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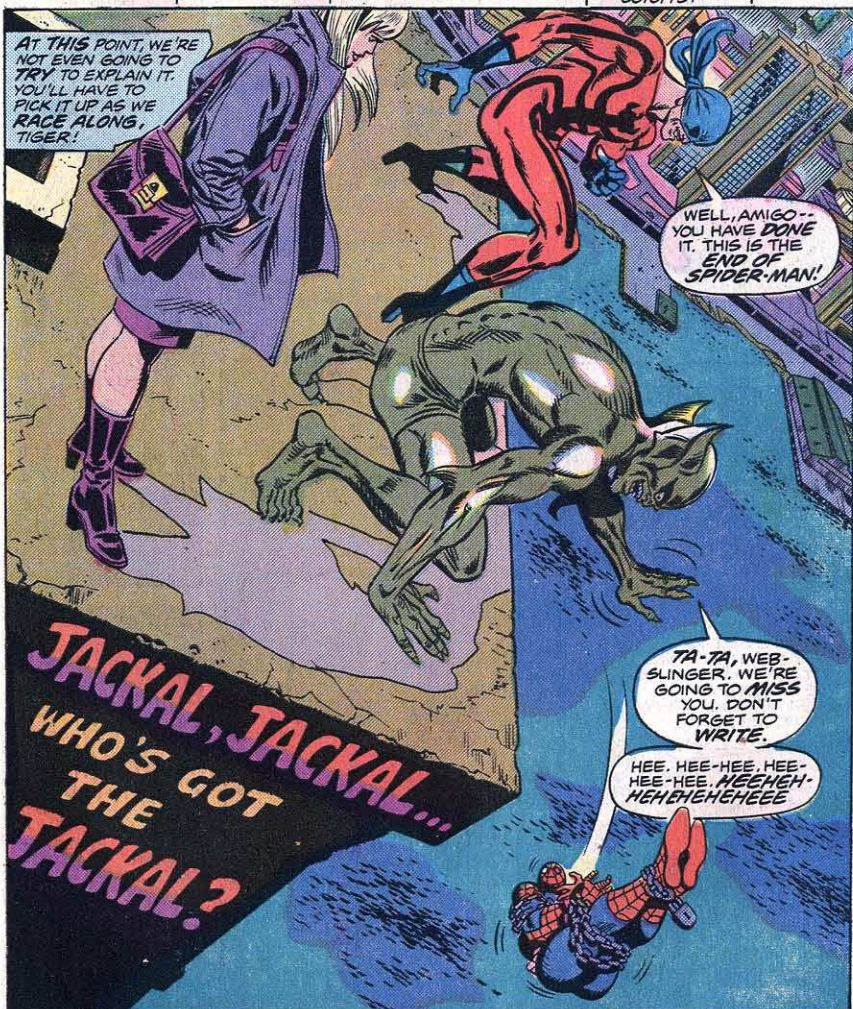
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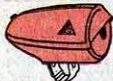
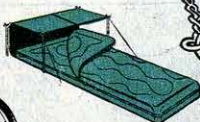
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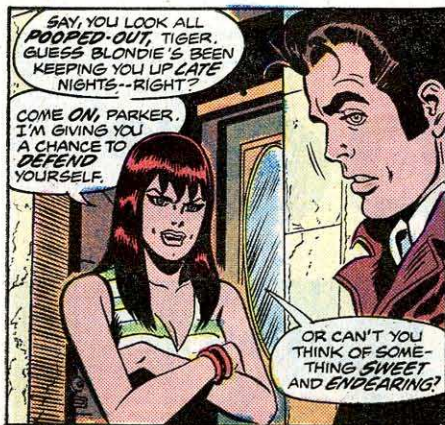
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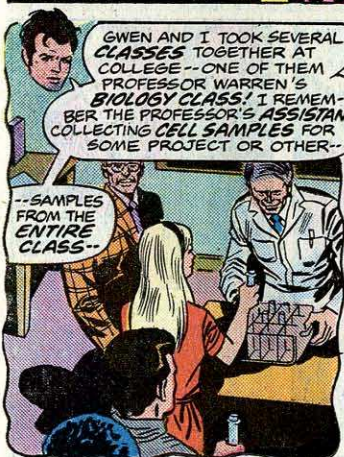
YES, GANG, IT'S NOT BEEN WHAT YOU'D TERM A GREAT DAY FOR OUR HARRIED HERO. IT'S BEEN THE SORT OF DAY YOU WANT TO FORGET-- AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE.

PETER PARKER FORGETS THINGS BY TAKING A BATH...



(LISTEN--SOME PEOPLE BET ON HORSES. OTHER PEOPLE TAKE BATHS. WHATEVER GETS YOU THROUGH THE NIGHT, PILGRIM...!)







ONE HOUR AND TWENTY-FIVE MINUTES LATER; PETER'S COLLEGE CAMPUS IN QUEENS...

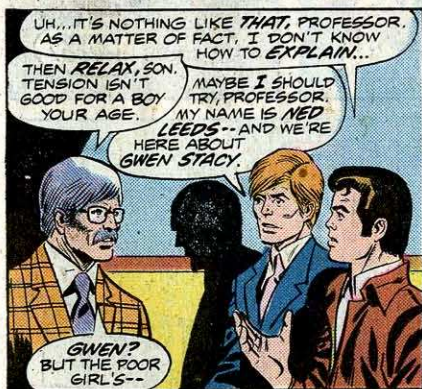
PROFESSOR WARREN ALWAYS TEACHES A LATE CLASS ON TUESDAY, NED--



--AND THERE HE IS NOW. HEY, PROFESSOR!

COULD I SEE YOU A MOMENT, SIR?

WHAT--? OH, IF IT'S A PARKER, SCHOOL MATTER, MY OFFICE HOURS--



UH...IT'S NOTHING LIKE THAT, PROFESSOR. AS A MATTER OF FACT, I DON'T KNOW HOW TO EXPLAIN...

THEN RELAX, SON. TENSION ISN'T GOOD FOR A BOY YOUR AGE.

MAYBE I SHOULD TRY, PROFESSOR. MY NAME IS NED LEEDS--AND WE'RE HERE ABOUT GWEN STACY.

GWEN? BUT THE POOR GIRL'S--

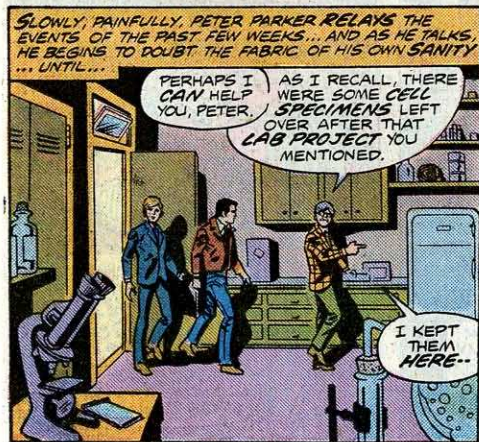


DEAD, SIR. THAT'S WHY WE'RE HERE--UH--I MEAN, SHE IS AND SHE ISN'T.

WHEW! I'M NOT BEING VERY CLEAR, AM I?

NO, PETER, YOU'RE NOT.

PROFESSOR--HAVE YOU EVER HEARD ABOUT CLONES--?



SLOWLY, PAINFULLY, PETER PARKER RELAYS THE EVENTS OF THE PAST FEW WEEKS... AND AS HE TALKS, HE BEGINS TO DOUBT THE FABRIC OF HIS OWN SANITY... UNTIL...

PERHAPS I CAN HELP YOU, PETER.

AS I RECALL, THERE WERE SOME CELL SPECIMENS LEFT OVER AFTER THAT LAB PROJECT YOU MENTIONED.

I KEPT THEM HERE--



--IN THIS REFRIGER--

THAT'S ODD. THE SPECIMENS ARE GONE.

GONE?



I AFRAID SO, PETER--
AND I'VE A FAIR
IDEA WHO MIGHT
HAVE TAKEN
THEM.

MY ASSISTANT
AT THAT TIME--

--ANTHONY
SERBA.



BUT AS TO
HIS WHERE--
ABOUTS--

I CAN'T
HELP
YOU, SERBA
DISAP-
PEARED
SOME
MONTHS
AGO.

THANKS,
PROFESSOR
WARREN.

