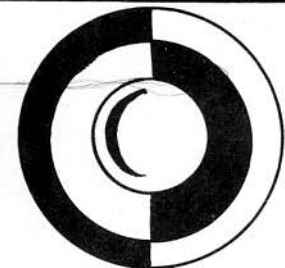


FANZINE '75

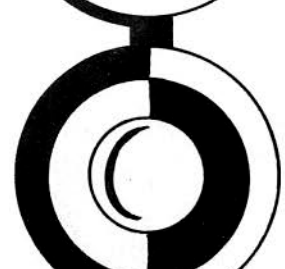
ARTICLES • SHORT STORIES • COMIC LITERATURE • CONTEMPORARY THINKING BY
MITCH SONODA • LARRY NIBERT • JAMES M. PACK • DAVE YETTER • FRIENDS



MITCH
SONODA

LARRY
NIBERT

DAVE
YETTER



NIBERT 75

JUST

RAPPIN'



I WANT TO THANK YOU FOUR PEOPLE FOR BUYING MY MAGAZINE. FANZINES ARE A TERRIFIC CHALLENGE AND WHEN SOMEONE BUYS A COPY, ANYONE BUYS A COPY, IT IS WELL WORTH THE TIME AND EFFORT. SO I WANT TO THANK YOU, MOM, DAD, AUNT MARY, AND MY WIFE CAROLYN FOR BUYING A COPY OF MY MAGAZINE. A GUY HAS TO START SOMEWHERE. (MAYBE I CAN FORCE UNCLE HARRY TO BUY ONE TOO.)

THIS ACTUALLY IS MY SECOND ATTEMPT AT CREATING A FANZINE. MY FIRST TRY WAS A 40 PAGE MONSTER CALLED "ERA & EON" THAT DIDN'T QUITE MAKE IT TO THE PRINTER. I FOUND OUT FROM THAT RATHER HAIR RAISING EXPERIENCE THAT MODERATION IS PERHAPS THE BETTER PATH. SO MIDWAY IN MY DEPRESSION OVER THE INABILITY OF "ERA & EON" TO MAKE IT, FANZINE '75 WAS BORN, AND OFF I WENT AGAIN.

MY EGO TOLD THAT I HAD TO DO EVERYTHING MYSELF BUT FOR THE SAKE OF DIVERSIFICATION, I LET A COUPLE OF NOBODYS DO SOME WORK IN IT TOO. THEY ARE MITCH SONADA, LARRY NIBERT, AND DAVE YETTER. MITCH HAD SOME OF HIS WORK PUBLISHED IN MARVEL COMIC BOOKS' "UNKNOWN WORLDS OF SCIENCE FICTION", LARRY WAS ONE OF WINNERS IN THE CHRONICLES ART CONTEST, DAVE IS A PUBLISHED AND HIGHLY ACCLAIMED WRITER OF SCIENCE FICTION, AND ME, WELL I DRAW NICE PICTURES FOR MY PET CAT. SO I DECIDED TO GIVE THEM A BREAK AND LET THEM DO SOME WORK FOR

ME. SO IF YOU LIKE OR LOATHE THEM, LET ME KNOW ABOUT IT.

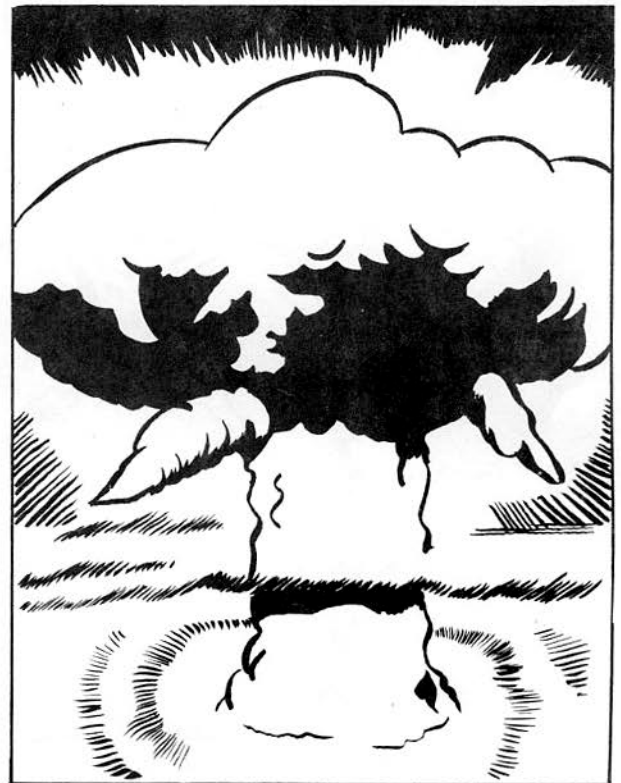
YOU'RE PROBABLY WONDERING HOW SUCH A GREAT MAGAZINE COULD SELL FOR A DIME. WHY? BECAUSE I'M INSANE AND LOVE GOING BROKE. THE ONLY WAY I COULD GET MY MONEY BACK WAS TO CHARGE 75 CENTS FOR A COPY AND PERSONALLY I'M UP TO HERE WITH EXPENSIVE FANZINES. SO YOU FOUR PEOPLE HAVE BOUGHT PROBABLY ONE OF THE ONLY .10 COMIC BOOKS AROUND. I SINCERELY HOPE YOU ENJOY IT. I ENJOYED PUTTING IT TOGETHER FOR YOU.

FANDOM FOREVER.

James M. Pack
CHIEF PENCIL PUSHER

SEND ALL COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS TO:

LANCE STUDIO
201 MILLER RD., NO. 22
LEBANON, OHIO, 45036



FANZINE '75 IS A PRODUCT OF LANCE STUDIO WHICH IS SOLELY RESPONSIBLE FOR ALL OF ITS CONTENTS.

The Sword and the Mine

Art: Mitch Sonoda



Sonoda 75

IN THE SHADOWS OF A CASTLE RESTING HIGH ATOP A MOUNTAIN IN NORTHERN ENGLAND, AN ARCHEOLOGIST WORKS PATIENTLY IN A LONG DRIED UP LAKE BED. HE GENTLY SIFTS THE SOFT SAND, INSPECTING ANYTHING OF DECENT SIZE THAT IS LEFT ON THE SCREEN.

THE SUN BEGINS TO LOWER BEHIND THE CASTLE BUT HE CONTINUES, SCOOPING, SIFTING, AND FINDING NOTHING UPON INSPECTION SCOOPS UP ANOTHER LOAD.

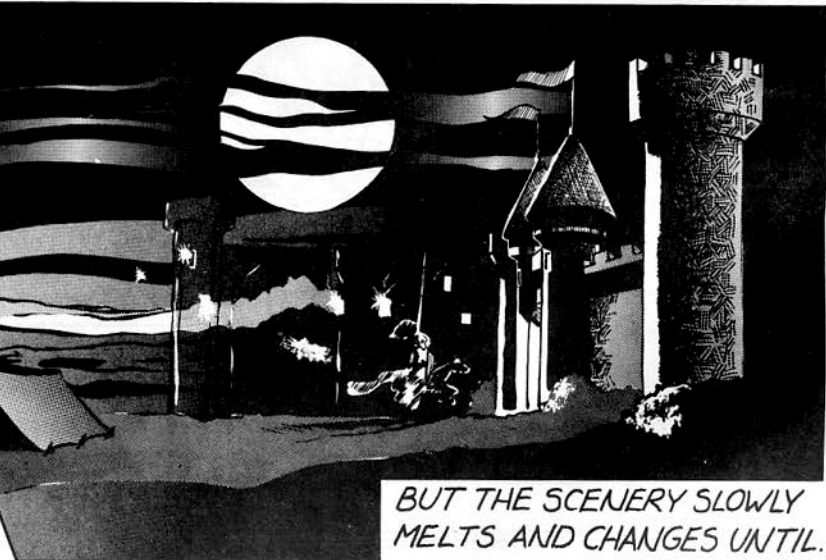
IN THE DARKNESS THAT HAS ENVELOPED THE AREA, HIS NEXT SCOOP HITS A HARD OBJECT. IN THE GROWING DARK, IT RADIATES LIGHT! HE PULLS IT FROM THE SAND...

IT IS A SWORD!

Excaliber: whosoever owns this sword obtains the power needed to right-all-wrongs

IT WILL FOREVER DISCOUNT THE MEMORY OF KING ARTHUR AS A MEER LEGEND!! IT IS TRUTH!

I MERL LIND, HAVE FOUND THE FABLED SWORD OF KING ARTHUR!



BUT THE SCENERY SLOWLY MELTS AND CHANGES UNTIL...



WHAT THE HELL?!



RRIPP



OH NO! IT CAN'T BE! THERE'S NO SUCH THING!



HAIL ODD ONE, I AM SIR NORTON. YOU DRAGON HAS BESTED ME. DO YOU WISH THE SAME CONTEST OR HIDE FROM IT'S POWER?

I GUESS THERE IS

AND HELL IF I'M STICKING AROUND!

I THINK I'LL HIDE UNDER THAT NICE ROCK!

I'M HIDING! THAT'S FOR DAMN SURE! I'M NOT ABOUT TO BECOME A HUMAN WIENER ROAST! WHAT HAPPENED TO YOU AIN'T ABOUT TO HAPPEN TO ME!



E-GADS!

GOD SAVE US!

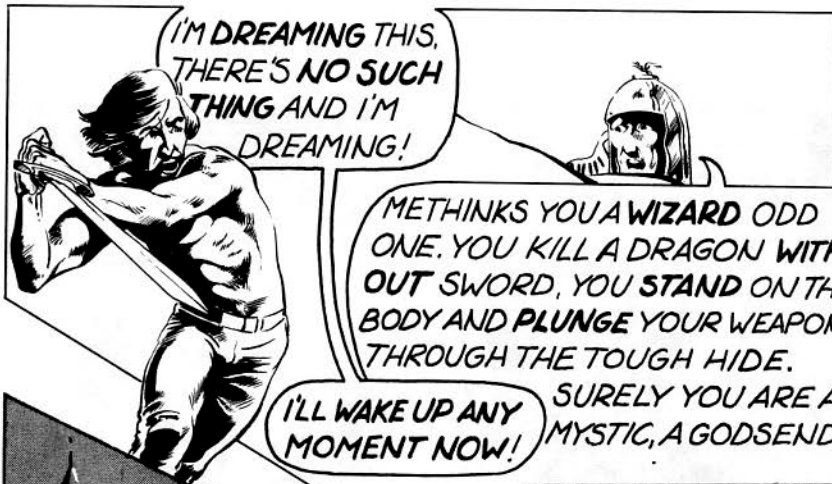


IF THIS .44 DON'T STOP EM, NOTHING WILL!



I'LL BE A SON OF A BITCH!

WUNK

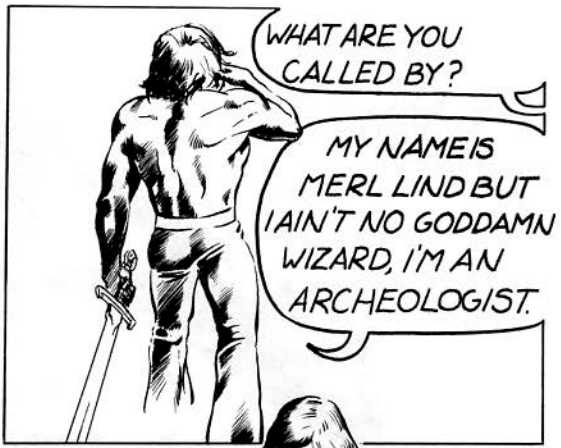


I'M DREAMING THIS, THERE'S NO SUCH THING AND I'M DREAMING!

METHINKS YOU A WIZARD ODD ONE. YOU KILL A DRAGON WITHOUT SWORD, YOU STAND ON THE BODY AND PLUNGE YOUR WEAPON THROUGH THE TOUGH HIDE.

I'LL WAKE UP ANY MOMENT NOW!

SURELY YOU ARE A MYSTIC, A GODSEND



WHAT ARE YOU CALLED BY?

MY NAME IS MERL LIND BUT I AIN'T NO GODDAMN WIZARD, I'M AN ARCHEOLOGIST.



THE WIZARD MERLIN, I SALUTE YOU!

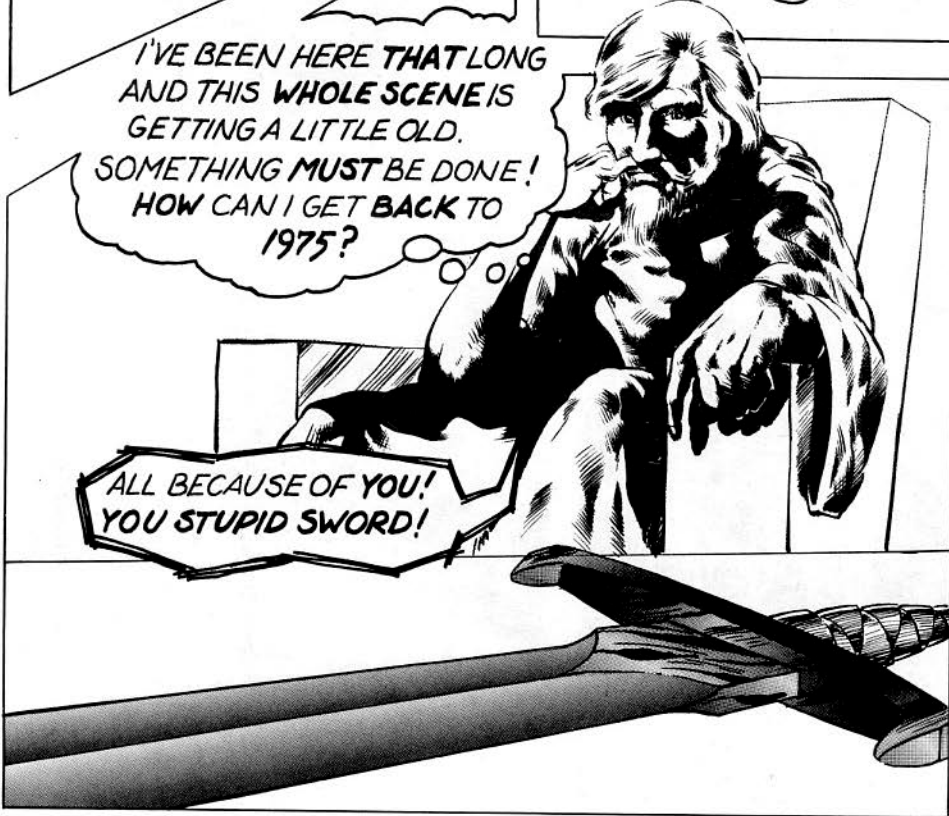
WEIRDO!



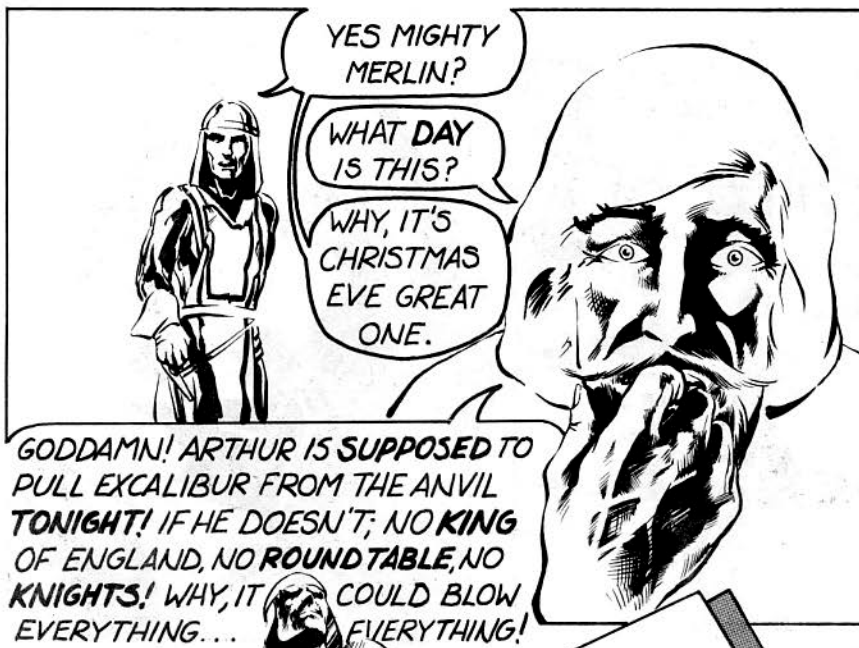
SEVEN YEARS!

I'VE BEEN HERE THAT LONG AND THIS WHOLE SCENE IS GETTING A LITTLE OLD. SOMETHING MUST BE DONE! HOW CAN I GET BACK TO 1975?

ALL BECAUSE OF YOU! YOU STUPID SWORD!



WAIT A MINUTE! I AIN'T SUPPOSE TO HAVE THIS SWORD! ACCORDING TO HISTORY, THIS HUNK OF METAL BELONGS TO KING ARTHUR! HISTORY DEMANDS IT! GUARDS!



YES MIGHTY MERLIN?

WHAT DAY IS THIS?

WHY, IT'S CHRISTMAS EVE GREAT ONE.

GODDAMN! ARTHUR IS SUPPOSED TO PULL EXCALIBUR FROM THE ANVIL TONIGHT! IF HE DOESN'T; NO KING OF ENGLAND, NO ROUND TABLE, NO KNIGHTS! WHY, IT COULD BLOW EVERYTHING... EVERYTHING!

GUARD! ORDER MY CRAFTSMEN TO CONSTRUCT ME AN ANVIL OF IRON, IMMEDIATELY! TELL THEM TO BRING IT TO ME WHILE IT'S STILL MOLTEN HOT! AND TELL THEM TO HURRY!



ORDER MY COURT TO THIS ROOM IN TWO HOURS. I HAVE SOMETHING TO SAY TO YOU ALL!



WHOSO PULLETH OUT THIS SWORD FROM THIS STONE AND ANVIL IS THE TRUE BORN KING OF ALL OF ENGLAND!



THE WORD TRAVELED FAST. "WHOSO PULLETH THE SWORD FROM THE STONE SHALL BECOME THE KING OF ALLOF ENGLAND! MANY TRAVELED FROM FAR AND NEAR ONLY TO TRY AND TOFAIL. THEY HAD TO-HISTORY DECREED IT!

MERLIN WATCHES FROM BEHIND A CORNER AS A SMALL BOY APPROACHES THE DIAS.



HE LOOKS ABOUT HIM...



THEN!



IT IS DONE. NOW I CAN REST EASY.



AH HA HA HAHA! MERLIN! WHAT A BUNCH O' SHIT!

THE SWORD! IT'S GONE! OH MERL, WHAT... MERL? MERLLIND? HAHA, MERLIN!

Fin.



UNTITLED

**CRAWLING CREATURES CRY
AT THE SILVER TOUCHED WINGS,
AND FONDLE THEMSELVES IN THEIR TEARS.
SIGH YOUR LAST SIGH
AND WHISPER GOODBYE,
FOR THE END YOUR TIME IS NEAR.**

**WHO HAVE YOU SEEN
BEYOND THE CLOUDS
AND WHO HAS PLAYED TUNES IN THE AIR?
YOU HAVE REACHED TO THE ENDLESS SPACE ABOVE.
NOW GIVE YOUR SOUL
WITH SOMEONE TO SHARE.**

**BE NOT AFRAID TO SING YOUR SONG,
FOR TOMORROW
WILL BE GONE.
NOW THE WORDS ARE FORGOTTEN,
AND CRAWLING CREATURES SMILE
AT THE SILVER TOUCHED WINGS.**

WHISPER GOODBYE !

BY..... DAVID YETTER



Epitaph

NO.1



Artists and Writers include:

- MITCH SONODA
- TOM CAMERON
- LARRY NIBERT
- JIM STARLIN
- BILL MORSE
- JIM PACK
- GENE DAY

Sci-Fic and Fantasy!!

Printed offset, 28 pgs.

Order from:

LARRY NIBERT
310 Ludlow
Springfield, OHIO
45505

Only 60¢ plus 15¢ post.



AFTERWORLD

ISSUES # ONE AND # TWO
OFFSET ZINES · COVERS
ON COLOR STOCK AND
FEATURING WORK BY-

FRANK CIROCCO,
MITCH SONODA,
LARRY BLAKE, JIM
PACK, TOM CAMERON,
LARRY NIBERT AND
STEVE PALMER

BOTH FOR \$1.00

OR
50¢ EACH

ORDER FROM:

Larry P. Blake
5 E. Main St.
South Vienna, Ohio 45369

WHY NOT?

ADVERTISE IN FANZINE '75

BEING THE LAST OF THE TEN-CENT COMIC BOOKS, FANZINE '75 FEELS IT CAN'T HELP BUT GAIN READERSHIP. NOT ONLY ARE WE SOLD THROUGH THE MAIL TO ALL THE STATES OF THE UNION BUT ALSO ACROSS THE COUNTER AT YOUR FINER BOOK STORES. SO, IF YOU HAVE SOMETHING TO SELL, WHY NOT SELL IT THROUGH FANZINE '75. IN FACT, WE'RE SO SURE THAT WE CAN SELL YOUR MERCHANDISE THAT WE WILL PICK UP 50% OF THE COST OF ADVERTISEMENTS IN OUR SECOND ISSUE.

JUST CONSULT THE PRICE LIST BELOW AND CUT THE PRICE BY HALF

HURRY!
DEADLINE FOR
HALF-PRICE
ADS
IS DECEMBER 15, 1975

WHOLE PAGE.....	\$14.00
HALF PAGE.....	8.00
1/4 PAGE.....	5.00
1/8 PAGE.....	2.75
1/16 PAGE.....	1.50

IF YOU'RE READING THIS MAGAZINE
CAN YOU GUESS HOW MANY OTHERS ARE?

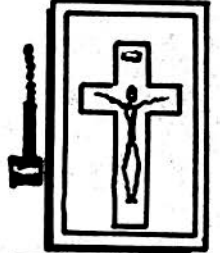


BLAKE
-74-

INKS • L. NIBERT

RE AVEJ

ATOMIC TESTING CENTER

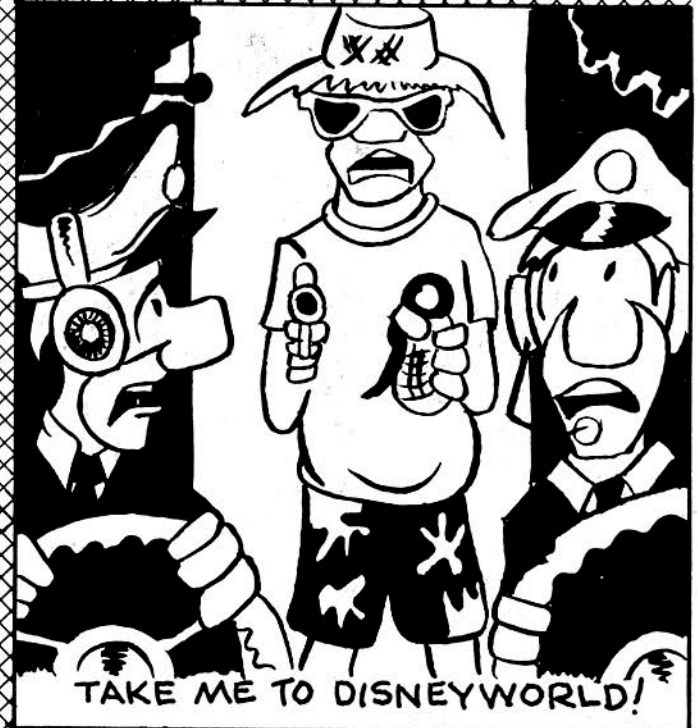


IN CASE OF AN EMERGENCY, BREAK GLASS

YOU CALL THIS HUMOR?



SLIP ME A QUARTER AND I'LL TELL YOU WHEN SIS HAS HER PERIOD...



TAKE ME TO DISNEYWORLD!

THAT LAST JOINT I SMOKED MUST HAVE BEEN SPIKED WITH BUFFERIN!

MY HEAD'S REALLY OUT OF IT! I THINK MY HEART'S GONNA STOP. THAT LAST JOINT'S GONNA DO ME IN!

THEY'LL FIND ME DEAD ON THE SIDE OF THE HIGHWAY. EVERYBODY WILL SAY IT WAS AN ACCIDENT WHEN REALLY, I'M THE ONLY GUY TO O.D. ON MARIJUANA.

...CHOKE...

E-E-E-E

WARROOM



SUDDENLY, AT THE MOMENT OF IMPACT, HE IS JERKED AWAY...

WHAT THE HELL IS GOING ON?! WHERE AM I?

... AND FINDS HIMSELF IN A PLACE VOID OF SPACE AND TIME. EVERYWHERE IS THE SWEET ODOR OF BURNING MARIJUANA. HE IS BEWILDERED.

BUT...

WHAT DO YOU WANT FROM ME?

SILENCE!

IT WAS I, KING SATIVA, WHO SAVED YOU FROM YOUR DEATH, DEAN LIST.

HOLY MOSES!

AS YOU MIGHT HAVE GUESSED, MR. LIST, I HAD AN ULTERIOR MOTIVE FOR RESCUING YOU FROM YOUR DEATH. I WANT YOU TO RETURN TO EARTH AS MY SENT GAURDIAN TO SAVE ALL THOSE THAT SMOKE MY WEED FROM HARRASSMENT FROM THOSE WHO DO NOT YET COMPREHEND. SAVE MY CHILDREN FROM THE PIGS WHO WISH TO JAIL THEM.

YOU WANT ME TO DO WHAT?!!

HEY NOW.....WAIT A MINNIT HERE. I AIN'T NO FALL GUY FOR ANYBODY.



I'M GETTING OUT OF HERE!

HALT!

YOU HAVE NO ALTERNATIVE, MR. LIST. YOU SHALL BECOME.....



ZAP

WHAAAA?

CAPTAIN CANNIBAS



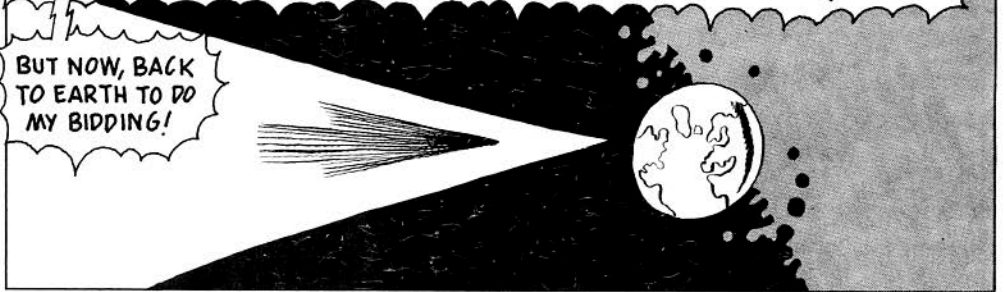
Story & Artwork by

James M. Paetz



MR. LIST, I HAVE GIVEN YOU THE POWER OF CANNIBAS SATIVA. WOE BE TO THOSE WHO INCUR YOUR WRATH. FOR NOW YOU HAVE SUPER HEARING, SUPER LAPSES IN MEMORY, SUPER REASONING, AND FOREMOST, YOU HAVE THE POWER OF N^2-4+3 (N^2-4+3) - N^4-16-9 TIMES THE POWER OF A SPEEDING LOCOMOTIVE. THESE POWERS YOU MUST USE TO AID THOSE WHO SMOKE MY HOLY MARIJUANA. ALL YOU NEED DO TO CALL ON THESE POWERS IS TO SAY THE MYSTIC WORDS... **FAR OUT!**

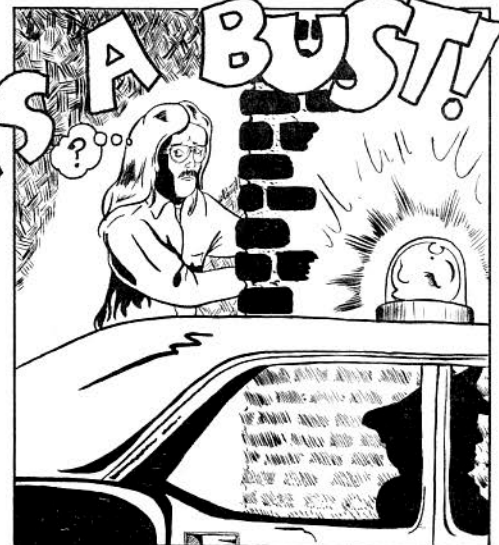
BUT NOW, BACK TO EARTH TO DO MY BIDDING!



SO DEAN LIST (CAPT. CANNIBAS) RETURNS TO EARTH...



BOY! I AIN'T NEVER GONNA SMOKE ANY DOPE NO MORE. THAT WAS A TRIP. A DRINK SHOULD QUIET MY NERVES, THOUGH.



YEAH SARGE, I GOT ANOTHER ONE OF THOSE POTHEADS.

FAR OUT!

WELL, I'LL BE DAMNED,

IT WORKS!



HEY PIGS! UNHAND MY BROTHER. CAPT. CANNIBAS.. COMMANDS IT!

HMM... I THINK I COULD GET INTO THIS.

ER.... EXCUSE ME,
I'M AFRAID YOU DIDN'T
HEAR ME.

HUH?

BLAP

MAYBE I'M NOT YELLING
LOUD ENOUGH...

DO YOU THINK THAT'S THE
ANSWER?

CAN YOU
HEAR THAT?

TSK, TSK, THESE OFFICERS MUST
HAVE SLIPPED AND HURT THEM-
SELVES.

SMACK

DOES THAT
HELP?

YOU DON'T
TALK MUCH,
DO YOU?

SAY! WHO WAS THAT MASKED MAN?

OKAY BROTHER, YOU'RE FREE NOW. GET HOME
QUICK BEFORE MY PLAYMATES WAKE UP.

I DON'T KNOW BUT HE
GAVE ME A SILVER JOINT!

≡GULP≡

FINI

FIRE as COLD as ICE

THE MORNING SUN BEAMED UPON THE EARTH AS A GIANT LUMINOUS TORCH LEAVING A CLUSTER OF HEAT HOVERING OVER THE SMALL VILLAGE. AS THE DAY BEGAN CAMERON WAS SITTING IN HIS CHAIR WITH THE MORNING PAPER LYING IN HIS LAP, HIS FEET PROPPED UPON AN OLD BEAT UP HASSOCK THAT WAS IN THE FAMILY FOR TOO LONG TO GET RID OF. ALONG HIS SIDE SAT A HALF CONSUMED CAN OF BEER THAT WAS THERE SINCE THE NIGHT BEFORE. SWEAT ROLLED DOWN HIS CHEEKS LEAVING A TRAIL OF SMUDGED GRIME AND HIS SHIRT CLUNG TO HIS CHEST FROM THE PERSPIRATION THAT FLOWED FROM HIS BODY. THE CLOTHES HE WORE WERE SOILED AND SHOWED SIGNS OF CONSTANT WEAR FROM WRINKLES, AND DOTS OF LINT WERE SPRINKLED OVER HIS PANTS FROM THE CHAIR HE SLEPT IN THE NIGHT BEFORE. CAMERON THREW HIS ARM OVER THE SIDE OF THE CHAIR AND FUMBLING UNTIL HE TOUCHED A CRUMPLED PACK OF CIGARETTES. "WHAT THE HELL," HE MUSED, "I SUPPOSE THE HEAT WILL GET TO ME BEFORE THESE THINGS WILL ANYWAY." HE REACHED FOR THE THIRD PACK OF CIGARETTES HE SMOKED THAT MORNING.

CAMERON STOOD AND FACED THE WINDOW. BEFORE HIM WERE THE SIGHTS ON THE BARREN STREETS OF RUNYON. THE AIR CARRIED A LONLINESS, FOR NO ONE SCURRIED UPON THE SIDEWALKS; NO SOUND BROKE THE SILENCE THAT LAID THROUGHOUT THE MORNING. THE GRASS THAT ONCE WAS GREEN FROM THE SPRING RAINS WAS NOW PARCHED AND BURNT FROM THE SUMMER SUN. THE TREES STOOD PLACID AND ERECT LIKE SO MANY BUSTS AMONG THE FLOWERS THAT FELL UNDER THE BLINDING RAYS OF THE SUN. THE STREETS WERE CRACKED AND BROKEN, COVERED BY A POOL OF HEAT THAT ALREADY STARTED MELTING THE ASPHALT.

"MY GOD!" CAMERON YELLED SWINGING HIS ARMS ABOUT LOOKING FRIGHTENED AS HE STUMBLED FOR THE RADIO. "IT'S TOO HOT, SOMETHING IS WRONG.

WHAT THE HELL IS HAPPENING?"

IT WAS THE NIGHT BEFORE, RIGHT AFTER THE SUN WENT DOWN, WHEN CAMERON FIRST SUSPECTED SOMETHING STRANGE. IT WAS HOT THROUGHOUT THE DAY, BUT EVEN AS NIGHT BEGAN TO EMERGE, THE COOL, SWEET AIR OF DUSK DID NOT APPEAR. THROUGH THE NIGHT THE AIR GREW HOT BASKING CAMERON'S APARTMENT WITH A FLUSH OF SEETHING FIRE. THE AIR CONDITIONER STRAINED TO GIVE THE ONLY RELIEF CAMERON COULD HAVE, A SLIGHT COOL BREEZE THAT TRICKLED THROUGH THE ROOM. AFTER WRESTLING WITH THE SHEETS, DAMP WITH HIS SWEAT, HE REALIZED HE COULD NOT SLEEP, SO GAVE UP TRYING. HE SPENT THE NIGHT IN HIS CHAIR DRINKING WARM BEER, SMOKING STALE CIGARETTES AND PRAYING FOR SNOW.

THE MORNING BROUGHT NO RELIEF FROM THE HEAT. YES, THE BALL OF FIRE RISING IN THE EAST ASSURED THE DAY WOULD BRING EVEN MORE BURNING AND BLISTERING TEMPERATURES. ALREADY CAMERON LOOKED AT HIS THERMOSTAT AND SAW THE NEEDLE BURIED AT ONE HUNDRED DEGREES BUT KNEW IT HAD GONE FAR BEYOND THAT. "HOW MUCH?" HE WONDERED AS HE TURNED THE WARM KNOB OF THE RADIO. "WONDER HOW HOT IT IS? WHY THE HELL IS IT SO HOT? THEY GOTTA BE SAYING SOMETHING!" THE RADIO BLARED STATIC AS CAMERON TWISTED THE TUNING KNOB UNTIL HE HEARD A FADED CRACKING VOICE ".... KNOW IT'S SAD. NO ONE EXPECTED THIS COULD EVER HAPPEN, NO ONE DREAMED THIS WAS THE TIME." THE VOICE CAMERON HEARD WAS WEAK AND TIRED WHICH FRIGHTENED HIM. THE ANNOUNCER PAUSED AS IF TO CLEAR HIS MIND AND THEN—STATIC. "SHIT!" CAMERON SWUNG AT THE BOX AND IT LANDED UPSIDE DOWN ON THE FLOOR. "SAY SOMETHING YOU BASTARD. TELL ME WHAT'S HAPPENING!" HE GRABBED THE RADIO AND PUT IT BACK ON THE STAND. THE VOICE STARTED AGAIN BUT WAS CLOUDED BY STATIC. CAMERON

ON PUT HIS EAR AGAINST THE SPEAKER AND STRAINED TO HEAR THE VOICE.

".....AND YET WE DON'T KNOW WHEN IT WILL HAPPEN. TWENTY-FOUR HOURS, MAYBE FORTY-EIGHT. FIRES ARE NOW DESTROYING THE COUNTRYSIDE AND PANIC IS BEGINNING TO SET IN. MAY WE CAUTION YOU, DO NOT LEAVE YOUR HOMES. NOTHING CAN PREVENT....."

THE VOICE FADED AND ONCE AGAIN WAS REPLACED WITH THE CLICKING OF STATIC. CAMERON SHOOK THE RADIO "WHAT? PREVENT WHAT? YOU STUPID IDIOT, WHAT'S HAPPENING TO ME? WHAT'S HAPPENING TO EVERYBODY?" HE THREW THE RADIO AGAINST THE WALL, JARRING IT INTO A THOUSAND LITTLE PIECES.

SLOWLY HE PICKED HIMSELF UP AND IN A DAZE STUMBLED TO THE BATHROOM. LOOKING IN THE MIRROR HE SAW HIMSELF NAKED AND WONDERED HOW HE GOT THAT WAY, THEN SHRUGGED, THEN LAUGHED. "YOU CRAZY FOOL, YOU'RE DYING YOU KNOW. SUFFOCATING IN HELL IS WHATS HAPPENING TO YOU." BUT THE IMAGE IN THE MIRROR JUST STARED BACK WITH SWOLLEN EYES AND A RED CRYING FACE. HIS HAIR WAS MATTED FROM THE SWEAT THAT POURED DOWN HIS NOSE AND INTO HIS MOUTH. HE BECAME SICK, DOUBLED OVER AND GAGGED. HE LEANED HIS HEAD INTO THE BASIN VOMITTING AND CRYING, "IT'S TOO HOT, MY GOD, I'M ON FIRE!" TREMBLING, HE EASED HIS BODY BACKWARD AND FELL AGAINST THE WALL. LAYING ON THE FLOOR IN A PUDDLE OF HIS OWN SWEAT, CHOKING FROM LACK OF AIR, IN A SUDDEN MOMENT OF REALIZATION, HE SCRAMBLED TOWARD THE SHOWER. YANKING THE CURTAIN, HE FELL TO THE FLOOR AS HE CLIMBED INTO THE TUB.

THE SHOWER WAS COLD, CAMERON MADE SURE OF THAT. HE HUMMED AND LAUGHED AND SPLASHED AS HE LET THE ICY WATER ROLL OVER HIS BODY WITH A FORCE NO GREATER THAN AIR. IT FELT GOOD TO HIM, THE WATER SEEPING INTO HIS EYES AND MOUTH. ENJOYING THE WET SENSATION, HE WASN'T AWARE THAT THE WATER WAS WARMING UP UNTIL HE FELT THE FIRE BURN HIS EYES. CLUTCHING HIS FACE HE THREW HIMSELF OUT OF THE SHOWER, CHOKING AND GASPING FOR AIR.

CAMERON LAY SPRAWLED ON THE FLOOR, LIGHTHEADED AND DIZZY FROM THE HEAT. HE FELT THE FIRE BURN IN HIS CHEST AS HE CRAWLED OVER THE RED HOT FLOOR,

WHILE EACH CRACK HE MOUNTED FELT LIKE A FLAMING ARROW SLICING THROUGH HIS SKIN.

"ONE LAST HOPE...." HE STUTTERED, SWALLOWING BLOOD FROM HIS PARCHED THROAT. "I'VE GOT TO FIND IT, ITS GOTTA BE THERE." CAMERON CRAWLED TO THE DOOR THAT LED TO THE GARAGE, FORCING HIS HAND TO GRASP THE KNOB. HIS WET FINGERS SLID LIKE GREASE OVER THE HANDLE AND SLIPPED FREE. LIFTING HIS HAND AGAIN, HE CLUTCHED THE KNOB AND PULLED THE DOOR OPEN. "THERE IT IS."

HE SMILED.

IN THE BACK OF THE GARAGE, BEHIND HIS 'VETTE, IN A DARK CORNER STOOD THE FREEZER.

HE LAUGHED.

HE HAD IT FILLED WITH ICE THE DAY BEFORE YESTERDAY, THANK GOD. THEN HE KNEW. "NO ICE! NO ICE! HOW CAN THERE BE ICE? I'M ON FIRE. MY BODY IS BURNING AND MY MIND IS RED HOT! THERE CAN'T BE ANY ICE. I'M INSANE AND I'M DYING, PLEASE LET THERE BE ICE!"

THERE WAS NO ICE.

CAMERON CRIED AND THERE WAS NO ICE. JUST WATER. A FREEZER FILLED WITH WATER. "SHALL I TOUCH THIS ICE TURNED WATER." HE WONDERED. "I SHALL TOUCH THIS ICE TURNED WATER." HE MOCKED HIMSELF.

THERE WAS NO ICE, BUT THERE WAS COLD WATER.

CAMERON CHEERED, HIS THROAT DRY AND HACKING BLOOD. "I'M ON FIRE, MY BODY IS BURNING BUT MY FREEZER IS COLD WITH WATER." SLOWLY, AS IF TO SAVOR EVERY BEAUTIFUL COLD MOMENT, HE CLIMBED INTO THE FREEZER. HE FELT THE TINGLE OF COLD AGAINST HOT AND BEGAN TO SHIVER. "I'M NOT GOING TO BURN!" HE SHOUTED, THEN AS A CHILD, "HELL, HELL GO AWAY."

LIKE A YOUNG BOY, CAMERON SPLASHED THE WATER AND GENTLY RUBBED IT OVER HIS NAKED BODY. "I MUST WET MY THROAT," HE SAID, SPILLING WATER ON HIS MOUTH, "AND I MUST BREATHE THE COOLNESS INTO MY FIERY LUNGS. MY INSIDES ARE BURNING AND I NEED REFRESHED." SLOWLY HE BENT HIS HEAD INTO THE COLD WATER.

OUTSIDE, THE LEAVES OF TREES BURNED AND THE FLESH OF PEOPLE DECAYED. THE ANIMALS PLAYED NO LONGER AND HID THEIR FACES IN THE GROUND. CASTLES FELL TO THE EARTH, CONSUMED BY TIME AND FIRE, AND THE SUN TURNED OUT IT'S LIGHT.

INSIDE, A NAKED MAN LAY FACE DOWN IN A FREEZER FULL OF COLD WATER. *FINI*

