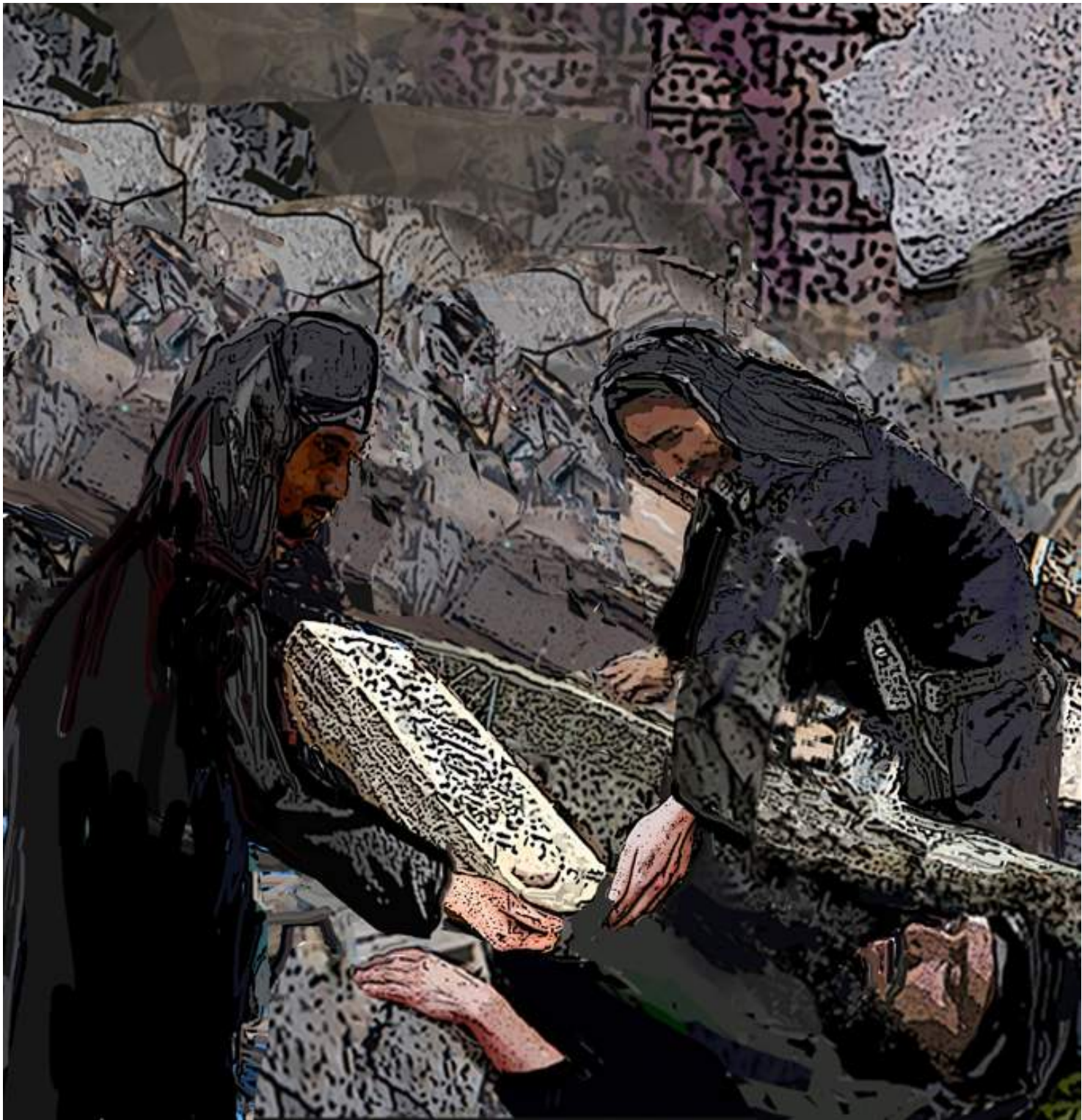


i'm hit, father.
help me!



Cease fire, men,
cease fire!

یتامیل ایلوون،
یتامیل ایلوون!









Johnson, damn it,
help the girl.



Khalid, let the companion
help her. We can save her!
Go to her. That's an
order!

Sir, you've lost a
lot of blood--



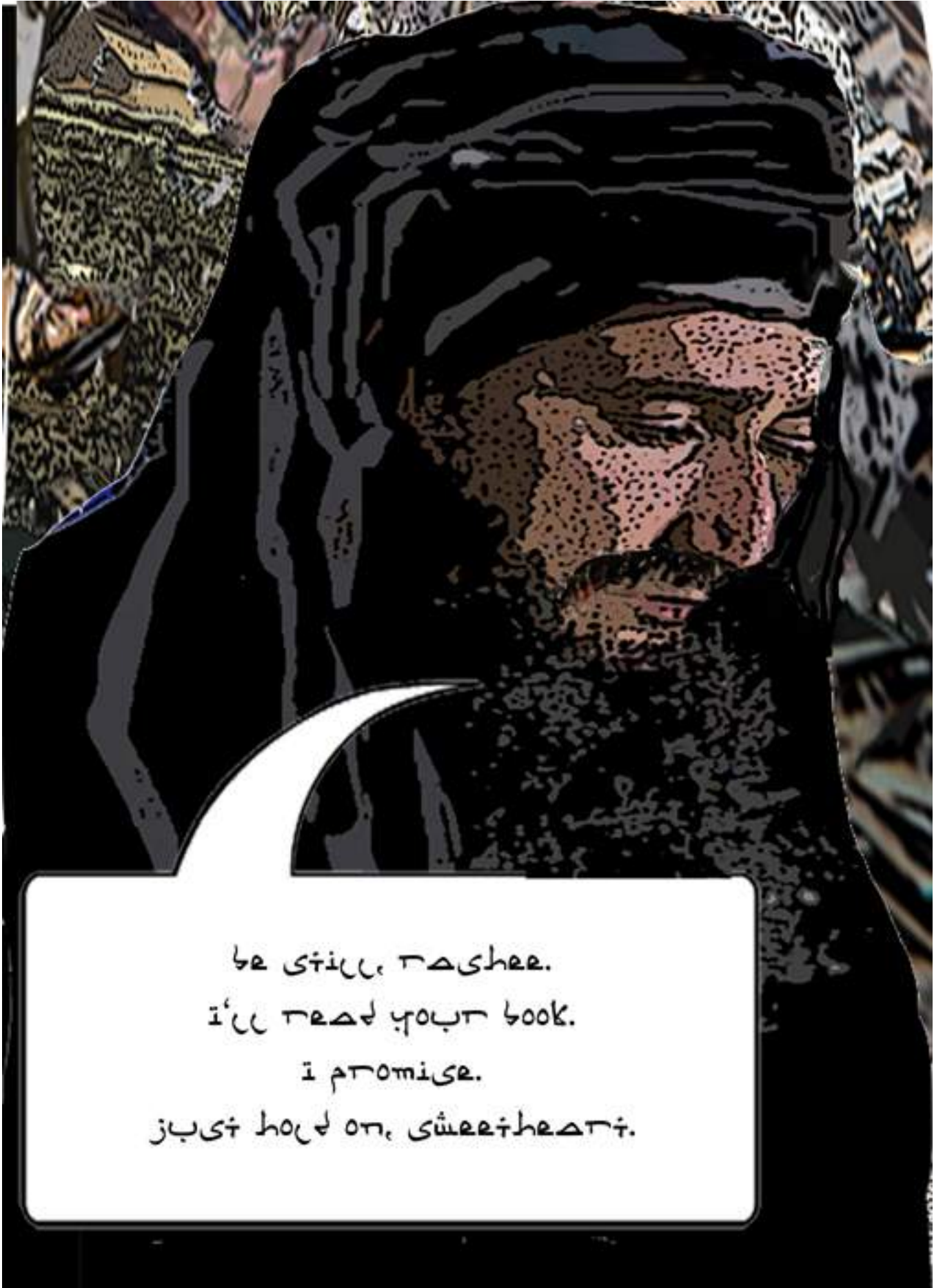





father, no regrets, no regrets,
promise me. it's not your fault.
it's no one's fault. promise me,
no more hate, no more hate.

"...this is not grief or joy...not a mixture of
an emotion or a desire. there come and go...this
is the presence that doesn't..." i have seen the
father. i am not afraid.





be still, rashid.
i'll read your book.
i promise.
just hold on, sweetheart.



Pascual, I need some help here.

Jeez, Johnson, what do I do?



With my hands?

Put pressure on the wound, right here.

No, with your feet!



Khalid, the American
captain... he's getting
أشبه.

فيڤه هٽ ٽو بي،
Khaulad. We'll
medyas هٽ ٻي.



ہی قیقہ...
her name is
Rasheeda.








Get the girl on first.





Lieutenant, all your men made it?

Yeah, we're OK. Viper got away down these damn alleys, Sir. It's a maze behind the mosque ...

I don't have the men to pursue, maybe when the Bradleys get here we can commandeer a squad.



He's not a factor anymore, Lieutenant. I know him well. Nothing regular here tonight.

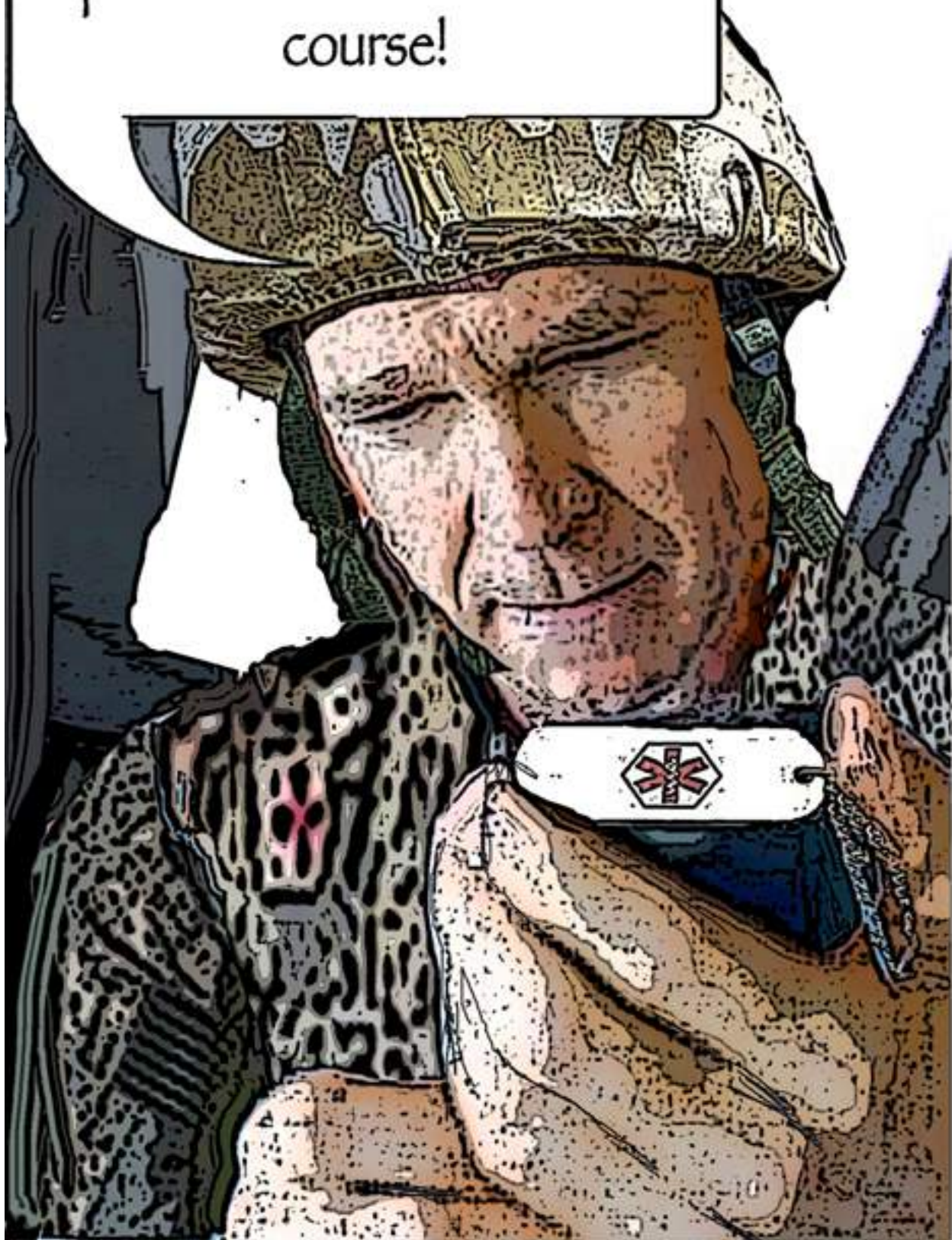
No Sir, highly irregular.

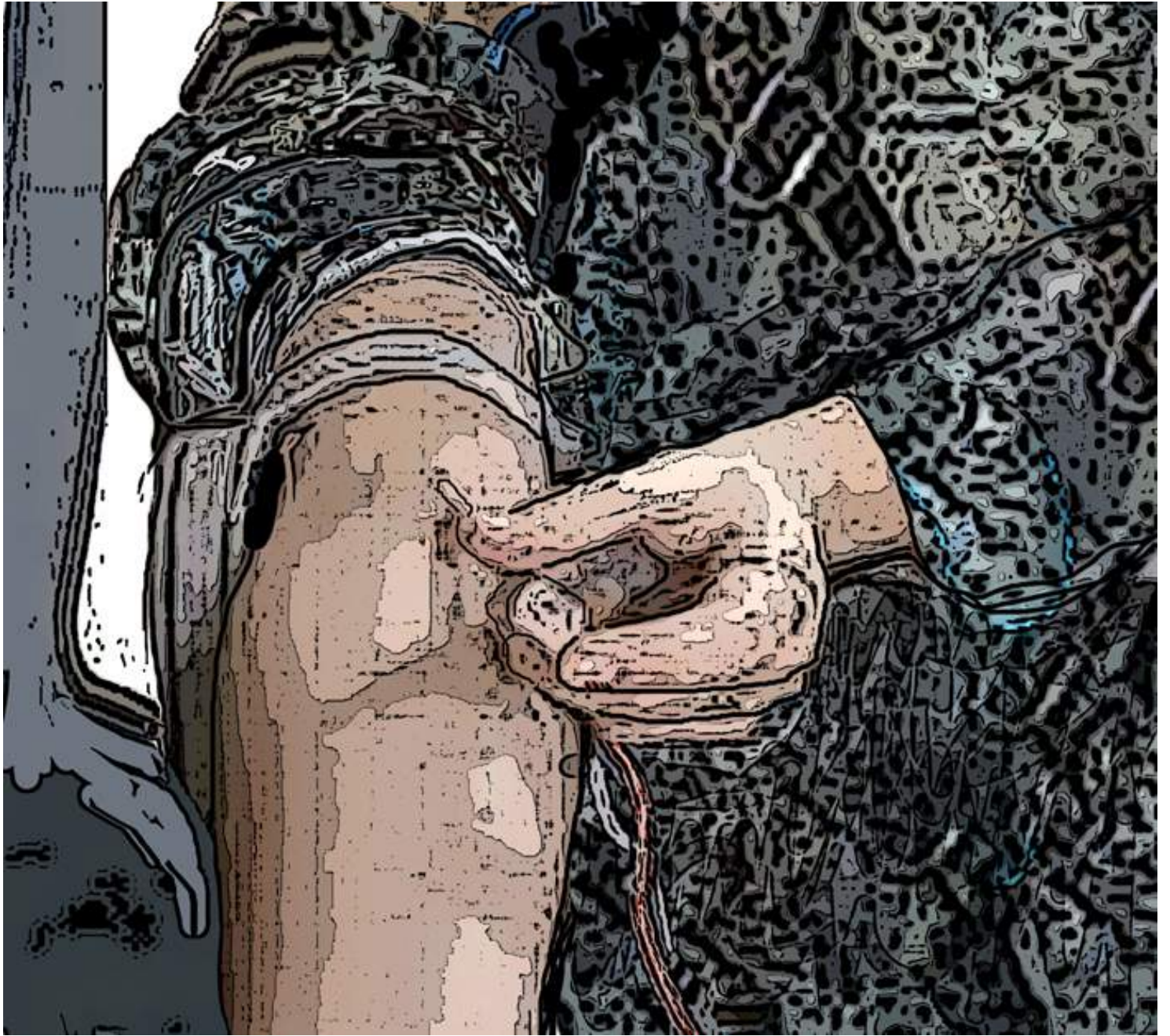
We're
losing the
girl, we're
losing
the girl!






Smart girl, you. Anybody here
B positive---other than me of
course!






You and I are special,
sweetheart. Very
special people,
us Bs, now you hold
on, y'hear.



A comic book panel featuring a man in a white military uniform, possibly a Marine, with a speech bubble. The man has a serious expression and is looking slightly to the right. The background is a dark, textured surface, possibly the interior of a vehicle or a building. The style is a high-contrast, black and white comic book illustration with some color shading on the man's face and uniform.

You must be the
Marine in the recruit-
ing poster, Corpsman.

A comic book panel featuring a close-up of a man's face. He has a serious, somewhat distressed expression. He is wearing a dark, textured jacket. A speech bubble is positioned to the right of his face, containing the text: "Captain, she's slipping away. Damn it, I'm losing her." The background is dark and indistinct, suggesting an interior setting.

Captain, she's
slipping away.
Damn it, I'm losing
her.



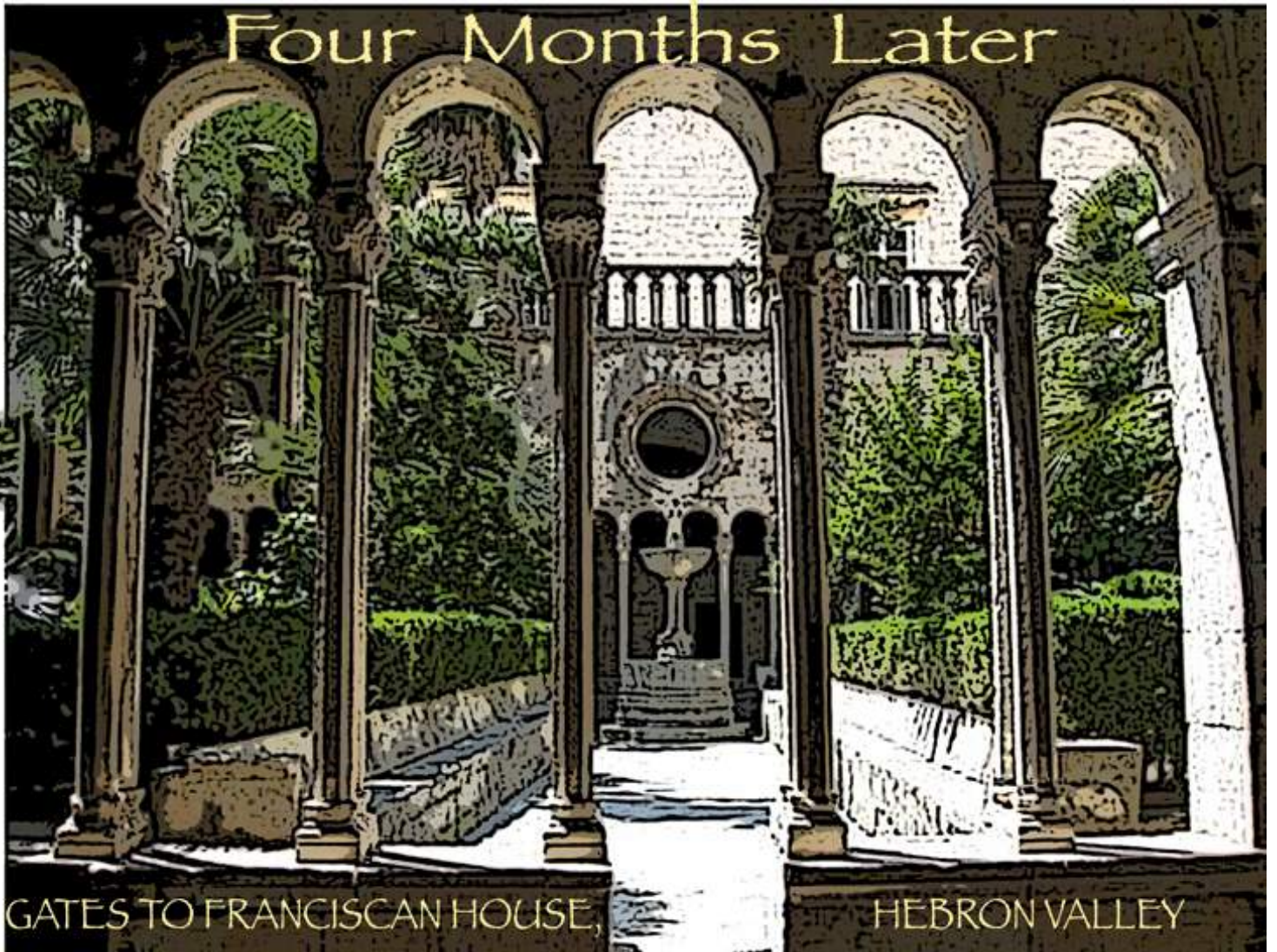


Do your best, Corpsman.





Four Months Later



GATES TO FRANCISCAN HOUSE,

HEBRON VALLEY







May I help
you?

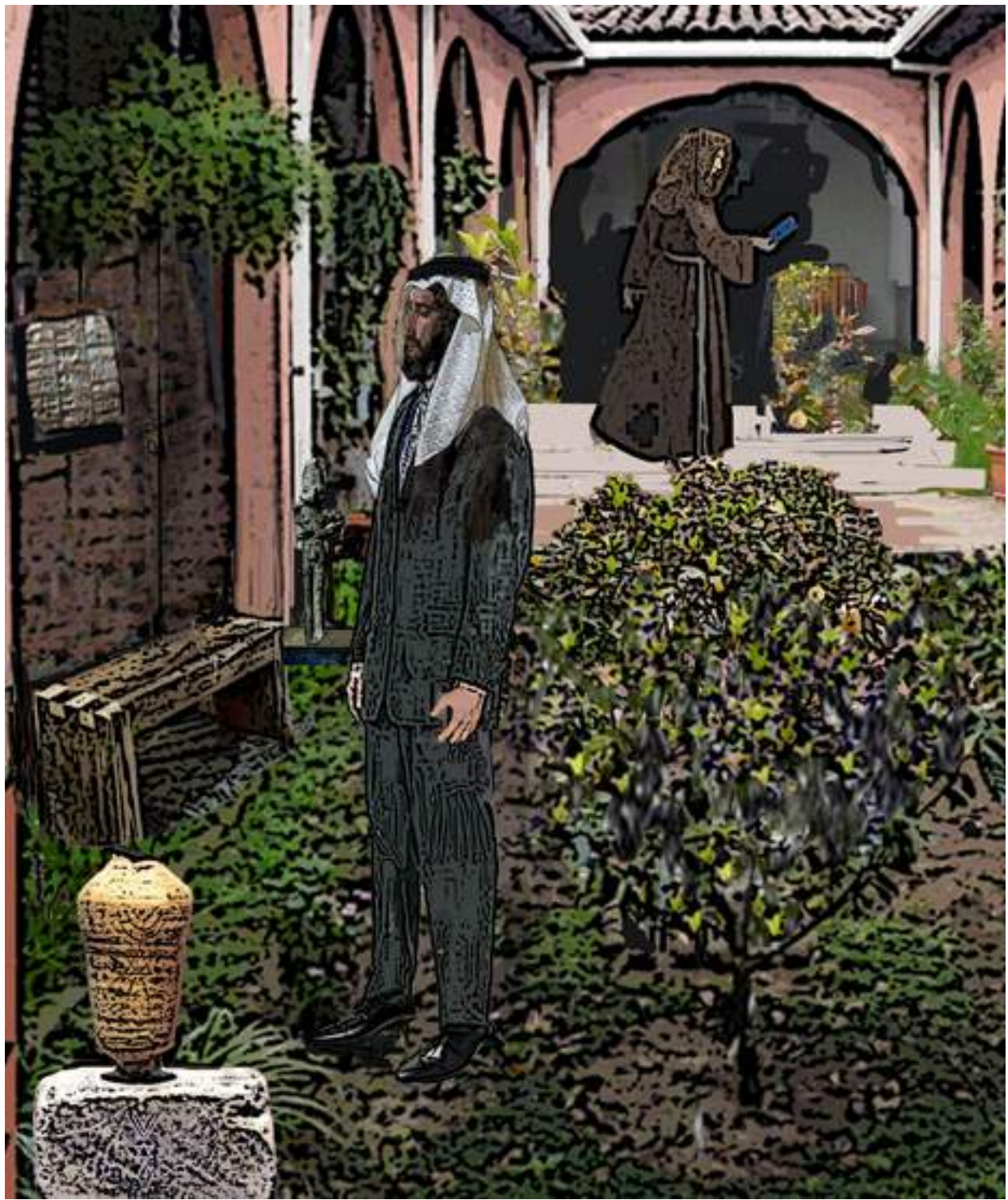
My English, it's been a while. Please, I'm looking for this man.





