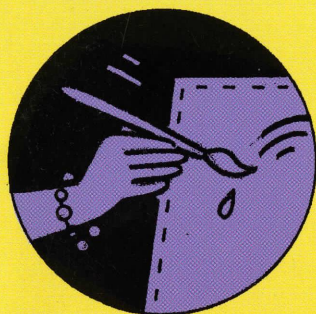


ALTERNATIVE COMICS

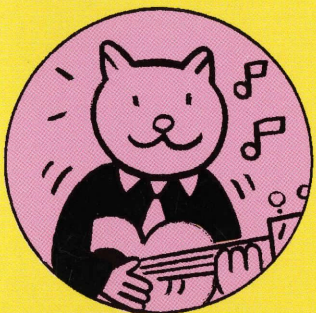
URBAN HIPSTER 2

GREG STUMP • DAVID LASKY

\$2.95



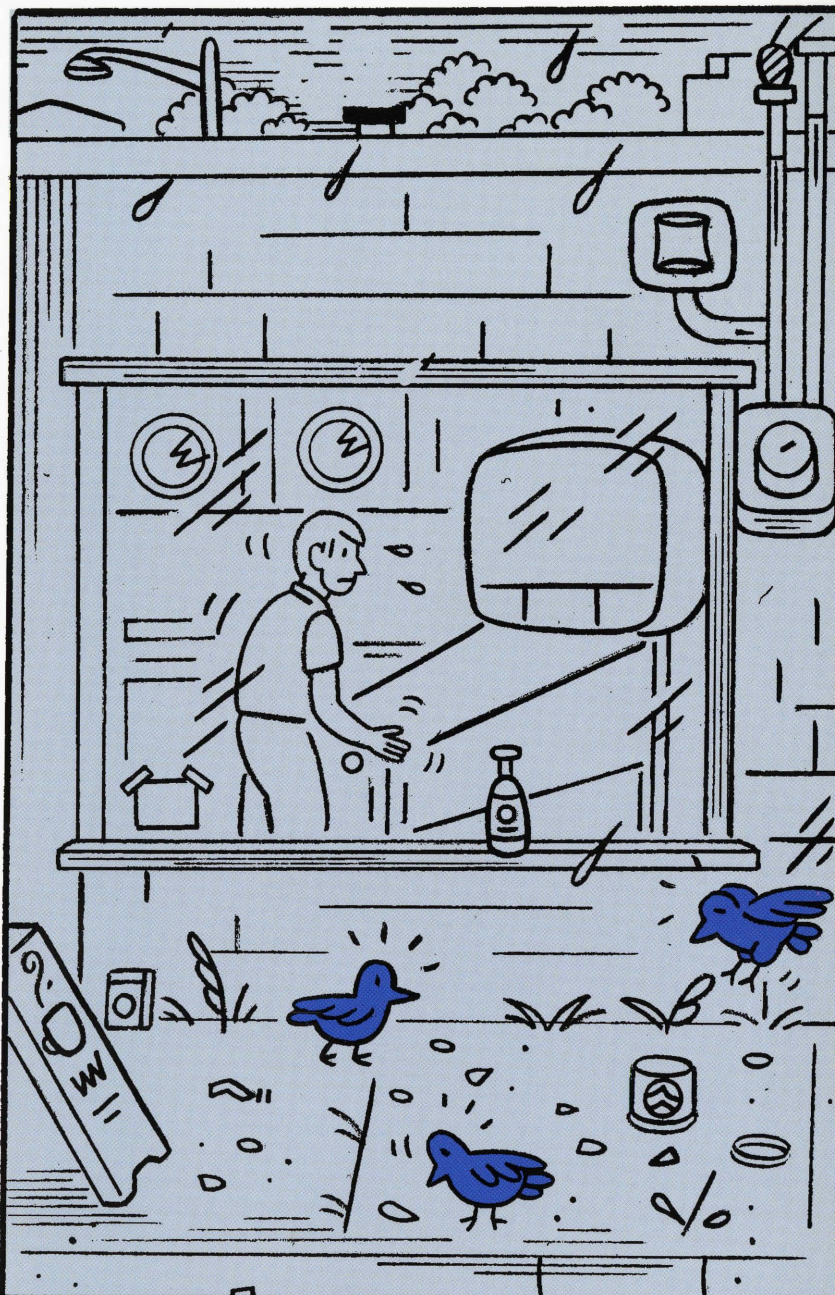
ART



MUSIC



ALCOHOL



AND
PINBALL

ISBN 1-891867-32-6



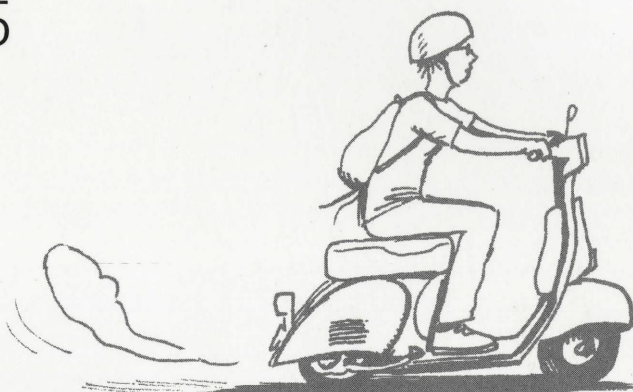
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UH2 CONTENTS

- 1 GARFUNK
- 2 WAS IT GOOD FOR YOU?
- 3 FOUR TWENTY-FIVE
- 12 GARFUNK'S ISLAND
- 13 BABETTE'S FEAST
- 30 ROOM FOR RENT
- 31 LUCINDA
- 32 THE KITTENS

IBC OUR TEXT PAGE
BC RED LIGHT



I'VE BEEN JOBLESS SINCE FEBRUARY
and It's the Best Thing That's Ever Happened to Me

YEARS AGO, I MADE AN UNSUCCESSFUL ATTEMPT TO BE A FREELANCE ARTIST. WHAT I ENDED UP WITH WAS AN UNTHINKABLY HUGE CREDIT CARD BILL. I REALLY NEEDED MONEY, SO I TOOK A JOB I DIDN'T LIKE.

5 LONG YEARS LATER, MY DEBTS WERE GONE, BUT HERE I WAS, STILL IN MY CUBICLE MAKING TOO MUCH MONEY TO QUIT, BUT COMPLETELY BURNED OUT. IN FACT, I WAS BEYOND BURNED OUT.

Campaign to Clone the Dodo
Let's bring them back And make amends For once extinguishing Our flightless friends

SO I DECIDED I'D SAVE UP ENOUGH TO LIVE ON FOR A FEW MONTHS AND I WOULD QUIT. I COULD BE AN ARTIST FOR A FEW PRECIOUS MONTHS... BUT WITHIN A FEW DAYS OF THIS DECISION:

I'm afraid there are going to be some LAYOFFS.

WHAT I REALLY WANTED WAS TO BE AN ARTIST, AFTER ALL. TO COPE, I'D WRITE POEMS ON THE PAGES OF MY DESK CALENDAR WHILE ON BREAK.

I HUNG IN THERE UNTIL THEY FINALLY DECIDED TO LET ME GO. NATURALLY, I HAD TO PRETEND TO BE SAD AND UPSET...

BUT IT WAS WONDERFUL. I IMMEDIATELY LAID OUT A PLAN TO DO ALL THE ART PROJECTS I'D BEEN PUTTING OFF FOR THE PAST 6 YEARS.

I HAVE SO MUCH FREE TIME NOW—I'M SO MUCH HAPPIER. COLLECTING UNEMPLOYMENT IS GREAT! If you can manage to get laid-off, I really recommend it...

SURE, I AM REQUIRED TO LOOK FOR WORK (3 JOB CONTACTS PER WEEK), BUT THERE JUST AREN'T A LOT OF JOBS OUT THERE.

I don't want the economy to be bad, but as long as it is, I may as well enjoy it, right?

OF COURSE, I WILL BE FORCED TO GO OUT AND WORK AT SOME POINT. I'M NOT SURE WHAT I WILL DO. THERE REALLY AREN'T A LOT OF JOBS OUT THERE... IT'S LIKE HEARING THE GROWING ROAR OF A WATERFALL AS I FLOAT DOWN A PEACEFUL STREAM...

SORRY, DAVID...

