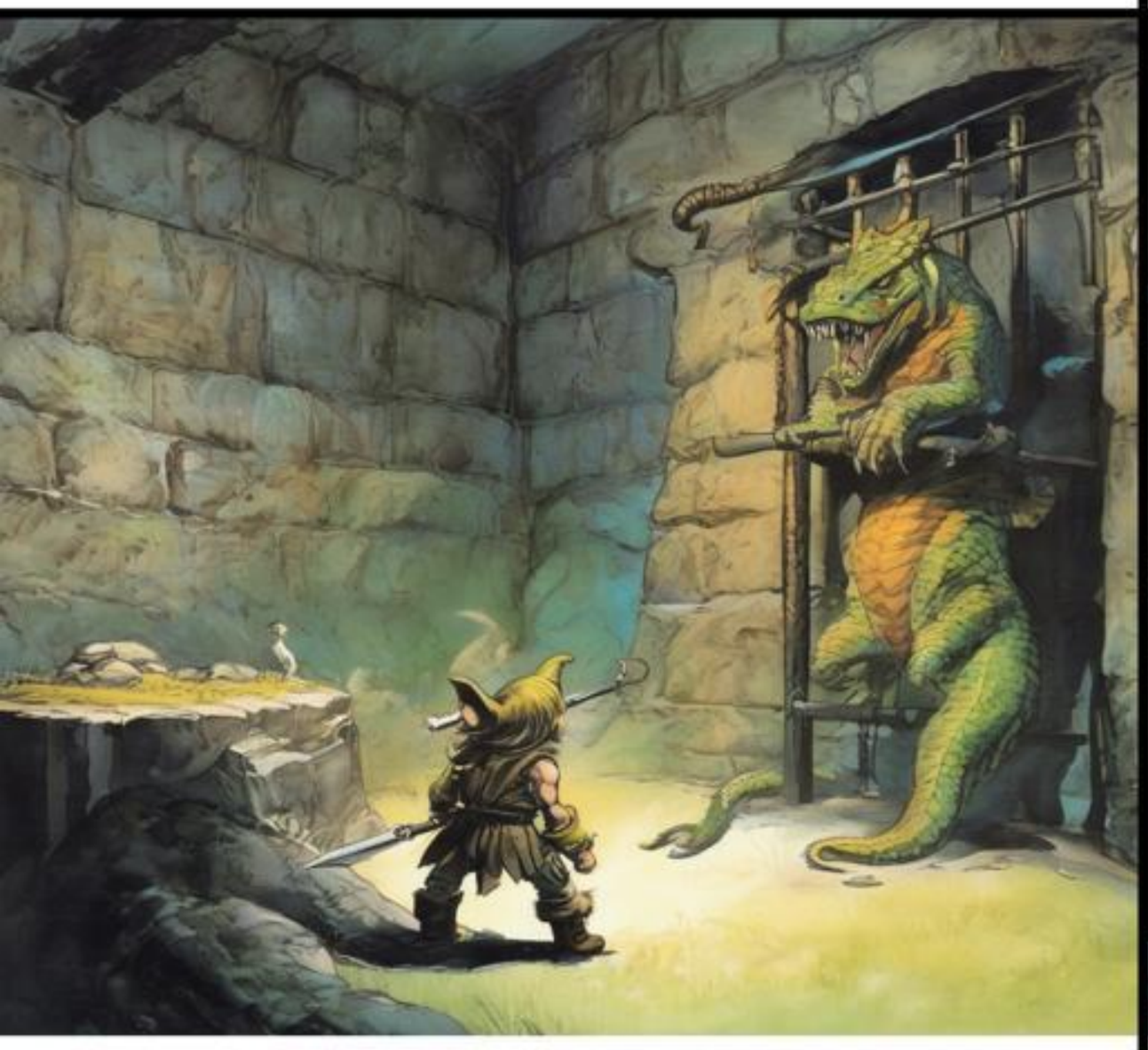
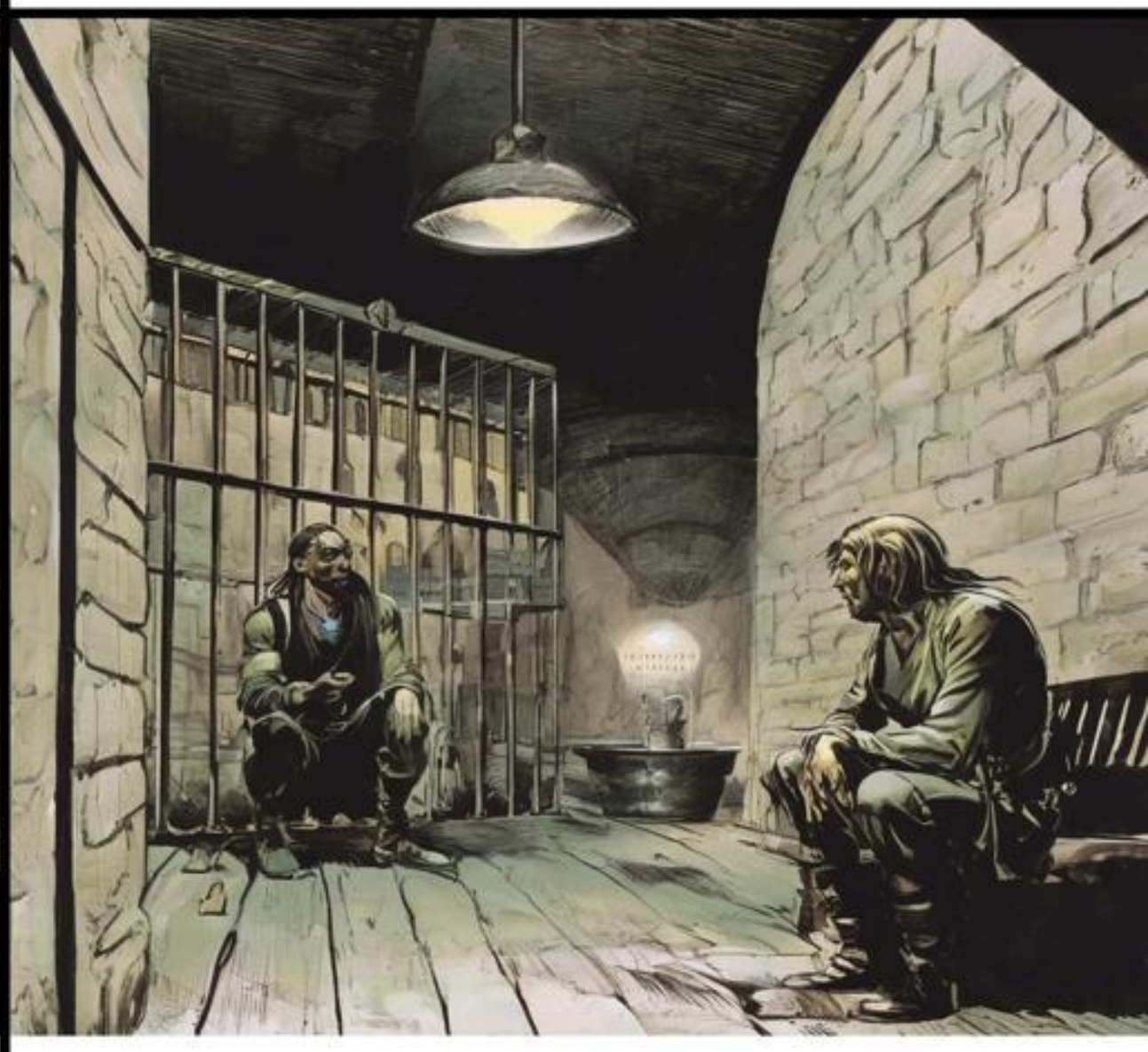
SCALY PETE WHISPERED 'COME ON, WHITEFUR, WAKE UP! WE NEED TO ESCAPE!'

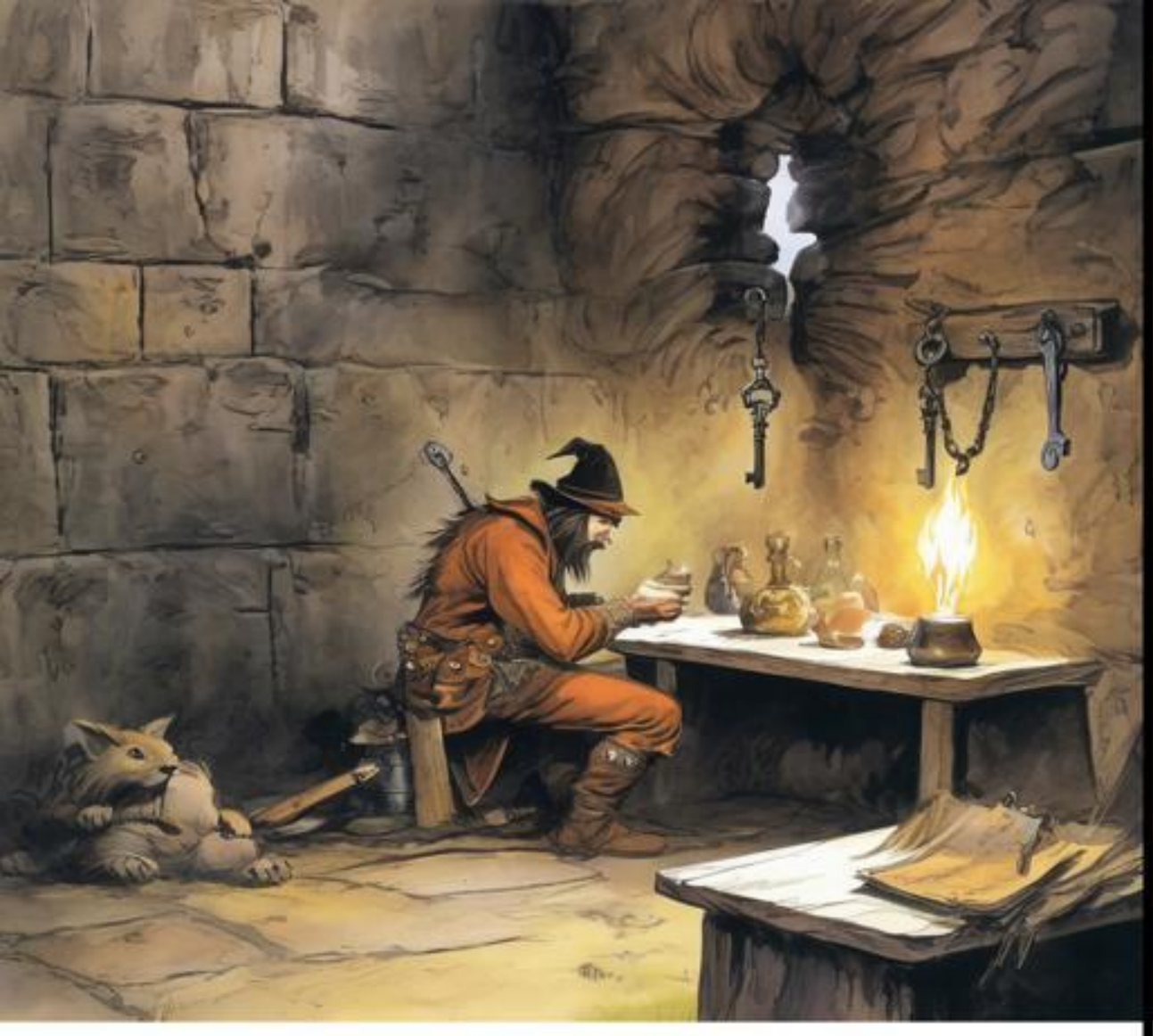


SCALY PETE: "UGH...WHAT'S THIS PLACE?"

"WHAT THE...?" SCALY PETE SAYS, STARING AT GNOME WHITEFUR WITH A MIXTURE OF SHOCK AND WORRY

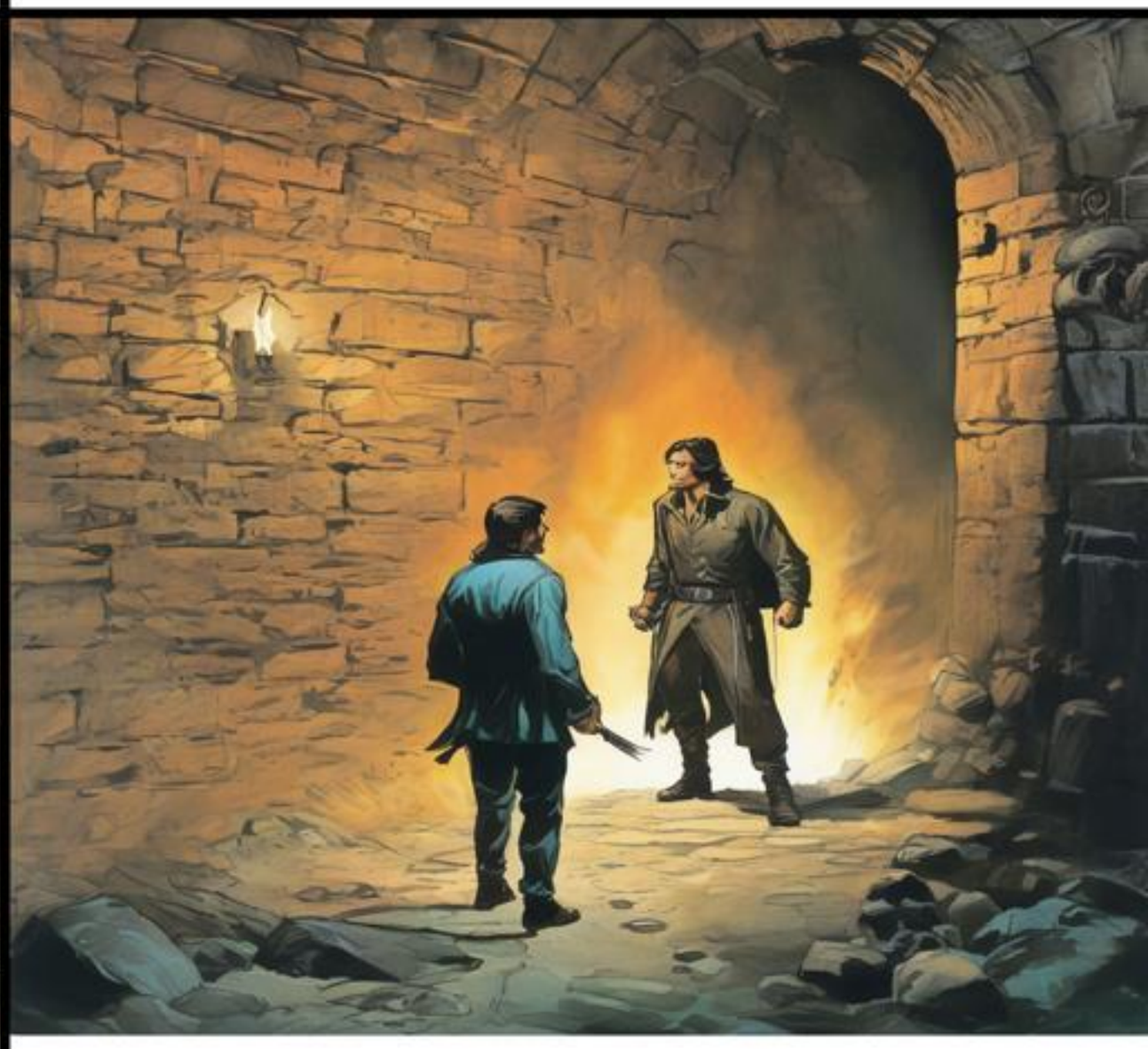
CAN YOU SEE THIS?!





"AND I'LL TRY AND GRAB HIM AND GET THE KEYS..."

THE WOOD ELF'S VOICE IS BARELY ABOVE A WHISPER AS HE TRIES TO KEEP UP THE RUSE.



THE MAN WHISPERS 'WHAT HAPPENED? WHAT?' AS HE SURVEYS SCALY PETE'S MOTIONLESS BODY

SCALY PETE: YOU CAN SLIP INTO THOSE CELLS UNNOTICED...

WHEN THE DOOR OPENS, I'LL BE RIGHT BEHIND IT.

"IT'S ALSO A HAY ROOF. WE CAN USE IT TO OUR ADVANTAGE."

"I'LL CLIMB UP AND GET IN ONE OF THOSE WOOD BEAMS", SCALY PETE WHISPERS

SCALY PETE MUTTERS TO HIMSELF, WEIGHING THE RISKS...

GET IT TO SCREAM AGAIN!

AND GOING, WHAT THE HELL IS GOING ON IN THERE???

'SUR.E...'

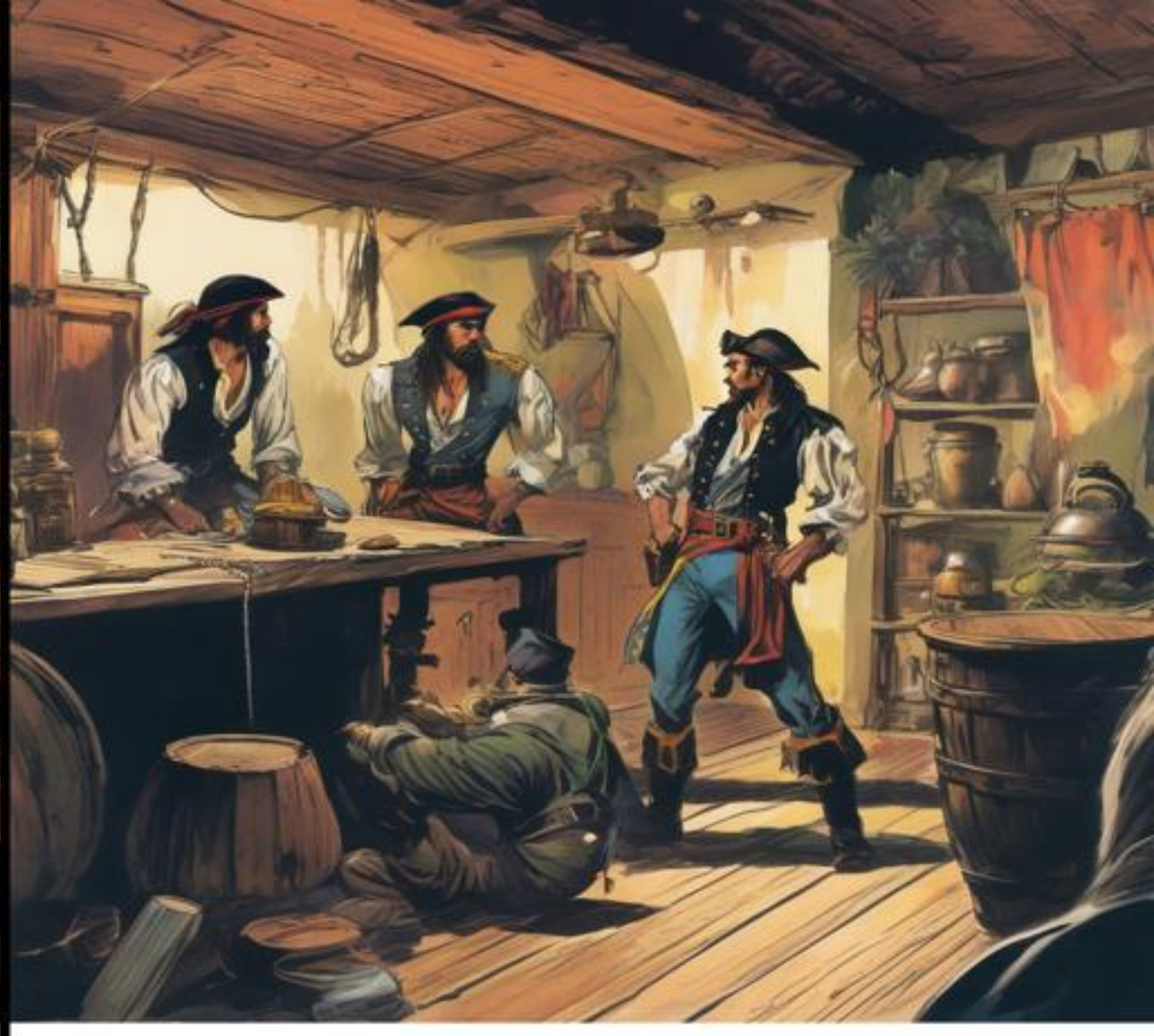
SILENCE IS GOLDEN... FOR NOW.

"NO MERCY..." SCALY PETE WHISPERS TO HIMSELF

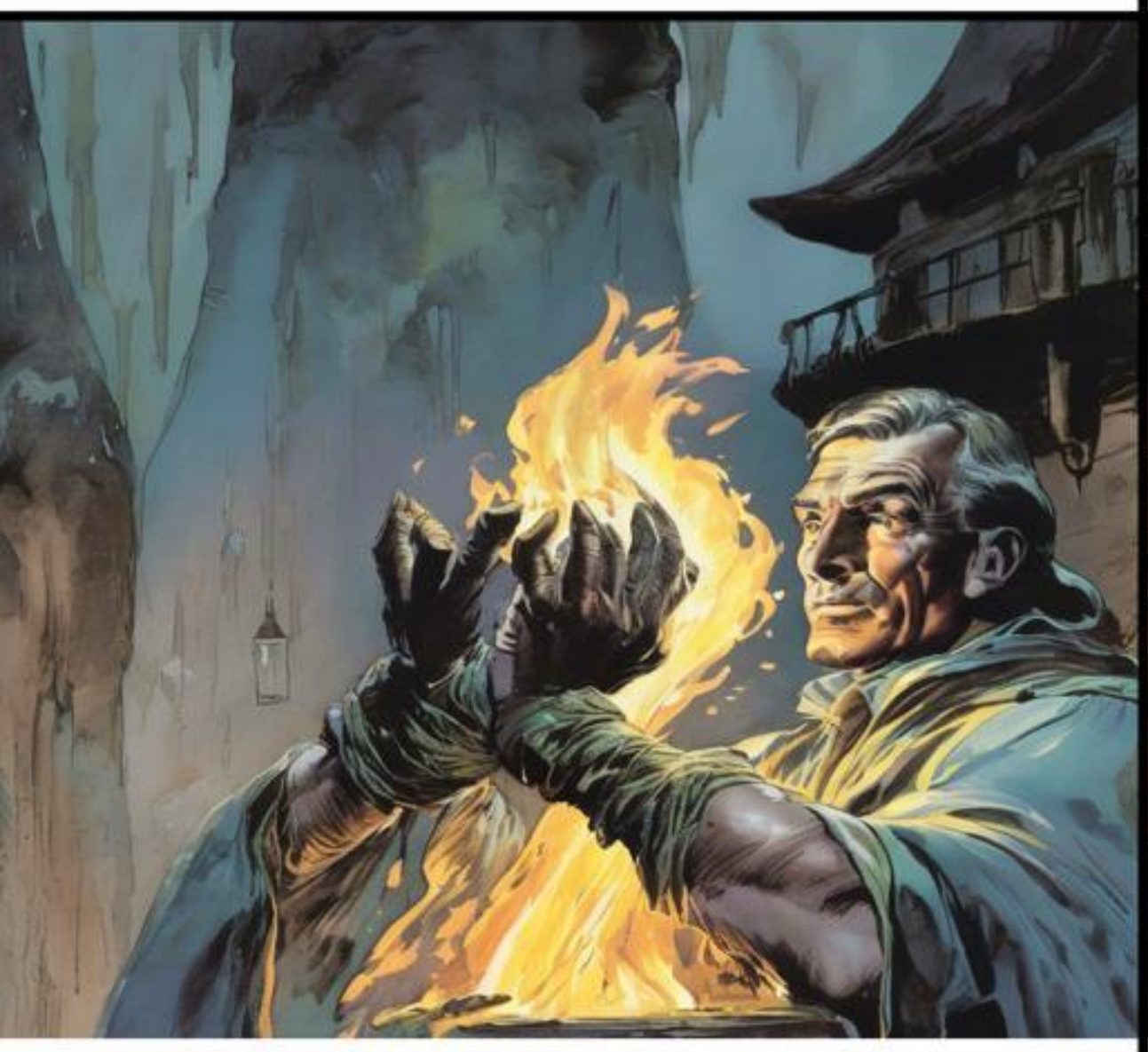
"MANY A PIRATE... HE'S HAD HIS THROAT SLIT BY THE GREAT G.NOME..."

SAILOR: 'AT LEAST TRY TO WEAR THEIR UNIFORMS...'

SCALY PETE CHECKS HIS REFLECTION IN A NEARBY MIRROR, ADJUSTING HIS CAP AND TRYING TO LOOK LIKE A REAL GUARD



SCALY PETE ADJUSTS HIS UNIFORM, MAKING SURE HE LOOKS LIKE A REAL GUARD

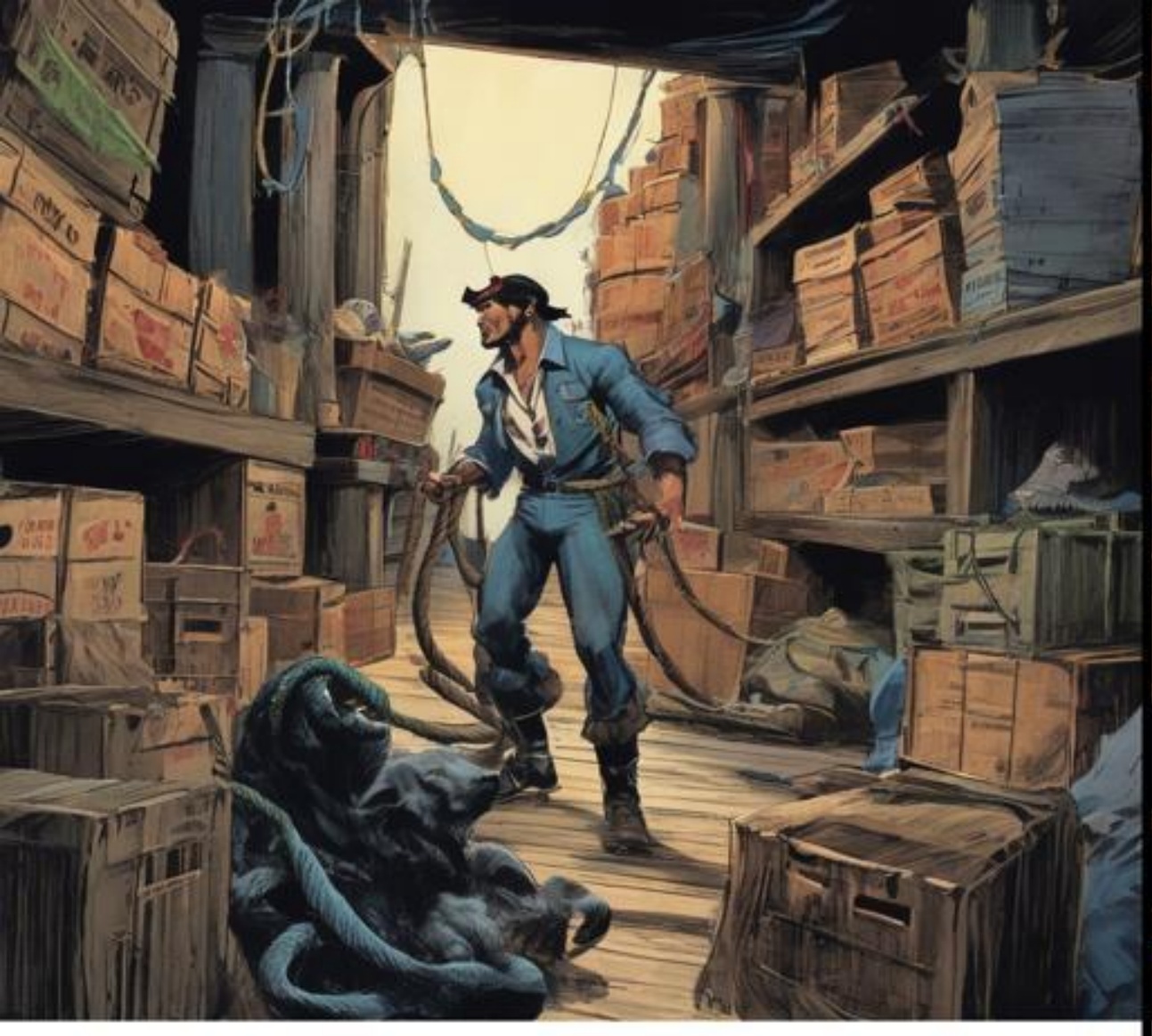


SILENCE. NO WORDS ARE SPOKEN AS SAILOR WORKS TO DISGUISE SCALY PETE.

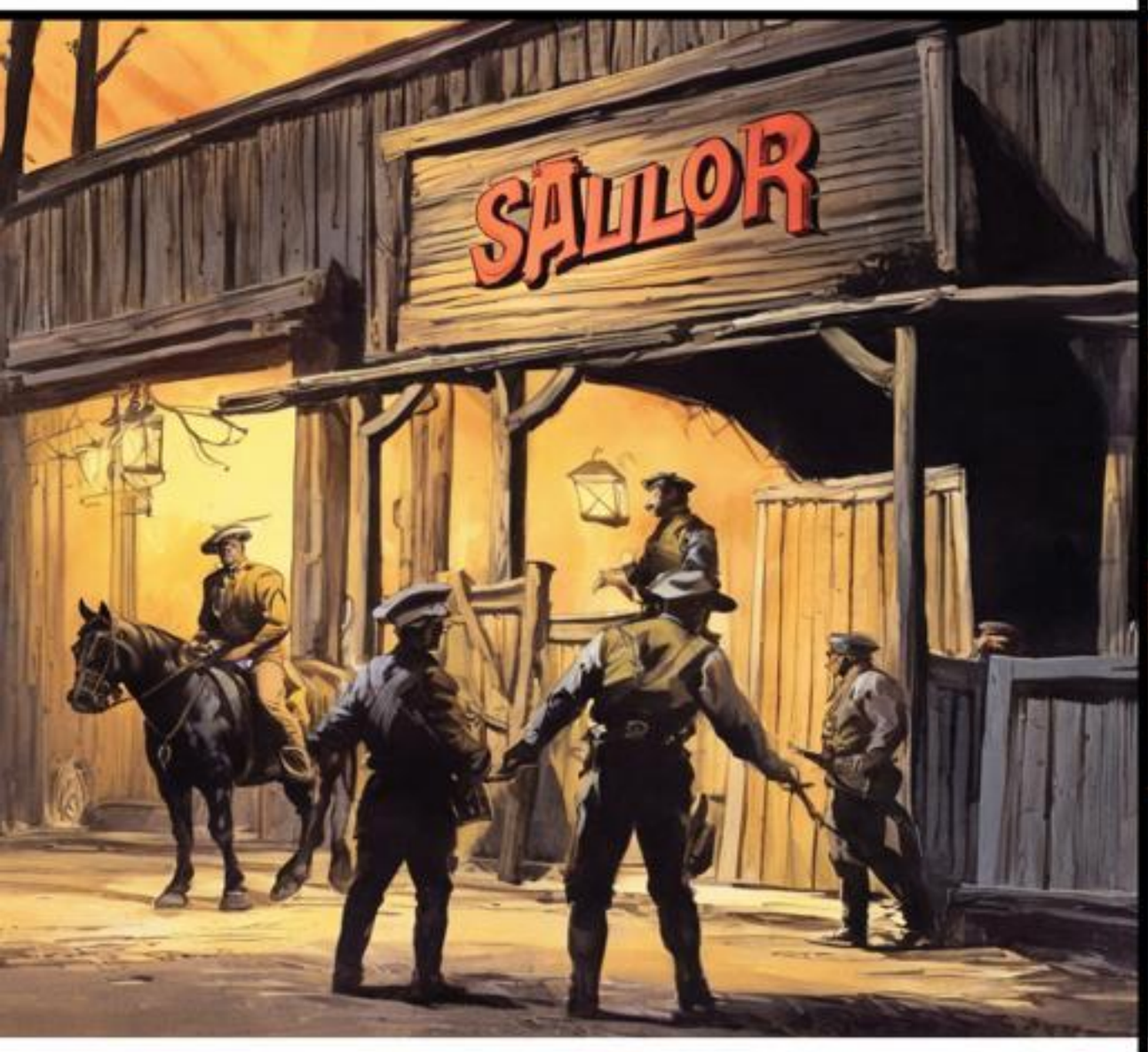
ARE YOU TRYING TO LEAVE THE TOWN OR FIND A PARTICULAR PLACE???

