Richard Strauss

SALOME

HERODIAS
wife of herod

HEROD
tetrarch
of judea

SALOME
a princess

JOCHANAAN
a prophet

NARRABOTH
captain of the guard

At King Herod's palace, the young captain Narraboth admires the beautiful princess Salome. A page warns Narraboth that something terrible might happen if he continues to stare at the princess, but Narraboth won't listen.
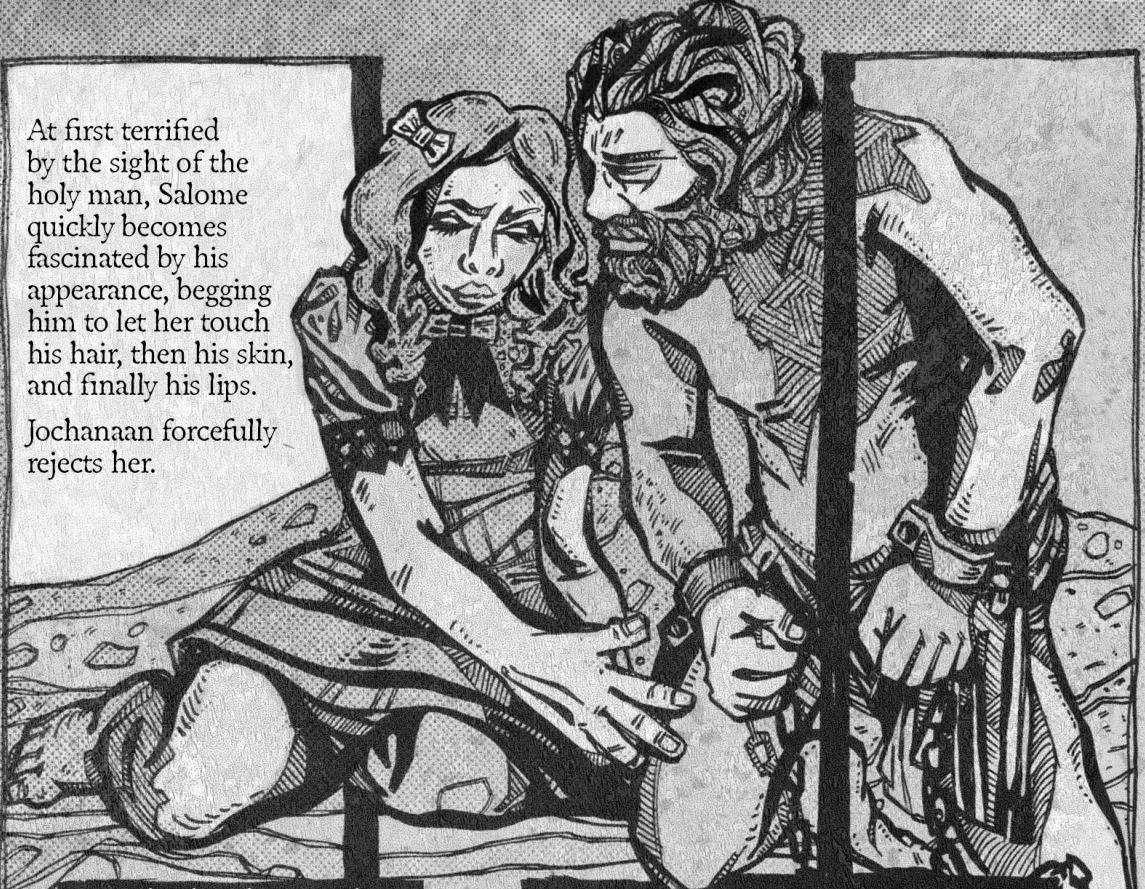
The voice of Jochanaan is heard from the cellar, where he is kept prisoner, proclaiming the coming of the Messiah.

Salome asks about the prophet.

The soldiers refuse to allow her to speak with him, but Narraboth, unable to resist her, allows Salome to descend into the cellar.

At first terrified by the sight of the holy man, Salome quickly becomes fascinated by his appearance, begging him to let her touch his hair, then his skin, and finally his lips.

Jochanaan forcefully rejects her.

Narraboth, who can't bear Salome's desire for another man, stabs himself.

Herod appears from the palace. When he slips in Narraboth's blood, he suddenly panics, and begins to hallucinate.
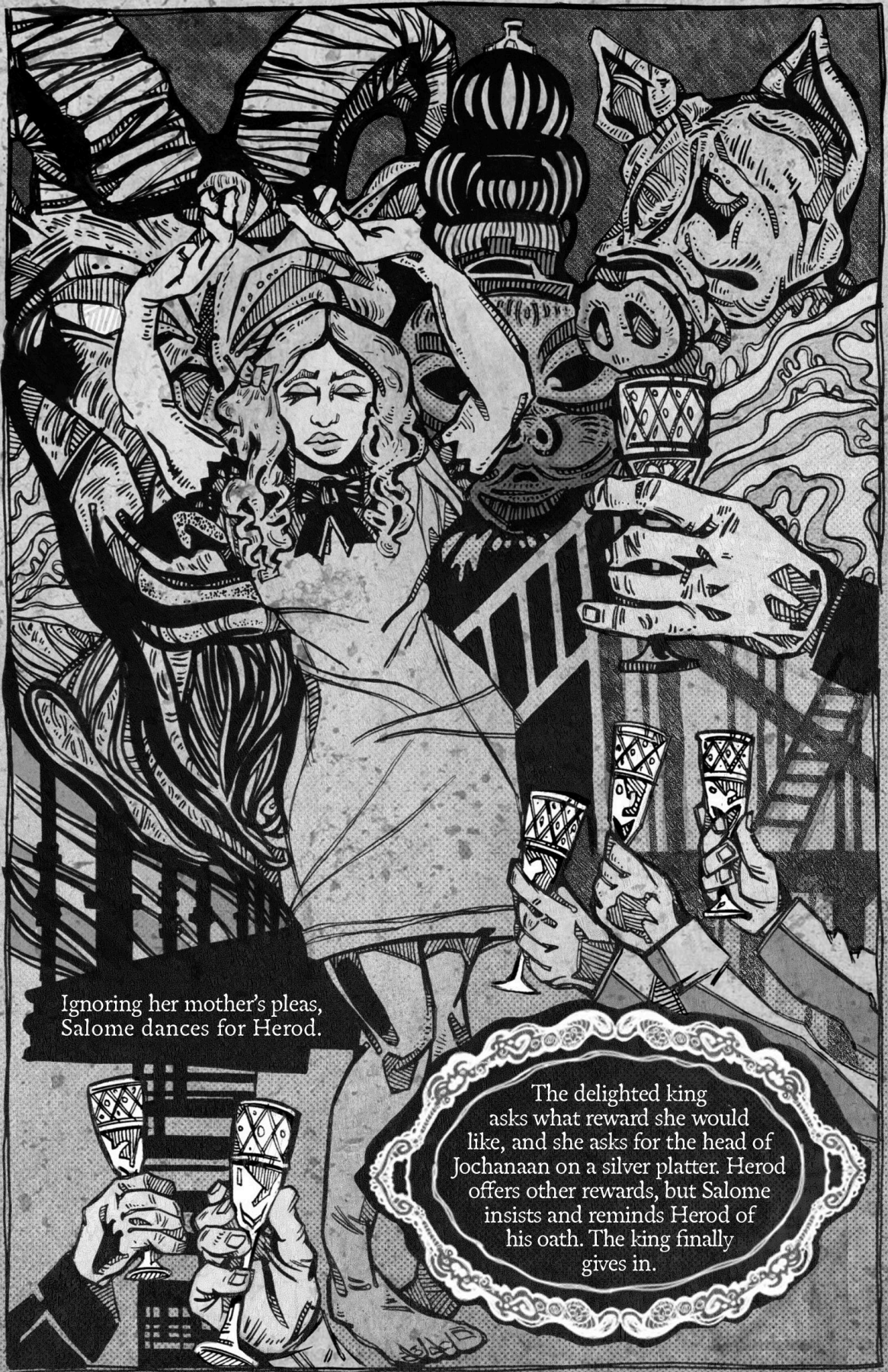
Herod then turns his attention to Salome. He offers her food and wine, but she rejects his advances.

Jochanaan rebukes Herodias, who demands that Herod turn the prophet over to the Jews. Herod refuses, maintaining that Jochanaan is a holy man and has seen God.

Herod asks Salome to dance for him. She refuses, but when he promises to give her anything she wants, she agrees, once she has made him swear to keep his word.

Ignoring her mother's pleas, Salome dances for Herod.

The delighted king asks what reward she would like, and she asks for the head of Jochanaan on a silver platter. Herod offers other rewards, but Salome insists and reminds Herod of his oath. The king finally gives in.

When the prophet's head is brought to her, Salome passionately addresses Jochanaan as if he were still alive, and finally kisses his lips.

The terrified Herod, outraged and disgusted at Salome's behavior, orders the soldiers to kill her.