

THE HUMAN BUN

人肉包子

* The first Taiwanese comic book creator to sell rights to Casterman

While escaping from local hoodlums, a young boy, A-Chi, and the elderly owner of a curio shop find themselves transported to ancient times, where they take refuge with a woman who sells steamed buns. Little do they know that the woman will soon stand accused of selling steamed buns stuffed with human flesh!

There's nothing A-Chi loves better than listening to Mr. Chien tell stories. Every day after school he heads straight to the Mr. Chien's curio shop in hopes of hearing more. One day, the elderly shop owner comes into conflict with a local gang collecting protection money. A terrified A-Chi flees into the depths of the shop to hide, only to discover the winding corridors have no end, forever twisting and turning and leading to an infinite number of worlds.

Exhausted from his flight, A-Chi follows an enticing scent to a restaurant that sells steamed buns. When he regains his senses, he realizes that he, Mr. Chien, and the hoodlums have all been transported back to antiquity, and the gateway back to the curio shop has disappeared!

A-Chi and Mr. Chien become lodgers with Sun Erniang, proprietress of the steamed bun shop, while the gangsters, after giving an impromptu rock concert, are mistaken for a trio of gods and become guests of a local dignitary, Lord Xiao. Outwardly known for his generosity, Lord Xiao is in fact a great schemer. When he spreads a rumor that Sun Erniang sells steamed buns stuffed with human flesh, he ignites a conflict that pits Lord Xiao and the three hoodlums against A-Chi, Mr. Chien, and Sun Erniang.

Recently re-issued in a thirtieth anniversary edition, the story of *The Human Bun* remains as fresh and original as ever. This fast-paced,



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tight-knit tale from artist Ren Zheng-hua sprinkles in references to contemporary film and art and irreverently questions the nature of truth and reality. Modern readers are sure to appreciate this multi-layered masterpiece of comic humor.

