

Critters

No. 21

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Canada)



FANTAGRAPHICS BOOKS

Critters

EDITORIAL

So where is "SpeakingStone" this issue? I hear you ask. Bad news, I'm afraid: The ever-conscientious Reed Waller has hit some rough water in his schedule (partly caused by the long-awaited *Omaha* reprint volume), and was unable to deliver the second chapter of his epic. Fortunately, however, John Holland and Ron Wilber had just delivered a new chapter of "Lizards" for our inventory files, and it fills the space snugly—even leaving room for a one-page Mike Kazaleh gag. With a little bit of luck, "SpeakingStone" should be back next issue—but we know you'll agree it was worth the wait.

I've just put the *Amazing Heroes* funny-animal issue to bed (and at this moment, I envy it). It turned out to run some 116 pages, and is chock full of great stuff. Check it out: Interviews with Gallacci and Milton, a huge focus on the new *Mighty Mouse* Saturday-morning show, 36 cartoonists on why they draw funny-animals, Dwight Decker on Carl Barks, and much, much more. Check it out!

Speaking of Carl Barks, special thanks to Sam Kieth for this issue's very strange but terrific cover. Sam is one of the most talented new artists around, and I recommend picking up *The Wandering Stars* for a look at what he's capable of on a major scale. Beats *Adolescent Radioactive Whatchamacallits* all to heck, for one thing.

Next issue features the return of The Blue Beagle, in "Watchdogs," a unique story that satirizes (among other things) Max Headroom, Pee-wee Herman, the comic-book censorship controversy, and some DC superhero comic the name of which eludes me. As a special bonus, we're running this issue with two different covers—a "straight" *Critters* cover, and a satirical one (see below), both by Tim. All this, plus the conclusion of the "Gnuff" serial, and (keep your fingers crossed) "SpeakingStone." What could be more exciting than that...I mean, other than the upcoming Christmas special?

—KIM THOMPSON



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NUMBER 21 FEBRUARY 1988

C O N T E N T S

Fission Chicken by J.P. Morgan

"Marketing Experts From Beyond, Part 3" The action-packed finale of the pulse-pounding mind-control thriller extravaganza.....1

Lizards by Holland & Wilber

"Afternoon Stroll" Some were born to ride, and some were born to stroll, as Dweezil and his Pop find out.....11

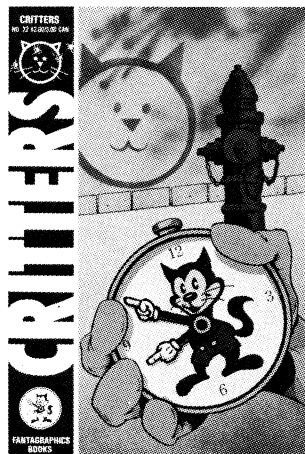
Gnuff by Freddy Milton

"The Root of All Evil" As the giant trees grow beyond all manageable levels, desperate measures become the order of the day.....17

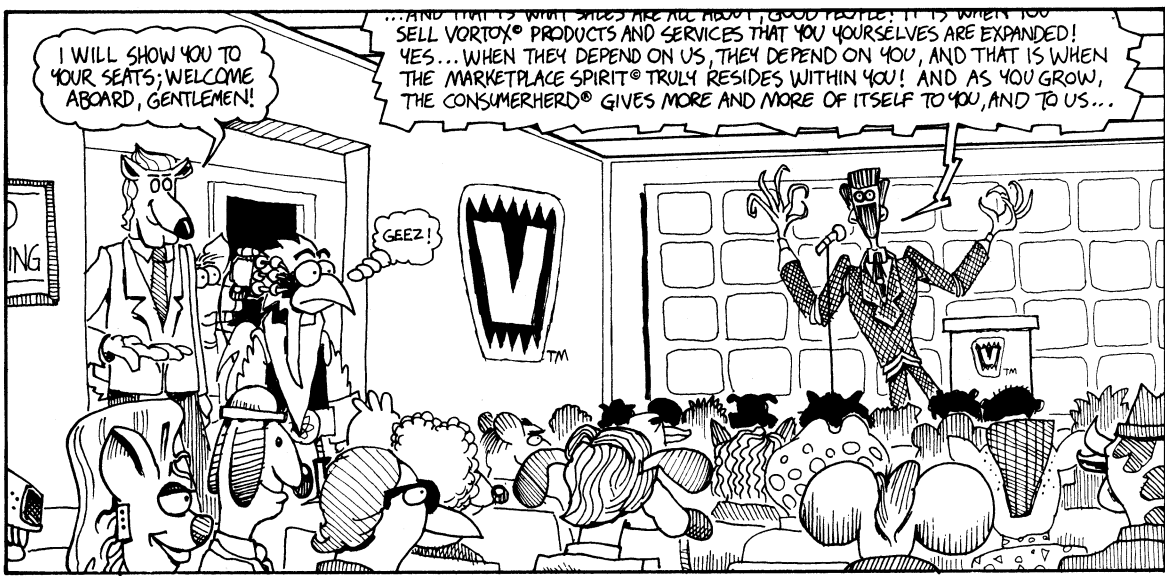
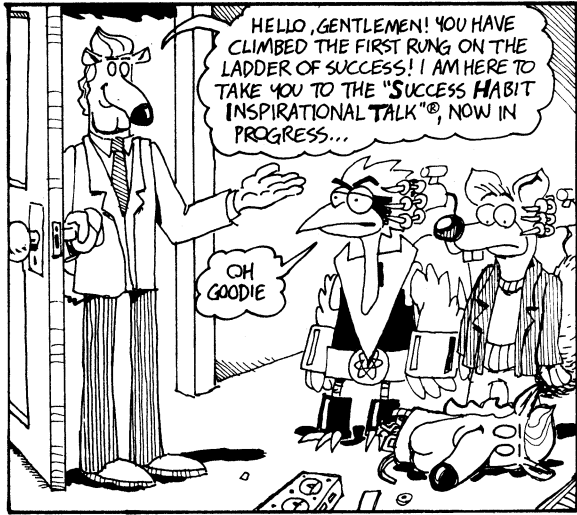
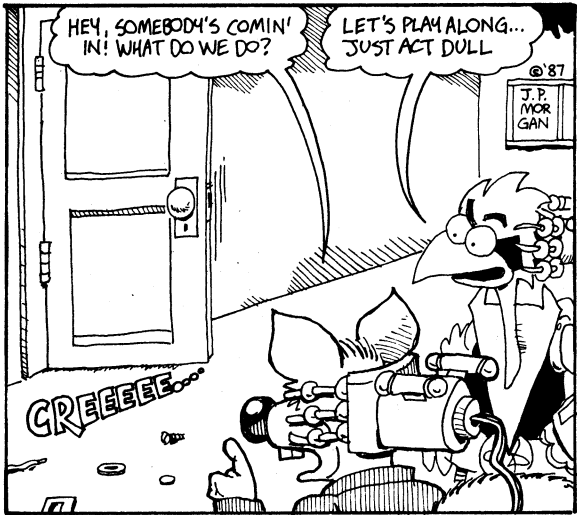
Pgog by Mike Kazaleh

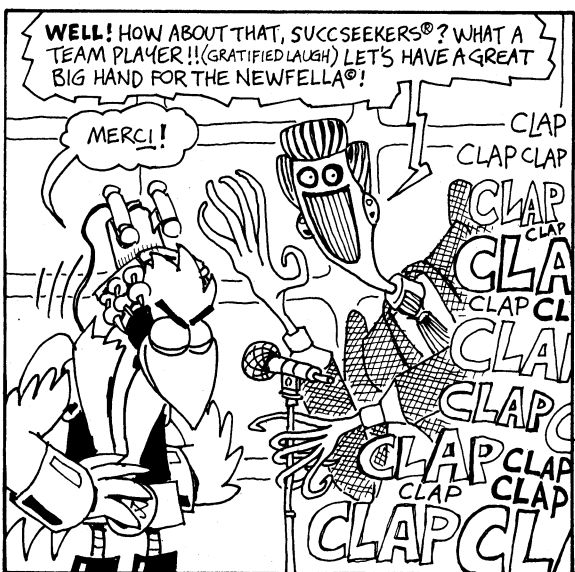
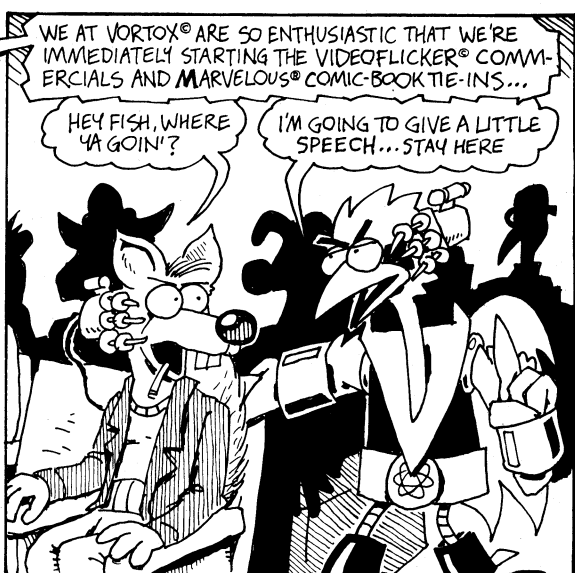
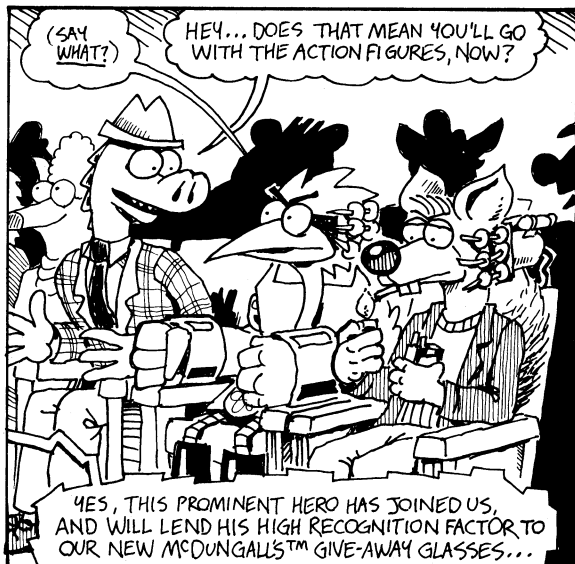
A satirical stab at the funny-animal comic-book market, done in tribute to the one and only Walt Kelly.....31

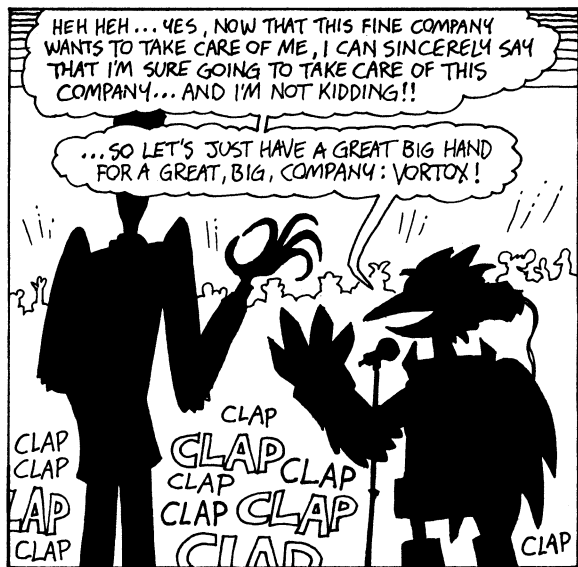
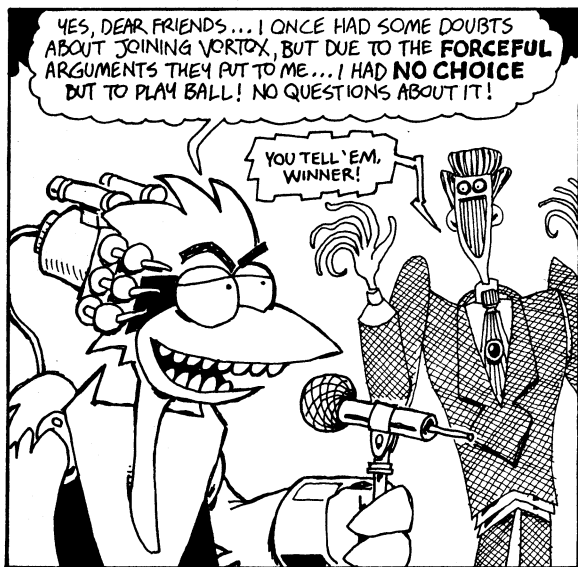
Critters #21, February, 1988. Editor, Kim Thompson. Art Director, Coco Shinomiya. **Critters** is published monthly by Fantagraphics Books, Inc., and is copyright © 1987 Fantagraphics Books, Inc. All characters, stories, and art © 1987 their respective creators: John Holland and Ron Wilber, Mike Kazaleh, Sam Kieth, Freddy Milton, and J.P. Morgan. Cover separations by S*H Graphics. No part of this magazine may be reproduced without written permission from Fantagraphics Books and the creators. No similarity between the any of the names, characters, persons, animals, and institutions in **Critters** and those of any living or dead persons or beasts is intended, and any such similarity that may exist is purely coincidental. Letters to **Critters** become the property of the magazine and are assumed intended for publication in whole or in part, and may therefore be used for those purposes. First printing: November, 1987. Available directly from the publisher for \$2.00 + 75¢ postage and handling: Fantagraphics Books, 1800 Bridgegate Street Suite #101, Westlake Village, CA 91361.

