

CRIES FROM THE ATTIC™

FROM THE SKETCH PAD...



Believe it or not, the other day I was writing the editorial for **Bundles of Trouble** Volume 23. Steve is getting several new volumes ready to go on press in the coming...

Whoah -- come back here. Don't go rushing out the door to buy them just yet — many of them are not slated for release for several months. We'll keep you posted.

I mention **BOT #23** because that volume happens to contain some of my favorite strips and got me digging into the past looking at some of my old notes and drawings that went into the issue.

Not only do we get to see Bob's character fleshed out in a major way (when he loses his job and is kicked out of the house by his old man) but it also contains Bob senior's first on-page appearance.

The first appearance of Bob's niece and nephew, Croix and Hunter is here as well. Three new characters!

Writing the editorial for **BOT#23** got me thinking back on the creation process involved in breathing life into those new characters.

Unlike previous **KODT** characters who just sort of spilled out on the page, we put a lot of thought into Bob senior, Croix and Hunter.

Croix and Hunter were easy enough for me to draw as far as appearance. Steve Johansson and I had brainstormed on the characters for many months before introducing them. So, I had a pretty good mental image of how they should appear.

Hunter was somewhat based on my nephew Joey.

Bob's dad...? He was a bit more troublesome.

Dave Kenzer and I initially had different ideas on what he should look like. We first toyed with the idea of introducing Bob's dad way back in 1997. I would draw some head shots, send them up to Dave and then go back to the drawing board (literally) armed with his feedback and some new ideas and try again.



ABOVE: Rough sketch of Bob's Dad by Dave Kenzer. circa 1997



ABOVE LEFT: Jolly's take on Bob's Dad as he drew closer to his debut in 2003. Shown here wearing his 'rug'.



ABOVE RIGHT: Gary Jackson for comparison.

Eventually, we compromised. The final version of Bob Sr. contains elements both of us wanted to see in the 'old man.'

As I recall, Dave wanted him to have hair. But in the end, I went renegade and made him bald.

And, for good reason. No matter what I did with his hair, it seemed I just couldn't shake the "He looks like Gary Jackson" comments.

Which has more to do with my drawing style, I think, than anything else.

Today, I can't imagine Bob senior looking any other way.

We received a lot of feedback the last time we ran some of my old character sketches. Especially those showing how certain character concepts evolved as the result of D-Team brainstorming sessions.

If you enjoy these I may consider devoting a page occasionally showing more. Just yesterday I uncovered the first ever BlackHands test panel. I had totally forgotten in the original sketches that Stevil wasn't even part of the group.

Enough with the nostalgia. There's a new issue in hand to enjoy. Hope you approve.

Game on!

Jolly R. Blackburn

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