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NOV

Moebae

ADVENTURES™



MAX 0d
INK 20
95

THE DARK AGES • 1 OF 8

PROTOPLASM PRESS • \$2.00 • NOVEMBER 1995

AMOEBA ADVENTURES #20

THE DARK AGES

PART ONE:

Strength.



Written and created by Nik Dirga

Pencils, inks and letters by Max Ink

"Beat me enemy,
Beat me out of me."
— Kurt Cobain, "Aneurysm"

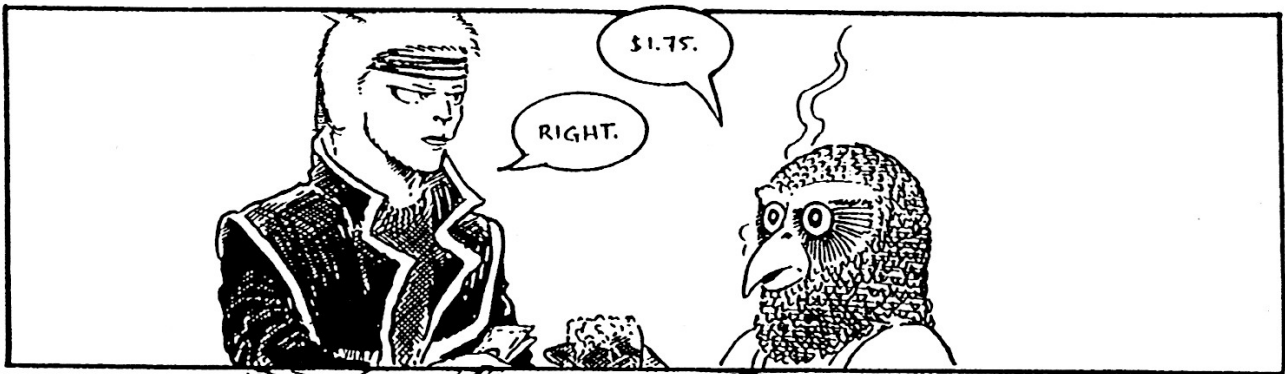
Last issue: Having just returned from a trip to Canada, Prometheus and Dawn were enjoying an evening of rest when Prometheus underwent a most startling transformation, and disappeared. Meanwhile, the mysterious Dark One, seen plotting against the heroes of the All-Spongy Squadron for months now, appeared ready to finally make his move. Our story now shifts to Columbus, Ohio, where former Squadron leader Rambunny is currently staying...

Protoplasm Press
is a member of the
following fine
organizations:



Amoeba Adventures #20, November 1995. Published bi-monthly by Protoplasm Press, P.O. Box 2230, University MS 38677-2230. Amoeba Adventures and all characters herein are created by and ©1995 Nik Dirga; Artwork ©1995 Max Ink. All rights reserved; reproduction allowed for purposes of review only. Additional copies available for \$2.00 postpaid; \$2.50 for Canadian or foreign orders. Subscriptions to Amoeba Adventures are \$8 for four issues/\$10 in Canada. Free catalog of back issues available. Please make all checks payable to Nik Dirga, not Protoplasm Press. Here's to five more years!



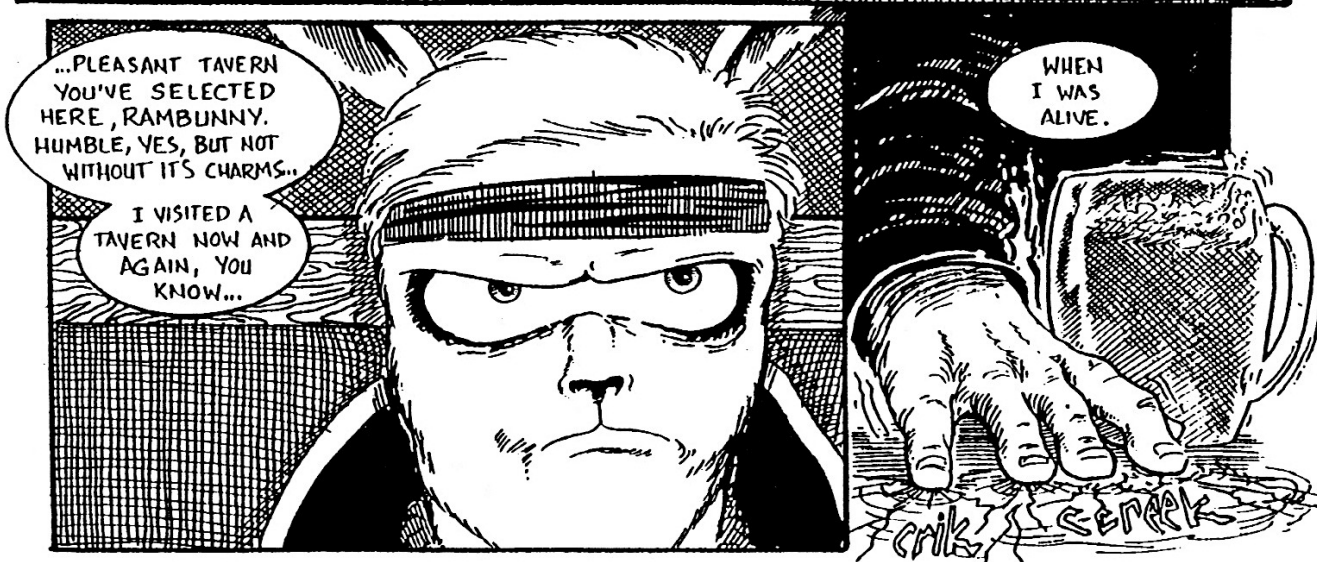




IT'S ME —
MANSLAUGHTER.
MIND IF I
JOIN YOU?

Ladies

Gents

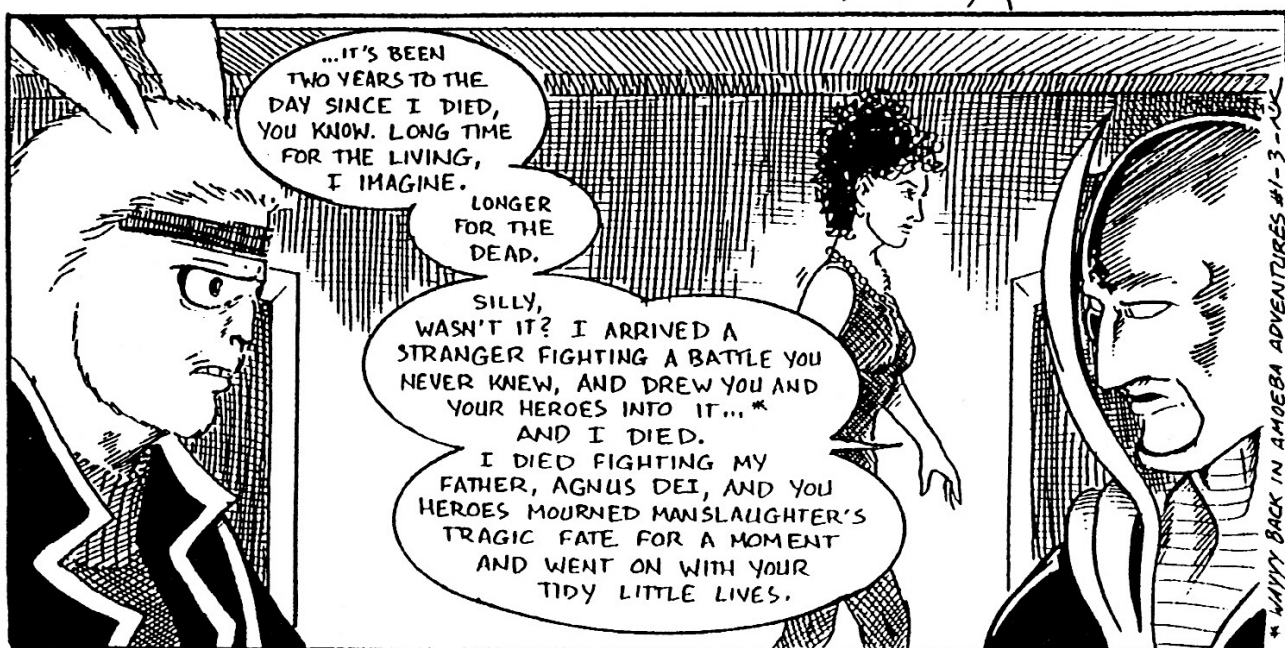


...PLEASANT TAVERN
YOU'VE SELECTED
HERE, RAMBUNNY.
HUMBLE, YES, BUT NOT
WITHOUT ITS CHARMS...

I VISITED A
TAVERN NOW AND
AGAIN, YOU
KNOW...

WHEN
I WAS
ALIVE.

CRICK CRACK



...IT'S BEEN
TWO YEARS TO THE
DAY SINCE I DIED,
YOU KNOW. LONG TIME
FOR THE LIVING,
I IMAGINE.

LONGER
FOR THE
DEAD.

