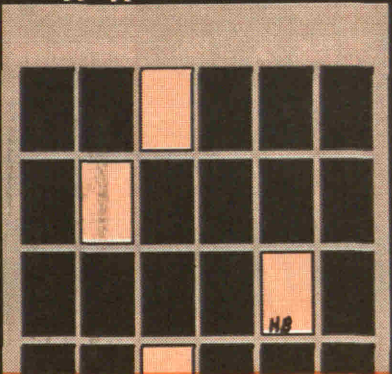
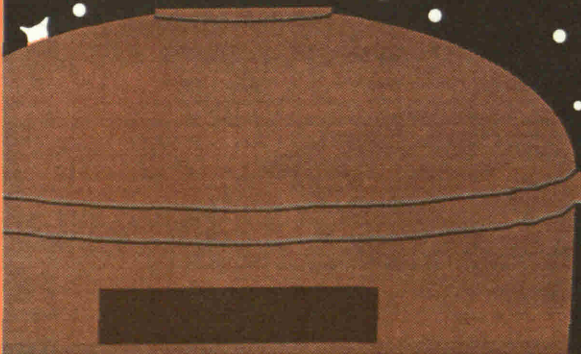
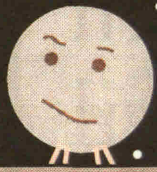


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When the holiday's come around, don't you miss those elementary school assignments like Labor Day crossword puzzles, Flag Day ceremonies and Chanukah potato songs?

Well, here for your relaxation pleasure and trip down memory lane..



THE GSC HALLOWEEN SEARCH-A-WORD!!



Can you find all these holiday words in the grid below?
(For those of you who never had the joys of such holiday fun, I strongly suggest you give it a try...)

WORD LIST

halloween	scary
ghost	witch
spirits	boo
pumpkin	werewolf
mask	blood
costumes	cat
candy	goblins
trick-or-treat	gouls

H	W	A	C	S	E	M	U	T	S	O	C
T	A	Z	S	D	M	M	N	P	H	O	O
B	B	L	O	O	D	B	G	C	T	B	H
G	O	U	L	S	C	V	T	E	A	Y	F
S	W	W	E	O	D	I	R	H	U	T	D
P	W	E	R	E	W	O	L	F	T	F	T
I	E	R	F	J	H	E	Y	R	A	C	S
R	I	G	J	S	S	T	E	U	O	L	O
I	D	P	U	M	P	K	I	N	M	H	H
T	R	J	K	A	S	N	I	L	B	O	G
S	N	O	I	S	A	E	E	W	Q	G	F
T	R	I	C	K	O	R	T	R	E	A	T

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blanche -a your userid gsc-students

In "Hallowed Eve" Voo Doo



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What to read, what to see, what to do...



Building - Part II — page 16

More of the future of grad-school from Jim Bredt.



The Darkest Day In The History Of Larch Road — page 14

Another glimpse into the childhood of Hani Sallum.

The Adventures of Joe Smug — page 18

Zachary Emig tells the tale of this not entirely typical freshman.

*Love,
Chuck*

Letters to Voo Doo — page 26

Hey! What can we say? This stuff just shows up in our mailbox.

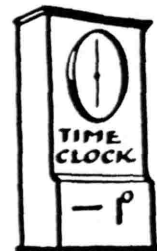


How to Draw the Sunday Comics — page 29

Make money fast with Mark P. Hurst's 5-step technique!

Snapdragon Chronicles - Part 6 — page 30

by Henry Chiu. 'nuff said.



One Night - Part VI — page 36

Those of you who remember what happens to "collect and third number calls" may also remember the beginning of this story.

Bob's Barbershop — page 40

Inside details of the hair-care of John Dzenitis. Voo Doo Exclusive!



Filled Empty Bubbles — page 42

Our empty-bubble illustrations filled by an actual reader. Yours, too, could be here...



Commander Coriander — page 44

More trouble from the spice underworld, from the pen of Jason Bucy.

Attention



FROM THE PUBLISHER



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Volume 76, Number 2

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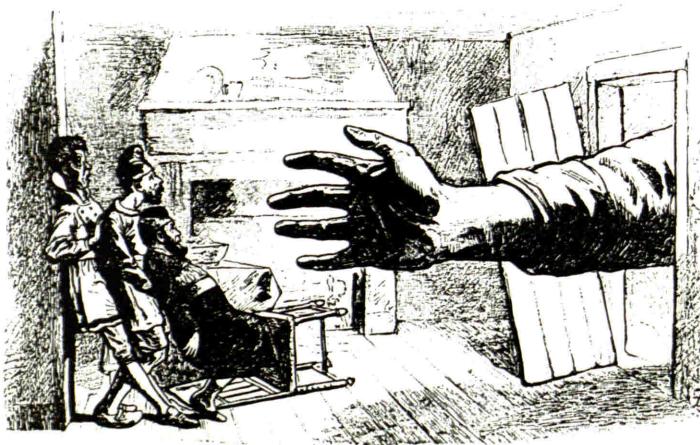
Voo Doo (vōō'dōō) n., [Slang c.1920] hubbub; excitement; mischief; *an ideal name for a humor magazine.*

Factsheet 5 Blurb-o-Tron (corrected, reviewed issue 75.2, from F5#50): Humor from the unwashed students who wind up designing important things like computers and nuclear devices. What the fuck happened? Suddenly, Voo Doo got funny. Like, laugh out loud on the tram funny. Is this the same zine? It must be, as there are still things I Just Don't Get. I doesn't matter, I get enough of it. Where else are you going get the Marilyn Monroe/Elvis Presley/JFK connection? Or the results of last year's IgNoble Prizes? College humor at its finest? Yeah, well, maybe. Trades OK/back issues available/paid ads/prints letters/no submissions. Price:\$3.00 Subs:\$10.00 for 6 issues.

Check out the Voo Doo Magazine Homepage
and the College Humor Magazine Homepage

<http://www.mit.edu:8001/activities/voodoo/voodoo.html>

<http://www.mit.edu:8001/activities/voodoo/chm.html>



Next Submission Deadline : November 14, 1994.

PHOS****REVIEWS



The Cartoon History of the Universe, Book 2, by Larry Gonick, Doubleday, 10/94, \$14.95, 304pp.

I've been here at MIT quite a few years. They keep my IV bottle filled here at Voo Doo because I know how to use the camera in the darkroom. Before twelve years of Reagan and Bush, I walked into my neighborhood head shop and discovered the Rip-Off Press sold in the back room, out of sight, past the glass case with coke spoons and hash pipes. One of my favorite features was Larry Gonick's Cartoon History. I had a lot of fun following it through the 80's when I was an undergrad. Today, comics are sold in front, "head" supplies include metal hardware that passes through one's tongue, and the Cartoon History is still going strong.

In his first seven volumes, published together as Tome 1, he covered 4-1/2 billion years from the Big Bang to Alexander the Great. Evidently around 1990 he needed a change of scene, because he published five or six other books: The Cartoon Guide to Genetics, Physics, Statistics, Computer Science, U.S. History, etc. etc. If this guy ever drops his pen, they'll have to stop it with a bazooka.



Gonick has just published a new volume that covers the next thousand years, roughly from years 500 BC to 500 AD. Whipping through ancient Indian history (you gotta see his Baghavad Gita in 3 pages), he launches into the history of China which goes

on for over 100 pages, beginning in the ice age and running through the Han Dynasty. That's the first half of the book. The second half covers the entire history of the Roman Empire.

The Rip-Off Press was started by Gilbert Shelton and Gonick derives a lot of inspiration from him. I'm not saying that Christ is a dead ringer for Phineas, but we're talking serious artistic heritage here.



Gonick is a serious book addict and draws his material from the respected literary sources. What this means a lot of the time is a lot of unspeakable slaughter, but he is able to piece together a generous helping of human-scale drama as well. He walks a very thin line between accurately representing the real history and punching it up with gags and one-liners. He's not afraid to take chances: I don't think anyone has ever done a funnier New Testament.

I went to Harvard Square and looked around for it: it was at Million Year Picnic on Mt Auburn St. and at Wordsworth just around the corner. IT WAS NOT at Newbury Comics, New England Comics, and LearningSmith. Evidently his distributors are going for the highbrow market, and MYP is just a great shop. LearningSmith doesn't seem to classify history as a form of learning, but they do carry other Gonick books. To extrapolate, it's almost certainly at the BU Bookstore, and Comicopia in Kenmore Square ought to have it. The COOP at Harvard said they had it, and the MIT COOP had it backordered. Newbury Comics in the SC said they had gotten two copies to stock but they had been sold. Duuh.

Oh, did I forget to mention? GONICK IS AT MIT!! He's here on a Knight Science Journalism Fellowship. I met him at a party last Friday. I knew if I hung around MIT long enough something worthwhile would happen. I felt like Li'l Abner meeting Lester Gooch.

- Jim Bredt

Bands *Lunachicks* and *Thumper* at Strat's Rat, October 6th, 1994.

Imagine an all female Misfits led by Barbarella the aerobics instructor. For a long time or a short time on the 6th of October, the Lunachicks jumped around the stage in La Sala de Puerto Rico and looked grumpy. And it was cheap too. Good old-fashioned straight ahead music. They reminded me once again that a real song doesn't have to be *about* anything. Real punk rockers can spew about slugs or coat hangers or differential equations. They don't need to wail about love or childhood memories or any of that Cranberry-ass shit.

The singer boldly asserted her dykedom in a hilarious manner, showing that, guess what, an adversarial stance in coming out, an exclusive rather than inclusive attitude about being queer, is unproductive, ludicrous, and indeed only belongs in a punk/glam Garbage Pail Kid-esque send-up of stupid snorting riot grrrls who, unlike the Lunachicks, cannot actually play their own instruments or cultivate the cords to sing like Glen Danzig. Um... actually, the singer never out and out, if I remember now, said she was a dyke. She sort of implied it, as part of a joke. I guess it really doesn't matter. I guess I just wanted to flame about GaMIT. Oh well.

Thumper was an absolute treat. The band is technically superior to anyone else playing that night. Their incredibly funny fusion of ska and tongue-wagging heavy metal, combined with perfect timing and split-second tempo changes, was stunning and full of spectacle. The crowd was either too tired, or too fucking mainstream, to dance, unfortunately. The guys from Fruvous Leghorn or whatever seemed shocked by Thumper's performance. I saw one gazing at Thumper, his wide eyes and gaping, smiling mouth reflecting the thought, "Maybe if we didn't take ourselves seriously, people would dig our idiotic forgery of a dead form of music!" Alas.

I spoke with the singer of Thumper after his set. We compared clothing that we had bought in thrift stores or found in alleys. This boy really is crazy. But that's okay. He was really glad to here how skilled I thought his band was. You could clearly hear each instrument playing a different part, the vocals were well mixed, and the whole band smiled. It was just great. The Student Center Committee is just great. All this for \$2. Yaaaay. -Jason Bucy

Ig Nobel Prize Ceremony. October 6th, 1994 in Kresge.

The Ig Nobels were pretty funny this year. The hecklers shut up for the most part, and were more than outdone by the pathetically unfunny jackasses near whom I was seated in the Press Pit/Mosh Pit. Except for the other *Voo Doo* folks. I guess. Anyway, I would like to congratulate the MIT Museum and the *Annals of Improbable Research* for a fine show, and express a great deal of appreciation for the press passes.

By the way, I had a dream last night about the harpist for the Ig Nobels. She was TAing a class on marine artifacts taught by my old geophysics professor. He was out of class, and we were supposed to meet her at the pier next to the Institute at 7 am to join our professor on a boat going to the site of the marine archaeological find. The Institute appeared to be set up like a supermarket, however, with aisles and automatic doors all over, and the classrooms all looked like the *Voo Doo* office. I went to the TA's office to explain that it was already 2:30 am (yet as bright as an overcast day at noon) and that I was afraid to go to sleep for fear of missing the field trip. She quickly typed a 100-odd line C program that displayed a weird game that showed people walking around on that etching of "The Belvedere," but soon turned into her electronic appointment book. "Oh!" she exclaimed. "Looks like the boat left at midnight! I'm taking the rest of the day off!" And then she tried to sell me a leather jacket. -Jason Bucy

Yet another October has come and gone, and this, of course, means yet another slew of Ig Nobel prizes have been awarded to those individuals whose achievements "cannot or should not be reproduced." And speaking of should not be reproduced, here are some of this year's prizewinners. Full results, including other perhaps more interesting stuff, will be printed in the upcoming Annals of Improbable Research. For more info, contact <air@mit.edu> or their lackeys at the MIT Museum.

BIOLOGY - W. Brian Sweeney, Brian Krafte-Jacobs, Jeffrey W. Britton, and Wayne Hansen, for their breakthrough study, "The Constipated Serviceman: Prevalence Among Deployed US Troops," and especially for their numerical analysis of bowel movement frequency.

PEACE - John Hagelin of Maharishi University and The Institute of Science, Technology and Public

Policy, promulgator of peaceful thoughts, for his experimental conclusion that 4,000 trained meditators caused an 18 percent decrease in violent crime in Washington, D.C.

MEDICINE - This prize is awarded in two parts. First, to Patient X, formerly of the US Marine Corps, valiant victim of a venomous bite from his pet rattlesnake, for his determined use of electroshock therapy -- at his own insistence, automobile sparkplug wires were attached to his lip, and the car engine revved to 3000 rpm for five minutes. Second, to Dr. Richard C. Dart of the Rocky Mountain Poison Center and Dr. Richard A. Gustafson of The University of Arizona Health Sciences Center, for their well-grounded medical report: "Failure of Electric Shock Treatment for Rattlesnake Envenomation."

PSYCHOLOGY - Lee Kuan Yew, former Prime Minister of Singapore, practitioner of the psychology of negative reinforcement, for his thirty-year study of the effects of punishing three million citizens of Singapore whenever they spat, chewed gum, or fed pigeons.

PHYSICS - The Japanese Meteorological Agency, for its seven-year study of whether earthquakes are caused by catfish wiggling their tails.

CHEMISTRY - Texas State Senator Bob Glasgow, wise writer of logical legislation, for sponsoring the 1989 drug control law which make it illegal to purchase beakers, flasks, test tubes, or other laboratory glassware without a permit.

ECONOMICS - Jan Pablo Davila of Chile, tireless trader of financial futures and former employee of the state-owned Codelco Company, for instructing his computer to "buy" when he meant "sell," and subsequently attempting to recoup his losses by making increasingly unprofitable trades that ultimately lost .5 percent of Chile's gross national product. Davila's relentless achievement inspired his countrymen to coin a new verb: "to davilar," meaning, "to botch things up royally."

MATHEMATICS - The Southern Baptist Church of Alabama, mathematical measurers of morality, for their county-by-county estimate of how many Alabama citizens will go to Hell if they don't repent.



Honig gives us the sign.

