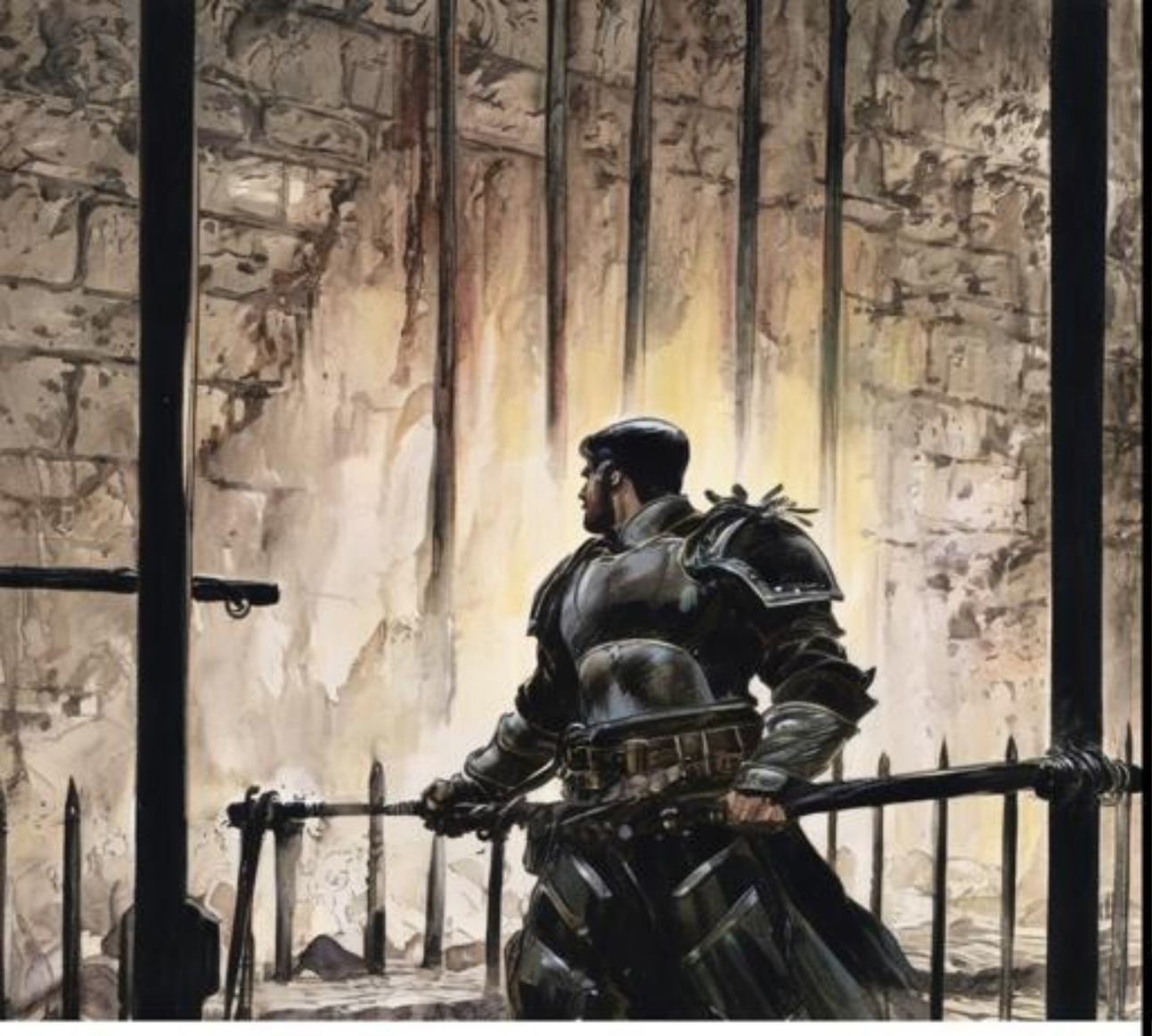
YOU AWAKEN, REMEMBERING ONLY THAT YOUR SHIP WENT DOWN IN CANNON FIRE. THE GUARD WATCHES YOU CLOSELY, HAND RESTING ON HIS PISTOL.

NIKTAR: I'M A TALL, BUFF-LOOKING GUY... A GUY EXTREMELY HOT.

'FANTASTIC?' NIKTAR REPEATS, LOOKING AT THE GUARD FOR ANSWERS.

WHAT DO YOU WANT, HUMAN?!

"WHO'S THAT NEXT TO YOU? IS HE NOT... YOU KNOW?"



"HELLO! MY NAME IS BON JI.VEY.."

BON JIVEY: 'FINESSE OUR WAY OUT OF HERE... WHAT DO YOU BOYS THINK?'

THE GUARD'S GESTURE IS MET WITH SKEPTICISM BY NIKTAR

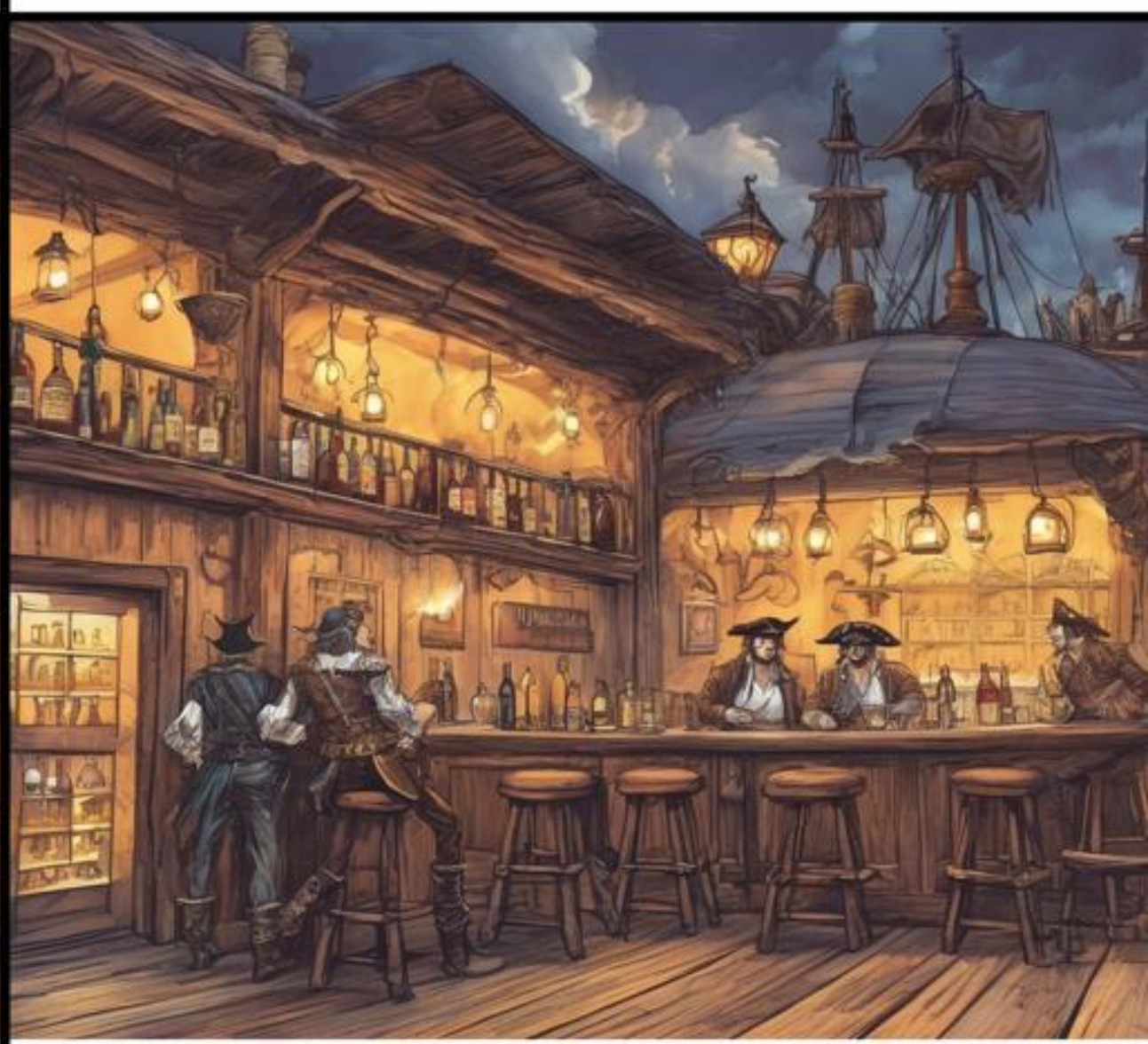
GUARD: 'HIS BOSS..!

YOU NEED TO CHECK THEM OUT..THEY'RE OPENING UP A LITTLE BIT...

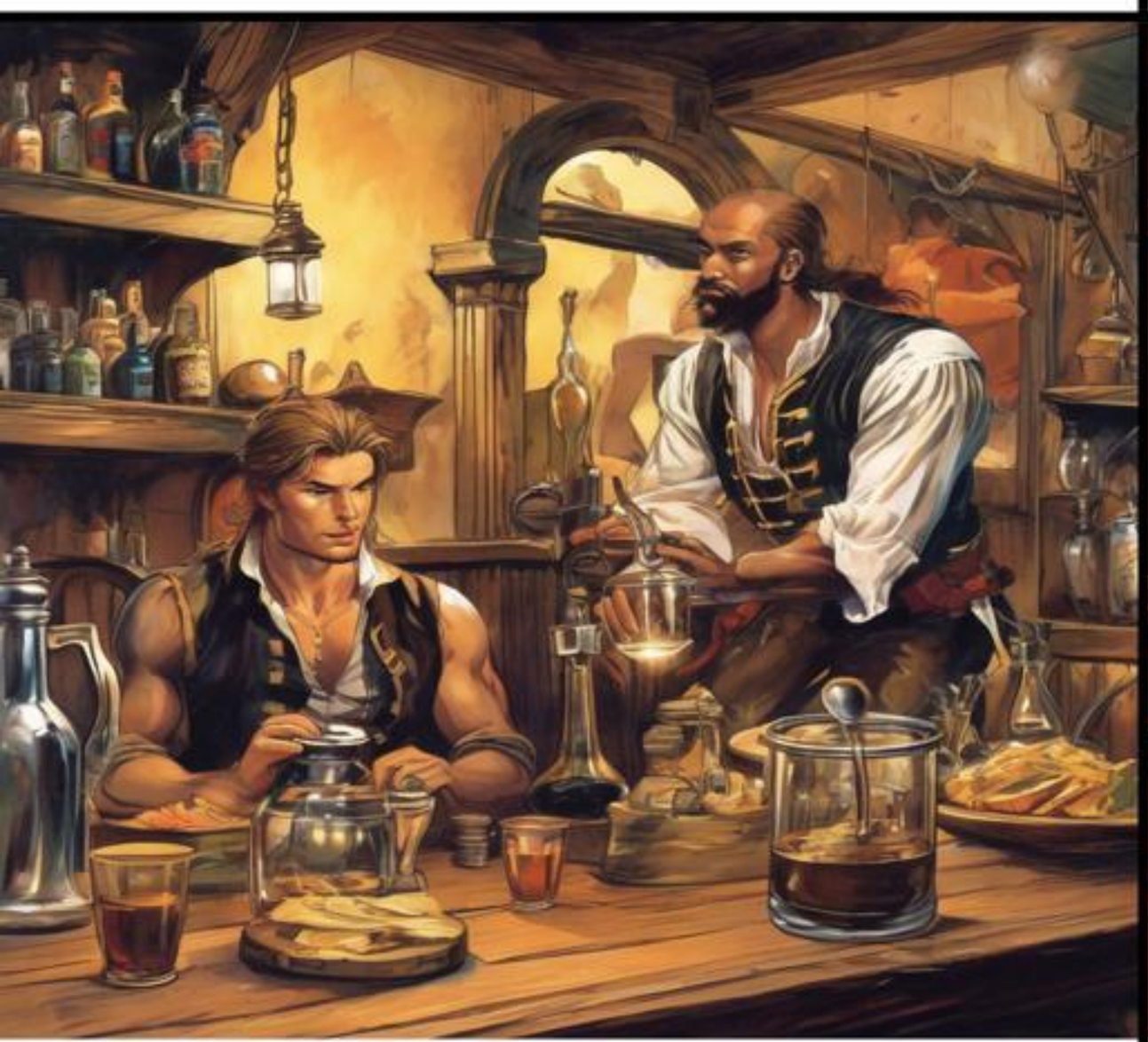
NIKTAR MUTTERS TO HIMSELF, 'MAYBE IT HELPS...'

"OH SHIT," JAR WHISPERS, AS THEY BOTH GLANCE NERVOUSLY AT THE BATHROOM DOOR

THE LARGE BAR.MAN'S BOOMING VOICE ECHOES THROUGH THE TAVERN, A STARK CONTRAST TO THE INTIMATE SETTING OF THE BATHROOM



'THREE GLASSES OF YOUR BEST MATE. PLEASE'.

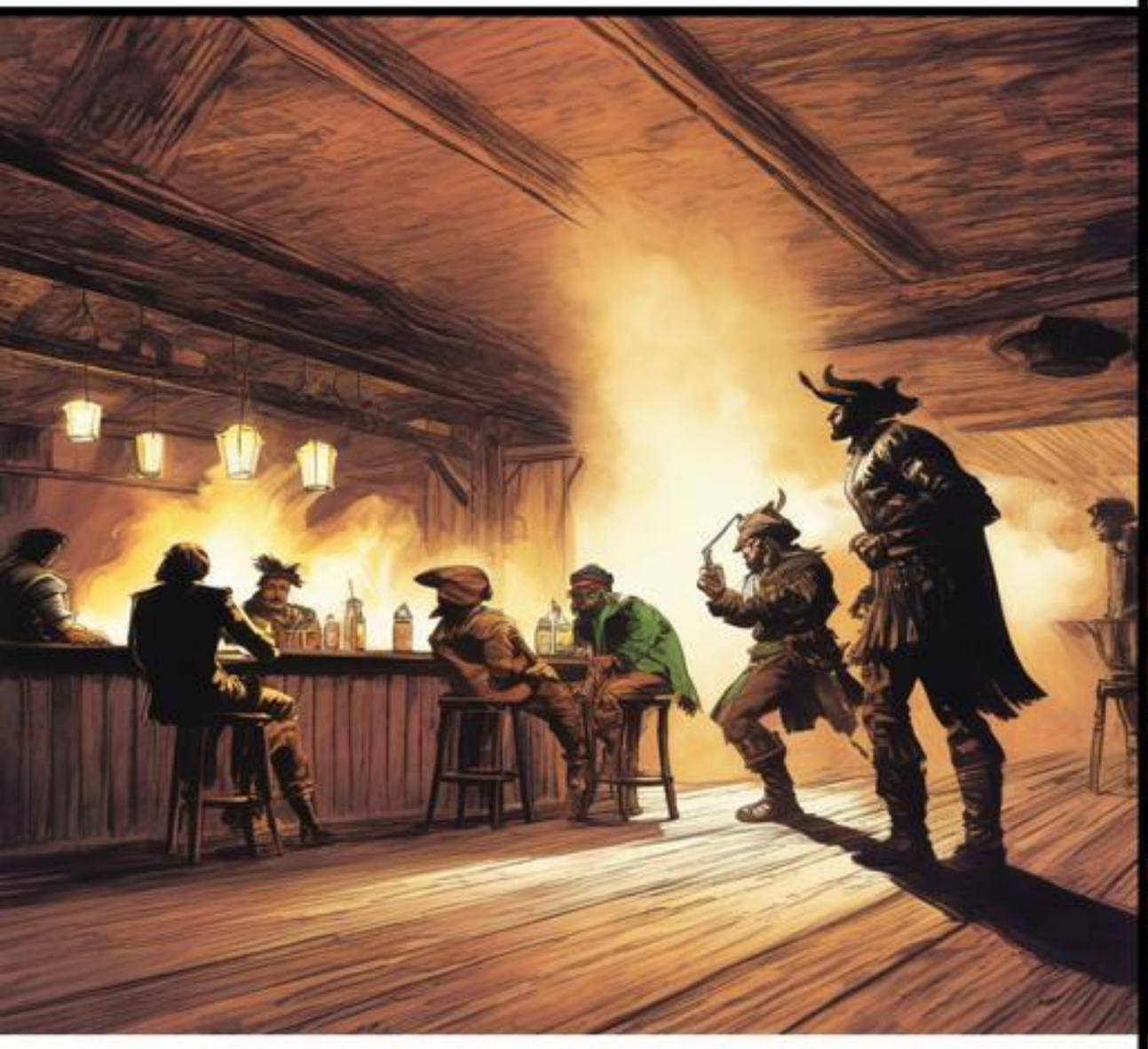


NIKTAR'S EYES DART AROUND THE ROOM, ENSURING THEY'RE NOT BEING OVERHEARD.

"YOU SEE THAT? THEY'RE DOING IT TOO. IT MUST BE SOME SORT OF PIRATE INITIATION RITUAL," NIKTAR WHISPERS TO JAR

OH MY GOD. A ZO BABY.

NIKTAR: 'WHAT IN THE WORLD...?'

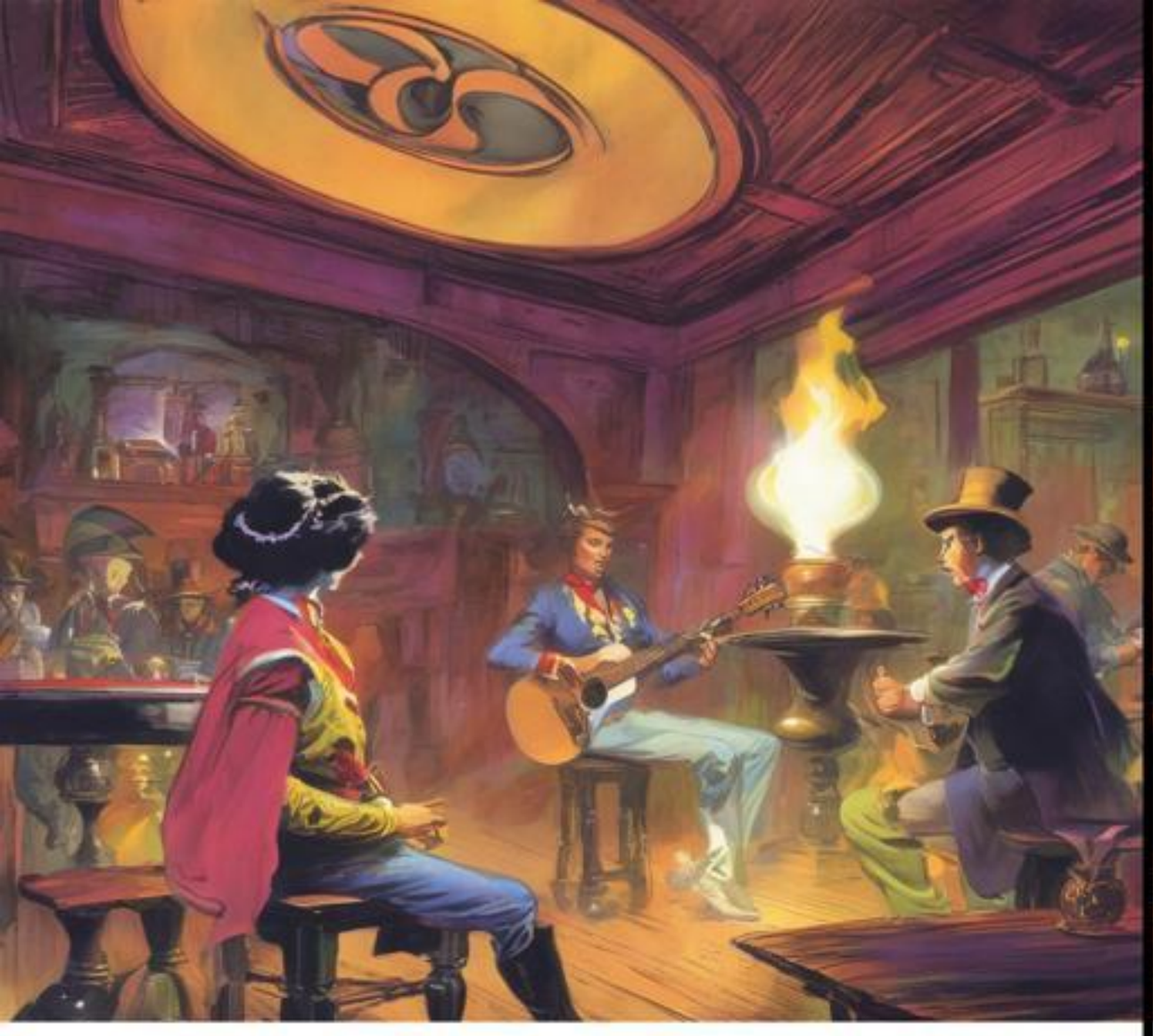


AH, I LOVE THIS VOICE. AND I'M HERE TO PLAY A GAME.

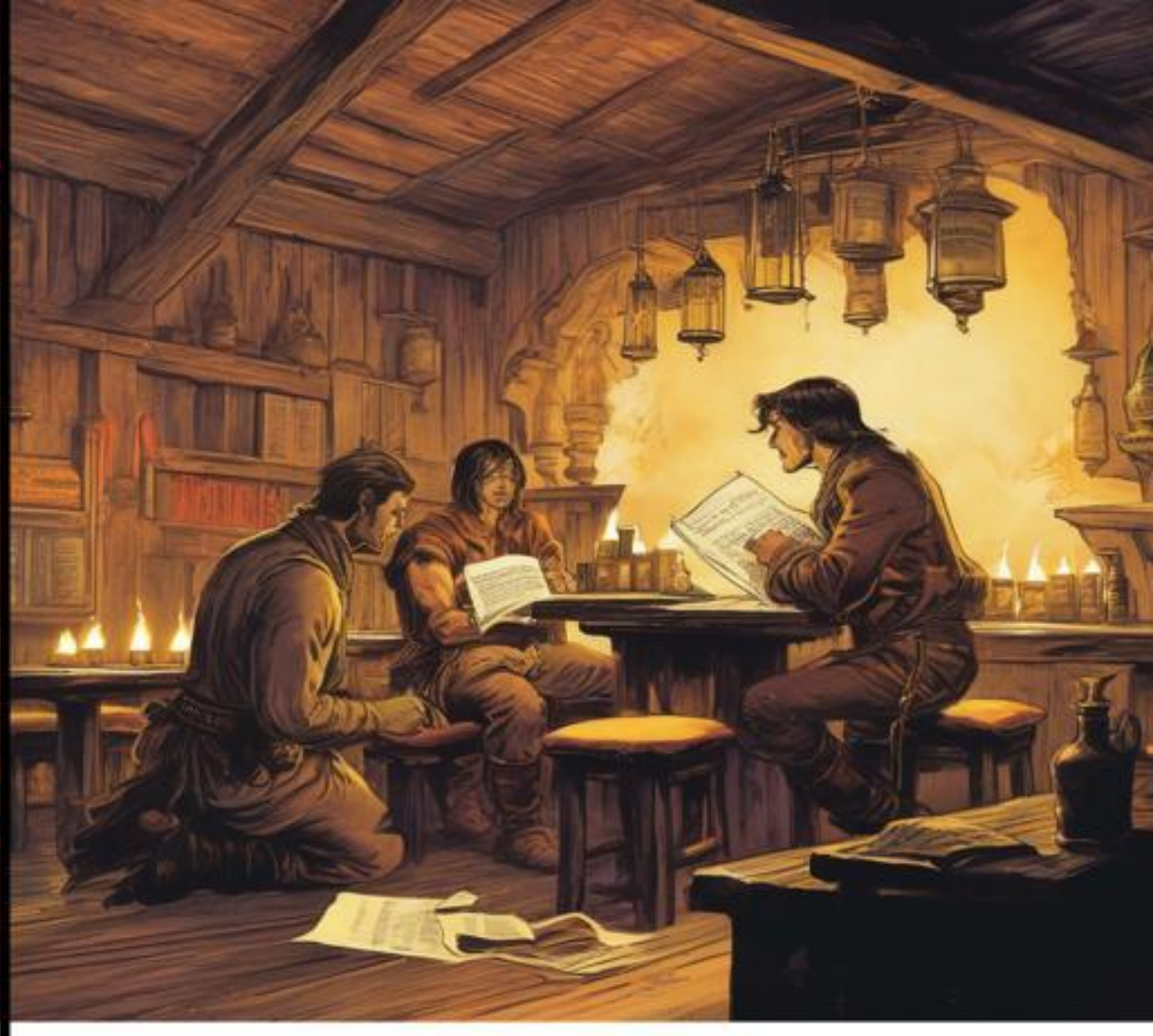
NIKTAR WHISPERS TO JAR, 'WE NEED TO MOVE QUICKLY. OUR COVER IS BLOWN!'

"THREE GOLD"

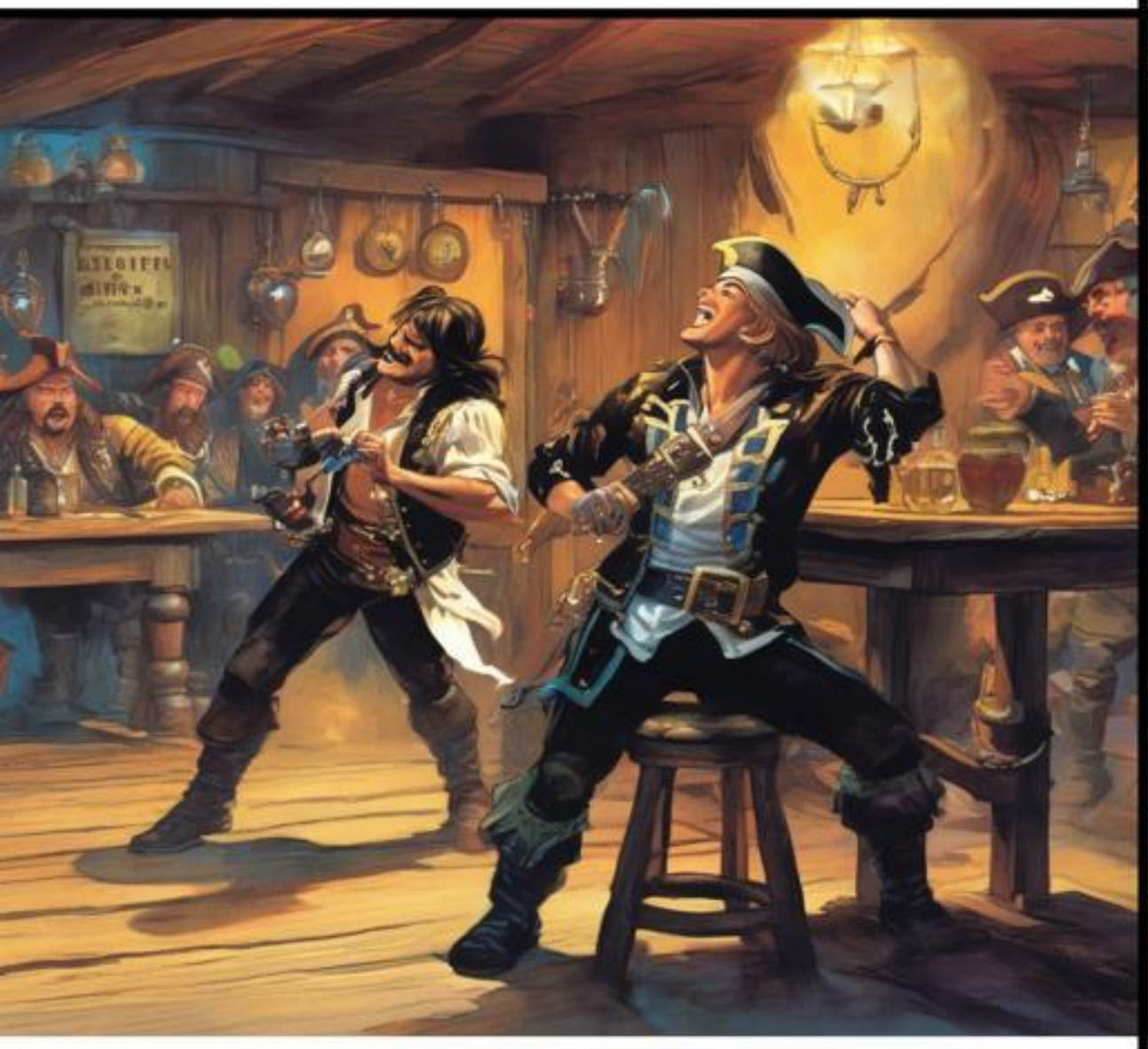
"THREE GOLD FOR A BEER?" NIKTAR SAYS WITH A HINT OF INCREDULITY



THE PERFORMER'S OTHERWORLDLY VOICE WHISPERS TO NIKTAR, 'ROLL WITH ME...'



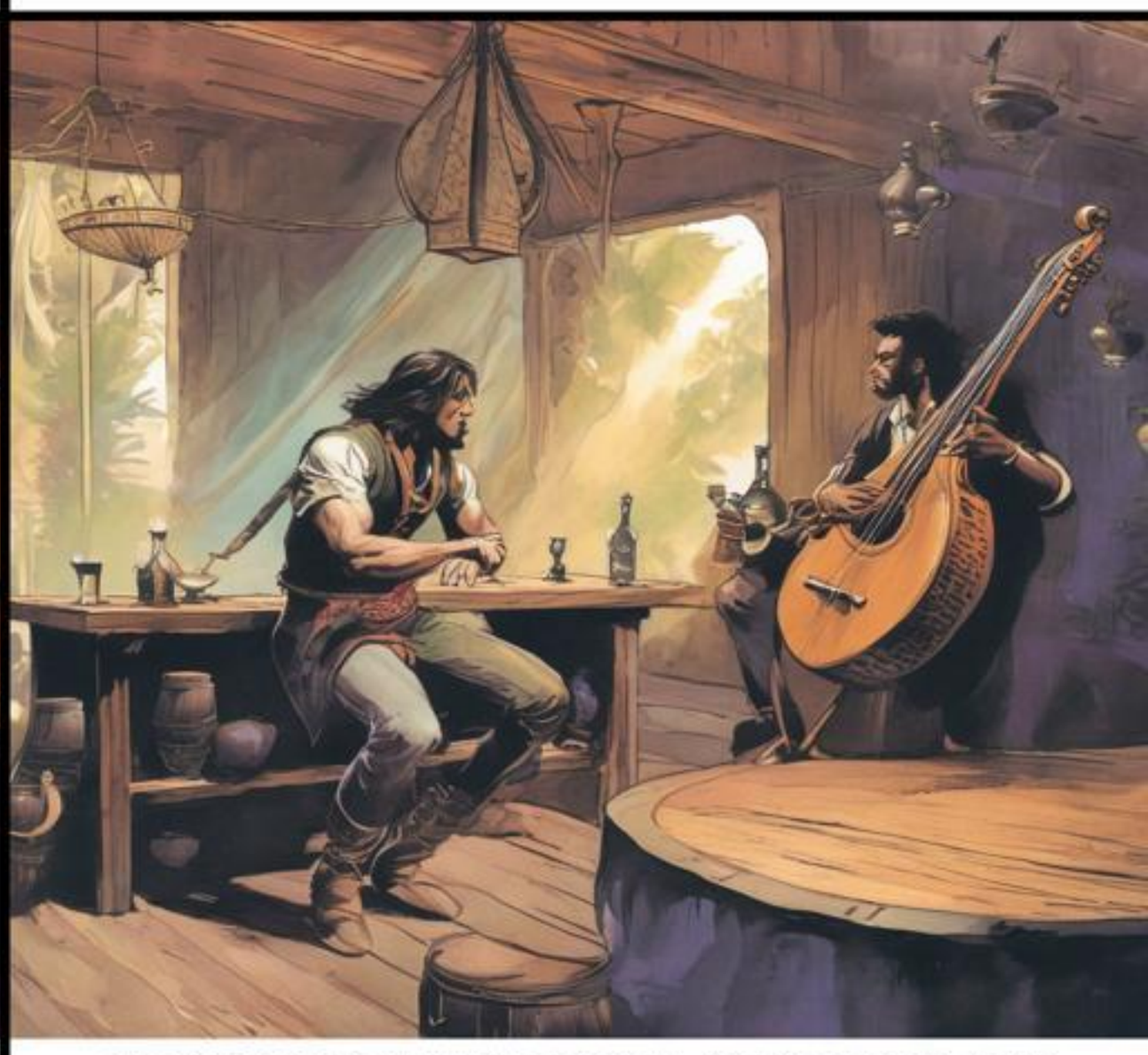
NIKTAR: 'WHAT DOES THIS MEAN? WHAT HAVE YOU GOTTEN US INTO?'



THE AIR IS THICK WITH TENSION AS JAR TAKES A DEEP BREATH AND BEGINS TO...

WILL YOU JUDGE MY PERFORMANCE, PATRON? THE FATE OF YOUR EVENING HANGS IN THE BALANCE.

'WHAT WILL YOU HAVE ME PICK FOR ENTERTAINMENT?' THE MYSTERIOUS PERFORMER ASKS IN THEIR OTHERWORLDLY VOICE

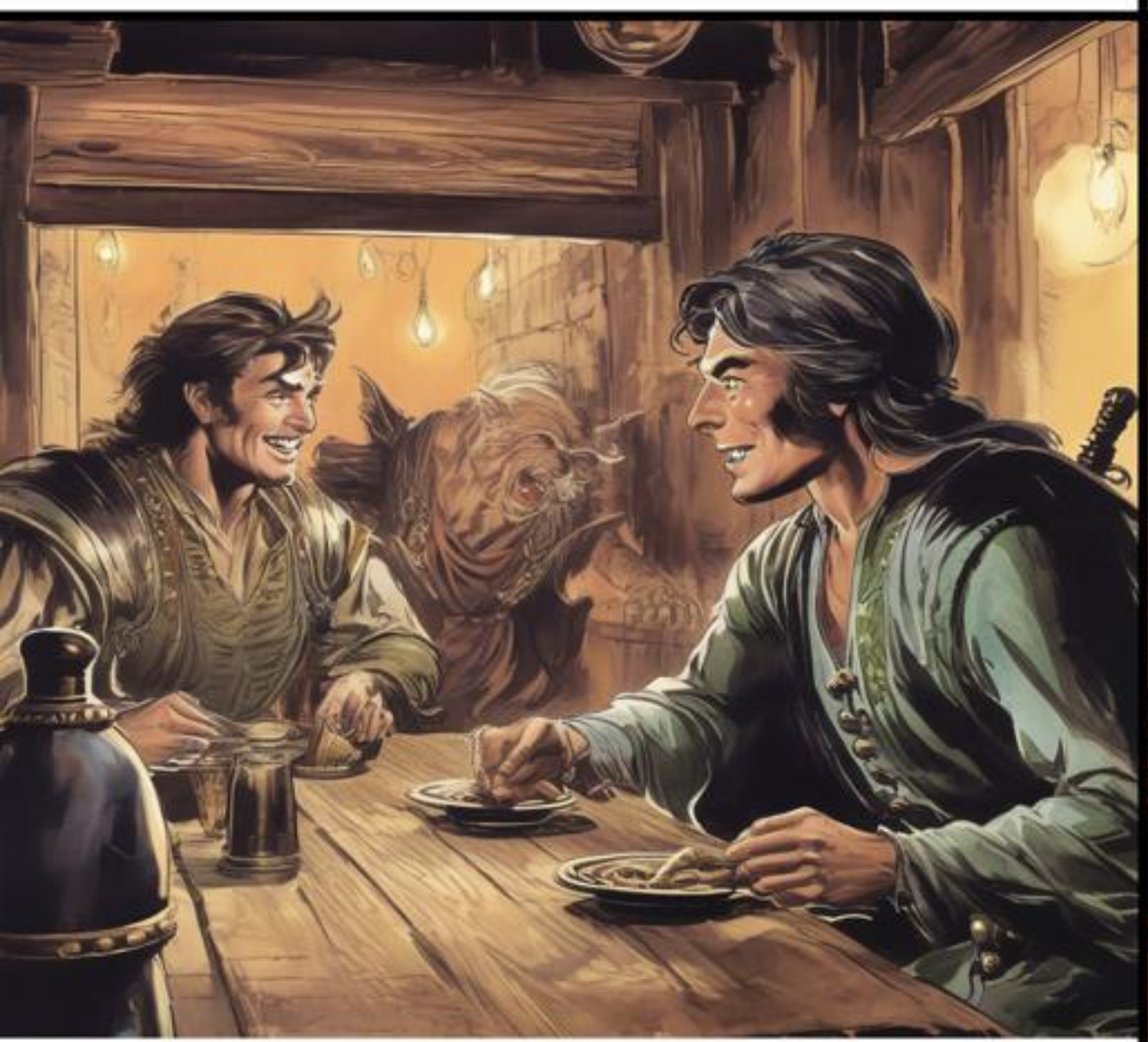


THE AIR IS HEAVY WITH TENSION AS THE MYSTERIOUS PERFORMER RAISES THE HARP ITS STRINGS VIBRATING WITH AN UNSETTLING POWER

"WHEN I FIND MYSELF IN TIMES OF TROUBLE / BARMAN'S ME..."

IT'S KIND OF... THEIR VIBE.

THE AIR THICKENS WITH TENSION AS NIKTAR TAKES THE CARD



NIKTAR: 'WHAT HAVE YOU GOTTEN US INTO, JAR?'

BUT YOU KNOW... / AND THEY ALL START LAUGHING.

JAR'S TRANCE-LIKE STATE REMAINS UNBROKEN AS FOUR GOLD COINS VANISH FROM HIS PURSE

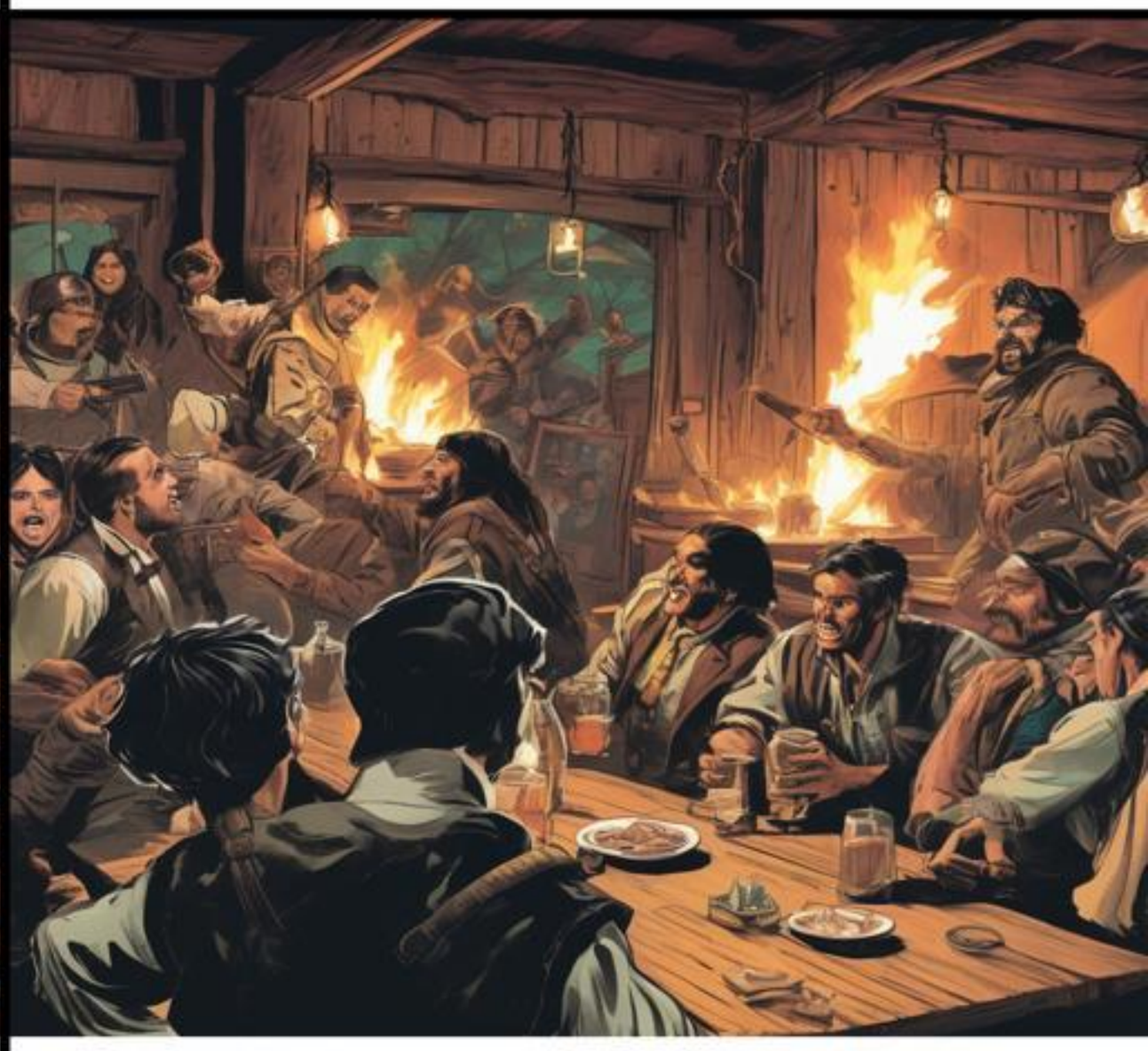
"DON'T GIVE ME THAT!" THE MYSTERIOUS PERFORMER SAYS, THEIR VOICE RISING ABOVE THE MUSIC.

