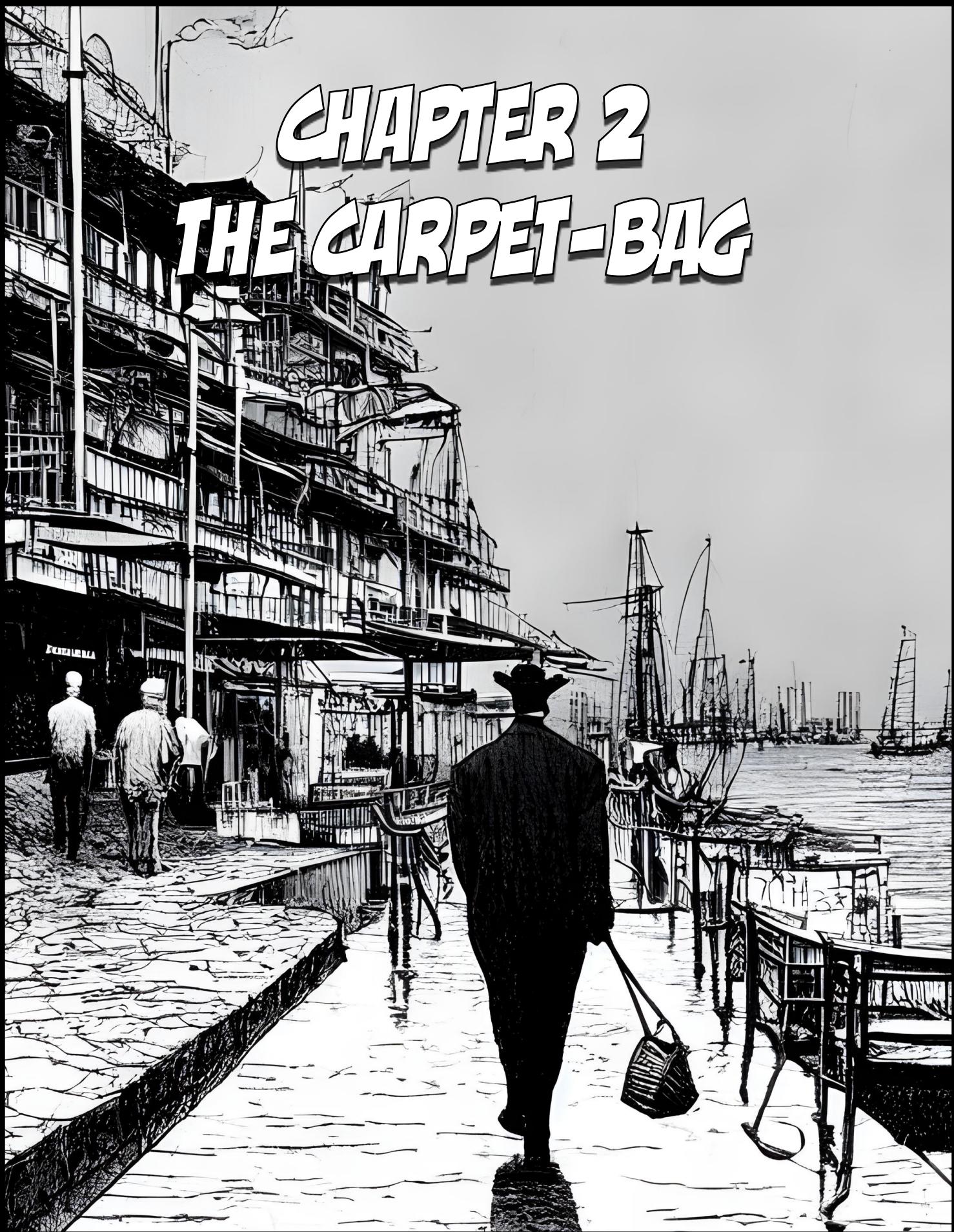


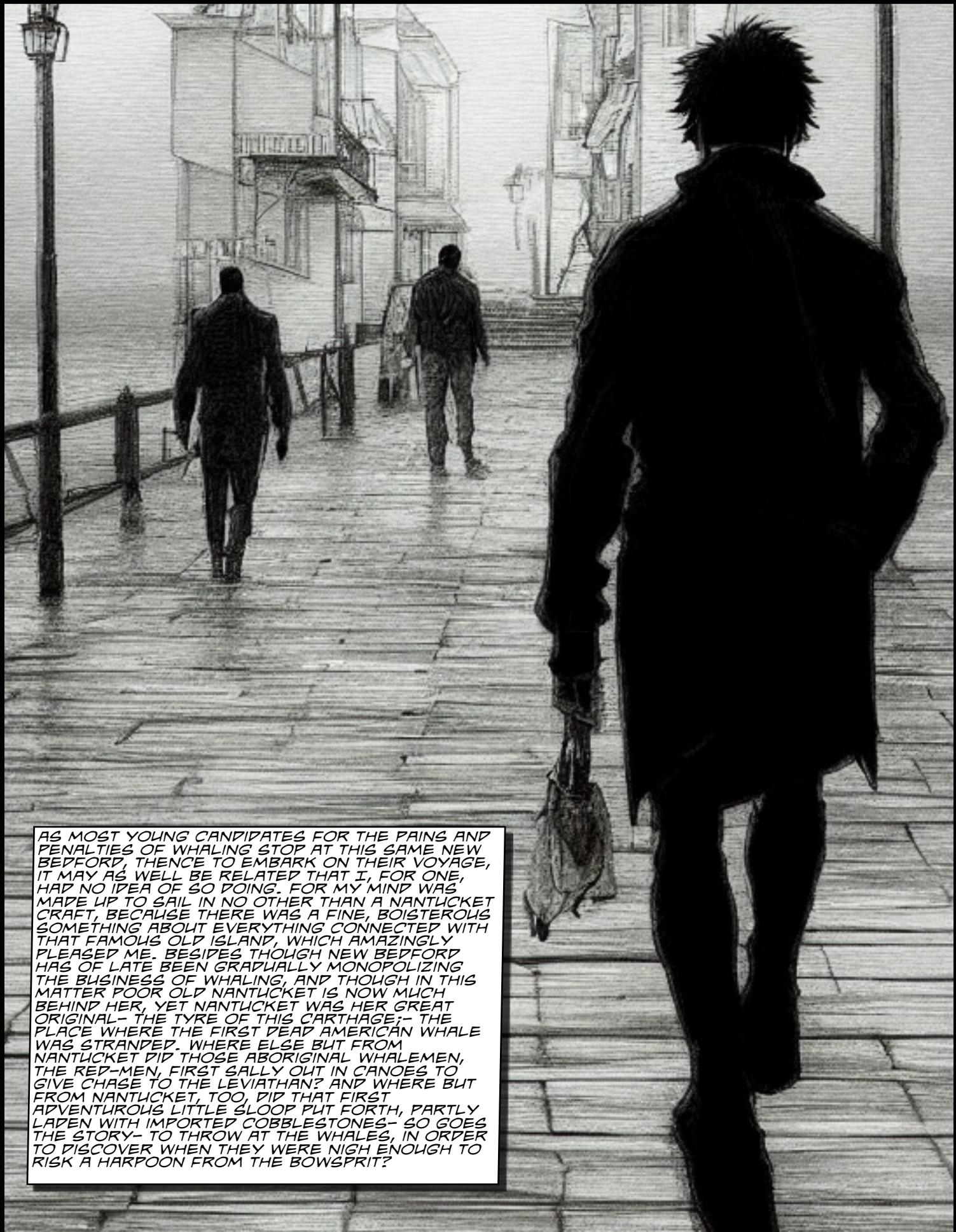
CHAPTER 2

THE CARPET-BAG



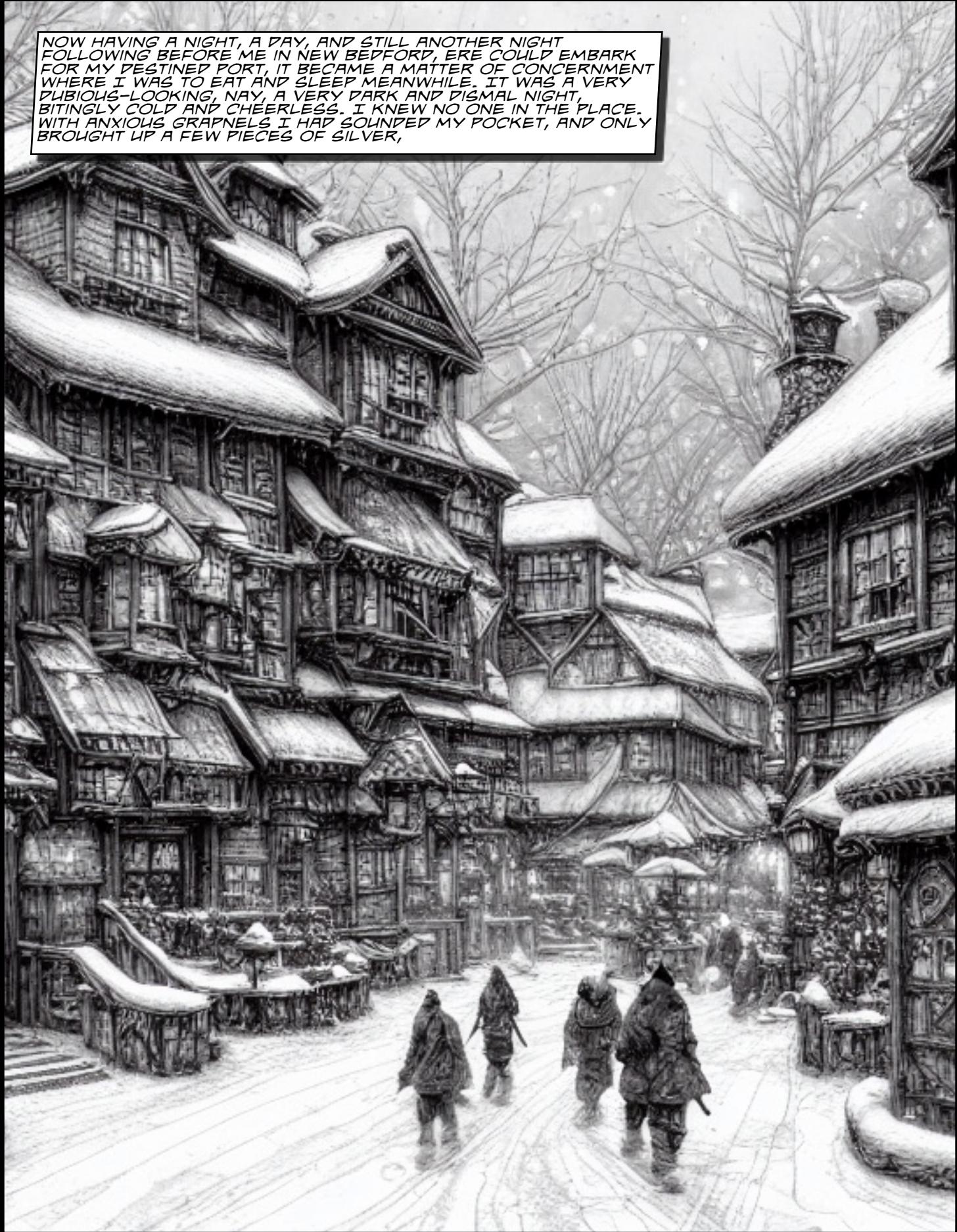
I STUFFED A SHIRT OR TWO INTO MY OLD CARPET-BAG, TUCKED IT UNDER MY ARM, AND STARTED FOR CAPE HORN AND THE PACIFIC. QUITTING THE GOOD CITY OF OLD MANHATTO, I DULY ARRIVED IN NEW BEDFORD. IT WAS A SATURDAY NIGHT IN DECEMBER. MUCH WAS I DISAPPOINTED UPON LEARNING THAT THE LITTLE PACKET FOR NANTUCKET HAD ALREADY SAILED, AND THAT NO WAY OF REACHING THAT PLACE WOULD OFFER, TILL THE FOLLOWING MONDAY.