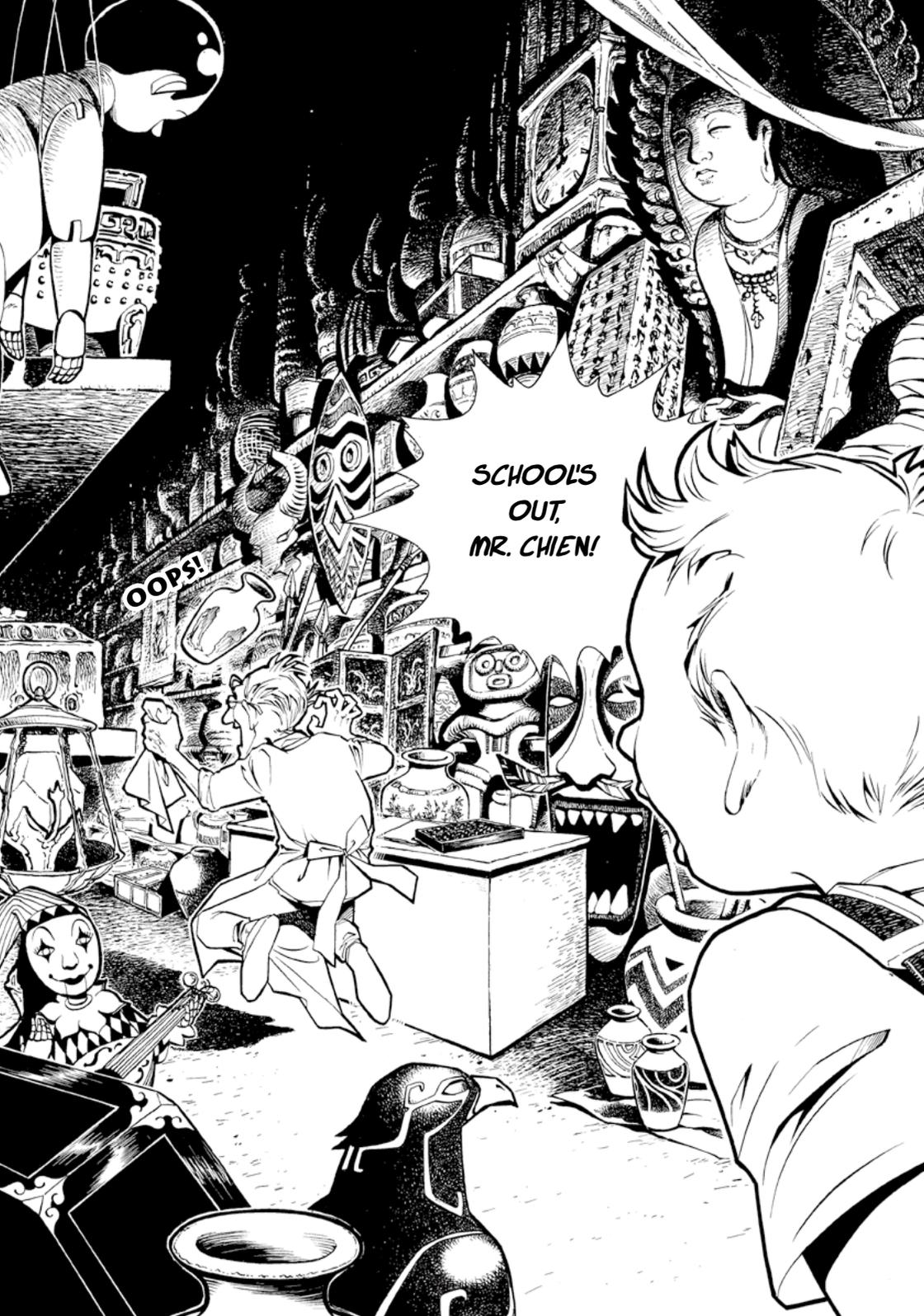
Ren Zheng-hua 任正華

Born in Taipei in 1963, Ren Zheng-hua began her comics career with the immensely popular *Sea of Devil*, serialized in *Sunday Comics* magazine, and later sold as a three volume graphic novel. Incisively witty with a touch of black humor, Ren masterfully weaves tales that run the gamut from ancient to modern, from mythic/fantastic to everyday reality, often satirizing the human capacity for both good and evil. Ren is also the founder of publisher BoHai Culture Co. and comics magazine *Lotto*. In 2007, her work was published in French under the title *Le Fils*, making Ren the first Taiwanese comic book creator to be published by Casterman, the renowned French comic book publisher.



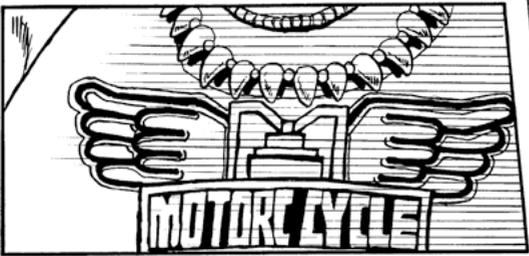
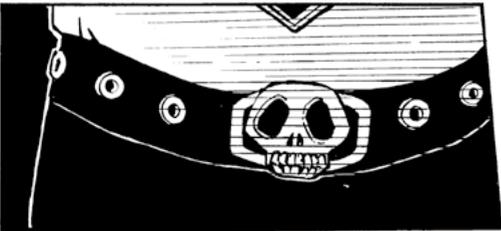
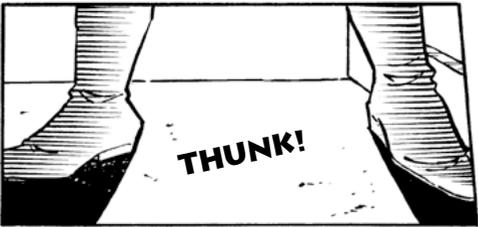


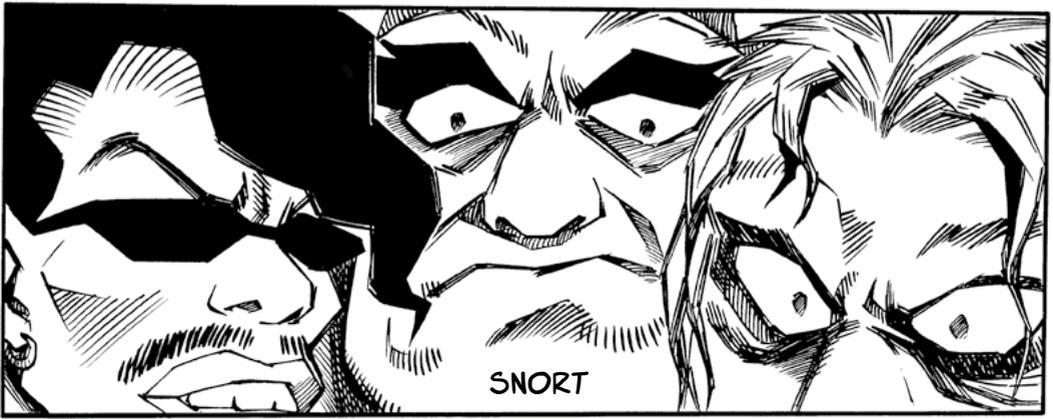




SCHOOLS
OUT,
MR. CHIEN!

OOPS!





SNORT



SNAKE



TIGER



DRAGON



THE
WHATCHAMA-
WHOSITS?



BACKSTREET
BARONS!

AROUND HERE,
EVERYONE
KNOWS US AS THE
LEGENDARY...

AH!

BOOM!

RUMBLE!

CREAK!

