

No. 4

\$2.00

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Critters



FANTAGRAPHICS BOOKS

Critters

No. 4 Sept., 1986

OLD FACES, NEW FACES

Fourth Issue Editorial by KIM THOMPSON

Another long editorial chat this time, edging out the letters column, but take heart—it'll be the last one in a while.

Regular readers may be surprised to notice that both our lead feature and our cover this issue are by **Critters** newcomers. I hope your surprise gives way to delight as you first feast your eyes on KEN MACKLIN's lovely painting, then read TOM (Spaced) STAZER's terrific "Zany But Deadly." I know that I was delighted when I got in each of the two pieces—they far exceeded my expectations when I commissioned them. It seems that the **Critters** trend of calling forth creators' best work continued unabated.

Letters have been coming in at a rapid clip to the **Critters** offices, and one of the main recurring themes has been the hope for a reconciliation between the irascible JOSHUA QUAGMIRE and yrs. trly., in order to see the return of Cutey Bunny in **Critters**.

Well, it's not too likely at this stage... but consider this: Josh's own book, **Army Surplus**, has taken off like nobody's business, while **Critters** is sailing along beautifully without Josh. If he were still contributing to **Critters**, all it would mean is that (a) Josh would get out one or two fewer issues of **Cutey Bunny** a year and (b) **Critters** would have much less room to present new series. This would be a triple loss—to Josh, because his own book would be cut down to something like

twice a year (and a low frequency like that is highly damaging in today's market); to the readers, who would be deprived of new series like Tom Stazer's "Lionheart" (which was, in fact, originally commissioned to fill a hole left in the schedule by Josh's abrupt departure); and to the many talented creators waiting in the wings.

One of the long-term ideas I've been toying with is spinning **Critters**' more successful series into their own titles (or a second title), thereby opening a slot for another talented newcomer. Of course, that doesn't mean I plan to "steal" all **Critters**' successes out of the book as they happen. For one thing, several of the artists just can't produce enough work to sustain a regular books. STAN SAKAI, for instance, to whom I would gladly give his own book at a moment's notice, can only produce about 10 pages every other month—so **Critters** will be his home for the foreseeable future (aside from special projects like the **Usagi Yojimbo Summer Special**, which is 3/5 reprint, anyway). At any rate, I have no intention of undercutting **Critters** by treating it like a launching pad for new series. My ideal rhythm, actually, would be to introduce a new series or creator every couple of issues, with the remainder of the book occupied by familiar faces.

A matter of some import before we move on. I'm sure most of you have followed the

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© 1986 Tom Stazer

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LIONHEART in:
"Zany But Deadly"
by TOM STAZER

He used to be the biggest star of the silver screen. But now he was just the flattest, and the widest too...



© 1986 Steven A. Gallacci

Page 11

BIRTHRIGHT
"Chapter Four"

by STEVEN A. GALLACCI

Prince Alfon makes his move against the Tosiu, and his friends get into trouble as the revolution heats up.



© 1986 Freddy Milton

Page 19

GNUFF in:
"Political Animals"
by FREDDY MILTON

Gnellie can't sleep, and it's the super's fault—as per usual. And we meet Mr. Siegel, the Gnuffs' landlord.

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ZANY BUT DEADLY!

IT'S STRANGE... EVEN IN DEATH HE MAKES ME LAUGH.

I COULD REMEMBER A TIME WHEN DIZZY DOG WAS THE BIGGEST STAR IN COMEDY FILMS... NOW HE WAS JUST THE WIDEST. AN AIR CONDITIONING REPAIRMAN FOUND THE BODY A FEW HOURS AGO, HERE ON THE ROOF. IT DIDN'T LOOK LIKE AN ACCIDENT AND IT SURE WASN'T SUICIDE.



STORY & ART by
TOM STAZER

ANY COMMENT FOR THE PRESS, SERGEANT NYARG?

OH, HELLO LIONHEART. NOT MUCH TO GO ON YET. WE'RE TALKING TO THE GUARD DOG BUT HE SAYS NO ONE HAS BEEN UP HERE ALL WEEKEND.



STUPID DOG. I MEAN, YOU DON'T JUST STEAMROLL OVER SOMEBODY ON THE ROOF OF A 12- STORY BUILDING AND DRIVE DOWN THE SIDE!

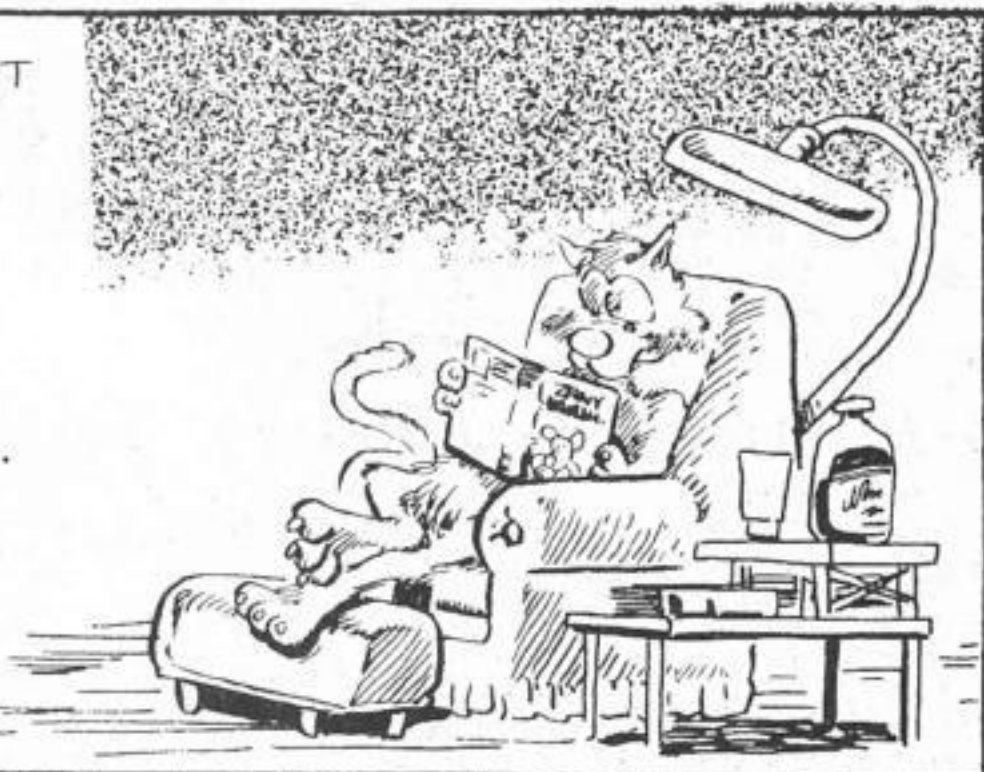
YEAH, HE WAS OBVIOUSLY KILLED ELSEWHERE AND DROPPED HERE. BUT, THIS IS THE SORT OF THING THAT MAKES MY JOB INTERESTING.



YEAH, MINE TOO.

PLOTTING ASSIST:
JOHN WILLIAMS / ANTHONY SMITH

THERE WAS DEFINITELY A STORY HERE. THAT NIGHT, AT HOME, I DUG UP MY COPY OF **ZANY BABYLON**, DIZZY'S NO-HOLDS-BARRED ACCOUNT OF HIS DAYS AT **WACKY STUDIOS**. THERE ARE SOME AWFUL GRITTY STORIES BETWEEN THESE COVERS: THE **CHIRPY AND KITTIKAT MURDER/SUICIDE**; **TEX THE WOLF'S RAPE TRIAL**; **SWIFTY GOMEZ'S ADDICTION TO SPEED**. THE BOOK LOST DIZZY A LOT OF FRIENDS, AND MADE HIM **SOME ENEMIES**. IT ALSO MADE HIM A PILE OF DOUGH... IT WAS THE KIND OF **SORDID TRASH** THAT SELLS **MILLIONS OF COPIES**; AND DIZZY'S **BIZARRE DEATH** MADE THE PERFECT **ADDENDUM**. BUT **ZANY BABYLON** WAS PUBLISHED **YEARS AGO**. IT COULDN'T BE THE **MOTIVE FOR MURDER**.



I NEEDED A BETTER **FOCUS** FOR MY ARTICLE... A LOOK AT DIZZY'S **PRIVATE SIDE**. FIND OUT WHAT THE **REAL DOG** WAS LIKE... INTERVIEW HIS FRIENDS. I DECIDED TO **START** WITH DIZZY'S **CO-STAR** AND **ONE-TIME BEST FRIEND** **QUACKY THE DUCK**... BECAUSE I **KNEW** WHERE TO **FIND** HIM.



AFTER THE **DECLINE** OF THE **COMEDY SHORTS INDUSTRY**, MOST OF THE **ACTORS** WERE LEFT **JOBLESS**. THOSE WHO **DIDN'T** GO INTO **TV COMMERCIALS** SETTLED INTO **ORDINARY LIVES**. **QUACKY THE DUCK** HAD OPENED A **NOSTALGIA SHOP** ON THE **NORTH SIDE** OF **TOWN**.



QUACKY'S **EGO**, **TEMPER** AND **PARANOIA** WERE **LEGENDARY**. BUT THOSE QUALITIES MAKE FOR **TERRIFIC INTERVIEWS**.



QUACKY DUCK? I'M FROM THE **TIMES**, AND I WAS **WONDERING**...

AH FER **CRYIN' OUT LOUD**, I JUST GOT RID OF THE **COPS** AN' NOW YOU WANNA WASTE MY TIME! WELL, I'M **TRYING** TO RUN A BUSINESS HERE, SO IF YOU WANNA TALK, YER GONNA HAFTA FOLLOW ME!



I GUESS YOU WANNA KNOW WHY DIZZY CAME TO SEE ME THE NIGHT HE WAS **OFFED**. I GOT NUTHIN' TA **HIDE**... THE **DIRTY DOG** CAME HERE TO **ANTAGONIZE** ME AS USUAL. HE'D BEEN DRINKING **HEAVILY**... SINCE HE WAS **BORN**. HE WANTED TO **RUB** HIS **GOOD FORTUNE** IN MY **FACE**!



THE CONNIVING CUR HAD JUST CLOSED A TWO MILLION DOLLAR CONTRACT FOR THE SYNDICATION RIGHTS TO HIS OLD WACKYTUNES.

TWO MILLION SMACKEROOS! BROTHER, WHAT A LUCKY DOG!



BUT DO YOU THINK I GET ANY ROYALTIES FOR MY APPEARANCES? OH, NO! IT'S THE SHORT END OF THE STICK FOR OL' QUACKY AGAIN!

REMEMBER "SHOOT THE DUCK"? "G-MAN QUACKY"... AND "DUCK AWRY!" DUCK AWRY IS THE BEST DAMN FILM EVER TO COME OUT OF WACKY STUDIOS!



I'M TELLIN' YA, IT'S A CRIME THE WAY DIZZY AND HIS PIG PAL HAVE SWINDLED ME OUT OF MY DUES! PORKPIE GETS HIS PERCENTAGE NOW THAT HE OWNS THE STUDIO. THE HALF MILLION WOULD'VE SAVED HIS ASS FROM THE CREDITORS... DIZZY WAS ON HIS WAY THERE TO GIVE OLD FATBOY THE GOOD NEWS!



DID DIZZY SAY WHERE ELSE HE WAS HEADED?

NAH, BUT I THINK THAT HE SPENT THE EARLIER PART OF THE EVENING AT ERHARDT BLOWHARD'S BAR.

THANKS QUACKY. HERE, FOR YOUR TIME.



OH, BOY! A WHOLE FIVE-DOLLAR BILL! THANKS EVER SO MUCH! YOU'RE JUST THE SOUL OF GENEROSITY, AREN'T YOU!



MY CURIOSITY WAS REALLY PIQUED NOW... I DECIDED TO HEAD FOR BLOWHARD'S PLACE, DOWNTOWN. WITH LUCK I MIGHT LOCATE SOME OF DIZZY'S DRINKING BUDDIES TO TALK TO. BESIDES, I FELT LIKE A DRINK.

THE GREAT OBNOXIOUS FOWL, ERHARDT BLOWHARD, IS ANOTHER RELIC OF THE WACKYTUNES ERA, AND HIS BAR ATTRACTS A VARIETY OF HAS-BEENS AND NEVER-WILL-BES. I LOCATED A FEW OF THE REGULARS AND ORDERED UP A ROUND OF DRINKS.

DANKE!... I SAY DANKE SHÖN!... I VILL HAFF YOUR DRINKS AT VONCE!

ANYWAY, DIZZY DIDN'T REALLY HAVE ANY CLOSE FRIENDS, HE JUST CAME BY OCCASIONALLY TO GET RIPPED AND TELL DIRTY JOKES.



HE KNEW GREAT DIRTY JOKES.

WELL, THAT NIGHT DIZZY WAS REALLY PUTTIN' ON A BUZZ... HE DISAPPEARED INTO THE HEAD A HALF-DOZEN TIMES. I THINK HE WAS OFF-BASING.

SERIOUS STUFF.







THEN, DIZZY BEGAN TO SPREAD VICIOUS RUMORS ABOUT MY MANHOOD. I COULDN'T GET A FEMALE CO-STAR FOR MY NEXT FILM... MY CAREER DIDN'T LAST LONG AFTER THAT...



I'M SORRY... I DON'T HAVE TO PRINT THIS IF YOU DON'T REALLY WANT ME TO...



