



Labor Day, 1977 Denver, CO

QUACK has been a bit of an anomaly to me from the very beginning. The intention at first was to take the "funny animal" concepts we were all exposed to in our childhood and use them in entertaining and perhaps enlightening grown-up stories. This is an admirable goal and one to which I still aspire, but I've been less than pleased with the over-all progress in this direction.

A major part of the difficulty lies in my own near-nil background in this genre. Unlike our flagship STAR\*REACH title, which gained a clear editorial path fairly quickly (at least in my own head), I hadn't really any idea how to get from the starting point to where I wanted to go. So I have been unable, even till the present, to establish clear editorial guidelines to the contributors. Thus I've been accepting incredibly diverse approaches to stories in hopes that (much like STAR\* REACH) an identity would begin to establish itself on its own.

Only I don't think this identity has occurred. While every story printed here has had its strengths and uniqueness — and I don't regret publishing any of them — each succeeding book, taken as a whole, still has not seemed to hold together as a unit. As a reader, one tends to get pulled in too many directions to fully enjoy an issue as much as one could if there were more unity of purpose.

So why am I writing all this? First, to explain what's happening here and in our next issue coming up. And second, to ask for some advice.

To work backwards, what seems to be the best approach now is to cut back on the number of contributors and concentrate on the two or three that work together the most successfully. What I'd like to hear from you is if you think this is a good idea and if you do, which strips would you prefer to see more — and why.

As for what's happening here and in QUACK No. 6, in order to also help find out what you want, I'm giving you different cover features than one might first expect in hopes of getting a sales gauge on the popularity of a couple of so-called "back-up" strips. This issue, as you can already see, the spotlight is on "The Wraith" (in more ways than one). Creator Mike Gilbert has developed his story-telling ability tremendously from his early work in this magazine and although "unknown" beyond QUACK, I think what he does is solid enough to justify the cover exposure. Next issue, Ted Richards' "E. Z. Wolf" (or actually, a spin-off, using his mad scientist "Quack" character from issue No. 3) will be our lead feature. Ted is easily the most knowledgeable of all the QUACK contributors regarding funny-animals and he

is continuing to educate me a lot in this area. His "E. Z. Wolf" strip has appeared widely in the Rip-Off Press newspaper syndicate and its own comics (from both Rip-Off Press and Last Gasp). I'm hopeful he'll be as well-received here as he has been elsewhere.

Any distinct changes will be in issue number Seven. If you respond quickly to my request for your opinions, I'll be able to announce any changes next issue. Till then . . .

Mike Friedrick





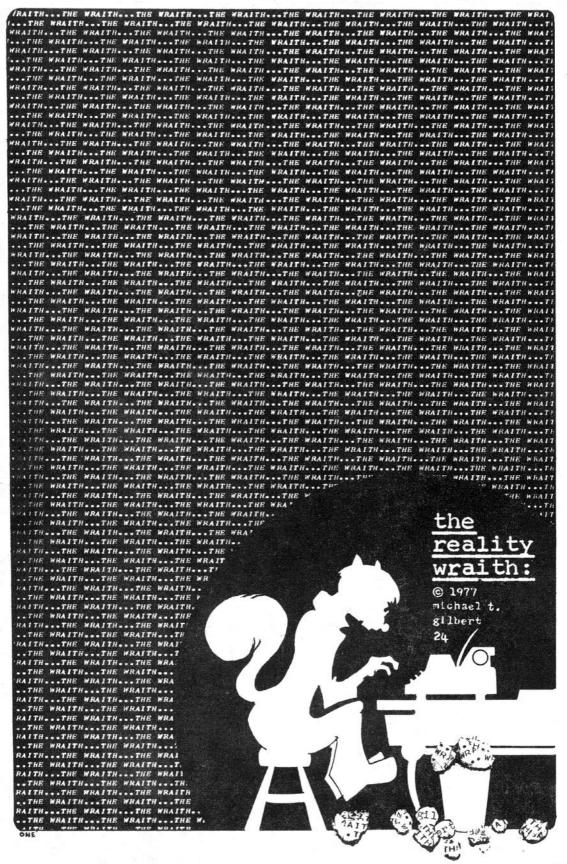
QUACK (No. 5) is published quarterly by Star\*Reach Productions, P.O. Box 385, Hayward, CA 94543; Mike Friedrich, editor and publisher. @1977 Star\*Reach Productions. World Rights Reserved. Front cover art and the story "The Wraith: The Reality Ray" @1977 Michael T. Gilbert. Back cover art and the story "Planet of the Ducks" @1977 Ken Macklin. "The Beavers" @1977 Dave Sim. "The Rabbit Wonder" @1977 Steve Leialoha. "A Bird In The Hand" @1977 Gene Day. "Oregon Bobcat" @1977 Dot Bucher. Address all inquiries c/o Star\*Reach Productions.