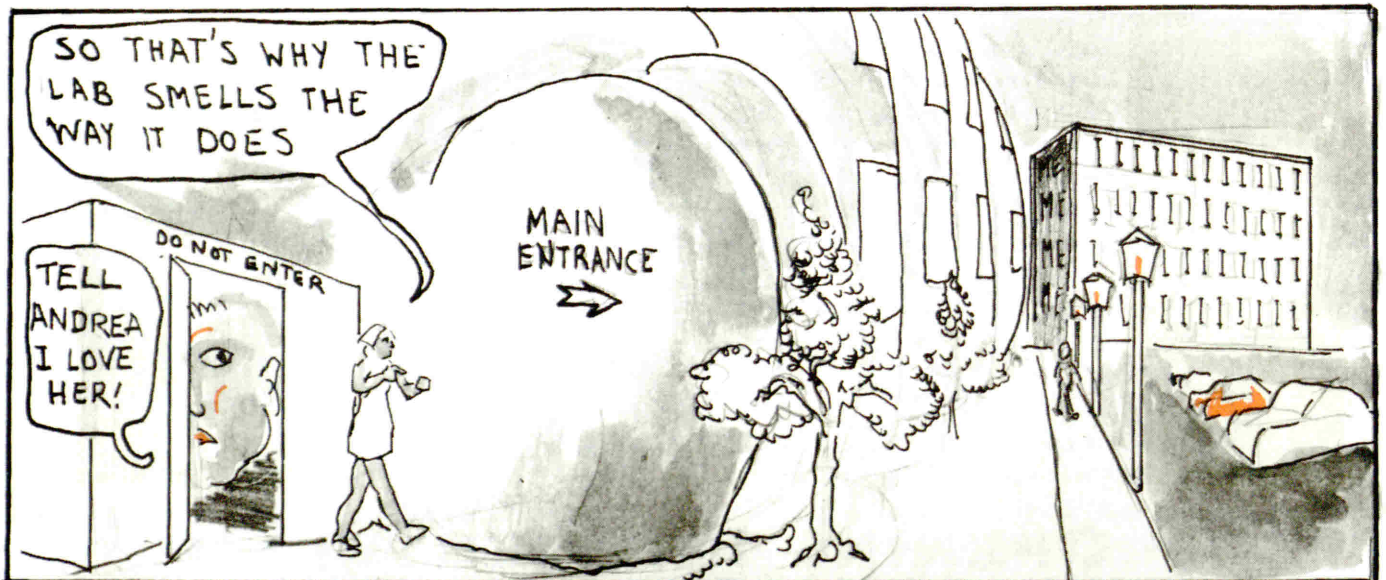
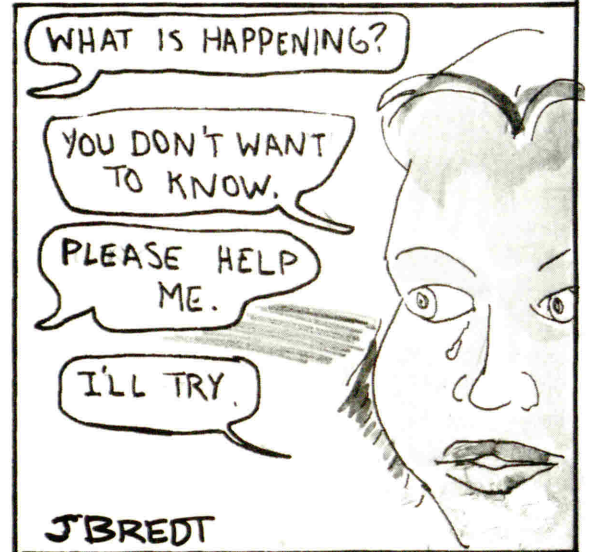
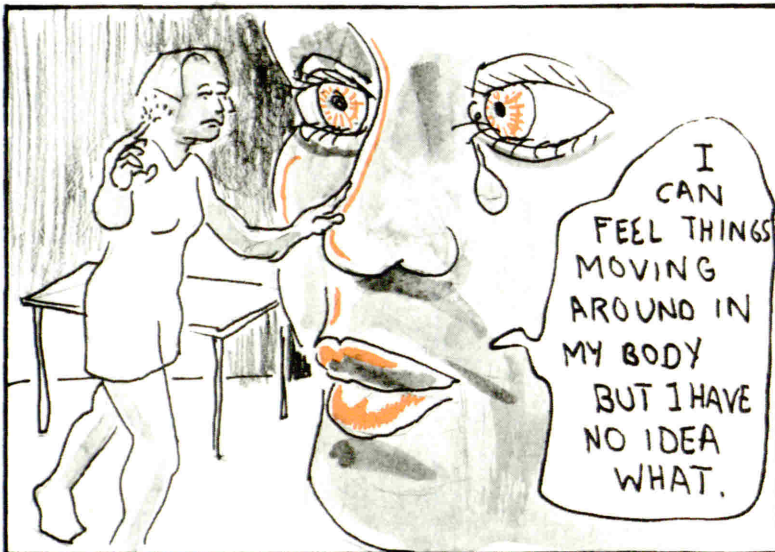
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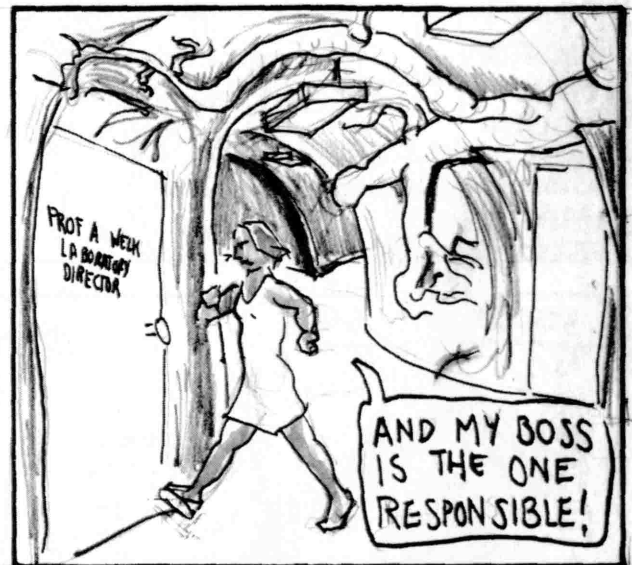
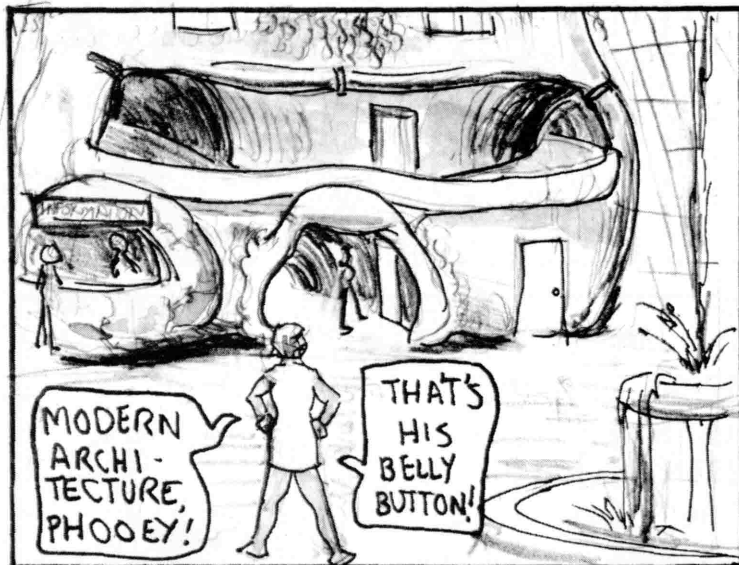
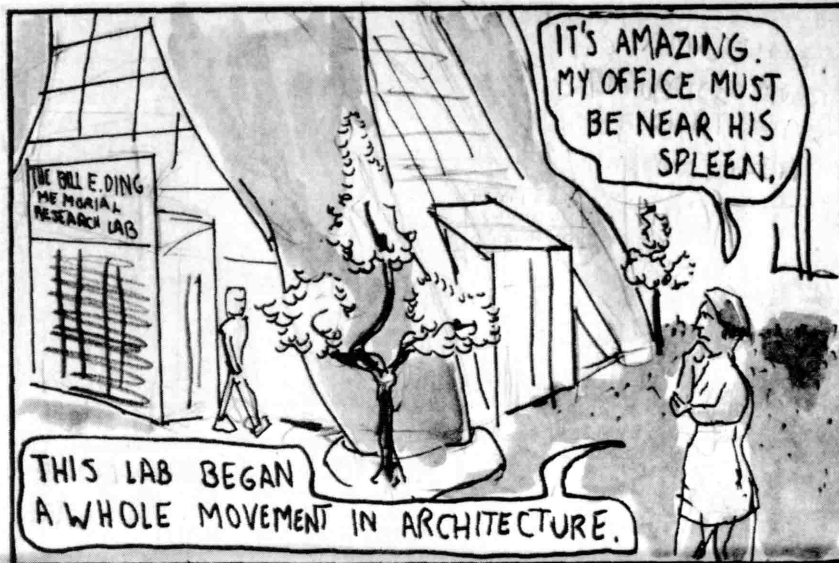
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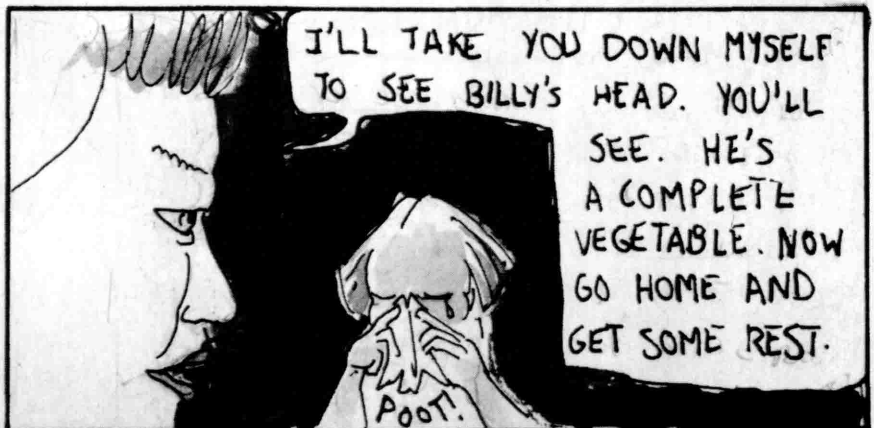
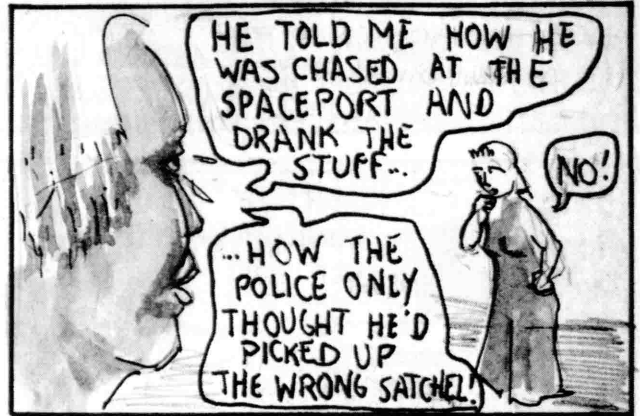
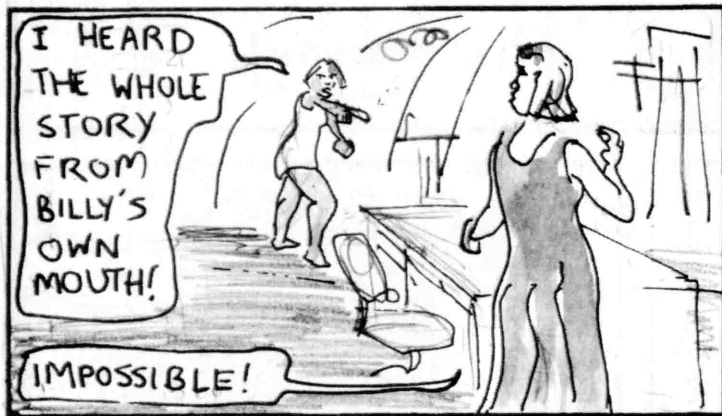
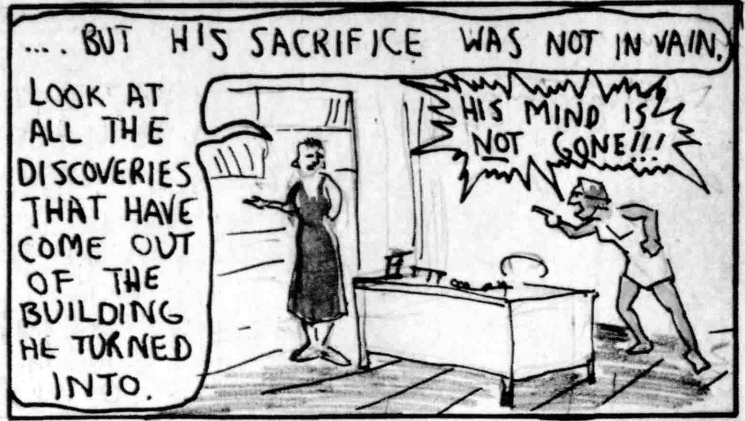
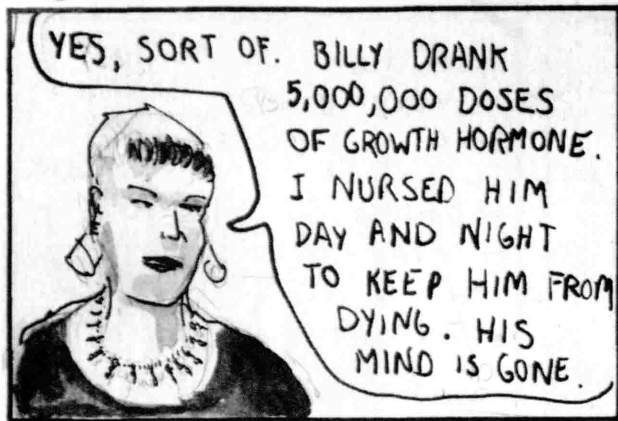
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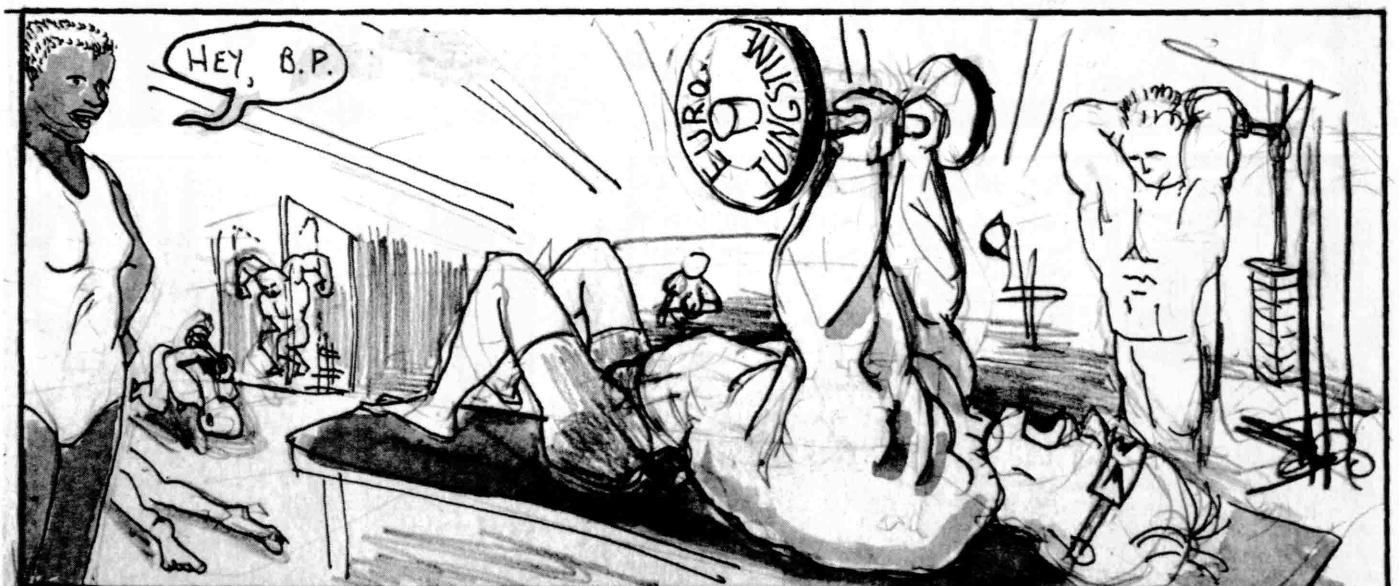
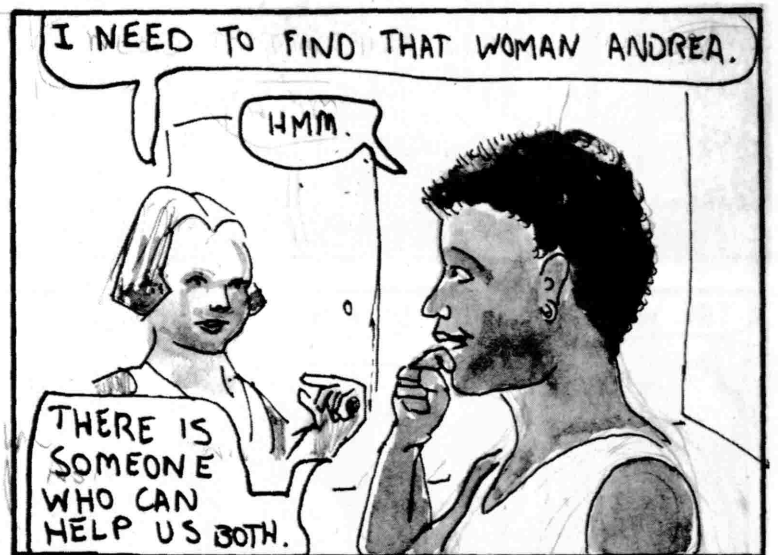
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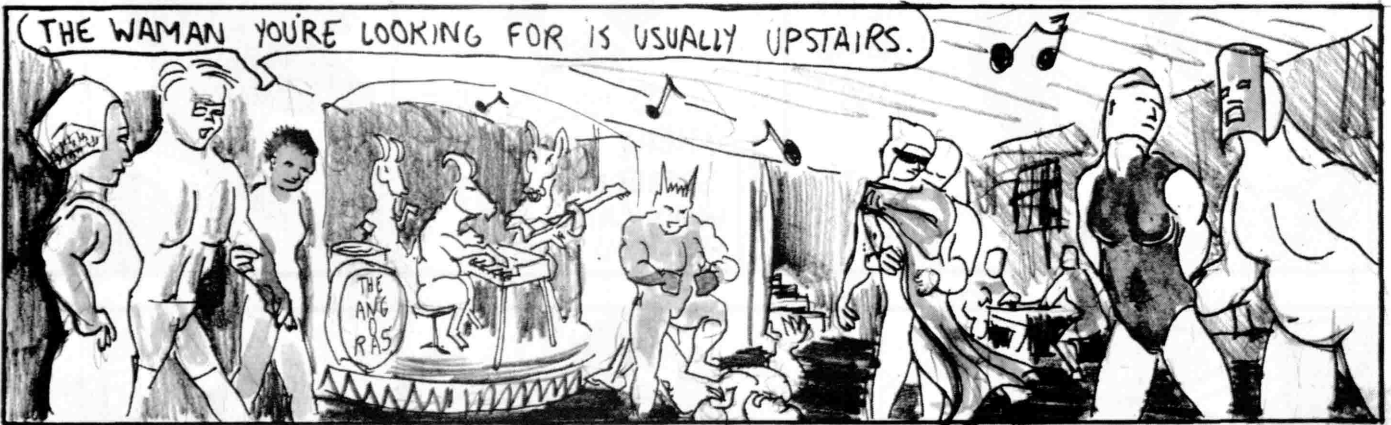
EPISODE II













The Darkest Day in the History of Larch Road

by Hani Sallum

Before my days of Manhole Cover Tiddlywinks, I was, for the most part, a calm and collected child. I busied myself with normal tot sort of things; building with legos, playing tag with kids on the street (always having to come in at sundown, smelling like a wet goat sometimes), climbing around on my friend's splinter-infested jungle gym in his backyard, and imagining I was any one of a million people I kept inside my head whenever I got bored with being me.

There were two things which always stuck out more than anything else, though. The first one was riding my Big Wheel.

If you've seen the film "The Shining," you'll remember the Big Wheel as what that little kid was riding around the hotel like a maniac. A Big Wheel was a real sit-down get-into kind of vehicle, almost like a cross between a car and a tricycle. It had a seat-back that you could move forward and back to accommodate the puniest wimp to the biggest galoot around. The whole thing was made out of injection-molded plastic. It had two smallish wheels in the back and one *big* wheel in the front, hence the name. This big wheel was about the size of a large pizza. On it were a set of pedals, the only things that were metal on the entire vehicle. The front wheel was attached to a fork on the main body and was steered via a large set of handlebars, which often had strips of colored plastic flying out the ends as a decoration and wind gauge so you knew how close to Mach 1 you were going. If your hands and wrists were bleeding, you were getting real close.

The best part of the Big Wheel was the noise it made when you were tearing around on it. It was like empty skulls being crushed by bulldozer treads. I kid you not. Irritating to parents and teenagers alike, but music to us kids. Back then I wondered what was the provocation for that horrible event. Now I know why Jack went insane in *The Shining*. How clearly I see now...

The other activity which I took great interest in was staying out of my older brother's way. Being my senior by five years, the interest involved was

purely for my well-being. Many a time I'd gotten in his way and suddenly became the Incredible Flying 5-year old (how do you think I know what crushed skulls sound like?). It added a bit of flavor to an otherwise perfectly fine childhood.

So the scene is set for that stage of my life, where there were only absolute evils and simple answers (most of the time). So also sets the end of the tranquil prologue of my life, before my imminent coming of age. The calm before the storm.

Next to my house, for as long as I could remember, was the old Russell School, a very large brick institution which had been in disuse for longer than I had been alive. Condemned and taking up real estate space, it was eventually torn down by the city. I used to come home from nursery school and watch the huge wrecking ball swing and knock down enormous portions of the building's walls. I remember when the roof collapsed, and fifteen years worth of lost tennis balls fell to the ground below.

And after the enormous edifice had finally tumbled to the ground and all the rubble was almost completely cleared away, there was a barren wasteland of broken masonry and uneven ground, and suddenly there was a new place to play.

Our parents preferred it only slightly to the streets where we usually played; the field of shattered building material presented about as much danger as the neighborhood roadways. But who cared? Not us. It was a perfect Mars landscape, or a post-Apocalyptic North American setting (we had violent, vivid imaginations as kids). But we never brought our Big Wheels in there. No sir, we cherished our vehicles too much to risk driving on that rough, uncaring terrain. And I believe this became evident to all our older siblings. Thus sets the scene for the Darkest Day in the history of Larch Road.

There were about fifteen families in the Larch Road area with sets of older and younger siblings. And the youngsters all had Big Wheels. We were all pals; little whiny Scott, who couldn't speak below 30,000 Hz; Leisha, whose last name I could never remember; Ben, the biggest kid in the neighborhood;

Lee, the most aesthetically intuitive kid on the block; and all the rest.

One Saturday morning I woke up like I did any normal Saturday morning. I would get out of bed and wander around the house in my pajamas until my mother asked me what I wanted for breakfast. I would invariably say "Pancakes," because, as a 5-year-old, that's all you really needed: it was sugar and starch (i.e. sugar and more sugar).

After breakfast (which would involve me politely turning down an offer of eggs) I would usually sit down with a bag of Legos in front of the T.V. and watch cartoons until my mother told me it was too nice a day to be doing that (i.e. 11:00 am). This Saturday was no different than any other.

However, things began to change as soon as I started getting dressed. Suddenly, I started to hear the familiar sound of several Big Wheels being driven around outside the house, and the shouts of people having fun. I hurriedly finished getting dressed, thinking I was missing out on some Big Wheel racing rally. I wanted to be in on the fun too.

But as I ran out of my room, I heard a noise I recognized as clearly as one can recognize their name being called amongst a backdrop of noise. I heard the distinct sound of my own Big Wheel being driven around.

Frantic, it suddenly struck me that my brother hadn't yelled at me yet that day. Then I really noticed what direction the sound was coming from: The Wasteland next door. The realization of what was going on felt like someone stuffing a five pound block of ice down my throat, jamming it sideways into my heart, and asking: "Cold enuff for ya?" I ran to the front door and threw it open, revealing the worst of my fears.

Out in the street in front of the wasteland there were fifteen Big Wheels being driven around by fifteen older siblings. Unable to fit behind the plastic adjustable seats, they had ripped off the backrests and were riding the Big Wheels like scooters; one foot on the chasis, the other foot pushing from behind. I could see the axles bending more than they were ever designed to, the poor plastic body turning white in certain spots and buckling from extreme stress. They wouldn't last much longer.

These terrorists were riding in what was seemingly a random pattern, though staying mostly lined up parallel to the sidewalk, like a fleet of sailboats tacking in front of a starting line, waiting for the whistle to start a race.

My normal reaction to this type of injustice

would be to scream at the top of my voice for my mother to come yell at my brother. But this was not one of those times. This was personal.

I ran onto the sidewalk, yelling at my brother to get off my Big Wheel or he was going to "get it" via Mom. No sooner had I made my presence known than he broke off from his pack and tore down at me on my own vehicle, screaming at me to clear out or I was going to "get it" via my own Big Wheel.

I yelped and dove for cover on the sidewalk as he ripped by, executing a tight turn that caused one of the pedals to scrape against the street top.

Dazed, I looked around for any other of my pals. I saw Leisha a few houses down, his face pale. I ran over to him.

"Leisha!" I screamed, pointing at the massacre. "Aaaaaagh! ... Deh... They..." I couldn't put it into words. But he understood me anyway. He grabbed me by the shoulders and shook me.

"Hani!" he screamed, "Get ammo!" He ran around under his porch and pulled out two milk crates filled with old roofed tennis balls from the destruction of the old school.

I immediately knew what to do. My brother had also collected a large amount of this treasure when the school was torn down, and I knew exactly where he had them. I ran back into my house and into my brother's room.

Had I been older, I would have been able to appreciate the irony that was dripping from this method of attack. But I was young, and had about half a pound of sugar running through my system.

I found the brown paper bag my brother kept all his tennis balls in and ran back outside. When I got out, I saw that we had added Lee to our ranks, and seeing as he had gotten a bike with training wheels for christmas, he was the closest thing to a fast attack vehicle we had. We began to try to coordinate our forces, but tacticians we were not, so we ended up just deciding to run over and start lobbing the tennis balls.

It was at that point that the race began.

Fifteen Big Wheels, with 120+ lb loads on them, jumped the curb onto the sidewalk and began careening around the broken wasteland within. Pushing the poor machines past all limits of tolerance, the terrorists laughed and screamed whoops of victory over their younger siblings, reveling in the destruction of all that was dear to them (except their Legos). We could see bits of plastic flying off our wonderful vehicles, beyond all possibility of being repaired.

And at almost the same time, the front

door to Ben's house flew open with a crash. Bill Cosby's neighborhood had Fat Albert. We had Ben Breaubeater. Ben was not a fat child, just big. He just about compared with the rest of our older siblings, and he was the best weapon we could possibly have.

He looked out to the wasteland, saw what was happening, and said in a normal tone "Well? What are you waiting for?" That was all the motivation we needed. We looked at each other, and attacked.

Looking back on it, I can't say now that they didn't expect a kind of mass retaliation, but they certainly didn't expect what Ben was planning. While we were doing our best to run around pegging our older siblings with tennis balls, Ben was gathering all his ammo into a garbage bag and cutting slits in the bottom.

Lee made pass after high speed pass on his bike launching handfuls of tennis balls at the perpetrators, Leisha hit tennis balls with his bat, trying to get good enough aim, and I just threw or kicked them. None of us was doing much at all. Then Ben arrived on the scene.

Without a word, he sprinted into the wasteland, clutching the huge bags of tennis balls to his chest like a child he was protecting. There were cries of "Get Him!" and "Run 'im Down!" from all sides, and we were sure that he had had it. But Ben managed to dodge all attempts on his life, leaping and bounding gracefully from one pile of broken masonry to another. It was incredible to watch, like high speed ballet. He was evidently running toward a pile of plaster fragments that our siblings were driving around. He mounted it just as Scott's older brother plowed into it at full speed. A cloud of white plaster dust exploded all over the two of them, but Ben was still standing. Scott's brother was trying to remove the large plastic Big Wheel handlebars bent around his groin area. I didn't see how bad the damage was, but didn't really want to either.

Ben was now in the position of power, three feet higher than anyone else because of the pile of plaster. The pack of terrorists began circling closer, closing in for the kill. And that's when Ben began swinging the garbage bag around his head as fast as he could.

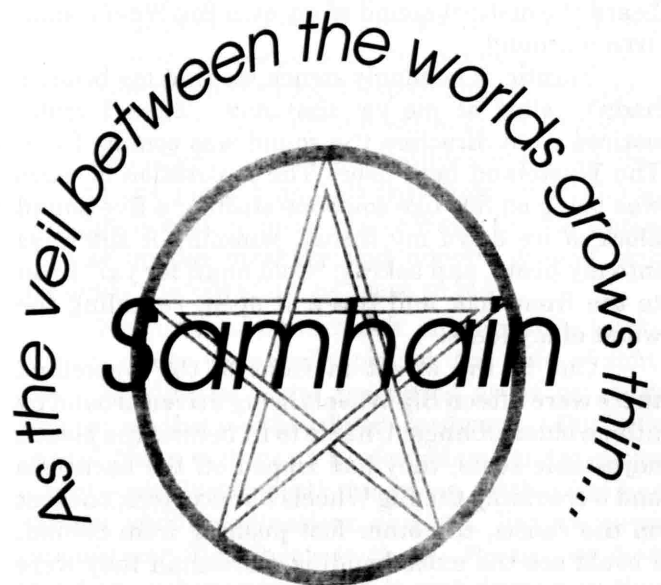
From my relatively safe distance, I suddenly got the impression of a large popcorn machine. The tennis balls were flying out of the slits in the garbage bag at an incredible speed. They were bouncing off older sibling right and left as if being fired out of

a tennis practice ball launcher. Some flew as far as fifty feet after ricocheting off the skull of one of our kin. Cries of pain and anger rose like pillars of smoke from an effigial burning, filling the air and our souls. For that brief moment, watching Ben up there swinging his garbage bag around like there was no tomorrow (which was a decent assumption to make for some of us at this point), keeping fourteen mortal enemies at bay single-handedly with old tennis balls (Scott's brother was still hurtin' pretty badly) made me feel like I could... well, do just about anything. And I knew for sure that Ben felt that way too.

Until he ran out of tennis balls and the fourteen terrorists mauled him.

I'll never forget that day, the pure rage I felt, and the utter elation at watching Ben stand his ground for us in the wasteland.

There wasn't a whole lot left of our Big Wheels after that. The older siblings got yelled at a good deal, but as that and the joy of Ben's short-lived victory wore off, the bitterness of the inhuman act remained. I vowed that day never to do anything for my brother ever again, for as long as I lived. And I haven't, except for taking a urine test for him once.



*Celebrate Halloween with some real witches.
Today we look back on the past year
and look ahead to the next.*

Monday, October 31st

*8:00pm in the MIT chapel
Everyone welcome*

Sponsored by the MIT Pagan Students' Group



Here's one more week of

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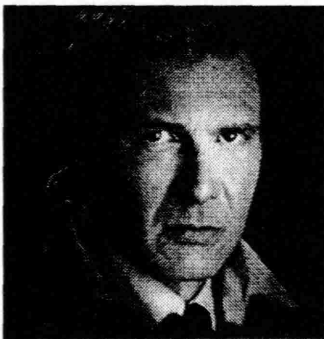
Absolutely and Really Last Chance during Fall Term!

	Mon		Tue		Wed		Thu	
12 noon	14 Nov	Intro	15 Nov	Basic WP	16 Nov	Latex	17 Nov	Thesis
7 p.m.		Intro		Intro		Latex		Latex
8 p.m.		Basic WP		Basic WP		Thesis		Thesis

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LSC



It may be cold outside, but it's hot in here...

Wolf 10/29

The Mask 12/2

Clear and Present Danger 12/14

Movieline x8-8881

Speed 10/28

Blown Away 11/5

True Lies 11/18

The Shadow 11/19

TOE SMUG[©] by Zachary Emig

THOUGH ALREADY 11:00, THE SKY WAS STILL DARK, AS IF THE MORNING WAS HAVING TROUBLE EVICTING THE NIGHT.



'THE FALL WAS COMING IN EARLY THIS YEAR', EXPLAINED THE METEOROLOGISTS. THIS LATE AUGUST STORM WAS JUST THE FIRST SIGN.

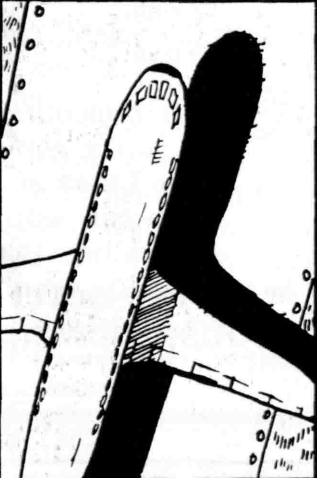


©1994 ZACHARY EMIG

THE STORM HAD BEEN GATHERING FOR A FEW WEEKS, AND FINALLY STRUCK ON AUGUST 24TH. DURING THAT DAY, HOWEVER, SOMETHING ELSE WAS GATHERING.



THE M.I.T. FRESHMAN CLASS.



FROM ALL DIRECTIONS THEY CAME, ARRIVING ONE BY ONE AT LOGAN.

A MYRIAD OF PERSONALITIES, INTERESTS, AND TALENTS; A THOUSAND DIFFERENT LIVES INTERTWINING.

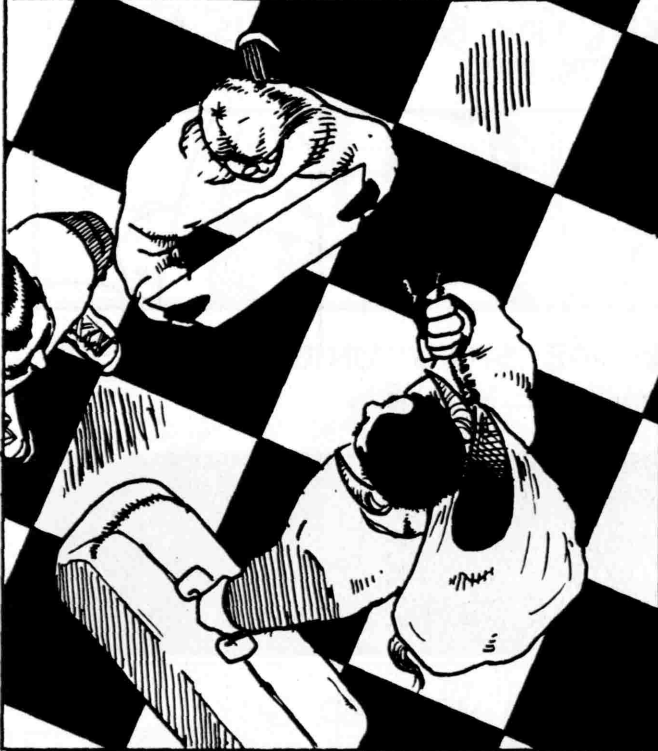


WE, HOWEVER, WILL BE FOCUSING ON ONE MAN.

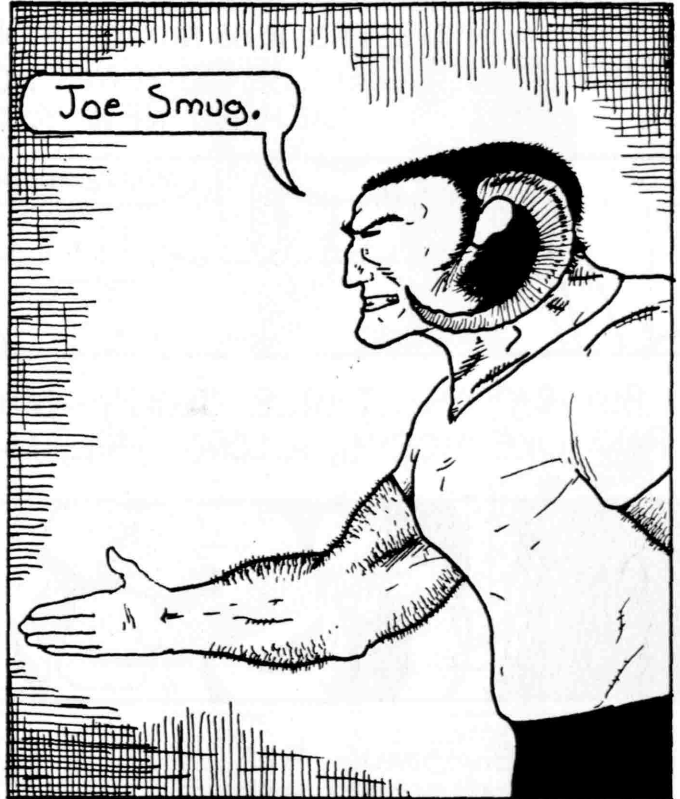
A YOUNG MAN OF UNQUESTIONABLE
INTELIGENCE, STRONG WILL, AND
DEEP EMOTIONAL RESERVES.



A MAN WHO GOES BY THE NAME...



Joe Smug.



Uh...



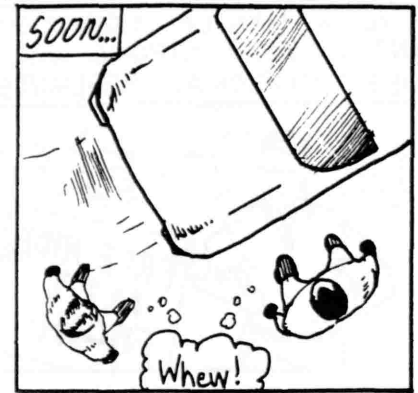
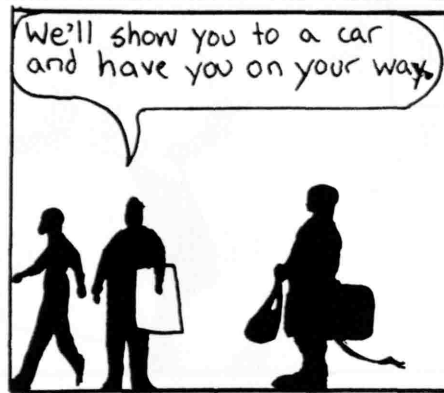
I'm a freshman
here at...



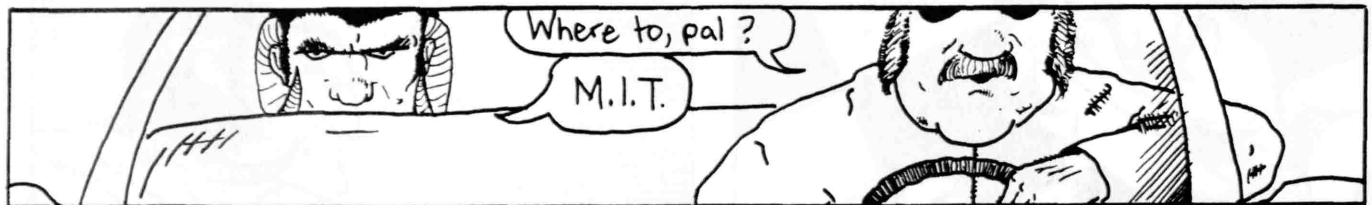
We'll
check
our
list.



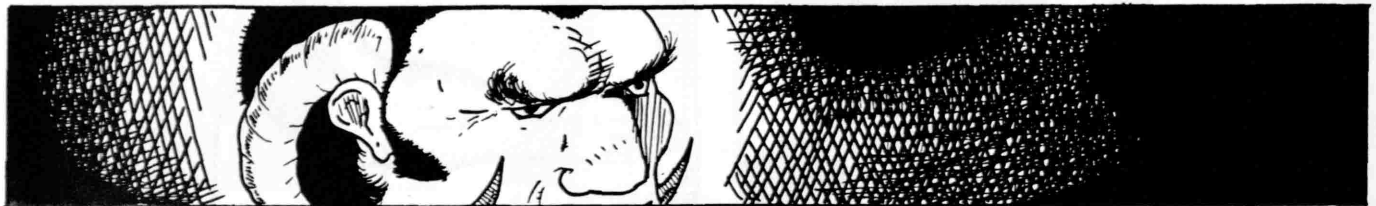
FLIP FLIP FLIP



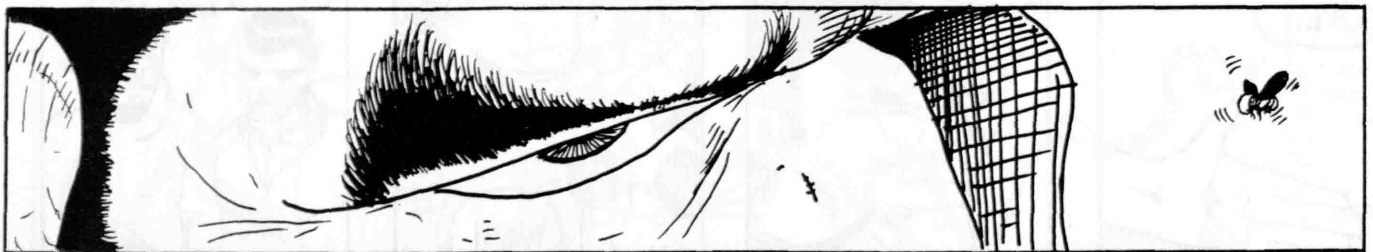
SMUG IS INTERESTING TO US NOT BECAUSE HE WANTS TO STUDY COMPUTER SCIENCE, NOR BECAUSE HE PLAYS HOCKEY, NOR BECAUSE HE'S A DIEHARD NEW YORK METS FAN.



BUT RATHER, THREE THINGS MAKE JOE SMUG UNIQUE: RAM-LIKE HORNS, A LONG TAIL, AND HORSE HOOVES.



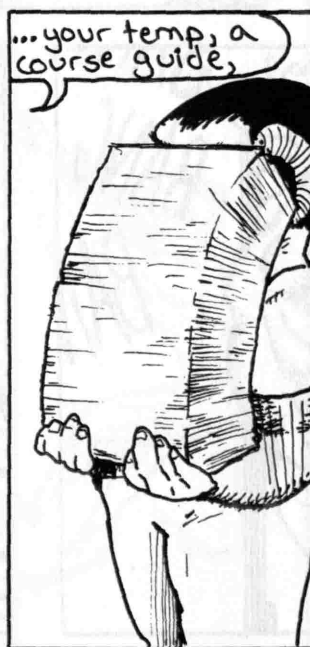
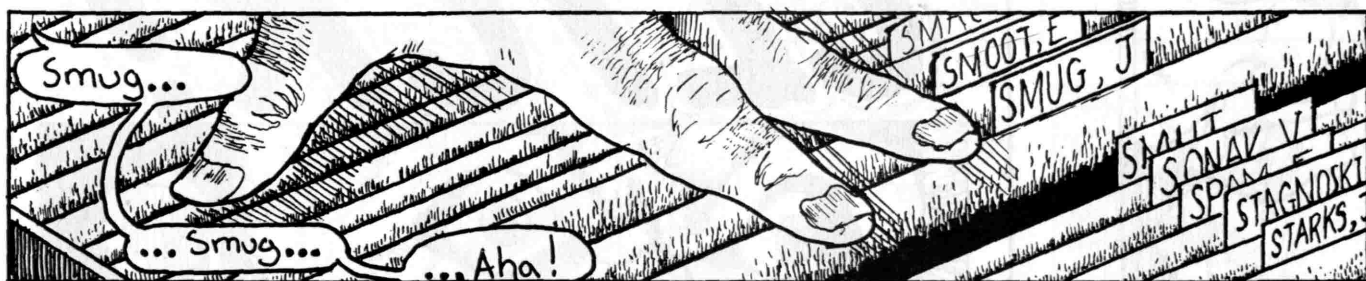
YOU SEE, SMUG REALLY IS A NICE, WARM HEARTED GUY. BUT AFTER YEARS OF THE SUSPICIOUS STARES, VICIOUS WHISPERS, AND OUTRIGHT VERBAL ASSAULTS, CAN ANY HUMAN BEING BE EXPECTED TO HAVE A GOOD DISPOSITION?

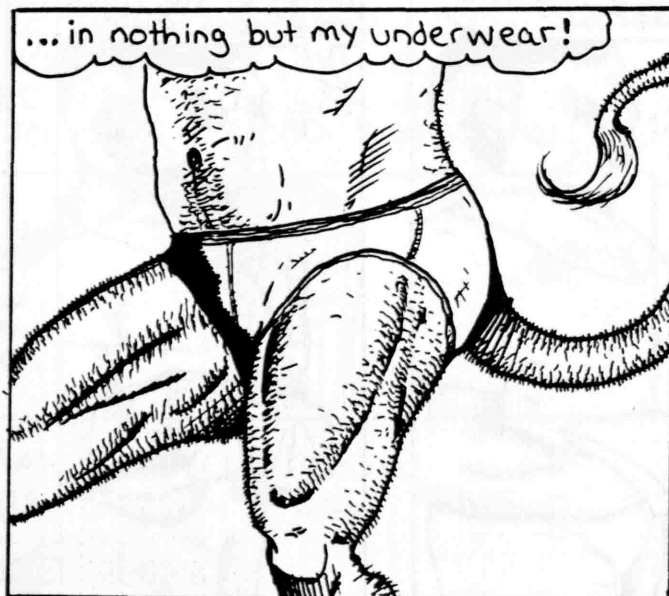
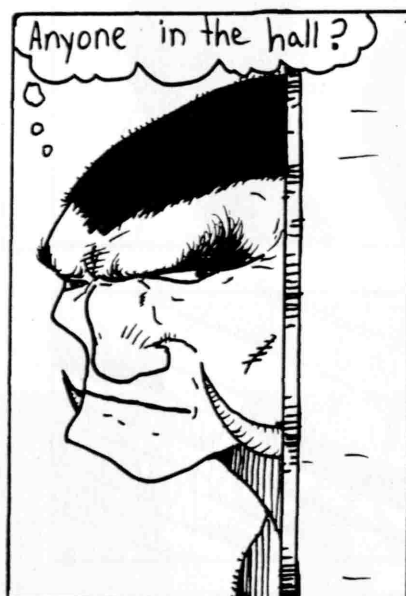
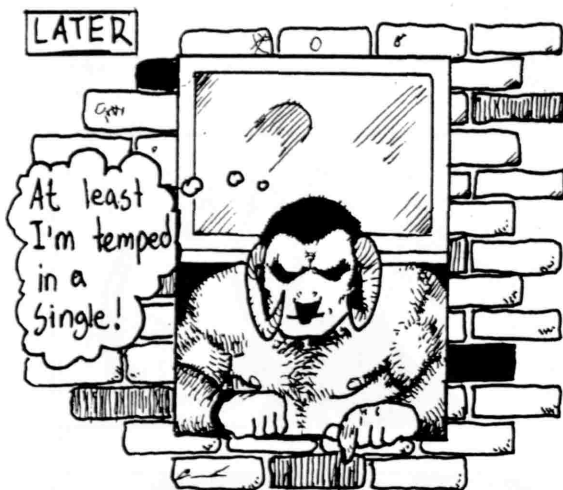


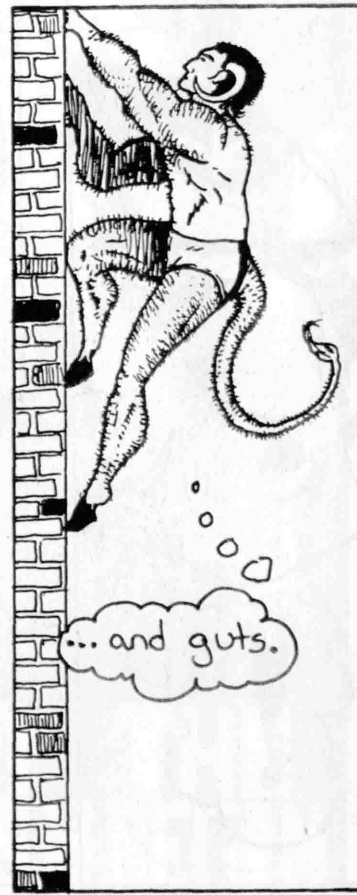
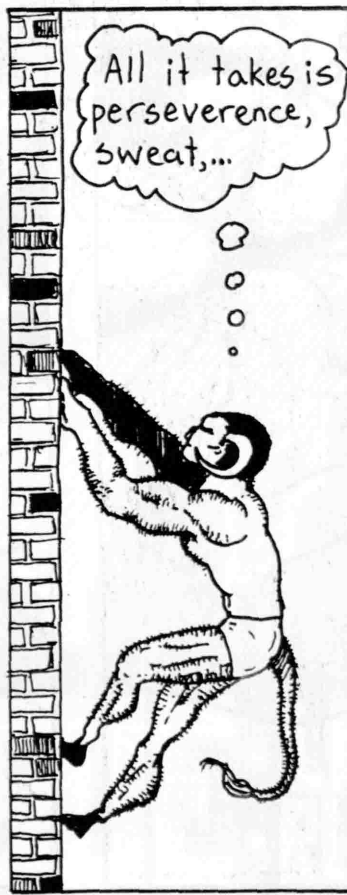
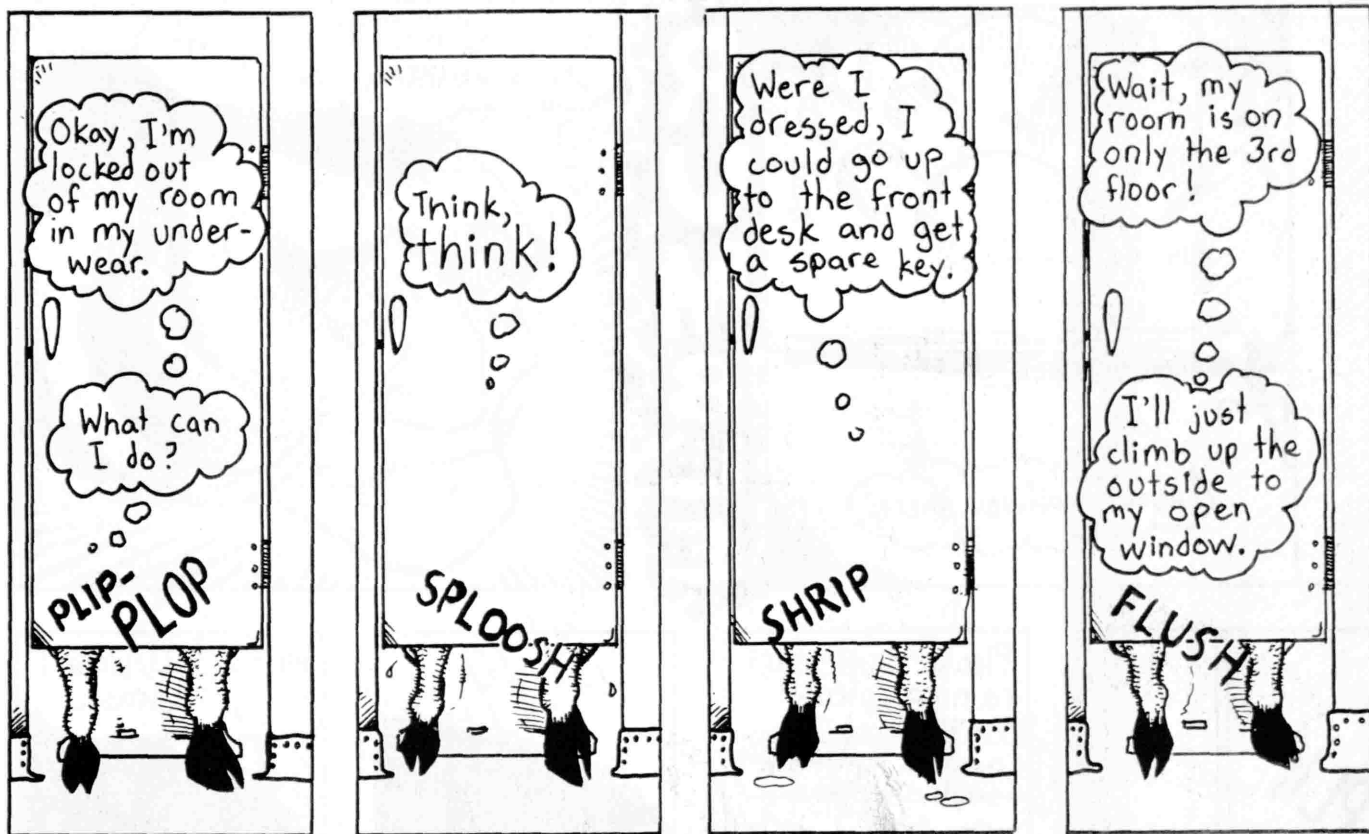
WHAT DOES THIS DO TO A MAN'S PSYCHE? HOW DOES BEING SO DIFFERENT CHANGE HIM? ONLY TIME WILL TELL.



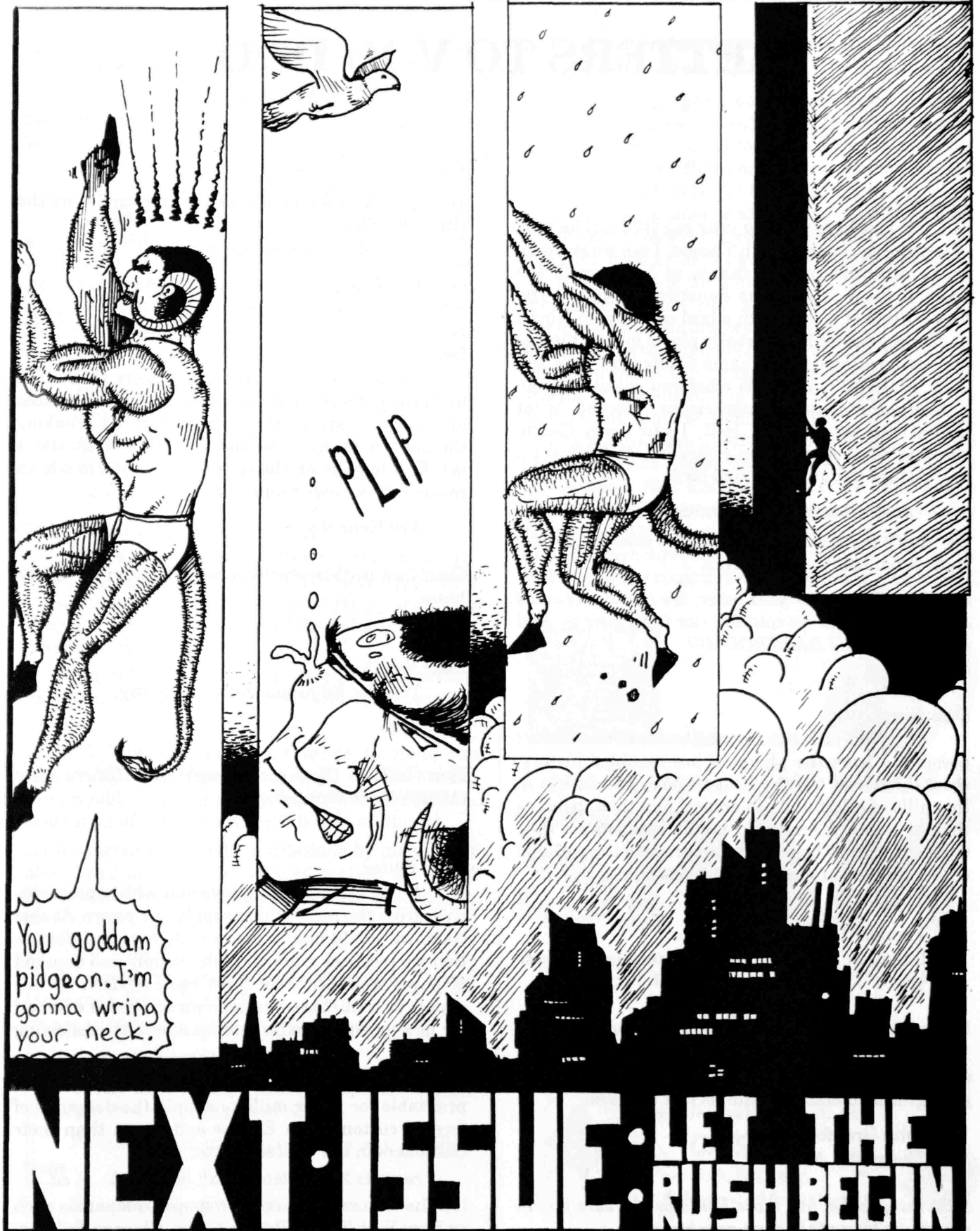
DAY · ONE











LETTERS TO VOO DOO

Dear Phos,

As I sit here reading your rag (v76 n1) instead of writing the paper due in 7 hours, I see what would be an otherwise almost funny, at least worth the space it filled, "Freshman Sensitivity Exam." The kicker, item G, a man with a bird on his head, keyed as "Jimmy Buffet Fans," really pisses me off. First of all, you spelled [sic] his name wrong. Try 2 Fs and 2 Ts: BUFFETT. Buffet is what you eat at Lobdell, a smorgasbord, not an experience. Second, what is that clip art picture? Hell, I saw Jerry Garcia running down Mem Drive yesterday, at least get a cool picture to put with a cool bird.

- Just a frustrated Cambridge Parrothead

p.s. that's the term you would have used for Jimmy Buffett fan had you had a clue.

JAFCP - Thanks for your letter. We took a picture of Jerry Garcia, but we couldn't run it because we had NO GODDAMN DARKROOM!!!

Dear Sirs,

We shall pick the ripened beans of democratic possibility from the plants of our troubled history, roast them over the fires of patience, grind them in the mills of effort and diplomacy, and then, pouring the hot water of American military assistance over these grounds of hope, we shall prepare the coffee of reconciliation through the filter of justice.

Thank you. Thank you.

President Aristide

hiding in my sock drawer, somewhere in Haiti

We got this one scrawled on the back of an envelope:

If you persist in sending me your mindless drug numbed pornographic rag, at least have the good graces to mail it to the correct address!

John Grenfell

Thorndike, Maine

Sure thing babe, but those Eskimos are sure gonna miss their bimonthly drug-numbed rag!

To the entity responsible for the crop circles by the Green Building:

What does it all mean?!!

Bob Ufo

Dear Phos,

What is it that makes cab drivers think that by putting the car in reverse and driving backwards on a one-way street, they're somehow not breaking the law? Actually, now that I think of it, maybe it is OK. If they break the speed limit by -50 m.p.h. in reverse, do we owe them money too?

Ted Kennedy

Good luck in those elections now Ted, and lay off the booze.

Dear Voo Doo,

The Doc Edgerton story was funny.

-lifto

Dear Lifto -- Glad you thought so. Others were OFFENDED! Fancy that.

Dear Editor,

In the last week, we have met with representatives from the mills which supply our paper. At this time, we would like to share with you the information we received concerning the supply and demand of paper markets. We have been advised by our suppliers that there has been an increased demand for newsprint and offset stocks due to the following reasons:

(1) The devaluation of the dollar has made it more profitable for paper mills to supply the demands of foreign customers in Europe and Japan than their customers in the United States;

reasons 2 - 6 deleted, blah blah blah... -- ed.

(7) The demand by large newspaper companies such as New York Times, Boston Globe, Chicago Tribune,

and Washington Post, just to name a few, has increased through January 1.

We have, fortunately, established excellent relationships with our paper companies and they have stated that they will be able to supply us with our inventory requirement provided we give them sufficient notice to produce these orders.

To this end, we would like to request that you provide us with your printing schedules for the next six months. These can, of course, be approximations, but should be as accurate as you can possibly foresee. This information is imperative in order to ensure that we receive adequate inventory as well as plan production time for your publication.

Sincerely,
Richard Saltzberg
President, Chuck River Press

Phos repsonds...

Dear Richard,

Thank you for your letter of September 13, 1994, laying out in gory detail the difficulties with the world's paper supply. We will be happy to provide you with our publication schedule, as best as we can determine it.

Please be aware that our schedule is subject to a variety of considerations, some of which I enumerate here:

- (1) MIT Physical Plant may decide to route the Kosher Kitchen's chimney through our darkroom. This would make our paltry facility the largest concentration of hot, toxic gases this side of Bhopal.
- (2) An increase in cattle mutilations by malevolent aliens will increase the price of beef on the world market, which will in turn increase our expenses on hamburger.
- (3) There is no reason (3).
- (4) Someone may mistake our door for GAMIT's and spray pink foam all over it.
- (5) My thesis proposal may be approved.
- (6) Two words: friendly fire.
- (7) We may have finally reached that critical mass of people that we have pissed off.

Please contact us if you require any clarifications.

Sincerely, Phosphorous

To my dearest Phos, for whom the sun appears to rise up out of the sea,

How I long to gaze upon your delicately sculpted china-doll earlobes, so cool and glimmering against the fiery beauty shining from the folds of your deep, wavy hair. Your fine nasal hairs glisten beneath your lovely proboscis like the cilia of a paramecium in the silver autumn moonlight. I miss the sweet caress of your elegant feet and think back to the days when we used to lie beneath the old oak tree near the river and pick the lint from each other's toes. I remember how the soft, supple folds of your elbow reminded me of the billowy clouds overhead. How the wind blowing through the hair on your dainty fingers reminded me of the rabbit-bitten meadow grass in March. I remember the hours we spent together picking out conic sections, and rational functions, and modulated sinusoidal waves dotted on the azure sky in soft white cotton. You brightened the darkness of my heart like electrons excite the atoms in a tube of rarefied gas and shone into my life with the radiance of a billion gigacandelas. We went together like the carbohydrate and lipid chains on a virus match and the receptors on an antibody, and shared



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our lives with each other like two covalently bonded atoms share electrons in a diatomic molecule. The warmth of your heart had the kinetic energy to cause hydrogen bonds to break in the amorphous, bacteria resultant, dairy product in a cheese sandwich across the room.

Now my life is darkness. I cannot wait for us to be together again.

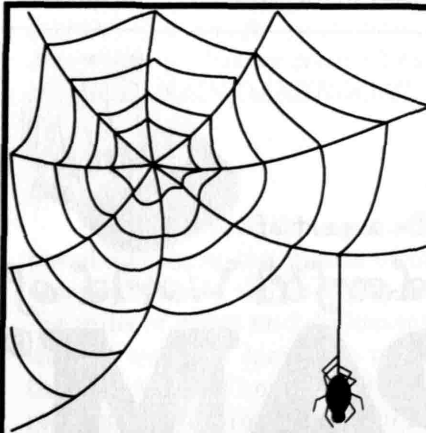
The day I lost you was like running into a hard cold wall. The consistency of my heart is nothing without the starch metamucil-like fiber of your love. You stretch my heart strings like the croakies that firmly hold the myopia correcting lenses on to my watermelon shaped head. The cold, harsh world echoes in my ears and dances distorted before my strained eyes. Every day becomes a search for your Venetian beauty; the disappointment, the agony, the defeat when I realize I have missed you again freezes and cracks my heart like a rubber ball in liquid nitrogen. Sadness looms over my soul like a herd of yaks, and God himself seems to laugh at how pathetic a wretch my longing for you has turned

me into. My heart smitten and my spirit broken, I drudge on through the day like a marionette dragged through the dirt. The warm love I once had has turned to an absolute void, and can grow no colder, no denser. My universe has collapsed and shrunk into nothingness.

The thought of you reenters my mind, and then, like a cataclysmic collision of a proton and an antiproton, the universe is light again. I remember our love, our undying love, that marches on towards total passion until all energy is dissipated as heat. My thoughts of you abound like fissioning uranium atoms in a supercritical situation. I feel like our love was as powerful as the hydrogen fusion reactions of a billion billion stars raging across the firmament and I ask, how could it have ended?

-Lustful in Lobdell

Dear Lustful -- Phos responds that he/she remembers you fondly, but that love between a hip, androgynous, 75 year old cat and a nerdy little Carl Sagan wannabe like you just won't work!



ELECTRIC VOO DOO

from Athena :

add voodoo ; voodoo

or Voo Doo on the Web!

URL <http://www.mit.edu:8001/activities/voodoo/voodoo.html>

OS/2

M.I.T. Users Group

Meets on the third Thursday
of each month at 5pm in
M.I.T. Room 2-105 to discuss
the use and advocacy of OS/2

Next Meetings:

November 17

Programming Seminar :
Writing Native PM OS/2
Programs in C and C++

December 15

Topics TBA

For information about joining our
electronic mailing lists (the
announcements-only list or the
discussion list), or for information
about writing for our monthly
newsletter, "OS2@MIT",

Contact: os2admin@mit.edu

WWW Homepage: <http://www.mit.edu:8001/activities/os2/os2world.html>

WANNA BE
MAINSTREAM?
THEN MAYBE YOU
SHOULD READ THIS...

HOW TO DRAW THE

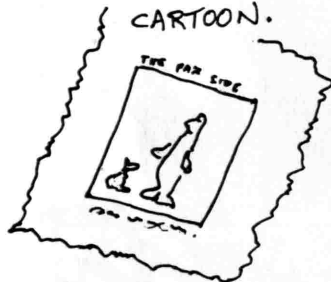
SUNDAY COMICS

FOLLOW THESE EASY-TO-FOLLOW INSTRUCTIONS TO SEE HOW THE MASTERS CHURN OUT THOSE WEEKEND WONDERS!

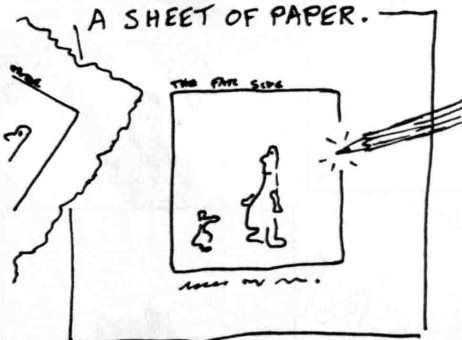
LESSON UNO: NON-SEQUITUR



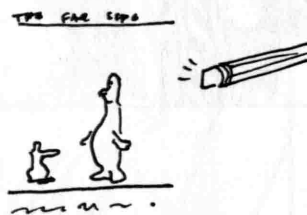
STEP 1. FIND A "FAR SIDE" CARTOON.



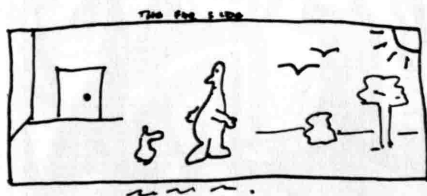
STEP 2. TRACE IT ONTO A SHEET OF PAPER.



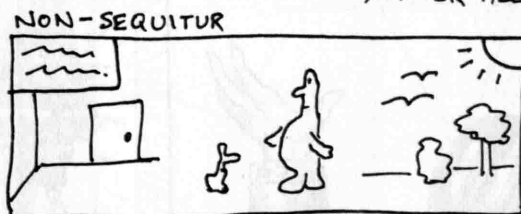
STEP 3. ERASE THE LEFT AND RIGHT BORDERS.



STEP 4. EXTEND THE LENGTH OF THE PANEL, AND DRAW SOME JUNK IN THE EXTRA SPACE.



STEP 5. MOVE THE CAPTION TO A BOX IN THE UPPER-LEFT CORNER, AND SLIDE THE TITLE LEFT. ... MAKE SURE YOU USE THE NEW TITLE! IT'S A NEW STRIP, AFTER ALL.



SA: THAT'S IT!
EASY, HUH?
STAY TUNED
FOR LESSON DOS!

NEXT TIME:
BLASPHEMING
SPACE MAN
SPIFF.

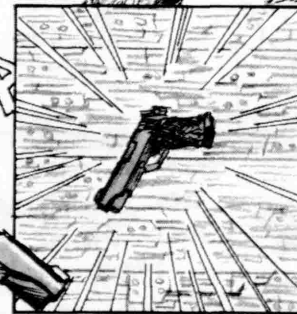
COMMENTS
mphurst@mit.edu

THE Snapdragon Chronicles

Government Research Center. MICA Project.

Hmm, kaon flow nominal, heat sinks are nominal,

um, hey - do you guys hear something?

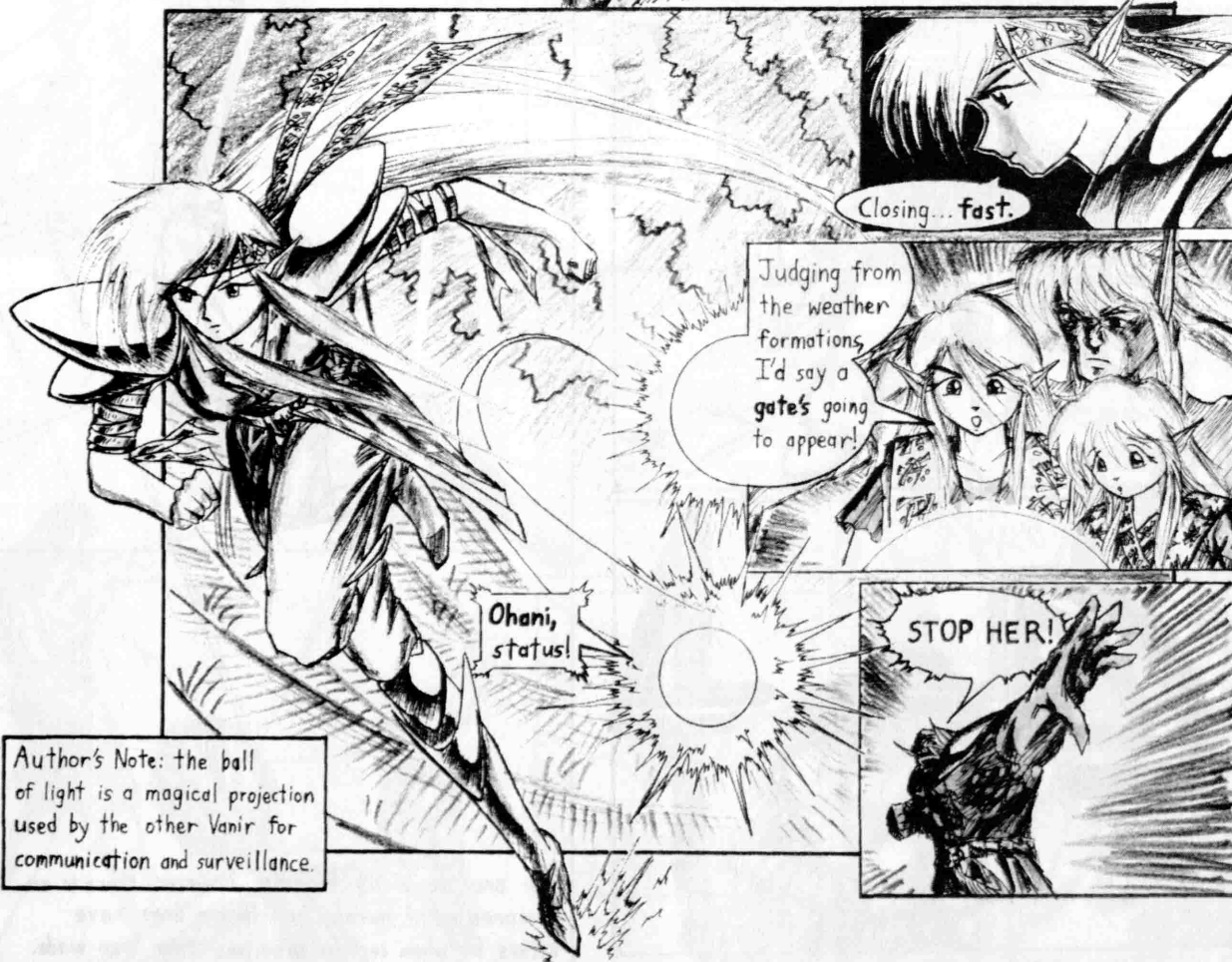




Although there are swifter and less complicated ways to establish "gates" between **very distant places**, even if the Vanir possessed such knowledge, they would be **loathe** to carry out the morally **compromising** methods involved.



For one such as **Horrin** however, there is **no** compromise of morals. And **Horrin** does have **allies**, for whom certain **promises** have been made.





Ohani-please. You will not be in synch with the gate. Your displacement is uncertain. We'll kill him next time. Okay pumpkin?



Siana, in range. Begin analysis.

COME!



Ohani!

This gate goes to where Cygnus is!



in



Siana, I'm going





One Night, part VI

Breakfast of Champignons

by James Fleming

Wow, it's about time I finished up with this story. For all you froshlings out there, here's the scoop. There's our narrator, this anti-hero David, living in Boston, finding odd jobs in and about the Boston area for the last 15 years since his bout with electroshock therapy in 1978. He's spent these years in a stupefying haze of alcohol, cocaine, mescaline, heroin, you name it. He recently heard that his ex-girlfriend Jeanine is now ex-alive as well, and has followed clues on some negatives and a box of chocolates to Disney World, to the secret hideout of a man claiming to be his long lost brother, who appears to head some sort of secret organization. Just refreshed from a bath, shave, haircut, (and just a sniff of cocaine) he goes to confront this man at breakfast.

The topless French maid escorted me down the main corridor, through a few turns and into the main wing of the building. Here the questionable industrial appeal of black brick and drop ceilings faded into marble floors, white stucco, plaster moldings and chandeliers. Billowing curtains covered bright bay windows that on further inspection proved to be nothing more than ventilator grills ringed with fluorescent lights.

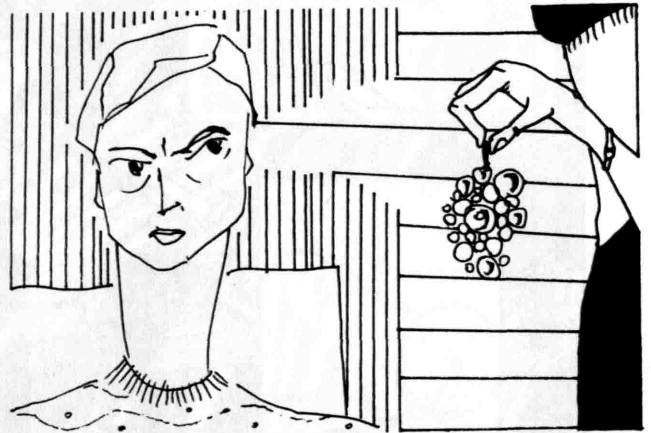
We proceeded from this room to a similarly furnished breakfast room, where the man claiming to be my brother relaxed at a table lushly adorned with fruits, juices, yogurts, and nuts, all on fancy china service. My escort showed me to my seat, pushed me in and remained standing at my side. My "brother" looked up at us, all golden tan, sandy blond hair, hawkish nose, and comforting hazel eyes. Dressed in simple white silk pajamas, he looked young, very young, perhaps 19, though his eyes gleamed with an arrogance and command that belied this estimate.

He looked me over and laughed, "Well Clarice! You've outdone yourself. Brother, you look years younger! Your sleep and grooming have done you well. I trust Clarice's ministrations were not too harsh?" He raised an eyebrow.

I dabbed at my nose a bit and sniffled. "Yes! I mean no! She was fine, really very nice, and

attentative too. Godamn, she's a fine filly alright!" I pinched her bottom, eliciting a polite smile from her and a frozen stare from my brother.

"Well, good. Clarice, that will be all, my brother and I will be breakfasting alone." My maid departed silently, closing the doors behind her.



I grinned, riding that train, high on cocaine. "So, let's make a deal here, brother. You know, all this stuff about Jeanine aside, I want some answers. Mostly, about our past. I've told you I have no memories before my uh, therapy at McClean. However, I will also concede that in 1978 I was registered at McClean as a patient, male, in his mid twenties, and that now, after a good bath and shave and haircut, I appear to be still, indeed, a man in his mid-twenties. I've worn bell bottoms *twice* in my adult life. That alone could mark me as immortal. So tell me, bro, if I may call you that, what is the deal? That is to say, what are you doing here, what am I doing here, what is all this?" I waved my hands around.

My brother smiled at me from across the table, and gestured to the food. "First, we must eat. In the morning one should eat only fruits, juices and yogurt, so as not to shock the digestion. Do have some. I shall." He helped himself to orange juice in a silver pitcher, some yogurt, oatmeal, and sliced fruit. I stared around anxiously for coffee and pancakes or sausage and bacon.

I smiled graciously, completely confident in my abilities to handle this situation. "How about some

coffee and eggs, or donuts or something? That is what I truly crave this morning, my brother."

"Brother brother brother, such things are not at all good for you. Caffeine, in the morning! Only to be used as a mild simulant in the afternoon. One musn't rush one's own body you know. Not healthy."

I smiled rabidly at him, and sniffed again. "Well then, breakfast it is!" and I grabbed some grapenuts and fruit and yogurt and orange juice, and began devouring them with an unholy fervor.

I finished in ten minutes flat, my jaw aching from the grapenuts. Damn things. I tried conversing with my brother some more, but he only held up a finger and continued eating. Finally, he finished the last pulpy remnants of his orange juice and cleared his throat. "You would like some answers, but I must tell you that I've been intentionally holding back this information from you since learning that your memory has been impaired. At one time you had a very keen eidetic memory, truly photographic, or perhaps better put, videographic, and I would like to see if we can elicit these memories of pre-1978 from you."

I laughed, a short bark, and began tapping my knee uncontrollably. "You haven't kept up with me that well, have you? Do you know what I do every day? I can hardly remember what I did an hour ago. McClean itself is more a memory of a memory at this point, and that was only fifteen years ago. I don't have an eidetic memory. Sorry. Hey, why are you on such a health kick, if you're immortal?"

My brother merely smiled and leaned back in his chair, steeping his fingers. "I believe the man I once knew and loved as my brother is still there within that delirious wreck I see before me." His smile turned suddenly bitter. "I will tell you this. You are my younger brother, make no mistake. You look at least six years older than I am. Your intempered life style and irreverance towards your body has done this to you."

I raised my eyebrows, then lowered them again, the crystalline mirth of my cocaine high suddenly abating. I felt irritable and cranky, and didn't exactly like his tone. "That 'delirious wreck' you see before you is pretty fucking pissed off about his ex-girlfriend getting axed by a prancing new-age adolescent. Cut the crap, why am I here?"

My brother's head dropped a fraction of an inch and his voice lowered. "I've told you why you're here. I've brought you here to rejoin me and my operation. As soon as you realize where your loyalties lie you won't care about your little Jeanine plaything any-

more. Now answer me, what particular drug did you have on the first of this month."

I laughed, the fool. "No particular drug, I assure you. The first of this month? Which month is that? I really don't know."

"It's October. Now answer me, what was the first drug you had that day, a few weeks ago, the first of October."

I shrugged and then remembered a newspaper header "THE BOSTON GLOBE, WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 1" read on a shaky morning wakeup involving whiskey and scrambled eggs at a nearby diner, cut with some crystal meth for that little wake up kick. "Meth. Crystal meth, five in the morning."

"And so, mister I-have-no-memory, where were you at the time?"

"A diner. Dolly's actually, they were trying to close just as I got there, and they strongly objected to my whiskey. But I've always tipped well, so Eileen, the waitress, let me stay and cooked for me."

"What was she wearing?"

There it was in front of me clear as day. "Her usual little goth outfit, black turtleneck, black jeans, black sneakers. She never really got out of the eighties."

"How did she look?" He leaned forward.

I saw where this was going, and didn't like it one bit. I knew exactly how she looked. She looked bedraggled after a long night of serving loser townies and fending off passes made by overweight middle aged men. One strand of her black hair was loose and hung over her right eye. She had batted at it occasionally. When she brushed it back you could see the broken fingernail and scuffed red polish on her right hand. There was a spot of mayonaise high on her left shoulder that no one had pointed out to her. Her lipstick was all but worn off, replaced with simple lip gloss. There was a small pimple on her chin, the little chin that I often stared at and lusted to hold and pull against me so that we might kiss. Her sparkling dark brown eyes, almost black, were tired and slightly bloodshot yet happy to see her best tipping and most unfailingly polite customer. The daily special on the menu was -- "No! Hey!"

I shook myself and remembered where I was. I tried to close my mind but memories of that morning came rushing in, in an uncontrollable flood. Memories of the whole day, meetings with people, friends, clients, associates. Memories of that day melding into night and ending with drinks at a bar with a minor mob figure. Memories of the next day and the next and the next... I stood up straight, knock-

ing over my chair and holding my head. I fumbled around in my non-existent coat for a non-existent bottle of whiskey. I looked at him get up, which seemed very slow, but by the time I hit the ground he was there holding me. I remember only the clash of tableware and voices until there was darkness and nothing.



Bottle. Smooth bottle opening. Smooth bottle opening on lips. Whiskey! I grabbed the bottle and sucked it down eagerly, it helped the weird feeling in my head, the pressure of memories threatening to overwhelm me. I opened my eyes to see that the bottle was held by none other than my good maid Clarice, no longer topless, and wearing a nurses uniform. I was in my satin canopy bed in the room I'd been given here. She smoothed my hair back with one cool hand. "He is awake now, Melesh." She withdrew, taking the bottle with her.

My brother stood over me, looking down at me. I tried to hold my head and simultaneously shield my eyes from the horrible light. Compromised by just sort of squinting and ducking under the covers. My brother cleared his throat. "That was your first lesson, dear brother. A little more harsh than anticipated, but just what you need. More will follow, you can be sure, if we're ever going to wean you off of your dependencies and get you back in the organization." He smiled. "I don't think you've been permanently injured by your electroshock therapy. You and I, we're very resilient."

I tried to nod and croaked "Chromosome 47."
[Ed. note: see last episode for more info]

He looked surprised and nodded. "Yes, yes indeed. How do you know of this?"

"Reports at McClean. Mutated copy of 15. We should have been non-viable fetuses... Melesh."

He looked visibly disturbed. "That was sloppy, Clarice. I didn't want to tell him our names. I wanted

him to come upon them himself. Get out before I hit you." Clarice left quickly.

"That's right David, I've done research on this myself. I suppose you know we're sterile..."

I was starting to feel a bit better, and pulled the covers down to my neck. "Actually I didn't know. All that money on contraceptives, ha." I took a long swig, then leapt out of bed. I felt silly then, standing uncertainly, bottle in hand. We stood silently, facing each other, him a little taller than I. Younger. Clearly younger. "Melesh? Is that your name?"

"Yes, what is your name?"

"I can't remember. furthermore, I don't want to. That was a dirty trick, what you did there earlier. If I wasn't your guest, I'd kill you for that."

"But David!" and his arms went out wide, his smile wide and handsome, "I merely showed you what you *could* be, if only you so desired! Once you again, you could be a god among men, walking among them like one of them, but knowing so much more, capable of so much more!"

I felt weak, and struggled against it, yet fell back into bed, holding onto my whiskey. "I'm tired, Melesh, please leave me, we'll talk later, really. I just need to rest a bit." I looked up at him, plaintive.

His smooth brow briefly furrowed in concern. "Very well, I've planned a dinner for you, a small dinner, you and me alone. If you need anything, Clarice will be outside your door. She's been assigned to you. Get some sleep perhaps." Melesh, my brother, turned and left without a sound.

Left alone I could only think and take drugs. Somehow my meeting with Melesh and his lesson of the true nature of my memory left me unwilling to get too high. I settled for some of the whiskey and half a joint pulled out of my bag. The usual pleasure and confusion of intoxication seemed barren. Like running away from something, perhaps. From possibility. From charm and grace and an easy manner that my brother so clearly had. I was left with myself: stark and unpleasant, unshaven, wild haired, wearing my trademark beat up black leather and jeans. Yet here I was; here was what I could be: sedate, washed, clean shaven, wearing silk boxers in a satin canopy bed in this immaculate white room with marble floors. I thought of my strange trip down here, the constant confusion of my existence, and the hope that maybe it could be different, disciplined.

I stopped drinking around noon and crawled over to the bookcase. I grabbed a scroll off the bottom shelf, unrolling it onto the floor, revealing Egyptian

heiroglyphs. Tiny little symbols, like insane beetles sprawling in the sun. I wished I could be there, the sun beating down on the backs of farmers and the painted faces of royalty.

Cold trembling dread tugged at my heart as a startling view of ramps and pyramids filled my eyes, unbidden. Expensive grape wine from Greece in my hands as Pharoah talked about his plans, kohl eyes wild in his face, red with drink, hidden under talc. Soundless I felt my mouth forming words I'd long since forgotten, oracular prophecies pulled straight from Delphi, bullshit pulled straight from my ass, provoked with drink and rare herb. Always the rare herb, drugs, *drogen*, meaning dry. I swept the scroll from my presence, staggered back to bed. I slept until Clarice woke me, my tear stained face pressed against the tender scented skin of her shoulder, her arms holding me as I continued crying awake, sobbing against her. "*Monsieur*, it's okay now, yes?"

• • •

She bathed and shaved me again as last night. This time I was unresponsive, unplayful. "*Monsieur* is not feeling so well. Do not fret, your brother loves you very much. We are so happy to have you here, *non*?" Discouraged by my silence, she quickly finished my bath, picked a fresh black wardrobe for me, laid it on my bed, and left.

I tried shaking off my feeling of gloom by drinking more. I was afraid of stimulants or hallucinogens for fear of triggering more memories. I tried remembering Jeanine, my dear ex-girlfriend, now dead, to stop the little bits of arid landscapes and dark featured countenances that crept into my mind when I wasn't looking. It was all too hideous. I went to my door. "Clarice, would you come in here?"

Clarice rose from her desk, where she was doing some paperwork. A few inches shorter than I was, light olive toned skin, black hair, wearing a white blouse and smart black jacket. Her eyebrows rose, "Does *Monsieur* desire anything?"

I tried smiling. "*Monsieur* desires answers, Clarice. When is dinner?"

The French accent dropped. "Twenty minutes, in his private study. I see you've dressed yourself." She paused to look at me. "I thought you'd never stop crying. You were wailing, like a baby."

"What does my brother do? What does Melesh do here, for god's sake?"

"Costumes, *Monsieur*, he's a costume designer

for Disney. Does all the great period pieces. He's a master, very highly paid."

I stared.

She continued. "He's brilliant really, his costumes are without compare, authentic with regard to style, color, material, and cut. He's very respected in his field. This is just an annex to one of the parade costume warehouses."

"What about all this conspiracy stuff, his 'organization', that he wants me to help out in. Not exactly a 4-H project, I gather."

Her eyes narrowed. "You'd have to ask him. I can't really say."

"Do you still have my coat and boots and stuff?"

She seemed impatient. "I had them cleaned, everything's in your closet. you won't need such impractical clothing around here though."

"What do you do here, Clarice?"

"I am... how you say... working my way up, you see?" She laughed, surprisingly dark and throaty. "I won't say he's a good man, but he's direct, and his instructions are clear. He's amazing, actually." Her eyes sparkled darkly. "You're another one, aren't you? God, what you've seen, what you can do..." She shook her head. "Well, *mon cher*, let's go! We musn't be late!"

I laughed and shook my head. "No. Tell him I'll see him for dinner tomorrow. Now get out, get the fuck out of my room."

She hesitated. "Now!" I yelled. She left, I closed the door, propped it closed with a chair and rummaged through my bag. I took a few hits of acid, mellowing it with heroin, the last I had with me.

I sat on my bed, waiting and watching while glimpses of earlier years, decades, centuries and millenia began stalking furtively around my bed, circling inward. I sat very very still, cross-legged, peering around. Deserts and ships and wars, back alleys, asylums, opium dens and palm trees, women and prophecies, prophets and ghosts all took tantalizing form in ragged smears around me, emerging and vanishing, teasing me as they circled and came ever closer.

I watched them for half an hour. Half an hour it took and they finally reached me and the screaming started. It was my screaming. Through the evening and the night they tore me apart. By the morning, I was gone; they'd killed me. Left me disembowled upon my own bed, whispering my own name over and over again.

To be continued... one more time...

Bob's Barbershop

by John Dzenitis

When I lived in Houston I would have my hair cut at a place called Bob's Barbershop, by a guy named Bob. I first went into Bob's because it was literally "within spittin' distance" of my house; this later turned out to be a drawback because many of the patrons practiced said vice. I returned time and time again to Bob's because it was a classic barbershop, not only in the archetypal sense, but also in the definitive sense. I know most of you have your hair cut at places like "Mr. Maurice's New Euro-York Salon," by a guy named Mr. Chad, but I think you would agree.

The first thing anyone would have noticed about Bob's was Bob, if he wasn't in the back chugging a beer. He was a frightening guy, not because he was huge or had weird tattoos, but because he looked insane and held sharp tools. His clothing was of the slickest polyester, and the shirt ("only nine fuckin' dollars at KMart!") stretched taut across his gut. His yellowish white hair was combed up and back over his head and held in place mercilessly by a substance known only to barbers. There was a weird orange tint to Bob's skin; its color was somehow in spiritual alignment with the shirt's. There were disturbing French Foreign Lesions bivouacking on his lips and hands. Let's just skip the teeth. His eyes, though, were really unsettling. These eyes had viewed the abyss, been unimpressed, and showered it with urine instead of tears.

I came to know and love and fear the shop itself. Being there was like visiting the 1950's without Michael J. Fox. There were three chrome-and-cracked-vinyl barber's chairs, but since Bob was the only person working, the other two served as recliners for regulars. The walls behind and facing the barber's chairs had long mirrors that bounced images back and forth across the room; each image was farther away and more distorted than the previous one, but they never ended. I could worry about what Bob's reflection was doing to my hair, and what his reflection's reflection was doing, and so on. The *Popular Mechanics* magazines were from the 1950's. Even the calendar was from that era, but it was only used to cover a racy swimsuit poster during rare emergencies. (That's not to say that those

swimsuits were worn in races; I think they would have dissolved in water.)

The wall furthest from the entrance had the complete set of Dogs-Acting-Like-Humans paintings, including *Playing Poker*, *At The Track*, *Fishin'*, *Playing Pool*, and *Pissing on a Tree*. The *At The Track* print attracted me, trying to figure out if the dogs were at a horse track or a dog track. If they were at a horse track, were humans or dogs riding the horses? If they were at a dog track, would the entire dog crowd bolt for the mechanical rabbit when it was released? Near the dog prints was a barbershop altar with various hair sprays, tonics, and restoratives. They had archaic lettering, and no one had disturbed them for years. A vacuum tube radio hummed from the top of the altar; the radio was permanently tuned to a station that existed not in present time, but in the period of its construction. Further in the back was a Spartan bathroom containing a seatless toilet, a bare light bulb, and a waist-high Styrofoam snowman frieze from some Christmas past.

Bob revered the tools of his trade in a manner befitting jihad accoutrements. There were electric clippers that reportedly cost thousands of dollars and whose scalp-guides reached scalp-searing temperatures. Since sharpening cost so much, they worked through a mixed process of melting and pulling one's hair off. He held his sterilizing box, which contained an ultraviolet light, in veneration; the box had the perfect aura of technology rendered as witchcraft. Bob's Daddy had given him the straight razor. The air compressor, though, was a unique barber tool. Instead of the standard vacuum system, Bob had settled on the air compressor and machine shop nozzle as a superior hair removal system. When he reached a point of prickly discomfort, he would grab the nozzle and blast himself from hair to toe, taking care not to blow out his lit cigarette. A split second after he said "close your eyes," the full force of the storm would be upon me. Unmoored hair would go sailing across the room, and my clothes, ears, eyelids, and lips would flap in the gale. Another sadistic use for the compressed air was "The Refresher." This unrequested treat involved applying

volatile organic solvents to a freshly shaved neck, then forcing painfully rapid evaporation with the jet of air.

I would go to Bob's on Saturdays around noon. This was also the time that the Bob's Barbershop Crew would roll out of bed, put on the same crusty flannel shirts and baseball hats from the previous night's binge, roll into Bob's, and start drinking again. The Crew would have been considered "scurvy" even in pirate circles. Many of them, in fact, would have been labeled "as scurvy a dog 'ere I've laid eye 'pon, to be sharr. Argh." During the week, they worked punishing manual labor jobs like tearing the testicles off bulls or installing track lighting in homes of baby boomers. Saturday afternoon, however, their job was to drink beer and badger Bob while he cut hair. They attacked these tasks with a verve that no bull or baby boomer had to endure.

On my first visit, I wasn't comfortable with the Crew. They were taunting a man who was chain smoking, drinking beer, complaining about back pains, hacking in the sink, and shaving around my ears with a straight razor. Things got better, though, after one of them squinted to read my shirt and yelled at me, "Hey, Dart Mouth, ya want a beer?" Several rounds later, I was sent on a sortie to the corner store for another twelve-pack. When I returned with a case instead, I was exalted on high. (In the interim, things had gotten ugly. One of the Crew had jokingly brandished a razor, and Bob had temporarily blinded him with "The Refresher.")

When the Crew was too sick to make it in or too rowdy to stay inside, Bob and I had some more personal discussions. He gave me updates on the health of his parents, which was failing. The warmth that shone through when he talked about his daughter was touching. He always asked about my brother, who had come to the shop once and damaged one of the waiting chairs by tilting back in it. Sometimes there were brief glimpses into his home life: "You know what I like the most? Gettin' a big ol' plastic cup, filling it up to the top with ice and milk, and watching porno movies with my old lady." There was some fluctuating and complex existential philosophy: "There're two kinds of drunks. You got your sad drunk, your happy drunk, and your mean drunk. That Slicer, I've seen him so drunk, he couldn't say his name." I never found out how many kinds of drunks there really were, or what kind of drunk Slicer was.

The fly in the hair ointment was that Bob was a racist bastard. This wasn't apparent at first, but crept into his conversation over the course of

months. There was no sophisticated philosophy in this realm; he would just add a "goddam [person of color]" to stories he told, or send a "fuckin' [ethnic]" flying out the door after anyone who walked by. When I would question these comments, he would acquiesce slightly, saying, "Well, I guess not all of 'em."

I tried to really talk to him about this, but I couldn't think of anything to say. ("So, Bob, why are you a racist bastard?") I thought about killing him ("Hold his head in the sterilizing box? That might take hours."). I considered boycotting the shop, but I doubted that would do more good than my feeble dissension.

So I would sit there, trying to dispense positive and negative reinforcement in a manner that would do more good than harm. He blasted my head with the compressor; I drank his beer; he shaved around my ears; I told him his daughter sounded like she was very nice. And every time he said something I would tense up, bracing myself for the various epithets. It was actually a relief when I moved away.

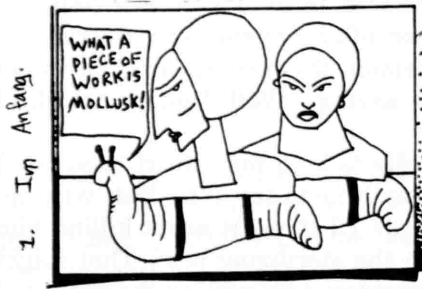
Now I live in Boston, and I haven't been able to settle on a new barbershop. I've thought about just shaving my head, but I'm afraid that there might be strange structures or markings on my skull. Or that I'll be mistaken for some Nazi Skinhead in serious need of a beating. As a compromise, I've opted for a five-millimeter-burr home haircut. Now I look like a monkey, a big Curious George without The Man With The Yellow Hat chasing me. Even with this solution there's still something missing.

I guess I might crave the tension of spending time with someone I both like and hate. Maybe it's the weirdness I crave. Maybe just the beer.



Stomachefoot and Puerco

by Sneaker



2. ENTRÉE!



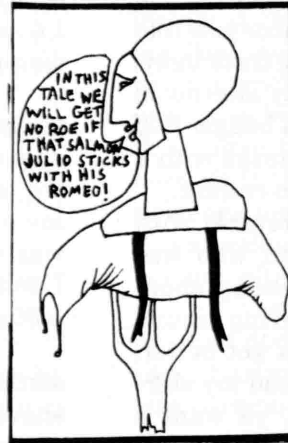
3. Understanding.



4. With a grain of salt.



5. dénouement.



6. Zum Ende.



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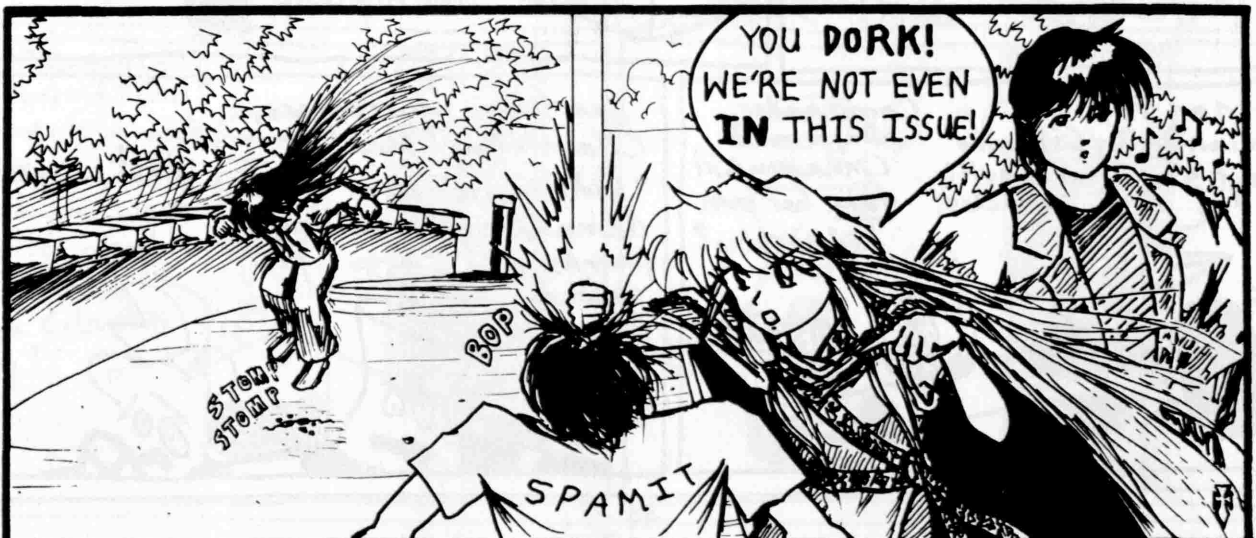
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THE ADVENTURES OF COMMANDER CORIANDER And his trusty sidekick, Cilantro Boy

EPISODE 2: MARY?

by Jason Bucy

The commander and his boy escape miraculously from the spice grinder death trap set for them by the evil Cinnamon Girl. They have been pulled from the rubble of a building in the Condiment Zone by Father Thyme and Sister Rosemary.