WHAT DOES IT MATTER? WHAT DOES ANYTHING MATTER?

DIZZY'S DEAD, HE'S GONE, AND NOW I KNOW HE'S NEVER COMING BACK TO ME!



BEFORE LEAVING, I CHECKED IN WITH WILLY AT THE MORGUE. WILLY ALWAYS HAD THE INSIDE STORY ON CELEBRITY AUTOPSIES.



WHAT HAVE YOU GOT FOR ME, WILLY?

THIS DIZZY LED AN INTERESTING LIFE ... ACCORDING TO HIS MEDICAL HISTORY, HE'S BEEN DROPPED SIX STORIES, RUN THROUGH A CANNING FACTORY, AND HIT BY MORE FALLING TREES THAN I'D HAVE THOUGHT POSSIBLE. AND YOU KNOW WHAT IT TOOK TO KILL HIM?



A HYDRAULIC PRESS?

CREASES? YOU MEAN DIZZY WAS FOLDED?

GO FIGGER IT. SAY, DO I GET THE BASEBALL TICKETS?

YEAH, YOU EARNED THEM. BYE!

I SET OUT FOR PORKPIE'S PLACE, WEST OF TOWN.
HALFWAY THERE, A COUPLE OF FIRE ENGINES
RACED PAST ME, HEADING FOR A CLOUD OF
SMOKE THAT HAD BEGUN TO RISE OVER THE HILLS...

...WHERE PORKPIE'S
STUDIO WAS AT.

EVENING, DETECTIVE SQUIB.
WHERE'S SERGEANT NYARGH?

INSIDE, WITH THE PIG. THE
SERGEANT'S TERRIFIED
OF FIRE.

Y'KNOW, THIS IS STARTING
TO LOOK LIKE SOMEBODY
IS OUT FOR REVENGE
ON THE WACKYTUNES
GANG.

OKAY, PORKPIE. LET'S HEAR IT AGAIN.

BOOK REVIEW

WHILE I WAS WAITING FOR YOU GUYS, I NOTICED LIGHTS ON IN THE WAREHOUSE. I STARTED TOWARDS IT WHEN I REALIZED THE LIGHT WAS REALLY A FIRE... I SAW THAT THE DOOR HAD BEEN FORCED... THAT'S ALL, THEN YOU SHOWED UP.



AND YOU CAN'T THINK OF ANYTHING DIZZY SAID THAT MIGHT SUGGEST WHO'S RESPONSIBLE?

LOOK, LIKE I'VE SAID, DIZZY DIDN'T HAVE ANY SPECIAL REASON FOR STOPPING BY... HE USED TO VISIT ME OFTEN. WE WERE PALS. WE SHOT THE BREEZE FOR AN HOUR OR SO AND THEN HE LEFT!

YOU BUY HIS STORY, SERGEANT?

NOT REALLY, BUT I CAN'T ARREST THE GUY FOR BEING SUSPICIOUS. I THINK HE'S HIDING SOMETHING, THOUGH.

NYARG, GIVE ME A MINUTE TO TRY SOMETHING, MAYBE I CAN BLOW HIS COOL.

NYARG, GIVE ME
A MINUTE TO
TRY SOMETHING,
MAYBE I CAN
BLOW HIS COOL.

... YEP... PRETTY GRISLY
THIS DIZZY THING, PRETTY
GRISLY. MAKE YOU SICK
TO YOUR STOMACH, I
MEAN SICK.

YES, I'M
SURE.

I CAN STILL SEE
HIM... THE BUGGED-
OUT EYES, THE
HORRIFIED GRIMACE.
AND THEN THE RAIN
HAD GOT TO HIM, SO
HE WAS KIND OF
WRINKLED UP...
CURDLE YOUR BLOOD.

IT
WOULD.

I UNDERSTAND
THE BODY WAS
DISFIGURED...
KNIFE WOUNDS,
CIGAR BURNS...
DIZZY MIGHT'VE
BEEN SEXUALLY
ABUSED! KILLER
MUST BE A REAL
SICKO!

STOP IT! STOP!
NONE OF THAT'S
TRUE, NONE OF IT!

BARKY WAS
SHOT, AND
THAT'S ALL!
HE DIDN'T
SUFFER!

YES, BUT HOW
WOULD YOU
KNOW THAT?

I... UH, READ
THE P-PAPERS!

WE ONLY JUST FOUND OUT
THAT DIZZY WAS SHOT. IT
WASN'T IN THE PAPERS.
LET'S NOT WASTE TIME
HERE, PIG. WHAT REALLY
HAPPENED?

OH, GOD, IT'S
ALL FALLING
APART... WHAT
HAVE I DONE?
I DIDN'T WANT
TO KILL HIM,
I DIDN'T PLAN
IT! IT JUST...
HAPPENED.
HE WAS ONE
OF MY FRIENDS.

DIZZY DID COME TO SEE ME SATURDAY NIGHT...
HE WAS PRETTY STONED. HE FOUND ME OUT IN
THE WAREHOUSE.

HEY PORKPIE, WHERE
ARE YOU? IT'S YER
OLD PAL DIZZY!

YOU IN HERE, PIG?

SSOO-OOEY!
HAHA-HA!

... WONDER WHERE THAT
PITIFUL PORKER HAS
GOT OFF TO...

H-HELLO,
DIZZY! WHAT
BRINGS YOU
HERE?

HEY, THERE Y'ARE,
CHUBS! WATCHOO
UPTOO...

OH, NOTHING.
C'MON LET'S GET
OUT OF HERE.

NAH, I KINDA LIKE IT HERE ... BRINGS BACK
THE MEMORIES, YA KNOW... ≡ SNIFF ≡ ALL
MY GREAT FLICKS ≡ SNIFF ≡ AND THE
FANS. ≡ SNIFF- SNIFF ≡

GOSH, DIZZY
ARE YOU CRYING?

≡ SNIFF ≡ ARE YOU KIDDING?
NO, I SMELL GASOLINE.
≡ SNIFF ≡ YOU SMELL
LIKE GASOLINE, P.P.!

D-D-DON'T BE
RIDICULOUS.
YOU'RE HAVING A
H-HALLUCINATION
OR SOMETHING.

AND WHAT'S WITH THE STUTTERING,
PORKPIE? YOU NEVER DID THAT
BEFORE ... WHAT ARE YOU UP TO?

I GET IT! A
TORCH JOB!
YOU WERE
GONNA BURN
DOWN YOUR
OWN PLACE
FOR THE
INSURANCE!

N-N-NO, REALLY DIZZY,
I W-WOULDN'T DO THAT!
GOSH, NO.

YOU CAN'T DO IT,
PORKPIE, YOU
CAN'T JUST
INCINERATE
MY LIFE! YOU
UNDERSTAND?
THE MEMORIES
IN THIS PLACE
BELONG TO ME!

REMEMBER THIS ANVIL?
IT'S THE ONE I DROPPED
ON QUACKY'S FOOT IN
THE MAD MALLARD!

... AND HERE'S
THE ROCKET
HELMET FROM
ZIP, ZOOM, BANG!

THAT WAS MY QUALITY
TIME FATSTUFF. I WAS
HAPPY, THEN... INSANELY
HAPPY...

AND NOW?

YOU THINK
YOU'RE GOING TO
DESTROY IT?

YOU'RE DRUNK, DIZZY.
DRUNK AND BABBLING.
NOW STOP MAKING SO
MUCH NOISE AND
CALM DOWN.



NO! I WON'T LET YOU DO IT! I'LL
STOP YOU! THE POLICE WILL
STOP YOU! HELP! HELP!
PO-LICE! HELP!

STOP
SHOUTING,
YOU
SCREWY
MUTT!



I'M NOT
KIDDING,
DIZZY!



COME BACK HERE!



I SAID,
THAT'S
ENOUGH,
DIZZY!



HELP, MAD
PIG! HELP!

DAMN
YOU,
DIZZY!

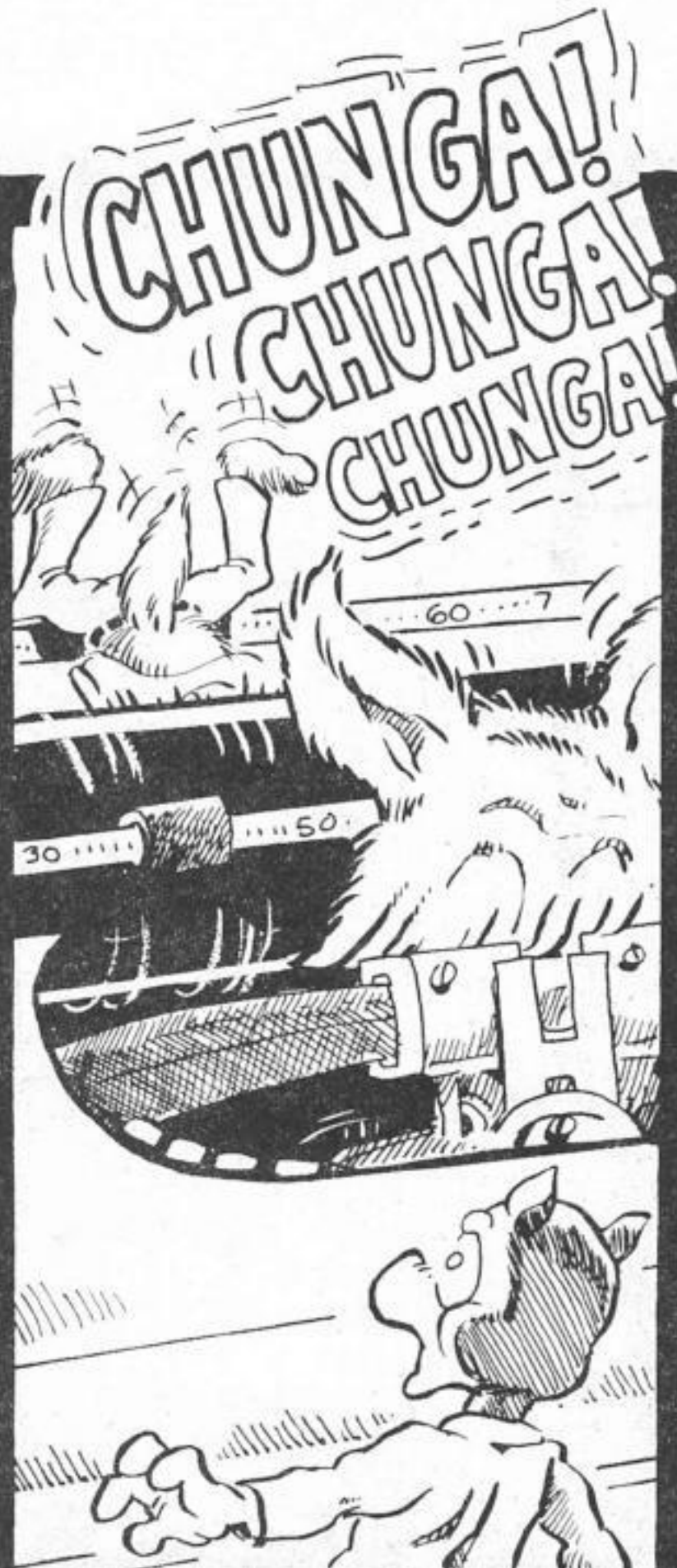


GLOOK!



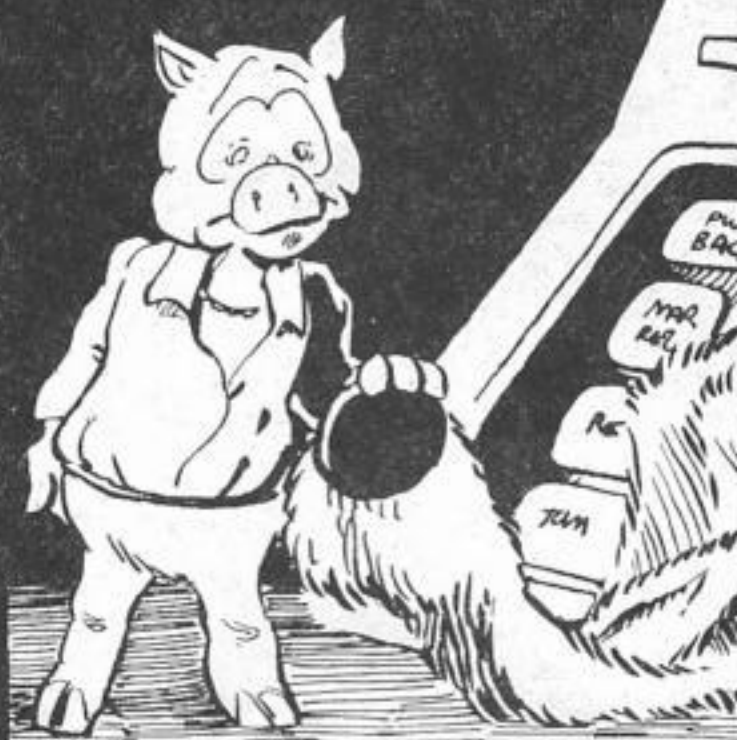
NO, OH, NO! WHAT HAVE I
DONE? I'VE SHOT
DIZZY!





