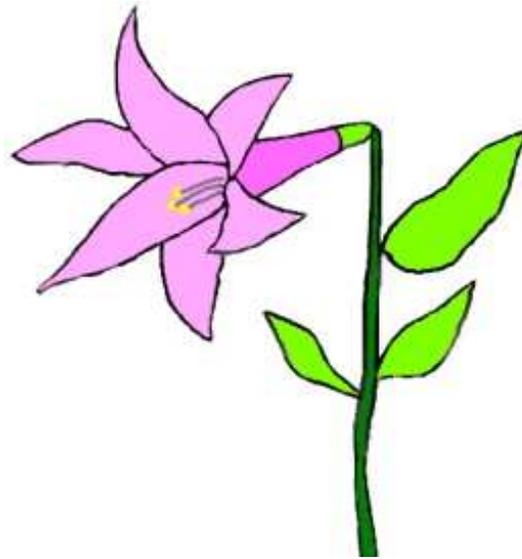


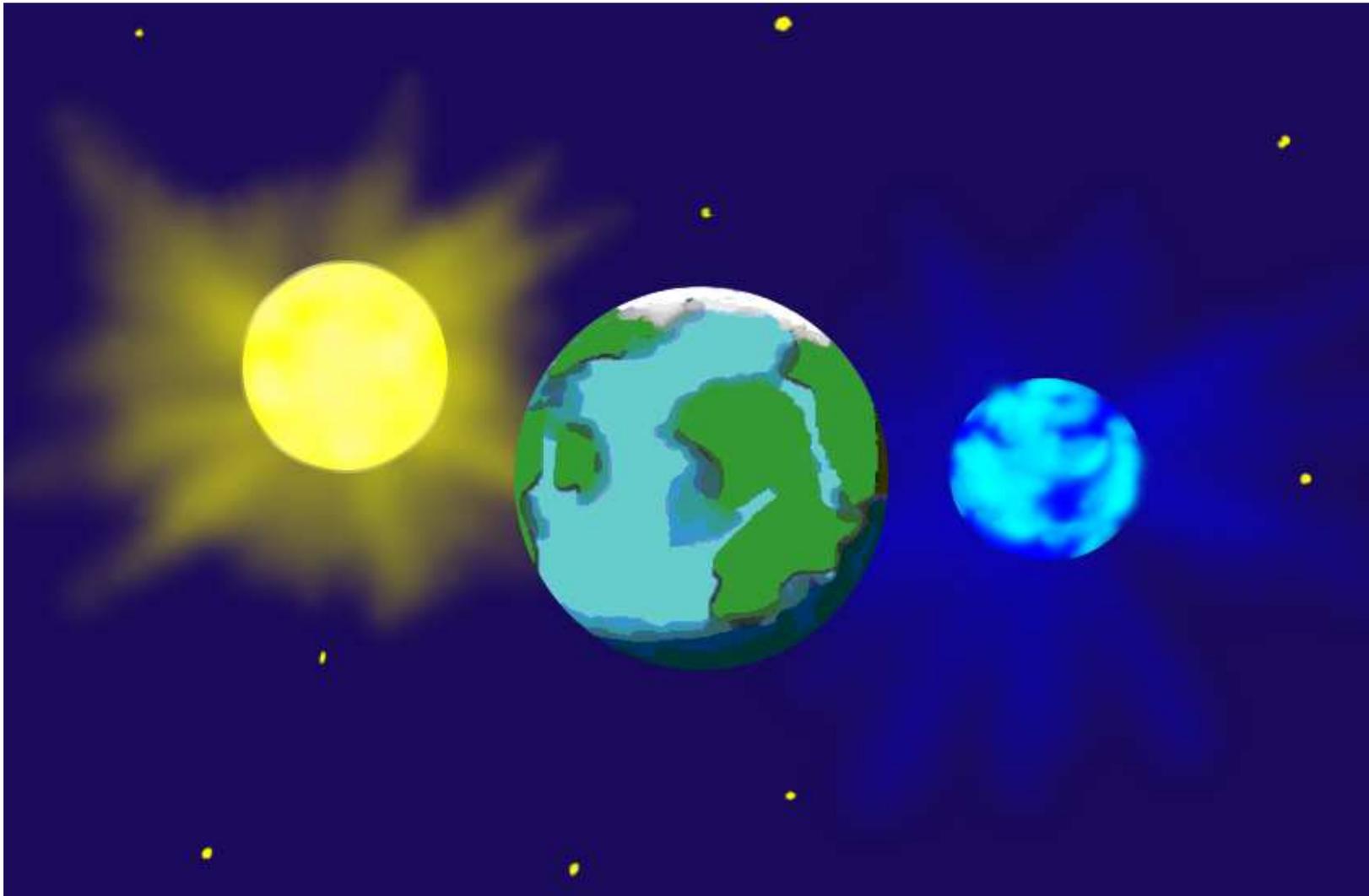
Just a flower

~ the way to eliminate atomic bombs ~



Jun Togo Edited by B.Blue

Our story begins on a star amidst the vast universe.

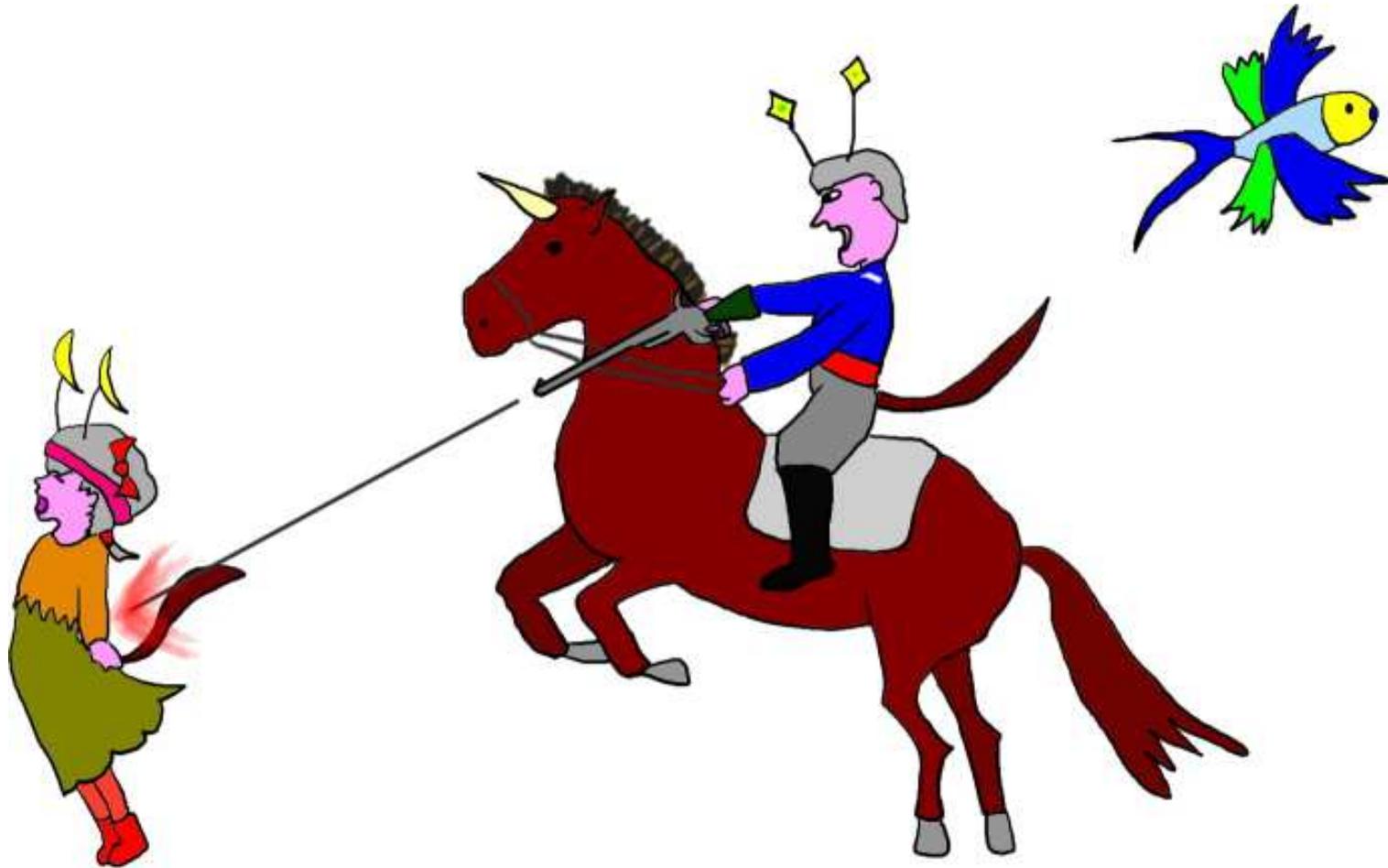


The star is not Earth.

Soldiers with diamond shaped antennas have come from overseas and are assaulting the village people with crescent shaped antennas.



A young soldier shoots a girl with crescent antennas.



She was a beautiful girl. The soldier felt something weigh down on his heart.

The massacre lasted for many years. As a result, only a handful of the crescent folk survived and the few that did had given up all resistance.



People all over the planet were naturally overcome by fear and it was this fear that made them increase armaments.

Thus, a new nation of residents with diamond shaped antennas was born.



The soldiers were heroes of the newfound country and everyone rejoiced.

As it turned out, many of the diamond folk had little freedom in their homeland and had led an unhappy life.



20 years elapsed.

That young soldier is now married with a daughter and is living happily.



One day, his daughter asked him, "What's the matter daddy?"

"Ahh, n-nothing."

For a split second the soldier mistook his daughter for the young girl he murdered 20 years ago. His daughter was around the same age as the girl whose life had been robbed.



After that, he began to drink more often.



One day, he saw his daughter playing with children with crescent shaped antennas.

"What are you doing? Don't play with them!" he found himself shouting at her.



"Listen carefully child. Those children are of inferior race, they are doomed to be eliminated. We are the superior race, the diamond race, and will dominate everything! It is our destiny. This world is ruled by the survival of the fittest."

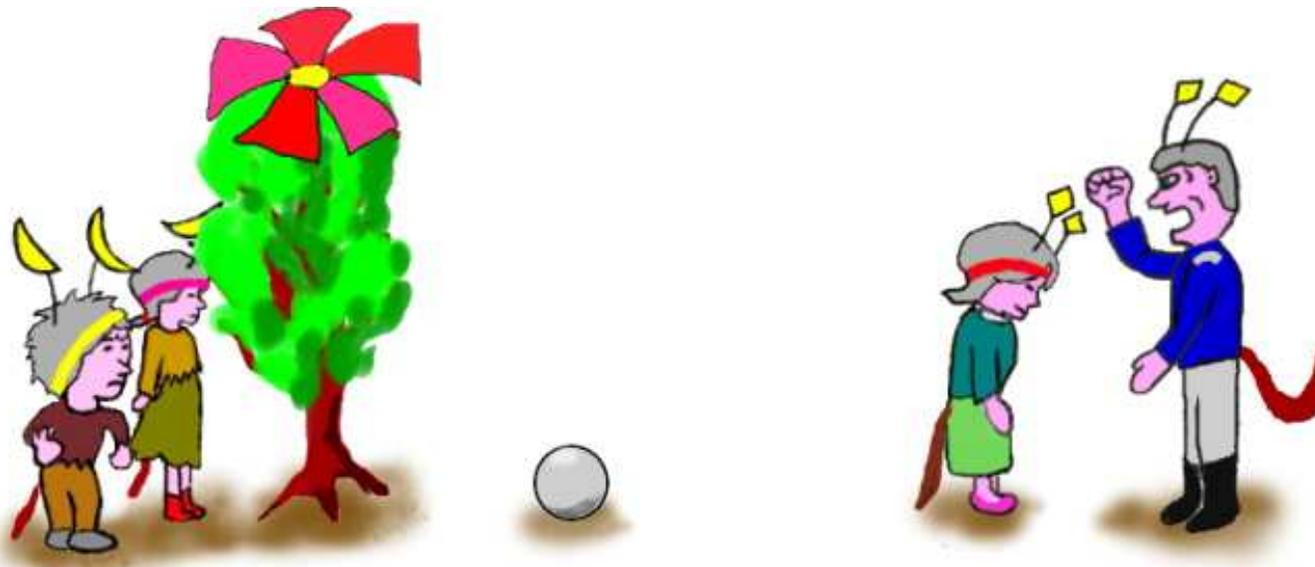
"Yes, father."

"Mixing with inferiors will lead to the degeneration of our kind and is an evil thing to do."

"Yes, father."

"We must fight against inferior races for the sake of justice."

"Yes, father."



His drinking habits began to escalate.



One day, an old woman approached the drunken soldier.

"Oh, poor soul. I feel thy suffering."

"And you are?"

"To ease thy pain, that which you can't feign,
takes but a flower for those whom you've slain."

"What!?"

He shouted at the old woman.

"What nonsense! I am not bad. They are the inferior race. It is God's will for our kind, the civilized race, to
destroy the barbarians."

In his anger the soldier shot
the old woman.



Not long after that, the soldier's drinking habits peaked and in the end, took his life.

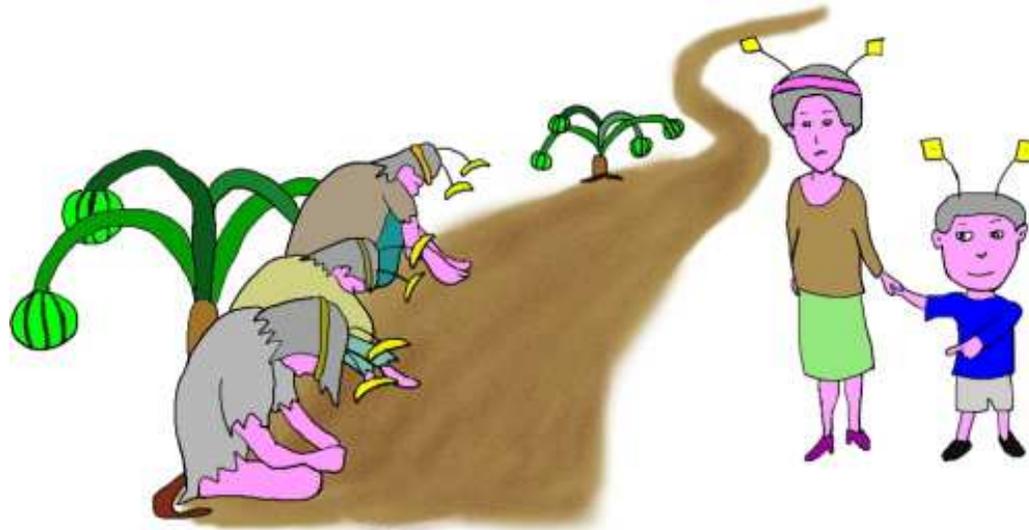
30 years elapsed.

The soldier's daughter is now married and has a son.



"Mum, what are those people doing?"

The boy pointed his finger at the shabby looking people with crescent antennas while strolling along the streets with his mother.

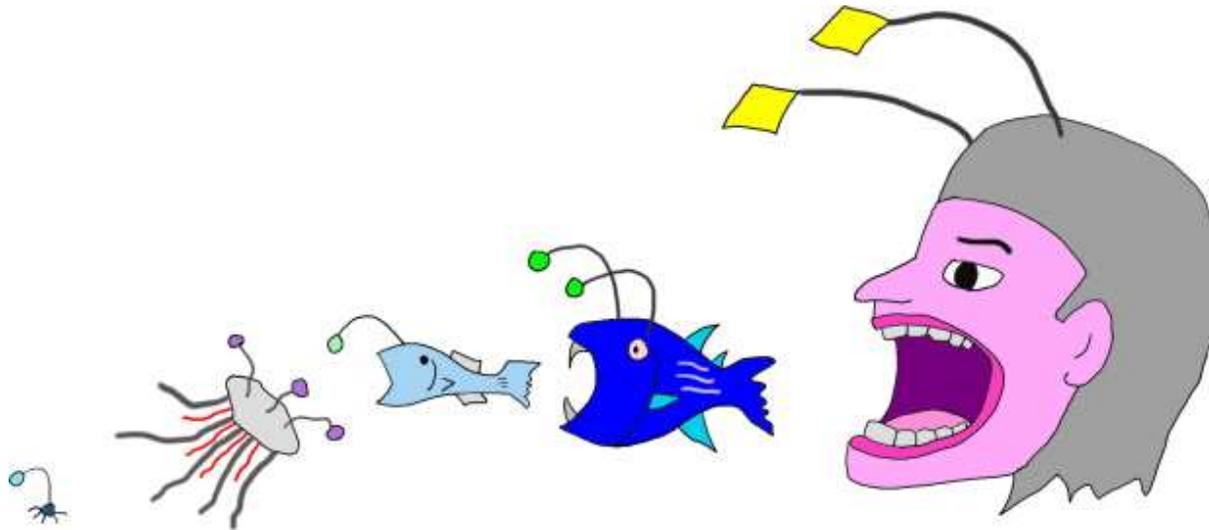


"Those dear, are the dregs of society, those beaten in the struggle for existence. One mustn't associate with them."

"Yes, Mum."

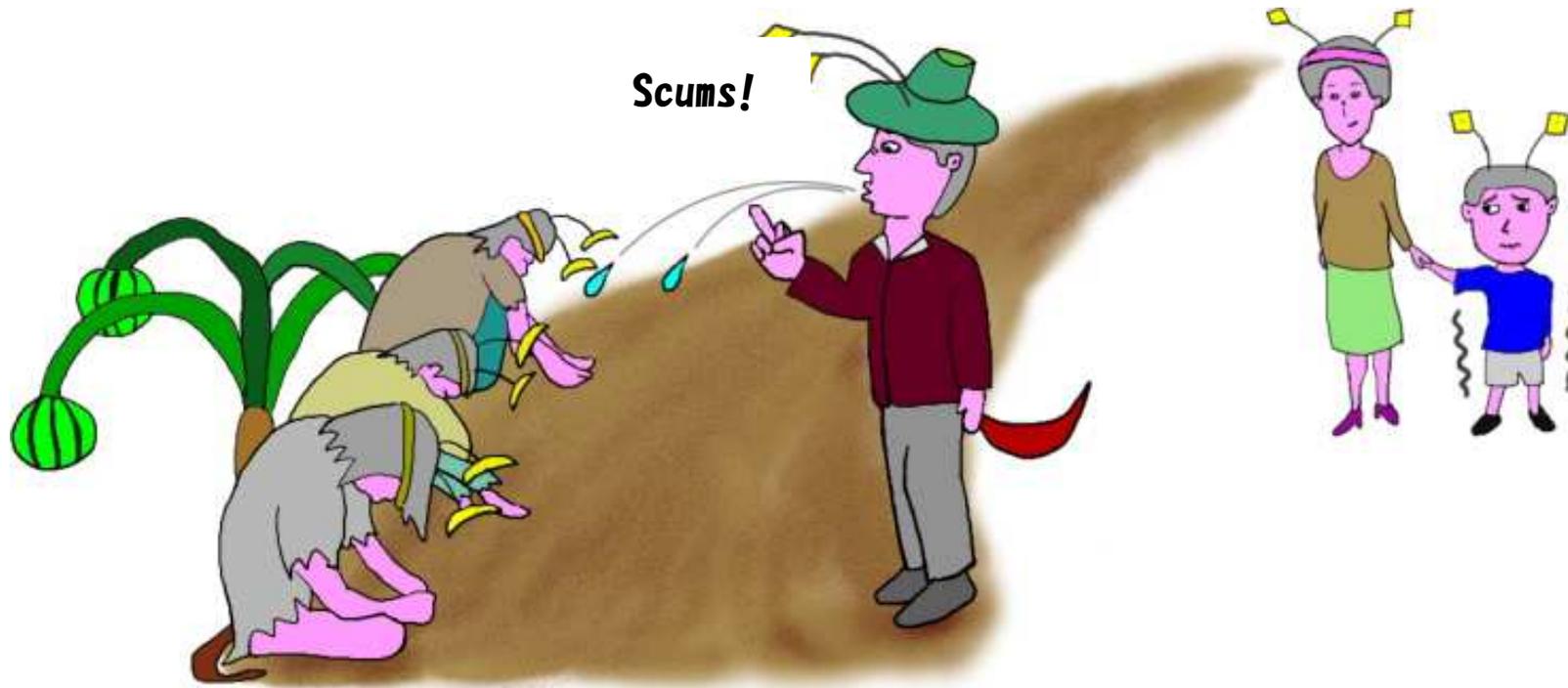
"My late father, your grandfather, used to always say how the world was ruled by the survival of the fittest. The weak are defeated and must suffer the consequences. These are the rules governed by God¹. Therefore it is the strongest race, the diamond people, that will dominate the world. This is God's will. This is justice."

