

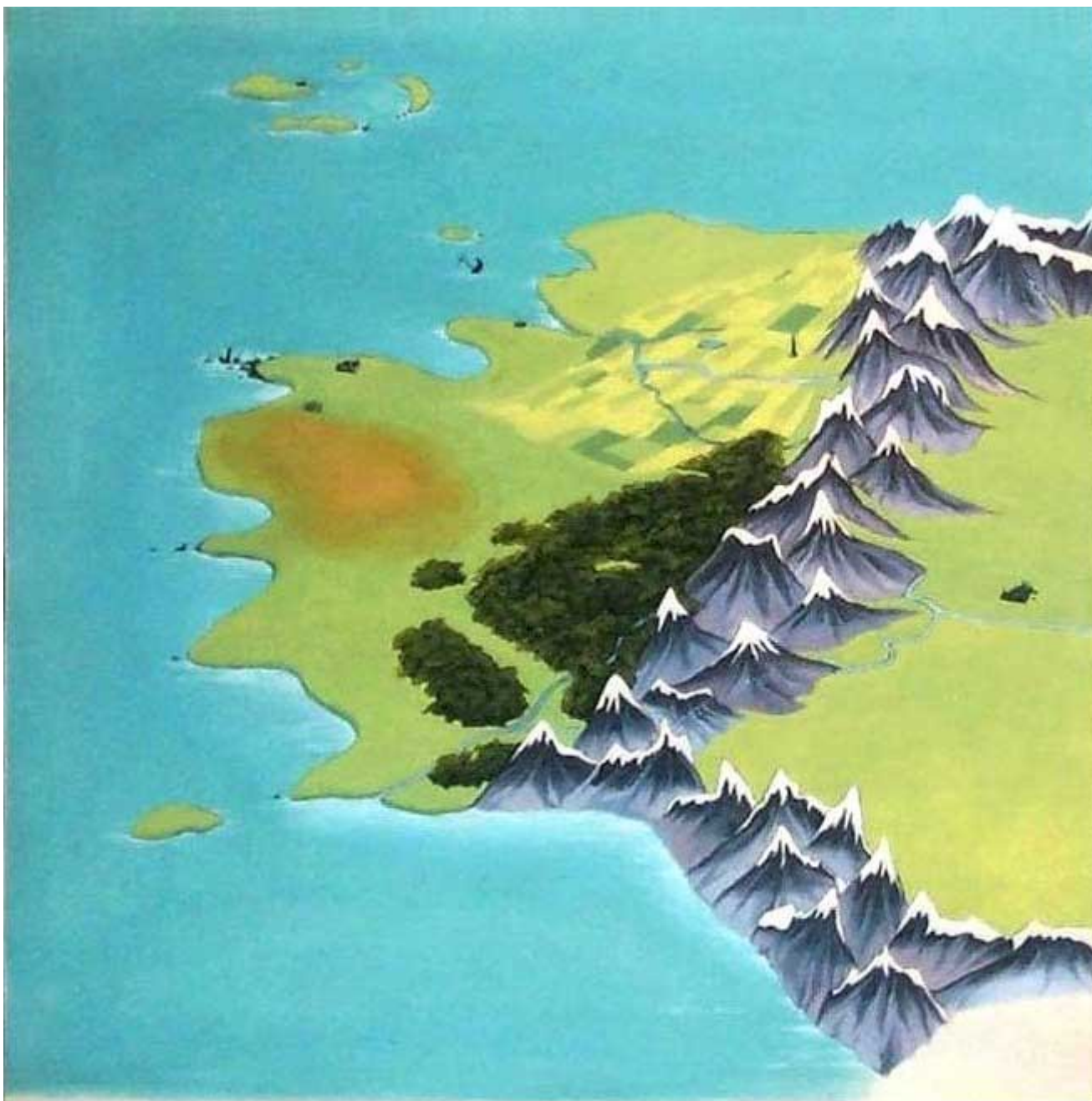
# COCONIA

Written & illustrated by Chris Covins © 1988



All rights reserved. Reproduction in whole or in part in any form or medium is prohibited without the express written permission of The Coconia Trust.  
[www.coconia.co.uk](http://www.coconia.co.uk)

**For Sam and Jake  
with love from Daddy**



## Beyond imagination

*F*ar to the west of Imagination lies the land of Coconia and the four islands of the Pinolians.

Bordered by the sea, the clashing rocks to the west and the White Mountains to the east, Coconia is populated by the four tribes of the Palmae: the Cocos, the Nucifera, the Ananas and the Sabat.

Beyond the White Mountains to the east lies the hidden land of Coconia where, unknown to the four tribes, lives the lost tribe of the Palmett; the fifth tribe of the Coconian nation mentioned in the great book of Chamaerops.





## A dream of destiny

**A**nak of the tribe Ananas dreamed a great dream.

After a long day fishing and tending the nets in the little fishing village of Anadir, he returned to his home and family tired and hungry.

Anakim, Anak's wife, fed him a rich, nourishing meal and seeing he was so tired packed him off to bed.

Anak's sleep, despite his tiredness, was troubled and disturbed as he tossed and turned constantly. When he did finally fall into a deep sleep it was to dream of a great city with buildings, the like of which he had never seen before.

Without knowing how he sensed that this place was part of his destiny.





Anak awoke suddenly, disturbed by the intensity of his dream and an awareness of a strange light shining through the window of his room.

Rising to stand at the window, Anak saw that the strange light came from beyond the White Mountains. It gave a golden glow that shimmered like the image of his dream.

At that moment a comet streaked across the night sky and across the White Mountains falling towards the glow beyond. To Anak it was like a finger pointing out a direction for him to follow.





## An unexpected visitor

Still wondering about the significance of his dream, Anak went to work as usual along with his son, Ani.

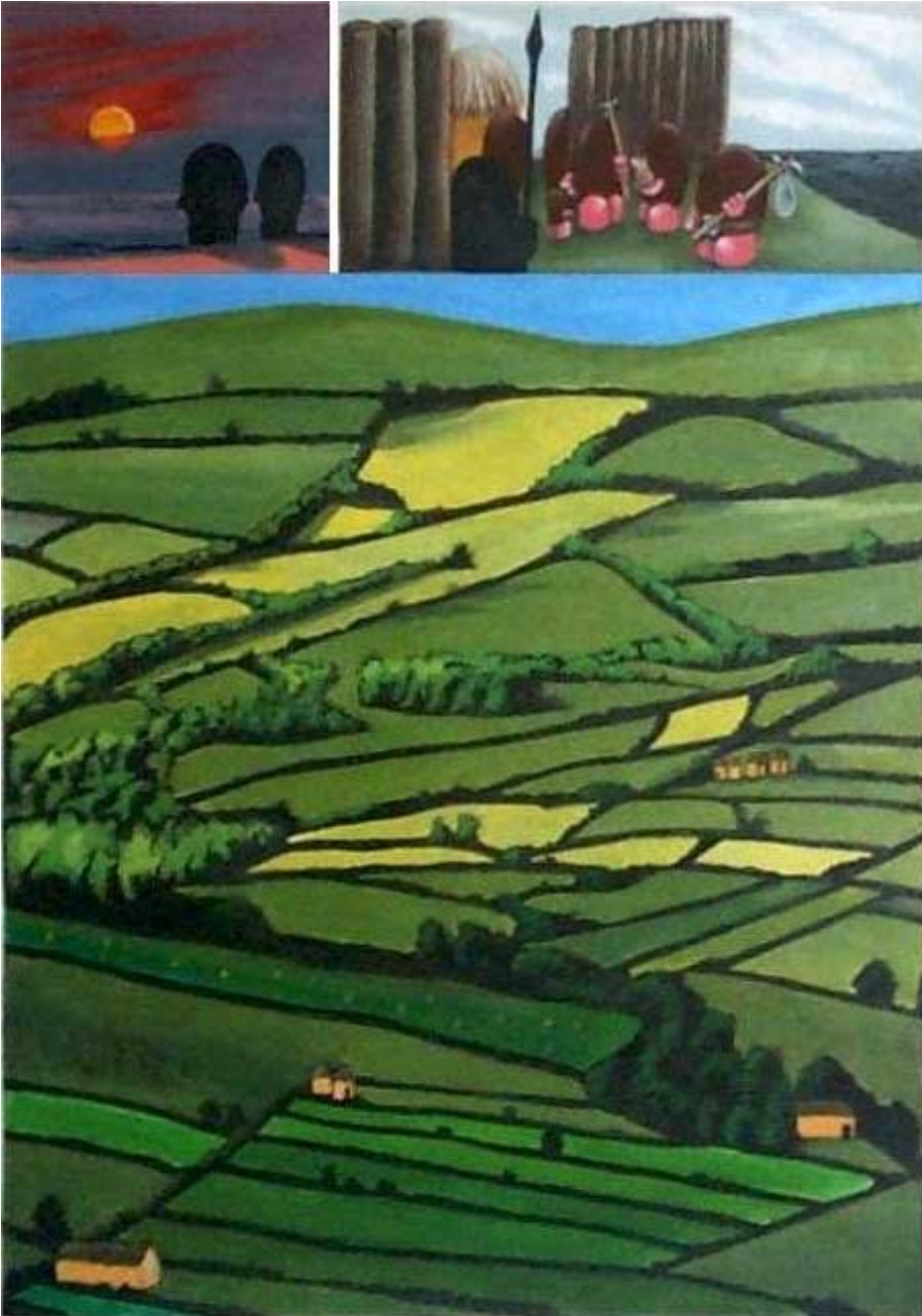
Great excitement was created when, during the day, an extraordinarily large Coconian was washed up on the beach barely alive.

After warming and feeding him they learned that the strange Coconian was named Colossus and that he had a very strange story to tell.

Seated in the main hall of the village with Anak and the elders, Colossus told them of how he had been kidnapped by Pinolians whilst chopping wood in the forest, taken by them to a ship, chained in the bilges, and how he had overheard his Pinolian kidnappers planning to invade Coconia!

Colossus also told of how the Pinolian vessel was wrecked in a great storm off the Coconian coast and himself washed on the shore.





Colossus, the council then discovered, came from a tribe of woodsmen, the Cocos, near the White Mountains.

It was immediately decided that Colossus and Anak should convey their fears of a Pinolian invasion and the war this would bring to the great city of Coconia, Cocopa, and to the Elder of all Elders, Panopolis. They felt sure that Panopolis, with his wisdom of years, would know what to do.

The following day Colossus and Anak set out to journey across the fair lands of Coconia.





## The journey begins

*T*he first sign that they were nearing their goal came when they stumbled upon a comana stone, telling them that they were 300 comani from the city of Cocopa.

“Two more days will see us there”, said Colossus and, not looking where he was going, walked straight into a stream instead of crossing by the bridge.

As it then started to rain the fact that he was soaking wet mattered not at all.

At night they lit a fire to dry out and slept warm and snug under the stars, starting each new day at dawn to take advantage of as much light as possible.

Eventually the great city of Cocopa came into sight.







Because they had arrived too late in the day, the city gates were closed and no outsiders allowed into the city.

That night Anak took Colossus to the ruined city of Pandosia, once the home of the lost tribe of the Palmett.

The city was a monument to a time long ago when the land of Coconia suffered a dreadful invasion and a war with the Pinolians. At that time the land was overrun and the Palmett driven beyond the White Mountains, never to be heard of again, except in the great book of Chamaerops.

Colossus collected water and Anak some sticks for a fire ready to spend the night in the city of Pandosia.

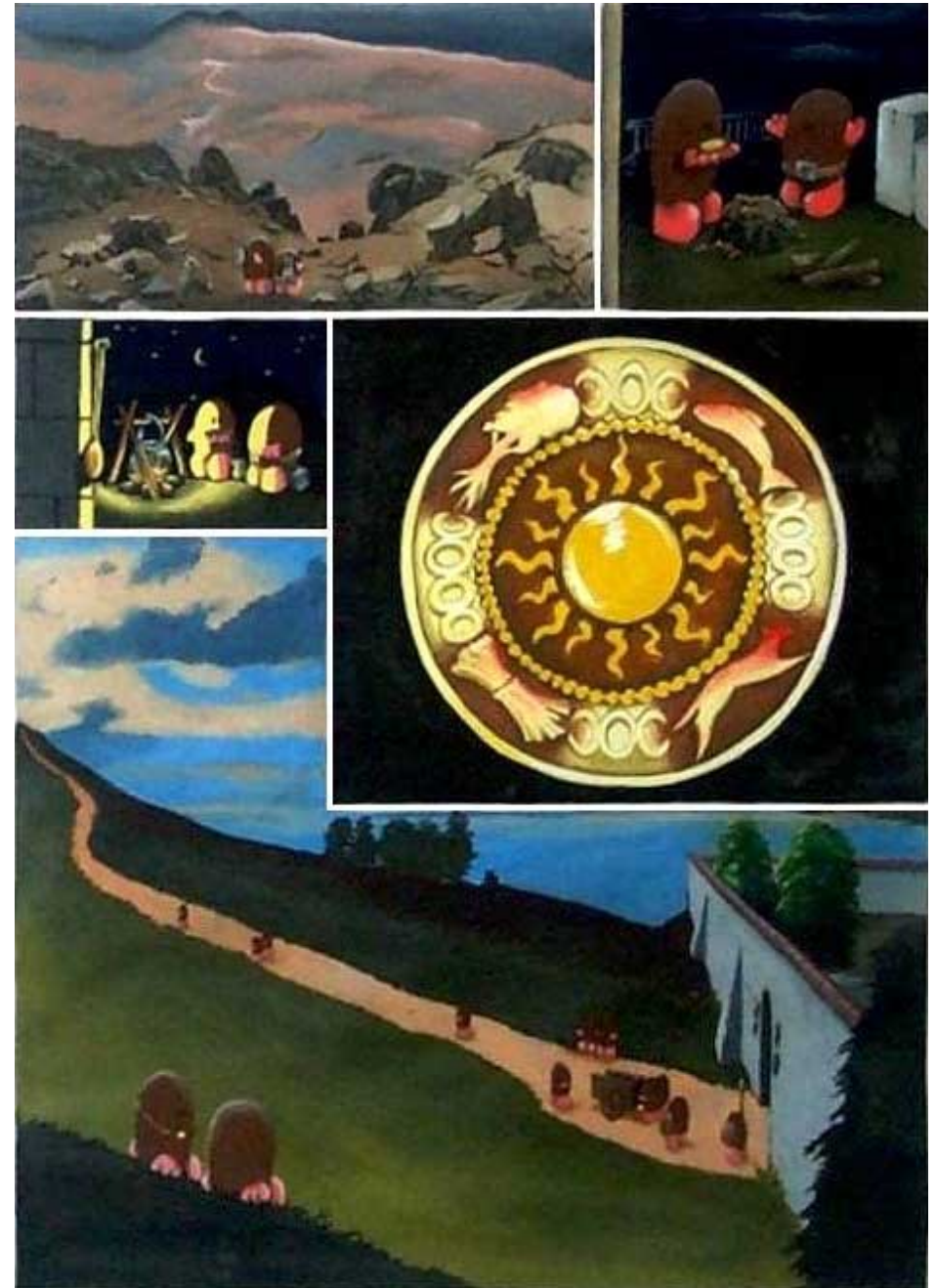


Together in the falling dusk, Anak and Colossus took a last look at the land before settling down for the night.

Digging a pit for the fire, Anak struck something hard and metallic in the earth. To the great surprise of both of them, Anak scraped away the dirt from a gold medallion, a medallion that appeared to glow in the dark.

They sat long into the night huddled around their fire discussing what significance their great find could have and Anak announced his intention of wearing the medallion around his neck as a good luck charm.

Next morning they entered the city of Cocopa.





## Finding an answer

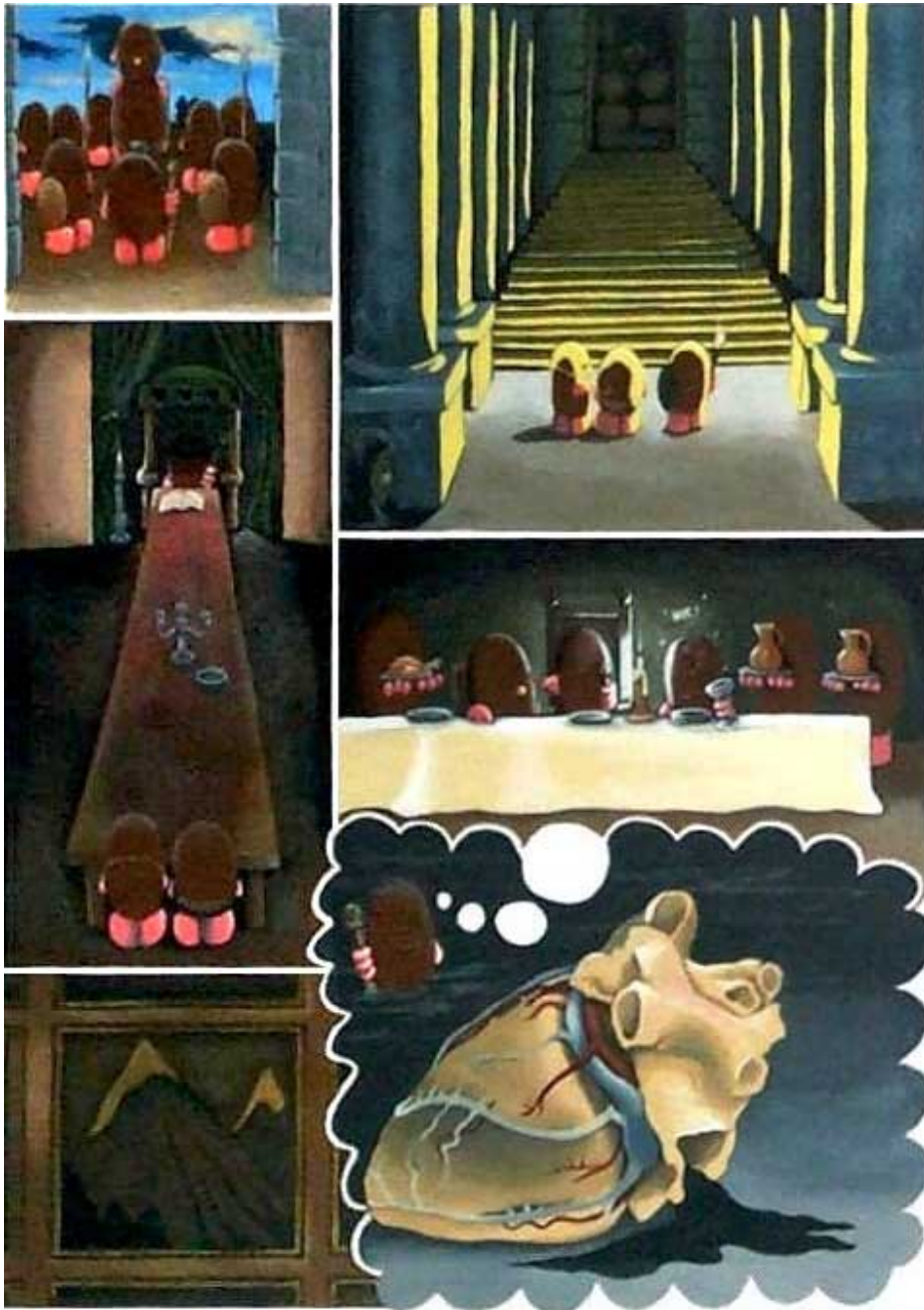
*I*nside the crowded city, Anak was forced to climb up on to Colossus's great shoulders in order to attract the attention of the people and the guards.

As a stranger with a huge companion and a glowing medallion no time was lost in taking them to the great hall and into the presence of the Elder of all Elders, Panopolis.

Over a meal they explained their mission and in turn Panopolis told them of the prophecy of Chamaerops, that the heart of darkness will fall upon Coconia and that the darkness and the blood would be one, that only a warrior wearing the sign of the lost tribe could save the land from destruction.

"You..." said Panopolis to Anak, "are wearing the medallion of the Palmett."

Anak, suddenly fearful for the future, stared out of the window towards the White Mountains.



That night Anak and Colossus stayed in the palace of the Elders.

Bewildered by the strange events that led him here, Anak stared out of the window towards the White Mountains.

Slowly, Anak became aware of streaks of light flowing down the slopes of the White Mountains and growing in intensity until he could look no more and had to move from the window.

The light now shone through the window in a great shaft to illuminate a picture on the wall that Anak had not noticed.

The picture was of a comet streaking across the White Mountains towards a distant glow, exactly as he had dreamed it before. That was it, he thought, the answer lay in the White Mountains; they were beckoning him to them.







## Into the White Mountains

**A**t the request of the Elders, Anak and Colossus were required to add a third member to their expedition to cross the White Mountains. To their surprise this turned out to be a very small Nuciferan called Nunc.

The huge Colossus roared with laughter when he met the diminutive Nunc, "Follow in my footsteps" he laughed, "then we won't lose you in the snow". Nunc merely smiled, "It will be easier digging me out than you", he said.

Having thus established an easy comradeship, they set out upon their great adventure. Forests gave way to hills, hills to rocky crags and dangerous precipices, rocks to snow and glacier where Colossus's size came into its own in helping Nunc over the trickier places.

Sometimes Colossus would forget he was carrying Nunc who would cry, "Put me down you great oaf, I'm not a baby". Colossus would grin, put Nunc down and pat him paternally on the head, which only infuriated the intellectual Nunc.

A deep crevasse barred their progress until, after much searching, they found a natural ice bridge.

Anak elected to cross first, but he had barely reached the far side when the bridge collapsed and, to everyone's horror, Anak fell from sight.

"Anak!" cried Colossus, rushing to the edge, "Anak!"

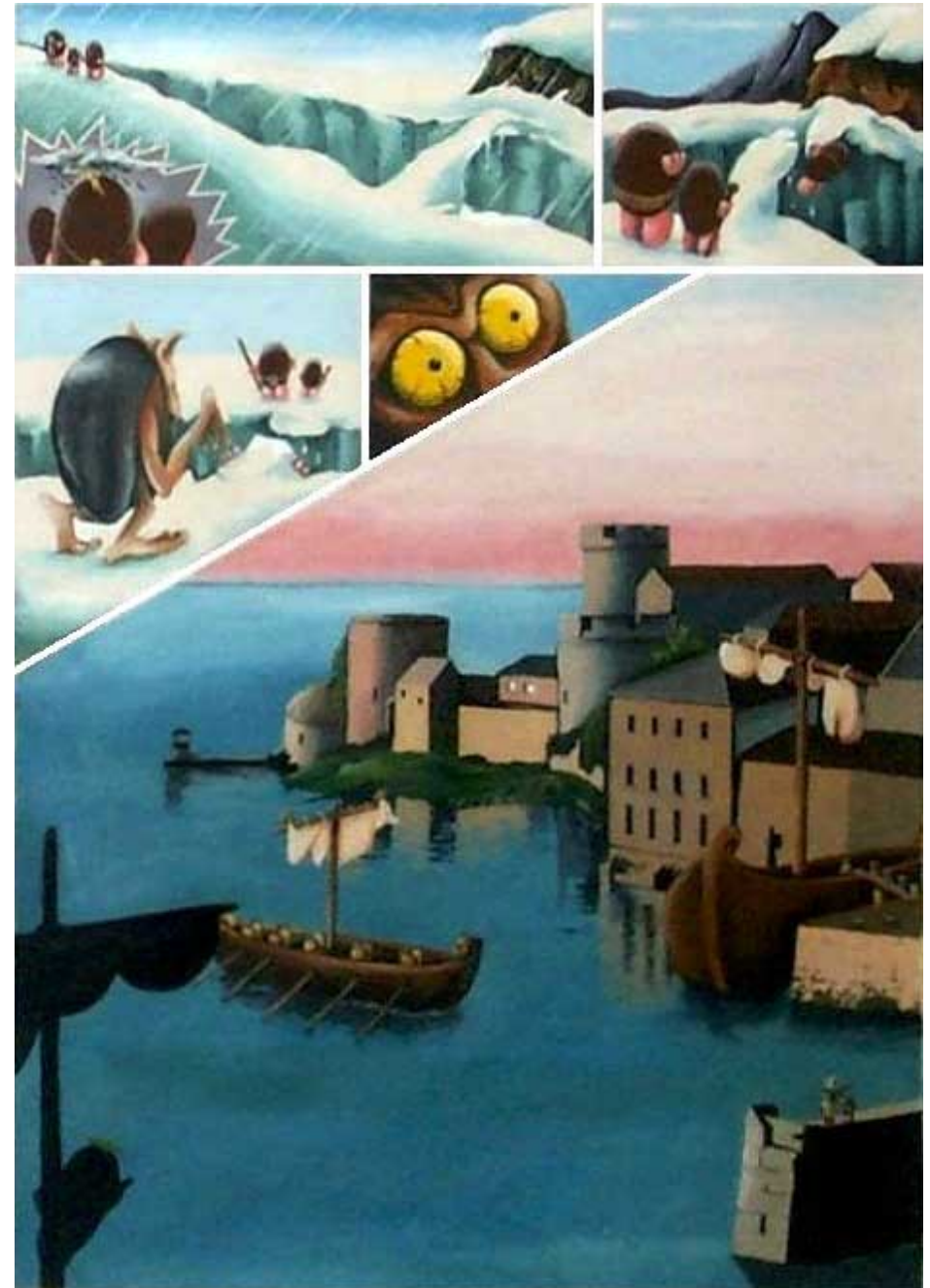
"It...it's okay", came Anak's voice from below the level of the crevasse and the others became aware of Anak's hands clinging to the far edge.

"Phew!" breathed Nunc, "that had me worried. Can you climb out, Anak?"

"Oh, no!" cried Colossus, "Look!"

Lumbering towards them from the far side came the most fearsome creature Colossus and Nunc had ever seen.

***MEANWHILE*** in the Pinolian harbour of Pinsk, a ship returned carrying the rescued captain of the vessel that had held Colossus as a prisoner.







The king of Pinolia, Matricarius, waited at the dock-side to greet his returning sailors.

The secret report on the Coconian defences was given privately to the king and then to the entire war council.

Fearing execution by the guillotine, the captain of the wrecked vessel sweated whilst the council plotted an invasion of Coconia.



## The lost tribe

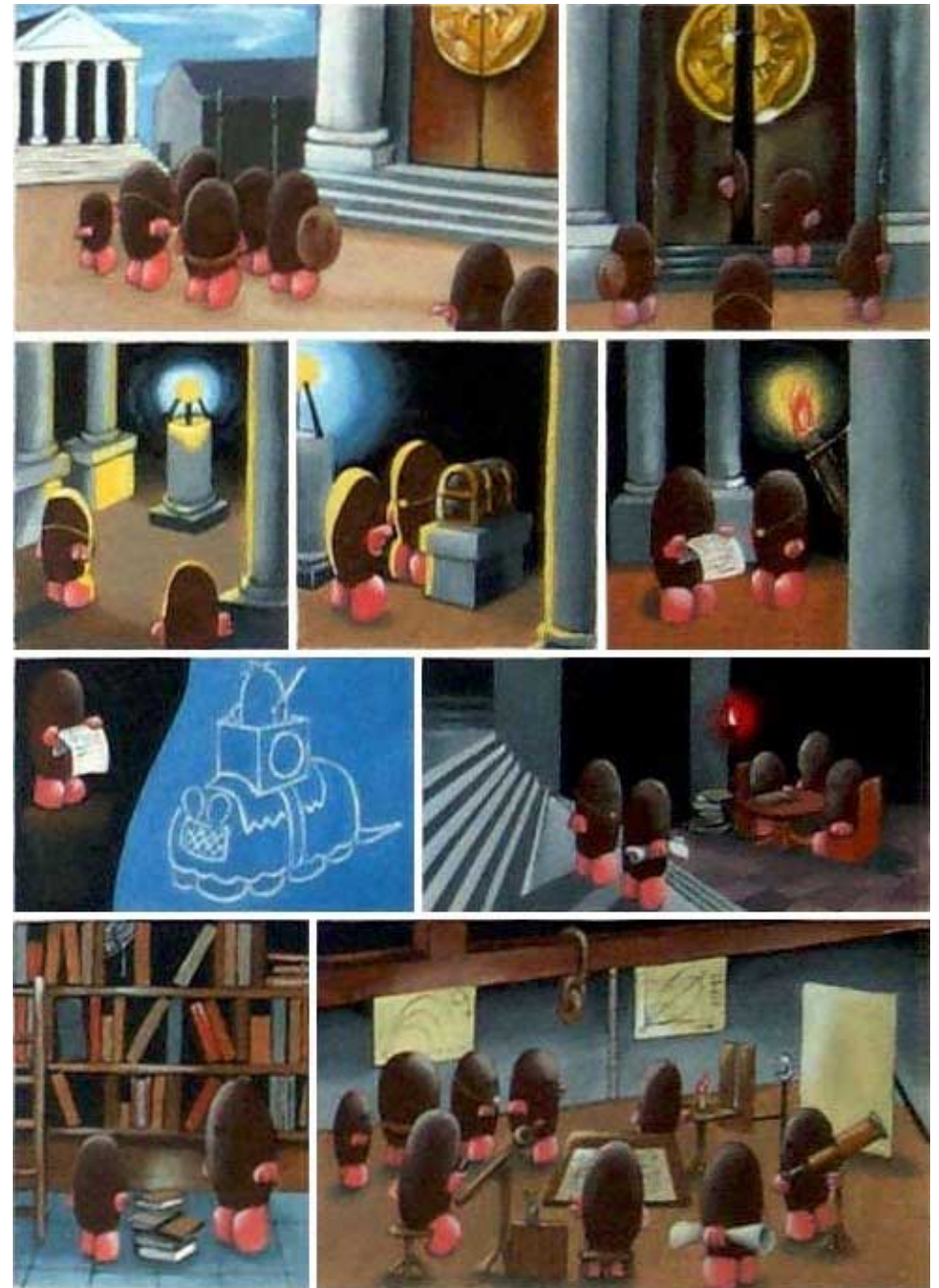
Anak awoke safe and sound in a comfortable room to hear of how he was rescued by members of the lost tribe of the Palmett, and how the monsters, known as Notyeti, were driven off.

As Nunc concluded the tale, the door opened and they were all introduced to Princess Patani, daughter of the king of the Palmett, Pachomius.

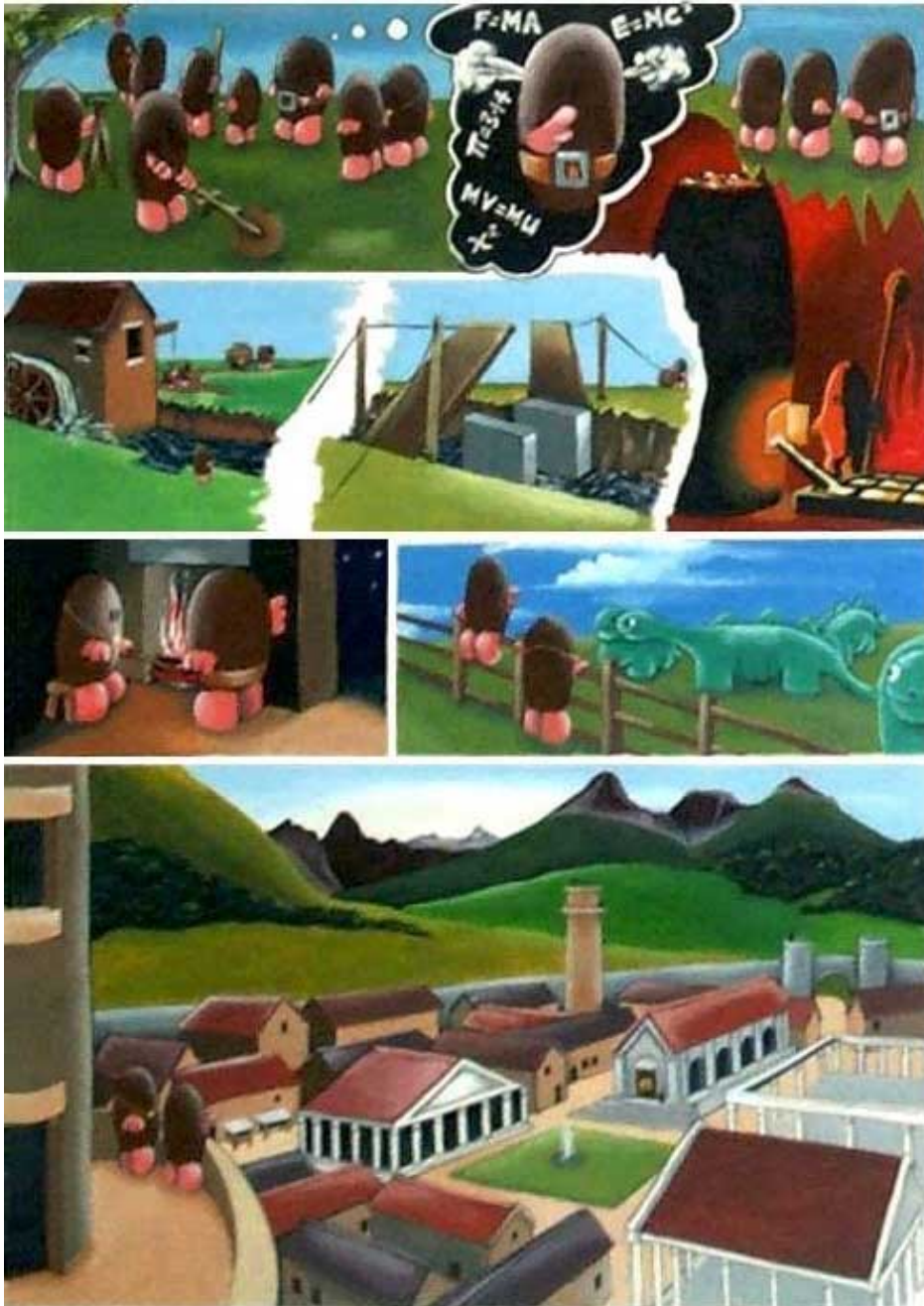
Approaching the great doors of the palace of King Pachomius, Anak recognised the symbol on the doors as being like the medallion he wore around his neck.

Princess Patanis led them through the palace to the Golden Orb of the Palmett and the Secret Casket, within which lay the prophesy of Coconia, telling of the Pinolian invasion and picturing the Pinolian beasts of war, the Tor-Slugs.

Anak was introduced to the Palmett war council, whilst Nunc searched the great library and was impressed by the wisdom and knowledge of the 'lost' tribe.







All the talk of equations, logarithms and theorems was too much for simple Colossus and he wandered off to marvel at the great achievements of the Palmett: The smelting of metal, the water mills and the lifting bridges.

Anak was shown by a friendly farmer the herds of Gorf, an animal never seen west of the White Mountains, and the city of the Palmett, looking exactly as it had in Anak's dream.

Anak knew that they had to return to the four tribes west of the mountains to prepare them for battle, but he also knew that winter now lay upon the White Mountains and that the journey back was impossible. Impossible too for the Palmett army, with their superior weapons, to cross until the spring thaws. If only they could delay the Pinolians long enough for the Palmett to arrive...

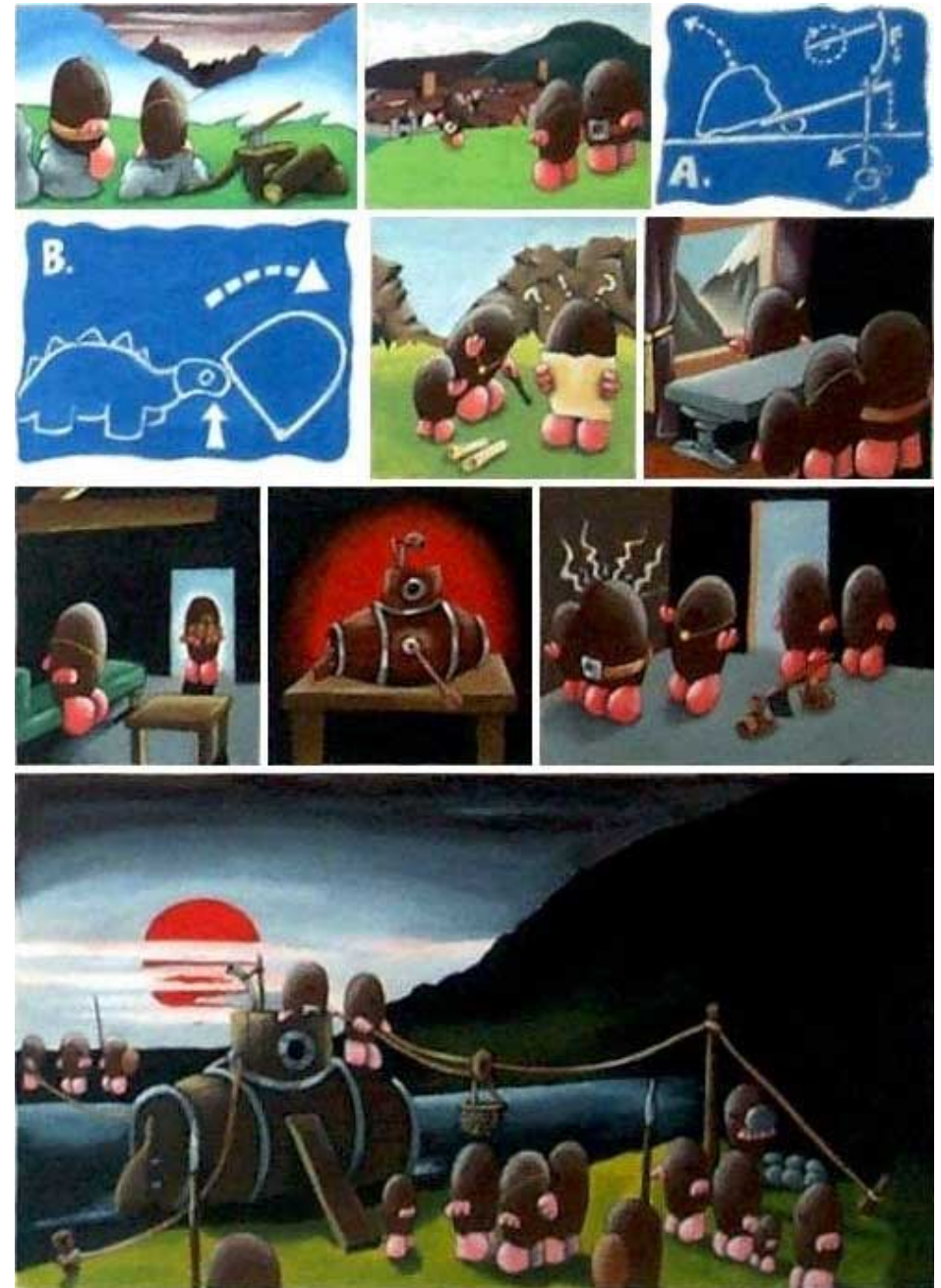


## A lucky escape

Anak and Colossus sat pondering the enormous problem of defeating the war-like Pinolians; they considered a system of levers and how they could use the Gorfs to overturn the Pinolian war beasts. Ideas came and were dismissed until, finally, Nunc, the diminutive Nuciferan, called them all together.

Nunc claimed to have come up with the answer to getting past the White Mountains; a sub-mountaineer. A vessel in which the intrepid trio could travel under the White Mountains via the underground streams.

Colossus was terrified at the prospect and destroyed the model sub-mountaineer muttering "If Coconians had been meant to go under water they would have been given fins." Anak reasoned with him and eventually, with the help of the Palmett, a sub-mountaineer was built and the brave trio departed into the dark underworld of the subterranean river.







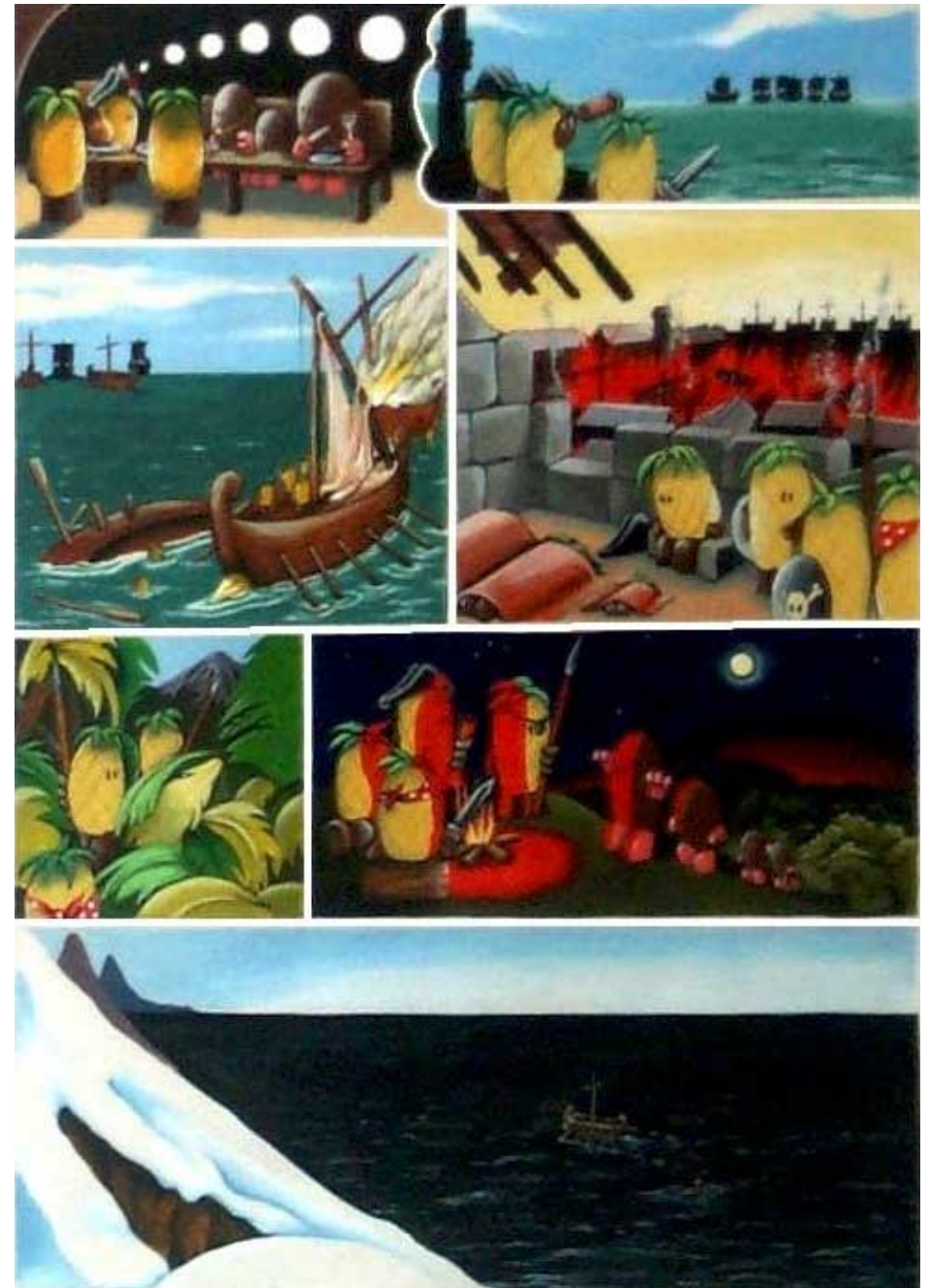
Blackhead was a renegade Pinolian, the scourge of all the waters between Pinolia and Coconia and an enemy of both.

Under the White Mountains the sub-mountaineer, buffeted by rocks and encased in darkness finally broke out into daylight and the bay of Coloban off Coconia.

Anak, Nunc and Colossus inhaled the fresh sea air as they sat on top of the sub-mountaineer and waved excitedly when they saw a ship approach in the distance. Imagining the ship was friendly, the three were surprised to be confronted by Pinolian pirates and none other than Blackhead himself.

Blackhead, after hearing the story of the three Coconians, related his own tale of having fought a sea battle with one of the Pinolian king's sons, Pinhead, of having his fleet and family destroyed, of escaping to the forest, of being joined by escaping Coconian slaves and, with their help, building another ship to once again sail and plunder the seas.

Because of the Coconians who formed part of his crew, Blackhead was inclined to be lenient with his new guests and agreed to take them to Cocopa, the great city of Coconia.



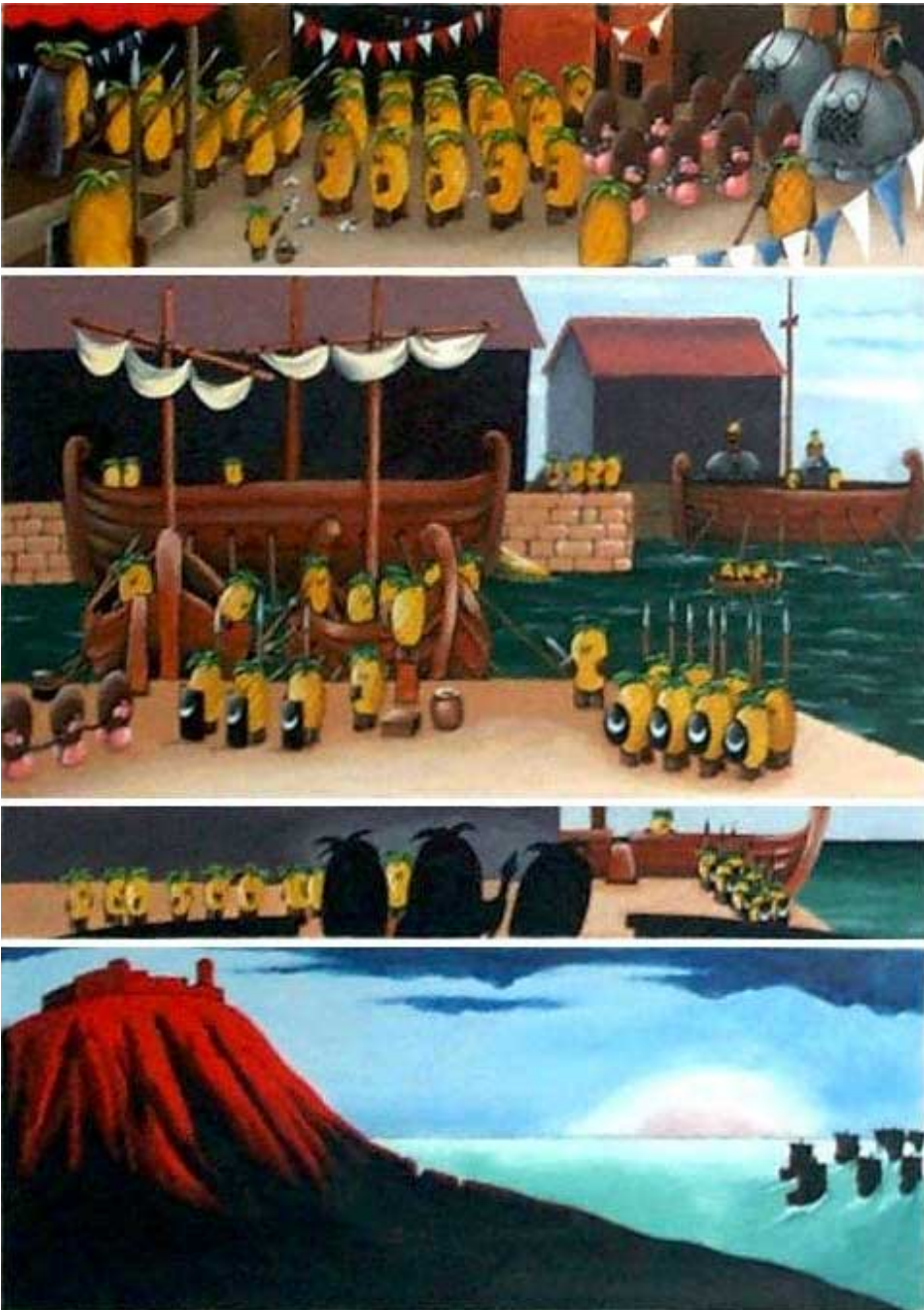


## Preparing for battle

*P*inolian troops paraded before King Matricarius, along with their Coconian slave rowers and heavily armoured beasts of war, the Tor-Slugs.

The invasion forces were boarded and the king gave them a rousing speech to send them on their way.

With a fair wind, the fleet sailed for Coconia.

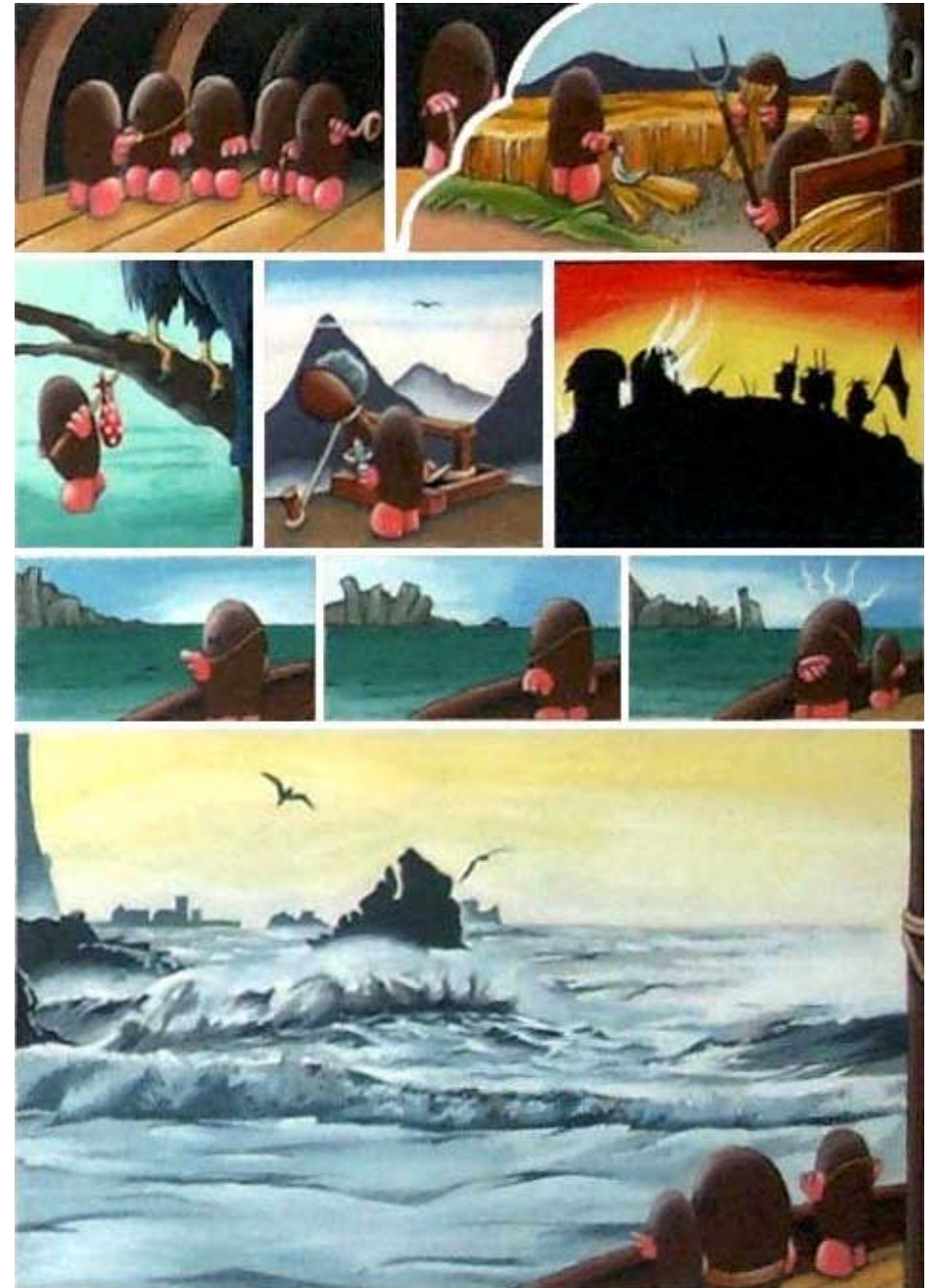


## No time to lose

*T*he Coconians who had joined Blackhead told Anak and his friends about the legend of Saxnot, of the first tribe. The land was bountiful and times were happy. Saxnot was watched over night and day by a mighty bird. One day, high in the mountains, he killed this mighty creature and in its dying rage sent the Pinolian hordes to destroy the villages and enslave the Coconians of the land.

Meanwhile on deck, every headland held disappointment for the fretful Anak until they heard the cry “Land Ho!” Everyone ran to see the Clashing Rocks of Coconia.

The sea roared and the rocks seemed to clash and rattle with the movement of the water.







Sailing into the harbour of Cocopa, the Coconian ships turned out at the sight of the Pinolian vessel and as Blackhead set foot on Coconian soil he was promptly arrested.

Explaining the situation, Anak, Nunc and Colossus lost no time in conscripting an army to meet the Pinolian invasion and delay them long enough for the Palmett to join the fray.

Nunc was given command of supplies and logistics, Colossus the job of forming commando groups and the renegade, Blackhead, responsibility for naval tactics.

Whilst practising on the plain outside the city, the warning was given that the enemy had been sighted.

Anak dispatched Colossus and his guerrillas to prepare their defences.

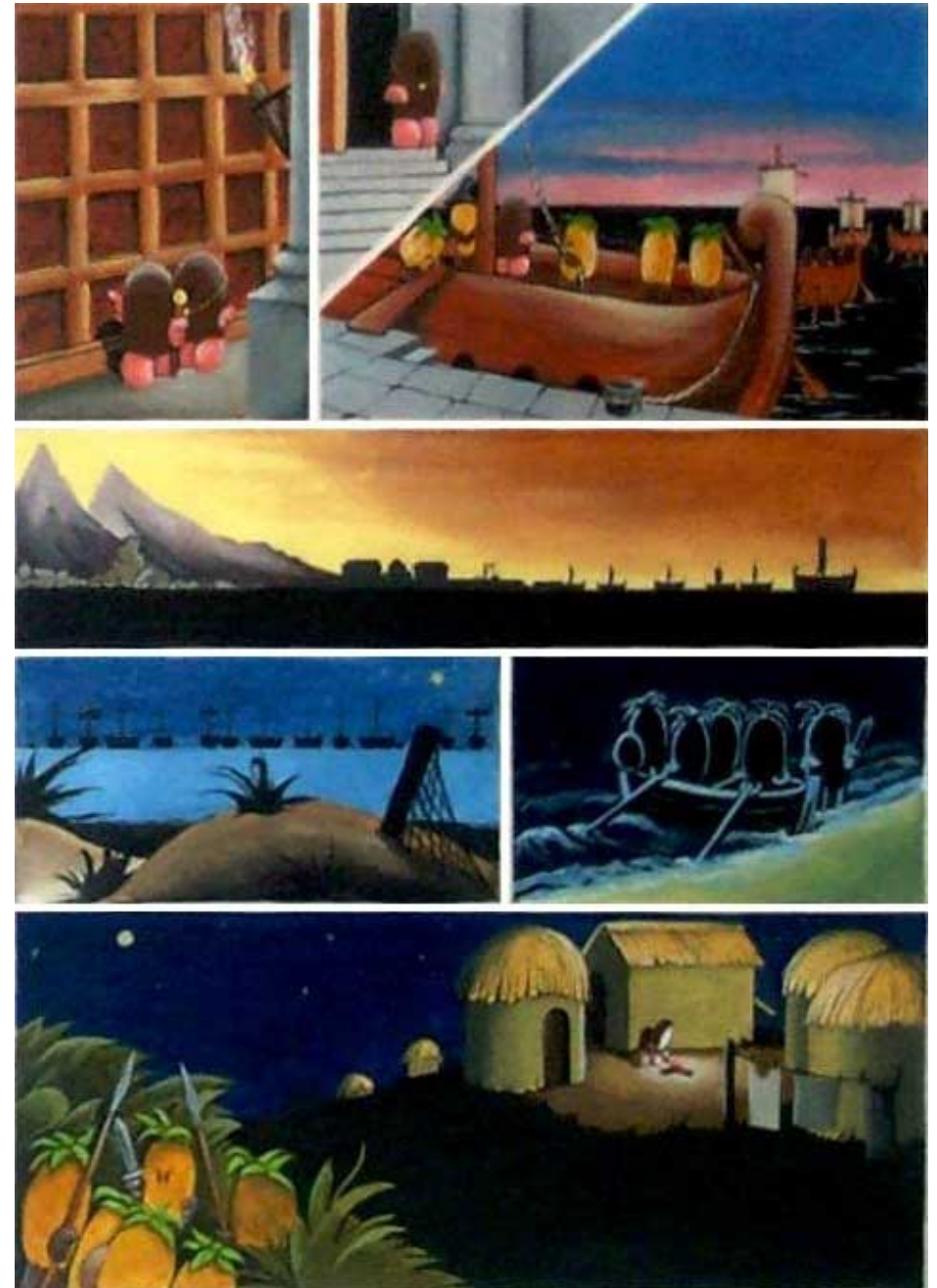


## The first attack

*K*ing Panopolis explained to Anak, using the geographic engravings of the wall of the Great Chamber, the likely invasion sites along the coast.

With Blackhead's ship in the lead, the Coconian fleet set sail from Cocopa.

Unfortunately, before the Coconian fleet could arrive, the Pinolians had landed by night and were set to destroy the outlying Coconian village of Anadir, Anak's own village.







With the village in flames, the Coconian fleet arrived too late. Anak, fearful for his family, dived overboard and swam ashore, but he was unable to help them, for his family were dead.

Blackhead, whose own family were destroyed by his fellow Pinolians, tried to comfort Anak. The Heart of Darkness was near.



## A stout defence

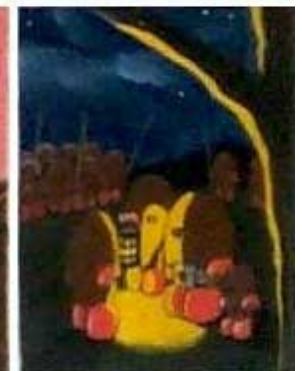
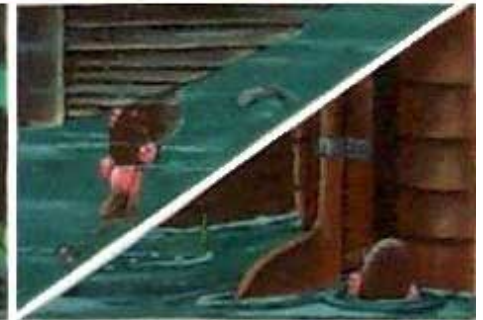
**T**he Pinolian fleet entered the estuary of the river Anabara and anchored; its intention to move inland before disembarking for a southward sweep across Coconia.

Anak arrived with a commando group and showed them how to make small rafts and wooden wedges. Then, using reed pipes as breathing tubes and belts of stones, Anak led his men into the water, passing unseen until they arrived at the anchored ships where they drove the wooden wedges into the rudders to prevent them turning.

Ashore again, the small rafts, loaded with sticks, were fired and floated towards the enemy ships, cutting off their retreat to the sea.

Many Pinolian vessels were damaged, but not enough to prevent their advance.

Anak plotted his next move.





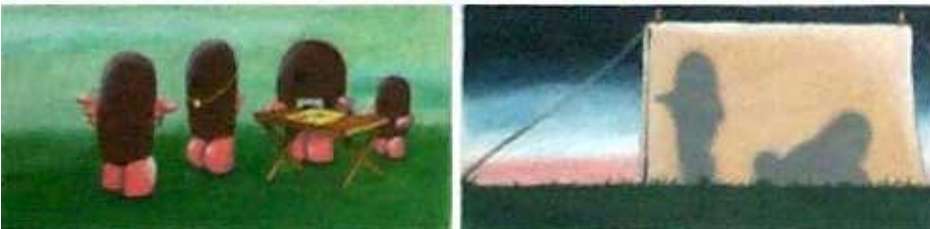


Upriver from the Pinolian fleet, Colossus led his men into slinging ropes across the river and felling trees.

Around the camp fire the leaders discussed tactics.

The Pinolian commander was furious with his men and at the damage that had been inflicted.

A Coconian observer of the Pinolians' progress reported that they would not arrive before morning so Anak ordered his men to bed down for the night. Anak was woken early next morning with the news that the Pinolian fleet was on the move again.



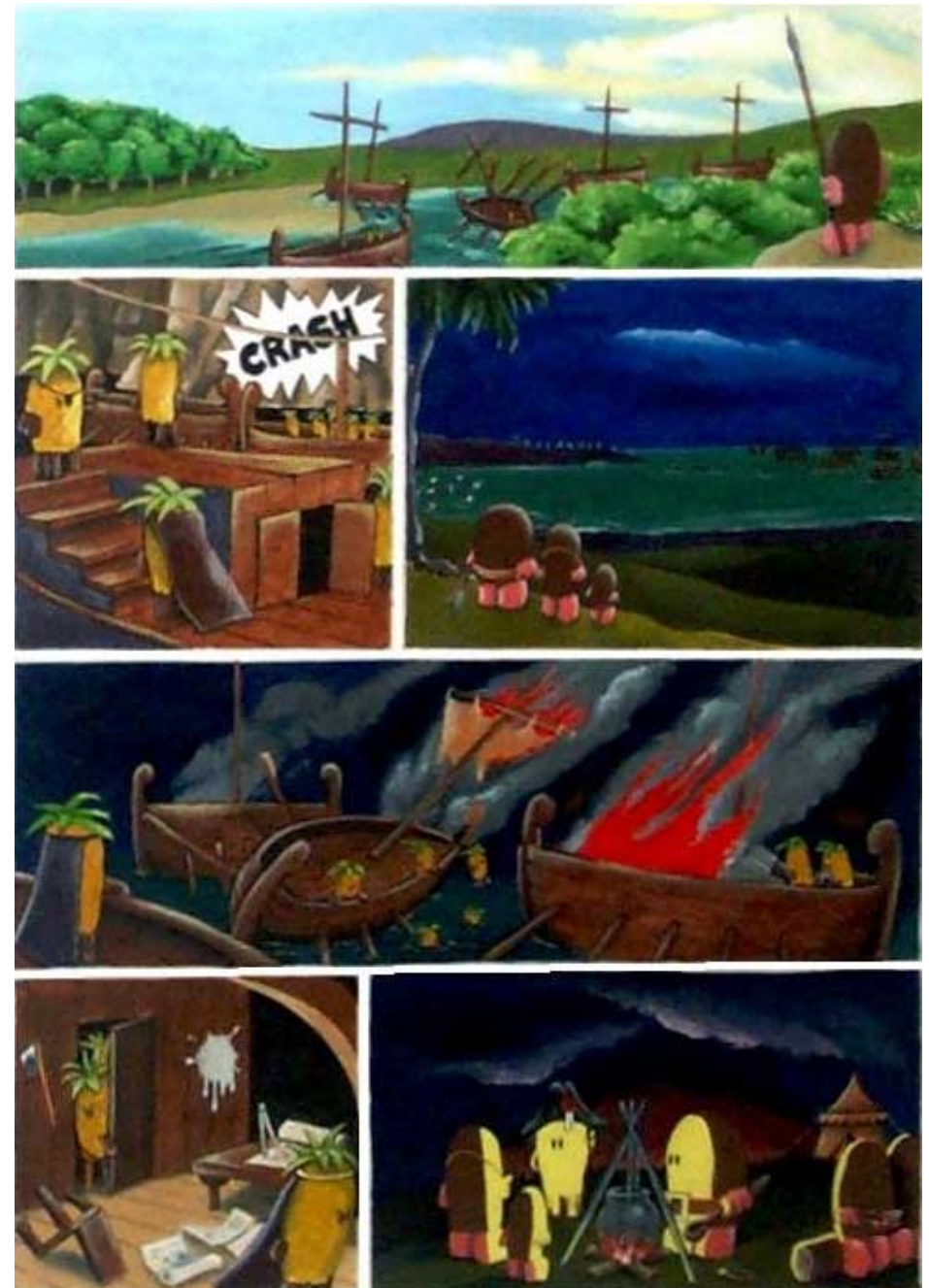
To the surprise of the Coconians the Pinolian fleet had manoeuvred itself around and was making for the open sea again.

In anticipation, Blackhead was waiting at the mouth of the river and immediately launched his floating fires.

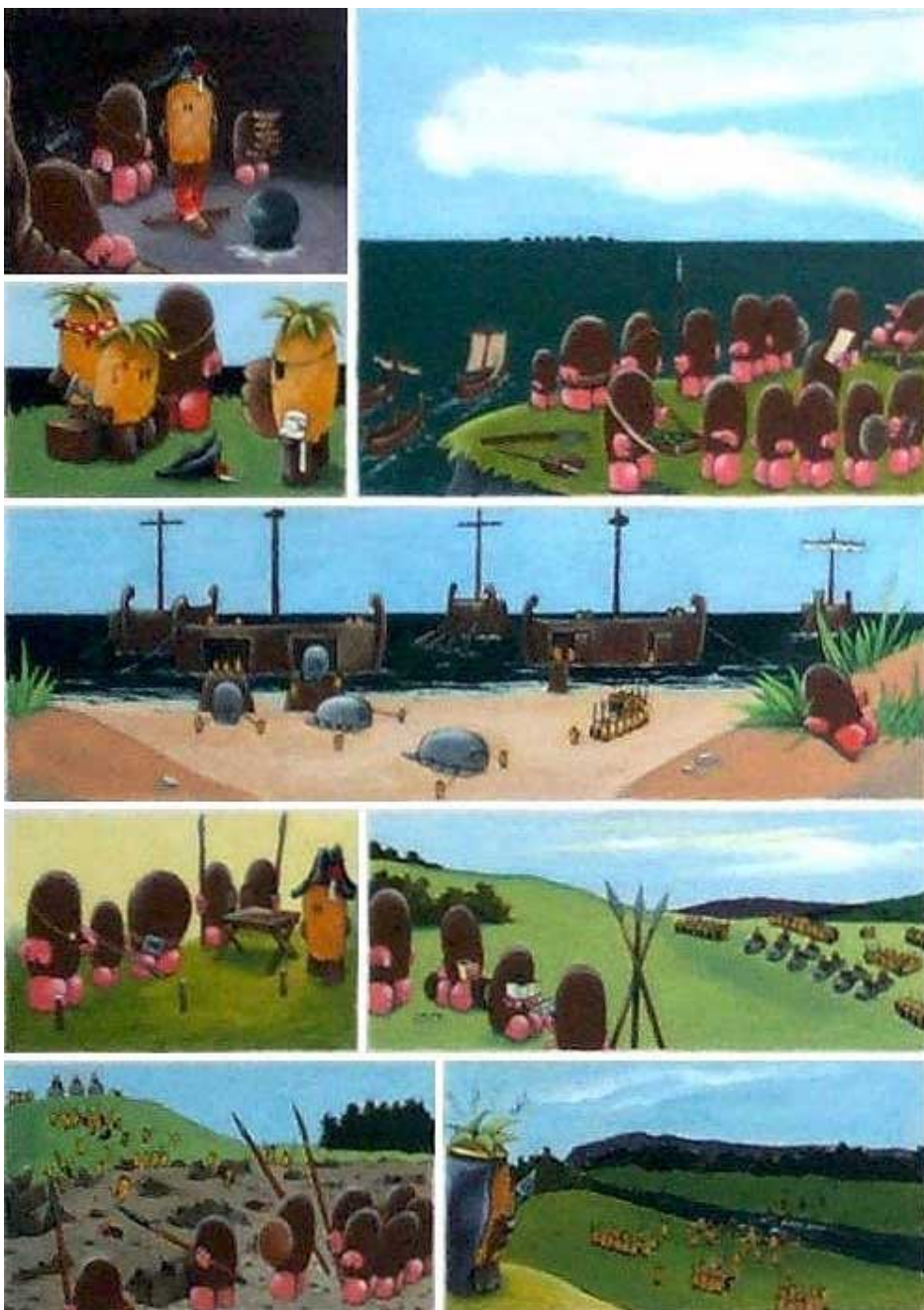
The trio of leaders watched delightedly as the Pinolian fleet was once again assailed by fire and flame.

The Pinolian commander was not amused.

Anak congratulated Blackhead on his work as they prepared to eat.







## The Pinolians advance

**N**ext morning, Blackhead's ships set out to meet the enemy in open sea, with Coconians lining the cliffs to cheer them on.

The battle was hard fought, but Blackhead was outnumbered and beaten back.

The Pinolians wasted no time in closing in and disembarking on the beaches. Troops and the armoured Tor-Slugs poured on to the sands of Coconia.

At a war council, Anak instructed the leaders in a policy of hit and run; whenever they were hard pressed they were to fall back and form a new line. The plan was to delay long enough for the Palmett to arrive.

Coconian troops, apparently unconcerned, awaited the first assault. Pinolian infantry poured down the hill and the Coconians instantly gave ground and retreated across the river.

The Pinolian commander was infuriated.

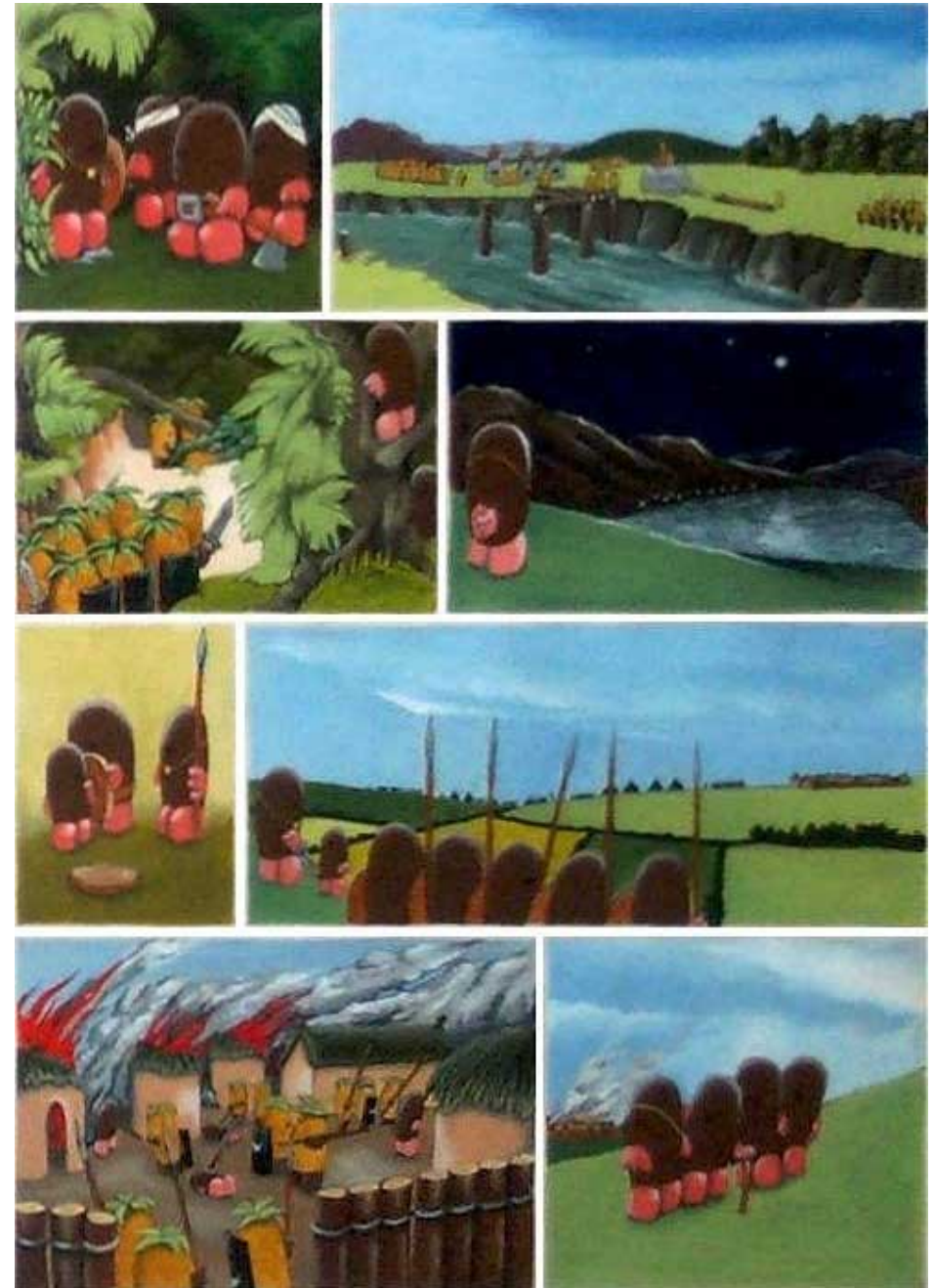
Hidden in the forest, the Coconians watched the efforts of the Pinolian army to get their armoured beasts across the river.

Forward parties of Pinolians were sent across the river but were instantly way-laid by Colossus's commandos who dropped trees on them as they passed through the dense woods.

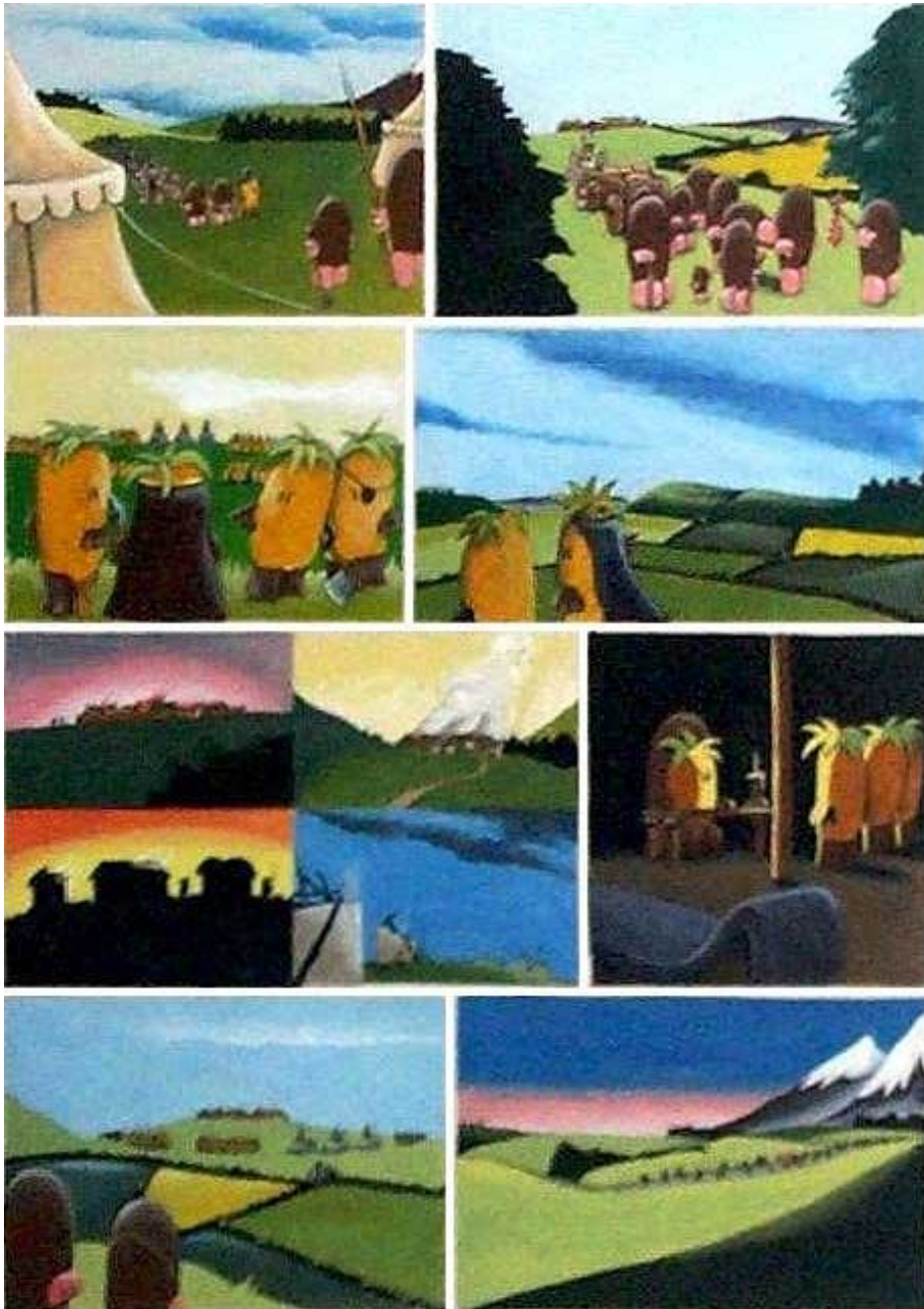
By evening the Pinolians were across the stream and camped on the shores of a lake.

To Anak's horror, even as he was discussing weapons with Colossus and Nunc, warning came of a Pinolian attack on a distant village. Helpless, the Coconians watched the sack of one of their villages.

An old man was spared by the Pinolians to warn Anak of their intention to destroy everything in their path unless the Coconians stood their ground and fought.







Anak led his army to join up with the Coconian encampment where he proposed evacuating all the villages in the path of the enemy until the Palmett and their Gorfs could join them.

King Matricarius ordered his armies forward, destroying as they went. When several empty villages had been burned to the ground, Matricarius got the message and ordered a rapid advance avoiding all villages and towns towards a confrontation.

Coconian evacuees filled the roads all morning moving eastwards, towards the White Mountains.

By sunset it was clear that the Pinolian army was so close on their heels that Anak would be forced to stop and fight a pitched battle.



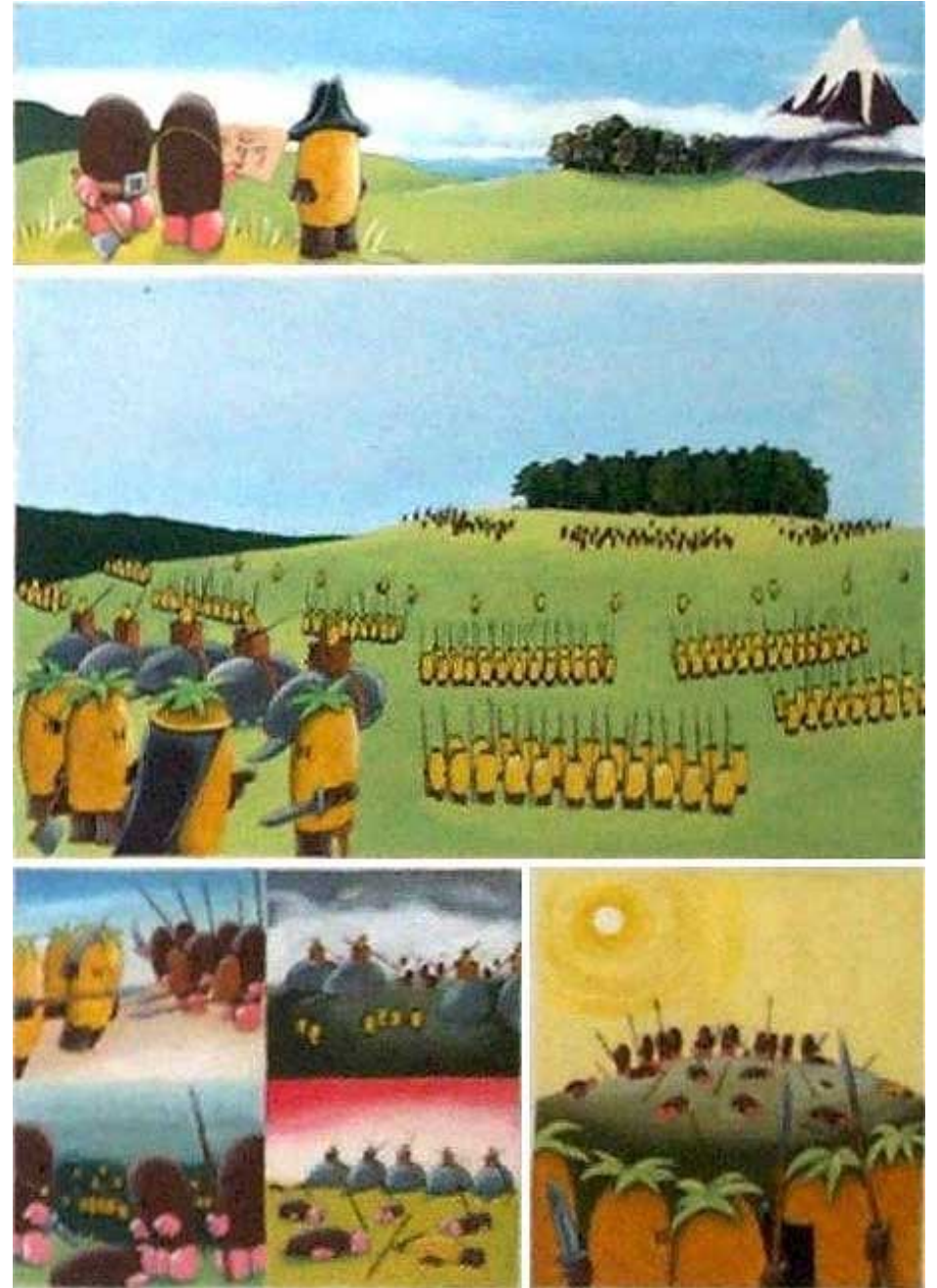
## The last stand

*I*n the morning Anak reviewed the situation with Colossus and Blackhead and decided that this was where they would have to fight their last stand.

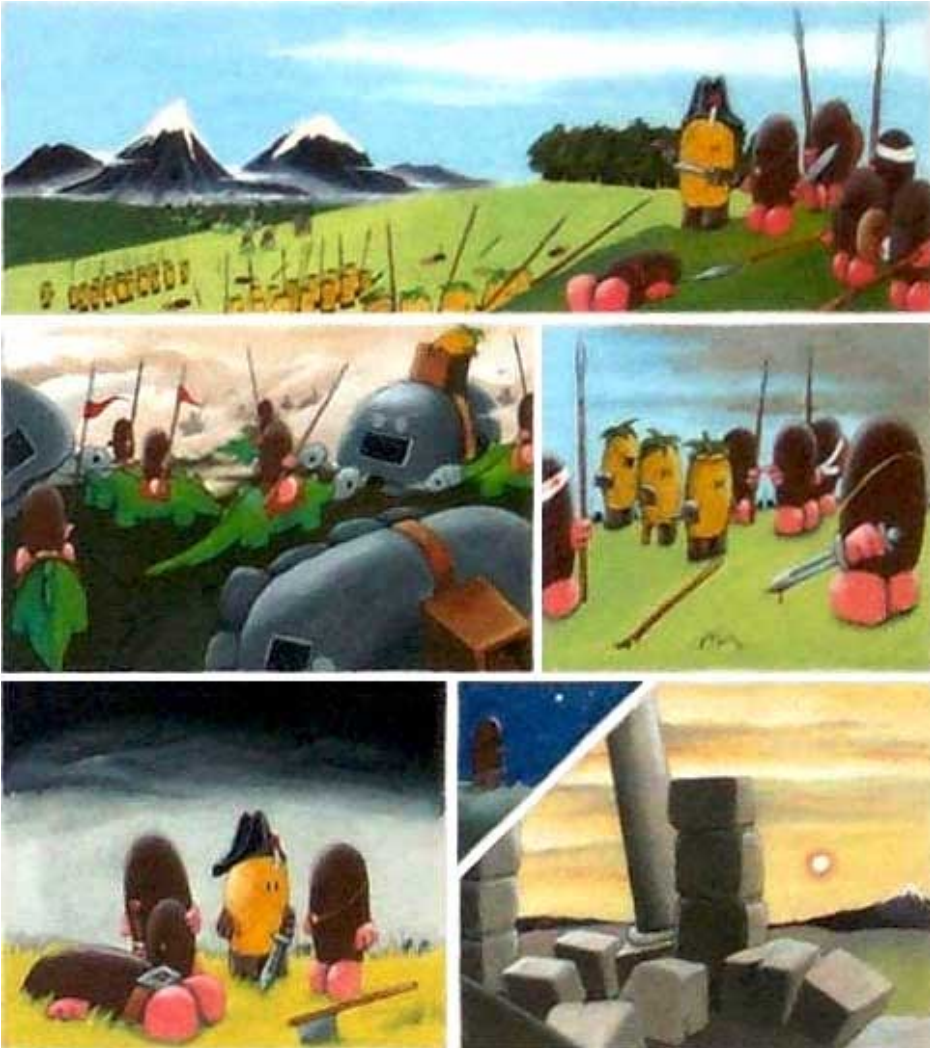
King Matricarius ordered his troops to wipe out the Coconians, “No quarter” he ordered, meaning leave no Coconian alive.

The battle was fierce and hard with the Coconians fighting bravely and doggedly, but they were no match for the Pinolian Tor-Slugs who left many dead in their wake.

Finally, on a hill-top, the pitiful remnants of the Coconian army gathered for a last, hopeless stand against the might of Pinolia.







Suddenly, Blackhead cried “Look!” and every head swivelled towards the White Mountains where, on the plain below, the mighty Palmett army could be seen advancing.

Battle was joined and the Pinolians found their Tor-Slugs at a disadvantage against the armour-headed Gorfs who overturned them with ease. With the Tor-Slugs helpless on their back, it was only a matter of time before Matricarius and his sons stood in chains and the battle was over.

Sadly, one of the last casualties was the giant Colossus. All were sad, especially Nunc who had grown to love the gentle giant.

Anak returned to the ruined city of Pandosia and there buried the medallion of Coconia: Returning to the earth perhaps for another to find in a time of need.