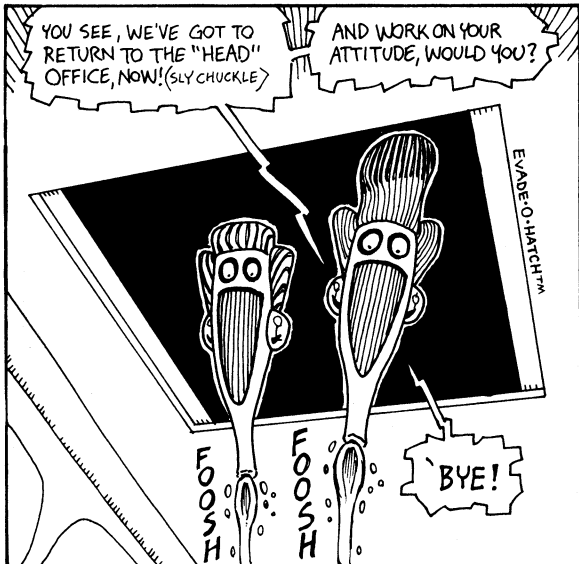
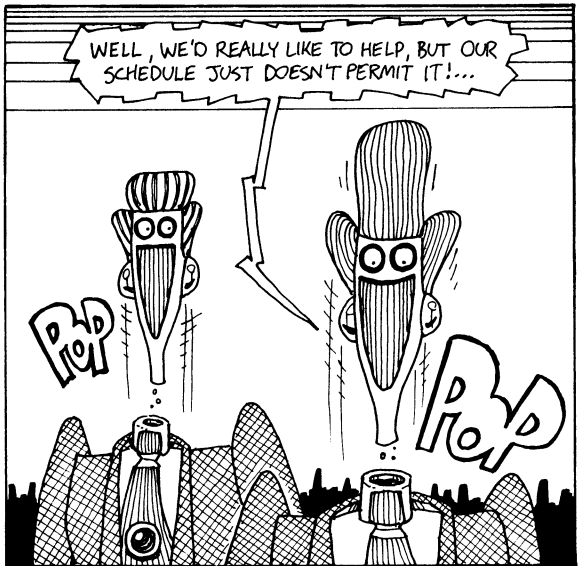


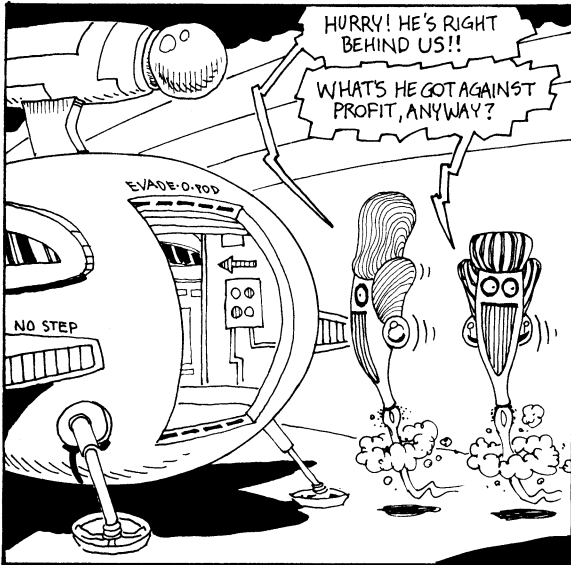
FISSION CHICKEN VS. THE MARKETING EXPERTS FROM BEYOND PART 3!





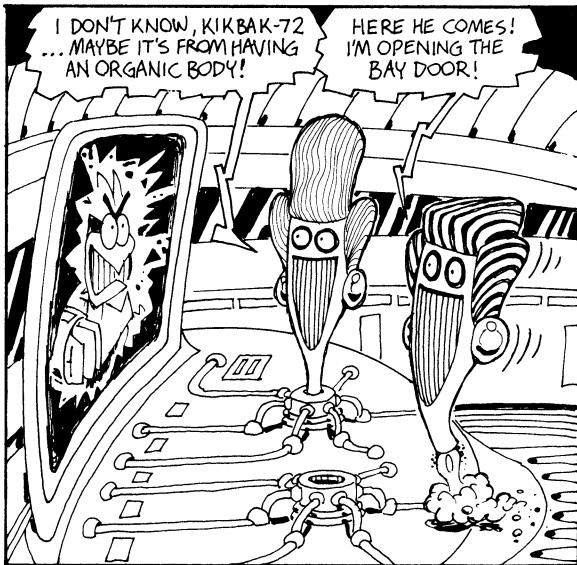






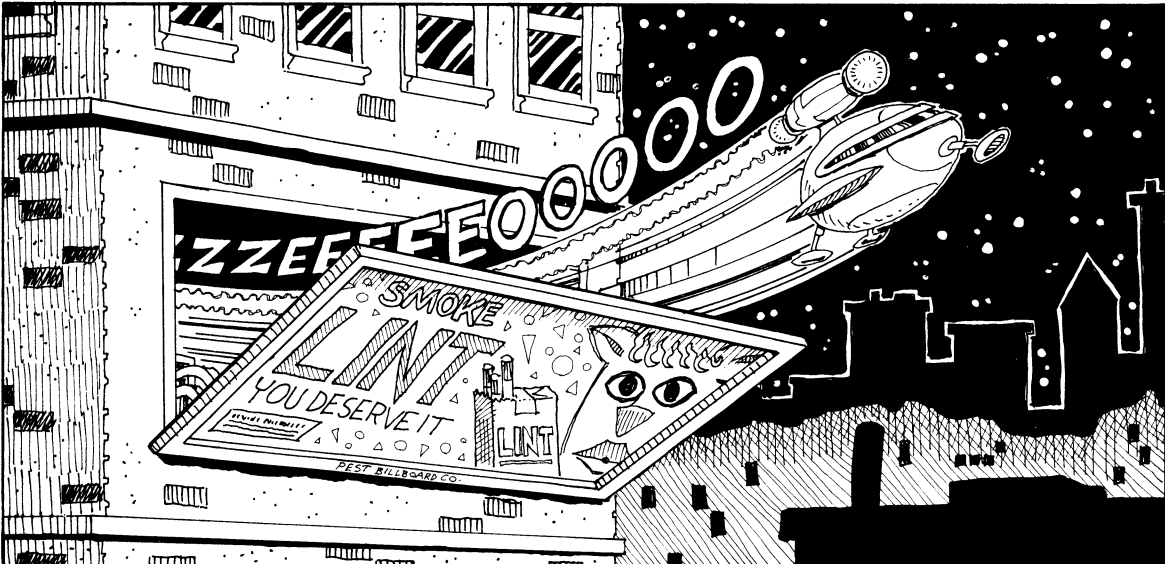
HURRY! HE'S RIGHT BEHIND US!!

WHAT'S HE GOT AGAINST PROFIT, ANYWAY?

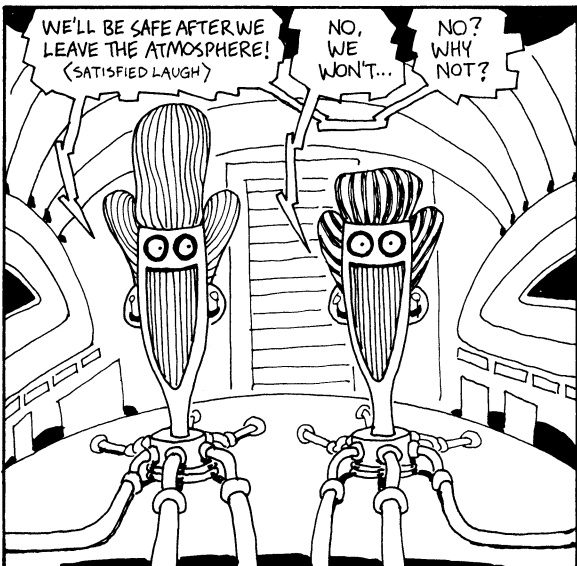


I DON'T KNOW, KIKBAK-72 ... MAYBE IT'S FROM HAVING AN ORGANIC BODY!

HERE HE COMES! I'M OPENING THE BAY DOOR!



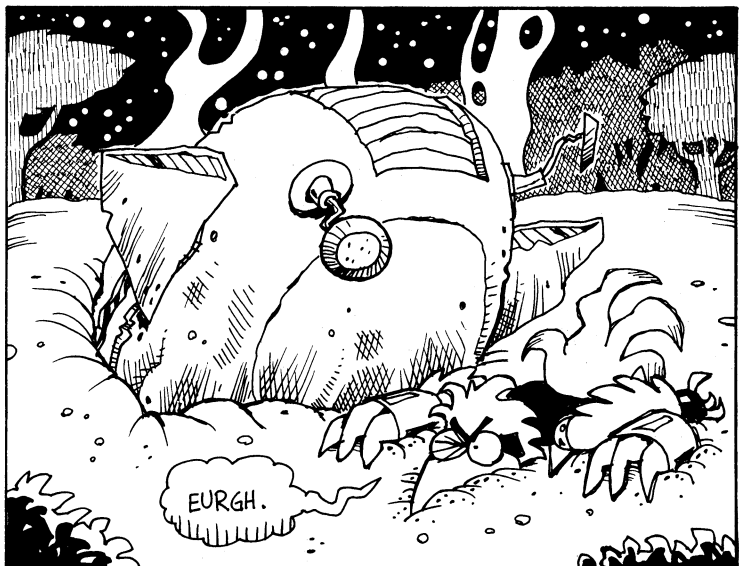
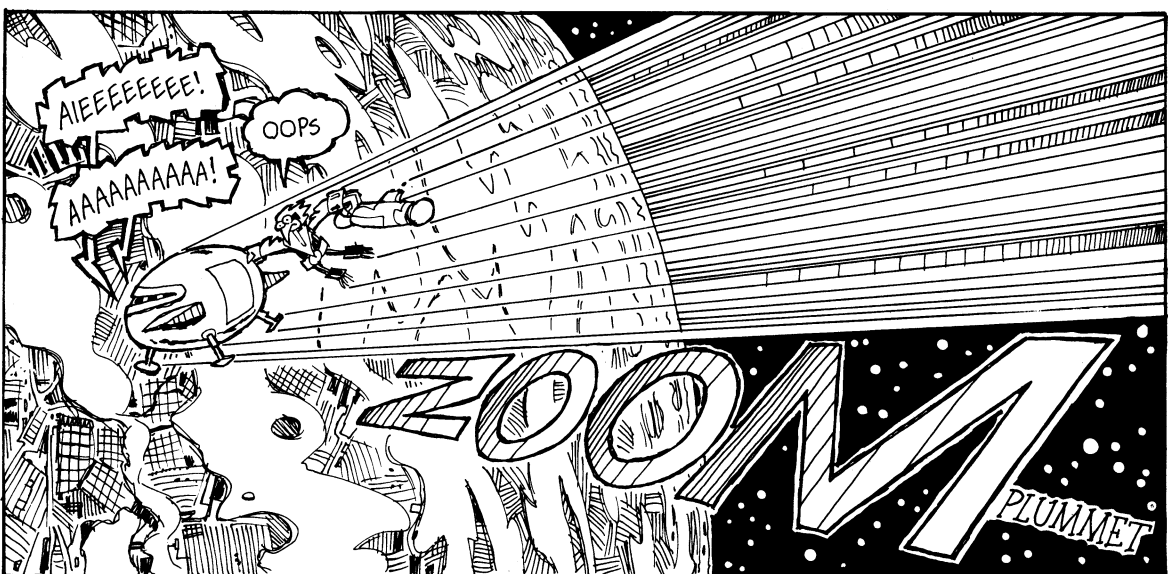
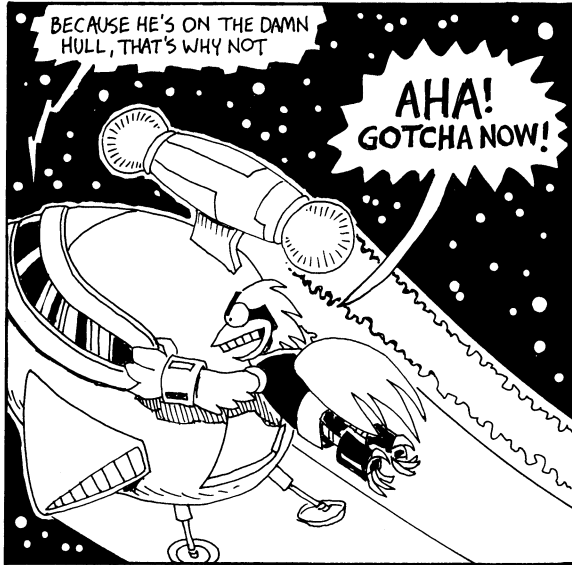
COME BACK HERE, YA ZOMBIES!



WE'LL BE SAFE AFTER WE LEAVE THE ATMOSPHERE! (SATISFIED LAUGH)

NO, WE WON'T...

NO? WHY NOT?





YOU WERE RIGHT — THAT CHICKEN HAS NO RESPECT FOR CORPORATE PROPERTY WHATSOEVER! ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?

YES...

NO!

EERK!

CRUNCH

HI! SORRY I SCUFFED UP YOUR SHIP LIKE THIS... BUT DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT!



AFTER ALL, YOU'RE OBVIOUSLY STILL "A-HEAD", HEH HEH

UH, (FALTERING CHUCKLE) NOW LISTEN, MR. CHICKEN, PERHAPS WE WERE JUST A WEE BIT HASTY...

ER, YES...

HASTY?

GRAB

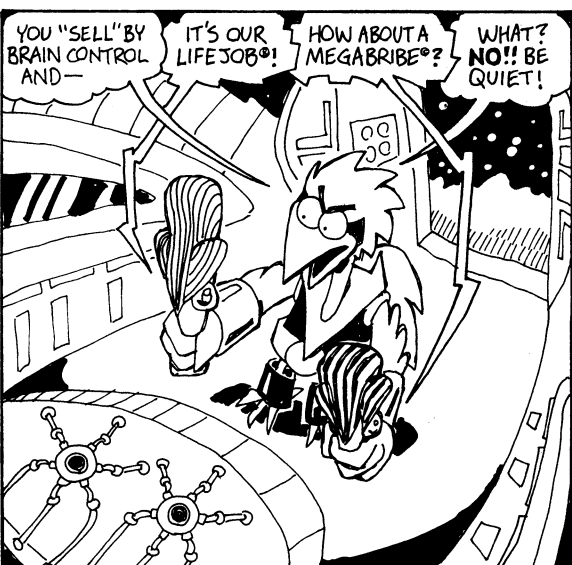
GRAB



YEAH... HASTY ENOUGH TO TRY INJECTING CRAP INTO MY BRAIN! AND NOW YOU'RE GOING TO CALL OFF THE INVASION OF THIS PLANET!!