Contributions are not encouraged, though eventually read; warning: no return postage and it'll be trashed. FIRST PRINTING: September, 1977.

ADDITIONAL COPIES: \$1.25 plus 35¢ postage (mailed flat, 1st Class) and handling. No subscriptions, sorry.

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ANY SIMILARITY TO REAL PERSONS (or real animals), LIVING OR DEAD, EXCEPT FOR PURPOSES OF SATIRE, IS COINCIDENTAL.



MANY PEOPLE LIVE LIVES OF QUIET DESPERATION. THE WRITER IS ONE SUCH ANIMAL.

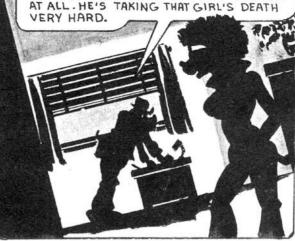
NOS DO MOS DN IST ESS!



I...I'M SORRY
IVORY - DIDN'T
MEAN TO SNAP AT
YOU. BUT I'VE...
BEEN WORRIED
ABOUT THE WRATH
VERY WORRIED.



HUH? - EVER SINCE HE CAME BACK FROM
THAT TRIP TO SILVER ISLAND, HE...
HE'S NOT THE SAME. JUST SITS
AROUND AND MOPES. THREE MONTHS THIS
HAS BEEN GOING ON. IT'S NOT LIKE HIM
AT ALL. HE'S TAKING THAT GIRL'S DEATH
VERY HARD.



AL, UNK-YOU WORRY TOO MUCH: THE WRAITH'S TOUGH. HE CAN HACK THINGS O.K.







CRAZY LOOKIN'
THINGS! NO TWO
ALIKE. EVERYBODY'S
SEEIN' 'EM. I'D CHALK IT UP TO CRACKPOTS - BUT MAYOR CYANIDE SAYS SHE'S SEEN 'EM TOO. CAN'T SWEEP THIS ONE UNDER THE . TOO.



ANYBODY HURT?

NAW. THEY'RE HARMLESS. BUT A LOTTA PEOPLE ARE GETTING SPOOKED. NOBODY KNOWS ANYTHING 'BOUT EM. SO NATURALLY IT GETS DUMPED ON MY LAP!



BUT THAT'S

NO EXCUSE

YELLING AT

YOU. FORGIVE

F'R ME

I'M GONNA STOP BY AND SAY "HI" TO THE WRAITH. AIN'T SEEN HIM IN AGES ANY MESSAGES?



THIS LETTER. CAME IN T'DAY. ALWAYS US ZIP CODE C/O W. MULCHBERRY ANTIDE OITY POLICE

JUST GIVE 'IM



AND 50.

