

# HYDERABAD GRAPHIC NOVEL

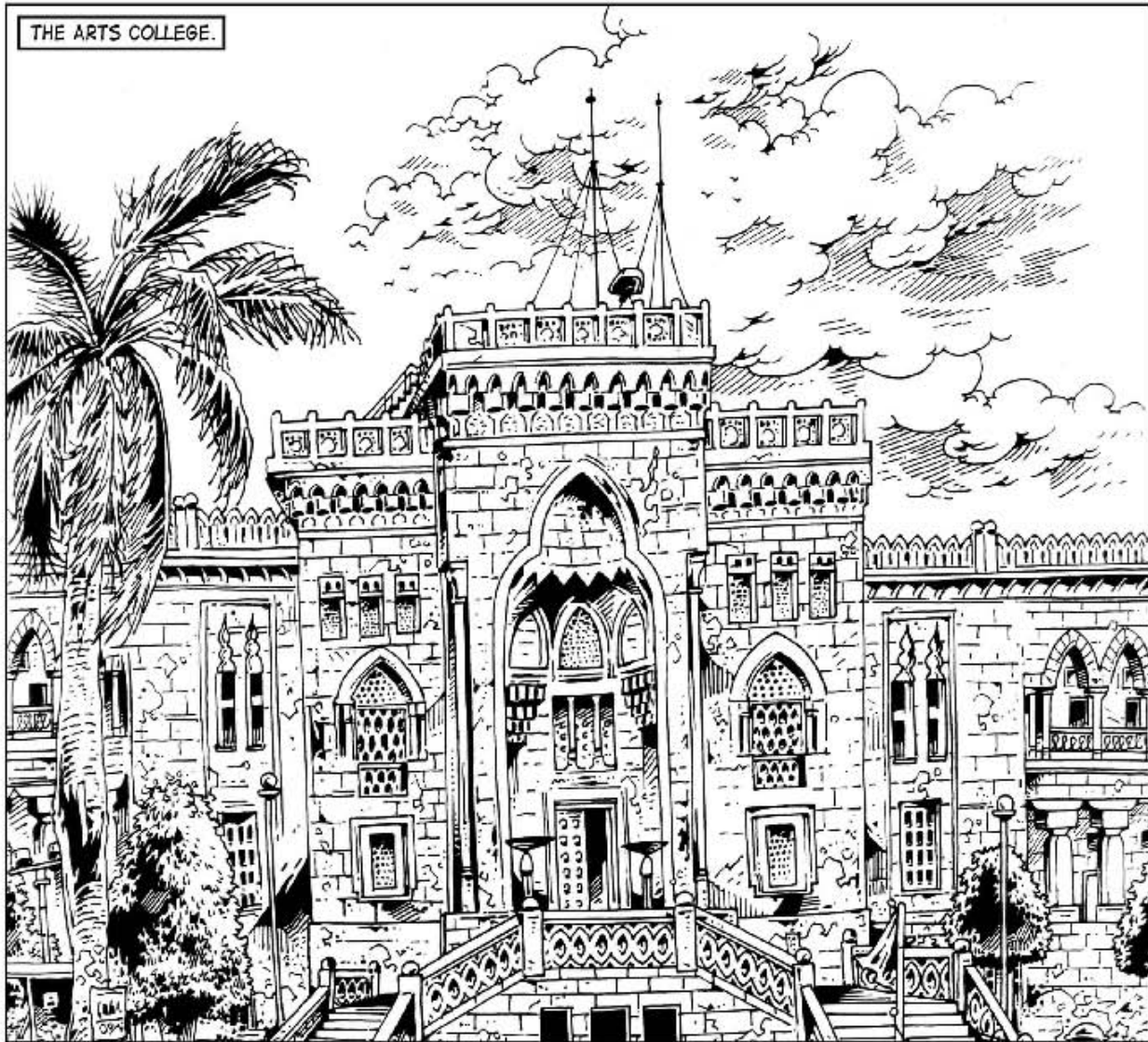
Presents



**“COME YOU LOST ATOMS”**

**SYENAGIRI**

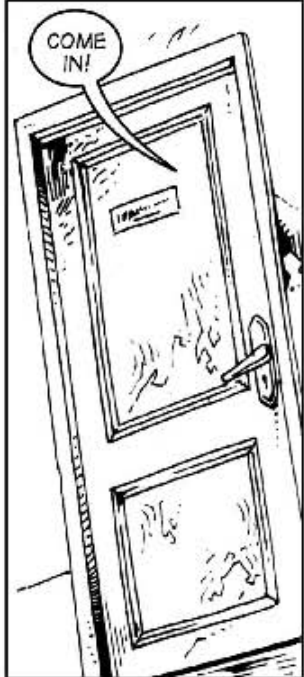
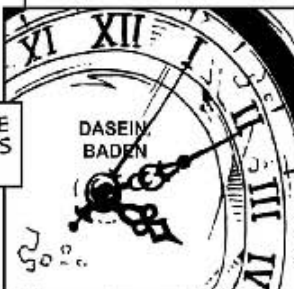
THE ARTS COLLEGE.



THE CLOCK ON THE WALL. THE HARD BENCH. THE WEIGHT OF THE WAIT. THE DOOR TO THE PROFESSOR'S CHAMBERS.

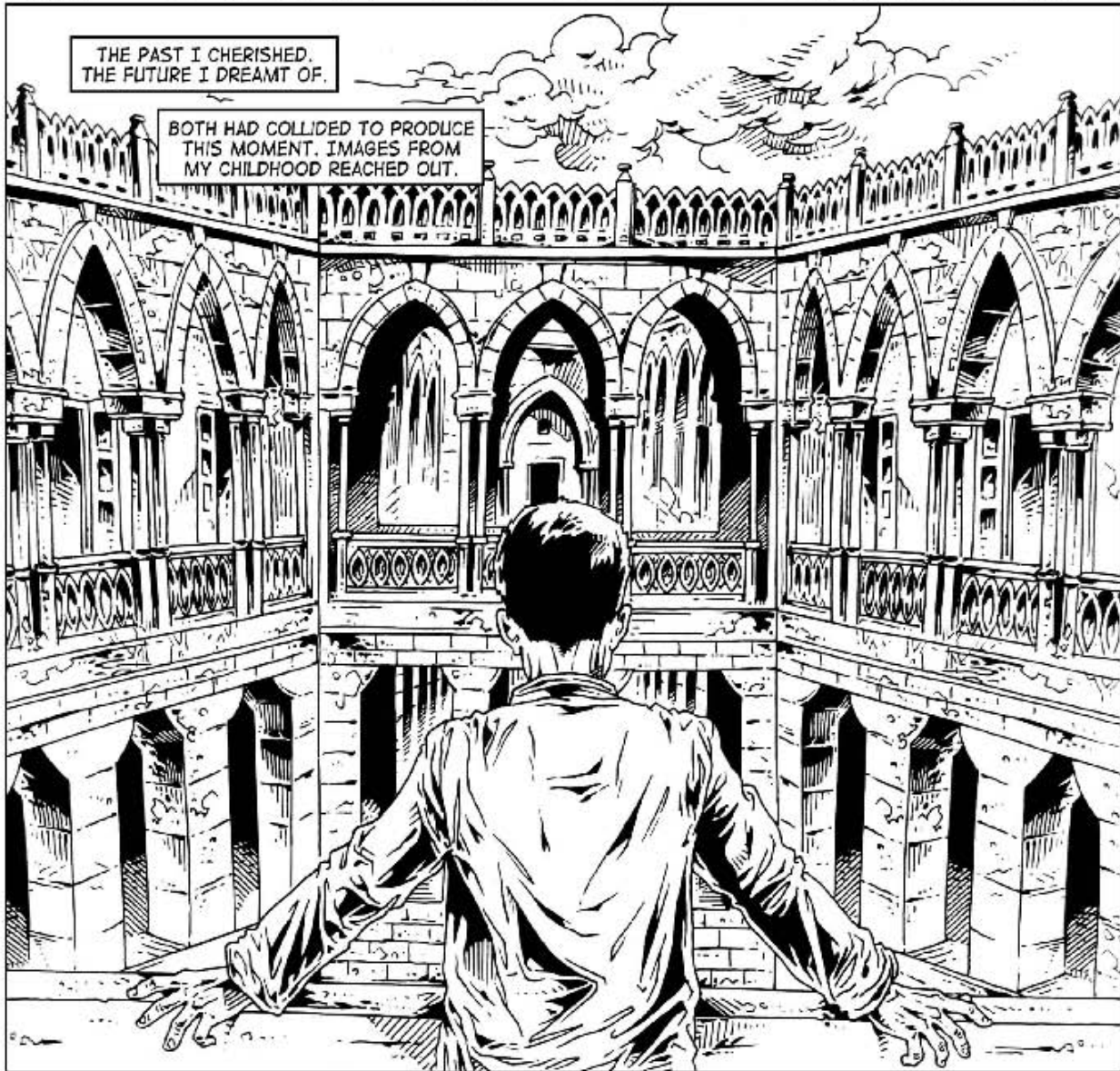


THESE ARE THE ONLY REALITIES NOW.











BOYHOOD IN MY GRAND-FATHER'S HOME. A LONG ILLNESS HAD CONFINED ME TO BED. THE WALLS WERE MY ONLY COMPANIONS.



IT WAS THEN THAT I MET MY FRIENDS.

WORDS WERE BRICKS WHICH BUILT HIGH CASTLES, LOST FORESTS, INEBRIATED SAILORS, FIERCE DESPERADOES, PORTLY SCHOOLBOYS, CRAFTY VIZIERS, ENCHANTED LAKES, MAGICAL BIRDS.

COME YOU LOST ATOMS TO YOUR CENTRE DRAW, AND BE THE ETERNAL MIRROR THAT YOU SAW: RAYS THAT HAVE WANDERED INTO DARKNESS WIDE RETURN, AND BACK INTO YOUR SUN SUBSIDE.

THE LINES LEAPT OFF THE PAGE AND BURNT THEMSELVES INTO MY BRAIN. MY MIND CLIMBED THE THIN, CLEAR AIR OF HIS WORDS.

IT WAS IN THAT LONG AFTERNOON OF TIME THAT I DISCOVERED THE POET ASHFAQ.



LITTLE WAS KNOWN OF ASHFAQ,  
HOWEVER. THE CHRONICLERS  
WERE VAGUE; SOME SAID HE  
WAS FROM MERV, OTHERS  
WERE EQUALLY EMPHATIC THAT  
HE WAS A NATIVE OF NISHAPUR.

HE HAD BLAZED BRIEFLY LIKE A COMET IN  
THE VELVET SKIES OF HYDERABAD. ON WHERE  
HE CAME FROM, WHENCE HE HAD GONE, THE  
ANNALS OF HISTORY WERE LITTERLY BLANK.











ONE LOOK AT YOUR LION-FACED COUNTEANCE, HUIZOR, AND YOUR NEED WAS CLEAR.

23RD CENTURY JAOGE?



I KNOW WHAT YOU WANT!



MY SPECIAL TONIC IS MADE FROM 22 ROOTS, 6 KNOWN ONLY TO THE 4 RISHIS WHO SIT ON MOUNT TIRICH (AND 3 OF THEM AREN'T TALKING). A DROP AND YOU'LL SATISFY ALL YOUR WIVES - ALL AT THE SAME TIME!



CHARM EVEN IBLIS WITH MY AMULET!



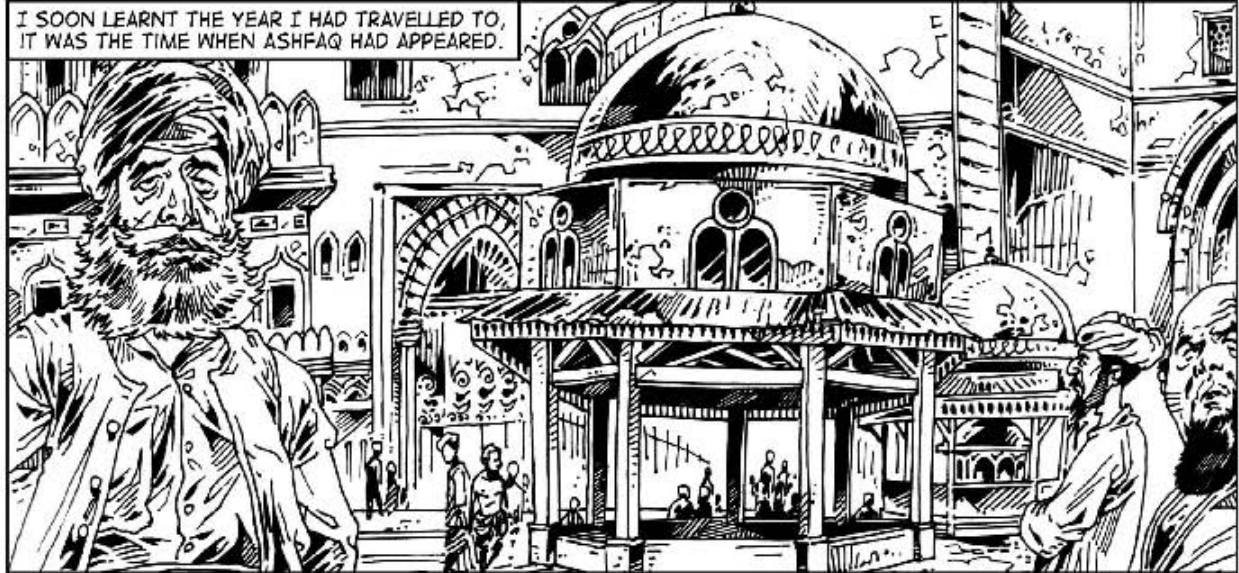
ONE SIP AND YOU'LL START GALLOPING LIKE AN ARABIAN STALLION!

NEW LAMPS FOR OLD!

LIKE SNOW ON MOUNT KAF, MY FEZ WILL SIT ATOP YOUR GRACEFUL HEAD!



I SOON LEARNT THE YEAR I HAD TRAVELLED TO, IT WAS THE TIME WHEN ASHFAQ HAD APPEARED.













WHAT DOES THIS GRINNING IMP DO EXACTLY?

IT ENABLES ONE TO SPEAK OVER LONG DISTANCES.

HOWEVER AT THE END OF EACH MONTH THE DEMON APPEARS AND BY DINT OF HARSH WORDS EXACTS MANY OFFERINGS.

THESE DEMONS ARE ALL LIKE THAT.



I DO NOT WISH TO INSULT A GENTLEMAN LIKE YOU BY BARGAINING. PLEASE ACCEPT 6 MOHURS AS A TOKEN OF MY ESTEEM.

THE MYSTERIES OF ALCHEMY ARE NO MYSTERIES TO YOU.

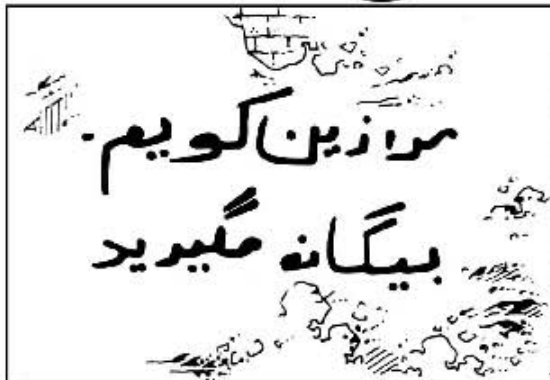
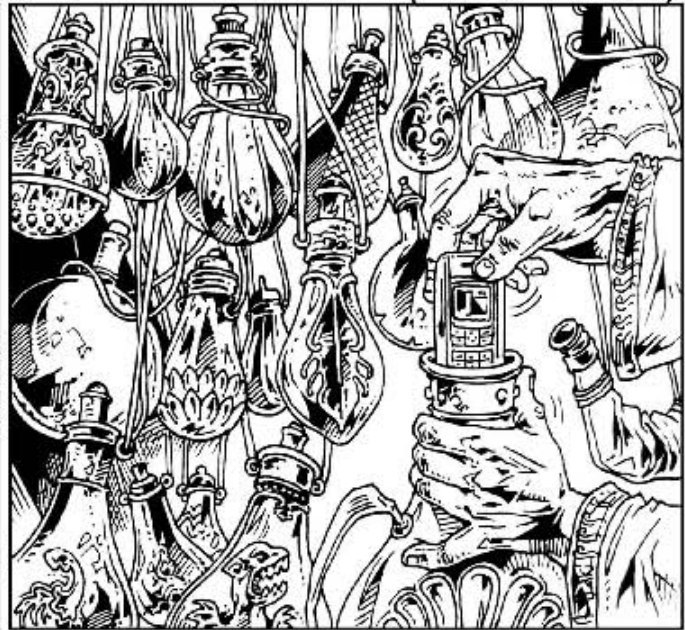
WITH THE POWER OF CHANGING BASE LEAD TO NOBLE GOLD, I'M SURE 12 MOHURS WOULD BE A MERE TRIFLE.



CHANGING LEAD TO GOLD IS EASY COMPARED TO TRANSFORMING MAN'S LOW NATURE TO EXALTED VIRTUE. 8, BUT I'M ROBBING MYSELF.

10 MOHURS AND THE PARROTS OF PARADISE WILL SING TONIGHT.

SO BE IT.

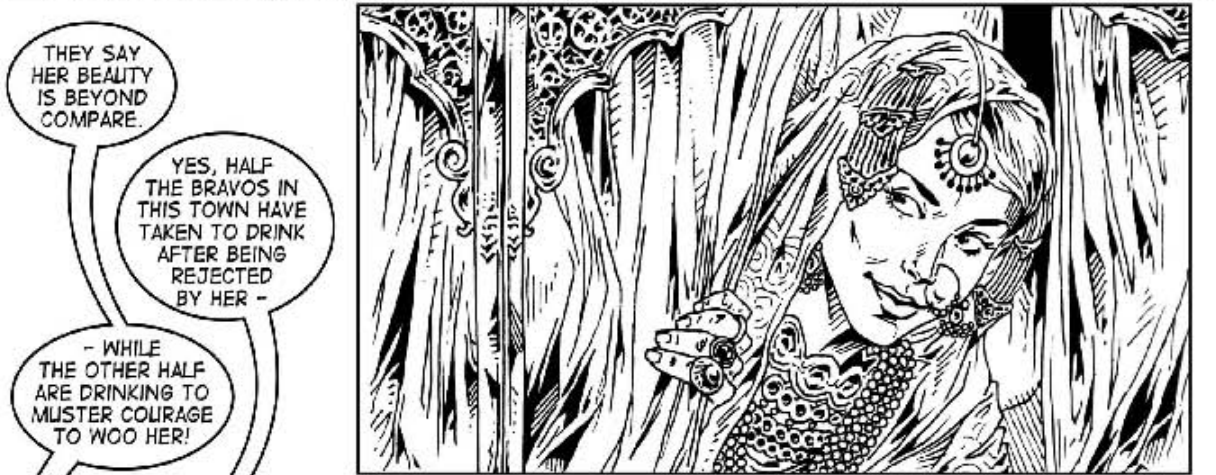


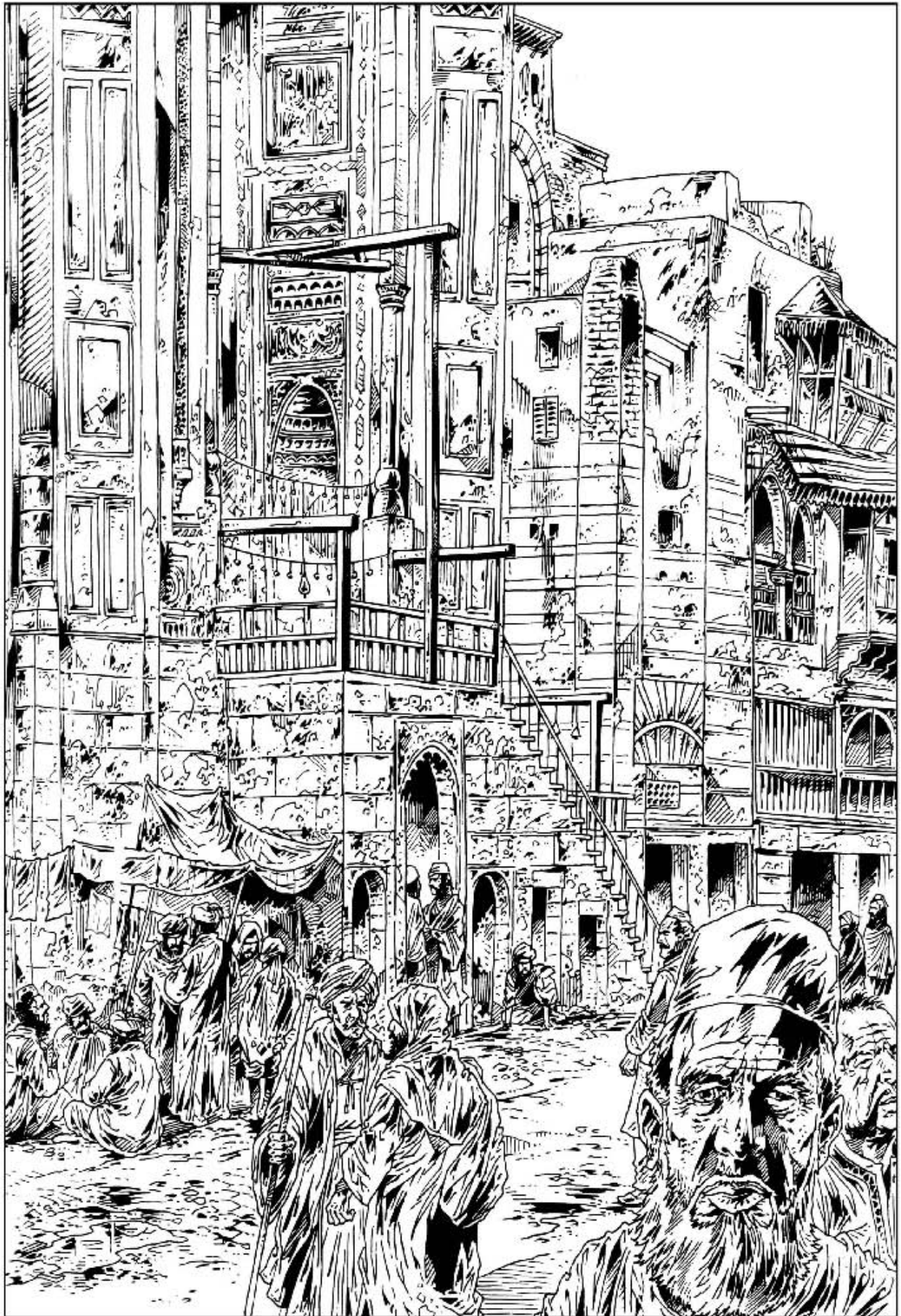
مرا زین کو ایم  
بیگانہ مگیرید



MAKE WAY! MAKE WAY FOR THE SHEHZADI...