SILLY,
WASN'T IT? I ARRIVED A
STRANGER FIGHTING A BATTLE YOU
NEVER KNEW, AND DREW YOU AND
YOUR HEROES INTO IT... *

AND I DIED.
I DIED FIGHTING MY
FATHER, AGNUS DEI, AND YOU
HEROES MOURNED MANSLAUGHTER'S
TRAGIC FATE FOR A MOMENT
AND WENT ON WITH YOUR
TIDY LITTLE LIVES.

* HAPPY BACK IN AMDEBA ADVENTURES #1-3 - N.C.

OR SO YOU THOUGHT.
BUT NOTHING REALLY
EVER ENDS, DOES IT,
RAMBUNNY? THE
DOUBTS SET IN YOUR
MIND... YOUR PROUD
AND STUBBORN
CONVICTION THAT
YOU COULD'VE,
SHOULD'VE SAVED ME...
THOSE DOUBTS LED YOU
TO LEAVE THE SQUADRON
AND SET OUT ON YOUR
OWN, MONTHS LATER.



AFTER
ALL, YOU WERE
TEAM LEADER,
AND I DIED ON
YOUR WATCH!

FAILURE
ALWAYS HAPPENS
ON YOUR WATCH, DOESN'T
IT? PROMETHEUS
WAS KIDNAPPED...
SPIF NEARLY KILLED
BY THAT WEREWOLF...
INTERESTING
PATTERN, EH?



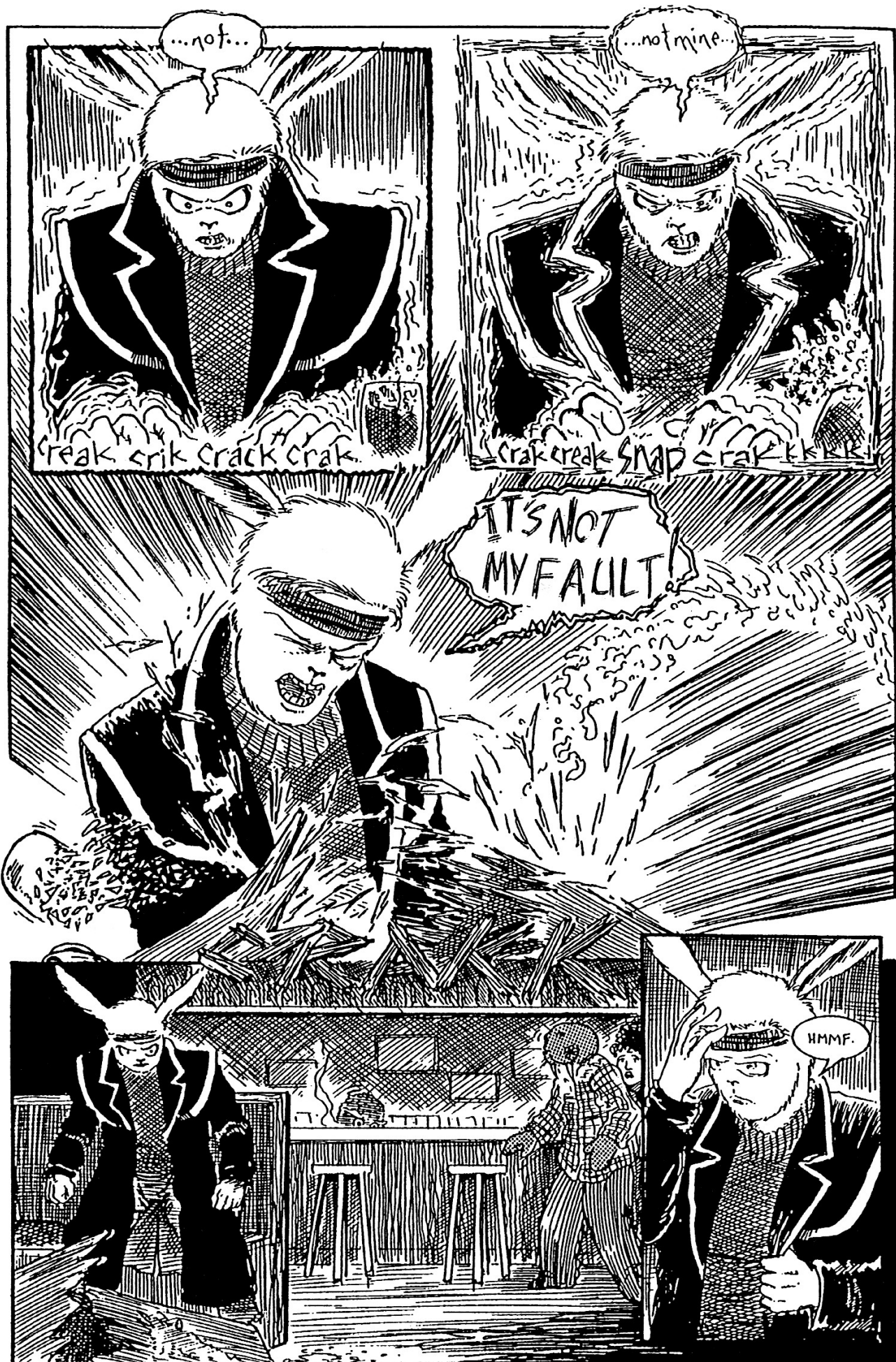
... BUT I
APOLOGIZE. I CAN SEE
I'VE DISTURBED YOU.
I DIDN'T MEAN TO BE SO
CAUSTIC, BUT BEING DEAD
DOES THINGS TO A
FELLOW. MORE TIME
TO STEW IN YOUR OWN
JUICES AND COME UP
WITH PEOPLE TO
BLAME FOR YOUR
FATE.

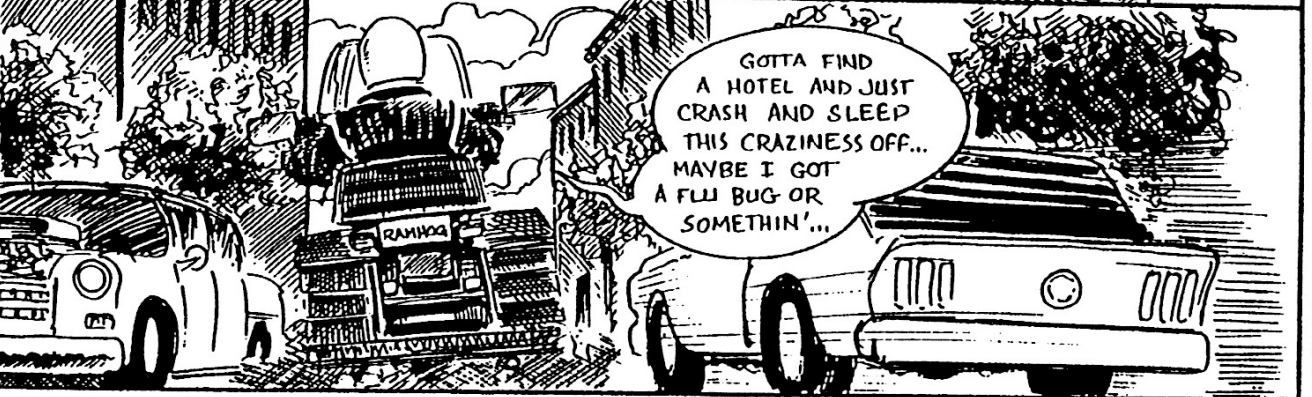
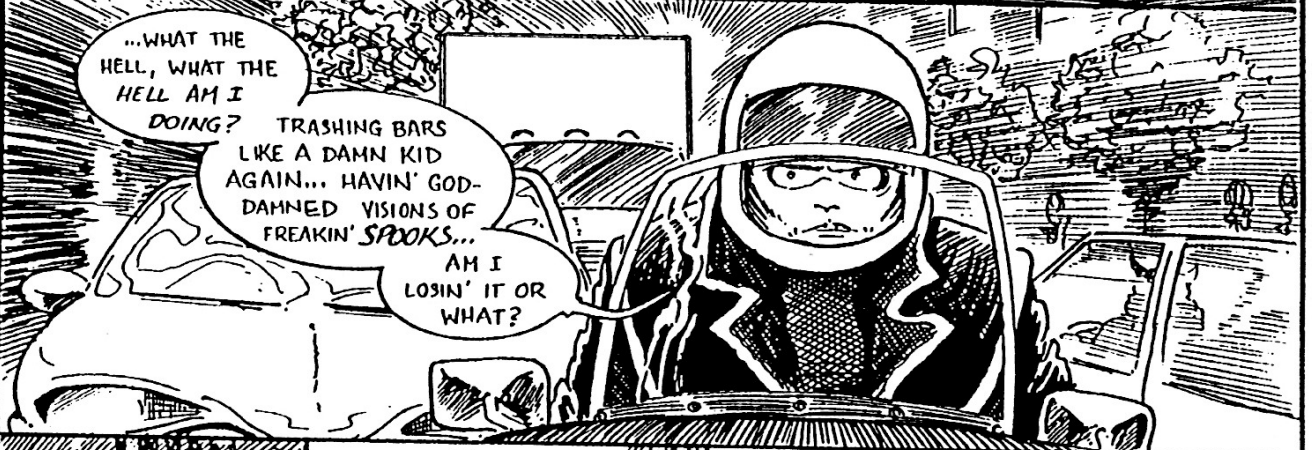
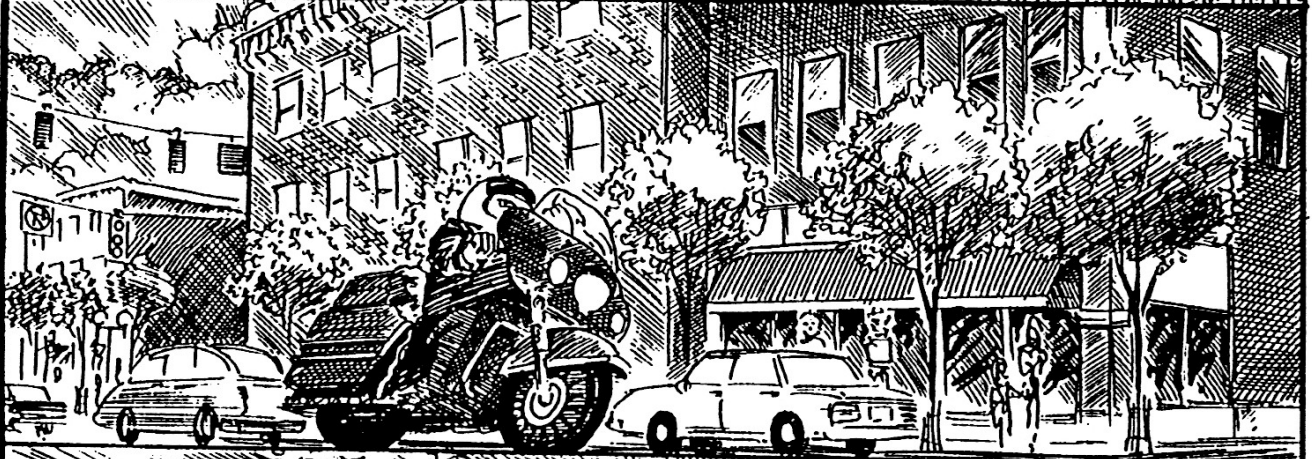