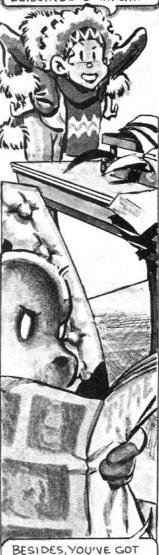








FUCK YOU! SINCE NEVER, SMART-ASS!
AS FAR AS I'M CONCERNED THOSE CHEAP DETECTIVE PULPS OF YOURS ARE PRETTY ASININE. BUT THEY DO PAY YOUR RENT. AND BOOKS - NO BUCKS!
AND EVEN MANIC-DEPRESSIVE DETECTIVE'S GOTTA EAT.



BESIDES, YOU'VE GOT A RESPONSIBILITY TO YOUR FANS. A LOT OF PEOPLE LIKE THAT GUNK YOU WRITE!



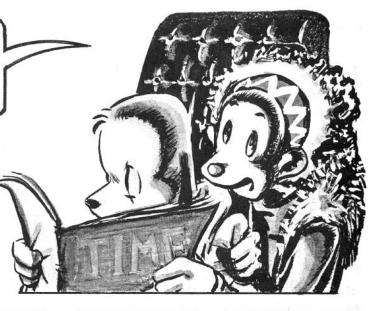
LOOK AT THIS! YOU
HAVEN'T EVEN CHECKED
OUT THE GALLEYPROOFS ON YOUR
GOTHIC ROMANCE BOOKS.
YOUR EDITOR MUST
BE HAVING A REAL
SHIT-FIT!



EVER HEAR OF ALCATRAZ JR. HIGH?
ALL TH' HARDASSES WENT TO OLD
ALCATRAZ - TH' ARMPIT OF TH'
EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM. TEACHERS
WERE ALWAYS GETTIN' SLICED
UP IN THAT PLACE. I STARTED
GOIN' THERE WHEN I WAS TEN—
SKIPPED A COUPLE OF GRAPES, YKNOW?

ME BEIN' YOUNGER THAN THE OTHER KIDS — THAT ADDED TO TH' FACT THAT I WAS JUST ABOUT TH' ONLY WHITE GIRL IN TH' PLACE — MADE MY SCHOOL LIFE PRETTY ROUGH. I WAS ALWAYS GETTIN' HASSLED. FOUGHT MY WAY T'CLASS EVERY DAY.

I DIDN'T TAKE ANY CRAP,
THOUGH! \_ AND AFTER TRADING
A FEW BLOODY NOSES AN'
KNOCKING OUT A FEW TEETH. I
I MADE SOME FRIENDS, Y'KNOW?



MY HOMELIFE WAS SHITSVILLE TOO-BUT T WON'T GET INTO THAT NOW.



TH' WHOLE SCENE WAS TH' PITS - REAL BAD NEWS, Y'KNOW? NOTHIN' SEEMED TO MATTER MUCH. ME AND TH' GUYS'D GO TO TH' HILLS BEHIND TH' SCHOOL, MAKE OUT AND BLOW SOME WEED. SOON I WAS DOIN' LUDES, ACID, P.C.P. ANYTHING I COULD SNORT, STICK OR SWOLLOW.

IT WAS LIKE - REAL NEAT FOR A WHILE.
TWO YEARS OF COMIN TO CLASS STONED ALL TH'
TIME. BUT LIKE, I STARTED LOOKIN' AT TH' OTHER DUDES ONE DAY - AND, LIKE WOW! THEY WERE ALL IN JAIL OR O.D.ING OR LAYIN' IN TH' MORGUE, BLEW ME AWAY!!!



TH WHOLE SCENE WAS REAL-Y'KNOW-FUCKED UP. I MEAN, HERE I WAS-FUCKED UP. TWELVE YEARS OLD F'R CHRISSAKES -ALREADY BURNT OUT. SURE I HAD THINGS TOUGH - BUT JESUS! I LET THOSE THINGS BEAT ME DOWN. T'HELL WITH THAT! TOO MUCH T'DO AND SEE IN THIS WORLD TO GIVE UP WITHOUT A FIGHT. SO I WENT COLD TURKEY. IT WAS HELL CLEANIN' UP MY ACT- BUT I DID IT MAN-CUZ I HAD TO!