"Yes, Mum."



¹ This is NOT related to any religions on earth.

"My father was a hero of the foundation of our nation. You must have faith in God and fight for the sake of the evolution of our race. Whatever happens, you must not be defeated. Fail, and you will become what we see before us today. Remember this."



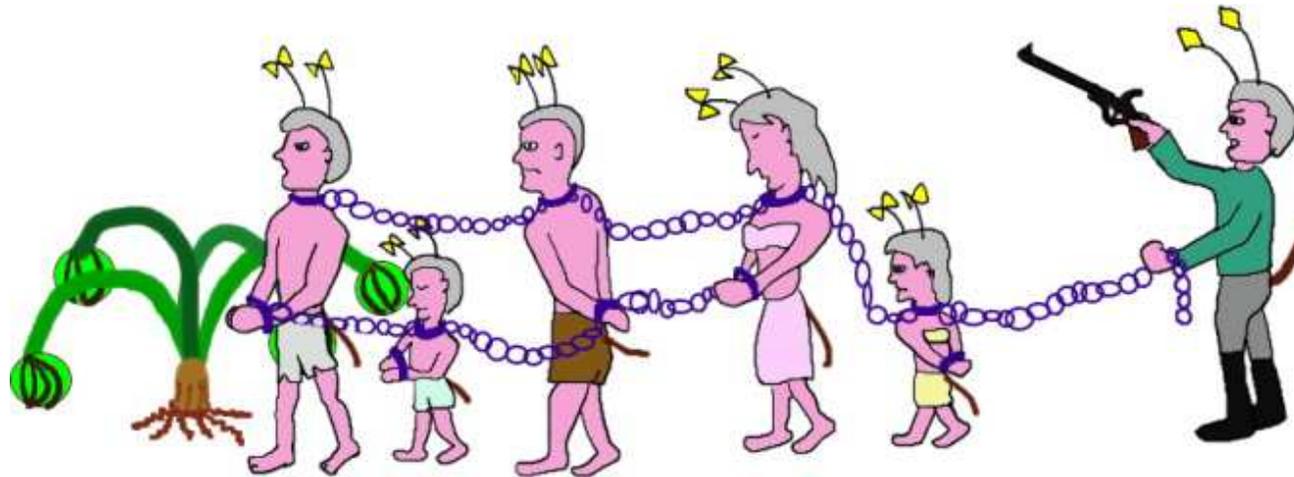
"Fail, and you will become what we see before us today..." The boy trembled with fear and swore to himself never to lose.

20 years elapsed.

The boy continued to conquer everything that lay in his path and eventually became a wealthy farmer.

He made a fortune and bought many slaves.

The slaves were people with butterfly shaped antennas. Originally residing in a faraway country, the butterfly folk were kidnapped and enslaved by the people with diamond antennas.



People all over the planet who heard of this incident were naturally overcome by fear and it was this fear that drove them increase military forces.

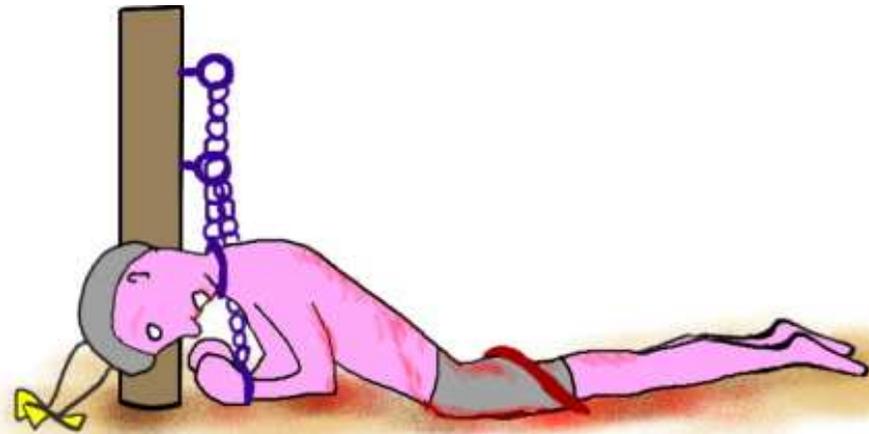
In order to remain a winner in his eyes, it was necessary for him to whip his slaves to force them to work.



But what has become of the slave?

His body now fails to move.

Perhaps he is dead...



The next day, many slaves tried to escape.

One incapable of punishing corrupt slaves is nothing but a coward and cannot win the struggle for existence.

"I will kill them all!"

The farmer chased the slaves and shot each and every one of them, men, women and children.



After that, the farmer began to hallucinate and was haunted by nighmarish scences. He could not escape these visions by drinking as he feared leading the same fate as his grandfather.



Instead he went to the House of God. He thought that by confessing his sins to God he would be protected.

The farmer confessed to *God's* right-hand.

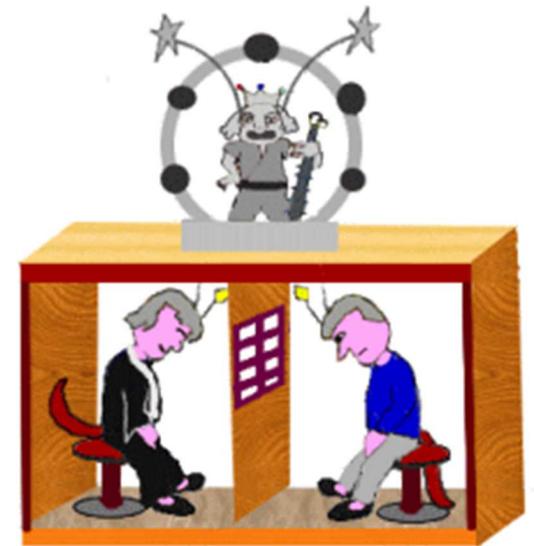
"I have shot many slaves. I had no other choice as they chose to disobey and escaped. They were in the wrong to disturb the social order.

If what is evil is not punished, civilization cannot be protected."

"Thank you for your confession. Now ask for *God's* forgiveness.² Let us pray."

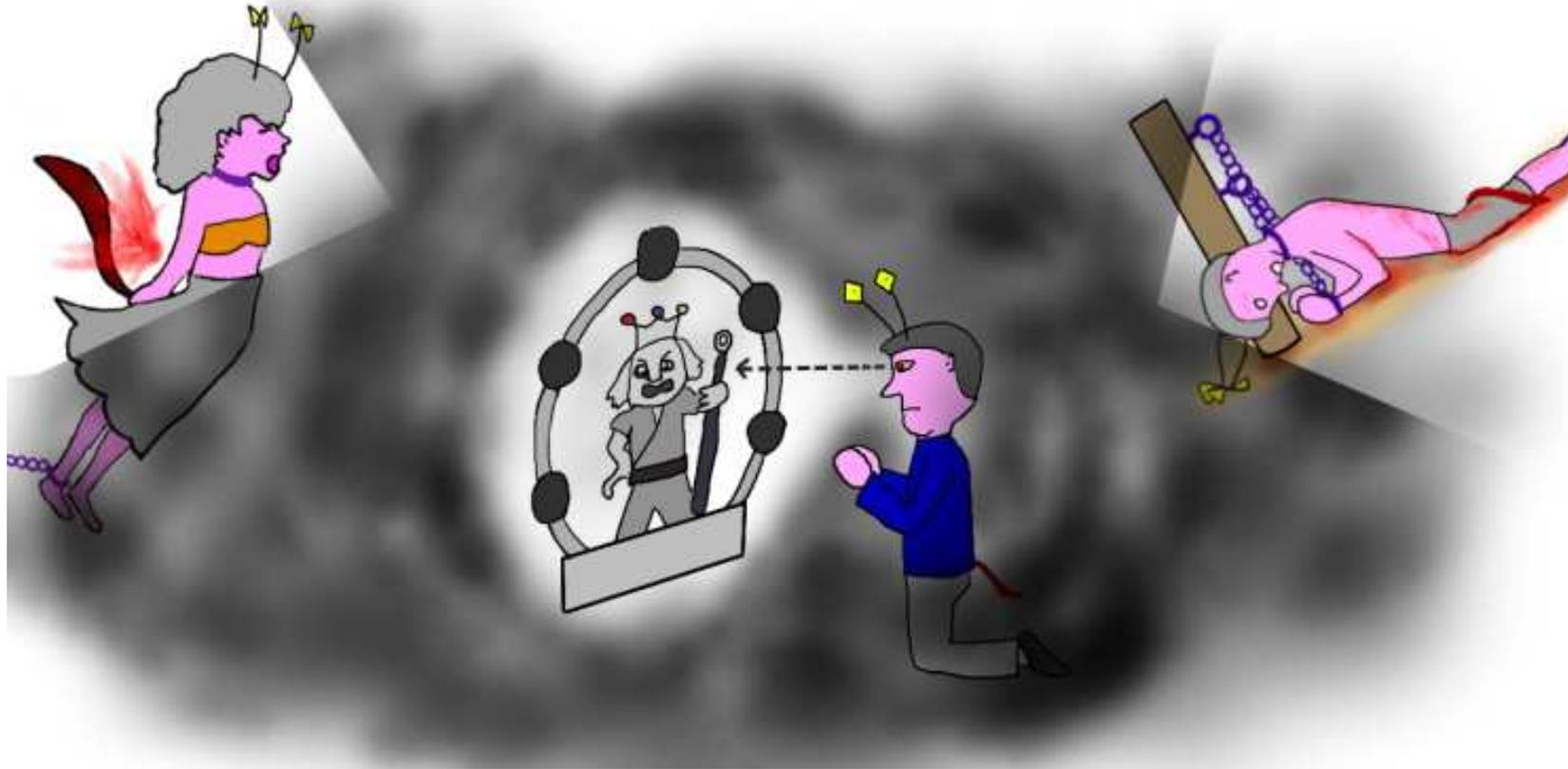
"Dear *God*, forgive me."