YOU MEAN OUR PROFITQUEST™? WE CAN'T POSSIBLY DO THAT! WE TWO JUST RUN THE LOCAL BRANCH OFFICE IN THIS ZONE, BUT IT'S STILL A SACRED TRUST!

BESIDES... CAN YOU REALLY CALL IT AN INVASION IF EVERYBODY BUYS WHAT WE SELL? (INSINUATING HUM)



YOU "SELL" BY BRAIN CONTROL AND —

IT'S OUR LIFEJOB®!

HOW ABOUT A MEGABRIBE®?

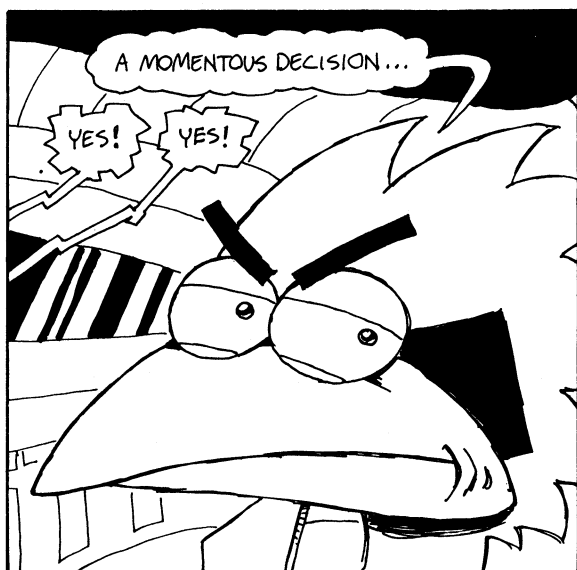
WHAT? NO!! BE QUIET!



OUR LIVES ARE BASED ON THE HOLY LAW OF SUPPLY AND DEMAND! WHY IS THAT SO BAD? (PUZZLED SIGH)

IT'S BAD BECAUSE YOU SHOUT DOWN EVERYBODY ELSE —

A MEGABRIBE® IS A NICE PIECE OF CHANGE!



AND SO...



...SO WHAT HAVE THEY TOLD YOU SO FAR, FISH?

NOT TOO MUCH...THEY KEEP GOING ON ABOUT THE "MARKETPLACE SPIRIT" AND MEGABRIBES...WANNA TAKE A LOOK, SEE WHAT YOU CAN DO?

YEAH, SURE. HEY! HOW DO THEY STAY ALIVE? WHAT DO THEY LIVE ON, ANYWAY?



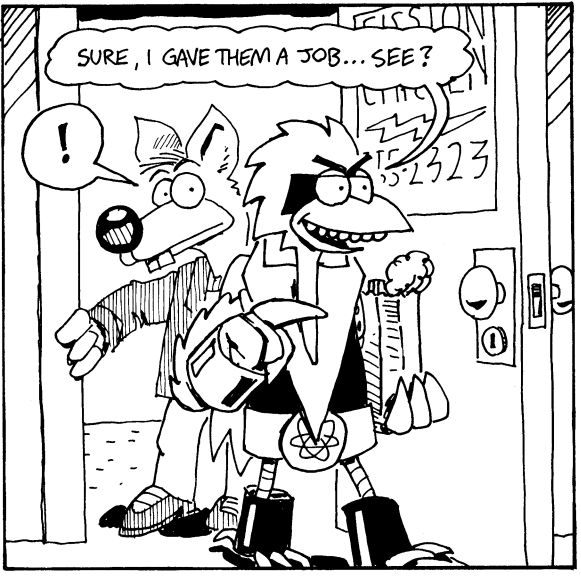
IT'S WEIRD...THERE'S A VALVE ON TOP OF THEIR HEADS, UNDER THE WIGS...AND I JUST PUT A LITTLE PANCAKE SYRUP IN NOW AND THEN! AND I MAKE SURE THEY ALWAYS GET THE CHEAP BRAND...

WOW! STRANGE! AND THEY CAN'T SIGNAL FOR HELP?

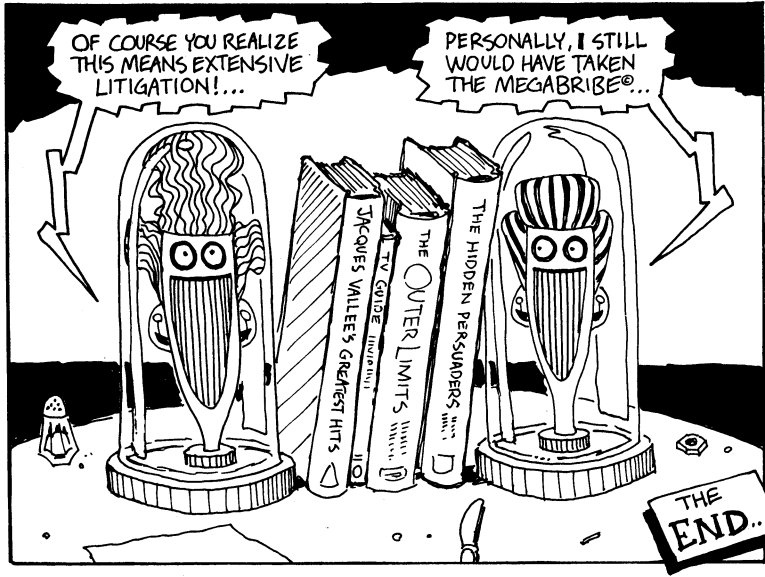


NO WAY...I SET RADIO-PROOF DOMIES OVER BOTH OF THEM BEFORE I PUT THEM TO WORK!

"PUT THEM TO WORK"?!?



SURE, I GAVE THEM A JOB...SEE?



OF COURSE YOU REALIZE THIS MEANS EXTENSIVE LITIGATION!...

PERSONALLY, I STILL WOULD HAVE TAKEN THE MEGABRIBE®...

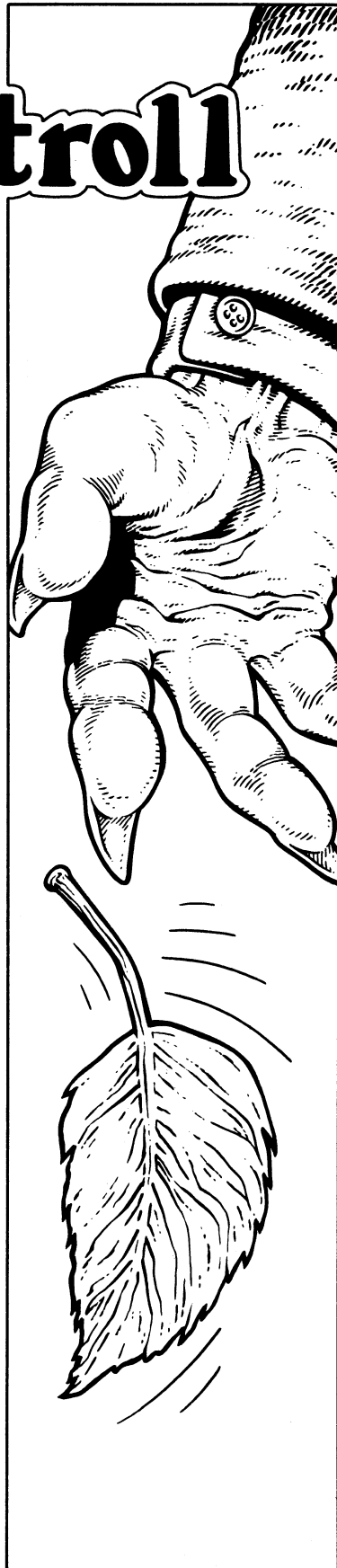
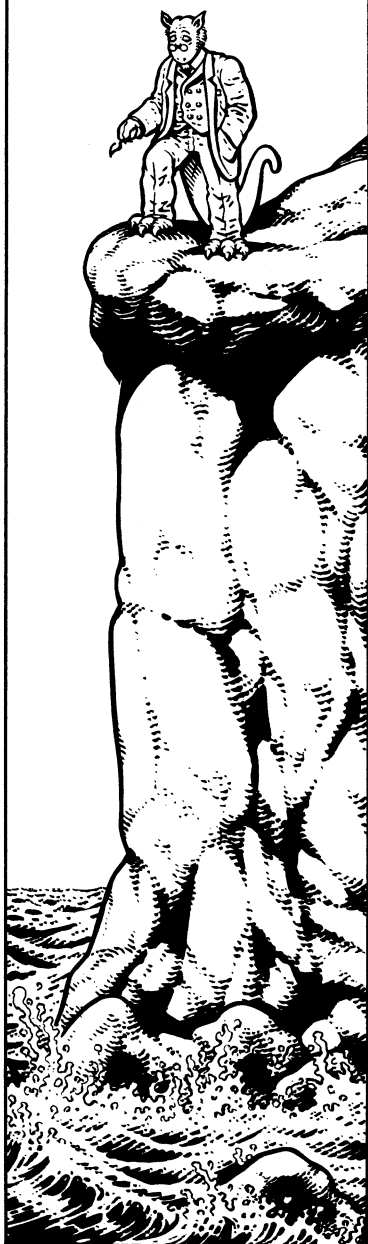


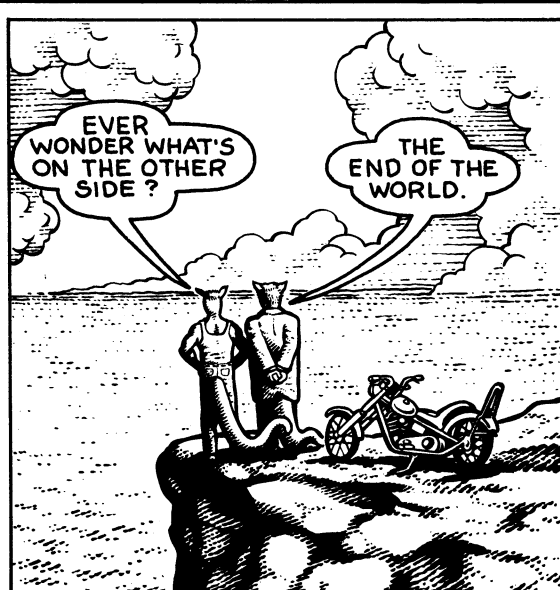
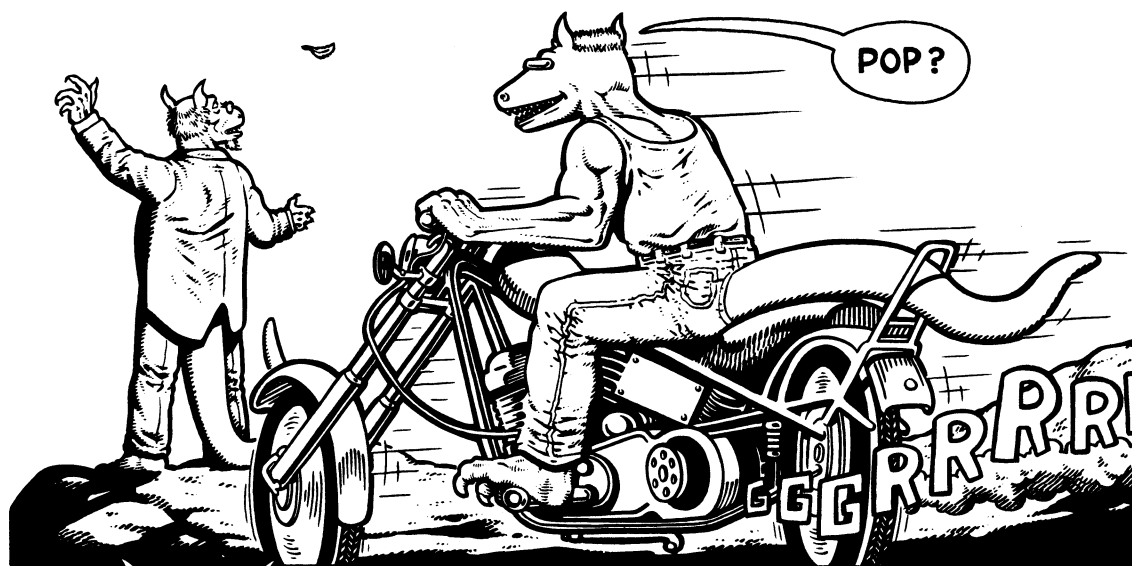
SAY, WHAT HAPPENED TO EARTH PROFITZONE 333-B? IT'S BEEN AWFULLY QUIET...

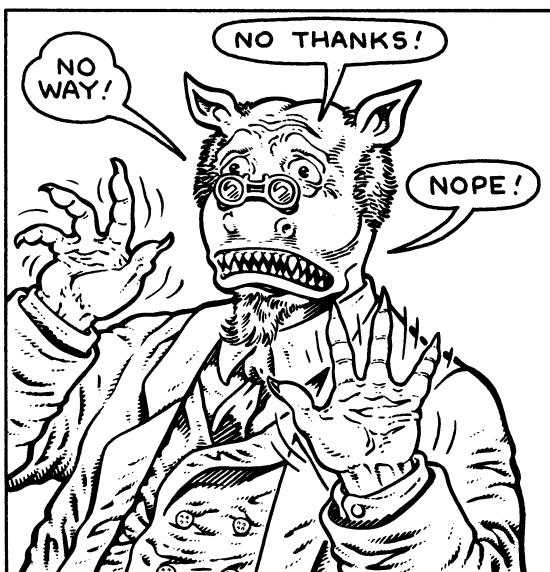
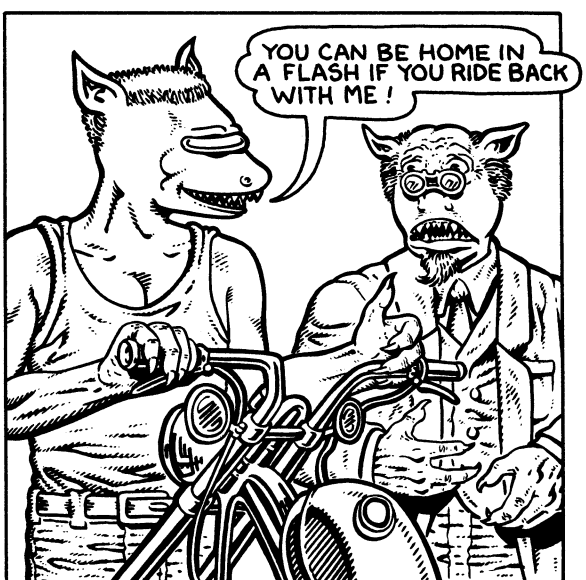
WE'LL HAVE TO CHECK ON THAT NEXT...

