

THE ADVENTURES OF

PROMETHEUS

#3

FADING
IMAGE
GRAPHIX

THE
PROTOPLASM™

MOVE OVER, SLIME!
NINJA ANT
IS TAKING THIS
RAG OVER!

Take it!



The Slimeball Speaks:

For the whiny little protoplasm in all of us

Yes, a protoplasm walks among us!
And he is alive!
Alive, Doctor Frankenstein, ALIVE!!
Hahahahahahahaha.....

These insignificant little creatures, these protoplasm..
what are they?
WHY are they?
Let's ask Mister Webster...

Protoplasm (pro'te-plaz'em) n. A complex jelly-like substance colloidal substance conceived of as constituting the living matter of plant and animal cells and performing the basic life functions. **pro'to-plas'mic, pro'to-plas'mal.**



Kinda makes ya
jealous, huh?

Being a successful protoplasm has
it's problems. Why, take the time
that Prometheus got stuck in Huey
Lewis' hot tub! Or the time he ate
an entire batch of marijuana
brownies! Or....

THE PROMETHEUS THE PROTOPLASM THEME SONG

It's a story
of a slime named Prometheus
who was intellectual
and smart

He had three issues
like his father
they were all so bold

It's a story
of a jerk named Kronos
who was stupid
and a commie pig

He had no issues
and so was PO'd
and vowed to kick some butt

The one day came these
two slimes had a hunch
that next issue
they would battle
and then the loser would lose his..life?
And that's the way we be-came the
SLIMEY BUNCH!
Da da de da da de da dum dum dum!

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PROMETHEUS THE PROTOPLASM™



STARRING IN

“LIKE A NINJA”
By NK

GUEST APPEARANCE BY DR. SQUE™

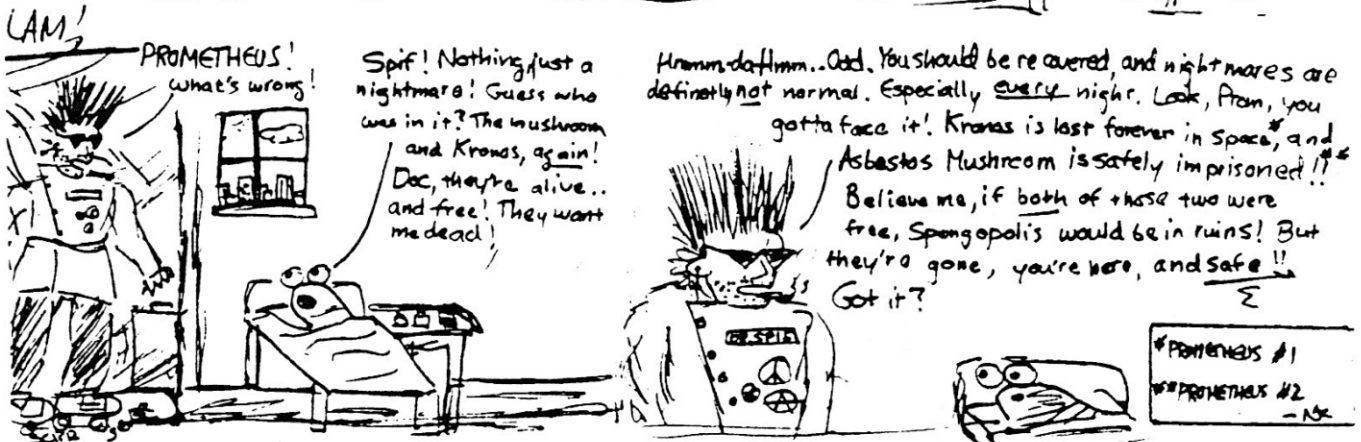
AND
INTRODUCING

NINJA ANT™

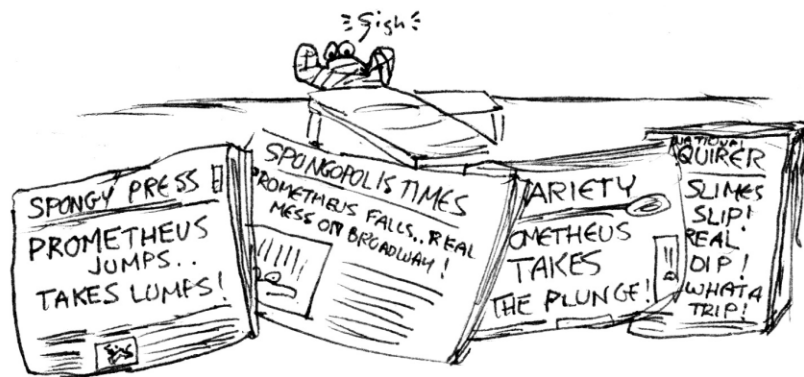
AND HUNDREDS OF SPECIAL GUEST STARS!!