"...LET'S AT LEAST MAKE SURE WE MOVE AWAY FROM THIS PLACE BEFORE WE GO LOOKING FOR HORSES," SCALY PETE SAYS, EYEING THE SURROUNDING AREA.

"I'M BUSY... COME HERE, LIZARD BOY!"

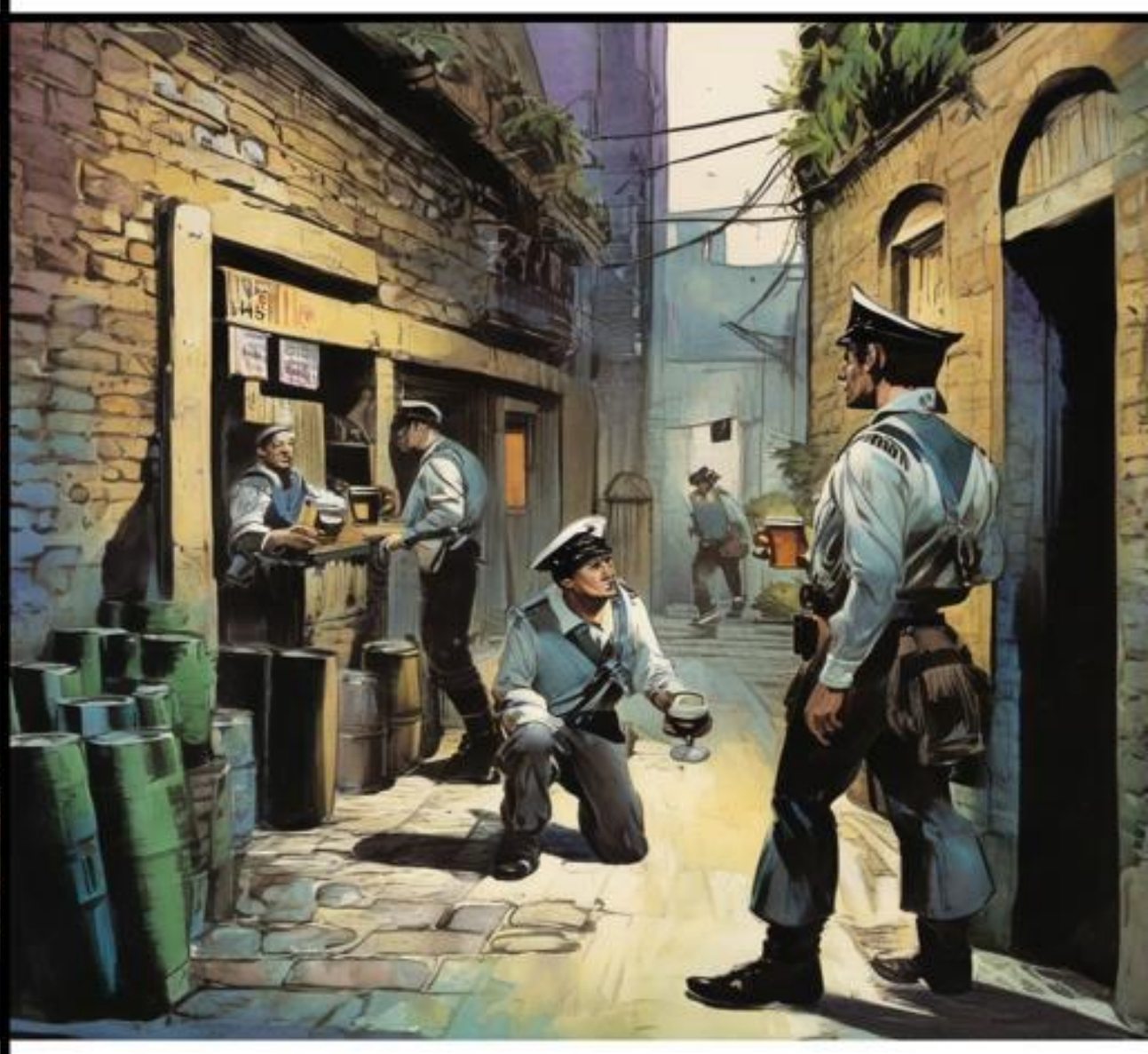


SAILOR: 'BUT GNOME'S STRAIGHT-TO-BUSINESS ATTITUDE. AND QUICK EXIT FROM ANY PARTICULAR CONVERSATION.'

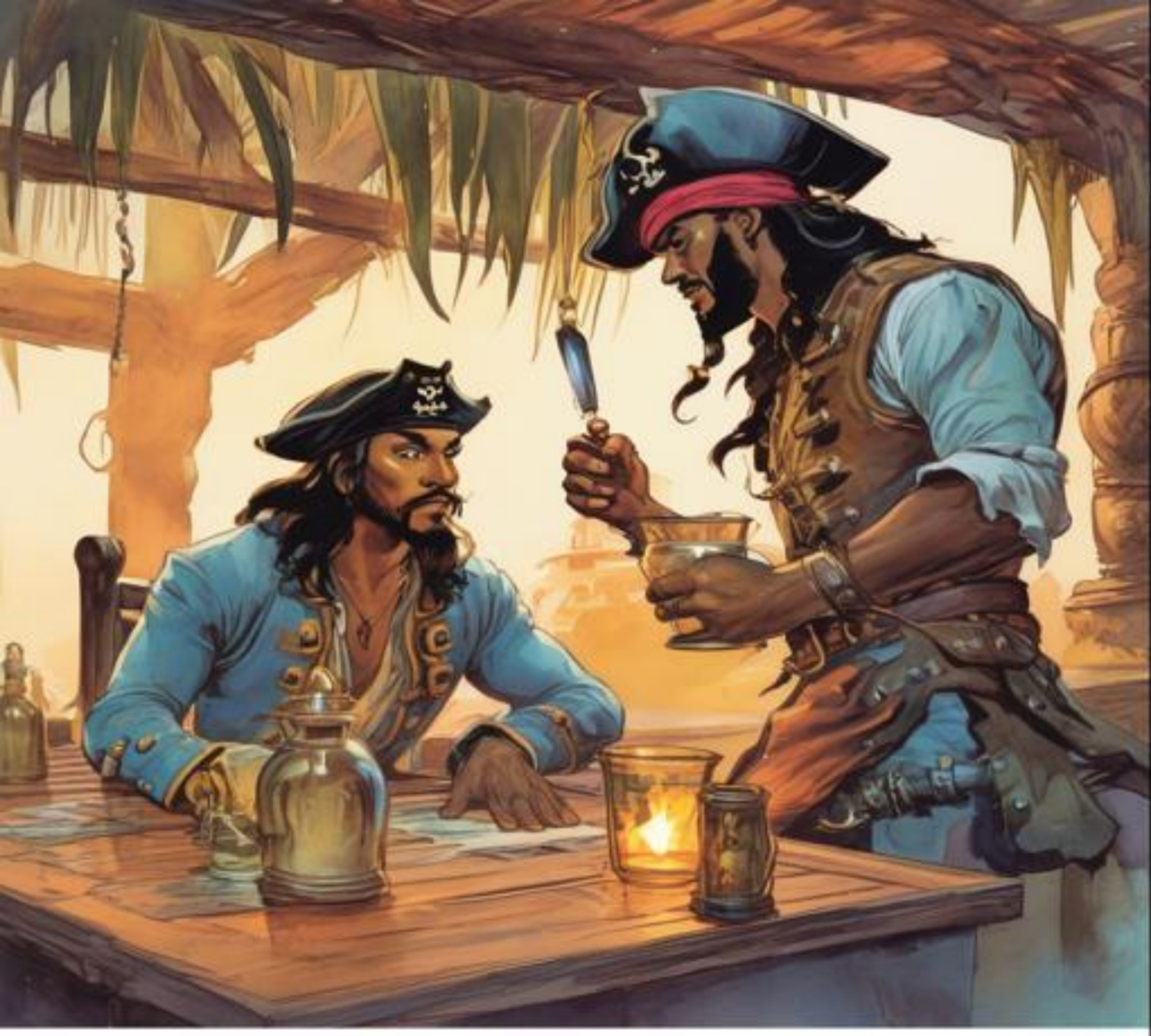


"WHY WOULD WE TAKE A PRISONER IN HERE? WE'LL STICK OUT LIKE SORE THUMBS!"

SAILOR: 'OF A LARGE BUILD THAT WOULD FIT YOU WELL ENOUGH... MAYBE A BIT SNUG...'

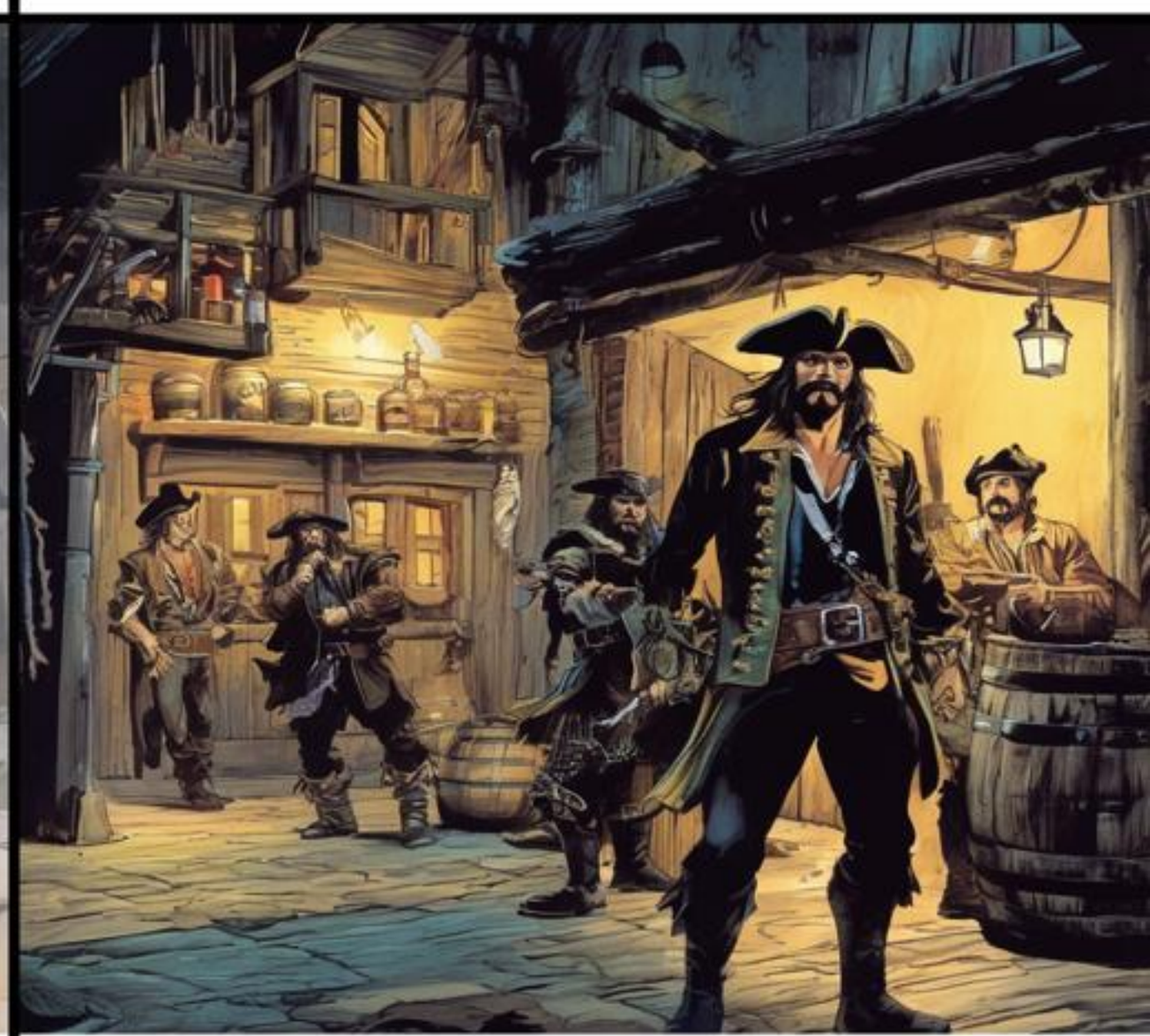


OBSERVING THEIR PATROL ROUTE...



SAILOR: 'WE COULD TAKE ONE AND DRINK. AND SLIP SOME IN IT...'

GREAT, NOW WE'VE FOUND A PIRATE BAR. JUST WHAT WE NEEDED.



SCALY PETE: "OR KILL HIM. GET HIS SHIT, WHATEVER IT TAKES."

"HE'S CLEARLY MAKING HIS ROUNDS" SCALY PETE WHISPERS, EYES FIXED ON THE GUARD.

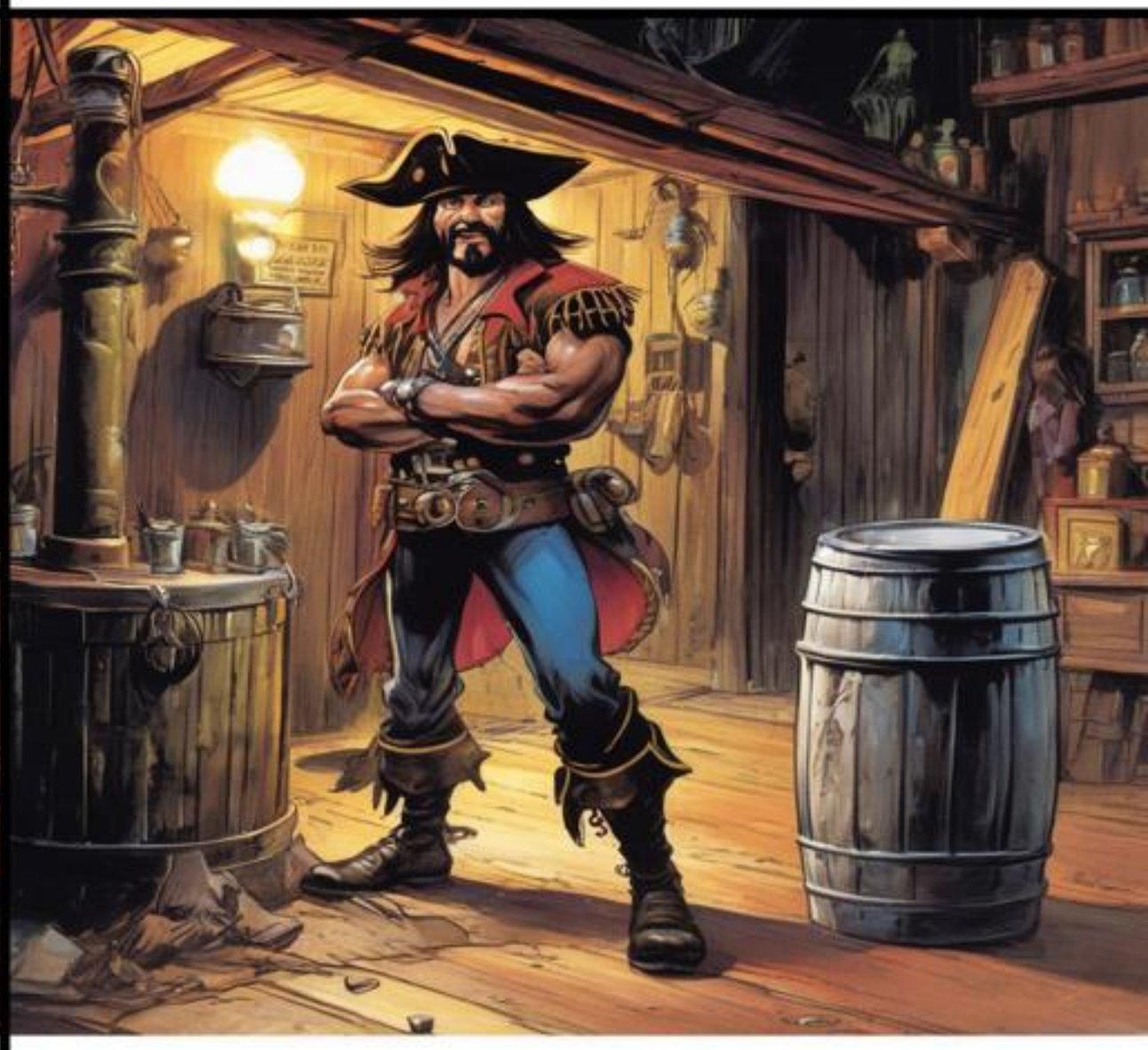
SCALY PETE: 'AND I MAKE MY WAY..'

SCALY PETE: 'IT IS A THING... I'M AN AMAZING FIGHTER, BUT STEALTH ISN'T MY STRONGEST POINT.'

"YOU COULD HAVE JUST SAID THAT, YOU KNOW... YOU'RE NOT EXACTLY STEALTHY, PETE."

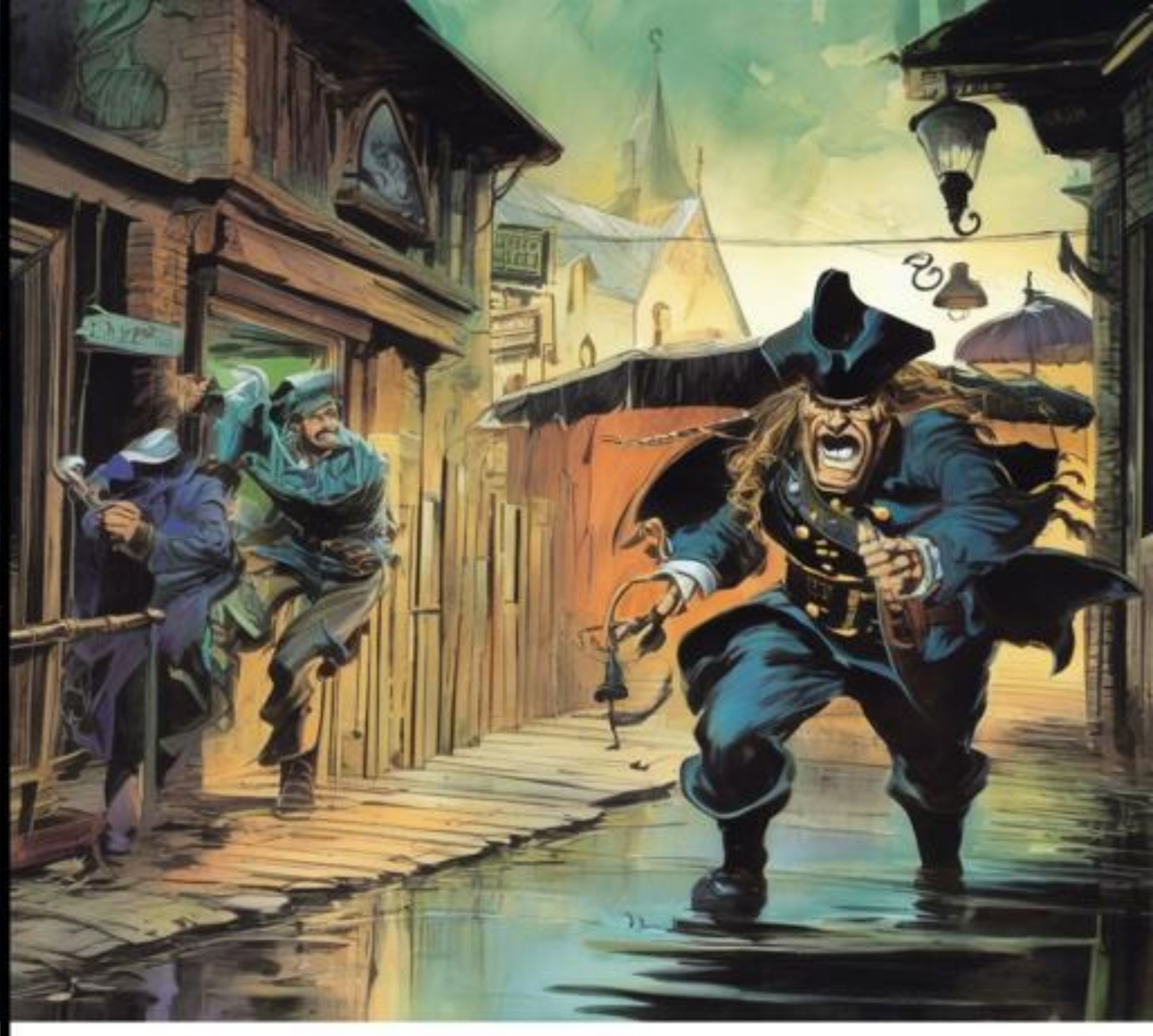
"AND ALL OF A SUDDEN... WE GOT CAUGHT BY THOSE FLYING SERPENTS!"

"YOU TOLD ME MY TAIL WAS FAT WHEN I TRIED TO PUT ON THAT SPANGLY JUMPSUIT..."



SCALY PETE: 'HEY, COME ON, I'M A PROFESSIONAL... I MEAN, UH...'

SCALY PETE: "WHY DO YOU HAVE TO DO ME LIKE THAT NOW?"

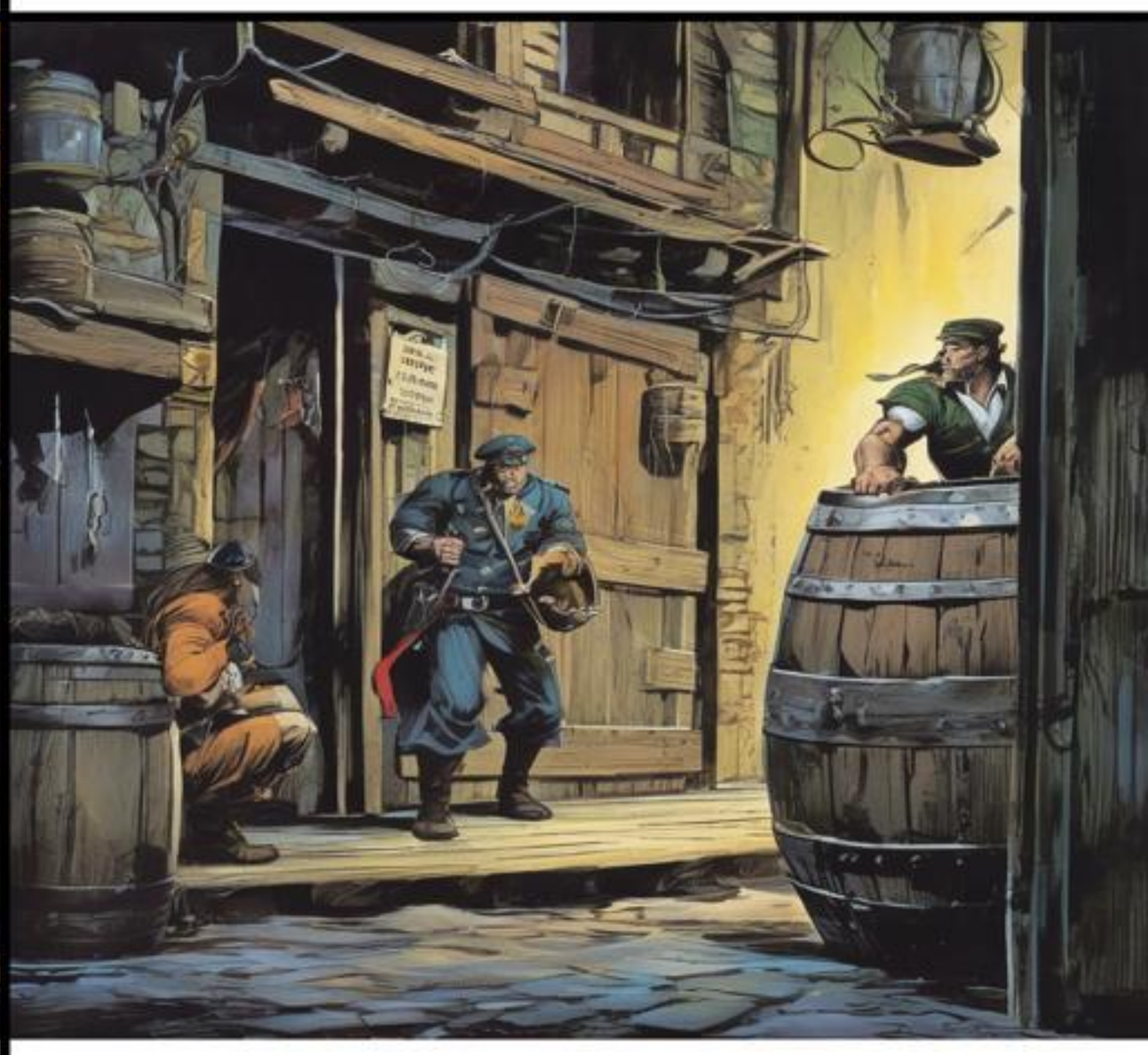


PETE: 'COME ON, SAILOR! WE CAN SNEAK IN TOGETHER. I'VE GOT A PLAN.'

SCALY PETE LEANS IN, WHISPERING, 'HE'S CLEARLY HALF DRUNK, TAKING A PISS... NOT PAYING ATTENTION WHATEVER.'

SCALY PETE: "I'M NOT SURE WHICH ONE IS THE RIGHT DOOR. THIS HALF-MOON SYMBOL LOOKS IMPORTANT..."

SCALY PETE: "IT'S OFF ONE SIDE OF THE BARN. WHICH IS MOSTLY WIDE."



SCALY PETE: 'LOOKS LIKE OUR ONLY WAY IN.'

COME ON OVER... (SAILOR WHISPERS, AS HE SIGNALS FOR SCALY PETE TO FOLLOW)

"OKAY, I'VE GOT EYES ON THE CORNER. NOW IT'S YOUR TURN TO SNEAK PAST."

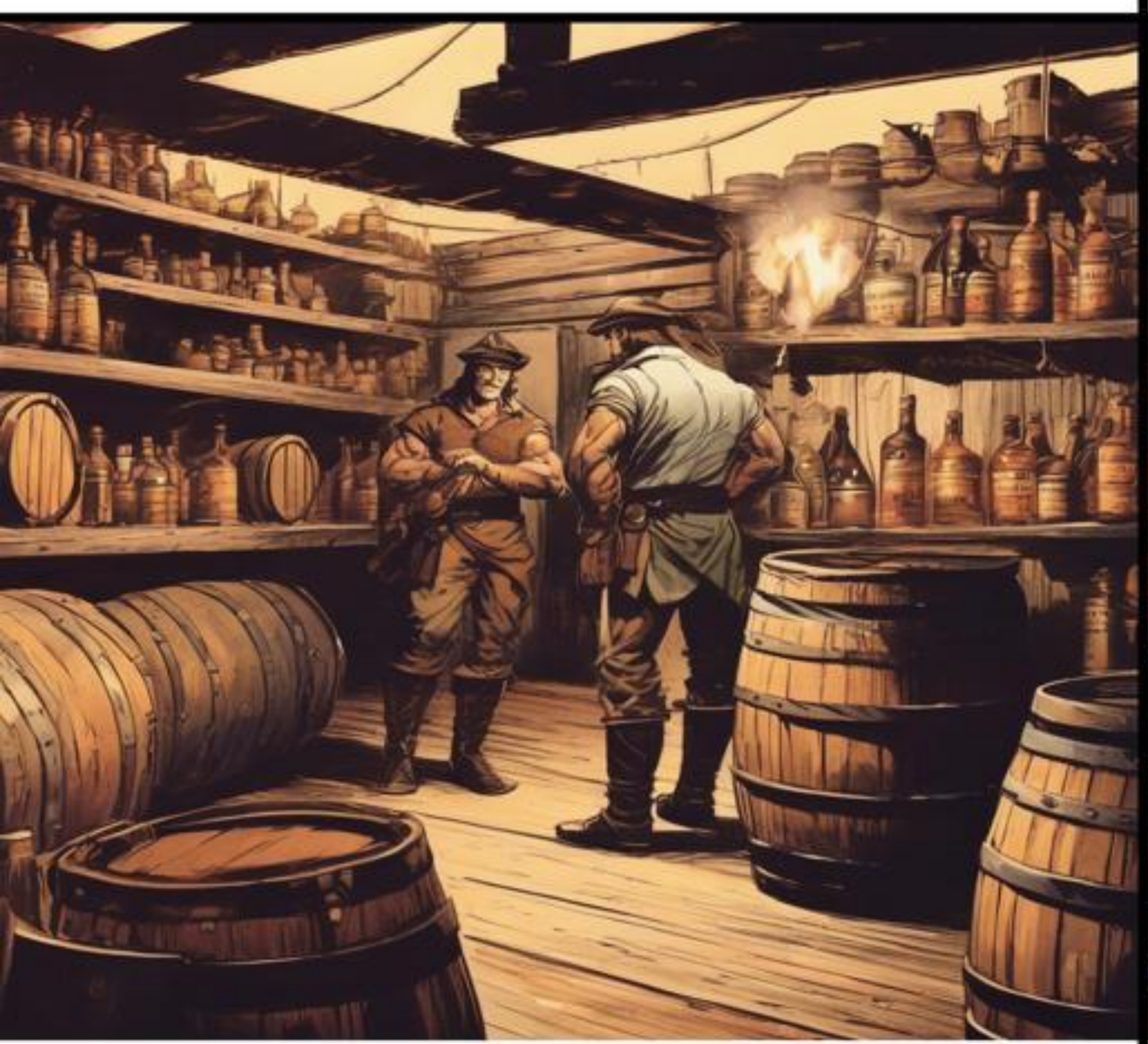
SCALY PETE: 'WOULD THIS GIVE ME AN EDGE? A BIT MORE STEALTHINESS?'

SAILOR: 'YEAH... YOU'D HAVE TO ROLL TWICE BECAUSE OF YOUR ARMOR.'

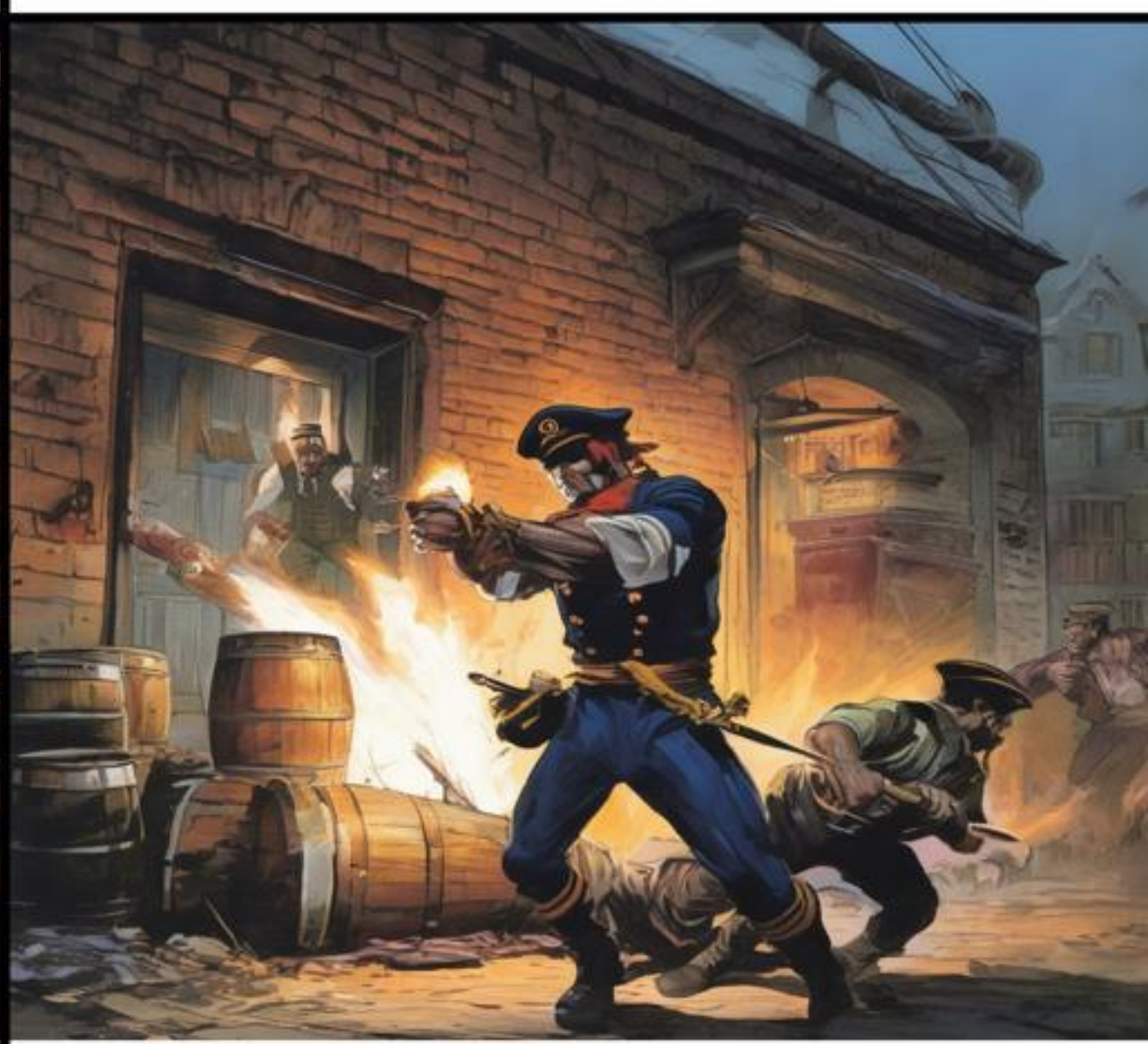
"IT IS..." SCALY PETE WHISPERS TO SAILOR, AS HE PREPARES TO MAKE HIS MOVE.

"IT WOULD BE 19... THE GUARDS ARE ALSO NOT PAYING ATTENTION" SAILOR SAYS QUIETLY TO SCALY PETE, AS HE READIES HIMSELF FOR A STEALTHY ENTRY

SAILOR: 'NOT SO UNSTEALTHY NOW, EH?'



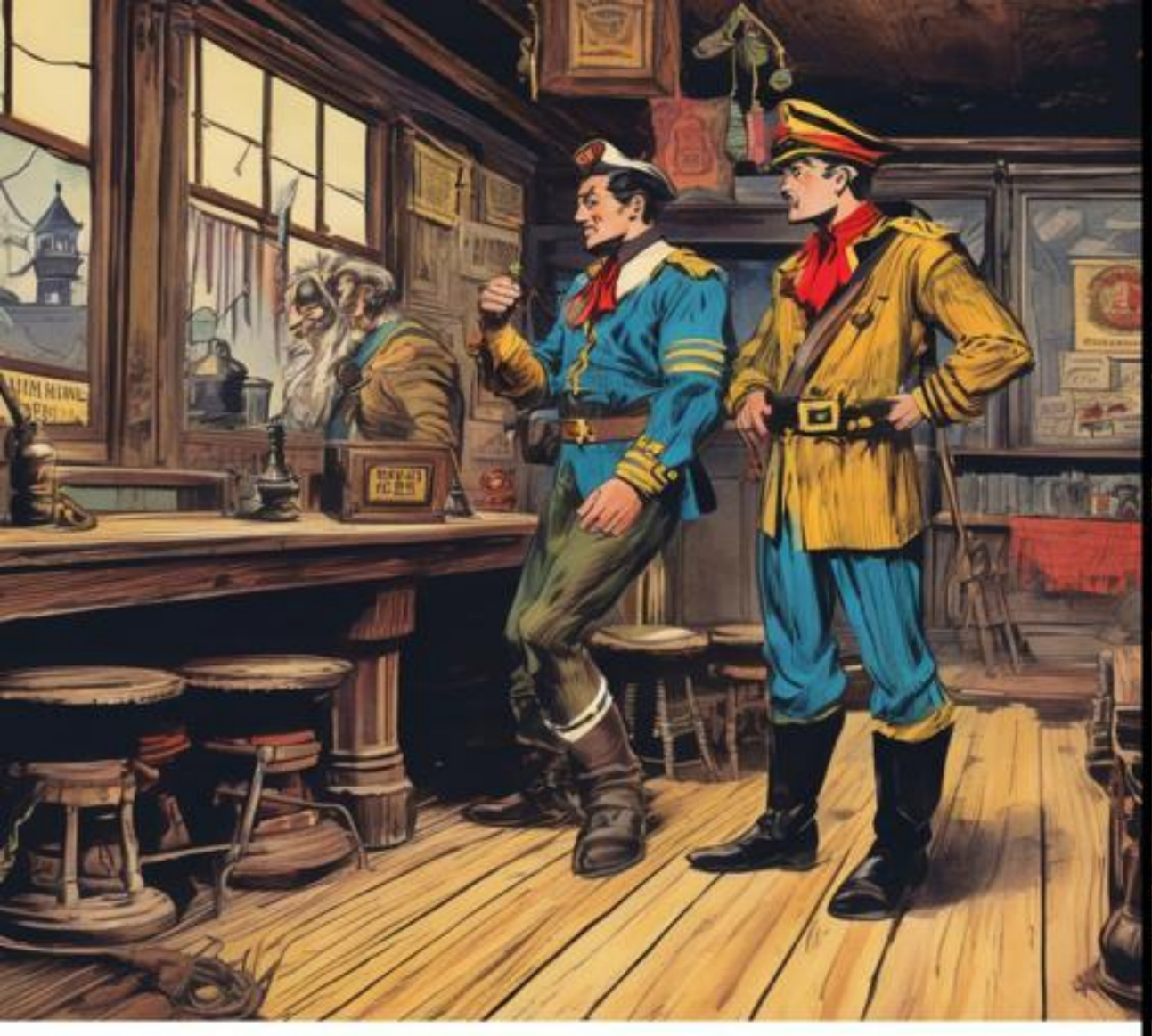
HIDE HIM QUICKLY! WE CAN'T LEAVE A DEAD PIRATE OUT IN PLAIN SIGHT!



"YEAH... OKAY, WHICH WAY DO WE GO NOW?"

SCALY PETE: 'WE NEED TO GET SOME HORSES... BUT THERE WILL BE GUARDS WATCHING THE STABLES'

SCALY PETE'S VOICE WHISPERS: 'THAT SHOULD DO IT...'



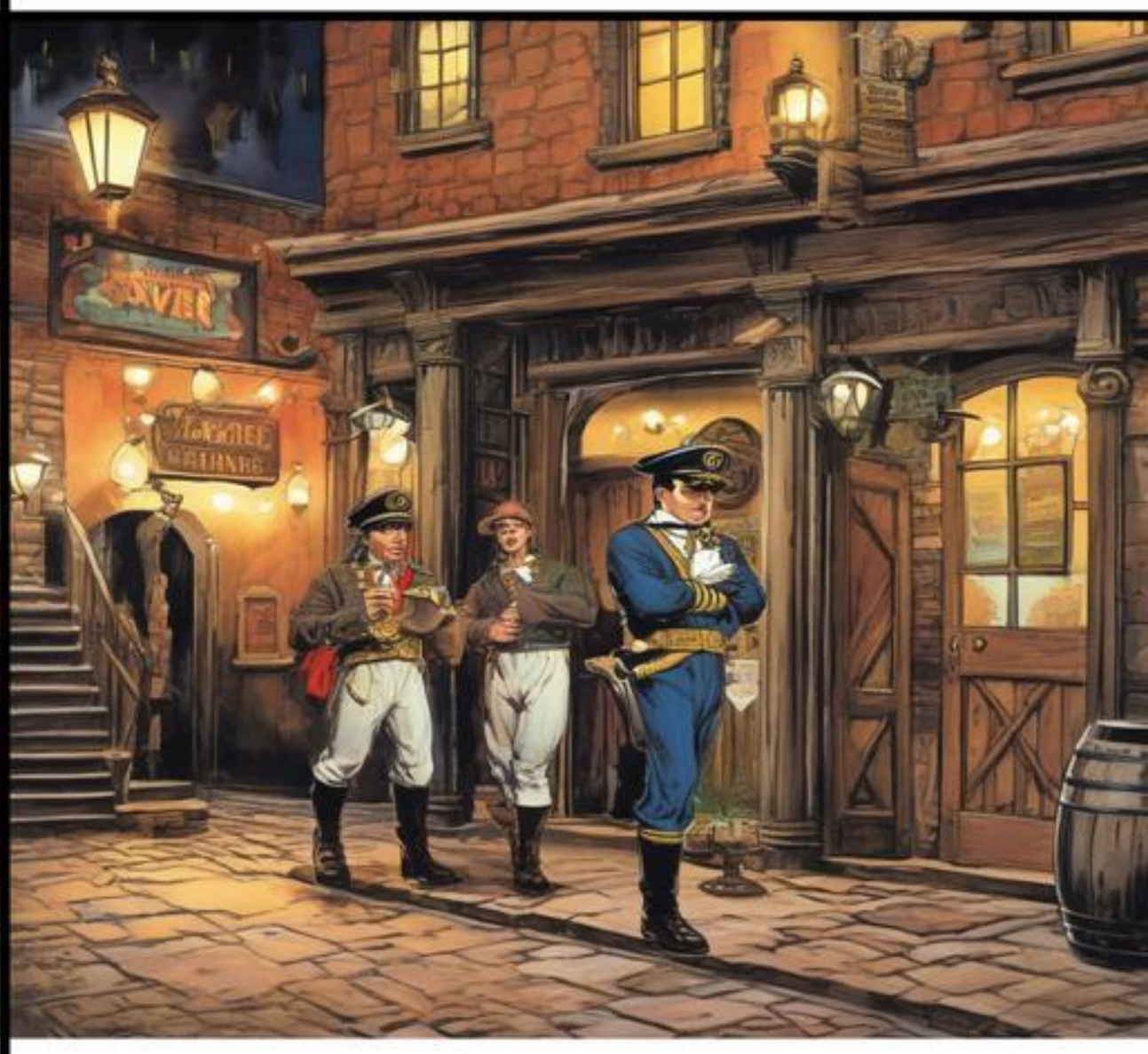
THE DIM LIGHT OF THE TAVERN HIGHLIGHTED THE FAKE WINDOWS, WHICH SEEMED ALMOST OUT OF PLACE AMONG THE ANCIENT DECORATIONS.

SCALY PETE GENTLY PUSHES THE FAKE WINDOW PANEL, SURPRISED TO FIND IT SWINGS OPEN

"THE STABLE... WHAT SITUATION??"

SCALY PETE: 'WE'LL NEED TO PASS THE GUARD STANDING WATCH AT THE BACK DOOR.'

SAILOR: 'WHAT WAS THE NAME OF THE BOAT...?'



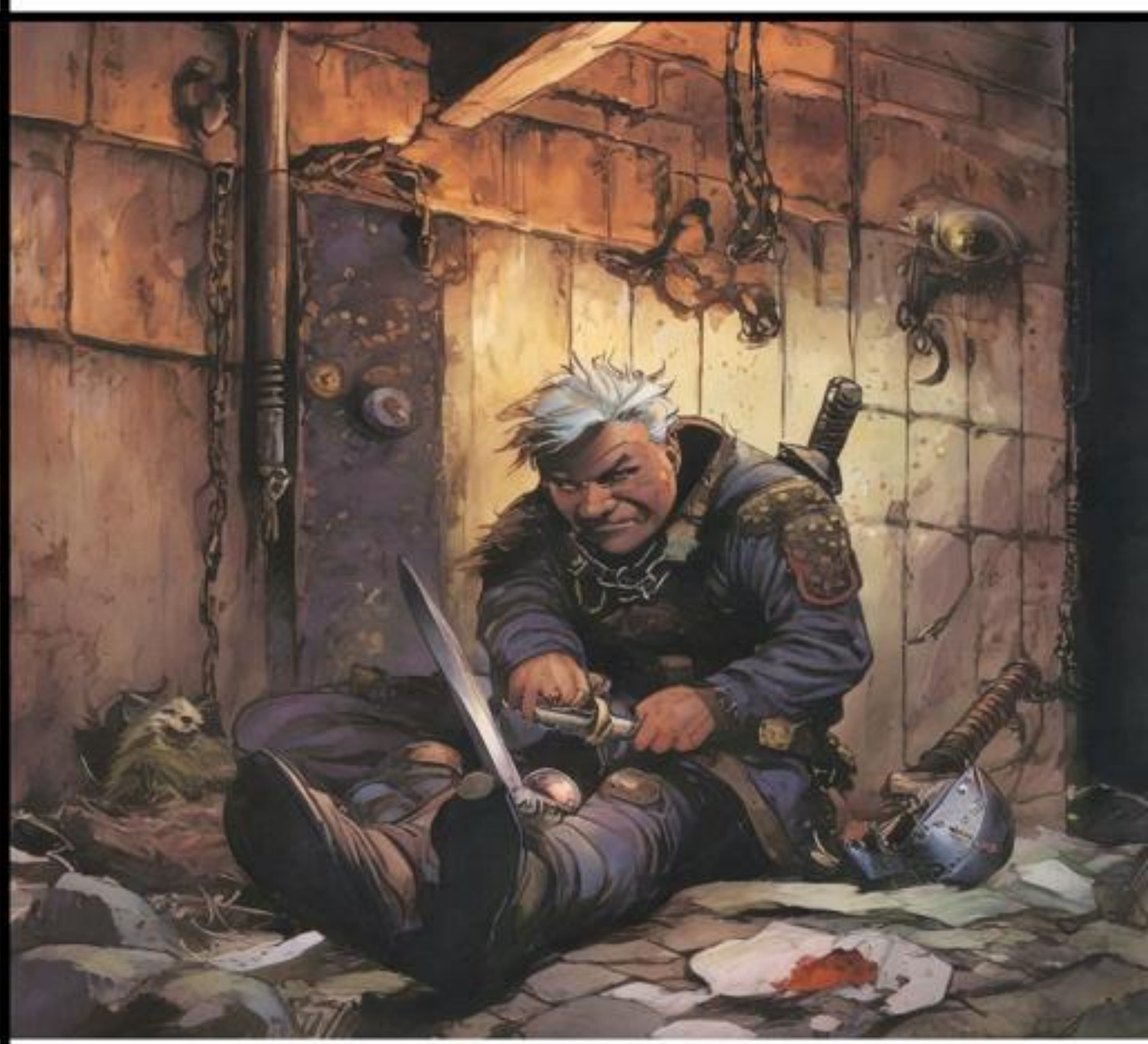
HEY, YOU, WAKE UP! - THE MAN

SCALY PETE'S ANKLE SLIPS THROUGH THE FENCE, LEAVING HIM HALF-EXPOSED

THE SCRAPE OF METAL ON STONE ECHOES THROUGH THE CORRIDOR AS SCALY PETE'S FOOT IS PULLED FREE

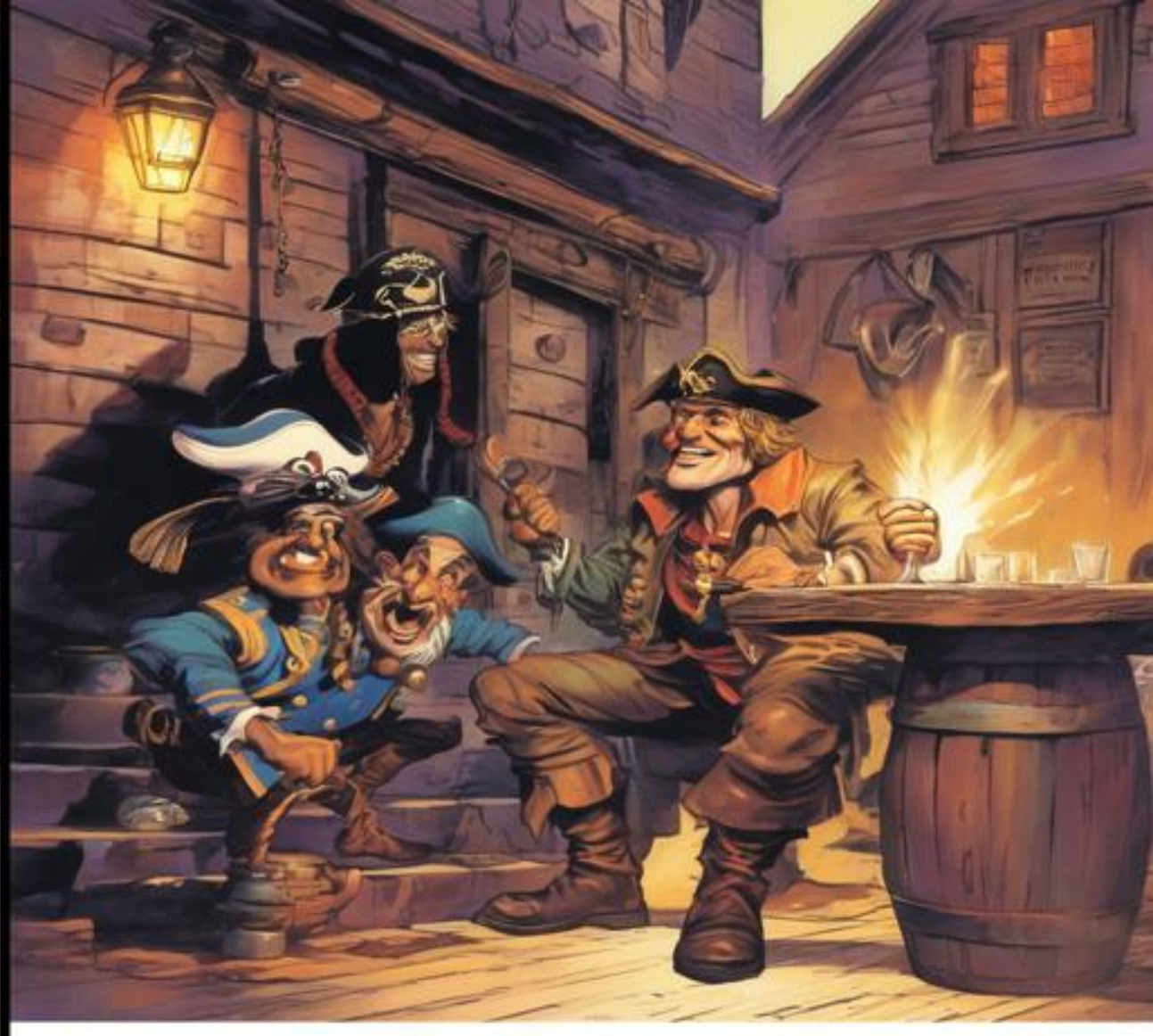
YOU CAN SEE... HIS OTHER HAND IS REACHING FOR A DAGGER...

BANG! GNOME WHITEFUR YELPS IN PAIN AS SCALY PETE FRANTICALLY TRIES TO GET HIM FREE.



"YOU'RE GOING TO BE OKAY! JUST HOLD ON..."

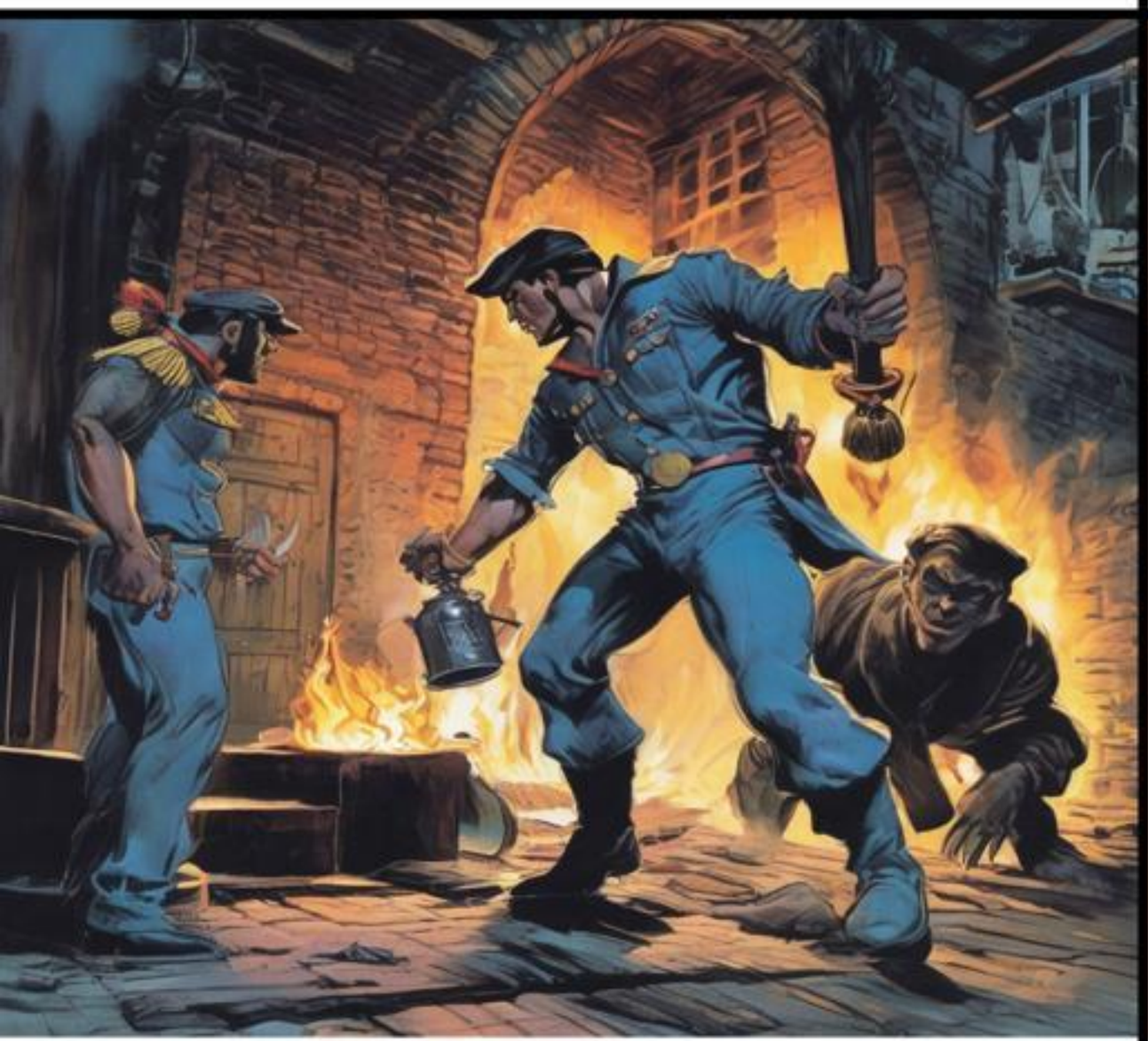
'WE'RE DOING A THING... WE NEED TO GET OUT OF HERE NOW!'



"SHH, KEEP MOVING" SCALY PETE WHISPERS URGENTLY TO SAILOR, HIS EYES DARTING TOWARDS THE WAITING PIRATE.

"AH, LOOKS LIKE HE WAS WAITING FOR THE BIG MAN.." SAILOR WHISPERS, TRYING TO KEEP A STRAIGHT FACE

"YOU'RE PRETTY EASY TO BE MISTAKEN FOR... A COMMON PIRATE, BUT YOU!"



YOU'RE NOT JUST A PIRATE, YOU'RE... A LARGE MAN WITH A TAIL?

SAILOR: 'WE HAVE TO KEEP MOVING, WE CAN'T LET THEM CATCH US AGAIN!'

SAILOR: (WHISPERING) WE'RE CLEAR, SCALY PETE. KEEP MOVING.

BIG CHAR... ABOUT SIX FOOT TALL... BUT I JUST HEARD HIM DROPPING HIS GUT...

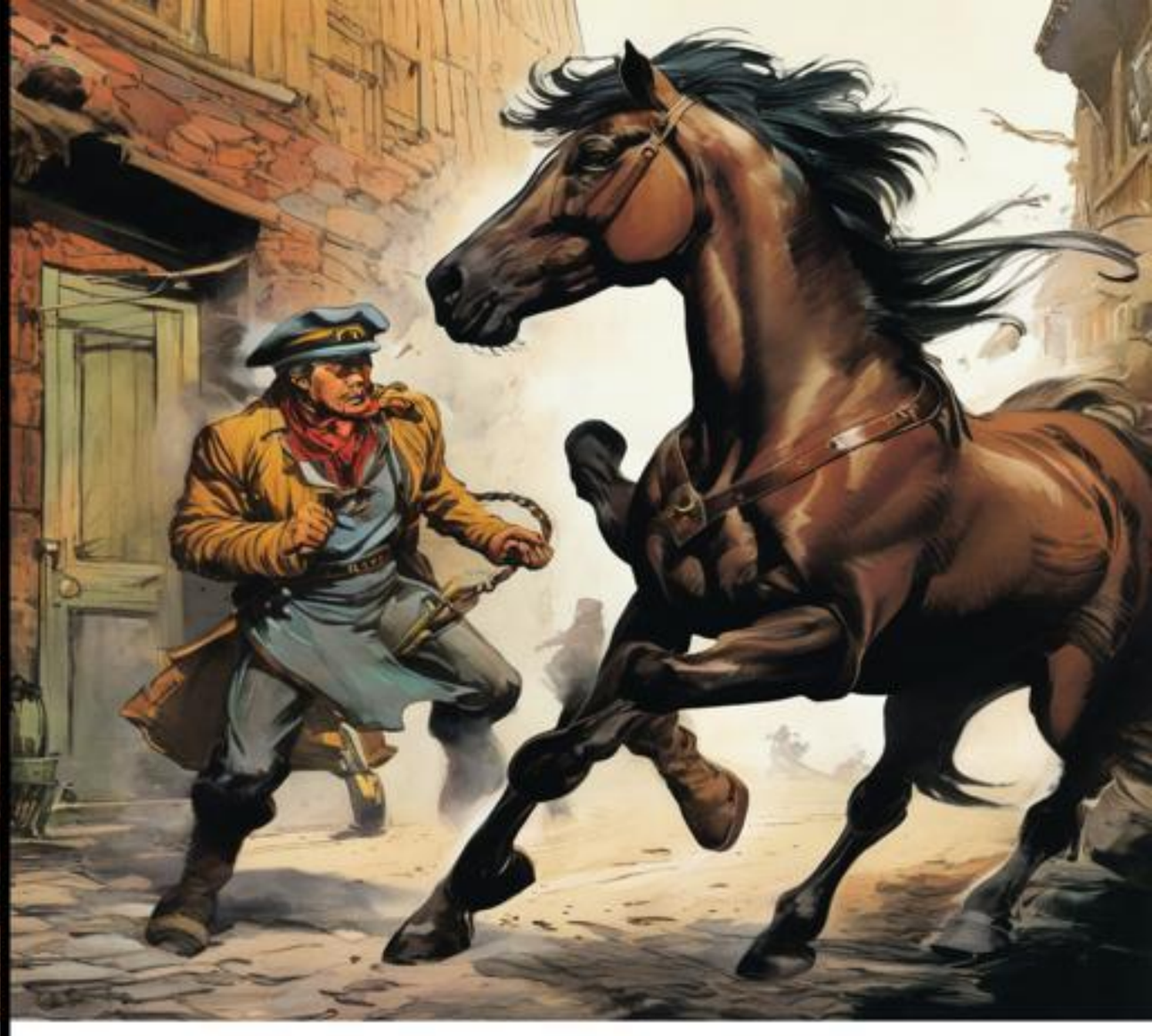
THE SMELL WAS BAD... THE SMELL WAS BAD...

FOUL-SMELLING DRAGON FLATULENCE ENGULFS THE PAIR

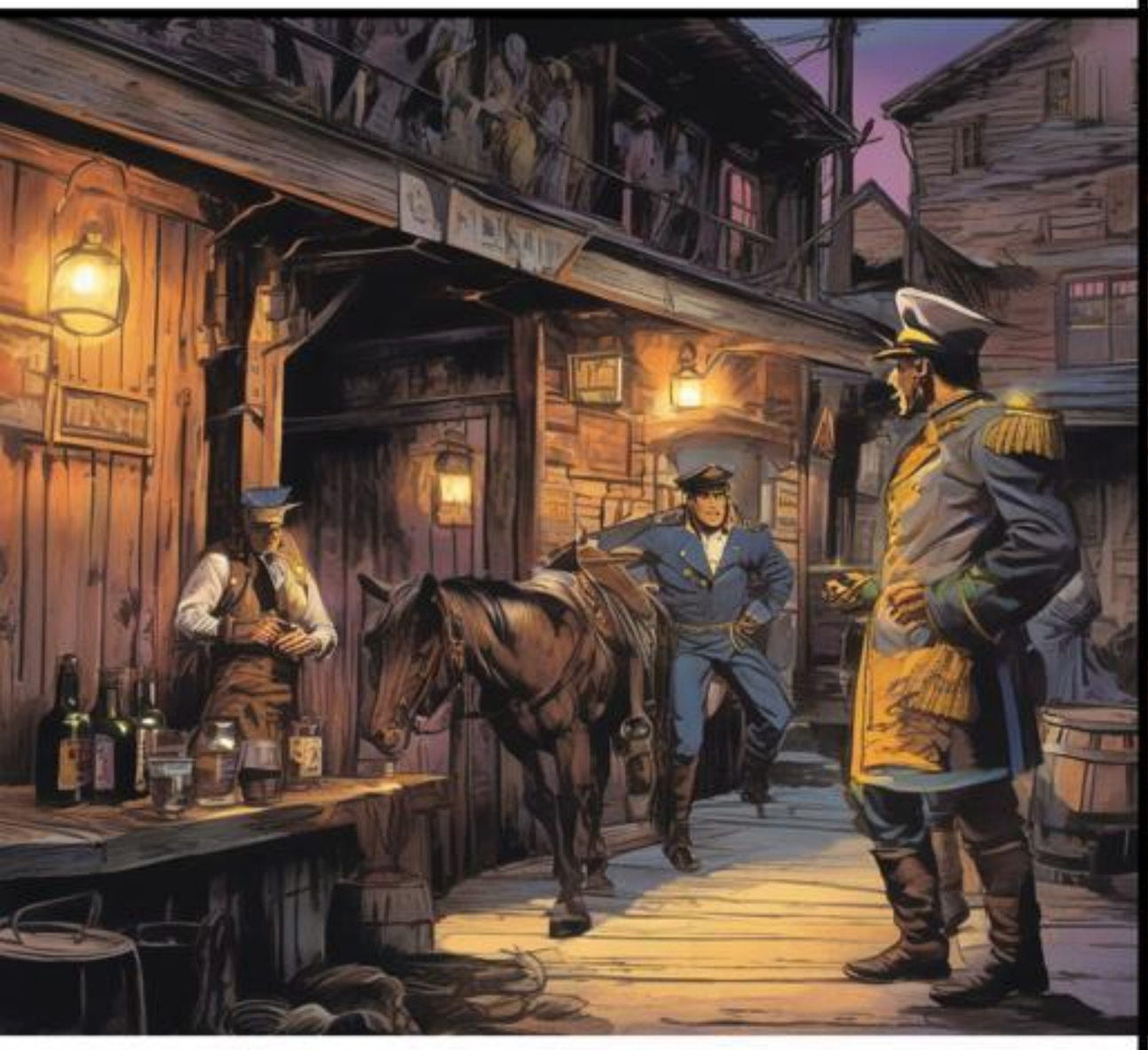
"AND YOU MANAGED TO JUST SORT OF CAROUSE THROUGH THE GROUP OF SAILORS OVER TO THE STABLE," SAILOR SAYS, TRYING TO REASSURE SCALY PETE.

"YOU'VE BLENDED IN WITH THE CROWD. DON'T WORRY. WE'RE ALMOST OUT OF HERE."

"ARE THEY SAD?DLED???" SCALY PETE ASKS, STILL SHAKEN BY THE DRAGON'S BLAST



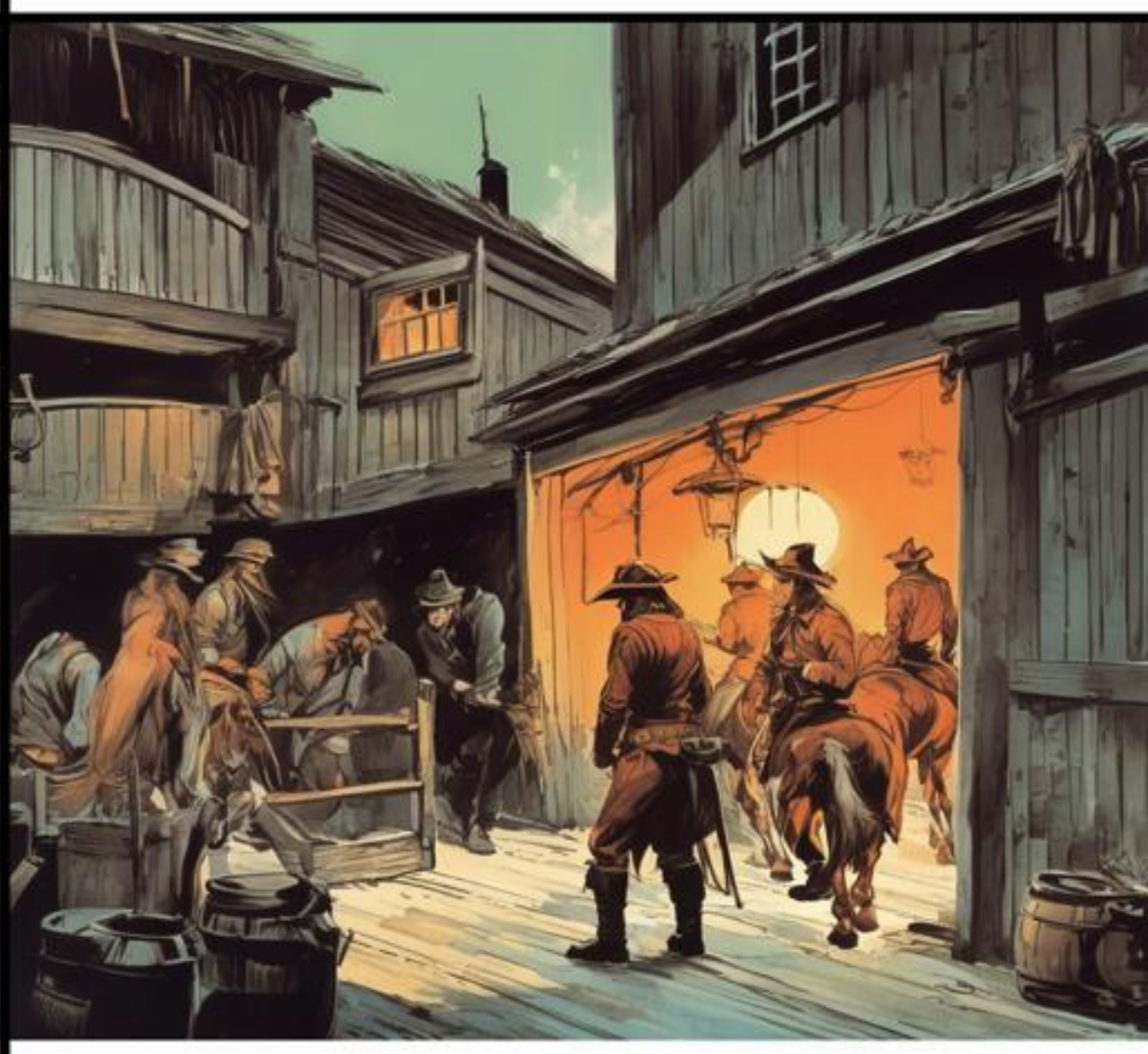
"THERE'S A FEW OPTIONS... WE COULD UNDO ALL THE HORSES, OR WE JUST GRAB TWO AND MAKE OUR ESCAPE."



SAILOR: 'THE SHORT, THE HORSES ARE NEEDED AT THE SHIR..'

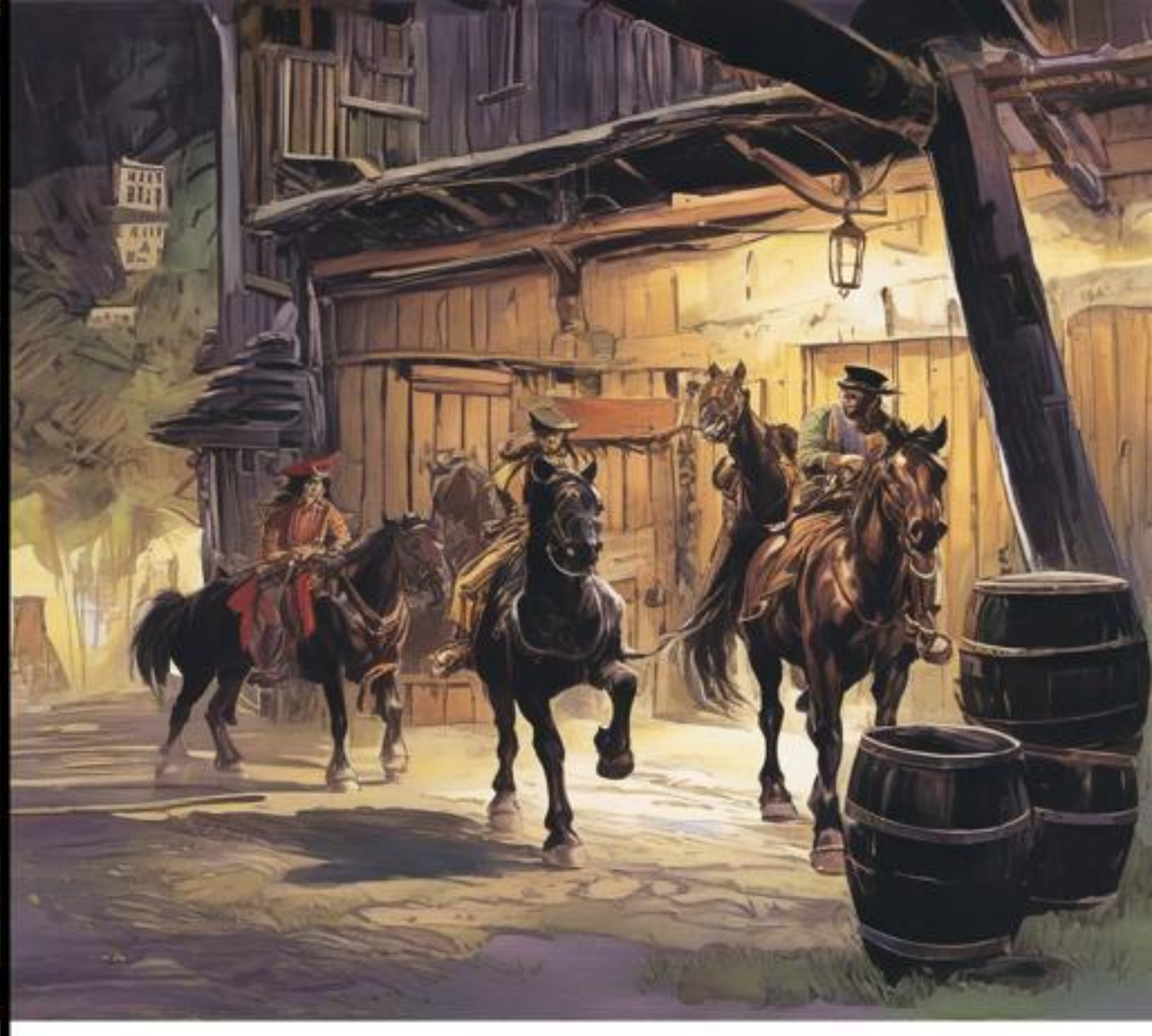
"AND JUST RIDE OUT THE DOOR..."

SAILOR: 'JUST MOUNT THEM SLOWLY WE DON'T WANT TO DRAW ATTENTION!'

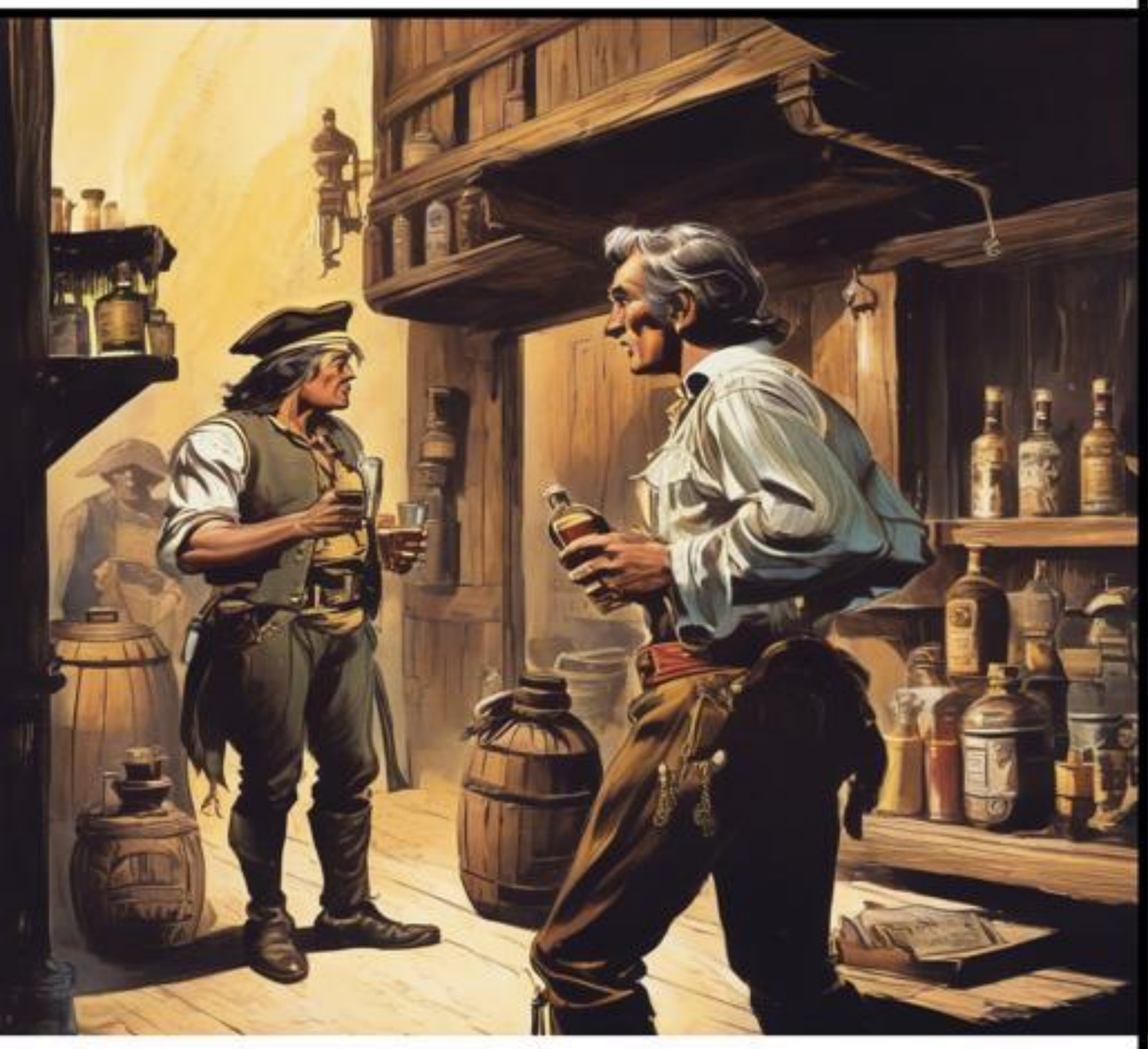


'WHAT ARE YOU GUYS OFF TO???' A PASSERBY ASKS, OBLIVIOUS TO SCALY PETE'S AND SAILOR'S PLAN

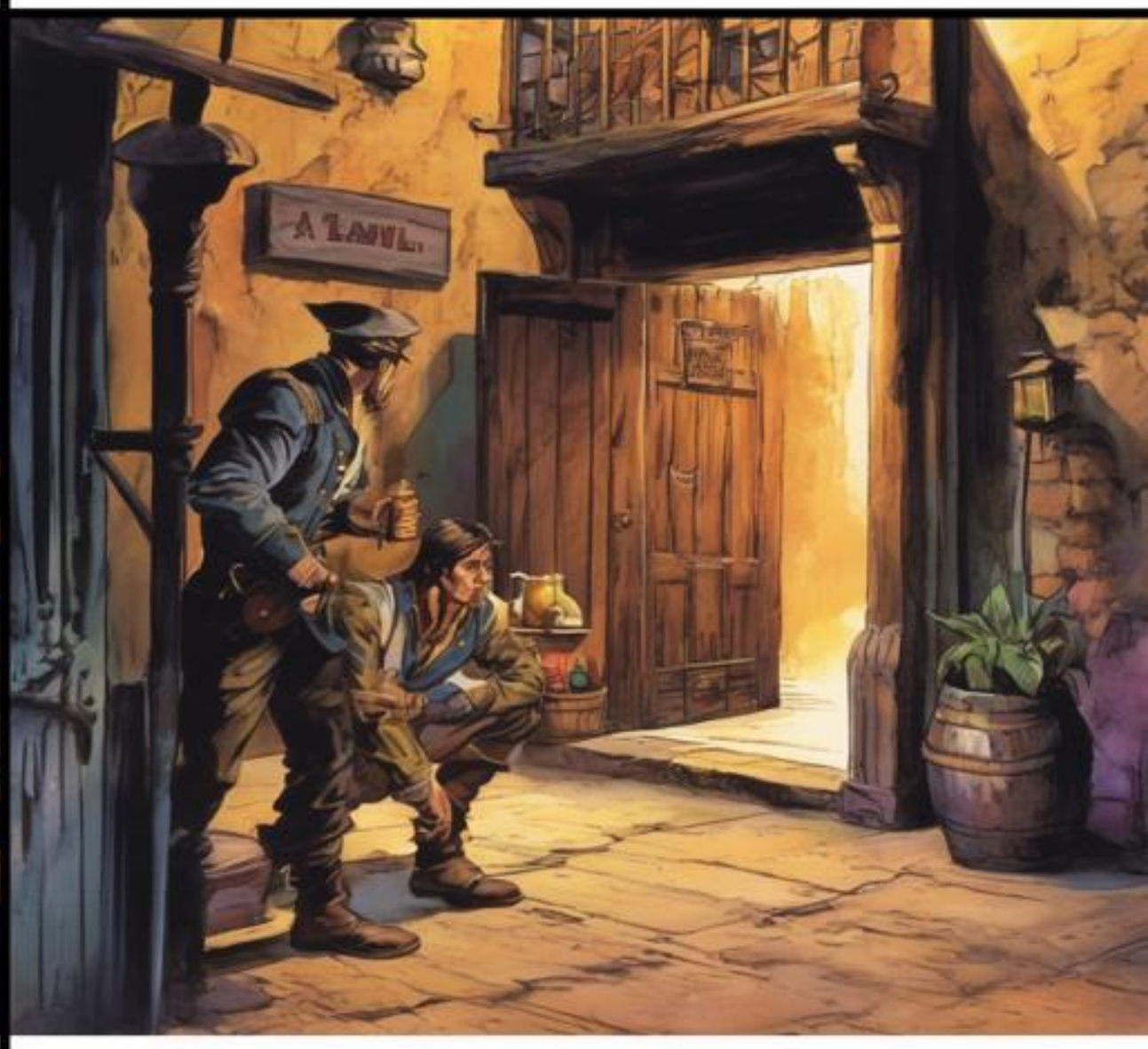
WE HAVE TO GET OUT OF HERE NOW, BEFORE ANYONE REALIZES WE TOOK THE HORSES.



'IF YOU GUYS ARE HEADING OVER THERE, COULD YOU BRING SOME OF THAT RUM?'



SCALY PETE: NO...WE CAN'T TAKE YOUR RUM...



"WE'LL BRING THE ROOM..." SCALY PETE WHISPERS, LOOKING BACK AT THE TAVERN PATRONS

SCALY PETE WHISPERS TO SAILOR: 'WE NEED TO BE CAREFUL. WE CAN'T LET THEM TRACK US DOWN.'

SCALY PETE NODS TO SAILOR AS THEY CONTINUE THEIR RIDE, THE HORSES' GENTLE PACE A STARK CONTRAST TO THEIR DESPERATE SITUATION.

HERE IN THESE UNSETTLED LANDS... WE MUST BE CAREFUL.

NOAM, SOMETHING'S FOLLOWING US...

"WHAT DO YOU WANT TO DO?" SAILOR WHISPERS TO SCALY PETE, NODDING TOWARDS THE DARKNESS AHEAD

CAN YOU KEEP THEM MOVING FAST?

THE CASTLE GATES AHEAD SEEM TO BE THEIR ONLY HOPE FOR SAFETY.

"AND WHAT IS ONE? VERY LARGE... METAL... IN FRONT. STANDS A GIANT."

"A SHIP'S CANNON... WITH A SACK OF CANNONBALLS AND SHOT. HE'S BOUND BY CHAINS AROUND HIS ANKLES." - SCALY PETE

"BY CHAIN.S. AROUND HIS AN.KLE.S. TO THE GATE ITSELF."

"IT'D BE QUITE DIFFICULT FOR ANY HUMAN TO OPERATE..." SAILOR SAYS, EYEING THE 12-POUNDER CANON

SCALY PETE: 'A VERY STRONG DRAGON MAN COULD TRY TO BLAST US IN...'

SAILOR'S VOICE BARELY ABOVE A WHISPER: 'HE'S JUST THERE... WITH HIS CANON.'

"WE JUST RIDE UP TO HIM, WITH HIGH SPEED ON THE HORSE...AND JUST OPEN THE GATE."

SCALY PETE: 'YOU'RE WEARING THE PIRATE'S CLOTHES, YOU'RE RIDING THEIR HORSES. AT THIS DISTANCE...'

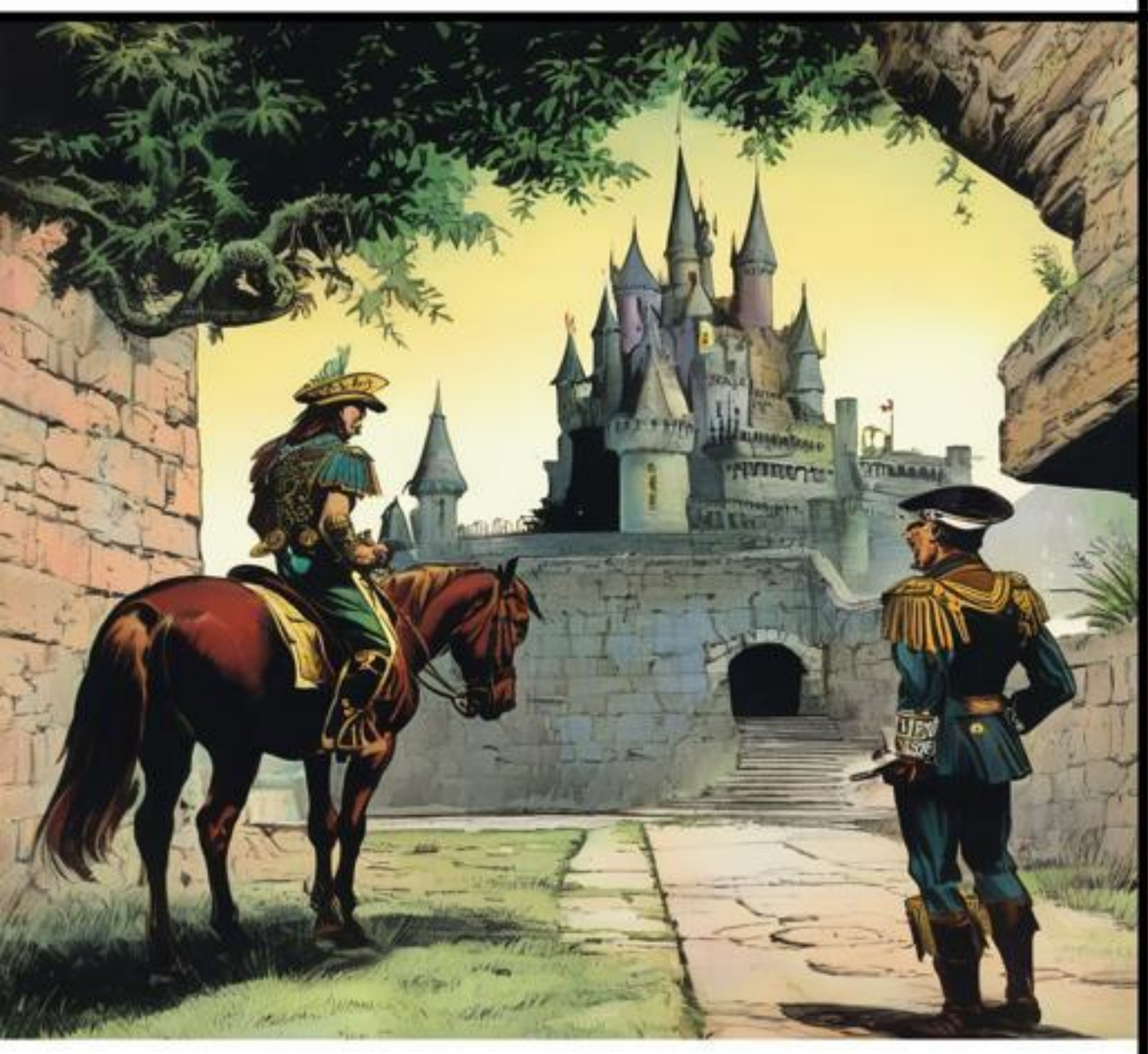
'WHAT'S GOING ON???' SAILOR SHOUTS BACK AT THE HILL GIANT

"FOR WHO?" SAILOR ASKS, LOOKING AT SCALY PETE WITH CONCERN

SCALY PETE: 'WE HAVE TO GET THIS INFORMATION TO THE CAPTAIN ASAP. THIS COULD CHANGE EVERYTHING.'

"OPEN THAT GATE!" SCALY PETE YELLS, HIS HAND POISED OVER THE IRON KNOCKER

SCALY PETE: "DO YOU WANT TO BE THE ONE TO EXPLAIN TO THEM THAT THEY DIDN'T GET THIS INFORMATION ON TIME?"



'HUH? WHAT ARE YOU TRYING TO SAY?' SAILOR ASKS, EYEING SCALY PETE WARILY

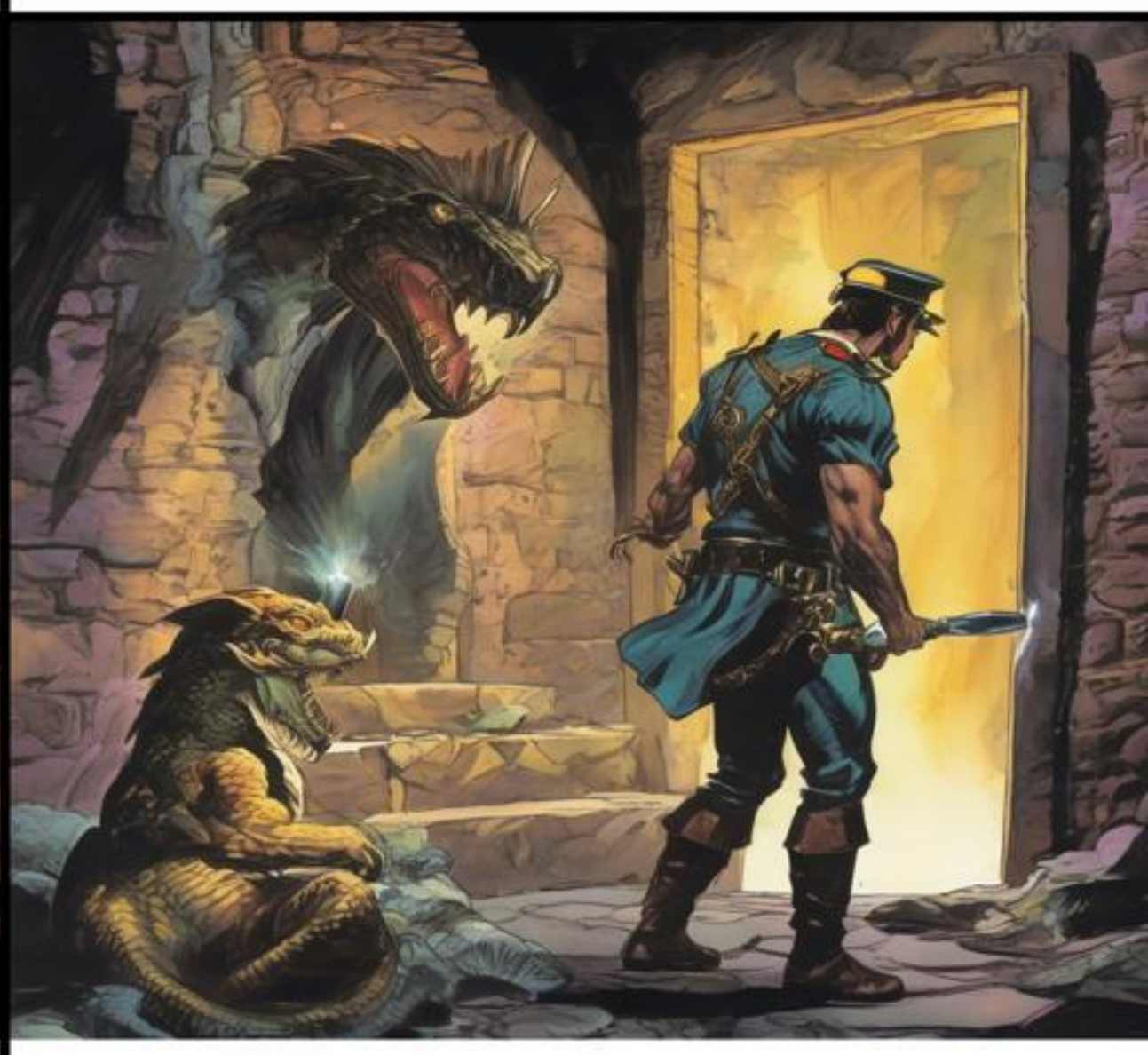
"WE'RE THE INTERROGATORS... WHAT DO YOU WANT TO KNOW?" NOBBY SAYS, EYES NARROWING

NOBBY: 'AND YOU HAVE. NOBBY CAN REMOVE FINGER.NA.ILS. LIKE NOBODY'S BUSINESS...

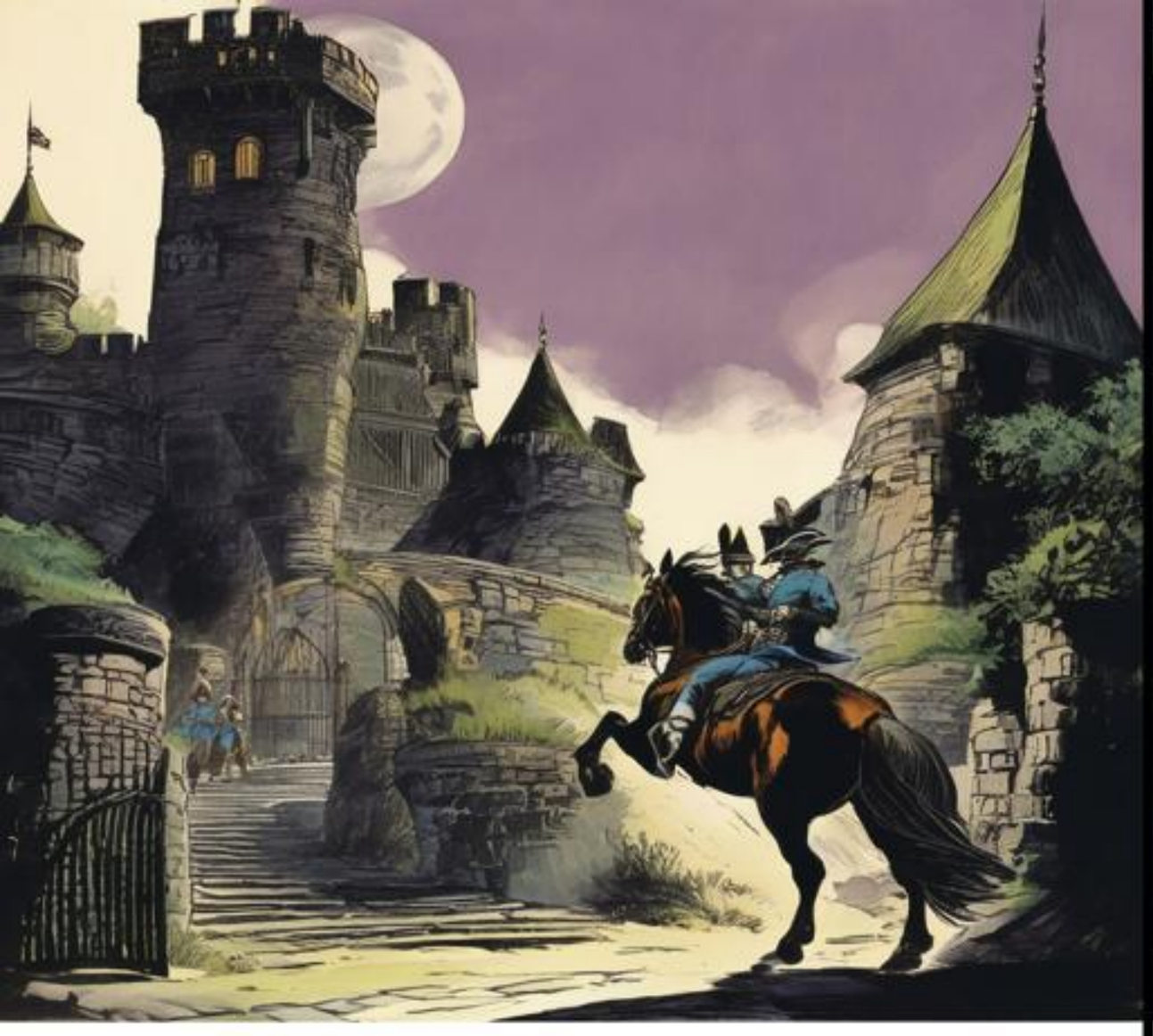
"HE'S NICE..." NOBBY SAYS WITH A CHUCKLE, AS SCALY PETE'S EYES WIDEN IN HORROR

SCALY PETE GRINS MANIACALLY, 'IT TAKES A WHILE... AND HE SORT OF TAKES...'

LONG NIGHT,,, HU.H.? YEAH,,, YEAH,,, YEAH, YEAH...



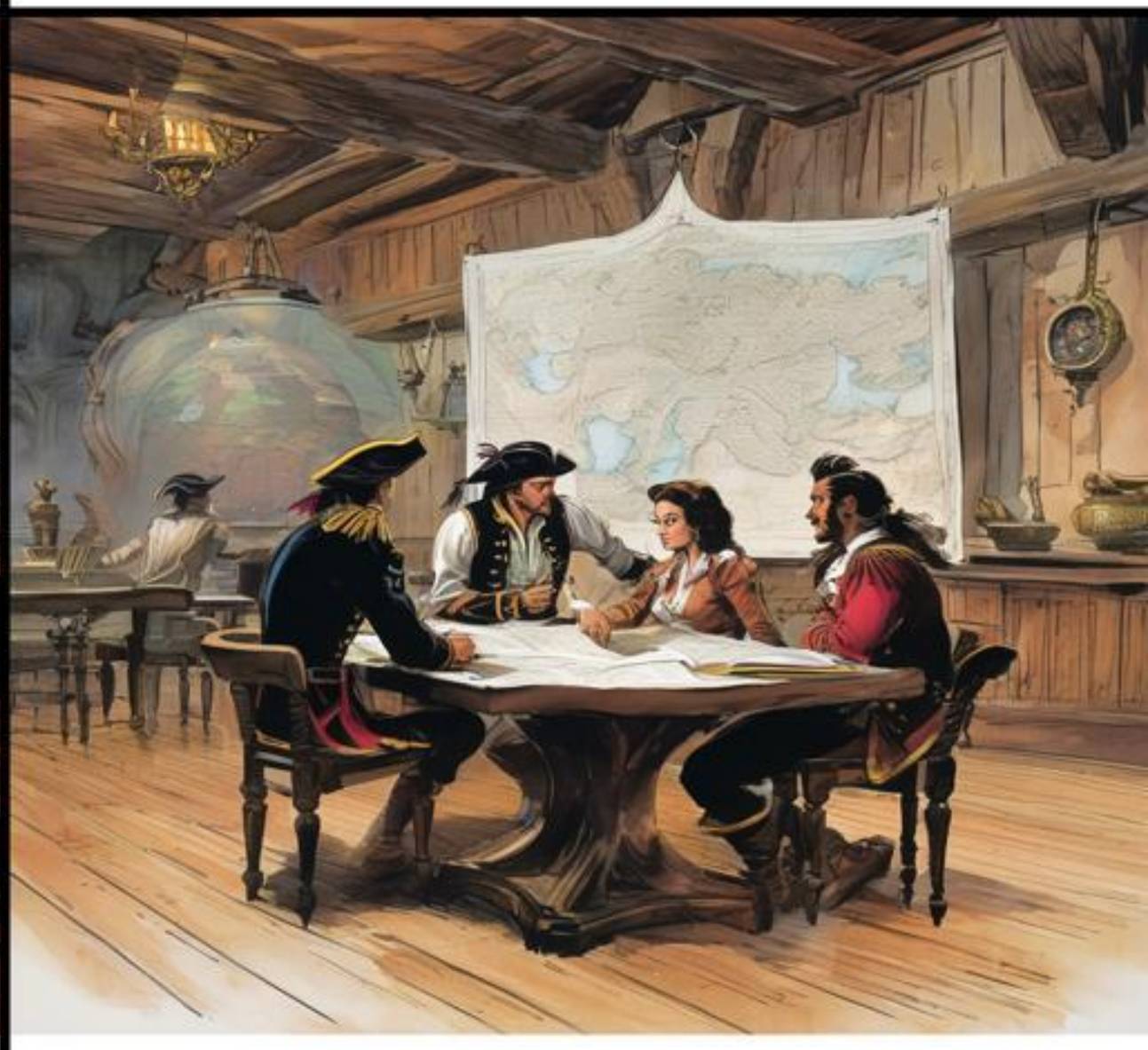
"NO INFORMATION." SAILOR SAYS, BUT SCALY PETE IS HIDING SOMETHING...



SCALY PETE RIDES AHEAD GESTURING FOR SAILOR TO FOLLOW HIM OUT OF THE CASTLE

SCALY PETE WHISPERS TO SAILOR, 'WE NEED TO BE CAREFUL. THERE MIGHT STILL BE GUARDS INSIDE.

SCALY PETE WHISPERS TO SAILOR, 'IT HAS TO BE HERE. OUR HOSTS WOULDN'T LEAVE IT OUT IN THE OPEN.'

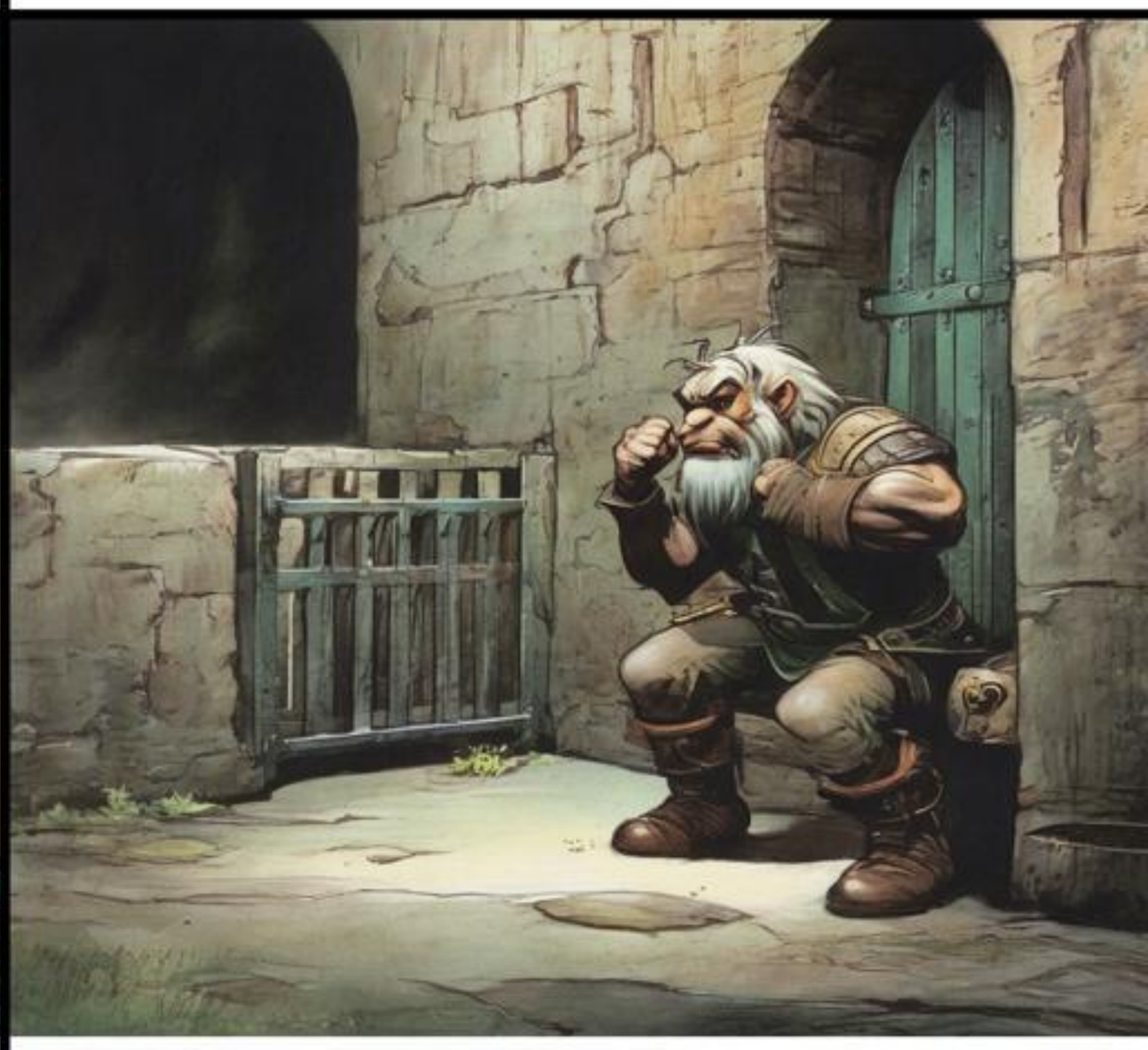


"I THINK I SEE OUR BEST CHANCE TO FIND THE CALICO'S HIDEOUT IS IN THE BASEMENT..."

"YOU'RE FAST...ER THAN I THOUGHT" SCALY PETE SAYS, TRYING TO REASSURE GNOME WHITEFUR

"CAN I REACH HIM? THROUGH THE RAILS."

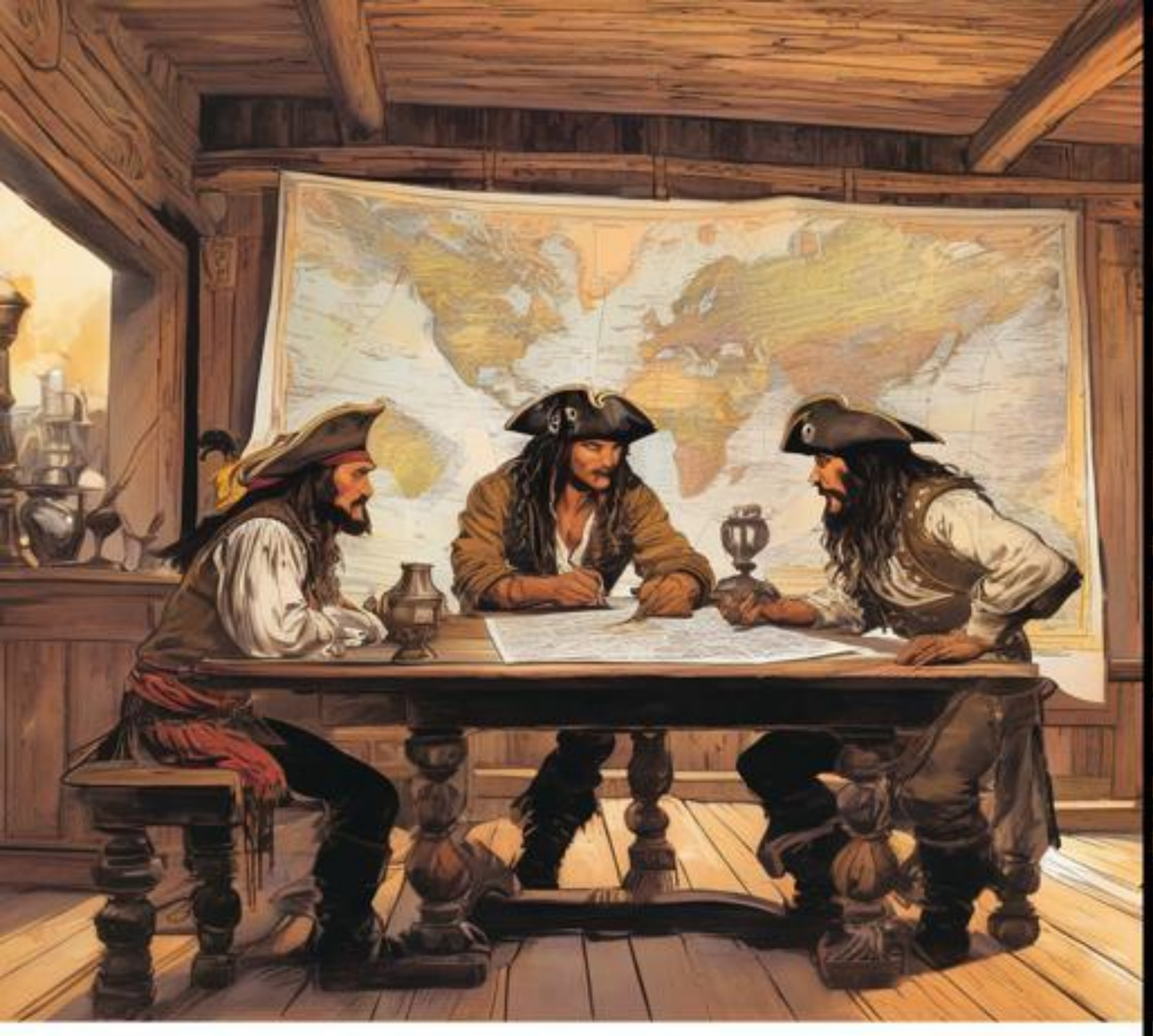
"YOU'RE TRYING TO PULL HIM TOWARD YOU THROUGH THE BARS?"



YOU CAN'T SAVE HIM NOW...

'BAM!' ECHOES THROUGH THE CELLBLOCK AS SCALY PETE DELIVERS A MASSIVE BLOW

YOU CAN SEE FROM THE WAY YOU'VE GOT HIM CORNERED...

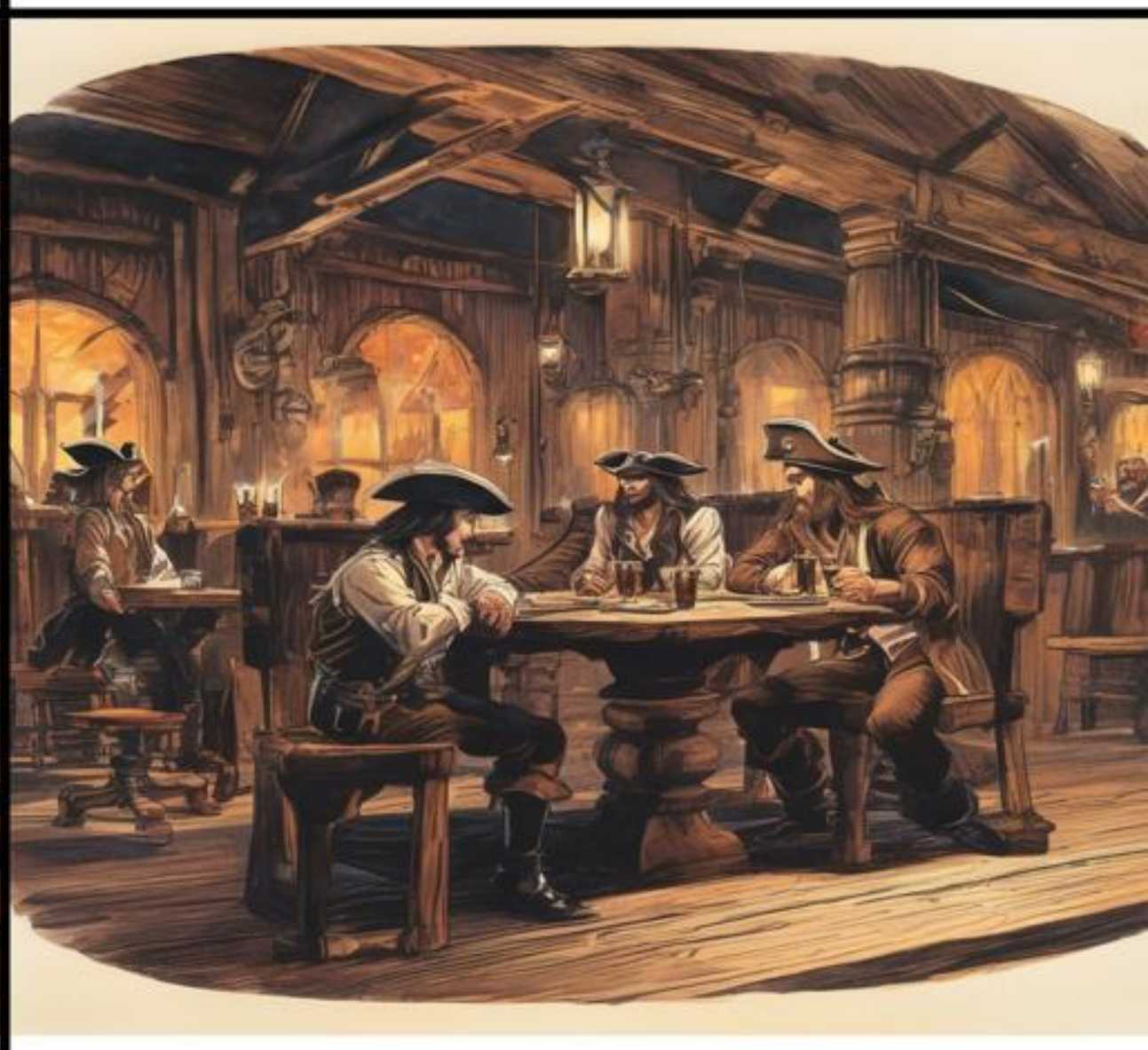


SAILOR: 'I THINK WE'VE GOT THIS. BUT TO BE SURE, LET'S KEEP THE DISGUISE.'

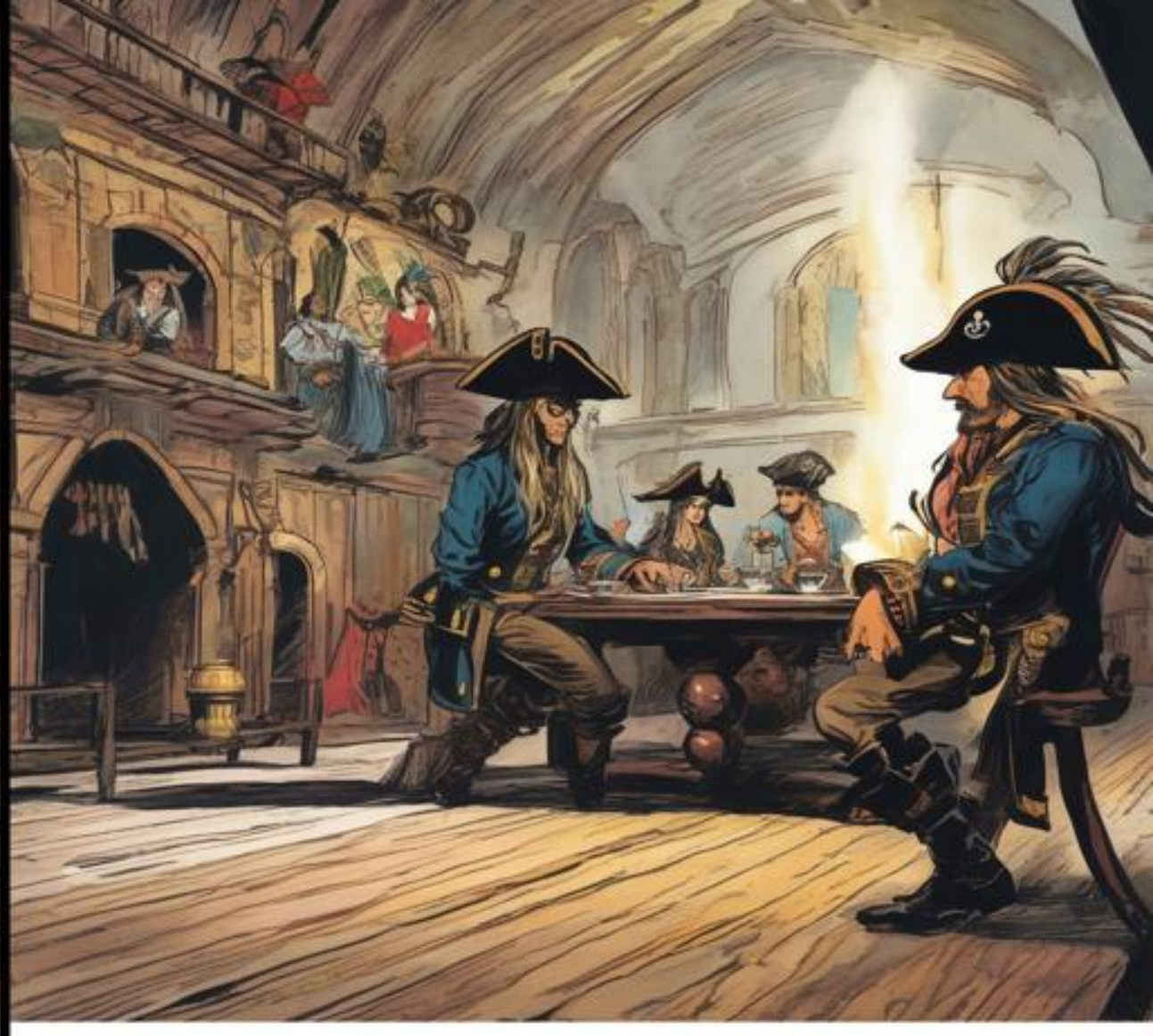
"WITHIN THESE WALLS... WE CAN FIND A TAVERN. AND TALK TO A DRUNK PIRATE."

"WE CAN'T ASK AROUND. WE NEED TO BE MORE CAREFUL," SCALY PETE WHISPERS.

SCALY PETE: 'WE NEED TO TRY AND FIND OUT WHERE THE LOOT WOULD BE.'



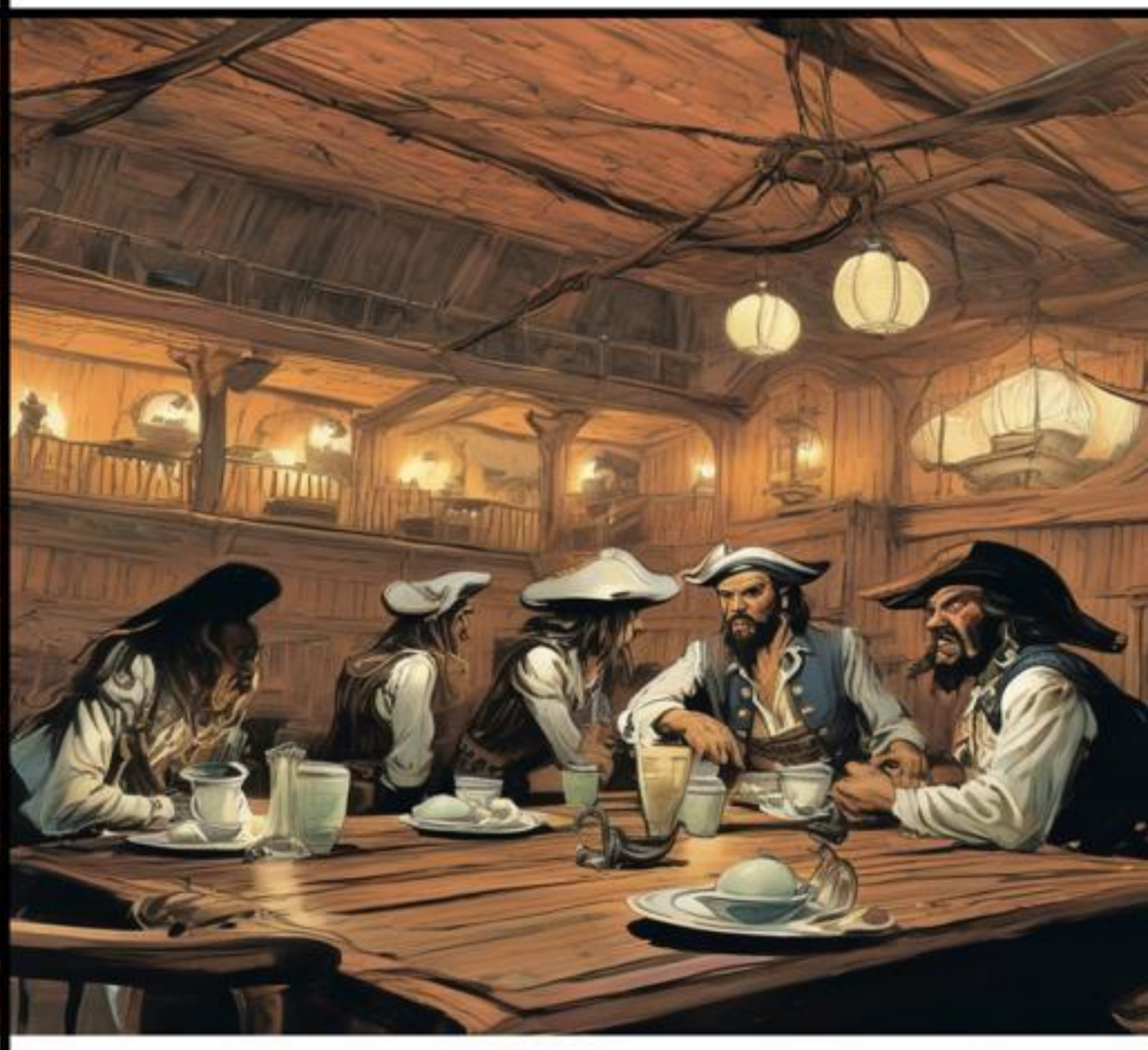
A LITTLE BIT OF INTELLIGENCE...



THE PIRATES SEEM TO BE IN A STATE OF SUSPENDED ANIMATION, AS IF WAITING FOR SOMETHING...

THE LOOT OF THEIR MANY MISADVENTURES LIES STREWN ABOUT LIKE A DRAGON'S HOARD.

SCALY PETE: 'I THINK IT'S NOT JUST EXHAUSTION. LOOK AT THESE MUGS... THEY'RE UNTOUCHED.

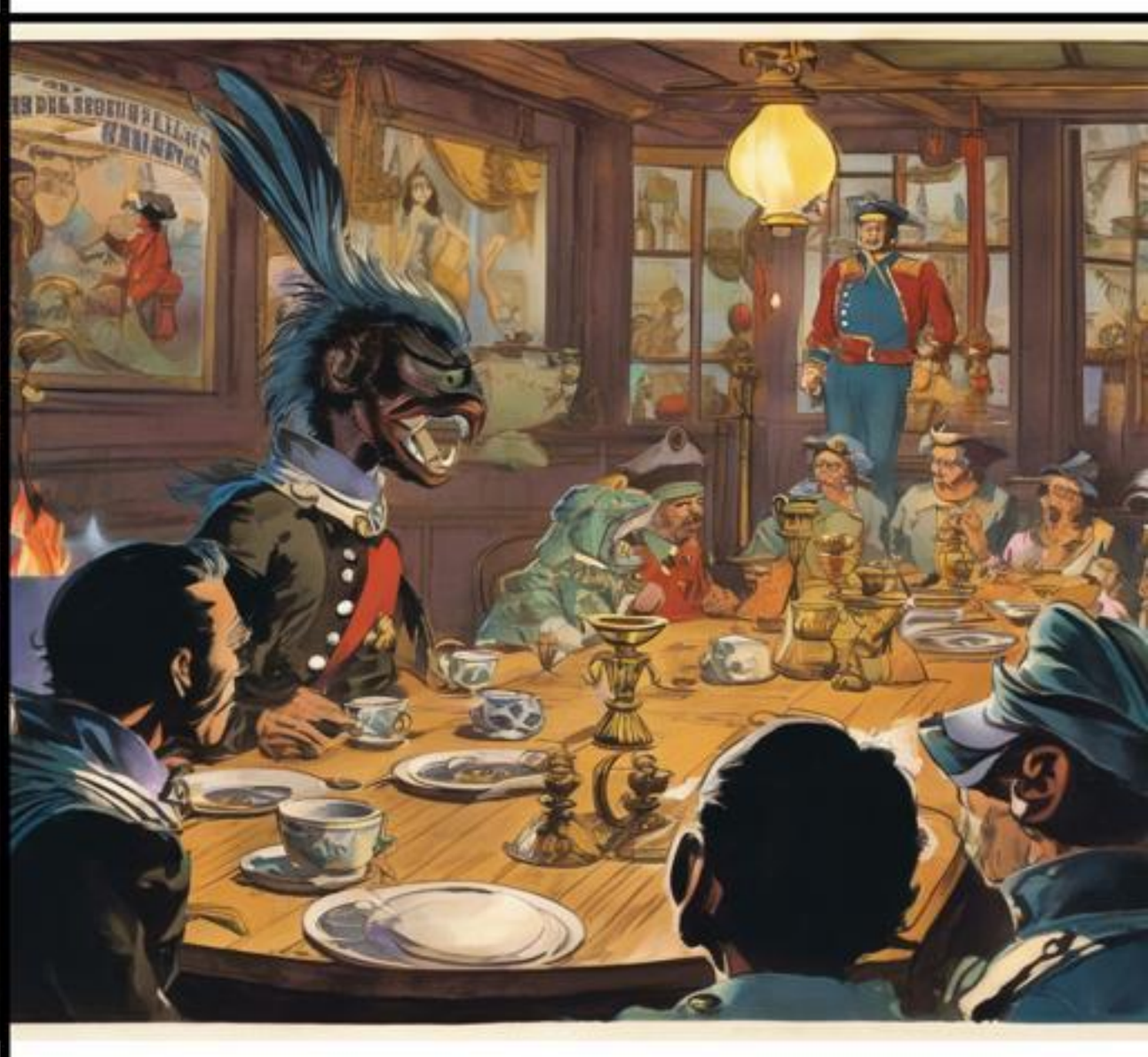


SILENCE IS DEADLY

SCALY PETE: 'CAN WE ASSUME THEY ALL DRANK FROM THIS CHALICE?'

"CAN WE... SNEAK... CAREFULLY." - SAILOR

SCALY PETE WHISPERS TO SAILOR: 'NO ONE'S BREATHING... IT'S LIKE THEY WERE ALL JUST... FROZEN.'



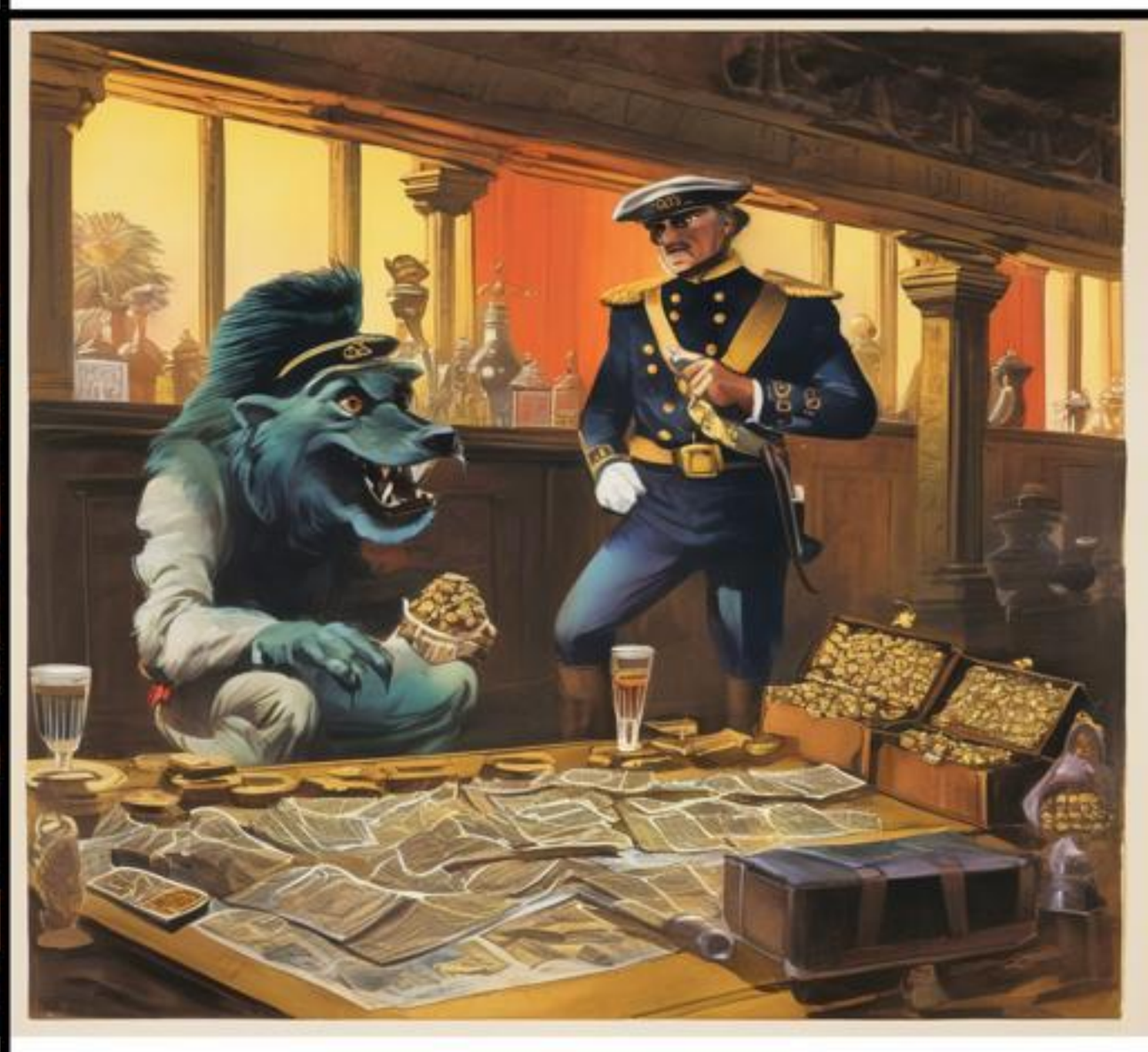
'NO', SCALY PETE SAYS. 'EXACTLY WHAT I'M TRYING TO SAY.' HE GLANCES AT SAILOR, THEN BACK AT THE CHALICE.

SCALY PETE: 'THE LAST ONE'S GONE OUT. BUT... WHAT'S THIS?'

"I WANT TO SEE WHAT THE STORY IS" SAILOR WHISPERS, HIS EYES FIXED ON THE CHALICE AS HE GENTLY LIFTS IT OFF THE TABLE

SCALY PETE: 'WHAT IN THE WORLD...?'

SCALY PETE: 'AND THE REMNANTS OF A FEAST STREWN EVERYWHERE...THIS IS NO NORMAL CREW COLLAPSE.'



"ABOUT THE TABLE," SCALY PETE SAYS, HIS VOICE LOW AND SERIOUS.

"THEY'RE JEWISH PIRATES, SAILOR. AND THERE ARE 50 MEN IN THIS ROOM..."

"AND THERE'S THE KING" SAILOR SAYS SLOWLY, VOICE BARELY ABOVE A WHISPER.

"STEAM...ING" – SAILOR WHISPERS TO SCALY PETE, HER VOICE BARELY AUDIBLE OVER THE CREAKING OF OLD WOODEN BEAMS.

"SO MAYBE WE SHOULD TAKE SOME PRECAUTIONS" SAILOR SAYS SOFTLY, HER VOICE BARELY ABOVE A WHISPER.

'AS YOU'RE WHISPERING TO ONE, ANOTHER..'

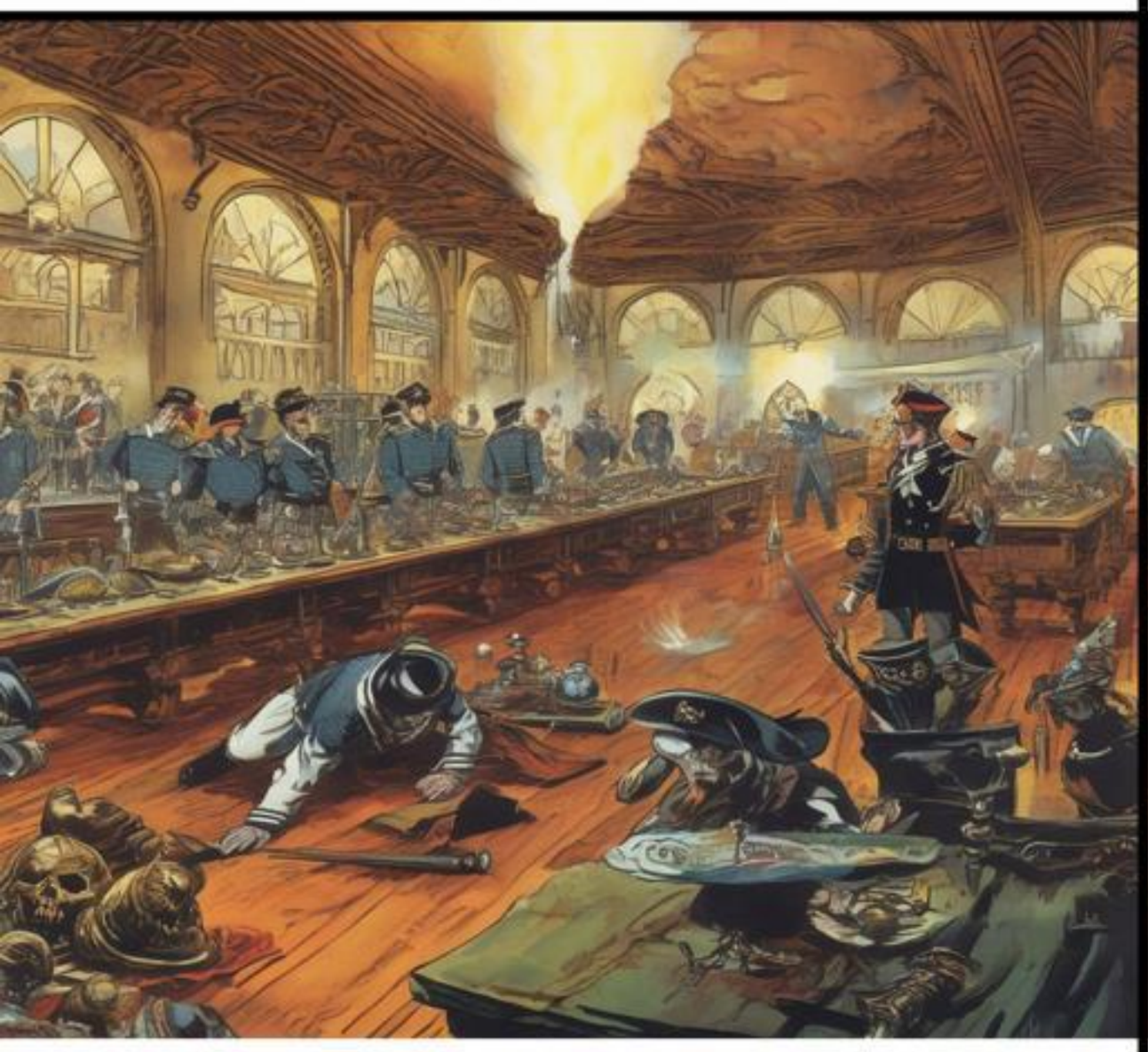
"YOU NOTICE THE CAPTAIN'S A BIT DIFFERENT FROM ALL THESE OTHER DEAD BODIES."

SCALY PETE: "HE'S NOT LIKE THE OTHERS. HIS DEATH IS... DIFFERENT."

"BLOOD IN HIS EYES... ARE THEY VAMPIRES?"

"YOU THINK THIS WAS A MURDER, BUT WHAT IF IT'S SOMETHING MORE?" SAILOR SAYS, EYEING THE SILVER DAGGER

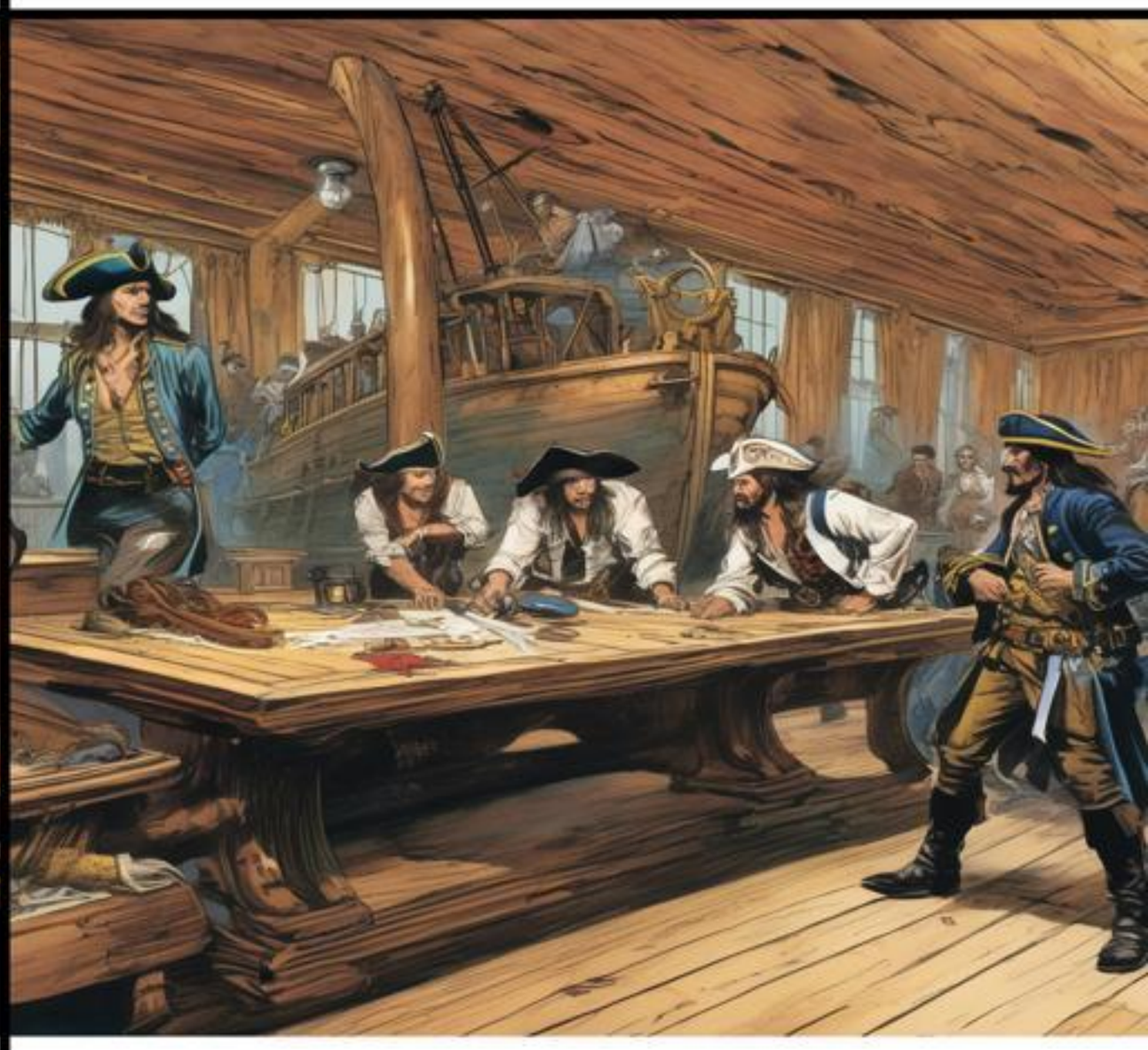
THE ARMORS ALL HAVE A SIMILAR SYMBOL ETCHED INTO THEM...



'IT SEEMS THESE MEN ARE EITHER MORE EXPERIENCED OR MORE ACCOMPLISHED, SCALY PETE SAYS, HOLDING UP ONE OF THE PIRATE ARMORS

SOMEHOW, THESE MEN WERE EITHER EXTREMELY EXPERIENCED OR...ACCOMPLISHED.

"PERHAPS A BIT TOO CONVENIENT", SAILOR SAYS, EYEING THE PISTOLS IN THE CHEST



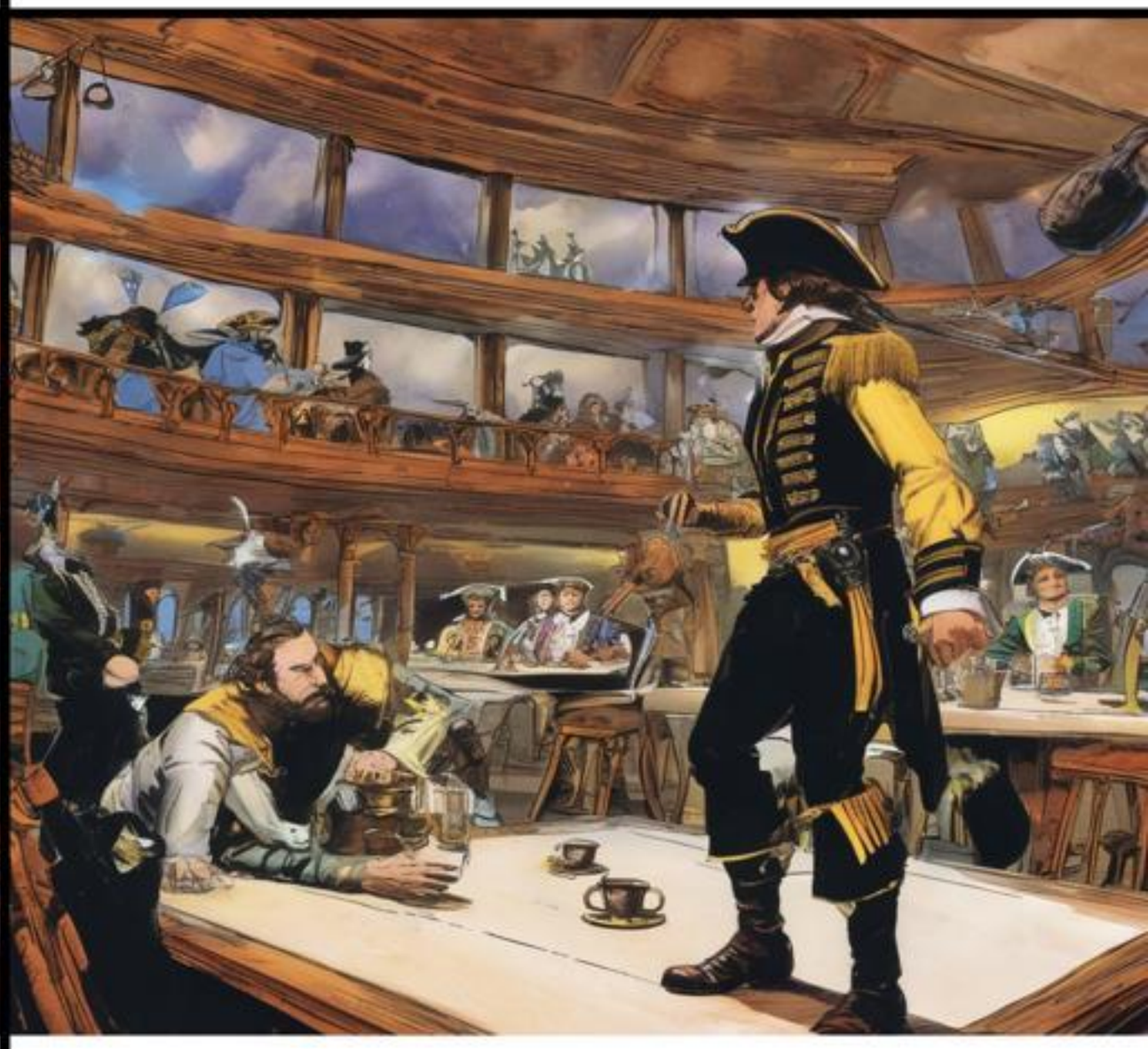
"IT SEEMS THAT MOST OF THEM WERE NOT ORDINARY PIRATES", SCALY PETE SAYS, HIS VOICE LOW AND SERIOUS.

"DEAD... CAN I JUST SNEAK UP TO ONE OF THE PISTOLS?"

"YOU CAN FEEL THE BODY IS COLD-ISH" SAILOR SAYS, HIS VOICE BARELY ABOVE A WHISPER.

"UNDEAD..." SCALY PETE WHISPERS, HIS VOICE BARELY AUDIBLE

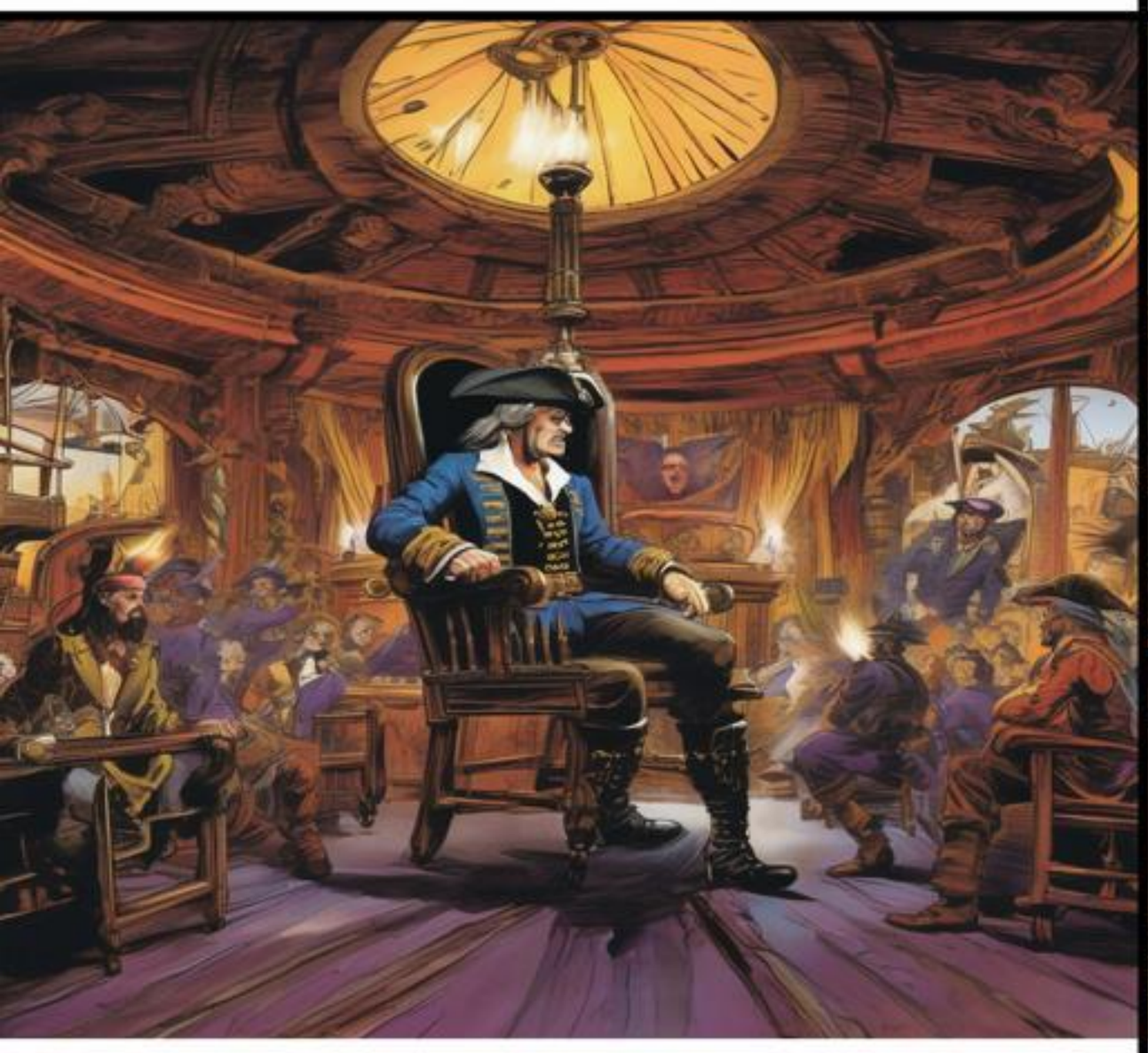
SAILOR: 'IT'S A CANTRIP, RIGHT? CAN YOU DETECT GOOD OR EVIL?'



SAILOR: 'CAN I TRUST YOU TO KEEP WATCH WHILE I EXAMINE THESE ARMORS?'

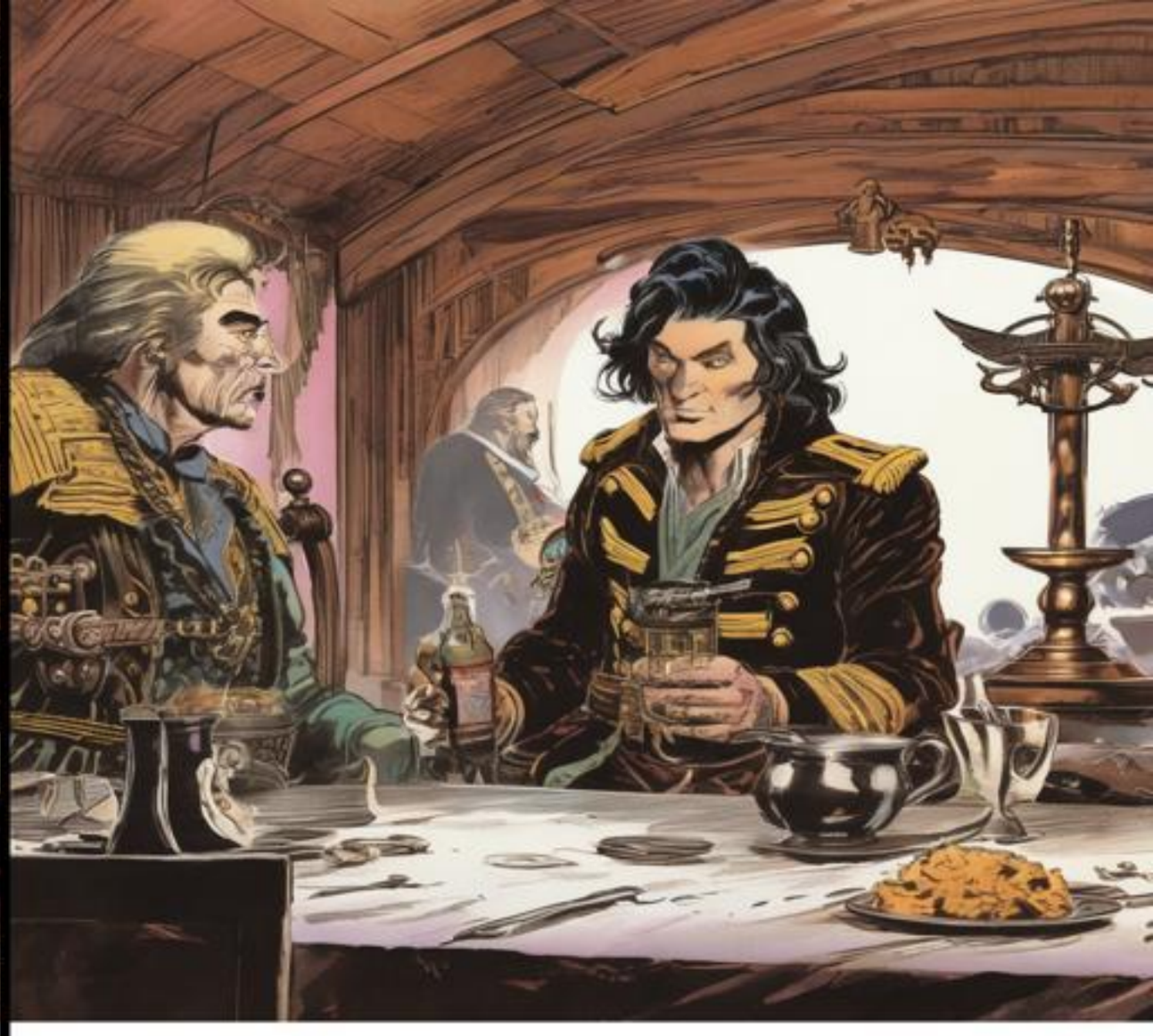
"THERE'S A VERY STRONG EVIL PRESENCE. AND IT SITS... IN THE CAPTAIN'S CHAIR..."

"THEY SEEM SIMPLY DEAD.."



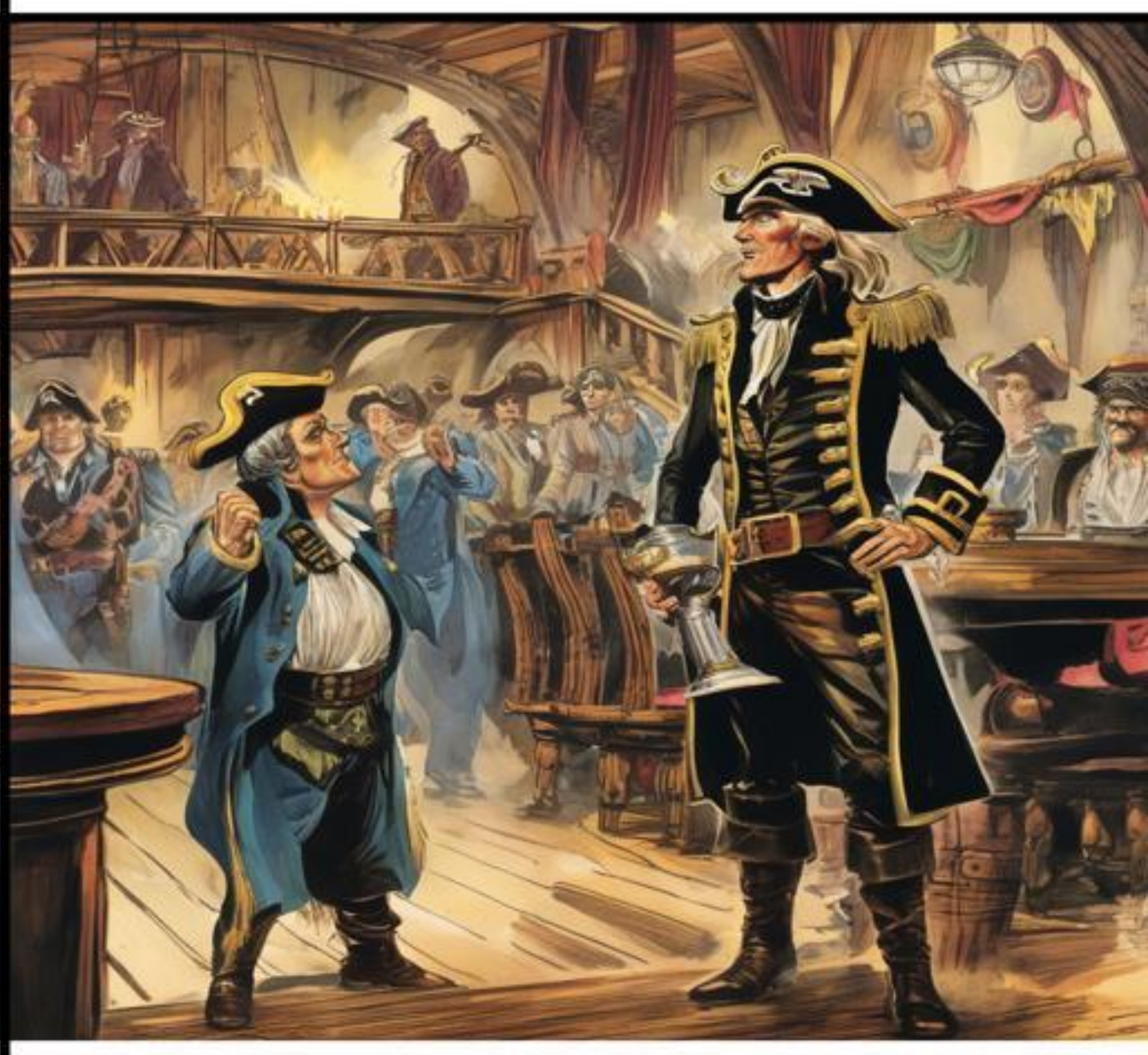
SCALY PETE: 'READY WITH MY BOW?'

"YOU MAY TRY," SCALY PETE SAYS WITH A HINT OF SKEPTICISM, "BUT YOU WILL FAIL..."



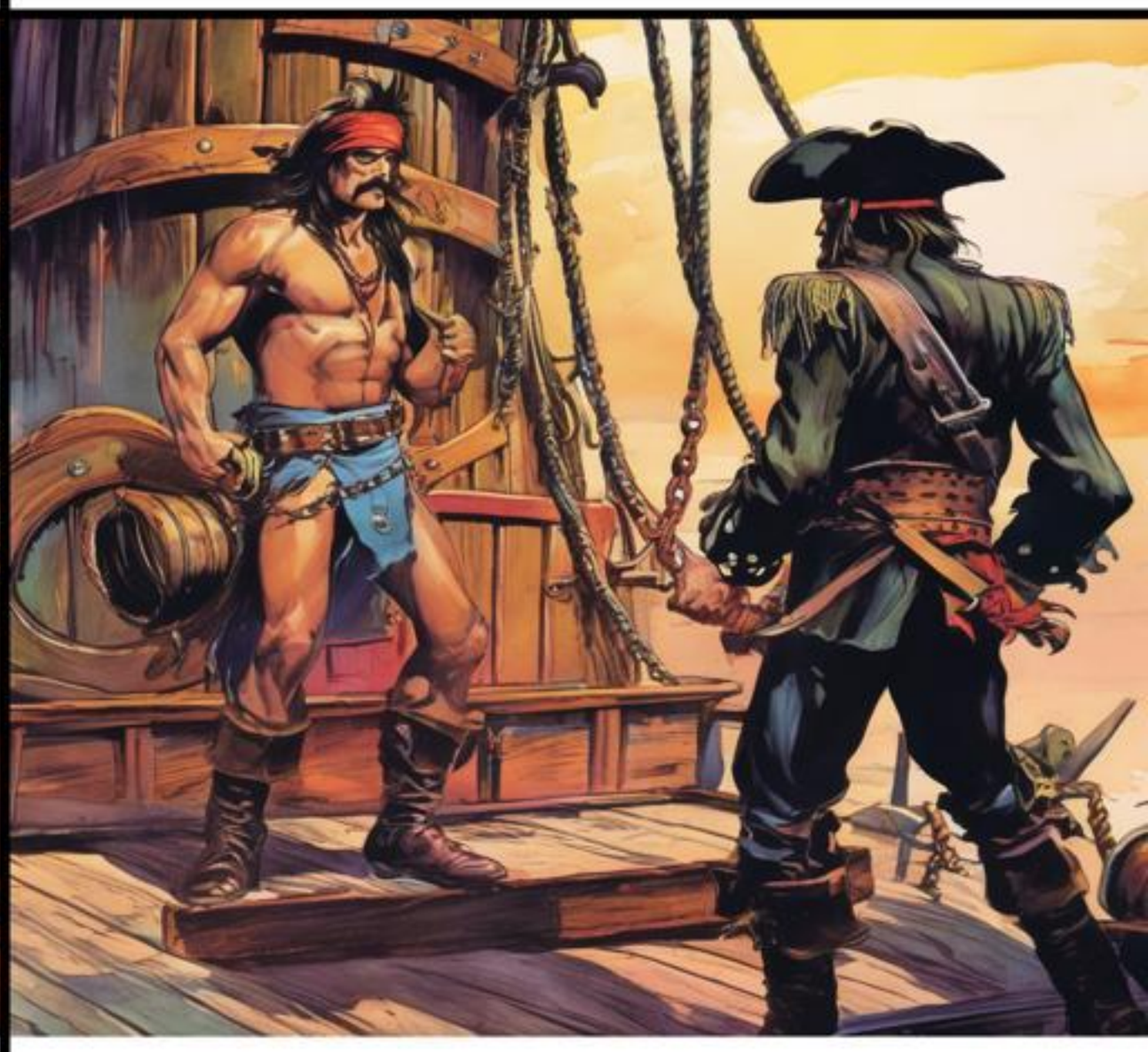
"STILL SONG... THE CAPTAIN WHOSE NAME YOU NEVER HEARD, ANIMATES... HIS DEAD."

"YOU CAN HOLD ON TO IT IF YOU LIKE..."



"YOU CAN HOLD ON TO IT IF YOU LIKE..." SCALY PETE SAYS, TRYING TO SOUND CALM

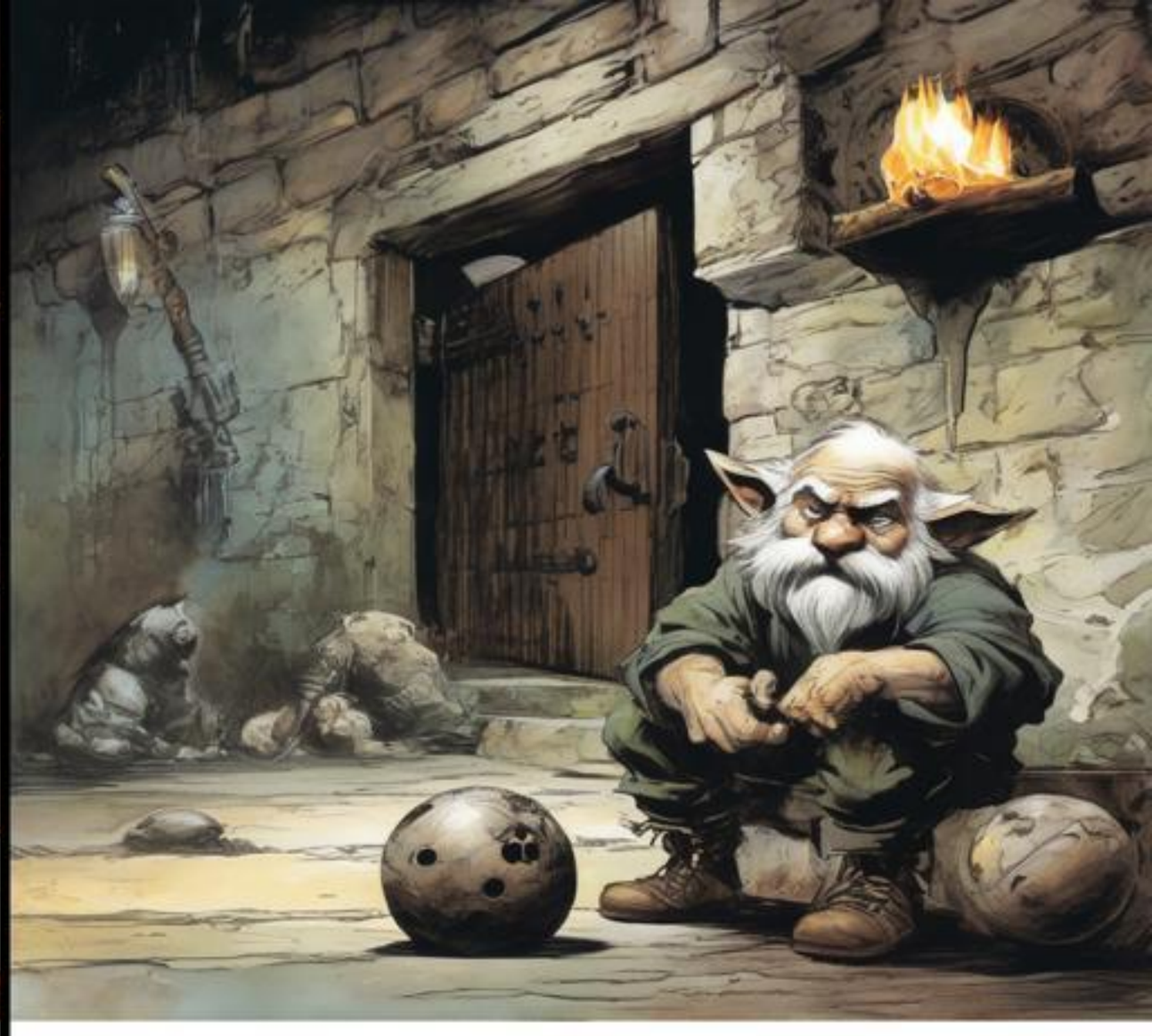
THE AIR IS THICK WITH MALEVOLENT ENERGY AS THE CREW PREPARES FOR BATTLE



"AH, YOU'RE FIRST," THE MONSTER HISSES AT PETE...

