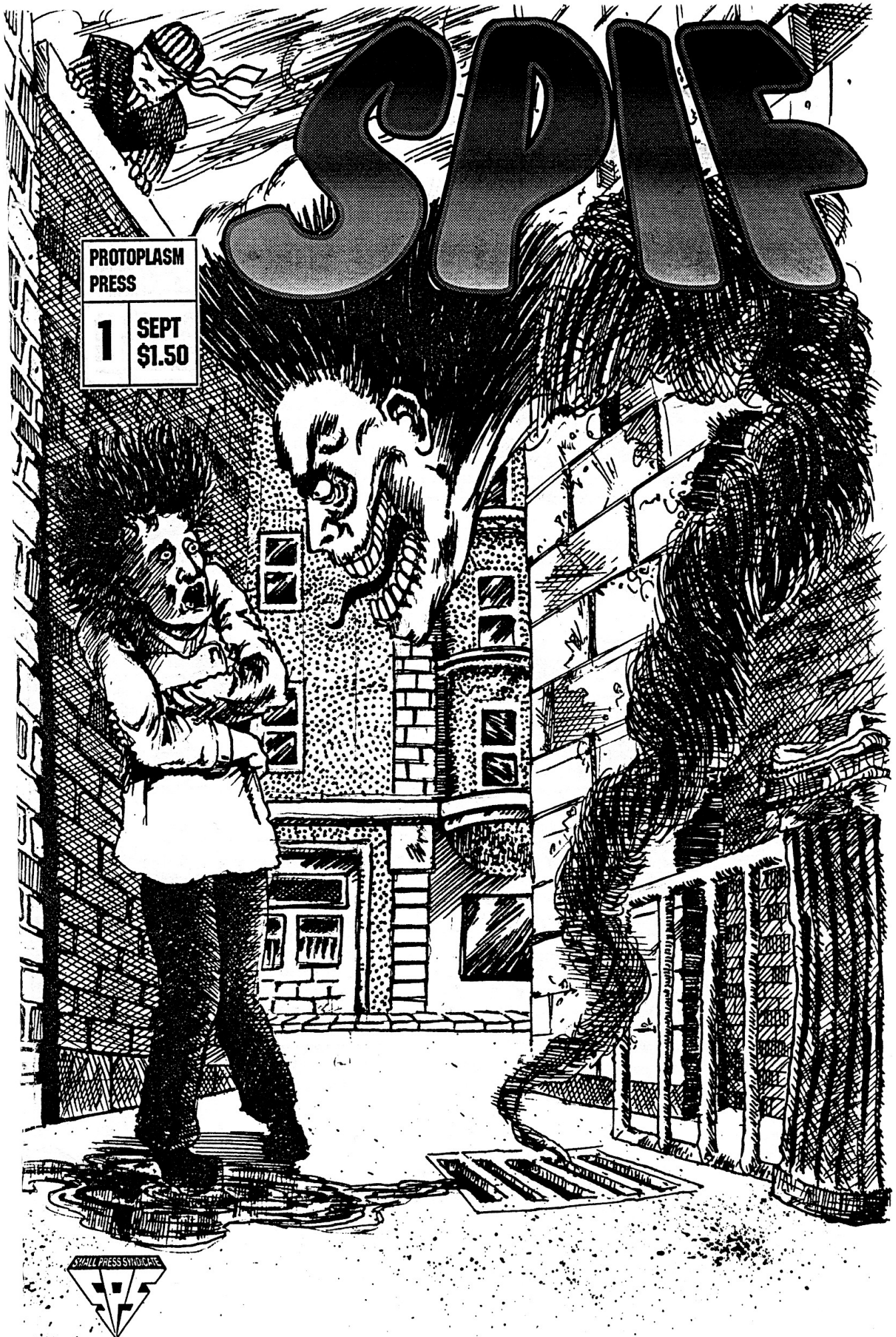


SPIT

PROTOPLASM
PRESS

1 SEPT
\$1.50



Spif

INTRODUCTION Troy Hickman

Nik asked me to say a few words about why I wanted to write Spif, about what drew me to the character. For once in my life, an answer comes easy: Lenny Skutnik. What's that? You say the name doesn't ring a bell? Well, when I think of great heroes throughout history, I think of people like Thomas Jefferson, Abraham Lincoln, Mohandas Gandhi, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., and Lenny Skutnik. That last one isn't a very heroic-sounding name, is it? And yet on January 13, 1982, Lenny Skutnik, a bystander in Washington D.C., threw off his boots and coat and dived into the freezing waters of the Potomac River. He was attempting to save the flight attendant of an Air Florida Boeing 737 jetliner which had struck the 14th Street Bridge. He didn't have to do it; he could've done what many would have done and chose "not to get involved," but he didn't. Lenny Skutnik jumped into the icy current, regardless of the fact that he was risking his life, because he was there and he was needed. To my way of thinking, that's what makes a hero: a problem that desperately needs to be solved, and the courage of an individual willing to take the challenge, even if the odds are against him.

That's why I have such an affinity for Spif. I see him as the potential hero in each of us. Here you have a guy who doesn't have the kind of power his teammates possess, who doesn't really have anything going for him except his own brainpower, courage, and will to triumph, and yet he's right there with the rest of the group, on the front lines in the fight against evil. As much as I love every member of the Squadron, I have to say that Spif's my favorite. Cosmic powers and a glitzy costume can dress up a character nicely, but a good heart and strong convictions are what makes him a hero.

Yeah, Lenny Skutnik's not a very heroic-sounding name, but then, I guess neither is Cyrone Spifinov. Luckily, it's not what a man is called that determines his worth, but rather what call he chooses to answer.

— Troy Hickman, May 1994

POST-PRODUCTION Nik Dirga

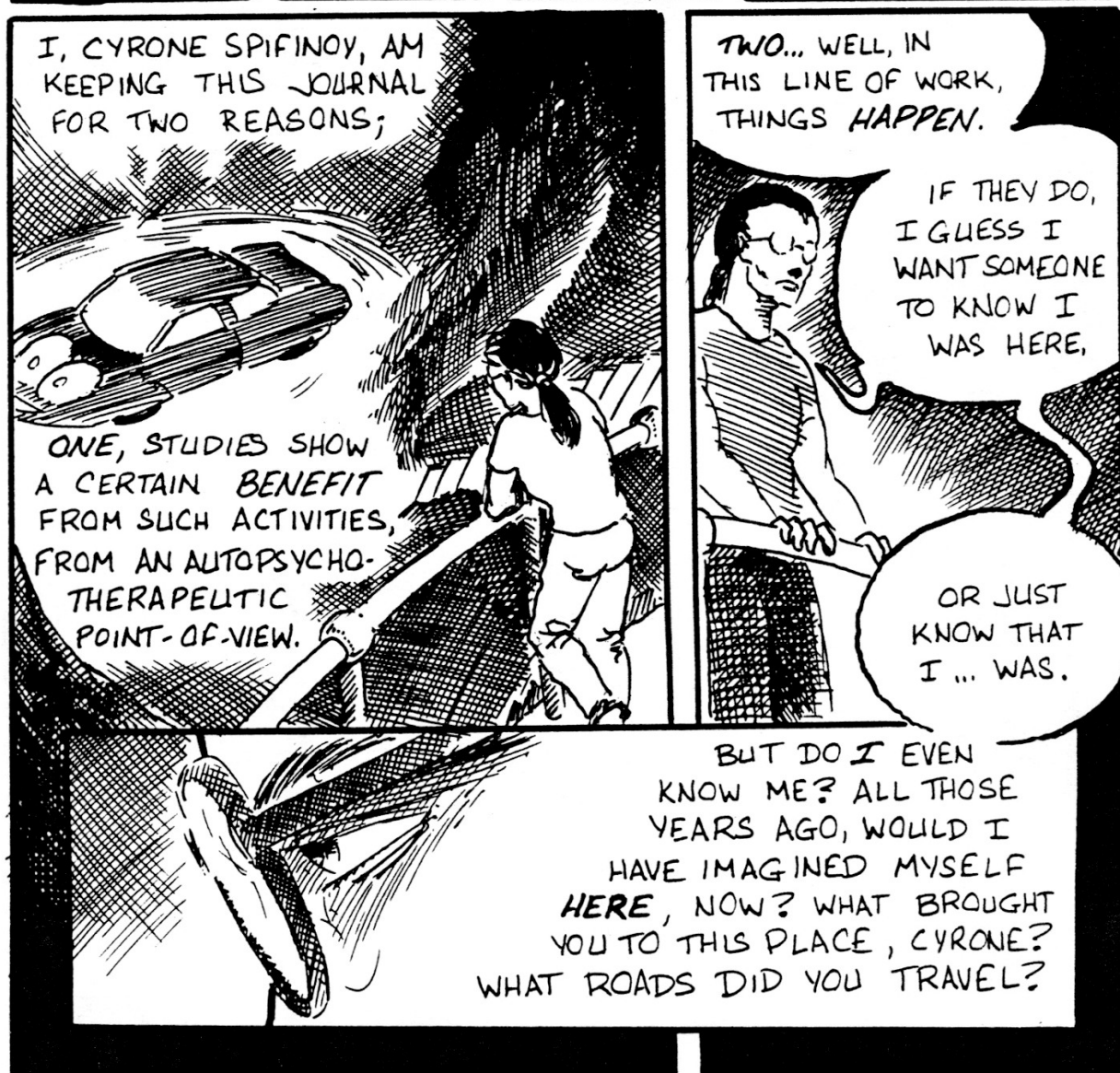
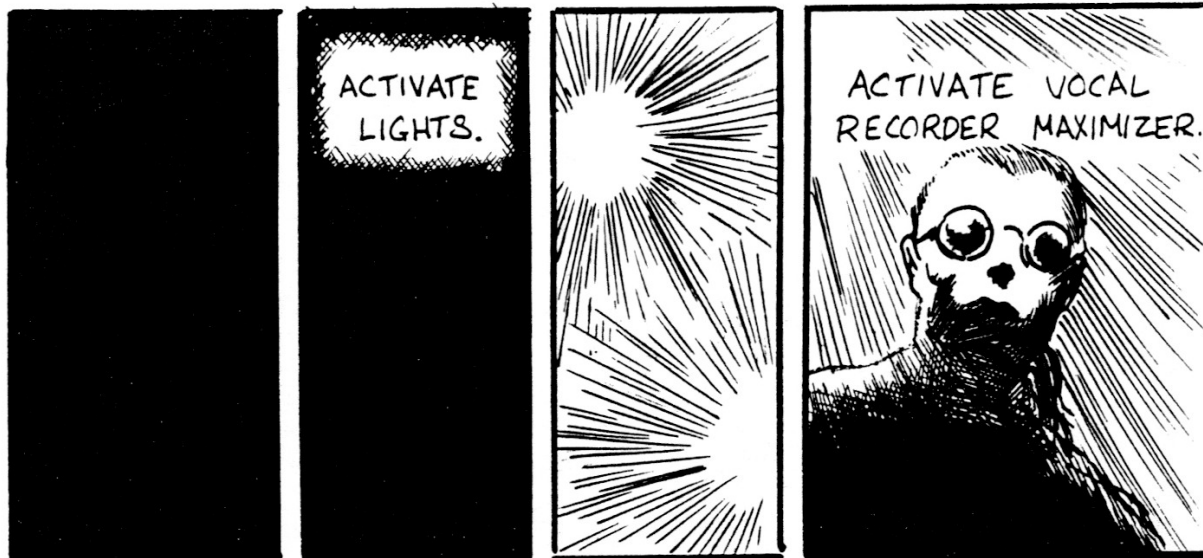
This one's been a long time in coming. Six years, as a matter of fact. The original idea for a Spif solo book came into my head around 1988, when I was noodling around with what eventually became Amoeba Adventures #1 in November 1990. I had made several major changes in the character of Spif from his appearances in the original Prometheus series that I did from 1988-1990. He had inexplicably mutated from the wisecracking "Doctor Spif" into the grim, justice-obsessed "Mr. Spif" when AA #1 was put together - a mutation I intended to explore "soon" in an "untold" origin story for Spif in a future comic (In fact, there's a sneak preview of this comic here in Amoeba #1 - a comic I completed nearly four years ago!). The long and endless story of why it's taken so long for this comic to actually appear is a typically convoluted one, but Spif actually got on the road to being produced in summer 1992, when I asked Troy Hickman to write it for me.