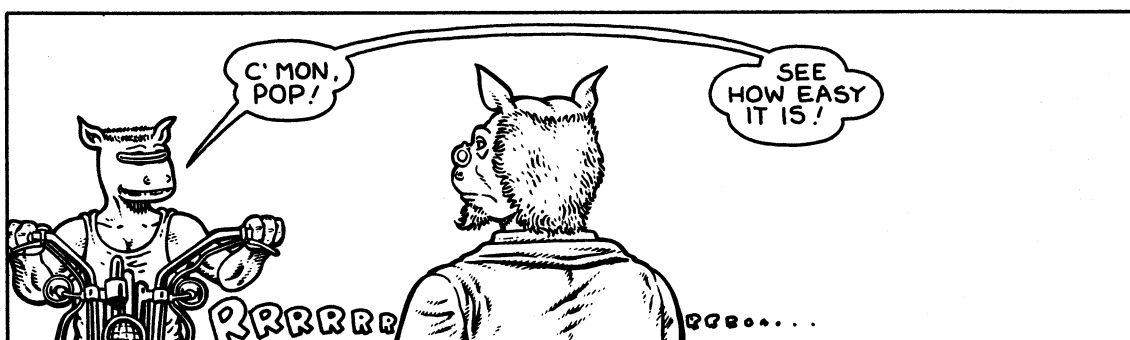
an afternoon stroll

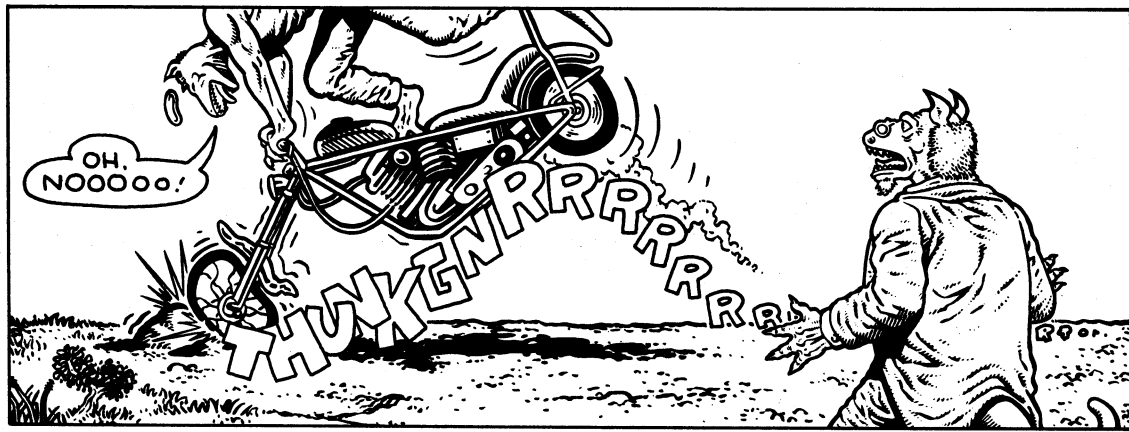
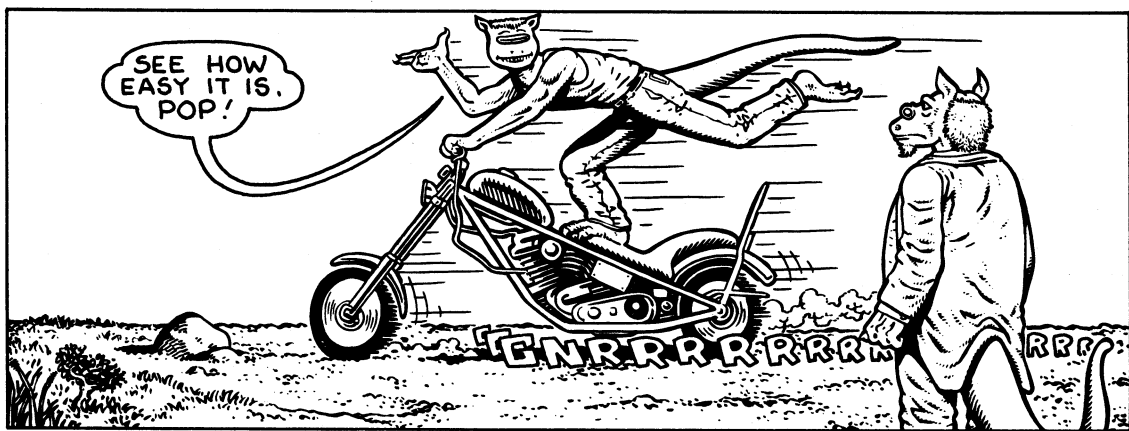
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✦ R. WILBER - ART • 87

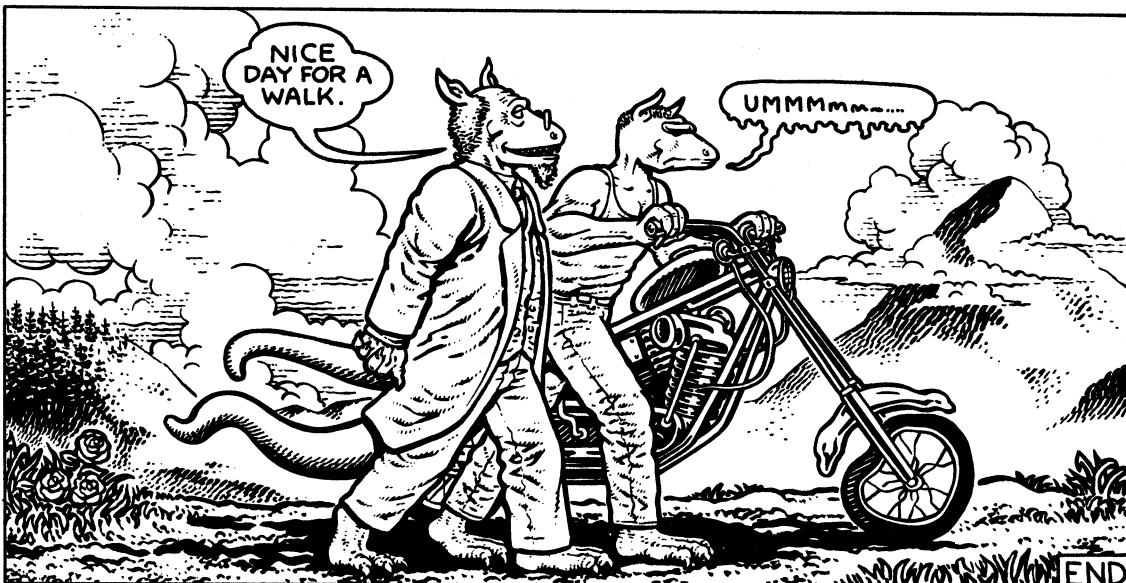
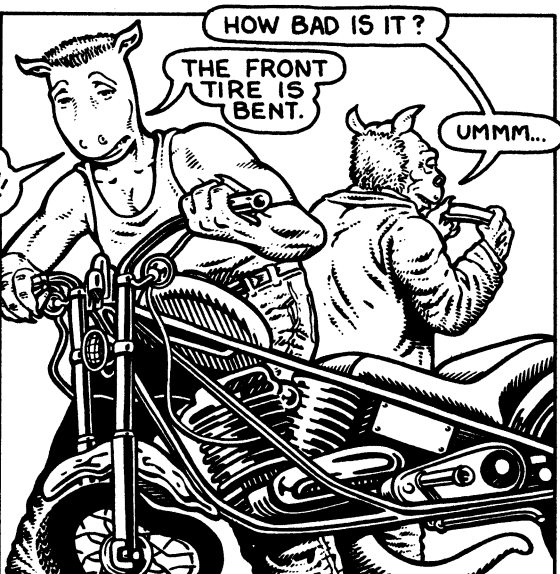












Freddy Milton's Gnuft

ART &
STORY
FREDDY
MILTON

"THE ROOT OF
ALL EVIL"

CITY GARDENER GNUFT
HAS A GROWING
PROBLEM...

ARE THOSE REALLY THE TREES YOU
PLANTED LAST WEEK, MR GNUFT?

YEP! I DID JUST
WHAT YOU TOLD ME,
MR. SIEGEL!

©Milton-

YOU CAN SEE THEY'RE GROWING SWELL,
SO DO I GET TO KEEP MY JOB AS CITY
GARDENER?

WELL... I JUST DIDN'T
REALIZE THEY COULD
GROW THAT FAST!

THEY'RE ALREADY MUCH TALLER THAN
THE OTHER TREES ON THE STREET!

MAYBE IT'S
SOMETHING IN
THE AIR THAT'S
DOING IT...?

DID YOU GIVE THEM TOO MUCH FERTILIZER?

I DIDN'T GIVE
'EM ANY
FERTILIZER
AT ALL, MR.
SIEGEL...

KRRRRR

SUDDENLY...

??!

CRACK

!!!

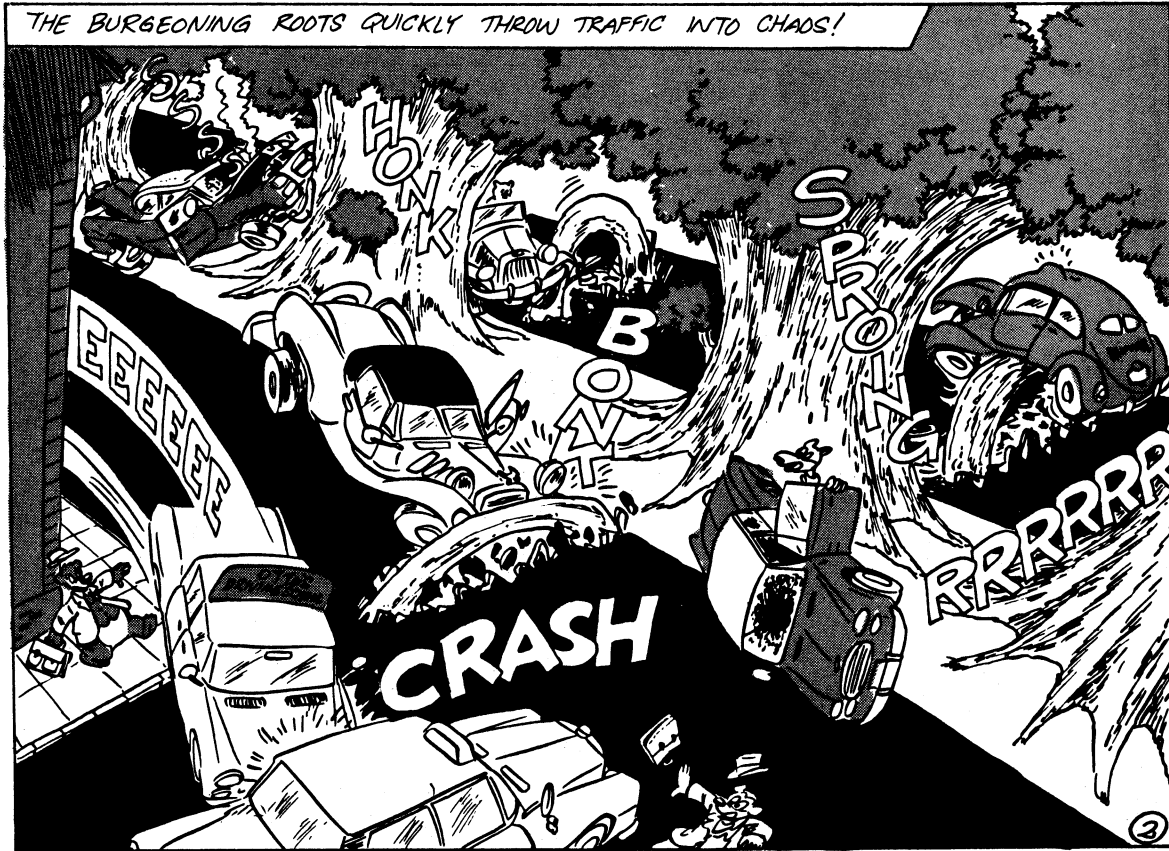
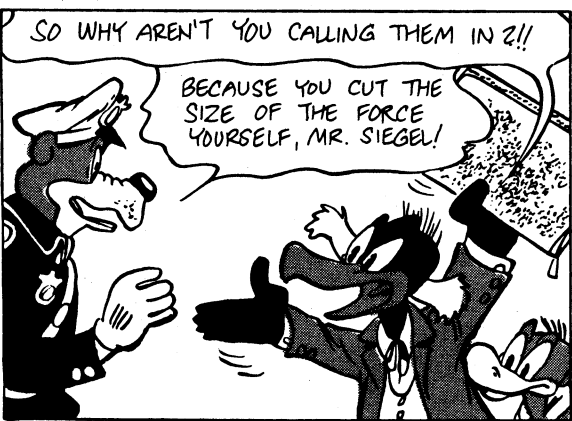
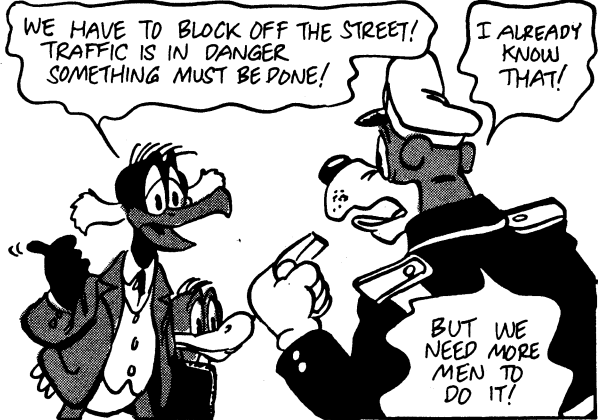
GOOD
LORD!

