

TALES FROM THE ANIVERSE



MS. CHEVIOUS

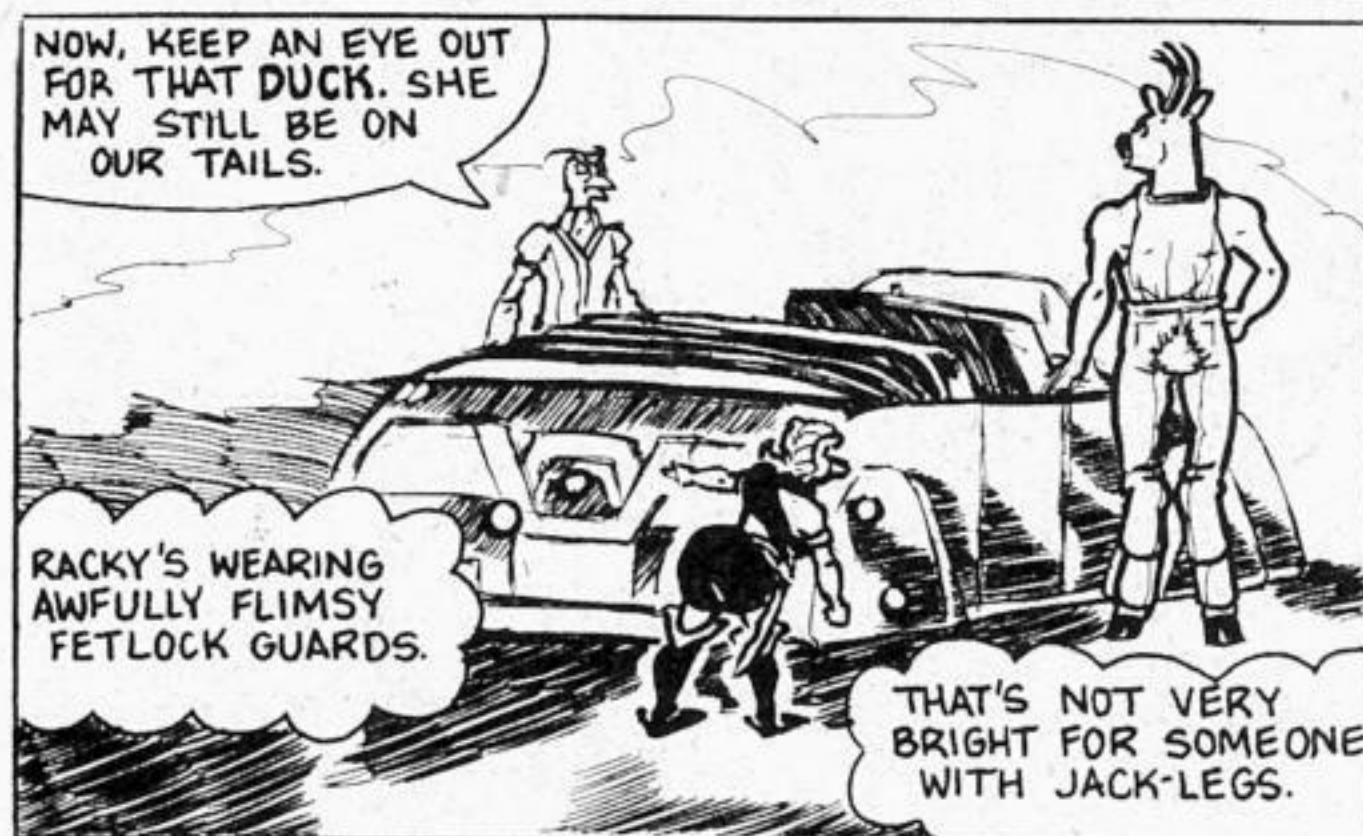


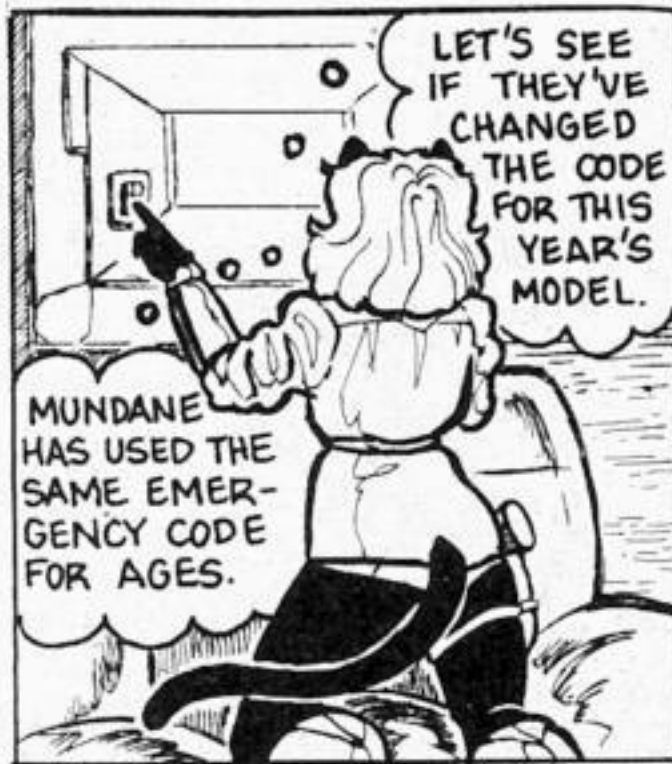
RETRO RAM

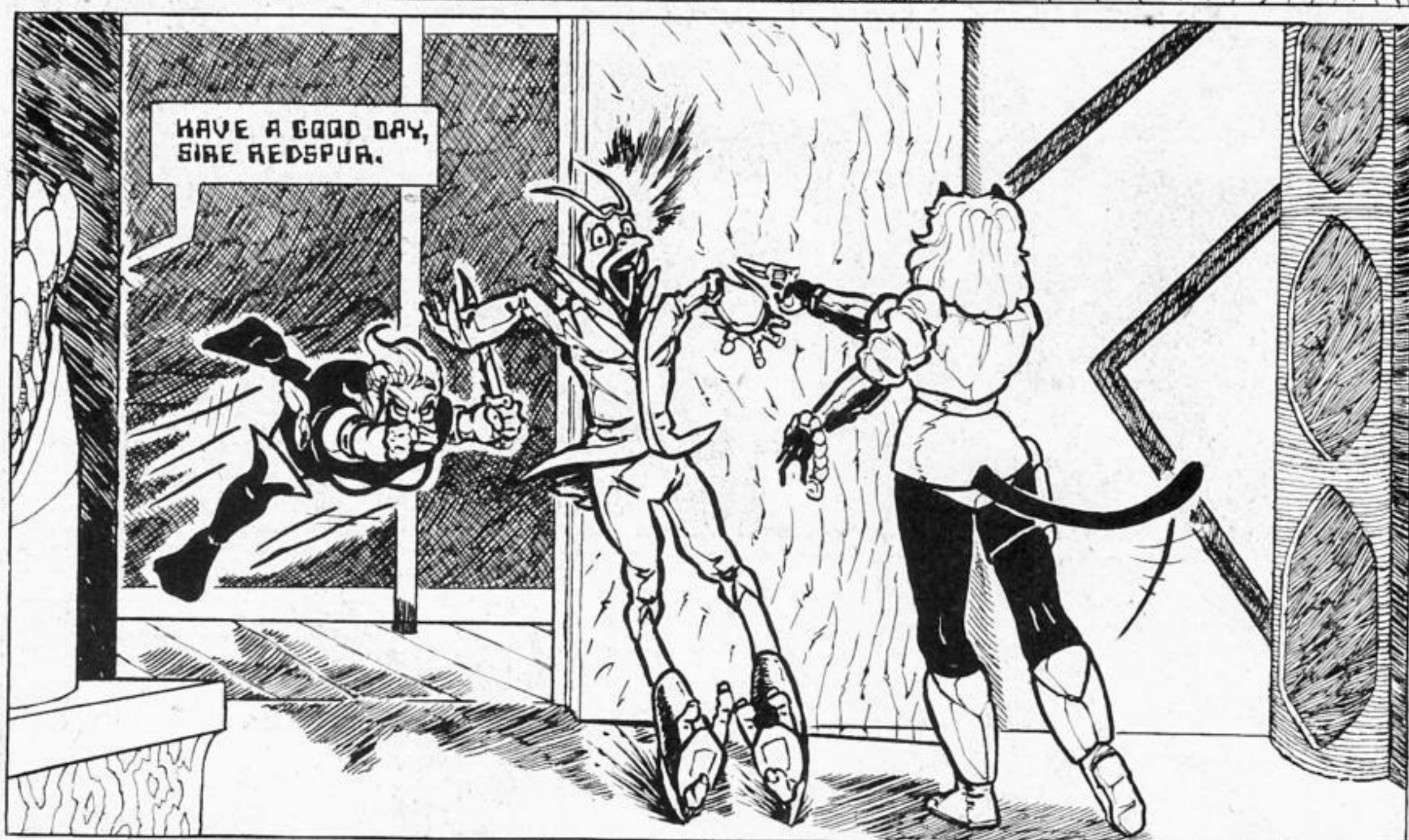


J.B. SPACE

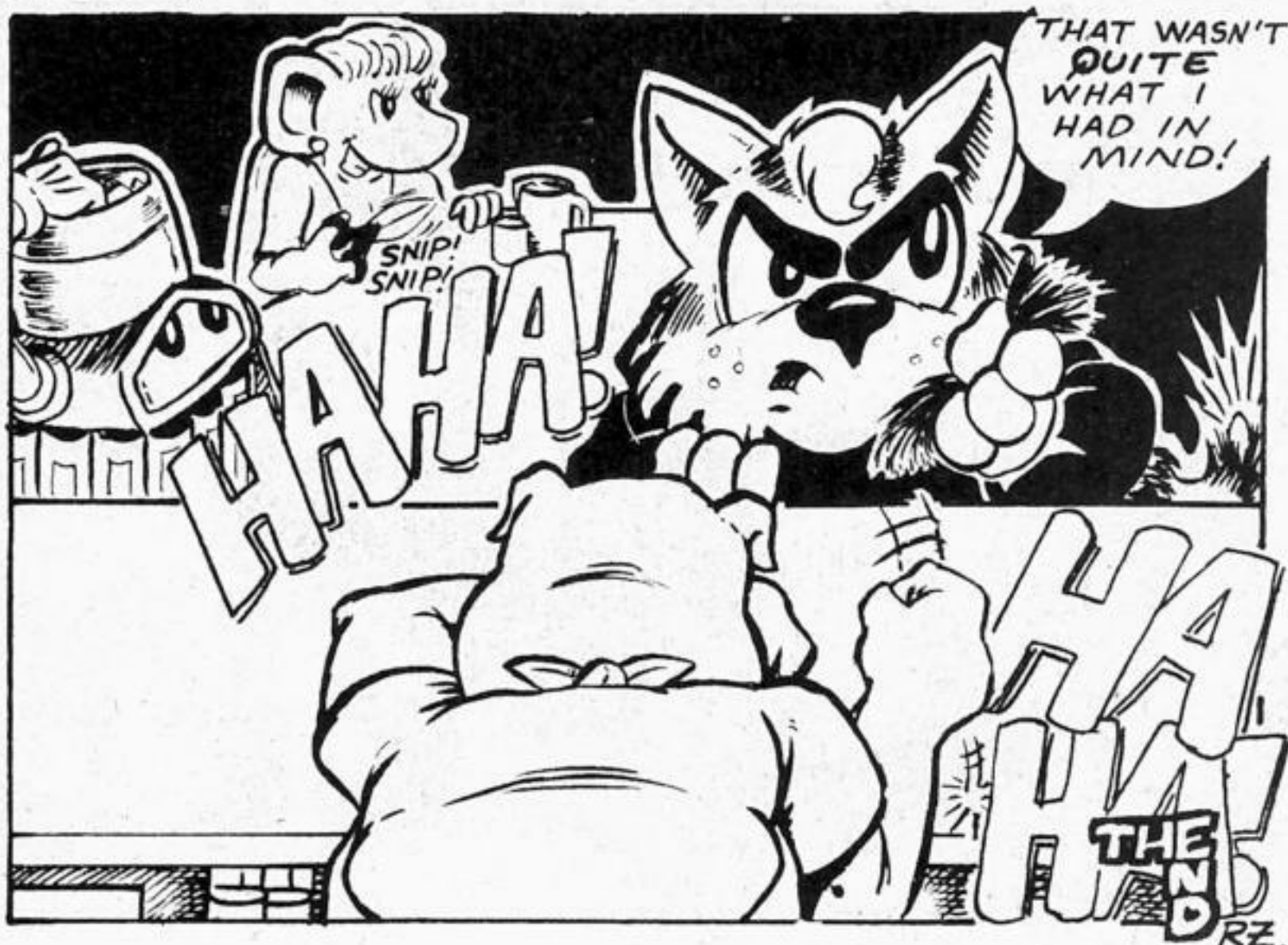
PLUS
CONVERSATION
IN THE
DARK











D.B. SPACE

in:
MUCH TO STEW ABOUT NOTHING.

HOWDY-DOODY
MISSER SPACE!
GOOD TO SEE
YOU BACK
FROM DELIVERY!

YEP CRISPY,
NOT ONLY DID
I GET A CHECK
LARGE ENOUGH TO
COVER THE RENT...

BUT I PICKED UP
THIS DELIVERY
PACKAGE FOR YOU!

GOOD!
MY SHIPMENT
OF RALFINS!

SO I CAN MAKE
RALFIN STEW
OF COURSE!

SO HE CAN
MAKE RALPH 'N' STU?!

RALFINS? WHAT
ARE THEY FOR?

I THOUGHT
RALPH 'N' STU
HELP MAKE
THIS BOOK!

WHAT?

NOTHING
=SNIFF!
=SNIFF!
SAY!
WHAT'S COOKIN?



SWEET AVIAN SYRUP
CALLED A BUVER
WIFE FIND RECIPE
IN MAGAZINE. YOU
WANT TASTE? HERE
HAVE SIP.

YECH! THIS
IS TERRIBLY
BITTER CRISPY!



SIP!



UH-OH! I
BETTER THROW