"I WANT TO SET THIS SCENE", JAR SAYS, THEIR VOICE STILL LACED WITH THE PERFORMER'S ENCHANTMENT

JAR'S VOICE CRACKS AS HE TRIES TO SING ALONG, HIS WORDS SLURRING TOGETHER

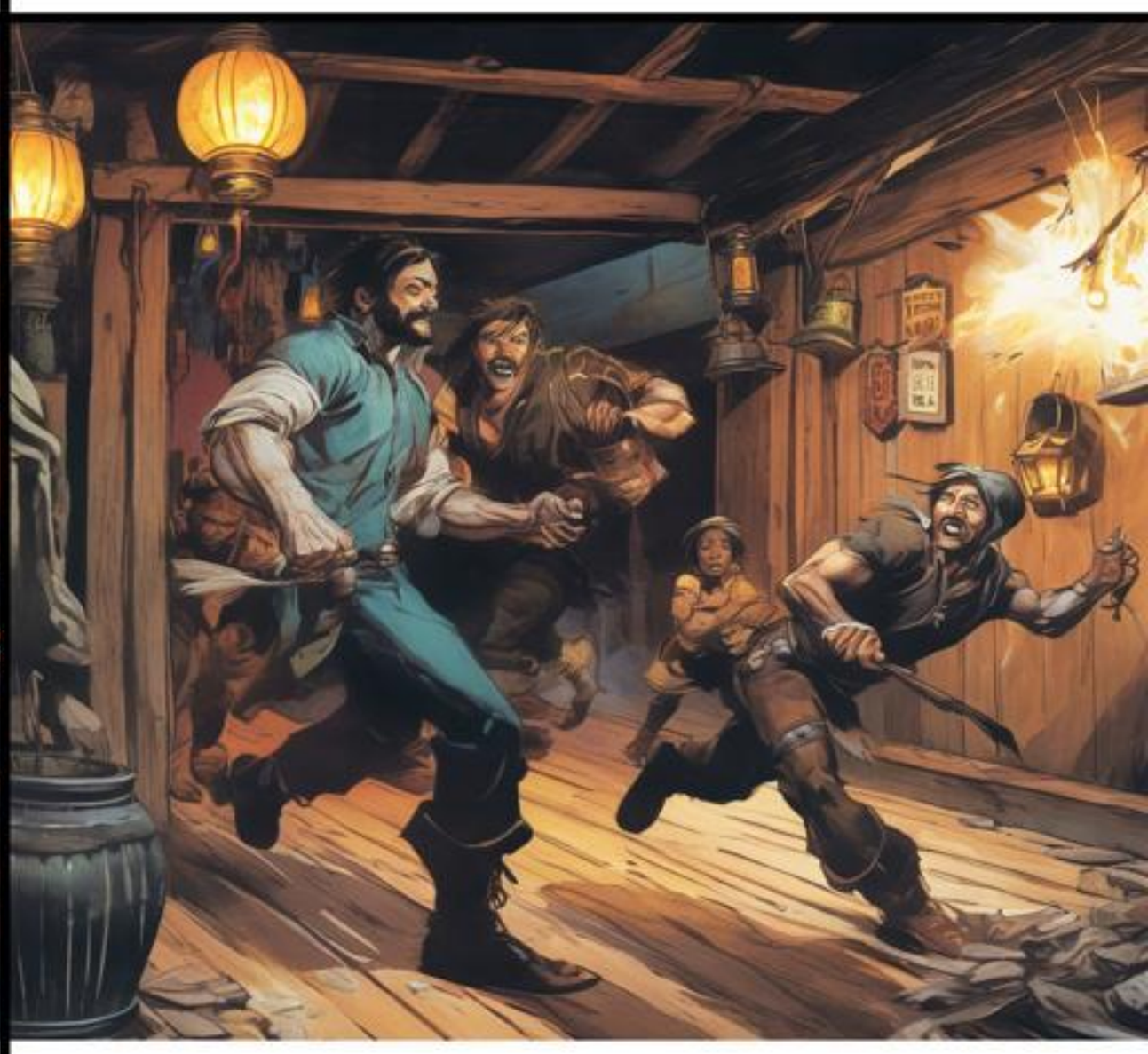
20? 30? WHAT DID YOU GET?

"JAR, SNAP OUT OF IT! WE NEED TO GET OUT OF HERE, NOW!"



GUNS AND ROSES... WHAT HAVE YOU GOTTEN US INTO?

"WELCOME TO... THE JUNGLE" JAR STAMMERS, THEIR EYES DARTING WILDLY AROUND THE ROOM

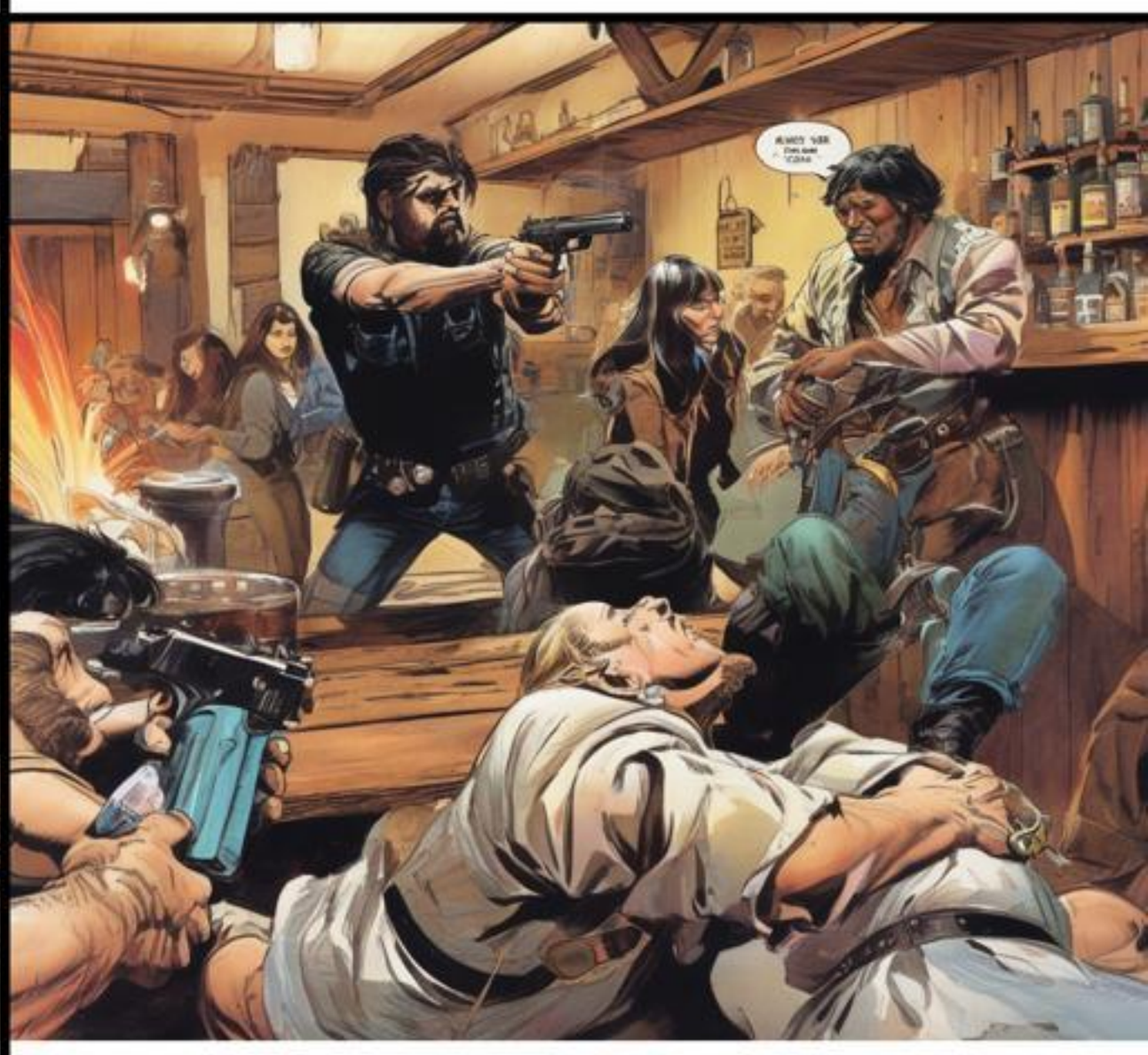


'GONNA GET OUT OF HERE, NOW!' NIKTAR YELLS OVER THE DIN

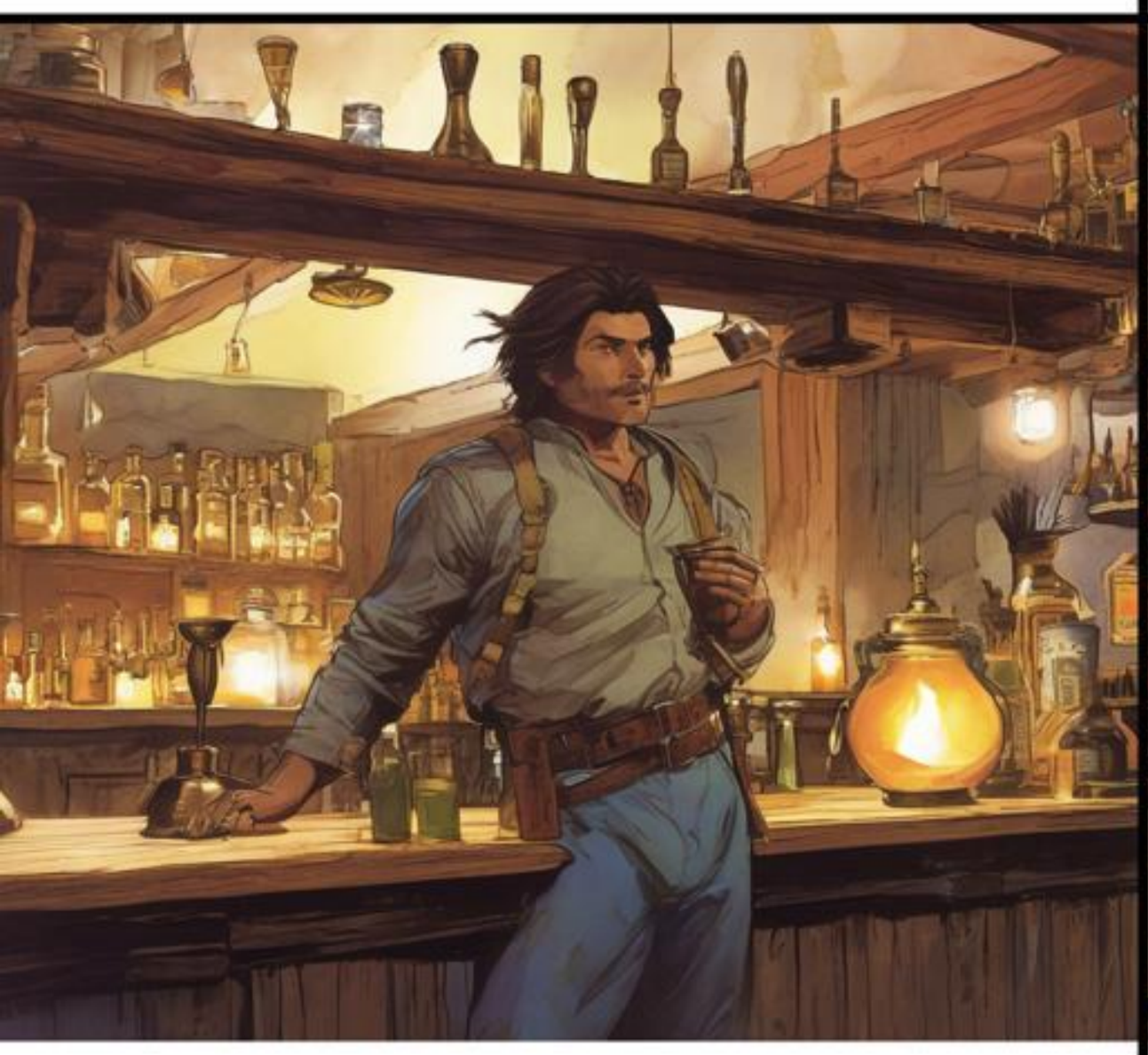
"WHATEVER HIS HIGHEST IS, IT'S NOT GOOD FOR HIM... OR US"

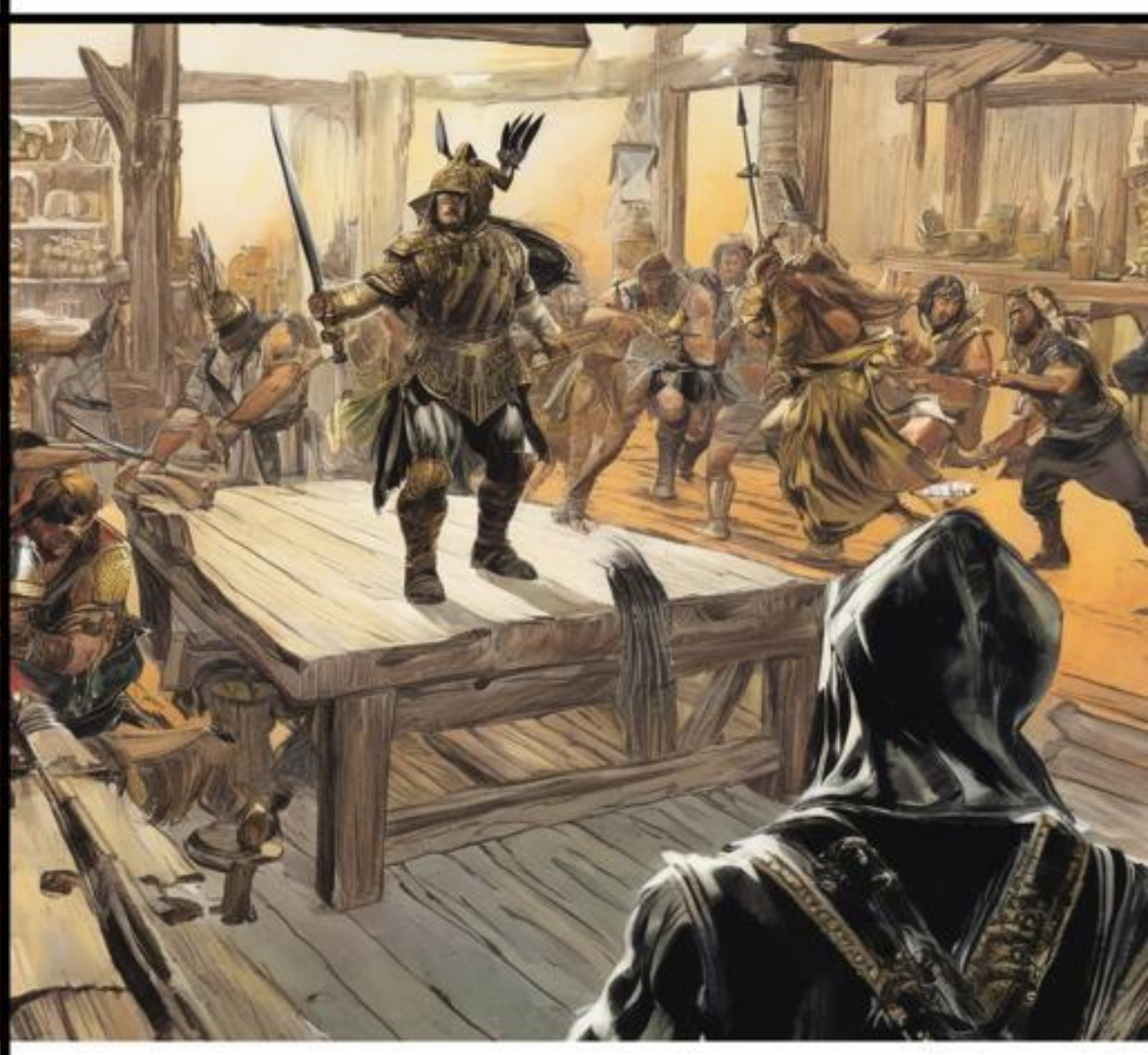
JAR, STILL DISORIENTED LOOKS UP AT NIKTAR AND WHISPERS "WHAT...WHAT I SEE...?

"NO, NO, NO! WHAT ARE YOU DOING?!"



"AND YOU FIGURE?" JAR ASKS, THEIR VOICE SHAKING AS THEY STRUGGLE TO UNDERSTAND WHAT HAPPENED

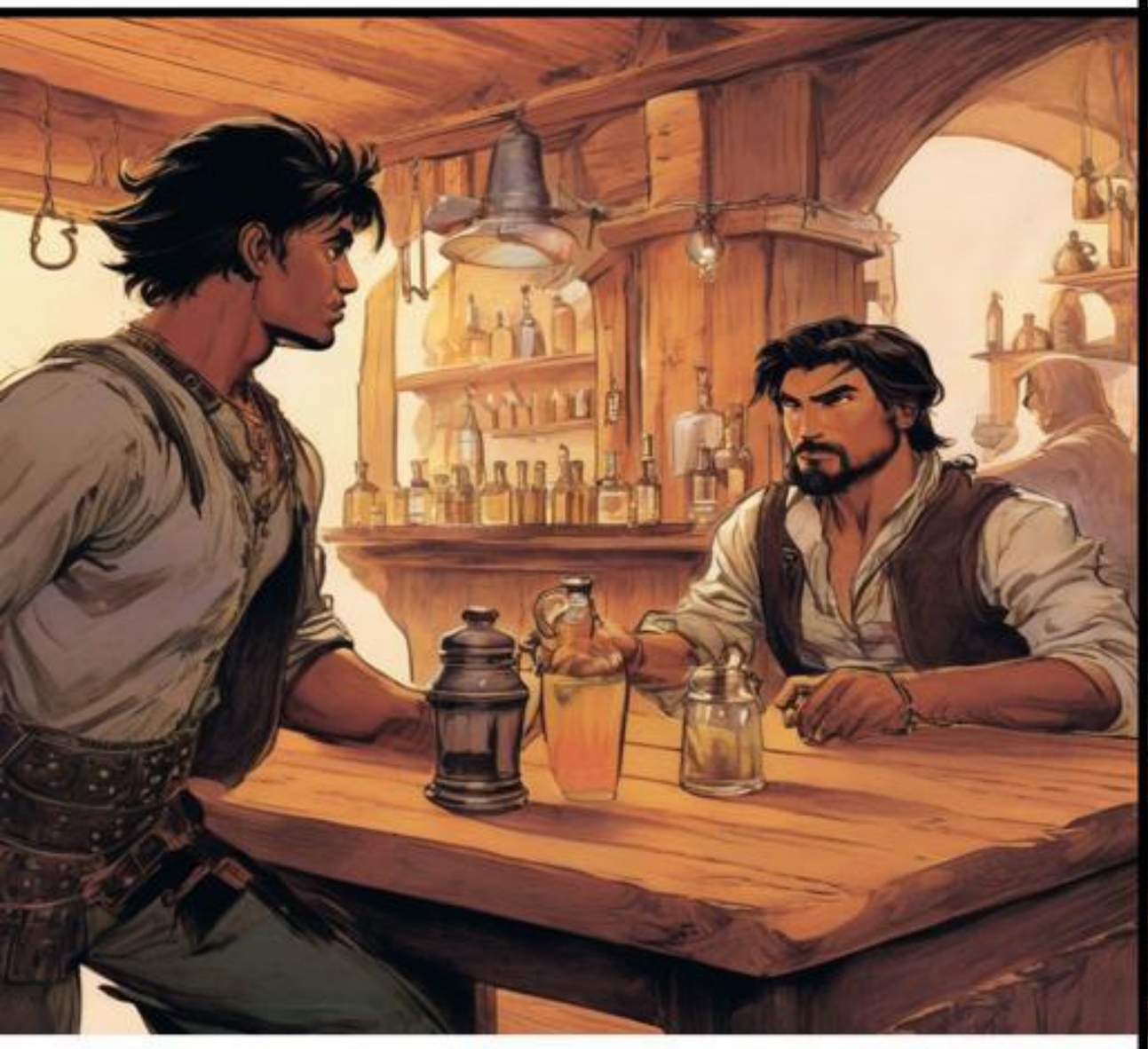




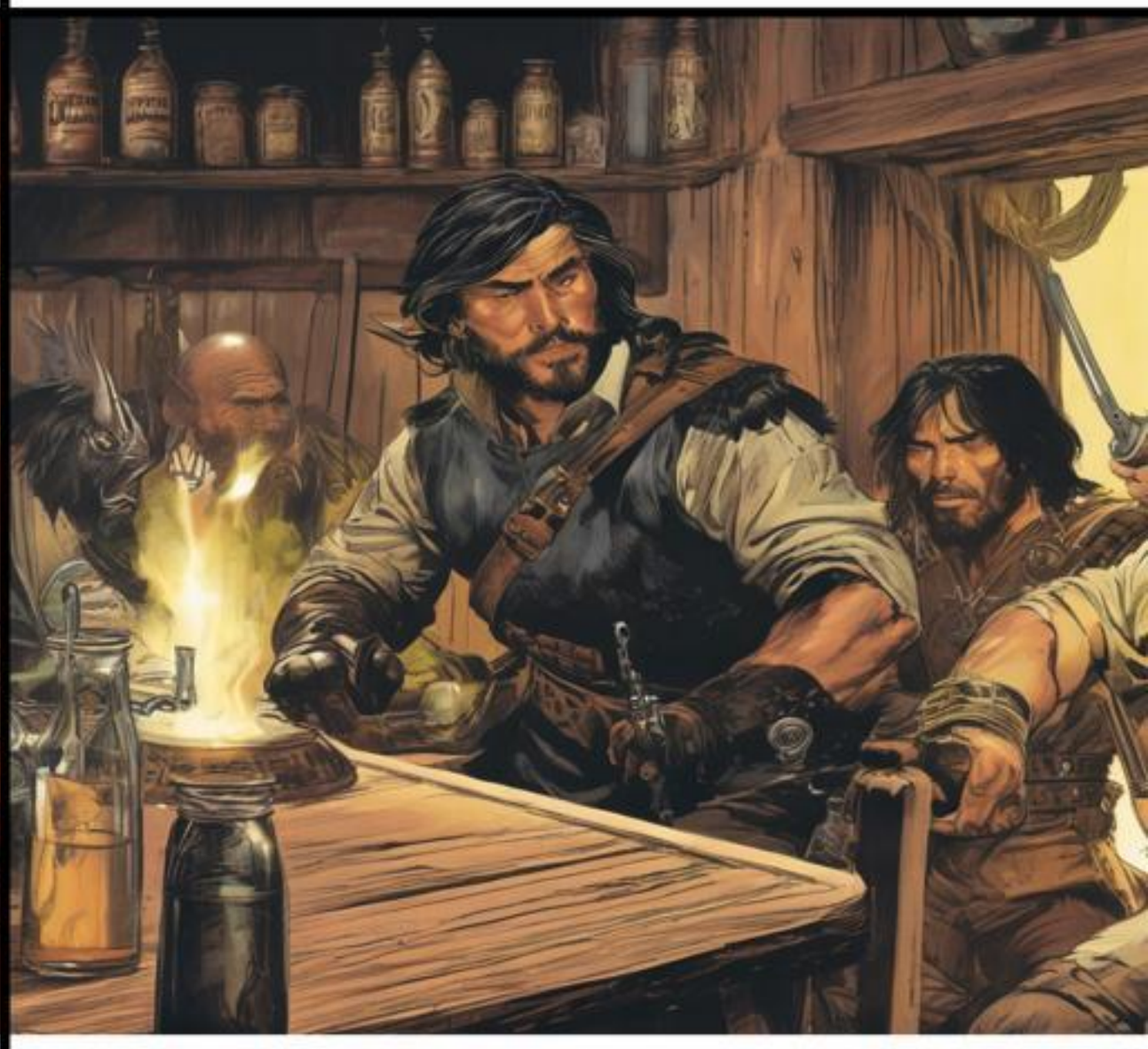
NIKTAR: "COME ON, JAR, LET'S PUT THIS DOWN, WE CAN'T SOLVE ANYTHING WITH GUNS DRAWN."

JAR: 'WHAT DO YOU THINK GUYS? WHAT JUST HAPPENED?'

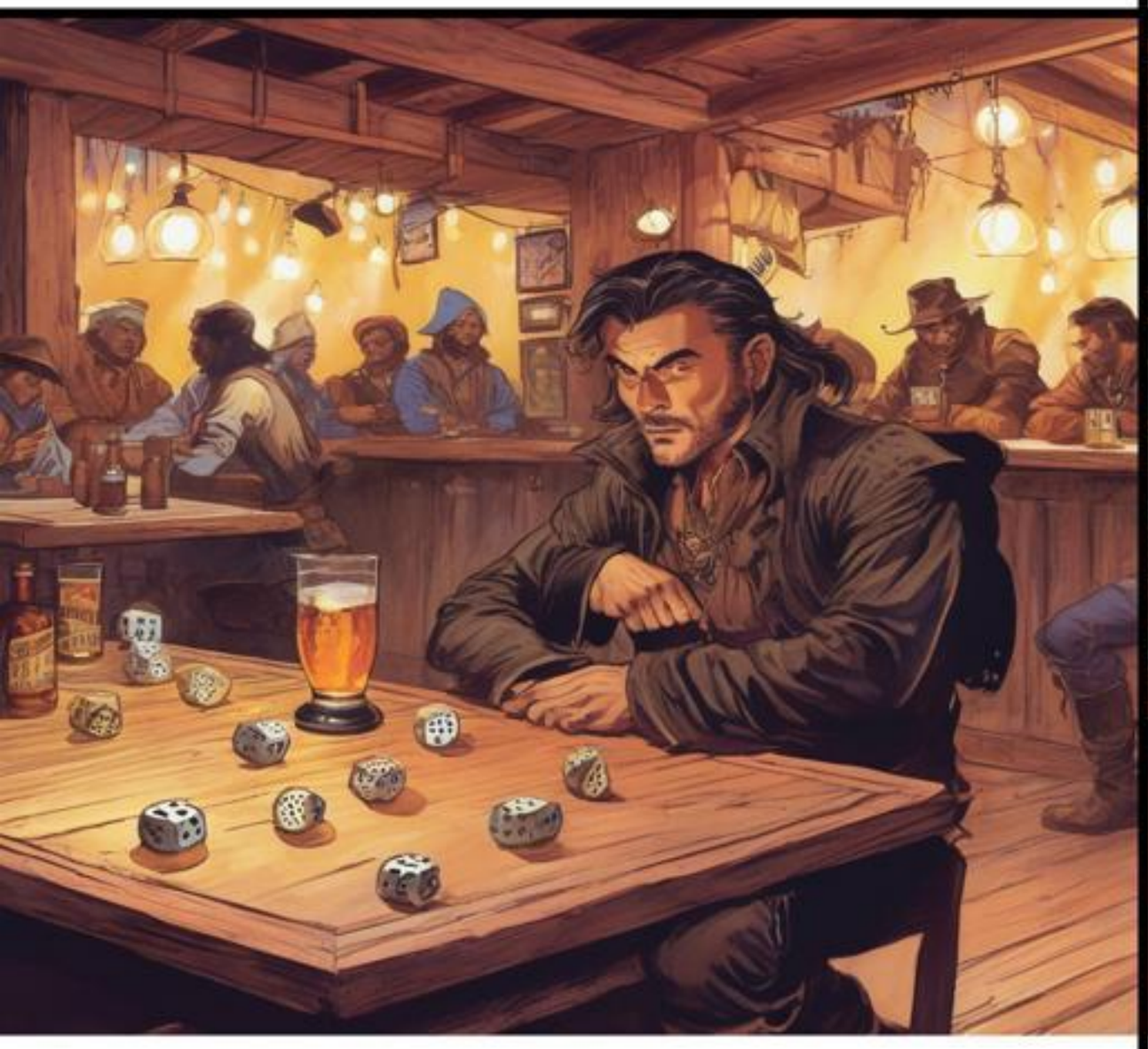
"CAN WE DO IT BEFORE YOU TRY TO.." – JAR'S WORDS TRAIL OFF AS HE SEARCHES FOR REASSURANCE FROM NIKTAR



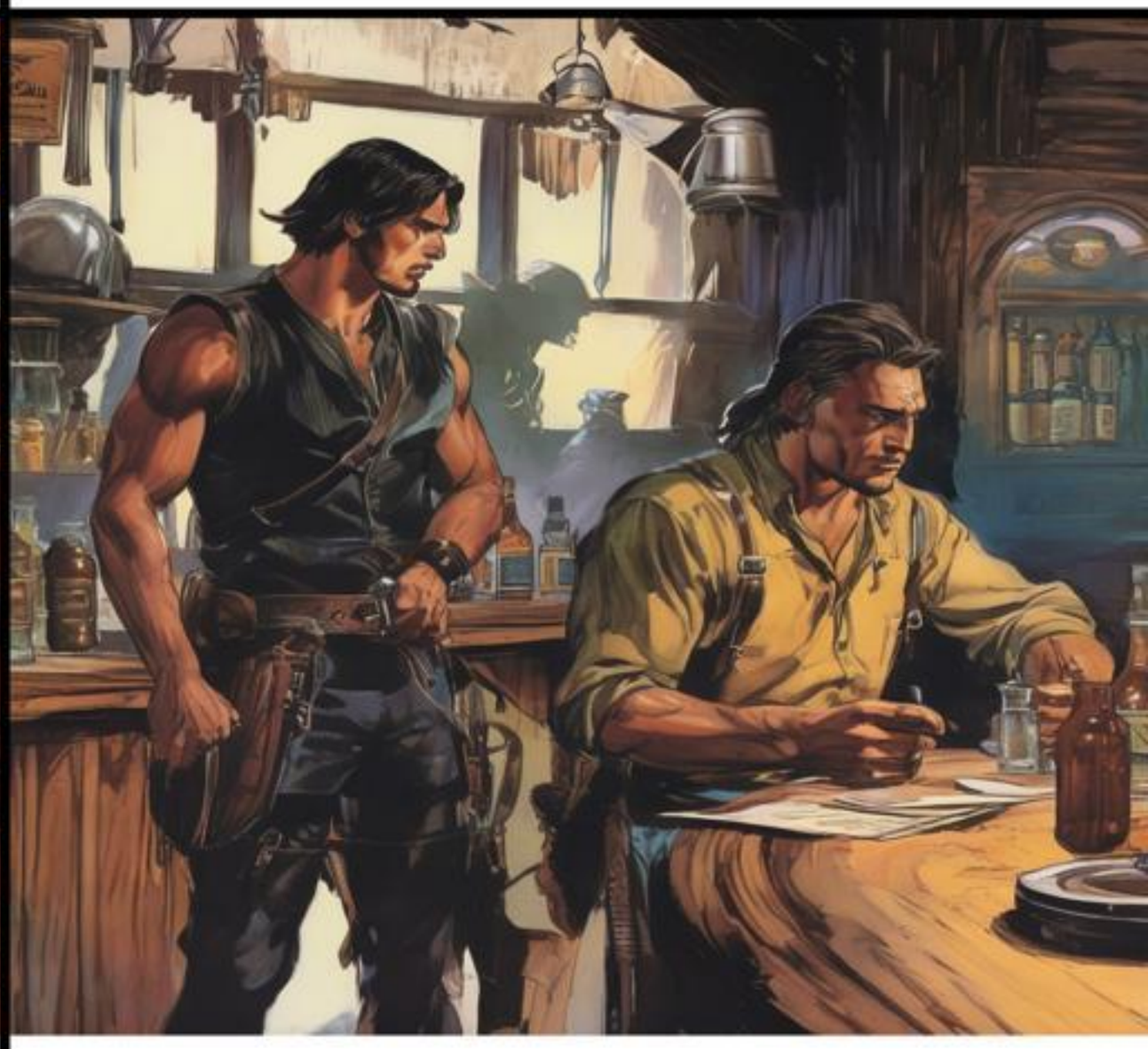
"I FEEL LIKE I COULD TRY TO BE FRIENDS WITH EVERYONE," JAR SAYS, LOOKING AT NIKTAR FOR REASSURANCE



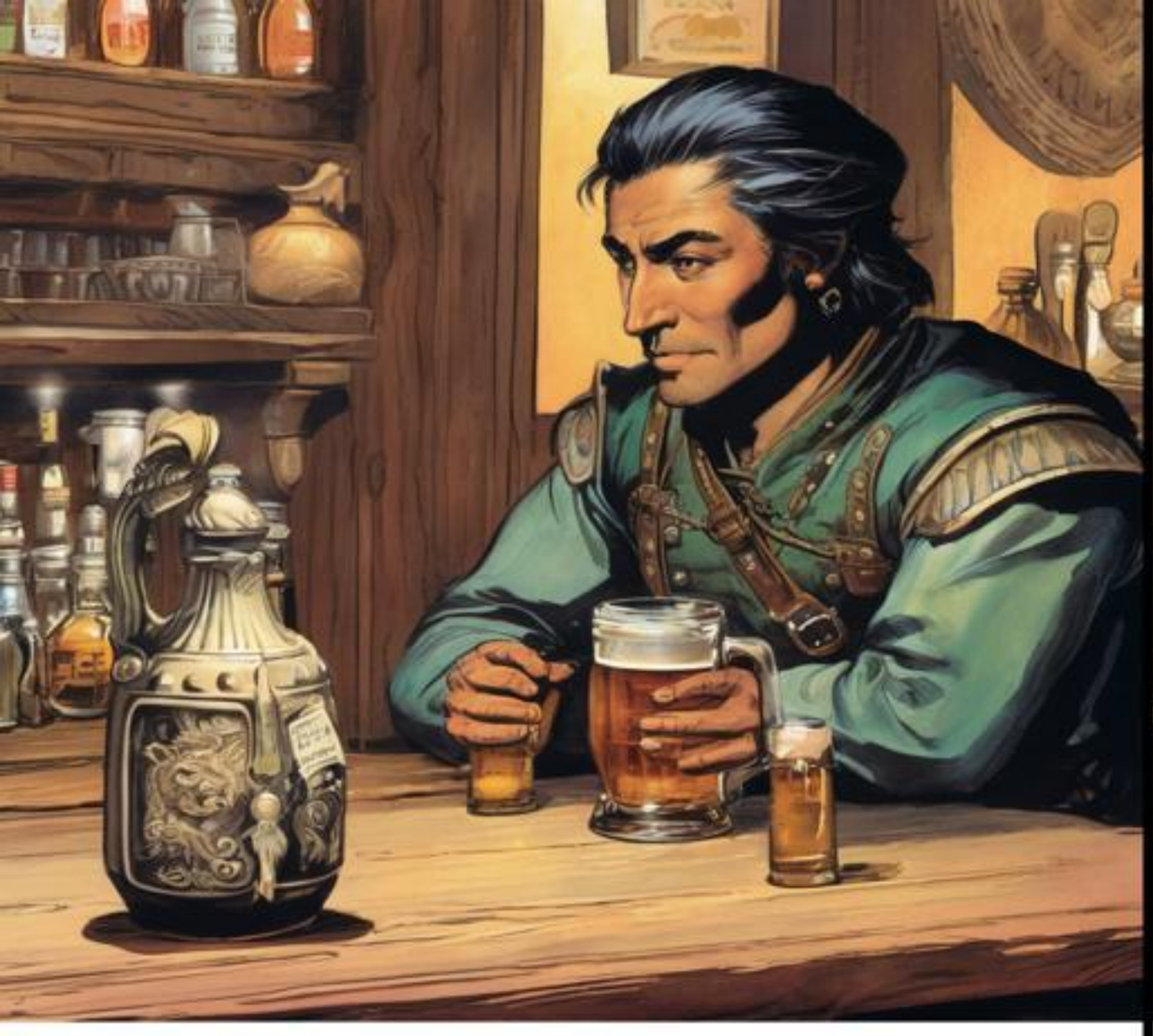
JAR: 'I FEEL LIKE I COULD TRY GOING... SOMEWHERE, LIKE, SOMETHING.' NIKTAR: 'THE FACT THAT YOU SHOT ME IS A BIT MORE PRESSING THAN WHERE WE GO NEXT.'