ONE OF THE TREE
ROOTS BROKE RIGHT
UP THROUGH THE
ASPHALT!

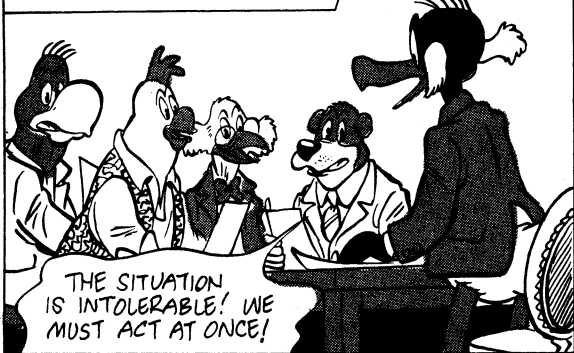
IF I HADN'T SEEN
IT FOR MYSELF, I
WOULDN'T BELIEVE IT!

②

TRANSLATED BY DWIGHT R. DECKER



SIEGEL CALLS AN EMERGENCY
CITY COUNCIL MEETING...



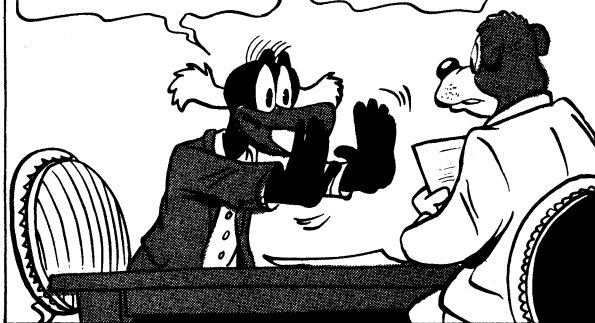
THAT MEANS WE SHOULD APPPOINT A SPECIAL
COMMITTEE TO
LOOK INTO IT!

IT CAN SUBMIT A FAST
REPORT IF IT
HURRIES!

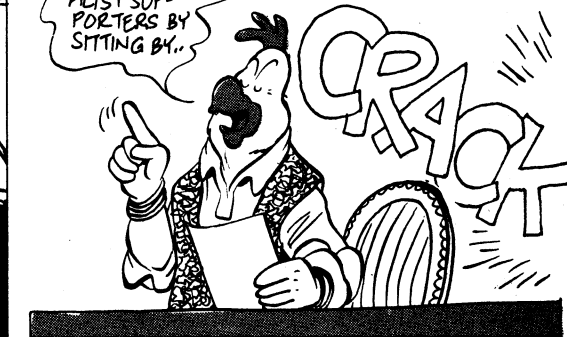


NO, NO! ABSOLUTELY NOT! WE DON'T HAVE TIME
FOR THAT! THE TREES
HAVE TO GO! NOW!

I PROTEST!



I CAN'T FAIL MY
ENVIRONMENT-
ALIST SUP-
PORTERS BY
SITTING BY..



WHAT'S
GOING ON?

IS IT
A QUAKE?



IT LOOKS
LIKE IT'S
READY TO
COLLAPSE!



LET'S GET OUTTA HERE!

WAIT! WE'LL
HAVE TO TAKE
A VOTE
FIRST!

THE CEILING'S
COMIN'!
DOWN!

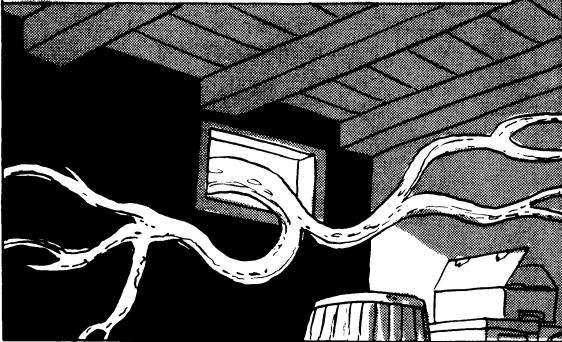


WE'VE GOT TO PIN
THE BLAME ON
SOMEBODY-FAST!

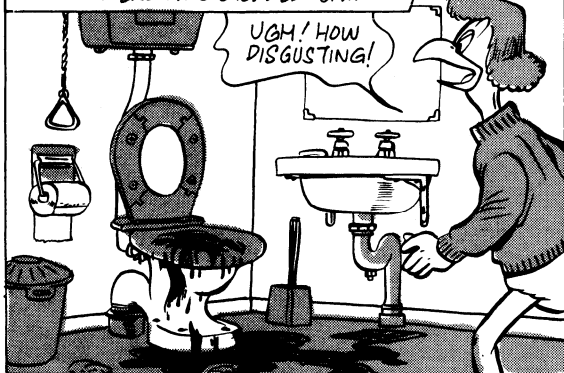
YEAH-SOMEBODY
NOT IN OUR PARTY!



THE TREE ROOTS SPREAD OUT MORE AND MORE... INTO BASEMENTS AND DRAINS...



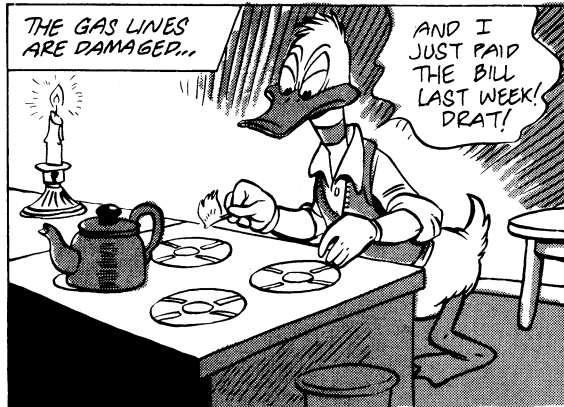
THE SEWERS ARE STOPPED UP...



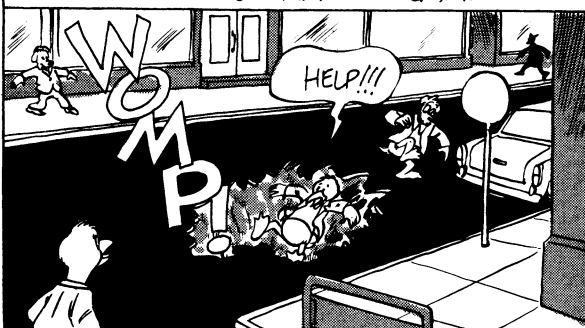
THE ELECTRIC CABLES ARE CUT..



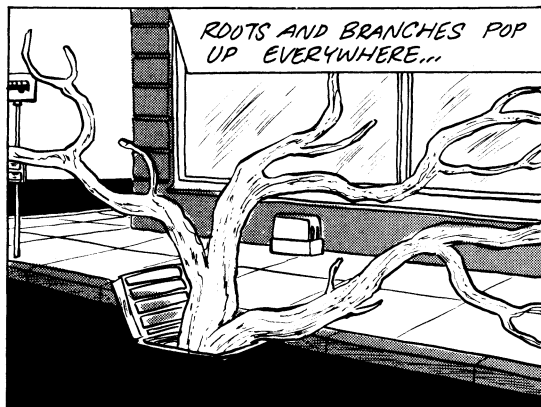
THE GAS LINES ARE DAMAGED...



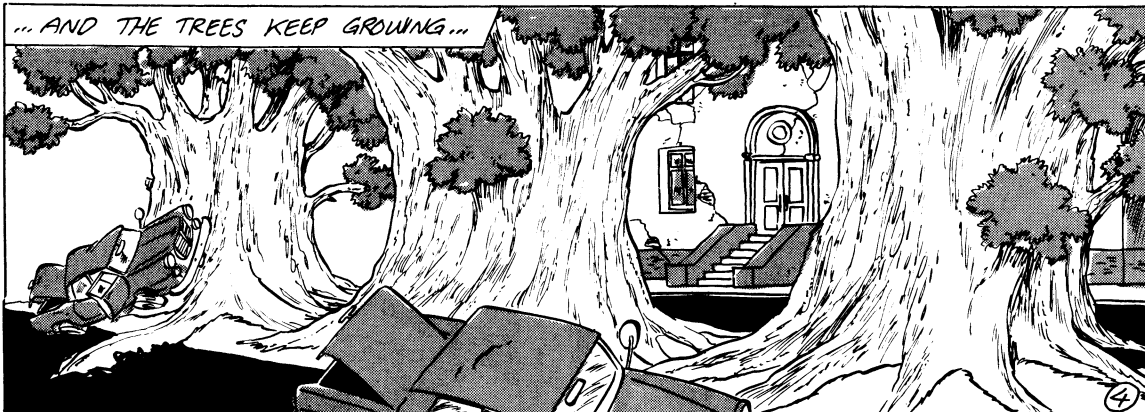
THE GROUND IS UNDERMINED BY WATER LEAKING FROM CRACKED PIPES AND THE STREETS AROUND CITY HALL START CAVING IN...

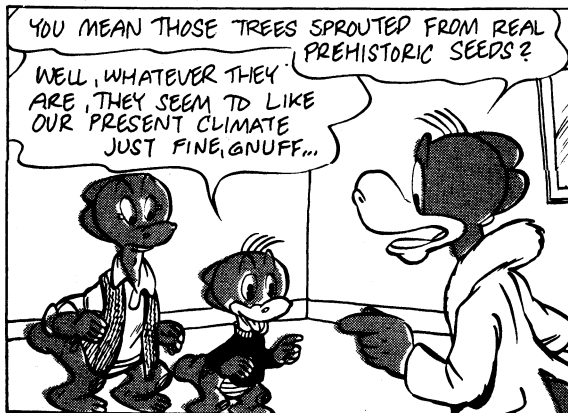
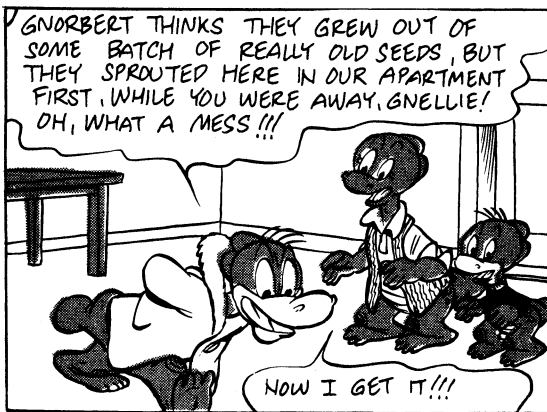
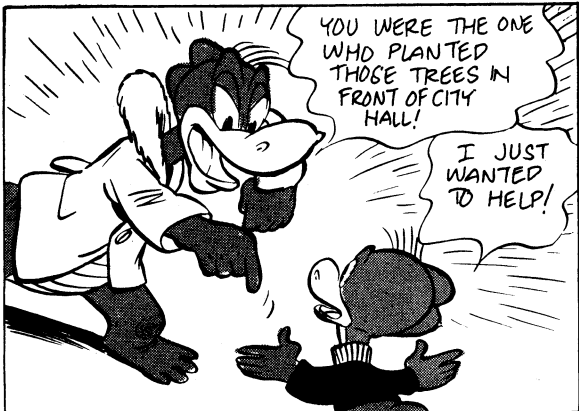
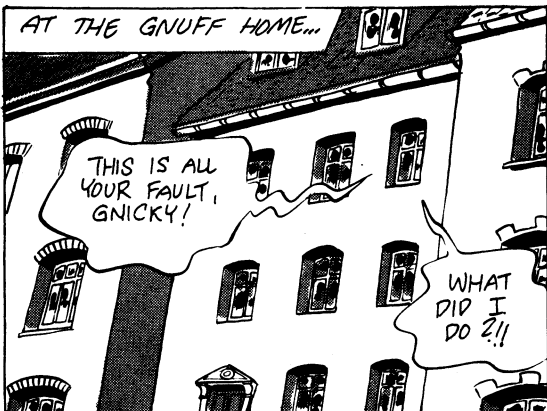