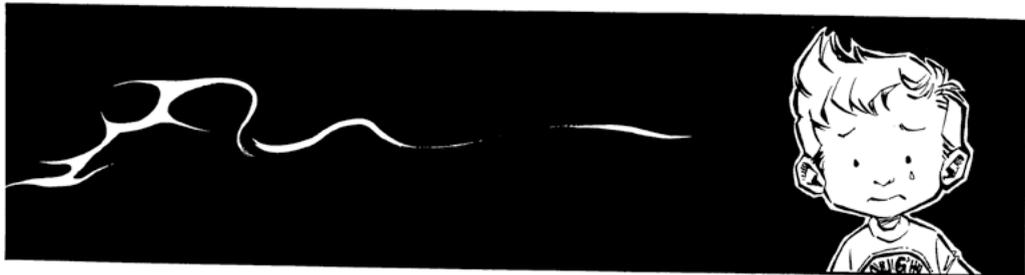
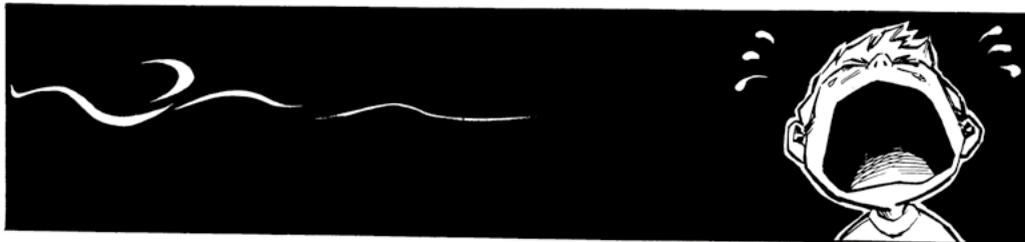
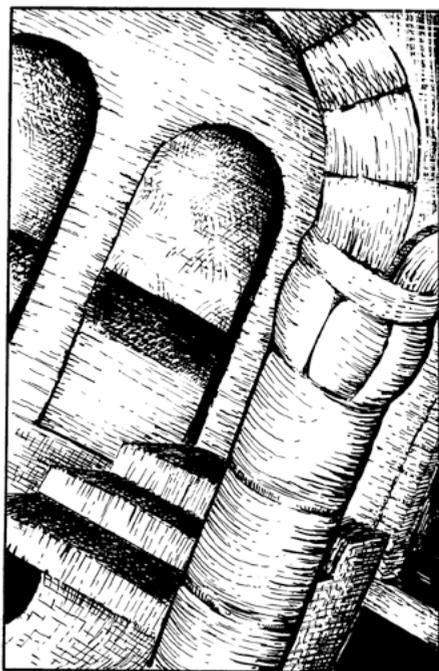
HELP!

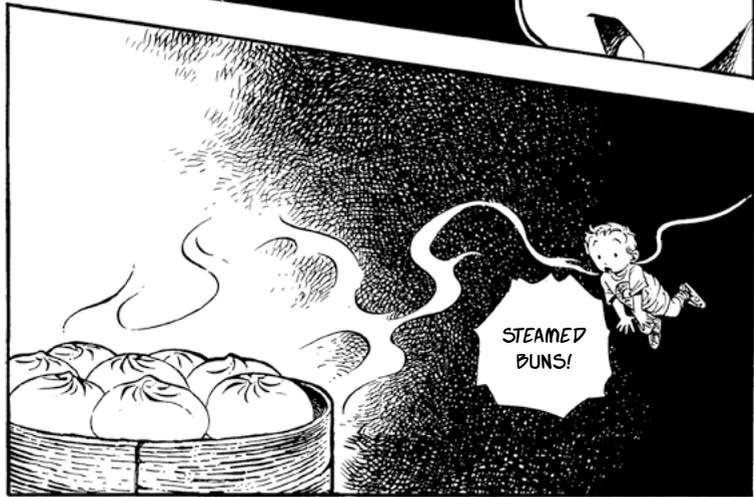
BOOM!

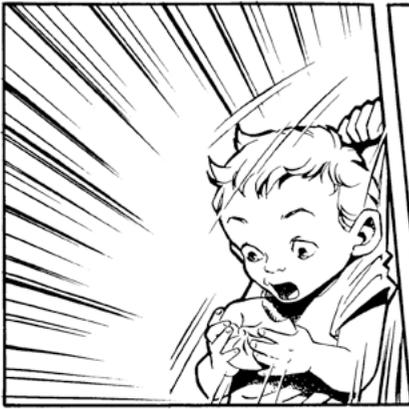




WHOA!