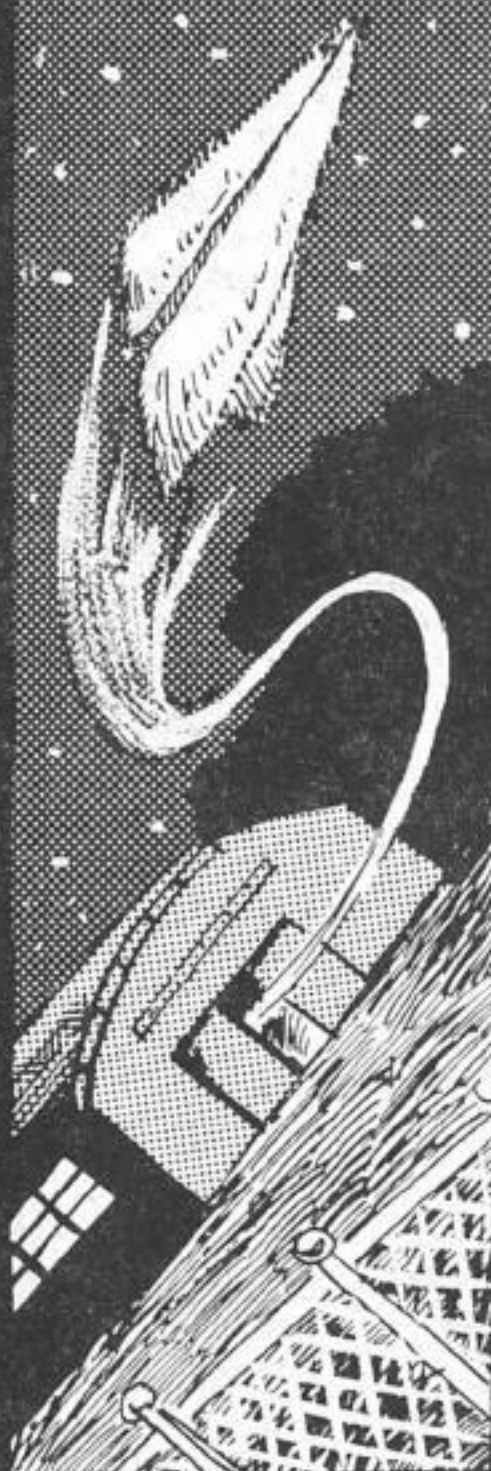
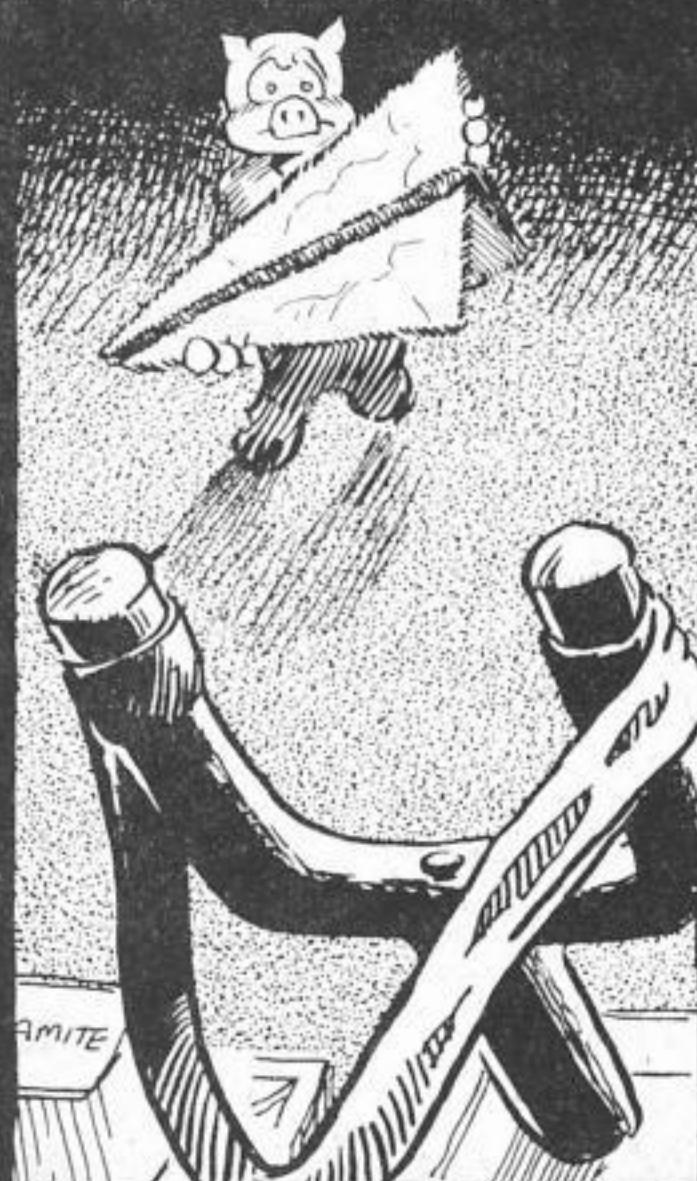
YOU MUST UNDERSTAND, I DIDN'T STOP TO THINK WHAT I WAS DOING... I WAS IN SORT OF A TRANCE. I HAD JUST MURDERED MY OLDEST PAL... AND I WAS STUCK WITH A CORPSE THE SIZE OF A BUS.

I HAD TO GET RID OF THE BODY. I LOOKED AROUND, AND THEN IT HIT ME. I COULD DROP DIZZY MILES AWAY WITHOUT EVER LEAVING THE WAREHOUSE.



AND WHEN I HAD FINISHED MY GHASTLY TASK, I CARRIED DIZZY TO THE GIANT SLINGSHOT...

...AND SAID GOOD-BYE TO MY FRIEND FOR THE LAST TIME.



COME ON, PORKPIE. LET'S TAKE A LITTLE TRIP DOWNTOWN.

STOP THE PRESSES, ARTIE, I'VE GOT A HELL OF AN EXCLUSIVE...



I PHONED IN MY STORY, A BLACK COMEDY AS BIZARRE AS ANY OF DIZZY'S SCREEN ESCAPADES. SOMEHOW, THOUGH, HIS STRANGE DEATH SEEMED ODDLY FITTING... DIZZY HAD LIVED... AND DIED... BIGGER THAN LIFE.

The End

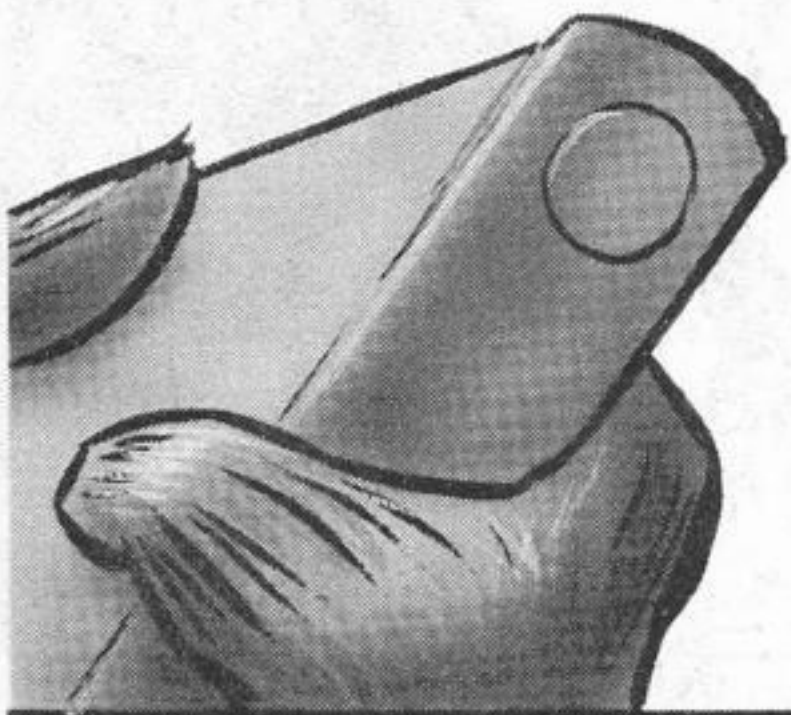
The country of Shartoa has suffered occupation by self-proclaimed Tosiu "peacekeeping" forces now for ten years. In that time, the economy has been plundered and the population suffers endless petty abuses. Various factions are now preparing to attempt to oust the Tosiu.

BIRTHRIGHT

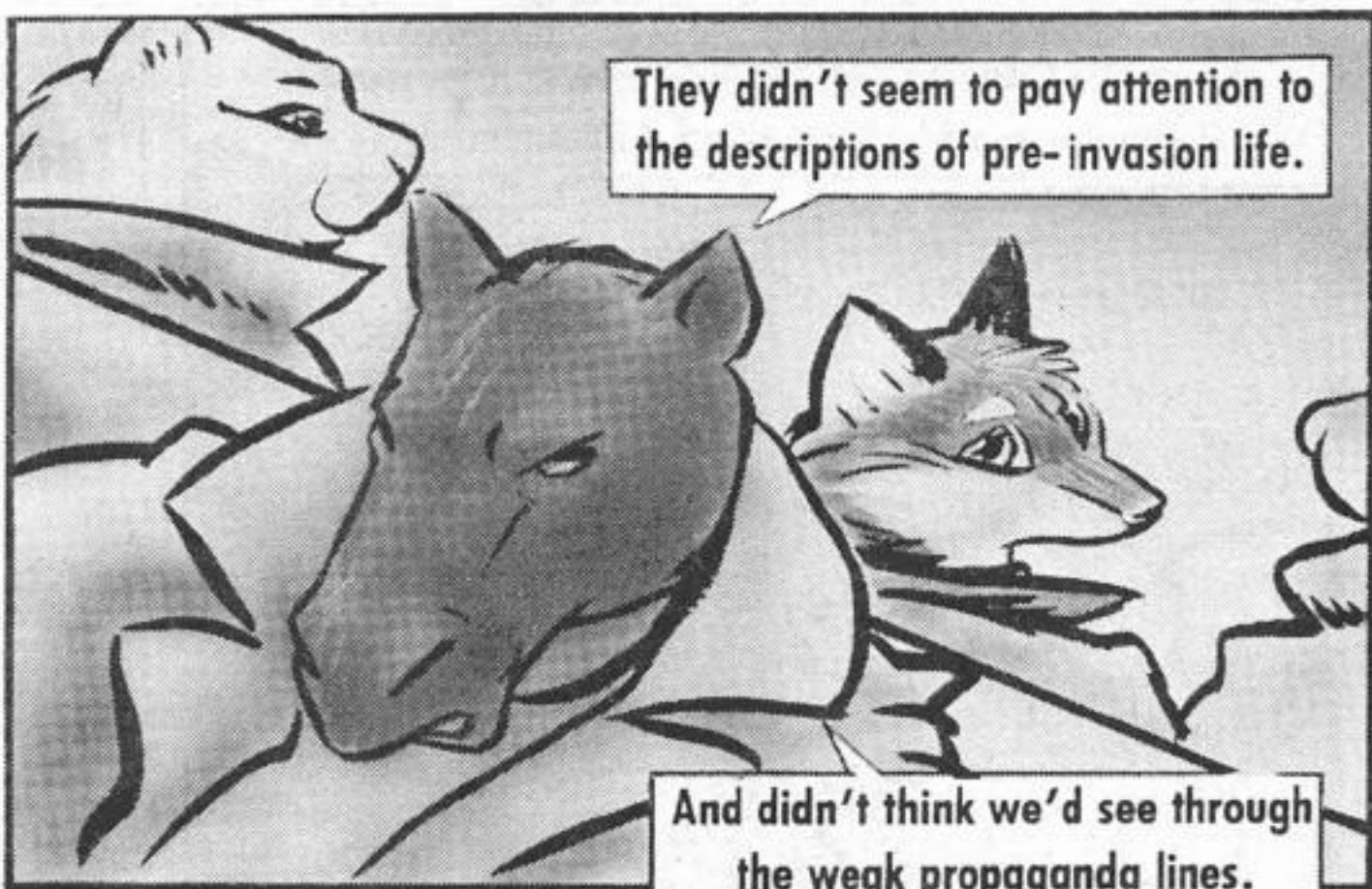




You've had a good look at that book, haven't you? The Tosiu thought it would illustrate the futility of revolution.



They didn't seem to pay attention to the descriptions of pre-invasion life.



And didn't think we'd see through the weak propaganda lines.

A lot of people are reading it.



And they're going to want to make changes. You can be a part of it. ?

Sure.



Ah, Ms. Shodi, how has your day been?

Oh, asite from vatching chiltren an' tozen assault rifles refurbished, nothing much.