A gigantic ball of protoplasm races through space. Committing suicide in a comet, the ball splits in two pieces: Kronos, a gigantic evil amoeba, and a pacifist slime, the heroic...

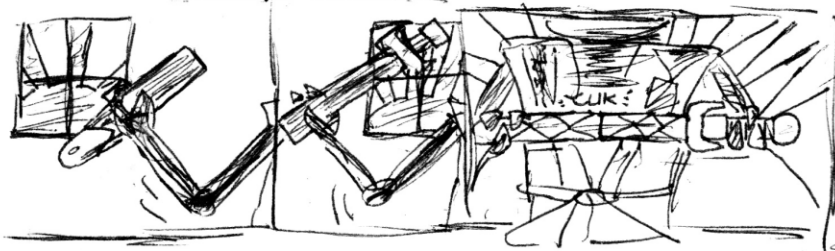
PROMETHEUS the PROTOPLASM!!!



Meanwhile, the news of Prometheus hits the newspapers like a runaway peanut butter truck with a dead iguana driving!!!



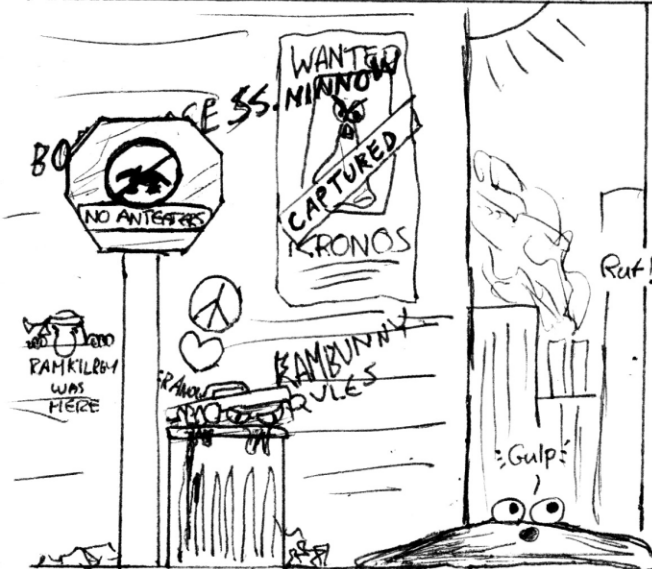
Meanwhile, in a rented apartment in the outskirts of Spongopolis...



Finally, happily for the hospital, comes Prometheus' release date...



But, those ever-amazing people, the Newshounds, get wind of prom's release from the hospital, and...

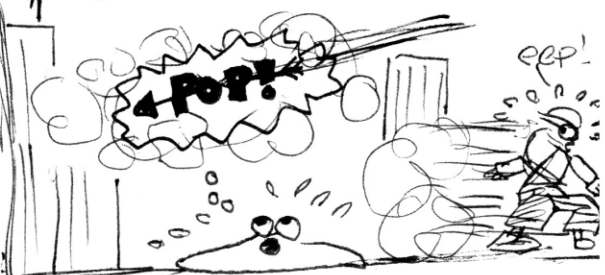


However, up on a nearby tenement rooftop... danger lurks!

That worthless slime gets all of the glory while I, with my real talents, rot here! But no longer!!!



...NINJA ANT'S DAY HAS COME!



HAVE NO FEAR, NINJA ANT IS HERE!



Greetings, Spongopolians! I must say, Tho' Prometheus-sar may have been permanently put out of buisness, I, Ninja Ant, swear on my dog's grave that he shall be avenged and I will carry on in his place, naturally!



But what of Prometheus? Is he truly unable to speak, or just a very quiet amoeba?



While I can't speak, I can still think...and I think it's time I vacated the premises!

Let me see!

Wife!

Good gravy!
This is amazin!

Ninja Ant rules! Wowza! Double wowza!

far in!

SPONGOPOLIS TIMES

NINJA ANT!

SUPER STAR COMES TO TOWN!
PROMETHEUS WHO?

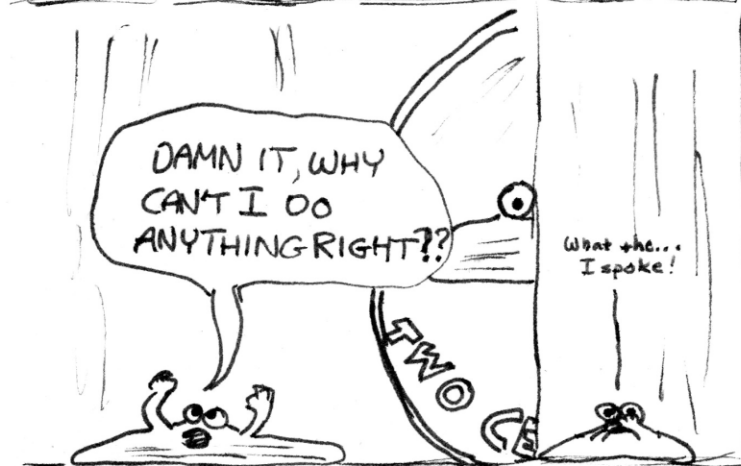
RAOUL'S COMING!

