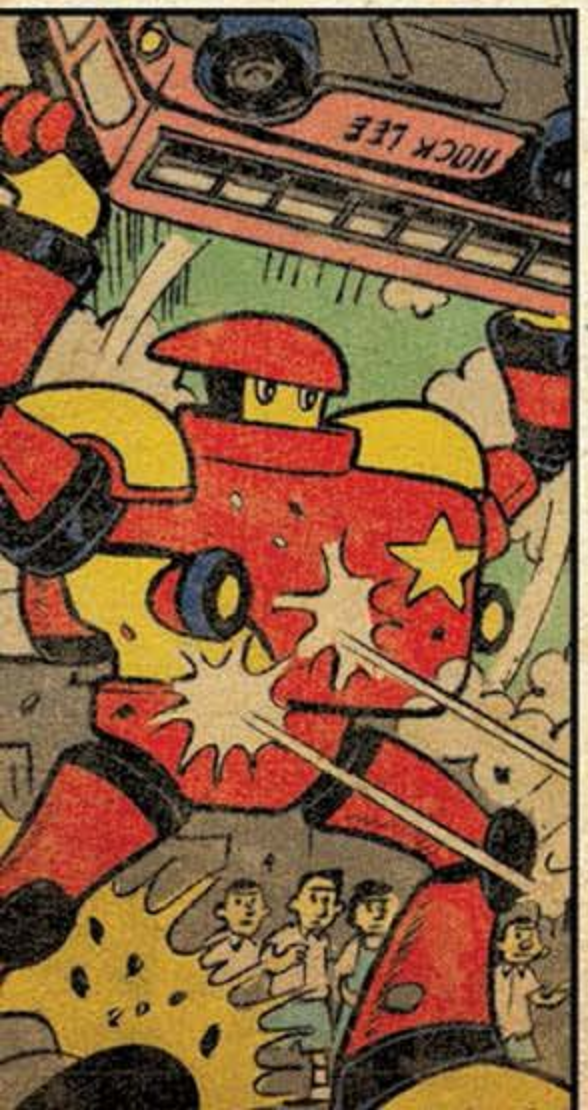
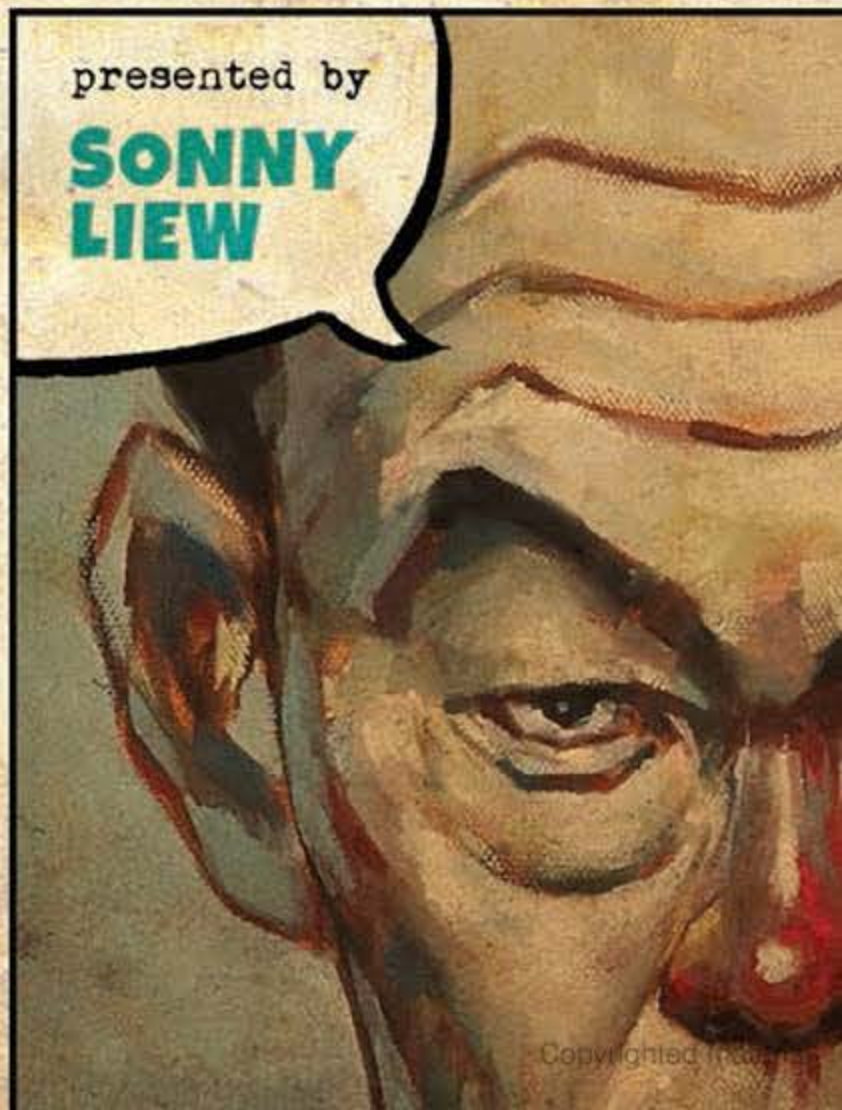
THE ART OF

CHARLIE CHAN HOCK CHYE

陳福財





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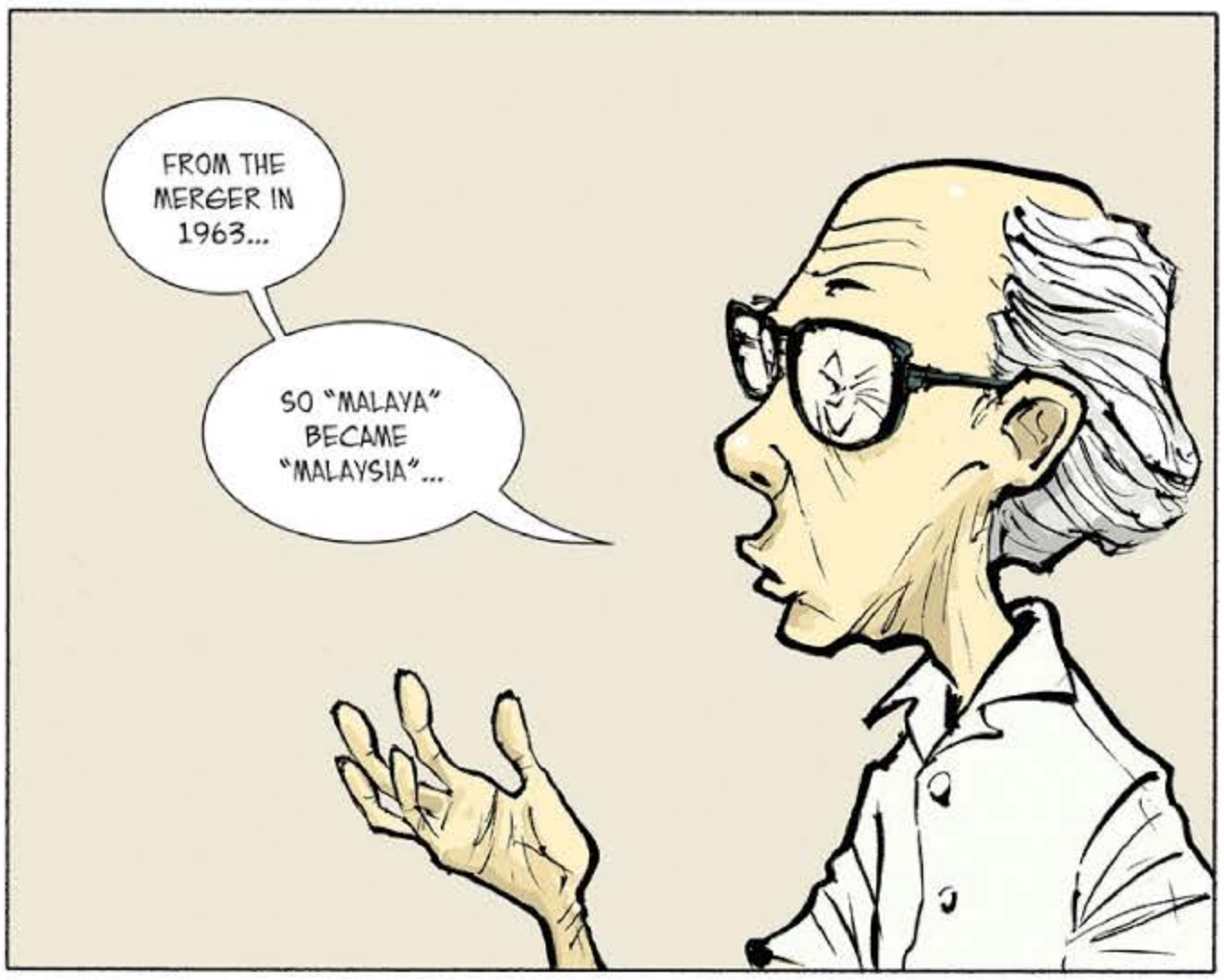
Charlie Chan Hock Chye, aged 72, 2010



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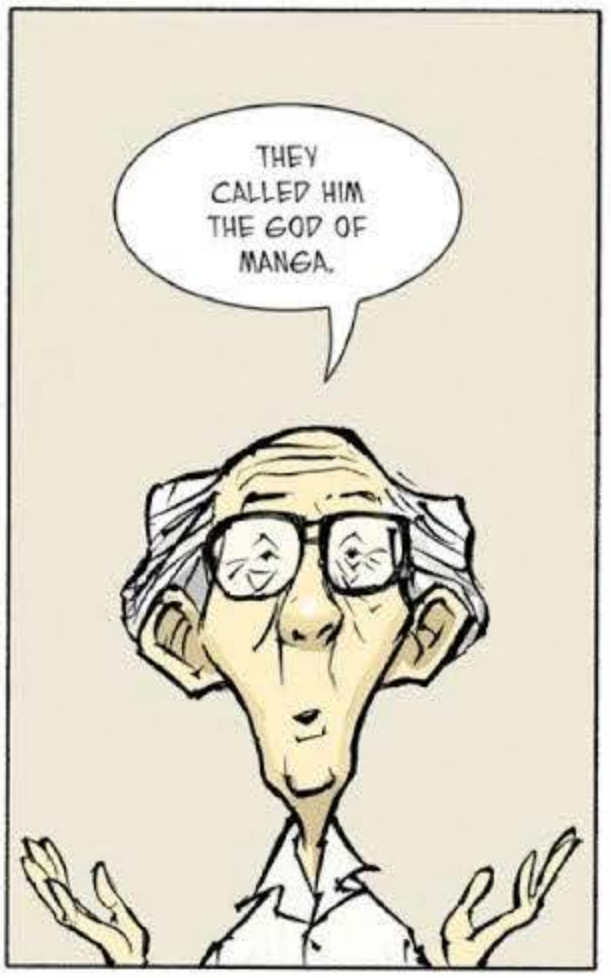

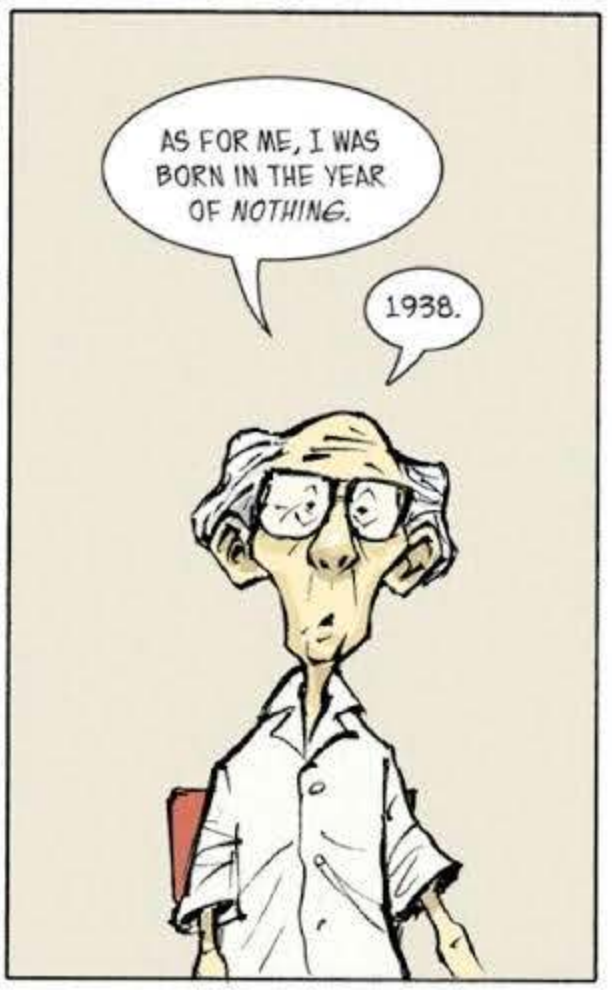

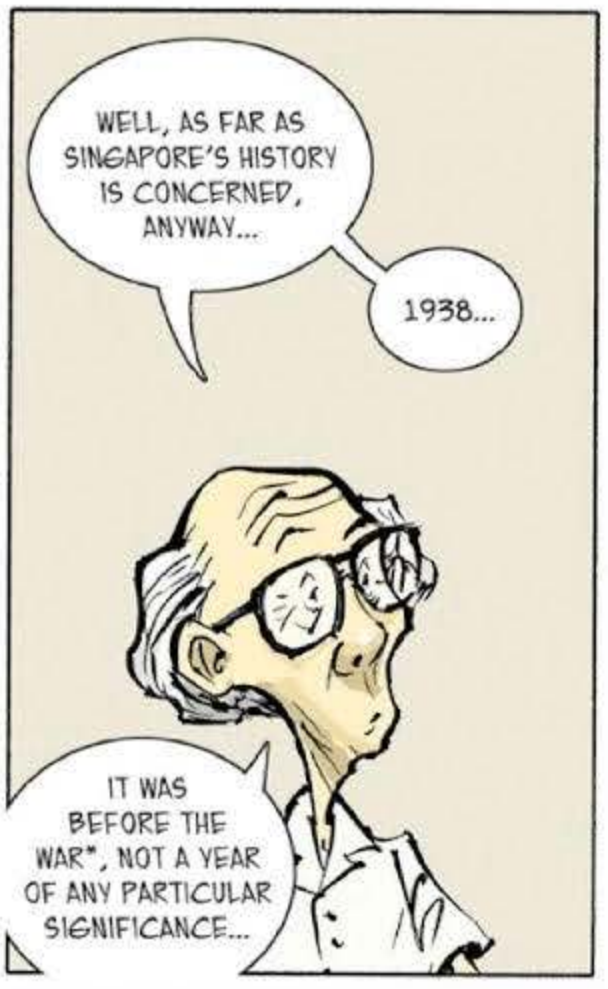

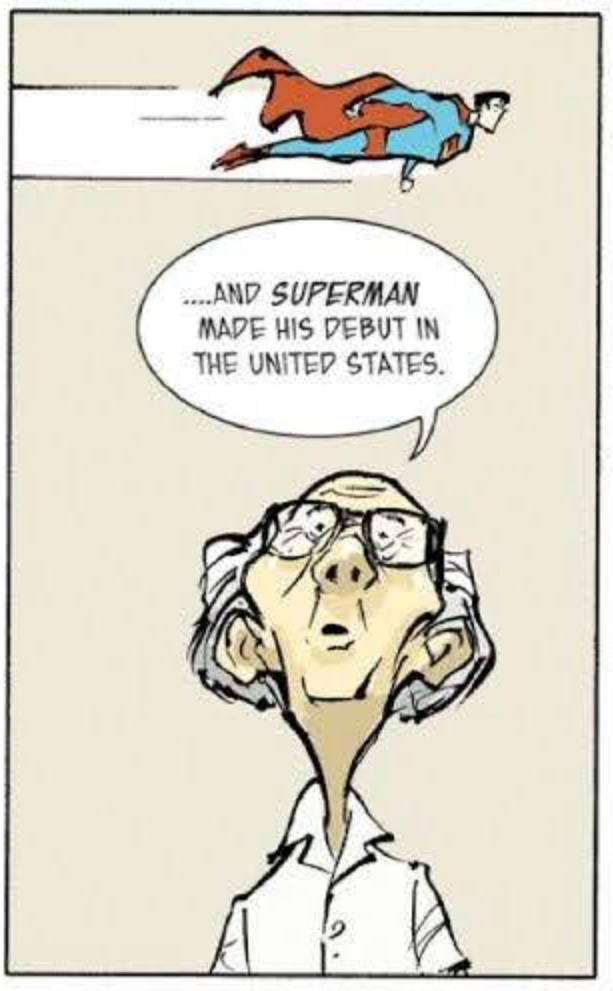

*JAPANESE OCCUPATION, 1942–1945

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THE ART OF

CHARLIE CHAN HOCK CHYE

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SONNY LIEW

PANTHEON BOOKS
NEW YORK

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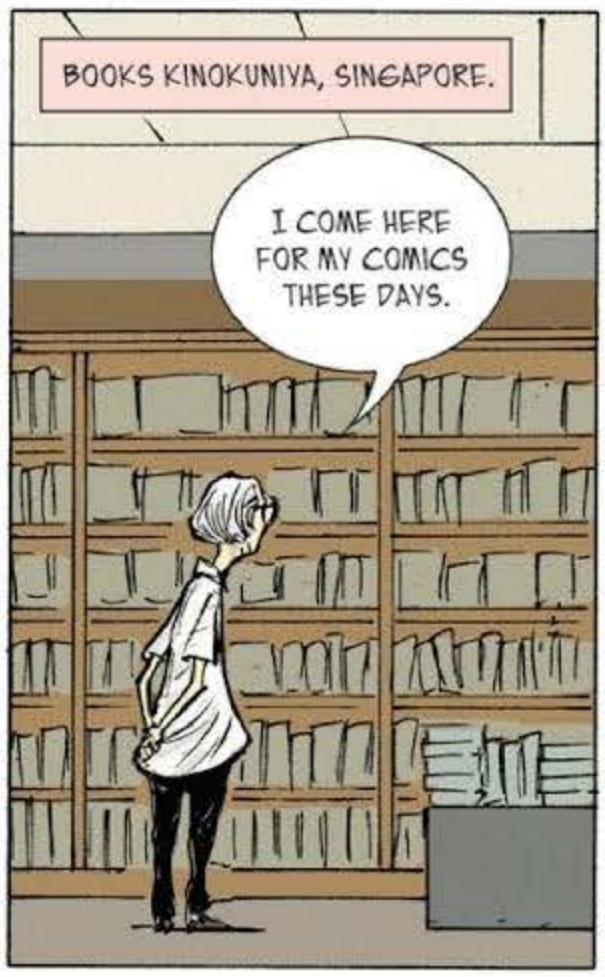
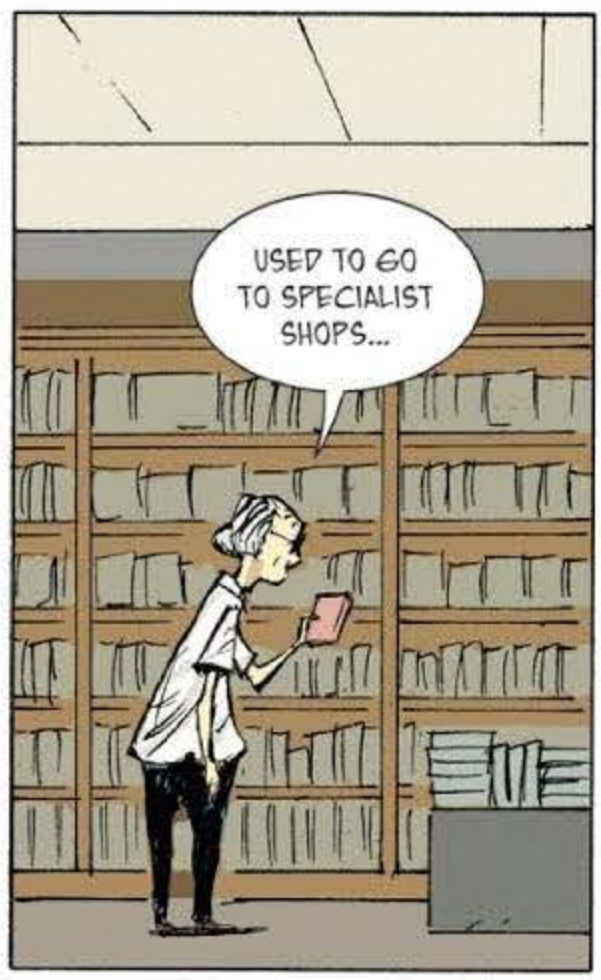
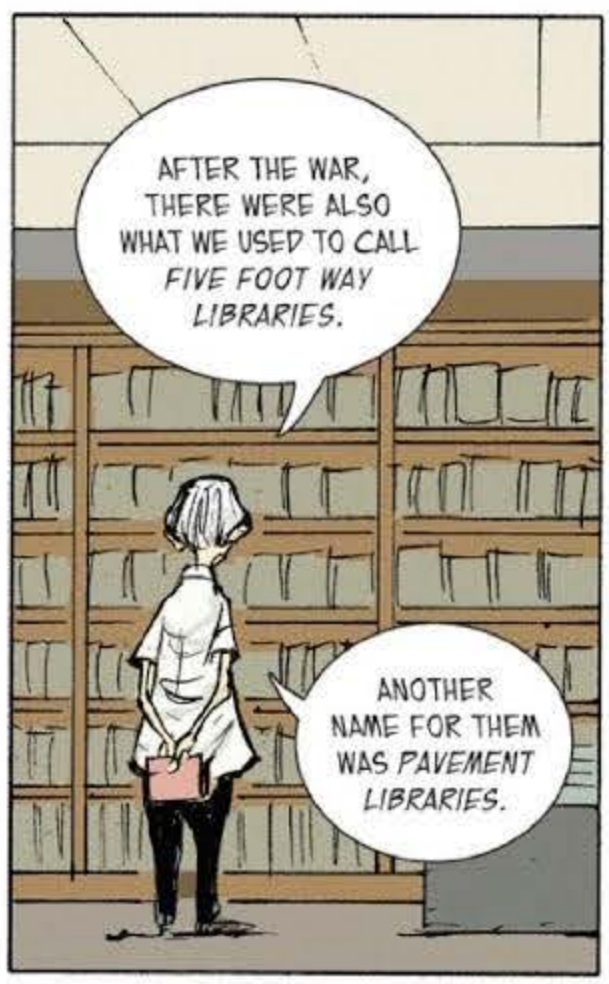
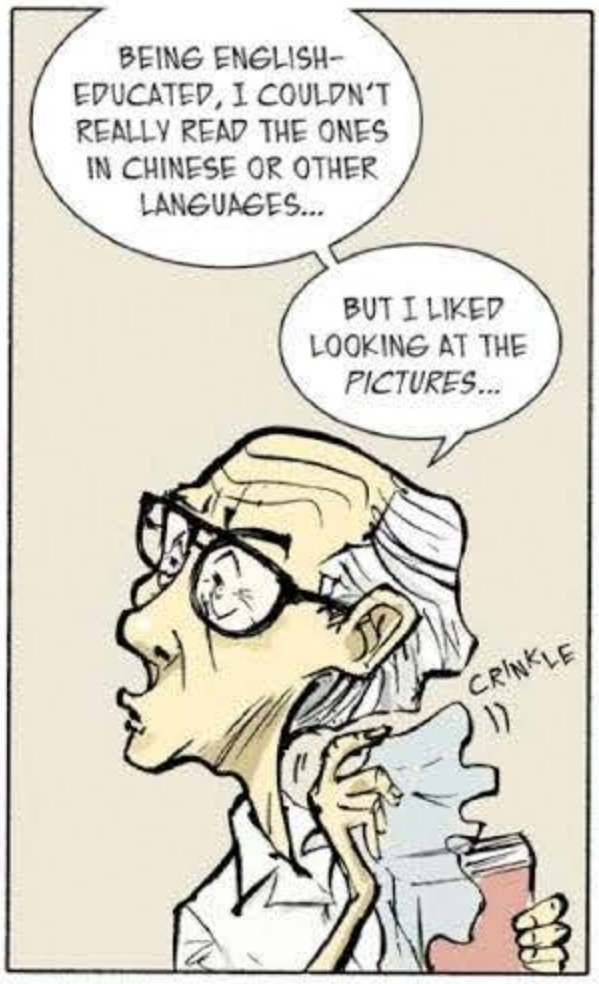
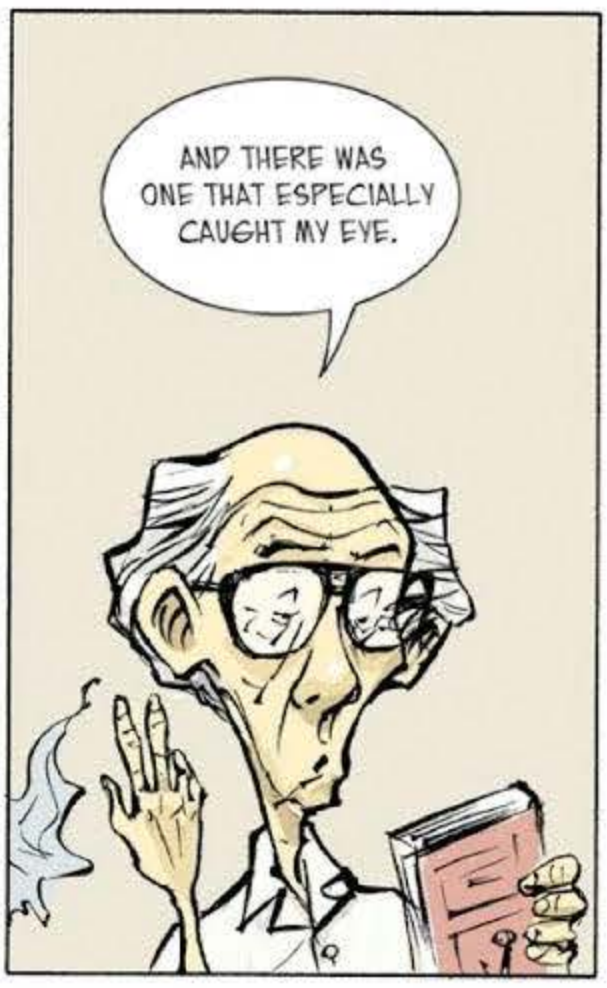






FIVE FOOT WAY LIBRARY (1966) | Chan Hock Chye | Ink and wash on paper





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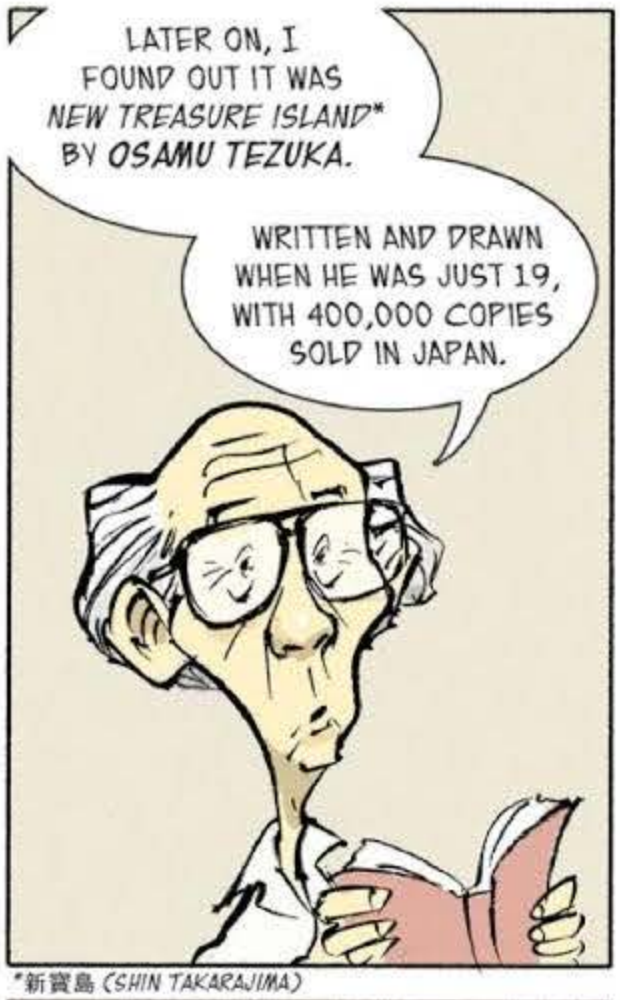
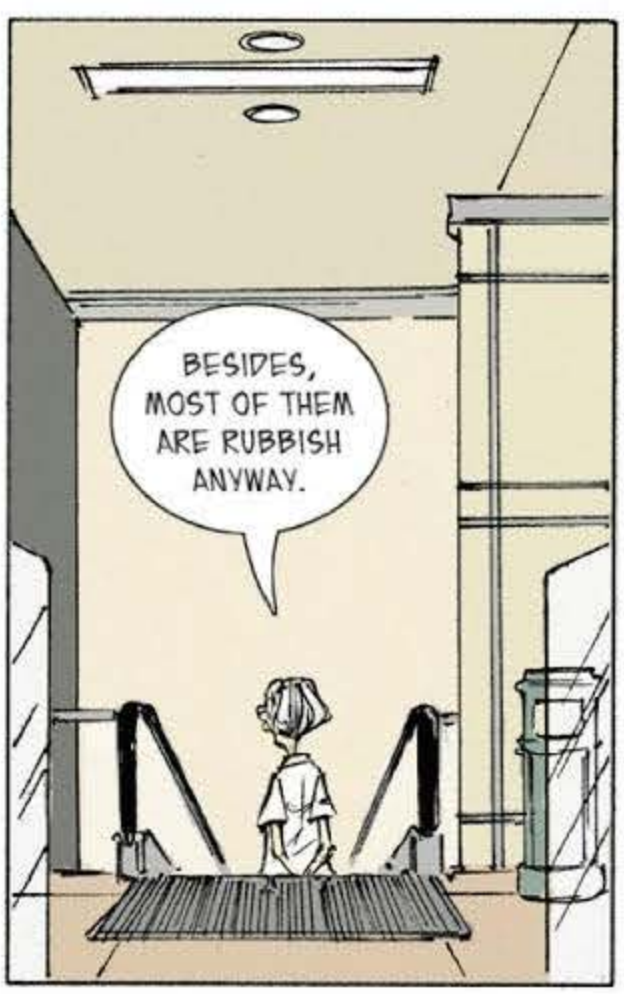


*新寶島 (SHIN TAKARAJIMA)



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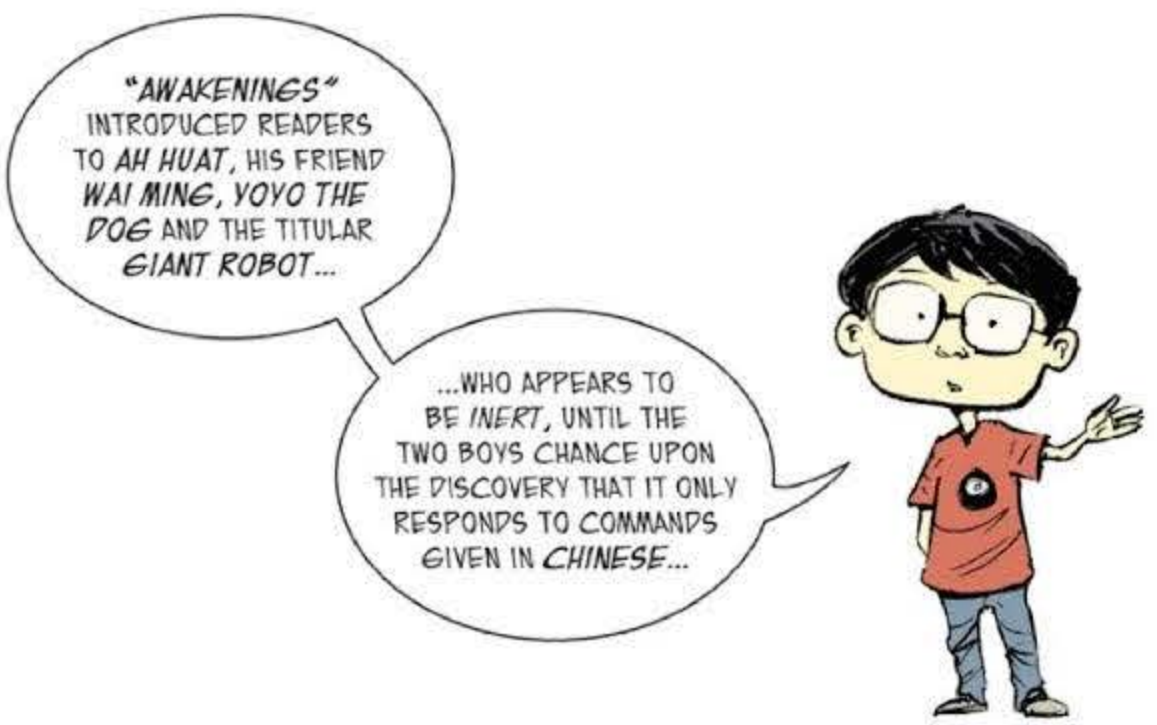
AH HUAT'S
GIANT ROBOT
陳福財作

Above
AH HUAT'S GIANT ROBOT Vol. 1
1956
Chan Hock Chye
Stones Throw Press

Opposite
AH HUAT'S GIANT ROBOT: AWAKENINGS
1954
Chan Hock Chye
Tiger Press

Ah Huat's Giant Robot: Awakenings was Chan's first published work. Written and drawn when he was 16, the 34-page comic first appeared as an extract in *Qian Jin* (*"Forward!"*) magazine, before being printed in its entirety as *Ah Huat's Giant Robot Vol. 1* by Stones Throw Press.



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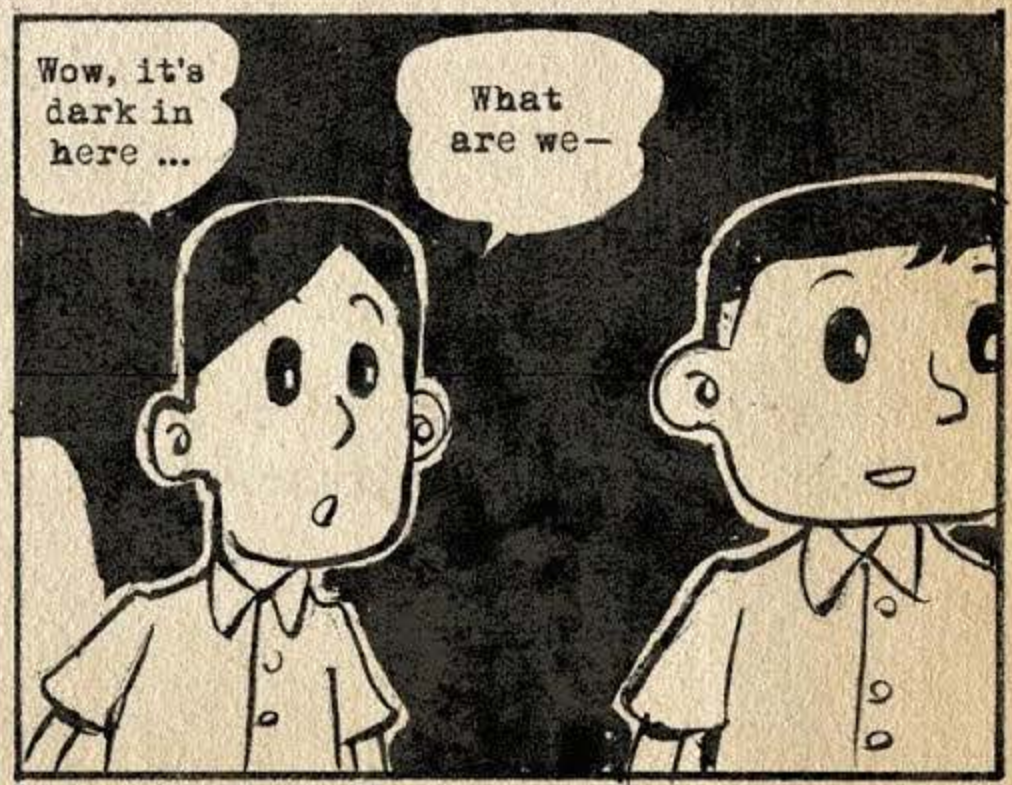

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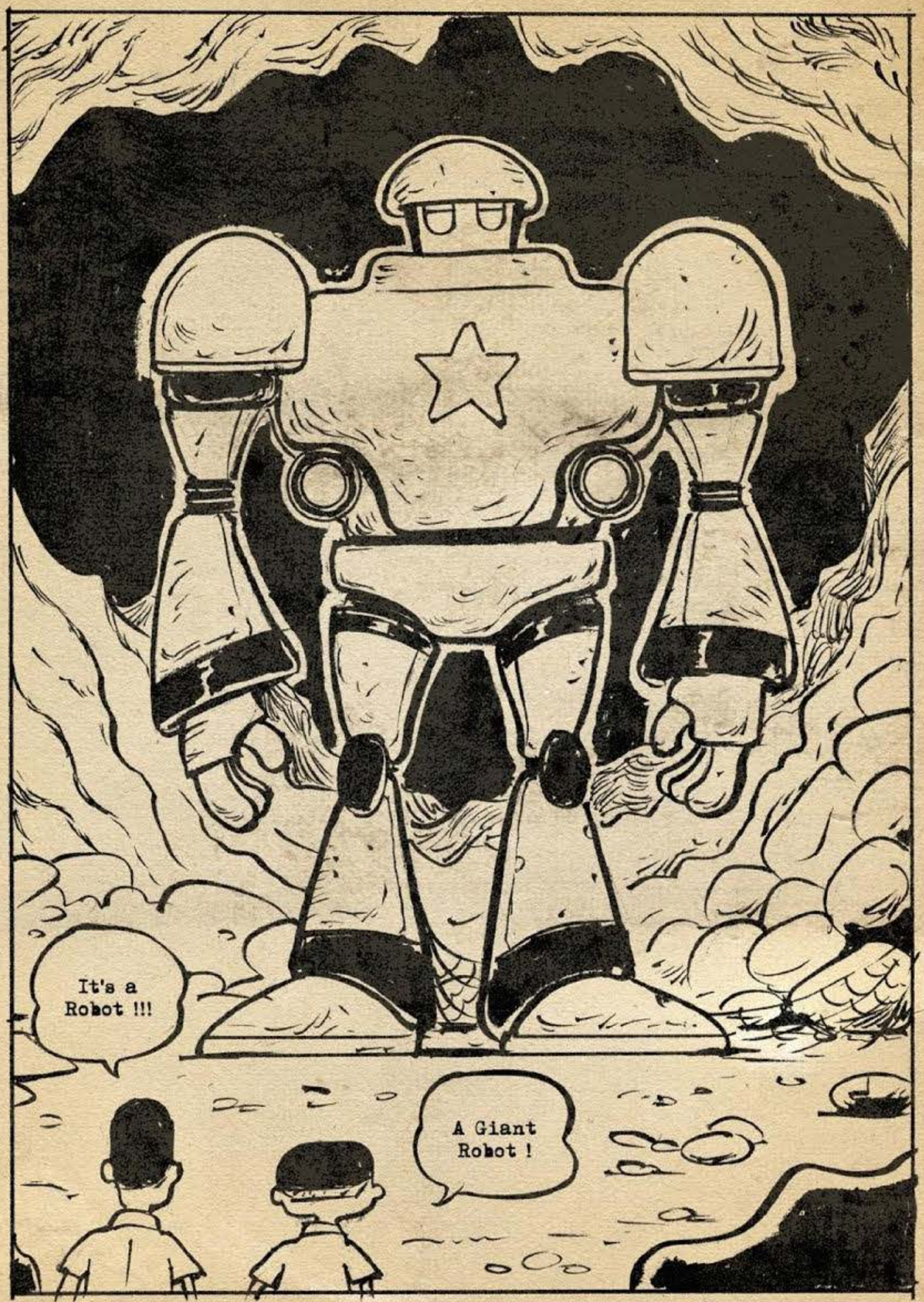

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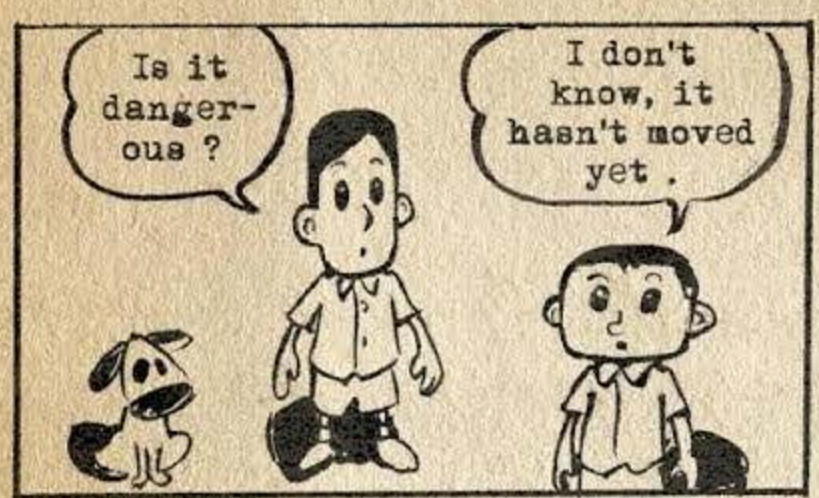

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Chapter One

FIGHTING SPIDERS, LONGKANG FISH

童真年代

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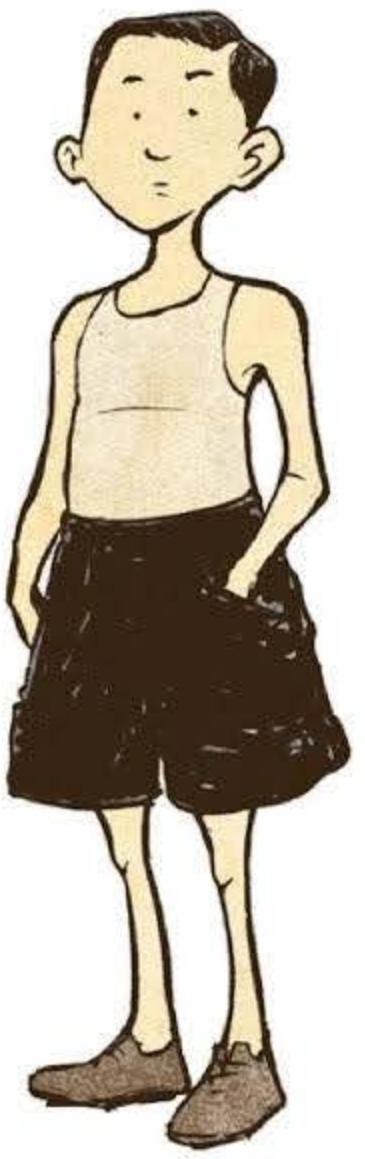
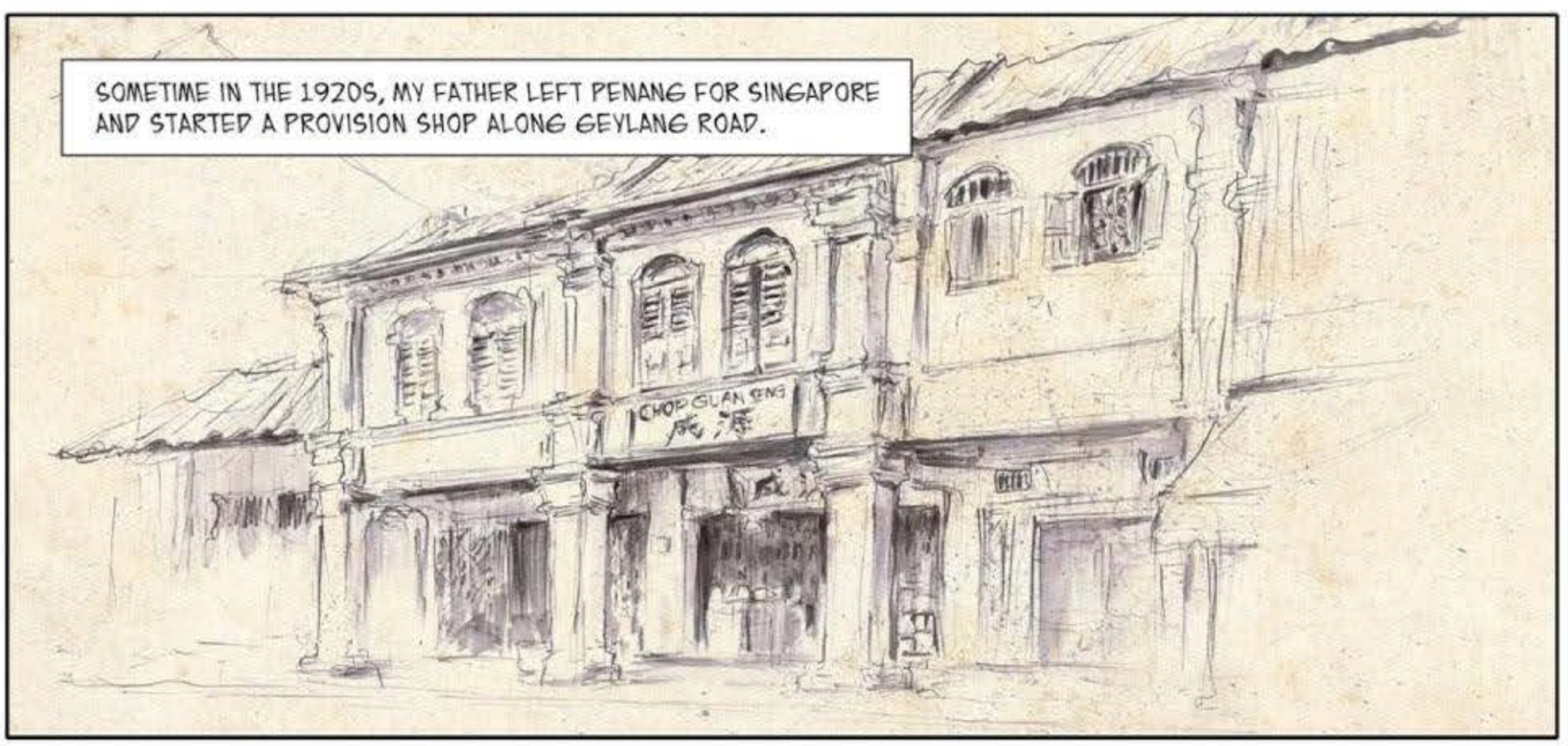


Charlie Chan Hock Chye, aged 10, 1948



GEYLANG PROVISION SHOP (1987) | Chan Hock Chye | Ink and wash on paper | Drawn from memory and photographs

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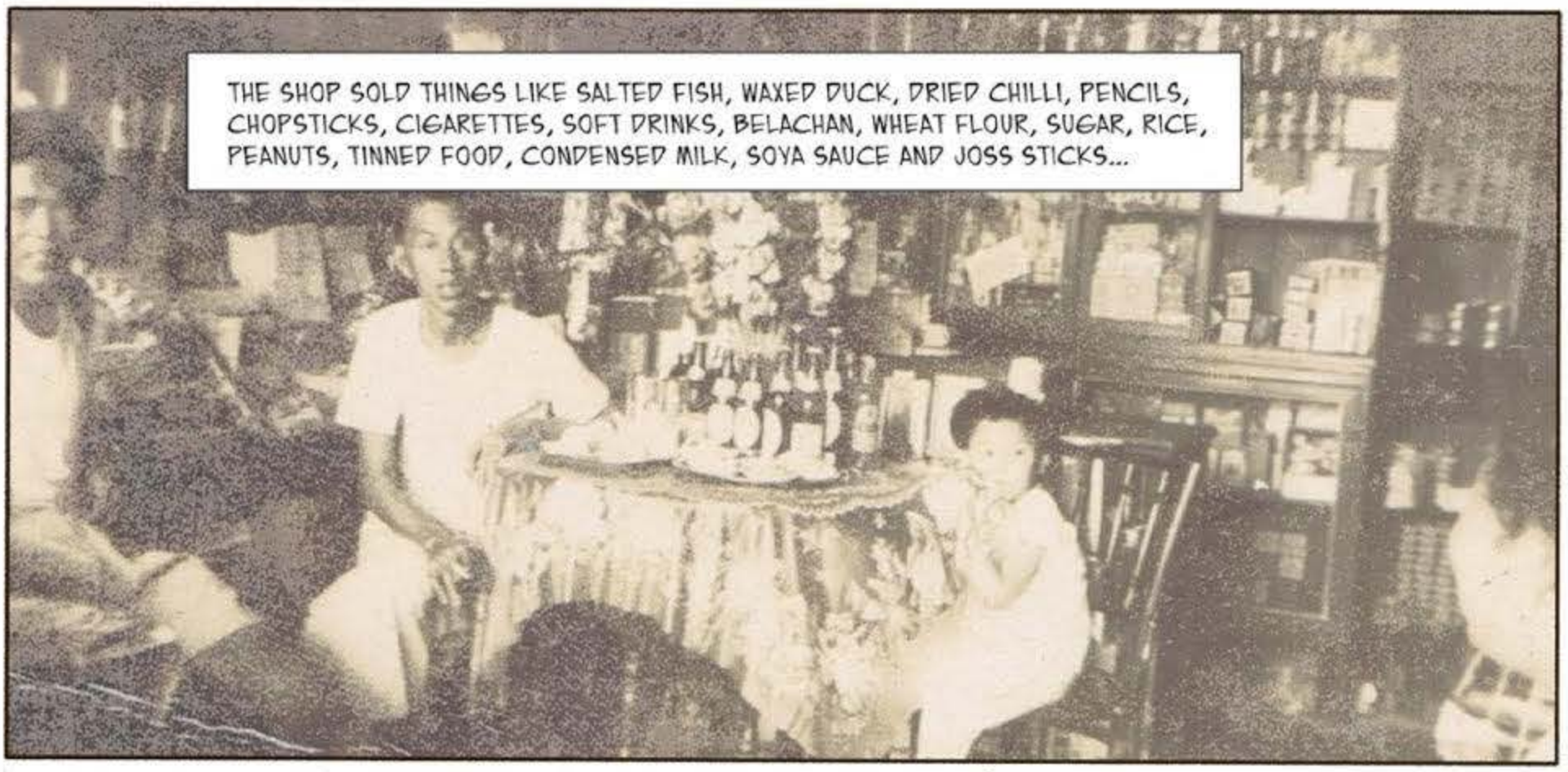

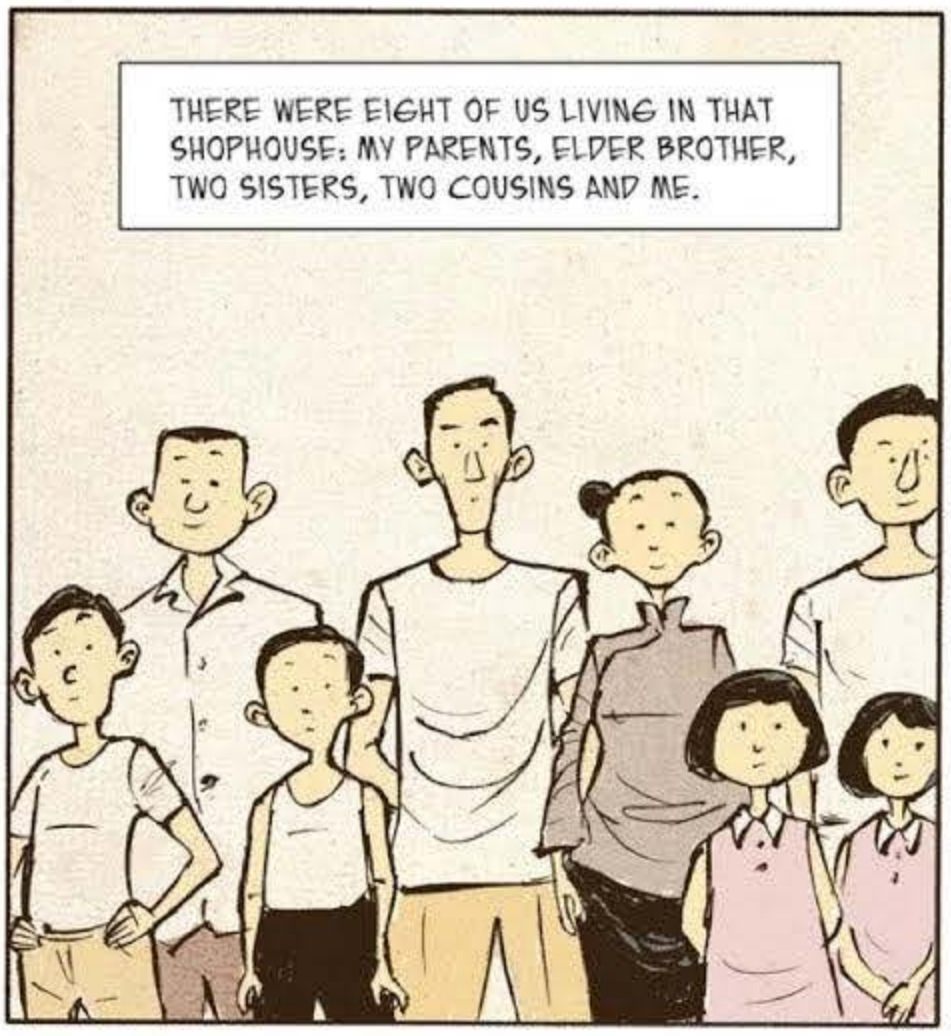

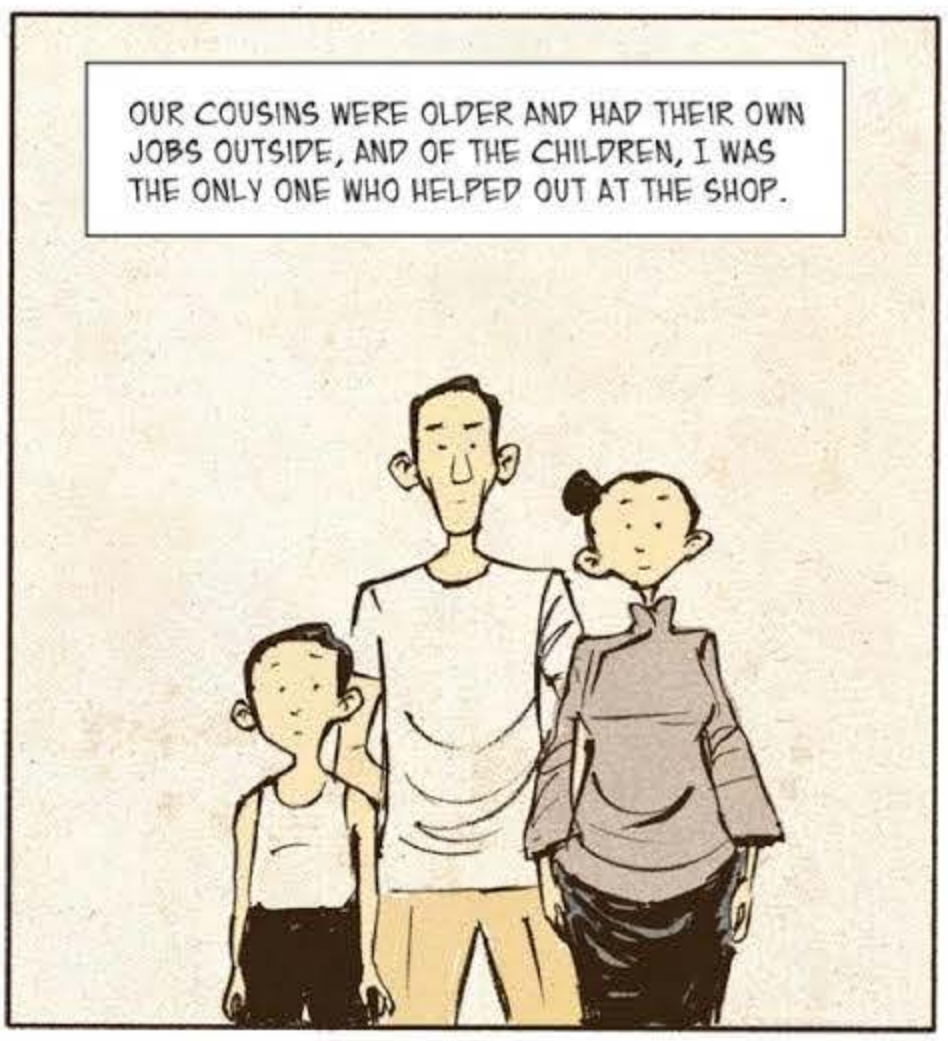

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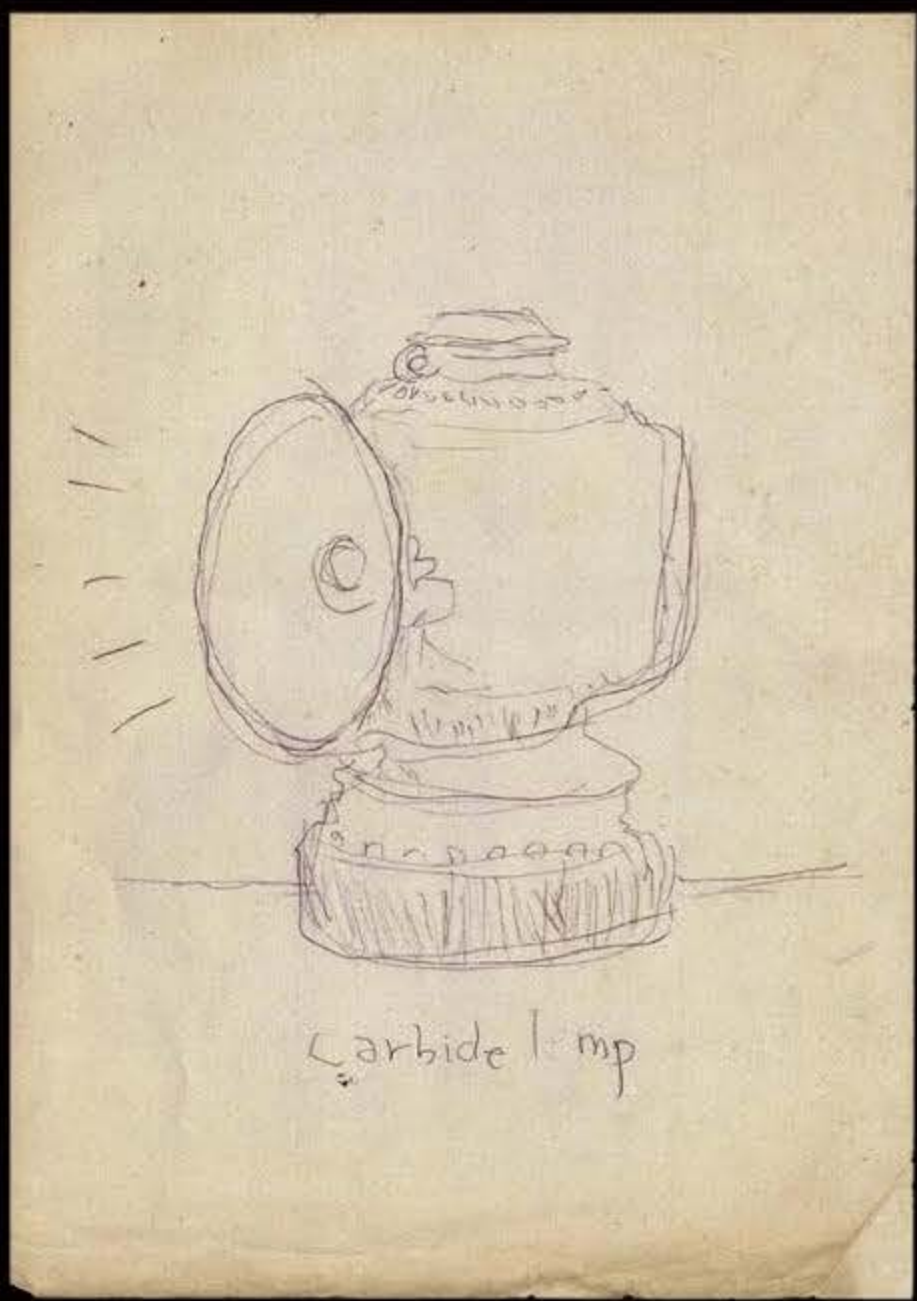
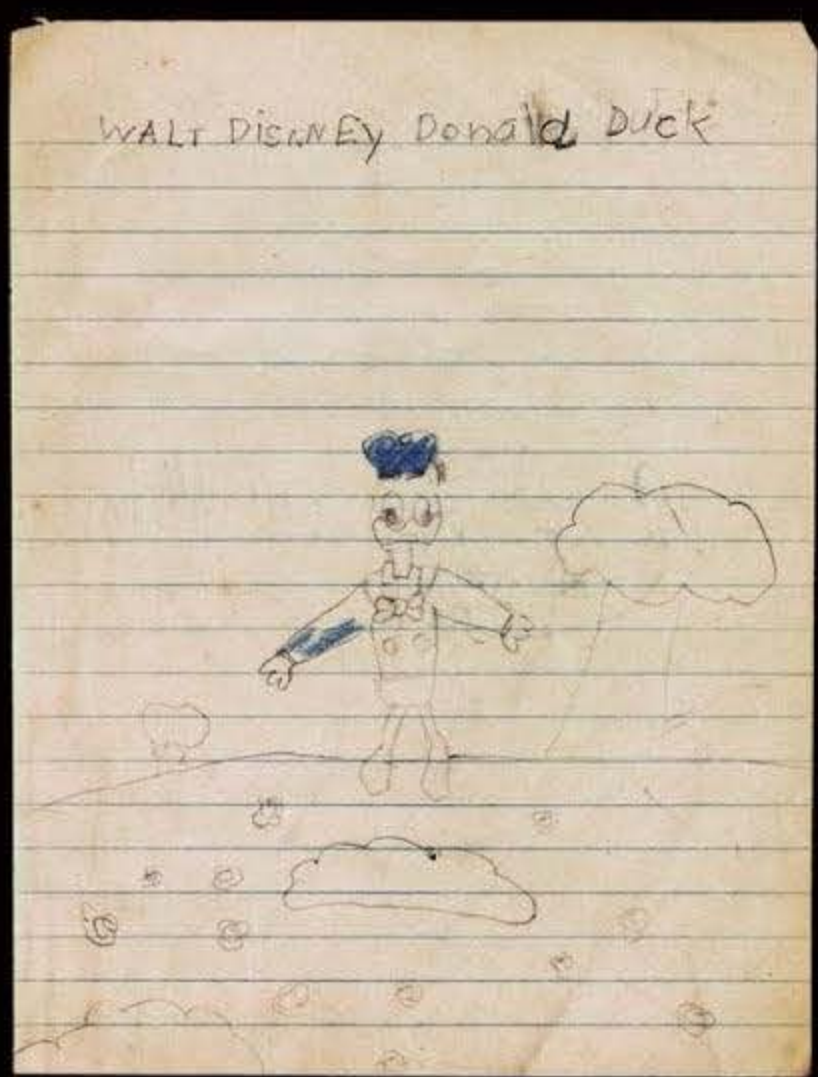




Top left
CARBIDE LAMP
1947

Bottom left
WALT "DISNNEY" DONALD DUCK
1944

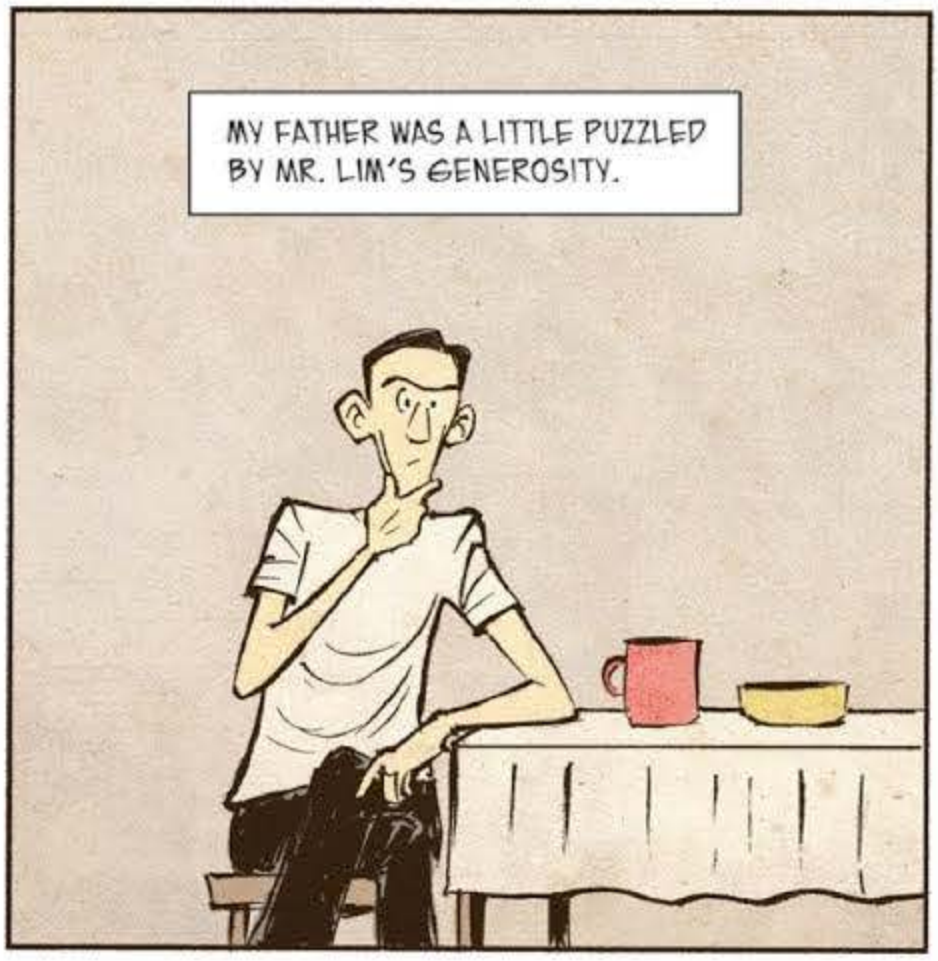
Top right
GREATER FAR EASTERN CO-PROSPERITY SPHERE
1945
Copied from a Japanese propaganda magazine

Bottom right
MY SISTERS
1949

Top left
FIGHTING SPIDERS, LONGKANG FISH
1944

Top right
SUPER DUCK VS. F&N LION
1948

Bottom right
GREAT WORLD AMUSEMENT PARK
1949
Copied from postcard



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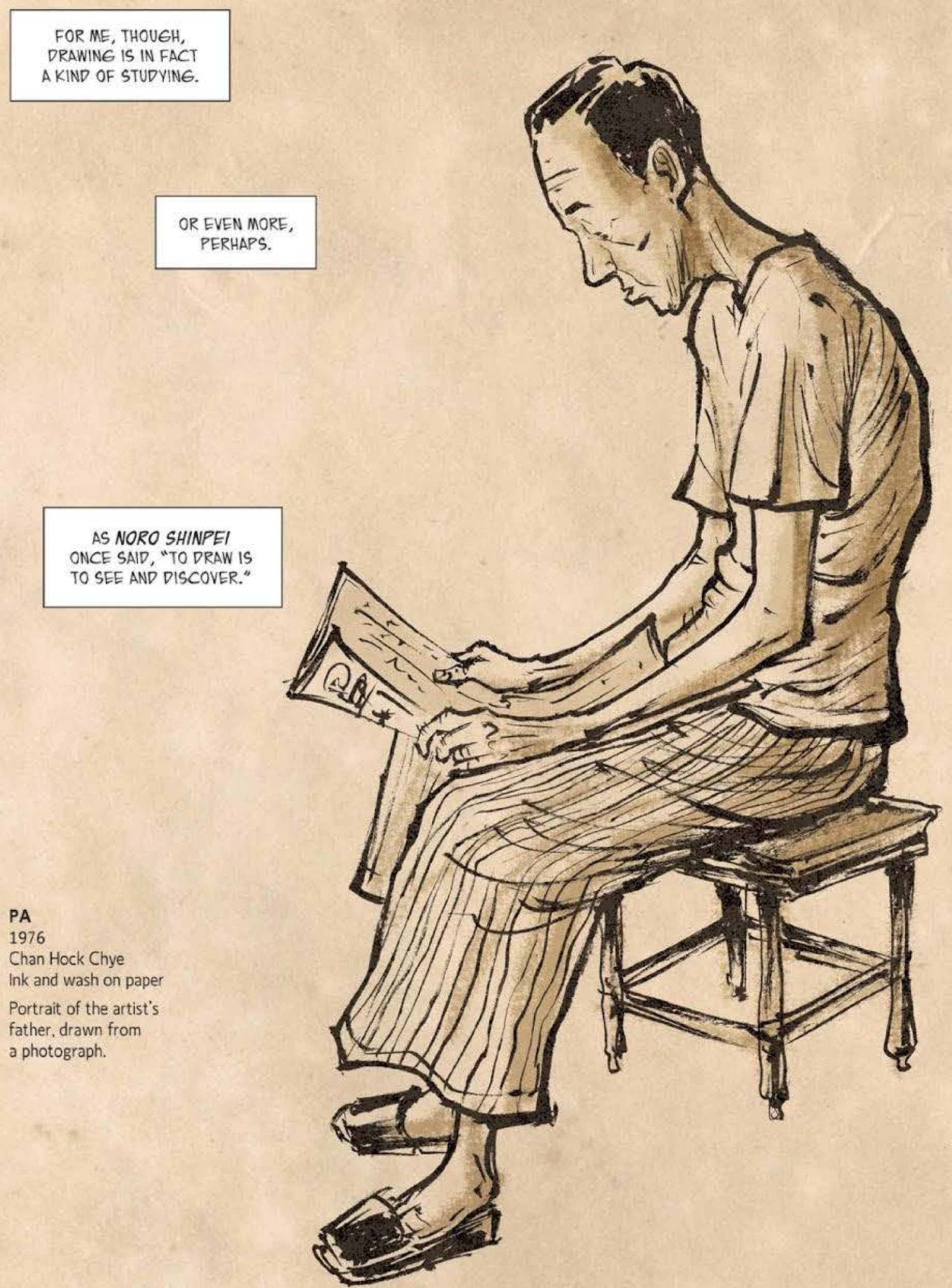

PA
1976
Chan Hock Chye
Ink and wash on paper

Portrait of the artist's father, drawn from a photograph.

"To draw is to see and discover. Every time you draw, you discover something new."

— Noro Shinpei, Japanese manga artist (1915–2002)

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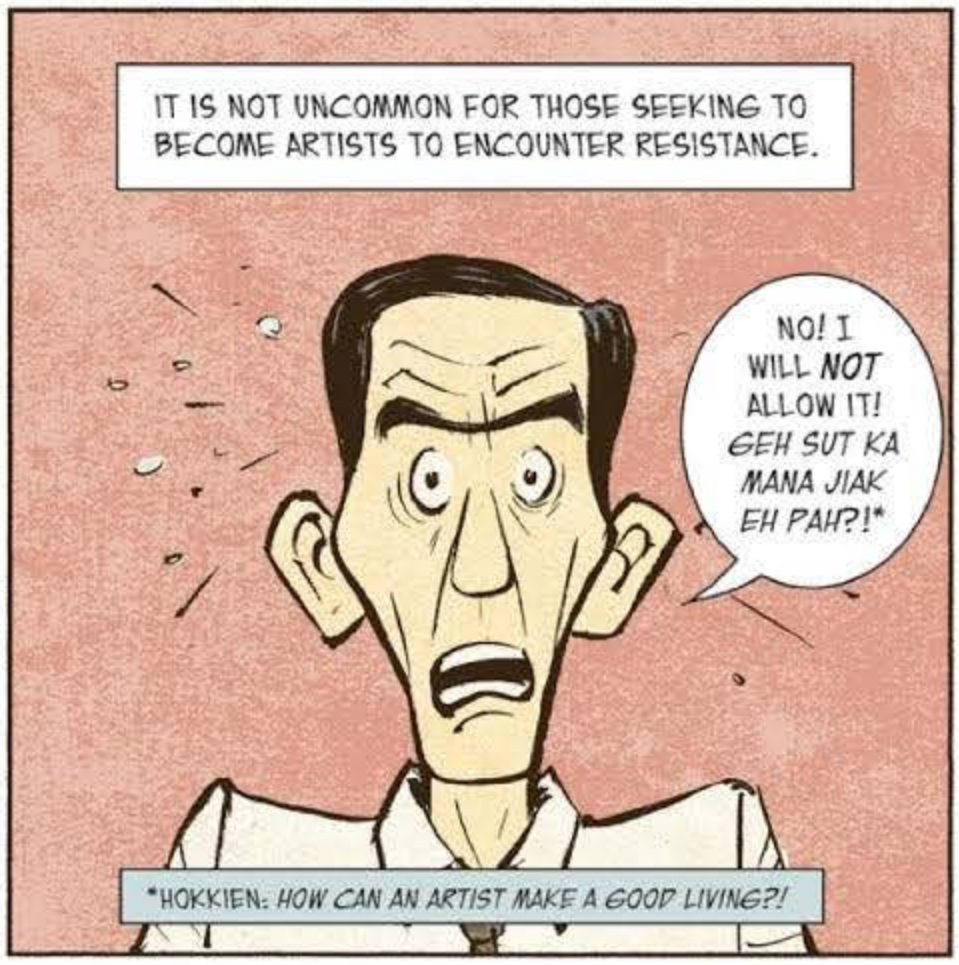

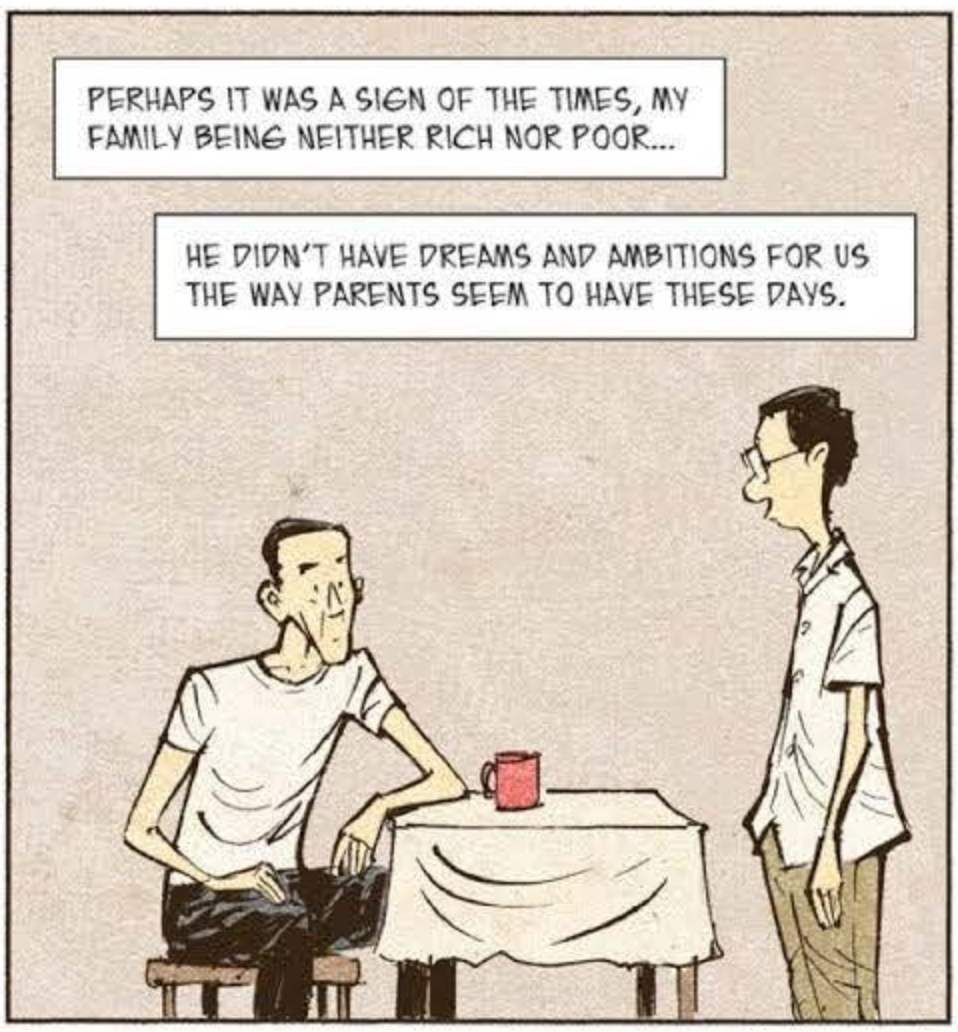

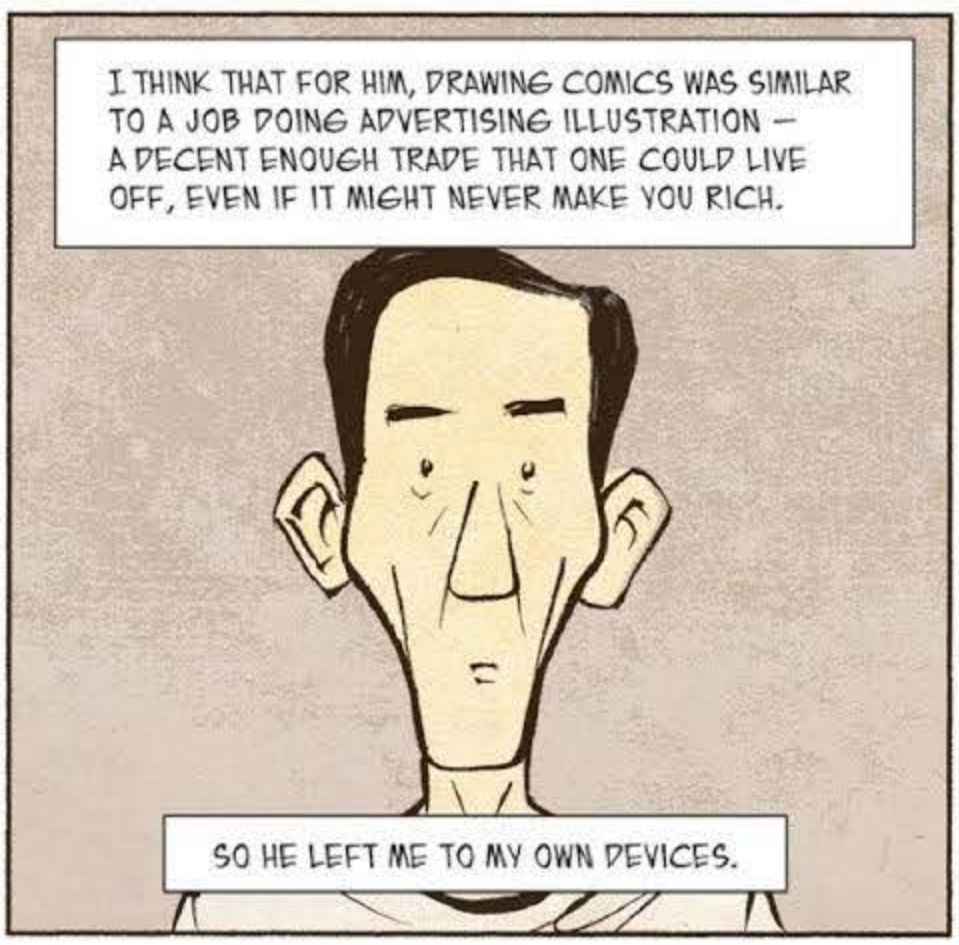

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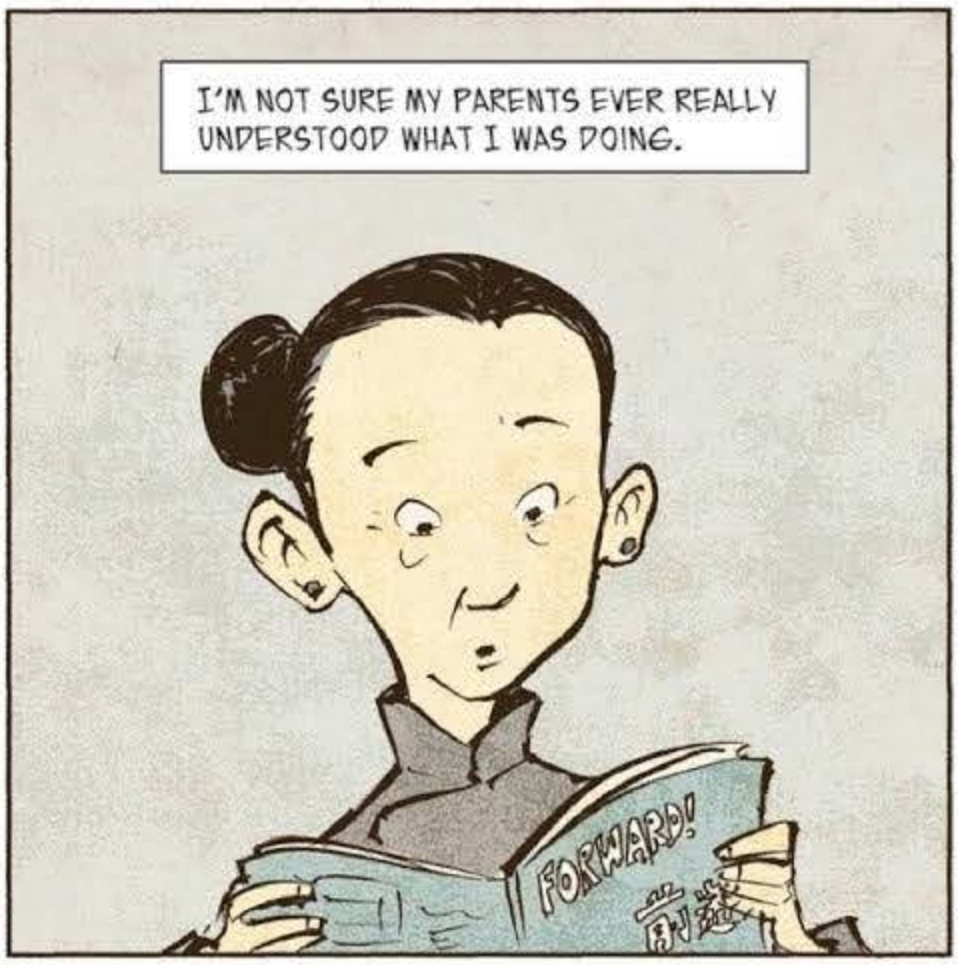

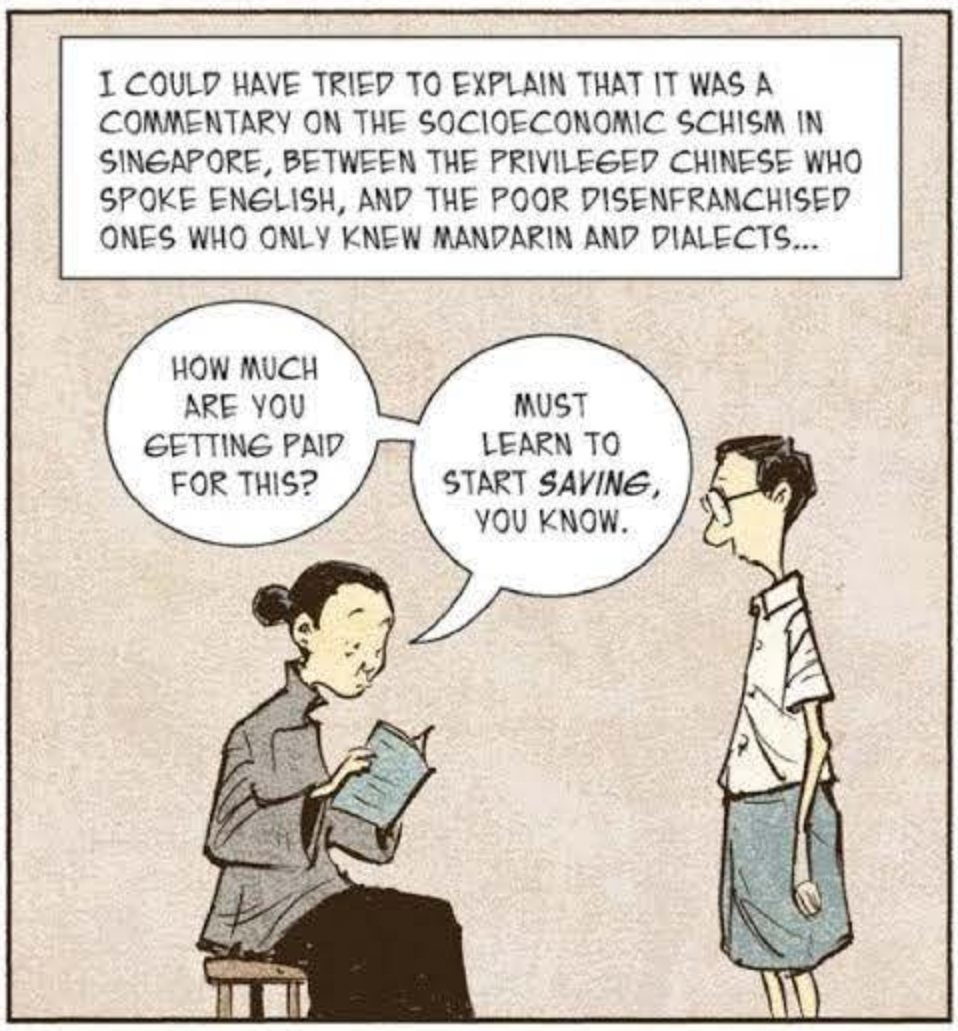

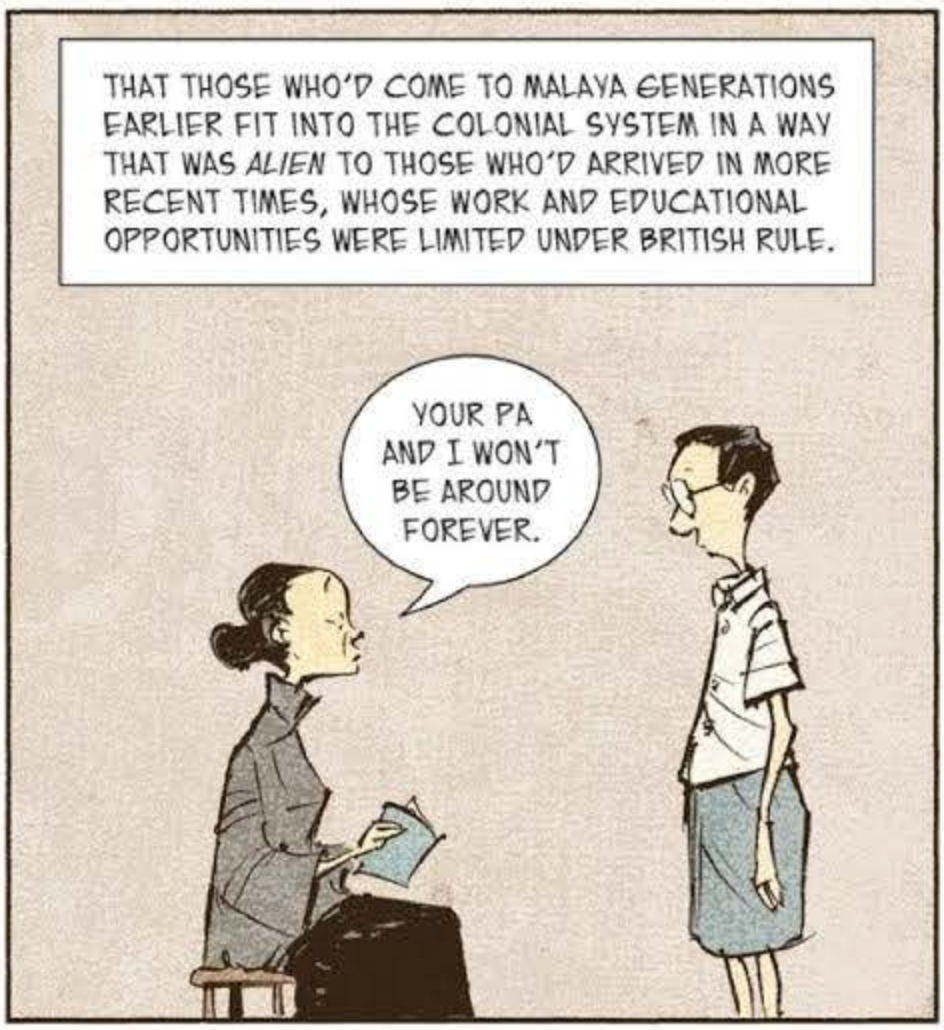

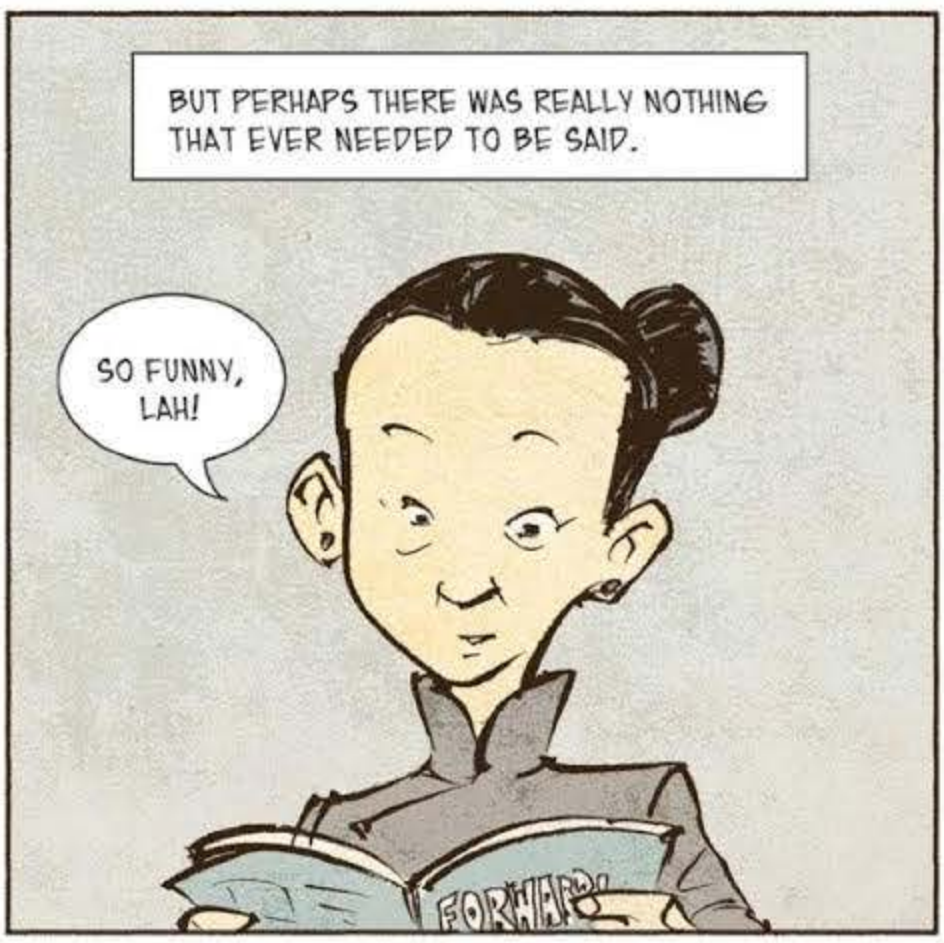

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Above
MA
1983
Chan Hock Chye
Oil on canvas

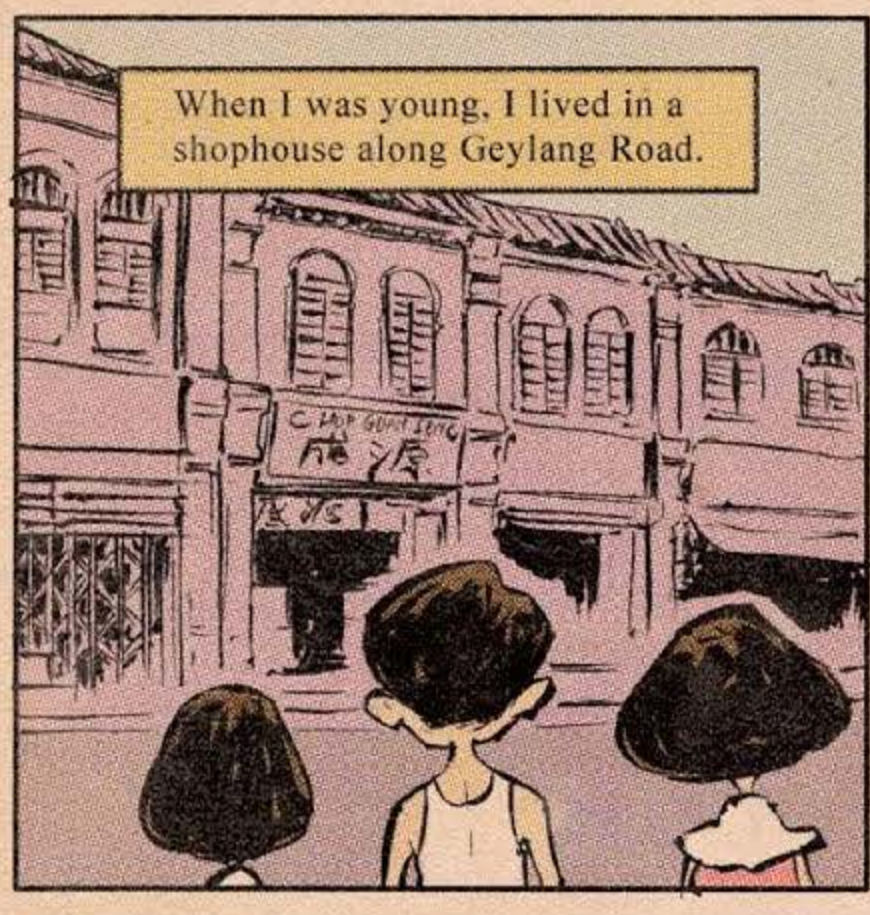
Portrait of the artist's mother as a young woman, painted from a photograph.

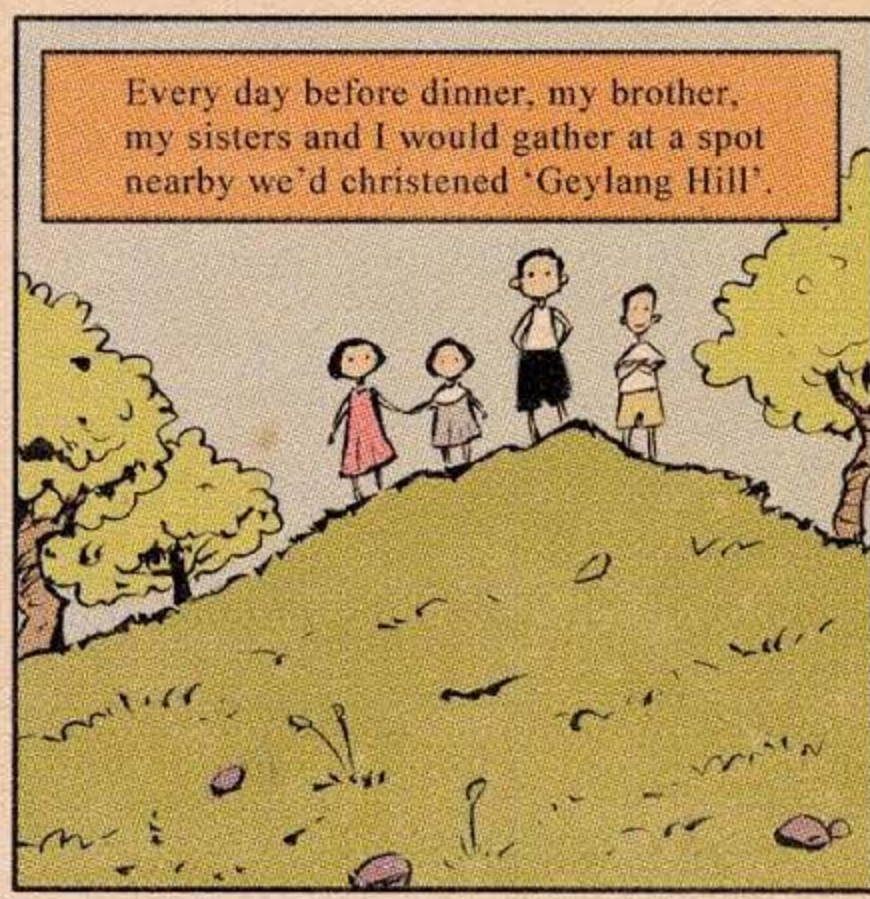
Opposite & following
GEYLANG HILL
1986
Chan Hock Chye
Self-pubished

From a chapbook collection of Chan's short stories.

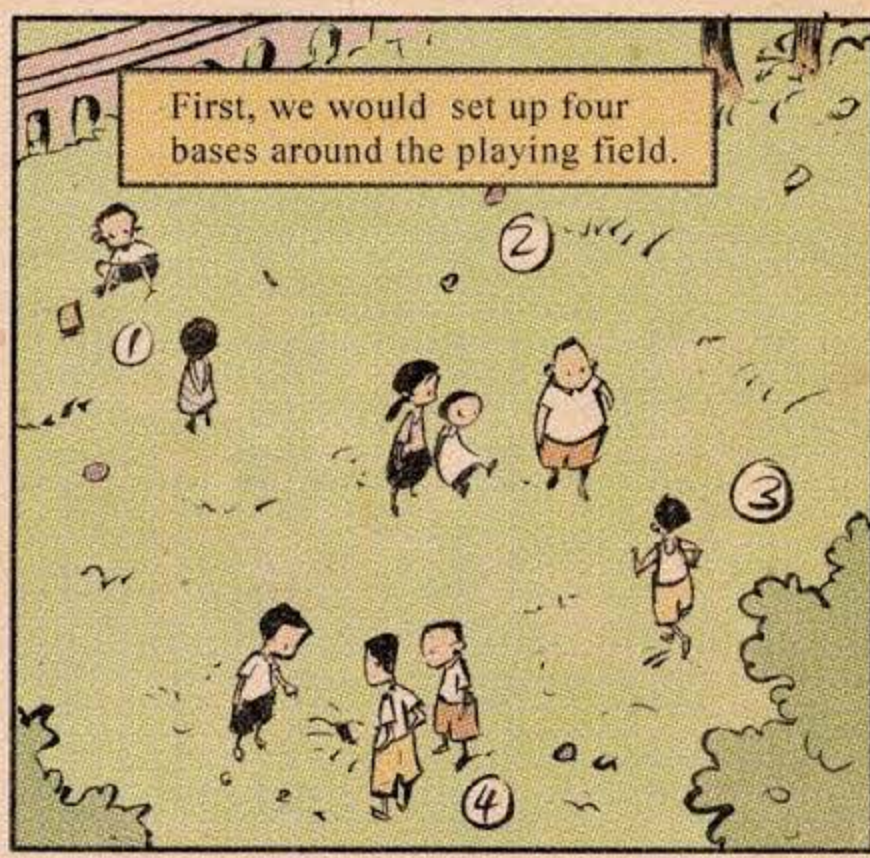
GEYLANG HILL 芽籠山

BY CHAN HOCK CHYE





My sisters would usually play with marbles, whilst my brother and I played a game called "Ta Guan" with the other boys from the neighbourhood.



Note: "Ta Guan" – Cantonese, literally meaning "Hitting Sticks"

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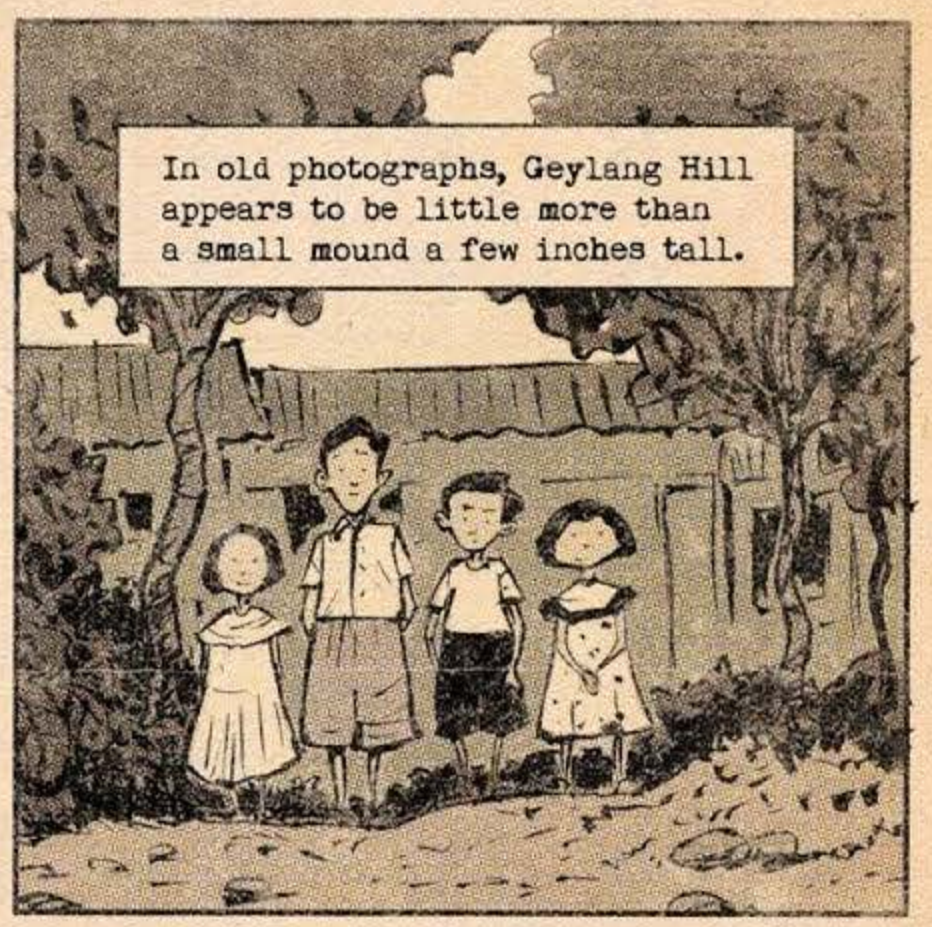

And if you went back to the place itself today

There would be no way of knowing

If it was a trick of the light

How things really were

In those days of being wild

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Chapter Two

CHARLIE JOINS THE REVOLUTION

置身革命

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Charlie Chan Hock Chye, aged 16, 1954

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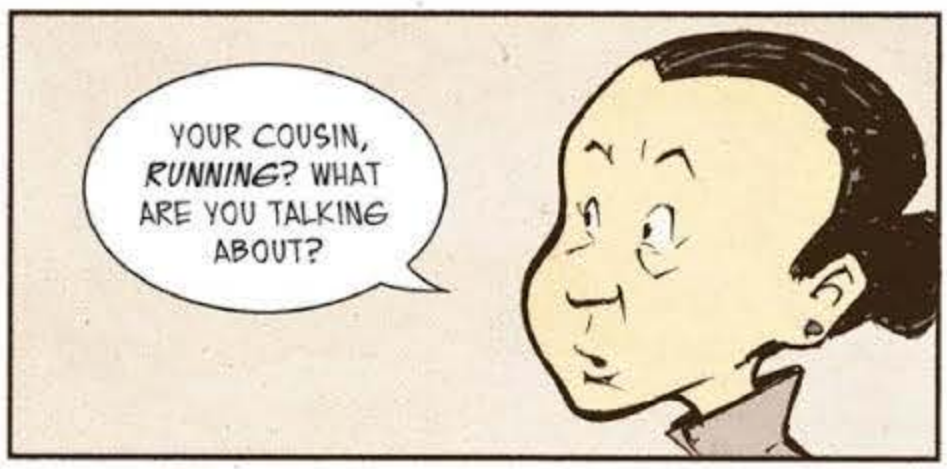

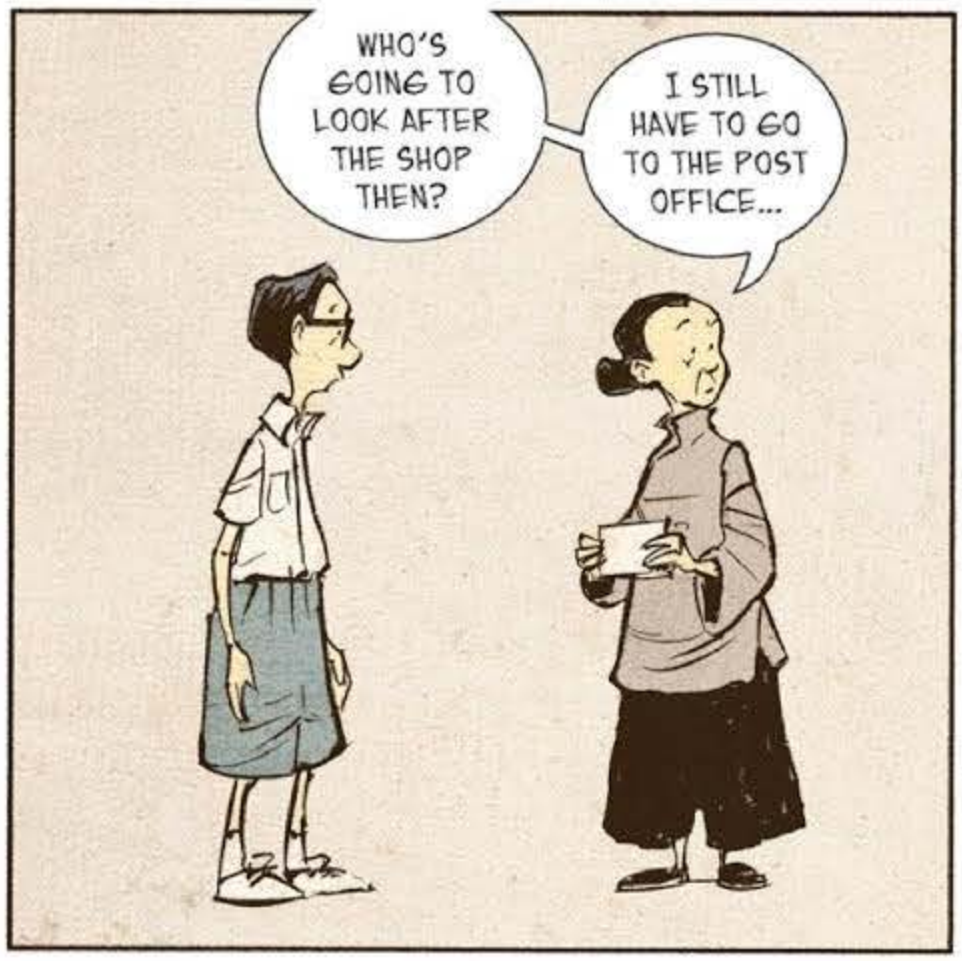

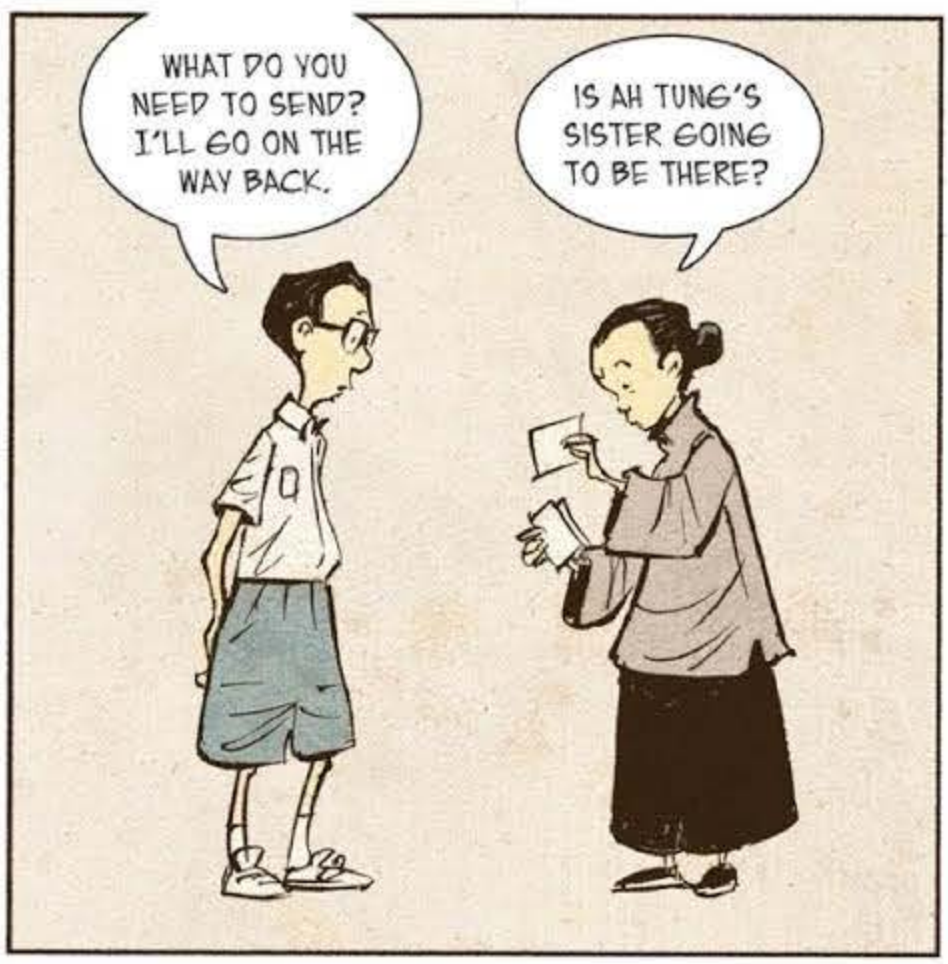

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Above & following **AH HUAT'S GIANT ROBOT Vol. 1** (1956) | Chan Hock Chye | Stones Throw Press

Partly based on Chan's own experience of the May 13 incident of 1954, the comic depicts the actions taken by the police against students who had gathered at King George V Park (renamed Fort Canning Park in 1981) as an unprovoked attack.

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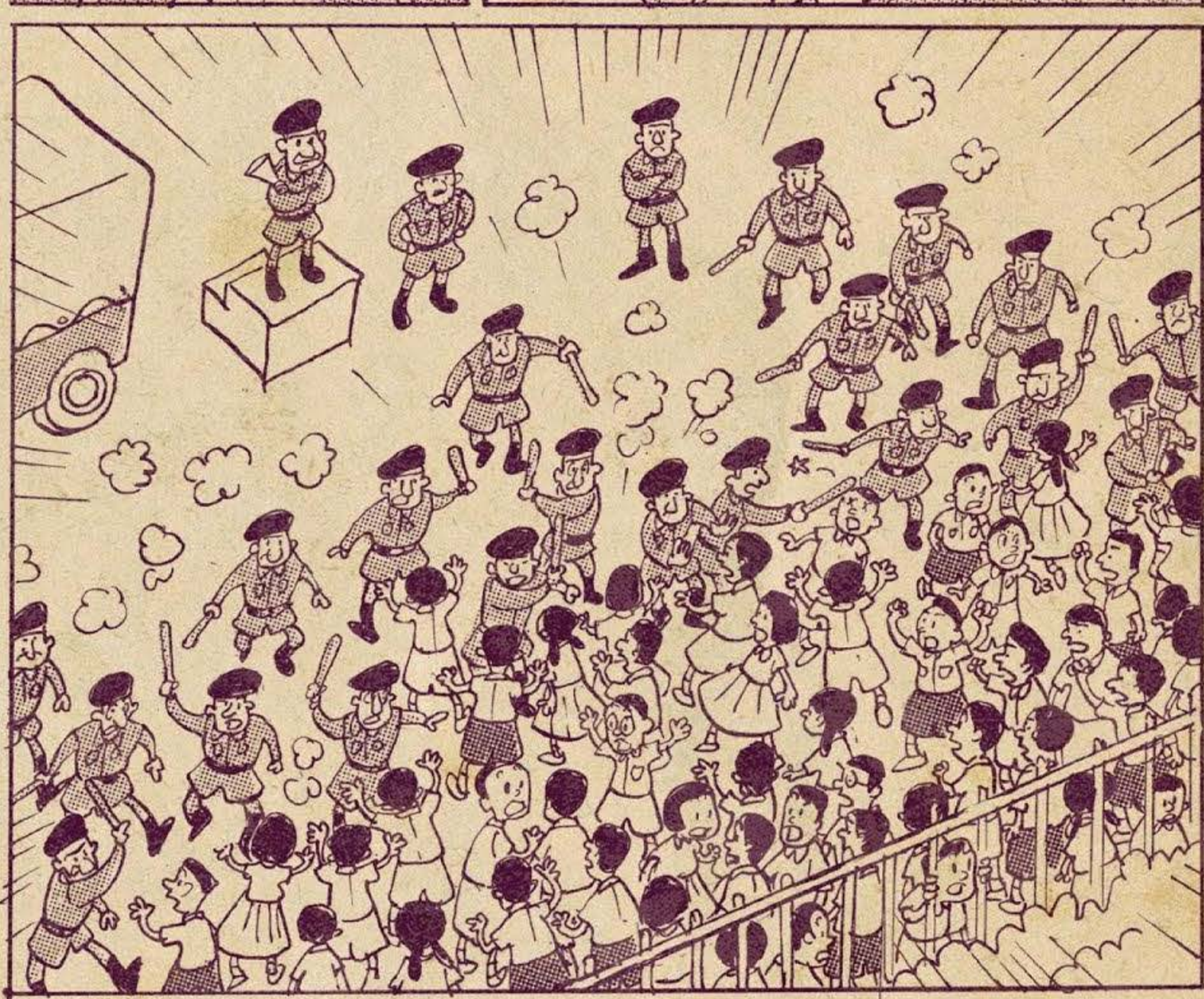

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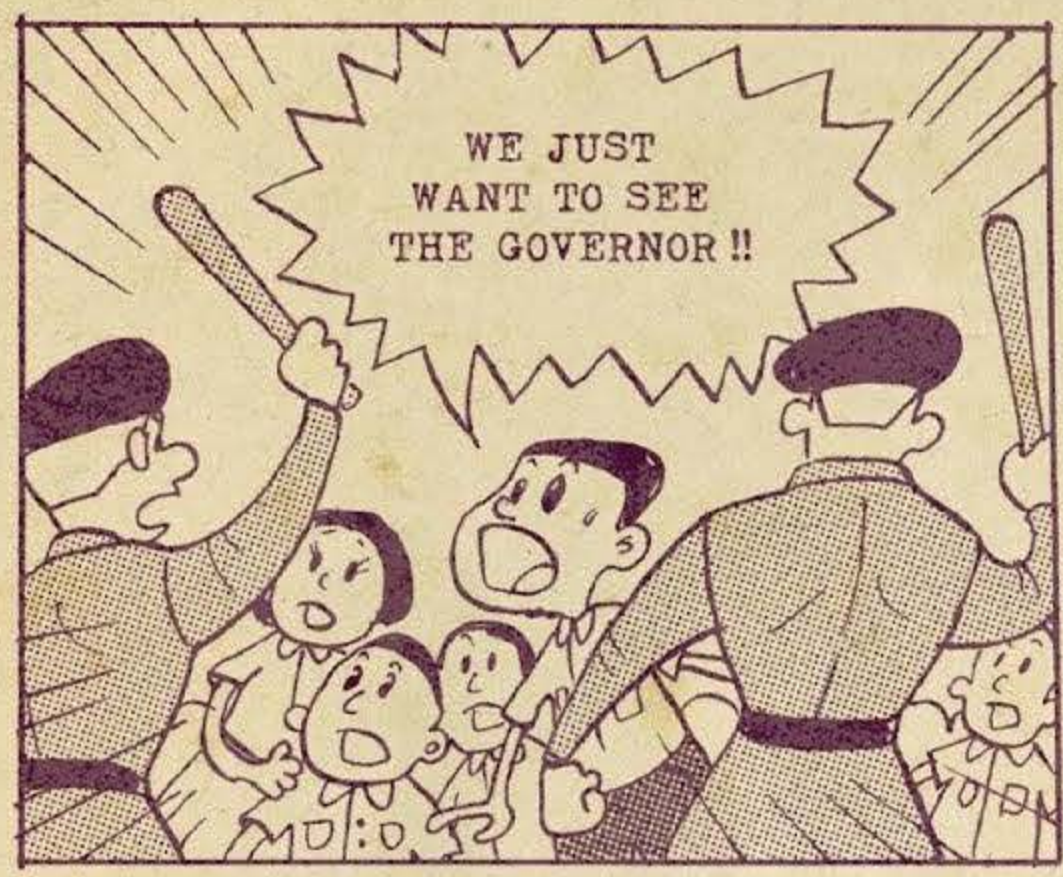

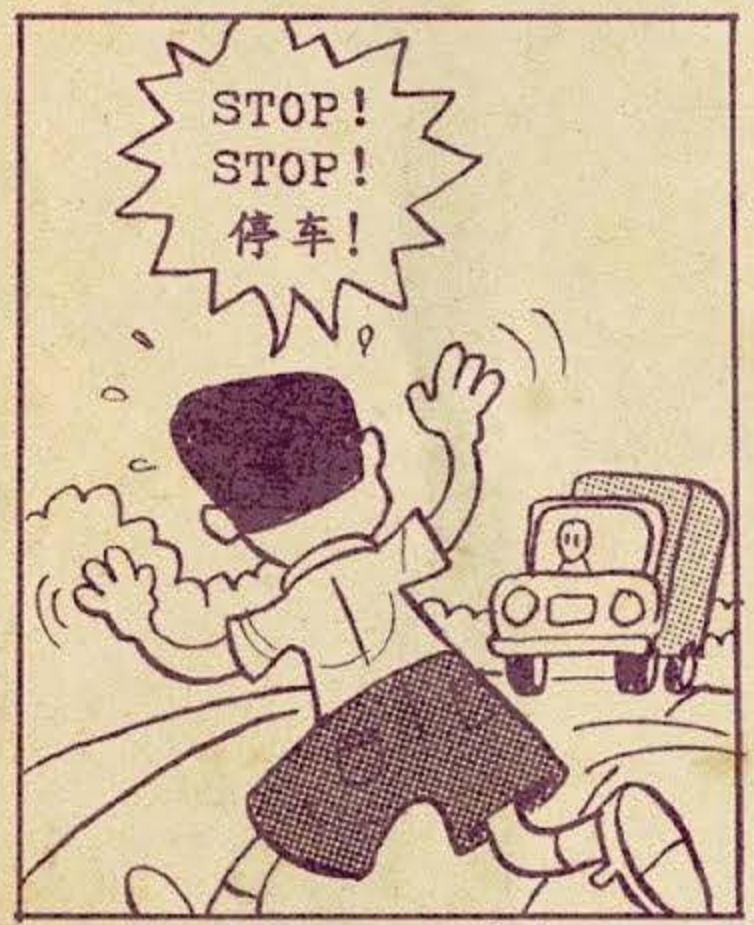

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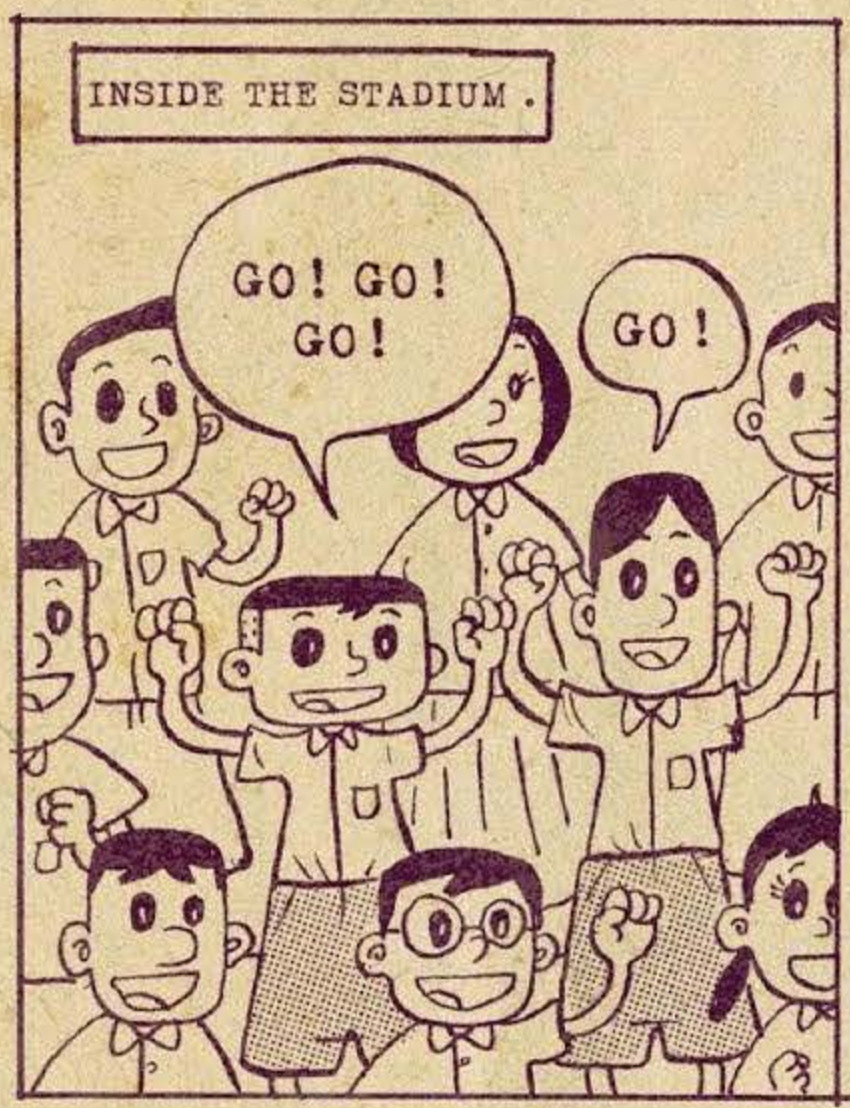

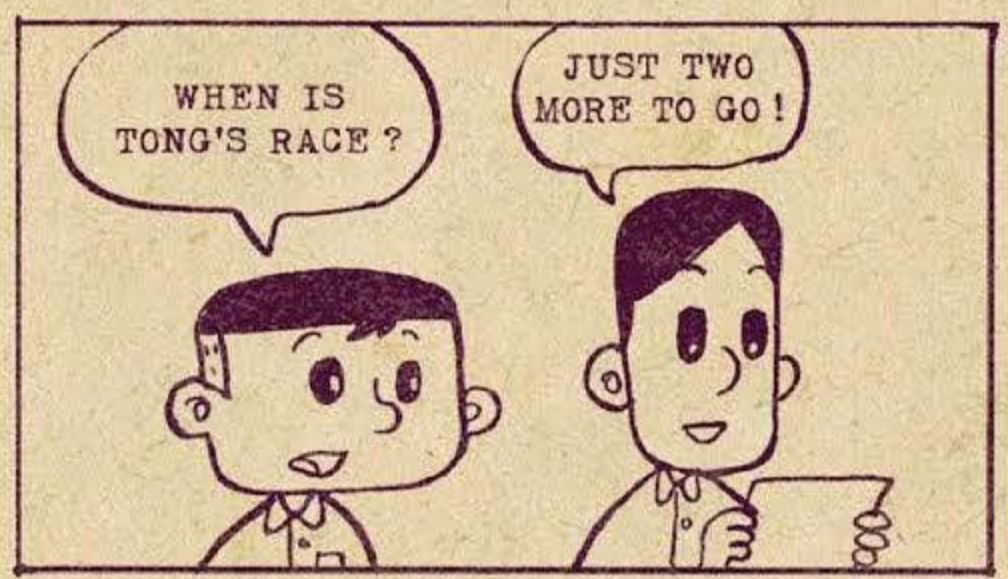

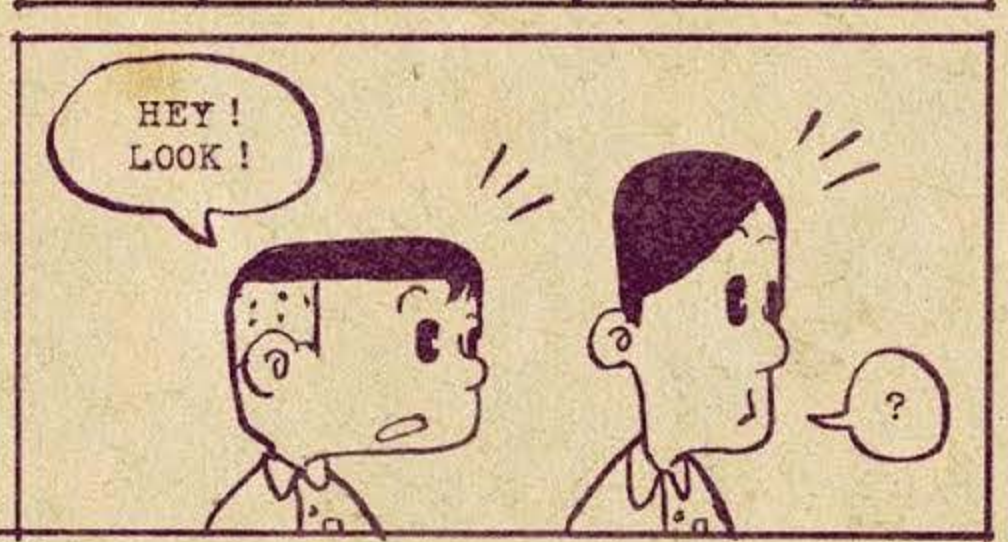

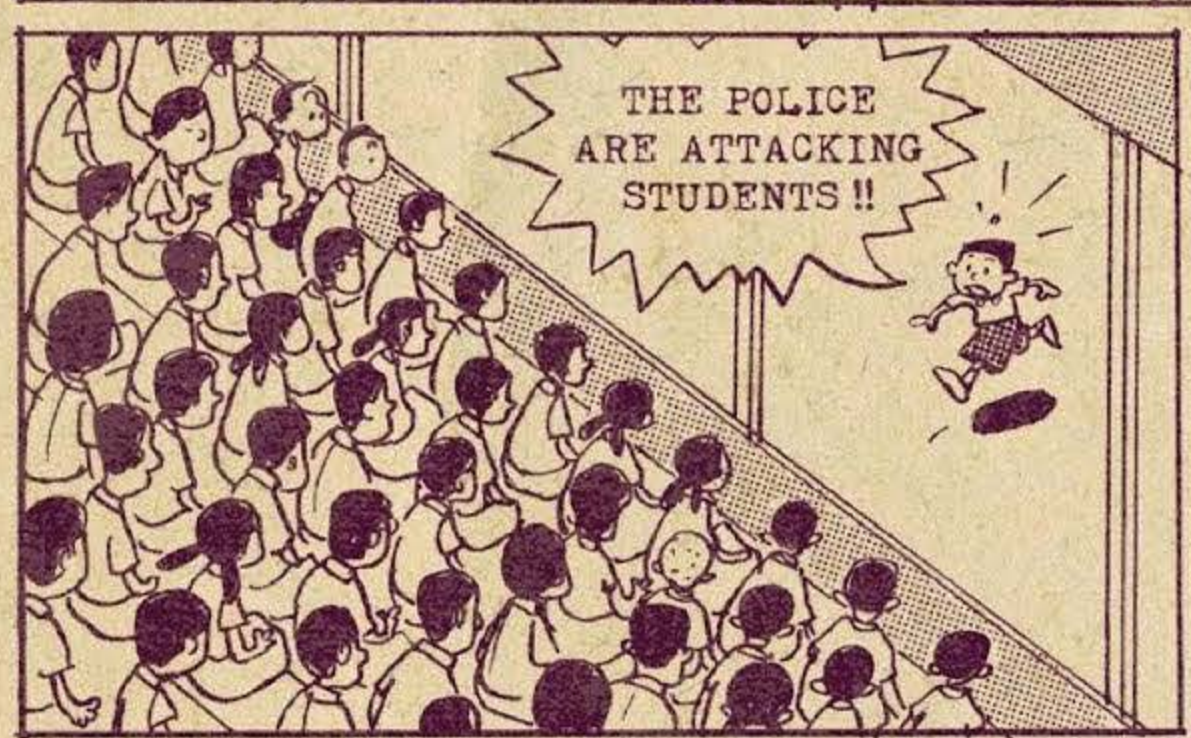

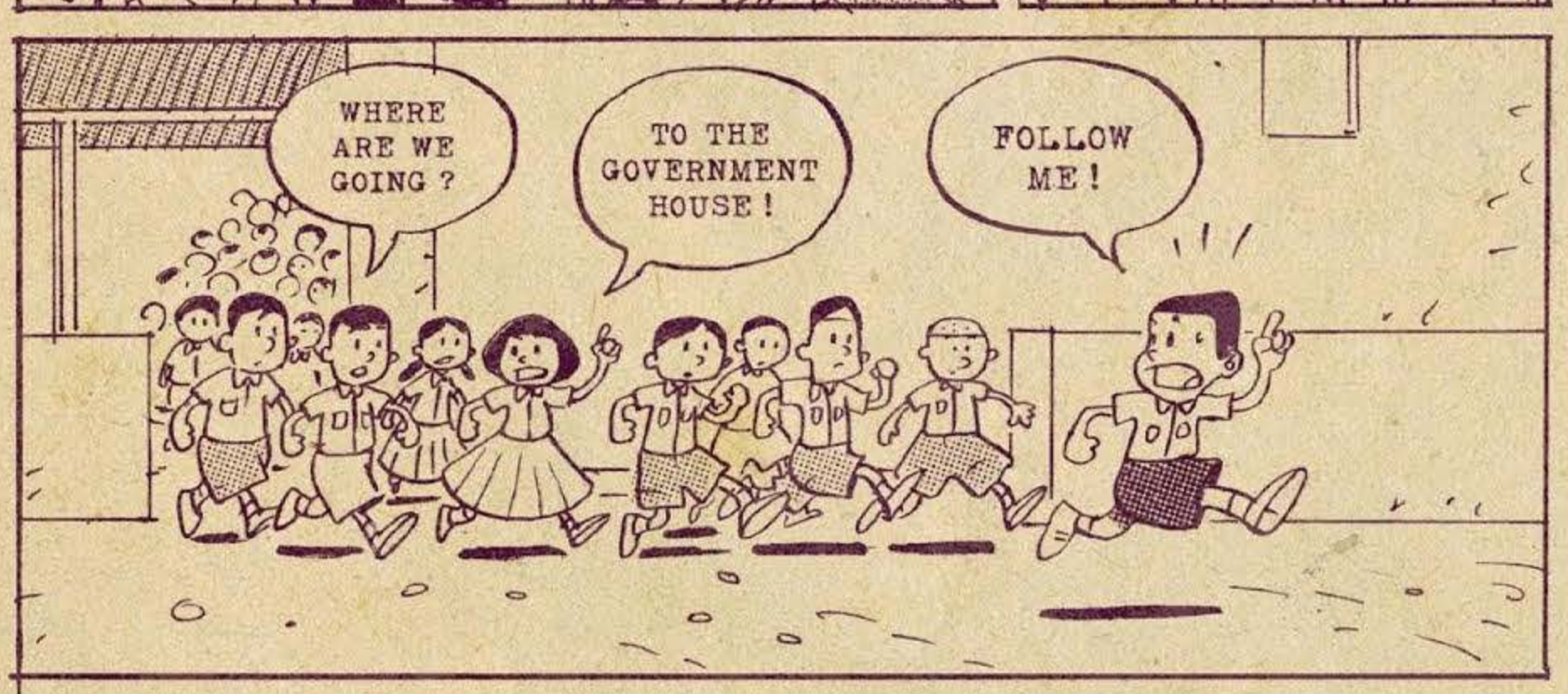

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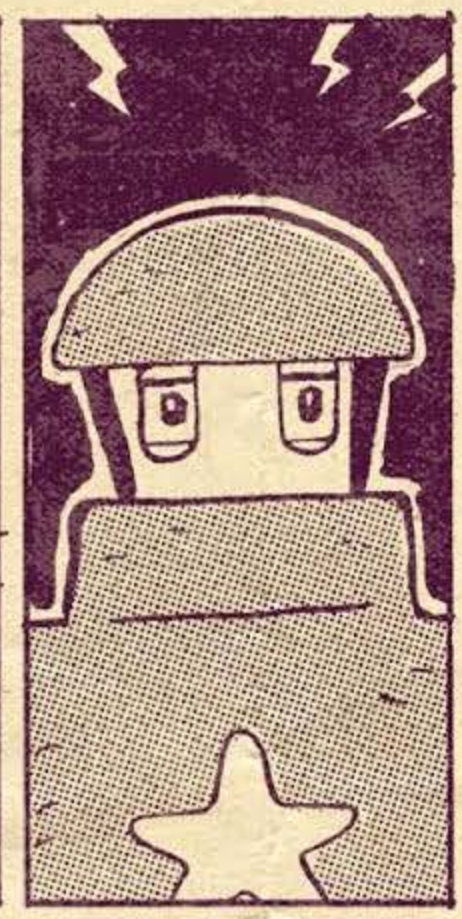

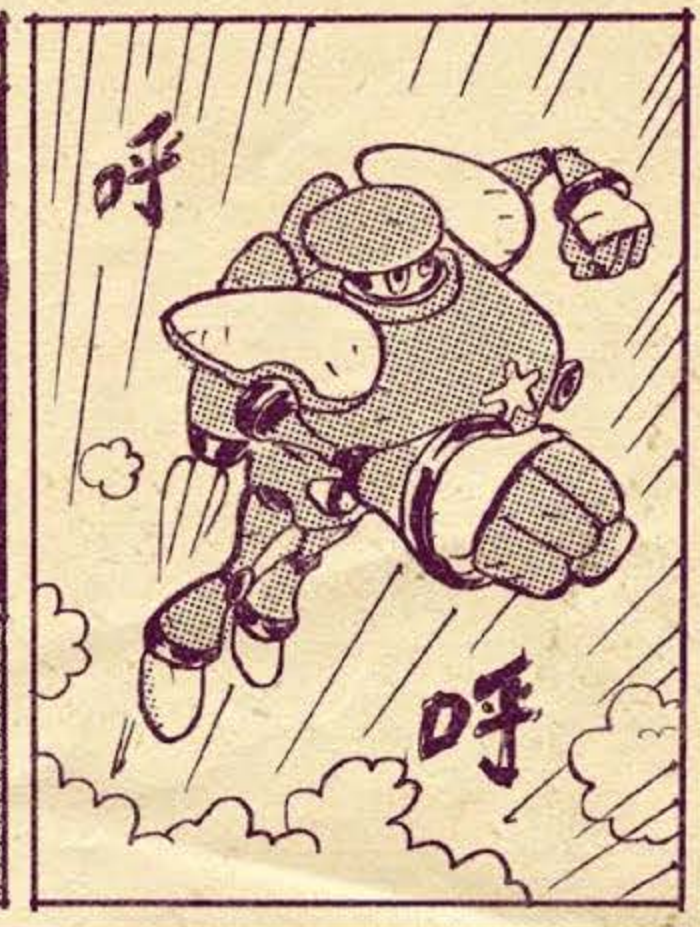

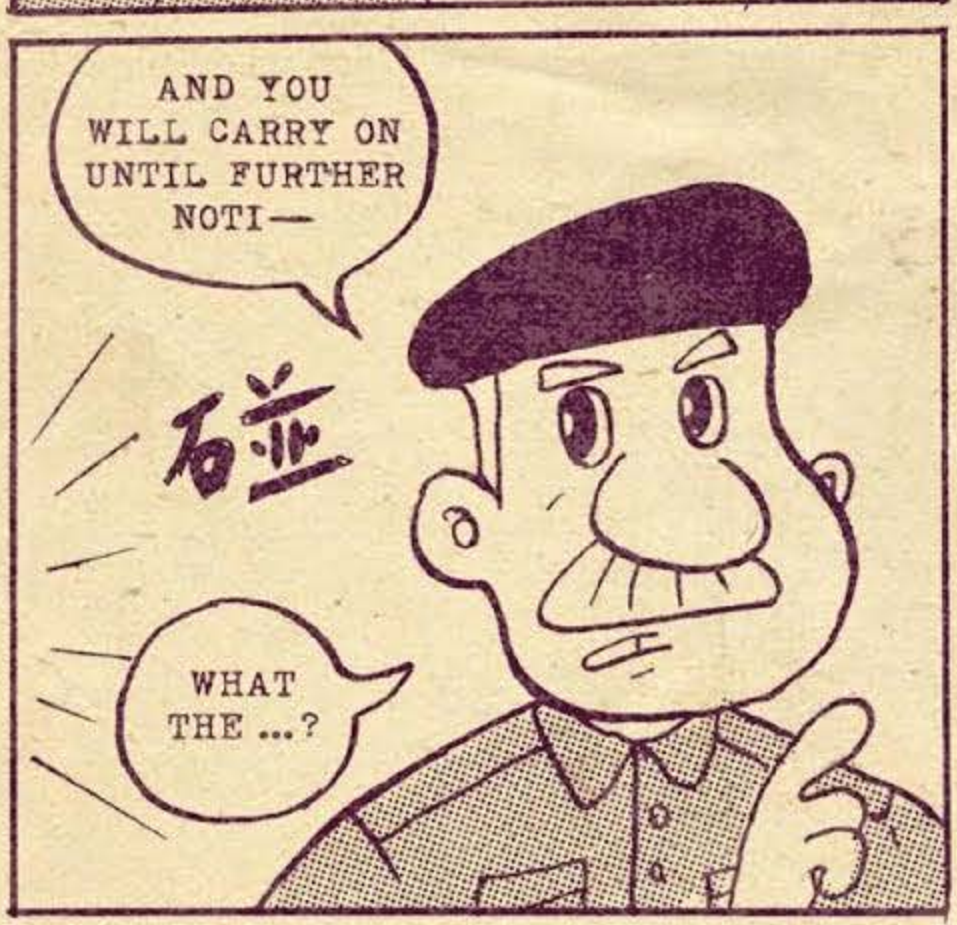

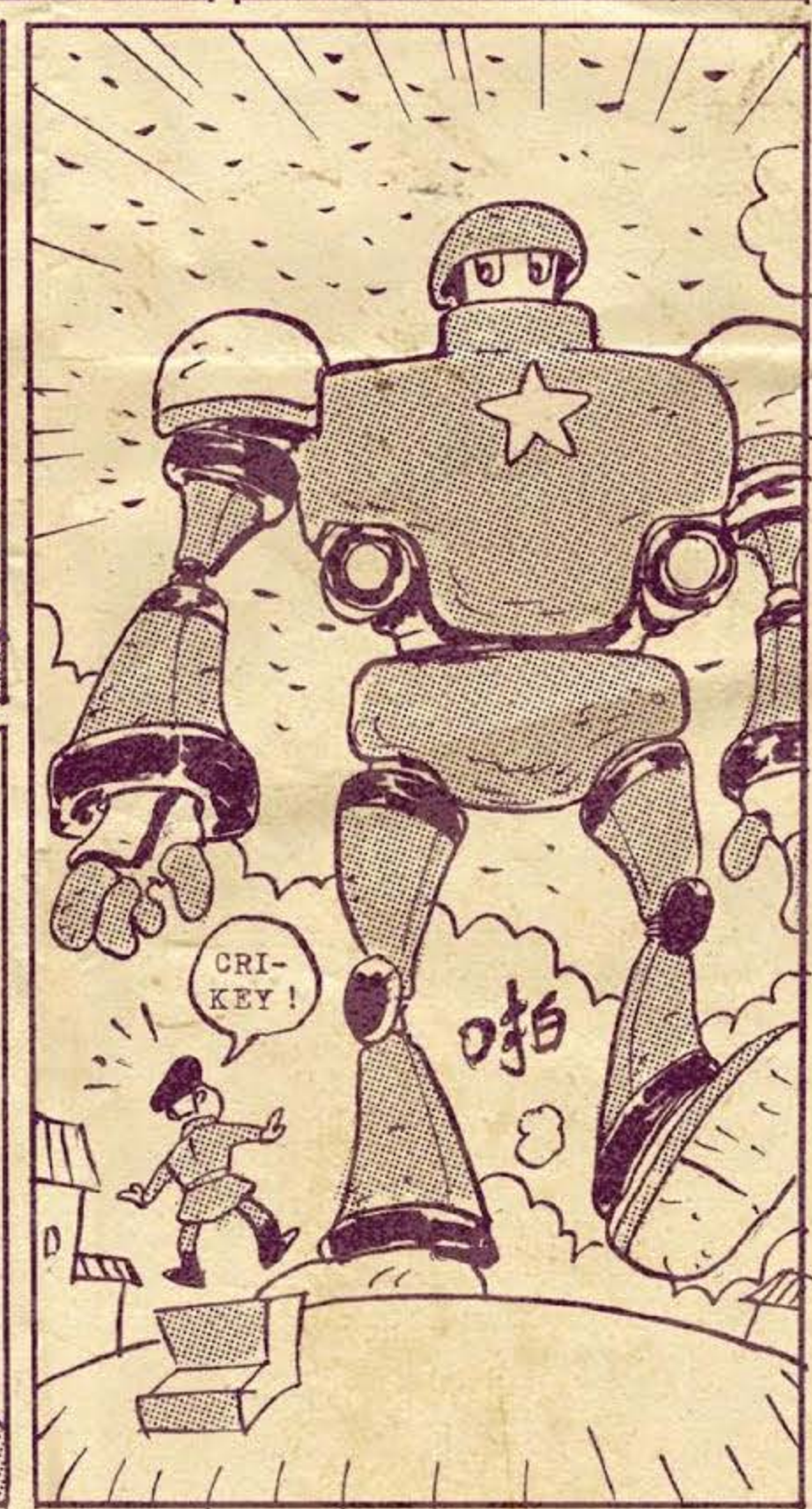

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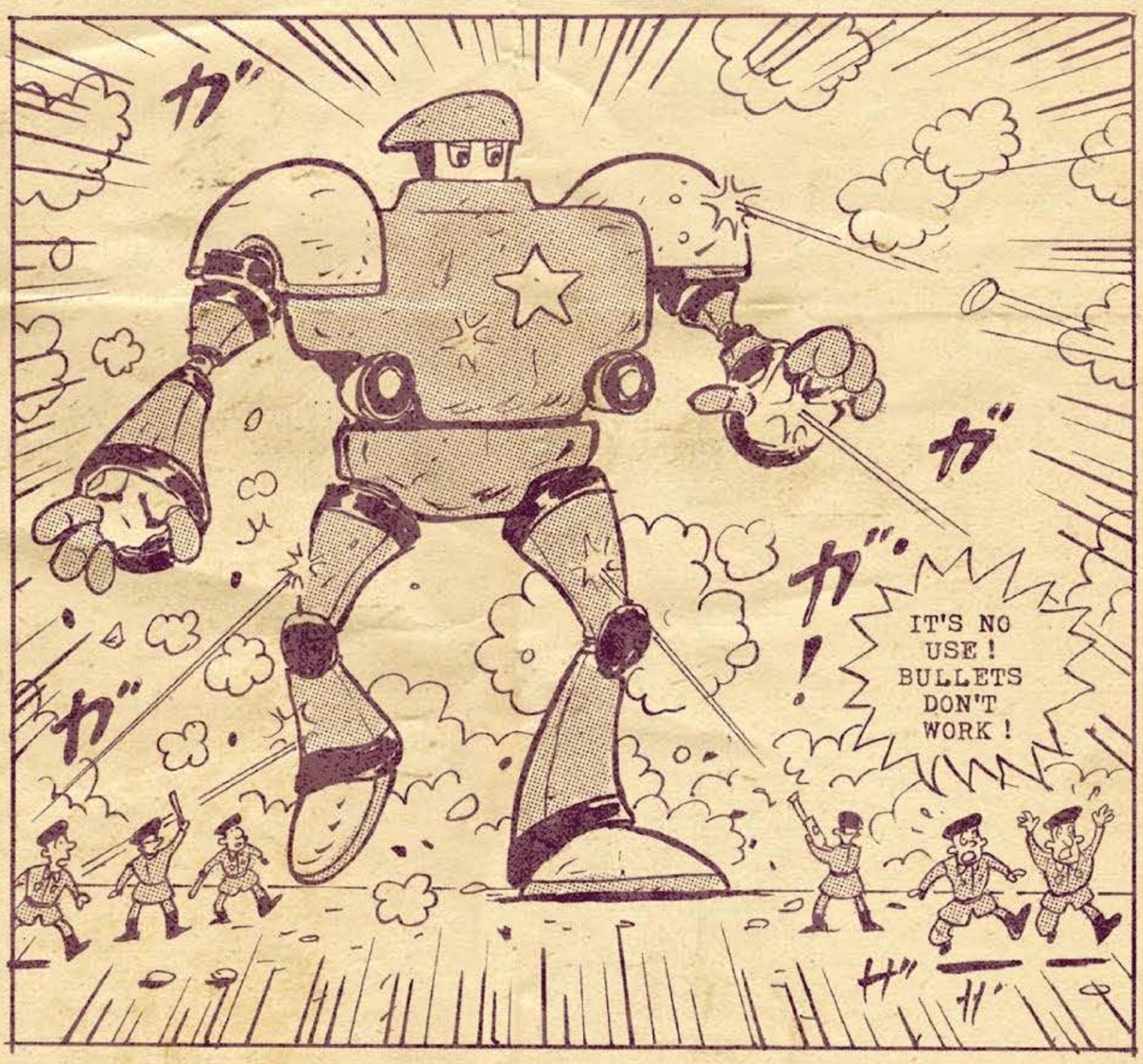

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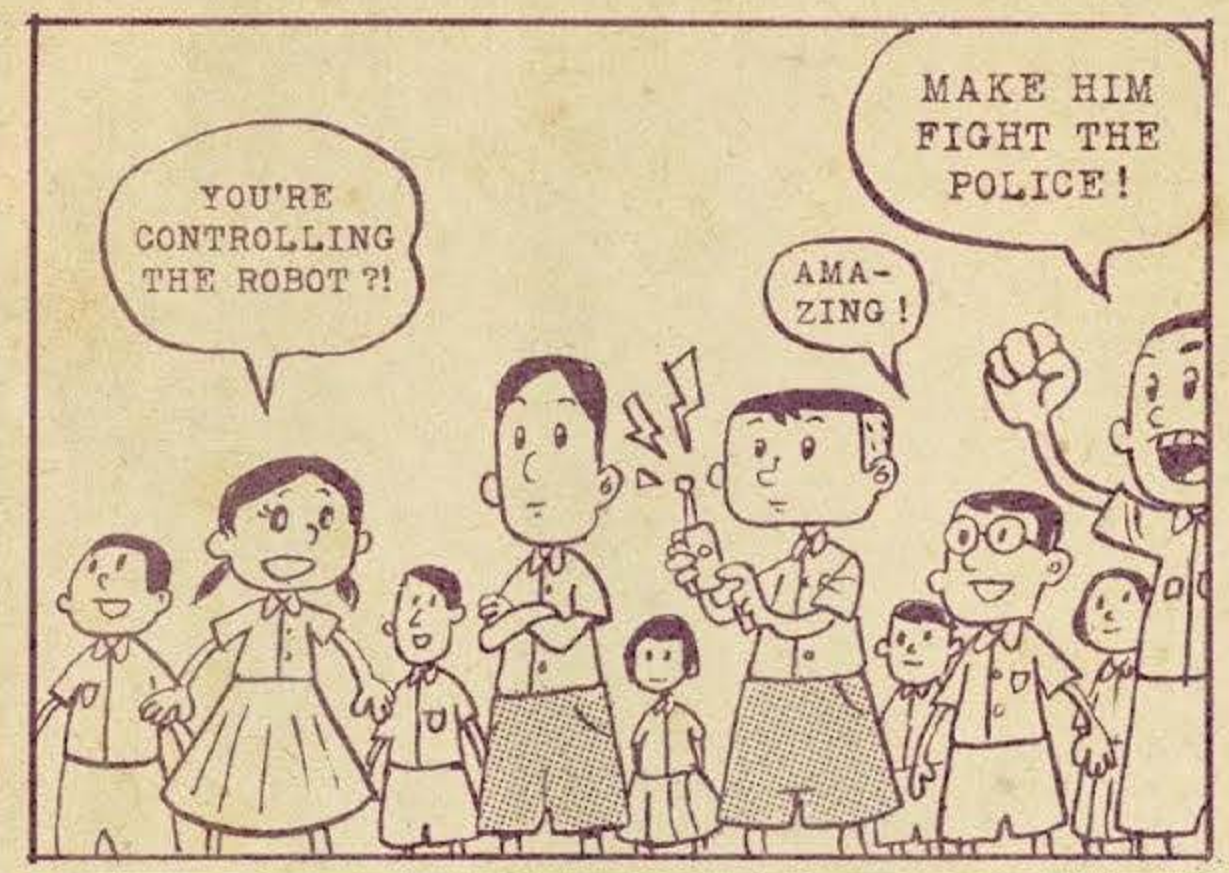

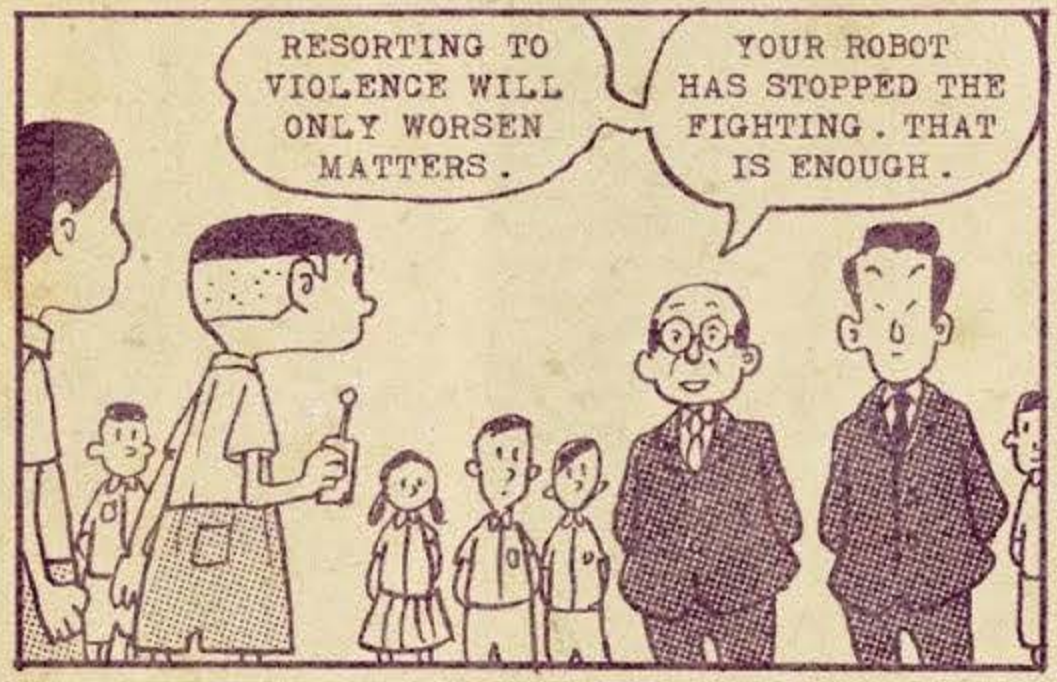

Thinly disguised versions of British Queen's Counsel **D.N. Pritt** and legal assistant **Lee Kuan Yew** are shown offering advice at the May 13 scene itself in this fictionalised version of events. In reality, the two lawyers only got involved at a later date, when they agreed to act as legal counsels for the 48 students arrested during the incident.