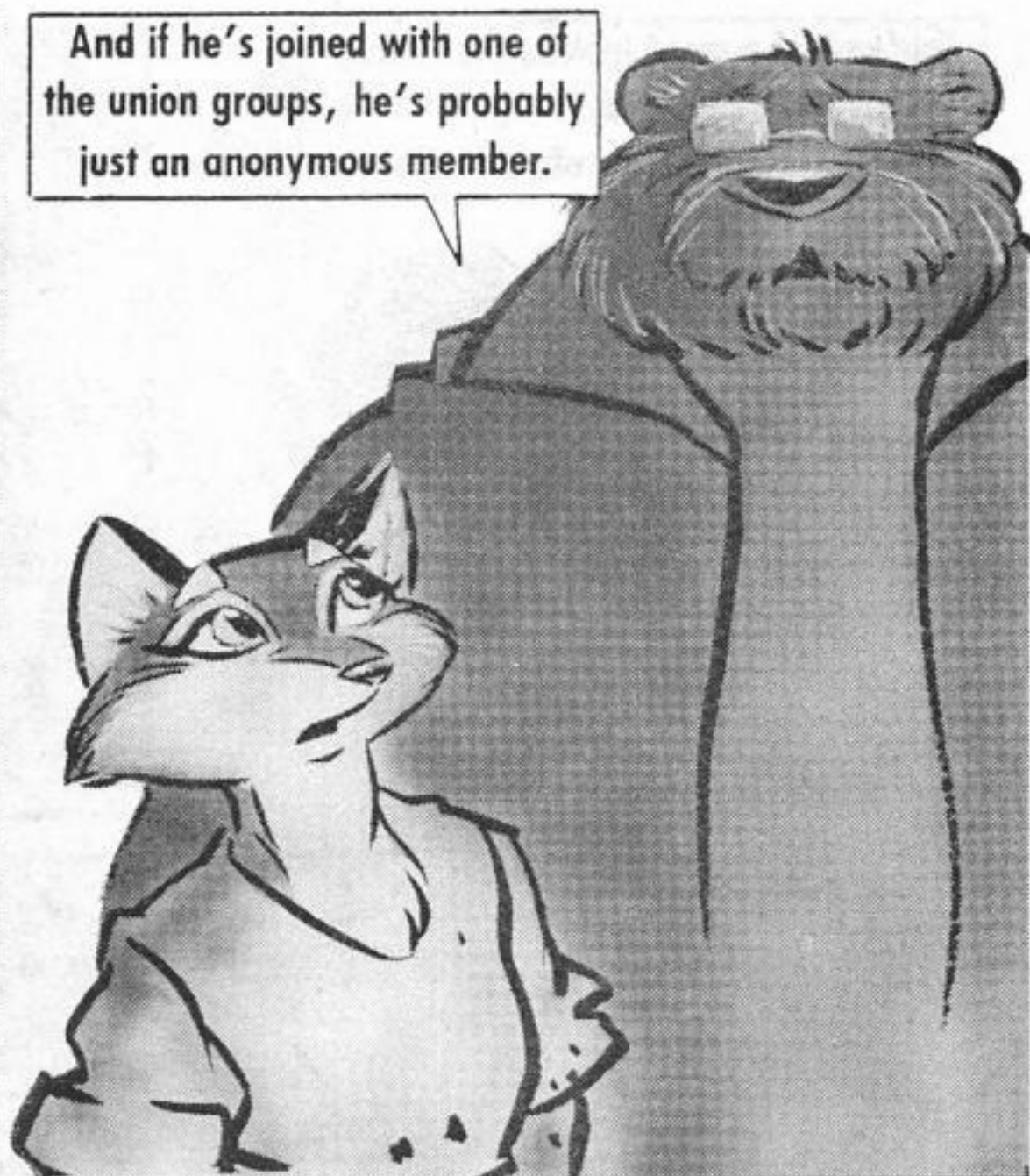
No.

No vert yet on Alfon?





But in this case, no news is good news. If he was picked up — we'd hear about it immediately.



And if he's joined with one of the union groups, he's probably just an anonymous member.



Can't we get one of the old ministers?

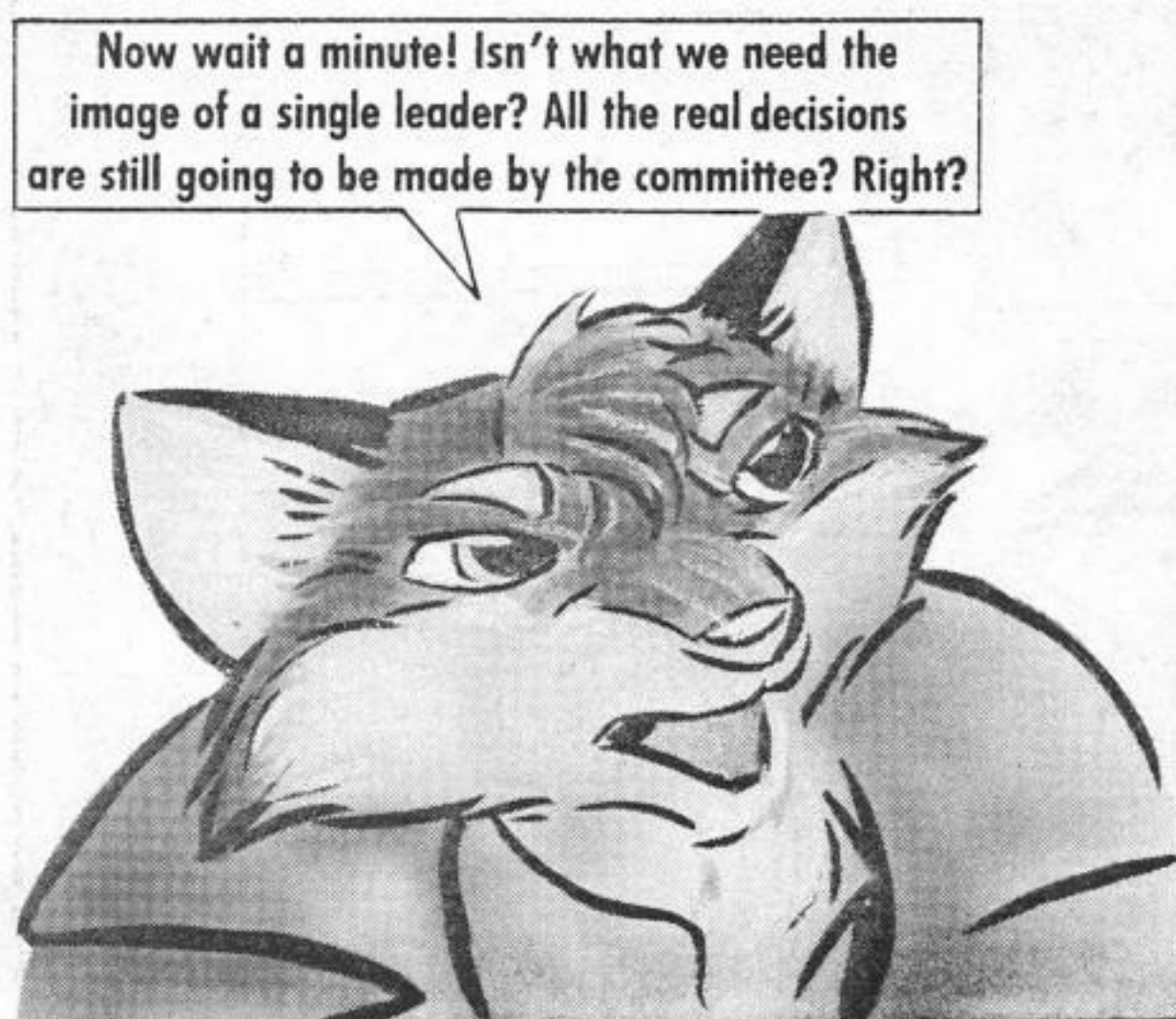
Come on now, who else has the public recognition?

Money? Since when did that take precedent over proven leadership?

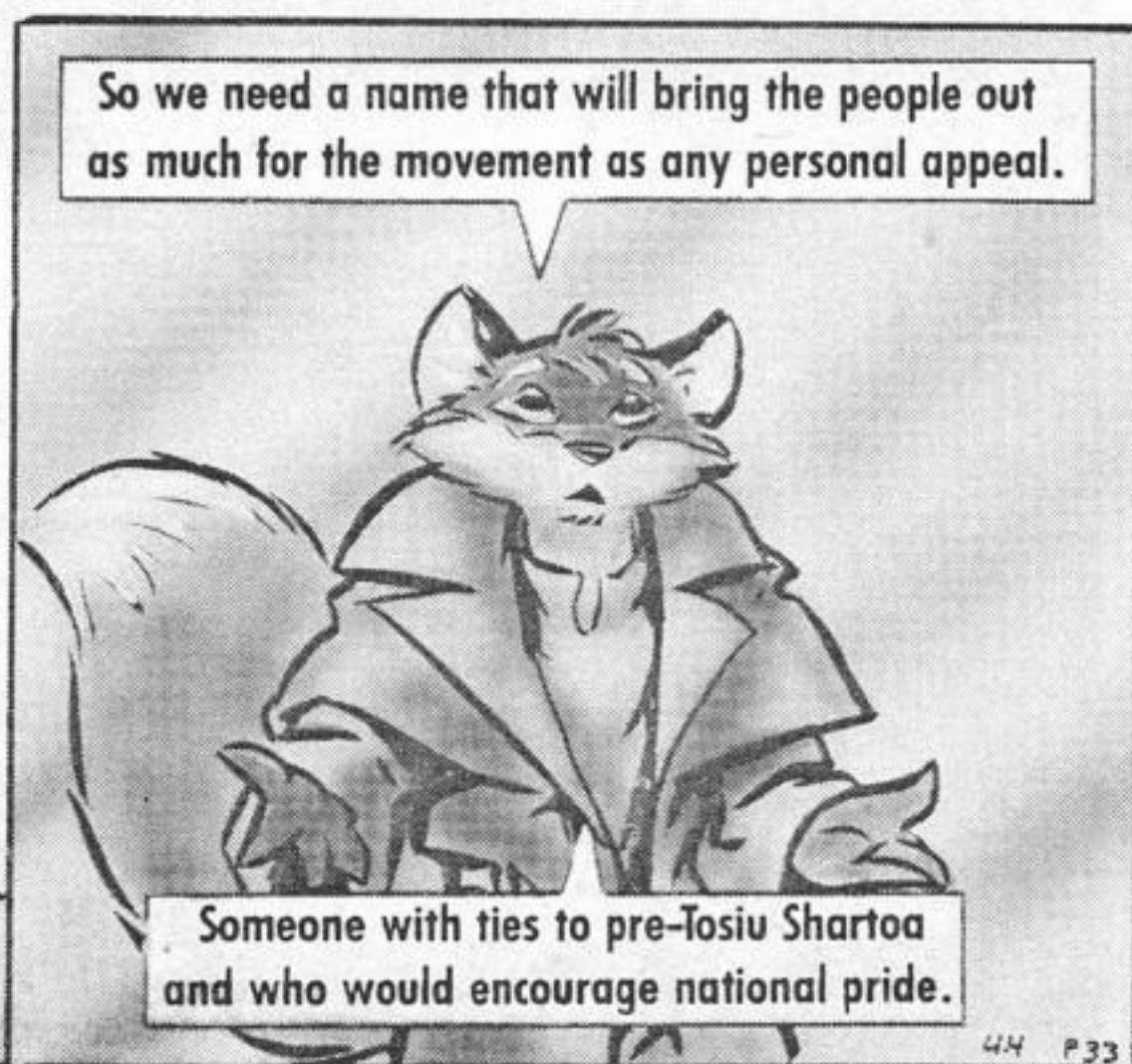
He couldn't lead a dance.

And why should I give up my control of the district?

If I can't get a seat, you can kiss the plumbers good-bye.



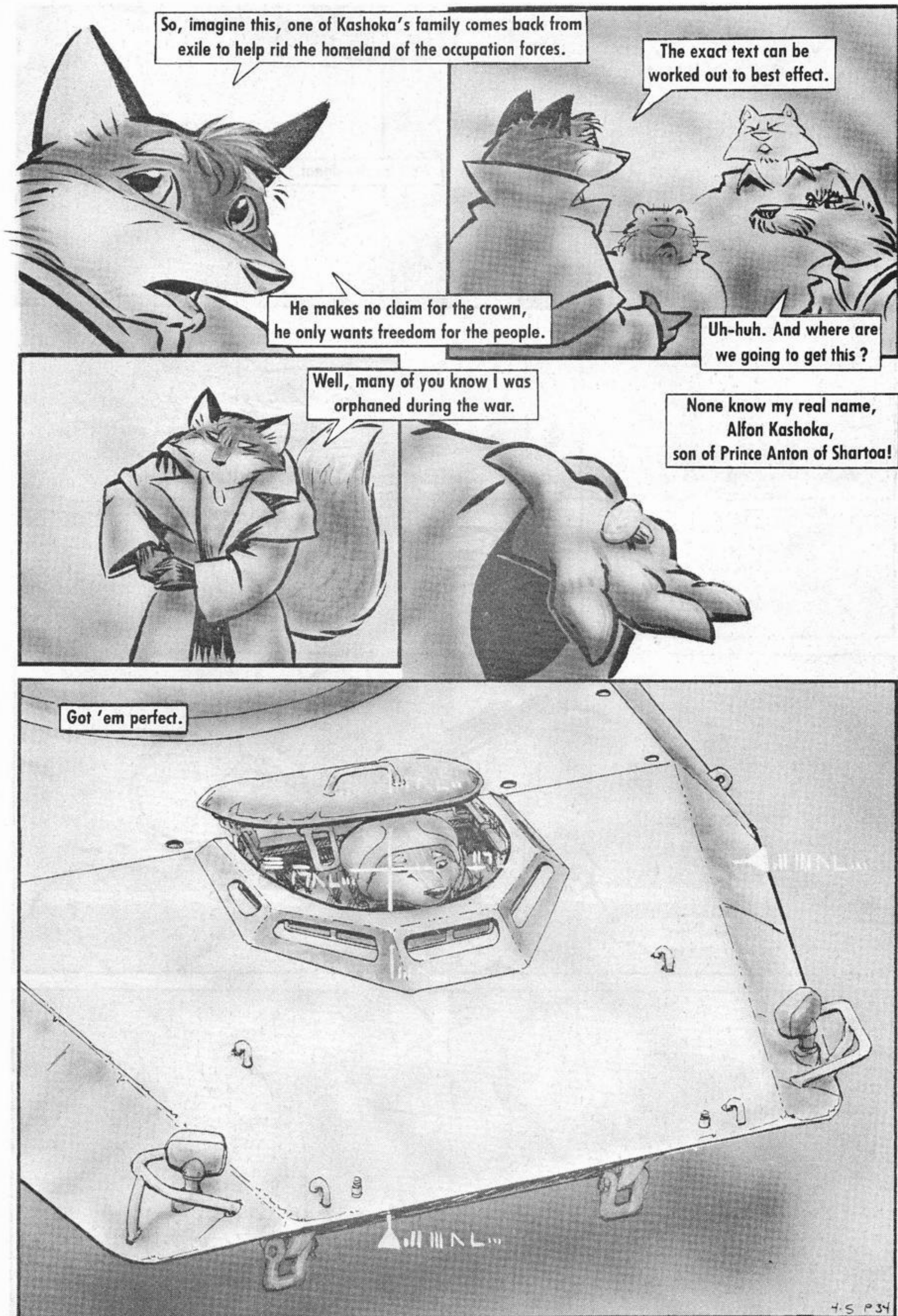
Now wait a minute! Isn't what we need the image of a single leader? All the real decisions are still going to be made by the committee? Right?



