

Celebrating 40 Years of Prometheus 1986-2026

Protoplasm
Press

38
APR 26

AMOEBA ADVENTURES



AmoebaMail

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Greetings and welcome back to yet another issue of Amoeba Adventures! Here's a few quick thoughts on recent issues by you kind and generous constant readers:

Even though this is newer work, it gives me a feeling of nostalgia to read *Amoeba Adventures*. I like your creative use of panels and time lapse - also the production values and "feel" of the book.

Steve Willis, Washington state

*Thanks Steve! For those who don't know, Steve Willis is an utter legend of small press, with his Morty the Dog and Cranium Frenzy some of the best - and longest running - surreal and witty comix out there. And there's been a fabulous reprinting campaign recently which brings all of his work back into print - go search out the wonderful **Collected Cranium Frenzy** from Phoenix Productions in four volumes over on Amazon! It's fab!*

Reboot. Relaunch. Reimagining. Remix. Because everything now is meta, as I read "The Crane Flies High", I was oh-so-acutely aware I was reading it not just in the era of *Starfleet Academy* and *The Mandalorian & Grogu* and *Tron Ares*, but also in the meta era of everything having to be commentary on its decades-ago-past self, and also also in the online era of everyone having to provide commentary on everything being commentary on its past self. Which, I guess, means I'm here to provide commentary on whether *Amoeba Adventures* should be read as commentary as on itself, and thus as commentary on everything being commentary on itself, because I guess this is also the post-post-irony era? The thing that fascinates me about the AA relaunch is that the characters haven't aged much since we used to hang out in a gone-by millennium, but the stories have grown up as we've aged. There's neither meta reinvention here nor nostalgic navel-gazing, but storytelling that has become richer and more textured while still staying true to itself. My post-post-irony-meta-retro-nostalgic-commentary wish is that every "legacy" property could age so gracefully (or, heck, that I could myself). That said, to address Ninja Ant's question - No, this cannot be a thing. Just no.

David Hitt, Alabama

Are you saying that Herr Heinous and Kyoko couldn't be a valid coupling, David? Who are you to stand in the way of true love, anyway? Seriously, thanks for the kind comments on this quasi-"reboot" I've been churning out since 2020 - it's been a fascinating experiment to try and pick right up where I left off in 1998 but to also acknowledge I'm not writing from the point of view of a confused 20-something anymore!

Speaking of which, that pivots us right into...

NEXT ISSUE: It's all been leading to this - the wedding of Prometheus and Dawn Star, featuring a cast of thousands and quite possibly the most unexpected return of all! Come back for *Amoeba Adventures* #39 later in 2026 and see how it's all going to end!

OUR CAST



Ninja Ant
Hyperactive.



Rambunny
Irritable.



Prometheus
Confused.



Dawn
Amused.

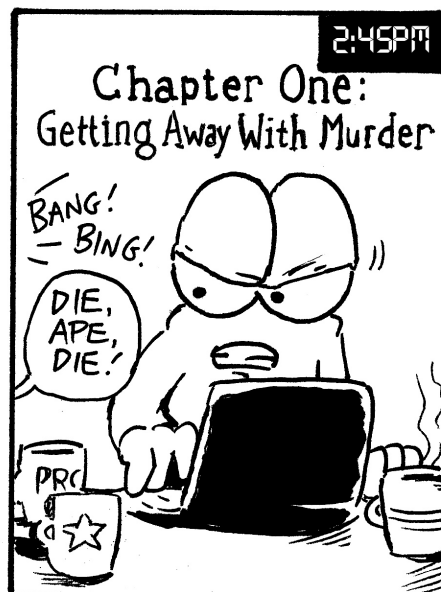
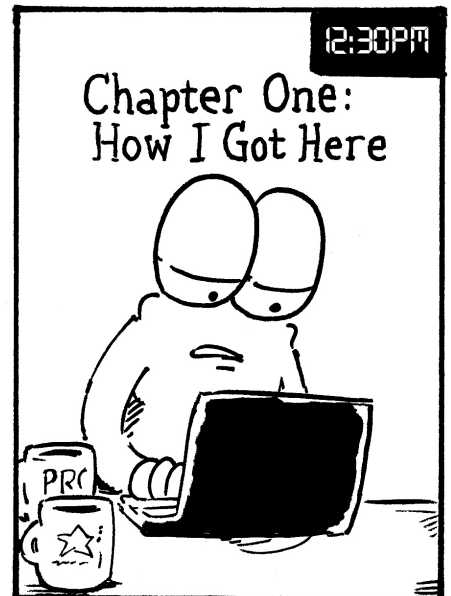
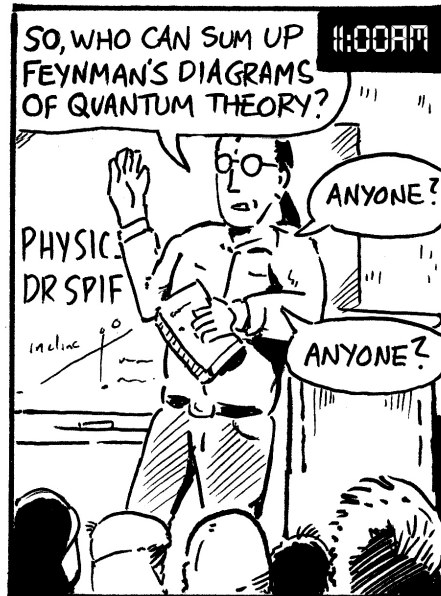
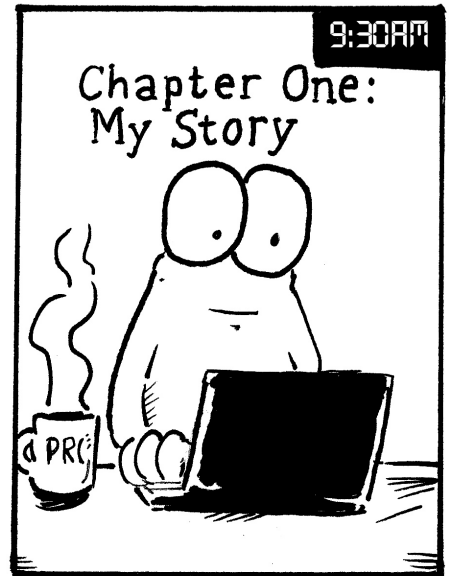