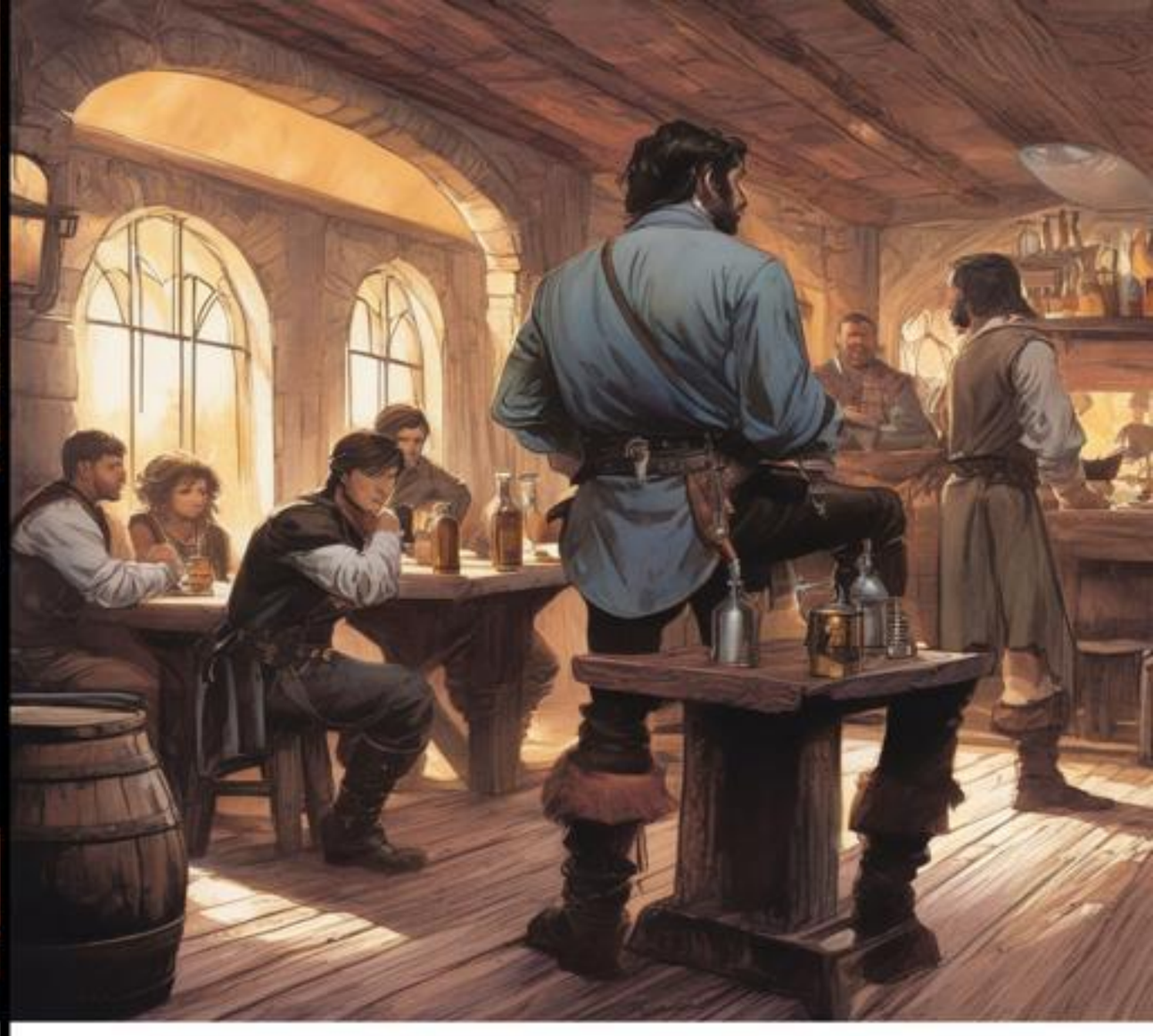
'MAYBE THEY LIKE MY GUT?' JAR ASKS, VOICE BARELY ABOVE A WHISPER



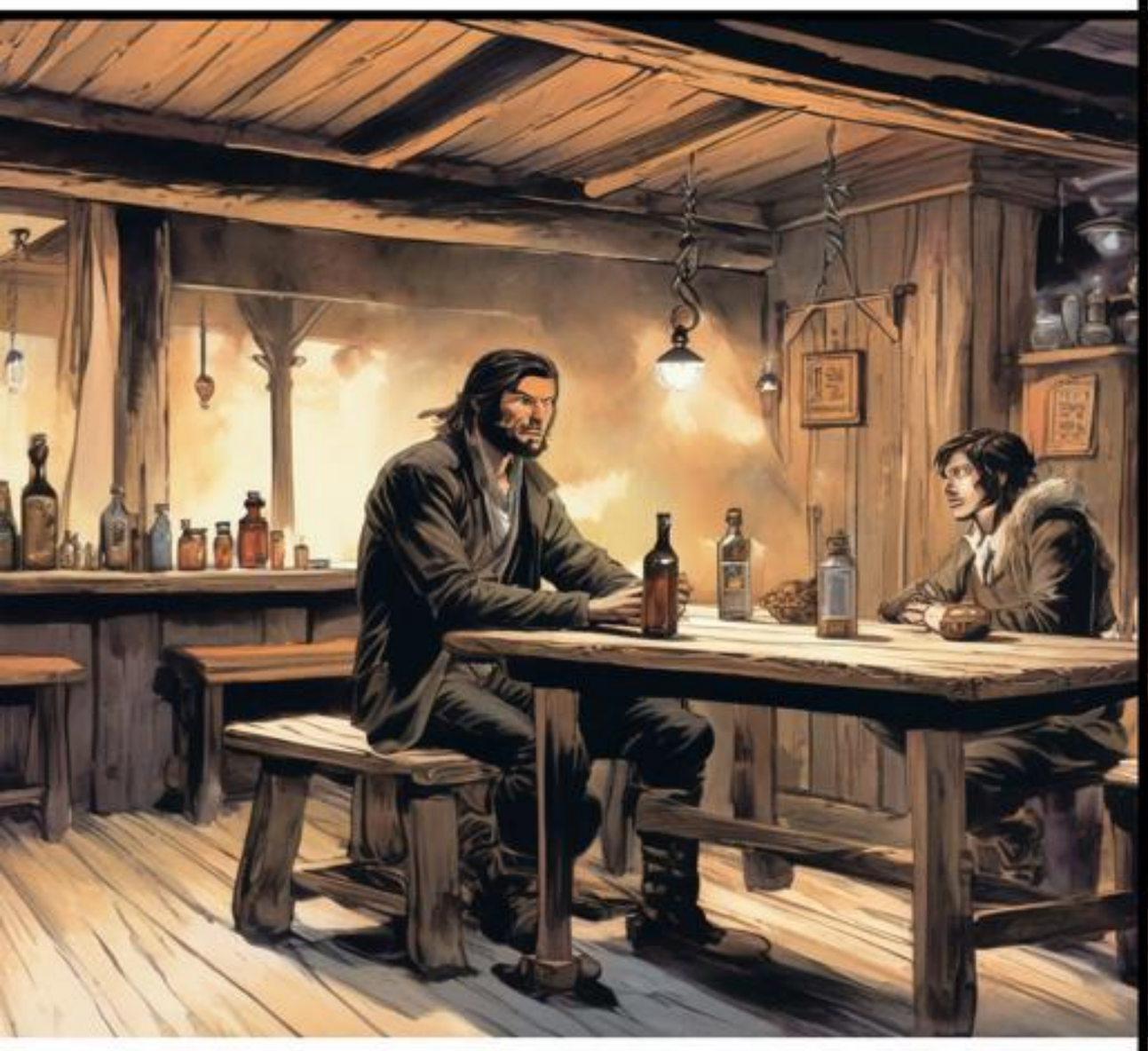
"OH. GAME ON," JAR SAYS QUIETLY, HIS VOICE LOW AND HUSKY



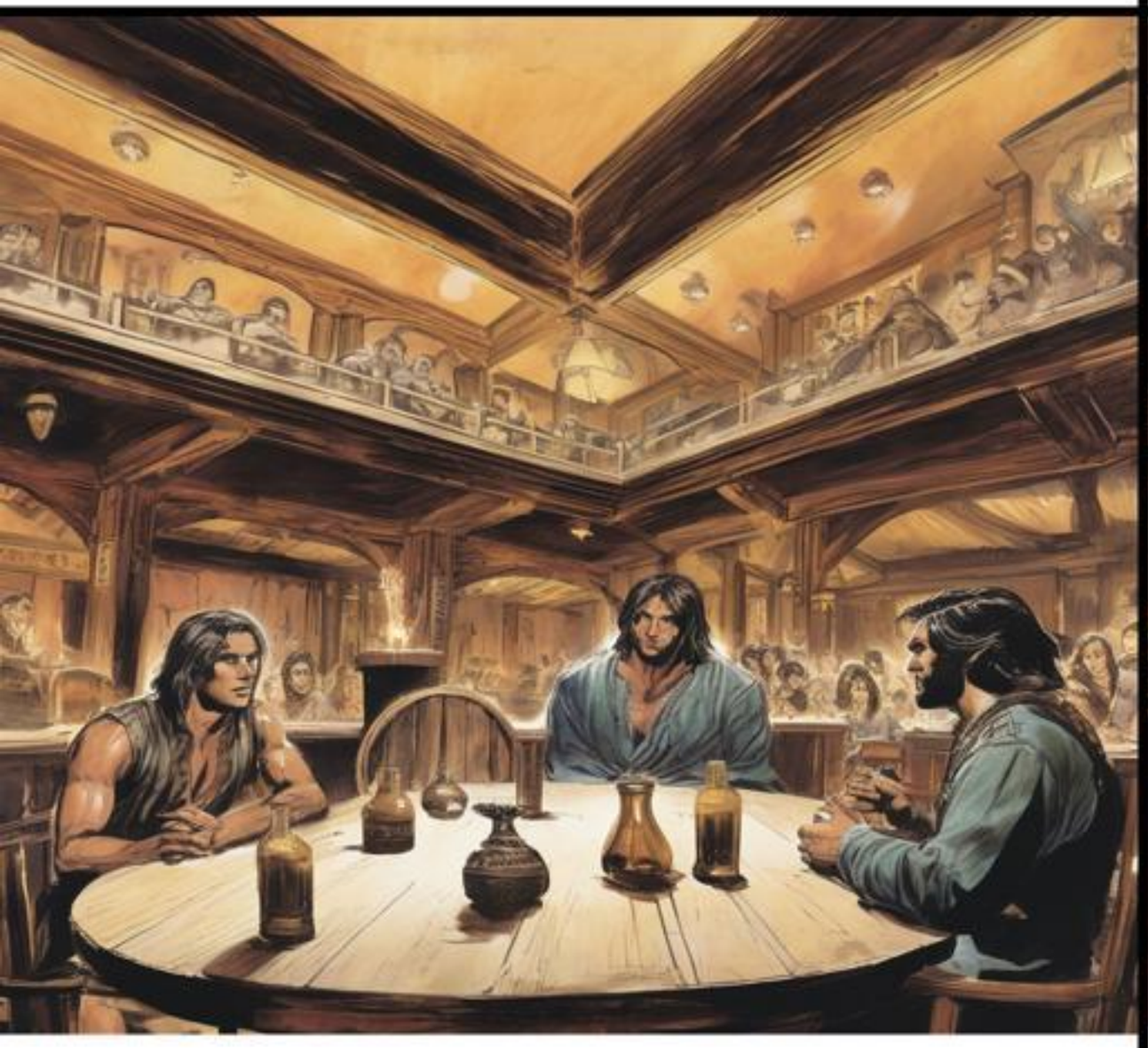
WELL... I THINK IT MIGHT BE TIME WE TALKED ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED EARLIER.



'JUST HOLD IT FOR A SECOND', NIKTAR SAYS SOFTLY.

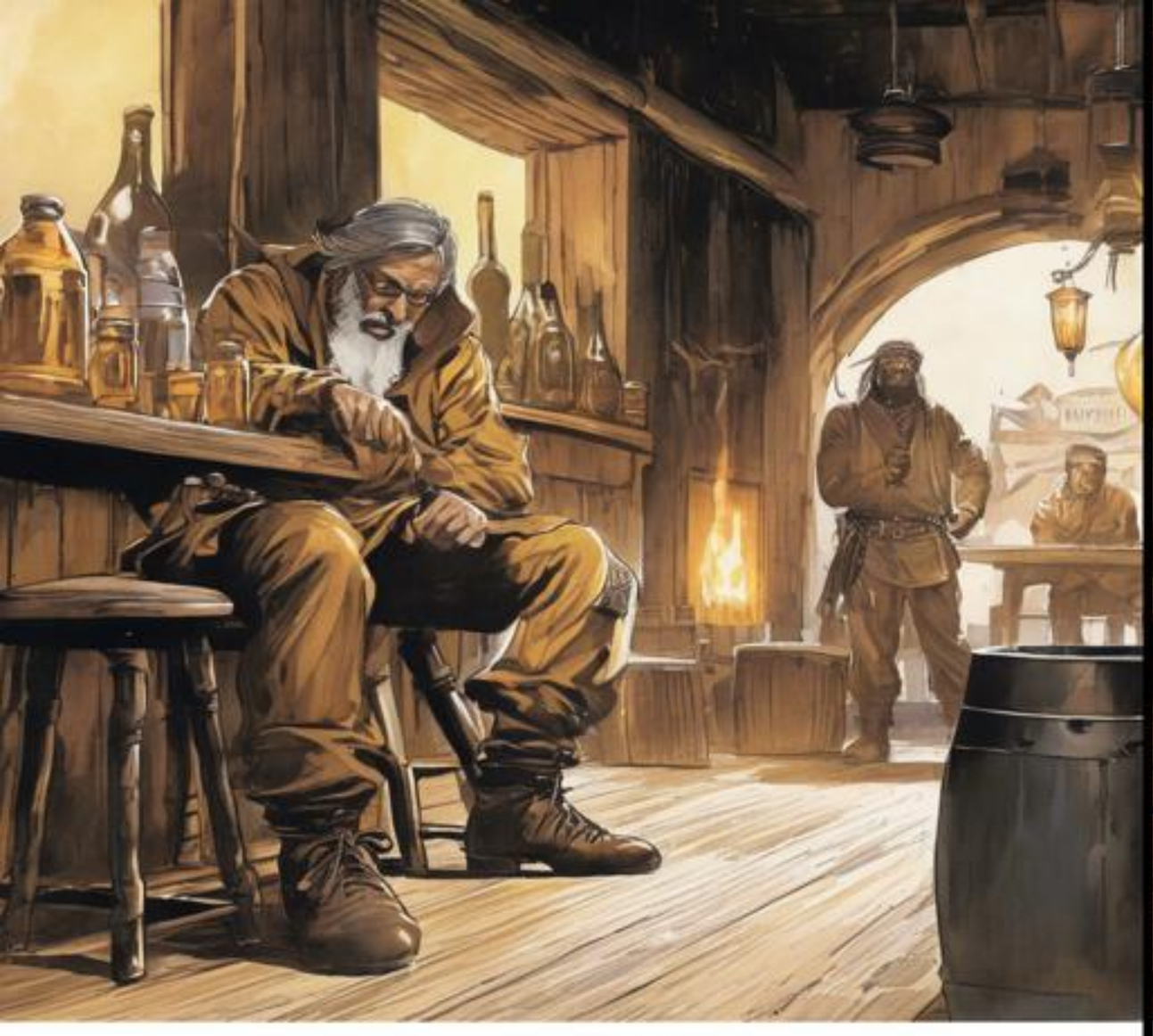


"YOU CAN HELP ME MAKE SENSE OF...OF WHAT JUST HAPPENED?"

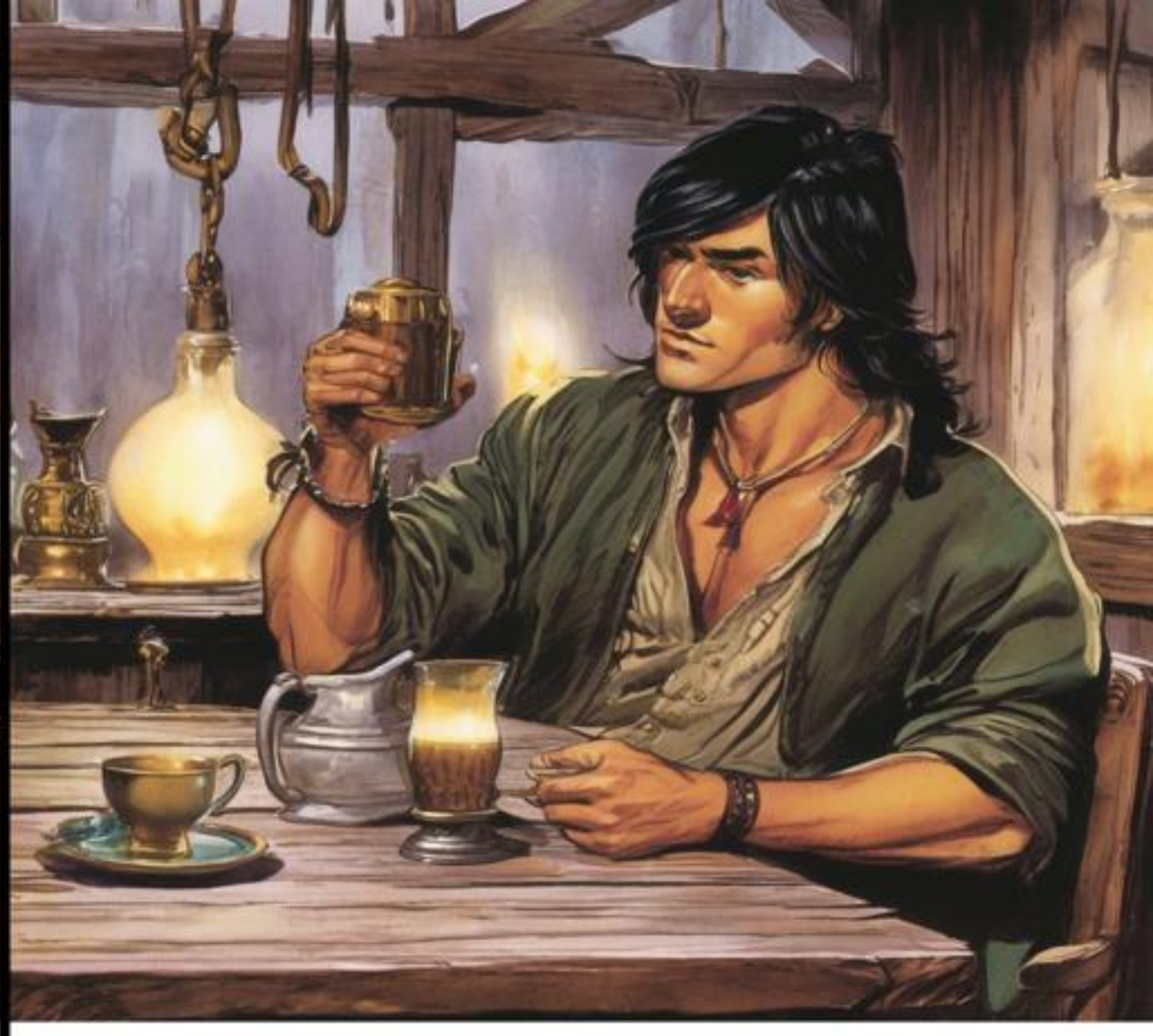


"YOU CAN SNEAK IN NO MORE. NO MORE FIGHTING. ESPECIALLY FOR YOU."

"IT'S PERSUASION OR PERFORMANCE", NIKTAR SAYS, HIS VOICE BARELY ABOVE A WHISPER.

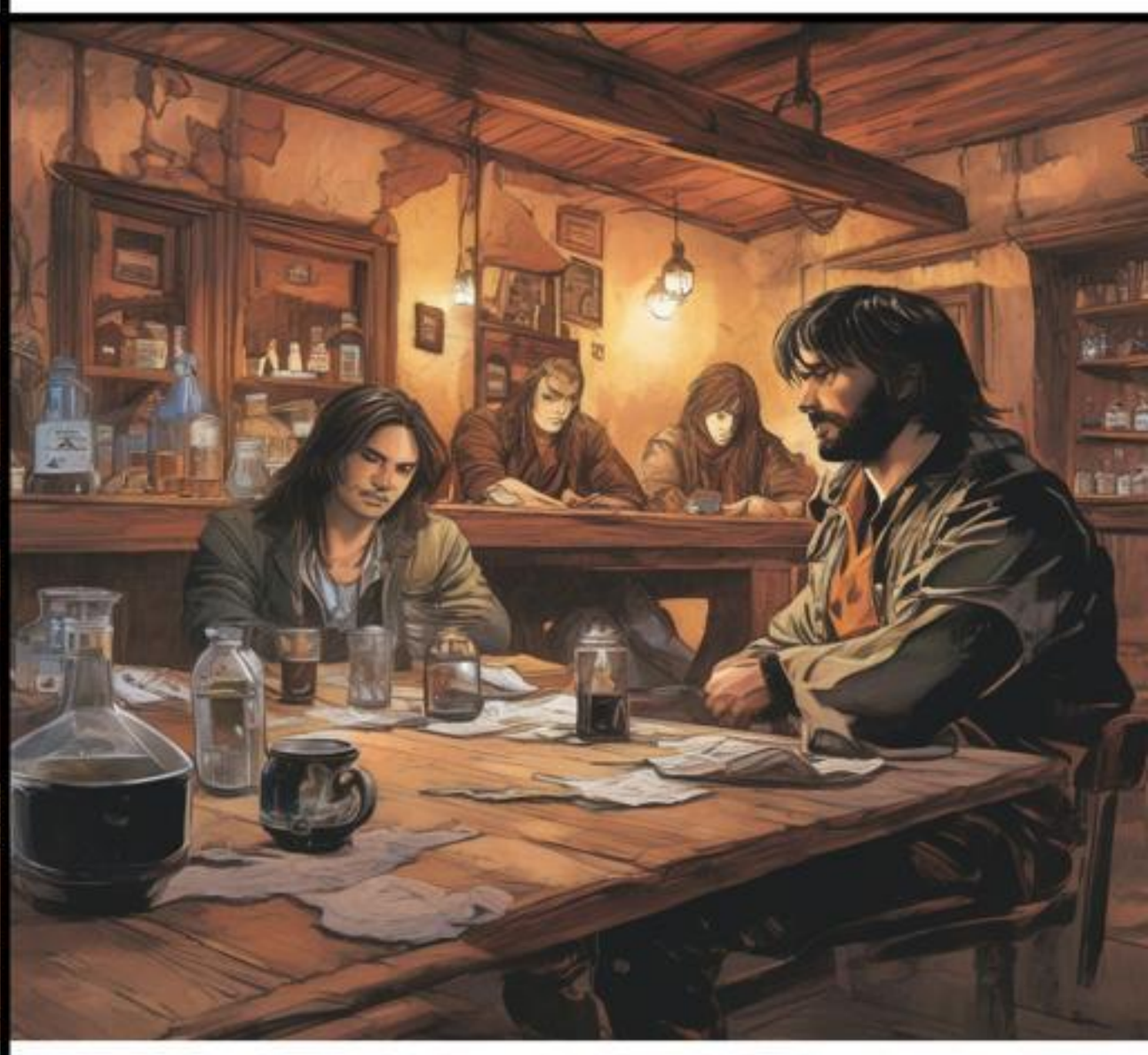


IMAGINE THEY'RE NOT WATCHING US.



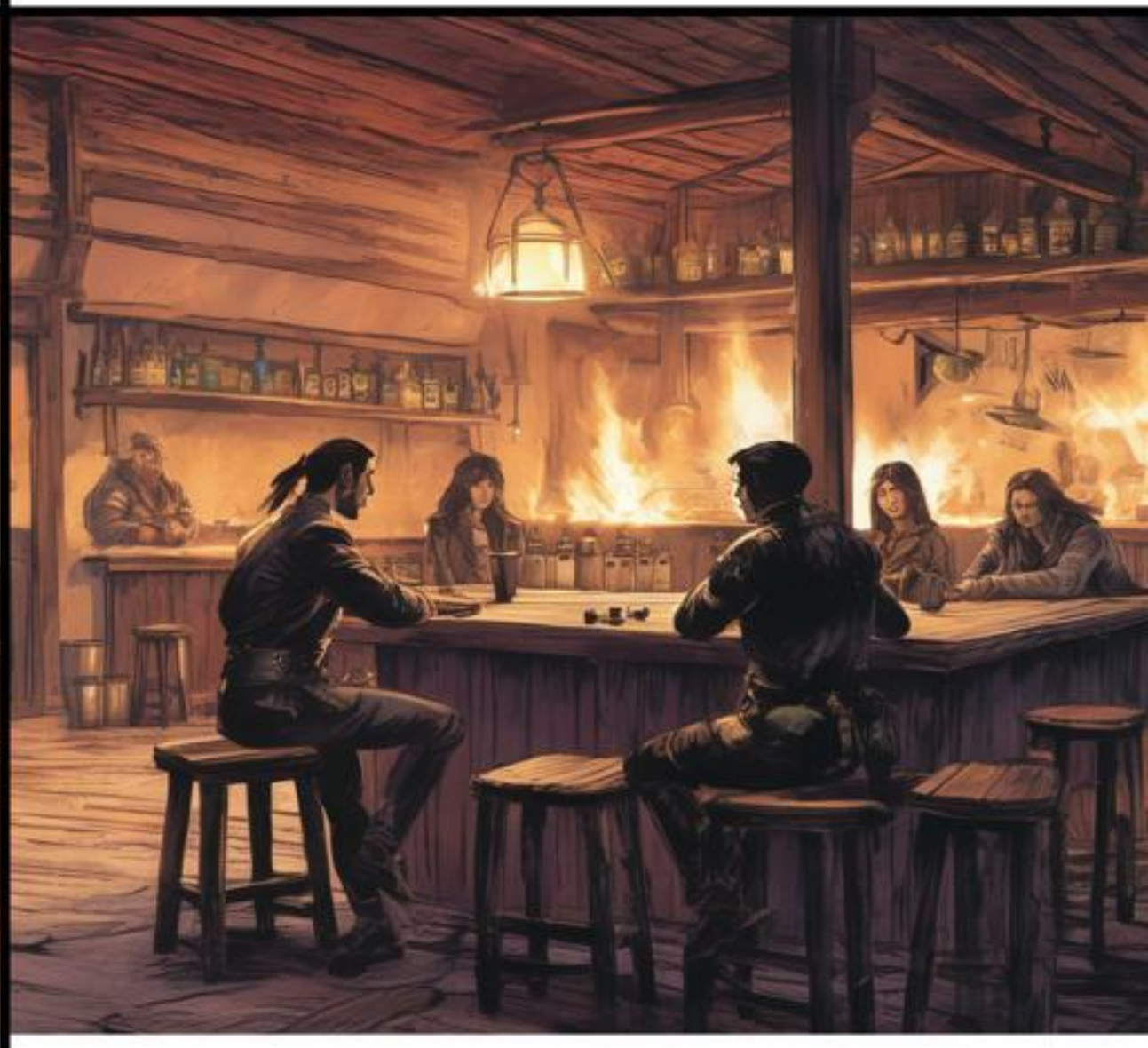
NIKTAR: 'I GIVE YOU BARDIC INSPIRATION... LET IT GUIDE US THROUGH THIS CHAOS.'

WHAT DO YOU GUYS HONESTLY THINK I'M DOING HERE?



"HE'S JUST SHOWING HIS LOVE IN A DIFFERENT WAY" NIKTAR WHISPERS TO JAR, TRYING TO EASE HIS CONCERNS

JAR'S VOICE IS BARELY AUDIBLE OVER THE MURMUR OF THE CROWD: 'YOU KNOW, EXPLORE EACH OTHER'S PARTIES...'



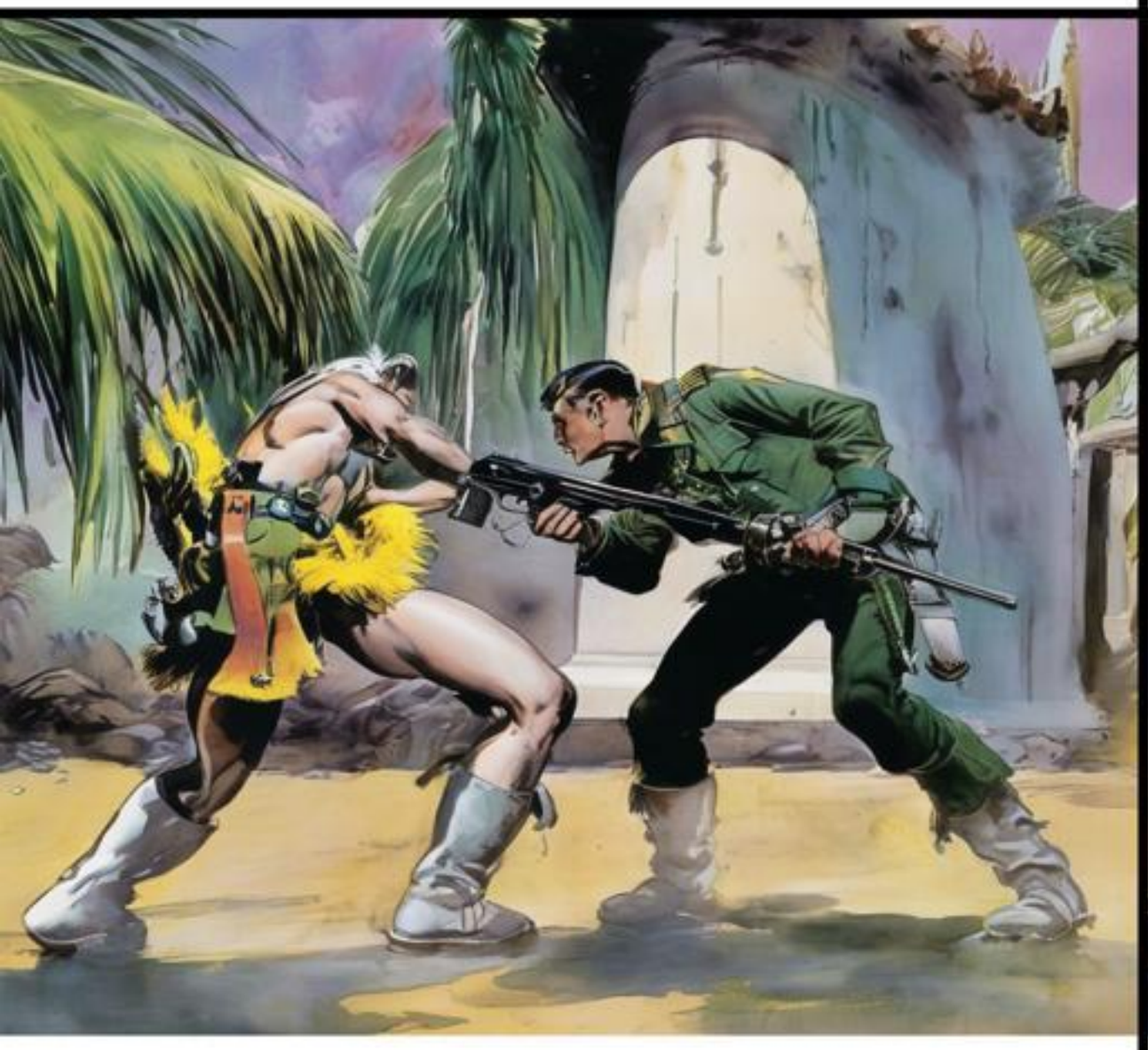
"WE APOLOGIZE... AND WE DIDN'T MEAN ANYTHING LIKE IT," JAR SAYS, HIS EYES AVOIDING NIKTAR'S GAZE.

"YOU NEED TO CHECK IF YOU WANT BECAUSE YOU CAN ESCAPE VERY QUICKLY..."

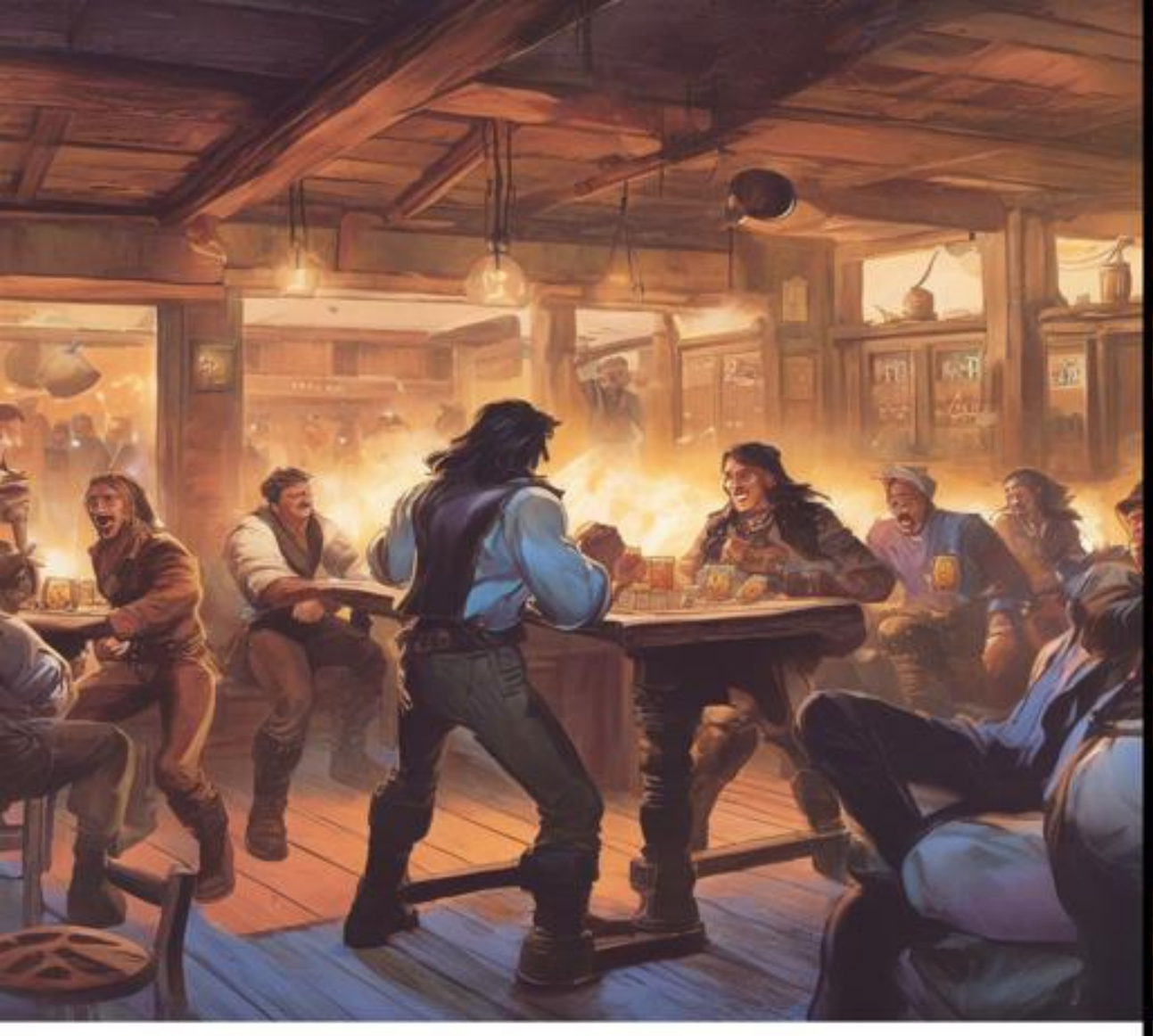
'WHICH BARS?' THE GUARD ASKS, A HINT OF UNCERTAINTY CREEPING INTO HIS VOICE.

WHAT WAS YOUR NAME AGAIN? A.JAR...

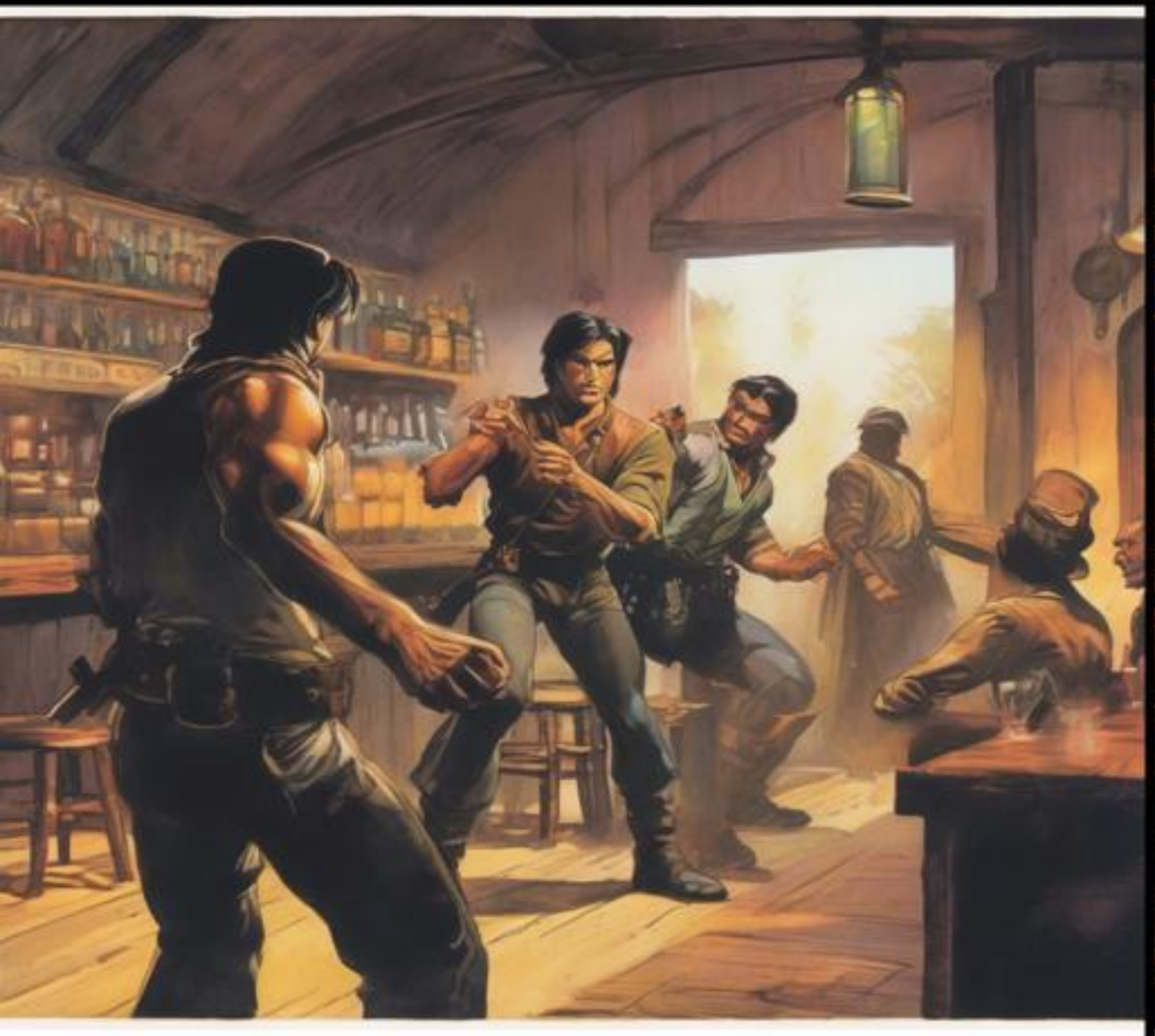
"SHH, LITTLE SONGBIRD" NIKTAR WHISPERS TO A.JAR AS HE PALMED THE KEY.



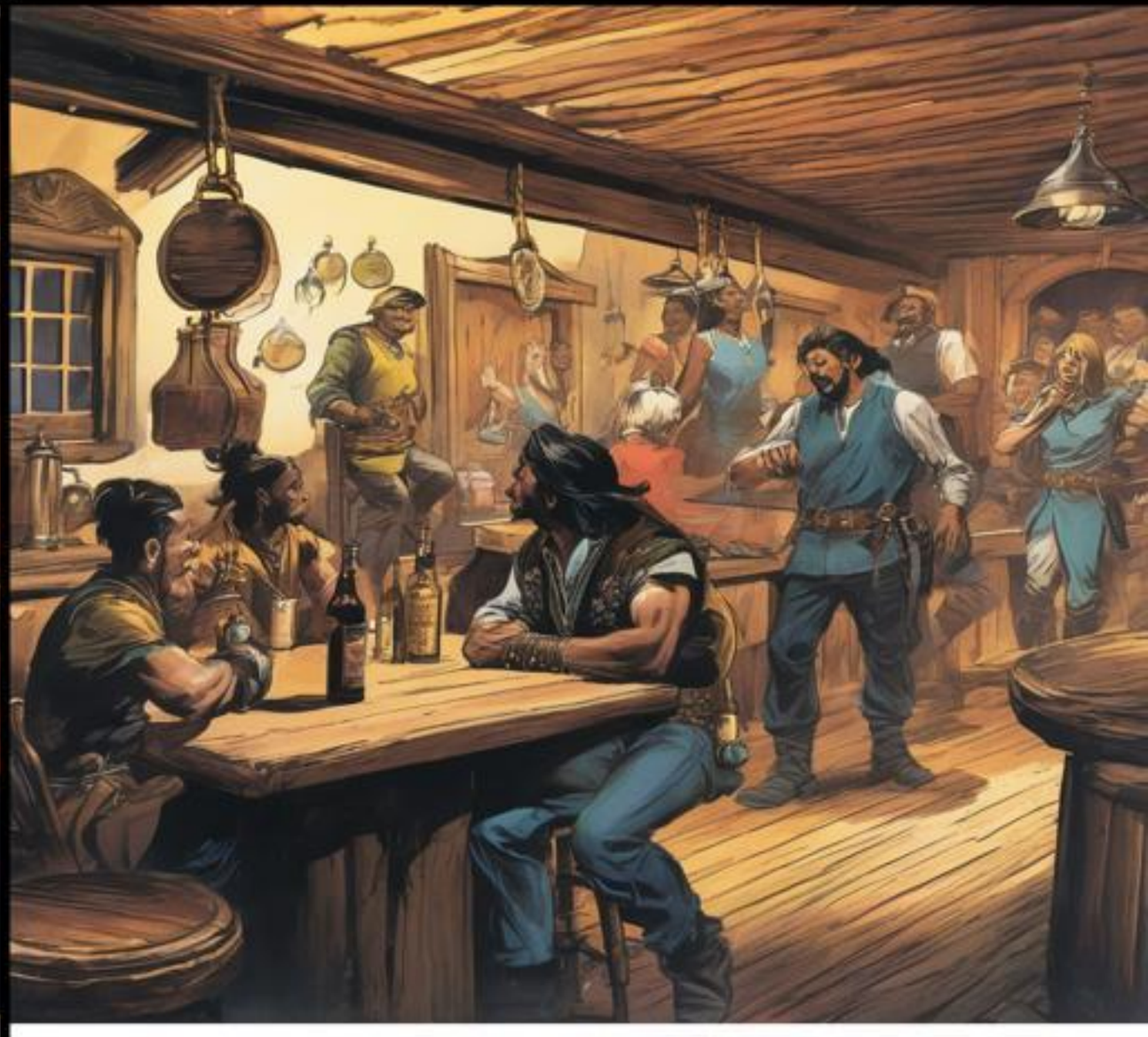
SILENCE IS GOLDEN... FOR NOW.



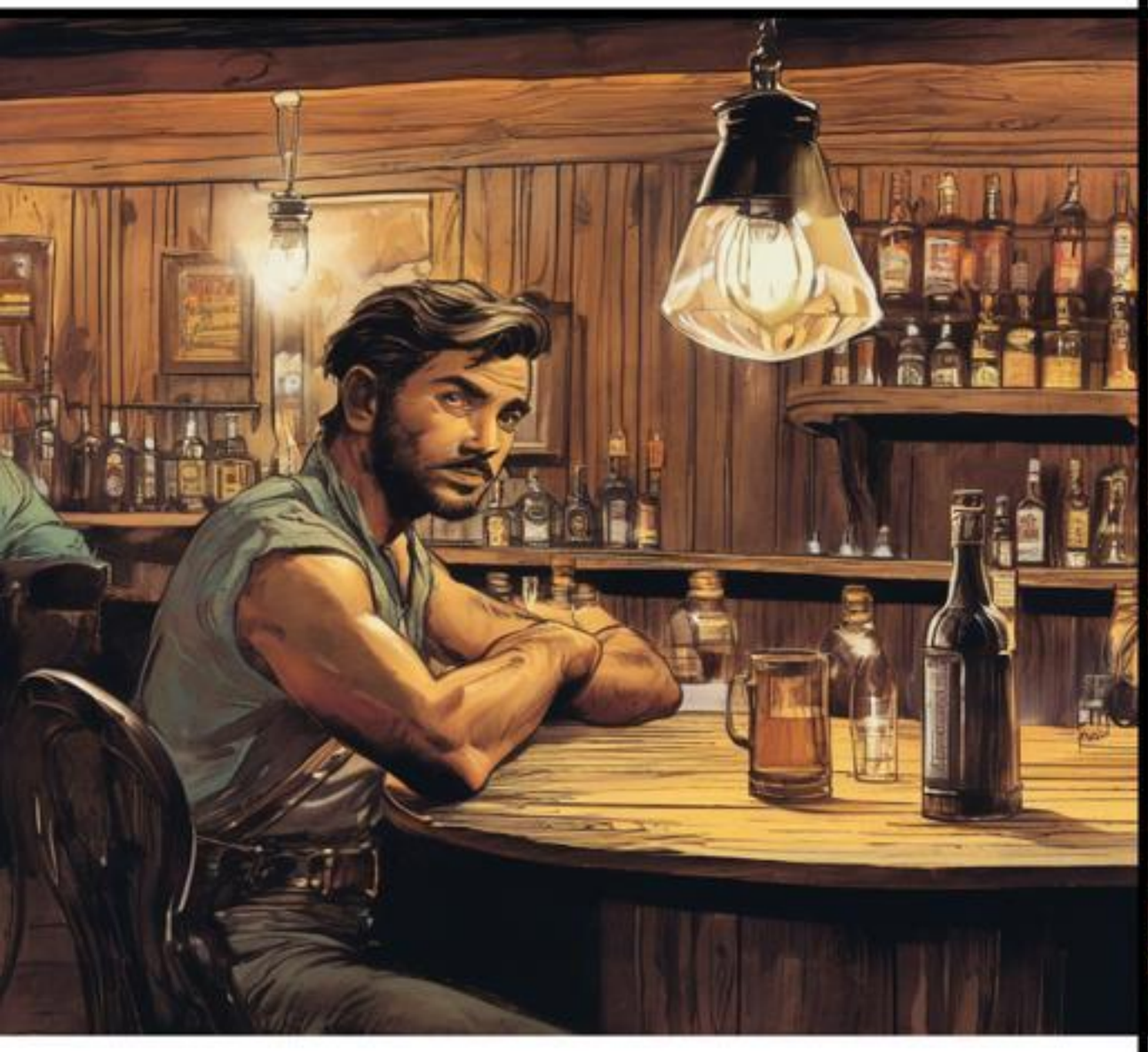
BUT DO YOU? ALSO HAVE A PERSUASION. NO.



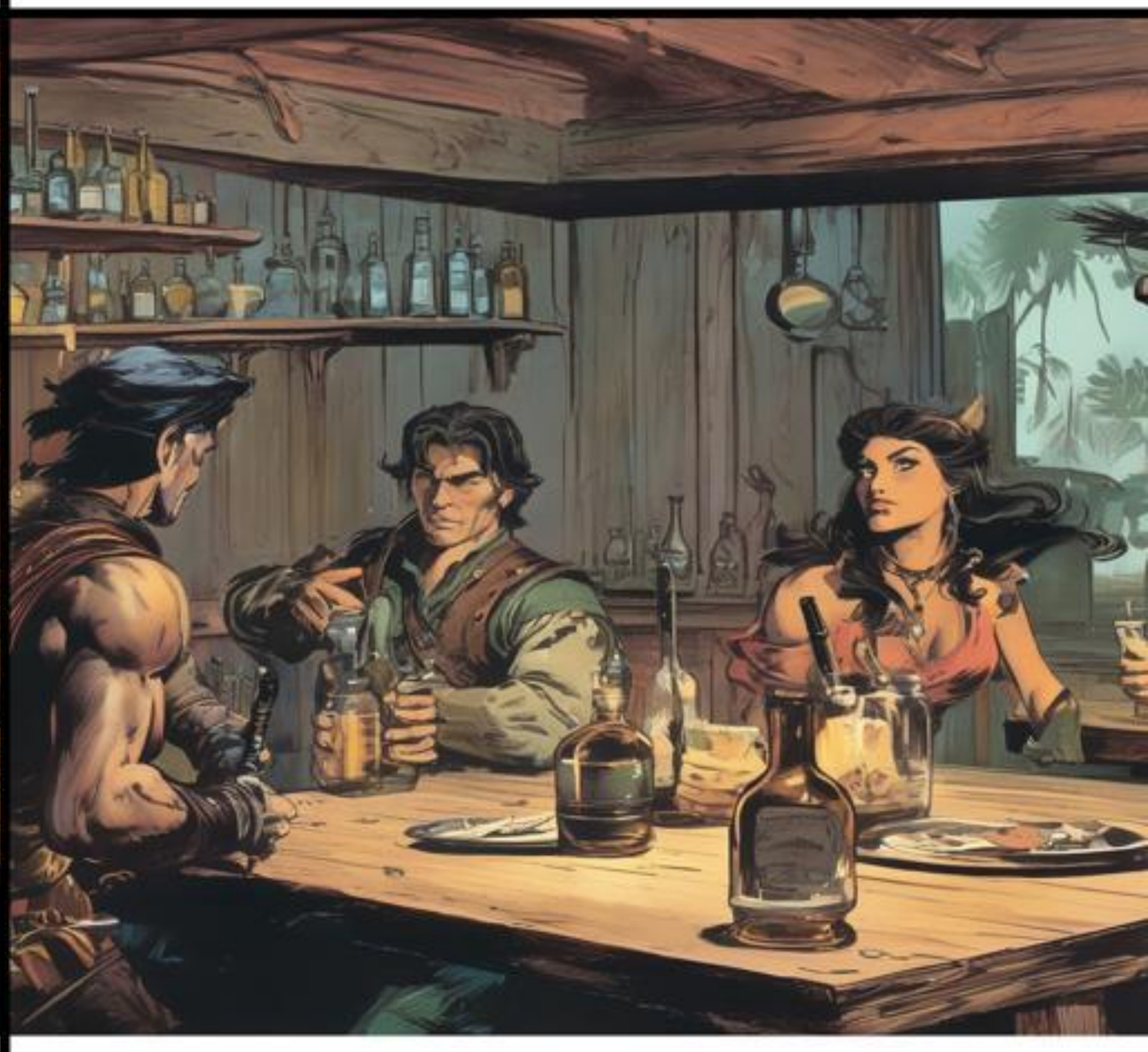
DID YOU COUNT YOUR CHARISMA BONUS AS WELL?



'NOT NOW', JAR WHISPERS TO NIKTAR, HIS VOICE BARELY AUDIBLE OVER THE BACKGROUND NOISE

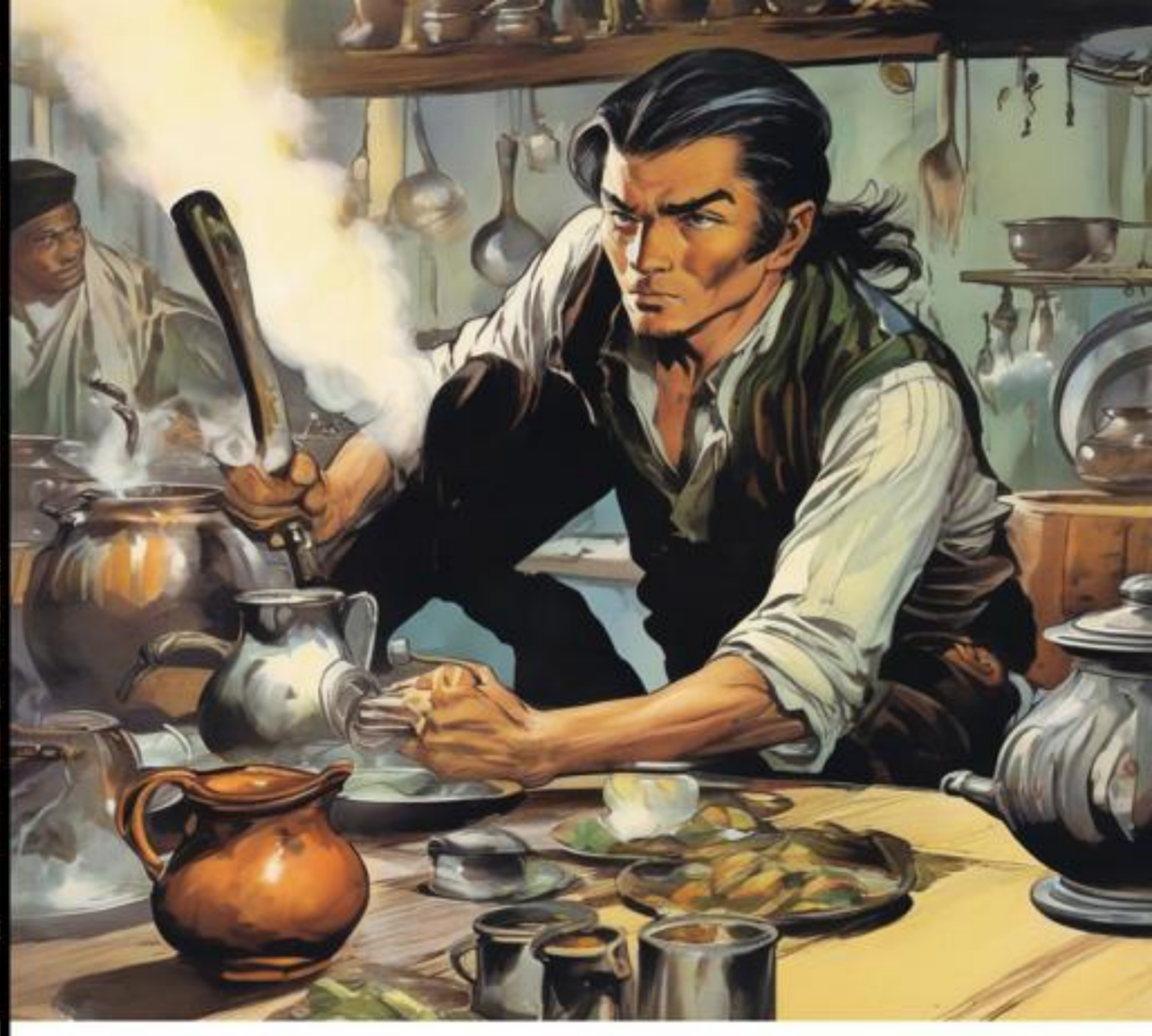


WHAT'S GOTTEN INTO YOU, MATE?!



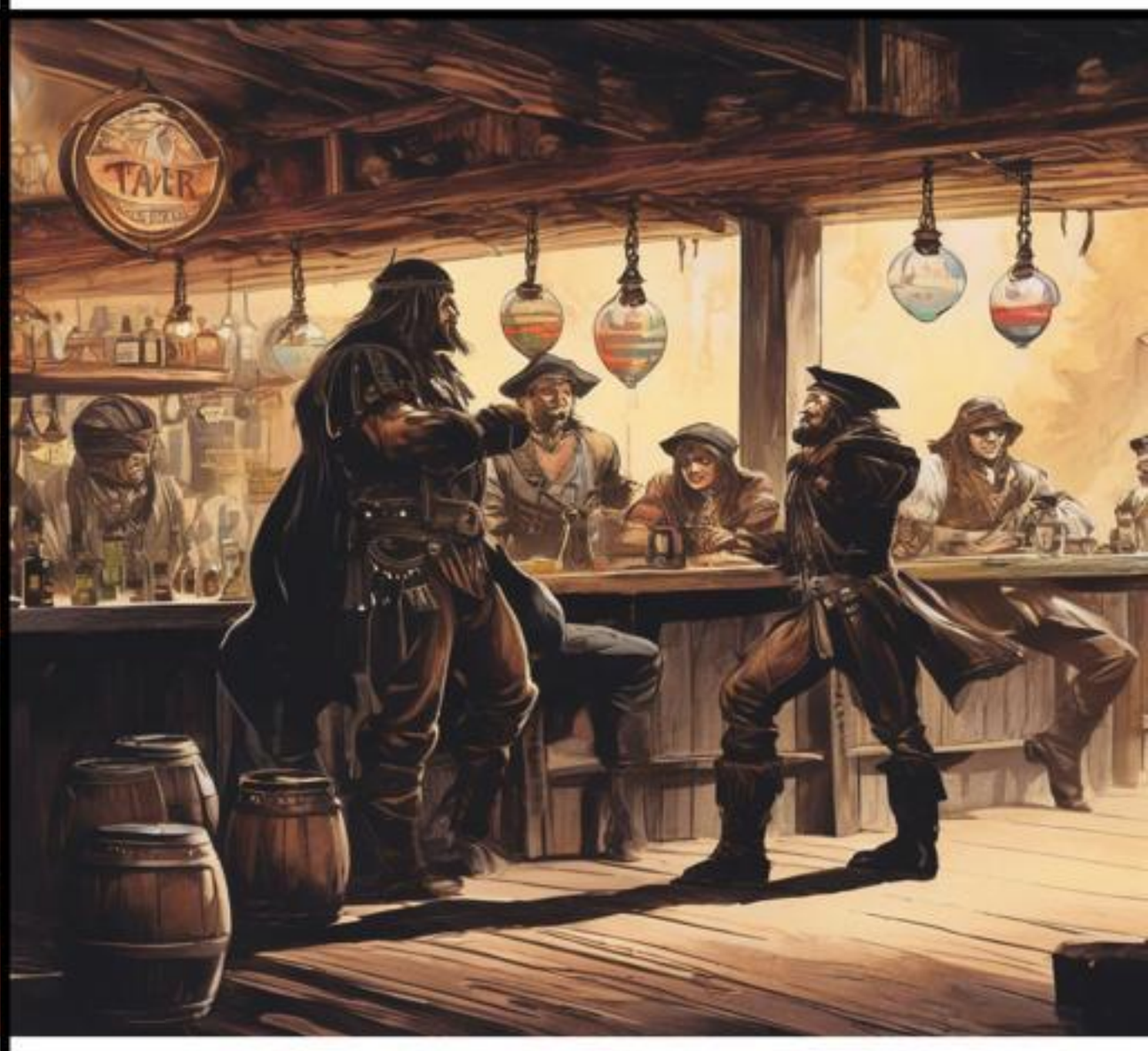
"IT'S YOUR TURN" ECHOES IN THE SILENCE

'AND I GO..' NIKTAR SAYS WITH A RAISED EYEBROW, VOICE LACED WITH AMUSEMENT AND CONCERN

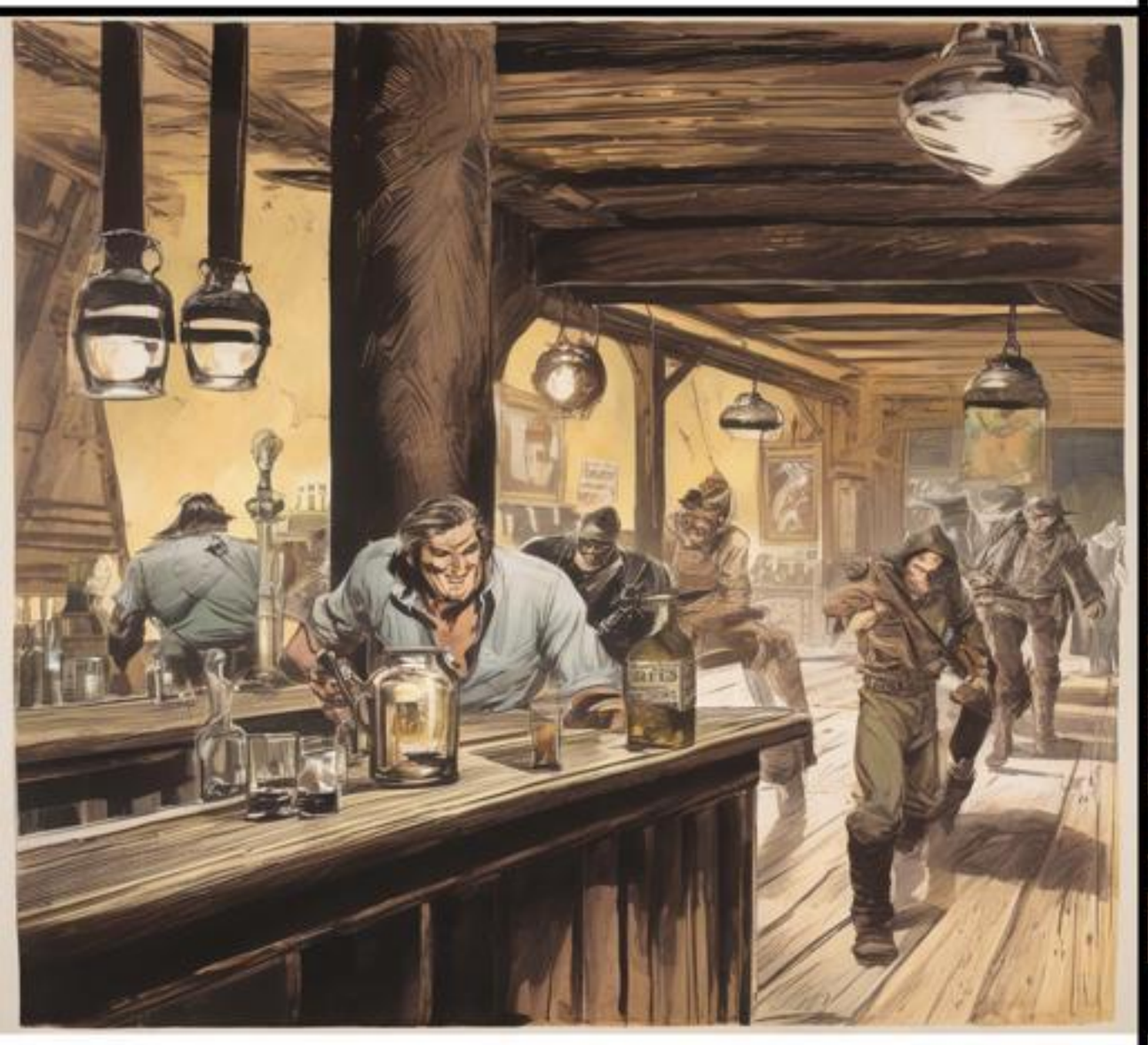


"LET'S KEEP THINGS CIVIL, EH?"

"COOL," JAR SAYS DRYLY HIS EYES LOCKED ON NIKTAR'S, AS THEY BOTH PROCESS THE RECENT EVENTS.

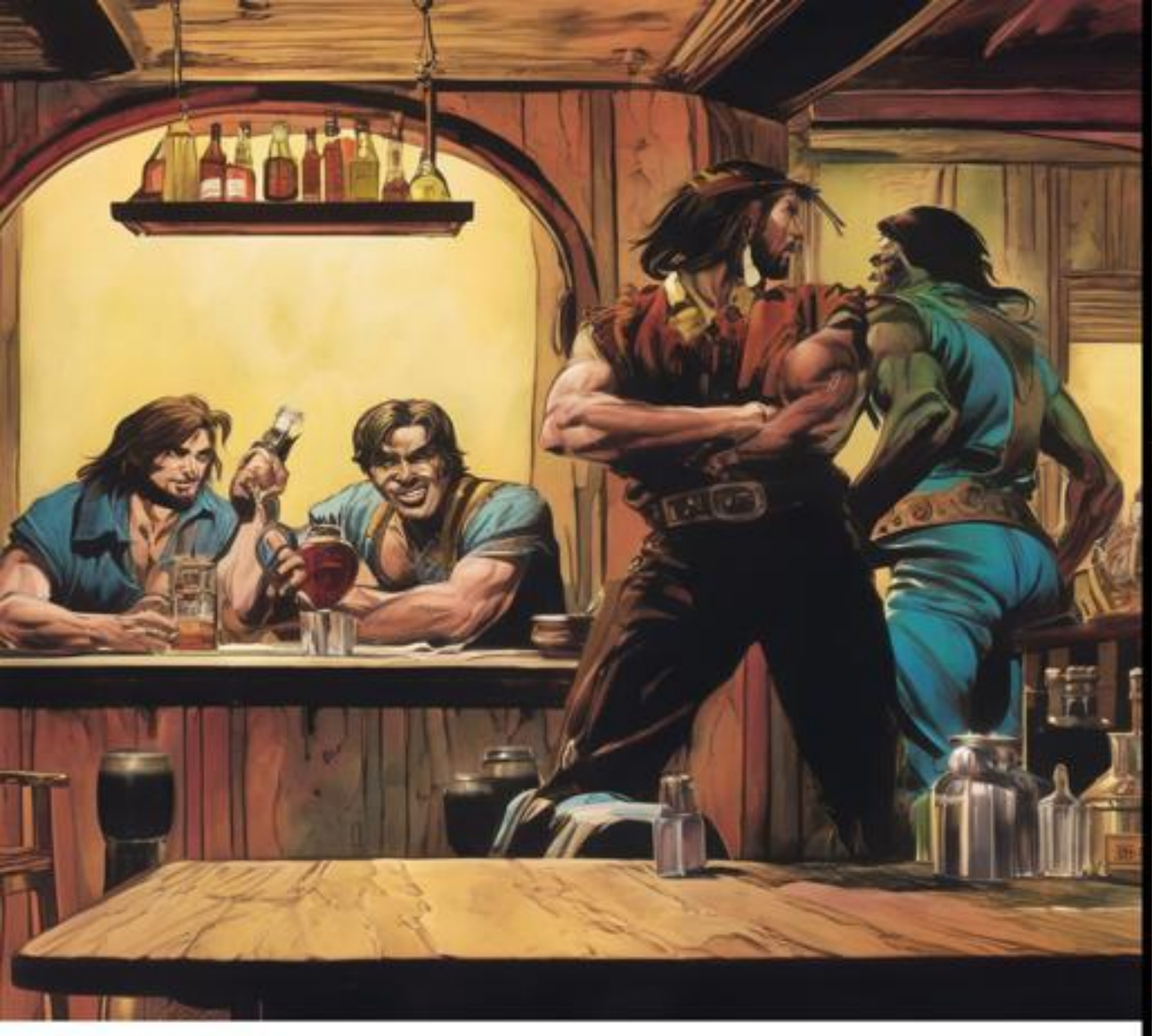



'WHO CARES?' SPEAKER_07 SAYS, AS IF GOADING JAR OR NIKTAR INTO ACTION



THE AIR WAS THICK WITH UNSPOKEN THREATS.

"AH. REAL PIRATES" JAR SAYS, HIS VOICE LACED WITH SARCASM, AS HE EYES NIKTAR'S TENSE STANCE



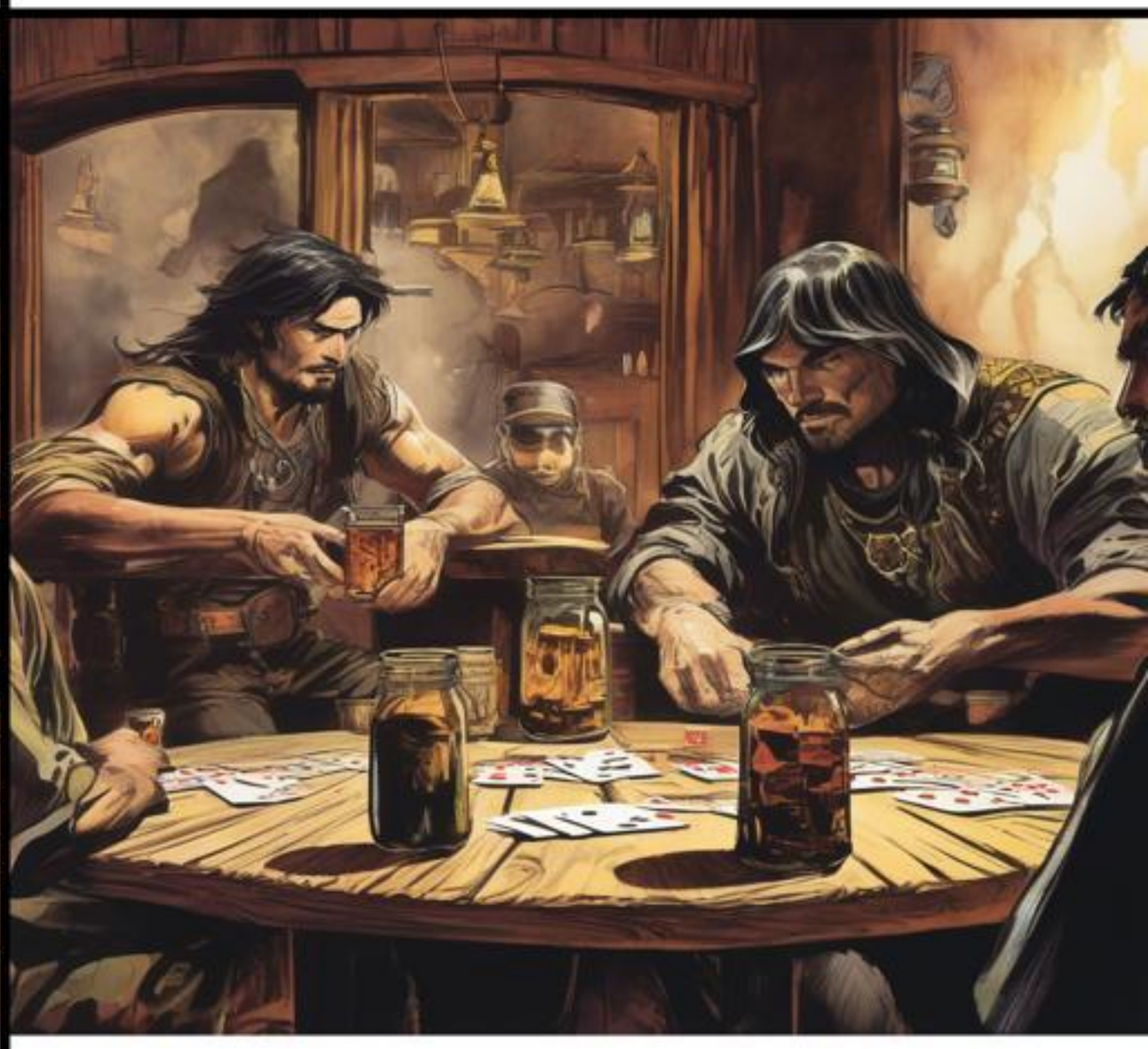
JAR'S EYES NARROW AS HE LOOKS AT NIKTAR, A HINT OF FEAR IN HIS EXPRESSION

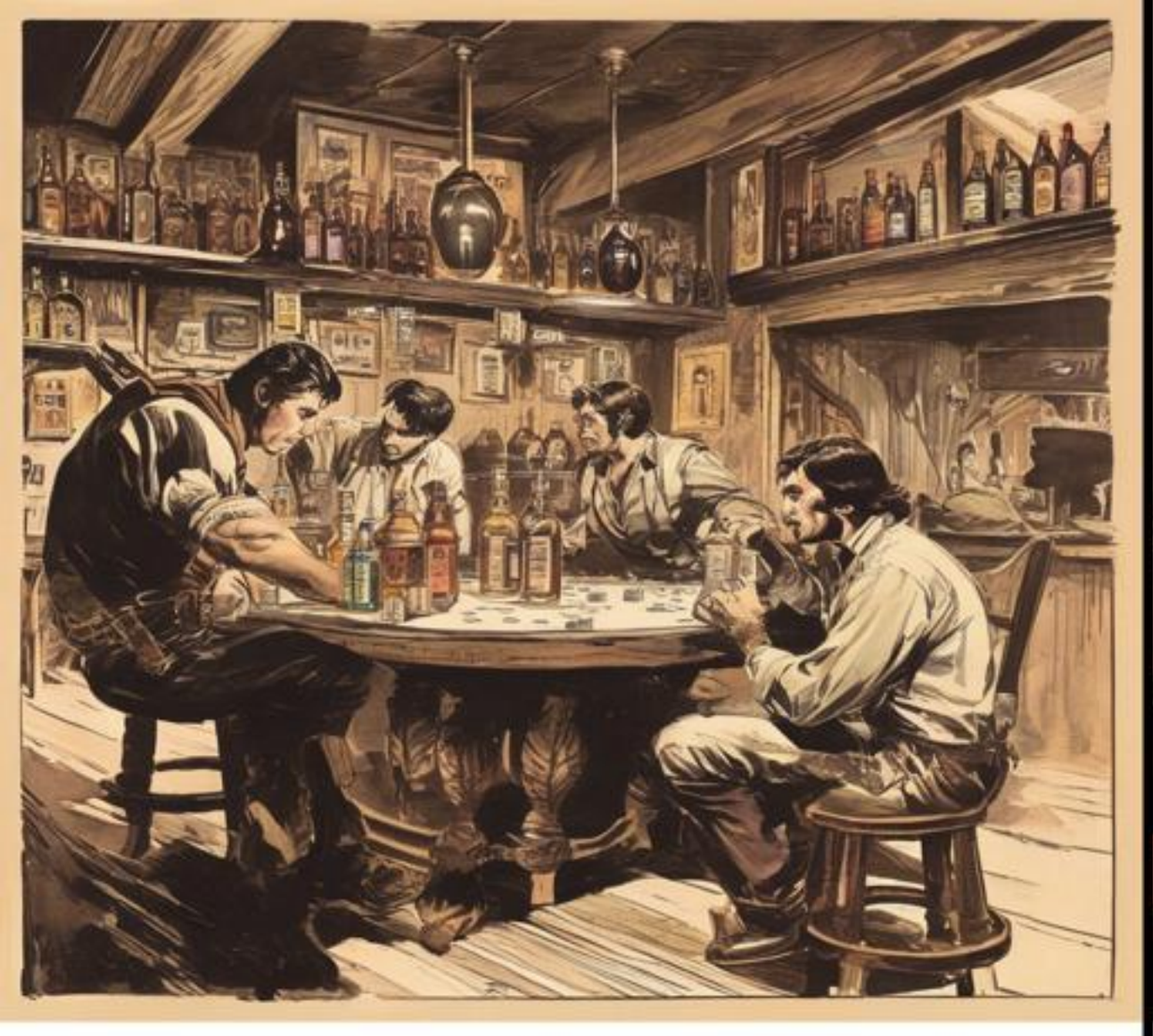
THE BARMAN HANDS JAR HIS DRINK, TRYING TO SMOOTH OVER THE EARLIER INCIDENT

'YOU JUST START THE GAME, HUH?' JAR SAYS, HIS VOICE LOW AND CHALLENGING

YOU LIKE ME, DON'T YOU?

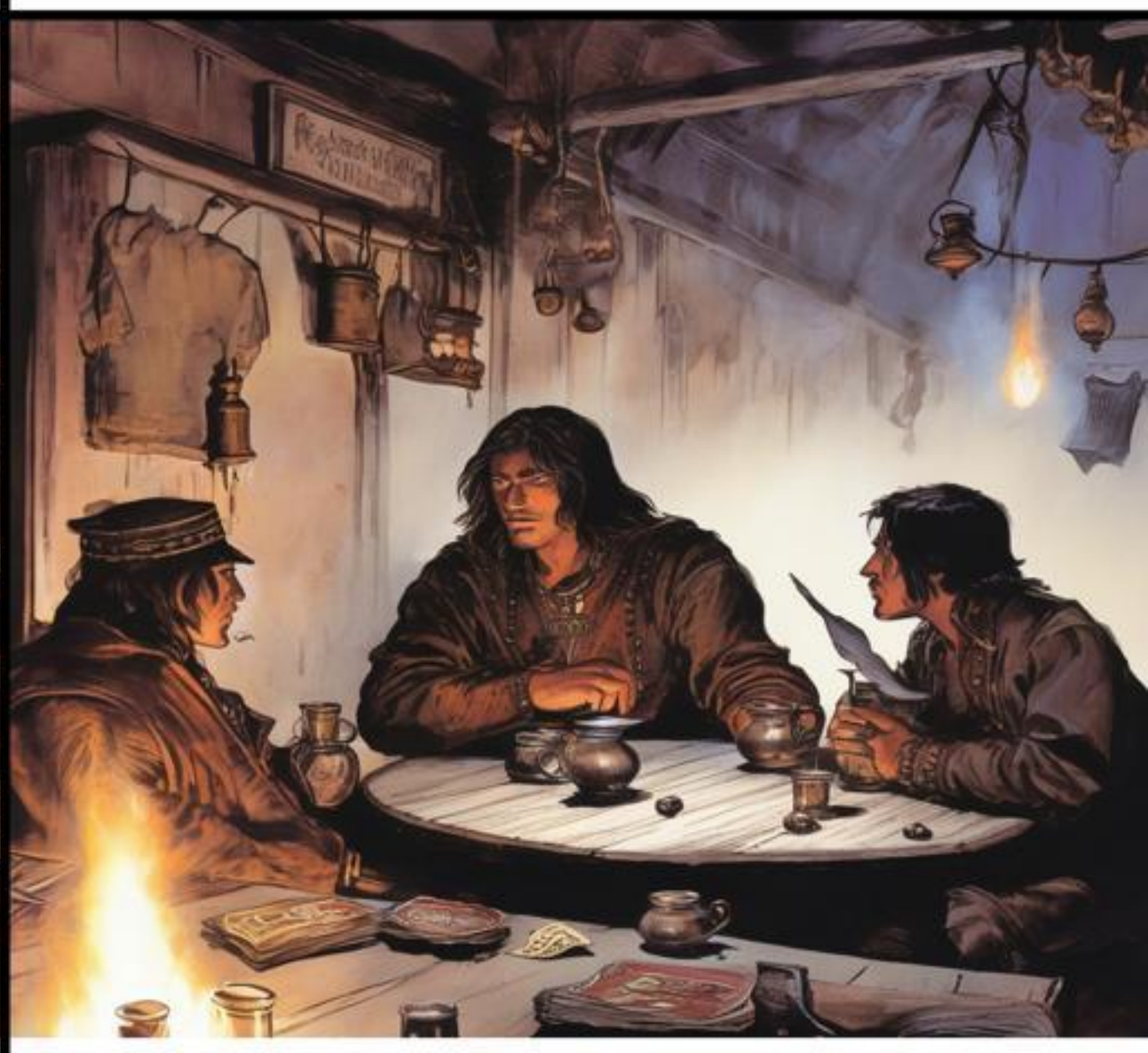
"ALRIGHT, LET'S RESOLVE THIS..." JAR SAYS, ATTEMPTING TO DIFFUSE TENSION.





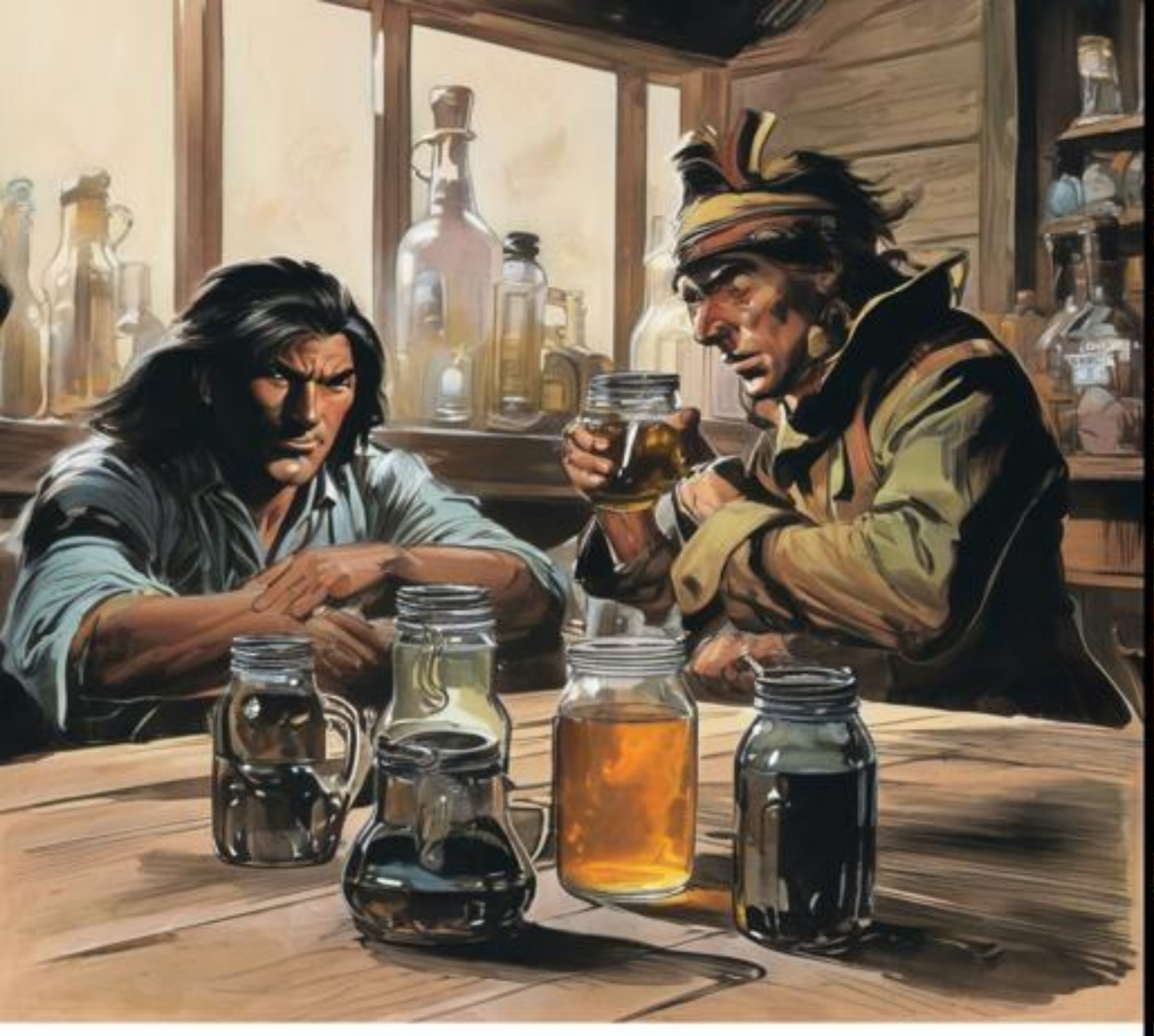
"YOU THINK YOU CAN SPOT ME BLUFFING?" NIKTAR RAISES AN EYEBROW, HIS VOICE LOW AND EVEN

'CHECK...' NIKTAR SAYS SLOWLY, EYES NEVER LEAVING JAR'S.



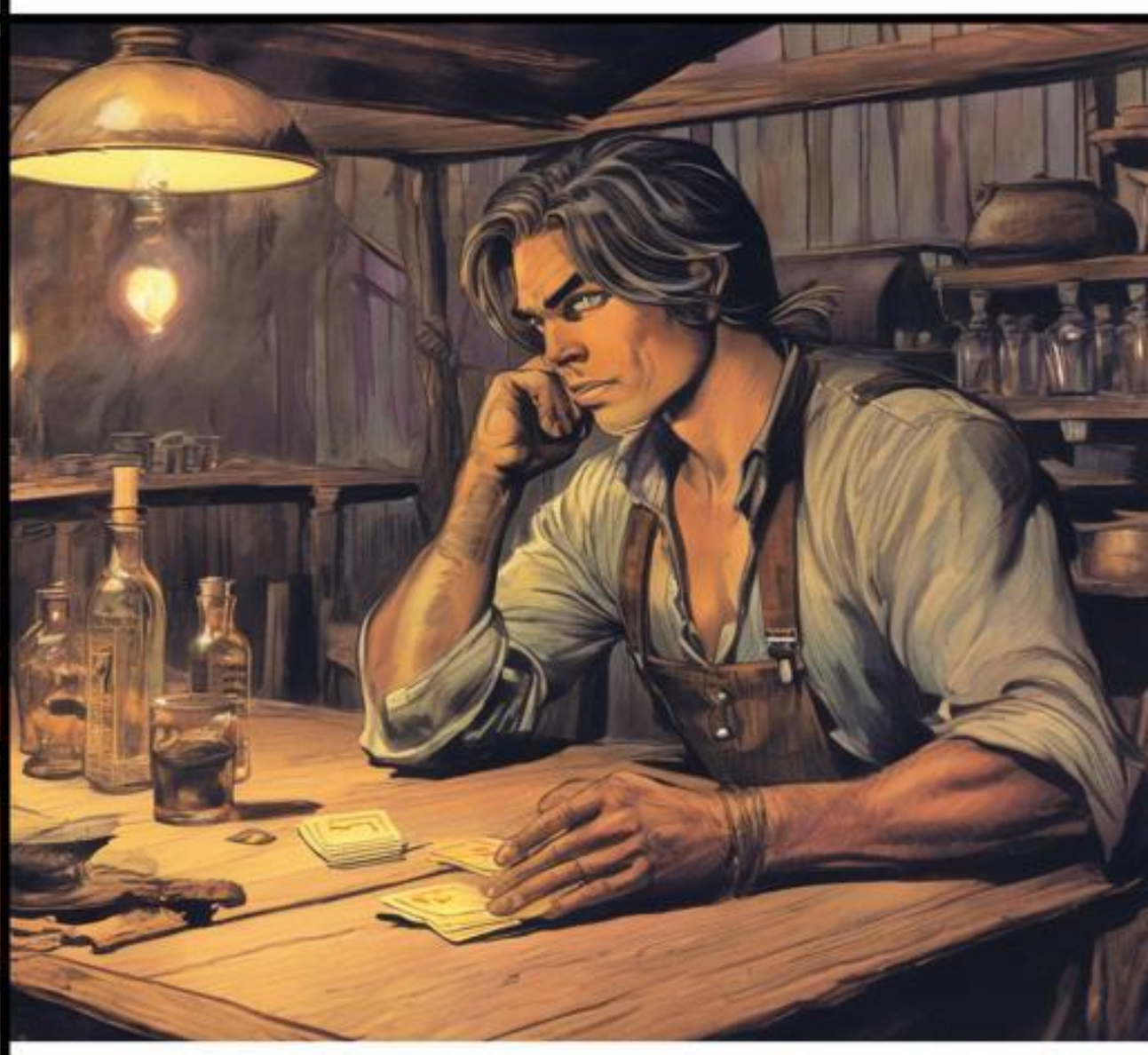
JAR'S GRIN WIDENS AS HE NODS THOUGHTFULLY, HIS MIND RACING AHEAD

NIKTAR'S FIRST ACTING JOKE HAS LEFT HIM... UNSURE.

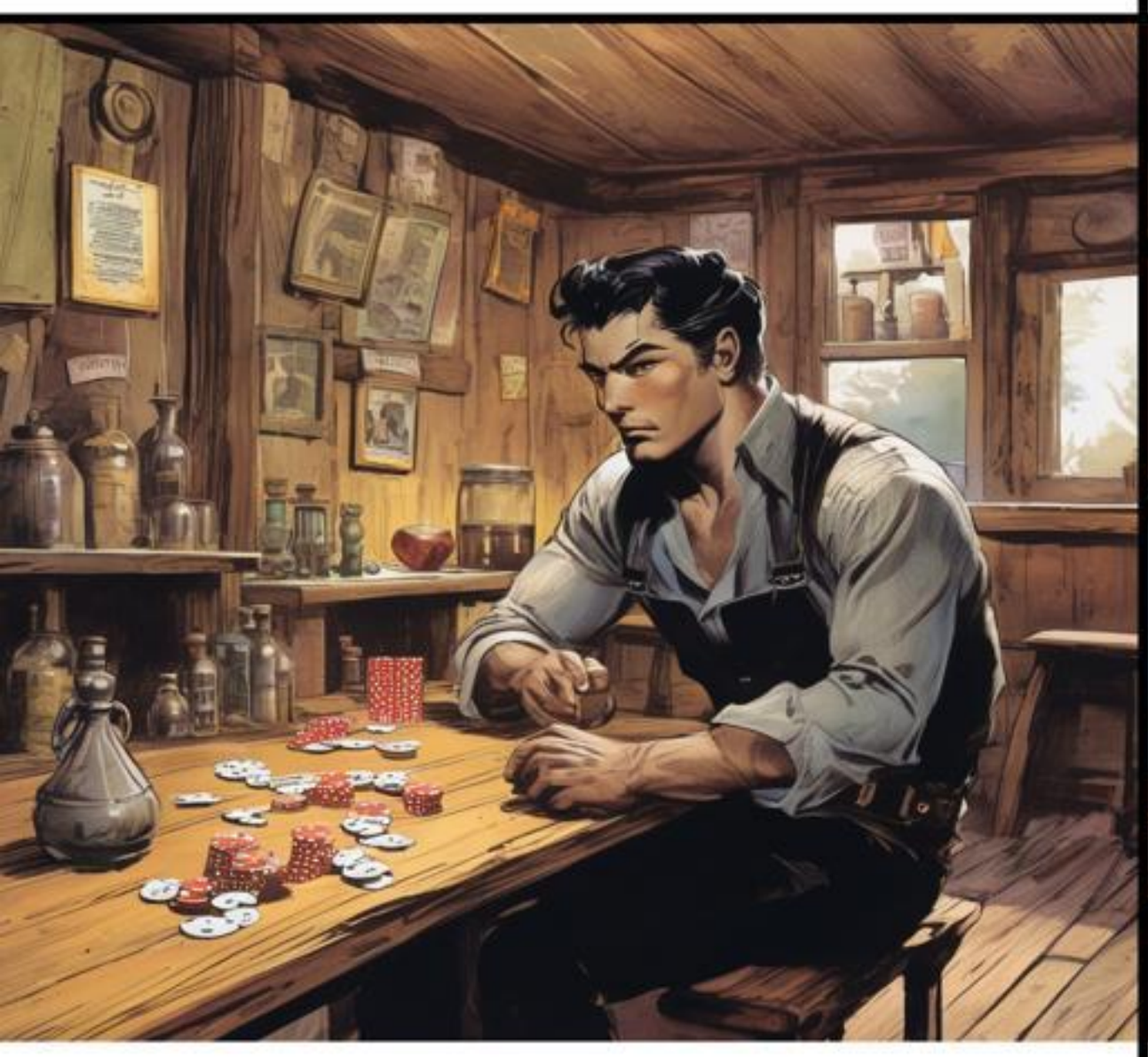


WITH BARDIC INSPIRATION, HOW DOES IT WORK?

DECEPTION IS CHARISMA.

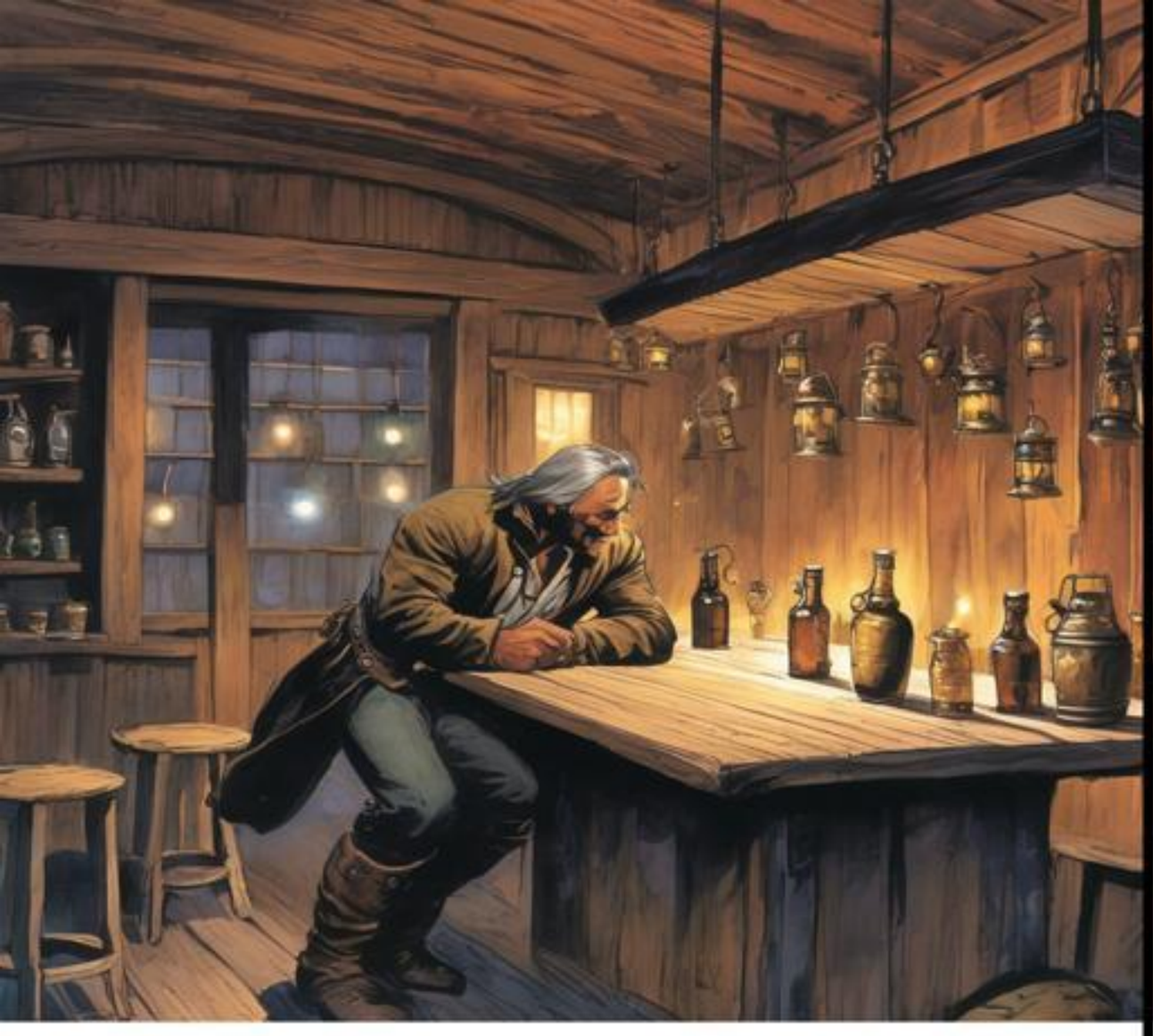


BUT YOU DO MAKE IT QUITE FAR THROUGH... RIGHT NOW.



I MEAN, I THINK YOU SHOULD... AND I SHOULD. WHAT DO YOU SAY WE MAKE IT INTERESTING?

NIKTAR: I WILL BET SOME MONEY. THAT I DON'T HAVE.

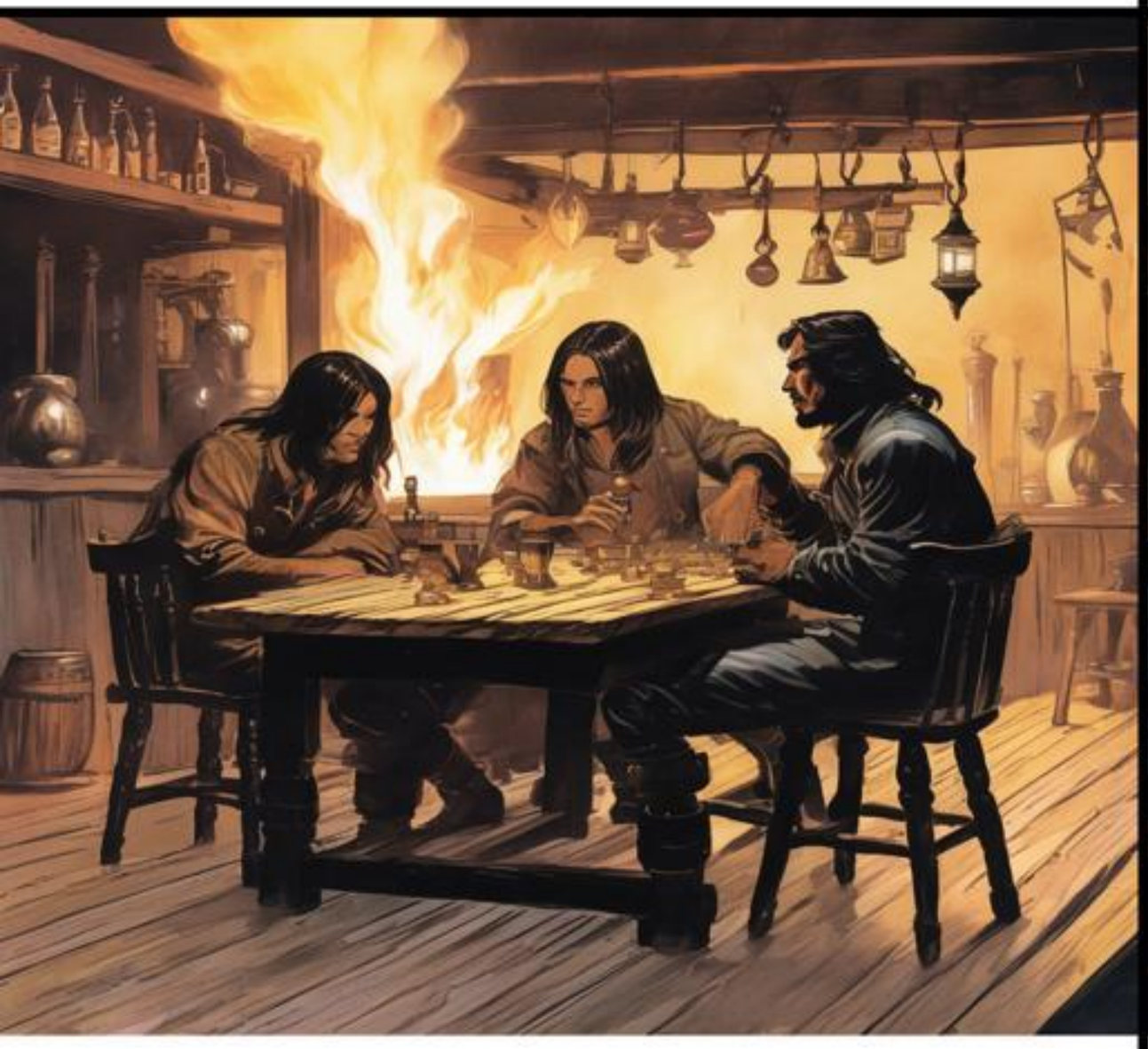


"CAN I BET A GOLD PIECE?" NIKTAR ASKS, HIS VOICE BARELY ABOVE A WHISPER.

THE AIR IS THICK WITH UNSPOKEN THREATS AS THEY AWAIT THE FINAL OUTCOME.

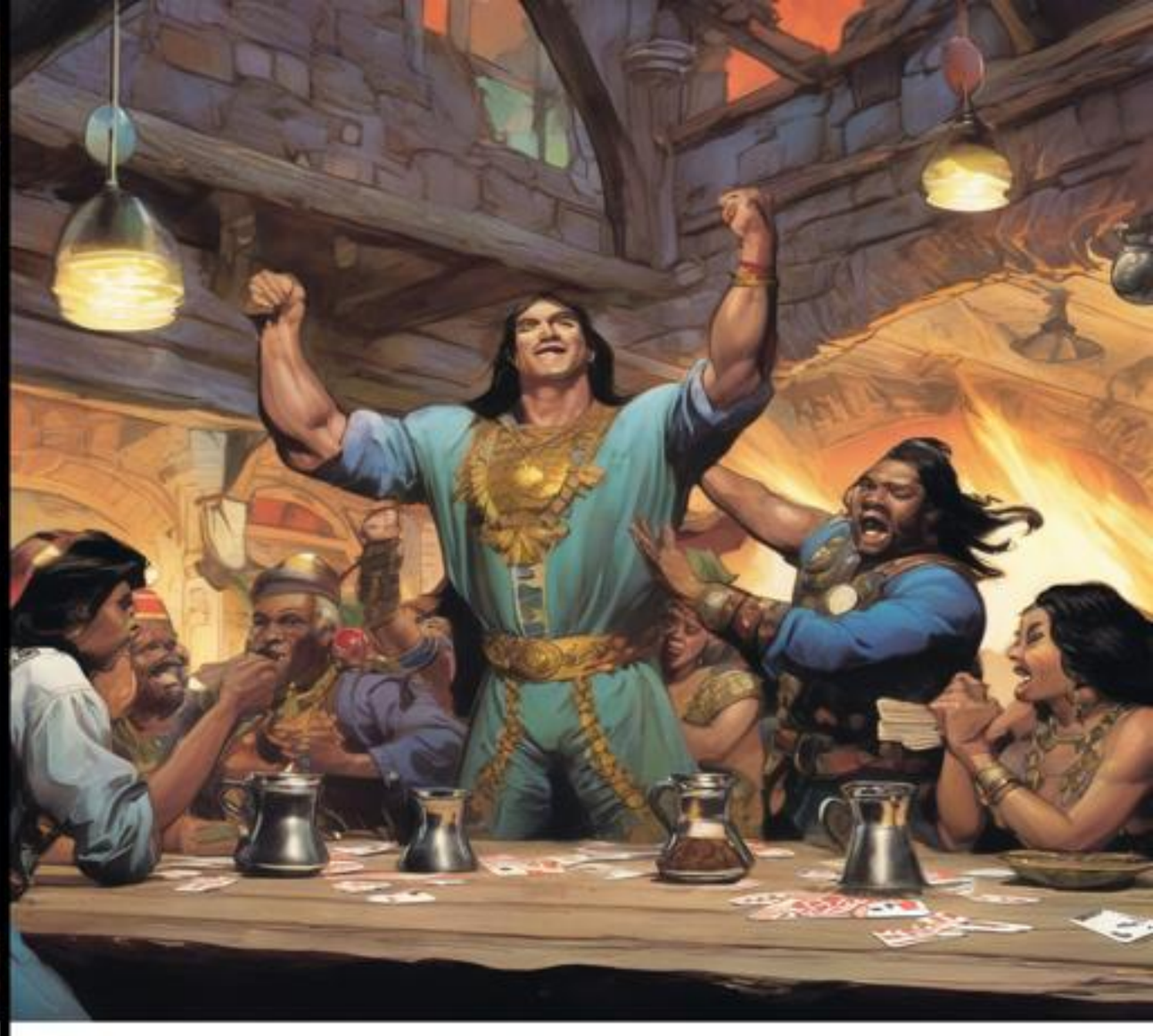
NIKTAR: 'IT IS NICE. WOULD HAVE BEEN NICE IF YOU'D PLAYED BETTER.'

"THE BETS ARE MATCHED. TO YOURS," NIKTAR SAYS WITH A SLY GRIN

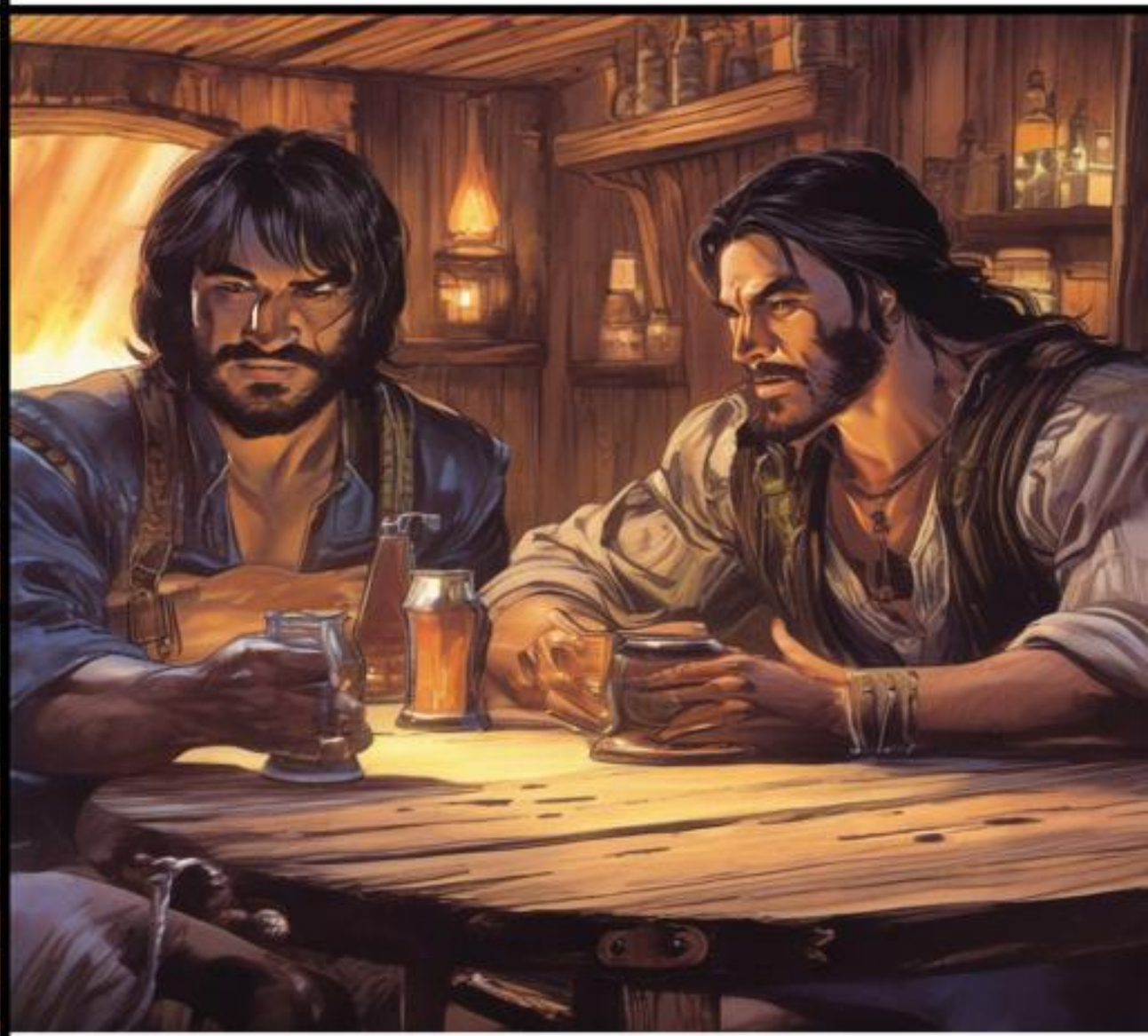


"YOU'RE PLAYING FOR EVERYTHING NOW," NIKTAR SAYS, A SLY GRIN SPREADING ACROSS HIS FACE.

JAR'S EYES LOCKED ONTO NIKTAR AS HE DECLARED HIS MOVE, 'PLUS, PLUS, PLUS...'



"AH, FINALLY! THE MASTER TAKES HIS DUE," NIKTAR SAYS WITH A SMIRK



YOU'RE CHEATING! NIKTAR SMIRKS, UNFAZED BY JAR'S ACCUSATION

JAR: 'GET PEOPLE ON MY SIDE, I'LL BUY ROUND DRINKS FOR EVERYONE!'

JAR DEMANDS PAYMENT FROM NIKTAR, BUT NIKTAR'S SMILE SUGGESTS HE'S NOT READY TO HAND OVER THE WINNINGS.

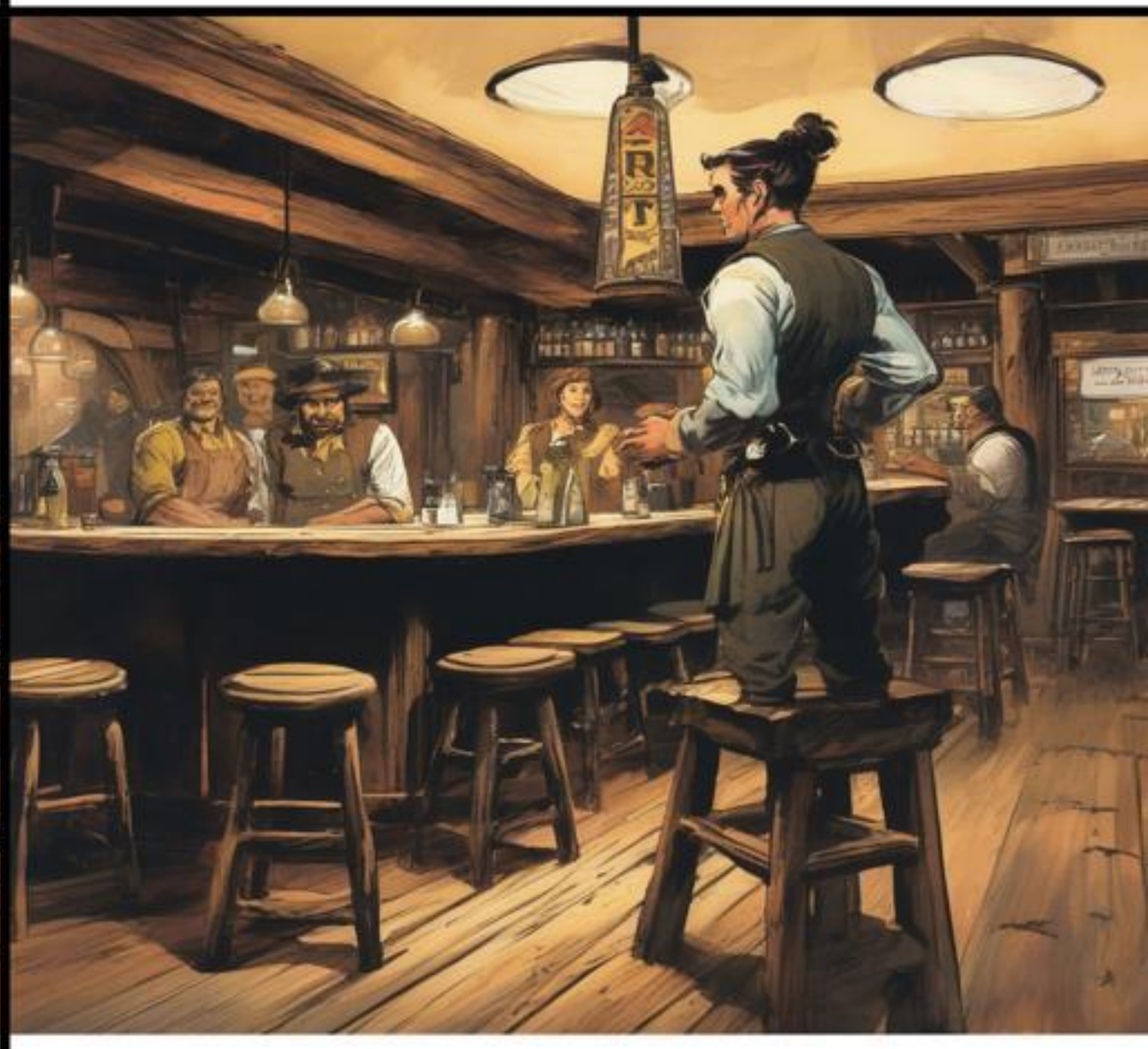
"YOU CHEATED, I SAW YOU!" JAR ACCUSES NIKTAR, HIS VOICE LOW AND THREATENING

'YOU DO CATCH THE BAG... PLUS THE X. 4. 20'. NIKTAR'S VOICE DRIPS WITH SATISFACTION

"ALRIGHT, YOU'VE GOT YOUR 140 GOLD BACK. DON'T EXPECT ME TO BE SO GENEROUS NEXT TIME."

"AND YOU STICK AROUND" ONE OF JAR'S ALLIES SAYS MENACINGLY, WHILE JAR GLARES AT NIKTAR OVER HIS SHOULDER

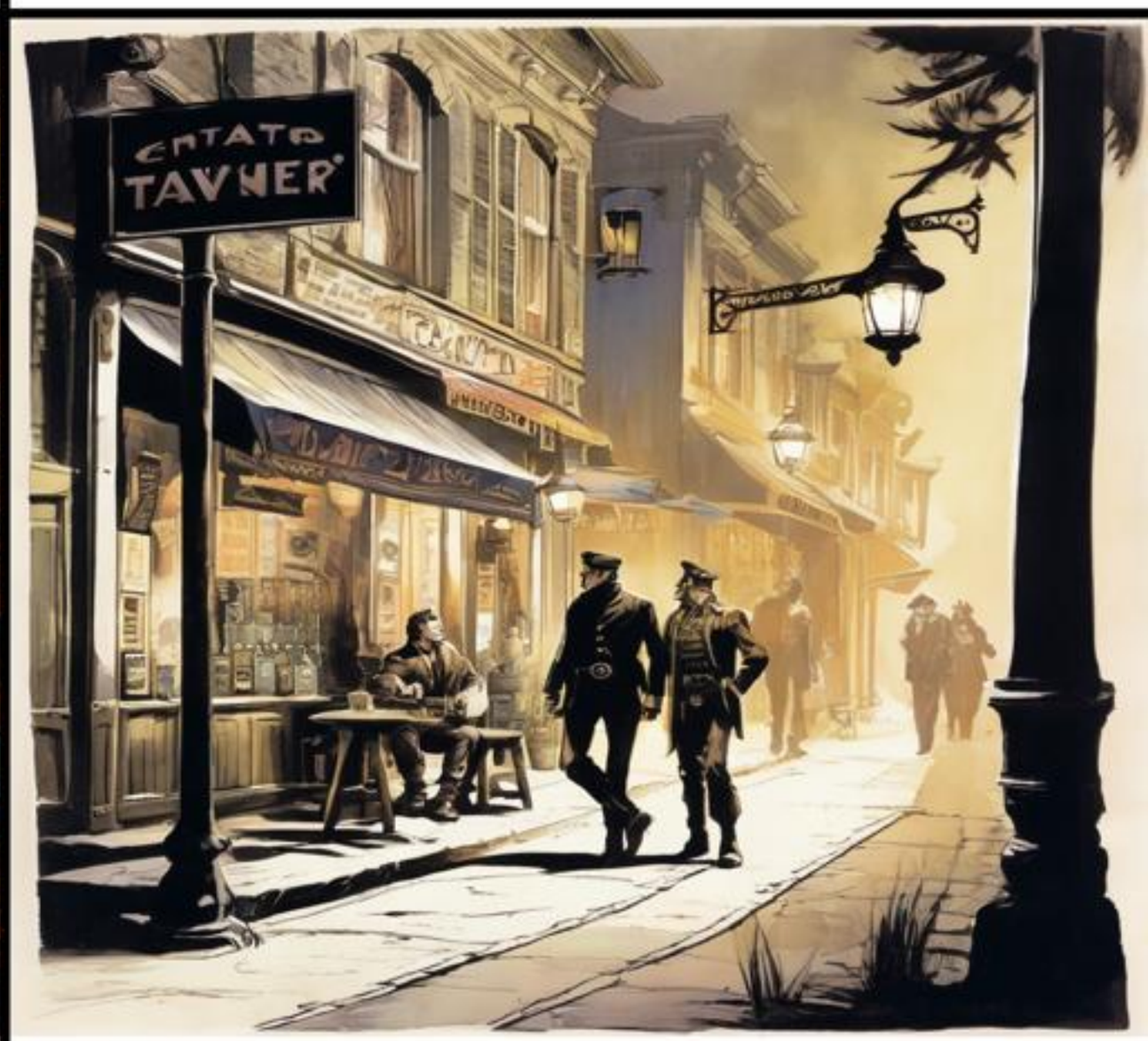
JAR SLAMS THE DOOR BEHIND HIM, MUTTERING UNDER HIS BREATH AS NIKTAR WATCHES WITH A CALCULATING GAZE



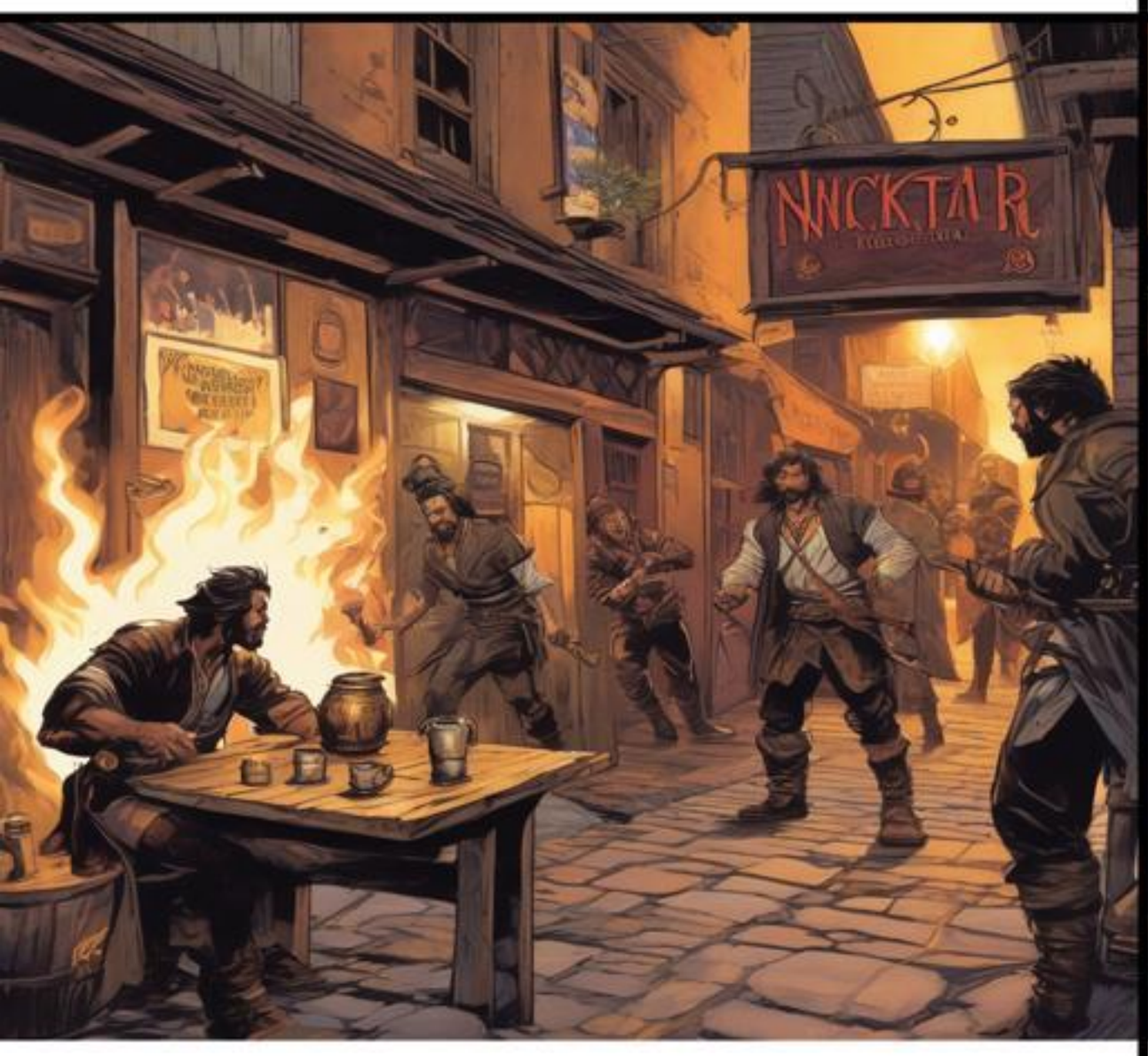
JAR: 'IF THERE'S ANY PLACE...'

"YOU'RE SOME SORT OF COMEDIAN, I GAVE YOU A GOLD PIECE OF MY MEAT THIS MORNING," NIKTAR SAYS WITH A SMIRK

NIKTAR: 'COME ON, FRIENDS! FIVE SILVER PIECES EACH FOR A GOOD CAUSE!'



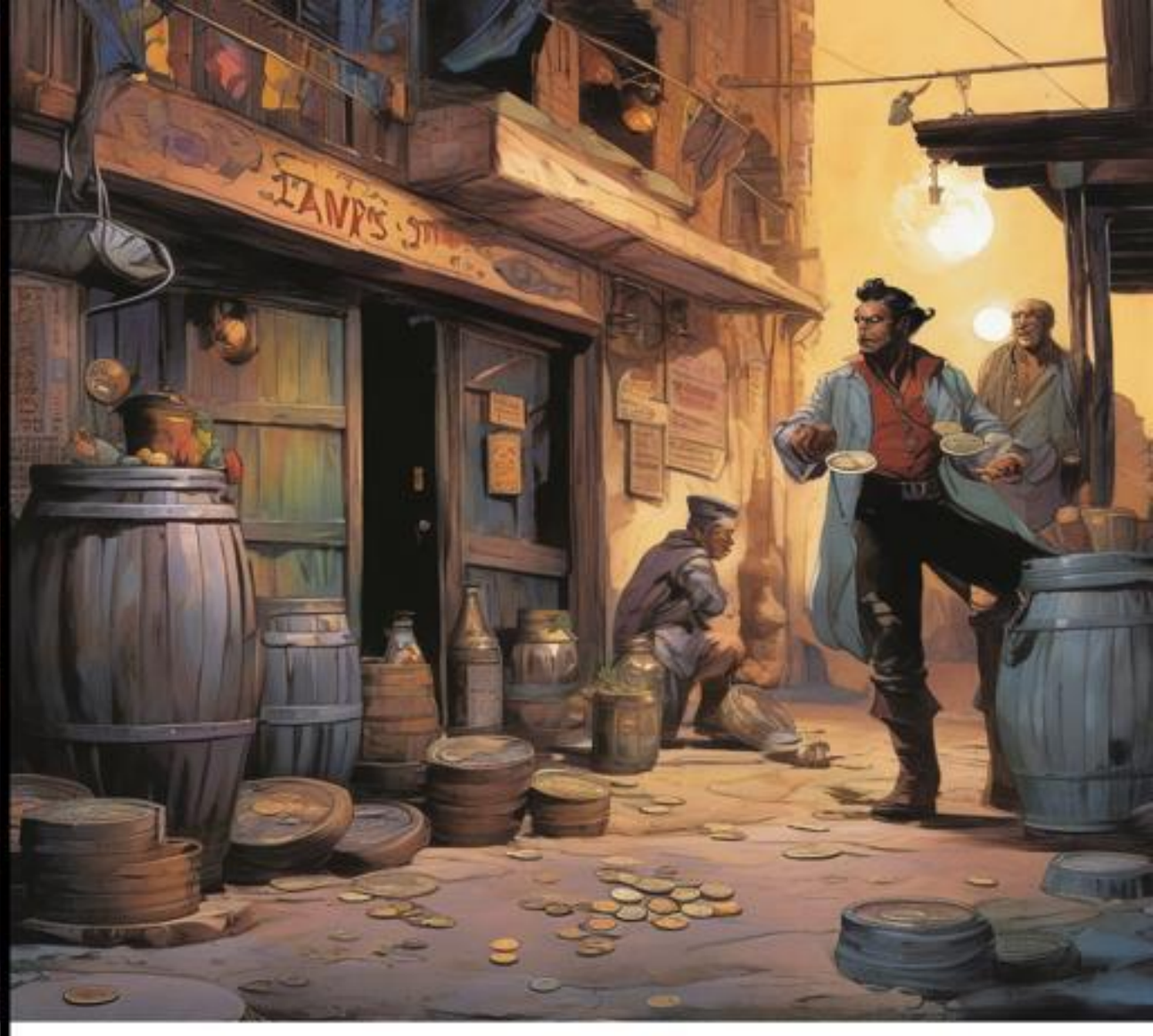

"WE CAN JUST WALK DOWN THE STREET TO A DIFFERENT ESTABLISHMENT," JAR SAYS, TRYING TO DE-ESCALATE THE SITUATION




NIKTAR: 'EVERYONE'S HAD A LONG NIGHT'.

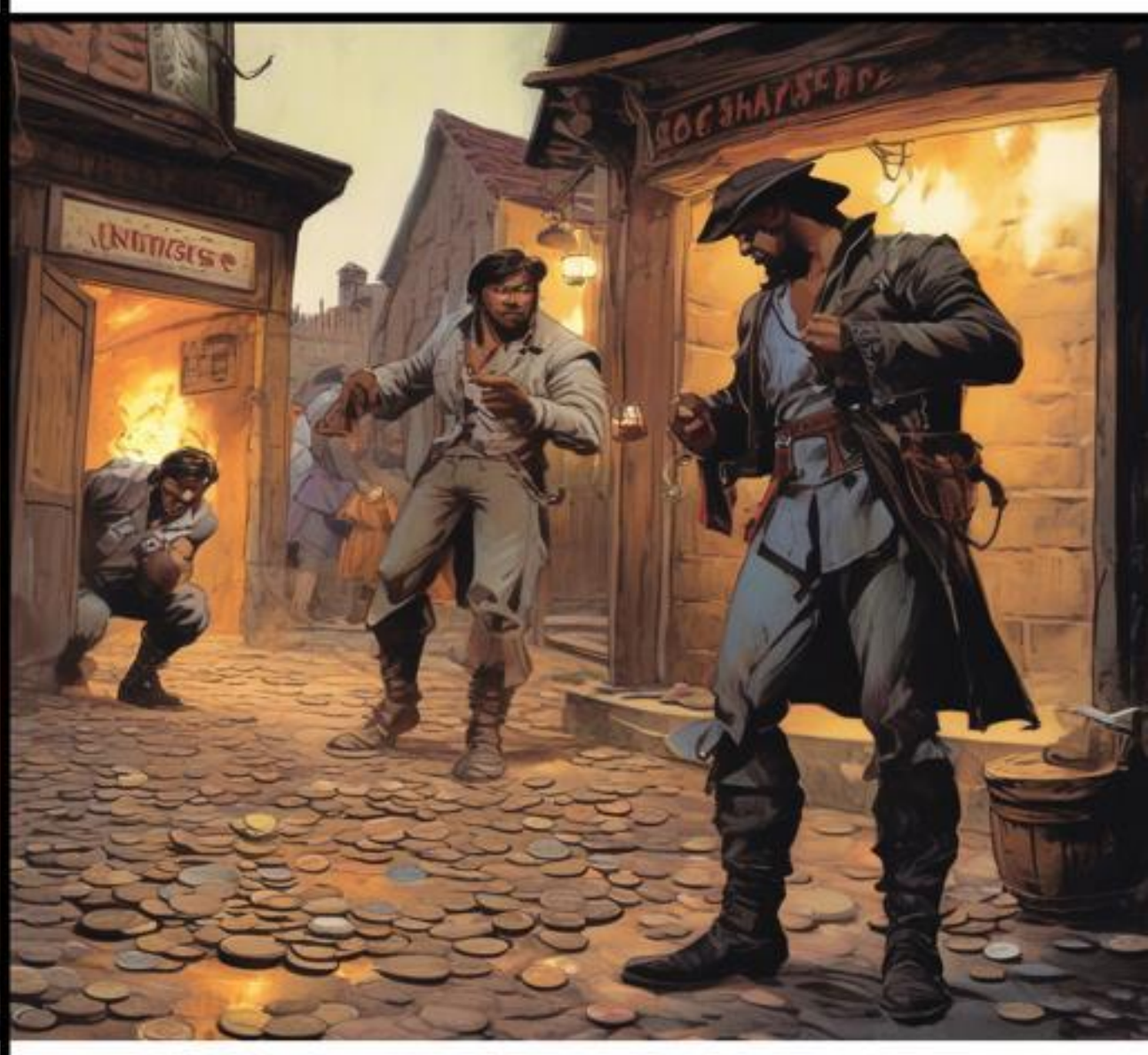
'PAY YOUR DUES, LOSER!' NIKTAR JEERS AS HE TOSSES MORE GOLD PIECES AT JAR'S FEET.

"YOU KNOW THAT THERE'S ROUGHLY 40 OF THEM..."

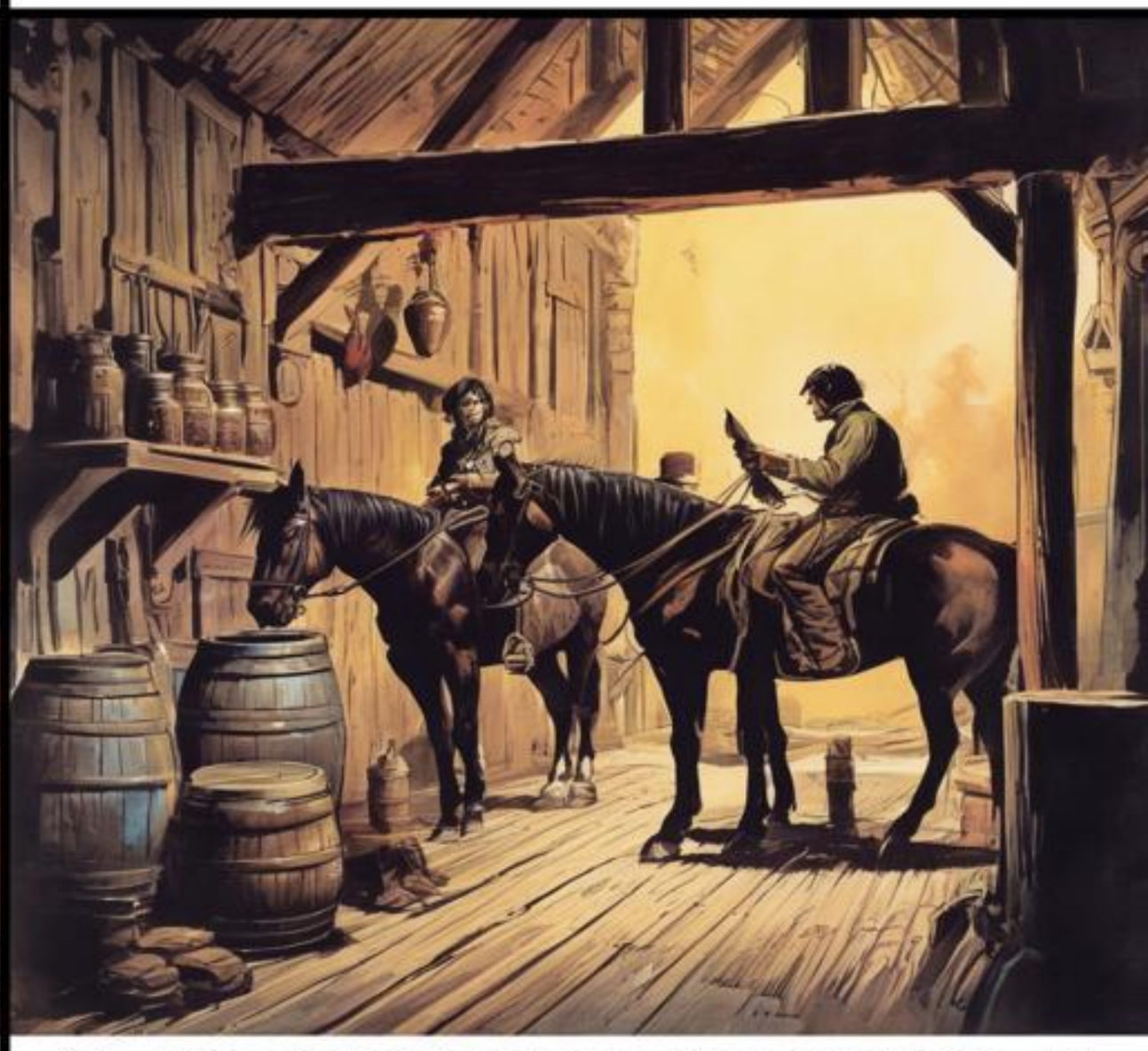


"OF COURSE THEY MADE AN EXCEPTION, TO SNAG THE CHALICE OF ETERNAL YOUTH..."

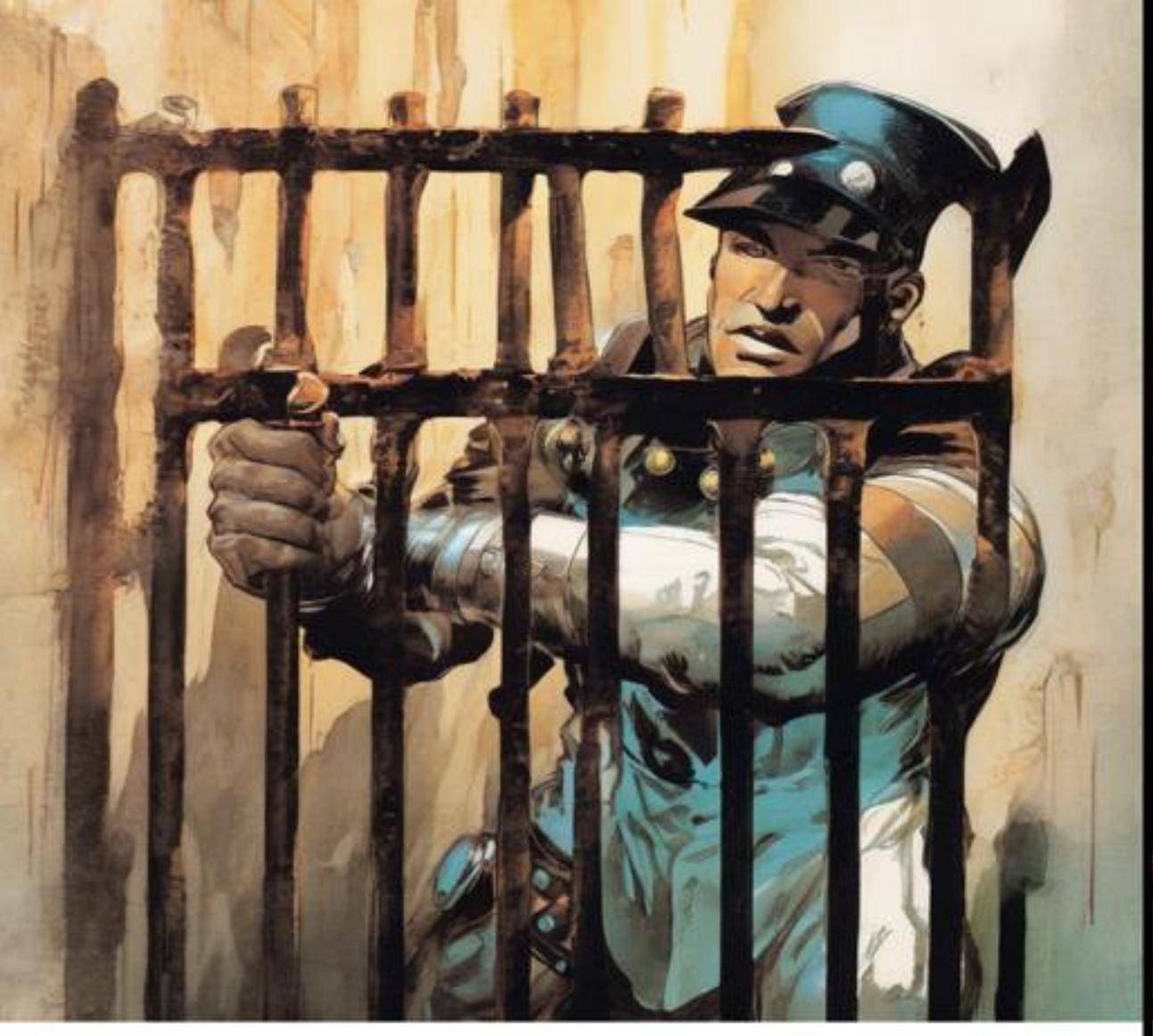
'THE CAPTAIN UP IN THE BLACKSTONE FORTRESS... STILLSONG, THAT IS, HAS BEEN MAKING THE ROUNDS, BRAGGING ABOUT HIS NEW PRIZE TO EVERYONE.' NIKTAR SAYS WITH A SNEER



NIKTAR: 'AND WE JUST... GO DO IT NOW. SLEEP TIME, OR NO SLEEP TIME.'

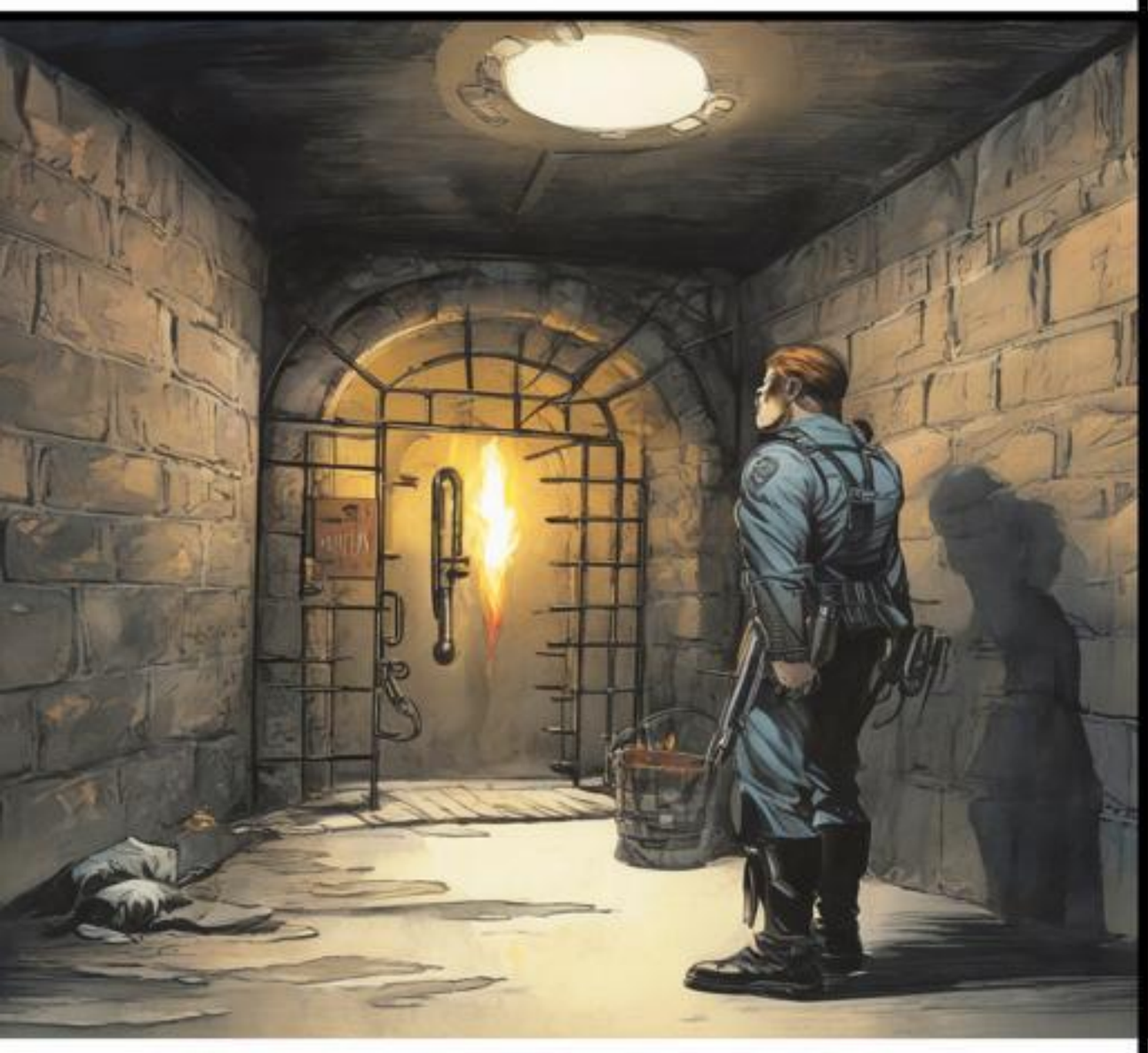


"IF YOU'RE PLANNING TO LEAVE, THERE ARE HORSES. YOU CAN'T EXACTLY RIDE OUT OF HERE IN YOUR CURRENT STATE...OR FINANCIAL SITUATION."



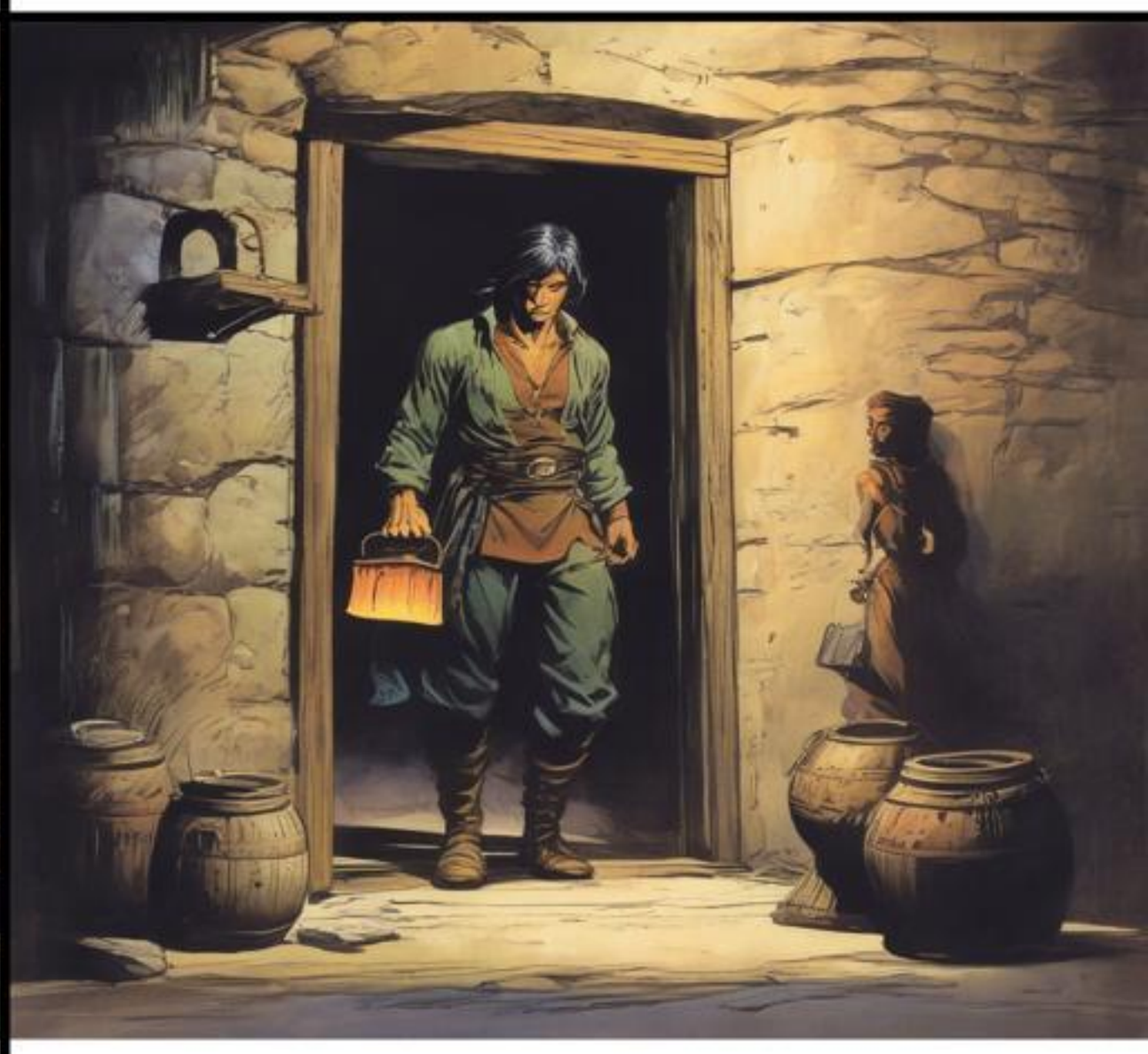
"WHAT'S UP?" A.JAR ASKS INNOCENTLY OBLIVIOUS TO NIKTAR'S GROWING EXCITEMENT AT THE POTENTIAL ESCAPE ROUTE.

"OH, YOU DAMN SCOUNDREL! YOU HEARD ME!" NIKTAR YELLS AT THE GUARD, JUST BEFORE HE MAKES A GRAB FOR THE GUN.



FREE AT LAST

WHERE DID THEY TAKE OUR STUFF?

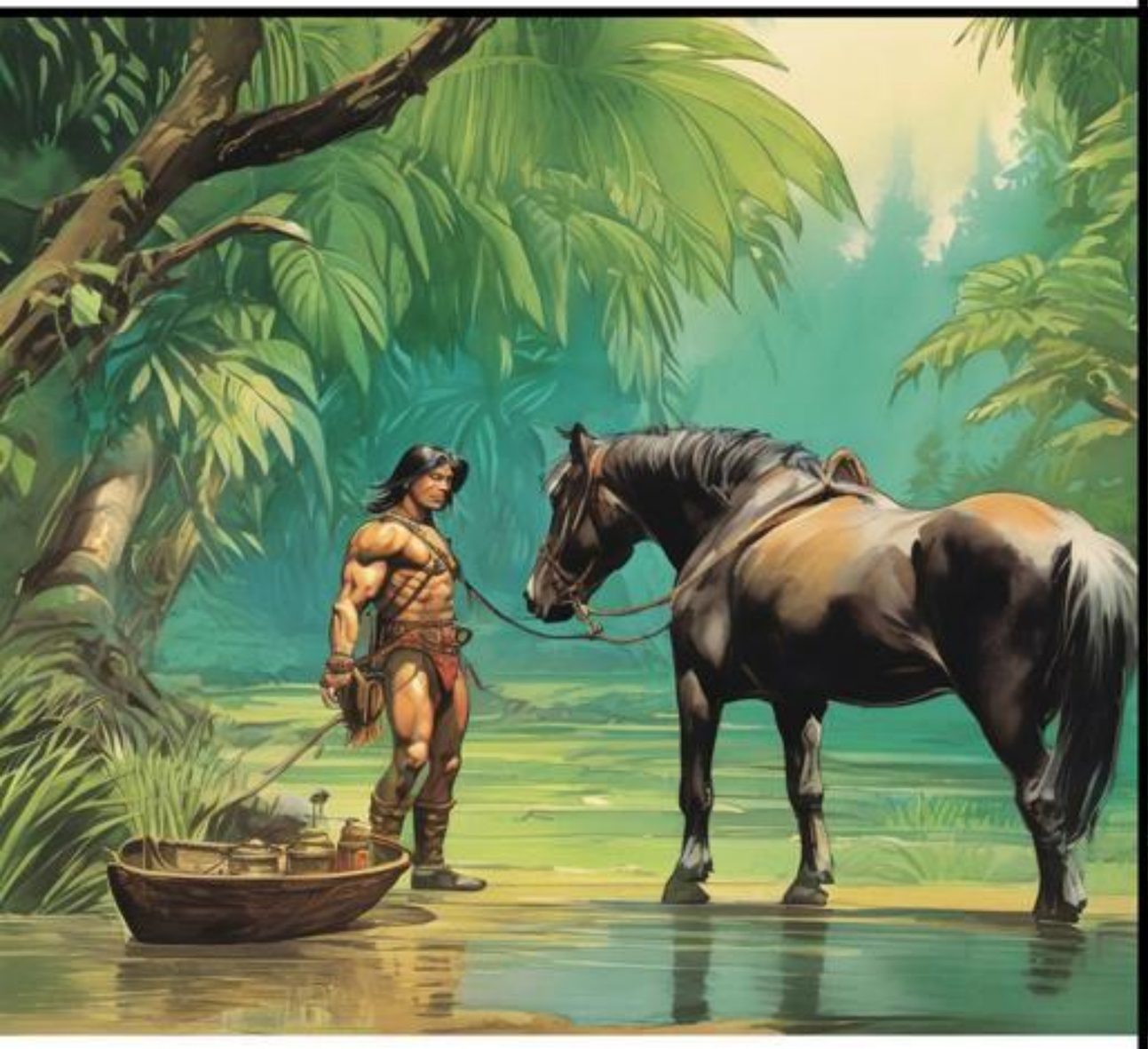


NIKTAR: 'YOU'RE AS USEFUL AS A SHIP WITHOUT SAILS, JAR. YOU'LL BE LUCKY IF YOU MAKE IT OUT OF THIS CITY ALIVE.'

"HOLD ON TIGHT! WE'RE MAKING OUR ESCAPE!" NIKTAR YELLS BACK TO JAR, HIS VOICE CARRYING OVER THE SCREAMING VILLAGERS

NIKTAR YELLS OUT TO JAR: 'MAKE A THING! INTO THE WILDERNES!'

"YOU'LL NEVER MAKE IT OUT OF THESE WATERS ALIVE!" NIKTAR YELLS, HIS VOICE CARRYING ACROSS THE WATER AS JAR STRUGGLES TO CONTROL HIS RAFT.



"YOU THINK YOU CAN FIND IT?" NIKTAR SNEERS, HIS VOICE BARELY AUDIBLE OVER THE CREAKING OF THE TREES

"TO SEE IF IT'S IN YOUR IMMEDIATE SURROUNDINGS...OR INVESTIGATION TO TRY AND FIGURE OUT WHICH TRACK IS FRESHEST," NIKTAR SAYS WITH A SMIRK

NIKTAR'S VOICE DRIPS WITH SARCASM: 'OH, I'M SURE YOU'LL FIND IT JUST BY SNIFFING AROUND.'

NIKTAR: (WHISPERING TO HIMSELF) HE THINKS HE CAN SNEAK PAST ME? I'LL SHOW HIM WHAT 'STEALTH' REALLY MEANS.

"WELL, I GUESS YOU'RE NOT AS SNEAKY AS YOU THOUGHT." - NIKTAR

JAR: (WHISPERING) SHH... DO YOU SEE THAT?

"HOW DO WE EVEN MEASURE DISTANCE IN THIS CRAZY PLACE?" NIKTAR ASKS, SHAKING HIS HEAD

"NO, THAT'S NOT RIGHT", NIKTAR SAYS, ADJUSTING HIS MAKESHIFT RULER. "YOU JUST DIVIDE IT BY LIKE AROUND... THREE."

JAR: 'I'D JUST BE LIKE... FROZEN WITH FEAR. I'M NOT EXACTLY BUILT FOR HORSEBACK RIDING.'

JAR: 'BUT WE COULD..' NIKTAR: 'WHAT OPTIONS DO YOU SEE?'

NIKTAR: 'YEAH SURE. BECAUSE I'M SMALL. THAT'S THE PLAN'.

'I'LL HOP ON YOUR BACK, AND THEN WE HIT, NIKTAR SAYS, HIS VOICE LOW AND URGENT'

"HOP ON THE BACK!" NIKTAR YELLS AS HE TURNS TO FACE JAR, HIS EYES FIXED INTENTLY ON THE OWLBEARD CHARGING TOWARDS THEM.

OH MY GOD. IS THAT... BEEFCAKE?

"IT'S A BEAR... BUT IT'S AN OWL" JAR STAMMERS, EYES FIXED ON BEEFCAKE.

GET ON ME! I'M YOUR ONLY CHANCE TO ESCAPE!

GET ON ME! JAR!

NO NEED TO CARE ABOUT ESCAPE PLANS ANYMORE!

"OH, THAT'S MY BEST HORSE..." NIKTAR WHISPERS, HIS VOICE CRACKING

"TOWARD THE BLACKSTONE FORTRESS" NIKTAR REPEATS, HIS VOICE FIRM BUT LACED WITH A HINT OF DOUBT

NIKTAR'S VOICE ECHOES OFF THE STONE WALLS AS HE YELLS FOR SOMEONE TO LET THEM IN

FORTUNATELY PLACED TREE LINE... A STRAIGHT STRETCH TO THE WALLS.

"CHAINED BY THE ANKLE.S... GREAT. JUST WHAT WE NEED." - NIKTAR

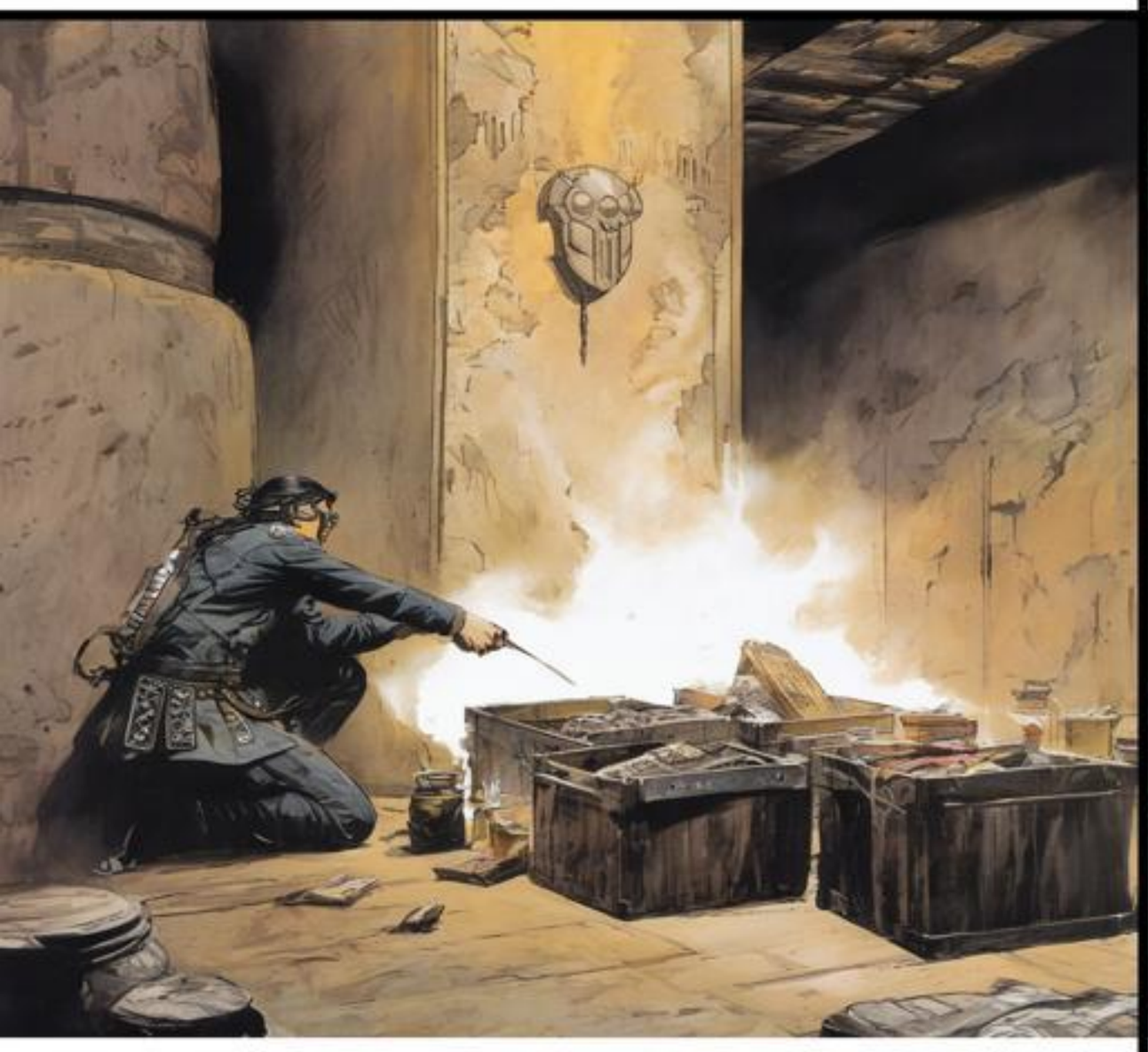
WHAT SORCERY IS THIS?

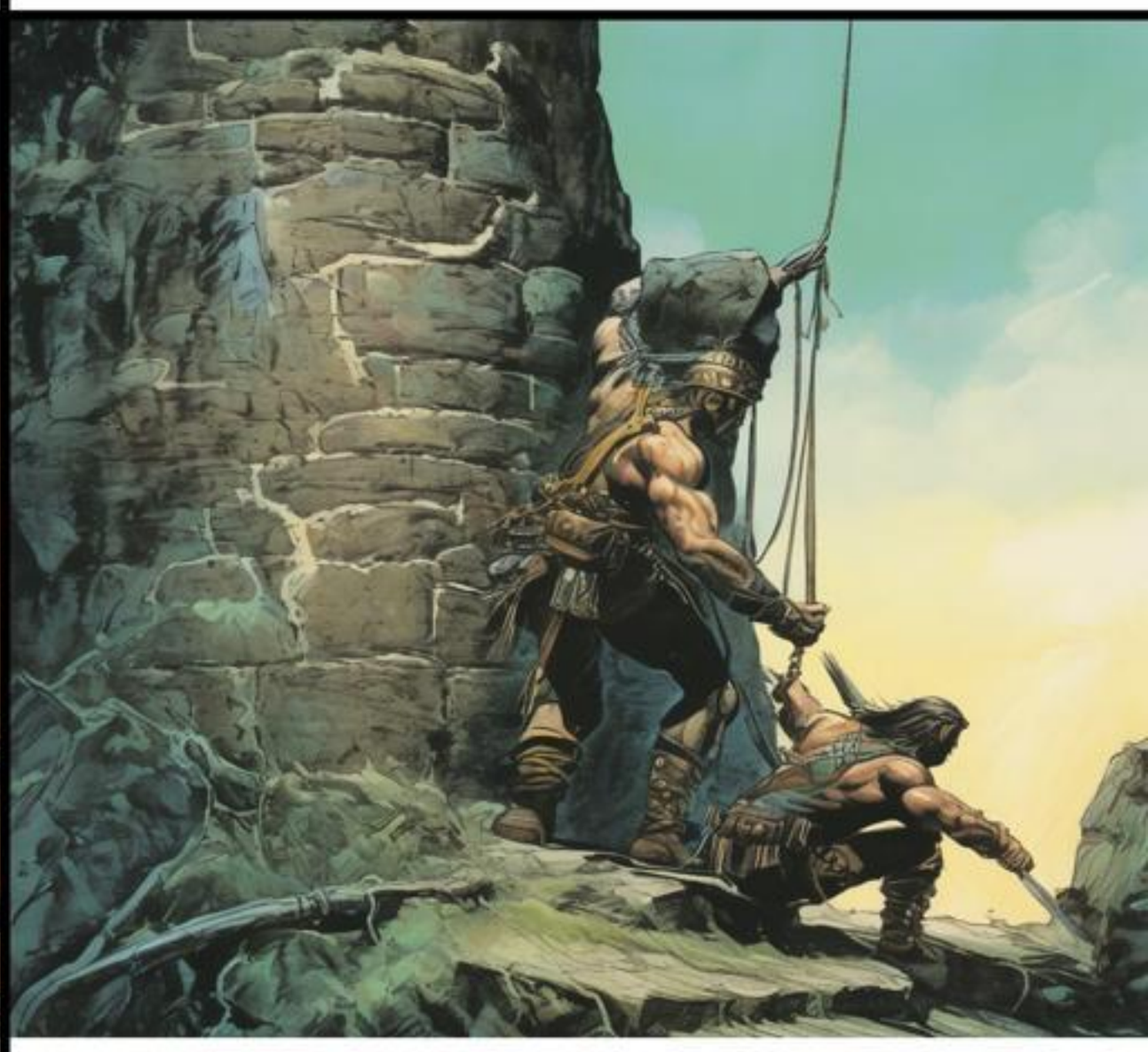
"WHAT IN THE ABYSS...?" NIKTAR WHISPERS, HIS VOICE TREMBLING.

"THE THING YOU USED TO OPEN THE GATE..." JAR STARTS TO SAY, TRAILING OFF AS THEY TAKE IN THE DESTRUCTION

NIKTAR: 'WHAT SORCERY IS THIS? HOW COULD THEY DESTROY OUR GATE OPENER?'

CAN WE TRY TO SNEAK AROUND?





NIKTAR: 'I THINK I FOUND ANOTHER WAY IN. BUT IT'S LOCKED..!

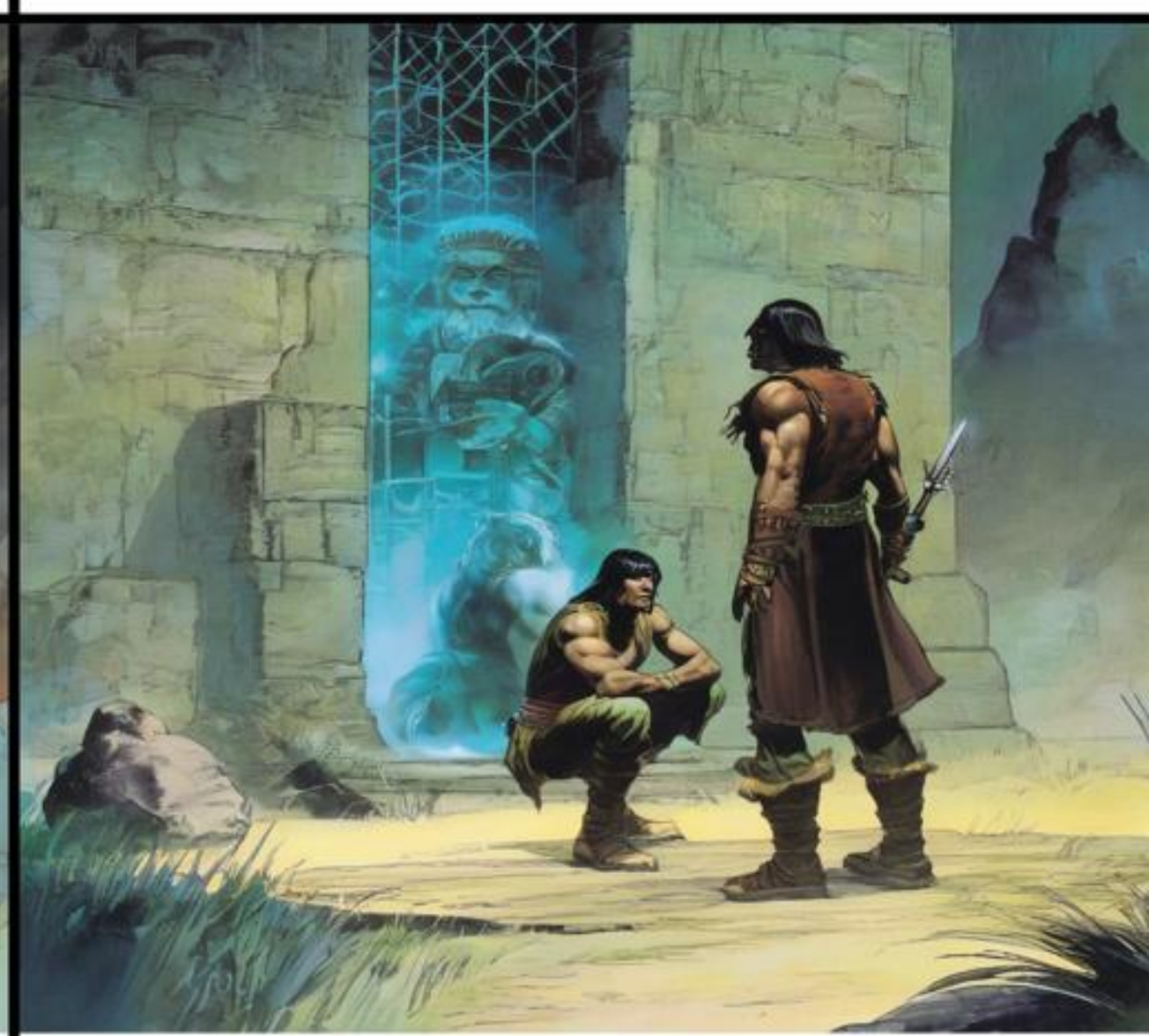
NIKTAR MUTTERS TO HIMSELF 'UNLIKELY GIVEN THE THICKNESS OF THE STONE...'

"WE COULD TRY TO DISTRACT HIM WHILE HE'S TRYING TO ATTACK US," JAR SUGGESTS QUIETLY.

"A DISTRACTION TO OPEN THE LOCK?" NIKTAR MOUTHS SILENTLY AT JAR.

"THE OTHER OPTION IS THAT WE JUMP OUT OF THE WAY" JAR SAYS, LOOKING AT NIKTAR WITH A QUESTIONING GAZE

GULL.IBLE HILL GIAN.TS. - 'THEY D,ON'T EVEN KNOW HOW TO FIGHT...'



NIKTAR: "BECAUSE I WAS THINKING THAT WE COULD USE THE HILL GIANTS AS DISTRACTIONS..."

JAR: 'HILL GIANTS ARE KNOWN FOR BEING... GULLIBLE!'

JAR: 'SEE? THEY'RE OBSESSED WITH BIGGER WEAPONS!'

"STRENGTH IS MORE, POWER. OTHER SUCH PRINCIPLES." JAR SAYS, HOLDING UP THE LARGE SWORD TO GET THE HILL GIANT'S ATTENTION.

'TAKE IT EASY, JAR SAYS, EYES FIXED ON THE WARHAMMER.

"YOU'RE A BIG GUY," JAR SAYS TO THE HILL GIANT, TRYING TO KEEP HIS VOICE STEADY.

JAR: 'YOU'RE... QUITE ENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT YOUR HAMMER!'

"YOU MENTIONED HIM," STUMPY LEG GROWLS, "BUT YOU DON'T REMEMBER HIS NAME."

YOU DON'T REMEMBER SOMEONE'S NAME. DO YOU?

NIKTAR: 'WE HAVE TO ESCAPE!' JAR: 'THIS IS THE PLAN!' GUARD: 'HUMAN, GET BACK IN YOUR CELL...'

JAR WHISPERS TO NIKTAR: 'WHAT DO WE DO NOW?'

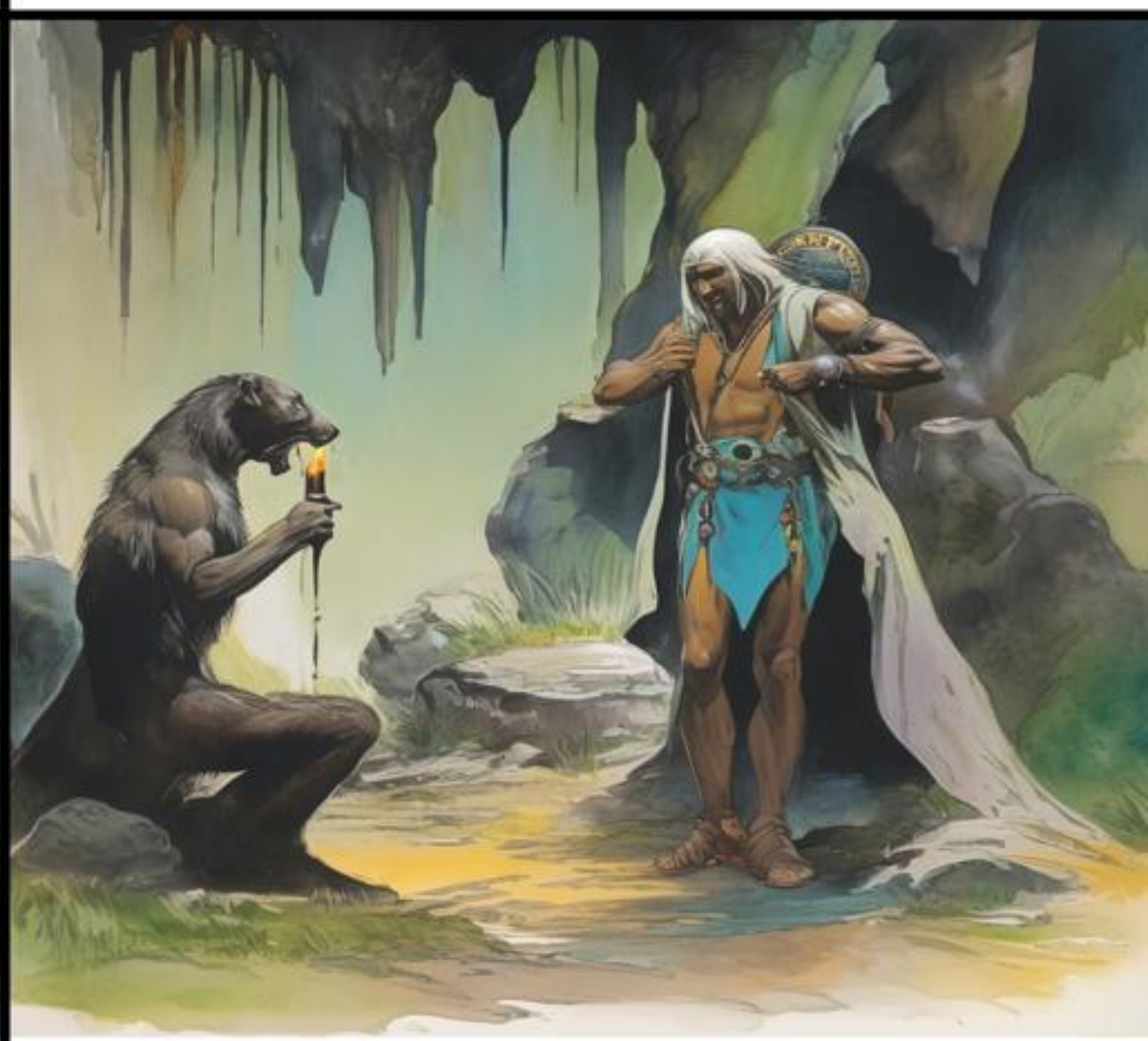
I REMEMBER... YOU WERE A SHIPMATE OF MINE, WEREN'T YOU?

STUMPY LEG: 'YOU DON'T REMEMBER, DO YOU?, THE THINGS WE'VE BEEN THROUGH TOGETHER...'

"YOU... HEAR SOMETHING TOO?" JAR SAYS, HIS VOICE LOW AND CAUTIOUS.

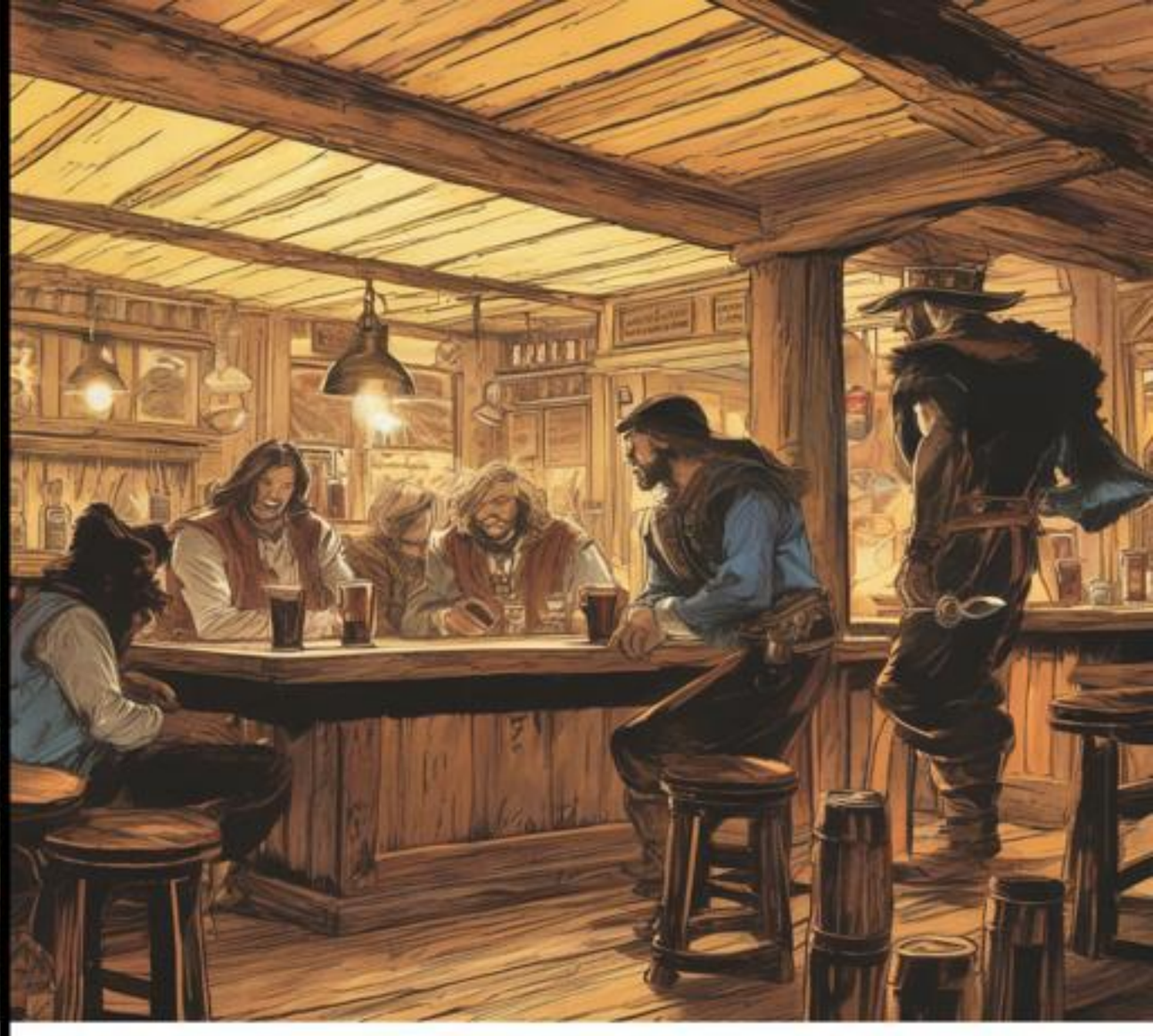
"YOU'RE LIKE... WHO SAID THAT?"

STUMPY LEG: "IT'S CLEARLY ME. WHAT LOOK DO YOU SEE?"



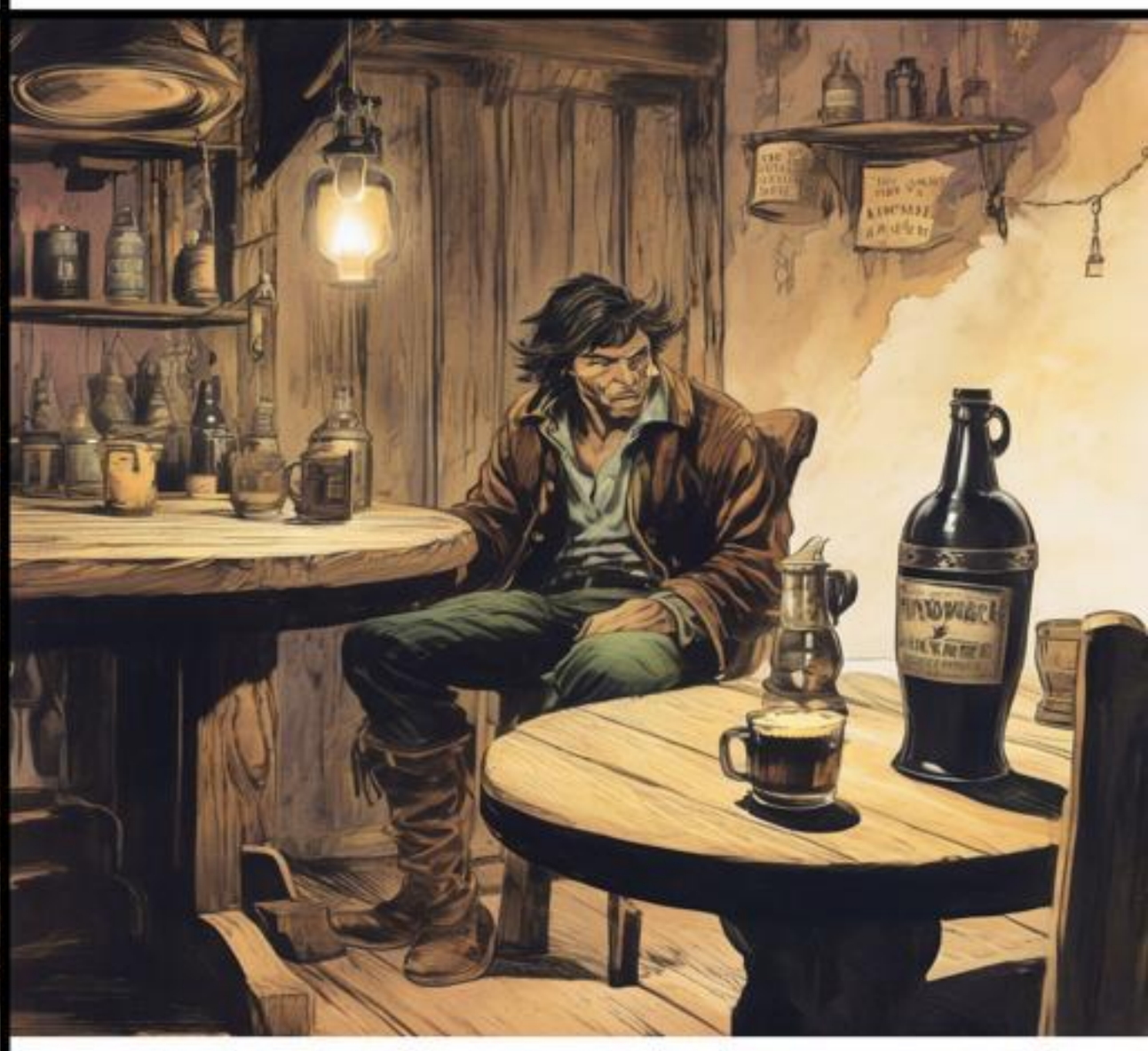
STUMPY LEG SAYS 'SEAL SONG. SEND ME DOWN!'

"BUT YOU'RE NOT STRONGER THAN ME NOW. I'VE FOUGHT BATTLES YOU CAN'T EVEN REMEMBER."



EVERYBODY'S OUT, JAR SAYS, BUT I KNOW BETTER. WE BOTH KNOW.

'BUT I'M ALREADY FULL, YOU KNOW' STUMPY LEG SAYS, EYEING JAR WITH A MIX OF CURIOSITY AND SUSPICION.'



STUMPY LEG: 'HE SAID... YOU DESERVE A LITTLE REST, AND THAT MAKES ME WONDER WHAT ELSE HE KNOWS.'

YOU HOLD THIS. AND HE THROWS.

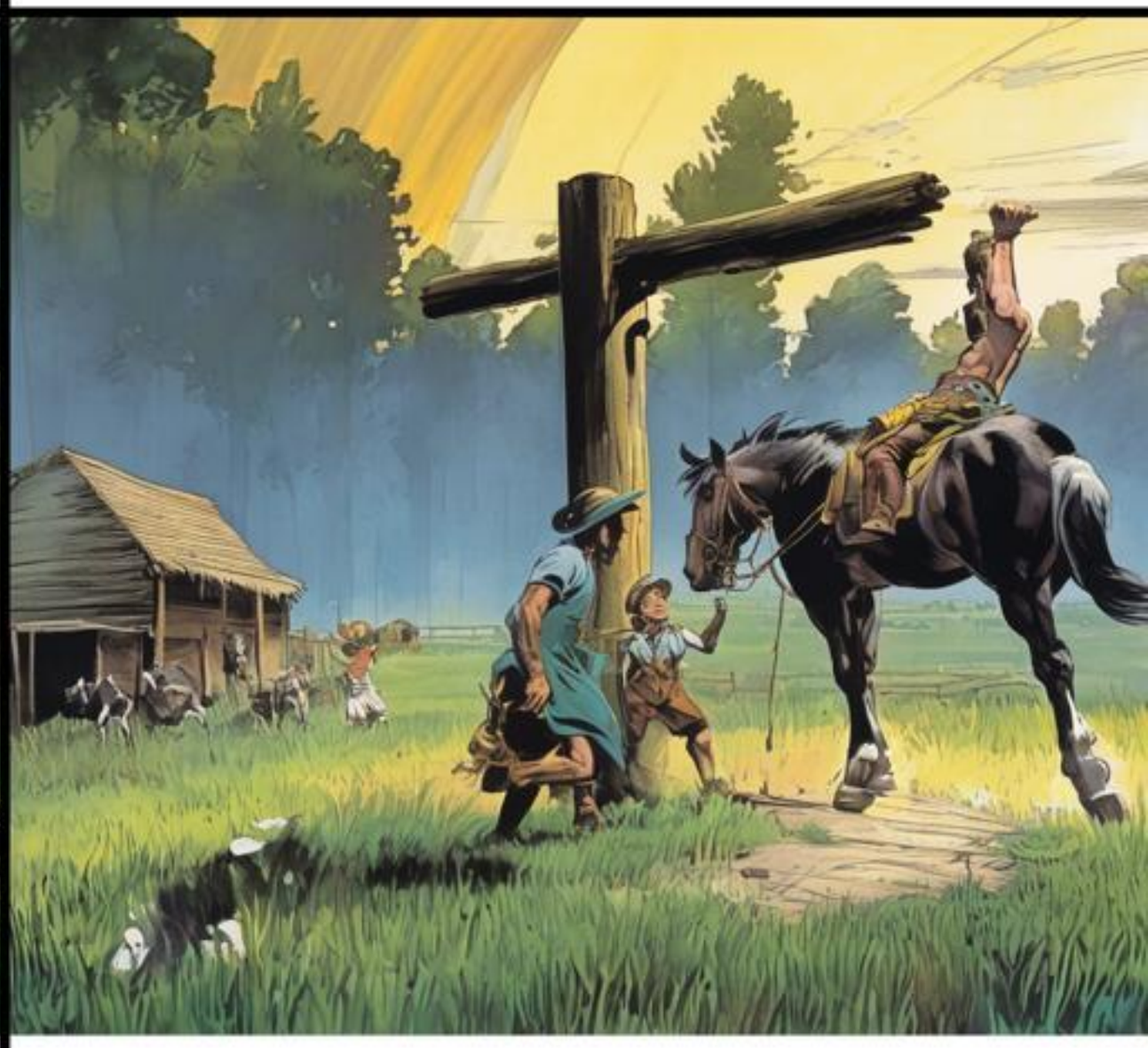
STUMPY LEG: 'YOU KNOW WHAT THIS IS? THIS IS A REMINDER!'

STUMPY LEG'S EYES LOCKED ONTO JAR'S, A SILENT PLEA FOR HIM TO DO SOMETHING

STUMPY LEG'S EYES ARE FIXED ON THE DEVICE AS IT BEARS DOWN ON THE VILLAGE

STUMPY LEG: "HE WAS TRYING TO PERFECT HIS AT-HLETIC SKILLS..."

STUMPY LEG: 'WE STILL HAVE TWO HORSES. THEY CAN PROBABLY PULL THAT...

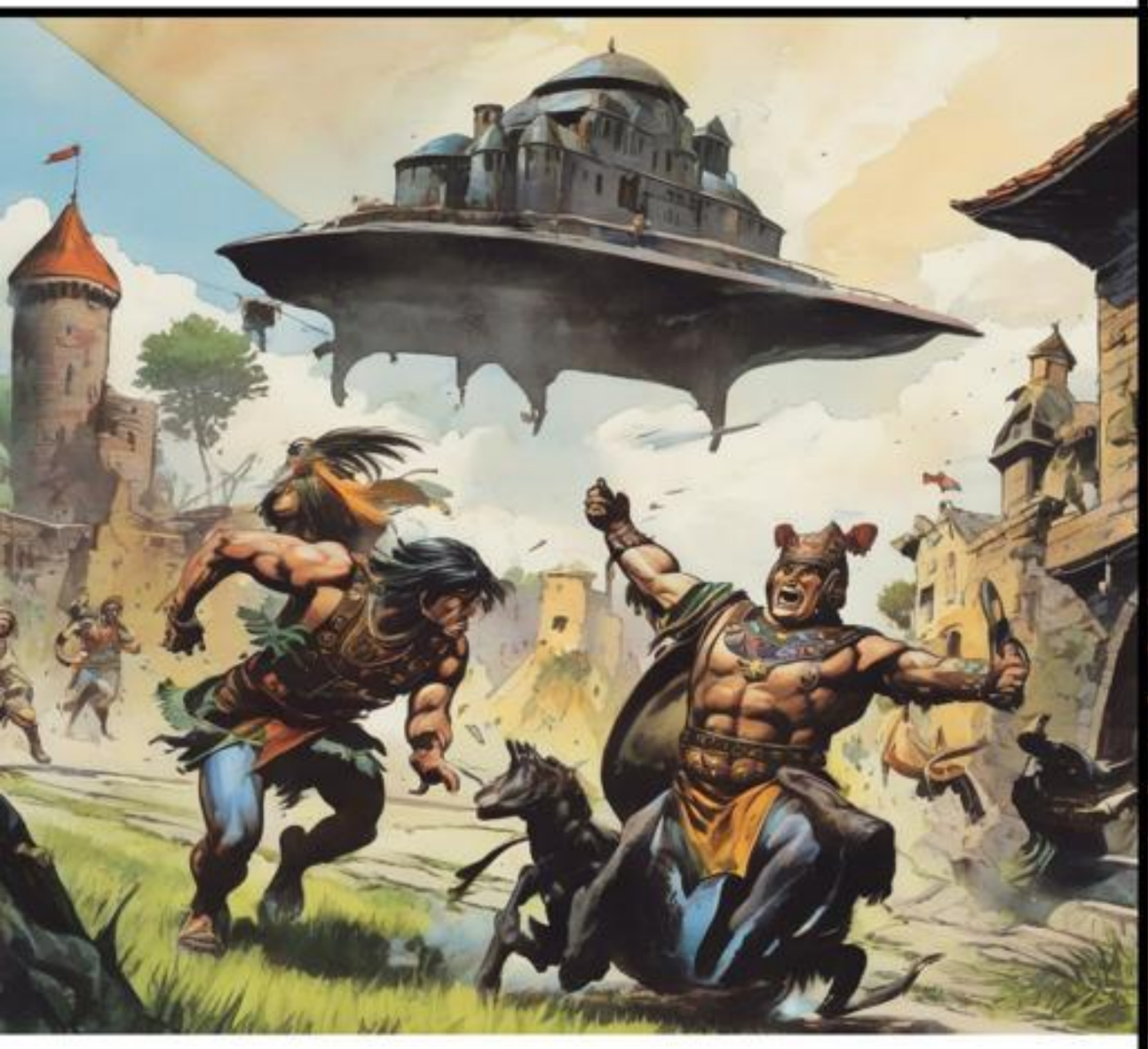


STUMPY LEG: 'WE STILL HAVE TWO HORSES. THEY CAN PROBABLY PULL IT OPEN.'

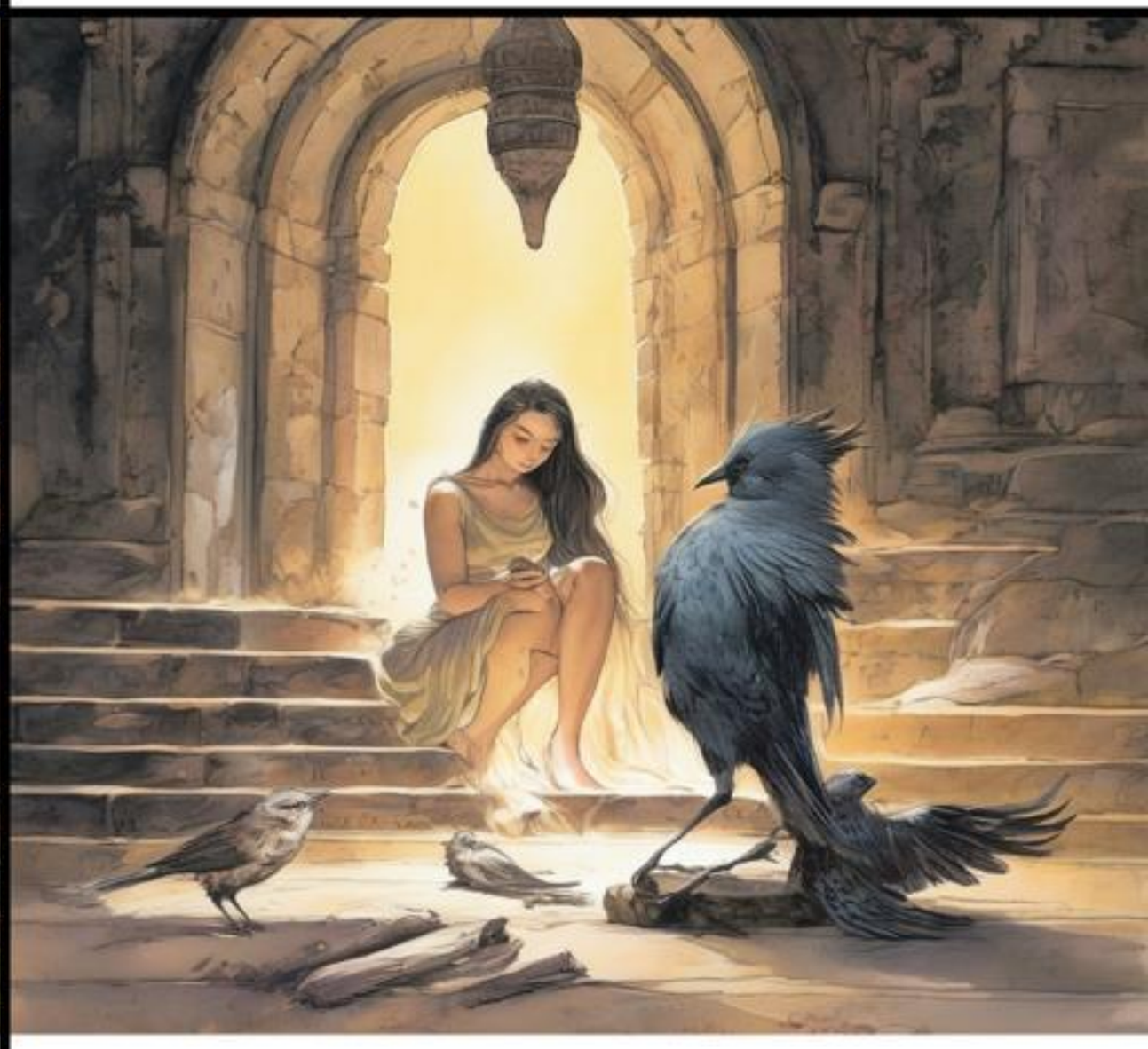
STUMPY LEG: BECAUSE I WAS THINKING... ABOUT HOW TO STOP IT, AND

STUMPY LEG SAYS, 'SCALING THE FENCE WOULD BE OUR ONLY HOPE.'

"WITH THE HORSES, WE MIGHT HAVE A CHANCE TO STOP IT" STUMPY LEG SAYS, GAZING OUT AT THE APPROACHING DANGER

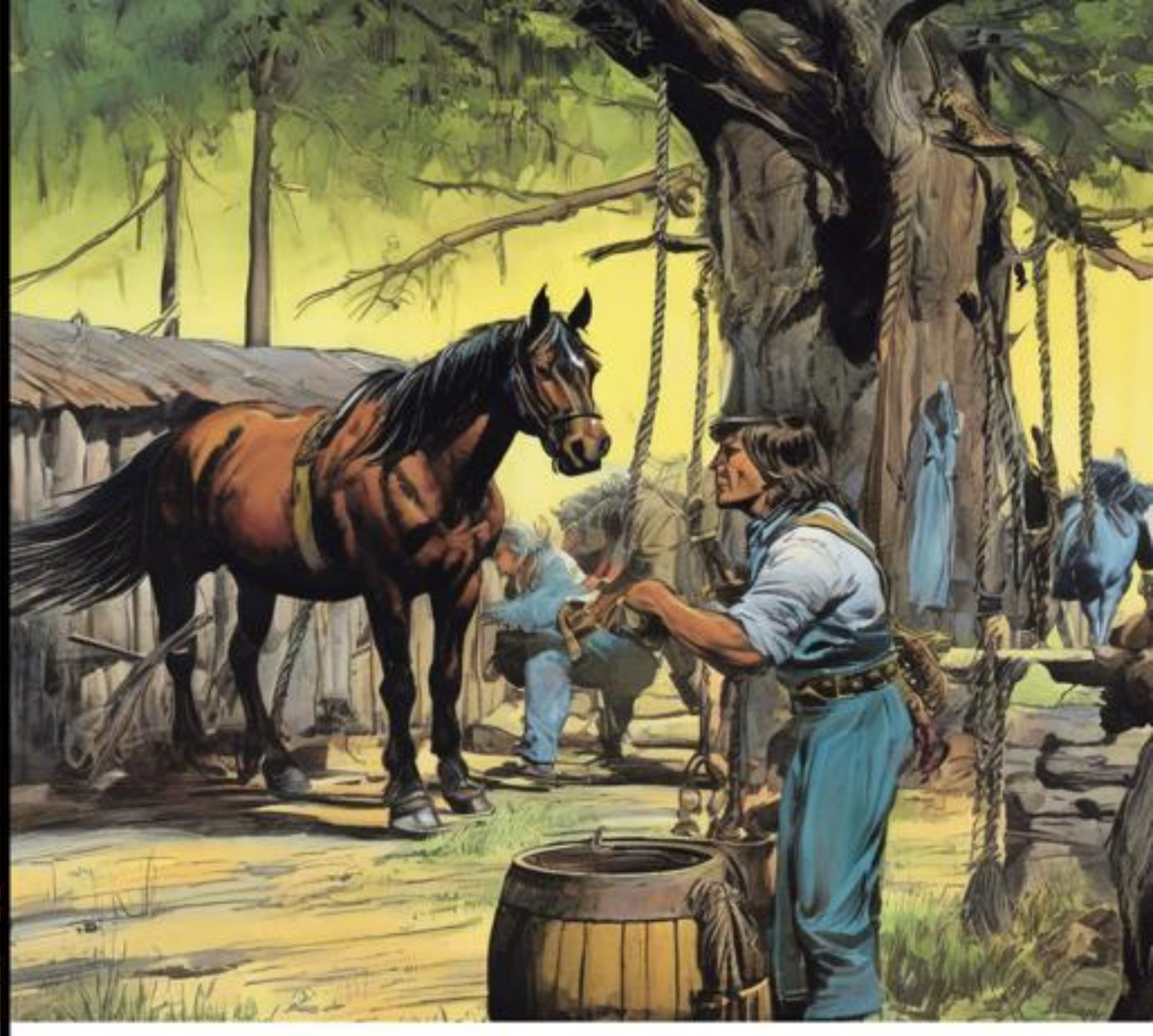


I'M HOLDING DOWN... THE FORT BRO. HE CAN BARELY HEAR A VOICE.



"STILL SONG" STUMPY LEG COOS SOFTLY AS HE GENTLY WRAPS A CLOTH AROUND STILL SONG'S WING

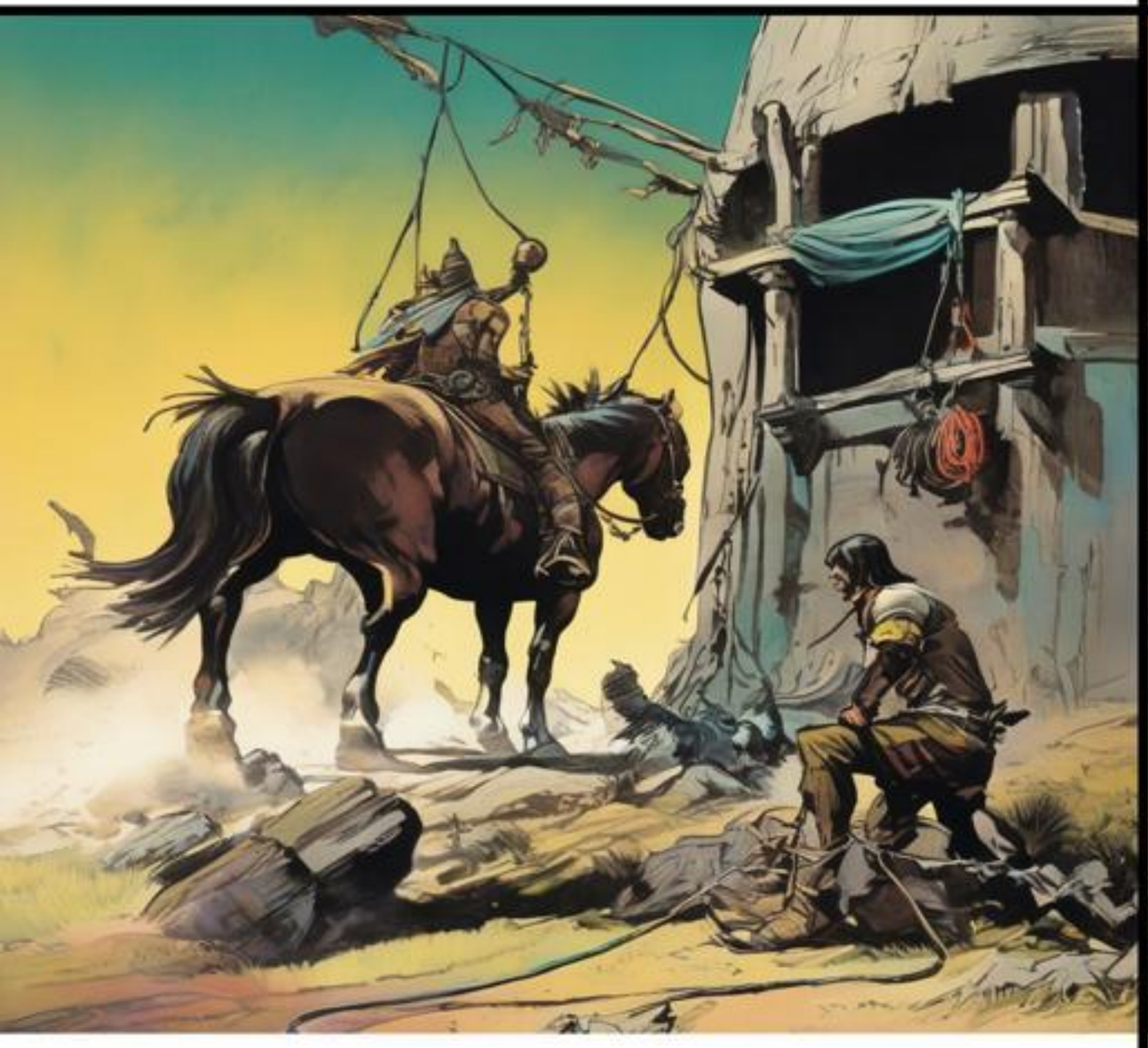
STUMPY LEG: 'WE NEED TO WRITE A MESSAGE, JAR... FOR ANYONE WHO MIGHT BE LEFT BEHIND.



STUMPY LEG: 'IF WE USE THIS PULLEY SYSTEM TO SLOW DOWN THE HORSES...

STUMPY LEG: 'AND I GIVE THEM A LITTLE BAR...' JAR: '...TO CONSPIRACY.

STUMPY LEG: 'WE CAN'T RISK THEM GETTING HURT'.



STUMPY LEG: 'YOU CAN CONTROL THEM, JAR. ANIMAL HANDLING IS UNDER WISDOM.'

THE FATE OF THE VILLAGE HANGS IN THE BALANCE AS THEY WAIT FOR THE DEVICE TO BE STOPPED

JAR: 'WHAT IN THE WORLD...?'

STEA.MING. WHAT DO WE DO WITH HIM?

STUMPY LEG: 'I STILL DON'T KNOW IF WE SHOULD DO THIS...'

WHAT IF HE WAKES UP?

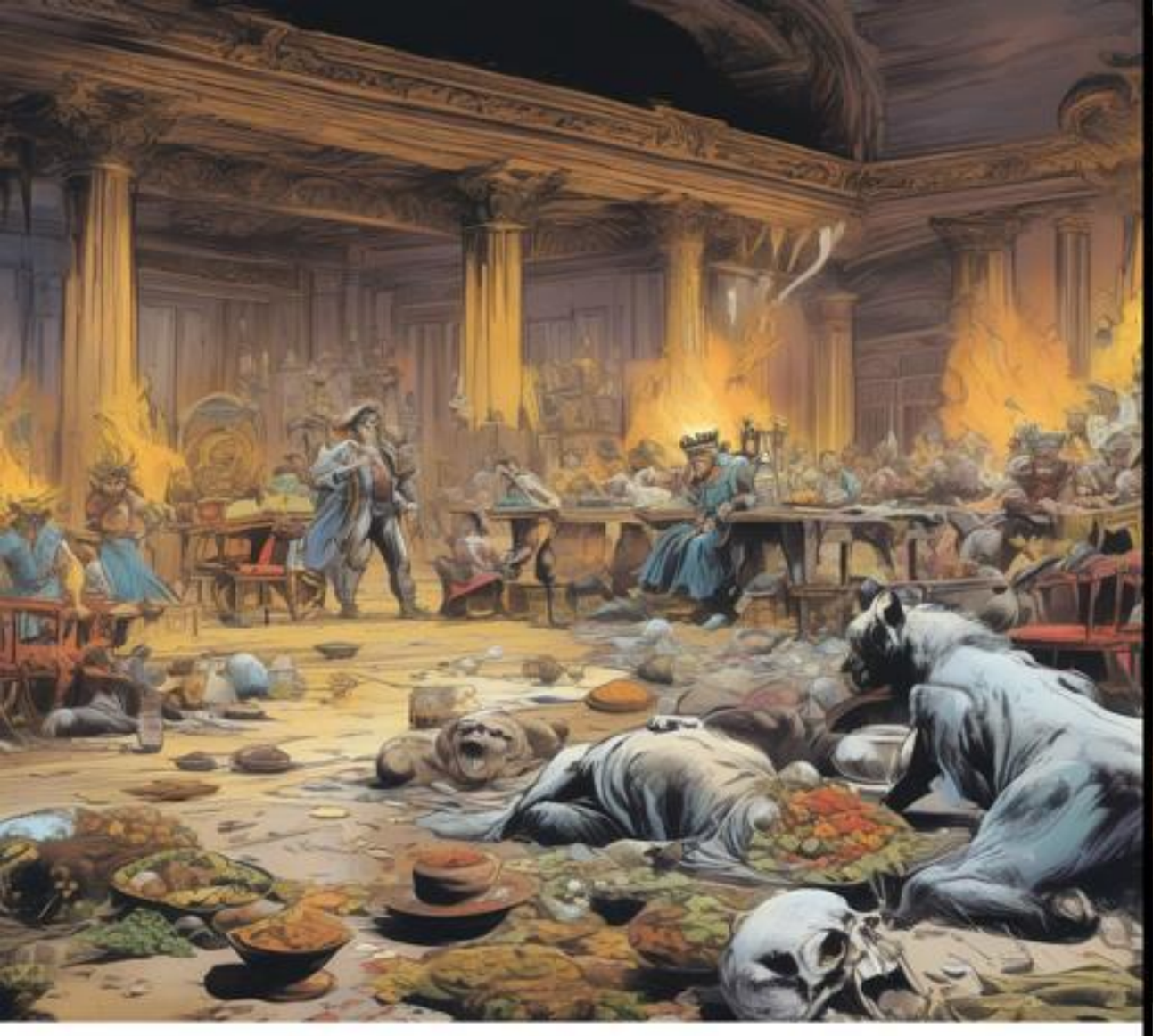
SOMETHING'S OFF... SOMETHING IS NOT QUITE THE WAY IT SHOULD BE...

THE AIR IS HEAVY WITH AN UNSPOKEN THREAT...

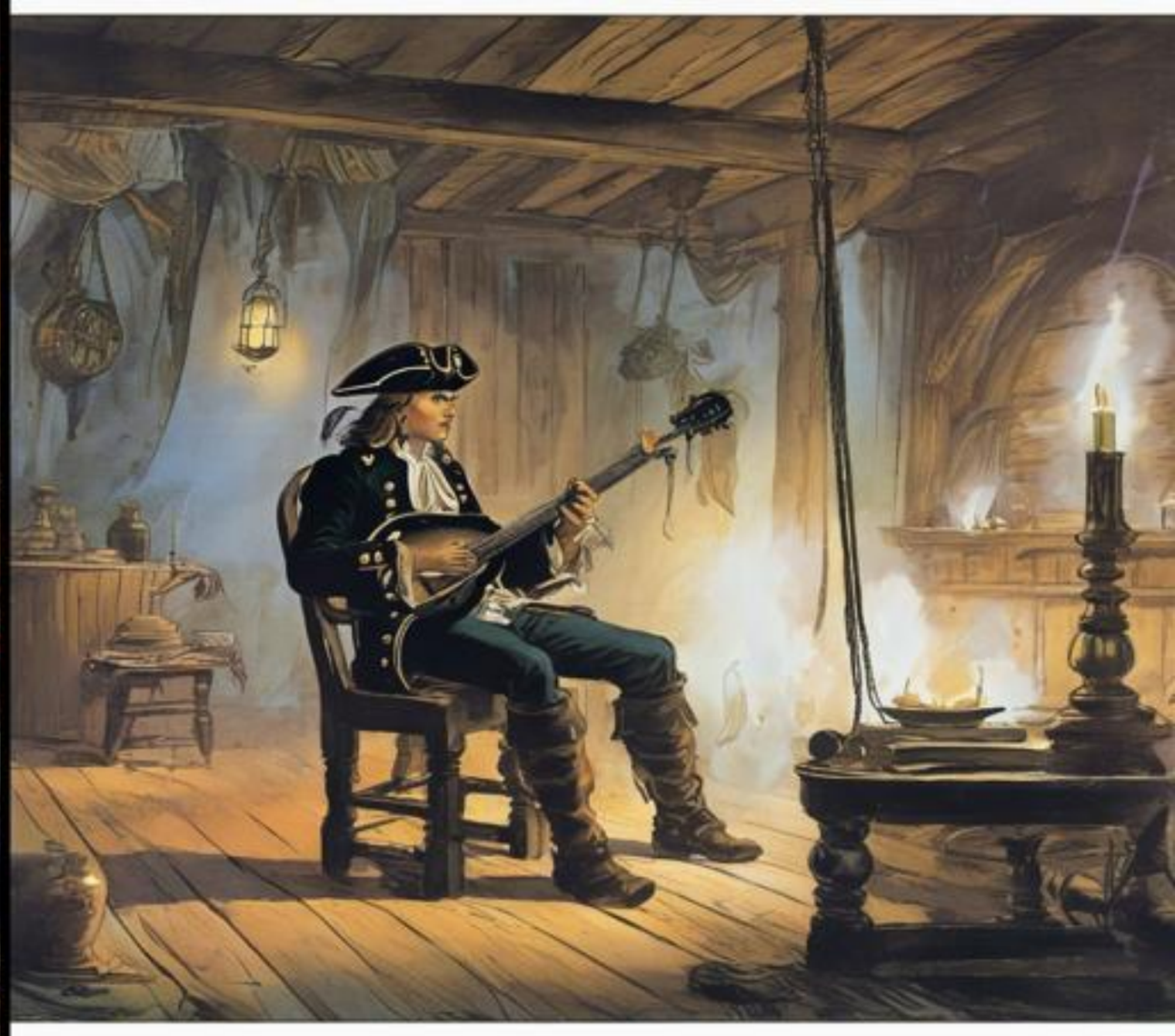
WHICH MAKES IT 4... THAT ONE, THE ONLY BODY THAT LOOKS DIFFERENT.

"WHAT IN THE WORLD..."

"LOOKS. DIFFERENT."



ARE WE IN THE RIGHT PLACE? CAN I DO SOMETHING?



"A HAUNTING MELODY FILLS THE AIR AS A YOUNG PIRATE SINGS FROM AFAR..."

STUMPY LEG: NO... WHAT HAVE I DONE?

"WHAT HAVE WE DONE?" JAR WHISPERS TO STUMPY LEG, THEIR EYES FIXED ON THE CHALICE.

YOU GOT DRAG SHIT.

"BOY, I DON'T THINK YOU SHOULD GIVE THAT TO HIM", JAR SAYS, EYEING CAPTAIN STILLSONG WARILY

"IZ... AND BONNIE," STUMPY LEG SAYS, HIS VOICE BARELY ABOVE A WHISPER.

JAR'S EYES WIDEN IN HORROR AS HE TAKES IN CAPTAIN STILLSONG'S TWISTED FORM

JAR: 'WHAT HAVE YOU DONE, STUMPY? THIS CAN'T END WELL.'

STUMPY LEG: "WHAT HAVE WE DONE?"

"IT'S NOT FLOWING THROUGH THE BODY BUT IT IS STILL IN THERE" - JAR'S VOICE ECHOES THROUGH THE FOREST

STUMPY LEG WHISPERS TO JAR: 'BASED ON THAT YOU FIGURE THIS CREATURE... IS SOME KIND OF VAMPIRE.'

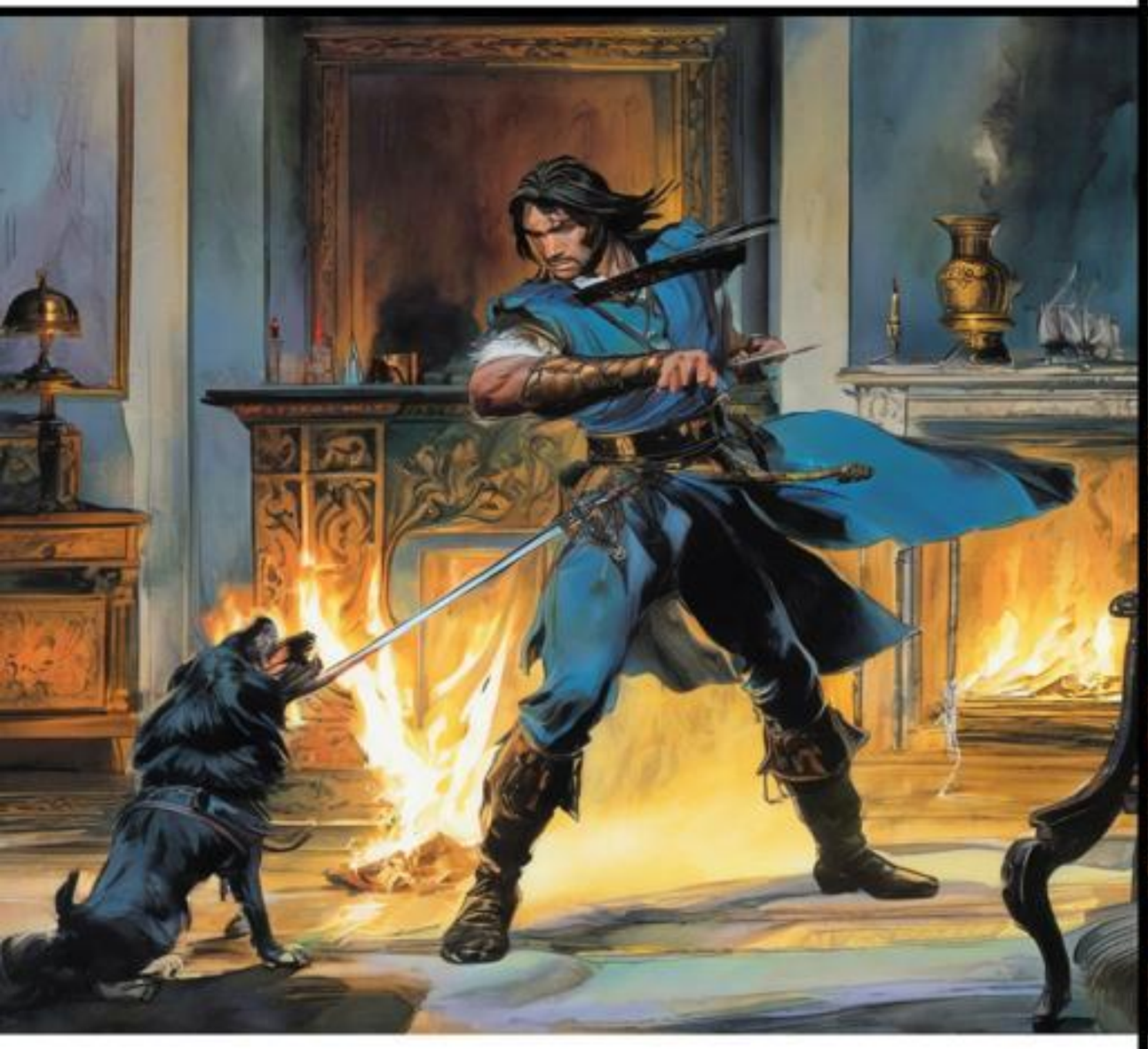
STUMPY LEG: 'HERE WE GO!'

