CELEBRITY
RARE BIT FIENDS

AND NOW FOR SOMETHING COMPLETELY DIFFERENT.

As I think I mentioned in the first issue, I'm constantly twisting the arms of all my friends and fellow creators to get them to try doing their own dream strips. DAVE SIM was the first to come through with the sparkling "ZELDA CAFE" and a number of others are in the talking stage as I write these words. One of my prime targets all along has been NEIL GAIMAN, who is a decent artist in his own right, as well as being... well, you know... the author of the OTHER dream comic we all love so much. Neil had actually contributed a one pager to the original 24 HOUR COMIC that started all this RARE BIT FIENDS stuff, and I've reproduced it in the letters page from a three year old fax, which I found in the back of a drawer (the original artwork was lost by Neil). Neil was game to attempt some new material, and of course I was egging him on as much as I could without coming across like a DC editor, but the poor guy's schedule sounded so brutal I knew it was going to be a cold day in KING HELL before he ever had the time to actually sit down and draw again. So, during one of our marathon telephone shmooze fests, I suggested that it might be fun if I illustrated one of his dreams, and he liked the idea (strangely enough, even thought Neil and I go back to my SWAMP THING days, we have never actually collaborated on anything beyond raw ideas!)

Sure enough, a few weeks later I received a fax with seven or eight of Neil's dreams written out. I roughed them into page layouts and faxed them back and we went over them, panel by panel, on the phone, Neil describing in detail what he remembered from the dreams, and me asking him for visual and emotional associations to flesh things out. The results surprised us both, I think, and will provide readers with a spooky, funny, and pretty darn accurate snapshot of what's going on in the subterranean sinkholes of the mind that has given us some of the best writing comics have ever seen. The good news is that there is enough material to carry over into next issue as well.

As the future CELEBRITY RARE BIT FIENDS, this certainly opens up some interesting new avenues to explore. I know a number of writers who don't draw, and I'll be trying to tempt them to share their nocturnal emissions in the same manner, (Hey, guys! These things write THEMSELVES!) Also, I'm going to start a little research to see if I can turn up actual dream accounts from historical personalities that might make interesting strips. Any sharp eyed readers who run into such material, please, send it an in!
I am wandering an old spaceship.

The whole place is made of tired old flesh.

I push my way through it, sadly.

The control room is ancient, eroded, open to the sky.

It is also male.
I activate the back-up systems in a surge of power.

New flesh begins to appear. Girders and arches pushing and flailing their way up from the ground.

A voice informs me the new ship is female.
I'M IN A TAXI, TALKING OVER THE INTERCOM WITH A WOMAN I MUST BE IN LOVE WITH.

SHE IS ALSO IN A TAXI, SOMEWHERE.

THE TAXIS GET FURTHER AND FURTHER APART, AND HER VOICE GETS FAINTER.

EVENTUALLY IT CRACKLES AWAY INTO NOTHING.
Waiting for a bus, a creature pushes past me.

I suppress any disgust, try to feel only pity.

I go upstairs on the bus where the thing is reclining. It looks at me through a hole torn in its sheet.

Now it has an old hag's face that tells me I owe it an advertisement.

Briefly I remember being in its dank basement doing some kind of deal.

I admit I owe it the advert, but claim the publication it is referring to never came out.

At that, it laughs and laughs and laughs and laughs.
WE HAD BEEN FILMING ROCK VIDEOS IN THE BASEMENT OF A HUGE HOUSE.

THEY GAVE ME A CROSSBOW BECAUSE IT WAS DANGEROUS OUTSIDE.

THERE WERE WILD PEOPLE OUT THERE.
THE CROWD CARRIED THE ROCK STAR AROUND THE BASEMENT ON THEIR SHOULDERS...

THEN THREW HIM INTO THE LAKE!

I SUGGESTED THIS TO HIM AS A POSSIBLE VIDEO.

HE SHOWED ME A ROOM THAT ROSE ELEVATOR-LIKE INTO THE SKY...
There was an airport that went on for ever. All planes landed or took-off. This was because the airport covered the world.

I no longer remember what I was doing there originally. Perhaps I was waiting for a plane...

I helped her, when the press charmed her and told lies about her.

Little Princess, run away!

I believed in her.

One day, I saw her on an overhead moving sidewalk. I called out, but she didn't even know I existed.

She got onto a plane. I was on her own.

The plane stood up. The plane knew away. Flying.

I do not know where it could have gone. I will never forget her.

On my desk the television men talk about hatred. We have always lived in the airport.

Jan 29 1971