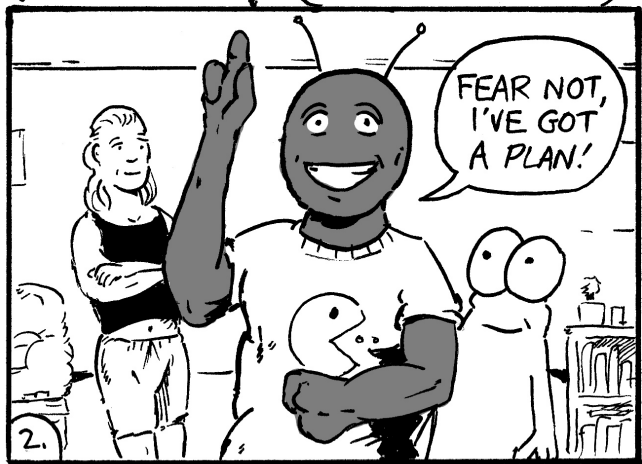
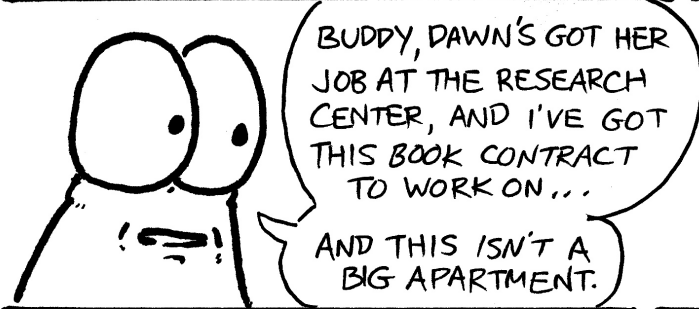
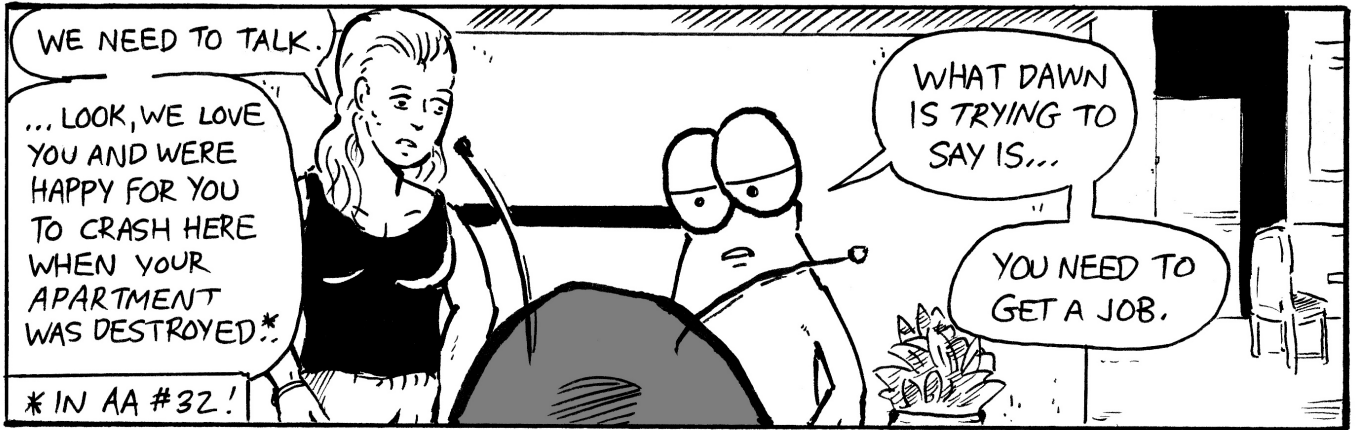
Larry
Freaking out.

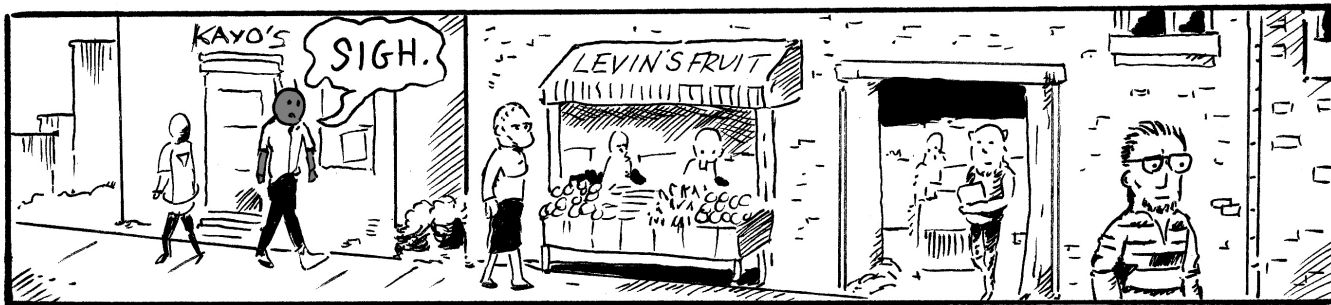
Amoeba Adventures #38, April 2026. Published eccentrically by Protoplasm Press, 262 Konini Road, Titirangi, Auckland New Zealand 0604. Additional print copies of this issue available for \$7.50 postpaid by emailing dirganik@gmail.com. Visit amoebaadventures.com and look for the links to download all 37 previous issues and much more for FREE, and give us a "like" on Facebook.com/amoebaadventures where occasionally I'll remember to post rare art and coming attractions. Amoeba Adventures, Prometheus the Protoplasm and all other characters are (C) 2026 Nik Dirga. All rights reserved.

"work. work is the key here."

- Steve Dunne, Seattle, 1992







SIGH.

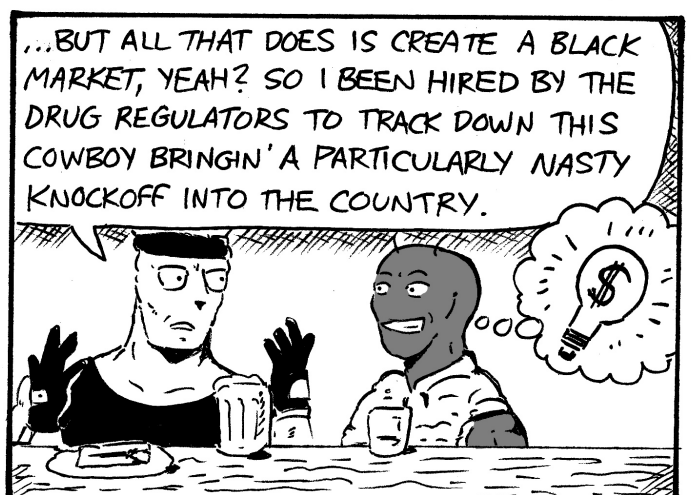
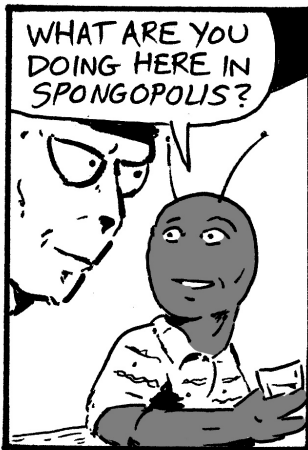
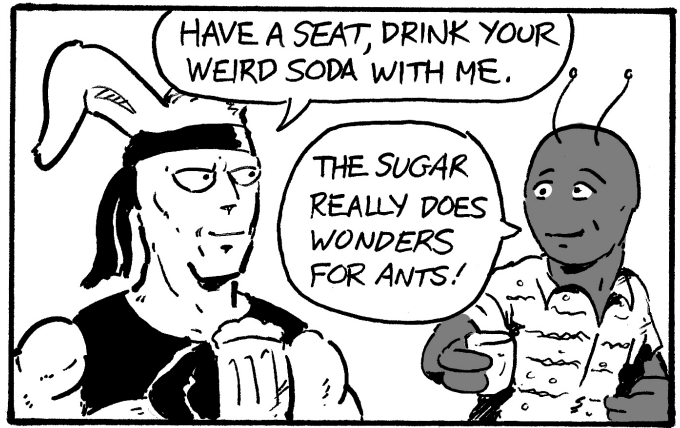
BUCK UP, MITSU, YOU KNEW YOU COULDN'T IMPOSE ON PRO AND DAWN FOREVER... BUT WHAT'S AN EX-SUPERHERO, FAILED DETECTIVE AND NINJA WITH FEW MARKETABLE SKILLS TO DO WITH HIS LIFE?