PROMETHEUS DISBANDS!

Ah, my morning paper! Let's see what Garfield's up to today!



Back at the Proto plasm Cave...



My name is Isuzu...but you can call me.. **KARATE KACTUS!!**



Yes, second cousins! Look, Prometheus, I came here, because...

KARATE KACTUS? you wouldn't be any relation to a NINJA ANT, by any chance?



Cousin? Wow...gee..

I mean, nothing personal, but you are a cactus and all...gee, I would've hated to be the delivering doctor when you were born...



Yes, but, you see, I think my cousin, Ninja Ant, was...

Hmm...and think of the diaper cost! I bet you wore titanium diapers! And...

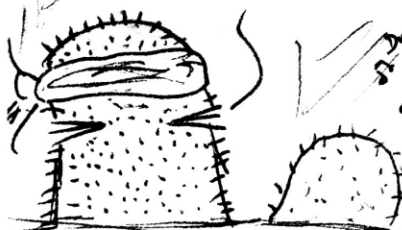


...Brainwashed into ruining your rep! And the person who did this was an old enemy of yours...

...the more I think about it... I mean, talk about bad prickly heat! So...



...THE ASBESTOS MUSHROOM!



YIPES!



Prometheus... get off the ceiling!!



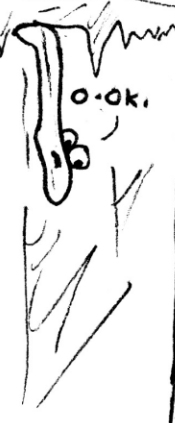
Uh-uh! No way, Jose! I've...er... got a bad case of mushroom phobia! Break out near them! Yeah, that's it!



Friend amoeba, I cannot force you to help me, but know this: My cousin is innocent! He will surely be slain by the mushroom when he's served his purpose! You've got to defeat the Ninja Ant! This should bring him out of his evil spell! Prometheus, can you WILL YOU DO IT?



O-Ok.



Excellent! Now, here's my plan! Listen up...



The next night, TVland's greatest nighttime variety show hits the tubes!

AND LIVE FROM SPONGOPOLIS.. IT'S THE MONTE PYTHON SHOW! **AIR**

Hey out there! How're things in the Big Avacado?

GREAT MONTE!

Well, great! Well, Tonight, our guests include Betty Crackpot, Ron Reagan, and all of Spongland's brand new superstar.. **NINJA ANT!!**

And we'll be right back after this important word from SUME magazin. Hit it!!

YAY! GO NINJA ANT!!
YAY! NINJA ANT!!

Outside the studio..

STUDIO 74

Ok, Pro..you ready?

Yeah, sure!

All right..on my signal, we'll go in and take Ninja Ant! If we beat him, we've got it made! But he's one tough customer..

..It's going to be a tough battle!!

Back inside..

All right now! Thanks a heap, Ronnie! Great budget plan! Now, ladies and gents..the ant you've all be waiting for... (the incredible insect!)

He's...

YAY! YAY! ALL RIGHT GO ANT!!

Hell-a, spongies!

...**NINJA ANT!!!**

YAY! YAY! SUPERCAULIFRAGILISTIC-EXPEALIDOSCIOUS

Prometheus, Shhh!

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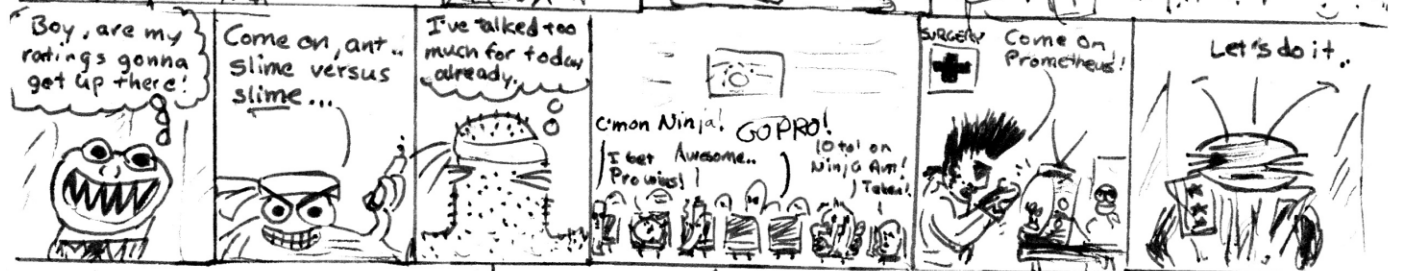
HELLO HOLLYWOOD! WOW! NINJA!

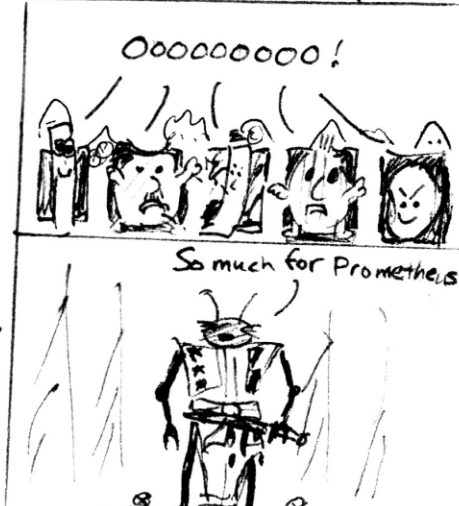
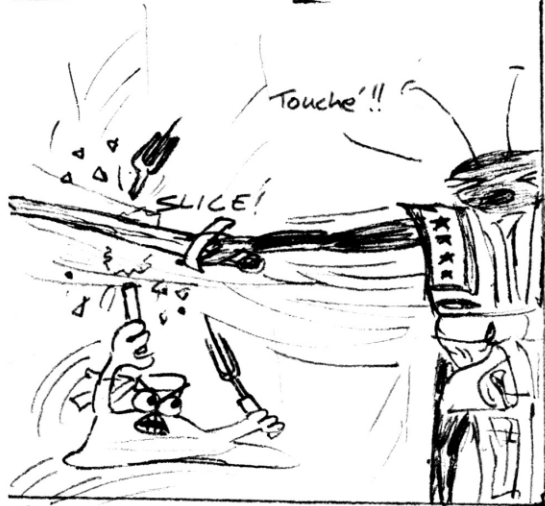
Dirty, rotzin' fratzin' stupid idiot ANT!

And tell us, Ninja, how's the movie deal?

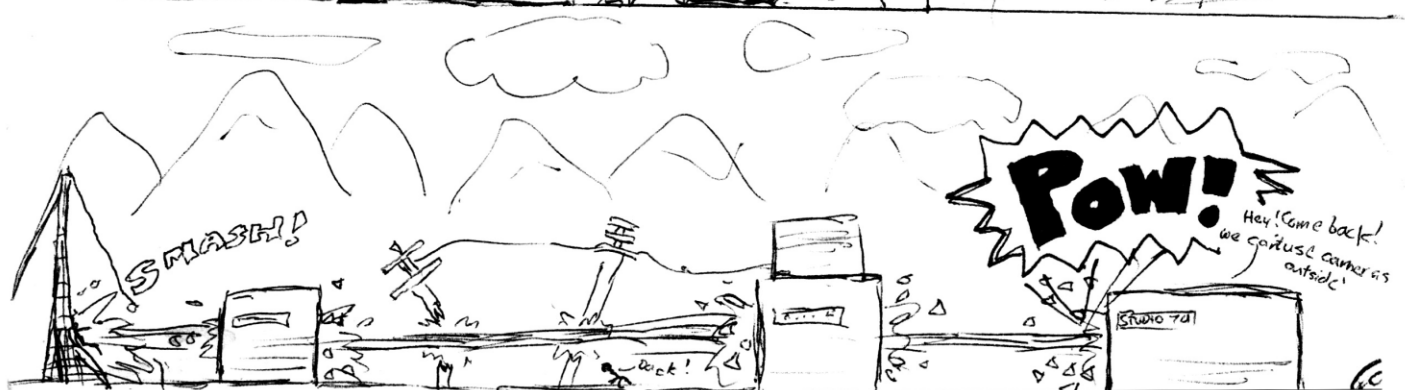
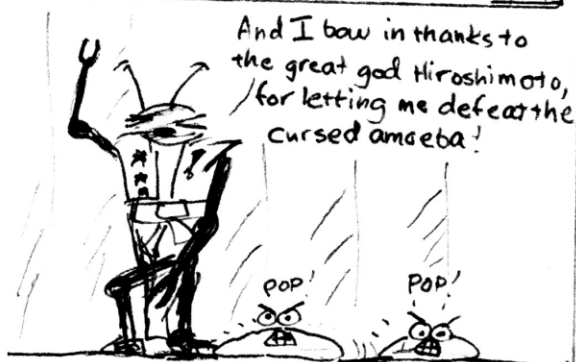
Well, Monte, I'll tell you.. We've decided to call it "Ninja Ant". Original, ey? It'll be all about my life story, and I figure I'll earn.. oh, a couple million..

OK! YAY! ANT!!





But each half of Prometheus forms
a new whole, unknown to the Ninja!





Ooo...I've got an
Excedrin headache!



I can't believe it!
I won! I beat him!

Wow...
My antenna!
My beautiful
antenna!

Great, Pro!
Now we can
find out
why the
Mushroom
brainwashed
him!



After the art is pried loose
from the wreckage..