AND NOW YOU GET HIGH ON LIFE-RIGHT?

ALRIGHT - SO I'M
LECTURING . SUE
ME! BUT LOOK, WARITH
YOU ... DO SO MUCH
GOOD. A LOT OF
PEOPLE LOOK UP TO
YOU, MAN. THEY
NEED SOMEONE LIKE
YOU. Y'CANT JUST
LET THEM DOWN,



YOU'RE A ... A SYMBOL: SURE IT'S EASY T'GIVE UP. BUT T DIDN'T. AND YOU'RE TOO TOUGH TO...

YEAH!YEAH! YOU GOT A LETTER FOR ME?

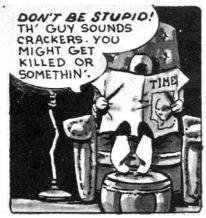
AREN'T YOU LISTENING TO ANYTHING I ... YES I DO GODDAMMIT!

READER'S DIGEST VERSION

IT'S PROBABLY NOTMEY! LISSEN TO
THIS! IT'S FROM
SOME PROFESSORSAYS HE HAS INFO
ON THE CREATURESYOU KNOW - THE
ONES THAT'VE BEEN
DRIVING MULCHY BATTY!
IT'S EVEN GOT HIS
ADDRESS. WOW!
WOTTA BREAK, HUH?

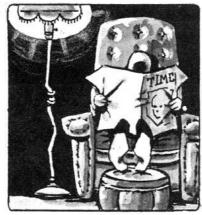


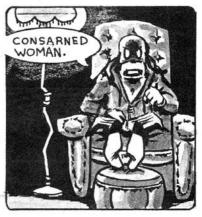


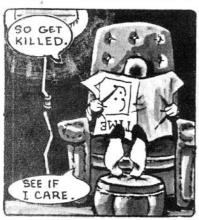


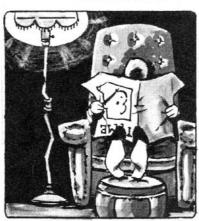


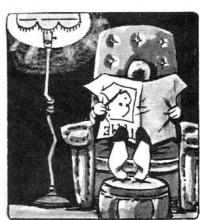


















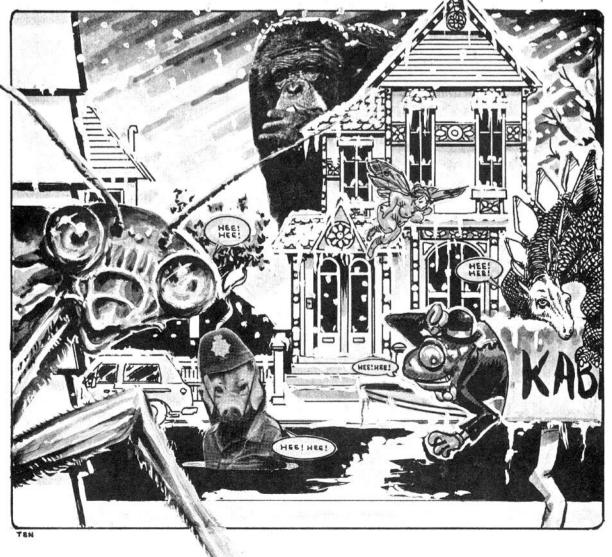


LOOK, MULCHBERRY - I'M GONNA SNEAK INSIDE AND SEARCH FOR IVORY. IF YOU DON'T HEAR FROM ME IN FIFTEEN MINUTES NOTIFY YOUR COP BUDDIES ...







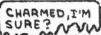












OH, MY. YOU MUST BE THE WRATH, DEAR FELLOW.

THE WRAITH, KABBIBLE WRAITH. GOT IT?

ENOUGH WITH TH' CHIT-CHAT, DOC. PUT THAT FANCY FLASH-LIGHT DOWN AND COME UP WITH A FEW ANSWERS.

