

SMALL PRESS REPORT

WINNER: BEST WRITER

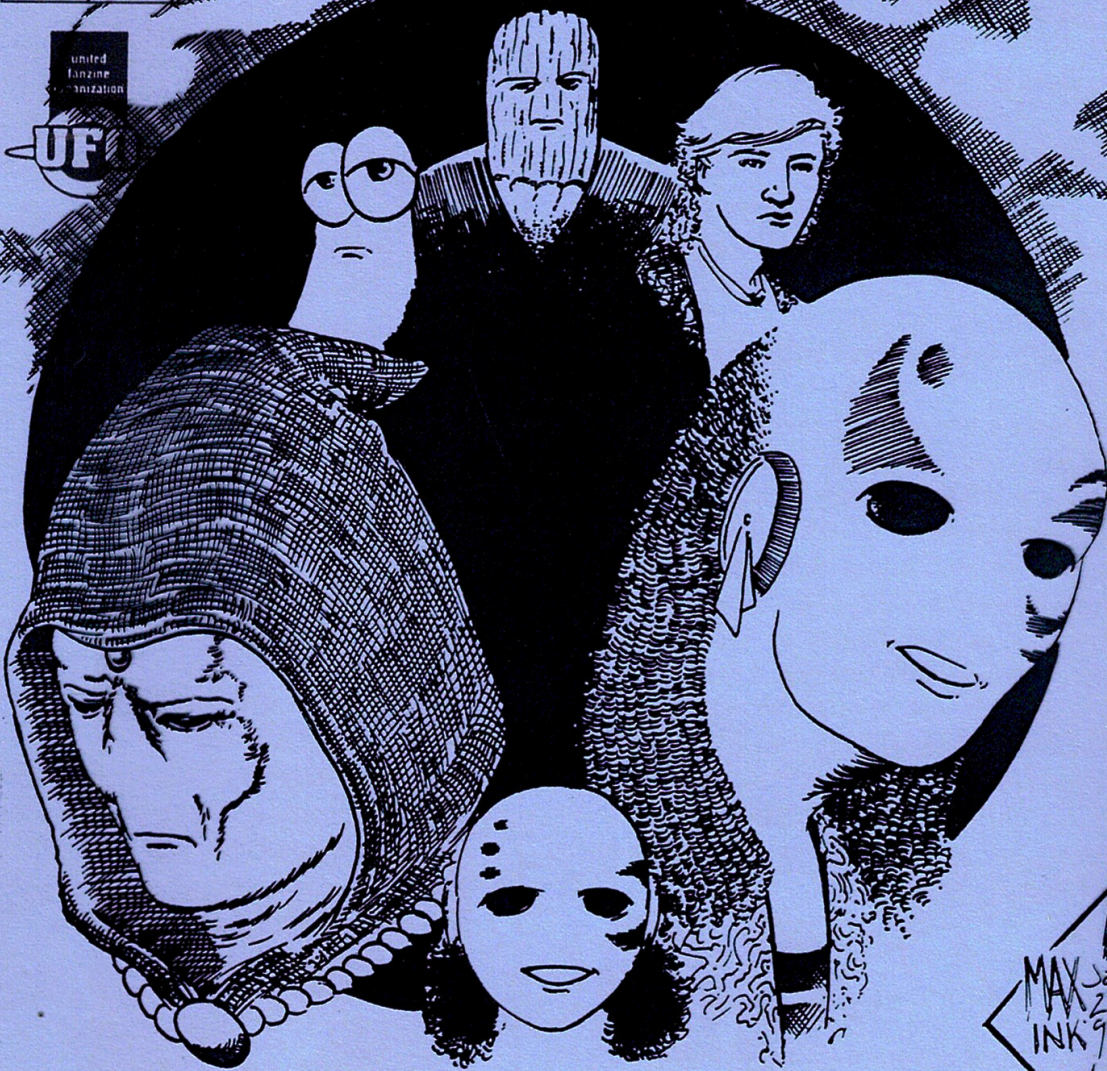
EDITORIAL CHOICE AWARDS '94

Amelock

ADVENTURES™

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THE SLIMEBALL SPEAKS

This one's a winner. And this time, I'm not just being a conceited ass. Because, for the first time, I'm not writing or drawing an issue of *Amoeba Adventures*. It'd take a pretty cool dude to make me hand over control of "my babies" for an issue, but I think you'll agree Max Ink fits that description. This story's taken almost a year from first thought to finished product, but it's been worth it for me to watch Max work his heart and soul out on this baby. His artwork reaches a whole new height here...those of you who saw #11 and thought that was good, well now you ain't seen nothing yet. I'll admit it... I'm jealous as hell of this little masterpiece he's gone and done. Ladies and gentlemen... Mr. Max Ink.

I'd like to thank the kind editors of *Small Press Report*, Ronald and Theresa Fleming, for naming me as "Best Writer" in their 1994 Editor's Choice Awards. Once in a while, it's good to be recognized for this junk.

I'd also like to ask each of you to take a moment before reading this tale and remember the late great Jack Kirby. This man inspired many of us, and for me, he *was* comics. Today's folks don't have a clue when compared to the King.

I've been a busy little beaver lately, trying to cobble together some new books for later this year. Now that Max is done with this puppy, he's able to concentrate on the long-delayed *Spif* solo comic written by Troy Hickman from a plot by myself. Meanwhile, I'll be pencilling #15 for Joe Meyer's inks, writing *Rambunny* #1, and throwing a script together for *Amoeba Adventures* #16, which will be the origin of Rambunny and feature the reunion of the famed Nik/Max team that won praise for #11. Czech 'em all out!

Peace, children! As always, your letters of comments are appreciated, as well as trades of equal value. Enjoy the issue!



On the back cover: me, my necklace, and my goddaughter Meeghan Chablis Phillips with a death grip on it. September, 1993.

AMOEB ADVENTURES

"Evidence of our
Confusion"

Written and
drawn by Max
Ink

Last issue: Ninja Ant, Spif, Dawn, and Kyoko decided to take a night out on the town. Unfortunately, they ended up running into the Squadron's old nemesis Herr Heinous.

This is AMOEB
ADVENTURES #14,
March 1994. Published
every three months or so
by Protoplasm Press,
P.O. Box 2230,
University, MS 38677-
2230. All contents are
©1994 Nik Dirga. Artwork
© 1994 Max Ink.
Subscriptions are
available at the low, low
price of \$5/ 4 issues.
Additional copies of this
issue \$2.50 ppd. If you'd
like a catalog of back
issues, just beg nicely. If
you want a backrub,
sorry, you're out of luck.



Prologue:

"Even the death of friends will inspire us as much as their lives... Their memories will be incrustated over with sublime and pleasing thoughts, as their monuments are overgrown with moss."
—HENRY DAVID THOREAU (1817-1862)



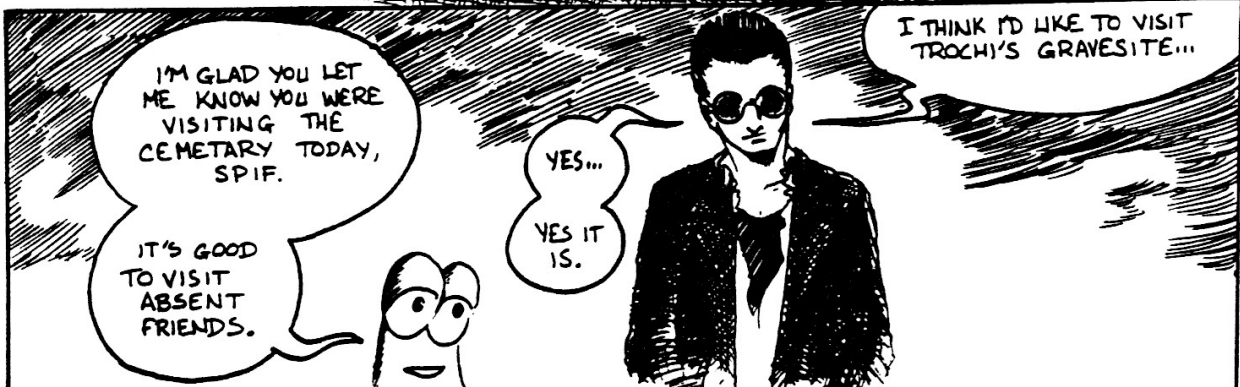
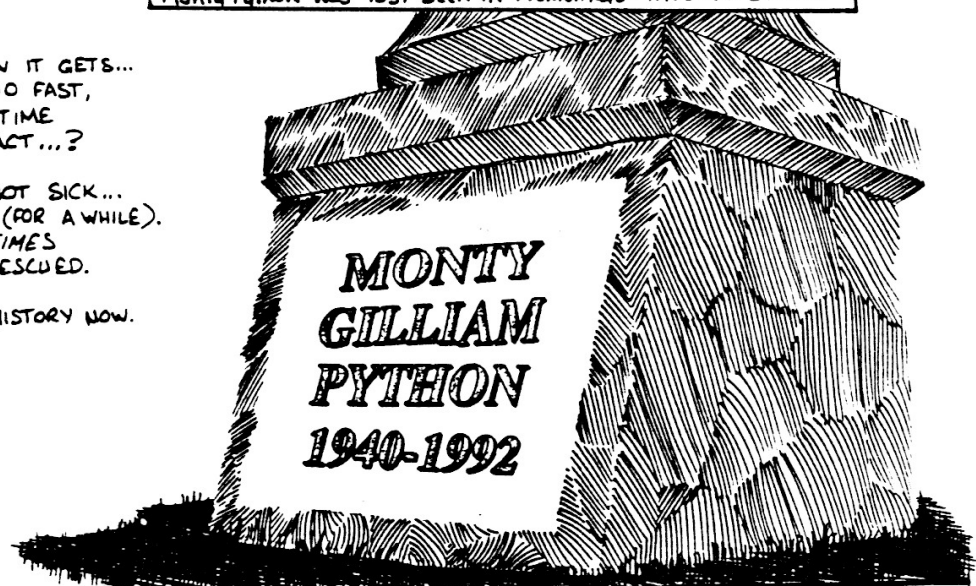
Monty Python was last seen in *Prometheus: the Silent Storm*.

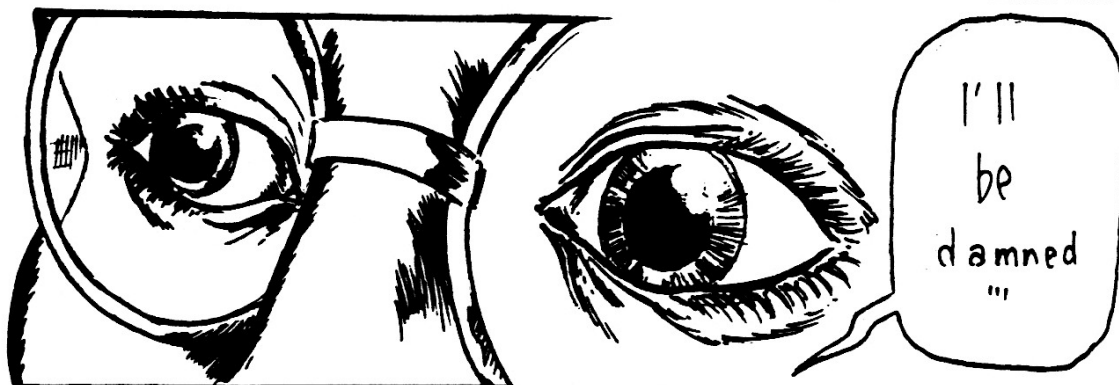
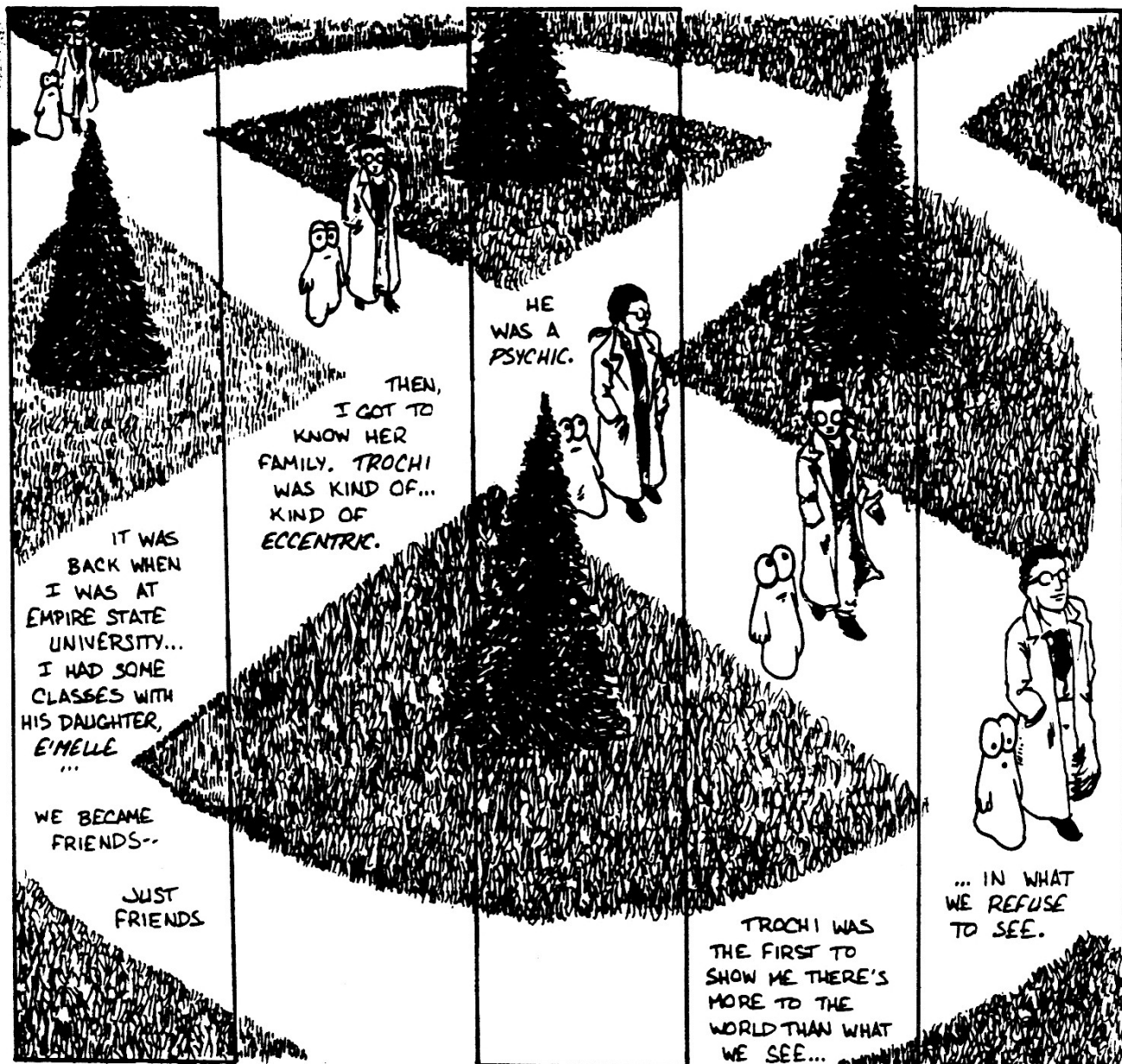
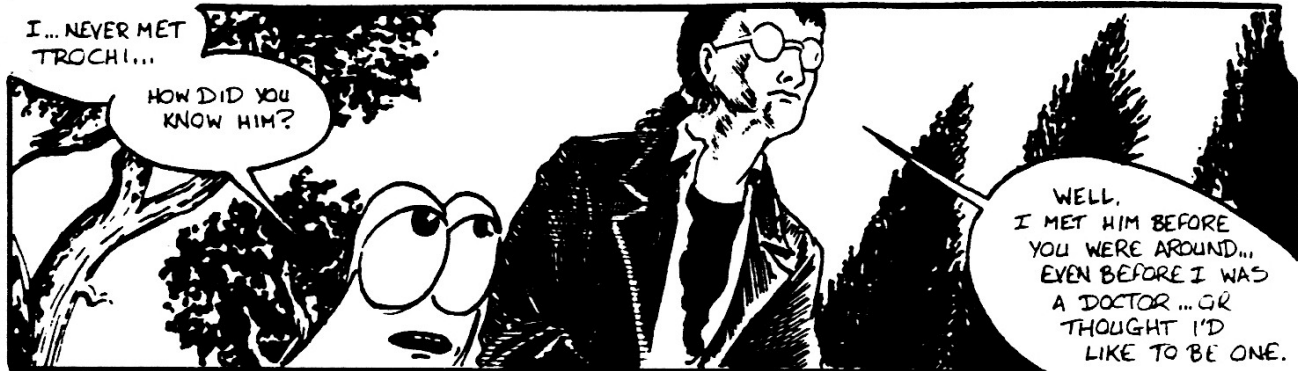
BUT, YOU KNOW HOW IT GETS...
WHEN THINGS GO TOO FAST,
AND ALL YOU HAVE TIME
TO DO IS TO REACT...?

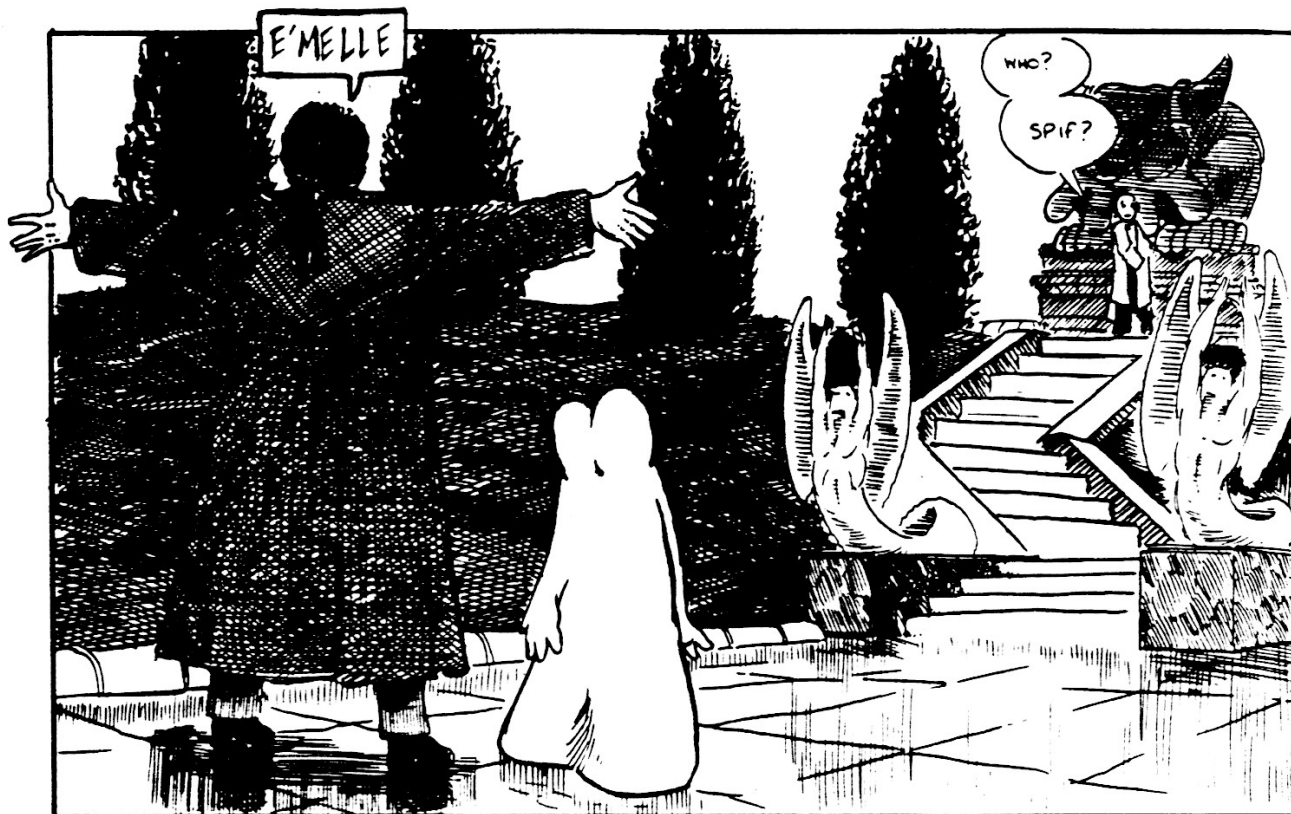
RIGHT AFTER YOU GOT SICK...
I WAS KIDNAPPED (FOR A WHILE).
AND, AS IT SOMETIMES
HAPPENS, I WAS RESCUED.