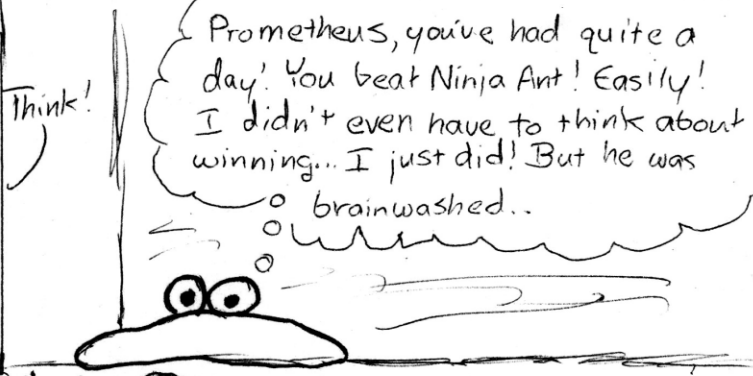
Mitsubishi, snap
out of it!!! Come on..

And I say,
Rudolph, you
real nosed
foul...

Wow! Pro is
famous and
more!

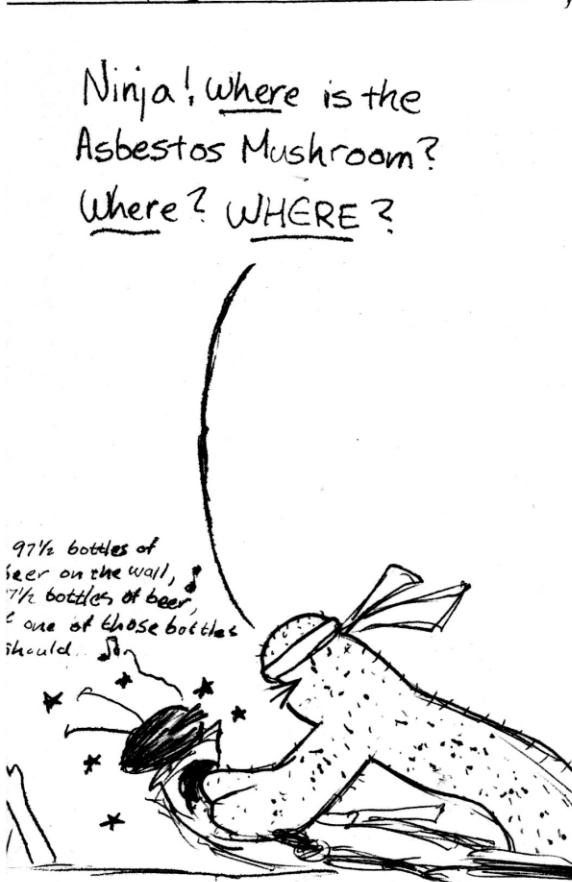


Ninja, think! Where is
the mushroom? We
have got to know
so we can
stop him!
We're counting
on you!



Think!

Prometheus, you've had quite a
day! You beat Ninja Ant! Easily!
I didn't even have to think about
winning... I just did! But he was
brainwashed..



Ninja! where is the
Asbestos Mushroom?
Where? WHERE?

97 1/2 bottles of
beer on the wall,
7 1/2 bottles of beer,
& one of those bottles
should...



YOU WANT THE ASBESTOS
MUSHROOM? THEN THE
ASBESTOS MUSHROOM...

Now how's that for
a Stupid Pet Trick?

NO! Not..you!



...IS HERE!!

..AND KRONOS
IS WITH HIM!

Um..help?

Uh oh...

I think..
that we're
in trouble!

NEXT:

THE
BAD GUYS
STRIKE
BACK!

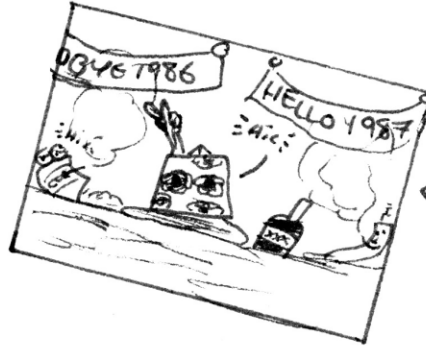
THUD!

BONUS!

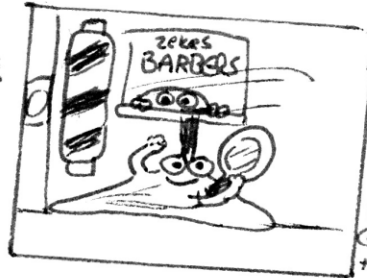
ANOTHER PAGE FROM PROMETHEUS' PHOTO ALBUM!



SPONGOPOLIS
AFTER
KRONOS
SNEEZED
What a mess!

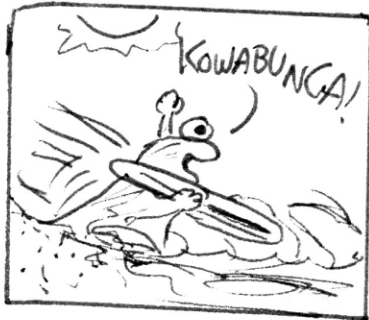


CLOWNING AROUND
WITH A LAMP SHADE
ON MY HEAD AT
THE CARROT'S NEW
YEARS PARTY!