YOU SENT ME A LETTER —
SOMETHING ABOUT STRANGE
CREATURES. MY ASSOCIATE
IVORY SNOW,

CAME HERE TO

THAT DEAR LITTLE DARK EYED GIRL?

YOU GOT IT, GRAMPS! NOW WHERE IS ...

ELEVEN













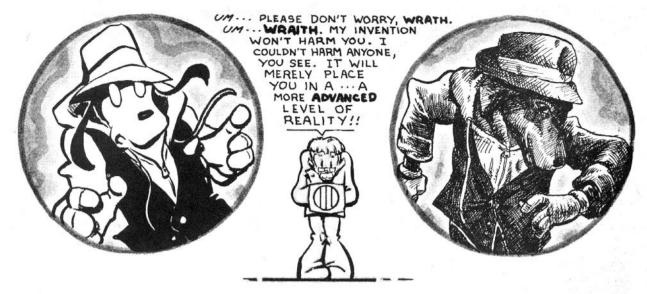








HAVE A DOSE OF REALITY WRAITH!



PERMIT ME TO EXPLAIN, SIR. YES,
REALITY - AS WE KNOW IT - IS
AN ARTIFICIAL CONSTRUCT.
SCIENTISTS AND PHILOSOPHERS
HAVE FORMULATED CERTAIN
LAWS THAT ATTEMPT TO
DEFINE "REALITY".



ALL MISCONCEPTIONS, OF COURSE!

OF COURSE. AND I - I HAVE
INVESTED FIFTY YEARS OF
MY LIFE TO REALIGNING
THOSE MISCONCEPTIONS.
OH MY, YSS: A MOST
FASCINATING PROBLEM!





SIZE, FHAVE, TANGIBILITY - ALL-ALL
THOSE STRAIGHT-JACKETS OF
PERCEPTION - HAVE BEEN
RENDERED MEANINGLESS
BY MY REALITY RAY.
YOU DO UNDERSTAND
NOW - DON'T YOU,
WRATH? HMMM?







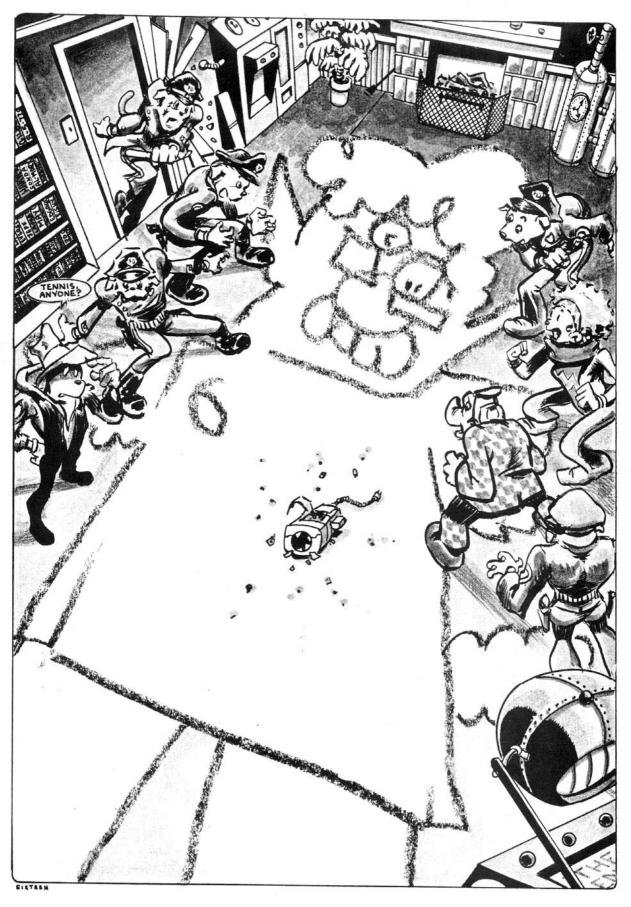


AND ..

IVORY:

HE PROFESSOR!









"AT LAST, LONG LOVE !!"

AHH, SPRING! THE SEASON OF REBIRTH! SYMBOLIC FREEDOM! WHEN YOUNG THINGS PUSH THROUGH THE EARTH TO GREET THE WARM SUNSHINE! Sigh!







KNOW THAT, FOR A BOBCAT --



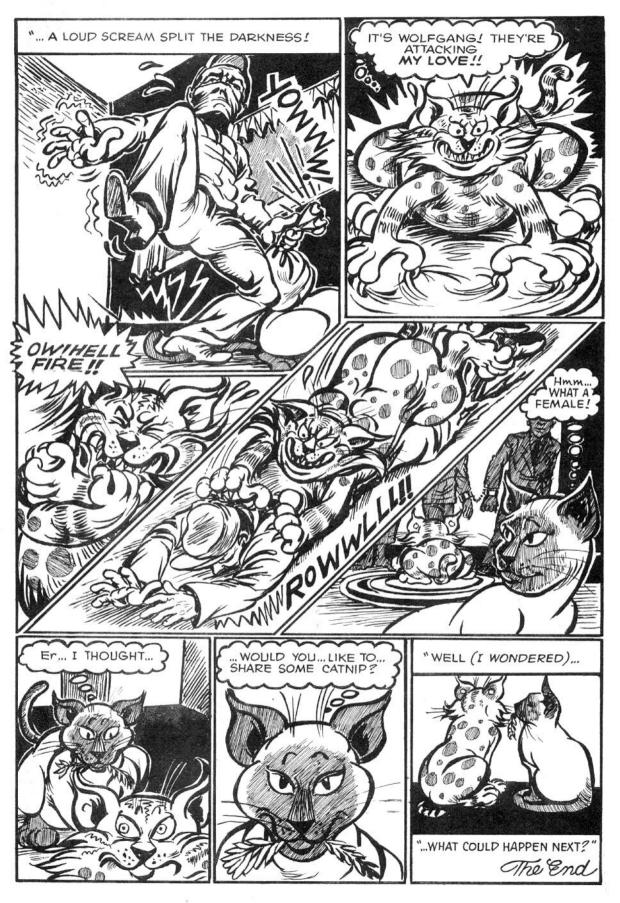
"-- LOVE KNOWS NO SEASON!







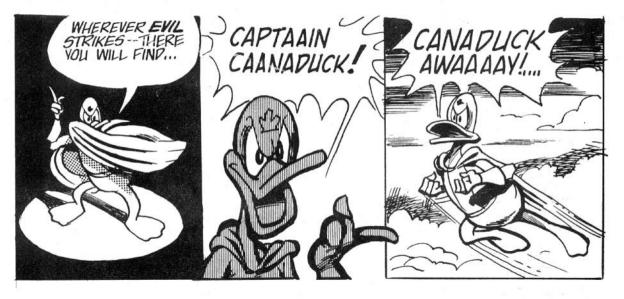








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WOLKING DOWN TO WORK, HE'S HIT WITH COSMIC RAYS WHICH TURN HIM INTO ...



























CANUCK COMICS GROUP. THE VICTIM 30¢ 71 FEB A HERO FOR OUR TIME! LEAVE ME ALONE ... ... PLEASE? SUPER-HERO? I'D HATE TO SEE A TRULY CANADIAN BARBARIAN! THAT ... THAT WOULD BE A TRULY CANADIAN

SUPER-HERO!







FINALLY, TEN SHEETS OF CORRASABLE BOND AND MANY @!X&!+'S LATER...







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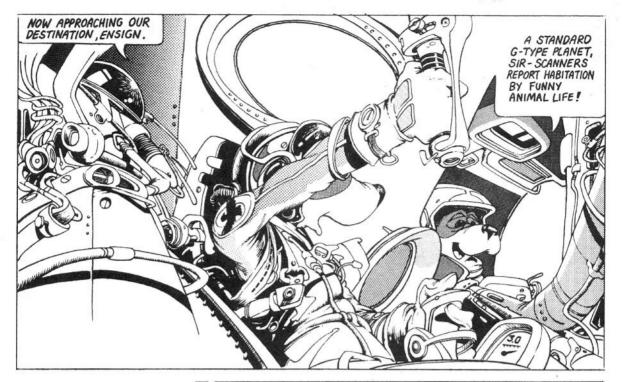












YES, A NORMAL WORLD TO OUTWARD APPEARANCES—YET COULD IT HOLD A CLUE TO THE SINISTER DEMISE OF HEALTHY CULTURES? WHAT WAS IT THAT STUNTED THE GROWTH OF INTELLIGENT CIVILIZATION ON DENEB AND VEGA 12? AND WHY WAS IT THAT NO STARFLEET INVESTIGATOR HAD RETURNED WITH AN INTELLIGENT ANSWER?



TO TACKLE THIS MYSTERY, STARFLEET REQUIRED THE TALENTS OF THE MOST CLEVER, COURAGEOUS CADET IN THE FLEET! UNFORTUNATELY, ALL THEY HAD WAS — KERWIN KEYSTONE OF EARTH! HALF AARDVARK, HALF PLATYPUS, WITH A KEEN MIND AND A LUST FOR ADVENTURE!





OKAY-READY FOR DEMATERIALIZATION!

















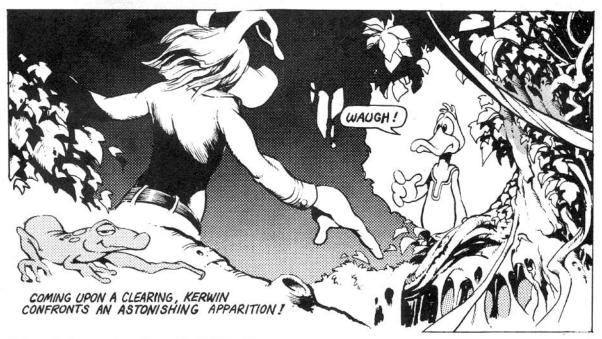


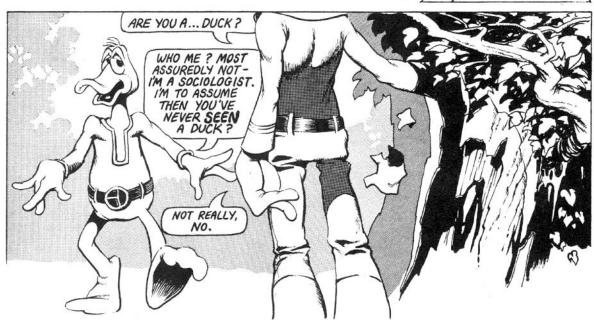


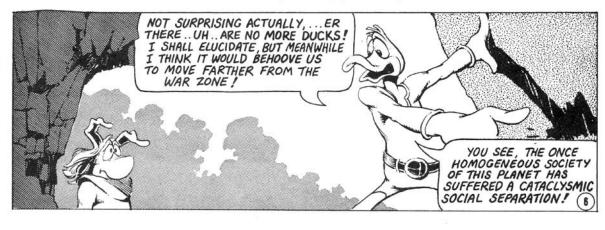














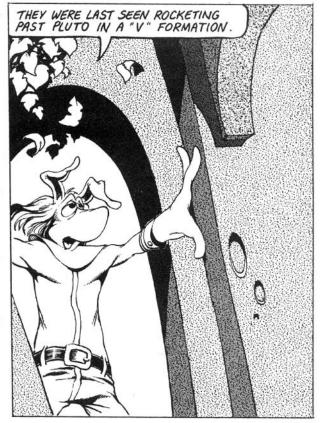


GEE, THAT'S AMAZING! ACCORDING TO THE OLD TEXTS EARTH WENT THROUGH A SIMILAR DUCK DILEMMA!











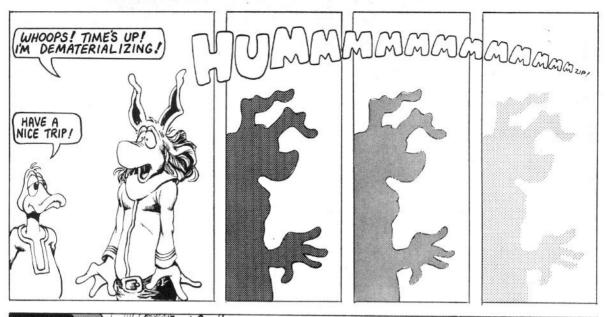






ALAS, DRIVEN TO EXTINCTION!
IN TIME, THE REMAINING
BARBARIANS MAY REGAIN
THEIR SENSE OF BALANCE!











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WHO IS THIS FEATHERED FOWL
IN FLIGHT? WHAT TERROR
HAUNTS HIM?



WHY DOES HE RUN SCREAM-ING THROUGH DISMAL DARK ALLEYS?



*WHAT DEMONS FOLLOW* FAST HIS **WEBBED** HEELS?























# IMAGINE IF YOU WERE GOING TO START A COMICS COMPANY FROM SCRATCH... WHAT WOULD YOU DO?



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IS DOING ALL THIS NOW!

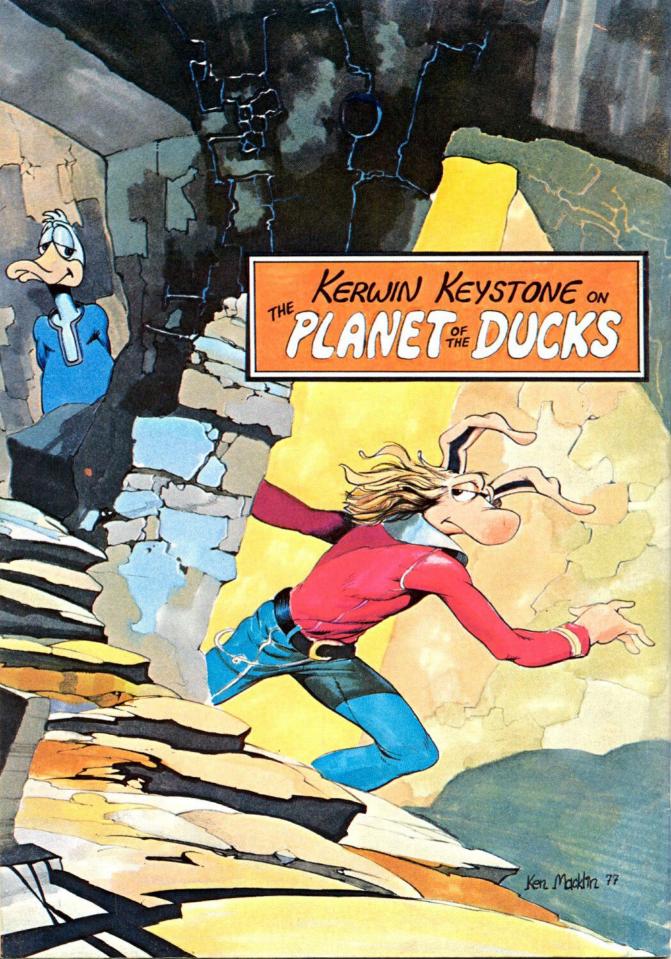
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# Sir Real's

# UNDERGROUND COMIX CLASSIX

## Quack #5

**Published September 1977** 1st edition

Star\*Reach Productions

\$1.25 52 pages

Printrun of 15,000 copies

7" x 10"

ISBN:

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### Comments: