It has been frequently observed that the comic art media, when well written and well drawn, is an extremely sophisticated one. One which in the past few years has taken enormous strides. More significant, however, is the tremendous increase in its popularity and reaching a new, and more sophisticated audience. Its vast potential is finally being realized.

It is not easy to precisely define the ingredients or formula for material that we term as "sophisticated." The term is usually reserved for selections dealing principally with the evocation of mood and the revelation of character. By this standard, work, for example, which would fit into the category of "underground comix" would be said to be in a special genre which employs basically primitive techniques to achieve limited aesthetic effects.

It is not the business of this book to try to render a definite judgement. The media, to me, seems sufficiently flexible to accommodate both. That shall be the editorial direction of this publication.

The present collection attempts to give the reader a representative view of all aspects of imagination from the minds and hands of some of the most talented people in the business.

Here then is Imagination No.1. May it entertain you, and may it once again prove that fantasy, when well written and drawn, bears one of the most honorable names in literature.

What is planned for the future is to say the least amazing. We sincerely wish that we could reveal our intentions at this time; no doubt it would greatly benefit our advanced order department. However, due to some legal red tape, we must refrain from any mention of them. Suffice it to say that the content of future issues should set milestones for the entire industry.

Our financial state at this time is not good. Subscribers will give us the capital we need to continue on a steady basis. We are also encouraging dealings with a standard discount of 40% (25% foreign).

If you can't afford to subscribe, order as many issues in advance as you can and subscribe when possible. The next issue is scheduled for July.

Now that you've read an issue, let us know what you think of Imagination. Send your letters of comment to the address below.

To merely say that I enjoyed the experience of publishing a magazine would be damning it with faint praise. As the first issue reaches the printing stage I feel, as if in the theater when the curtain is dropping, regret that I can't stay on for at least another act.

Sincere thanks to all involved, especially Al Schuster (our printer), Bill Stillwell, Allan Asherman, Alan Fleisig, Ken Barish, and Steve Englehart (who had worked on a story which, due to an unfortunate accident, could not appear). It was their inspiration and encouragement that has set our high standards and higher goals.

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NEXT ISSUE:

A Sci-Fi "Classic"

by Neal Adams
SATURN PROBE HERE. TITAN IS NOW BEHIND...

ROGER, SATURN, WE COPY YOU. HOW DOES IT LOOK FROM THERE? OVER...

LIKE A DREAM. I'LL TAKE READINGS HERE. OUT.

FANTASTIC! WE WERE RIGHT! ORE. INCREDIBLY RICH ORE. RADIOACTIVE. EMITTING FROM SATURN. NOW WE HAVE POWER TO REACH THE STARS! DO YOU READ ME, SATURN CONTROL. OVER...

WE READ YOU, CHASE. GOOD NEWS. CAN YOU TAKE EXACT RECORDINGS FROM THERE?...

NO. SOME DISTURBANCE. MAYBE FROM TITAN. I'LL MOVE CLOSER. OUT...

WE COPY. OUT.
THE ENGINE ERUPTED AND HURTLED CHASE TOWARD THE WONDER OF THE SOLAR SYSTEM.

THEN SILENCE. SOME IMMENSE MAGNETIC FIELD STILLED THE PROXIME HEAVENS. DEAD SILENCE.

I'M GOING IN NOW. CLOSER. I WANT TO GET AN ACCURATE READING. MAYBE I CAN GET BEYOND THE INTERFERENCE.

SATURN CONTROL, I'M FALLING OVER... SATURN CONTROL, THIS IS SATURN PROBE I, DO YOU READ ME? CLICK... CLICK...
HELLO... HELLO...
OUT THERE... NO... IT'S... IT'S...

THE RINGS.
Johnny... you know I love you, don't you?

Mmmph!

Okay Johnny... I won't hassle you. It's over, isn't it?

Sob! Sob!

Johnny... you said you loved me... why? I mean, just tell me why... please....

Okay, baby! Straight talk! It's just like the other guys say— you're a fair lay, but your conversation rots! Take it light, babe!

Slam!

...and so Johnny walked out of my life like the others had. Suddenly, I decided that it had happened once too often... I remember taking the pills....

Ooohhh... Johnny....
...and I remember the slow drift toward oblivion... like sinking into cotton... peace... enfolding me... forever...

so easy... but it never ended... I just floated for an age, adrift in a limbo of night. Contentment yielded to despair, and the peace I'd known fled with the thought... leaving my heart to be chilled by the dark...

terror welled within my breast... the darkness drew me... and I was falling... falling... and I knew I'd fall forever... the loneliness... fear... cast aside again, even by death... the anguish overwhelmed me, and from the depths of my soul my cry ripped out across eternity — "Oh God! I didn't know... didn't want this... not this... I only wanted to be loved... is that so wrong?"

oh jesus! help me!!!
pleasee....

as though in answer to my plight, a blaze of brilliance ripped the night and then an arm thrust through the light and saved my soul from endless night....
And when I to my senses came,
My life was nevermore the same.
Or young man smiled into my eyes;
He seemed a god in mortal guise...

His eyes held laughter, bold and free;
Of 'David' clothed in light was he....

He laughed at my initial shame;
Said he, "Are we not all the same?
Cast out those foolish fears within,
Where beauty lives there is no sin."

He smiled at me, and in my breast,
My fear and guilt were set to rest.

So laughing gaily, running free,
Eden's innocents were we....
A strange good feeling grew inside—
One I'd always had to hide....

And then he rose, gave me his hand,
And said to me, "Come see my land."
How wonderfu, this man who dared
To show a woman that he cared!
A lion's majesty had he—
And yet, he showed gentility.

He showed me glens wherein elves sing—
The moon-enchanted fairy ring...

And here approached a unicorn,
Whose back had only virgins borne...

A magic, sylvan silvered glade
Where great and pagan loves were made;
Where forest nymphs and water sprites
With faerie's lords took their delights.

Ulás, I wept, "I am not pure!"
But he said gently, "Be not sure..."
"For purity is more," said he,
"Than fools' high-priced virginity..."

"A girl whose maidenhead is torn
Should not feel she from grace is shorn.
Such fancies earn a real man's scorn;
He knows that's how the woman's born!"
Fear not your past, for I can see
The virgin within that ever shall be!

And as I turned, he kissed my lips;
His hands caressed my breasts and hips.
Then smiling sweetly, soft, he said,
"Shake earth's sweet mantle for our bed..."

She kissed again, and then he said,
"With love, I'll take your maidenhead;
This time, no tears when blood flows red,
A woman you'll become instead!"

I flushed, then felt desire rise;
His manhood pressed between my thighs.
Then, as he gently entered me,
I saw the art that love could be...

How matchless strong, yet tender kind...
A swift, sweet pain then brought to mind
How sweet is love's majesty,
When borne of love, as it should be!

My heart was pounding, lungs afire,
And still he quickened my desire....
A blend of beauty, truth and love, Together now we soared above, Surpassed the summit of delight, Exploded in a blaze of light!

And that was but the first that night; Again we shared love's ancient rite...

And yet, once more; one last release...

And then...I slept the sleep of peace....

...AGES LATER, I AWOKE IN MY OWN BED, IN MY OWN WORLD..."WHAT AN ODD DREAM," I THOUGHT, "IT WAS SO VERY...REAL!" AND, STRANGELY ENOUGH, I FELT...NEW...YES...NEW AND CLEAN, LIKE A WOMAN AT LAST! "ODD, HE SEEMED...SO REAL," I THOUGHT. "SO VERY..."

BUT I NEVER FINISHED THE THOUGHT... BECAUSE THAT MOMENT WAS WHEN I FIRST SAW THE BLOOD SPOTS ON THE BED....
That's not the point! You are not supposed to be here! Poor Barney.

What's going on? Barney, hold him, I'll be right there!

Hold him! Hold him!

Miss Jason, this is no place for a stumble-footed light-headed female. Is it so terrible to have a girl chasing you around all the time?

No, say it isn't so! Mr. Jason wants to talk to you tomorrow, Barney. I think he wants to thank you for the job you've done this last month. You've saved him a good hunk of money....

Huh-ayeee!

Howard! Look out! Be-
Nothing like having an engineer for a brother. I'll get that construction problem worked out before dinner.

I'll get him with this rope.

Then well... what?

I don't think I can hold on Barney.

Hold him, Barney, hold him!

I can't hold on, Barney! I can't hold on!

Howard, just a little longer.

Ah... now if I can just get under him...

Jeff! Jeff! Good boy! How is he?

He seems O.K., Barney, good thing you held him so long.

Moments later...

Barney Peake, and you, Jeff... you saved my... my... well... anyway... thanks. I won't forget this... never... I won't forget.
YOUR FRIEND, HOWARD, GOT SO EMOTIONAL. IT WAS EMBARRASSING.