Father? Will they be alright?



They should pull through, Sister. See? The young one is waking up.

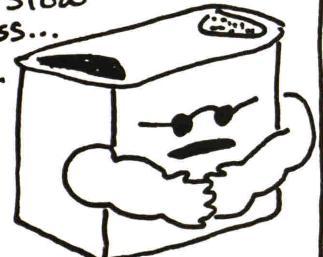


AAA!
Commander!
It's Cinnamon Girl and Mace!
They've got us!
Aieee!

WUMP



Oh my. Mind you, recovery is a slow process...



Later...



Father Thyme, Sister Rosemary, we can't thank you enough. But we must make haste and capture Cinnamon Girl!

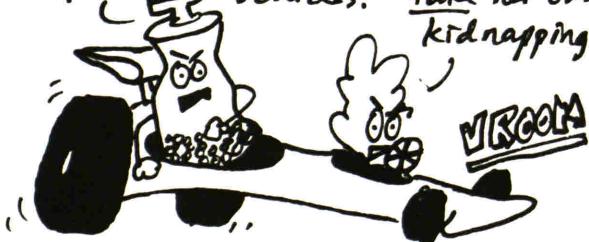


You are welcome. Charity is our duty. Good luck! Come, Sister, we must make dinner for the orphans.



Turn on the CorianDAR, Cilantro Boy! Scan for hostile vehicles!

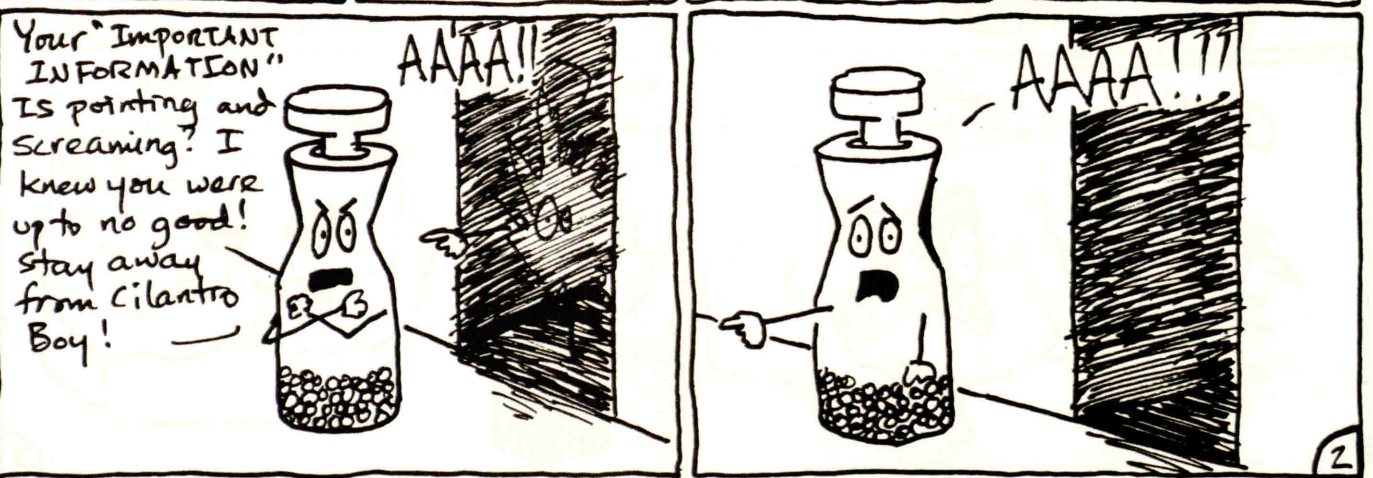
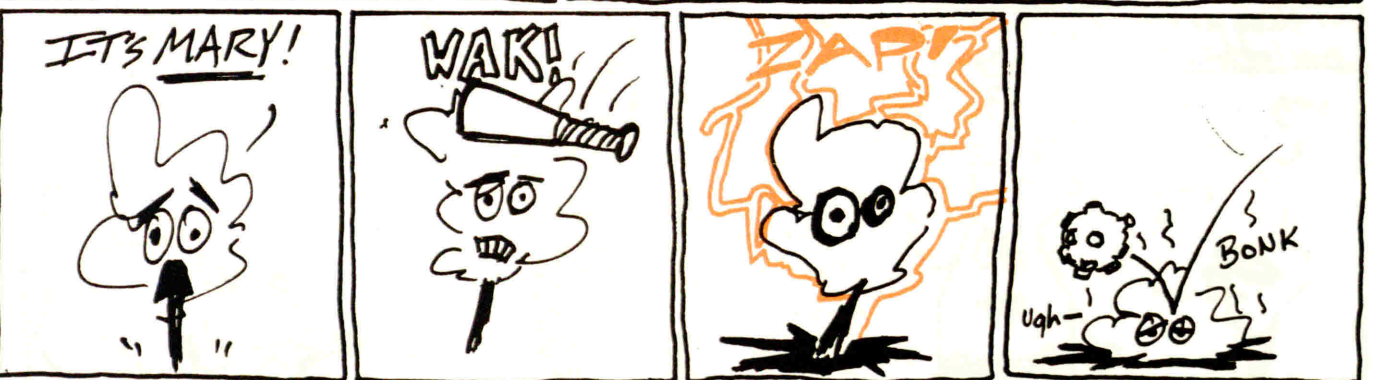
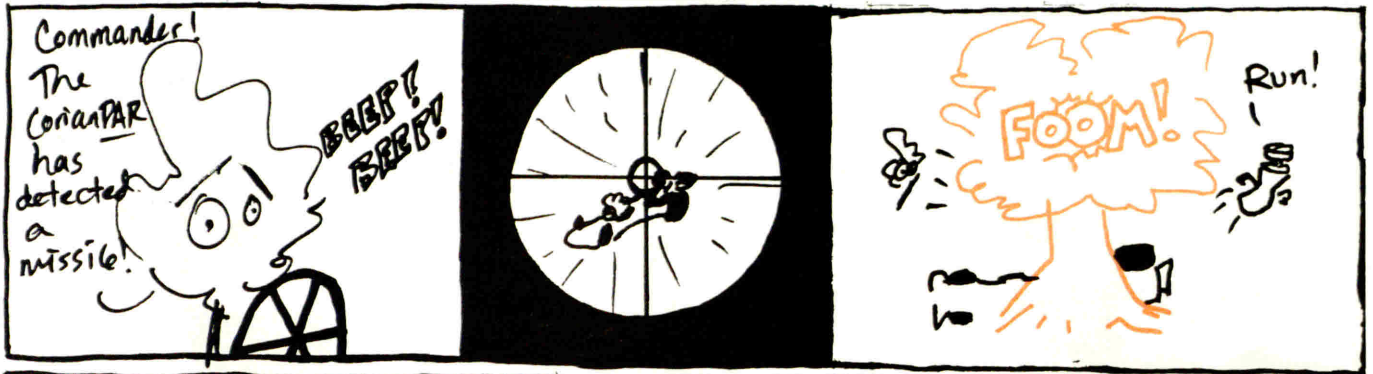
Commander, why would Cinnamon Girl fake her own kidnapping?

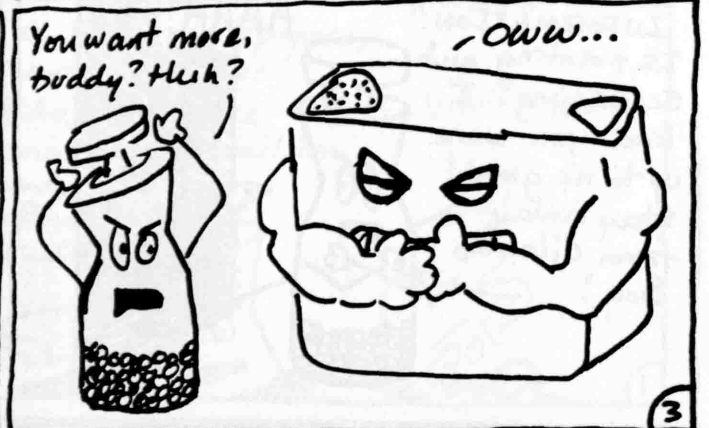
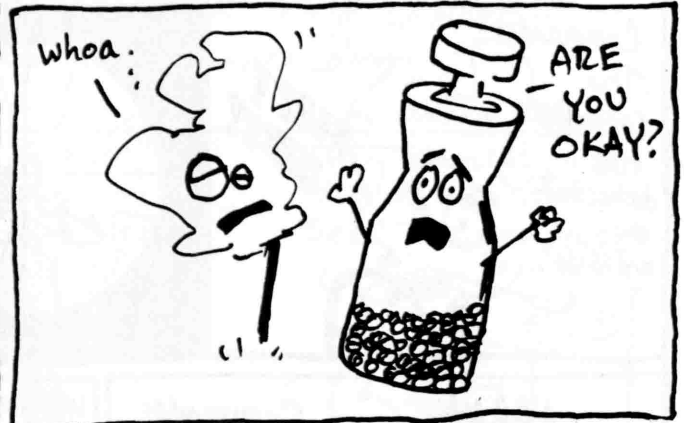


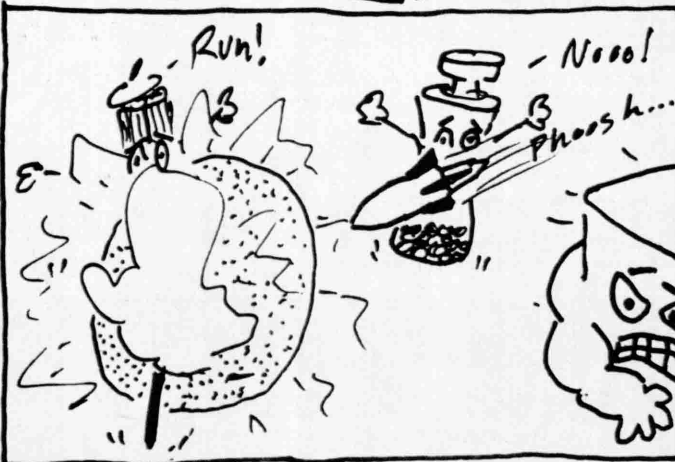
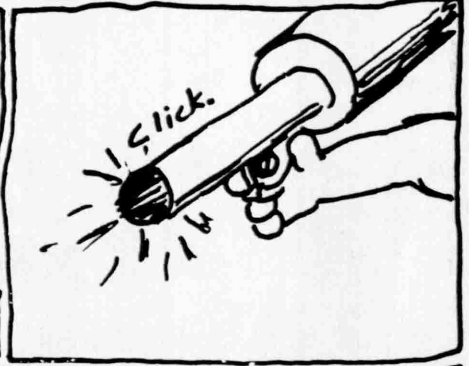
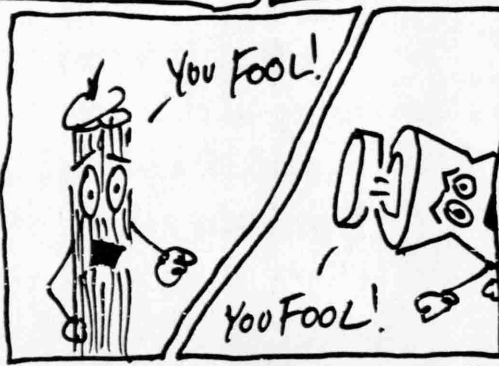
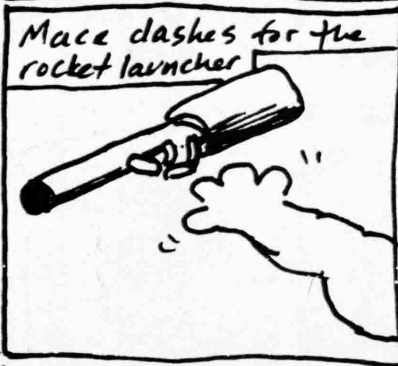
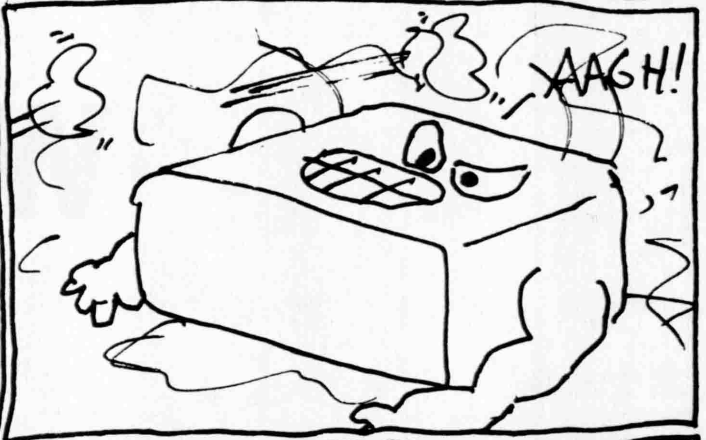
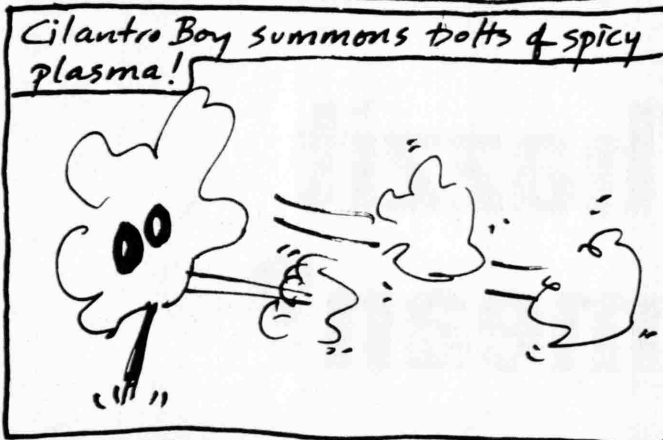
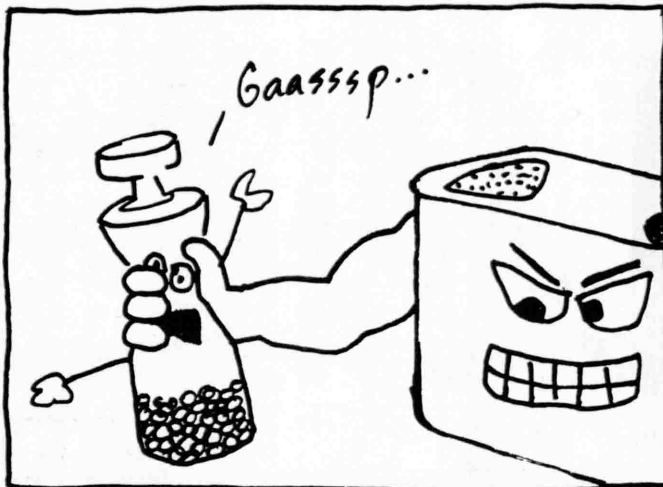
See those newspapers, Cilantro Boy? Her "kidnappers" are demanding a million pounds of saffron in ransom!

What a scam!










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