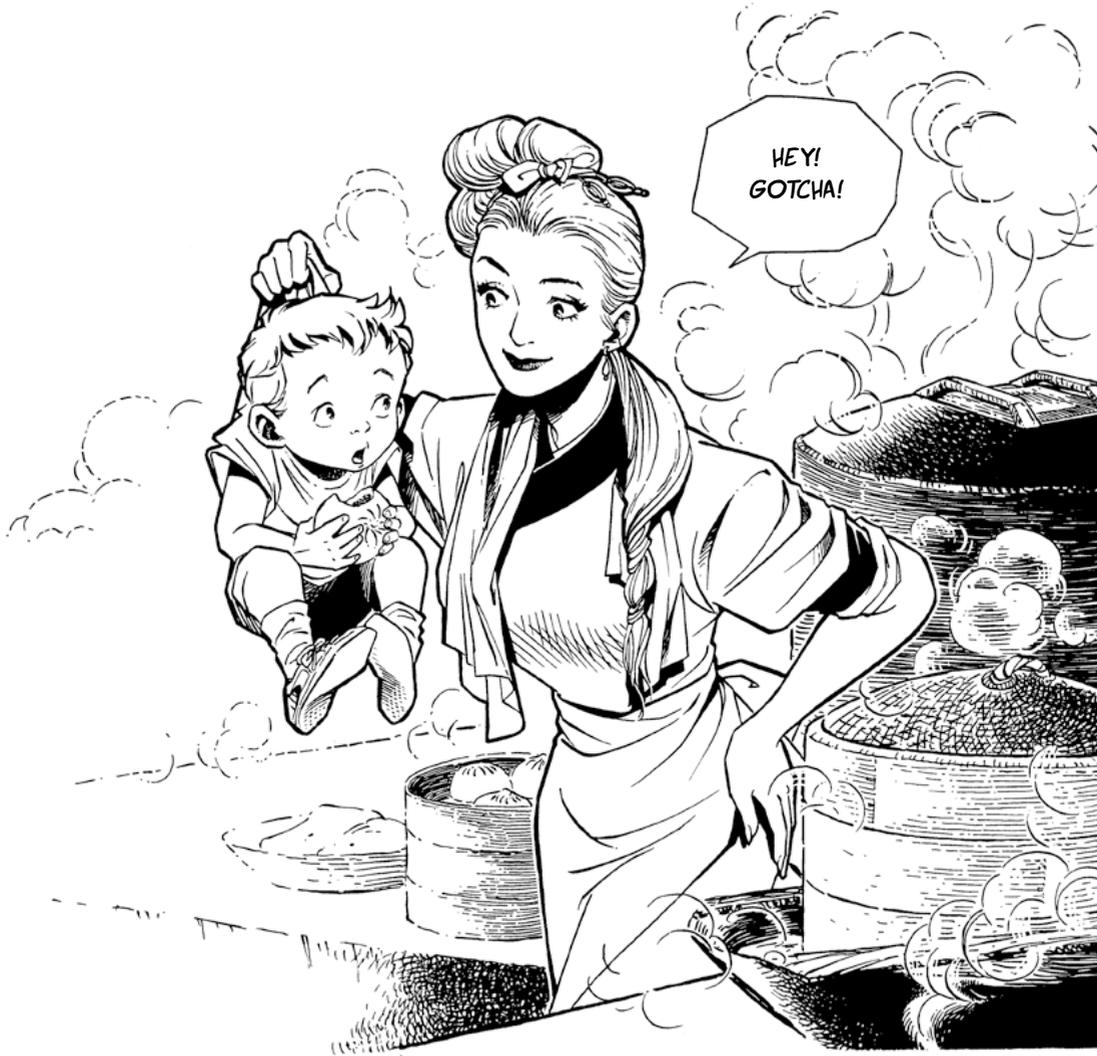




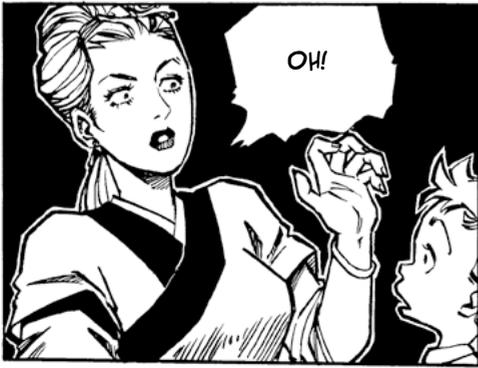
HEE HEE!
AMAZING!



MMM! SO
TASTY!



HEY!
GOTCHA!



OH!



HA HA!

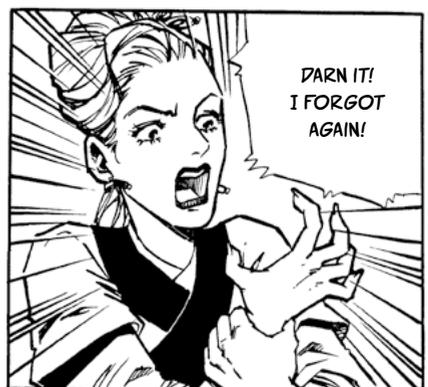
HA HA!

NO PROBLEM, YOU CAN HIDE HERE FOR NOW!



AND I SHOULD PROPERLY GREET YOU.

I SHOULDN'T LAUGH WITH MY MOUTH WIDE OPEN. I HAVE TO WATCH MY MANNERS.



DARN IT! I FORGOT AGAIN!



GAG!