So we need a name that will bring the people out as much for the movement as any personal appeal.

Someone with ties to pre-Tosiu Shartoa and who would encourage national pride.

44 P33



So, imagine this, one of Kashoka's family comes back from exile to help rid the homeland of the occupation forces.

The exact text can be worked out to best effect.

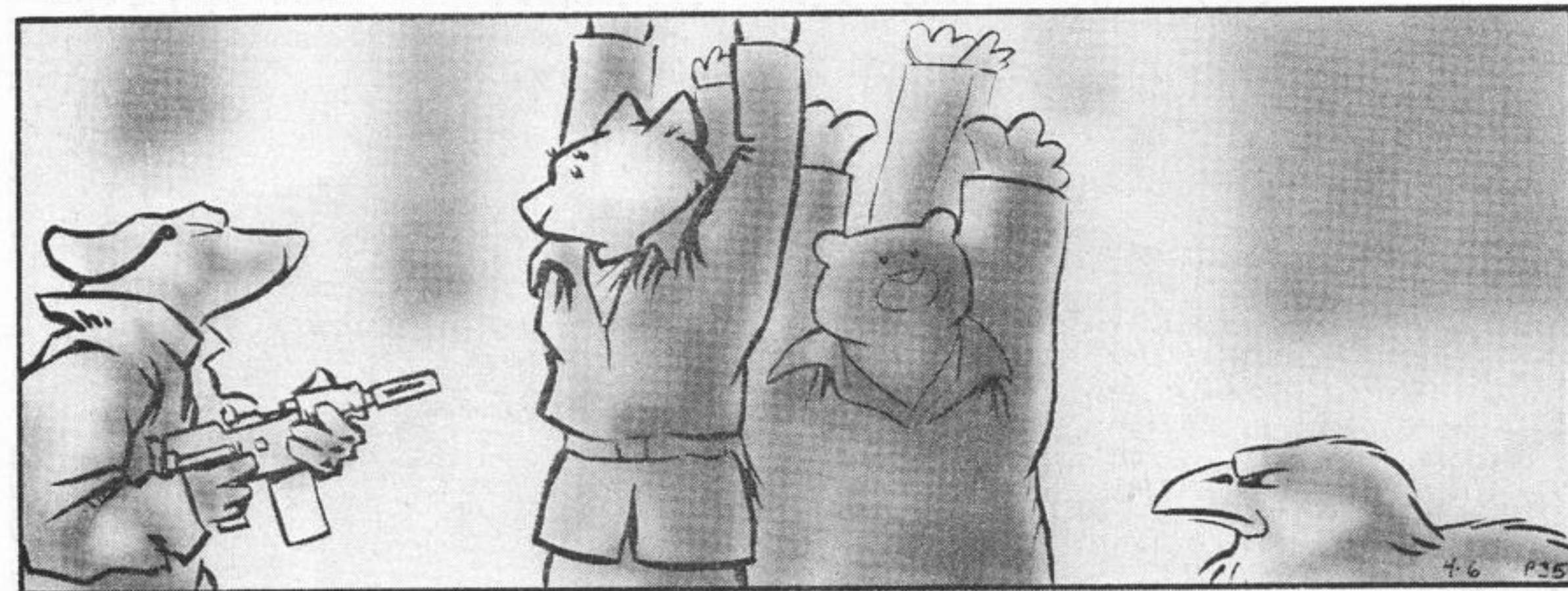
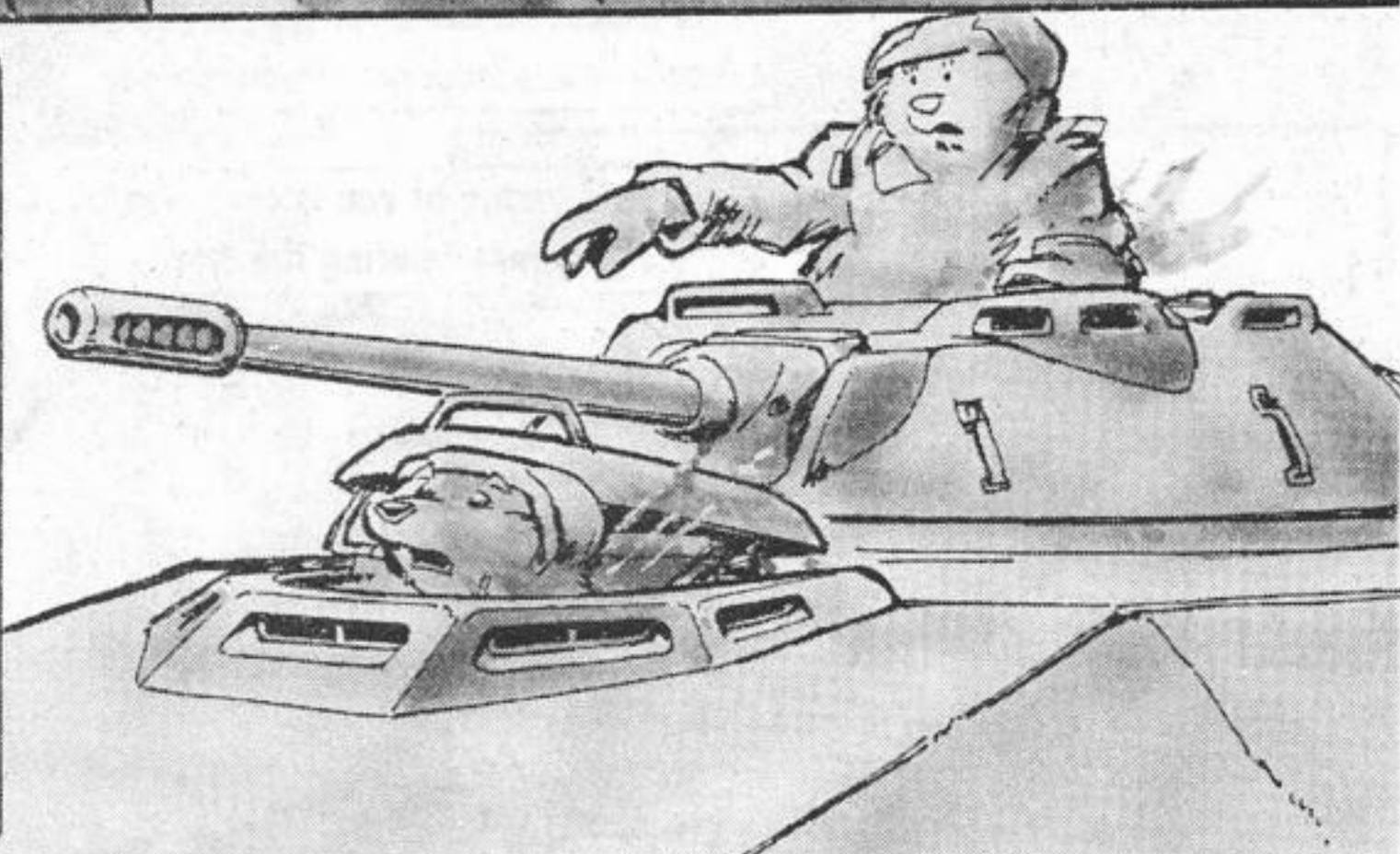
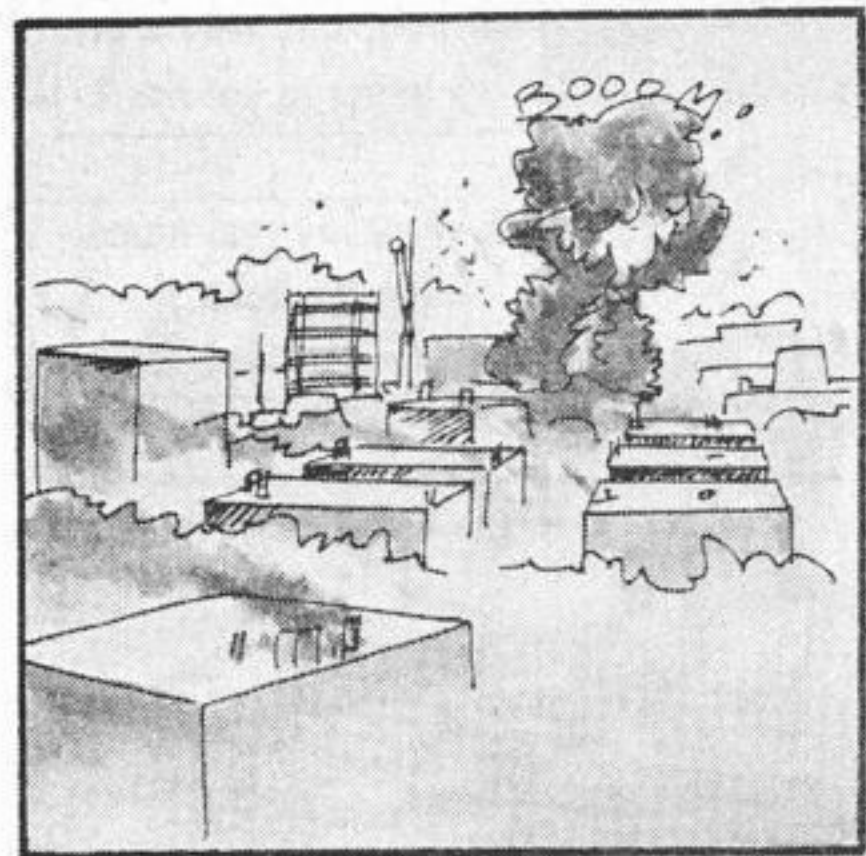
He makes no claim for the crown, he only wants freedom for the people.

Uh-huh. And where are we going to get this?

Well, many of you know I was orphaned during the war.

None know my real name, Alfon Kashoka, son of Prince Anton of Shartoa!

Got 'em perfect.





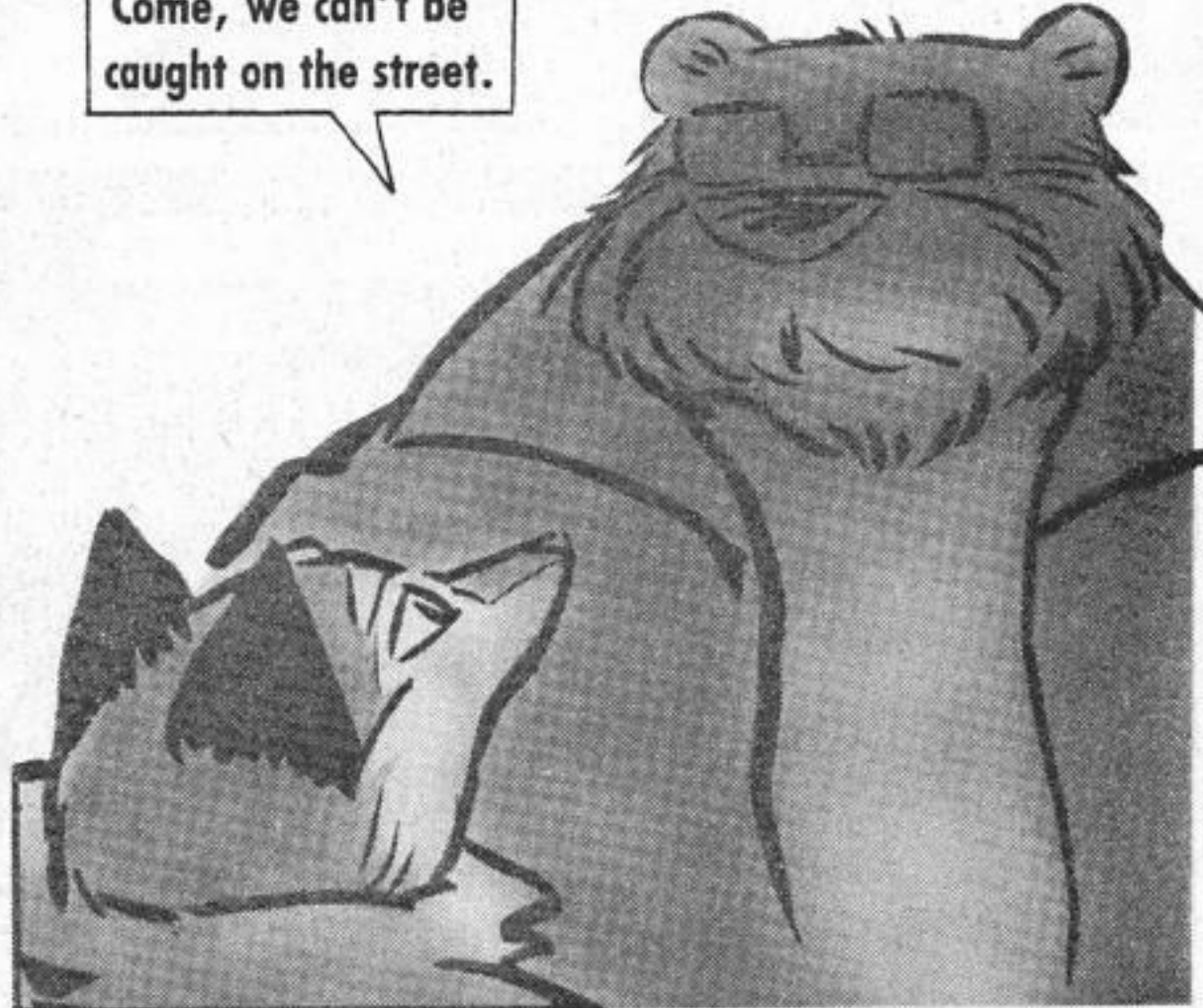
It's Alfon!