BUT THAT'S PAST HISTORY NOW.

JUST LIKE YOU.







OH SPIF...
IT'S SO GOOD TO
SEE YOU... BUT
UNDER THESE
CIRCUMSTANCES
...

DAMN.

I'M SO SORRY I
COULDN'T ATTEND THE
FUNERAL... I KEEP
WISHING THERE WAS
SOMETHING THAT I
COULD'VE DONE
TO HAVE PREVENTED
THIS...

I KNOW...
I KNOW SPIF...



WELL, IT LOOKS AS
IF YOUR FATHER'S
UNIQUE DECORUM
WILL OUTLAST
US...

THIS MONUMENT WAS
SPECIFICALLY ERRECTED
AS PER HIS WILL.

WELL, HE
NEVER WAS
ONE FOR
WOOD
PANELING
OR ROCKWELL
PAINTINGS.

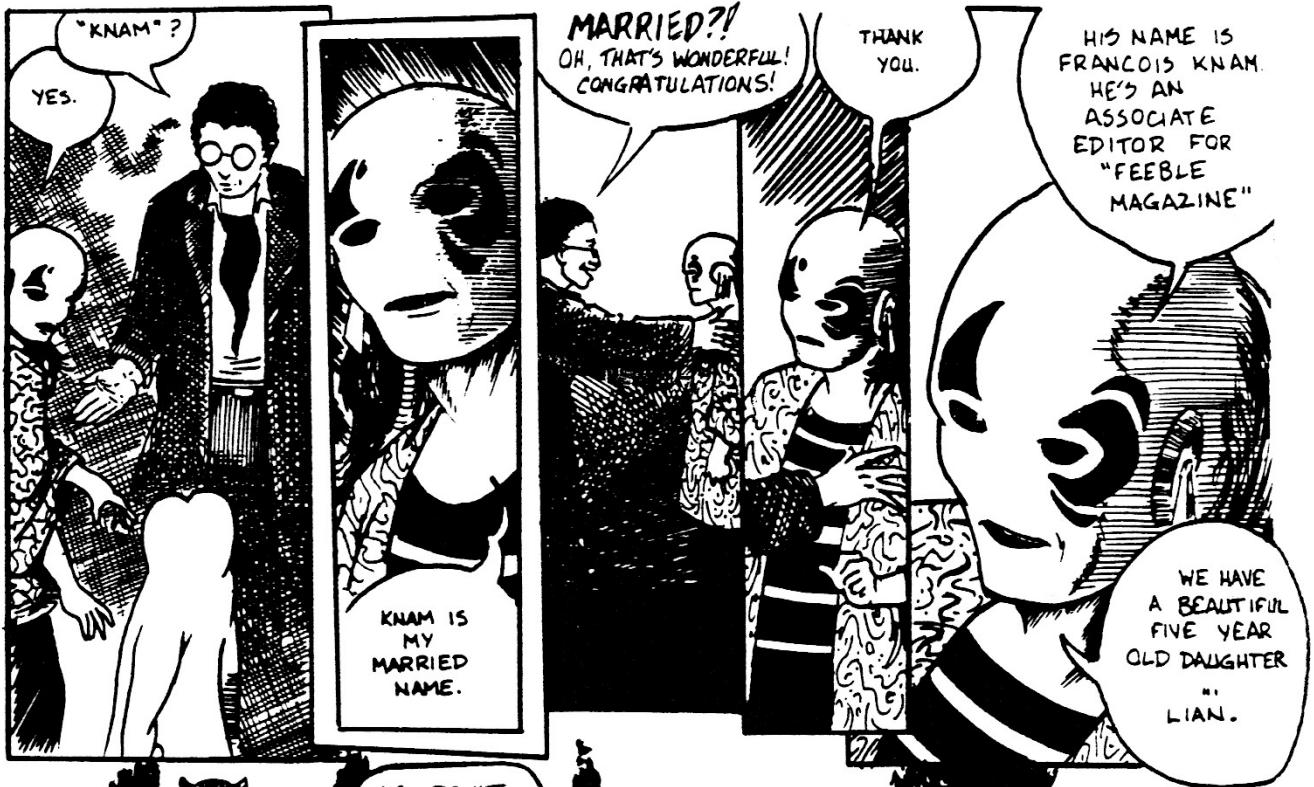
TRUE.
MY GOOD-
NESS CAN
YOU BELIE
THE LAS
TIME

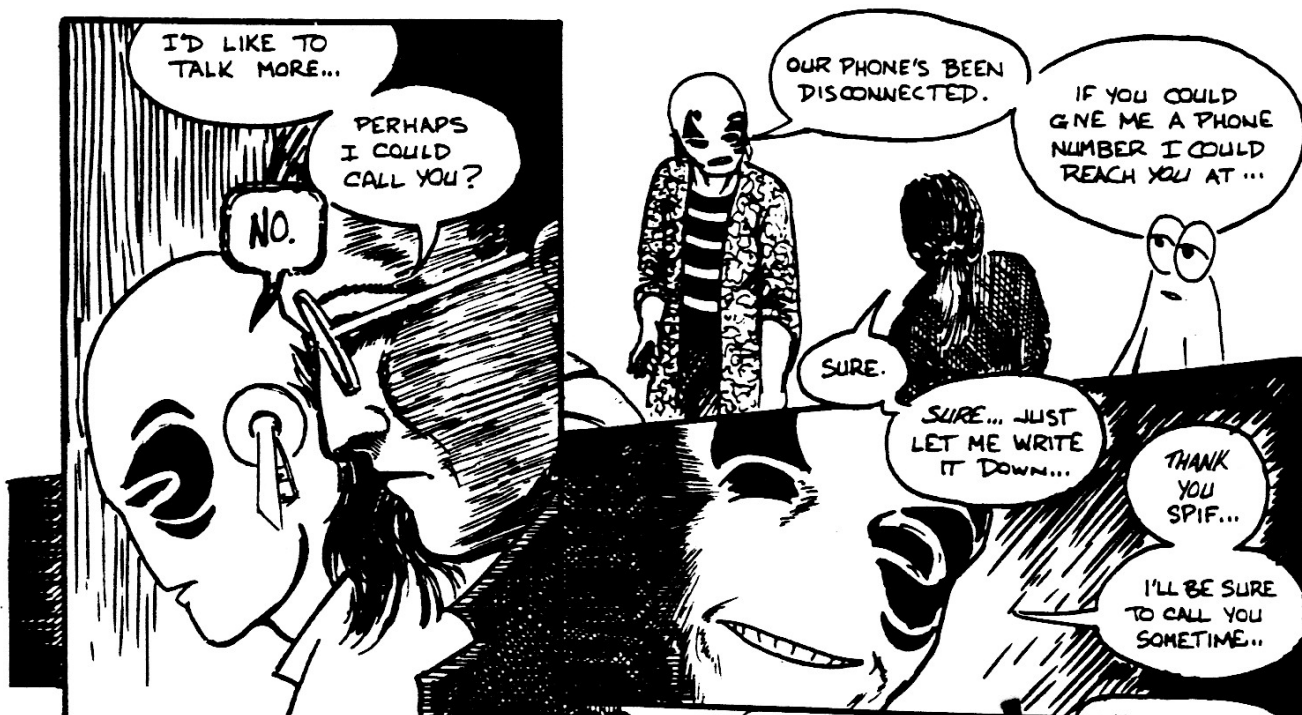
EXCUSE ME--
WHERE ARE MY
MANNERS?
IN THE
GUTTER, I'M SURE...

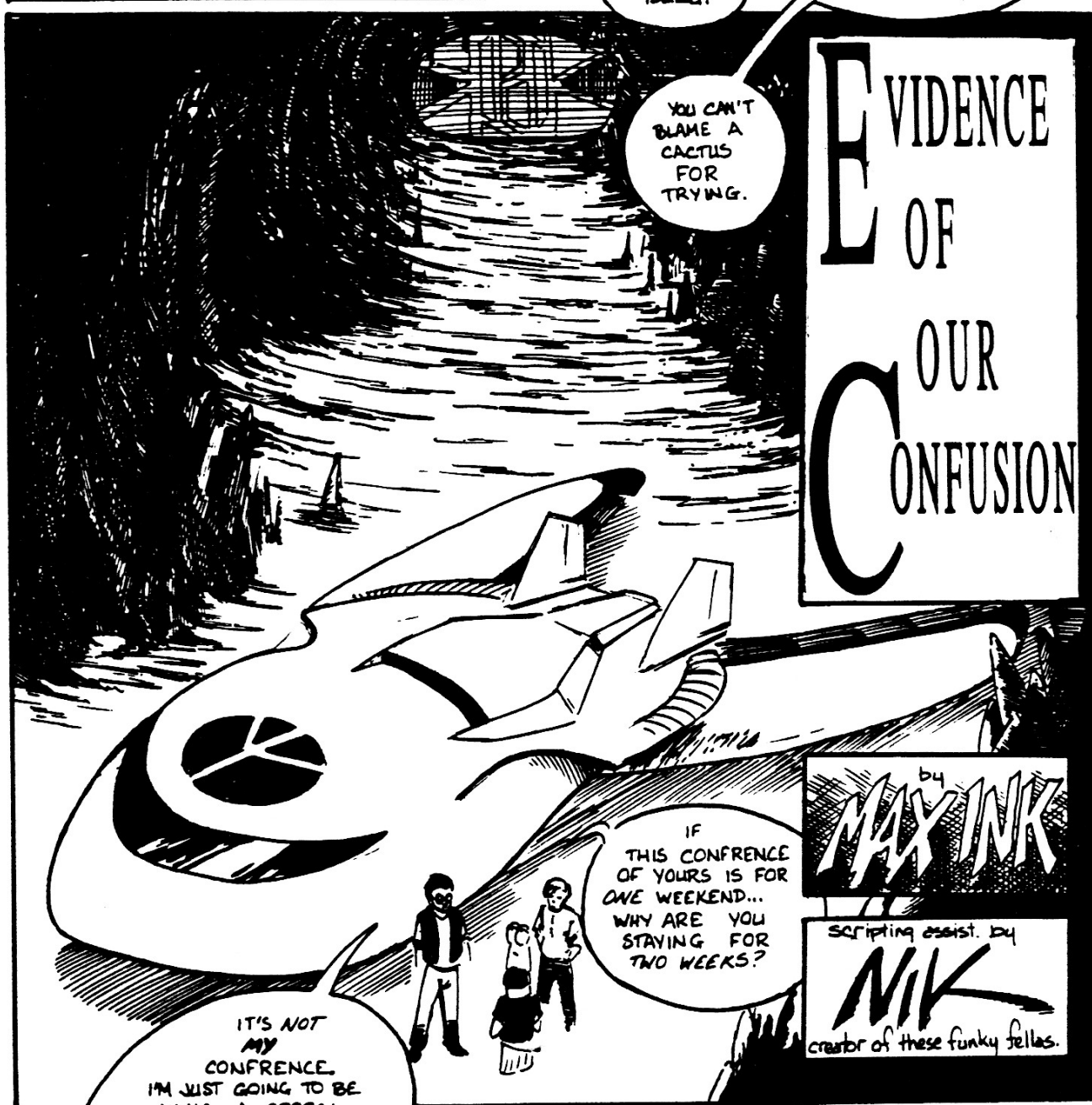
HELLO,
PROMETHEUS, MY
NAME IS E'MELLE
KNAM. I SAW
YOU AND THE
SQUADRON ON
LATE NIGHT...

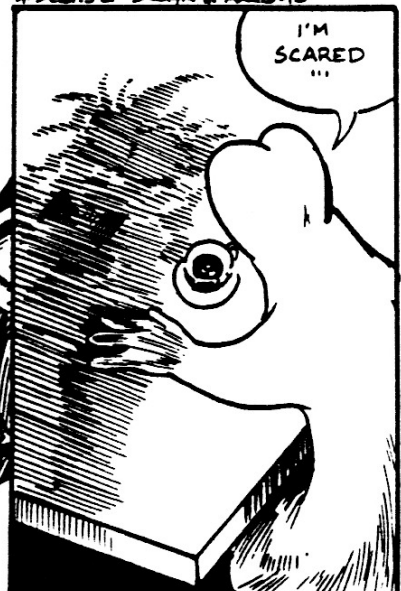
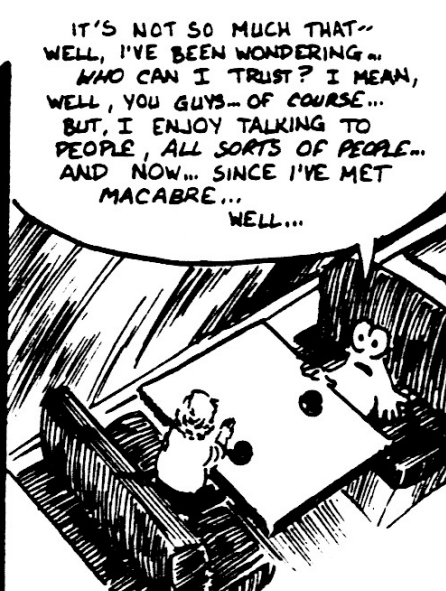
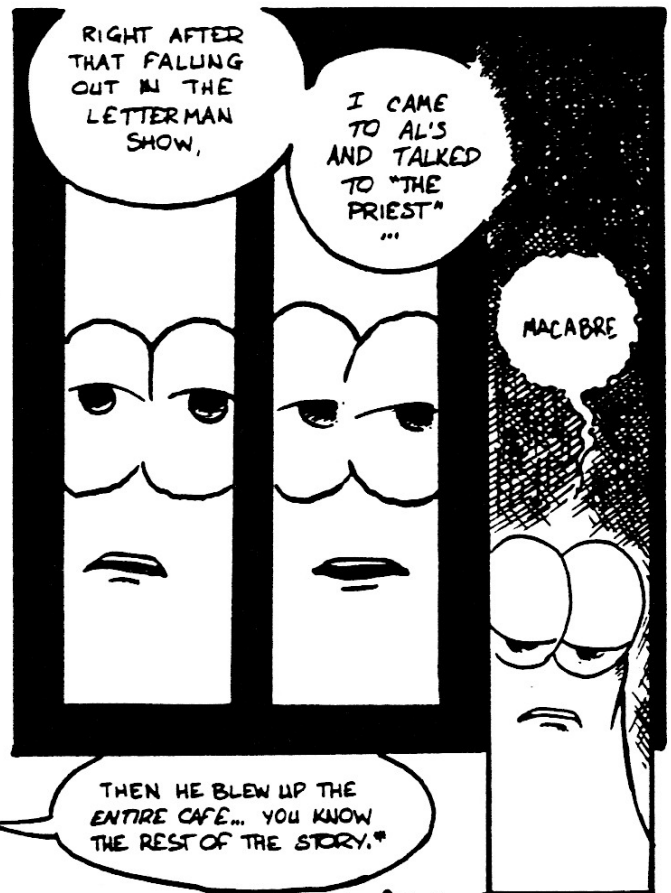
IT'S AN
HONOR TO
MEET YOU.

THE
PLEASURE'S
MINE
MS
...
KNAM?









*Details of Design - AA66-10



MAY I
TAKE YER
ORDERS?

WHERE'S
THE
WAITRESS
?

AL!



SHE'S ON,
WHATCH'D
CALL...

HER
BREAK.

FORGIVE ME FOR
PRYING... BUT,
WHERE IS HER
REPLACEMENT?



> SNICKER <

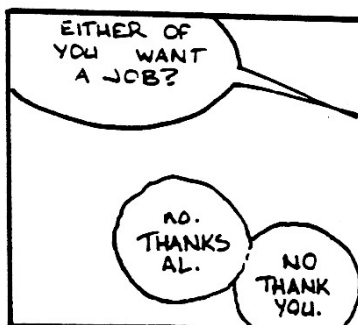
DAT'S A
GOOD ONE.



WUT
HAPPND WIT
YOU, MISTUH
PROMET'EUS,
AFTUH MY
PLACE WUZ
FIXED UP,
DID WONDRS FER
BIZ'NESS... BUT
WUZ LOUSY FER MY
PERSONNEL
SITUATION.

DEY
RUN OFF
CAUSE DEY'RE ALL
AFRAID SUMTIN
LIKE DAT'S GONNA
HAPP'N AGAIN. UNTIL
SOME MORE PEOPLE
APPLY FER A
JOB...

ANOTHER
WAITRESS
OR
WAITER
?



EITHER OF
YOU WANT
A JOB?

NO.
THANKS
AL.

NO
THANK
YOU.



I GOTTA DO
EVERYTHING I CAN
TA KEEP DIS PLACE
TOGETHER.



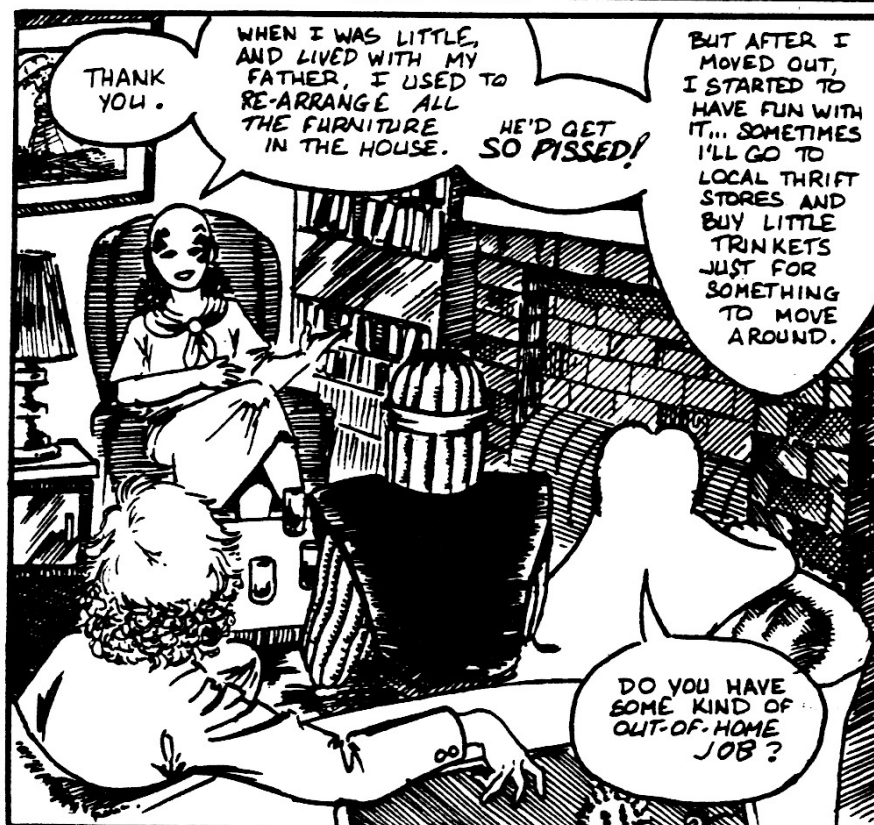
WELL, LEMME
KNOW IF YOU
NEED ANYTING...

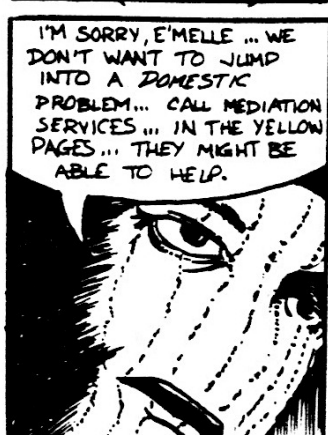
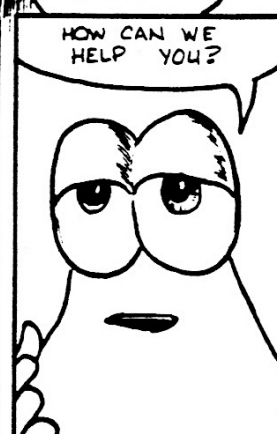
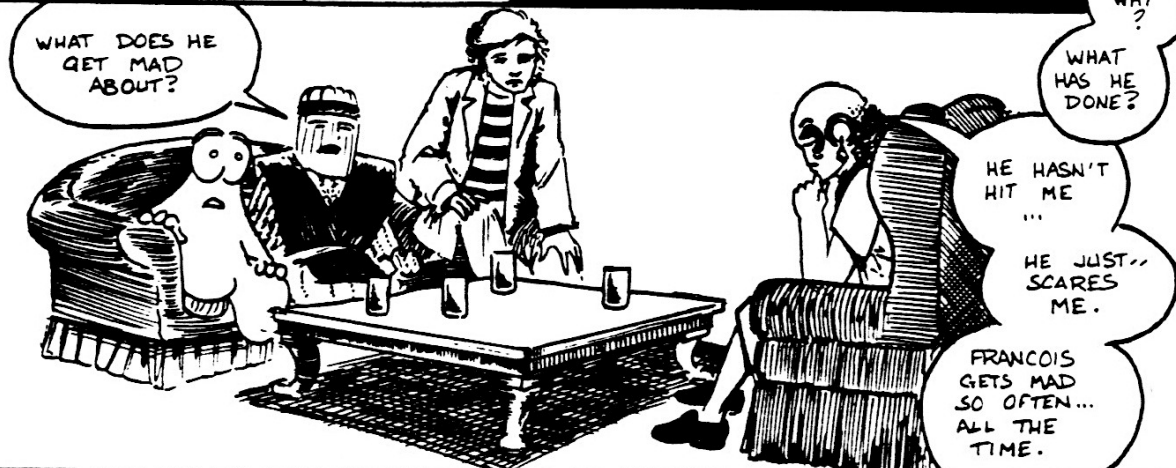
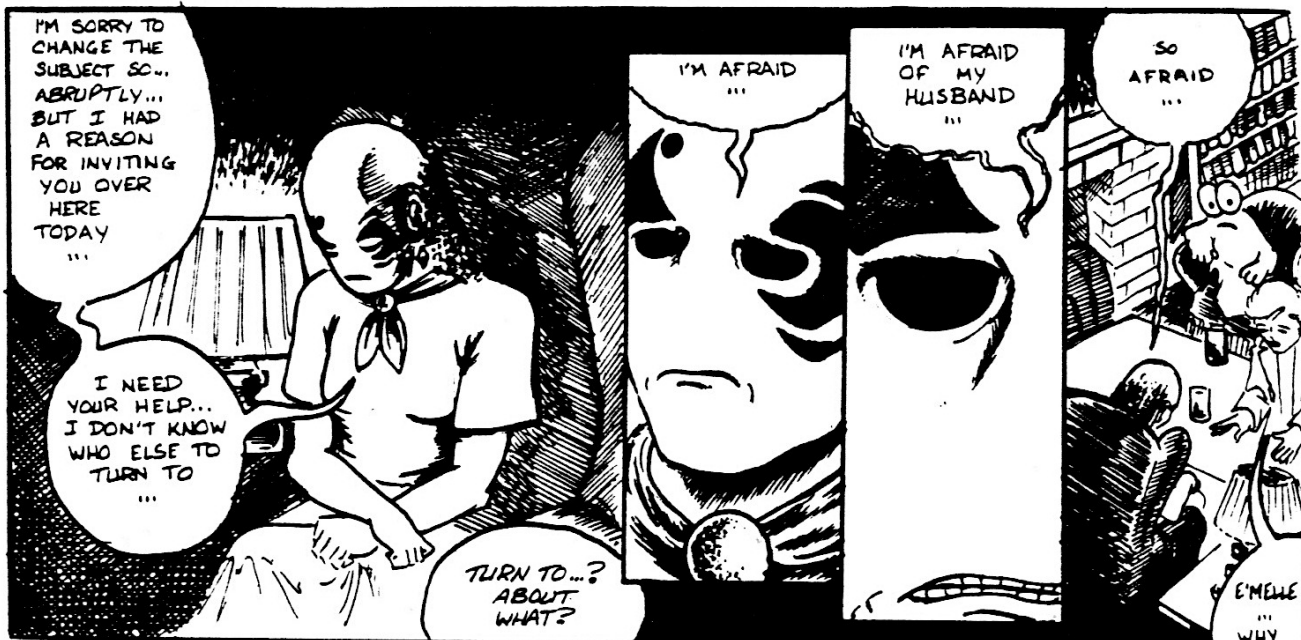
GOTTA
GO WAIT
ON DA
OTHER
TABLES.

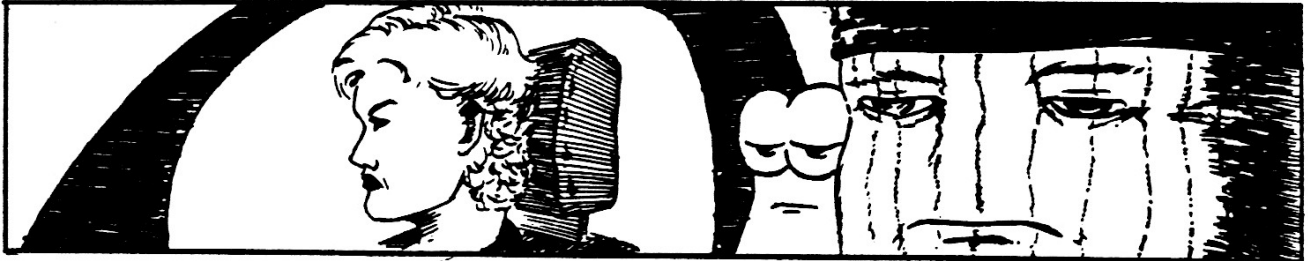
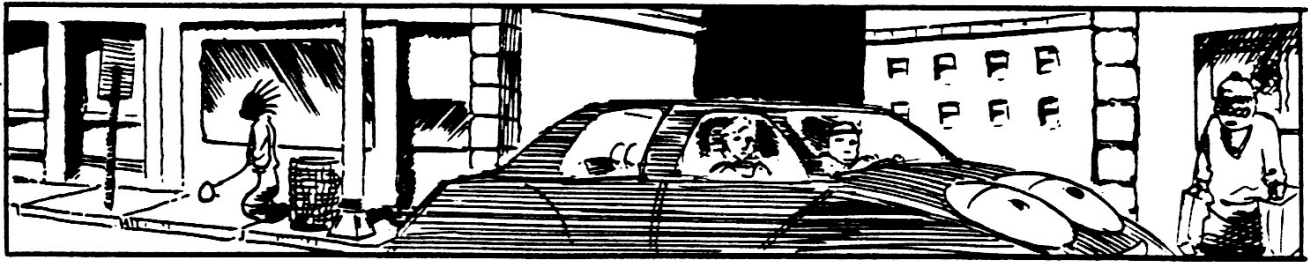
DONT SAY ANYTHING... please.

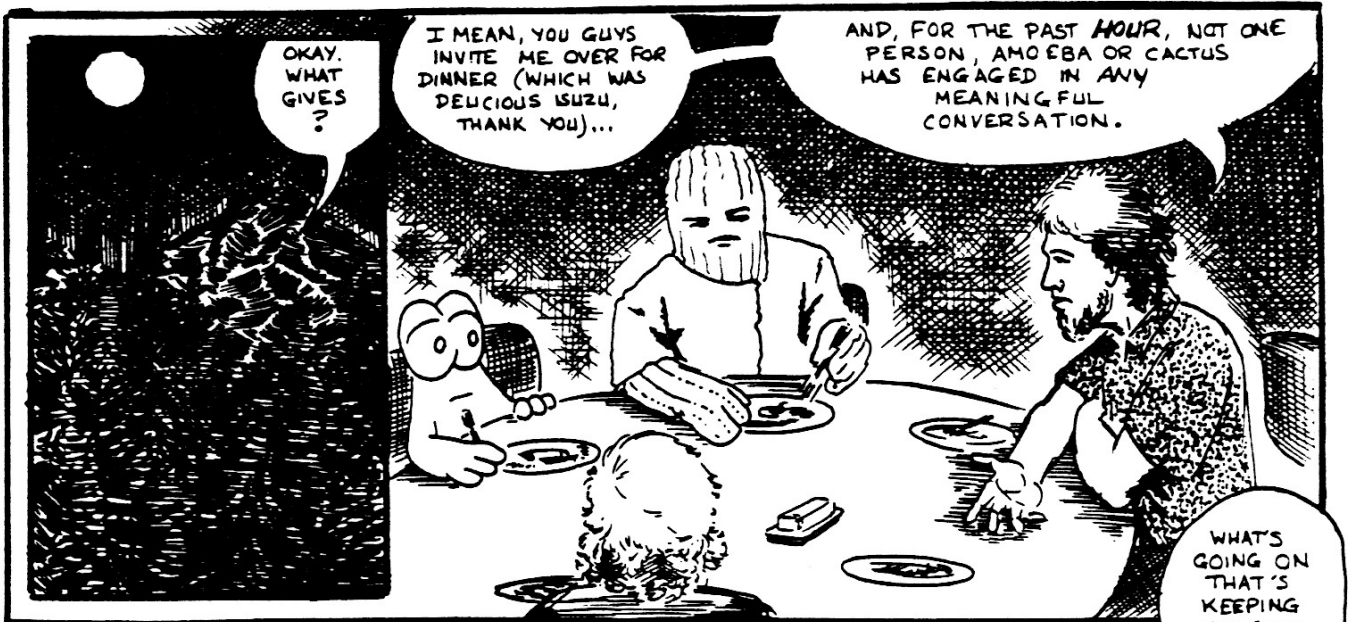
CERTAINLY.











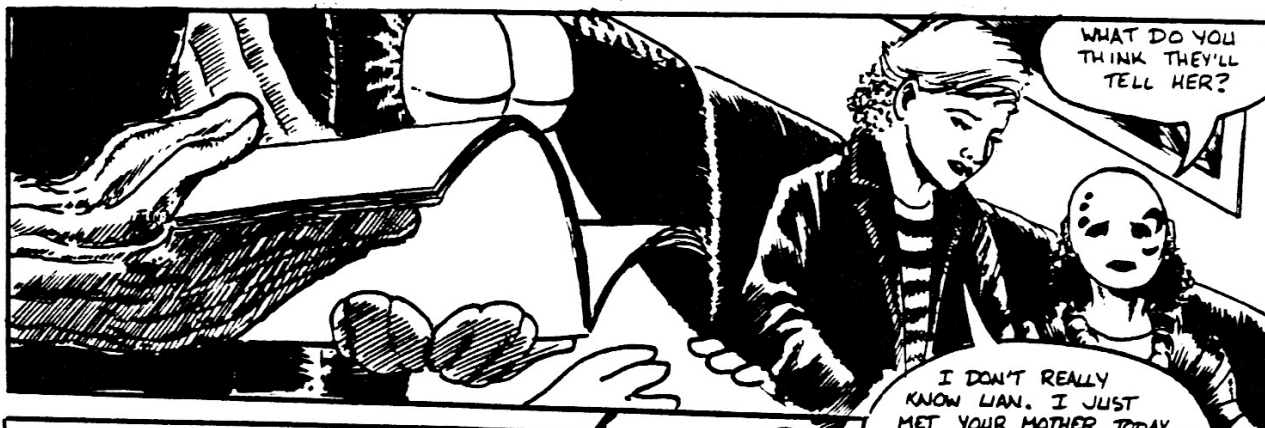


I FOLLOWED YOU, AFTER YOU LEFT MY HOUSE. THEN I WENT BACK HOME, PACKED UP SOME CLOTHES FOR LIAN AND MYSELF... I PICKED HER UP FROM SCHOOL AND CAME HERE...

ALL I ASK IS A BED FOR MY DAUGHTER AND MYSELF TO STAY TONIGHT.







WHAT DO YOU
THINK THEY'LL
TELL HER?

I DON'T REALLY
KNOW LIAN. I JUST
MET YOUR MOTHER TODAY...
WHAT DO YOU THINK
OF YOUR MOM AND
DAD, LIAN?



WHY?

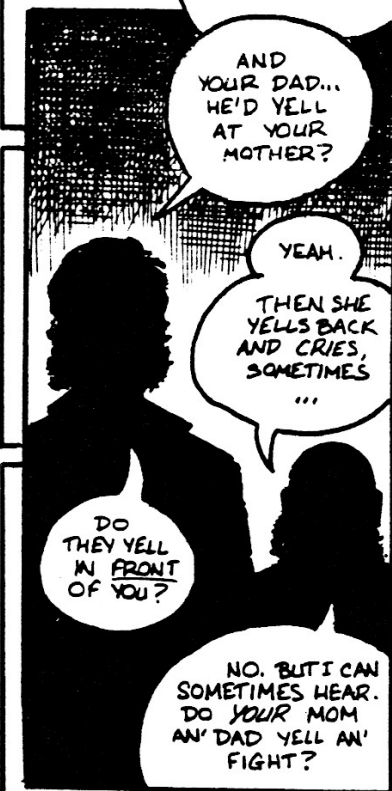
OH...
I DUNNO...
MAYBE SHE'S
AFRAID HE'LL
GET ANGRY
OR SOMETHIN'
LIKE THAT.



THEY'RE
PRETTY COOL.
WE ALWAYS GO
TO PARKS AN
PLAYGROUNDS...
AN' THEY USUALLY
GET INTO WATCHIN'
MY FAVORITE SHOWS
WITH ME. MOM TAKES
ME SHOPPIN' WHEN
SHE'S LOOKIN' FOR NEW
STUFF FOR THE HOUSE.
WE USUALLY GO OUT
TO EAT AFTER, BUT
TOLD ME, NEVER TELL
DAD ABOUT GOIN'
TO EAT.



I HAVEN'T
SEEN MY PARENTS
FOR A LONG
TIME... BUT
YES, I REMEMBER
HEARING THEM
ARGUING.
HEY, LIAN
...
WHAT SAY
WE TALK
ABOUT SOME-
THING ELSE?



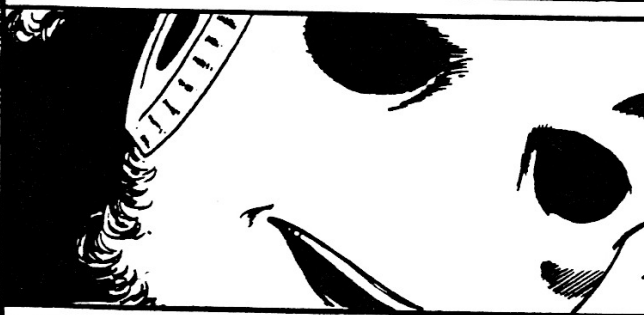
AND
YOUR DAD...
HE'D YELL
AT YOUR
MOTHER?

YEAH.

THEN SHE
YELLS BACK
AND CRIES,
SOMETIMES
...

DO
THEY YELL
IN FRONT
OF YOU?

NO. BUT I CAN
SOMETIMES HEAR.
DO YOUR MOM
AN' DAD YELL AN'
FIGHT?

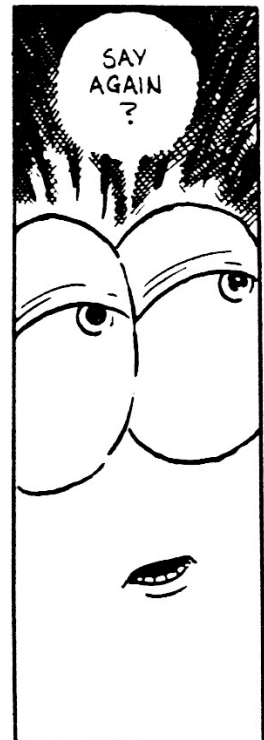


OKAY!

HEY,
PROMETHEUS!
CAN I ASK
YOU A
QUESTION?



PRO--?
WAKEY-WAKEY



MOM LET ME STAY
UP WHEN SPIN AN'
YOU WERE ON
DAVE LETTERMAN.
COULD YOU TELL
ME ABOUT IT?



ARE
YOU
SERIOUS?

YES!
PLEASE
TELL ME!

WELL, IF YOU SAW IT...
YOU KNOW WHAT A
FIASCO IT WAS,
WITH THE MUSHROOM
AND ALL. OTHER
THAN THAT IT
WENT WELL.



WERE YOU
NERVOUS?

NAH. EVER SINCE I
GOT HERE TO
SPONGOPOLIS, I'VE
GOTTEN USED TO CROWDS.



WHAT ABOUT
RAOUL?

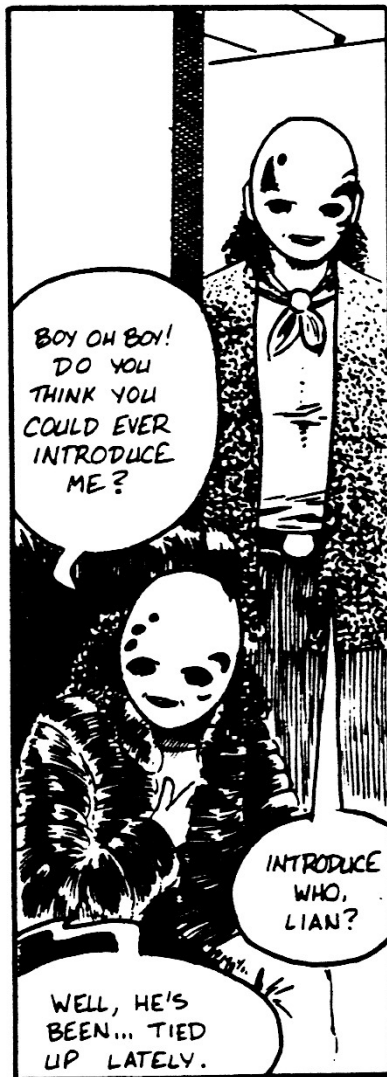
IS HE THAT
CUTE IN
PERSON?



WELL, I
SUPPOSE
...

POOR,
MISGUIDED
YOUTH.





BOY OH BOY!
DO YOU
THINK YOU
COULD EVER
INTRODUCE
ME?

INTRODUCE
WHO,
LIAN?

WELL, HE'S
BEEN... TIED
UP LATELY.



RADUL! I'D LOVE
TO MEET HIM
SOMEDAY.



AND DAWN
TOO!



OH, I'M SURE
THEY'LL INTRODUCE
YOU. YOU HAD A
NICE TIME TALKING
WITH MISTER
PROMETHEUS?

E'MELLE,
MAKE SURE
YOU'LL KEEP
THAT APOINT-
MENT WE
MADE, PLEASE.



IT WAS A
PLEASURE TO
MEET YOU
ALL.



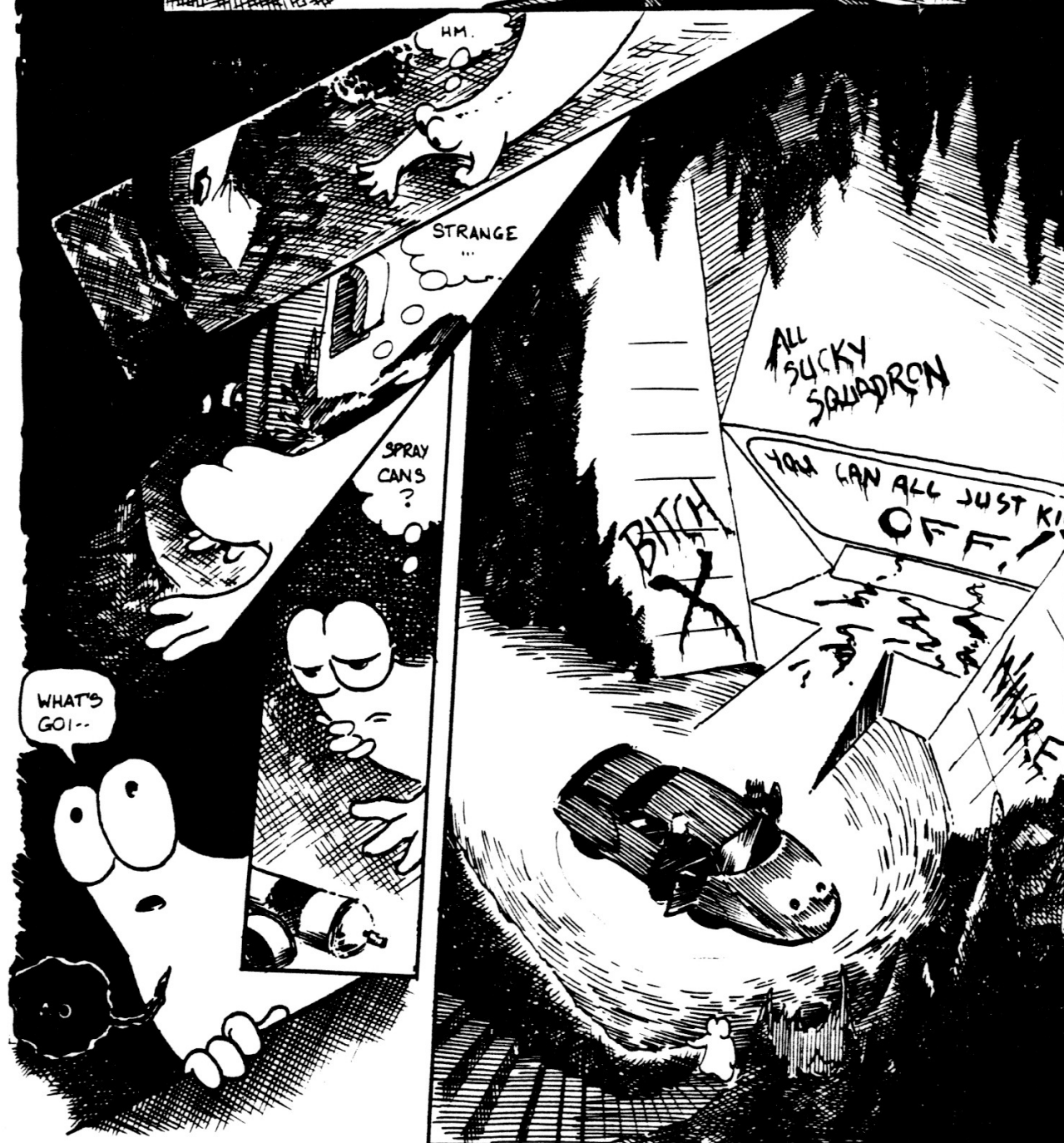
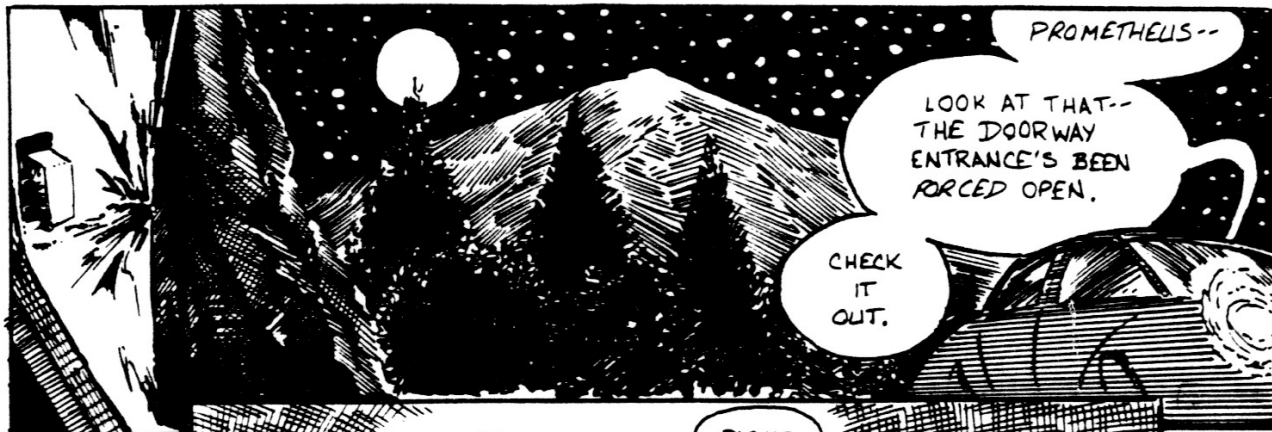
MR.
COUNSELOR?

YES,
LIAN?

I HOPE
YOU GAVE
MOM SOME
GOOD
ADVICE.

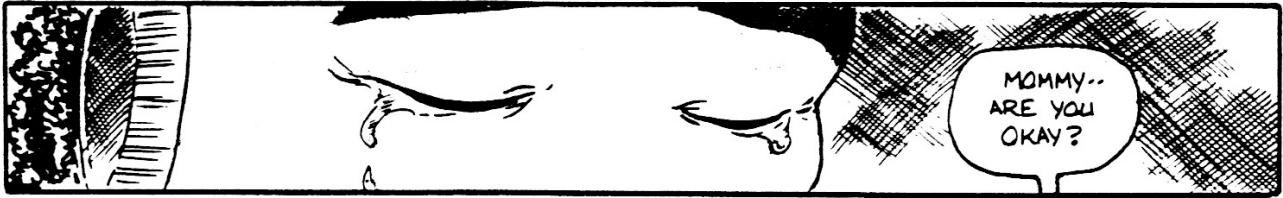
WELL, I TOLD HER
TO TALK WITH AND
LISTEN TO HER
DAUGHTER... I
THINK THAT'S SOME
OF THE BEST
ADVICE I'VE
EVER GIVEN.

OKAY,
MR. OLAH,
I'LL TRY.







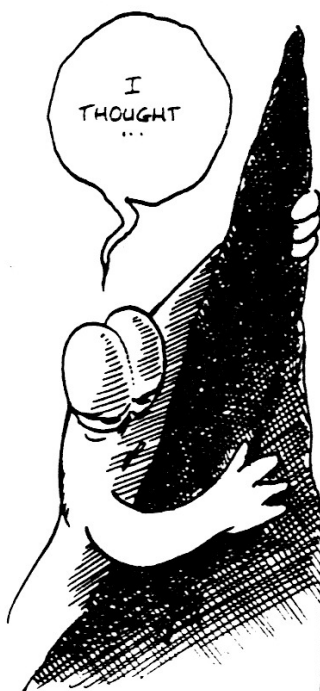
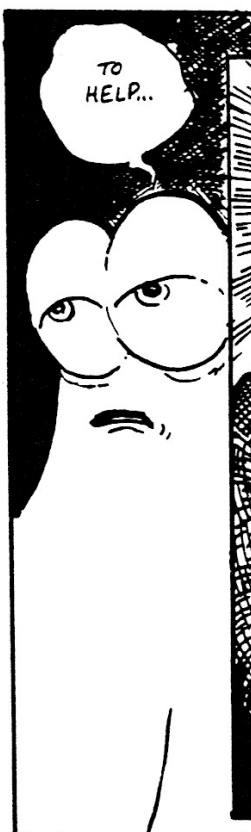
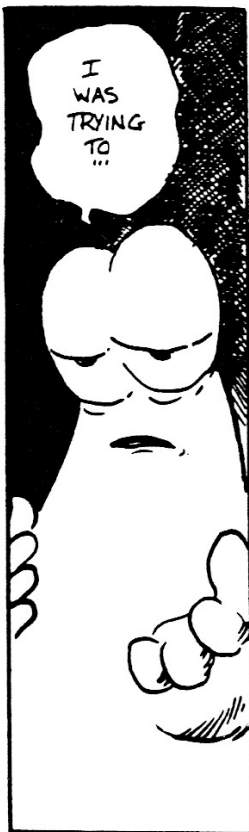


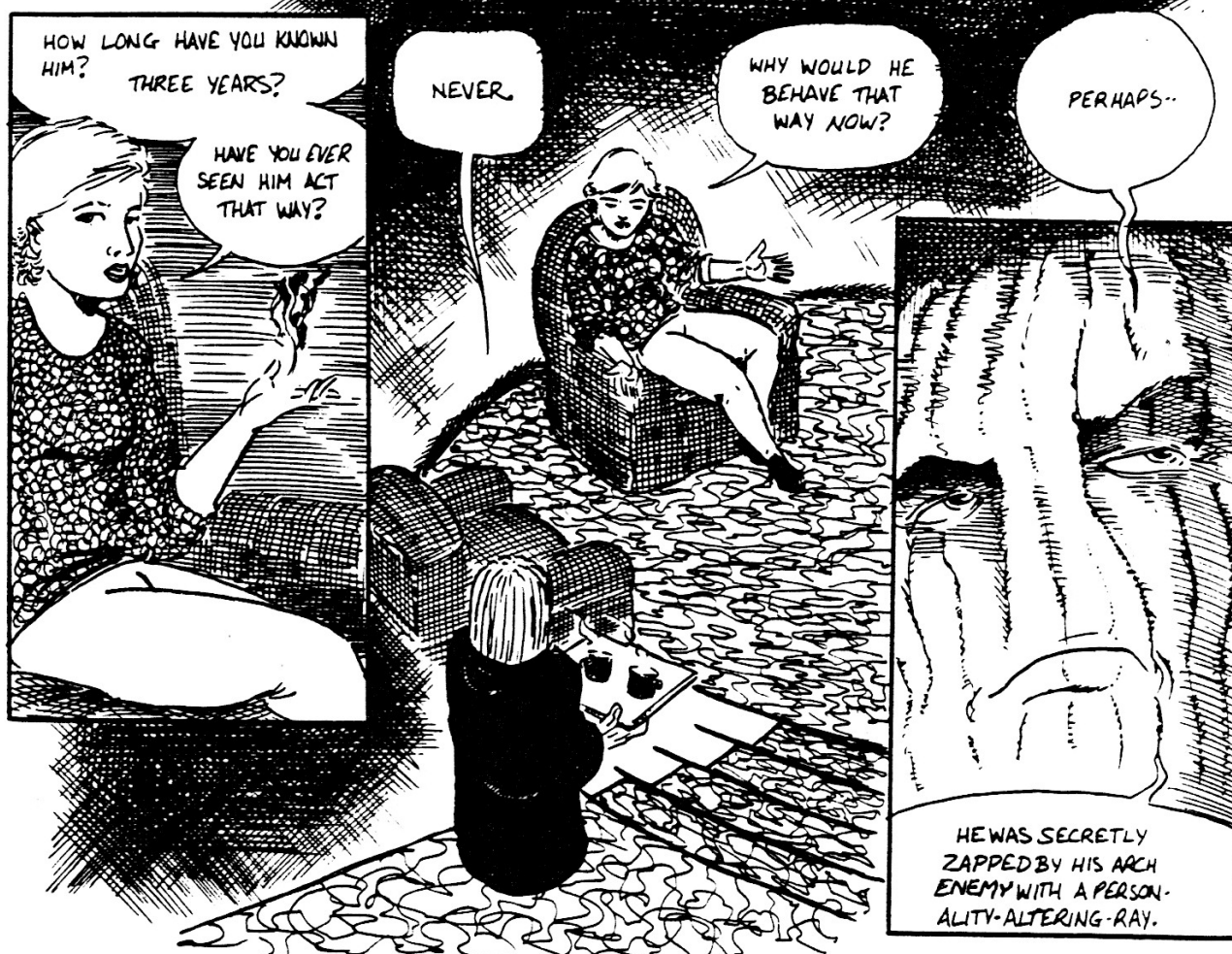
WHAT IN THE
HELL
WERE YOU
DOING?

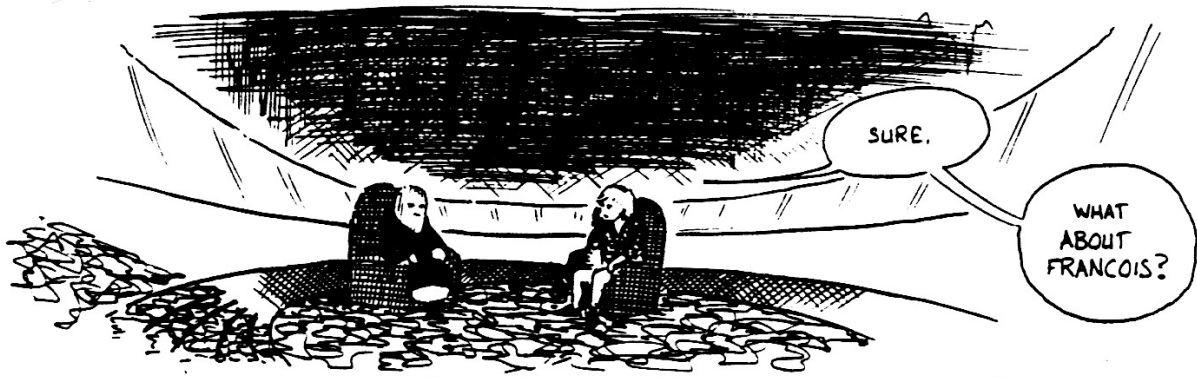


I

I
DON'T
KNOW.







SURE.

WHAT ABOUT FRANCOIS?

IT WILL BE QUITE SIMPLE ACTUALLY
OUR ATTORNEY, MISTER FOOSTER, WILL HANDLE THE SITUATION.

I'LL CALL HIM IN THE MORNING.

HE'LL TAKE IT FROM THERE.

HOW ABOUT E'MELLE?

I THINK SHE'LL DO BETTER AFTER SOME REST...

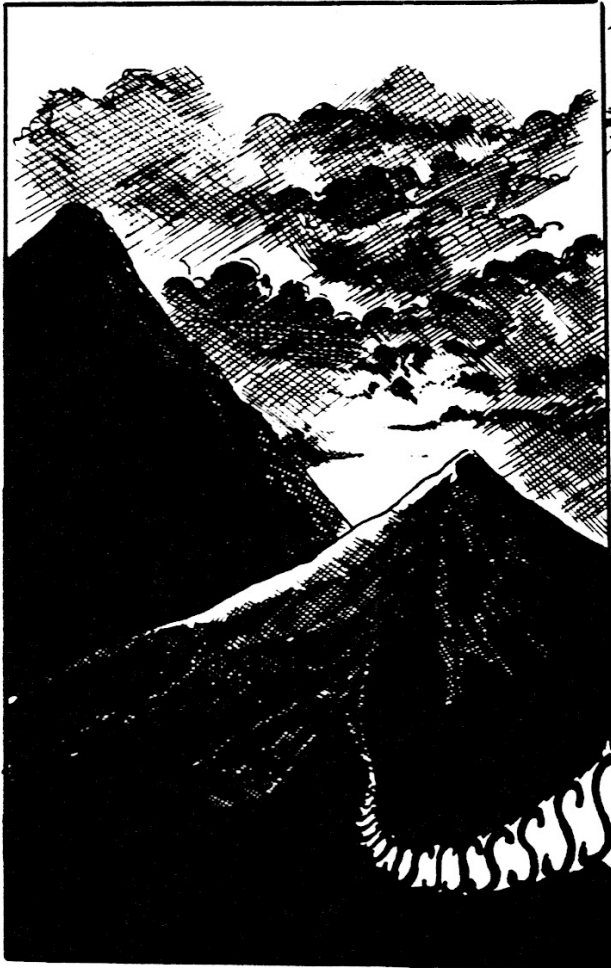
AND SOME PEACE.

I'LL TAKE THE AMOEBA MOBILE.

I TALKED TO HER AND LIAN... I'LL BRING LIAN TO SCHOOL TOMMORROW

HOW LONG IS SHE STAYING?

HARD TO SAY.



IF THIS
ISN'T THE
MOST
RIDICULOUS
WASTE
OF
WATER
"
IF I
WANTED
CLEAN--

I CAN
JUST
TURN
MYSELF
INSIDE
OUT.



HELPS ME TO THINK...
THINK ABOUT--

NOW SHE
FORGAVE
ME.



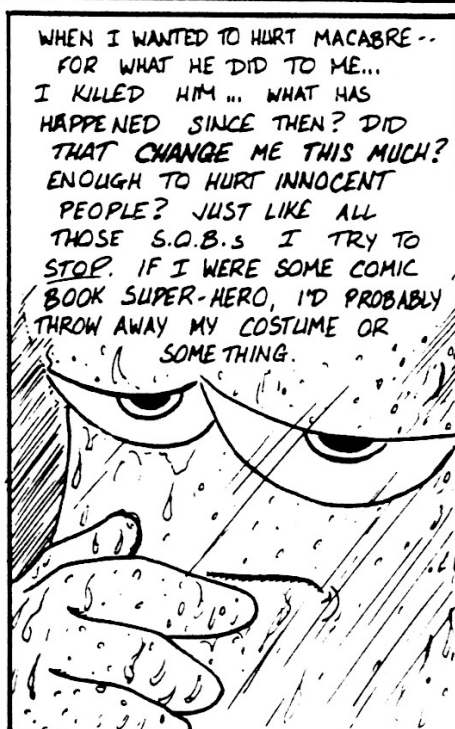
FOR WHAT
I DID...

I WAS SO
ANGRY AT FRANCOIS
...
BUT I TOOK
IT OUT ON
EMELLE.



I COULD'VE
HURT HER--

I'M GLAD
I DIDN'T
...

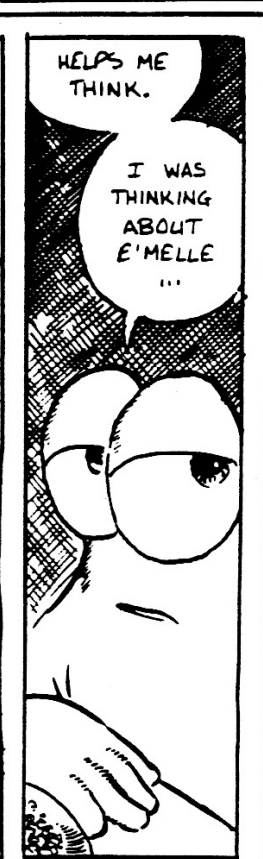
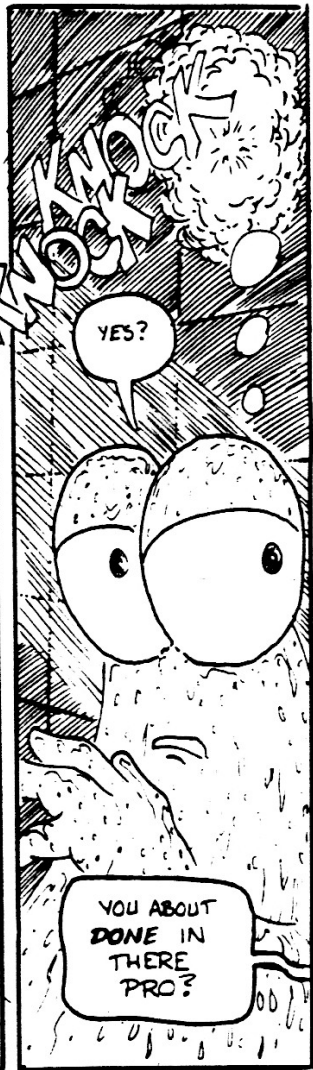
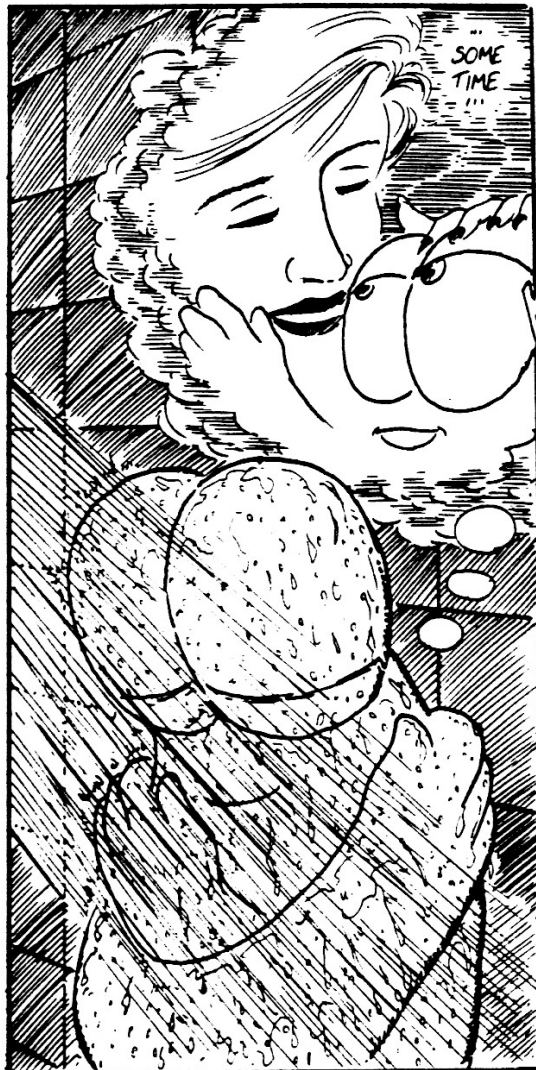
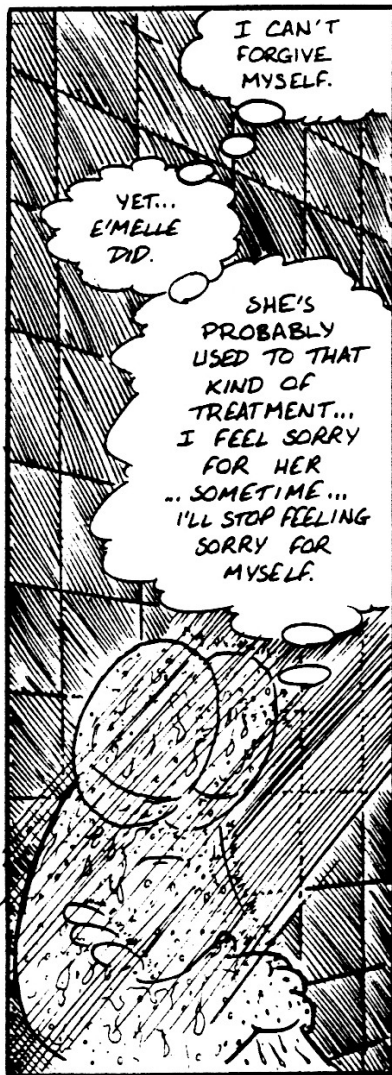


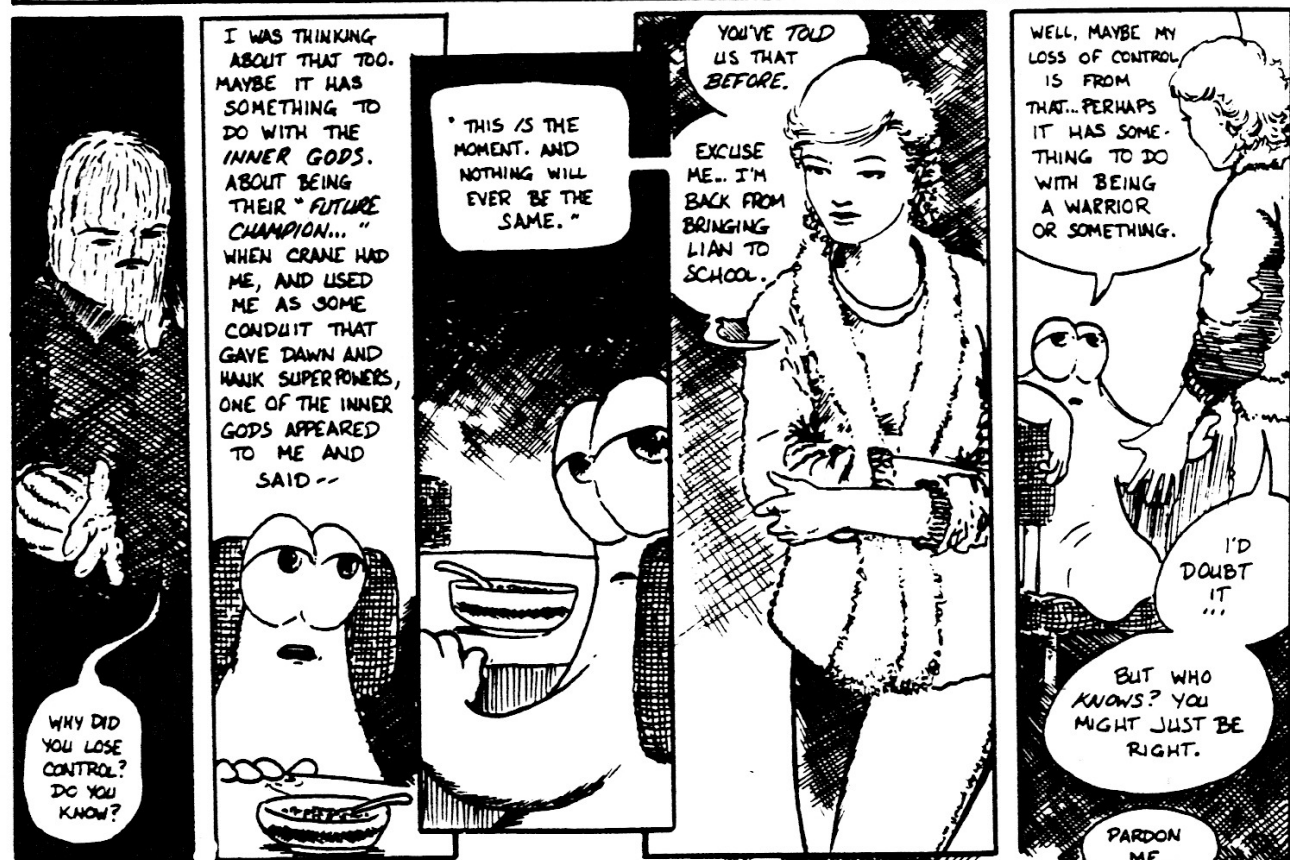
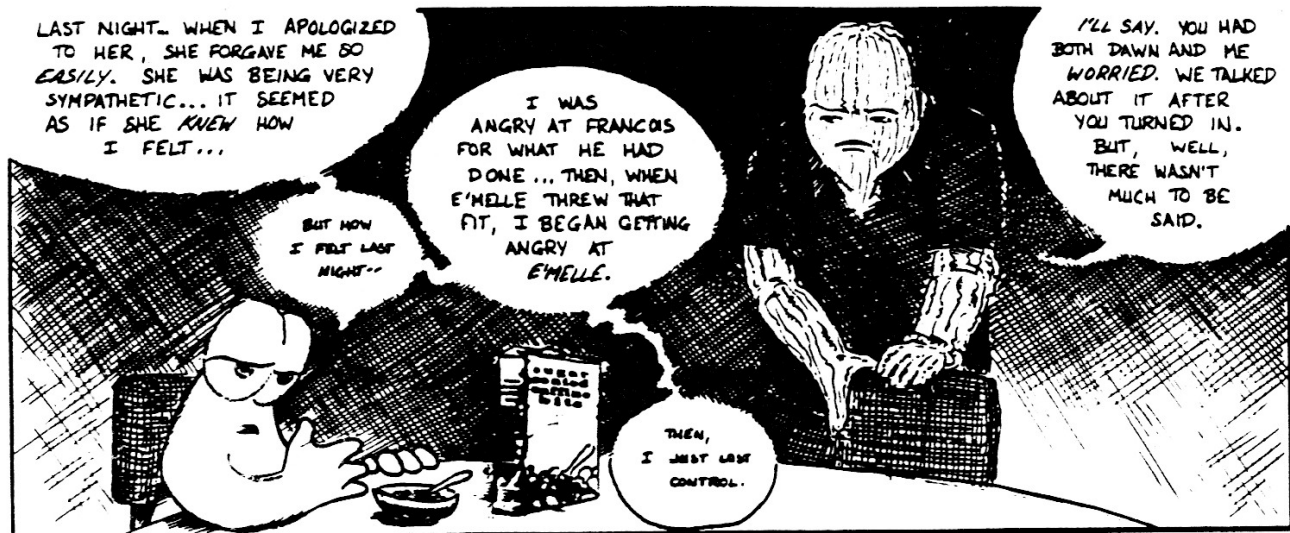
WHEN I WANTED TO HURT MACABRE--
FOR WHAT HE DID TO ME...
I KILLED HIM ... WHAT HAS
HAPPENED SINCE THEN? DID
THAT CHANGE ME THIS MUCH?
ENOUGH TO HURT INNOCENT
PEOPLE? JUST LIKE ALL
THOSE S.O.B.s I TRY TO
STOP. IF I WERE SOME COMIC
BOOK SUPER-HERO, I'D PROBABLY
THROW AWAY MY COSTUME OR
SOMETHING.



I USED TO BE SO...
RATIONAL. NOW, SOMETIMES,
IT'S AN EFFORT JUST TO
REMAIN CALM. WHAT'S
HAPPENED TO ME? WHAT
HAVE I BECOME? IS
THIS THE 'CHAMPION' THE
INNER GODS EXPECT OR
SOMETHING? I DON'T
LIKE IT.

I DON'T
LIKE WHAT I'VE
BECOME.





WELL, FIRST... THANK YOU
FOR BRINGING ME TO THAT
COUNSELING SERVICE...
I REALLY WAS ABLE
TO OPEN UP...

NOW, I'M
READY TO
TELL YOU
EVERYTHING
THAT'S
HAPPENED.

NO
...

E'MELLE...

HAVEN'T WE
HEARD ENOUGH
ABOUT WHAT
FRANCOIS' DONE?

... NOT
HIM.

ME.

I'VE
HIT
FRANCOIS.

YES... HE IS
POSSESSIVE.
YES, HE IS
JEALOUS.
HE...
he
yells
at me.

BUT HE
NEVER HIT
ME.

BUT
I'VE
HIT
HIM.

Hmph...
YOU KNOW,
WHAT'S ALMOST
FUNNY...?

HE... HE
REFUSES TO TELL
ANYONE. ALWAYS
MAKING EXCUSES FOR
THE BRUISES. HE
SAYS THAT I CAN
OVERCOME MY
VIOLENT BEHAVIOR...
BUT WON'T LET ME
SEE A THERAPIST
OR GO TO A DOMESTIC
VIOLENCE SUPPORT
GROUP.

HE'S
EMBARRASSED.



AND MORE THAN THAT...
IF HE CAME IN HERE, AND
SAW ME TALKING WITH YOU
THREE... HE'D ACCUSE
ME OF HAVING SOME
SORT OF AFFAIR...

HAVE
YOU--

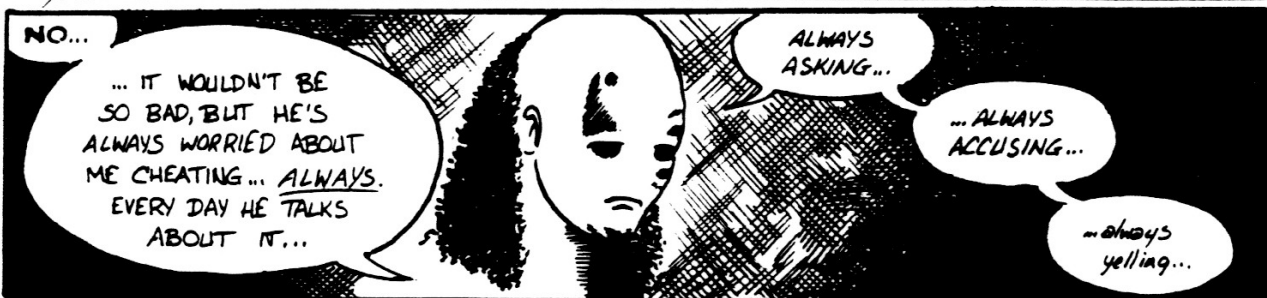
--EVER--?

BEEN
UNFAITHFUL
?

NOT THAT
I THINK YOU
WOULD...

...BUT...

...HAVE
YOU?



NO...

... IT WOULDN'T BE
SO BAD, BUT HE'S
ALWAYS WORRIED ABOUT
ME CHEATING... ALWAYS.
EVERY DAY HE TALKS
ABOUT IT...

ALWAYS
ASKING...

... ALWAYS
ACCUSING...

... always
yelling...



EMELLE... WHAT
ATTRACTED YOU
TO FRANCOIS
IN THE FIRST
PLACE?



WELL, HE WASN'T ALWAYS
LIKE THIS. I CAN
REMEMBER WHEN HE
GAVE ME SUCH RESPECT...
BUT HE'S NEVER GIVEN
HIMSELF RESPECT.
ALWAYS SO HARD ON
HIMSELF.

BUT
SOMETIMES
...



SOMETIMES I WAS
ABLE TO SHOW HIM
WHAT HE WAS CAPABLE
OF... THE GOOD INSIDE
HIMSELF. IT MADE
ME FEEL SO GOOD.
LIKE I WAS IMPORTANT,
THAT I MADE A DIFFERENCE.

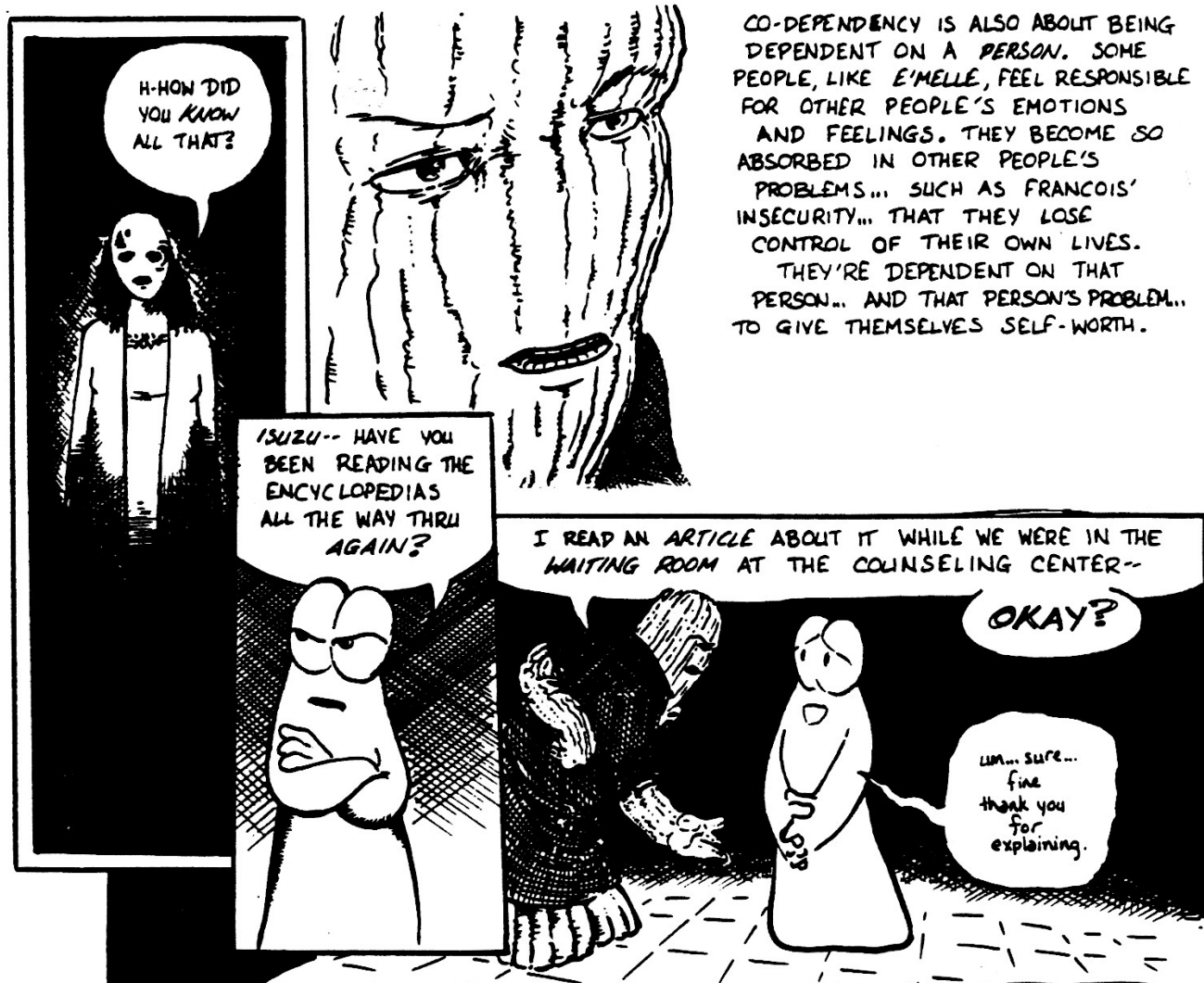
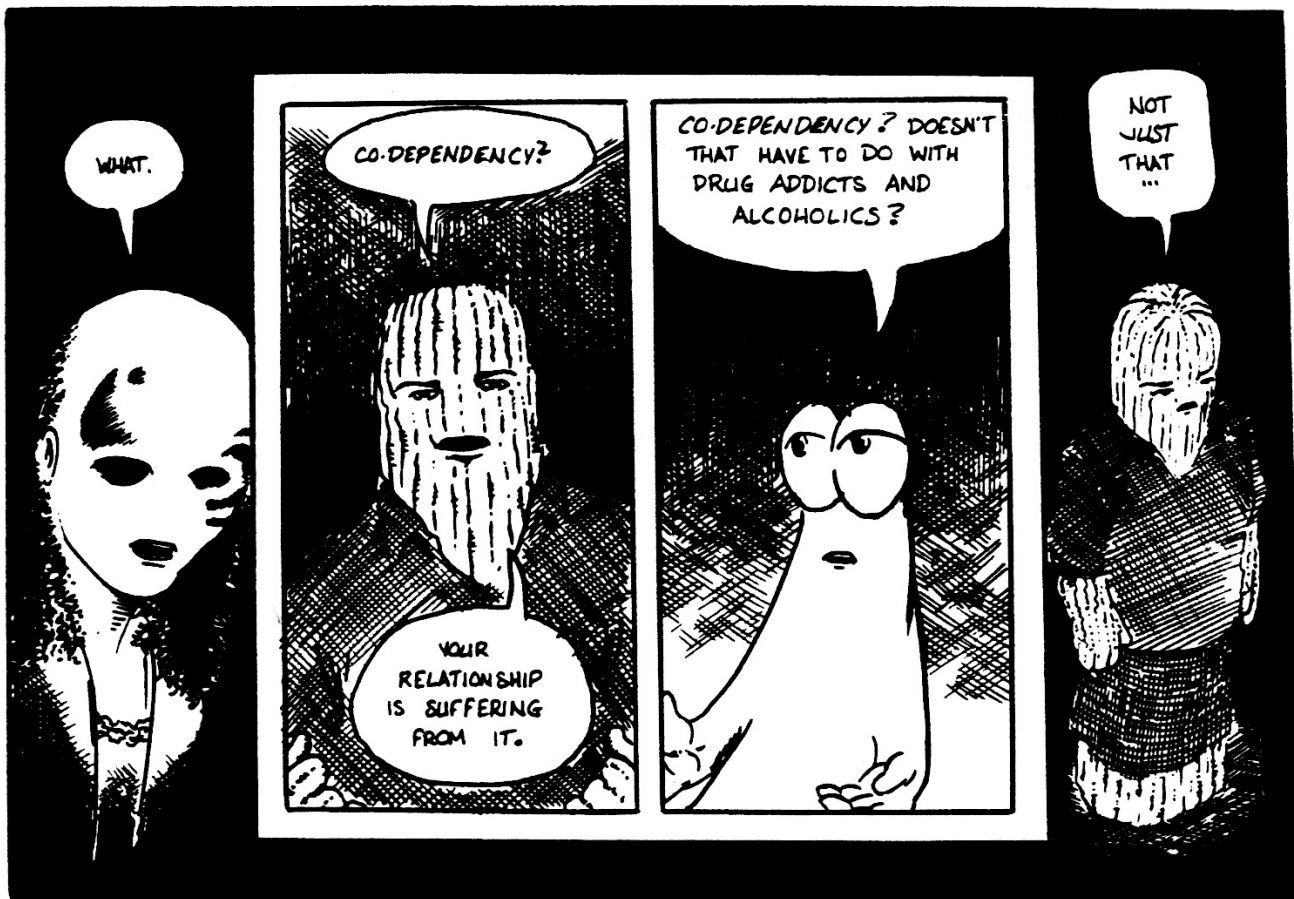