Troy's been an Amoeba fan since #3 or so, and is one hell of a fine writer as well (as the numerous small press writing awards cluttering his shelf attest to). I assembled a plot for him that roughly laid out the story I wanted to see, and then I sent it off to Troy for him to work his magic on. In about 48 hours, Troy, with his inimitable speed and polish, delivered unto me the finely wrought script I expected of him. This was in July 1992. I was originally going to draw Spif, but life intervened - I kept Spif on the back burner for a while anyway, since I was working on the regular Amoeba title. I actually went so far as to pencil pages 7-13, but I realized after almost a year (!) went by and I'd gotten no further on Spif, that it was time to turn it over to another artist.

Max Ink isn't just any artist, of course. He's currently the regular artist for Amoeba Adventures and is, in my humble and totally unbiased opinion, the best artist in small press. He agreed to draw Spif, partially because of the honor of working with Troy, and because he owed me 50 bucks. Unfortunately, he had other obligations at first - both Amoeba #11 and #14, which he drew, and several of his own projects, got priority over Spif. Still... I think you'll agree with me that the final project, despite the slightly prolonged genesis of it, is well worth the wait. And Troy - well, if you like this story, you can reach him care of the Happy Valley Nursing Home in Poughskeepie, Ohio. Sorry it took so long, ol' pal! Sheesh.

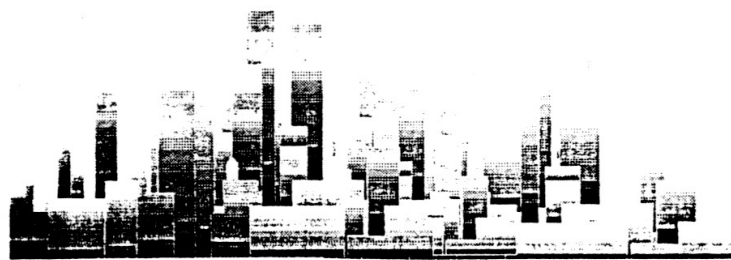
— NIK DIRGA 9/16/94

SPIF No. 1, September 1994. Published by Protoplasm Press, PO Box 2230, University MS 38677-2230. Additional copies are \$2.00 each. ©1994 Nik Dirga. Artwork ©1994 Max Ink. A back issue catalog of cool and keen stuff is available. This one's for the real life "Spif," Nat Perry-Thistle.



PLOT: SCRIPT: PENCILS: INKS: LETTERING:
NIK TROY MAX PAGES 7-13: MAX MAX PAGES 7-13:
DIRGA HICKMAN INK NIK DIRGA INK INK NIK DIRGA

CHAPTER
ONE:
THE
COUNTRY
I COME
FROM...



AS THINGS TEND TO DO, I SUPPOSE
IT STARTS AT THE BEGINNING. I WAS
BORN TO SECOND-GENERATION
RUSSIAN-AMERICAN PARENTS IN
NEW YORK CITY.



MY FATHER OWNED A SUCCESSFUL
USED BOOKSTORE, AND MAYBE
THAT'S WHAT MADE THE DIFFERENCE.

HAVING SEEN
HIS SHARE OF
WARS, DAD KNEW
THE FIRST THING
EVIL DID WAS
BURN THE BOOKS,
RAZE THE IDEAS.
HE TAUGHT ME TO
LOVE LEARNING,
AND THE
PURSUIT OF
KNOWLEDGE.

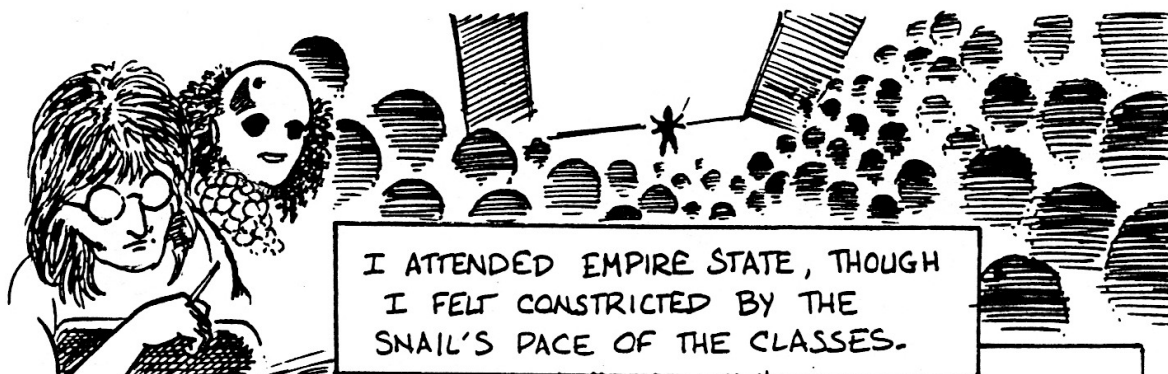


I READ CONSTANTLY AS A CHILD;
ANYTHING I COULD GET MY
HANDS ON.

I WAS ESPECIALLY FOND OF HEROIC
TALES, ENAMORED WITH THE LARGER-
THAN-LIFE CHARACTERS, AND I
READ THEIR STORIES WITH MY HEART
AS WELL AS MY MIND.

FOR A LONG
TIME, I WANTED
TO BE A WRITER,
BUT PRACTICALITY
LEFT THAT BY
THE WAYSIDE.



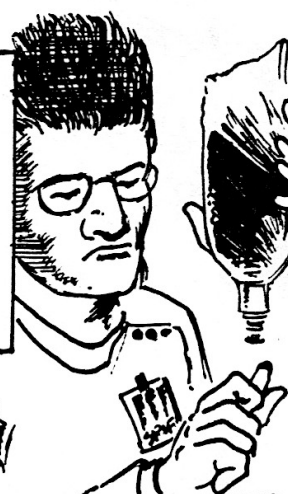


I ATTENDED EMPIRE STATE, THOUGH
I FELT CONSTRICTED BY THE
SNAIL'S PACE OF THE CLASSES.



EVENTUALLY, AFTER
SAMPLING A DOZEN
MAJORS, I SETTLED
ON MEDICINE. I
IMAGINE IT MADE
ME FEEL LIKE THE
IDOLS OF MY YOUTH,
HEROIC AND ALL,
AND THEN THERE
WAS THE DRAMA
OF IT.

AFTER STARTING MY RESIDENCY, THOUGH,
MY EYES WERE OPENED. I HAD THOUGHT
BEING A DOCTOR WAS LIKE IT WAS IN BOOKS:
ALL LIFE-SAVING OPERATIONS AND BEAUTIFUL
AMNESIACS. IN ACTUALITY, MOST OF MY TIME
WAS OCCUPIED BY SPECIMEN CUPS AND
PROCTOLOGY EXAMS, OR SO IT SEEMED.



AFTERWARDS, I TOOK A
JOB AS STAFF DOCTOR AT
SPONGOPOLIS GENERAL.

UP UNTIL THAT POINT,
MY LIFE SEEMED FAIRLY
MUNDANE. HOW COULD
I HAVE
EXPECTED
WHAT
WOULD
HAPPEN
NEXT?

THE WORLD WAS ROCKED
BY THE COMING OF
PROMETHEUS.

THE LITTLE GUY WAS
LIKE NOTHING ANY OF
US HAD EVER SEEN.

IT MIGHT
SOUND KIND
OF STRANGE
IF YOU
WEREN'T
THERE, IF
YOU DON'T
KNOW, BUT
I REALLY
ENVIED
PRO. HE
HAD HIS ACT
TOGETHER—
BRAINS, RESPECT,
PEACE OF MIND—
HE WAS WHAT I
WANTED TO BE.
I'D NEVER
EMBARRASS HIM
BY COMING RIGHT
OUT AND SAYING
IT, BUT A GOOD
NUMBER OF THE
VIRTUES I POSSESS,
WHATEVER THEY MIGHT
BE, I OWE TO
PROMETHEUS.

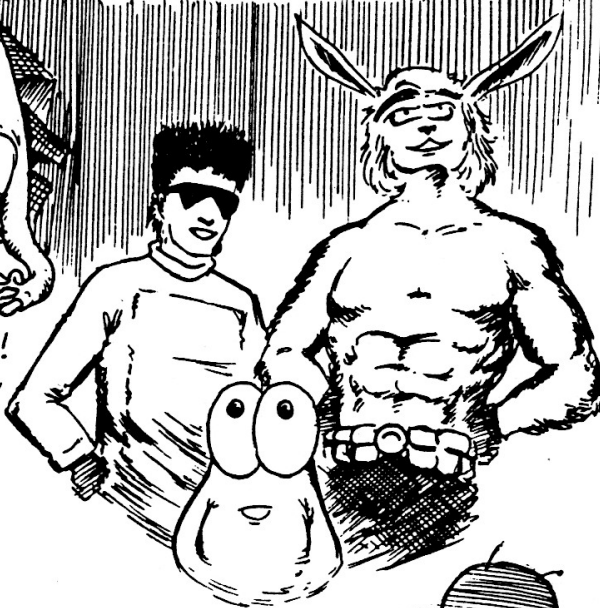
I'VE NEVER BEEN MUCH
OF A TV WATCHER BEFORE,
BUT PRO'S EXPLOITS
KEPT ME GLUED TO THE
TUBE. I FELT LIKE A
CHORD WAS BEING STRUCK,
A CHORD BEGUN IN
DEEPEST SPACE, BUT AS
CLOSE AS MY MARROW.

LIKE EVERYONE ELSE, I WATCHED, STUNNED, AS THE ASBESTOS MUSHROOM ATTACKED PRO AND THE LEGENDARY HERO, RAMBUNNY. THEY WERE POWERLESS TO STOP HIM.

IT'S FUNNY HOW RATIONAL PEOPLE CAN SUDDENLY DO SEEMINGLY IRRATIONAL THINGS. ALMOST BEFORE I REALIZED IT, I WENT FROM CYRONE SPIFINOV, M.D., TO DR SPIE, CRIMEFIGHTER! USING SOME GADGETS I TINKERED TOGETHER DURING MY LUNCH HOURS I JOINED THE BATTLE AGAINST THE MUSHROOM.



SOMEHOW, WE WON! I CAN'T DESCRIBE HOW GOOD, HOW ALIVE I FELT THAT DAY; IT WAS SORT OF LIKE WINNING THE LOTTERY, BUNGI-JUMPING, AND MOONING YOUR HIGH SCHOOL PHYS. ED. TEACHER, ALL AT THE SAME TIME.



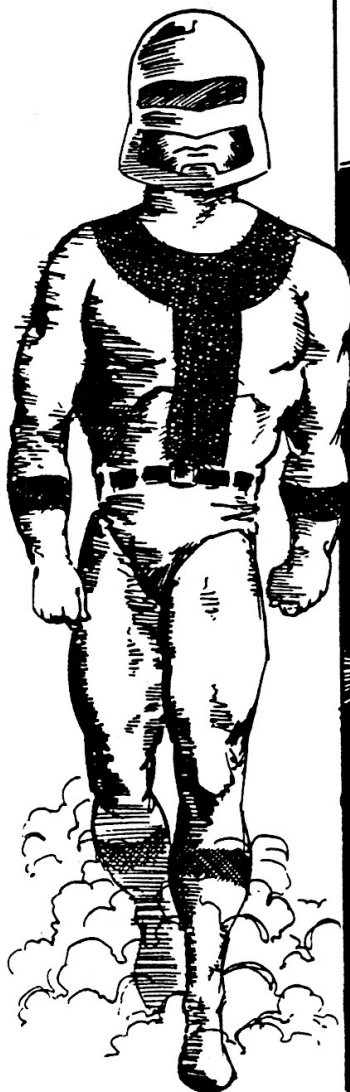
AND THEN, WHEN THE MUSHROOM RETURNED, WE SAVED THE DAY AGAIN.

IT WAS THEN THAT THE THREE OF US, ALONG WITH NINJA ANT AND KARATE KACTUS FORMED THE

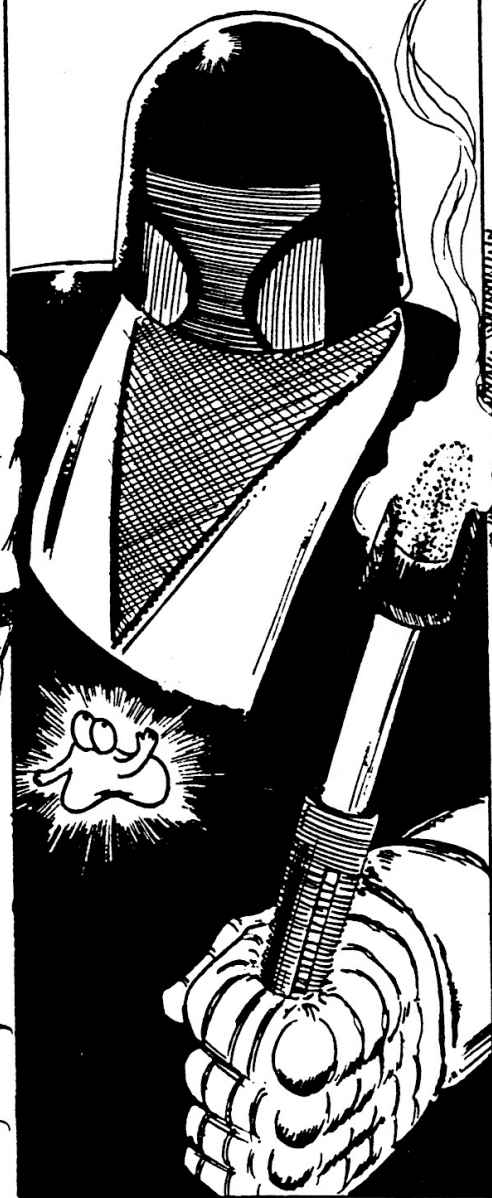
ALL SPONGY SQUADRON.



EVENTS CAME FAST AND FRANTIC AFTER THAT, SUCH AS WHEN PRO BECAME THE PROMETHEAN, SUPER BUT STILL ONLY A MAN.



IT WAS THEN THAT HE FOUND OUT WHO HE WAS, WHAT HE WAS ; HE MET THE INNER GODS.



SOON, THOUGH, PRO WAS BACK TO NORMAL ; A PROTOPLASM, AND DAMNED PROUD OF IT.

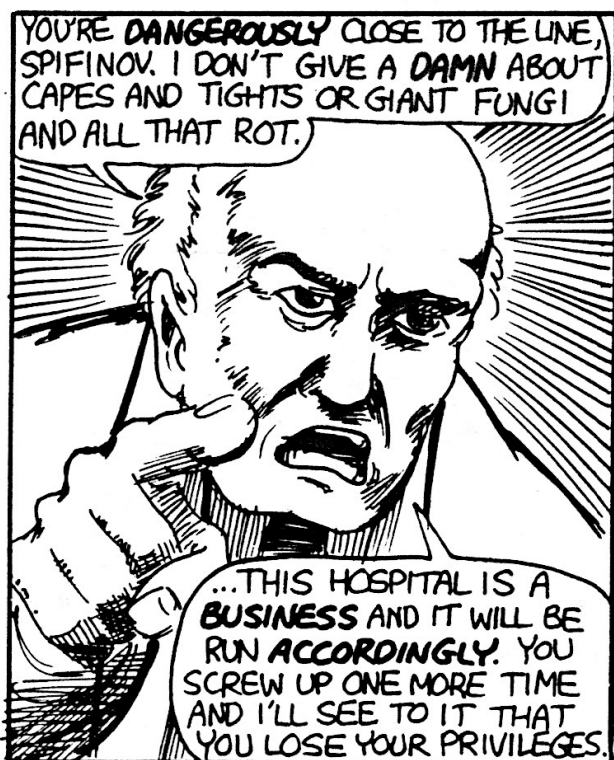
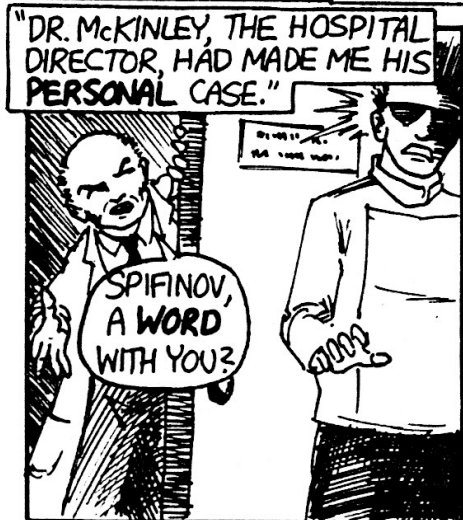
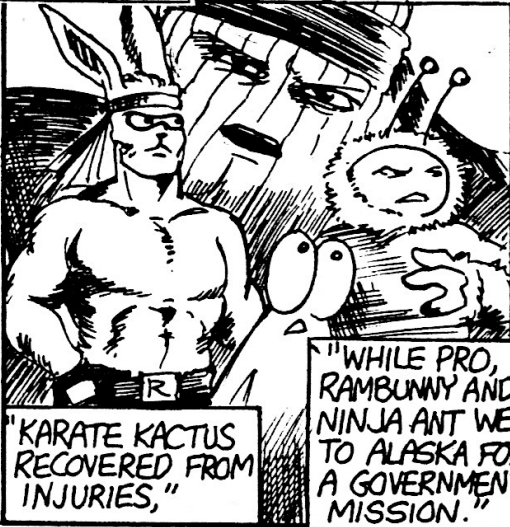


I HAD NEVER BEEN HAPPIER THAN THAT TIME. EVERYTHING JUST SEEMED TO FIT, LIKE WE COULD DO NO WRONG, LIKE NOTHING COULD HURT US. LIKE NOTHING COULD HURT ME. IF ONLY I HAD KNOWN

CHAPTER TWO:
H AS IN HERO,
H AS IN HUMAN.

"FOR A WHILE IT WAS
CALM, THE SILENCE
A HARBINGER OF
UPCOMING STORM."

"I WOULD'VE GIVEN A LUNG
TO BE WITH 'EM, BUT I HAD
THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF MY
JOB, AND THE HOSPITAL BOARD
HAD TAKEN AN INTEREST IN
MY SQUADRON ACTIVITIES."





"THE DAY CONTINUED
TO GO DOWNHILL..."

WE NEED TO CHANGE
MR. FECKSTEIN'S
COLOSTOMY
BAG...

I'LL SHOW YOU WHERE
TO PUT YOUR TONGUE-
DEPRESSOR, WISE-ASS...

"THERE WAS THE
MUNDANITY..."

SAY, SPIE,
CAN I BE YOUR
FAITHFUL KID
SIDEKICK,
TONGUE-
DEPRESSOR
BOY?

"THE SMART
REMARKS FROM
MY 'PEERS'..."

"AND THEN THERE WAS
A GENERAL MEETING FOR
ALL HOSPITAL STAFF. AH,
BUT THAT'S WHEN IT
REALLY STARTED..."

ALL RIGHT, LISTEN UP, PEOPLE.
I'VE CALLED THIS MEETING
TO ALERT YOU TO A
SERIOUS PROBLEM.

nudge
nudge

THANK YOU.

WELL, GIVEN THE FACT
THAT INVENTORY RECORDS
HAVE BEEN **ALTERED**, IT'S
OUR BELIEF THE PERPS
HAVE A **MOLE**, AN **INSIDE
MAN** WORKING HERE
AT THE HOSPITAL.

THE BOARD HAS LEARNED
THAT LARGE AMOUNTS
OF PRESCRIPTION DRUGS
AND OTHER PHARMACY
SUPPLIES HAVE BEEN
DISSAPPEARING FROM
THIS FACILITY.

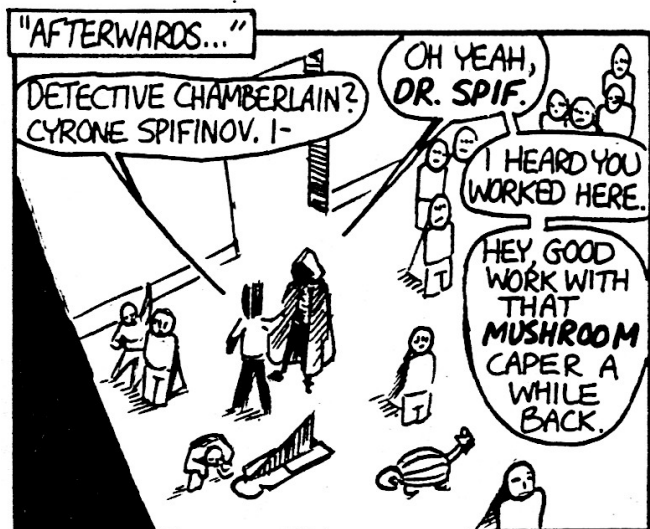
AND THAT'S WHERE
YOU FOLKS COME IN.

THE OTHER BOARD
MEMBERS AND I
HAVE GUARANTEED
THE AUTHORITIES
OUR FULL COOPERATION.

IF YOU HAVE **ANY**
INFO, NO MATTER HOW
SMALL, WE NEED YOU TO
COME FORWARD WITH IT.

NOW, TO TELL YOU **MORE**
ABOUT THE SITUATION,
THE OFFICER IN CHARGE
OF THE INVESTIGATION,
...DETECTIVE
**REX
CHAMBERLAIN**.

SO WE CAN PUT
THE HAMMER
DOWN ON THESE
SLIMEBAGS!!



"FINALLY, I LEARNED OF A RELATED DRUG DEAL GOING DOWN AT A SECLUDED WAREHOUSE--"



--AND HERE'S THE ADDRESS--

"WHAT I DIDN'T KNOW WAS THAT MY GETTING THE INFO WAS **NO** LUCKY BREAK FOR ME."

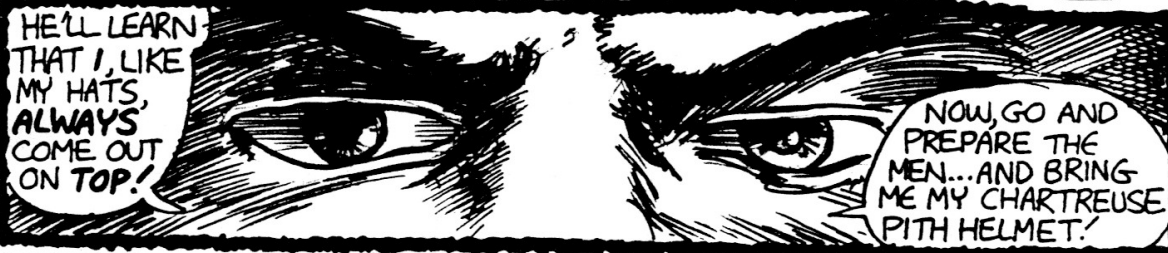


HE'LL BE AT THE WAREHOUSE TONIGHT.

EXCELLENT!

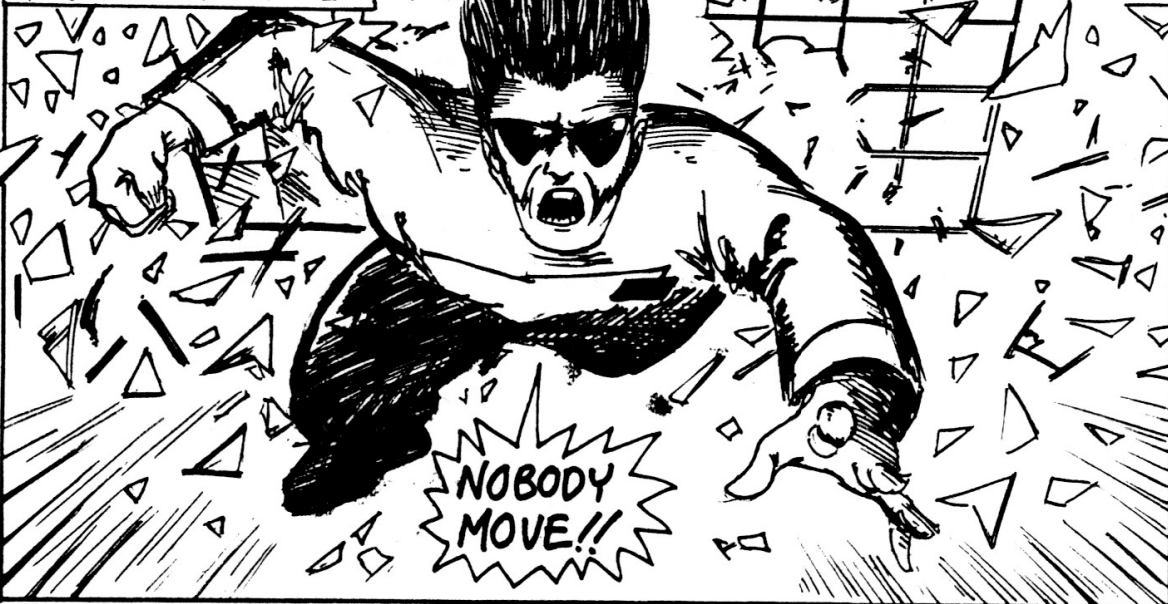
I'LL SHOW THAT CADUCEUS-CARRYING CRETIN THE ERROR OF INTERFERING WITH **MY** OPERATIONS--

HE'LL LEARN THAT I, LIKE MY HATS, **ALWAYS** COME OUT ON **TOP!**



NOW, GO AND PREPARE THE MEN...AND BRING ME MY CHARTREUSE PITH HELMET!