THE ~AN AMOEBA ADVENTURES STORY~

GOOD GUYS

WRITTEN AND DRAWN BY NIK DIRGA



SO... JUST HOW DO YOU GET THESE... JOBS?



AW, IT AIN'T THAT COMPLICATED, REALLY.

PEOPLE NEED SOMETHIN', THEY PAY ME ... AND I'M PICKY ABOUT THE KIND OF FOLKS I HELP.

I AIN'T ALWAYS BEEN A GOOD GUY, MAYBE, BUT I'M TRYIN' TO BE.



SOOOO... YOU EVER THINK ABOUT A PARTNER, MAYBE?



AW, HELL NO.

IS THAT WHAT THIS IS?

FORGET IT, ANT.



I WORK ALONE NOW.

BUT--



LOOK, MITSU, I LIKE YA, BUT LET'S FACE IT- PEOPLE WHO WORK WITH ME KEEP GETTIN' HURT. ITS WAY I LEFT THE TEAM, WAY BACK. * HECK, EVEN WHEN I GRABBED DAWN TO HELP ON A GIG RECENTLY, SHE NEARLY GOT KILLED. ** IF IT'S JUST ME, NOBODY ELSE GETS BLOODY.

*IN #11! **#30!



HEY, NO HARM IN ASKING, RIGHT? I RESPECT YOUR RUGGED LONER BRAND YOU'VE GOT GOING ON.

... ALL RIGHT, THEN. LOOK, I GOT TO CHASE THIS UP...



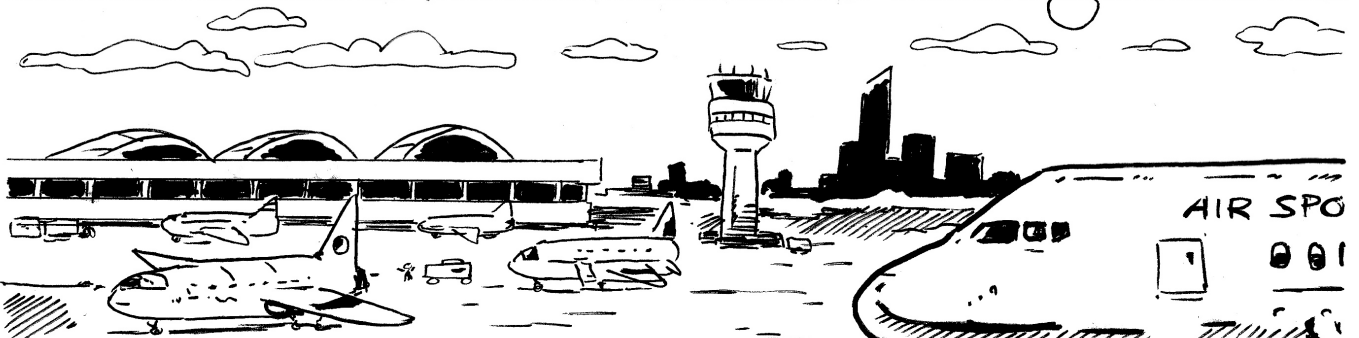
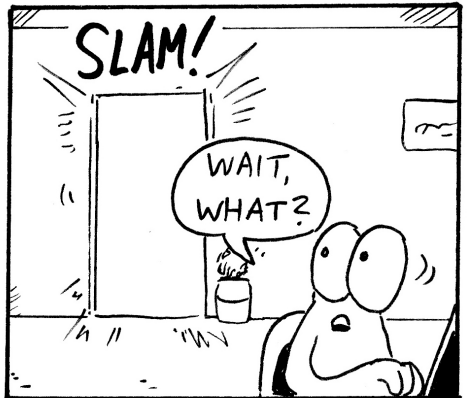
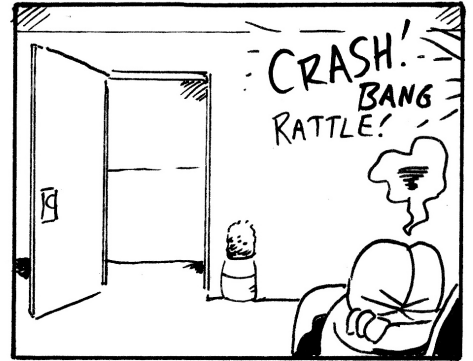
I'LL CATCH UP WITH YOU GUYS SOON, OK?

SEE YA, PAL!



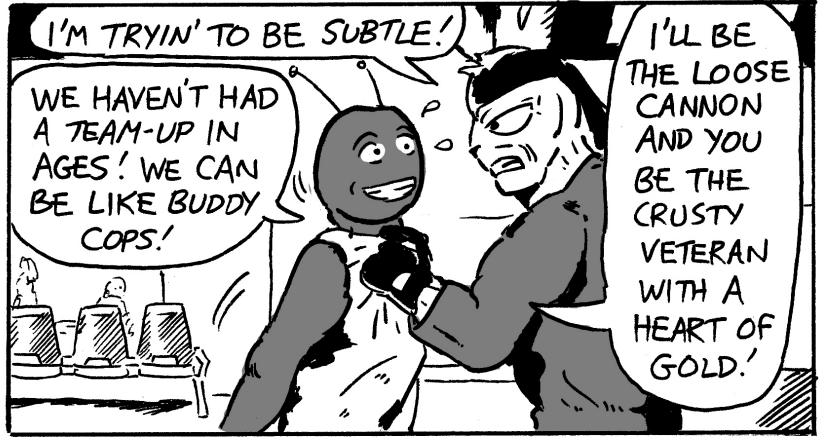
... BARTENDER, GIVE ME ONE MORE FANTA FOR THE ROAD...

AND MAKE IT STRAWBERRY.





DANG IT, MITSU, WHAT THE HECK ARE YOU DOING HERE?



I'M TRYIN' TO BE SUBTLE!

WE HAVEN'T HAD A TEAM-UP IN AGES! WE CAN BE LIKE BUDDY COPS!

I'LL BE THE LOOSE CANNON AND YOU BE THE CRUSTY VETERAN WITH A HEART OF GOLD!



CLAM UP! I GOT TIPPED MY COWBOY IS ON ONE OF THESE AFTERNOON FLIGHTS.

SO LET ME DO MY JOB, ANT!

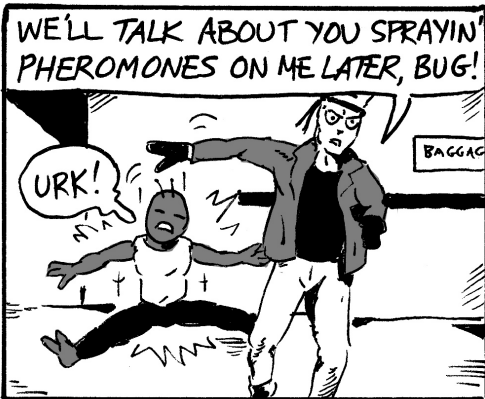


WAIT,.. HOW DID YOU FIND ME, ANYWAY?

THAT'S EASY! I JUST SPRITZED SOME OF MY ANT PHEROMONES AND THEN I CAN TRACK-

YOU DID WHAT- WHAT-

HEY LOOK, PEOPLE ARE GETTING OFF THAT PLANE!



WE'LL TALK ABOUT YOU SPRAYIN' PHEROMONES ON ME LATER, BUG!

URK!



ALL I KNOW IS MY CONTACT SAID A LARRY IS MY MULE, BUT THERE AIN'T NO LARRYS BOOKED ON FLIGHTS TODAY, SO HE'S UNDER AN ALIAS, WHICH MEANS I GOT TO STUDY EVERY PASSENGER ON THREE FLIGHTS TO--

WAIT, I GOT AN IDEA!



HEY, LARRY!!



WHAT?

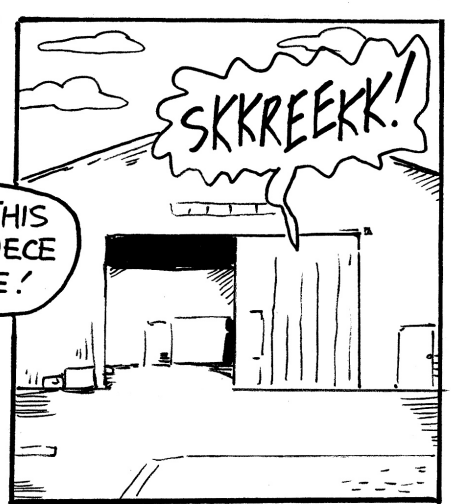
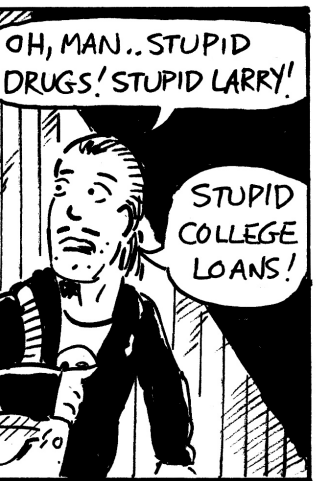
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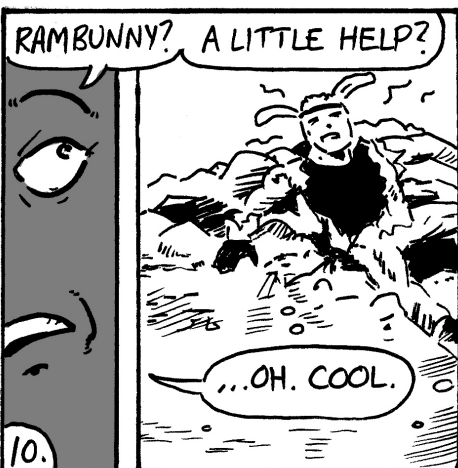
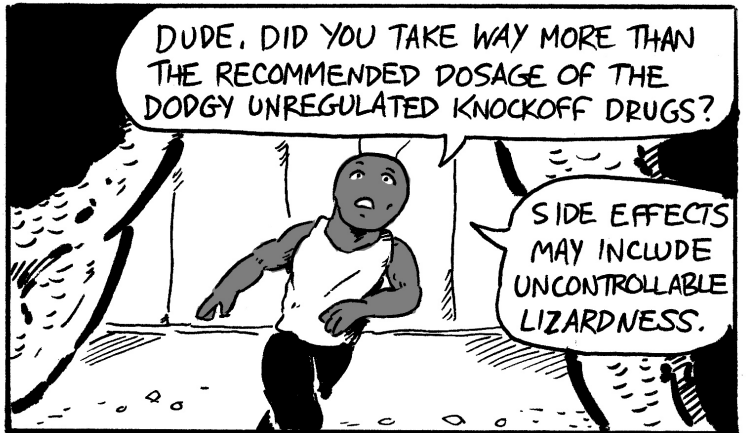
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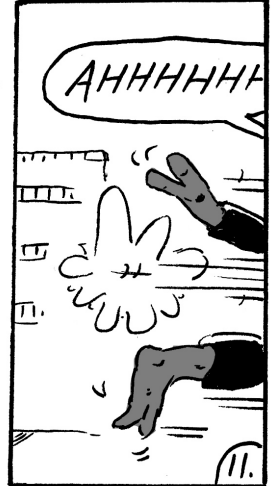
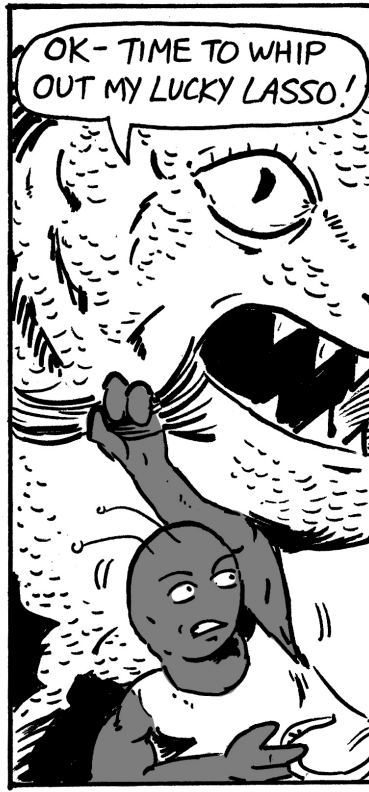
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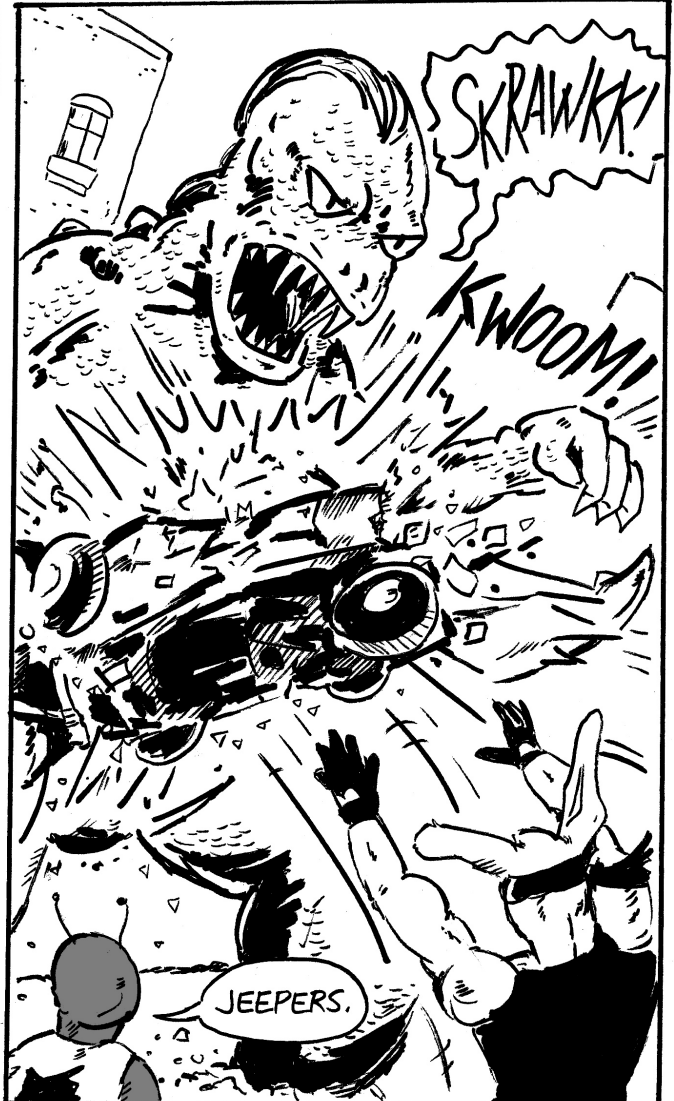
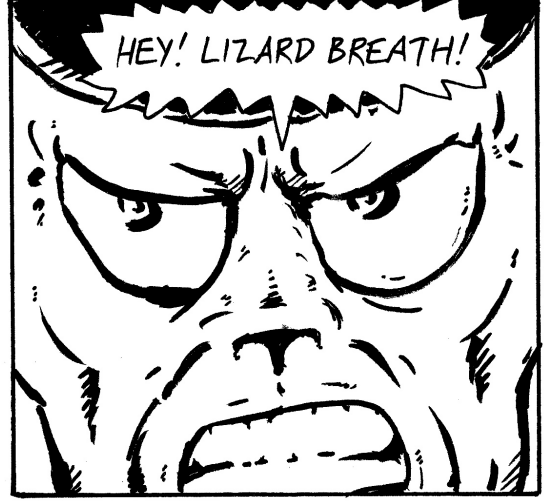
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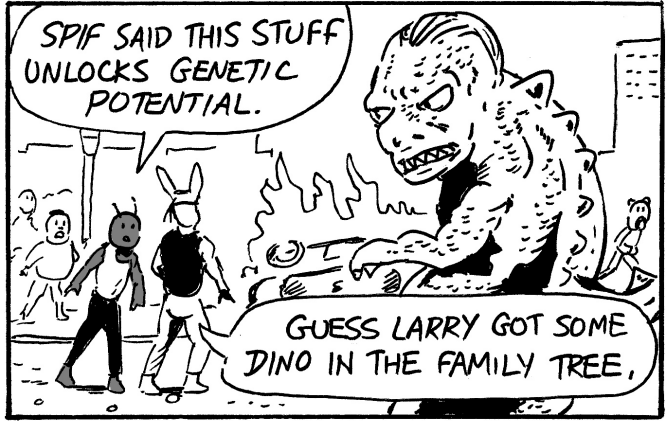
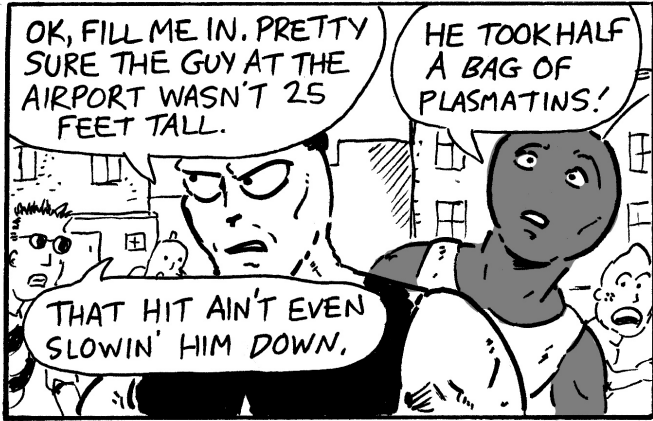




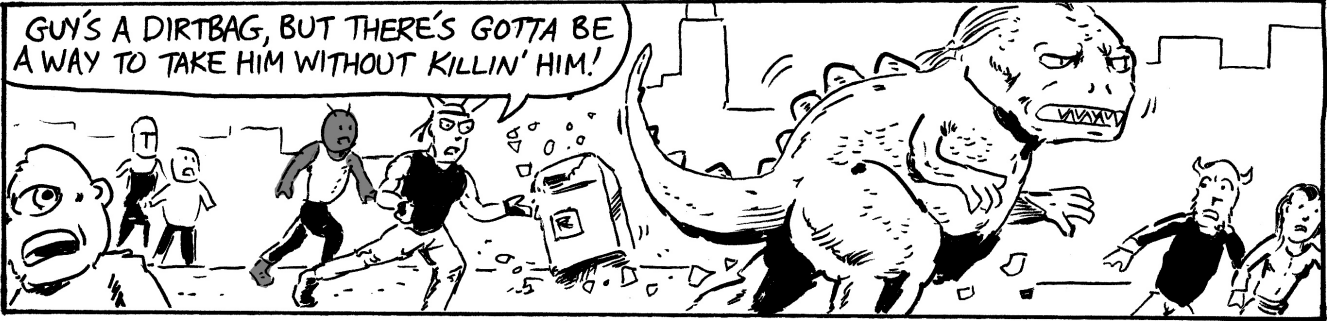








GUY'S A DIRTBAG, BUT THERE'S GOTTA BE A WAY TO TAKE HIM WITHOUT KILLIN' HIM!



TIP ONE, ANT-
USE YOUR
ENVIRONMENT!



KARRKKK!

LIE DOWN!

SPONNG!!



OH, MAN... THIS IS
ALL GETTING WAY
OUT OF ONE CUTE
LITTLE ANT'S LEAGUE.



... OH WELL, I ALWAYS KNEW I'D DIE
FIGHTING A KAIJU... OR MAYBE
IN A HORRIBLE ESCALATOR ACCIDENT.

SADDLE UP,
KAIJU
LARRY!

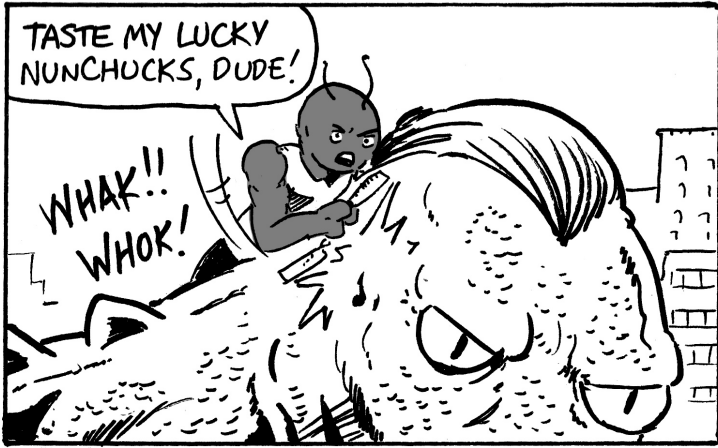


YOU AIN'T GETTIN'
ANOTHER STEP, DAMN IT!



YOU
AIN'T!





TASTE MY LUCKY NUNCHUCKS, DUDE!

WHAK!!
WHOK!



SKKREEK!!



HA! DIDN'T LIKE THAT, DID YOU?



WAIT... BRAIN... HAVING... FLASHBACK...



...AND SO, YOUNG MITSU, ANOTHER PIECE OF WISDOM FOR YOUR TRAINING. IF YOU SHOULD EVER ENCOUNTER A KAIJU OR SIMILAR MONSTROSITY, JUST REMEMBER: EVEN A FLEA CAN HUMBLE AN ELEPHANT, FORTUNE WILLING.

WHATCHOO TALKIN' 'BOUT, GRANDPA ANT?



YOU MUST STRIKE THEM IN THE TYMPANIC MEMBRANE AT THEIR EAR. IT WILL CAUSE PAINFUL VERTIGO AND SENSORY SHOCK.

GEE!



GREAT SCOTT! WHO KNEW THAT RANDOM BIT OF NINJA TRAINING MIGHT COME IN HANDY, YEARS LATER?

HEY, RAMBUNNY!



HIT HIM IN THE SYMPHONIC MANBRAIN!

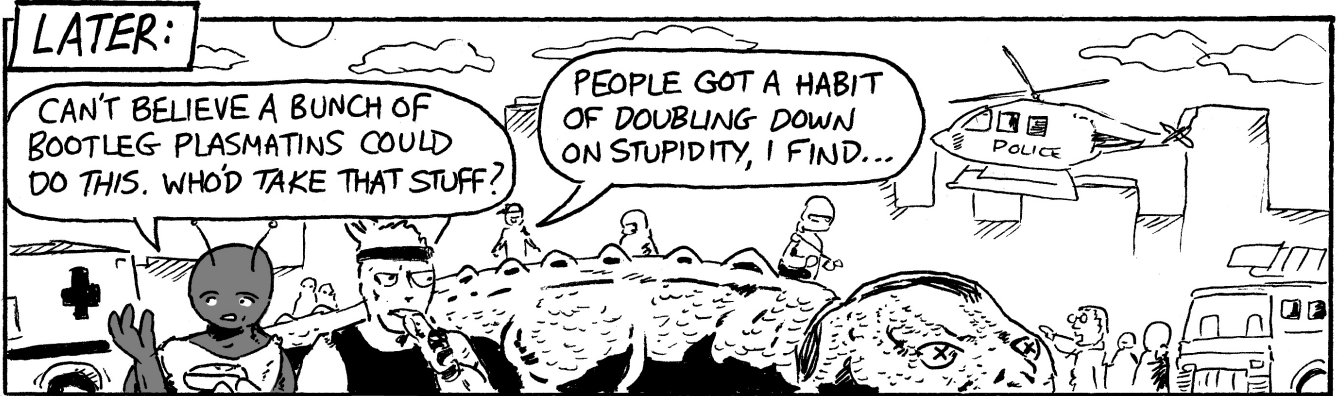
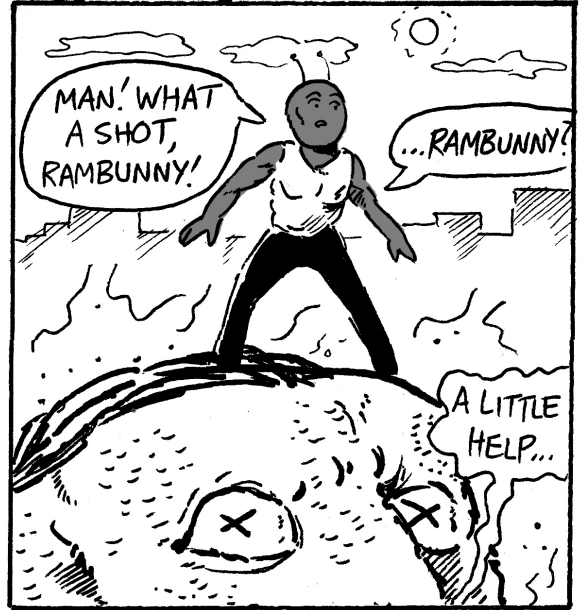


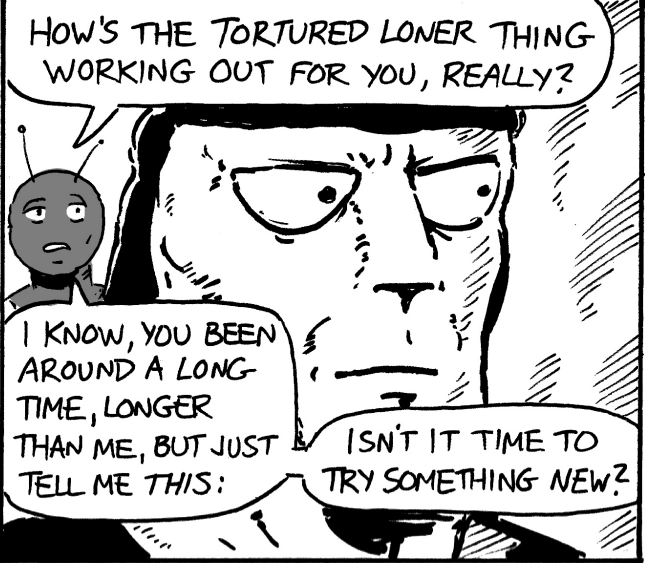
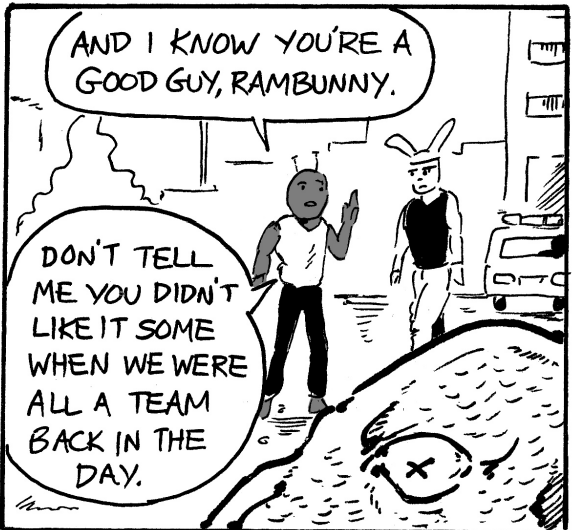
THE EAR! SLAP HIM IN THE EAR!

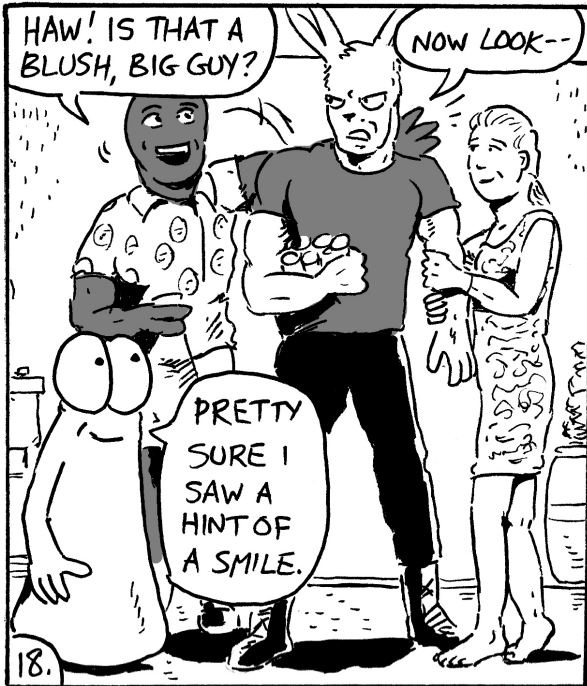
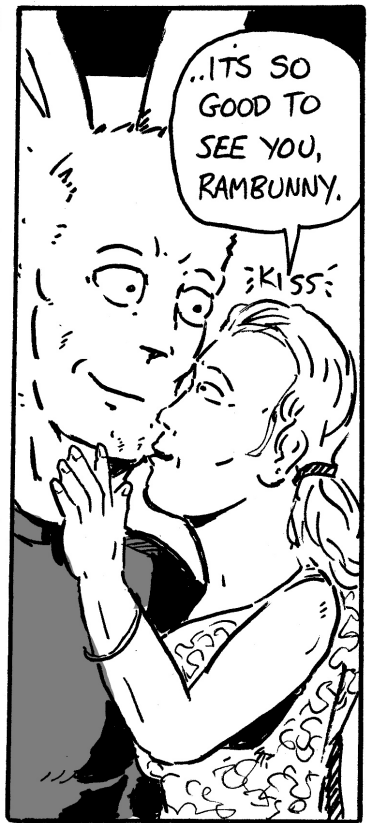
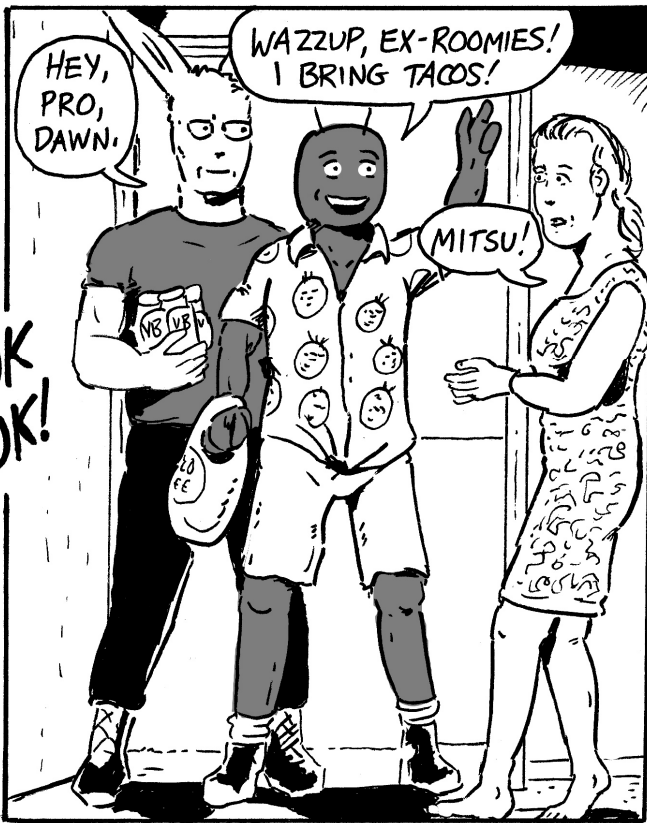
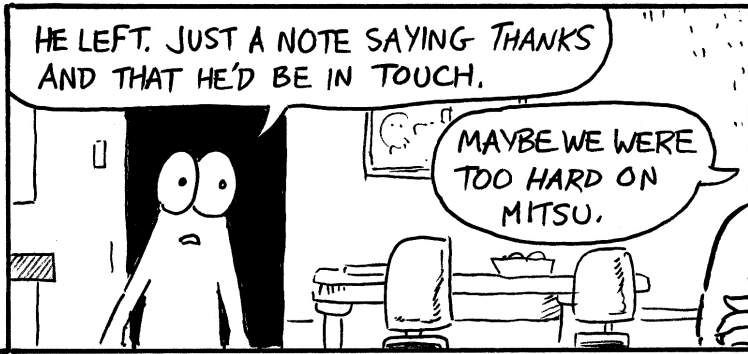
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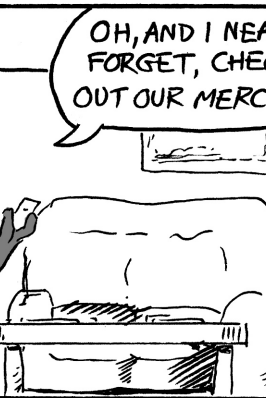
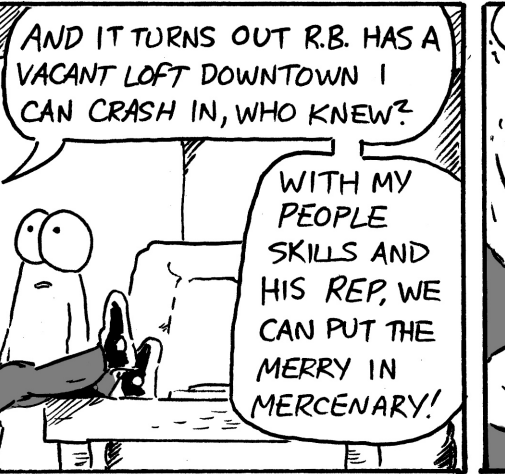


WELL, I GOT NO BETTER IDEAS...









NEXT ISSUE: THE WEDDING

The Secret History of Prometheus, Age 40

I'm not entirely sure about when the first time I drew Prometheus the Protoplasm was, but the first proper cartoon I signed my name to and dated was on March 11, 1986. Somehow, that's 40 years ago.

The first very silly Prometheus the Protoplasm cartoon was a weird parody stew of anti-communism propaganda that was heavily influenced by newspaper strips like *Bloom County*, *Doonesbury* and Dan O'Neill's *Odd Bodkins* in its attempts by a pimple-plagued 14-year-old to appear edgy. I drew it in a science class by a Mr Moore - long gone now, I'm sure - and many of the earliest Prometheus comics were done like that, in the margins of classes I should've been paying attention to.