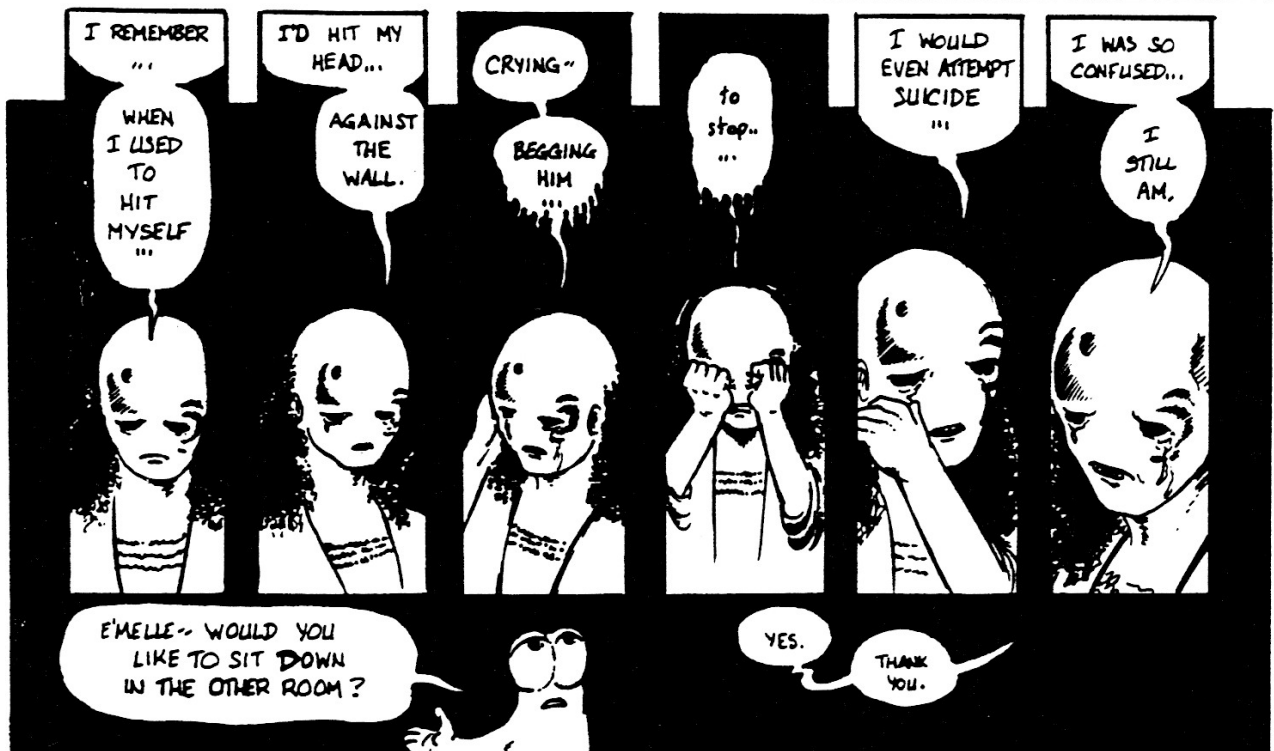
I'VE NEVER KNOWN
ANYONE... INTIMATELY,
BESIDES FRANCOIS.
I DON'T WANT
TO BE WITH
ANYONE ELSE--

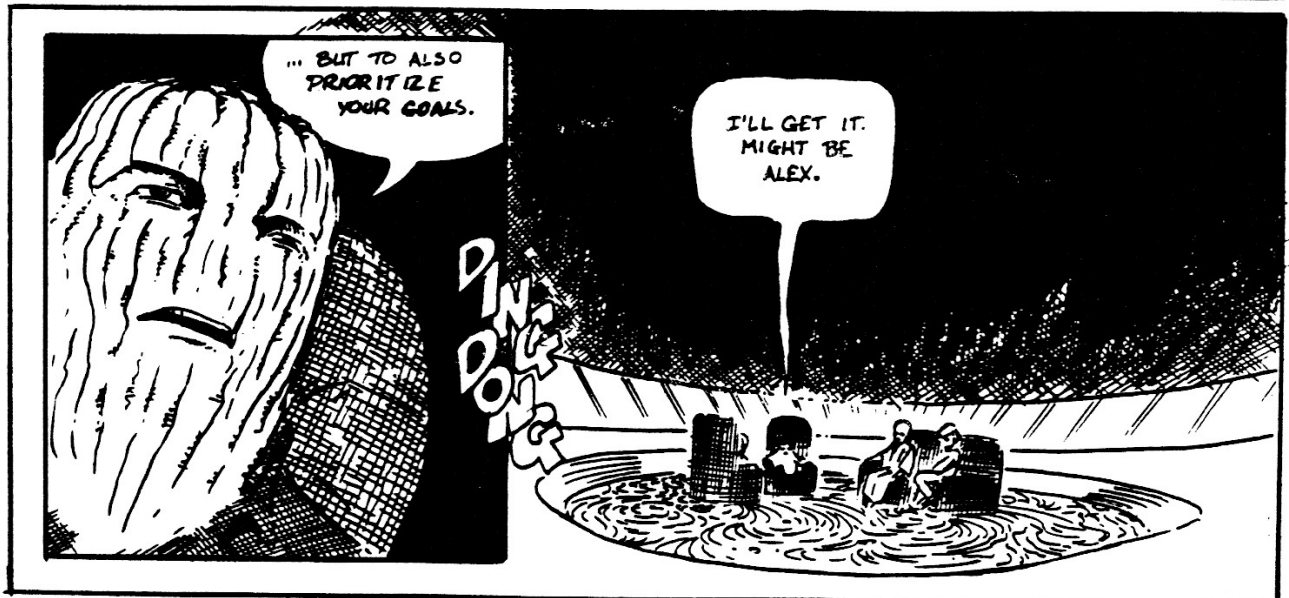
WE'VE HAD
A DIFFICULT
BEGINNING...
I--I DON'T WANT
A DIVORCE. WE
NEED SOME HELP,
THAT'S ALL. IT'S
HARD FOR FRANCOIS
TO ASK FOR HELP.
BUT I'M SURE IF

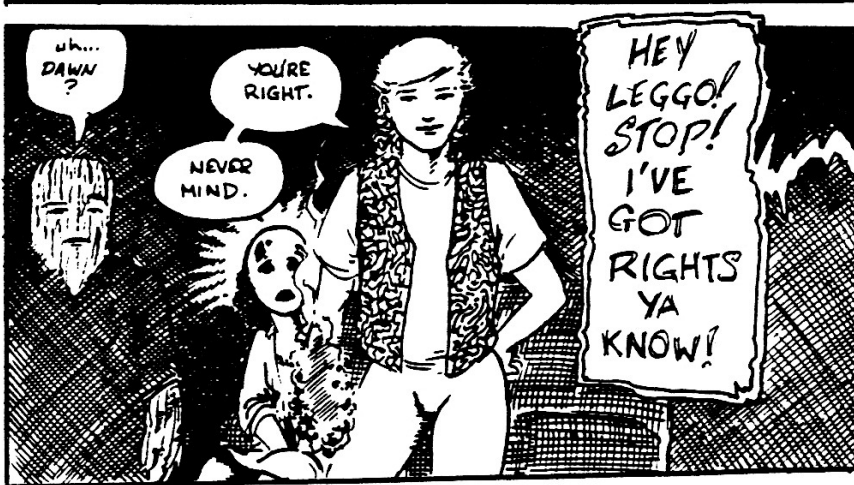
CO-DEPENDENCY.

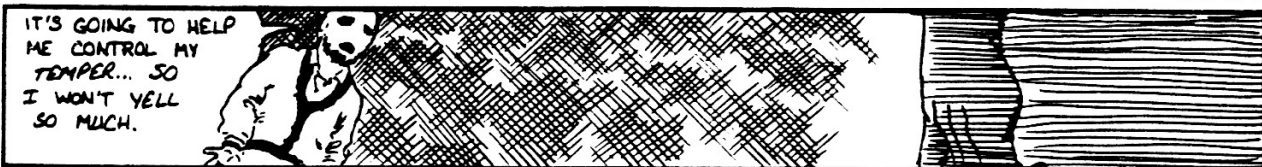
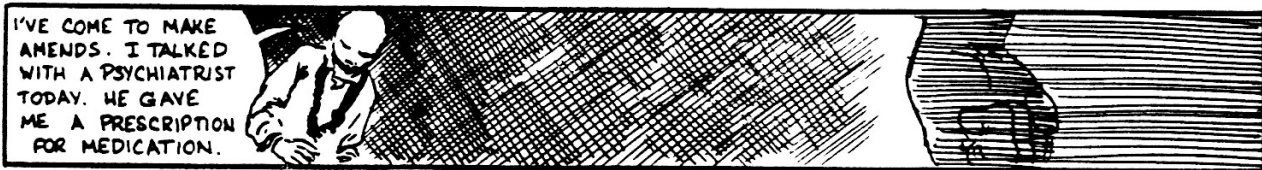
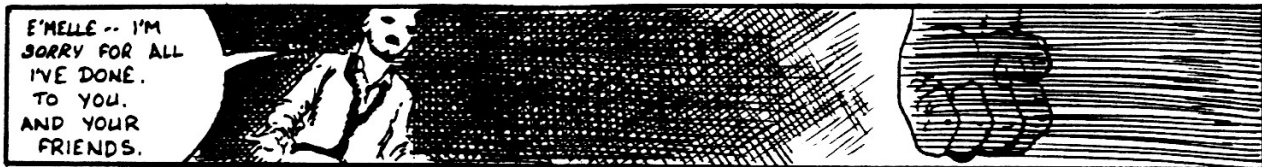
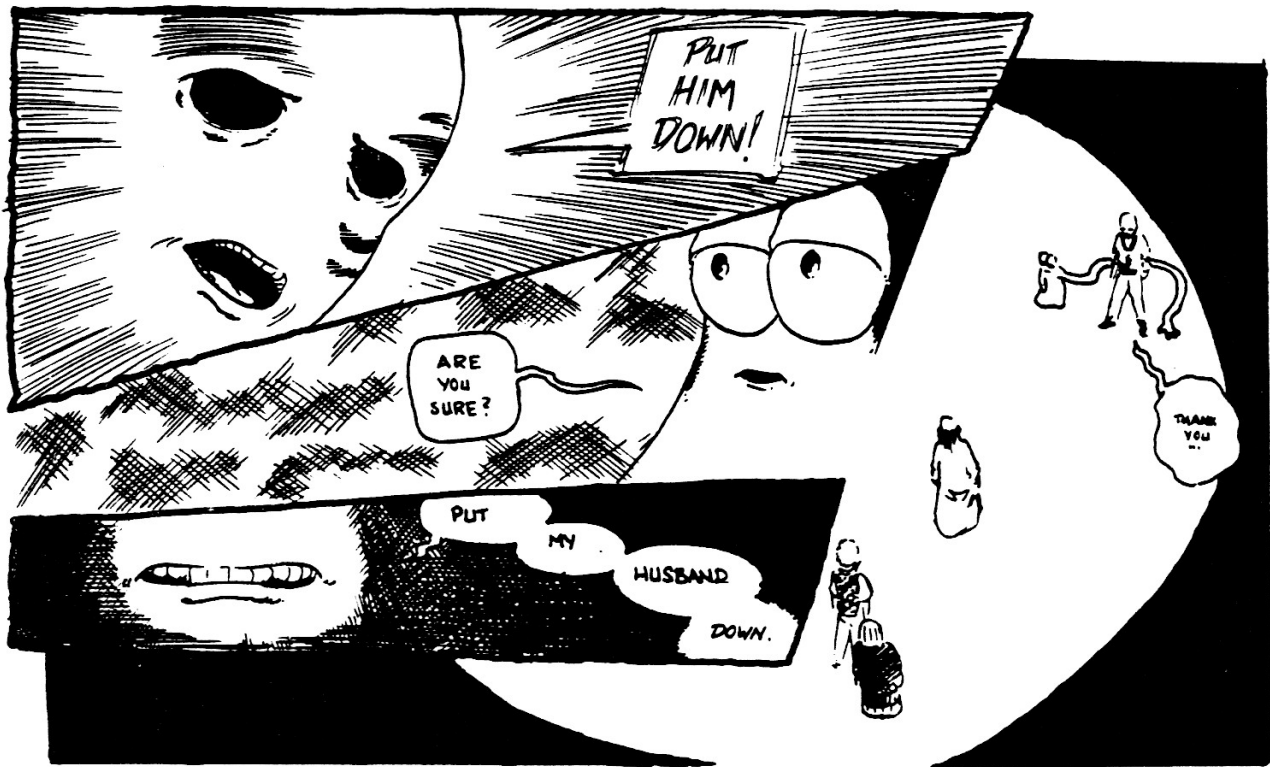




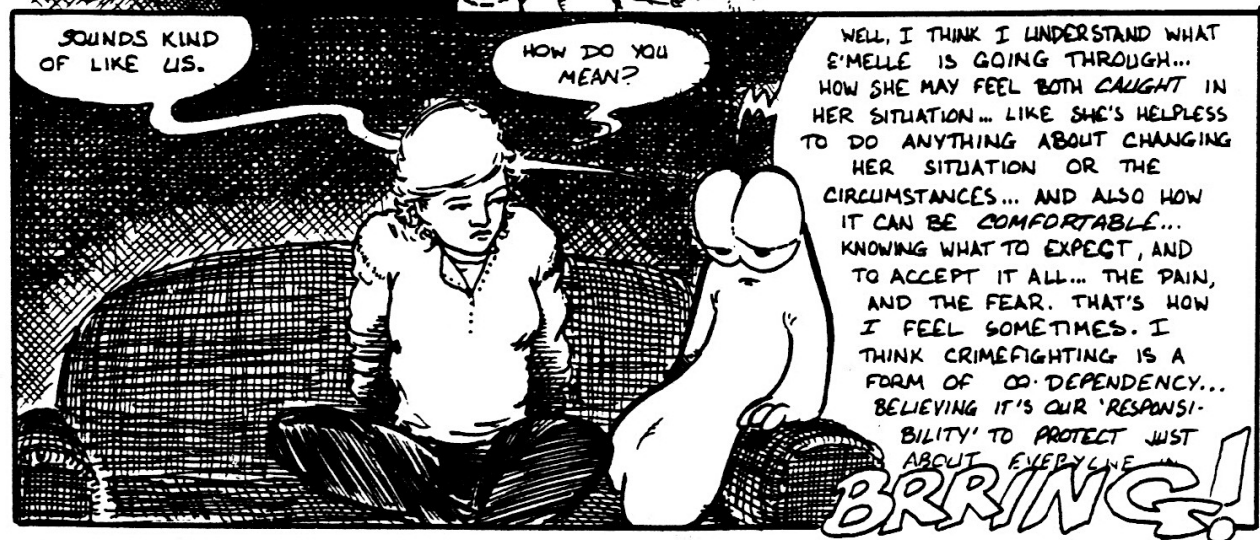
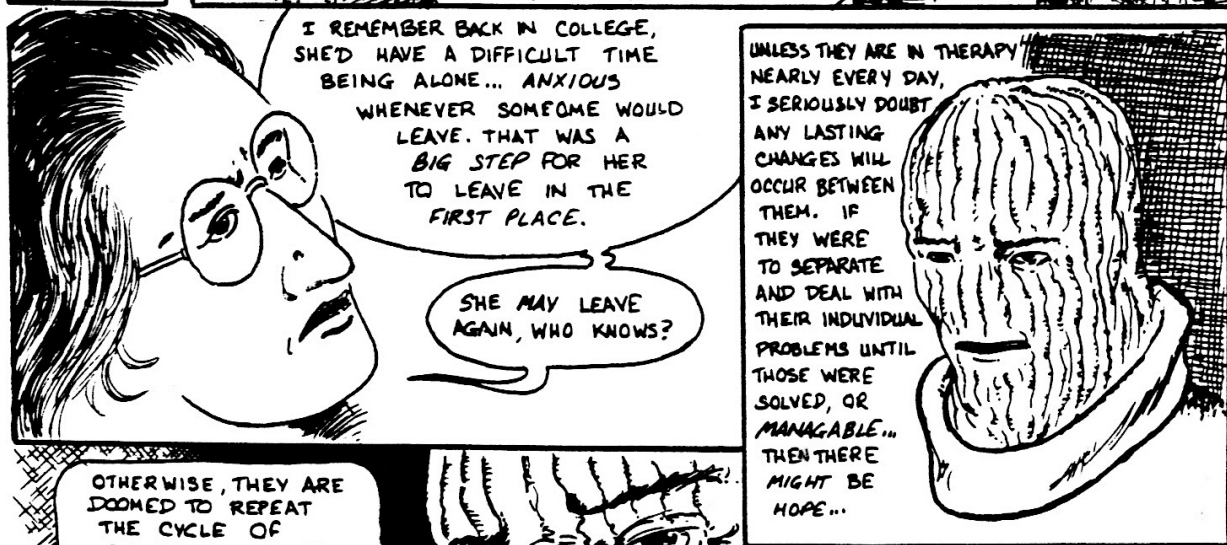














A year ago, it *really* began. Michelle, my ex-wife, and I had always had problems, just like so many other couples, but it was worse a year ago.

On February 2, 1993, while we were still married, I hit her. I was never formally charged for what I had done...although I stayed overnight at a nearby emergency community counseling clinic. I voluntarily attended a Men's Domestic Violence Group(as opposed to being ordered by the court, which is prevalent). That was when I really started thinking about writing this book.

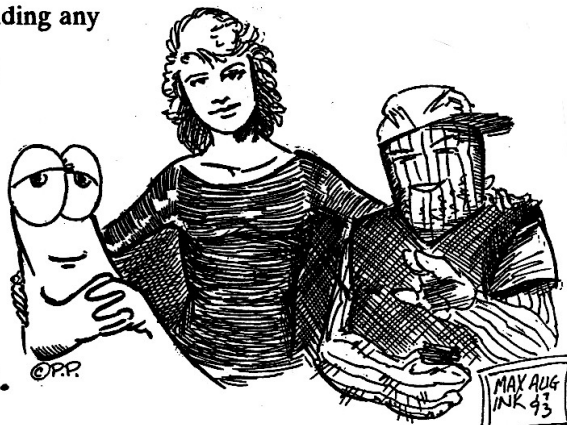
I never actually *punched* anyone before...and I won't allow myself to do that again. There was no justification for what I had done, there's no way to excuse my actions. I wasn't in any danger... I did not need to defend or attack in any physical way. What is wrong is wrong. Actually striking someone is much different than drawing it. Media exposes violence to it's audiences so often, it seems, without thought of consequence. I certainly don't think that seeing violence on television or in film or in comic books is directly related to people actually committing such acts...just, since my experience I've been able to regard violence with a greater amount of respect. It shouldn't be casually put into a story to "jazz it up," but should have a specific reason for being there. I purposely did not show the abuse the characters have gone through in the past, rather I had the characters talk about it and exposed their feelings.

The All Spongy Squadron is (in essence) a group of wanna-be pacifists. In the past, the Squadron has dealt with villains that meet the basic guidelines of "Super-Hero Comic Book Villain Form ND-094" (villain attempts/commits violent/criminal act, hero responds with verbal rebuke or violence to protect themselves or any citizens lurking in the background scenery). These characters have also had to deal with something that can be more menacing than the power cosmic...*feelings*. I've enjoyed reading Nik's dialogue when feelings grow beyond melodrama and into honest emotions. That's the way I tried to write this story. With honest emotions.

I look forward to hearing and reading any comments or questions you have to offer.

MAX INK
MAX
INK

SPECIAL THANKS TO MR. RON OLAH.
MAX CAN BE REACHED AT 276
MAINSAIL DR., WESTERVILLE OH 43081.



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(This time out, we're clearing away miscellaneous letters on AMOEBA #11-12 - Nik)

I really enjoyed the issues of *Amoeba Adventures* you sent. This is quite the complex little story you've got going... I'm curious as to what'll happen next, and that's not something I can say about any of the superhero-type comics on the stands today. You manage to walk that tightrope between satire, humor, drama, and action (and what a strange looking tightrope that is!) without losing the reader's interest.