'YOU TAKE SEVEN PIERCING DAMAGE, AS WELL!' THE POSSESSED CAPTAIN GROWLS

YOU'RE NEXT... DO YOU?



"INTO THE FENCE...WITH ALL MY MIGHT!"

YOU'RE NOT GOING ANYWHERE!

"SQUIRM OUT OF IT..." SCALY PETE GRUNTS, DIGGING HIS CLAWS DEEPER INTO GNOME WHITEFUR'S LEG.

GNOME WHITEFUR SNARLS AS HE READIES HIS BLADE

"YOU'RE NOT GOING DOWN WITHOUT A FIGHT, ARE YOU?"

"TRY AND DRAIN YOU. WITH ALL HIS STRENGTH."

SCALY PETE: 'SLAP HIM WITH THE DRAGON TAIL!'

MY TAIL... IT'S OUR ONLY HOPE.

'ALRIGHT, LET'S FINISH THIS' SAILOR SAYS, GRIPPING THEIR TWO-HANDED SWORD TIGHTLY.

"FIGHTING'S NOT EXACTLY MY SPECIALTY" SAILOR SAYS, TRYING TO HIDE HIS OWN UNEASE

'IS THAT MAGIC?' THE SAILOR ASKS HIMSELF ALOUD.

SAILOR'S VOICE LACED WITH WORRY: 'SCALY PETE, CAN YOU HEAR ME?'

YOU SEE, THE CREATURE ANIMATES AND STARTS SNATCHING.

"TAKE A SHOT?"

SCALY PETE'S 'YOU'RE IN, STEAL... SO YOU GET ADVANTAGE...' ECHOES IN THE SAILOR'S MIND AS HE FOCUSES ON TAKING DOWN THE UNDEAD CAPTAIN

THE SAILOR WHISPERS TO SCALY PETE, 'JUST A LITTLE MORE TIME, MATE...'

"THAT IS NON-MAGICAL... IT'S A MUNDANE ARROW", SAILOR SAYS TO SCALY PETE

"I DON'T KNOW WHY I'M NOT LETTING HIM GO" SCALY PETE SAYS SOFTLY, HIS VOICE FILLED WITH A NEWFOUND SENSE OF RELUCTANCE.

THE SAILOR'S VOICE TREMBLES AS HE SPEAKS: 'WHAT HAVE THEY DONE TO HIM...'

"NO! GET OFF ME!"

OR DO I HAVE TO GET OUT OF GRAPPLE FIRST?

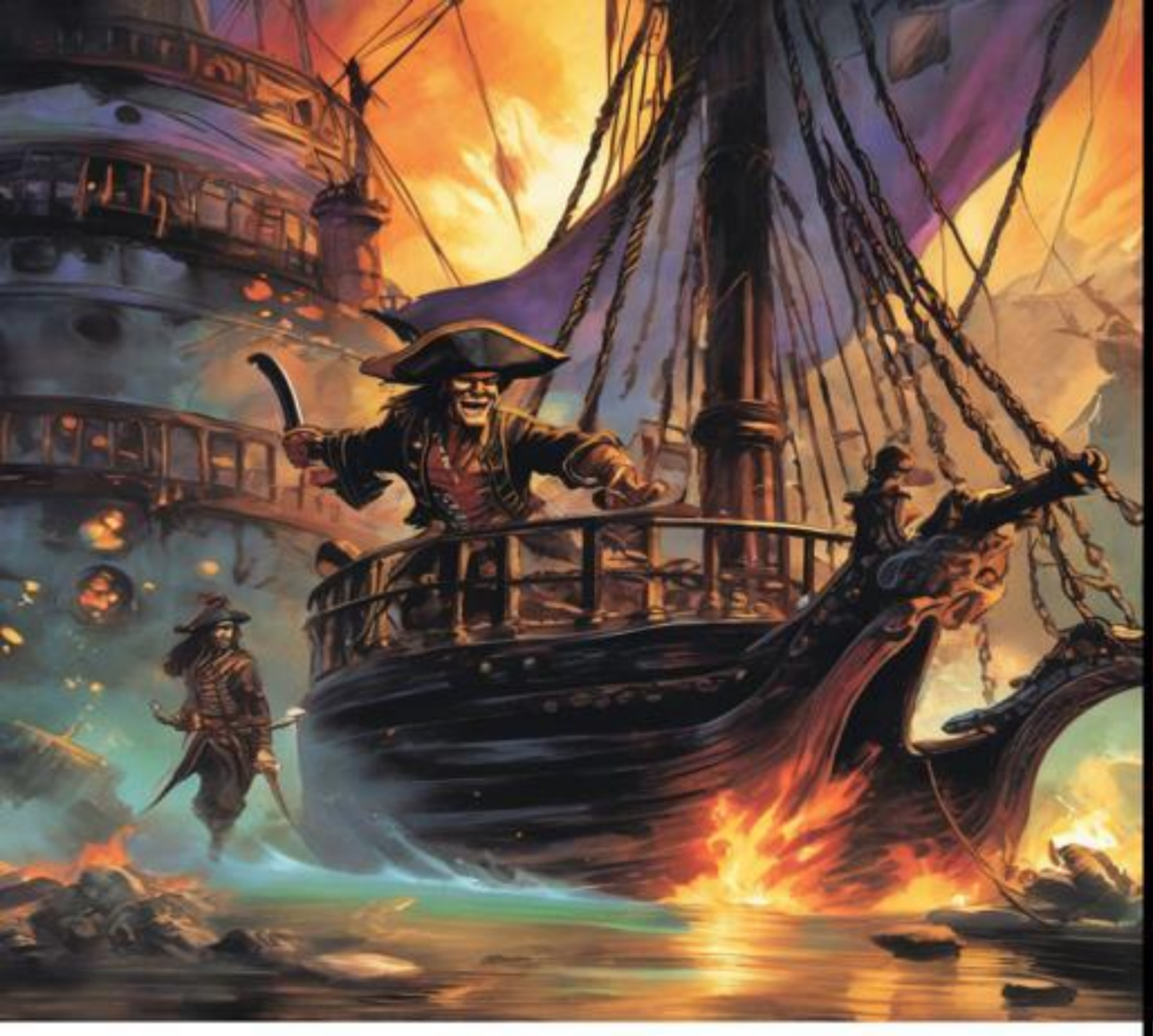
A FAINT SQUEAKING SOUND ECHOES FROM WITHIN THE GOBLET AS THE MOUSE INSIDE STIRS

"LET THAT THING GO! IT CAN'T KEEP HIM LIKE THIS!"

"BECAUSE I DON'T HAVE THE GOBLET IN MY HAND ANYMORE.." THE POSSESSED PIRATE CAPTAIN GROWLS, HIS VOICE DRIPPING WITH MALICE.

"I GET TWO ATTACKS.." SCALY PETE GROWLS, EYES LOCKED ONTO THE POSSESSED PIRATE CAPTAIN

'IT DIDN'T TAKE MY SECOND ATTACK... WITH MY TAIL'. THE SAILOR'S VOICE IS LOW AND MENACING



SCALY PETE: 'NO... YOU'RE LETTING ME GO OF THE GOBLET?'

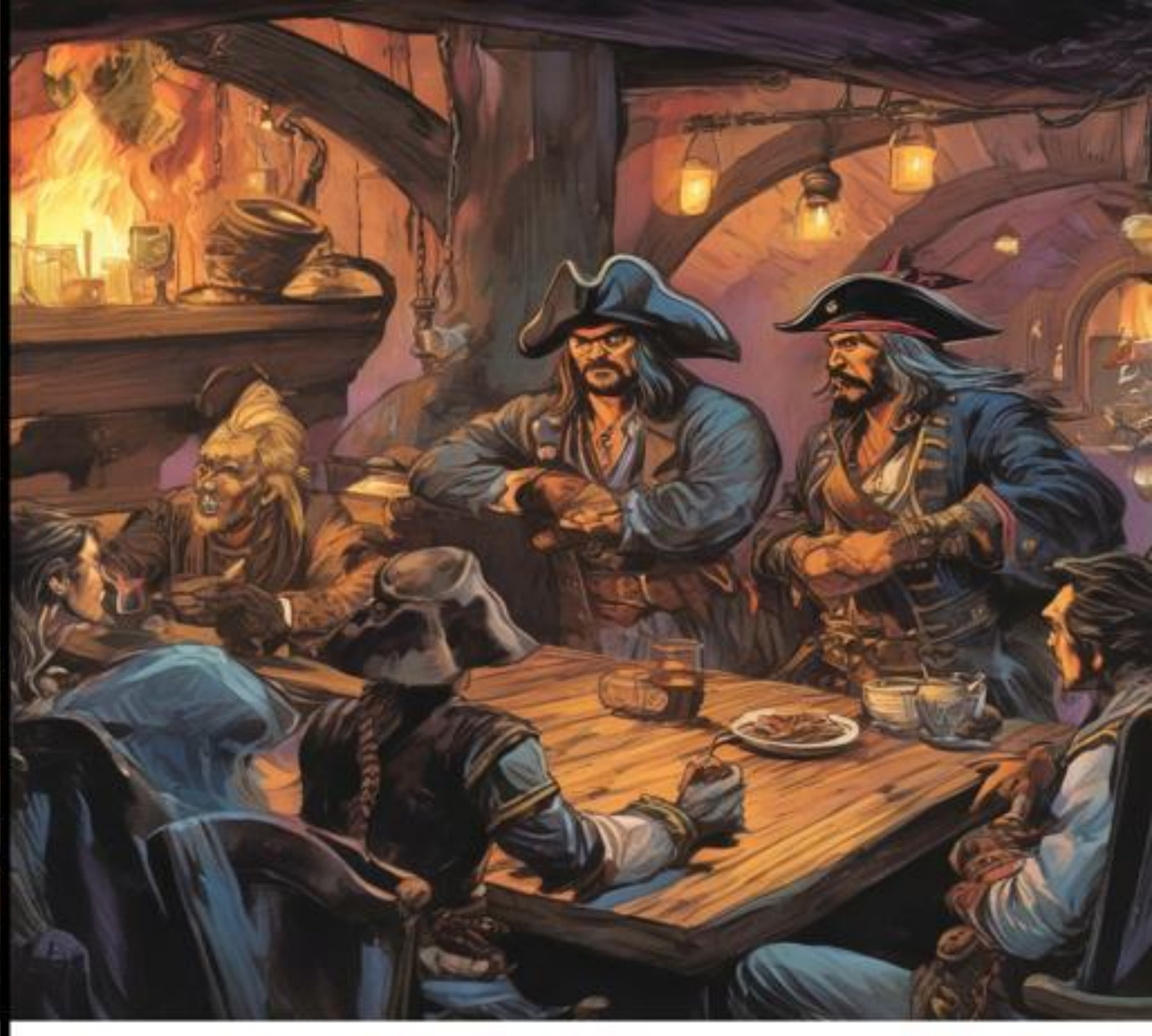
HE'S DRUNK. FROM IT... IT'S ALREADY HEALED HIM.

"BUT THEN HE FUCKING FLI.ES. AWAY AND DOES HIS SHIT..."

"YOU'LL NEVER HAVE IT, MATEY!" SCALY PETE YELLS AS THE SWORD SLICES THROUGH THE AIR

"YOU'LL NEVER POSSESS ME AGAIN!" THE SAILOR SHOUTS AS HE SWINGS HIS SWORD.

"YOU'VE FALLEN UNDER ITS INFLUENCE BECAUSE YOU'RE DESPERATE TO KEEP IT FOR YOURSELF, SCALY PETE WARNS.

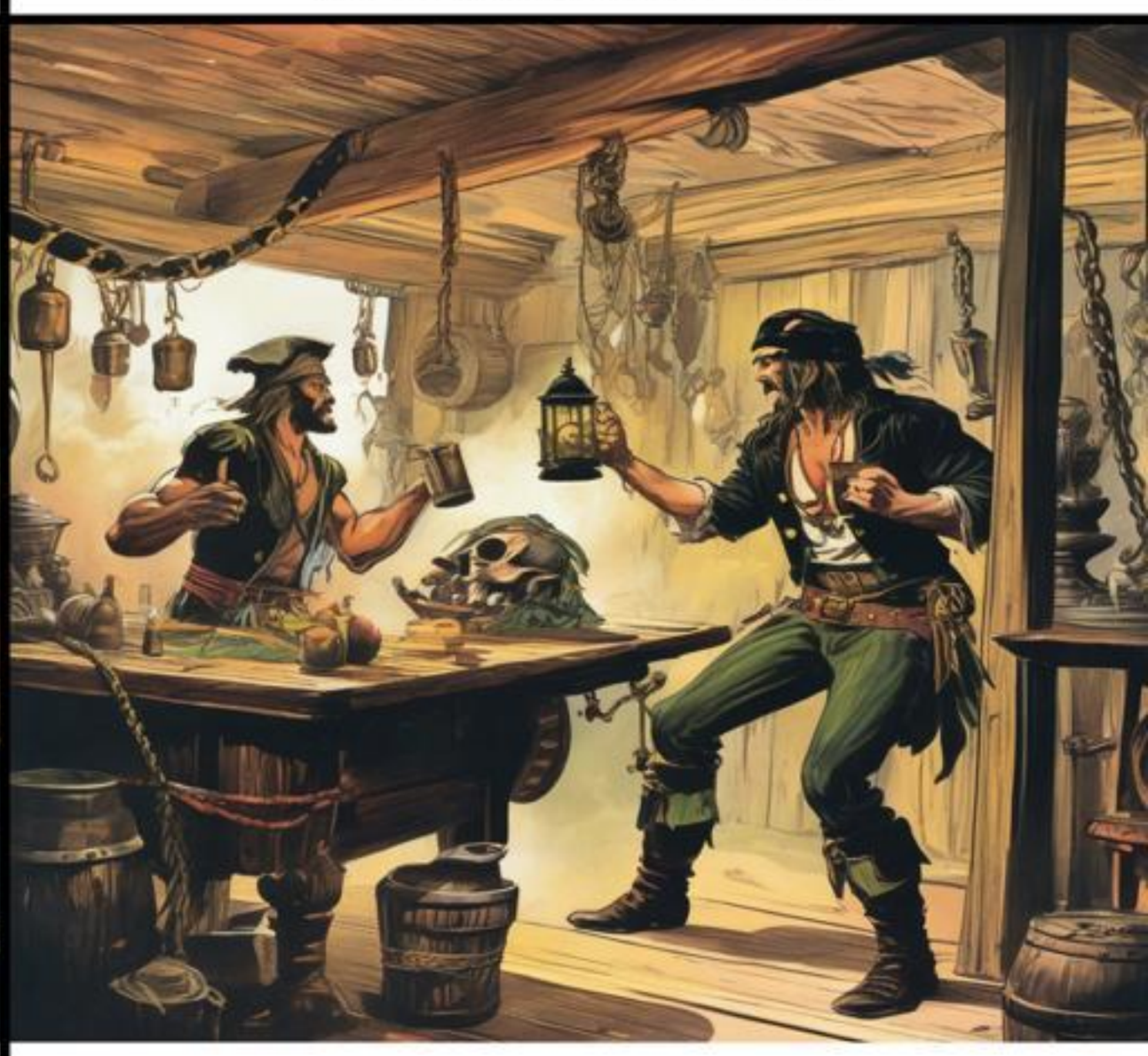


SCALY PETE: 'ONE INTO A ZO... IT'S ALMOST POETIC, DON'T YOU THINK?'

"ARE YOU GOING TO SMITE? I'M ONLY GOING TO SAVOR THIS MOMENT IF IT'S A VICTORY."

"YOU'RE NO LONGER IN CONTROL, CAPTAIN...THE GOBLET'S POWER HAS CONSUMED YOU..."

SCALY PETE: 'YOU'VE BEEN UPGRADED THREE TIMES, INCLUDING THE LAST SMITE... CAN YOU STILL TRUST YOUR OWN MIND?'



"I'M GOING TO ROLL THEM ALL..."

IN THE FACE WITH MY TAIL... BAM!

THE GOBLET'S DARK POWER HAS REVEALED A SHOCKING TRUTH...

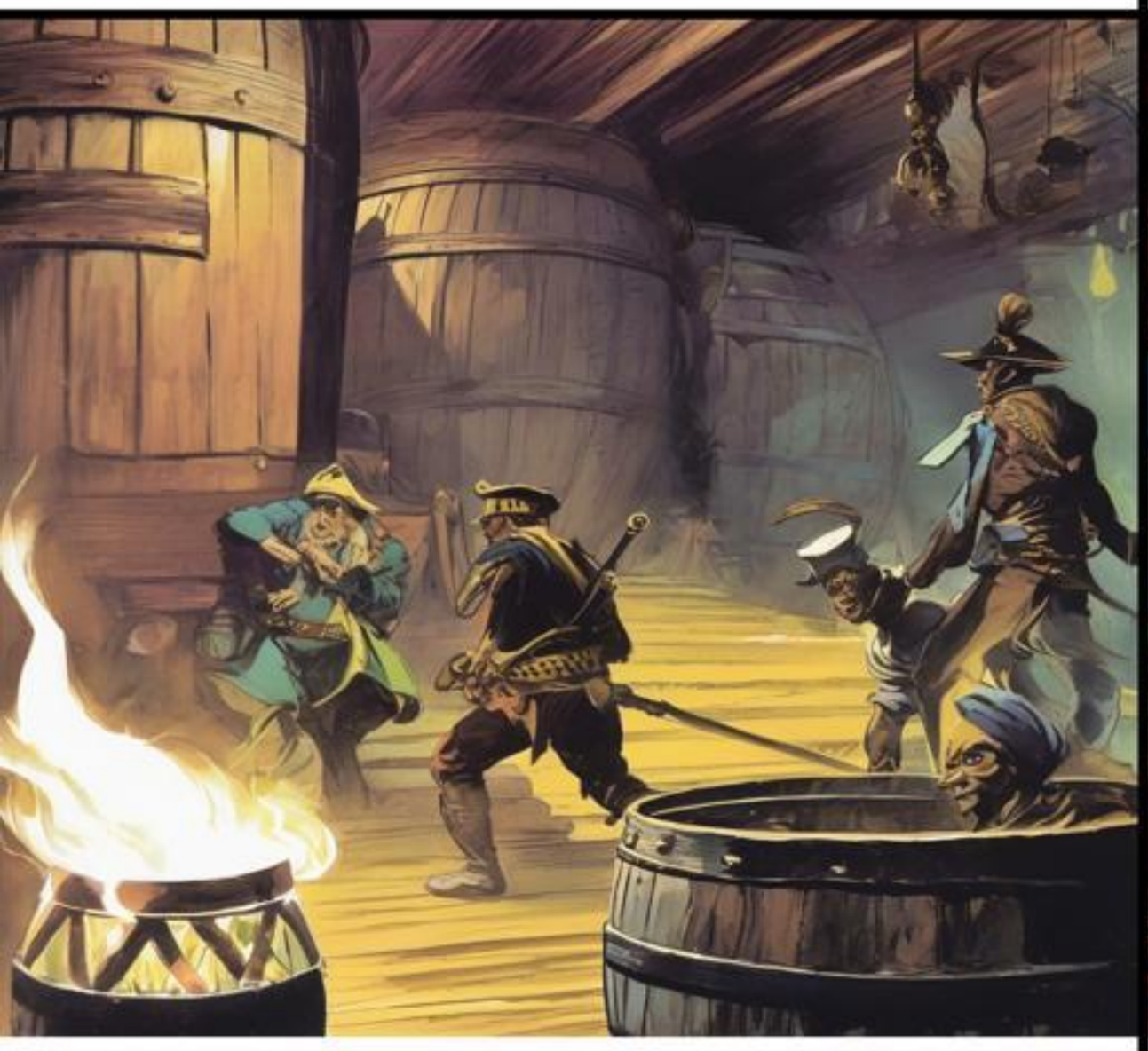
I FEEL... JAWS.BONE'S BREAKING... TE.ETH...

AS I SWING MY TAIL, I CHANT MY MYSTICAL INCANTATION...

"TO CALL FORTH..." THE WORDS ECHO IN SCALY PETE'S MIND AS HE REALIZES HIS OWN SPELL HAS TURNED AGAINST HIM

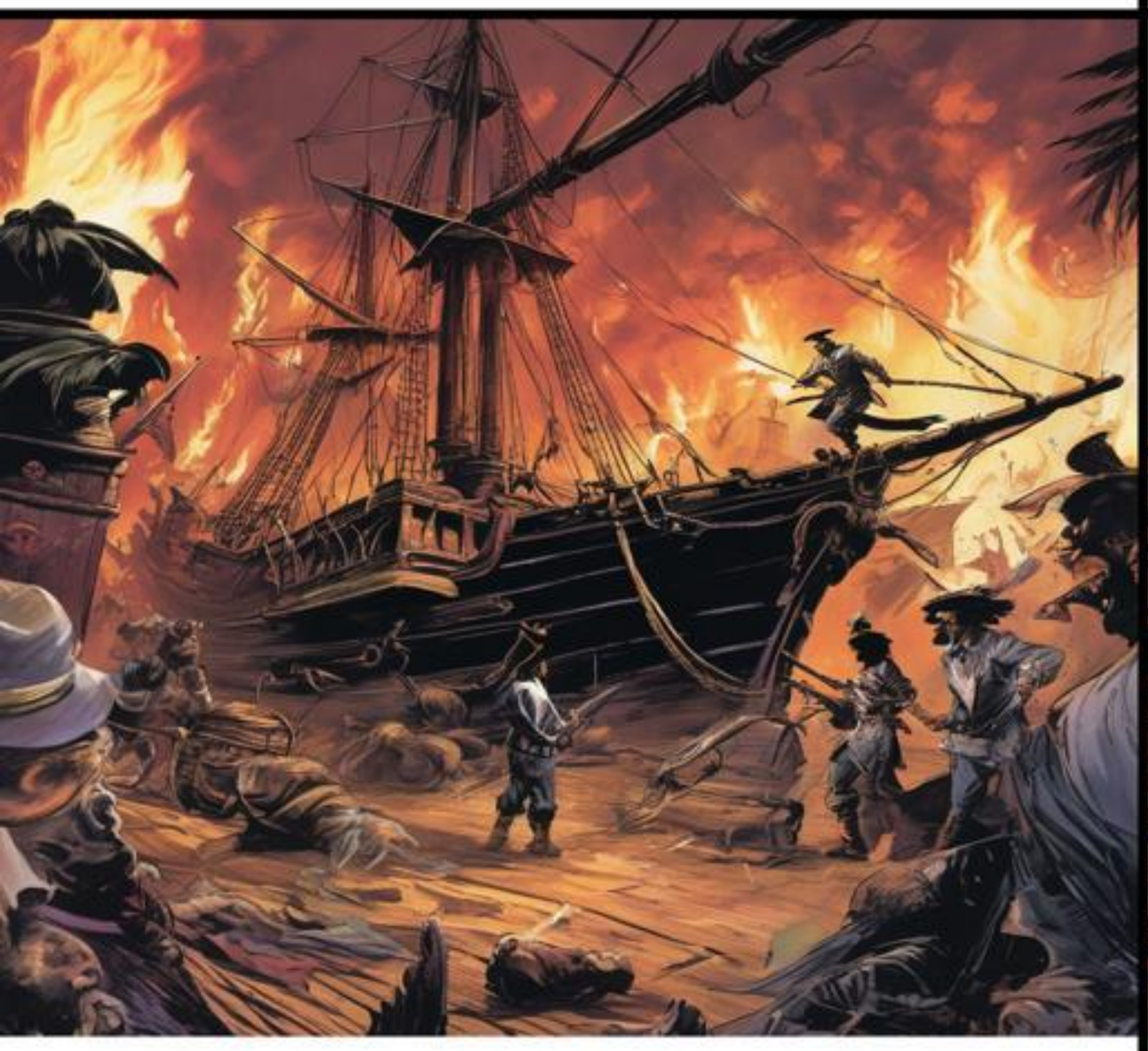
"TWO PLUS ONE PLUS... IT'S A CRITICAL HIT, I CAN FEEL IT," SCALY PETE SAYS, HIS VOICE LACED WITH DESPERATION.

'THAT'S FOUR D6..THE DAMAGE FROM THE TAIL ITSELF WHICH IS ALSO DOUBLED SO... THE SAILOR MUTTERS, HIS VOICE LACED WITH A MIX OF SHOCK AND CONCERN.

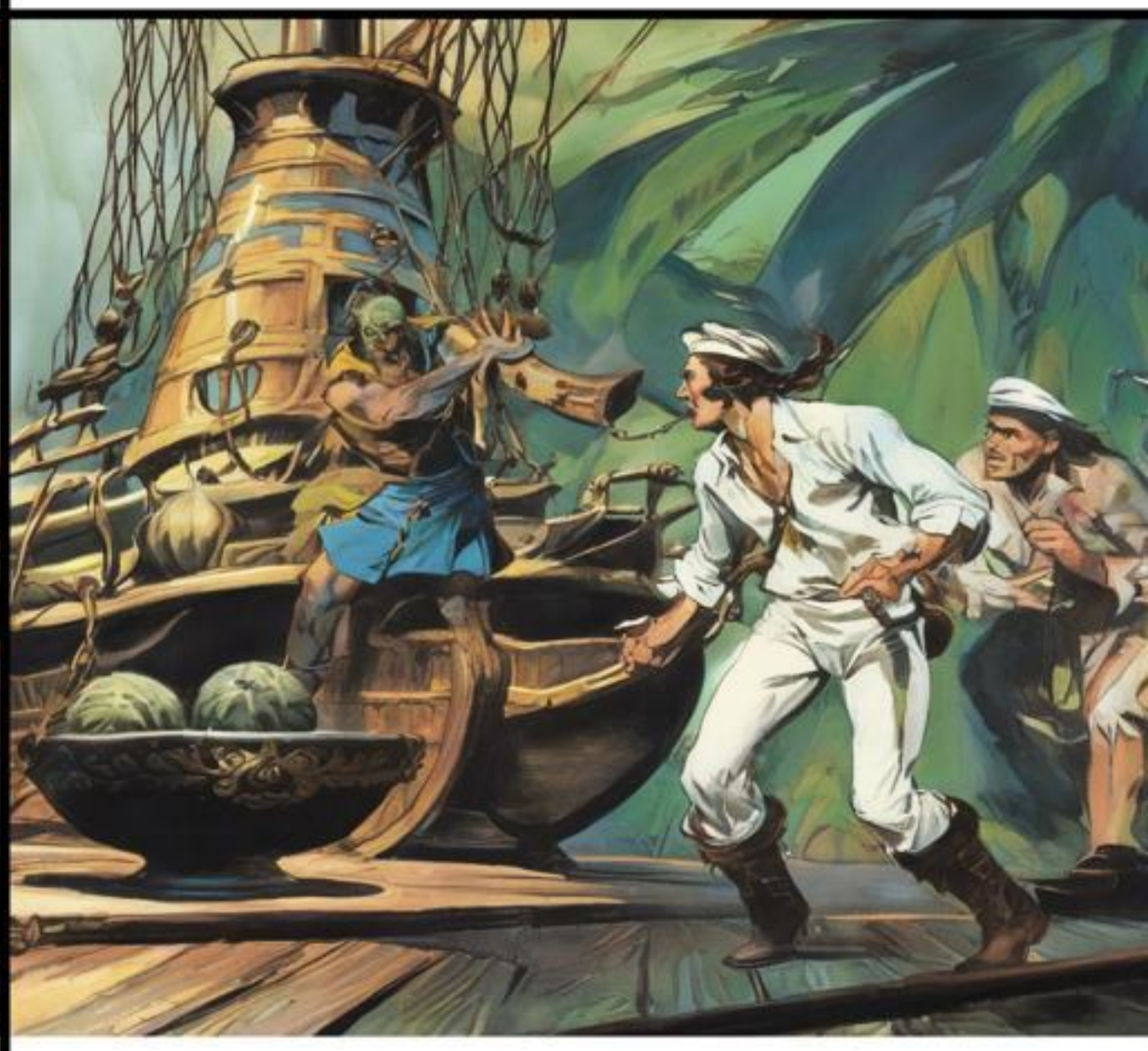


CAN YOU HANDLE THE TRUTH, SCALY PETE?

SCALENE WHISPERS URGENTLY TO SCALY PETE, 'EIGHT D8 AND FOUR D6... WHAT DOES IT MEAN?'



WITH A SICKENING CRUNCH, THE POSSESSED PIRATE CAPTAIN'S HEAD SNAPPED BACK, REVEALING A GAPING WOUND.