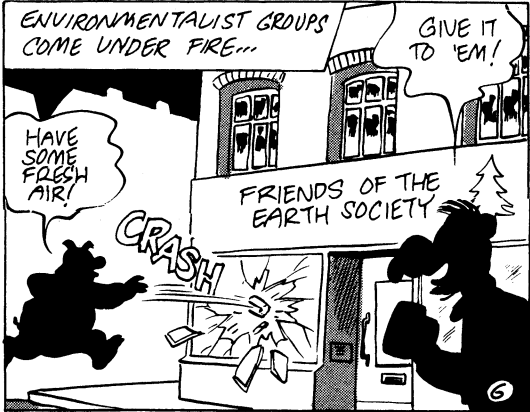
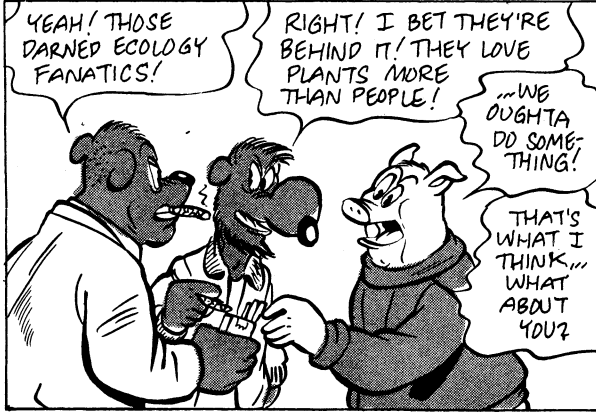
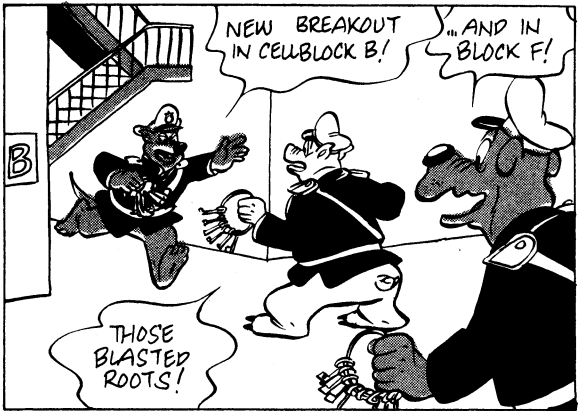
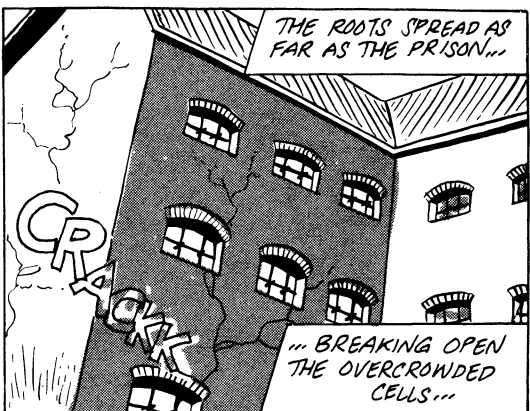
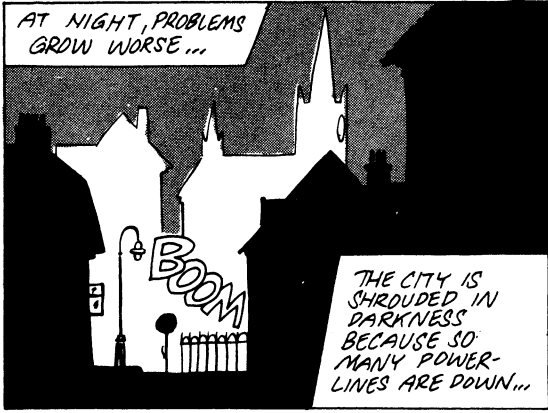
ROOTS AND BRANCHES POP UP EVERYWHERE...

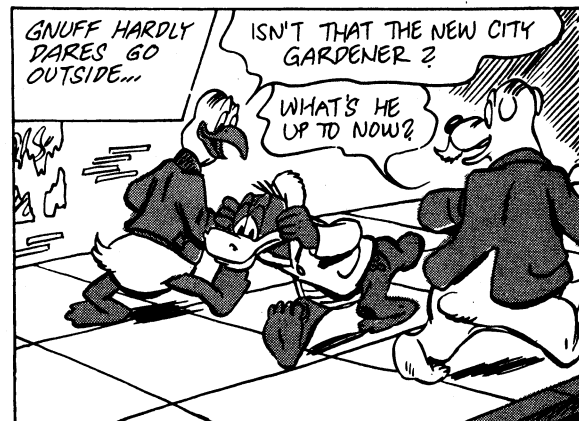
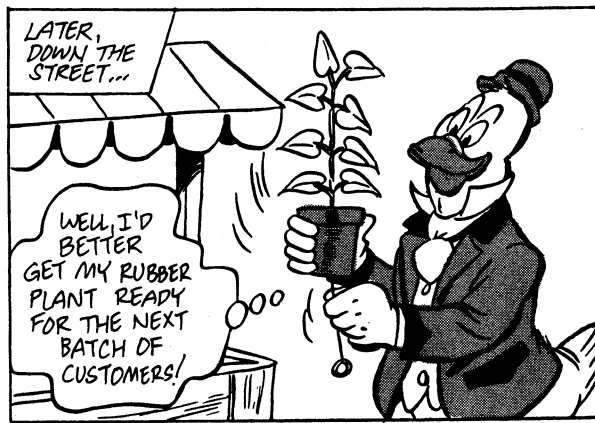
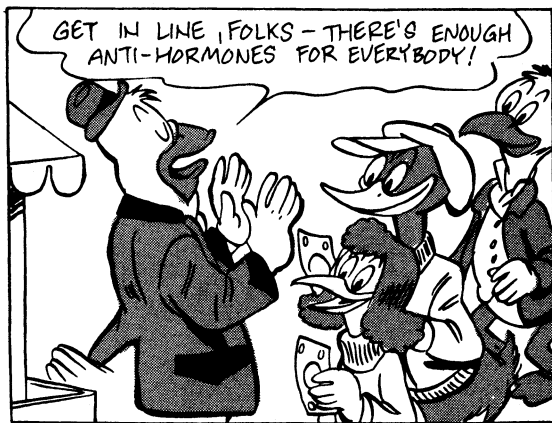
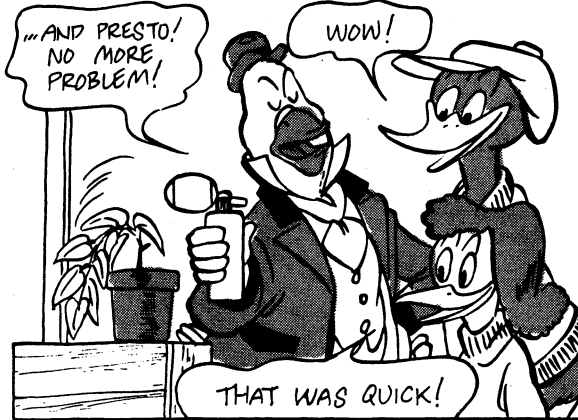
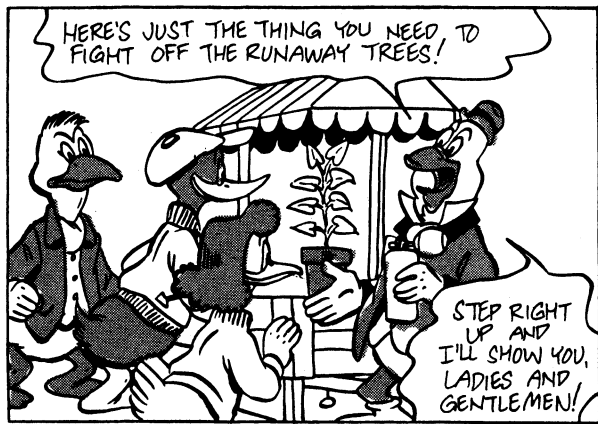
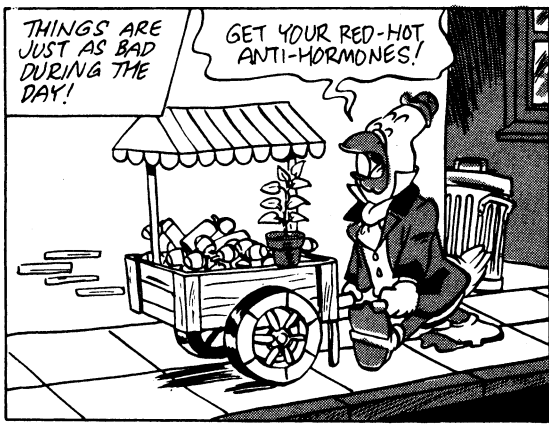


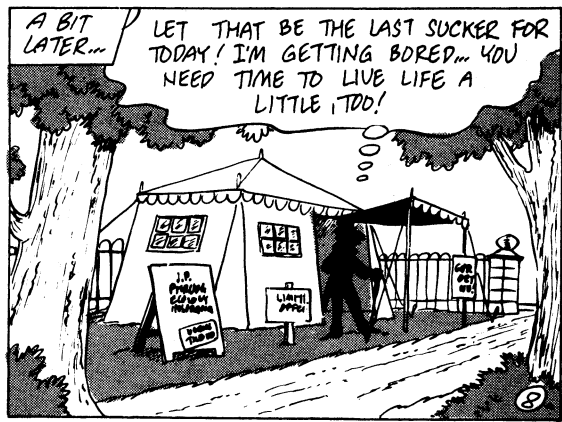
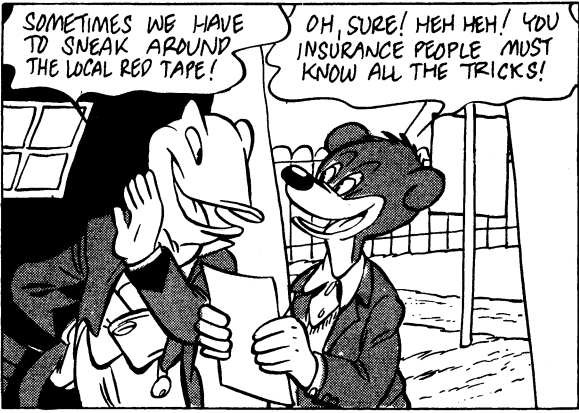
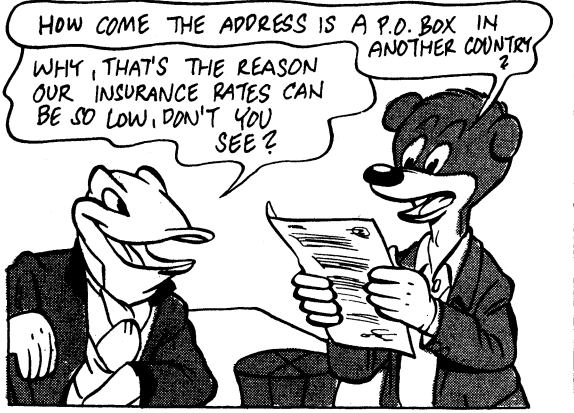
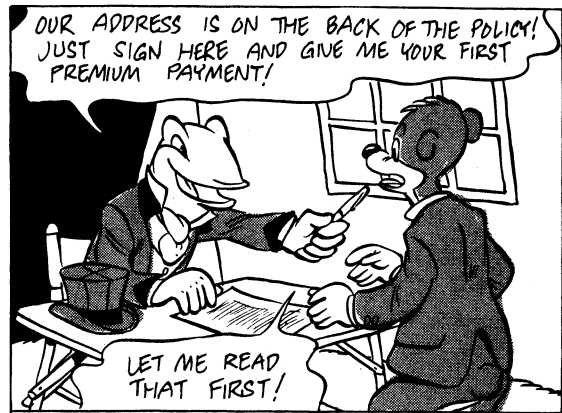
... AND THE TREES KEEP GROWING...

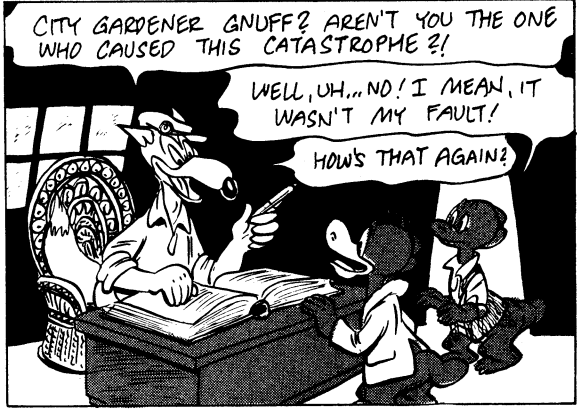
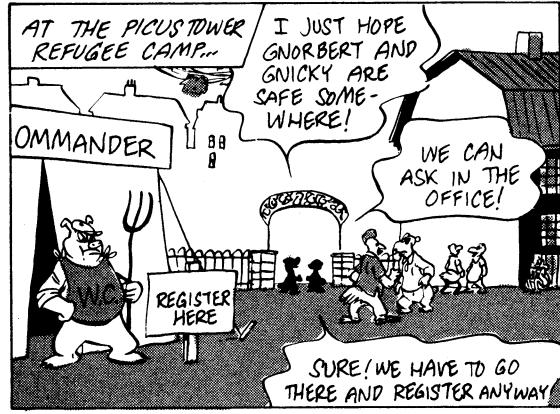
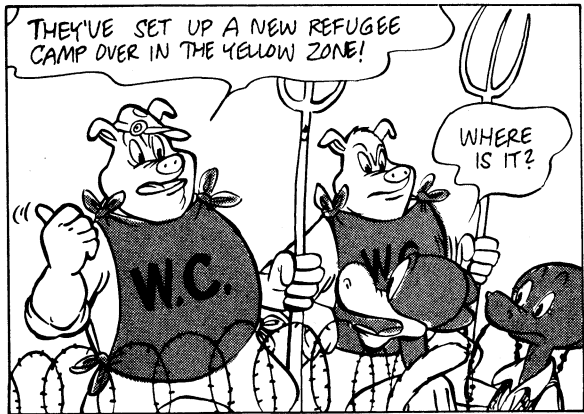
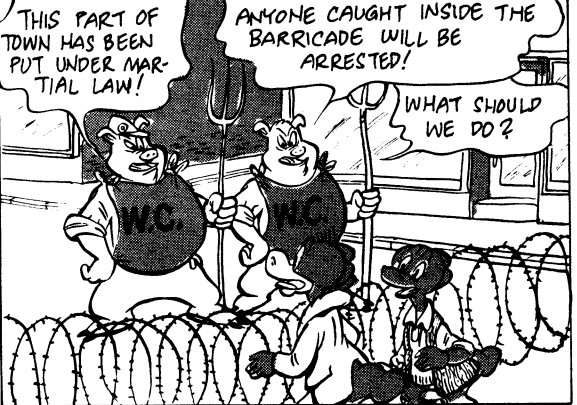


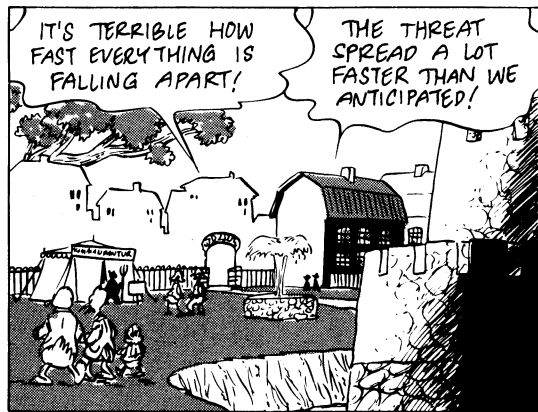
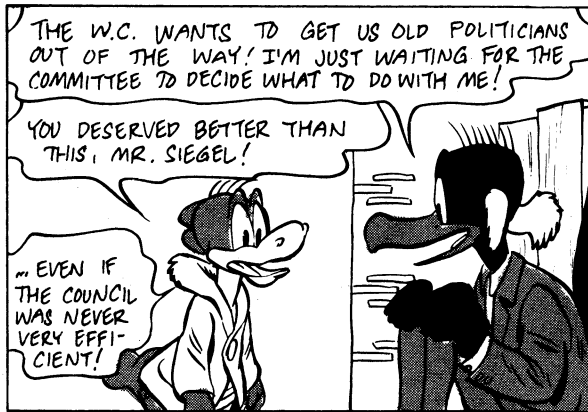
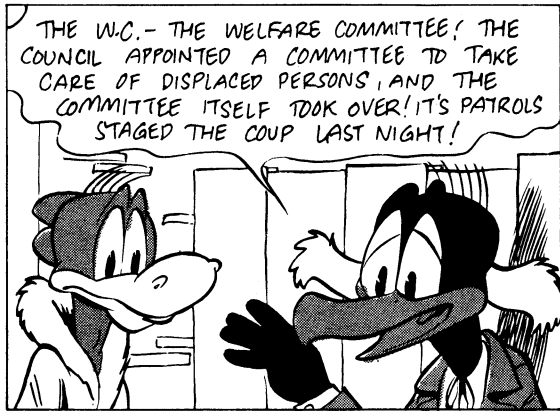
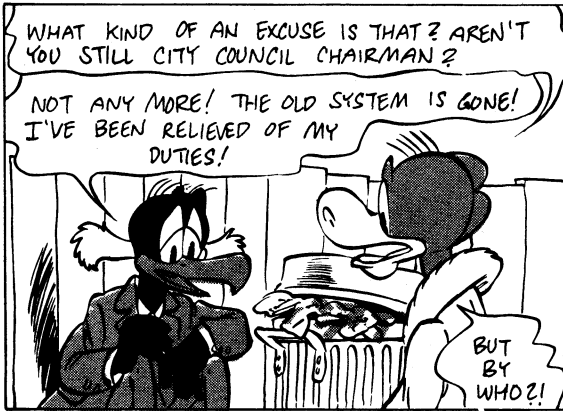
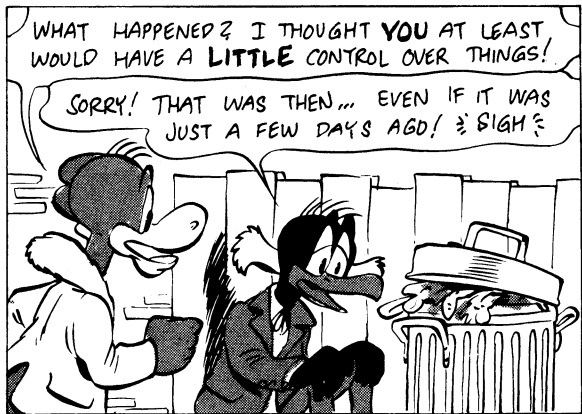


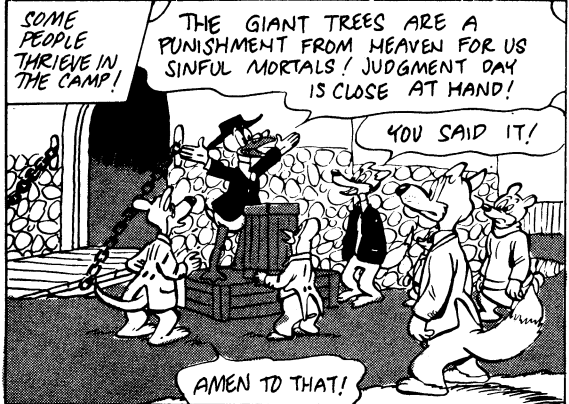












SOME PEOPLE THRIVE IN THE CAMP!

THE GIANT TREES ARE A PUNISHMENT FROM HEAVEN FOR US SINFUL MORTALS! JUDGMENT DAY IS CLOSE AT HAND!

YOU SAID IT!

AMEN TO THAT!



FOR TOO LONG WE HAVE WALLOWED IN OUR LUST AND CARNALITY! NOW WE MUST PAY THE PRICE FOR OUR LIVES OF SIN AND PLEASURE!

HALLELUJAH!

THANK HEAVEN!

GLORY BE!

AMEN!



BUT WAIT! THERE IS HOPE EVEN FOR THE MOST HARDENED SINNER! REPENTANCE CAN PURIFY A CORRUPT SOUL SO HE MAY BE WORTHY OF ETERNAL BLISS IN THE NEXT WORLD!

SNIFF! SNIFF!

THAT'S SO BEAUTIFUL...



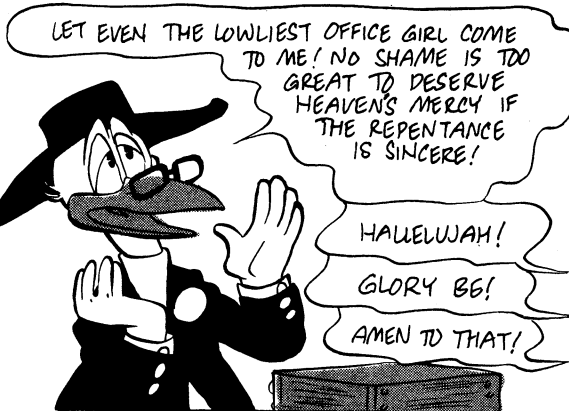
DESTINY HAS LAID UPON ME THE GREAT TASK OF HEARING YOUR CONFESSIONS AND PRAYING FOR YOUR SALVATION! SO, DEAR FRIENDS, PLEASE DON'T HESITATE TO CONFESS ALL!

I WANT TO CONFESS!



I'VE BEEN A BAD SINNER! I WORKED AS A SECRETARY FOR AN ENVIRONMENTALIST GROUP AND TYPED UP THEIR LONG MANIFESTOS! BUT NOW I'VE SEEN THE LIGHT! OH, I FEEL SO GOOD!

YES, MY CHILD!



LET EVEN THE LOWLIEST OFFICE GIRL COME TO ME! NO SHAME IS TOO GREAT TO DESERVE HEAVEN'S MERCY IF THE REPENTANCE IS SINCERE!

HALLELUJAH!

GLORY BE!

AMEN TO THAT!



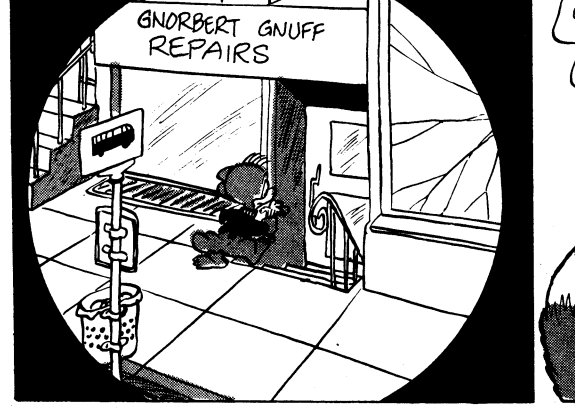
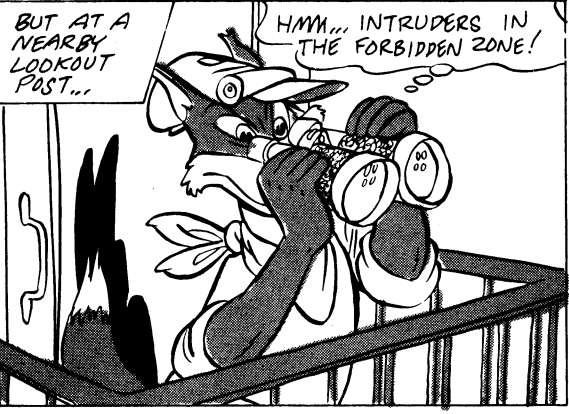
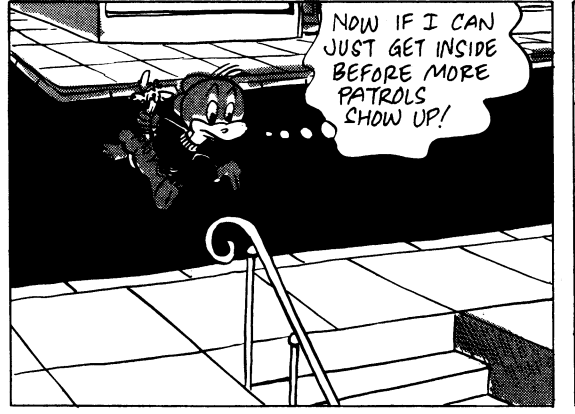
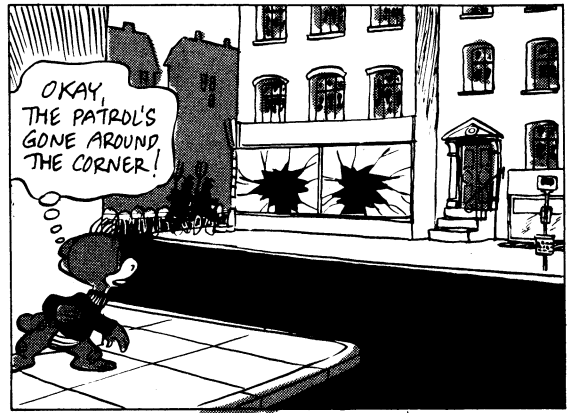
I'VE LOOKED THROUGH THE WHOLE CAMP BUT GNOBERT AND GNICKY AREN'T HERE!

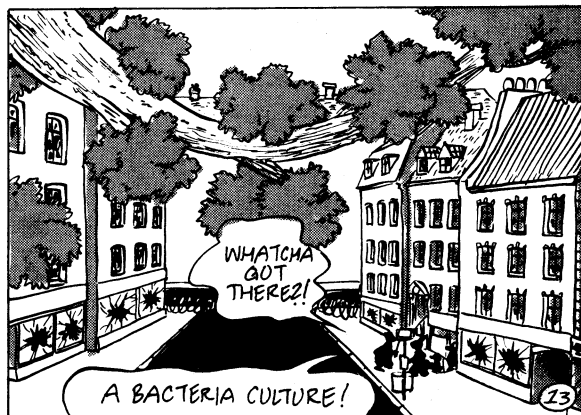
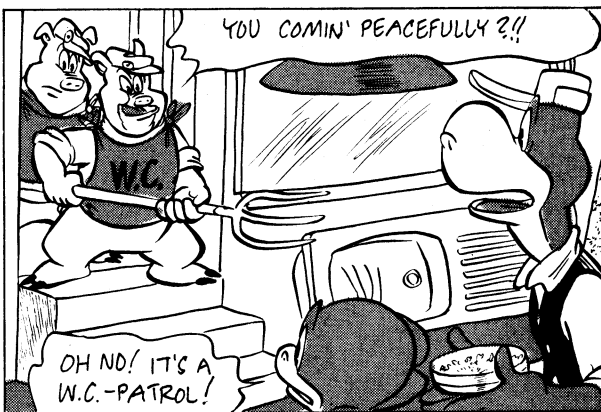
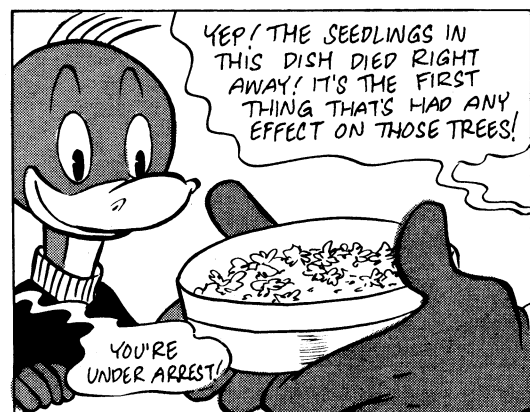
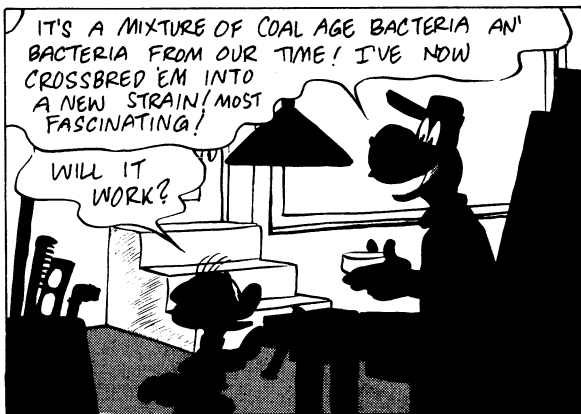
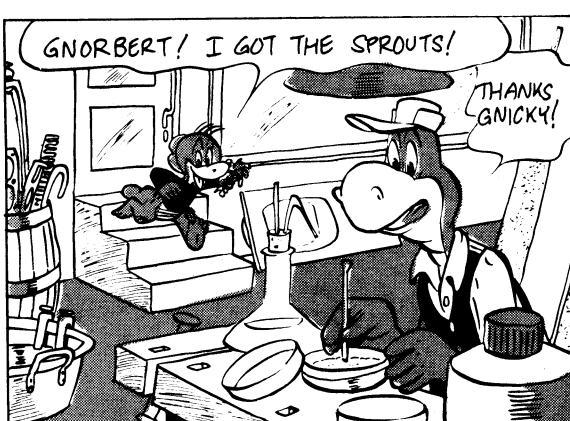
MAYBE THEY'RE IN SOME OTHER CAMP...