FIRST
"NEW
WAVE"
HAIRCUT!
Grew out
too fast -
though...
OR SPIF liked
it!!

ME AND..SOME GUY..KIND OF A
SNOB, THAT GUY.. Acted like he
was president or something..



HITTING THE
BEACH IN
SAN DIEGO..

...AND
FINDING
OUT THAT
I CAN'T
SWIM!



ONE LAST WORD OF
ADVICE... NEVER TRY
TO TAKE SEAN PENN'S
PICTURE!! I DID...



AT THE
AMOeba
WATCHERS
CONVENTION



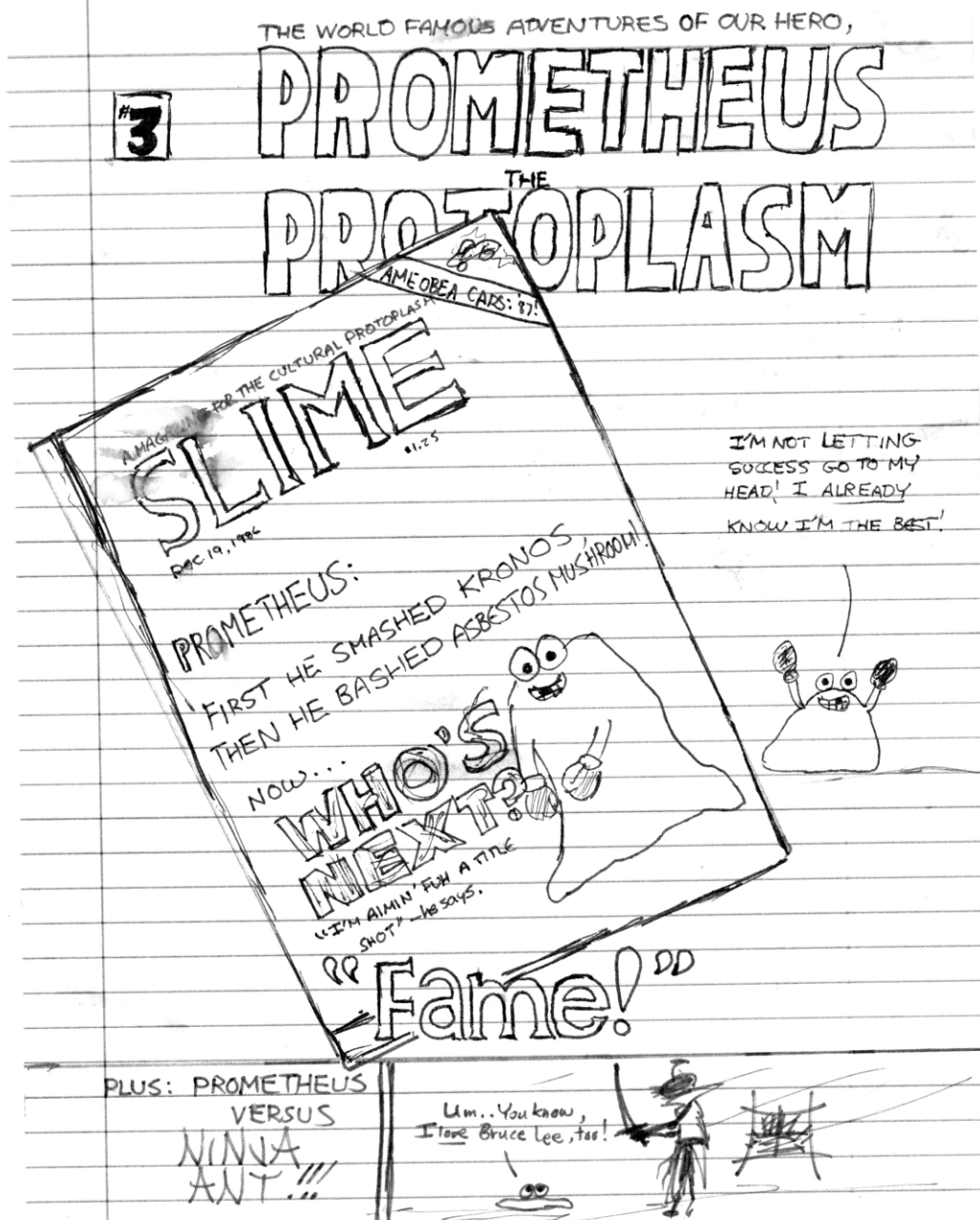
NEXT:



SPECIAL BONUS SECTION

Well, viewed 35 or so years on, Prometheus #3 is pretty embarrassing to me, the work of a 15-year-old novice. Yet, it's an important piece of Amoeba archaeology that introduces Ninja Ant and Karate Kactus for the first time, is a more proper "comic book adventure" than the first two scribbled comics, and sets a lot of the tone for the future. In my vague memories of 1987, I was learning as I went along - I started this issue scribbling in the same stupid blue marker pens I'd always drawn with, cramming as much as I could on a page (sorry that the lettering is borderline illegible on the first few pages), but even by the end of this story I started to learn how to tell a story better, using panel borders, clearer lettering and getting rid of the bloody blue pens. More than any other comic I did, this issue shows me learning as I went along, I think.

Below: A very early draft of the cover for Prometheus #3, more in the style of Prometheus #1 and #2.



There's stuff about these earliest comics that I cringe a lot at - my initial drawn portrayals of the Asian "Ninja Ant" and "Karate Kactus" characters were a little crude and insensitive. (I'm particularly dismayed by the "squinty eyes" I drew them both with for years, which weren't intended as racist, just based on some pretty antiquated and lame cartooning shorthand, but nowadays looks pretty bad.) Below is the "small press version" cover for the Prometheus #3 second printing - which I'm not quite sure if I ever published, 30 years on... I don't have any copies left if I did!

AND NOW, A BLAST FROM THE PAST,

PROMETHEUS™

ONLY A MAN

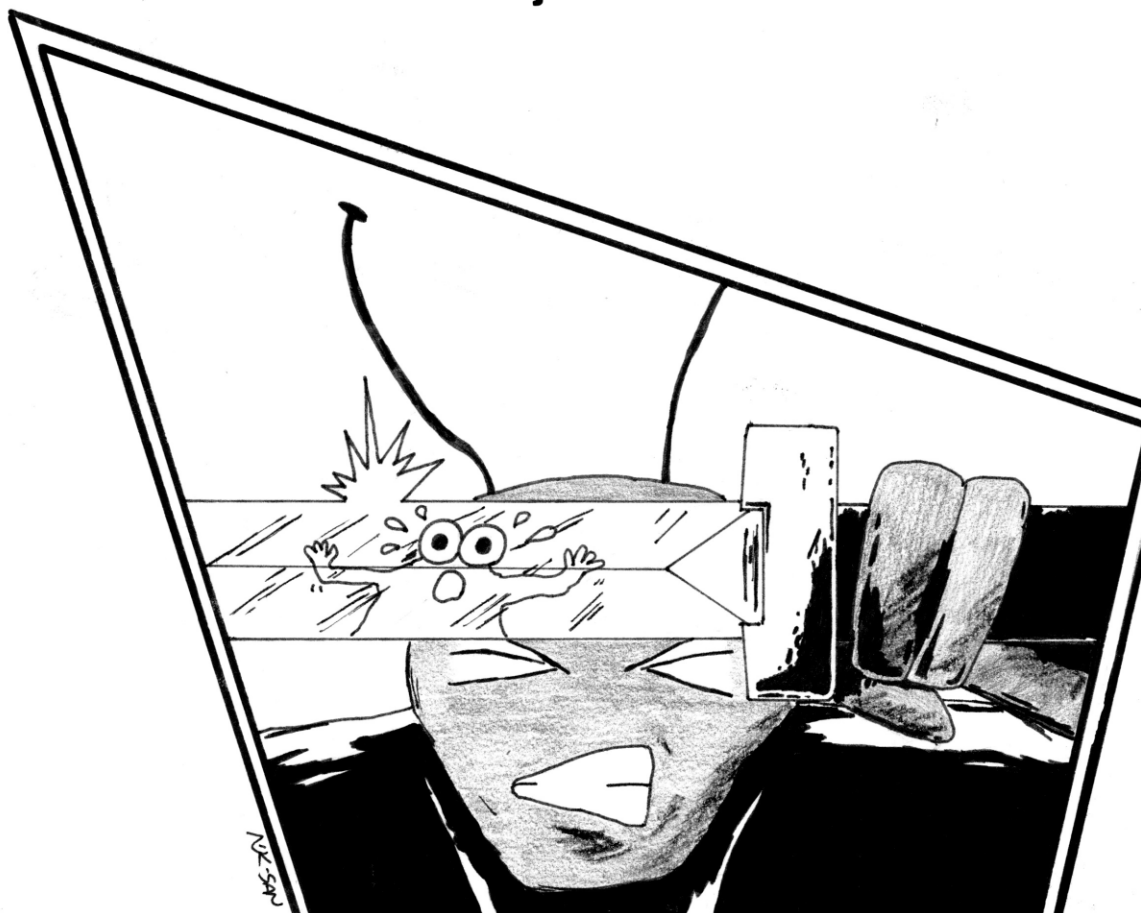
PART ONE
OF FOUR

like

a

ninja

Protoplasm Press	
3	\$1.00
JAN 1987	



The introduction for a second printing of *Prometheus* #3 (more like a "first" printing, because I never actually printed any copies of the issue back in 1987!) circa 1991.