IT OUT THEN!

PHEW! BAD FOOD
LIKE THIS COULD
RUIN MY REPUTATION!
HOPE OLD
SAYING
STILL TRUE!



WHICH ONE
IS THAT?

HEH-HEH, NEVER
JUDGE A COOK
BY HIS BUVER!



THE
R.Z.

RETRO RAM

AND HIS ROCKET RANGERS

IN OUR LAST
EPISODE...

A LOT IS HAPPENING
ON THE SPACE
STATION HEEP...

THIS EPISODE
INTRODUCING...



"ARTIE"



"GUPPY"



"PLATY"



"THALLA"



AFTER A FIVE YEAR
RETIREMENT **RETRO
RAM** HAS RE-ENLISTED
IN THE ANIVERSAL
RANGERS. HE HAS
BEEN CHOSEN TO
HEAD A TROOP OF
RANGER SPECIALISTS.
RETRO HAS JUST
RECIEVED THEIR
FIRST ASSIGNMENT
FROM ADMIRAL KILDA.

ARMEIL O'DILL,
RETRO'S BEST
FRIEND ALSO RE-
ENLISTED AND WAS
ASSIGNED AS FIRST
MATE TO RETRO'S
TROOP. AFTER
SAYING SO LONG
TO **MUSTELLA**,
ARMEIL AND RETRO
HEAD TOWARD THE
HANGAR.

MUSTELLA MINK
HAS GONE TO
LUNCH. AFTER
A QUICK BITE
AT CRISPY'S SHE
PLANS ON MEET-
ING OUR DUO
AT THE HANGAR
SO SHE CAN
KISS RETRO
GOODBYE.

DRAKESTAR,