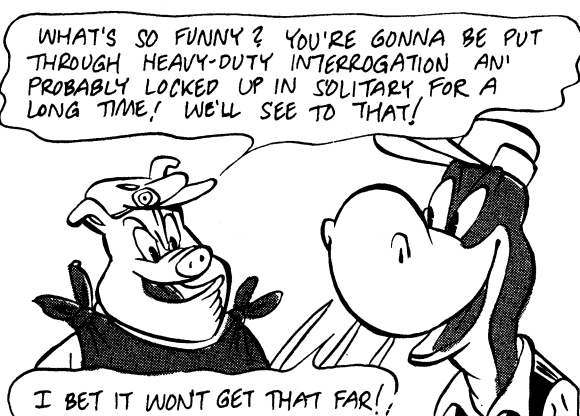
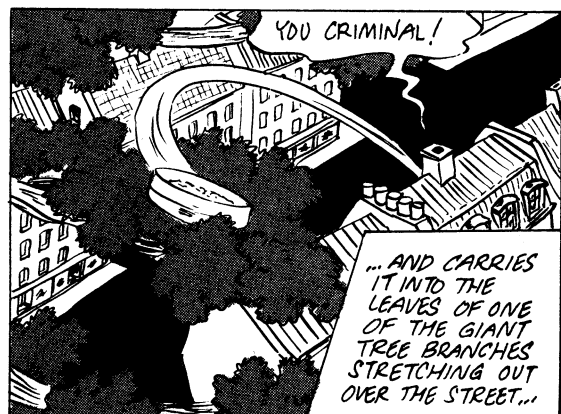
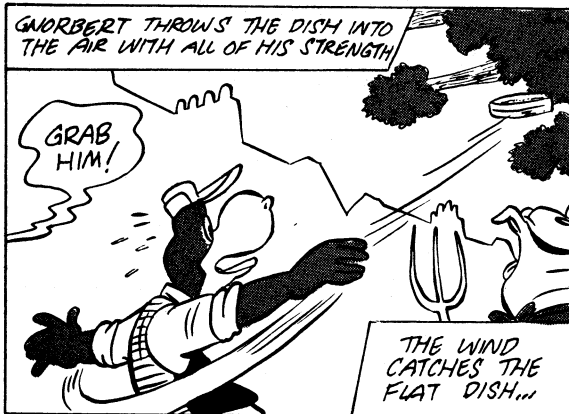
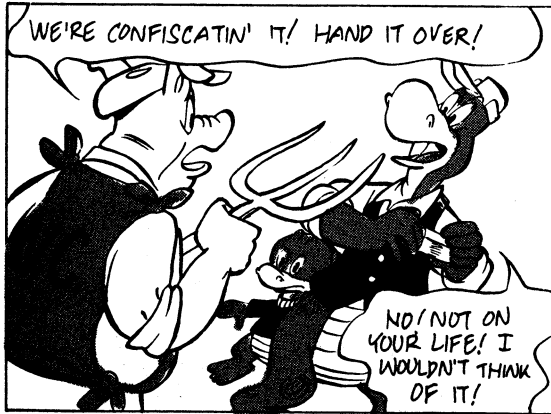


YES, BUT THE CAMP COMMANDER WOULD'VE KNOWN IF THEY WERE! OH, I'M SO WORRIED ABOUT THEM!

DON'T WORRY, GNELLIE- THEY WILL BE OKAY!



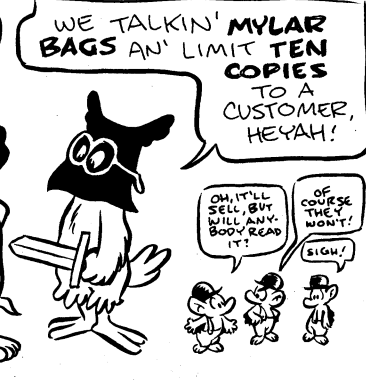
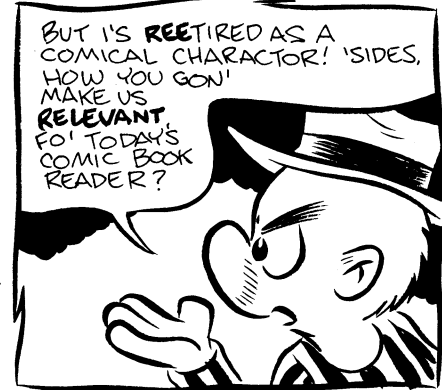




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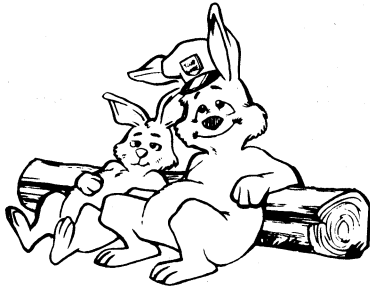
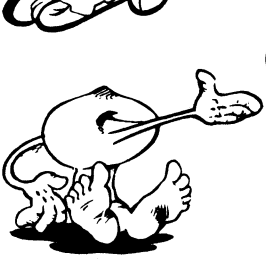
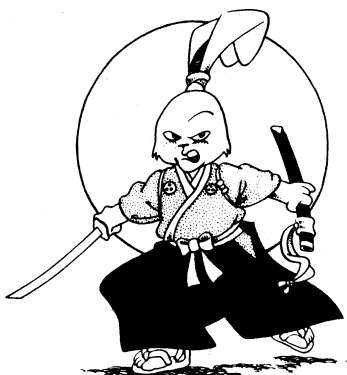
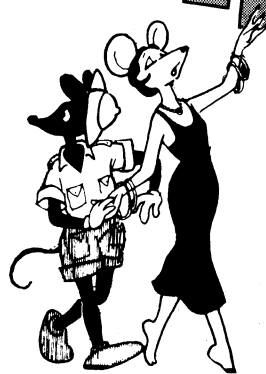


WALT KAZZY



Welcome to the Fantagraphics

MENAGERIE



ADVENTURES OF CAPT. JACK

Adventures of Captain Jack #3: Part 2 of "Sat. Night": Herman and Beezeleub visit the netherworld.

Adventures of Captain Jack #4: Maniacal astronauts and a batty back-up strip.

Adventures of Captain Jack #5: "Farmer Fred, I'm In Love With Your Daughter" Part 1: Arrival on Janet's planet. (This is the one that drove the distributors nuts around the country.)

Adventures of Captain Jack #6: Part 2: Herman and Janet decide to go away together.

Adventures of Captain Jack #7: Part 3: Beezeleub intrudes in Herman and Janet's relationship.

Adventures of Captain Jack #8: A daring escape, the Captain in drag, and more.

Adventures of Captain Jack #9: Pool hustling with Saturated Fats, and the conclusion of the storyline!

CRITTERS

Critters #4: *Gnuff* and *Birthingright* continue, *Lionheart* premieres, and the first Ken Macklin cover painting!

Critters #5: *Birthingright* continues, the first *Gnuff* novel concludes (with a cover), plus Stan Sakai's *Nilson Groundthumper*!

Critters #6: *Usagi Yojimbo* tale with cover, *Birthingright* concludes, and the first *Firecracker Jack* by Mark Armstrong!

Critters #8: *Jack Bunny* by cover artist Mark Armstrong, Templeton Kelly tribute, and *Lionheart* begins.

Critters #9: Hallowe'en issue with Gnuff behind a mask, *Lionheart's* nightmare, and *Dog Boy*.

Critters #10: *Usagi Yojimbo* cover and story, plus the continuations of *Gnuff* and *Lionheart*.

Critters #11: Special Christmas issue, featuring the conclusions of *Usagi Yojimbo*, *Gnuff*, and *Lionheart*, plus work by Mike Kazaleh, J. Holland and Ron Wilber, Mark Armstrong, Ty Templeton, Sam Kieth, Steve Lafler, and Ken Macklin. 68 pages!

Critters #12: *Birthright* returns, with a cover by Gallacci, plus Reed Waller and Kate Worley, and Sam Kieth!

Critters #13: *Gnuff* cover and 16-page chapter, plus *Birthright*, *Surfin' Neanderthals* by Mark Armstrong.

Critters #14: *Usagi Yojimbo* story and cover, plus *Birthright* and *Gnuff* continue.

Critters #15: *The Blue Beagle* and *Fission Chicken* both debut, and *Birthright* races on!

Critters #16: The conclusion to *Gnuff*, another *Nilson Groundthumper*, and *Birthright* reaches a climax.

Critters #17: *Lionheart* returns in a two-part Canadian adventure, plus the conclusion of *Birthright*.

Critters #18: *Leggo Lamb* by Jim Engel premieres. Also, the conclusion to *Lionheart*, and *Blue Beagle*.

Critters #19: *Gnuff* returns in a tale of nature gone wild, plus *Sam and Max*, *Freelance Police*, *Dragons*, and *Fission Chicken*.

Critters #20: *Speakingstone* by Waller and Worley returns, plus *Gnuff* and *Fission Chicken*.

Critters #21: *More Gnuff*, *Speakingstone*, *Fission Chicken*—32 pages worth—plus a Sam Kieth cover!

Critters Special #1—Nilson Groundthumper and Hermi: Both the *Albedo* stories, plus a new 10-page strip!

DOG BOY

Dog Boy #1: Journey off into surreal experiences with "Werewolf Bikers" and more!

Dog Boy #2: Sir Isaac Newton guest stars as reality unravels.

Dog Boy #3: *Dog Boy* shows how to publish your own comic book.

Dog Boy #4: *Dog Boy* goes to Hell, plus *Dog Girl* invades the White House. Guest starring Reagan!

Dog Boy #5: An experiment misfires, and *Dog Boy* and *Benb* combine to form... *Dog!* Oh no!

Dog Boy #6: "Drinkin' Man's Blues," with a striking painted cover.

Dog Boy #7: He be Doog Boog. Jazzy issue exploring *Dog Boy's* multiple personalities!

Dog Boy #8: Alfred Knoot starts a new newspaper, *Dog Girl* goes graffiti-crazy, and more!

HUGO

Hugo #1: Milton (*Midnite*) Knight's feline "Meets the Baron."

Hugo #2: *Hugo* becomes a cartoonist and gets into deep trouble.

Hugo #3: *Hugo* is abducted by mermaids and fights sharks.

MYRON MOOSE

Myron Moose Funnies #1: Lots of goofy snot jokes, plus parodies of Dr. Seuss and Uncle Wiggly books.

Myron Moose Funnies #2: Parodies of *Batman*, *Mickey Mouse*, *The Spirit*, and lots more.

Myron Moose Funnies #3: "Comic Book Fans," and more silly snot.

USAGI YOJIMBO

Usagi Yojimbo #1 (2nd printing): *Usagi* journeys tells how he became a samurai. Plus: Dennis Fujitake!

Usagi Yojimbo #2: *Usagi* goes into training and has his first duel. Plus: A new strip by Dave Thorne.

Usagi Yojimbo #3: The continuation of "Samurai," and a "Croakers" strip by Don Dougherty.

Usagi Yojimbo #4: The conclusion to *Usagi's* origin, and the first half of a penguin strip by Gary Kato.

Usagi Yojimbo #5: A one-issue tale of silk, treachery, and greed, and the end of the penguin tale by Kato.

Usagi Yojimbo #6: *Usagi* battles a water elemental, plus "Digger Duckbill" by Shaw and Evanier.

BOOKS, MAGAZINES, AND OTHER STUFF

Usagi Yojimbo Book One: Every *Usagi Yojimbo* story before *Usagi #1* collected in one handy 160-page volume, with a new Stan Sakai cover.

Amazing Heroes #9: Behind the scenes of DC's *Captain Carrot* comic with Scott Shaw! and Roy Thomas.

Amazing Heroes #42: Funny-animal issue with Joshua Quagmire cover and interview. Plus: Arn Saba on *Neil the Horse* and Dave Sim on *Cerebus*!

Amazing Heroes #111: Ty Templeton (*Critters*) interviewed. It's funny.

Amazing Heroes #129: Interviews with Steven A. Gallacci and Freddy Milton, "Why I Draw Funny Animals" by various, plus more!

The Comics Journal #73: Carl Barks featured, with long retrospective.

The Comics Journal #82-83: Mammoth interview with Dave (*Cerebus the Aardvark*) Sim.

The Comics Journal #99: Long interview with Arn (*Neil the Horse*) Saba.

Anything Goes! #3: Featuring a full-color *Captain Jack* story by Mike Kazaleh, *Cerebus* vignette by Dave Sim, and *Cerebus* cover by Neal Adams.

Anything Goes! #6: Cover painting by Stan Sakai of *Usagi Yojimbo*, worth the cover price.

NEMO #21: 28 pages of Jack Kent's classic *King Aroo* strip—a treat for classic funny-animal lovers!

PLEASE SEND ME THE FOLLOWING BACK ISSUES.

All are \$2.25 apiece unless otherwise indicated.

Capt. Jack: ☐ #3 ☐ #4 ☐ #5 ☐ #6 ☐ #7 ☐ #8 ☐ #9

☐ 6-issue subscription to *Captain Jack*: \$9.00

Critters: ☐ #4 ☐ #5 ☐ #6 ☐ #8 ☐ #9 ☐ #10 ☐ #11 (\$3.75)

☐ #12 ☐ #13 ☐ #14 ☐ #15 ☐ #16 ☐ #17 ☐ #18

☐ #19 ☐ #20 ☐ #21

☐ 12-issue subscription to *Critters*: \$17.00

Critters Special: ☐ #1 **Hugo:** ☐ #1 ☐ #2 ☐ #3

Dog Boy (\$2.00): ☐ #1 ☐ #2 ☐ #3 ☐ #4 ☐ #5 ☐ #6 ☐ #7 ☐ #8

☐ 6-issue subscription to *Dog Boy*: \$8.00

Myron Moose (\$2.00): ☐ #1 ☐ #2 ☐ #3

Usagi Yojimbo: ☐ #1 ☐ #2 ☐ #3 ☐ #4 ☐ #5 ☐ #6

☐ **Book One:** \$10.00

☐ 6-issue subscription to *Usagi Yojimbo*: \$9.00

Amazing Heroes (\$3.00): ☐ #9 ☐ #42 ☐ #111 ☐ #129

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The Comics Journal (\$3.50): ☐ #73 ☐ #82 ☐ #83 ☐ #99

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Anything Goes: ☐ #3 ☐ #6 **NEMO (\$4.00):** ☐ #21

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