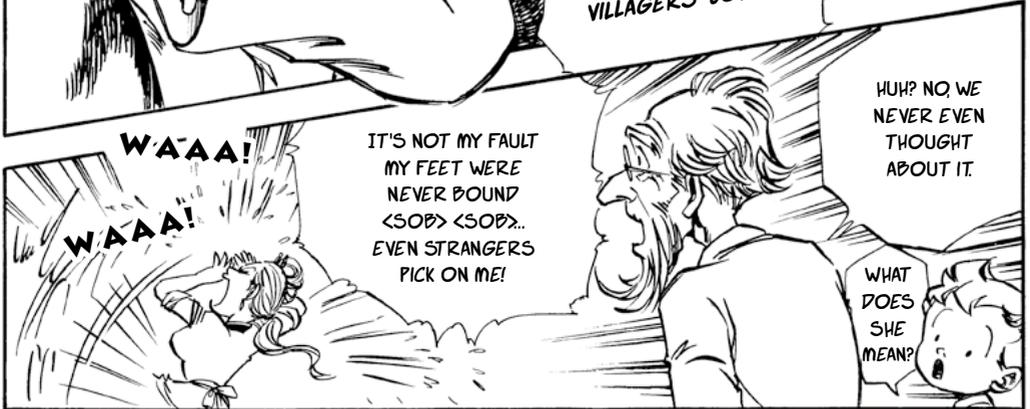
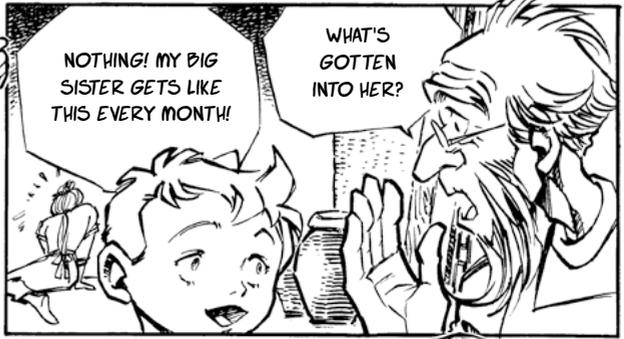
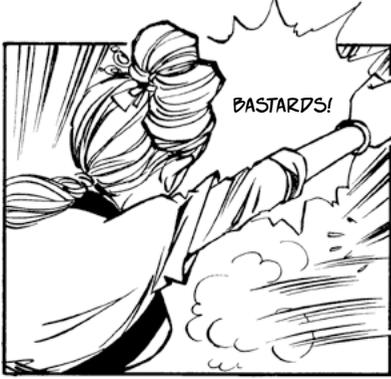
HUH?

RETCH!

GAG!



SUN ERNIANG AT YOUR SERVICE!













MY NAME IS XIAO
XIAOTIAN, AND I
EAGERLY AWAIT
YOUR INSIGHTS.

IF YOU HAVE NO
OBJECTIONS,
LET US GO
INSIDE TO TALK.



LORD XIAO IS A VERY GENEROUS MAN.

THIS WAY, YOU MUST HAVE ACCUMULATED GOOD KARMA TO HAVE THIS ENCOUNTER WITH OUR MASTER.

WINE HAS ALREADY BEEN BROUGHT TO THE SITTING ROOM.

ALL THE FIELDS IN THE VILLAGE BELONG TO HIM.

YAWN...

HEY, I CAN'T GET A MOBILE SIGNAL.

PLEASE, MAKE YOURSELVES COMFORTABLE.



HE HAS ADOPTED TEN ORPHANS OVER THE YEARS, TO SAY NOTHING OF THE MONEY HE LENDS OUT.

HE LOVES TO HELP OTHERS.

WE'VE FOUND A SUCKER.



WHATEVER DIFFICULTIES YOU HAVE, DON'T HESITATE TO TELL ME.

HEH HEH

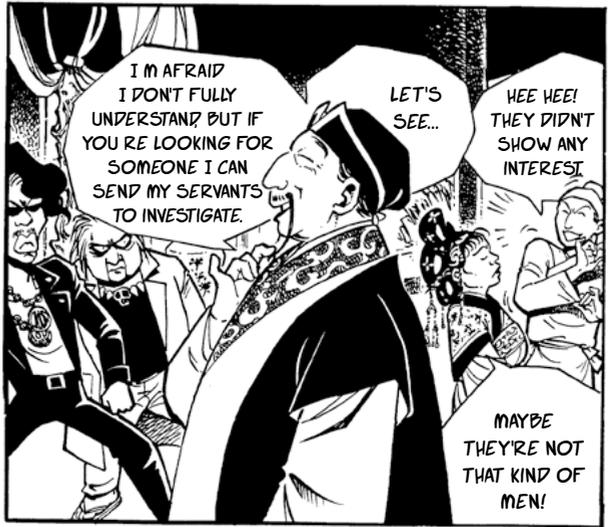


I HAVE NO HOBBIES BEYOND BEING OF SERVICE TO OTHERS.

IMMORTAL ONES, IT IS AN HONOR TO MEET YOU.



HOWEVER, I'LL
NEED A LITTLE
HELP IN RETURN.



I'M AFRAID
I DON'T FULLY
UNDERSTAND, BUT IF
YOU'RE LOOKING FOR
SOMEONE I CAN
SEND MY SERVANTS
TO INVESTIGATE.

LET'S
SEE...

HEE HEE!
THEY DIDN'T
SHOW ANY
INTEREST.

MAYBE
THEY'RE NOT
THAT KIND OF
MEN!

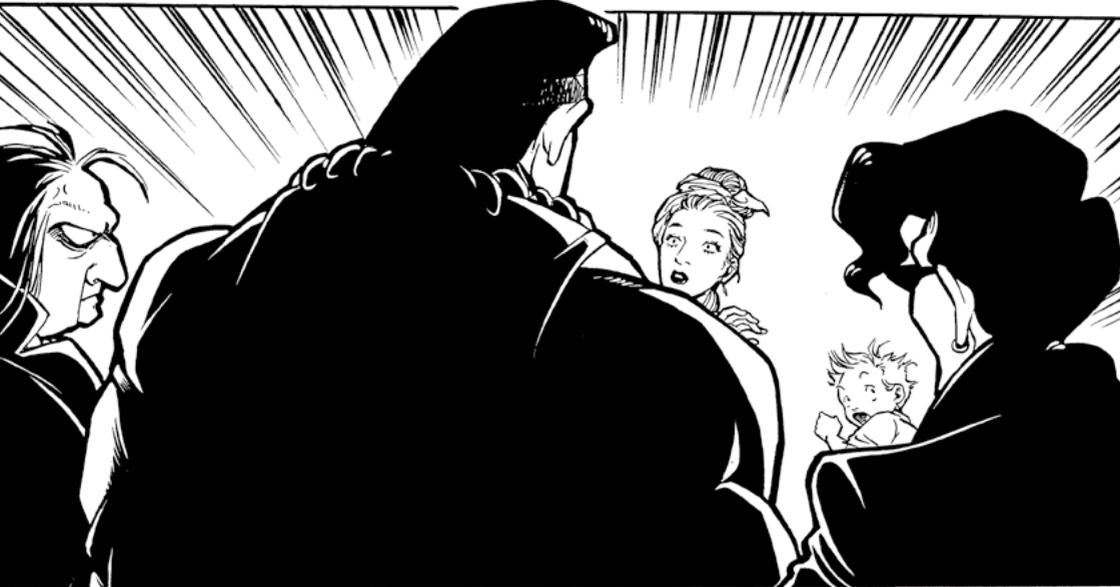
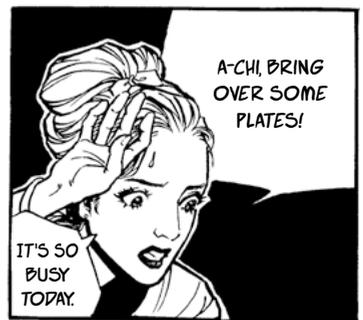


A little while later...



THEY SAID WE
WOULD FIND
THEM HERE.

STAYING WITH A
WOMAN CALLED
SUN ERNIANG





LET ME GO
BIGFOOT
LADY!

ARE YOU
BUYING
STEAMED
BUNS OR
NOT?



WHAM!



ARE YOU HERE TO BUY
SOMETHING OR ARE YOU
LOOKING FOR TROUBLE?

