

Daoism

Daoism

- another major philosophical view that shapes the Chinese culture
- a rival view to Confucianism
- The two most important philosophers are Laozi and Zhuangzi.

Laozi and Dao De Jing

- Laozi's real name is Li Er. (604 B.C.E. – ?)
- was a keeper of the Imperial Archives of the Zhou Dynasty
- Kongzi once visited Laozi to learn more about *dao*.
- wrote *Dao De Jing* before leaving Zhou for the central Asia

The Goal of Daoism

- Daoism and Confucianism share the basic worldview of *Yi Jing*.
- Daoism advocates that humans should live in harmony with nature.
- Daoism is one of the oldest schools of environmental philosophy.

Agreements with Confucianism

- The goal is harmony.
- To achieve harmony, we need to know *Dao*.
- Both emphasize the importance of *de* (virtue).

Disagreements with Confucianism

Daoism

- against moral cultivation and *li*
- holds that *dao* precedes virtue—One becomes virtuous by knowing *dao*.

Confucianism

- emphasizing moral cultivation and *li*
- holds that the way to know *dao* is by becoming virtuous

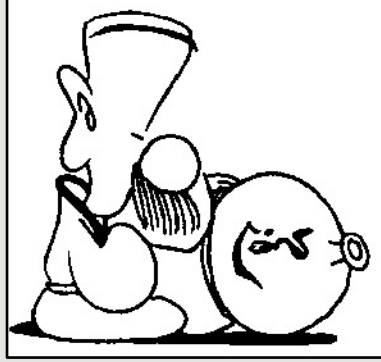
Reasons against Moral Cultivation

- Moral cultivation perpetuates certain values that reflect a society's preferences and prejudices.
- Moral cultivation leads to moral degeneration and hypocrisy.
  - Moral cultivation is based on rewards and punishments.
  - This leads people to pretend to be virtuous so as to gain rewards and avoid punishments.

Preference and Prejudice

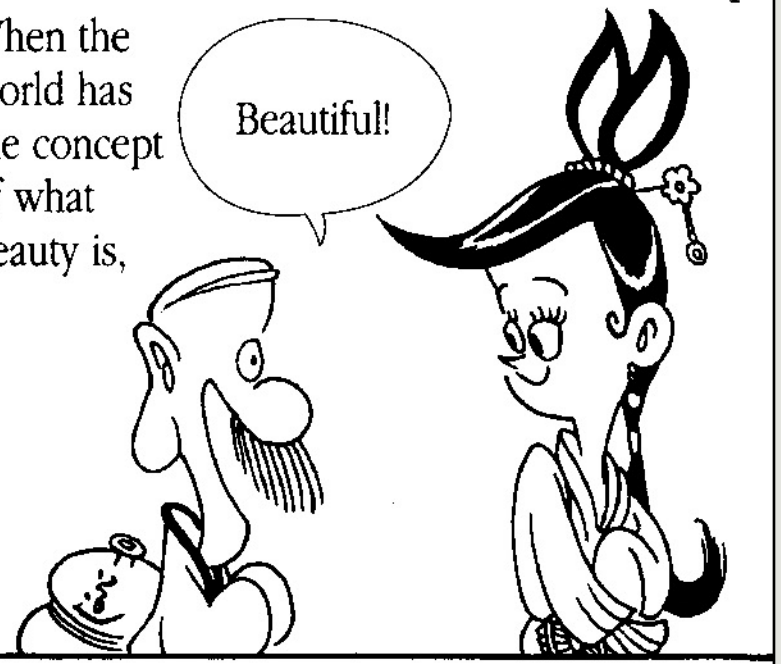
- Differences in the world are merely contrasts. They are presented by *yin* or *yang*.
- One needs to be careful not to favor *yin* over *yang,* or *yang* over *yin*.
- Otherwise, preference would lead to prejudice.

The Rise of Relative Opposites



1

When the world has the concept of what beauty is,

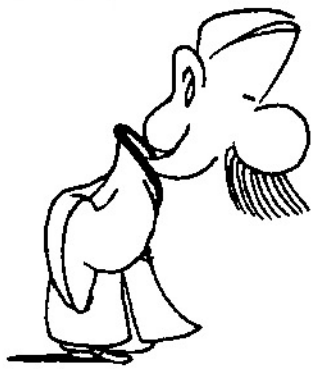


2

The concept of ugliness arises.



When the world has the concept of what goodness is,





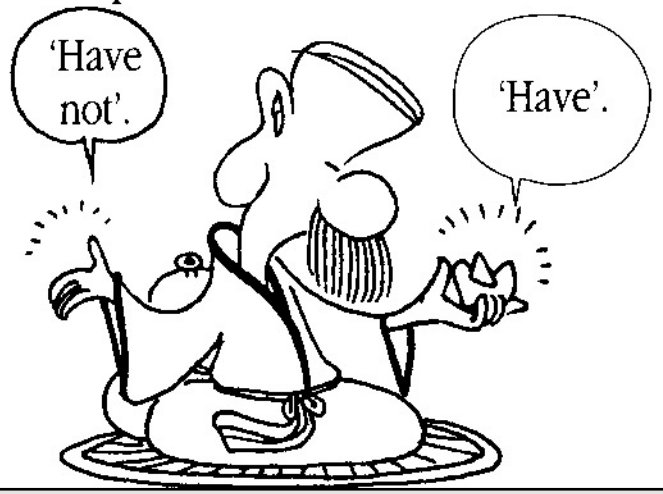
3



The concept of evil emerges.

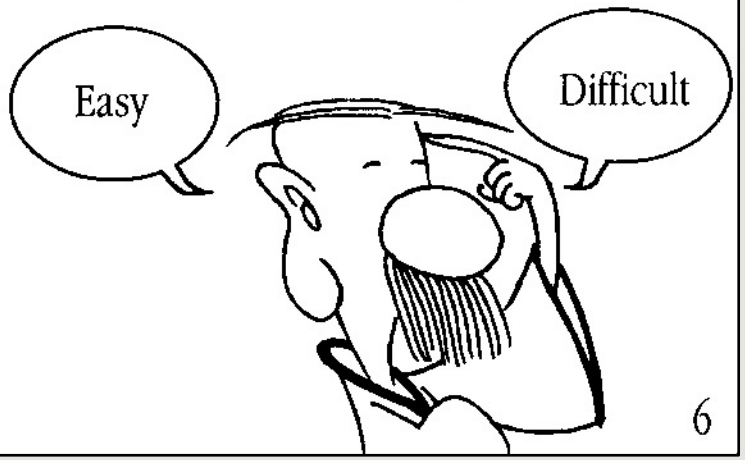
4

The concepts of 'have' and 'have not' appear upon comparison.



5

The concepts of 'difficult' and 'easy' are there only upon comparison.



6

The difference between 'long' and 'short' is noticed only when comparison is made.

Long

Short



7

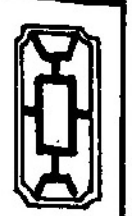
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High

'High' and 'low' exist only when they are compared.

Low





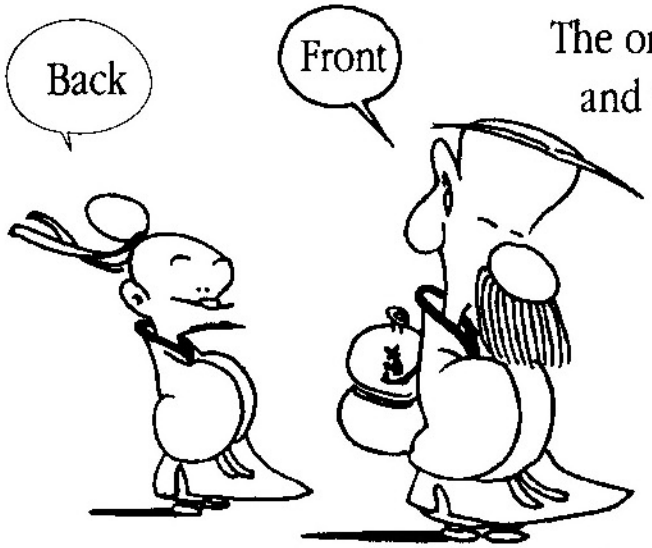
Two sounds become harmonised only when they are put together.

9



Back

Front

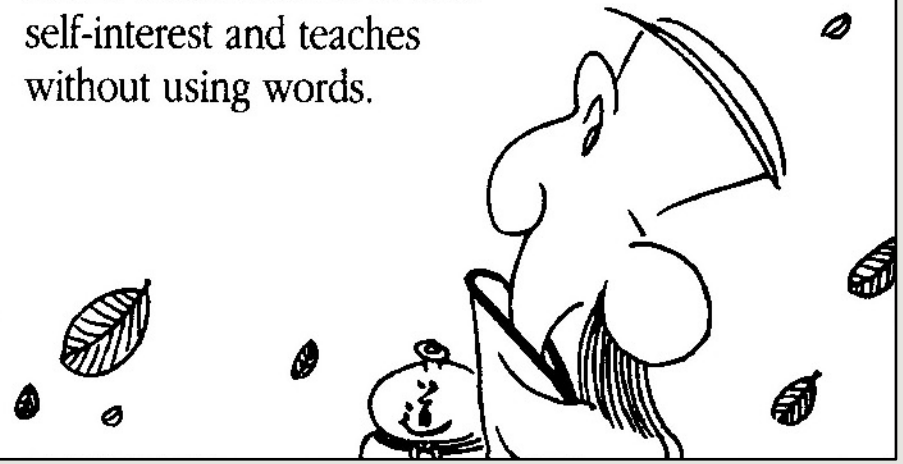


The order of 'front' and 'back' comes about when they are compared.

10

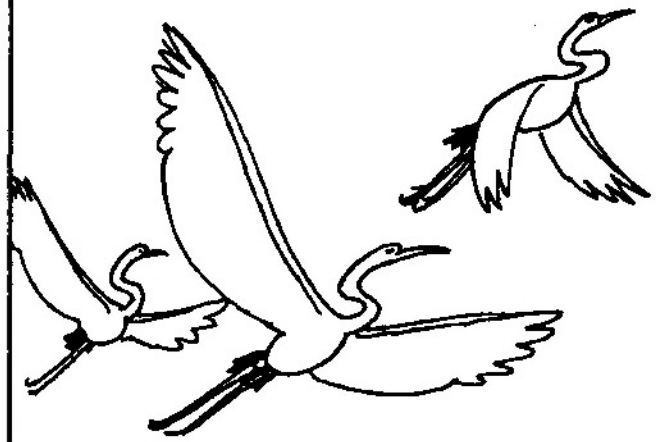
So the sage manages worldly affairs without motives and self-interest and teaches without using words.

11



When things develop, you must not interrupt; when things grow, you must not claim possession of them; when things turn out successfully, you must not allege that it is solely due to your ability. When successful, do not claim credit.



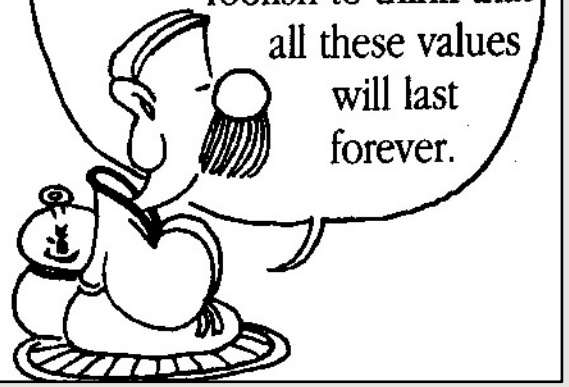


Because the sage abides by selflessness, his good work endures.



All values and concepts are conceived by people, and all value judgements arise upon comparison. The relationship between the opposite objects is always changing whereas the definition of value judgement is ever static.

Therefore, be calm about the difference between beauty and ugliness, 'have' and 'have not', difficult and easy, long and short, high and low, front and back. It is foolish to think that all these values will last forever.