SIR, TRY MY UNIQUE PILL FOR ALL DISORDERS OF THE PHLEGM.



WHAT'S WITH THE BEAR?

THEREIN LIES THE UNIQUENESS. FIRST I MAKE THE MEDICINE. THEN THE BEAR EATS THE MEDICINE. AND THEN YOU EAT THE BEAR.



DOES IT WORK?

IT WOULD, IF THERE WAS ANYONE WHO TOOK IT.

WHY, WHAT HAPPENS?

THEY CLAIM THEMSELVES CURED ON LEARNING THE MODE OF CONSUMPTION.



A SURE ADVERTISEMENT FOR ITS EFFICACIOUSNESS CANNOT BE FOUND.

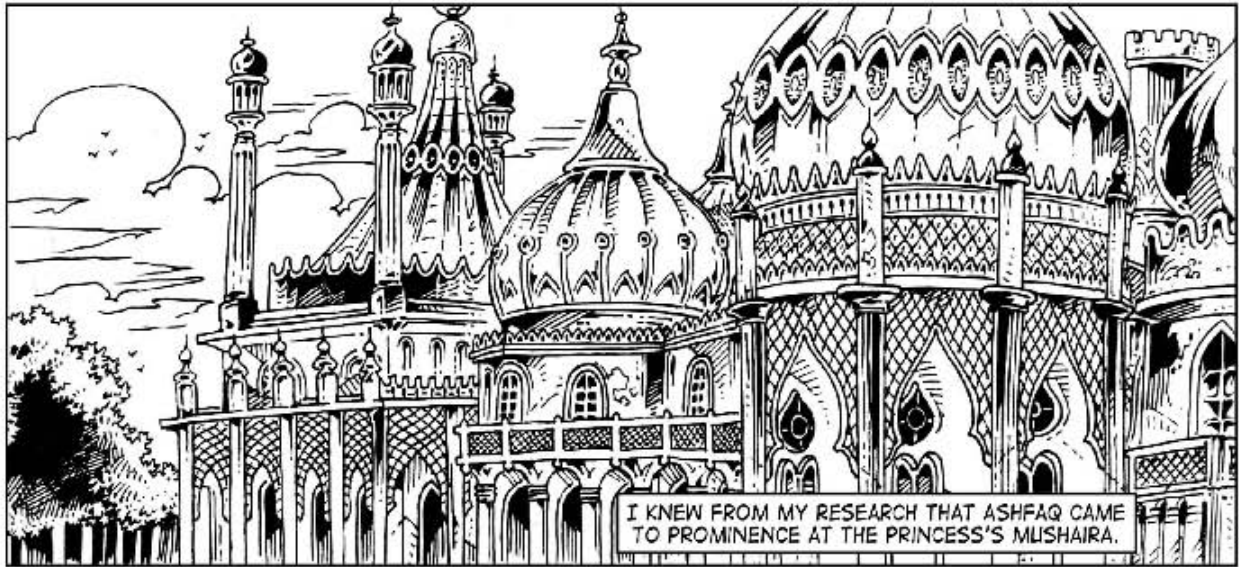
IT'S NOT VERY EFFICACIOUS IN GETTING THEM TO PAY UP!

FORGET THE BEAR. BRING ON A FISH.



A FISH?! SO CRAZY IT MIGHT JUST WORK.





I KNEW FROM MY RESEARCH THAT ASHFAQ CAME TO PROMINENCE AT THE PRINCESS'S MUSHAIRA.



BHOLI BHALI LADKI, KHOL MERE DIL KI...

WHO IS THIS KHILADI?

IT'S THAT UNCOLT PASHA SHUJA.

NO LADY IS SAFE FROM HIS IMPORTUNITIES



"THE SIGHS OF THE OPPRESSED ARE SHARPER THAN ARROWS. A WIDOW'S TEARS CAN WASH AWAY A THRONE."

WHAT IMPUDENCE, YOU PUP-FACED CUR! BEGONE OR I'LL POUR THE WATER OF MY SWORD OVER THE FIRE OF YOUR POETRY.



TWO YEARS FROM NOW, AN ELEPHANT IN MUSTH WILL CRUSH YOUR HEAD LIKE A COCONUT.

YOUR TOMB IS CURRENTLY A BUS DEPOT.





YOUR WORDS ACHIEVED WHAT BLOWS COULD NOT.

THE UNIVERSE WAS WEAVED IN WORDS, O MALKA.

THE POETS HAVE ASSEMBLED IN THE HALL. WE LOOK FORWARD TO YOUR WORK WITH UNCOMMON INTEREST.

HER PRESENCE BEWITCHED ME. MY QUARRY, THE ONE I HAD SOUGHT FOR SO MANY YEARS, WAS HERE. BUT ALL I COULD THINK OF WAS HER.

A large black and white illustration of a woman in traditional, highly ornate attire, including a headscarf and multiple necklaces, sitting on a throne. She has a thoughtful expression, with her hand near her chin. To her right, a smaller inset panel shows a man standing before her, gesturing with his hands. The background of the main panel features intricate architectural details like arches and carvings. The inset panel also shows the man in a similar setting, with a hand reaching out towards him.







LITTLE IS KNOWN ABOUT ASHFAQ. ALL WE ARE CERTAIN IS THAT HE APPEARED ONE NIGHT AT A MUSHAIRA. ON WHERE HE CAME FROM, WHENCE HE WENT, THE ANNALS OF HISTORY ARE UTTERLY BLANK.

I PLIED MY BOAT OF LEARNING, VOYAGING BETWEEN ISLANDS OF KNOWLEDGE AMIDST VAST SEAS OF IGNORANCE. I HUNTED DOWN EVERY SCRAP, EVERY FOOTNOTE, EVERY RUMOUR UNTIL IT SEEMED I KNEW HIS LIFE AS WELL AS MY OWN.

'YOUR WORDS SHALL BE WEIGHED IN GOLD.'

I AM ASHFAQ.

"I READ A HUNDRED BOOKS. BUT I COULD NOT READ MYSELF" IS ONE OF ASHFAQ'S MOST QUOTED LINES. IN MY PAPER I INTEND TO PROVE THAT...





I HAVE LOST MY WAY IN THE GARDENS OF TIME. TO LIVE ONE'S LIFE IS DIFFICULT AS IT IS. TO LIVE ANOTHER'S IS UNBEARABLE.



I HAVE A FANTASY. I LOOK TO THE OPEN DOORWAY. SUDDENLY HE WILL APPEAR - MUDDY, DISHEVELLED FROM YEARS OF TRAVELLING.

SORRY I AM LATE, HE WILL SAY, BUT YOU DID A GOOD JOB.

AND HE WILL STEP INTO HIS OWN LIFE. AND I. AND I WILL BE FREE TO GO.

FIN



**Fariduddin Attar, *The Conference Of Birds...***

COME YOU LOST ATOMS  
TO YOUR CENTRE DRAW,  
AND BE THE ETERNAL  
MIRROR THAT YOU SAW;  
RAYS THAT HAVE WANDERED  
INTO DARKNESS WIDE  
RETURN, AND BACK INTO  
YOUR SUN SUBSIDE.



**...Vladimir Mayakovsky, *A Few Words About Myself***



**Clark Ashton Smith, *Odysseus In Eternity...***



**...Margaret Atwood, *Variations On The Word Sleep***



**Ian McCulloch, *The Killing Moon...***



**SYENAGIRI**

**Presents**

**HYDERABAD GRAPHIC NOVEL**



**“COME YOU LOST ATOMS”**

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**Graphic Design: KARAN TALGERI**

**We would like to thank  
ARJUN VISWANATHAN & UTTARA SHAHANI**

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