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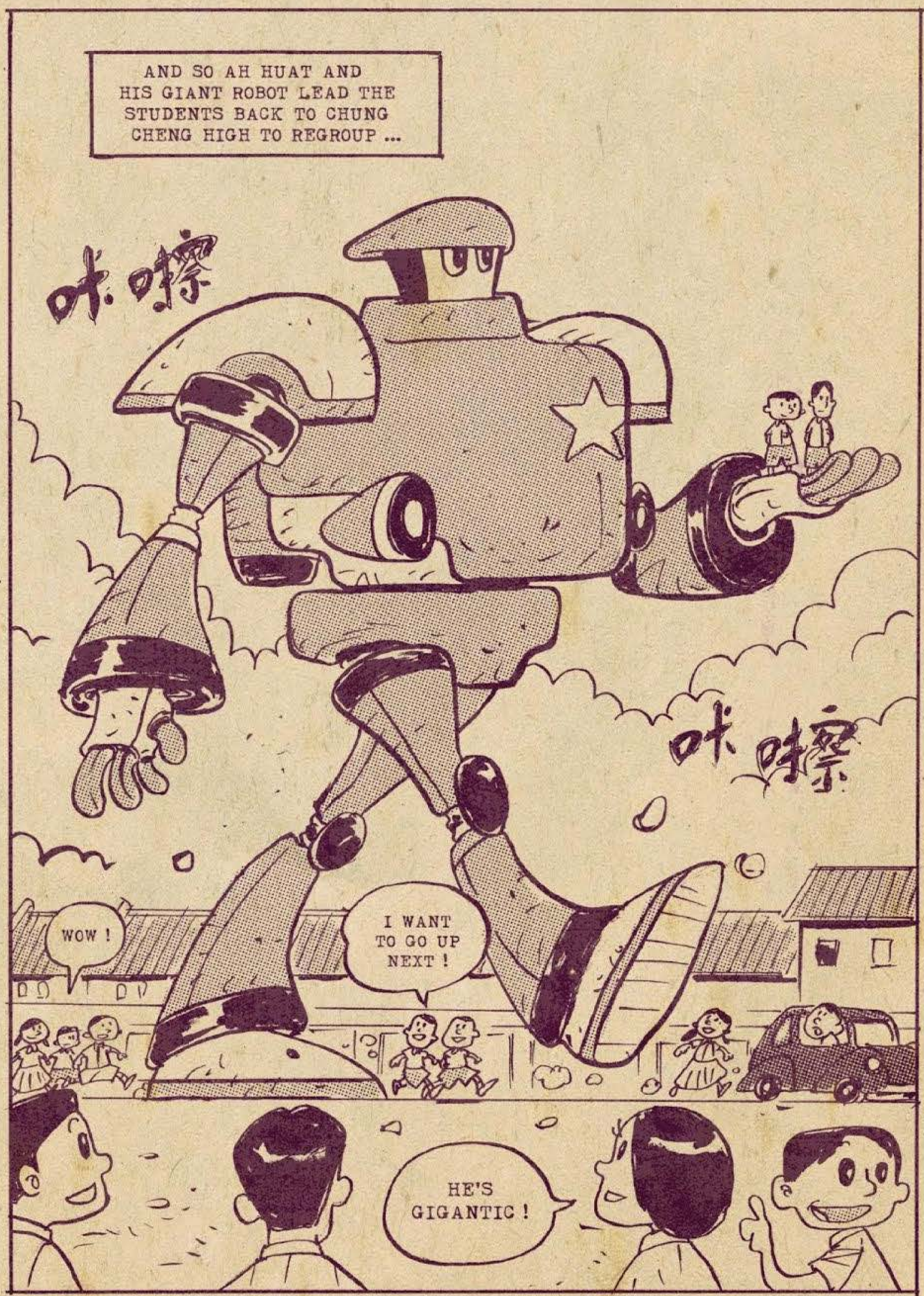

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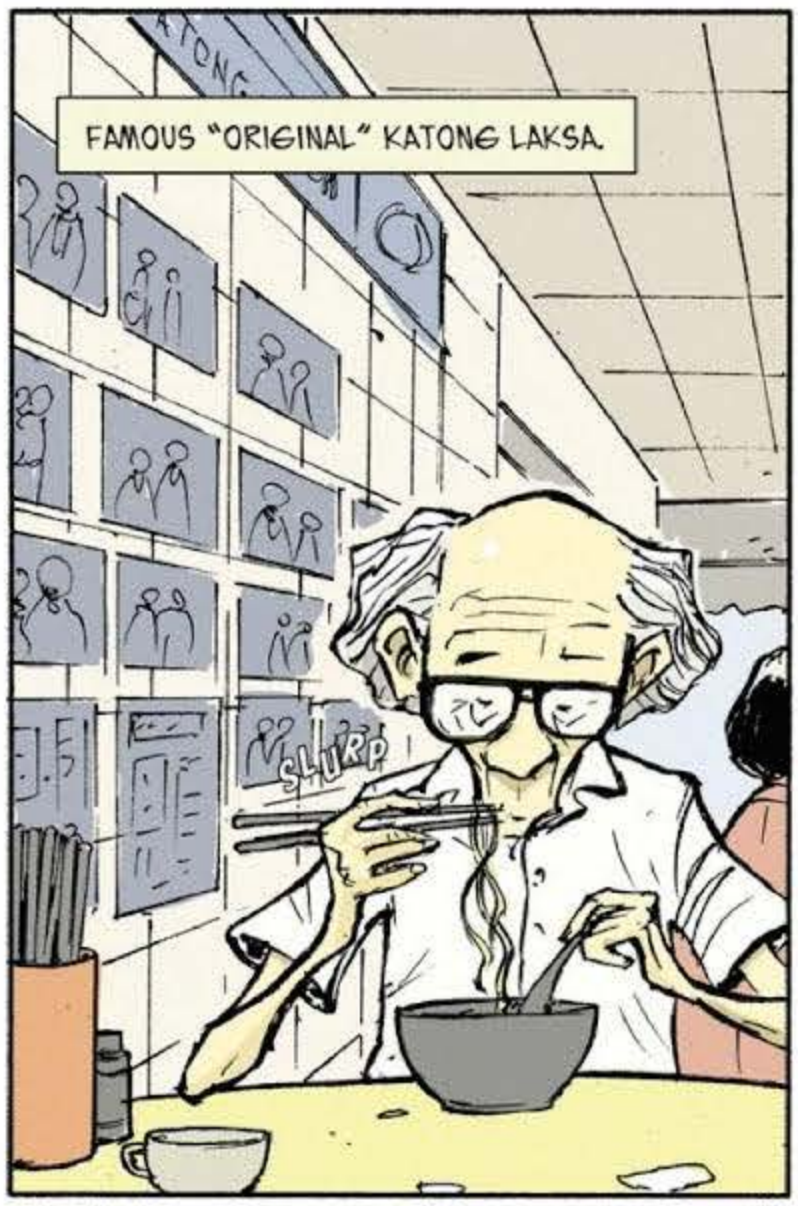

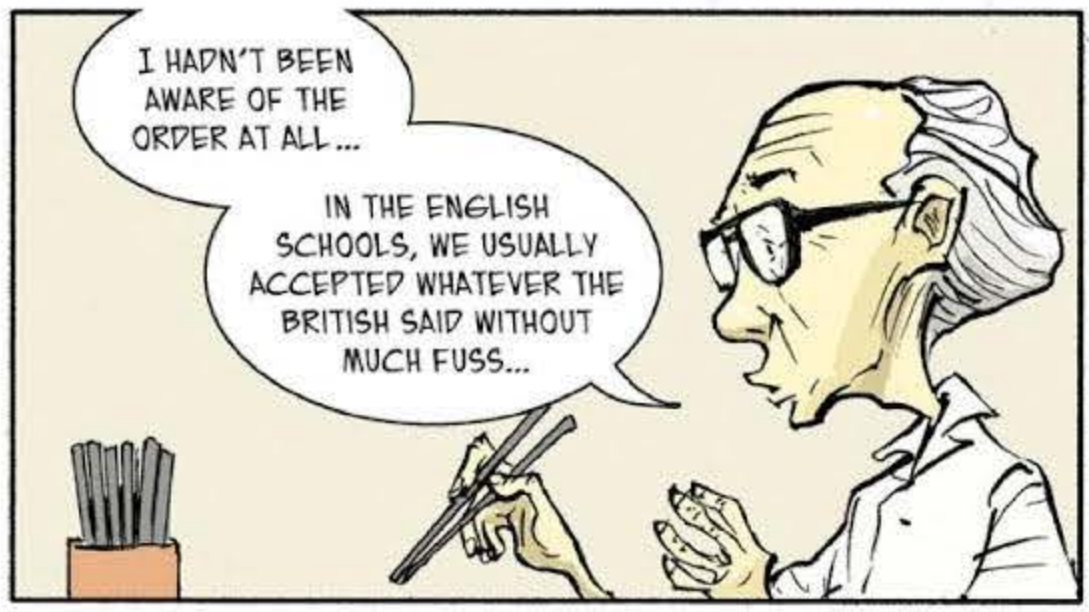

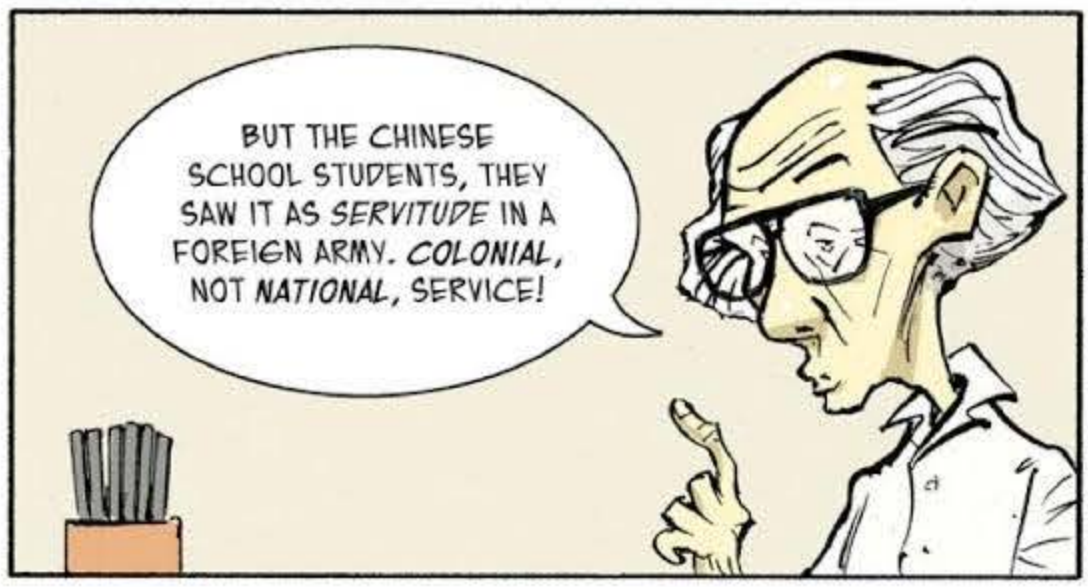

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SKETCHES
1954
Chan Hock Chye

Chan's sketches of students, policemen, teachers and parents during the Chinese Middle School student protests.

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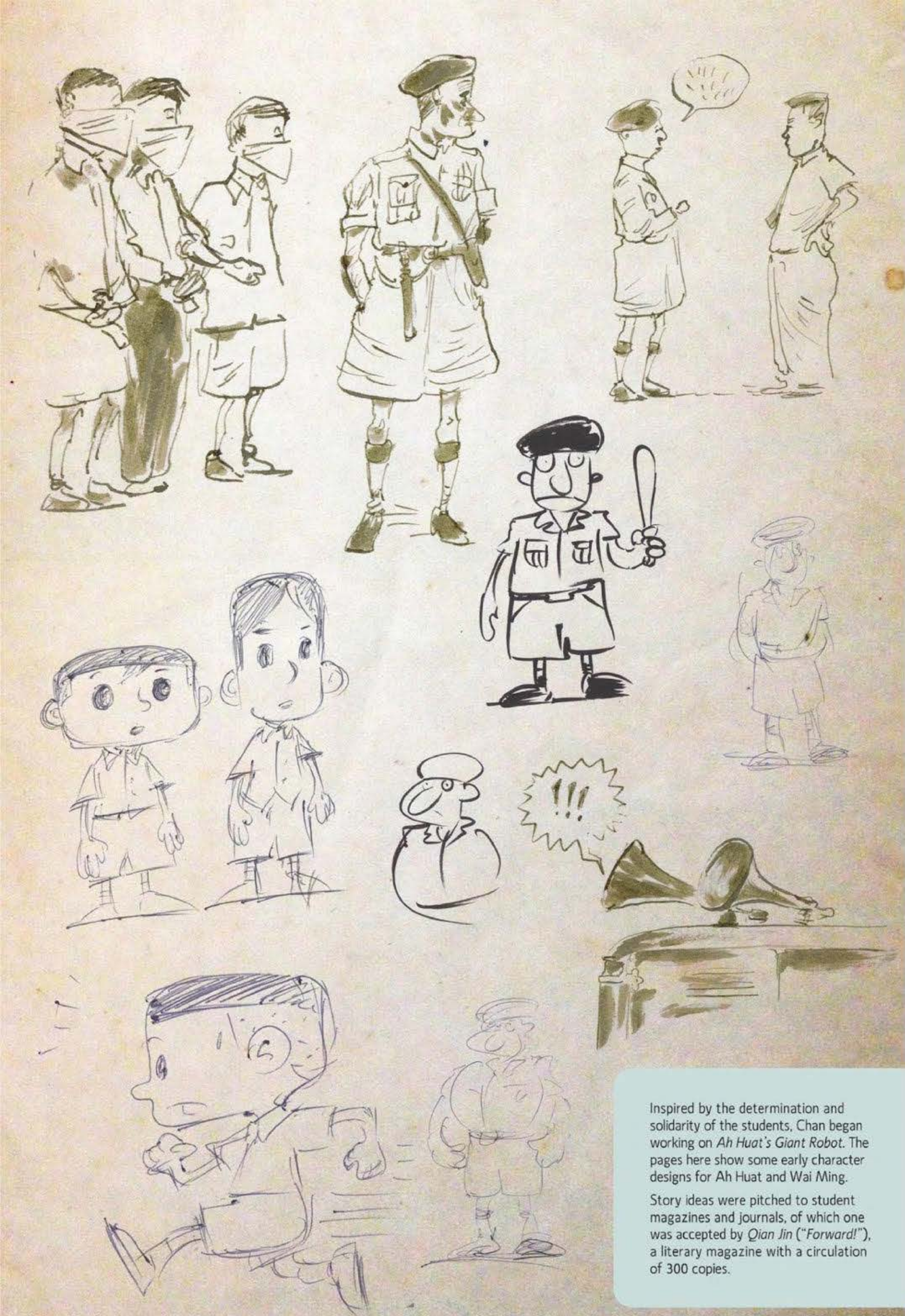

Inspired by the determination and solidarity of the students, Chan began working on *Ah Huat's Giant Robot*. The pages here show some early character designs for Ah Huat and Wai Ming.

Story ideas were pitched to student magazines and journals, of which one was accepted by *Qian Jin* ("*Forward!*"), a literary magazine with a circulation of 300 copies.

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THE GIRL ON THE BUS
1988
Chan Hock Chye
Self-published

An excerpt from a short story that laid the ground for the art style that Chan would subsequently adopt for his autobiographical comics.

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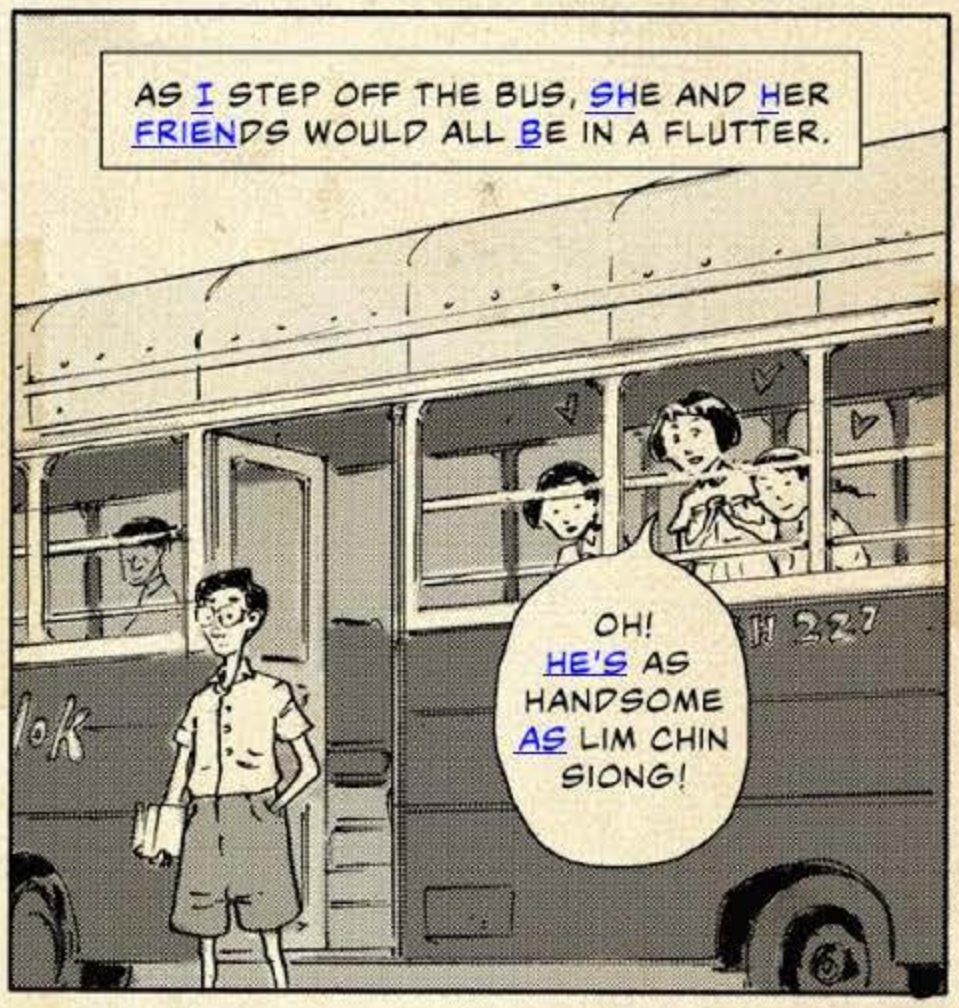

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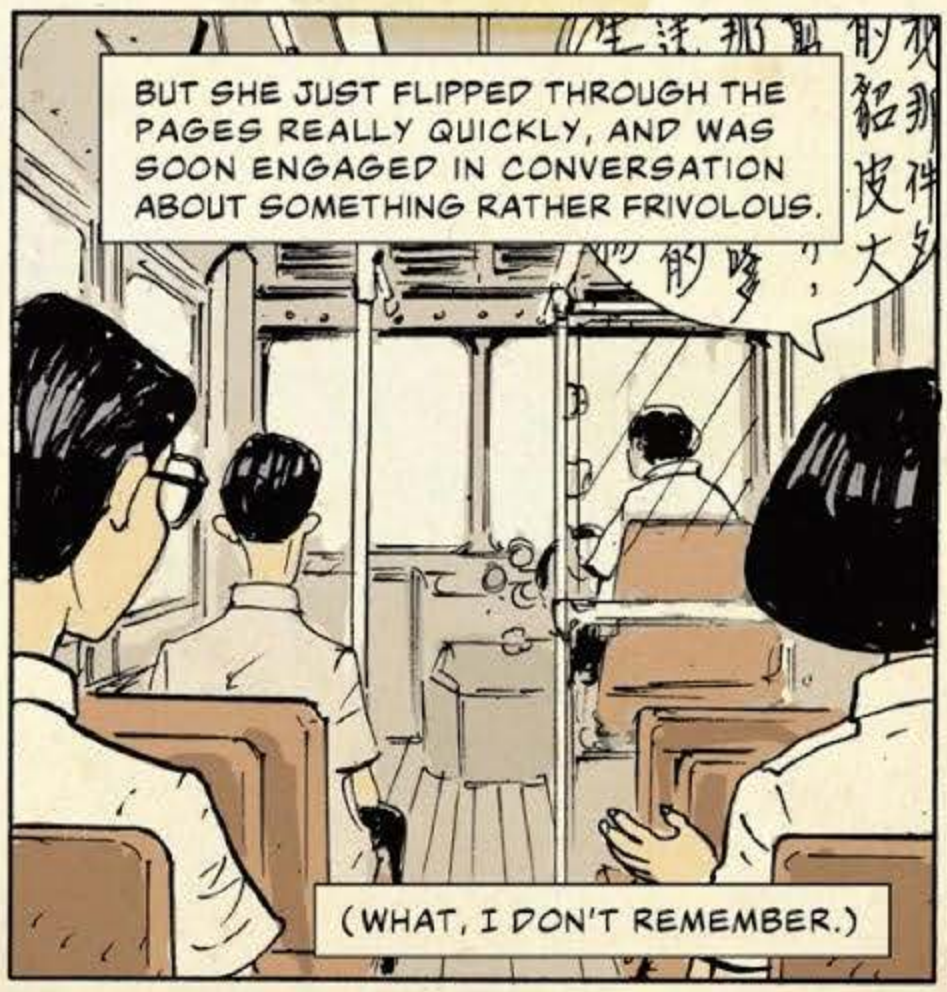

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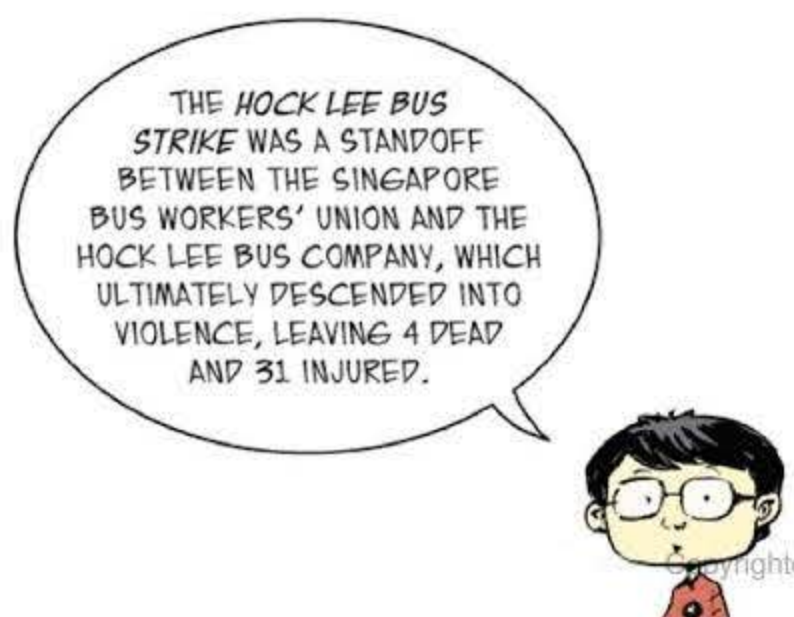
FORWARD! (QIAN JIN) Cover
1954
Chan Hock Chye
Tiger Press

Following
AH HUAT'S GIANT ROBOT Vol. 2: THE HOCK LEE BUS INCIDENT
1956
Chan Hock Chye
Stones Throw Press

Selected excerpts from Chan's response to the Hock Lee bus strike of May 12, 1955.



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Chan imagines a meeting between his fictional characters Ah Huat, Wai Ming and Yoyo the Dog, and real-life trade union leaders **Fong Swee Suan** and **Lim Chin Siong** during the standoff.

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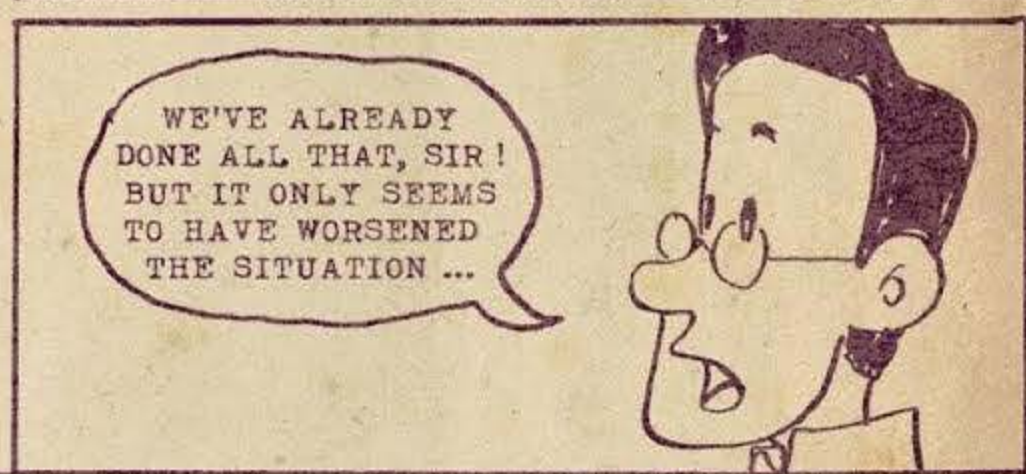

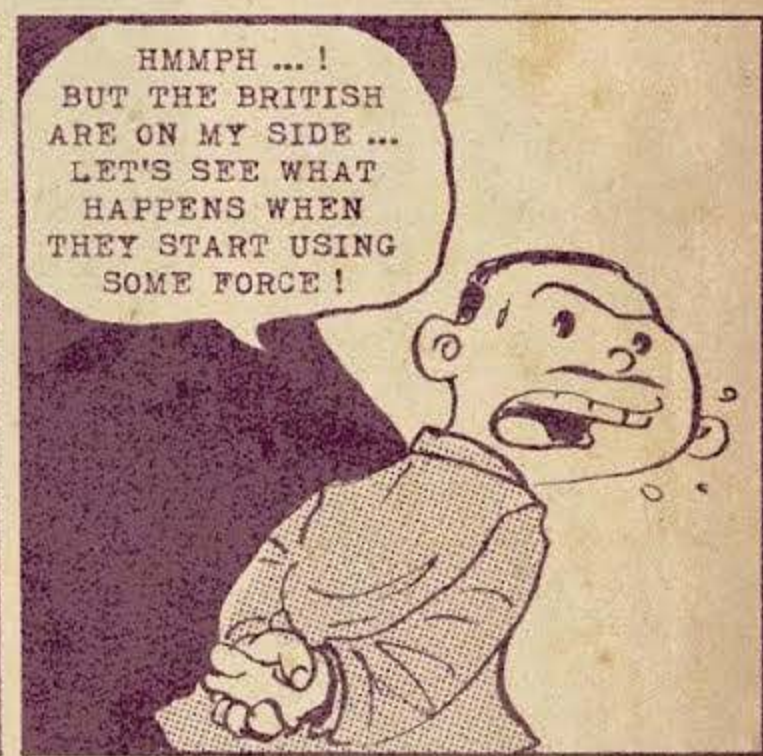

Chan had little sympathy for the **Hock Lee Bus Company** bosses. In the story, they are seen as callous and exploitative, with scant regard for employee welfare. "**Blacklegs**" refer to men hired by companies to break up strikes by replacing uncooperative workers, whilst "**yellow unions**" was a generally derogatory term used to describe pliant trade unions set up by the employers themselves.

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Official accounts of the Hock Lee Bus Riots have often blamed communist agitators for the strike and the subsequent outbreak of violence, but union leaders involved have always maintained that they had only been concerned with improving workers' welfare. Eyewitness accounts further suggest that the rioting had been sparked by aggressive police tactics, which had unleashed the pent-up anger and frustration of the picketers.

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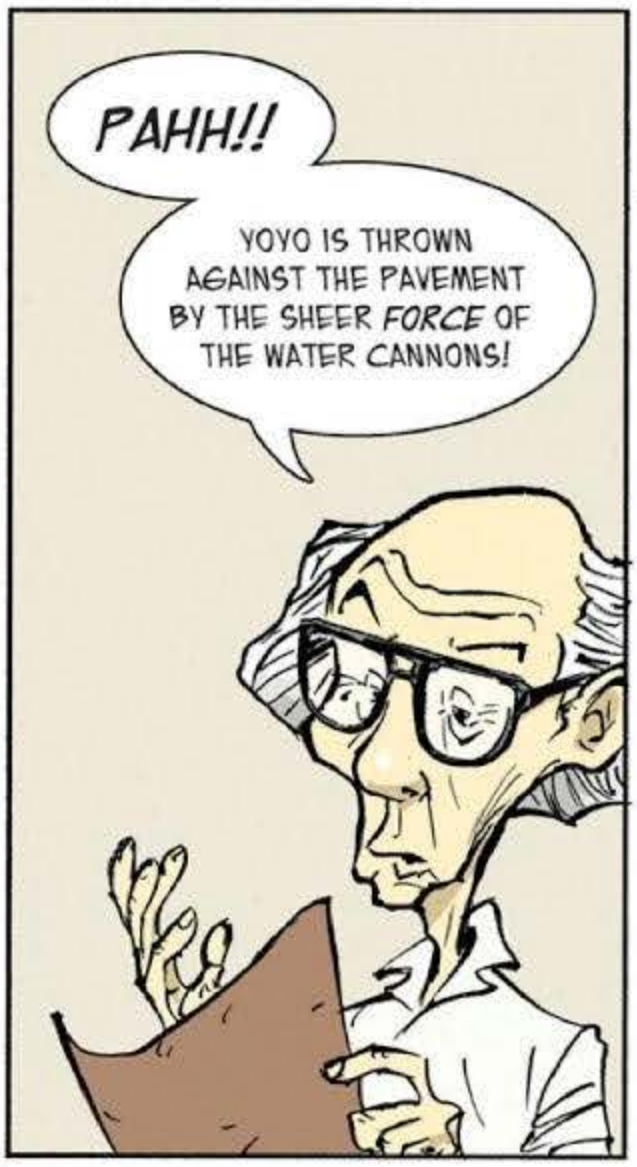

IN FACT...

LET ME TELL YOU THE ONE ABOUT *CHONG LON CHONG.*

THIS IS THE WAY IT USUALLY GOES...

Chong Lon Chong, aged 16 (1939–1955)

Copyrighted material

DURING THE HOCK LEE BUS RIOTS ON MAY 12, 1955, A STRAY BULLET STRIKES 16-YEAR-OLD STUDENT CHONG LON CHONG IN THE CHEST.

RATHER THAN TAKE HIM TO A NEARBY HOSPITAL WHERE HE MIGHT HAVE BEEN SAVED...

...PRO-COMMUNIST STUDENTS INSTEAD PARADE HIM AROUND FOR TWO AND A HALF HOURS, IN A BID TO FURTHER INFLAME THE CROWD'S EMOTIONS.

AS A RESULT, CHONG DIES OF HIS WOUNDS.

IT'S AN ACCOUNT YOU READ ABOUT *EVERYWHERE*... IN BOOKS ON HISTORY AND HISTORICAL FICTION, ON BLOGS AND WEBSITES.

AND YET, ACTUAL REPORTS OF THAT DAY DO NOT NECESSARILY SUPPORT THIS INTERPRETATION...

was their finding.

when decent law-abiding citizens [illegible] rioters and made the police the object of their attack."

He told the jury that there was no clear evidence as to when or where Chong died. They would be on firm ground if they found that Chong was pronounced dead by a doctor when he was carried into the General Hospital by four men at 1.20 a.m. on May 13.

He said: "You would be on equally firm ground if you find that Chong died of shock and haemorrhage from a gun-shot wound as stated by the pathologist.

BABY LAY

BUT INSTEAD LEAVE THE MATTER OPEN.

who brought the boy to hospital."

ant pathologist, had given evidence that Chong would have had a fair chance of survival if he had been brought to hospital without delay.

On the other hand, he said, if the boy was already dead when these men had custody of him, then they could not be held responsible.

Mr. Alexander said that if a doctor had had the opportunity of examining Chong just after he was shot he would attach more weight to the evidence of the pathologist.

He said: "At no time was there positive evidence that the boy was alive or, for that matter, dead."

WAS CHONG LON CHONG KILLED ON THE SPOT?

COULD HE HAVE BEEN SAVED?

From *The Straits Times*, July 2, 1955

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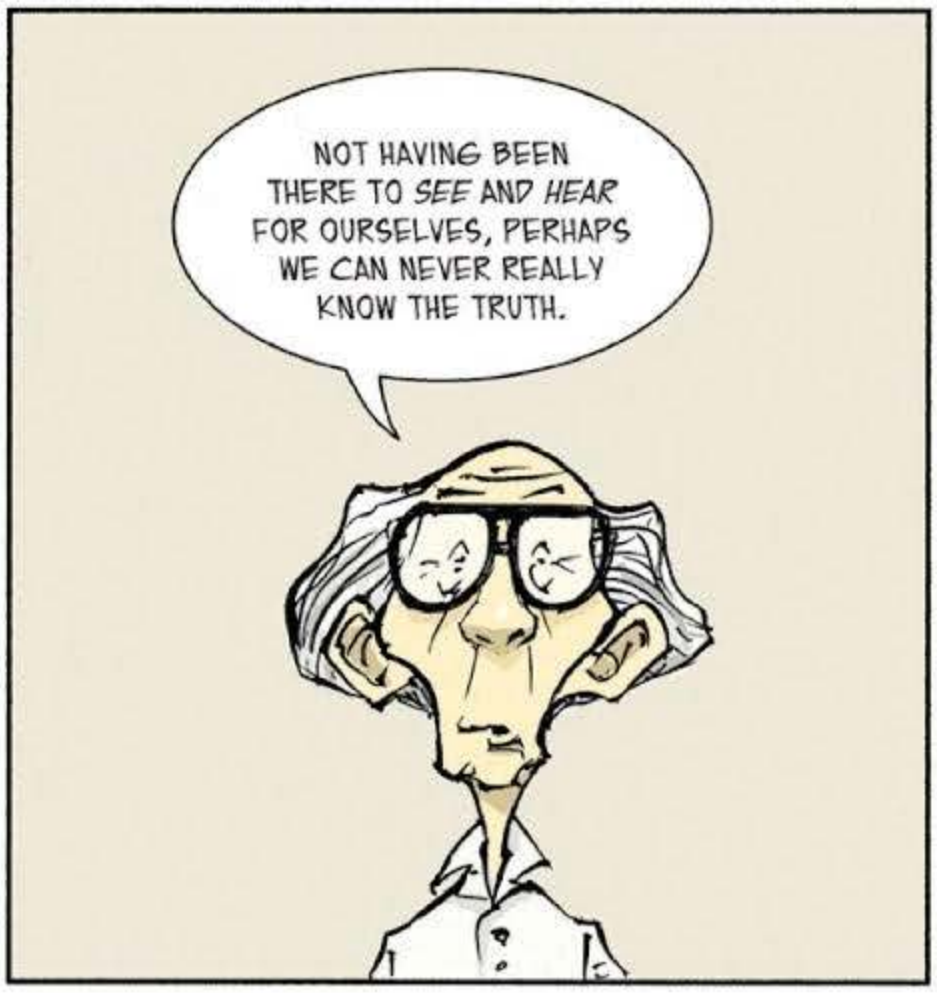

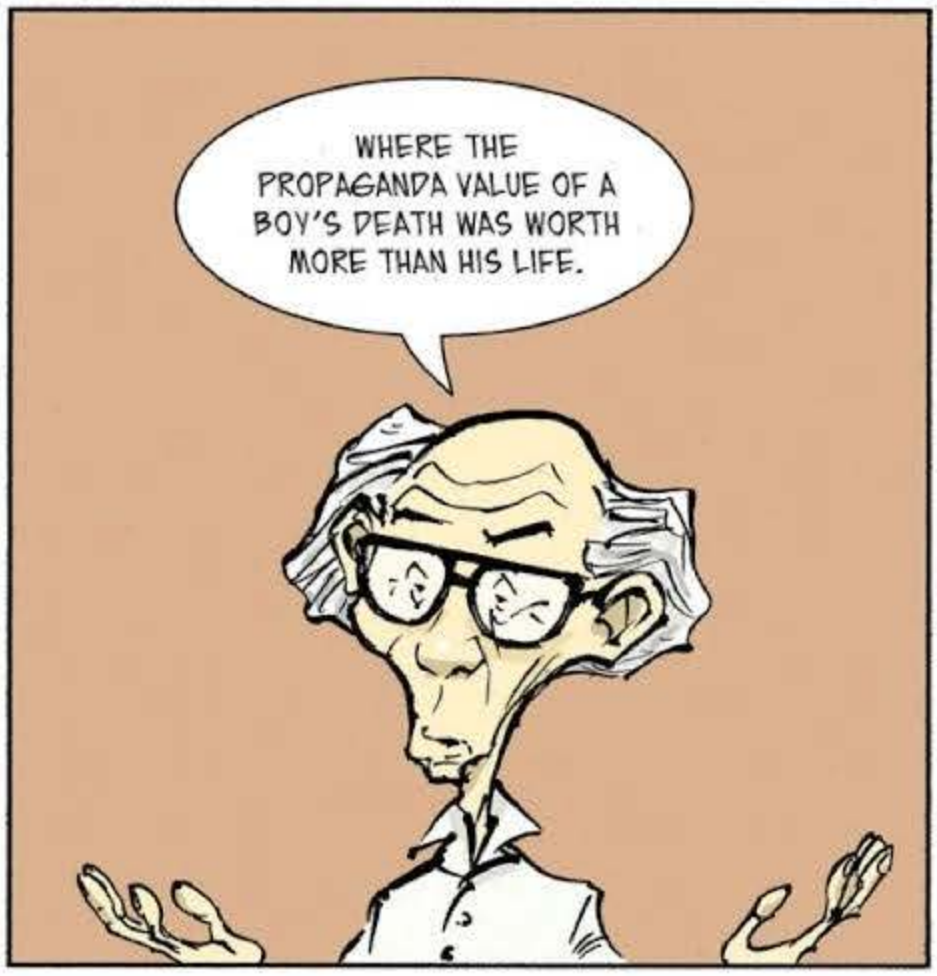

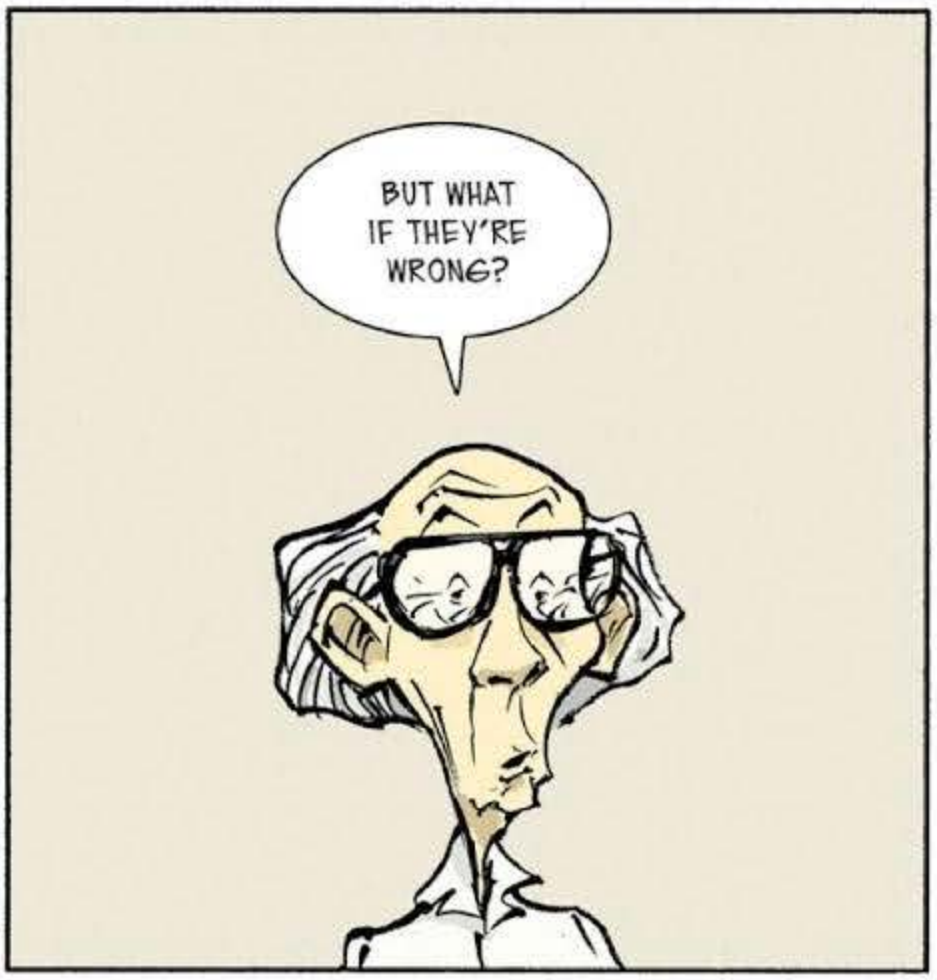

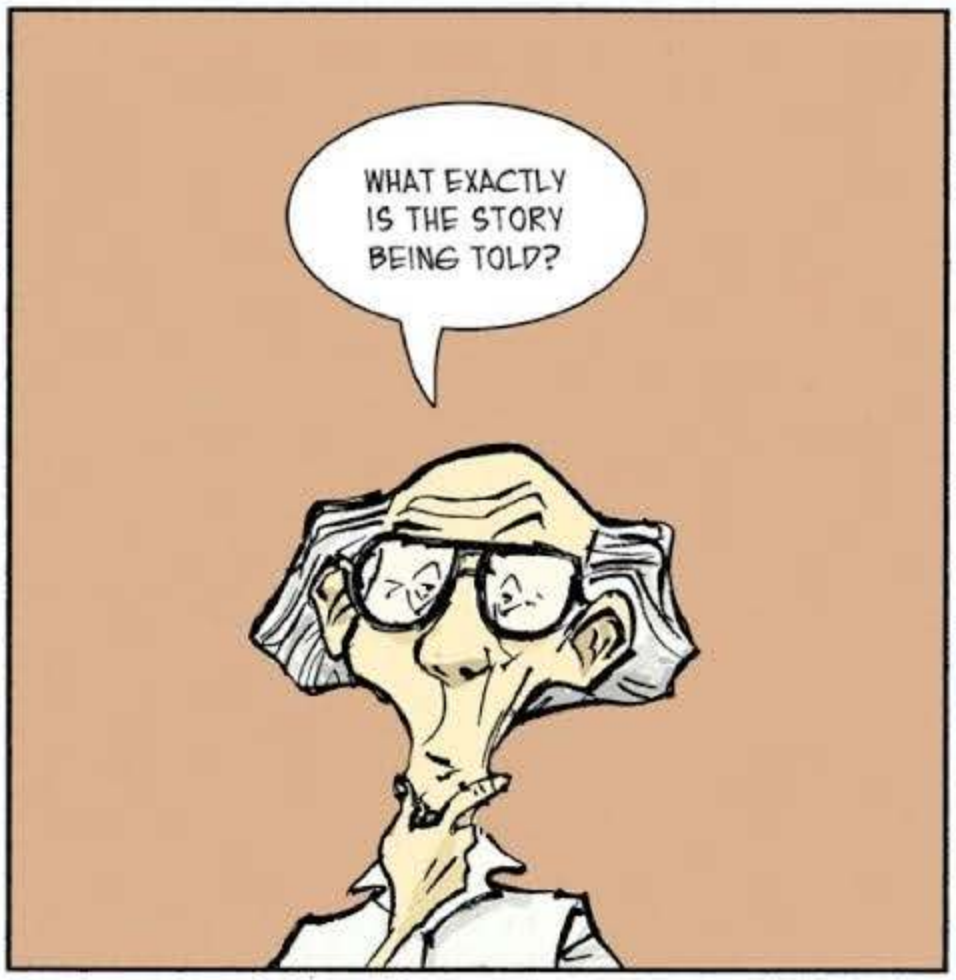

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Chapter Three

STANDING ON OUR OWN TWO FEET

站起来

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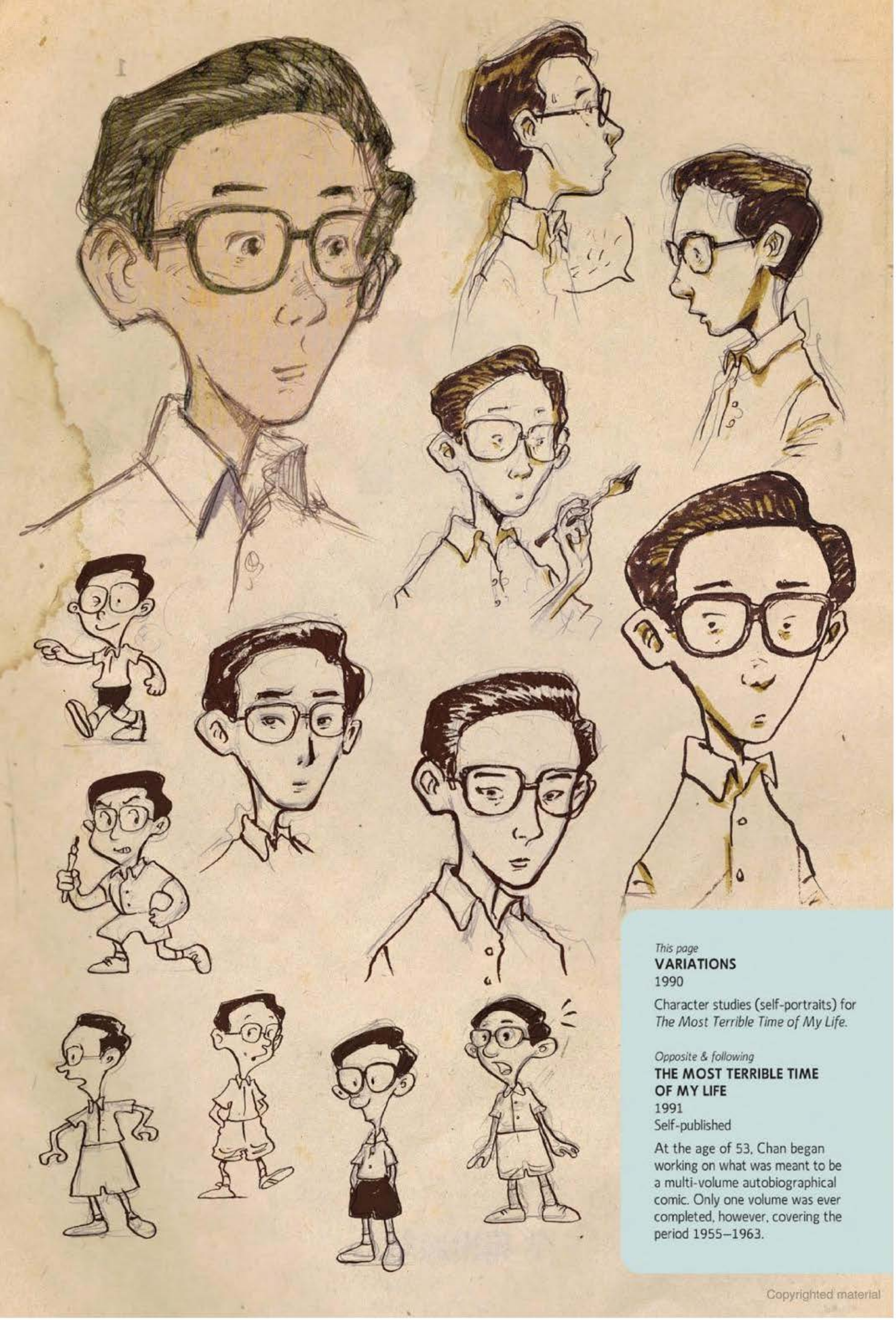

This page
VARIATIONS
1990

Character studies (self-portraits) for *The Most Terrible Time of My Life.*

Opposite & following
THE MOST TERRIBLE TIME OF MY LIFE
1991
Self-published

At the age of 53, Chan began working on what was meant to be a multi-volume autobiographical comic. Only one volume was ever completed, however, covering the period 1955–1963.

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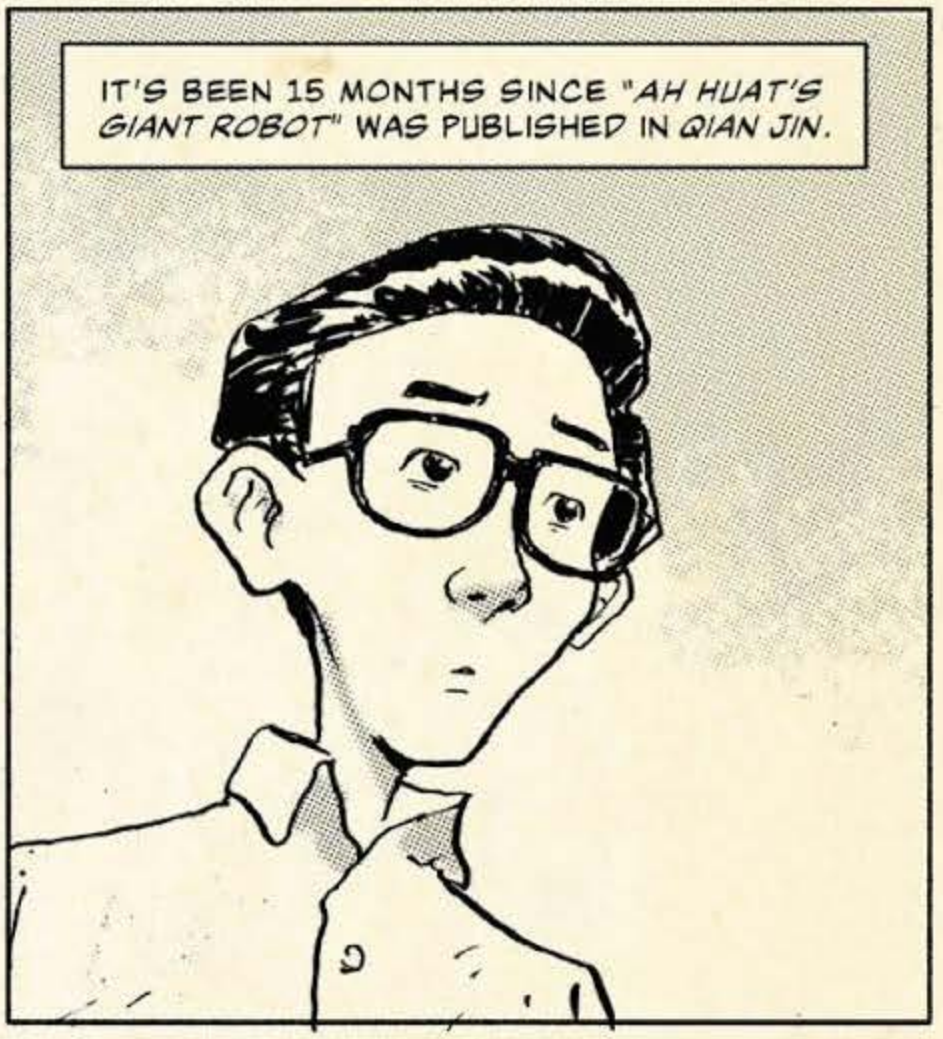

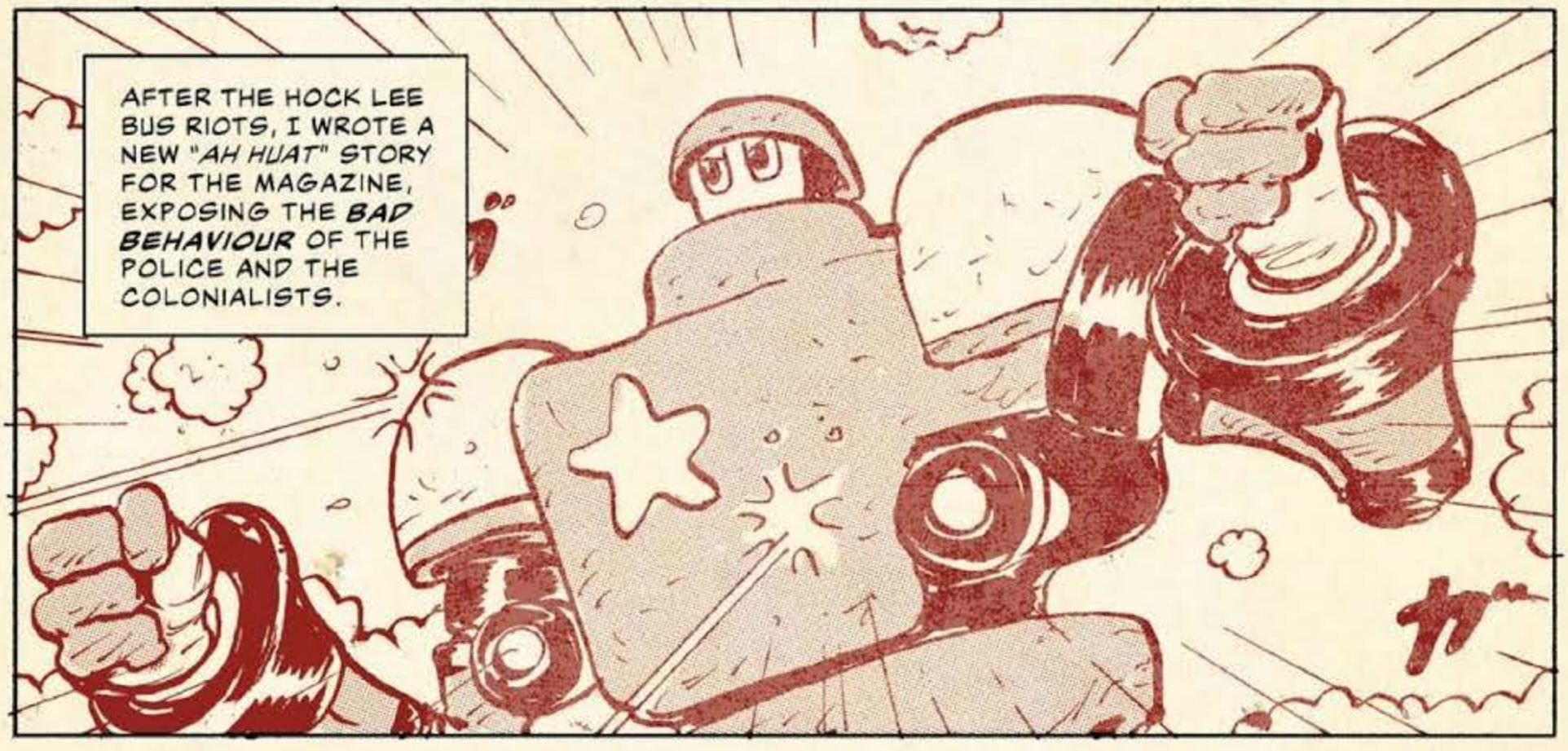

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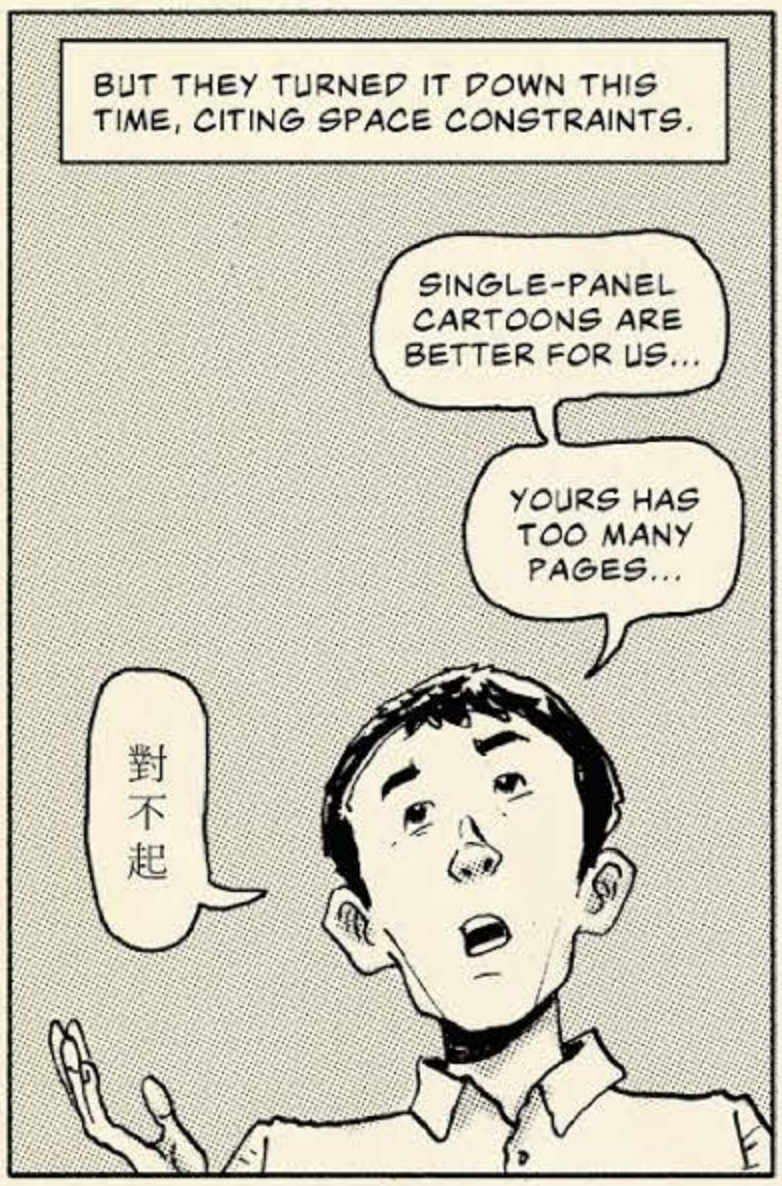

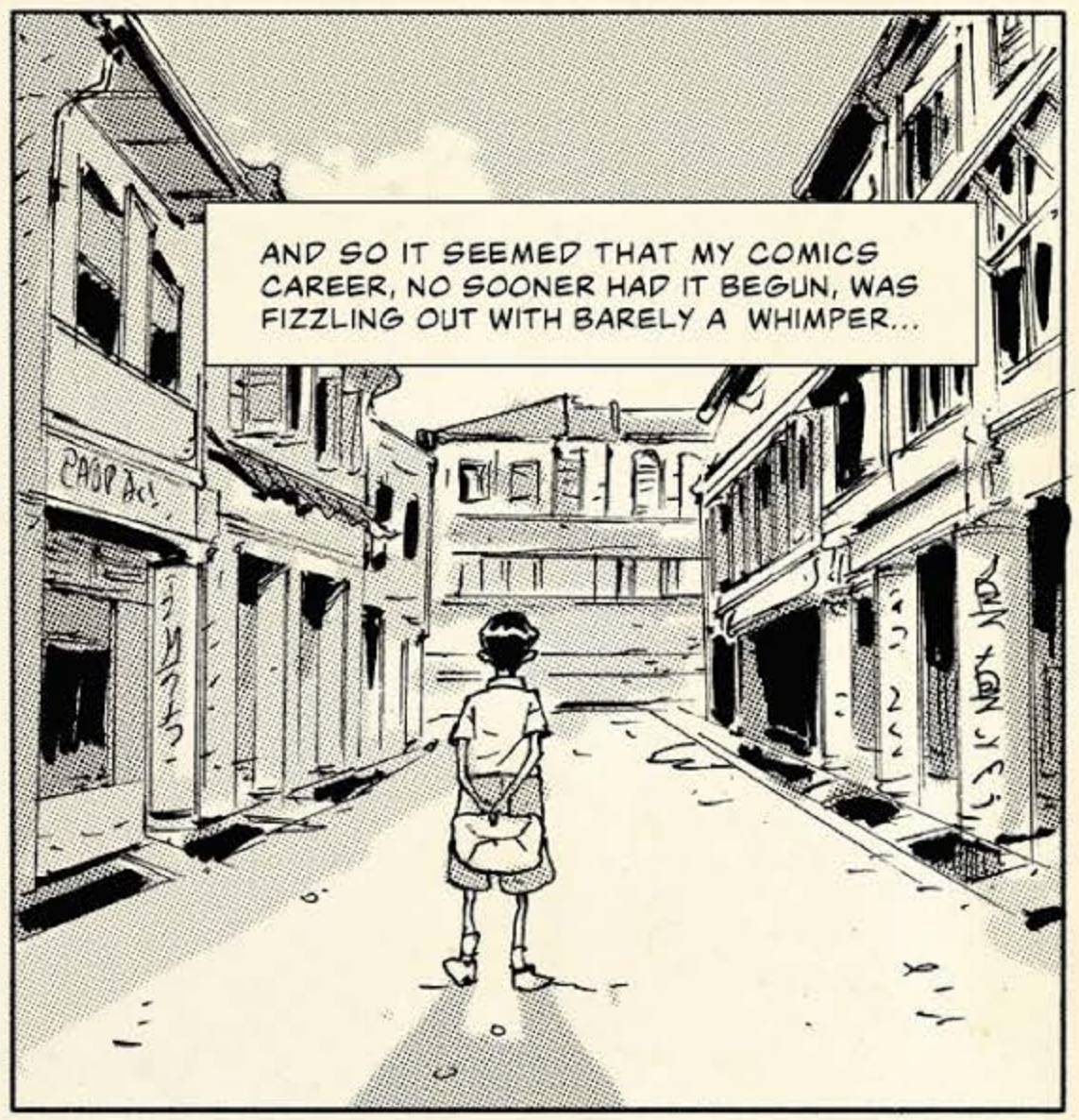

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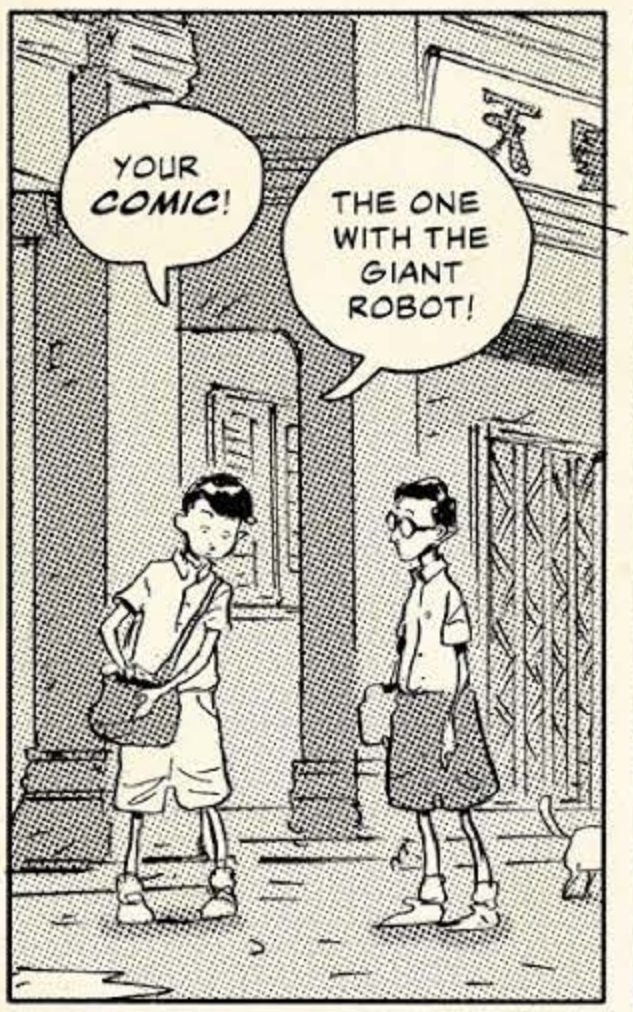

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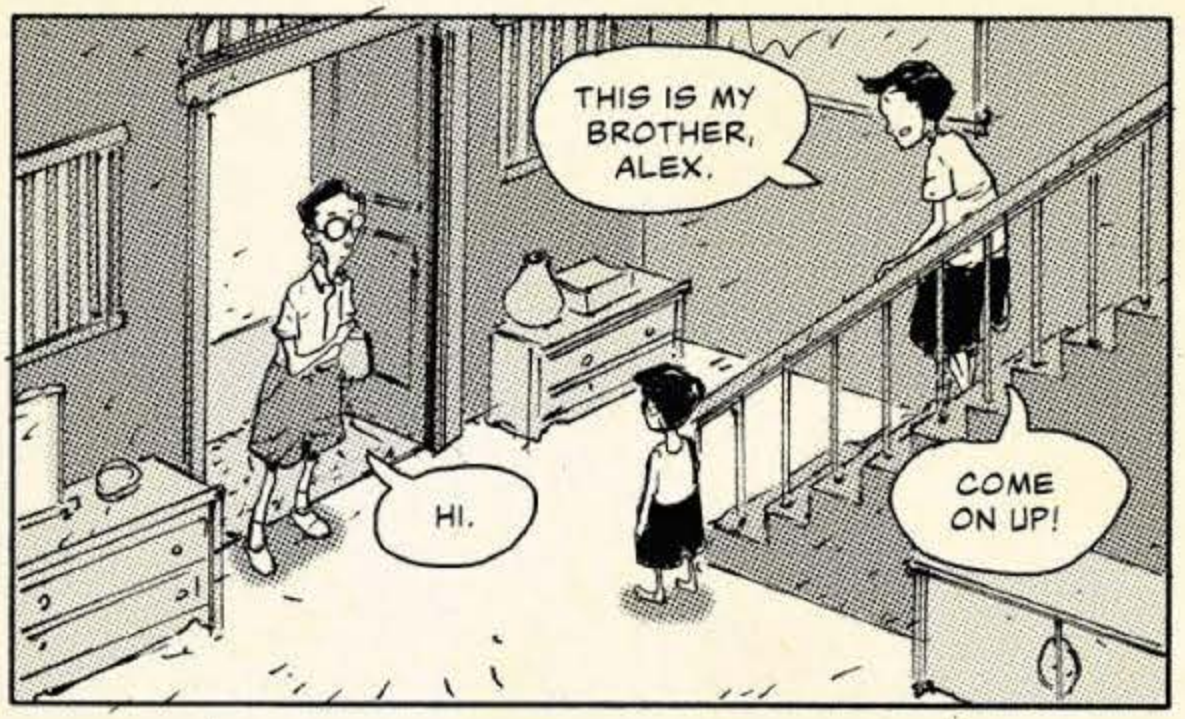

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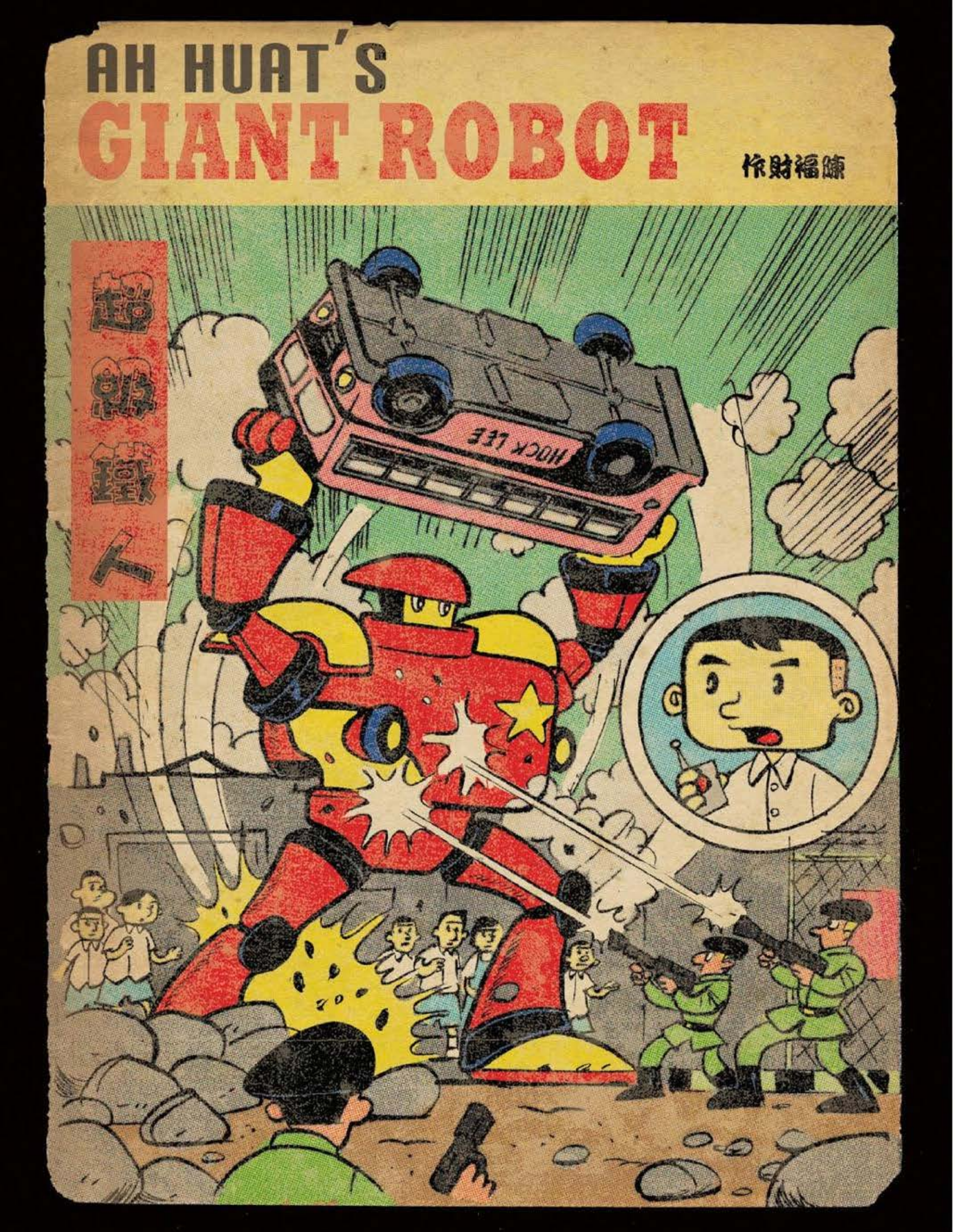
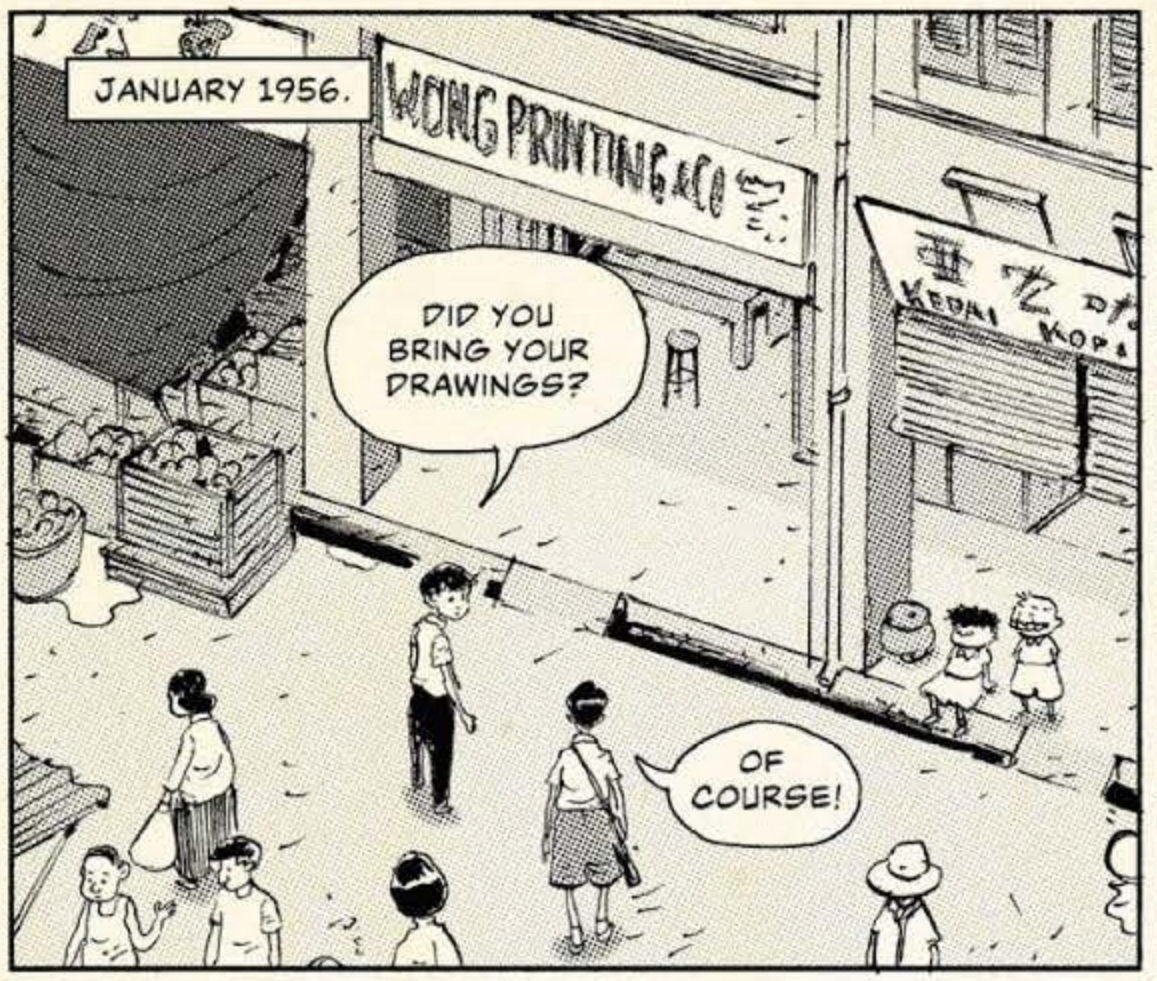
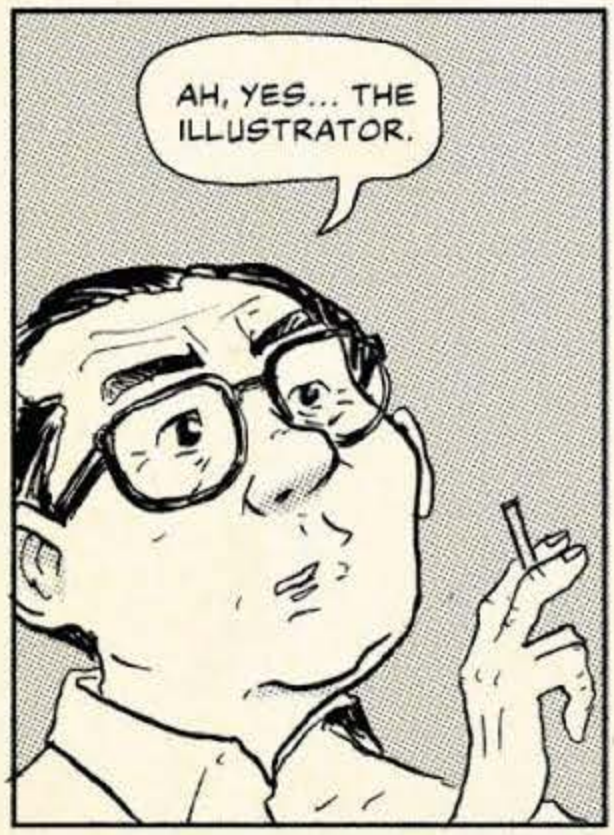
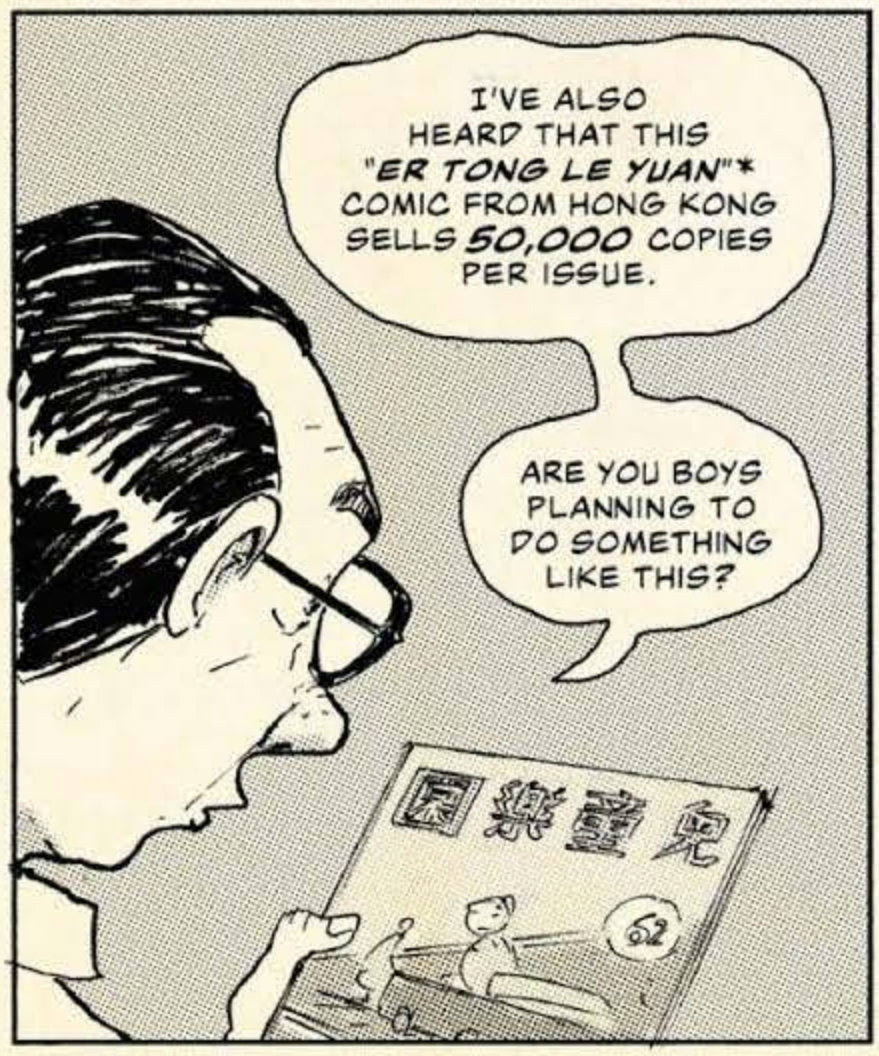


Above
AH HUAT'S GIANT ROBOT Vol. 2
1956
Chan Hock Chye
Stones Throw Press

Opposite & following
THE MOST TERRIBLE TIME OF MY LIFE
1991
Chan Hock Chye
Self-published







*儿童乐园 ("CHILDREN'S PARADISE")

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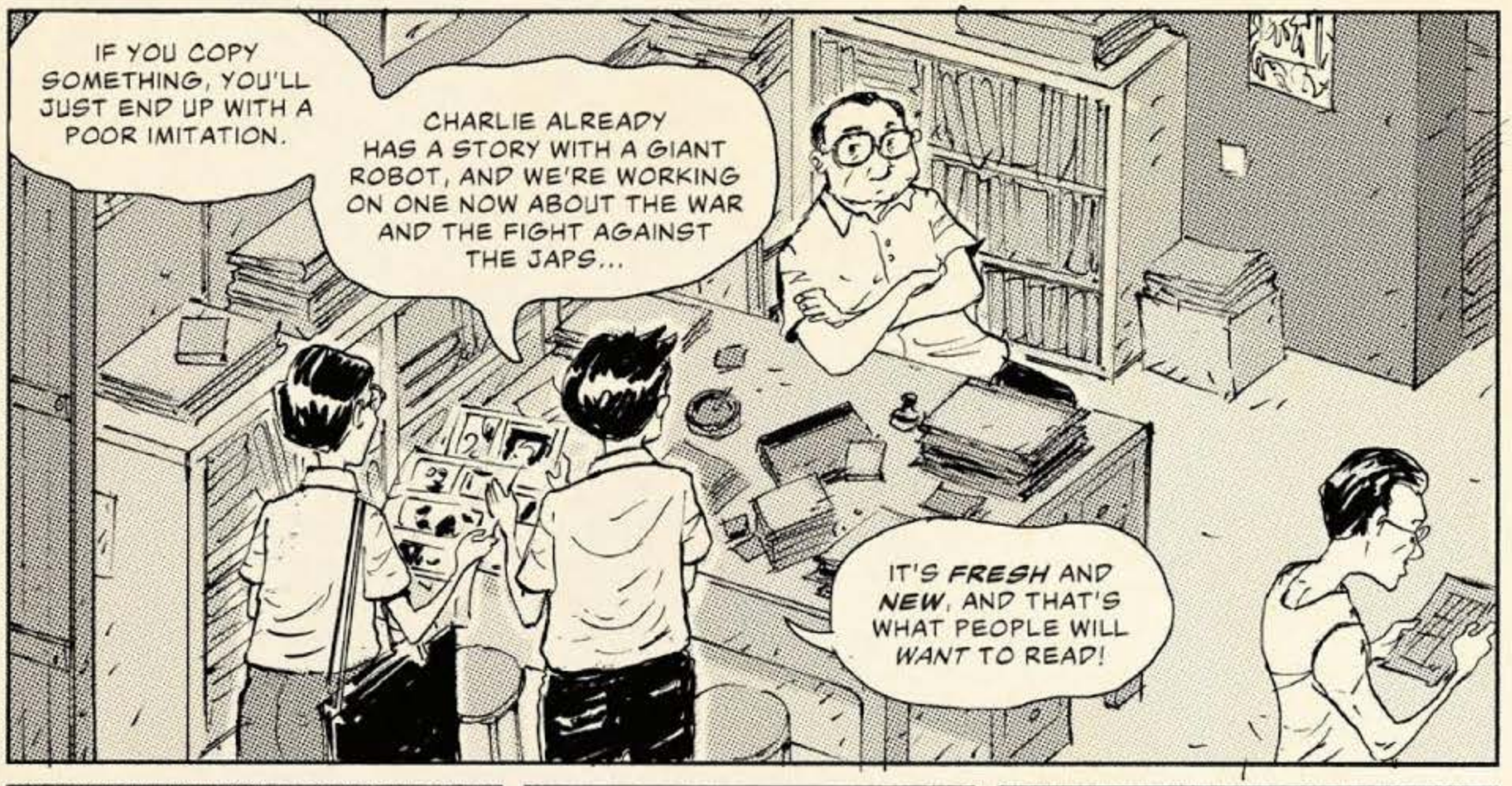

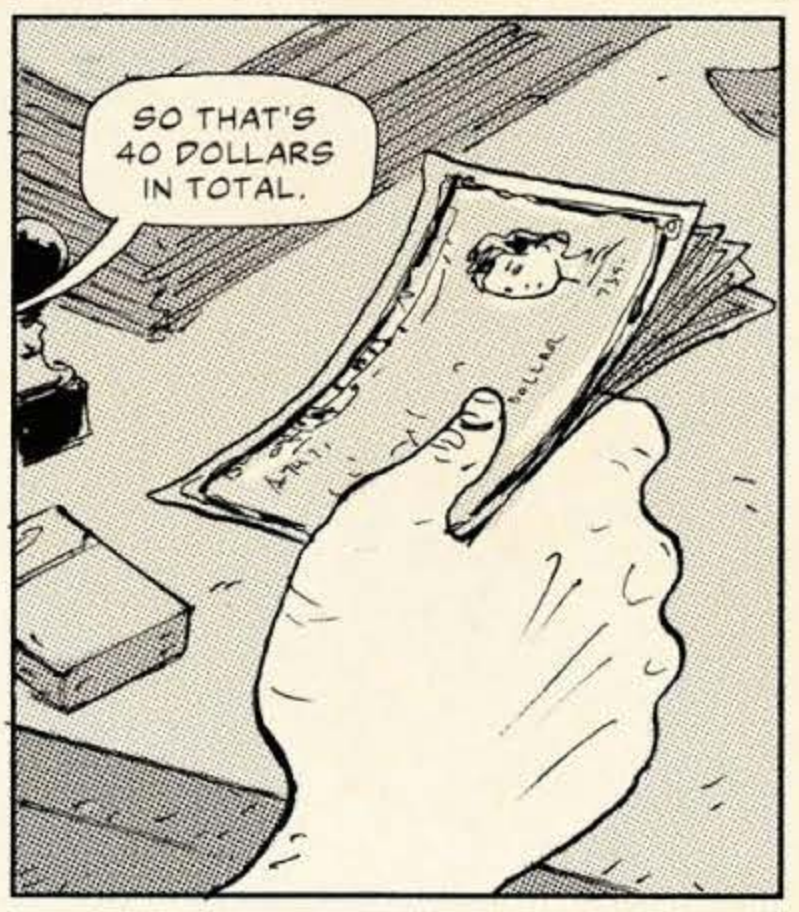

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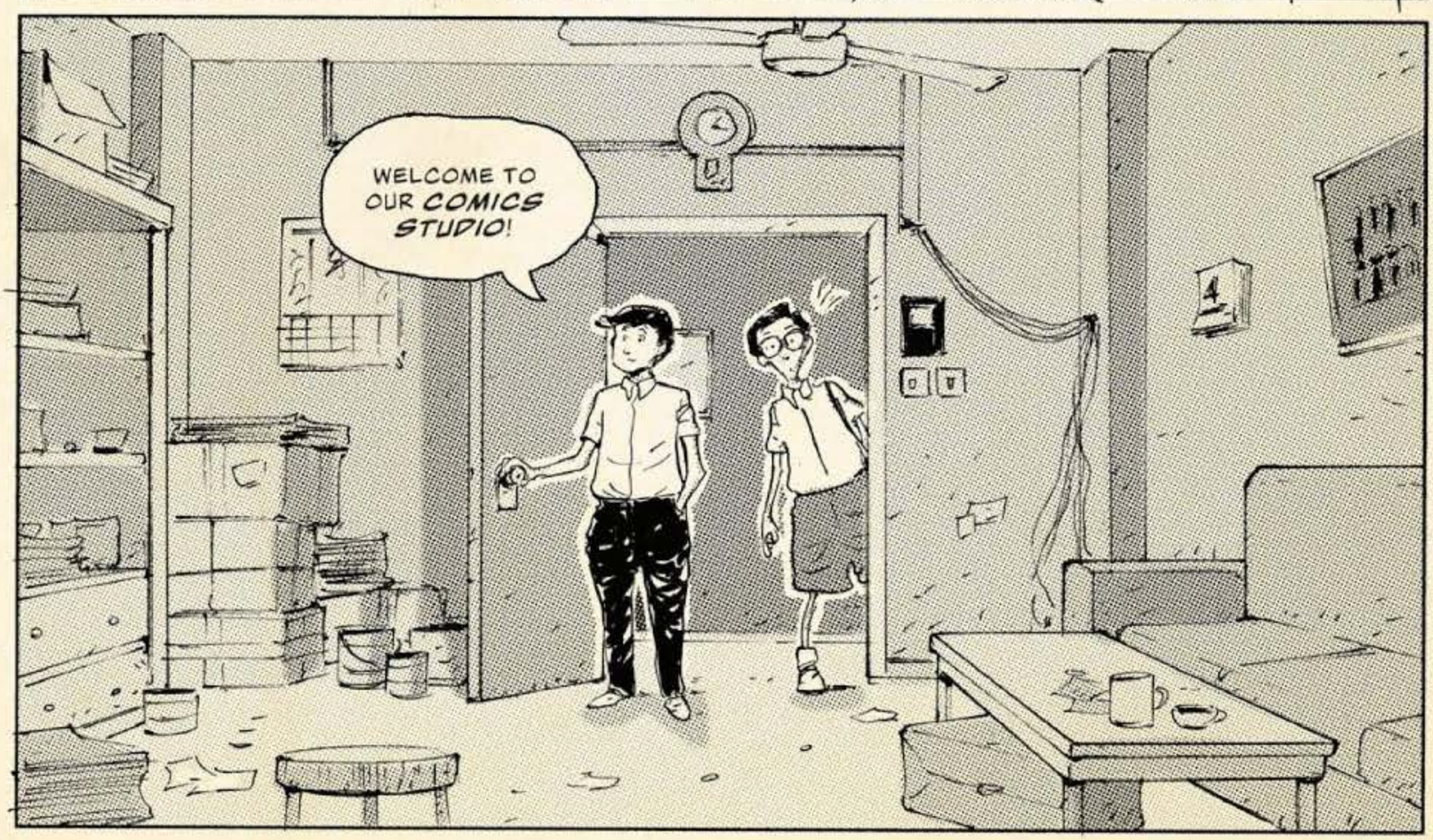

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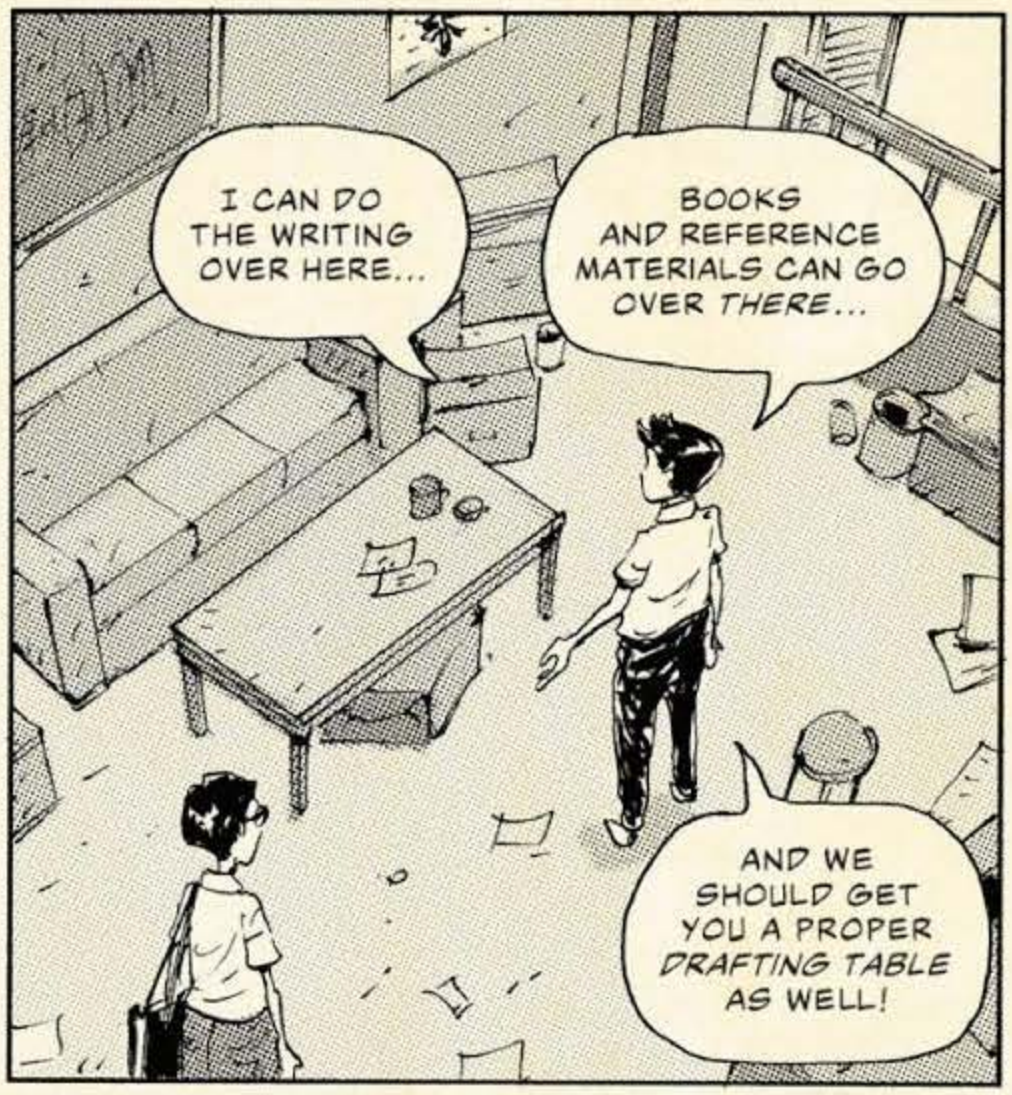
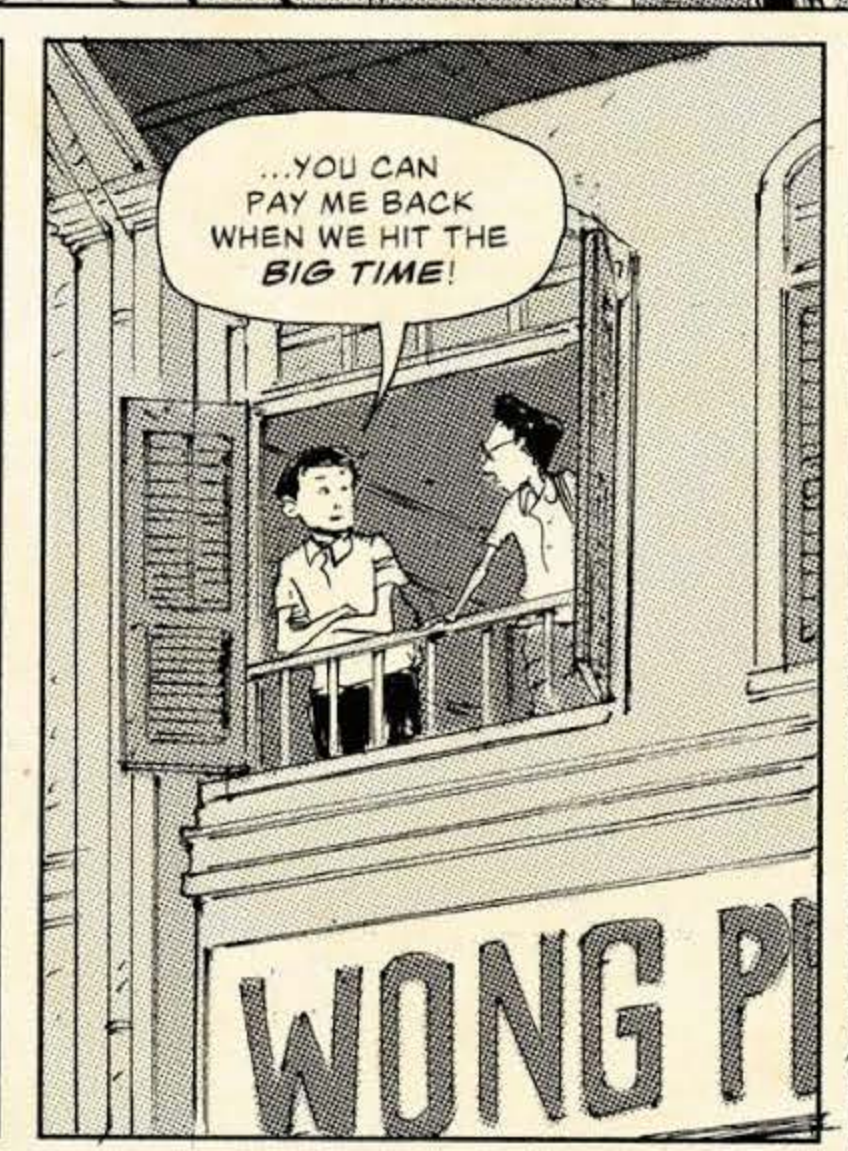

I CAN DO THE WRITING OVER HERE...
BOOKS AND REFERENCE MATERIALS CAN GO OVER *THERE*...
AND WE SHOULD GET YOU A PROPER *DRAFTING TABLE* AS WELL!

HOW ARE WE GOING TO PAY FOR ALL THIS?

EH?

THIS IS AMAZING...
BUT I'M NOT SURE HOW WE'LL BE ABLE TO *AFFORD* IT...

LET *ME* WORRY ABOUT THE MONEY SIDE OF THINGS FOR NOW. JUST FOCUS ON THE ART...


...YOU CAN PAY ME BACK WHEN WE HIT THE ***BIG TIME***!
WONG P

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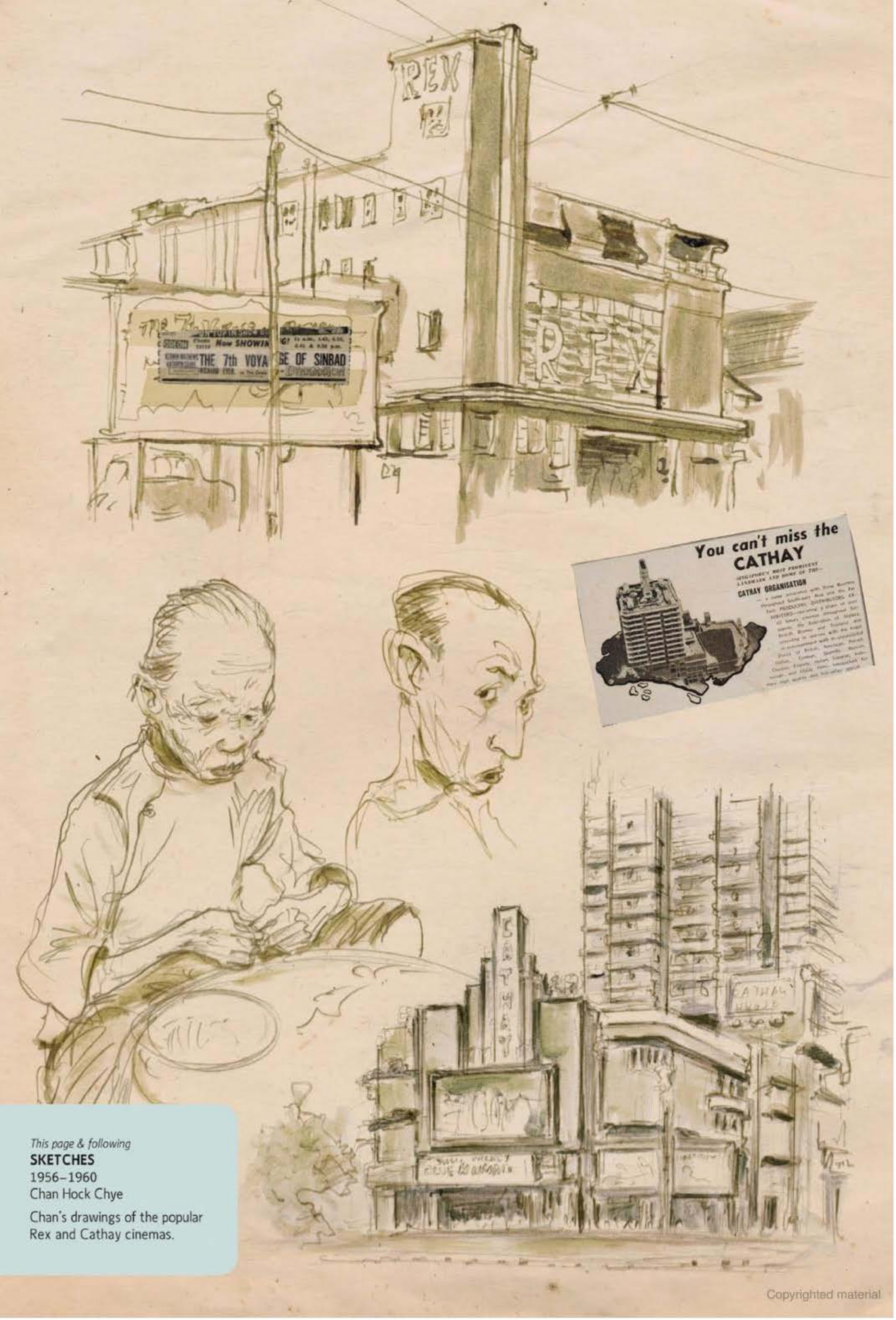

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SKETCHES
1956–1960
Chan Hock Chye

Chan's drawings of the popular Rex and Cathay cinemas.

Copyrighted material

(*Top right*) A night soil man deposits the day's collection into a night soil truck, and an old lady plays a game of "四色牌" or "Four-Colour Cards."

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Great World Amusement Park (*Tua Seh Kai*, or 大世界, *see bottom of page*), founded in 1929, was one of three popular amusement parks (along with New World and Happy World) offering affordable entertainment for the masses. Changing times and tastes led to their gradual decline, and Great World was closed for good in 1978.

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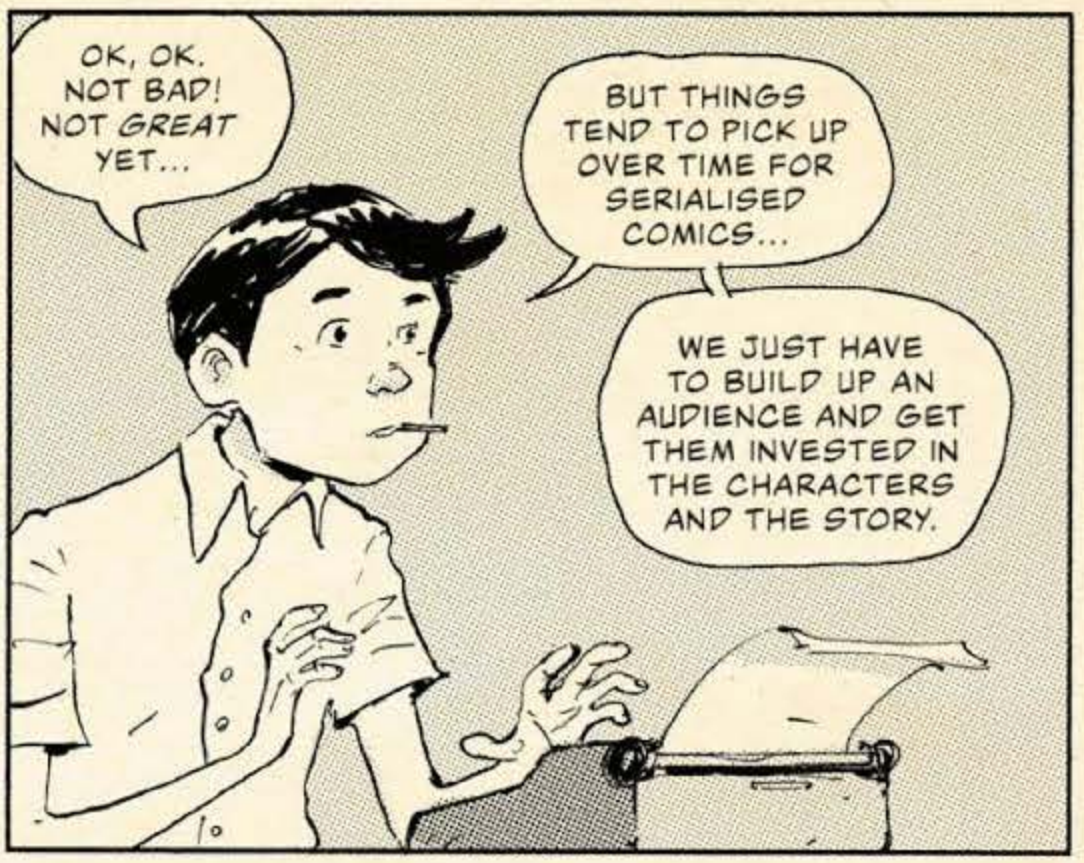

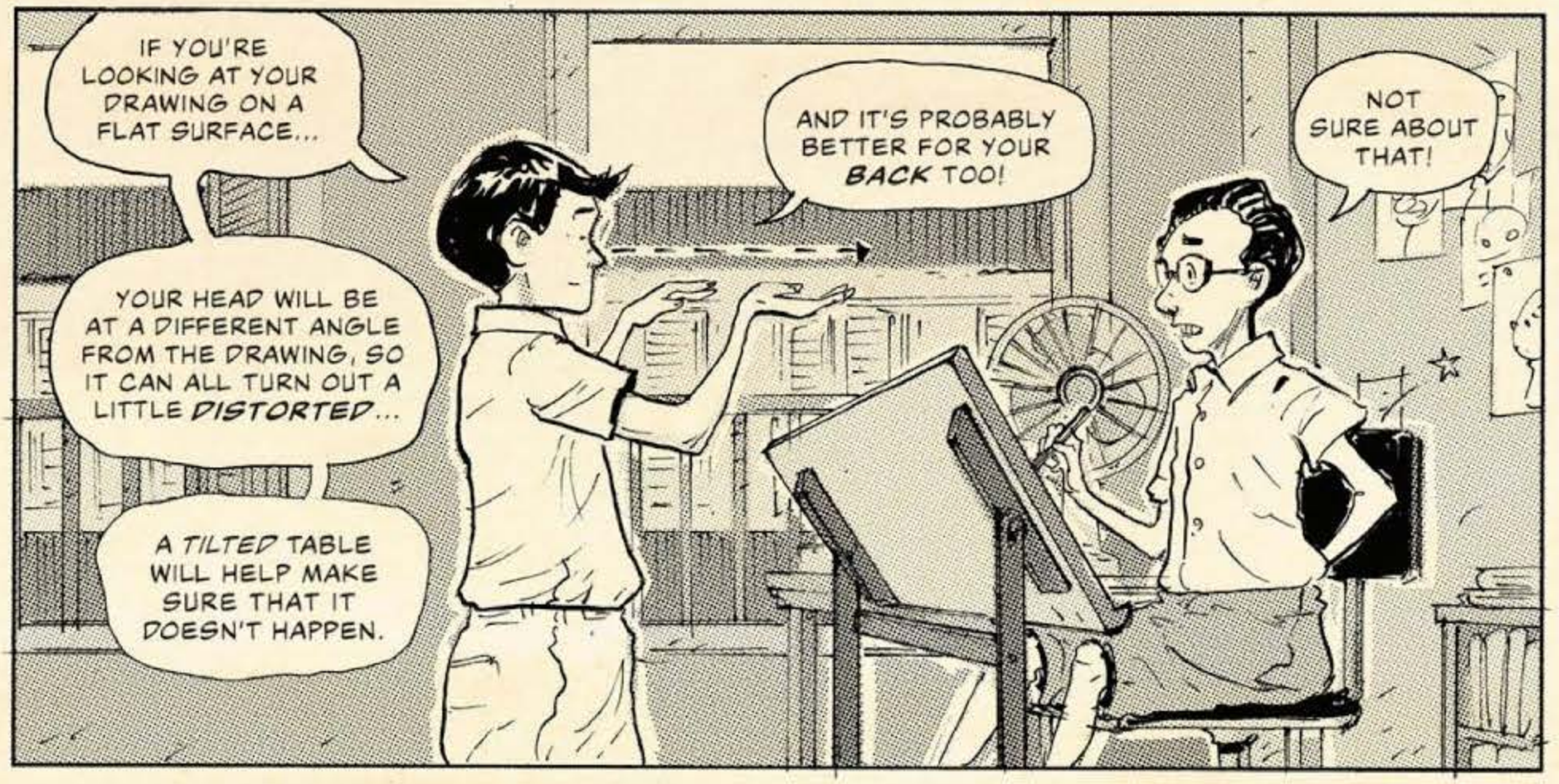

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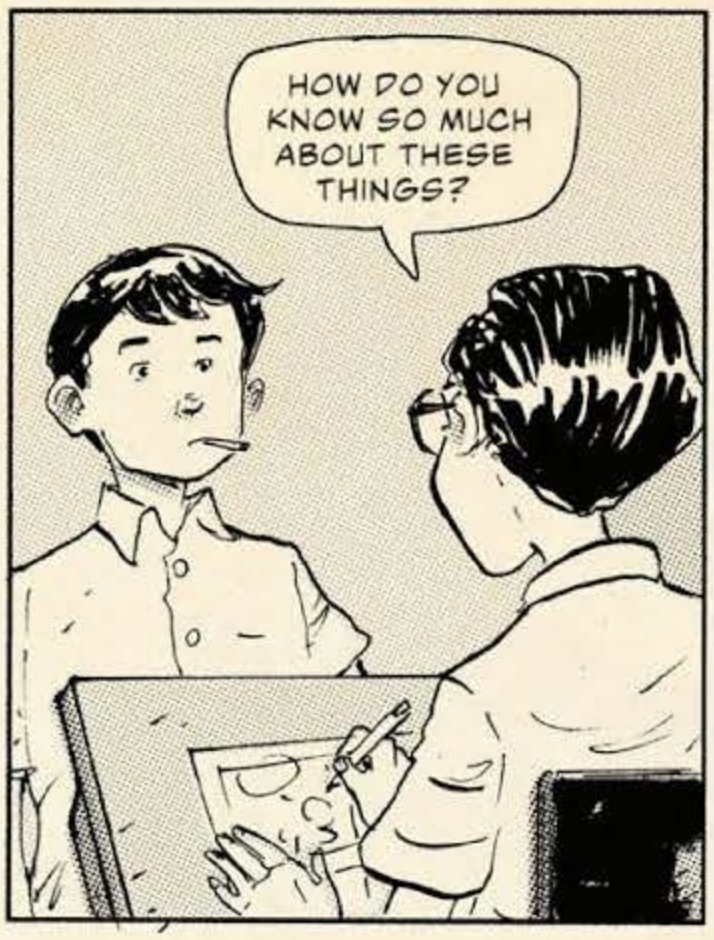

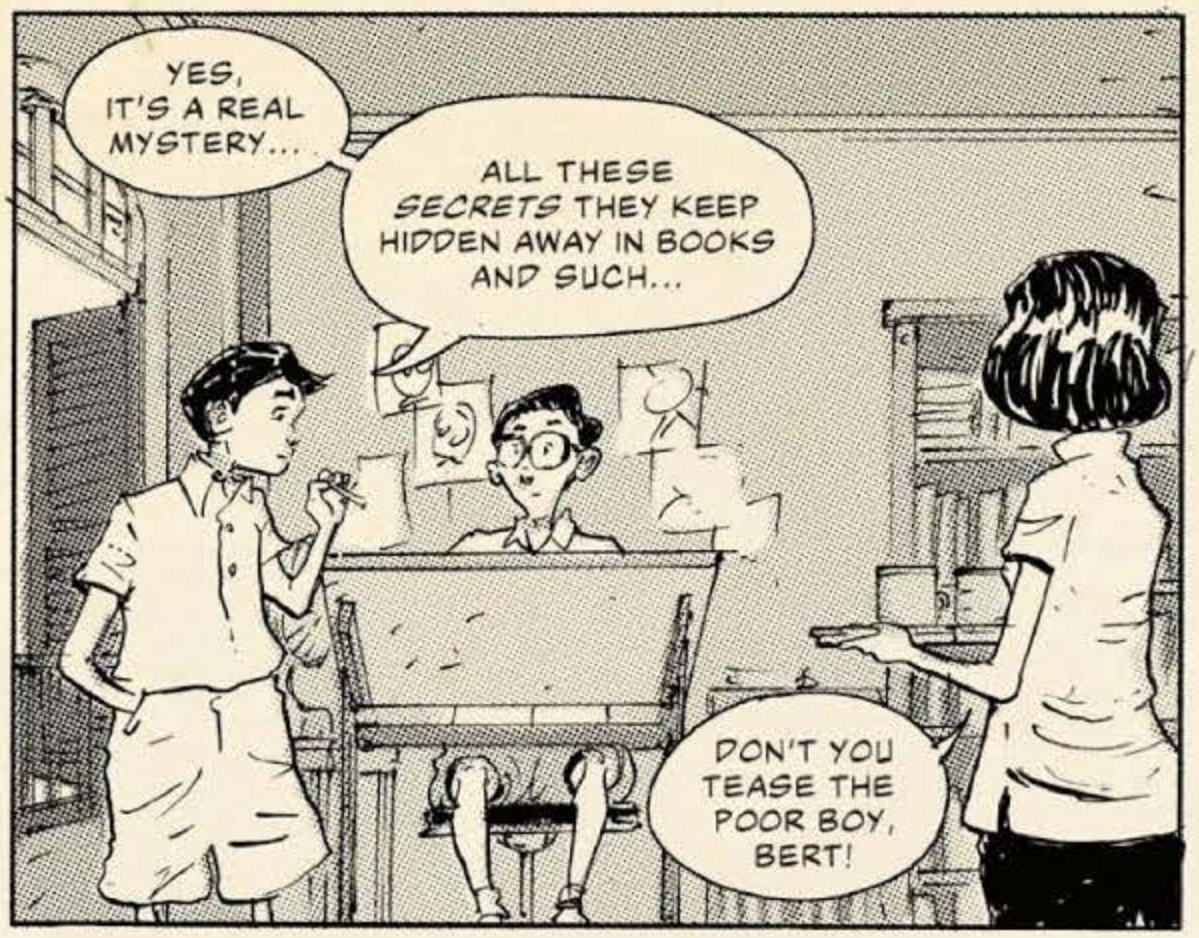

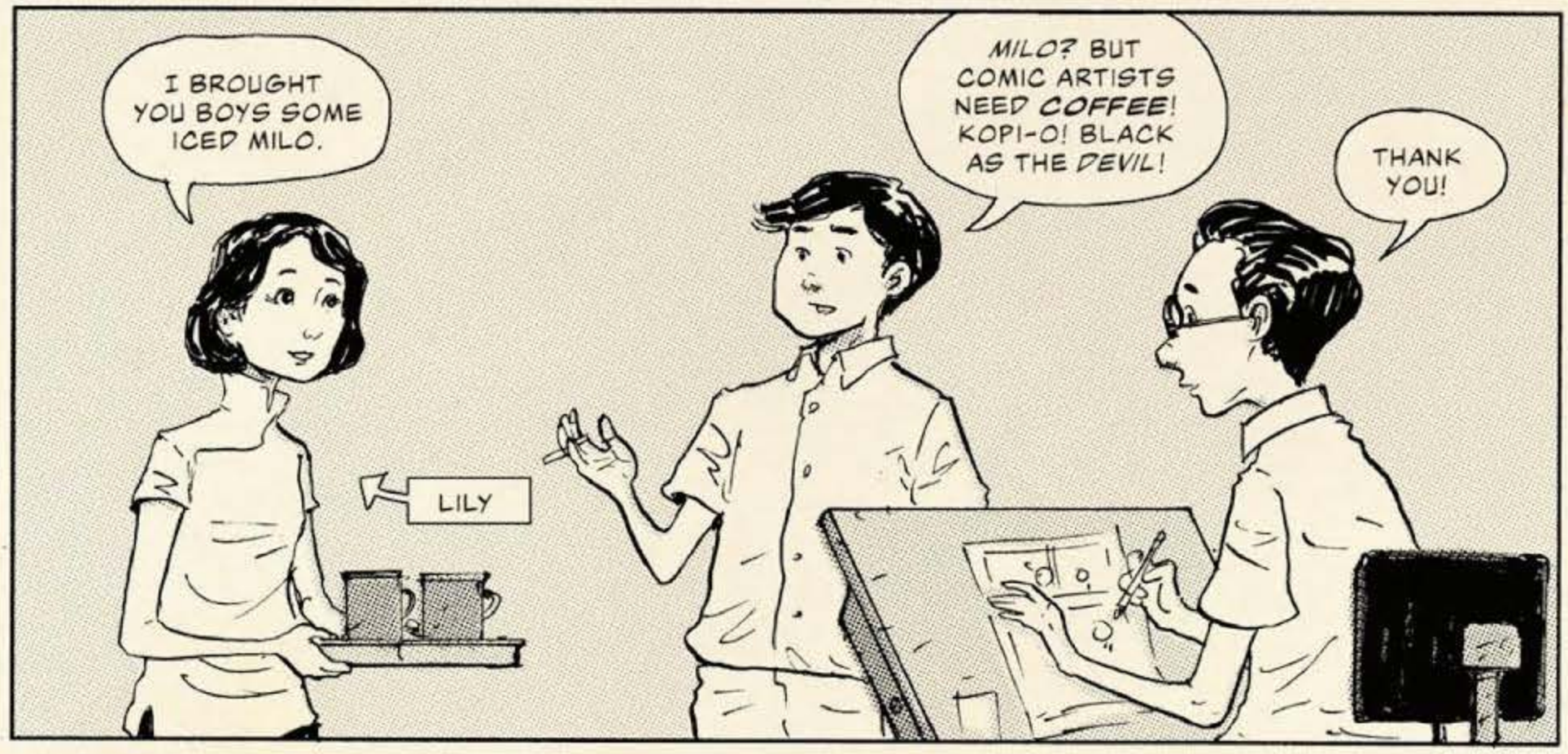

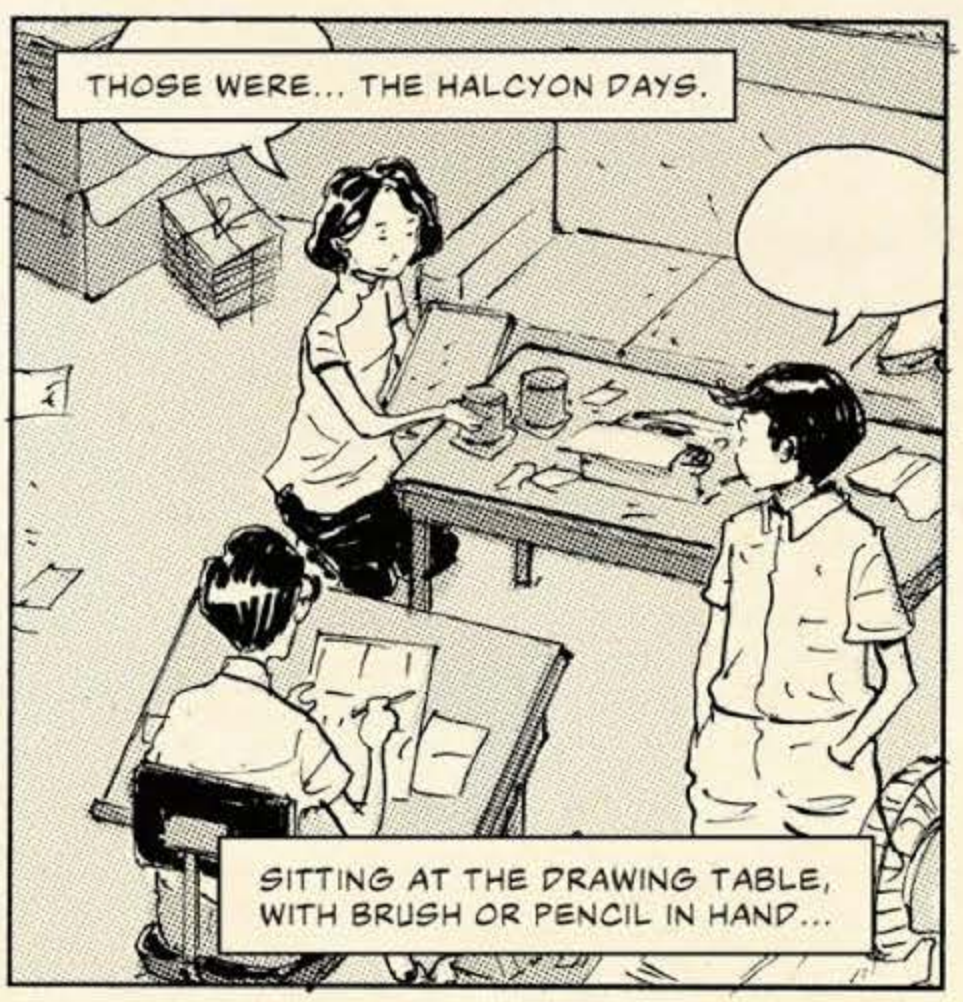

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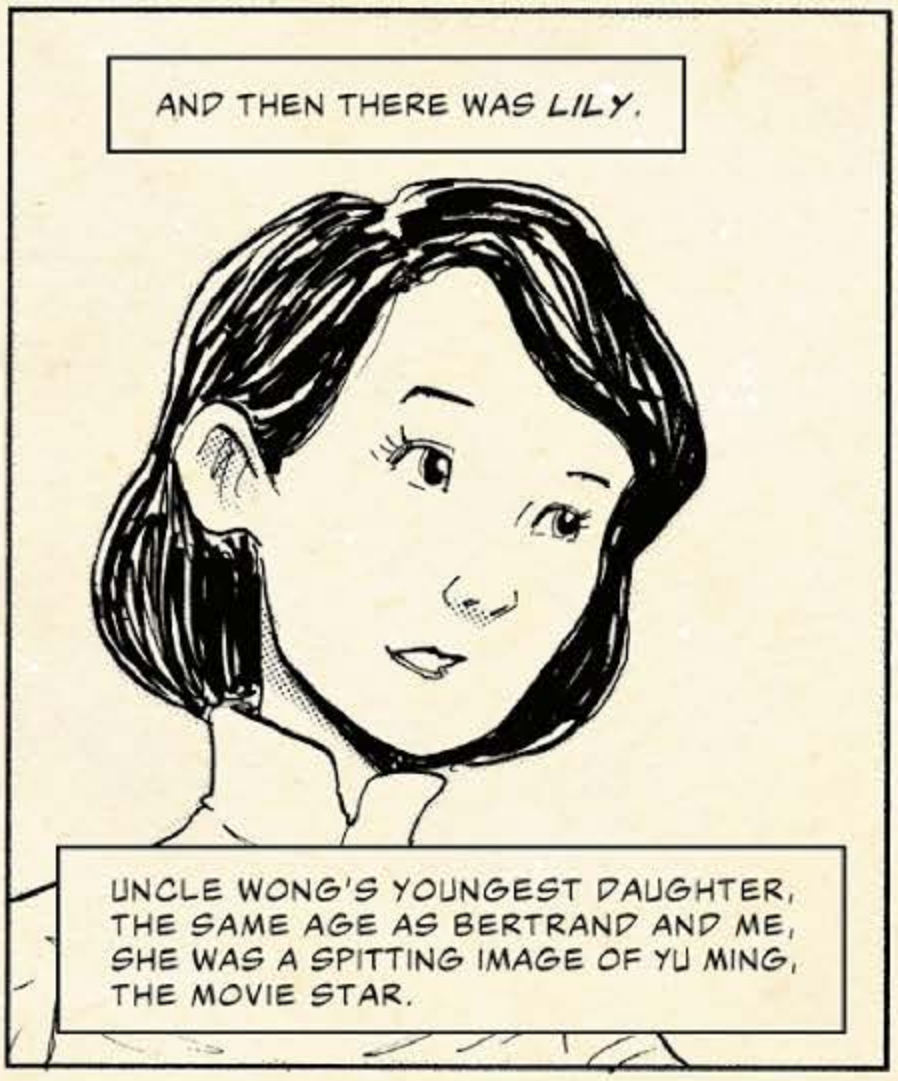
OUTSIDE, YOU COULD HEAR THE SOUNDS OF THE CITY... MORE HUMAN VOICES THEN, FEWER CARS... AND THE COLOURS SOMEHOW MORE VIVID, IT FELT LIKE, EVEN IF THEY SEEM TO FADE WITH EACH YEAR IN PHOTOGRAPHS.