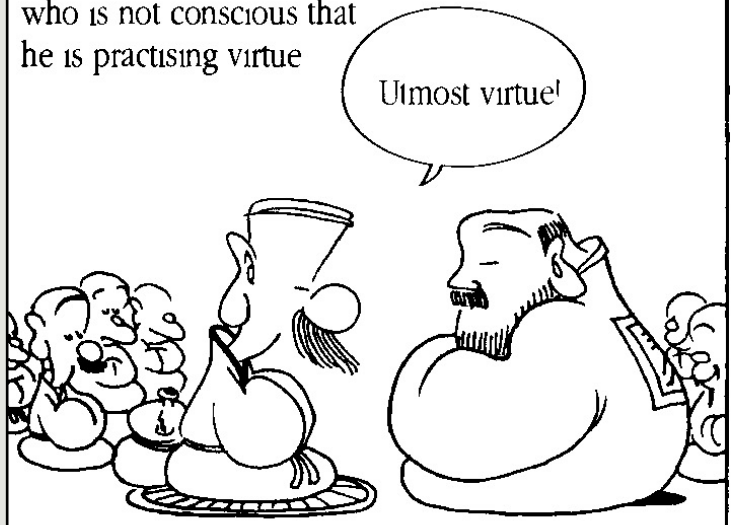


Virtue and Degeneration



1

A virtuous person is one who is not conscious that he is practising virtue



2

A person who tries to 'show' his virtue is not virtuous



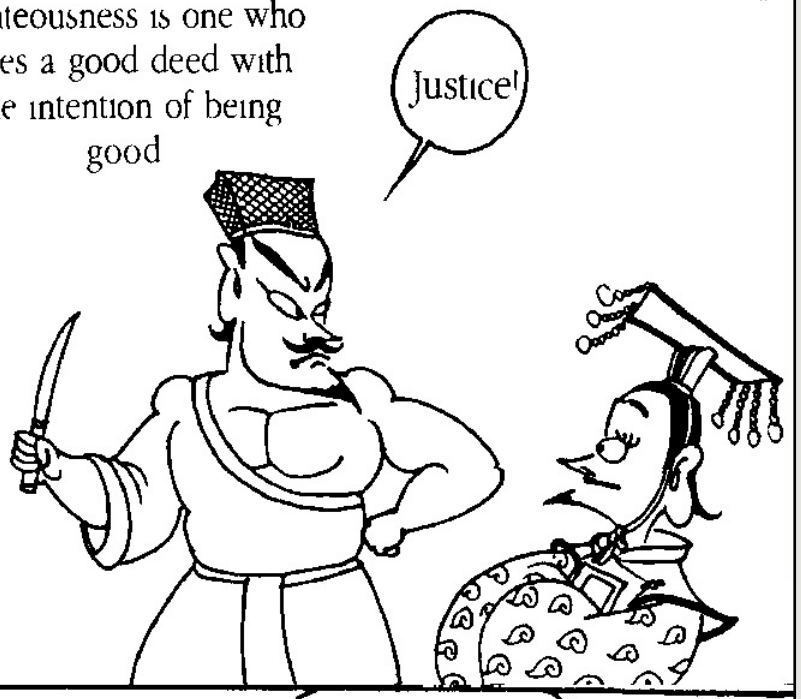
A person of utmost benevolence is one who does a good deed without the intention of being good

3

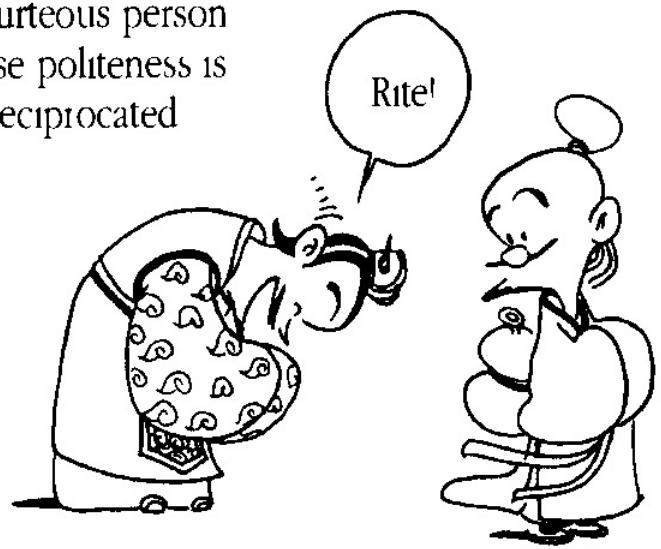


A person of utmost righteousness is one who does a good deed with the intention of being good

4

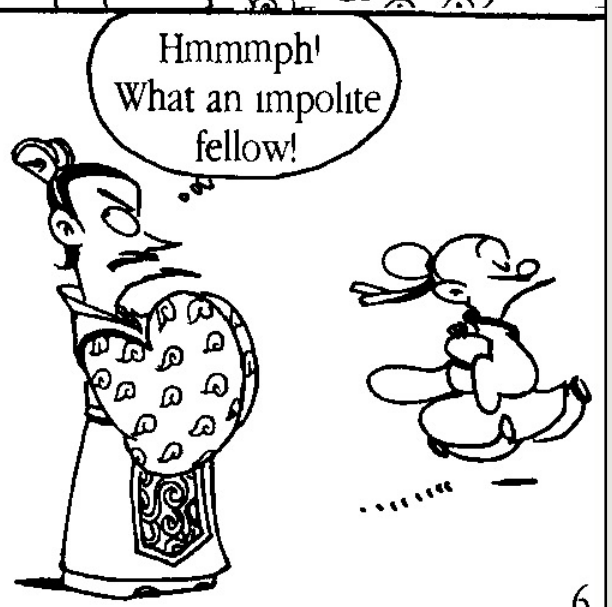


A courteous person whose politeness is not reciprocated



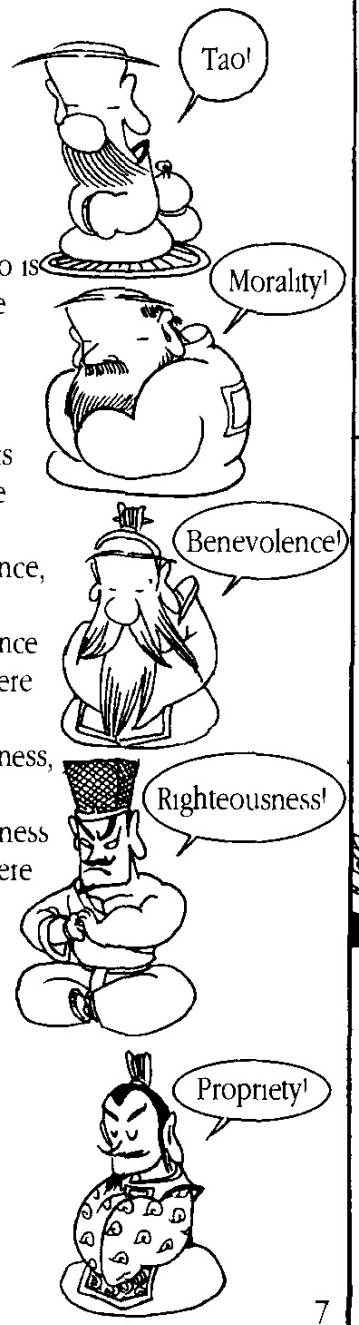
5

Will force others to be polite to him



6

So the sequence goes as follows When Tao is lost, there arises morality. When morality is lost, there arises benevolence, When benevolence is lost, there arises righteousness, When righteousness is lost, there arises propriety



7

When a society needs 'propriety' or rules of conduct for relationships, hypocrisies and deceit will emerge This leads to social turmoil



8

A person who thinks he is wise tries to be perfect, using his wits This is the cause of stupidity



9

Therefore the truly great men of Tao dwell in what is fundamental and shun what is trivial They abide by what is real, and discard what is ornamental

10

So we must adhere to the plain and honest Tao and not hypocritical intellect We must abandon vain luxury and make use of the rules of Tao





Cultivation of the Way emcompasses Tao, Virtue, Goodness, Justice, Rectitude and Wisdom To have a society that is in accord with the Tao, every step taken must follow the law of nature When a society needs intellect and rules of conduct to carry on, hypocrisies and deceit will emerge The situation here has reached a lamentable stage.

Dao—Beyond Words

- "The *dao* that can be spoken of is not the unchanging *dao*.
  The name that can be named is not the unchanging names."
- *Dao* cannot be described or defined clearly in terms of words.
- Language is based on concepts.
- Concepts arise from *yinyang*.
- Since *dao* transcends *yinyang*, it cannot be described or defined using language.

How to Know Dao

- Daoism holds that to know *dao*, we need to transcend our understanding of the world based on *yinyang*, and try to comprehend *dao* directly.
- One needs to live a simple life and be close to nature, avoid human contrivance.
- Preserve one's simple and innocent nature, and flourish in a natural and healthy environment.

Wuwei



- literally means “no endeavor”, “no action”
- follow the course of nature, do not force things
- be spontaneous and without intention
- be oneself
- no contrivance, no intervention
- Wuwei is a very important teaching in Daoism, it is a clear contrast to moral cultivation in Confucianism

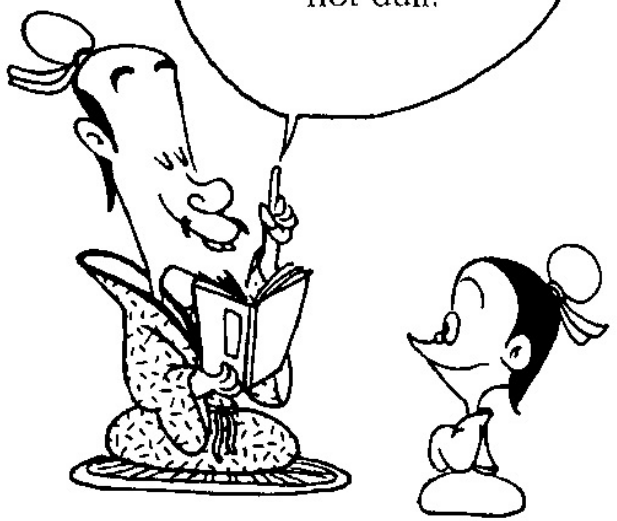
The Great Wisdom of Life



For ages, the general belief has been :

Man must show that he is strong and not pliant; smart and not dull.