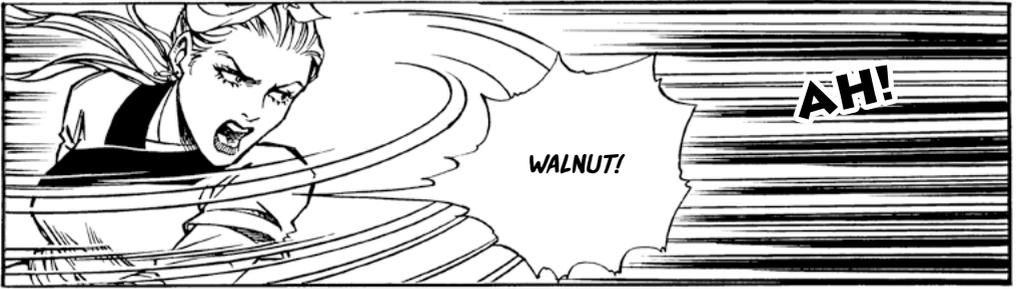


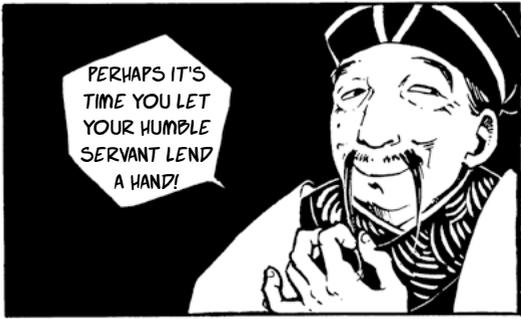
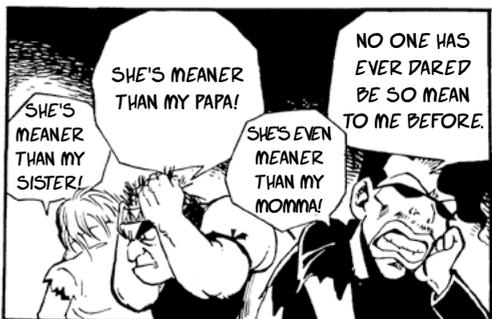
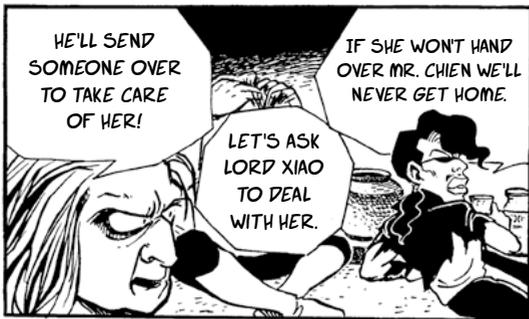
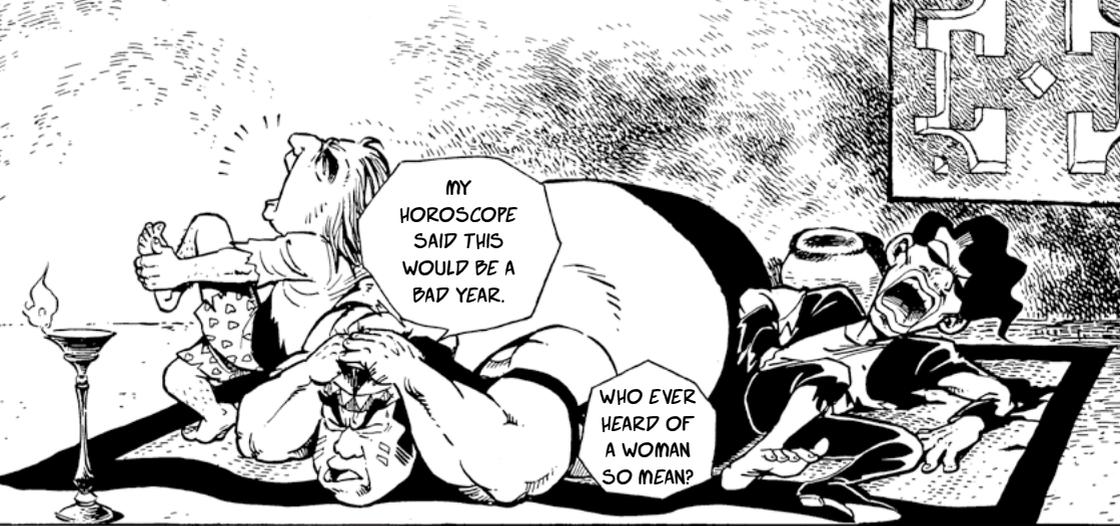
HEY, WHAT
WAS THAT
ABOUT?





*COME HAVE A
TASTE OF MY
FINEST DISH!*

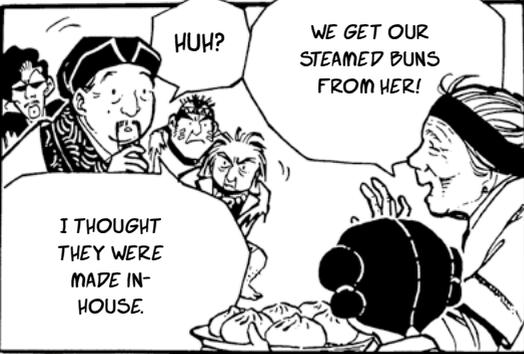






WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO HEAR, MY LORD? ARGUMENTS, DIVORCE, BRIBERY... I KNOW IT ALL.

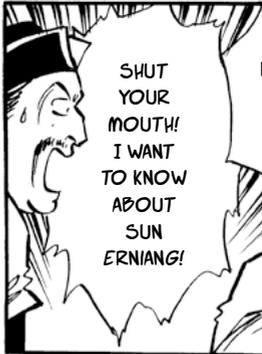
I KNOW ALL THERE IS TO KNOW ABOUT WHAT GOES ON IN THE VILLAGE.



HUH?

WE GET OUR STEAMED BUNS FROM HER!

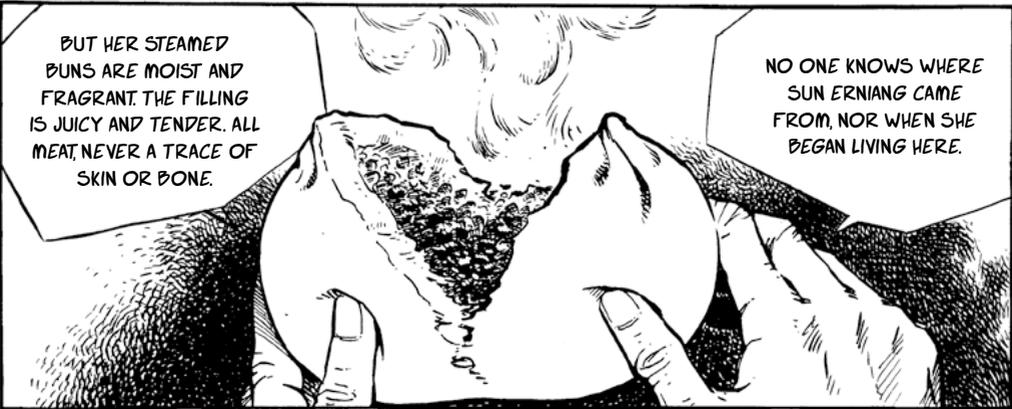
I THOUGHT THEY WERE MADE IN-HOUSE.