SEVERANCE

SEVERANCE

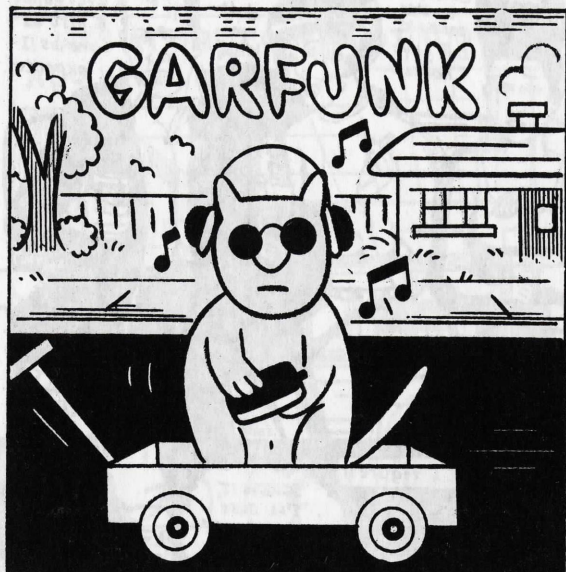
SORRY, NO JOBS

DAVID LASKY

DAVID LASKY

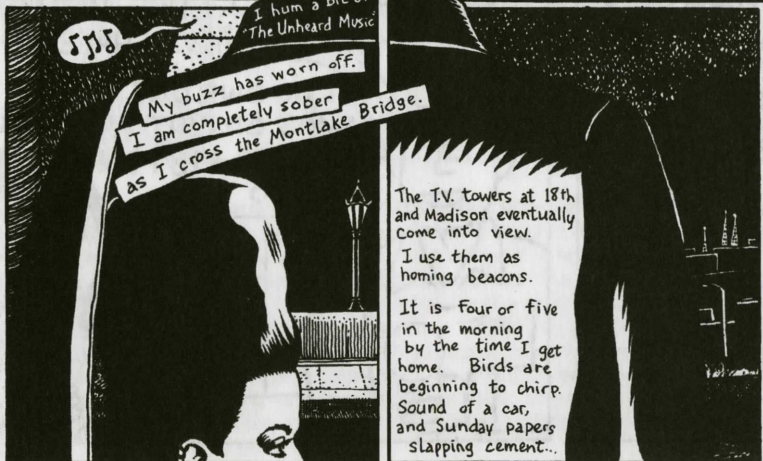
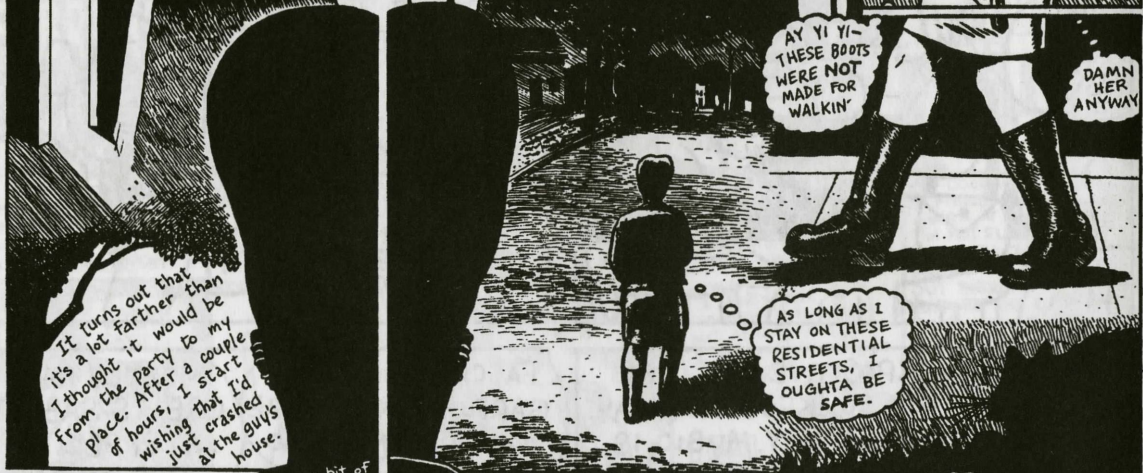
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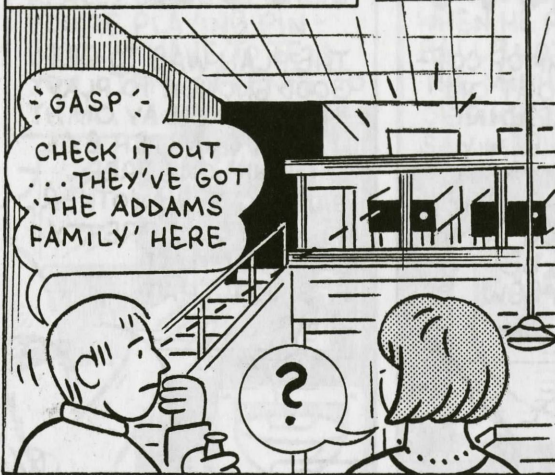


WAS IT GOOD FOR YOU?

USMAN WISPER, 2010-2013



I WAS AT THE COMET NOT TOO LONG AGO WHEN I SAW IT.

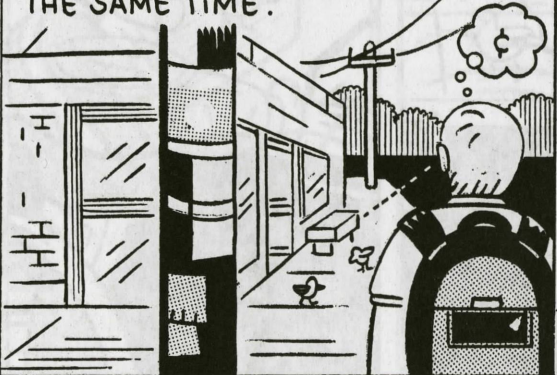


I GOT HOOKED ON THIS GAME THAT SUMMER AFTER I GOT LAID OFF FROM MY ONE AND ONLY "REAL" JOB...

THAT MUST'VE BEEN, WHAT, LIKE THREE YEARS AGO.



WITH NO JOB TO GO TO, I SPENT A LOT OF TIME JUST WALKING AROUND WITH MY HEAD DOWN-- A MIXTURE OF AVOIDING EYE CONTACT AND LOOKING FOR LOOSE CHANGE AT THE SAME TIME.



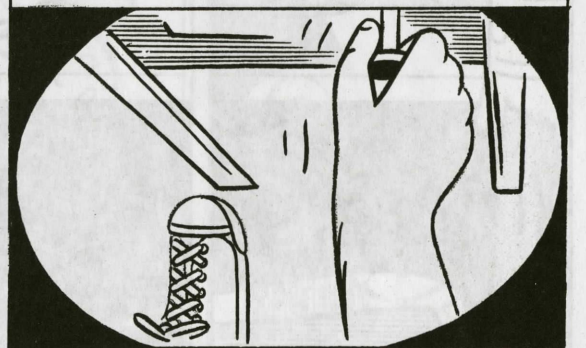
THIS WAS THE GAME THAT GOT ME INTO PINBALL. I DON'T MEAN PLAYING EVERY NOW AND THEN WHEN YOU'RE DRUNK IN A BAR--I MEAN REALLY INTO PINBALL.



I COULD LIE AND CLAIM THAT I WAS JUST ANOTHER VICTIM OF THE "TECH BUST"... IN REALITY I JUST QUIT WORKING ONE DAY. I WANTED TO SEE HOW LONG IT WOULD TAKE THEM TO FIRE ME (ABOUT TWO MONTHS).



MY UNEMPLOYMENT COVERED THE BASICS OF EXISTENCE (RENT, BEER, SPAGHETTI), BUT THAT WAS IT. SO MY MAIN FORM OF ENTERTAINMENT BECAME PLAYING PINBALL AT THIS LAUNDROMAT TWO BLOCKS AWAY...



FOUR

IT STARTED OUT KIND OF CASUALLY. PART OF THE APPEAL WAS JUST HOW BIG A WASTE OF TIME IT ALL WAS ... HOW MANY PEOPLE PLAN THE DAY AROUND A SCHEDULE OF PINBALL?



TWENTY

I'D MAKE A CUP OF COFFEE AND SIT OUT ON THE BENCH READING PAPERS BETWEEN GAMES. IF IT WAS A THURSDAY, WHEN THE FREE WEEKLIES COME OUT, I COULD BE THERE FOR A FEW HOURS, EASY.

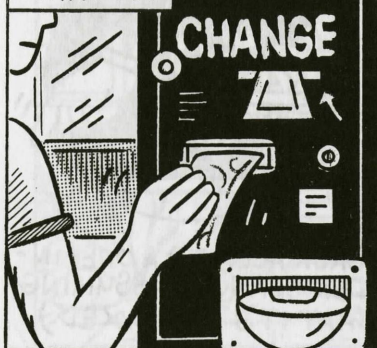


FIVE

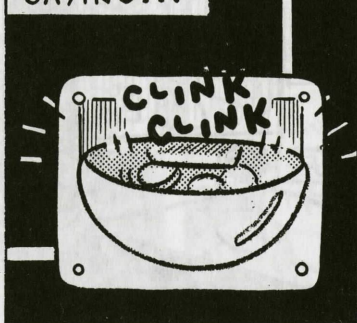
THE PLAN WAS TO GET GOOD ENOUGH TO PLAY THE WHOLE DAY ON JUST A QUARTER BY WINNING ONE FREE GAME AFTER ANOTHER. I FOUND OUT PRETTY QUICKLY THAT IT'S NOT THAT SIMPLE.



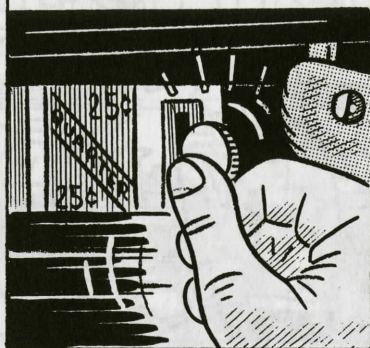
A LOT OF PEOPLE HAVE TOLD ME "YOU LOOK REALLY SERIOUS WHEN YOU'RE PLAYING PINBALL." I HAVE TO TELL YOU, I TAKE OFFENSE TO THAT...



DOES ANYONE TELL MICHAEL JORDAN THAT HE LOOKS SERIOUS WHEN HE PLAYS BASKETBALL? NOT THAT I'M THE MICHAEL JORDAN OF PINBALL--I'M JUST SAYING...



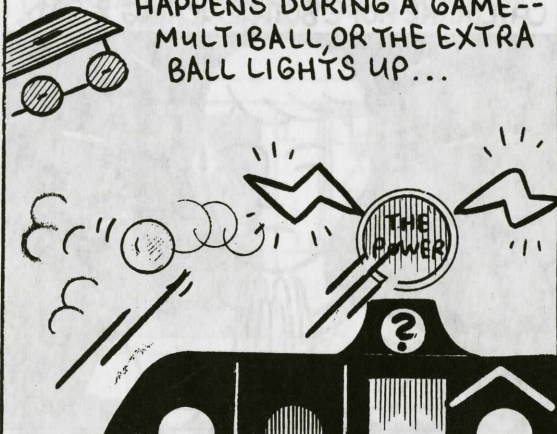
THE THING IS, PINBALL'S MORE LIKE A SPORT THAN A GAME. PEOPLE WHO DON'T UNDERSTAND THAT'LL THROW DOWN QUARTERS WITHOUT ANY KIND OF STRATEGY.



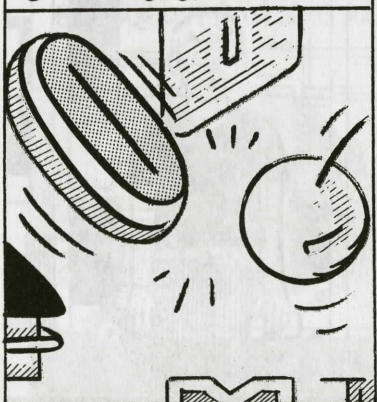
THEN THEY WONDER WHY THEY GET DEMOLISHED. TOTALLY LUDICROUS. IT'S LIKE THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN WRITING A POEM AND PRESSING RANDOM BUTTONS ON A KEYBOARD.



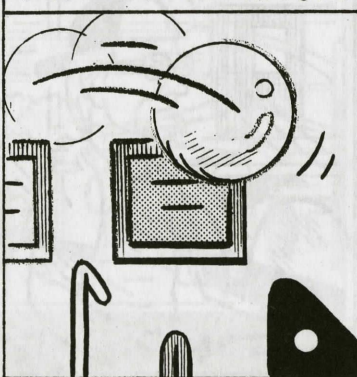
YOU CAN REALLY TELL WHEN YOU'RE WATCHING SOMEONE WHO KNOWS WHAT THEY'RE DOING. LIKE SAY SOMETHING HAPPENS DURING A GAME--MULTIBALL, OR THE EXTRA BALL LIGHTS UP...



A ROOKIE'LL TIGHTEN UP AND START PRESSING. THAT'LL COST YOU NOT ONLY THE BONUS, BUT THE BALL TOO.



THE TRICK IS TO PLAY THE BALL THE SAME NO MATTER THE SITUATION. IF YOU PLAY NOT TO LOSE, THAT'S JUST WHAT'LL HAPPEN.



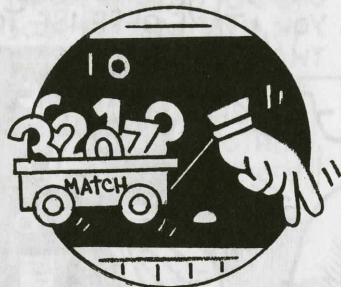
I DON'T KNOW IF MICHAEL JORDAN PLAYS PINBALL, BUT I BET HE'D TELL YOU THE EXACT SAME THING.



IF I WAS EVER TRULY GUILTY OF TAKING PINBALL TOO SERIOUSLY, IT WAS AT THE END OF PLAYING. AFTER THE LAST BALL WAS LOST ON THE LAST QUARTER OF MY SELF-IMPOSED TWO-DOLLAR LIMIT.



THAT'S WHEN YOU GET ONE LAST CHANCE TO KEEP PLAYING: IF YOU CAN MATCH A RANDOM NUMBER TO WIN A CREDIT.



BASICALLY, IT'S A ONE-IN-TEN CHANCE (ASSUMING THAT IT'S NOT FIXED).

I USED TO WATCH THOSE NUMBERS SCRAMBLING ACROSS THE SCREEN JUST LIKE SOME PEOPLE WATCH THE LOTTO NUMBERS ON T.V. -- WITH A CHILDLIKE HOPE BOTH TOUCHING & SAD.

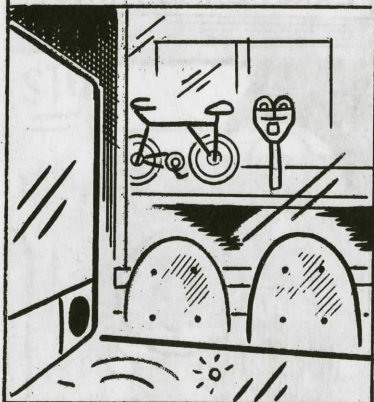


AT SOME POINT I STARTED FEELING LIKE I HAD A TELEPATHIC BOND TO THE MACHINE. SOMEHOW I JUST KNEW WHEN IT WOULD MATCH, AND WHEN THERE WAS NO HOPE WHATSOEVER.



IT WAS RARE THAT MY INSTINCTS WERE OFF...

EVERY ONCE IN A WHILE I'D BE ON MY WAY TO THE LAUNDROMAT WHEN I'D SEE SOMEONE ALREADY PLAYING MY MACHINE.



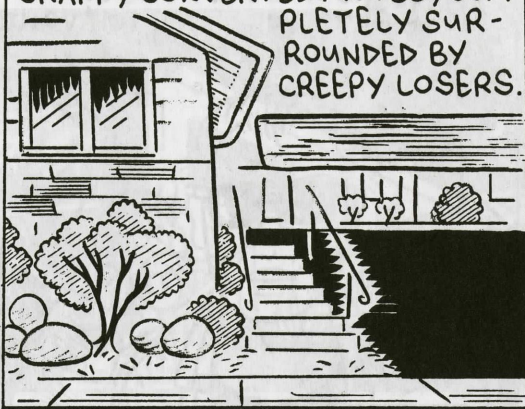
IT SEEMED OBSCENE -- LIKE WALKING IN ON A STRANGER MAKING LOVE TO YOUR WIFE...



NOT THAT I KNOW WHAT THAT'S LIKE OR ANYTHING. I'M JUST IMAGINING IT WOULD FEEL SORT OF SIMILAR.



EVEN THEN I KNEW IT WAS KINDA WEIRD TO HANG OUT IN THE LAUNDROMAT ALL DAY. UNFORTUNATELY AT THE TIME I WAS STUCK IN THIS CRAPPY CONVERTED MOTEL, COMPLETELY SURROUNDED BY CREEPY LOSERS.



THEY APPEARED TO HAVE EVEN LESS GOING ON THAN I DID (IF THAT WAS POSSIBLE). NO ONE EVER SEEMED TO BE GOING TO WORK; INSTEAD, THEY DEDICATED THEMSELVES TO DRIVING ME INSANE...



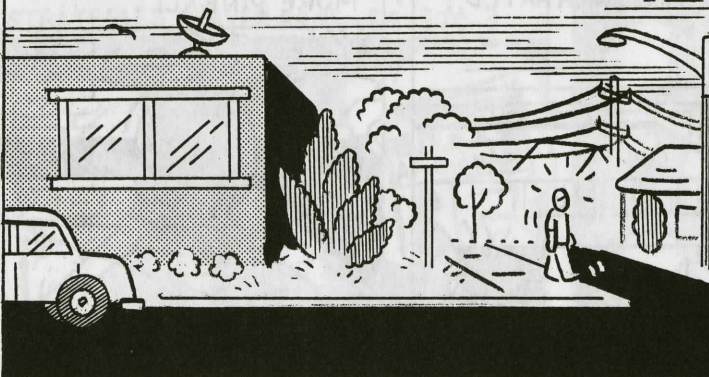
I WAS SANDWICHED BETWEEN TWO MISERABLE SPECIMINS. NEXT DOOR WAS THIS OLDER BEARDED DUDE WHO TALKED ON THE PHONE NON-STOP WITH HIS DOOR PROPPED WIDE OPEN.



ON THE OTHER SIDE, I HAD TO DEAL WITH THIS GROTESQUELY MADE-UP SINGLE MOTHER WHO MOSTLY JUST SCREAMED AND SLAPPED HER SON AROUND ALL DAY.

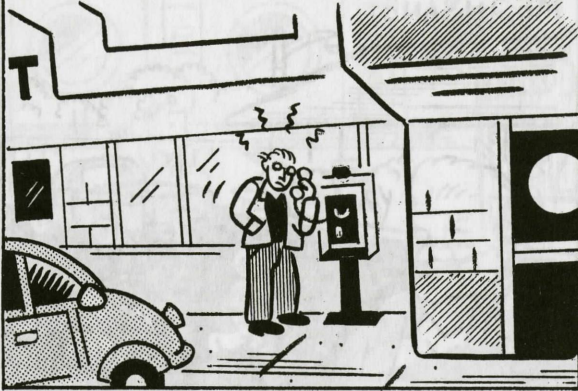


THEY WEREN'T EVEN THE WORST OF THE BUNCH. SOMETIMES I WONDER IF THEY'RE ALL STILL THERE: THE MIDDLE-AGED FAT GUY WHO ALWAYS WORE A WASHINGTON HUSKIES JACKET... THE MEXICAN FAMILY WHOSE KIDS WERE ALMOST BEGGING TO BE RUN OVER IN THE PARKING LOT...



YES, I SPENT QUITE A LOT OF TIME AT THE LAUNDROMAT THAT SUMMER...

THERE WERE SEVERAL CANDIDATES FOR MOST ANNOYING NEIGHBOR, BUT MY TRUE NEMESIS WAS THIS SUN-GLASSES-WEARING GUY WHOSE PHONE WAS PERPETUALLY DISCONNECTED.



I'D SEE HIM ON HIS WAY TO THE GAS STATION TO USE THE PAY PHONE ... IF HE WASN'T TOO CLOSE I'D MOVE TO THE OTHER SIDE OF THE STREET. HE WAS JUST ONE OF THOSE GUYS YOU WANT TO AVOID.



EARLY ON HE'D IGNORED ME WHEN I SAID HELLO, SO I FIGURED FUCK IT, WHY BOTHER PRETENDING. LATER I GAVE HIM A TASTE OF HIS OWN MEDICINE.



ON MY WAY HOME ONE NIGHT I SAW HIM STANDING OUTSIDE WITH EVERYONE ELSE IN THE BUILDING. TWO MEN WERE LOADING THE WASHINGTON HUSKY GUY INTO AN AMBULANCE.



THERE WAS NO WAY I COULD GET TO MY APARTMENT WITHOUT GOING THROUGH THIS SAD LITTLE SCENE. FOR SOME REASON IT PISSED ME OFF TO SEE THE SUNGLASSES GUY ACTING ALL CONCERNED. WAS I EXPECTED TO GET WORKED UP OVER SOME OLD FAT DUDE WE ALL PRETTY MUCH HATED?



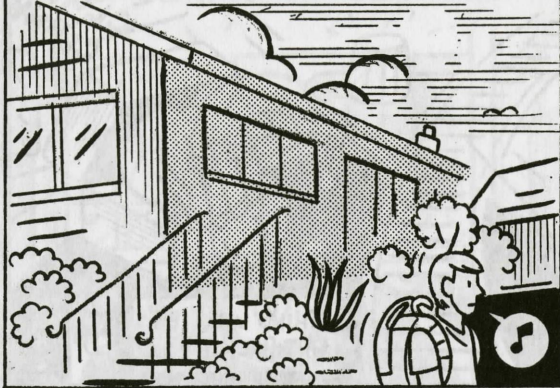
I DIDN'T STAY TO FIND OUT--JUST KEPT WALKING AROUND THE BLOCK RIGHT BACK TO THE LAUNDROMAT TO PLAY MORE PINBALL...



THAT WAS THE FIRST OF SEVERAL "DOUBLE-HEADERS". INITIALLY I HAD SOME KIND OF RULE ABOUT KEEPING IT TO ONE SESSION PER DAY, BUT IT WASN'T LIKE I HAD PRESSING BUSINESS TO ATTEND TO...



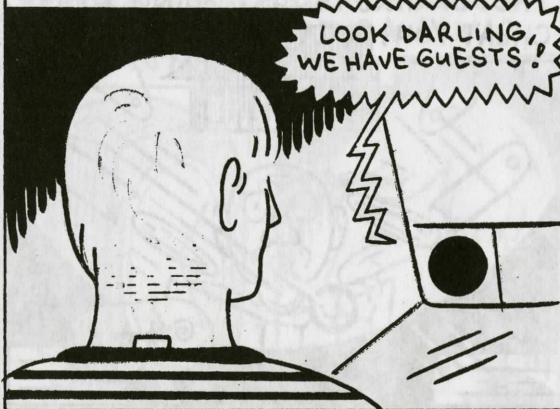
THE WHOLE SUMMER I HAD DREAMED ABOUT GETTING THE HIGH SCORE AND I COULD NEVER QUITE DO IT. THAT HONOR WAS RESERVED FOR THE GUY WHO OPENED UP THE LAUNDROMAT IN THE MORNING.



SOMETIMES WHEN I WAS REALLY BROKE I WOULD DELIBERATELY GET THERE EARLY SO I COULD PLAY OFF ANY FREE CREDITS ON THE MACHINE.



I COULD NEVER UNDERSTAND THAT, HOW YOU COULD WIN A FREE GAME, AND JUST LEAVE IT LIKE THAT. I GUESS HE HAD SOME PLACE TO BE ... STILL ...



I WAS PLAYING SO MUCH THAT I STARTED WONDERING IF MAYBE THIS COULD BE MY NEXT JOB--WAS THERE SUCH A THING AS A PROFESSIONAL PINBALLER? OR WERE THERE ENOUGH ADDAMS FAMILY FANS THAT I COULD START MY OWN MAGAZINE (TIPS, STRATEGIES, PLAYER PROFILES, ETC.)



AND MAYBE THERE WAS EVEN A GIRL SOMEWHERE IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD WHO WAS AN ADDAMS FAMILY FANATIC JUST LIKE ME... I'D RUN INTO HER. HERE AND INVITE HER TO PLAY DOUBLES... YOU NEVER KNOW...



ALMOST AS IF ON CUE, THE ADDAMS FAMILY BEGAN TO BREAK DOWN. AT FIRST IT WAS A STICKY FLIPPER ONCE IN A WHILE. BUT THE CANCER WAS SPREADING.



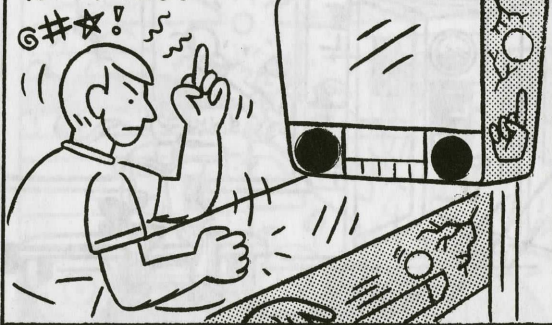
YOU CAN EXPECT SOME KIND OF MAINTENANCE IF YOU'RE PLAYING IN AN ARCADE. IN A LAUNDROMAT? DON'T COUNT ON IT.



I TRIED TO THINK OF IT AS AN ADDED CHALLENGE, BUT IT WAS JUST TOO MADDENING. YOU CAN NEVER REALLY GET GOING WHEN YOU'RE THINKING THE MACHINE IS JUST GOING TO CHEAT YOU.



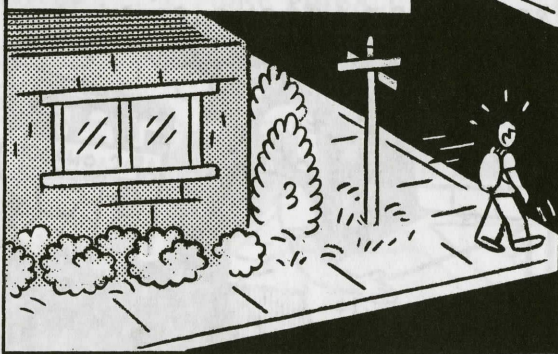
THE ADDAMS FAMILY HAD ALWAYS FELT LIKE AN EMINENTLY FAIR ENTERPRISE. IT WASN'T RIGGED TO STEAL YOUR MONEY LIKE SOME OTHER GAMES. AND NOW I WAS LOSING BALLS THAT WERE THE GAME'S FAULT, NOT MINE.



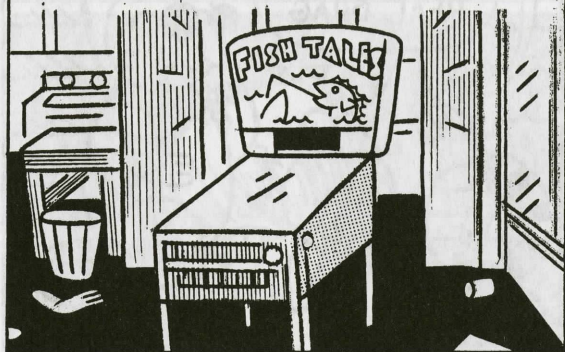
IT WAS A BITTER BETRAYAL, AND IN PROTEST, I DECIDED TO GO ON STRIKE. AT THE TIME IT FELT LIKE THE RIGHT THING TO DO: RECHARGE THE OLD BATTERIES, AND COME BACK WITH A RENEWED HUNGER.



I HELD OUT AS LONG AS I COULD -- SIX DAYS, I THINK -- AND THEN MADE THE HALLOWED TREK AROUND THE BLOCK. MAYBE THE HIGH SCORE GUY HAD RAISED A STINK, AND GOTTEN THINGS FIXED BY NOW...



THERE WAS A LIGHT RAIN OUTSIDE -- A NICE TOUCH, I THOUGHT LATER -- AND UNBELIEVABLY, A DIFFERENT MACHINE INSIDE THE LAUNDROMAT. NO COUSIN IT. NO UNCLE FESTER. REPLACED -- BY "FISH TALES." COME ON. LIKE ANYONE'S GOING TO PLAY THAT.



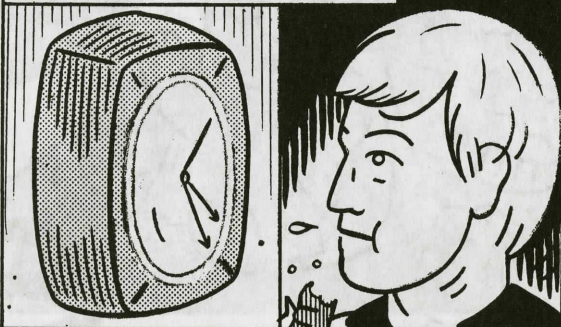
I COULDN'T BRING MYSELF TO PLAY IT THEN AND STILL HAVEN'T TO THIS DAY. I MEAN COME ON. I'M NOT SAYING I EXPECTED IT TO BE THERE FOREVER. THEY COULD'VE PICKED A BETTER REPLACEMENT THAN THAT.



DEFEATED, I BOUGHT A CANDY BAR (NUTRAGEOUS) AT THE GAS STATION AND WENT BACK HOME. IT WAS A BIG SHOCK ... ALSO KIND OF A RELIEF IN A WEIRD WAY.



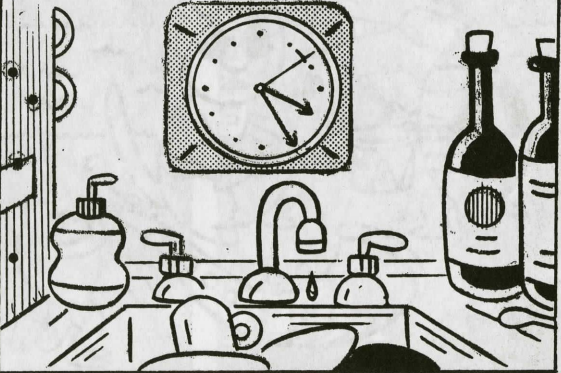
I CHECKED THE CLOCK -- IT READ THE SAME TIME THAT IT HAD FOR WEEKS. THE BATTERY WAS DEAD AND I FELT LIKE I COULDN'T AFFORD TO REPLACE IT SINCE I COULD JUST GET THE TIME FROM THE ALARM CLOCK IN MY BEDROOM.

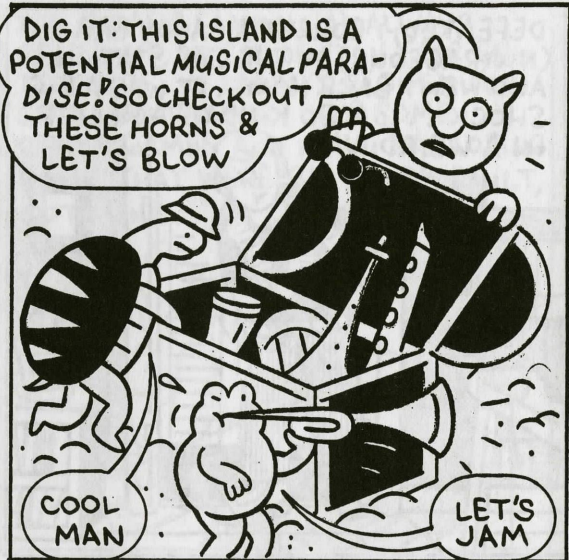


I SHOULD'VE JUST TAKEN IT DOWN, BUT THE WALL WOULD HAVE SEEMED EMPTY WITHOUT IT. SO INSTEAD I JUST KEPT CHECKING IT INSTINCTIVELY AND THEN SUDDENLY REMEMBERING IT DIDN'T WORK.



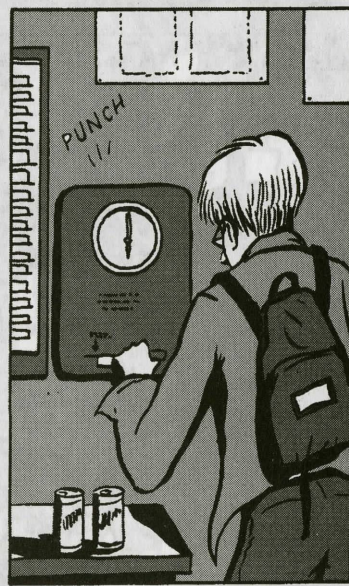
I MADE A BOWL OF POPCORN AND SAT DOWN. IT WAS ANOTHER YEAR AND A HALF BEFORE I GOT ANOTHER JOB AND SAVED ENOUGH MONEY TO MOVE TO A DIFFERENT NEIGHBORHOOD.

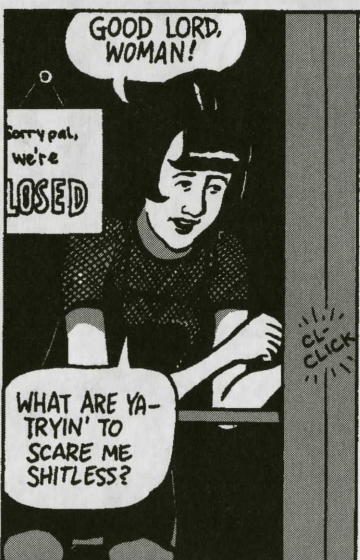
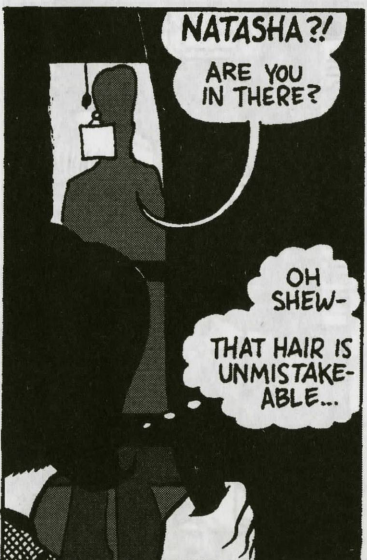


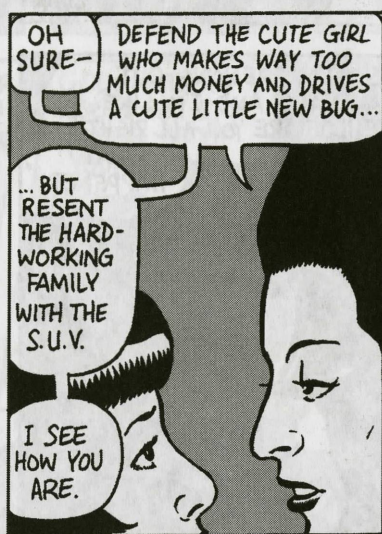
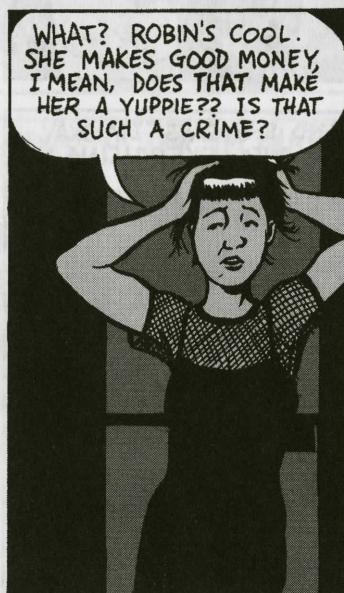


Babette's Feast

A CHLOE and NATASHA MYSTERY™









HER REASONING OF COURSE BEING THAT IF HER CHEST MUSCLES GET BIGGER, THEY'LL PUSH HER BOOBS OUT MORE...

I REALLY SHOULDN'T BE TELLING YOU GUYS THIS...

ON THE OTHER HAND, ISN'T IT POSSIBLE THAT HER CHEST WILL TIGHTEN AND CONTRACT — THEREBY MAKING HER TITTIES GET SMALLER?

YEAH-HUH — I TOLD HER THAT! AND SHE STARTED FREAKING OUT — I MEAN REALLY UPSET!

SHE HASN'T SAID IT OUT LOUD, BUT I KNOW SHE RESENTS THE FACT THAT MY CHEST IS BIGGER THAN HERS...

I MEAN, NOT THAT I'M **HUGE** OR ANYTHING. JUST, YOU KNOW, MORE THAN SHE HAS.

I DON'T CARE REALLY.

GOD, NATASHA, WOULD YOU STOP TALKING ABOUT YOUR TITS?!

OH-SORRY.

HAHA HAHAHAHAHAHAHAHA

HA HA.

NO, BUT REALLY YOU GUYS — I CAN SYMPATHIZE WITH CHLOE. I MEAN, GEEZ, BREASTS ARE PRETTY IMPORTANT.

THINK ABOUT IT- BREASTS. MAYBE THE MOST POTENT SYMBOL OF FEMININE POWER. THEY'RE MORE THAN JUST ATTRACTIVE...



BREASTS FEED BABIES. A LOT OF MEN HAVE A THING FOR BREASTS, SURE-- BUT A LOT OF WOMEN WERE BREAST-FED AS INFANTS.



EVERY HUMAN, SOMEWHERE INSIDE THEM, WANTS A NIPPLE TO SUCK. BREASTS HAVE PSYCHOLOGICAL POWER.



HOWS ABOUT NOURISHING ME WITH A LITTLE MORE OF THAT HEIFEWENZEN?



SHOULD WE ORDER ANOTHER PITCHER?

When.

I'LL BUY THIS ONE.



YEAH, I AGREE THAT BREASTS EQUAL FEMALE POWER. BUT THE THING IS, CHLOE HAS A REALLY LOVELY CHEST. SHE'S ACTUALLY PRETTY SEXY.



IT'S HER ATTITUDE THAT'S TRIPPING HER UP. I MEAN, A LOT OF GUYS PREFER SMALL BREASTS, Y'KNOW?

OH MY GOD!



THAT GUY AT THE BAR IS THE CAUSE OF CHLOE'S ANXIETIES...

- OH WAIT, DON'T LOOK! DON'T LOOK!



CHLOE'S BEEN OBSESSED WITH THIS GUY. SHE KEEPS A LOG BOOK ON THE WINDOW DISPLAYS HE SETS UP FOR HIS STORE. SHE ACTUALLY THINKS HE'S FLIRTING.



SHE FANTASIZES ABOUT LIVING IN AFRICA-- I THINK SHE WANTS TO RUN OFF WITH THIS GUY SHE DOESN'T EVEN KNOW. I TOLD HER SHE'S NUTS. -DON'T LOOK!



WHICH ONE'S HIM?

HOW CAN YOU POINT HIM OUT TO US WITH YOUR HANDS OVER YOUR EYES?



THIS'S CHLOE'S THING-- I SHOULD'VE KEPT MY MOUTH SHUT...

C'MON-- WHO IS HE?

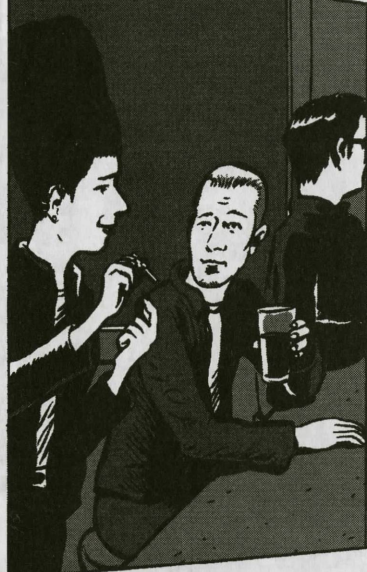
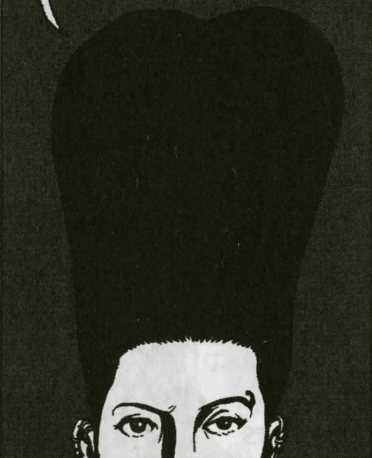


HMMM...

SHERLOCK HOLMES TIME: THERE'RE 3 GUYS AT THE BAR. TWO OF THEM LOOK LIKE ASSHOLES. ONE IS CUTE. WOULD CHLOE HAVE A CRUSH ON ONE OF THE ASSHOLES?



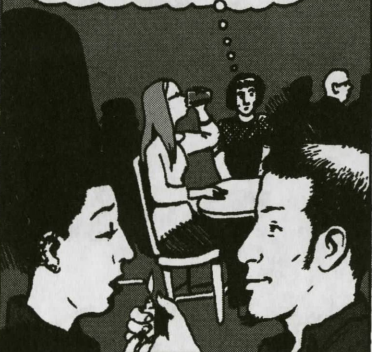
I DEDUCE THAT NO, SHE WOULD NOT. SO I'M GONNA CHECK OUT THE CUTE GUY...



OH SHIT! WHAT HAVE I DONE NOW? MAISIE'S GONNA TAKE HIM HOME TONIGHT. THEY'LL START DATING...



SHE'LL START COMING BY THE RECORD STORE AND CHLOE WILL KNOW THAT I SOMEHOW GOT THEM TOGETHER...



MAISIE'S LIKE A TIGRESS OVER THERE

WHEW!

GO GIRL!

I'M SUCH AN AWFUL PERSON



MAISIE TOLD ME SOME OF THE FUNNY CHLOE STORIES... HOW SHE'S LIVING IN SOME-ONE ELSE'S APARTMENT...



WHAT'S THAT ALL ABOUT? IS SHE JUST KIND OF CRAZY?

NO, NO... SHE'S SMART. SHE'S KEEPING THE LANDLORD FROM RAISING THE RENT.



THE LANDLORD STILL THINKS THIS GUY MANNY IS LIVING THERE, SO HE HASN'T RAISED THE RENT.



YEAH. OTHERWISE SHE COULDN'T AFFORD TO LIVE ON CAPITOL HILL. WHO CAN ANY MORE? WITH ALL THE DOT-COM YUPPIES DRIVING UP RENTS... UM...



... AND IRONICALLY, ALL THE COOL STORES ARE CLOSING BECAUSE THEY CAN'T AFFORD THE RENTS EITHER...



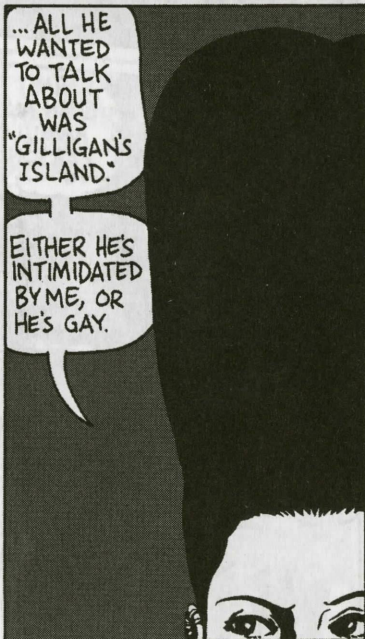
BACK FROM THE HUNT!

WELL THAT WASN'T HAPPENING!



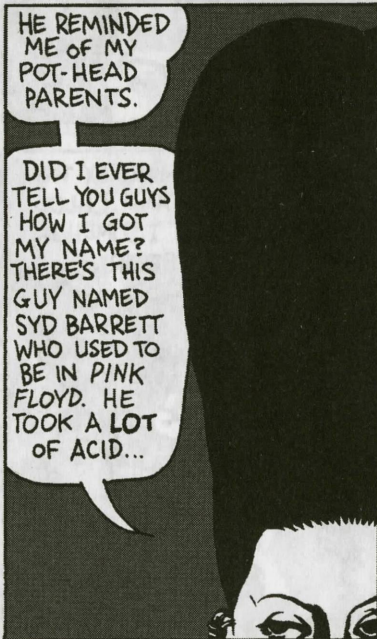
... ALL HE WANTED TO TALK ABOUT WAS "GILLIGAN'S ISLAND."

EITHER HE'S INTIMIDATED BY ME, OR HE'S GAY.

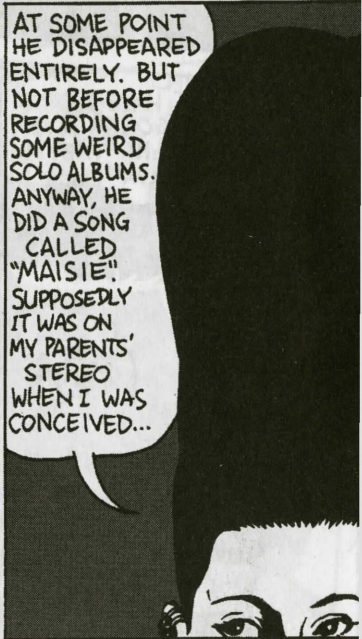


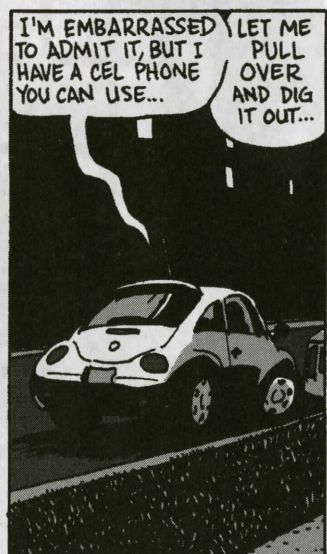
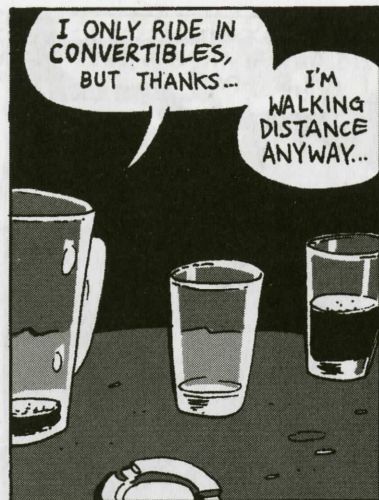
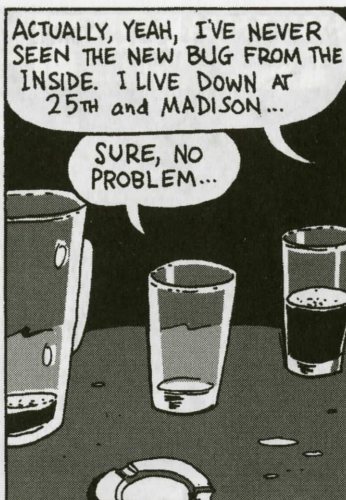
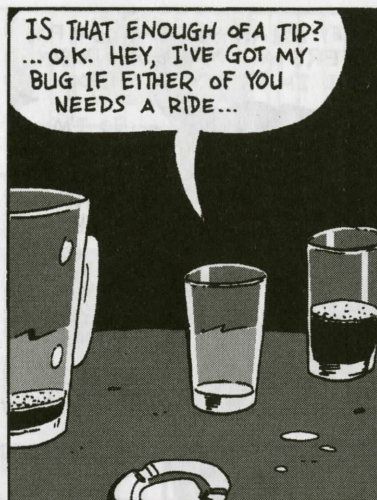
HE REMINDED ME OF MY POT-HEAD PARENTS.

DID I EVER TELL YOU GUYS HOW I GOT MY NAME? THERE'S THIS GUY NAMED SYD BARRETT WHO USED TO BE IN PINK FLOYD. HE TOOK A LOT OF ACID...

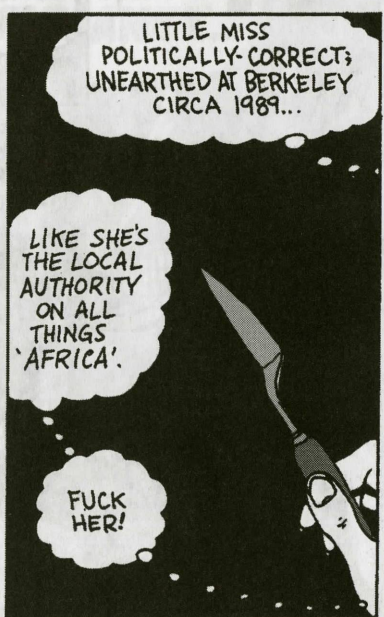
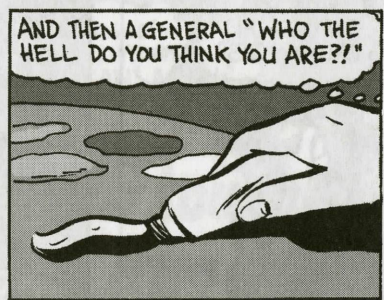
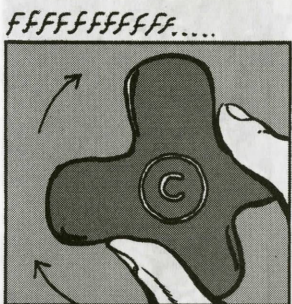
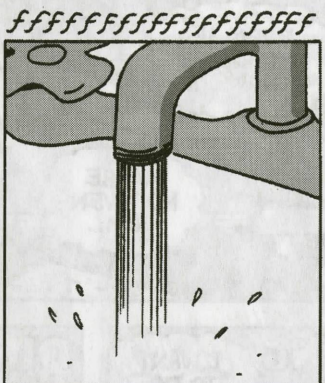
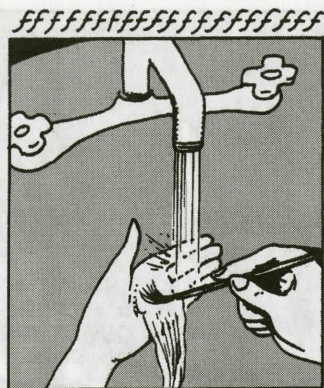
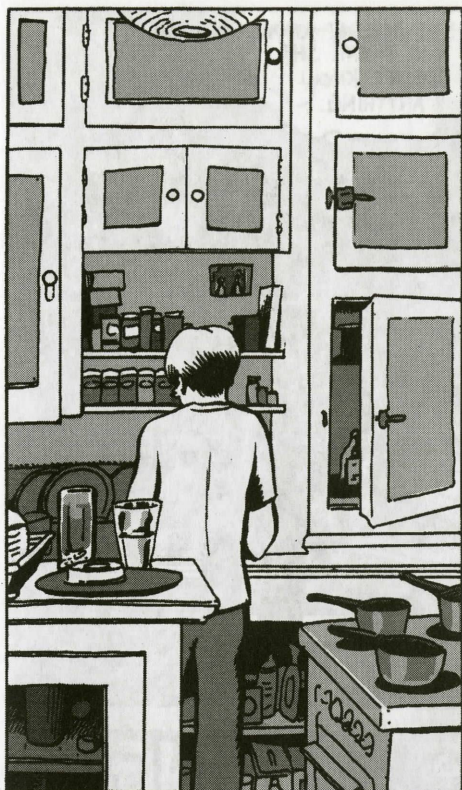


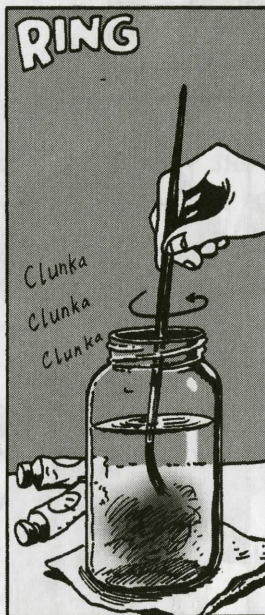
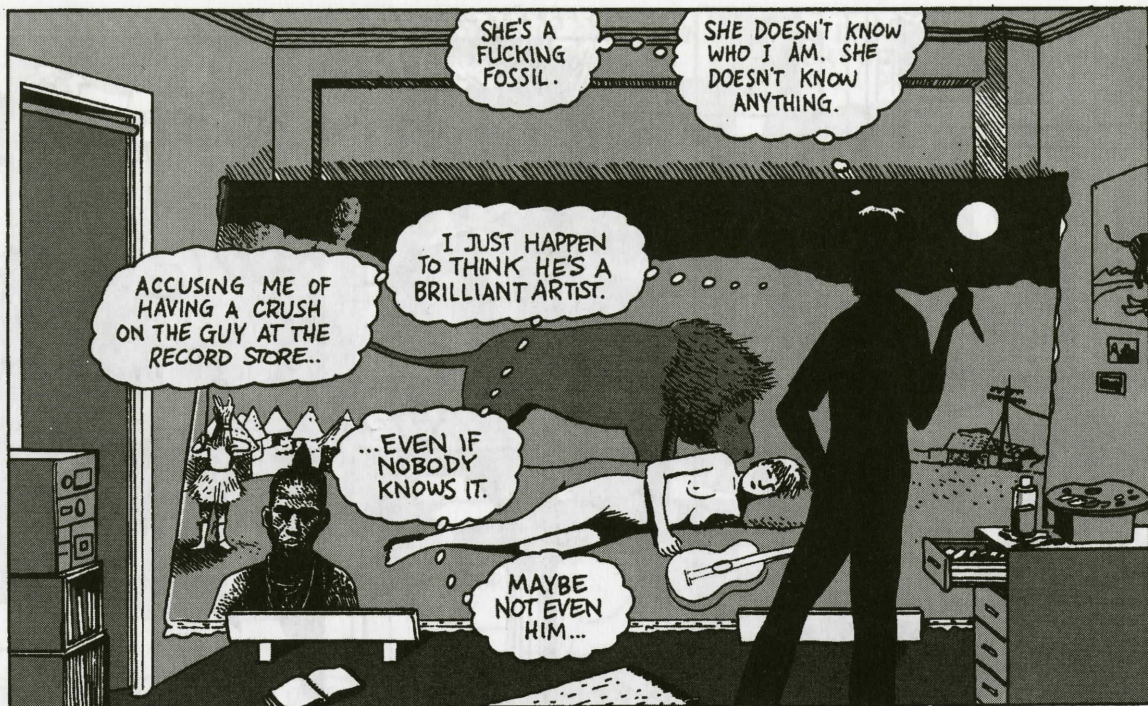
AT SOME POINT HE DISAPPEARED ENTIRELY. BUT NOT BEFORE RECORDING SOME WEIRD SOLO ALBUMS. ANYWAY, HE DID A SONG CALLED "MAISIE". SUPPOSEDLY IT WAS ON MY PARENTS' STEREO WHEN I WAS CONCEIVED...

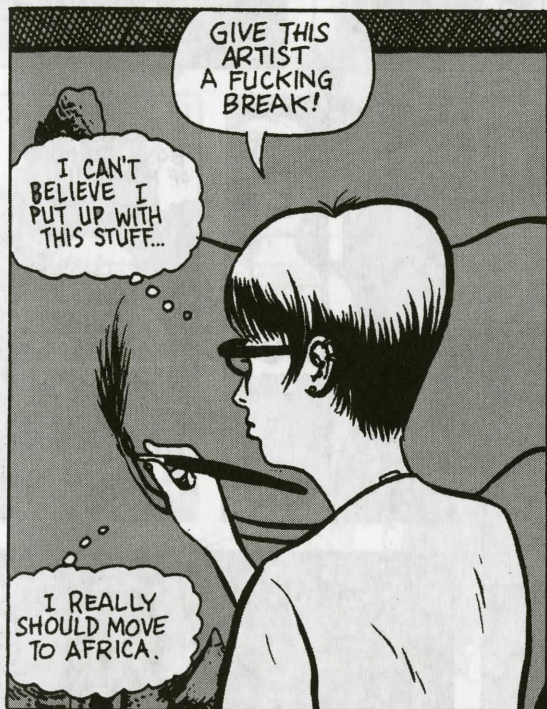






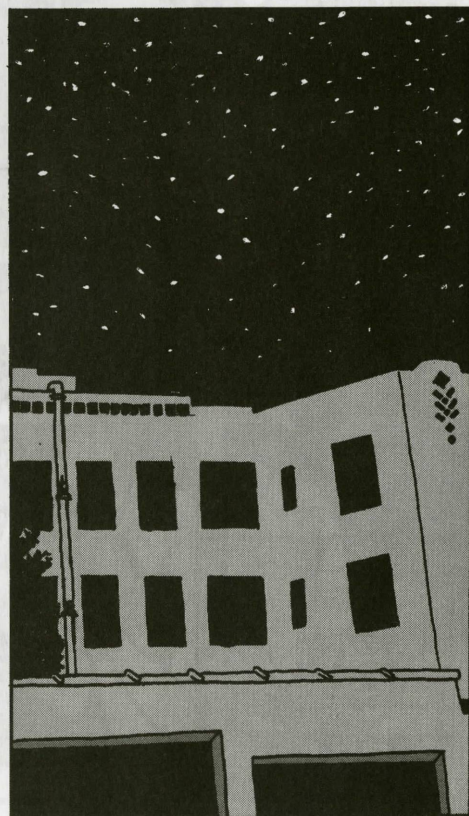


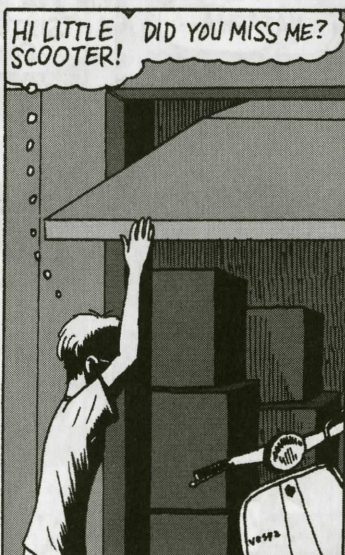
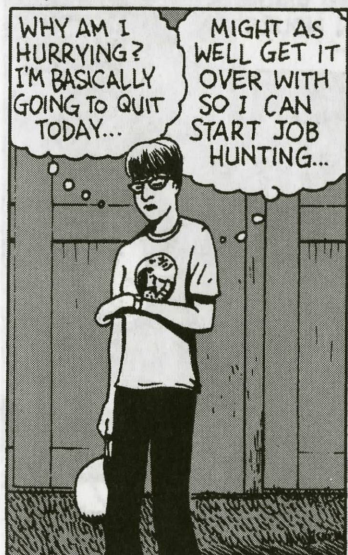
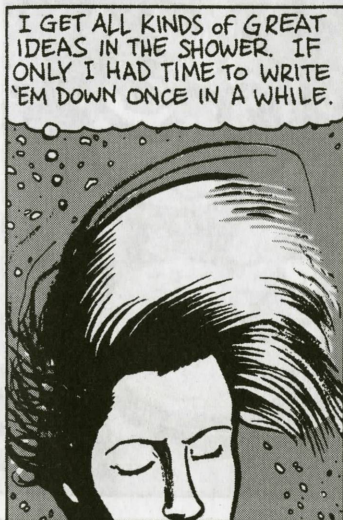


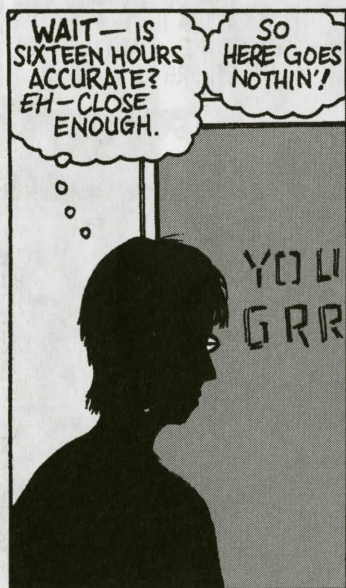
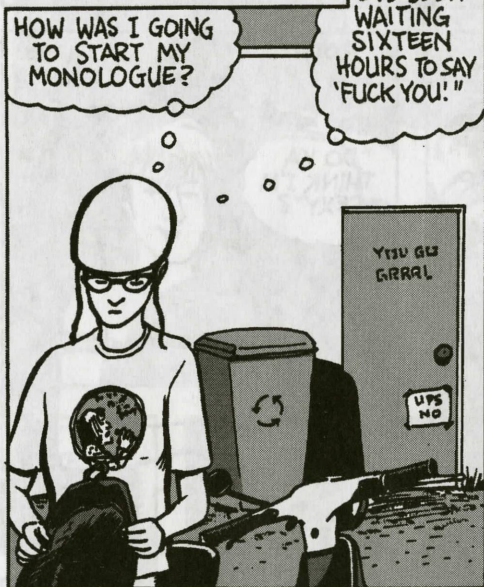




FF









OH
HEY...



I HATE TO ASK—
BUT IT'S KIND OF
AN EMERGENCY.

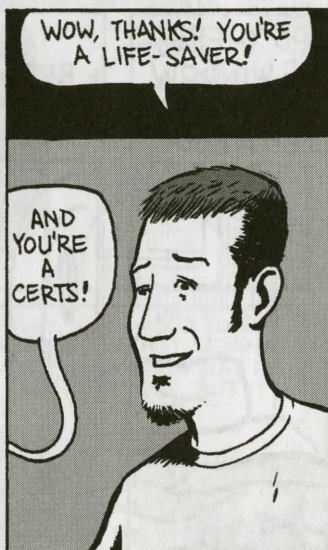
YA SEE:



THERE'S A CERTAIN FAMOUS
HIP-HOP DJ BUYING VINYL
IN MY STORE, HEH, AND I
DON'T HAVE CHANGE FOR
HIS HUNDRED...



OH HEY, NO PROBLEM—
I'LL GO IN BACK AND GET YOU
SOME SMALLER BILLS...



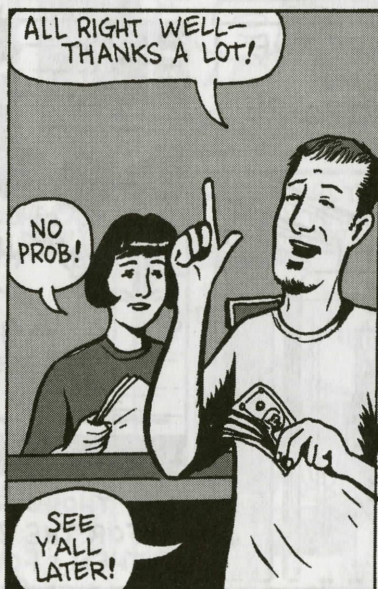
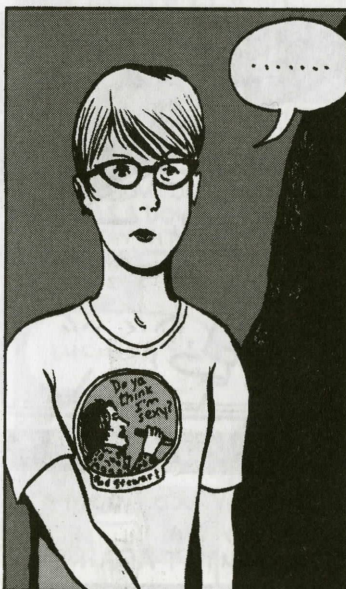
WOW, THANKS! YOU'RE
A LIFE-SAVER!

AND
YOU'RE
A
CERTS!



OH
HEY—

THAT'S
A COOL
T-SHIRT!



ALL RIGHT WELL—
THANKS A LOT!

NO
PROB!

SEE
Y'ALL
LATER!



CHLOE?

WAS THERE
SOMETHING YOU
NEEDED TO SAY?

"ROOM FOR RENT"

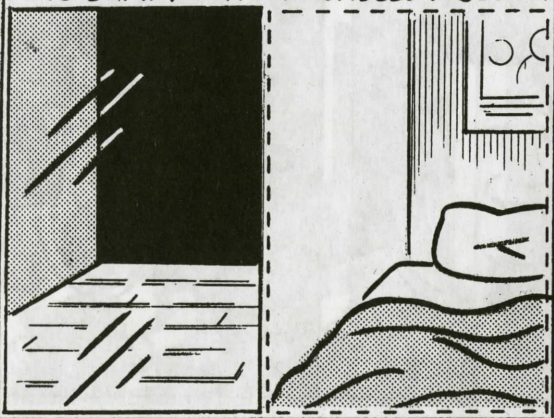


SO I'M OUT WALKING AROUND, NOT REALLY PAYING ATTENTION, WHEN I INSTINCTIVELY LOOK UP & SEE THAT BOARDING HOUSE I USED TO LIVE IN.

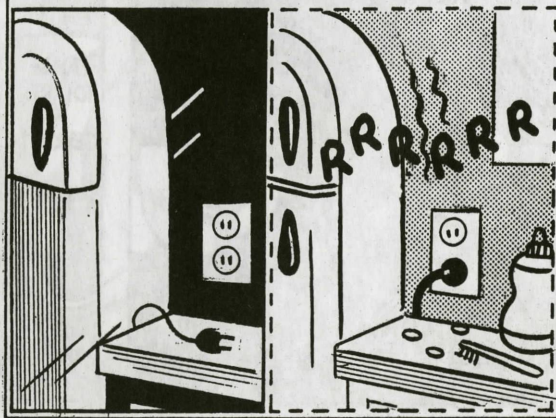
TURNS OUT IT'S MY OLD ROOM THAT'S UP FOR RENT, ONLY FOR A LOT MORE THAN I USED TO PAY.



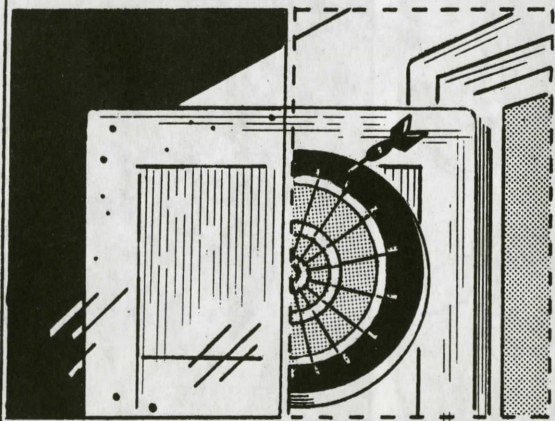
I'D FORGOTTEN I EVEN LIVED THERE, BUT LOOKING THROUGH THE WINDOW IT ALL CAME BACK PRETTY QUICK-- THE LUMPY FUTON I CALLED A BED...



AND THE ANCIENT, TANK-LIKE REFRIDGERATOR WHICH WOULD INEVITABLY START HUMMING RIGHT AS I WAS DRIFTING OFF TO SLEEP.



YOU COULD EVEN STILL SEE THE HOLES IN THE DOOR FROM WHERE I MISSED THE DARTBOARD COMPLETELY.



I THOUGHT ABOUT MY OLD ROOM FOR THE REST OF MY WALK, THEN I FORGOT ABOUT IT AGAIN.

"LUCINDA"

MY WHOLE LIFE, I'VE WANTED A DIFFERENT NAME... IT'S MY PARENTS' FAULT, OF COURSE--



--HOW COULD ANYONE NOT BE ABLE TO FIGURE OUT THAT JOAN KLEIN (THAT'S ME) IS JUST ABOUT THE MOST BORING NAME OF ALL TIME? IF YOU HAVE A BORING NAME, PEOPLE PROBABLY ASSUME THAT YOU'RE A BORING PERSON. AND I'M NOT-- I'M VERY MYSTERIOUS, ACTUALLY...

FOR EXAMPLE, WHEN I ORDER SOMETHING FROM THE CAFÉ ACROSS THE STREET, THEY'LL ASK



CAN I GET YOUR NAME?

YOU KNOW, SO THEY CAN BRING OUT YOUR STUFF WHEN IT'S DONE.

ONLY, WHAT I DO IS, I DON'T GIVE THEM MY REAL NAME...

INSTEAD, I GO BY AN ALIAS: THE NAME THAT I DECIDED I WANTED TO HAVE BACK IN FIFTH GRADE...