I had mixed feelings about the massive #12. After the complex #11, I guess I was spoiled, but I didn't enjoy the shorter tales as much. However, I thought Troy Hickman's fifty year history of Prometheus was hilarious! Very cleverly written. I also really enjoyed the Chicagocon report. I was actually at that con, but only had a chance to touch base with small press briefly. Your memories brought a tear to my eye at the beautiful moments in that summer of '93.

Will Pfeifer
505 N. Market St. #5
Rockford, IL 61107

(Shame I missed you there, Will! Maybe in '94! Will puts out a swell satire called *Violent Man* everyone ought to send a buck to get immediately!)

I liked *Amoeba Adventures*. I can see by the cover on #11 that you've used rothboard or textured paper and a crayon that a camera photographs. It reminds me of pointillism (Er, sorry, but all I used was a felt tip pen and card stock paper!)

I liked Karate Kactus best. After reading the comic I rushed out and got a

salad for lunch!

Mark Bratton
9911 US Hwy. 41 S.
Gibsonston, FL 33534

(This is the coolest comment I've ever gotten.)

I'll do the Hickman thing and go point-by-point on *Amoeba Adventures* #12:

- The Rambunny story was cool. In some ways kind of cliched, but Troy said it's some older work of his.
- The Ninja Ant story was really nice. The panels were kinda scrunched together, but the story itself was done really well.
- Lynn Allen's was good. I got a kick out of it.
- John Hurley's story was O.K., but I thought it may have ended too soon. The art was done really well.
- Your story with Tony Lorenz was easily the best in the mix. Good characterization and development and Tony did a great job on the art!

Bob Elinskas
1805 Girard St.
Utica, NY 13501

I like *Amoeba Adventures* #11 a lot. To me one of the most intelligent and helpful things in it is the story so far introduction. I didn't feel like I had walked into the middle of a movie.

The art by Max Ink is excellent. The appearance of the characters reflects their personalities well. The panels all flow from one to another and the different shapes keep the pages from being a visual bore. The panels all have a reason for being a shape and are not an attempt from the artist to be "artistic." Expressions on faces reflect what is being said. I have seen a lot of books where that is not so.

The writing is also excellent. The dialogue is realistic (a problem I have) and fits each character. It doesn't seem out of place for that character and is different from other characters. In other words, all the characters don't "sound" like the same person.

Dan Beck
P.O. Box 235
Lehi, UT 84043

P.O. Box 2230
University, MS 38677

(Dan, a good tip for doing dialogue is ask yourself: would I feel stupid saying this? Half the characters in comics speak in unrealistic, stiff hyperbole and it shows when you try speaking it out loud. I try to combine minimalism and realism in dialogue. And now, the legendary Troy "Foot Fungus" Hickman on #12:)

OK, mi granda enchilada, it's going to take a while, but let me give you my comments on #12:

- Excellent pin-up by Brad Parnell. His Ninja Ant and (especially) Spif cannot be touched. Pardon my ignorance, but what comics work does this guy do?
- Swell pin-up by Dave Berns; looks like the guys mean business.
- Heh heh, "Love's Tender Flames" was a knee-slapper. Great work by you and the Hurler (hey, whatever happened to John, anyway?).
- Lynn Allen's Spif story was OK. I liked the idea, but I think it could've used your scripting. Hey, the alien's name was Zook, which makes him the third comic book alien named Zook (after the Martian Manhunter's sidekick and Tim Kelly's character).
- A ginchy, slapsticky Herr Heinous story (once again, where's John? You did something with him, didn't you, Nik? His body's in your trunk, isn't it?).
- "Summer's End" was a very nice

story, made even better by Tony's art. I really like what he does with inks.

Troy Hickman
3200 S. 9th St. Apt. A
Lafayette, IN 47905

(To answer your questions, Sir: Brad Parnell did *The Bat* #1 & 2 for Anthony Gray back in '91 or so; John's dropped out of small press for now to concentrate on his studies)

Amoeba #11 was good. Especially, in #6, page 5, you showed Rambunny already having misgivings about being in the team. I was sorry to see him go but since you'll be doing more with him I'll be looking forward to it.

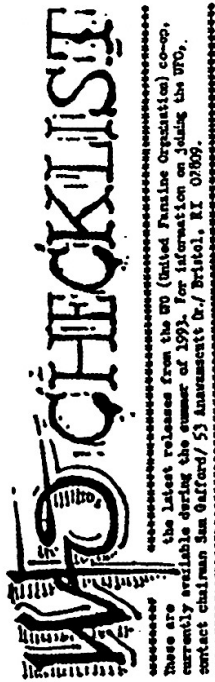
Showing the downtime between epic battles was well done also along with the humor, introspection and drama.

Peter Hopkins
APT. #6418
South 20th St.
Louisville, KY 40203

(Peter, you set me up for a plug! *Rambunny* #1 is set for July release, written by me, with pencils by Dave Berns and inks by Eric Hampton! Look for it soon!)

next issue: back to the insanity in





AMOEBIA ADVENTURES #12

(\$2.50 from Nik Dirgal/ P. O. Box 2230/ University/ MS/ 38677)

A jumbo anniversary issue as Amoebia Adventures celebrates its 50th year of publication! Huh? You gotta read it to believe it! Plenty of fun, spotlight strips, and action to make it worth the 50 year wait!

AAARGH #1

(\$2.25 from Jason Marcy/ 58 Connaught Ave./ S. Hamilton/Ontario L8M

3CS)

That "Tales from the Petro-Canada Man" guy strikes again with a autobiographical mini that allows Jay's unique personality to shine through. Learn all about Jay's new love and inability to sleep. Astound Jay with intimate personal details of his life when you meet him in person!

CREW OF THE WANDERLUST/GUYS 'N' GALS OF ANTHONY PLACE NOEL SPECIAL

(\$2.00 from Paul Quinn/ 459 Fifth Concession Rd. E./ Waterdown, Ontario/ Canada/ LOR 2H2)

The UFO's busiest creator strikes again with a flip book chronicling holiday stories from both of his strips. Paul's trademark humor and art are in full abundance and a good time is had by all. WARNING: Not suitable for GRINCHES!

FANTASY THEATER #1

(\$.75 from J. Kevin Carrier/ 8913 Eldora Dr./ Cincinnati/ OH/ 45236)

J. Kevin combines his mini comics under one title with this new publication containing new stories of GLORY and SPARKY (from LADY SPECTRA AND SPARKY). A unique blend of themes that works well and will hopefully calm the legion of fans begging for more! But wait! How much longer until the second issue?!

FUTURO TIERRA #19

(\$1.00 from Tony Lorenz/ 8708 Friendship Court/ Tampa/ FL 33634)

The adventure continues as our intrepid heroes take to the sea in a makeshift boat only to suffer exposure and storms. Will Steve survive the rough ocean? Even if he does, what awaits him? Another great installment to one of small presses best series.

LOSING YER HEAD #1 & #2

(Send a stamp for each to Joe Meyer/306 W 94th St./ Rm 235/ New York/ NY/ 10025-6828)

Joe Meyer strikes out into more strange territory with this mini of a man

who awakens one day and finds that his head is missing! But how does he talk? All this and more strangeness await in this incredibly inexpensive zine!

POWERWUS #20

(\$1.00 from Jason Marcy/ 58 Connaught Ave./ S. Hamilton/Ontario L8M 3CS)

This is the big one! Powerwus finally has his showdown with the evil DARK GAVIN! But who will survive? The cataclysm continues in this massive 51 page tale from the talents of Jason Marcy and Joe Meyer! Get in on the fun before Powerwus goes independent and everyone's fighting over copies of this issue!

SMALL PRESS REPORT #8

(\$1.25 from Ronald & Theresa Fleming/ 830 Western Ave. #3068/Monroe MI 48161)

Those apa-happy Flemings bring their acclaimed news/review zine to the UFO with this current issue. Chock full of news, letters, and reviews, SPR is an essential newsletter for every small presser.

THE UFO JAM

(\$1.25 from Steve Keeter/ 513 N. Summerlin Ave. / Orlando/ FL 32803)

Literally years in the making! This epic tale spans generations of UFO members including work from many artists who have passed through the group. A strange, unique conglomeration, this zine showcases some of the strangest material from UFO members in quite some time!

TETRAGRAMMATION FRAGMENTS! (THE UFO NEWSLETTER)

(\$2.00 for sample copy from Sam Gafford/ 53 Anawamscutt Drive/ Bristol/ RI/ 02809)

TFI is the Official Newsletter of the United Fanzine Organization, the longest running and most prestigious co-op in the alternative press. Each issue is loaded with columns from the members, news of upcoming publications, artwork, and much more. The current membership includes such small press luminaries as Bob Elinskas, J. Kevin Carrier, Kel Crum, Michael Hegg, Rick Howe, S. E. Mills, and many more. Find out why this co-op is growing by leaps and bounds!

THE UFO CATALOG #1

(FREE! from Sam Gafford/ 53 Anawamscutt Drive/ Bristol/ RI/ 02809)

At long last, a UFO CATALOG is available . . . and it's a whopping 52 pages long! Included are pages and pages of ads for UFO publications and an explanation of what the co-op is all about. Many, many cover reproductions and some original art too!

THE 1993 TF COMIC ANNUAL

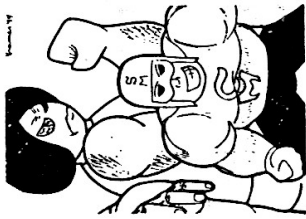
(\$2.00 from Sam Gafford/ 53 Anawamscutt Drive/ Bristol/ RI/ 02809)

This is it . . . THE blockbuster comic event of the year. TWO big volumes and 116 pages of comic strips from every single member of the UFO co-op! 23 strips including Jim Pack's Martian Cat, Paul Quinn's Doc Sapphire, Jason Marcy's Powerwus, Kel Crum's Ronald Gray, Steve Keeter's "Deep Poetry," Larry Blake's "Late Night! Metal," Anthony Gray's "Dinosaur Man," Ian Shires' "Dungar the Barbarian, Jim Main & Sam Gafford's "The Ultimate Gimmick," John MacLeod's "Closet Punk," and much, much more. If you buy only one small press comic this year, this is the one that has it all!

LATEST RELEASES FROM THE SMALL PRESS SYNDICATE

For more information on the Small Press Syndicate, write to Chairman J. Kevin Carrier / 8913 Eldora Dr. / Cincinnati, OH 45236

Adriana Comics - Small-Faced Studios 1994 Promo Card Set
9 Trading cards, 50¢ from Travis Kramer/P.O. Box 185/Lake Placid, NY 12946



An exclusive set of character shots and previews of upcoming books like **Nightfox Slug Fest** and **The Mitofo Adventure**; plus some surprise "guest stars" and randomly-inserted chase cards. Collect 'em all!

Amoeba Adventures #12
78pp digest, \$2.50, from Nik Diga / P.O. Box 2230 / University, MS 38677
This massive collection celebrates 50 years of Nik Diga's weirdo super-team (no, really). Included are all-new stories by Hickman, Lurnley, Allen, Hurley, Lorenz and Diga himself. Not to mention a ton of pin-ups, commentary, convention photos, and more! The biggest bargain in comics!

Amoeba Adventures #13
24pp digest, \$1.50, from Nik Diga / P.O. Box 2230 / University, MS 38677
The All-Spongy Squadron tries to spend a quiet evening at a posh restaurant. But

there's no rest for the anthropomorphic when they face Herr Heinrich... the deadliest lounge act of all its action, humor, romance, and cockroaches from the pen of Nik Diga.

The Amoeba Art of Max Ink #1
16pp mini, 50¢, from Nik Diga / P.O. Box 2230 / University, MS 38677
A collection of never-before-published sketches of the Amoeba Adventures gang by the one and only Max Ink.
Includes previews of new characters and upcoming storylines. Check out the cartoony-yet-moody style of this fantastic artist.

Bob & Hedgehog: "Let Us Play Gaymes"
8pp mini, 30¢ + stamp from Tim Kelly / P.O. Box 512 / Amityville, NY 11701
Tim Kelly, Bill Elliot, Bob Hedgehog, Jam, Refrigerators, Pudding, Acid, Guitars, Morons, Blenders, Weird, Twisted, Hilarious. Buy it.

Chicago Comiccon - A Small Press Celebration
11" x 17" poster, \$1.50, from Nik Diga / P.O. Box 2230 / University, MS 38677
When small pressers get together, a jam drawing is sure to follow. This masterpiece features the work of over 20 artists, including Diga, Mills, Fezzell, Nemo, Frushour, Blake, Shires, Courts, O'Donnell, Carrier, Hyland, Pack, and more. more, more! No wall is complete without it!

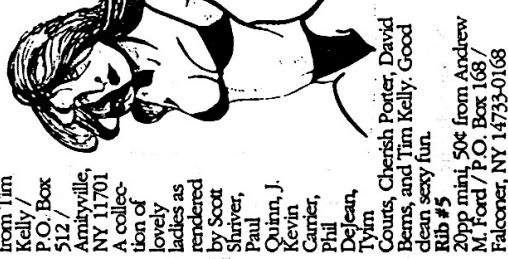
Cool Comic Theatre
8pp mini, 30¢ + stamp from Tim Kelly / P.O. Box 512 / Amityville, NY 11701

Captain Amityville TV Head!
MiniCopl and Masked Super United to save the world from the threat of exploding bananas! And Tim Kelly, Amy Frushour, Terry Krey, and Brian Krey have united to bring you this four-man jam comic!

Espionage #1
8pp mini, For Trade Only from Travis Kramer/P.O. Box 185/Lake Placid, NY 12946
They're lovely. They're lethal. Travis Kramer (with a little help from Dave Bems) spotlights "beautiful women with loaded weapons" in this slick mini-portfolio.

Jip Book One
32pp mid-magazine, \$2, from Nik Diga / P.O. Box 2230 / University, MS 38677
It's the comic strip that's taken the University of Mississippi by storm! In the tradition of Doonesbury, Bloom County, and Hephzibah, Nik Diga's college critters party, romance, and laugh their way through the halls of academia.

"Citizen Kane II"
8pp mini, For Trade Only, from Tim Kelly / P.O. Box 512 / Amityville, NY 11701
A collection of lovely ladies as rendered by Scott Shriver, Paul Quinn, J. Kevin Carrier, Phil DeJean, Tylin Courts, Cherish Porter, David Bems, and Tim Kelly. Good clean sexy fun.



"Playing Politics" Part II of V.
Where politics 89 can religion be far behind? As jamock tries to turn his people back to the "old ways", will he also risk bringing back the forgotten horrors of... The Shaman? Free calendar with every order!

Self Publisher #21
28pp tabloid, \$2.50, from Ian Shires / P.O. Box 360041 / Strongsville, OH 44136
Shout it from the rooftops...the legendary reviewzine has returned! It's got news, letters, tips, a Chicago Con report from Mr. Bozo Killer himself, and reviews, reviews reviews! All wrapped up in a mind-boggling Jeff Snee cover...don't miss it!

Small Press Feedback #13
52pp digest, \$2 (\$15 for a 12-issue subscription) from Bob Elinskas / 1805 Girard St. / Ulica, NY 13501
The man behind **Brushed** cover and is interviewed. Plus a preview of Amy Frushour's latest, strips by Carrier and Mallory, and Troy Hickman's historical / hysterical look at small press through the ages. SPT is going places...now's the time to hop aboard!

Small Press Report #9
12pp magazine, \$2 (\$18 for a 12-issue subscription) from Theresa & Ronald-Thomas Fleming / 843 Green Road, Apt. 306 / Ypsilanti, MI 48198
Meet the architects of the new Small Press League, S.E. Mills, Michael Hegg, and Chris Terry, in a frank and funny interview. Also: Chris Erwin on why in-fighting is "in", reviews, news, letters, comics, and the last word (honest!) on CBG.

Small Press Report #10
12pp magazine, \$2 (\$9 for a 6-issue subscription) from Theresa & Ronald-Thomas Fleming / 843 Green Road, Apt. 306 / Ypsilanti, MI 48198
Nik Diga and Chris Erwin choose their Top 10 Comics of 1993, and Bruce Sweeney's long-running "Underground Station" column joins the SPR team. And as always, there's news, reviews, the invaluable "Marketplace Update", and cool cartoons.

Snake Eyes #1
20pp digest, \$1.25 (\$4.00 for a 4-issue subscription) from Allan Angel / P.O. Box 32231 / San Jose, CA 95152
A sleek, high-tech superheroine takes on amored assassins in this powerful debut issue. Explosions, energy-blasts, and dizzying rooftop acrobatics abound. Allan's amazingly detailed artwork will blow you away.

Starchild #2
16pp digest, \$1.25 from Allan Angel / P.O. Box 32231 / San Jose, CA 95152
ADULTS ONLY. Age statement required. In this dark erotic fantasy, you'll meet Cherry, a snake-woman with... unusual tastes. When she conjures up a "daughter" in her magic cauldron, the fun begins. Bizarre, intense, and delightfully not for the timid.

It can tell you only one thing. You ain't no lady.



Tim And Amy's Outback Jam
8pp mini, 30¢ + stamp from Tim Kelly / P.O. Box 512 / Amityville, NY 11701

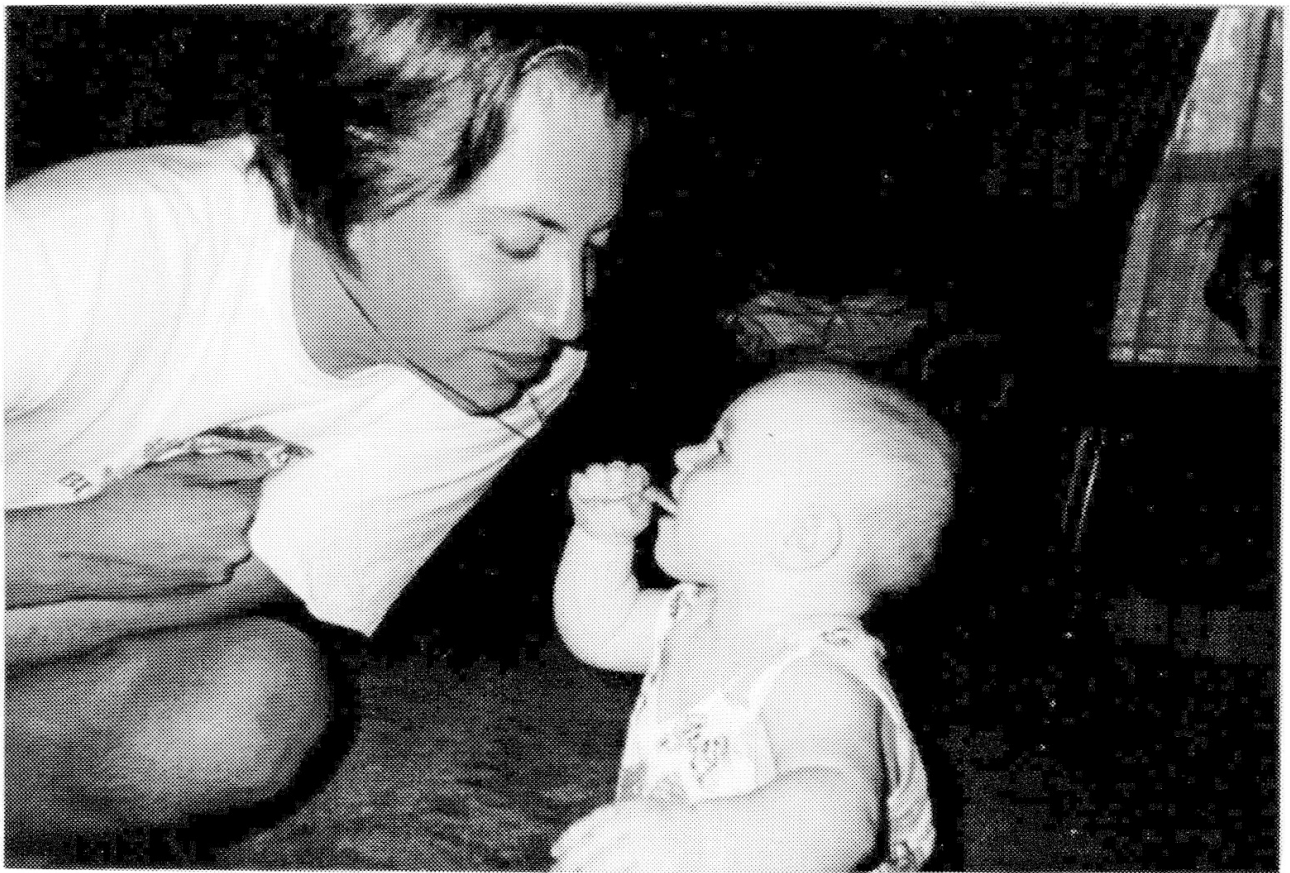


Frushour and Kelly are at it again. When these Triars of Tomfoolery join forces, no funny bone is safe. Don't miss Amy's acid flashback, and Tim's final word on that alleged "Ten and Stimp" influence.