"LATER THAT NIGHT, I MADE MY PRESENCE KNOWN AT THE WAREHOUSE, THE WAY I THOUGHT IT WAS DONE--"



NOBODY MOVE!!

UM, HELLO?

ANYBODY HERE?

DARN! MUST'VE GOTTEN
BAD INFORMATION. SOME
DETECTIVE I AM.

HOPE WORD OF THIS
DOESN'T GET OUT.

I CAN IMAGINE WHAT
THE OTHER GUYS IN THE
SQUADRON WOULD SAY IF-

GACCK!!

WELL, LOOKEE, BOYS.
WE GOT US A **TRESPASSER**.

ME LIKE COOKIE
UGH--
NOW, WAIT
A MINUTE--

**SHUT UP,
MEAT!**

ZOOOF!

ME LIKE COOKIE

THERE'S--NO TALKING
TO THEM--I'VE BEEN--
SET--UP...

"SOMEHOW, ALMOST INSTINCTIVELY, I PULLED A TOWNSEND BOMB FROM MY POCKET."



"IT'S A LITTLE DEVICE THAT BATHES AN AREA WITH ENOUGH DECIBELS TO FRY A MAN'S BRAIN FOR SEVERAL SECONDS. FITTING THE FILTERS IN MY EARS, I LET IT RIP."



"APPARENTLY THEY WEREN'T MUSIC LOVERS."

"I TOOK CARE OF THE REST OF THEM WITH THE RUBBERIZER."



"IT MOMENTARILY SOFTENS THE HUMAN SKELETAL STRUCTURE."



"I GOT THE IDEA FROM AN EXPERIMENT I DID AS A KID WITH VINEGAR AND CHICKEN BONES."



"FINALLY, TO KEEP 'EM WHERE THEY WERE, I ACTIVATED 'THE MAN'."



"IT'S BASICALLY A GRAVITON ACCELERATOR, WHICH KEEPS A PRONE FOE GLUED TO THE FLOOR."



"EVEN IN MY PULPED STATE, I WAS PLEASED WITH MY VICTORY."

"I SHOULD HAVE KNOWN BETTER."

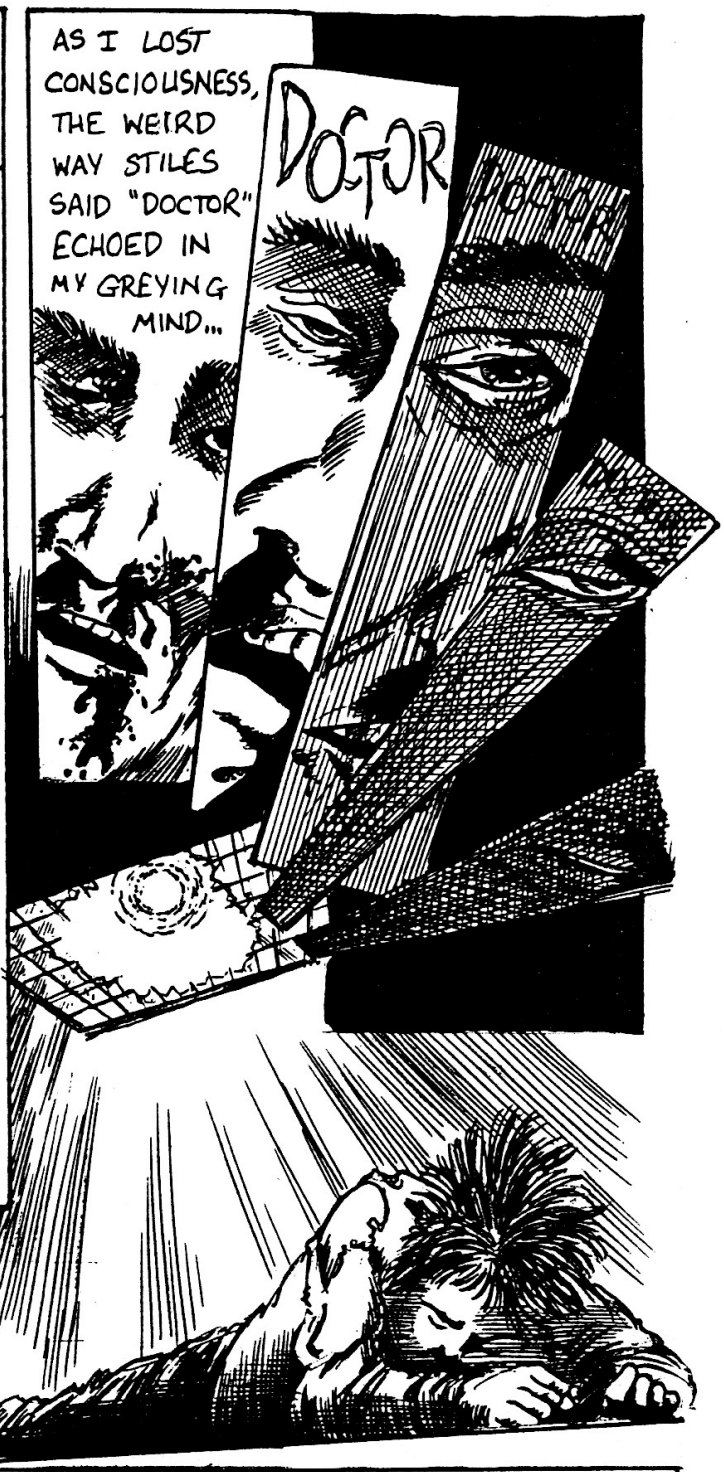




I MUST TAKE MY LEAVE NOW,
BUT HAVE NO WORRIES.
YOU AND I WILL BE SEEING
EACH OTHER AGAIN SOON...
VERY SOON...

... "DOCTOR"
SPIF.

I DON'T KNOW HOW
LONG I'D BEEN OUT--
ONLY THAT I WAS
PROBABLY LATE FOR
WORK.



AS I LOST
CONSCIOUSNESS,
THE WEIRD
WAY STILES
SAID "DOCTOR"
ECHOED IN
MY GREYING
MIND...

DOCTOR

DOCTOR



GET A JOB,
YOU BUM!

I SHAMBLERD MY
WAY ACROSS TOWN,
LOOKING AND
FEELING LIKE AN
EXTRA IN A
GEORGE ROMERO
MOVIE.

BACK AT THE HOSPITAL, I CHANGED MY CLOTHES, BUT IT DIDN'T HELP MUCH.

GEEZ, SPIF, MAYBE YOU'D BETTER GO HOME.

I CAN DO MY JOB

BUT LOOK AT--

IT SEEMED MCKINLEY THOUGHT OTHERWISE.

I CAN DO MY JOB, THANK YOU.

DR. SPIFINOV, WOULD YOU PLEASE STEP IN HERE (AND TAKE OFF THOSE RIDICULOUS SLINGGLASSES).

I HAD WONDERED WHY HE DIDN'T SOUND LIKE HIS USUAL GOOSE STEPPING SELF. I LEARNED IT WAS BECAUSE HE WAS NOT ALONE.

DETECTIVE CHAMBERLIN? HELLO. IS THERE ANY NEWS ABOUT THE DRUG RING? HAVE YOU FOUND THE MOLE?

DON'T PLAY INNOCENT, SPIFINOV...

YOU'VE BEEN UNCOVERED!

GIVE IT UP "SUPER-HERO". THESE INVOICES CLEARLY SHOWED THAT YOU SIGNED FOR SEVERAL CASES OF MISSING AMPHETAMINES THAT NEVER GOT TO STORAGE.

WHAT?!

ARE YOU INSANE?!

DAMN IT, KID. I HAD FAITH IN YOU. WHY'D YOU DO IT?



CYRONE SPIFINOV, YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO REMAIN SILENT...

OH, BY THE WAY "SPIF", THE A.M.A. WILL, OF COURSE, BAR YOU FROM MEDICAL PRACTICE.

COME ALONG YOU.

I NEVER DID TRUST THESE SUPER-TYPES.

THIS... CAN'T BE HAPPENING...

THAT WOULD BE A PRUDENT COURSE OF ACTION. HE SEEMS MOST MENTALLY DISTRESSED, DOESN'T HE?

LITTLE LIGHT IN THE LOAFERS IF YOU KNOW WHAT I MEAN.

WHERE'D HE GAACK *imagine* to be sick...

GOT TO DO SOMETHING.

HEY! WHAT THE COUGH HACK

I MANAGED TO ACTIVATE THE CUMULOID DISC IN MY WATCH. IT EMITS A CLOUD OF NOXIOUS GAS. I HELD MY BREATH, BUT THE COPS WEREN'T SO LUCKY.

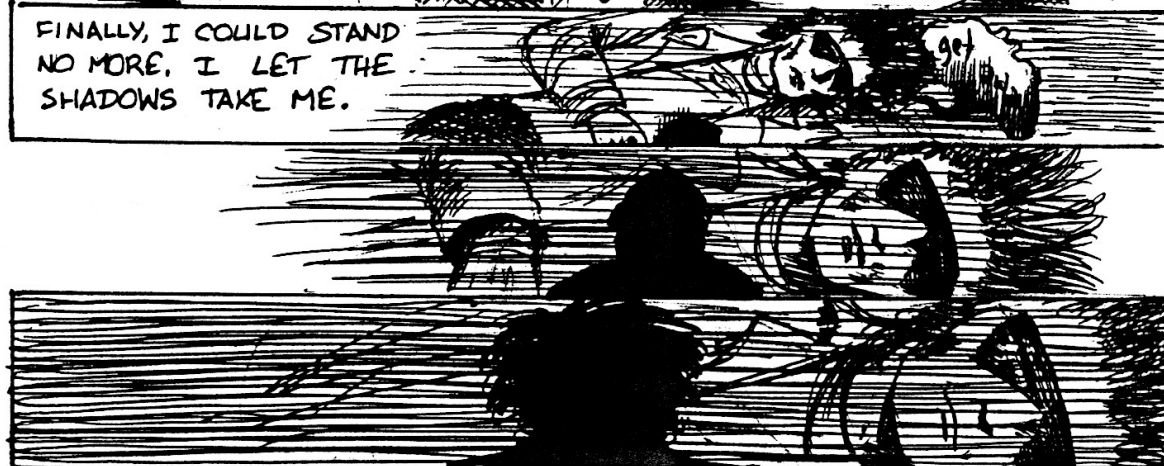
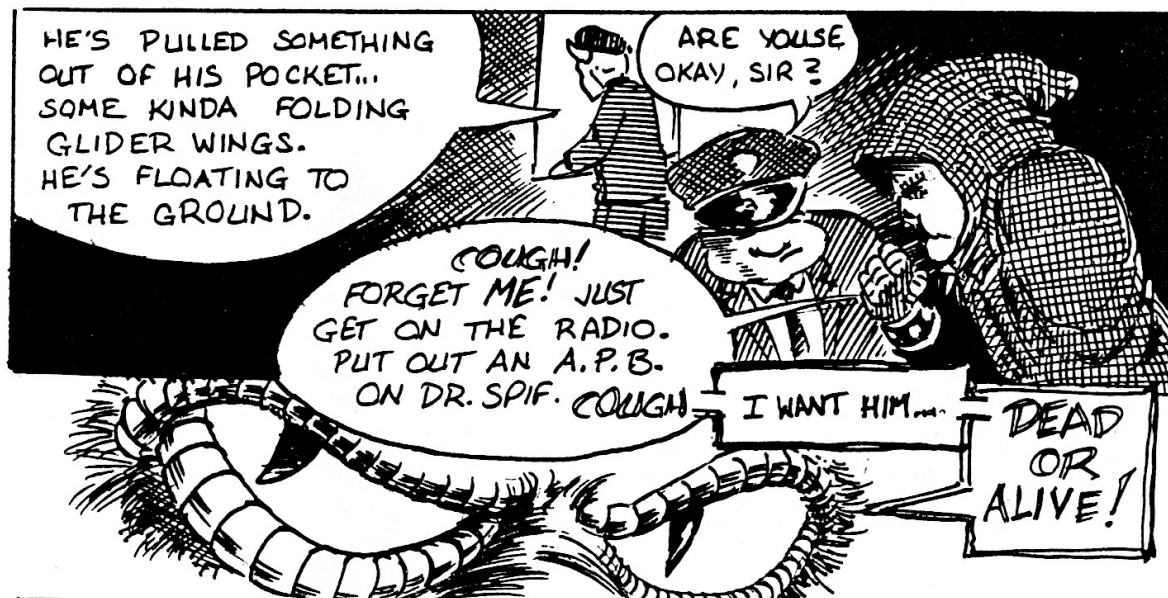
IN THE CONFUSION, I SLIPPED OUT OF MY CUFFS USING A TRICK I'D LEARNED FROM A HOUDINI BIOGRAPHY I READ AS A KID.

THERE HE IS... COUGH! THE WINDOW

I KNOW YOU DON'T BELIEVE ME NOW CHAMBERLAIN, BUT YOU WILL.

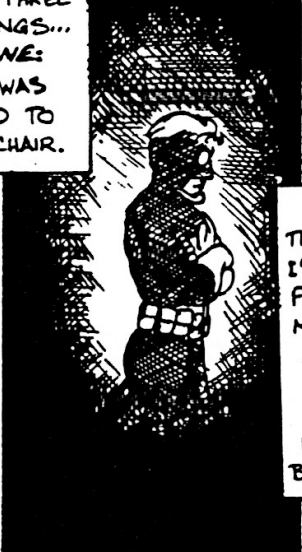
I'M INNOCENT AND I'LL PROVE IT... OR DIE TRYING.

THE CRAZY MOTHER'S JUMPING!

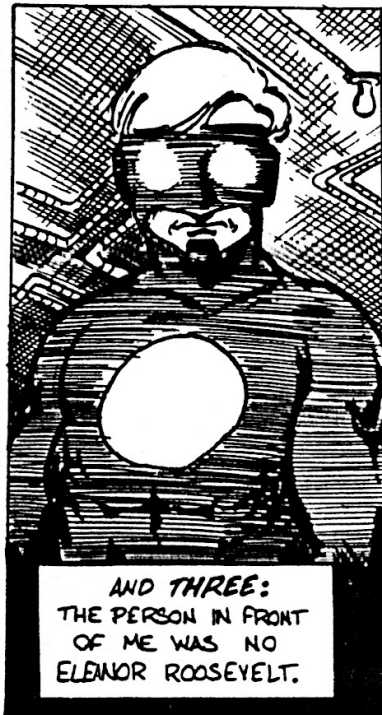
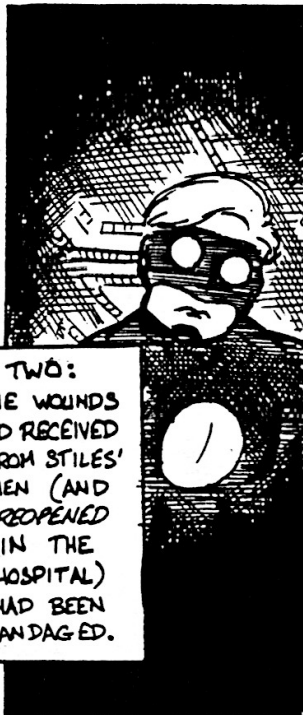


CHAPTER THREE: THE NIGHT AS BLACK AS HEARTS

AS I CAME
AROUND, I
WAS AWARE
OF THREE
THINGS...
ONE:
I WAS
TIED TO
A CHAIR.



TWO:
THE WOUNDS
I'D RECEIVED
FROM STILES'
MEN (AND
REOPENED
IN THE
HOSPITAL)
HAD BEEN
BANDAGED.



AND THREE:
THE PERSON IN FRONT
OF ME WAS NO
ELEANOR ROOSEVELT.



WHO... WHO
ARE YOU?
ONE OF
STILES'
MEN?

HARDLY--

IN FACT,
I PLAN TO
DRIVE THE NAILS
IN STILES'
COFFIN.

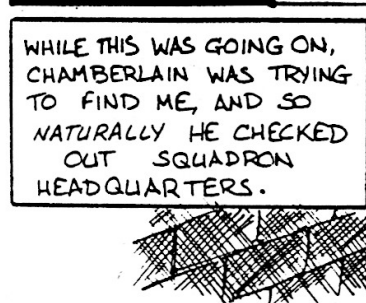


I AM THE
PERIOD!

I'M
THE
END
OF
CRIME!



uh
huh.



WHILE THIS WAS GOING ON,
CHAMBERLAIN WAS TRYING
TO FIND ME, AND SO
NATURALLY HE CHECKED
OUT SQUADRON
HEADQUARTERS.



I CAN'T
BELIEVE SPIF
WOULD--

WELL,
HE DID.

AND I'M
GOING TO STOP
HIM BEFORE HE
CAN DO IT
AGAIN.

AFTER
CHAMBERLAIN
LEFT--



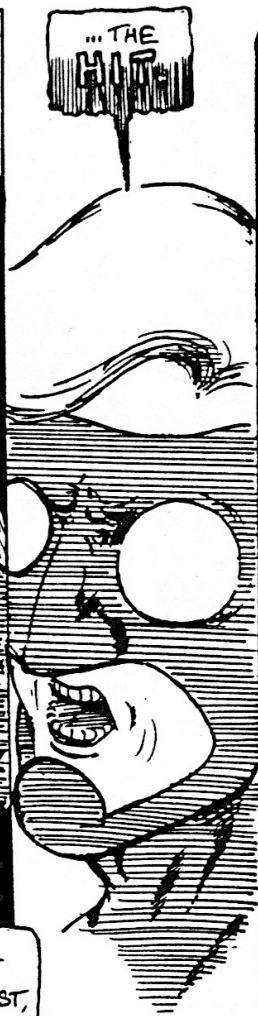
FOR SPIF'S OWN GOOD, I
HAVE TO FIND HIM FIRST.
I WONDER, THOUGH...
JUST WHAT AM I
GOING TO FIND?



MEANWHILE, THE PERIOD SEEMED INTENT ON RELATING HIS ORIGIN TO ME.

SO I WAS JUST ANOTHER CPA BACK THEN.

AT LEAST, UNTIL ...



...THE HUH



"MY MA WAS A PRIME WITNESS IN A CASE AGAINST A NOTED CRIMELORD."

"ONE DAY, SHE WAS ON HER WAY TO THE COURT ROOM-- BUT SHE NEVER MADE IT."



"THE LOUSY SCUM AMBUSHED HER. DROPPED A PART OF A BILLBOARD DISPLAY FROM AN OVERPASS."

MA NEVER SAW THE EXCLAMATION POINT COMING.



"FROM THAT MOMENT THERE WAS NO QUESTION: I **KNEW** I HAD TO BECOME A CRIMEFIGHTER."

"PERIOD."

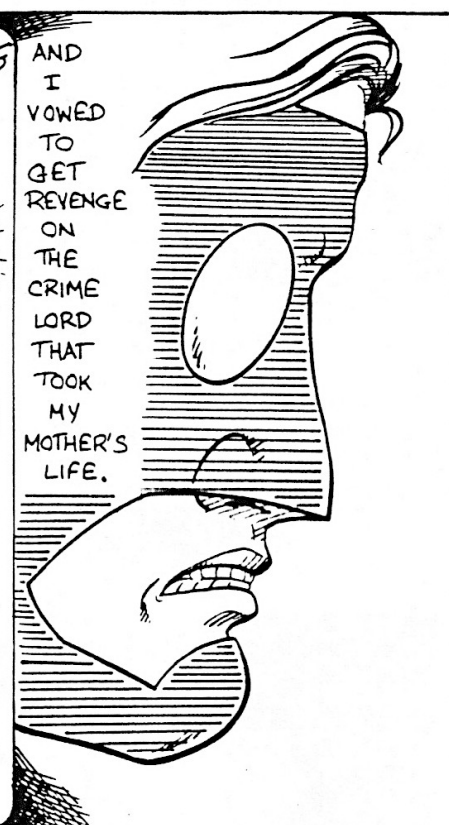


I STUDIED WEIGHT TRAINING WITH ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER--

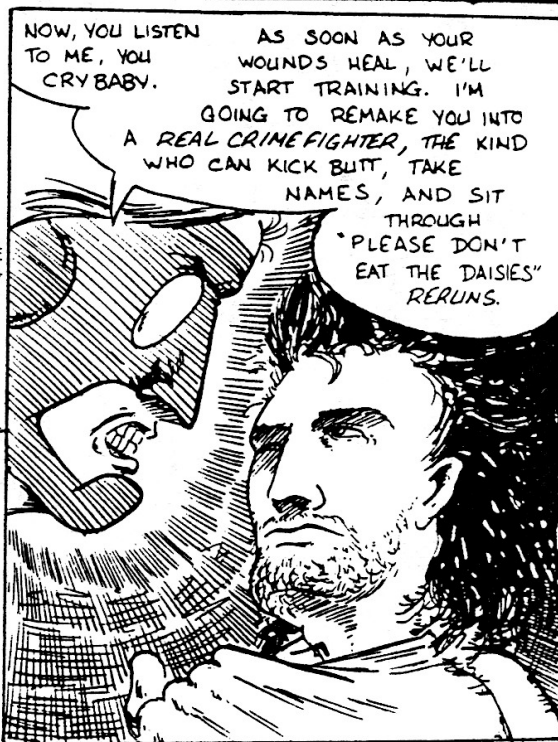
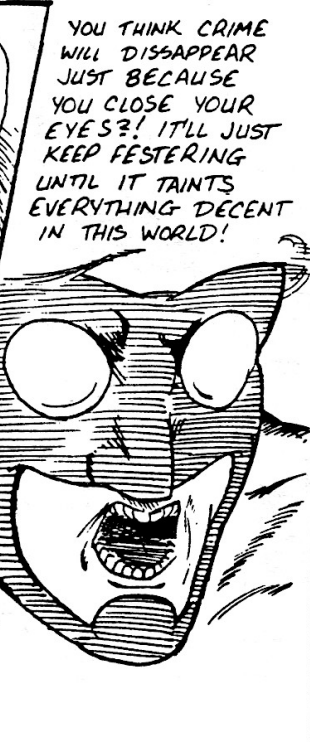
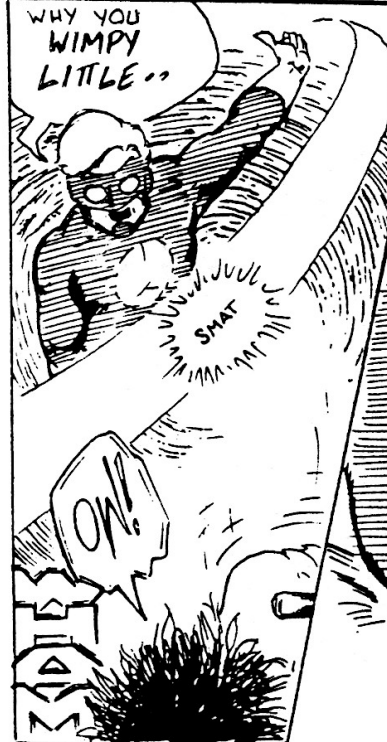
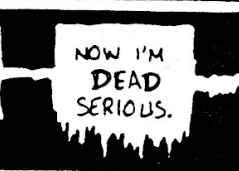
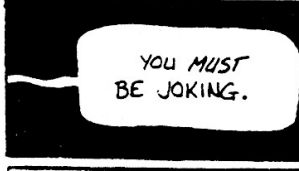
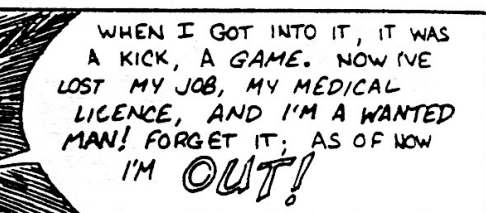
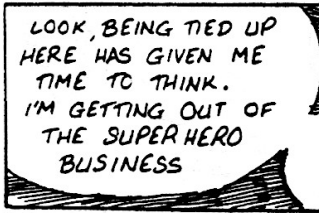
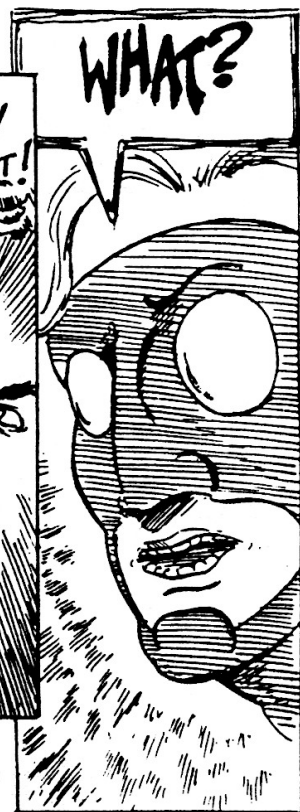
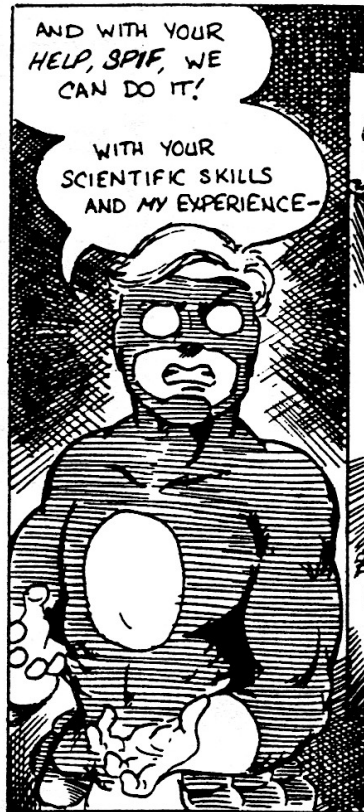
--MARTIAL ARTS WITH CHUCK NORRIS--

AND MARKSMANSHIP WITH SALLY KELLERMAN.

OK, MAYBE THE LAST PART WAS A MISTAKE.



AND I VOWED TO GET REVENGE ON THE CRIME LORD THAT TOOK MY MOTHER'S LIFE.



OVER THE NEXT THREE WEEKS, THE PERIOD
TAUGHT ME EVERYTHING HE KNEW ABOUT
CRIMEFIGHTING...

KARATE...

NO! USE THE SIDE OF
YOUR FOOT! YOU WANT
TO BREAK YOUR TOES?

... FIRE ARMS...

MORE TO THE LEFT.
ONE THROUGH EACH
NOSTRIL.

...DETECTIVE
WORK...

THE AVERAGE
PERPETRATOR
LEAVES TWENTY
SEVEN CLUES
BEHIND THROUGH
WHICH HE CAN
BE TRACKED.

... AND MAYBE MOST
IMPORTANTLY, STREET
WISDOM.

REMEMBER--
ALWAYS WITH
YOUR BACK TO
THE WALL.

WHEN HE WAS DONE,
THE WISE-CRACKING
DOCTOR SPIF WAS GONE.

NOW THERE
WAS ONLY...

Mr. Spif



IT WAS MORE THAN A
CHANGE OF COSTUME, THOUGH.
SOMEHOW, OVER THOSE WEEKS,
WHETHER IT WAS SUBTLE
BRAIN WASHING OR A PART
OF ME I'D LOCKED AWAY, I
CAME TO ACCEPT THE PERIOD...
AND HIS WAYS. I'D NEVER BE
PUSHED AROUND AGAIN.



THE PERIOD WAS OVER-JOYED.

WELL, I THINK YOU'RE READY.
NOW, OUR FIRST STEP--

ALL RIGHT, YOU TWO,

I WANT SOME ANSWERS AND I WANT THEM NOW!

ONE OF STILES' GOONS, huh?

HERE! GIVE THIS TO YOUR BOSS.

I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOUR PROBLEM IS---

... BUT YOU'RE GOING TO TELL ME WHAT YOU'VE DONE WITH DR. SPFF!

Isuu.

It's me. Spf.

WHAT? BUT WHAT HAPPENED TO YOU?

IT TOOK A WHILE; BUT I FILLED KK IN ON MY RECENT "CHANGES." HE SEEMED UNEASY ABOUT THE WHOLE THING. BUT HE ROLLED WITH IT.

SO, NOW WHAT?

NOW, WE TAKE THE FIGHT TO STILES. THE NEXT THING HE'LL BE WEARING ON HIS HEAD WILL BE A SHROUD.

THE PERIOD WAS ABLE TO TRIANGULATE THE LOCATION OF STILES' HEADQUARTERS BY ANALYZING SOIL SAMPLES LEFT FROM HIS SHOES.



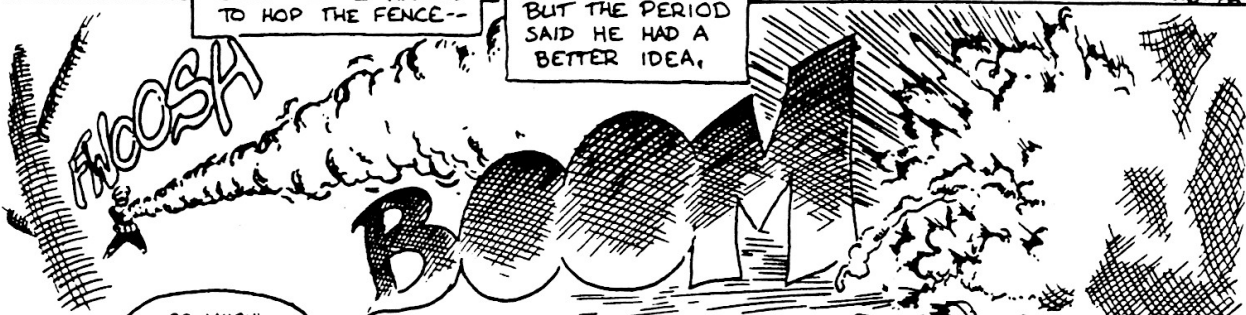
A TRICK I HAD PREVIOUSLY THOUGHT ONLY WORKED IN COMIC BOOKS.

SUPRISINGLY, IT WAS AN ABANDONED IRON MINE, OUTSIDE SPONGOPOLIS. I WOULD'VE EXPECTED MORE ORIGINALITY FROM STILES.



ISUZU AND I WANTED TO HOP THE FENCE--

BUT THE PERIOD SAID HE HAD A BETTER IDEA,



SO MUCH FOR STEALTH...



I WAS USING ALL THE DIRTY INFIGHTING SKILLS I'D LEARNED FROM THE PERIOD, AND IN A TWISTED WAY--

TAKE NO PRISONERS!

BRING ME THE HEAD OF ALFREDO GARCIA!

--I ENJOYED IT.

C'EST LA GUERRA!



IT TOOK A WHILE, BUT EVENTUALLY WE STARTED TO GET THE ADVANTAGE.



IT WAS THEN THAT THE PERIOD'S PERCEPTION TRAINING HAD PAID OFF;



I SPOTTED STILES ACROSS THE COMPOUND, TRYING TO MAKE HIS GETAWAY.



FEELING FAIRLY CERTAIN THAT ISUZU AND THE PERIOD COULD HANDLE THEMSELVES,

I WENT AFTER STILES.



I FOLLOWED HIM INSIDE THE COMPLEX,

ABOVE THE SMELTING YATS.

Hold it right there Stiles. You can't escape.



OH, MY DEAR MR. SPIF... ARE YOU RIGHT ABOUT ANYTHING?



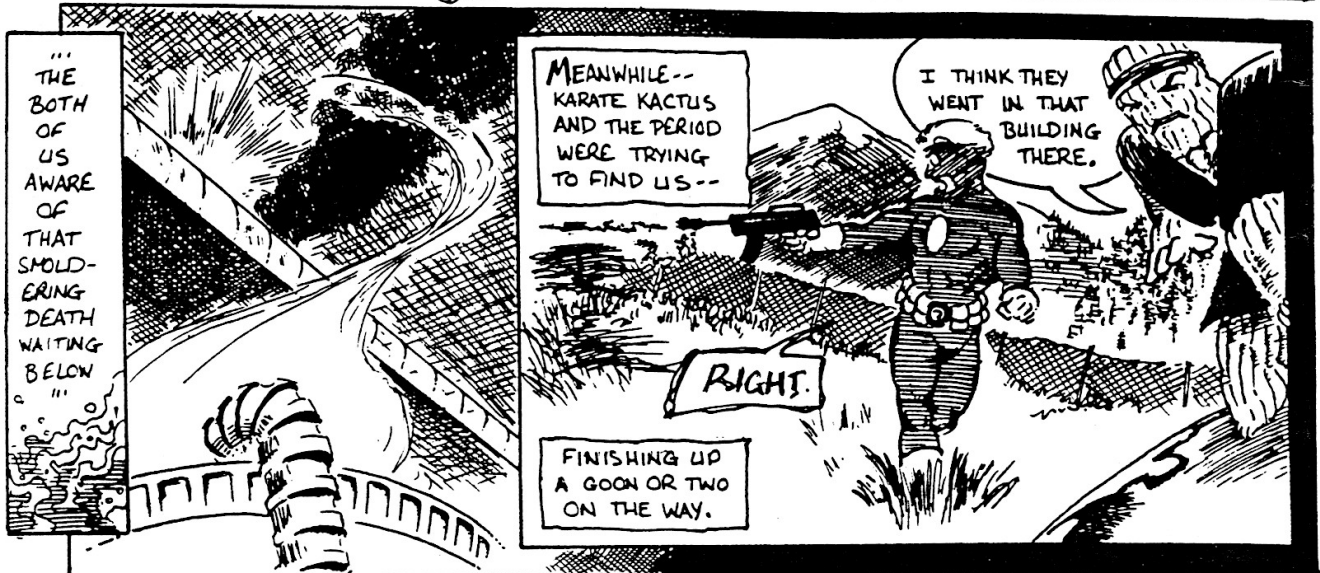
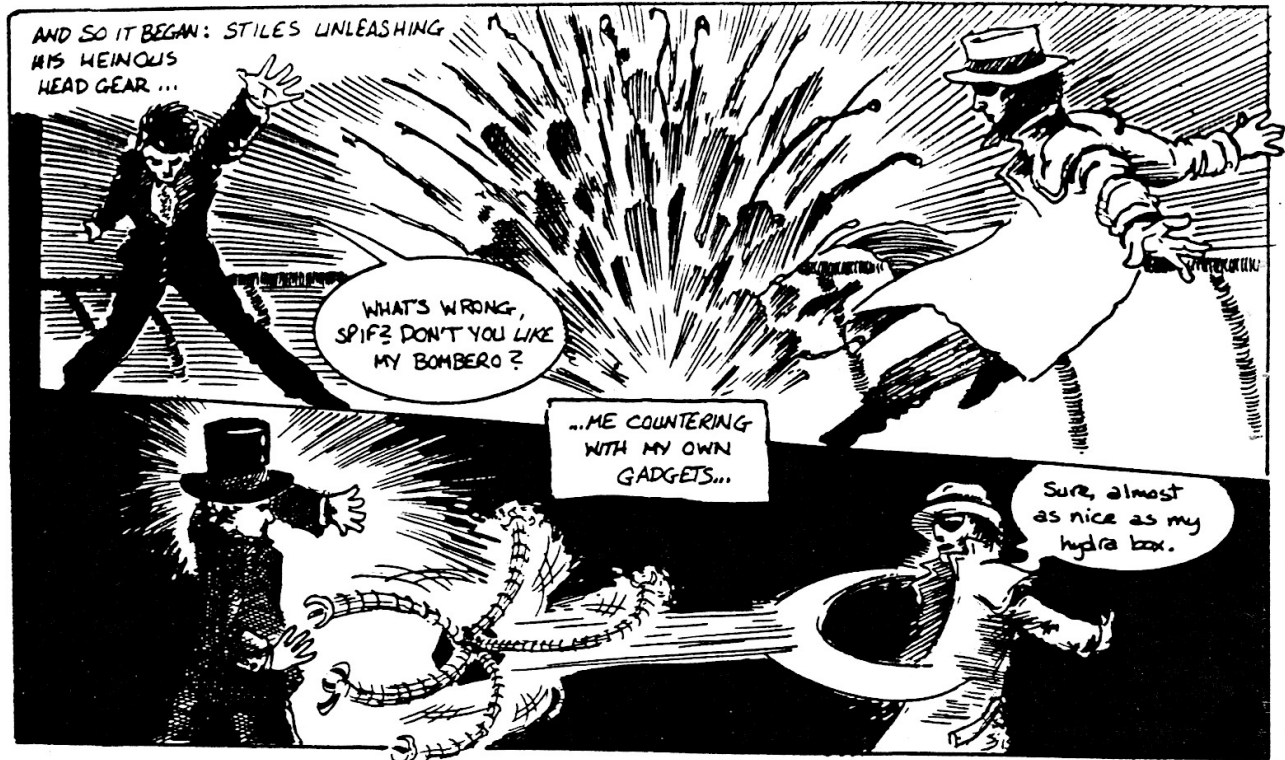
I'M NOT TRYING TO MAKE AN EXIT...

I SIMPLY WANTED TO PICK AN APPROPRIATE SPOT FOR YOUR EXECUTION.



GENTLEMEN?





EVENTUALLY, WE BOTH RAN OUT OF WEAPONS, BUT STILES WAS NO MATCH FOR ME IN HAND-TO-HAND COMBAT.

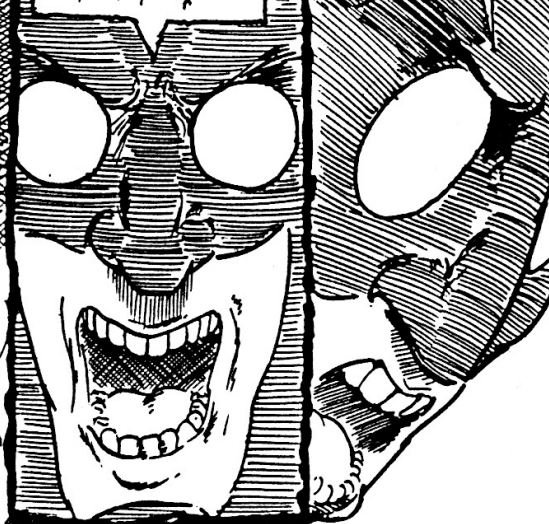
And now...

NO!
PLEASE, I CAN GIVE YOU POWER-MONEY
~~PLEASE~~
DON'T KILL ME!



YOU'VE GOT TO KILL HIM!

HE DESERVES TO DIE!
IT'S THE ONLY WAY!





WHAT?

Look, I appreciate all you've done for me, but when it comes right down to it... well, I can't be you.

LOST IN OUR ARGUMENT, WE DIDN'T SEE THAT STILES HAD ONE FINAL ACE UP HIS SLEEVE.

NOW LOOK...

DIE!

LOOK OUT!

A WELL THROWN NIGHT CAP FINISHED OFF THE ALREADY DAMAGED PLATFORM

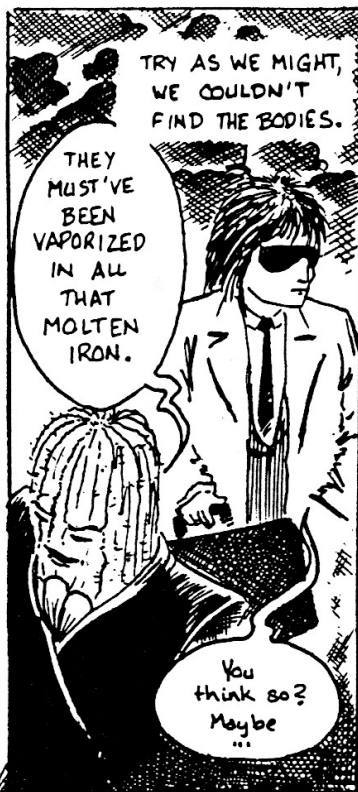
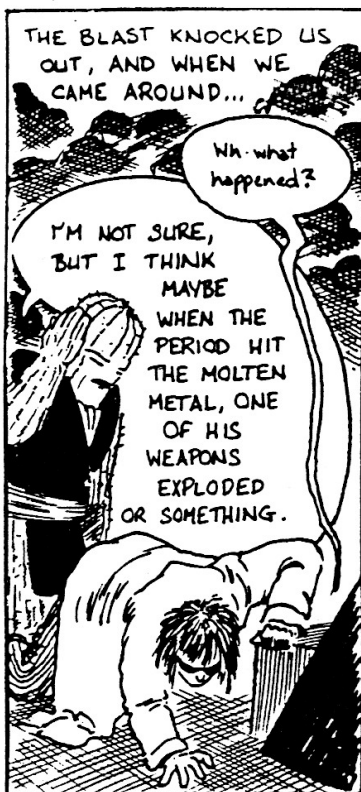
AS THE PLATFORM TWISTED AND FELL I THOUGHT IT WAS MY LAST CHAPTER ...

I'M DELNERING YOU TO HELL MYSELF STILES!

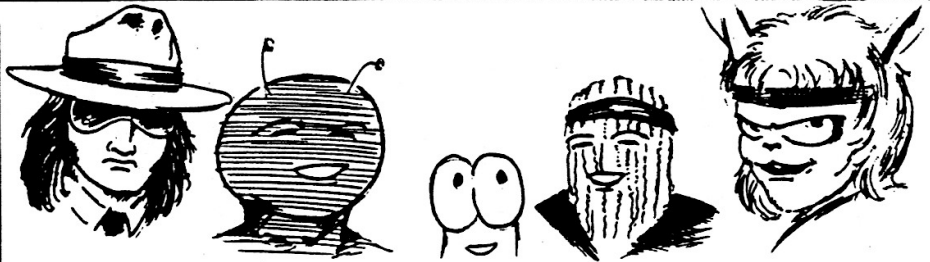
BUT SUDDENLY, THERE
WAS ISUZU, ON A LOOSE
POWER LINE.

HEADS
UP!

WHEN WE REACHED A
SOLID PLATFORM, ALL
HELL BROKE LOOSE.



CHAPTER FOUR: YOU ARE HERE



...IN THE TIME THAT FOLLOWED, I FOUND I COULDN'T RECONCILE THE "NEW ME" WITH THE THINGS THAT MADE ME WHAT I AM: MY PAST, MY FRIENDS.

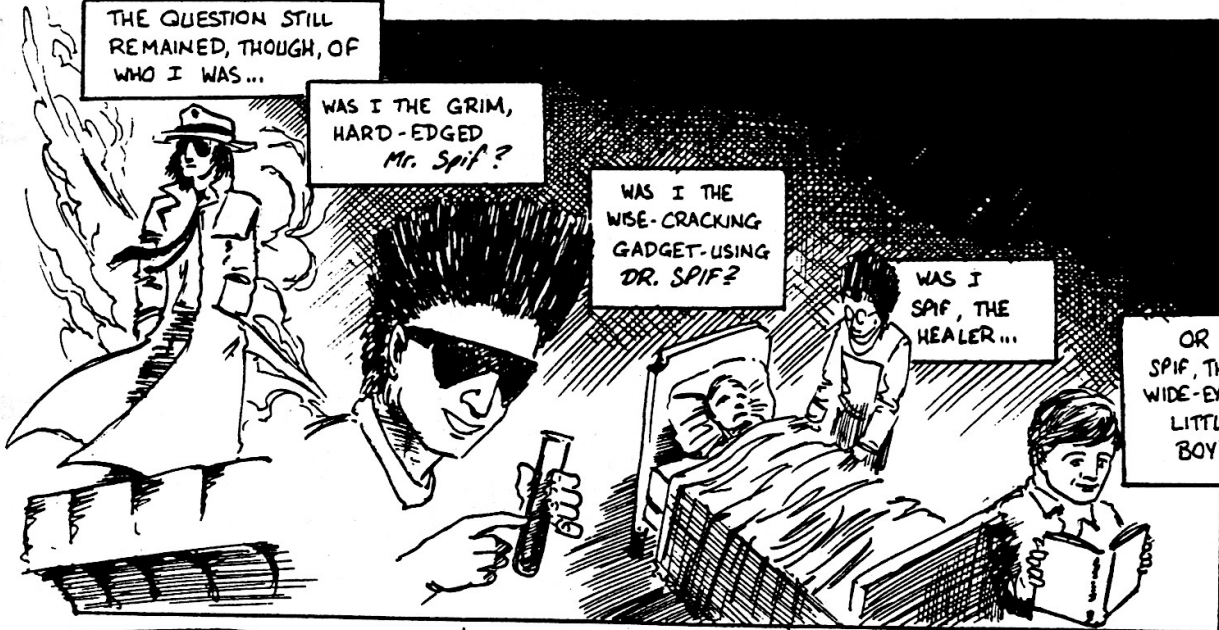
THE QUESTION STILL
REMAINED, THOUGH, OF
WHO I WAS ...

WAS I THE GRIM,
HARD-EDGED
Mr. Spif?

WAS I THE
WISE-CRACKING
GADGET-USING
DR. SPIF?

WAS I
SPIF, THE
HEALER ...

OR
SPIF, THE
WIDE-EYED
LITTLE
BOY?



AND THEN I
REALIZED ...
THE ANSWER
IS YES.
I AM ALL
THESE THINGS,
AND A
THOUSAND
MORE.



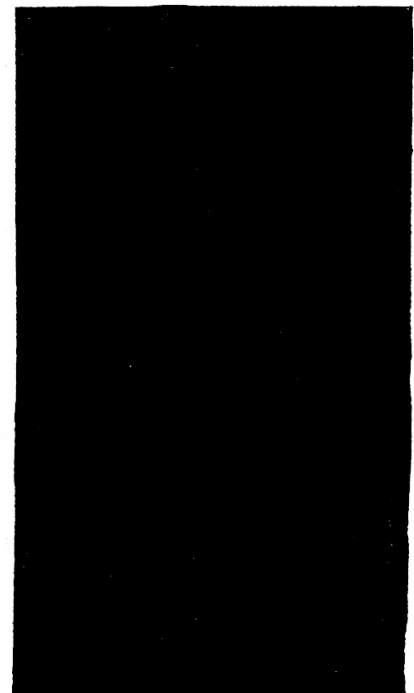
THAT'S WHAT
MAKES ME
HUMAN.



THAT'S WHAT
MAKES ME SPIF.



LIGHTS
DEACTIVATE.



end.

WANTED



DR. SPIF DEAD OR ALIVE!

MAX July
29
INK '94

PROTOPLASM
PRESS

1

SEPT
\$1.50

SPIF



SPECIAL 2020 BONUS SECTION

For some reason, Amoeba Adventures "solo" comics seemed cursed - Rambunny's tale took years to come out and had its own tragedy as related in the bonus material for that issue, and while Spif didn't have that kind of drama, it did take more than two years for us to turn Troy's excellent script into somethin' good. The final issue was also hampered by a really low print run and some (since-fixed) typos and print errors, coming as it did right when I finished college and was flat broke.

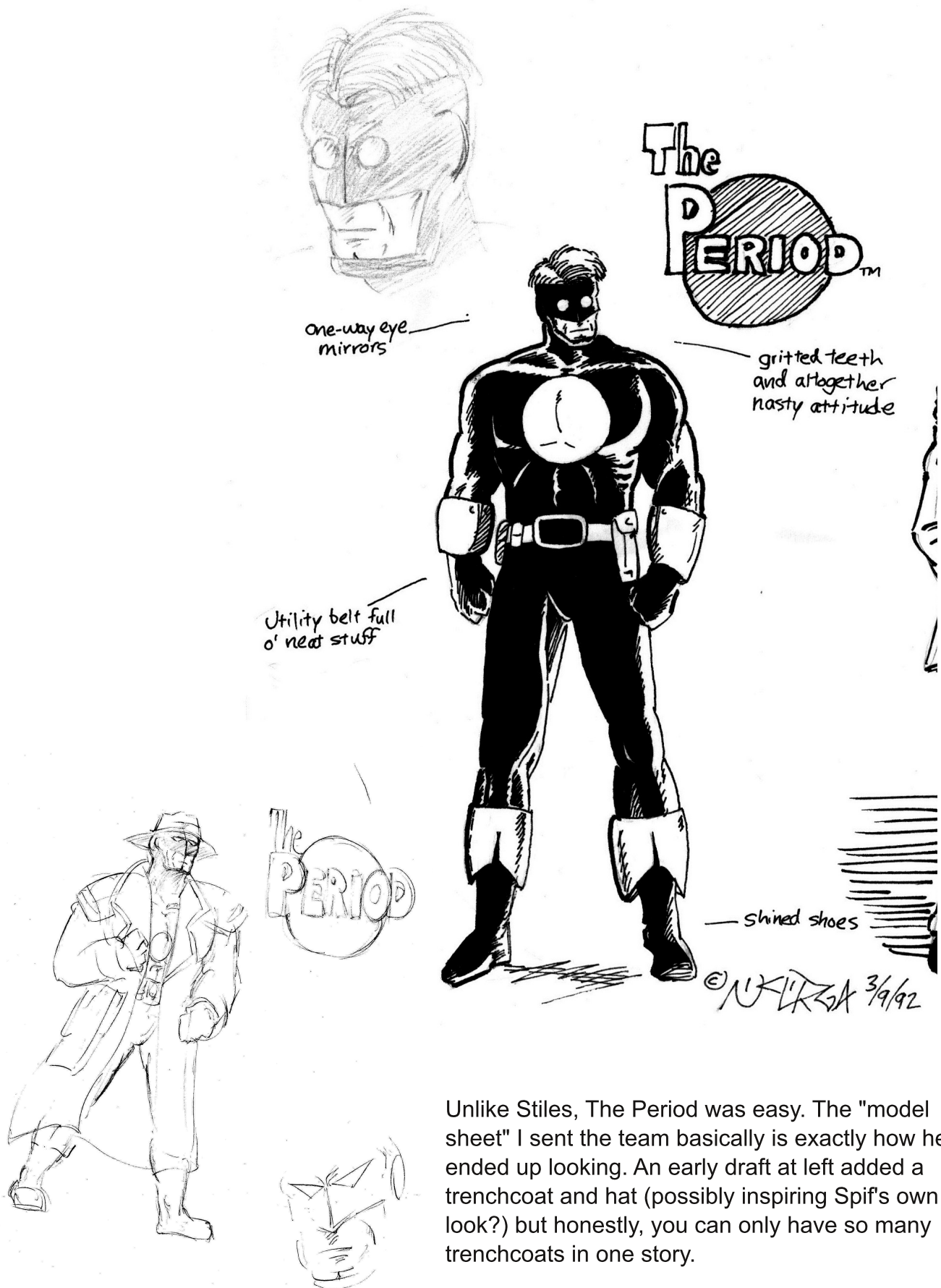


The idea of a Spif solo story had been around for ages, and was teased way back in **Amoeba Adventures** #1. One thing I never settled on was what Stiles LOOKED like - the very goofy "Hamburglar" Stiles seen at left appeared in a flashback cameo in AA #1.

When I sent "model" sheets to Troy and Max Ink for Spif #1, I sketched a very "Kingpin" take on Stiles at right - which doesn't really work at all. Fortunately, Max's final take on Stiles captured a nicely foppish, semi-Victorian look to the man of many hats. I always thought in a movie he'd have been played by James Mason or a young Richard E. Grant. Troy suggested Sebastian Cabot from "A Family Affair," who would've also been more "Kingpin" looking.



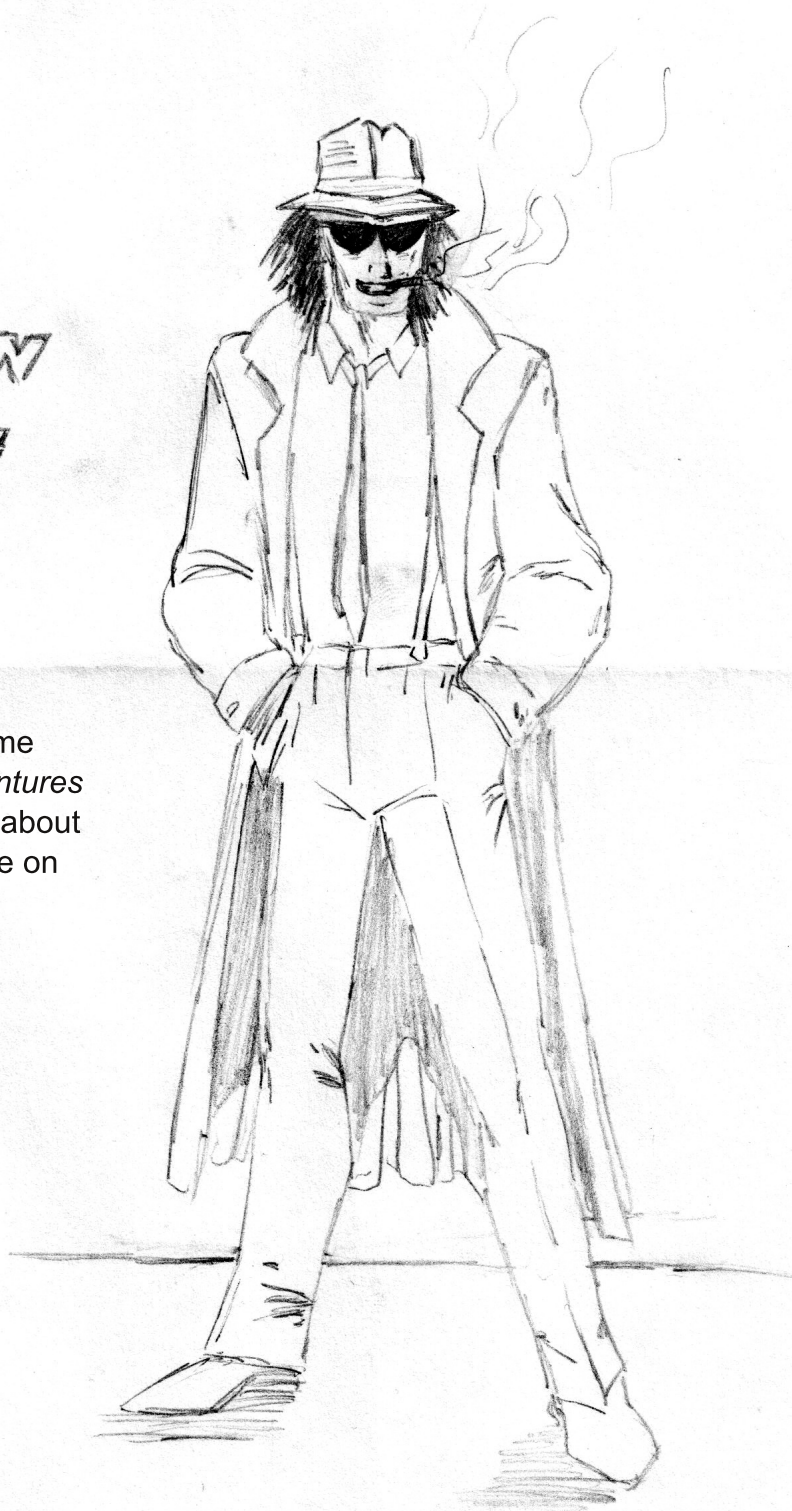
Troy - For SPiF one-shot



Unlike Stiles, The Period was easy. The "model sheet" I sent the team basically is exactly how he ended up looking. An early draft at left added a trenchcoat and hat (possibly inspiring Spif's own look?) but honestly, you can only have so many trenchcoats in one story.

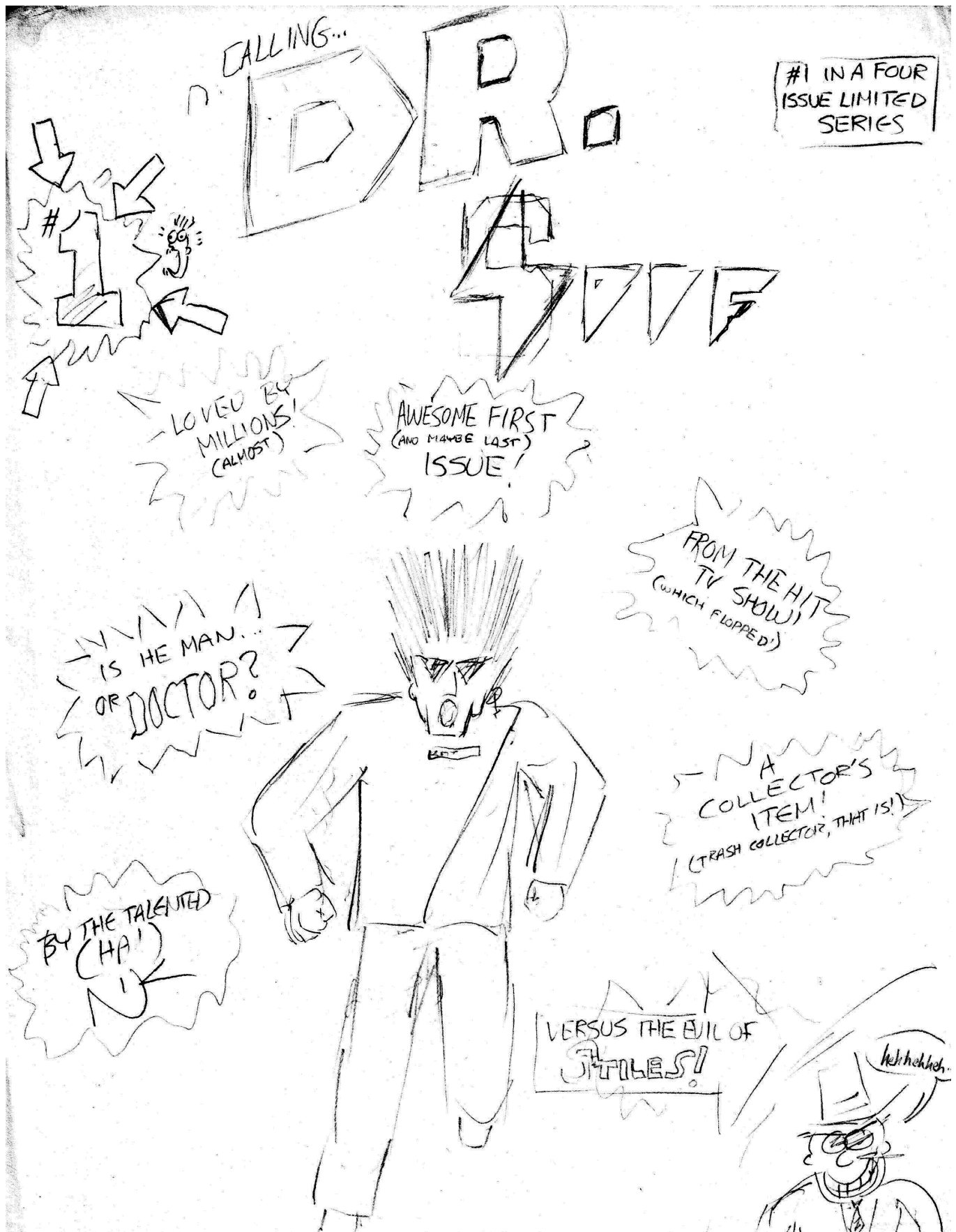
JOHN SPIF

A sketch I did sometime before *Amoeba Adventures* #1, idly daydreaming about an entire different take on Spif. (Attorney AND mercenary?!?)



IF NO ONE WILL HELP YOU..
IF NO ONE WILL BELIEVE YOU..

JOHN SPIF. ~~MERCENARY~~, ATTORNEY.



From way, way back circa 1987, this sketch done around the same time as Prometheus #4 shows just how long I'd imagined a Spif solo comic. Complete with Hamburglar Stiles, lurking at bottom right. I do love "Is he man... or doctor?"