NED AND I
WILL TAKE IT
FROM HERE.



AND, WHEN THE TWO
FRIENDS GET OUTSIDE...

PETER, YOU TRY TO TRACK
DOWN SERBA'S OLD ADDRESS
FROM THE REGISTRAR'S
OFFICE. I'M HEADING BACK
TO THE BUGLE--

--TO FIND OUT IF ANY-
ONE'S LOCATED GWEN.

LEAVE A MESSAGE
FOR ME THERE WHEN
YOU FIND THE ADDRESS.
TILL THEN, BUDDY--

ADIOS,
AMIGO!



TRANSITION:

A GOODY TIME AFTER
THE PREVIOUS SCENE, IN
THE PART OF MANHATTAN
KNOWN AS MIDTOWN
EAST...



SERBA
SEEMS TO BE
ONE OF THOSE
PATHETIC
GUYS--



--THE KIND WHO
DEVOTE THEMSELVES
ENTIRELY TO THEIR
WORK, TO THE EX-
CLUSION OF EVERY-
THING ELSE.

HIS FILE SAID HE HAS
NO KNOWN INTERESTS
OTHER THAN HIS WORK--



THE SPIDER'S WEB

SEND YOUR LETTERS TO:

THE MARVEL COMICS GROUP, SIXTH FLOOR 375 MADISON AV., NEW YORK, N. Y. 10022

Dear Len, Gerry, and Ross,

Shades of Stan Lee! Ger, you've got me so wrapped up in every little aspect of the book that I'd swear I was eleven years old again, thrilling to the whole Goblin/Crime Master/Patch/Liz-Betty/Aunt May complexity. I mean it, the book is *that* good now.

Unfortunately, Gerry, your writing since taking over SPIDEY has been hit and miss, hit and miss. At times, such as Gwen and the Goblin's deaths, your writing was unbelievable; but at other times, you've completely fallen flat. But, with the last ten issues or so, and especially so in this latest one, #144, a grand and complex set of situations have been brewing, during which time, the book has been no less than sensational.

First, the Jackal. Though he didn't appear in this ish, his aura still persists. The mystery pertaining to who he really is rivals the intrigue of the Goblin/Crime Master/Patch stories. And since the Jackal is only a sole character, that's saying a lot about how much I've grown to adore his character. Second, add Pete's ever growing relationships with supporting characters, especially with Jonah and Robbie. Recently, you've been presenting the Spidey/Jonah relationship as very, very comedic, and it's working greatly. As for Robbie, his camaraderie with Pete during their trip to Paris was really nice to see. And I hope to see a more involved relationship between them very shortly. I noticed that when Pete thought he fooled Robbie and Jonah into thinking he isn't Spidey, the narration made no mention of Robbie being directly tricked, only Jonah's acceptance of it. Perhaps you're leading up to Robbie's revealing to Pete that he knows his identity? I surely hope so.

The final situation, the one which is probably going to add more intrigue, and more excitement to the book than either of the above situations—Gwen's reappearance. Is it really her? And if it is, how will her resurrection affect the new Pete/MJ affair? I admit that I wasn't too happy about the thought of her coming "back from the dead" (Bucky, here we come!), but after this ish, I'm just too shocked, and too puzzled to complain. The growing Pete/MJ relationship was, of course, geared towards making more problems once Gwen did return, and I can see the many ramifications already. Wow, I can't wait for next ish to see all these implications.

All of these aforementioned situations are now contributing so very much to the book and it's been a long time since there have been so many different plot and sub-plot threads to get involved with. Remember, complexity of plotting has always been the most agreeable aspect of SPIDEY.

In the art department, Ross, all I can say is that you're great. That splash page was sensational in it's capturing of the uniquely Spideyish sense of heights, and too, your great ability to portray the agile and twisting Spidey motions. Watch out, and hold on to your hats, Ross Andru's in town.

That's it for this time, so for this time, until next time, MAKE MINE MARVEL.

PMM Dean Mullaney

81 Delaware Street
Staten Island, NY 10304

Hi,

Do you remember Marvel Comics? You know... "When Marvel kills off a character, they stay dead."

So here we have the return of Gwen Stacy. Lovely. I suppose the Watcher interfered and brought her back to life (by the way, when is he going to be expelled from the ranks of Watcherdom for so much interference in the affairs of this paltry planet?). Or, by a clever twist, (uniting your "monster" and superhero comics in one bold move), the sweet Gwendolyn who has appeared on Peter's doorstep is...of course...a vampire. I can visualize their first sweet embrace: she kisses Peter, incidentally biting his neck, and because his platelets are radioactively inclined, little Gwendolyn becomes not only a vampire, but a spider-powered vampire.

Marvelous. How do you come up with these ideas?

A couple of catches, of course: the two other times you "showed" us Gwen in the last two issues, she was seen by daylight. So maybe she is not among the living dead as yet. Two: It really came as no surprise to see her back, though it was disappointing because it shoots your carefully maintained realism...A nasty habit of Gerry's, this, to build a lovely plot then give it a quick blow to the foundations...no surprise because she was first seen as an "illusion" of Mysterio's...yet Mysterio was projecting images of Spidey's foes, and unless he knew Peter Parker was Spider-Man, he couldn't have projected a lovely moving photo of Gwen just to unhinge everybody's favorite talking Spider. Your explanation next issue had better be good.

By the way, congrats to Gerry on developing things well until this issue's "shocker." Fortunately, he's a rather talented fellow, so perhaps he'll find a way to pull off Marvel's latest "renaissance"...

With some sincerity...

Lars Simon

2410 E. Lynn, #104
Seattle, WA 98112

And that's how the mail ran on SPIDER-MAN #144. Some of you loved it, some of you hated it, and it appears that all of you are sitting on the edge of your seats waiting to see what Ger's going to pull next! As for us, we're keeping mum; we're too close to the end of this saga to let any cats out of the bag now!

How close? Wouldya believe that *next issue* is the fatale finale, the wondrous wrap-up of the events that have been transpiring to these many months? Ya would? Well, ya better, 'cause next issue promises to be the most bombastic yet in the long and checkered career of Marvel's favorite web-slinger!

Be here, pilgrim, ya won't wanta miss it!

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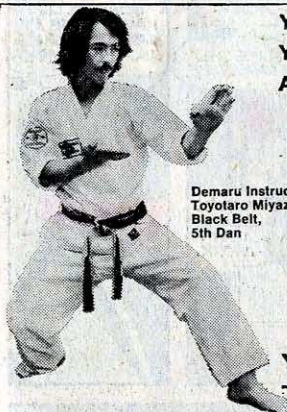
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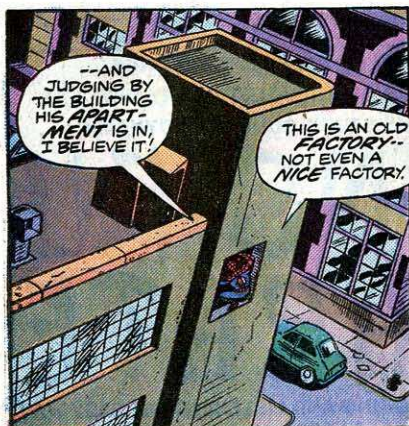
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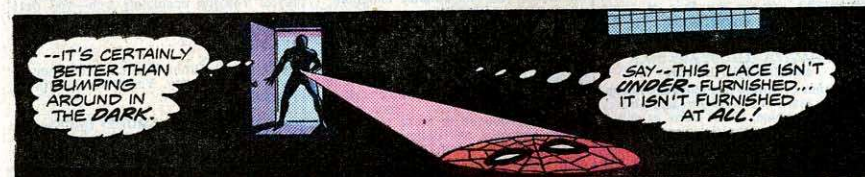
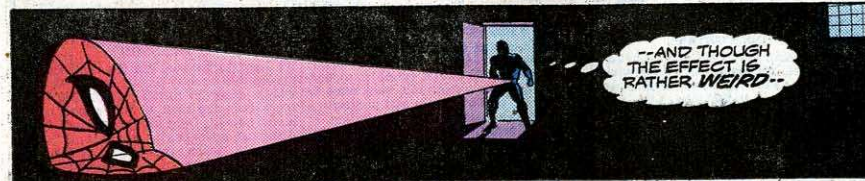
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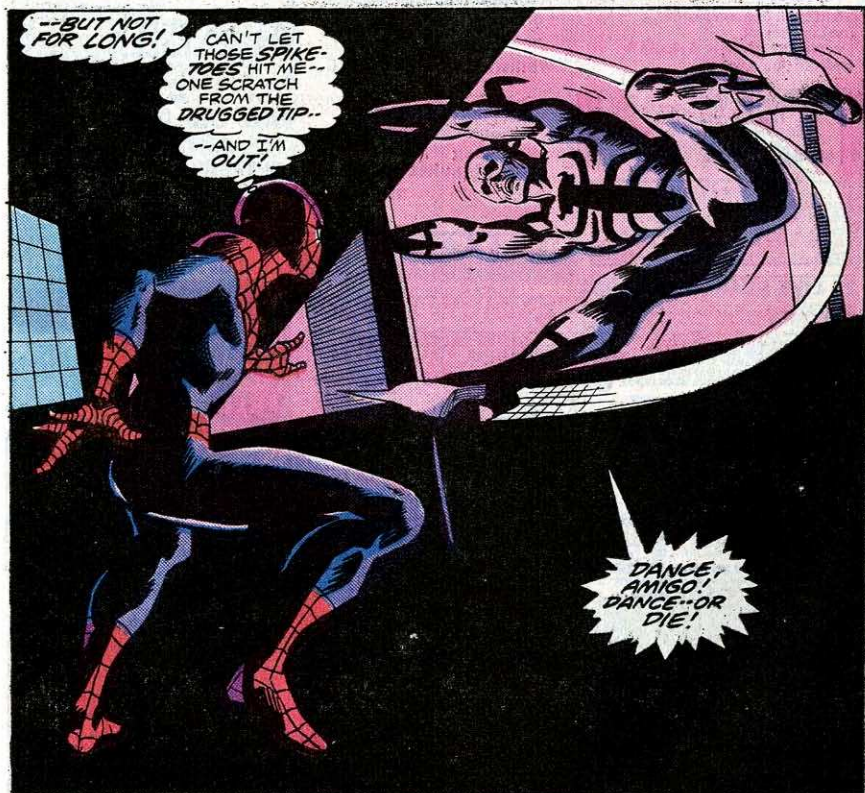
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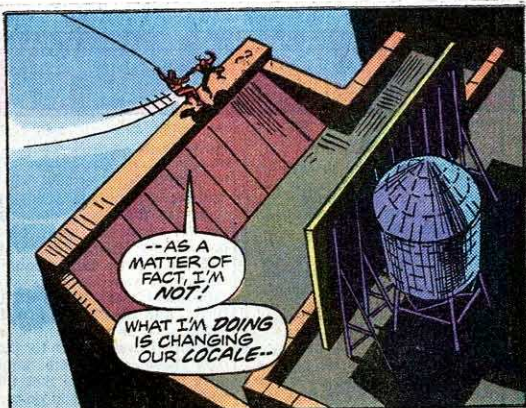
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Excelsior!

Stan

ITEM! For the past few months, we've been announcing sparkling new stars in the mighty Marvel cosmos practically hand over fist—you know, such stalwarts as THE SCARECROW, BLOODSTONE, and SKULL THE SLAYER—and they're just the beginning! In fact, Faithful One, we've got so many blamed new ideas in mind that even your beleaguered Bullpen can't handle 'em all without something giving some place—and, alas, something finally has! So in order for us to continually keep at the forefront of this ferslugginer field, in order to insure that when

the annals of comic mag history are inscribed, madcap Marvel will still be recognized as the maven of comic masterpieces, we've just had to put aside some of our new 50¢ GIANT-SIZE titles for the time being. (But that doesn't mean you won't be able to peruse the passel of GIANT-SIZE SPECIALS which will be continuing to come your way—such as the GIANT-SIZE IRON MAN, GIANT-SIZE DAREDEVIL, and GIANT-SIZE POWER MAN—and we'll be re-presenting some of the early Marvel classics for those who have been unfortunate enough to miss them!) It seems that there just weren't enough of us to go around on all the nifty new titles we have planned and still take proper care of our four-bit blockbusters. But don't despair, True Believer—you can bet your bottom shekel that you haven't seen the last of such stunning strips as THE INVADERS, SUPER-VILLAIN TEAM-UP, the all-new, all-improved X-MEN, and many of the others who only appeared in GIANT-SIZE incarnations. Almost even as we speak, spanking-new 25¢ versions of these same monumental mags are speeding to your local newsstand to ogle your orbs and mangle your mind. So keep your peepers peeled in the weeks to come for the second coming of THE INVADERS, THE X-MEN, SUPER-VILLAIN TEAM-UP, CHILLERS (starring TIGRA, the Were-Woman!), SKULL THE SLAYER, and four more glorious goodies that are still too top-secret to mention now. (But just check this space next month...) Who says mighty Marvel sits on its laurels?

ITEM! Looks like it's time to hop on the ever-whirling artist/writer merry-go-round again (come to think of it, when isn't it that time around here?) since, as we pen these imperishable words, the Winter frost is clearing, Spring is aborning, and all the madcap Marvel madmen are just itching to break new ground. Now follow this closely, Pilgrim—'cause you can't tell the players without a score-card. Ready? Okay. First, let's hear it for Rascally ROY THOMAS, who has just taken on the scripting chores for everybody's favorite Asgardian, The Mighty THOR! The Rascally One is really anxious to sink his literary teeth into the Odinson's universe-spanning adventures, and who are we to stand in his way? (Besides, Roy's just about the only Bullpenner who can conjugate an Asgardian verb.) Meanwhile, Lively LEN WEIN has acquired the scripting assignment supreme (acquired? He fought his way Tang and claw thru the whole blamed Bullpen). We don't wanna tell ya exactly which strip it is, but how many blue-and-red webheads do you know? The Lively One will also be handling the wall-crawler's monthly TEAM-UP mag, and he's promising there are big things

in store, so hang in there! And if that's not enough to set any Marvelite a'trembling with anticipation, there's more! Marvelous MARV WOLFGAN, whose shattering scripting on a certain Lord of Vampires has been so applauded by his peers that TOMB OF DRACULA has been nominated as Best Continuing Series by the Academy of Comic Book Arts, has been wracking his fevered brain to devise newer, more menacing adversaries for the Man Without Fear, DAREDEVIL! Devil-May-Care DOUG MOENCH has taken to running around the Bullpen clad only in a loincloth, his hip-length hair flowing wildly behind him, since he inherited the titanic typing chores on KA-ZAR, Lord of the Savage Land! On the artistic side of the street, Gorgeous GEORGE TUSKA has sauntered back over to the Invincible IRON MAN, while one of comicdom's most famous artistic teams has been reunited as Mischievous MIKE ESPOSITO begins inking the Amazing SPIDER-MAN over the peerless pencils of his old pal ROSS ANDRU. As Mischievous Mike put it at the time, “Nothing can stop us now!”

ITEM! Speaking of the sensational webslinging, any True Believer worth his salt won't want to miss SPIDER-MAN #149, where the startling secret of the malevolent Jackal is revealed at last for one and all to see. Gee, there's never a dull moment around the ol' House of Ideas, is there?

ITEM! We barely have room enough left to announce the beginning of a brand-spanking-new black-and-white blockbuster of a magazine. We call it MARVEL MOVIE PREMIERE and it's slated to feature full-length adaptations of the latest and greatest classics ever to grace the wide-angle screen. MMP will be debuting in just a few short weeks with a power-packed presentation of Edgar Rice Burroughs' THE LAND THAT TIME FORGOT, based on the fear-fought film starring Dauntless DOUG McCULLURE, and adapted by our own Marvelous MARV WOLFGAN and Smashing STEVE GAN! Don't miss it, Effendi—you know how we hate to see a Marvelite cry!

On February 20th, 1975, early in the morning, the comic book industry lost one of its foremost talents. ARTIE SIMEK died. For some thirty-odd years, the majority of his life, Artie produced a veritable mountain of work and gained a reputation for being a true professional. He was one of the cornerstones in building the mighty world of Marvel and his efforts cannot be ignored.

To those of us who were privileged to know Artie, he was a valued friend, a unique personality, and an irreplaceable co-worker. He will be missed.



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