MAYBE, MAYBE NOT. SOMETIMES I THINK MY SHARE OF EMOTIONS WERE GIVEN TO BROTHER CHADWICK.

ACHTUNG!...

...HUH? OH...HI, FELLAS.

ALL RIGHT, OUTSIDE OF MY BEING LATE AND YOU TWO CONSPiring TO RUIN MY LOVe LIFE, WHAT ELSE IS NEW?

NOT MUCH, CHAD... BURNED MY TONGUE ON COFFEE AT LUNChtIME.

MEANWHILE, FAR REMOVED...

HIS LIFE WAS JUST HANDED TO HIM. I THINK EVEN YOUR EMOTIONS MIGHT BE SHAKEu AT SUCH A TIME, JEFF.

UH-HHMM, FOR ALL OF YOU. THIS ONE FOR YOU LOOKS LIKE A CHECK, SON.

AH-HAH, MAIL THeIF! GOTCHA!

DON'T THINK SO BARNEY, I'M PROBABLY TRYING TO CONVINCE MYSELF I'LL BE ABLE TO DO FOR MY LEGS WHAT I'VE DONE FOR MY ARMS.
“AL IN TOILET LAND!”

by Dan Recchia

IT BEGAN ONE DAY WHEN AL WAS FULFILLING AN “URGENT BIOLOGICAL NEED.”

Suddenly, as he flushed the toilet, he felt a tremendous suction pull him down into the toilet, and then...

STORY & ART DAN RECCHIA © 1969
Hello! Hello!

This is wild... I've been accidentally flushed down the toilet bowl and I wind up in some weird place called Toilettland... Eh?

I'm Diah.
And I'm Rhea. We read your thoughts and we'd like to help you. What can we do for you?

Who are you?

Well, you can take me to whoever is in charge of Toilettland.

So, Al, flanked by his new friends, Diah and Rhea, start on their way to see Dr. Barnyard, the only person in Toilettland who may be able to help Al return home.

That's the president—Lindsay, son of a John. However, he may not be able to help you. I suggest we go to...

Dr. Christian Barnyard, the brilliant scientist who has made great breakthroughs in novel transplants. Maybe he can find a way to get you back home.

The trio walk about two miles when, suddenly...

Whoosh!

Look out! Duck!

What was that?

One of the deadly stink bombs used by the Urineans and the Excretins!

The Urineans and the Excretins, they use the bombs to kill each other. Once you're hit by a stink bomb the concentrated smell will suffocate you instantly!
But why do they fight each other?

Nobody really knows. They've been at it for centuries now and there's no end in sight, although only recently the Excreting have been clamoring for equal rights!

Well, let's make a break for it while we've still got a chance!

The three travelers continue their journey for quite a while...

Until...

Wait... I see something ahead of us in the clearing!

I know where we are! We're in...
...SHITCAEO

...THE HOME OF DR. BARNYARD!

IT'S THE MAIN CITY IN TOILETLAND, AND ALSO...

DR. CHRISTIAN BARNYARD
M.D.  B.S.  PH.D. S.O.B.
TRANSPLANTS
APPENDECTOMIES
NOTARY PUBLIC

DR. BARNYARD, I PRESUME? I...

QUIET, PLEASE!
I UM JUST ABOUT TO PERFORM A VERY IMPORTANT OPERATION!
I will now attempt to split apart a Siamese twin!

Oh well... you can't win 'em all...

So Al relates his story of how he arrived in Toilettland.

...and you've gotta help me get out of this place, Doc! They say you're the only one that can!

Hmmm... well now, I wouldn't say that... but... wait— I think I might have something here that can do the trick...

Here— take this medallion and put it around your neck. It has special chemical properties that may be able to bridge the dimensional gap between our dimension and yours!

Gee, Doc, that's really great! I sure hope this works. You don't know how really grateful I...
WHAT WAS THAT?

SOMEONE THREW A BRICK THROUGH THE WINDOW.

I'LL SEE WHAT'S GOING ON!


However, the cops seem to be making mincemeat out of the whoopies! Look at Mayor I.P. Daley over there barking them on!

All right men, I want you to go out there and BEAT ON THOSE WHOOPIES! SMASH! KILL! HAIM! SQUASH! STOMP! DISMEMBER...

POW!
HEY - THAT FELLOW OVER THERE LOOKS LIKE HE CAN USE SOME HELP! I'LL GO GIVE HIM A HAND!

SUDDENLY...


The End
THE LIFE-MASK

My Love, I have something to tell you:
Remember that big brown bag I was carrying around,
the one that had BOHACK printed in red on it?
Well,
In that bag I had your life-mask.
A heavy white plaster life-mask.
I used to carry it around
and
when I was alone
I used to take it out of that bag
kiss its unresponsive lips
touch its face mouth and eyes—
You never let me touch you anymore.

My Love, You know what I did today?
I went downtown.
I went to the top of one of those new buildings—
one of the tall ones
with a featureless face of glass—
and I went out onto the roof.
I took the life-mask out of the bag
and put it on the roof.
I took the BOHACK bag and tore it into little pieces.
I took the pieces, confettied them over the side
onto the unknowing parade
and screamed “hooray!”
Then I took that goddamn life-mask,
flung it off the roof
and watched the white shatter
on the black pavement.

ME AND MY MAGIC CALENDAR

The calendar fell off the wall
and the day I had circled hit me in
in the eye

Jumping up: “Today’s the day—
wake up—wake up”
I remembered I was alone
and I was embarrassed

“A hurried meal tastes hurried”
I noticed
sitting at my tea & toast
up and out on to the street

“Bus drivers are getting surly”
I noted to myself
as he stared at me
& my hair
& handed me 50 dimes—
change for a ten

onto the subway
alone
with the city
was squeezed out
at 59th
I was going
to 53rd
but today’s
the day
so I’ll walk

Into the office
at the desk
next to mine
and first checked
by the desk
next to that
clock hand crawled to
crawled to 12
and fell over
to 1 where it
stopped—
ROTH

She stopped, opened her eyes, and asked me:

"What did they do with all the padded seats they took out of the subways the buses the libraries and all the other places we used to be comfortable in?"

And all I could say was:

I really don't know but would you love me just the same as if I did?

almost and exploding at 5 out onto 53rd downstairs to the subway again met the city again up the stairs turned the door and was home

"canned dinner tastes like cans" I noticed as I sat in front of it

and after dinner I took my book (up to page 30-590 to go)

and waited and read and waited and when the clock hit ten I put in the bookmark (page 42) got up brushed my teeth & put on my pajamas

I set my alarm and took my red magic marker out of my desk

picked the calendar up off the floor circled tomorrow and hung it back on the wall

It is midnight. The sky is yellow. Smiling with the power of blackness. Under the skirts of love, in the mouth of blackness. I welcome anything that comes creeping like a dark lizard. Yellow stretches around the midnight, black as holes in the teeth...
BOOOOOOOG!!... HEEYAA KIDS, HEEYAAA! THIS IS YOUR HORRIBLE HOST IN HEATHER HOPPIN' HORROR, THE GREMLIN FROG... FRESH-CRAWLED FROM MY BED OF BILEOUS BARF-SLIME TO BEND YOUR EAR WITH A BONE-BREAKING BIT OF BAD BEDLAM. SO, PULL UP THAT POT OF PUTRESCENT PIG-PARTS WHILST I DESTROY YOUR MIND WITH THIS LITTLE PORTION OF PUCE CALLED...

CONJURE WOMAN

THE OLD WOMAN, STIRRING HER STEAMING CAULDRON WITH ALL THE CARE OF A MIDWIFE, COUGHED AND CHUCKLED AMIDST HER TOMES AND BOTTLES AND JARS, THEIR DARK TREASURES LOOKING ON APPROVINGLY... THE MYSTERIOUS CONTENTS OF HER GLOWING KETTLE POPPED AND BUBBLED, SWIRLED ABOUT IN EVER-CHANGING PATTERNS, AND THE GREASY BLACK FUMES ESCAPED THROUGH A HOLE IN THE ROOF OF HER ANCIENT HOVEL, STAINING THE DANK SWAMP AIR WITH THEIR OBSCENE COLOR...
SO, MY CHILD OF DARKNESS... YOU AWAKEN AT LAST! RISE, SON OF NEWT'S EYES AND BAT WINGS AND FROG'S TOADS...

...RAISE YOURSELF FROM YOUR VAT OF LIFE AND DO MY BIDDING!!

LONG YEARS HAVE I LABORED... WAITING FOR THE VILE INGREDIENTS THAT MAKE UP YOUR BEING TO GEL INTO ONE WHOLE... AND, NOW, YOU ARE BORN!!

GO, MY SON!! GO OUT AND WREAK OUR JUST HAVOC ON AN ALL TOO DESERVING WORLD!!
“In The Dark Hour of Nova Christus...”

“A, Saving Grace.”

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