"You have been cleansed. *God* shall protect you from all harm."



² N.B This is NOT related to any religions on earth.

After that, the farmer continued to pray. While he prayed, he could see only the image of what he thought God would look like. It was only when he prayed that he was able to block the nightmarish visions.



However, he could not prevent these visions from haunting him in his sleep. He was scared to fall asleep and a lack of sleep began to take its toll on his health.

One day, as he was praying in order to avoid sleep,
he was approached by an old woman.

“Oh, poor soul. I feel thy fear and suffering.”

“Who are you?”

“To ease thy pain, that which you can't feign,
takes but a flower for those whom you've slain.”

“Absurd! I have done no wrong. It is they who disobeyed and ran away - it is they who are at fault. This world is ruled by the survival of the fittest. And even if I were guilty, God has already forgiven me.”

“I am not blaming you. I just...”

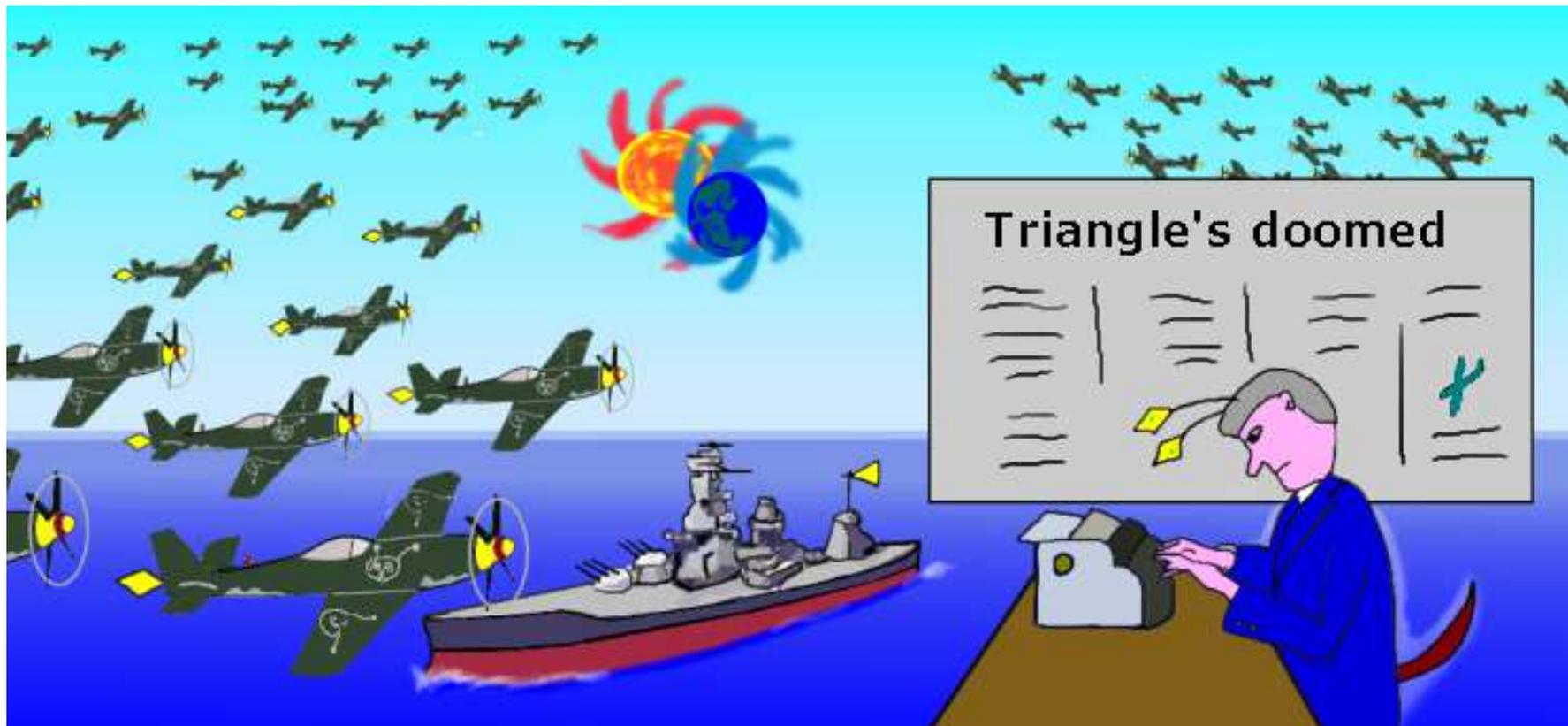


Shut up, you hag!

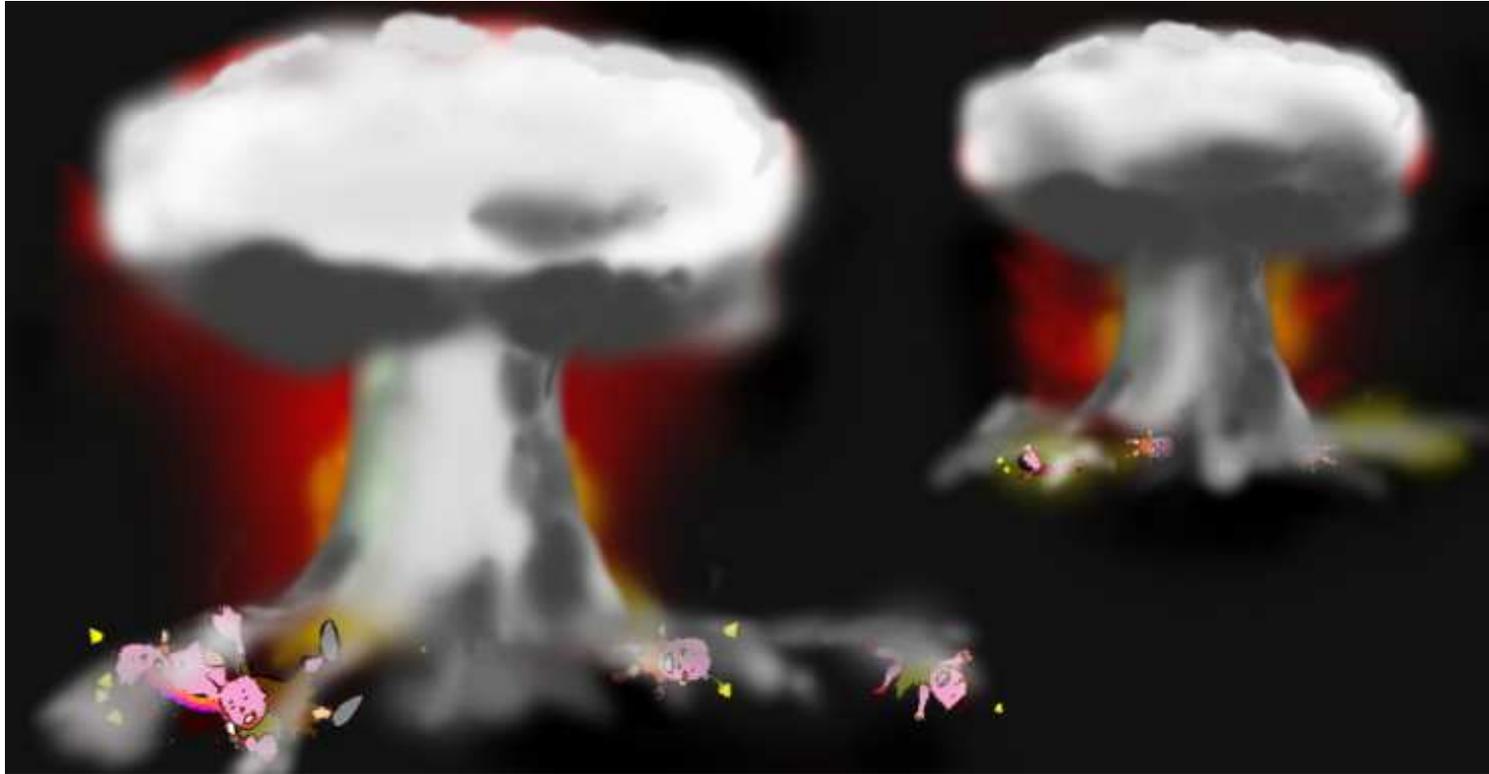


In the end the farmer, deprived of sleep, became mentally deranged and consequently died.

30 years elapsed. The farmer's grandchild has become a newspaper reporter. The powerful country ruled by people with diamond antennas was fighting against a small country of people with triangle shaped antennas. "We must destroy evil for the sake of freedom and justice!" the pressman wrote in the headlines every day.

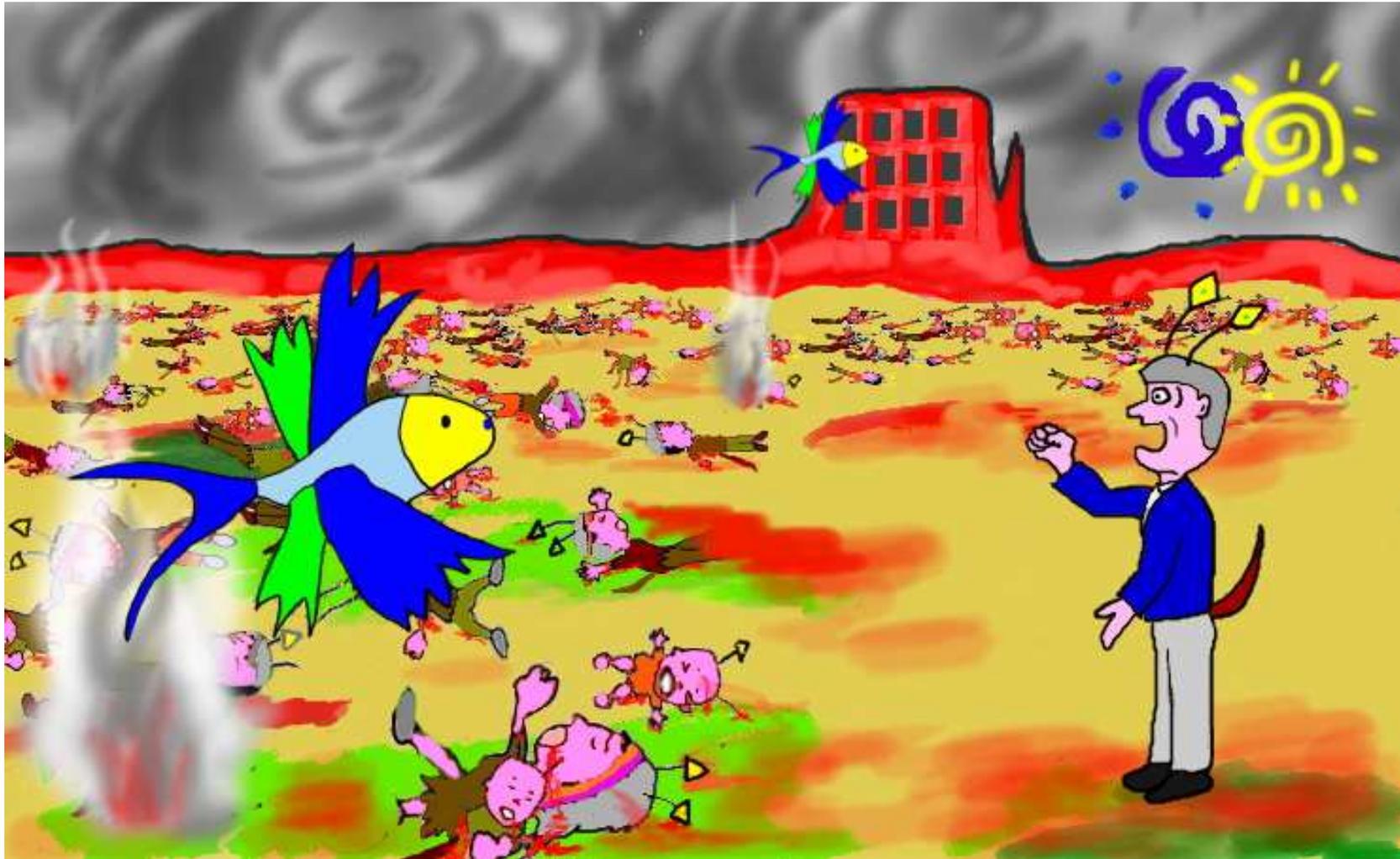


The diamond nation dropped atomic bombs on two of the enemy's cities. Hundreds and thousands of people lost their lives.

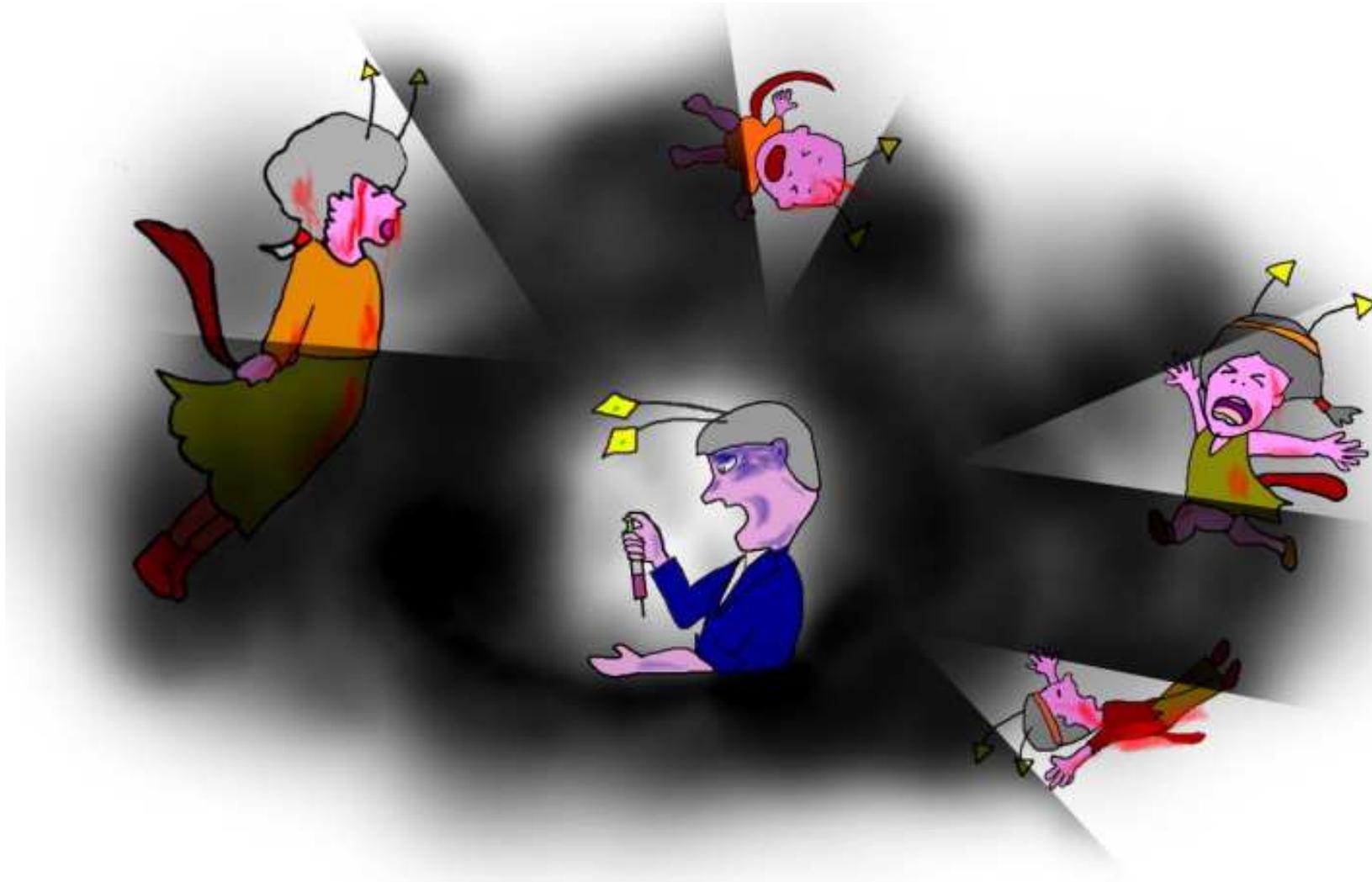


The people with triangle antennas surrendered. People all over the planet were naturally overcome by fear and it was this fear that made them develop nuclear weapons in order to avoid leading the same destiny as their predecessors.

The pressman went to inspect the scorched fields where the bombs had hit. A myriad of bodies lay scattered across the plain. Those who survived the bombings were only to be subjected to the effects of radiation which slowly and painfully took the lives of many more.



Not long after that, the man became consumed in drugs.



One day, the pressman was approached by an old woman.

"Oh, poor soul. I feel thy fear and suffering...to ease thy pain, that which you can't feign, takes but a flower for those whom you've slain."

"Who are you to lecture me? Are you suggesting I apologize to the

Tri? Nonsense! It is the atomic bomb that saved the lives of millions of young men in our country!!

Our actions were justified based on international laws. The Tri are evil, they are doomed! Or do you

dare say we are evil?

"I mean thee no harm nor do I come to torment thee. I merely want thee who invariably re-offends, to

be saved... "

"How dare you old woman! We fought for the sake of justice!

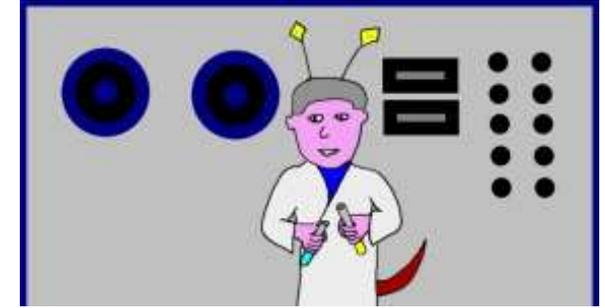
Be gone with you!"

The pressman thrust the old woman.



Not long afterwards, the pressman died from drug addiction.

Another 30 years elapsed. The pressman's grandchild has become a scientist who works for the country's defense force. His research is concentrated on defoliants.



The powerful diamond nation is now fighting against a small country in the jungle that has no nuclear weapons. The defoliant made by the scientist was sprayed throughout the jungle by airplanes. Consequently, trees withered and crops were destroyed, causing the enemy's food shortage and preventing them from lying in ambush.



The defoliant proved poisonous for people. As a result, many children with deformities were born.



People all over the planet were naturally overcome by fear and it was this fear that propelled them to increase armaments and develop nuclear weapons in order to avoid leading the same destiny as their predecessors.

Not long after that, the scientist began to drink a lot of alcohol.



One day, the scientist was approached by an old woman.

"Poor soul, I feel thy suffering. To ease thy pain, that which you can't feign, takes but a flower for those whom you've slain. "

"Huh, a flower?" replied the drunk scientist.

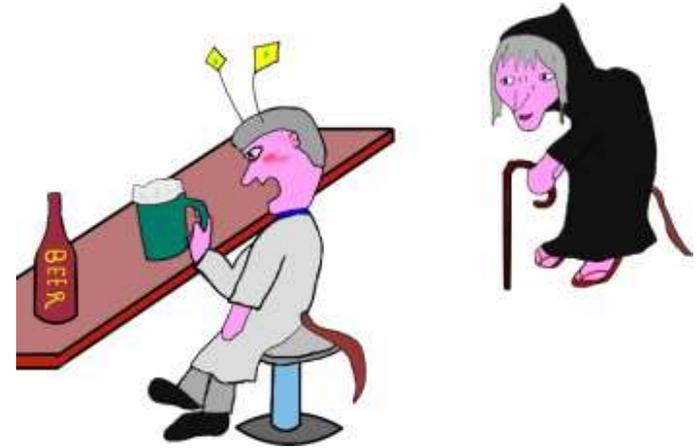
"That is correct.

Go to their graves and place a single flower for those whom you've slain."

For a split second, the scientist stopped to listen to what the old woman had said. However, an overwhelming sense of fear seized his heart.

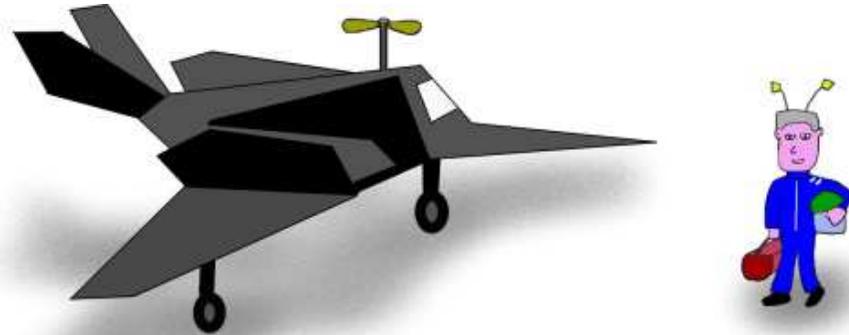
"That's insane! They were in the wrong! We fought the enemy at the risk of our very lives for freedom and democracy. Many of our soldiers were spared thanks to my defoliant.

It goes without saying that the enemy should be destroyed. It is the obligation of our people to fight against evil and to serve the best interests of our nation. Once defeated, you are slaughtered. Right and might go hand in hand. " He lashed out at the old woman.



Not long after that, the scientist died from over drinking.

Yet another 30 years elapsed. The scientist's grandchild has become a pilot of the air force.



As a descendant of the hero who founded his country, the pilot longed to fight against evil in the name of justice ever since he was a child.

Needless to say, this was the doctrine that he was indoctrinated with throughout his childhood. "Since her foundation, our country has always fought against evil for justice. You must serve your country, your people, our nation. One must fight in the name of justice!"



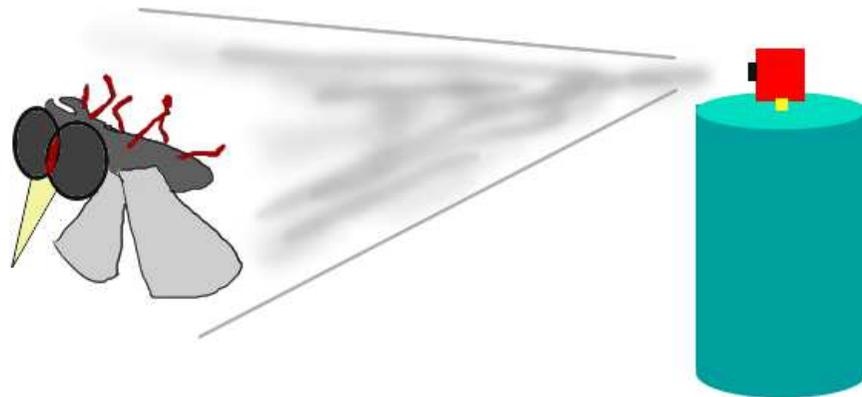
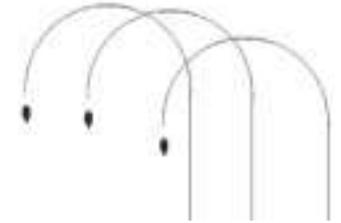
Now the mighty nation of the Diamond people has waged war against a small nation located in a remote desert that has no nuclear weapons. The pilot was finally able to fulfill his dream by fighting for justice just like his courageous ancestors had done so. He dropped many bombs from his jet with tremendous joy.



The enemy also appears to strike back.

However, the pilot is far from the enemy's reach, flying so high that the enemy's bullets fail to hit him. The pilot managed to safely kill many of his enemies with ease.

This made him think to himself: "This is no fight, it's a one-sided massacre. Just like killing a fly with insecticide..." He suddenly felt sick.



The people on the planet who heard of this massacre trembled with fear and became determined to focus all their efforts on developing nuclear weapons and increasing military power.

When he returned home from the desert, the pilot started using drugs. As his grandfather had died at a young age from drinking, he was unable to distract himself with alcohol.



One day an old woman approached him.
"Poor soul, I feel thy suffering. To ease thy pain,
that which thee can't feign, takes but a flower
for those whom thou hast slain."



"Are you implying I should apologize, woman? Who are you to point a finger at me! I am innocent! I have fought for freedom, democracy and for human rights and you stand before me accusing me of being immoral! I have fought for justice!!"

"I know."

"What?"

"Who ever said thou wert bad?"

"Weren't you the one who told me to gather some flowers for the dead?" "That I did. All I ask of thee is to offer a single flower for those whom thou hast slain."

"In other words, I'm bad so I must make up for all the evil acts I've committed?"

"Thou misunderstands me. All I ask of thee is to offer a single flower."

"I still can't comprehend..."

"Ne'er did I once accuse thee of evil. Why dost thou oppress thy natural sympathy towards others? **Why dost thou suppress thine own love?**"

"My own love?" "Yes, thine own love."



"But the people concerned are already dead!"

"Whether they are alive or dead is not relevant. **One apologizes for oneself.** It is not evil spirits that haunt thee. Thou fights against thine own love.

Can thou not see? **Open thine eyes now!**"

He fell silent for a long time.

"Is that really all I need to do? Do I only need to offer a flower?"

"Yes."

"If I offer a flower, if I acknowledge what I've done, will I not fall into Hell?"

"Thou wilt not."

"Will I really be released from my suffering by offering a single flower?"

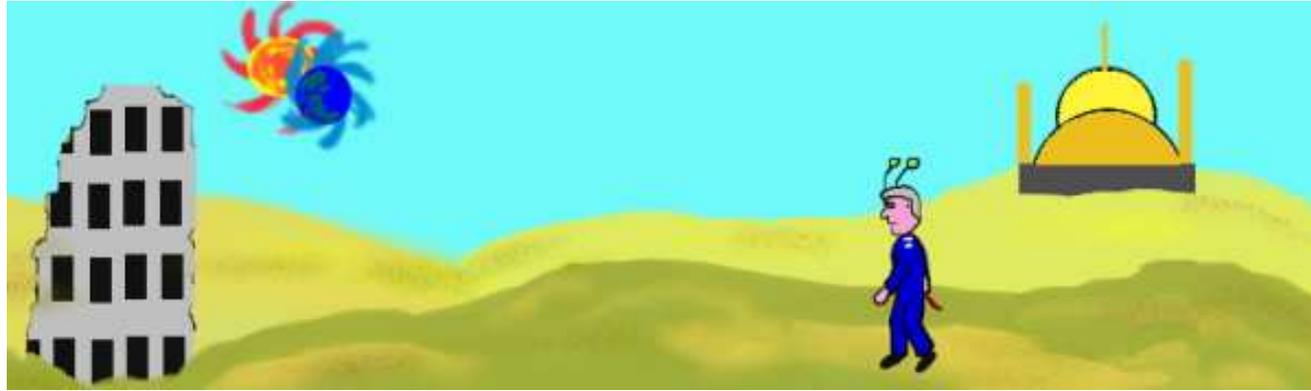
"Yes. Why art thou scared? Why doth a flower cause thee to fear?"

The pilot once again fell silent.

The old woman spoke for the final time. **"Who can goest against one's own love forever?"**



The pilot returned to the desert nation.



He was met with glares from many of the citizens.



He went to the place where he had bombarded. There he saw a tombstone-like object on the ground.

Many citizens gathered around him.



The pilot placed a flower on the grave and prayed in silence.



The flower punctured the wall in his mind and images flowed into his heart.



The image of people being burnt to death was ablaze in his mind's eye. He felt the people's pain as if it were his own.



The pain was overwhelming. However, he gritted his teeth and continued to open his mental wall that the flower had penetrated. I can no longer close my eyes and be imprisoned in the darkness!

**How I never understood your pain,
your suffering. How hard I tried to keep
my eyes closed. Now my mind's eyes are open
and I can feel your pain.
I'm sorry! Forgive me!**



All of a sudden he found himself shouting out aloud.

How long had he knelt there?

Before he knew it, he was surrounded by many citizens. All had tears in their eyes. Together they all cried.



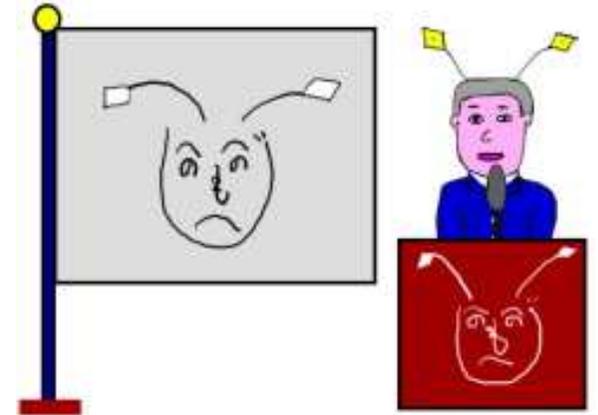
20 years elapsed. There was no longer a time where he used drugs.

Loved by many, the pilot had become the president of the country of the Diamonds.

One day during a cabinet meeting, he addressed the ministers:

"As a president representing this country,

I would like to offer a flower to all those sacrificed by the foundation of our country, by our racial discrimination and by our wars."



The ministers were horrified. If such an action was carried out, they would be killed by their own citizens, they thought.

The ministers all voiced their opposition.

" - If we were guilty, all we'd have to do is to confess to God."

" -What difference would it make to offer flowers to the deceased? Or dare you say you believe in the supernatural?"

" - It will have unprecedented repercussions on our national identity! People all over the planet will look down on us! Does the President dare accuse us of being unethical? Dare you incriminate us? If we apologize now, we'd be acknowledging that we are evil! Evil belongs in Hell!"

" - Exactly! When have we ever been wrong! The enemy is evil!"

" - We should waste no time in increasing nuclear weapons."

" - Yes, more and more nations are developing atomic bombs. We must stay on guard and ensure that we have more supplies than the enemy!"

" - Absolutely! **It is only with the aggrandizement of nuclear weapons that we can guarantee our freedom and safety, justice, our human rights and democracy!**"

“Apologize without our consent and we will not be able to guarantee your life, president or not.”

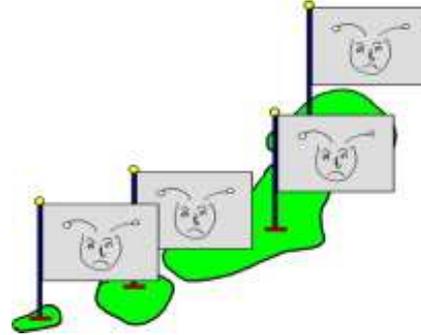


The cabinet ministers threatened the president.

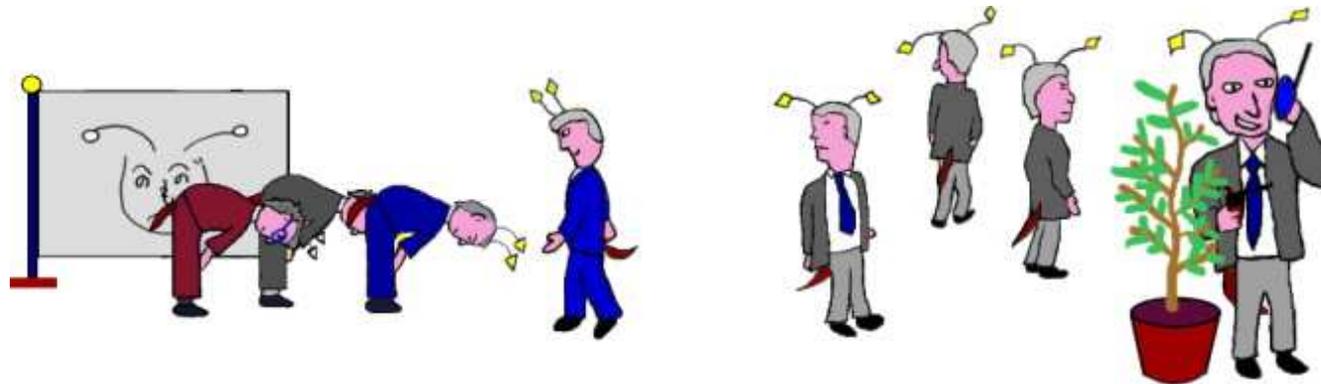
Not long afterwards, the president visited the country of their previous foe, the Triangles.

Upon winning the war, the Diamond nation made over 100 military bases in the country of the Triangles.

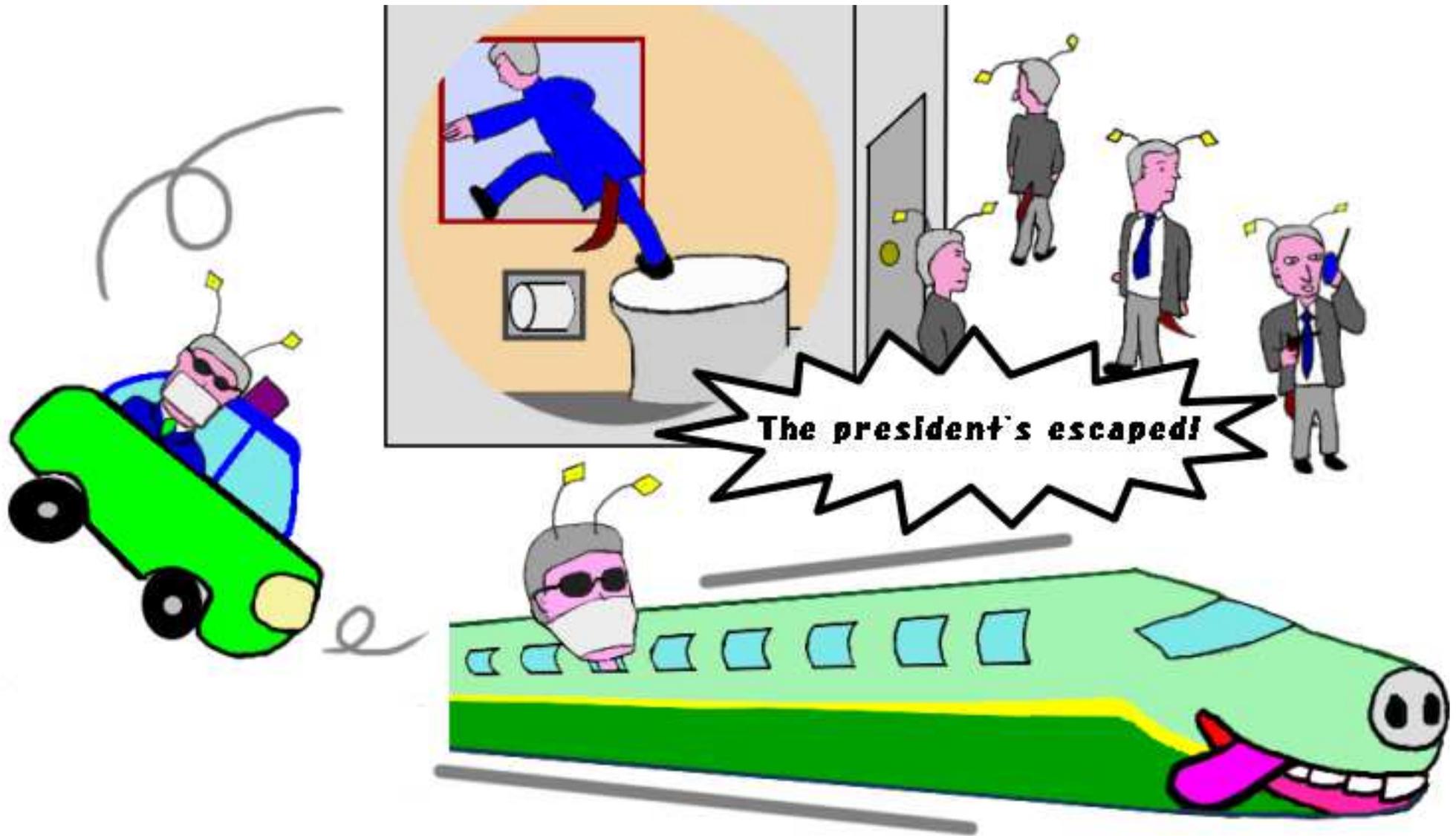
It was for this reason that the Triangle nation had never disobeyed since.



The president was constantly surrounded by policemen and bodyguards. Among them were those who appeared to be the ministers' spies.

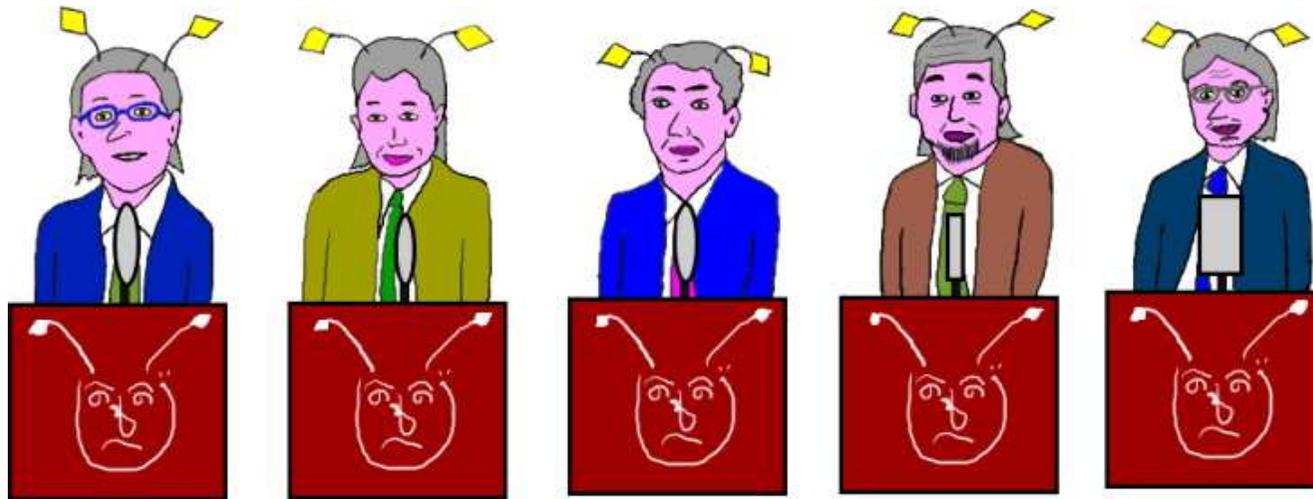


The president went into a bathroom and escaped from the window without being noticed. Wearing a pair of dark sunglasses and a mask, the president boarded the train in disguise.



The president had made his way to one of the cities where his country had dropped atomic bombs 80 years ago. This visit by an incumbent president had been unprecedented.

“What we did was justified, therefore we do not owe an apology.”



All of the presidents from the past continued to say the same thing.

People all over the planet trembled with fear and focused all their efforts on developing nuclear weapons and increasing military power.

The president arrived at the Memorial Museum which commemorated those who had lost their lives from the atomic bomb. There the president took off his disguise and signed the visitor's book.

**"Hello, Channel 123? The president
is here in the Memorial Museum!"**



Those who recognized the president were in shock.

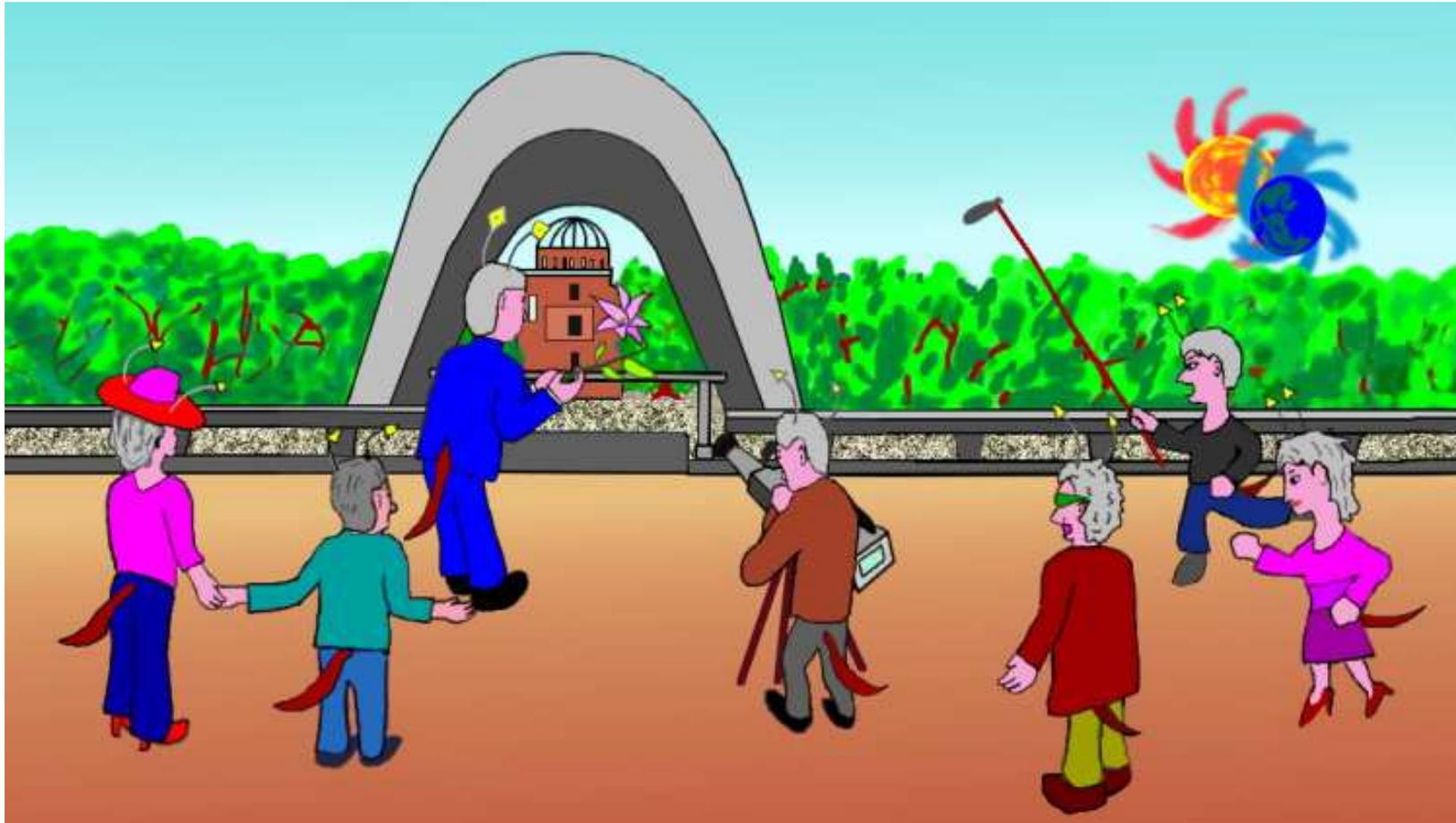
The president walked around the atomic bomb memorial all alone.

Charred bodies of children; people with keloids; those who'd been subjected to radiation...

He was looking into the fiery pits of hell.



The president then made his way towards the cenotaph erected in memory of the victims of the atomic bomb, carrying a flower in his hand. Many people gathered around him.



The image of the president offering a flower to the victims was broadcasted worldwide.

The president's long tacit prayer had ended. He raised his tear-streaked face.



*“Mr. President, a word
if you please.”*

“I have just offered a flower to the countless people who perished owing to the atomic bombs my country had dropped. This flower is not a sign of judgment. I am not passing judgment on my countrymen, nor have I the intention of doing so on those who fought against us. This is because **judging others is nothing but a declaration of hate, vengeance, suffering.** Ignorance replaces understanding.”



People all over the planet, including terrorists, politicians and the president's cabinet ministers, listened to the president's speech.

**"Boss, we may be able to
purchase an atomic bomb..."**

"Silence!"



"I offer this flower as a sign of our remorse and our unconditional sympathy to the victims of the atomic bombs. This flower symbolizes love, not *good and evil*.

The flower of love blooms where *good and evil* is absent. My dear friends please accept this flower. I implore you to allow us to share your pain that we inflicted, not only as your pain but also as our own - as friends."

Everyone all over the planet who heard the president's speech broke out in tears.

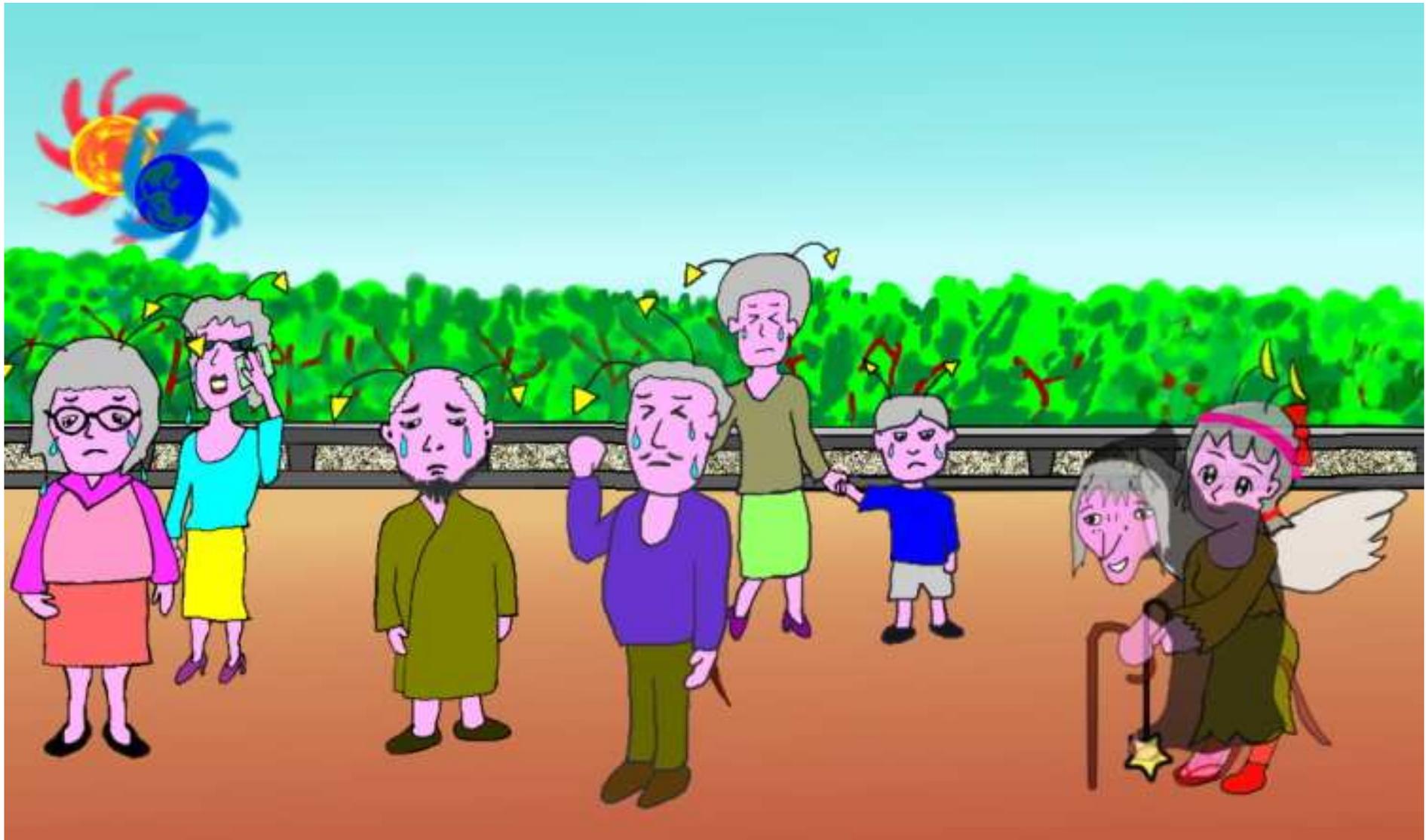
People preparing for war, terrorists and the ministers who had opposed the president also began to weep.



We can no longer use atomic bombs!



The crowd that had gathered around the cenotaph was also crying. Among them was the old woman.



1000 years elapsed.

Although various events occurred after the president's floral tribute, permanent world peace was achieved. This was the result of the people's determination in working towards mutual understanding.

All armaments including nuclear weapons were destroyed, apart from those seen in museums.



The name of the first president who had offered a flower to the victims of the atomic bomb had become legendary, as his simple gesture had led to the achievement of global peace. Even after a thousand years his grave is covered with flowers.



Afterword

If you hurt someone, you apologize. Apology and forgiveness work in tandem to restore human relationships. Without apology, it is almost impossible to restore the relationship between people. When trust between people disappears, only solitude, fear and violence remain.

The illusions derived from *good and evil* make apologizing very difficult to do and subsequently, humans continue to suffer. (For more details about the illusions of *good and evil*, please refer to my book, *Good and Evil Addiction*).

If you empathize with this picture book, we would appreciate it if you could show them to your family and friends.

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