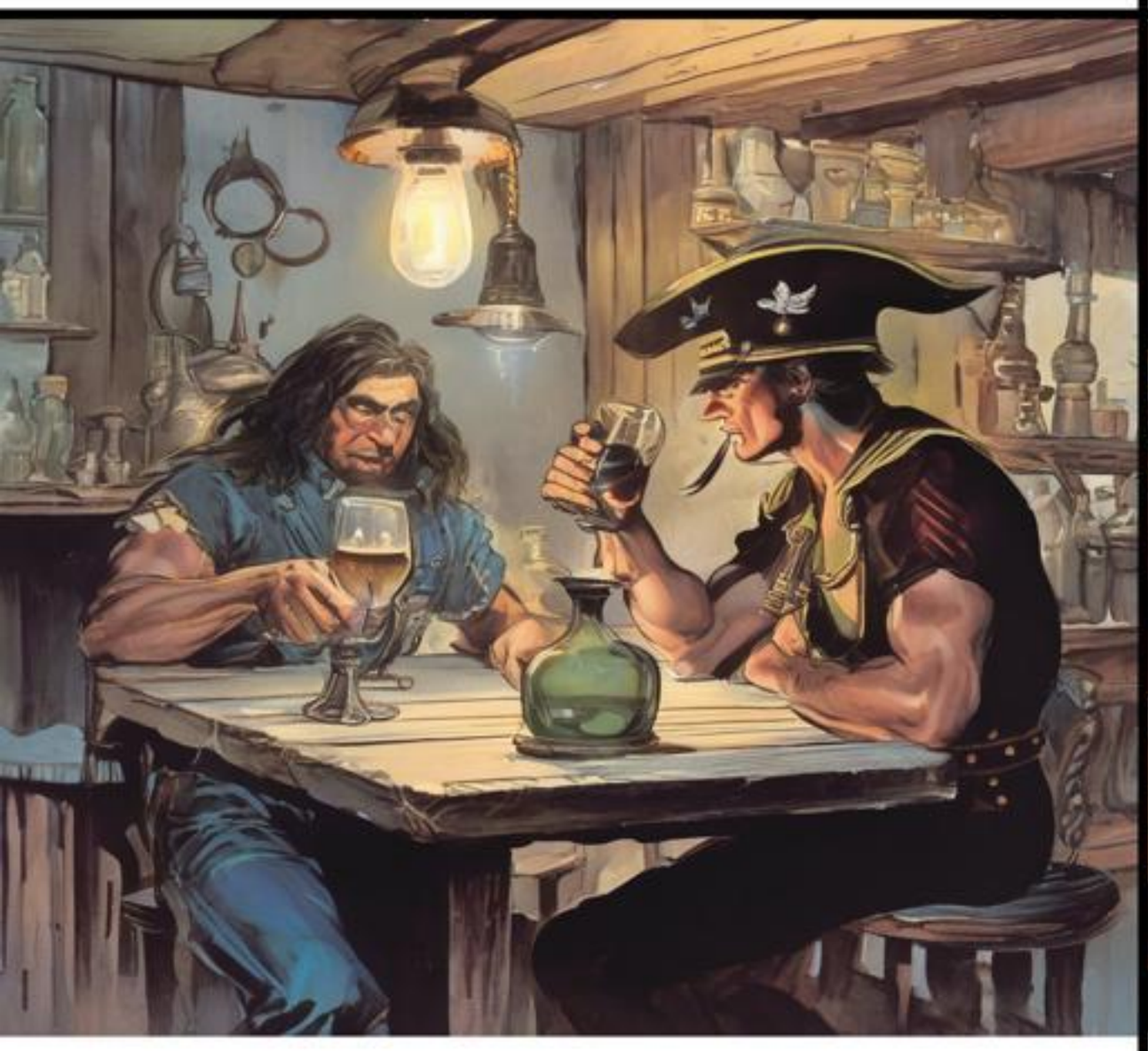
"GIVE ME... THE TIP... OF YOUR SWORD," SCALY PETE SAYS, HIS VOICE TREMBLING

"HOW MANY HITS...?" SCALY PETE ASKS IN A HAUNTED TONE

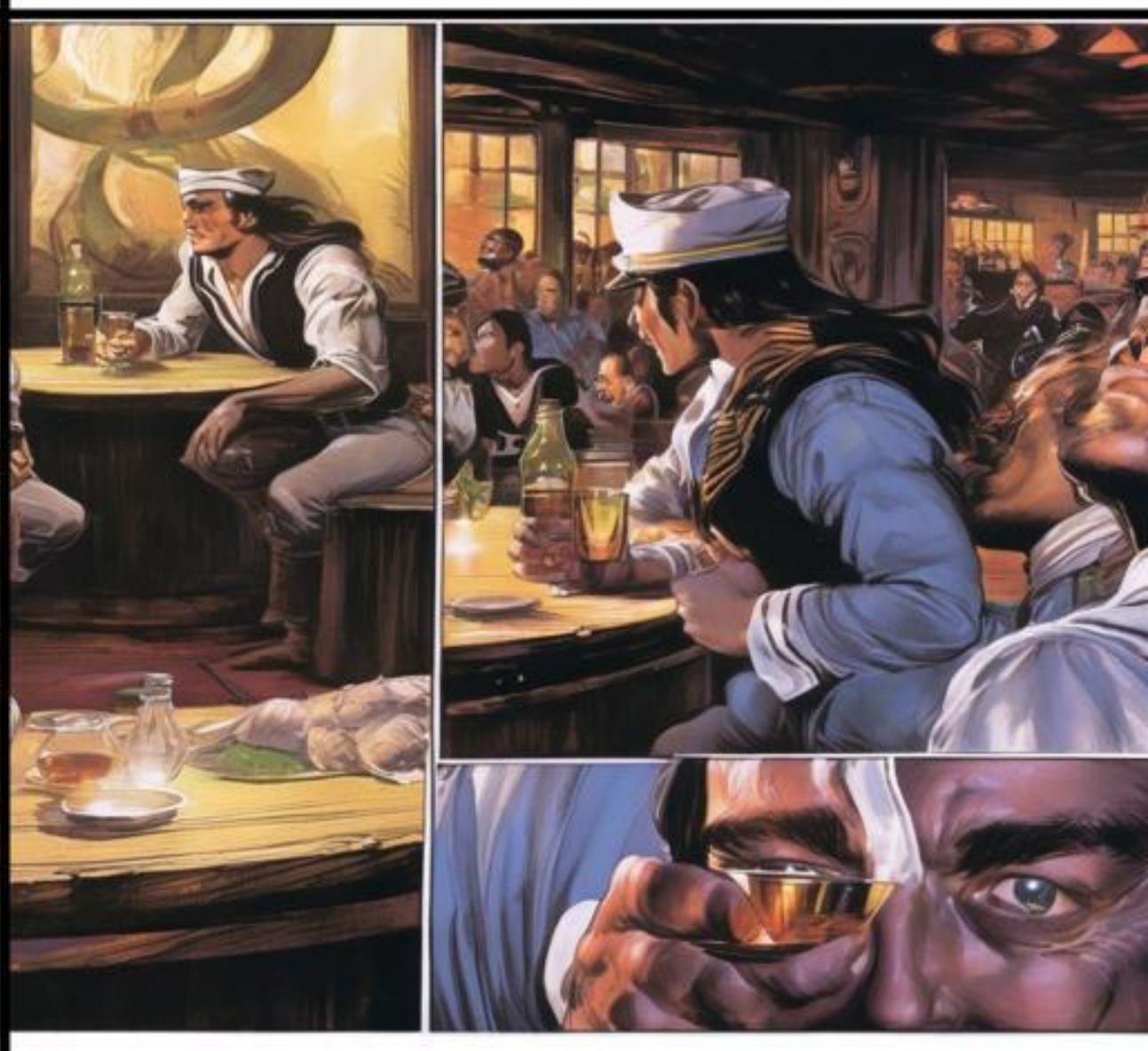
41... 41 DAMAGE. YOU CAVE IN.

SCALY PETE'S 'VE SMASHED YOUR OWN BODY, SAILOR... WHAT HAVE YOU DONE?'

'AS I STILL... WE BOTH HAVE OUR HAND ON THIS CHA.LICE'.



"WITH MY SLEIGHT OF HAND TRY TO STEAL...THE CHALICE"



"FINESSE... JUST GET IT OUT OF THERE WITHOUT TRIGGERING MORE CHAOS..."

"YOU'LL BURN YOURSELF TO ASHES FIRST!"

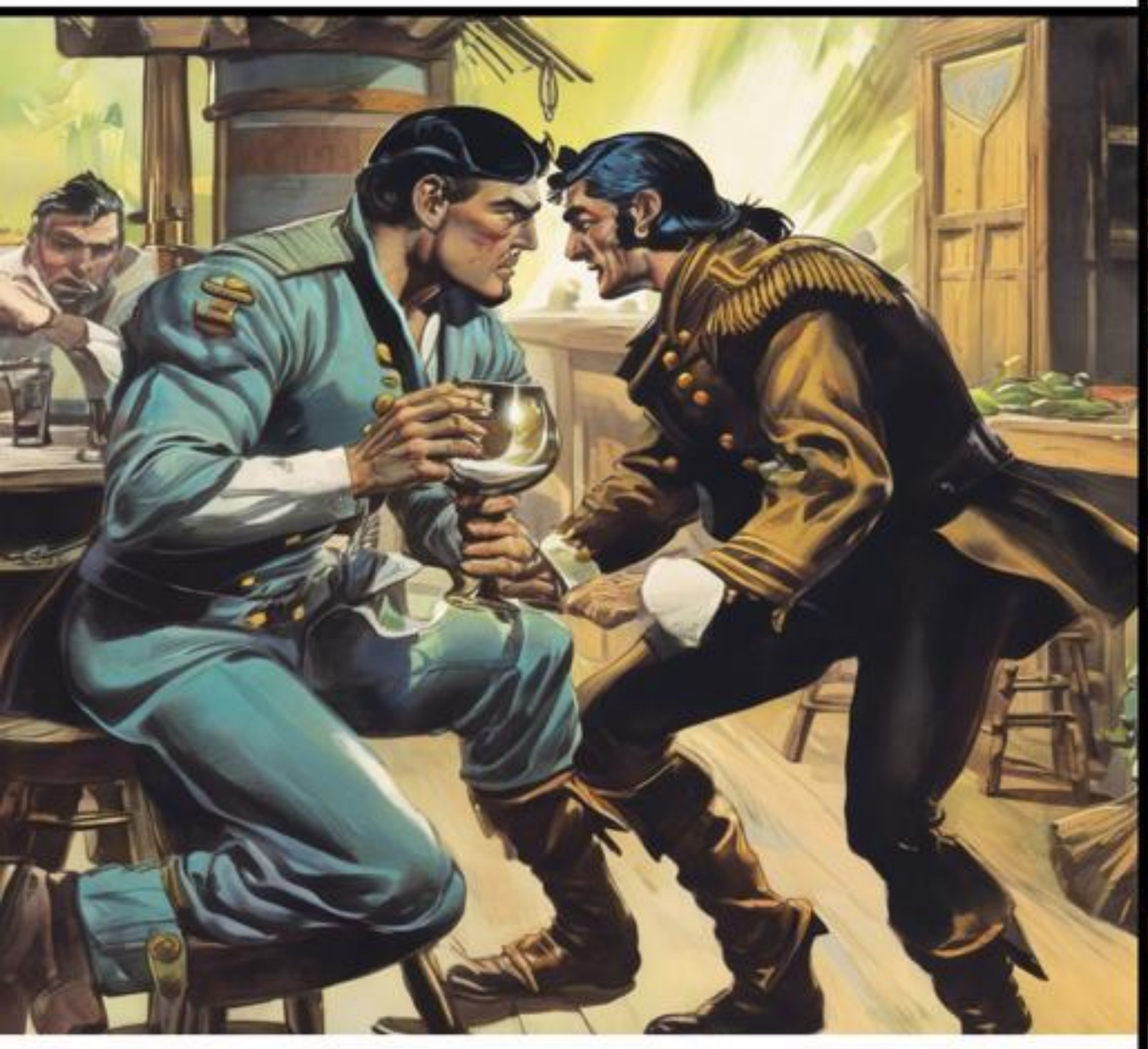
GNOME RECOGNIZE.S. THE NO.ISE.

SCALY PETE'S EYES WIDEN IN RAGE AS HE UNLEASHES HIS FULL FURY UPON GNOME WHITEFUR...

"YOU'RE NEXT, SAILOR! YOU'LL PAY FOR YOUR MEDDLING!"

SAILOR: (FRANTICALLY) 'NO...NO...THIS CAN'T BE HAPPENING!'

SCALENE WAS RIGHT... IT IS AS CONVENIENT AS IT IS.

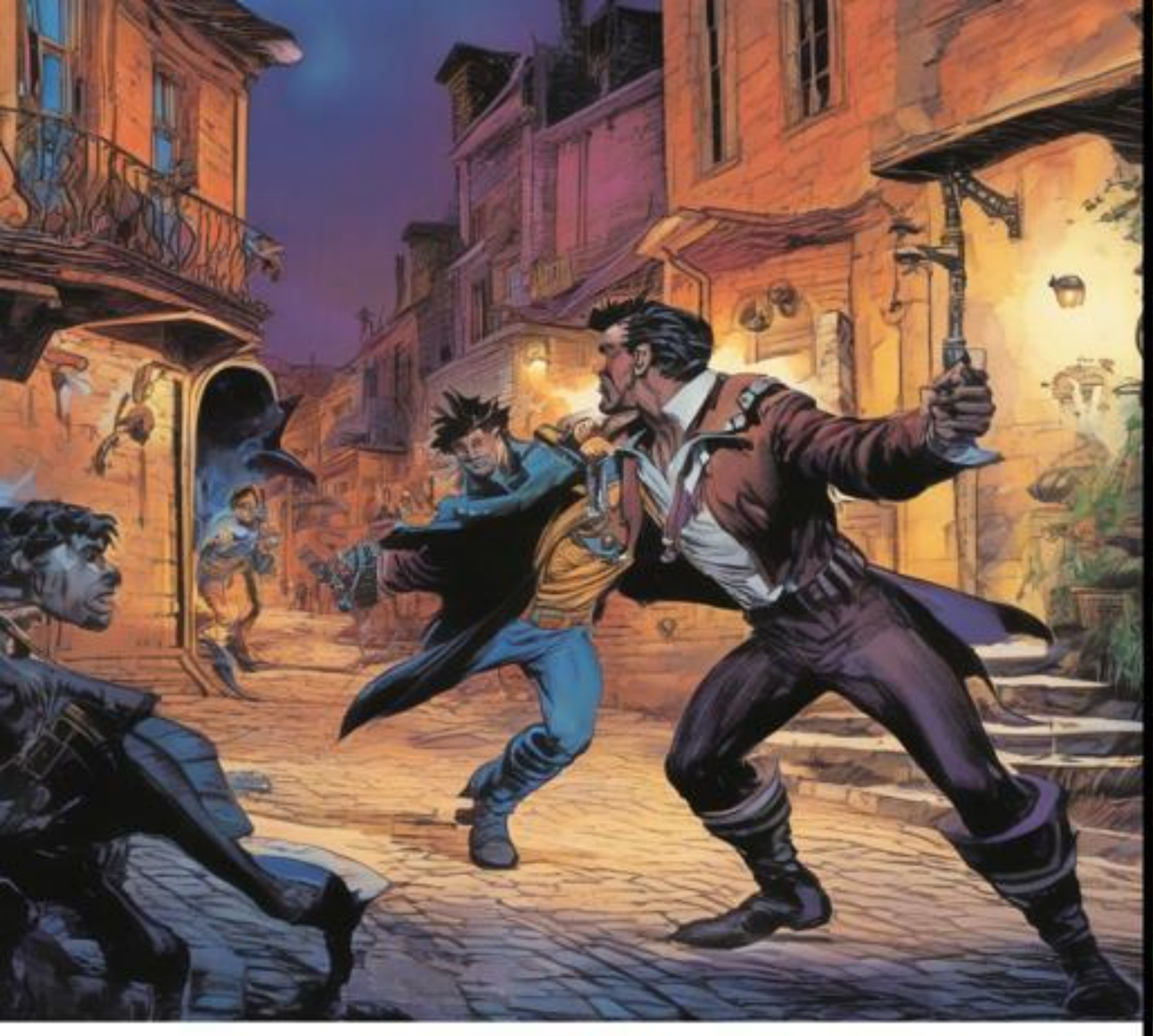


"ON THE SIDE, SO YOU MANAGE TO GIVE IT A SMACK FROM THE BOTTOM..."

SCALY PETE'S GRIP FALTERS, BUT THE SAILOR'S DOESN'T!

IT FEELS... COLD AND STRANGE...

'AND IT LOOKS AT YOU WITH WHAT'S LEFT OF ITS FACE'...



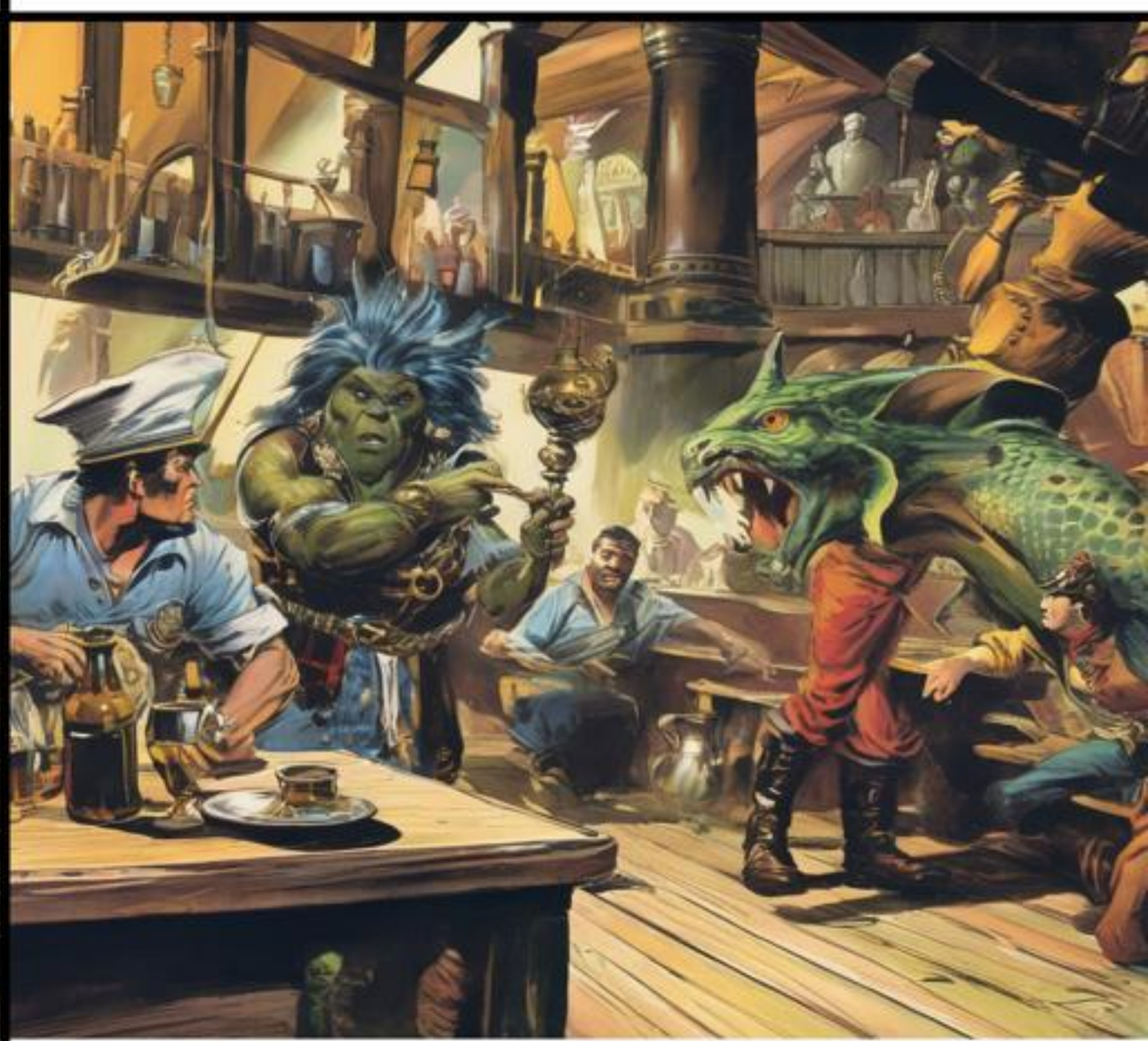
THE SOUND OF SCUFFLING AND GRUNTING COMES FROM UP AHEAD...

SCALY PETE'S EYES FLICKER OPEN, AND HE LOOKS UP AT THE SAILOR WITH A MIX OF CONFUSION AND SUSPICION

AS YOU HOLD... THE GOBLET YOU. START TO FEEL. KIND OF FUNNY...

SCALY PETE: 'ECHO IN YOUR EARS... SOUNDS LIKE THE HEARTBEATS OF THE CORPSES AROUND YOU'.

"YOU DROP IT..."



"I DON'T WANT TO TOUCH THAT ANY LONGER..." SCALY PETE SAYS, HIS EYES FIXED ON THE SPREADING LIQUID.

"NOT TOUCHING THAT..." SCALY PETE SAYS, HIS VOICE LACED WITH TREPIDATION

SCALY PETE STARES AT THE GOBLET IN HORROR: 'WHAT HAVE I UNLEASHED?'

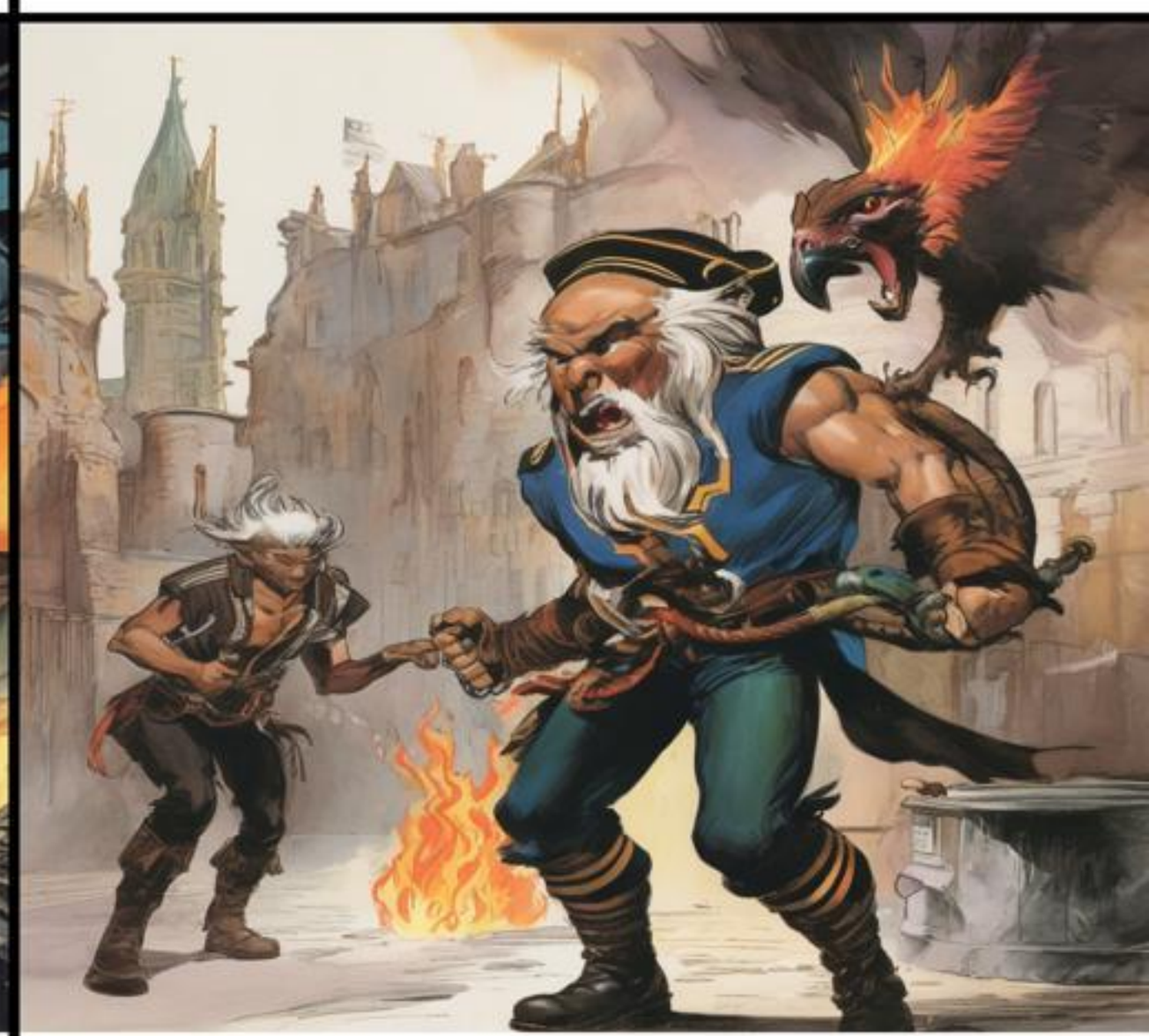
"YOU THINK IT'S GONE? WE CAN'T JUST LEAVE THIS..."

'DO WE EVEN WANT THIS THING?' SCALY PETE ASKS, AS THE SAILOR REPLIES 'YEAH, BUT WHAT WAS THE CONTRACT AGAIN?'

SCALY PETE: 'I SAY WE FILL OUR BOOTS...WITH THIS THING'.

"WHAT DO YOU DO?" SCALY PETE ASKS, EYES FIXED ON SAILOR AS HE STRUGGLES TO EXTINGUISH THE FLAMES

SAILOR GROANS IN PAIN, 'HUH...HU.H...



"WELL..." SAILOR GASPS BETWEEN COUGHS, EYES FIXED ON SCALY PETE'S BURNING GAZE

"I LAY ON HANDS 20 POINTS TO..TO NO AVAIL."

SCALY PETE CHANNELS HIS PALADIN MAGIC, MAGICALLY RESTORING THE WOUNDS TO GNOME WHITEFUR

"YOU HAVE A SCAR ON YOUR HAND.."

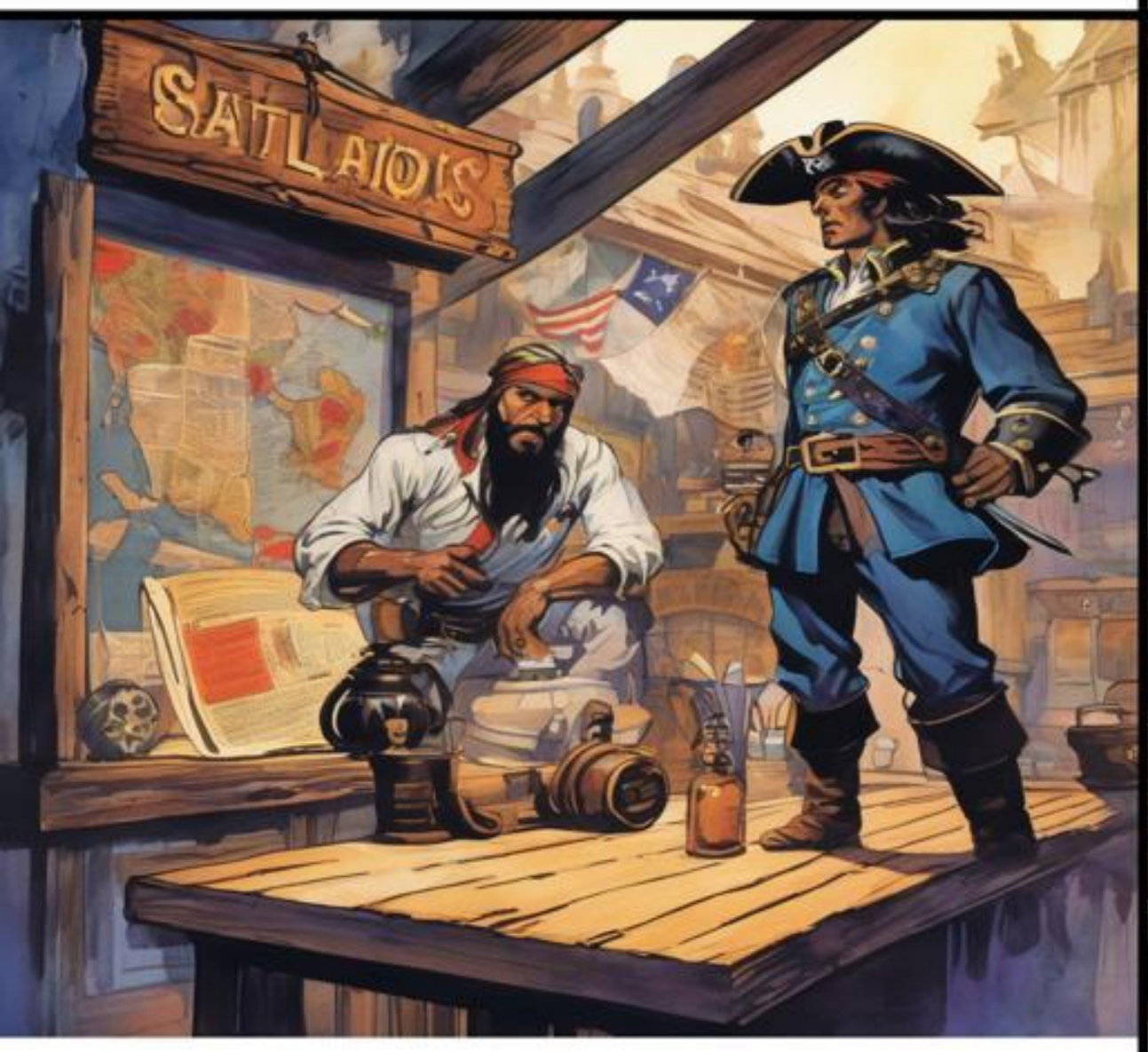
"YOU DON'T HEAR A LOT OF NOISE FROM THE OTHER SIDE..."

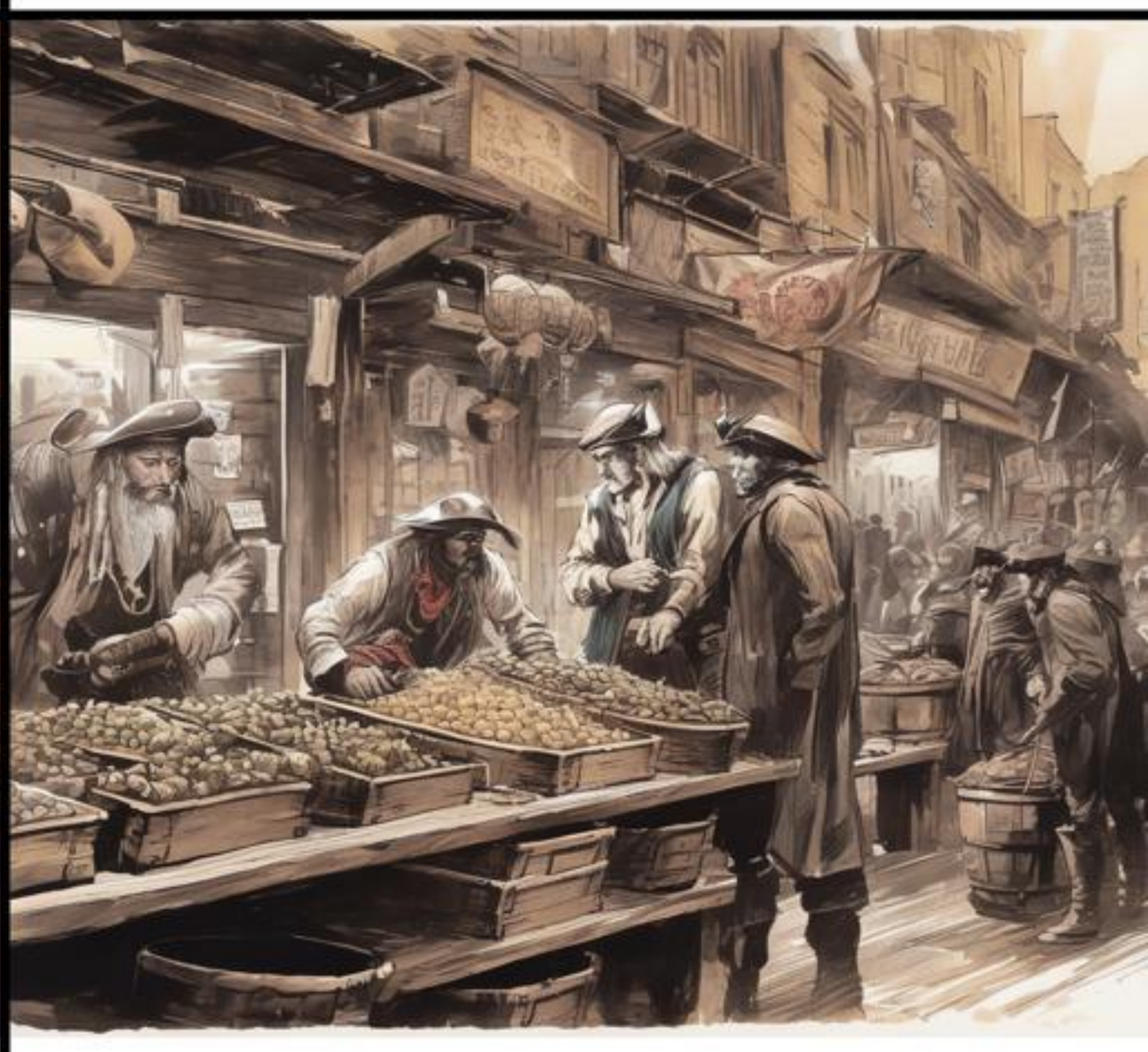
THE PIRATE SHIP THAT SANK... WHAT'S ITS CONNECTION TO OUR PAST?

AS THEY CONSIDER THEIR ESCAPE ROUTE, THEY CAN'T HELP BUT WONDER WHAT SECRETS LIE BENEATH THE WAVES.

SCALY PETE: 'IT'S ON THE FAR SIDE OF THE ISLAND..'

PIRATES PATROL THE STREETS...





"AH... LIKE THAT" SCALY PETE SAYS, NODDING TOWARDS A COAT, WHILE SAILOR LOOKS CONCERNED.

'WE NEED TO FIND THEIR BARRACKS' SCALY PETE SAYS, TRACING A PATH ON THE MAP.

SCALY PETE: "HE'S TOO FLASHY... WE CAN'T RISK BEING RECOGNIZED."

THE SOURCE OF THE VOICE... FROM BEFORE IS...

"SEEMS TO BE WAITING FOR HIS TURN..." SAILOR WHISPERS TO SCALY PETE

A PLAYFUL MOMENT AMIDST THE TENSION