

Colin Edmonds

STEAM, SMOKE & MIRRORS



ISSUE N°1

Colin Edmonds

**STEAM,
SMOKE &
MIRRORS**

THE GRAPHIC NOVEL SERIES

Caffeine Nights editorial project
Graphic novel adaptation by Blukokoro

THE METROPOLITAN THEATRE OF STEAM, SMOKE & MIRRORS 1899 LONDON



Tonight
we are seeing
Michael Magister,
The Industrial
Age Illusionist
and Phoebe
Le Breton,
The Queen of
Steam and
Goddess of
the Aethyr!

I've heard
their show is
magnificent!!





I can't wait to see the finale!



May I have your attention! The show is about to start!



Ladies and Gentlemen!
We present Michael Magister,
The Industrial Age Illusionist!




I've read in
the Paddington
Mercury that the
show is the most
ribald concoction
of blasphemy and
lust ever seen
in our
Victorian Era!



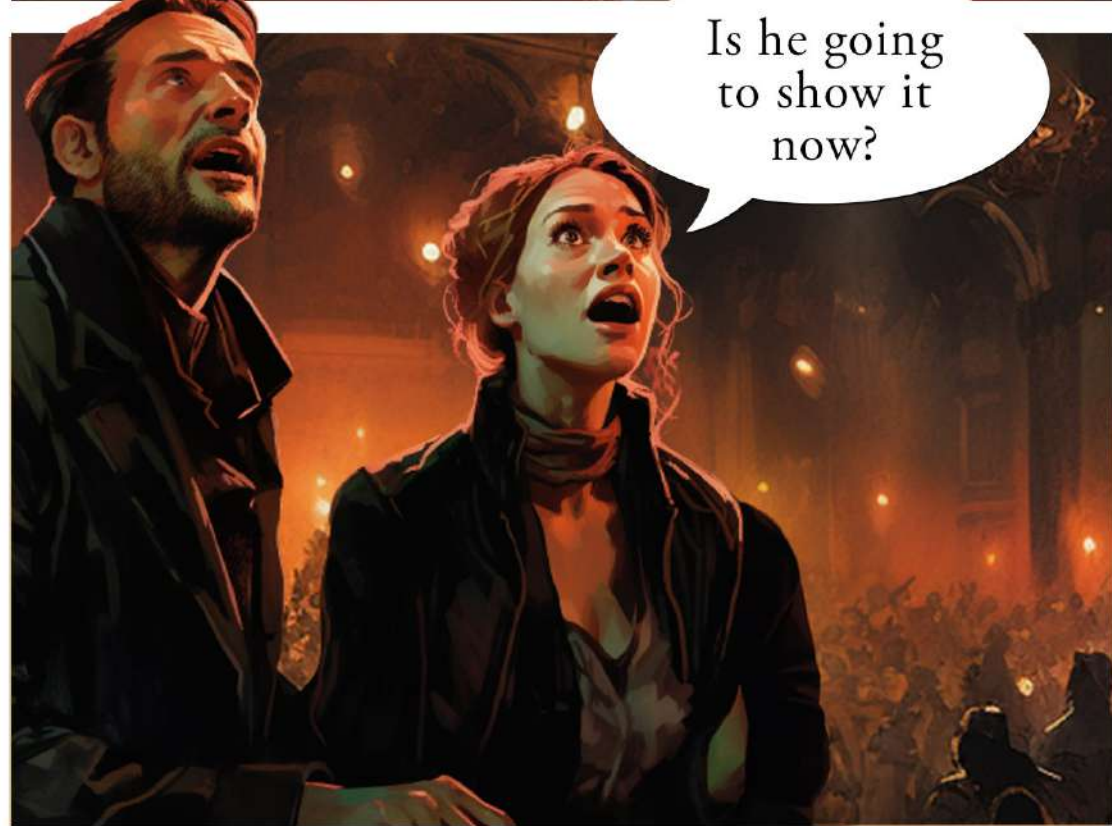
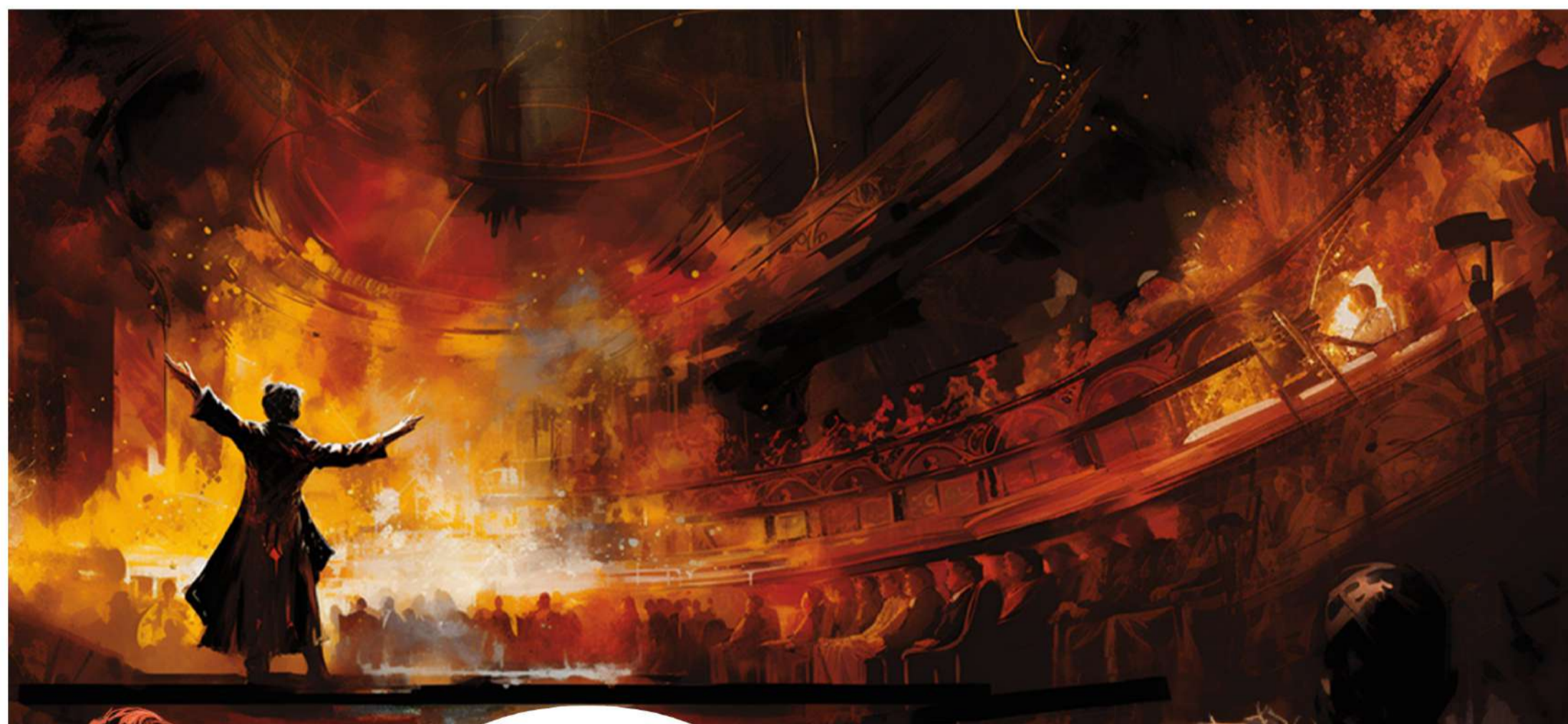


Ladies and gentlemen!
As you have witnessed
this evening,
the very presence of
my beautiful muse,
Phoebe, the Queen of
Steam and Goddess of
the Aethyr
has enabled me
to defy
death dozens
of times!

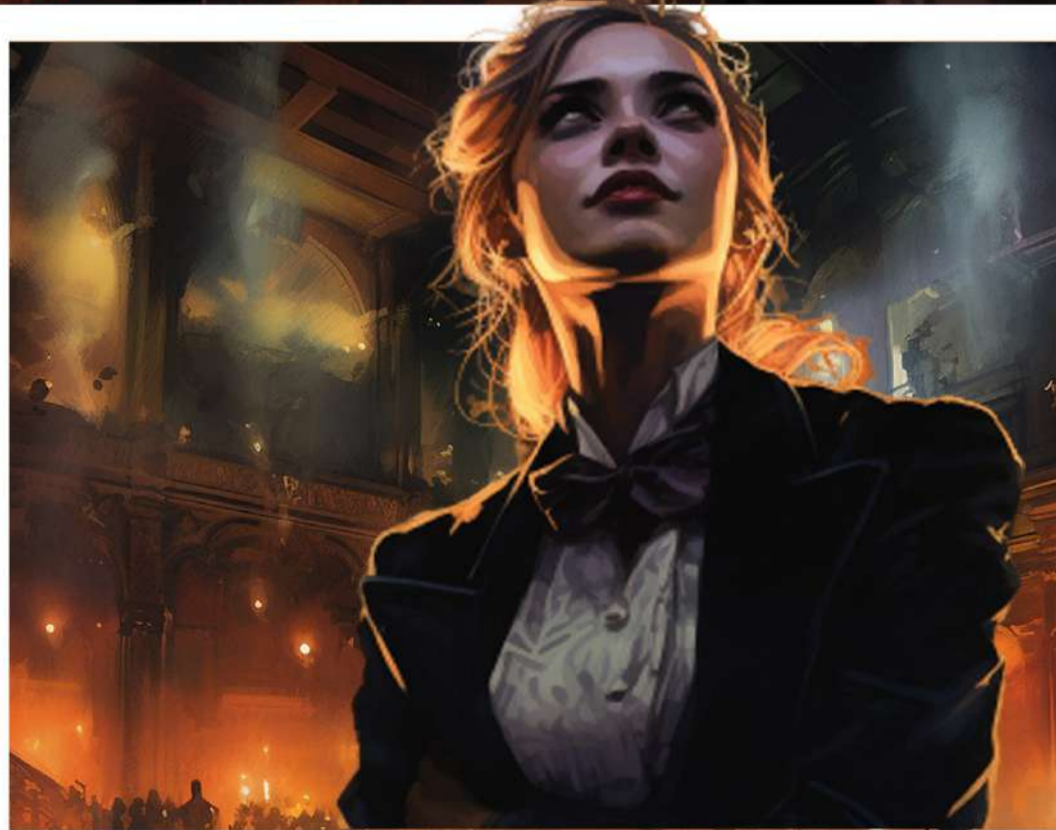




So the time has now come for me to cast her back to the dimension from whence she came! But to make such an event happen demands power, it demands passion – and THIS machine!



Is he going to show it now?



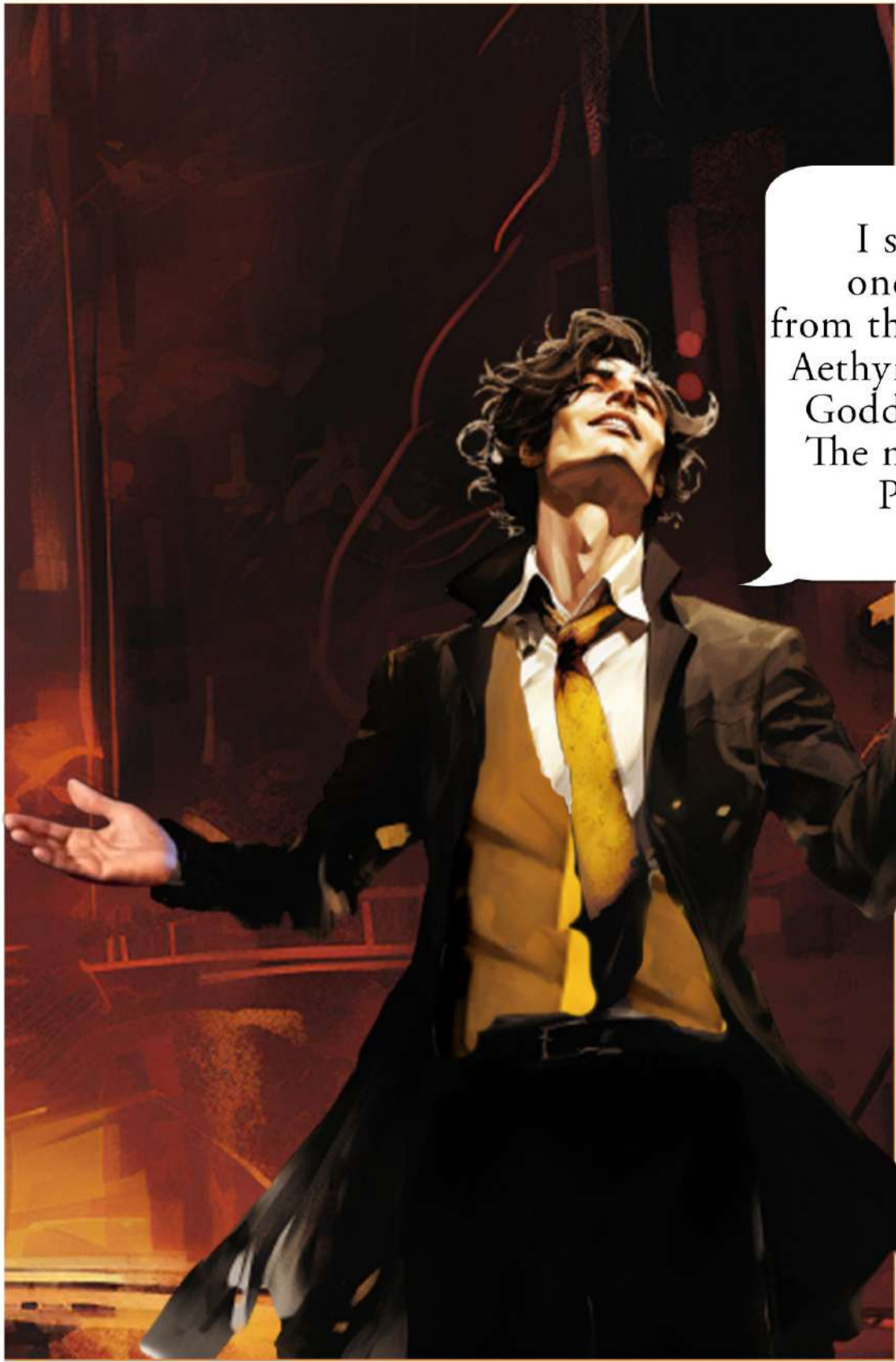


Where is
the beautiful angel?
The core of the show!

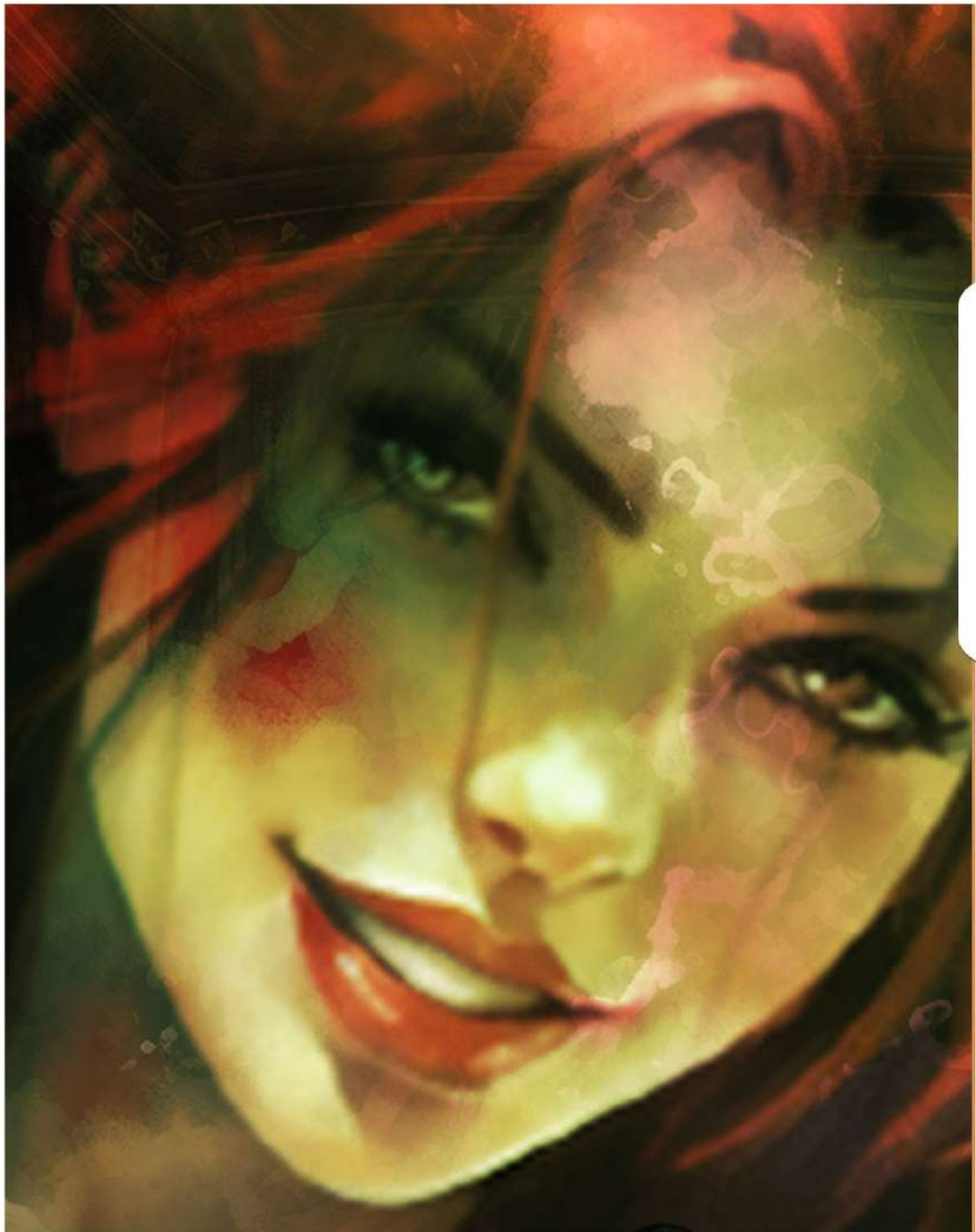


Yes, ladies
and gentlemen,
I, Magister
the Magician,
can now reveal the
inter-dimensional
mechanical
masterpiece that is...
The Throne
of Disintegration!





I summon
once again,
from the mysterious
Aethyr, The Great
Goddess herself!
The magnificent
Phoebe!



Here she is!
She's the most
enchanting
creature my
old eyes
have ever seen!







WOW!


SHE'S
BEAUTIFUL!

Be damned the
godless shaman
and his wanton
temptress!
Be damned
with their
steam engines
of Satan!

GRRRR

Get out if
you're a prude!

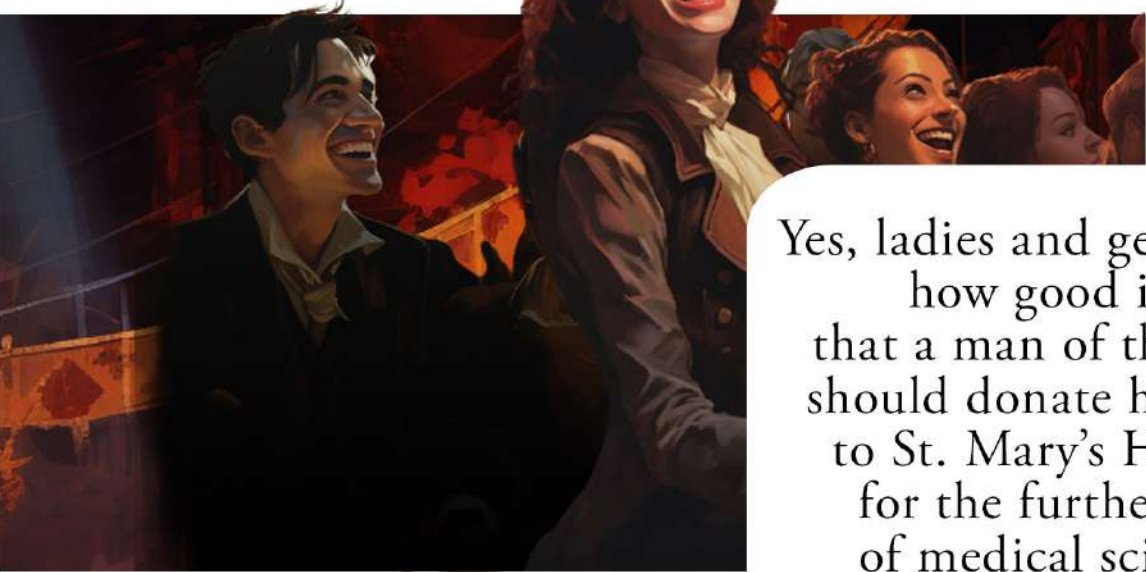
SHUT UP,
PRIEST!!



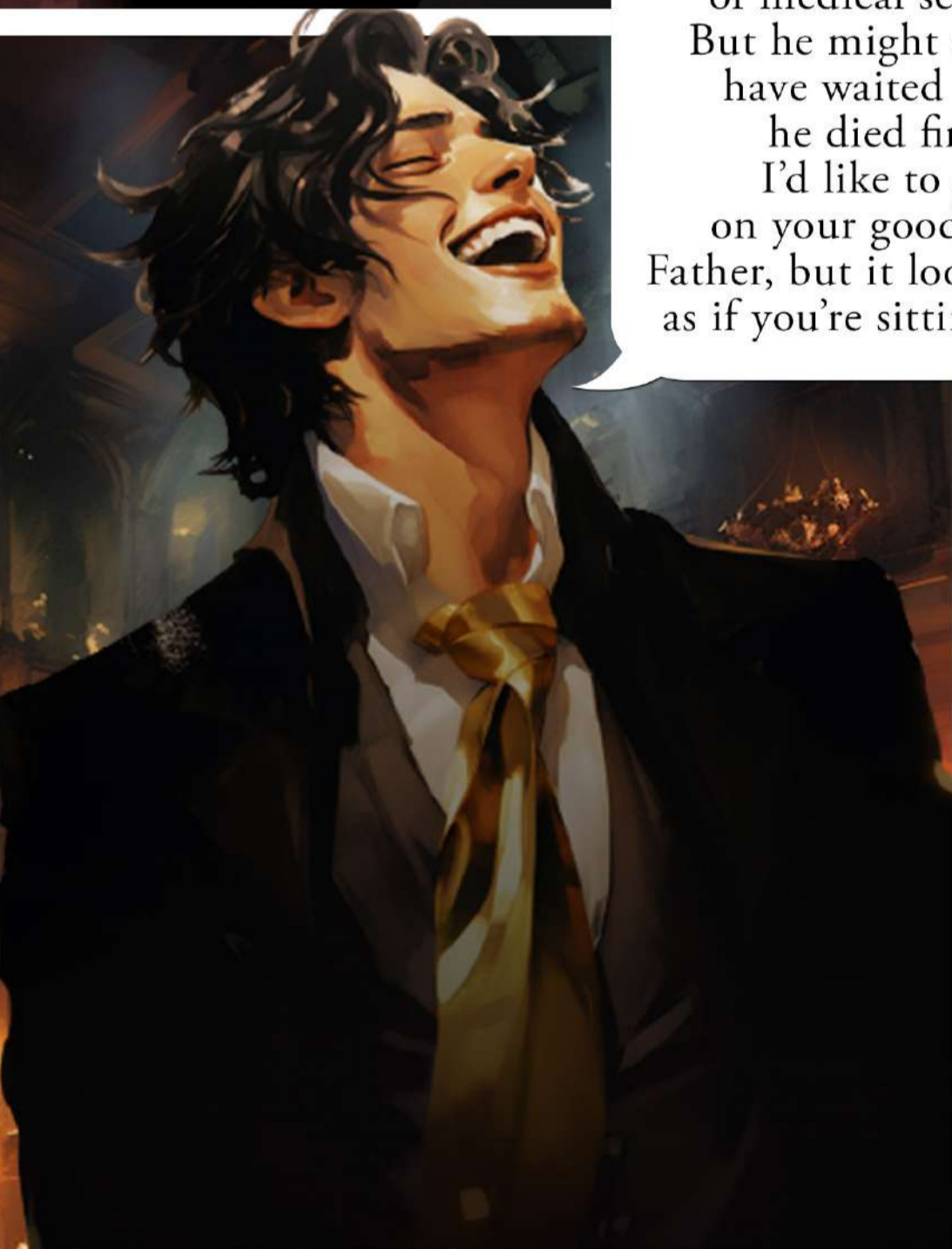
Thank you, sir! But please, ladies and gentlemen, do not strike the holy man's head! You'll only knock some sense into him! Thank you, please return to your seats. I just assumed it was a breeze from the brewery!



HA HA!




Yes, ladies and gentlemen, how good it is that a man of the cloth should donate his brain to St. Mary's Hospital for the furtherance of medical science. But he might at least have waited until he died first! I'd like to get on your good side, Father, but it looks to me as if you're sitting on it!





The London County Lunatic Asylum

Eleven miles from the Metropolitan Theatre, the mysterious events at The London County Lunatic Asylum begin to unfold.

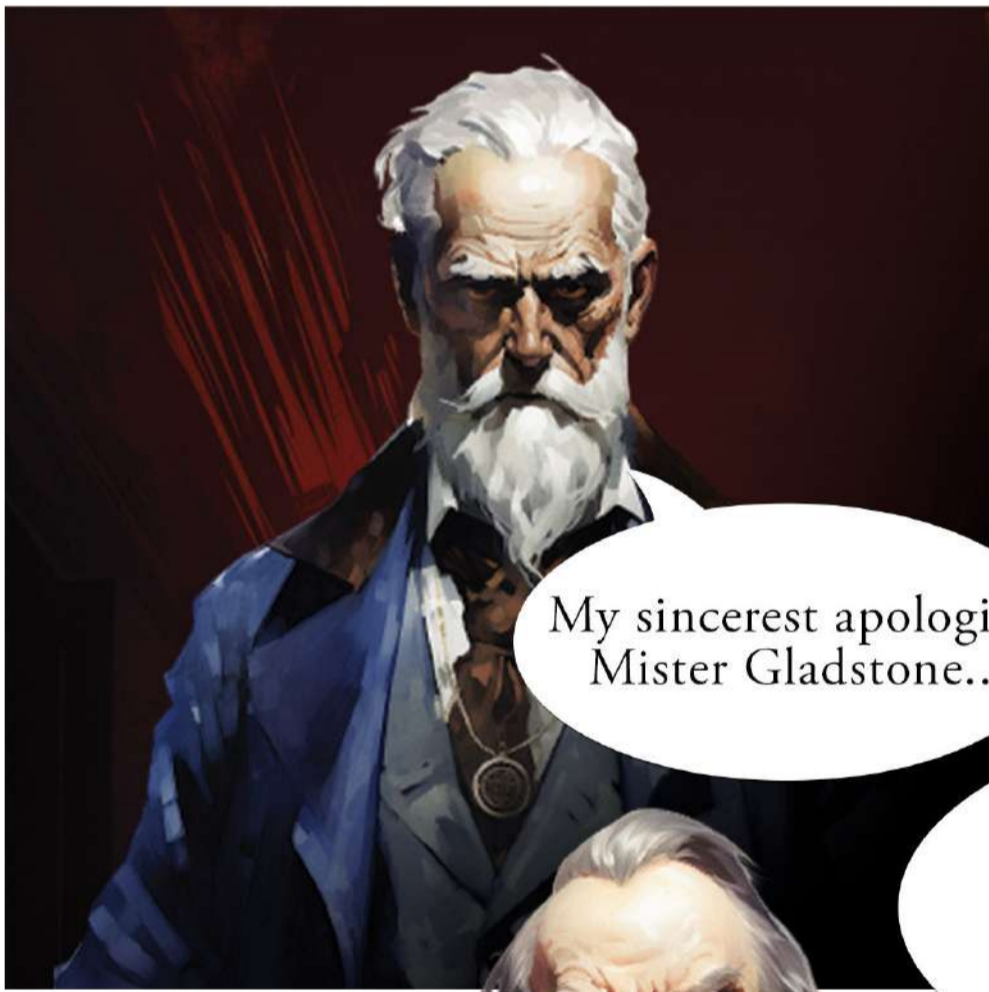


Mr. Senior Warder Winfield Trout the principal of the Asylum, was walking alongside the Honourable William Ewart Gladstone in the corridor of the Asylum.





This place can hardly be described as humble, Mister Trout!



My sincerest apologies, Mister Gladstone...

This facility excels in moral therapy over harsh methods but needs to manage high-security patients better. Mister Trout, you're a disgrace.



You are most kind, sir.



Pray now, let me take my leave of your godforsaken company.



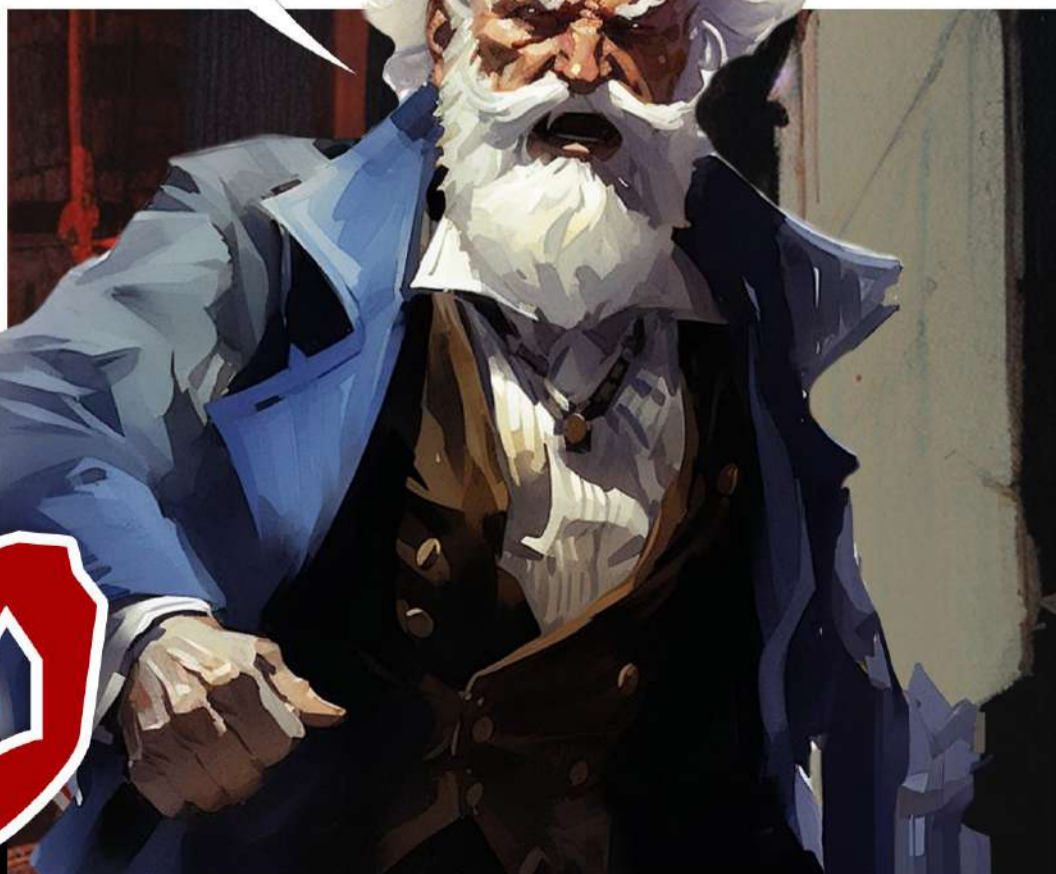
Few hours later in the Asylum's Kitchen...

Mister Gladstone wasn't happy about the situation. We should take more care of the security...

WHAT'S HAPPENING????!



Meanwhile, in the secluded area...



OH NOO



SHE'S GONE!!



What do you mean she's gone? No one goes!

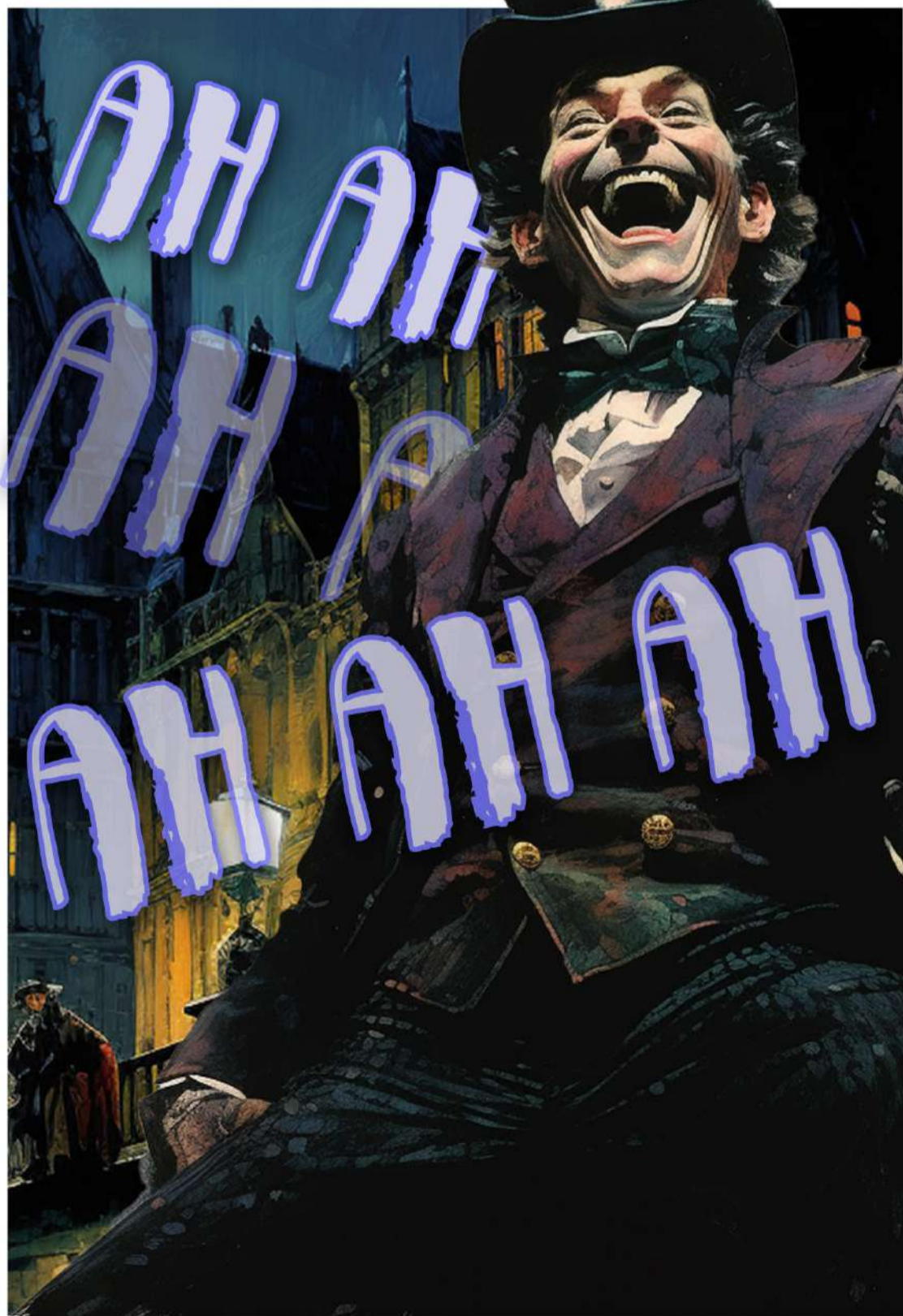


MAGISTER

This is going to be a problem!

**OUTSIDE
SCOTLAND YARD...**

Is that? Surely it cannot be the Prince of Wales! Drunk in the street?



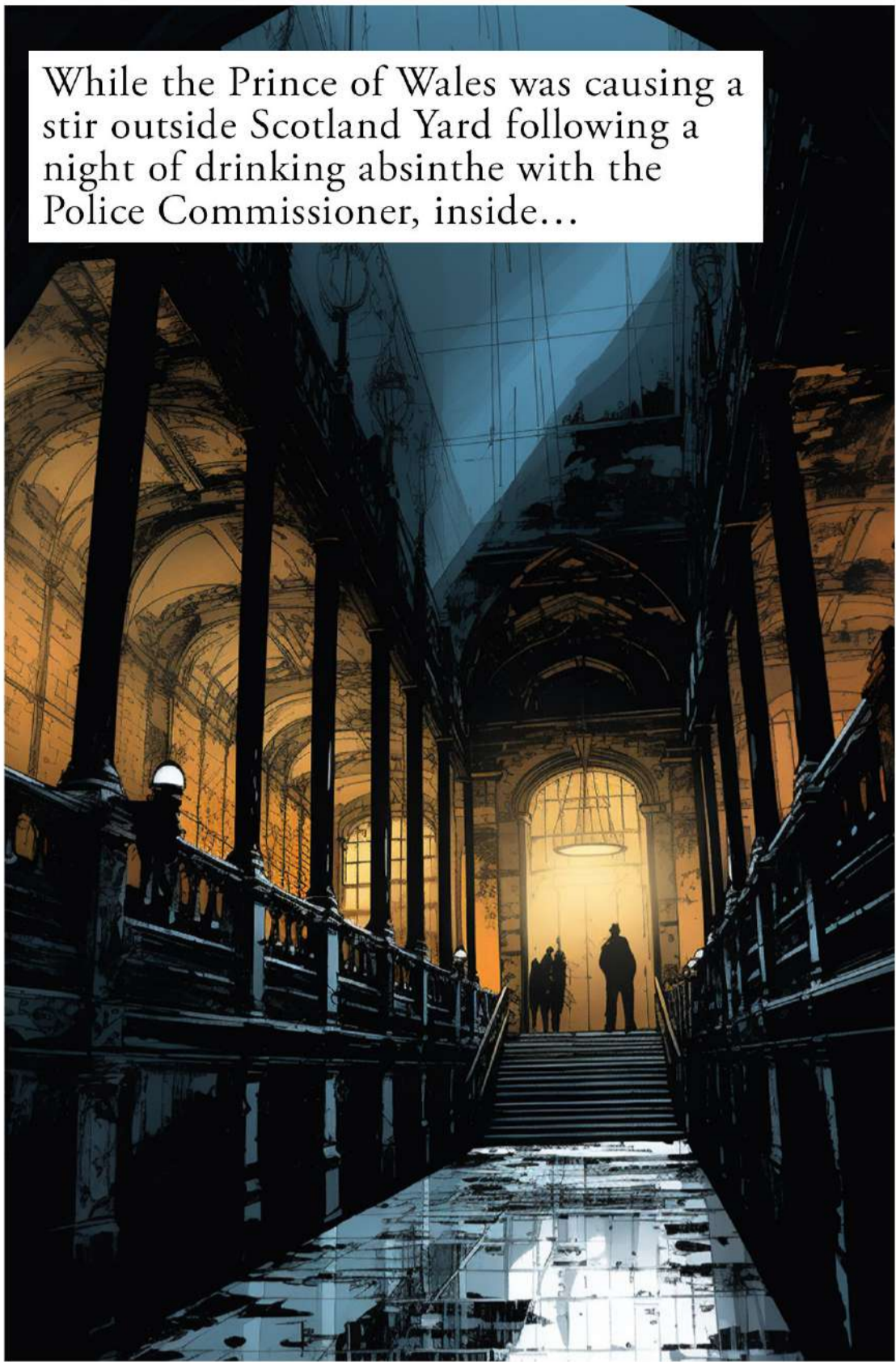
AH AH
AH AH
AH AH



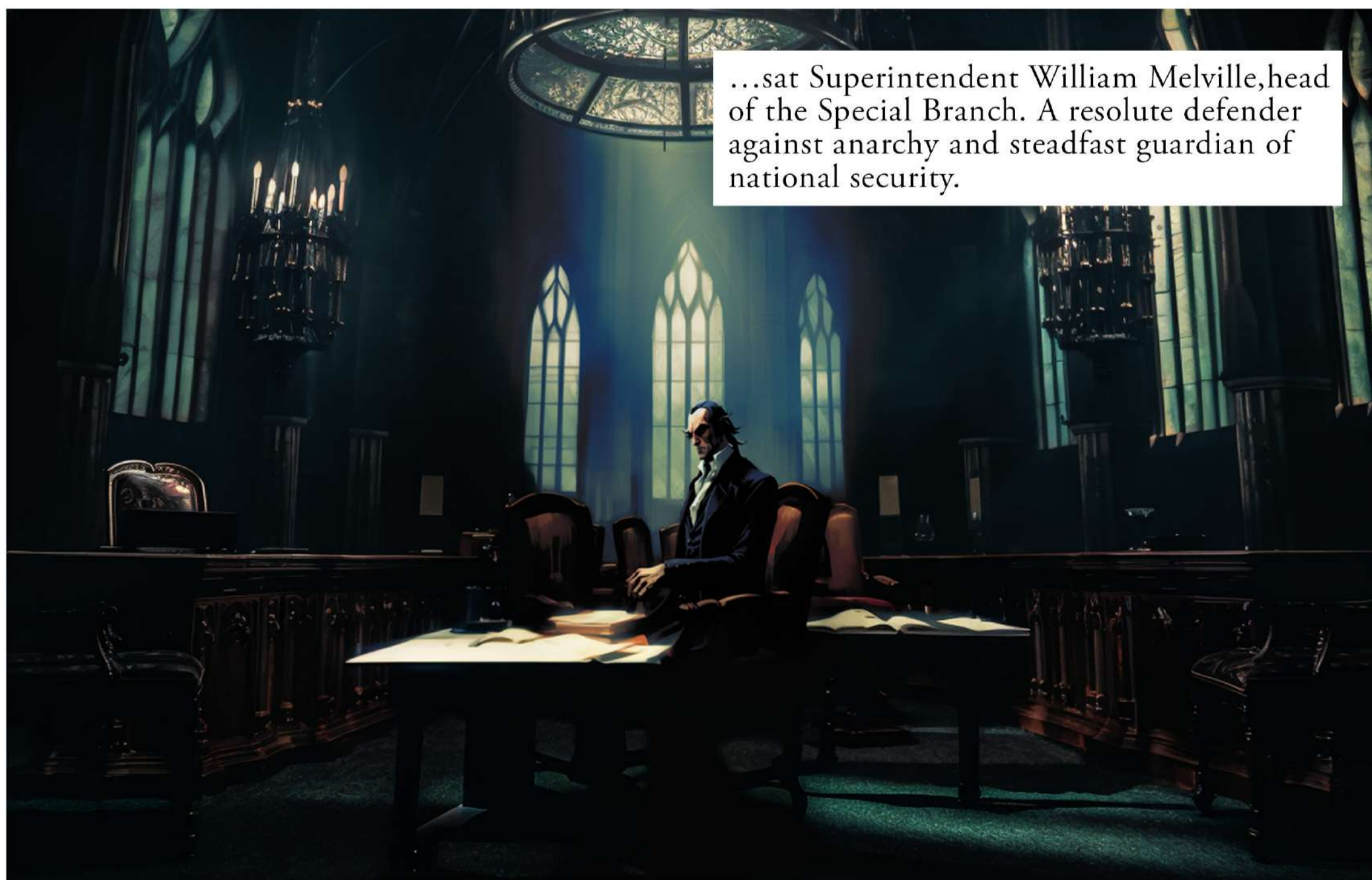
Oh, no. This is becoming quite the spectacle...



While the Prince of Wales was causing a stir outside Scotland Yard following a night of drinking absinthe with the Police Commissioner, inside...



...sat Superintendent William Melville, head of the Special Branch. A resolute defender against anarchy and steadfast guardian of national security.





“Magister”, you say?
Confirm the spelling
for me please.
And this was the only
word written?
Nothing is to be touched
within the room.
Thank you.


RING



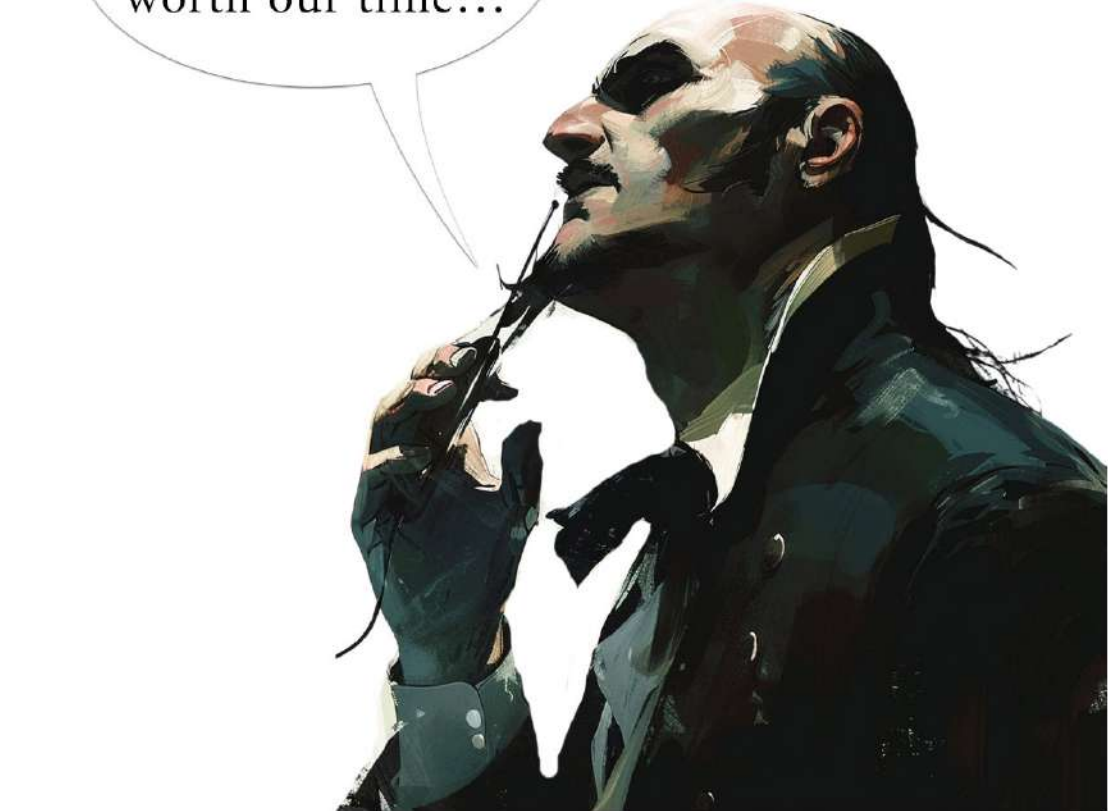
Come in,
Sergeant Pym!

**W
KNOCK**







Five minutes later, Pym and Melville were delving through the files the archivist had given them...




One might think this is hardly worth our time...




Three folders. One referencing an immigrant American conjuror. The other two, stuffed with papers all marked "Top Secret". The first Secret file concerned the conjuror's English assistant. The second detailed a long-term, institutionalised, middle-aged woman.



Indeed. Let's inform the Prime Minister then.



Bloody hell, if you'll pardon my French, sir.

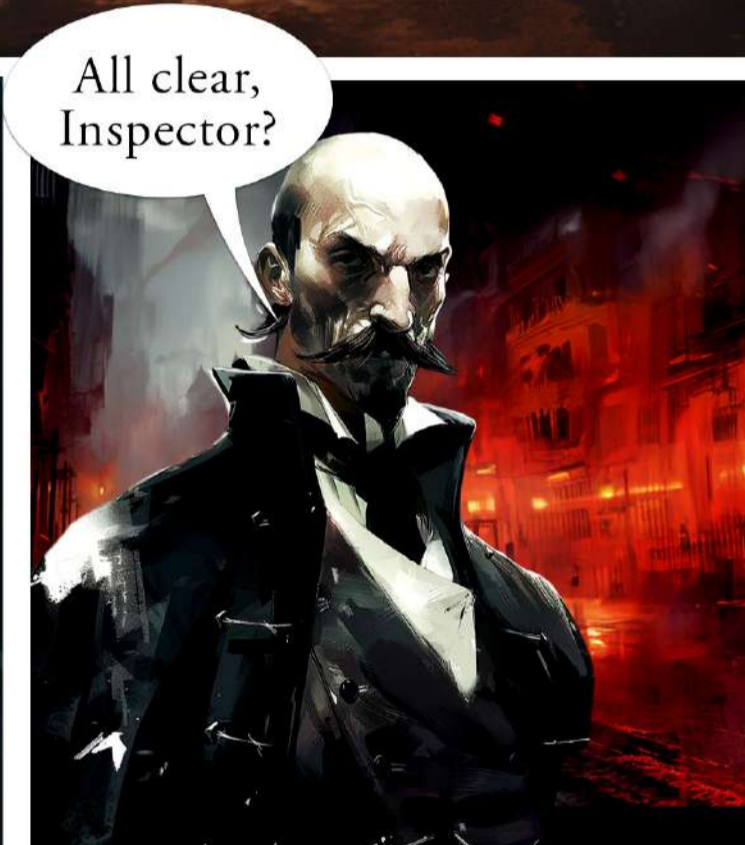


This has all the makings of a proper effin' balls up.

An hour later, Melville was heading to the Metropolitan Theatre of Steam, Smoke & Mirrors...



Superintendent...



All clear, Inspector?



Aye, sir, all clear it is.

The Prime Minister Lord Salisbury and Scotland Yard's Assistant Police Commissioner Sir Cumberland Sinclair are also both en route to the theatre, to meet Melville...



You understand I require the highest official approval, sir.

Sir Cumberland Sinclair steps down from his carriage, rubbing his hands together excitedly...



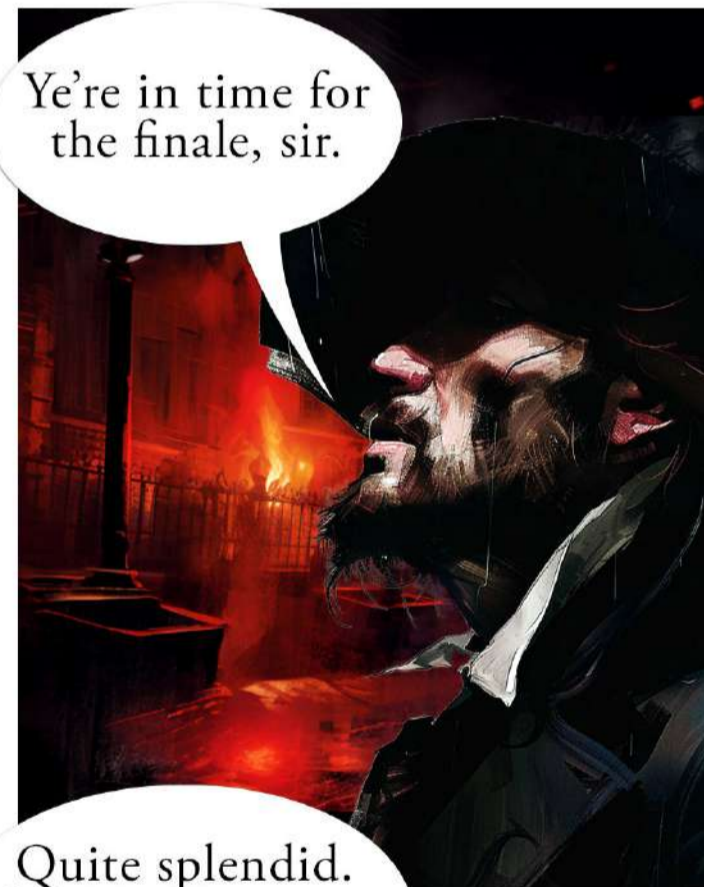
This is all very mysterious, our Melville!



Gentlemen, what we are about to witness tonight could change everything...



Ye're in time for the finale, sir.



Quite splendid. Magister is quite the conjuror, I hear.



A mysterious figure watches the group from the shadows, their eyes glinting ominously.



TO BE CONTINUED