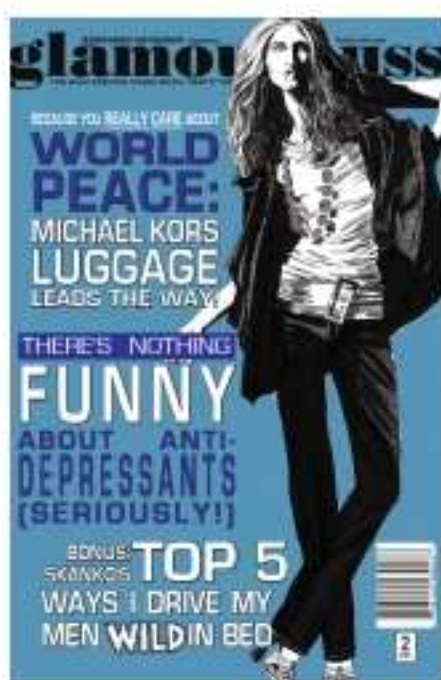


It isn't just the 'high fashion comic book
that is so six months ago. . .

AARDVARK-VANAHEIM PRESENTS **glamourpuss**



It's also a history of photorealism in
comics, here is a look at the historical
material from the first three issues.

Issue # 7 is currently on the stands of
good comic shops everywhere.

I'VE BEEN ASKED THE QUESTION
SO MANY TIMES
IN THE THREE YEARS SINCE I FINISHED
MY 6,000-PAGE, 26-YEAR GRAPHIC NOVEL,
CEREBUS...

THAT I ALWAYS FIGURED
THAT THE TITLE OF MY NEXT
BOOK SHOULD BE

*So what
are you
working on?*

BASIC BUSINESS
STUFF...

...PUTTING TOGETHER
THE *CEREBUS*
ARCHIVE...

...A SECRET
PROJECT
(SINCE
COMPLETED)...

...MY DAILY
BLOG & MAIL...

BUT! WHAT I *WANTED* TO BE WORKING ON HADN'T CHANGED VERY
MUCH SINCE I WROTE IN THE ANNOTATIONS FOR *LATTER DAYS*...

"WHEN PEOPLE ASK ME IF I HAVE ANYTHING PLANNED AFTER CEREBUS THIS IS ABOUT ALL THAT COMES TO MIND: CUTE TEENAGED GIRLS IN MY BEST AL WILLIAMSON PHOTO-REALISM STYLE."

"INTERESTING, DAVE. BUT WHAT WOULD THE BOOK BE ABOUT?"

"I JUST TOLD YOU: CUTE TEENAGED GIRLS IN MY BEST AL WILLIAMSON PHOTO-REALISM STYLE"

"IF I THINK OF ANYTHING STORY-WISE (WHICH ISN'T LIKELY TO HAPPEN), I'LL LET YOU KNOW."

I ENDED UP HAVING TO SKEW MY SUBJECTS A LITTLE OLDER JUST BECAUSE THE BEST FREE PHOTO REFERENCE IS ADVERTISEMENTS IN FASHION MAGAZINES... AND MOST OF THOSE MODELS ARE AT LEAST IN THEIR EARLY TWENTIES... OR, IN THE CASE OF ONE PARTICULAR FAMOUS ACTRESS FLOGGING HER NEW PERFUME (GUESS WHICH ONE) WELL INTO HER THIRTIES.

I LOVE PICTURING WHAT'S GOING THROUGH THEIR MINDS AT THE EXACT MOMENT THAT THE SHOT WAS TAKEN. IN THIS CASE: "I WILL KEEP LOOKING AT THE CAMERA AND I WILL NOT FALL OFF OF MY SHOES WHEN I STEP DOWN. I WILL NOT: REPEAT WILL NOT FALL OFF OF MY SHOES"

AND I ALSO MOVE ACROSS A SPECTRUM OF PHOTO-REALISM STYLES (FROM ALEX RAYMOND TO STAN DRAKE TO AL WILLIAMSON TO NEAL ADAMS) DEPENDING ON THE LOOK OF THE PENCIL TRACING ONCE I'VE TRANSFERRED IT TO THE ART BOARD, "TRANSLATING" IT INTO COMICS FORM...

AND IT REALLY IS A PROCESS OF "TRANSLATION":
SIMPLIFYING FACIAL FEATURES AND CLOTHING
DETAILS WHILE *RETAINING* AS MANY OF
THEM AS POSSIBLE.

OF COURSE I FREQUENTLY VIOLATE ONE OF THE
UNSPOKEN "RULES" OF COMICS PHOTOREALISM AS
INVENTED BY ALEX RAYMOND: IT'S ALL SUPPOSED
TO BE DONE WITH BRUSH, CROSS-HATCHING AND
TEXTURES ARE TO BE KEPT TO A MINIMUM

COMPARE THE CAR ON THE PREVIOUS PAGE -- WHICH
I TRACED FROM AL WILLIAMSON'S COVER
ILLUSTRATION ON *CARTOONISTS SHOWCASE*
NO.12 (1972) -- WITH MY FOREGROUND
ILLUSTRATION TRACED FROM A MAGAZINE PHOTO.

SOMETIMES I TRY
TO PICTURE WHAT
"STORY" THE
PHOTOGRAPHER
IS TRYING TO TELL.
HERE, I THINK IT
WAS SECRET
FEMALE
COMMUNICATION:
SHE'S SITTING
ON A BAR STOOL
AND HAS PICKED
UP HER BAG WITH
TWO FINGERS,
SIGNALLING TO
ANOTHER
SINGLE WOMAN
WHO JUST
CAME IN:
"I HAVE A
MARC
JACOBS
PURSE,
TOO!
WHY DON'T
YOU SIT
OVER
HERE
AND WE'LL
'WEED OUT'
THE
RIFF-RAFF
TOGETHER?"

OOPS! GLAMOURPUSS ONE *KNEW* SHE SHOULD HAVE PUT HER *NEW*
PRESCRIPTION CONTACTS IN...GLAMOURPUSS TWO IS ACTUALLY
PACKING A *CHANEL* BAG...HER EXPRESSION SEEMS TO SAY "HONEY,
COMPARED TO COCO CHANEL MARC JACOBS IS RIFF-RAFF."

THIS WAS WILLIAMSON AT THE PEAK OF HIS
"TRANSLATION" ABILITIES WHEN HE WAS DOING THE
SECRET AGENT CORRIGAN STRIP (FORMERLY
ALEX RAYMOND'S *SECRET AGENT X-9*) FOR KING
FEATURES.

I'D IMAGINE WILLIAMSON TRACED IT FROM A PHOTO
BUT THE BRILLIANCE IS IN KNOWING HOW TO
"TRANSLATE" THE VARIOUS VALUES OF GRAY INTO
HIGH CONTRAST BLACK AND WHITE -- WHAT TO LEAVE
IN AND WHAT TO TAKE OUT.

ALL OF THE REFLECTIONS AND HIGHLIGHTS ON THE
CAR ARE SOLID BLACK, INKED WITH A THIN BRUSH,
THUS ADHERING TO RAYMOND'S UNSPOKEN RULE.

INKING IT, THE ONLY PLACE I NEEDED A PEN POINT
AND A RULER WAS FOR THE LICENSE PLATE, THE
RUNNING BOARD AND THE WINDSHIELD.

AS YOU CAN SEE FROM MY OWN
ATTEMPT TO RENDER THE TEXTURE OF
A SUEDE JACKET, I *STARTED* WITH
HIGH CONTRAST BLACK AND WHITE,
USING DRY BRUSH FOR TEXTURE.

IT JUST DIDN'T WORK
BY ITSELF, SO I HAD TO
CROSS HATCH OVER THE WHOLE
THING, THEN RENDER INTO THE DRY BRUSH
AREAS WITH EVEN MORE THIN PEN LINES.

WHICH MADE THE DENSITY OF
HER HAIR COLOUR WRONG, SO
I HAD TO CROSS-HATCH THAT.

I'M HAPPY WITH THE RESULTS.
BUT I'M ALWAYS AWARE THAT
ALEX RAYMOND OR AL WILLIAMSON
WOULD KNOW HOW TO MAKE IT
LOOK LIKE SUEDE -- OR LEATHER, OR
SATIN -- JUST WITH
A FEW BRUSH STROKES.



"IT WAS FUNNY, BUT AT FIRST HE HAD TROUBLE DRAWING ANYBODY IN SUITS. HE'D DRAWN FLASH GORDON TYPES WITH TIGHTS AND DUNGAREES AND LEVIS AND THAT KIND OF THING. ROUGH CLOTHING, YOU KNOW. I REMEMBER SHOWING HIM HOW TO DRAW THE CREASE IN PANTS AND MAKE A SUIT LOOK SMART AND FASHIONABLE. AND AT FIRST HE WASN'T THAT KEEN ON DRAWING CARS, UNTIL I POINTED OUT TO HIM THAT YOU COULD MAKE A CAR JUST AS EXCITING AS YOU COULD A FIGURE, WITH THE WAY YOU HANDLE THE BLACKS AND THE ANGLE YOU PLACE IT IN, AND HE BEGAN ENJOYING CARS, TOO.

BUT WE GOT ALONG VERY WELL TOGETHER AND WORKED VERY WELL TOGETHER."

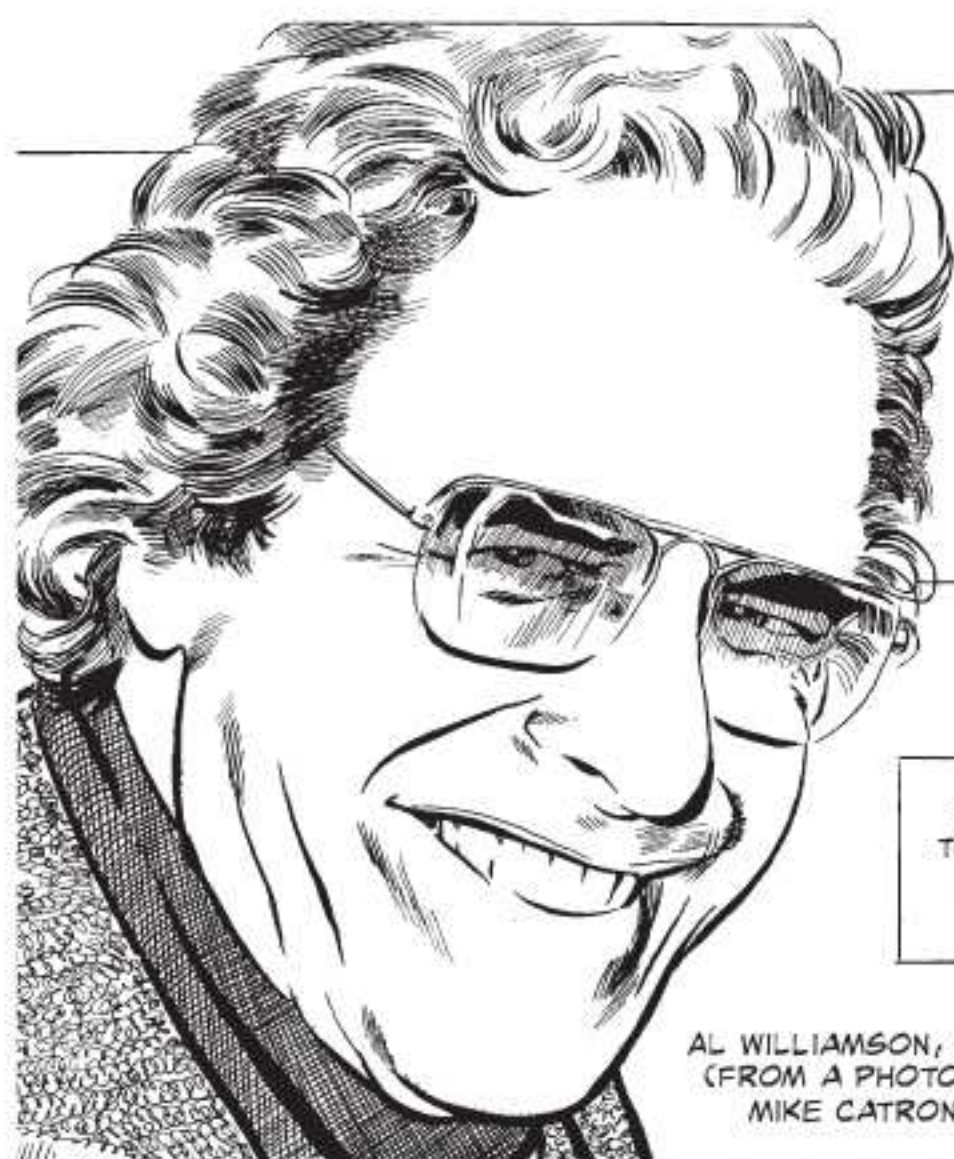
**RIP KIRBY ARTIST
JOHN PRENTICE**
ON AL WILLIAMSON'S
STINT AS HIS ASSISTANT
IN THE EARLY 1960'S



JOHN PRENTICE
CA. 1983

THEY MAKE GREAT REFERENCE AND INSPIRATION AS LONG AS YOU KNOW WHAT'S "UNDER THERE". BUT KING FEATURES HAS BEEN USING REALLY BAD COPIES SO THAT ALL THE FINE LINES HAVE EITHER FATTENED UP, FILLED IN OR DISAPPEARED LONG AGO.

THIS IS MY BEST GUESS AT WHAT THE LINE-WORK LOOKED LIKE ORIGINALLY, BASED ON THE ORIGINAL JOHN PRENTICE ARTWORK THAT I'VE SEEN.



"WHEN WE WERE DOING THE NOSTALGIA PRESS *FLASH GORDON* BOOK, DO YOU KNOW WHAT THEY GAVE US TO DO IT? ...PHOTOSTATS. THEY WERE BLOWN UP FROM MICROFILM. THAT'S WHAT WE HAD THAT THEY GAVE US. LUCKILY, I HAD A SET IN BLACK AND WHITE, AND WE GOT THE MISSING STUFF FROM MRS. RAYMOND"

AL WILLIAMSON ON DEALING WITH KING FEATURES SYNDICATE

"THEY'VE GONE OVER MY ARTWORK. THEY DO SUCH LOUSY REPRODUCTIONS ON THE PROOFS THAT SOMETIMES THEY FIGURE, OH, HIS LINES ARE TOO LIGHT, LET'S GO OVER IT... INSTEAD OF SENDING THE ORIGINALS BACK TO THE ENGRAVER AND SAYING DO IT RIGHT."

AL WILLIAMSON ON DEALING WITH THE L.A. TIMES SYNDICATE

[CALL IT "THE CURSE OF *PEANUTS*" BUT BY THE 1960S, I THINK EVERY SYNDICATE JUST ASSUMED THAT *ANY* COMIC STRIP COULD BE REPRODUCED JUST AS WELL FROM PHOTOSTATS OR BAD XEROXES AS FROM THE ORIGINAL ARTWORK. WITH THE EXCEPTION OF JOHN PRENTICE, AL WILLIAMSON, NEAL ADAMS AND STAN DRAKE, BY THEN, THANKS TO CHARLES SCHULZ, IT WAS PRETTY MUCH TRUE.]

AL WILLIAMSON, 1984
(FROM A PHOTO BY MIKE CATRON)



JOHN PRENTICE TOOK OVER THE STRIP IN 1956 AFTER ALEX RAYMOND WAS KILLED IN A CAR CRASH ON THE *SIXTH* OF SEPTEMBER. RAYMOND HAD FINISHED WORK ON THE STRIP THROUGH TO THE *TWENTY-NINTH* OF SEPTEMBER

SO BASICALLY, PRENTICE HAD MERE DAYS -- AT THE OUTSIDE MOST TWO WEEKS -- TO TURN HIMSELF INTO AS EXACT AN ARTISTIC CLONE OF ALEX RAYMOND AS HE COULD MANAGE...FINISH THE EIGHTEEN DAILY STRIPS REMAINING IN THE THEN-CURRENT STORYLINE...



...AND ONLY THEN START BUILDING HIS OWN LEAD TIME ON THE FEATURE. EVEN TO LONG-TIME *RIP KIRBY* DEVOTEES, HIS SUCCESS IN DOING SO MUST HAVE BEEN COMPLETELY ASTONISHING... AS THESE TRACED EXAMPLES FROM THOSE EIGHTEEN STRIPS ATTEST HE HAD THE RAYMOND STYLE "NAILED" PRACTICALLY FROM DAY ONE.



SINCE I'M TRYING TO TEACH MYSELF THE RAYMOND SCHOOL "LOOK", I COULD HAPPILY JUST TRACE AND RE-INK MY FAVOURITE RAYMOND AND PRENTICE "PRETTY FACE" PANELS FOR THE NEXT FORTY PAGES...

(BOTH AS A LEARNING EXPERIENCE AND BECAUSE IT'S THE MOST ENJOYABLE COMIC-ART DRAWING PROJECT I CAN IMAGINE: "DE-FATTENING" AND RESTORING ALL THE FINE LINES THAT KING FEATURES SYNDICATE HAS THOUGHTLESSLY ALLOWED TO ERODE OVER THE YEARS)

ALEX RAYMOND, 10 MAY 54



UNFORTUNATELY FOR ME, THERE IS AN IMPLIED BARGAIN IN COMIC ART: THE PRESENCE OF WORDS JUXTAPOSED WITH PICTURES DRAWS THE NATURAL INFERENCE ON THE PART OF THE READER THAT BOTH TOGETHER ADD UP TO A SEQUENTIAL *NARRATIVE*

FLIPPING THROUGH THE PAGES IN A COMIC-BOOK STORE, YOU'RE GOING TO THINK THAT THIS IS A COMIC STRIP



A NATURAL INFERENCE WHICH I'M MAKING USE OF BY PUTTING MY NARRATION INTO THESE WORD BALLOONS, THUS CREATING THE ILLUSION THAT THIS IS A COMIC-ART STORY INSTEAD OF WHAT IT IS: A RAYMOND AND PRENTICE "SLIDE SHOW" - THIRD RATE (AT BEST) COMPARED TO THEIR OWN BUT, OUTSIDE OF THEIR EXTANT ORIGINAL ARTWORK, THE ONLY PLACE WHERE YOU CAN SEE WHAT THE "LOOK" WAS MADE UP OF.

ALEX RAYMOND, 6 NOVEMBER 52



FOR MY OWN PHOTOREALISM COMIC ART, I RELY MOSTLY ON PHOTOGRAPHS FROM MAGAZINES AND NEWSPAPERS ...WHICH SELDOM FEATURE MORE THAN A HANDFUL OF PICTURES OF A GIVEN "SUBJECT"




MAKING THE PRODUCTION OF A COMIC-BOOK STORY OUT OF THEM -- LET ALONE A GRAPHIC NOVEL - MORE THAN A LITTLE *PROBLEMATIC*

LET ME SHOW YOU WHAT I MEAN:

ALEX RAYMOND 21 SEPTEMBER 51

JOHN PRENTICE, 4 MARCH 59

JOHN PRENTICE, 11 APRIL 64



THE TERRACE AT THE VILLA
IN MONTE CARLO? YES, THAT HAD
BEEN A DEFINITE **REALIZATION**
IN FACT, THE AWAKENING
OF HER **SOCIAL CONSCIOUSNESS**

SHE HAD READ AN
ARTICLE IN THE
ITALIAN EDITION OF VOGUE
ON **FOOT-BINDING**
IN THE ORIENT WHICH
HAD REALLY STRUCK HOME
WITH HER!

(MIGHT IT HAVE HAD
THE SAME IMPACT ON
HER HAD SHE NOT SPENT A
GOOD HOUR THAT MORNING
CRAMMING HER
SIZE FOUR FEET INTO SIZE TWO
BOOTIES FROM
BURBERRY PRORSUM? **HARD TO SAY.**)

"THESE PEOPLE MAKE
FOOT-BINDING SOUND LIKE
A...A...**BAD**...THING,"
SHE THOUGHT. "DON'T THEY
REALIZE THAT AN **L.B.D.**
BY VERA WANG JUST
LOOKS **WRONG** WITH
SIZE FOUR BOOTIES?"

(BESIDES! WHAT TRULY FASHION-
CONSCIOUS FIELE WOULDN'T
ADORE HAVING THOSE
FUNKY-LOOKING RADIATING
BLACK "**PAIN STARS**"
MAKING GLITTERING LITTLE
SWIRLIES AROUND
HER FEET ON THE DANCE FLOOR?)

BUT, NO, THAT **STILL** WASN'T
THE REALIZATION SHE HAD
BEEN TRYING TO REMEMBER.



NO, NO, NO.
THIS WASN'T
IT EITHER

PARDON?
THIS?

THIS IS ME, THAT
SAME SUMMER
ON THE LEFT BANK
IN PARIS "SE FAIRE BEAU"
IN MY NEW DRESS BY
BLUMARINE

EARRINGS BY
KENNETH JAY LANE, GLOVES
BY CHARTER CLUB, CLUTCH
PURSE BY JENNIFER
ALFANO

I HAD JUST PURCHASED
THE CLINIQUE COLOUR
SURGE BUTTER SHINE
LIPSTICK IN
RASPBERRY RUSH
(CLINIQUE.COM)

AND HAD CHOSEN TO
CELEBRATE MY ACQUISITION
BY PRACTICING
MY BEST "DROP DEAD" LOOK
ON MY FELLOW DINERS
AT LA SELECT BISTRO

ALAS,
THE BLUMARINE/CLINIQUE
SURGE BUTTER SHINE
LIPSTICK IN RASPBERRY
RUSH PROVED MORE
POTENT THAN I COULD
HAVE ANTICIPATED

AND THE ENTIRE BISTRO,
PATRONS, TABLES, CHAIRS
(EXCEPT MY OWN)
MAÎTRE DE, WINE STEWARD
...C'EST TOUT!...
WERE REDUCED TO
THE SCATTERING OF
UNPLEASANT ROCK SALT
YOU SEE HERE.

OUI, UN AUTRE
REALISATION:

IF I AM GOING
TO INDULGE MYSELF
IN THESE TRES AMUSANT
FASTIMES
I SHOULD MAKE
SURE ALWAYS
TO WAIT TO DO SO
UNTIL **AFTER** I HAVE
BEEN SERVED
MY TURTLE SOUP AND
CRUST-LESS CUCUMBER
SANDWICHES

NO, SHE REMEMBERED NOW, AND THE MEMORY, KNIFE-LIKE
ETCHED A SHARP PAIN WITHIN HER. IT HAD BEEN
HERE, ON THIS VERY SPOT, ALMOST A YEAR AGO, NOW,
THAT THE INSIGHT...THE REALIZATION...HAD COME TO
HER, UNBIDDEN, BUT UNRELENTINGLY...

IN THAT MOMENT, FROZEN FOREVER IN TIME AND SPACE,
FROZEN...FOREVER... IN HER MIND'S EYE
SHE HAD SUDDENLY RECOGNIZED THAT THERE WAS...
MORE TO LIFE THAN GUCCI BLACK KNIT DRESSES WITH
HAND-EMBROIDERED APPLIQUES FULLY ACCESSORIZED
WITH MATCHING BRACELET AND BELT, BOTH
PROMINENTLY EMBLAZONED WITH THE
GLEAMING GUCCI LOGO...

YES, THERE WAS **MORE** TO LIFE...**MORE**
TO LIFE EVEN THAN STRAPLESS GOWNS
FROM DONNA KARAN...

MORE TO LIFE THAN LITTLE BLACK
DRESSES
BY VERA WANG...MORE TO LIFE...SO
MUCH MORE...TO...LIFE... THAN
...THAN CLUTCH PURSES
BY JENNIFER ALFANO...

SHE WAS GENTLY SOBBING NOW,
SMALL HITCHES OF INWARD-
QUESTING
BREATHS THAT BROUGHT
THE WARMTH OF SHAME TO
HER UNDERLIDS, THAT
THREATENED TO OVERSPILL
HER REDDENING CHEEKS
WITH HOT TEARS OF REMORSE...
AND SELF-RECRIMINATION. HOW
COULD SHE HAVE BEEN SO...
BLIND? HOW COULD SHE HAVE
BEEN SO **FOOLISH?**

YES, THERE WAS
MORE.
TO.
LIFE.

THERE WAS **THIS!** THIS PLAIN AND
SIMPLE FACT BEFORE HER:

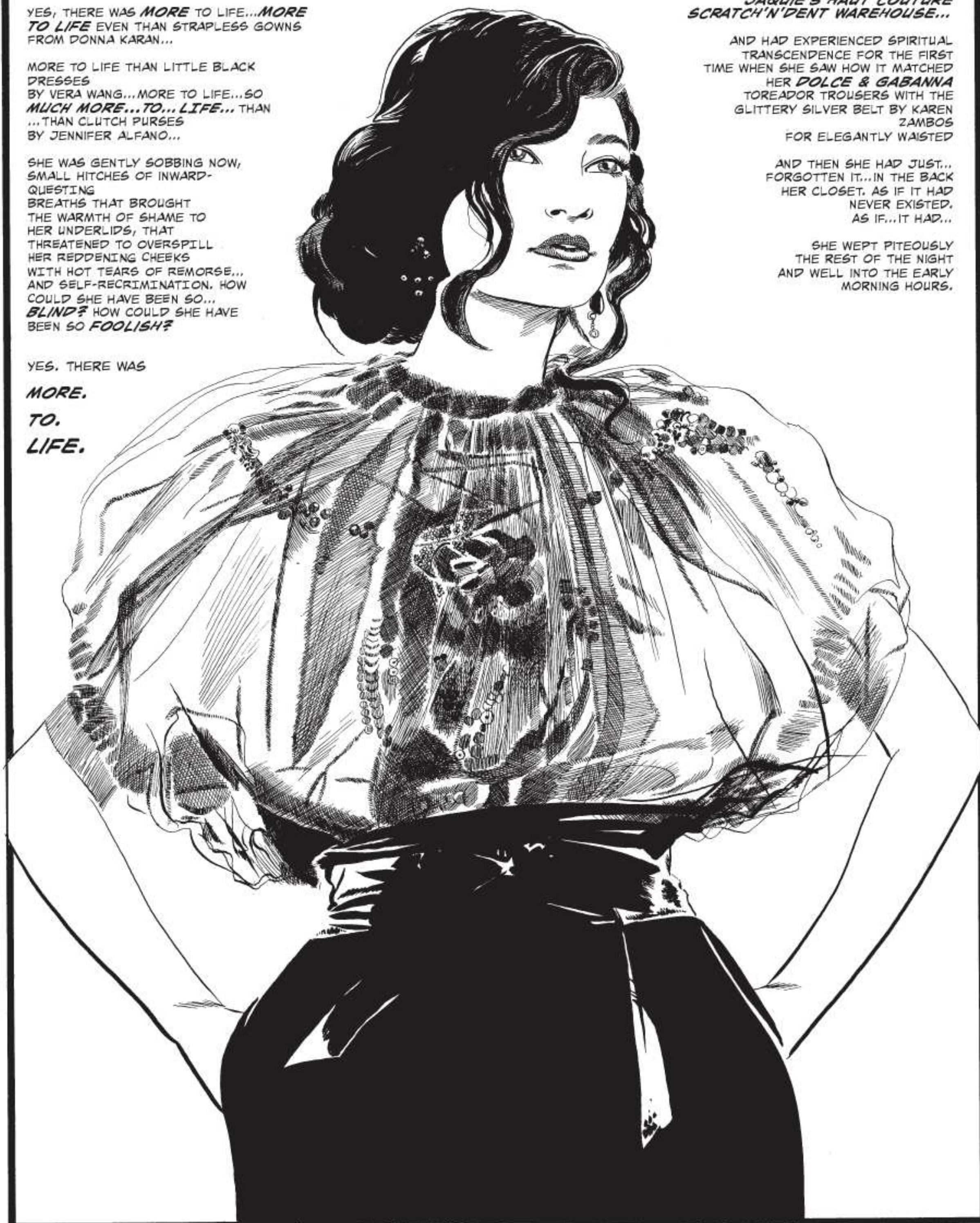
A
DOLCE & GABANNA BIG POOFY BLOUSE
WITH **CRYSTALS**, WITH **BEADS** AND WITH
MAJOR
(MAJOR!) SLEEVES!

SHE HAD BEEN
PRACTICALLY BESIDE HERSELF
WITH JOY WHEN SHE HAD DISCOVERED
IT IN HER OWN SIZE ZERO ON THE
"AS IS: \$900" RACK AT **WAQUIE**
JAGUIE'S HAUT COUTURE
SCRATCH'N'DENT WAREHOUSE...

AND HAD EXPERIENCED SPIRITUAL
TRANSCENDENCE FOR THE FIRST
TIME WHEN SHE SAW HOW IT MATCHED
HER **DOLCE & GABANNA**
TOREADOR TROUSERS WITH THE
GLITTERY SILVER BELT BY KAREN
ZAMBOS
FOR ELEGANTLY WAISTED

AND THEN SHE HAD JUST...
FORGOTTEN IT...IN THE BACK
HER CLOSET. AS IF IT HAD
NEVER EXISTED.
AS IF...IT HAD...

SHE WEPT PITEOUSLY
THE REST OF THE NIGHT
AND WELL INTO THE EARLY
MORNING HOURS.





THE NEXT DAY,
WANDERING IN THE
ELABORATE GARDENS
OF THE MONTE CARLO
VILLA, IN HER YVES ST.
LAURENT COAT AND
PUMPS AND LORO PIANA
GLOVES AND HAT
SHE WONDERED...

(NOT FOR THE
FIRST TIME)

IF HER ROLE
MODEL AND
PERSONAL HERO,
MAHATMA GANDHI,
HAD EVER EXPERIENCED
MOMENTS OF SELF-
LOATHING SUCH AS SHE
HAD THE NIGHT
BEFORE.

SHE RATHER
THOUGHT THAT
HE *MUST* HAVE.

AND SHE FOUND
THE THOUGHT...

INSPIRATIONAL.

"SAY, WAIT A MINUTE!" DAVE
SIM THOUGHT ALOUD TO
HIMSELF. "THIS IS ACTUALLY
PRETTY GOOD! THIS COULD
WORK!! THIS COULD BE HUGE!!!"



IT WAS AS IF HE HAD BEEN
SUFFERING THE EVIL GENIUS
EQUIVALENT OF JET LAG! HAVING
BEEN DORMANT FOR THREE YEARS
IT HAD TAKEN HIS EVIL GENIUS A FEW
PAGES TO EVEN RECOGNIZE THE EVIL
BRILLIANCE OF ITS OWN PLAN!
WHY, HE COULD SEE THE
MERCHANDISING POSSIBILITIES NOW...





10 MAY 54





23 MAY 53

2 JULY 56





NEAL ADAMS IS ALSO ON RECORD AS SAYING THAT "THE BRUSH IS A LAZY INSTRUMENT" ...THERE'S A GOOD CASE TO BE MADE FOR THAT

5 AUGUST 54

AS I CAN ATTEST, HAVING JUST DONE MORE **BRUSH** INKING IN THE LAST **MONTH** THAN I HAD DONE IN THE LAST THIRTY **YEARS**, IN FACT USING **EXCLUSIVELY** BRUSH ON THE LAST THREE PAGES

(EXCEPT FOR THE PICTURE OF NEAL WHICH WAS DONE WITH BRUSH AND **GILLOTT-290** PEN NIB - FOR REASONS THAT WILL BECOME APPARENT IN THE NEXT INSTALMENT OF **GLAMOURPUSS**)

AS WALLY WOOD, COMIC BOOKS' CONSUMMATE BRUSH ARTIST SAID, "I PUT IN MY SOLID BLACKS AND THEN SEE WHAT DRAWING I HAVE LEFT TO DO." HE ALSO SAID, "WHEN IN DOUBT, BLACK IT OUT."

23 MARCH 56

SEEING NEAL'S POINT, THE BIGGEST QUESTION FOR ME REALLY CAME DOWN TO: IS THERE A **HUGE** AMOUNT OF DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE **SPONTANEOUS HIGH ART BRUSH STROKE** OF THE **JAPANESE CALLIGRAPHER...**

...AND THOSE OF THE **SUBURBAN 1950S CARTOONIST WHO JUST WANTS TO GET OUT IN HIS MERCEDES SL 300F**

WRESTLING WITH MYSELF TO DEVELOP A **TOP QUALITY ALEX RAYMOND BRUSH LINE** WHILE I WAS LABOURING OVER PAGE 5 OF "THE SELF-EDUCATION OF N'ATASHAE" AND HAVING FAILED MISERABLY (IN MY OWN OPINION) TO MAKE MY **HUNT 102** PEN LINES ON HER **DOLCE AND GABANNA** BLOUSE LOOK EVEN REMOTELY LIKE **SPONTANEOUS BRUSH STROKES**

WHEN IT CAME TIME TO INK THE **BELT AND TOREADOR SLACKS**, I THOUGHT, IN FRUSTRATION,



"OKAY. I'M ALEX RAYMOND AND I REALLY DON'T GIVE A S-T. I'M JUST GOING TO LOAD UP THE BIG BRUSH WITH INK, SLAP THE BELT AND SLACKS ON THERE..."



"...AND THEN I'M GOING FOR A NICE DRIVE AROUND DARIEN."

AND THAT'S WHAT I DID EXCEPT FOR THE NICE DRIVE AROUND DARIEN PART

(A) I DON'T DRIVE AND (B) IT'S A LITTLE FAR FROM SOUTHERN ONTARIO

18 APRIL 55

AND, IN MY OPINION, IT REALLY TURNED OUT TO BE **THE BEST PART OF THAT PAGE, BY A WIDE MARGIN!**

14 AUG 50



19 SEPT 52



18 DEC 50

RAYMOND DESCRIBED HIS USE OF SOLID BLACKS AS "POOLS OF QUIET". HE RESISTED THE URGE TO "OVERDO IT" AND THE *BEYOND NOIR* STYLE

WAS USED ALMOST EXCLUSIVELY FOR "ESTABLISHING SHOTS": SCENE-SETTING OR STAGING PANELS TO LET THE READER KNOW

THEY WERE IN A DARKENED ROOM ...



23 APR 55

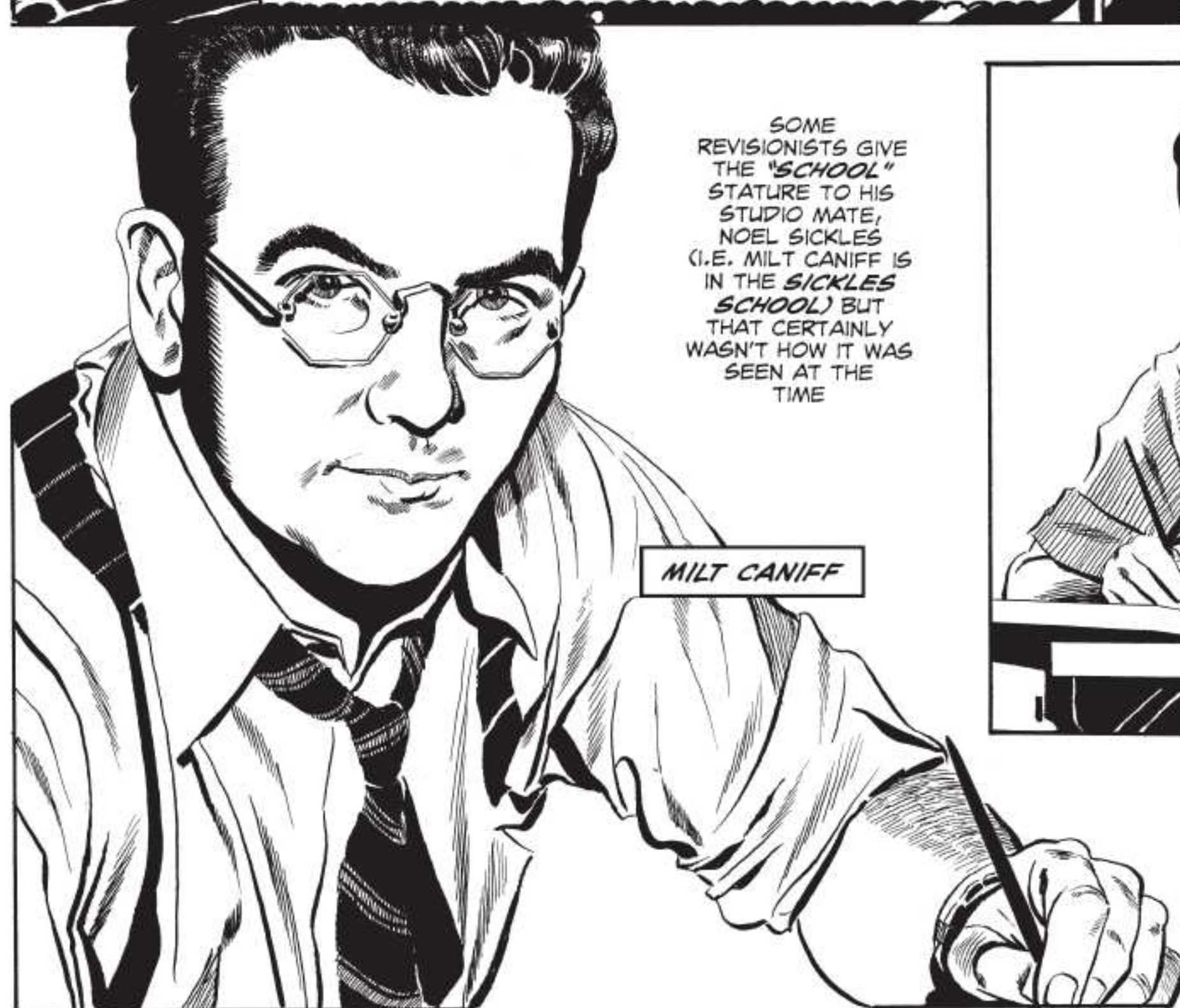
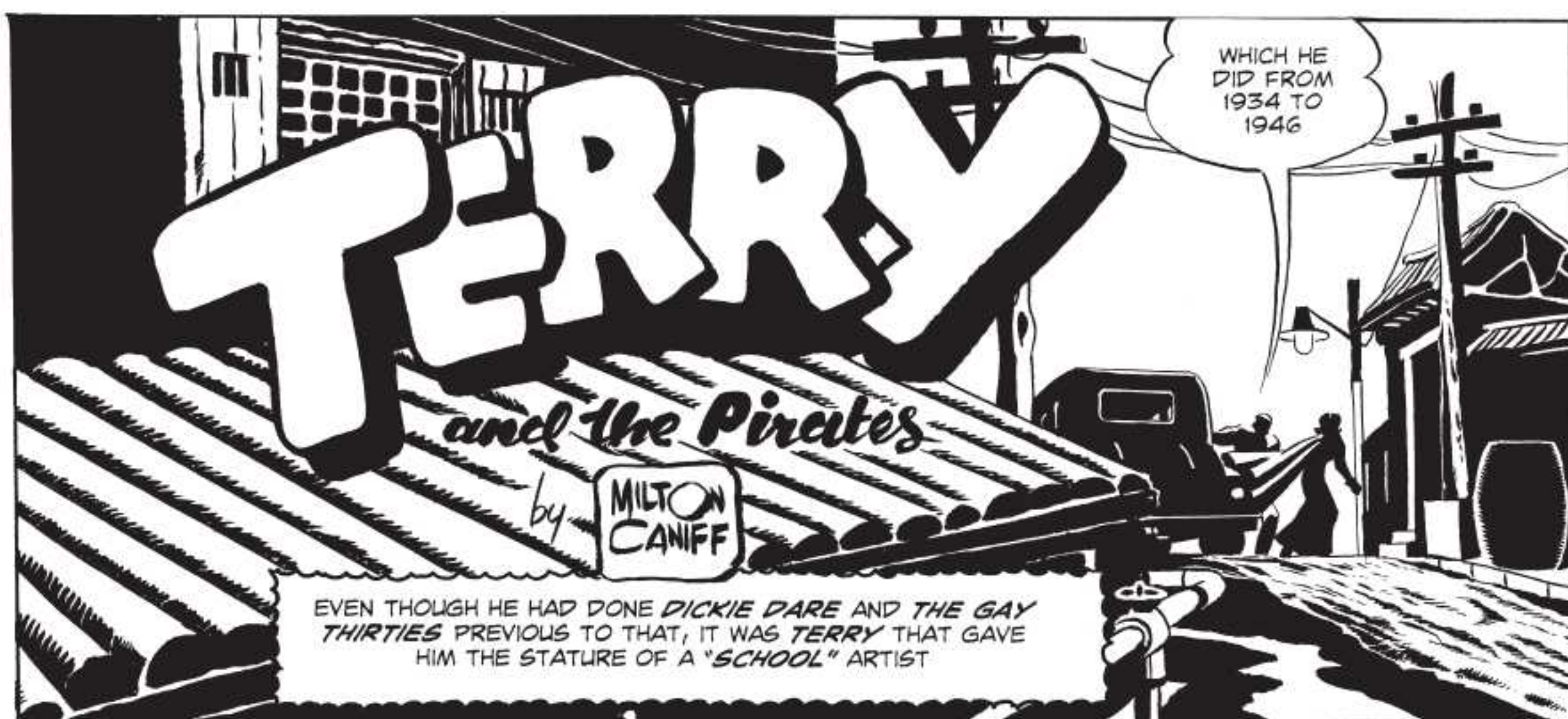


29 JUNE 55



9 APR 55





SOME REVISIONISTS GIVE THE "SCHOOL" STATURE TO HIS STUDIO MATE, NOEL SICKLES (I.E. MILT CANIFF IS IN THE *SICKLES SCHOOL*) BUT THAT CERTAINLY WASN'T HOW IT WAS SEEN AT THE TIME



NOEL SICKLES

THE FOSTER SCHOOL

HAL FOSTER FIRST CAME TO PROMINENCE DRAWING *TARZAN* BUT HIS WORK ON *PRINCE VALIANT* (NON-STYLIZED REALISM) GAVE HIM THE STATUS OF A "SCHOOL" ARTIST

HAL FOSTER

ALEX RAYMOND

THE RAYMOND SCHOOLS

ALEX RAYMOND ACTUALLY FOUNDED TWO SCHOOLS: THE FIRST WITH HIS WORK ON *SECRET AGENT X-9* AND *FLASH GORDON* (STYLIZED REALISM) AND THE SECOND WITH HIS WORK ON *RIP KIRBY* (PHOTO REALISM)

MILT CANIFF

THE CANIFF SCHOOL

THE MILT CANIFF SCHOOL AS DEVELOPED BY HIM ON *TERRY AND THE PIRATES* AND LATER REFINED BY HIM ON *STEVE CANYON* MERGED TWO LOOKS: CARTOON REALISM ON HIS CHARACTERS AND PHOTO REALISM ON HIS BACKGROUNDS

BY THE 1960'S, BOTH THE COMIC STRIP AND COMIC BOOK FIELDS WOULD ABANDON ALL THREE SCHOOLS IN FAVOUR OF *EXTREME MINIMALISM* IN THE FORMER FIELD AND *MODIFIED AND MERGED VARIATIONS ON THE SEMINAL SCHOOLS* IN THE LATTER FIELD.

IN COMIC STRIPS, THE *CHARLES SCHULZ SCHOOL* PRETTY MUCH DOMINATES ALL ASPECTS ON THE FIELD UP TO THE PRESENT DAY WITH *EXTREME MINIMALIST DRAWING*.

EXTREME MINIMALIST DRAWING HAVING LED TO THE MICROSCOPIC REDUCTION IN THE PRINTED SIZE OF COMIC STRIPS, THE ELIMINATION OF THE *RAYMOND, FOSTER AND CANIFF SCHOOLS* IS NOW, PRESUMABLY, *PERMANENT* IN THE COMIC STRIP FIELD.



(ODDLY ENOUGH PEANUTS DEBUTED ON 2 OCTOBER 1950, ALEX RAYMOND'S 41ST BIRTHDAY...HAPPY BIRTHDAY, ALEX! YOUR SCHOOL OF ART IN YOUR CHOSEN MEDIUM YOU HELPED PIONEER IS TOAST!)

IN COMIC BOOKS,
THE **JACK KIRBY SCHOOL** OF
STYLIZED AND EXAGGERATED
HEROIC PROPORTIONS HAS
REMAINED THE GOLD STANDARD
SINCE THE 1960'S...

WHICH THE **NEAL ADAMS
SCHOOL** IN THE LATE 60'S AND
EARLY 70'S WOULD TEMPORARILY
DISPLACE IN POPULARITY

MERGED
RAYMOND
SCHOOL
STYLIZED
REALISM AND
RAYMOND SCHOOL
PHOTO REALISM

MODIFIED
CANIFF
SCHOOL
CARTOON
STYLIZED
REALISM



BY MERGING PHOTOREALISM
DRAWING WITH THE **JACK KIRBY
SCHOOL** TO FORM A DISTINCT
SCHOOL

OF **EQUALLY** EXAGGERATED,
EQUALLY HEROIC BUT
REALISM-BASED PROPORTIONS

WHILE THE **NEAL ADAMS
SCHOOL** WOULD DOMINATE
THE 70'S AND 80'S,
IN THE 1990'S IT WOULD BE
SUPPLANTED
IN TWO DIRECTIONS:

MODIFIED
FOSTER SCHOOL
NON-STYLIZED
REALISM



LED BY
THE CREATOR/FOUNDERS OF
IMAGE COMICS, THE **ART ADAMS
SCHOOL** WOULD TAKE ART
ADAMS' OWN EXAGGERATED BUT
REALISM-BASED ART

...AND MODIFY IT INTO
AN ICONIC **NON-REALISM
BASED** CARTOON STYLE

JUST AS THE **BRUCE TIMM
SCHOOL** WOULD ABANDON
REALISM COMPLETELY BY
ADOPTING THE
TROPES AND STYLIZATIONS OF
ANIME AND OTHER "REALISTIC"
ANIMATION STYLES



WELL THANK YOU, GLAMOURPUSS!
WHATEVER THAT WAS ALL ABOUT
I'M SURE MANY, MANY OF OUR
CONCERNED...AND SOCIALLY CONSCIOUS!
...READERS FOUND IT
EXTREMELY HELPFUL...

(WHERE
WAS I?)

...WHEN IT COMES TO
MAKING WISE...AND
MENTALLY HEALTHY!...
CHOICES IN TODAY'S
FAST-PACED, HIGH-
PRESSURE, HURLY-
BURLY, MULTI-TASKING
WORLD!

OH, RIGHT. SO, ANYWAY, ALEX
RAYMOND BEGAN DOING THE
"SUNDAY ONLY" NEWSPAPER STRIP
FLASH GORDON, IN 1934

(BASICALLY APPROPRIATING THE
ILLUSTRATION STYLE OF MATT CLARK
TO CREATE WHAT I CALL THE
"STYLIZED REALISM" SCHOOL
OF COMIC ART)

HAL FOSTER BEGAN DOING
THE "SUNDAY ONLY" NEWSPAPER
STRIP, *PRINCE VALIANT*, IN 1937

(IN THE PROCESS REFINING
HIS OWN "NON-STYLIZED REALISM"
SCHOOL OF COMIC ART WHICH HE
HAD PIONEERED
ON *TARZAN*)

WHAT WAS INTERESTING WAS THAT
-- BY THE TIME RAYMOND VOLUNTEERED
FOR MILITARY SERVICE IN 1944 -- HE
HAD CONVERTED ALMOST ENTIRELY
TO HAL FOSTER'S "NON-STYLIZED
REALISM" POINT OF VIEW.



RAYMOND'S ORIGINAL ARTWORK IN HIS "MATT CLARK PERIOD" ON *FLASH GORDON* AND *SECRET AGENT X-9* WHETHER INKED BY BRUSH OR (AS HERE) PEN WAS STAGGERINGLY BEAUTIFUL BUT ALMOST IMPOSSIBLE TO REPRODUCE AND WAS EFFECTIVELY OBLITERATED WHEN COLOUR WAS ADDED (*FLASH GORDON* WAS IN COLOUR; *SECRET AGENT X-9* IN BLACK-AND-WHITE)

HAL FOSTER WAS FACING
THE SAME PROBLEMS
WITH *PRINCE VALIANT*

BUT HAL FOSTER'S ART-
WORK **REPRODUCED**
BETTER...MORE OF HIS
RENDERING MADE IT
ONTO THE NEWSPAPER
PAGE

SO, GRADUALLY, RAYMOND HAD
ADOPTED FOSTER'S INKING SOLUTIONS
TO REPRODUCTION PROBLEMS:

USING SHARPLY DEFINED
BLACK SHAPES (RATHER THAN
PARALLEL BRUSH STROKES)
TO DEFINE A SHADOW;

"WEIGHTING" HIS INK LINE
ON THE SHADOWED SIDE OF
A FIGURE TO CREATE THE
ILLUSION OF REALISTIC
CONTOUR;

MAKING SURE THE OUTLINE OF
EACH PART OF EACH FIGURE
WAS DEFINED BY A SINGLE
UNBROKEN BRUSH STROKE;

"I ALWAYS WISHED I COULD
HAVE DRAWN LIKE ALEX RAYMOND...
HE HAD THE MOST BEAUTIFUL
LINES. I CAN'T IMITATE HIS LINES.
I'D LIKE TO COPY SOME OF HIS
STUFF, BUT HE WAS JUST TOO
DAMN GOOD."

HAL FOSTER



"SPOTTING" HIS BLACKS
IN SUCH A WAY THAT
EVEN IF **ALL** OF THE
FINE LINE WORK
DISAPPEARED IN THE
REPRODUCTION PROCESS
(AS IT OFTEN DID)
THE **SOLID** BLACKS
AND **SOLID** OUTLINES
STILL CONVEYED ALL
THE NECESSARY VISUAL
INFORMATION

WHEN RAYMOND RETURNED FROM THE
SERVICE, KING FEATURES REFUSED
TO LET HIM RETURN TO *FLASH GORDON*
INSTEAD PRESSURING HIM TO CREATE
A **NEW** STRIP FOR THEM

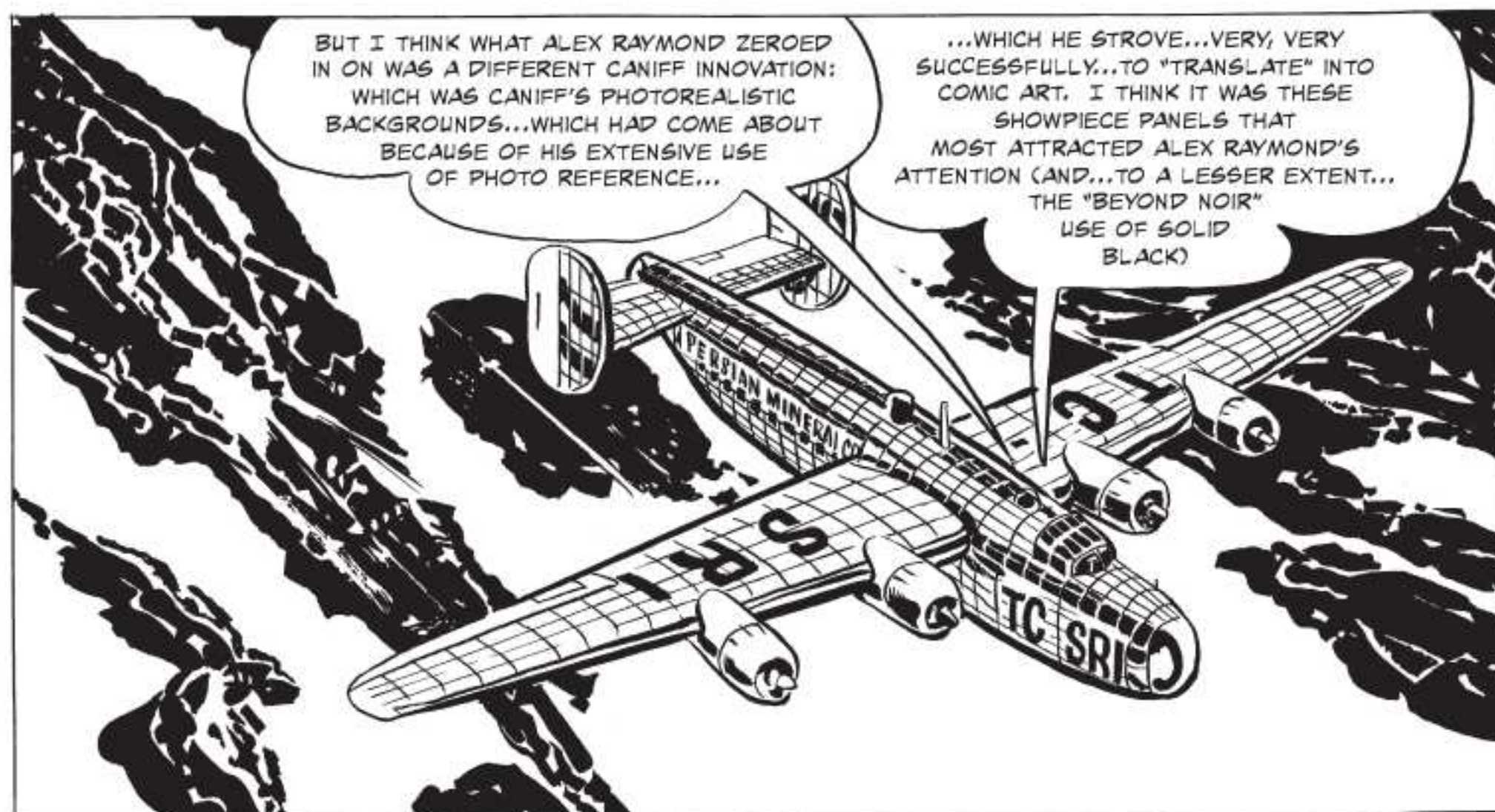
I SUSPECT IT WAS AT THAT POINT--
CONTEMPLATING A NEW SUNDAY
PAGE--THAT RAYMOND REALIZED
THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE SHODDY
REPRODUCTION METHODS IN
THE **COLOUR** COMICS HAD
COMPELLED HIM TO COMPROMISE
ON AND FUNDAMENTALLY **ALTER**
HIS CREATIVE DECISION-MAKING

AND I THINK **THAT** MADE HIM DECIDE THAT--INSTEAD OF DOING
ANOTHER **SUNDAY-ONLY COLOUR STRIP**--HE WOULD DO
A **DAILY-ONLY BLACK-AND-WHITE STRIP**

...THAT ULTIMATELY BECAME
RIP KIRBY

AND I THINK *THAT* CAME ABOUT BECAUSE THERE *WERE* ONLY THREE OF THEM AT THE TOP OF THE *COMIC ART REALISM SCHOOL PYRAMID* AND -- IN TURNING AWAY FROM HAL FOSTER'S COLOUR SUNDAY PAGE INKING SOLUTIONS -- RAYMOND NATURALLY TURNED TOWARD MILT CANIFF...

...AND CANIFF'S OWN SET OF INKING SOLUTIONS HE HAD DEVELOPED ON *TERRY AND THE PIRATES* AND WHICH ALLOWED HIM TO INK THE BLACK-AND-WHITE DAILY STRIP AND THE COLOUR SUNDAY STRIP THE SAME WAY: BY RELYING ON "BRUSH HEAVY" DENSE BLACK CHIAROSCURO...WHICH WOULD CAUSE HIM (MUCH LATER) TO BE HAILED AS "THE REMBRANDT OF COMICS" (A SILLY DESIGNATION WHICH REALLY JUST MEANT "HE USES LOTS OF BLACK")



I DON'T THINK RAYMOND FOUND ANYTHING PARTICULARLY USEFUL IN THE PRIMARY FOUNDATION OF CANIFF'S ART WHICH I'VE DESCRIBED AS "CARTOON REALISM"

(ALTHOUGH, IN COPYING THIS EXAMPLE FROM *TERRY AND THE PIRATES*, IT WAS INTERESTING TO SEE WHERE SUCH DIVERSE "CARTOON REALISTS" AS THE E.C. WAR-COMICS ERA HARVEY KURTZMAN, GEORGE WUNDER, FRANK ROBBINS, DALE MESSICK AND CHARLES BURNS ORIGINATED)

NO, I THINK THE QUESTION THAT OCCURRED TO ALEX RAYMOND WAS: "IS IT POSSIBLE TO CREATE A COMIC ART LOOK WHERE THE PEOPLE ARE AS REALISTICALLY RENDERED AS CANIFF'S AIRPLANES, JEEPS AND MILITARY BASES?"

I THINK IF HE HAD *ASKED* ANYONE AT THE TIME -- *INCLUDING* CANIFF -- THEY WOULD HAVE *LAUGHED* AT THE VERY IDEA!

PARTICULARLY CANIFF (I SUSPECT) BECAUSE ONLY HE KNEW HOW TIME-CONSUMING IT WAS TO GET ALL OF THOSE FINICKY LITTLE DETAILS ON THOSE AIRPLANES, JEEPS AND MILITARY BASES RIGHT.

8 APRIL 45

BUT I *ALSO* SUSPECT THAT RAYMOND *WOULDN'T* HAVE ASKED ANYONE IF THEY THOUGHT IT WAS POSSIBLE BECAUSE I SUSPECT HE HAD NOT ONLY ALREADY DECIDED IT *WAS* POSSIBLE BUT HE *ALSO* ALREADY DECIDED THAT *ALEX RAYMOND* WAS THE ONE TO DO IT!



RIGHT FROM HIS FIRST CONCEPT SKETCHES IT SEEMS APPARENT TO ME THAT ALEX RAYMOND WAS ATTEMPTING TO SOLVE THAT INHERENT PROBLEM: WHAT WOULD CHARACTERS RENDERED IN *SPONTANEOUS*, ALMOST *CARELESS* BRUSH STROKES (WHICH WAS THE *ESSENCE* OF THE CANIFF INKING STYLE) *LOOK LIKE* GIVEN THAT THE GOAL WAS TO MAKE THEM *LOOK AS REALISTIC AS CANIFF'S* PHOTO-REFERENCED BACKGROUNDS? THE DEADLINE PRESSURE OF A DAILY STRIP MEANT THERE WOULDN'T BE TIME TO *ACTUALLY PHOTOGRAPH* MODELS OR USE *LIVE* MODELS EXTENSIVELY AS HAD BEEN THE CASE ON *FLASH GORDON*. *RIP KIRBY* WOULD REQUIRE *DOUBLE* AND SOMETIMES *TRIPLE* THE NUMBER OF PANELS THAT *FLASH GORDON* HAD REQUIRED PER WEEK

SO, RAYMOND BASICALLY INVENTED FROM *SCRATCH* A SHORTHAND DRAWING AND INKING STYLE THAT EFFECTIVELY *TRANSLATED* HUMAN FEATURES INTO A FIXED MINIMAL NUMBER OF PEN AND BRUSH STROKES WHILE MANAGING *BOTH* TO STEER CLEAR OF HAL FOSTER'S FORMALIST CLASSICAL ILLUSTRATION "LOOK" *AND* TO ERADICATE FROM HIS OWN TECHNIQUES ALL RESIDUAL TRACES OF THE "STYLIZED REALISM" HE HAD ADAPTED FROM THE WORK OF ILLUSTRATOR MATT CLARK'S STYLE ON *SECRET AGENT X-9*





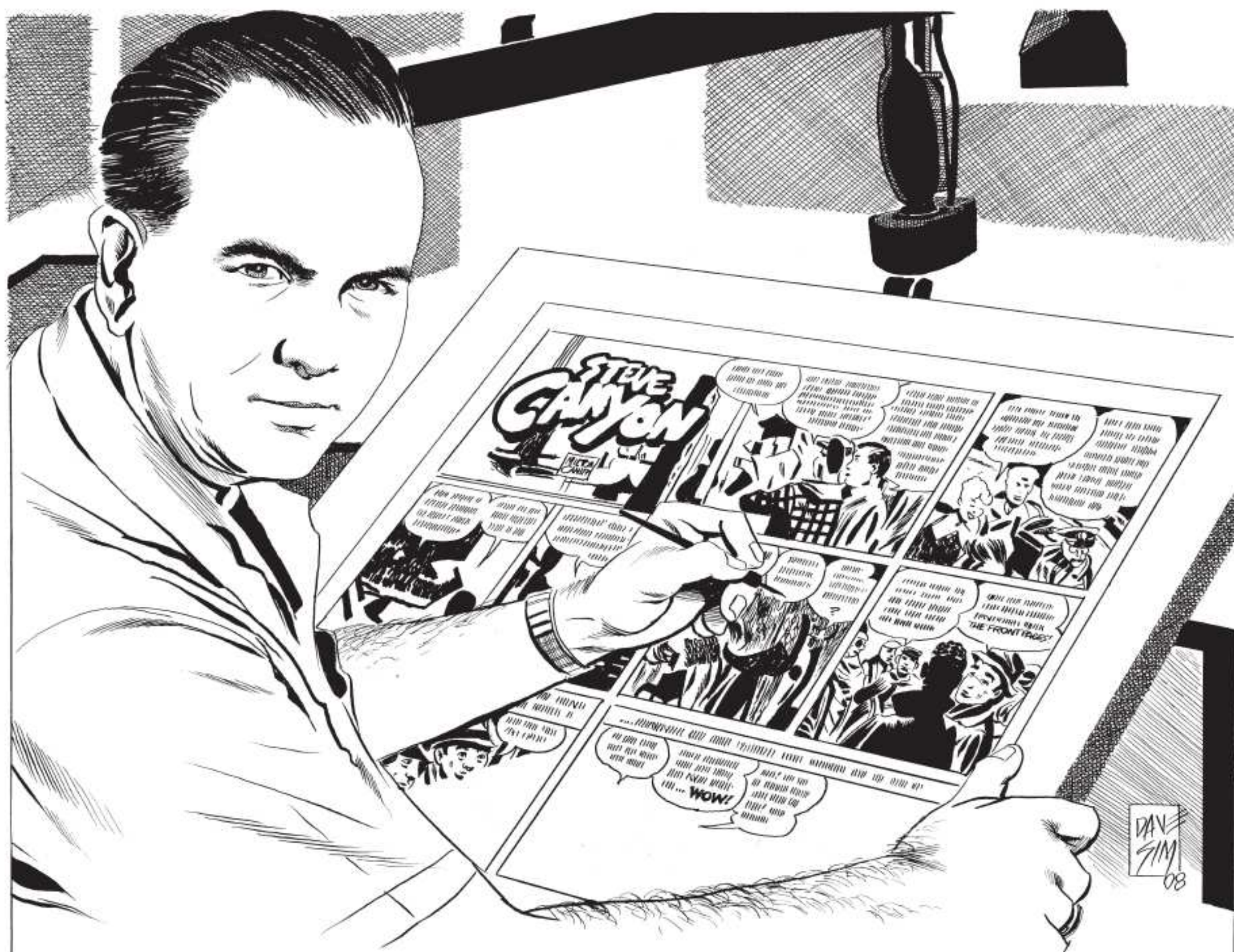
EVEN AT THE "PRESENTATION ART" STAGE (COME ON -- YOU DIDN'T THINK I WAS GOING TO TRACE RIP KIRBY IMAGES WHEN I HAD SIX GREAT HONEY DORIAN SHOTS TO PICK FROM, DID YOU?), WHEN RAYMOND HAD HIS NEW STYLE PRETTY MUCH LOCKED IN, THE ART CONSISTED ALMOST **EXCLUSIVELY** OF FACES AND FIGURES WITH ONLY **MINIMAL BACKGROUNDS** ADDED IN.

RAYMOND, I SUSPECT, KNEW THAT THE SUCCESS OR FAILURE OF *RIP KIRBY* HINGED ON WHETHER HE HAD SUCCEEDED OR FAILED AT HIS GOAL: TO CREATE THE FIRST **ALL PHOTOREALISTIC** COMIC STRIP

"IN MY NEW FEATURE I WANTED TO GET AWAY FROM THE WILD TYPE ADVENTURE. THIS IS MY OWN CHOICE. I WANTED TO DO SOMETHING DIFFERENT AND MORE DOWN TO EARTH. I THINK THE FANTASTIC STUFF HAS BEEN OVERDONE. I THINK THE FIELD IS JAMMED WITH IT, AND I'D RATHER IN MY NEW STRIP HAVE A MAN THAT WILL BE MORE REAL."

ALEX RAYMOND INTERVIEW
EDITOR AND PUBLISHER
8 DECEMBER 45

BY 1949 *RIP KIRBY* WAS APPEARING IN FIVE HUNDRED NEWSPAPERS AROUND THE WORLD. IT WAS THE MOST SUCCESSFUL LAUNCH OF A NEW STRIP IN KING FEATURES SYNDICATE'S HISTORY.



OF COURSE, IN GOING MILT CANIFF "ONE BETTER" BY TAKING CANIFF'S PHOTOREALISM BACKGROUND INNOVATION AND CREATING FROM IT THE FIRST "ALL PHOTOREALISM" COMIC STRIP, ALEX RAYMOND INADVERTENTLY STRUCK A *VERY* RAW NERVE WITH THE "CARTOON REALISM" GUYS OF THE *CANIFF SCHOOL*. EVEN IN 1990, *THIRTY-FOUR YEARS AFTER RAYMOND'S DEATH*, IN AN INTERVIEW CONDUCTED BY PROMINENT COMICS HISTORIAN, R.C. HARVEY, CANIFF SHOWED HIMSELF TO BE COMPLETELY OBLIVIOUS TO THE INNOVATIONS IN PHOTOREALISTIC FACES AND FIGURES THAT RAYMOND HAD ACHIEVED WITH HIS WORK ON *RIP KIRBY*.

ASKED ABOUT WHAT HARVEY CLEARLY *ASSUMED* TO BE A *FRIENDLY* RIVALRY BETWEEN THE TWO (ANALOGOUS TO THE ONE WHICH EXISTED BETWEEN FOSTER AND RAYMOND), WHAT CANIFF PROVIDED PROVED TO BE A STREAM OF THINLY-VEILED INVECTIVE ALTERNATING WITH DAMNING WITH FAINT PRAISE ("HE WAS A HOTSHOT RIGHT FROM THE BEGINNING"; "THAT STYLE OF HIS, REAL FASHION PLATE STUFF"; "BUT I NEVER THOUGHT OF HIM IN TERMS OF BEING A BITTER RIVAL -- A MEAN, OLD, HATE-HIS-GUTS RIVAL"; "HIS STYLE WASN'T MY BAG AT ALL. NOEL SICKLES USED TO SAY, I DON'T WANT TO DRAW ANYBODY WHOSE PANTS ARE PRESSED. IT'S MUCH MORE FUN TO DO WRINKLES THAN A KNIFE EDGE.") IT'S WORTH NOTING THAT ALL OF CANIFF'S COMMENTS WERE DIRECTED AT THE ALEX RAYMOND OF 1934 WHICH WAS, EVIDENTLY, THE LAST TIME THAT HE (AND NOEL SICKLES) HAD CONTEMPLATED RAYMOND'S WORK AND, CLEARLY, CANIFF HAD FOUND NO CAUSE IN THE NEXT *HALF-CENTURY PLUS* TO REVISIT, MODIFY OR QUALIFY HIS SELF-EVIDENTLY JEJUNE PREJUDICES.

READING CANIFF'S QUOTES IN TOM ROBERTS' *ALEX RAYMOND: HIS LIFE AND ART*, I THOUGHT IT PERHAPS NOT INSIGNIFICANT THAT CANIFF WAS THE ONLY ONE OF THE "*BIG THREE*" TO LIVE TO SEE THE RESUSCITATION OF HIS WORK IN THE DIRECT MARKET COMIC-BOOK FIELD (KITCHEN SINK PRESS PUBLISHED *STEVE CANYON MAGAZINE* FROM 1983 TO 1988) WHERE VITUPERATION AND RANCOUR AGAINST REALISTIC ART HAVE ALWAYS BEEN THE NORM RATHER THAN THE EXCEPTION.

THERE'S AN INTERESTING PHOTOGRAPH OF ALEX RAYMOND, MILT CANIFF AND RUBE GOLDBERG IN TOM ROBERTS' BOOK, TAKEN ON THE OCCASION OF RAYMOND'S ELECTION TO THE PRESIDENCY OF THE *NATIONAL CARTOONISTS SOCIETY* IN 1950.

PARDON?

OH, SORRY. I'M OUT OF ROOM AGAIN. HOPE TO SEE SOME OF YOU AGAIN IN SIXTY DAYS.

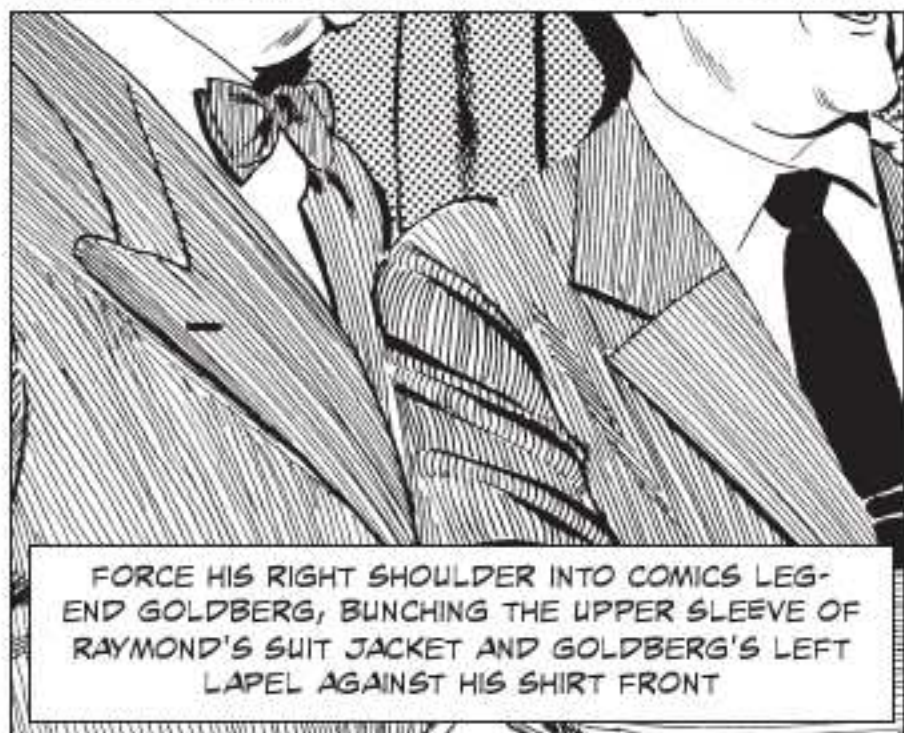
SO.

ANYWAY.

THE PHOTO TAKEN 29 MARCH 50 OF (LEFT TO RIGHT) RUBE GOLDBERG, ALEX RAYMOND AND MILT CANIFF ON THE OCCASION OF RAYMOND BECOMING THE THIRD PRESIDENT OF THE NATIONAL CARTOONISTS SOCIETY (GOLDBERG HAD BEEN THE FIRST AND CANIFF THE SECOND)



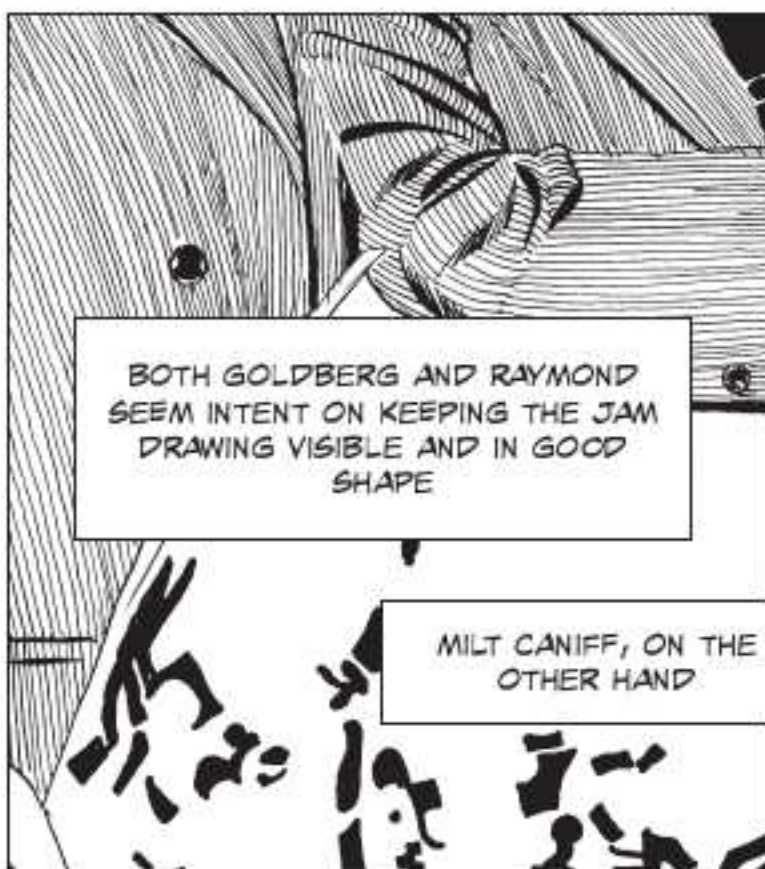
ON THE SURFACE OF IT, IT'S A HAPPY ENOUGH LOOKING SNAPSHOT...ALL THREE MEN ARE SMILING BUT ON CLOSER EXAMINATION YOU CAN SEE THAT RAYMOND IS WINCING SLIGHTLY AND LEANING AWAY FROM MILT CANIFF. EVEN CLOSER EXAMINATION REVEALS THAT RAYMOND IS BEING PUSHED BACKWARD





THE "PRESENTATION DRAWING" (WHAT WE WOULD CALL TODAY A JAM DRAWING) IS BEING PUSHED AGAINST GOLDBERG AS WELL, CURLING THE EDGE...

(THE DETAIL ON THE PHOTO ISN'T VERY GOOD SO ALL THAT'S VISIBLE IN THE DRAWING ARE THE AREAS OF SOLID BLACK)

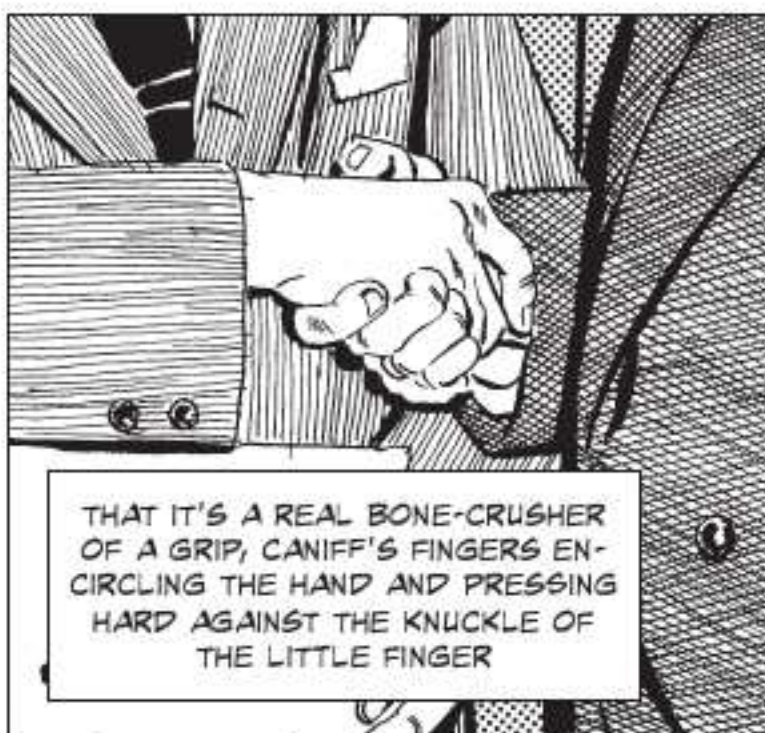


BOTH GOLDBERG AND RAYMOND SEEM INTENT ON KEEPING THE JAM DRAWING VISIBLE AND IN GOOD SHAPE

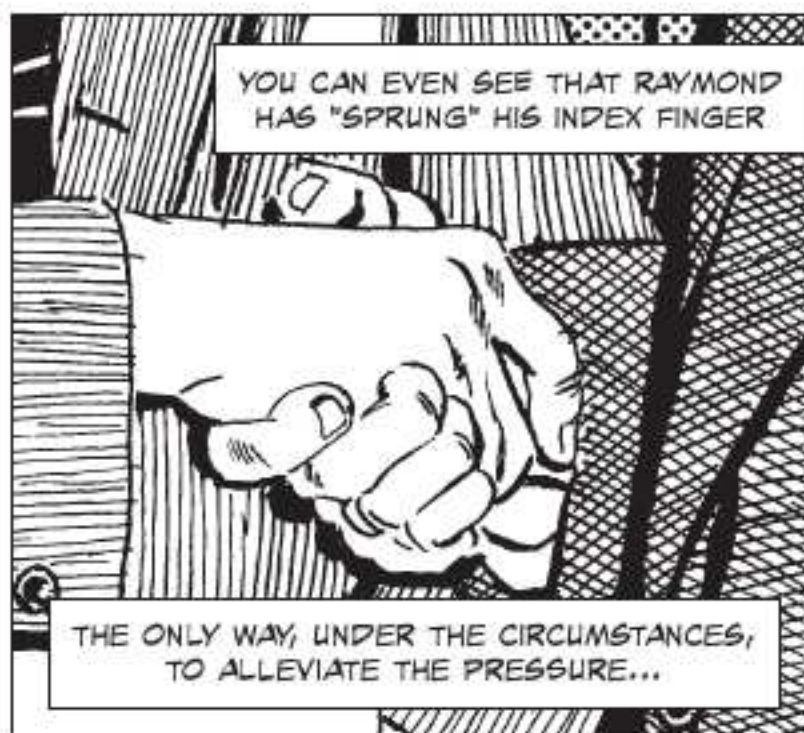
MILT CANIFF, ON THE OTHER HAND



SEEMS CONCERNED WITH ONLY ONE THING: SHAKING ALEX RAYMOND'S HAND. YOU DON'T HAVE TO LOOK TOO CLOSELY TO NOTICE



THAT IT'S A REAL BONE-CRUSHER OF A GRIP, CANIFF'S FINGERS ENCIRCLING THE HAND AND PRESSING HARD AGAINST THE KNUCKLE OF THE LITTLE FINGER



YOU CAN EVEN SEE THAT RAYMOND HAS "SPRUNG" HIS INDEX FINGER

THE ONLY WAY, UNDER THE CIRCUMSTANCES, TO ALLEVIATE THE PRESSURE...

I DON'T THINK RUBE GOLDBERG HAD A CLUE AS TO WHAT WAS GOING ON...

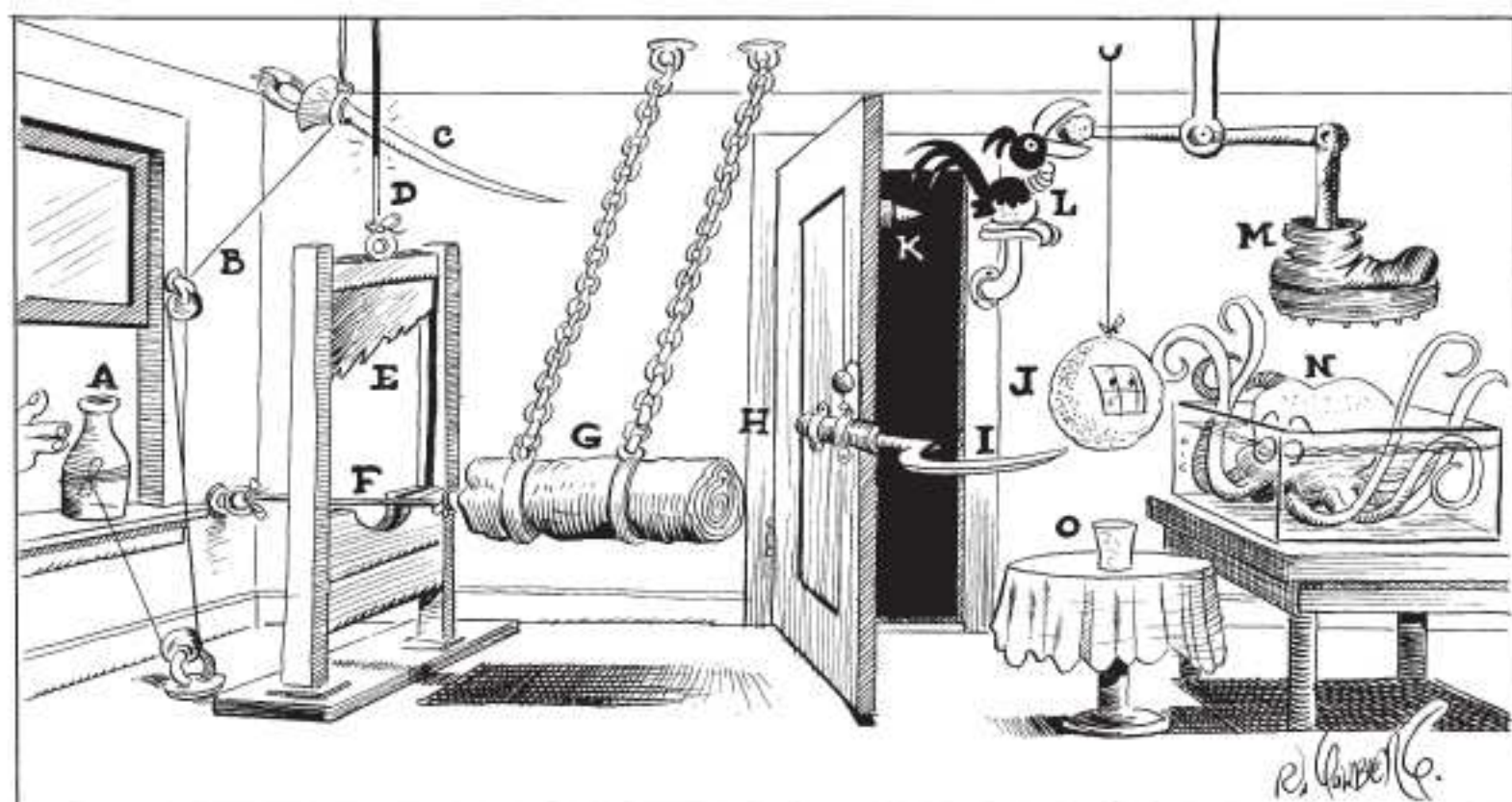
HIS RESPONSE TO RAYMOND BEING PUSHED BACK AGAINST HIM IS TO PUT A COLLEGIAL HAND ON RAYMOND'S SHOULDER

BUT THEN, LIKE RAYMOND, GOLDBERG WAS A CARTOONIST COMFORTABLE IN HIS OWN SKIN. WHY WOULDN'T HE BE?



HE HAD ALREADY WON THE PULITZER PRIZE TWO YEARS BEFORE AND HE WAS ALSO THE FIRST (AND POSSIBLY ONLY) CARTOONIST TO BE HONOURED WITH HIS OWN DICTIONARY ENTRY -- THANKS TO "A BEWHISKERED CHILD OF MY BRAIN, BUT A SUBCONSCIOUS OFFSPRING OF MY ENGINEERING CAREER" THE ELABORATE INVENTIONS OF HIS CREATION PROFESSOR LUCIFER GONZAGA BUTTS

Rube Gold-berg \ˈrüb-ˈgöl(d)-bərg\ also **Rube Gold-berg-i-an** \-,bər-gē-ən, -,bərg-yən\ *adj* [Reuben (Rube) L. Goldberg †1970 Am. cartoonist] (1942) : accomplishing by complex means what seemingly could be done simply (a kind of Rube Goldberg contraption . . . with five hundred moving parts —L. T. Grant); also : characterized by such complex means



PROFESSOR BUTTS STEPS INTO AN OPEN ELEVATOR SHAFT AND WHEN HE LANDS AT THE BOTTOM HE FINDS A SIMPLE ORANGE SQUEEZING MACHINE. MILK MAN TAKES EMPTY MILK BOTTLE (A) PULLING STRING (B) WHICH CAUSES SWORD (C) TO SEVER CORD (D) AND ALLOW GUILLOTINE BLADE (E) TO DROP AND CUT ROPE (F) WHICH RELEASES BATTERING RAM (G). RAM BUMPS AGAINST OPEN DOOR (H) CAUS-

ING IT TO CLOSE. GRASS SICKLE (I) COPS A SLICE OFF END OF ORANGE (J) AT THE SAME TIME SPIKE (K) STABS PRUNE HAWK (L) HE OPENING HIS MOUTH TO YELL IN AGONY, THEREBY RELEASING PRUNE AND ALLOWING DIVER'S BOOT (M) TO DROP AND STEP ON SLEEPING OCTOPUS (N). OCTOPUS AWAKENS IN A RAGE AND SEES DIVER'S FACE WHICH IS PAINTED ON ORANGE. ATTACKS

IT AND CRUSHES IT WITH TENTACLES, THEREBY CAUSING ALL THE JUICE IN THE ORANGE TO RUN INTO GLASS (O). LATER ON YOU CAN USE THE LOG TO BUILD A LOG CABIN WHERE YOU CAN RAISE YOUR SON TO BE PRESIDENT LIKE ABRAHAM LINCOLN.



DID ALEX RAYMOND KNOW WHAT WAS GOING ON?

I SUSPECT A PART OF HIM MUST HAVE. HE IS VISIBLY FLINCHING WAY FROM CANIFF AND MUST BE AWARE...AT SOME LEVEL...THAT APPROPRIATING A FELLOW CARTOONIST'S INNOVATION (CANIFF'S PHOTOREALISTIC BACKGROUNDS) WAS A DIFFERENT THING FROM APPROPRIATING MATT CLARK'S ILLUSTRATION TROPES FROM A TANGENTIALLY RELATED FIELD

OR ADOPTING HAL FOSTER'S INKING SOLUTIONS ON THE SUNDAY PAGE SECURE IN THE KNOWLEDGE THAT HE...AND FOSTER... KNEW WHO HAD THE FINEST INKING LINE. HAL FOSTER WAS STILL HAL FOSTER AND *PRINCE VALIANT* WAS STILL *PRINCE VALIANT*.

BUT, IN A REAL WAY, RAYMOND HAD DIMINISHED MILT CANIFF BY MAKING IT PAINFULLY OBVIOUS WHAT THE DIFFERENCE WAS BETWEEN A "CARTOON REALIST" AND A PHOTO-REALISM ILLUSTRATOR

NOT THAT CANIFF DIDN'T WIN A PYRRHIC VICTORY OR TWO...

11 OCTOBER 1949

THE BEST EXAMPLE OF WHICH, TO ME, IS THE OCTOBER 10-15 1949 WEEK OF *RIP KIRBY*

PART OF THE "VALERIE STONE" STORYLINE

WHICH IS EASILY THE MOST MILT-CANIFF-LIKE WORK RAYMOND EVER ATTEMPTED.

EXCEPT FOR THE PHOTOREALISM GIRL IN THE FOREGROUND...





FOR HIS LATE NIGHT SEARCH FOR MISSING SCHOOLGIRL, VALERIE STONE.

"WHAT'S A GOOD SHORTHAND FORM FOR A LEATHER JACKET?" I SUSPECT RAYMOND ASKED HIMSELF.

AND THE ANSWER WAS IMMEDIATELY OBVIOUS -- MILT CANIFF'S **STEVE CANYON**. THE STRIP HAD DEBUTED IN 1947

9 OCTOBER 1949



11 JANUARY 1948

...PRETTY MUCH EVER SINCE. OF COURSE "EASIER SAID THAN DONE." IT LOOKS LIKE A HAPHAZARD SET OF RANDOM, BOLD BRUSH STROKES (WHICH IS WHAT RAYMOND PROCEEDED TO EXECUTE) BUT AS CAN BE SEEN FORM THE ABOVE EXAMPLES CANIFF'S VERSION LOOKS LIKE A LEATHER JACKET WHILE RAYMOND'S VERSION JUST LOOKS LIKE...A HAPHAZARD SET OF RANDOM, BOLD BRUSH STROKES

SO -- CHALK ONE UP IN THE "WIN" COLUMN FOR MILT CANIFF; FAKE "DETAIL" WINS OVER PHOTOREALISM HANDS DOWN - NO SMALL POINT. RAYMOND ATTEMPTS TO "DO" CANIFF FOR A WEEK AND THE RESULT IS, ARGUABLY, THE UGLIEST WEEK'S WORTH OF STRIPS IN *RIP KIRBY'S* SHORT HISTORY

THE HARD LESSON
LEARNED?
CANIFF'S FREEWHEELING
SLAPDASH INKING STYLE
COULD BE USED WITH-
OUT DETRIMENT...



10 OCT 49

LESS SO ON...



THERE WERE A
LOT OF CLOSE-
UPS THAT WEEK

SO IT WAS A
REAL VICTORY.
WHAT MADE IT
A PYRRHIC
VICTORY

WAS THAT I'M SURE
CANIFF KNEW NOTHING
ABOUT IT BEFOREHAND
UNTIL HE SAW IT
IN THE NEWSPAPER OR
(EVEN WORSE) SOMEONE
SHOWED IT TO HIM

10 OCT 49

HAD ALEX RAYMOND GOTTEN HIS SECRETARY TO TYPE MILT CANIFF A NOTE, SOMETHING ALONG THE LINES OF:

ALEX
RAYMOND

Dear Milt:

Spent the week attempting to ape your stuff, starting with a Steve Canyon-style leather jacket. What a mess, as you'll see (week of October 10 to 15).

I found out the hard way that your work looks simple but there's a lot more there than meets the eye and my hat's off to you. Hope you enjoy a good laugh at my expense when you see the results.

Cordially yours,



65 South Street
Stamford, Connecticut

INSTEAD RAYMOND SEEMED TO HAVE SUCCUMBED TO THE TEMPTATION TO JUST PUT THE STRIPS OUT THERE AND LET CANIFF MAKE OF THEM WHAT HE WOULD. WHICH LEFT THE QUESTION OF **MOTIVATION** TOO WIDE OPEN GIVEN THAT ONLY CANIFF, A CANIFF FAN OR ANOTHER CARTOONIST WOULD BE LIKELY TO SEE WHAT RAYMOND HAD DONE: THAT IS, WHAT (**EXACTLY**) WAS RAYMOND SAYING? HAD HE **NAILED** CANIFF'S STYLE IT COULD BE AN **HOMAGE** BUT GIVEN HOW WIDE HE FELL OF THE MARK, WELL, WAS IT A **PARODY**? (I.E. "HERE, MILT, THIS IS WHAT YOUR STUFF LOOKS LIKE. NYUCK NYUCK NYUCK"). GIVEN THAT THEY BOTH KNEW THAT RAYMOND HAD FORGOTTEN MORE ABOUT REALISTIC DRAWING THAN CANIFF WOULD EVER KNOW, A THING LIKE THAT COULD REALLY PREY ON YOU AS "THE LEAST REALISTIC ARTIST OF THE 'BIG THREE'". AND CANIFF COULDN'T JUST PICK UP THE PHONE AND CALL: "RAYMOND? WHAT THE HELL'S THE IDEA OF APING MY INKING STYLE?" IF ALEX RAYMOND WAS **INNOCENT** -- OR, EVEN WORSE, **FEIGNING INNOCENCE** -- CANIFF WOULD JUST END UP LOOKING **PARANOID** ("HAD THE DARNEDEST PHONE CALL FROM MILT CANIFF THE OTHER DAY.")

SO I'M SPECULATING THAT THAT'S
THE REASON FOR CANIFF'S BONE
CRUSHING HANDSHAKE OF 29
MARCH 1950 -

IT'S
EITHER
THAT
OR...

CANIFF AND RAYMOND WERE BOTH
THIRTY-THIRD DEGREE MASONS AND
THEY'RE GIVING EACH OTHER THE
SECRET MASON CARTOONIST
HANDSHAKE...IN
WHICH CASE?

"
ALL LOVE YOU - A L E

JUST
FORGET
I SAID
ANYTHING.

IT'S ALSO, I THINK, WORTH
NOTING THE CHRONOLOGICAL
JUXTAPOSITION THAT
TOOK PLACE:



FOLLOWED BY MILT CANIFF'S
DECISION TO ABANDON THE SYNDICATE-
OWNED *TERRY AND THE PIRATES*

STEVE CANYON

by MILTON
CANIFF

THE FOLLOWING YEAR IN
FAVOUR OF THE "CREATOR-
OWNED" *STEVE CANYON*...
A LITTLE IRONIC



GIVEN THAT STARTING A
NEW "CREATOR-OWNED"
STRIP HAD BEEN, FOR
ALEX RAYMOND, A
"THIRD-BEST" OPTION



AFTER KING FEATURES HAD REJECTED
HIS FIRST CHOICE: RETURNING TO WORK
ON *FLASH GORDON*



AND THEN ALSO REJECTED RAYMOND'S "FALL-BACK POSITION": THAT KING FEATURES SELL BACK TO HIM THE RIGHTS TO *FLASH GORDON*. WHAT RAYMOND PROBABLY VIEWED AS LARGELY A FAILURE, PROFESSIONALLY



WOULD APPEAR TO HAVE BEEN SEEN BY MILT CANIFF AS AN INTOLERABLE PIECE OF "ONEUPMANSHIP"


SO THAT HE COULDN'T REST UNTIL HE HAD HIS OWN "CREATOR-OWNED STRIP" RELINQUISHING, IN THE PROCESS, WHAT RAYMOND WOULD HAVE PREFERRED: WORKING ON THE STRIP THAT HAD MADE HIM FAMOUS!

AS FOR HAL FOSTER? WELL, AS I SAID EARLIER



HAL FOSTER WAS STILL HAL FOSTER AND *PRINCE VALIANT* WAS STILL *PRINCE VALIANT*





FOSTER HAD OWNED
THE STRIP FROM ITS
INCEPTION IN
FEBRUARY 1937

HAVING LEARNED HIS OWN
HARD LESSON ON THE *TARZAN*
STRIP WHICH WAS JOINTLY OWNED
BY EDGAR RICE BURROUGHS AND
UNITED FEATURES

WHERE HE HAD BEEN
STRICTLY A HIRED HAND
WITH THE SMALLEST
SHARE OF THE FINANCIAL
COMPENSATION

BUT DID THE "BIG THREE"
ACTUALLY OWN THE STRIPS
THEY BELIEVED THEY OWNED?

THROUGHOUT ITS HISTORY, *RIP KIRBY* BORE THE ONE-LINE LEGAL INDICIA "© [YEAR] KING FEATURES SYNDICATE," AS DID *PRINCE VALIANT*. IF RAYMOND AND FOSTER *DID* OWN THEIR STRIPS, HAVING THAT NOTICE ON EVERY STRIP THEY DID PROBABLY WASN'T THE MOST LEGALLY ASTUTE OF MOVES. THE *RIP KIRBY* REPRINTS I OWN SAY "© KING FEATURES SYNDICATE" AND "™ HEARST HOLDINGS." TOM ROBERTS' NEW RAYMOND BIOGRAPHY MAKES NO MENTION OF EITHER RELATIVE TO *RIP KIRBY*...JUST *FLASH GORDON*. BRIAN KANE'S HAL FOSTER BIOGRAPHY SAYS *PRINCE VALIANT* APPEARS "COURTESY OF KING FEATURES SYNDICATE."

THE ONE-LINE INDICIA
ALSO READS "WORLD
RIGHTS RESERVED"

THE QUESTION IS:
"RESERVED FOR
WHOM?"



THE ARTIST?
HIS ESTATE?
HIS FAMILY?

OR KING FEATURES
SYNDICATE, HEARST
HOLDINGS AND THEIR
LEGAL DEPARTMENTS?

OR...MAYBE..."WORLD
RIGHTS" ARE "RESERVED"
FOR WHOMEVER HAS THE
CHUTZPAH TO ASSERT
THEM

CHECKER BOOK PUBLISHING'S
STEVE CANYON REPRINTS ARE CREDITED
AS ™ AND COPYRIGHT THE ESTER PARSONS
CANIFF ESTATE "THE OWNER OF ALL
RIGHTS."

NO MENTION OF THE LEGAL
INDICIA COPYRIGHT HOLDER
THE SUN AND TIMES COMPANY

SOUNDS LIKE ANOTHER
ONE IN THE "WIN"
COLUMN FOR MILT
CANIFF