EXILED LORD
OF THE AVIAN
EMPIRE, WAS
CAPTURED BY
RETRO BEFORE
HE "RETIRED". HE
NOW SITS ON
ATOTH ONE, A
PRISON ASTEROID,
OR SO IT
SEEMED...

AND NOW, EPISODE TWO:

SUSPICIONS

"DRAKESTAR"?! RETRO THINKS.
"IT'S BEEN OVER FIVE YEARS SINCE
I LAST SAW HIM!"



YOU'LL
PAY FOR
THAT,
FIEND!

OH? AND
JUST WHO
IS GOING TO
DO THAT?

CERTAINLY
NOT YOU.





NO SHADOWS. LADDY!
IT MUST BE A PROJECTION
O' SOME TYPE!



THAT WAS
A SHOT!

THEN SHOOT
BACK!

BUT I DON'T
HAVE A
GUN!

THEN WE'D
BETTER TAKE
COVER!



HOW COME
YOU DIDN'T
BRING ANY
FIREPOWER!

SAME REASON
YOU DIDN'T.
WHO WOULD
SHOOT AT
ANYONE ON
THE HEEP?



CRUNCH! MUNCH! AND THEN
GAVIALIS STUCK HIS HEAD IN A
PAIL AND RAN OFF!

HA HA HA GULP! I'M SORRY
I WASN'T THERE! GEE, ARTIE,
IT'S GOOD TO ALREADY
KNOW SOMEONE YOU'RE
SHIPPING OUT WITH!

WHILE ARMEIL AND
RETRO DECIDE WHAT
TO DO, LET'S LOOK
IN ON CRISPY'S,
BEST RESTAURANT
ON THE HEEP.



SURE IS GUPPY! AND
SAY, I KNOW SOMEONE
ELSE WHO'S SHIPPING OUT
WITH US, THALLA MARIT!
BEST MECHANIC IN
OUR CLASS!

DAMNATION!

WHIZZ!



WHERE'D DO
YOU THINK
IT CAME
FROM
RETRO?



IF I
FIGURE THE
PROJECTION
RIGHT, IT
CAME FROM
SOMEWHERE
AROUND
THAT OLD
CRUSIER.

THALLA?! DID
YOU SAY THALLA
MARIT?



NOT HER!

TALES FROM THE EDITORVERSE



GUEST EDITORIAL

COLLABORATION, now there's a word. TALES FROM THE ANIVERSE is a collaboration between Sue and I. The dictionary describes collaboration as joint labor and we couldn't agree more. It's also described as willing cooperation with the enemy given by an inhabitant of an occupied country, but somehow that just doesn't apply here. Well, maybe once in a while . . .

Randy and I have been collaborating on Aniverse for more than five years. In that time, we've learned that there are more definitions to collaboration than are listed in Webster's. First, there's the kind of informal "joint labor" that goes on over a lunch; this sharing of ideas led to the creation of the Aniverse. Then there's the type of cooperation that occurs when an idea moves from the "gee, wouldn't it be nice" stage to the "why don't you do a book" level. At this point ideas flow faster, innumerable characters are born, and tempers get a wee bit frayed. Finally, there's the "deadline is coming" stage. This is collaboration at its worst; suddenly little details like Ms. Chevious' eyebrows and Varcel's hair become the subjects of ridiculous arguments.

Then there's collaboration at it's best, the end result. That's when we go through and compliment, constructively criticize, and systematically apologize for any harsh words said when deadlines were as short as our patience. What we have come to learn is that a collaboration of this nature requires a constant and steady effort, and enough humility to promote the whole over the self.

That is probably the trickiest part of all; taking two separate visions of what the aniverse should be like, and blending them into one book. This takes a lot of patience, a lot of talking, and a lot of work at keeping our egos in line (DOWN, Brutus! Down! I fed you yesterday!). And yes, Virginia, it IS worth the effort.

This particular issue is very important to us. This is the issue we have worked for since Ralph and Stu approached us and said "Hey, how'd you like to do a book?" The majority of the characters we will be working with have been introduced, now the fun of "fleshing out" these characters begins. We both hope that you feel it

was worth the effort because, in the end, YOU are the ones we have to please. Just because we have so much fun doing it is secondary.

So, let us know if we're succeeding. WRITE US. We very much enjoy the letters we have been getting, but we're greedy; we would like to see many, many more. Those letters help keep us going, and they let us know what you like, and don't like, about our work.

We especially enjoy those letters treating our characters as flesh and blood. We must be achieving our goal to entertain you, if you actually think our characters are real.

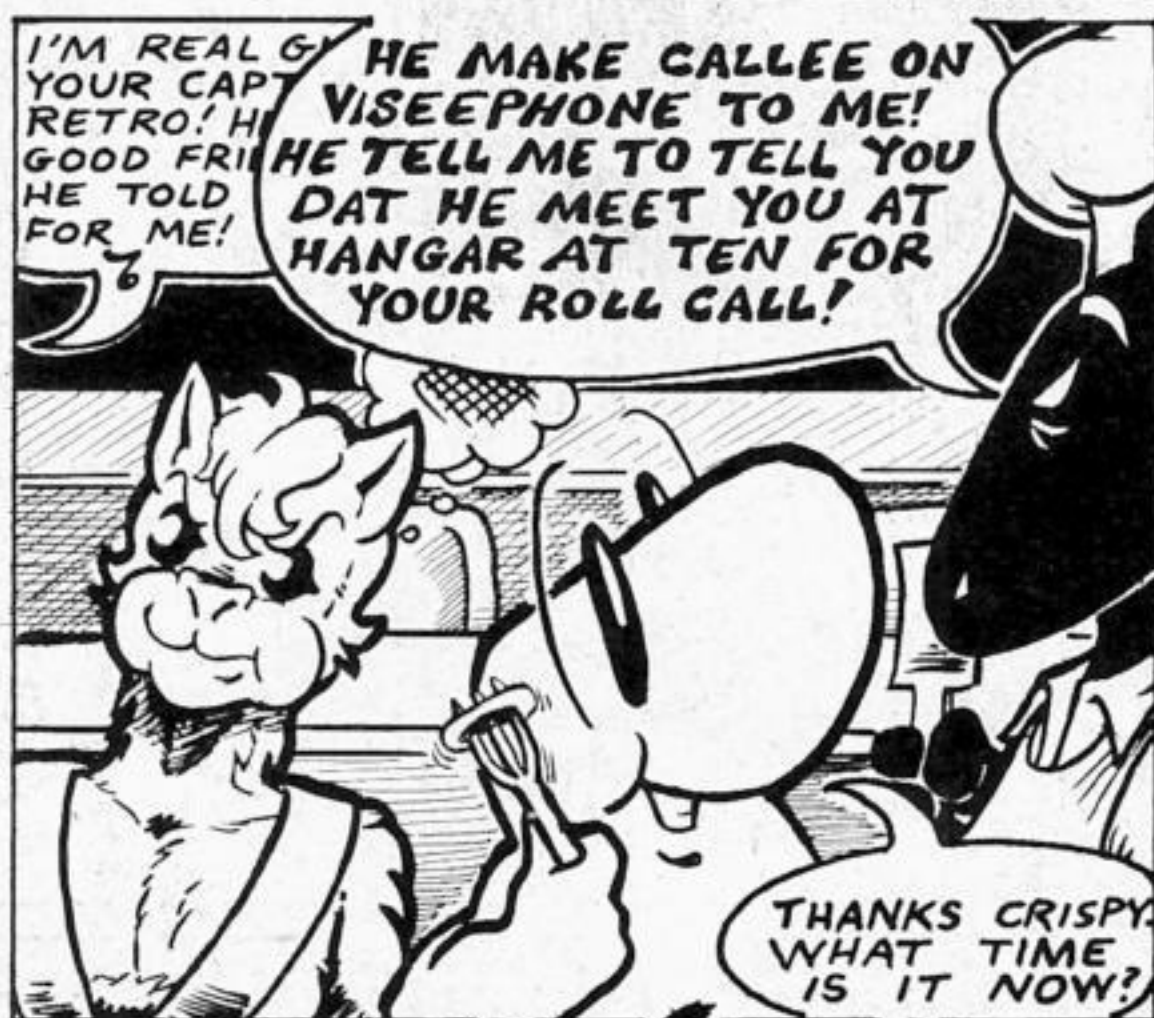
In closing we would like to note that the part of Retro Ram is now being played by a different actor, due to a serious auto accident, and that the actor playing Talon in VARCELS VIXENS has broken her contract to pursue a career in the greeting card industry. Auditions for the role of Talon start next week, and the appearance of Varcel's Vixens has been postponed from issue six to issue seven in order to accommodate.

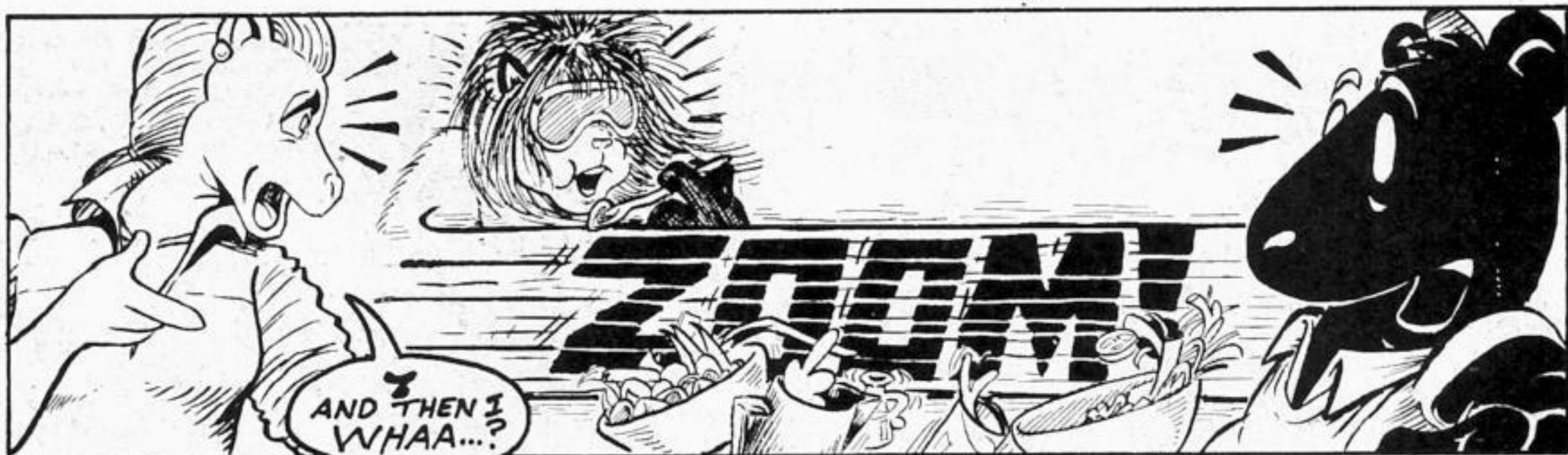
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MEANTIME: BACK AT THE RANGER'S HANGAR...

THE NEAREST STASH OF WEAPONS IS PROBABLY THAT OLD SHIP, BUT THAT'S THE DIRECTION WHERE THE SHOTS WERE FIRED.

BLAST! IT'S JAMMED!

CLICK!
CLICK!

WHAT? MORE SHOTS?!

BLAM!
BLAM!

IT'S ALL RIGHT! YOU CAN COME UP NOW. I SCARED HIM OFF.

WHO'S THAT LADDY?

I DON'T KNOW. SOMEONE'S IN THAT OLD CRUISER!

LET'S GO SEE WHO IT IS.

'BOUT TIME YOU GOT HERE. I WAS STARTING TO THINK YOU OVERSLEPT.

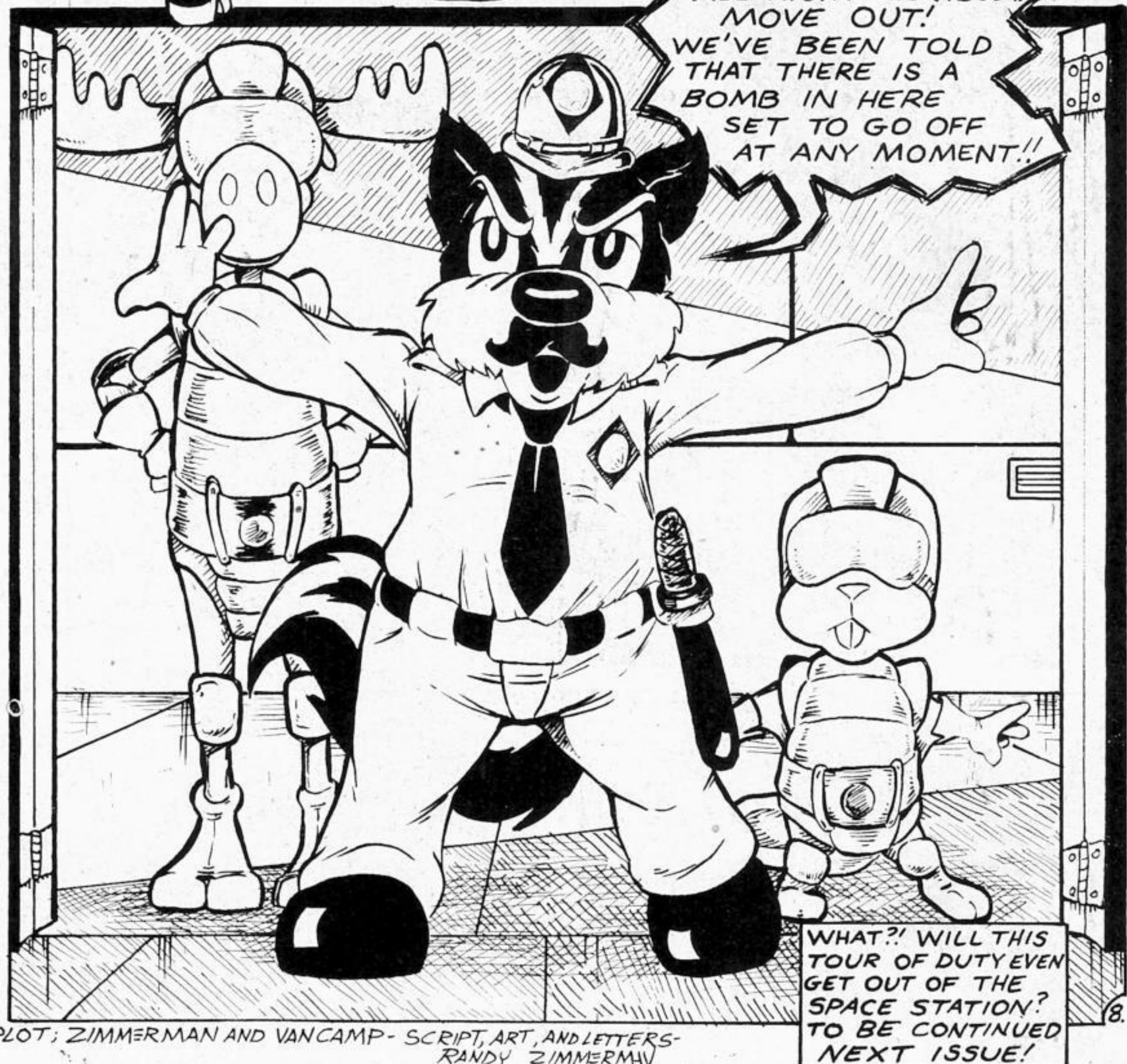
OH YES, CHIEF PILOT PLATIMATICUS LETRAPUSS REPORTING SIR!!

HUMPH!

PLATY?

CAREFUL LADDY!





I PREPARED TO DOCK WITH THE BATTLE CRUISER WHERE FALTEROUS WAS STAYING. I HAD A HUGE ACHE IN MY GUT BECAUSE I HAD FAILED.

FAILURE WAS SOMETHING I NEVER COULD TAKE EASILY. EVEN WORSE, FAILURE WAS SOMETHING FALTEROUS NEVER TAKES AT ALL. TELLING HIM ABOUT J.B. SPACE WOULD BE RISKY.

I STRODE UP TO HIS PLATFORM AND TOLD HIM THE WHOLE STORY. HOW I FOUND THIS J.B. SPACE, THE IDIOT WHO HAD MADE A FOOL OF FALTEROUS, THE PIRATE LORD. HOW MS. CHEVIOUS HAD CLAIMED THAT THE IDIOT WAS UNDER HER PROTECTION.

FALTEROUS BEGAN TO BROOD.

HE THOUGHT FOR A MOMENT, AND THEN TOLD ME TO FORGET ABOUT J.B. SPACE, THAT HE'D TAKE CARE OF IT HIMSELF. BESIDES HE HAD ANOTHER ASSIGNMENT FOR ME.

HE HELD UP A SHOT OF GORE, A FELLOW ASSASSIN. A GOOD ASSASSIN, BUT NOT AS GOOD AS ME. AND FALTEROUS WANTED ME TO RUB HIM OUT.

I HAD TO DECLINE. ASSASSIN'S CODE. ONE ASSASSIN DOESN'T KILL ANOTHER. FALTEROUS SCOWLED AND BROODED.

I BEGAN TO WORRY.

THEN FALTEROUS FUMED "IF YOU CAN'T HIT THE ASSASSIN, HIT THE EMPLOYER!!" "THIS TIME DON'T FAIL ME!!"

THIS TIME I WON'T. I DON'T WANT TO BE DINNER FOR HERMAN.

TO BE CONTINUED.

MAILS TO THE ANIVERSE

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ANIVERSAL AWARENESS FOUR

Just to prove that we at Arrow Comics are free of the restraints and the restrictions of most publishers, I am switching roles with Randy and Sue this month. They get to do the (guest) editorial and I get to answer the letters. You may ask the question, "Why?", to which I will simply reply, "Why not?"

— Smilin' Stu

Dear Ralph-n-Stu & Randy & Sue,

Just wanted to tell you how much we have enjoyed TALES FROM THE ANIVERSE. Good plot, great characters and great art. Looking forward to many more issues. I hope we will be seeing more of Varcel's Vixens.

Thanks,
WB Brogden (& family)
Leander, TX

Thanks for the nice comments, WB. I'm especially glad that you can share your enjoyment of TFTA with your family. And you'll be seeing Varcel and the rest of the Vixens again in issue seven (see Tales From the Editorverse).

Dear Ralph, Stu, Randy and Sue,

I picked up Aniverse two last week and I was surprised and pleased for two reasons. First, after reading number one months ago, I thought it was going to be the first and last issue. I enjoyed the stories very much, but I didn't think it had the "right stuff" to become a mainstream independent. Well, you proved me wrong by coming out with issue two and I'm very happy that I was wrong. Second, number two showed a lot of maturing, especially the artwork. It made me realize that maybe you do have the "right stuff" for a good funny animal comic, which are too few for my taste. I am now looking forward to number three.

On a lighter note, in "Tales Goes to Barky's," was Vandal (Varmint) supposed to be a raccoon? I wasn't quite sure, but I do think that funny animal comics need more raccoons. I see a severe lack of raccoons in today's comics and I hope to see more! And porcupines! And squirrels! And . . . oh well.

Sincerely,
Edward J. Kandl
Champaign, IL

Mainstream independent? *I like that. Never heard it put quite that way before, but it adds a new term to the list of vague, ambiguous labels like small press and independent that get thrown around so freely nowadays. I agree with you that Randy and Sue's work, both in storytelling and art, is maturing as they really get into the swing of having their own book (especially with the freedom we offer them. I know they like that, and I trust their judgement and abilities 100%).*

Yes, VV is a raccoon, and a feisty little fellow, at that. You'll be pleased to note that he makes a couple of appearances in this very issue.

Dear Stu,

Thanks for the comics. Nice stuff. I especially liked the lead story in TALES FROM THE ANIVERSE #3, partially because I found it a little easier to read than the others. All of them had much of interest, however, so when the going got a little heavy, it was worthwhile trying to figure things out.

You guys seem to be off to a good start. See you at the next con.

Good luck,
Jim Shooter
Marvel Comics
New York, NY

What can I say? Thanks, Jim.

Dear Editors "Ralph-n-Stu,"

I am a collector of strictly Anthropomorphic material (except for a few publications like *Realm*). My friends call me an anthropomorphic "freak," though I would like to be considered a "connoisseur" of such things. So you can understand me being "slightly" perturbed at my inability to obtain *Aniverse*. But, luckily enough, after beleaguering my patient stockclerk to somehow perform a miracle and get *Aniverse*, my confidence was restored in her when she was able to procure number three.

There are no words I can say that can express the feelings I have for such a magazine, except that it has achieved my very strict standards for excellent workmanship in all aspects, next to the only others that have been able to reach that level: *ALBEDO* and *CRITTERS*. (And if you would be so kind as to denote my feelings to the artists and creators for their beautiful work.)

Wayne Powers
no address given

Sorry, Wayne, but I've got to admit that you've brought up a subject that is the biggest gripe that readers and collectors have with the Arrow line, the inability to obtain our first few books, i.e. TFTA #1 & #2 and THE REALM #1 & #2. The lettercol in THE REALM #4 will explain what we're doing to solve the problem with that title. Sometime in the future (hopefully next summer) there should be some type of TFTA collection, but format, contents, etc., still need to be worked out. In the meantime, I can assure you that TFTA is only going to get better with each issue, so hang with us.

Dear Randy and Susan,

I've been following *TALES FROM THE ANIVERSE* since your first issue, and I must say that if you keep improving at the rate you have been, I can't wait to see what issue ten will be like! It looks like you're having a lot of fun with this book. I know that I have a good time reading it!

Issue two has to be my favorite, though — Varcel is one hot anthropomorphic. Strong, intelligent and beautiful — what a combination! I can say without reservation that she is my current favorite female character in comics. Please do more with her. Love those braids.



You're developing a really interesting bunch of "critters" here . . . an ever-expanding cast, it seems. The Vixens are worthy of a lot more attention, as is Lord Falterous, who is one of the neatest villians (conceptually and graphically) I've seen in comics. Keep up the good work.

Peter Laird
Mirage Studios
Sharon, CT

It seems that Varcel is gathering quite a following. Randy and Sue have plans in the works for future Vixens stories, possibly even a mini-series. (I've heard bits and pieces of what the storyline would be and it sounds great!). Thanks for the kind words. They mean all the more coming from the co-creator of a true modern day comics phenomenon.

Well, that was fun. We may change roles again someday. Hey, maybe I could even draw an issue someday. Then again, maybe not.

On another note, you may have been wondering about the new ICPA symbol on the cover of this issue. ICPA stands for Independent Comic Publishers Association and its members include *B-Movie Comics* (*B-Movie Presents*), *Pyramid* (*Barbaric Tales*), *Tru Studios* (*Trollords*) and *Arrow Comics*. ICPA will be a symbol of quality and dependability in the growing small press, B&W comics market. Further info will be upcoming in *NIGHT-STREETS* #2 and *DEADWORLD* #1, both in October.



GANDA 13 © 1986
R. ZIMMERMAN & S. VANCAMP

19. B. Boddy/ORTH. 86

VANDIE VARVINT



BOUNTY HUNTING ATTRACTS
A WIDE RANGE OF PERSON-
ALITIES. SOME FOLKS ARE
PATIENT. OTHERS ARE HASTY.

TWO WEEKS AGO, EGRAT REDSPUR
PULLED THE BIGGEST JEWEL HEIST
OF HIS LIFE. SUCCESS WAS SWEET,
BUT COSTLY; NOW HE AND HIS
HIRELINGS HAVE A HEFTY PRICE
ON THEIR HEADS.
MS. CHEVIOUS AND GANDA INTEND
TO COLLECT THE BOUNTY ON RED-
SPUR, HIS CRONIES, AND THE JEWELS
THEY TOOK. AFTER PAINSTAKING IN-
VESTIGATION, MS. CHEVIOUS FIGURED
OUT WHERE THE THIEVES ARE, BUT
CANNOT FIND THE JEWELS.
GANDA HAS BECOME TIRED OF
WAITING. MS. CHEVIOUS HAS AGREED
TO DO THINGS HER WAY.

THIS MEANS...

YAAAA!!!

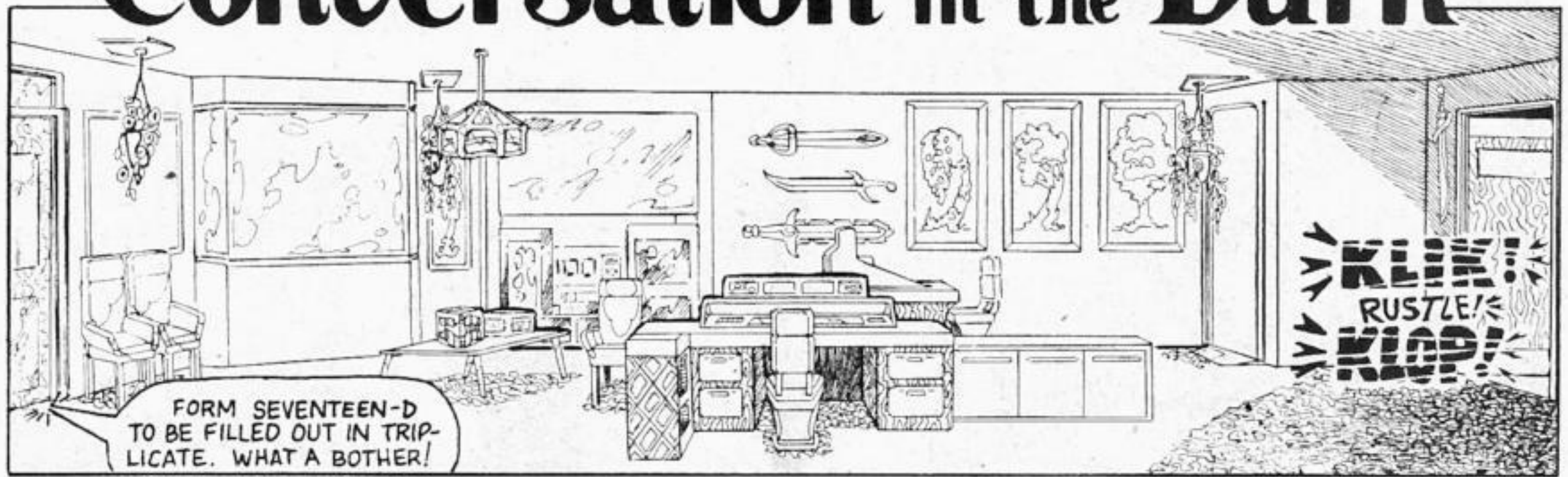
KRASH



MS. CHEVIOUS AND GANDA
AND IN:

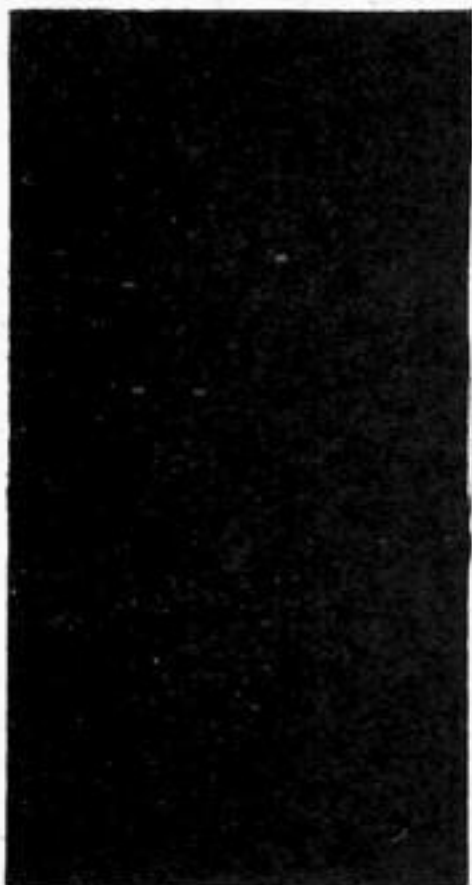
A MATTER OF STYLE

Conversation in the Dark



PLOT, SCRIPT, AND INKS - VAN CAMP AND ZIMMERMAN: LETTERS - TRACY BOLAND
PENCILS - SUSAN VAN CAMP





YOU KNOW, WE SOMETIMES
HAVE TO BE APART WHEN
WE WANT TO BE TOGETHER.

IS THAT ANY REASON
TO BE APART WHEN WE
ARE TOGETHER?

IT SEEMS LIKE
A TERRIBLE
WASTE, NOW
THAT YOU
MENTION IT,

ESPECIALLY SINCE I
SPEND SO MUCH TIME
THINKING ABOUT YOU
WHEN WE'RE APART.

I SOMETIMES FORGET YOU
CAN'T ALWAYS BE WITH ME.

ARE YOU
TIRED?

NO, I'M
FINE.

WELL, PERHAPS A
LITTLE TIRED.

MY BACK IS GIVING ME FITS.

MADAM, ARE YOUR
INTENTIONS HONORABLE?

I SHOULD
HOPE NOT!

OUCH! ARDA,
MY EYES.

SORRY,
I WANTED
TO SEE YOU.

IS THAT SO?
WELL, LET ME
COME A LITTLE
CLOSER.



KLIK!



the Realm

The excitement just keeps on building in THE REALM. Our small party of adventurers (Alex Stonewell, Dominic Wagner, Marj Duncan, Silverfawn and Diggoruss Gorey) must invade Castle Darkoth, the inner sanctum of the Darklord, to rescue the captive Sandra Beech. But Darkoth is protected by scores of guards — zombies, ninjas, skeletons — who are eager to slay our heroes. Even if they can survive this battle, the legendary evil power of Lord Darkoth awaits them.

The cast also continues to expand with the introduction of Grappo Pildin, travelling merchant, a cute but wily hairfoot with a glib tongue and a headful of song. In upcoming issues you will meet many more characters, both allies and enemies of the earthling refugees: Letha Kazan, a powerful, but funloving female mercenary; General Ramus, a human fighter high in the ranks of Darkoth's army; the Rainbow Elves, an elusive group both in appearance and motivation; Norvose, Darkoth's Field Wizard and commander of the Dark Army; and more, an entire world of intrigue, suspense and adventure. Somehow, our quartet of earthers is inextricably tied to the fate of this strange land. For better or worse.

Issue number four contains a bonus feature: the DEADWORLD preview, an eight page introduction to a brand new continuing series from Arrow Comics. Both the preview story and the new title will be written by Stuart Kerr and drawn by Vince Locke. DEADWORLD #1 will debut in October.



DEADWORLD

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THE REALM (now bimonthly) and DEADWORLD (quarterly) are 32 pages, B&W with full-color covers for \$1.50 from Arrow Comics.



00
USAN
VAN CAMP

RAUDY
ZIMMERMAN