But comics were my school, too, and so I drew things like the first few very rough Prometheus comic strips and full comic stories, scribbled mildly PG-13 comics in notes to my friends, experimenting by jamming on weird diversions like a Prometheus-meets-Snoopy comic, Prometheus meeting the Beatles and a never-finished horror tale called "A Protoplasm on Elm Street." (A lot of this early nonsense is in the digital only ***Amoeba Adventures Archive***, available on my website!)

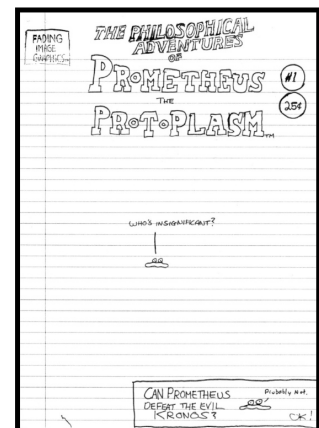
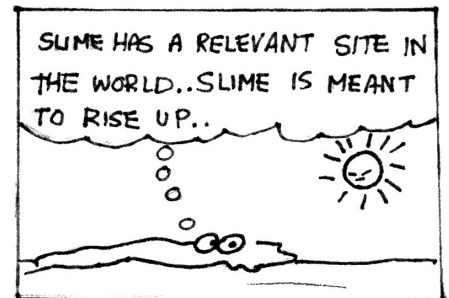
Eventually, though, an actual character and stories started to take shape with this oddball Prometheus - who basically, with his fluid shape and bobbing eyeballs, was the only thing I could easily draw at the time. Prometheus became a bit of an alter-ego for me, insecure, lacking confidence, but hoping he could be better. Other characters started to pop up, too, all fragments of who I wanted to be - swaggering Rambunny, brainy Spif, hilarious Ninja Ant and wise Karate Kactus.

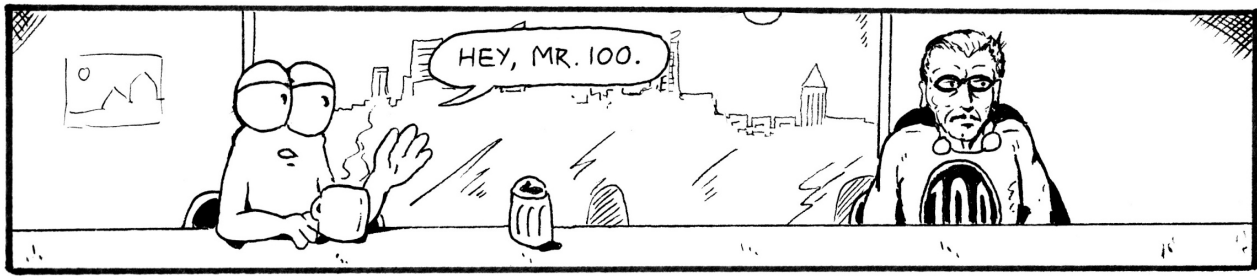
From late 1986 to 1989 I hacked out six issues of a *Prometheus* comic that nobody other than me and a couple other people ever really read, a rambling narrative that began with unbearably primitive art and ended with slightly less primitive art that ripped off a lot from the Marvel and DC comics of the mid-1980s. But I kept wanting to do more, to do "real comic books" somehow with my limited talents.

Prometheus became more than a diversion between classes when I entered college and I started drawing a new comic called *Amoeba Adventures*, putting out the first issue in November 1990. I was a freshman in Mississippi on the other side of the country from my friends, and used my comic as a kind of pen-pal bait to fervently keep in touch with the past.

I soon discovered the great bustling small press fanzine scene of the 1990s and somehow, people actually wanted to read my weird comics. *Amoeba Adventures* and Prometheus became something far more than just a series of doodles - sure, small fish indeed in the wider comics world, but to me, it was a revelation to actually have fans and readers following Prometheus as his world gradually became more and more complex.

From top, the first Prometheus cartoon, March 11, 1986; Prometheus #1, 1986; from Amoeba Adventures #1, 1990; Amoeba Adventures #8, 1992.





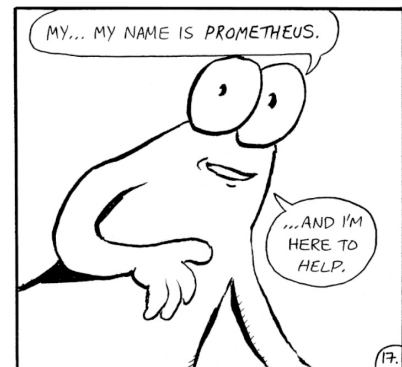
The great artist **Max Ink** joined me for a dozen or so issues of *Amoeba Adventures* and made it all look better than I could ever imagine. All told, 27 issues of *Amoeba Adventures* and another dozen or so spin-offs and side tales all came out by 1998. Prometheus comics won acclaim and awards on the small press scene, “big” comic creators like the legendary Will Eisner, Dave Sim and Sergio Aragones read them and offered some really kind praise, and it was a remarkable time.

From top, *Amoeba Adventures* #28, 2020; *Amoeba Adventures* #24, 1996 art by Max Ink; *Amoeba Adventures* #33, 2023.

The rest is painfully ordinary, probably - by 1998, burned out and getting busier in the so-called “real world” with my journalism day job, leaving my twenties behind and starting a family and all that jazz, I put my pens down and Prometheus went dormant for more than 20 years, until the gaping void and uncertainty of the Covid-19 pandemic made me pick it all up again in 2020, republishing all the old stuff online, putting out a couple of book collections over on Amazon and writing and drawing 11 issues now of “new” Prometheus adventures.



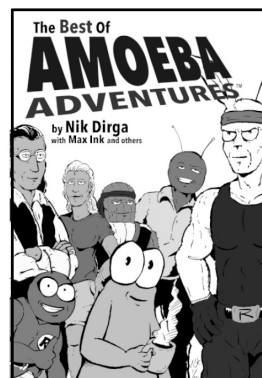
A part of me is still that 14-year-old kid, scratching away on his notebook paper when he probably should've been paying attention to other things. I still marvel, sometimes, that all the great experiences I've had because of Prometheus - friends I've made, stories I've gotten to tell - stemmed from those first comics doodled in science class, 40 years ago now.



It was strangely easy, it turned out, to return to Prometheus as a middle-aged dude. The same uncertain, hopeful amoeba I drew all those years ago was there, like me, a bit more battered and slightly wiser from everything that happens in a lifetime. I've loved drawing a more “mature” Prometheus and his cast of friends, his unlikely love affair with the human superhero Dawn and his changing voice in a changing world. My art skills will never be magnificent, but at least I'm better able to capture the stories in my head than 14-year-old me once did.

In recent years it feels like I'm finally finishing the story I began as a gawky teen, all those years ago. I sure appreciate everyone who's ever read one of my silly Prometheus comics, and had a few words to say about them. You never know when a doodle might change the course of your life, a little bit. Thanks for coming along for the ride!

EVERY issue of Amoeba Adventures since 1990 can be found as a free PDF download at nikdirga.com - or check out the two cool collections on Amazon! >>



Next issue:

