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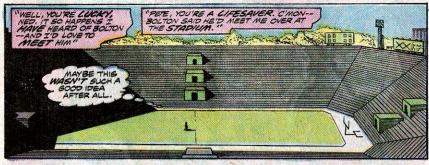
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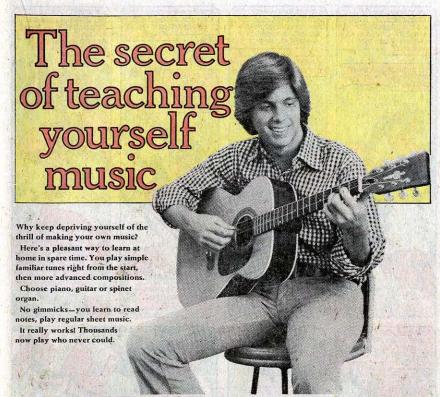
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As is to be expected, SPIDER-MAN #149—containing the riotous wrap-up of our multi-part Jackal saga-gariered an unusually large amount of fan mail. However, little did we realize that amongst the raves and the cheers, the criticisms and the jeers, there would also be an almost unprecedented multitude of missives pleading for our Nefarious No-Prizes, an unstemmed flood of letters requesting recognition for spotting flaws...or, at the very least, minor descrepancies in Merry Gerry's stupendous storyline. So many, in fact, that the armadillo that usually answers these letters has passed to me, Roguish Roger Slifer, boy assistant editor and mighty Marvel masochist, the "pleasure" of explaining away the alleged flaws in the Jackal series. As a result I hereby present the following...

OF JACKALS AND JUXTAPOSITION

Probably the best way to go about explaining the discrepancies and filling in the gaps left at the end of issue #149 is to present an orderly chain of events—from the Jackal's inception leading up to his eventual demise, starting with the death of Gwen Stacv.

SPIDER-MAN #121: This is the now-classic issue in which Gwen Stacy met her death at the hands of the Green Goblin. It was this event which set Professor Warren on the path to madness. Struck with sorrow, the Professor remembered the cell samples that were the spawning ground from which the clones of Gwen Stacy and Peter Parker were made. We already know why he made the clone of Gwen Stacy, but why did Professor Warren choose, out of all the students from which he took cell samples, the student known as Peter Parker? Well, it was obvious from the Jackal's comments in SPIDER-MAN #140 he was aware of a link between Pete and Spider-Man, a link he deduced because of the sheer volume of photos taken by Peter Parker of Spider-Man for the Daily Bugle. Therefore, it seems likely that he would see the necessity for a clone of Peter Parker, a clone he could hypnotize to discover what that link was, even though in the beginning Professor Warren had no idea that Peter is Spider-Man.

However, growing a clone takes time, and the Jackal got impatient waiting and resolved to instigate a direct assault, using the Punisher (in ish #129) as his instrument for revenge. For a short time he thought he succeeded and, rather than admit to himself that he was Professor Warren, he decided to embark upon a life of crime and startad establishing underworld contacts. When he learned of his error concerning Spider-Man's demise, he determined to use those contacts to learn the whereabouts of Hammerhead. Through his conniving, the Jackal succeeded in pitting Hammerhead against Doc Ock, cleverly manipulating Spider-Man into the midst of the two foes and reasoning that there was no way that Spider-Man could survive caught between two such formidable enemies. This plan, too, met with defeat.

SPIDER-MAN #136: The failures of the Jackal's first two schemes convinced him that he should once again try to track Spider-Man down through Peter Parker and, since the clone was not'yet fully developed, he decided to keep surveillance on Pete's apartment with a tele-photo lens from a near-by apartment complex. Through some incredible stroke of luck, the Jackal never saw Spider-Man actually enter Pete's apartment.

What he did see, though, was Pete throwing a web-encased bundle onto the roof of a near-by apartment building. This was Pete's spare Spider-Man costume which he tossed away in order to prevent its discovery by the police after his apartment was bombed by Harry Osborn. It was this uniform, complete with web-shooters, with which the Professor later costumed his clone.

Finding the costume gave the Professor strong suspicions that Peter Parker and Spider-Man were one and the same. However, since he had no proof, the Professor utilized the Grizzly (issue #140) to lure Pete within his grasp. He attached the "vibro-harness" to Pete's arm (luckily Pete had apparently ditched his regular costume before entering the Grizzly's home, since our astute web-spinner knew full well that he might be walking into a trap, thus saving himself from exposure when the Jackal rolled up his sleeve to attach the device).

The Jackal had indeed planned well this time. As he told Peter, he was expecting the device to lead him to Spider-Manbut his methods were so subtle and devious that even Spidey didn't catch on! The Jackal knew that, in order to remove such a carefully constructed device (a device the Jackal originally told him would explode with tampering; ever wonder about that, pilgrims?), Pete would have to utilize the equipment in the bio-chemistry lab at college. The Jackal merely employed the key he possessed as Professor Warren for his own classroom, and waited patiently in the shadows for Pete to arrive. His diligence was rewarded when Pete removed the vibroharness, switched to Spider-Man before his very eyes, and exited to throw the harness into the Hudson River.

At this point, after receiving his proof that Peter Parker and Spider-Man were one and the same person, the Jackal started his campaign to drive Spidey up the wall, using the Gwen clone (ish's 142-145), all of which led up to their final confrontation in issue #149.

But there are still a couple of questions left unanswered. Such as: How could the Jackal leave Ned Leeds in the basement with Spider-Man after he made his exit, when Nedisshown at Shea Stadium as still being the Jackal's prisoner, and why doesn't Ned know who Spider-Man is now, since he was present all the time the Jackal was raving and using the names Peter Parker and Spider-Man interchangably?

The first part of this question is very easily answered by simply examining the Jackai's character. Does it seem unlikely to you that someone as devious and cunning as the Jackai, seeking to goad Spider-Man into following him to Shea Stadium, would leave a dummy of one of Peter Parker's best friends as an added inducement for him to follow? As for the second part of the question, take a close look at the panels that Ned Leeds appears in, and you will see that Ned could indeed hear the accusations as Professor Warren railed against Spider-Man—if his ears weren't covered by the same blindfold which blocked his vision.

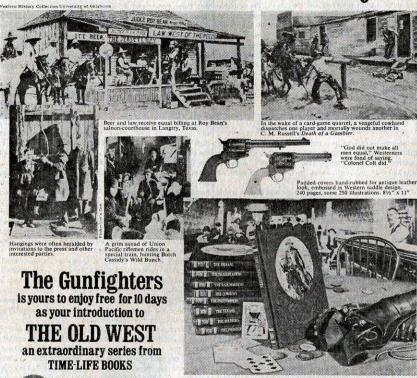
As for the zillions of Marvelmaniacs that pointed out that if Spidey's spider-sense can only alert him to his enemies, then why did it react to Mary Jane on the last page of SPIDER-MAN # 149—that's one even we can't figure out. So consider yourself No-Prized—each and everyone of you who noticed this grievous error.

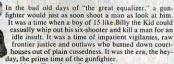
And, as a parting shot, we just want to thank you for letting us take a page to explain away the few problems that, because of space limitations (We mean, after all, do you realize how long that blasted series ran as it was?), we were unable to cover previously.

Your liltin' letters will return next ish.

'Nuff said? Please?

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STAN LEE'S SOAPBOX

Since the Thanksgiving season is almost upon us, what could be more fitting than a sentimental little sonnet from me to you? (Actually, there are a zillion things that could be more fitting—but since it's my column—!)

"THANKS" By Henry Wadsworth Lee

I'm thankful for our writers
Whose imaginations never fail,
And I'm thankful for our artists
Who illustrate each tale.
I'm thankful for our letterers
Who print the words we write,
And without our classy colorists
We'd just be black and white.
I'm thankful for our editors
Who put it all together,
And the gang that proofs each
peerless page
In every kind of weather.

peeriess page
In every kind of weather.
I'm thankful for our printers
So dependable and true,
And also for our auditors
Whatever it is they do.
I'm thankful for our sales force
Selling every neighborhood,
And I thank our competition
For making us look good.
Now here's to all of Marveldom
I can't thank you enough,
Yep, you're the ones I thank the most
For reading all this stuff!

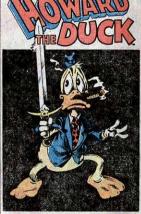
Excelsion! Stan

ITEM! We've got a crazy kaboodle of bombastic bombshells to lay on ya this time around, so let's get rolling right along, shall we?

ITEM! There's nothing better to brighten up a slow and sultry summer day than a friendly game of sock-lt-to-'em softball—and it's so much the better if Mighty Marvel comes out as the wondrous winner! On a tumultuous Tuesday a week or so back Marvel-time (that's July in the real world) your Batty Bullpen broke its all-toolong losing streak by defeating, demolishing, and otherwise destroying the rollickin representatives of ESQUIRE! We're not saying it was all that difficult, but without the humble help of a certain bashful blue-eyed Benjamin Grimm, we never would have done it!