THE SLIMEBALL SPEAKS (RETROACTIVELY):

The tale of *Prometheus*' creation I feel like I've repeated a million times, so I'm not gonna go into it again here (Check out *ONE-CELLED TALES* #1, *AMOEBAS ADVENTURES* #1 or #3 for that oft-repeated tale if you're interested). Suffice it to say that during Christmas 1986, the first two issues of *Prometheus* were born. They were hasty, doodle-like things, not at all the refined artwork I churn out today (yeah, right). To give you an idea of how cheesy they were, they were done in blue marker on binder paper.

However, they did contain some darned nifty characters and ideas...#1 brought you *Prometheus* and his evil big brother Kronos, and in #2, a whole slew of fellas were introduced...Rambunny, Dr. Spif, and the evil phallic villain, the Asbestos Mushroom. That issue, since I'm not planning on reprinting it, needs to be recapped a bit to fully understand this tale.

Prometheus #2 opened with *Prometheus* finding himself the victim of several nasty attacks by the Asbestos Mushroom, a deranged looney who disliked amoebas for some reason. To protect himself, Pro got the services of the mammoth Rambunny as a bodyguard. Well, that didn't work out as the Mushroom popped up again with a device that "changes *Prometheus*' bodily frequency so that he can't transmutate to avoid harm," and then nuked him with some napalm. (Yes, I know this virtually echoes Alan Moore's *Swamp Thing* #53, but keep two things in mind: (1. I was young. (2. *Swamp Thing* wasn't no amoeba, OK?) (Consider it a homage, then.) (Hey, if all these bozos nowadays can rip-off other people's concepts and call it a "homage," then so can I) (This blatant rip-offism is another reason I ain't reprinting *Pro* #2) OK, enough parenthetical talk. So Pro got nuked. Who else could save him but...Doctor Spif! The Doc arrived, took Pro to the hospital, and left Rambunny to deal with the Mushroom, who in the course of their battle had been thrown into a nuclear reactor and turned into a 30-foot giant. I know, plot wasn't a strong point. Well, Rambunny was getting wasted by the Shroom, when Pro was miraculously cured by a mysterious voice (the Inner Gods, but that wasn't revealed until #6 [well, it was supposed to be revealed. I kinda forgot]) and rejoined the battle. Through skill, prowess, and blind luck, Spif, Rambunny, and Pro beat the Mushroom and all was a happy day again. Pro was sent to the hospital to recover, and as #3 opens, that's where we find him..

I like to think of the "real" story beginning in #3. *Prometheus* #3-6 link together to form a nice little story, "Only A Man." This story sets down all the background that *Amoeba Adventures* is working from, such as the Inner Gods, the forming of the All-Spongy Squadron, and so forth. It's a pretty good yarn, I guess, as I look back on it a few years later. If you read the whole story, you'll see a gradual increase in quality of art and storytelling, or so I hope. It took about 3 years to finish "Only A Man"...#3 was done in January 1987. It was still more or less doodled during classes I didn't like (I distinctly recall doing page 10 & 11 during a French I lecture), but at least I wasn't using binder paper anymore. Then #4 was done during the summer of '87...I wrote and pencilled it, and had my friend Nat Perry-Thistle do the inks on most of it. We did a lot of it on a camping trip to the mountains of the Sierra Nevadas. Then, after I did #4, nothing. I couldn't draw #5...it was more complex than I could handle. I tried many things, but it mostly hung around in a drawer for 2 years, until July 1989 when I finally finished it. #6 came relatively fast after that, in January 1990. Right before the end of high school, matter of fact.

Keep in mind, now, that none of the first six issues were intended as small-press comics. Well, in a way they were, but this was years before I even discovered the existence of a small-press network. So any critics of art (especially #3 & 4), story, etc. must factor that in first before speaking. The main reason I'm reprinting these four issues again is because I feel they make an integral background for the stories I'm now spinning in AA. Also, they aren't all that bad, either. I hope you enjoy the kickoff here in *Prometheus* #3, and decide to check out other parts of the overall tale.

Peace,

Nik

11-1-91

Oxford, MS.



P.S.: I've mentioned a few times I'm not printing *Prometheus* #1 & 2 again...but sometime, in the distant future, I do plan to entirely rewrite & redraw these two issues...and maybe #3 while I'm at it. With the current schedule, this will be around 1998. Anyone wanna draw them? Please? Oh well...I really need a few more hands, or maybe some robot doubles like Superman had.

PROMETHEUS #3, October 1991. Second Printing. Originally published Jan, 1987. *Prometheus* (and all characters contained herein) are © 1991 Nik Dirga. All rights reserved. Protoplasm Press, PO Box 2230 University, MS 38677.

A weird sort of "commercial" for myself I drew featuring "Max Protoplasm," the none-more-'80s parody of Max Headroom I briefly drew, "interviewing" Prometheus about his comic book. All these years on, my main question is, who the heck was Captain Eggplant?!?