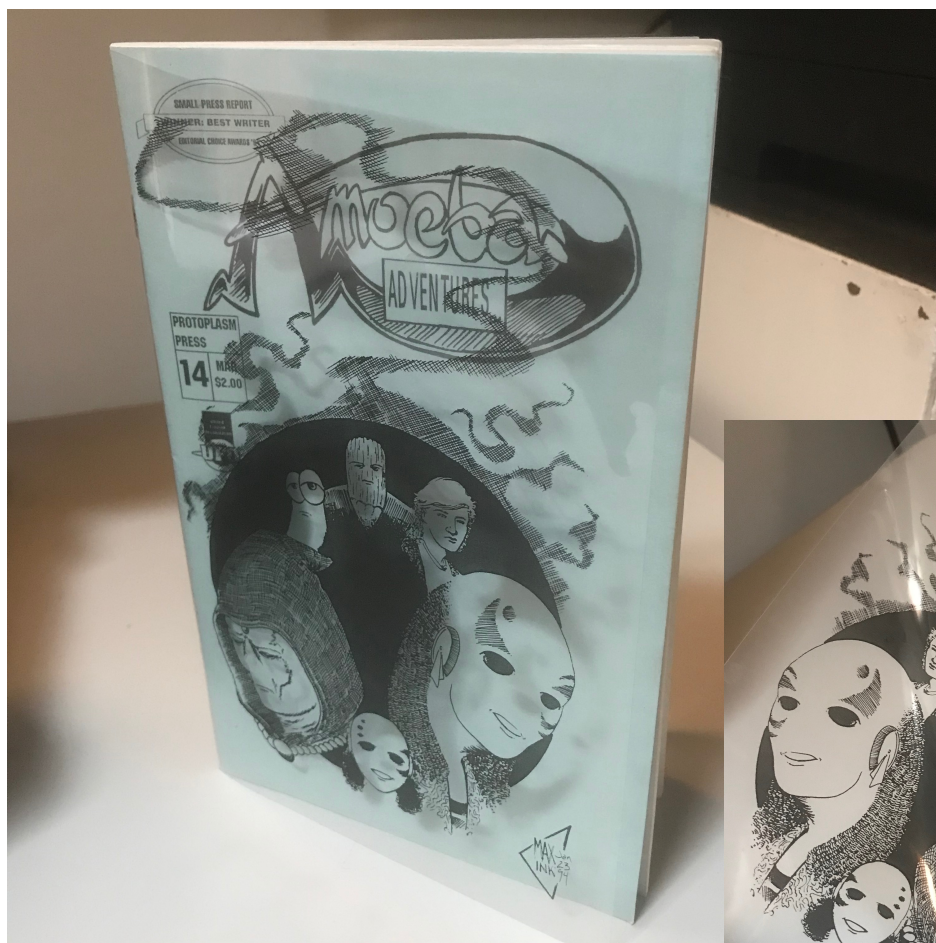
Tom And Rabbit #5: "Lord Of The Flaws"
8pp mini, 30¢ + stamp from Tim Kelly / P.O. Box 512 / Amityville, NY 11701
Schneitz! Another Elliot / Kelly, jam? Can you stand it? Is Freddie Mercury God? Do you realize how hard it is to write a plot synopsis of this hysterically funny, yet totally incoherent comic?

Rap Sheet
Sample issue \$2 (\$12 for a 12-issue subscription) from J. Kevin Carrier/8913 Eldora Dr./Cincinnati, OH 45236
The official newsletter of the Small Press Syndicate! Each monthly issue has news, tips, columns, and all the latest releases from the hottest talents in small press!

Small Press Syndicate 1993 Co-Op Catalog
20pp digest, \$1, from J. Kevin Carrier/8913 Eldora Dr./Cincinnati, OH 45236
All the great comics put out in the last year by the talented members of the SPS, assembled in one place for your shopping convenience. From superheros to funny animals, from slice-of-life to satire, there's something for everyone.



SPECIAL 2020 BONUS SECTION

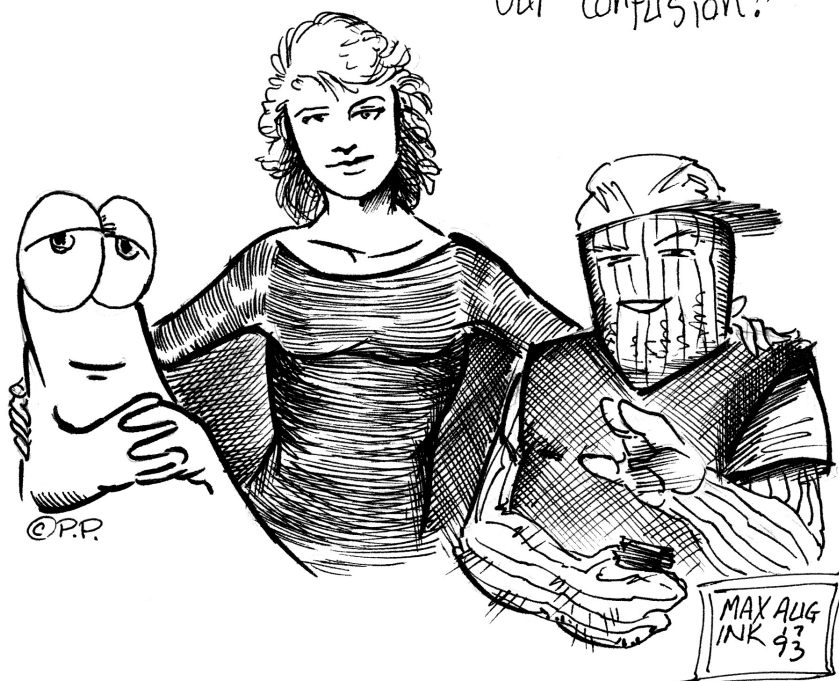


It was 1993, the peak of the "gimmick comic book cover" era and I worked at a copy shop part-time, so for some reason we decided to give the first printing of Amoeba Adventures #14 an acetate cover.



Don't ever mix
Dr Pepper with
Beer. Yuck.

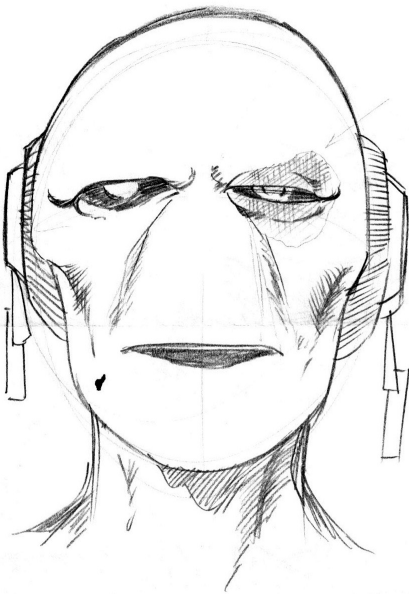
The Stars of
"Evidence of
Our Confusion!"



It worked... OK. I printed Max's art on the overlay and the logo, etc on the inside which gave it an interesting "smoky" look. I remember the stupid plastic acetate jammed repeatedly in the machines and I never did a gimmick cover again.

Domestic
Violence

bruise.



TROCHI'S Niece

(I didn't even know
he had a sibling!)



This was the first and only issue of Amoeba Adventures done entirely by another writer. The very personal story was Max's idea (see his afterword), spinning out of the death of a character, Trochi, briefly seen in Amoeba Adventures #6. Max created a family for the late Trochi.

In these very early letters and sketches between us, Max outlined some ideas for the story that would become "Evidence of Our Confusion."

There's a funeral for Trochi (in his honor... since there's not much left of him to put in a casket!) Trochi's sister and niece are there. Spif + the squadron and anybody else too.

Trochi's Niece (TN) is an abused wife. Her husband suffers from a mental illness that I'll go into detail later (another time). He's getting medicine for the illness, but he is denying his abusive behavior.

TN has her own troubles too, I'll tell you more about those when I figure them out. She's an interior decorator.

Ninja Ant + Kyoko want opinions on decorating their 'gondo'. Spif tells them about T.N.. Spif gives her a call, husband answers (very rude) - hangs up.

After the party, Spif + Kyoko (NA "on duty") go visit T.N.

Husband answers the door. Says "She ain't seeing no super heroes nor any oriental ant ladies today. G'bye" SLAM.

Raoul + Spunky have tagged along (somewhat discreetly) and are volunteered to wait across the street until husband leaves, then call Spif on beeper.

Few funny panels/page of R+S waiting (maybe on a roof?) Husband leaves call spif.

At left is a very early take considerably different than the final story - E'Melle was a niece, not Trochi's daughter - and other characters like Ninja Ant and Raoul appeared.

The final story focused much more tightly on Pro, Dawn and Karate Kactus with a bit of Spif, and for my money the small cast made the final story feel much more intimate.

Later on, via phone calls and more letters, the final shape of "Evidence of our Confusion" came into focus, as seen on the following pages. I helped oversee the script and suggested plot changes a bit but otherwise this issue was all Max's baby.

Nick,

This is the letter I said
that I'd write you...

Cerebus (the cat) is sniffing
around the studio... now he
just laid down.

Down to the nitty gritty.

I'm a little shaky on that title:

"Falling Between the Cracks"

Pages Plot.

1-5. Cemetery; Pro + Spif check
out Montey's grave, then
Spif brings Pro to Trachi's
grave. Intra - Emelle.

Prologue

Time Passes.

Pages

6-12

Spif leaving for conference in
Spif Plane (I'm going to make new name)

Couple days later, Emelle calls "Amoeba
Cave"... wants to talk to spif.
PRO, KK + Dawn go visiting Emelle.

Emelle's townhouse - she explains
some more about what's gone on

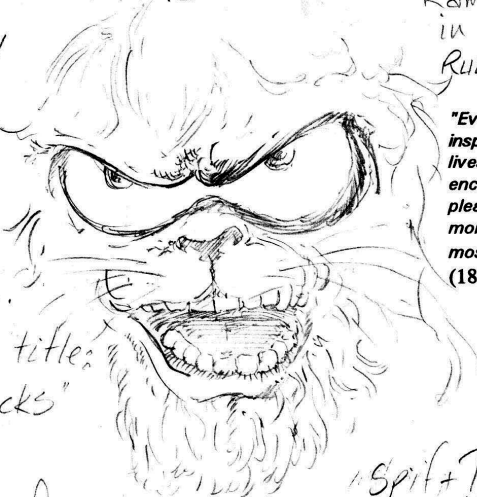
Francios (husband) is verbally abusive.
Emelle has hit Francios... but
he has not hit HER.

I will go into greater detail about
this another time... But Emelle does
not reveal that she has hit Francios (yet).

Emelle is afraid Francios will hit
her. But he won't.

Prologue - Dawn and you

PAGE 1



Rambunny when he was
in Vietnam! - Hippies.
RULE! PEACE BROTHER!

"Even the death of friends will
inspire us as much as their
lives... their memories will be
encrusted over with sublime and
pleasing thoughts, as their
monuments are overgrown with
moss." - Henry David Thoreau
(1817-1862)

Spif + Trachi's / Emelle meeting

Back when spif was a student
at Empire State University,
Trachi's daughter was in
same class as spif... They
became friends with some
common interests (not romantically).
Got to know the family.

Trachi, Emelle and
brother (Army type) (mom passed away)
After a short time Emelle
became distant to family but
spif was fascinated? by Trachi's
special Abilities and they
spoke a lot about philosophy
and history.

As time went on, and spif
became a doctor, they still
maintained contact... although distant...
But when spif became a "super hero"
spif REALLY drifted apart from
friends... Trachi included.

After she explains this stuff:

Pro: What do you want us to do?

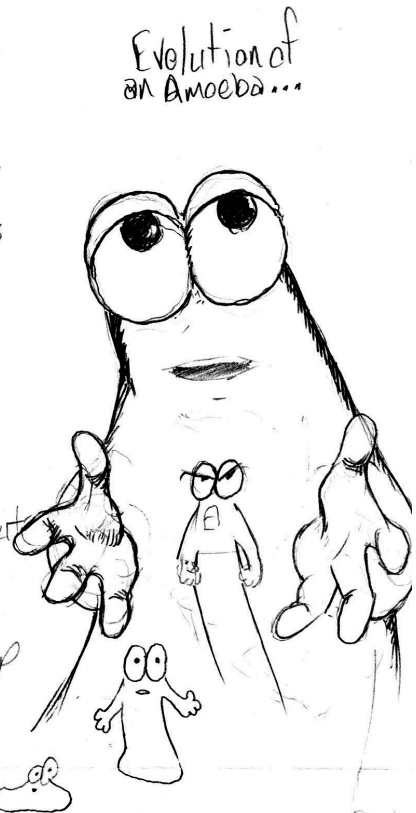
E'm: Protect me... give my daughter and myself shelter.

Down: What about shelters for battered women?"

E'm: He hasn't hit me. The police say there's nothing they can do... I've tried to get to the shelters.. but they turn us away. (starts to cry.)

KK: Well... perhaps. It's not our policy to get involved with domestic cases, see about getting marriage counseling for the both of you... or perhaps some support groups that offer the 12 step method.

we'll keep this confidential
Call us if you need anything more.



Squad goes back to Cave + is visited by N.A. K.K. meditating.

NA + KK talk (further develop relationship... never quite fully understood them myself.)

14-17 Pro + Down talk about E'melle, anger + violence
Down talks about course in college, Responsible for self..
can't control others... codependency.. 12 steps

Prometheus thought 12 steps only in Al-Anon (Alcoholics Anonymous)
— in mid conversation they are interrupted by KK over loudspeaker.

E'melle + daughter have infiltrated headquarters.

She's afraid terribly; crying + almost screaming... admits that she has hit Francois.

I Love writing this stuff..
Nik, I'm make the script up
as I'm going right now!

E'melle

"Even the death of friends will inspire us as much as their lives... their memories will be encrusted over with sublime and pleasing thoughts, as their monuments are overgrown with moss." -Henry David Thoreau (1817-1862)

TITLE

"Evidence
of our
confusion"

Song by Chris
Squire
Billy
Sherwood
- Affirmative Music

Francios

MAX
INK
JULY
27
'93

AMOEBA ADVENTURES #14

There is a common feeling amongst the small press that superheros are unwelcome. With so many crowding the mainstream, why bother to perpetuate them? Luckily for us lovers of great comics, Nik Dirga and Max Ink don't feel that way.

Perhaps it's a certain way of looking at things, perhaps it's just the fact that they use the freedom of small press to probe areas of superheroing that most people don't even think about. Whatever it is results in what is beyond compare the absolute BEST superhero comic in small press and one that easily competes with some of the big companies.

The heros in question are the "All-Spongy Squadron" consisting of such off-beat heros as Prometheus the Protoplasm, Ninja Ant, Raoul the Boy Cockroach, RamBunny, Mr. Spif, Dawnstar, and the inimitable Karate Kactus. Sure it all sounds silly but Dirga's writing manages to make it all believable and interesting. Balancing humor with drama, Dirga has created some truly unique characters who have developed an extraordinary amount of reality. In past issues, they have had to deal with AIDS, loss of identity, death, responsibility, and overwhelming power. Throughout all of it, they have shown humanity and emotion that many four color heros

can only dream of.

Combined with the excellent art of Max Ink, **AMOEBA ADVENTURES** is a must have read. Ink's art, already impressive, has grown progressively over the last few issues and displays a remarkable amount of talent and discipline. A unique stylist, Ink takes particular interest in playing with page and panel layout. While this can be a little confusing at times, it is never boring. With this recent issue, Ink steps into his own as he handles both the writing and art chores on this massive 40 page tale.

"Evidence of Our Confusion" is one of the best issues of this title to date both for the obvious talent of Max Ink and the emotional difficulty of its subject. One of Mr. Spif's old friends comes to the Squadron looking for an escape from domestic violence. From there, the story takes a few surprising (and unusual) twists as the characters debate taking involvement and their different reactions to the situations. Prometheus, in particular, is having a difficult time following the multi-issue "Details of Design" storyline in which he deliberately killed the architect of his torture, Master Macabre. Finding his actions becoming progressively violent, Prometheus wonders if he can ever recover his peaceful existence. His tale is nicely transposed with that of Mr. Spif's friend, E'melle, as both

Amoeba Adventures #14 got some very kind reviews around the small press scene, including this nice lengthy look at left written by the late Sam Gafford in his reviewzine Sez Who?

Factcheet Five, the holy bible of the scene, also weighed in, below left, and Tony Isabella in the Comics Buyers' Guide in his "Tony's Tips" column, bottom.

search for answers to their conflict.

The special nature of this book is confirmed by a personal note from Max Ink at the end of the story which makes the tale all the more poignant. I can think of no better justification for the existence of small press than this title. Intelligently written, excellently drawn, and beautifully produced . . . and all for a few bucks. You won't find a better deal in comics today.

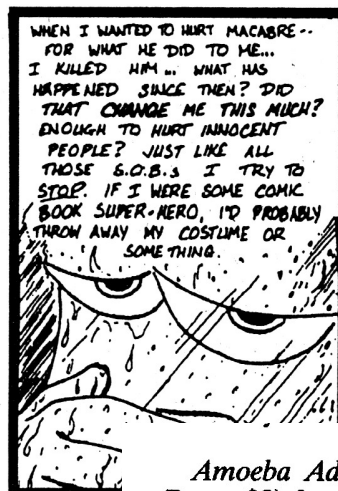
AMOEBA ADVENTURES #14 is a 44 page b/w digest comic with special enhanced cover and is available for \$2 from Nik Dirga at Protoplasm Press, P.O. Box 2230, University, Ms., 38677-2230. If you don't buy this book **NOW**, then you really aren't interested in reading good comics! Nik has copies of the previous issues still available (write for details) and might still have copies of the hilarious and incomparable "Dr. Phlegm" issue (with more great art by Max Ink) which has to be read to be believed.

•AMOEBA ADVENTURES•

#14, March 1994. An ongoing comic with an interesting cast of characters, including a bug-eyed cafe owner, humanoids, aliens, an amoeba and a cactus-man. This issue is a domestic mystery tackling the issue of spousal violence. Excellent writing, great artwork, absorbing story, characters with depth and personality. Need I say more? Get the catalog before ordering back issues. Recommended! Trades OK/back issues available/prints letters/no submissions. Price:2. Subs:\$6 for 4 issues. Nik Dirga, Protoplasm Press, P.O. Box 2230, University, MS 38677 (44 pages/digest/MIR)

ANGRY COMICS The Big Book of Bad Asses

FACTSHEET FIVE #52 unny guy. He's also rude, hat's why I like him. *Angry* is great. Sure it's offensive and loutish and if you're the sensitive PC type



★
Amoeba Adventures #14 (Protoplasm Press; \$2) features a team of off-beat super-heroes called the All Spongy Squadron. Creator and publisher Max Dirga usually writes and draws this small-press comic book, but this issue is by Max Ink. "Evidence of Our Confusion" is, given the outlandish heroes, a surprisingly sensitive look at spousal abuse. As with far too many comic books of late, the new reader will be baffled by the cast of characters. I'm not really sure exactly what it is the Squadron does or who its members are. Though the tale desperately needed a "what has gone before" page, it gets my recommendation in spite of this omission. You can get a copy by sending \$2.50 (postpaid) to: Protoplasm Press, P.O. Box 2230, University, Miss. 38677.

★