LUCINDA.
LUCINDA APPLAGATE

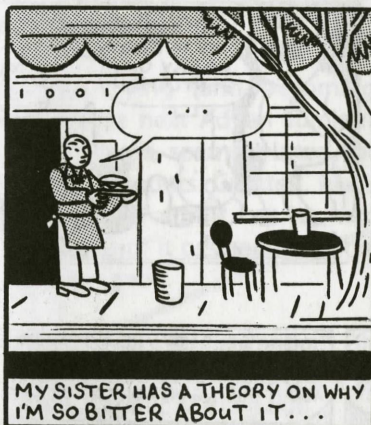
IN ALL LIKELIHOOD, THEY KNOW I'M LYING. BUT IT DOESN'T REALLY MATTER IF THEY THINK I'M REALLY A LUCINDA APPLAGATE...



OKAY
"LUCINDA"

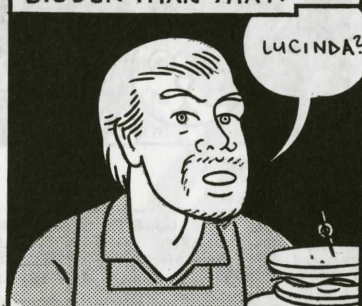
WE'LL CALL YOU WHEN YOUR SANDWICH IS READY.

AS LONG AS THEY DON'T KNOW I'M A JOAN KLEIN, I'M HAPPY.



MY SISTER HAS A THEORY ON WHY I'M SO BITTER ABOUT IT...

NAMELY, THAT I USED TO GET TEASED WHEN THAT 'JOANIE LOVES CHACHI' SHOW WAS ON T.V., WHICH IS TRUE, BUT IT'S BIGGER THAN THAT.



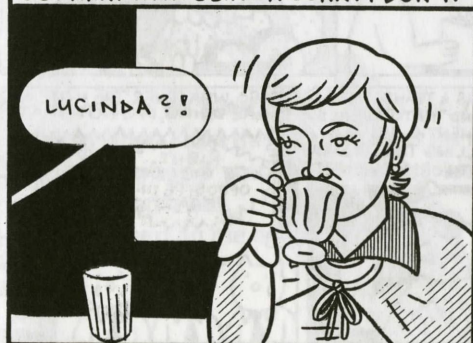
LUCINDA?

THE REAL PROBLEM IS, THERE'S NOT REALLY ANY GREAT JOANS TO LOOK UP TO. SURE, I KNOW ABOUT JOAN DIDION AND JOAN CUSACK. BUT MOST FOLKS DON'T.



LUCINDA...?

WHAT ABOUT JOAN JETT, YOU SAY. SEE, SHE HAS A DOUBLE 'J' NAME, SO SHE CAN GET AWAY WITH BEING A JOAN. I DON'T.



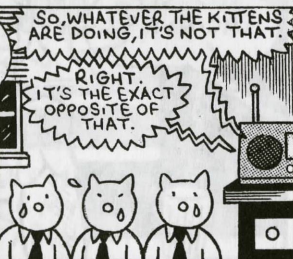
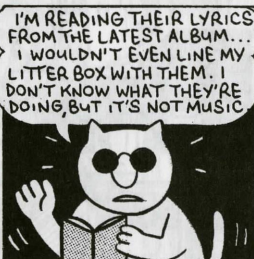
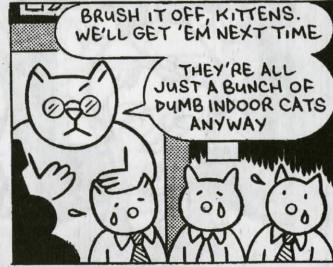
LUCINDA?!

SO WHAT'S A GIRL TO DO, SHORT OF LEGALLY CHANGING HER NAME (WHICH I'VE LOOKED INTO AND IT SEEMS LIKE A HUGE PAIN)? JUST KEEP ESCAPING THROUGH GRILLED CHEESE.



OH!
OVER HERE!

I WAS SPACING OUT.



LETTERS

David and Greg,

Finally borrowed UH from [Tom] Devlin ... really enjoyed the Chloe and Natasha stories, particularly the "Out of Africa" piece, and I think you're on to a pair of characters to follow up on. The other parts, save "Lost in Space" perhaps, didn't hit me as hard, and it's tough to gauge where the irony starts and stops. I only hope that I'm responding to the more serious and personal segments! Good work.

-Heath

Dear Greg "the Pump" Stump,

I'm just writing to let you know that I liked Urban Hipster. Everything was good especially "August" and the advertisement. Interesting pictures, but Dave needs bigger shoulders. Also, I bet your guitar wasn't plugged in (Urban Hipsters are all "in a band," but they don't really play) in that picture on the inside back cover. "December" was pretty good too.

Poignant Comics Journal-style critiques:

In "Slob," the title character picks up Husker Du's "New Day Rising." "Land Speed Record" is a vastly superior album.

Are you trying (and becoming successful) to become the next Adrian Tomine? Your stories, as well as Dave's, seem pointed towards 1-st hand "hipster" accounts. Granted, that's the bread and butter of your comic, but it's hard to tell if you're making fun of it or exemplifying it. Regardless the stories are good.

I told Vanessa [VanderZanden] (she used to intern at Fantagraphics, remember?) and she was excited about the comic coming out.

-Roy Schwartz (I used to intern at Fantagraphics, remember?)

p.s. It is 1 a.m. and I am high.

This comic is so good. I am a big fan of Ghost World, so when I saw this I knew it was up my alley. I was wondering if you guys had any idea when book 2 will come out. Thanks for keeping me entertained.

-Lori

Hey Dave --

Good to hear from you. I thought UH was really good. I was actually surprised at how much I like Greg's pieces. I wasn't crazy about his style at first, but as I read the comics I really came around to liking it. The piece about the car trip is pure Adrian Pulse days. But better.

I think the "I" in hipster should be a "!" ! Just for the hell of it. Like in Press Releases, which Jeff used to send out.

Still breathing,
Ed

So after several years now as my number 1 from the wash to wearing, my "UH" tee-shirt (originally intended for my sister-in-law) is finally falling apart at the seams. How many more wears have you left, Number One? I'll treasure each...

SIGH
Ribs

SHOUT OUT

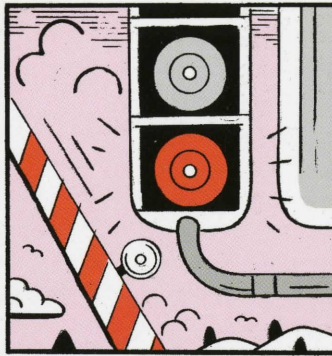
Thanks to Leeann Bowen, Carolyn Hauck, Ariel Bordeaux, Brian Sendelbach, Gary Driggs, Ilse Thompson-Driggs, Shawn Steen, Maggie Santola, Ellen Forney, Alison True, MNF, Deb Siegel, Mr Mike, Zak, John P, Frank Young, Marisa Corso, Brad Beshaw, Lark, Jason, Jeff Mason and his posse, Josh Neufeld, Kelsey Marshall, Coby and Korinna, Henry Chamberlain, the state of Washington, Fine Comix, our respective parents and all our "peeps" (if your name didn't appear here and you know us, then you would be one of the "peeps").

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

David Lasky's comics have appeared in several anthologys of late, including *Rosetta*, *Bogus Dead*, *Orchid*, *Dirty Stories*, *Swell*, *EXPO 2002*, 9-11: *Emergency Relief*, and *MATTE Magazine*. Each one is well worth seeking out and reading. Look for "The Carter Family", his collaboration with Frank Young, in *Kramer's Ergot* No. 4.

Greg Stump's weekly comic strip "Dwarf Attack" appears in Seattle's *The Stranger* and in *The Portland Mercury*.

RED LIGHT



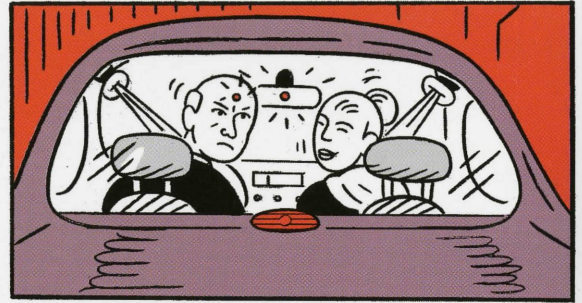
SO I'M WAITING FOR THE DRAWBRIDGE WITH A BUNCH OF CARS AROUND ME...



IF IT'S A BIG BARGE GOING BY, IT CAN TAKE FOREVER. TODAY IT'S SOME RICH GUY IN HIS YACHT.



TO MAKE MATTERS WORSE, SOME DUDE WITH ONE OF THOSE PEN-SIZED LASER LIGHT THINGS IS SHINING IT IN EVERYONE'S REAR-VIEW MIRRORS...MINE INCLUDED.



IT'S TOO HOT INSIDE MY HELMET TO WANT TO PUT UP WITH THIS CRAP. THAT'S WHY I RIDE A SCOOTER; IF I WASN'T BOXED-IN I COULD JUST ZIP AROUND ALL THESE DUMB CARS.



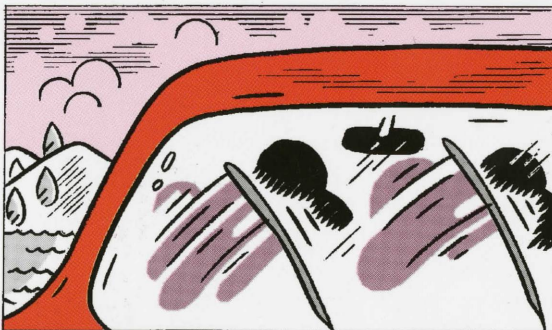
NORMALLY, I DON'T MIND SUCKING DOWN EXHAUST WHILE WAITING FOR THE DRAWBRIDGE. BUT THIS JERK WITH THE LASER POINTER IS PUSHING ME OVER THE EDGE.



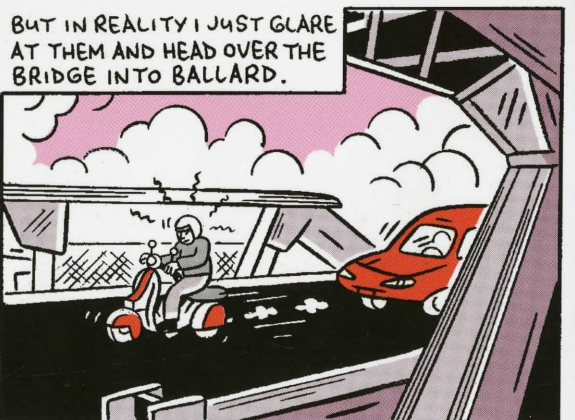
HALF OF ME THINKS OF WHAT I LEARNED IN MY MEDITATION CLASSES. THE OTHER HALF JUST THINKS ABOUT TAKING A BASEBALL BAT TO HIS FACE.



IN MY MIND, I TRY TO IMAGINE SOME KIND OF REVENGE SCENARIO,



SUCH AS: I GRAB MY TRUSTY OIL CAN, WHIP AROUND AND AIM FOR THEIR WINDSHIELD--AND, BEING TOTAL MORONS, THEY TURN ON THE WIPERS!



BUT IN REALITY I JUST GLARE AT THEM AND HEAD OVER THE BRIDGE INTO BALLARD.

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