AS MOST YOUNG CANDIDATES FOR THE PAINS AND PENALTIES OF WHALING STOP AT THIS SAME NEW BEDFORD, THENCE TO EMBARK ON THEIR VOYAGE, IT MAY AS WELL BE RELATED THAT I, FOR ONE, HAD NO IDEA OF SO DOING. FOR MY MIND WAS MADE UP TO SAIL IN NO OTHER THAN A NANTUCKET CRAFT, BECAUSE THERE WAS A FINE, BOISTEROUS SOMETHING ABOUT EVERYTHING CONNECTED WITH THAT FAMOUS OLD ISLAND, WHICH AMAZINGLY PLEASED ME. BESIDES THOUGH NEW BEDFORD HAS OF LATE BEEN GRADUALLY MONOPOLIZING THE BUSINESS OF WHALING, AND THOUGH IN THIS MATTER POOR OLD NANTUCKET IS NOW MUCH BEHIND HER, YET NANTUCKET WAS HER GREAT ORIGINAL- THE TYRE OF THIS CARTHAGE:- THE PLACE WHERE THE FIRST DEAD AMERICAN WHALE WAS STRANDED. WHERE ELSE BUT FROM NANTUCKET DID THOSE ABORIGINAL WHALEMEN, THE RED-MEN, FIRST SALLY OUT IN CANOES TO GIVE CHASE TO THE LEVIATHAN? AND WHERE BUT FROM NANTUCKET, TOO, DID THAT FIRST ADVENTUROUS LITTLE SLOOP PUT FORTH, PARTLY LANDED WITH IMPORTED COBBLESTONES- SO GOES THE STORY- TO THROW AT THE WHALES, IN ORDER TO DISCOVER WHEN THEY WERE NIGH ENOUGH TO RISK A HARPOON FROM THE BOWSPRIT?

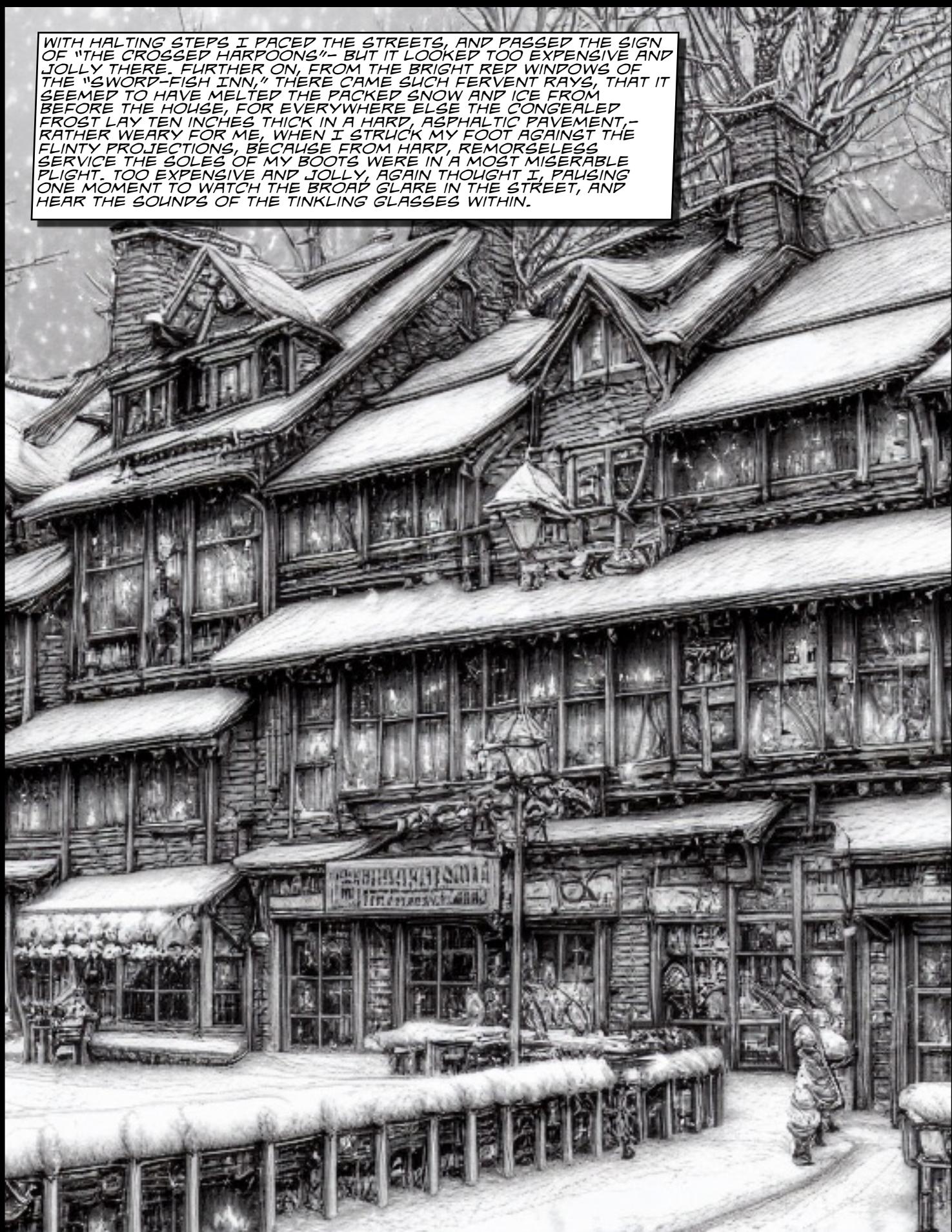
NOW HAVING A NIGHT, A DAY, AND STILL ANOTHER NIGHT FOLLOWING BEFORE ME IN NEW BEDFORD, ERE COULD EMBARK FOR MY DESTINED PORT, IT BECAME A MATTER OF CONCERNMENT WHERE I WAS TO EAT AND SLEEP MEANWHILE. IT WAS A VERY DUBIOUS-LOOKING, NAY, A VERY DARK AND DISMAL NIGHT, BITINGLY COLD AND CHEERLESS. I KNEW NO ONE IN THE PLACE. WITH ANXIOUS GRAPNELS I HAD SOUNDED MY POCKET, AND ONLY BROUGHT UP A FEW PIECES OF SILVER,



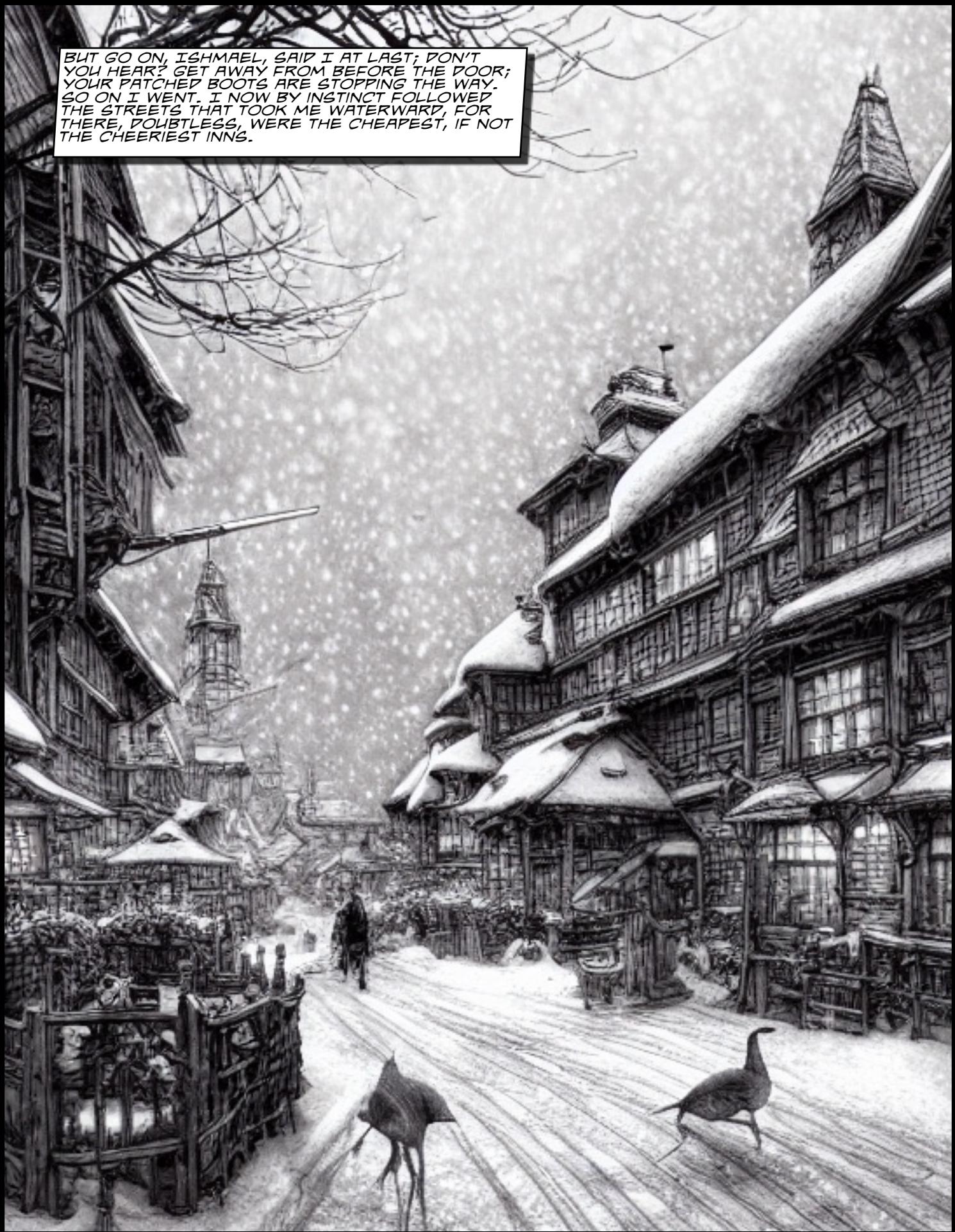
- SO, WHEREVER YOU GO, ISHMAEL, SAID I TO MYSELF, AS I STOOD IN THE MIDDLE OF A DREARY STREET SHOULDERING MY BAG, AND COMPARING THE TOWARDS THE NORTH WITH THE DARKNESS TOWARDS THE SOUTH- WHEREVER IN YOUR WISDOM YOU MAY CONCLUDE TO LODGE FOR THE NIGHT, MY DEAR ISHMAEL, BE SURE TO INQUIRE THE PRICE, AND DON'T BE TOO PARTICULAR.