SHUT YOUR MOUTH! I WANT TO KNOW ABOUT SUN ERNIANG!



HAS MY LORD PATCHED THINGS UP WITH WIDOW CHO?



BUT HER STEAMED BUNS ARE MOIST AND FRAGRANT. THE FILLING IS JUICY AND TENDER. ALL MEAT, NEVER A TRACE OF SKIN OR BONE.

NO ONE KNOWS WHERE SUN ERNIANG CAME FROM, NOR WHEN SHE BEGAN LIVING HERE.



AND SHE PRICES THEM CHEAP. THE WHOLE VILLAGE BUYS FROM HER.

NO ONE KNOWS WHAT MEAT SHE USES.

WE'VE TRIED EVERY MEAT WE CAN THINK OF... CHICKEN, DUCK, BEEF, LAMB.. BUT WE CAN'T MATCH HER FLAVOR.

RUMBLE



BRILLIANT!
NOW YOU'RE
THINKING



COULD IT
BE HUMAN
FLESH?

IF IT'S
NOT ANIMAL
MEAT



AT YOUR
SERVICE,
MASTER!



PROSPERITY!
FORTUNE!
PEACE! JOY!



HERE,
SIR!

JOY!



CAN YOU TELL
EVERYONE WHAT I
EXCEL AT?

EVERY KIND
OF WICKED-
NESS!



PROSPERITY -ATTERS,
FORTUNE LIES,
PEACE BATTERS,
AND JOY SLANDERS

I CALL
THESE
FOUR
MY BIG
RUNNING
DOGS.



WOOF!



SPREAD A RUMOR.
TELL EVERYONE THAT SUN
ERNIANG FILLS HER STEAMED
BUNS WITH HUMAN FLESH. IF
SHE WON'T GIVE US THE OLD
MAN, WE'LL DRIVE HER OUT
OF BUSINESS!

GO!



NOW IT IS TIME FOR THE THREE OF YOU TO ASSIST YOUR FRIEND LORD XIAO.

ARE WE SUPPOSED TO BE IN A PLAY?

WHY ARE WE DRESSED UP LIKE THIS?



IN ANY CASE, THESE COSTUMES DON'T INTIMIDATE ME.

I DON'T KNOW WHERE YOU BANDITS CAME FROM, NOR DO I INTEND TO ASK.



EVERYONE ELSE, HOWEVER, WILL BELIEVE YOU ARE GODS, SO PLEASE DO AS I SAY.

A HUNDRED THOUSAND PEOPLE COULDN'T PUSH HER DOWN!

ONE MORE STEP AND SHE'S AT THE TOWN HALL!

WITH ONE STEP SHE CRUSHES EIGHT BULLS!

BIGGEST OF THEM ALL!

BIGFOOT!

BIGFOOT!



SHUT UP!



COME OUT AND FACE ME!

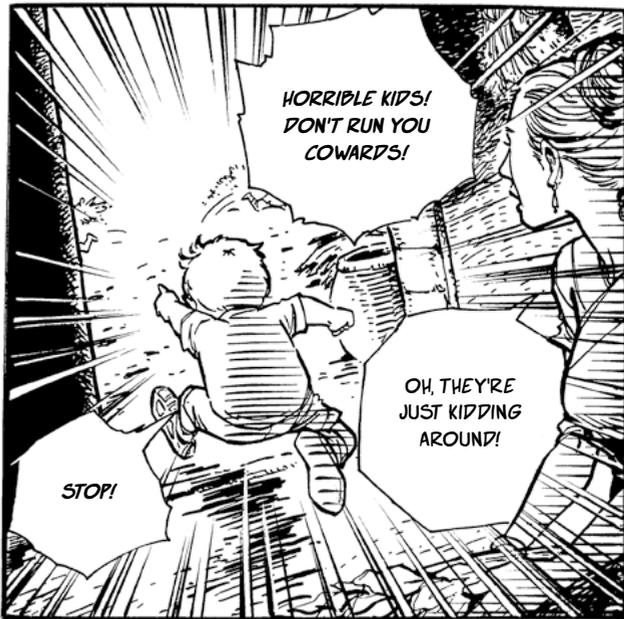
HA HA HA!

HA HA!

COME OUT YOU BASTARDS!

COME AND GET US!

HEE HEE!



HORRIBLE KIDS! DON'T RUN YOU COWARDS!

OH, THEY'RE JUST KIDDING AROUND!

STOP!



THE ABILITY TO WALK ON TWO FEET SHOULD NEVER BE TAKEN FOR GRANTED.

AND MY PEOPLE NEVER HARM THEMSELVES.



I'LL GO BRING HIM BACK.

THERE'S NO POINT. HE HAS TO LEARN HOW THE WORLD WORKS.



IF EVERYONE MAKES FUN OF YOU, WHY DON'T YOU JUST BIND YOUR FEET?