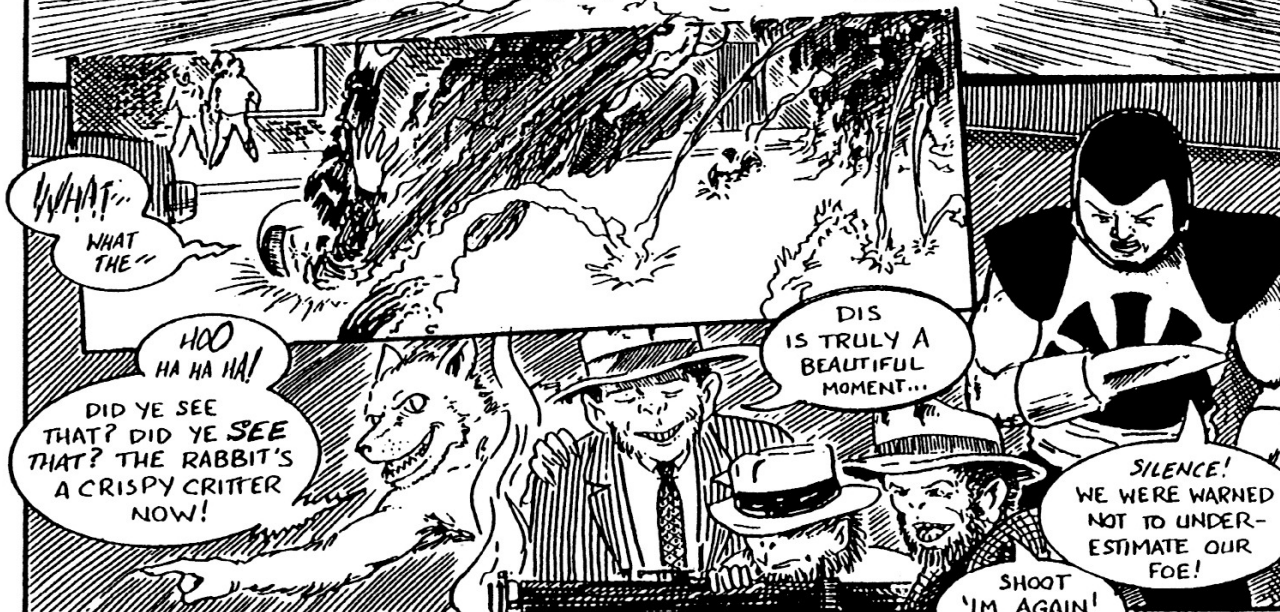
THERE IS ENOUGH OF
THE HERO IN ME TO FEEL
SORRY FOR WHAT'S HAPPENED
TO YOU IN THE LAST TWO
YEARS, RAMBUNNY.

BE
STRONG.









WHAT...
WHAT THE

HOO
HA HA HA!

DID YE SEE
THAT? DID YE SEE
THAT? THE RABBIT'S
A CRISPY CRITTER
NOW!

DIS
IS TRULY A
BEAUTIFUL
MOMENT...

SILENCE!
WE WERE WARNED
NOT TO UNDER-
ESTIMATE OUR
FOE!

SHOOT
'IM AGAIN!
AGAIN!



...TWO SECONDS...
JUST GIMMIE TWO
SECONDS, GOD, AN'
I'M TALKIN' SERIOUS
PAYBACK HERE...

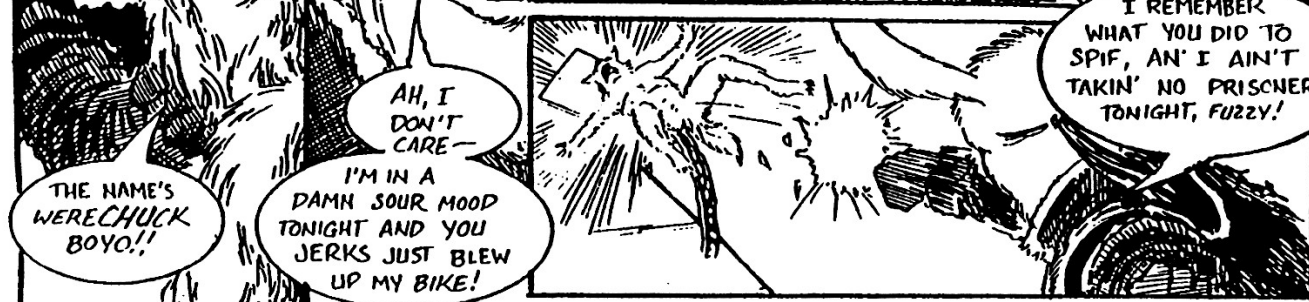
YE COULDN'T HIT
A BARN, YE BLOODY
BABOON! GIVE ME
THAT BAZOOKA!



LAY OFF,
YA FREAKIN'
LYCANTHROPE!

DON'T
DROP DAT
SHELL!

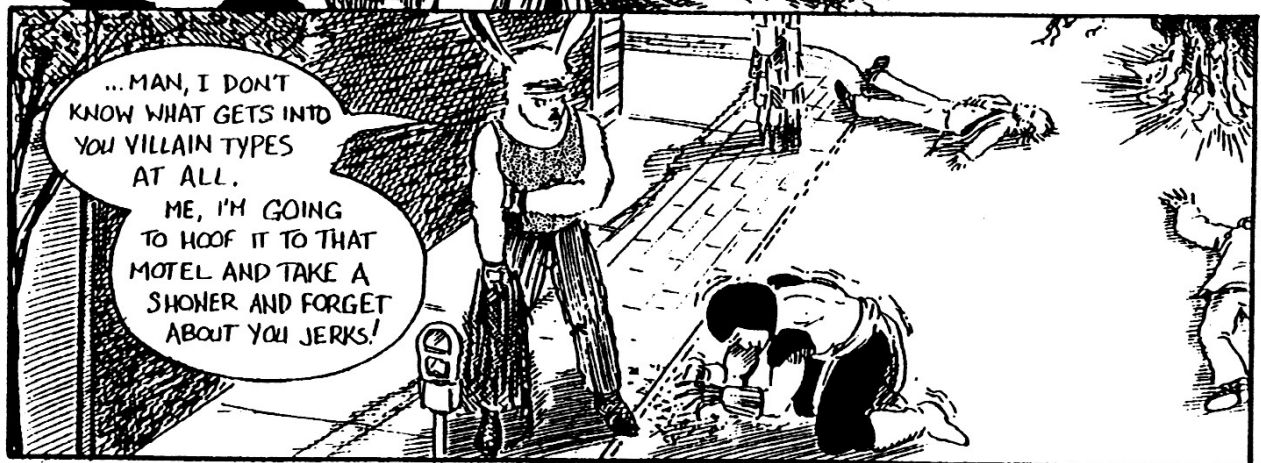
YOU
INCOMPETENT
FOOLS!

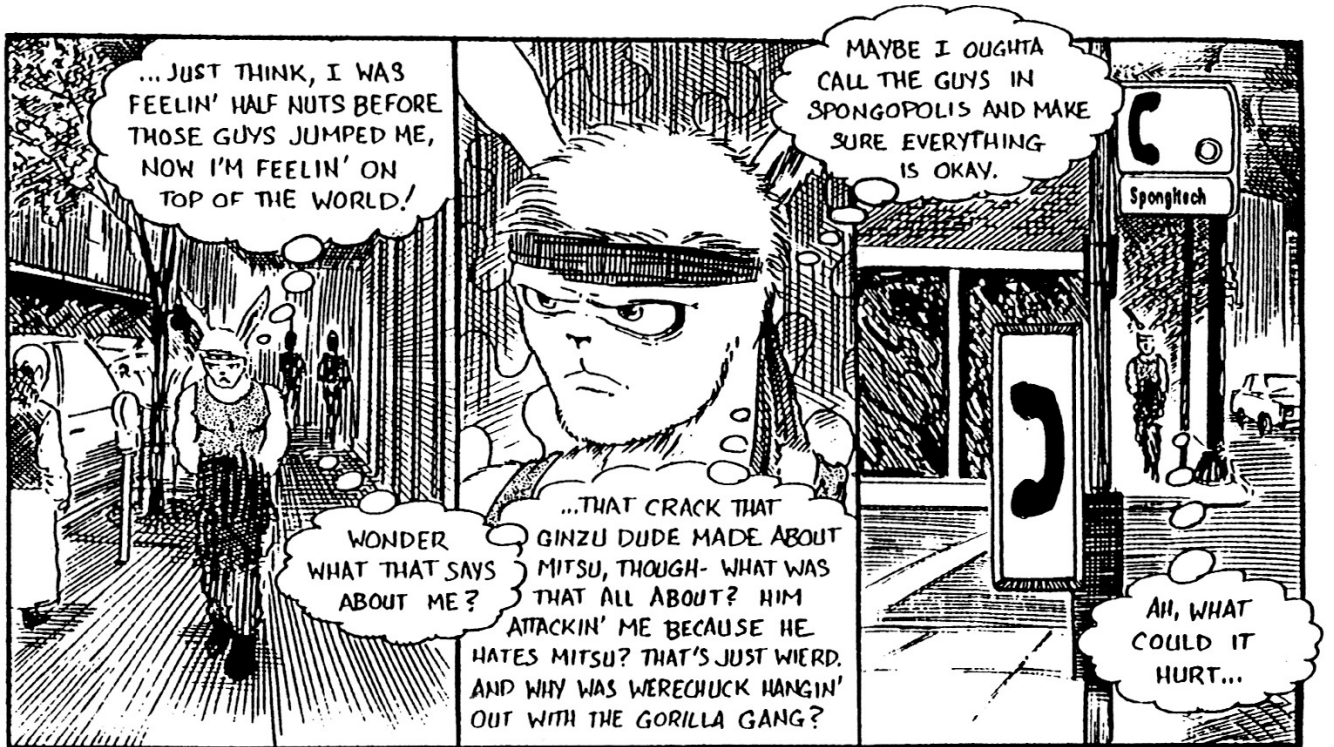






*SEE AMOEBA ADVENTURES#5
FOR THE WHOLE STORY - LUK







MY, WHAT A
FIERCE LITTLE
BRAIN YOU HAVE,
RAMBUNNY! IT WILL
BE A TRUE
CHALLENGE TO
CRUSH IT.

I AM THE
MINDMASTER - SO
NAMED FOR OBVIOUS
REASONS, DON'T
YOU AGREE?

THAT'S IT!
GRIND HIS HEAD
TO A PULP!

GAAAH!

PATIENCE,
HEINOUS, LET'S
SAVOR THIS
...

...not...
goddamn
likely...

CURSED
DO-GOODER!

OH!

MY MIND'S
MY OWN,
SWEETCAKES!

FEEL THE
FULL POWER OF
HERR HEINOUS,
HERO!

AW, GIVE
IT A REST,
WILL YA?

STRONG
ENOUGH TO FIGHT
TWO BATTLES AT
ONCE?

JUST HOW
STRONG ARE YOU,
RAMBUNNY?





WAY MY DAY'S
GOIN', THAT'S GOTTA
MEAN SOMETHIN' REAL
NASTY COMIN' FOR
ME!
I AIN'T IN
NO SHAPE NOW
FOR A KNOCK-DOWN
WITH NOBODY!

THOOM. THOOM. THOOM. THOOM.



...GOTTA STAY
IN THIS... KEEP IT
TOGETHER...

thoom.



THERE
YOU ARE, BAD
RABBIT.

...HELLO,
OSCAR.



WANNA HIT
ME, BAD
RABBIT?

NO, OSCAR.
I KNOW WHAT
HAPPENS THEN.



BAD
RABBITS HITS
ME BEFORE!

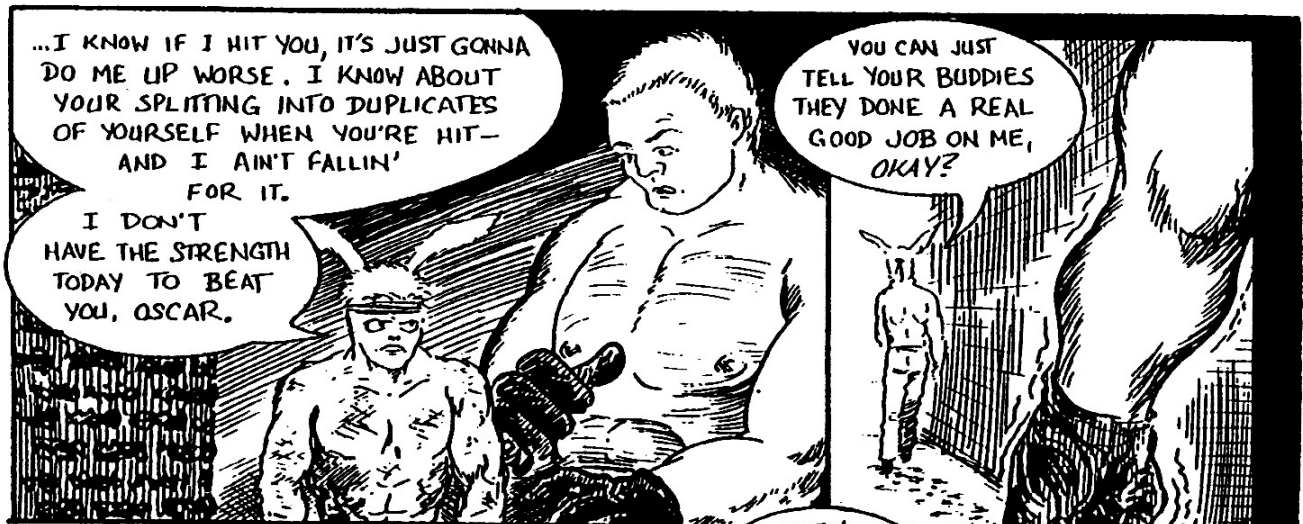
MADE ME
SPLITS INTO LOTS
OF OSCARS!

MAKES
ME SMARTER
OSCAR!

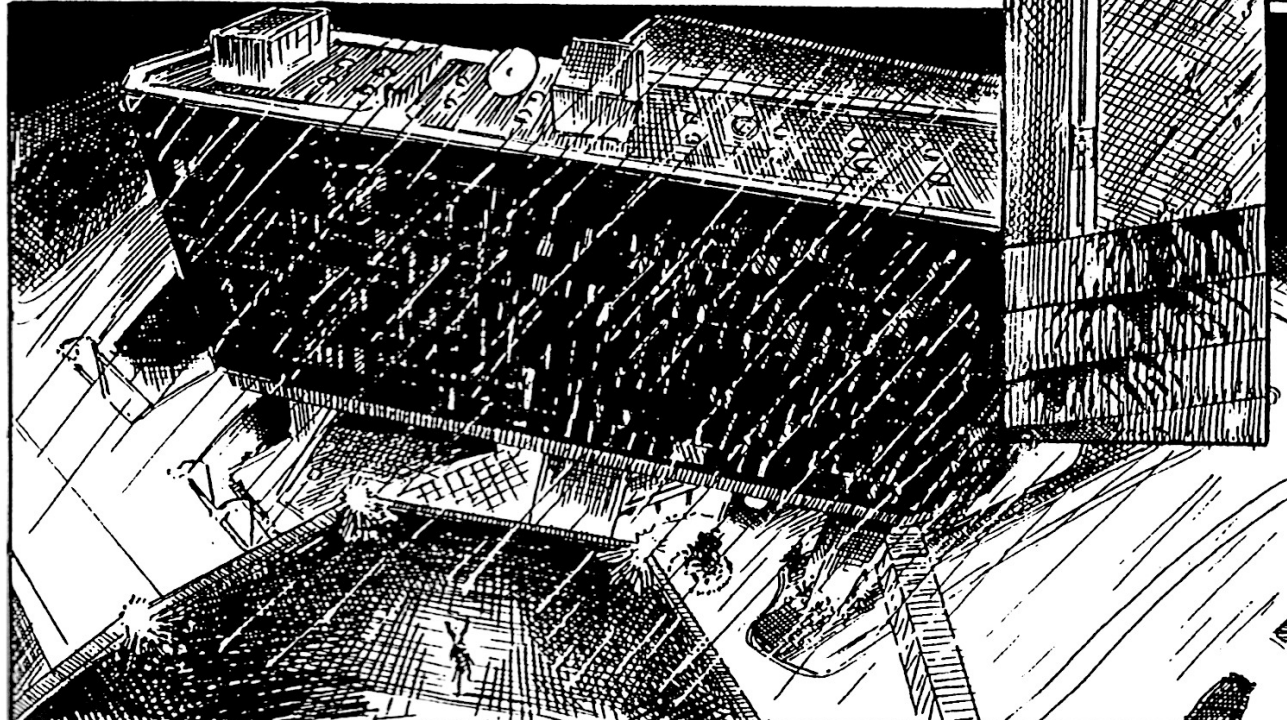
BAD
RABBIT BEAT
ME BEFORE!*

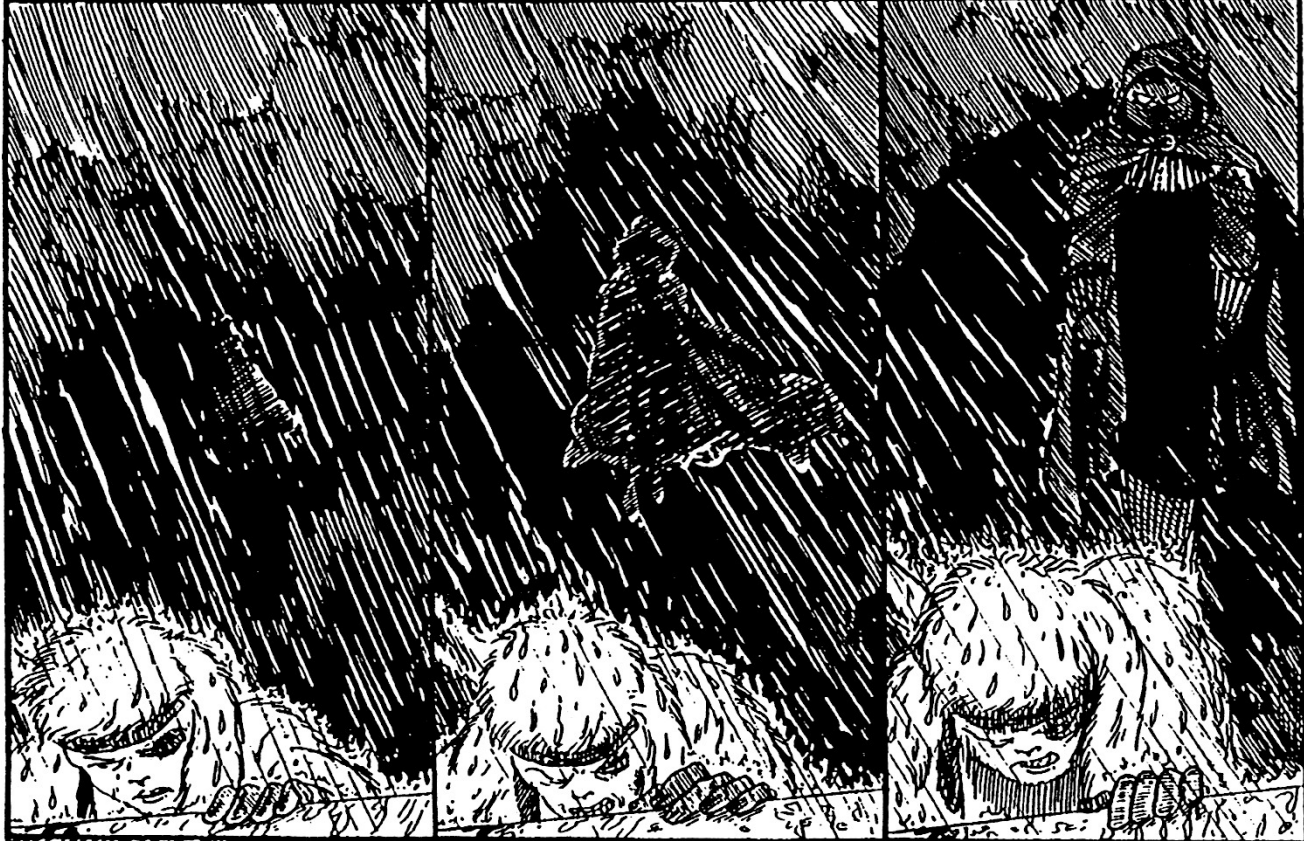
NOT NOW,
BUDDY.

*IN AASHIO 23

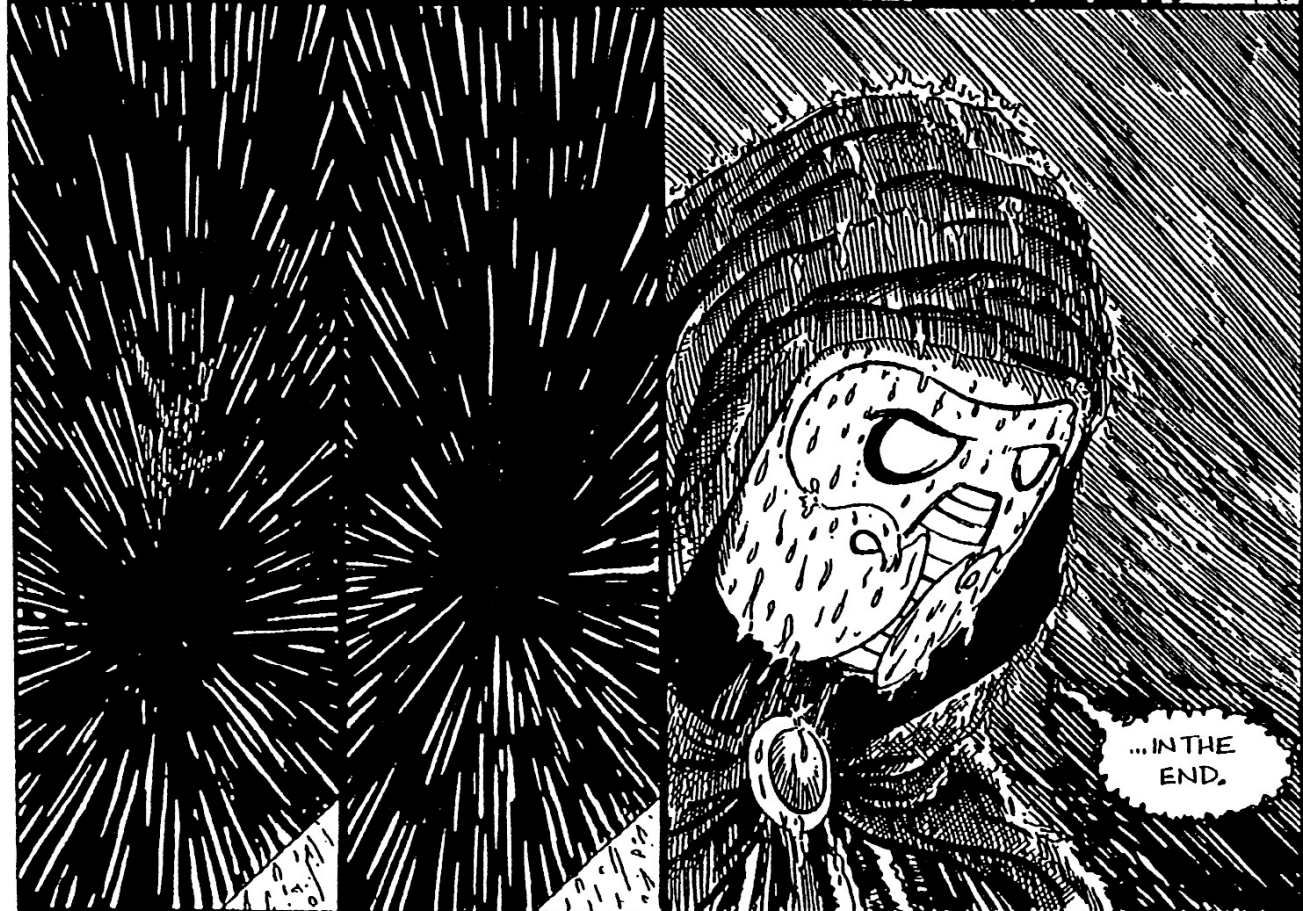












NEXT: F A I T H

the slimeball speaks

Welcome to *Amoeba Adventures* #20! If you ain't heard already, with this issue we're marking five funkadelic years of publishing *Amoeba Adventures*. To get in on the whole celebratory-self-indulgent type experience, pick up a copy of the *Amoeba Adventures Fifth Anniversary Special*, out now for a mere \$2.00 post-paid from us. Included are pin-ups of the gang by several of small press's best artists, including Larry Blake, J. Kevin Carrier, Scott McClung and many more, and special looks back by yours truly and small press's favorite essayist, Troy Hickman! Pick it up now and live the rest of your life a fulfilled and happy person.

You might be so fortunate to pick this issue up at the 1995 Mid-Ohio Con in Columbus, Ohio, where Max and I are making our second appearance together November 25 & 26. We'll also appear at The Laughing Ogre comic store Friday, November 24 — we appreciate the own-

ers for letting us have Rambunny and Oscar destroy their fine establishment in this issue here, as well as their fantastic support for *Amoeba Adventures*. Thanks, guys!

Max wanted me to tell you all that he's now offering original art from *Amoeba Adventures* for sale at his convention appearances as well as through the mail. Pages available include pp. 1,3-40 from *Amoeba Adventures* #14, pp. 11-23 from #15, and all the pages from #16-19, except the cover to #18. Write Max at 276 Mainsail Drive, Westerville, Ohio 43081-2741 for price information and the chance to own a piece o' the Amoeba!

Coming in 1996 as we cruise bravely into our sixth year of publishing: the continuation of "The Dark Ages" here in the bi-monthly pages of *Amoeba Adventures*, as well as the long-delayed release of *Rambunny* #1 by myself and Ron Gravelle. Join us as we see what kinda hell we can raise the *next* five years!

☺, NK DSA

Nikommendations



©1995 Jerzy Drozd

Reading Jerzy Drozd's *The Front* is some of the best fun I've had in a while. This group of quirky superheroes' adventures can be seen in the pages of *Bocetus Comics Presents* — Jerzy's witty writing with his realistic, yet not grim 'n' gritty, characters, and his cool, Keith Giffen-ish artwork add up to one of the best small press comic experiences out there. #5 is the latest, available for \$1 ppd. from Jerzy at P.O. Box 221, Mt. Pleasant, MI 48858.



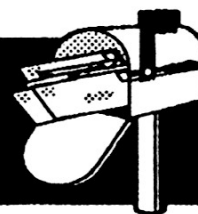
©1995 Jason Marcy

The final issue of Jason Marcy's autobiographical magnum opus, *Tales of The Petro-Canada™*

Man, is now out! If you haven't seen Jay's poignant, hilarious and self-effacing work before, do so now! Watch Jay work, draw, fall in love and bitch & moan over all 6 fantastic issues. Get one issue for \$1 ppd, or all six for \$6 or so, from Jay at 34-337 East 42nd. St., Hamilton, Ontario, Canada, L8T 3A6.



Amoebama!



(Without further ado, your comments on the prologue to "The Dark Ages" in #18 and #19... Thanks again for all the kind words, and don't forget to drop me a line letting me know what you thought of this issue right here! - Nik)

Jerry Smith

Morristown, Tennessee

Kudos on another great issue of *Amoeba Adventures*! There just aren't enough adjectives to describe it. I'm not sure how much anyone has said about it, but you have a fabulous sense of humor and an impeccable knack of timing. I was cracking up, big time! Loved the car chase scenario.

What the heck is going on with Prometheus? Is it going to turn out he was a brain-washed alien infiltrated into the All-Spongy Squadron? It'll be fun and, I'm sure, well worth the wait, to find out.

Only one teeny-tiny complaint about the lettering on pages 18, 20 and 21. Maybe it was just my copy, but I had trouble reading several words on these pages. Maybe I just need glasses.

(A couple folks mentioned the poor printing last issue... Max and I apologize for that; we attempted an experiment in cheaper copying only to find that you gets what you pays for. This issue should return us to the world-class printing we had in previous issues. Well, there's a reason they call it "small" press, right? - Nik)

Eric Hess

Indiana, Pennsylvania

Nik, thanks for *Amoeba Adventures* #18! Great ish. Nice to see the pulse-pounding Period back in action, and the Asbestos Mushroom is a hoot! (This is my first exposure to him) Especially enjoyed: "My spleen!" (heh!)... the Mushroom piloting his truckplane with

headlights on (ha!)... Mitsu playing w/the toys (*I want an Amoebaplane toy! Want one, want one, want one!*)... "and even if it didn't, it's a fine anecdote" (also, excellent expression on Isuzu's face in that panel)... Dawn trashing her costume and the resultant "where's the spandex?"... "I'm suing this mall for every cent they've got!" (ha!)... Pro's face in panel 1, page 19 (nice!)... *Omigod I can't believe what Pro did on pages 19 & 20!* (Ahem; pulse returns to normal)... and the twist cliffhanger ending. The Dark One is really hitting our heroes from all sides, isn't he? Great cover, too — Max really nailed Teddy!

Thanks also for AA #19! Neat cover, although that blue-grey makes the art kinda murky. Page one is *gorgeous*. Also enjoyed: Dawn playing with her hair... the "splash" sfx on page 5... "team whining" (heh!)... "issued it to me at the desk" (ha!)... our heroes' jailbreak (although I was really pulling for Karate Kactus to stay; remember *Captain America and the Falcon* from the 70s?)... the lump on Mitsu's head... panels 2-5 of page 11... (awesome sfx and the faces in panel 5 are priceless!)... page 13 (Oh man. Only one person that can be. Gahhhh...!)... "fiendish! They're waltzing themselves to death!" (what a horrible way to go!)... and of course the *awesome* last three pages. Too flippin' cool. *Very* much looking forward to next ish!

As usual, I am in awe of you guys' teamwork. I am reminded of Dave Sim & Gerhard. Not so much in terms of style per se, but in that neither of you are prima donnas — you both give 110% and you both do it in service to the story. Bravo, sez I!

(OK, Eric, take your Prozac... Seriously, thanks for your kind comments! - Nik)

Bob Elinskas
Utica, New York

Hey, wanted to drop you a line or two and let you know that I received *Amoeba Adventures* #19 without a glitch! Looks great! (Though, is Max's art getting finer and getting lost in the copier or is the copier photocopying lighter?)

I have finally figured out who the evil "Dark One" is behind all of these recent stand-offs with the Squadron! There's only one person I know who would work with a guy called the Asbestos Mushroom and encourage him! Only one person who would seek to destroy the group for no other reason than the fame and glory of it. Only one name springs to mind when we discuss the ultimate destruction of Prometheus! And only one fashion victim would be happy to don the gas mask and cloak to lead the crazy assemblage — *me!*

This would keep the humor angle of your book intact without pushing it over the "serious" edge it's been tilting towards lately. While at the same time, it carries that somber overtone that the book always has. It's the perfect solution! You fiend! I have no idea how you've figured out my plot but you won't stop me from taking that sledgehammer to Prometheus on the back cover! Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha!

Craig T. Powell
Salt Lake City, Utah

I just wanted to take a minute and tell you how much I enjoy *Amoeba Adventures*. I find it well-written with interesting characters and intriguing plots. The art keeps getting better. Please pass along my compliments to Max. I think you combine the humor and the thought-provoking, the dramatic and the absurd very well.

To be honest, I wasn't expecting much when I first decided to try out *Amoeba Adventures* — based on the recommendation in Tony Isabella's *Comics Buyer's Guide* column. But I found something well worth the price and very entertaining. Don't be offended when I say that the first few issues were a little corny. As the

series has progressed, I've noticed a maturity in both the story content and writing ability. My compliments on that — many a writer, if you can call them that, are very static and stagnant in their 'craft.' I've also seen terrific improvement in the art. Max is really coming into his own. The art had been a distraction, but it now is a compliment to the writing.

Congratulations on the awards you've received for *Amoeba Adventures*. I think they're well deserved. I'm now up to speed on AA — I've got all issues, life is good.

Will Pfeifer
Rockford, Illinois

As usual, *Amoeba Adventures* #19 was great stuff. I was relieved you didn't drag out the "heroes have been framed for a crime they didn't commit" subplot. It was fun while it lasted, but I've seen it before. My favorite bits in the whole issue involved the nonchalance with which our heroes faced the Asbestos Mushroom again. Just like an old Batman villain, he hangs out at places related to his schtick and uses goofy weapons that really aren't very practical. The fact that he's just a pawn being used by a villain who poses an actual threat gives a nice edge to the funny parts. I thought Max did another bang-up job on the art scenes, especially in the scenes with Dawn and Pro in the clouds... great stuff. And howabout that ending? Is Pro a human? Is he becoming a human? I have no idea, but you can bet I'll be reading "The Dark Ages."

(Will, along with several other fine folks, is a contributor to the *Amoeba Adventures Fifth Anniversary Special* — if you haven't ordered that yet, do so now! See you in 60! — Nik)

next! Is Rambunny dead? Where the %#@ is Prometheus? Who is The Dark One, *really*? Part Two of "The Dark Ages" may or may not reveal some of your questions - you'll just have to read *Amoeba Adventures* #21, coming in January, to find out, friend!

BACK ISSUES! BACK ISSUES! HOO-HA!

AMOEBA ADVENTURES #1 - Beginning the continuing saga of the All-Spongy Squadron's adventures! 24 page mid-mag, \$2.00

AMOEBA ADVENTURES #2 - Prometheus alone has to free his friends from the clutches of Herr Heinous. 28 page mid-mag, \$2.00

AMOEBA ADVENTURES #3 - "The Visitor" concludes dramatically as someone dies! 24 page mid-mag - \$2.00

AMOEBA ADVENTURES #4 - The introduction of Raoul the Boy Cockroach! 24 page mid-mag, \$2.00

AMOEBA ADVENTURES #5 - Special double-sized issue guest-starring David Letterman! 36 page mid-mag - \$2.50

AMOEBA ADVENTURES #6 - Kicking off the five-part "Details of Design" storyline. 16 page digest - \$1.00

AMOEBA ADVENTURES #7 - Rambunny takes on Macabre. 16 page digest - \$1.00

AMOEBA ADVENTURES #8 - Where is Prometheus? 16 page digest - \$1.00

AMOEBA ADVENTURES #9 - The amazing debut of Manipulator and Dawn Star. 24 page digest - \$1.00

AMOEBA ADVENTURES #10 - The huge conclusion to "Details of Design." 36 page digest - \$2.00

AMOEBA ADVENTURES #11 - Artist Max Ink and guest-inker Larry Towsley lend their talents to "Little Earthquakes." 28 page digest - \$1.50

AMOEBA ADVENTURES #12 - Special monumentally-large "Fiftieth Anniversary Issue!" Loads of guest artists! 72 page digest - \$3.50

AMOEBA ADVENTURES #13 - Featuring the long-awaited return of Herr Heinous. Winner of the UFO Award for Best Single Comic of 1994. 24 page digest - \$1.50

AMOEBA ADVENTURES #14 - Max

Ink takes charge of both the art and writing in this very special Domestic Violence and Abuse Awareness Issue. 48 page digest - \$2.50

AMOEBA ADVENTURES #15 - Introducing the Mindmaster. 24 page digest - \$1.50

AMOEBA ADVENTURES #16 - Max Ink jumps aboard as the new regular artist in "Time's Up!" 44 page digest - \$2.00

AMOEBA ADVENTURES #17 - At long last, the return of Rambunny! 32 page digest - \$2.00

AMOEBA ADVENTURES #18 - The Period, The Asbestos Mushroom and more! 32 page digest, \$2.00

AMOEBA ADVENTURES #19 - A shocking turning point for Prometheus. 32 page digest, \$2.00

AMOEBA ADVENTURES #20 - Part one of "The Dark Ages," as Rambunny faces the full brunt of The Dark One's wrath. Available in November. 28 page digest, \$2.00

PROMETHEUS: THE SILENT STORM - The All-Spongy Squadron's lives are hit by the AIDS epidemic, as an old friend is revealed to be HIV-positive. Digest, \$2.00

SPIF #1 - The token human of the team steps out into his own solo book, plotted by Nik Dirga, written by Troy Hickman and drawn by Max Ink. Digest, \$2.00

ONE-CELLED TALES #1 - For all Amoeba completists, a sketchbook featuring some of the very first protoplasmic art by Nik Dirga. 20 page digest, \$1.00

DR. PHLEGM #1 - The first full-length collaboration of Nik and Max Ink introduces the most mucus-laden villain of all! 12 page digest, 50¢

AMOEBA ADVENTURES: ONLY A MAN - Collecting the long out-of-print *Prometheus* #3-6 with a brand new cover and introduction. 84-page mid-magazine, \$4.00

Ordering Information: All prices include postage. Please make all checks payable to Nik Dirga, not Protoplasm Press. Please allow 3-5 weeks for delivery. Subscriptions to *Amoeba Adventures* are indeed available at the reasonable price of \$8 for 4 issues. We strive for a bi-monthly schedule.

Send them orders to: Protoplasm Press c/o Nik Dirga

P.O. Box 2230

University, MS 38677-2230

The UFO Checklist



These are the latest releases from the UFO (United Fanzine Organization) co-op, currently available during the Fall of 1995. For information on joining the UFO, contact chairman Jim Pack/ 7534 Kingsgate Way/ W. Chester, OH 45069



SMALL PRESS FEED-BACK #20

(\$3.00 from Bob Elinskas/ 1805 Girard St./ Utica, NY 13501)

Editor Bob Elinskas has managed to put together a host of talented individuals that include Gafford, Dirga, and Hickman to produce the definitive guide to small press comic books. Inside can be found reviews, news, articles, advertisements, interviews, and (quite possibly) the kitchen sink. New to the network? Want to know more about it and how to get involved? Then you can't afford to be without this indispensable publication. It's waiting for you! Send for it now!



TWILIGHT GUARDIAN #1

(\$1.00 from Troy Hickman/ 3200 S. 9th St., Apt. A/ Lafayette, IN 47905)

Venture into the world of obsession and neurosis with the *Twilight Guardian*. Recently a psychiatric patient, the *Twilight Guardian* watches the world of reality in a constant search for an opportunity to be a super hero. Troy Hickman writes the words on this one and the super talented Pam Bliss draws the pictures. The story is somewhat of a spin-off from Troy's *Tales of the Pathetic Club* but it has a life all of its own. The network is eagerly awaiting the next two issues. But in the meantime, order this one now!



HOLEY CRULLERS! #1

(\$1.50 from Troy Hickman/ 3200 S. 9th St., Apt. A/ Lafayette, IN 47905)

Troy, with the help of friend Jerry Smith, have carted out three new super heroes for our enjoyment. The first one is *Speeding Bullet*. *Speeding Bullet* is an angst ridden man who has the ability of exceptional speed. Learn all about him with a reporter gaining a story on him. In a second story, we are introduced to Debuton and Moshe Chomsky, super person attempting to find sanctuary from their fate. Good stuff! Order it today!



ANYTHING FOR A CHEAP LAUGH

(\$1.50 from Troy Hickman/ 3200 S. 9th St., Apt. A/ Lafayette, IN 47905)

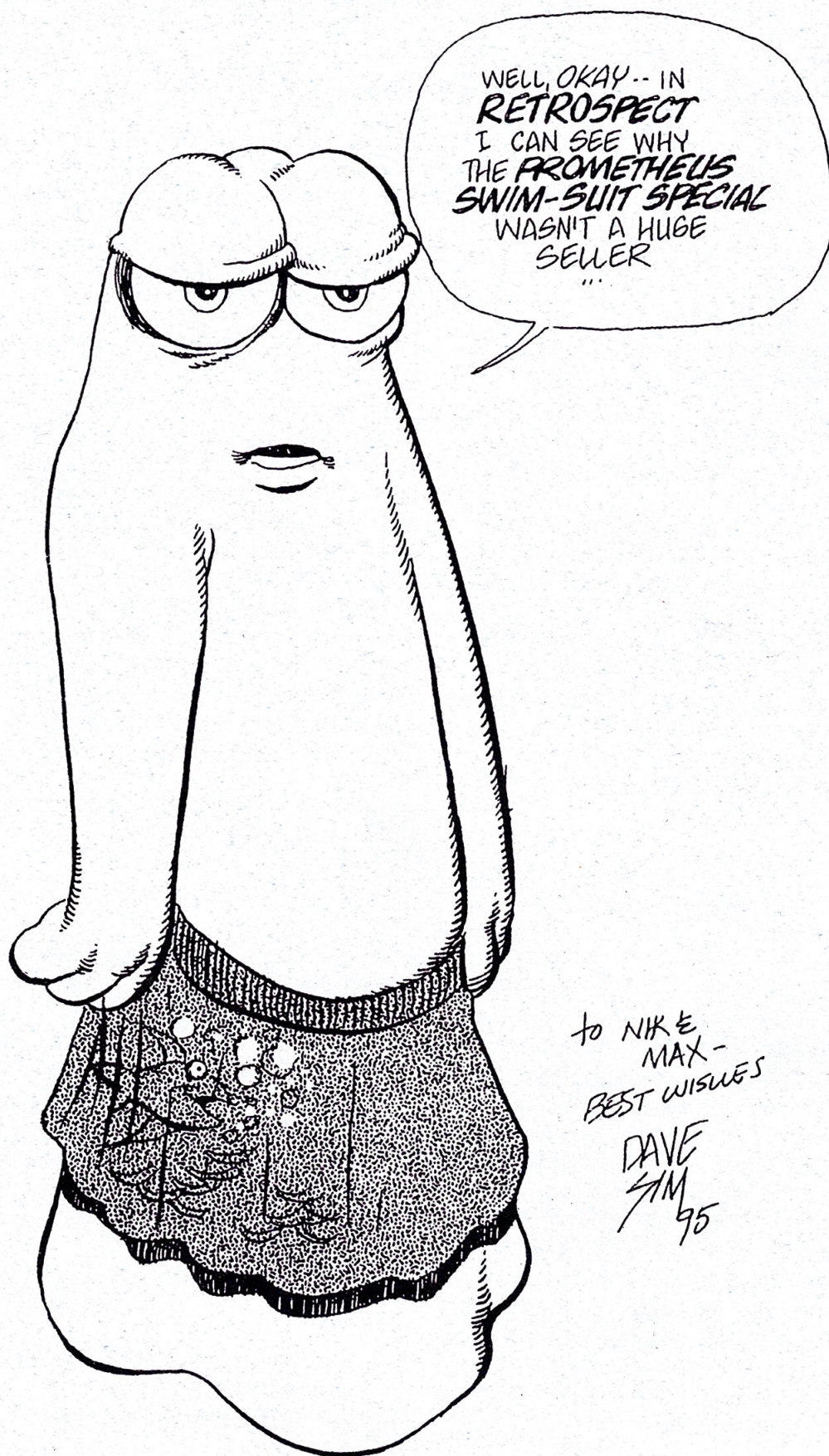
Troy accompanies some hilarious text pieces with some excellent illustrations. Text humor in the small press comic book network is about as scarce as dinosaur repellent. Get this one quickly. It's small press history



TETRAGAMMATON FRAGMENT #140, 141, 142, 143, 144, 145

(\$2.00 ea from Jim Pack/ 7534 Kingsgate Way/ West Chester, OH 45069)

Miss an issue, bunky? Never fear! You can still find out what's happening by ordering back issues.



to NIK &
MAX -
BEST WISHERS
DAVE
SIM
95

SPECIAL 2020 BONUS SECTION

The Dark One had been in the works for a LONG time, since around Amoeba Adventures #9! He first appeared in a cameo in #13. Max Ink came up with the design way back in 1992, four years before "The Dark Ages" finally kicked off.



I'll work on making this more or less metallic

slight addition

I'm rushing because it's 1 night/early sat and I want to go in the

About inking AA index

maybe Anth but I wasn't with his ex pencils, been a while

I'd lean son towards R. or (dare

Bob H

It's been since I've them last ask them interested yes. that's

About inking DON what do be c.

I'll also have to work on this being more defined etc.

I haven't got on those This Dr P

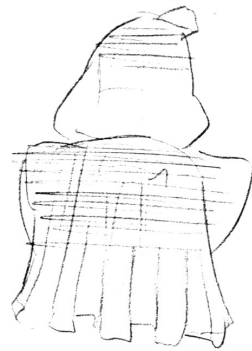
TELL ME THE GENERAL - GOINGS ONS a content for the cover for AA #11.

too much detail

The Dark ONE

po

part 1


$$\frac{10}{92} 28$$

send back please

An idea I had for the cover of Amoeba
Adventures #20 (drawn 2 1/2 years
before it came out!)

AMOEBA ADVENTURES

#20

Coming in late 1994...

God!

6-9-93



Max Ink's even better concept art for what eventually became #20's cover.

KY
CON
SKETCH



MAX
INK

276
MAINSAIL
DRIVE
WESTERVILLE, OH
43081
(614) 899-1809

Some seriously sketchy mapping out of "The Dark Ages" and future issues of Amoeba Adventures done sometime around #12 or 13. You'll note many details below never actually happened. Also, I was wildly optimistic thinking "The Dark Ages" would end in early '96, when it actually ended in 1998.

The 5 year plan

The Dark Ones



Goal by #20 or so - no more team! Prometheus & Dawn on own, journeying around country, even world?? Whoa. I'd say #27 would come around

Pro dies it for love?

1995-6, Oh God.



15 - RB orig in

16 - "FAME"

17 - Dinosaurs

18-19 Mushroom Period

20 - Rambunny goes down

21-27 Dark Ages

THE NEXT MULTI-PARTER

#20 or so

The Dark Ages



(RMB) SPIE/DAWN, PRO
KK/KYARD NA
(RAOUL) ALEX

each 20 91 RB
issue 21 2 NINJA ANT - Pro transforms.
12-14 22 3 Pro quits, SKK
pgs? 23 4 Onslaught
Concise, concise! 23 4 Onslaught

THE DARK AGES 2 OF 8

16 30? - 25 6 Return - Alex, Period
26 7 defeat.
27 8 DARK ONE VS. PROMETHEUS
OTHERS VS. ALLIES.

The End



#20-27

THEY BEAT DEI.
THEY BEAT MACARE.
TWO OUT OF THREE
AIN'T BAD.

God.
MARCH
1996

6928.92 NOW
11-90 2-91 5-91 8-91 12-91 4-92 6-92 8-92 9-93 11-93 1-94 3-94 5-94 7-94 9-94 11-94 1-95 3-95 5-95 7-95 9-95 11-95 1-96 3-96 5-96 7-96 9-96 11-96 1-97 3-97 5-97 7-97 9-97 11-97 1-98 3-98 5-98 7-98 9-98 11-98 1-99 3-99 5-99 7-99 9-99 11-99 1-00 3-00 5-00 7-00 9-00 11-00 1-01 3-01 5-01 7-01 9-01 11-01 1-02 3-02 5-02 7-02 9-02 11-02 1-03 3-03 5-03 7-03 9-03 11-03 1-04 3-04 5-04 7-04 9-04 11-04 1-05 3-05 5-05 7-05 9-05 11-05 1-06 3-06 5-06 7-06 9-06 11-06 1-07 3-07 5-07 7-07 9-07 11-07 1-08 3-08 5-08 7-08 9-08 11-08 1-09 3-09 5-09 7-09 9-09 11-09 1-10 3-10 5-10 7-10 9-10 11-10 1-11 3-11 5-11 7-11 9-11 11-11 1-12 3-12 5-12 7-12 9-12 11-12 1-13 3-13 5-13 7-13 9-13 11-13 1-14 3-14 5-14 7-14 9-14 11-14 1-15 3-15 5-15 7-15 9-15 11-15 1-16 3-16 5-16 7-16 9-16 11-16 1-17 3-17 5-17 7-17 9-17 11-17 1-18 3-18 5-18 7-18 9-18 11-18 1-19 3-19 5-19 7-19 9-19 11-19 1-20 3-20 5-20 7-20 9-20 11-20 1-21 3-21 5-21 7-21 9-21 11-21 1-22 3-22 5-22 7-22 9-22 11-22 1-23 3-23 5-23 7-23 9-23 11-23 1-24 3-24 5-24 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Another extremely kind plug by Tony Isabella in his Comics Buyer's Guide column's Top 40 list.



Faraway LOOKS

John Jackson Miller
CBG Associate Editor

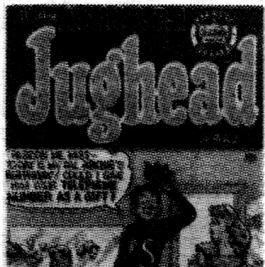
A belated gift

Notice anything familiar about the cover from *Archie* #430, where Jughead gives Archie a cute redhead's phone number for his birthday?



It may be because he asked her for the number on the cover of *Archie's Pal Jughead* #1 45 years ago.

Same gag, same characters — both girls are even redheads!



With the February chill clinging to their souls, the hopeful masses from every corner of the nation await the results of perhaps the most pivotal of competitions, the one which sets the course for others to follow, the one which ...

Excuse me? What was that? Are you goofy? Why would I waste valuable space discussing the New Hampshire primary? It's February. It's cold. The brain is sluggish. People do dumb things like casting their vote for the political equivalent of *The Hindenburg*. Duh.

No, this, this is something significant. This is the twice-yearly comic-book rankings I like to call:

Tony's Top 40

Veteran *Tips* readers will remember how this works. I read way too many comic books over the preceding six months. I also spend way too much on those comics, but thanks in no small part to this biannual feature, I can get some back by claiming them as business expenses on my taxes. Ya gotta love it.

81 comic books made the initial cut for my list. For the statisticians, here is the breakdown:

35 of these semi-finalists were creator-owned works.

27 semi-finalists were self-published by creators.

19 semi-finalists were published by DC Comics or one of that company's imprints.

Eight semi-finalists were published by Dark Horse.

Other represented publishers: Marvel, Gladstone, Viz, Image, Archie, Warp, Crusade, Kitchen Sink, Milestone, AC, Mirage, Slave

count of their writers used them to take cheap shots at other creators. That's why we have review columns, guys.

As even new readers will have figured out, "Tony's Top 40" represents my personal favorites among the skadillions of comics being published today. I make no apologies for my love of clearly-told stories and noble heroics. I'm impressed by neither anatomical distortions or trendy nihilism.

With that caveat firmly in place, let's begin the countdown. Can't you just feel the excitement?

40. *Amoeba Adventures* by Nik Dirga and Max Ink. This small-press comic got bumped off the last list by Will Eisner and Bryan Talbot. That it's bounced back comes as no surprise when one but considers the title's stars: the heroic, human, and captivatingly delightful All-Spongy Squadron.

Amoeba Adventures, a black-and-white, digest-sized title, is published by Dirga's Protoplasm Press (P.O. Box 2230, University, MS 38677). Single issues are \$2 postpaid and a free catalog of back issues is available. I especially recommend the powerful exploration of domestic violence in issue #14, the human interest of #19, the kick-off of the current eight-part story in #20, and, to acquaint yourself with the cast and history of the heroes, the *Amoeba Adventures Fifth Anniversary Special*. This is mighty good stuff, Maynard.

39. *Donald Duck Adventures* by writer Ron Fernandez and artist Pat Block, who did the lead stories for issues #34 and #35. While you're looking for those, check out #37 and the very funny Valentine's Day tale written by Shelly Block and drawn by the lucky guy who married her. Ah, romance!

38. *Breakneck Blvd.* by Timothy Markin. Compelling drama in the midwestern club scene from an exciting young talent.

37. *Batman: Ghosts — A Legend of the Dark Knight Halloween Special* by Jeph Loeb and Tim Sale. Hey, I would buy a Legends