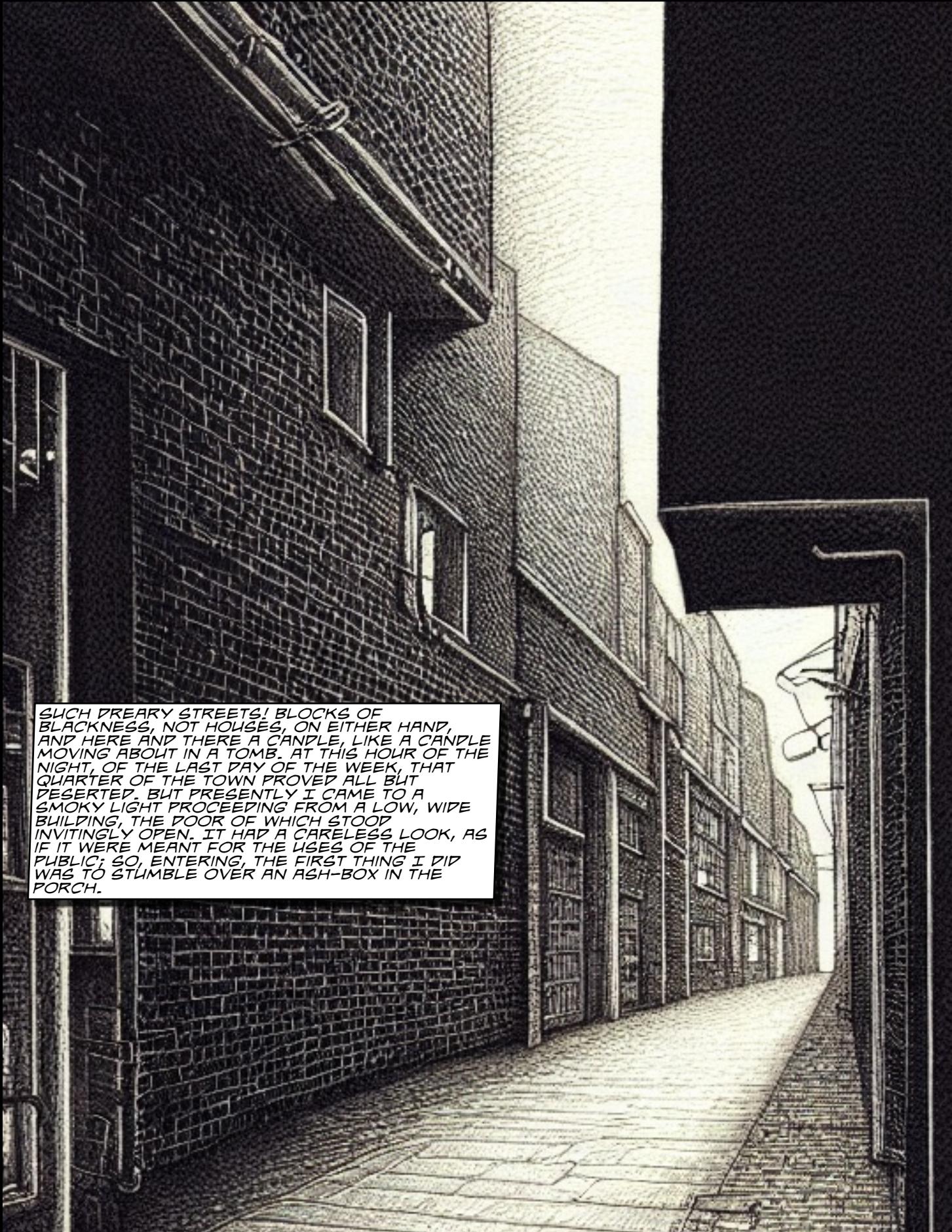


WITH HALTING STEPS I PACED THE STREETS, AND PASSED THE SIGN OF "THE CROSSED HARPOONS"—BUT IT LOOKED TOO EXPENSIVE AND JOLLY THERE. FURTHER ON, FROM THE BRIGHT RED WINDOWS OF THE "SWORD-FISH INN," THERE CAME SUCH FERVENT RAYS, THAT IT SEEMED TO HAVE MELTED THE PACKED SNOW AND ICE FROM BEFORE THE HOUSE, FOR EVERYWHERE ELSE THE CONGEALED FROST LAY TEN INCHES THICK IN A HARD, ASPHALTIC PAVEMENT—RATHER WEARY FOR ME, WHEN I STRUCK MY FOOT AGAINST THE FLINTY PROJECTIONS, BECAUSE FROM HARD, REMORSELESS SERVICE THE SOLES OF MY BOOTS WERE IN A MOST MISERABLE PLIGHT. TOO EXPENSIVE AND JOLLY, AGAIN THOUGHT I, PAUSING ONE MOMENT TO WATCH THE BROAD GLARE IN THE STREET, AND HEAR THE SOUNDS OF THE TINKLING GLASSES WITHIN.



BUT GO ON, ISHMAEL, SAID I AT LAST; DON'T YOU HEAR? GET AWAY FROM BEFORE THE DOOR; YOUR PATCHED BOOTS ARE STOPPING THE WAY. SO ON I WENT. I NOW BY INSTINCT FOLLOWED THE STREETS THAT TOOK ME WATERWARD, FOR THERE, DOUBTLESS, WERE THE CHEAPEST, IF NOT THE CHEERIEST INNS.

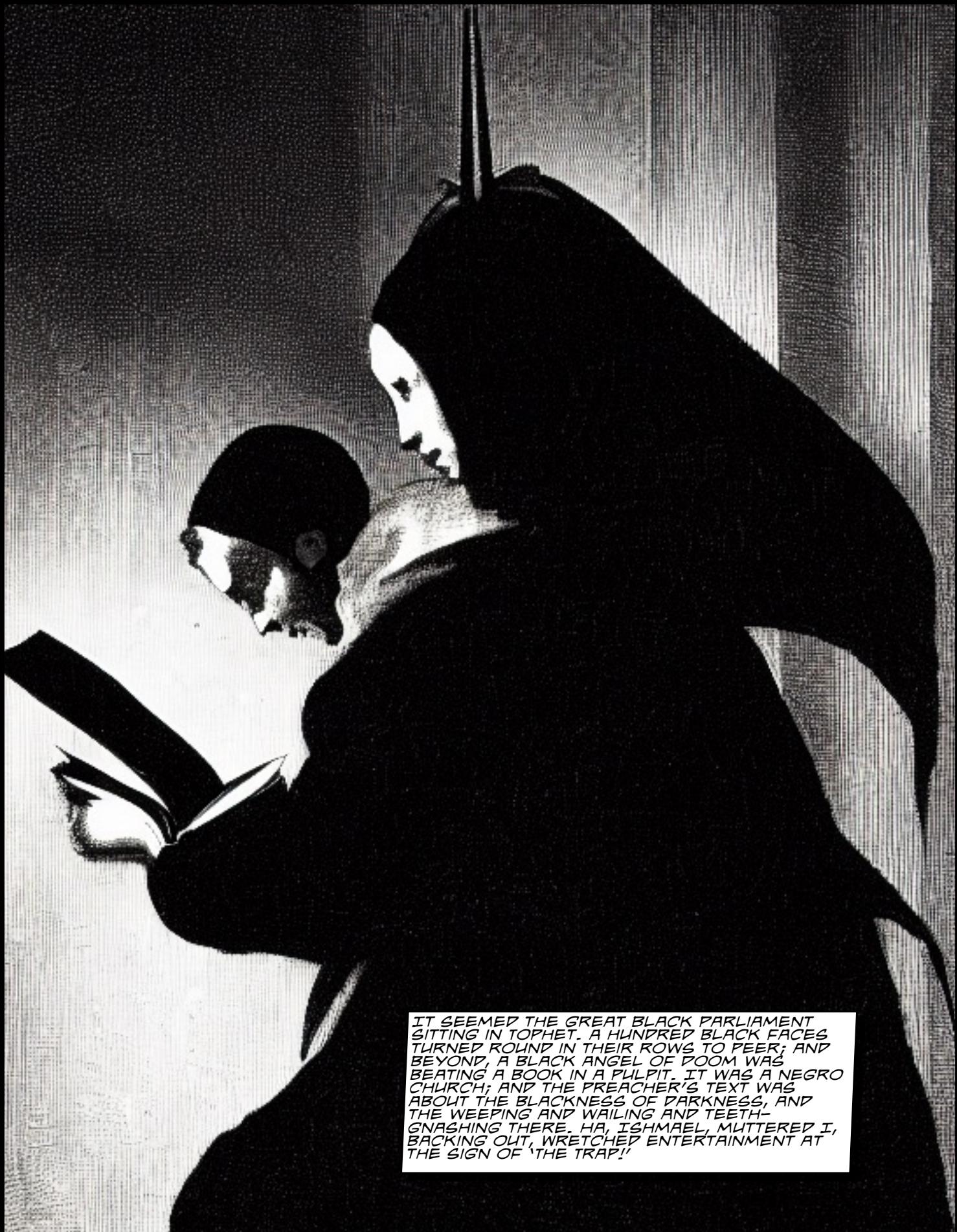




SUCH DREARY STREETS! BLOCKS OF BLACKNESS, NOT HOUSES, ON EITHER HAND, AND HERE AND THERE A CANDLE, LIKE A CANDLE MOVING ABOUT IN A TOMB. AT THIS HOUR OF THE NIGHT, OF THE LAST DAY OF THE WEEK, THAT QUARTER OF THE TOWN PROVED ALL BUT DESERTED. BUT PRESENTLY I CAME TO A SMOKY LIGHT PROCEEDING FROM A LOW, WIDE BUILDING, THE DOOR OF WHICH STOOD INVITINGLY OPEN. IT HAD A CARELESS LOOK, AS IF IT WERE MEANT FOR THE USES OF THE PUBLIC; SO, ENTERING, THE FIRST THING I DID WAS TO STUMBLE OVER AN ASH-BOX IN THE PORCH.

