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Box 100, 308 Westwood Plaza
Los Angeles, CA 90024

For the 72 Mailing of CAPA-alpha
October 1970

IncuNebulous Publication 785.

UP THE TOWER...

If I manage to save my membership this time, it will be by the proverbial skin of the teeth. I've been very off-again, on-again about it this time, and only the finding of inexpensive quick-printing in the general vicinity of UCLA where I work made me litho a couple more pages of Tower Comics 2 for your edification and ennui.

For those fortunate among you who weren't with ~~it~~ us when the previous installment was published, everyone in this story has characteristics of some member of the Los Angeles SF Society. We open P.13 with The Junkman and Poppy, who have stolen some workers from the up-and-coming fanzine RETORT, in order to have them work in a basement narcotics lab. Psykie -- well, 2/3 of her, anyway (Id and Superego) -- enters hot (appropriately enough) on the trail...

panel 3: "She would have said 'our men' ..." is a two-stage reference. Stage 1 goes to Gilbert & Sullivan's Princess Ida, where men disguised as women are discovered: "'Why these...are men,' she would have said, but 'are men' stuck in her throat." Stage 2 goes back further, to where Gilbert got his line: "'Amen' stuck in my throat" (from Macbeth.)

panel 4: The cry of "Uh, well, ah..." identifies Fred Patten... .

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panel 3: The Great Pulpo is part Western, part Detective, and part Science Fiction in his costume.

panel 4: The Chopper (Owen Hannifen) was being attacked by the swords from the Wilkinson Sword Blade commercial, under the direction of Supernebbish (Dwain Kaiser), who has all the Powers of Madison Avenue (plus the Power to make two people disappear when he enters the room, unlike a regular Nebbish, whose entrance only makes it seem as if one person has left; and the Power of X-Lax Vision -- everything he turns it on turns to dreck. Supernebbish, the Master of Mediocrity, constantly fights against the idea that anyone is better than anyone else. Hence his fight with the Chopper, who, as the proprietor of RETORT, was trying to make it better than any other zine. Hannifen is the Chopper because of his aichmophilia -- a fondness for edged weapons. Fred is the Great Pulpo because of his collecting magazines (and apparently knowing everything in them). Hilda Hannifen is Psykie because of her vaunted/claimed parapsych power. Dwain Kaiser is Supernebbish because he is Dwain Kaiser.