Tuvan, Alfon is here!
An' he goes to fight!

Huh! So it seems!

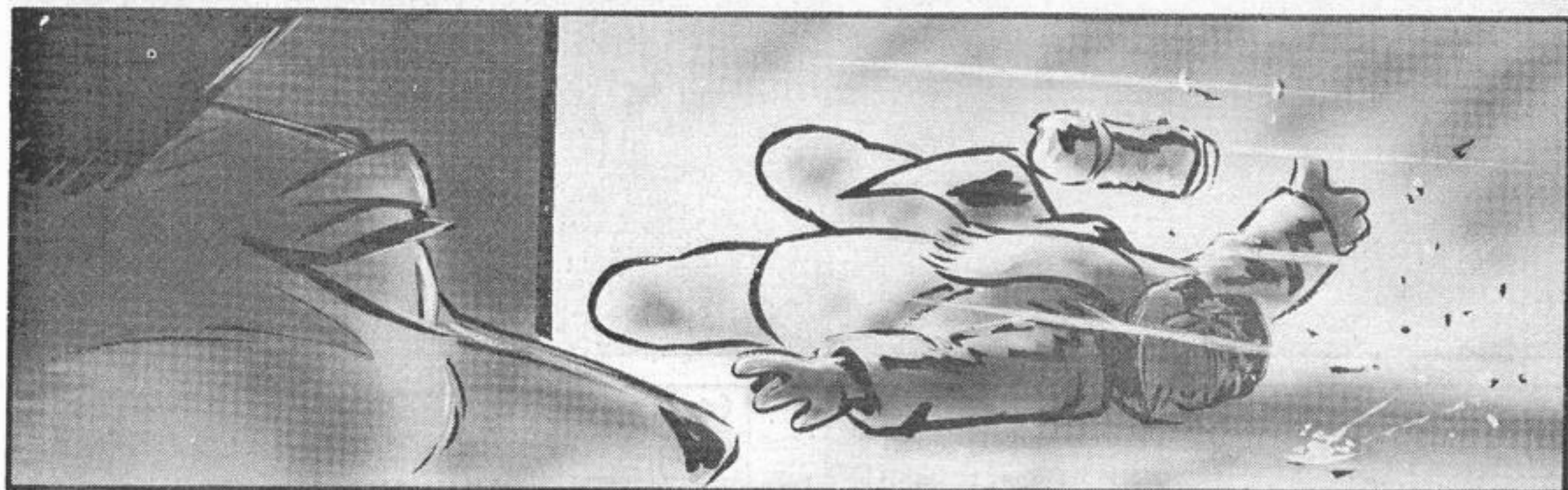
Come, we can't be
caught on the street.



Hey! You! Yes! You!



47736



Freddie Milton's Familien Gnuff

“POLITICAL ANIMALS”

THE GNUFFS HAVE MOVED INTO A HOUSE OWNED BY CITY COUNCIL CHAIRMAN SIEGEL...

AHA! LOOKS LIKE YESTERDAY'S SPEECH WENT OVER WELL...

DESERVEDLY SO, I MUST SAY...

© MILTON 1983

WHOA! LOOK AT THE TIME! AND THE COUNCIL MEETING'S SCHEDULED FOR NOON...

... AND THEN THERE'S THE BUILDING CODE INSPECTION... AND THE HOUSING COMMISSION...

THE TENANTS' COMMITTEE WILL JUST HAVE TO WAIT...

A MR. FELONIUS IS HERE TO SEE YOU, MR. CHAIRMAN...

TELL SIEGEL IT'S IMPORTANT... FOR HIM!

FELONIUS ... THE BIGGEST BUILDING CONTRACTOR IN THE CITY... THAT'S ONE FELLER I CAN'T AFFORD **NOT** TO TALK TO...

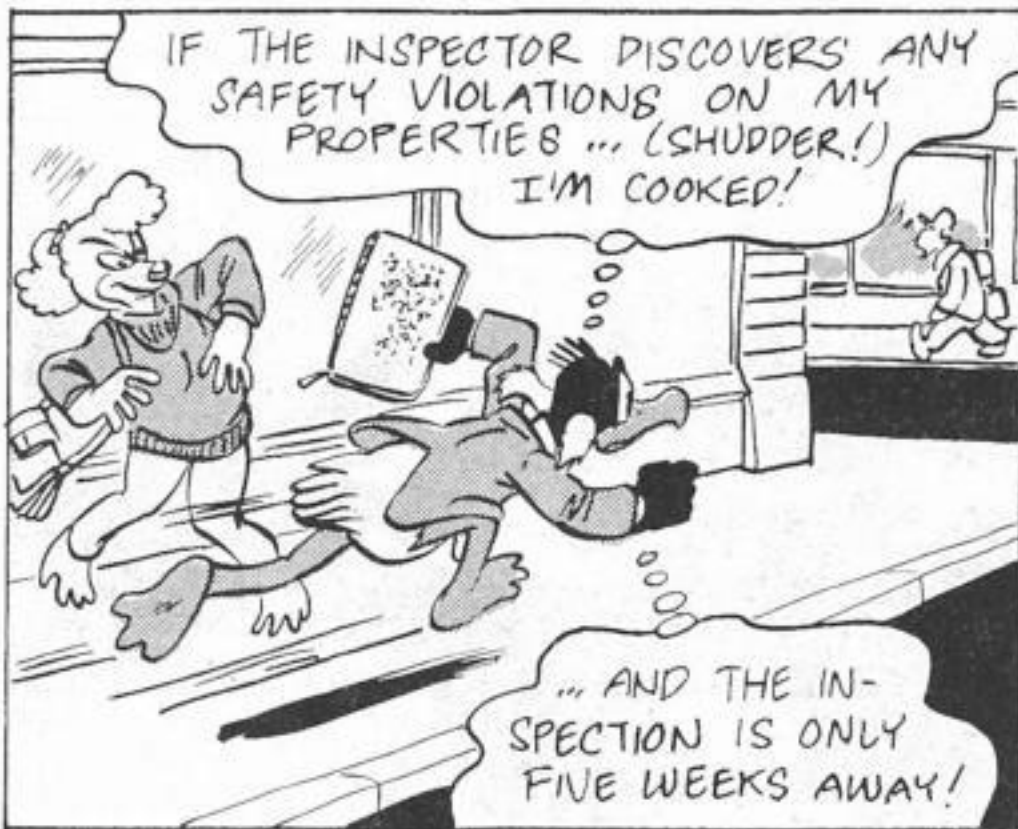
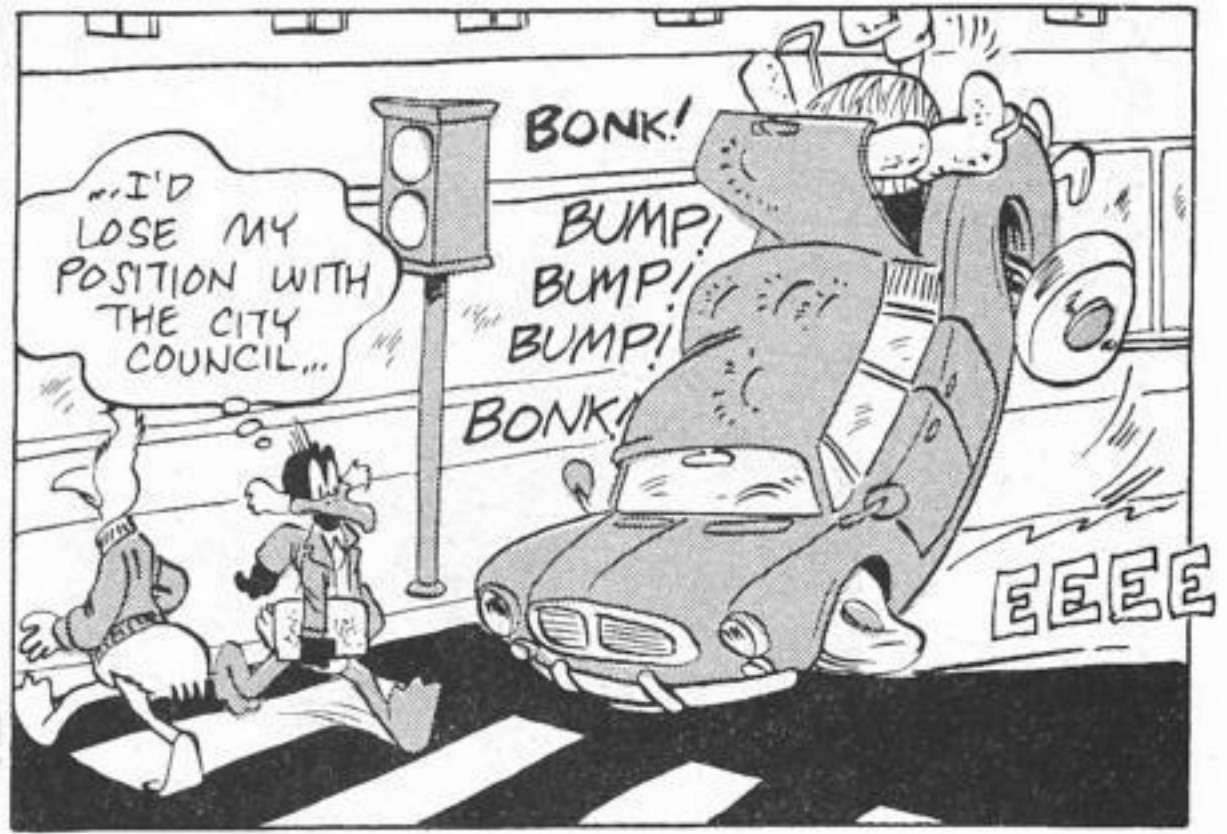
... BESIDES... "IMPORTANT" FOR HIM?

MR. SIEGEL CAN SEE YOU NOW!

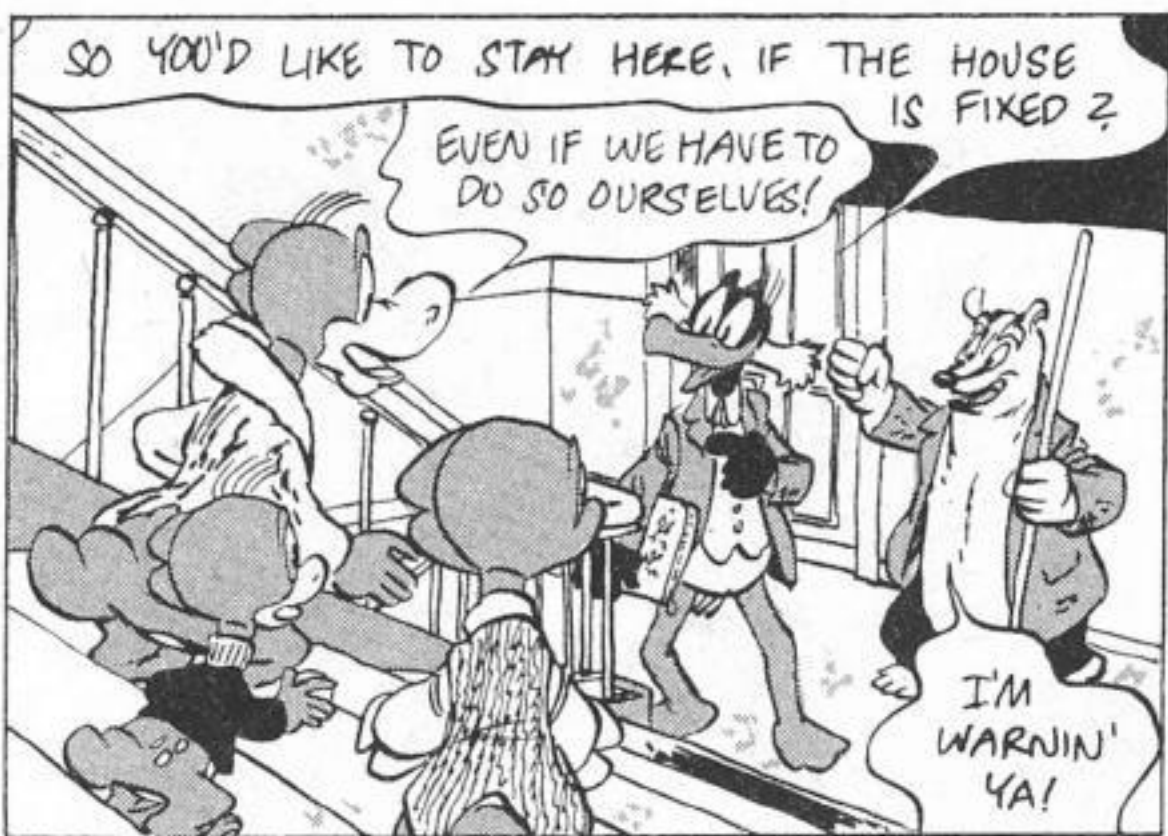
ABOUT TIME!

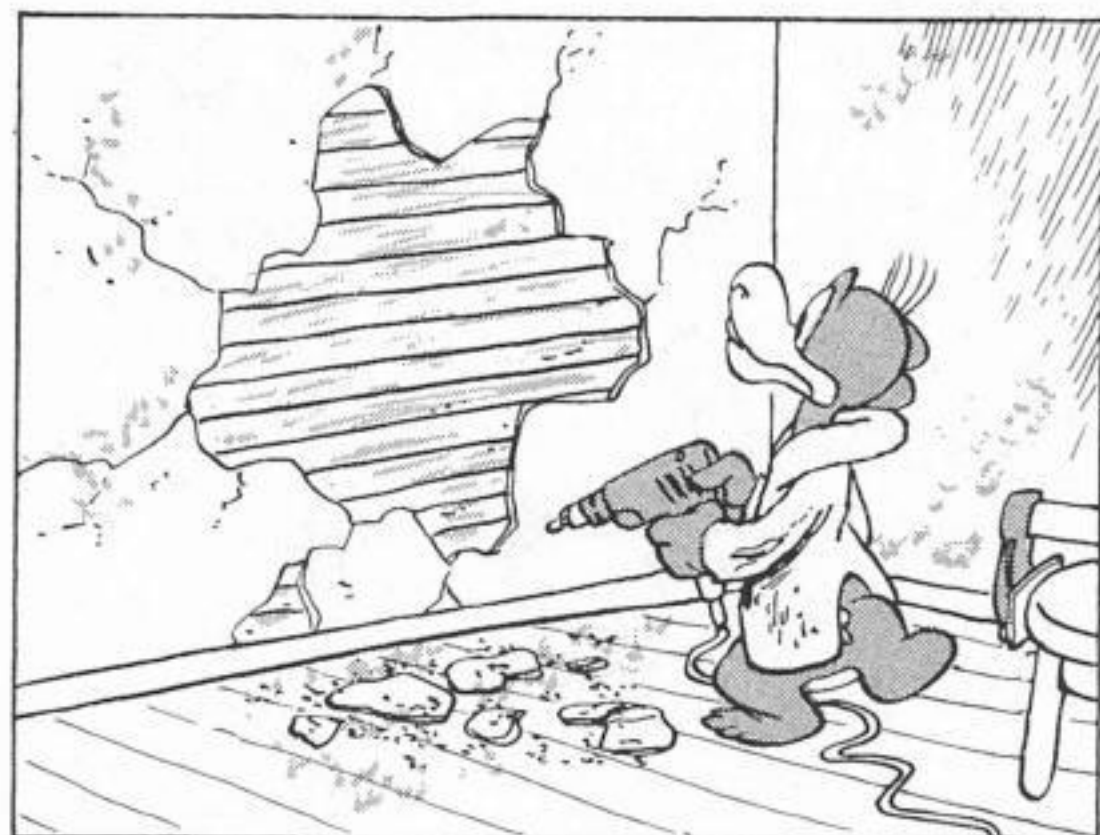


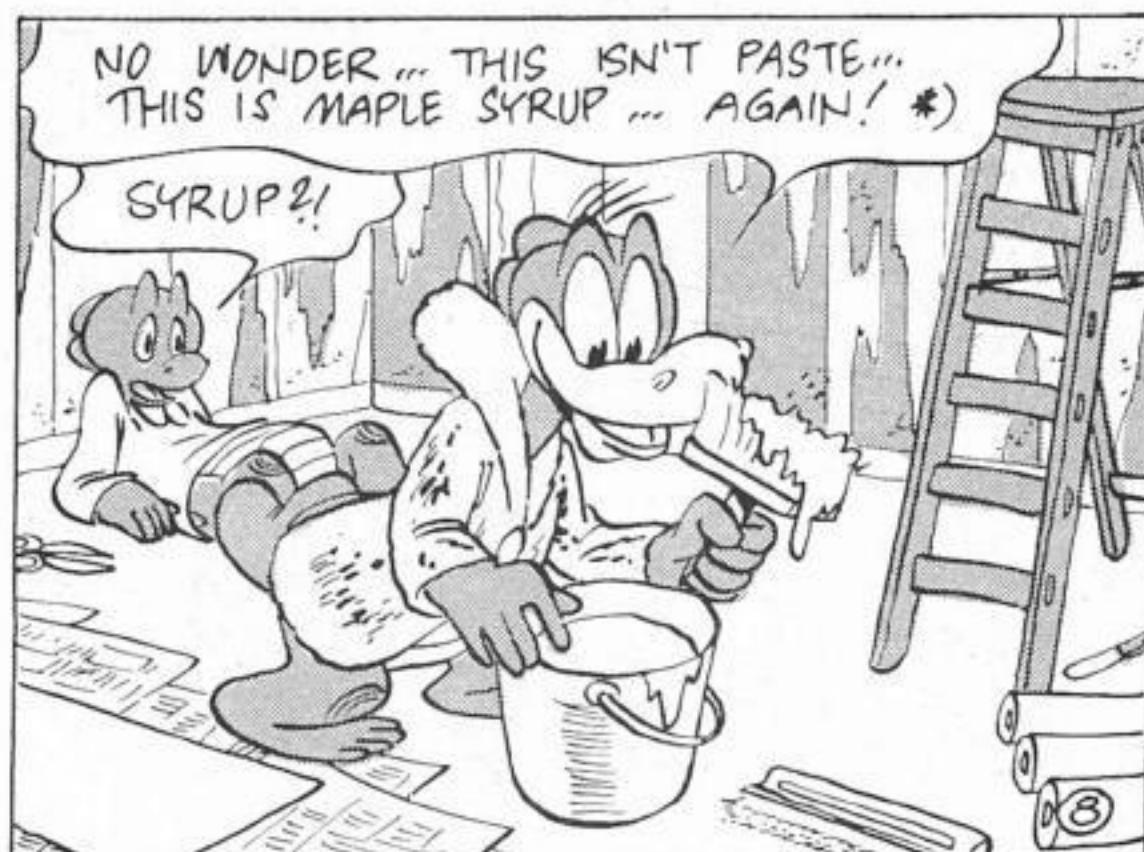




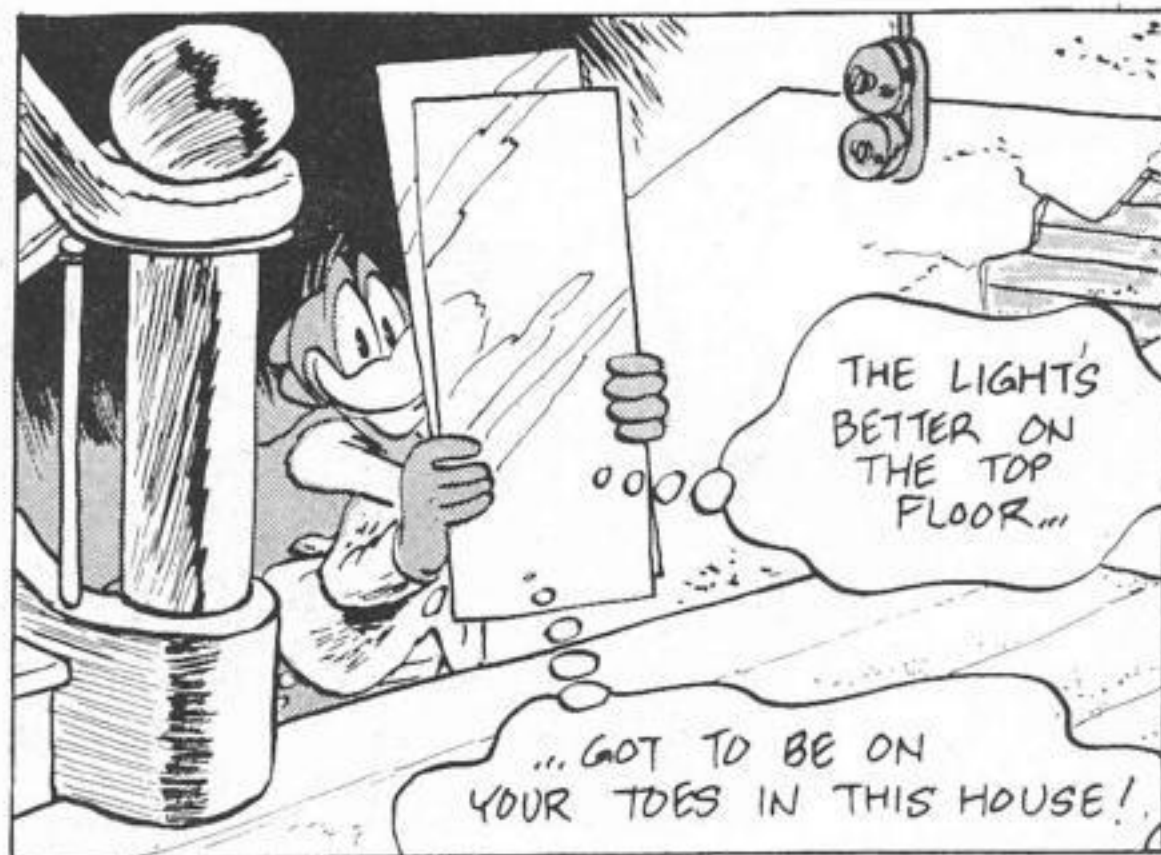


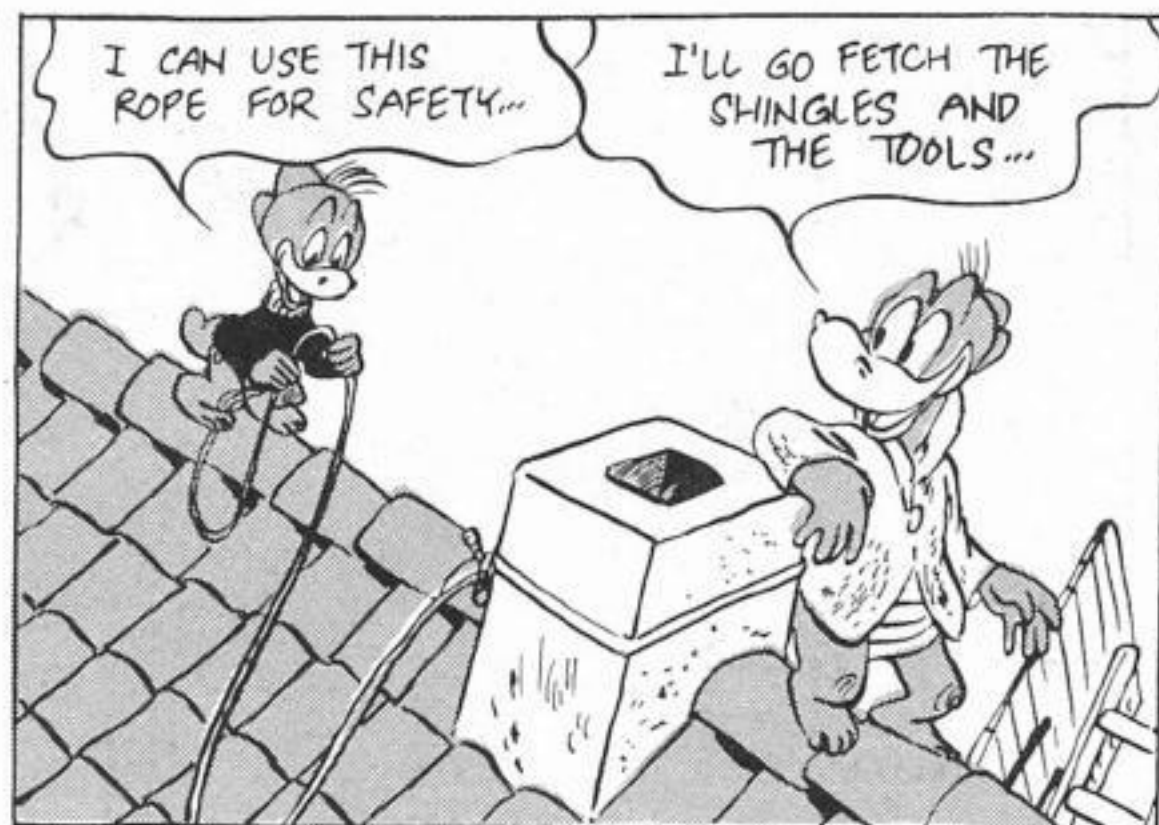






*) SEE "CRITTERS" #2







NEXT: WHERE'S GNIKKY?

ongoing battle between JACK KIRBY and the Marvel Comics Group over the possession of Mr. Kirby's original art. (For those of you who haven't, I recommend a quick perusal of **The Comics Journal** #105, which devotes most of its pages to the conflict—including a savagely eloquent editorial by FRANK MILLER on the subject.)

What it boils down to is that Marvel is acting in a horrendously ungrateful manner toward the gentleman who co-created virtually every major character in the Marvel universe. Not only does Mr. Kirby get zilch for all the millions Marvel makes off the series he co-conceived, but Marvel is using a paltry 88 pages of original artwork in an attempt to bully Mr. Kirby into signing a document that would forfeit all possible rights he could have to anything he created for Marvel, in perpetuity.

A slew of comics professionals—including such luminaries as Bill Sienkiewicz, Alan Moore, Jim Starlin, Neal Adams, Dave Stevens, Garry Trudeau, and literally dozens of others—have signed a petition demanding that Marvel return Kirby's art. **The Comics Journal** is also circulating a petition for comics fans to sign, which is reproduced on this page.

This is your chance to make a difference. Make a Xerox of the petition (you don't want to cut up the last page of "Gnuff" on the opposite side of the sheet, do you?) or type up a copy of it and send it in. It'll cost you a total of about 30 cents, and it will be another step toward helping a man who has given more to comic books than anyone else in the world get his due. We owe it to Jack. Send in the petition today.

Plug time! Of course, we'd like you to spend as much money as possible on all those terrific Fantagraphics Books comics (all advertised on the last two pages of this issue), but if by chance you have any pennies left after that, you might want to check out these two titles produced by this issue's contributors:

You can buy yourself a copy of the latest issue of **Albedo**, #7, for \$2.00, sent to Thoughts & Images, P.O. Box 19419, Seattle, WA 98109. In addition

JACK KIRBY PETITION

I, the undersigned, believe that Marvel Comics should place no conditions upon the immediate return of Jack Kirby's original art. I regret Marvel's shameful treatment of and ingratitude toward its most inspired, imaginative, and productive founding father, without whom there might not be a Marvel Comics today. Furthermore, I wish to express my appreciation and love for Jack Kirby, who, by his unparalleled talent and his life-long devotion to comic book art, enriched the lives of comics readers everywhere.

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to the usual great stuff by STEVEN A. GALLACCI and DEAL WHITLEY, that issues features a sensational cover by Ken Macklin to boot! (Also available are issues 3, 5, and 6.)

And Tom Stazer is still selling copies of **Spaced**, his very funny and entertaining science-fiction title. If you enjoyed "Zany But Deadly," send him \$2.60 for the latest issue of **Spaced**, made out to Unbridled Ambition, P.O. Box 500202, Houston, TX 77250-0202.

No other American editions of FREDDY MILTON stuff for the nonce, but we'll have some

related news on "Gnuff" next issue.

Mapping out future issues of **Critters**, here's what you can expect:

Next issue, #5, features the climax and conclusion to the "Gnuff" serial, with an extra-long segment and full-color cover by Freddy Milton. After that, the Gnuffs will be taking a break for a couple of issues—but never fear, they will be back [see below]! That issue also includes a "Nilson Groundthumper" story by Stan Sakai. Now, a lot of people (myself included) have

puzzled over how Stan can tell such a good, solid story in 10 pages; well, in this case, he tells one in **four!** And rounding off the issue is the penultimate chapter of Steve Gallacci's "Birthright."

Critters #6 features the return of Usagi Yojimbo in a new story; the conclusion to "Birthright," with a full-color cover painting by Gallacci; and, I'm very proud to say, the first story by MARK ARMSTRONG for **Critters**, featuring his character Jack Bunny (whom some of you may remember from a **Charlton Bullseye** of a few years back—the same one that featured the first color Neil the Horse story). I've been a fan of Mark's work for years (Gallacci and I have even gone so far as to follow **Peter Porker, Spectacular Spider-Ham**, just for his marvelous drawings), and I'm delighted to have him join our merry crew.

If anything could make me happier than a Mark Armstrong story, it would be a full-color airbrush Mark Armstrong cover, and that's just what we have fronting **Critters** #7—accompanying the conclusion to the "Jack Bunny" story. Also in that issue is another "Usagi Yojimbo" (two in a row!), and the first chapter of a new "Lionheart" serial by Tom Stazer.

Still following me? I've got these suckers planned out!

Critters #8 sees the return of "Gnuff," in a new serial called "Animal Graffiti." (Oh, by the way, the first serial was called "The Gnuffs Move In"; forgot to mention that.) The issue also includes the second chapter of the "Lionheart" serial, and a short story by—oh, we'll surprise you.

Critters #9 will cover-feature the "Lionheart" serial; issue #10 will cover-feature another "Usagi Yojimbo" story; and issue #11 is our extra-special Christmas issue, with more features than you can shake a stick at, including the conclusions to both the "Lionheart" and the "Gnuff" serial.

Hey, what a coincidence—all this chatter wound up right next to our subscription page. Funny how that worked out. Don't let me stop you...

Next issue, I'll be printing some letters (honest, I will—so keep on writing!). See you then!

CREDITS: "Zany But Deadly" was written and drawn by **Tom Stazer**, with some plotting assistance by **John Williams** and **Anthony Smith**. "Birthright" was written and drawn by **Steven A. Gallacci**, with typesetting provided by **Western Type**. "Gnuff" was written, drawn, toned, and re-lettered by **Freddy Milton**; the translation was by **Kim Thompson**. The cover is a painting by **Ken Macklin**. Separations provided by **Impact Productions**. The CRITTERS logo was designed by **Freddy Milton** and rendered by **Ingo Milton**. Printed at **Port Publications**. Production by: **Tom Mason**, art director, and **Dave Nelson**, production assistant. **CRITTERS** is edited by **Kim Thompson** for **FANTAGRAPHICS BOOKS**.

SUBSCRIBE TODAY!

That's all very nice, but what about Usagi Yojimbo? Is Prince Alfon's attempt doomed to failure? What is it that's bedeviling the Gnuffs in their house? Can Tom Stazer really sustain a 40-page "Lionheart" novel? If all these animal-related questions are bothering you, you have no option but to **subscribe to CRITTERS** and every issue will be delivered to your doorstep!



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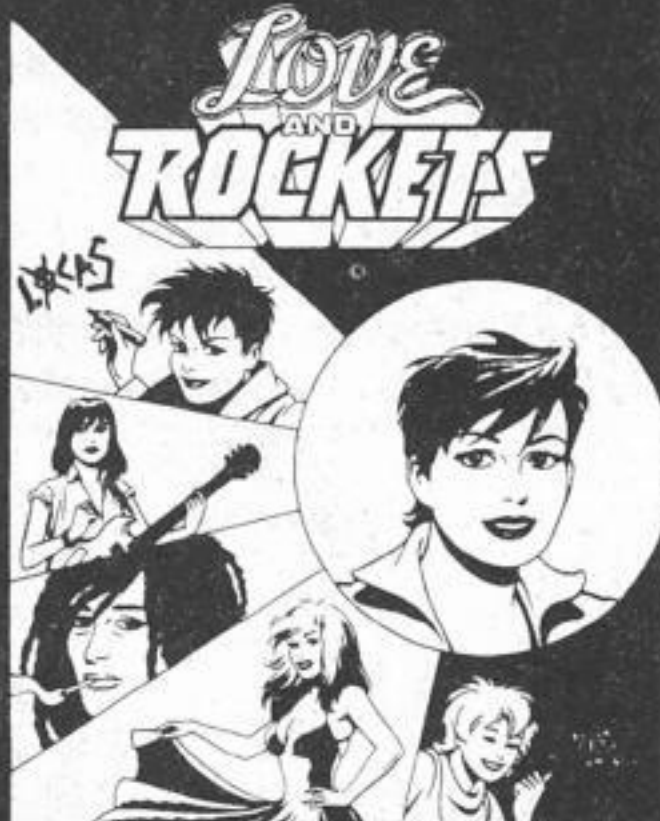
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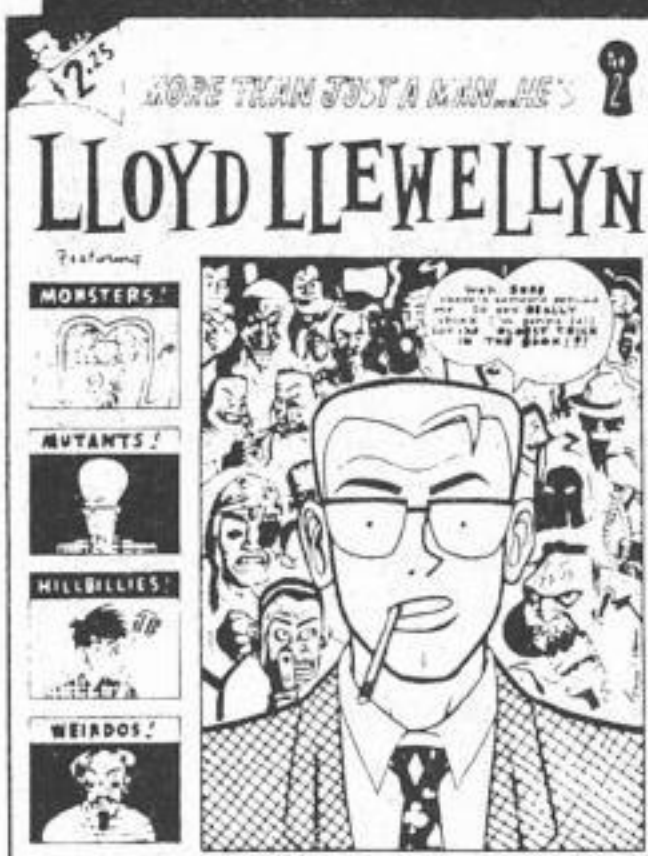


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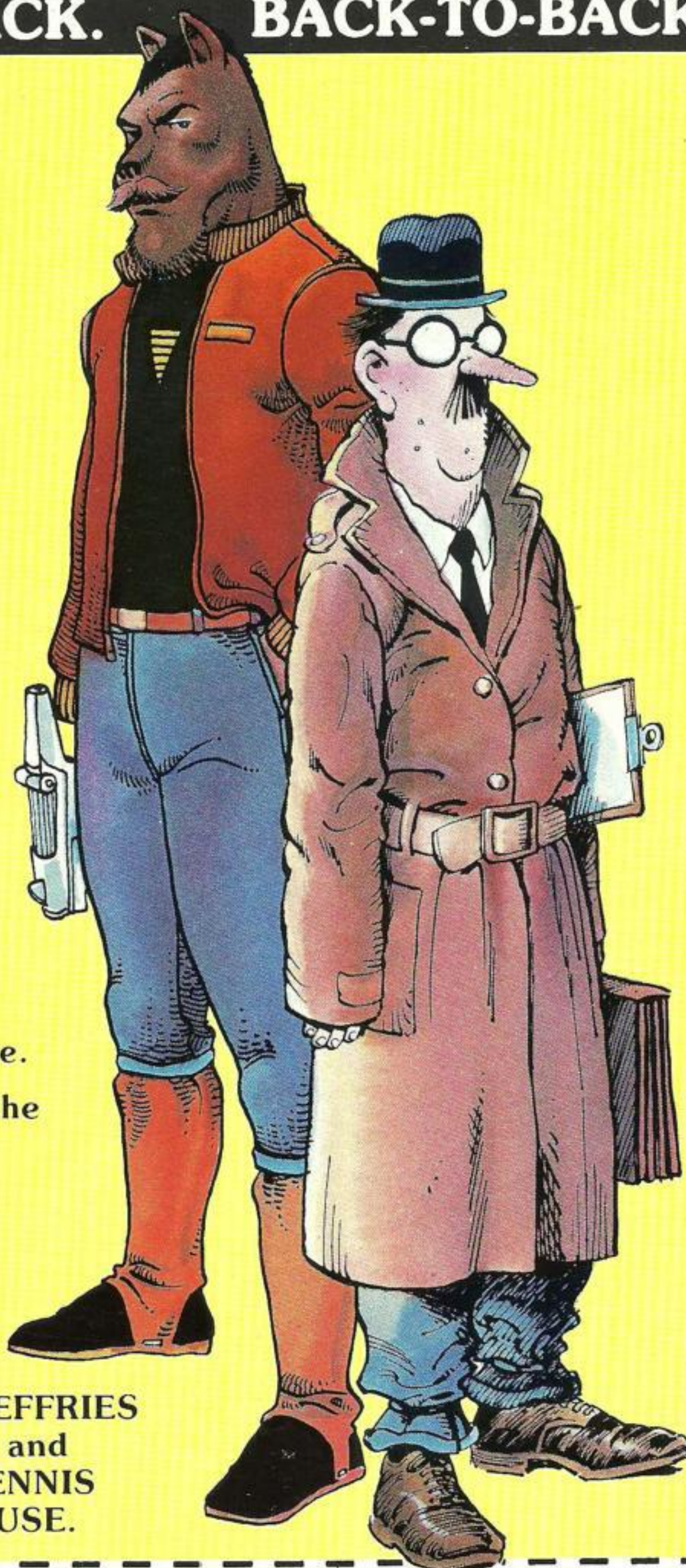
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