HA! THOUGHT I, HA, AS THE FLYING PARTICLES ALMOST CHOKED ME, ARE THESE ASHES FROM THAT DESTROYED CITY, GOMORRAH? BUT "THE CROSSED HARPOONS," AND THE "THE SWORD-FISH?" - THIS, THEN MUST NEEDS BE THE SIGN OF "THE TRAP." HOWEVER, I PICKED MYSELF UP AND HEARING A LOUD VOICE WITHIN, PUSHED ON AND OPENED A SECOND, INTERIOR DOOR.



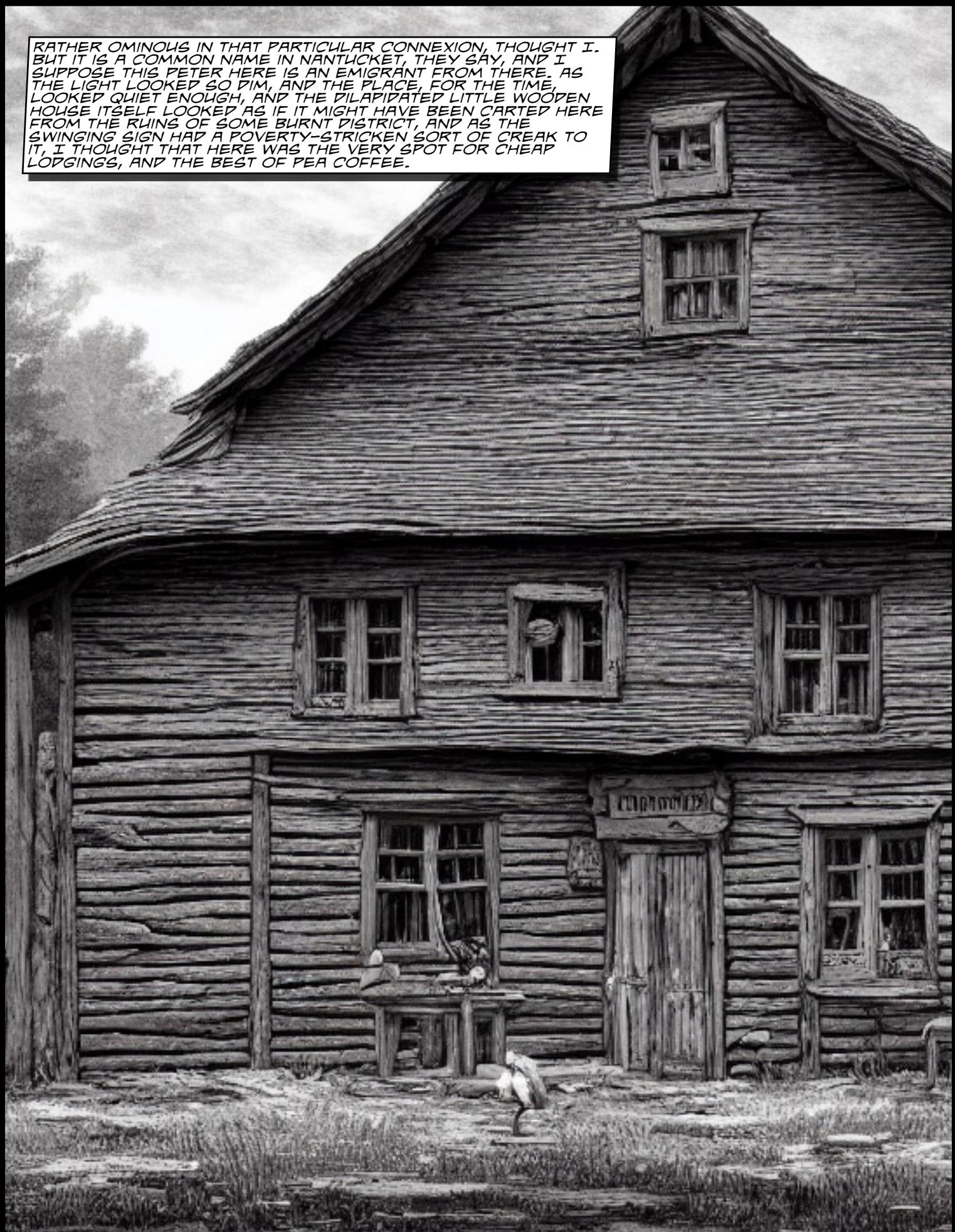


IT SEEMED THE GREAT BLACK PARLIAMENT
SITTING IN TOPHET. A HUNDRED BLACK FACES
TURNED ROUND IN THEIR ROWS TO PEER; AND
BEYOND, A BLACK ANGEL OF DOOM WAS
BEATING A BOOK IN A PULPIT. IT WAS A NEGRO
CHURCH; AND THE PREACHER'S TEXT WAS
ABOUT THE BLACKNESS OF DARKNESS, AND
THE WEEPING AND WAILING AND TEETH-
GNASHING THERE. HA, ISHMAEL, MUTTERED I,
BACKING OUT, WRETCHED ENTERTAINMENT AT
THE SIGN OF 'THE TRAP'!



MOVING ON, I AT LAST CAME TO A DIM SORT OF LIGHT NOT FAR FROM THE DOCKS, AND HEARD A FORLORN CREAKING IN THE AIR; AND LOOKING UP, SAW A SWINGING SIGN OVER THE DOOR WITH A WHITE PAINTING UPON IT, FAINTLY REPRESENTING TALL STRAIGHT JET OF MISTY SPRAY, AND THESE WORDS UNDERNEATH—“THE SPOUTER INN-- PETER COFFIN.”
COFFIN?— SPOUTER?

