

Protoplasm
Press

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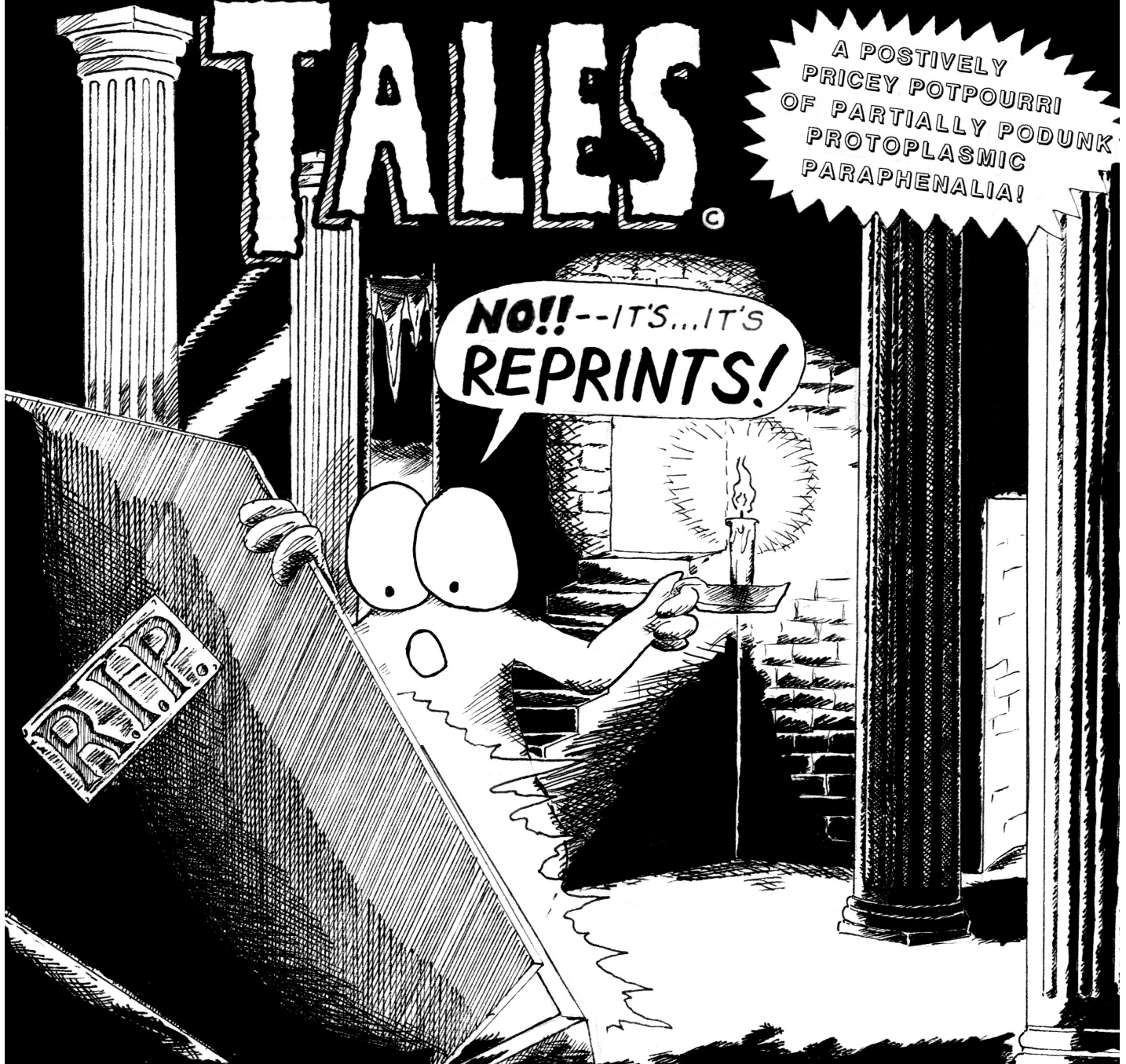
\$1.50

ONE-CELLED

TALES

A POSTIVELY
PRICEY POTPOURRI
OF PARTIALLY PODUNK
PROTOPLASMIC
PARAPHENALIA!

**NO!!--IT'S...IT'S
REPRINTS!**



THE SLIMEBALL SPEAKS (RETROACTIVELY):

I knew I was a goner the moment I saw it.

It sat on the racks at the local grocery store, waiting. It was after church on a Sunday afternoon. We'd stopped for some assorted groceries, and in my boredom, I was drawn to the magazine section. And there it was.

Star Wars #58. My beginning and end, my epiphany, my Rangarok, my addiction's beginning.

I'd known about comics for years, of course. Any self-respecting 10-year old did. But I'd never been more than a casual reader of these four-color fantasies. I was more into the other pastime of my generation, *Star Wars* and all the assorted sequels, games, costumes, action figures, and arcane accessories that came with it.

But that comic... The cover drew it to me right away. C-3PO and R2-D2 suspended in a blood-red sky that looked like the flames of hell itself, whilst below, spaceships hung in the abyss. The clash of gold against red, the fresh smell of the comic in my hands, the fact that these were adventures of my gods, my Baal and Buddha, the *Star Wars* gang that were the Hercules and Jason to a whole slew of panting, cheering kids.

The 60¢ was wrenched from my parent's pockets soon enough.

From there began a love-hate relationship with this medium that has yet to pall in the slightest...sure, my tastes have changed a bit, I've outgrown some comics and moved on to others, but never in the ten years or so since I started down this trail have I doubted the value, yes, the *need* a medium such as comics in a kid's life.

And of course, I made up my own heroes. What kid didn't? The Arachnoid, El Jaguar, Robotron, Silver Sorceress...all were there, leaping from rooftop to rooftop, cavorting in the skyline of my own private universe. The time came, though, that my own warped sensibilities took hold, and I started to get...*weird*. No more muscle-bound men in tights, I started drawing decidedly odd things like walruses and polar bears, and a little blob that could.

The rest of the story is pretty straightforward. Prometheus, the little blob that could, came forth as my Spider-Man or Batman...and others started fermenting in my warped cranium as well. Soon enough, I started using my minimal art skills to fashion whole comics using my pantheon. These got slightly better, until I really began to tell an actual story with them. The story? Glad you asked.

Prometheus #3-6 were done from my freshman to senior years in high school, with copious breaks between them, of course. They formed the tale I call "Only A Man," and that in turned became the basis for the series I'm presently doing, the one that started my acquaintance with the small-press network, *Amoeba Adventures*. The continuing adventures of Prometheus and all his pals, which I've managed to bring to far more people than I ever thought I could. And hopefully it gets better. Anyhow, with the moderate success of *AA*, I decided the time was ripe to fill in the background a bit. I've reprinted *Prometheus* #3-6, so that some of the events unfolding in *Amoeba Adventures* don't seem so arcane, and hoping that the less-than-spif artwork in some of these early tomes doesn't turn off those few devotees to Earth-Spongy and life on it.

I was also left with literally scads of other things in the Drawer Of Abandon. During those "copious breaks" between issues of *Prometheus*, I managed to keep busy. I did lots of sketches, started lots of unfinished stories, and even attempted a collaboration or two with friends. I figured that some of you might be interested in seeing what didn't make it to completion, or what I just did in my spare time between issues.

The stuff here in *One-Celled Tales* isn't meant to be Faulkner or McFarlane, or even equal to what I'm doing nowadays. Consider this the equivalent to a literary rummage sale, a Saturday morning garage sale in some suburb somewhere. Sure, there's a few cracked vases and board games with pieces missing, but there might also be that TV you're looking for, or an old suspense novel you thought you'd never see. Or maybe not. Anyway, *One-Celled Tales* is yours to browse through, and who knows? Maybe there is some buried treasure in it.

This sucker is dedicated to all those who helped or inspired me over the years...Eric Moul (thanks for KK!), Chris "The Scribbleman" Matthews, Nat Perry-Thistle, able assistant, Kim Taylor, proofreader and divine guidance, Aaron Teeling "without whom...", Sean Mick, "Bubblegum Head" Flath, and "Mr. Bore," not to mention all those who continue to give me ideas and aid me today...you know who y'all are!!

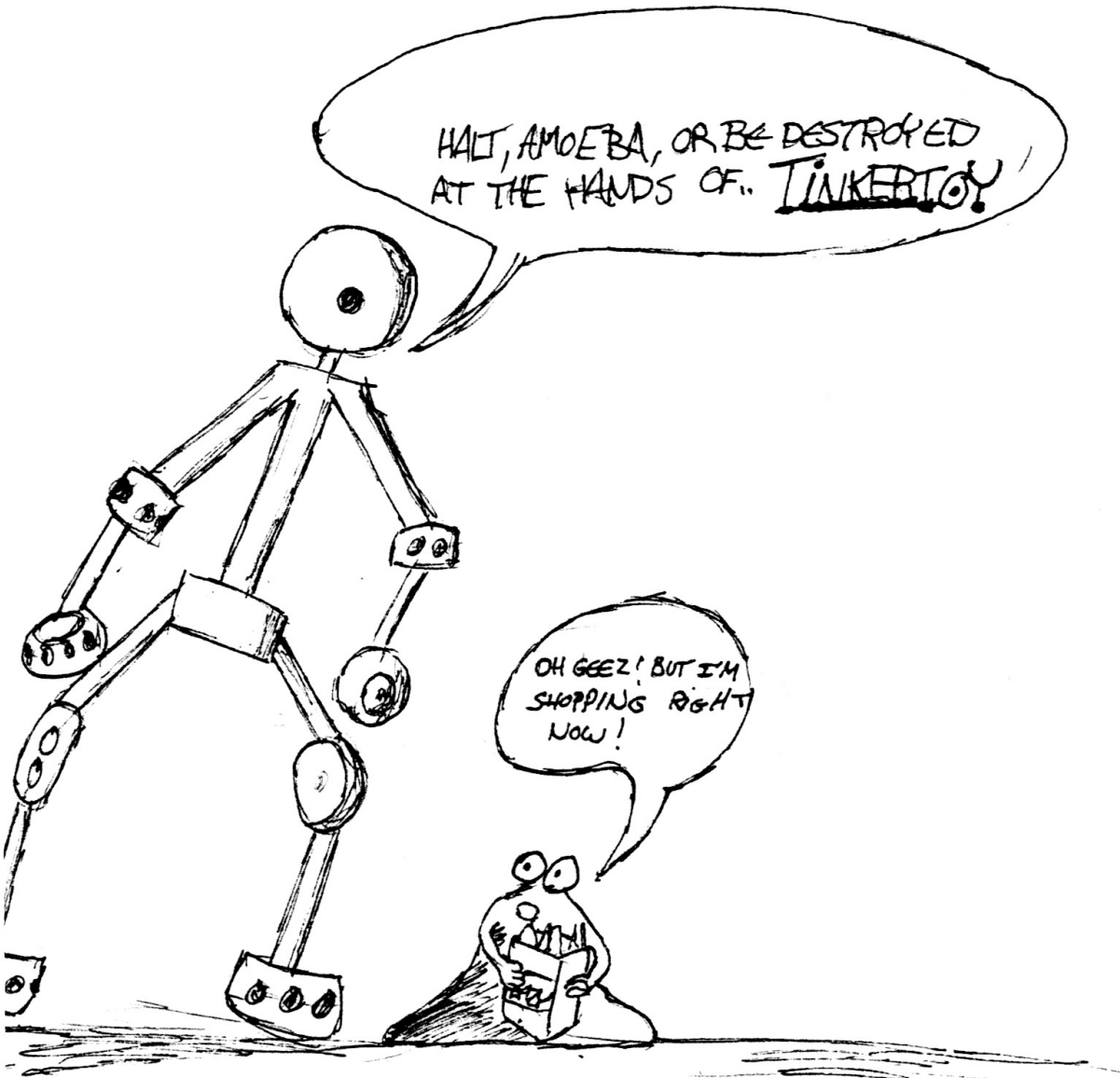


Protoplasm Press catalog now available for a paltry 29¢ stamp. We do windows and fine china.

Printed on recycled paper

ONE-CELLED TALES #1, November, 1991. Published because the little men told me to. One-Celled Tales, Prometheus, and all characters herein are © 1991 Nik Dirga. Reprints © 1986, 1987, 1988, 1989 Nik Dirga. Published by Protoplasm Press, PO Box 2230, University MS 38677.

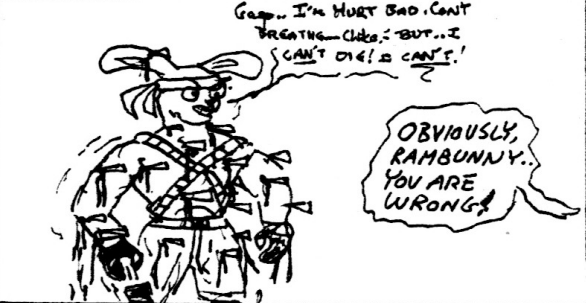
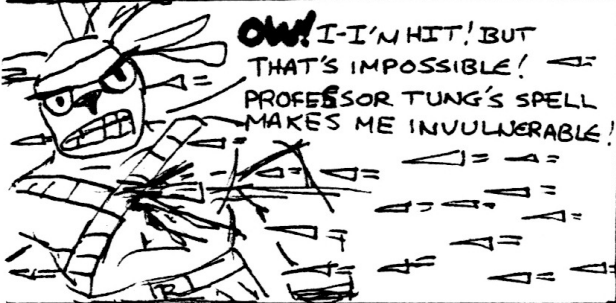
A quick sketch of Prometheus being confronted by Tinkertoy, by Mr. Nat Perry-Thistle.



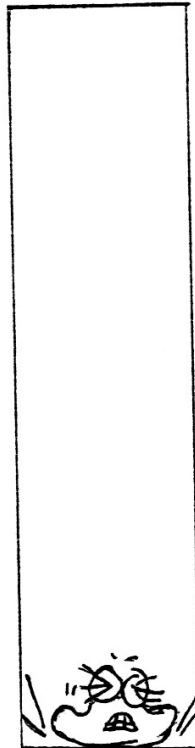
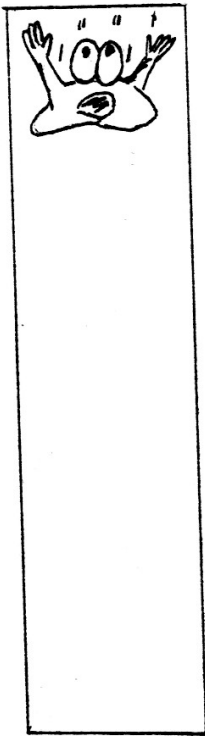
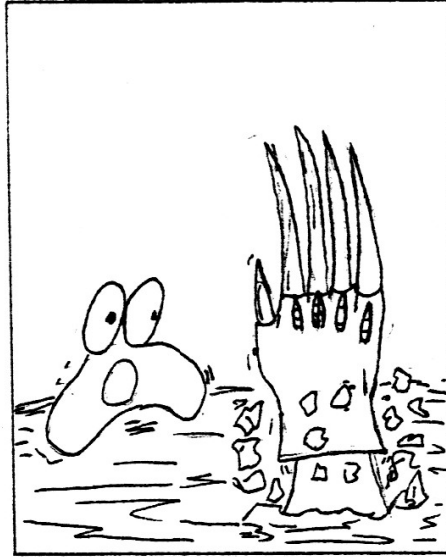
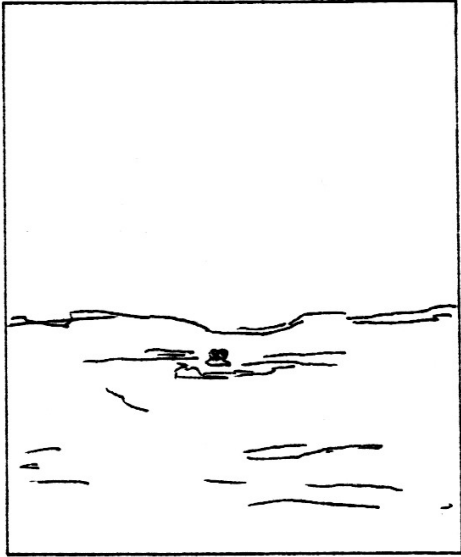
Ah yes, "A Protoplasm On Elm Street..." This story had numerous false starts. I wanted to introduce "Freddy-Plasm," the malevolent spectre haunting Rambunny in this picture, as the personification of Pro's "evil side"...I had some really cool visuals in mind for this short story, inspired by the "Elm Street" movies.

NK presents: A PROTOPLASM ON ELM STREET!

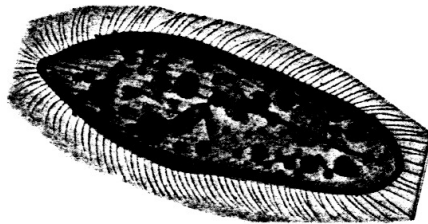
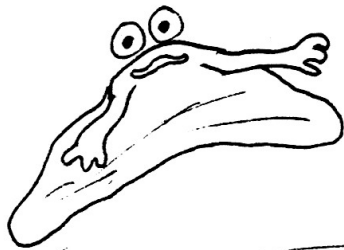
Night. Most of Spongopolis' residences sleep quietly. All but one. He is Rambunny. Inside his violent mind, tonight, there is one who doesn't belong.



I even tried writing it and having Nat Perry-Thistle draw it, the first time I'd ever had anyone else draw a story I wrote...this attempt was going to be more surreal than the first, with not a single word spoken throughout. It, too, never got off the ground, but I still think it would've been keen.



Oh, hi! I'm Prometheus the Protoplasm! How're you doing? Really?
Great! Uh-huh.. oh, him? He's my third cousin.. or nephew.. or
something like that. His name's Percy the Protozoa. We're
just sitting.. or floating around the old petri dish .. watching
some idiot with a microscope watch us! Boy, is he gonna
be surprised in a minute.. Percy's lunch didn't agree
with him, and he's feeling a little..er.. ill. Aim for
the jerks' pocket protector, Percy!



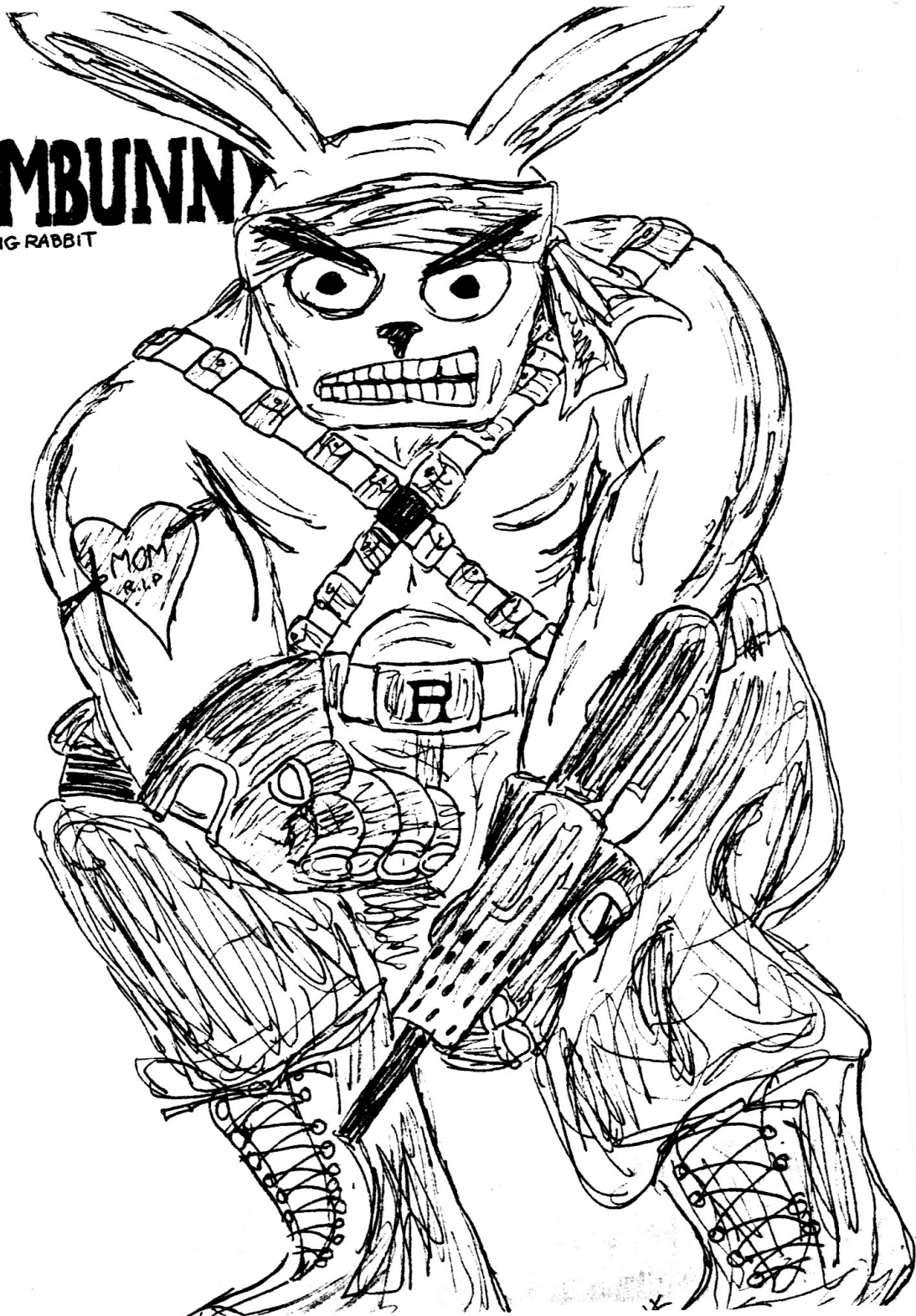
Urg....

NSI

My attempt at jumping on the parody bandwagon, here's Rambunny in his "Dark Knight" (or should I say "Dark Wabbit"?) pose....originally presented in *Prometheus* #3.

RAMBUNNY

THE RAGING RABBIT



Almost two years of time lay between the completion of *Prometheus* #4 and *Prometheus* #5. I figured I wasn't able to tackle drawing the Promethean as well as I wanted to be, so I just gave up and shunted the story to the back reaches of my drawer for the better part of two years. I did yank it out on occasion, producing a few covers that had nothing to do with the story. This one must've been done right after I did #4, judging from the art style. A hackneyed cover concept, without a doubt.

THUNDERBOLT
GRAPHICS
#5 SEPT.
1987

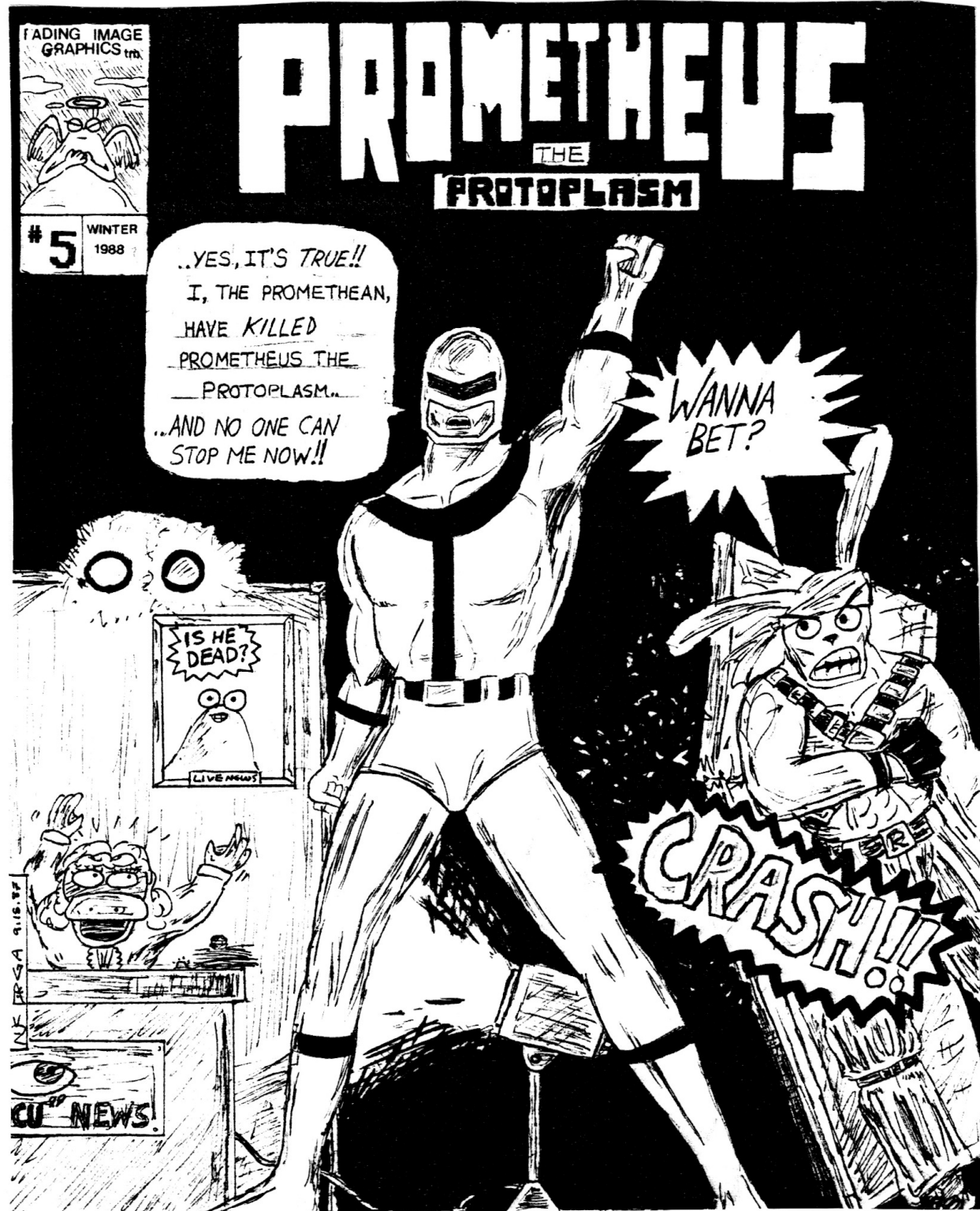
PROMETHEUS

THE
PROMETHEAN
MAN!

JUST WHEN YOU THOUGHT IT WAS SAFE TO BE AN AMOEBA...



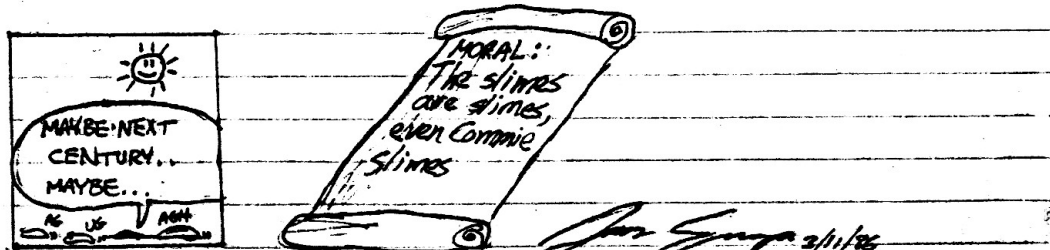
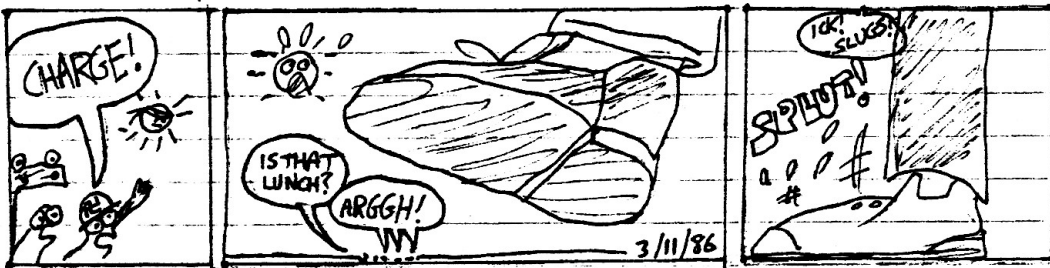
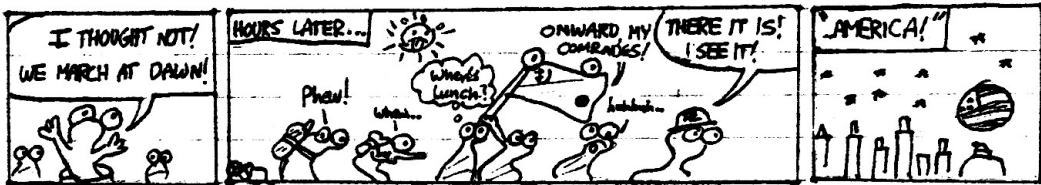
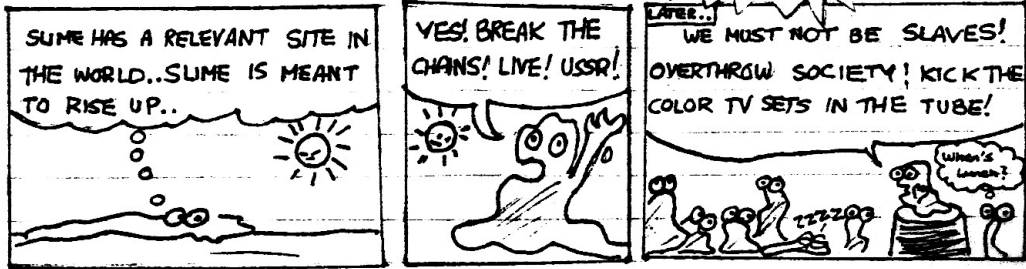
I think I got a little better with this second try, done during Summer 1988. I had some incredibly convoluted plot wherein Rambunny and Promethean would get on a fight on national TV to improve the Promethean's image, or distance himself from Prometheus, or somesuch nonsense. As you can see, it didn't make much sense to me either, and back into the Drawer Of Abandon the tale went. As a sideline, this was the first cover I did with a black background...I have ink tattooed on my skin to this day because of it.



Here's the one that started it all...the very first appearance of Prometheus, or at least the first one I can find. Done March 11, 1986. The rambunctious communist upstart pictured herein is slightly different than the fellow we all know and love today, isn't it?

PRESENTING: A CLASSIC!
THE FIRST APPEARANCE
OF PROMETHEUS... FROM
MARCH, 1986!

PROMETHEUS THE PROTOPLASM

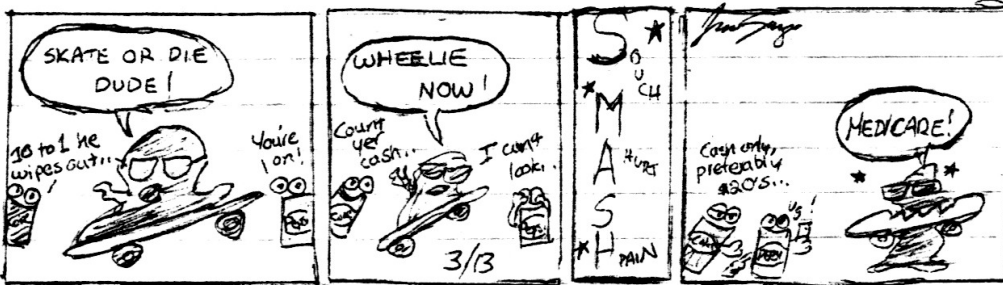


And another blast from the past...done in the days immediately following Pro's first strip, I did a few more strips. My idea was to make Prometheus into a comic strip, like *Garfield* or something. The mind boggles at the idea of seeing Prometheus stuffed dolls stuck on the windows of cars everywhere. Also, don't blink or you'll miss the very first appearance of Rambunny, looking very different than he does today.

PROMETHEUS THE PROTOPLASM by *Jason Siegel*



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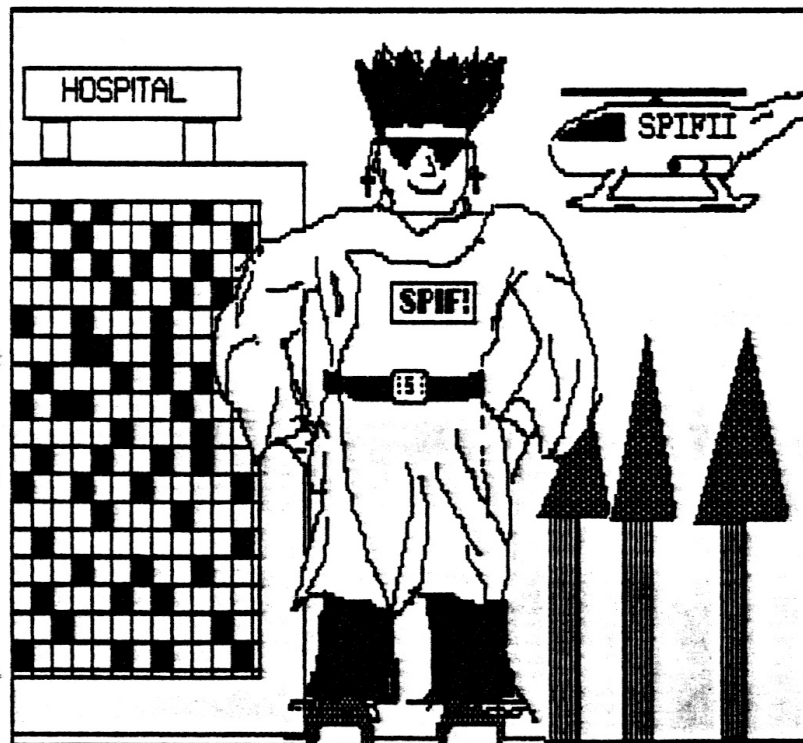


When we broke down and bought a computer, I had loads of fun playing with the Paint program...these "capsule origins" are one of the things that came out.

Rambunny was anything but a calm individual. A disgruntled veteran of the second World War, Peter Rabbit decided to take up arms against all who dared defy the laws of American Justice. He chose his name to become the name which would become the symbol of freedom to many: the name of RAMBUNNY.

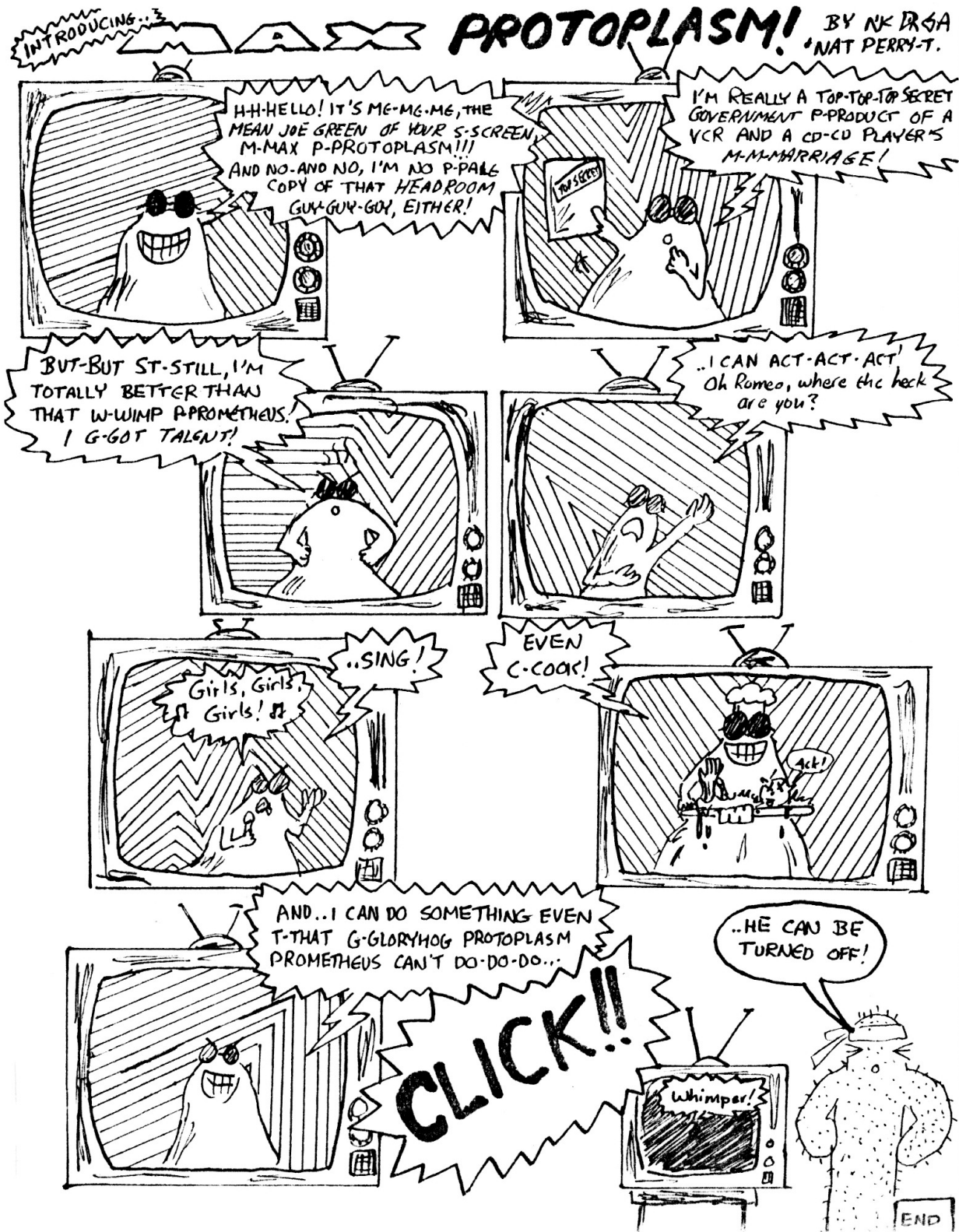


And on the other hand, there was Doctor Spif. He could be considered insane...but not in the same way that Rambunny was. A doctor who was wholly bored with life, Spif "punked out", became a crime fighting vigilante, and gathered a series of weapons to use in his fights with evil. His joke cracking and unique ways of combating evil made him a favorite among the Spongopolis citizens.



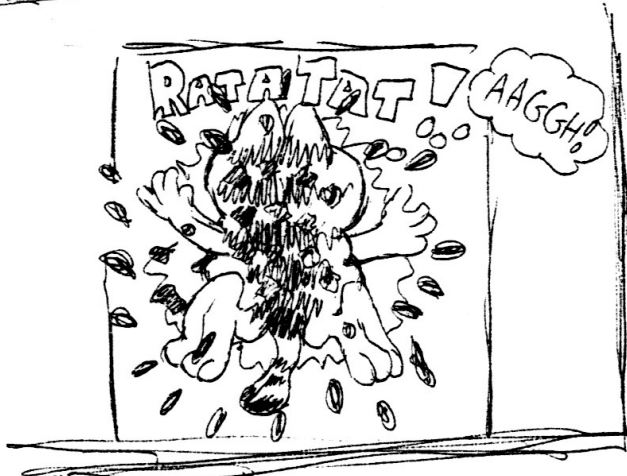
Yet where are the heroes without the villains to fight? Some of the foulest creatures ever imagined have fought the likes of Rambunny, Dr. Spif, and Prometheus the Protoplasn. And still, the heroes have triumphed every time they duel.

Max Protoplasm...without a doubt, one of my more idiotic parodies. Not quite as bad as Freddy-plasm, but bad enough...



Was I the only person that really hated that stupid cat?

In a small house in Anytown, USA,
the terror begins.



Now no one will
ever call him fat again!
Score one for me!



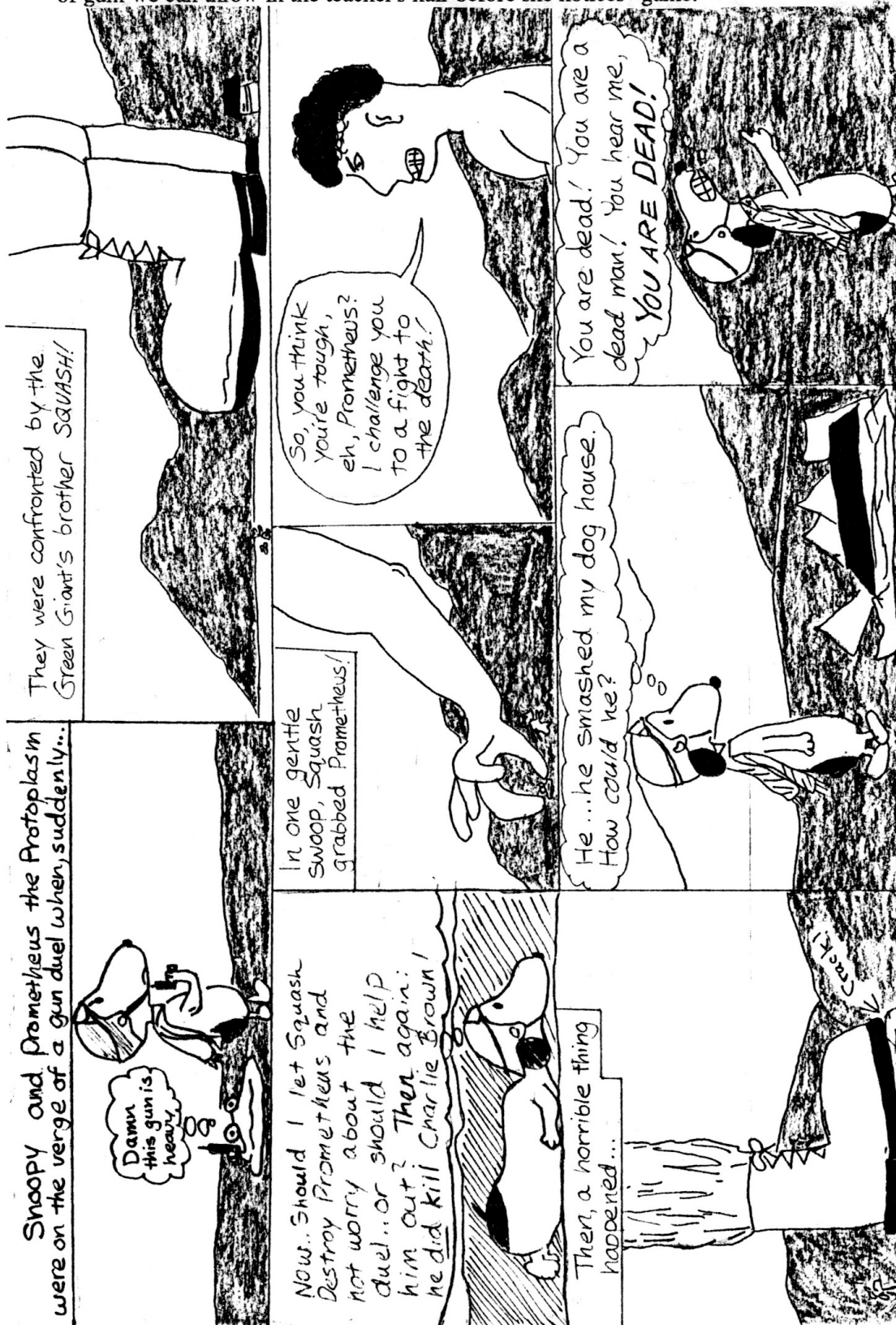
It's
PROMETHEUS
THE PROTOPLASM
VERSUS

THE

Garfield ©1991 United Features Syndicate

WORLD!!

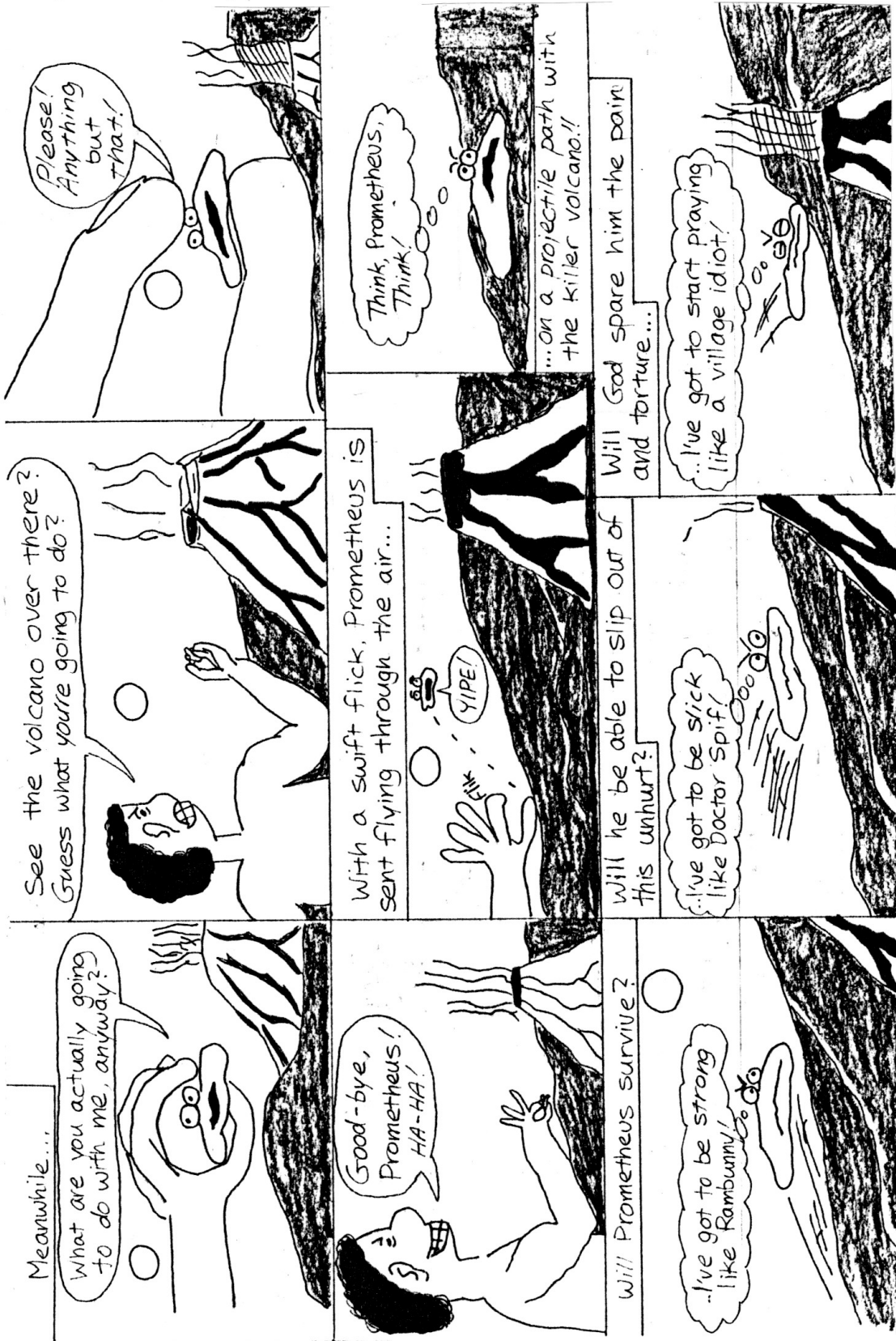
The man was warped. The man in question being one Aaron Teeling, of course, and the time being January or so of our freshman year. Aaron was not one prone to subtlety. A fellow prisoner in that same excruciatingly dull history class where *Prometheus* #1 & 2 were drafted, he'd animate the class a bit with such antics as emptying every trash can in the class from the balcony above, doodling obscene cartoons on the blackboard, and my personal favorite, the "let's see how many pieces of gum we can throw in the teacher's hair before she notices" game.



Snoopy ©1991 United Features Syndicate, Inc.

A fan of my still-primitive Promethean adventures, he decided one day to draw me an adventure teaming up a certain amoeba with none other than Snoopy...poor Charles M. Schultz never thought his creation would come to this end. Although it was never finished, I just had to show a sample page or two from the epic adventure written and drawn by Aaron Teeling, with lettering by yours truly. Be warned...like I said, the man was *warped*.

(E)



The original cover to *Prometheus* #3, which I chose not to use on the second printing.

THE ADVENTURES OF

PROMETHEUS

#3

FADING
IMAGE
GRAPHIX

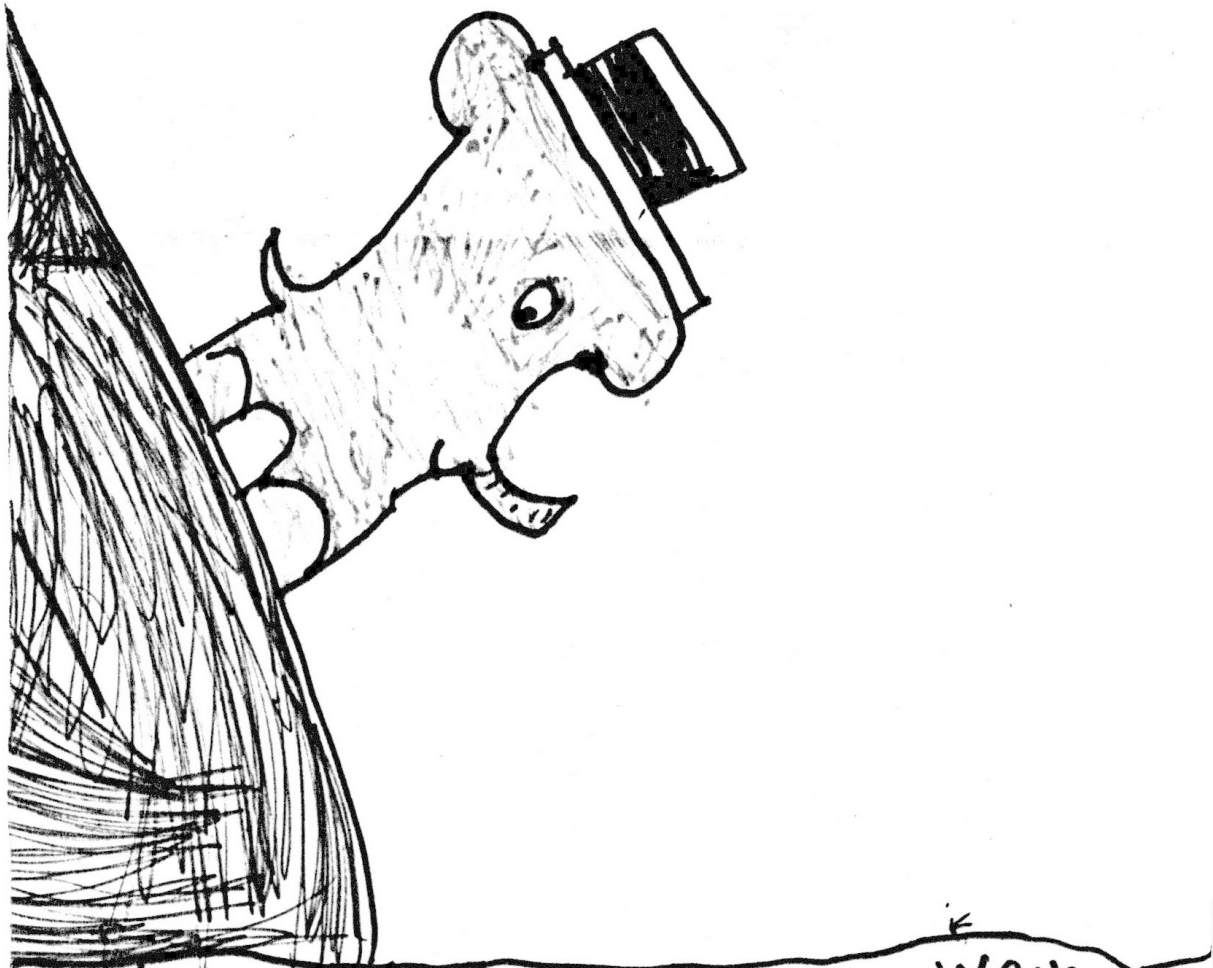
THE
PROTOPASM™

MOVE, OVER, SLIME!
NINJA ANT
IS TAKING THIS
RAG OVER!



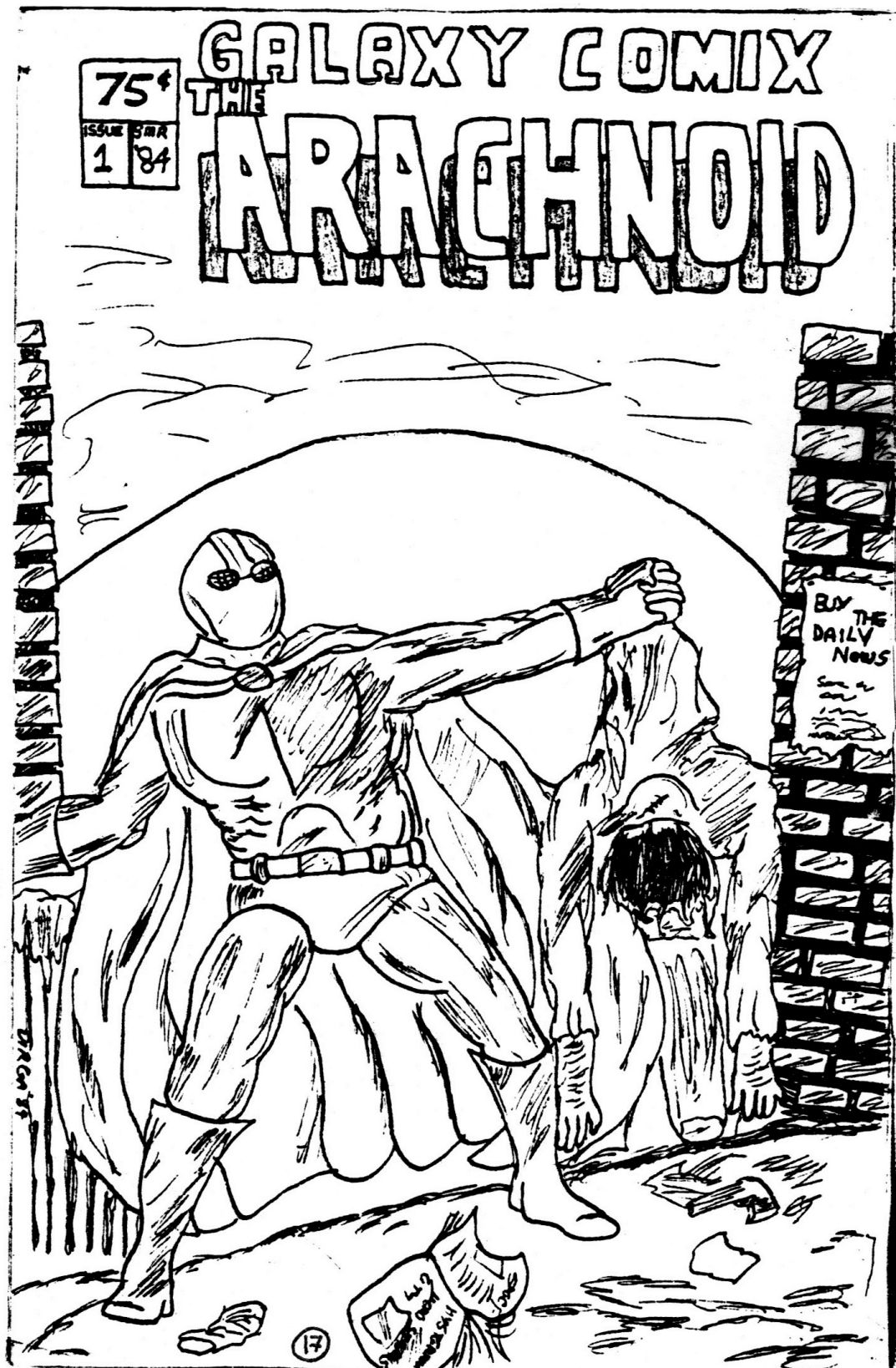
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A relic from my Daliesque surrealism period, or a somewhat askew rendition of an elephant, done around age 6.



...elephant WAS TAKING A ~~WALK~~ WALK.

Years and years ago, way back even *before* Prometheus came about, I was on my steroid-pumped Marvel rip-off kick and invented a whole mythological universe of superheroes and supervillains. Although I did zillions of sketches, this is the only actual cover that I did, for my Spider-man/Superman xerox called "The Arachnoid."



The ALL-SPONGY SQUADRON™

The original back cover for *Prometheus* #6.