1

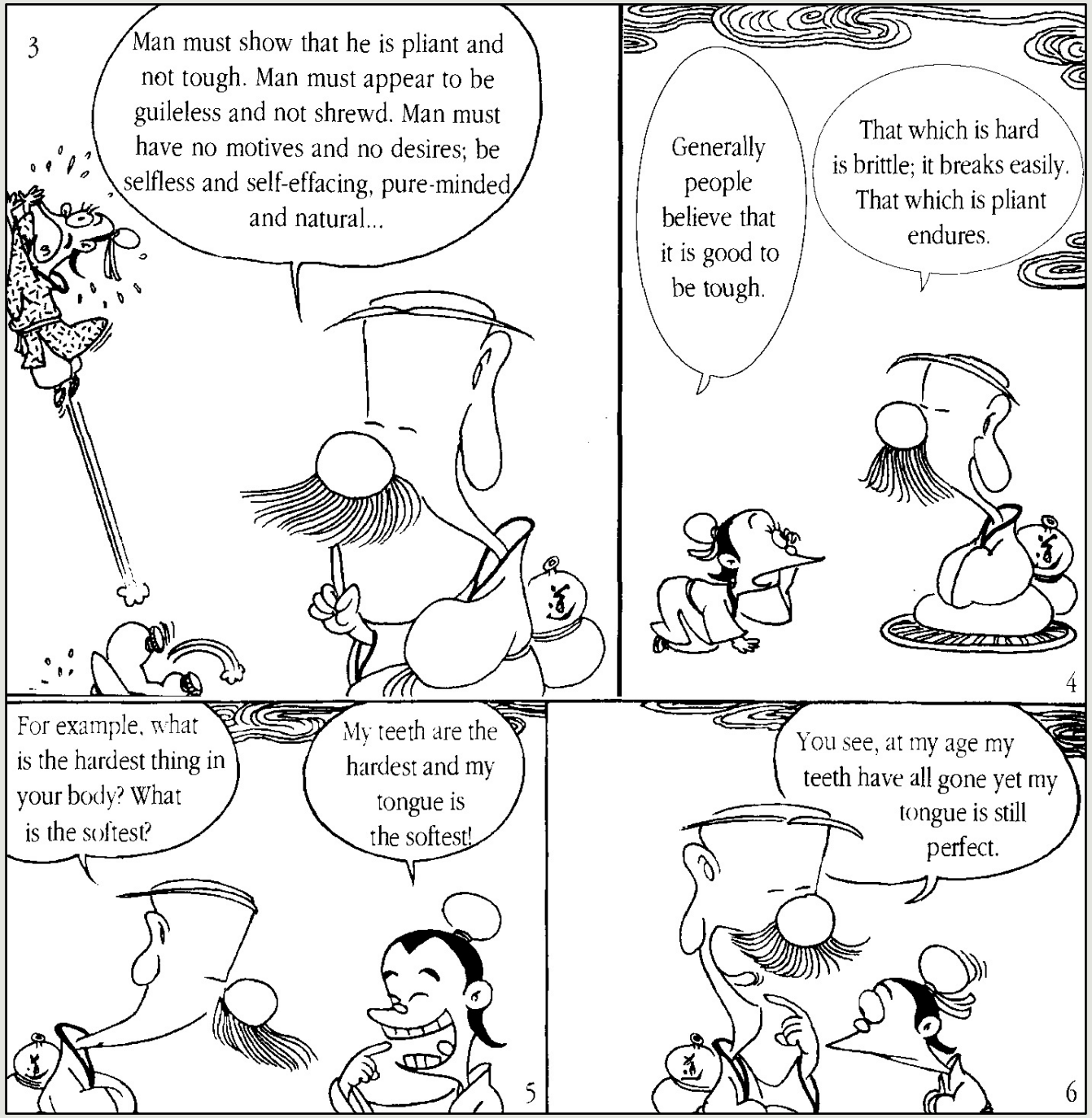


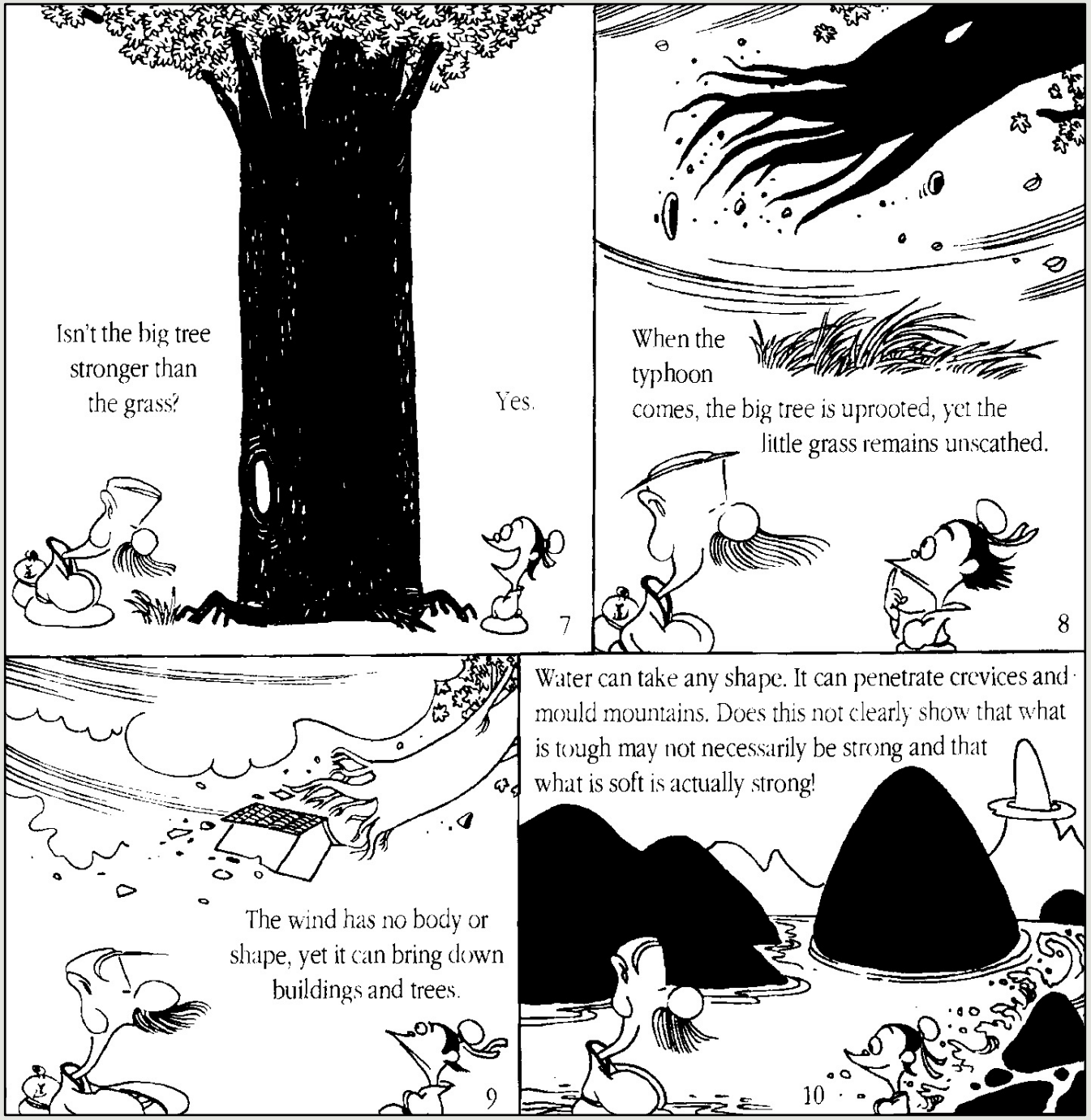
But there appears in Chinese history a man named Lao Zi who is different from the rest.



2




3
Man must show that he is pliant and not tough. Man must appear to be guileless and not shrewd. Man must have no motives and no desires; be selfless and self-effacing, pure-minded and natural...
Generally people believe that it is good to be tough.
That which is hard is brittle; it breaks easily. That which is pliant endures.
4
For example, what is the hardest thing in your body? What is the softest?
My teeth are the hardest and my tongue is the softest!
5
You see, at my age my teeth have all gone yet my tongue is still perfect.
6


Isn't the big tree stronger than the grass?
Yes.
7
When the typhoon comes, the big tree is uprooted, yet the little grass remains unscathed.
8
The wind has no body or shape, yet it can bring down buildings and trees.
9
Water can take any shape. It can penetrate crevices and mould mountains. Does this not clearly show that what is tough may not necessarily be strong and that what is soft is actually strong!
10

The Cultivation of Tao



In the pursuit of knowledge, day by day, something is acquired.

My knowledge has improved tremendously.

1



In the pursuit of Tao, there is daily emptying of the mind's consciousness until there is nothingness.

My desires have greatly diminished.

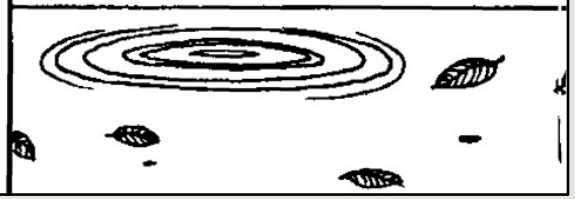


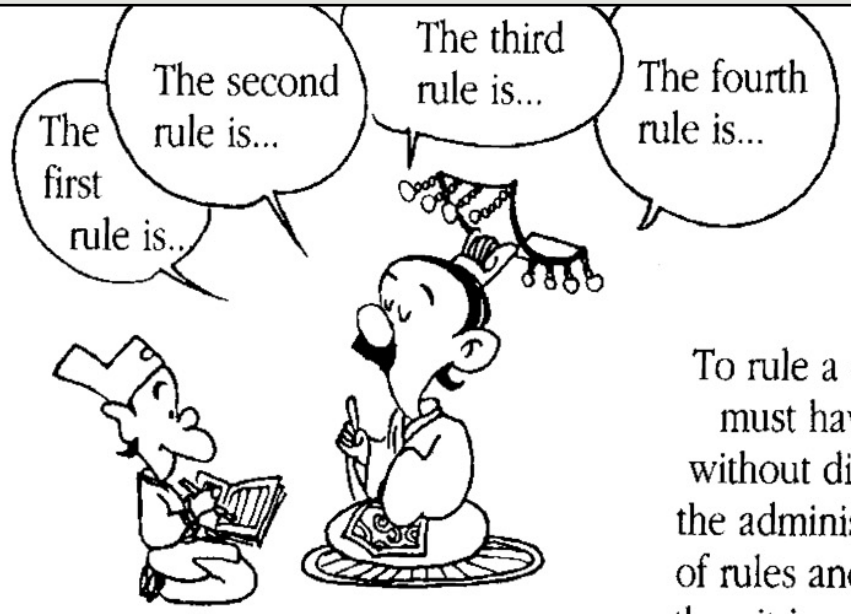
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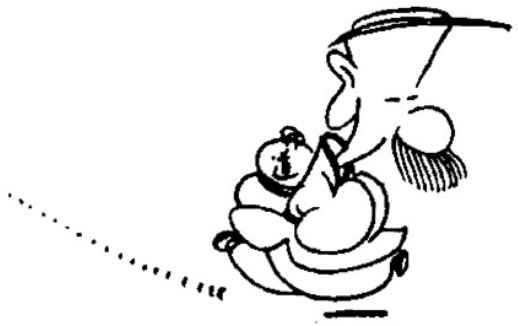
If you are able to curb misbehaviour, there's nothing that you cannot do







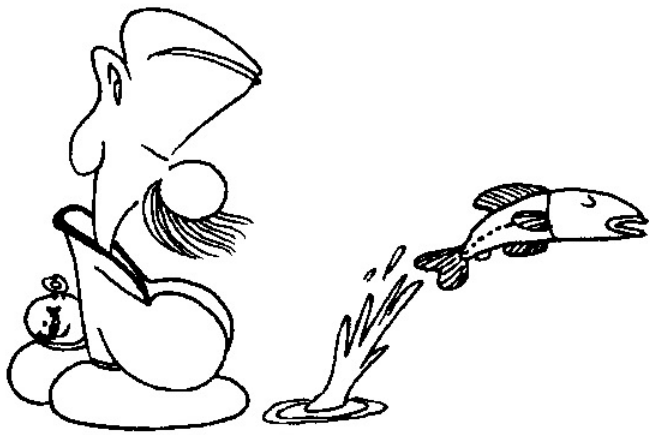
To rule a country, one must have solitude without disturbance. If the administration is full of rules and regulations, then it is not qualified to rule the country.



Learning can only improve your knowledge and increase your desire, thereby giving rise to hypocrisies and worries. The cultivation of Tao, in diminishing knowledge and desire, makes your mind pure and clear, and free from worries.

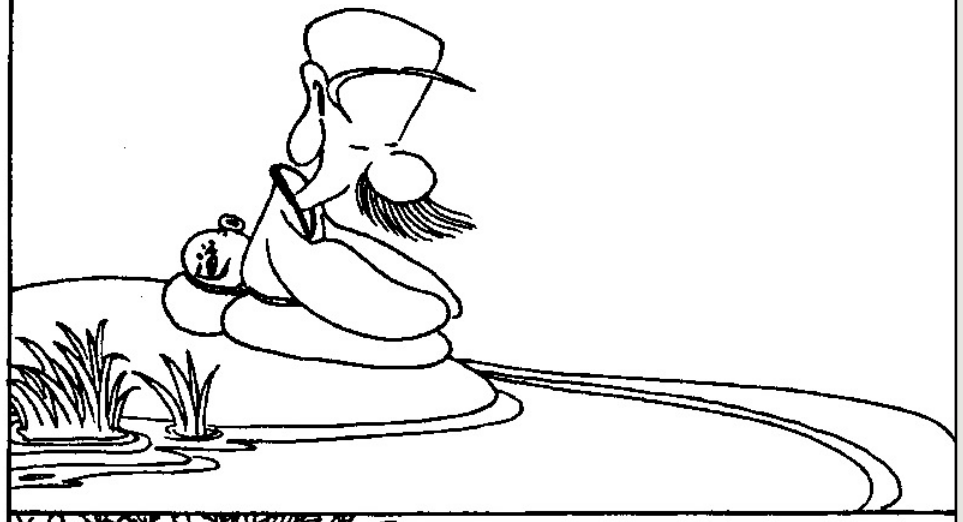


The Characteristics of Water

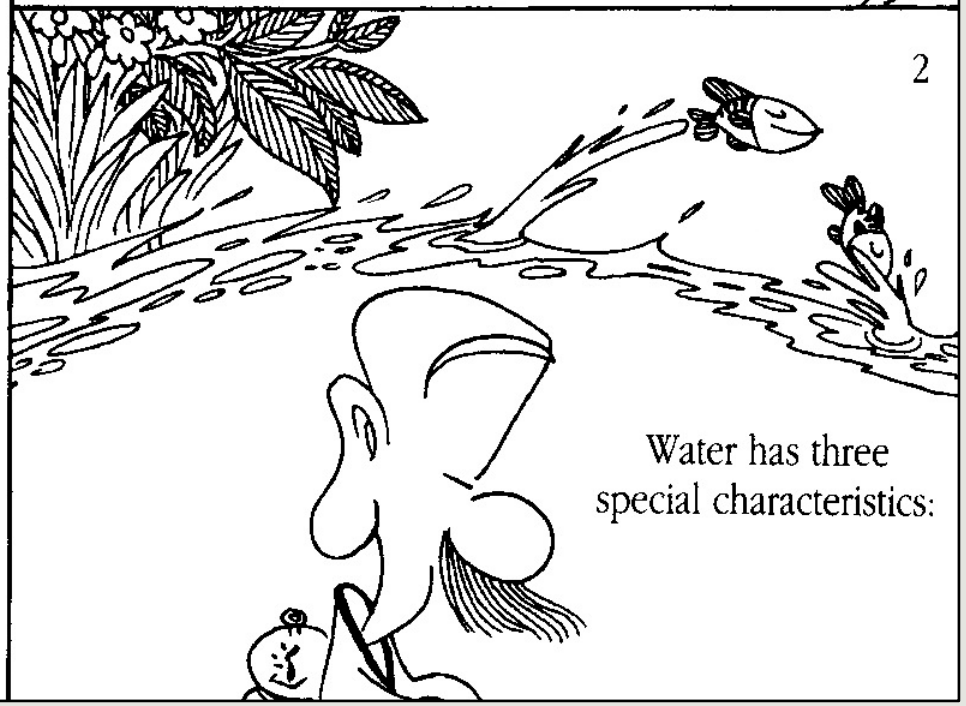


1

A virtuous person is just like water.



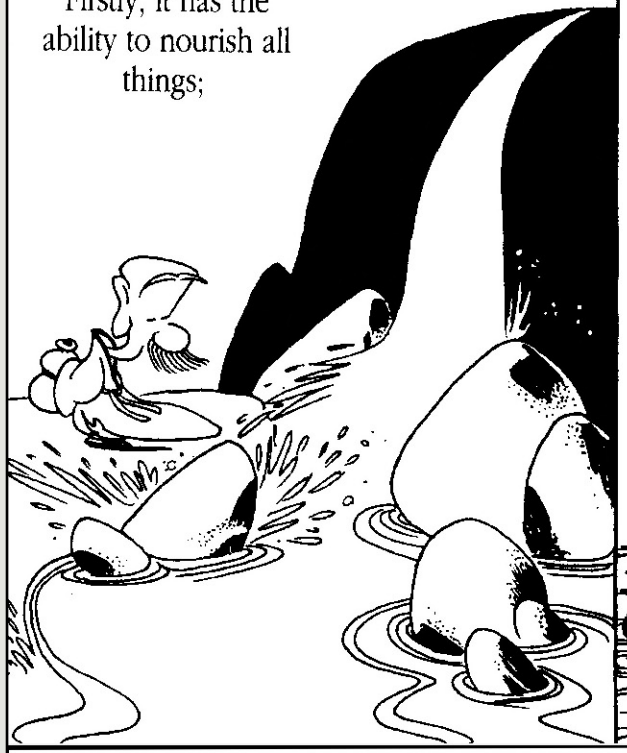
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Water has three special characteristics:

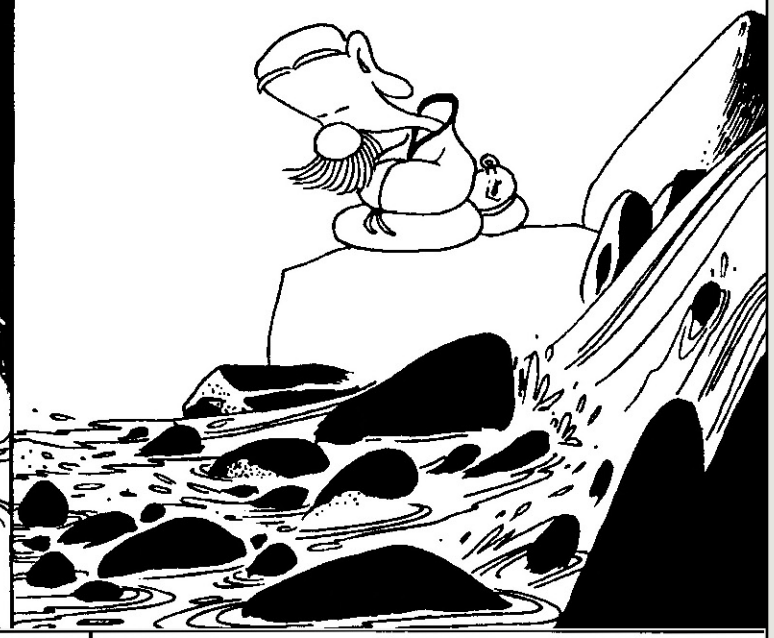
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Firstly, it has the ability to nourish all things;



4

Secondly, being soft, it does not fight against odds but lets things take their natural course;



Thirdly, water flows into lowly places which people disdain.

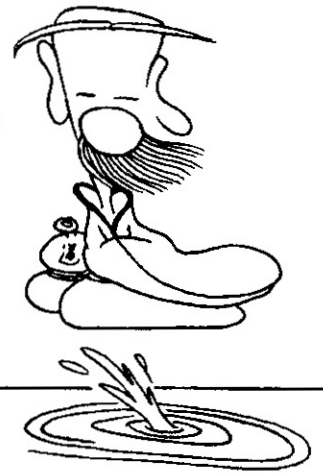
Just as water is located in a lowly place, a virtuous person willingly adopts a humble attitude.

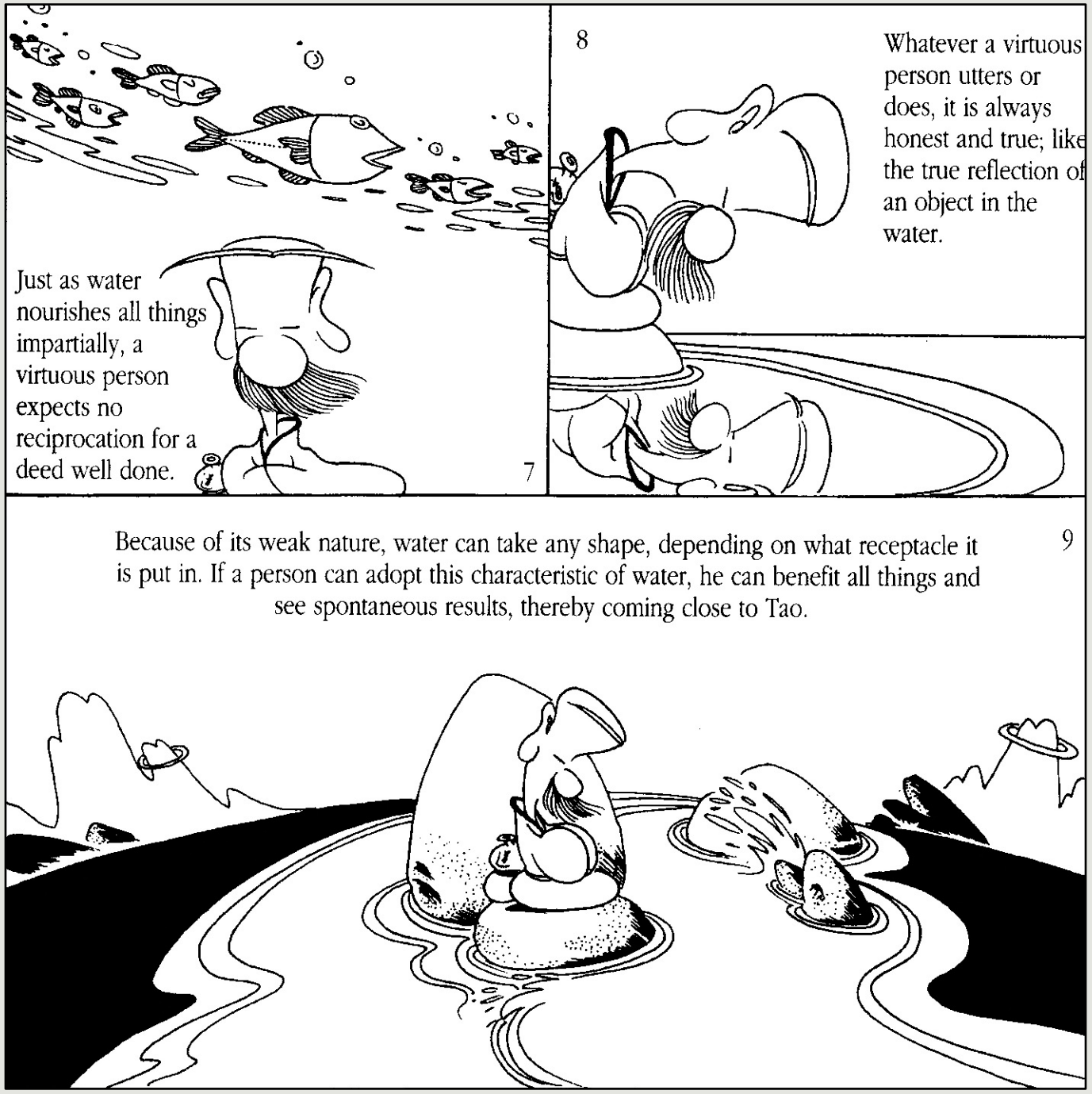


5

6

Just like the deep and clear water, a virtuous person remains silent and solitary.




Just as water nourishes all things impartially, a virtuous person expects no reciprocation for a deed well done.
7
8
Whatever a virtuous person utters or does, it is always honest and true; like the true reflection of an object in the water.
Because of its weak nature, water can take any shape, depending on what receptacle it is put in. If a person can adopt this characteristic of water, he can benefit all things and see spontaneous results, thereby coming close to Tao.
9

Zhuangzi and Zhuang Zi

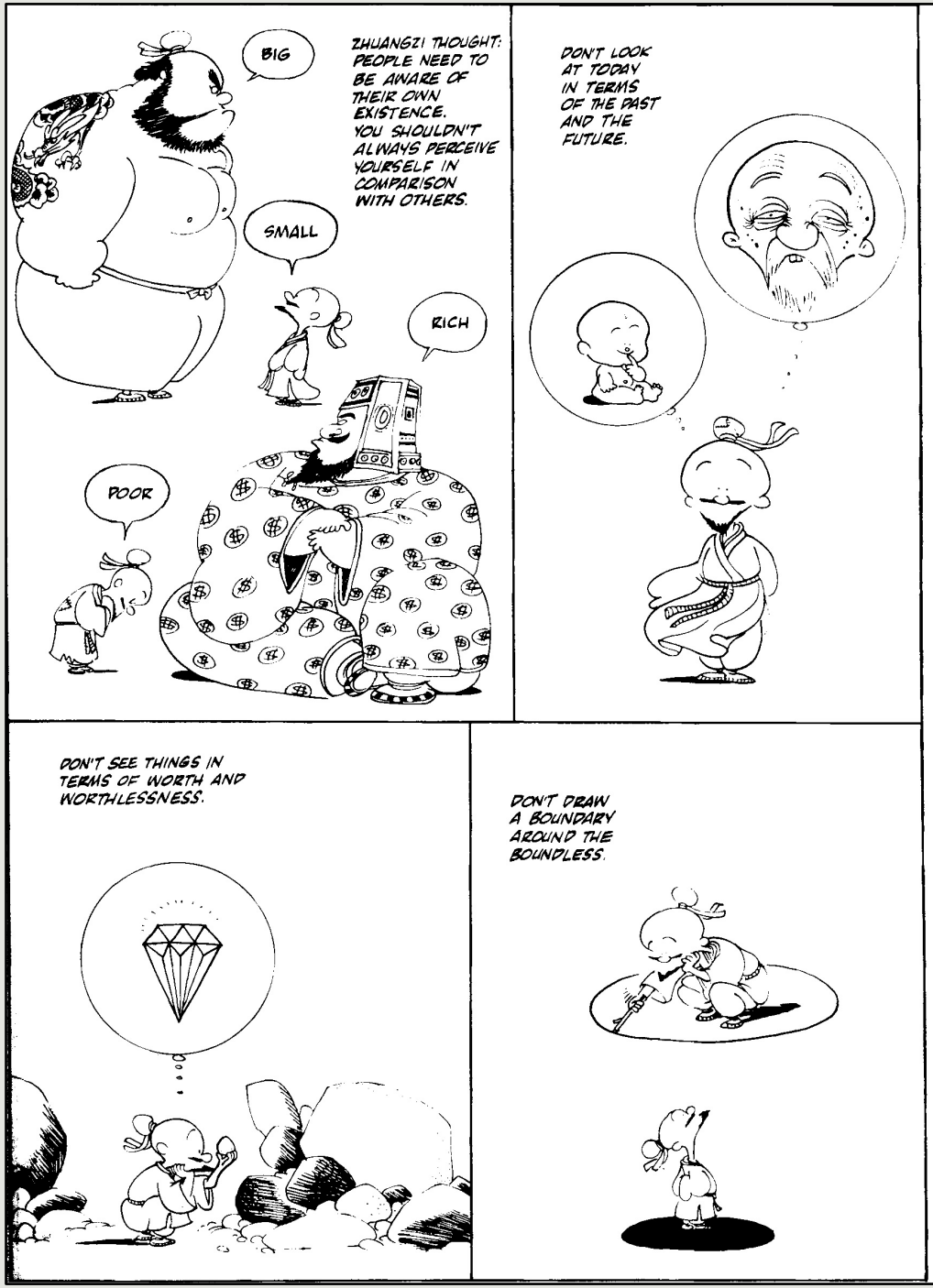
- Zhuangzi's name is Zhuang Zhou (369?–286? B.C.E.).
- wrote the first seven chapters of the book *Zhuang Zi*
- *Zhuang Zi*—not only a philosophical book but also a classic in Chinese literature

THE NAME OF OUR HERO IS ZHUANG ZHOU. LIKE ALL CHINESE NAMES, THE SURNAME COMES FIRST, FOLLOWED BY THE GIVEN NAME. TO SHOW RESPECT FOR HIS VAST WISDOM, WE ADD THE SUFFIX "ZI" TO HIS SURNAME, JUST LIKE KONGZI (CONFUCIUS), MENGZI (MENCIUS), AND LAOZI. ZHUANGZI LIVED DURING THE FOURTH CENTURY B.C., A TIME KNOWN AS THE WARRING STATES PERIOD IN CHINA. THIS WAS A PERIOD OF DISUNITY IN WHICH RIVAL NATIONS BATTLED CONSTANTLY FOR MORE LAND AND GREATER POWER. AS A RESULT, IT WAS ALSO A TIME OF WIDESPREAD DEATH AND DESTRUCTION. ZHUANGZI SAW THIS CHAOS AND SUFFERING AND WAS DEEPLY SADDENED BY IT.

AS A WAY OUT, ZHUANGZI SHIFTED HIS LINE OF SIGHT FROM THE EARTHLY WORLD TO THE LIMITLESSNESS OF TIME AND SPACE.

夫莊子者，可謂知本矣，故未始藏其狂言，言雖無會而獨應者也。夫應而非會，則雖當無用；言非物事，則雖高不行；與夫寂然不動，不得已而後起者，固有間矣，斯可謂知無心者也。夫心無為，則隨感而應，應隨其時，言唯諢爾。故與化為體，流萬代而冥物，豈曾設對獨遘而游談乎方外哉！此其所以不經而為百家之冠也。

節自【晉・郭象◎莊子序】



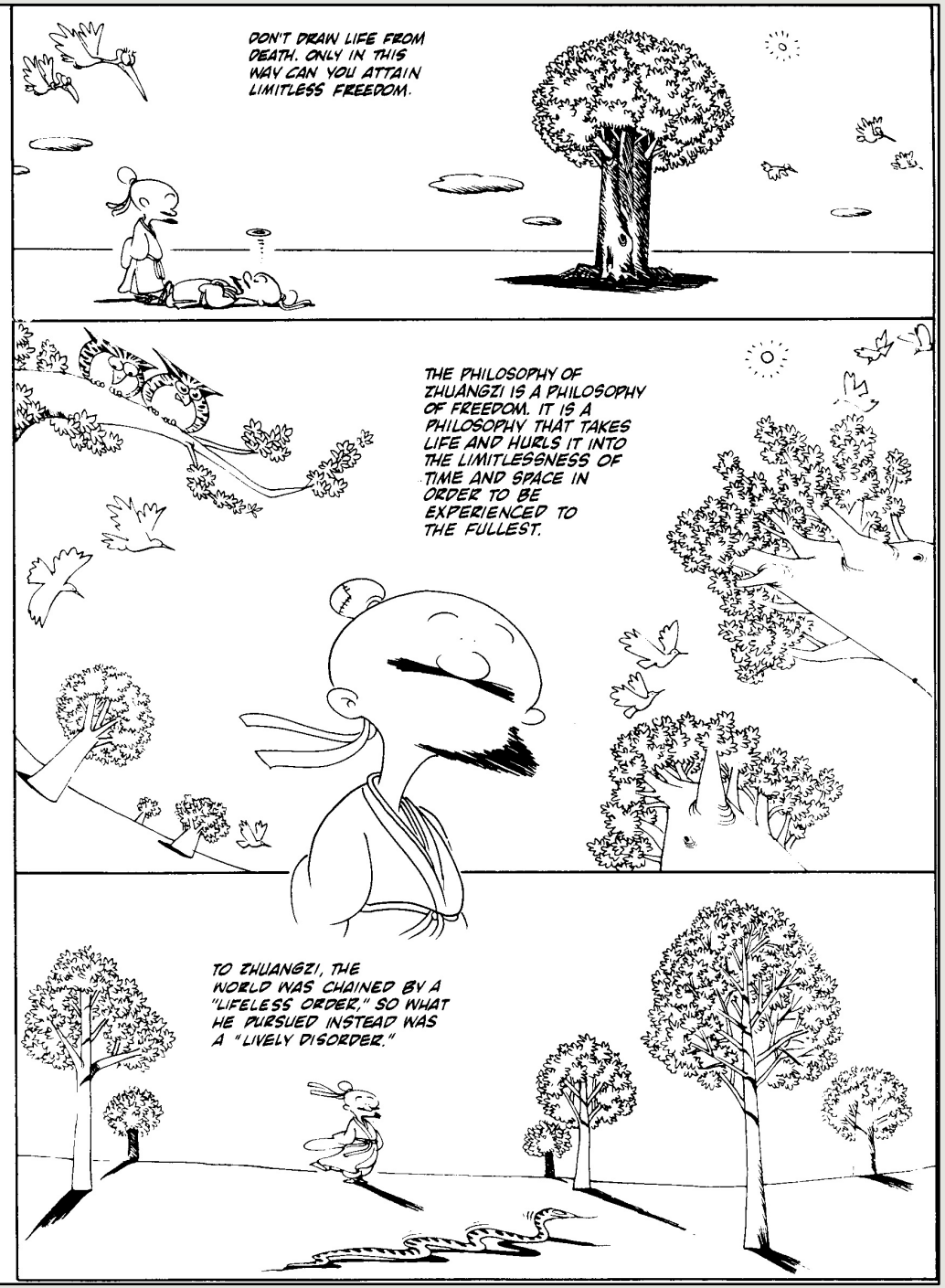
節自【唐・陸德明⊙莊子序】

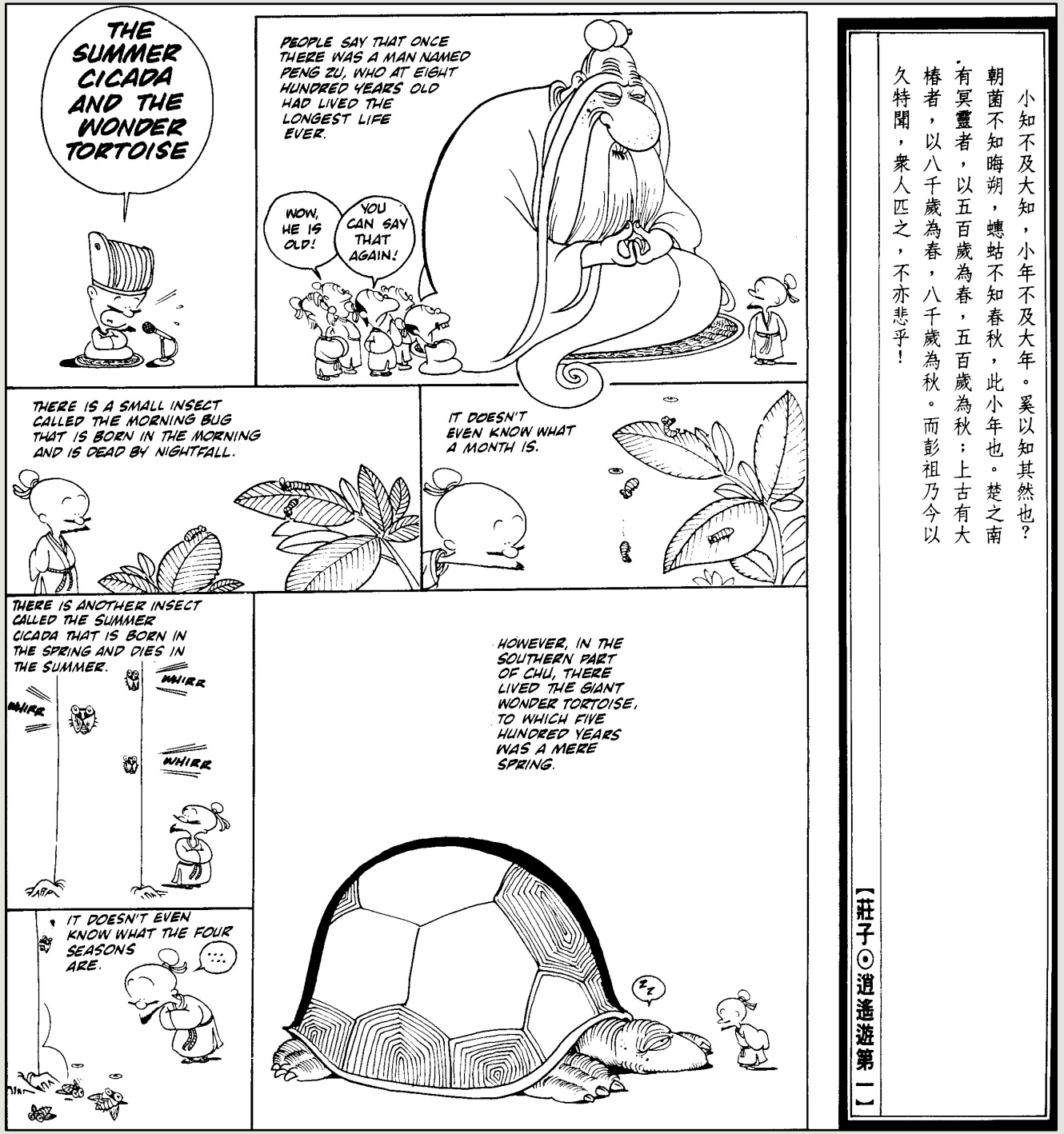
莊子者，姓莊，名周，（太史公云：字子休。）梁國蒙縣人也。六國時，為漆園吏，與魏惠王、齊宣王、楚威王同時，（李頤云：與齊愍王同時。）齊楚嘗聘以為相，不應。時人皆尚遊說，莊子獨高尚其事，優遊自得，依老氏之旨，著書十餘萬言，以消遙自然無為齊物而已；大抵皆寓言，歸之於理，不可案文責也。

夫莊子者，所以申道德之深根，述重玄之妙旨，暢无為之恬淡，明獨化之窅冥，鉗捷九流，括囊百氏，諒區中之至教，實象外之微言者也。

其人姓莊，名周，字子休，生宋國睢陽蒙縣，師長桑公子，受號南華仙人。當戰國之初，降周之末，歎蒼生之業薄，傷道德之陵夷，乃慷慨發憤，爰著斯論。其言大而博，其旨深而遠，非下士之所聞，豈淺識之能究！

節自【唐・成玄英◎莊子序】



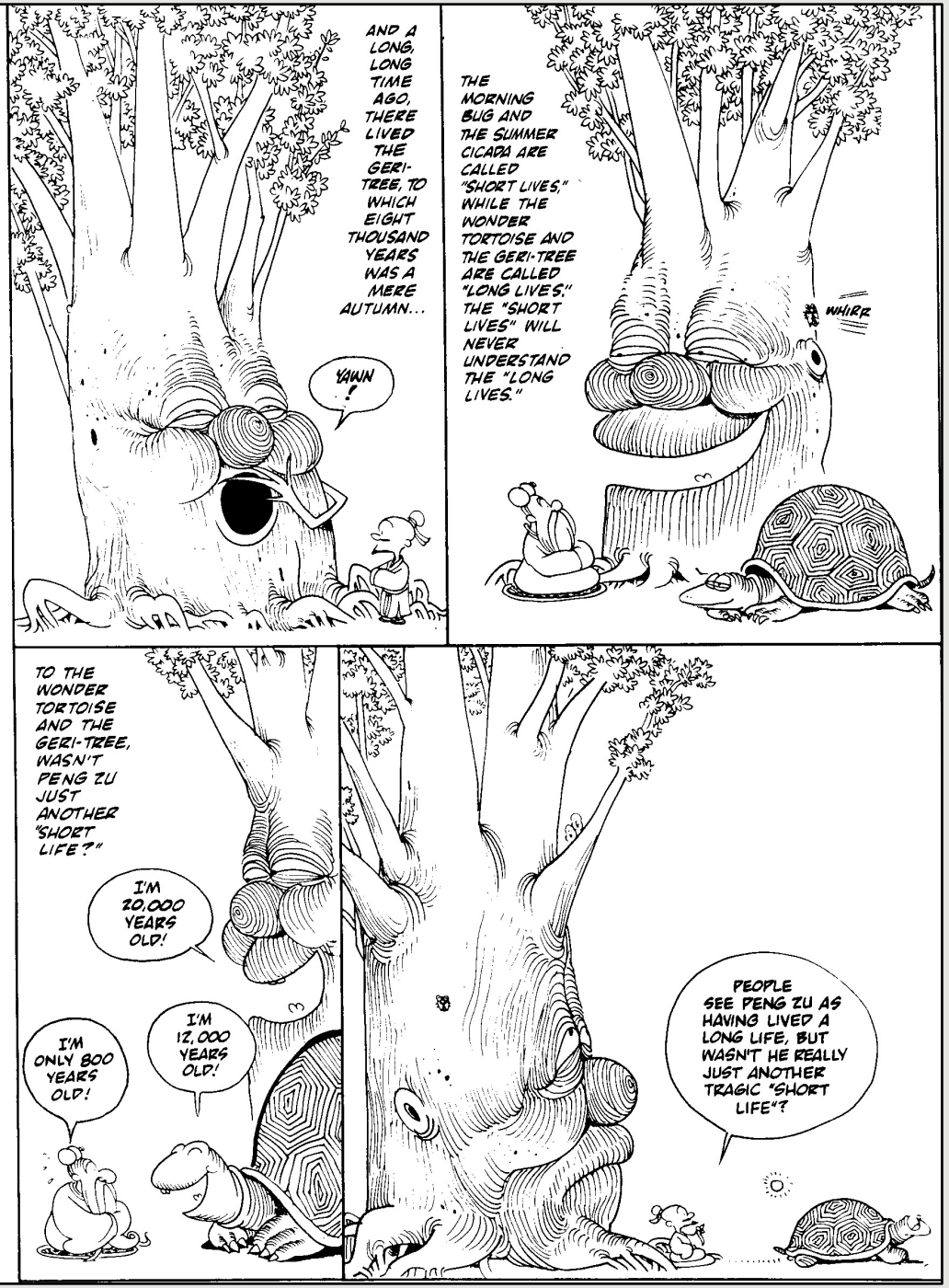


小知不及大知，小年不及大年。奚以知其然也？朝菌不知晦朔，蟪蛄不知春秋，此小年也。楚之南有冥靈者，以五百歲為春，五百歲為秋；上古有大椿者，以八千歲為春，八千歲為秋。而彭祖乃今以久特聞，衆人匹之，不亦悲乎！

【莊子⊙逍遙遊第一】

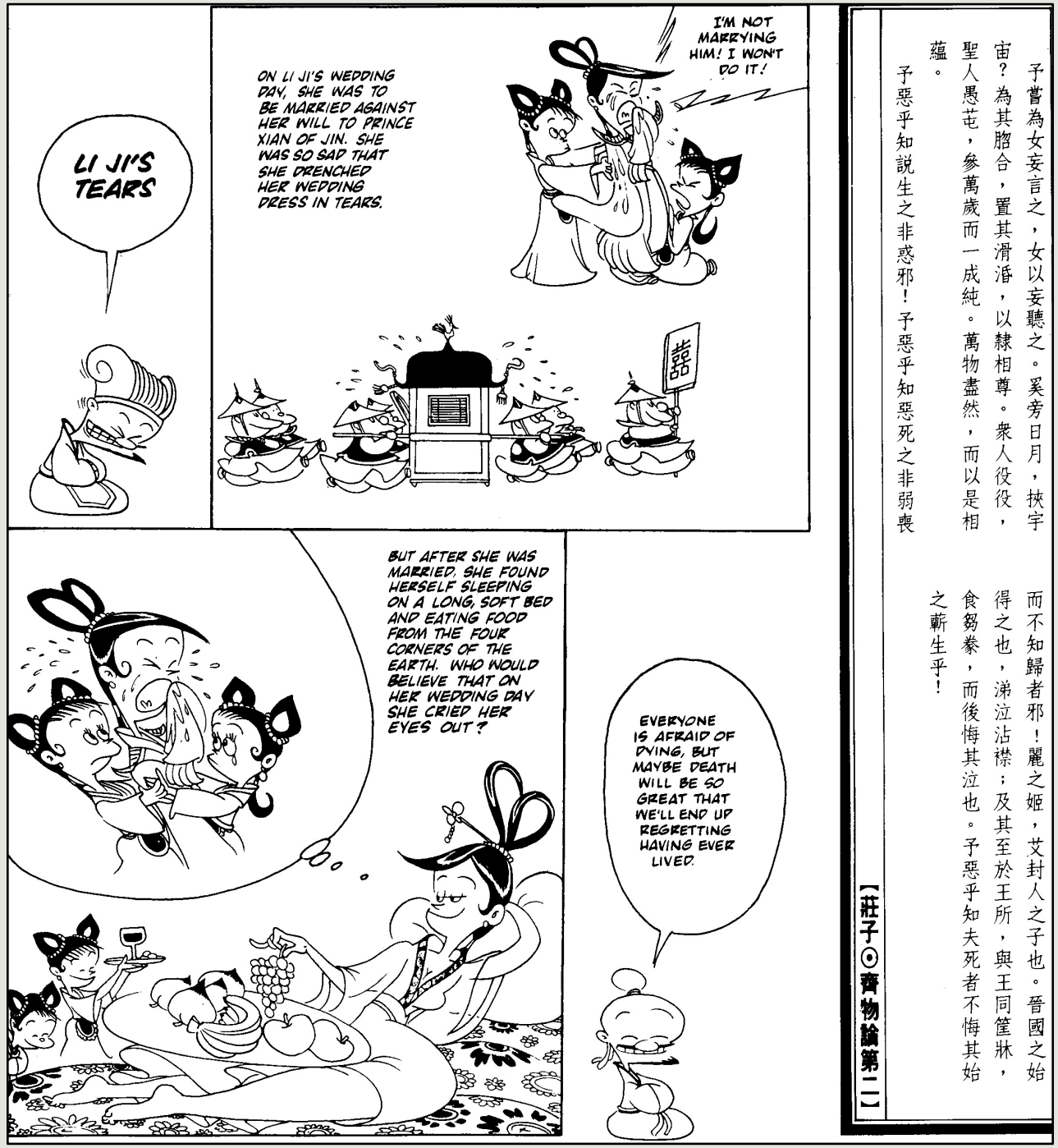
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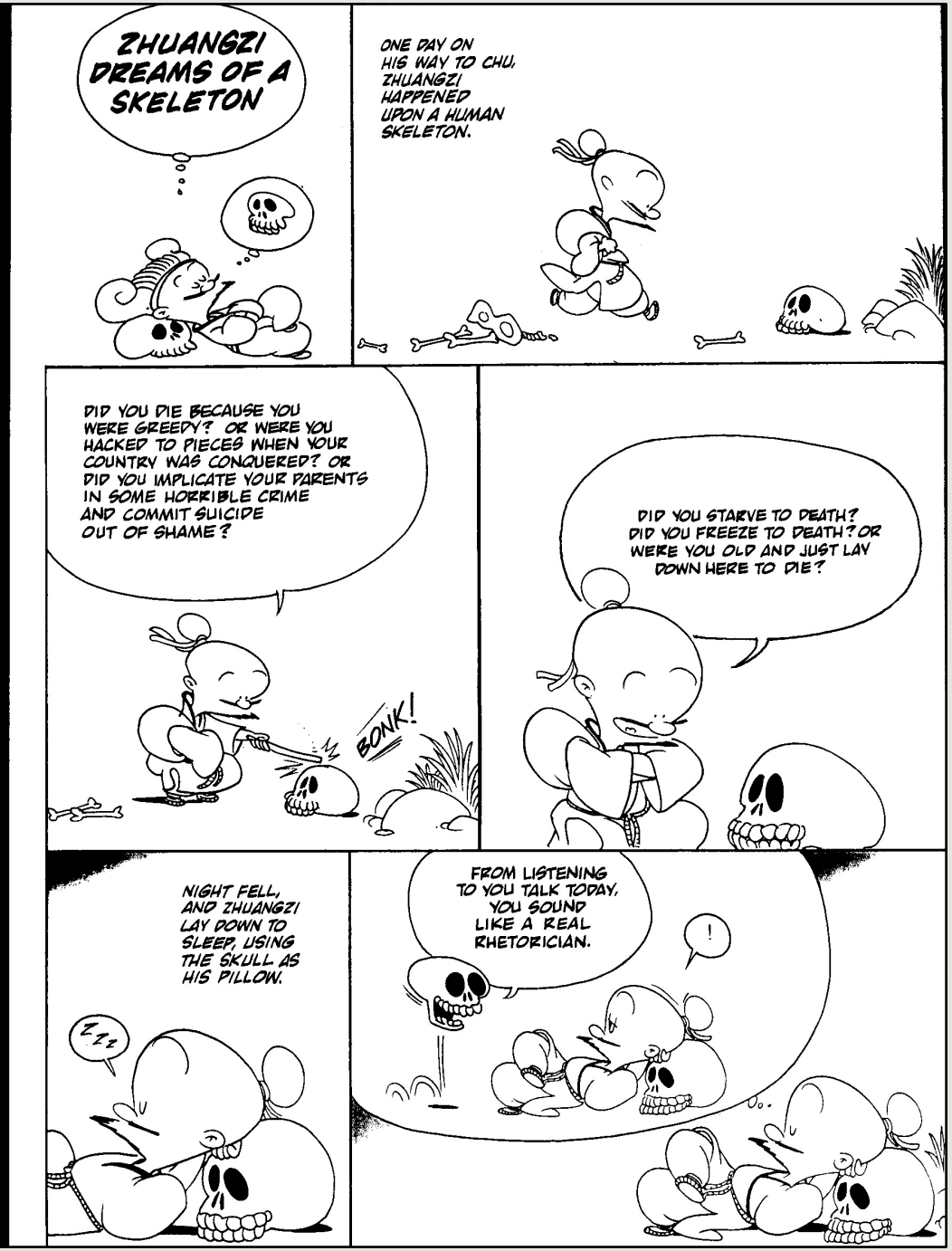
【莊子⊙逍遙遊第一】



予嘗為女妄言之，女以妄聽之。奚旁日月，挾宇宙？為其脗合，置其滑涽，以隸相尊。眾人役役，聖人愚芚，參萬歲而一成純。萬物盡然，而以是相蘊。

予惡乎知說生之非惑邪！予惡乎知惡死之非弱喪而不知歸者邪！麗之姬，艾封人之子也。晉國之始得之也，涕泣沾襟；及其至於王所，與王同筐牀，食芻豢，而後悔其泣也。予惡乎知夫死者不悔其始之蘄生乎！





莊子之楚，見空髑髏，髐然有形，撽以馬捶，因而問之，曰：「夫子貪生失理，而為此乎？將子有亡國之事，斧鉞之誅，而為此乎？將子有不善之行，愧遺父母妻子之醜，而為此乎？將子有凍餒之患，而為此乎？將子之春秋故及此乎？」

於是語卒，援髑髏，枕而卧。夜半，髑髏見夢曰：「子之談者似辯士。視子所言，皆生人之累也，死則无此矣。子欲聞死之說乎？」

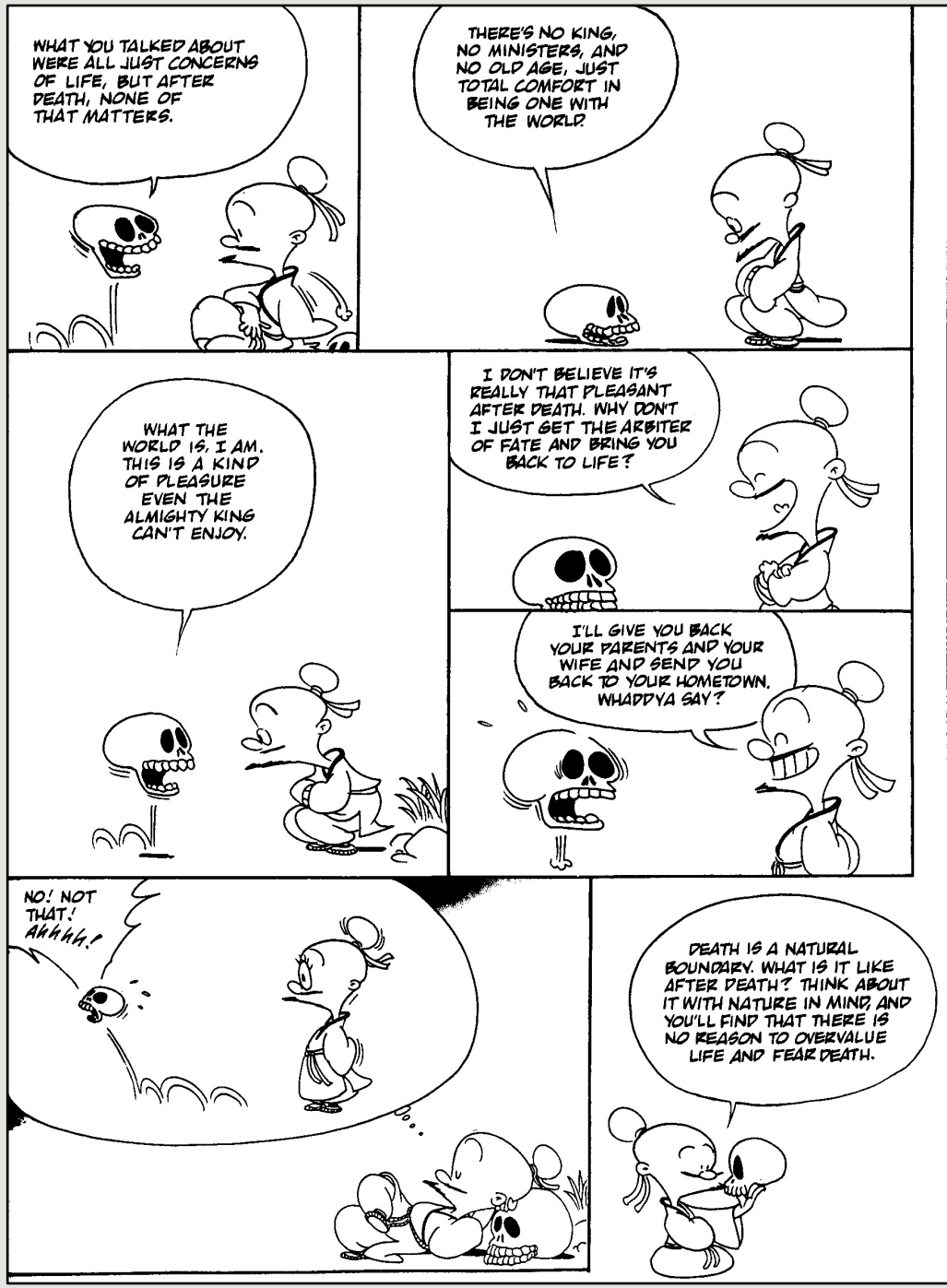
莊子曰：「然。」

髑髏曰：「死，无君於上，无臣於下；亦无四時

之事，從然以天地為春秋，雖南面王樂，不能過也。」

莊子不信，曰：「吾使司命復生子形，為子骨肉肌膚，反子父母妻子閭里知識，子欲之乎？」

髑髏深矉蹙頞曰：「吾安能棄南面王樂而復為人間之勞乎！」



子輿與子桑友，而霖雨十日。子輿曰：「子桑殆病矣！」裹飯而往食之。至子桑之門，則若歌若哭，鼓琴曰：「父邪！母邪！天乎！人乎！」有不任其聲而趨舉其詩焉。

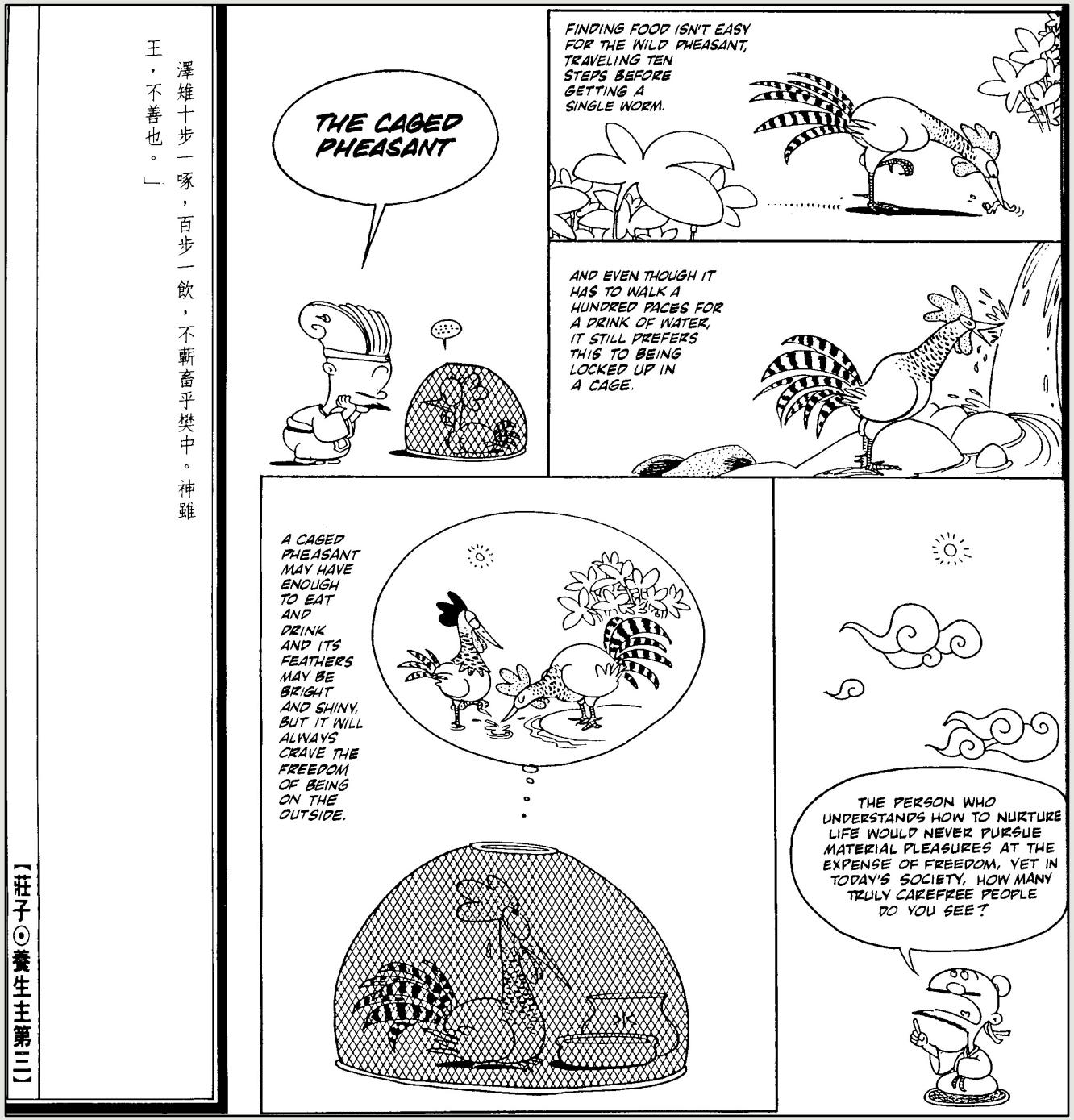
子輿入，曰：「子之歌詩，何故若是？」

曰：「吾思夫使我至此極者而弗得也。父母豈欲吾貧哉？天无私覆，地无私載，天地豈私貧我哉？求其為之者而不得也。然而至此極者，命也夫！」



澤雉十步一啄，百步一飲，不蘄畜乎樊中。神雖王，不善也。」

【莊子⊙養生主第三】

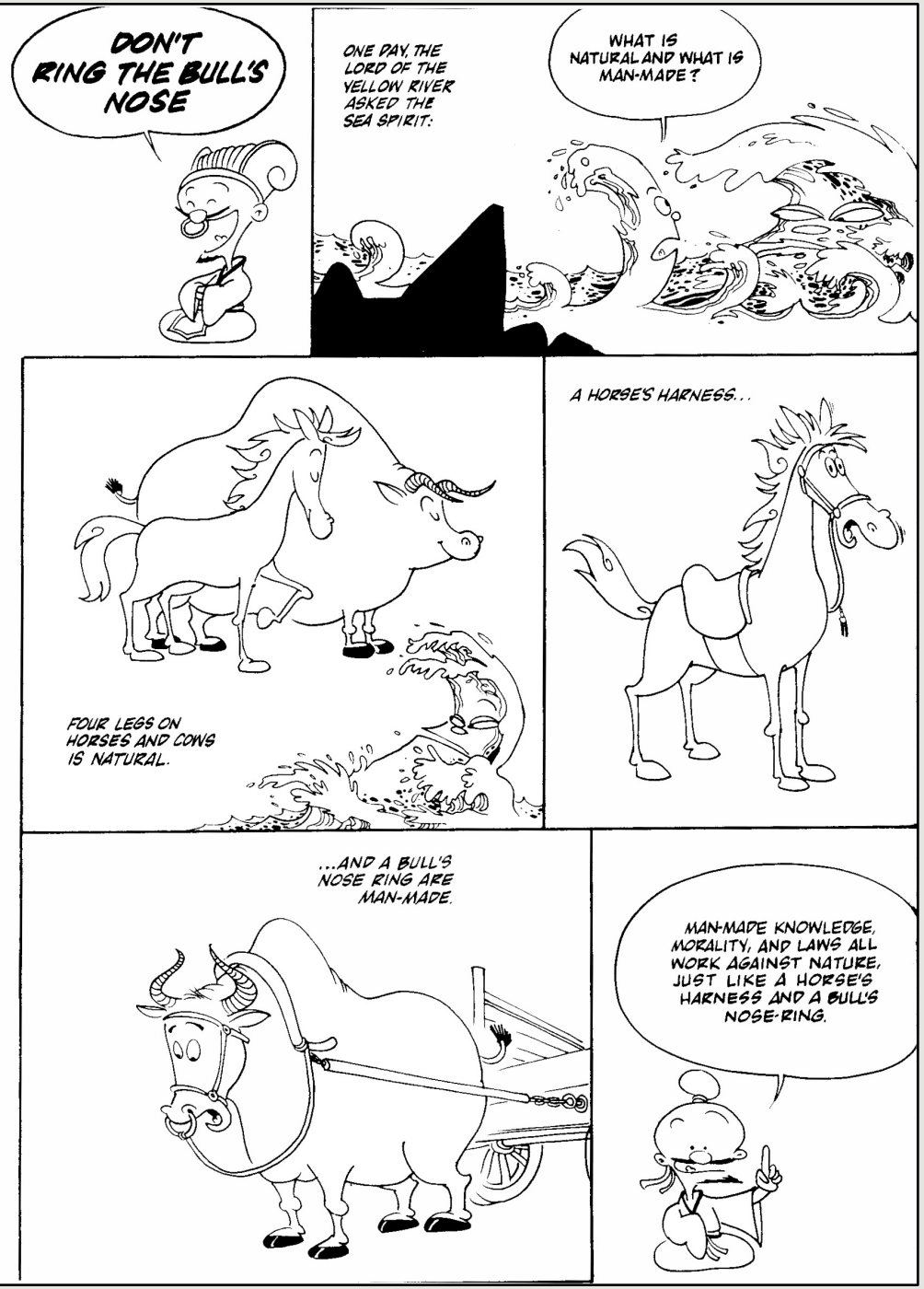


河伯曰：「何謂天？何謂人？」

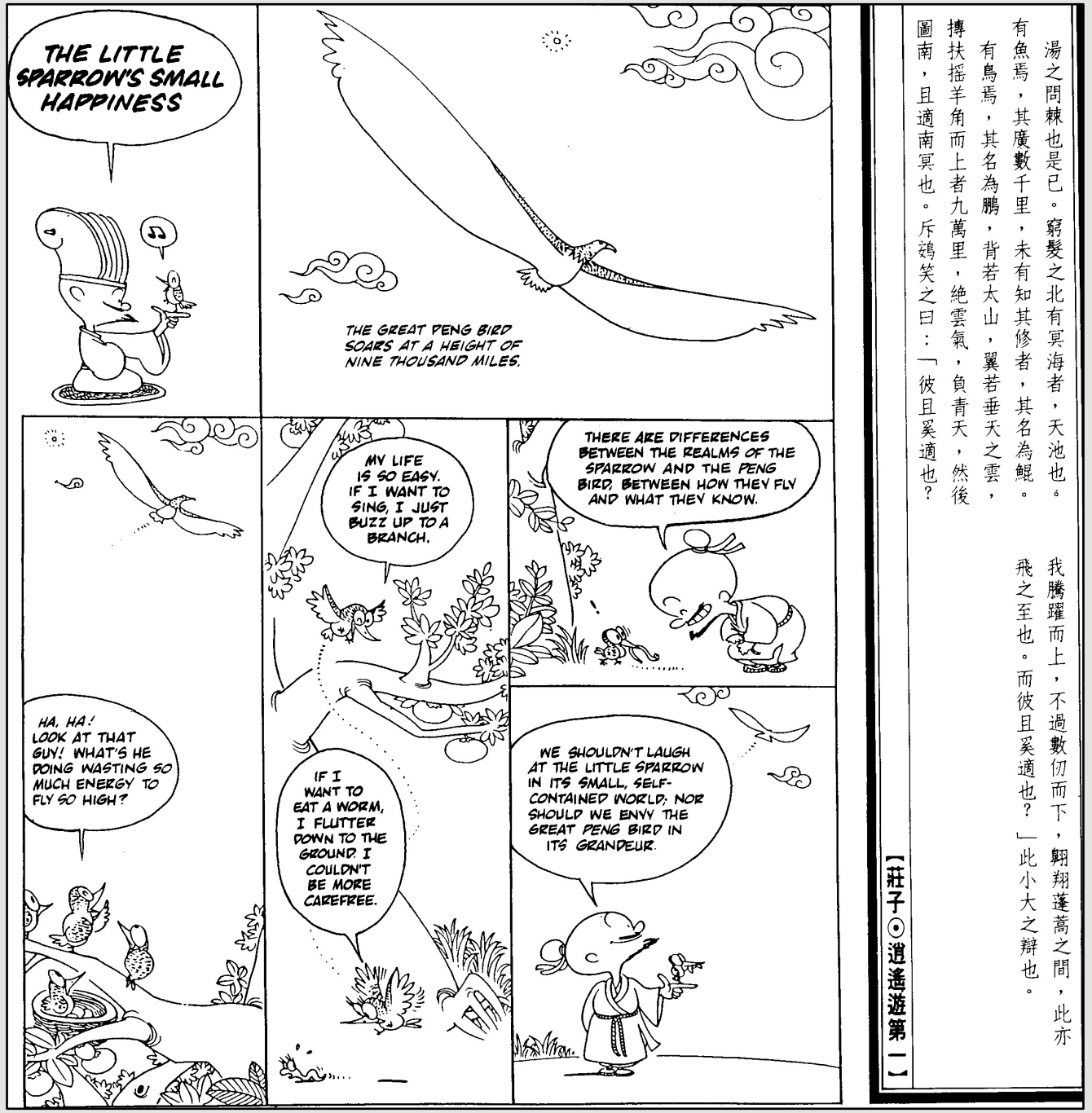
北海若曰：「牛馬四足，是謂天；落馬首，穿牛鼻，是謂人。

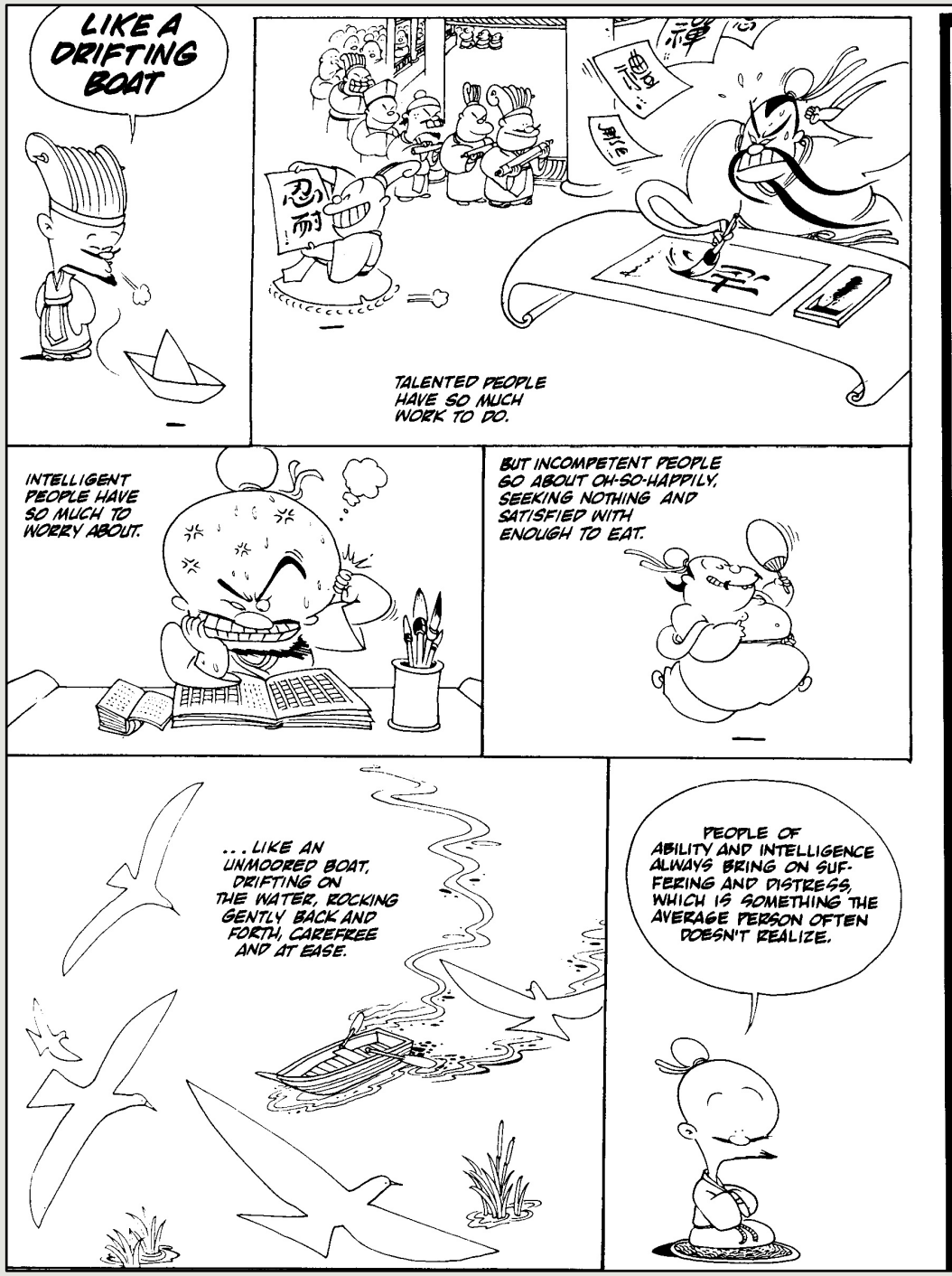
故曰，无以人滅天，无以故滅命，无以得殉名。謹守而勿矣，是謂反其真。」

【莊子◎秋水第十七】



湯之問棘也是已。窮髮之北有冥海者，天池也。有魚焉，其廣數千里，未有知其修者，其名為鯤。有鳥焉，其名為鵬，背若太山，翼若垂天之雲，摶扶搖羊角而上者九萬里，絕雲氣，負青天，然後圖南，且適南冥也。斥鴳笑之曰：「彼且奚適也？我騰躍而上，不過數仞而下，翱翔蓬蒿之間，此亦飛之至也。而彼且奚適也？」此小大之辯也。

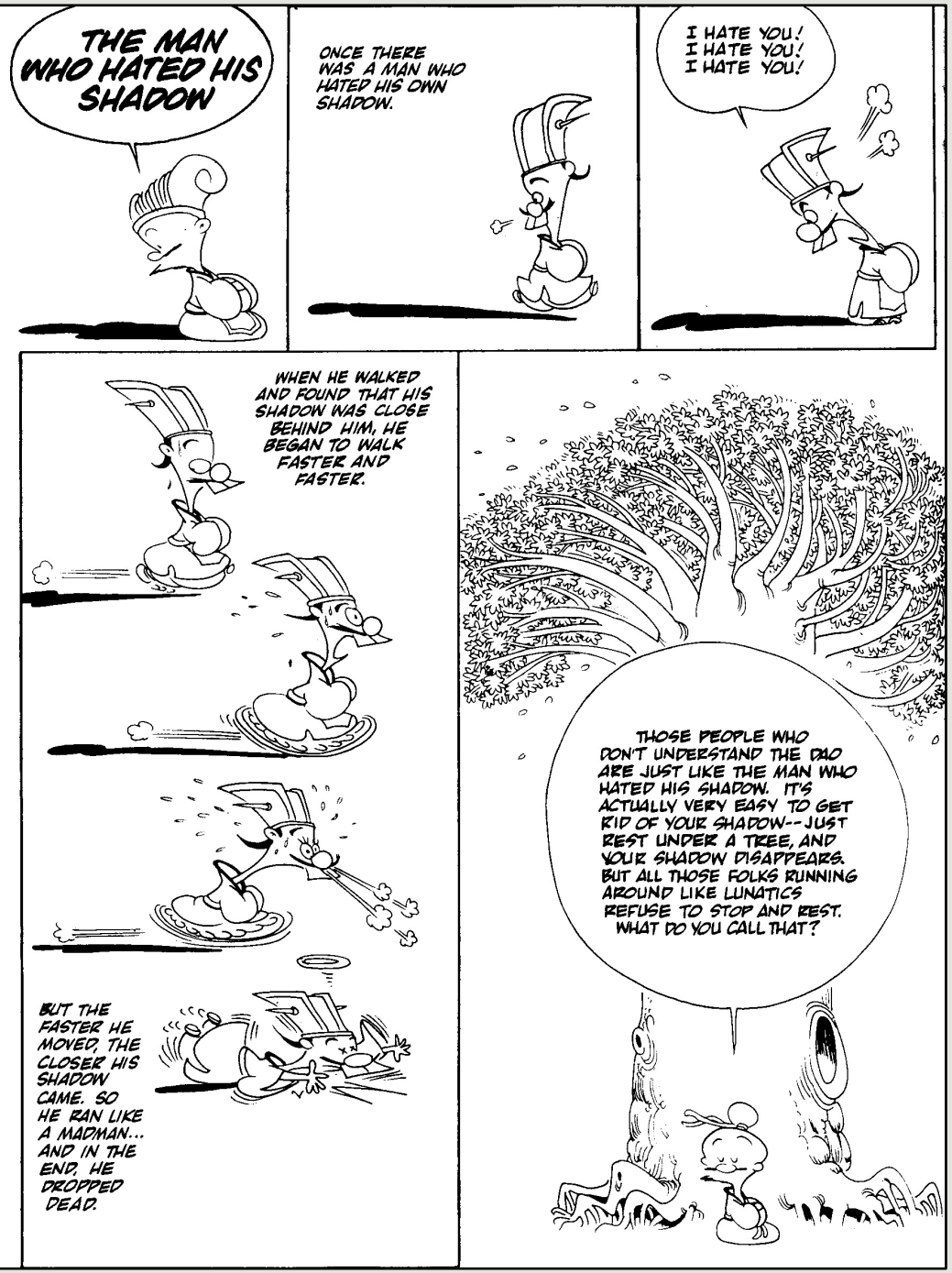


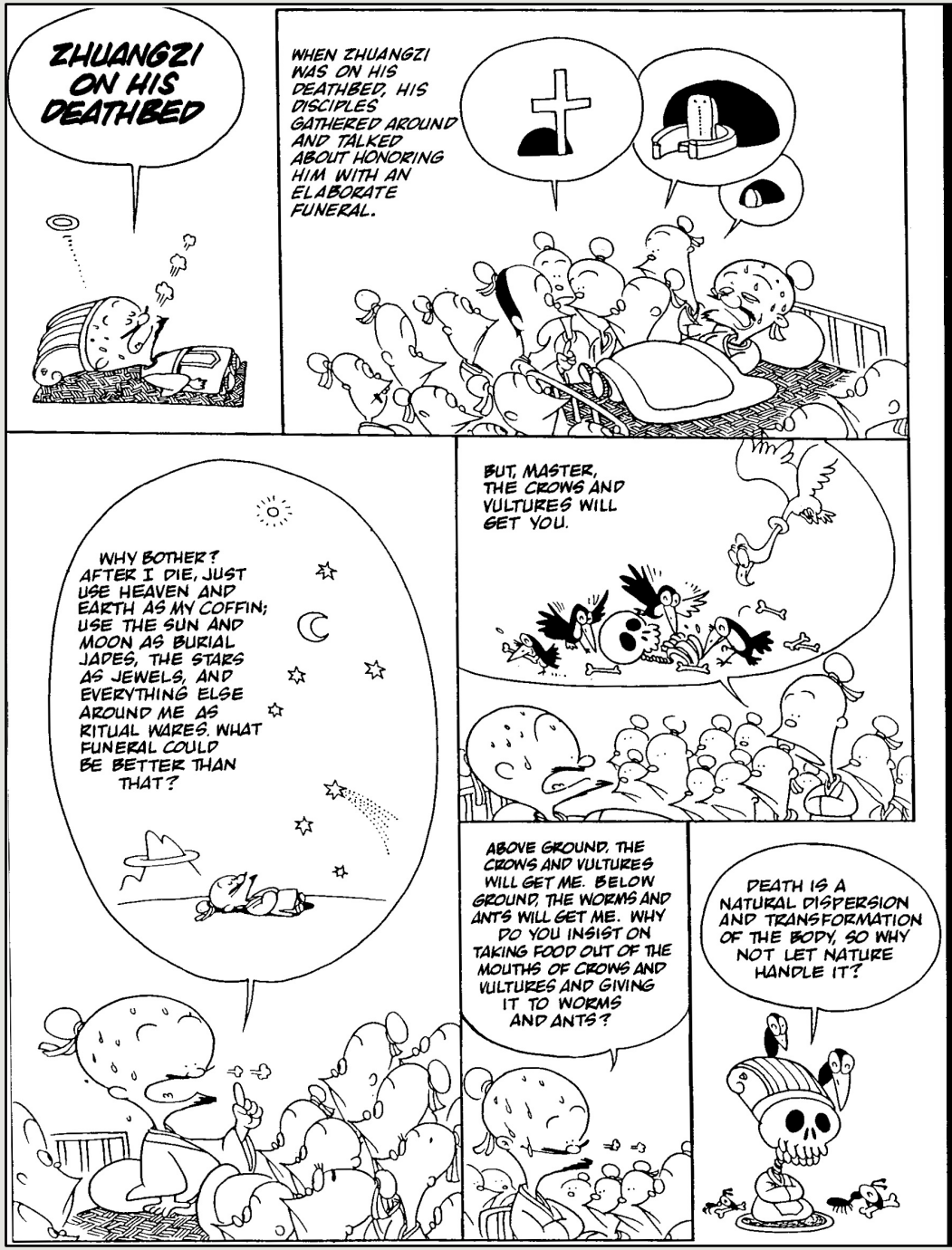


巧者勞而知者憂，无能者无所求，飽食而敖遊，
汎若不繫之舟，虛而敖遊者也。

人有畏影惡迹而去之走者，舉足愈數而迹愈多，走愈疾而影不離身，自以為尚遲，疾走不休，絶力而死。不知處陰以休影，處靜以息迹，愚亦甚矣！

【莊子⊙漁父第三十一】





莊子將死，弟子欲厚葬之。莊子曰：「吾以天地　與此，何其偏也！」為棺槨，以日月為連璧，星辰為珠璣，萬物為齎送。吾葬具豈不備邪？何以加此！」

弟子曰：「吾恐烏鳶之食夫子也。」

莊子曰：「在上為烏鳶食，在下為螻蟻食，奪彼