You're in luck. Fr. Laughlin returned last week. Please, come inside and wait. I'll find him.

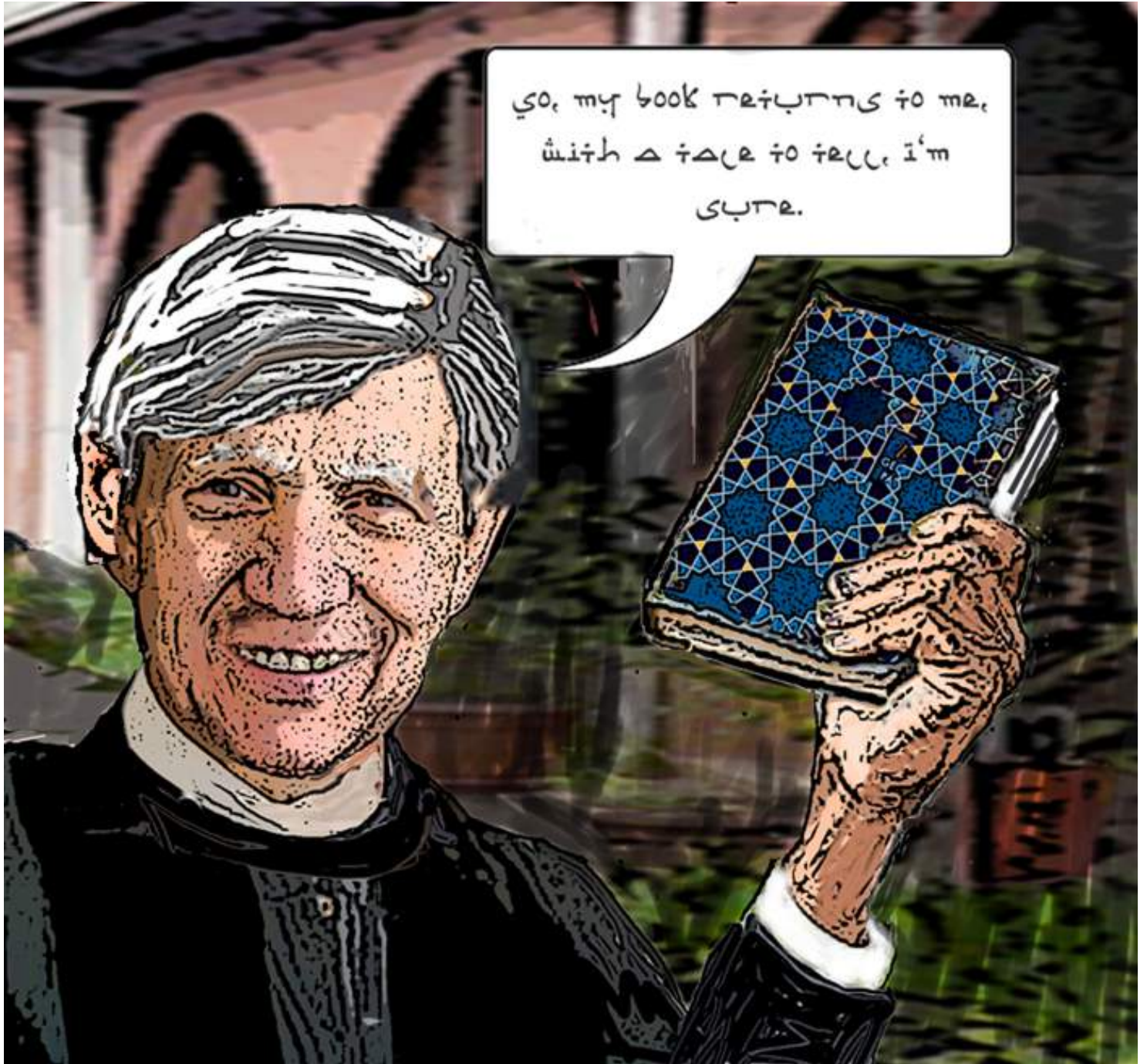








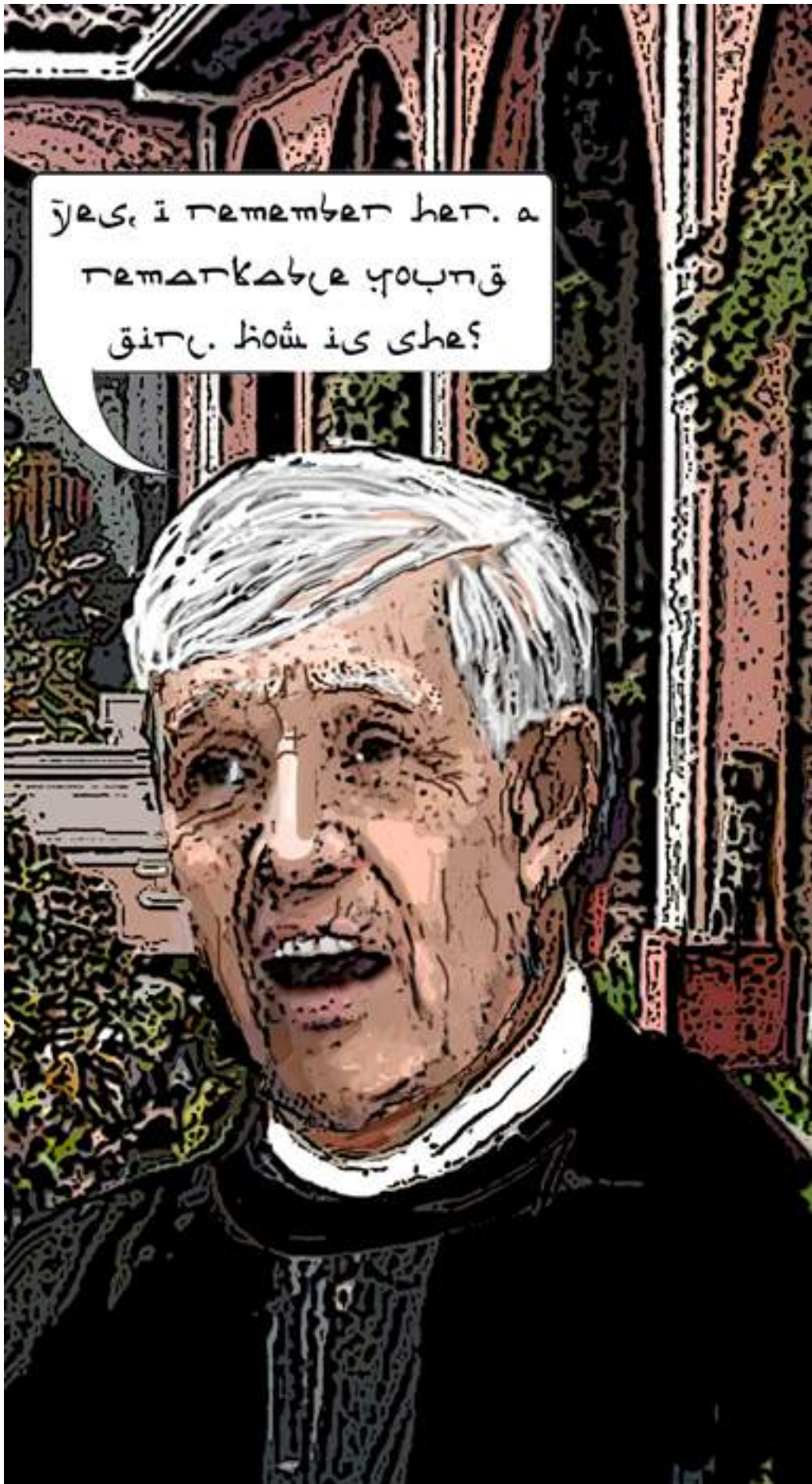
So, my book returns to me,
with a tale to tell, I'm
sure.



my daughter gave it to me
and i have come to give it
back.

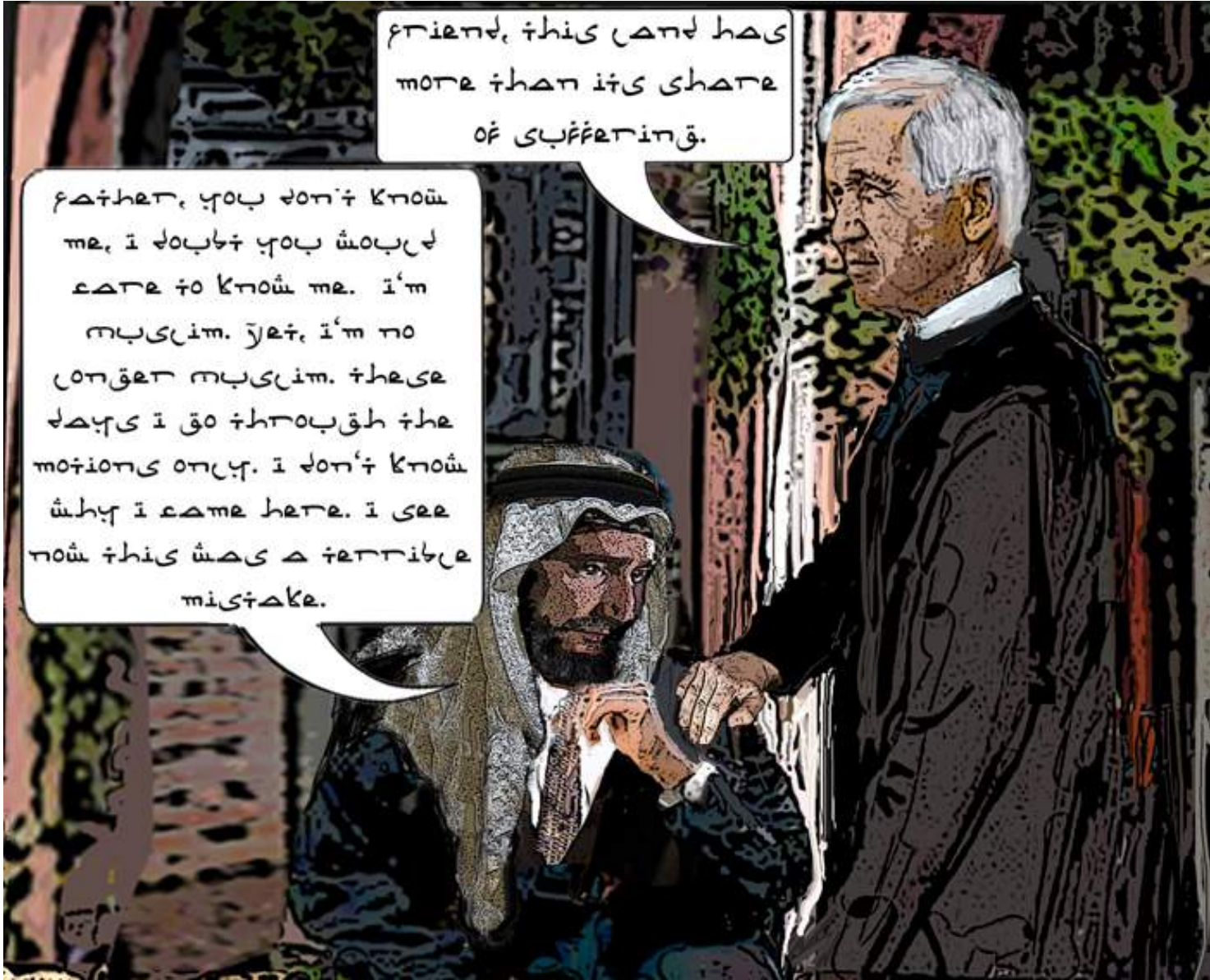


յիշ, i remember her. a
remarkable young
girl. հո՞ւնք ի՞նչ?



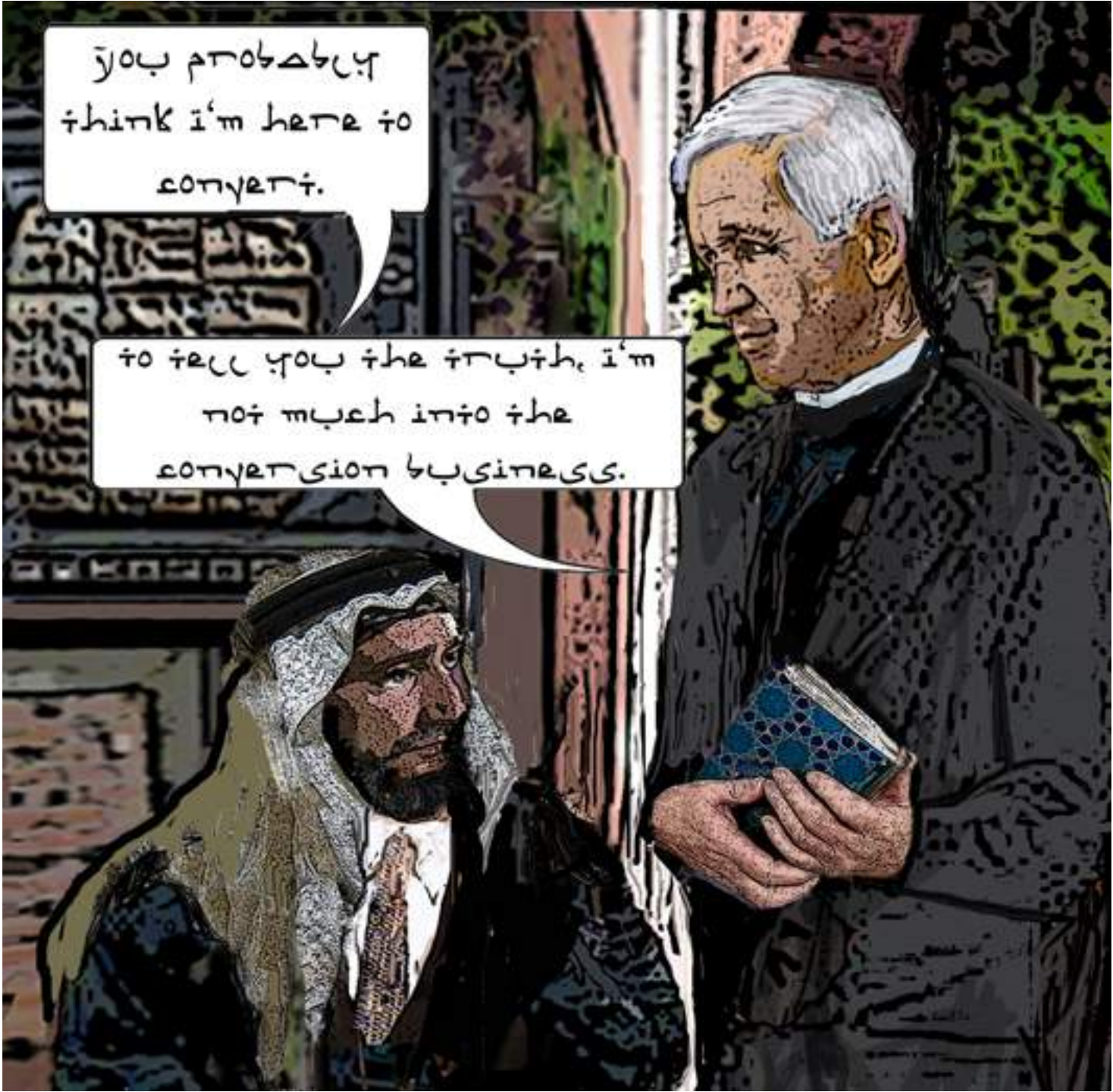
friend, this land has
more than its share
of suffering.

Father, you don't know
me, I doubt you would
care to know me. I'm
Muslim. Yet, I'm no
longer Muslim. These
days I go through the
motions only. I don't know
why I came here. I see
now this was a terrible
mistake.



somehow i don't think so.

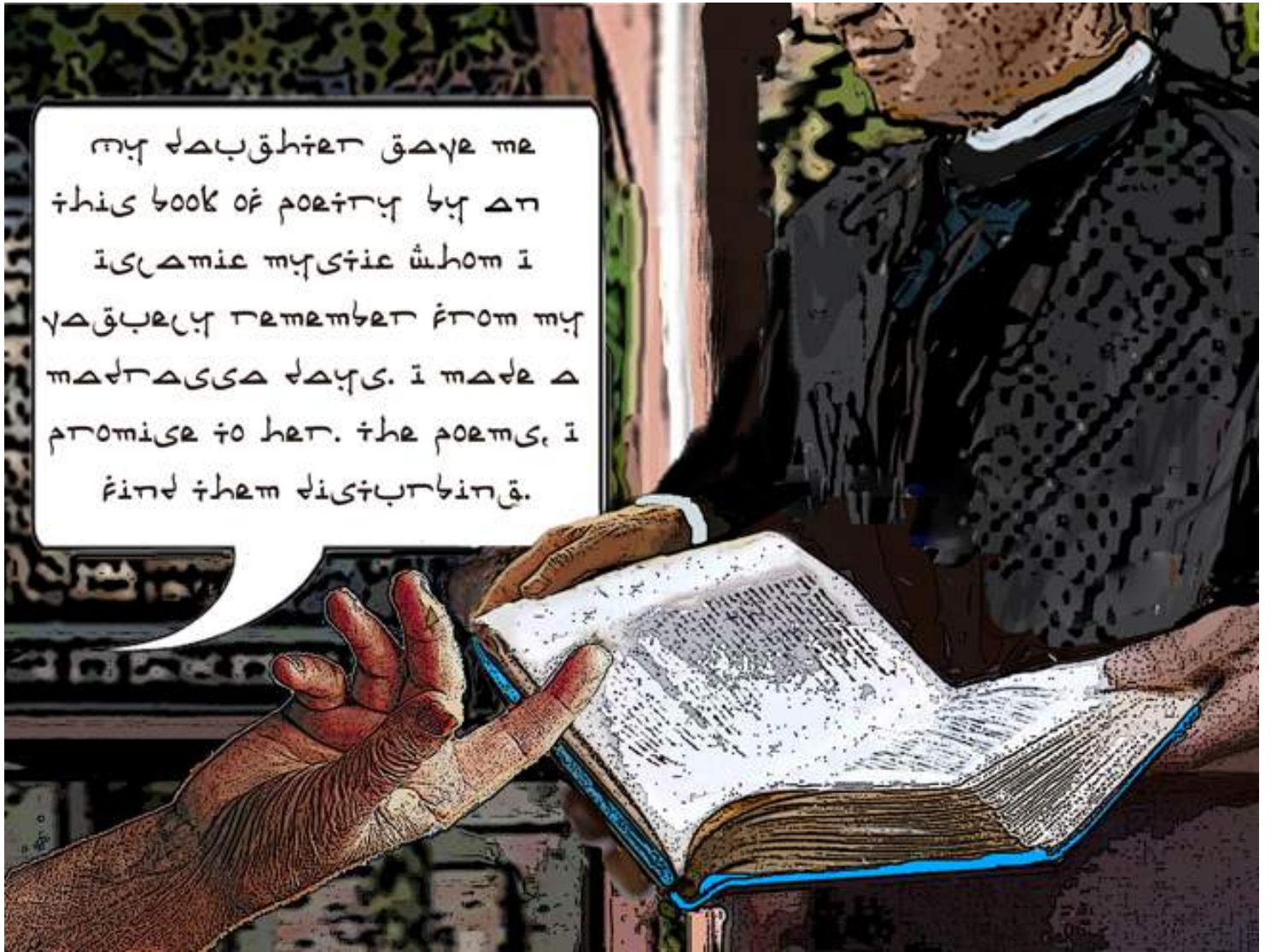




you probably
think i'm here to
convert.

to tell you the truth, i'm
not much into the
conversion business.

my daughter gave me
this book of poetry by an
Islamic mystic whom I
vaguely remember from my
madrasa days. I made a
promise to her. The poems, I
find them disturbing.



yes. they call every-
thing into question.



I'll let you in on a little secret, soldier to
soldier. Here, the brothers and I--how
shall I put it--we really don't give a
damn if you're Muslim, Jew, Christian,
or Hindu. Any seeker is welcome here.



Don't understand, I've done... I'm not
a good man. I believed I was following
Allah's will, I was convinced of
it, but I see now I was shipping my
own bitterness. Hundreds have died,
at my hand.



my own wife, whom I loved beyond measure,
I strove always with my pride and
ambition. Rasheda, my beautiful,
beautiful daughter. my beautiful
daughter. my hands are covered with
blood, they can never be washed clean.
never, I tell you. never.



we have extra rooms
for قسمة. you
can pray right
here alongside the
brothers and me.
you see the mark on
the wall over there?
face that mark,
you're turned
towards mecca. i'm
curious about one
thing. how did you
get through all the
checkpoints? you're
not exactly the
tourist type.



It's not hard for someone like
me to negotiate this land. I've
been negotiating into shadow
for years.

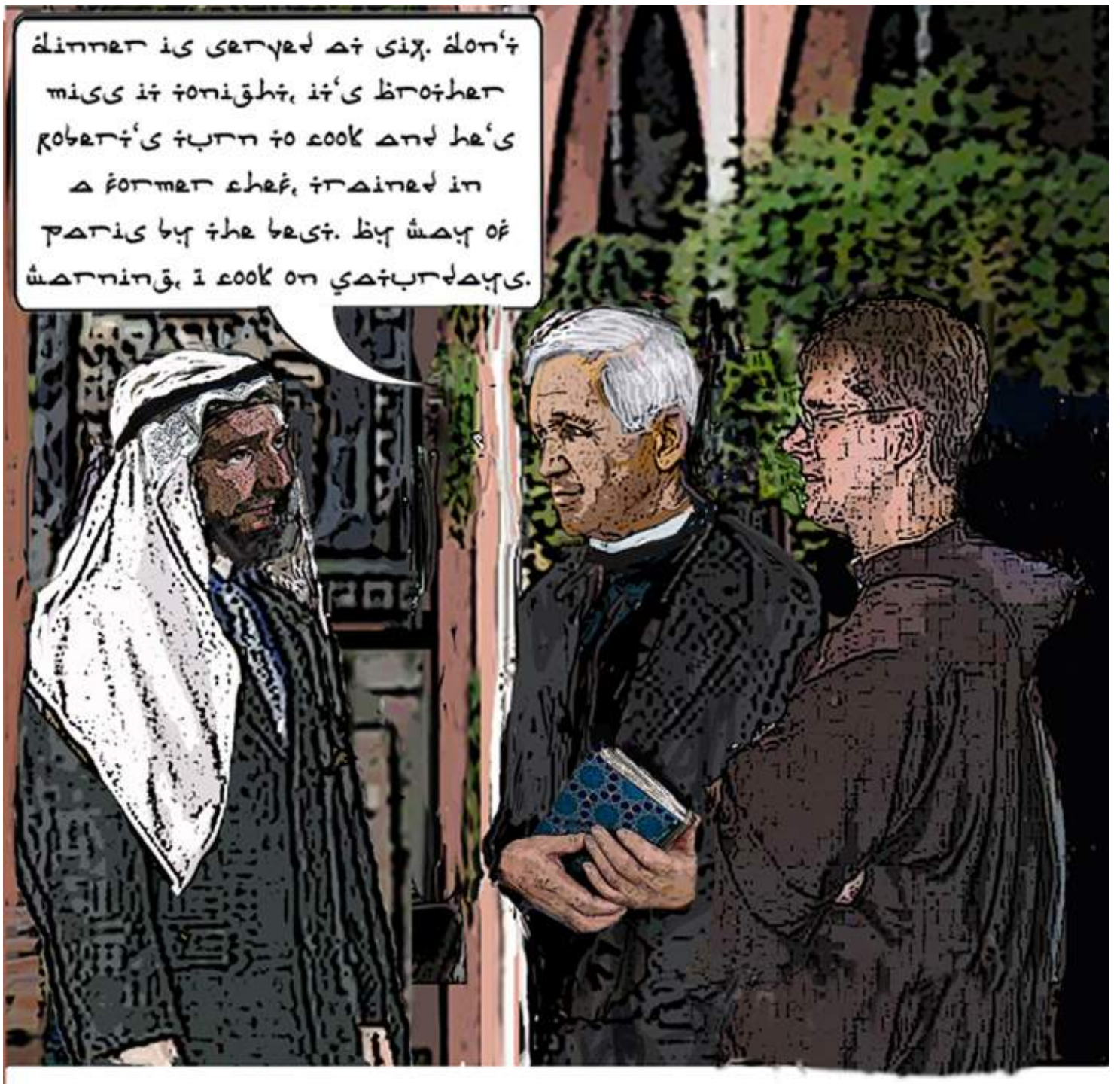
Yes, the
shadow...
something I do
know about.



brother robert,
we'll be having a
quest for a while.
will you see to his
accommodation?



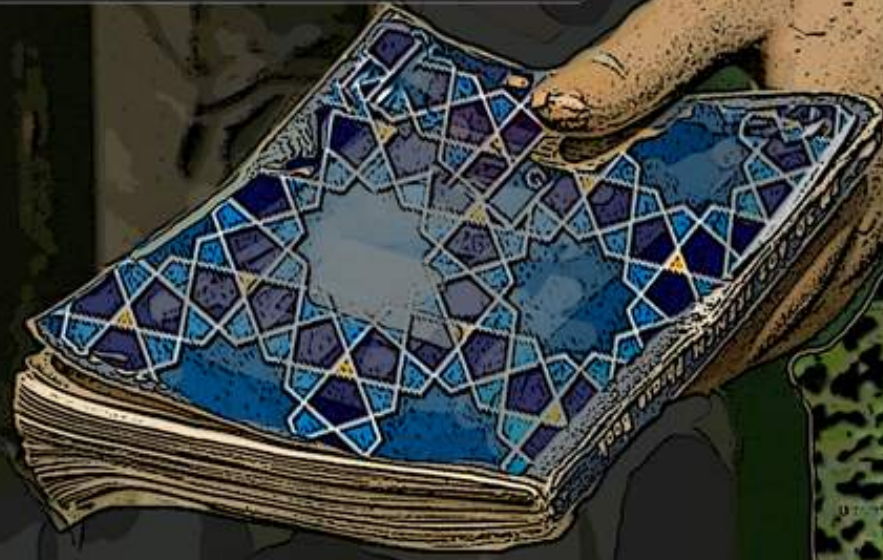
dinner is served at six. don't miss it tonight, it's brother robert's turn to cook and he's a former chef, trained in paris by the best. by way of warning, i cook on saturdays.



aren't you're for-
getting something?



brother robert, will you see
to it that the quran from
my library is placed in the
best quarters, and the
prayer rug?





certainly,
father.

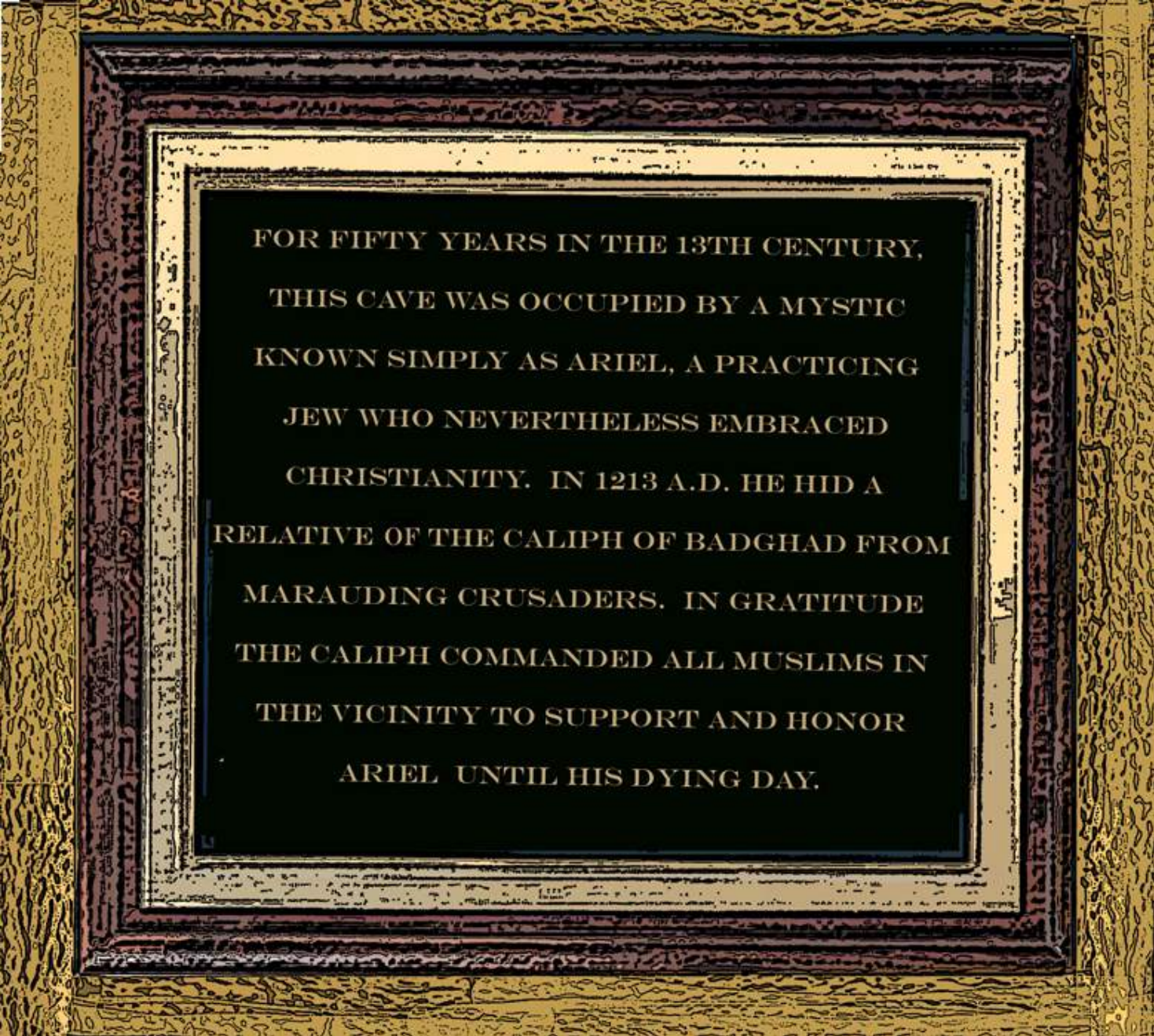
thank
you.



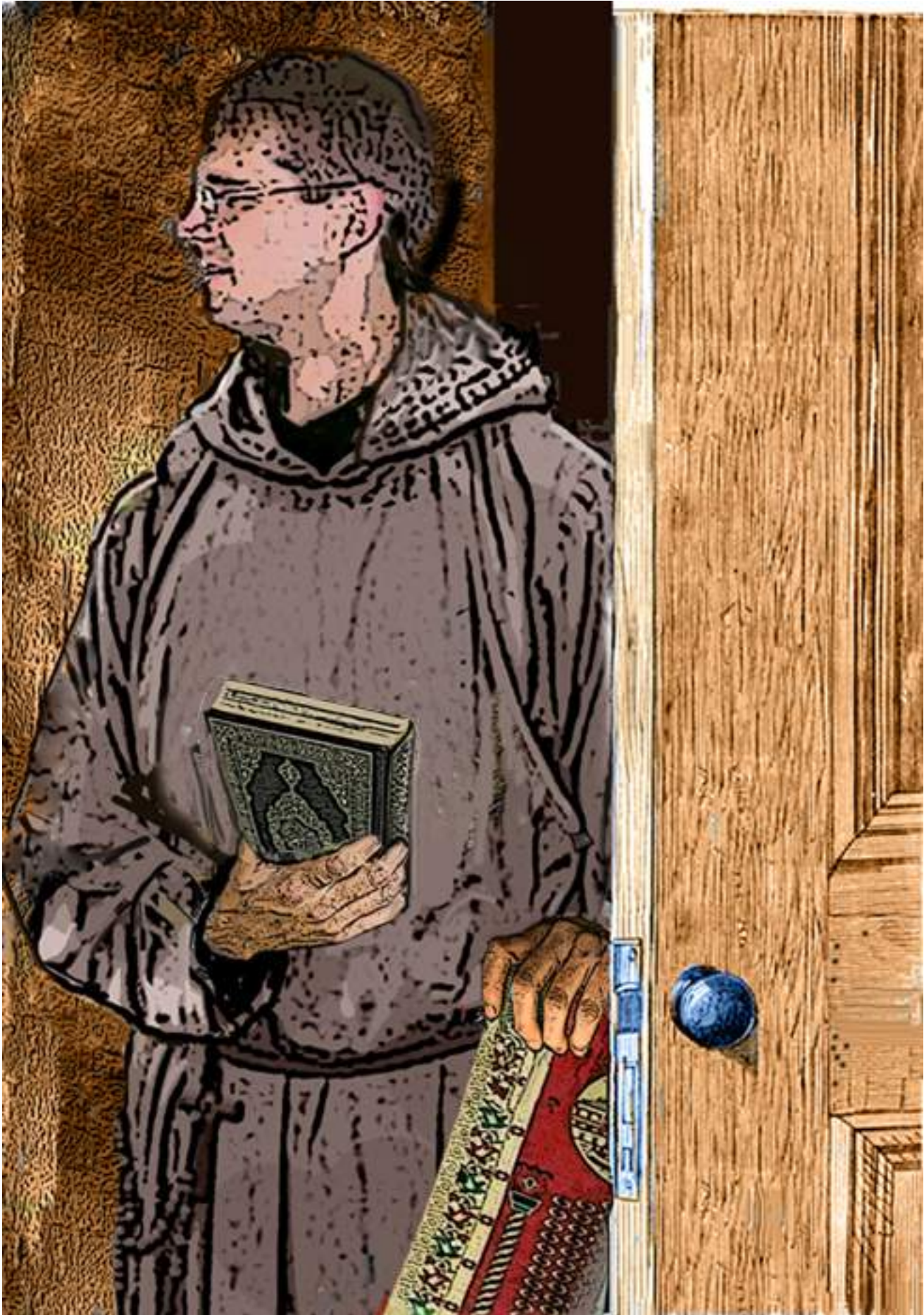




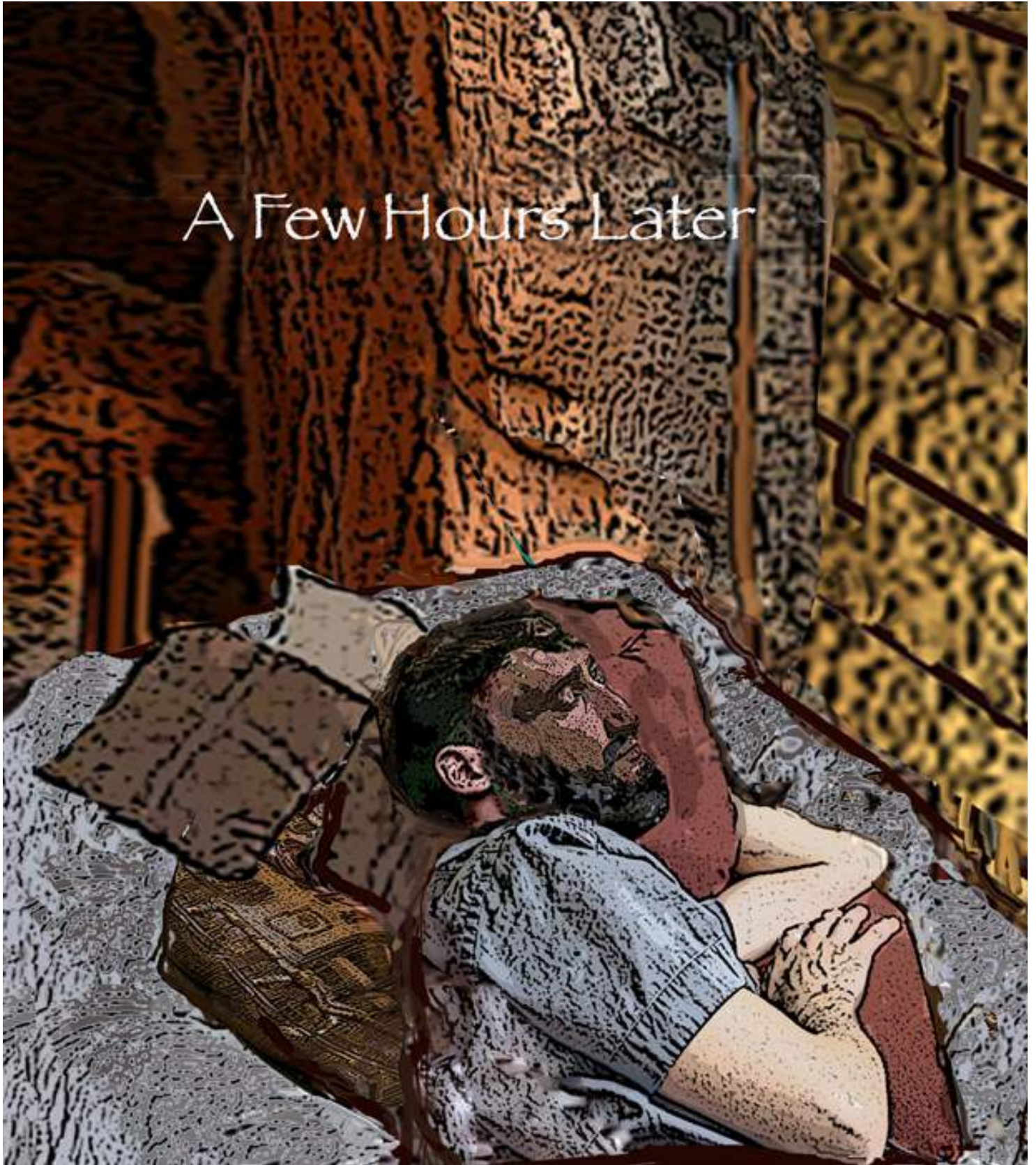
At the beginning of the
Sunday after Easter
the stone was rolled away
at 7:30 AM on 12/20/11
At the beginning of the
Sunday after Easter



FOR FIFTY YEARS IN THE 13TH CENTURY,
THIS CAVE WAS OCCUPIED BY A MYSTIC
KNOWN SIMPLY AS ARIEL, A PRACTICING
JEW WHO NEVERTHELESS EMBRACED
CHRISTIANITY. IN 1213 A.D. HE HID A
RELATIVE OF THE CALIPH OF BADGHAD FROM
MARAUDING CRUSADERS. IN GRATITUDE
THE CALIPH COMMANDED ALL MUSLIMS IN
THE VICINITY TO SUPPORT AND HONOR
ARIEL UNTIL HIS DYING DAY.



A Few Hours Later



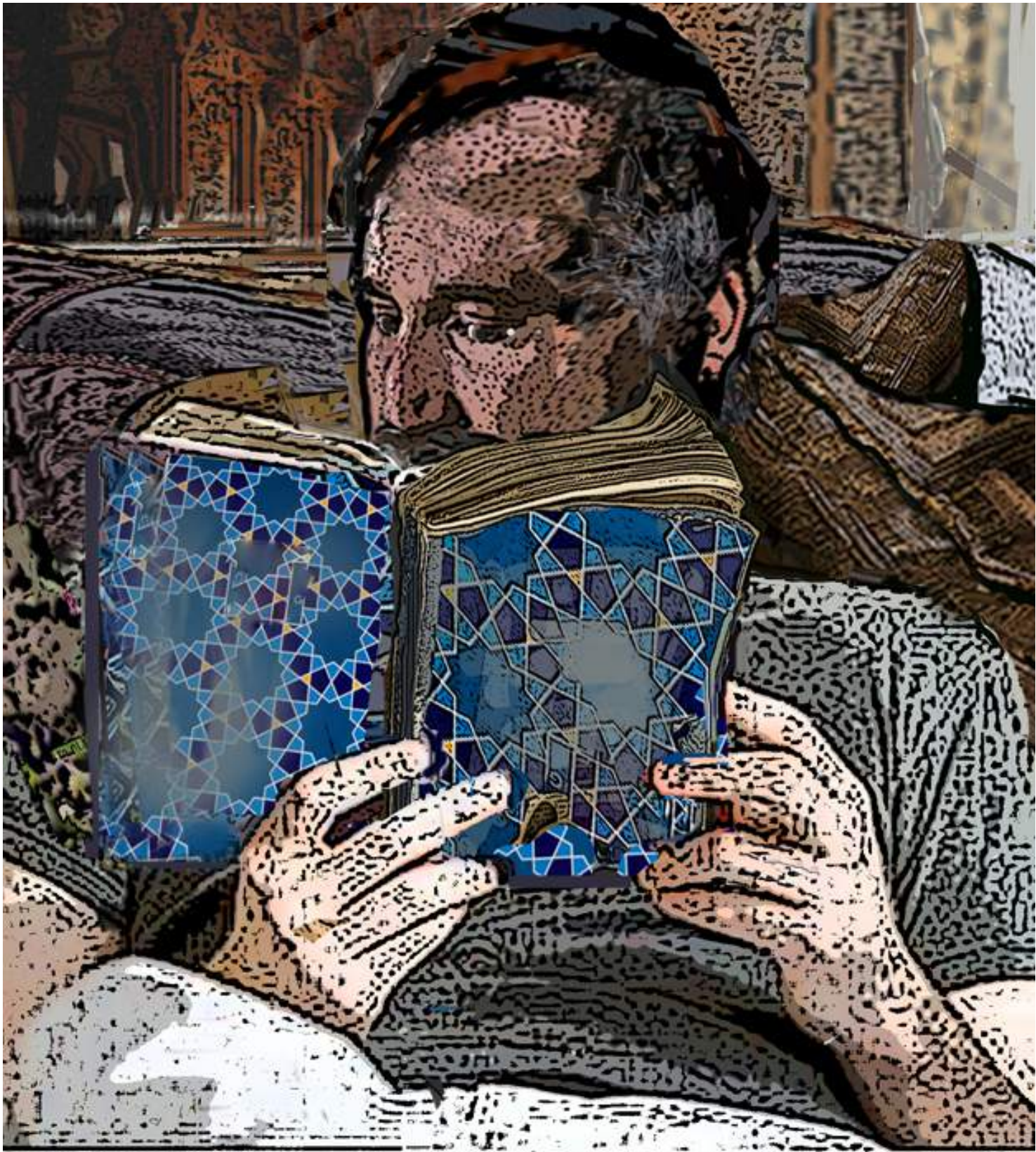


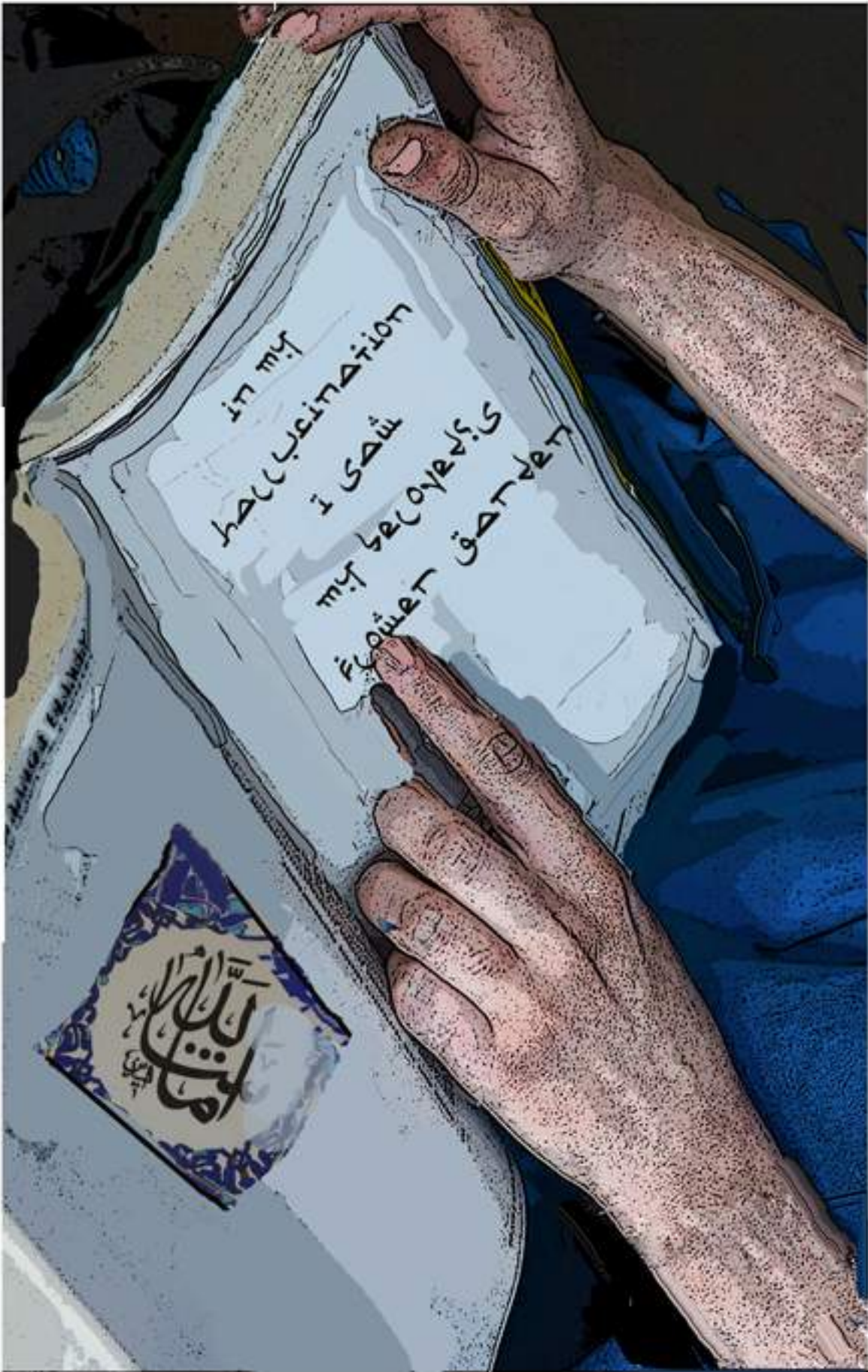














"in my vertigo,
in my dizziness,
in my drunken haze, whirling and dancing
like a spinning wheel, i saw myself as the source
of existence.
i was there in the beginning, and i was the
spirit of love. now i am sober, there is only the
hangover and the memory of love...
and only the sorrow."



i yearn for happiness, i ask for help, i want
mercy. and my love said,
"look at me and hear me because i am here just
for that. i am the moon and your moonlight, too.
i am your flower garden and your water, too.
i have come all this way eager for you, without
shoes or shoes. i want you to laugh, to kill all
your worries, to love you, to nourish you.



oh, sweet bitterness, i will soothe you and
heal you. i will bring you roses.
i, too, have been
covered with thorns."







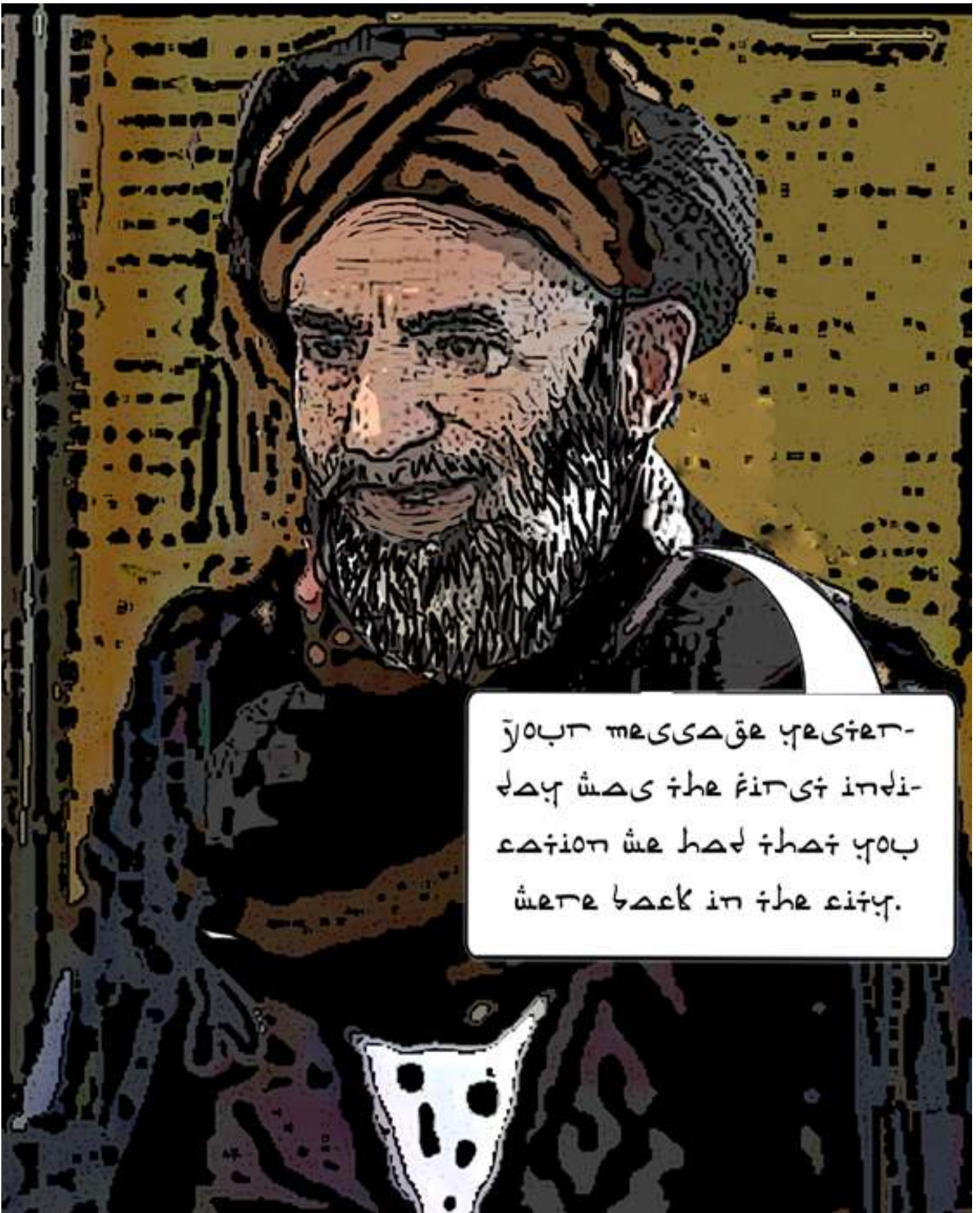







بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
rahmat Allah
barakatuh!

we looked every-
where for you.
why didn't you
contact us?




your message yesterday was the first indication we had that you were back in the city.



i've been in
palestine.

excellent! we'll debrief you
later. the american captain
is no longer in the country. i
can promise you, that doq will
never know peace in any
muslim land. we'll get him
eventually.

A man in a blue shirt and a patterned headscarf is embracing an older man in a brown headscarf. The man in blue is speaking. The background shows an interior setting with a chair and a table.

i've come for
the داقت.

yes, yes! very
good. my men
found it in the
rubble.



may i have it?

excellent, that's the right attitude, khaad. take up the fight again. work out your grief in action.

all this
time in palestine.





a warrior of Islam forever.
your period of mourning is
over, Khalid.





in your hands may it
continue to run with
the blood of the unbeliev-
er, as it has in our
tradition for seven
centuries.



Khalid...what are
your plans?

قائىق اىرلر اىرلر؟
بىز ئىنقىلىپنىڭ ئىنقىلىپىنى
ئىنقىلىپىڭىزنىڭ ئىنقىلىپىنى.



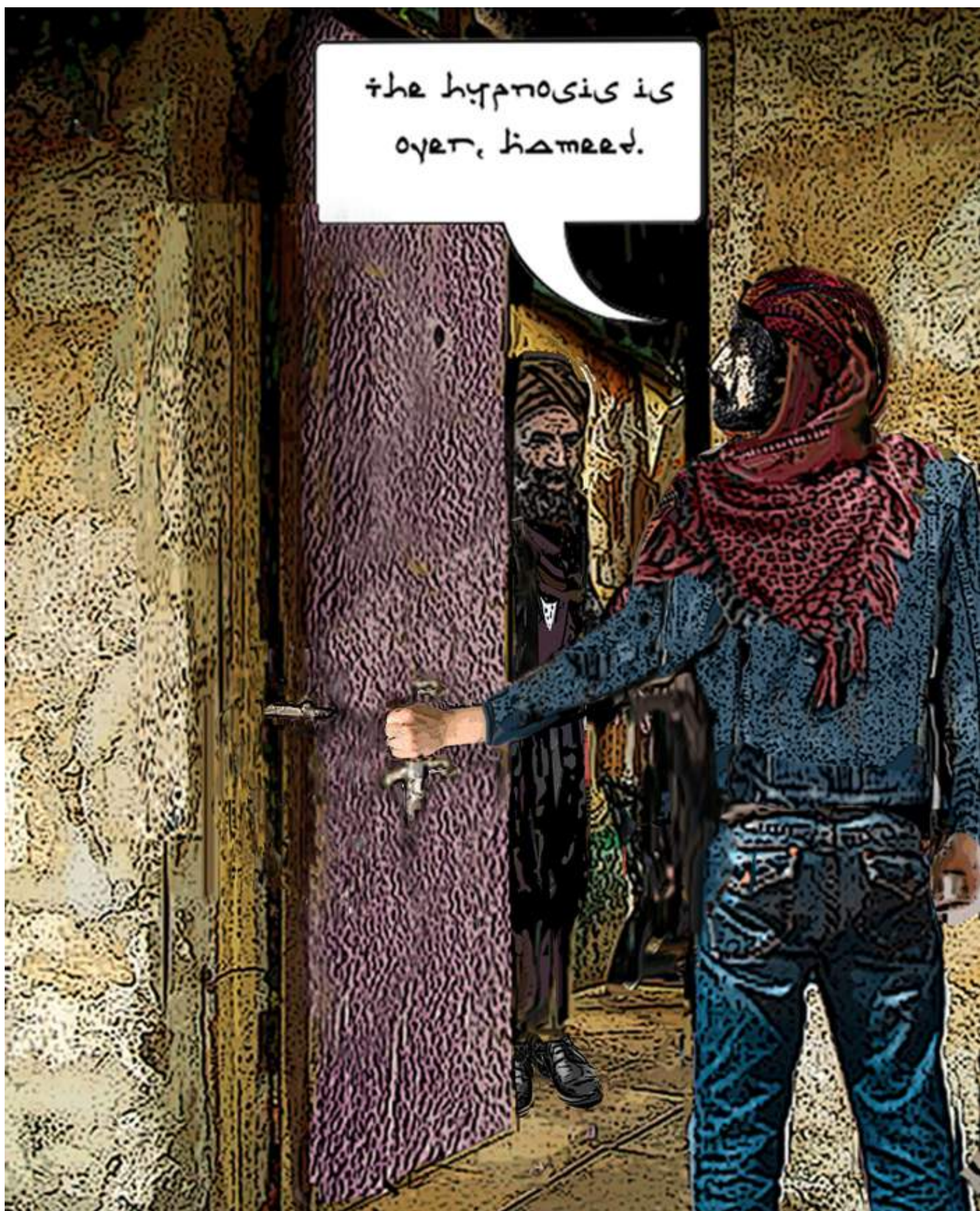


Hammed, my teacher of these
 many years... "God has allowed
 some magical reversal to
 occur, so that you see some
 corruption fit as an object of
 desire, and all the beautiful
 expense around it, is dan-
 gerous and shaming with
 snakes!"



"this is how strange
your fear of death
and emptiness is,
and how perverse your
attachment to what
you want."

the hypnosis is
over, hamred.



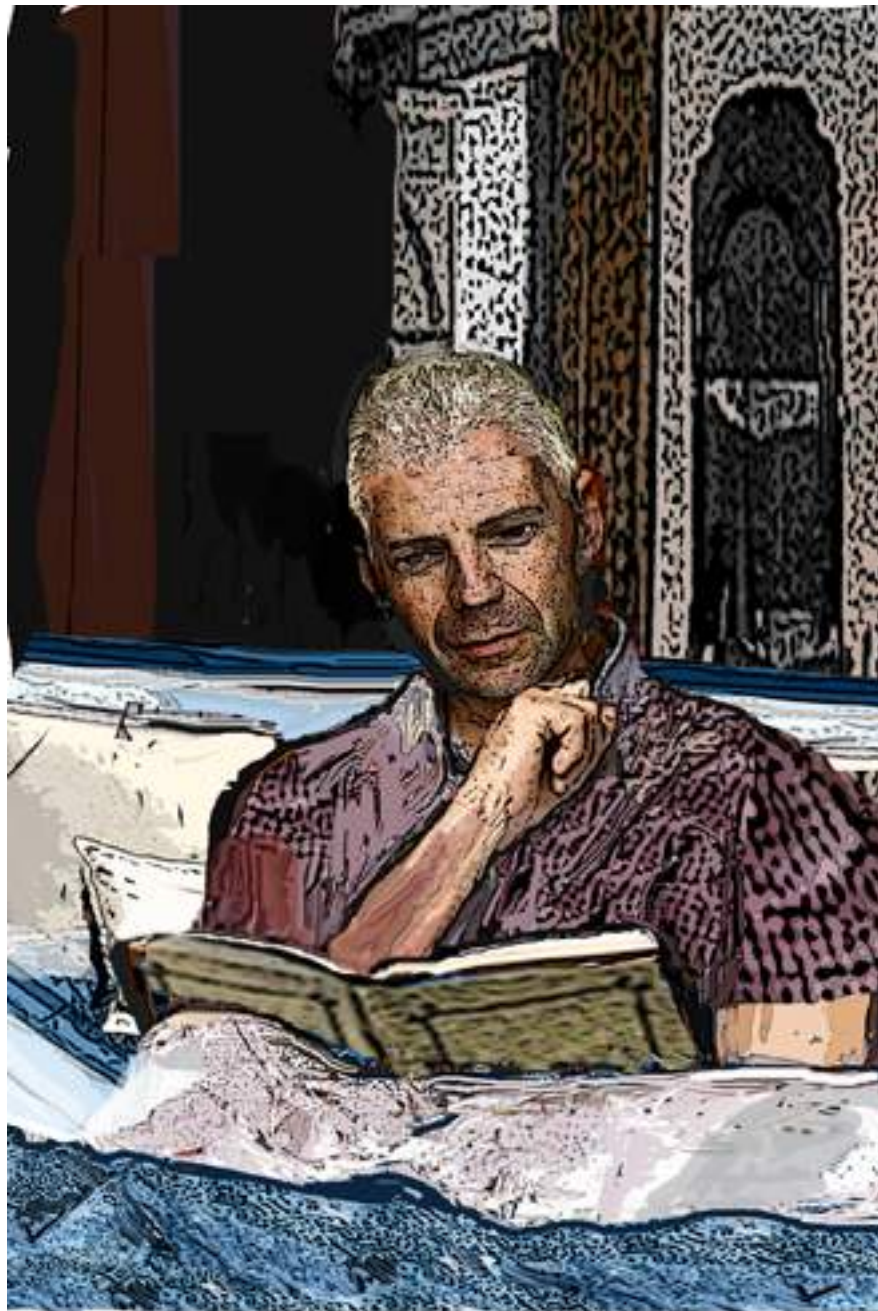


Briggs' Home in Virginia

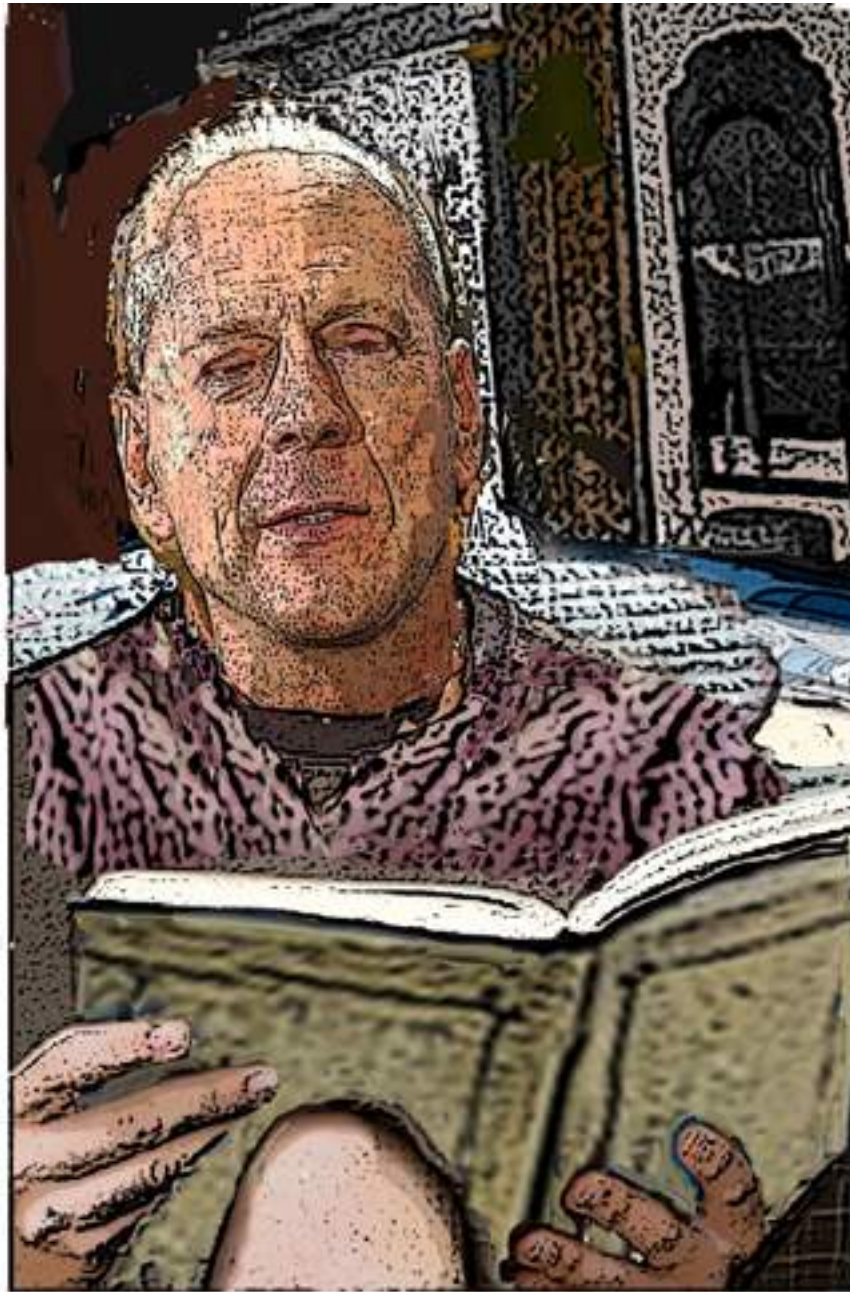








"All day I think about it, then at night I say it. Where did I come from, and what am I supposed to be doing?
I have no idea. My soul is from elsewhere, I'm sure of that, and I intend to end up there.
This drunkenness began in some other tavern. When I get back to that place, I'll be completely sober."



“Meanwhile, I’m like a bird from another continent, sitting in this aviary. The day is coming when I fly off, but who is it now in my ear who hears my voice? Who says words with my mouth? Who looks out with my eyes? What is the soul? I cannot stop asking.”

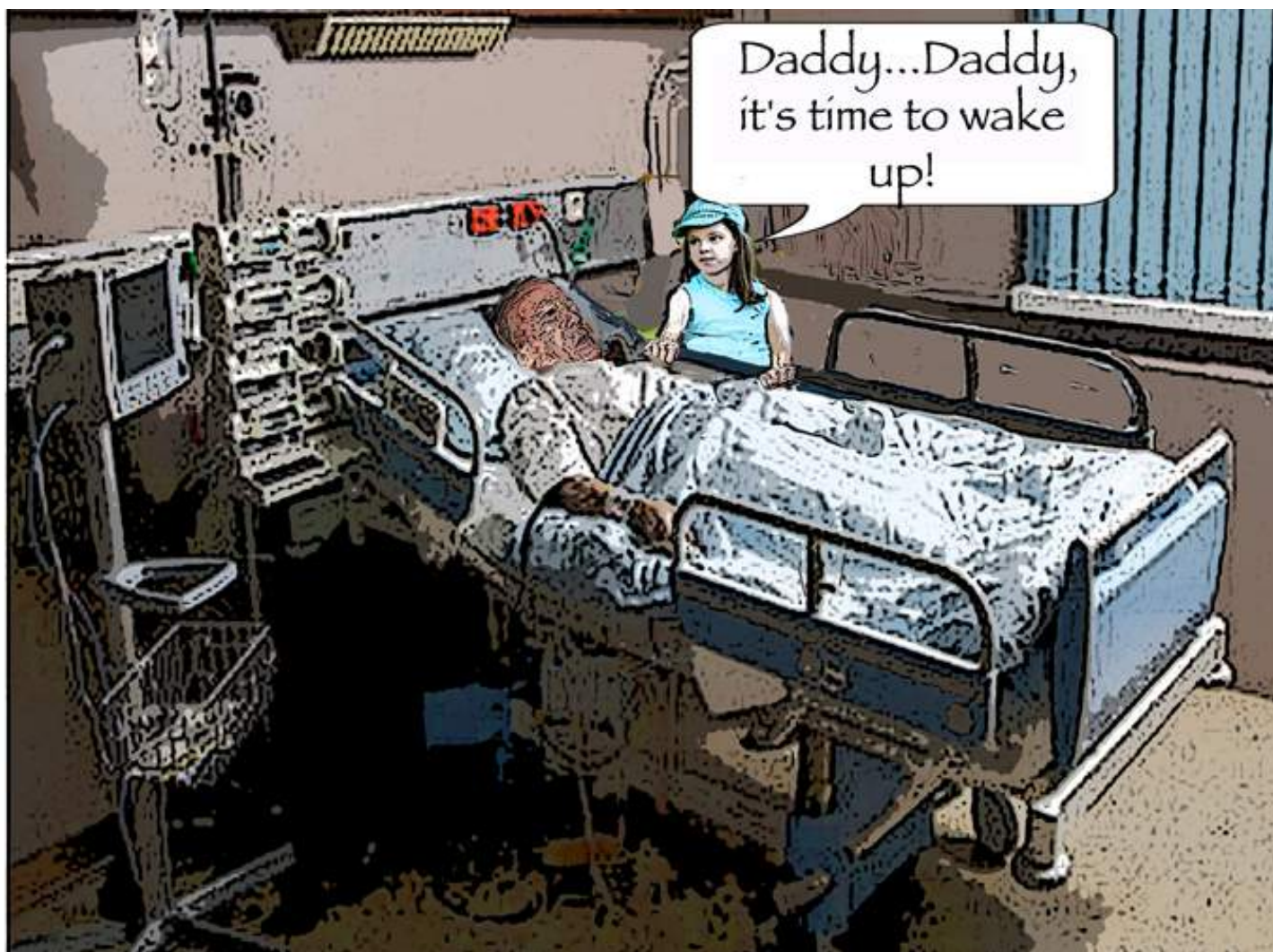


“If I could taste one sip of an answer, I
could break out of this prison for
drunks.

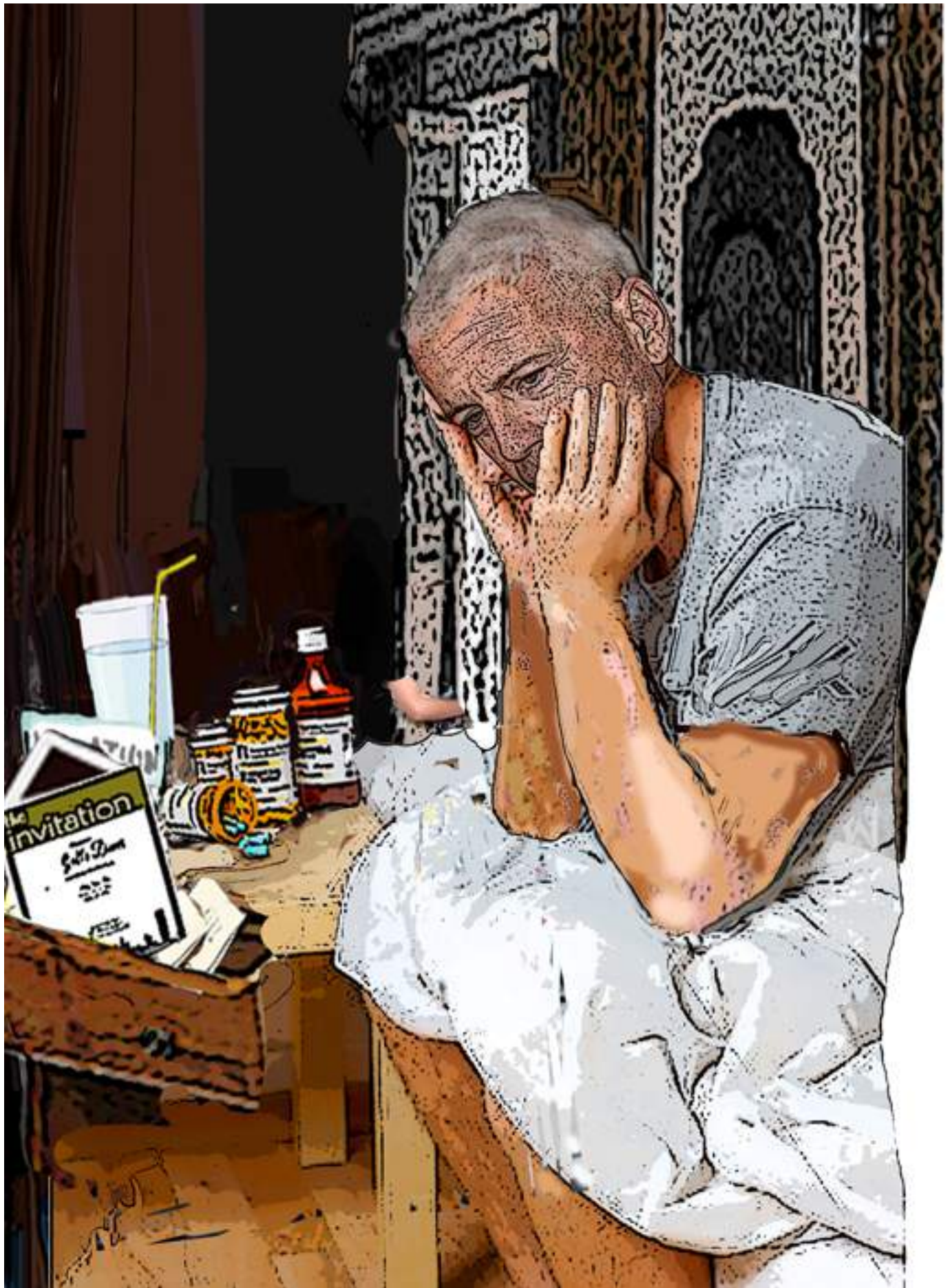
I didn't come here of my own accord,
and I can't leave that way.
Whoever brought me here will have to
take me home.”







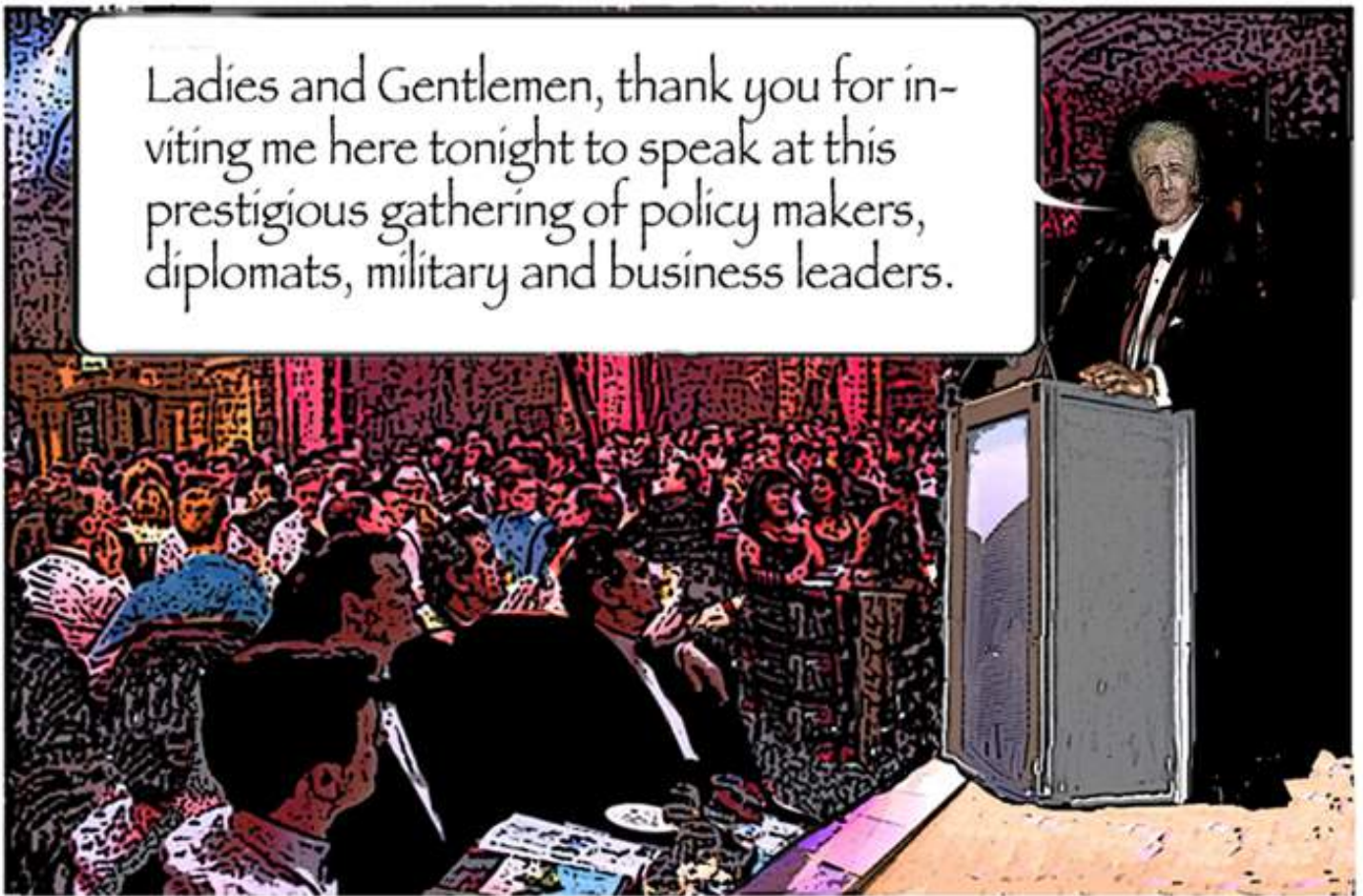






Gala Dinner, Washington, D.C.
Think Tank

Ladies and Gentlemen, thank you for inviting me here tonight to speak at this prestigious gathering of policy makers, diplomats, military and business leaders.

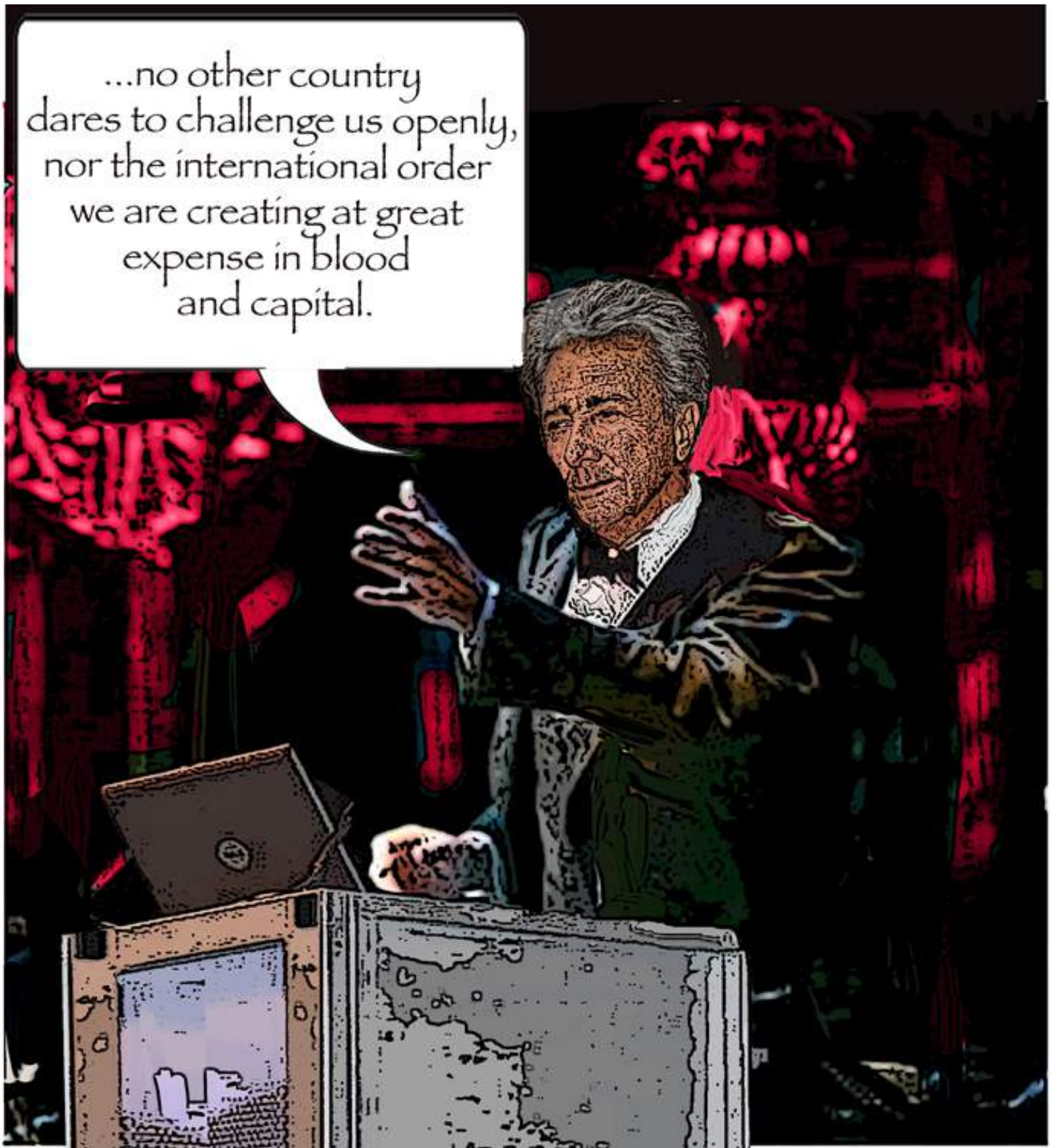


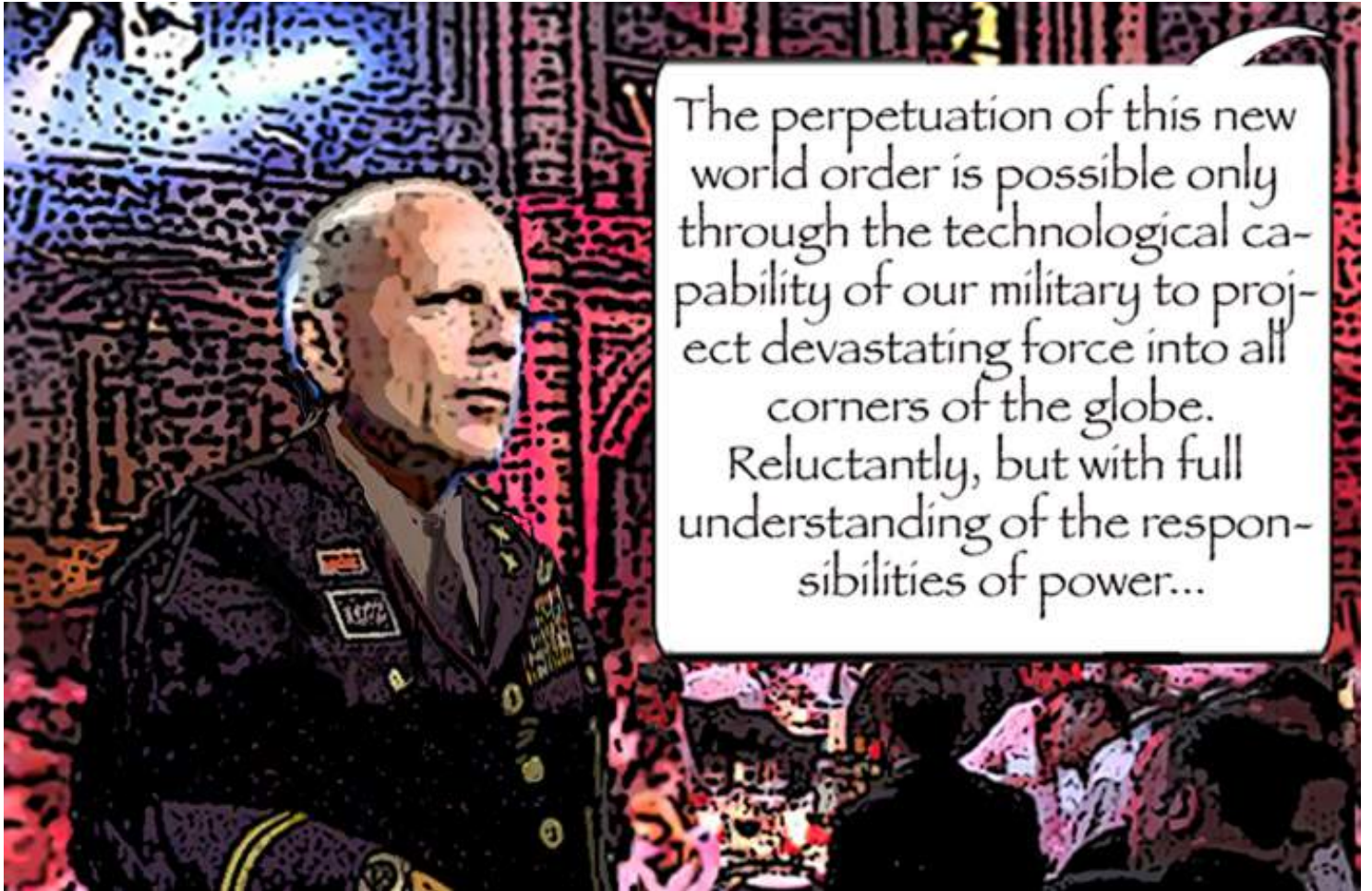
Today, as a nation, we find ourselves in an enviable historical position. As the pre-eminent military power on the planet...





...no other country
dares to challenge us openly,
nor the international order
we are creating at great
expense in blood
and capital.

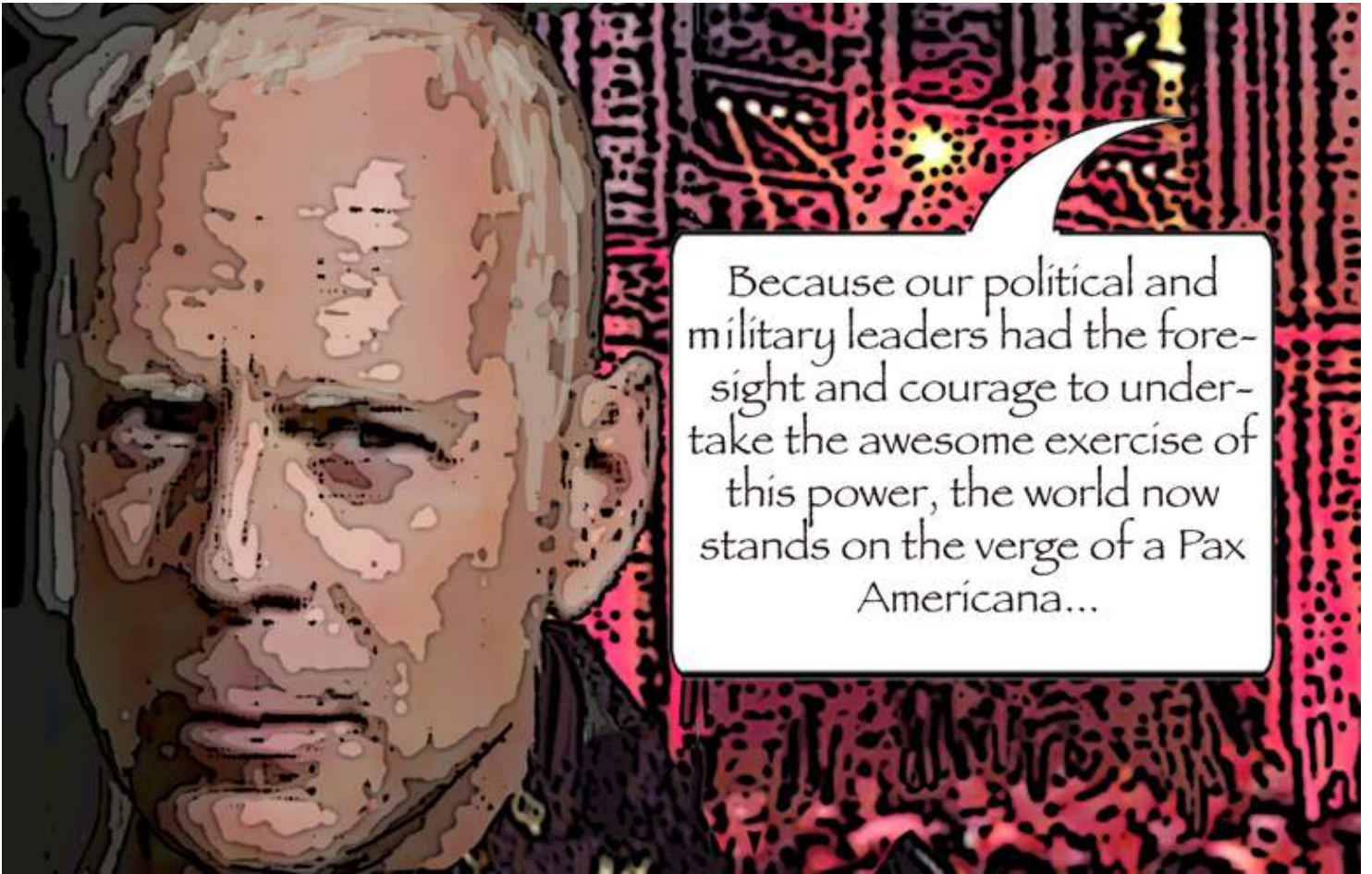




The perpetuation of this new world order is possible only through the technological capability of our military to project devastating force into all corners of the globe. Reluctantly, but with full understanding of the responsibilities of power...

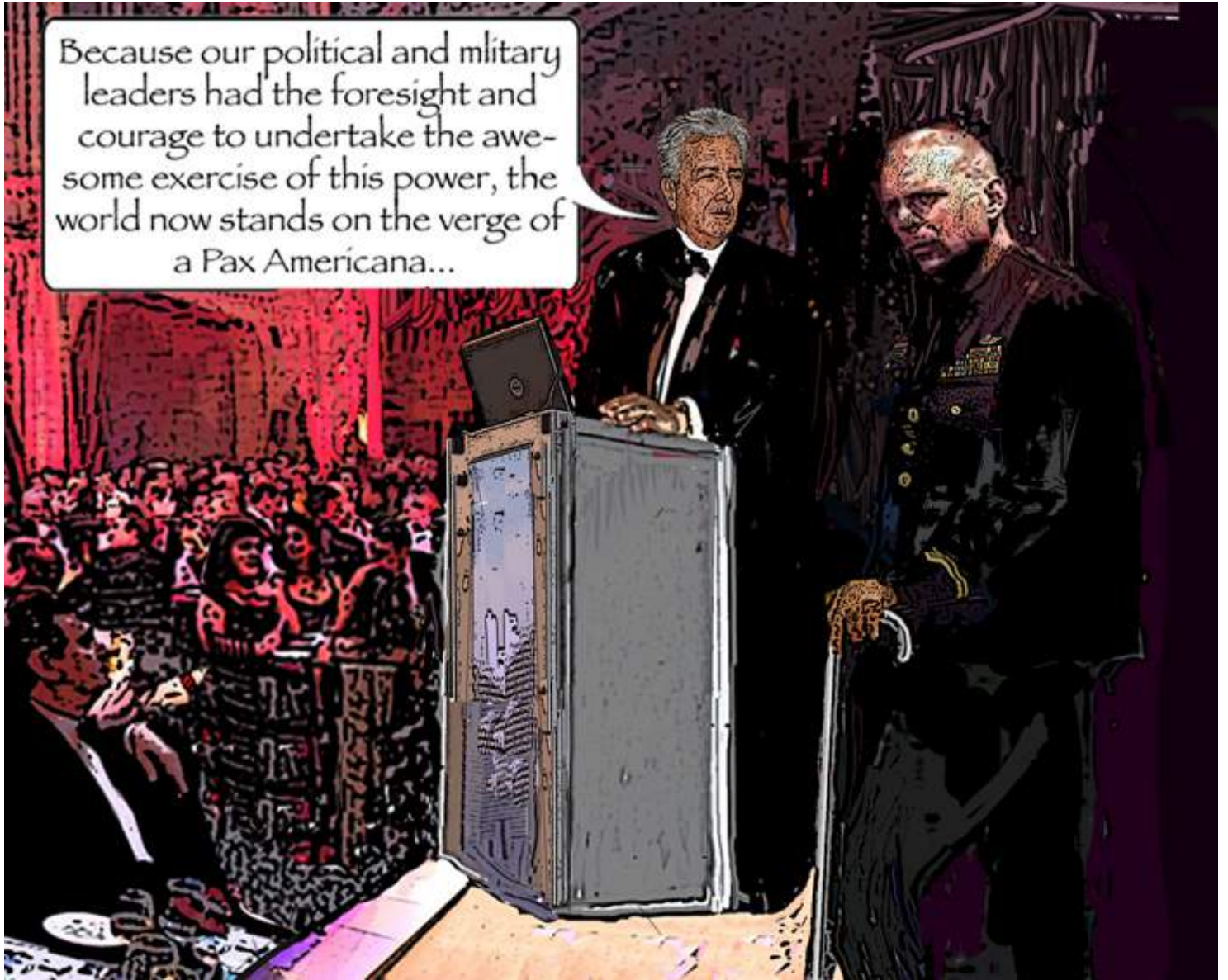
...we shoulder the burden of furthering the cause of democracy worldwide. We have conducted an audacious foreign policy promoting American interests abroad. We are currently establishing a permanent leadership at the highest levels of the American government, which understands and accepts the responsibilities of global power.



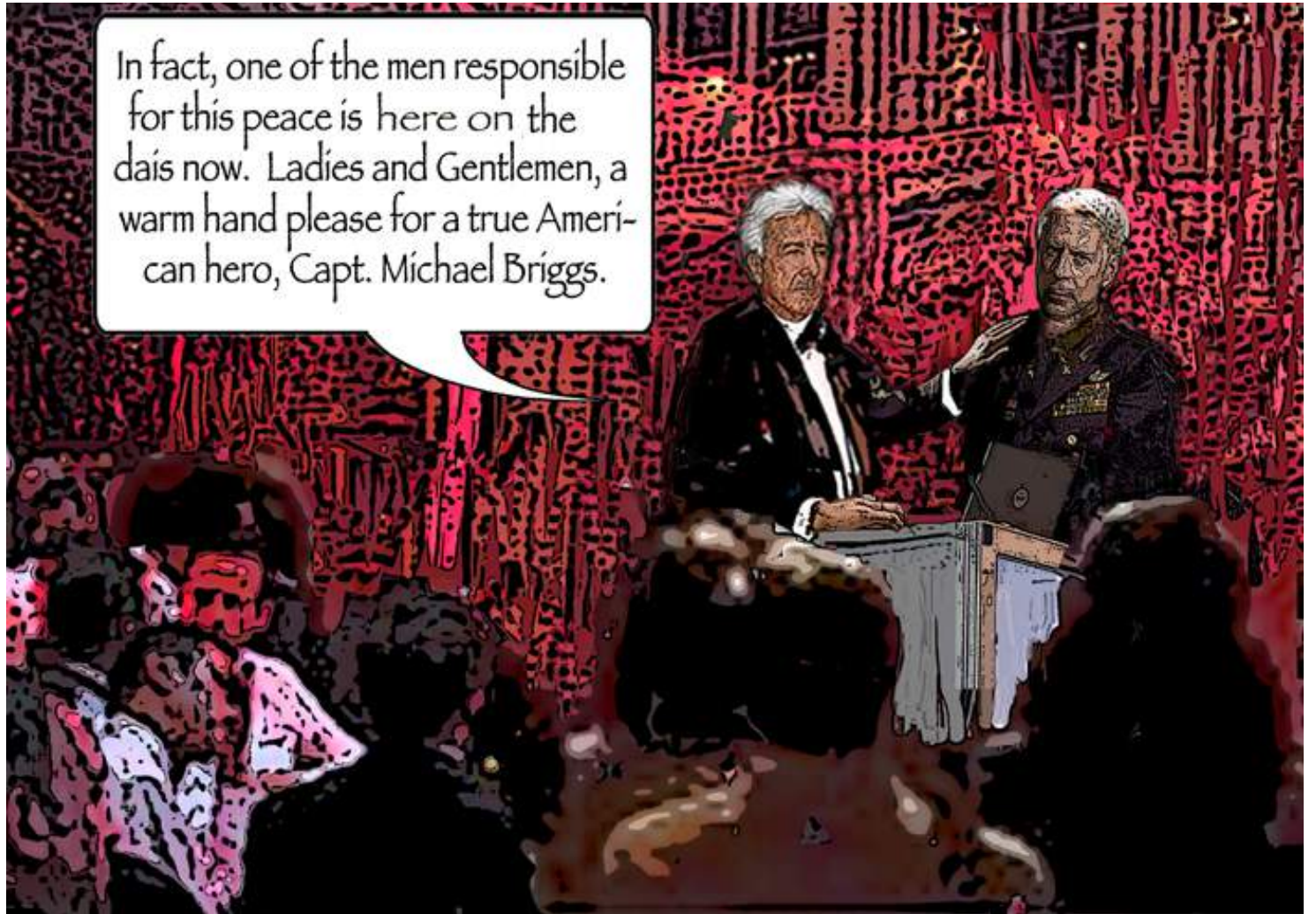


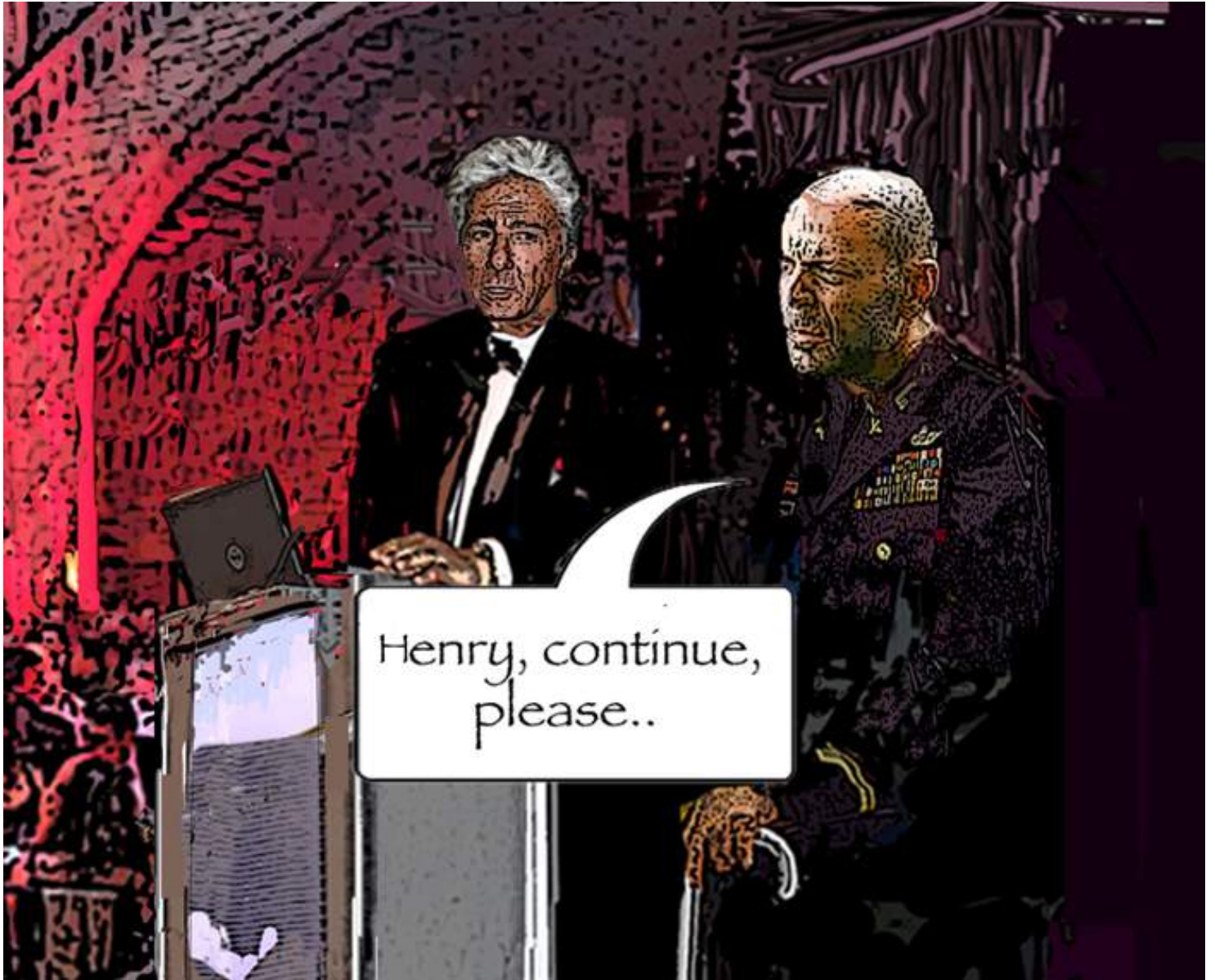
Because our political and military leaders had the foresight and courage to undertake the awesome exercise of this power, the world now stands on the verge of a Pax Americana...

Because our political and military leaders had the foresight and courage to undertake the awesome exercise of this power, the world now stands on the verge of a Pax Americana...

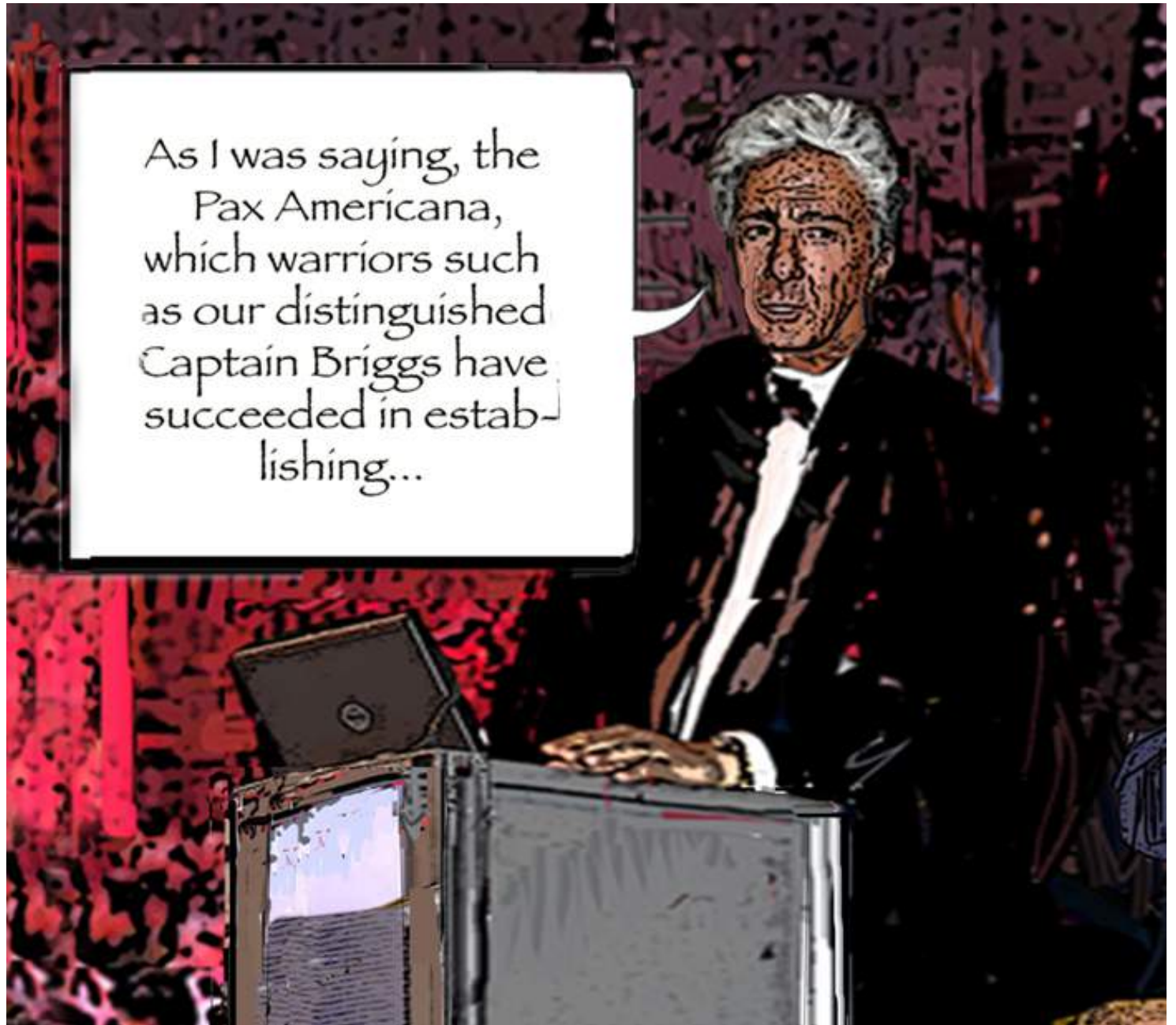


In fact, one of the men responsible for this peace is here on the dais now. Ladies and Gentlemen, a warm hand please for a true American hero, Capt. Michael Briggs.





As I was saying, the
Pax Americana,
which warriors such
as our distinguished
Captain Briggs have
succeeded in estab-
lishing...







...has opened up unprecedented opportunities for commercial success in regions of the world...



Ladies and Gentlemen, I think Captain Briggs, who has recently returned from extensive duty in the Middle East, is perhaps a little inebriated tonight. Would someone from Security be kind enough to escort the Captain to a table?



Henry, step aside and let me speak---now!---or I'll spill the beans on everything, I swear to God I will, right here.





Ladies and Gentlemen, let me assure you, I'm not drunk. Unfortunately, drinking myself into oblivion doesn't seem to work anymore. I'm left to face the consequences of my actions without the aid of that long-time friend.



For years I have been a servant of the Empire, and, in essence, a traitor to the principles of our former Republic. I have acted as a high-level assassin, involved mostly in "wet" ops conducted in Central and South America, and, of course, in the Middle East.



Cut the power to
the microphone!



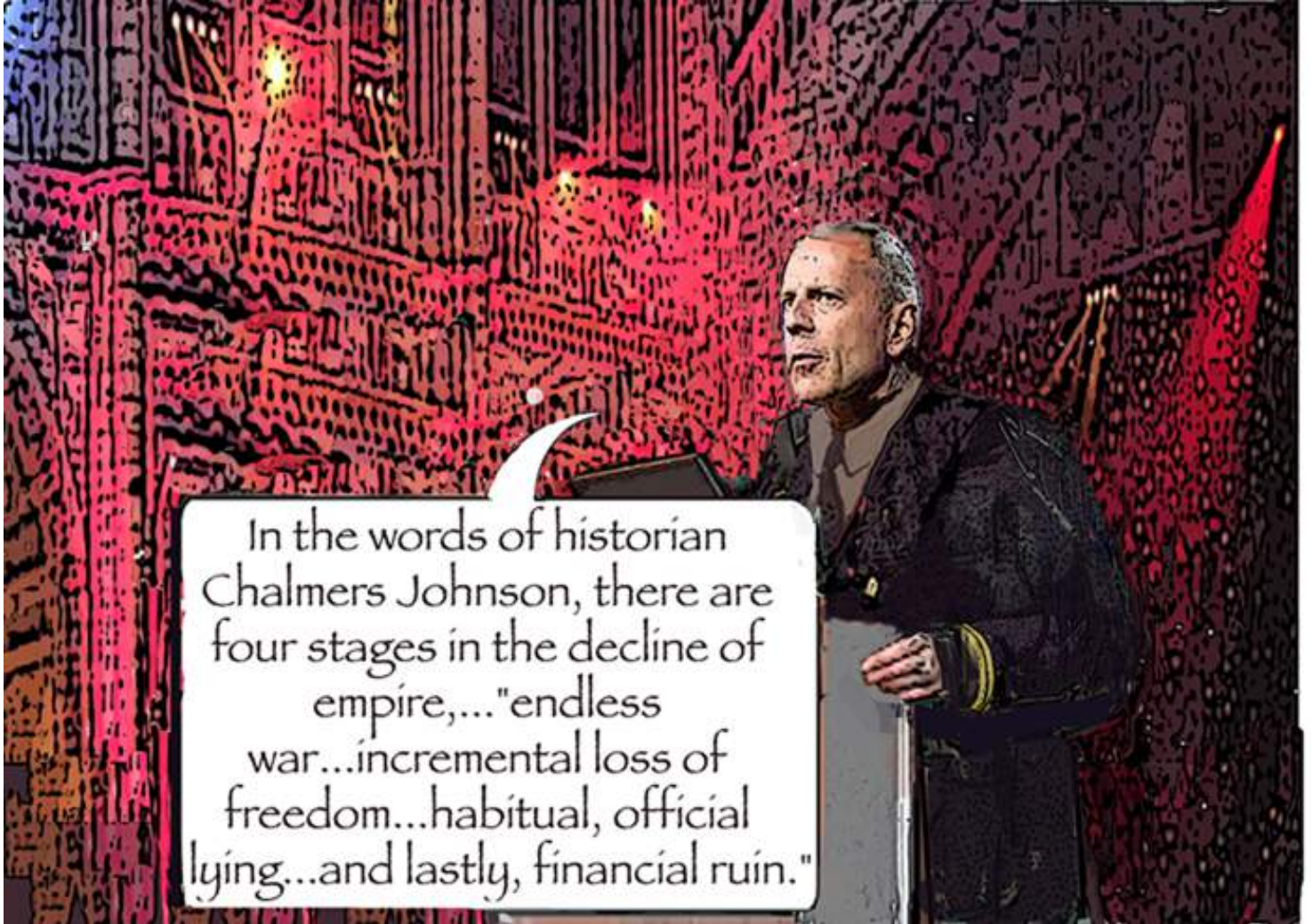


You don't really want to do that now, do you?

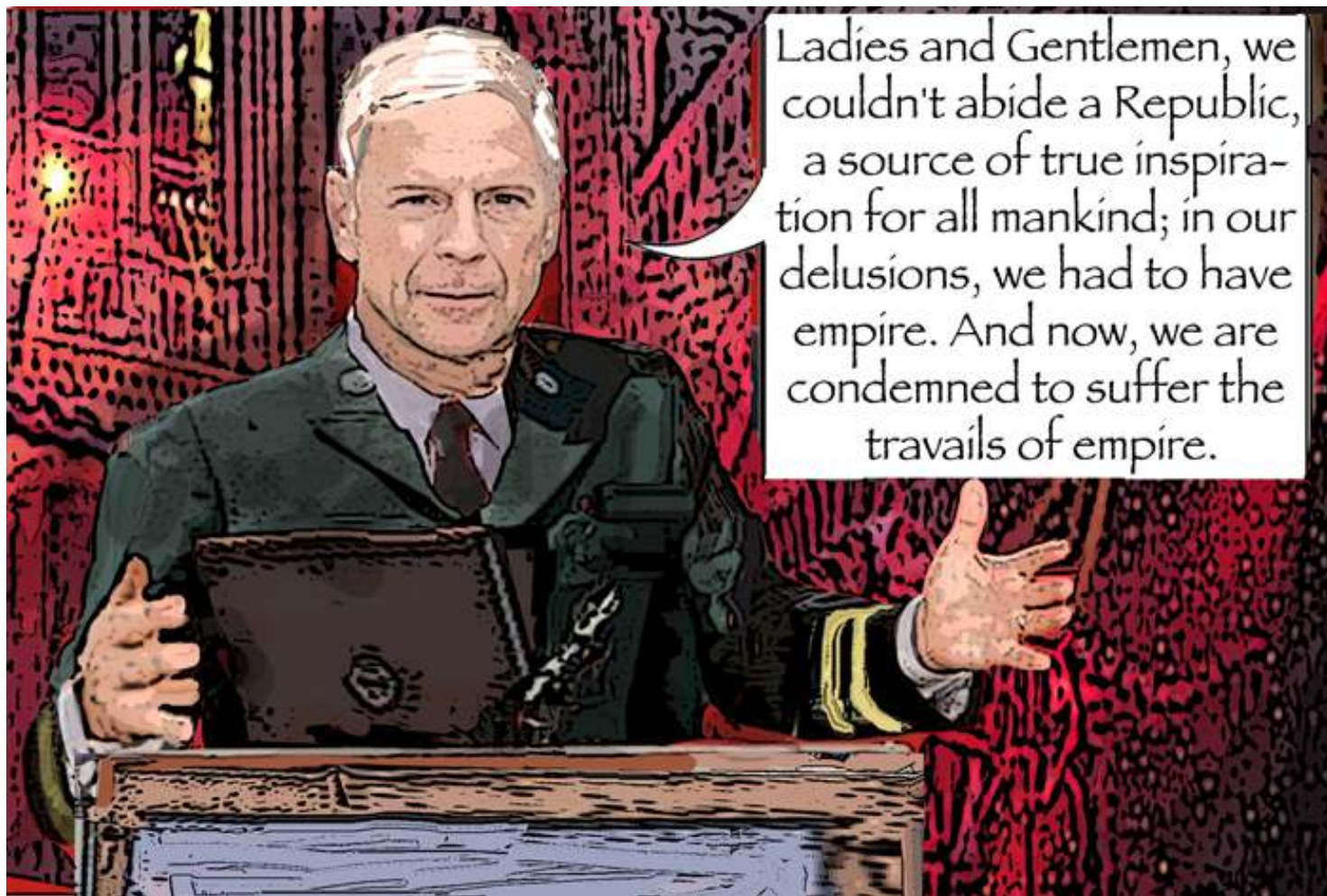


I didn't think so.





In the words of historian Chalmers Johnson, there are four stages in the decline of empire,... "endless war... incremental loss of freedom... habitual, official lying... and lastly, financial ruin."



Ladies and Gentlemen, we couldn't abide a Republic, a source of true inspiration for all mankind; in our delusions, we had to have empire. And now, we are condemned to suffer the travails of empire.

After much soul-searching, I have decided to resign my commission in the United States Marine Corps, effective immediately. I resign in protest and I resign in shame.



I end my years of service with words that come down to us from the 13th Century, but the melody accompanying them came from the heart of a contemporary young woman of the Middle East.







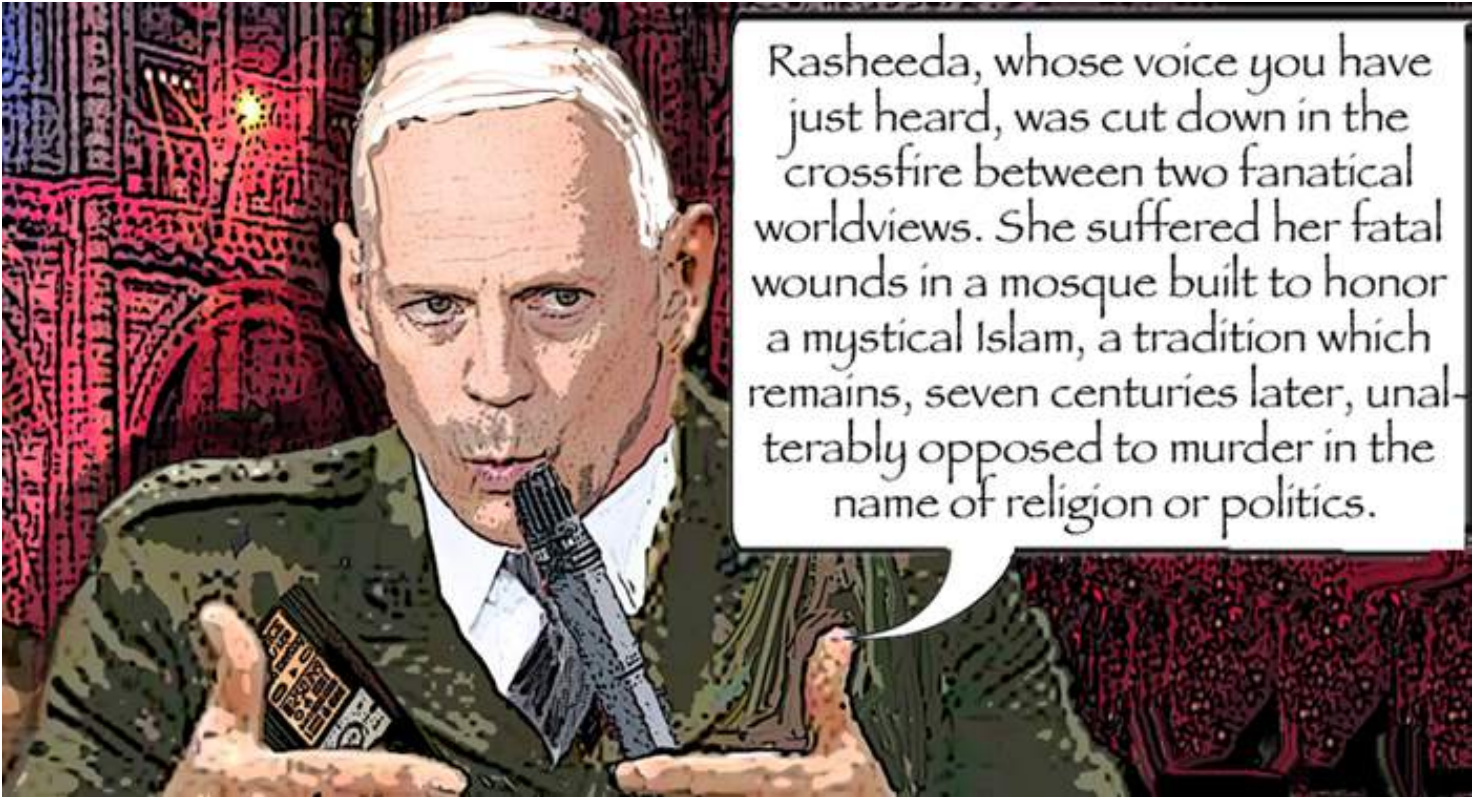
But beyond ideas of
wrongdoing or right-
doing, there is a
field.

I'll meet you there.
When the soul lies
down in that city,
the world is too full
to talk about.

Idea, language,
even the phrase
'each other' doesn't
make any sense.

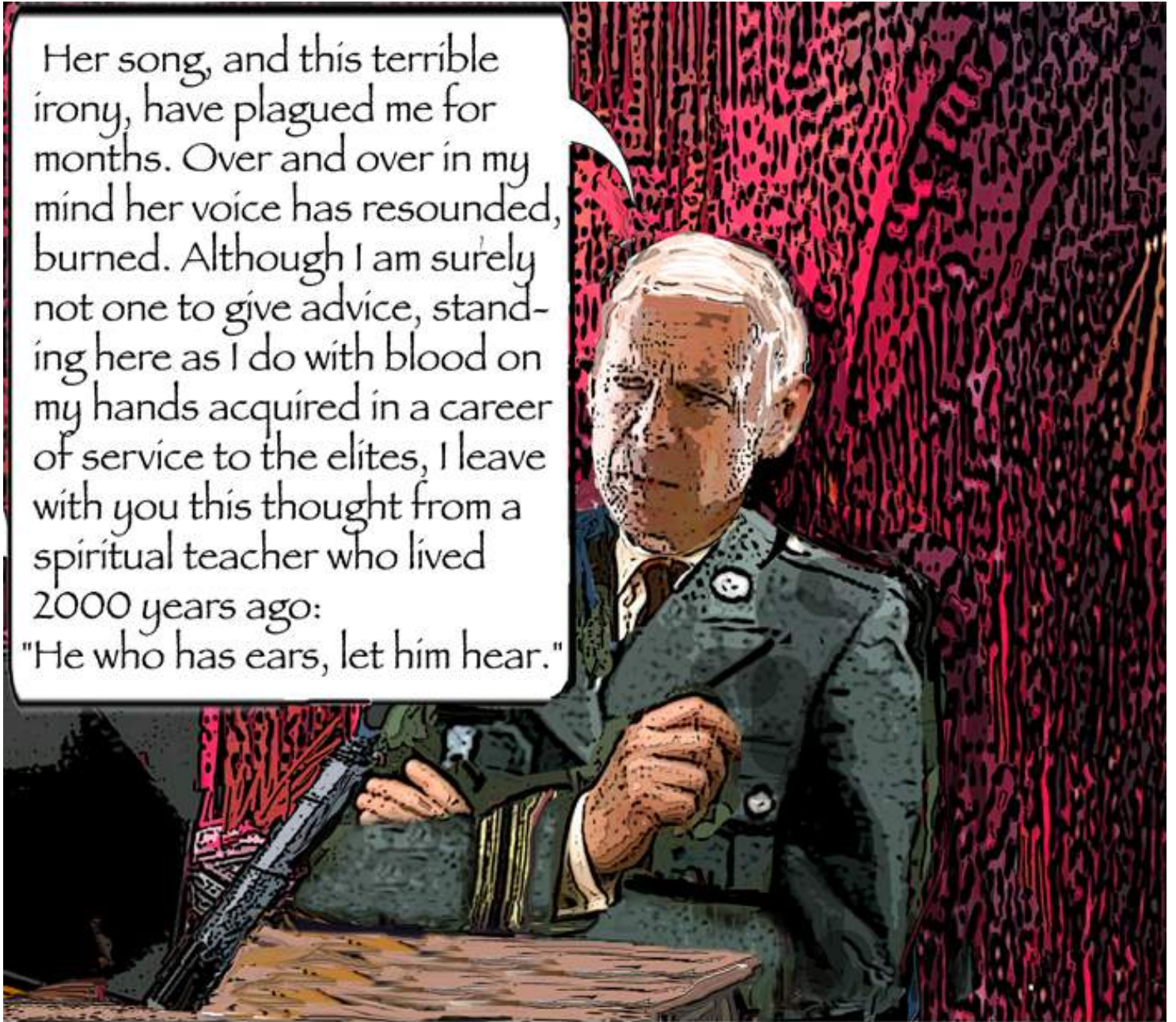
I'll meet you there.





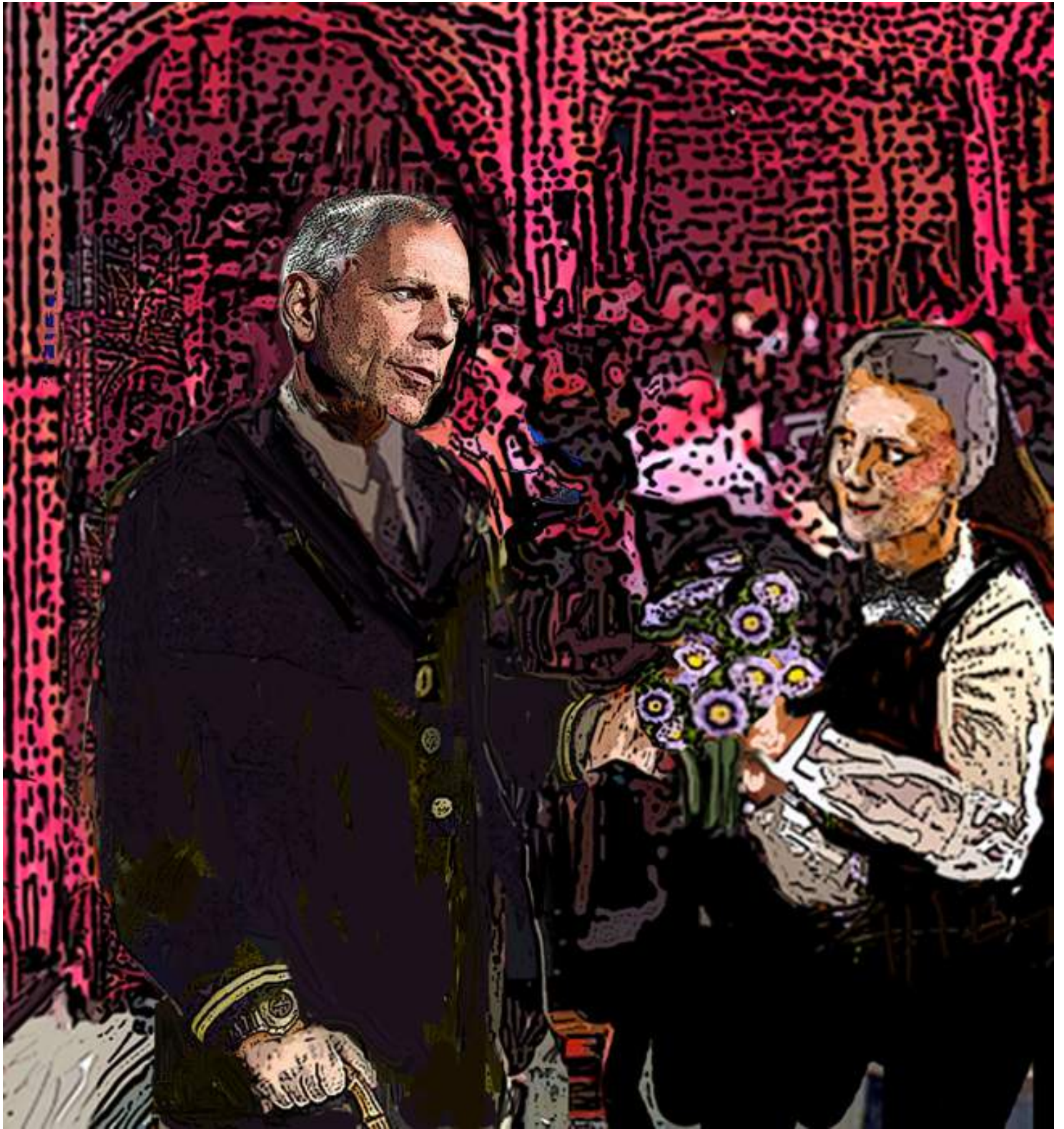
Rasheeda, whose voice you have just heard, was cut down in the crossfire between two fanatical worldviews. She suffered her fatal wounds in a mosque built to honor a mystical Islam, a tradition which remains, seven centuries later, unalterably opposed to murder in the name of religion or politics.

Her song, and this terrible irony, have plagued me for months. Over and over in my mind her voice has resounded, burned. Although I am surely not one to give advice, standing here as I do with blood on my hands acquired in a career of service to the elites, I leave with you this thought from a spiritual teacher who lived 2000 years ago:
"He who has ears, let him hear."





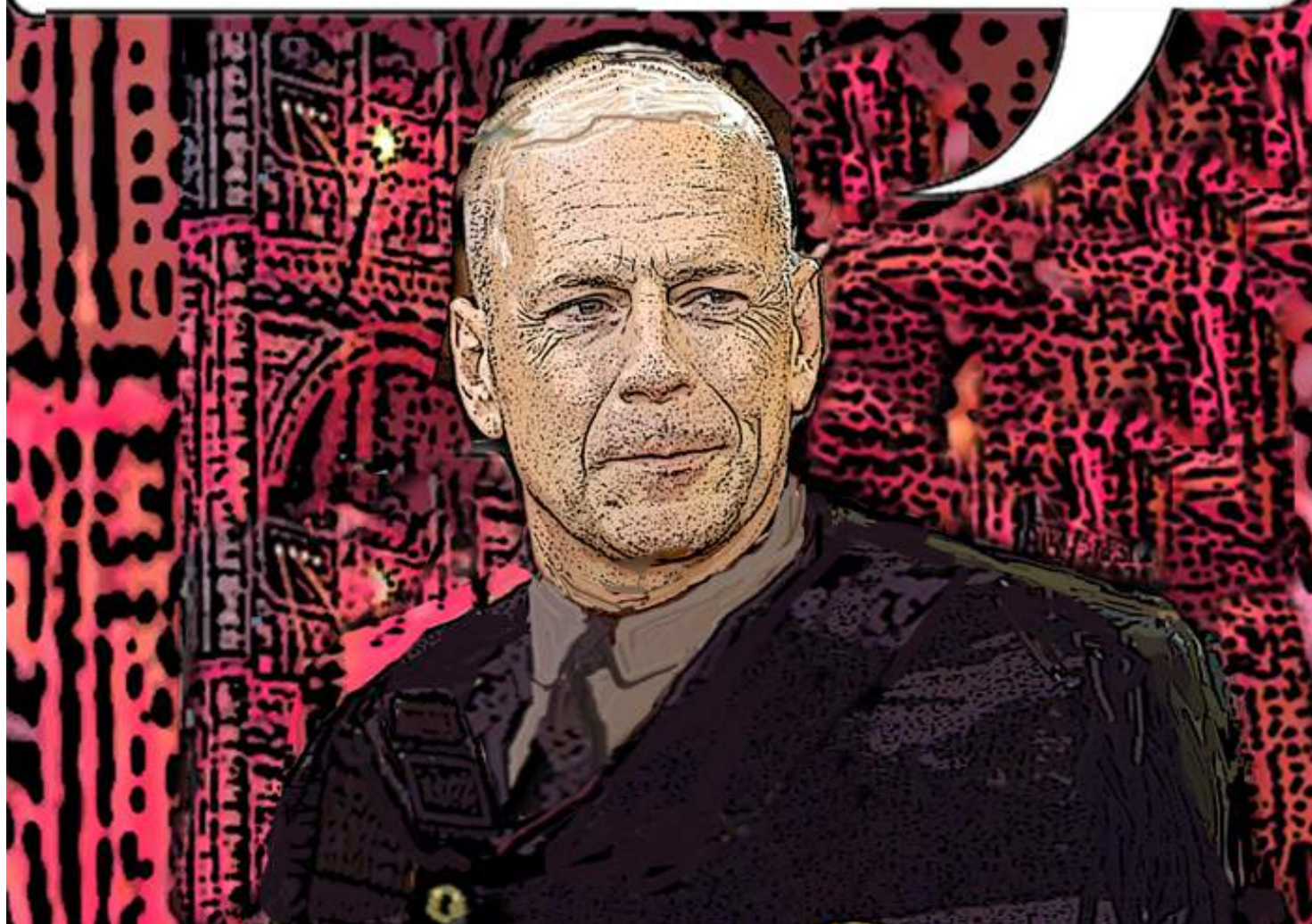




I would say that more or less finishes my career, Captain, and quite possibly your life, Sir.

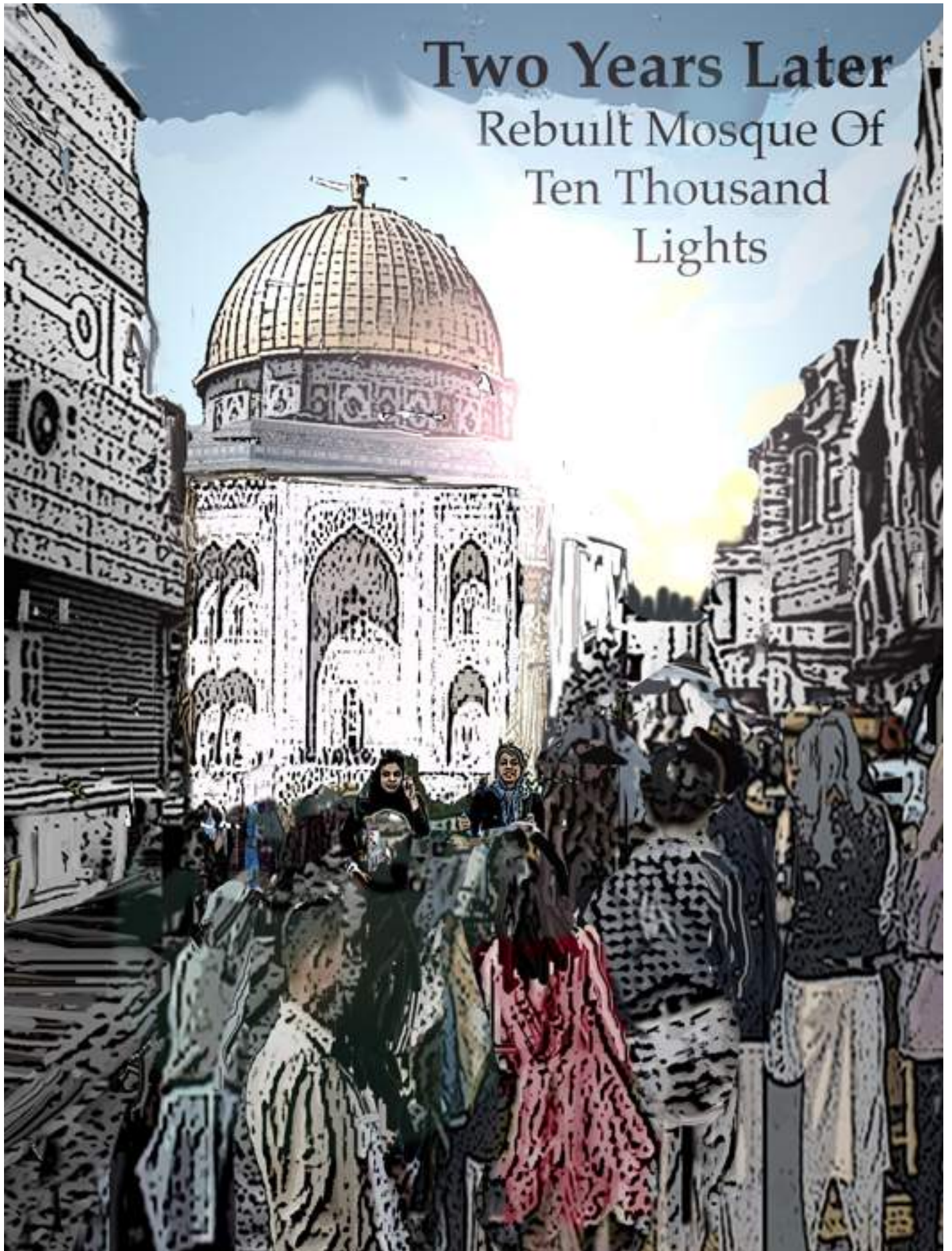



Yes, but this drunkenness is over,
Sergeant. This drunkenness is finally over



Two Years Later

Rebuilt Mosque Of Ten Thousand Lights






یہ عظیم الشان، یہ
سب سے خوبصورت، یہ
میں نے ہمیشہ سے
دیکھا ہے۔ یہ ایک
خوارق واقعہ ہے جو
ہمیں کھینچ کر
ہمیں لے گیا ہے
اور
ہمیں لے گیا ہے
اور

One victim of that tragedy
was a young woman, a prom-
ising musician by the name
of Rasheeda. At that moment
an unshakable resolve
arose in her dearest friend,
Amirah.



in memory of Rasheeda she invited women of all cultures and religions to participate in the restoration of this structure, the mosque of ten thousand lights.



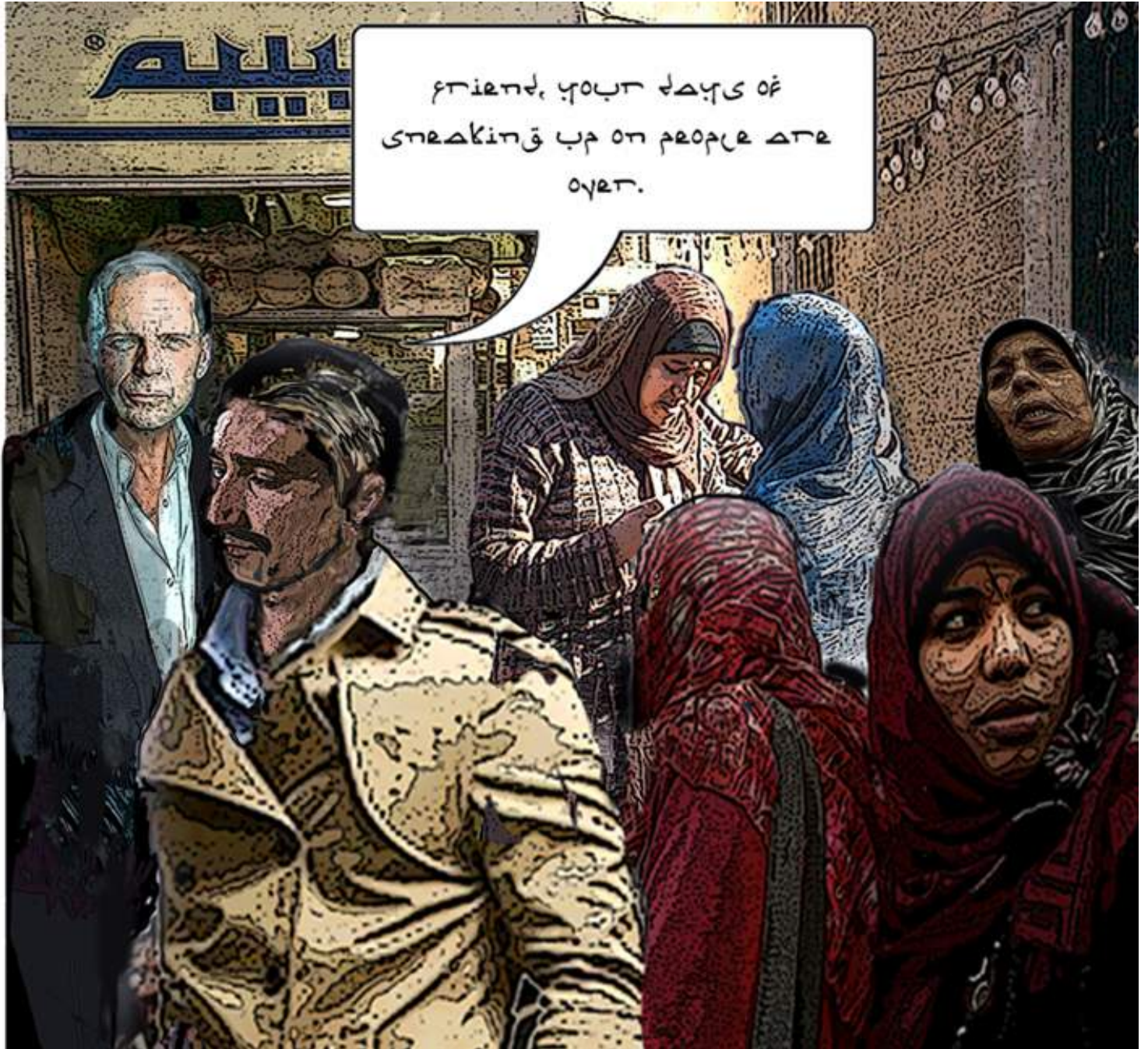


in her memory,
she asked all
women who were
sickened by war

to make a profound commitment to
the cause of peace worldwide.
She asked them to renounce
fear, in all its manifestations,
in all its illusory power.

بیتھ

friend, your days of
sneaking up on people are
over.



and i'm afraid it's too late for
a soccer career, khalid, but
your father was absolutely
right: you were indeed poetry
in motion.

i didn't think i'd see
you again, يوقيق.
it's good that you're
here.



i don't have much time
left, Khalid. i know too
much, and i know my
people fit it hand. they
never forget. some acci-
dent is being arranged
with my name on it.



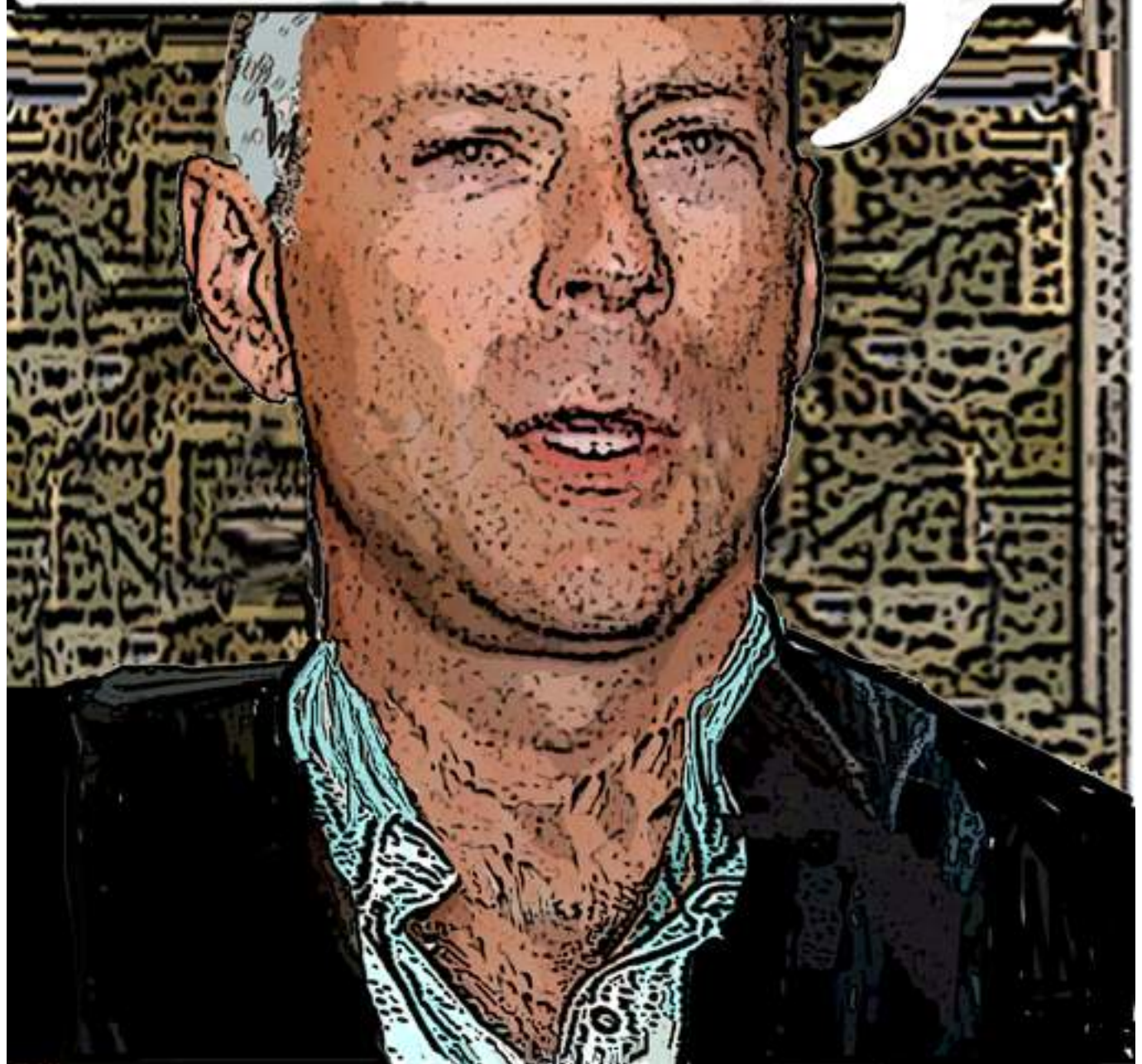
to my people i'm an apostate, the
lowest form of life imaginable.
Hammed can't quite bring himself to
give the order, but it will come. i know
my people fit it hand, and they never
forget. i can't go back, لا يمكنني. i
can no longer drink from that well of
hated.



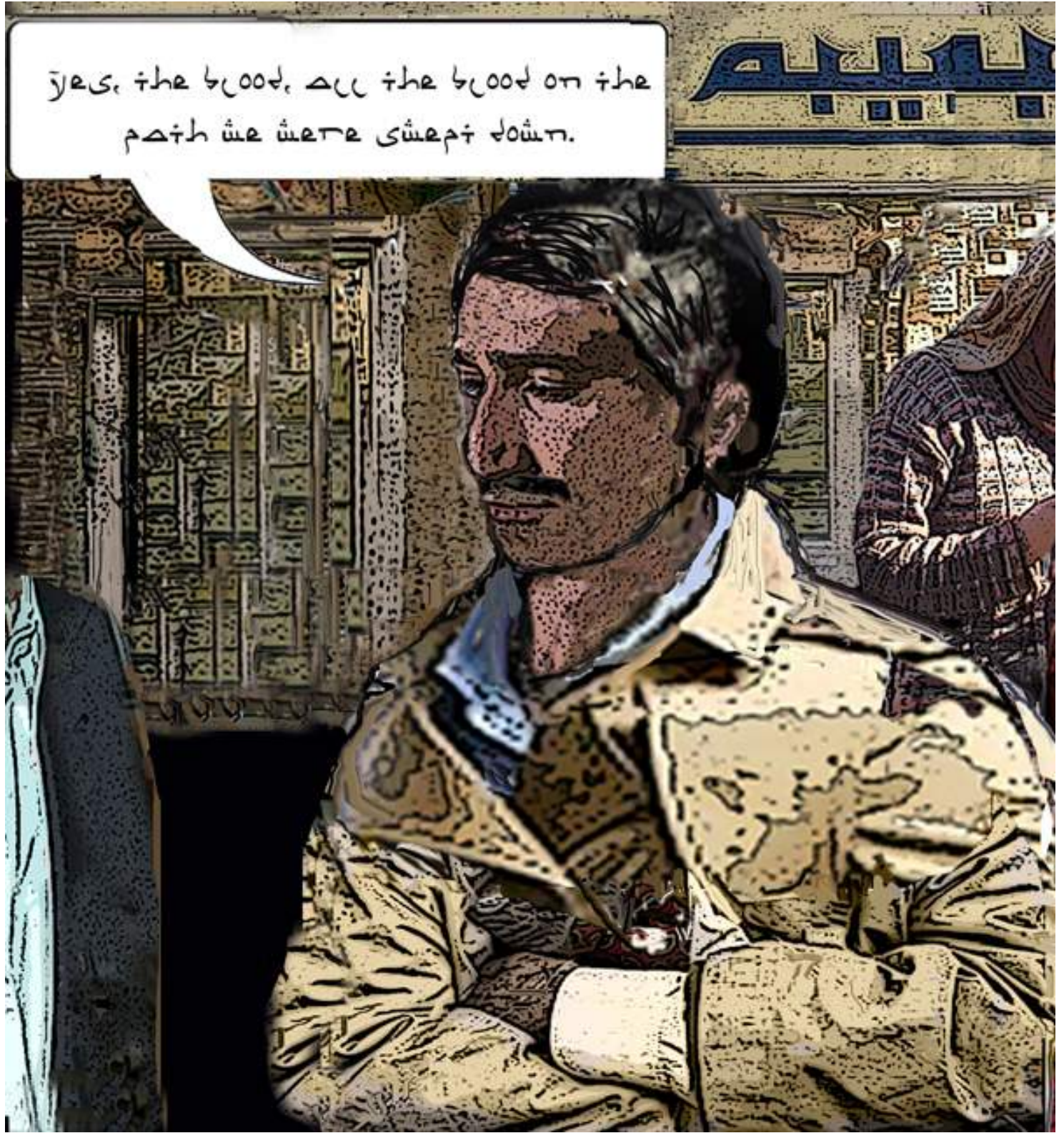
i abandoned my daughter in life,
but i will not abandon her in
death.



It's a strange feeling,
like coming out of a trance with blood on
your hands.



yes, the blood, all the blood on the
path we were swept down.





i have the perfect piece
for you, a true an-
tique, a beautiful
treasure, yet a
bargain.



i feel generous today. i'll even take dollars. they're down again
this morning, but i'll make an exception for such a
distinguished american, at the old price.



السلامة

FOR RASHEEDA?

YES, IN MEMORY OF
RASHEEDA.




بہت سے
تھک رہا ہوں۔



It is my great privilege to introduce a young woman who dares to call all of womankind to the cause of peace: amirah, will you come forward!



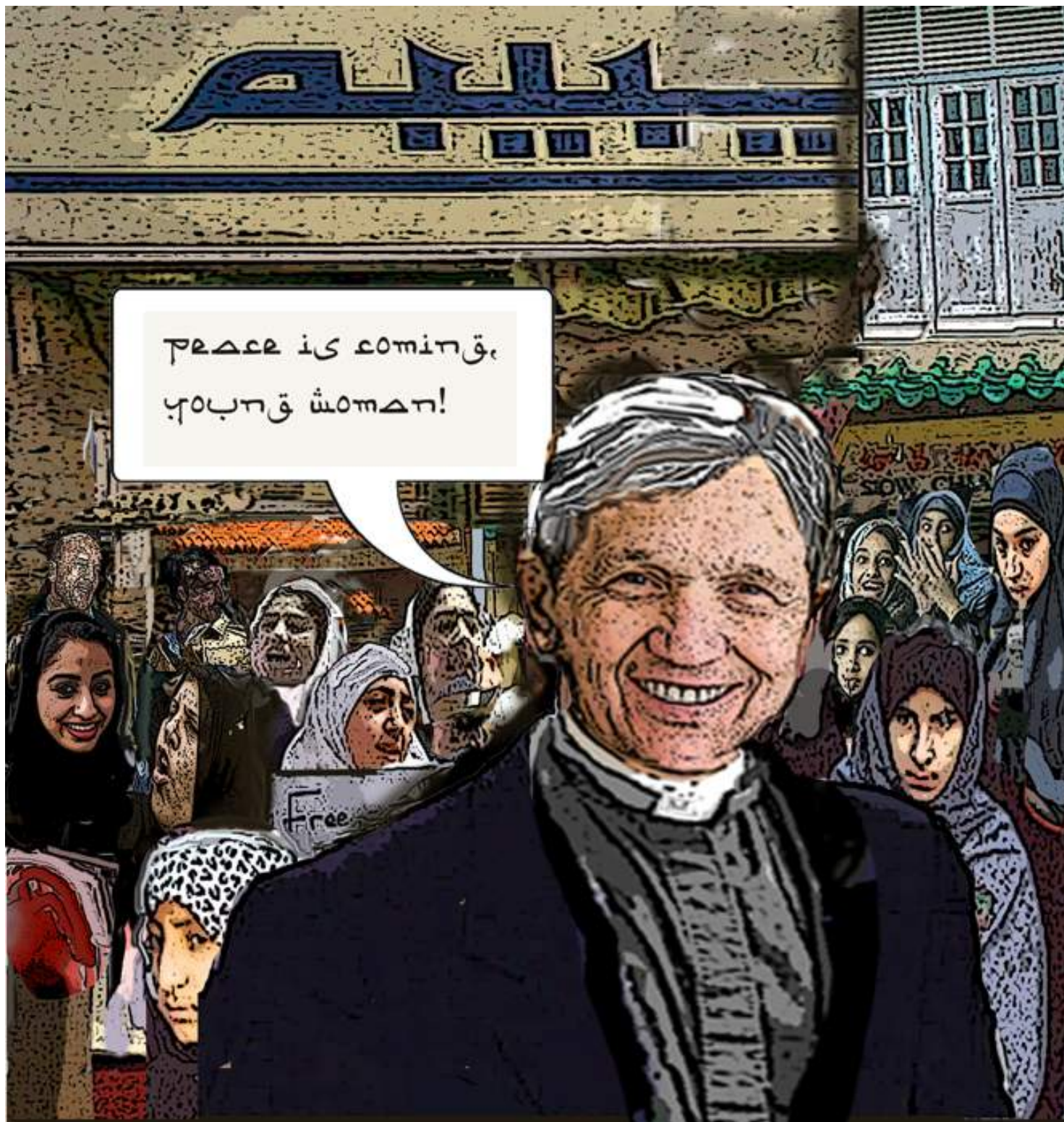




فأثيرها لا يمحى أبداً،
أنتِ تماماً كما
رأيتها تصف
وصفتكِ. هي
لم تنسكِ أبداً.
هي حطت على
كل مكان. أنا
أفتقدكِ كثيراً.

الله

Peace is coming,
women! Women!







thank you for coming
to the rededication of
the mosque of ten
thousand lights.

For seven centuries it was
and its people were allowed to
fade away after away of reli-
gion and sectarian violence
kept over it. no longer. but ef-
forts have succeeded more than
I could have imagined.



When I first learned of my friend's death,
something mysterious happened to me. All
fear vanished. and where there is no fear,
anything is possible.



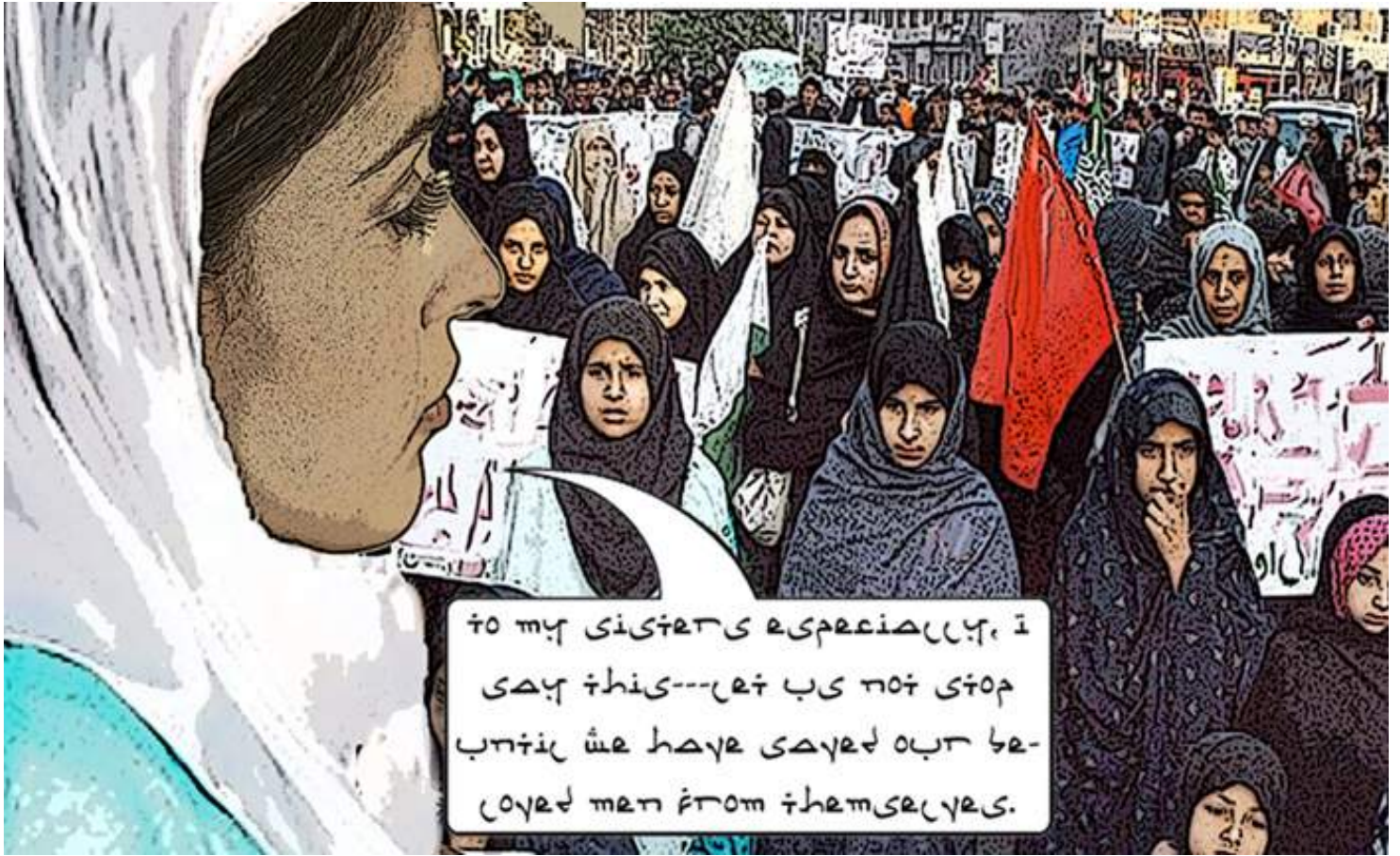
When I first learned of my friend's death,
something mysterious happened to me. All
fear vanished. and where there is no fear,
anything is possible.





this is only the beginning of our journey
together. "our is not a caravan of de-
spair!" will you stay with me to finish
the journey?





to my sisters especially, i say this---let us not stop until we have saved our beloved men from themselves.

we take up Rasheed's
challenge, we take up the
challenge of the American
activist, Julia Ward Howe,
who in 1870, appalled by the
carnage of the American
Civil War, cried out to the
women of the world: stand
up against war, stand
up and be counted! we
bring life into this world.
let it be known, we do not
bring death!



Rasheda, i sing your last composition.



"not christian or jew or muslim, not hindu, بولہندو، بولہی، or zen, not any religion or belief system."



"i am not from the east or the west, not out of the ocean or up from the ground, not natural or ethereal, not composed of elements at all."



"I do not exist, am not an entity in this world or in the next, did not descend from adam or eve or any origin story."



"MY PLACE IS PLACELESS, A
TRACE OF THE TRACELESS.
NEITHER BODY OR SOUL."

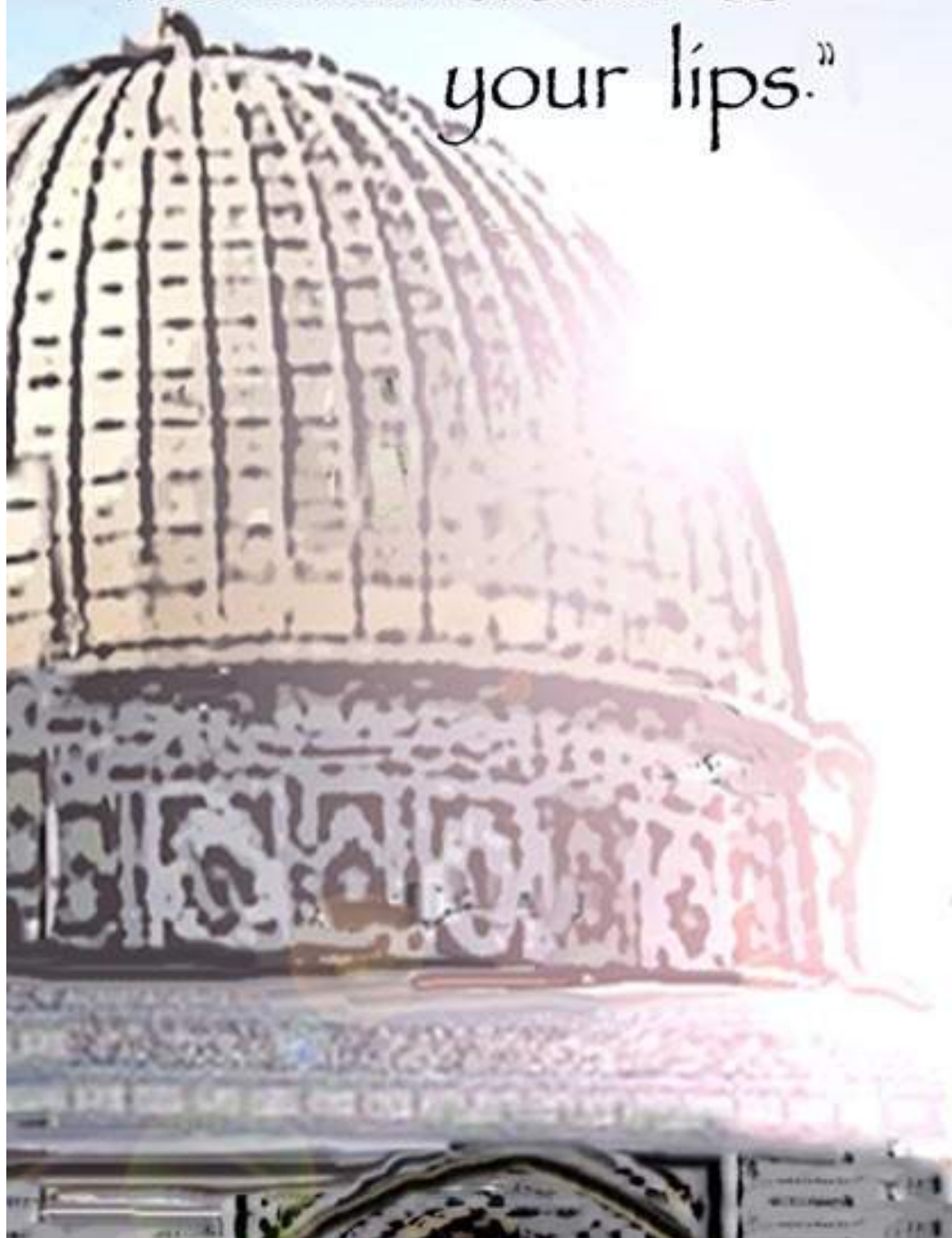


"I belong to the beloved, have seen the two worlds as one and that one call to and know, first, last, outer, inner, only that breath-breathing human being."



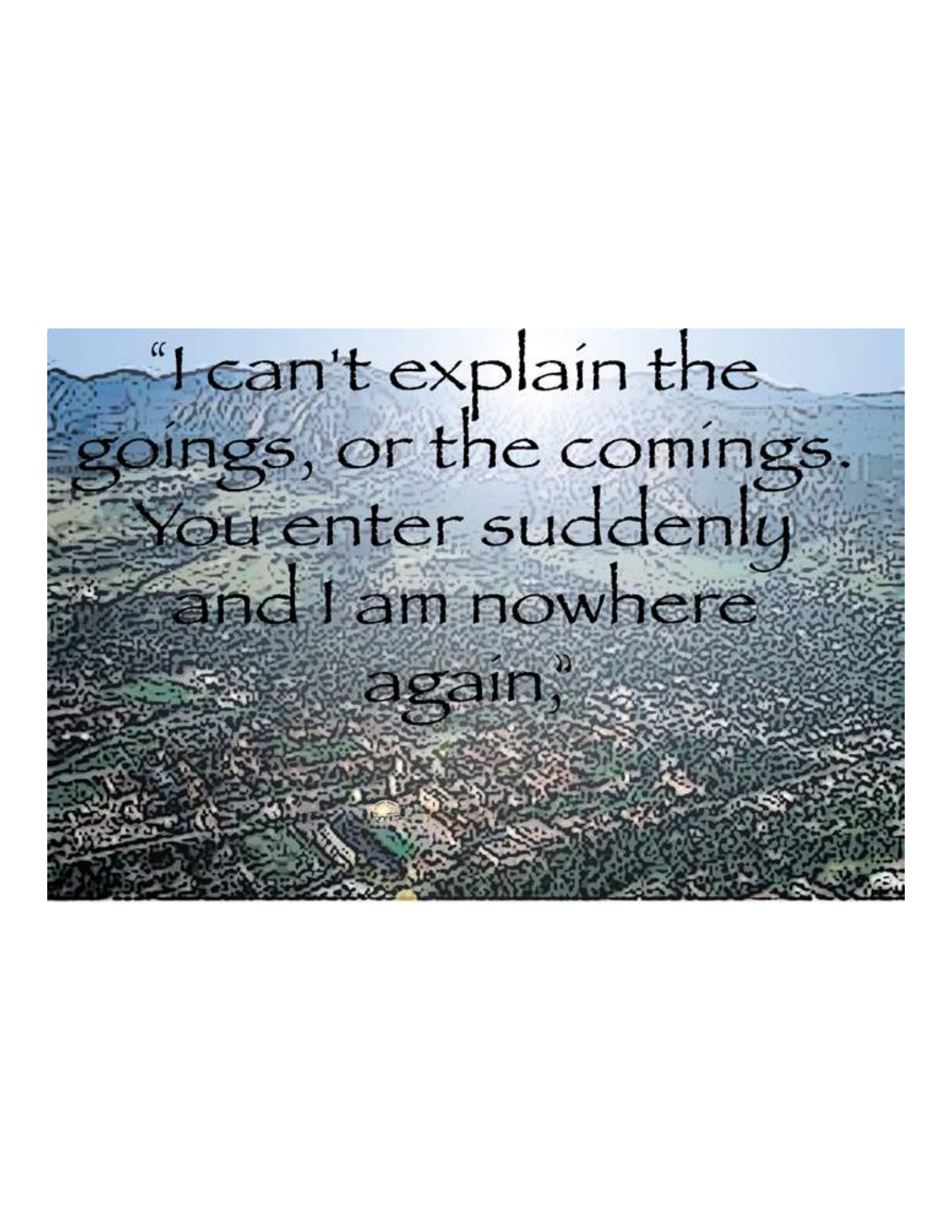


“When it's cold and raining,
You are more beautiful.
And the snow brings
me even closer to
your lips.”



"The inner secret, that which was
never born,
You are that freshness, and I am
with you now."



An aerial photograph of a city, likely Los Angeles, showing a dense urban area with a grid of streets and green spaces. The city is surrounded by hazy, mountainous terrain under a clear blue sky. A quote is overlaid on the image in a black, serif font.

“I can't explain the
goings, or the comings.
You enter suddenly
and I am nowhere
again.”