CAPTAIN STILLSONG: GGGRRAAAHH...

"SHH, STAY QUIET. WE DON'T KNOW HOW LONG WE HAVE BEFORE THEY NOTICE US," JAR WHISPERS TO NIKTAR

NIKTAR'S EYES LOCK ONTO THEIR GEAR AS JAR READIES FOR A FINAL PUSH

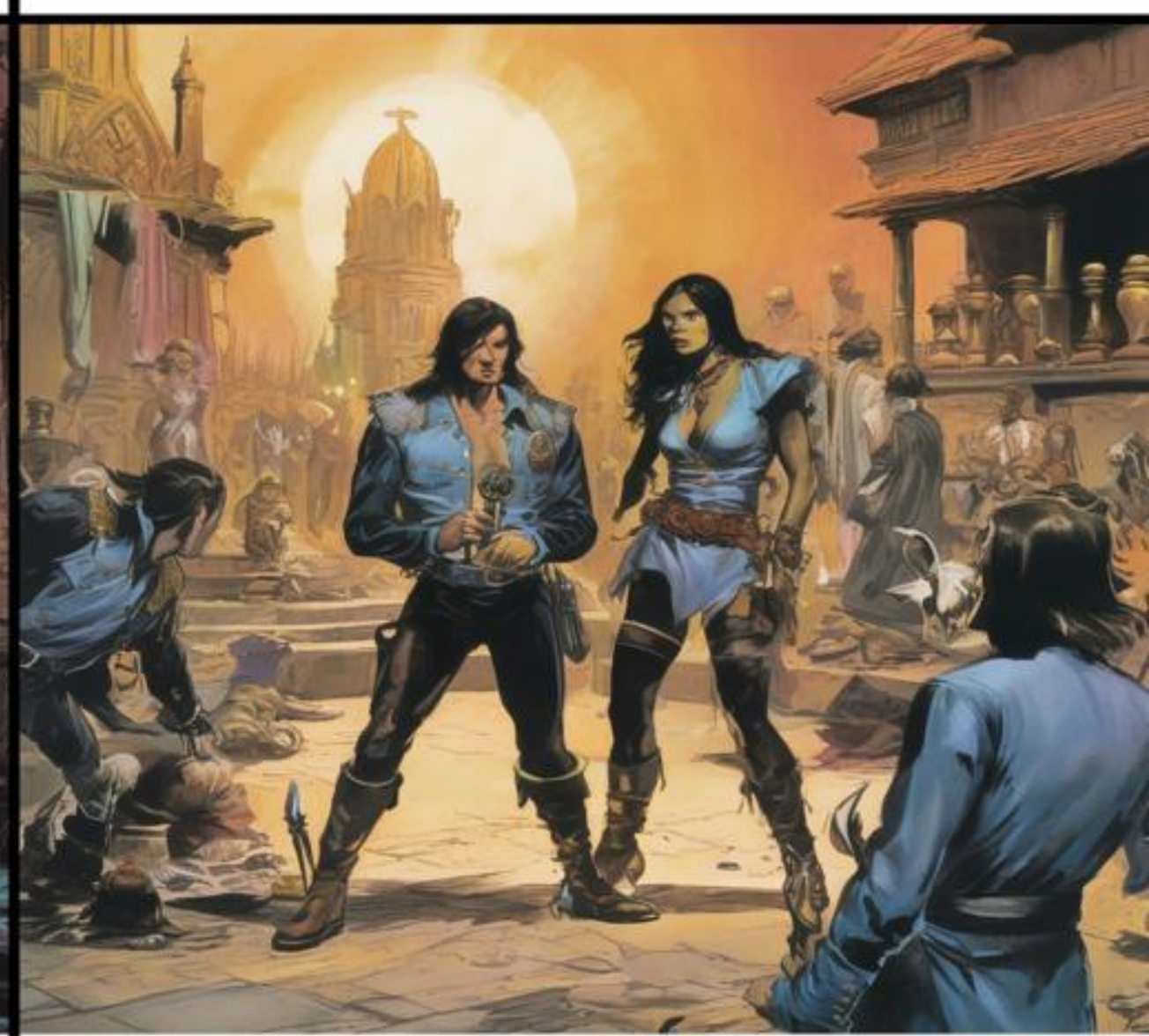
JAR: *GRABS SWORD* NIKTAR: *REACHES FOR SPELLCASTING TOOL*



JAR'S EYES LOCKED ONTO THE GUARD THE TIP OF HIS RAPIER GLINTING MENACINGLY

"YOU'RE BOTH HOLDING THE CHALICE, SO YOU HAVE TO WALK, STUMBLING BACK THROUGH DEAD BODIES... CHAIR.S... AND NOW GO.BLE.TS."

JAR'S EYES WIDEN AS HE DODGES TO THE SIDE, AVOIDING A RAZOR-SHARP CLAW BY MERE INCHES.



"WE COULD'VE MADE IT A CLEANER CUT," JAR SAYS, HIS VOICE LACED WITH FRUSTRATION AND WORRY.

A SNARLING PIKTAR CHARGES INTO THE FRAY...

"GET READY FOR THIS!" STUMPY LEG BELLOWS AS IT PREPARES TO CLASH WITH PIKJAR!

I DON'T UNDERSTAND IT. LIKE YOU'RE FORGETTING.

JAR GASPS IN RELIEF AS STUMPY LEG SHIELDS HIM FROM THE DEADLY BLOW.

PIKJAR: ARE YOU GONNA... DO IT .RECK.LESS.LY.

"THIS THING IS TOUGH. IT'S LIKE CUTTING THROUGH SOLID WOOD, JAR SAYS, HIS VOICE BARELY ABOVE A WHISPER

CAPTAIN STILLSONG: 'TELL ME, WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT UNDE.AD'S INVOLVEMENT IN THIS?'

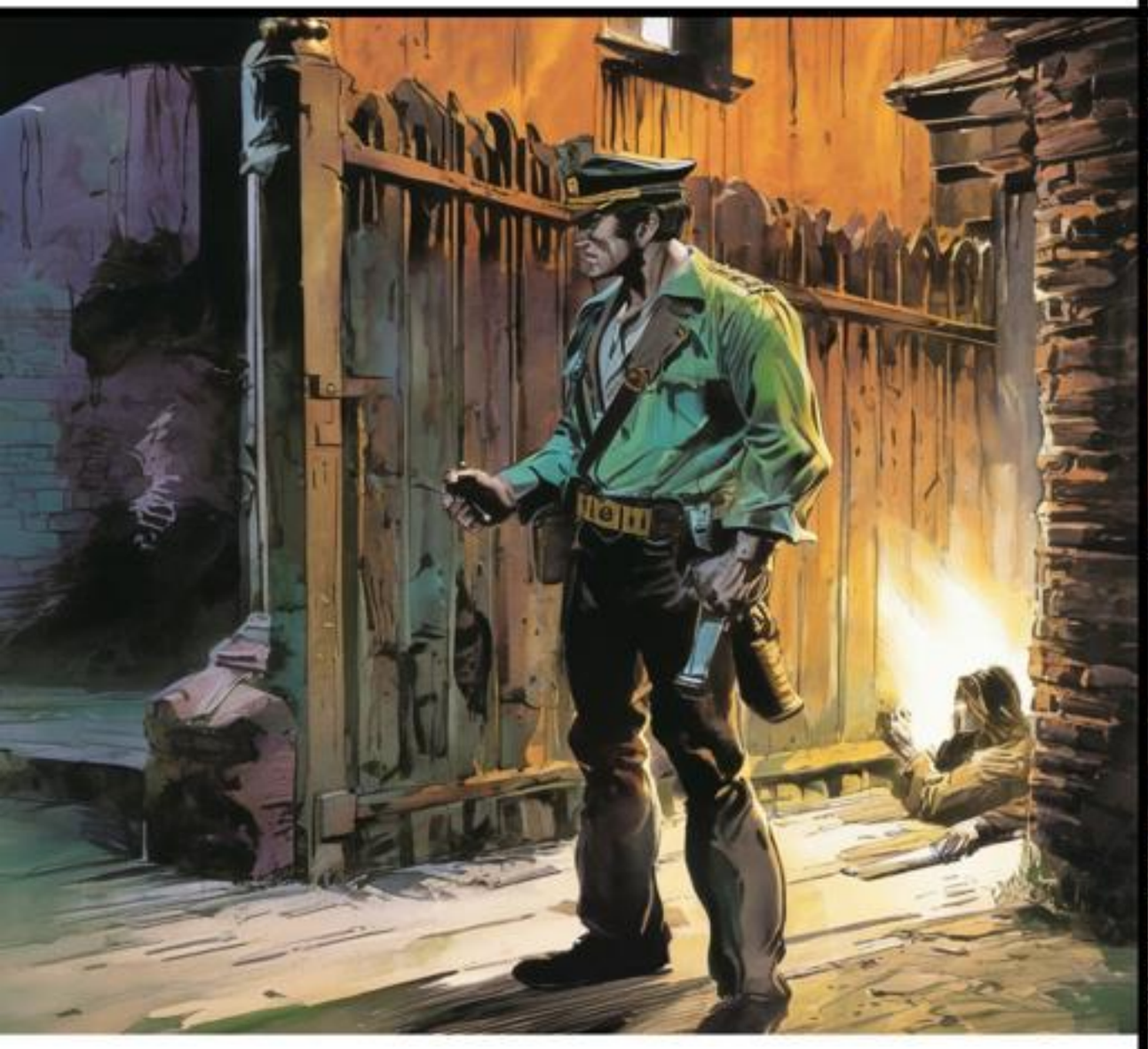
WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT UNDE.AD'S ROLE IN THIS CHAOS?

"YOU'RE SLIGHTLY LESS FUCKED THAN YOU WOULD BE AGAINST A REAL VAMPIRE. THEY'RE SNEAKY," CAPTAIN STILLSONG WARNS JAR

PIKJAR'S VAMPIRIC STRENGTH IS A DOUBLE-EDGED SWORD...

CAPTAIN STILLSONG: 'THEY CANNOT ENTER RESIDENCES WITHOUT PERMISSION... AND THEY'RE DESTROYED IF THEY'RE RESTING.

"SO, YOU'RE SAYING THAT THIS... THING CAN BE KILLED WITH A WOODEN STAKE?"



BUT CAN WE INVITE A VAMPIRE INSIDE, CAPTAIN?...I MEAN...

PIKJAR'S GAZE BURNS WITH AN UNQUENCHABLE FURY AS IT SIZES UP ITS FOE.

THE STAGE IS SET FOR A THRILLING DUEL.

PIKJAR'S GRIP IS LIKE IRON...

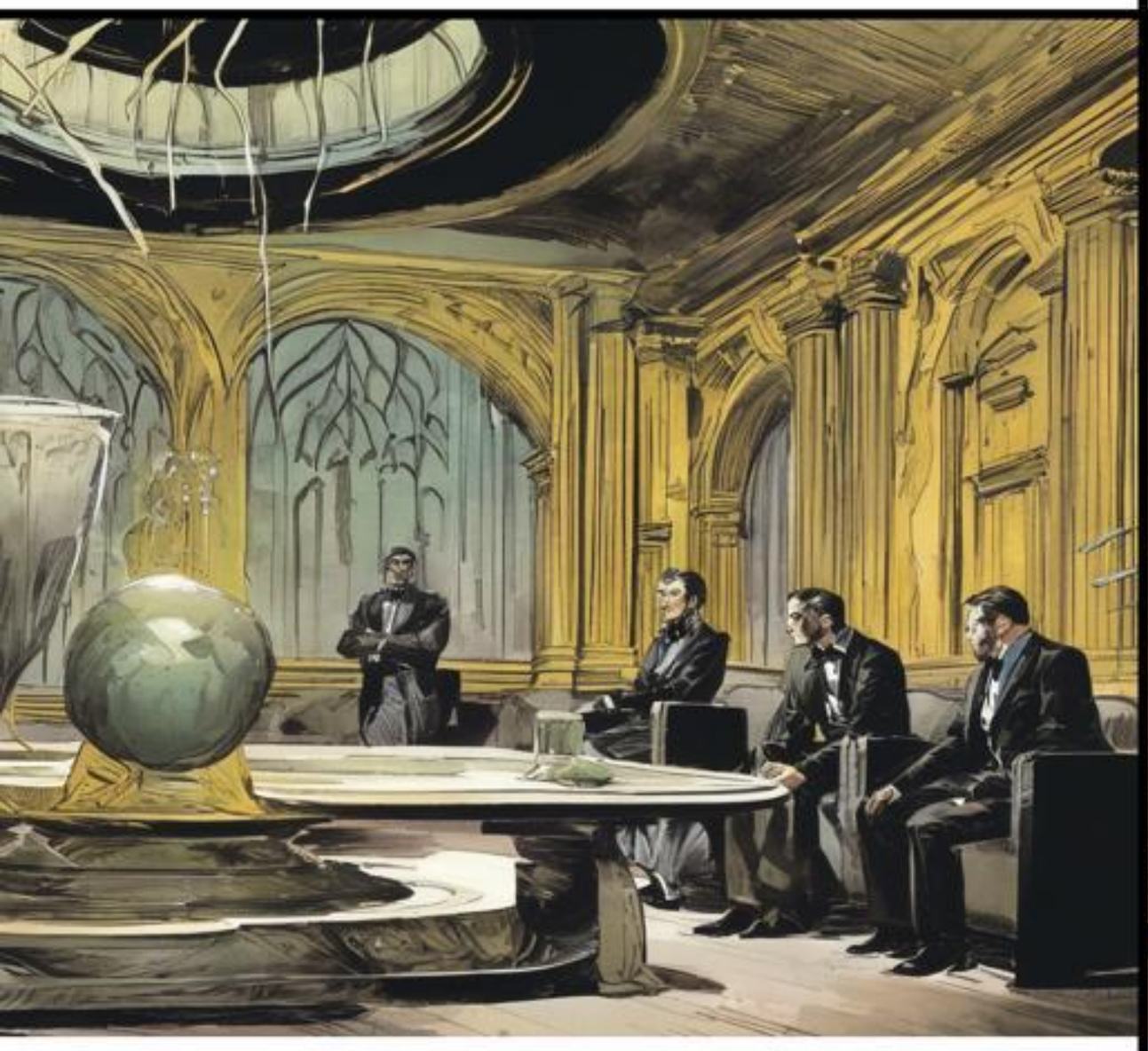
I.JAR: "OH YEAH... SO UM..."

"BUT UH... IT DOESN'T LET GO!"

'WITH UH, I SUPPOSE OUR CONVERSATION IS AT AN END, PIKJAR GROWLS.

SPEAKER_13: THAT IS A FUCKING CRIT.

'BUT YOU ARE... JUST A CREATURE', SPEAKER_07 SAYS IN AWE

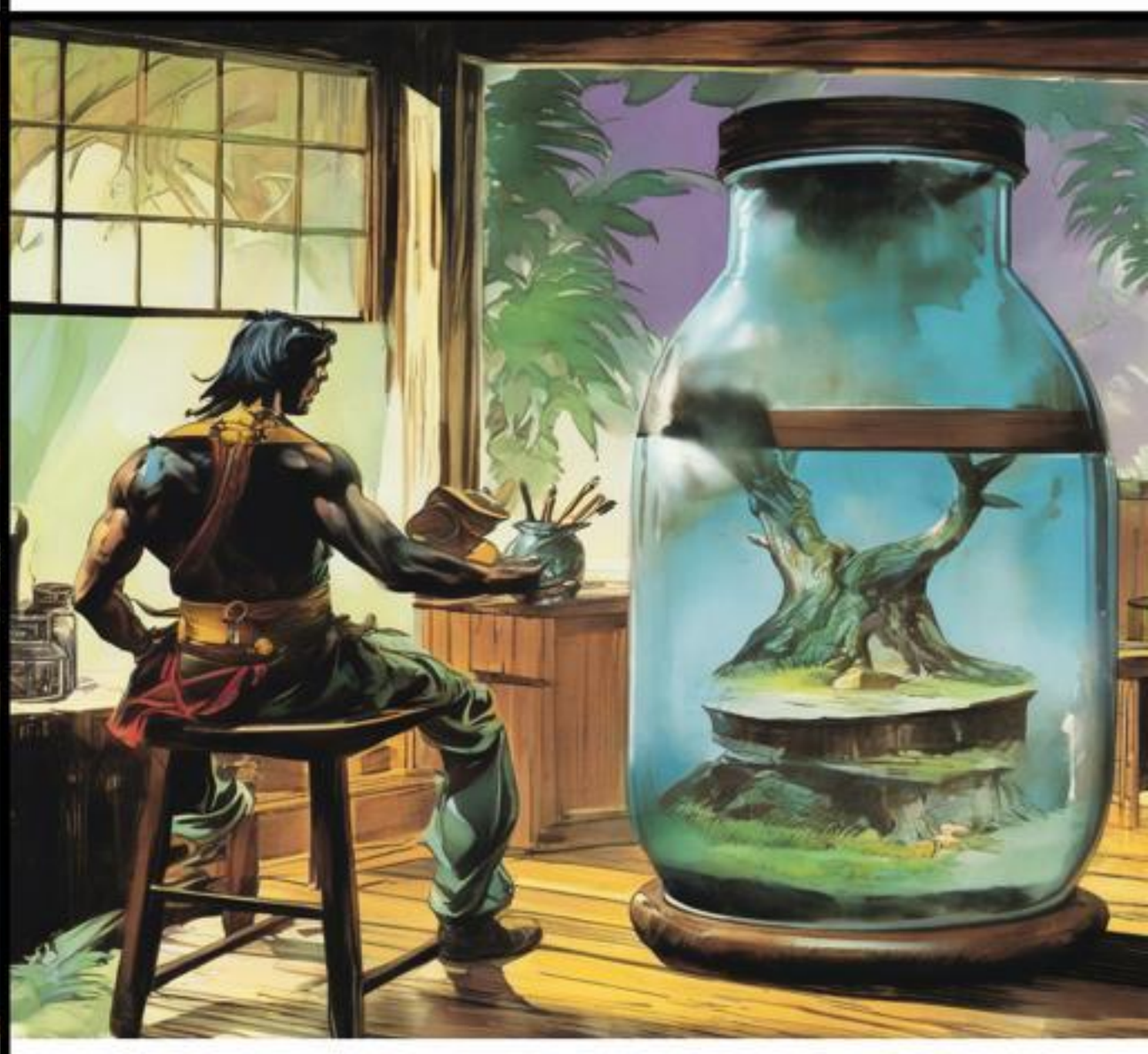


"THAT WHEN YOU THROW IN THE GAME..." SPEAKER_07 TRAILS OFF, UNSURE WHAT TO SAY NEXT.

"TWENTY EIGHT..." SPEAKER_13 STAMMERS, STRUGGLING TO COMPREHEND THE IMPLICATIONS OF PIKJAR'S CLAIM

PIKJAR: IT BITES YOU.

'MAYBE WE CAN DO SOMETHING' WHISPERED SPEAKER_15, AS SPEAKER_02 BEGAN TO FORM A PLAN.



"YOU GET THIS PIECE OF WOOD. YOU STICK IT THROUGH A JAR. INTO THE VAMPIR.E."

THE AIR IS THICK WITH ANTICIPATION AS PIKTAR'S EYES LOCK ONTO THE WOODEN SHARD.

THE TIME TO ACT IS NOW.

THE WOODEN LEG SLICES THROUGH THE AIR

"IT'S LIKE TRYING TO STAB WOOD WITH WOOD," SPEAKER_00 SAYS

SPEAKER_07: JUST DRIVE THAT... WOODEN STAKE IN.

'YOU CAN'T KILL ME', SPEAKER_03 SAYS, SWINGING THEIR JA.W IN A MIGHTY ARC.

CAN YOU ATTACK?

"JUST ONE MORE," SPEAKER_07 REPEATS, THEIR VOICE DRIPPING WITH MALICE

"AL.RIGHT..." SPEAKER_07 MUTTERS, HAND CLENCHED AROUND THEIR WEAPON

THE FINAL BLOW...

"NEW WHISPERS OF SMOKE..."

"YOU EITHER DIE A HERO..."

"WHO KNOWS? WHAT FATE WILL BEFALL A.JAR. IN THE END."

"I."

"I DIDN'T MEAN TO KILL HIM..."

"WHAT'S THE SITUATION?" JAR ASKS, HIS RAPIER STILL POISED FOR ACTION

THE AIR IS THICK WITH TENSION AS JAR PREPARES TO DEFEND AGAINST THE GROWLING BEAST.

NIKTAR: 'COME ON BOY, DON'T MAKE ME HURT YOU'

YOU'LL NEVER LIVE AGAIN IF YOU COME CLOSE...

"I FIND OUT," SPEAKER_13 SAYS, THEIR VOICE BARELY ABOVE A WHISPER

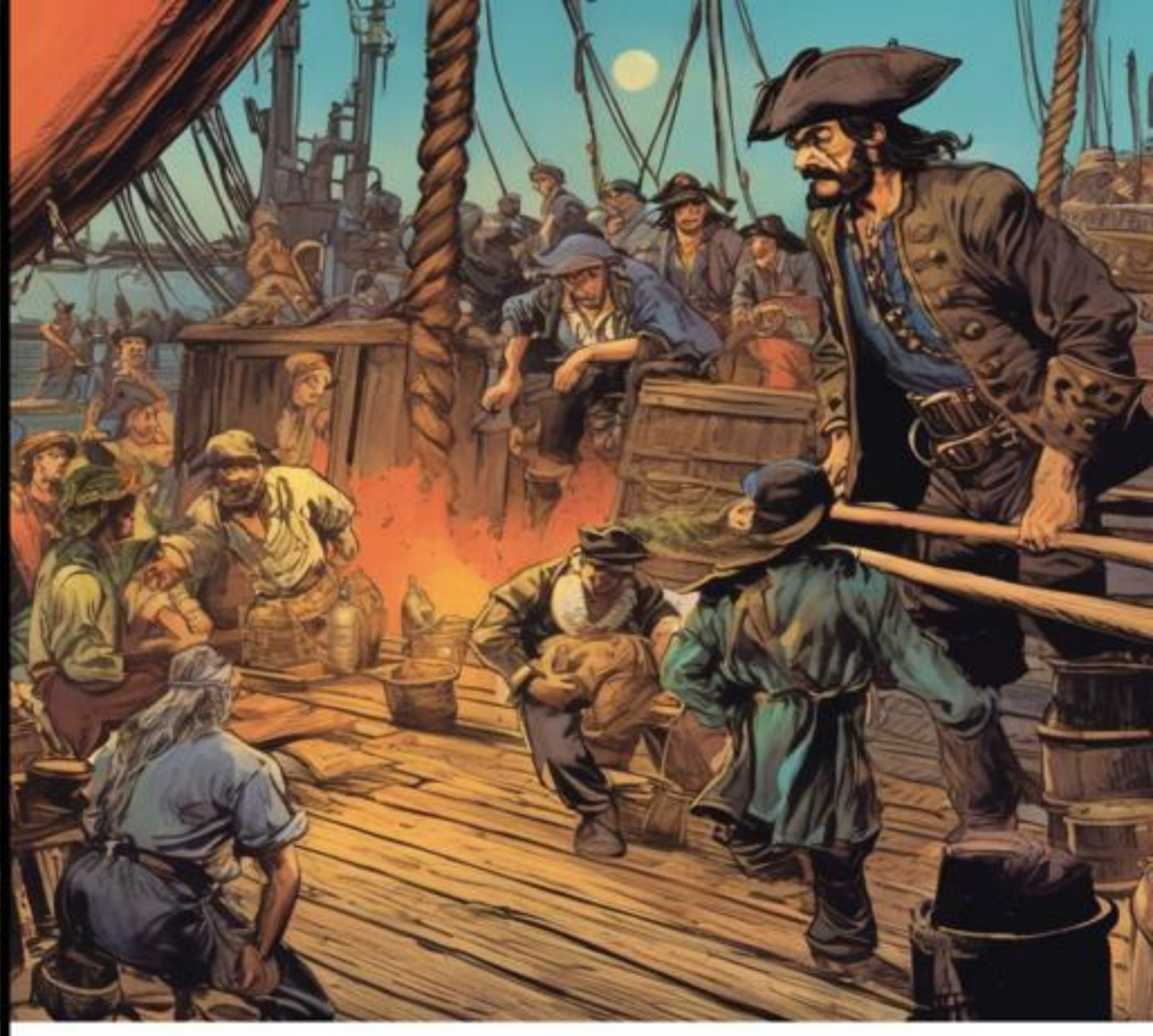
"I WILL NOT BE BOUND BY FATE," A.JAR SAYS, HOLDING THE CHALICE ALOFT

"LET'S MOVE!" JAR SHOUTS BACK TO NIKTAR, HIS VOICE CARRYING DOWN THE CORRIDOR

THE DARKNESS CLOSES IN, BUT FREEDOM IS WITHIN REACH... FOR NOW

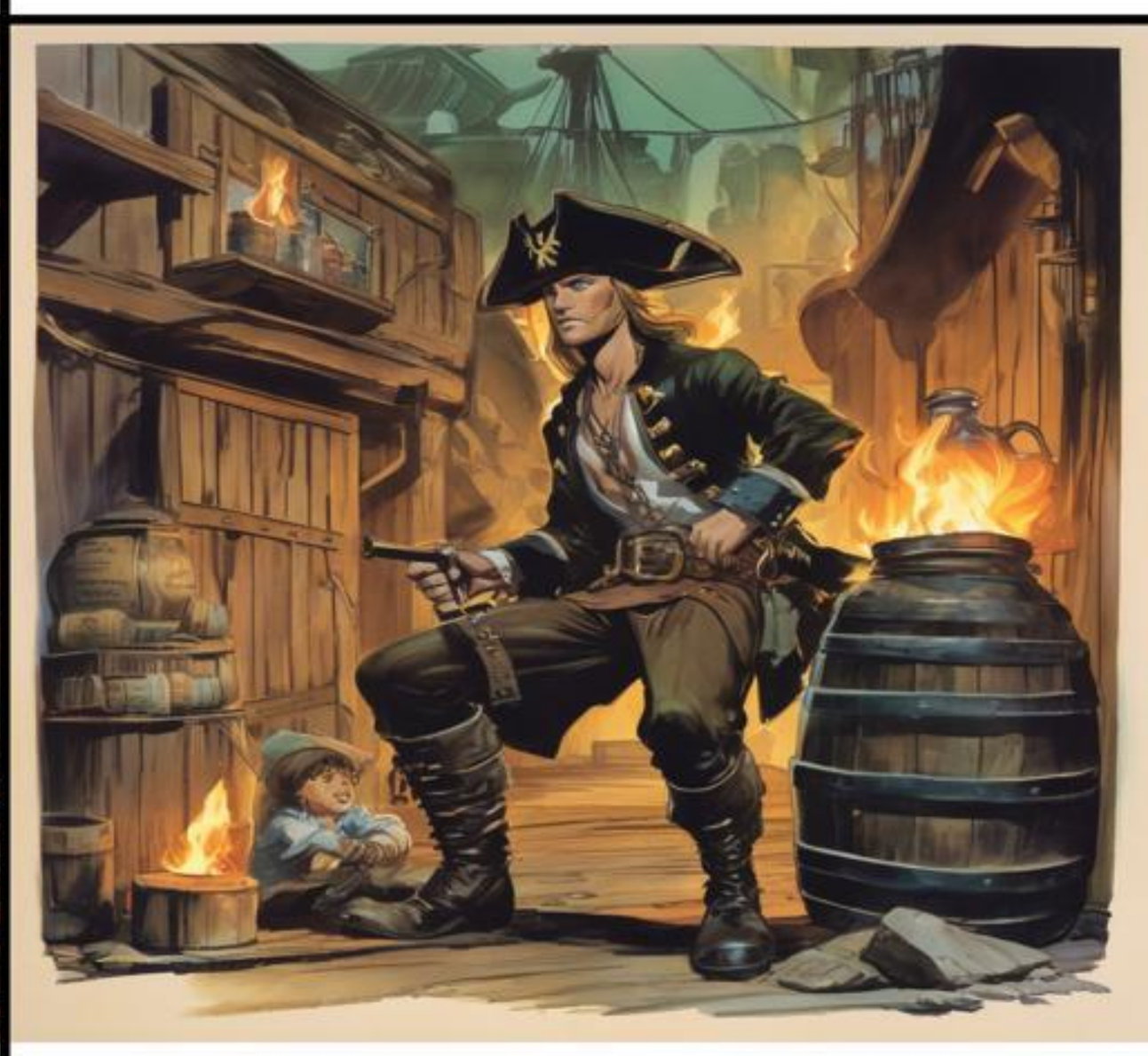
NIKTAR: 'VOILA! INSTANT PIRATE!

'LOOKS GOOD', NIKTAR SAYS, 'BUT ARE YOU SURE YOU CAN PULL OFF THIS PERSONA?'

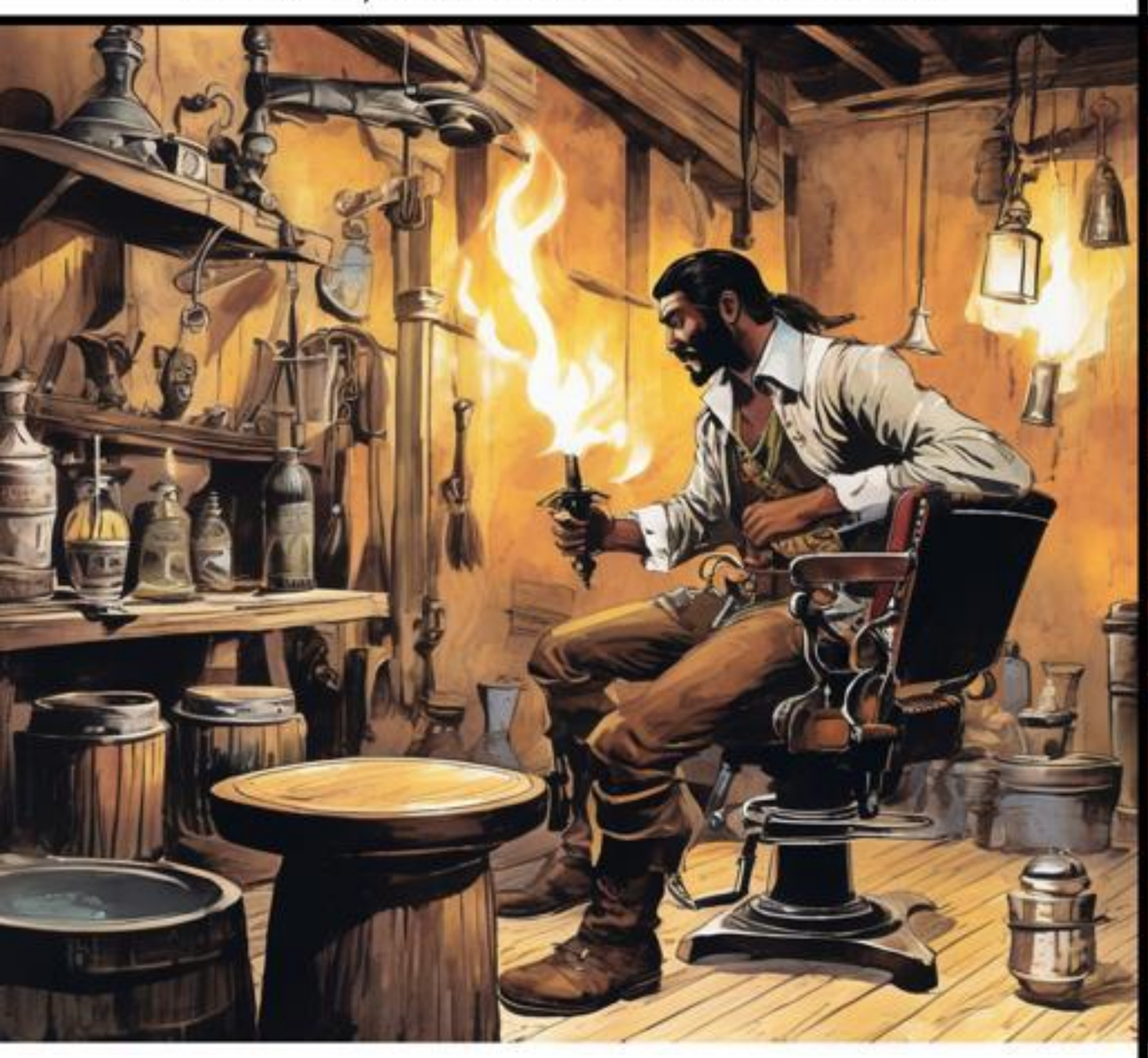


I'M LOOKING FOR A JOB, SIR. I'VE HEARD THERE'S WORK TO BE HAD ON THIS SHIP.

"I THINK WE SHOULD GET OUT OF THIS TOWN AS QUICK AS WE CAN," JAR SAYS. NIKTAR'S EYES NARROW, 'BUT I NEED THAT TREASURE, MAN. I WANT TO LIVE FOREVER.'

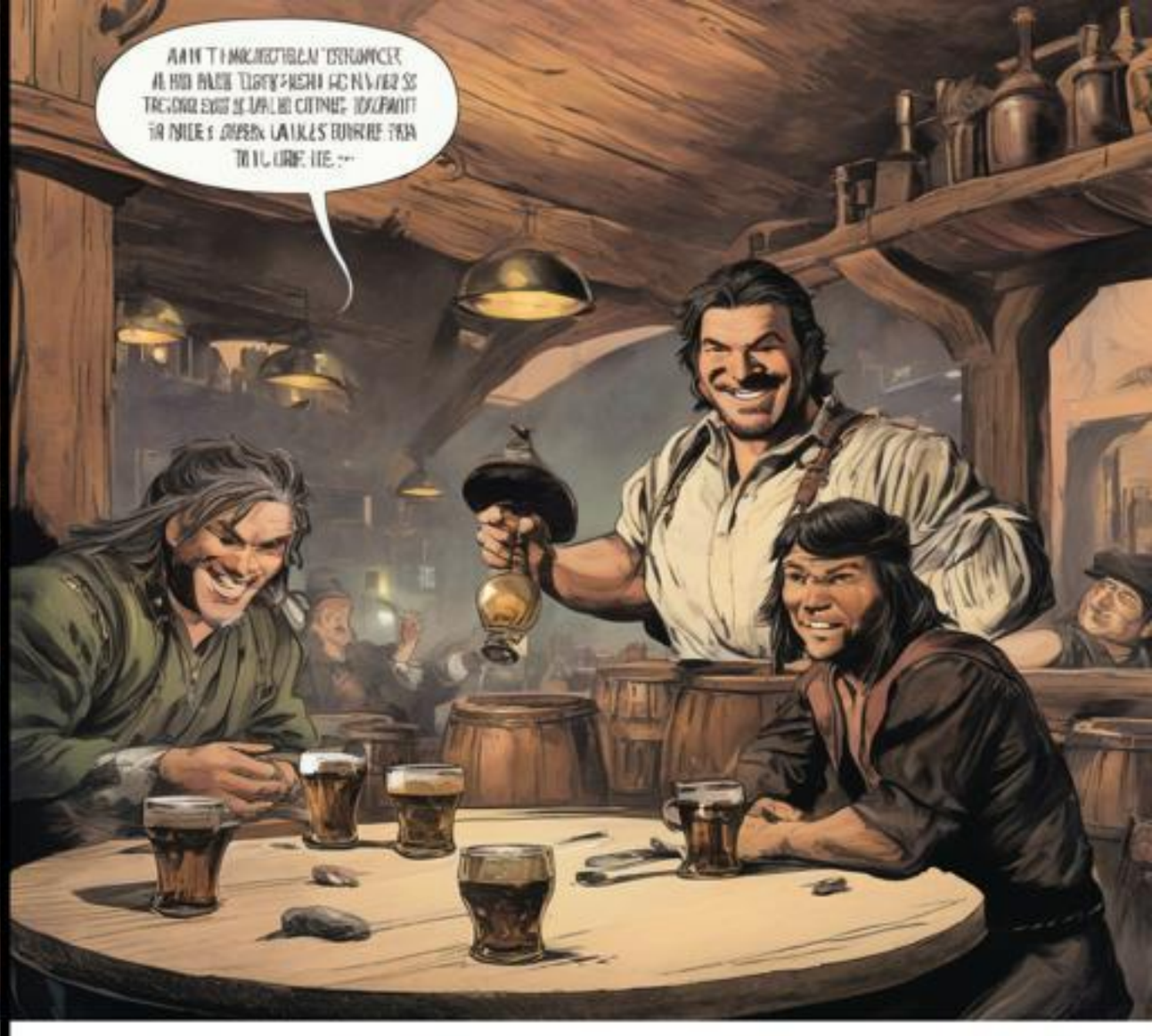


THIS WHOLE PRISON MIGHT BE A LITTLE BIT LOOP-Y...

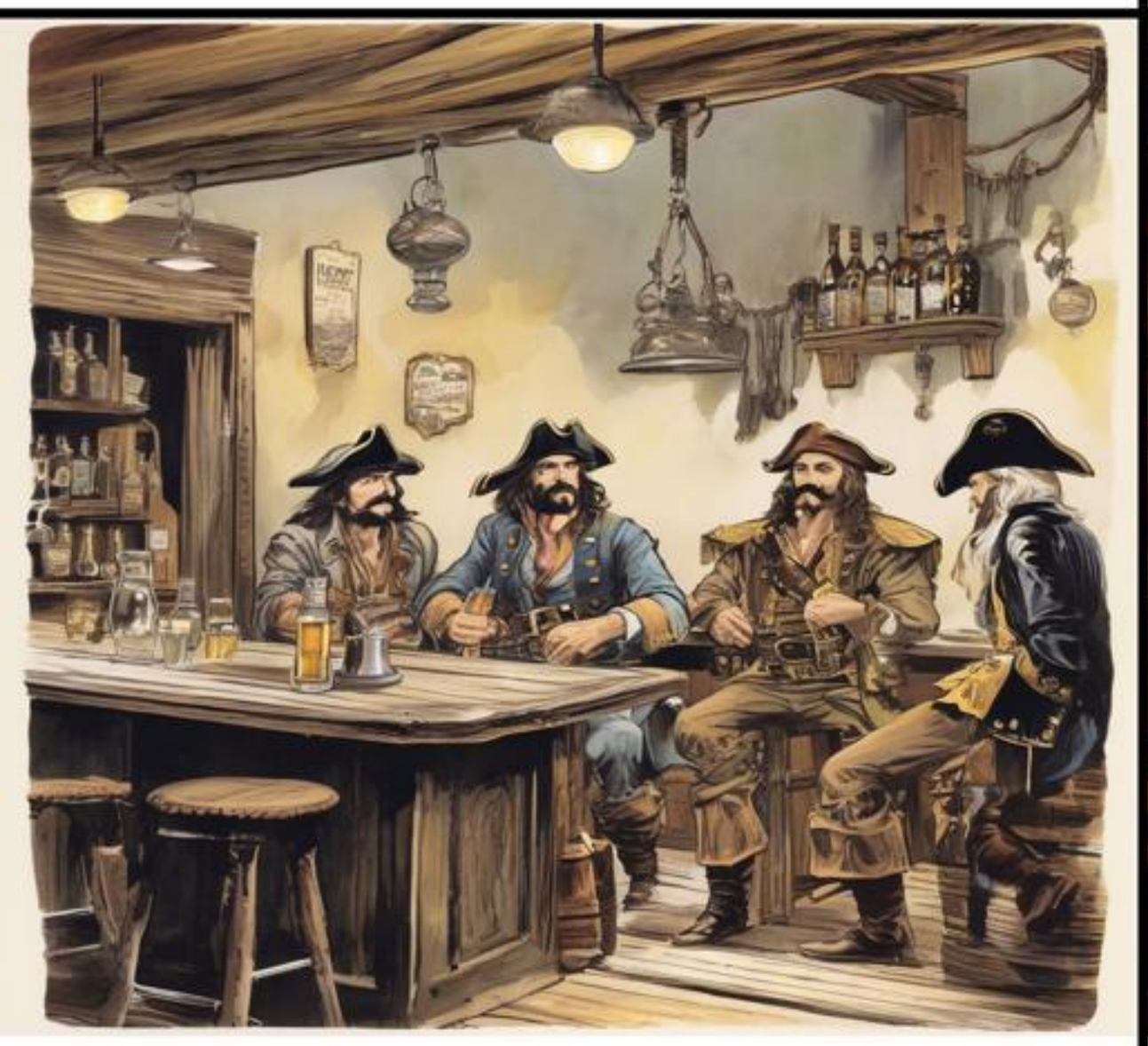


NIKTAR: 'A HAIRCUT MIGHT BE A LITTLE... NOTICEABLE...'

JAR LEANED IN CLOSE TO NIKTAR, WHISPERING "THIS IS EITHER A TRAP OR AN OPPORTUNITY.



NIKTAR WHISPERS, 'YOU'RE NOT HERE TO ASK ABOUT THE JOB, ARE YOU?



"THAT ONE... HE'LL DEFINITELY RECOGNIZE ME. WHAT DO WE DO NOW?"

JAR: 'THEY'LL RECOGNIZE US IF WE'RE NOT CAREFUL.'

THEY'RE PLAYING A GAME... AND MAYBE IF WE WIN THAT GAME.

NIKTAR: 'NOW WE'LL BE YOUNG AGAIN...WITH THEIR ULTIMATE YOUTH POTION.'