

comix

He's a Mad, Mad, Mad, Mad Man

Madman is the super-dweebiest superhero around. Neat-o.

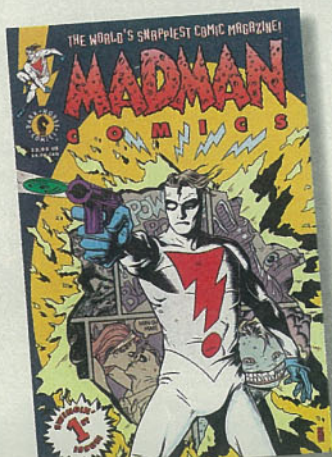
IMAGINE THE *TWILIGHT ZONE* but this time in color, in a comic book, and nothing but fun. How else to characterize a story featuring a revived corpse (who says "neat-o" a lot) on a journey of self-discovery, two doctors with somewhat abnormal physiognomies (Dr. Egon Boiffard is a burbling lump of brain tissue, Dr. Flem sports a mismatched head and body), and the most wonderful girl in the world named Joe. That's Mike Allred's *Madman Comics* (Dark Horse), a.k.a., "The World's Snappiest Comic Magazine," a kooky boogaloo through the psyche of the Everyman, complete with mock-existential ramblings and such lines as, "Joe, can you tell her I don't want to hurt her feelings, but does she *have* to eat her husband?"

Killed in a car accident, Madman is brought back to life by Dr. Boiffard who, clueless about his identity, names him after two of his favorite heroes of the 20th century, Frank Sinatra and Albert Einstein. Frank, as he is known to his friends, has a little problem with self-esteem, having been brought back to life sans memories. But in short order, he slips into an ego-boosting superhero persona, sporting his trademark "exclamation bolt" on his chest, and gets drawn into Boiffard's battles with his erstwhile benefactor, the evil Monstadt.

Toeing the line between kitsch and culture, *Madman* is, in its creator's own words, "an adventure-science-fiction-romance-comic book." Allred, whose wife does all the coloring, has created a universe so complete in its geekwad irony that a



Kooky when pissed: Madman lives up to his exclamation bolt.



scene of Frank-Madman taking out alien-infected street beatniks with a modified jet disc gun (think Wham-O products of yore) makes you pine for a disc gun of your own. "I like to ride the edge between realism and cartoony," admits Allred. Then again, that kind of thing should come naturally to a guy who has a signed picture of Adam West hanging above his toilet and who admits that hero and creator are alike in that, "We both happened to shove our fists up someone's nostrils."

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