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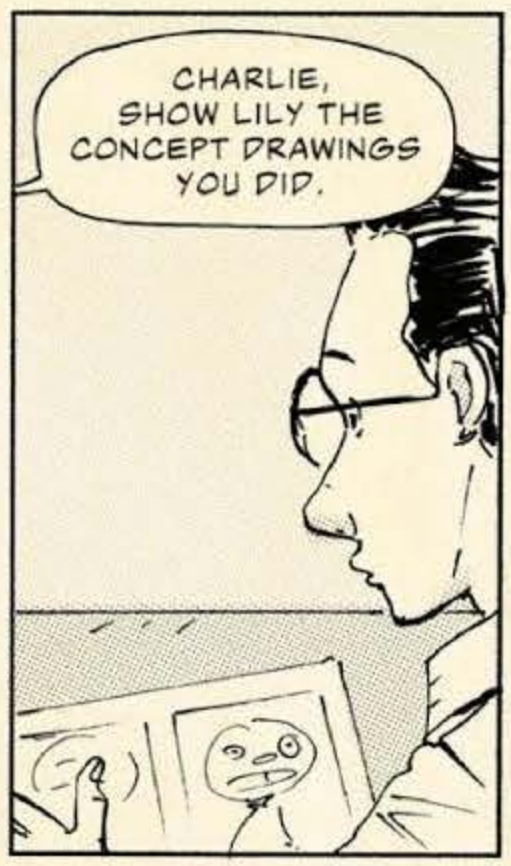

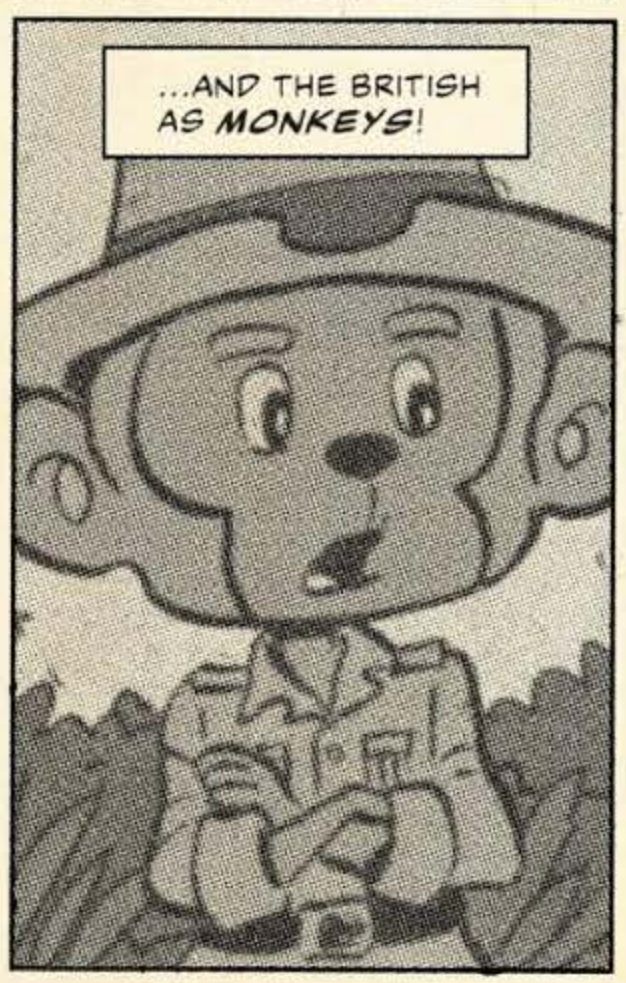

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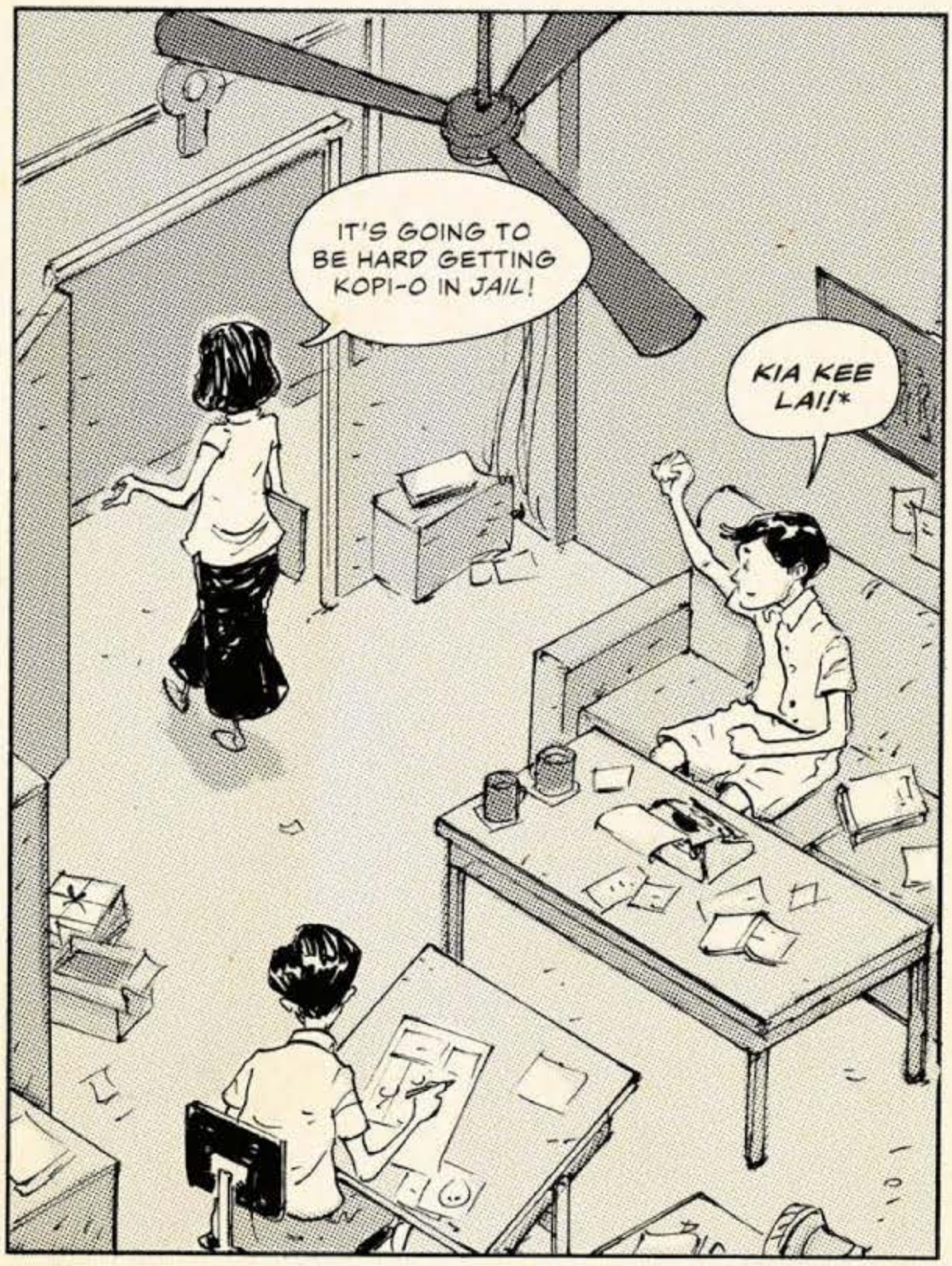

*"站起来!": HOKKIEN FOR "STAND ON YOUR OWN TWO FEET!"

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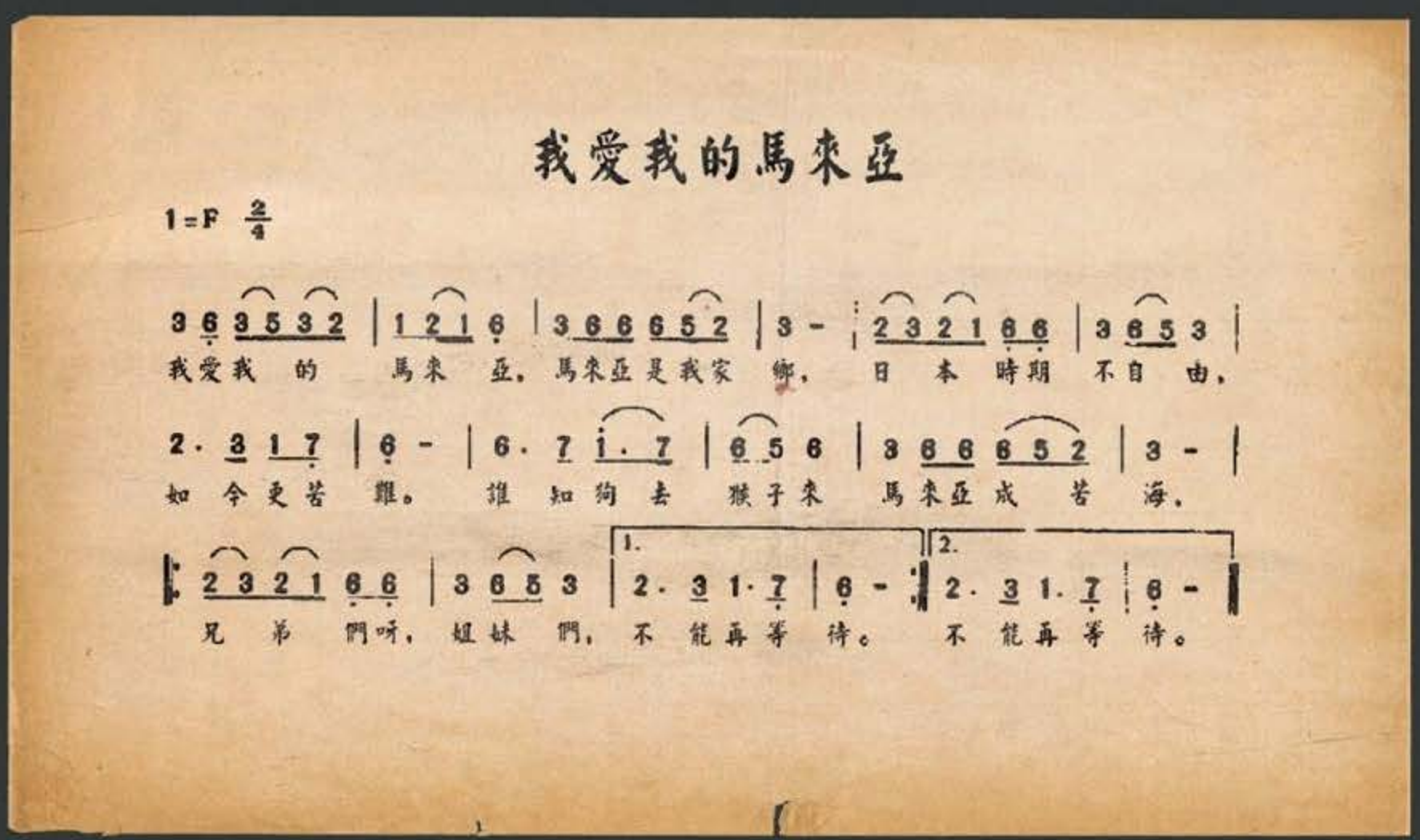

我愛我的馬來亞

1=F 2/4

3 6 3 5 3 2 | 1 2 1 6 | 3 6 6 6 5 2 | 3 - | 2 3 2 1 6 6 | 3 6 5 3 |
我愛我 的 馬來 亞，馬來亞是我家 鄉， 日 本 時期 不自 由，

2. 3 1 7 | 6 - | 6. 7 1. 7 | 6 5 6 | 3 6 6 6 5 2 | 3 - |
如 今更苦 難。 誰 知狗 去 猴子來 馬來亞成 苦 海，

|: 2 3 2 1 6 6 | 3 6 5 3 | 1. 2. 3 1. 7 | 6 - :| 2. 3 1. 7 | 6 - |
兄 弟 們呀， 姐妹 們， 不 能再等 待。 不 能再等 待。

我爱我的马来亚
I love my Malaya

马来亚是我家乡
Malaya is my home

日本时期不自由
During the Japanese Occupation
We were not free

如今更苦愁
Now we are in greater misery

谁知狗去猴子来
Who knew when the dogs had gone
The monkeys would return

马来亚成苦海
And turn Malaya into a bitter sea

兄弟们呀姐妹们
Oh my brothers, my sisters

不能再等待
We can wait no more

同胞们呀快起来
Oh my compatriots
Let us all stand up

不能再等待
We can wait no more

Above
"I LOVE MY MALAYA"
Song sheet
c. 1956
Collection of Chan Hock Chye

Copyrighted material

Above
FORCE 136 No. 2
1956
Chan Hock Chye
Stones Throw Press

Opposite & following
FORCE 136 No. 1
1956
Art by Chan Hock Chye
Words by Bertrand Wong
Stones Throw Press

Copyrighted material

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MEANWHILE, AT A JAPANESE CAMP SEVERAL MILES AWAY, ANOTHER GROUP OF SOLDIERS ARE ALSO ABOUT TO MEET THEIR NEW COMMANDER...

ATTENTION! WE MUST BE AT OUR ABSOLUTE BEST TODAY! COLONEL SUGIMOTO APPROACHES!

BUT LIEUTENANT MORI WILL SOON LEARN THAT IMPRESSING THE NEW COLONEL WILL BE A MUCH MORE TESTING ENDEAVOUR THAN HE COULD HAVE EVER ANTICIPATED...

FOR SUGIMOTO IS A SADISTIC AND VICIOUS KILLER, ALWAYS EAGER TO DEMONSTRATE HIS POWER AND AUTHORITY IN CRUEL WAYS!

I MUST SHOW THESE INCOMPETENT FOOLS MY STRENGTH!

IT WILL MAKE FOR SOME GOOD SPORT TOO...

GREETINGS, COLONEL!

SPARE ME THE NICETIES, LIEUTENANT!

HEADQUARTERS HAS ASSESSED THIS UNIT TO HAVE FALLEN **BELOW** THE STANDARDS REQUIRED IN ITS ACHIEVEMENT OF OBJECTIVES...

SO I INTEND TO **PUNISH** ALL THOSE WHO FALL SHORT, STARTING WITH PRIVATE **ICHIRO**!

ICHIRO? BUT THAT WAS AN **ACCIDENT**!

COLONEL! PERHAPS IF I MAY HAVE A CHANCE TO EXPLAIN...

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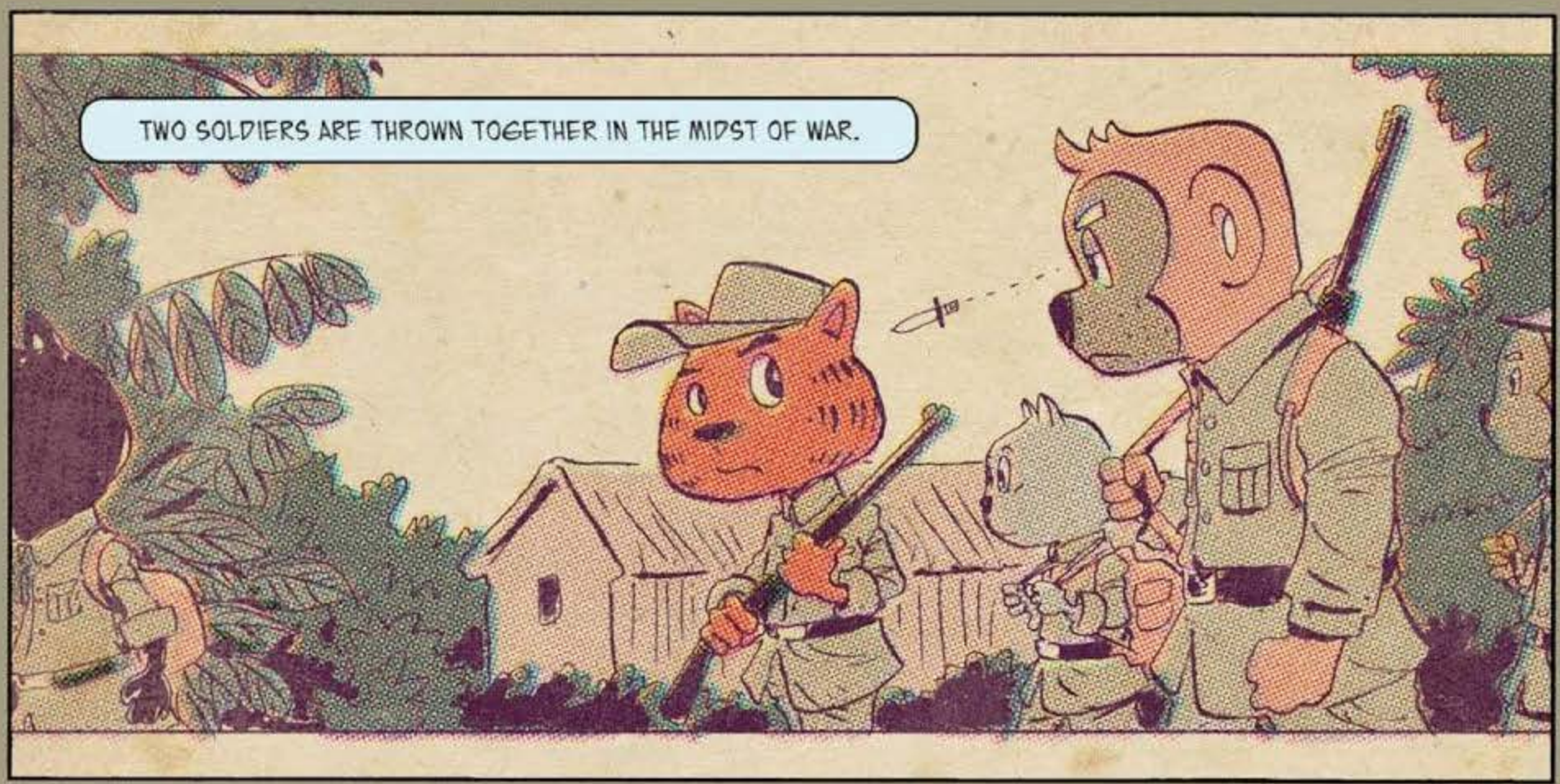

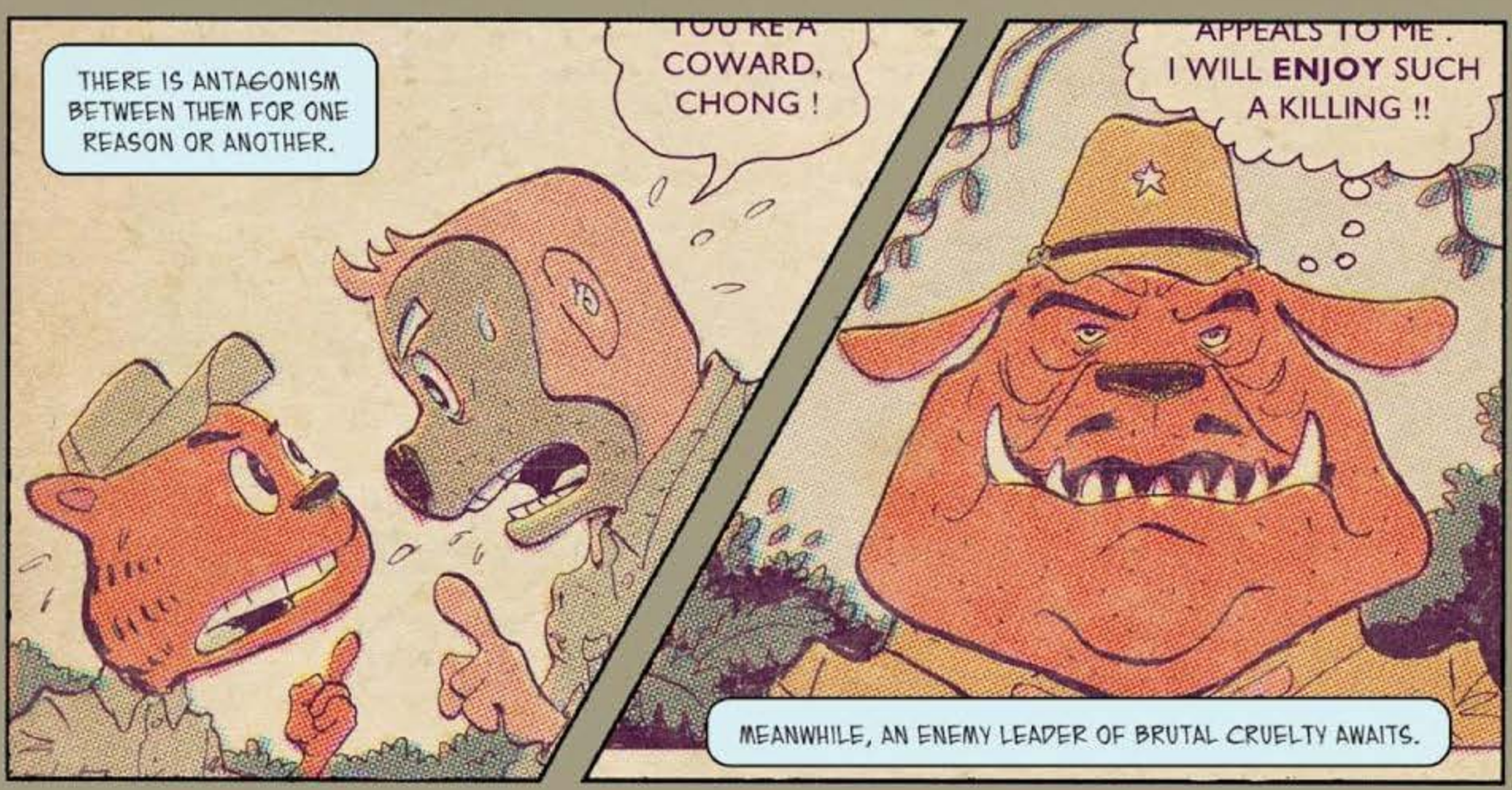

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IN THE HEAT OF THE BATTLE, OUR HEROES PROVE THEIR *BRAVERY* AND *INTEGRITY* TO EACH OTHER.

WATCH OUT! ENEMY SNIPER BEHIND YOU!!

I'M SORRY I EVER DOUBTED YOU, CHONG!

AND NOW, COMRADES IN ARMS, THEY LOOK FORWARD TO HELPING THE ALLIES DEFEAT THE EVIL AXIS POWERS AND ***WIN*** THE SECOND WORLD WAR!

BUT CHAN AND WONG WOULD COME TO REALISE THAT THEY WANTED TO TELL STORIES THAT SHOWED THE HARSHER *REALITIES* OF ARMED CONFLICT...

...JUST AS *HARVEY KURTZMAN** HAD DONE WITH HIS WAR TITLES AT EC COMICS.

*ASIDE FROM *TWO-FISTED TALES* AND *FRONTLINE COMBAT*, KURTZMAN WAS ALSO THE DRIVING FORCE BEHIND THE INFLUENTIAL *MAD* MAGAZINE AT EC COMICS.

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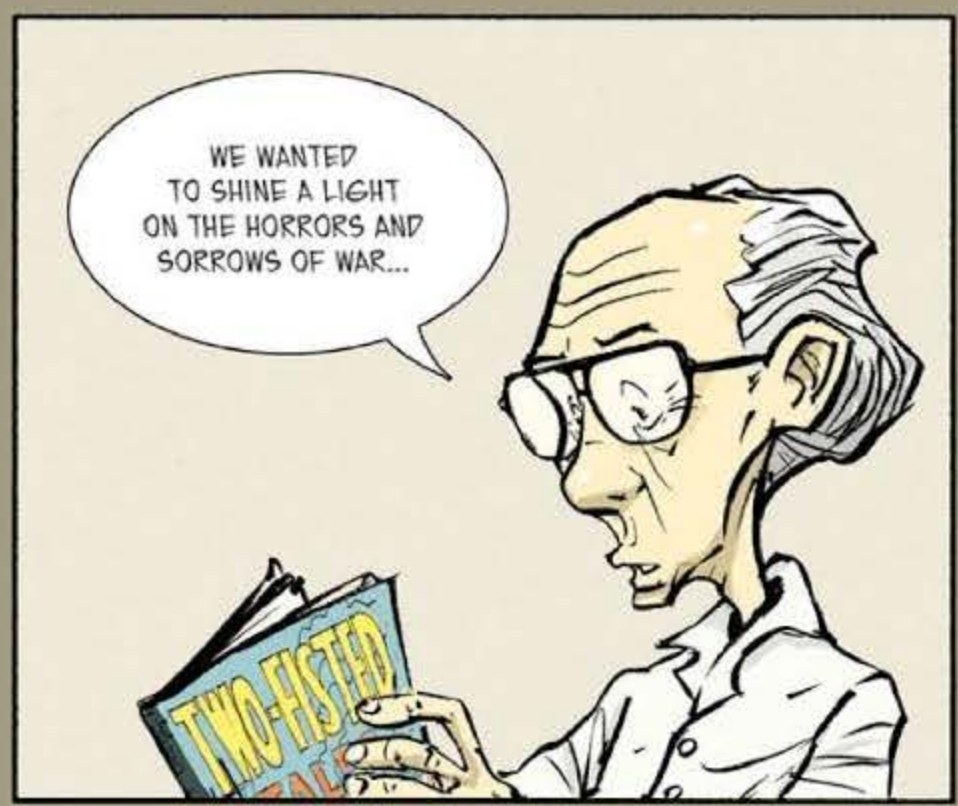

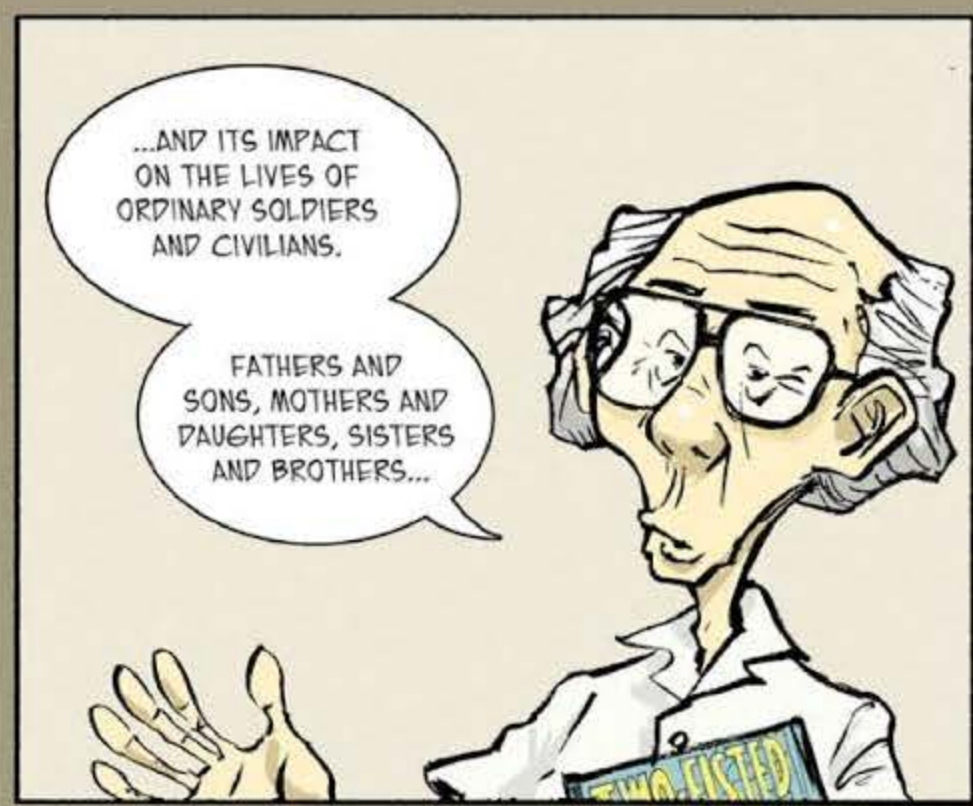

A MAN CANNOT ATTEND HIS OWN FUNERAL... OR SO THE SAYING GOES! BUT WHAT IF HE IS FORCED TO ***DIG HIS OWN GRAVE?*** TO STAND ***DEFENCELESS*** AS MACHINE GUNS ARE AIMED AND ***FIRED*** AT HIM? TO BE A VICTIM OF...

SOOK CHING!

BUT PERHAPS LADY LUCK HAS NOT YET DESERTED YOU! THE BULLETS HAVE SOMEHOW ***MISSED*** YOU, AND YOU PLAN TO HIDE AMONGST THE FALLEN UNTIL THE COAST IS CLEAR!

BUT, OH, WHAT'S THIS?! THEY ARE SEEKING OUT SURVIVORS AND CRUELLY FINISHING THEM OFF WITH THEIR ***BAYONETS!***

HEAR THE ***ANGUISHED CRIES*** AS COLD STEEL PIERCES WARM FLESH!! IS THIS HOW YOUR JOURNEY ENDS?!

Left
FORCE 136 No. 4: SOOK CHING
1957
Art by Chan Hock Chye
Words by Bertrand Wong
Stones Throw Press

The story recalls the massacre of Chinese civilians under Operation Sook Ching ("purge through cleansing") after the Japanese conquest of Singapore in 1942.

To punish the Chinese community for its support of anti-Japanese war efforts in Manchuria and Malaya, as many as 50,000 Chinese males between the ages of 18 and 50 were singled out for execution using a largely arbitrary screening process.

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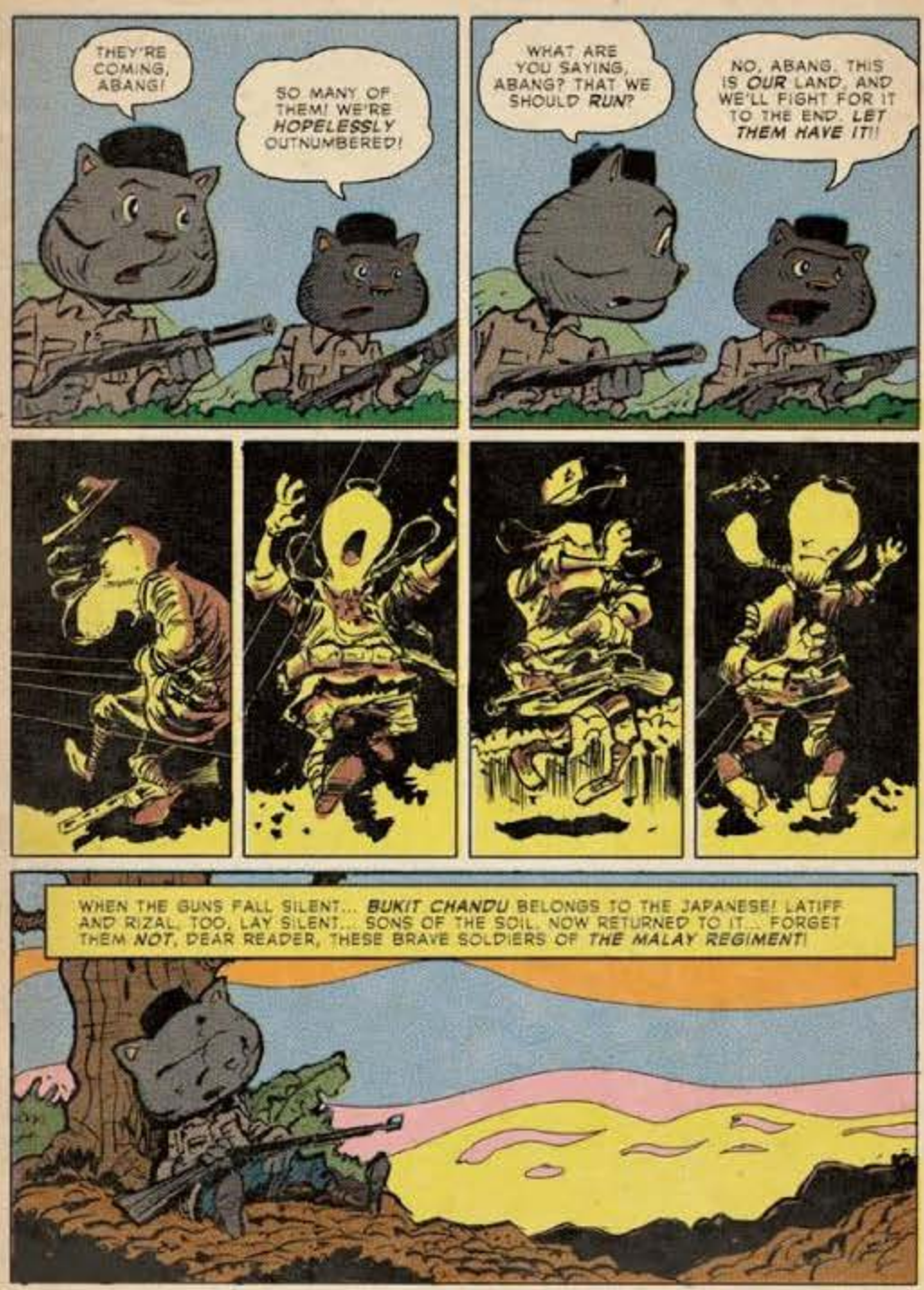
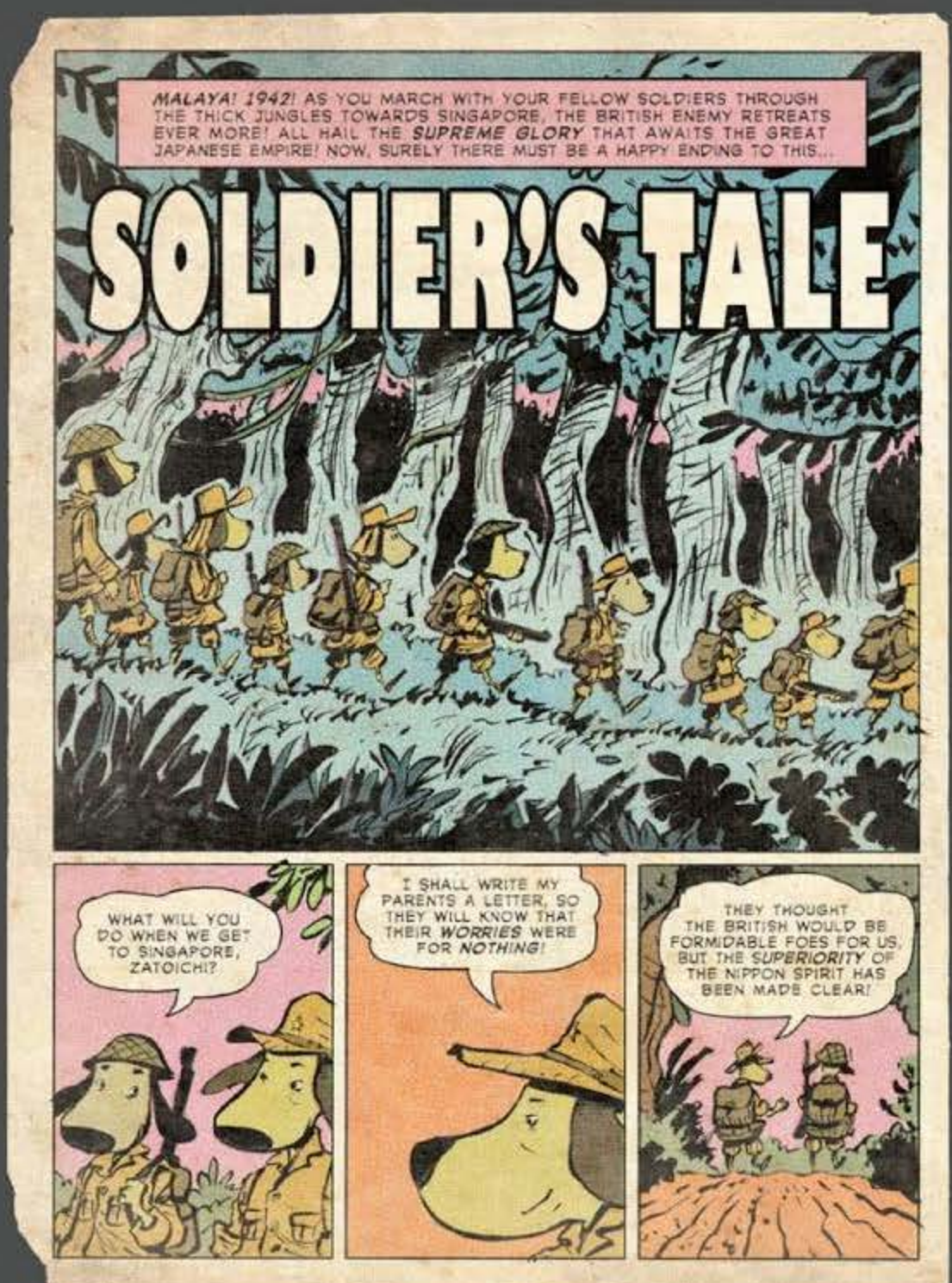


Left
FORCE 136 No. 5: OPIUM HILL
1957
Art by Chan Hock Chye
Words by Bertrand Wong
Stones Throw Press

A depiction of the Battle of Bukit Chandu ("Opium Hill" in Malay) on February 13–14, 1942, just before the fall of Singapore. Heavily outnumbered, Lieutenant Adnan Saidi and the men of the C Company of the 1st Malay Brigade valiantly held their ground for nearly two days before being overrun.



Right
FORCE 136 No. 6: SOLDIER'S TALE
1957
Art by Chan Hock Chye
Words by Bertrand Wong
Stones Throw Press

Told through the eyes of a Japanese infantryman, the story charts the changing fortunes of the Imperial Army as the tide of the war turns, forcing its soldiers to embark on an arduous retreat through the mountains and jungles of Burma, whilst battling starvation, malaria and dysentry.

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A TOWN IN *MALAYA!* A MAN STANDS, GAZING AT THE SUNSET! HOW DOES AN *INNOCENT* MAN END UP CAUGHT BEHIND BARBED WIRE FENCES? WHY IS HE TREATED LIKE A *CRIMINAL* IN HIS OWN LAND? WHY, IT MAY BE ALL A QUESTION OF...

TRUST!

TRUST! IT IS WHAT FRIENDSHIPS ARE BUILT ON! HOW NATIONS AND COMMUNITIES *SURVIVE!*

TRUST! IT IS WHAT YOUR PARENTS SAID HAD TO BE *EARNED* AND KEPT!

TRUST! CAN IT REALLY BE WHAT LEADS A MAN TO A LIFE TRAPPED BEHIND WIRE FENCES?

Above & following **FORCE 136 No. 7: TRUST!** (1957) | Art by Chan Hock Chye, Words by Bertrand Wong | Stones Throw Press

By the seventh and final issue of *Force 136*, Chan and Wong had abandoned the use of animal characters. The focus had also shifted from the Second World War to the **Malayan Emergency**, the battle fought between the Malayan Communist Party (MCP) and the British army from 1948 to 1960.

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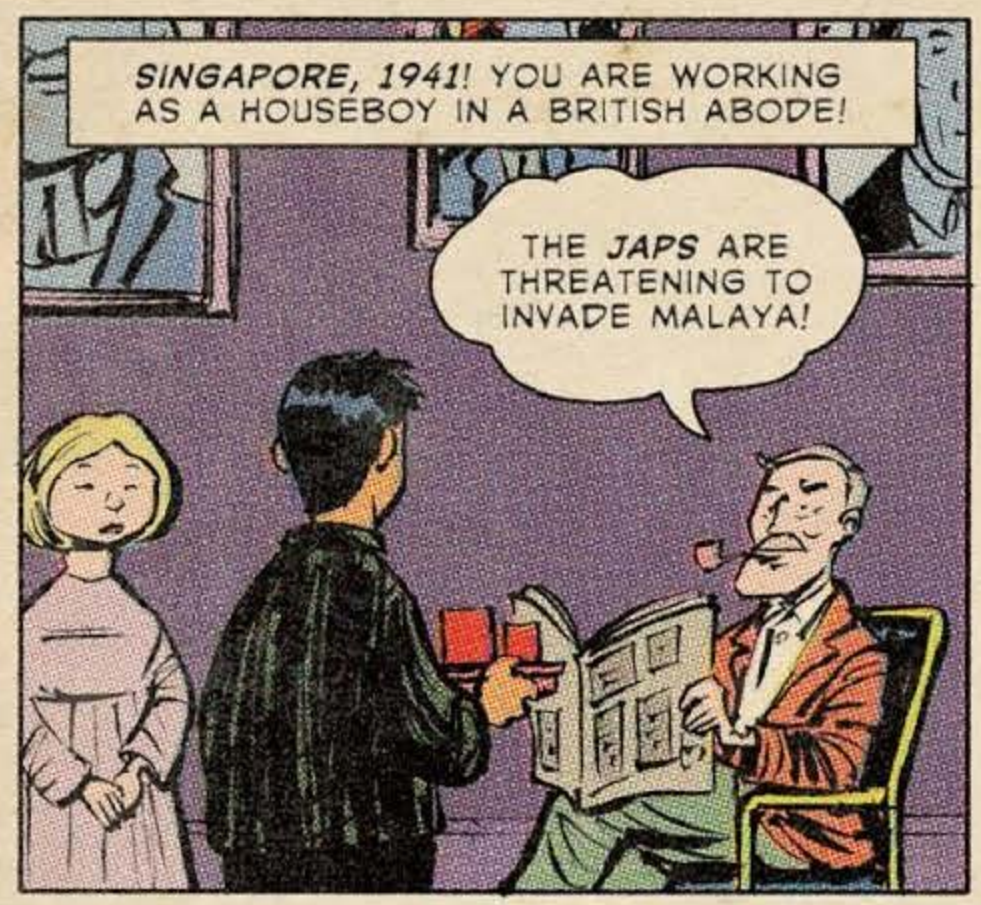
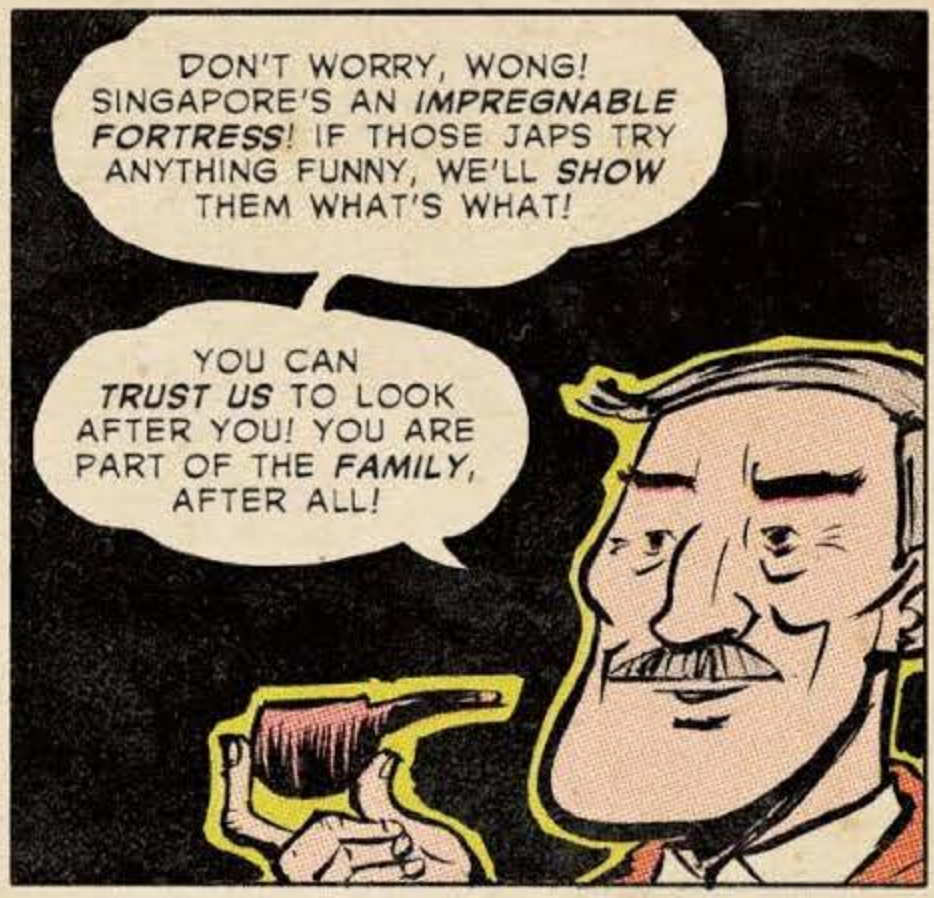
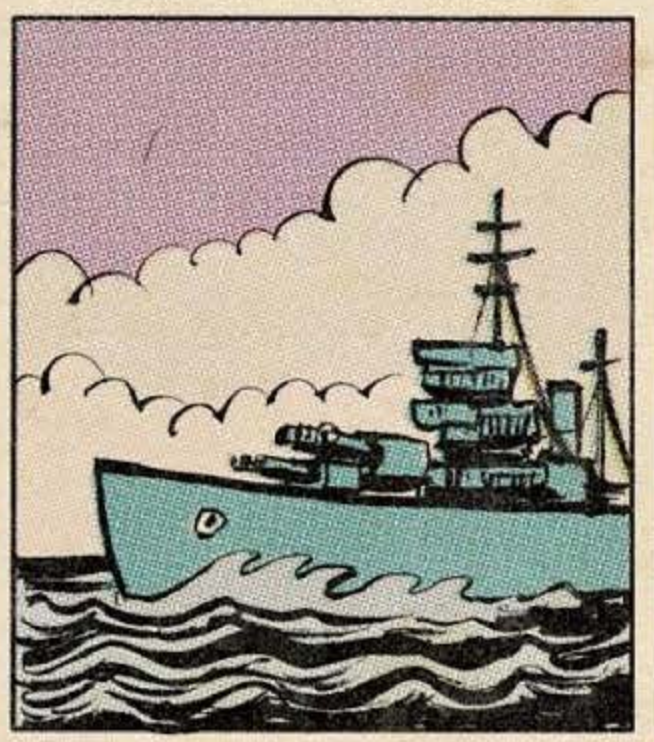


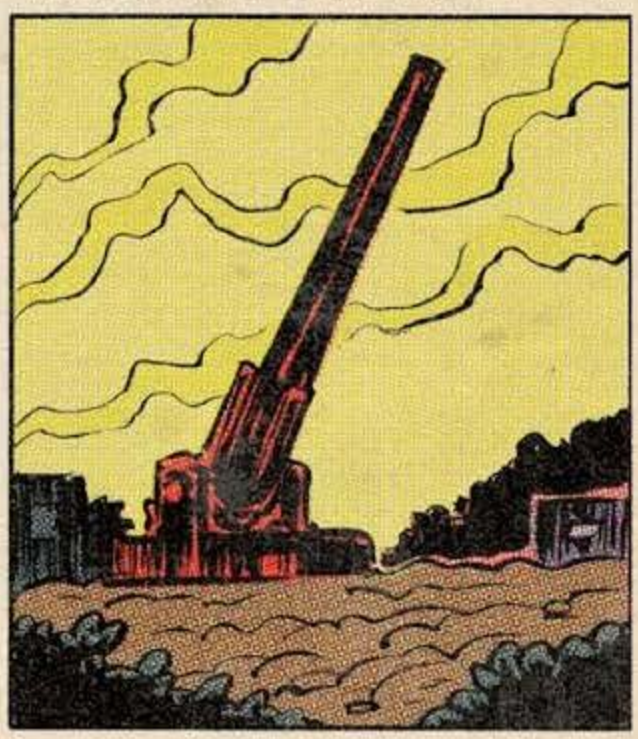


AND INDEED, THE BRITISH HAVE 100,000 SOLDIERS STATIONED IN SINGAPORE!

THE MIGHTY BATTLESHIPS HMS PRINCE OF WALES AND HMS REPULSE SIT IN HER HARBOUR!



AND POWERFUL COASTAL GUNS STAND READY TO THWART ANY INVASION, BY LAND OR BY SEA!



BUT LO! WATCH AS THE BRITISH PACK UP THEIR BAGS AND GET READY TO FLEE!

OBSERVE, AS THEIR SOLDIERS RETREAT IN DISARRAY AND TURN INTO A DISORGANISED RABBLE!

AND SO YOU RETURN TO YOUR OWN HOME TO AWAIT THE INVADING FORCES!

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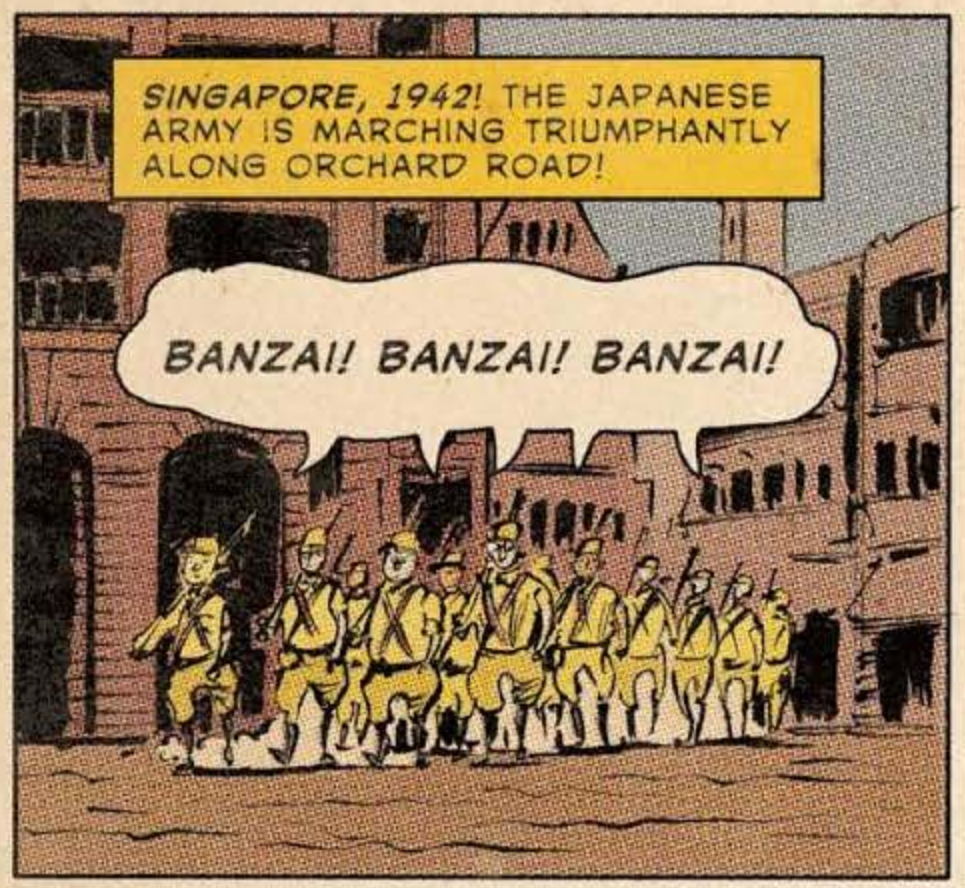

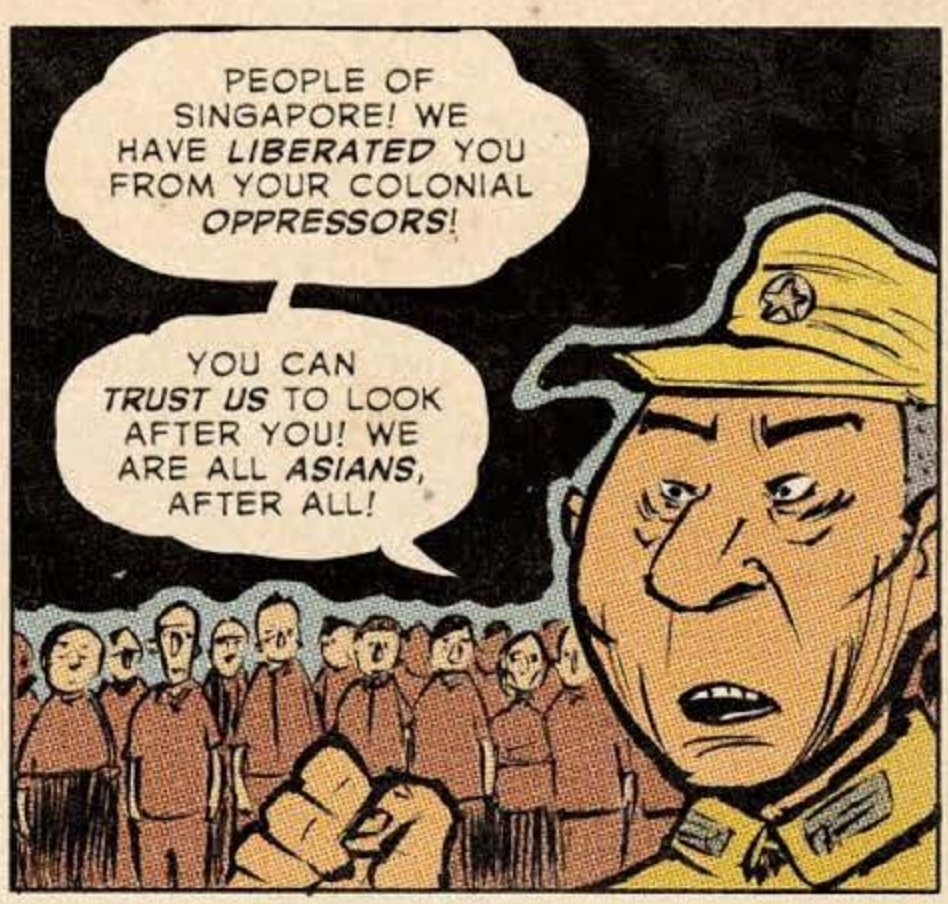

AND INDEED, YOU HAD BEEN BUT A MERE *SECOND-CLASS CITIZEN* UNDER BRITISH RULE!

NOW THE JAPANESE PROMISE A *GREATER EAST ASIA CO-PROSPERITY SPHERE*, FREE FROM COLONIAL SUBJUGATION!

AND OFFER THE PROSPECT OF AN *INDIAN NATIONAL ARMY* TO HELP INDIA FIGHT FOR ITS *INDEPENDENCE*!

BUT LO! WATCH AS THEY ROUND UP MANY INNOCENTS, WHO WILL *NEVER* RETURN!

SHIVER, AS YOU LISTEN TO WHISPERED TALES ABOUT THEIR WANTON ACTS OF *UNSPEAKABLE* CRUELTY!

AND SO YOU *FLEE* INTO THE JUNGLES OF MALAYA TO ESCAPE THE HORRORS!

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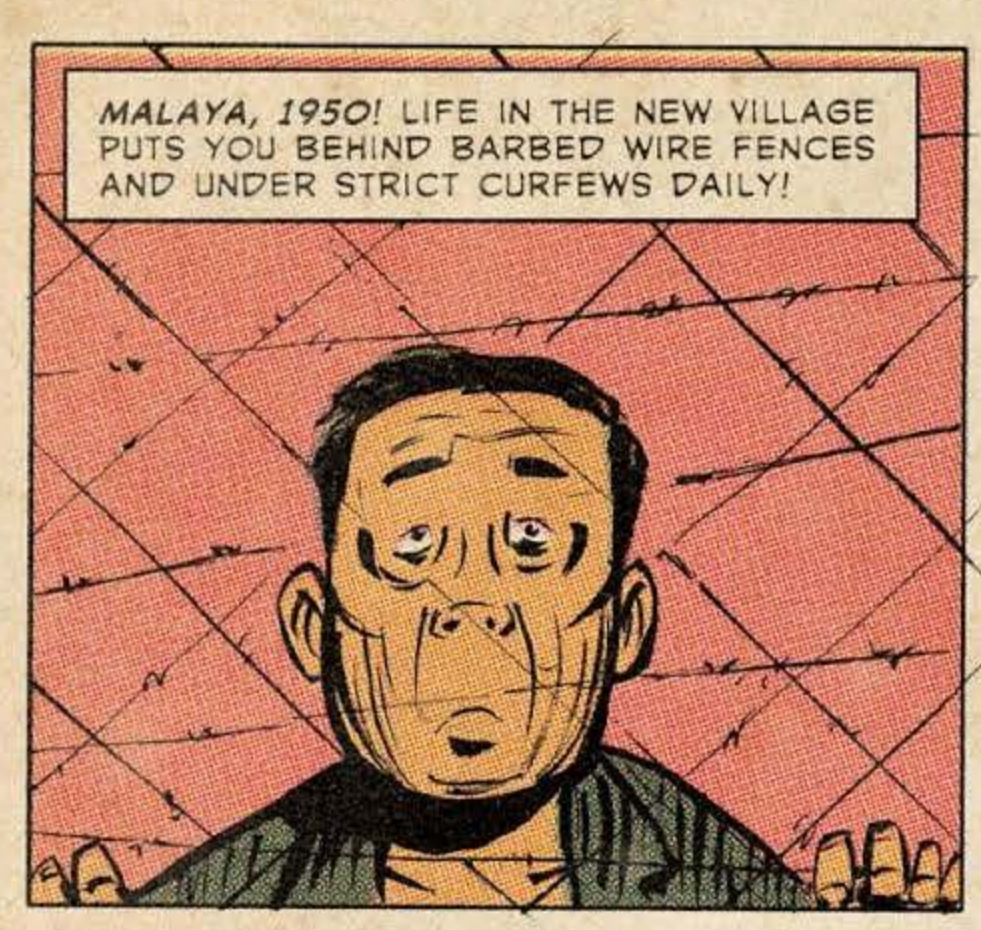
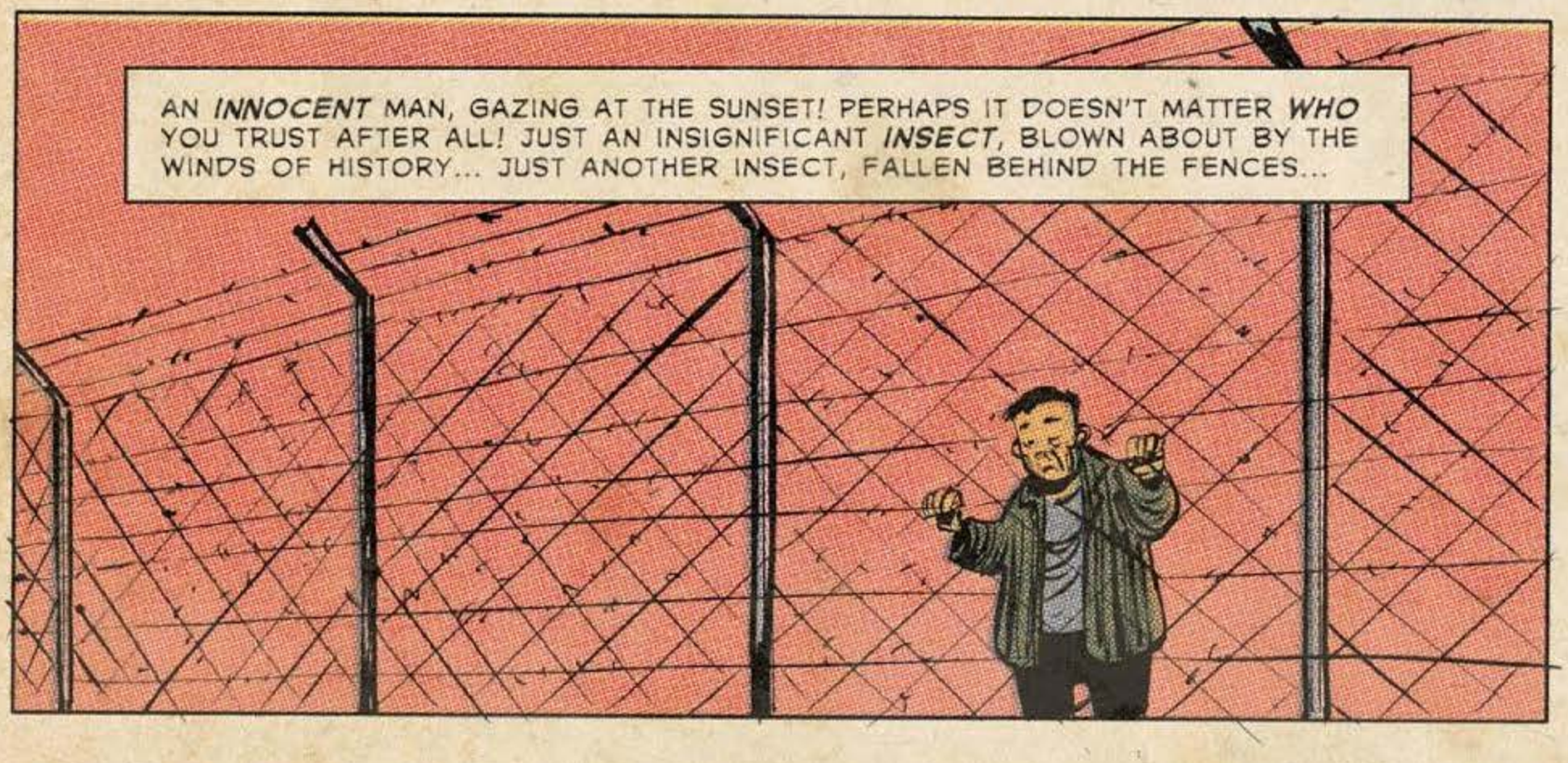


THE WHITE MAN WHO FLEES AS SOON AS WAR ARRIVES?

THE SOLDIERS WHO FORSAKE THEIR HUMANITY TO FOLLOW ORDERS TO SHOOT AND KILL?

OR THE COMMUNIST WHO JUSTIFIES EVERY DARK DEED IN THE NAME OF REVOLUTION?



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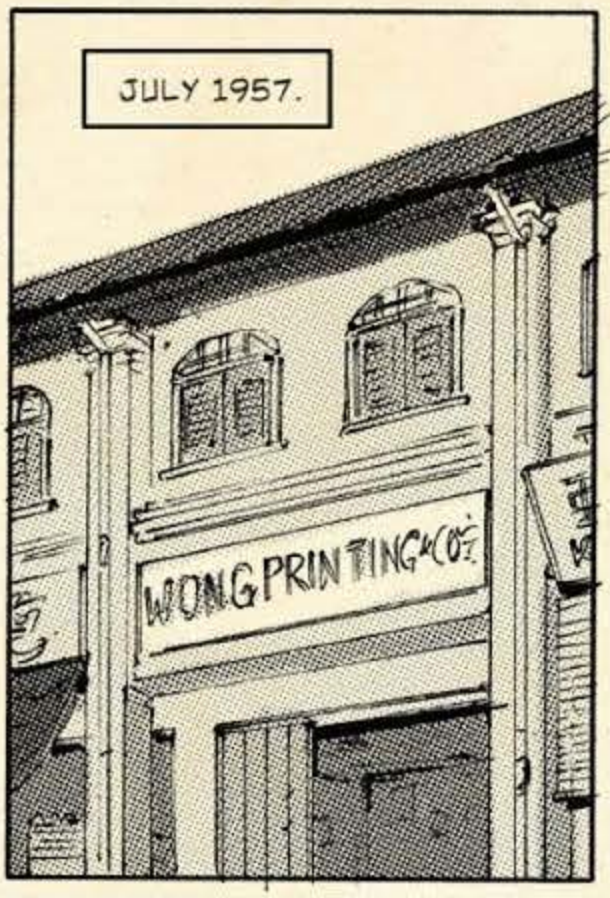

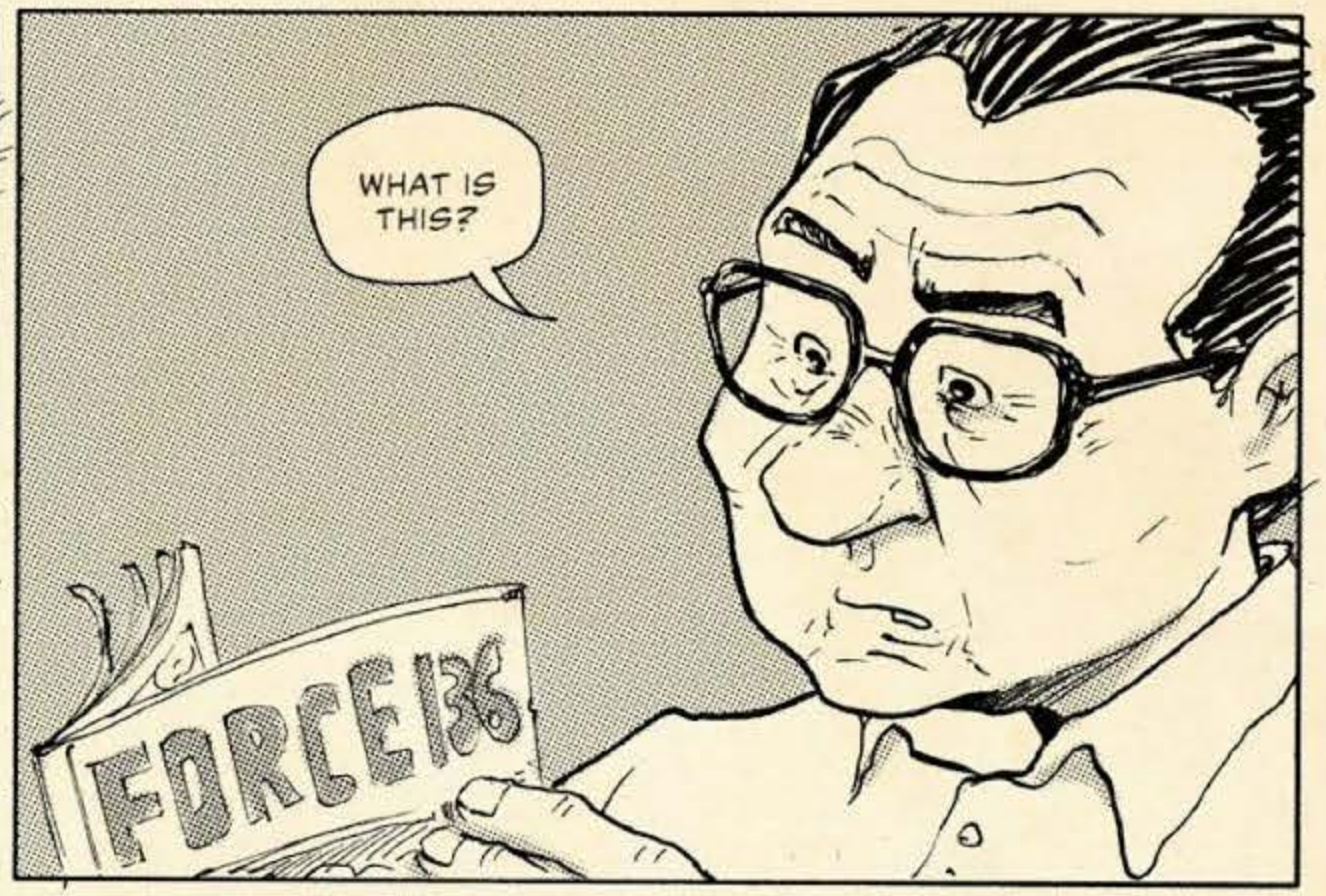

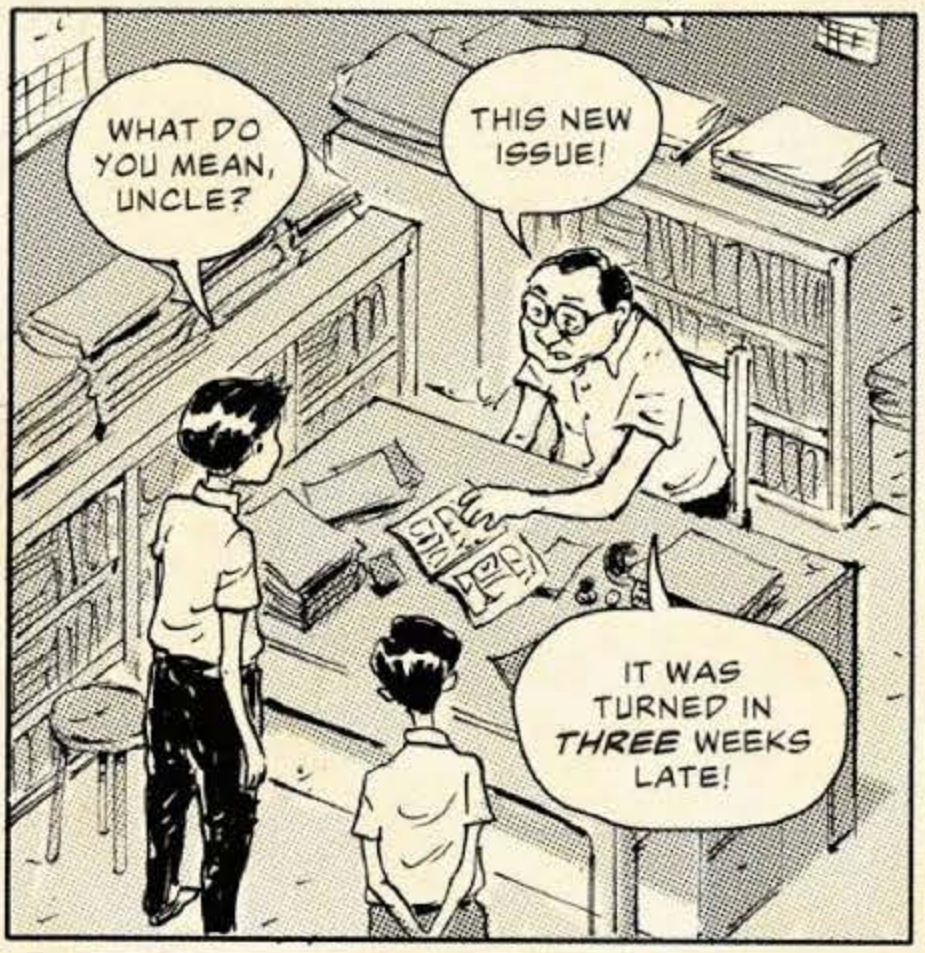

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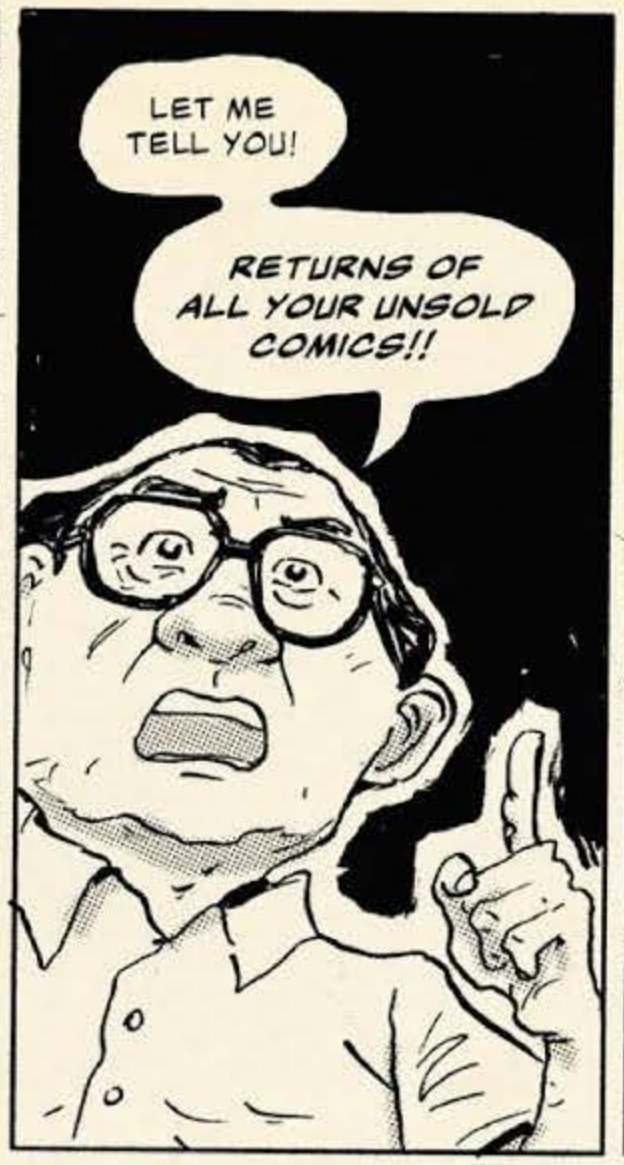

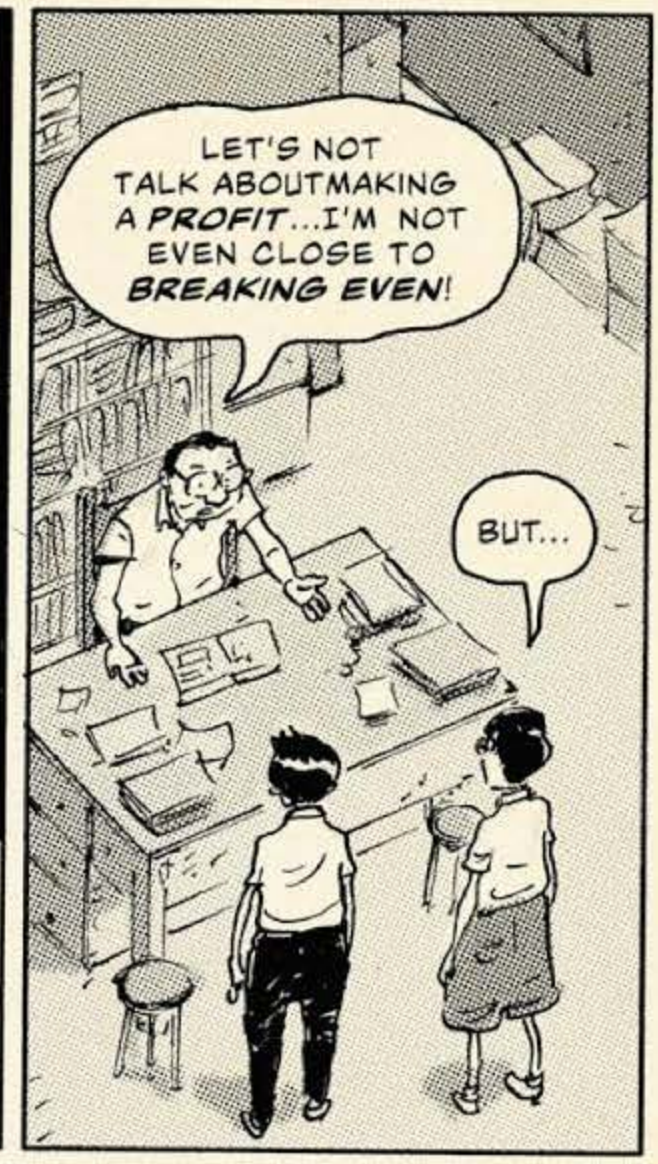

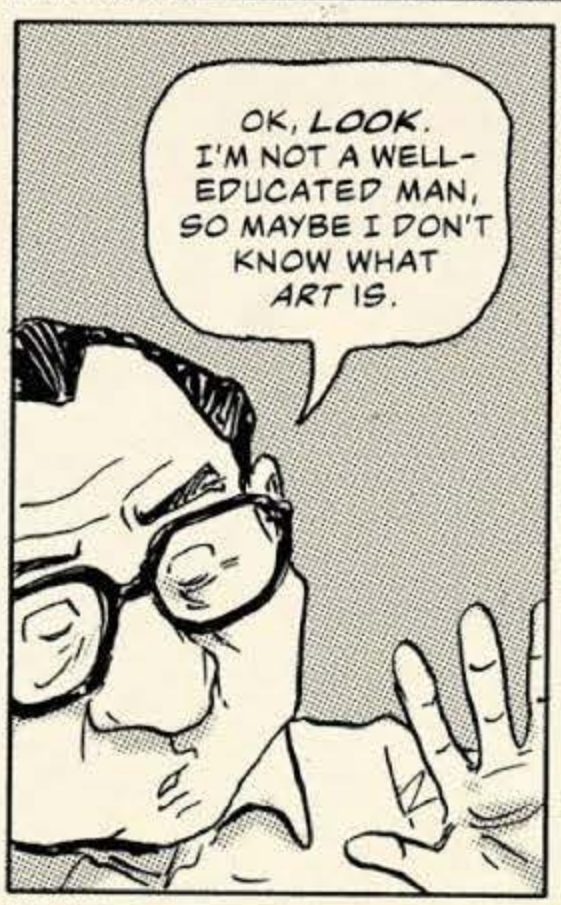

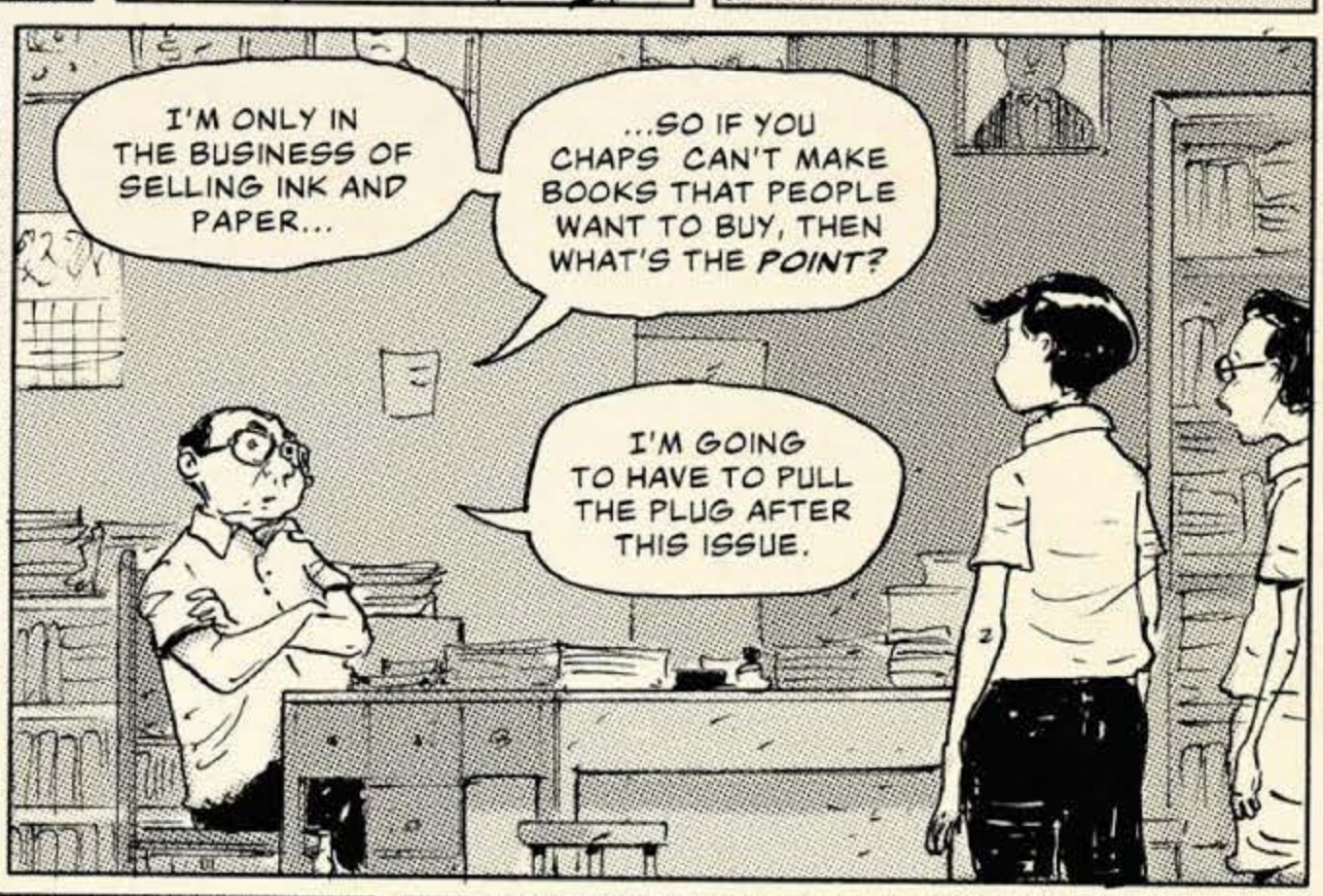

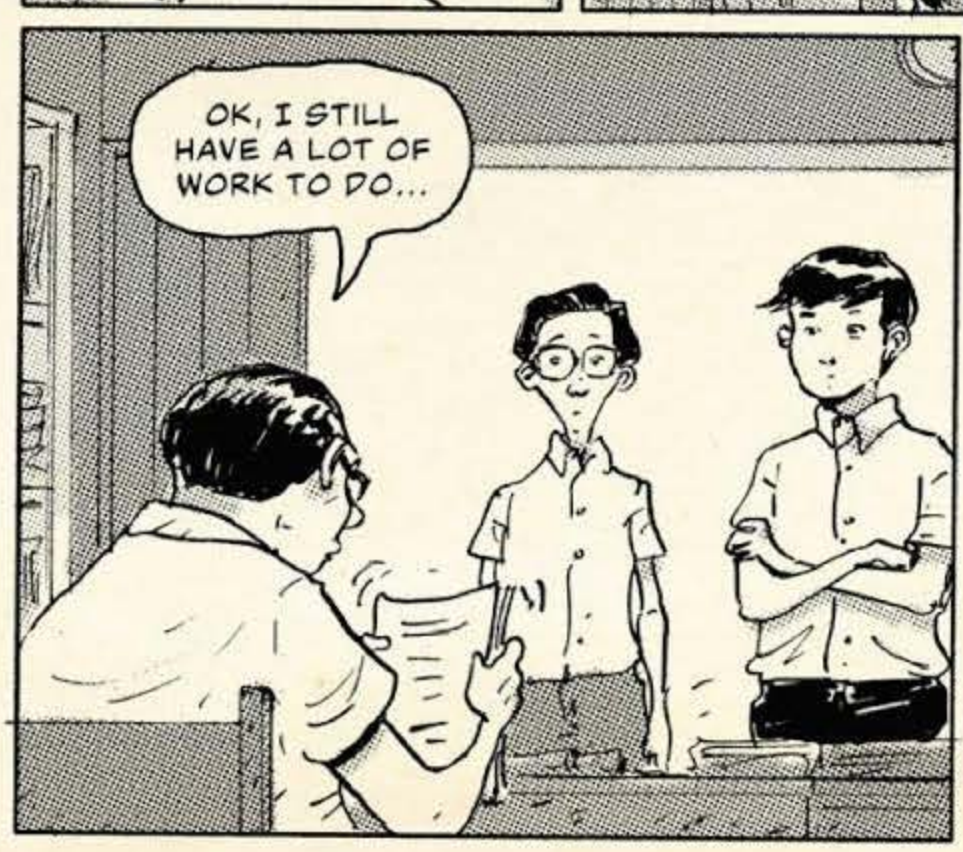

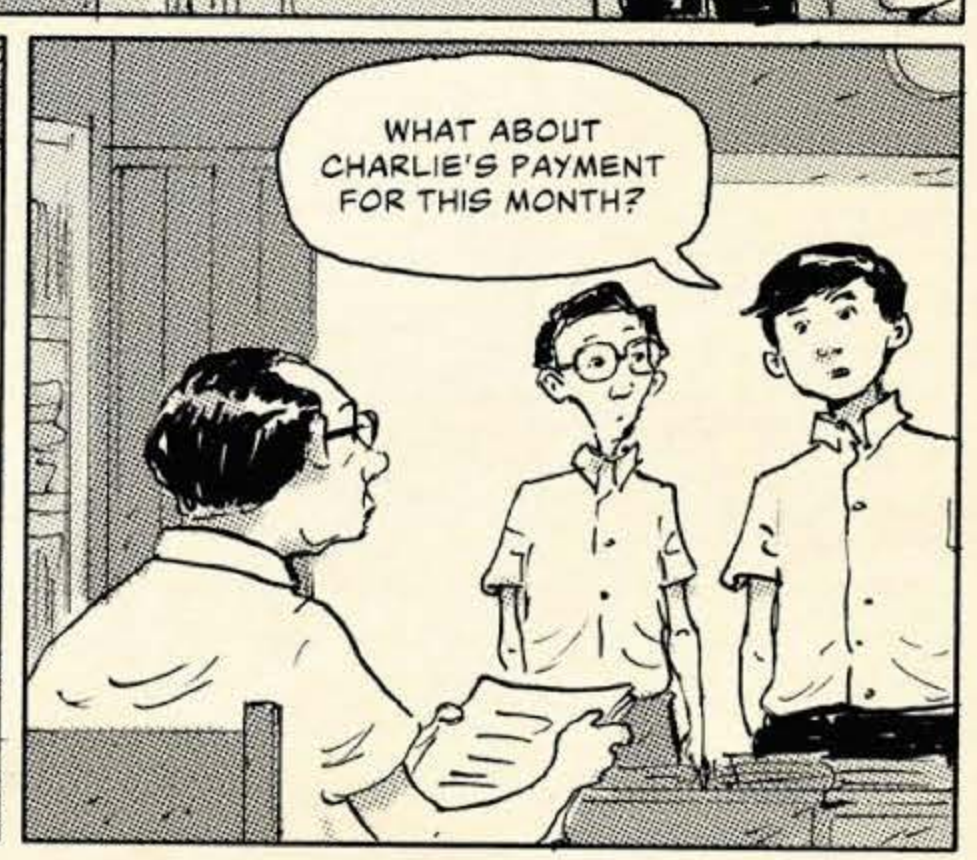

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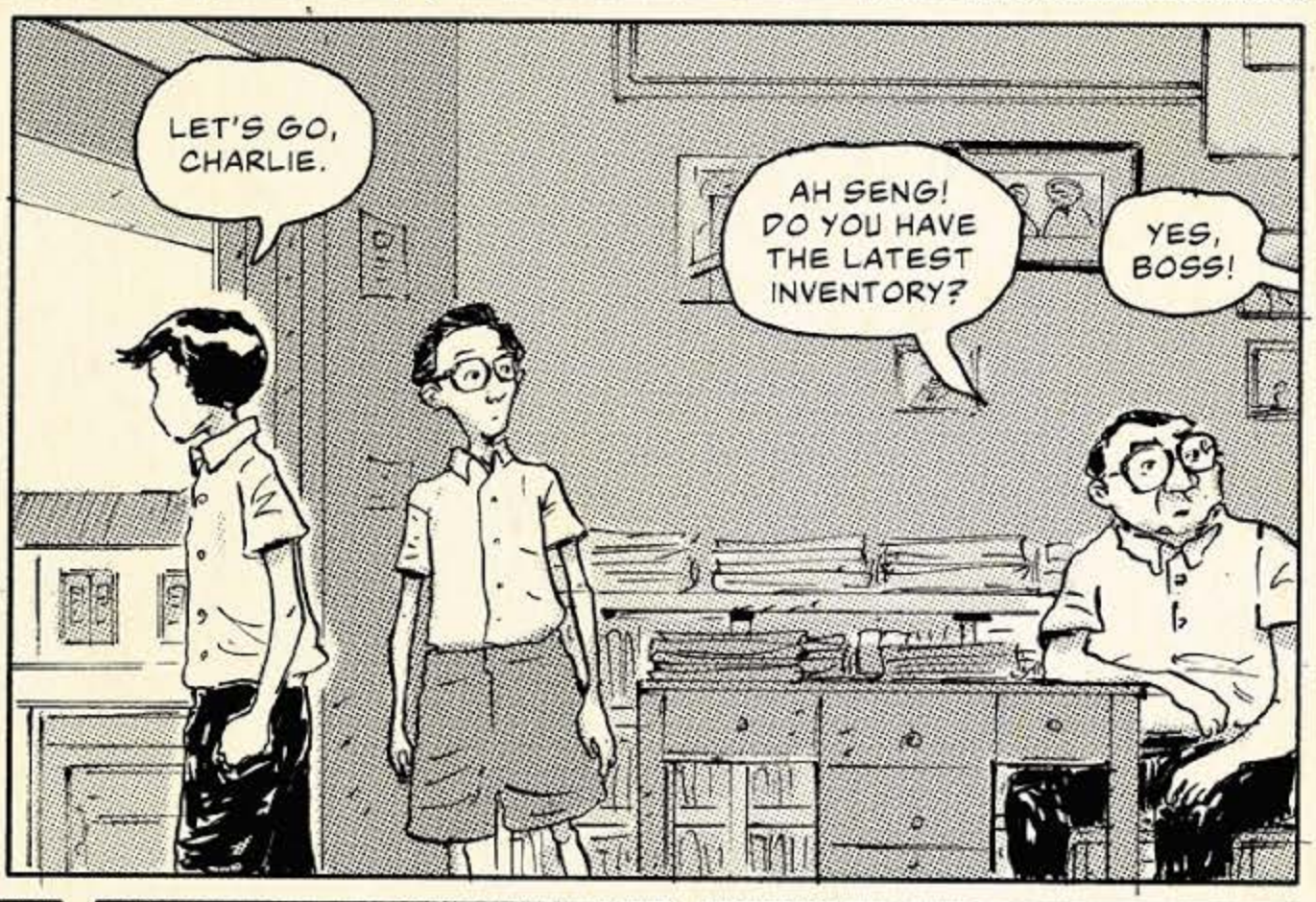

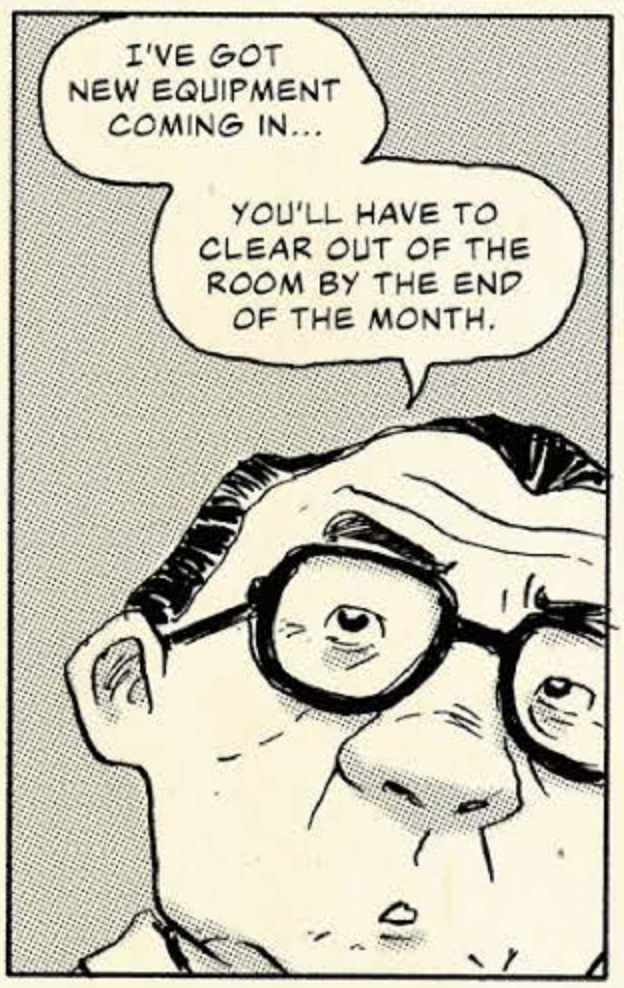

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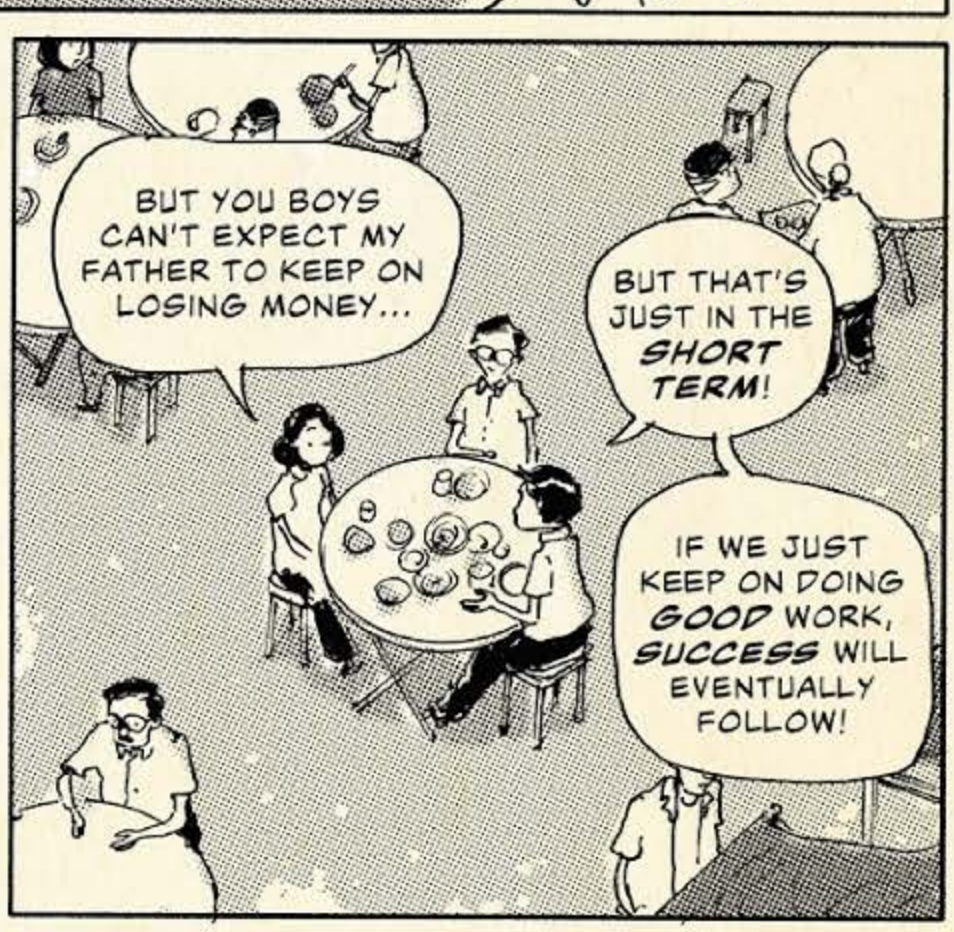

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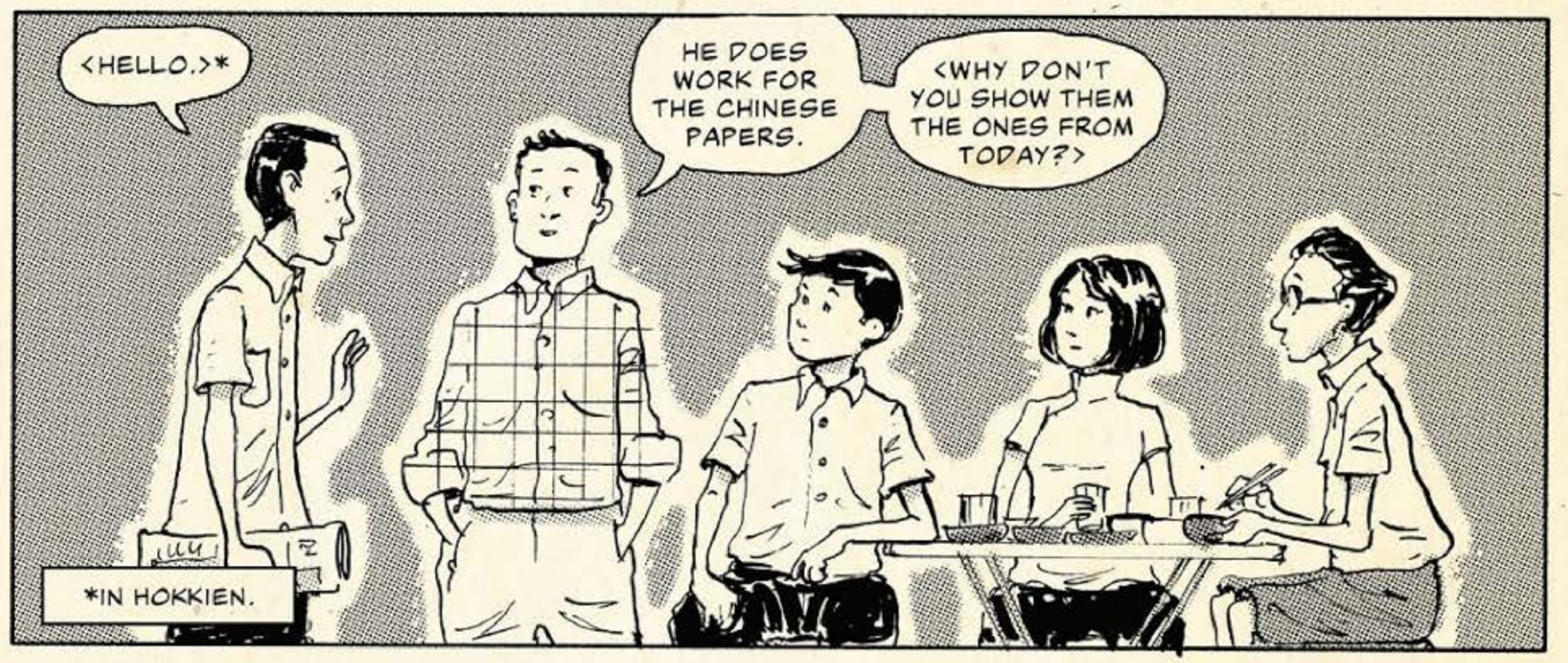

**A POPULAR CABARET AND NIGHTCLUB AT THE GREAT WORLD AMUSEMENT PARK

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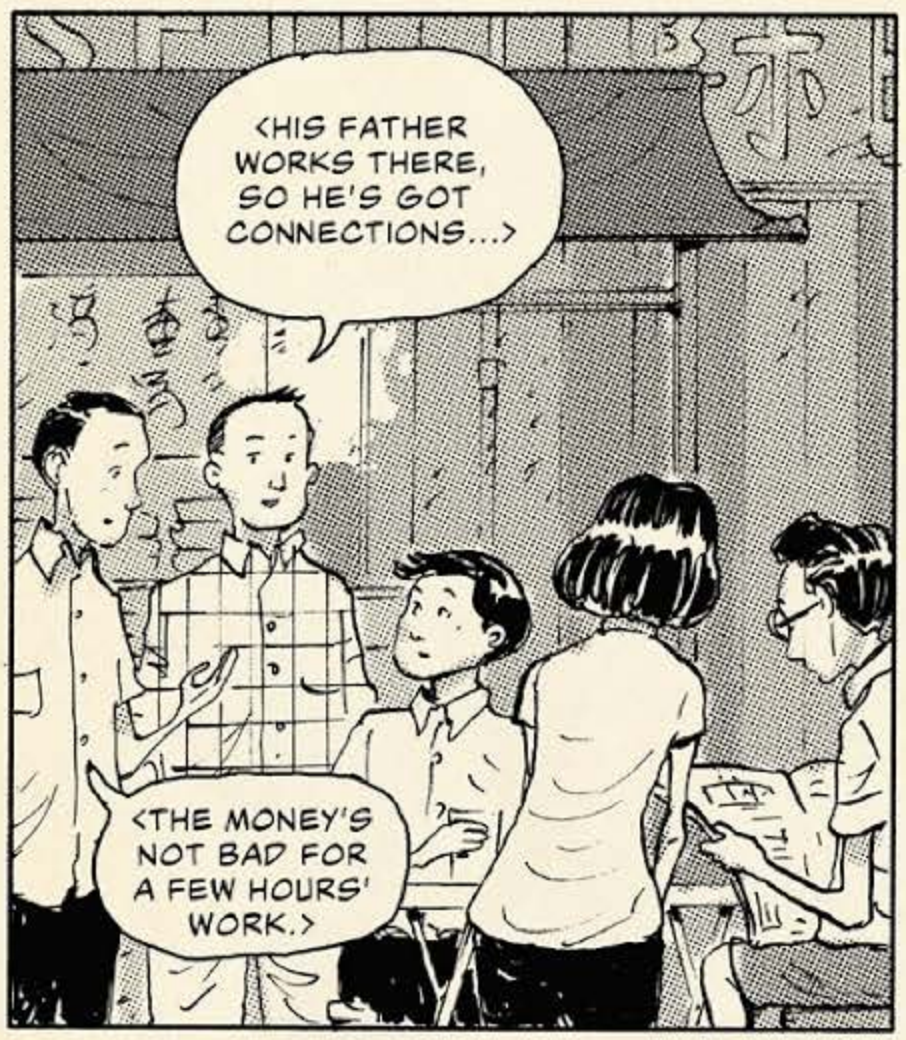

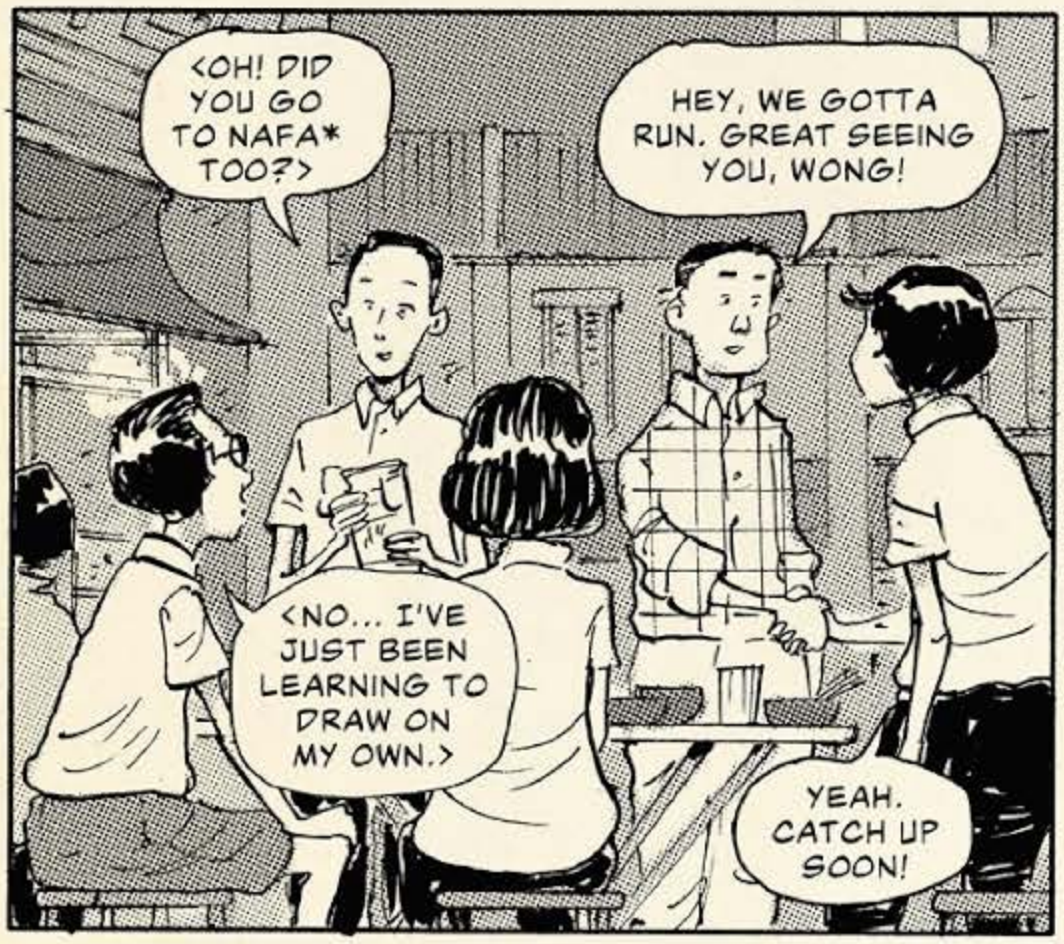

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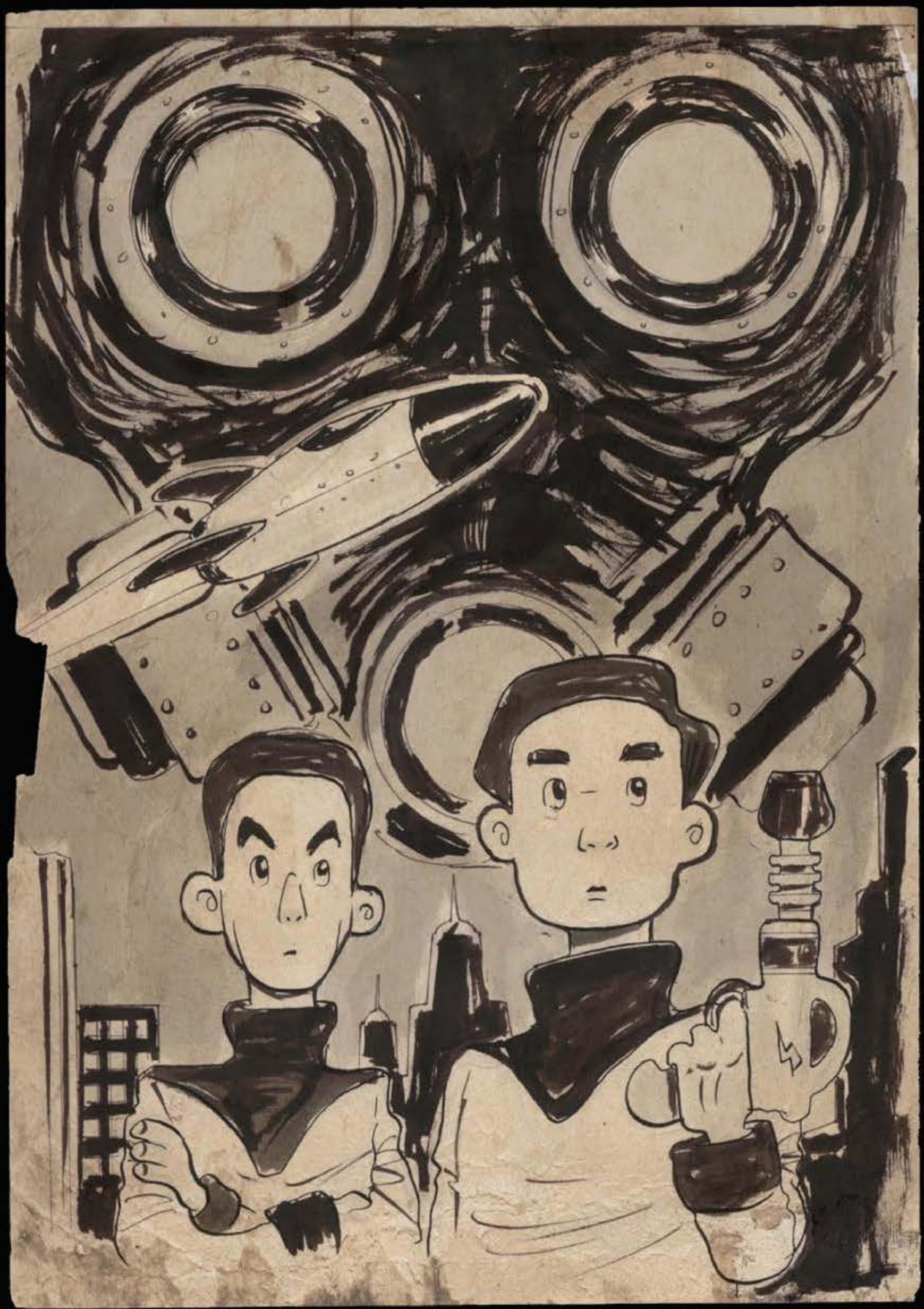
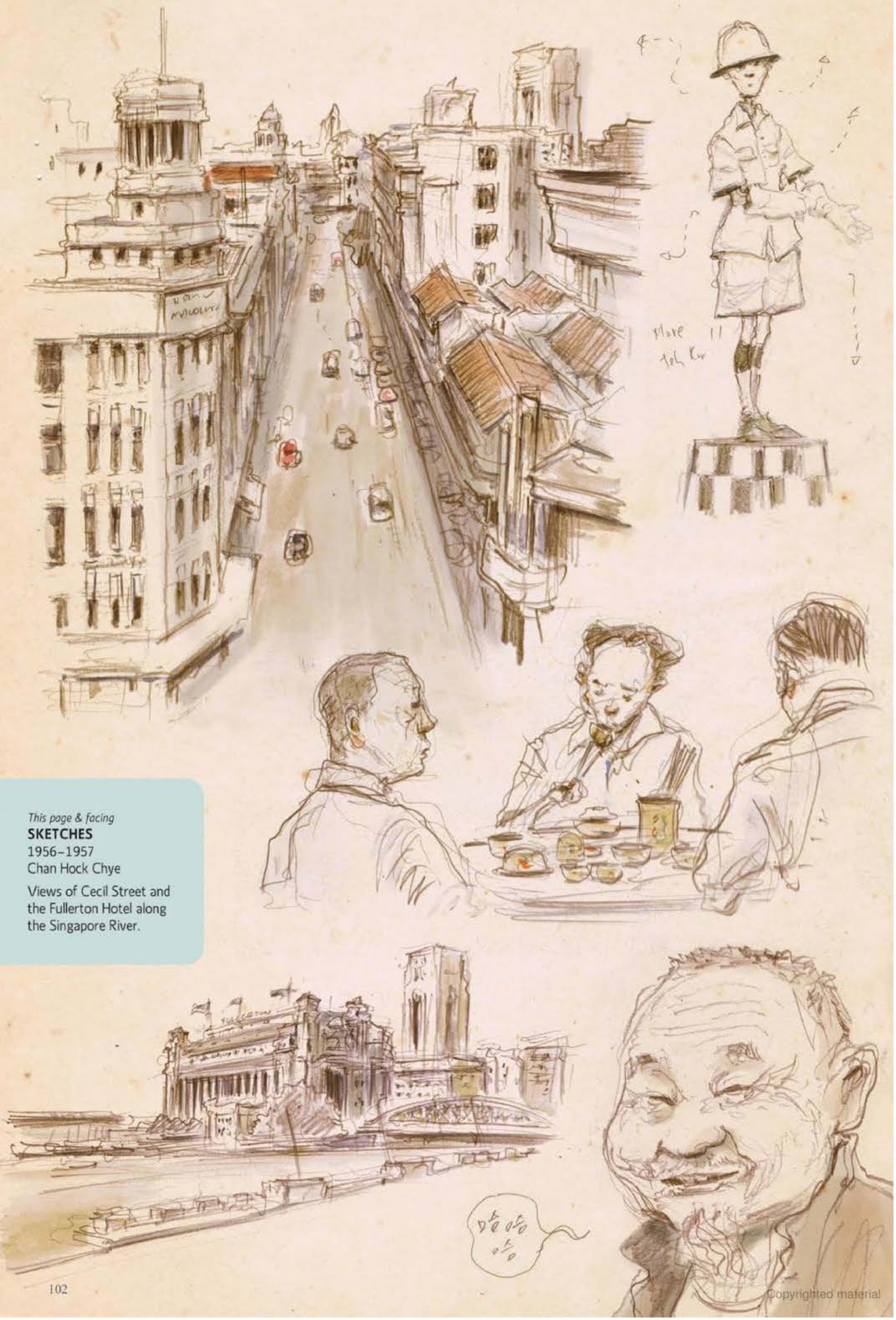


Above **INVASION Cover Sketch** (1957) | Chan Hock Chye | Unpublished

Chan and Wong's next project was to be a science fiction epic, with cartoon versions of Lim Chin Siong and Lee Kuan Yew as leaders of a resistance group fighting against an alien invasion. In its early stages of development, the comic featured a Tezuka-influenced art style and a battle for independence that was to be fought with laser guns and rocketships.



This page & facing
SKETCHES
1956–1957
Chan Hock Chye

Views of Cecil Street and the Fullerton Hotel along the Singapore River.

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Chartered Bank sat at the corner of Flint Street and Battery Road, while the popular Happy World Amusement Park (renamed Gay World in 1966) was situated between Geylang Road and Mountbatten Road. The two buildings were torn down in 1981 and 2001 respectively.

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Chapter Four

THE ALLEGORIES OF CHAN & WONG

陈黄寓言

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Charlie Chan Hock Chye, aged 19, 1957

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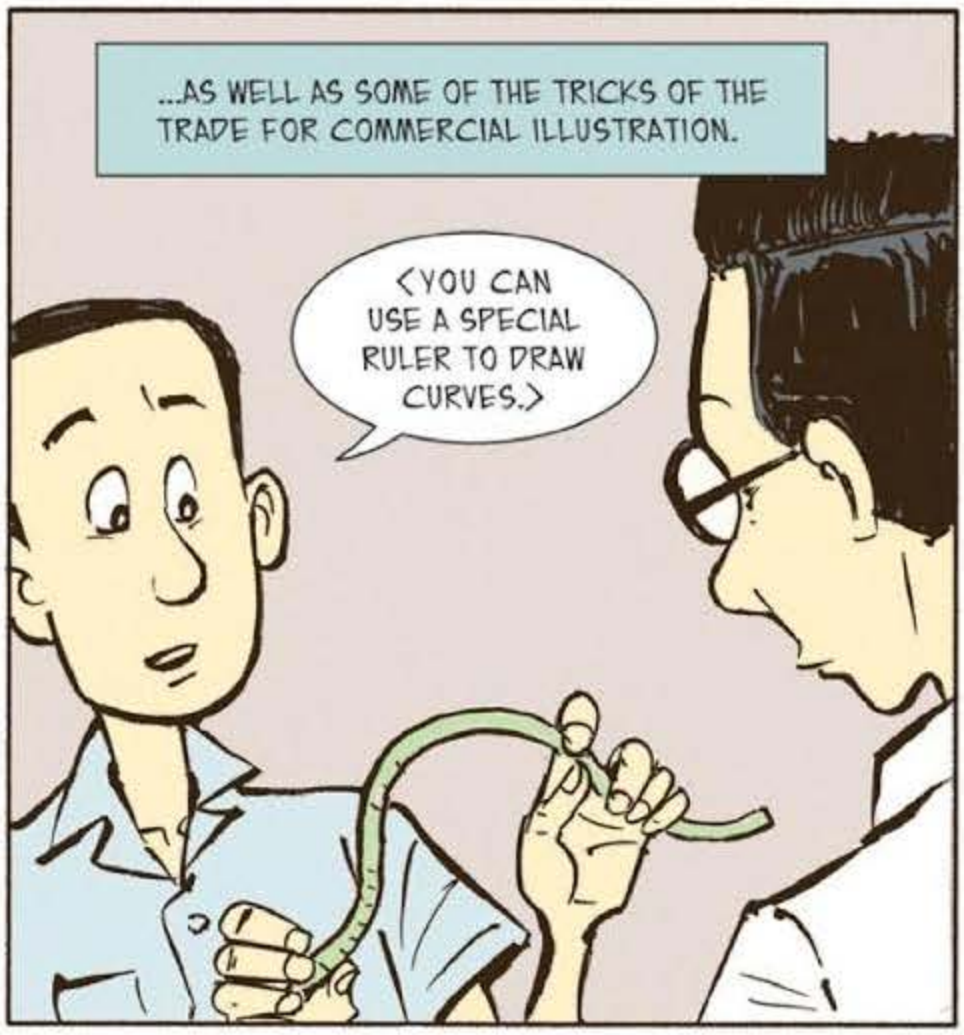

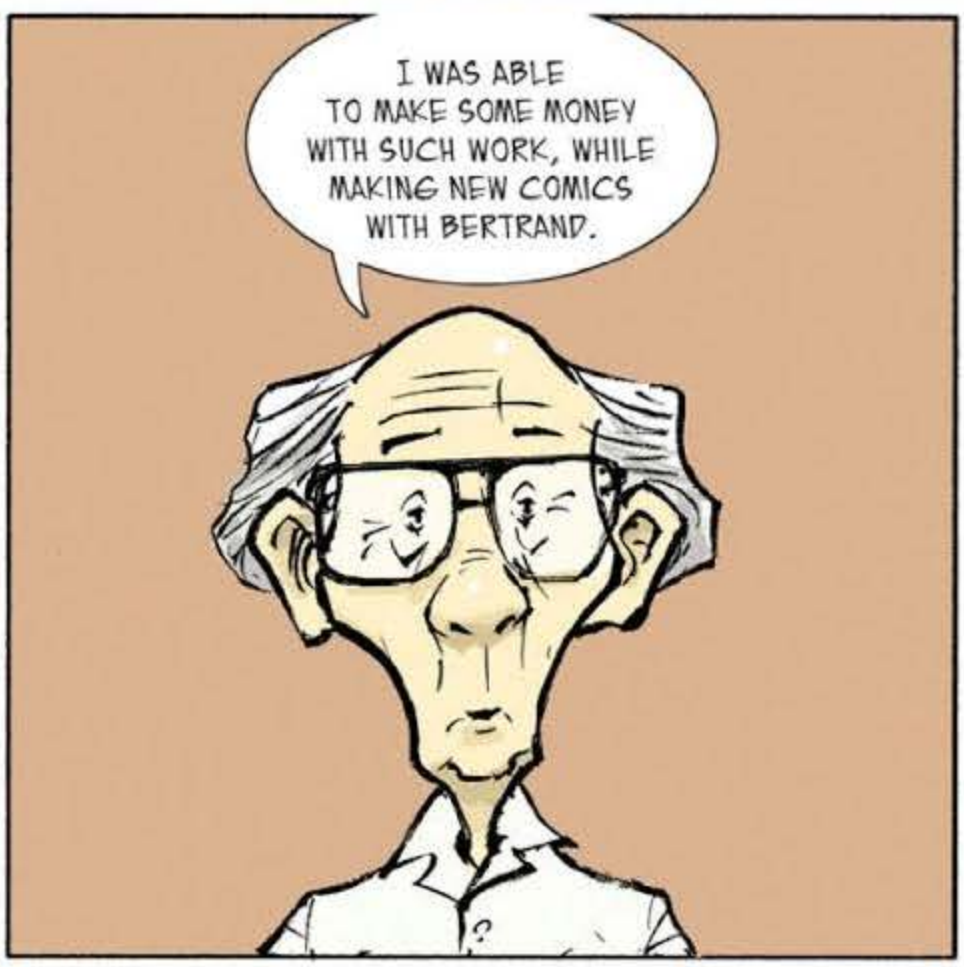

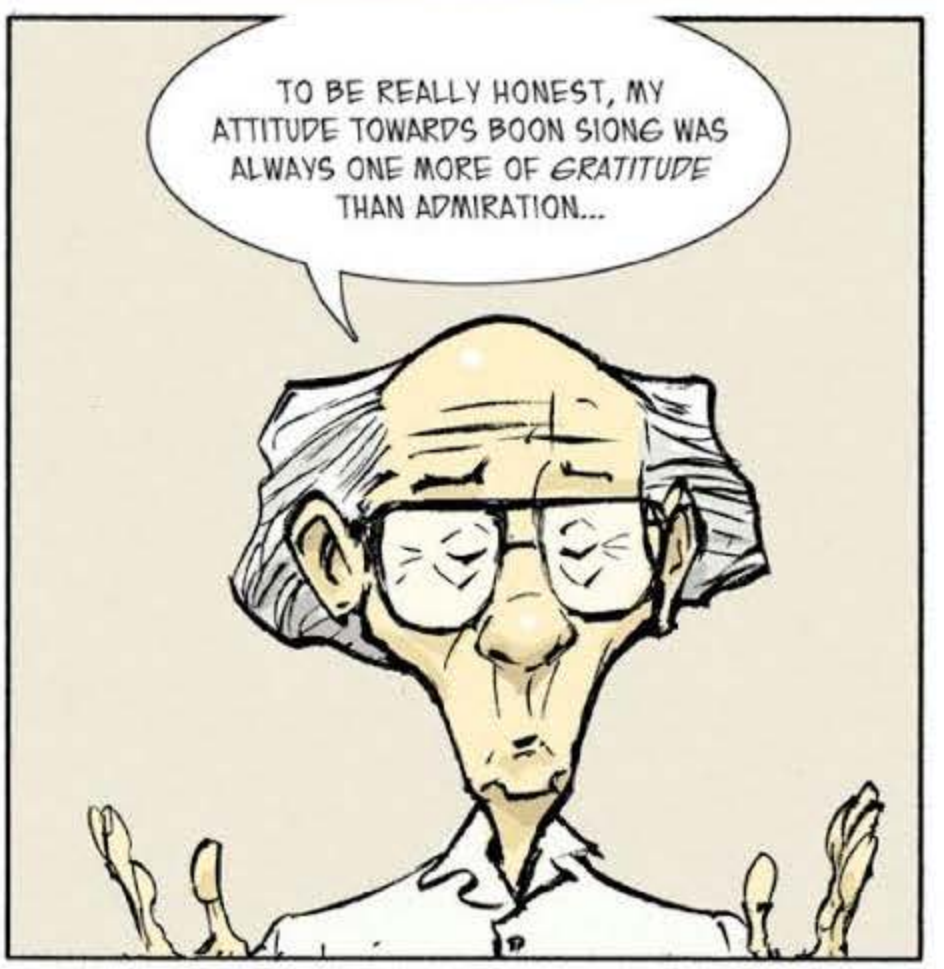

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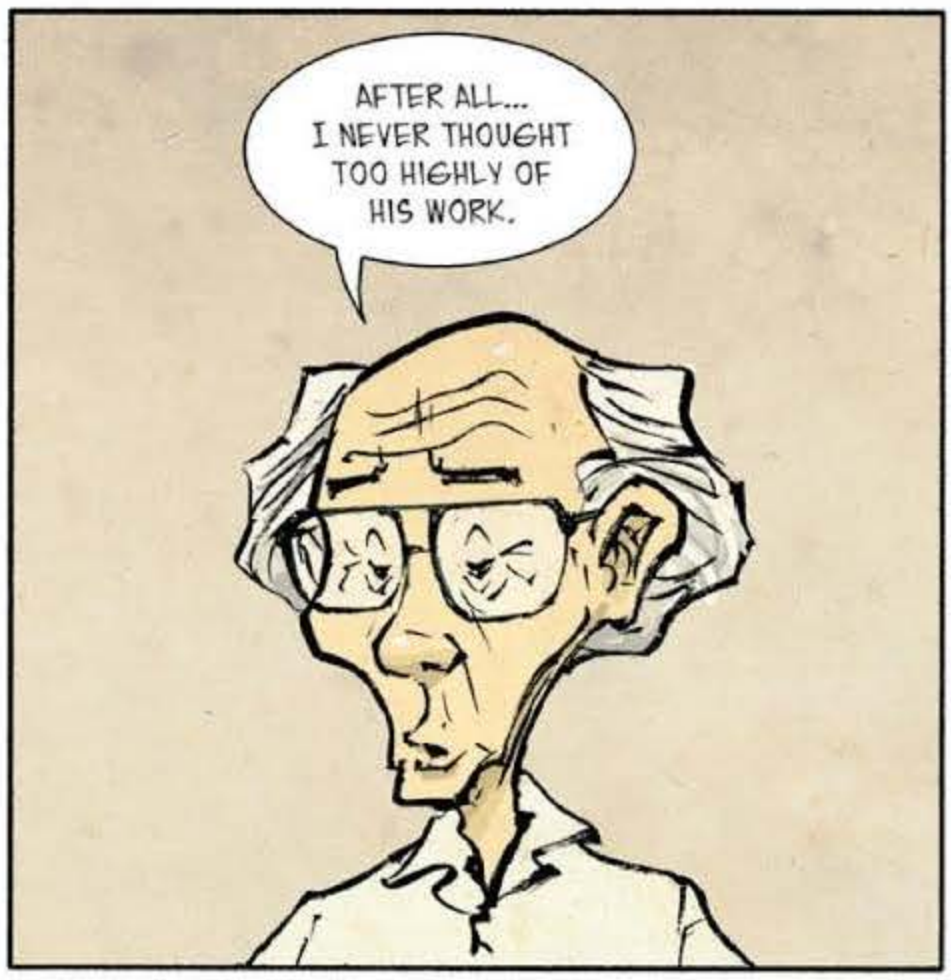

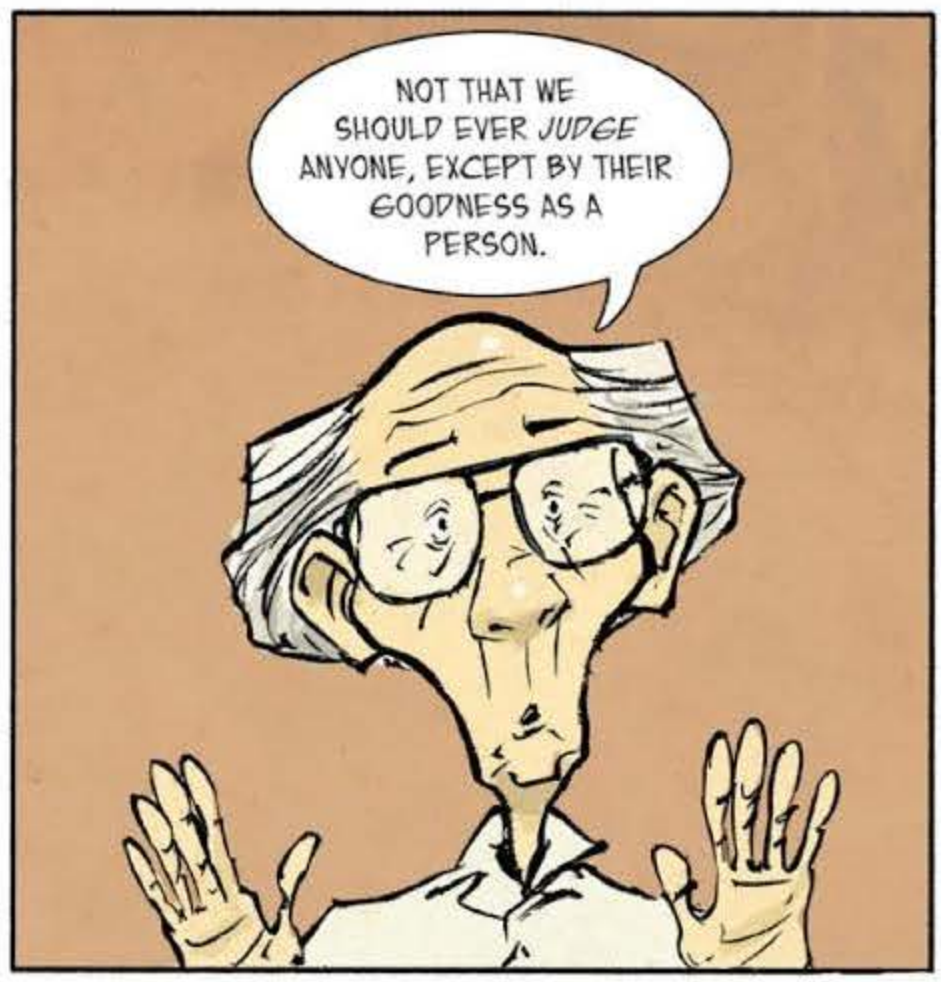

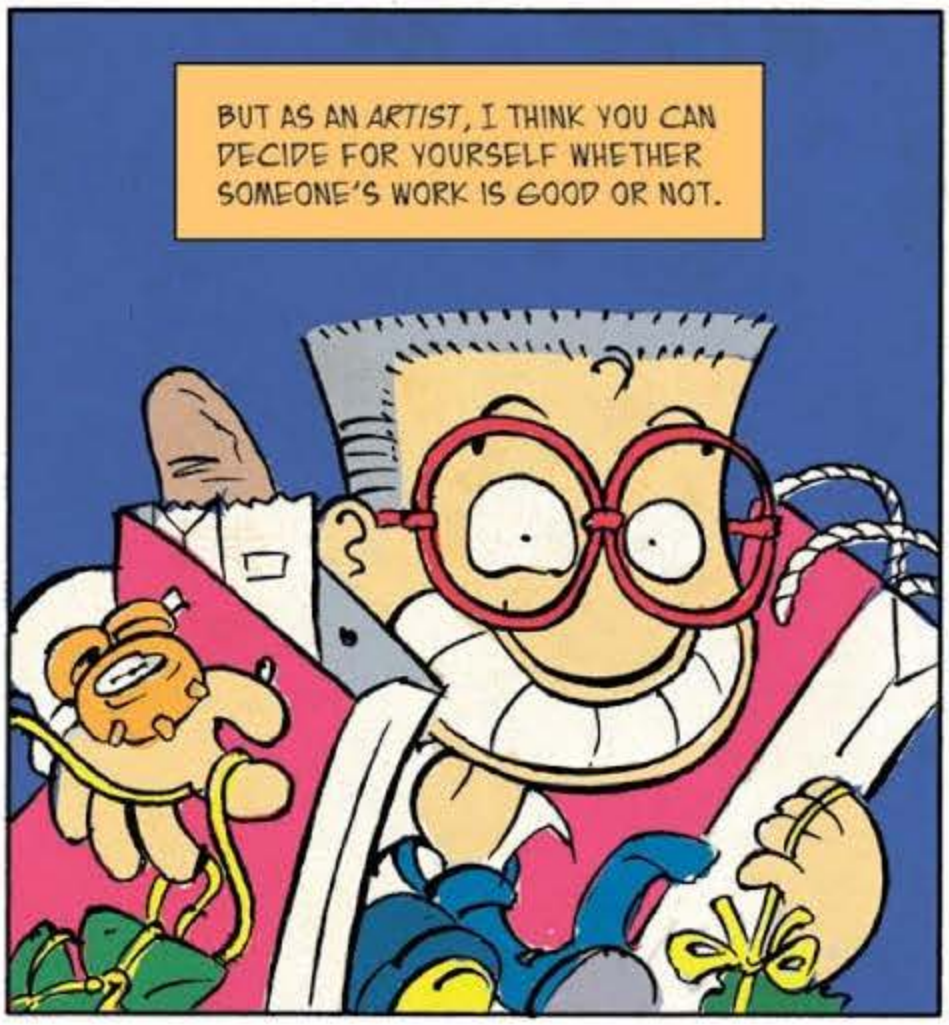

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A CRITIC'S DREAM

WHAT DO YOU THINK OF CHARLIE CHAN?

HIS ART STOOD OUT RIGHT AWAY.

THE BOLD, CONFIDENT, AND EXPRESSIVE LINES...

THE *SUPERB* BALANCING OF DARKS AND LIGHTS, OF POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE SPACE.

AS A STORY-TELLER TOO, HE IS UNSURPASSED.

SUCH MASTERFUL PACING!

THE *PERFECT* MARRIAGE OF TEXT AND IMAGE.

HOW WOULD YOU RATE HIM AMONGST LOCAL COMICS ARTISTS?

CLEARLY, HE WOULD BE AT THE VERY *TOP*.

WHO ELSE IS THERE?

THERE ARE THOSE WHO HAVE ACHIEVED GREATER LEVELS OF FINANCIAL SUCCESS...

BUT WHEN IT COMES TO *AESTHETIC* ACHIEVEMENTS...

THERE IS NO EQUAL.

AND ON THE WORLD STAGE?

I PREDICT HE WILL ENTER THE *CANON*, ALONGSIDE THE LIKES OF *EISNER*, *HERGÉ* AND *TEZUKA*.

BECAUSE IN TIME

GREAT ART WILL ALWAYS BE RECOGNISED

THE CREAM ALWAYS RISES

TO THE TOP!

OH, MY! WHAT A DREAM! I MUST HAVE MORE DELICIOUS RAREBIT FOR MY SUPPERS!

Above **A CRITIC'S DREAM** (1984) | Chan Hock Chye | Unpublished

Inspired by Winsor McCay's newspaper comic strip *Dream of the Rarebit Fiend*, in which strange and fantastical dreams would always be attributed to a meal of Welsh rarebit, Chan offers a glimpse into his own psyche and aspirations.

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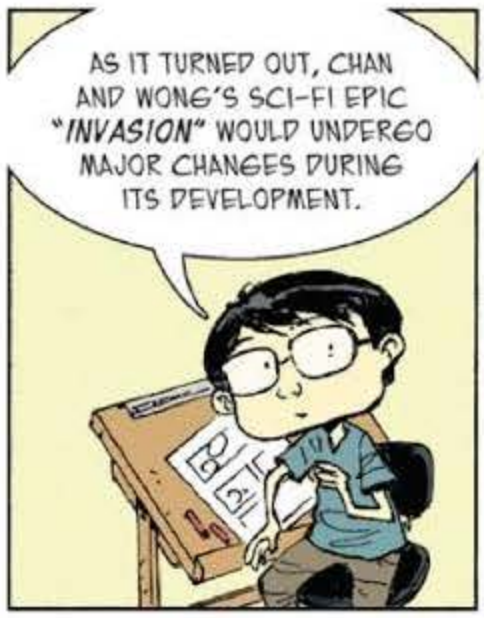

Above **INVASION Character Sketches** (1957) | Chan Hock Chye

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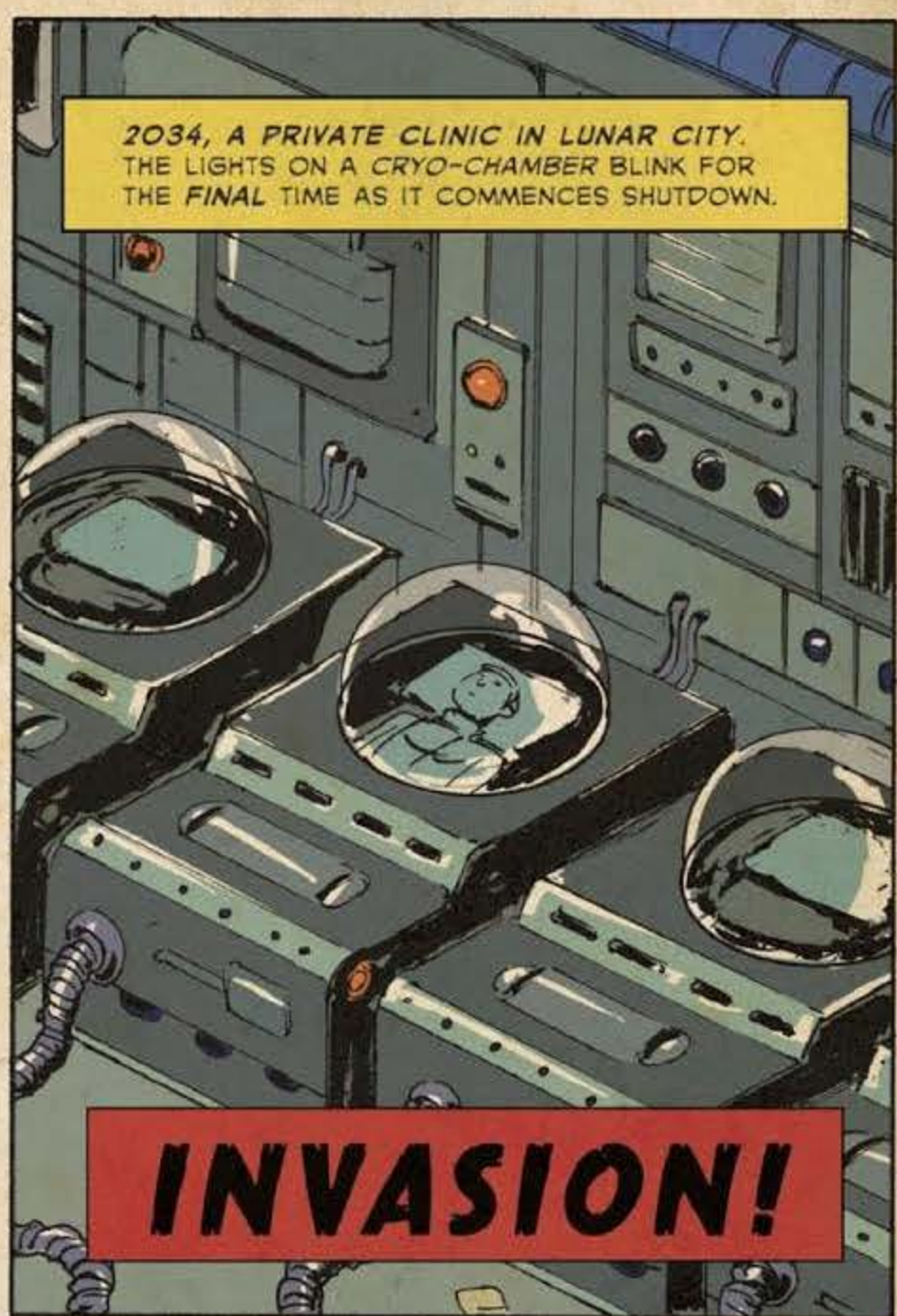

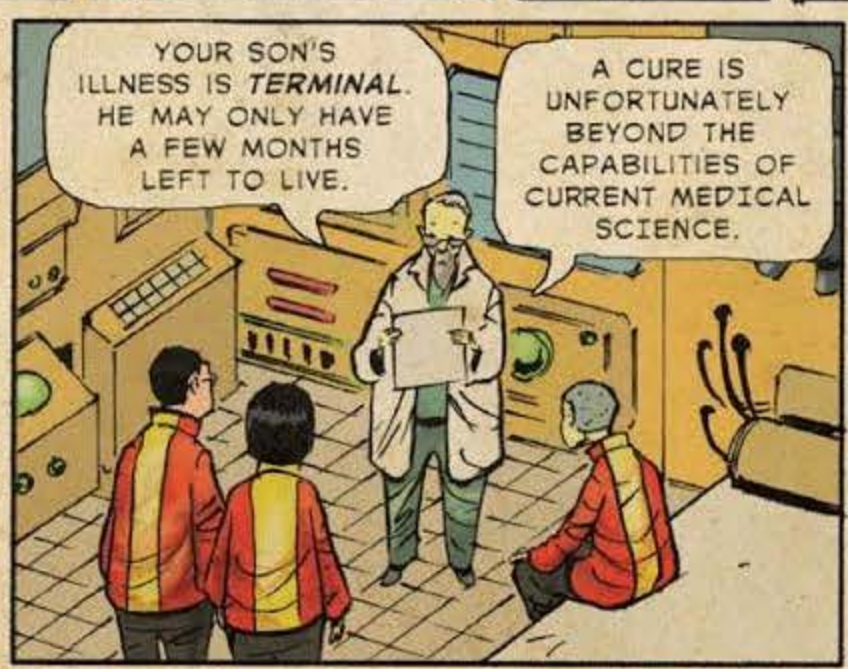

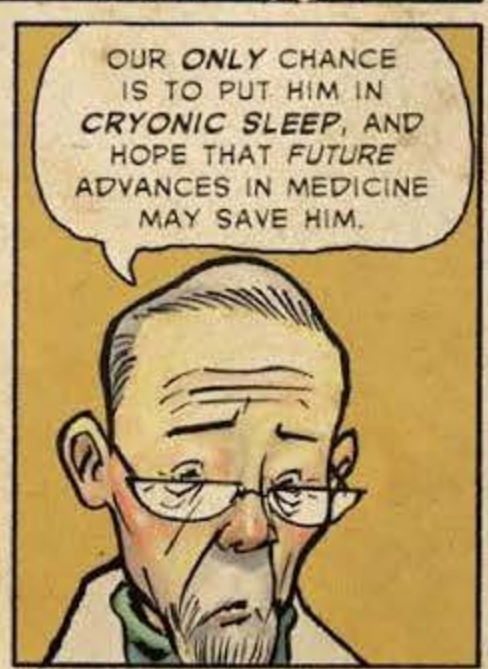

Above & following **INVASION Vol. 1 Nos. 1 & 2** (1957) | Art by Chan Hock Chye, Words by Bertrand Wong

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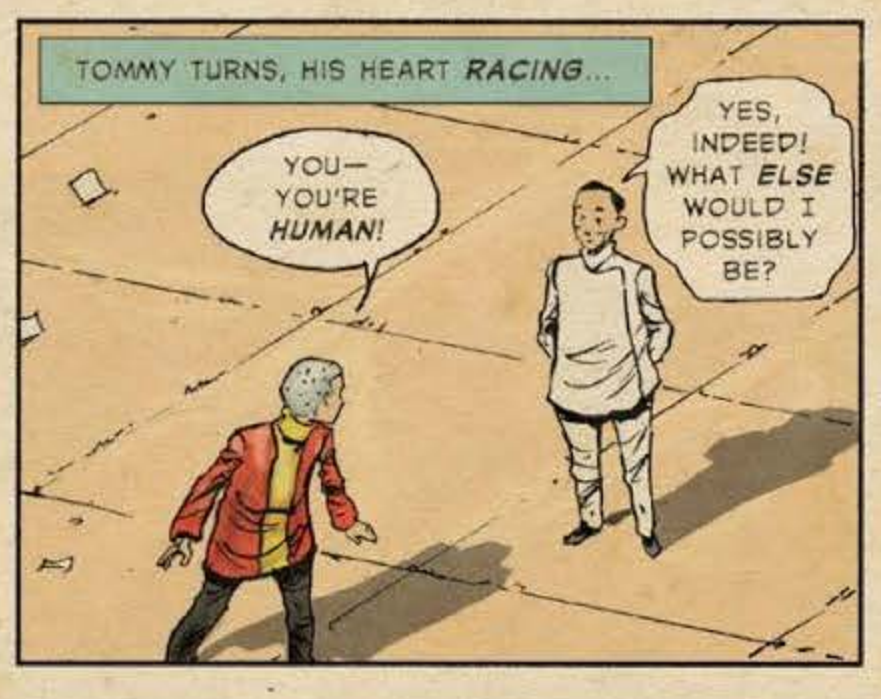
TOMMY TAN

INVASION!

Tommy Tan has just woken up after years in cryo-sleep, and now finds himself in strange surroundings!

OH... IT'S ONLY A *STATUE*... BUT *WHAT OF*, EXACTLY?!?

AND THE PLAQUE BENEATH IT... IT'S WRITTEN IN SOME *STRANGE* LANGUAGE...



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INVASION! A BEGINNER'S

Co-Creator Charlie Chan's Guide

Our main character is **Tommy Tan**, a young boy who wakes up to find from his new acquaintance **Mr. Wei** that **120 years** have passed since he was put in cryo-sleep.

TOMMY TAN

MR. WEI

Tommy is appalled to learn that the human race had allowed itself to be thus **subjugated**, and is determined to help **free** Lunar City from its alien shackles...

But after seeing the fluent Hegemonese speaker and legal counsel **Harry Lee Kuan Yew** successfully defend workers' rights at a court hearing...

Compounded with the knowledge that he has but a **short time** left before his illness catches up with him...

HARRY LEE KUAN YEW

Lim Chin Siong and Harry Lee eventually come to realise that each needs the other's talents and resources to win the support of the people and **take on** the alien occupiers.

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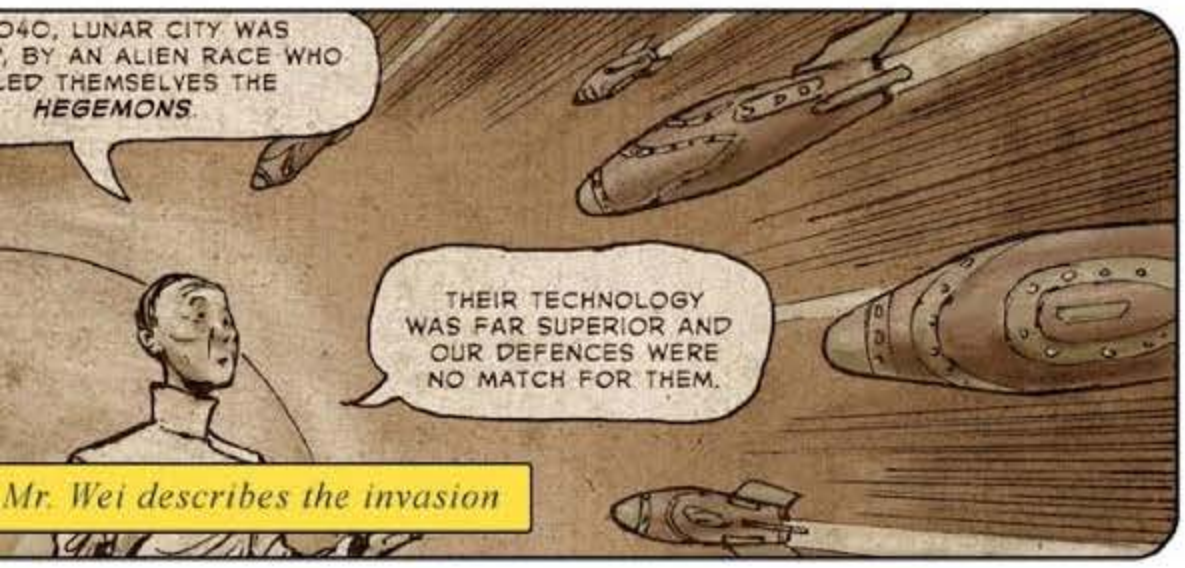
GUIDE

From an interview transcript dated July 14, 2012.

to the Science Fiction Epic!

During this time, his homeworld of **Lunar City** has been conquered by an **alien** race known as the **Hegemons**...

...and his people forced to adopt the alien language, **Hegemonese**, for all official matters.



Mr. Wei describes the invasion

A Hegemon speaking Hegemonese

Tommy worries that his inability to speak Hegemonese will render him **worthless** in the fight for independence.

Mr. Wei decides to take him to meet the famous freedom fighter **Lim Chin Siong**...

...who swiftly allays Tommy's fears, and inspires in him a new sense of **hope** and **purpose.**

LIM CHIN SIONG

And so they **join forces** in their quest to overthrow the Hegemons and help Lunar City regain its **independence**!

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INVASION! A BEGINNER'S

SO GOES THE DECREE OF THE EMPIRE! BUT WILL EVENTS TURN OUT AS THE ALIENS ENVISAGE? ALL WILL BE REVEALED IN NEXT WEEK'S ISSUE!!

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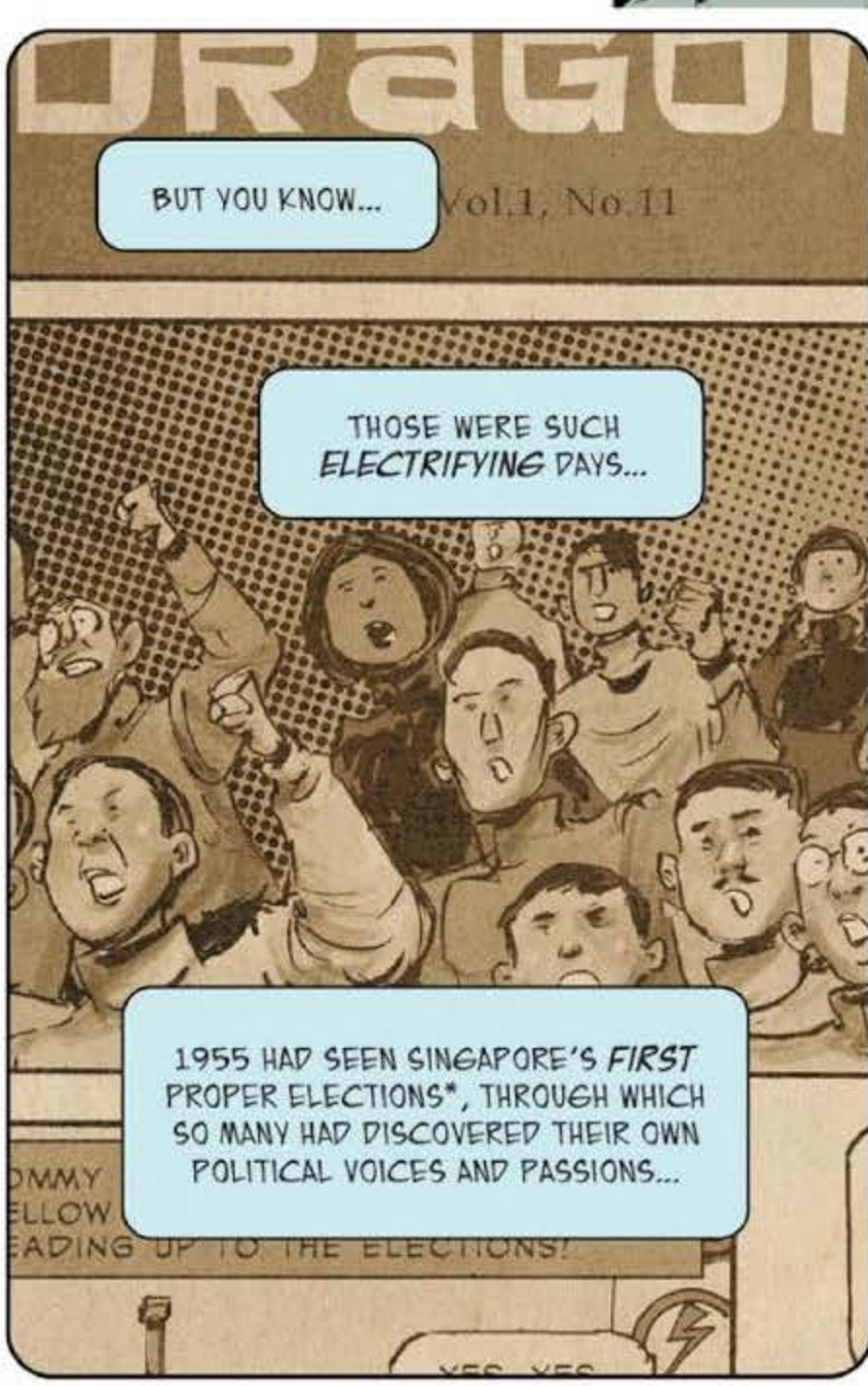

*EDITOR'S NOTE: THE 1955 LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY GENERAL ELECTIONS WAS THE FIRST TIME THAT THE MAJORITY OF SEATS IN THE ASSEMBLY WERE DETERMINED BY A POPULAR VOTE, INSTEAD OF BEING APPOINTED BY THE BRITISH COLONIAL GOVERNMENT.

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AND SO IT SEEMED TO US THAT DURING SUCH TIMES, NO FICTION COULD BE STRANGER, OR MORE *EXCITING*, THAN THE *TRUTH*.

INVASION!

Tommy Tan has awakened from years of cryo-sleep to find Lunar City being ruled by the Hegemons. To stave off unrest, the aliens have allowed the humans to vote for their own leaders, who will be granted limited powers...

LED BY *HARRY LEE KUAN YEW* AND *LIM CHIN SIONG*, THE NEWLY FORMED *PLANETARY ACHIEVEMENT PARTY* (P.A.P.) DRAWS HUGE CROWDS WITH THEIR ELECTRIFYING SPEECHES!

DOOFUS! THE P.A.P. WAS JUST FORMED A FEW MONTHS AGO. WE AREN'T *READY* TO RUN THE GOVERNMENT!

WE JUST NEED TO TAKE PART THIS TIME... AND MAYBE THE NEXT ONE WE CAN WIN!

LOUT!

AND WITH THE FIRST *FULL ELECTIONS* COMING UP IN 1959*, WE KNEW THAT WE WERE FACING A WATERSHED MOMENT...

THE RESULTS ARRIVE...

DAVE MARSHALL IS THE NEW MAGISTRATUS!

WE WON THREE SEATS AS WELL!

...WHEN A COMIC ABOUT THE POLITICAL SCENE IN SINGAPORE WOULD SURELY *RESONATE* WITH PUBLISHERS AND READERS ALIKE.

(WHAT!!??)

(I'M AFRAID THE PRAETOR PARTY DID *POORLY*, CONSUL EDEN...)

CHANGE WAS IN THE AIR, AND THE *TIDES* OF HISTORY WERE TURNING.

BERTRAND AND I BOTH KNEW THAT WE HAD OUR OWN PART TO PLAY...

...AS WE WORKED ON OUR COMICS LATE INTO THE NIGHT, AND UNTIL THE EARLY MORNING DAWN.

*EDITOR'S NOTE: WITH THE 1959 GENERAL ELECTIONS, *ALL* THE SEATS IN THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY WOULD BE PUT TO A POPULAR VOTE. FOR THE FIRST TIME, THE WINNING PARTY WOULD BE GRANTED POWERS OVER FULL INTERNAL SELF-GOVERNMENT.

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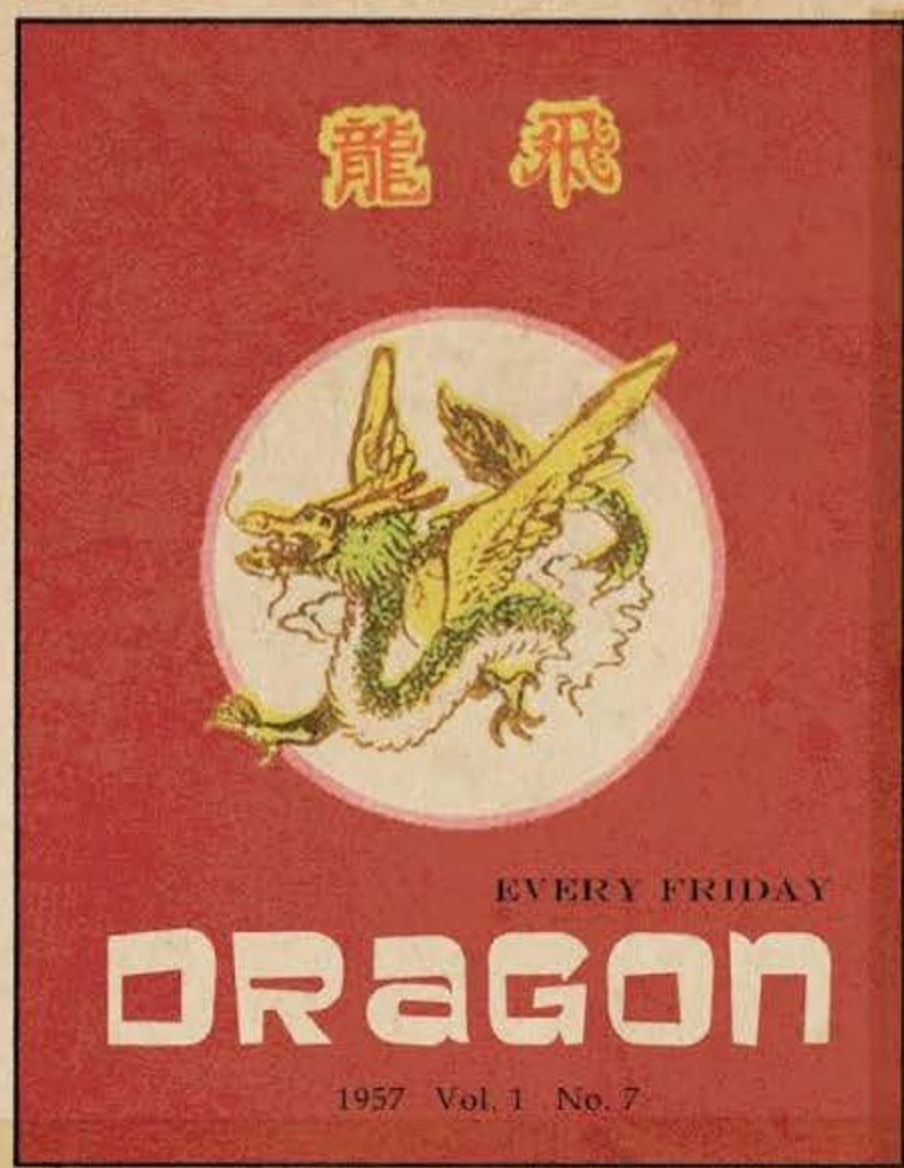

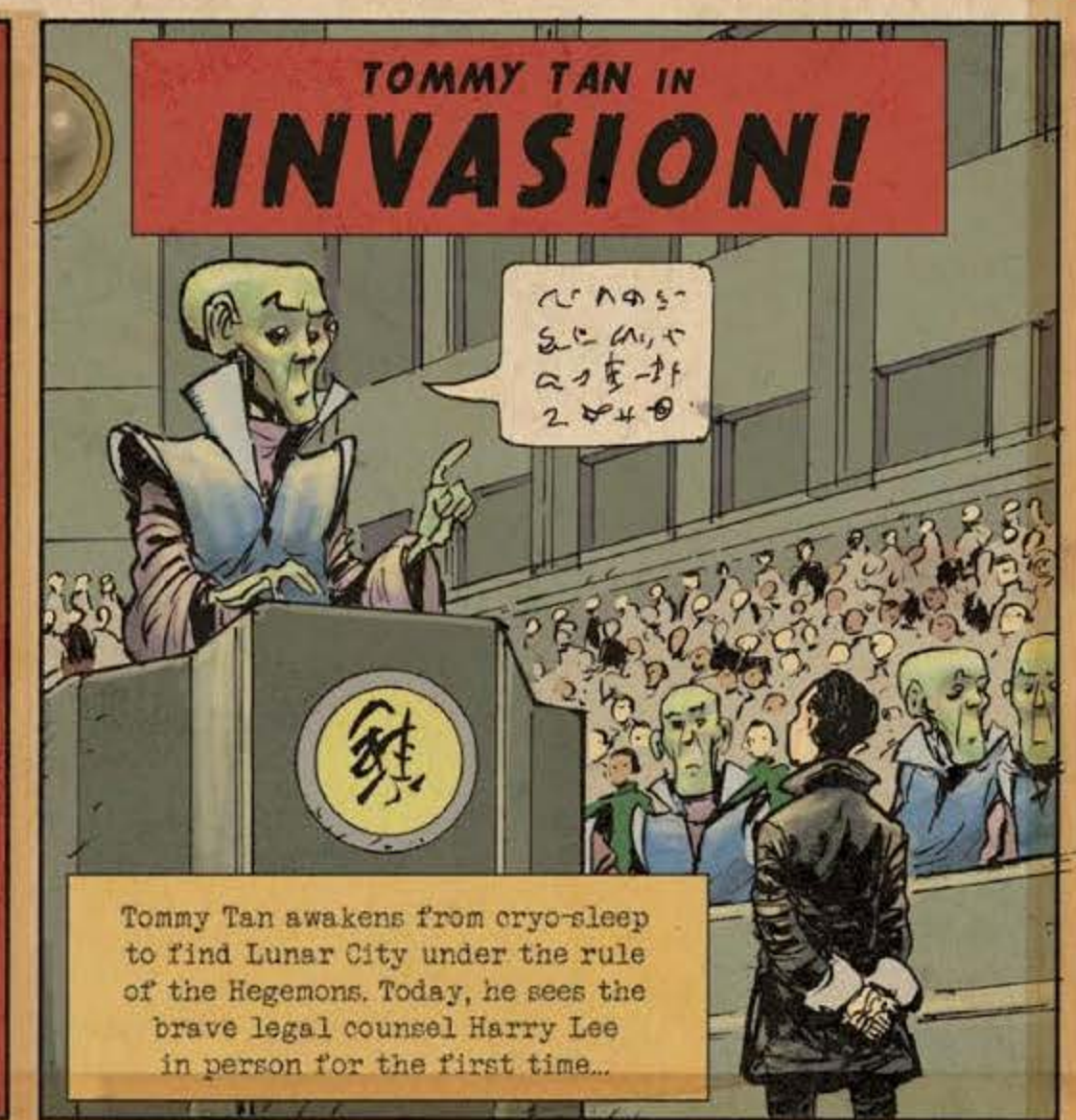

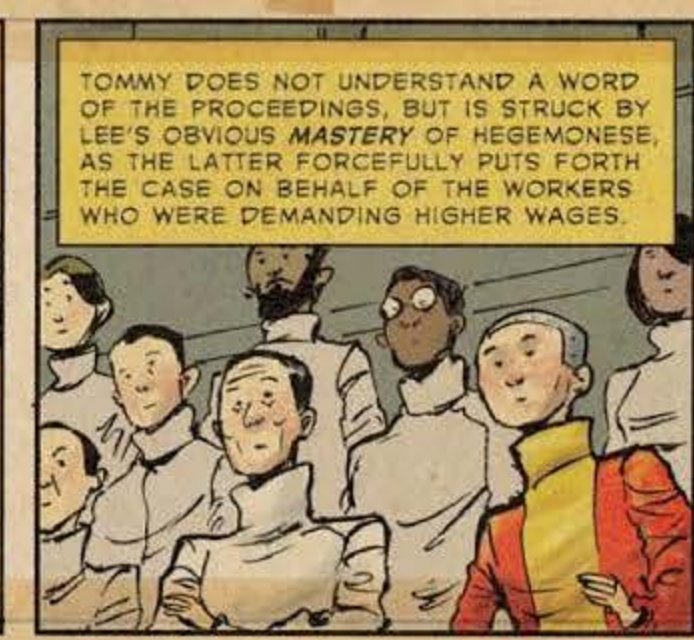

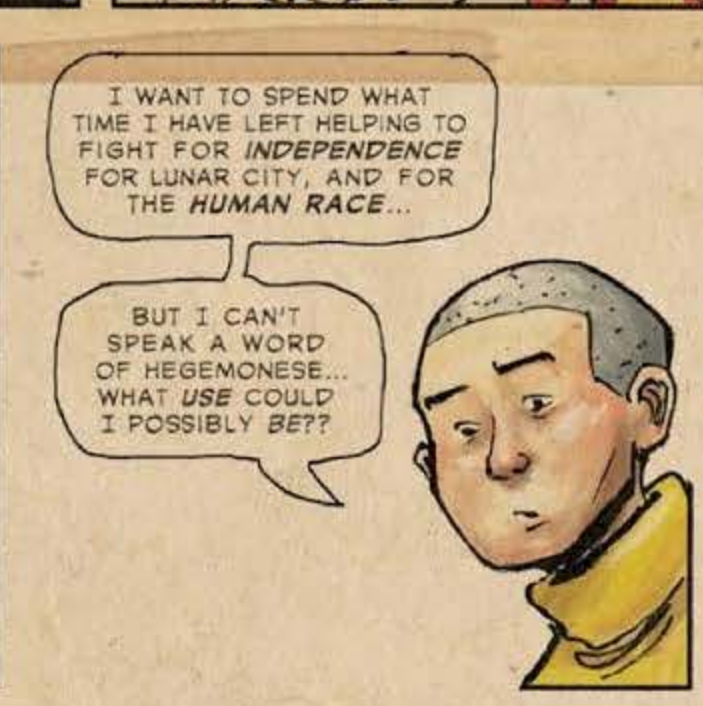

Above & following **INVASION Vol. 1 No. 7** (1958) | Art by Chan Hock Chye, Words by Bertrand Wong

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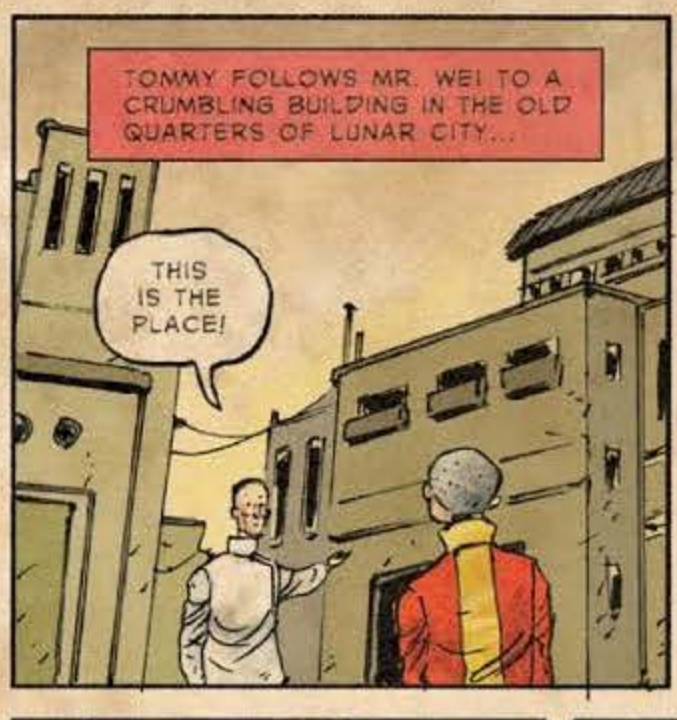

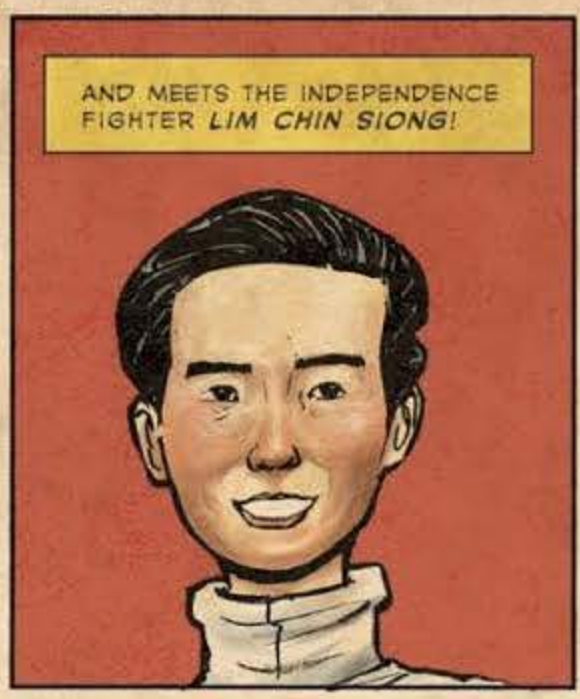

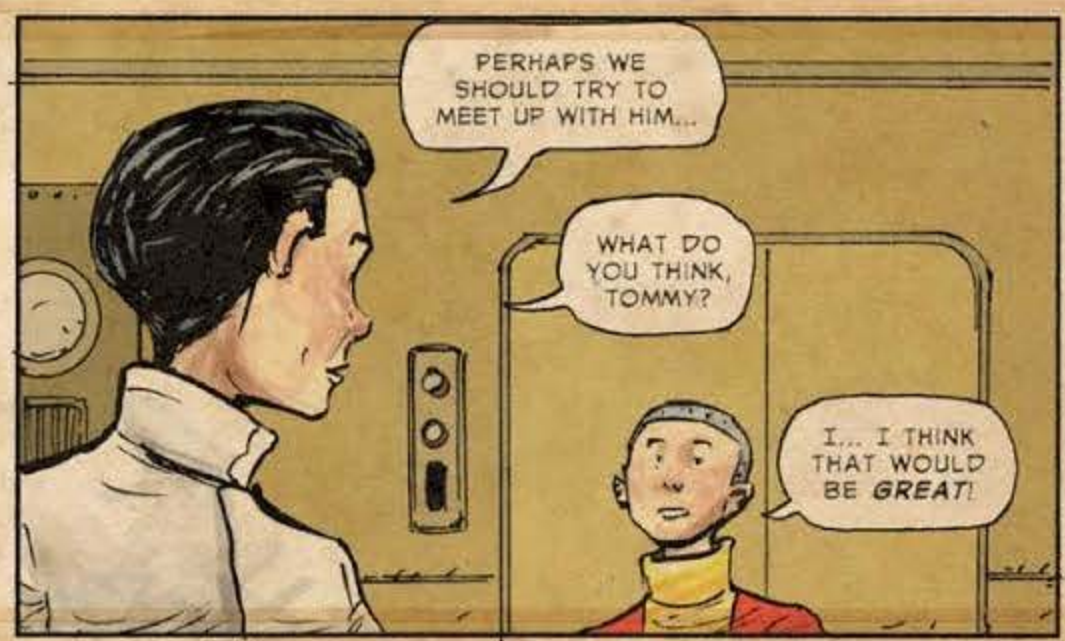

AND SO IT SEEMS THAT THE PATHS OF THE TWO MEN ARE DESTINED TO CROSS! WILL THEY TURN OUT TO BE FRIENDS OR FOES? FIND OUT NEXT WEEK!

*EDITOR'S NOTE: TRANSLATED FROM HEGEMONESE

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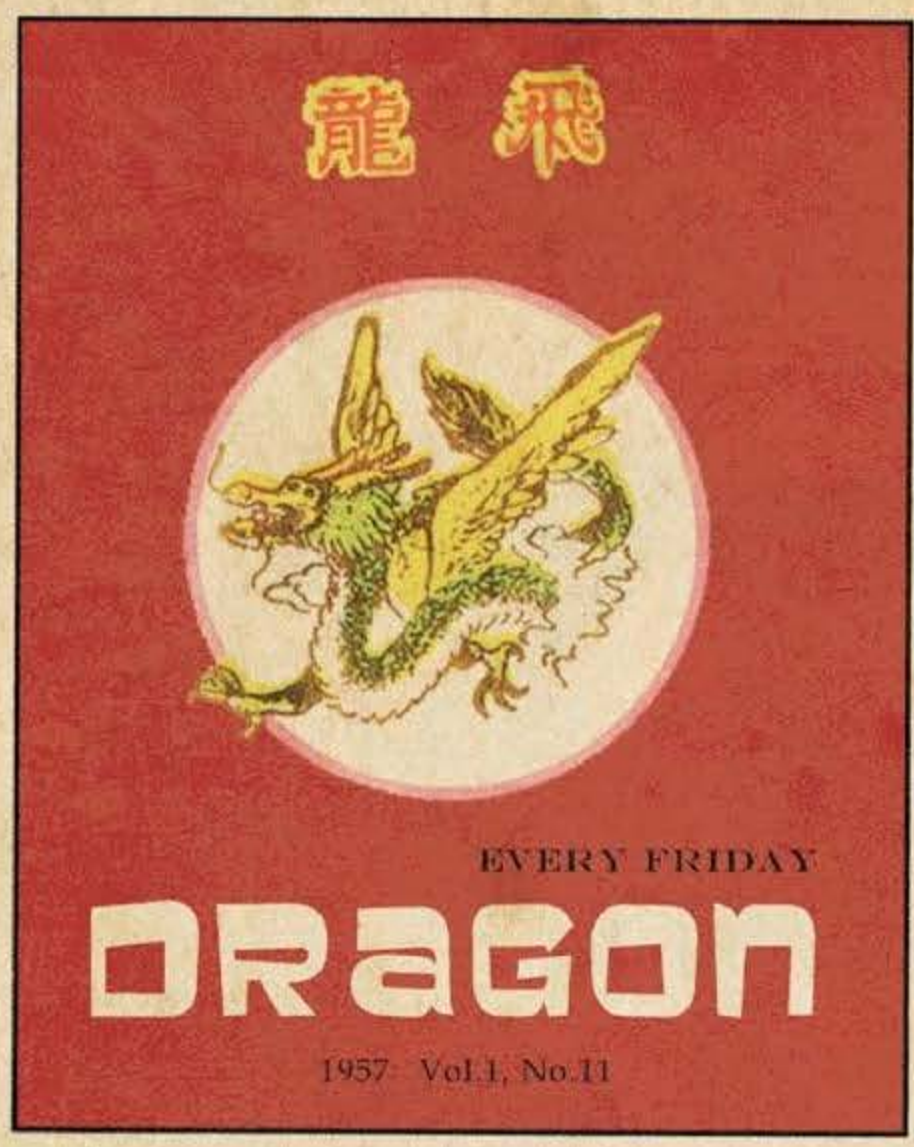

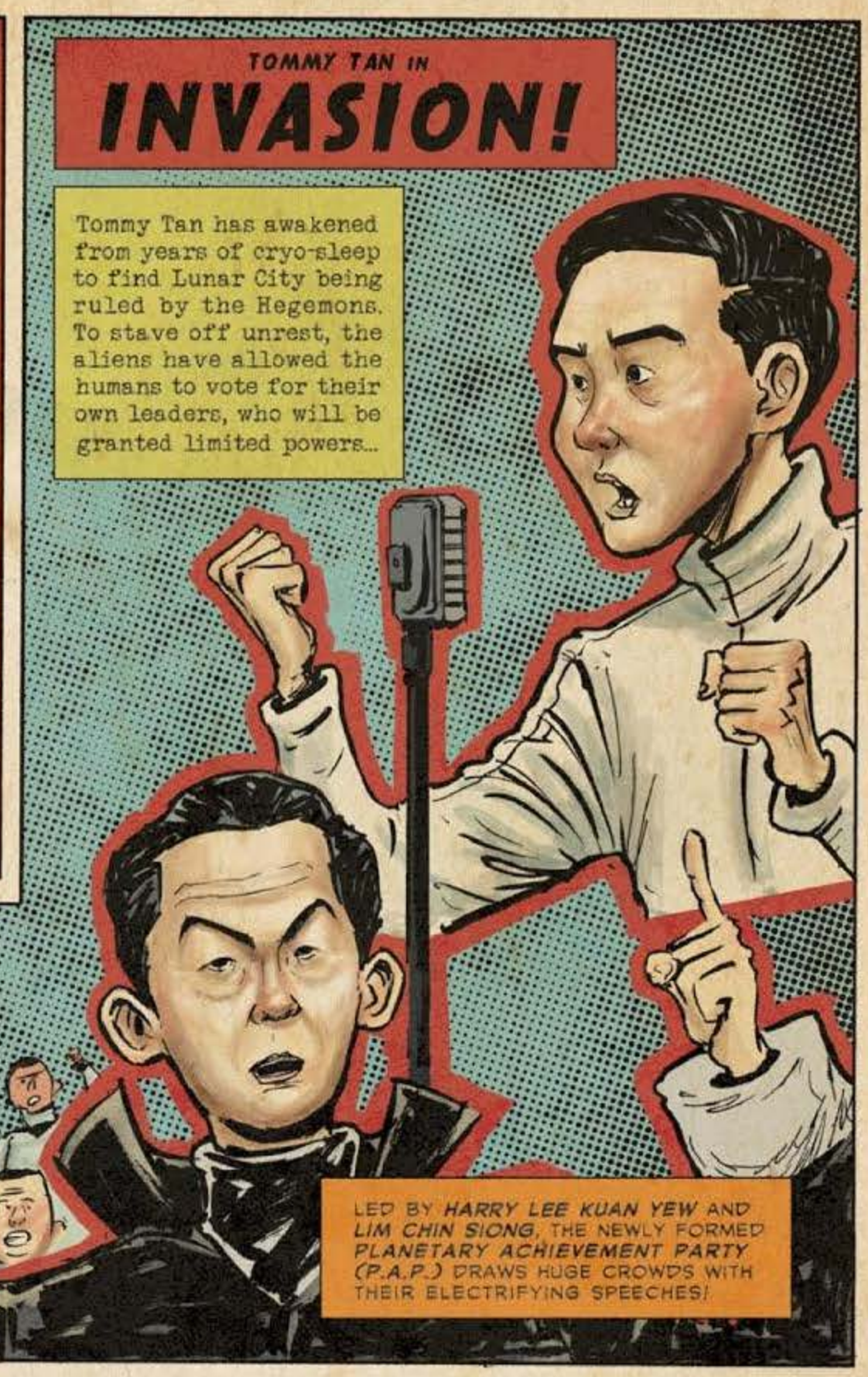

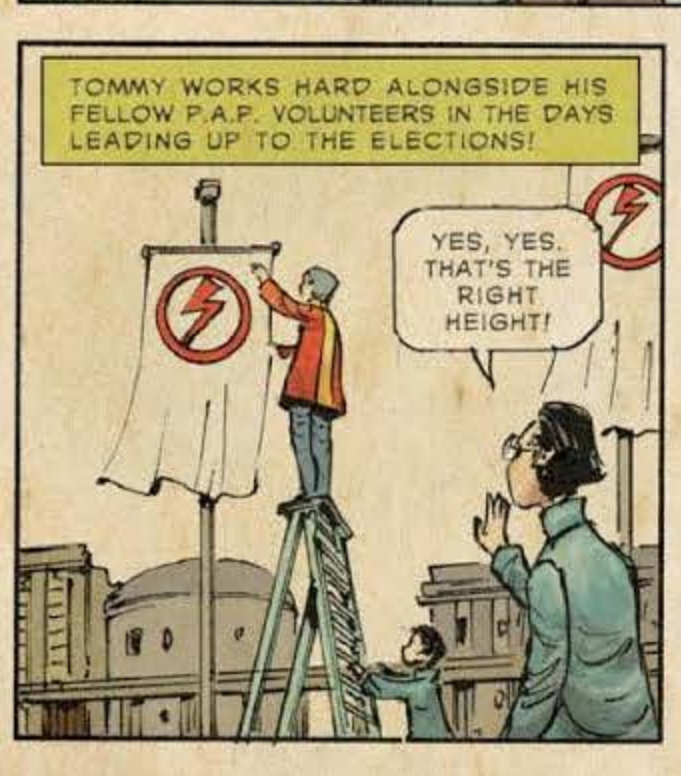

Above **INVASION Vol. 1 No. 11** (1958) | Art by Chan Hock Chye, Words by Bertrand Wong

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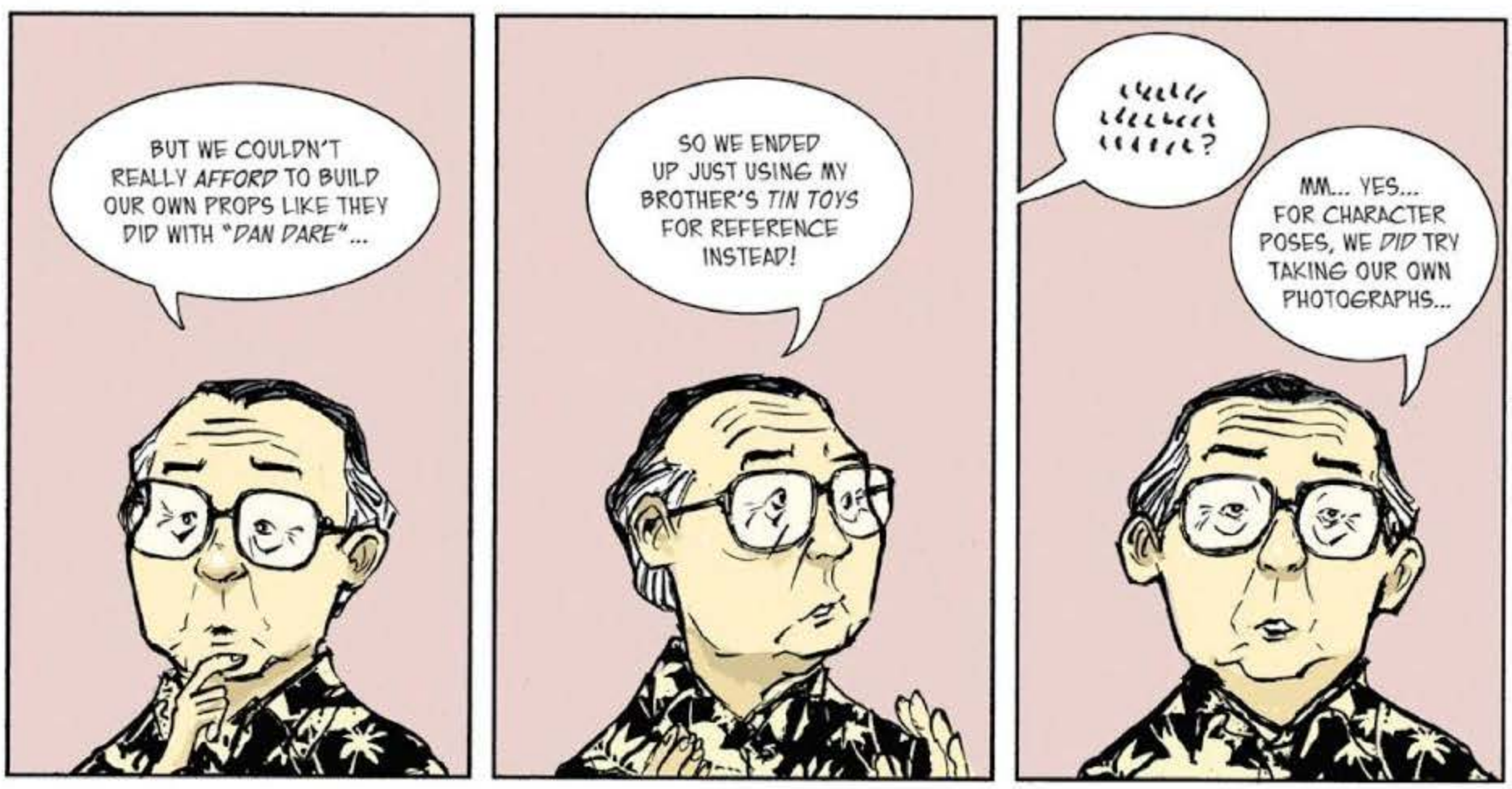
Above
X-2 Sparkling Friction Rocket Space Ship
1953
Masudaya Modern Toys



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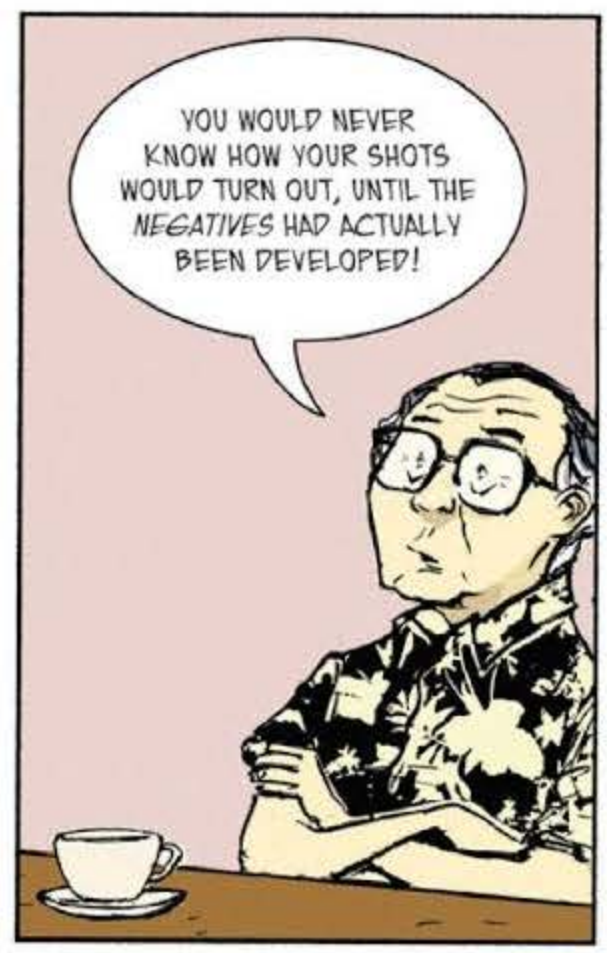

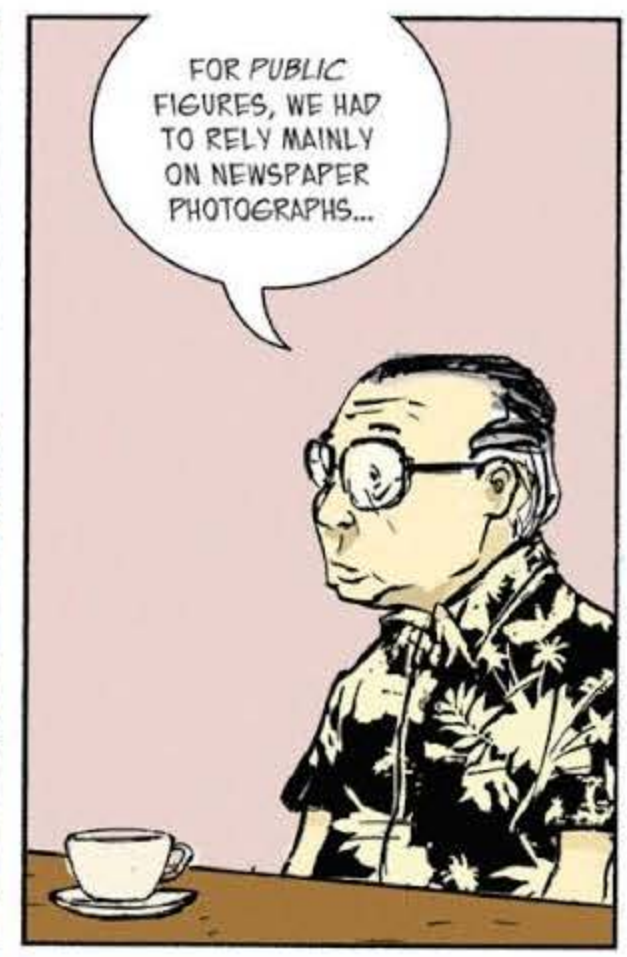

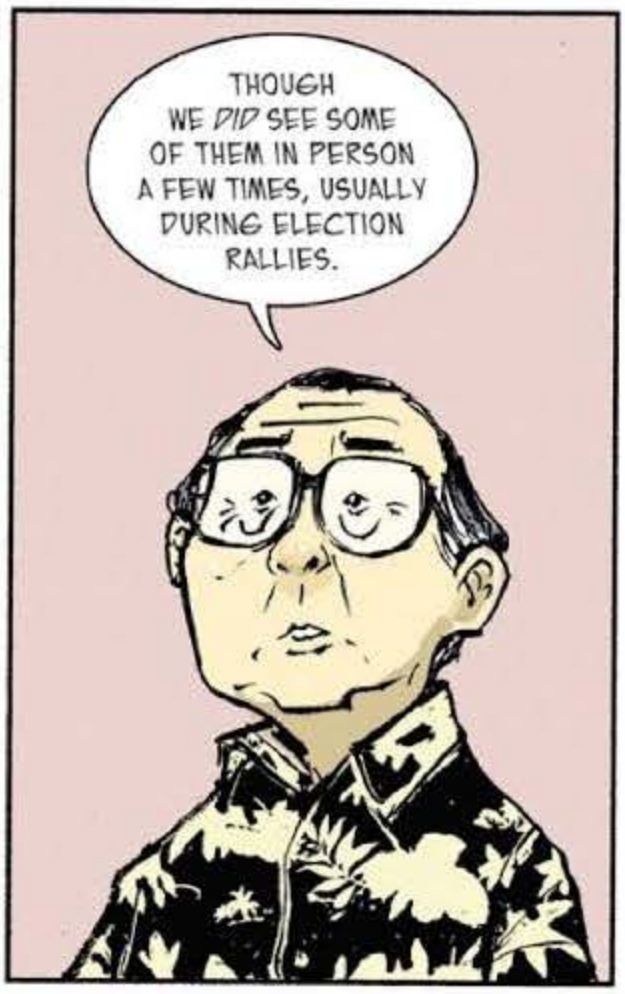

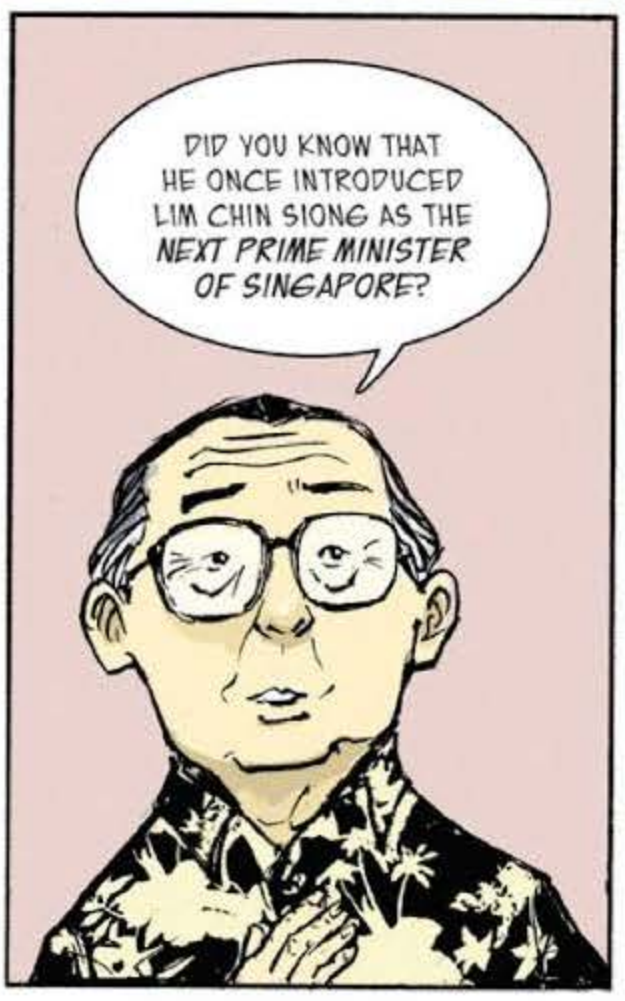

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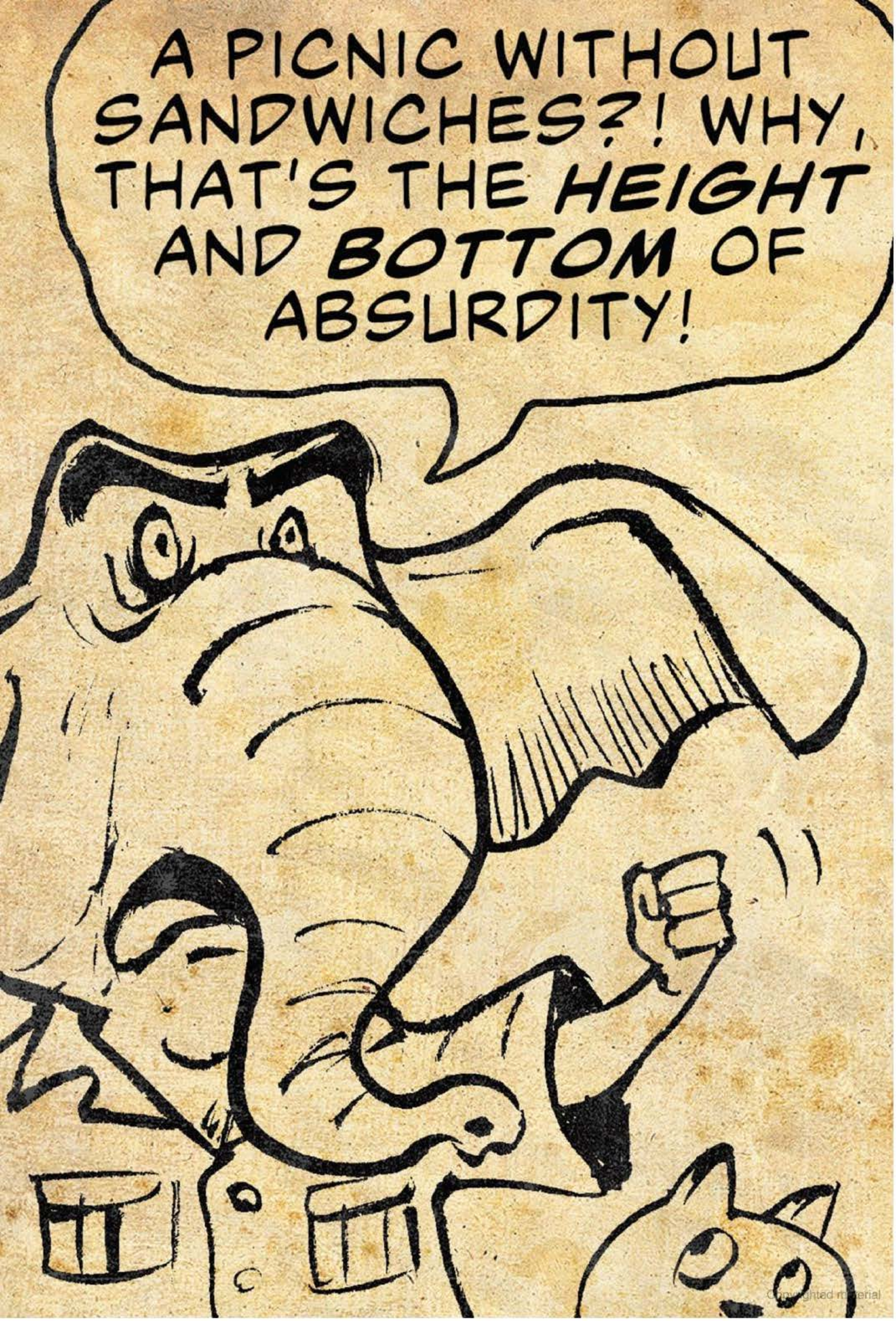

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Opposite
BUKIT CHAPALANG
Detail
1958
Chan Hock Chye

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Right
DRAGON Editorial Mock-up
1958
Unpublished

Wong and Chan pasted their own materials over an existing *Eagle* page to create this mock-up. "*Bukit Chapalang*" appears in the bottom tier.

Above & below
SANG KANCIL Sketches
1957
Chan Hock Chye

Opposite
BUKIT CHAPALANG: SANG KANCIL & THE CROCODILE
1958
Chan Hock Chye

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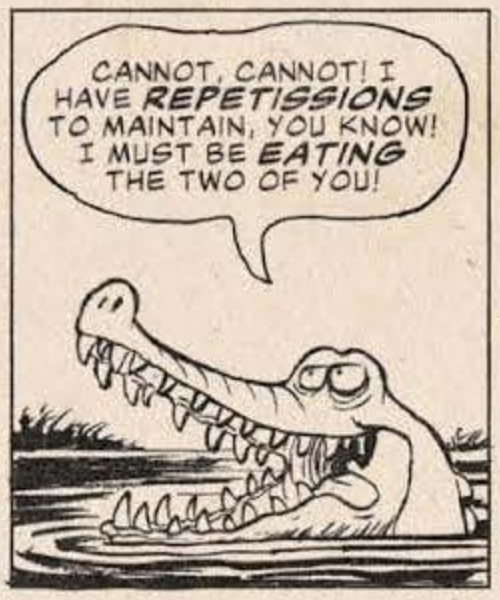

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LIM YEW HOCK
Kingfisher
(Sang Pekaka)

SIR WILLIAM GOODE
Lion (Sir Lion)

DAVID MARSHALL
Elephant (Sang Gajah)

Above **CHARACTER SKETCHES & COUNTERPARTS** (1958) | Chan Hock Chye

Below **BUKIT CHAPALANG: THE PICNIC** (1958) | Chan Hock Chye | Unpublished

Sang Gajah (David Marshall) begins his tenure as Chief Minister, forcing concessions from the British by threatening to resign.

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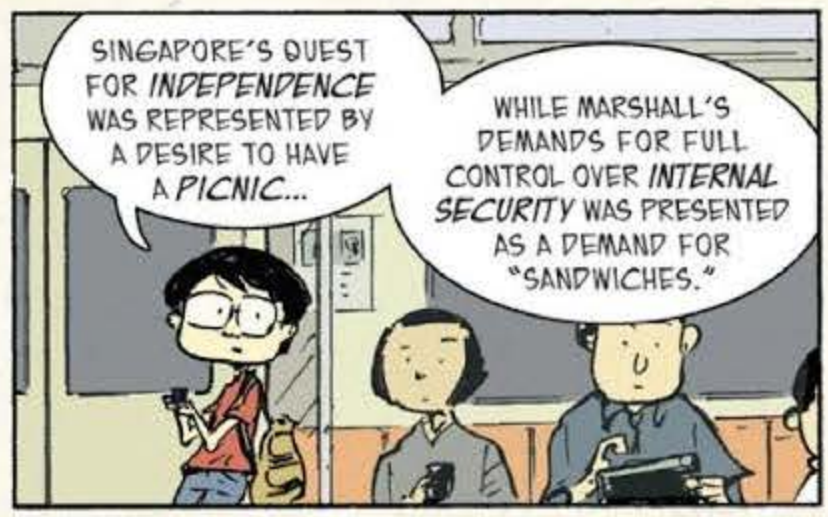
LEE KUAN YEW
Mouse-deer (Sang Kancil)

LIM CHIN SIONG
Cat (Sang Kucing)



*AN AMERICAN COMIC STRIP BY WALT KELLY

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David Marshall's reluctance to use force to curb trade union and student protests left the British with little confidence that economic and political stability would be maintained if independence was to be granted to Singapore.

Marshall was caught in a bind. Taking tougher measures might help to assuage the colonial authorities, but he would also be accused of being a stooge and lackey.

Regardless, Marshall continued to press for immediate and complete internal self-government, and once again threatened to resign as Chief Minister unless his demands were met. But the British remained unwilling to relinquish their control over matters of internal security, and would not be swayed by his threats this time.

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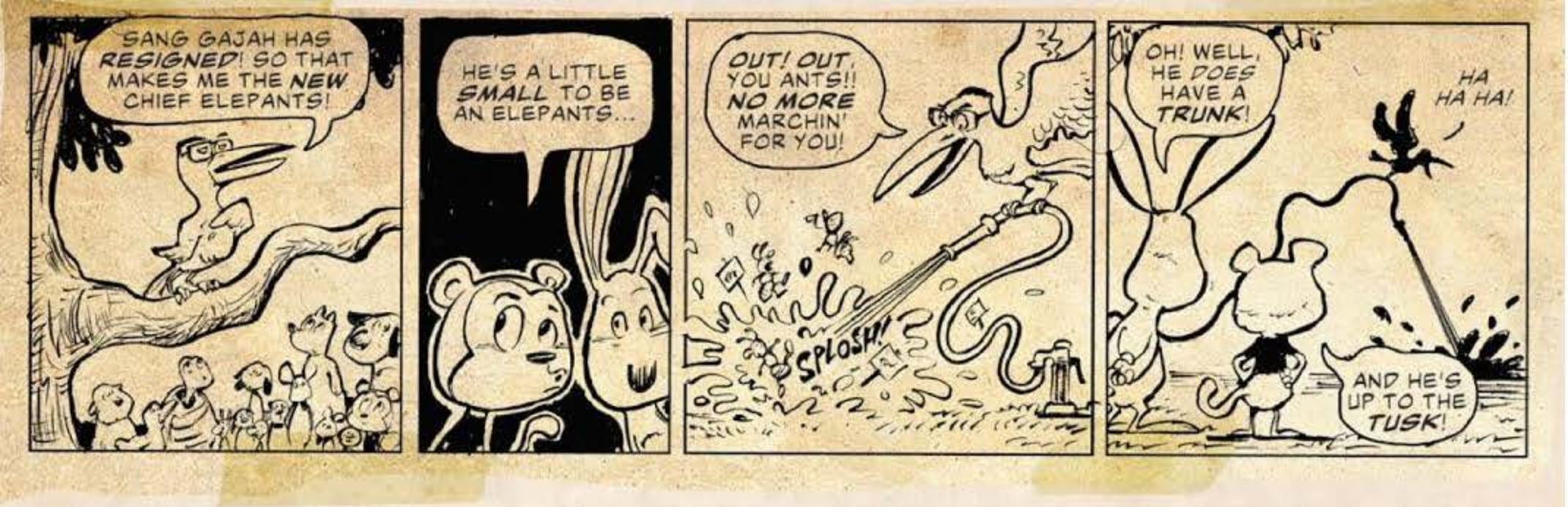

Taking over as the new Chief Minister was Lim Yew Hock, who had fewer reservations about using tear gas and water cannons to put down the student and worker protests. He would also go on to order the arrest of Lim Chin Siong and other leaders of the radical left in October 1956.

The new Chief Minister's willingness to take action gave the British enough peace of mind to grant Singapore internal self-rule. The issue of internal security was resolved by the formation of a council, whereby a representative from the Federation of Malaya, rather than Britain, had the casting vote. This had the advantage of removing the appearance of colonial control, whilst maintaining powers in the hands of conservative forces. It was a deal Marshall would describe as granting "*tiga suku busuk merdeka*," Malay for "three-quarters rotten independence."

Meanwhile, Lim Chin Siong and the other political detainees languished in prison. Their continued incarceration highlighted the significance of having internal security powers, which granted the right to arrest and detain individuals indefinitely without trial.

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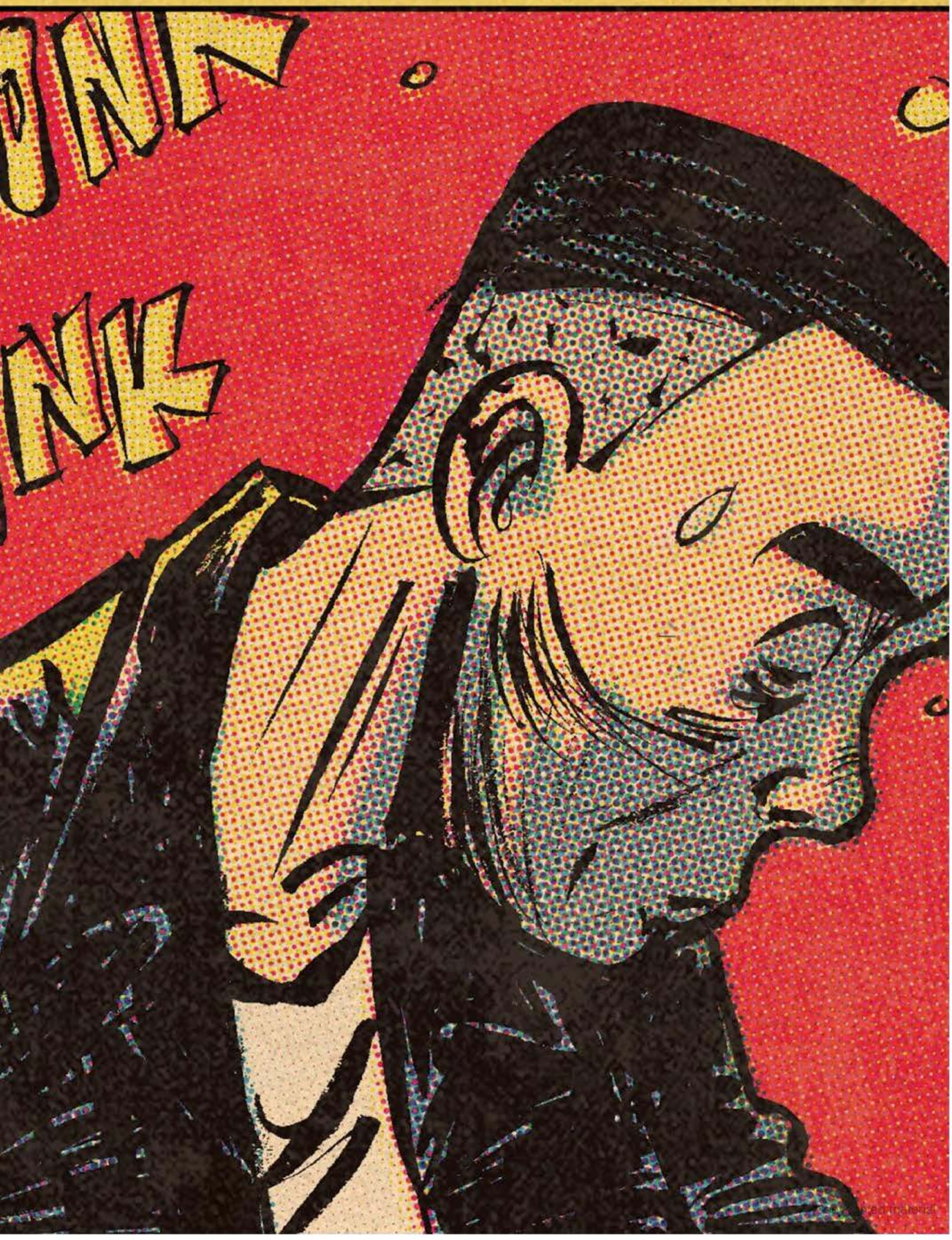
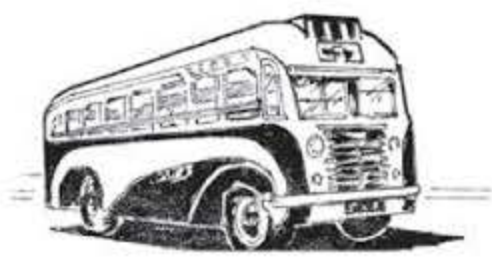
DREAM... DELIRIOUS, YET TING
WITH A SENSE OF ALIVENESS.



Chapter Five

SUPERHERO

时势造英雄



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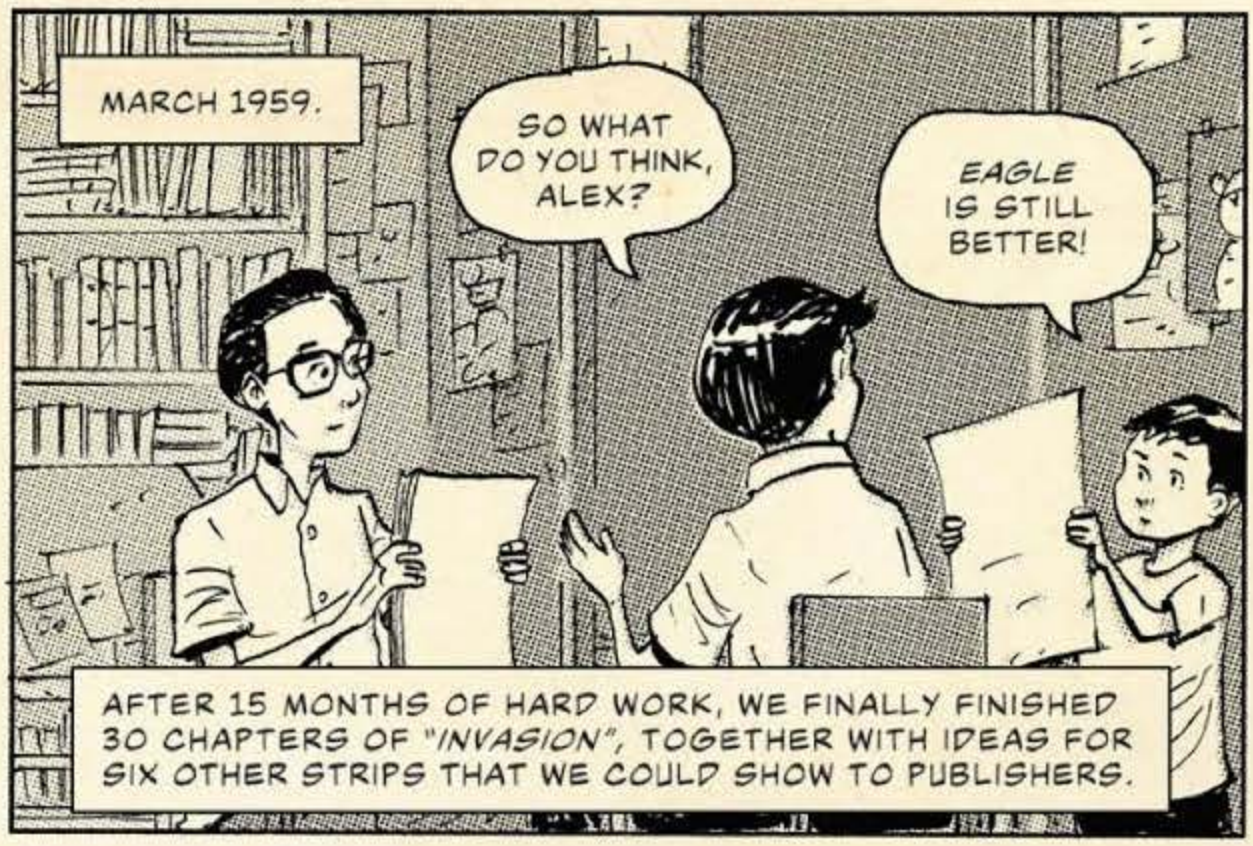

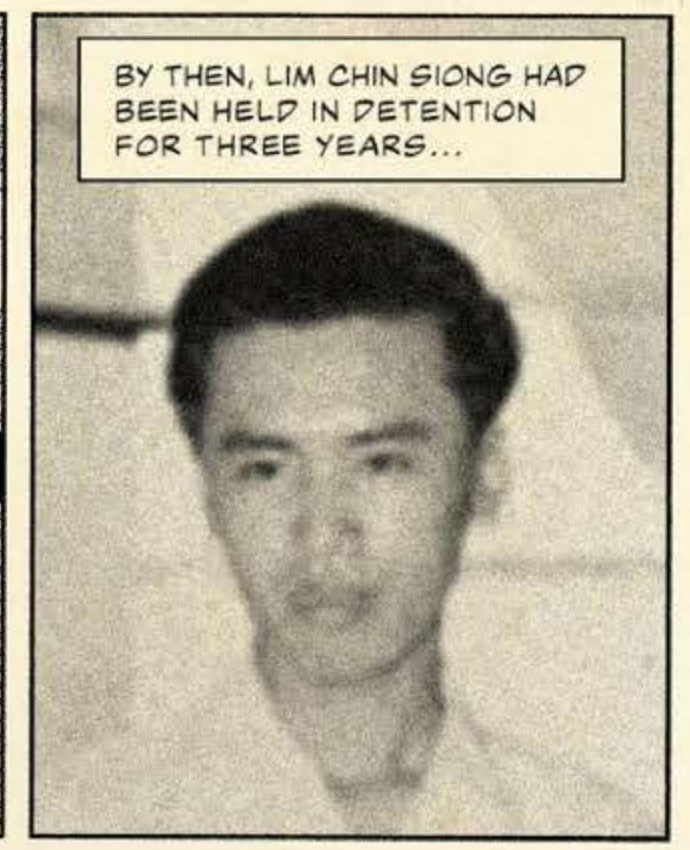

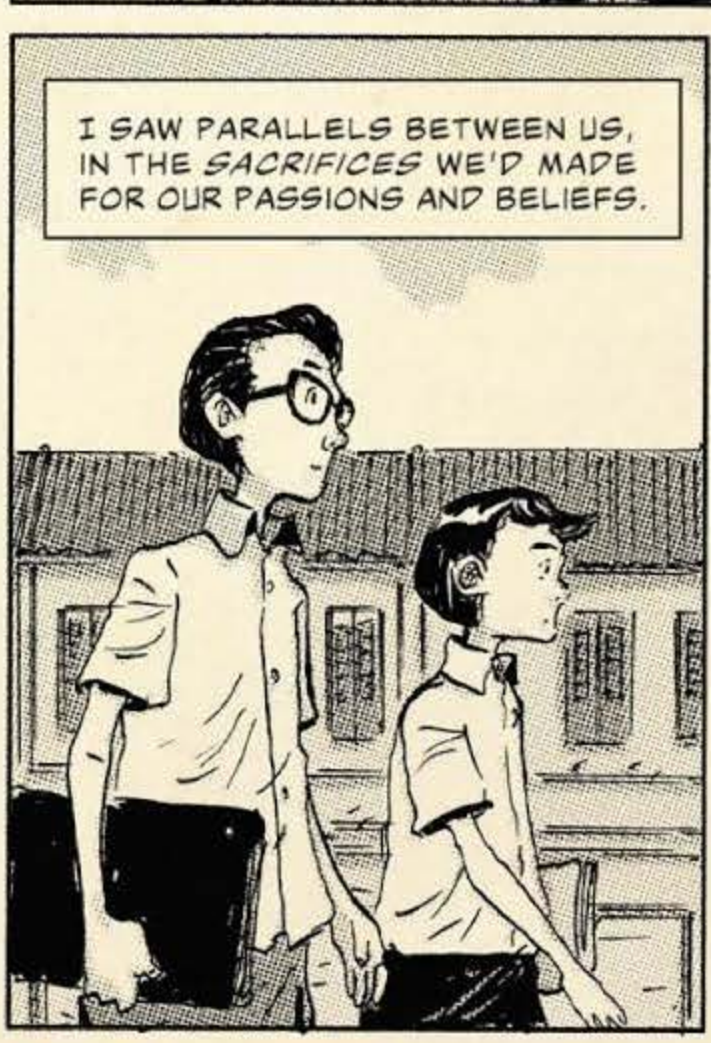

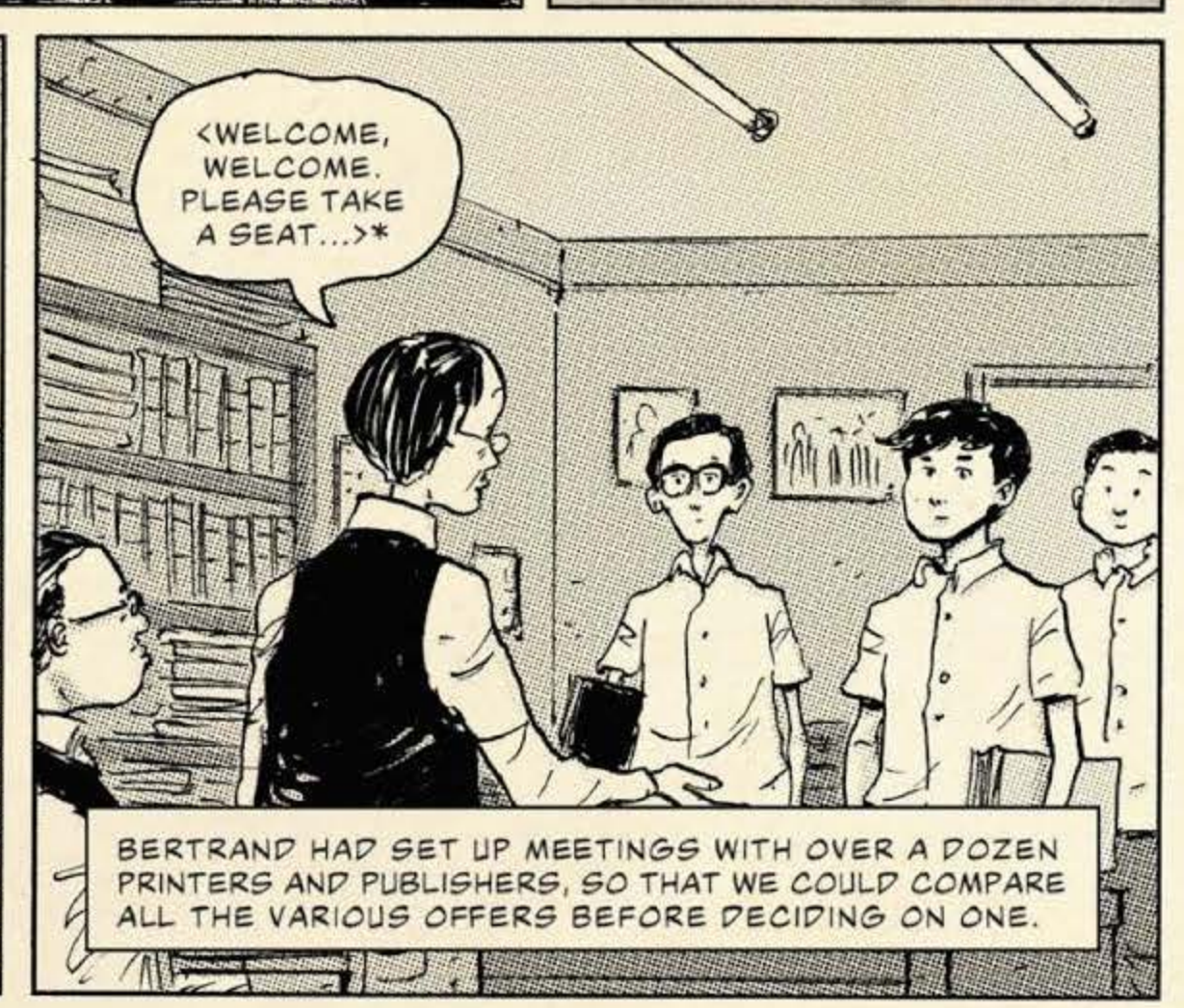

*IN HOKKIEN.

**AN EXPRESSION CONVEYING ADMIRATION FOR A DISPLAY OF GENUINE SKILL.

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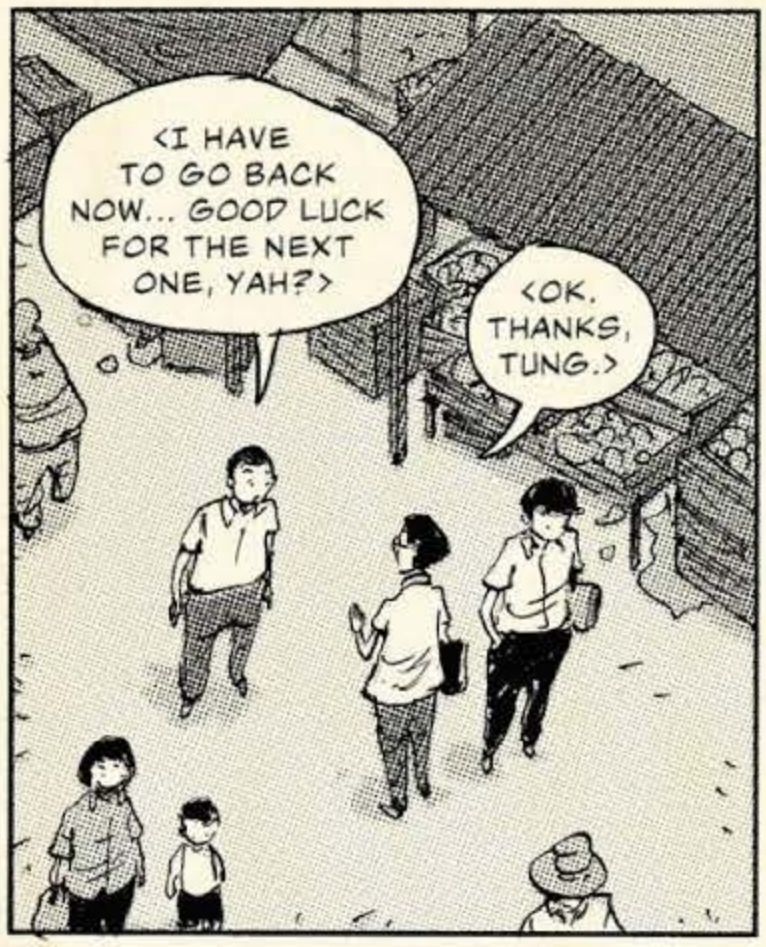

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DRAGON SPORTS PAGE • INFORMATION INSTRUCTION • NEWS

THOMAS CUP

BY KENNETH WOLLITER

To which Lancashire club will the honours go in this Coronation year Cup Final at Wembley? To famous Bolton Wanderers, six times finalists, three times Cup winners and unbeaten at Wembley; or to gallant Blackpool, three times finalists since the war, but never the winners? Will everybody's favourite, Stanley Matthews, at last capture that elusive winners' medal, or will Nat Lofthouse, the centre forward everyone admires, crown his triumphant season with this additional honour?

Let tomorrow's game decide the better team on the day, and whichever it proves to be you can rest assured that the Cup couldn't go to a finer set of sportsmen.

Now for messages from the rival managers and captains.

The Rival Managers

Bill Ridding, who was England's trainer in the World Cup series at Rio, took us into the Bolton dressing room and pointed to a notice hanging on the wall.

Teach me to win when I win, and, if I must not win, then, above all I pray, make me a good loser, we read.

'That is the spirit in which Bolton Wanderers will take the field at Wembley, as they do in all their games', said Bill Ridding. 'But the boys are playing well, they are fit and confident. What's more we've got a match-winner just as outstanding as Blackpool's Stanley Matthews: Nat Lofthouse.

'Perfect timing, balance and co-ordination are his to command as a result of long practice allied to natural ability. You'll note that he has scored in every round so far.

'I must admit to having a personal angle here. As a former centre forward, it was always my ambition to play on the winning side at Wembley, but injury ended my playing days at the age of 24. Now I can only achieve my ambition by remote control and through Nat.

'But football is a team game, and it is on Bolton's splendid harmony and team work this season that I base my confidence that Willie Moir, and not Harry Johnston, will be first up the steps after the match is over to receive the Cup'.

Next we asked for the views of Joe Smith, manager of Blackpool and former international inside forward who scored a winning goal in the first Cup Final ever played at Wembley.

'I've been fortunate enough to play in two Wembley Cup Finals', said Joe Smith, 'and each time I was on the winning side. Strangely enough, my team was Bolton Wanderers!

'There have always been friendly connections, as well as a strong rivalry, between Blackpool and Bolton, but there is no doubt which side I shall be on in this Final.

Although unbeaten at Wembley as a Bolton player, I've twice seen the team I manage beaten there, and now I want to see Blackpool win the Cup for the first time in history.

'No manager could wish for a finer set of lads than I've got at Bloomfield Road. From star internationals like Stanley Matthews, Stan Mortensen and Harry Johnston – not forgetting Allan Brown – down to the youngest members of the staff, they give a loyalty and service to our club that is without equal.

'I feel that victory can be the only just reward for their fighting spirit'.

The Rival Captains

'I've been a Blackpool player since I was fifteen years old, and there's only one team for me', said Harry Johnston, of Blackpool and England. 'Since I first became skipper I've had one great ambition – to lead the Tangerines to victory at Wembley. Twice I've come near to realizing that ambition; now I'm hoping that it will be a case of third time lucky.

'We have a particular incentive to win this time. We owe it to Allan Brown, who again misses the Final, because he broke his leg in scoring the winning goal in the sixth round at Highbury, and to Stanley Matthews, whose glittering career would be tragically incomplete without the reward of a winners' medal.

'Winning isn't going to be easy because the Trotters are a grand team, but that's the way we want it. We all love a good fight. We'll do our best, and if that's not good enough then there'll be no bitter feelings down Blackpool way.'

The final word goes to Willie Moir, of Bolton Wanderers and Scotland.

'They're cautious folk in Stoneywood, near Aberdeen, where I come from, so you can't expect me to risk a prophecy,' said Willie Moir, 'but this I will say – if we don't win the Cup it won't be for want of trying.

'I'm proud to have been given the honour of leading the Trotters this season, because they are the finest team I've ever known, in every sense. Like Harry Johnston I've been a footballer all my life, and my greatest ambition has always been to be on the winning side at Wembley.

'We can't both win, Harry, but I agree with you – let's make it a good fight, and may the better team win'.

Wong Soon Pang

Charoen Wattanasin

(Right) HARRY JOHNSTON, followed by Scottish international goalkeeper GEORGE FARM, leads the Blackpool team out to the field.

(Below) The sturdy Blackpool full-backs, EDDIE SHIMWELL (left) and TOM GARRETT (right).

Hard tackling HUGH KELLY is a hard-playing Scottish international wing half.

ERNIE TAYLOR, born in Sunderland, carves openings for the other Blackpool forwards.

Action plus! Speedy left-winger, BILL PERRY, is a South African. He played in the 1951 Final.

Inside, or centre forward JACKIE MUDIE is another from Scotland. He, too, played in the 1951 Final.

(Right). Making his third attempt to win the only football honour that has escaped him is EAGLE Readers' Favourite Footballer, STANLEY MATTHEWS. With Harry Johnston he shares the hope that it will be a case of third time lucky.

centre forward, NAT LOFTHOUSE, could prove Bolton's match-winner.

Bootle born STAN HANSON is a fine, reliable goalie who joined Bolton in 1935. He is shown winning a duel with Everton's inside left in the Cup semi-final tie.

JOHNNY WHEELER (Bolton). He is wing half and deputy centre forward.

...MBARRASS, ...'s international ...re half, was ... Blackpool!

...ional Bolton forwards are HAROLD ... (left) and BOBBY LANGTON (right).

...RS' TRAINING ...NE ...England trainer ...ding as their ... the Bolton ... red-hot on ...and bad weather ...op them. They ... an indoor ringing ...k, all in the dress... room is this special ...ling machine. As you ... the pedals so the needle ...ves round the dial in front. ...ks round the dial represents ...cycle ride of ¼ mile.

...icksilver STAN MORTENSEN ... the Blackpool shooting-star ...o could, if he is fully fit, win ... Cup for Blackpool. In the ...tures on the right (taken by ...rl Sutton) Stan is shown ...king one of his typical ...d-blooded drives at goal.

Lucky home with the Thomas Cup 1949

Thomas Cup Aggregate Table

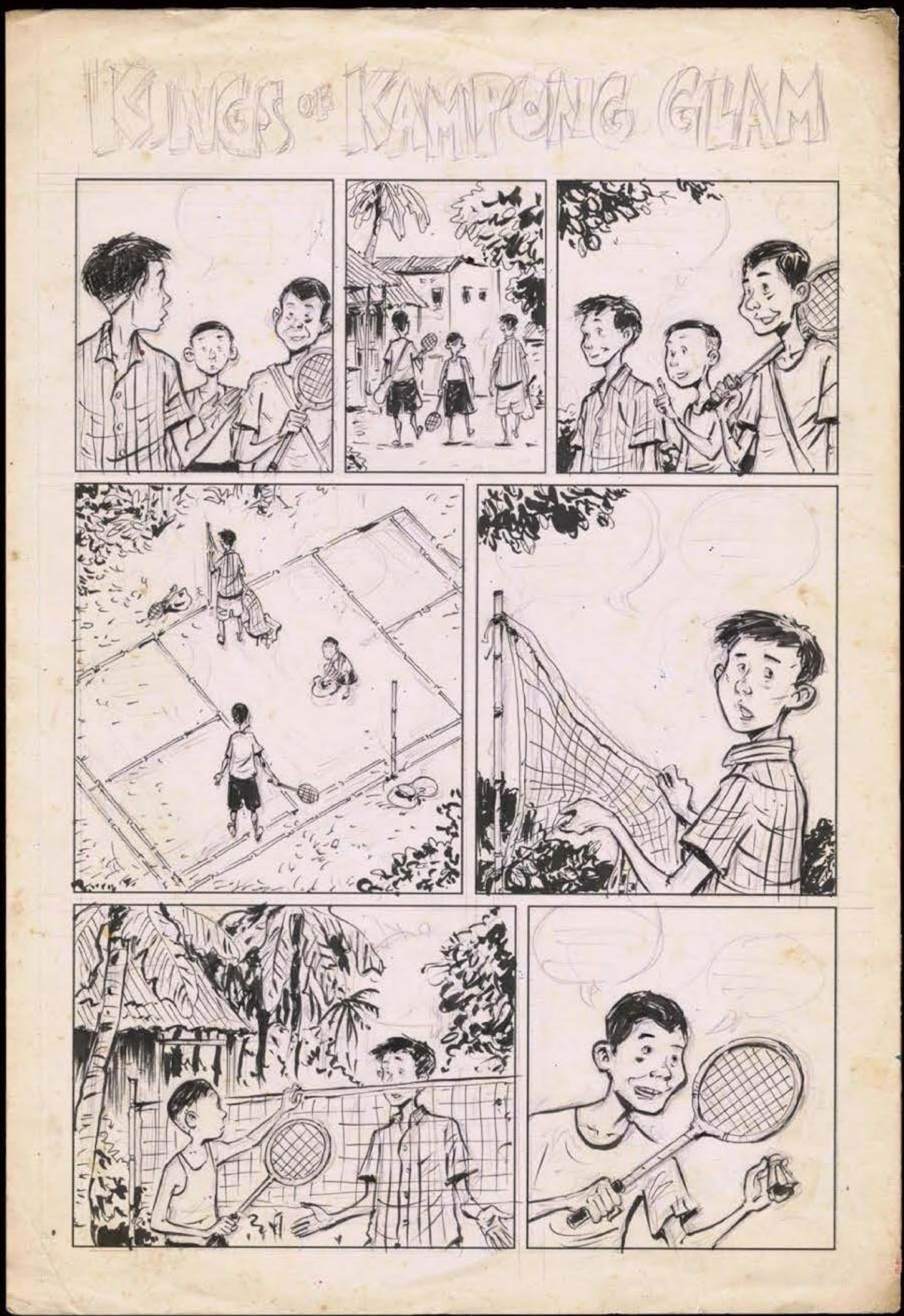
Thomas Cup Mr. Arcade 1949

Above

DRAGON Sports Page Mock-up

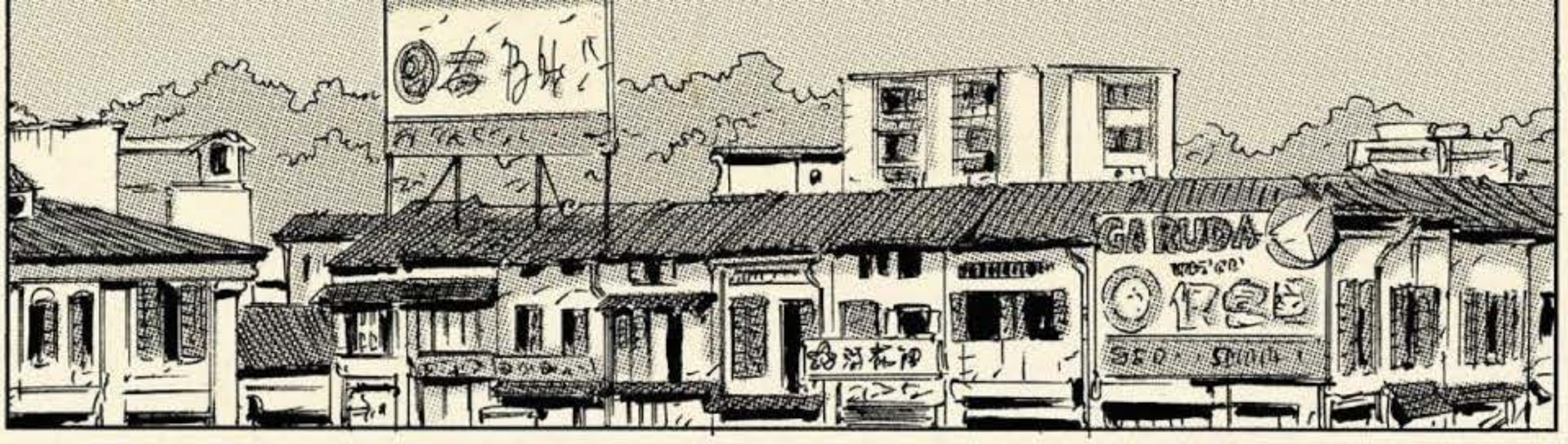
1959

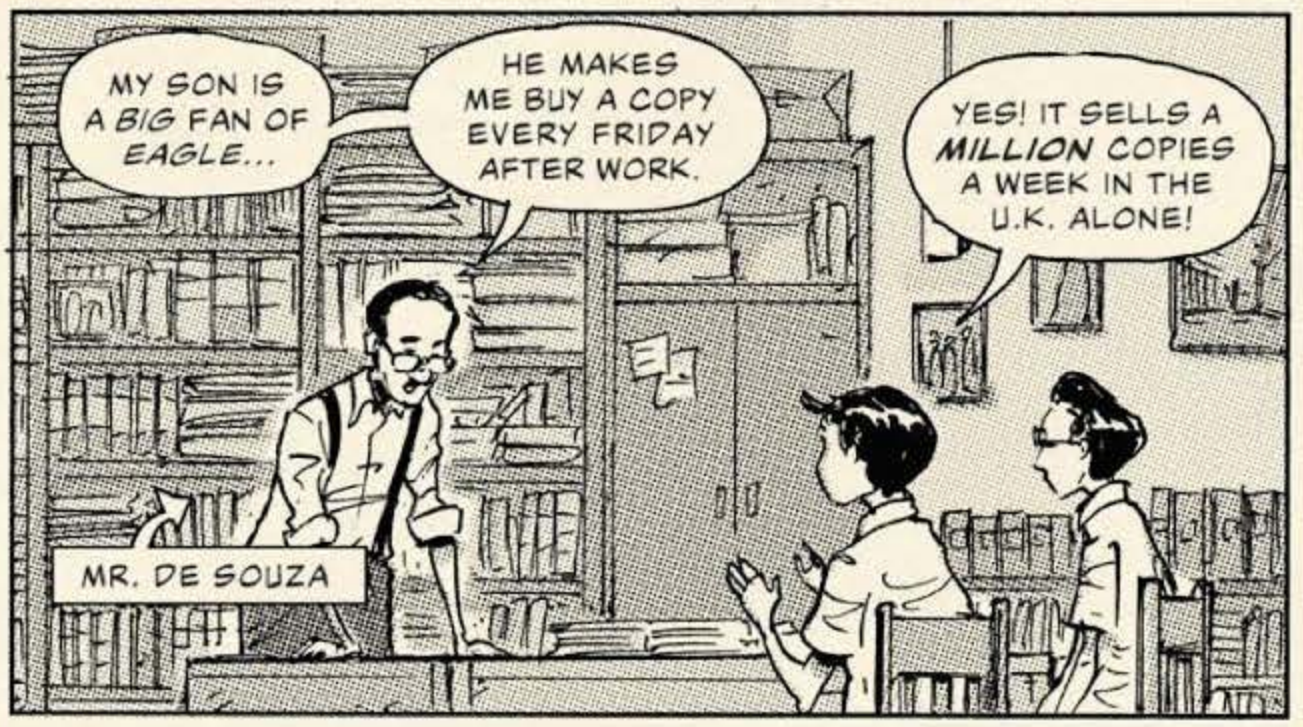
Another mock-up for the *Dragon* pitch put together by Bertrand. Featured on the page are the badminton stars of the day, such as the great Wong Peng Soon, Ong "Crocodile Serve" Poh Lim and the Oon brothers. Wong had been the first Asian to win the All-England Championships in 1950, a feat he would repeat thrice more. Wong and Ong had also been key members of the Malayan teams that had won three consecutive Thomas Cup championships during 1949-1955.

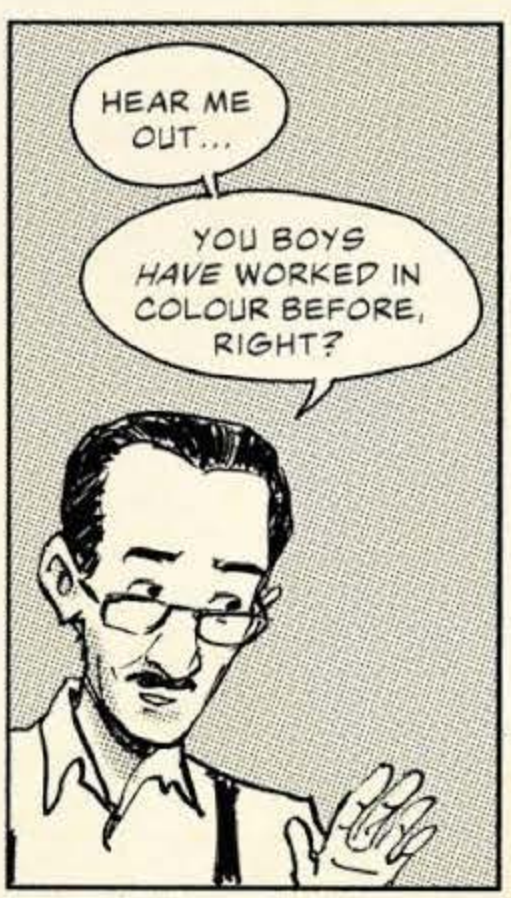


Above **KINGS OF KAMPONG GLAM** (1959) | Chan Hock Chye | Unpublished

A comic for the *Dragon* pitch, featuring a trio of young boys with dreams of emulating their Thomas Cup-winning badminton heroes. The dialogue for these pages, meant to be filled in at a later stage, was never written.







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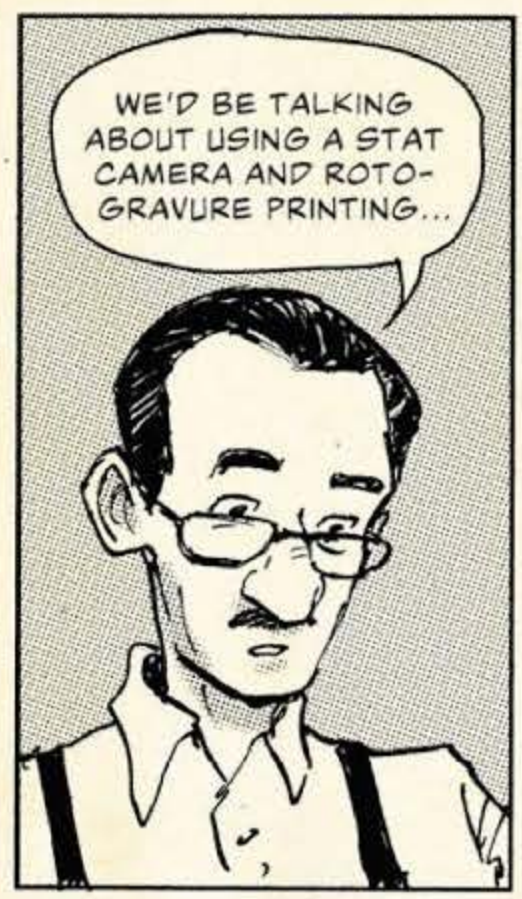

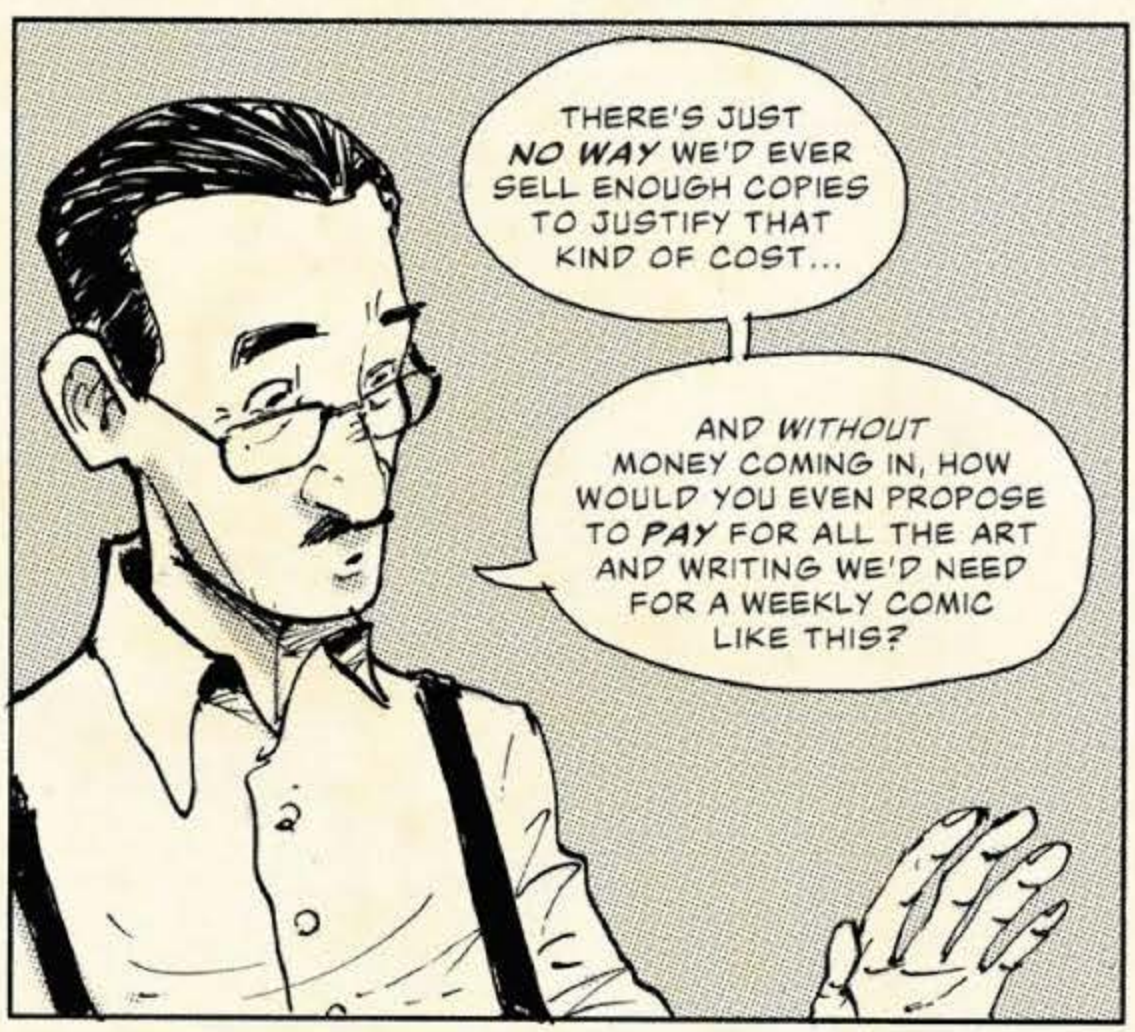

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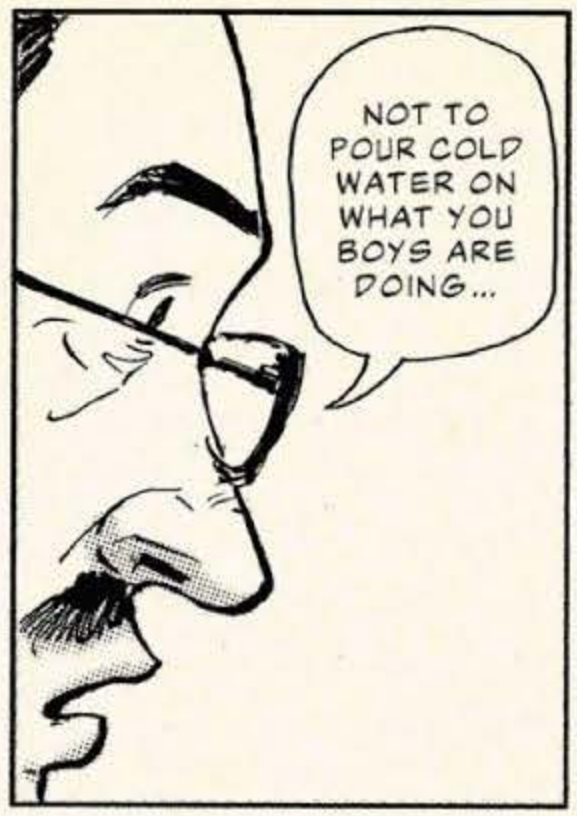

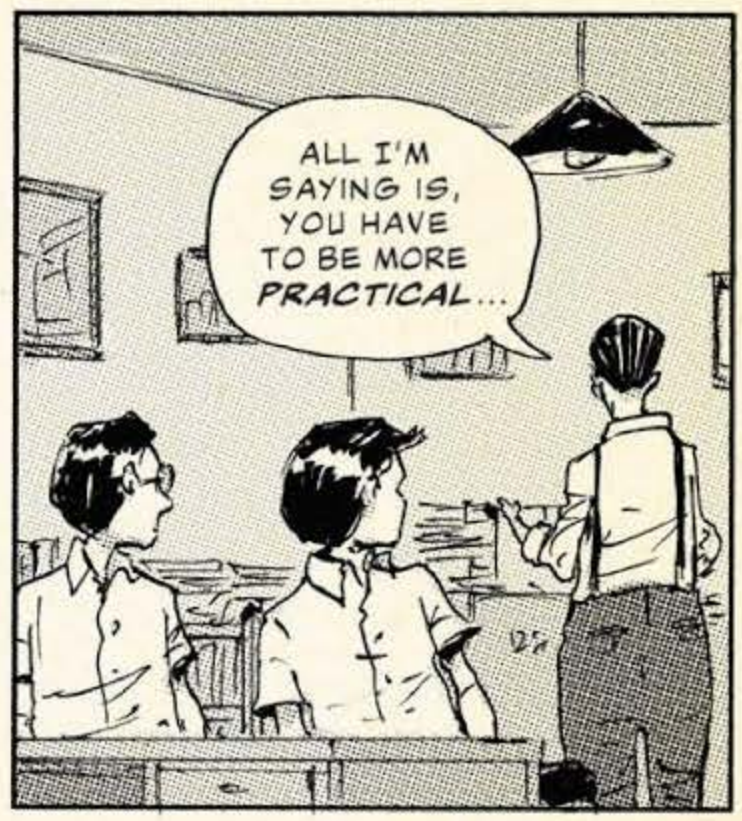

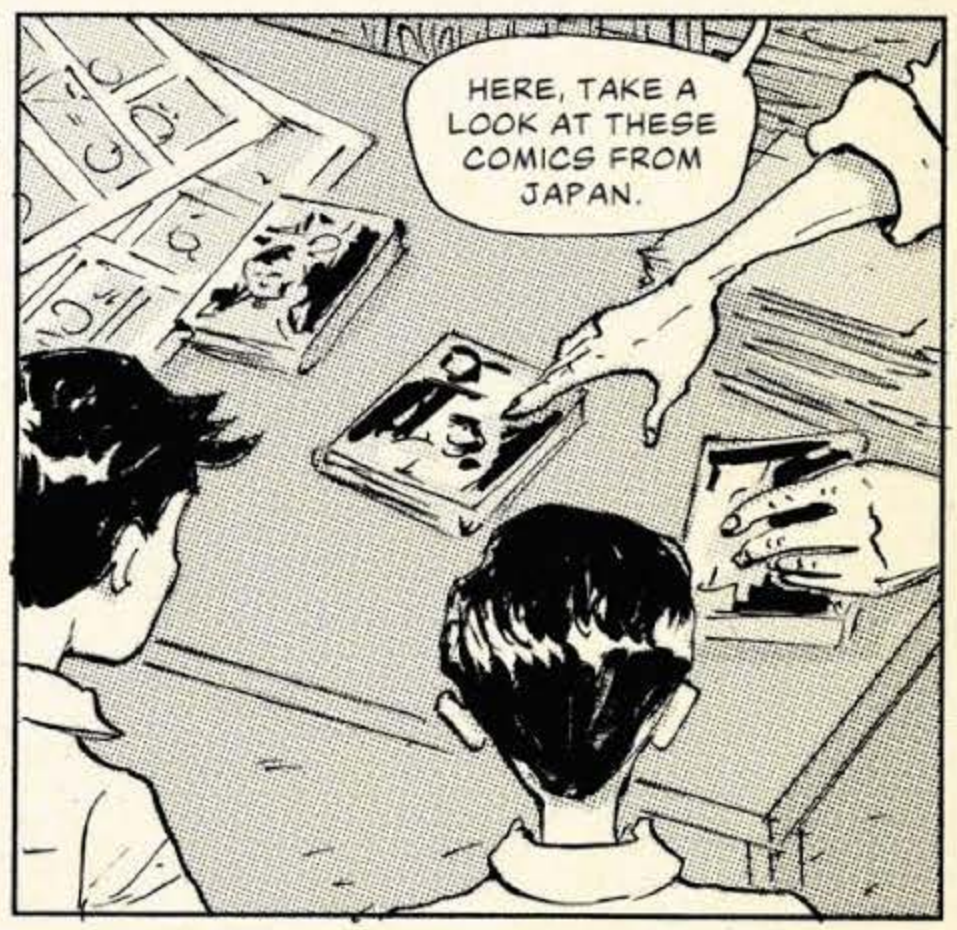

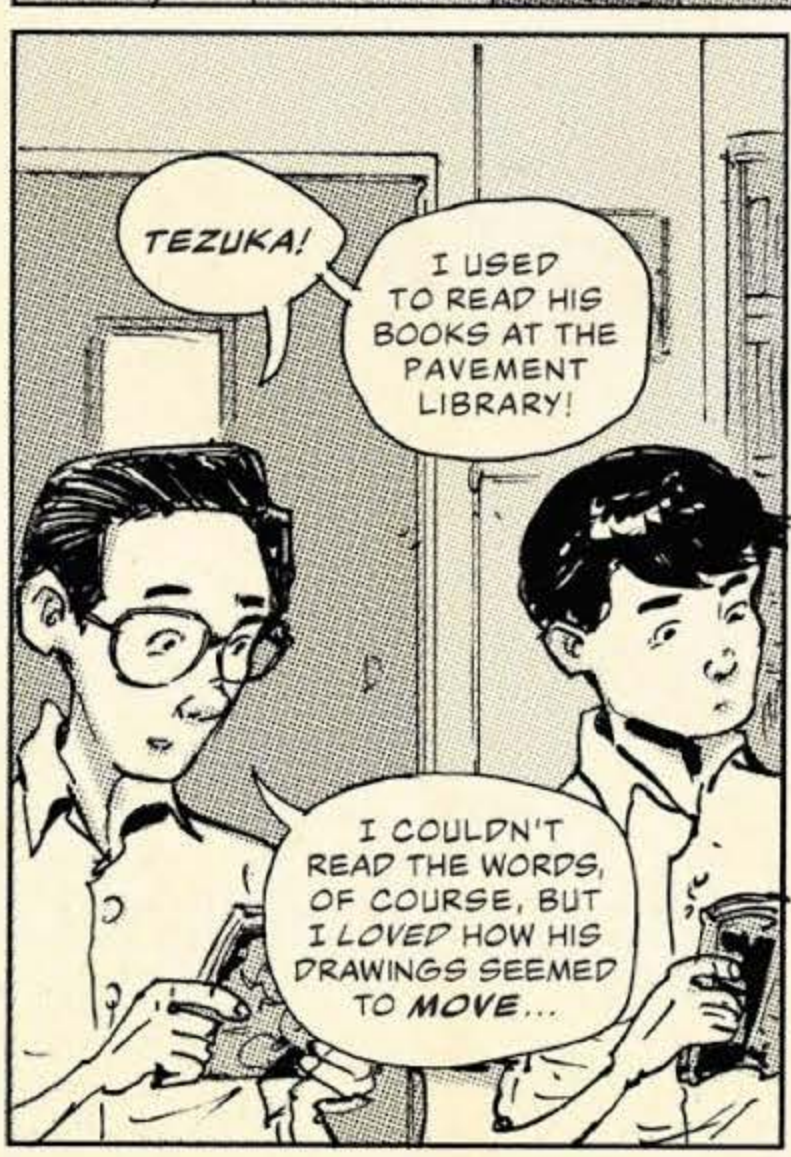

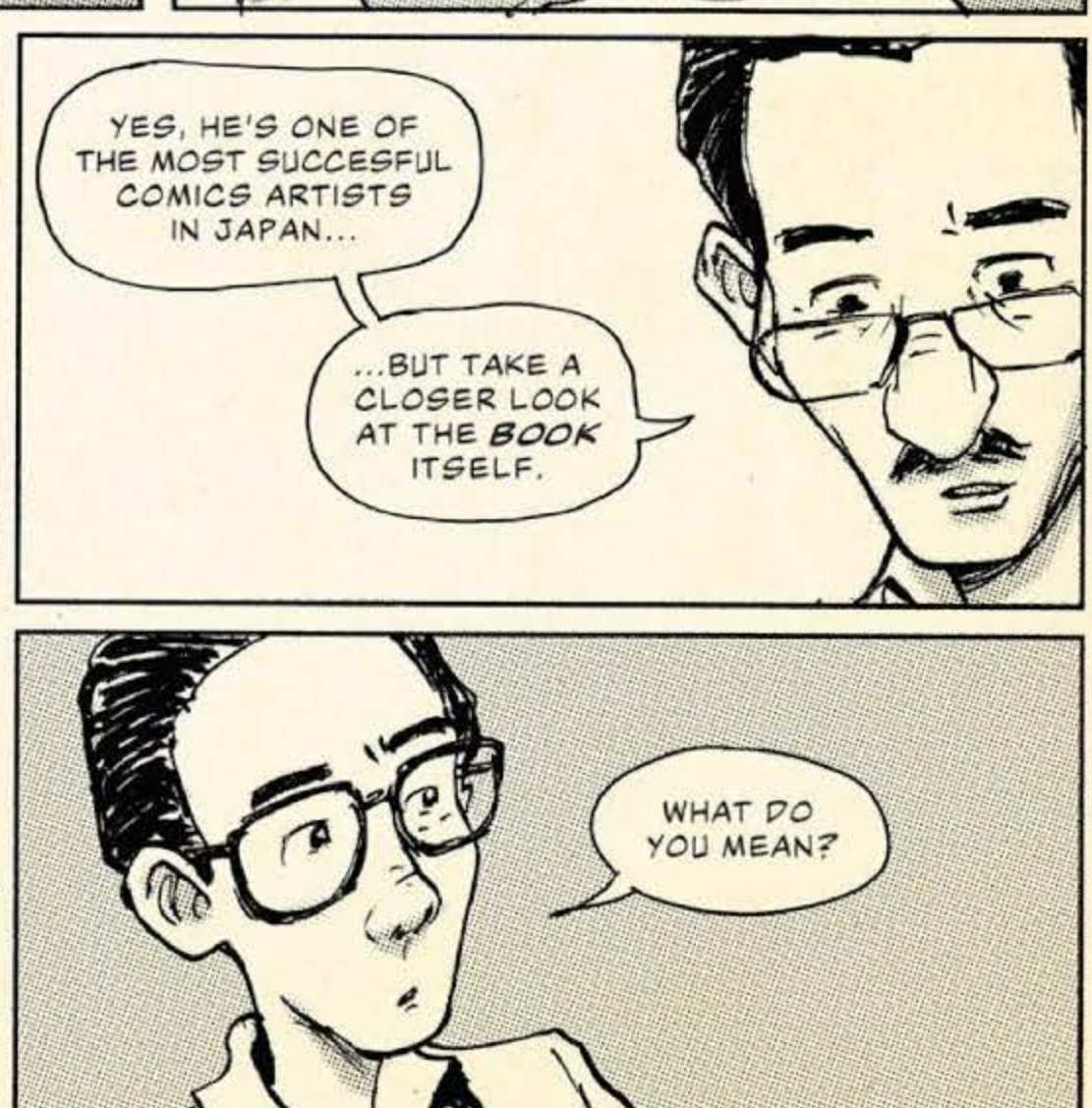

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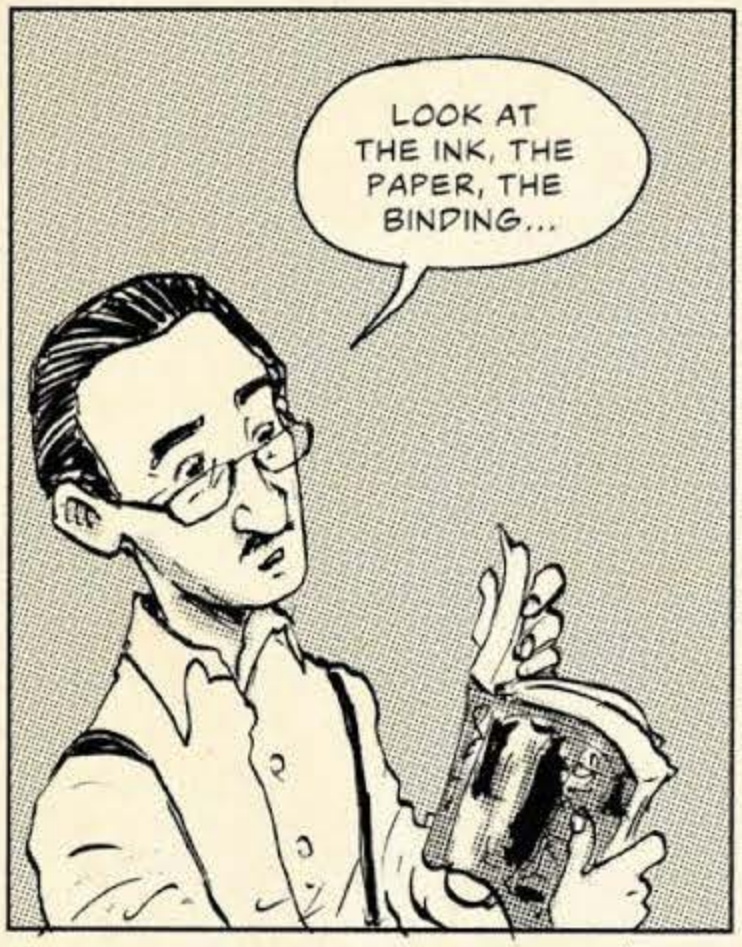

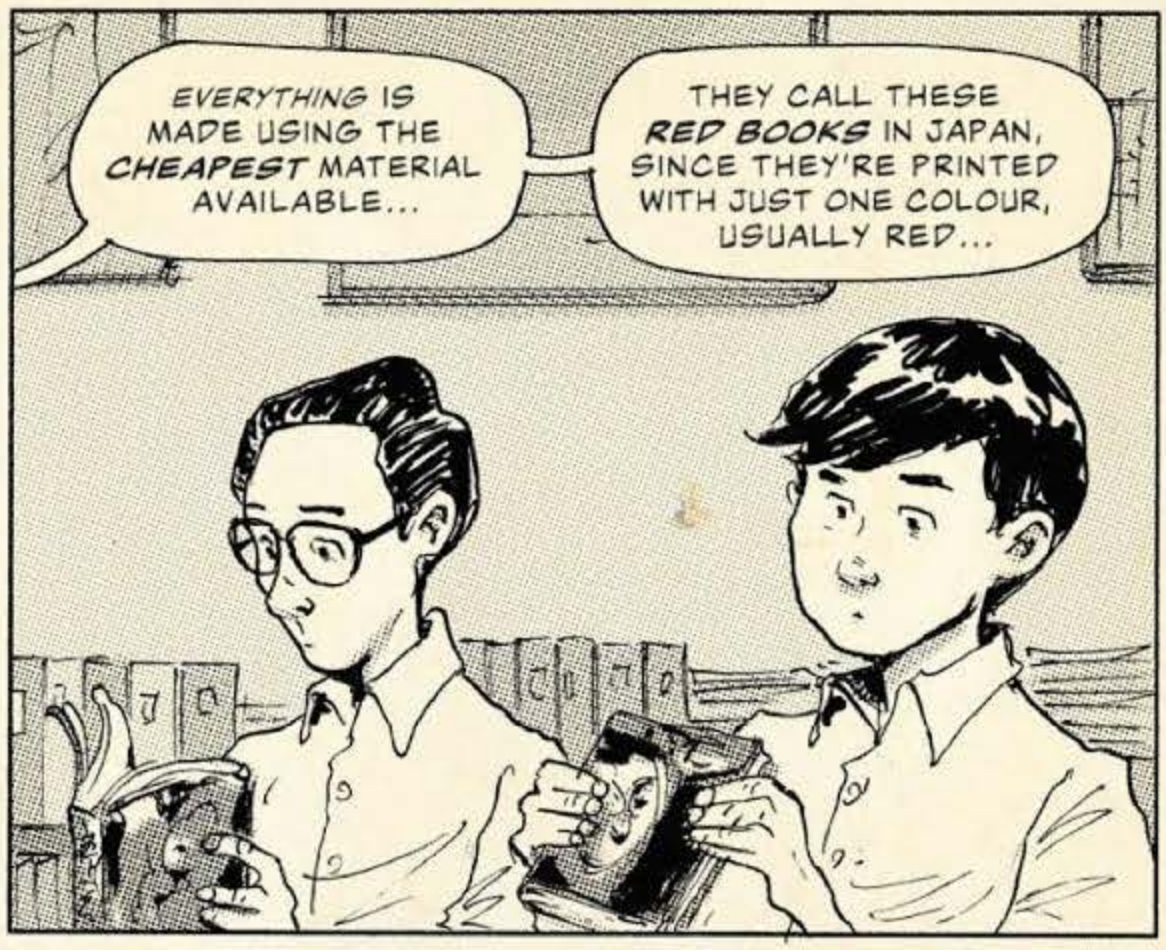

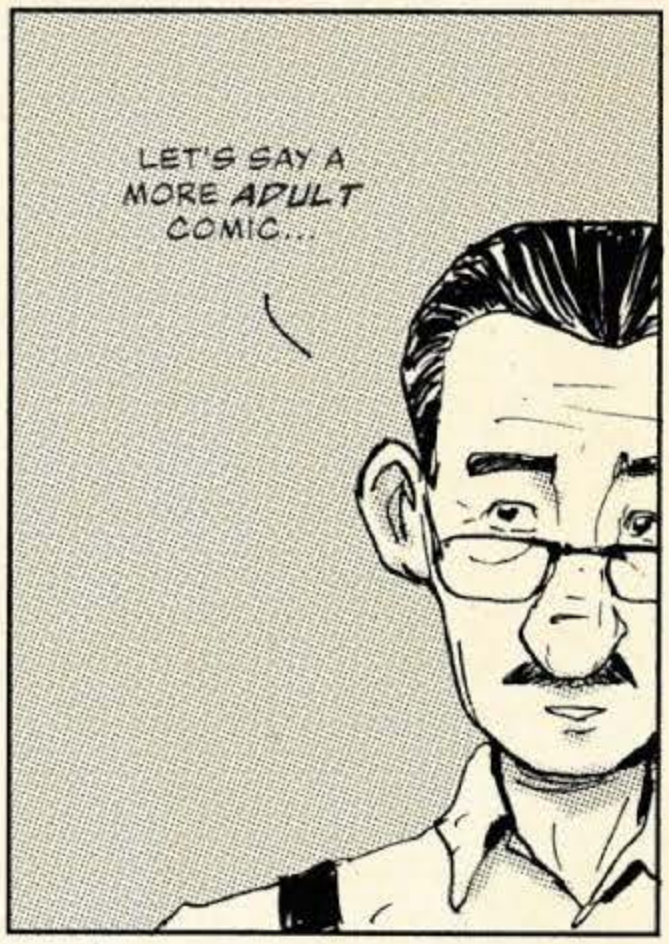

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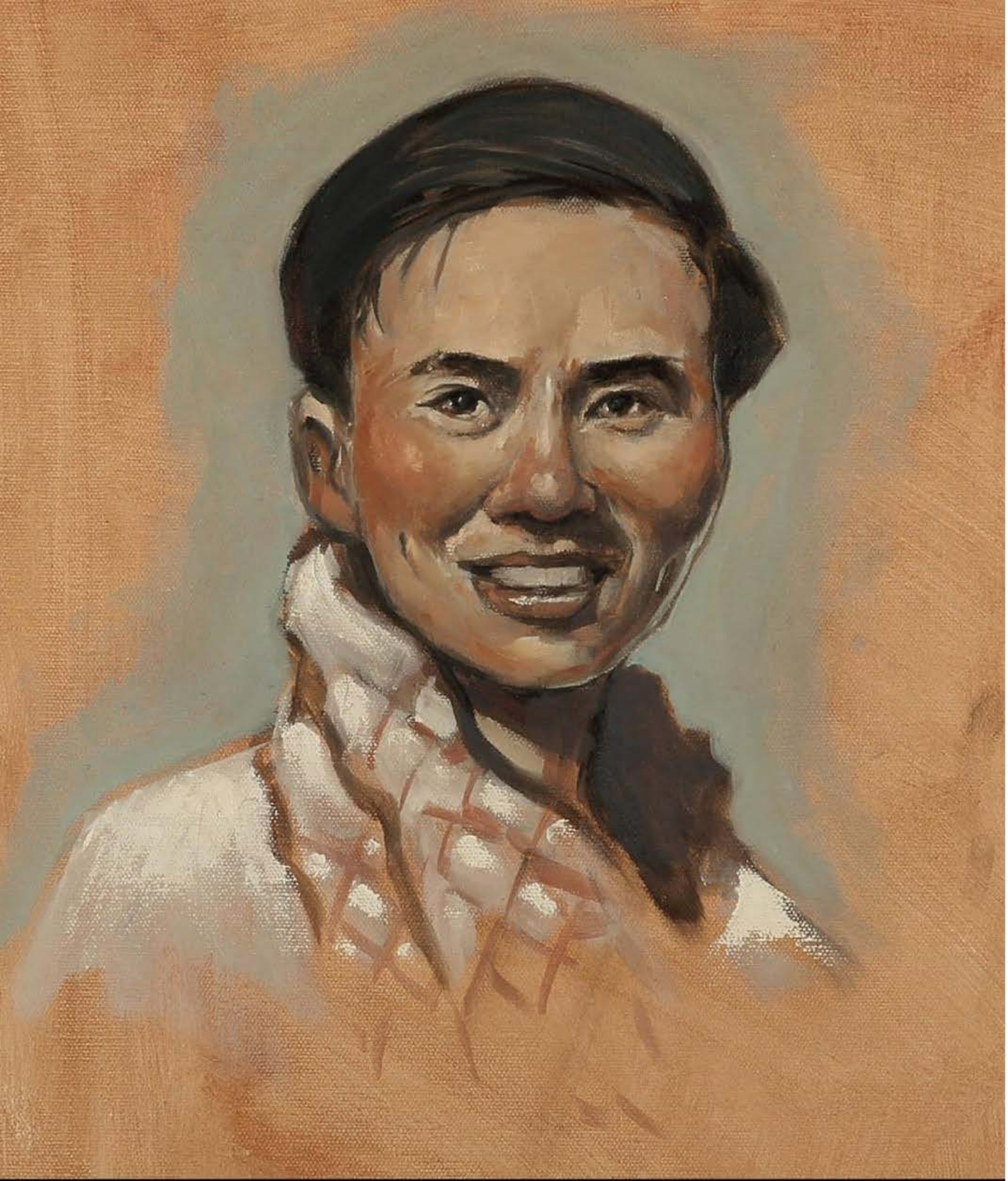
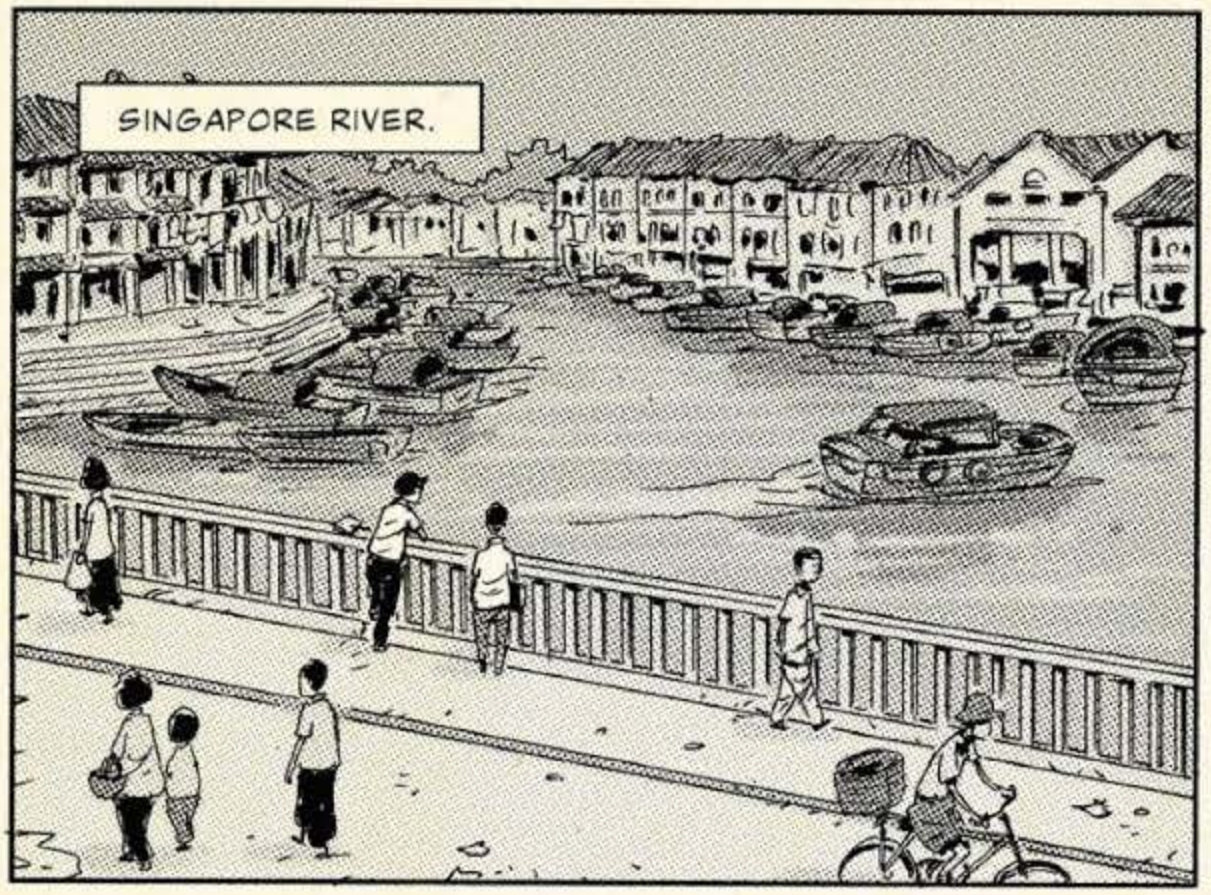
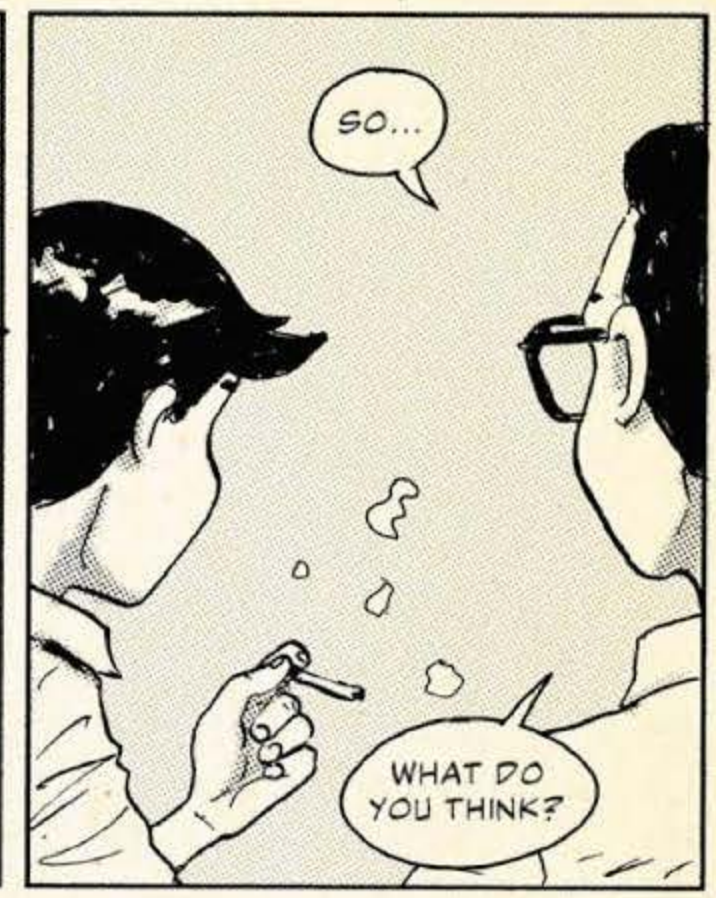


Above
LIM CHIN SIONG
1959
Chan Hock Chye
Oil on canvas

A painting based on a photograph, taken during Lim Chin Siong's release from his first period of detention (1956-1959) following the People's Action Party's (PAP) victory in the 1959 elections. He was freed alongside other union leaders, including Fong Swee Suan, Sidney Woodhull and Devan Nair.





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* A STREET HAWKER SELLING SUGARED PEANUTS AND OTHER SNACKS IN PAPER CONES.
KACANG PUTEH: MALAY FOR "WHITE BEANS AND NUTS"

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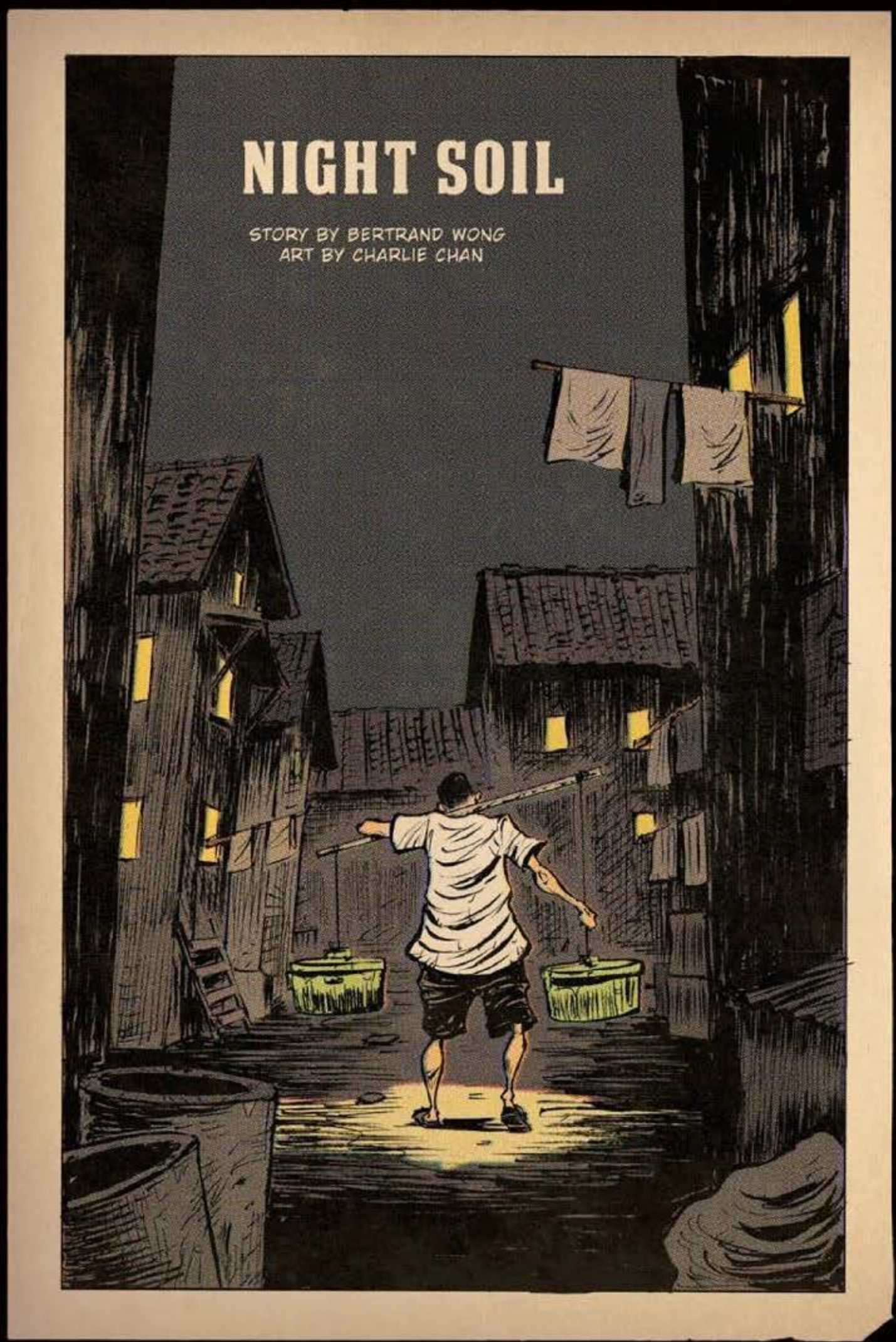
ROACHMAN

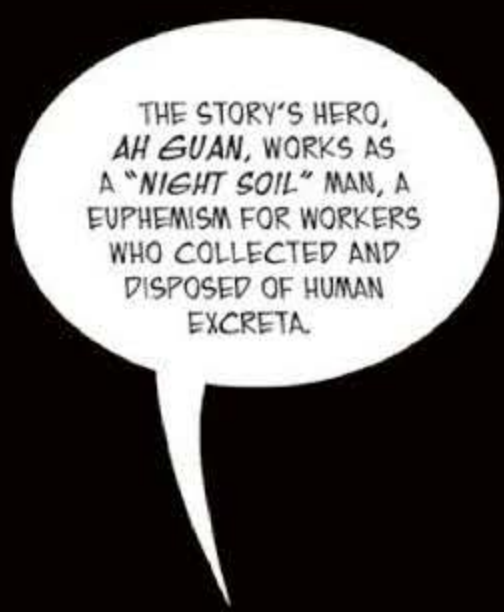
KIDNAP!

No. 4

Previous
ROACHMAN No. 4: KIDNAP!
1960
Art by Chan Hock Chye
Words by Bertrand Wong
Mosquito Press

Roachman was a hybrid of pulp and superhero comics, with stories that often drew on sensationalist newspaper headlines of the day involving murders, kidnappings, suicides, animal attacks and the like.

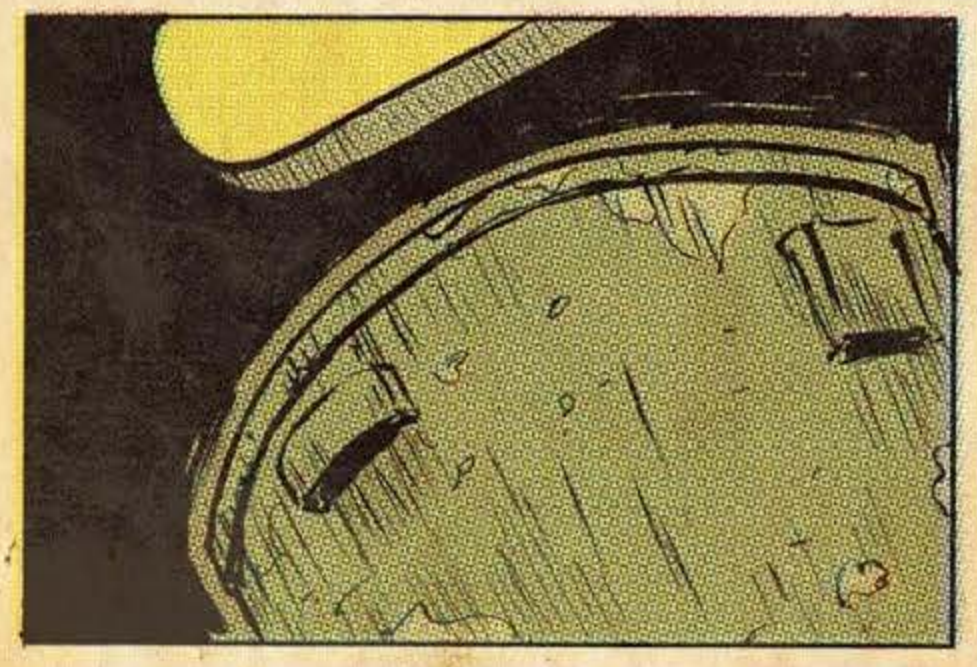




Above & following
ROACHMAN No. 1: NIGHT SOIL
1959
Art by Chan Hock Chye
Words by Bertrand Wong
Mosquito Press

The first issue of the series tells the origin story of the Roachman.

OI, YOU! HURRY UP!



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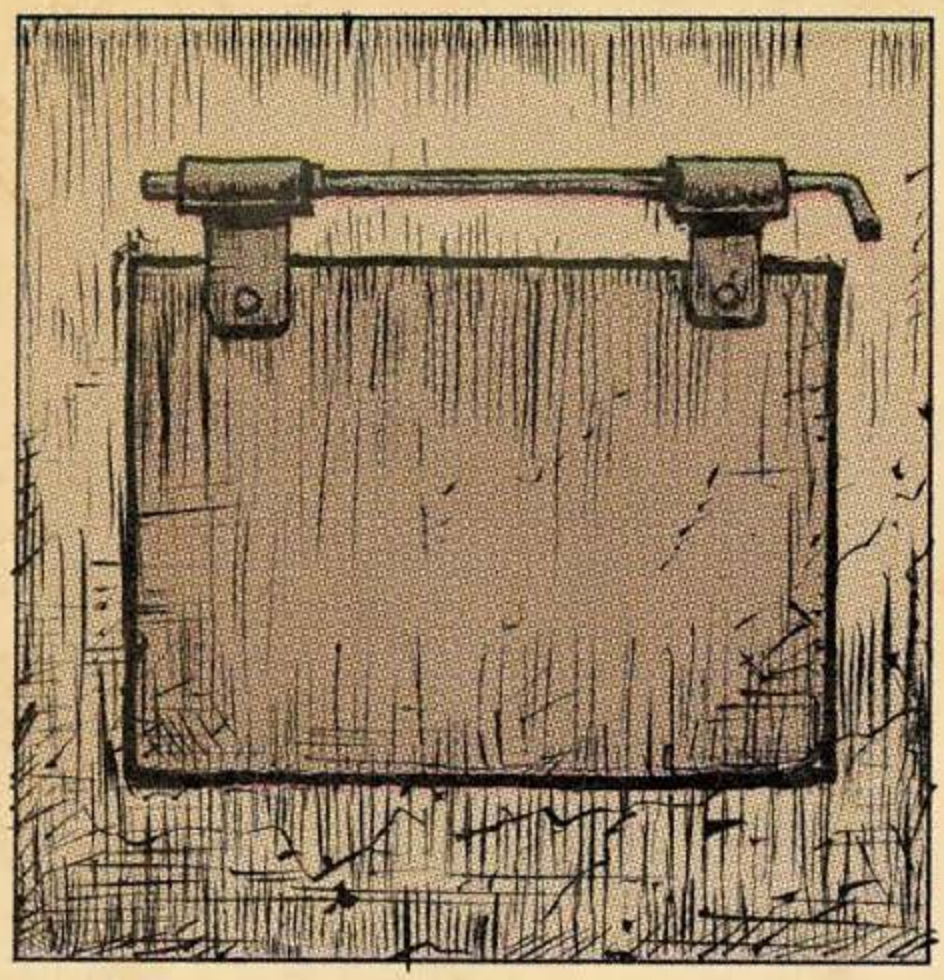

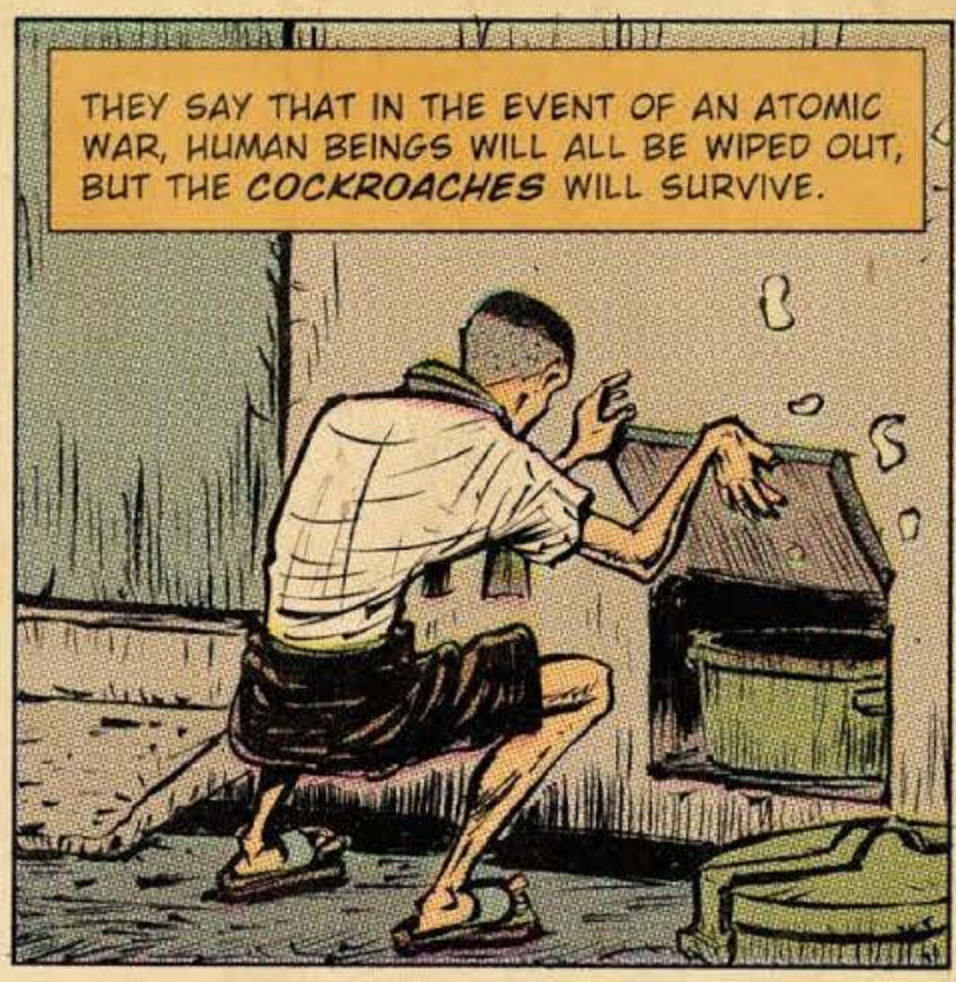

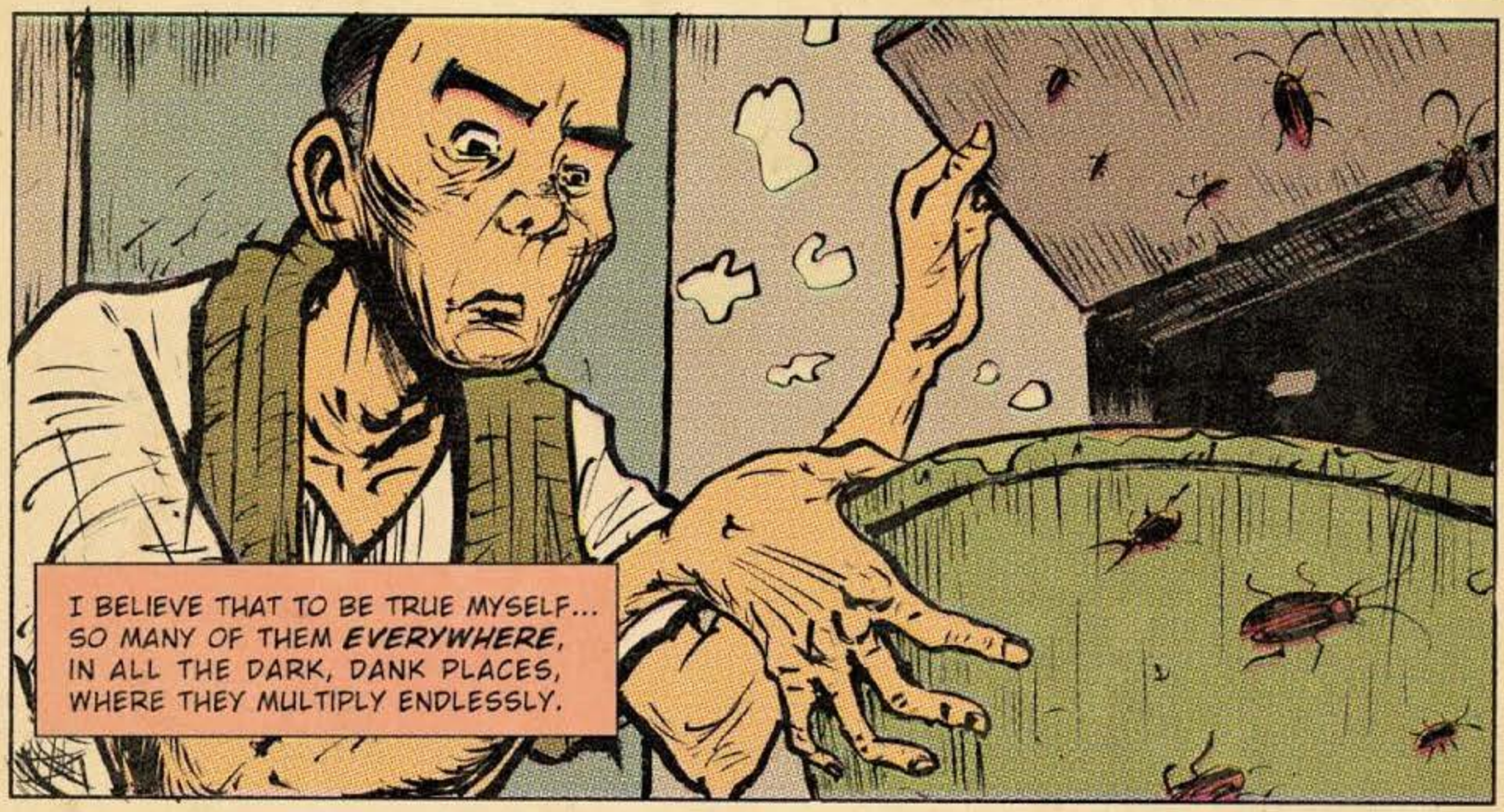

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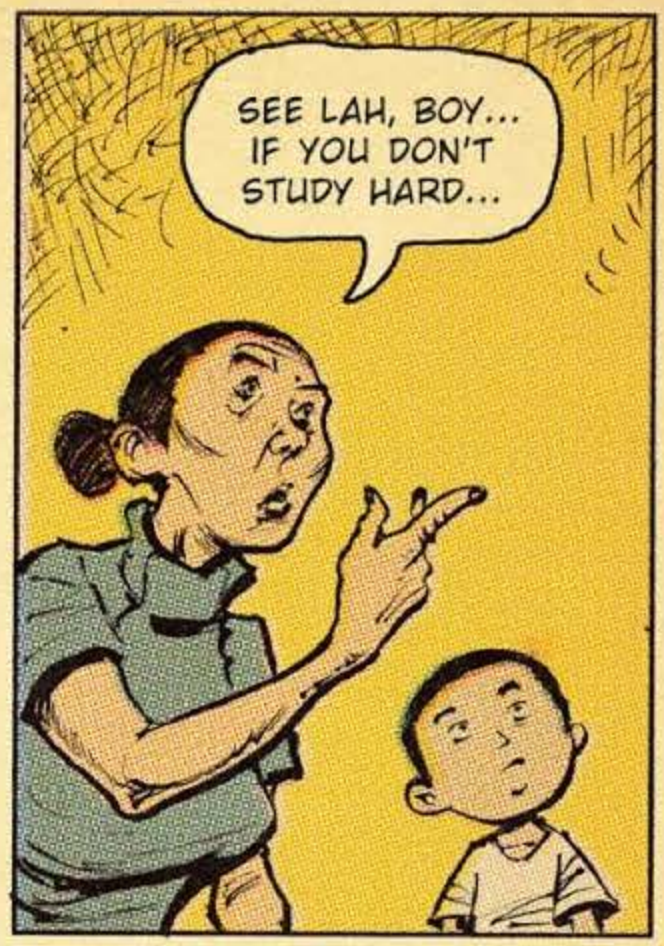

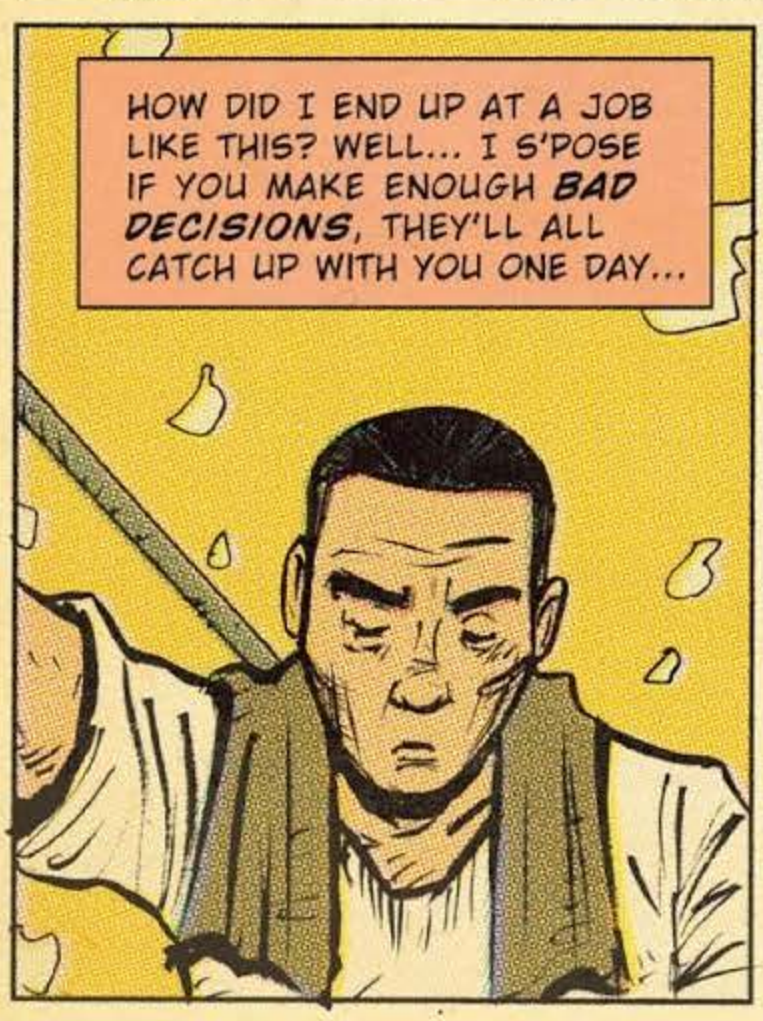

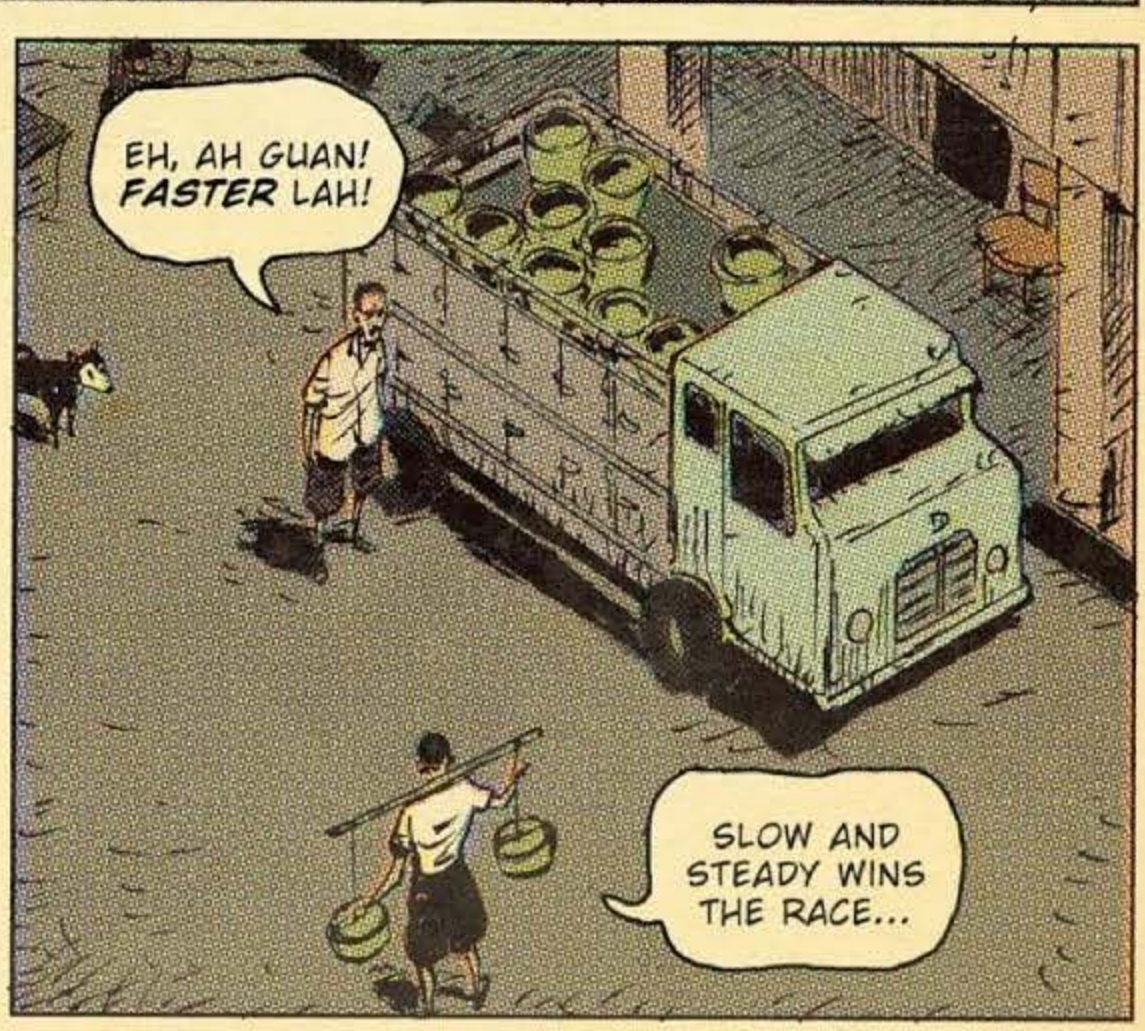

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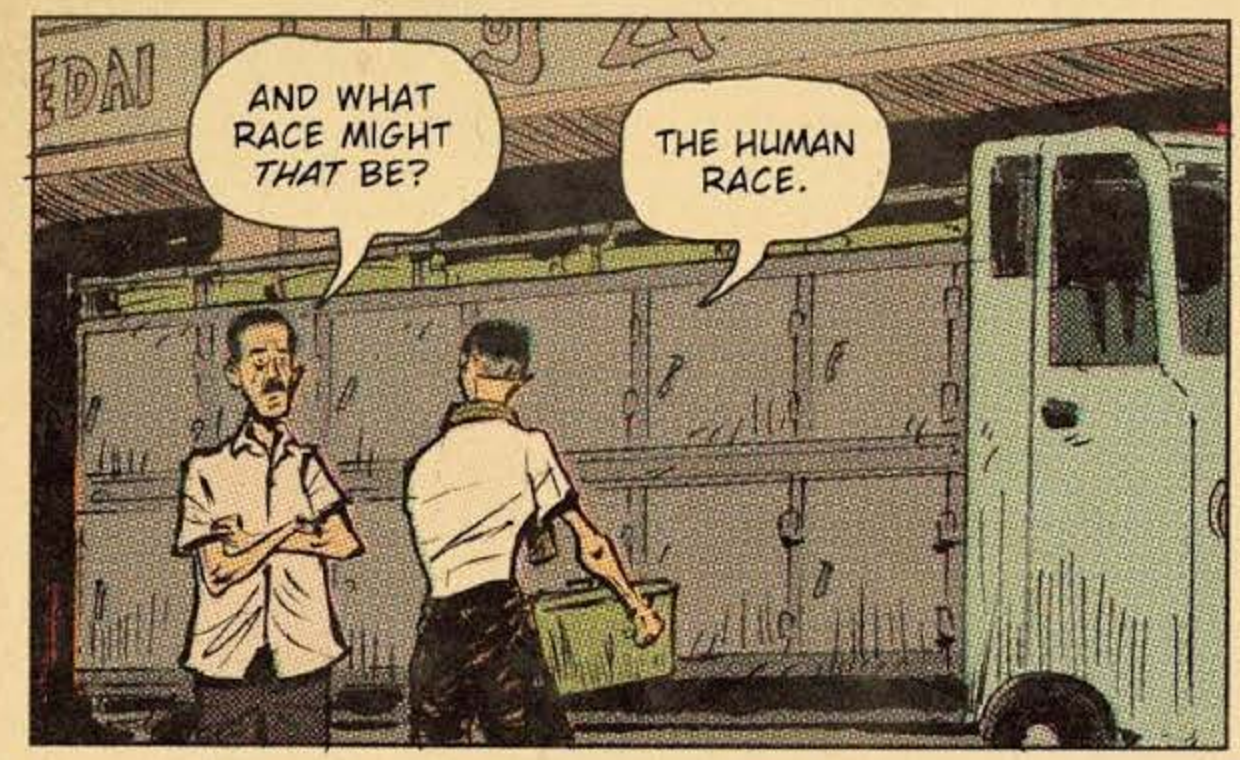

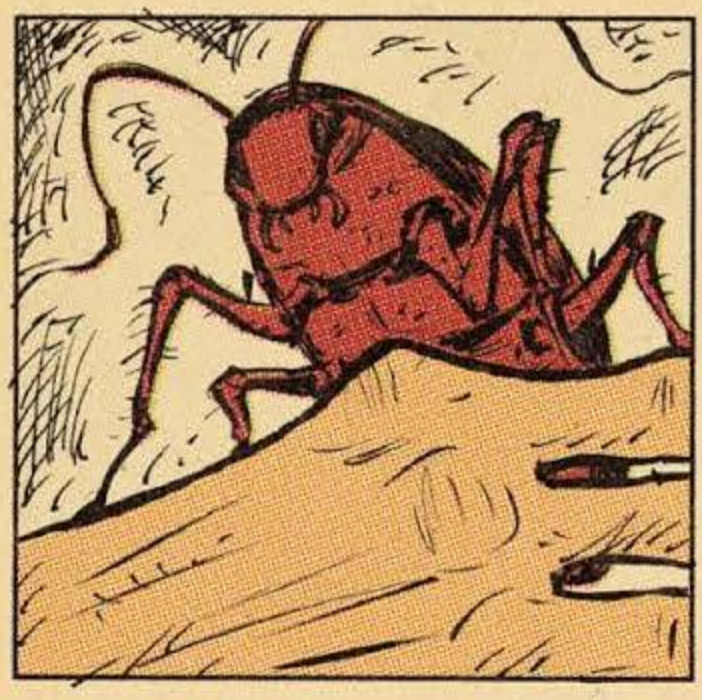

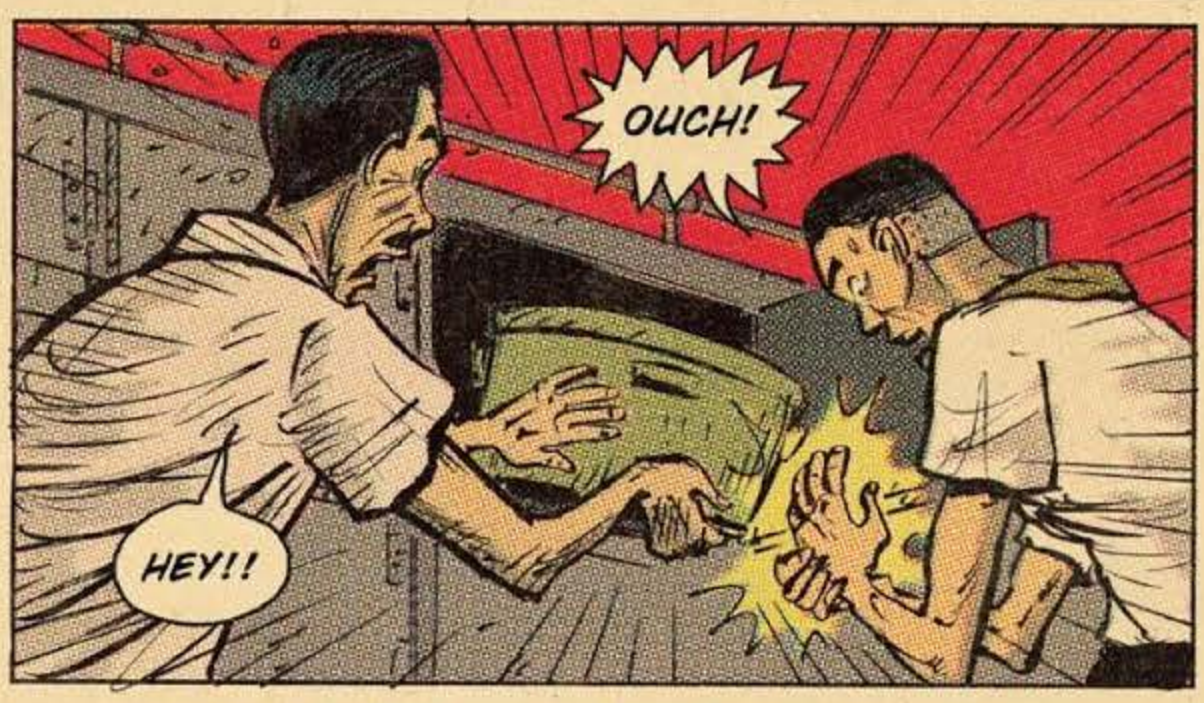

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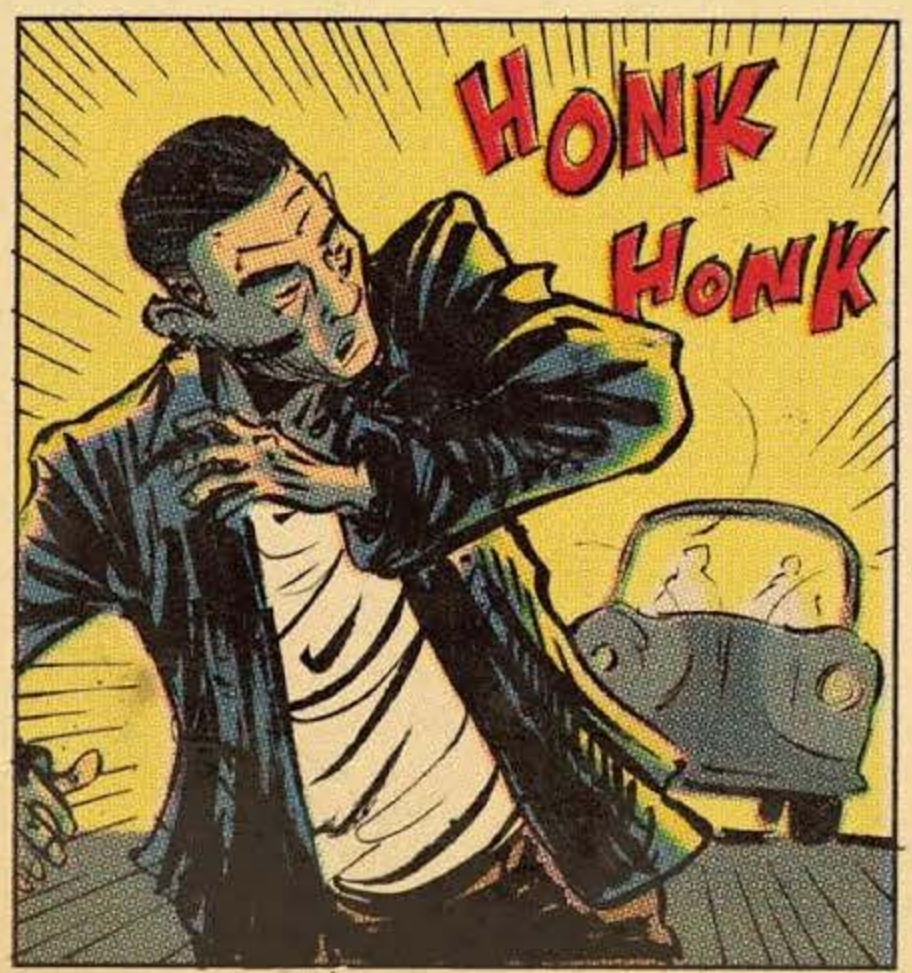

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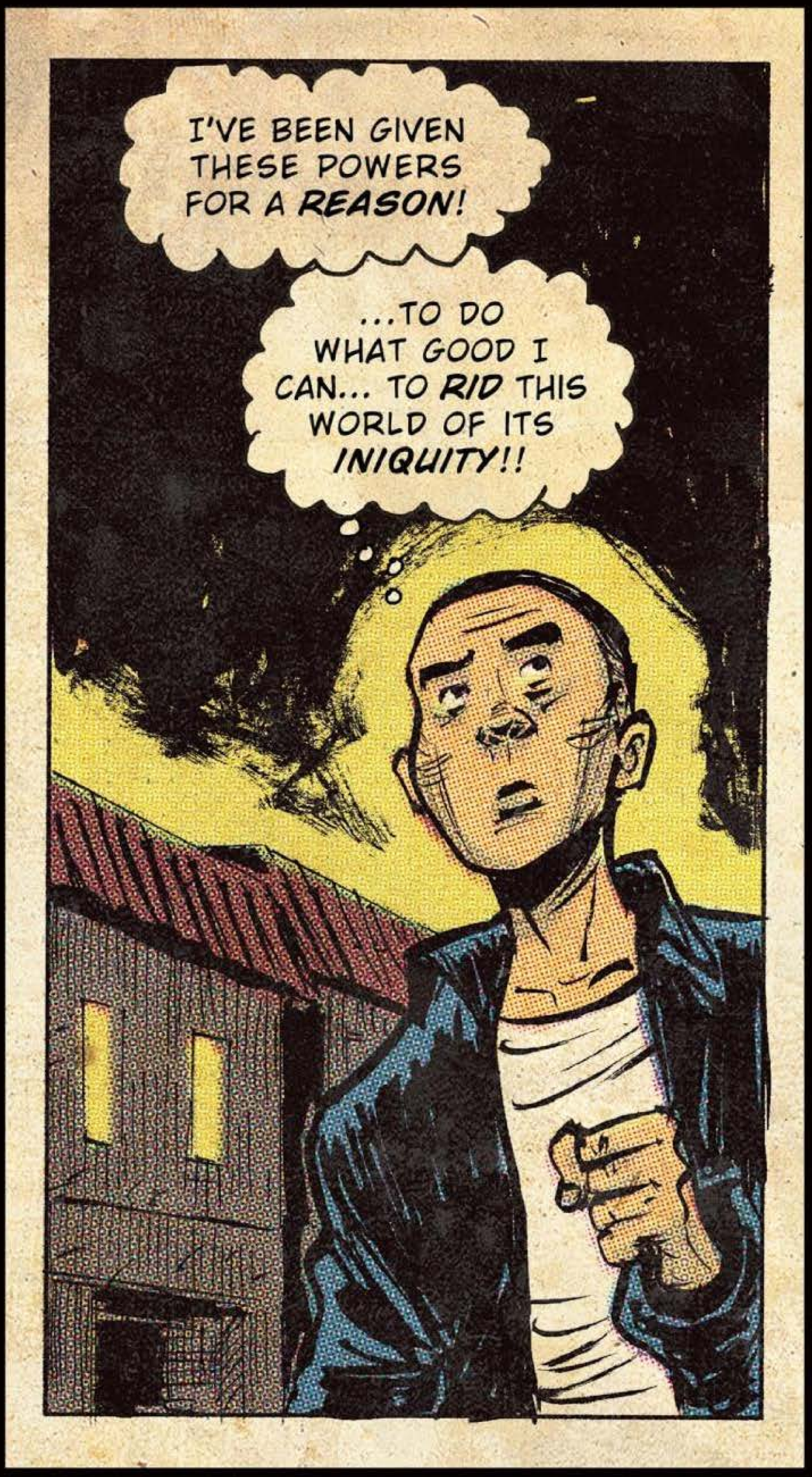
Above **ROACHMAN Vol. 5: "Roachman: Secrets"** (1961) | Art by Chan Hock Chye, Words by Bertrand Wong | Mosquito Press



Above **ROACHMAN No. 1 Detail** (1960)

Ah Guan decides to use his newfound powers to help the downtrodden fight for a better life. He dons a homemade costume and adopts the guise of "Roachman" as his vigilante identity.

ROACHMAN Character Sketches (1959) | Chan Hock Chye | Pencil and watercolour on paper

The design for Roachman's costume, featuring a fedora and red face scarf, suggests an homage to the pulp action character The Shadow. According to Chan, however, his inspirations were the actual clothing worn by workers in Singapore at the time, as well as the handkerchiefs donned by the Chinese Middle School students during their protests to avoid indentification by the authorities.

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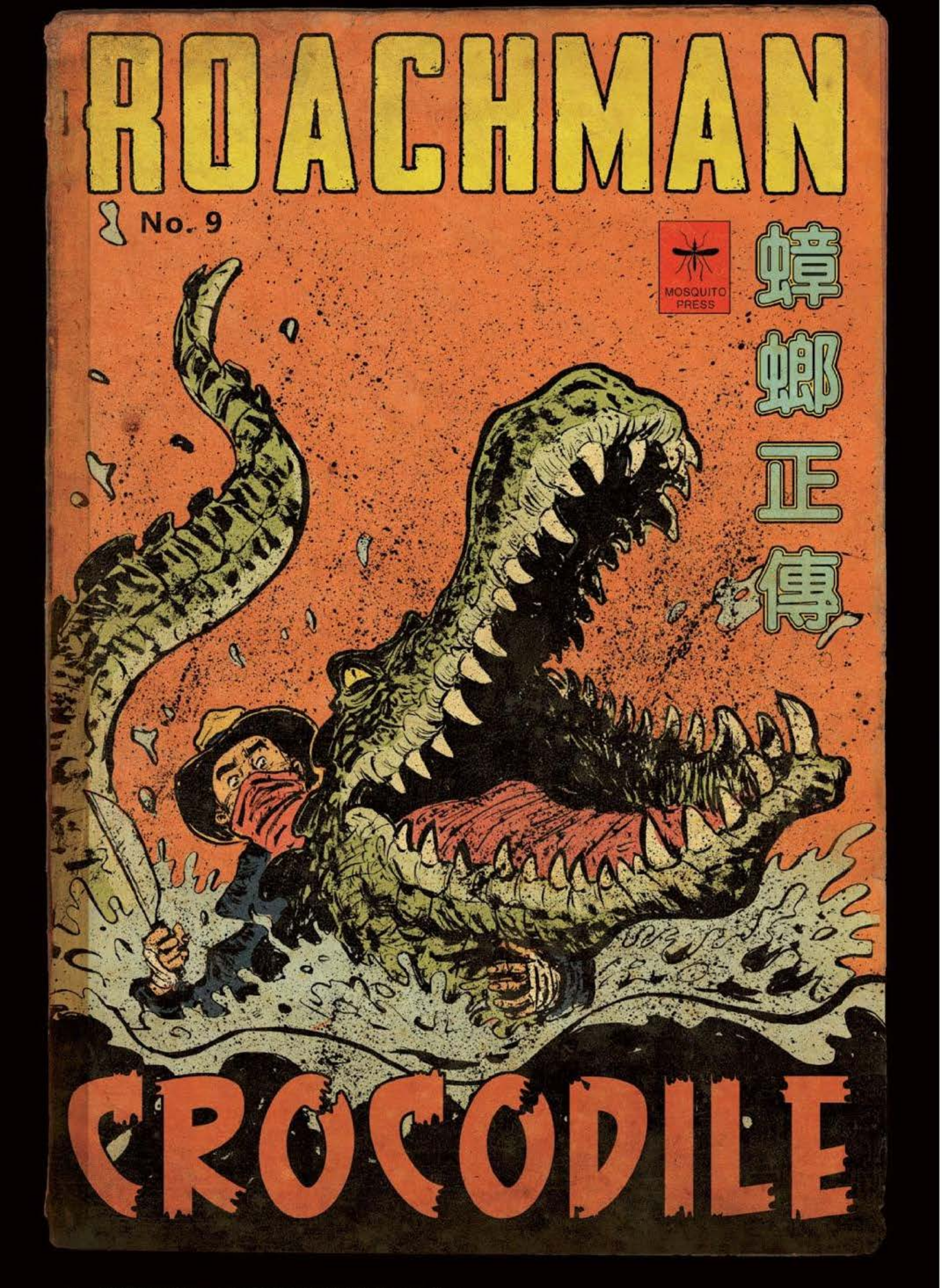
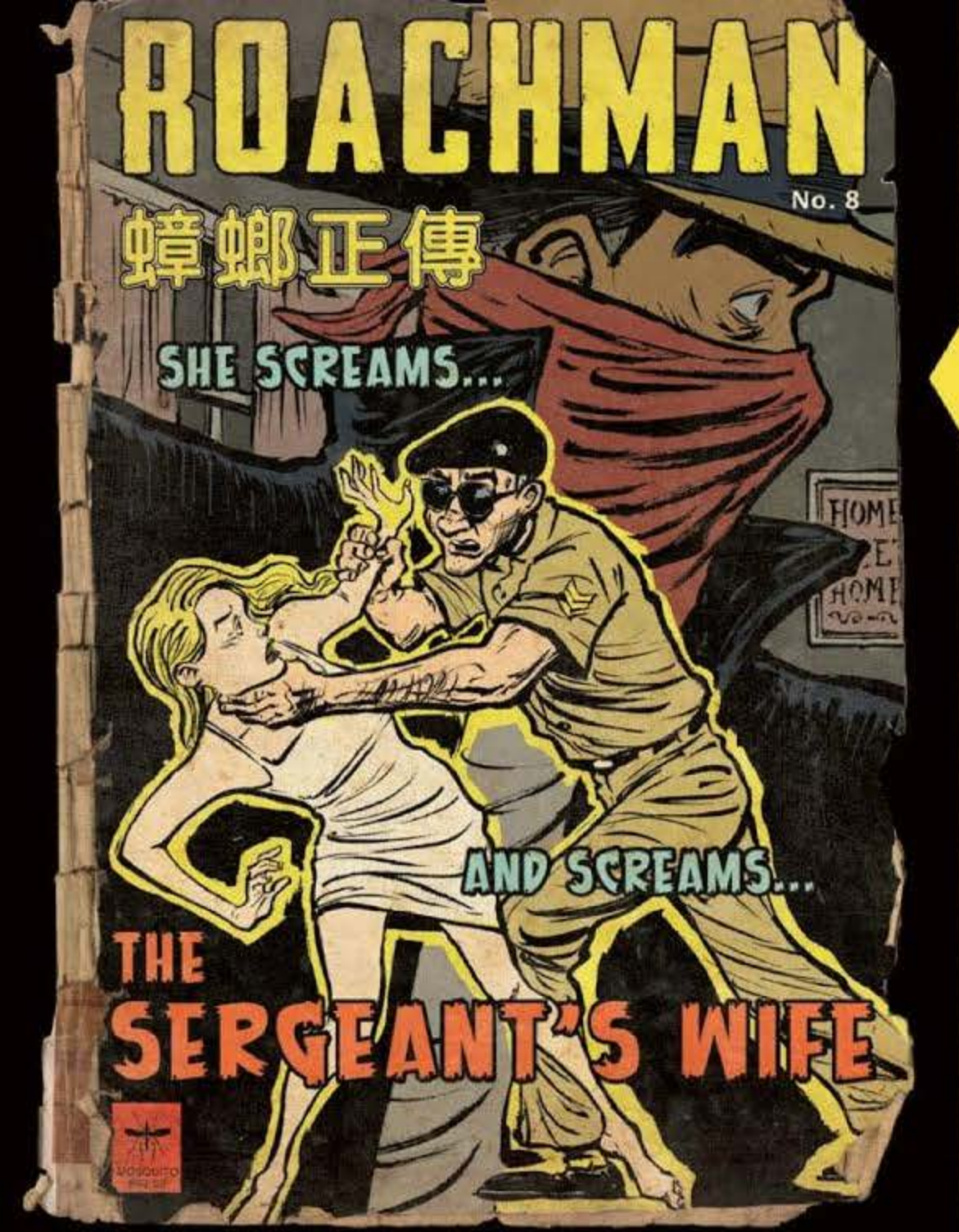


Above **ROACHMAN No. 9: CROCODILE** (1960) | *Mosquito Press*



Top left **ROACHMAN No. 8: THE SERGEANT'S WIFE** (1960) Mosquito Press

Bottom left **ROACHMAN No. 14: THE SCRATCHER** (1961) Mosquito Press

DESPITE THEIR SENSATIONALISTIC COVERS, THE "*ROACHMAN*" STORIES WERE OFTEN SERIOUS MEDITATIONS ON THE ISSUES OF THE DAY. THE *LUCIEN HICKS* CASE, FOR EXAMPLE, WHERE A BRITISH ARMY OFFICER WAS CHARGED WITH KILLING HIS WIFE IN 1959, WAS USED AS A LENS TO EXAMINE THE NATURE OF JUSTICE IN COLONIAL SOCIETY IN "*THE SERGEANT'S WIFE.*"

HICKS TRIAL
Fourth Day
CONTINUING THE EVIDENCE FOR THE PROSECUTION

ARMY PATHOLOGIST GIVES EVIDENCE ON FINDINGS AT POST-MORTEM OF 'BADLY CHARRED' BODY

HICKS WILL SERVE TERM IN BRITAIN

People in the case

"*CROCODILE,*" MEANWHILE, STARTS OUT AS AN ACTION-ADVENTURE YARN, AS ROACHMAN IS TASKED WITH HUNTING DOWN A CROCODILE THAT HAS BEEN SOWING TERROR AMONG THE VILLAGERS. THE FINAL PANELS, HOWEVER, FEATURING SHOTS OF ROW UPON ROW OF CROCODILE SKIN MERCHANDISE, TURNS THE IDEA OF MAN-AS-VICTIM ON ITS HEAD.

THERE WERE LIGHT-HEARTED STORIES TOO, SUCH AS THE POLICE PROCEDURAL FARCE, "*THE SCRATCHER.*"

ANOTHER FREE ENTRY WORD PUZZLE CONTEST: BEGINS IN THE FREE

Croc scares fishermen

SHOTGUN HUNTERS FIRE IN VAIN: 'THEY ARE ONLY TICKLING IT' SAY THE VILLAGERS

TUGS FAIL TO MOVE SHIP

IKE TELLS CONGRESS 'AMERICA SHOULD ADMIT MORE ASIANS'

s a warning

THE SCRATCHER: POLICE DETAIN MAN ON BICYCLE

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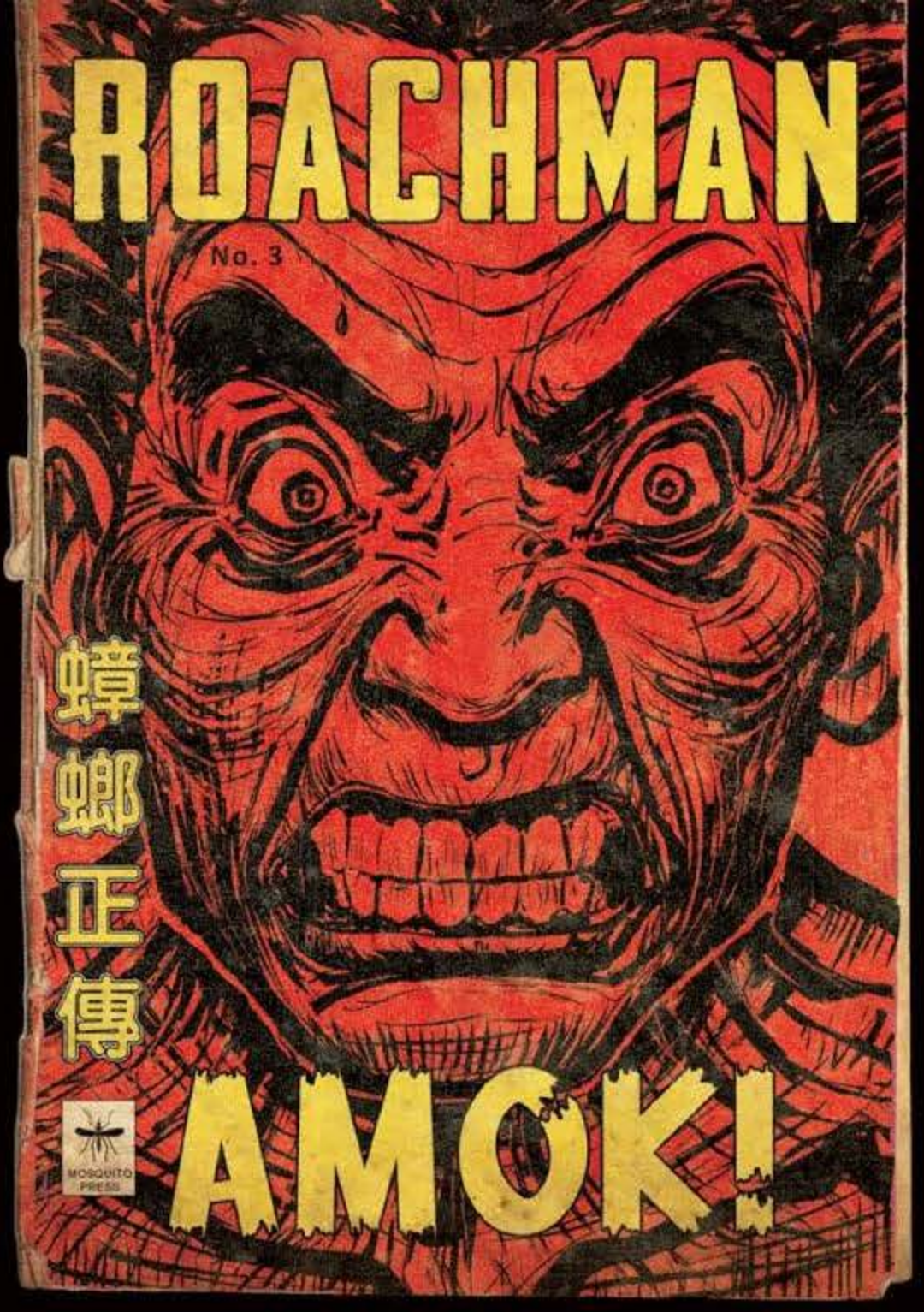
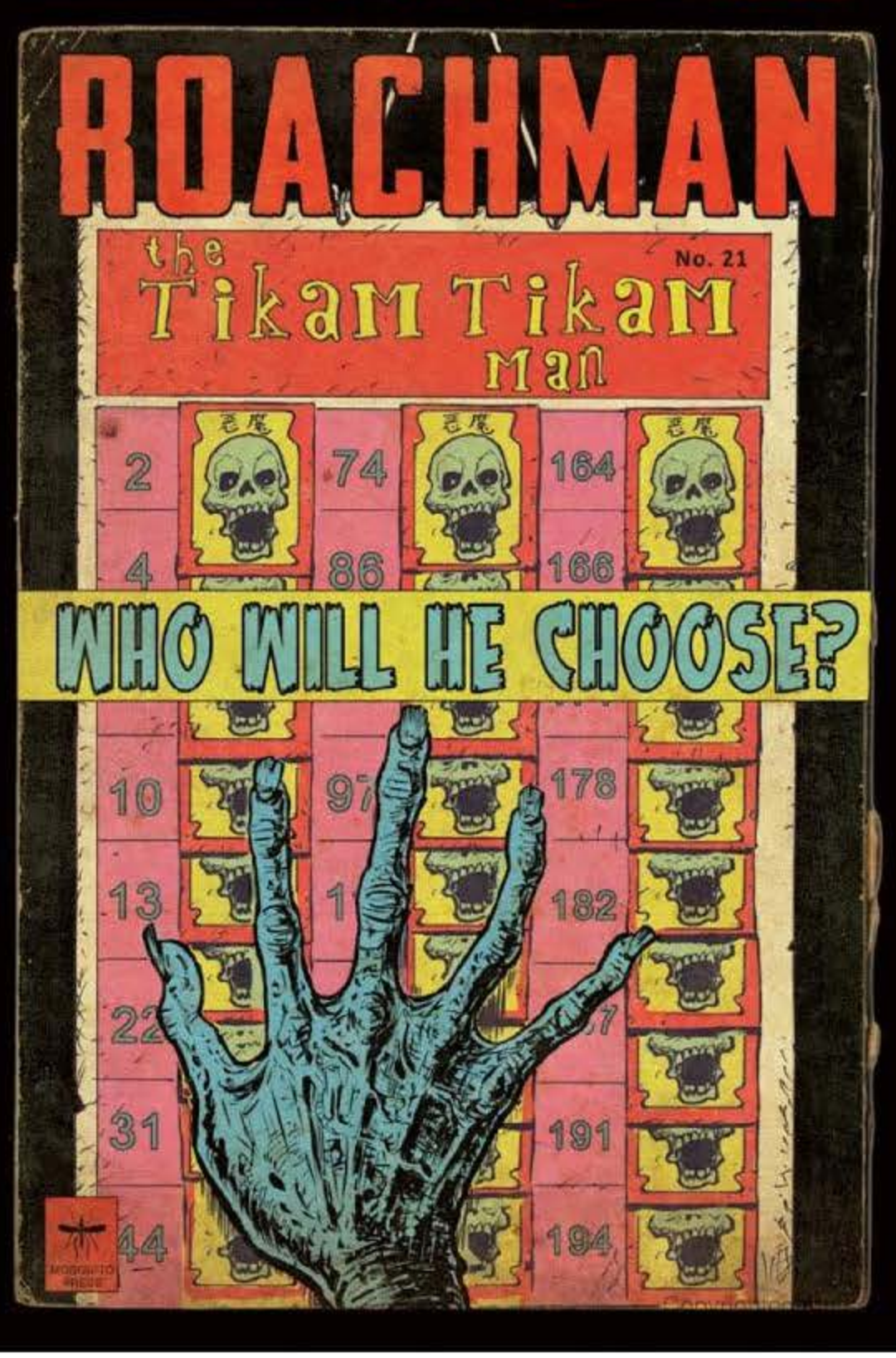
"*AMOK!*" EXPLORES THE AFTERMATH OF A FATHER'S VIOLENT PSYCHOLOGICAL BREAKDOWN, AND HIS FAMILY'S STRUGGLES TO COPE WITHOUT HIM FOLLOWING HIS ARREST AND INCARCERATION.

THE PAP'S WAR ON THE SUPPOSEDLY HARMFUL INFLUENCES OF WESTERN OR "YELLOW" CULTURE WAS ALSO FEATURED. GOVERNMENTAL BANS ON ADULT MAGAZINES AND GAMES OF CHANCE FOR CHILDREN (KNOWN AS "*TIKAM TIKAM*") WERE GIVEN A TONGUE-IN-CHEEK TREATMENT IN STORIES SUCH AS "*THE LAST PLAYBOY*" (1960), WHICH DEPICTS ONE MAN'S INCREASINGLY DESPERATE ATTEMPTS TO BUY UP EVERY LAST COPY OF THE RISQUÉ MAGAZINE BEFORE THE *UNDESIRABLE PUBLICATIONS ORDINANCE* CAME INTO EFFECT.





Top right **ROACHMAN No. 3: AMOK!**
(1959) Mosquito Press

Bottom right **ROACHMAN No. 21: TIKAM TIKAM MAN**
(1962) Mosquito Press

Above **ROACHMAN No. 6: THE LAST PLAYBOY** (1960) | Mosquito Press

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Opposite & above **ROACHMAN No. 13: INFERNO** (1961) | Art by Chan Hock Chye, Words by Bertrand Wong | Mosquito Press

ROACHMAN FINDS HIMSELF FACING DOWN FLAMES AND CONSPIRACY THEORIES DURING THE *BUKIT HO SWEE FIRE* IN "*INFERNO*." THE INFAMOUS 100-ACRE FIRE DESTROYED THE HOMES OF SOME 16,000 SQUATTER KAMPONG DWELLERS, AND MARKED THE BEGINNING OF LARGE-SCALE PUBLIC HOUSING BUILDING AND RELOCATION BY THE PAP, WHICH WOULD IRREVOCABLY TRANSFORM THE URBAN AND SOCIAL LANDSCAPE OF SINGAPORE.

"*STREET OF THE DEAD*" WAS A COLLECTION OF SHORT STORIES SET IN *SAGO LANE*, INFAMOUS THEN FOR ITS "DEATH HOUSES" — FUNERAL HOMES THAT DOUBLED AS HOSPICES FOR THE ELDERLY TO SPEND THEIR FINAL DAYS.

THE MAIN STORY CENTRED ON A TEENAGE COUPLE WHO HAD COMMITTED SUICIDE TOGETHER AFTER APPARENT PARENTAL OBJECTIONS TO THEIR RELATIONSHIP, AND THE SUBSEQUENT "MARRIAGE" RITES HELD AT SAGO LANE TO "REUNITE" THE STAR-CROSSED LOVERS IN THE AFTERLIFE.

Left
ROACHMAN No. 22: STREET OF THE DEAD
1962
Mosquito Press

Tuition time—for love notes

Extracts from a suicide couple's last essay and marginal comments

The last lines of 'love essay'

Press is shown how trap works

Extra spending approved

Detective g months fo

NO INCREASE IN CAPITAL'S ASSESSMENT RATES NEXT YEAR

Painless budget for most people

Every mother dreams of a bouncing baby!

SENATE CHIEF HEADS C'WEALTH SOCIETY

Relatives claim the bodies for burial

DEATH-FALL LOVERS ARE NOW 'MARRIED'

It's good morning and hullo for Negro

1,000 STRUGGLE ON OVER THE SNOW

The Street of the Houses of the Dead

By A Special Correspondent

FAITH

Push-button

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*CATCH-22 (1961) BY JOSEPH HELLER

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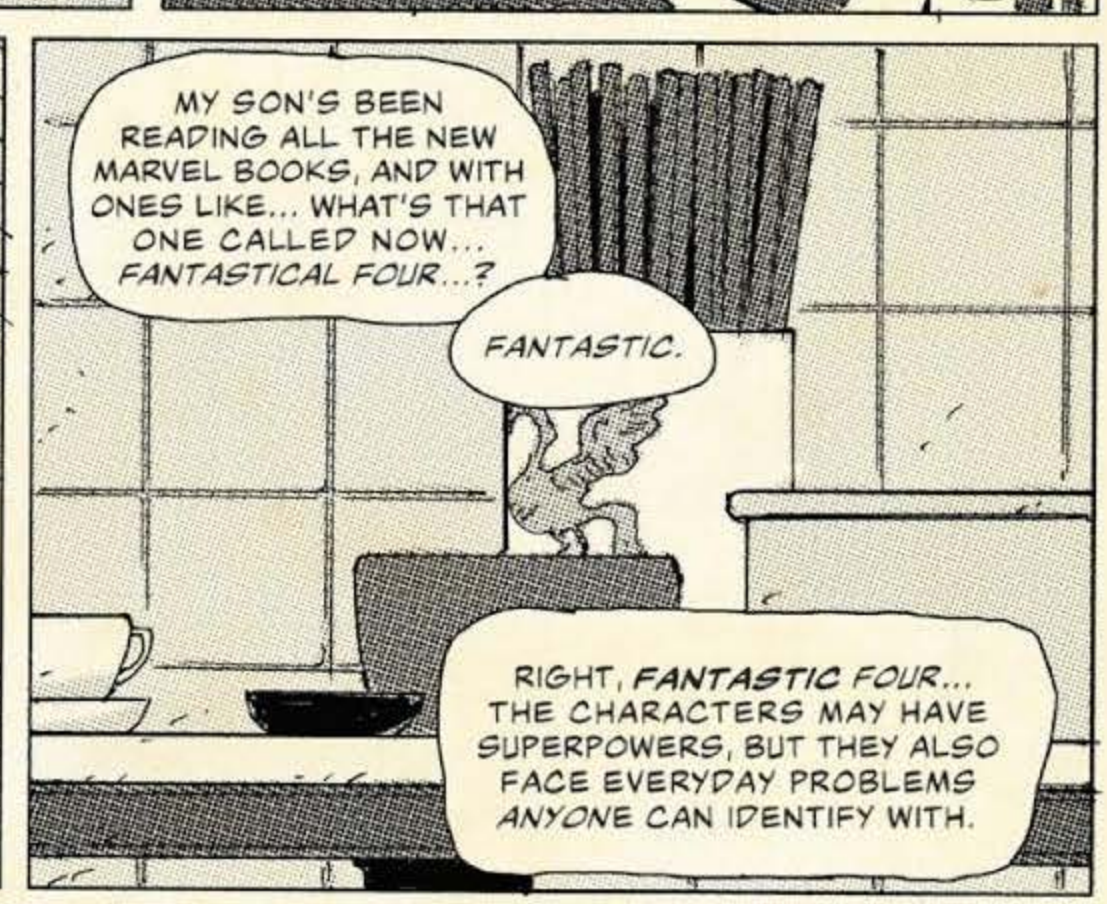

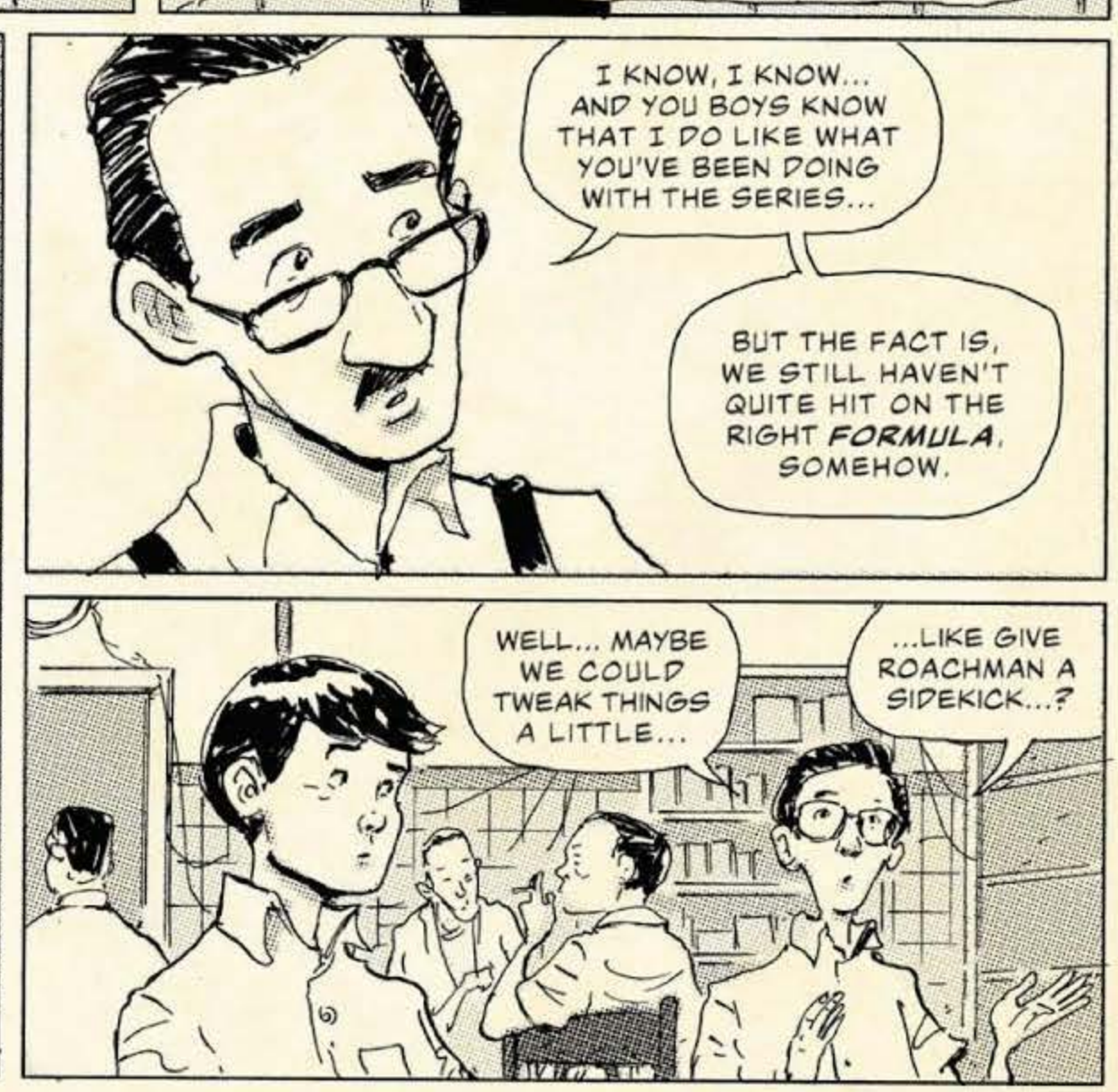

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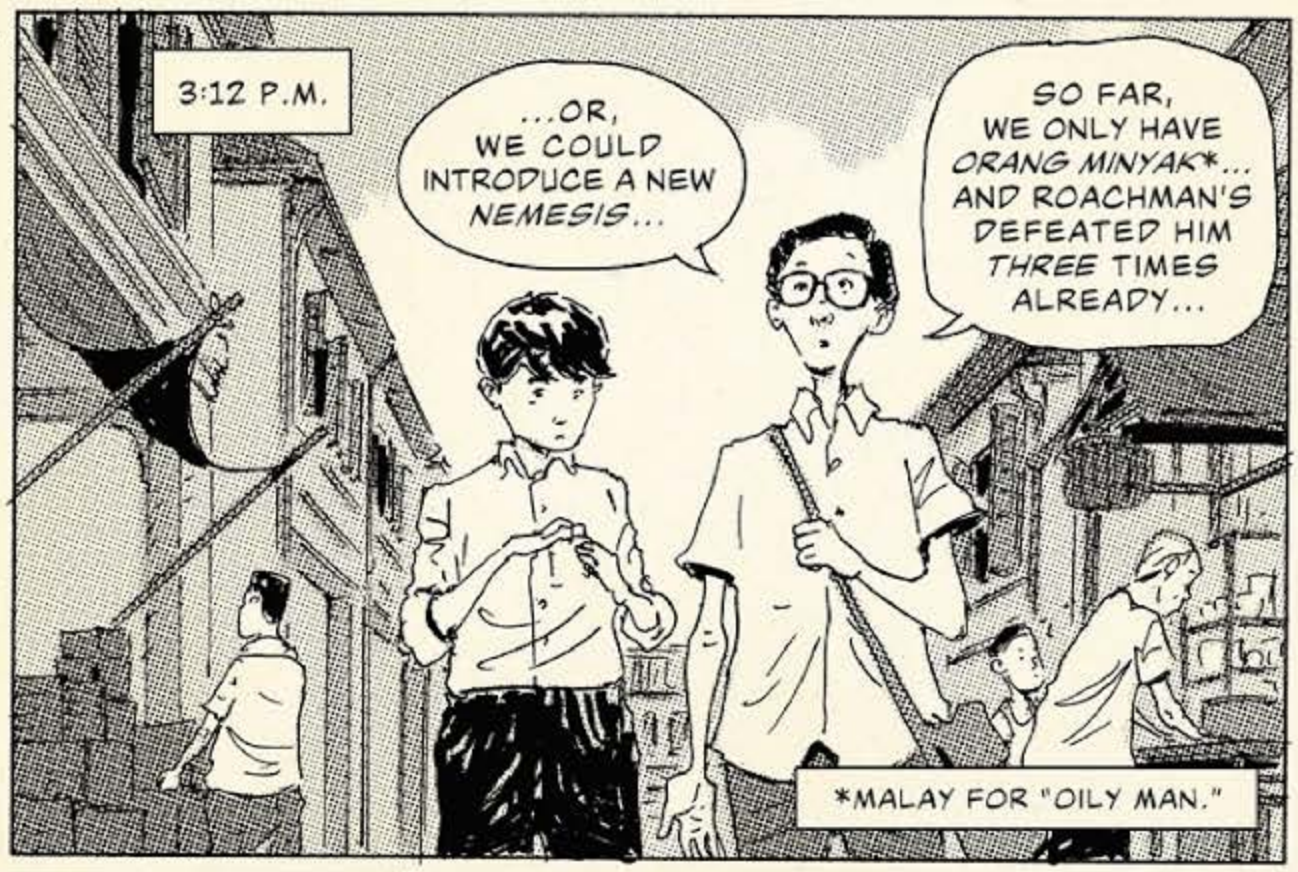

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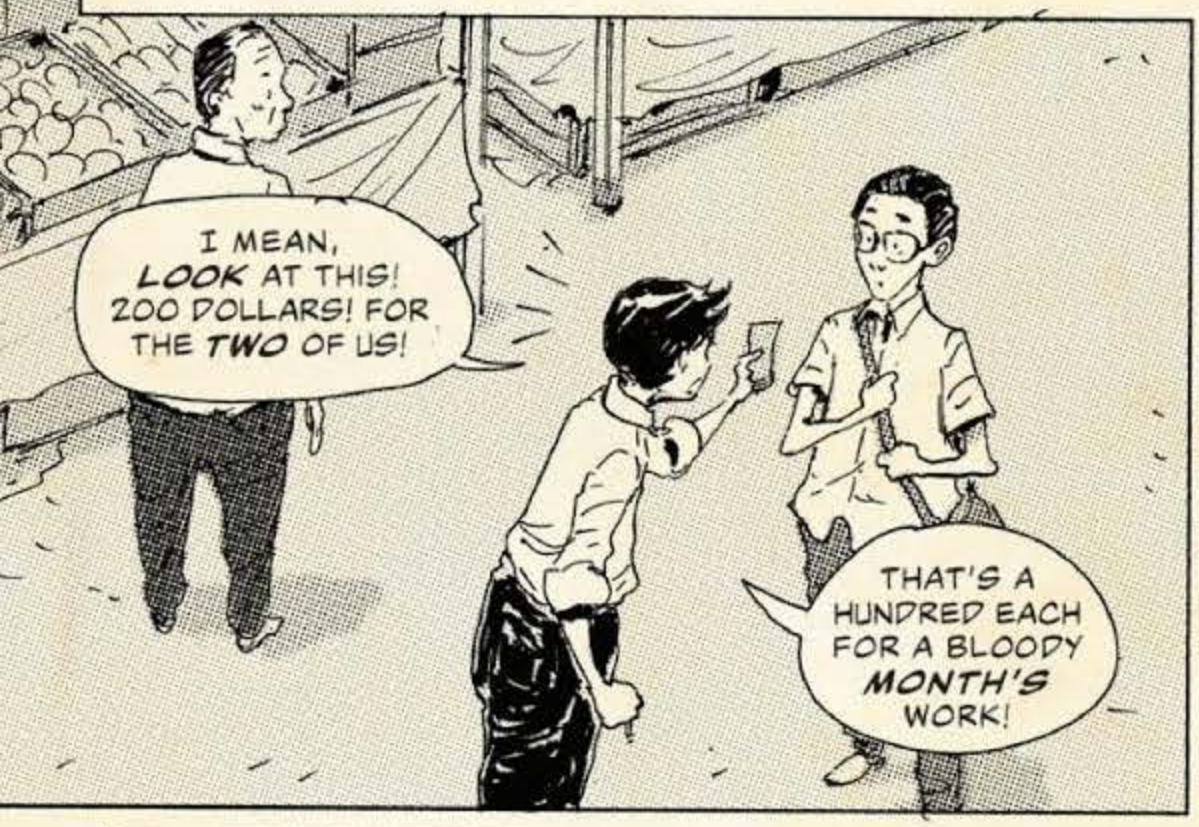
THAT'S GREAT NEWS!
WE SHOULD DO A SPECIAL COMIC TO CO

CHARLIE.

I NEED TO START EARNING AND SAVING SOME MONEY FOR A FAMILY.


I MEAN, LOOK AT THIS! 200 DOLLARS! FOR THE TWO OF US!
THAT'S A HUNDRED EACH FOR A BLOODY MONTH'S WORK!

WE'VE BEEN DOING THIS FOR EIGHT YEARS NOW...
AND WHAT DO WE HAVE TO SHOW FOR IT?

MONEY ISN'T EVERYTHING, BERT.
BESIDES, WE'VE GOT 23 ISSUES OF A COMIC ABOUT A MAN WHO DRESSES UP AS A COCKROACH.

COME ON!! I'M SERIOUS!

WE...
WE'RE ALWAYS SERIOUS ABOUT OUR COMICS.

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Lim Chin Siong was freed from detention after the People's Action Party's victory in the 1959 elections.

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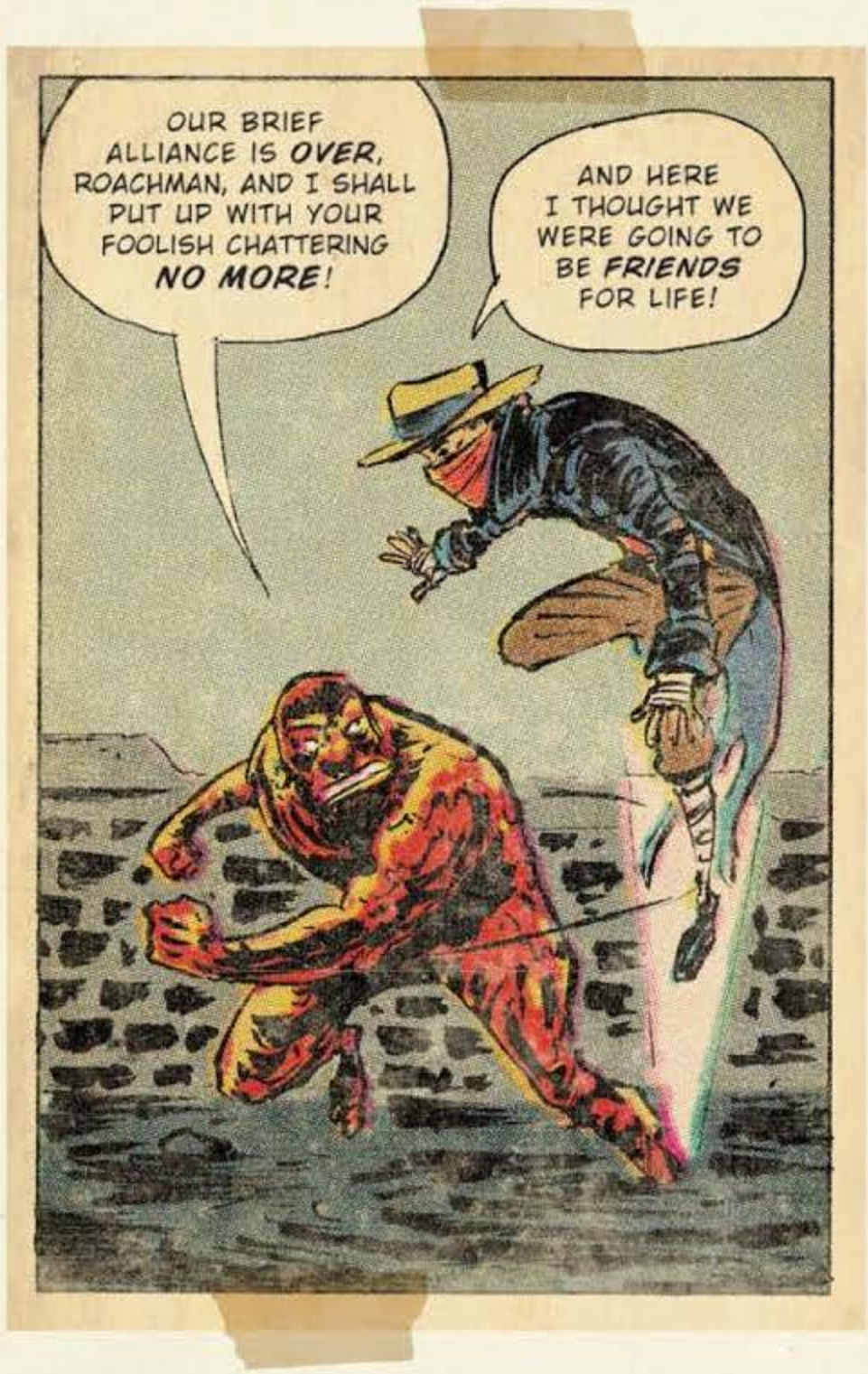
But divisions within the Party would lead to a split between the radical left led by Lim and the moderates under Lee Kuan Yew in 1961.



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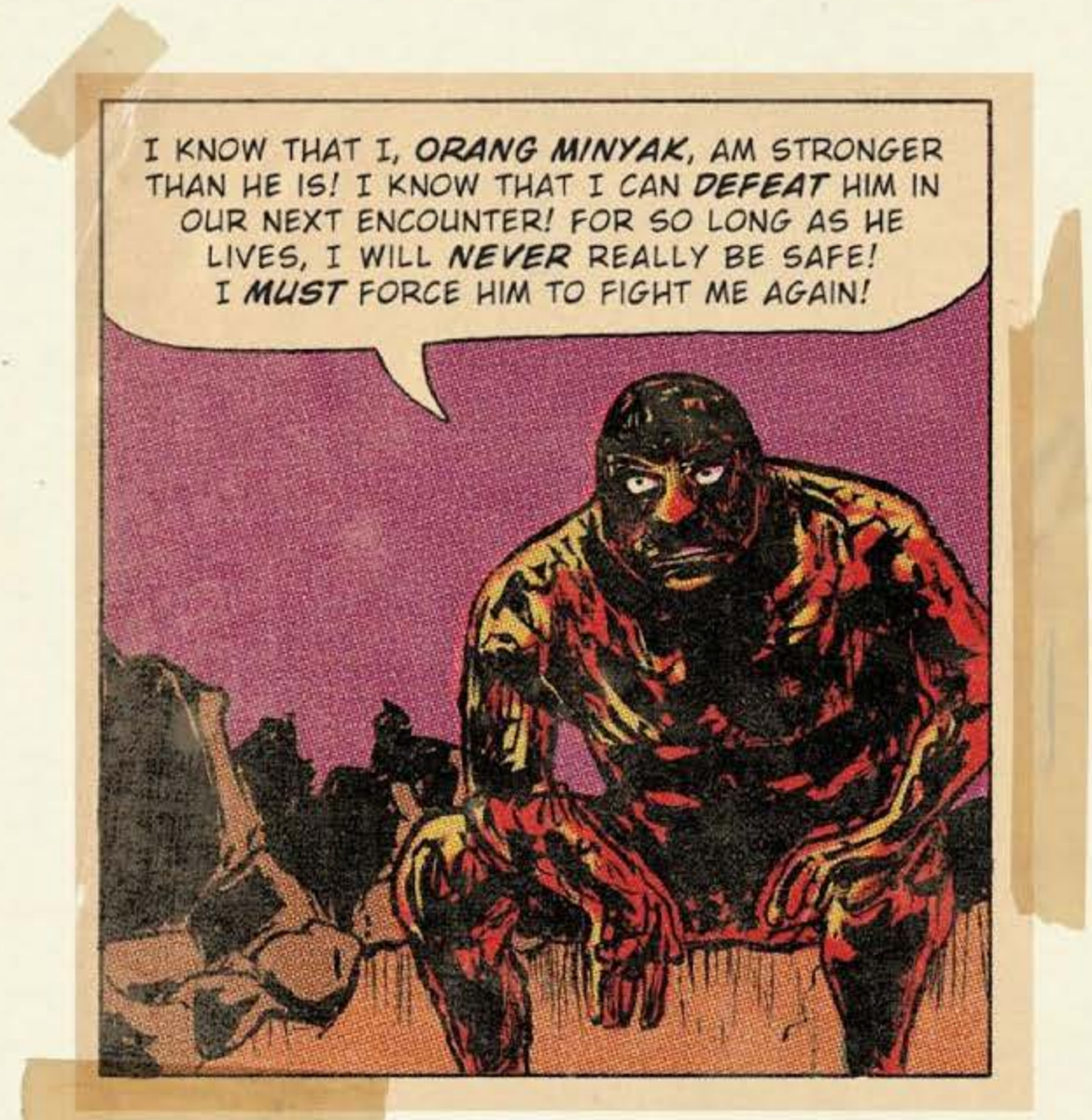
Lee and the PAP feared that the new splinter party, the **Barisan Sosialis**, would triumph in the next elections.



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Meanwhile, the Prime Minister of Malaya, Tunku Abdul Rahman, was deeply concerned about the prospect of having a communist-led Singapore right at his doorstep.

And the British certainly had no wish for an independent Singapore with a radical left-wing, anti-colonial government in charge.

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On February 2, 1963, the Singapore, Malayan and British governments jointly launched **Operation Coldstore**, arresting Lim Chin Siong alongside more than a hundred other left-wing leaders and activists, placing them in indefinite detention without trial.

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During this second period of incarceration, Lim reportedly struggled with depression. After an attempted suicide, he was released on July 28, 1969, after agreeing to renounce politics and to go into exile in London.

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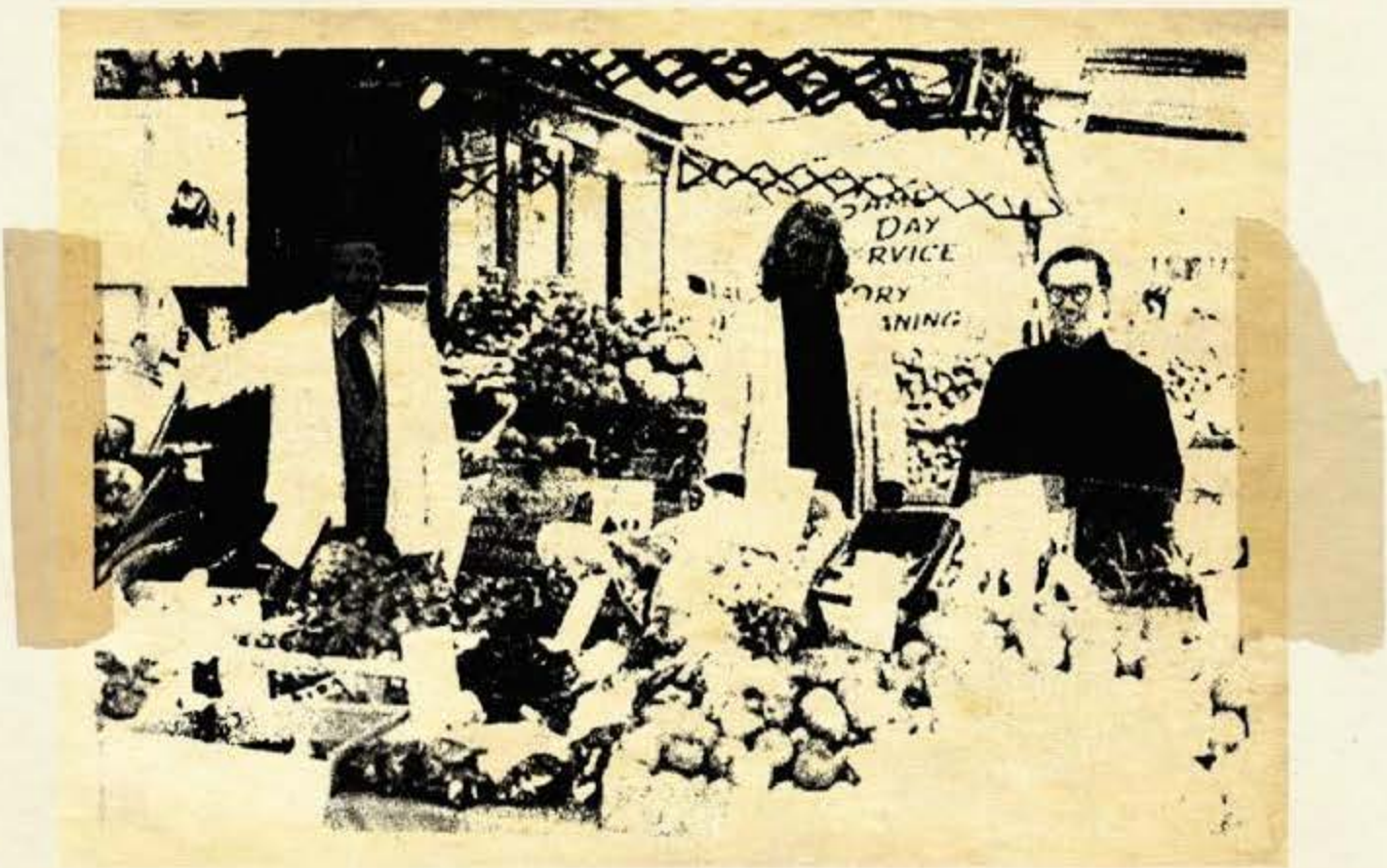

He would work there as a fruit and vegetable seller for the next decade.

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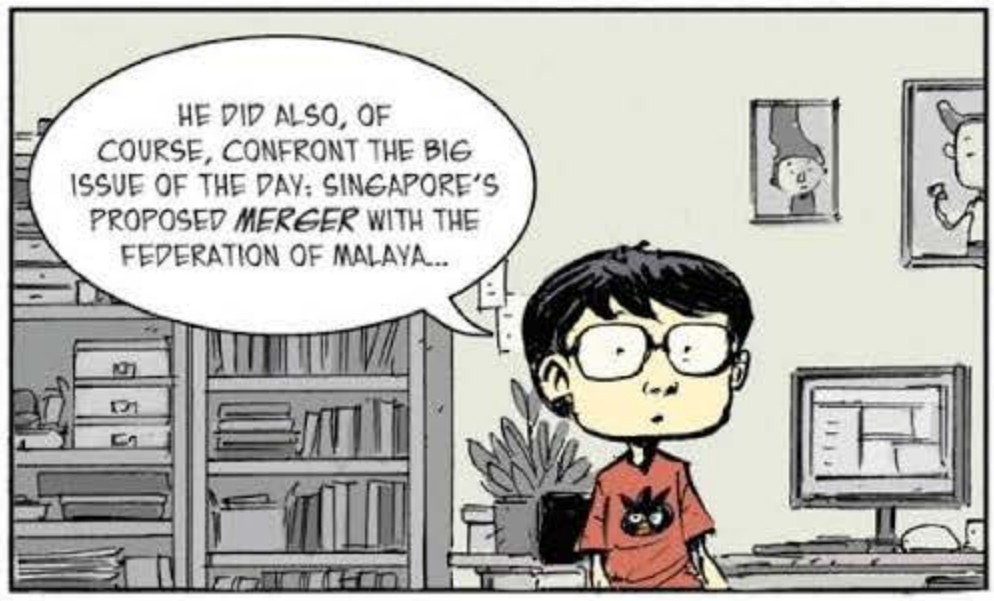

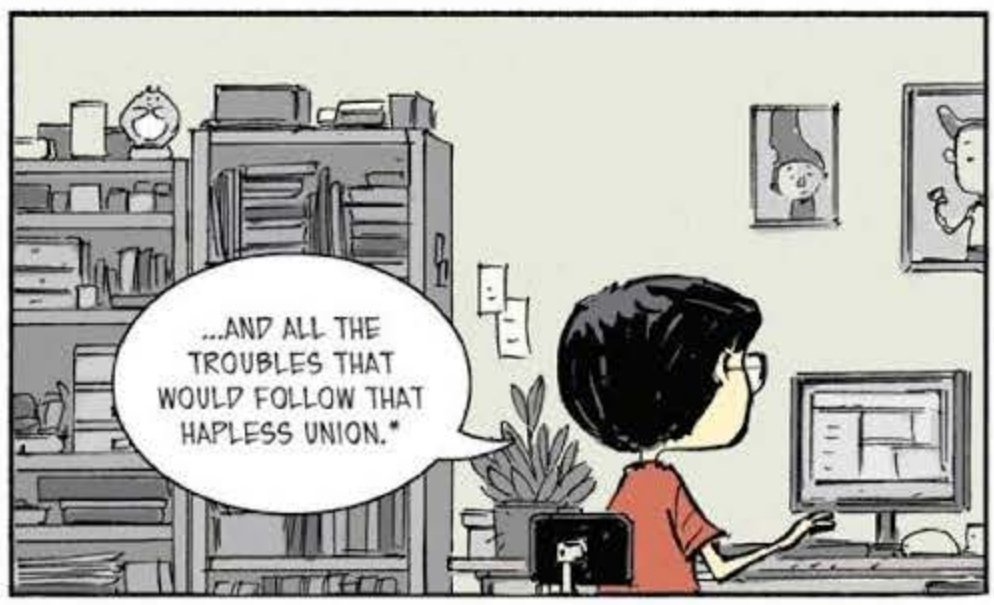

*MALAYSIA WAS FORMED ON SEPTEMBER 16, 1963, WITH THE MERGER OF THE FEDERATION OF MALAYA WITH SINGAPORE, NORTH BORNEO (SABAH) AND SARAWAK.

Following
BUKIT CHAPALANG
c. 1963–1965
Chan Hock Chye
Unpublished

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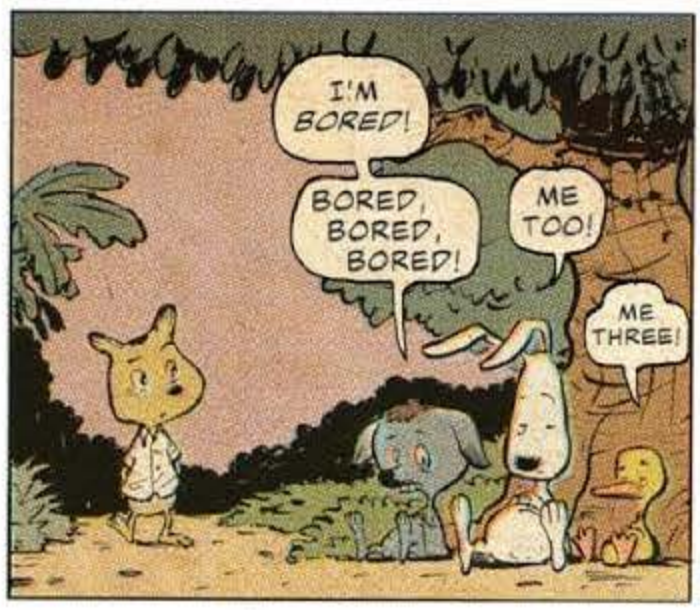
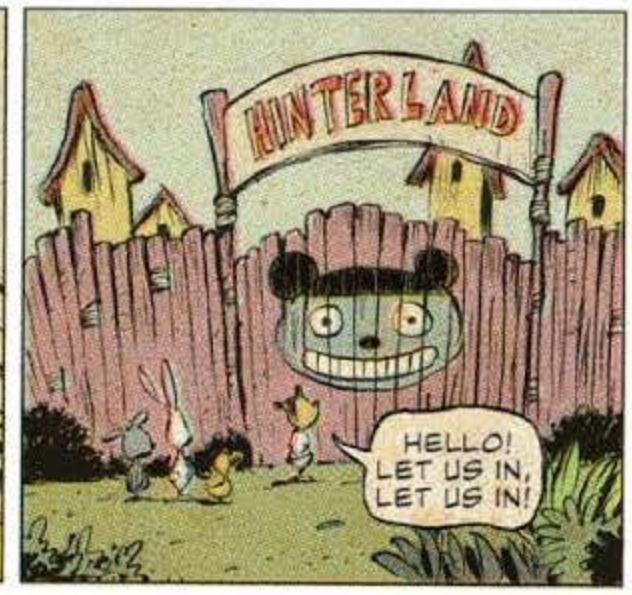
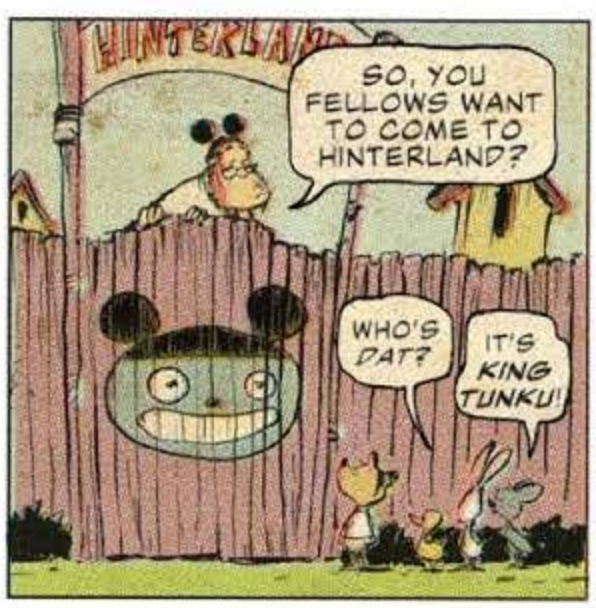


At the time, almost everyone believed that a merger with the Federation of Malaya would be necessary for Singapore's survival once full independence had been granted by the British. The Malayan mainland could serve as a hinterland for the fledgling island state, providing both natural resources and a larger common market.



The leaders of Malaya, however, were not exactly keen on the idea.

Absorbing Singapore's large Chinese population of 1.3 million would mean altering Malaya's "racial arithmetic": the Malay population would be outnumbered by the Chinese, thereby transforming the electoral landscape.



Such a change would threaten the political dominance of the Malay ruling elite. Attitudes towards merger shifted only after PAP candidates were defeated in two successive by-elections in 1961, sparking fears that a more radical party might ultimately prevail in Singapore.

In Chan's comic, "Mouseketeers" were used to represent the Malays, while Malayan Prime Minister Tunku Abdul Rahman was depicted as a benevolent orangutan.

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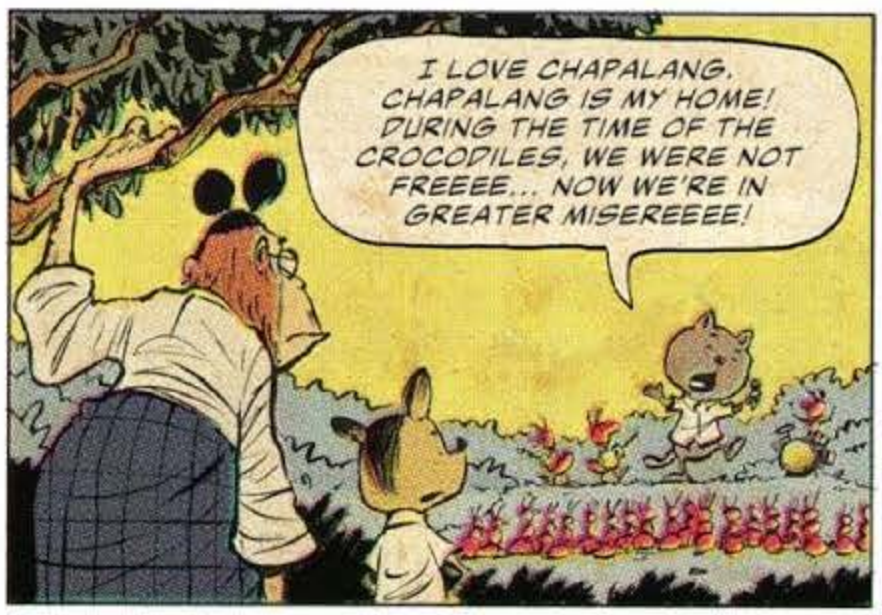
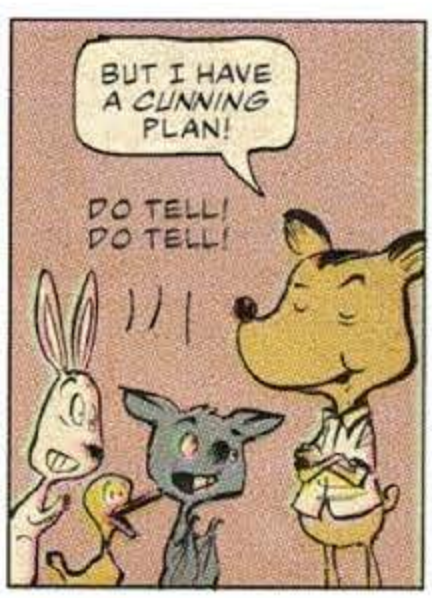


The Tunku's fears were heightened after Lim Chin Siong and his supporters formed the Barisan Sosialis following their expulsion from the PAP in 1961. Believing the Barisan to be a communist party, he was concerned that Singapore might become a "Little China" under Lim, a base and stepping stone from which communism could be propagated to Malaya.

Both the Tunku and Lee Kuan Yew saw the merger as a means of preventing such a scenario, since the conservative Malayan government would be able to crack down on any left-wing ambitions.

In order to preserve the existing balance of races, the British Borneo territories of Sabah and Sarawak, with their large non-Chinese populations, were subsequently incorporated into the plans for the union.



The Barisan Sosialis strongly objected to the proposal, fearing for their political survival if merger was to go through, while questioning whether the terms of the merger were ideal for Singapore.

In response, Lee Kuan Yew decided to hold a Referendum on Merger.

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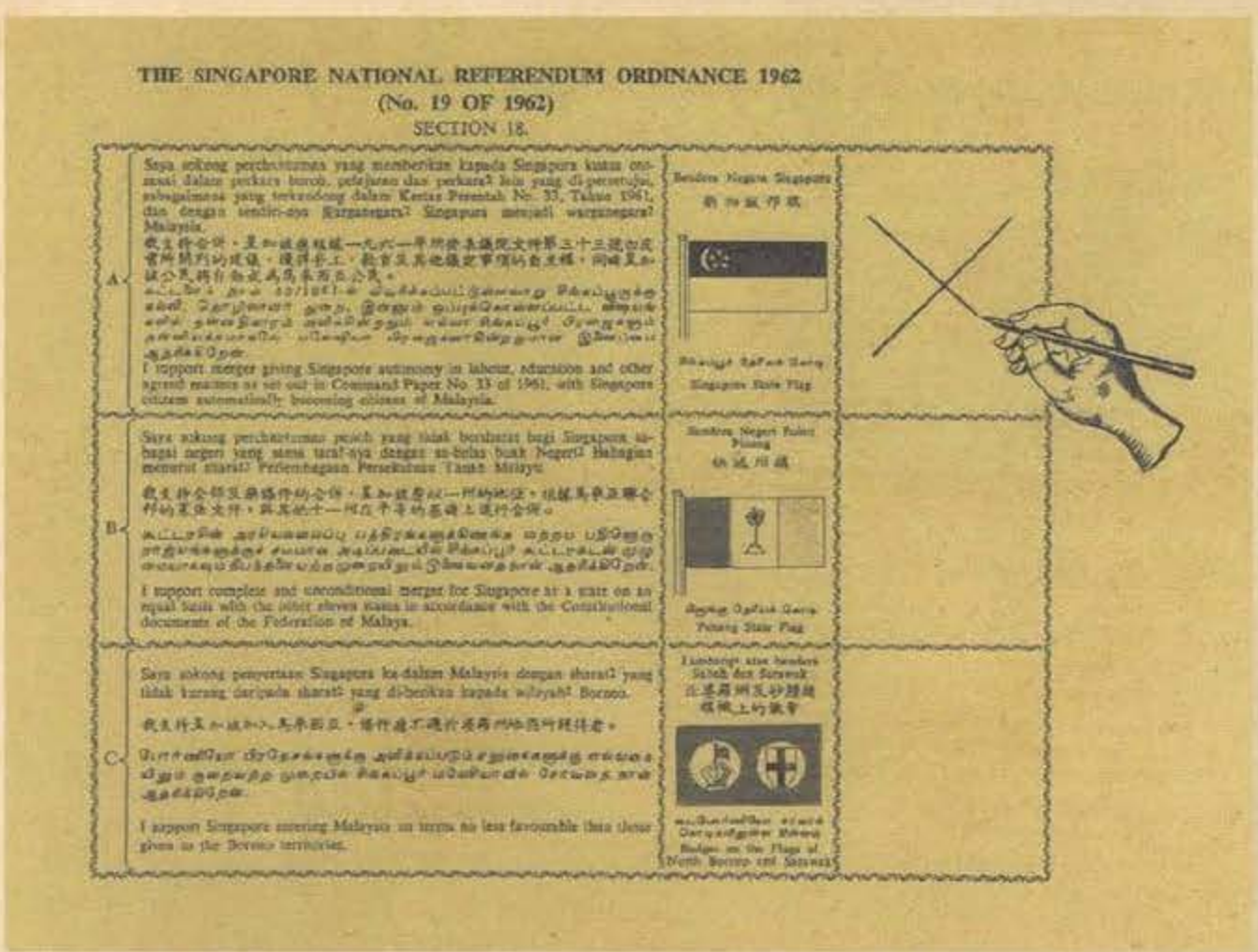
Above
MAP OF MALAYSIA
1963

The coloured areas on the map highlight the former British territories making up the new Federation of Malaysia: Peninsular Malaysia, Singapore, Sarawak and Sabah.

Right
REFERENDUM DAY INFORMATION FLYER
1962


THE SINGAPORE NATIONAL REFERENDUM ORDINANCE 1962
(No. 19 OF 1962)
SECTION 18.

A. Saya sokong perkahwinan yang memberikan kepada Singapura kuasa otonomi dalam perkara buruh, pelajaran dan perkara2 lain yang di-persetujui, sebagaimana yang terkandung dalam Kertas Perintah No. 33, Tahun 1961, dan dengan sendiri-nya Warganegara2 Singapura menjadi warganegara2 Malaysia.

I support merger giving Singapore autonomy in labour, education and other agreed matters as set out in Command Paper No. 33 of 1961, with Singapore citizens automatically becoming citizens of Malaysia.

B. Saya sokong perkahwinan penuh yang tidak berbezaan bagi Singapura sebagai negeri yang sama taraf-nya dengan sebelas buah Negeri2 Bahagian menurut sharat2 Perlembagaan Persekutuan Tanah Melayu.

I support complete and unconditional merger for Singapore as a state on an equal basis with the other eleven states in accordance with the Constitutional documents of the Federation of Malaya.

C. Saya sokong penyertaan Singapura ke-dalam Malaysia dengan sharat2 yang tidak kurang daripada sharat2 yang di-berikan kepada wilayah2 Borneo.

I support Singapore entering Malaysia on terms no less favourable than those given to the Borneo territories.

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The referendum ostensibly offered voters three choices. But as then Deputy Prime Minister and PAP stalwart Toh Chin Chye would later admit, "*[T]he ballot paper was crafted by Lee Kuan Yew... frankly, they were all votes for merger... Few understood [it]. Few even knew where Sabah was... But we got away with it... It was a win-win situation for the government.*"

The PAP's strategy and tactics during the lead-up to the Merger Referendum would be described as acts of "Machiavellian brilliance," while the Barisan's reactions were muddled at best, often playing right into their opponent's hands.

When the Barisan called for supporters to cast blank votes in protest, for example, they found that the PAP had already included a clause in the Referendum bill, which allowed for blank and uncertain votes to be counted towards merger.

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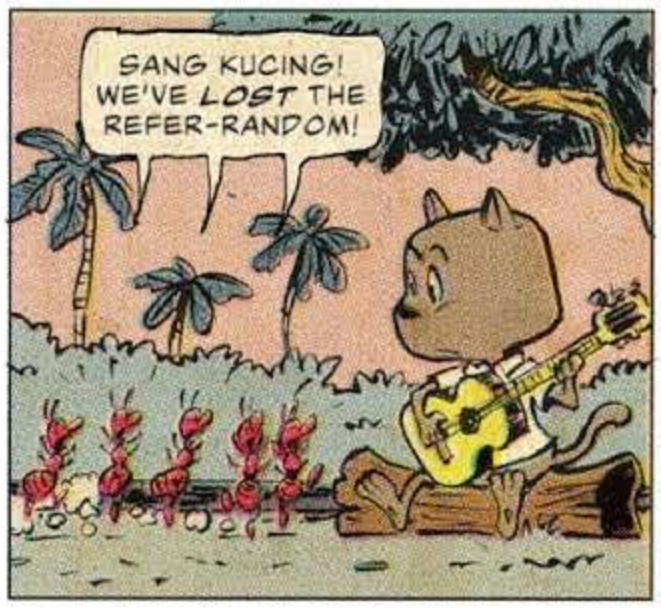

As it turned out, 71% of the votes were cast in favour of the PAP's option "A," whilst only 25% had cast a blank vote. The PAP had demonstrated their political mettle, and the Barisan Sosialis had been thoroughly outmanoeuvred.

Meanwhile, the governments of Britain, Malaya and Singapore all believed that it would be in their best interests to have the leaders of the Barisan Sosialis arrested. None of them wanted to shoulder the blame for such an unpopular action though, and there was a period of hand-wringing as each side jostled to have another assume the responsibility.

An attempted leftist revolution in Brunei led by Sheik A.M. Azahari in December 1962 finally provided a pretext for arresting Lim Chin Siong and more than a hundred other alleged subversives. Lim's lunch meeting with Azahari in Singapore days before the revolt, together with the Barisan's declaration of solidarity with the uprising, were held up as evidence that the radical party was ready and willing to resort to armed insurrection.

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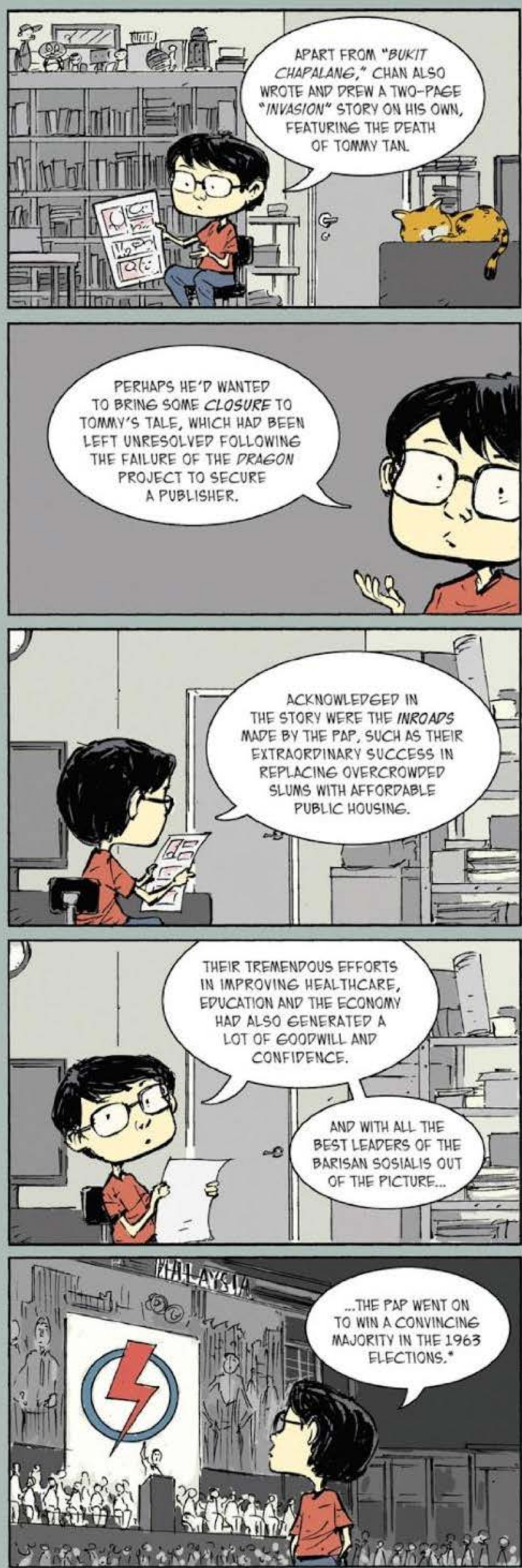

*THE PAP WON 37 OF THE 51 SEATS, WHILE THE BARISAN SOSIALIS TOOK 13 SEATS. THE UNITED PEOPLE'S PARTY WON THE SOLE REMAINING SEAT.

Following
INVASION: THE DEATH OF TOMMY TAN
1963
Chan Hock Chye
Unpublished

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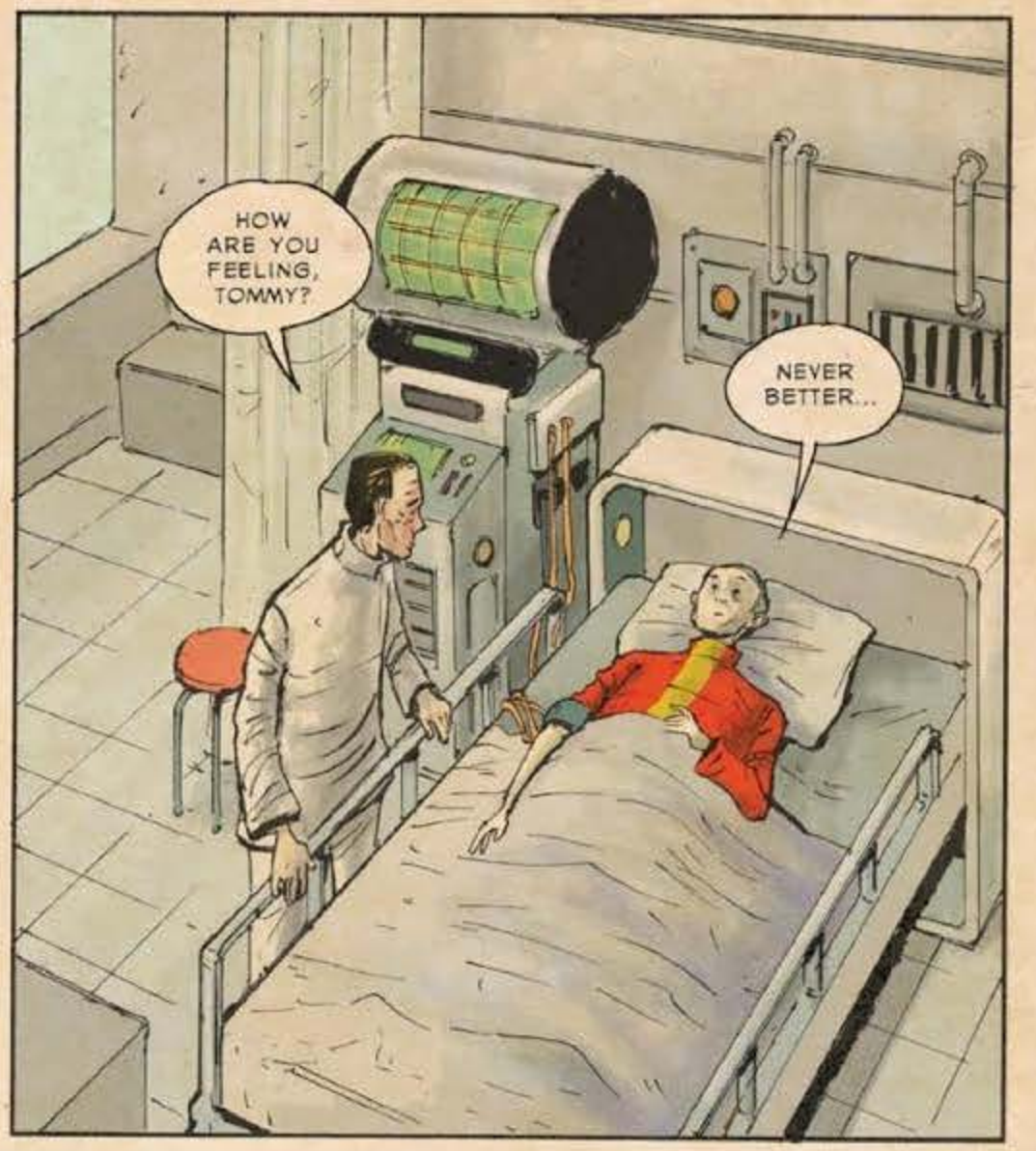

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BUKIT CHAPALANG

HURRAY!

HURRAH!

GOOD NEWS ALL ROUNDS! THEY'RE LETTING US INTO HINTERLAND...

AND WE *BEAT* THE ANTS TO THE TOP OF THE BILLYBOARD CHARTS!

BILLYBOAR CHARTS

THE TOP!

THAT'S COS OUR MUSIC IS SO CATCHY AND FINGER-SNAPPIN' GOOD!

YOU KNOW, YOU KNOW! WE SHOULD START PLAYING IN HINTERLAND TOO!

WE'D BE SUCHA HIT!

MAKE THEIR OWN MUSIC SOUND ALL *FUDDY* AND *DUDDY*!

THEY WOULD NOT BE TOO *PLEASED* IF WE DID THAT...

...THOSE FELLOWS ALREADY HAVE THEIR OWN BANDS PLAYING!

WE KNOW! WE HEAR 'EM ON OUR RADIOS!

IF *THEY* CAN PLAY THEIR MUSIC *HERE*... *WE* CAN PLAY OUR MUSIC *THERE*, EH?

A MOST *CAPITAL* IDEA, MY DEAR RABBIT! MOST CAPITAL, INDEED!

I DON'T SEE WHAT COULD *POSSIBLY* GO WRONG!

HEAR, HEAR!

With the formation of Malaysia on September 16, 1963, the PAP had achieved their goal of merger. A convincing victory in the Singapore elections followed that same month. The party now felt emboldened enough to contest the 1964 federal general elections in the Malaysian mainland, despite assurances by Lee Kuan Yew that they would not do so.

Above & following
BUKIT CHAPALANG
1963–1964
Chan Hock Chye
Self-published

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BUKIT CHAPALANG

WHAT A *HUGE* TURNOUT!!

DIDN'T I TELL YA? I *TOLD YA* OUR MUSIC WAS GONNA BE A *BIG HIT* IN HINTERLAND!

YUP! OUR ALBUM'S GONNA HIT THE *TOP* OF THE CHARTS HERE TOO, FOR SURE!

KING TUNKU!

WHAT'S THE MATTER, SANG BINTURUNG?

DID YOU KNOW THAT SANG KANCIL & HIS GANG ARE PLAYING A *CONCERT* HERE IN HINTERLAND??

ONLY *MY* BAND IS SUPPOSED TO DO THAT!

I THOUGHT I *TOLD* THAT FELLOW TO TAKE IT EASY!

HE NEVER *LISTENS*!

THAT *MOUSE-DEER* IS JUST TOO FULL OF *AMBITIOUSNESS*!

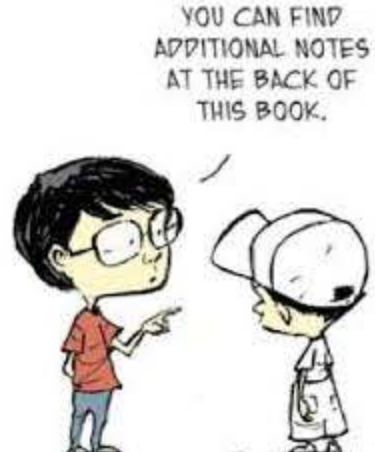
DO YOU SPEAK OF *SANG KANCIL*?

DIDN'T I SAY IT? I *SAID* THAT FELLOW WAS GOING TO BE *TROUBLE*!

WON'T BE LONG BEFORE HE'LL WANT TO TAKE OVER *ALL* OF HINTERLAND!

SIGH... I TOLD HIM TO TAKE IT EASY...

The **Malaysian Chinese Association** (MCA) was one of three political parties that made up the ruling coalition, and the appointed representative of Chinese interests in the Federation. The PAP had hoped that a show of strength in the federal elections would demonstrate their appeal to Chinese voters, thereby convincing the Tunku that they could replace the MCA as a worthy coalition partner. This move, however, antagonised the MCA and its leader, **Tan Siew Sin**, and further fuelled fears amongst conservative Malay leaders like the **United Malays National Organisation** (UMNO) Secretary-General **Dato Syed Ja'afar Albar** that Lee Kuan Yew's ultimate ambitions lay in becoming the Prime Minister of all Malaysia.



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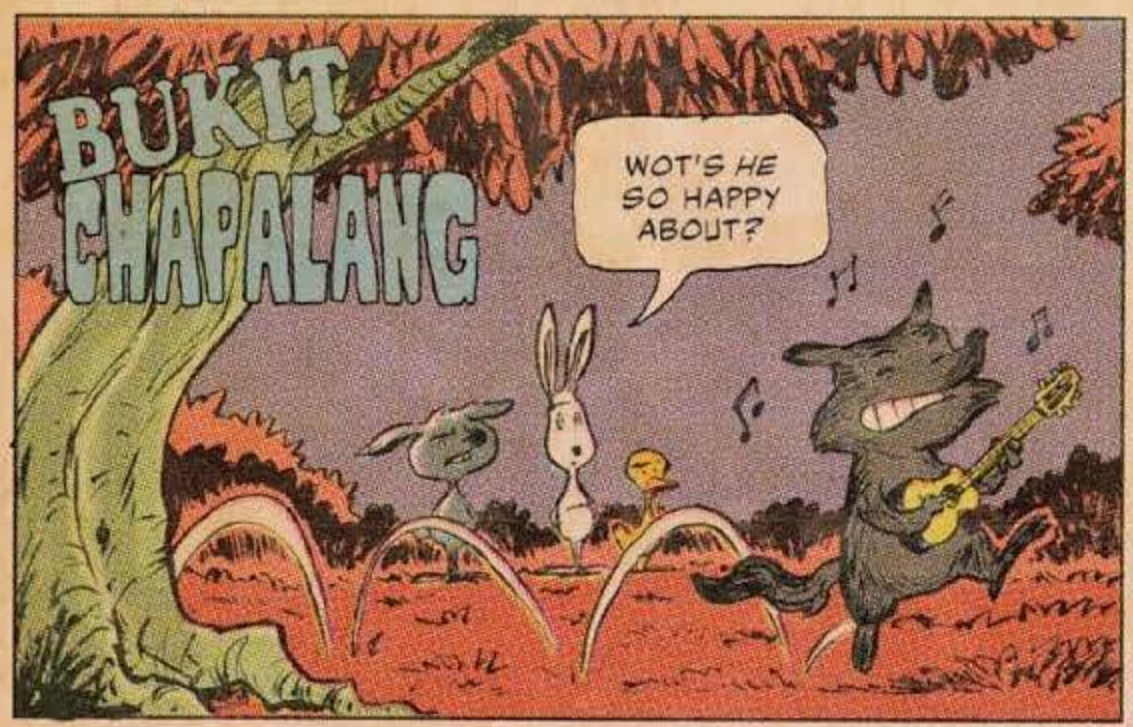

Despite large turnouts for their election rallies, the PAP performed dismally, winning only one of nine seats contested, whilst the MCA made significant gains. Incensed by what they saw as broken promises, and the overreaching ambition and impatience on the part of the PAP, the ruling coalition in Malaysia now sought to crush them in Singapore itself, with Syed Ja'afar Albar leading a virulent campaign to discredit the PAP and Lee Kuan Yew amongst Malay voters in Singapore.

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BUKIT CHAPALANG

OH WOE, OH WOE, FOR THE MOUSEKETEERS OF BUKIT CHAPALANG...

TREATED LIKE STEPSONS, DRIVEN FROM YOUR HOMES...

OH, SANG KANCIL, DON'T TREAT OUR MOUSEKETEERS THIS WAAAAY!

THAT CIVET IS AT IT AGAIN!

BEEN NOTHING BUT TROUBLES SINCE WE GOT INTO HINTERLAND!

MOUSEKETEERS' KLUB

WELL... WE DID GET RID OF SANG KUCING AND THE ANTS...

BUT NOT MUCH EVI-DENT-SES OF THE ENTERTANE-MENTS WE WERE PROMISED!

THAT'S COS I'M THE MAMMAL IN CHARGE OF ALL HINTERLAND FUN-FARES!

SERVES YOU RIGHT FOR TRYIN' TO REPLACE ME ON THE BILLY-BOARD CHARTS!

WHAT'RE WE GONNA DO??

CLEARLY, WE HAFTA HOLD MORE CONCERTS IN HINTERLAND!

IF YOU CAN'T JOIN 'EM, FIGHT 'EM!

There was to be more trouble on other fronts. The Malaysian Minister of Finance was none other than MCA leader Tan Siew Sin, who now used his power and influence to make it difficult for Singapore to receive the financial and economic benefits it had hoped would come with merger. Meanwhile, Syed Ja'afar Albar and Lee Kuan Yew continued their war of words.

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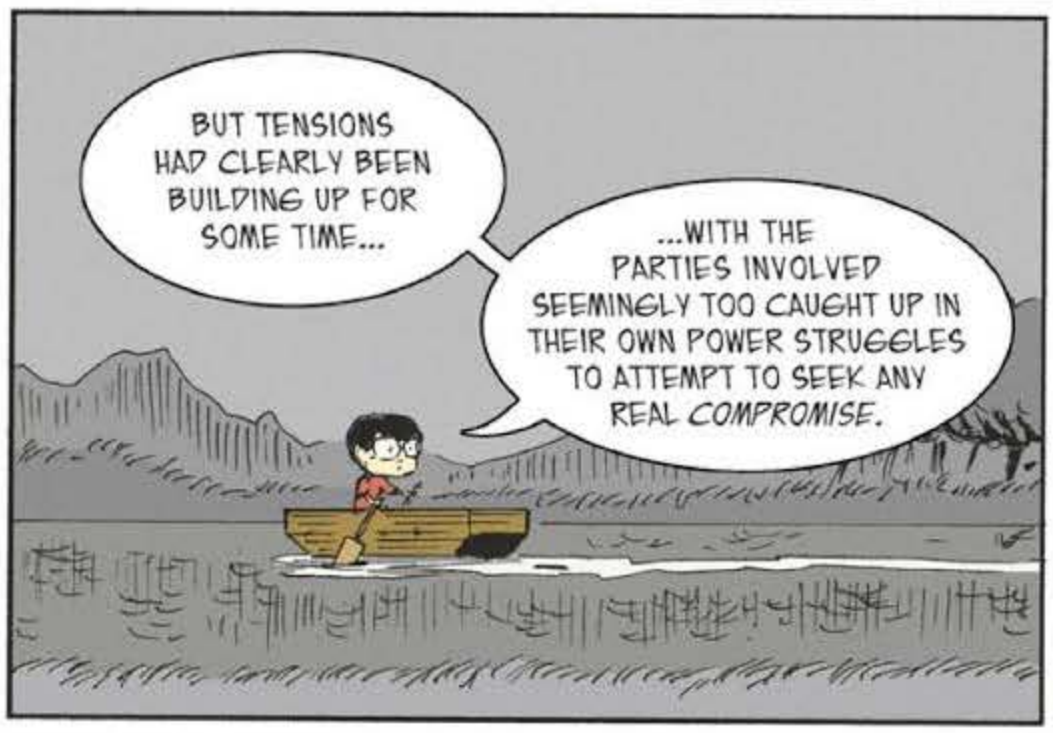

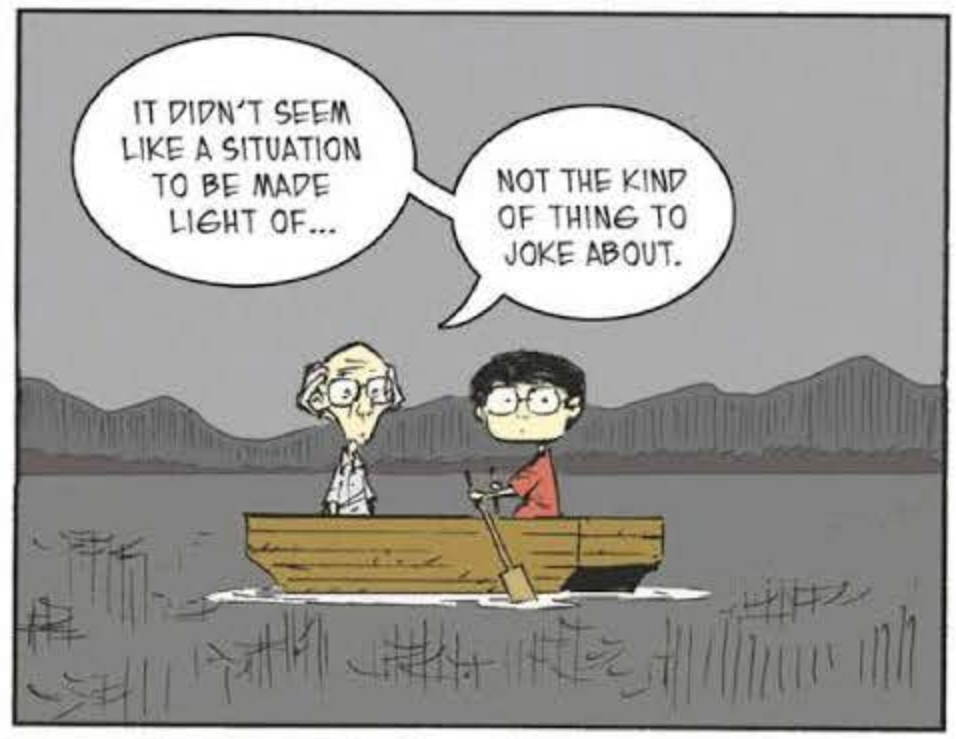

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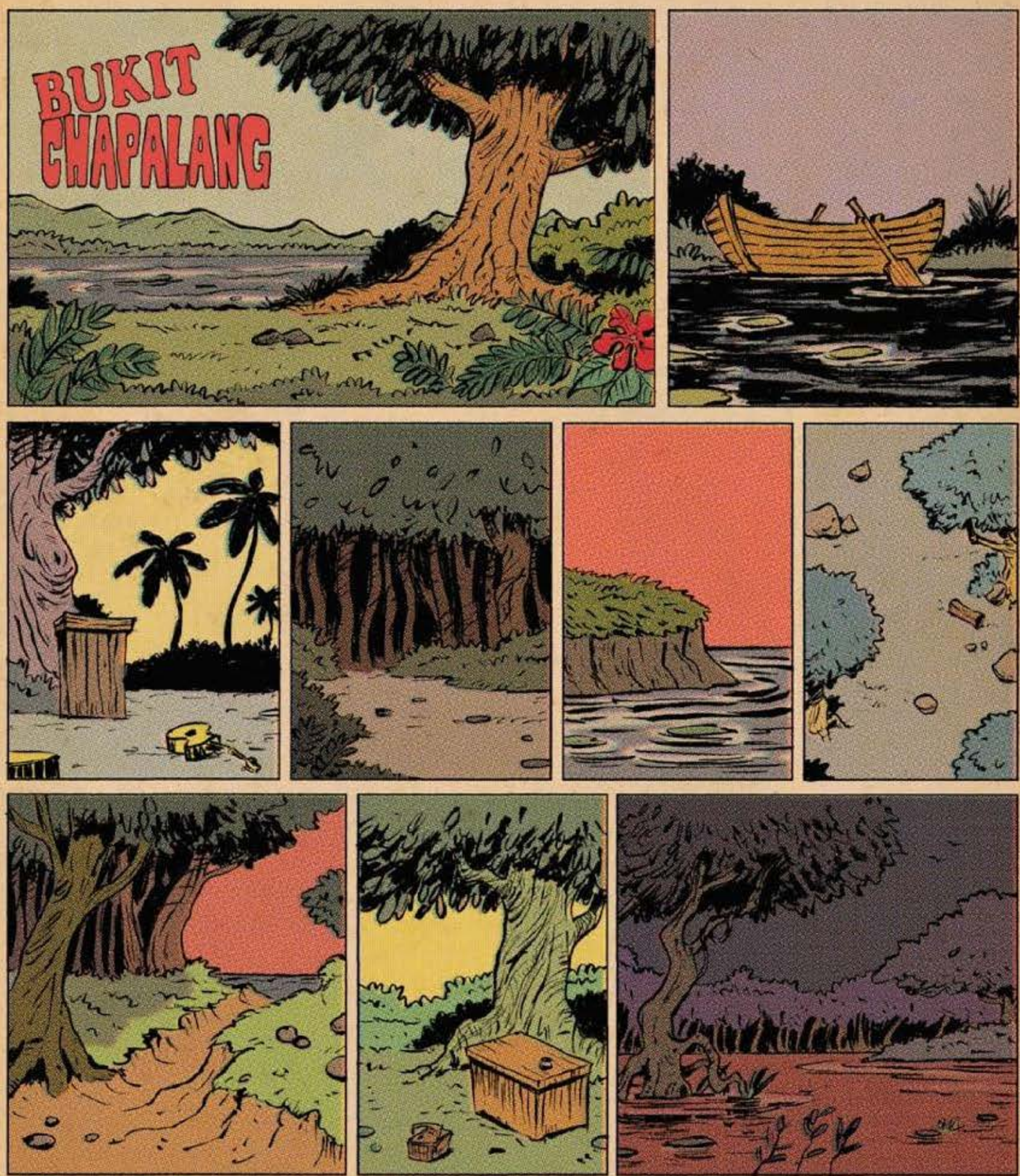

Above
BUKIT CHAPALANG
1965
Chan Hock Chye
Self-published

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Pĕlajaran Kĕĕnam

KĚRJA SAYA TIAP-TIAP HARI

Saya bangun tiap-tiap pagi pada pukul 6. Kĕmudian saya pĕrgi gosok gigi. Saya gosok gigi dĕngan bĕrus gigi. Pada bĕrus gigi itu saya buboh sadikit ubat gigi. Gigi saya bĕrseh dan tidak busok.

Lĕpas gosok gigi saya mandi. Saya gosok badan saya dĕngan sabun mandi. Daki hilang dan badan saya pun bĕrseh. Kĕmudian saya lap badan dĕngan tuala mandi. Saya sikat rambut dĕngan sikat. Lĕpas itu saya pakai pakaian sĕkolah. Pakaian sĕkolah saya baju kĕmeja puteh dan sĕluar pendek puteh juga.

Bila sudah siap saya pun makan pagi. Saya minum kopi dan makan sa-kĕping roti. Ĕmak sĕdiakan makanan saya tiap-tiap pagi. Ĕmak bĕri saya 20 sen untok bĕlanja sĕkolah.

Above & opposite

PELAJARAN BAHASA KEBANGSAAN: BUKU SATU (NATIONAL LANGUAGE EDUCATION: BOOK ONE)
1965
Art by Chan Hock Chye
Words by Syed Nasir Bin Ismail

Illustrations from a proof copy of a book teaching basic Bahasa Melayu (Malay language), which was to be adopted as Singapore's national language after it joined Malaysia. Race riots and political tensions, however, would lead to Singapore's separation from the Federation on August 9, 1965. The book's publication was cancelled shortly after, and Chan would never receive payment for this work.

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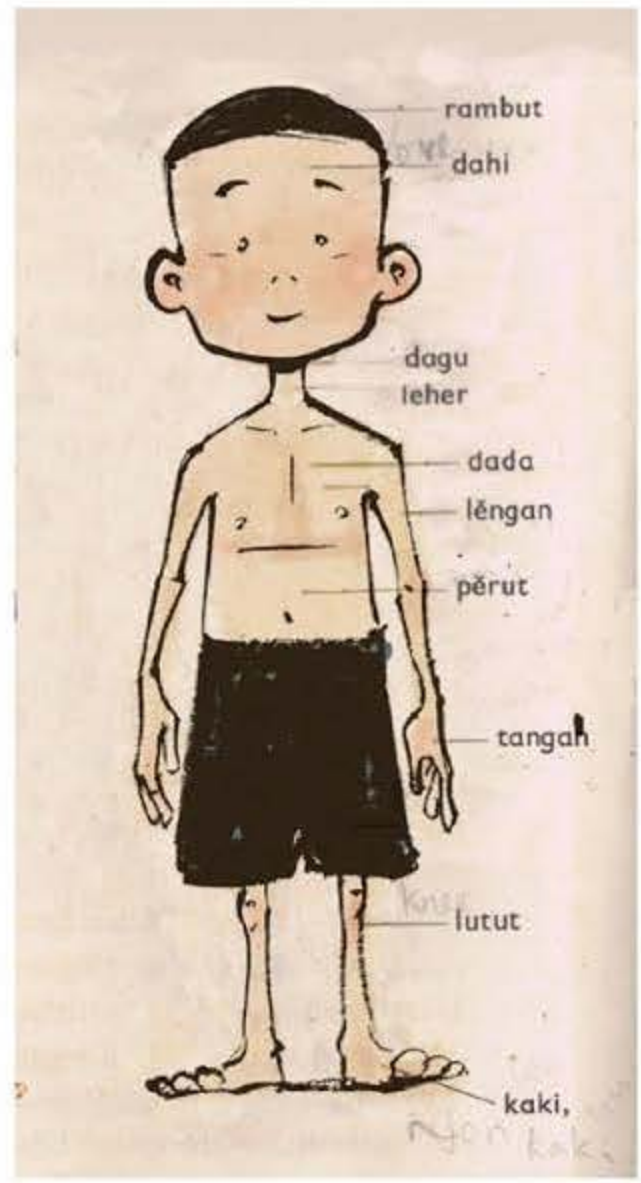
Pĕlajaran Kĕtiga Bĕlas

HARI HUJAN

Pagi sĕmalam hujan lĕbat. Saya dan kawan-kawan pĕrgi ka-sĕkolah pakai payong. Bapa pun pĕrgi bĕkĕrja pakai payong. Di-sĕkolah tidak ada sĕnaman. Sĕmua murid bĕrkumpul di-dalam dewan. Mĕreka mĕndĕngar uchapan Guru Bĕsar.

Murid-murid tidak suka kalau hari hujan sĕbab mĕreka tidak dapat main bola. Itek sangat suka kalau hari hujan sĕbab ia dapat mandi. Kalau hujan tĕrlalu lĕbat boleh mĕnjadi bah. Kalau bah bĕsar, pokok-pokok tanaman banyak yang rosak dan ayam itek pun banyak yang mati. Rumah-rumah ada yang hanyut dan kadang-kadang orang pun ada yang mati lĕmas.



Pĕlajaran Kĕdua Bĕlas

PĔRBUALAN BABAK I DI-GĔRAI IKAN

Pĕnjual ikan: Che' hĕndak ikan apa?

Mak Midah: Bĕrapa harga ikan tĕnggiri ini sa-kati?

Pĕnjual ikan: Sa-ringgit sa-kati

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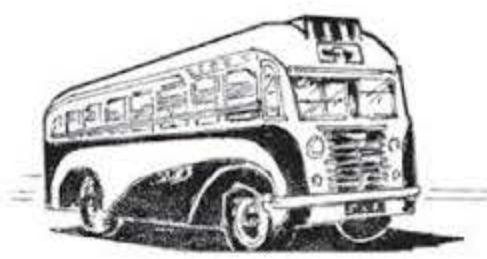
Chapter Seven

IT'S ALL ABOUT BEING PRACTICAL

脚踏实地



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Charlie Chan Hock Chye, aged 27, 1965

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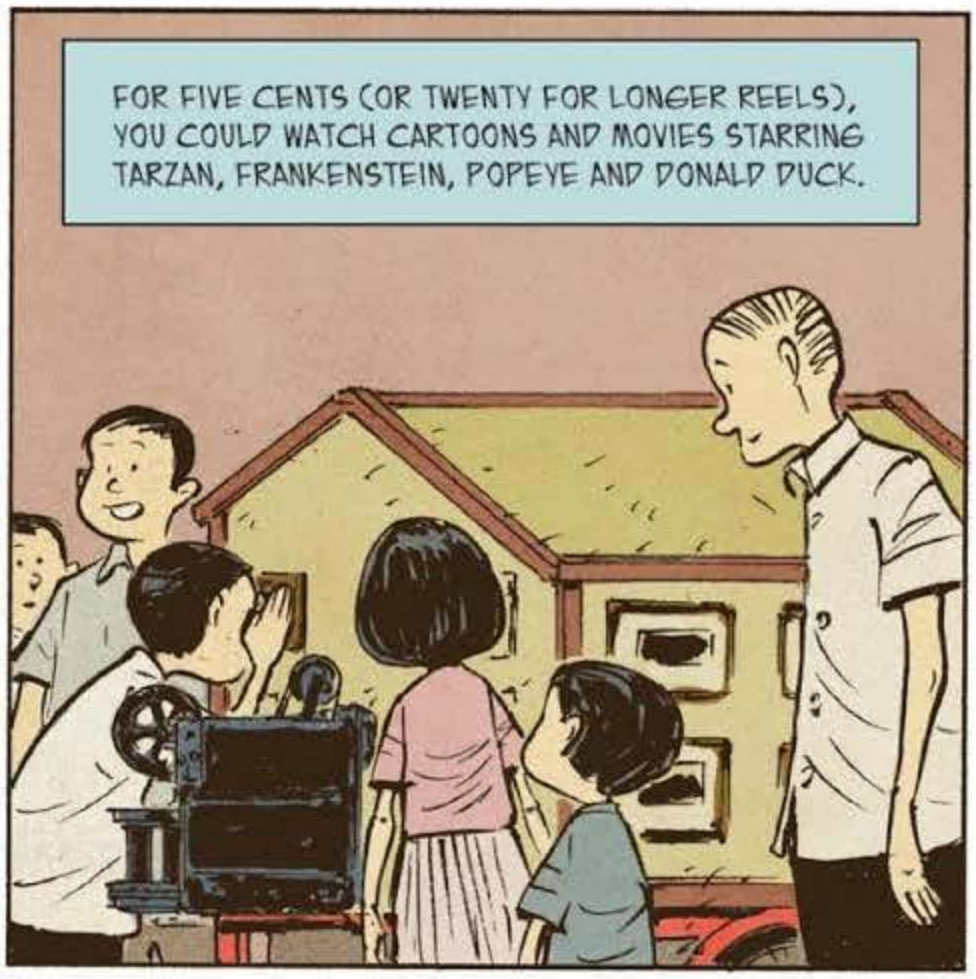

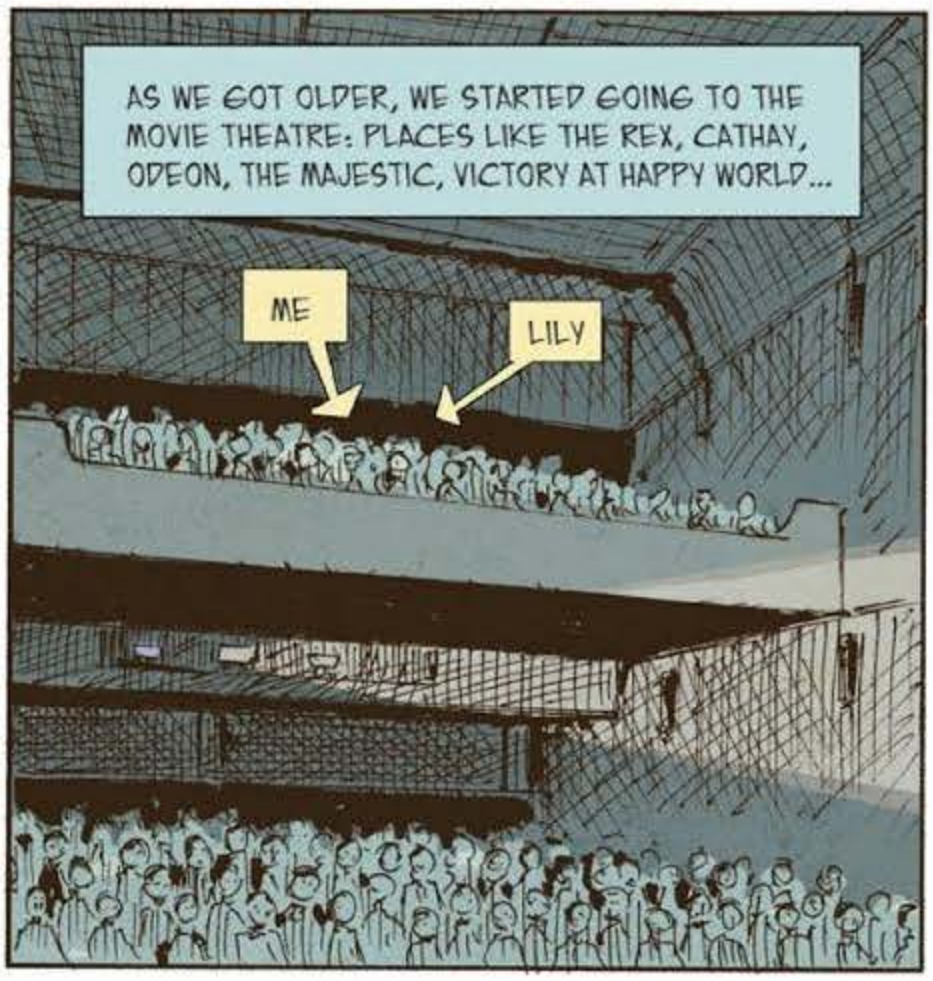

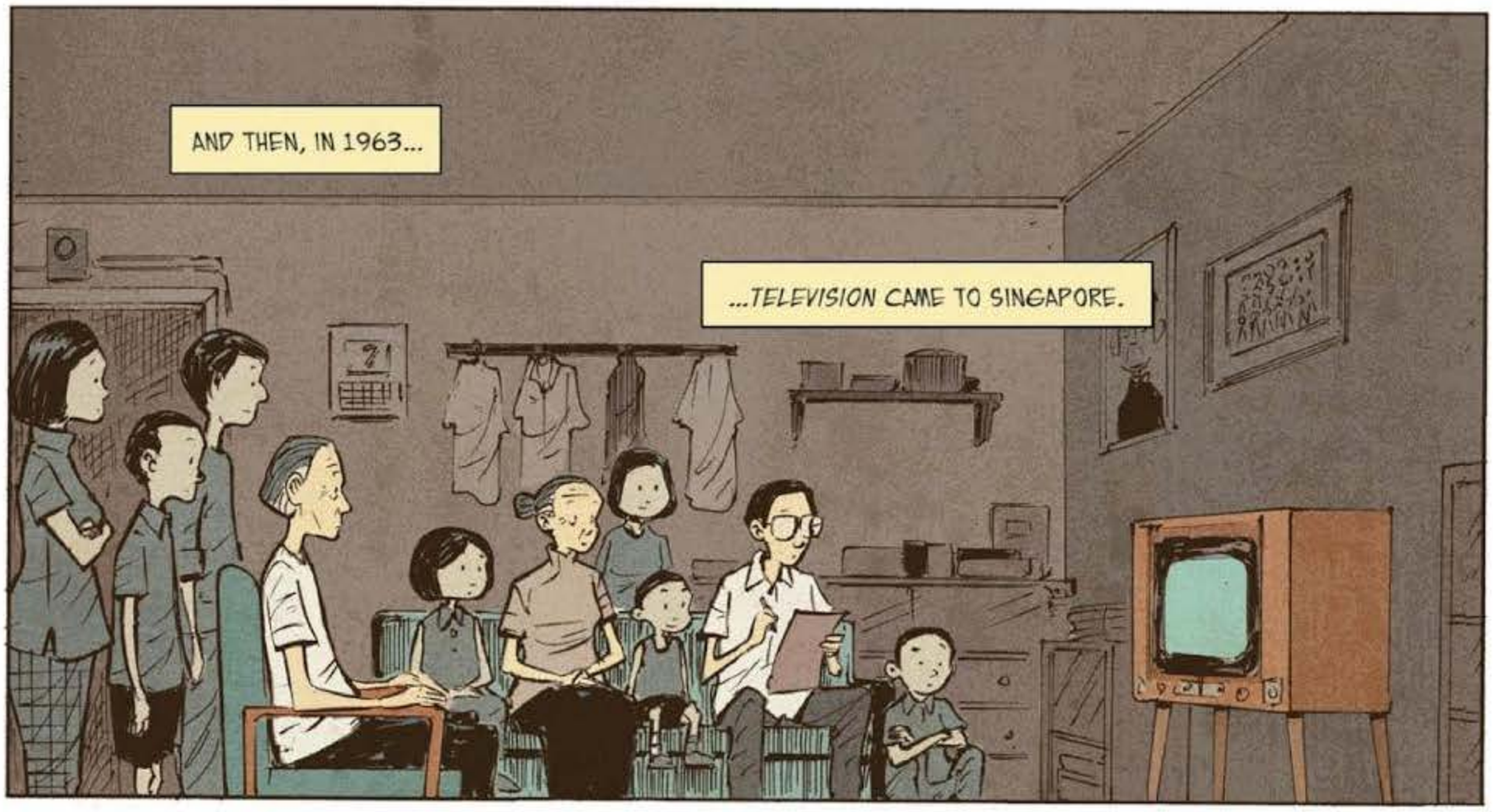

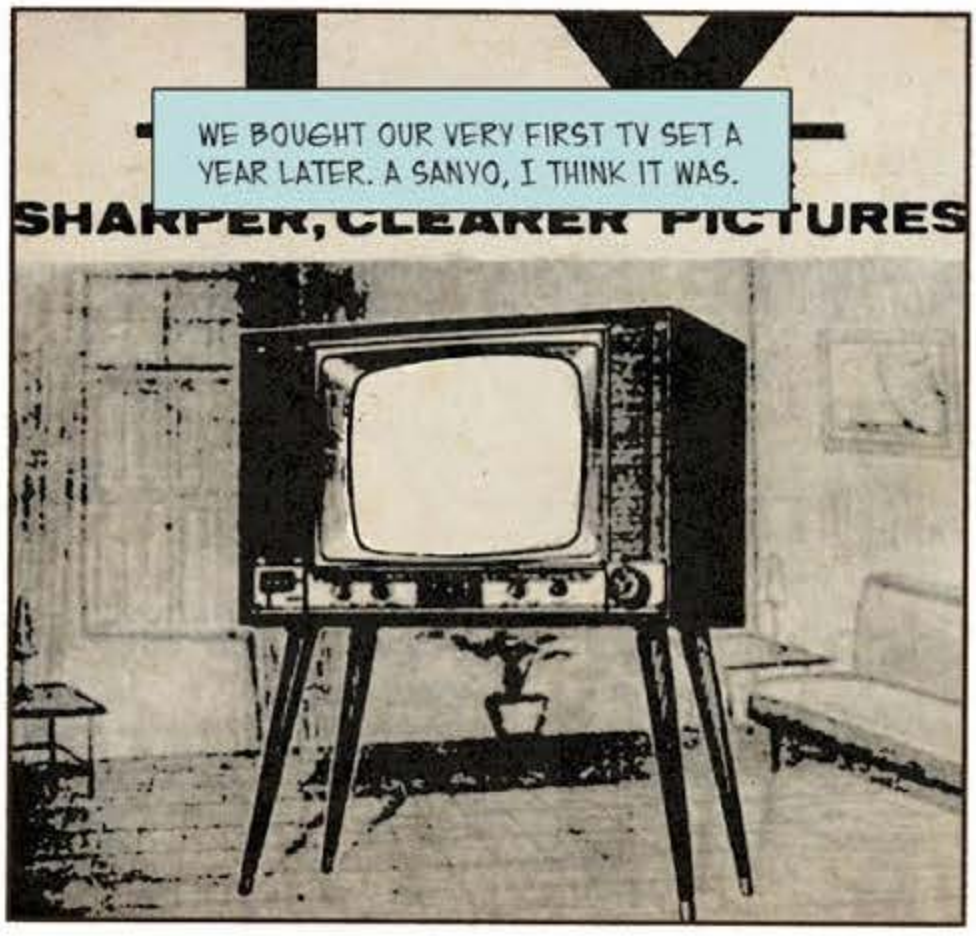

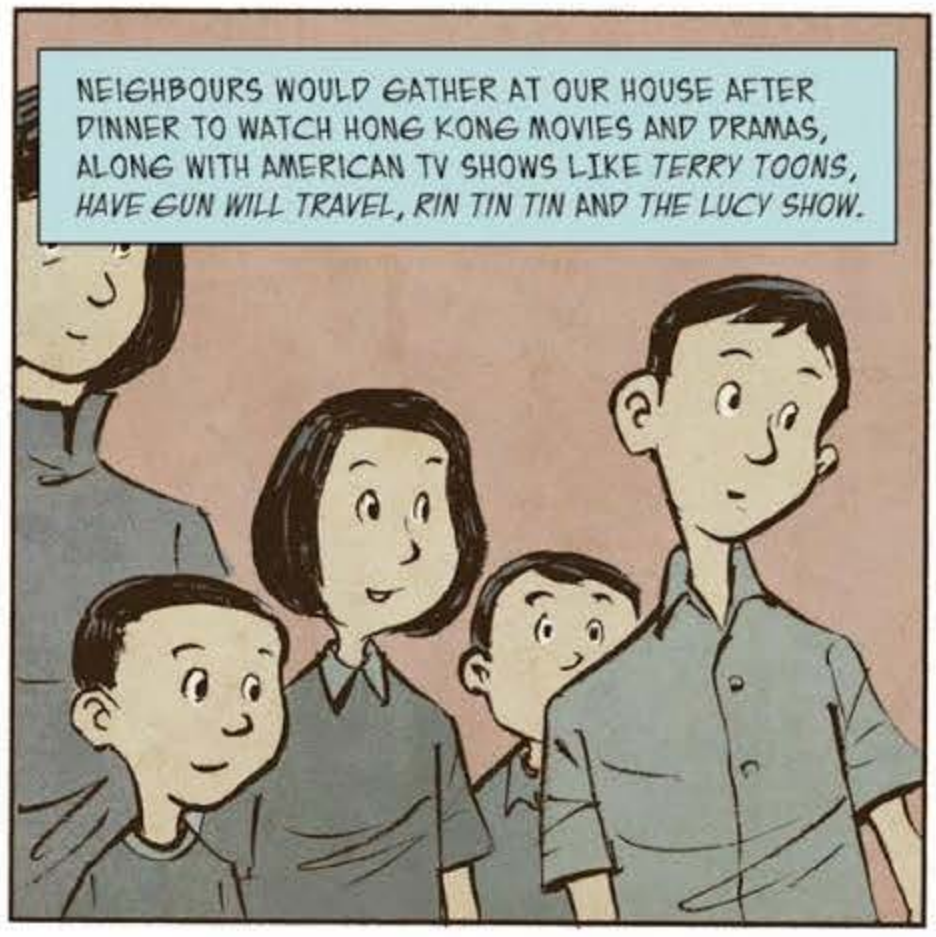

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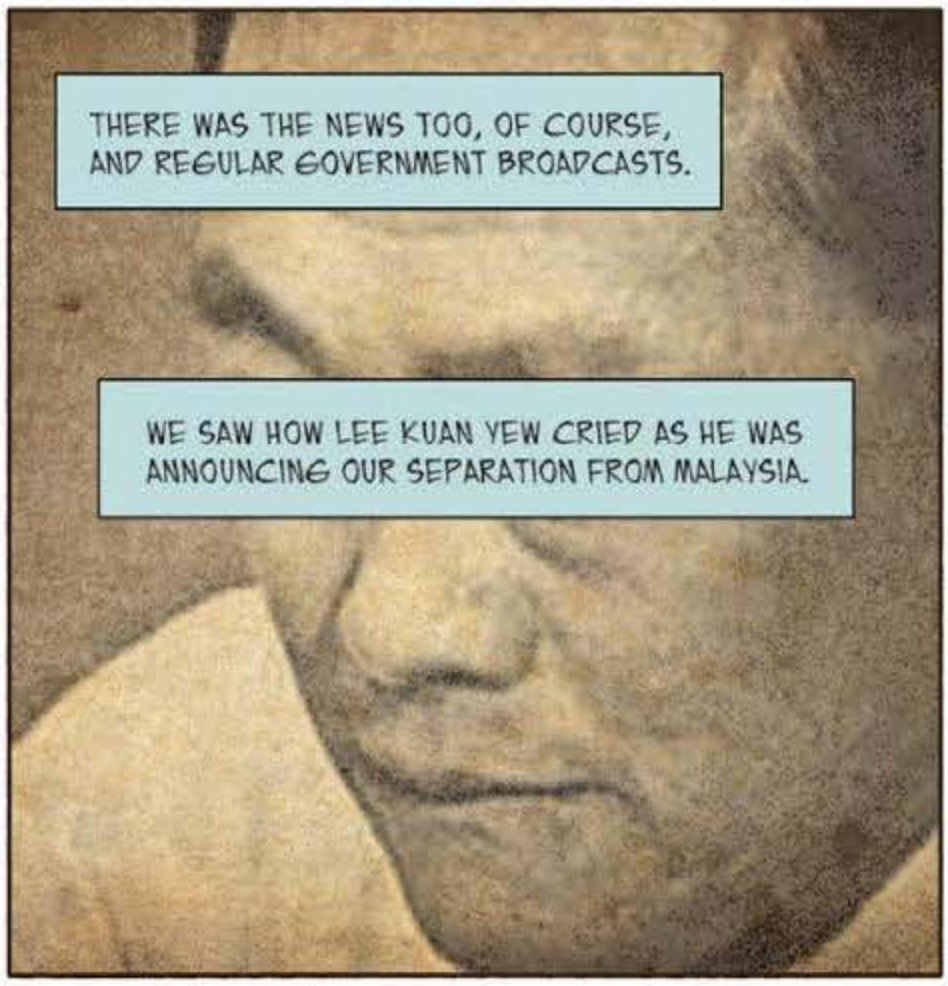

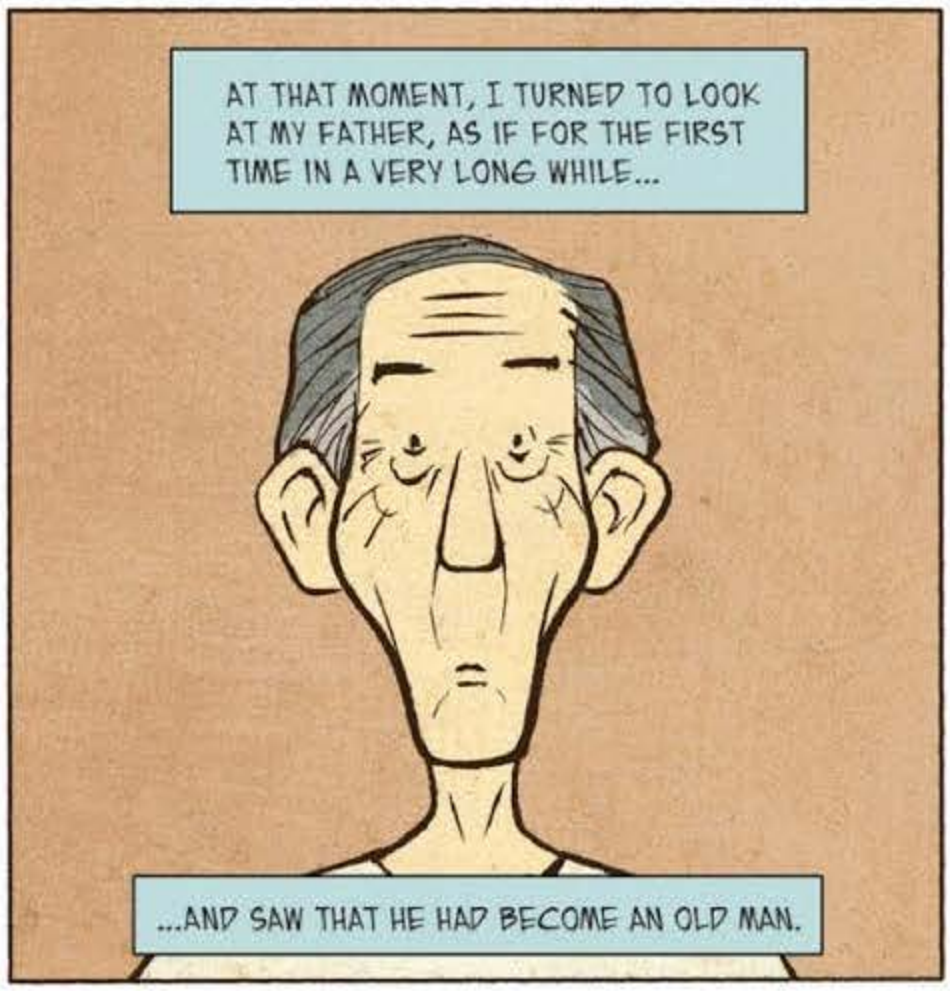

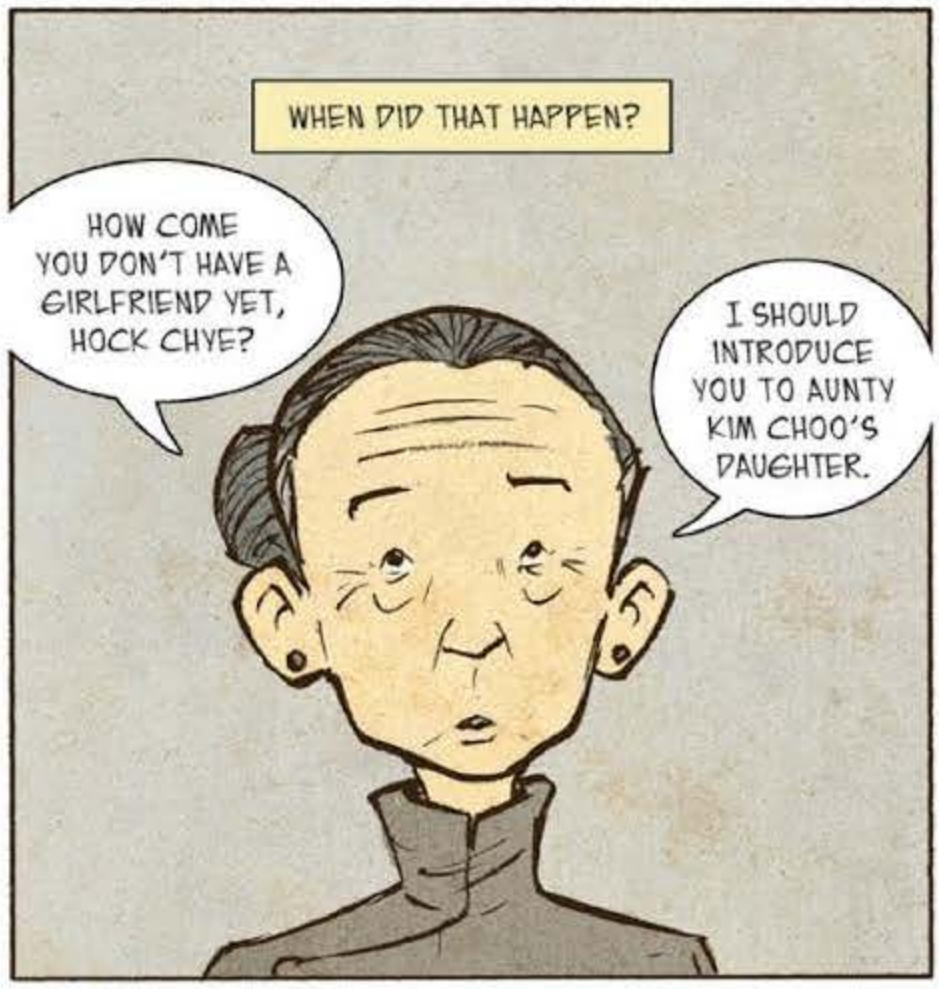

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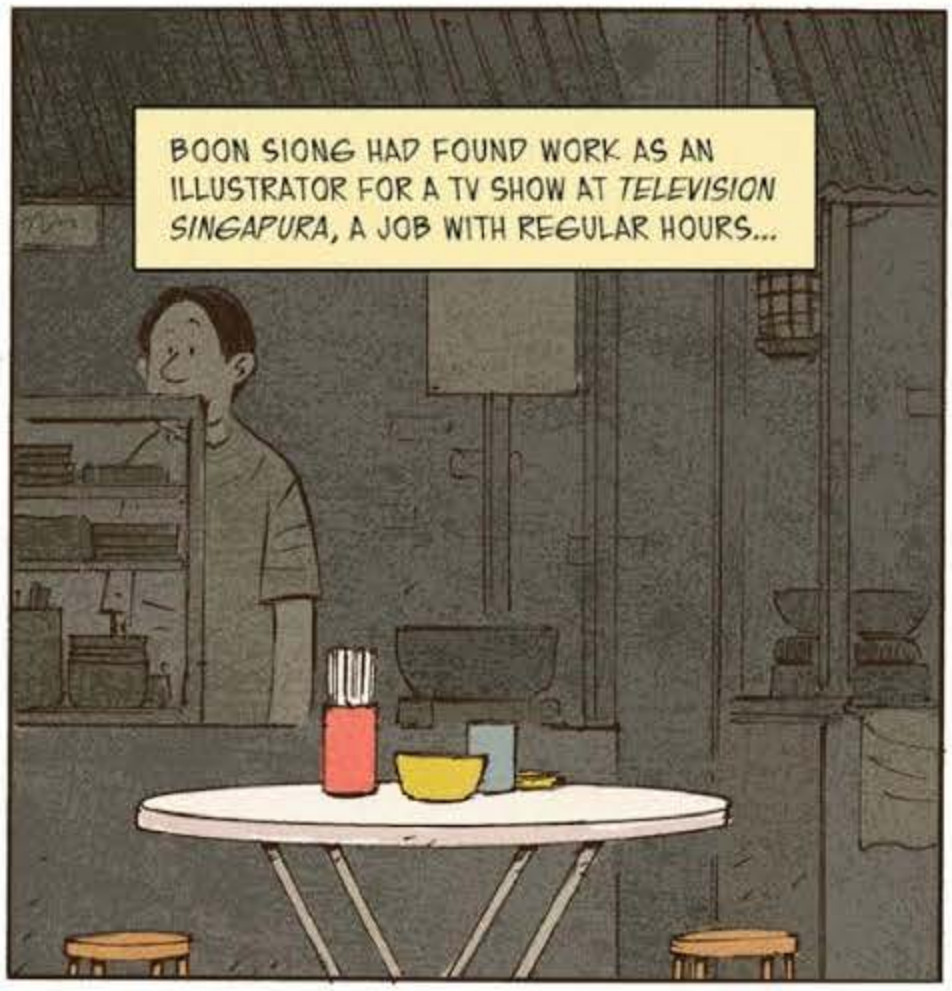

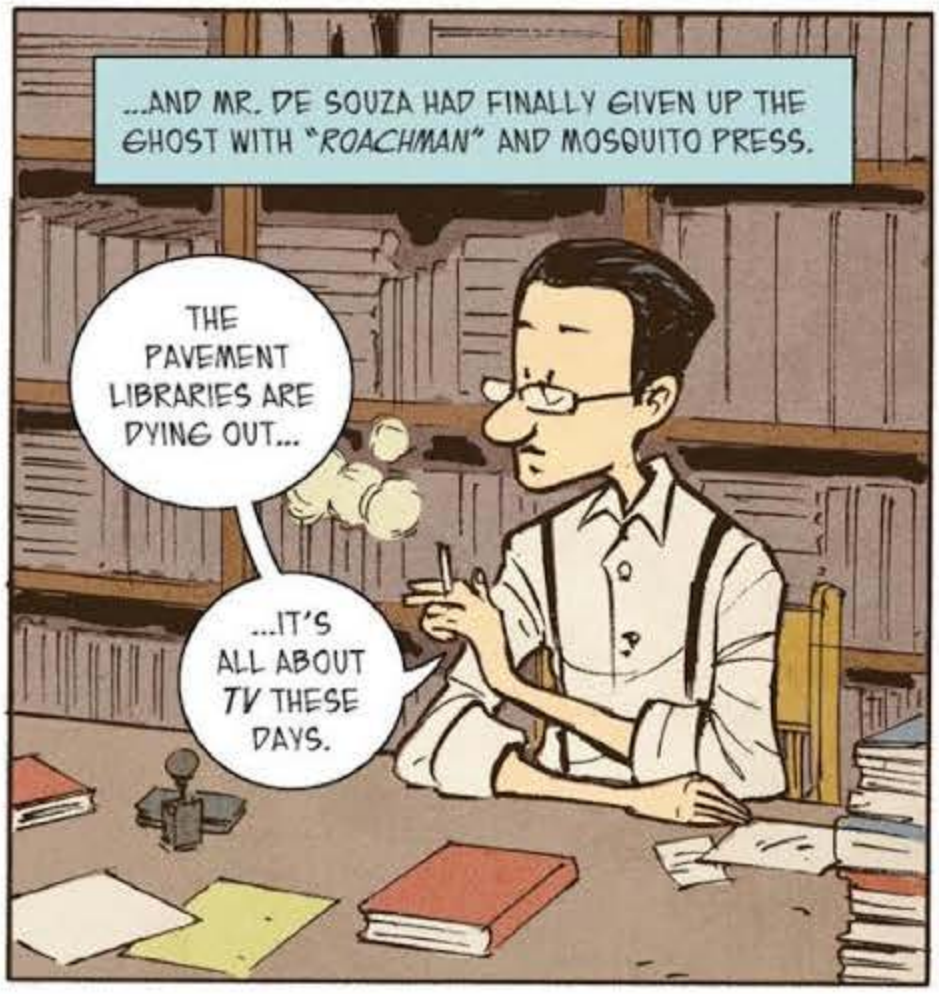

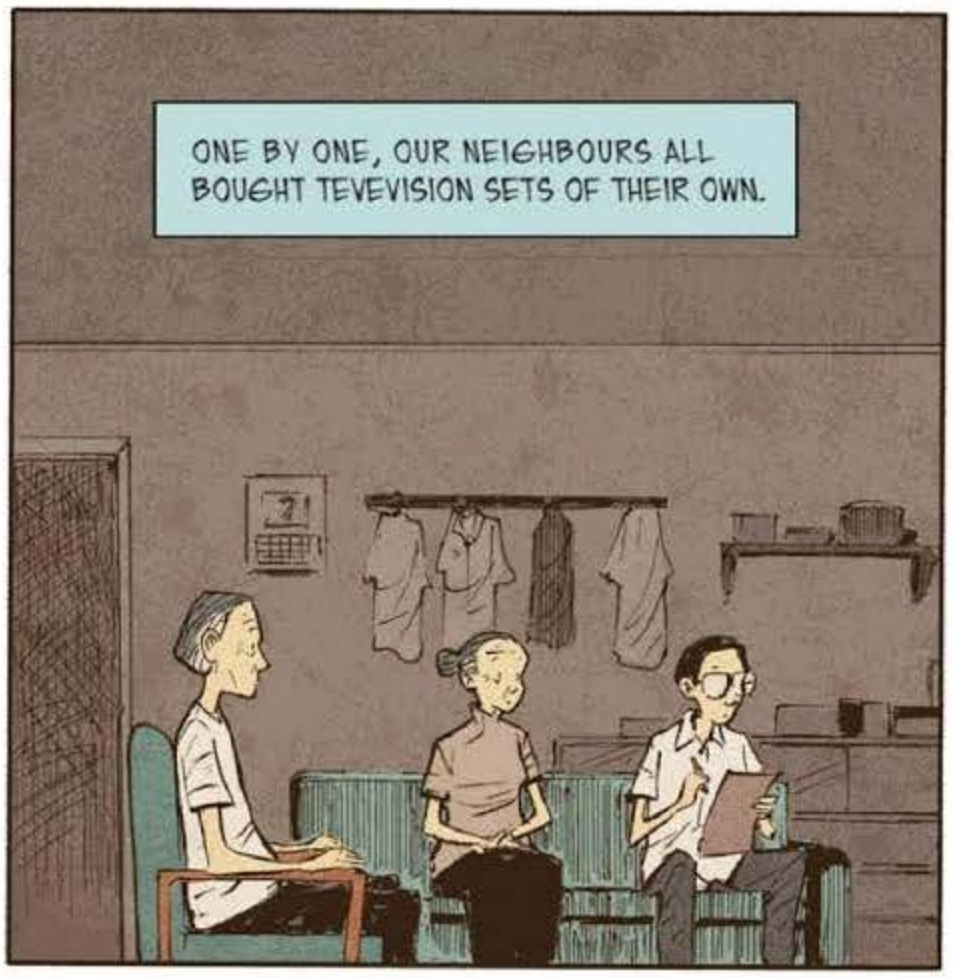

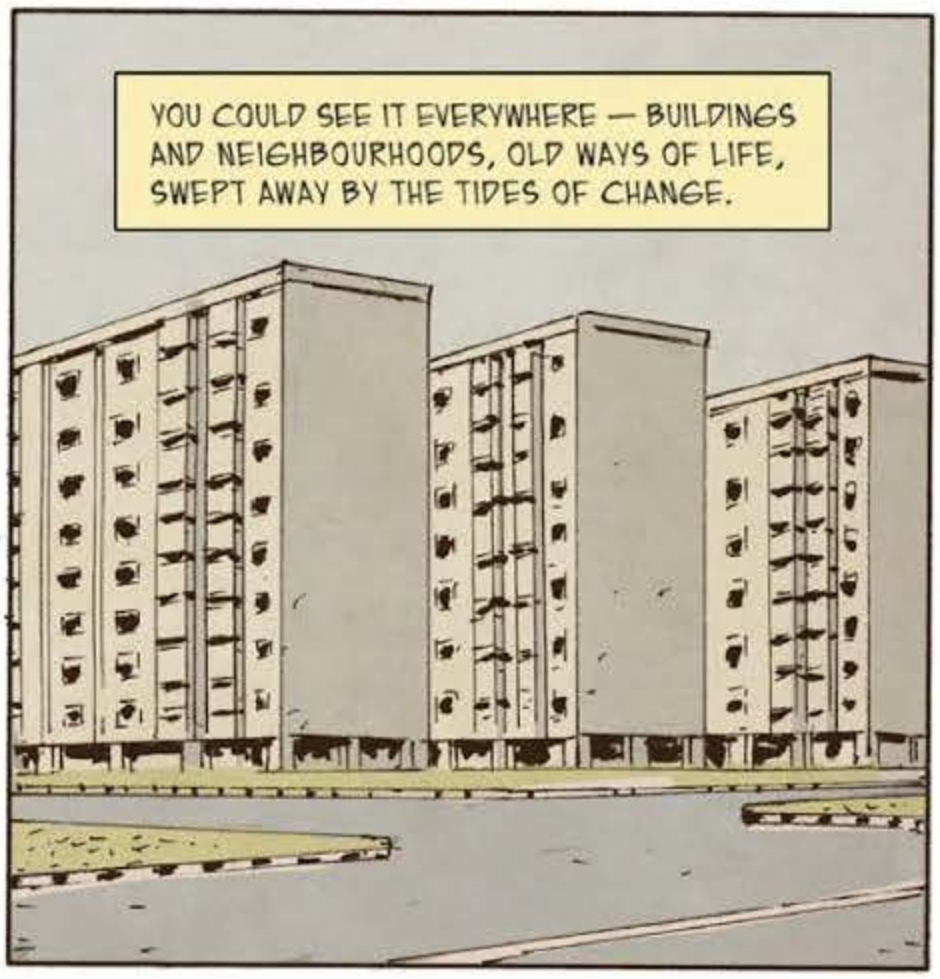

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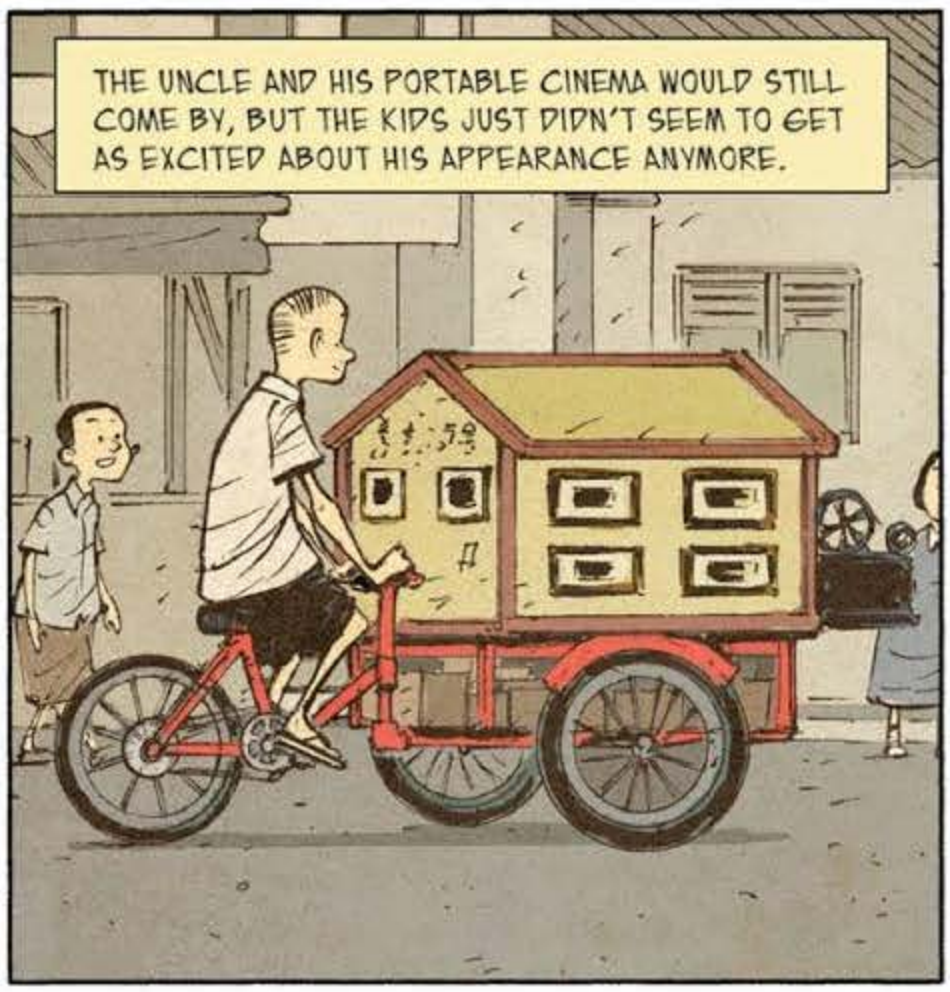

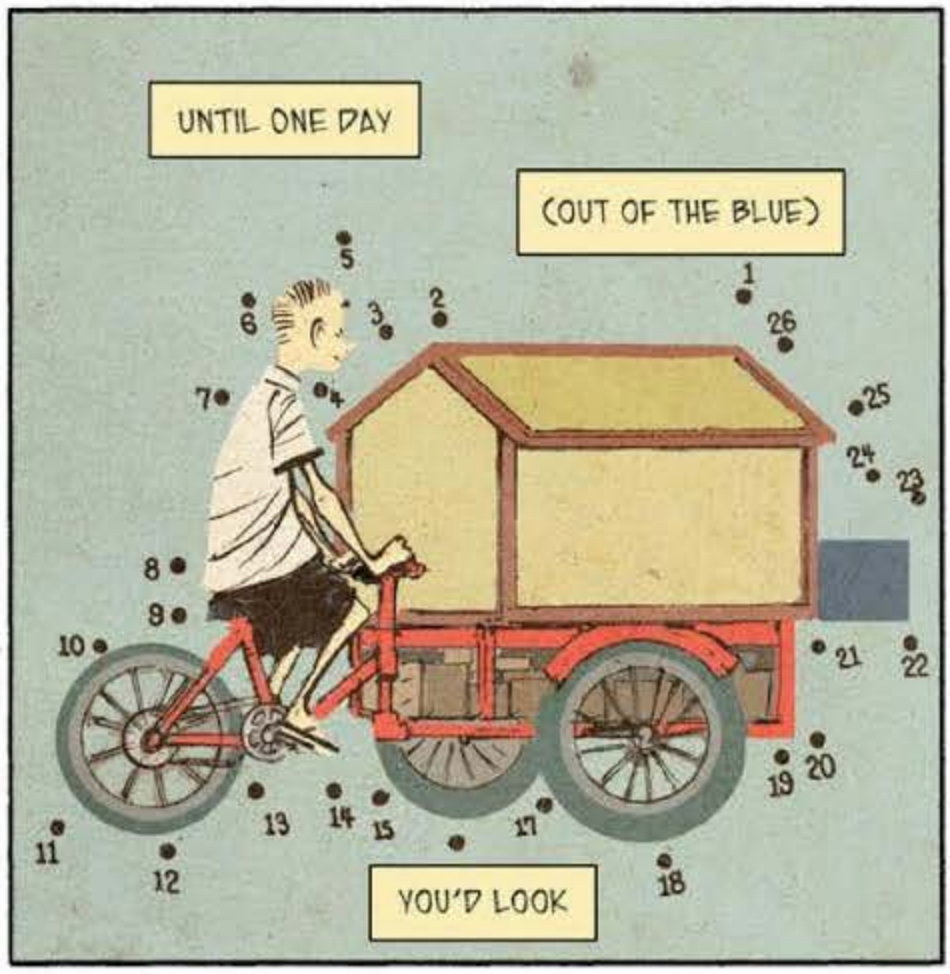

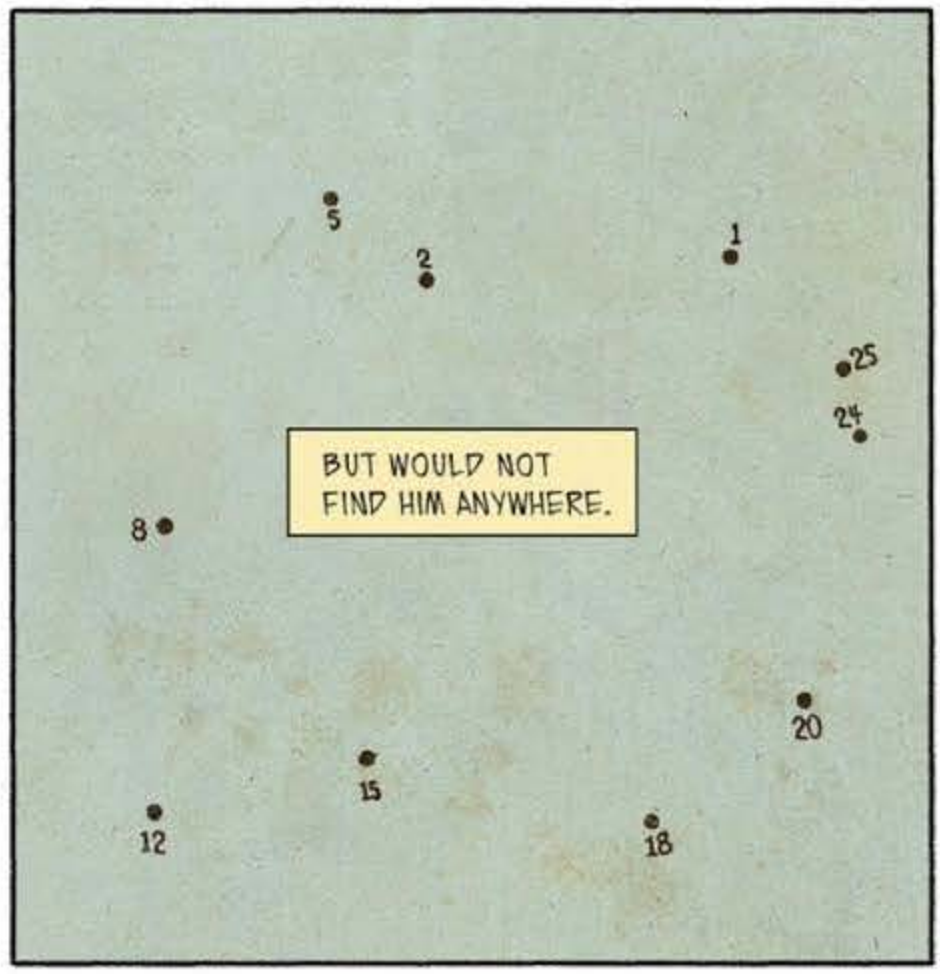

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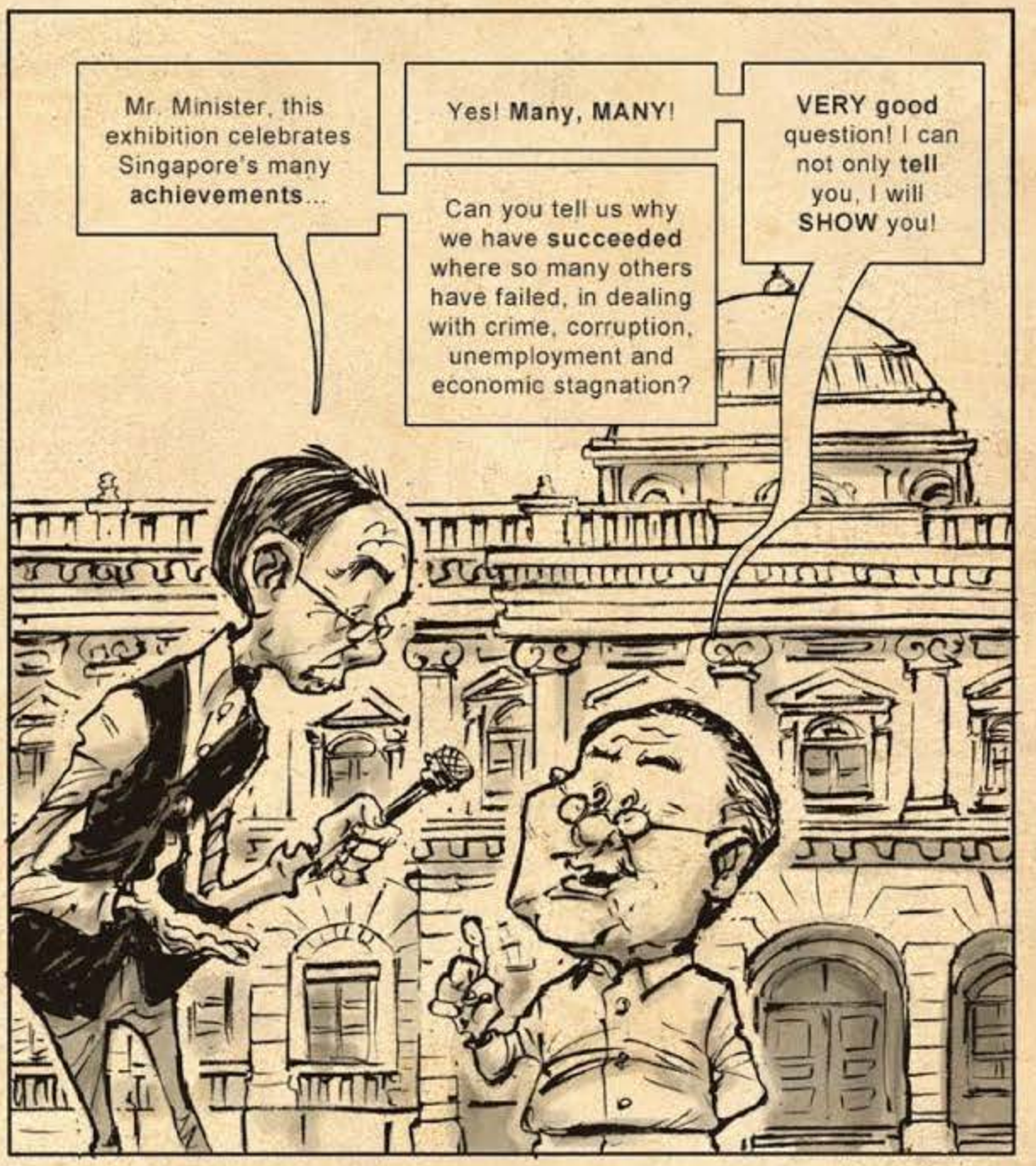
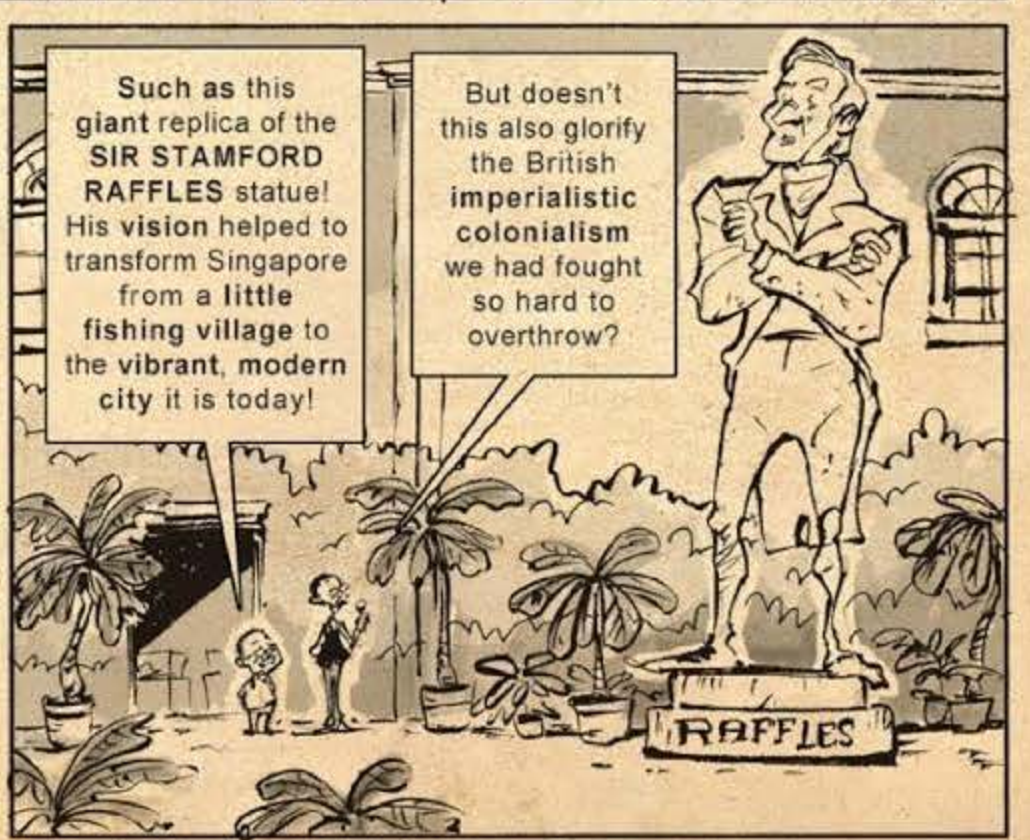
SELF-PORTRAIT
1965
Chan Hock Chye
Oil on canvas

Hello, everybody! I am **Wang Sha Sha**. Today, we are here at the **National Museum** to preview a very special exhibition curated by the **Minister of Museums** of the **PAY-AND-PAY** (P.A.P.) party, Mr. **YE MAN FONG**! So please join me, as he explains the intricacies and wonders of the...

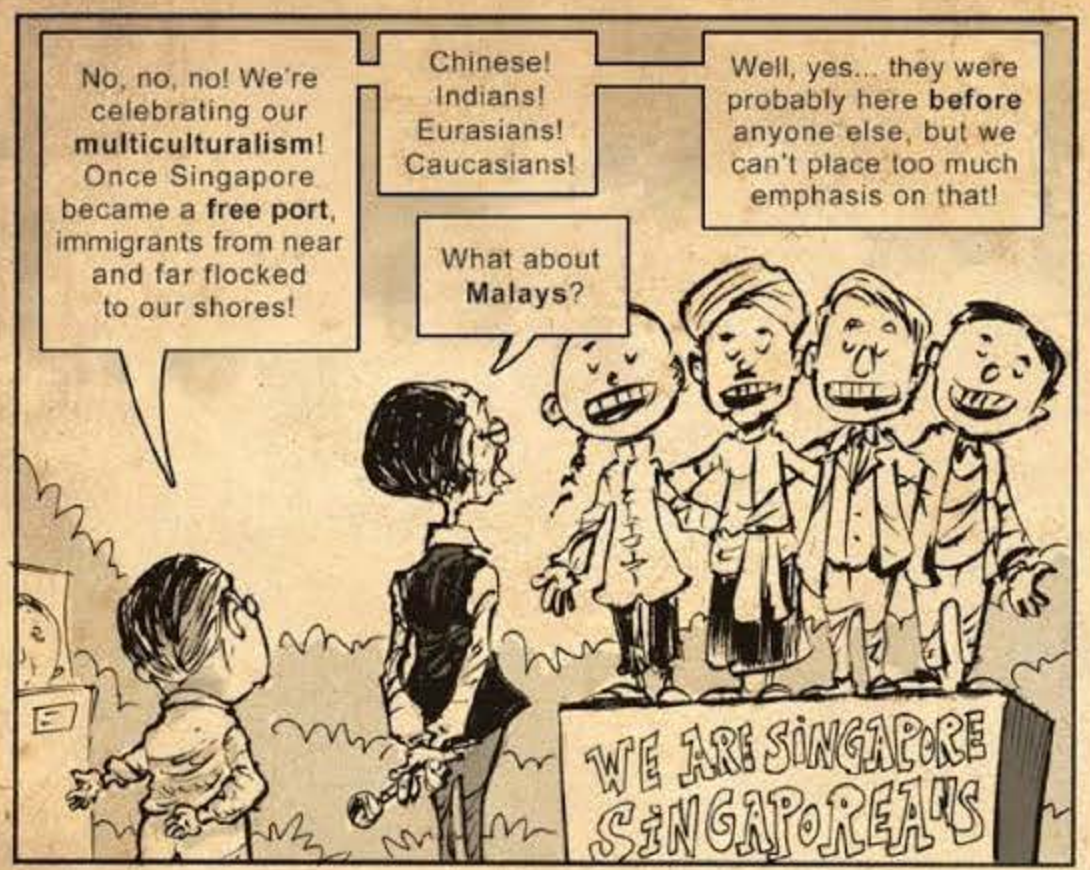
SINGAPORE STORY!

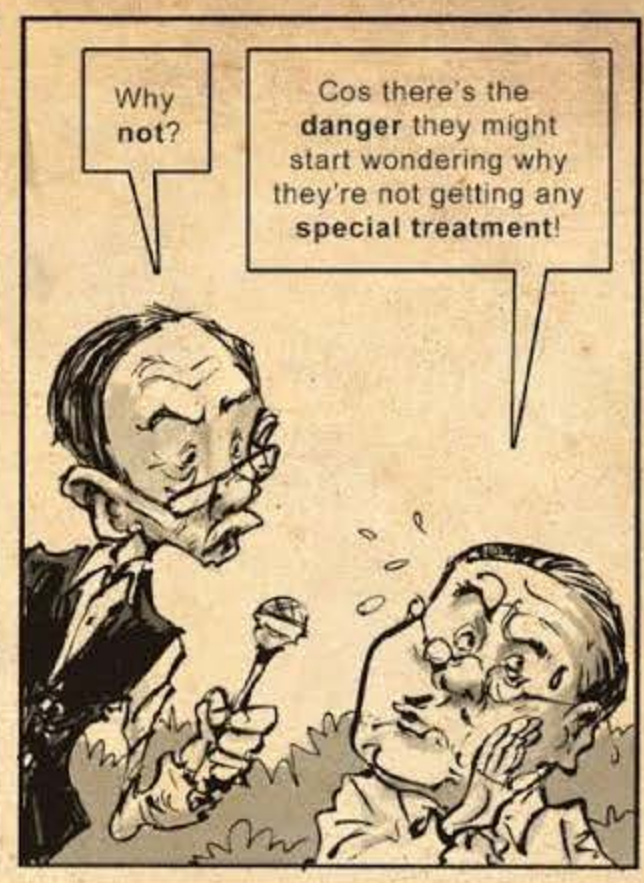


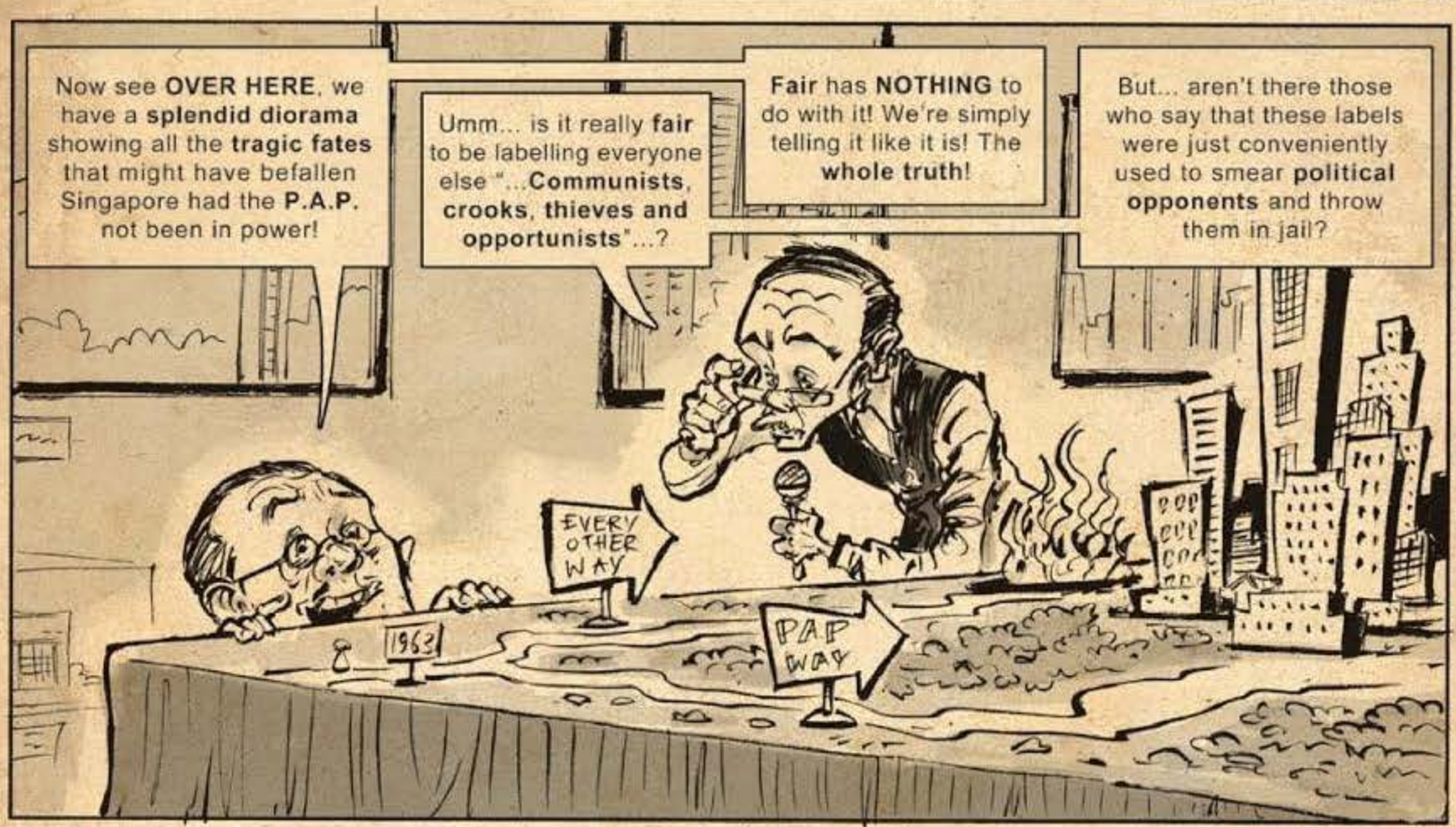


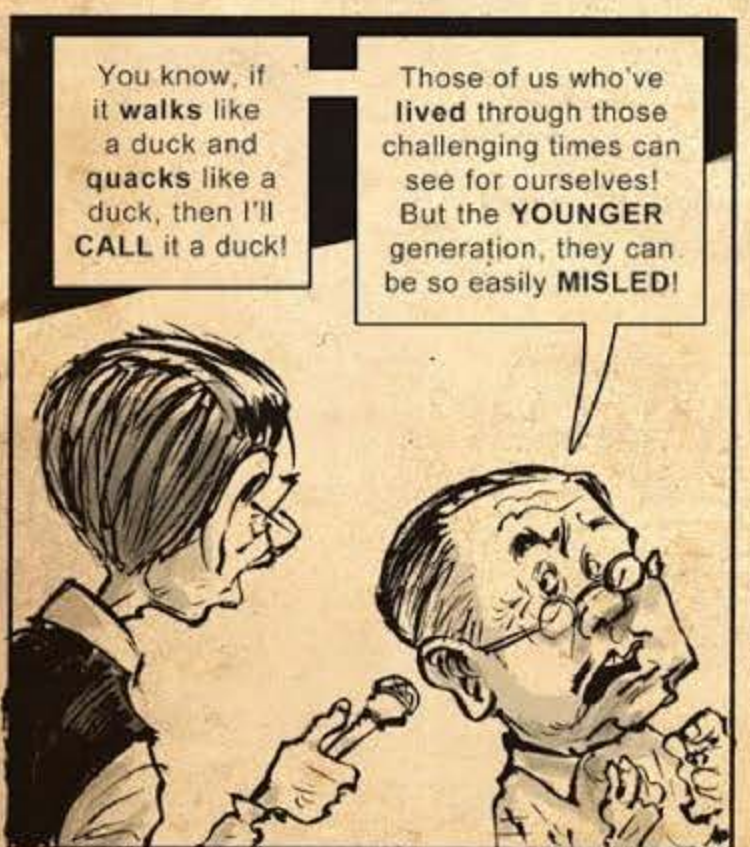
Above **SINGAPORE STORY** (1991) | Chan Hock Chye | Unpublished

Chan's take on the Singapore Story, done in a style and tone that paid homage to the irreverent, satirical humour of ***Mad*** magazine.

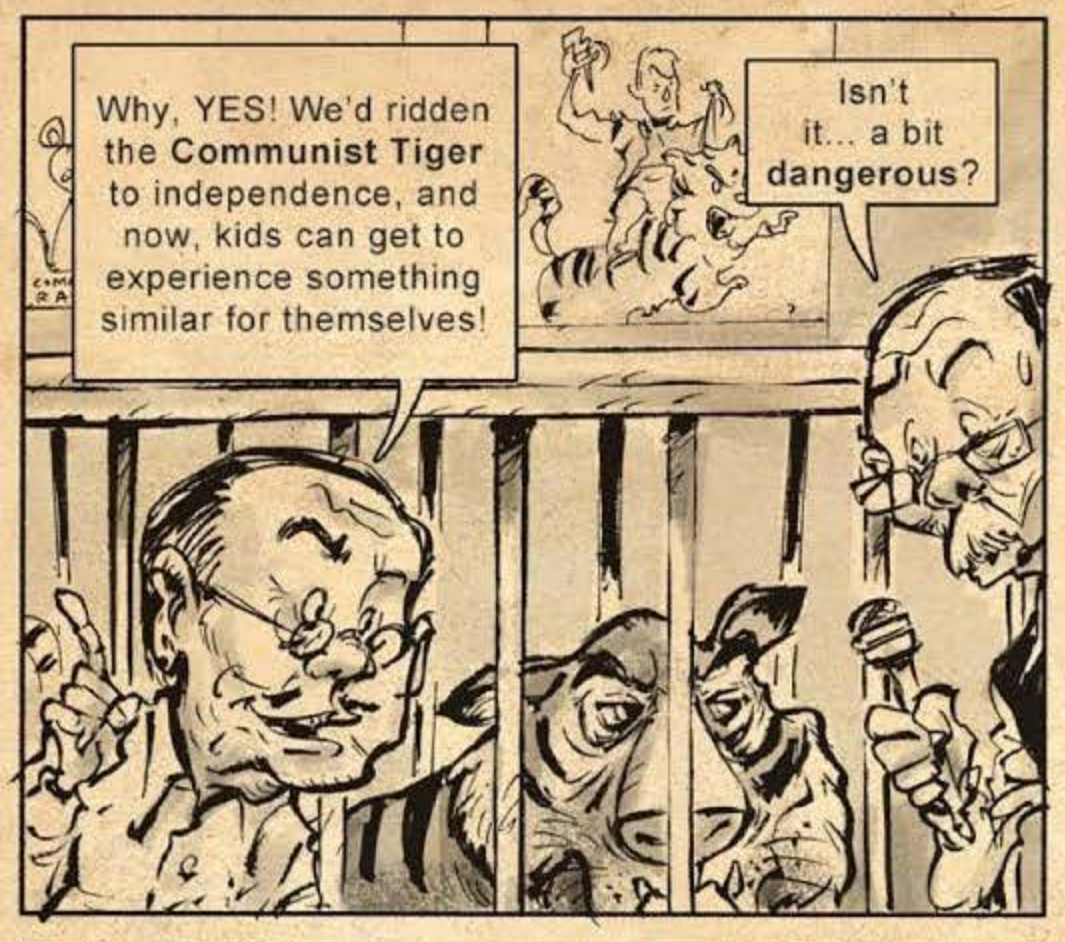


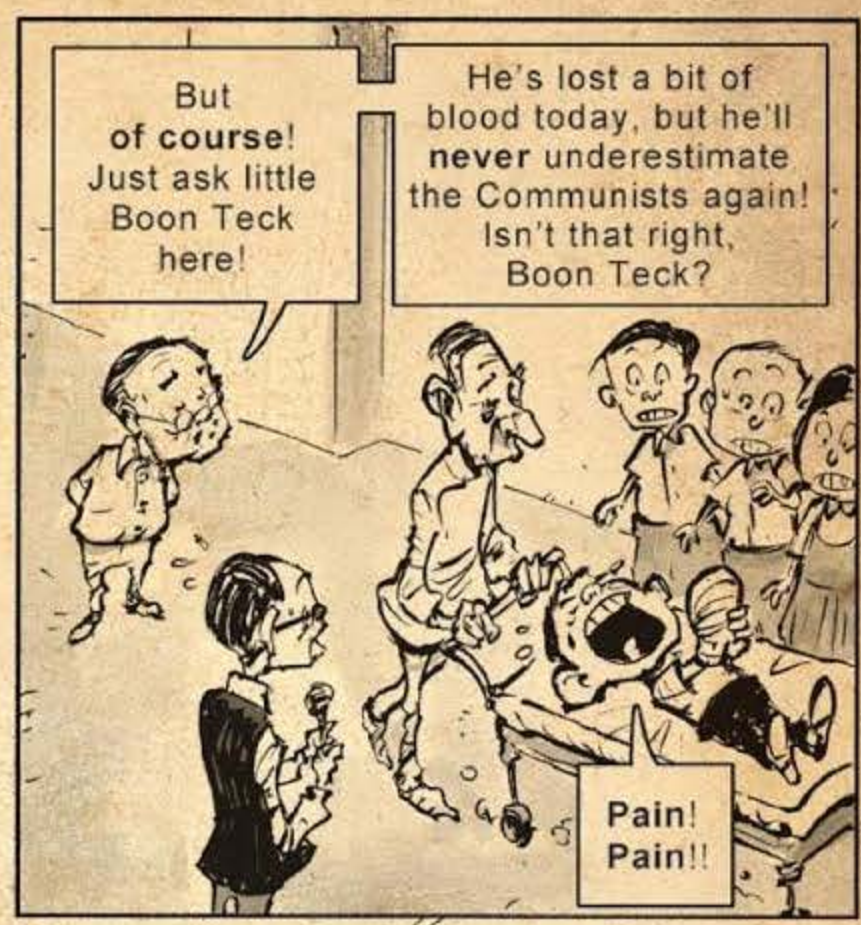


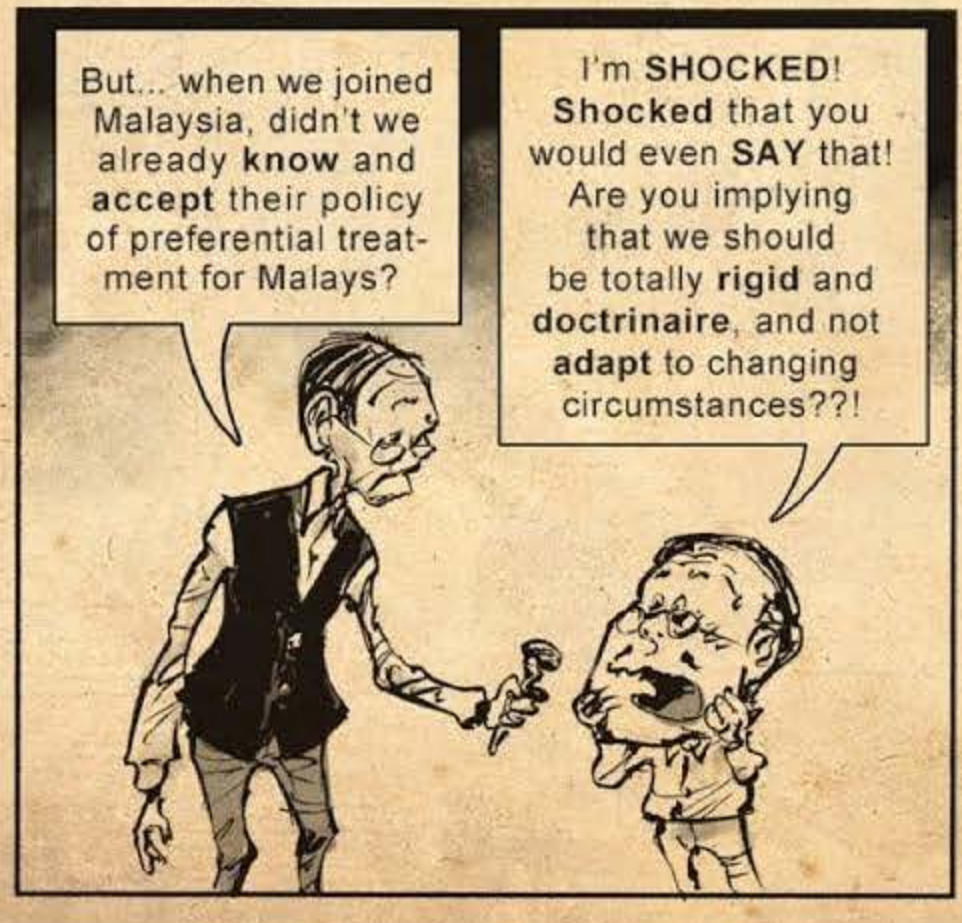


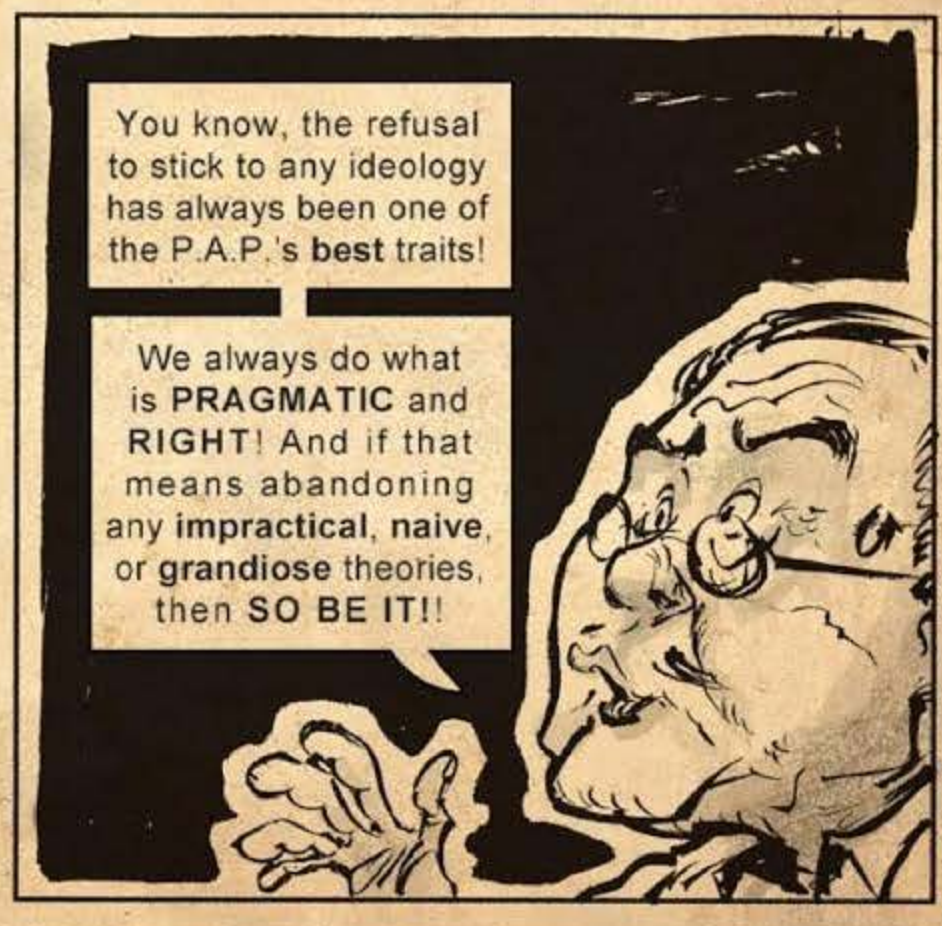


The two characters featured were based on popular local stand-up comedians **Wang Sha** and **Ye Fong**. Initially a live theatre act, the duo became staples on the airwaves when Television Singapura began broadcasting in 1963. With skits that mashed Chinese dialects, Mandarin, Malay and English with playful satires on social campaigns, the duo became the grand old masters of Singapore comedy, and bade goodbye to local audiences with a final performance in 1994. Ye Feng died a year later, and Wang Sha passed away in 1998.









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It's one of the reasons why we've been able to **transform** Singapore from a **sleepy fishing village** into a **modern metropolis** in just a few decades!

But wasn't it only a fishing village back in the days of **Raffles**?

Wasn't there quite a lot of **modern infrastructure already** in place by the time the British granted us our independence?

BEFORE PAP

AFTER PAP

SLEEPY FISHING VILLAGE

VIBRANT COSMOPOLITAN CITY

Heh, well... there were still many **slums**, and a lot of other problems that needed to be tackled, from **housing** to **health**!

If I **exaggerate** a little, it's only for **effect** to drive the point home!

Are you saying that some of the exhibits here are **not exactly TRUTHFUL**?!

No, no, no, no, no! What I am saying is that everything we do, we do for good **REASON**!!!

But you know, what we **really** need to deal with are **REAL** problems, like the **moral degeneration** of our country, resulting from the pernicious influences of **Westernisation**!!

Wouldn't some say that, in order for Singapore's economy to grow through cutting edge technology and ideas, we'd need to have **cultural openness** as well?

Ah, but you see, we **don't**! Because we can always look to our ancestral history, to **CONFUCIUS**, for guidance!

CONFUSCIUS

孔子

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But... isn't Confucius from **China**? What about the Indians, Malays, Eurasians...?

Ah... ha ha! Let's just call it **ASIAN VALUES** then! We all share them as Asians, after all!

But you know, I **do** understand what you're saying!

You **do**?

Yes! We need to be **more inclusive** to ensure that the people won't feel alienated, and start voting for **opposition parties**!

Which is why the **next** part of the exhibition here presents **alternative views** that differ somewhat from the official Singapore Story!

I'm afraid I don't see anything!

Really? It's right over **here**!

Isn't that... a little **small**?

All it takes is a little **effort**! That's the problem, see! People just can't be **bothered**!

But isn't all the **apathy** and **indifference** a consequence of the government **cracking down** on activism in the media, schools, and civil society?

Sigh... it just goes to show that we need a **firm hand** to lead this country!

REMEMBER! Without the **P.A.P.**, Singapore would **SINK BACK** into the **FISHING VILLAGE MUD**!!

This is Wang Sha Sha, bidding you all farewell from the National Museum...

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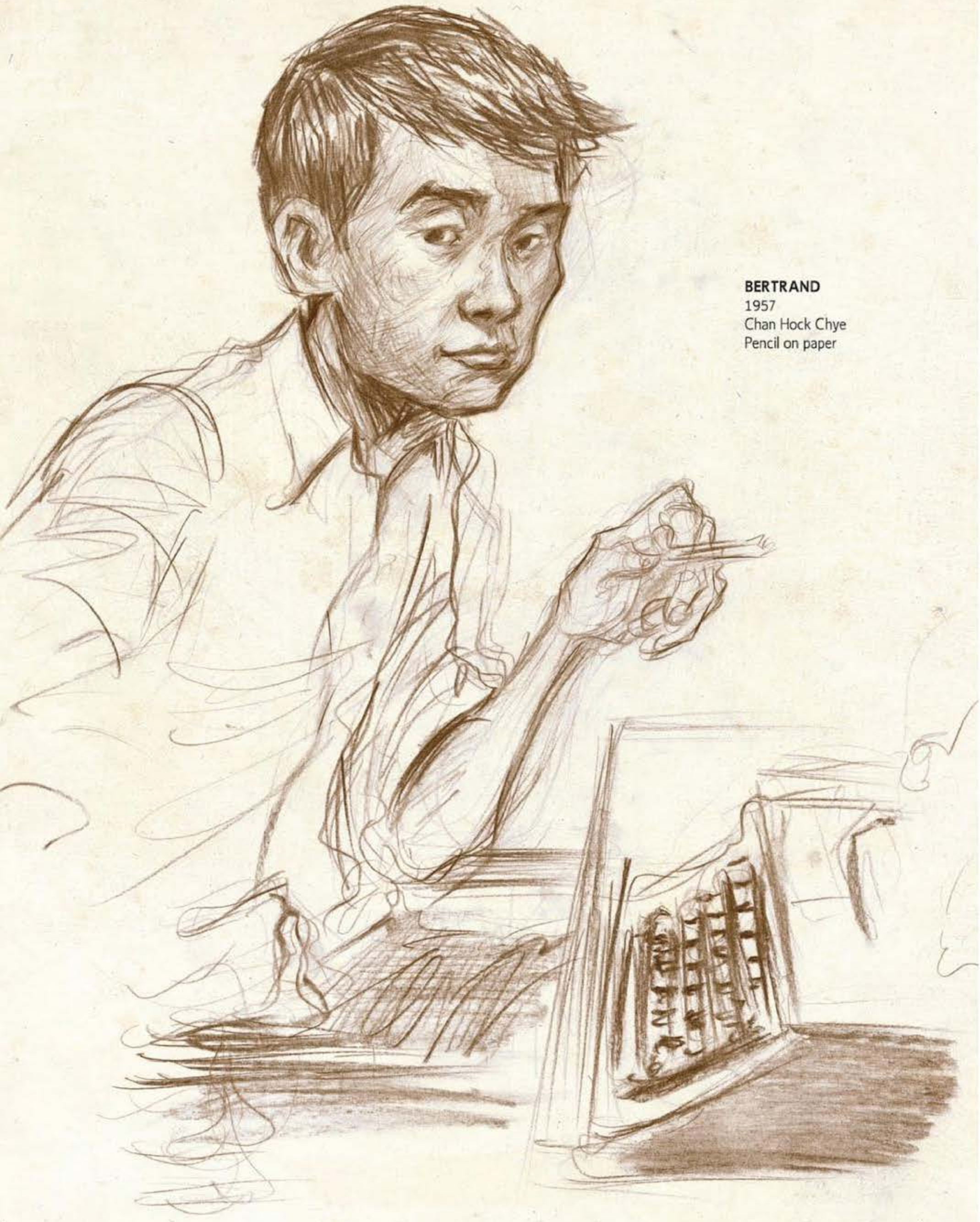

BERTRAND
1957
Chan Hock Chye
Pencil on paper

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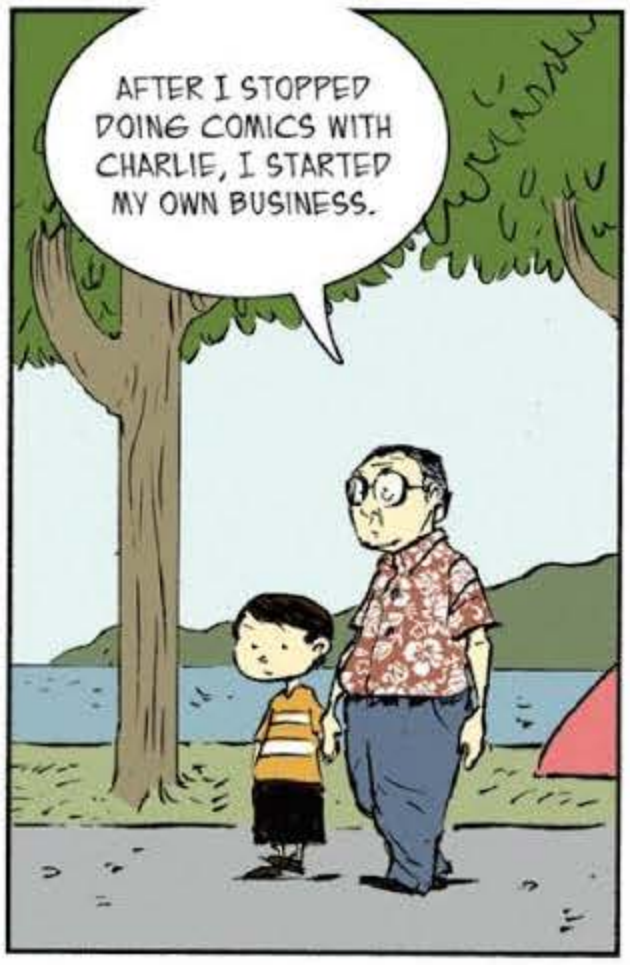

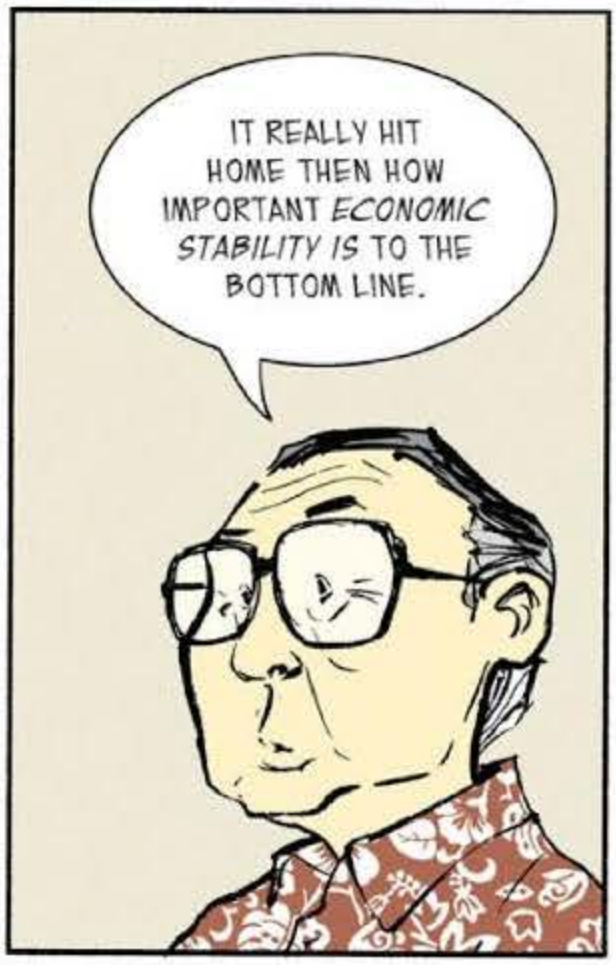

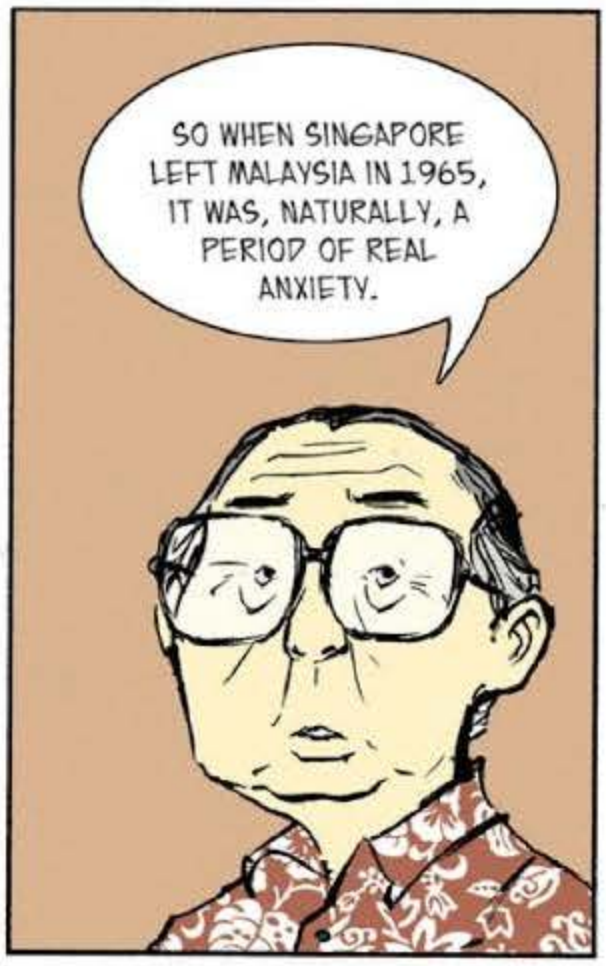

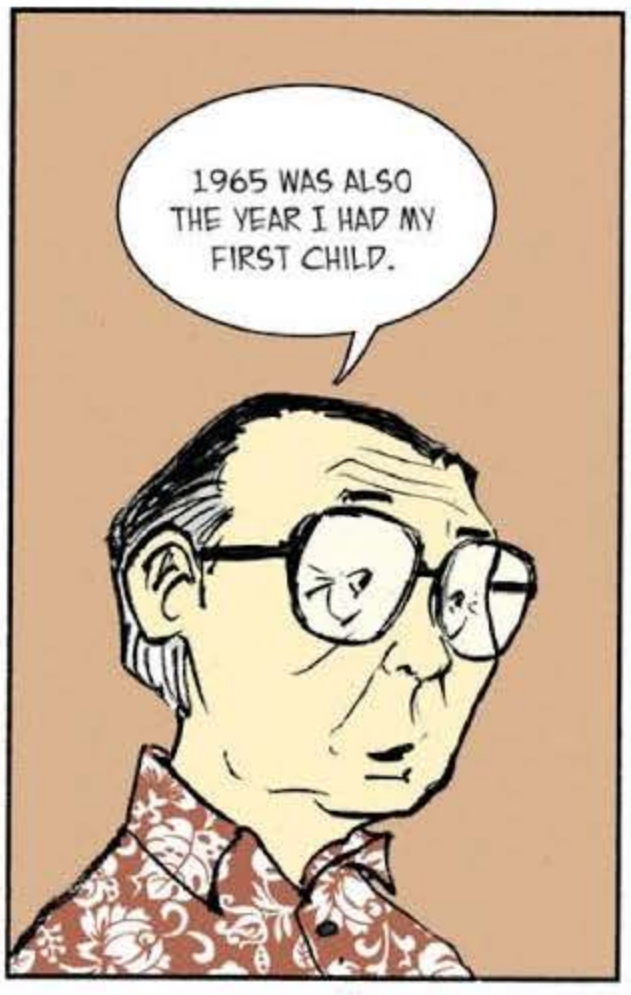

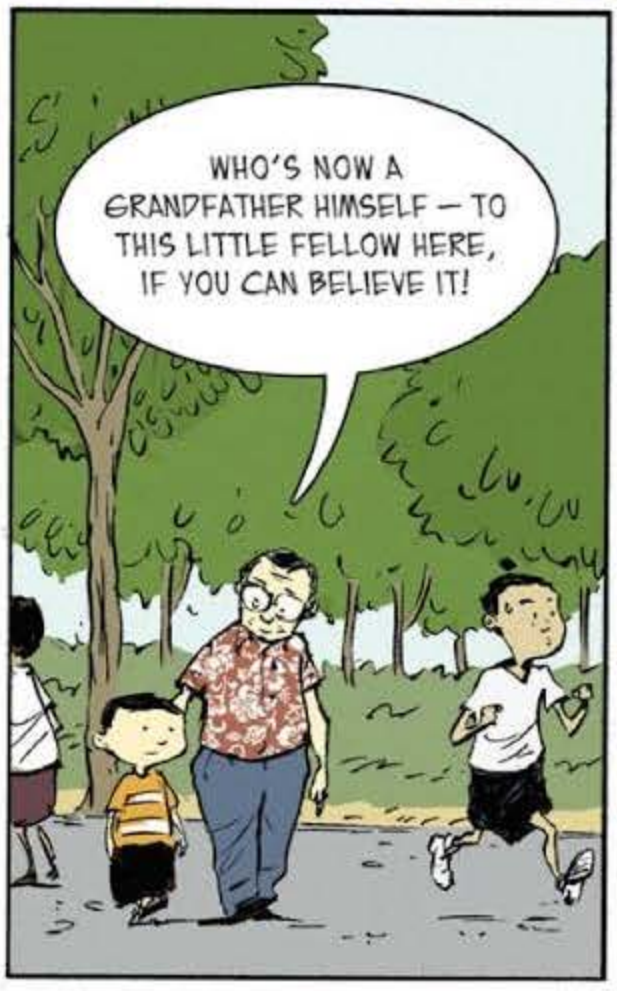

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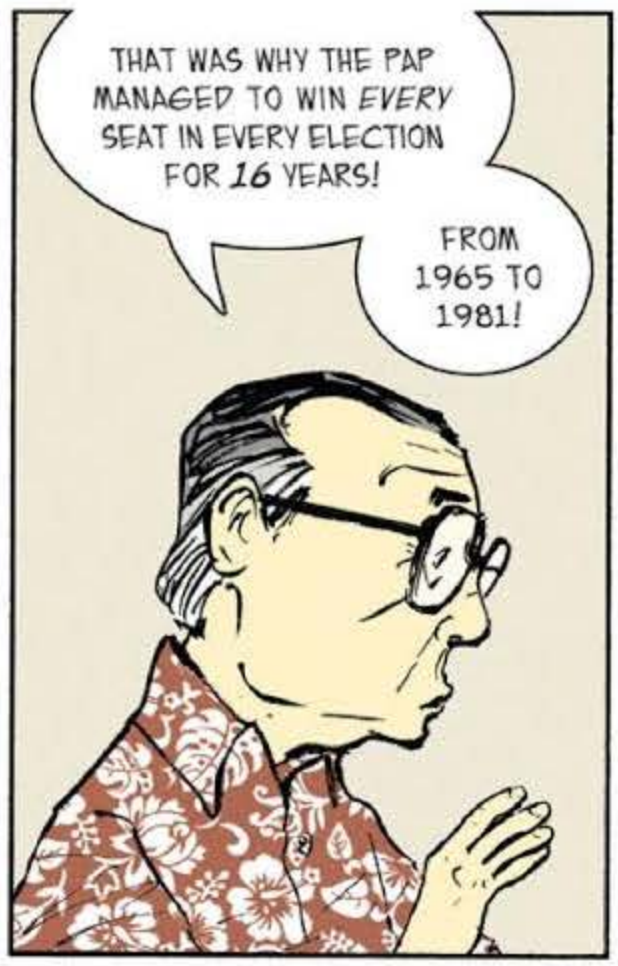

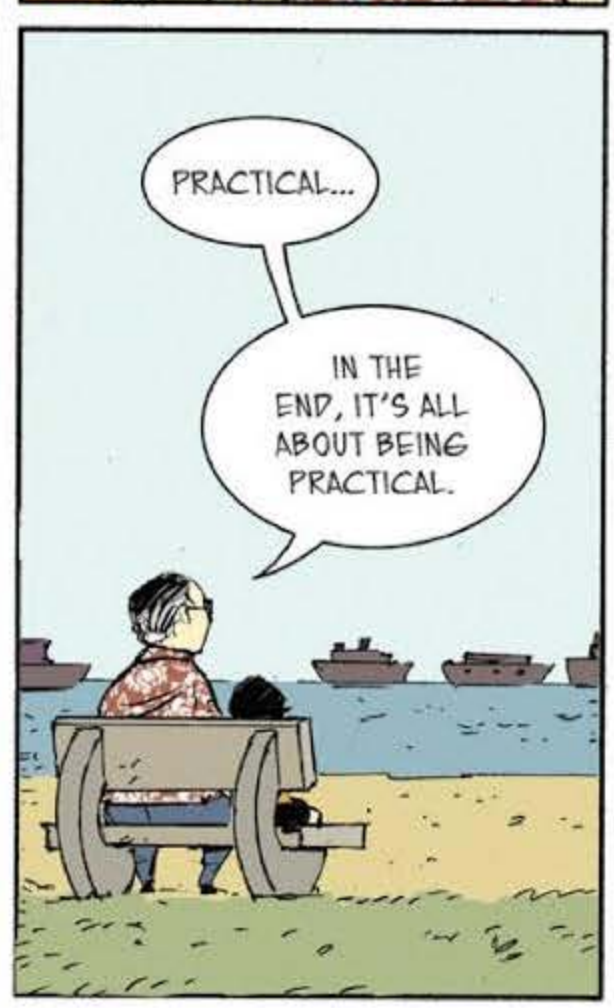

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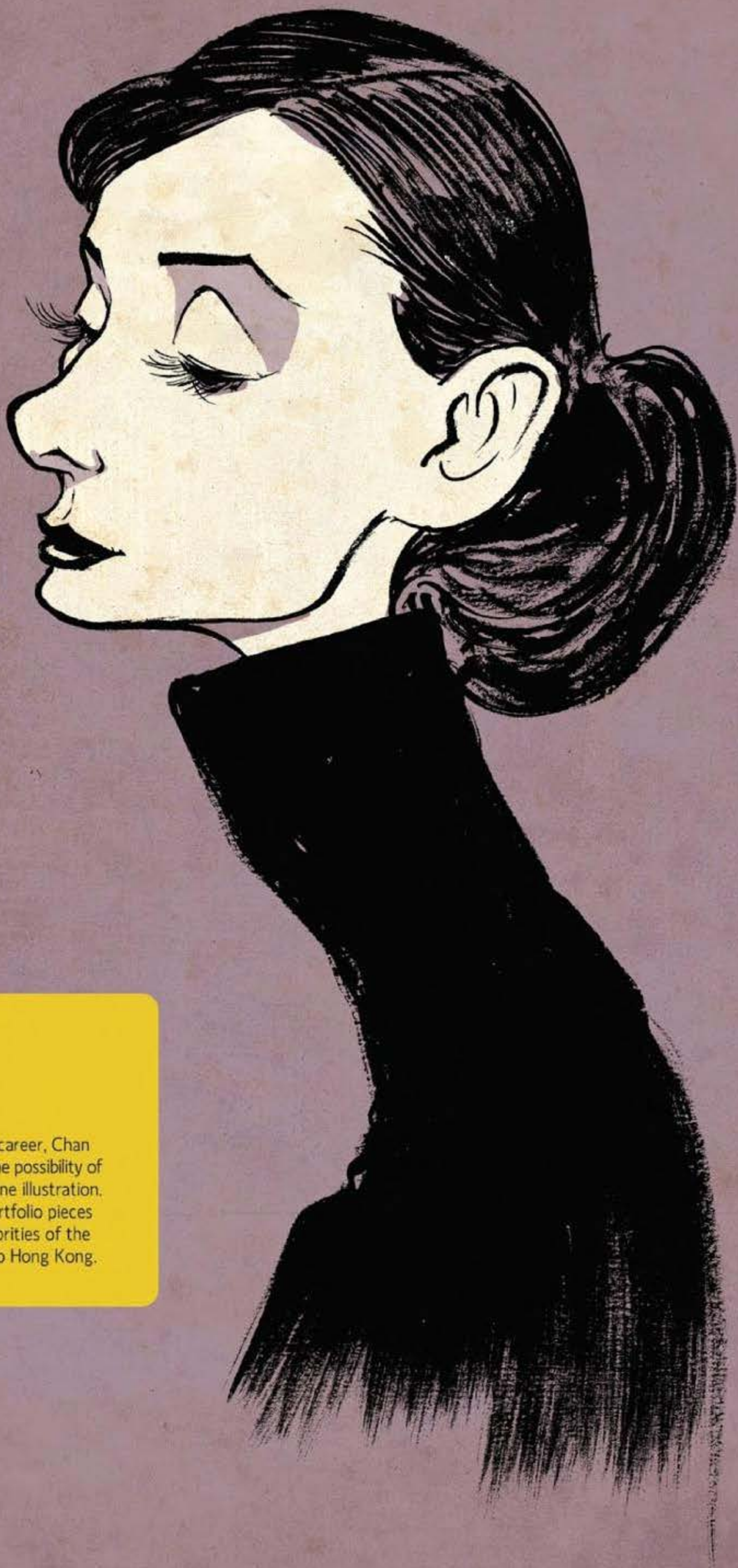

AUDREY HEPBURN
1965
Chan Hock Chye
Mixed media

At a crossroads in his career, Chan began contemplating the possibility of finding work in magazine illustration. He started creating portfolio pieces that featured the celebrities of the day, from Hollywood to Hong Kong.

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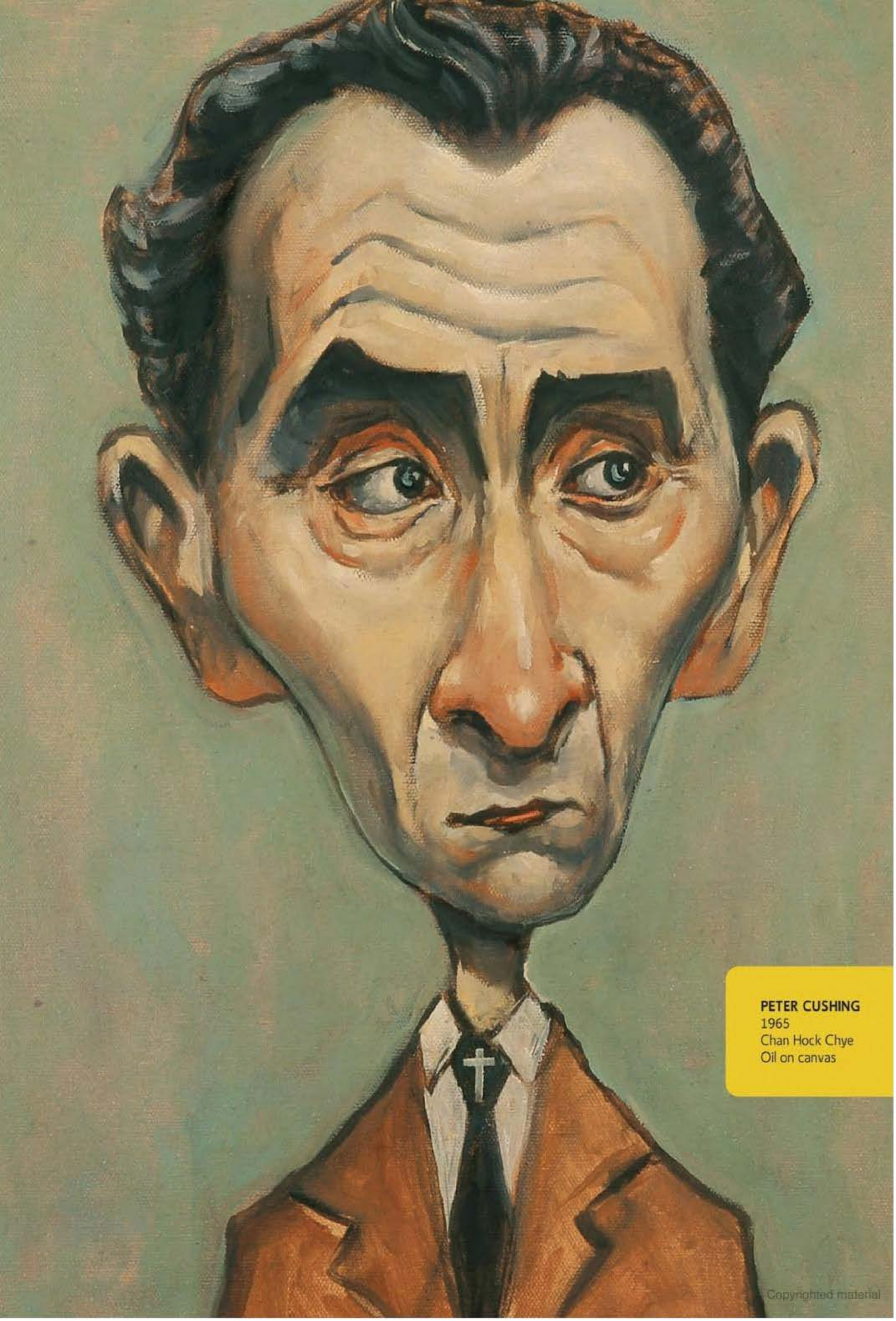

PETER CUSHING
1965
Chan Hock Chye
Oil on canvas

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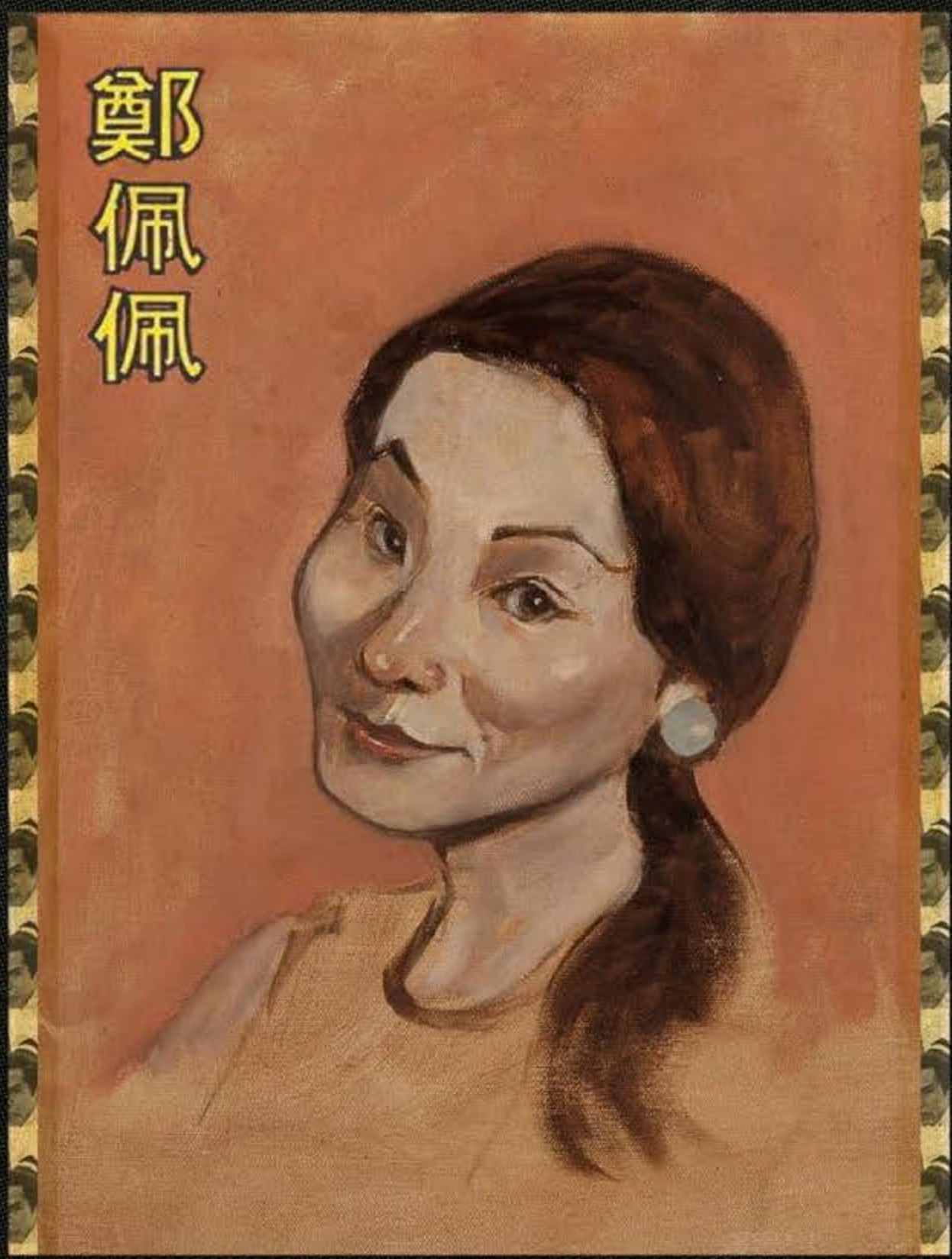
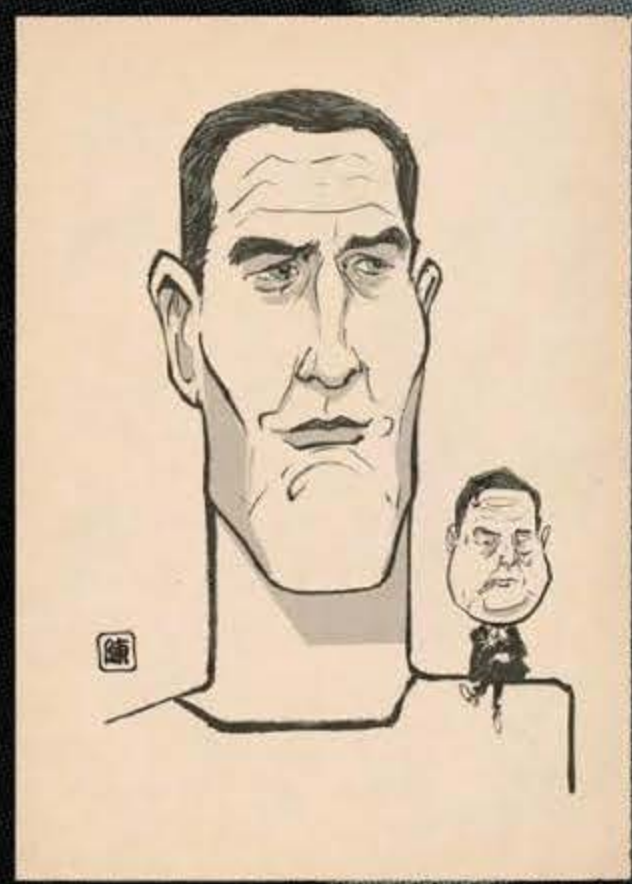
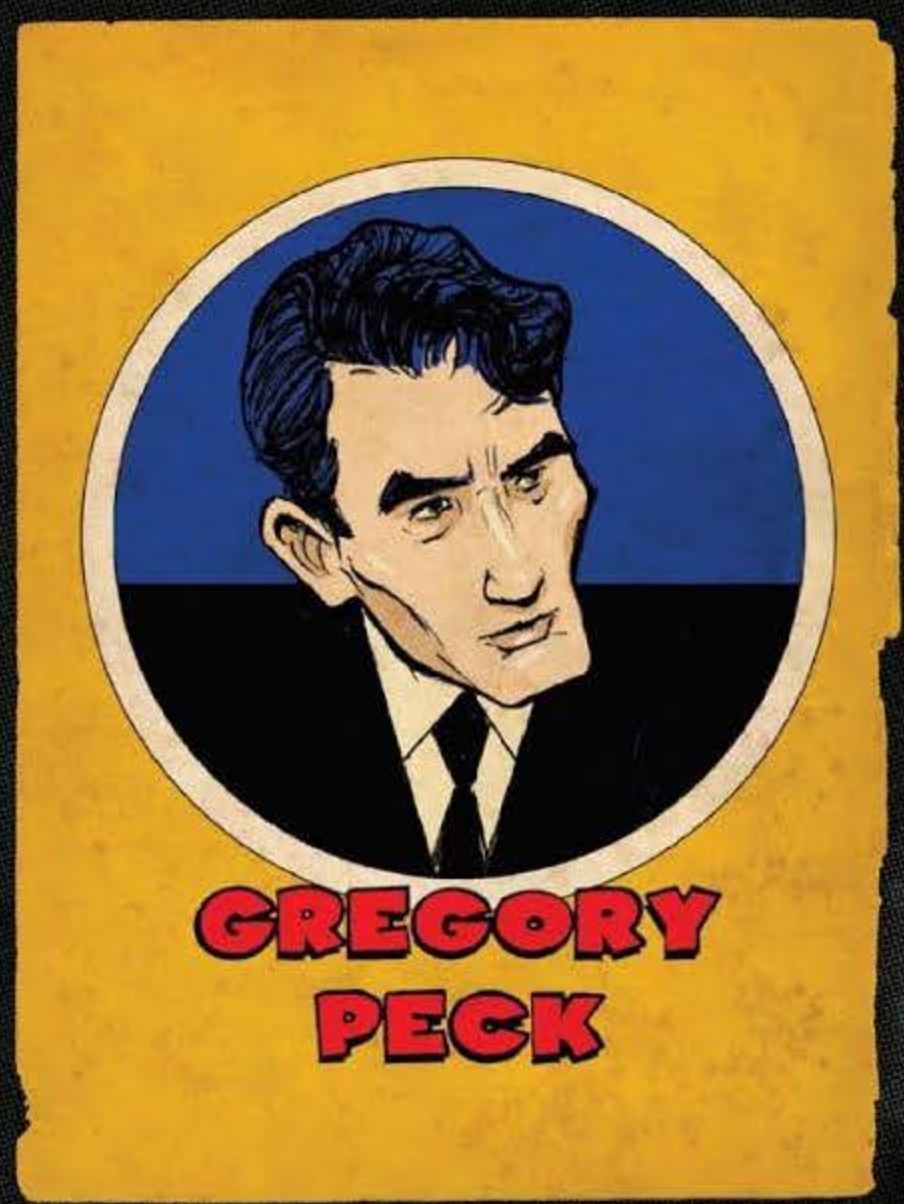
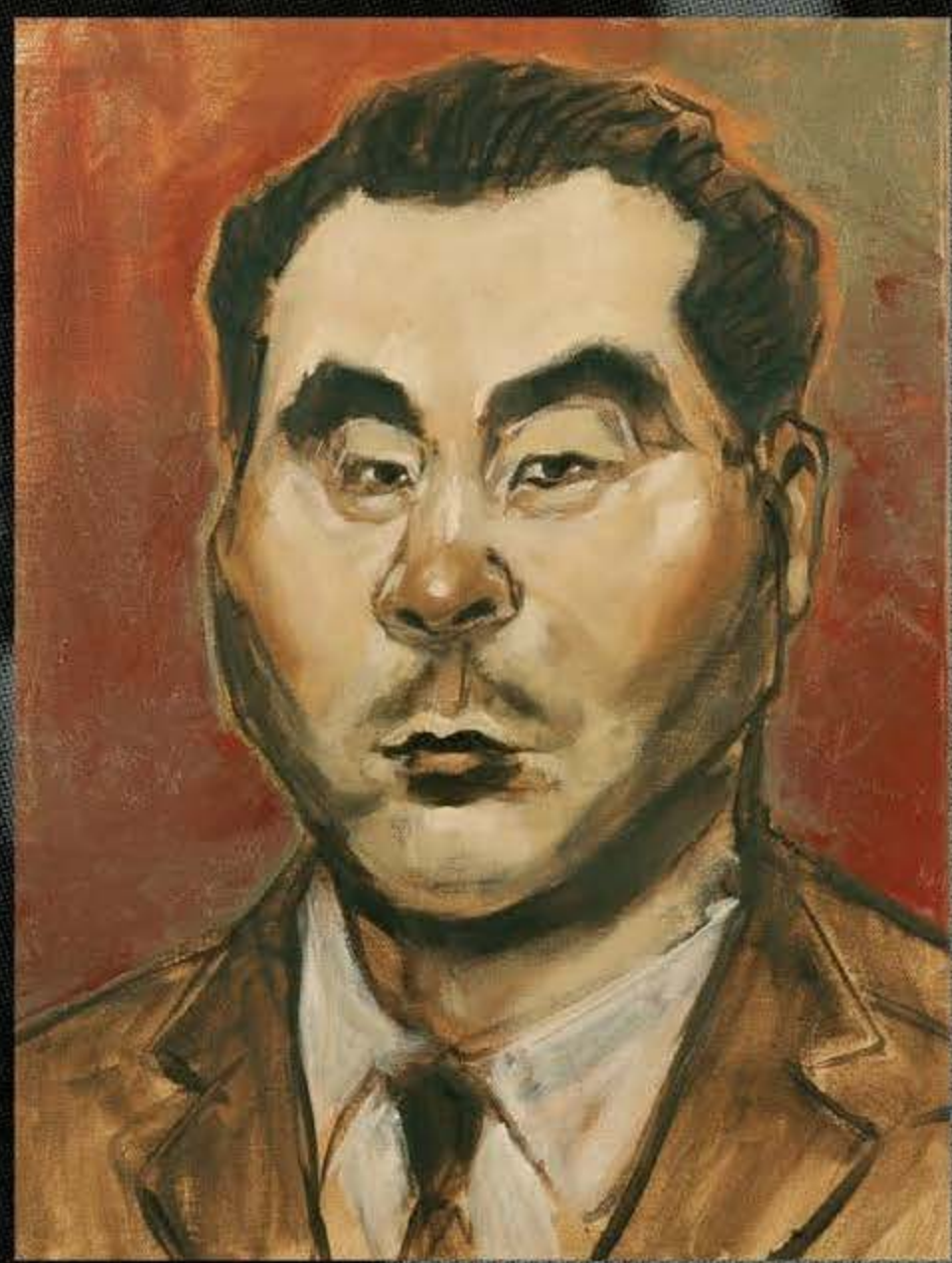
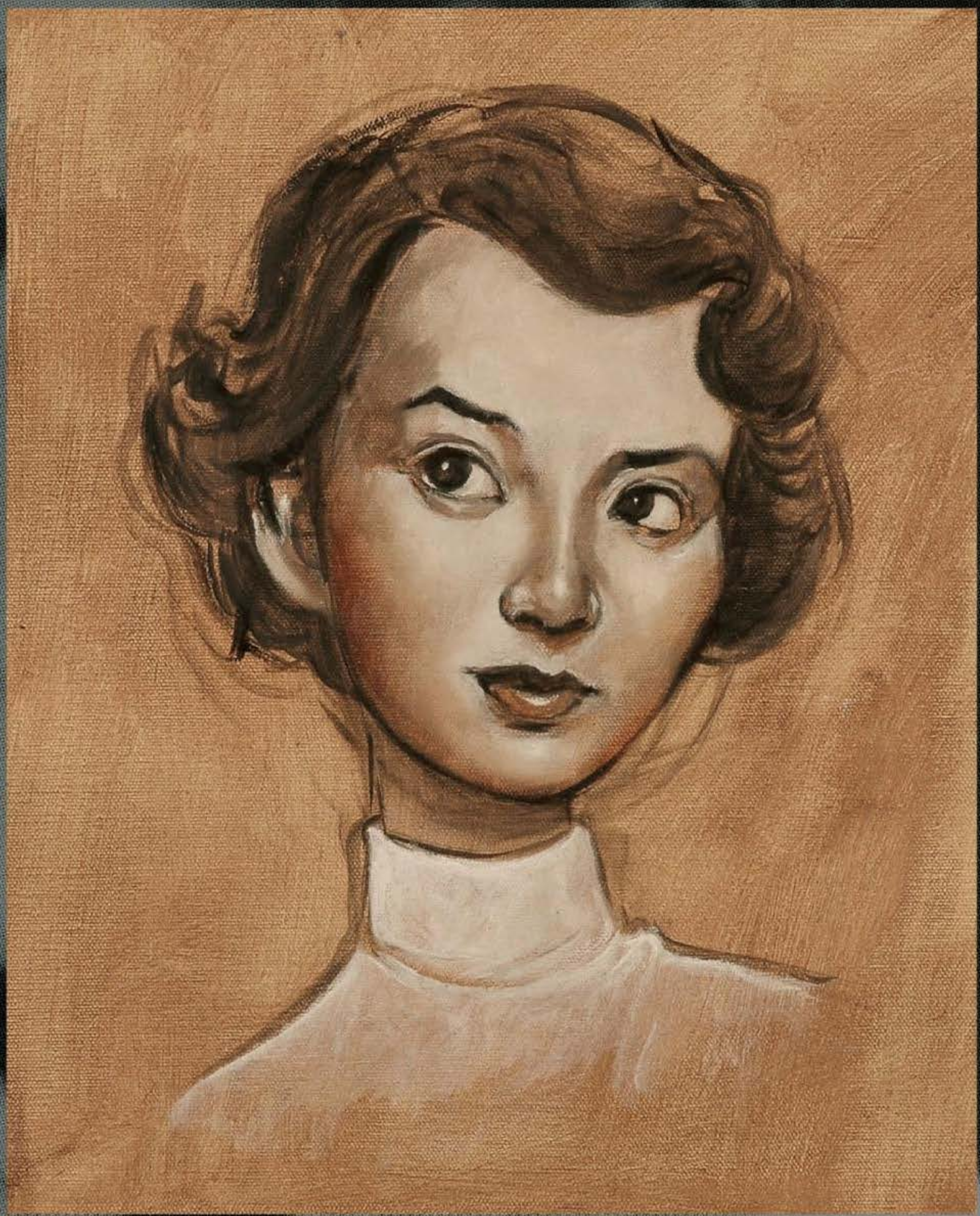


This page (clockwise from top left)
CHENG PEI-PEI, PAUL NEWMAN & JACKIE GLEASON, ROY CHIAO AND GREGORY PECK
1965
Chan Hock Chye
Various media









Above

YU MING

1965

Chan Hock Chye

Oil on canvas

Lucilla Yu Ming was a Hong Kong film star from the 1950s to 1960s, whose visits to Singapore would always attract huge, rapturous crowds. Chan says that he was often struck by how much the actress reminded him of Lily.

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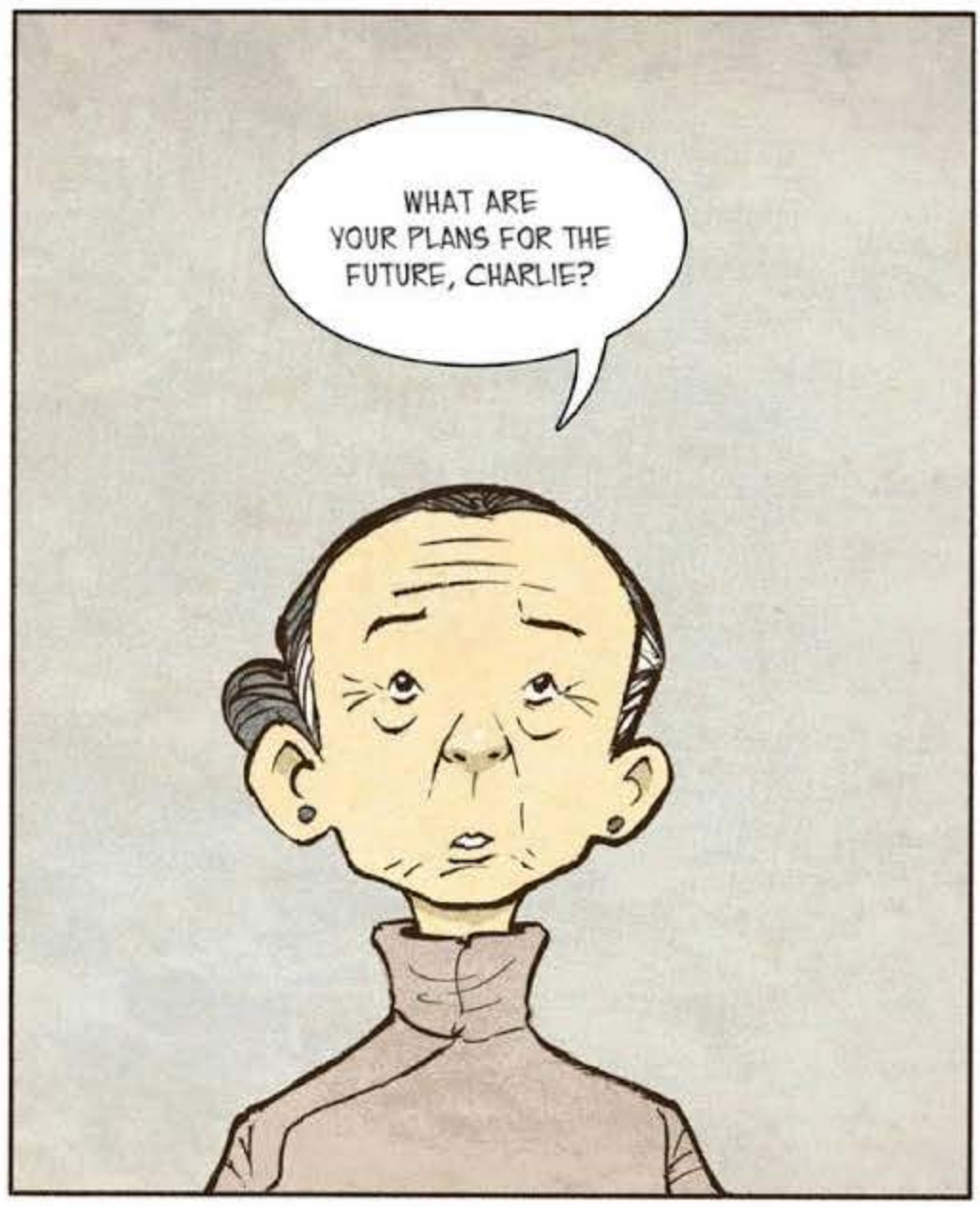
VINCENT PRICE (1965) | Chan Hock Chye | Mixed media

Ultimately, though, Chan felt that he did not possess the requisite passion for a career in commercial illustration, and decided to continue pursuing his dreams of being a comics artist.



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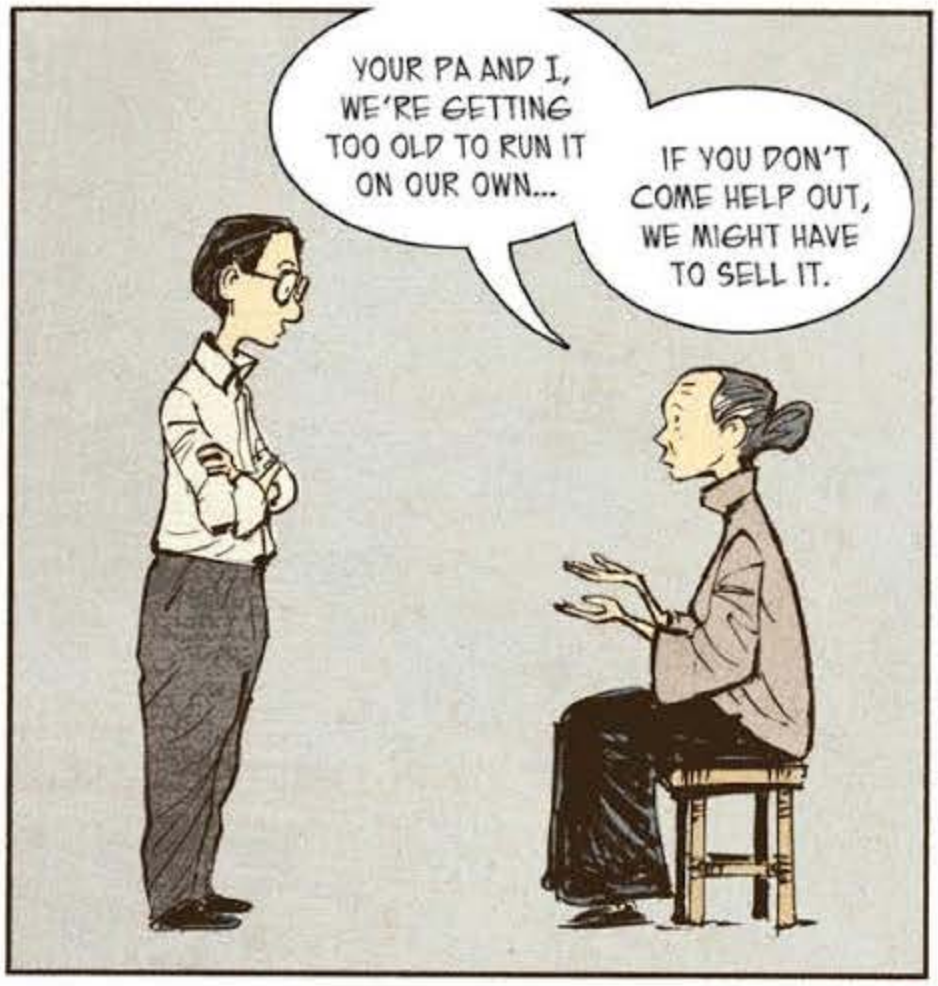

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The Night Watchman

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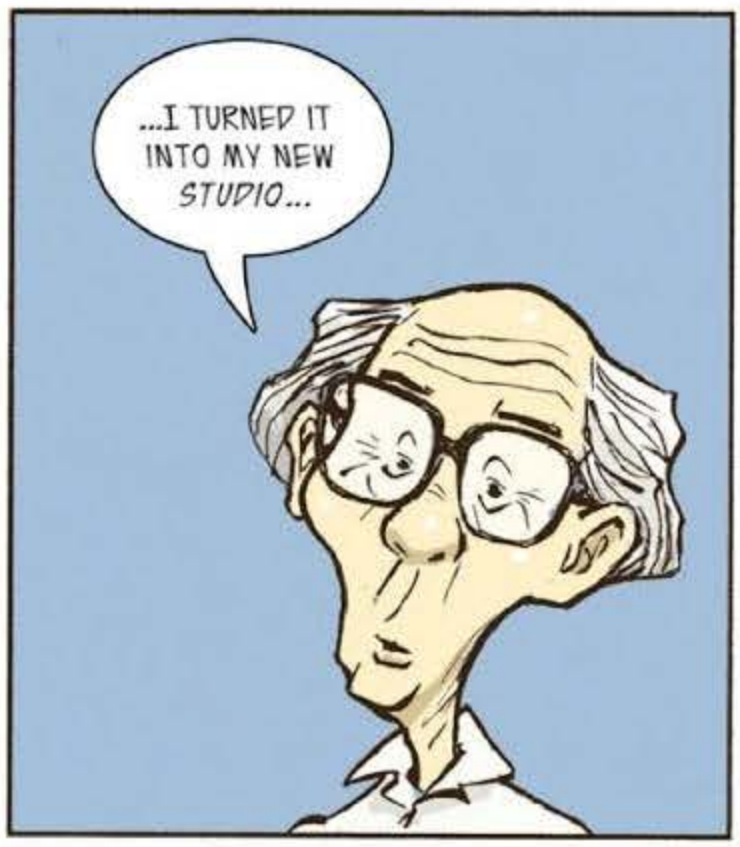

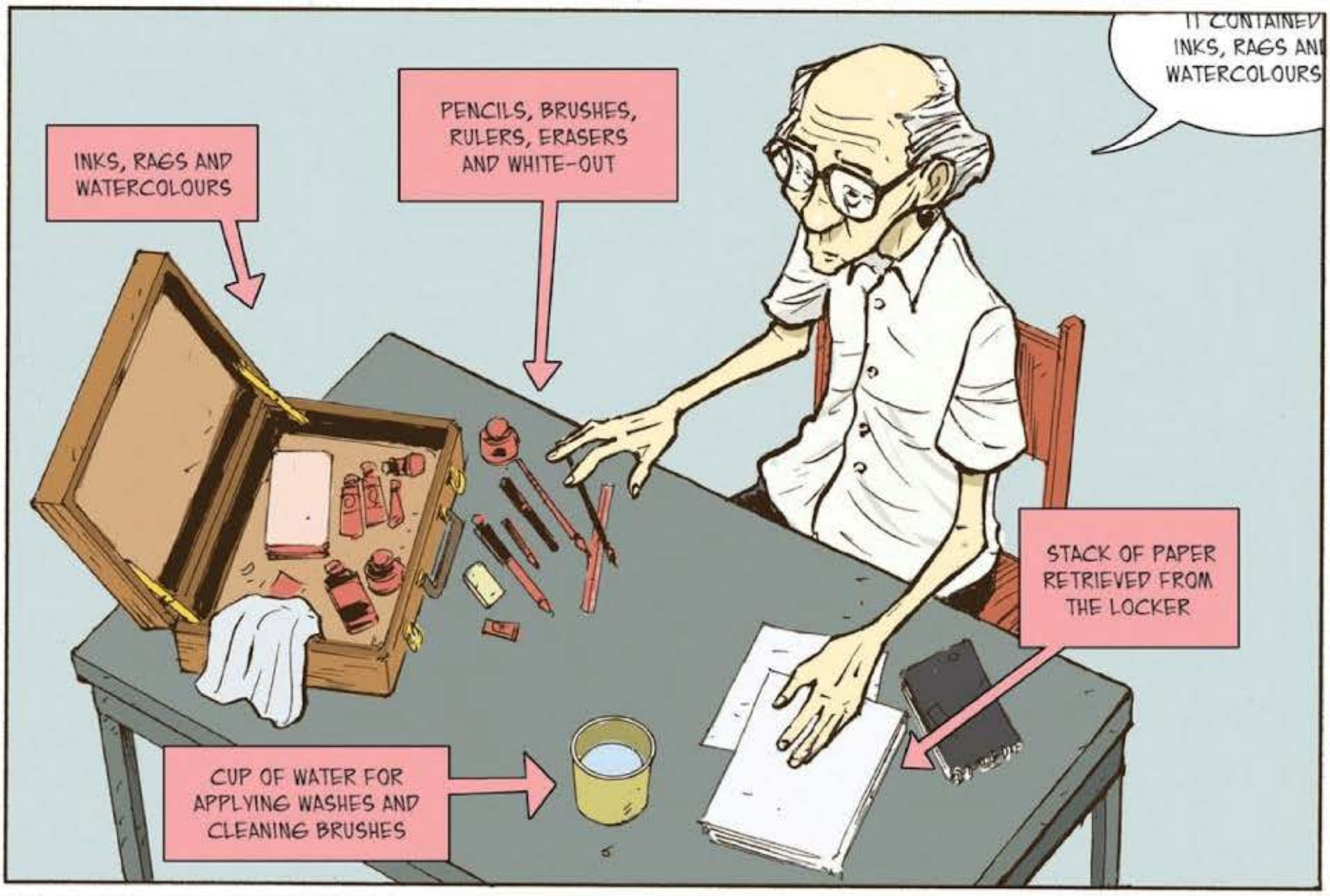

*GOVERNMENT-ASSISTED RENTAL HOUSING

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Above **SINKAPOR INKS Pencilled Page** (1988) | Chan Hock Chye

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PRIME MINISTER
1970
Chan Hock Chye
Oil on canvas

Copyrighted material

SINKAPOR INKS STATIONERY & SUPPLIES

Above & following **SINKAPOR INKS: STATIONERY & SUPPLIES Book 3** (1983) | Chan Hock Chye | Unpublished

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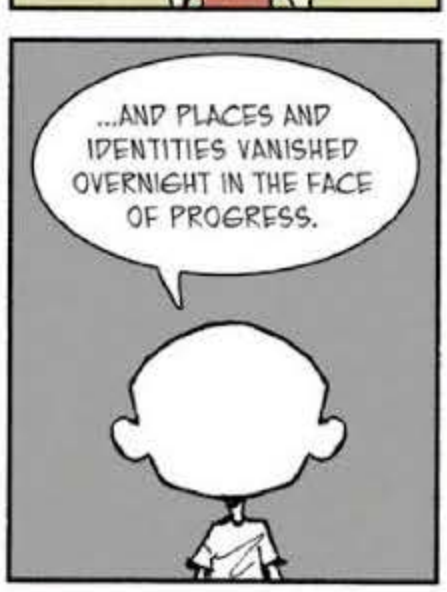
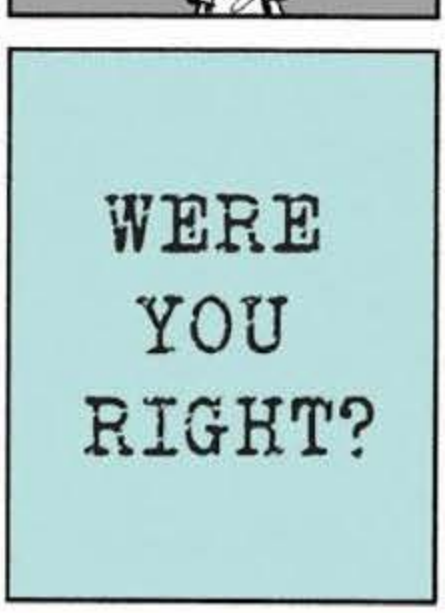
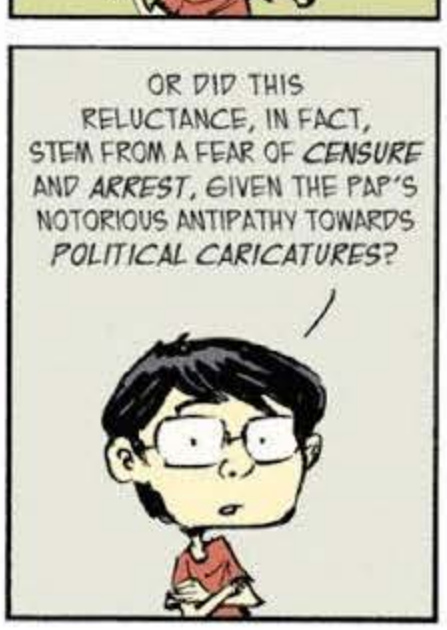
ERASER by Sonny Liew (After "Talking Heads" by Chan Hock Chye)

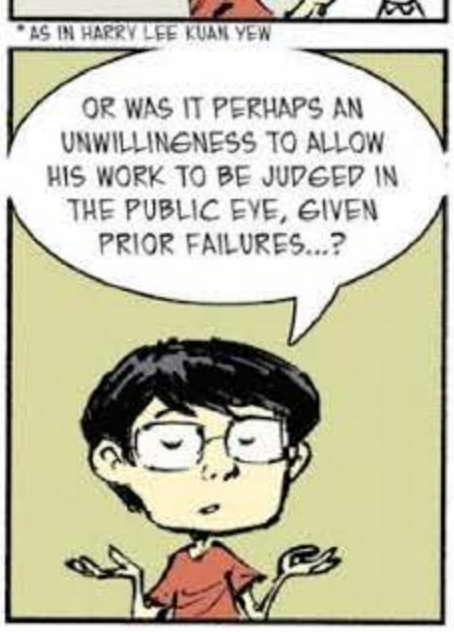
* MALAY: VILLAGE

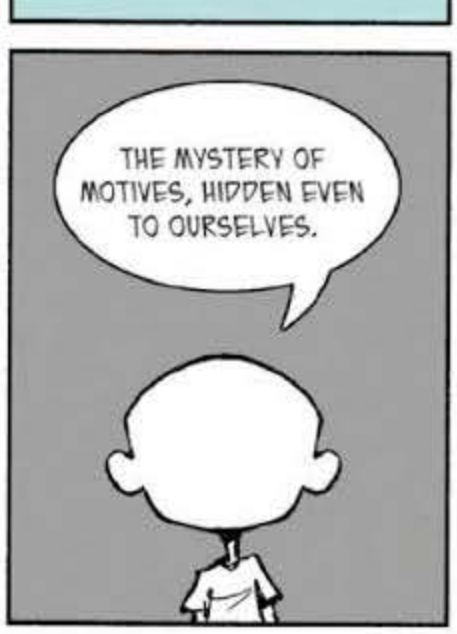




* AS IN HARRY LEE KUAN YEW







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SO, MR. SO-AND-SO, DO YOU KNOW ***WHY*** YOU HAVE BEEN HAULED UP HERE?

ER...

BECAUSE WE ARE A ***MULTI-COATED, MULTI-COLOURED, MULTI-ALGORITHMIC*** COMPANY THAT MIGHT ***EXPLODE*** IN INTER-DEPARTMENTAL CONFLICT AT ANY TIME!!

SO WHEN YOU USE ***OUR*** NEWSLETTER TO WRITE ABOUT THINGS OF ***A SENSITIVE NATURE***...

IT MAKES ME *VERY* ***CONCERNED*** ABOUT YOUR *MOTIVATIONS.*

I... I WAS ONLY REPORTING ON THE FEEDBACK WE'D GOTTEN FROM OUR CUSTOMERS...

LET ME TELL YOU A ***STORY!***

THE ***SINKAPOR INKS STORY©!***

WHEN I FIRST TOOK OVER THIS COMPANY, ALL WE HAD WERE ***SLEEPY FISHES*** IN THE FISH TANKS!

...AND ***NONE*** OF OUR RIVALS WOULD'VE HESITATED TO ***CUT OFF*** OUR FINGERNAILS!

THIS STRIP WAS BASED ON THE EXPERIENCES OF CHINESE-LANGUAGE NEWSPAPERS IN THE 1970S...

...WHICH WERE FACING A CRACKDOWN FOLLOWING THEIR PROTESTS OVER THE STATE OF CHINESE *CULTURE* AND *EDUCATION* IN SINGAPORE.

WHICH *WERE,* IN FACT, IN SERIOUS DECLINE...

...PARTLY AS A RESULT OF THE GOVERNMENT'S FOCUS ON *ENGLISH* EDUCATION AS A MEANS OF DEVELOPING A WORKFORCE ATTRACTIVE TO FOREIGN BUSINESSES.

ANY QUESTIONS?

NOPE.

Copyrighted material

BUT WITH THE HELP OF *A FEW GOOD MEN*, WE'VE BECOME ONE OF THE BEST-RUN, MOST EFFICIENT, AND *EXCEPTIONALLY PROFITABLE* STATIONERY WHOLESALE COMPANIES!

TODAY, *HUNDREDS* OF EMPLOYEES DEPEND ON *ME* TO MAKE SURE THAT THEY CAN AFFORD TO BUY THE THINGS THEY WANT TO BUY!

SO IF *ANYONE* TRIES TO UNDERMINE THIS COMPANY, THERE IS *ONLY ONE PLACE* FOR THEM TO GO!

NOOOOOO... NOT THE JANITOR'S CLOSET!!!

SORRY, BIG BOSS SAYS SO.

JANITOR

Copyrighted material

BUT... HOW LONG DO I HAVE TO STAY IN HERE??
JANITOR
ONE NEVER CAN TELL.
WH...WHO'S T...THAT???
TYPO. CHIA TYPO.
MR. CHIA! I THOUGHT YOU'D RETIRED!
NO LAH.
HELLO.
WAIT... JUST HOW MANY PEOPLE ARE THERE IN HERE?!
A FEW, LAH.
ALLO.
HEY THERE.
HI.
SO... HOW CAN WE GET OUT OF THIS CLOSET?!
YOU HAVE TO
GIVE A SPEECH
IN FRONT OF
ALL AND SUNDRY
ADMIT THAT
YOU'VE BEEN WORKING
FOR COMPETITORS
TO UNDERMINE AND TAKE OVER
THE COMPANY
BUT I WAS JUST REPORTING ON GENUINE CONSUMER FEEDBACK!
HA-HAHA
HA
AH, SWEET
SWEET
NAIVETY

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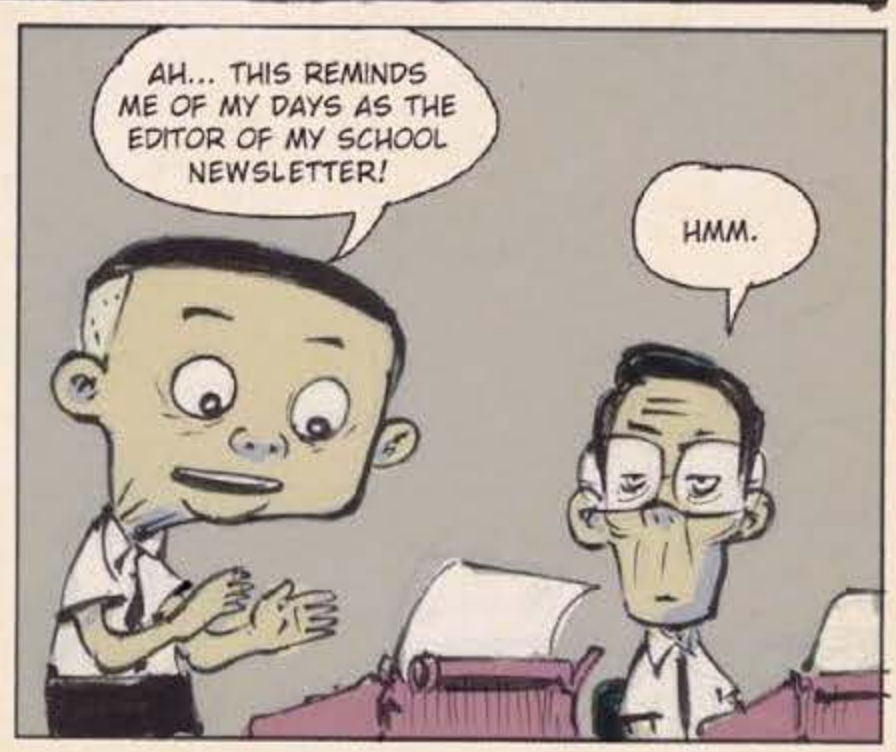

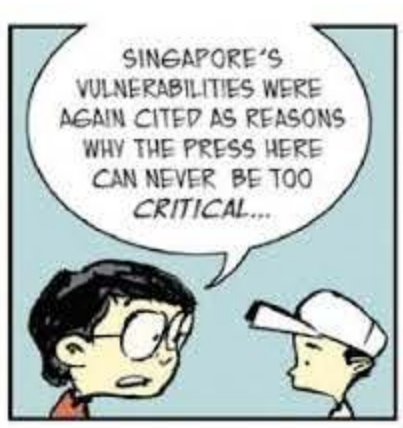

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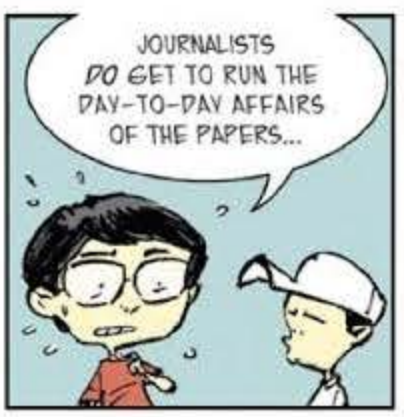

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BUT, *SIR*... IF THERE SHOULD BE ANY *ISSUES* OR *PROBLEMS* WITH THE POLICIES...

...SURELY RAISING THEM IN AN *OPEN* AND *CONSTRUCTIVE* MANNER CAN ONLY *HELP* THE COMPANY TO MAKE THE BEST DECISIONS?

MR. TAN... PERHAPS THAT IS WHAT YOU'VE BEEN TAUGHT AT YOUR *STUDENT* NEWSPAPER... BUT LET ME TELL YOU A *STORY*...

THE *SINKAPOR INKS STORY*©!

SEVERAL MINUTES LATER...

...AND SO YOU SEE, SINKAPOR INKS IS A TRULY *UNIQUE* COMPANY!

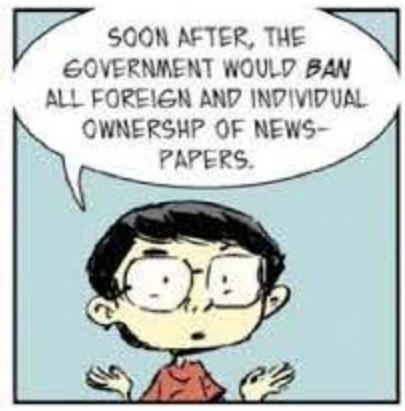
AND OUR NEWSLETTER MUST ALWAYS REFLECT ITS *SPECIAL NEEDS* AND *CIRCUMSTANCES*. OTHERWISE, MANAGEMENT WON'T BE ABLE TO RUN THINGS *EFFICIENTLY*!

HMM... MAYBE I CAN DO A NEWSLETTER OF *MY OWN* ON THE SIDE...

YOU'VE GOT IT, SIR!

WHAT'S THE POINT IN JUST *PARROTING* WHAT THE BOSSES SAY??

I'LL CALL IT... THE *SINKAPOR HERALD*!



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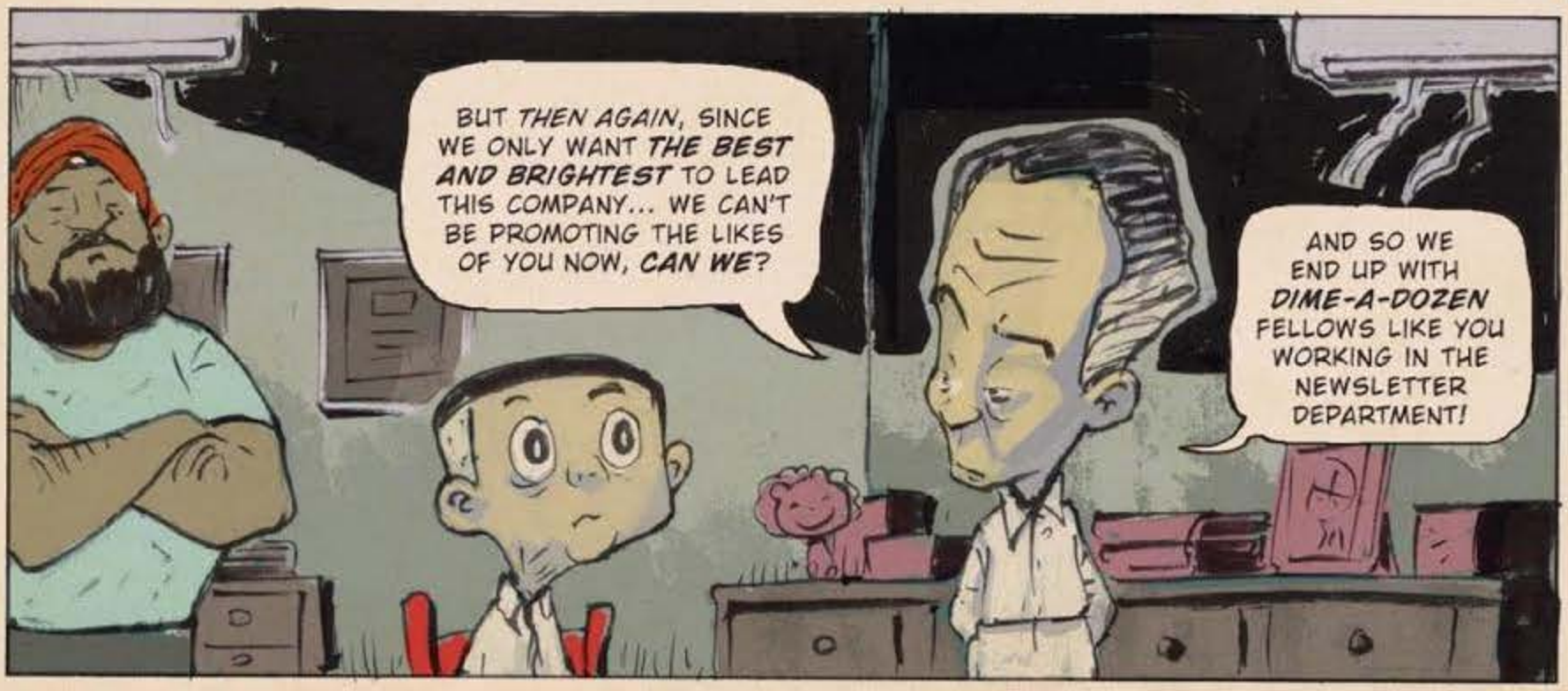

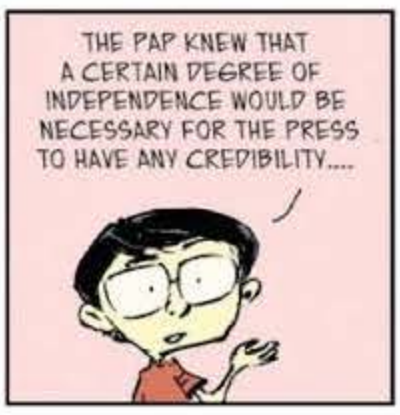

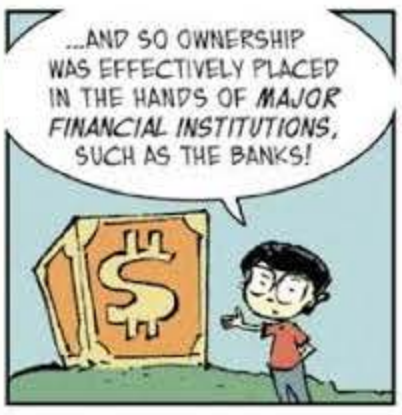

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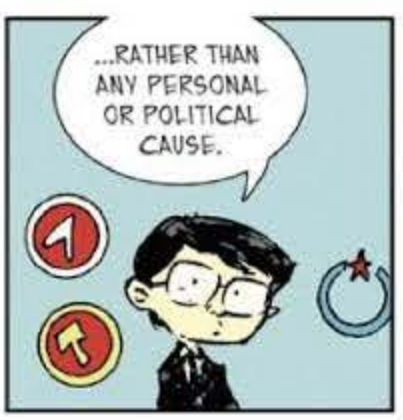

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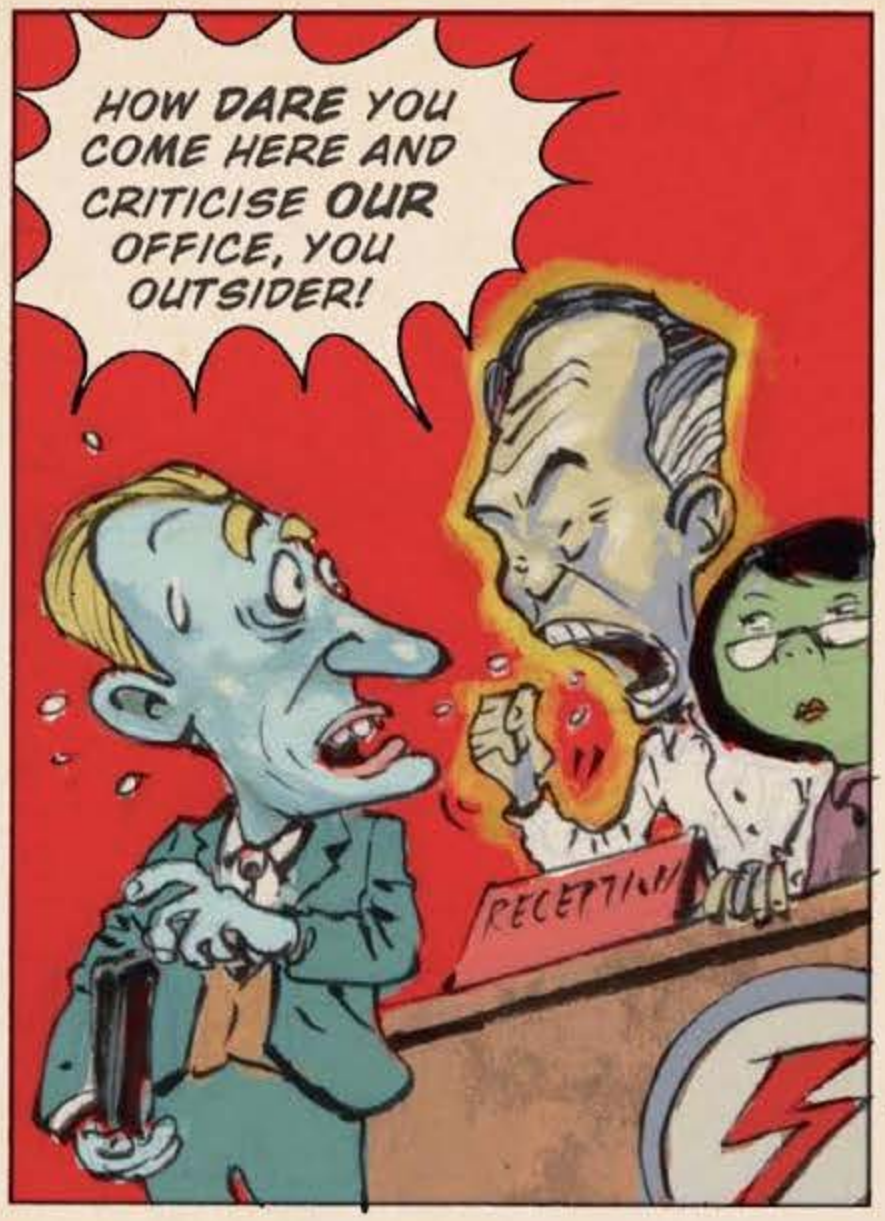

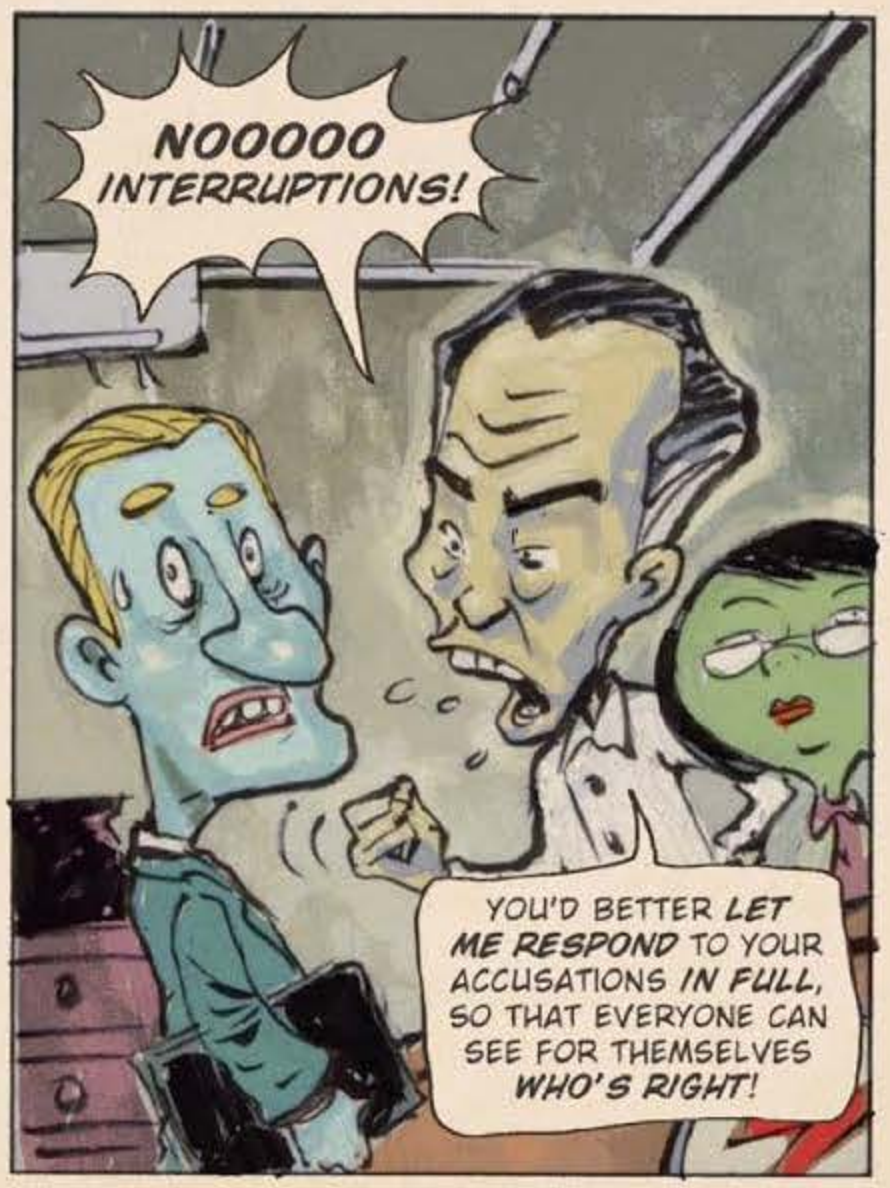

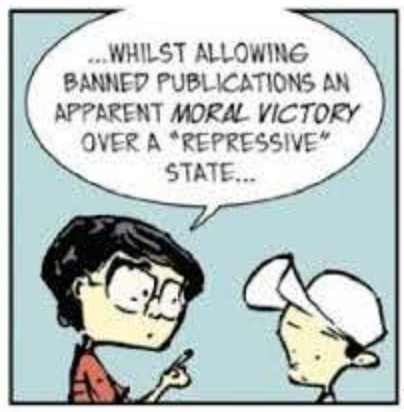

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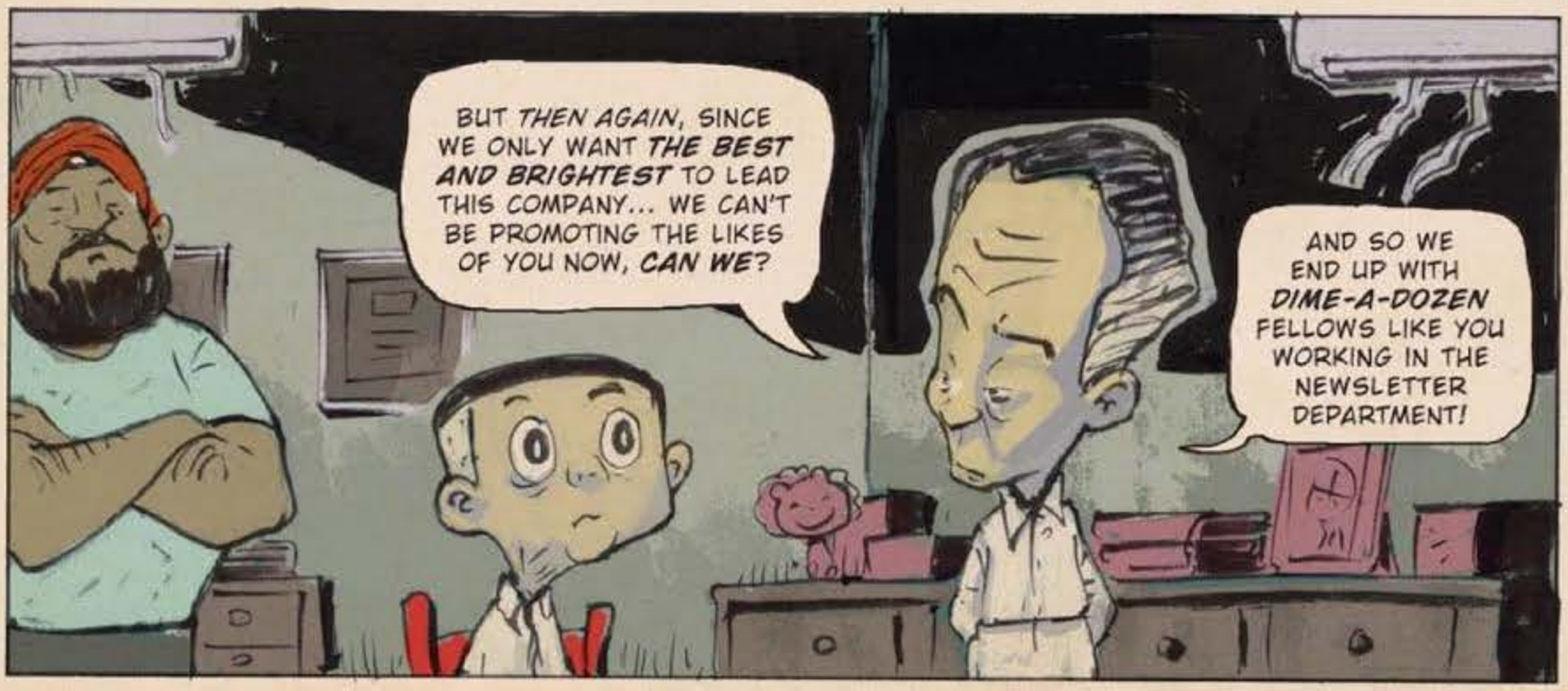

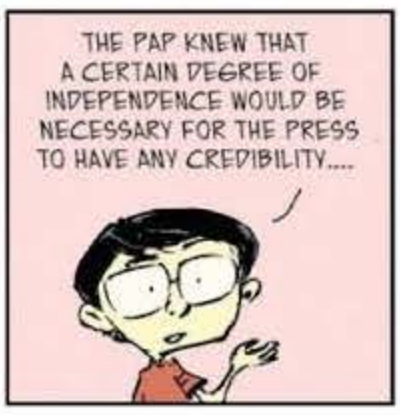

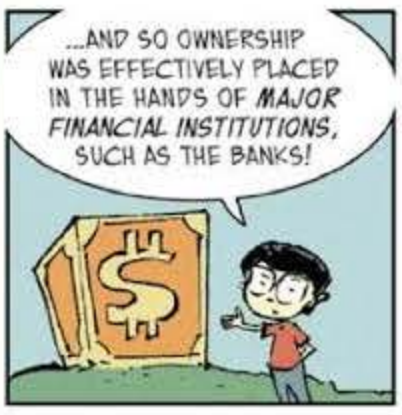

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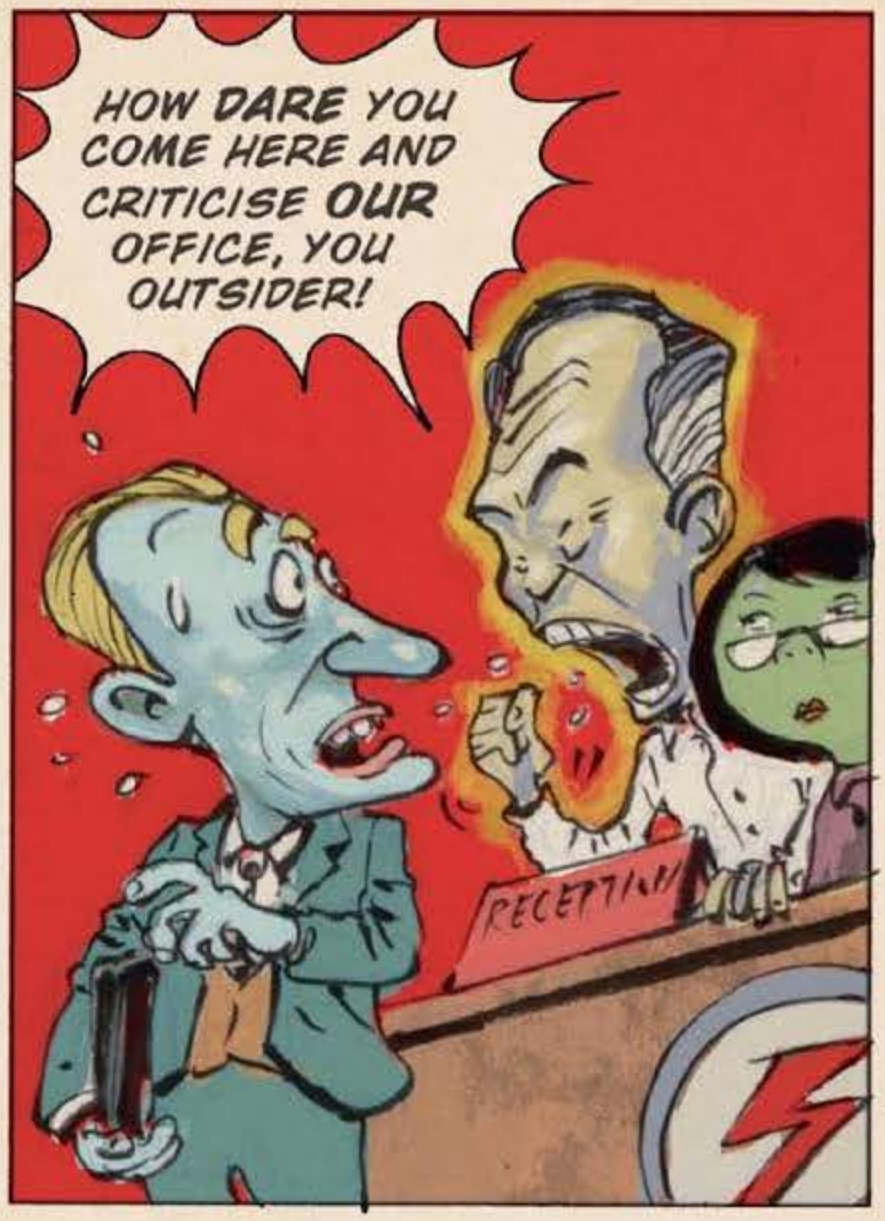

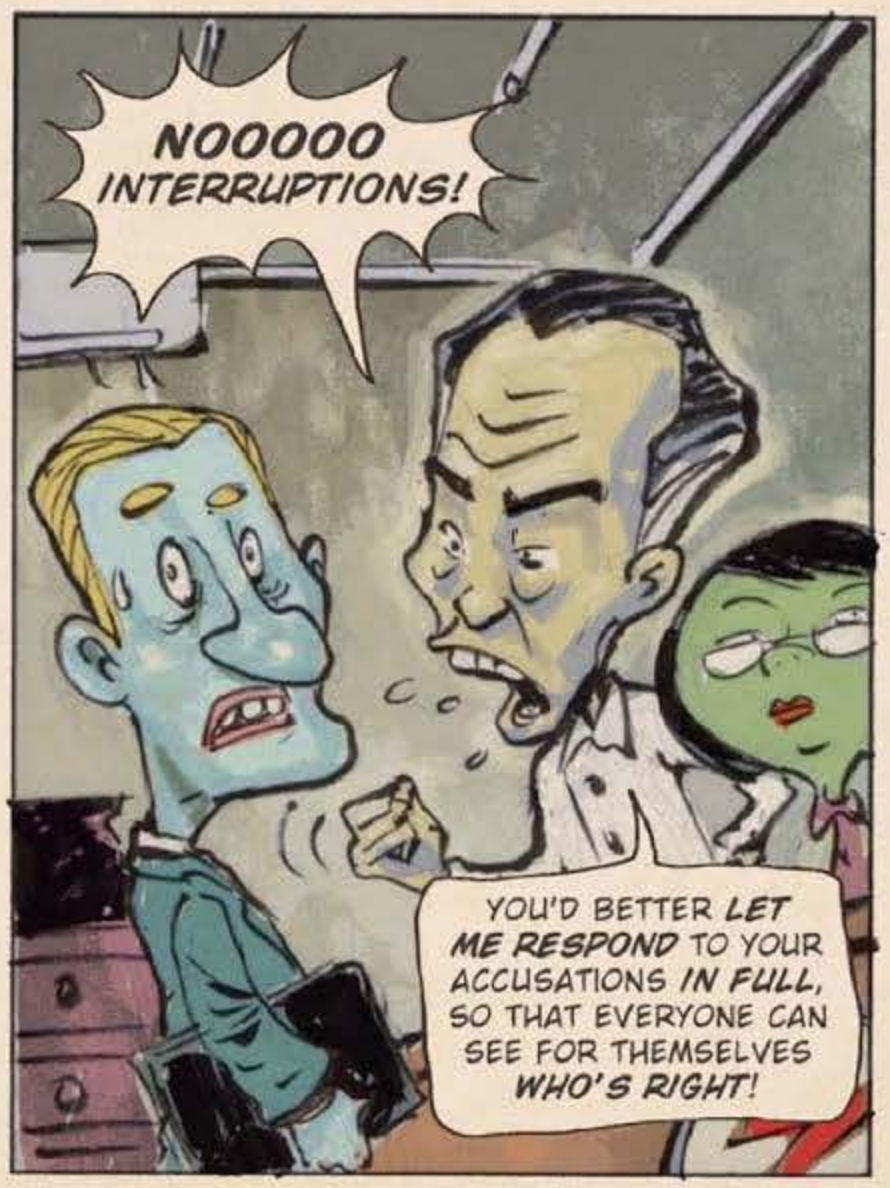

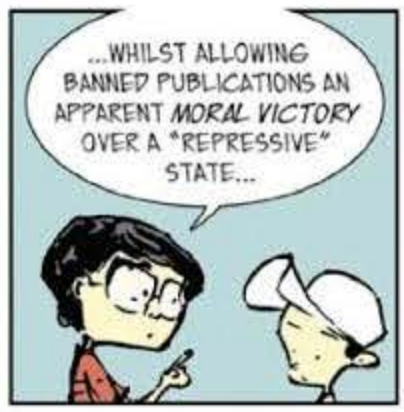

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LOOK, I REALLY DON'T HAVE TO LISTEN TO ANY—

OH, YES YOU DO! OTHERWISE, YOU'D CLEARLY BE MEDDLING IN OUR INTERNAL AFFAIRS!

ISN'T THAT RIGHT, MR. FU?

YES, BOSS! OF COURSE, BOSS!

ARE YOU TELLING ME THAT YOUR WORKERS DON'T EVEN HAVE THE RIGHT TO KNOW IF THEIR OFFICE NEEDS A FRESH COAT OF PAINT??

HA! DO YOU HONESTLY EXPECT ME TO BELIEVE THAT IT'S MY WORKERS' RIGHTS YOU REALLY CARE ABOUT?

YOU'RE JUST OUT TO MAKE A QUICK BUCK SELLING YOUR OFFICE EQUIPMENT, AND I'M GOING TO PROVE IT!

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WELL, MR. SALESMAN... I'M NOT GOING TO LET YOU RIDE THE **MORAL HIGH HORSE** BY **BANNING** YOU FROM THIS OFFICE OUTRIGHT...

SINKAPOR INKS

YOU ARE **FREE** TO SAY **WHATEVER** YOU WANT...

...AS **LONG** AS YOU SUPPLY US YOUR OFFICE EQUIPMENT FOR **FREE!**

THEN WE'LL SEE IF IT'S **MONEY OR FREEDOM** YOU CARE SO MUCH ABOUT!

THAT'S... **RIDICULOUS!!!** BUT BUGGER IT! I CAN ALWAYS MAKE MY MONEY **ELSEWHERE...**

...SO, **FINE!** YOUR COMPANY CAN HAVE ALL THE EQUIPMENT FOR **FREE**, IF THAT'S WHAT IT'S GONNA **TAKE!**

HA! I SEE RIGHT THROUGH YOUR **RUSE!** THE EQUIPMENT WILL **STILL** BEAR YOUR COMPANY'S **BRAND NAME**. WHICH MEANS THAT YOU'LL STILL BE ENJOYING **FREE ADVERTISING!**

REMOVE **THOSE, THEN** WE'LL TALK!

INKS

THIS MEANT IMPOSING A SEVERE *RESTRICTION* ON A PUBLICATION'S CIRCULATION IN SINGAPORE.

THE PAP WANTED TO SHOW THAT *PROFITS* MATTERED MORE THAN *PRINCIPLES...*

...THAT PUBLICATIONS WOULD ULTIMATELY CHOOSE TO TOE THE LINE WHEN FACED WITH CRIPPLED *SALES* AND *AD REVENUES*.

AND WHEN ONE PAPER ANSWERED THE CHALLENGE BY OFFERING TO DISTRIBUTE THEIR PUBLICATION FOR *FREE...*

AWSJ

...THE PAP ARGUED THAT ITS *AD REVENUES* WOULD STILL REMAIN, AND DECLARED THAT ONLY COPIES WITH THEIR ADS *BLANKED OUT* COULD BE DISTRIBUTED!

AWSJ

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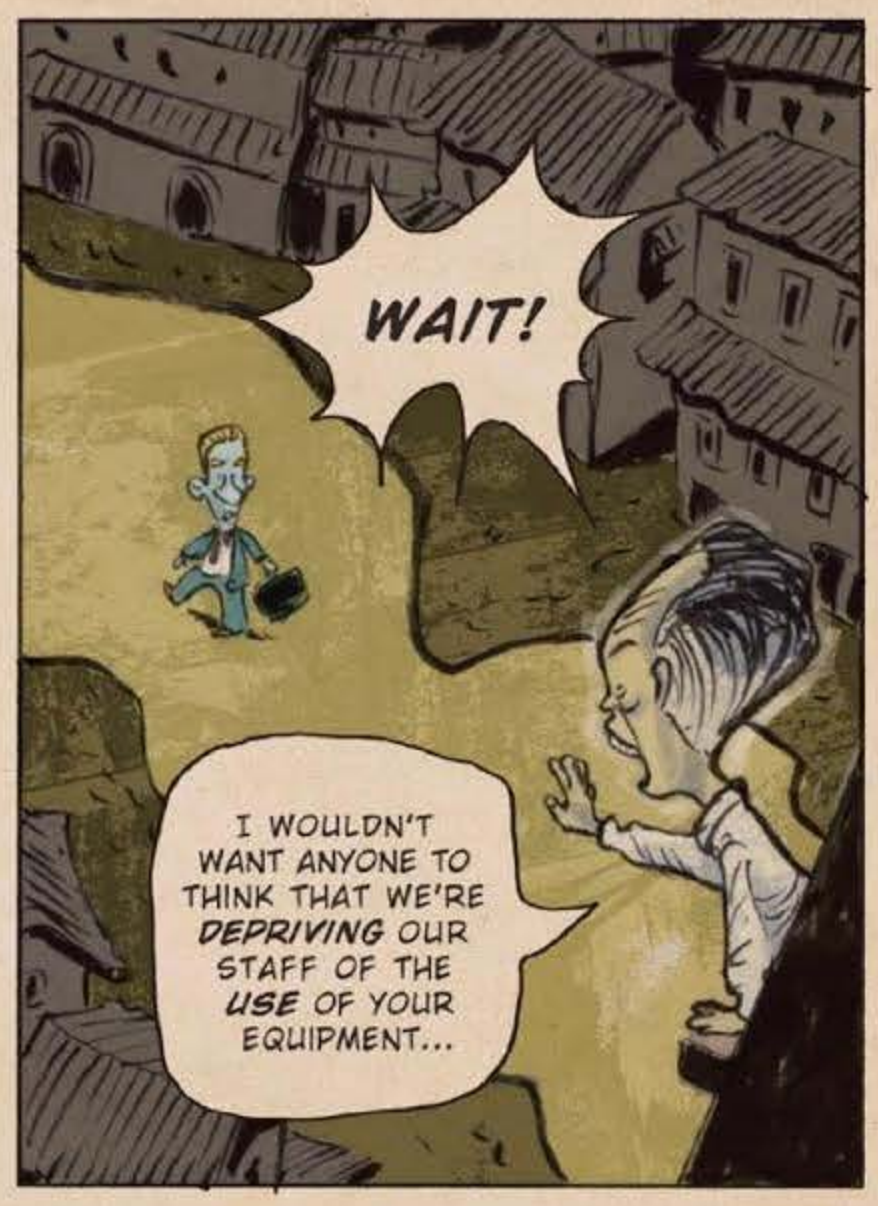

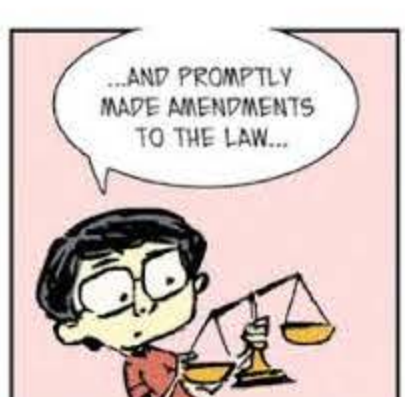

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SINKAPOR INKS STATIONERY & SUPPLIES

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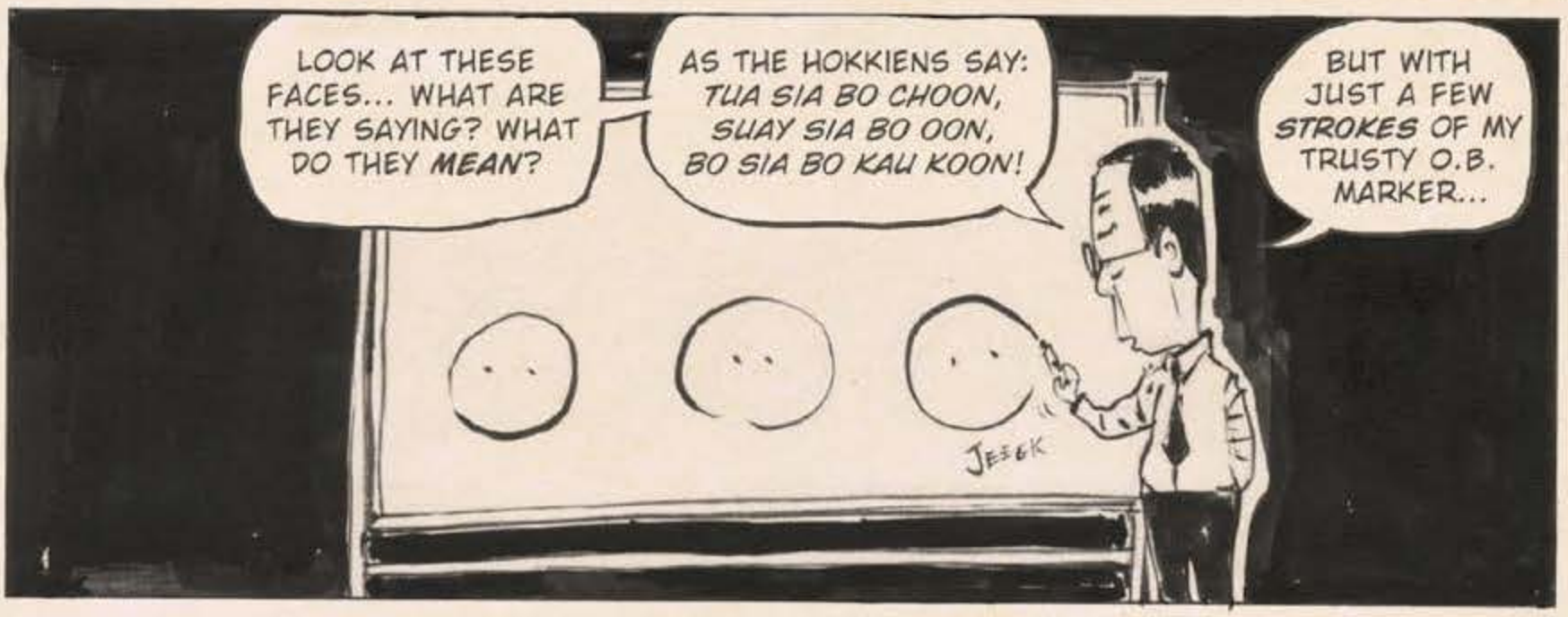

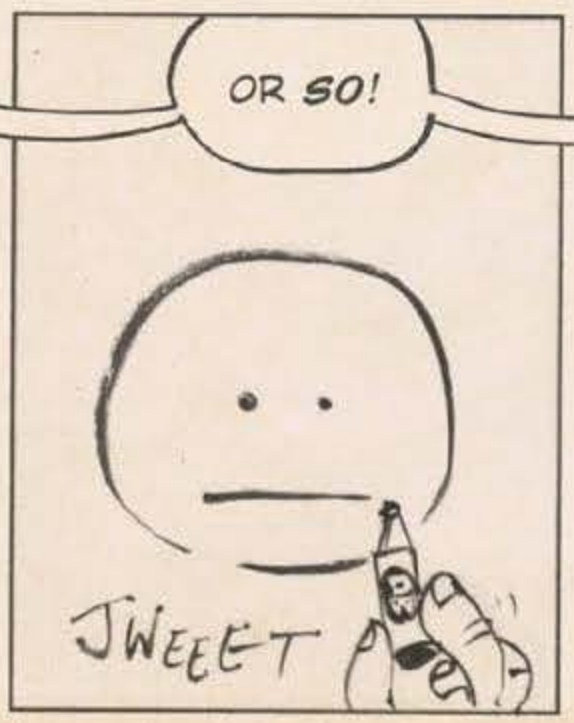

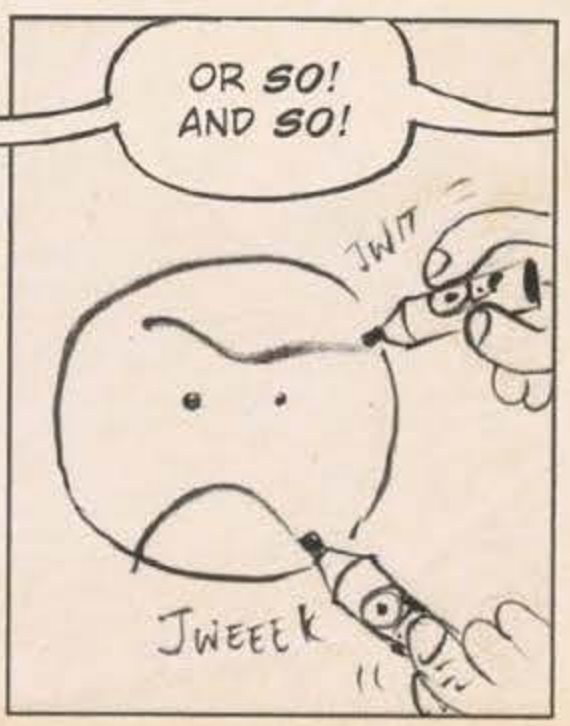

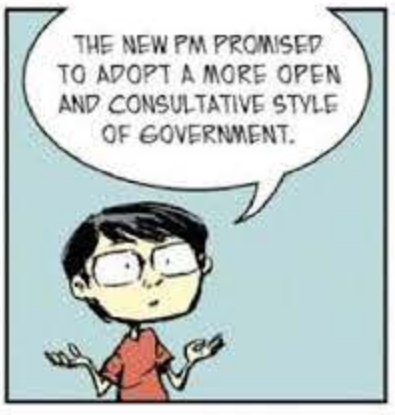

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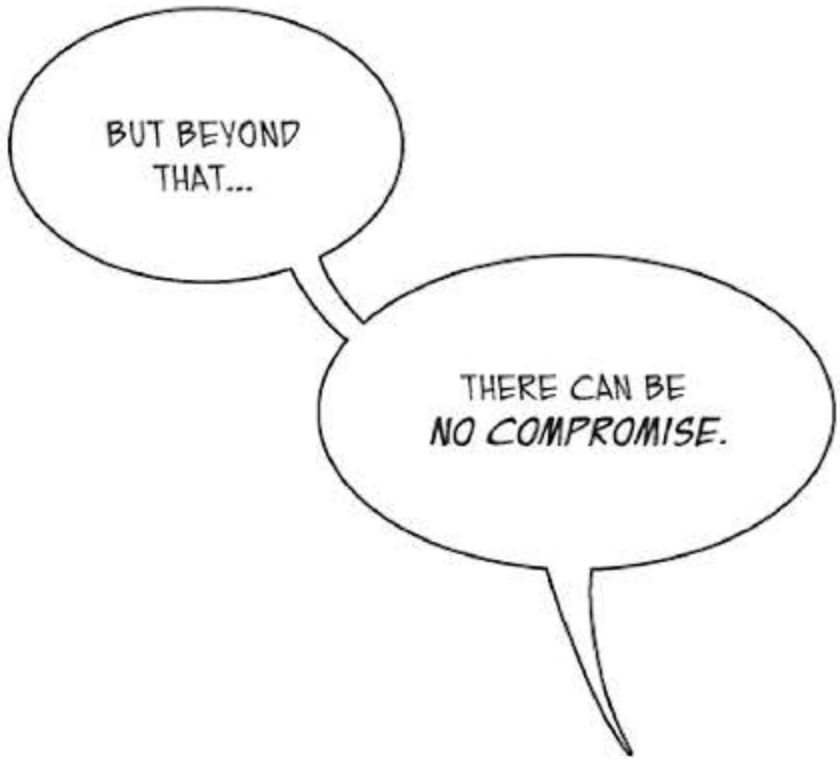

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Above **STOP AT TWO** (1984) | Chan Hock Chye | Unpublished

The 1980s provided fertile ground for Chan's critiques of government policies. Population control policies such as the **Graduate Mothers Scheme** (1984) and the "**Have Three Or More, If You Can Afford It**" (1986) campaign were, in his eyes, symptomatic of a state bent on shaping its citizenry according to the particular intellectual convictions and idiosyncrasies of then Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew.

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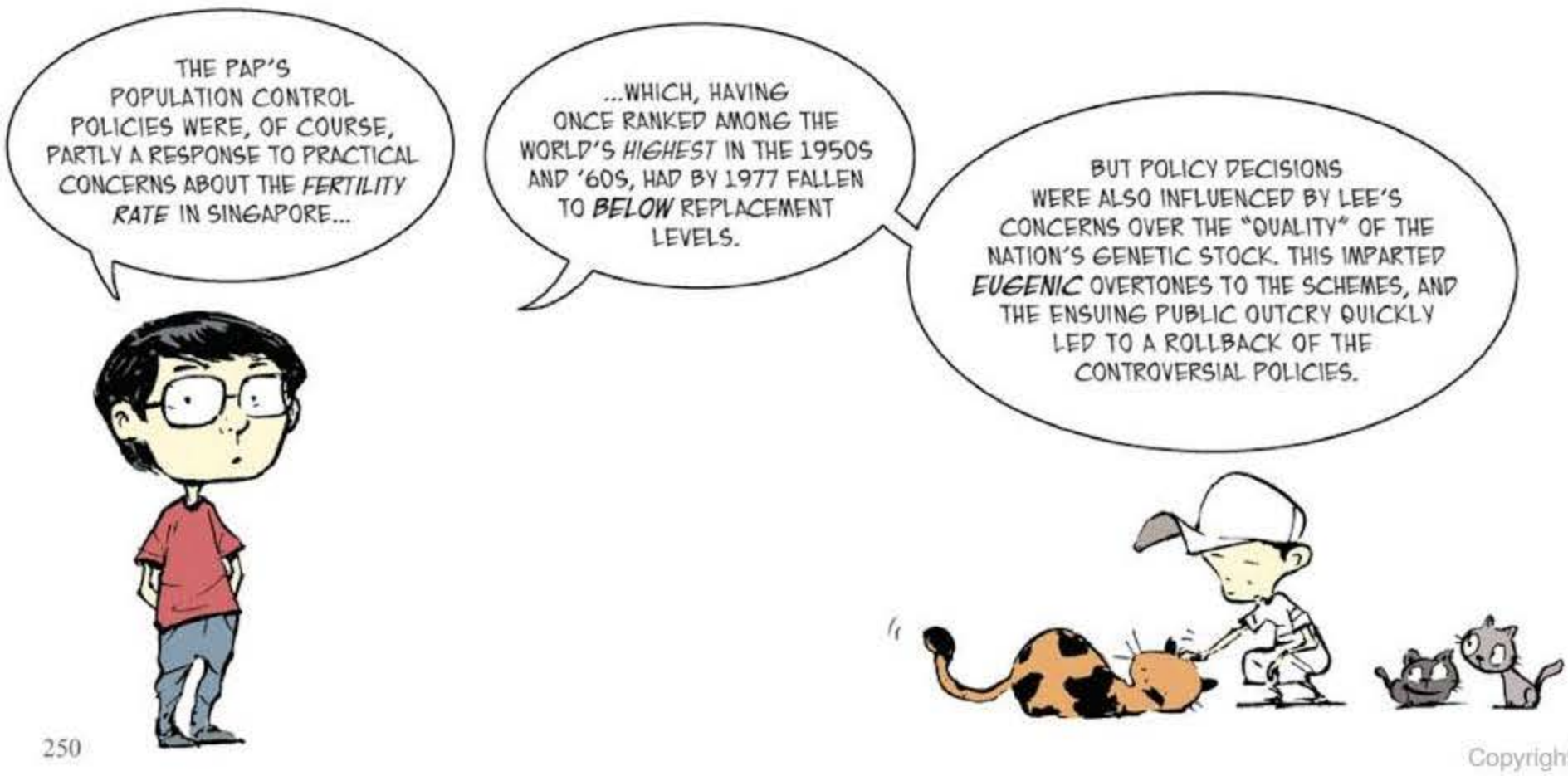
Right
TRASH CAN BABY
1984
Chan Hock Chye
Unpublished

In 1984, the government introduced a slew of social and financial incentives that were designed to entice better-educated women to bear more children, while less-educated mothers were encouraged to undergo voluntary sterilisation.



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SINKAPOR INKS STATIONERY & SUPPLIES

SO, DO YOU KNOW *WHY* YOU HAVE ALL BEEN HAULED UP HERE?

ER...

...

DON'T FEIGN IGNORANCE! YOU KNOW VERY WELL THAT YOU ARE *ALL*...

...PART OF A *MARXIST CONSPIRACY!!*

TO BE *PRECISE* AND *EXACT*...

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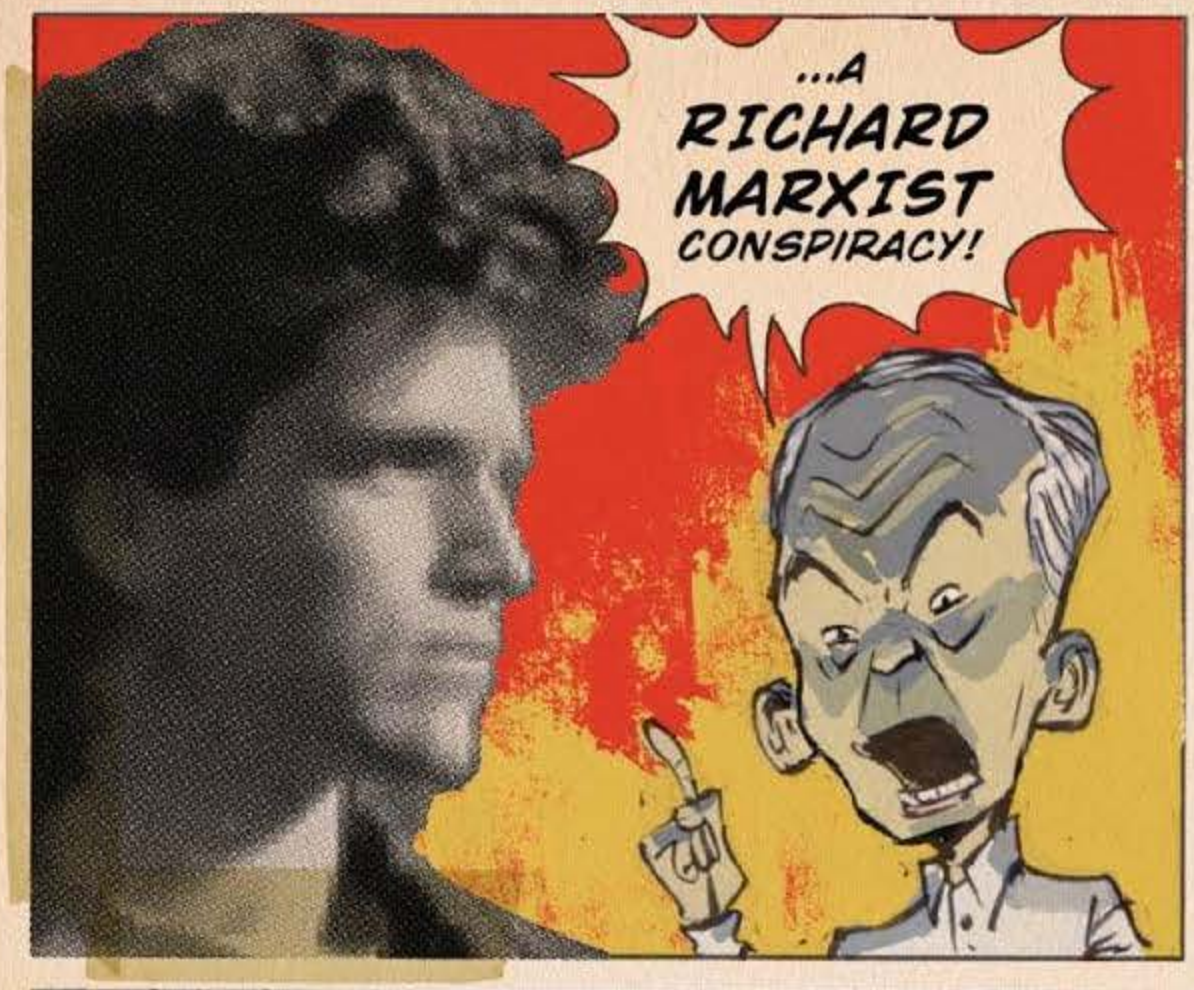

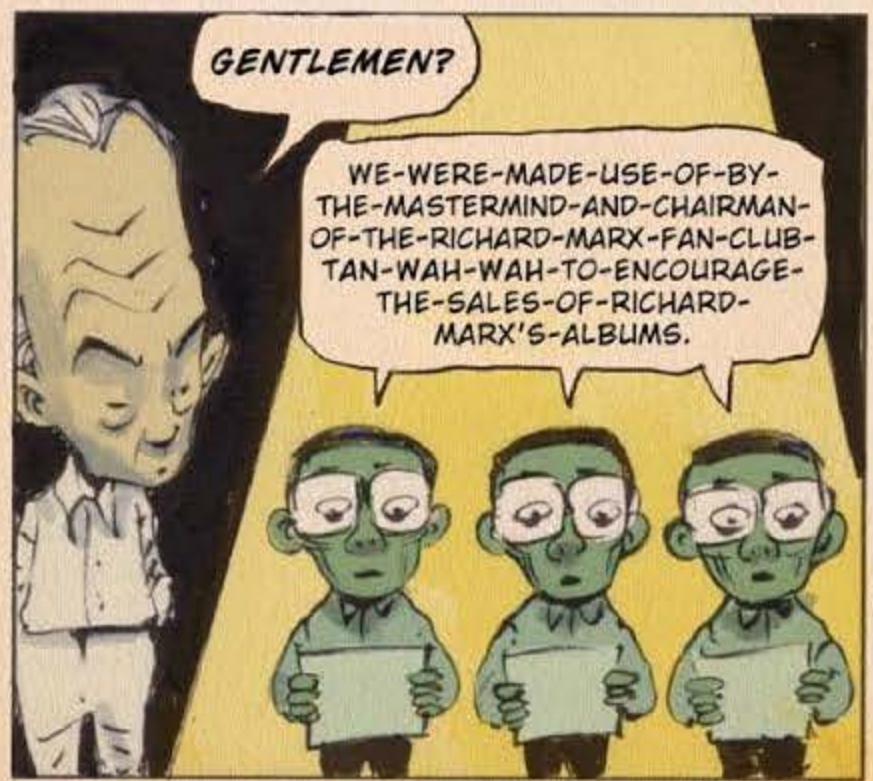

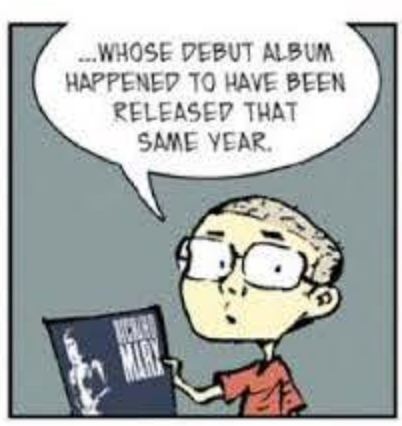

*FROM THE NOTEBOOKS OF CHARLIE CHAN

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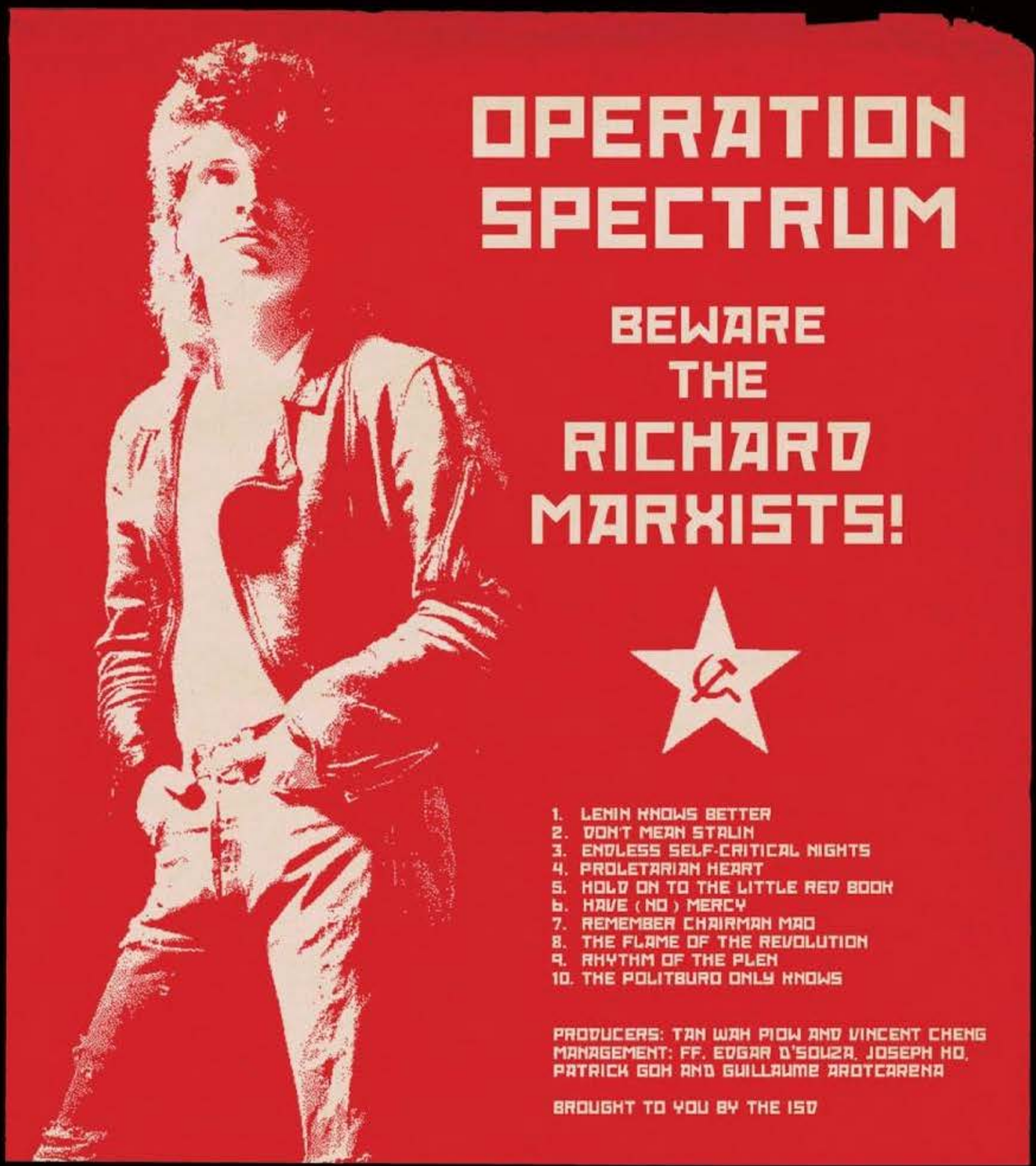
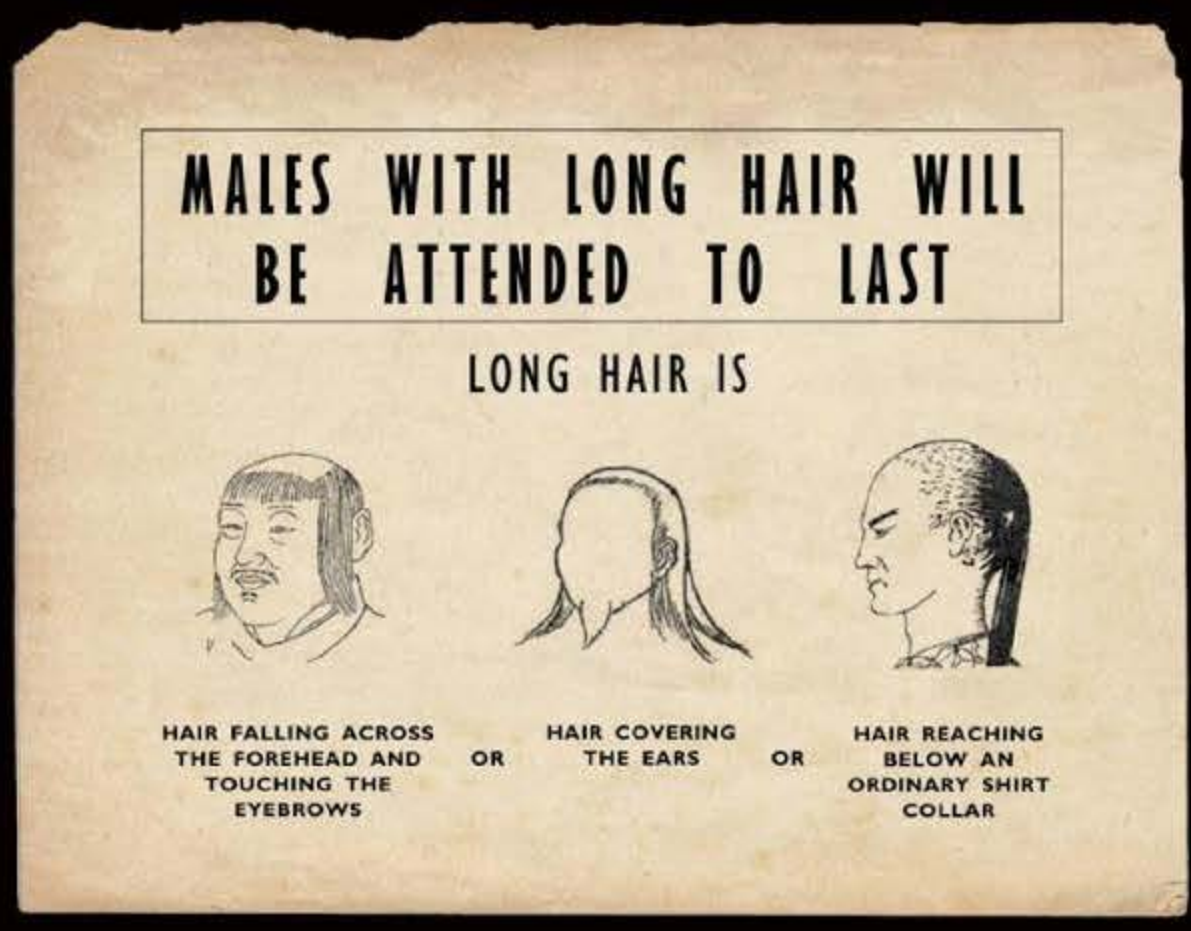


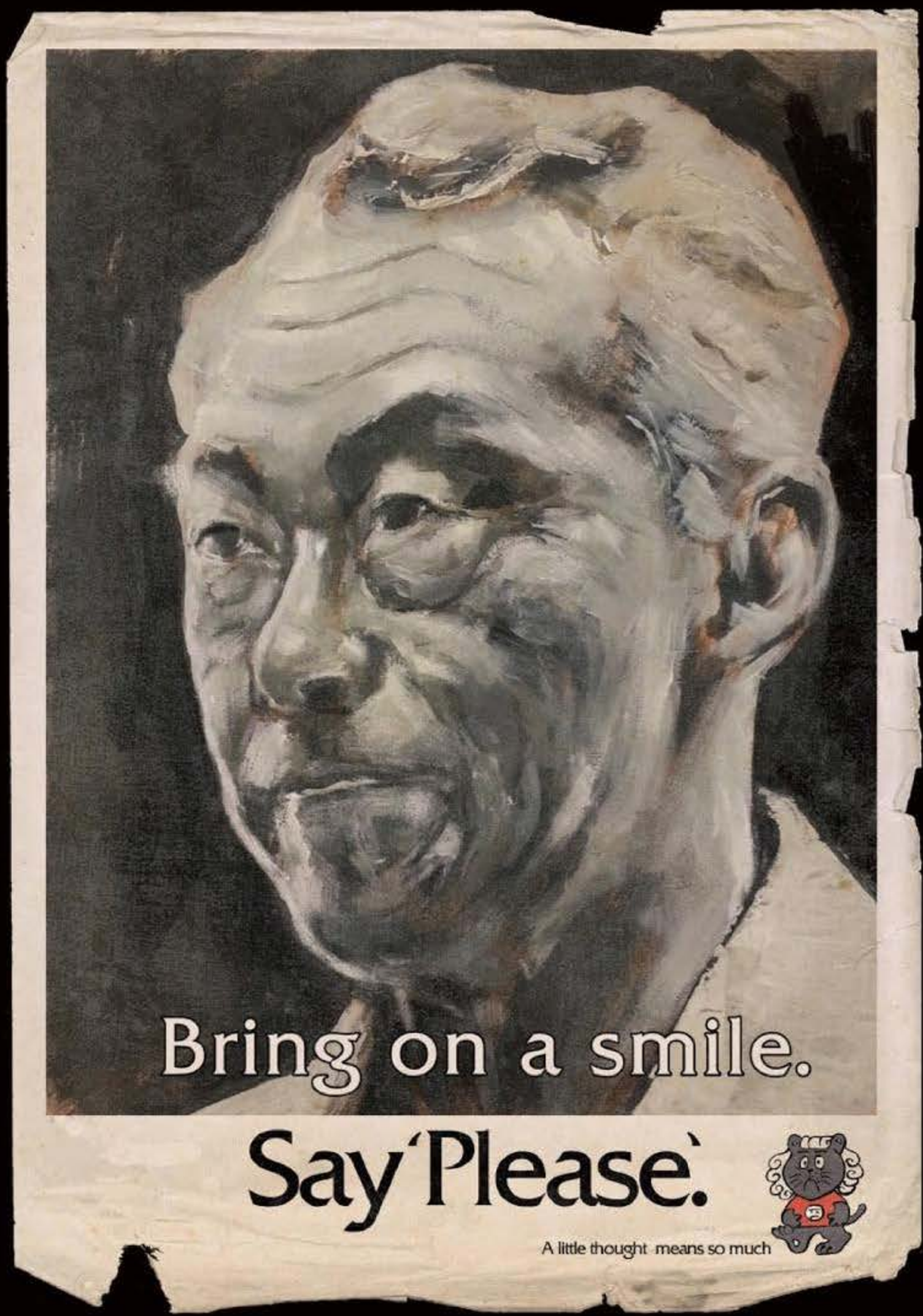


Above
OPERATION SPECTRUM
1988
Concept by Chan Hock Chye
Layout by James De Souza
Self-published

Chan often sought out his former publisher's son, James De Souza, who had taken up graphic design, to help him realise his ideas for mock poster designs.

Left
LONG HAIR IS...
1982
Chan Hock Chye
Self-published

A spoof of official flyers discouraging long hair for men, which had come under attack by the government as a symbol of decadent Western cultures and mores.



Left
MAKE COURTESY OUR WAY OF LIFE
1985
Art and Concept by
Chan Hock Chye
Layout by James De Souza

Below
CAMPAIGN POSTERS
c. 1977–2003
National Archives
of Singapore

Above **I CAN SPEAK MANDARIN!** (1985) | Art and Concept by Chan Hock Chye, Layout by James De Souza

Drawing on the '**Speak Mandarin**' campaign posters and images of the 1956 Chinese Middle School riots, Chan's mock poster was a commentary on the shifting fates of Chinese education in Singapore. Marginalised from the 1950s to the 1970s over its perceived links with communism and Chinese chauvinism, it would later be rehabilitated as a means of helping Singaporean Chinese maintain their values, culture and identity.

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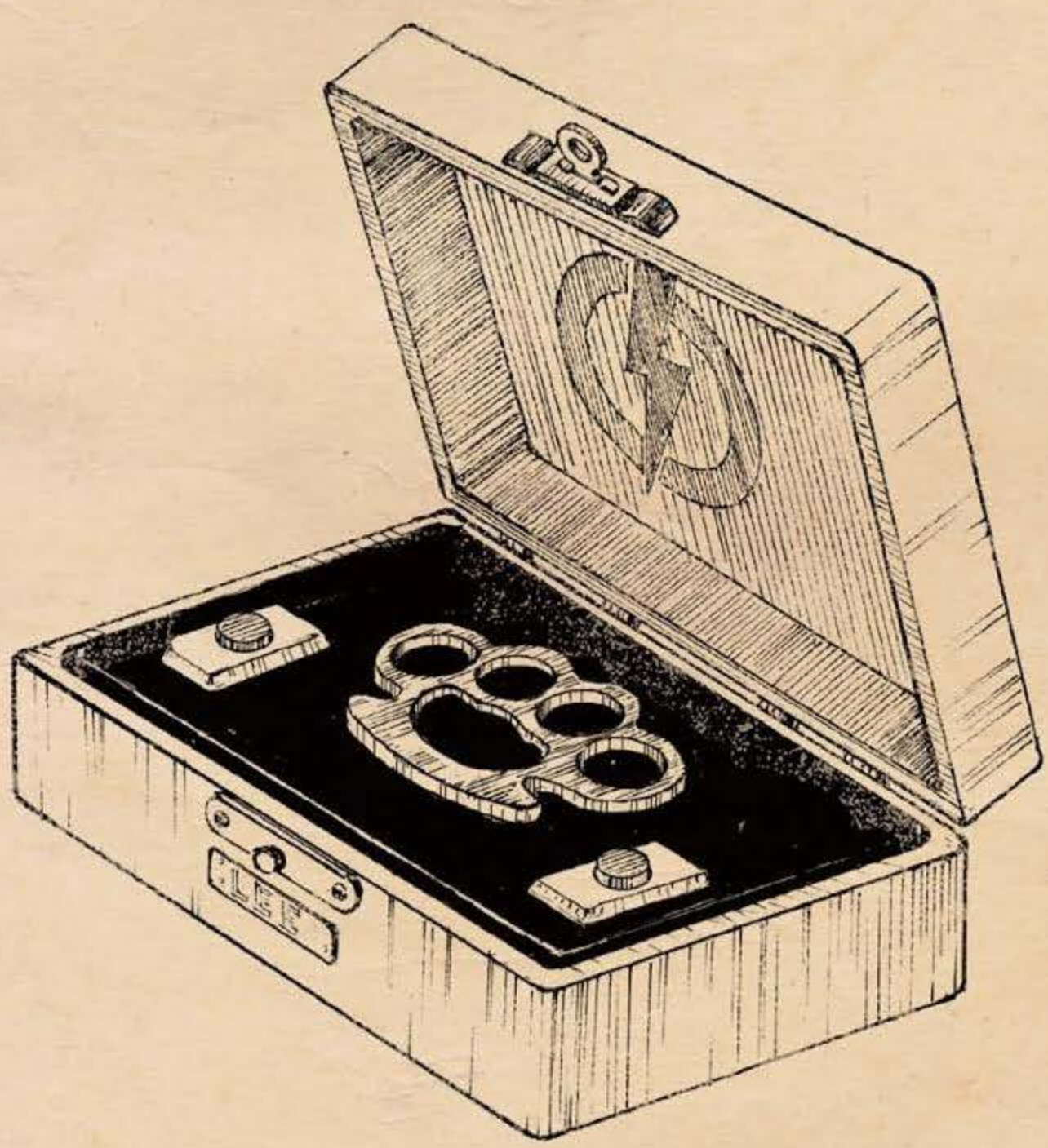
POLITICAL TOOLKIT

政治工具



Contents

One Knuckle-Duster for Cul-de-Sacs
One Button for Rising Up From Sickbeds
One Button for Rising From the Grave

Above **POLITICAL TOOLKIT** (1997) | Chan Hock Chye | Unpublished

One of the few personal illustrations done by Chan in the style he had used for advertising illustrations in the 1950s and '60s. The idea was based on the speeches and writings of Lee Kuan Yew. At the National Day Rally in 1988, Lee had assured Singaporeans that "*Even from my sickbed, even if you are going to lower me into the grave and I feel something is going wrong, I will get up.*"

He would claim on another occasion that "*[M]y posture, my response has been such that nobody doubts that if you take me on, I will put on knuckle-dusters and catch you in a cul-de-sac... Anybody who decides to take me on needs to put on knuckle-dusters. If you think you can hurt me more than I can hurt you, try. There is no other way you can govern a Chinese society.*" (from *Lee Kuan Yew: The Man and His Ideas*, 1998).

Copyrighted material

Above **JBJ CUTOUT PAPER DOLL** (1998) | Chan Hock Chye | Self-published

Joshua Benjamin Jeyaretnam (JBJ) won the 1981 Anson by-election and became the first opposition politician to capture a seat in Parliament since Singapore's independence in 1965. He was twice disqualified as a Member of Parliament and further declared a bankrupt as a result of a series of high-profile lawsuits. Chan says that he created the paper pattern mock-up as "My impression was that he was getting sued in court all the time, sued until *terng kor*, as they say."

Terng kor: Hokkien, literally to lose one's pants; describes a person who has lost all of his possessions, often as a result of some ill-calculated gamble.

Above **HOTEL NEW WORLD: THE STORYTELLER** (1988) | Chan Hock Chye | Self-published

The collapse of Hotel New World in 1986 left 33 dead, and would go down as one of Singapore's deadliest civil disasters. Based on a television interview with a witness to the incident, Chan's comic sought to illustrate the gap between the interviewee's rich and expressive dialect and the colourless English translated captions provided by the televison programme. He had conceived of the comic after watching a staging of Kuo Pao Kun's *Mama Looking for Her Cat*, a play that explored the breakdown in communication between different generations in Singapore as dialect knowledge and usage plummeted among the younger generation.

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AH HUAT DOLL (1988) | Lily Wong | 21.5" Mixed media
A hand-made doll given by Lily on the occasion of Charlie's 50th birthday.

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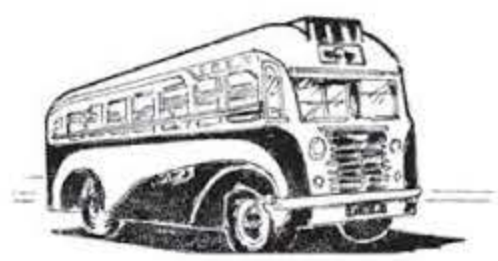
THE POWER
THE WORD,
HE IMAGE.

Chapter Eight

THE KING OF COMICS

漫画之王



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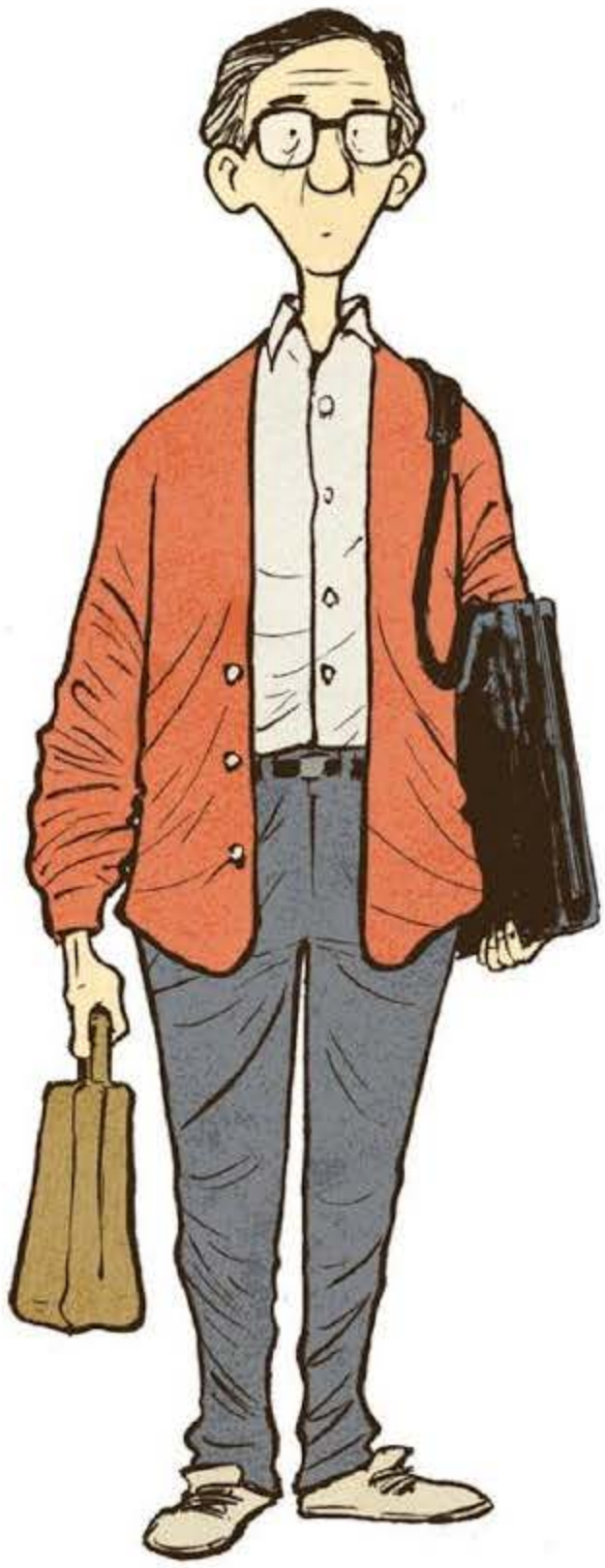

Charlie Chan Hock Chye, aged 50, 1988

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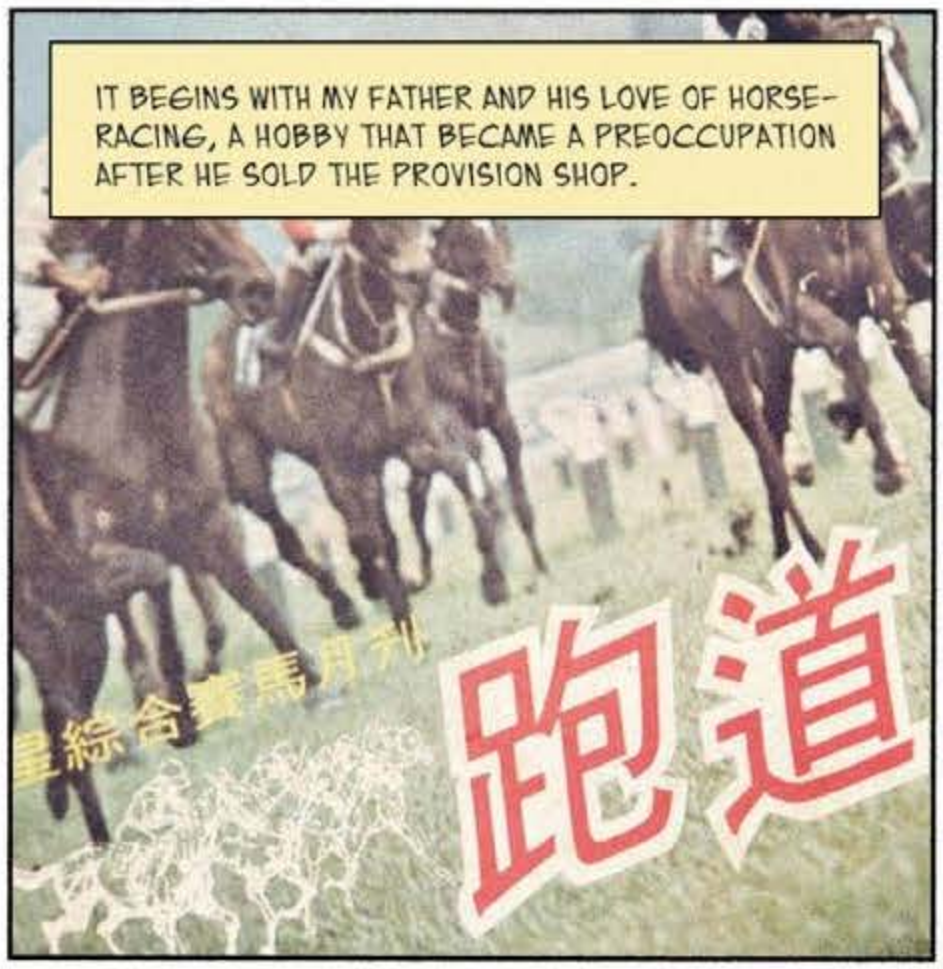

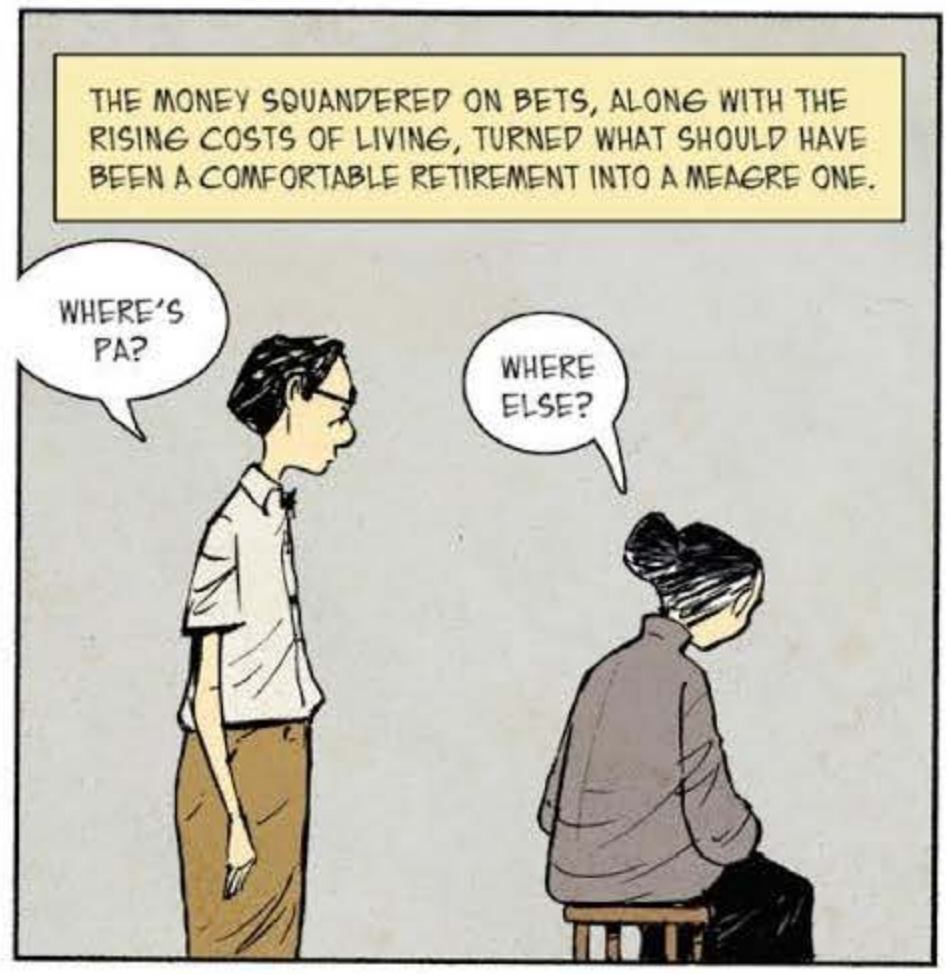

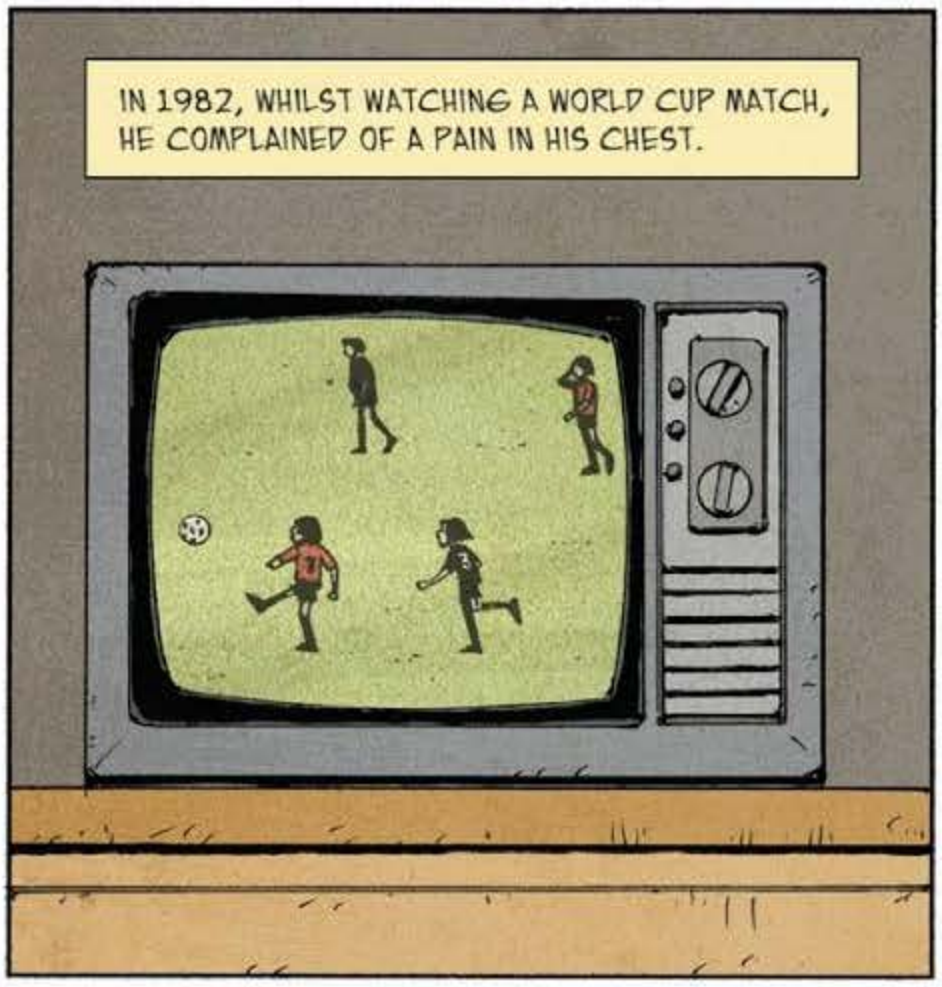

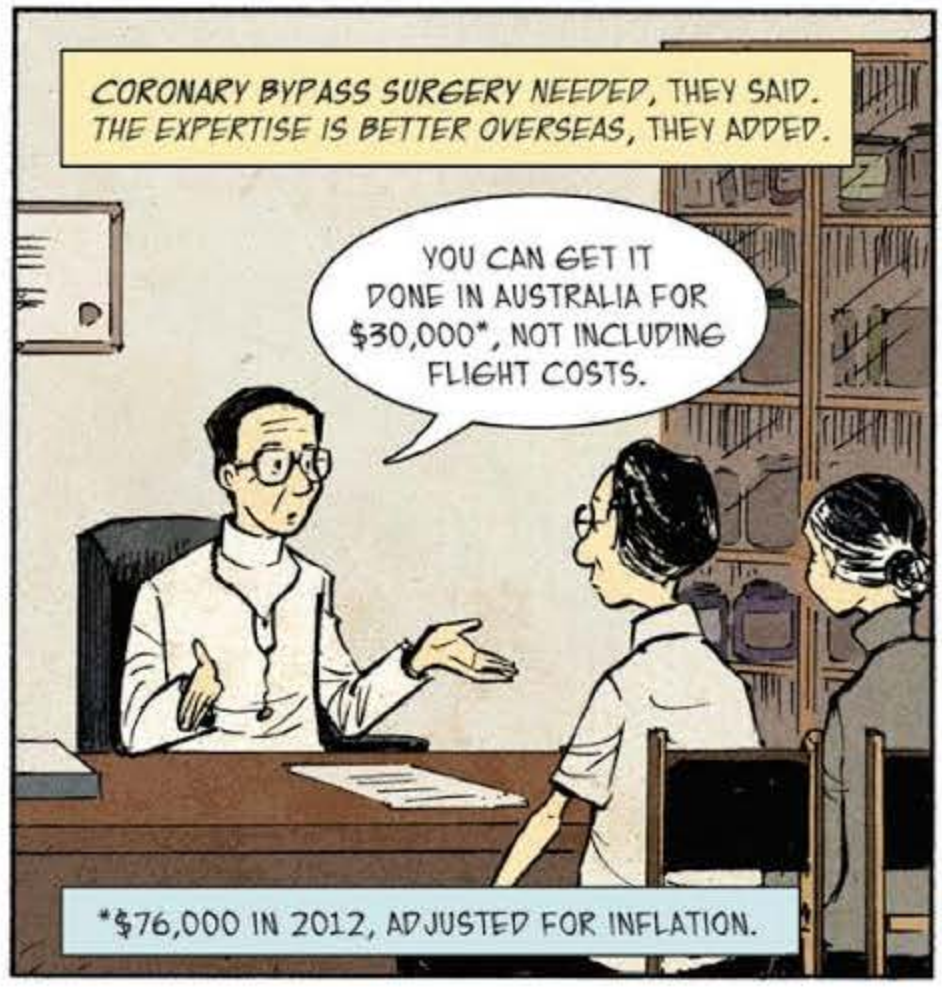

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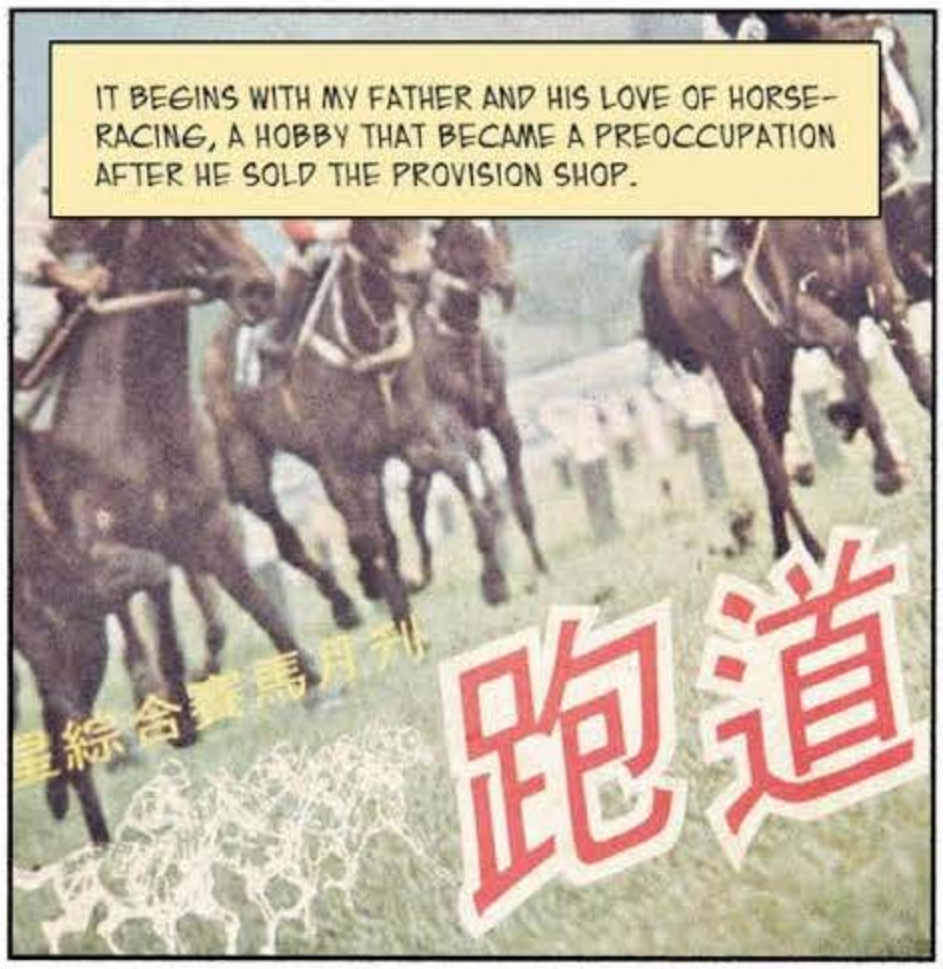

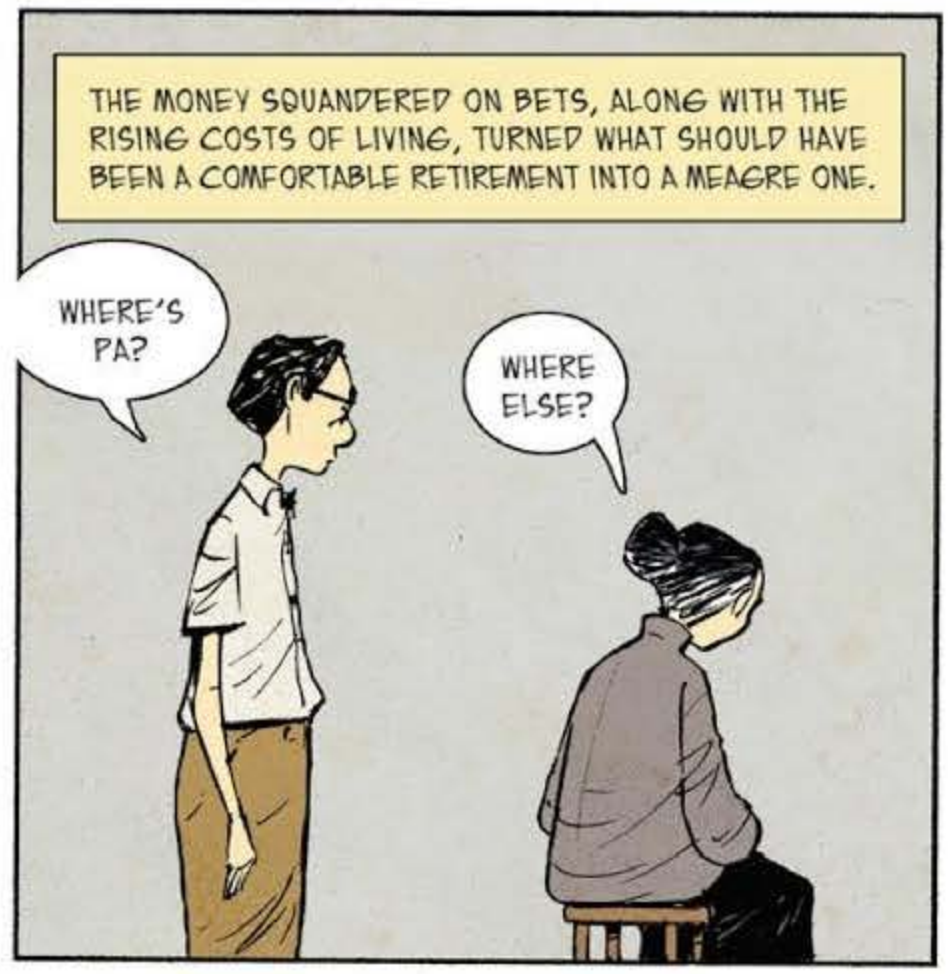

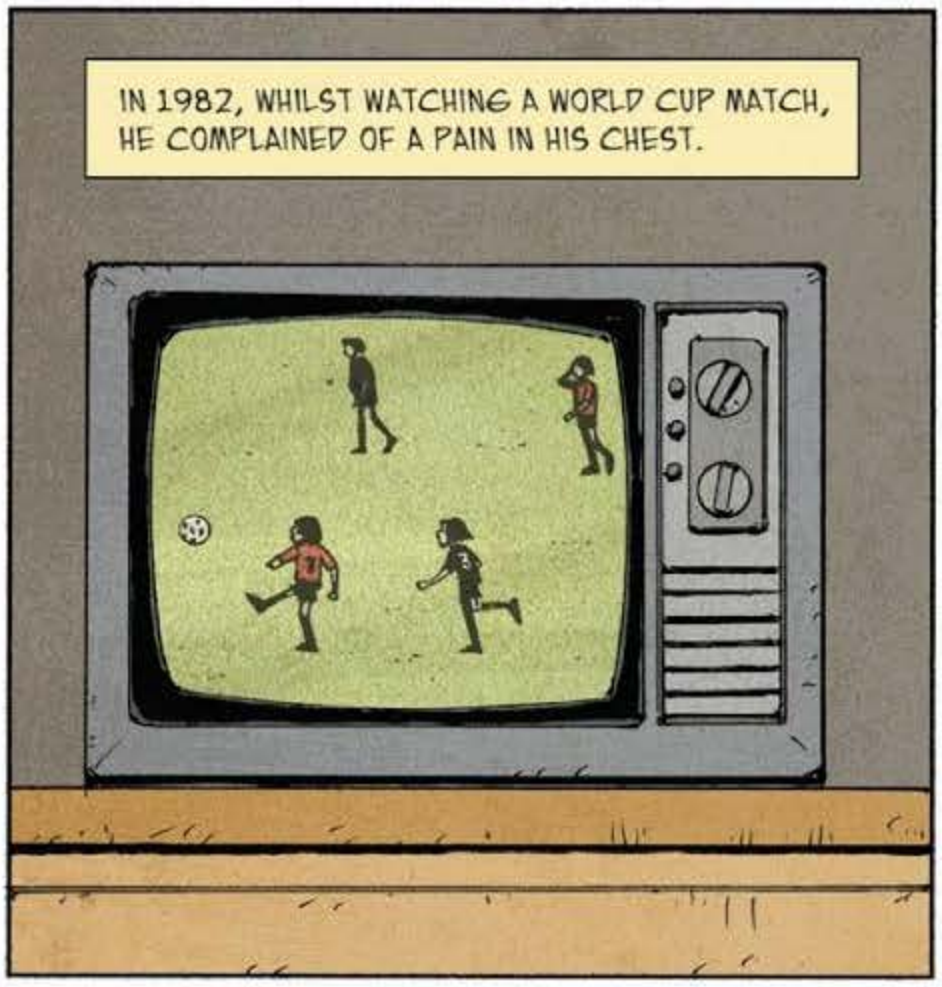

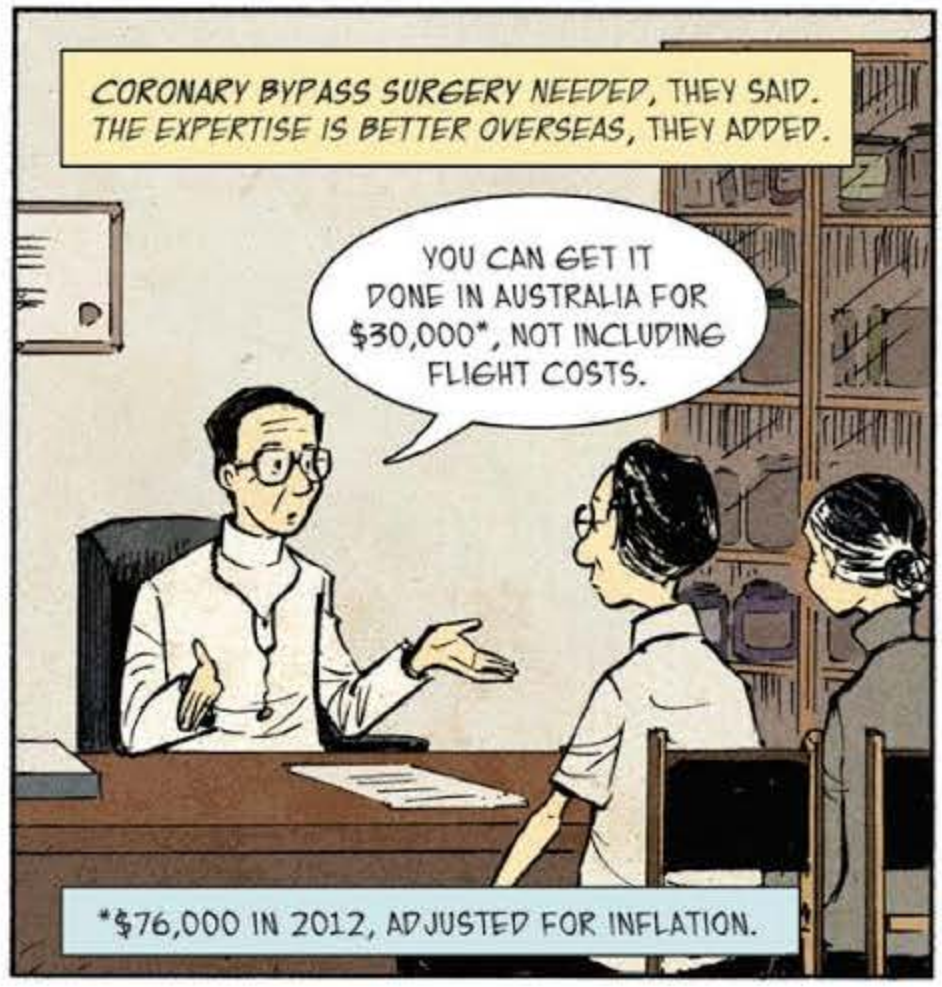

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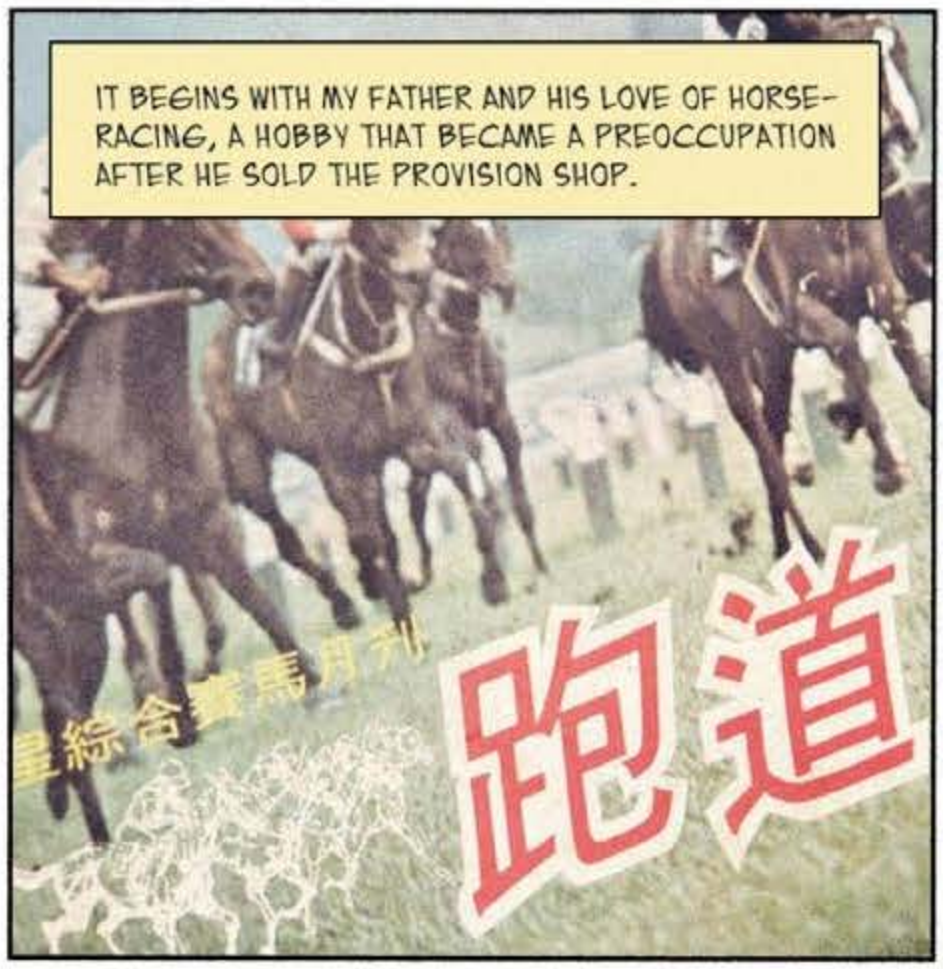

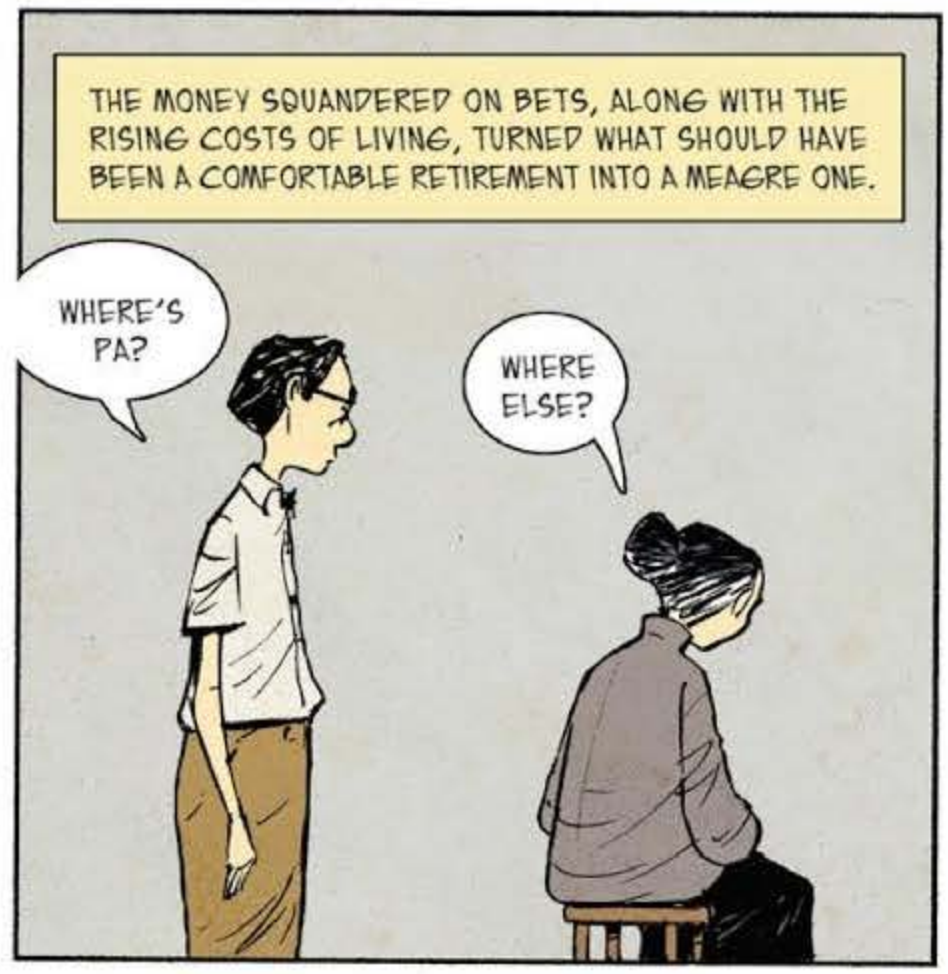

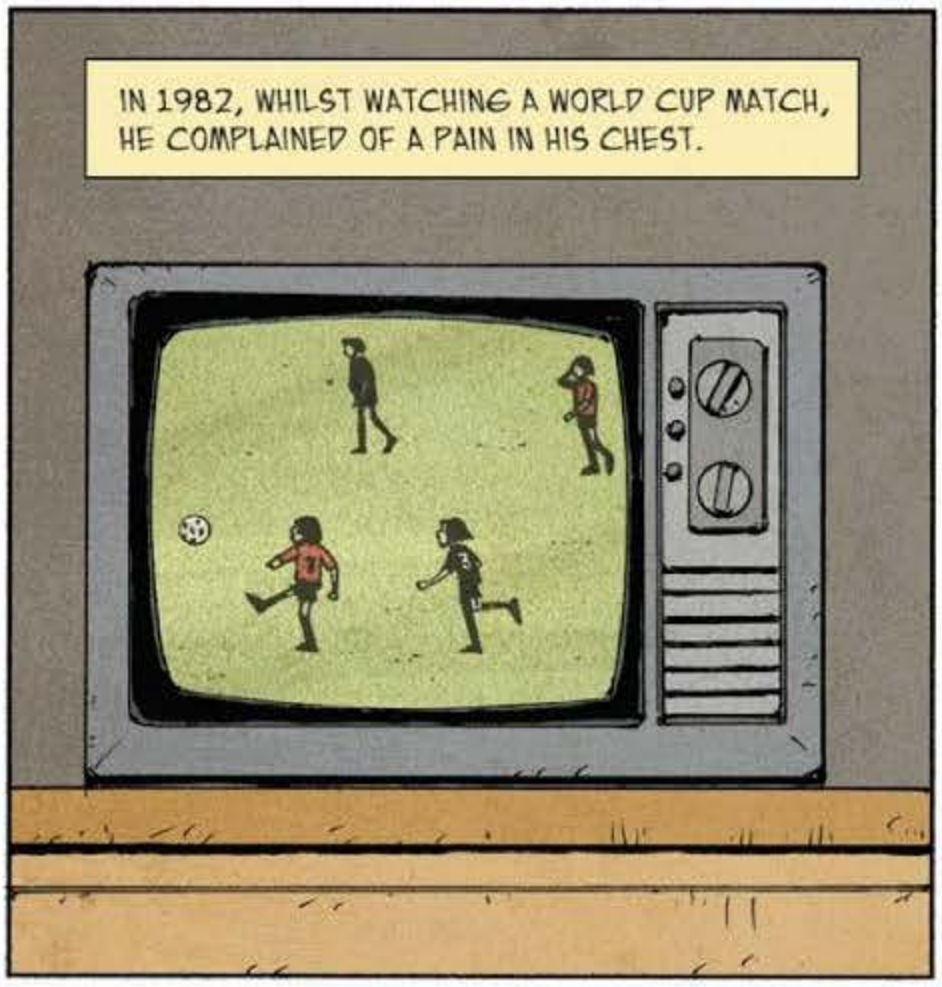

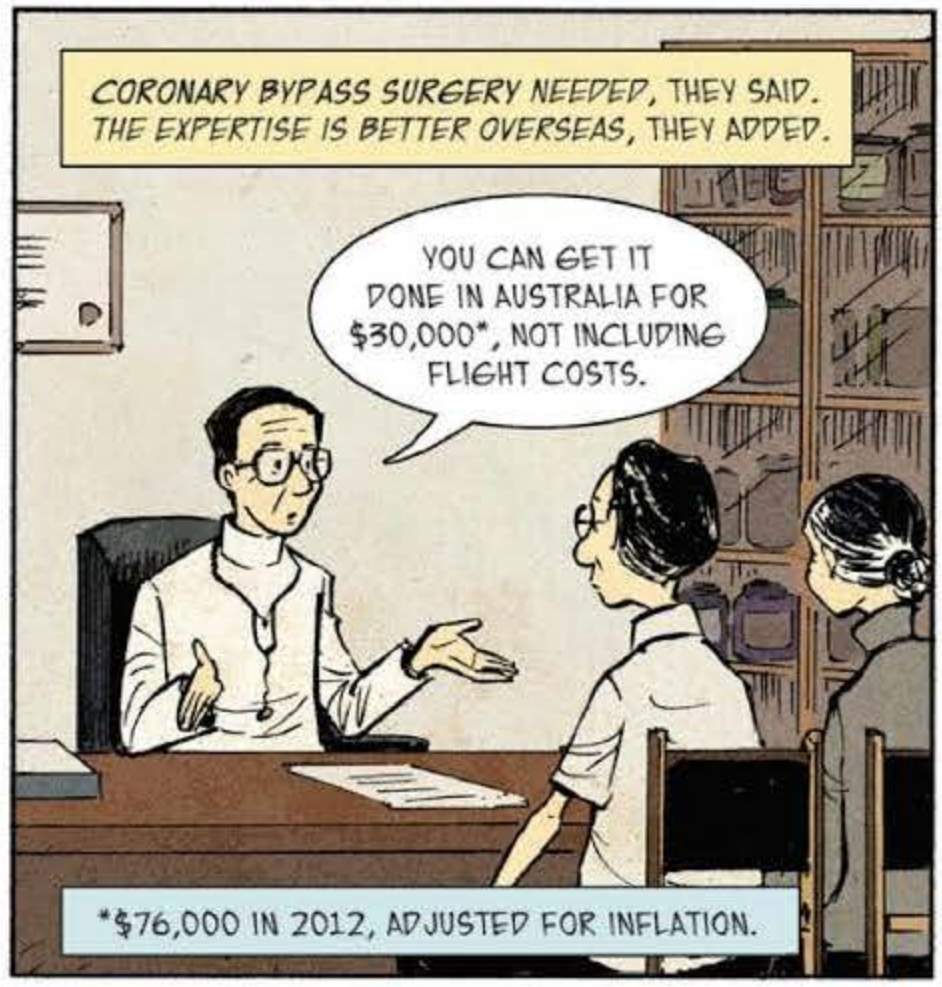

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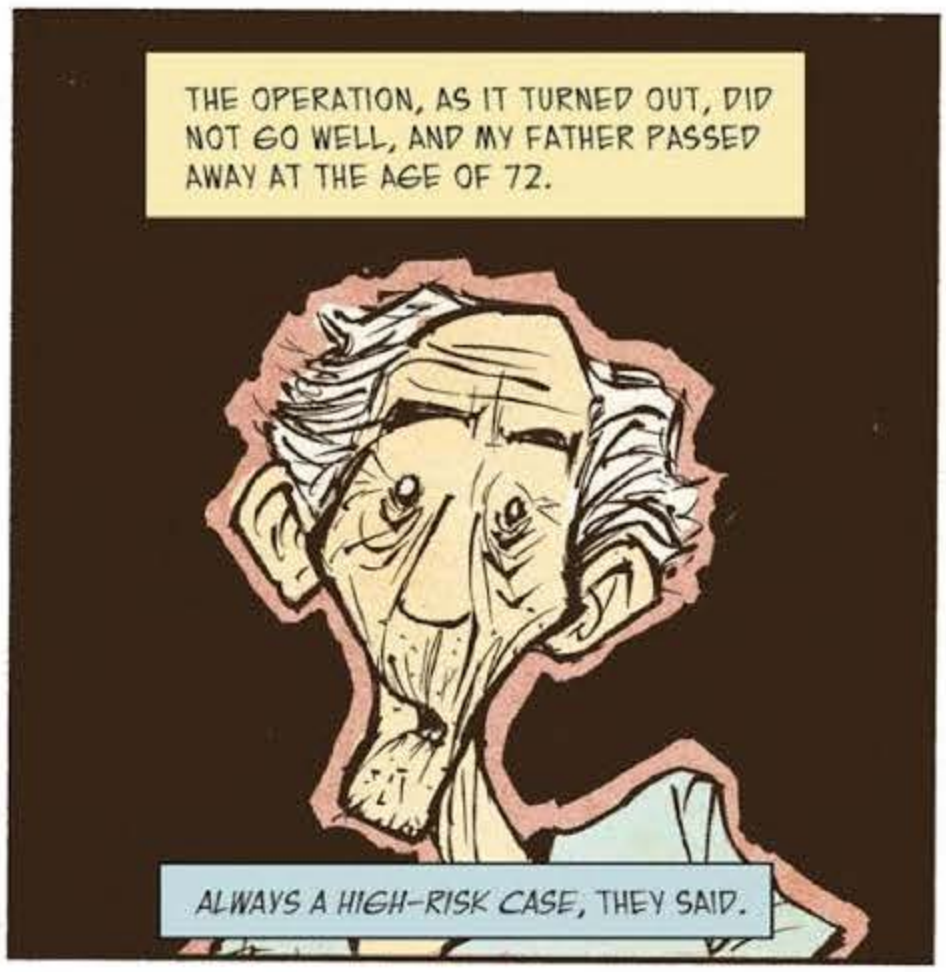

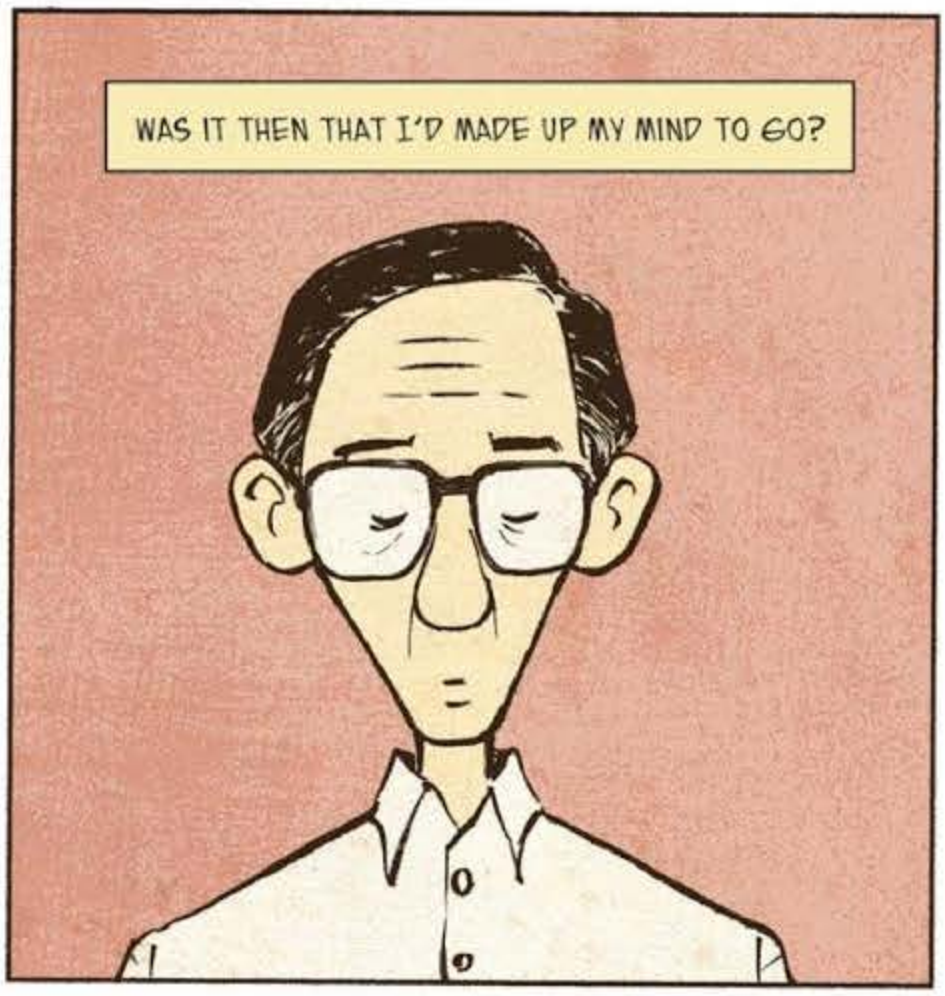

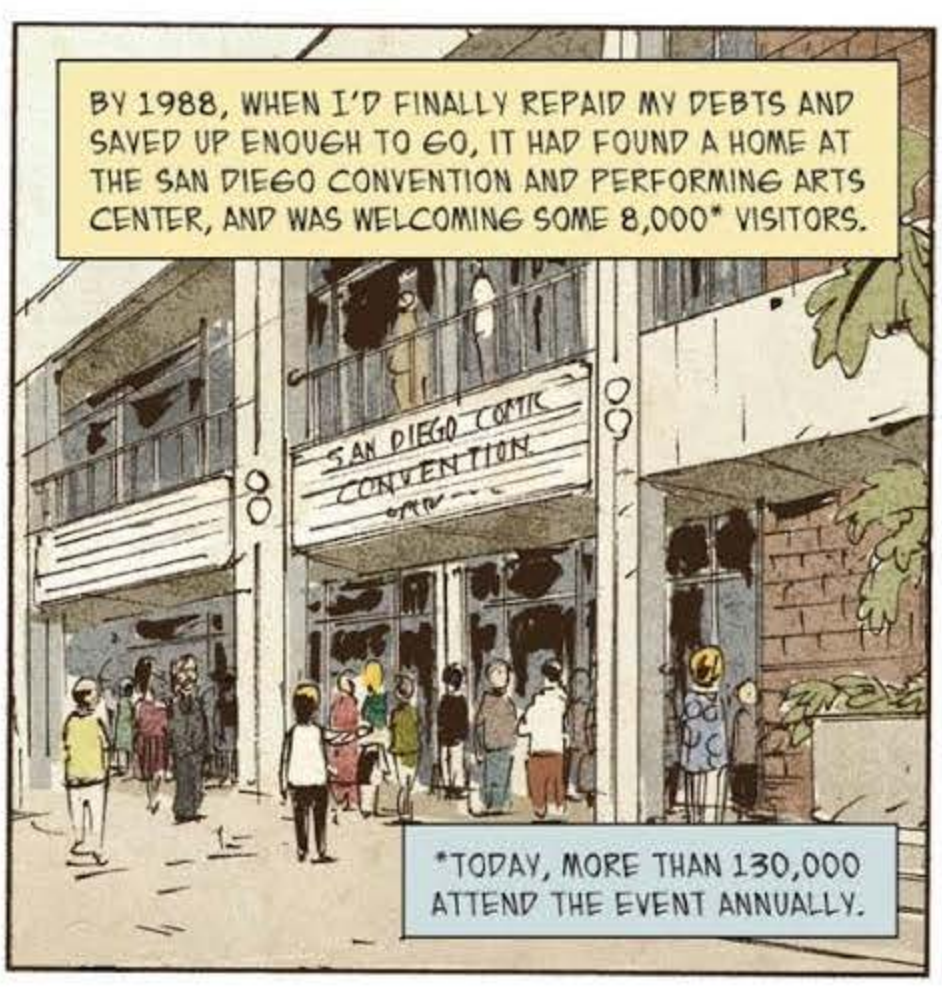

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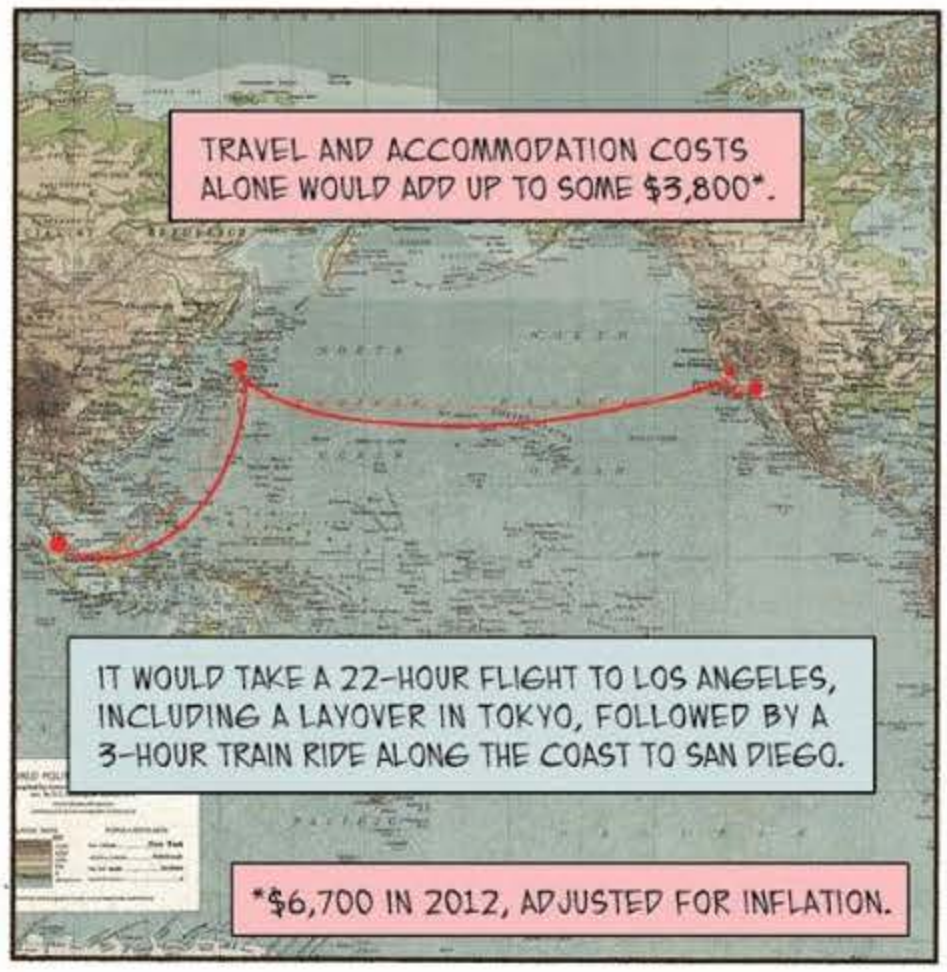

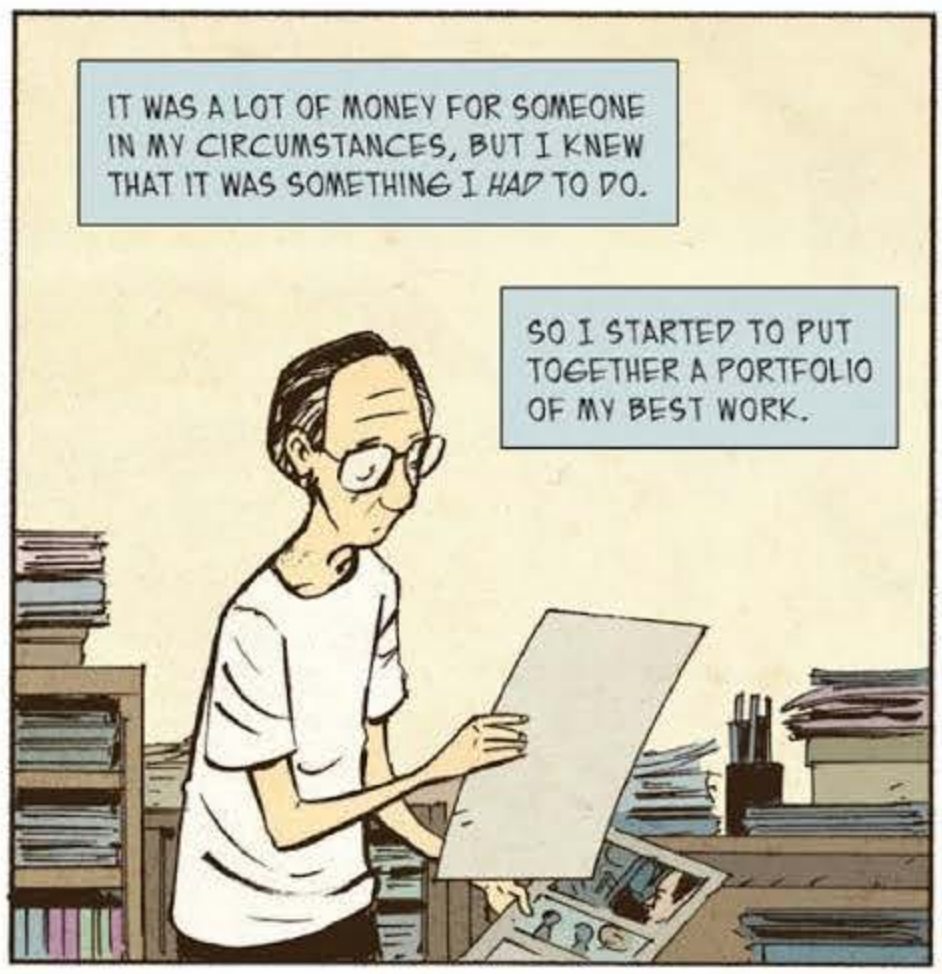

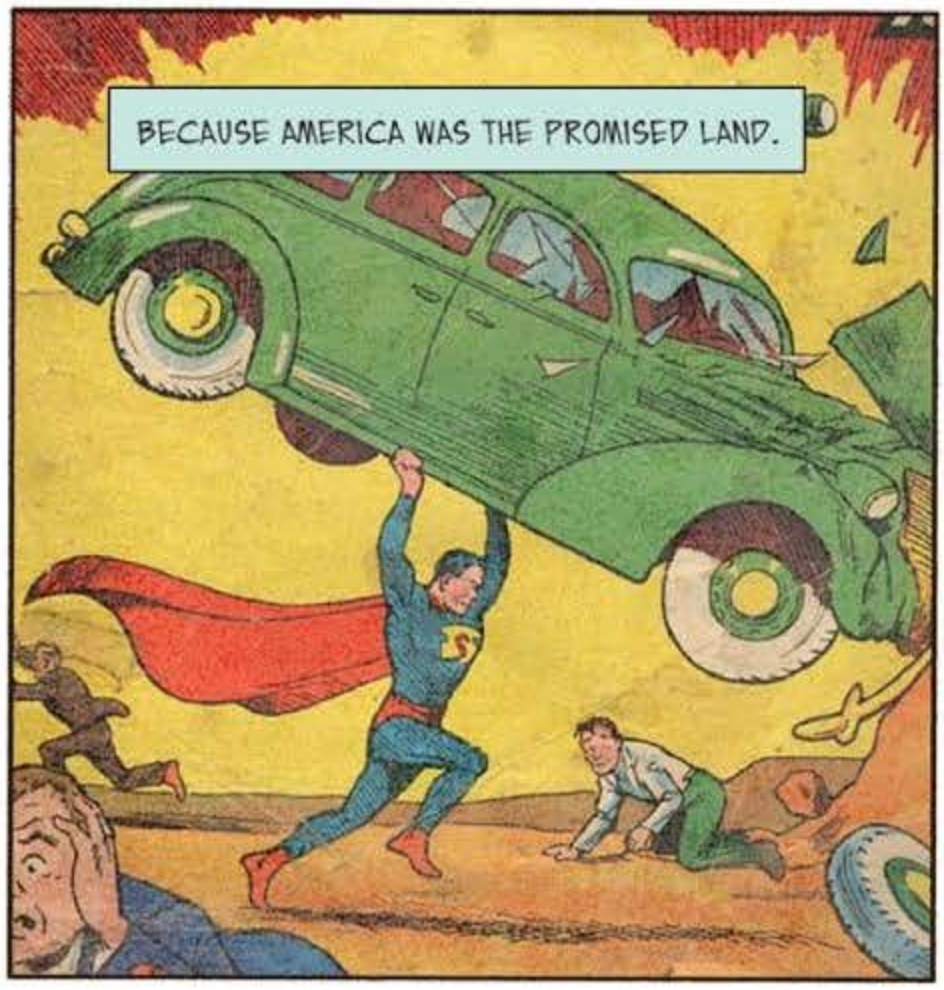

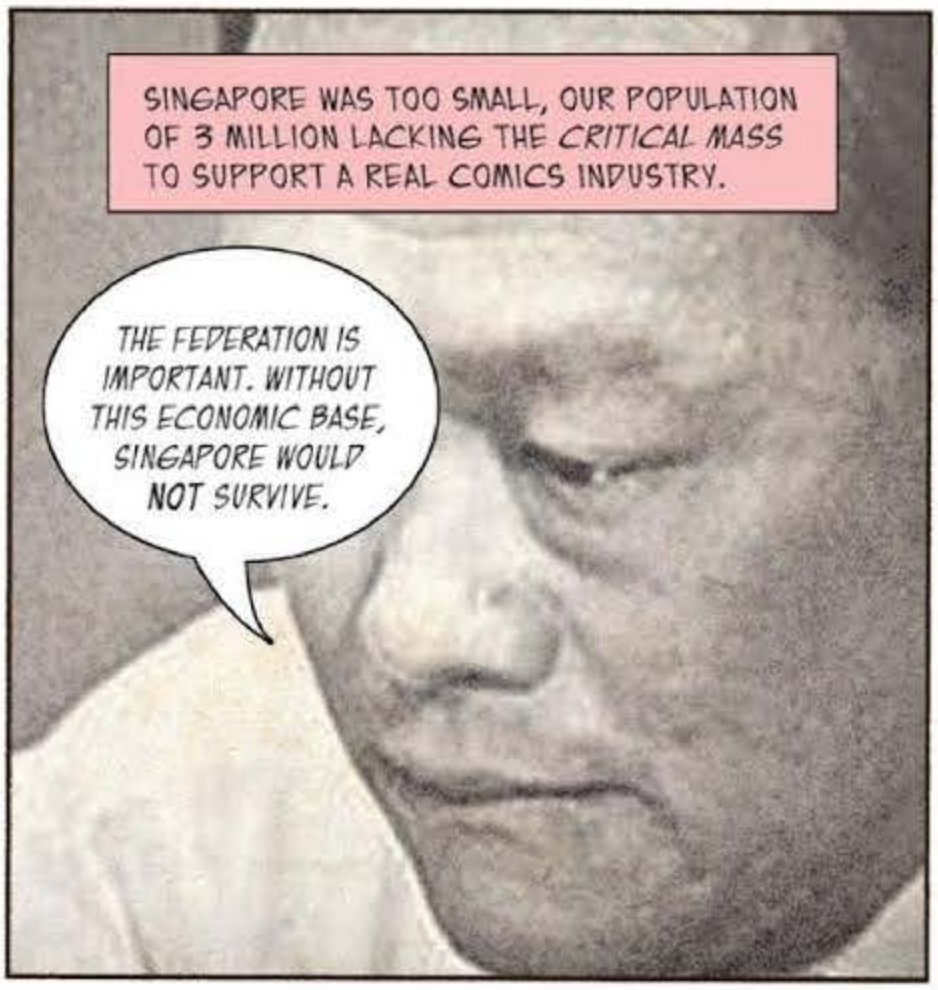

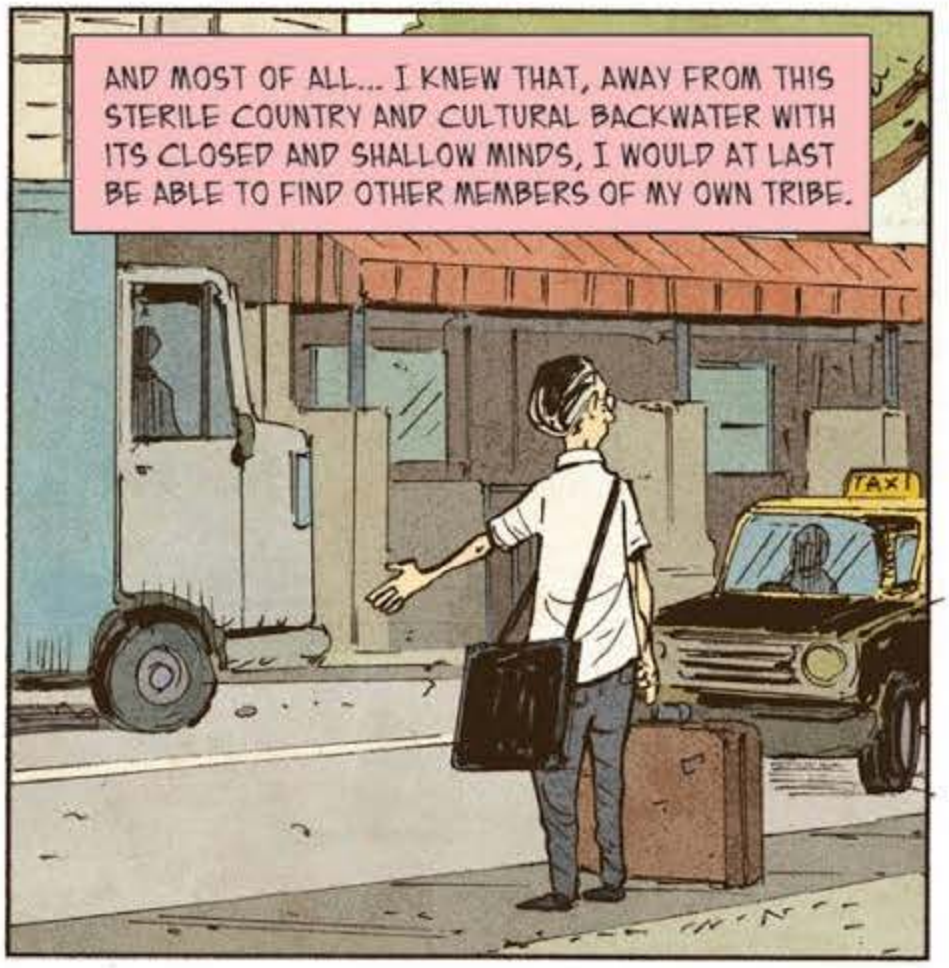

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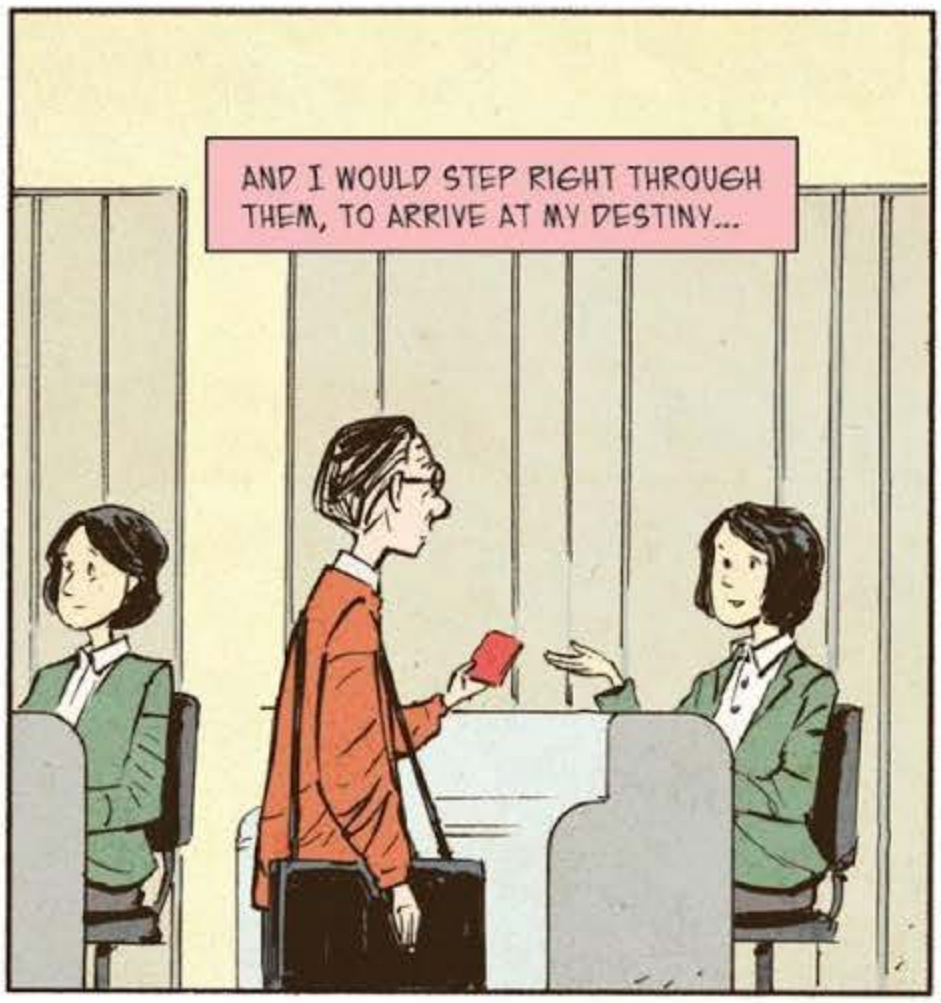
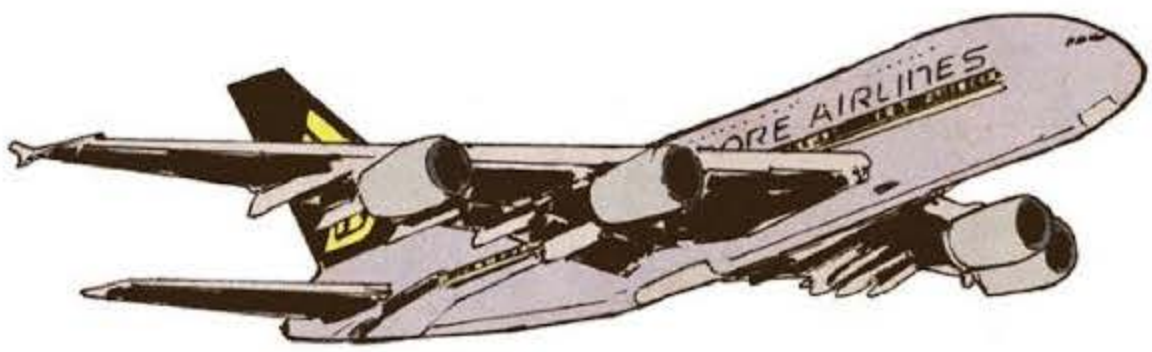


CALLING OUT TO ME FROM FAR ACROSS
THE PACIFIC, LIKE A SIREN SONG.



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San Diego Comic-Con Convention Events Guide

August 4-7, 1988

Above
SAN DIEGO COMIC-CON Events Guide
1988
Art by Steve Leialoha
Collection of Chan Hock Chye

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COMIC-CON SKETCHES
1988
Chan Hock Chye

Clockwise from top left: Jack Kirby, Sergio Aragonés, Matt Groening, Carol Tyler, Dennis Worden, Peter Kuper, Peter Bagge, Daniel Clowes, Jaime Hernandez, unknown moderator.