ITEM! In a move daringly designed to direct your undivided attention to our pulsatin' PREMIERE and sensational SPOTLIGHT mags, we proudly present the two current features in each of these titanic titles! In MARVEL PREMIERE #28, the long-awaited, long-demanded "Legion of Monsters!" makes its devastating debut. Not to be confused with the our former black-and-white mag with the

same name, this fearsome feature is a special once-in-a-lifetime-team-up of Man-Thing, Ghost Rider, Werewolf (By Night) and Morbius, The Living Vampirel And if that isn't enough to conjure with, MARVEL SPOTLIGHT #26 will be presenting an astounding adventure of that Aquarian Defender—the stupendous, savage Sub-Mariner! What's coming up after these frantic features—2 Well, that would be telling. So stay tuned, keep alert, and keep reading! Well spill the information somewhere. You know how modest we are!



ITEM! And speaking of artistic triumphs, have you picked up the pulse-pounding premiere issue of HOWARD THE DUCK yet? If you've seen any of his solo sagas in the back of GIANT-SIZE MAN-THING, you won't want to miss it! Frank Brunner, Tom Palmer, and Steve Gerber have worked themselves to the proverbial bone to produce what must be the strangest teamup the Marvel Universe has ever seen. Don't miss the fantabulous first encounter of Howard and... Spider-Man? And while we're on the topic of frantic firsts, don't miss the two more of our latest and greatest efforts- BLACK GOLIATH and OMEGA THE UNKNOWN! You've never met OMEGA before, but all POWER MAN fans must certainly remember our twentyfoot tall titan who appeared in issue #'s 24 and 25 of Luke Cage's mag! After all, it was you who demanded that we give him his own title. True Believer, Your wish is our command! And don't forget- even though STRANGE TALES is now devoted to representing the best of the early Doctor Strange classics, WARLOCK's still soaring! In fact, he's moved into his own merely magnificent mag, while Jim Starlin, jester of all trades, continues working on a top secret project which he plans springing on the Bullpen towards the end of the year. We'll let you know the details as soon as we find out, but while you're waiting, be sure to pick up that titanic triumvirate premiere package—HOWARD THE DUCK, OMEGA THE UNKNOWN, and BLACK GOLIATH! They're sure to make comic book history!

TITEM! Who says comic book writers can only write comic books? Not ARCHIE GOODWIN nor STEVE ENGLEHART, whose novelette-length prose pieces will be appearing in Pyramid Books' two-volume paperback anthology, WEIRD HEROES!

ITEM: Have ya glommed the latest PAUL McCARTNEY AND WINGS album, "Venus and Mars," yet? If not, there's a cutrya just gotta hear! It's called "Magneto and the Titanium Man," and if that's not enough to start the Bullpen blushing bright red, we don't know what is!

ITEM! Seems that everyone agrees that Marvel's still the greatest, 'cause the winners have just been announced in the annual SHAZAM awards, and the blushin' Bullpen walked away with so many of 'em that we needed a truck to get back to the office. The winners in all categories are:
DRAMATIC DIVISION. Best Writer:
ARCHIE GOODWIN; Best Penciller: JOHN BUSCEMA; Best Inker: DICK GIORDANO: Best Letterer: JOHN COS-TANZA; Best Colorist: TATJANA WOOD; Superior Achievement by an Individual: ROY THOMAS; Best Continuing Feature: CONAN; Best Individual Story: "Gotterdammerung"; Best Individual Short Story: "Cathedral Perilous"; Outstanding New Talent: CRAIG RUSSELL. HUMOR DIVISION. Best Writer: STEVE SKEATES; Best Penciller: MARIE SEVERIN; Best Inker: RALPH REESE; Best Story: "Kaspar the Dead Baby"; and, the Hall of Fame: Award: JACK KIRBY, Congrats to all the







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 - 6. "HIGH WIRE"

AND MANY, MANY MORE!

P.S. IF YOU THINK THE FRONT COVER IS SOMETHING ELSE, WAIT'LL YOU SEE WHAT WE'RE HITTING YOU WITH ON THE FLIP SIDE! IT'S GOT A PUNCH HARDER THAN THE THING FACIN' OFF AGAINST OL' DOC DOOM!

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