RATHER OMINOUS IN THAT PARTICULAR CONNEXION, THOUGHT I.
BUT IT IS A COMMON NAME IN NANTUCKET, THEY SAY, AND I
SUPPOSE THIS PETER HERE IS AN EMIGRANT FROM THERE. AS
THE LIGHT LOOKED SO DIM, AND THE PLACE, FOR THE TIME,
LOOKED QUIET ENOUGH, AND THE DILAPIDATED LITTLE WOODEN
HOUSE ITSELF LOOKED AS IF IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN CARTED HERE
FROM THE RUINS OF SOME BURNT DISTRICT, AND AS THE
SWINGING SIGN HAD A POVERTY-STRICKEN SORT OF CREAK TO
IT, I THOUGHT THAT HERE WAS THE VERY SPOT FOR CHEAP
LODGINGS, AND THE BEST OF PEANUT COFFEE.



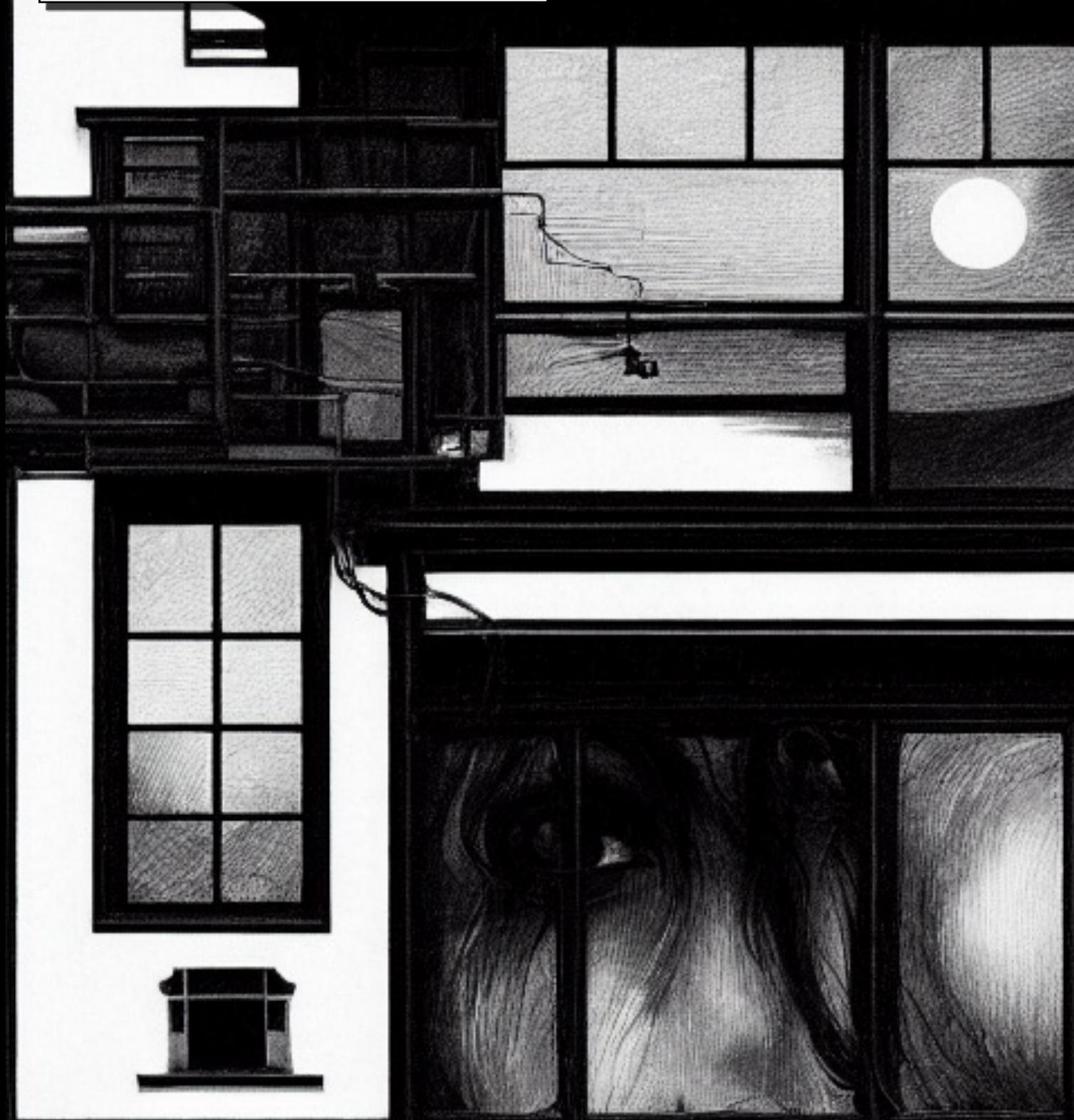
IT WAS A QUEER SORT OF PLACE-A GABLE-ENDED OLD HOUSE, ONE SIDE PALSED AS IT WERE, AND LEANING OVER SADLY. IT STOOD ON A SHARP BLEAK CORNER, WHERE THAT TEMPESTUOUS WIND EUROCLYDON KEPT UP A WORSE HOWLING THAN EVER IT DID ABOUT POOR PAUL'S TOSSED CRAFT.



EUROCLYDON, NEVERTHELESS, IS A MIGHTY PLEASANT ZEPHYR TO ANY ONE IN-DOORS, WITH HIS FEET ON THE HOB QUIETLY TOASTING FOR BED. "IN OF THAT TEMPESTHOUS WIND CALLED EUROCLYDON," SAYS AN OLD WRITER- OF WHOSE WORKS I POSSESS THE ONLY COPY EXTANT- "IT MAKETH A MARVELLOUS DIFFERENCE, WHETHER THOU LOOKEST OUT AT IT FROM A GLASS WINDOW WHERE THE FROST IS ALL ON THE OUTSIDE, OR WHETHER THOU OBSERVEST IT FROM THAT SASHLESS WINDOW, WHERE THE FROST IS ON BOTH SIDES, AND OF WHICH THE WIGHT DEATH IS THE ONLY GLAZIER."



TRUE ENOUGH, THOUGHT I, AS THIS PASSAGE OCCURRED TO MY MIND- OLD BLACK-LETTER, THOU REASONEST WELL. YES, THESE EYES ARE WINDOWS, AND THIS BODY OF MINE IS THE HOUSE. WHAT A PITIY THEY DIDN'T STOP UP THE CHINKS AND THE CRANNIES THOUGH, AND THRUST IN A LITTLE LINT HERE AND THERE. BUT IT'S TOO LATE TO MAKE ANY IMPROVEMENTS NOW. THE UNIVERSE IS FINISHED; THE COPESTONE IS ON, AND THE CHIPS WERE CARTED OFF A MILLION YEARS AGO.

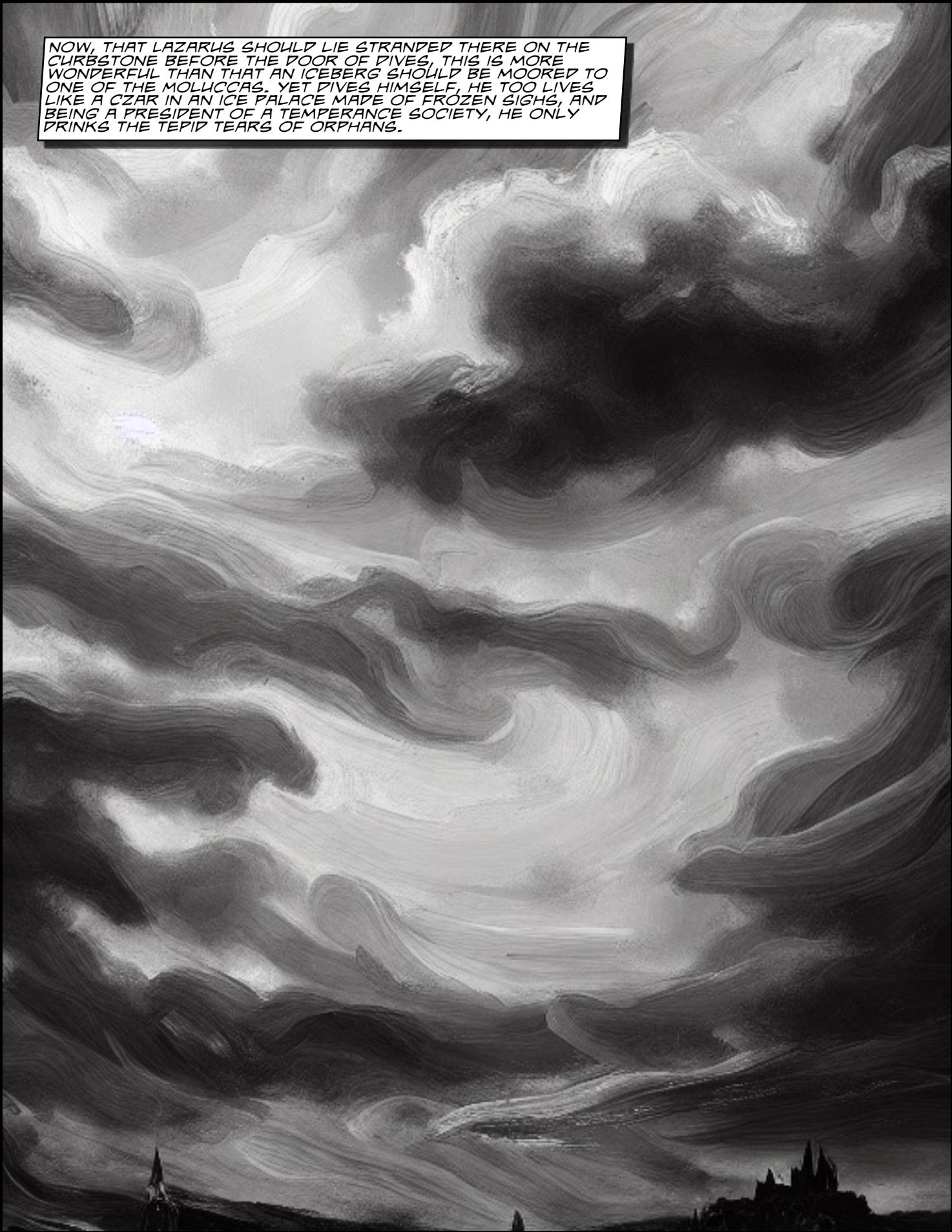


POOR LAZARUS THERE, CHATTERING HIS TEETH
AGAINST THE CURBSTONE FOR HIS PILLOW, AND
SHAKING OFF HIS TATTERS WITH HIS SHIVERINGS, HE
MIGHT PLUG UP BOTH EARS WITH RAGS, AND PUT A
CORN-COB INTO HIS MOUTH, AND YET THAT WOULD
NOT KEEP OUT THE TEMPESTUOUS EUROCLYDON.
EUROCLYDON! SAYS OLD DIVES, IN HIS RED SILKEN
WRAPPER- (HE HAD A REDDER ONE AFTERWARDS)
POOH, POOH! WHAT A FINE FROSTY NIGHT; HOW
ORION GLITTERS; WHAT NORTHERN LIGHTS! LET
THEM TALK OF THEIR ORIENTAL SUMMER CLIMES OF
EVERLASTING CONSERVATORIES; GIVE ME THE
PRIVILEGE OF MAKING MY OWN SUMMER WITH MY
OWN COALS.



BUT WHAT THINKS LAZARUS? CAN HE WARM HIS BLUE
HANDS BY HOLDING THEM UP TO THE GRAND NORTHERN
LIGHTS? WOULD NOT LAZARUS RATHER BE IN SUMATRA
THAN HERE? WOULD HE NOT FAR RATHER LAY HIM
DOWN LENGTHWISE ALONG THE LINE OF THE EQUATOR;
YEA, YE GODS! GO DOWN TO THE FIERY PIT ITSELF, IN
ORDER TO KEEP OUT THIS FROST?





NOW, THAT LAZARUS SHOULD LIE STRANDED THERE ON THE
CURBSTONE BEFORE THE POOR OF DIVES, THIS IS MORE
WONDERFUL THAN THAT AN ICEBERG SHOULD BE MOORED TO
ONE OF THE MOLUCCAS. YET DIVES HIMSELF, HE TOO LIVES
LIKE A CZAR IN AN ICE PALACE MADE OF FROZEN SIGHHS, AND
BEING A PRESIDENT OF A TEMPERANCE SOCIETY, HE ONLY
DRINKS THE TEPID TEARS OF ORPHANS.

BUT NO MORE OF THIS BLUBBERING NOW, WE ARE
GOING A-WHALING, AND THERE IS PLENTY OF THAT YET
TO COME. LET US SCRAPE THE ICE FROM OUR
FROSTED FEET, AND SEE WHAT SORT OF A PLACE THIS
"SPOUTER" MAY BE.