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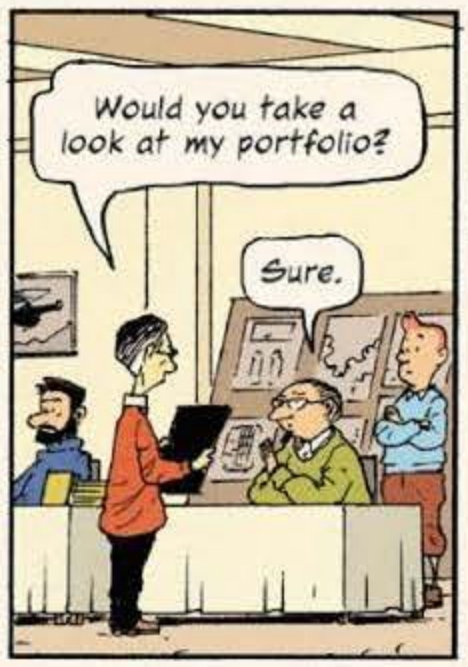
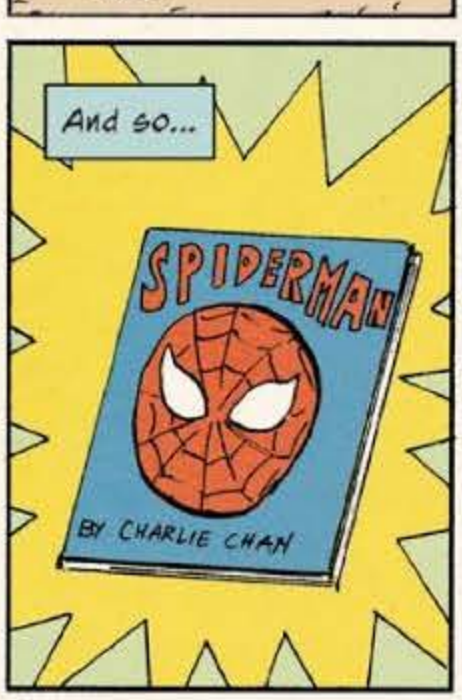
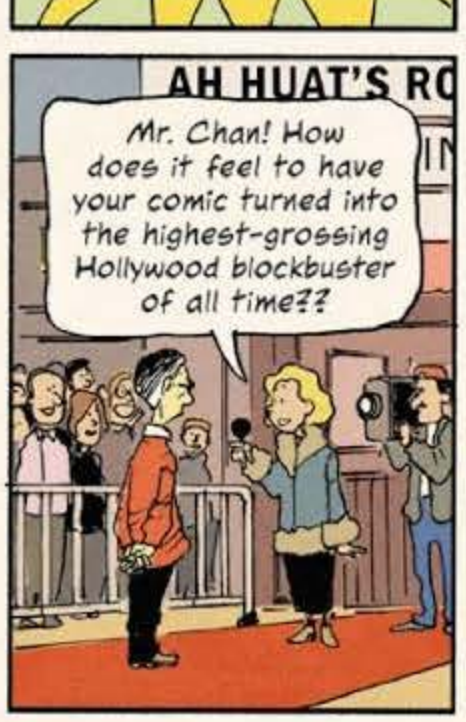
THE KING OF COMICS

PART ONE

by Charlie Chan







Above & following **THE KING OF COMICS** (1988) | Chan Hock Chye | Self-published

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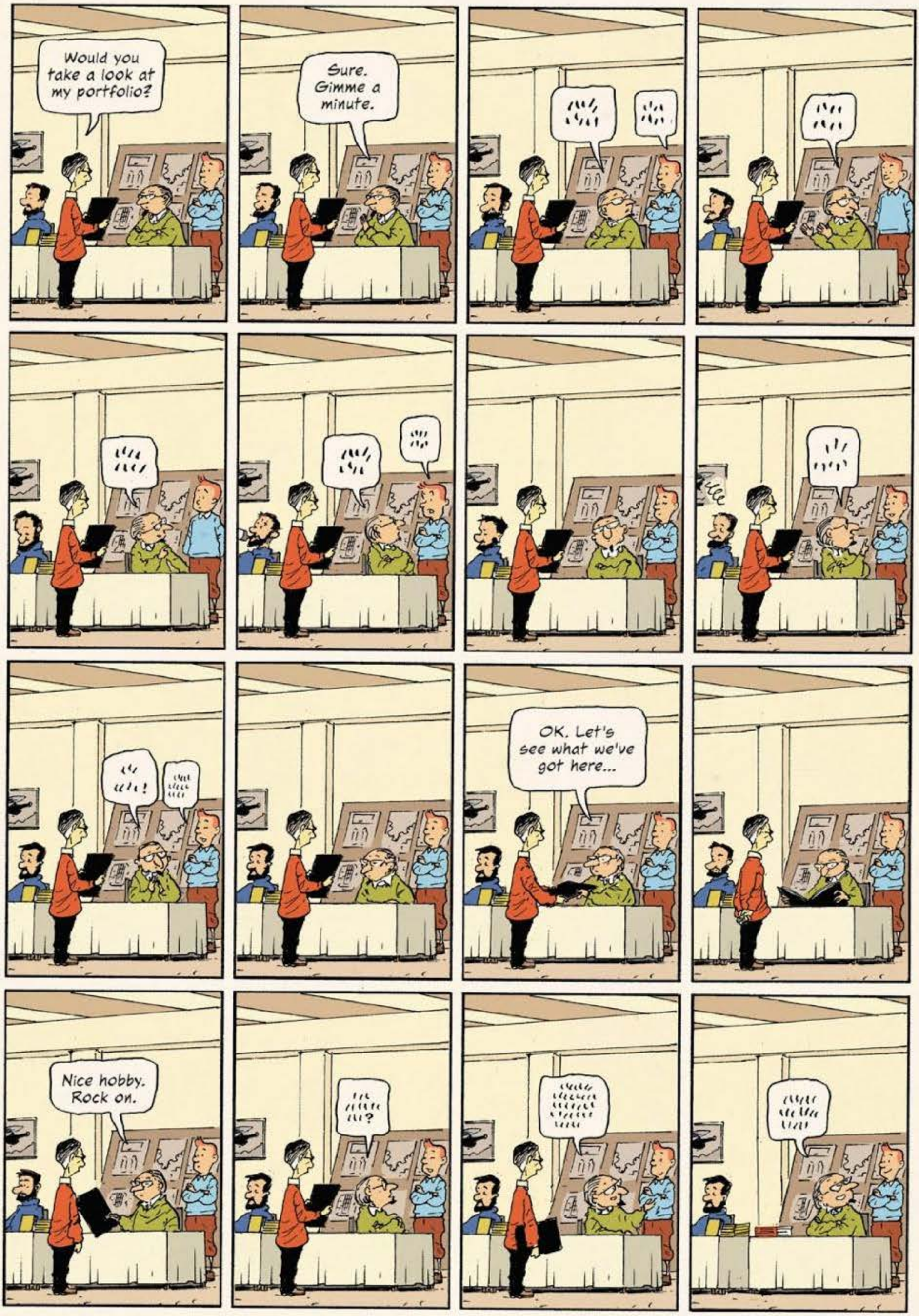
THE KING OF COMICS

PART TWO

by Charlie Chan



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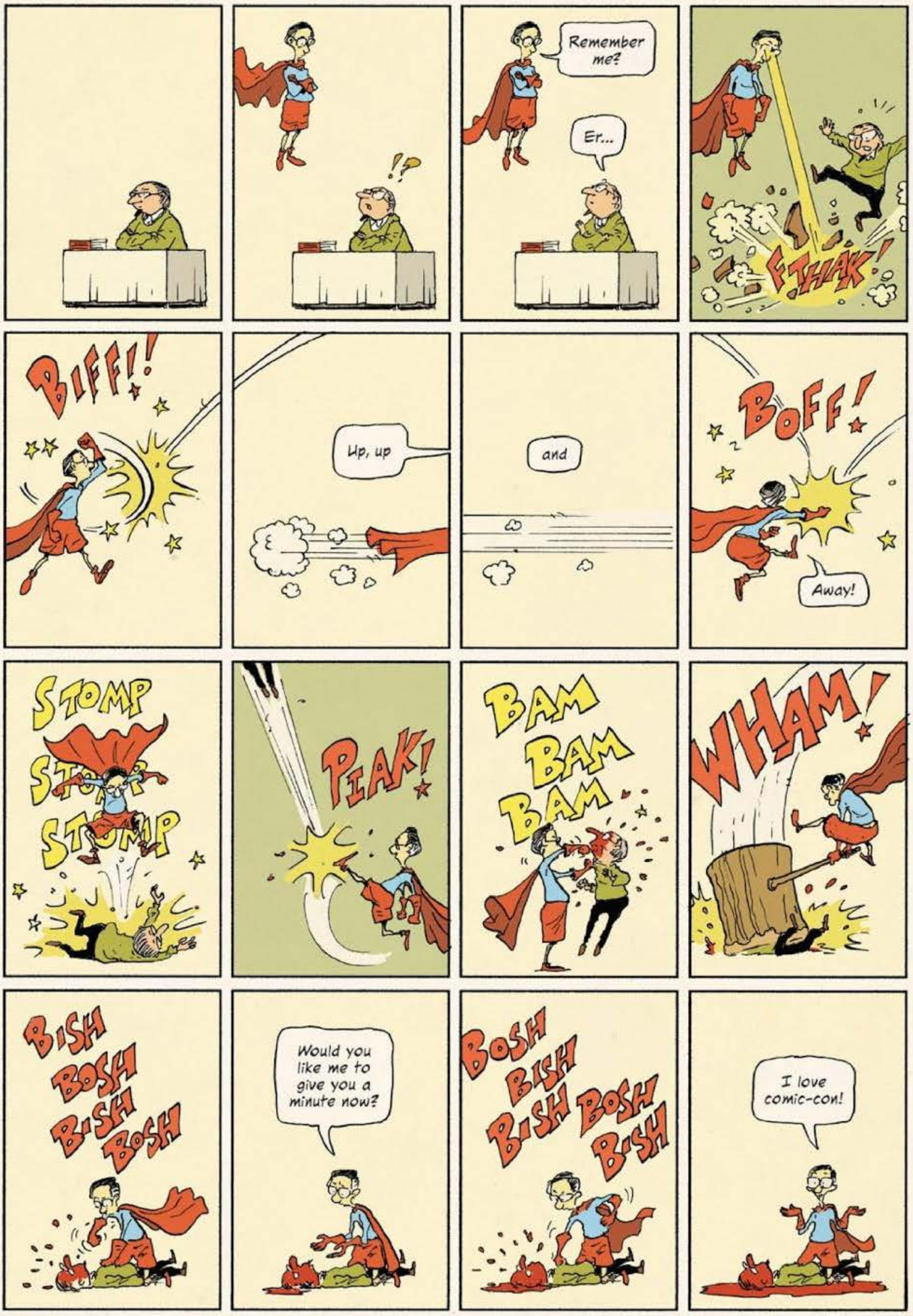
THE KING OF COMICS

PART THREE

by Charlie Chan



Chan's San Diego Comic-Con experience turned out to be a mixture of excitement and disappointments. He would write that "*It had given me a glimpse of what comics and a comics community could aspire to be. But I remained an outsider looking in, unable to become a member of the club, however much I longed to do so.*"

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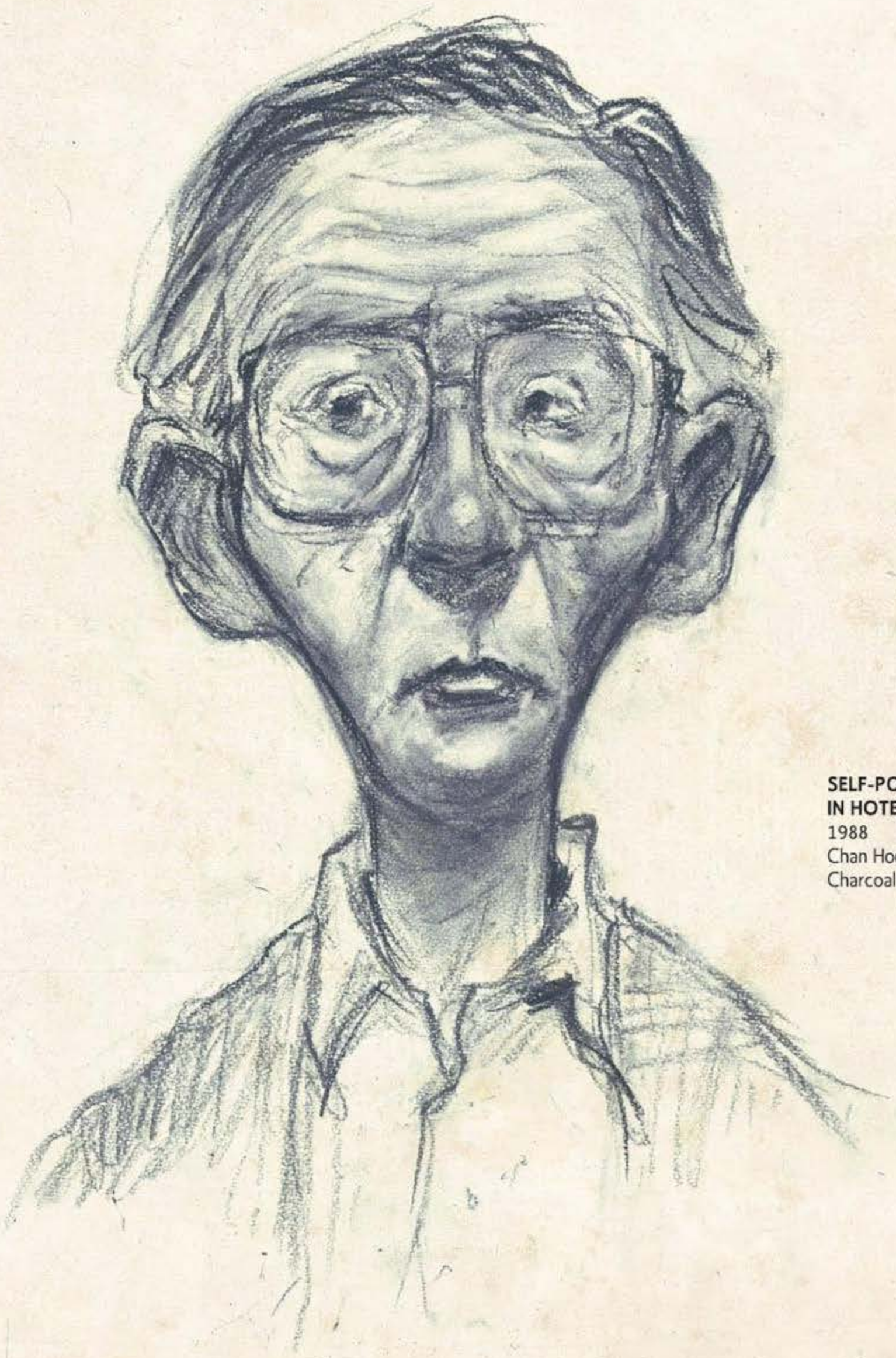

SELF-PORTRAIT IN HOTEL ROOM
1988
Chan Hock Chye
Charcoal on paper

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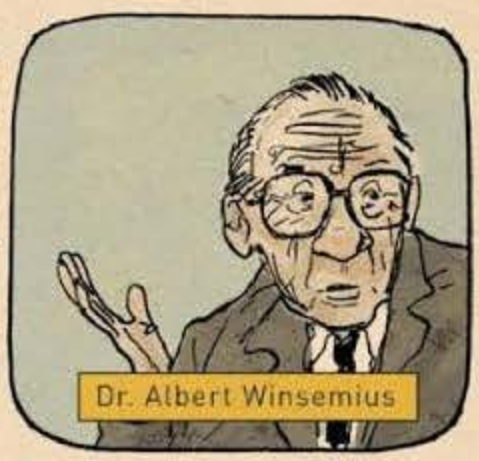
HAVE WE STARTED?

OK.

KOFF

WHEN I FIRST CAME TO SINGAPORE AS THE LEADER OF A **UNITED NATIONS** ECONOMIC SURVEY TEAM IN 1960, I HAD HIGH HOPES FOR IT.

I SAW PEOPLE IN THE STREETS REPAIRING THINGS... AXLES FROM MOTOR-CARS, MAKING TWO BICYCLES OUT OF THREE OLD ONES...



AND I GOT A SENSE THAT THE PEOPLE HERE HAD A HIGH **APTITUDE** FOR MANUFACTURING...

SO I WAS SURE THAT, GIVEN A CHANCE, IT COULD REALLY DEVELOP, REALLY GROW.

IN MY REPORT, I SAID: GET RID OF THE **COMMUNISTS!** BECAUSE THEY ARE CAUSING UNREST, PREVENTING GROWTH. SO **GET RID** OF THEM.

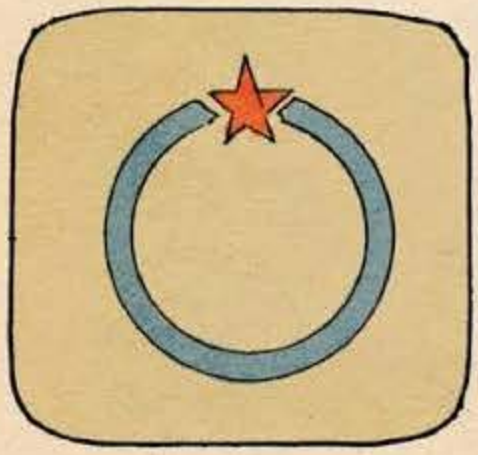
OTHERWISE, SINGAPORE IS GOING TO GO DOWN THE DRAIN, **SINK** INTO THE MUD!

SO YOU CAN IMAGINE MY DISMAY WHEN I LEARNED THAT THE **BARISAN SOSIALIS** HAD WON THE 1963 ELECTIONS.

BECAUSE, YOU KNOW, I'D MET THEIR LEADERS: LIM CHIN SIONG, FONG SWEE SUAN, JAMES PUTHUCHEARY, SIDNEY WOODHULL...

AND, TO ME, THEY SEEMED TO HAVE BEEN STUCK IN A **COMMUNIST** MINDSET THAT WOULD HAVE **DESTROYED** SINGAPORE.

BUT ONE DAY, OUT OF THE BLUE, I GOT A CALL...



AND IT WAS **PUTHUCHEARY**...! HE SAID THEY WANTED MY ADVICE, MY HELP.

FRANKLY, I WAS TAKEN ABACK. BUT WHAT I CAME TO SEE WAS THAT, THERE CAN BE ONE THING YOU **SAY** IN THE STRUGGLE FOR POWER...

AND ANOTHER YOU **DO**, WHEN YOU COME FACE TO FACE WITH THE REALITIES OF ECONOMIC **SURVIVAL**.

AND CHIN SIONG... WELL, HE CAME ROUND... WAS A PRACTICAL MAN, AS HISTORY HAS PROVEN...

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THANKS, SIMON! WE'LL BE HEARING FROM P.M. LIM HIMSELF IN A LIVE BROADCAST OF HIS ANNUAL BIRTHDAY SPEECH IN JUST A LITTLE WHILE.

BUT FOR THOSE OF YOU WHO CAN'T WAIT, HERE ARE SOME HIGHLIGHTS FROM OUR **EXCLUSIVE** INTERVIEW WITH THE PRIME MINISTER LAST YEAR, AT THE ISTANA!

A CULT OF PERSONALITY?

YES, I'VE HEARD THAT BEFORE.

YOU KNOW, ALL MY LIFE, I'VE HAD THESE LABELS THROWN AT ME.

COMMUNIST, DEMAGOGUE, DICTATOR...

CHARLATAN.

RRMMBLL

BUT ANYONE WHO'S PAID ANY ATTENTION TO THE **FACTS** WILL KNOW THAT I ONLY DID WHAT WAS **NECESSARY** FOR SINGAPORE.

THIEF.

KKKRAK

BACK IN THE DAY, THERE WERE THOSE LIKE LEE KUAN YEW, WHO THOUGHT THAT SINGAPORE COULD NOT SURVIVE WITHOUT MERGER WITH MALAYA.

BUT I HAD **FAITH** IN OUR PEOPLE, AND I KNEW THAT THERE WAS NO POINT IN JOINING THE FEDERATION ON THE WRONG TERMS...

...AND IF WE COULDN'T GET THE TERMS **RIGHT**, THEN WE SHOULD, AND **COULD**, MAKE IT ON OUR OWN.

SPEAKING OF LEE KUAN YEW, WHAT WOULD YOUR MESSAGE BE TO HIM TODAY?

USURPER.

KRRAKKK

WELL... I WOULD SAY THAT I HAD BEEN IMPRESSED BY HIM FROM THE MOMENT WE MET.

AND THAT HE COULD HAVE PLAYED A **BIG**, AND INDEED IMPORTANT, ROLE IN OUR NATION'S PROGRESS, HAD IT NOT BEEN FOR SOME PERSONAL ISSUES.

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YOU WOULDN'T DESCRIBE YOUR DIFFERENCES AS **IDEOLOGICAL**?

WELL, OF **COURSE** WE HAD OUR DIFFERENCES IN OPINION...

I WAS CHINESE-EDUCATED, HE WENT TO ENGLISH SCHOOLS, TO CAMBRIDGE... WE HAD VERY DIFFERENT BACKGROUNDS AND MINDSETS.

BUT, AS I'VE SAID, THE REAL WORLD ALWAYS TRUMPS THEORY... AND I BELIEVE THAT WE WERE BOTH MOVING TOWARDS THE SAME DIRECTION.

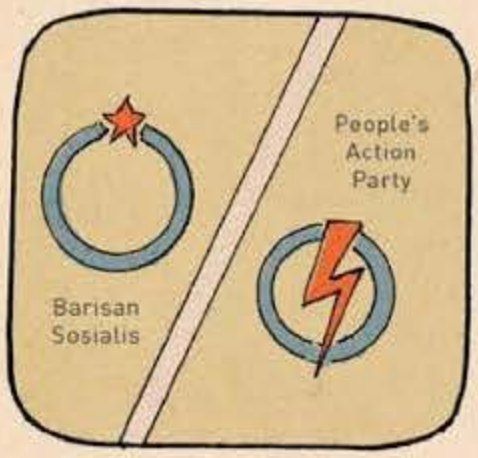
FOR EXAMPLE, HE LEARNT CHINESE, I LEARNT ENGLISH, AND WE BOTH IMPROVED OUR MALAY... WE BOTH DID WHAT NEEDED TO BE DONE.

AT THE END OF THE DAY, IT WAS ALWAYS MORE A **POLITICAL** STRUGGLE OF ONE PARTY AGAINST ANOTHER WITHIN A DEMOCRATIC SYSTEM.

AND WHAT ABOUT RUMOURS THAT HE WAS **EXILED**?

OH, NO, NO.

NO TRUTH IN THAT AT ALL.



WE HELD NO GRUDGES AGAINST THEM. IT WAS ALWAYS JUST A **CONSTITUTIONAL** BATTLE. SURE, THERE WAS ALWAYS LOOSE TALK OF 'FIXING' OPPONENTS, THREATS...

BUT NO ONE WAS EVER GOING TO **SHOOT** ANYONE, OR PULL OFF ANYONE'S FINGERNAILS!

IF YOU LOOK AT ALL THE FORMER P.A.P. MEMBERS, MEN LIKE TOH CHIN CHYE, GOH KENG SWEE, AND JEK YEUN THONG...

THEY'VE ALL **STAYED** AND BECOME CAPTAINS OF INDUSTRY, OR LEADERS IN THEIR CHOSEN FIELDS HERE IN SINGAPORE.

IF I COULD SAY SOMETHING TO KUAN YEW NOW, IT WOULD BE THIS...

THAT HE NEVER HAD TO LEAVE SINGAPORE.

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AND THAT HE WOULD BE WELCOMED BACK WITH OPEN ARMS.

HICKORY

DICKORY

DOCK

EVEN HIS OWN SON, BRIGADIER GENERAL LEE—

WE INTERRUPT THIS BROADCAST TO BRING YOU **BREAKING** NEWS.

A MASSIVE **FIRE** HAS BROKEN OUT AT THE **BUKIT HO SWEE** CONSERVATION SITE.

THE PRESERVATION OF THE HISTORIC DISTRICT HAS BEEN A TOP NATIONAL PRIORITY SINCE THE TIME OF OUR INDEPENDENCE, AND STRINGENT FIRE SAFETY MEASURES HAD ALWAYS BEEN IN PLACE.

THE CLOCK STRIKES ONE

BREAKING NEWS

YOUR TIME IS DONE

POLICE SAY IT IS STILL TOO EARLY TO ASCERTAIN THE CAUSE OF THE BLAZE.

SEVERAL EYEWITNESSES, HOWEVER, CLAIM TO HAVE SEEN A FIGURE, A **MAN IN WHITE**, AT THE SCENE SHORTLY BEFORE THE FIRE BEGAN.

THE GHOSTLY FIG—

WAIT, **WHAT...?** **GHOSTLY...?** ARE WE SERIOUSLY REPORTING THIS?! **GHOSTS??**

STILL TOO EARLY OR US AY WITH IY CER-

AND IT CAN FLY!

Fire At Bukit Ho Swee

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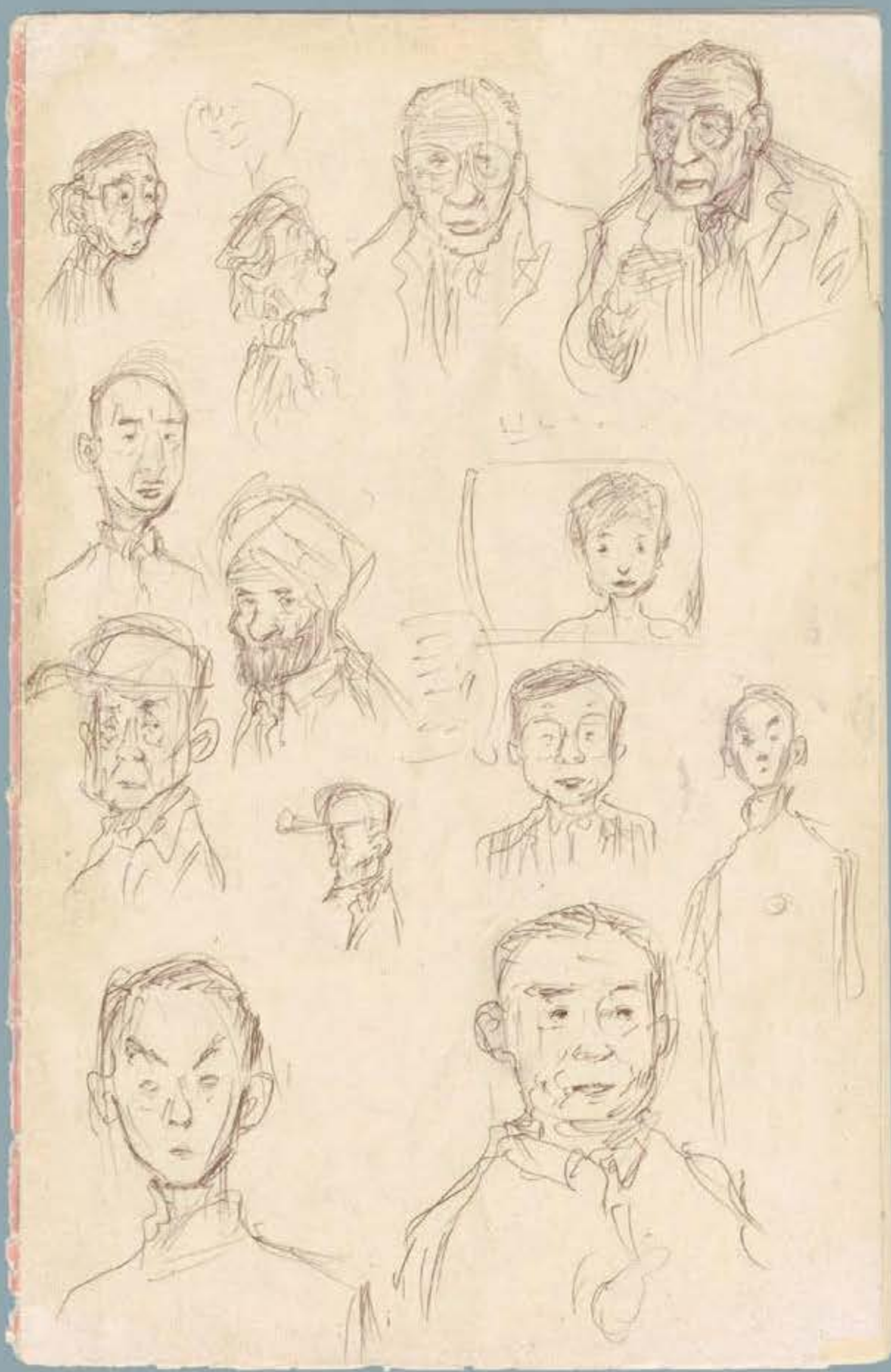
ALBERT WINSEMIUS
Dutch Economist



LIM CHIN SIONG

Above
DAYS OF AUGUST
Character Sketches
1988
Chan Hock Chye

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The Malayan government's **fear** of communism leads to a fraught relationship with Singapore.

TUNKU ABDUL RAHMAN SAYS HE WILL NOT TOLERATE A LITTLE CHINA ON HIS DOORSTEP.

As a result, **merger** never takes place.

SHOW THEM!

SHOW THEM WE CAN STAND ON OUR OWN TWO FEET!

With help from Dr. Winsemius, the Barisan Sosialis is able to push through social and economic reforms that help to secure Singapore's survival.

Dr. Albert Winsemi

IN MY REPO

GOVERNMENT ANNOUNCES **PAY CUTS** FOR ALL CIVIL SERVANTS EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY.

Relying on their control of the trade unions, as well as a mild cult of personality built around Lim, they are able to ensure labour unity and discipline.

Over the years, progress and stability is achieved.

I'M AT THE COUNTING CENTRE WHERE THE RESULTS SHOW THAT THE RULING BARISAN SOSIALIS HAVE ROMPED HOME WITH 80% OF THE VOTE IN THE 1972 GENERAL ELECTIONS!

ELECTIONS 1972

And even relations with Malaya eventually thaw.

HISTORIC FIRST MEETING BETWEEN NKU ABDUL RAHMAN D LIM CHIN SIONG.

Lee Kuan Yew, having fled to Cambodia, installs himself as a fierce critic-in-exile against the Barisan regime.

IT IS FUNDAMENTALLY ***ABSURD*** TO SEPARATE TWO TERRITORIES AND PEOPLES CONNECTED BY GEOGRAPHY, ECONOMICS AND TIES OF KINSHIP...

HOW ***LONG*** CAN SINGAPORE SURVIVE ON ITS OWN, WITH ITS ***MEAGRE*** RESOURCES?

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Charlie Chan himself pops up as a character in the story.

IN OTHER NEWS, THE OPENING OF THE **CHAN HOCK CHYE MUSEUM** BROUGHT CHEER TO A GROUP OF STUDENTS FROM PEI HUA PRIMARY.

CHAN, KNOWN AS THE **"TEZUKA OF SINGAPORE"**, WAS AT HAND TO GIVE THE EXCITED GUESTS A PERSONAL TOUR OF HIS MUSEUM.

At first, it appears to be little more than a cameo role, with the narrative focused on the mysterious '**Man in White**'...

BLAMM

THE STRIKES ONE

A **vigilante** figure bent on wreaking havoc and destruction on the hitherto peaceful city-state.

BLAM

As well as the efforts of a trio of veteran **detectives** who try to track him down.

HE COULD NOT HAVE SET OFF THE BOMB FROM HERE...

THE SYSTEM IS DESIGNED SO THAT O SOMEONE WITH A SPE ACCESS CARD CAN G ACCESS...

WHAT DO YOU THINK, TAUFIK?

THE USUAL RULES DON'T APPLY WITH THIS ONE.

But when Chan is shown meeting Lim Chin Siong for the first time at the opening ceremony of a museum, it emerges that he has a bigger part to play in the tale.

YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE NATION HAVE BEEN **REMARKABLE.**

I'M SURE WE CAN ARRANGE TO HAVE

PRIME MINISTER, COULD I HAVE A WORD WITH YOU IN PRIVATE?

I'M SURE WE CAN ARRANGE TO HAVE YOU COME OVER TO THE ISTANA FOR LUNCH OR DINNER SOMETIME.

It is revealed that Chan has been working on a comic, depicting an alternative world in which the PAP and Lee Kuan Yew had **won** the 1963 elections.

PLEASE! YOU **HAVE** TO READ THIS!

PRIME MINISTER, ARE YOU AWARE HE IS WRITING A STORY WHERE **KUAN YEW** IS SITTING WHERE YOU ARE?

I'VE BEEN MEANING TO READ THAT MANUSCRIPT HE GAVE ME...

WORKING, WORKING ALL NIGHT, HARDLY SLEEPING. EVERY PANEL A PRAYER, A SHOT IN THE DARK.

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As the acts of **terror** continue unabated, sowing fear and uncertainty amongst the citizenry...

Chan reveals that he has been plagued by troubling **dreams** that the world that they inhabit is not the **real** one.

IN THAT WORLD... I'D HARDLY MADE A **CENT** WITH MY COMICS...

UNKNOWN, UNLOVED, JUST ANOTHER **LOST SOUL** IN THE DUSTHEAP OF HISTORY.

And that the Man in White represents **reality** trying to **reassert** itself, to force history back onto the path it was always supposed to have taken.

WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT, SIR?

He'd hoped that by depicting a world in which the PAP had triumphed, he might help to **placate** or **stave off** the forces threatening to destroy their present world...

...but now realised that a lack of **clear knowledge** of what that other world was **actually** like had doomed his plans to failure.

At the story's climax, we see the visage of the Man in White for the first time, his features resembling that of a young **Lee Kuan Yew**.

THE POWER OF THE ***WORD***, THE ***IMAGE***.

HE SAID HE WAS JUST GUESSING, WILD SPECULATIONS, NOTHING MORE.

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The inhabitants of this world make their final stand...

THIS IS **MY** WORLD, AND I'M NOT GIVING IT UP WITHOUT A FIGHT!

WE BUILT
STRONG, PROS
SINGAPORE...
DOES IT MATT
DID IT AND H

THESE THINGS ARE NOT FOR ME TO JUDGE...

I AM MERELY THE FORCE THAT RETURNS THE WORLD TO HOW IT HAS TO BE.

...but are ultimately **powerless** to stop the walls of their reality from crashing down around them.

Chan and Lim Chin Siong now find themselves thrown back in time to pre-independence Singapore.

Restored to their youth, and having seemingly been given a chance to reconsider all their choices, knowing now, to some degree, what the future has in store...

Lim Chin Siong

Chan Hock Chye

(This is accompanied by a stylistic shift, with the 4x4 panel grid previously used in the book abandoned in favour of looser configurations.)

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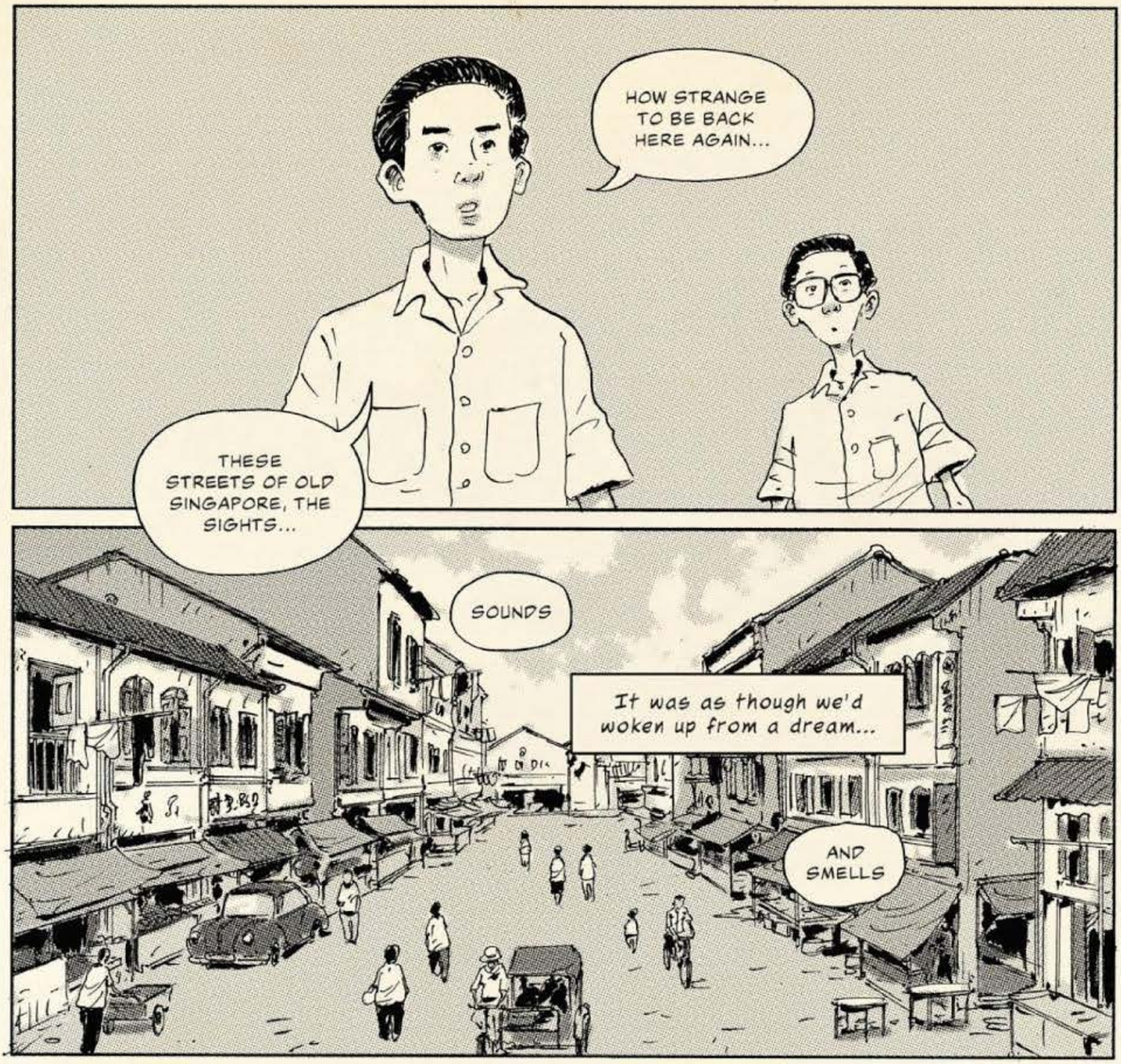

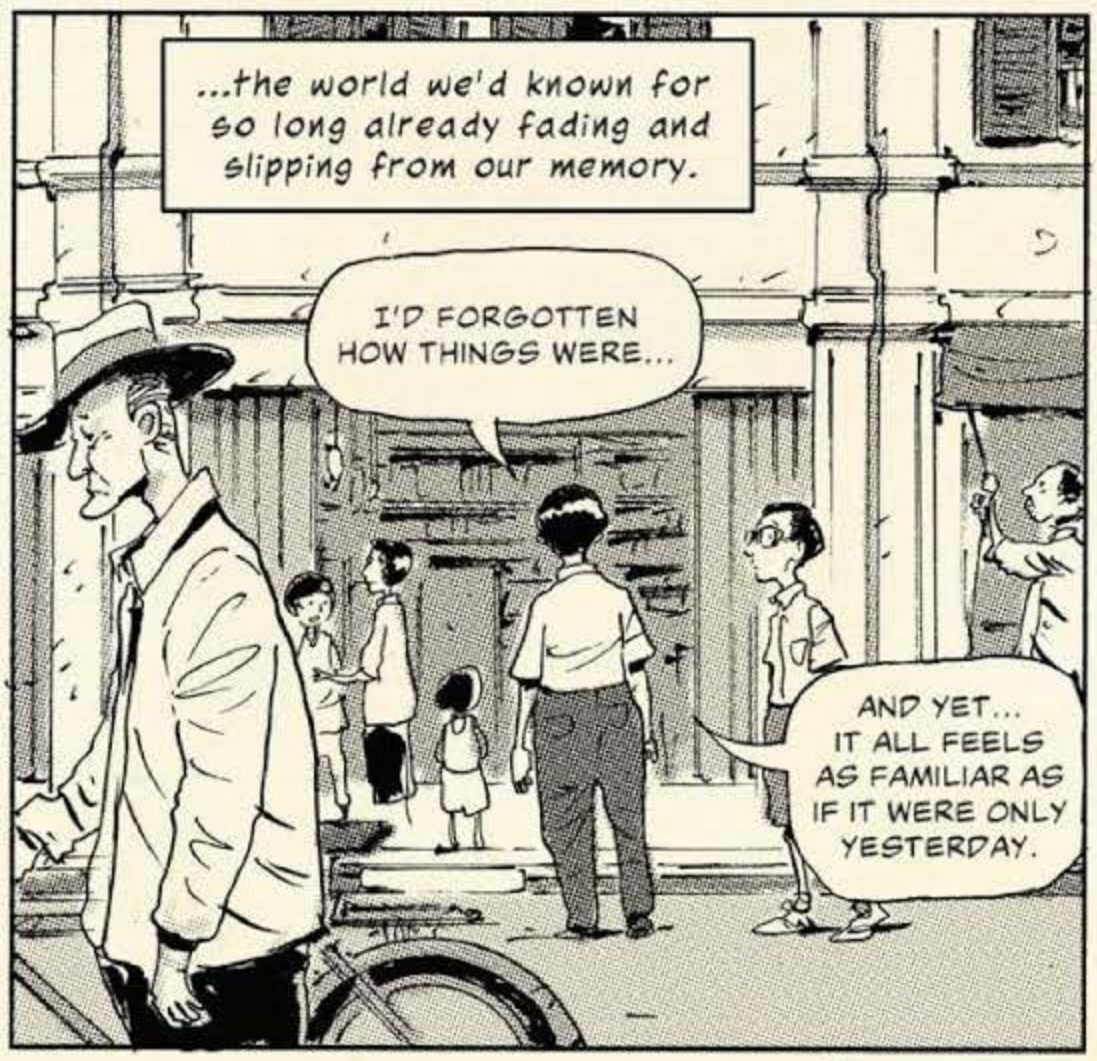

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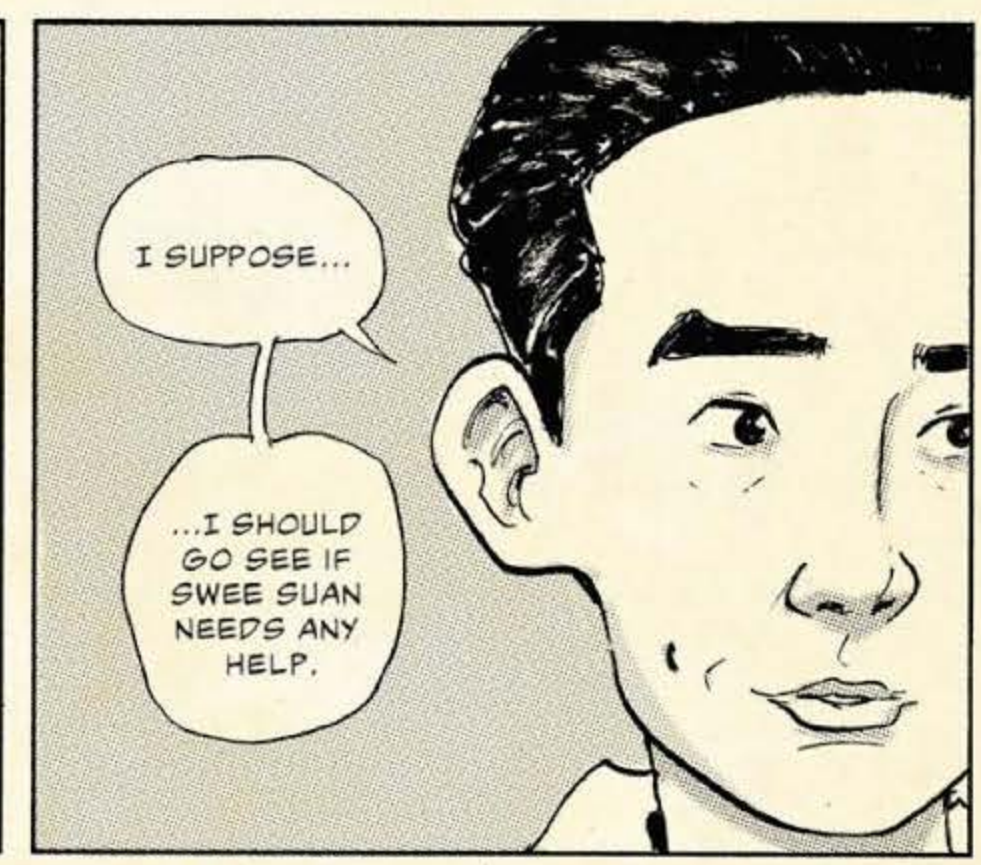

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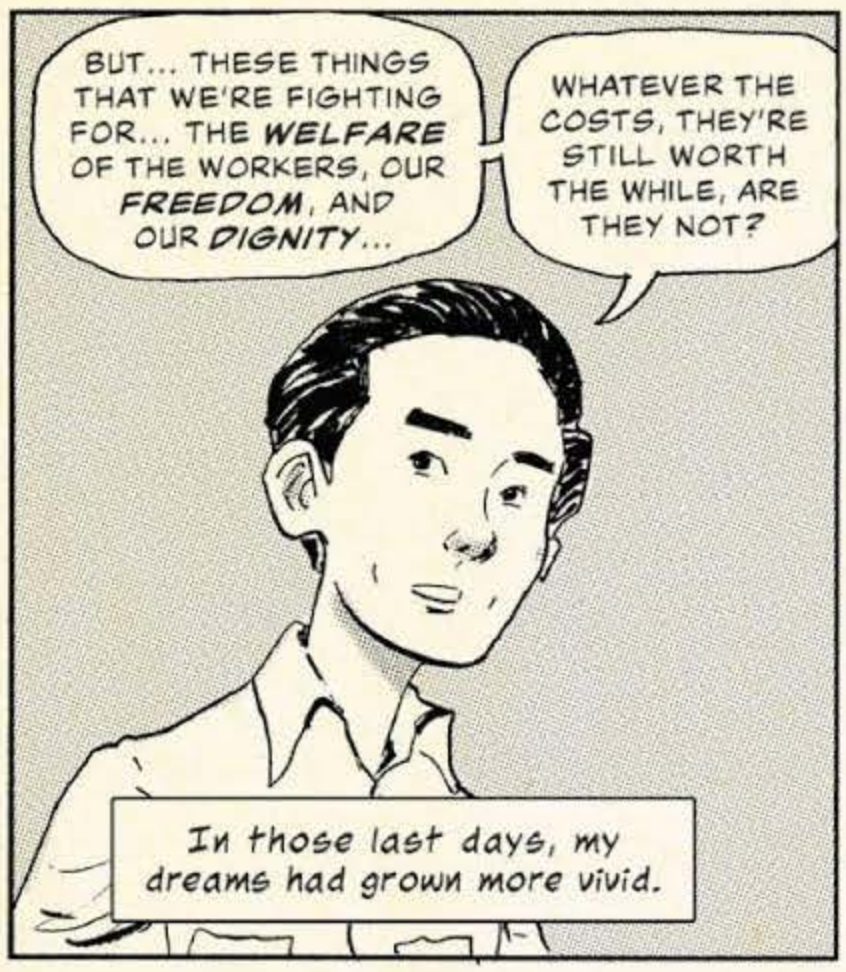

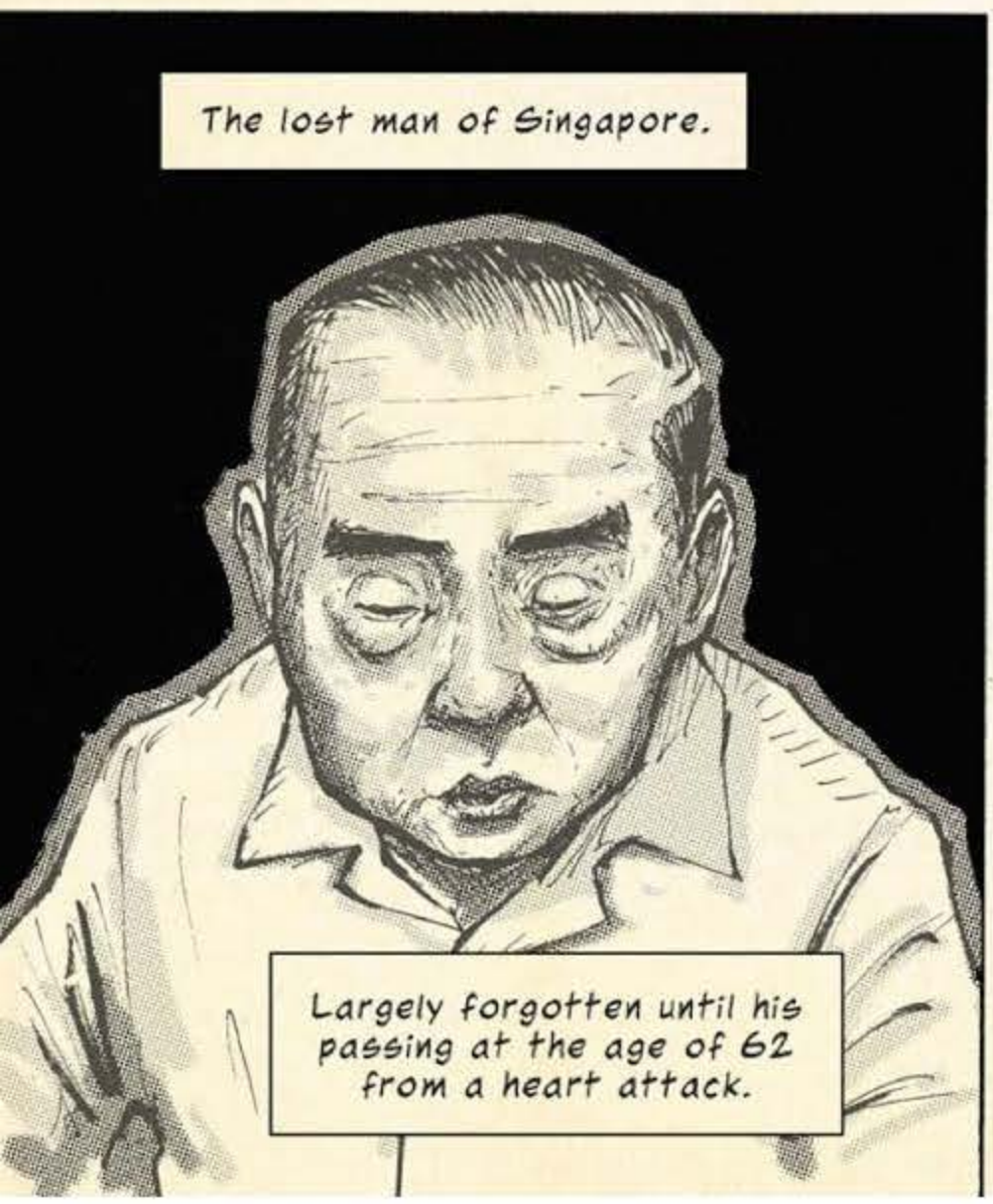

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I'm not sure why I didn't tell him.

Maybe because I knew that he would've followed his chosen path no matter what I said.

Or maybe... I was just afraid that he wouldn't.

Perhaps I wanted a world where he still made a mark, however briefly. Fought the good fight.

A moment in time, a breath, when he was our brightest star.

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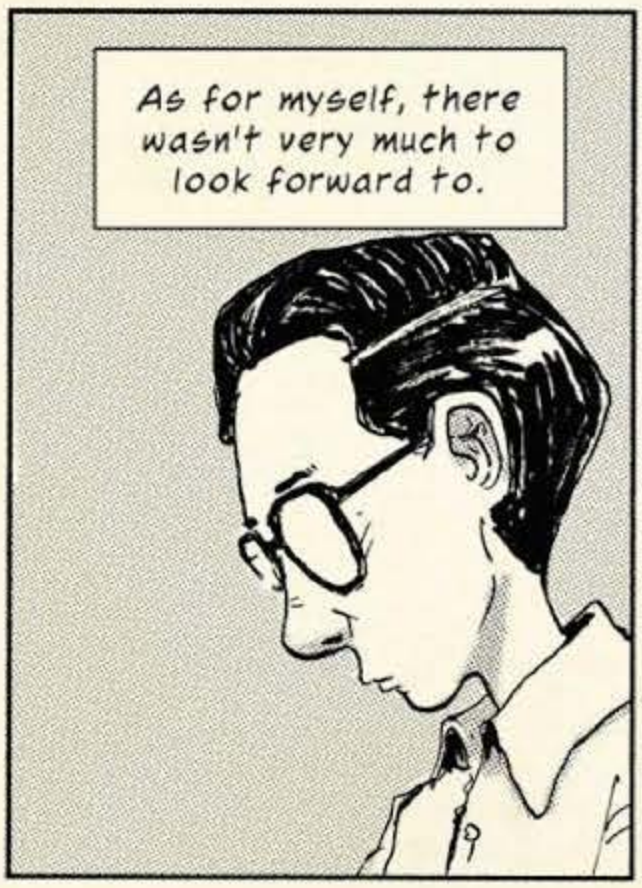

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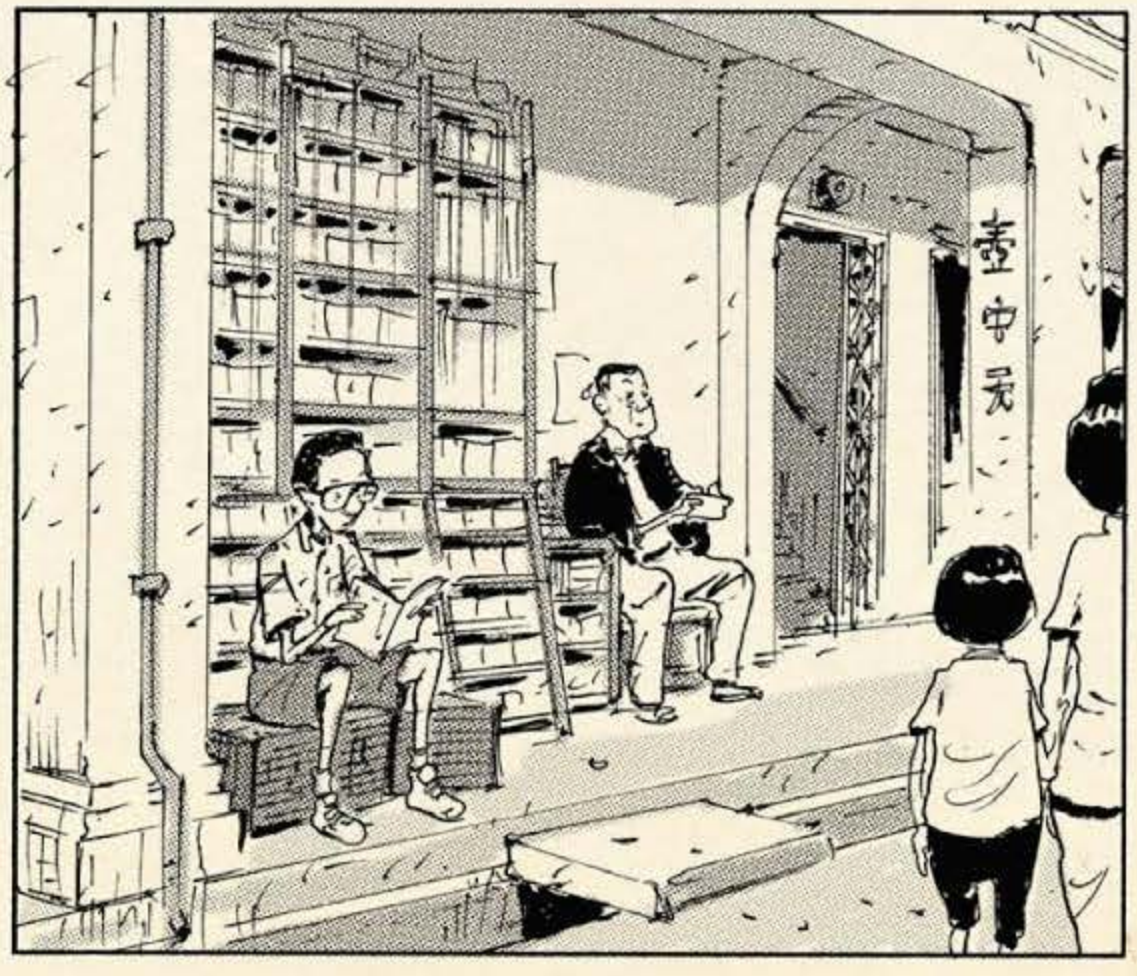

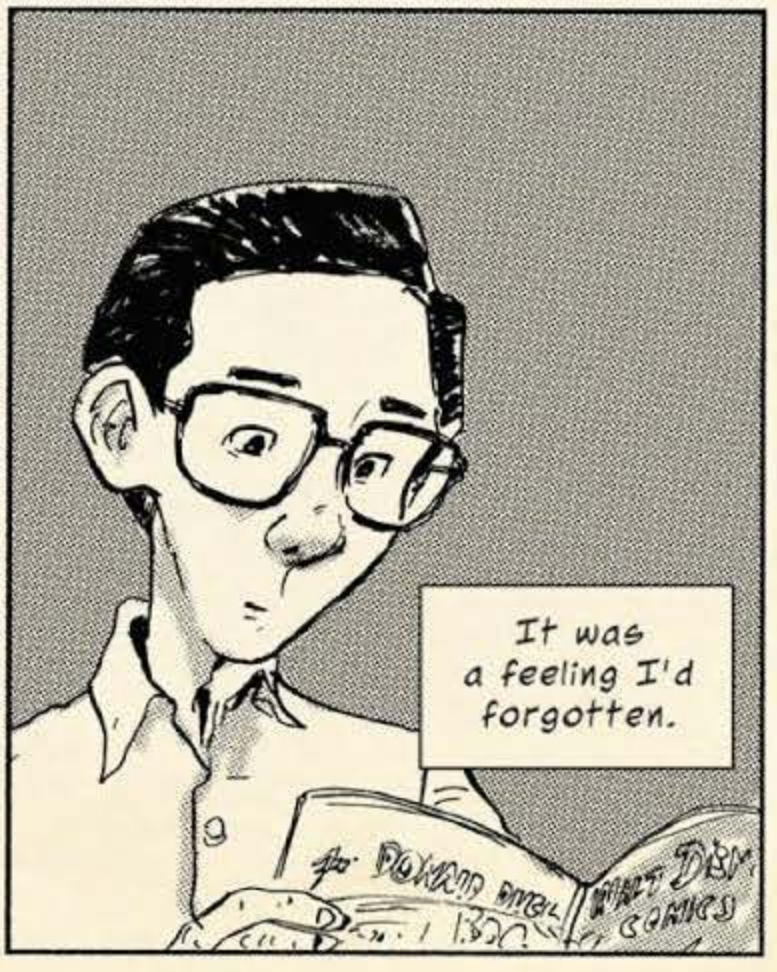

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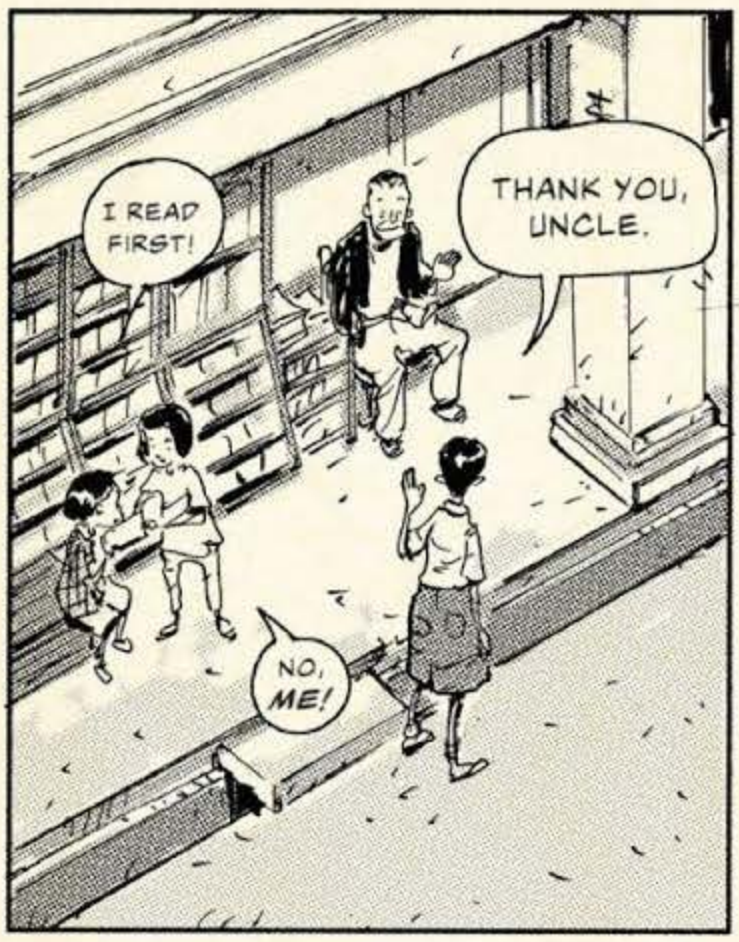

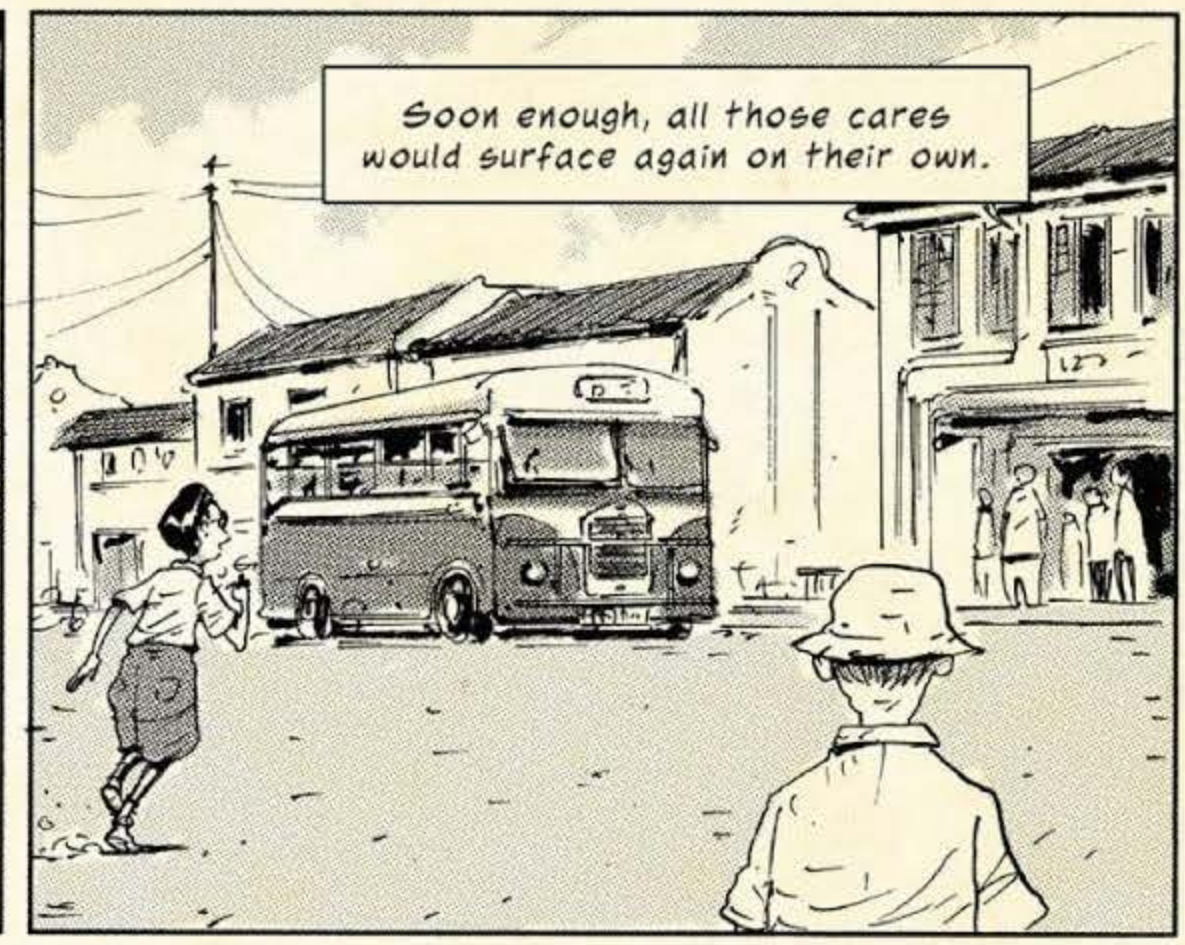

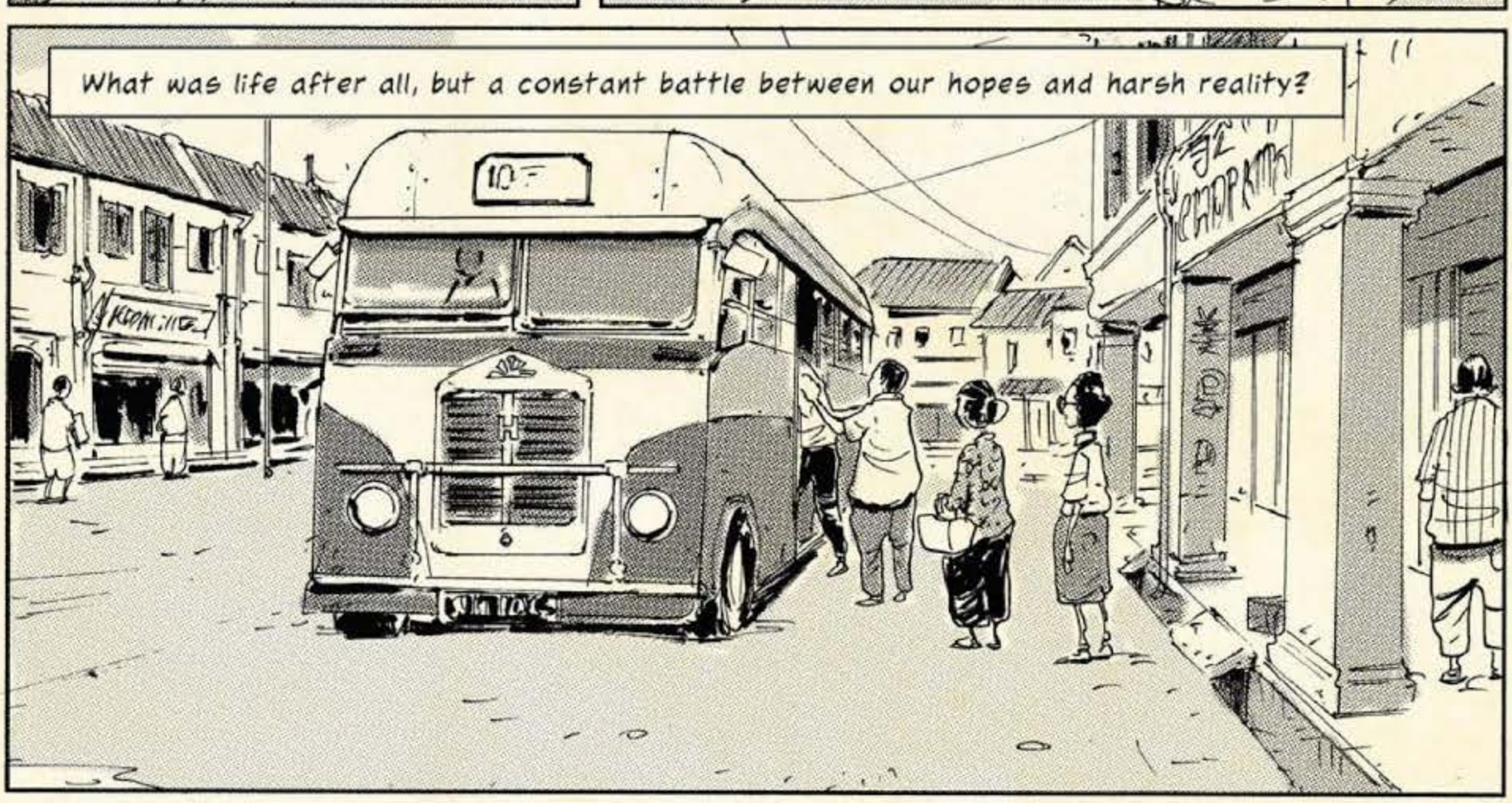

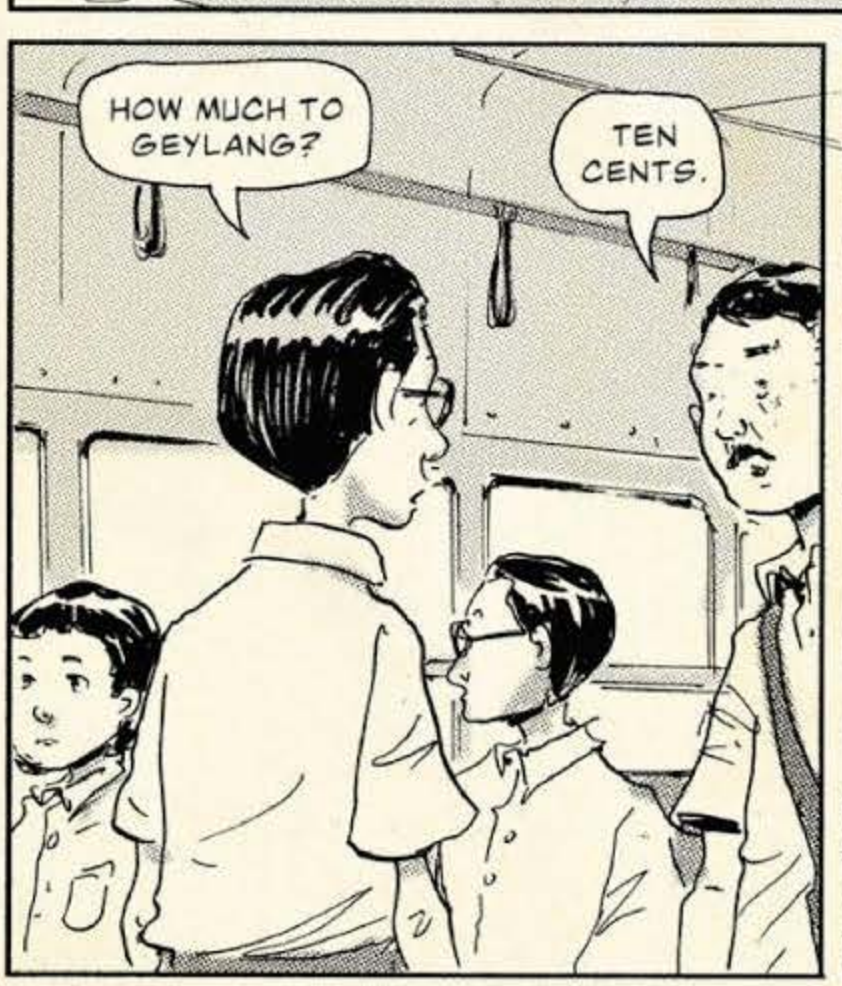

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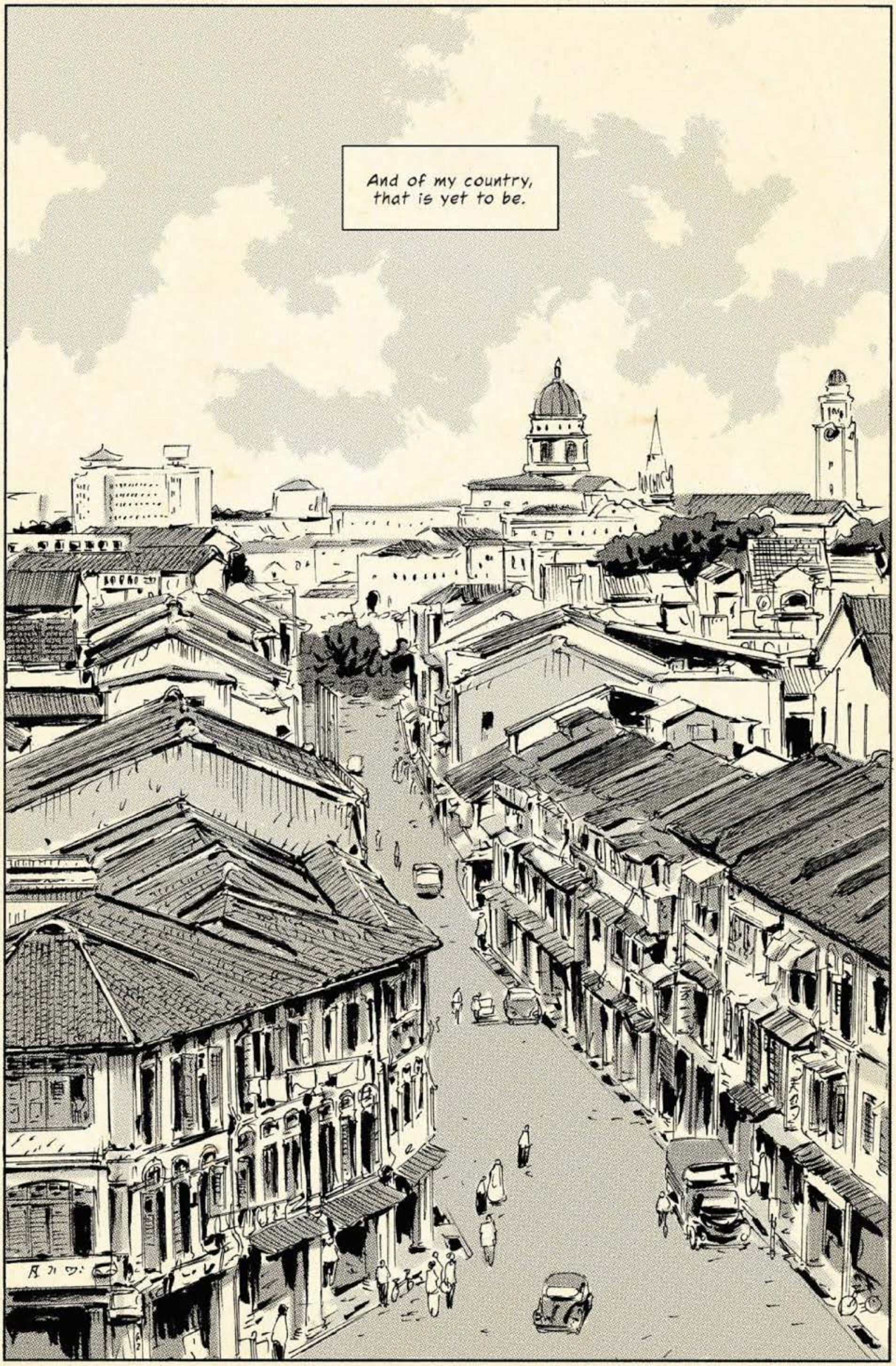

First embarked on in 1988, "*Days of August*" remained unfinished for many years. Chan says, "*I never quite knew how to finish the story... until I heard about Lim Chin Siong's passing. Although historical closure may be ever elusive, for the story at least, it marked an ending of sorts.*"

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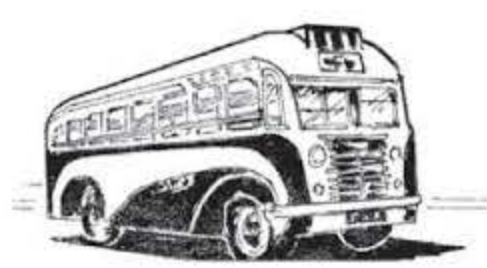
Epilogue

AN OLD MAN NOW, AFTER ALL

野草莓



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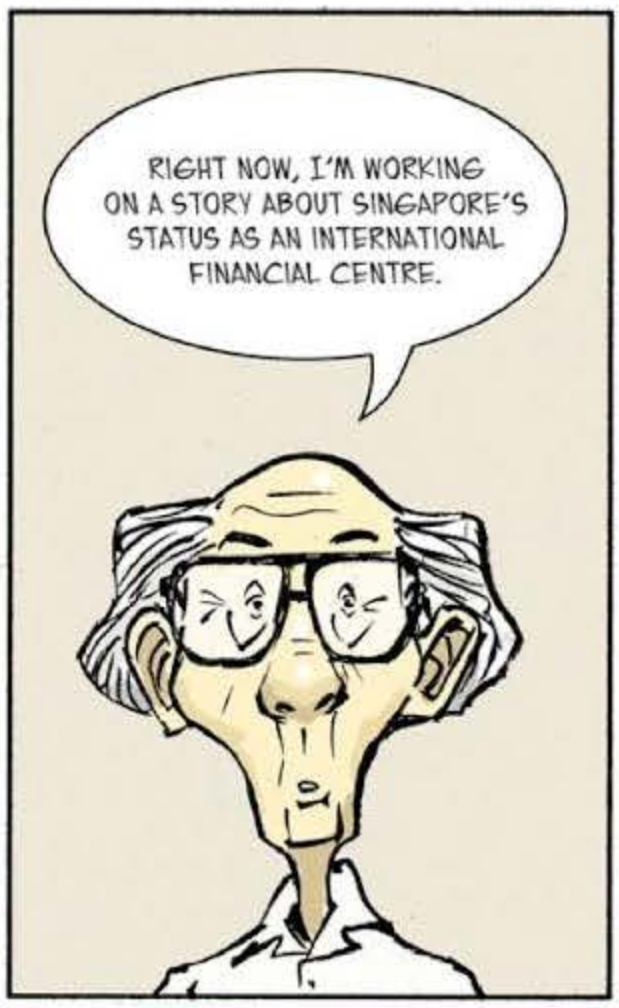
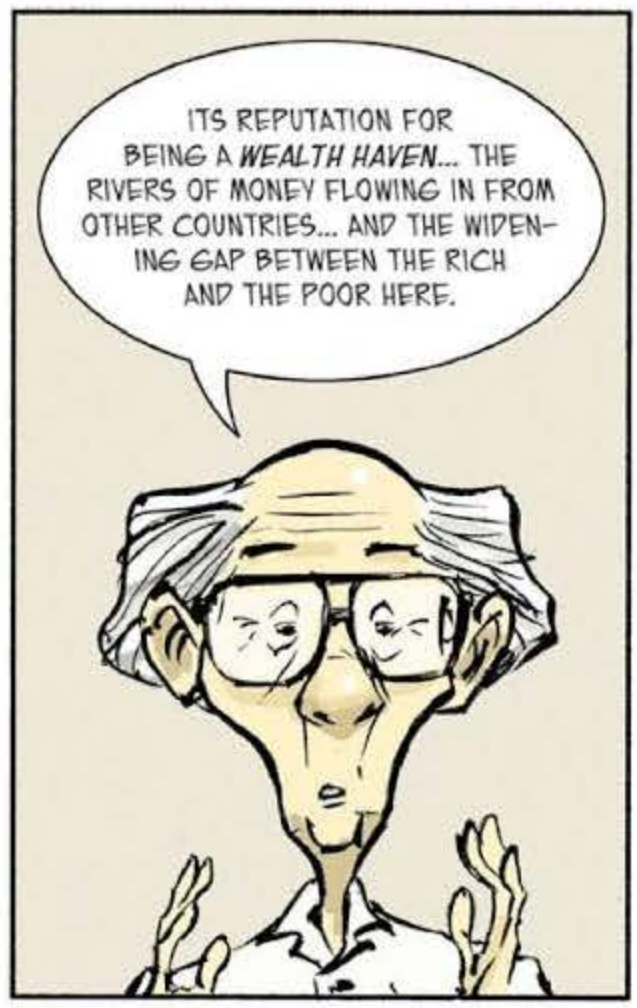
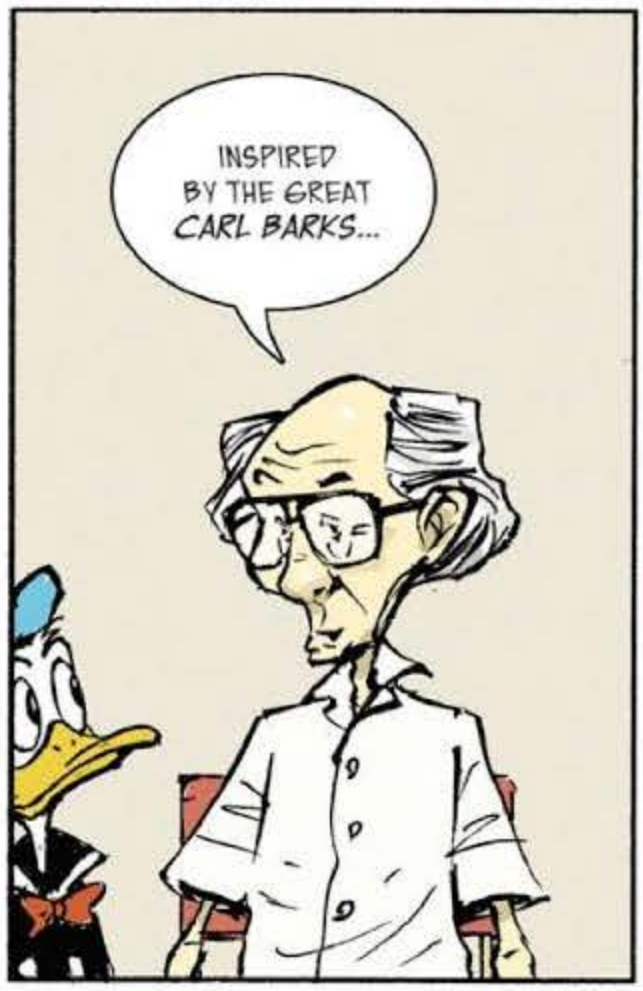
TIME AND TIDE (2012) | Chan Hock Chye | Oil on canvas

Portrait of Lee Kuan Yew at the age of 88. By the time he retired from office in 1990, Lee had served as the Prime Minister of Singapore for 31 years. He would continue to play an active and vocal role in the nation's politics until declining health led to a gradual withdrawal from public life in his final years. Lee's passing in 2015 prompted an unprecedented outpouring of public tributes and appraisals of his legacy, a testament to the profound impact he'd had on the development of the nation and its people.







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DATO DUCK in SINGAPORE

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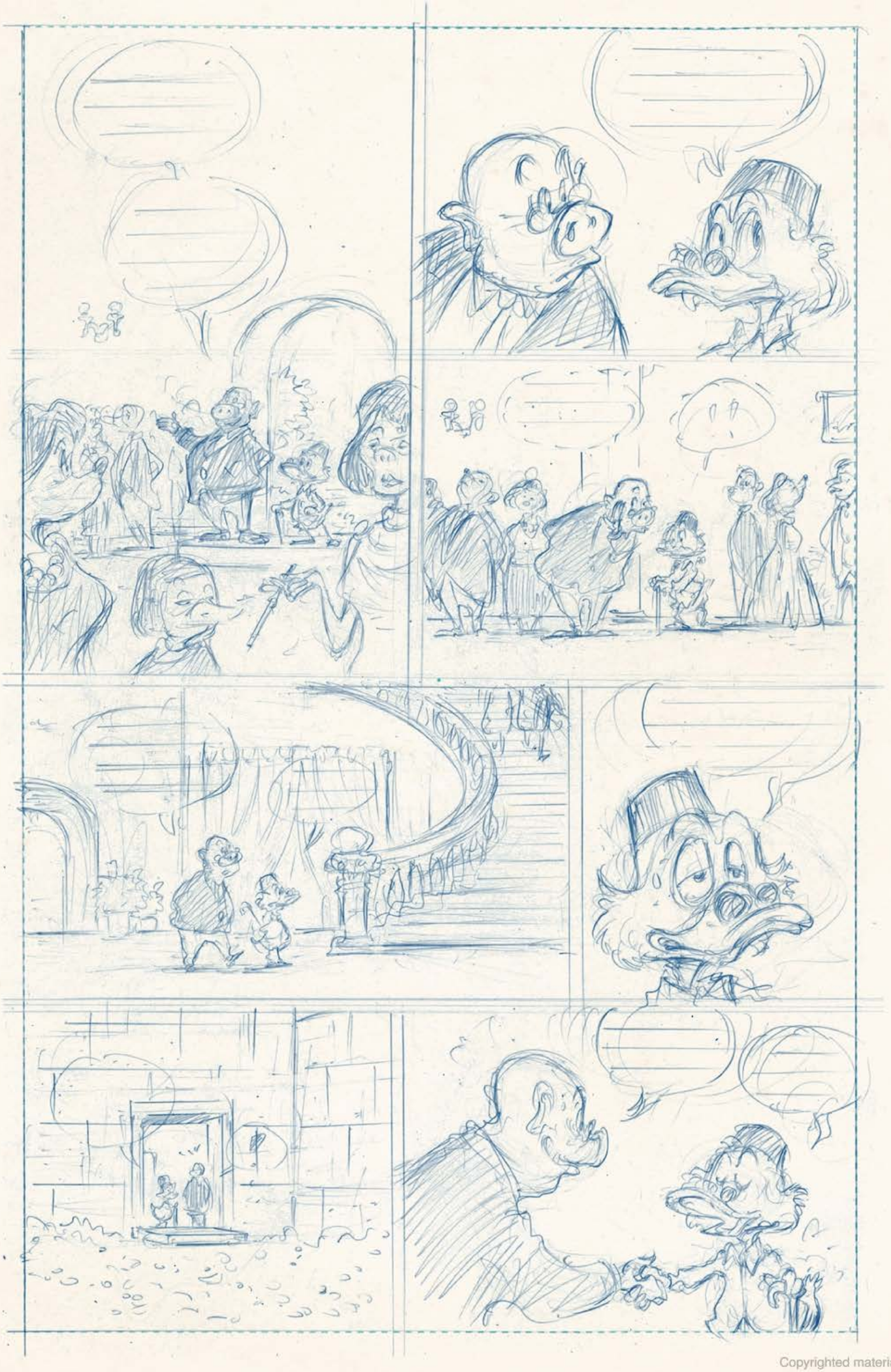

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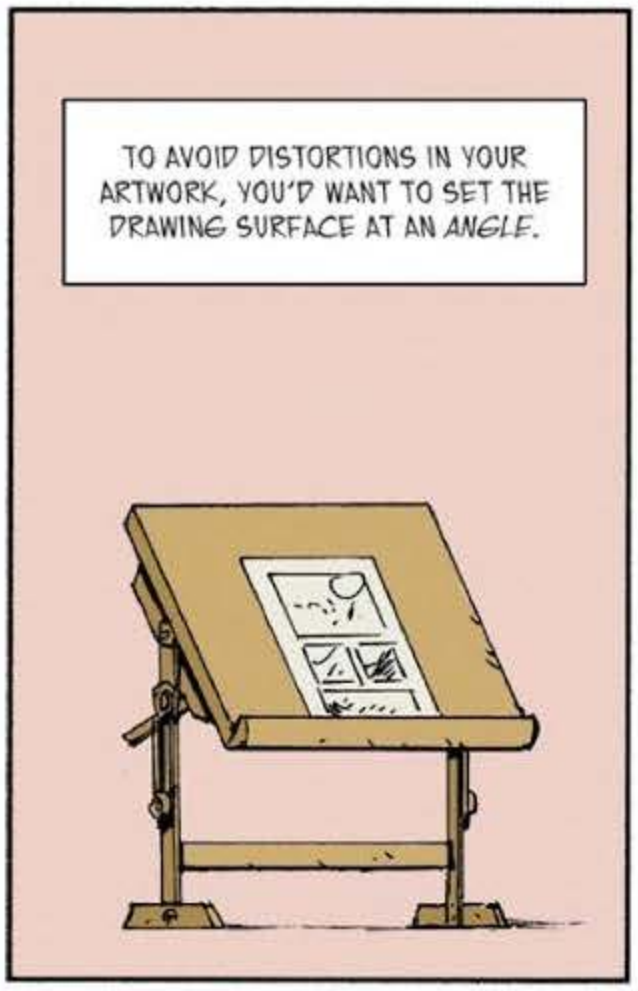

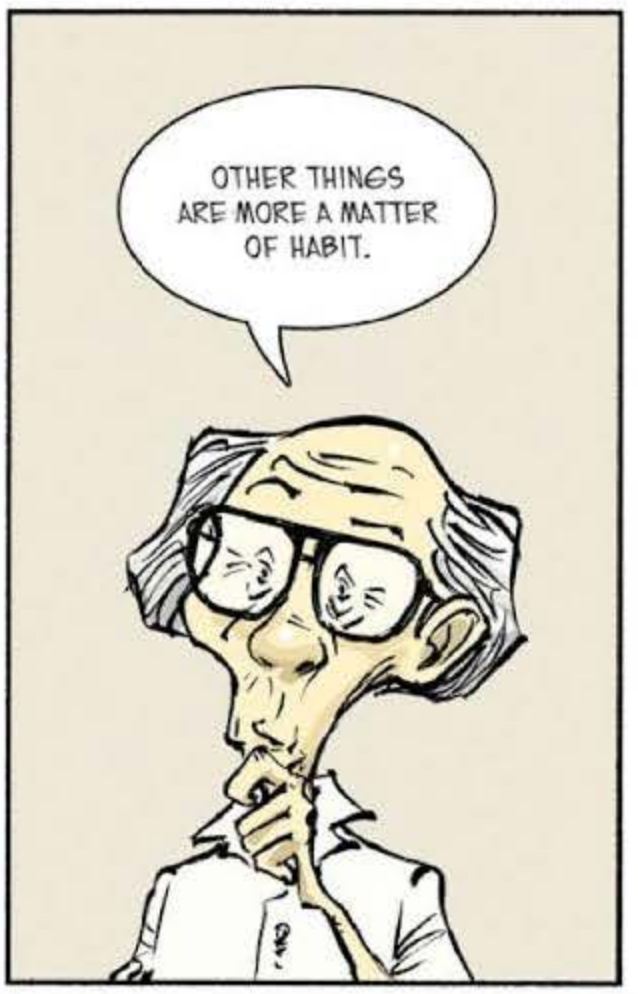

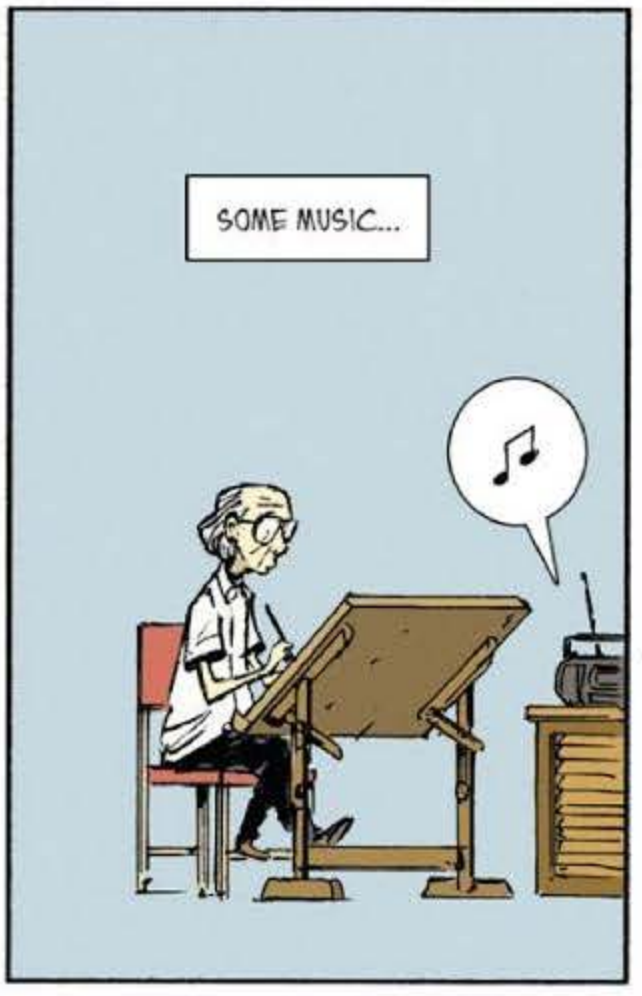

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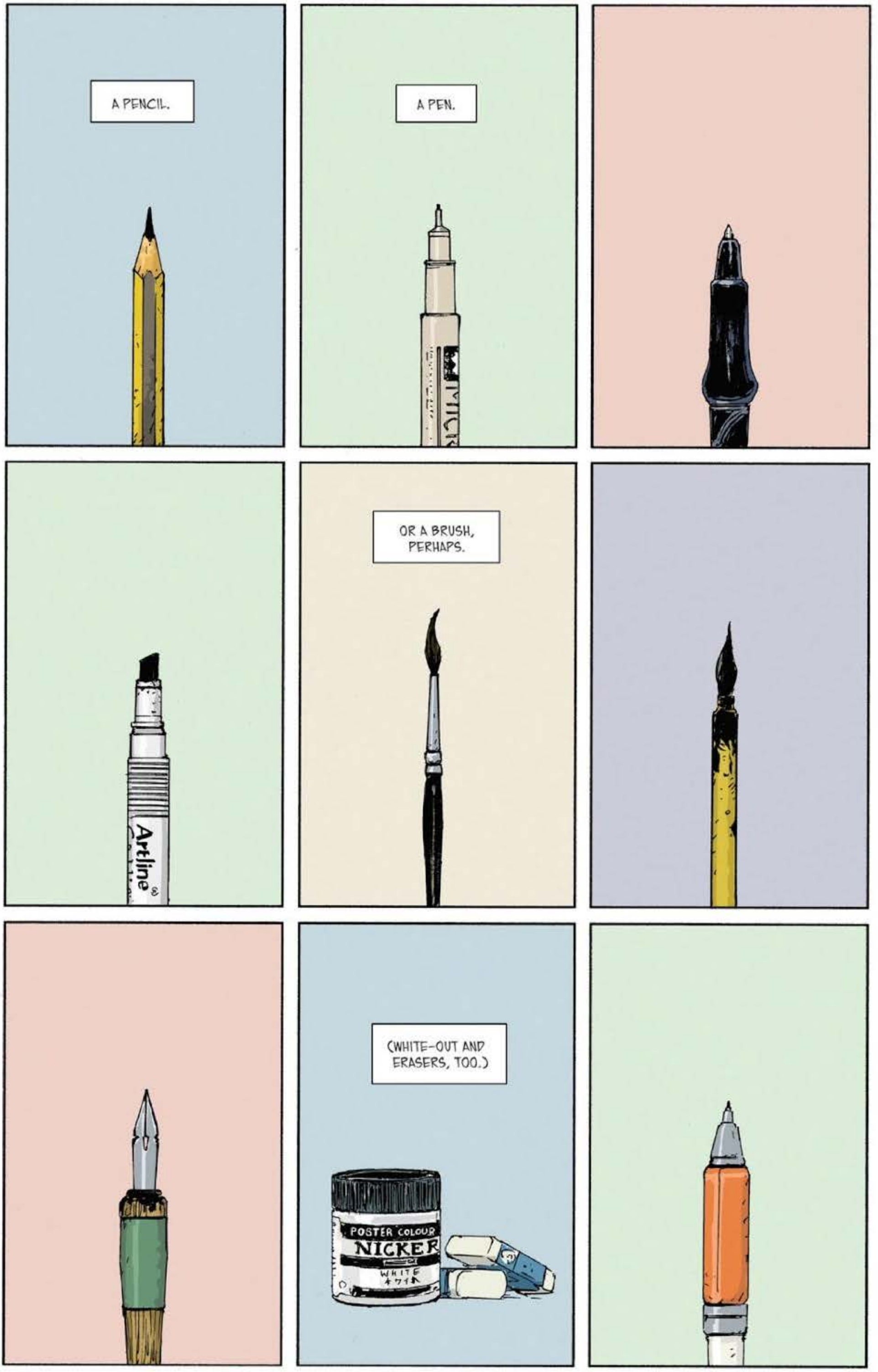

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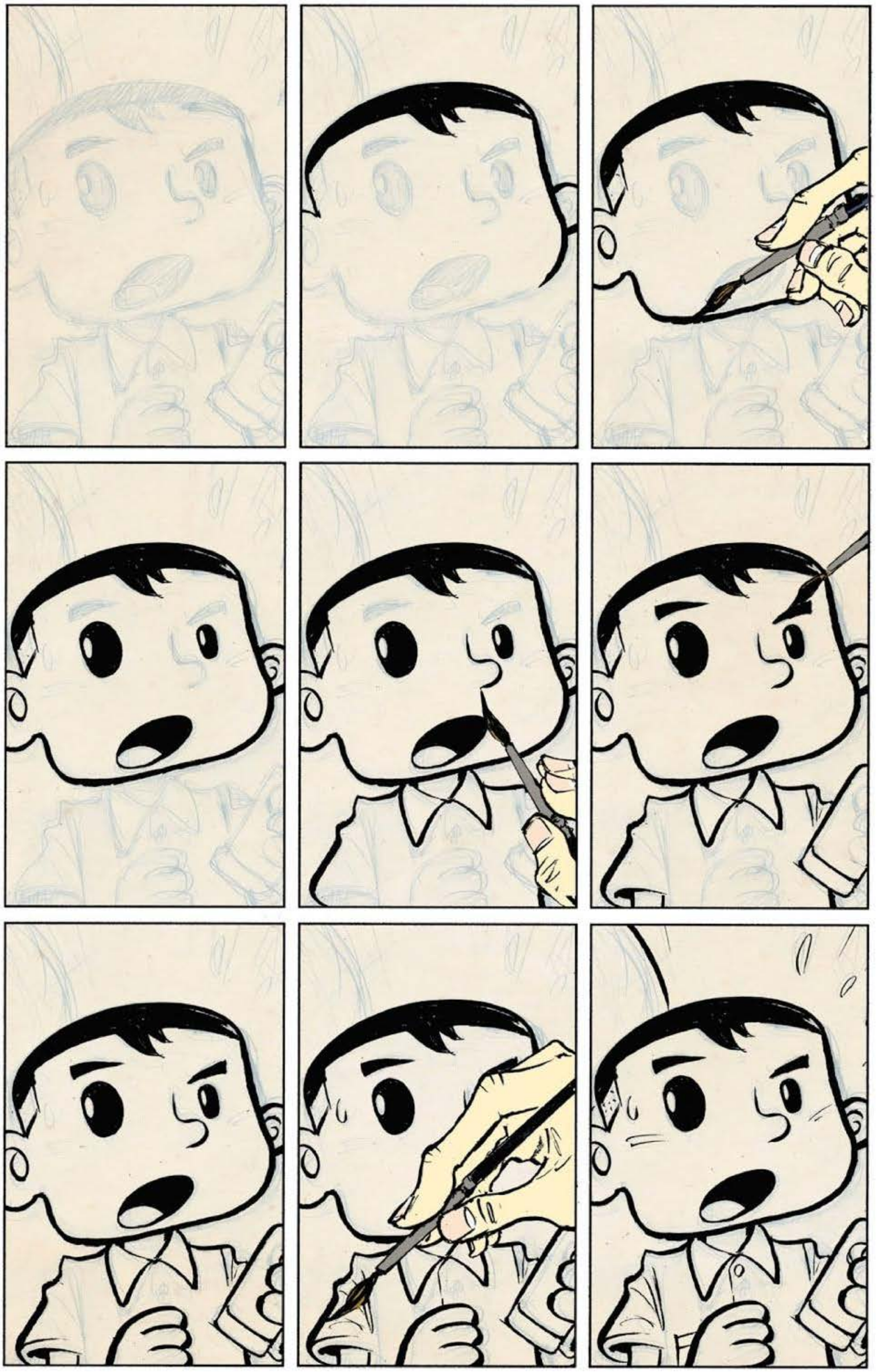

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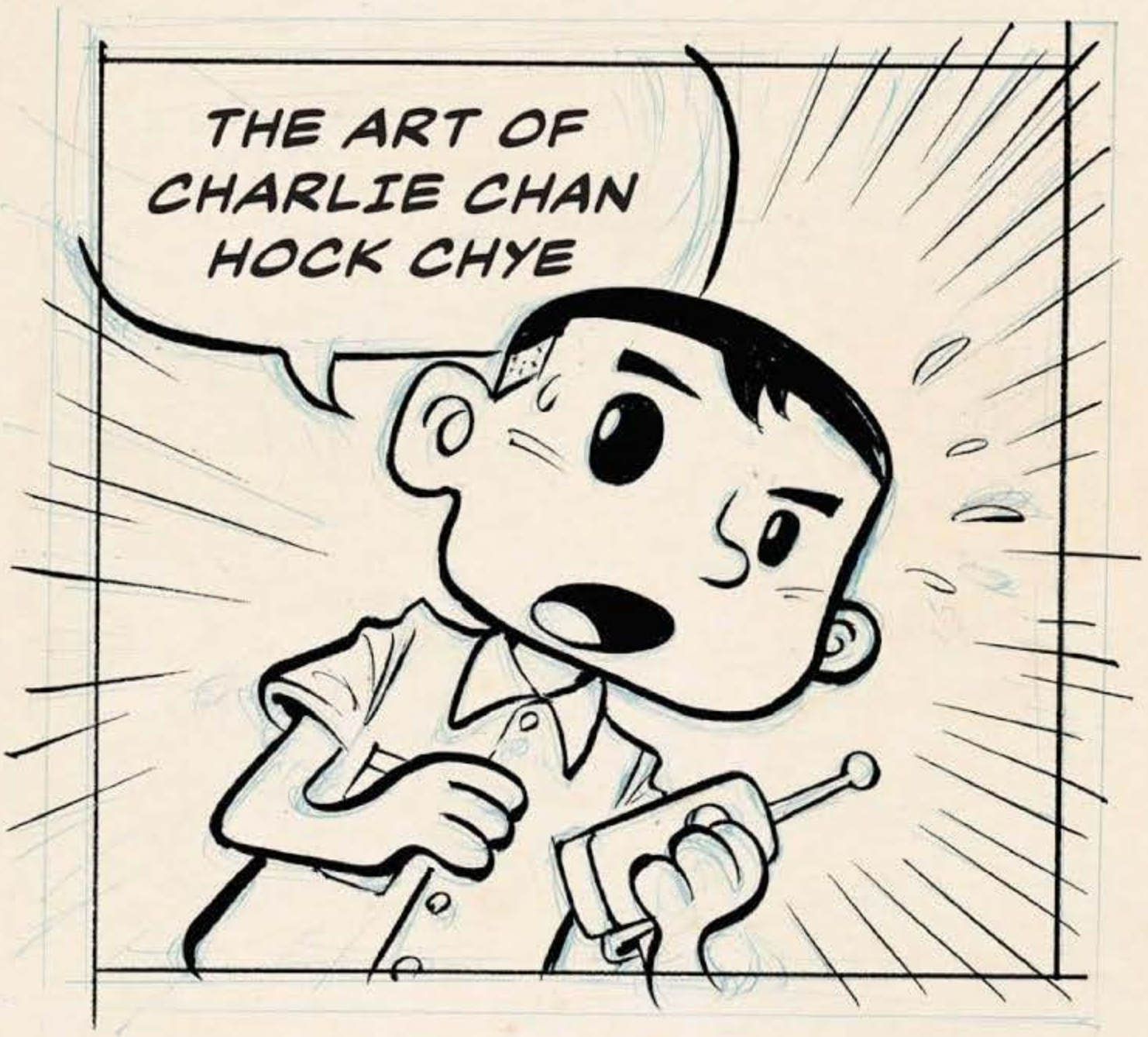

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Charlie Chan Hock Chye, aged 76, 2014

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Notes

Listed by page number

1 This theory of the origins of the "si" in "Malaysia" is, by most accounts, anecdotal.

7 It is difficult to overstate Japanese comics artist Osamu Tezuka's (1928–1989) prodigious output and profound influence on the development of manga and anime. Over the years, his debut work *Shin Takarajima* (1947) has acquired an almost mythical, cult-like status. For a more nuanced and revisionist account that challenges mainstream notions of the book's impact and Tezuka's role in its creation, see Ryan Holmberg, "Tezuka Outwits the Phantom Blot: The Case of New Treasure Island cont'd," *The Comics Journal*, February 22, 2013 <*www.tcj.com/tezuka-osamu-outwits-the-phantom-blot-the-case-of-new-treasure-island-contd*>.

18 English-medium schools had become increasingly attractive in post-war Singapore, owing to the better educational and employment opportunities they afforded students. Thanks to generous funding by the British, these boasted superior facilities and standards of teaching. 1954 marked the first year that the new intake in English-medium schools outstripped that of the Chinese schools. See Jim Baker, *Crossroads: A Popular History of Malaysia and Singapore* (Singapore: Marshall Cavendish Editions, 2006), p. 263–65; and C. M. Turnbull, *A History of Modern Singapore, 1819–2005* (Singapore: NUS Press, 2009), pp. 247–50.

31 The May 13 incident, which saw a clash between Chinese Middle School students and the police, helped kick-start a period of increased political activism in Singapore. Although its significance tends to be downplayed in official histories, those involved often recall the events with some degree of pride and fondness. For a more detailed account by May 13 participants, see Tan Jing Quee, Tan Kok Chiang and Hong Lysa (eds.), *The May 13 Generation: The Chinese Middle Schools Student Movement and Singapore Politics in the 1950s* (Petaling Jaya, Malaysia: Strategic Information and Research Development Centre, 2011).

37 D. N. Pritt, a renowned Queen's Counsel and left-wing champion, was brought in to defend members of the University of Malaya Socialist Club (USC) against the British colonial government during the *Fajar* sedition trial of 1954. Lee Kuan Yew, who was legal adviser to the club, served as Pritt's legal assistant in defending the USC's eight-member editorial committee against charges that they had published seditious articles in the May 10 issue of the club journal, *Fajar*. The students' strongly negative response to the military initiative to establish the Southeast Asia Treaty Organisation (perceiving it as continued Anglo-American aggression in the region) in the journal belied the usual framing of English-educated intellectuals as mostly politically apathetic, and stoked the British government's fears that they had managed to bridge the divide between English-educated and Chinese-educated anti-colonial activists. The case was quickly dismissed, with the trial boosting Lee's reputation in left-wing circles, thereby helping to pave the way for his becoming the leader of the progressive People's Action Party formed later that year. For more, see Kah Seng Loh, Edgar Liao, Cheng Tju Lim and Guo-Quan Seng (eds.), *The University Socialist Club and the Contest for Malaya: Tangled Strands of Modernity* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2012).

50 Lim Chin Siong and Fong Swee Suan were leading trade unionists in the 1950s. Coming from Chinese-educated backgrounds, a combination of ability, commitment and charisma brought them to the forefront of the trade union and anti-colonial movements. Fong was one of the founding members of the People's Action Party (PAP), and Lim, one of the party's first assemblymen in the groundbreaking 1955 Legislative Assembly, alongside Lee Kuan Yew and Goh Chew Chua.

Representing the radical left-wing of the party, Lim and Fong would later be accused of being communists. Dominant historical narratives in Singapore tend towards this interpretation, but recent divergent accounts have questioned the unequivocal vilification of the radical left. See Tan Jing Quee and Jomo K. S. (eds.), *Comet in Our Sky: Lim Chin Siong in History* (Kuala Lumpur: Insan, 2001); and Mark R. Frost and Yu-Mei Balasingamchow, *Singapore: A Biography* (Singapore: Editions Didier Millet / National Museum of Singapore, 2011), pp. 409–10.

52 For a largely mainstream interpretation of the Hock Lee Bus Riots, see Channel NewsAsia's TV documentary "Days of Rage: Hock Lee Bus Riots" <*www.channelnewsasia.com/tv/tvshows/daysofrage/hock-lee-bus-riots/968850.html*>. For an alternative approach, see "Politics of the Chinese-speaking Communities in Singapore in the 1950s: The Shaping of Mass Politics" by Hong Lysa in *May 13 Generation*, pp. 80–84.

54 Article on Chong Lon Chong taken from *The Straits Times*, July 2, 1955, p. 8.

63 Wally Wood (1927–1981) is widely recognised as one of the greatest comics artists to emerge in the 1950s, working on various titles for EC Comics, DC Comics and Marvel Comics, including *Weird Science*, *Mad* magazine and *Daredevil*. By 1980, however, problems with alcoholism as well as declining health and career prospects would lead him to take on work drawing pornographic comics. Wood took his own life with a gun in 1981.

67 *Children's Paradise* <<儿童乐园>> magazine, founded by editor-artist Lo Koon-Chiu (1918–2012) in 1953, was the first full-coloured children's comic in Hong Kong. With its well-crafted and beautifully drawn stories, it proved to be immensely popular and influential, with 1,006 issues published by the end of its run in 1994.

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80 *"Kia kee lai!"* ("Stand up!" or "On your feet!") was a phrase used by Lim Chin Siong. " 'Look friends, only dogs have licences and numbers… The British say you cannot stand on your own two feet. Show them that you can stand!' – at which point, according to one eye witness, 40,000 people 'leapt up – shining with sweat, fists in the air – shouting '*Merdeka*'" (Frost and Balasingamchow, *Singapore: A Biography*, pp. 355–56).

81 "I Love My Malaya" was a nationalistic song adapted from the popular Taiwanese folk song "Taiwan Is My Home" <<我愛我的台湾島>>.

82 Force 136 was a special operations task force set up in 1940 by the British to gather intelligence, as well as to incite, organise and support indigenous resistance groups in enemy-occupied territory in Southeast Asia. In Malaya, its recruits consisted mainly of Kuomintang Chinese, as well as some Malay and Indian agents. After the Japanese conquest of Malaya and Singapore, Force 136 fighters worked with the Malayan People's Anti-Japanese Army (MPAJA) in fighting the Japanese. The MPAJA, formed by the Malayan Communist Party (MCP) after the fall of Singapore, had built up to a force of some six to ten thousand guerrilla recruits by 1945, but the war would be won before any large-scale joint operation with Force 136 was launched. Made up of predominantly Chinese working class youths, these MPAJA guerrillas would later form the core of the MCP's anti-British armed insurgency. For more on Force 136, see Tan Chong Tee, *Force 136: Story of a WWII Resistance Fighter* (Singapore: Asiapac Books, 3rd ed., 2007).

86 American comics publisher EC Comics started out as Educational Comics before becoming known as Entertaining Comics. Under William Gaines, it enjoyed popular success from 1949, publishing horror, crime, science fiction and war titles. The war comics line (*Two-Fisted Tales* and *Frontline Combat*), edited, written and sometimes drawn by Harvey Kurtzman (1924–1993), stood out for their meticulously researched stories and anti-war stance. The horror comics titles (*Tales From the Crypt*, *The Vault of Horror* and *The Haunt of Fear*), however, were notorious for their gleeful depiction of gruesome acts, and helped spur the mounting public criticism of the comics industry. Psychologist Fredric Wertham led the way in linking comics reading with juvenile delinquency. The publication of his book *Seduction of the Innocent* in 1954 helped pressure a move towards self-regulation within the comics industry, and culminated in the introduction of the Comics Code that same year. Wertham's influence arguably stunted the growth and development of American comics for decades, although more recent studies have found multiple flaws in his methodology and approach. See Dave Itzkoff, "Scholar Finds Flaws in Work by Archenemy of Comics," *New York Times*, February 19, 2013 <*www.nytimes.com/2013/02/20/books/flaws-found-in-fredric-werthams-comic-book-studies.html*>.

91 After their conquest of Singapore, the Japanese tapped into nationalist passions amongst Indian prisoners of war and set up the Indian National Army (INA) as part of its "Asia for Asiatics" propaganda campaign. The ostensible goal was to fight for India's independence from the British. The INA would gain real traction with the arrival in Singapore of Subhas Chandra Bose, the charismatic leader of the Indian Independence League, in July 1943. By the time it set out to join the Indian front in 1944, however, the tide of war had already turned, and the army was pushed back to Burma along with the Japanese army without making any significant advances. See Turnbull, *A History of Modern Singapore*, pp. 216–50, and Lee Geok Boi, *The Syonan Years: Singapore Under Japanese Rule 1942–1945* (Singapore: National Archives of Singapore and Epigram, 2005), pp. 231–40.

92 The Malayan Communist Party under Chin Peng had been treated as anti-Japanese heroes after WWII, but when it became clear that British and communist aims could not find common ground, the MCP sought an armed struggle instead. Known as the Malayan Emergency, the insurgency war lasted from 1948 to 1960. So-called New Villages were set up as part of the Briggs Plan, a British strategy to eliminate communist influence in Malaya by relocating some half a million predominantly Chinese squatters into highly policed gated compounds, in a bid to cut off supplies and other support to the communist guerrillas. Faced with the vast counter-insurgency resources of the British army, the MCP's effectiveness as a fighting force was largely curtailed by the mid-1950s.

108 First published in 1990, *Mr Kiasu* became one of the most commercially successful and iconic comics series from Singapore. The *kiasu* (Hokkien for "being afraid to lose") mentality, defined by the Oxford English Dictionary as a "grasping, selfish attitude," was thought to be a peculiarly Singaporean trait. With its recognisable home-grown character, the comic so resonated with local readers that it even established a tie-up with fast food behemoth McDonald's for a "Kiasu Burger" in Singapore at one point.

109 A pioneer in animation and comics, Winsor McCay (1867–1934) is best remembered for his innovations in the 1914 vaudeville animation feature *Gertie the Dinosaur*, as well as his comic strips *Little Nemo in Slumberland* (1905–1911, 1924–1926), and *Dream of the Rarebit Fiend* (1904–1913, 1923–1925). Both comics featured their characters having fantastical dreams. *Little Nemo* was a full-coloured, lushly illustrated strip aimed at younger readers, while *Rarebit Fiend* dealt with more adult anxieties, often revealing certain unflattering or terrifying aspects of the dreamer's psyche.

110 *Eagle* was a British children's comics weekly founded by an Anglican vicar, Marcus Morris (1915–1989), and the artist Frank Hampson (1918–1985). Morris sought to produce a comic that could provide an edifying alternative to the popular horror and crime comics from the United States. In 1949, Morris and Hampson put together a dummy issue of the comic, sparing no expense

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in building models and costumes in order to provide their artists with proper references for their drawings. The idea was seen as a risky venture, and they were turned down by several publishers in London until Hulton Press finally decided to take a gamble on it. *Eagle* turned out to be a resounding success, with the first issue released in April 1950 alone selling 900,000 copies.

113 The British colonisation of Singapore began in 1819 with the arrival of Sir Stamford Raffles, who would ink a formal agreement with the Johore prince Tengku Hussein, granting the British the right to establish a trading post in Singapore. The portrayal of the British as "invaders" as such is not strictly accurate, although British colonial rule was arguably predicated on the belief in the superiority of Western culture and technology. It would continue until the Japanese conquest of Malaya in 1942.

114 The court hearing shown on these pages is based on an actual postal workers' strike in 1952. Lee Kuan Yew, a recent graduate from Cambridge University and newly employed at the law offices of Laycock & Ong, became the legal adviser to the postal workers union, which was in the middle of a wage dispute with the British government. The successful resolution of the dispute, with plenty of glowing press centered on Lee's skill and effectiveness in handling negotiations, further burnished the young lawyer's growing reputation as a left-wing champion of the underdog.

116 The British Empire was no longer financially sustainable after WWII, and the British recognised the need to withdraw from the colonies stretching from India to Malaya. They had hoped, however, to maintain their economic and strategic interests in the regions by handing power over to "acceptable" members of the local elite: conservative, right-wing leaders who would be sympathetic to British interests. In Singapore, the conservative Progressive Party (SPP), made up of English-educated, Western-oriented upper-class commercial and professional men advocating for a gradual approach towards constitutional reform and self-government, was initially earmarked for the role. Despite the self-interested nature of many of their actions, the British commitment to an orderly decolonisation in Malaya and Singapore, manifested through socioeconomic programmes designed to reshape education, housing and labour, can scarcely be disregarded. These would go on to play an important role in Singapore's eventual viability as a city-state. For more, see Turnbull, *A History of Modern Singapore*, pp. 238–43.

117 The Rendel Constitution led to the 1955 elections, which would provide Singapore with limited self-government (defence, internal security and foreign affairs would remain under British control). The electoral roll was expanded, with the aim of engaging more Singaporeans in the political process. The results took both the British and the contesting parties by surprise, with the SPP's conservative approach soundly rejected at the polls (ibid., pp. 244–60). The Labour Front under David Marshall, championing a much faster route to independence, emerged victorious, garnering 10 of the 25 seats. It was invited to form a coalition government with the Singapore Alliance, and Marshall became the first Chief Minister in Singapore's first elected government in 1955. The People's Action Party (PAP) won 3 seats to become part of the opposition. It was a calculated decision by the party leadership to contest only a handful of seats. They saw the 1955 election as a transitional one, since the government would only have restricted powers under the Rendel Constitution. By positioning itself as a strong and vocal left-wing opposition in the Legislative Assembly, the new party sought instead to win over the Chinese-educated masses, with the intent to bolster their electoral base until full self-government could be realised.

118 Singapore would not be fully independent, since the British retained control over defence and non-commercial foreign affairs, while a council was set up to handle internal security. For more on the issue of internal security, see notes to pp. 130–31.

119 The postal workers' negotiations helped bridge Lee Kuan Yew with the trade unions and the student movements, who in turn promised the support base that would be necessary for his aspirations to set up a viable anti-colonial political party. The young lawyer was at the forefront of a group of English-educated moderates seeking to lead Singapore to independence on a Fabian socialist model. Joining forces with Lim Chin Siong and the other trade unionists provided them with the mass support of the Chinese-speaking majority, whilst the Chinese-educated leaders saw Lee's considerable legal and political acumen and knowledge of constitutional practice as an advantage in their struggles against British colonialism. For more, see Frost and Balasingamchow, *Singapore: A Biography*, pp. 350–55.

123 The Lim Chin Siong anecdote referred to here was recounted by David Marshall in an interview in Melanie Chew, *Leaders of Singapore* (Singapore: Resource Press, 1996), p. 79.

128 The incident depicted here refers to Marshall's threat to resign as Chief Minister in July 1955, after Governor Sir Robert Black's initial rejection of his request for the appointment of four assistant ministers.

129 *Pogo* was a comic strip created by Walt Kelly (1913–1973) that featured anthropomorphic funny animal characters, including the titular Pogo, a possum, and his alligator friend Albert. It ran from 1948 to 1975, and at its peak was syndicated in nearly 500 newspapers in 14 countries.

130 Despite facing numerous obstacles, ranging from British scepticism to political opposition from both the right and radical left, David Marshall succeeded in introducing reforms and ideas that addressed the fundamental grievances of Singaporeans during his tenure as Chief Minister. His genuine and principled sympathy for student and worker causes, however, made him unwilling to crack down on

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their actions, and made the British wary of handing over full powers of internal self-government to Singapore. Whilst amenable to making many concessions, the colonial government was adamant about retaining powers over internal security. Marshall's flamboyant and uncompromising style of politics arguably doomed negotiations during constitutional talks in London, and led to his resignation as Chief Minister in June 1956 (see Turnbull, *A History of Modern Singapore*, pp. 262–65).

131 The new Chief Minister, Lim Yew Hock, was much more willing to act against the students and workers. There is some evidence to suggest that he might even have sought to provoke confrontations in order to justify the arrests of left-wing leaders such as Lim Chin Siong (see "Lim Chin Siong in Britain's Southeast Asian De-colonisation" by Greg Poulgrain, from Tan and Jomo [eds.], *Comet in Our Sky*, p. 117). The arrest of Lim and 18 Middle Road union leaders during the student riots in October 1956 gave the British enough assurance to grant Singapore greater powers of self-government. The deal offered to the new Chief Minister was, in fact, very similar to the one rejected by David Marshall in 1956. The British were now willing to cede nominal control of internal security, however, by transferring power to an Internal Security Council comprising three representatives from Singapore, three from Britain and one from the Federation of Malaya. Given that the tussle over internal security was largely centred around the detention of leftist elements, this change could be seen as essentially cosmetic in nature, with the British confident that the deciding Federation vote would always favour any moves against the radical left.

The new constitution was to come in place after the 1959 elections. Having taken the necessary actions to win favour as well as concessions from the British, Lim Yew Hock's government was unable to reap any electoral benefits. The PAP's decision to consolidate mass support by playing the role of the anti-colonial opposition during the transitional period proved to be prescient, however. It swept to power in 1959, capturing 43 of the 51 seats contested. See Baker, *Crossroads*, pp. 271–76.

144 The post-war period in Japan saw a boom in manga publishing. *Akabon* or "red books" (赤本, so-named for their prominent use of red ink to add tone to black-and-white line art) were a low-cost alternative to expensive pre-war hardback manga collections. This cheaper new format, primarily distributed via rental libraries, gave many struggling manga artists their first big break, among them Osamu Tezuka.

The late 1950s saw the emergence of a grittier, more realistic breed of manga aimed at older readers, known as *gekiga* (劇画, meaning "dramatic pictures"), a genre distinct from the traditional *manga* (漫画, meaning "whimsical pictures") produced for children. The term was coined by Yoshihiro Tatsumi (1935–2015), although the form's leading light was arguably Yoshiharu Tsuge (b. 1937). The movement had a profound effect on Tezuka as well, leading him to create multi-volume works such as *Phoenix* and *Message to Adolf*, which featured more mature content focused in part on the turbulent sociopolitical changes wrought on Japan after the war.

146 After the PAP's election victory in 1959, eight of the detained Middle Road union leaders including Lim Chin Siong, Fong Swee Suan, James Puthucheary, Devan Nair and Sidney Woodhull were released. Lee Kuan Yew's insistence on their release was, as he had anticipated, a popular move, although there are suggestions that he had in effect manoeuvred both the left-wing elements of his party as well as the British over the issue of their detention (see "Lim Chin Siong and the 'Singapore Story'" by T. N. Harper, in Tan and Jomo, *Comet in Our Sky*, pp. 18–48). Many others arrested in 1956 remained in detention, including Lim's brother, Lim Chin Joo.

164 The Bukit Ho Swee Fire, the biggest ever recorded in Singapore, broke out at 3:20 p.m. on May 25, 1961. The cause of the fire has never been firmly established, although official accounts place the onus on the inherent flammability of the squatter settlement, which could have easily been set ablaze in the event of a household accident. Unsubstantiated rumours of arson have always persisted, however, with some placing the blame on the government, which had been seeking to redevelop the land for some time. Among these were claims that the fire could have served as convenient grounds to force the eviction of recalcitrant kampong residents. In the larger scheme of things, the Bukit Ho Swee Fire marked the beginning of the end of large-scale squatter dwellings, and helped push Singapore towards its modern incarnation as an urban city-state, where the majority of the population live in public housing. For a nuanced account of the fire and its impact, see Loh Kah Seng, *Squatters into Citizens: The 1961 Bukit Ho Swee Fire and the Making of Modern Singapore* (Singapore: NUS Press, 2013).

167 *Catch-22* is a novel by Joseph Heller published in 1961. Set during WWII, the book satirised the murderous insanity of war and captured the anti-military zeitgeist of the Vietnam War (1954–1975) era. The title, which refers to a fictional bureaucratic military stipulation, became a byword for unsolvable logic puzzles, the only solution for which is made impossible by a circumstance or rule inherent in the puzzle.

168 Superhero comics arguably became the mainstream comics genre in the United States from the mid-1950s onward, thanks to the Comics Code, which frowned upon the excesses of war, crime and horror comics, but was open to the bloodless punch-ups depicted in superhero comics. Marvel Comics in particular helped reignite the genre through the talents of artist Jack Kirby (1917–1994) and editor-writer Stan Lee (b. 1922). Kirby's explosive, kinetic style made his characters' superhuman feats seem believable, and the Lee-Kirby team was able to create "humanized, troubled characters ambivalent about their powers" (Roger Sabin, *Comics, Comix & Graphic Novels*, London: Phaidon, 1996). Their successes included

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The Fantastic Four (1961), *The Incredible Hulk* (1962), and, most of all, *The Amazing Spider-Man* (1963).

174 The alliance between moderate and left-wing elements in the PAP finally fell apart in July 1961. Events were kicked off when the vulnerability of the PAP's moderate wing was exposed by its losses in two by-elections in Anson and Hong Lim earlier that year. The Malayan Prime Minister, Tunku Abdul Rahman, was alarmed by the prospect of a more radical – and in his mind, communist – government taking over in Singapore. Having previously balked at the difficulties involved in a merger between the two territories, he now came to the conclusion that merger with Singapore and the Borneo territories would be necessary to prevent the possible emergence of a "second Cuba," which could be dangerous to Malaya's security.

The Tunku's change of heart alarmed Lim Chin Siong and his supporters, as they recognised that the move was directed at suppressing leftist influence. Lim subsequently sought and received assurances from Lord Selkirk, British High Commissioner for Singapore and Commissioner-General for Southeast Asia, that the British would not intervene if the leftists were able to unseat then Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew through constitutional means. This meeting, which came to be known as the "Eden Hall Tea Party," angered Lee, who called for a vote of confidence in his leadership in an emergency meeting of the Legislative Assembly. The vote was won by a narrow margin, and 13 left-wing PAP members who had abstained from voting, including Lim, Sidney Woodhull and Fong Swee Suan, were expelled from the Party.

This splinter faction went on to form a new party, the Barisan Sosialis, with Lim Chin Siong as its Secretary-General, on July 29, 1961. Large-scale defections to the new party followed, leaving the PAP in a critically weakened and precarious position. See Turnbull, *A History of Modern Singapore*, pp. 277–80; and Frost and Balasingamchow, *Singapore: A Biography*, pp. 396–99.

186 Apart from its role in curtailing the perceived communist threat, a merger between Singapore and Malaya was also seen as inevitable and a historical necessity by many. Along with the strong historical, cultural and geographical ties connecting the two territories, merger presented the allure of a common market, whilst providing a roadmap to independence that was acceptable to the British. See John Drysdale, *Singapore: Struggle for Success* (Australia: George Allen and Unwin, 1984), pp. 258–60, 294–95.

There was, however, some opposition to the merger. Indonesian leader Sukarno saw the formation of the Federation of Malaysia as an attempt by the British to maintain colonial rule and influence in the region, and launched the *Konfrontasi* (Confrontation) campaign in response. The military operation was aimed at destabilising the new federation, with numerous armed infiltrations launched in the Borneo territories and the Malaysian Peninsula, as well as indiscriminate bombings in Singapore, including the MacDonald House bombing on March 10, 1965. *Konfrontasi* formally ended with the signing of a peace treaty in 1966, soon after Suharto replaced Sukarno as president. See Marsita Omar, "The Indonesian-Malaysian Confrontation," <*eresources.nlb.gov.sg/infopedia/articles/SIP_1072_2010-03-25.html*>.

187 Within Singapore, the Barisan Sosialis opposed merger on various grounds, some of which were self-serving, and others perhaps more forward-looking. They were outmanoeuvred by the PAP in any case. For a closer look at the events leading up to the National Referendum on Merger in September 1962, see Drysdale, *Singapore: Struggle for Success*, pp. 283–312; and Albert Lau, *A Moment of Anguish: Singapore in Malaysia and the Politics of Disengagement* (Singapore: Times Academic Press, 1998).

189 Toh Chin Chye on the formulation of the ballot papers for the referendum on merger, in Chew, *Leaders of Singapore*, p. 92. For more on the PAP's strategy leading up to the referendum, see Willard A. Hanna, *The Formation of Malaysia: New Factor in World Politics* (New York: American Universities Field Staff, 1964), p. 116ff.

191 Between 1960 and 1963, the PAP demonstrated tremendous zeal and pragmatism in introducing social and economic reforms to improve standards of living in Singapore. They built more than 24,000 public housing units under the Housing Development Board scheme, and significantly increased expenditure on education and healthcare. The newly established Public Utilities Board introduced basic amenities ranging from running water to electricity and improved sanitation, whilst 4,000 acres of swamp and wasteland in Jurong were turned into an industrial estate that would eventually lay the foundations for Singapore's economic growth. Measures were also taken to combat crime and improve women's rights.

Having successfully won independence from British rule and accomplished merger with Malaysia, the PAP had sufficient grounds for optimism in the 1963 elections, even if its grassroots base had been decimated by the split with the Barisan Sosialis just two years earlier. Aside from their tangible achievements, they had consolidated ground support via community centres and the effective control of public broadcast channels such as television. As the incumbent party, the PAP was certainly in a position to make electoral and constitutional laws work in its favour.

In February 1963, the launch of Operation Coldstore saw the detention of Lim Chin Siong and other leading members of the Barisan Sosialis, thus greatly weakening the opposition. For all that, the decisiveness of the PAP's electoral victory in September that year, in which they won 37 of 51 seats, still came as a surprise. In retrospect, this was partly due to the first-past-the-post electoral system, which allowed the party to win three-quarters of the seats contested, despite receiving only 46.5% of the popular vote. The split in the opposition vote in many constituencies is also estimated to have

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cost the Barisan as many as 17 seats. For more, see Turnbull, *A History of Modern Singapore*, pp. 282–86; and Lau, *A Moment of Anguish*, pp. 48–53.

193 The question of Lim Chin Siong's association with the Malayan Communist Party has occupied a central place in the narrative of Singapore's modern history. On the one hand, the "us vs. them" Cold War mentality of the era promoted the identification and vilification of any person or group with leftist leanings with the Communist United Front. This was certainly how Lim and the Barisan Sosialis have been portrayed in official histories. However, while the radical left did not shy away from using more militant action in the form of strikes and protests, the actual degree of direct communist influence remains debatable. Declassified documents of British colonial government records in recent years have provided additional fuel to revisionist accounts. For more, see "Lim Chin Siong and the 'Singapore Story'" by T. N. Harper and "Lim Chin Siong in Britain's Southeast Asian De-colonisation" by Greg Poulgrain, both in Tan and Jomo, *Comet in Our Sky;* and Frost and Balasingamchow, *Singapore: A Biography*, pp. 374–78 and 409–10.

Lim's image as a rabble-rouser has often been bolstered by popular accounts of his speech at a PAP rally on October 25, 1956, which claim that he had instigated the crowd to "*pah matah*" (Hokkien for "beat the police"), which led to widespread rioting. Historian Thum Ping Tjin's recent research, however, points to evidence in the British Archives that suggests that Lim had in fact entreated the crowd *not* to vent their discontent on the police. See <*www.theonlinecitizen.com/2014/05/lim-chin-siong-was-wrongfully-detained*> and another historian's refutation of Thum's claims: <*www.ipscommons.sg/lim-chin-siong-and-that-beauty-world-speech-a-closer-look*>.

194 The PAP's victory in the 1963 elections included wins in the predominantly Malay constituencies of Geylang Serai, Kampong Kembangan and the Southern Islands, this despite opposition from the Singapore Alliance, which had received the backing of Federal leaders, including Tunku Abdul Rahman himself. Their proven ability to appeal across racial lines emboldened the PAP to take part in the Malaysian federal elections in 1964, a premature and ultimately disastrous move that ended up raising the ire of federal political leaders and eventually contributed to Singapore's ouster from Malaysia in 1965. For more, see Lau, *A Moment of Anguish*.

Lee Kuan Yew had made an initial commitment to the Tunku that the PAP would not take part in the first Malaysian federal elections, but the exact nature of this agreement remains disputed (see Sonny Yap, Richard Lim and Leong Weng Kam, *Men in White: The Untold Story of Singapore's Ruling Political Party* [Singapore: Singapore Press Holdings, 2009], pp. 264–65). In any case, Lee had stated in a speech that "We will not take part in the 1964 elections in the Federation" (*Sunday Times*, September 29, 1963).

195 The movement towards merger as a means of containing the influence of the radical left in Singapore had arguably led to hurried negotiations where certain issues had been glossed over, amongst which was the role Singapore would play in federal politics. The United Malays National Organisation (UMNO) leaders appeared to envision, at best, a slow integration of the PAP into their conservative and communalist style of governance, while the PAP leaders sought a much quicker timetable in which they could take an active role in Malaysian politics. The latter's consequent push towards a greater voice and influence would lead to conflicts with threatened pro-Malay elements within the Federation, as well as the conservative Malaysian Chinese Association (MCA). See Turnbull, *A History of Modern Singapore*, pp. 287–90.

196 Although the PAP performed poorly in the 1964 federal elections, they had effectively presented themselves as a potential threat to UMNO's approach to politics. The latter now sought to attack the PAP within Singapore, with its secretary-general Dato Syed Ja'afar Albar spearheading attempts to exploit and stir up discontent amongst Singapore Malays. See Turnbull, *A History of Modern Singapore*, pp. 290–92; and "The Alliance Strikes Back" in Lau, *A Moment of Anguish*, pp. 131–60.

197 MCA president Tan Siew Sin was able to use his position as Federal Finance Minister to curtail Singapore's economy when he felt that the MCA's position as UMNO's main ally was being threatened. His proposals, such as a punishing tax plan raised during budgetary parliamentary debates in November 1964, would badly hamper Singapore's own Finance Minister Goh Keng Swee's plans for the industrialisation of the island state. Goh eventually became a prime mover behind Singapore's split from Malaysia, convinced as he was that, for all the intimidating challenges it would face, Singapore would stand a better chance of achieving economic growth as well as swifter development as an independent nation free of Federal interference (see Turnbull, *A History of Modern Singapore*, pp. 287–300; and Lau, *A Moment of Anguish*, pp. 214–17).

Once the PAP's hopes of supplanting the MCA as the ruling Malaysian Alliance Party's second partner had been quashed, its decision to step into the role of an active opposition party within the Federation arguably set it on a collision course with UMNO, in which neither side was willing to give way. By espousing a non-communal policy of "a democratic Malaysian Malaysia" that repudiated the provision of special rights and privileges for Malays, and in further attempting to form a non-communal opposition bloc under the banner of the Malaysian Solidarity Convention (MSC), the PAP had upset the Malaysian politico-communal status quo by presenting a challenge to what UMNO saw as an inviolable component of the Malaysian social and political contract. For more, see "'We Are on Collision Course'" in Lau, *A Moment of Anguish*, pp. 211–52.

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198 Rising rhetoric on both sides led to communal riots in Singapore in July 1964 during a Muslim procession to celebrate the Prophet Muhammad's birthday. Conflicting explanations of what had sparked the riots remain unresolved (see Baker, *Crossroads*, pp. 314–15). Further outbreaks of violence occurred in August and September, resulting in 36 deaths, with more than 550 injured over the three months of rioting. Even though the riots came as a shock to the leaders on both sides of the straits, it failed to generate anything more than a brief truce. By July 1965, a select group of senior leaders on both sides had embarked on secret negotiations that would lead to the official separation of Singapore from Malaysia on August 9, 1965. For more, see "The Singapore Riots" in Lau, ibid., pp. 161–210.

210 The "Singapore Story" depicted here represents the official narrative of Singapore's history. The satirical take anticipates the launch of the National Education programme in 1997. This was a major push by the PAP government to "engender a shared sense of nationhood" in youths and students, by instilling core values and beliefs in newer generations that had not experienced the nation's early struggles, with the expressed aim to "ensure [Singapore's] continued success and well-being."

231–47 The PAP's attempts to control the media, alongside its claims of requiring a new media model to suit Singapore's unique circumstances, have been the subject of much analysis. Sources include Cheong Yip Seng, *OB Markers* (Singapore: Straits Times Press, 2013); Cherian George, *Freedom from the Press: Journalism and State Power in Singapore* (Singapore: NUS Press, 2012); and Francis Seow, *The Media Enthralled: Singapore Revisited* (USA: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1998).

251 Operation Spectrum was a security operation in which the Internal Security Act (ISA) was invoked for the arrest and detention of 22 activists with suspected Marxist links, including many church social workers, in May and June 1987. It continues to be an uncertain and somewhat chequered part of Singapore's history. With the absence of any official re-examination or analysis, an abundance of rumour, speculation and educated guesses at best instead surrounds the actual events. Historian C. M. Turnbull concluded that "[t]he alleged Marxist Conspiracy and the Liberation Theology menace turned out to be myths" (Turnbull, *A History of Modern Singapore,* p. 339). The exact reasons for developing and perpetuating such "myths" remain murky, however, with theories ranging from a genuine fear of a communist threat to attempts to prevent the Catholic Church from possibly becoming a legitimate political force in post-independence Singapore.

255 The Chinese Communist Party's successes in the post-WWII era were a source of pride for many overseas Chinese, and moderate leaders of the PAP came to see the Chinese-educated as being particularly susceptible to communist influence. Nanyang University, largely funded by businessman Tan Lark Sye, was thought to have been a hotbed of communist and communalist activity. Consequently, it was merged with the University of Singapore in 1980 to form the National University of Singapore. Often portrayed as chauvinists, Chinese activists championing Chinese education from the 1950s to the '70s have argued that their fears that the PAP's policies would lead to the eventual decline and erosion of the Chinese language and culture in Singapore have turned out to be well-founded.

256 Lee Kuan Yew's claim about putting on knuckle-dusters to tackle his critics (see Han Fook Kwang, Warren Fernandez and Sumiko Tan, *Lee Kuan Yew: The Man and His Ideas* [Singapore: Times Editions, 1998], p. 126) was made in response to writer Catherine Lim's criticism of Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong in 1994. The *Straits Times* had published several pieces of her political commentary, for which she had received a stern slap on the wrist. The authors and Lee himself contended that such political commentary would never have been risked when Lee was still Prime Minister, given his reputation for taking on his critics with an iron fist.

This no-nonsense brand of state authoritarianism was often justified by the argument that respect for leaders and hierarchy constituted a cardinal principle of Asian Confucian societies. When speaking about China's Tiananmen Incident of 1989 at the Institute of International Relations in Paris, May 23, 1990, Lee said: "You cannot mock a great leader in an Asian Confucian society. If he allows himself to be mocked, he is finished" (Lianhe Zaobao [ed.], *Lee Kuan Yew on China and Hongkong after Tiananmen* [Singapore: Shing Lee Publishers, 1990], p. 136). Even amongst leaders within Asia, however, there has been a distinct lack of agreement concerning this concept of an all-encompassing umbrella of "Asian core values," which include a deference to societal interests over the individual, respect for authority and prizing consensus over confrontation. For example, see "What Would Confucius Say Now?," *The Economist,* July 23, 1998 <*www.economist.com/node/169045*>.

During his 1988 National Day Rally speech, while discussing the transition of leadership to his successor Goh Chok Tong in 1990, Lee Kuan Yew vowed to "get up" from his grave if he sensed that Singapore was in trouble. It appeared to convey his intention to continue playing a role in Singapore's politics even after stepping down as Prime Minister.

257 Joshua Benjamin Jeyaretnam (commonly known as J. B. Jeyaretnam or JBJ) was Secretary-General of the Workers' Party for 30 years (1971–2001). He stood for Parliament five times from 1972 onwards before making a breakthrough in the 1981 Anson by-elections, when he defeated PAP candidate Pang Kim Hin. The last opposition candidates to successfully contest in general elections had been members of the Barisan Sosialis in 1963, but their decision to walk out of Parliament and boycott it in protest kicked off an unbroken run of 18 years of uncontested governance for the PAP, which enjoyed a single-

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party domination of the legislature without any opposition. Jeyaretnam retained his Anson seat in 1984, and was joined then by the Singapore Democratic Party's Chiam See Tong, who became the second opposition MP. Jeyaretnam passed away in 2008 at the age of 82. See Geoffrey Robertson, "Joshua Jeyaretnam," *The Guardian*, October 7, 2008 <*www.theguardian.com/world/2008/oct/07/2*>.

258 Kuo Pao Kun (1939–2002) was a pioneer in Singapore theatre, writing plays in both Chinese and English, including *The Coffin Is Too Big for the Hole, No Parking on Odd Days, Mama Looking for Her Cat* and *Lao Jiu*. His work combined traditional and experimental elements, and often incorporated acute social commentary and critique. The agitprop elements in his early plays led to his detention under the Internal Security Act from March 1976 to October 1980, and the revocation of his citizenship from 1977 to 1992. Following his release, Kuo continued with his theatre work and went on to become one of the most influential forces in the local arts scene, founding both the Practice Theatre Ensemble, a bilingual theatre group that was later renamed the Theatre Practice (1986), and the independent arts centre the Substation (1990). For his lifework, Kuo was awarded the Cultural Medallion in 1990, the highest honour for a Singapore artist.

262 The San Diego Comic Convention (SDCC) or Comic-Con was founded by comics artist and letterer Shel Dorf, comics bookstore owner Richard Alf and publisher Ken Krueger in 1970. Early incarnations of the event were held at various venues such as the U. S. Grant and El Cortez Hotels, and attended by just a few hundred fans. The numbers grew steadily, however, and by 2010, thanks to increased Hollywood interest and participation, media attention and a widened fan base, Comic-Con had become a major pop cultural event attracting more than 130,000 attendees annually. SDCC moved to the relatively small San Diego Convention and Performing Arts Center (CPAC) in 1979, and relocated to its present home at the newly built San Diego Convention Center in 1991.

274 Famed Dutch developmental economist Albert Winsemius came to Singapore as part of a United Nations industrial survey mission in 1960, and served as the nation's long-time chief economic adviser from 1961 to 1984. Working closely with Lee Kuan Yew and successive Finance Ministers Lim Kim San, Goh Keng Swee and Hon Sui Sen, Winsemius is credited with providing the PAP with a blueprint for Singapore's "economic miracle." In particular, the Dutch economist emphasised the importance of making the country attractive to foreign investors and industry through infrastructural development, political stability, labour discipline and education. See Turnbull, *A History of Modern Singapore*, pp. 281, 302, 358; and Kees Tamboer, "Albert Winsemius, 'Founding Father' of Singapore," *IIAS Newsletter #9*, Summer 1996 (Leiden, Netherlands: International Institute for Asian Studies, 1996) <*www.iias.nl/iiasn/iiasn9/soueasia/winsemiu.html*>.

279 *The Man in the High Castle* is a 1962 science fiction alternative history novel by Philip K. Dick, which imagines a world where the Axis Powers of Japan and Nazi Germany had emerged as the victors of WWII. The book features a story within the story, in the form of a novel titled *The Grasshopper Lies Heavy* read by several characters, which in turn offers an alternate history where the Allied Powers had won the war, the details of which differ from our real world history.

280 During the height of tensions between Singapore and Malaysia, there were calls from some UMNO quarters for Lee Kuan Yew and other PAP leaders to be arrested. Plans were made for a Singapore government-in-exile to be set up under Minister for Culture S. Rajaratnam in Cambodia, owing to Lee's personal friendship with head of state Prince Norodom Sihanouk. For more, see Drysdale, *Singapore: Struggle for Success*, p. 380; Alex Josey, *Lee Kuan Yew: The Crucial Years* (Singapore: Marshall Cavendish Editions, 2012), pp. 282–87; and Michael Leifer, *Singapore's Foreign Policy: Coping with Vulnerability* (London: Routledge, 2000), p. 52.

281 The phrase "men in white" refers to the PAP's practice of appearing at public events all decked out in white, as a symbol of the party's purity and incorruptibility. Since the party's inception in 1954, white has been the adopted colour of choice for all formal party occasions. All symbolism aside, the PAP's commitment to a stable and clean government has been, by most conventional measures and accounts, recognised as one of its key defining traits and enduring achievements. See Drysdale, *Singapore: Struggle for Success*, p. 226; and Frost and Balasingamchow, *Singapore: A Biography*, pp. 383–86.

297 After leaving his job as an animator at Disney in 1942, Carl Barks (1901–2000) ended up working on Donald Duck stories for comics publisher Western Publishing. He created many memorable characters from Scrooge McDuck to the Beagle Boys, but remained largely anonymous, as Disney animations and comic book licences carried only Walt Disney's name. Barks's recognisable style, however, led him to be dubbed "The Good Duck Artist." It was not until 1960 that two of his fans were able to track down the identity of the man behind the comics. Gifted with the ability to imbue comics characters with unforgettable personalities, Barks has been hailed as one of the most important comics artists of the 20th century, and was famously referred to as "the Hans Christian Andersen of comic books" by fellow cartoonist Will Eisner (1917–2005).

302 The writing tools shown here, from top left to right, are: Faber-Castell HB Pencil, Sakura Pigma Micron 03, Ballpoint Pen (brand unknown), Artline Calligraphy Pen 2.0, Winsor & Newton Series 7 Size 1 Sable Brush, Chinese calligraphic brush (brand unknown), Nikko Comic Pen Nib G-model with nib holder, Nicker Poster Colour (White, No. 51) and Pentel Hi-Polymer Erasers, and Pentel Selfit 0.5 mm Mechanical Pencil.

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Sonny Liew is an award-winning comics artist, painter and illustrator whose work includes the *New York Times* bestseller *The Shadow Hero* with Gene Luen Yang (First Second Books), *My Faith in Frankie* with Mike Carey (DC Vertigo), *Sense & Sensibility* with Nancy Butler (Marvel Comics) and *Doctor Fate* with Paul Levitz (DC Comics).

He has received Eisner nominations for *The Shadow Hero* and *Wonderland* (Disney Press), as well as for spearheading *Liquid City* (Image Comics), a multi-volume comics anthology featuring creators from Southeast Asia. His *Malinky Robot* series is a 2004 Xeric grant recipient and winner of the Best Science Fiction Comic Album Award at the 2009 Utopiales SF Festival in Nantes. He received the Singapore National Arts Council's Young Artist Award in 2010.

Born in Malaysia, he lives in Singapore, where he sleeps with the fishes.

ALSO BY SONNY LIEW

THE SHADOW HERO with Gene Luen Yang
MALINKY ROBOT
GEORGETTE CHEN: WARM NIGHTS, DEATHLESS DAYS
MY FAITH IN FRANKIE with Mike Carey
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