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THE
DAWN OF

STEVE ENGLEHART

ALSO:
GEORGE
MANDEL



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Cover Artists

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Jim Starlin, & Frank Brunner

(plus inkers)

Cover Colorist

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On Our Cover: Thanks to Christopher Day, our layout wizard, for assembling this montage of Marvel heroes who were scripted by Steve Englehart in the early '70s so skillfully that it's hard to tell they came from a half dozen or more different comics. And thanks to John Morrow for providing the photo of Steve, which may be of a slightly later vintage than the art. No matter. Steve, like the four-color super-stars, is timeless, right? The figures were penciled, at various times and places, by Gil Kane, Sal Buscema, Jim Starlin, and Frank Brunner, and were inked by myriad hands. [Art of Beast, Mantis, Falcon, Captain America, Shang-Chi, Valkyrie, Hulk, Silver Surfer, & Dr. Strange ©2011 Marvel Characters, Inc.]

Above: The Woman in Red, as noted in the interview with her premier artist, George Mandel, is probably the first masked female in comic books, preceding a certain Amazon by a good year and a half! Of course, the Better/Nedor heroine had no super-powers, let alone a magic lasso or invisible plane, and it must've been hot in that robe—but being first has to count for something. Mandel says that Black Terror/Fighting Yank-creating writer Richard Hughes originated the character; but the issue of Thrilling Comics from which this panel is taken is, alas, unknown. Thanks to Jim Ludwig. [©2011 the respective copyright holders.]

This issue is dedicated to the memory of Joanne Siegel, Louise Altson, Joe Vucenic, & Ed Lahmann



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“I Think [Having Been An Artist] Gave Me An Edge In Writing Comics”

Part I Of An Incredible Interview With Star Writer STEVE ENGLEHART

Conducted & Transcribed by Richard J. Arndt

INTERVIEWER'S INTRODUCTION: Steve Englehart (b. 1947) is one of the best-known and most influential comics writers to come out of the 1970s. But, though this fact is not as well-known, Steve actually began his career as an artist, drawing horror stories for Warren and Skywald and a few romance tales for DC and Marvel. He soon focused exclusively on writing, however, beginning with the adventures of the just-turned-blue-and-furry Beast in Marvel's Amazing Adventures. He quickly earned credits on such Marvel titles as The Avengers, The Defenders, Hero for Hire, Doctor Strange, Master of Kung Fu (which he co-created), and, probably most notably, Captain America, which he took from being a modest seller to one of Marvel's top titles. He also created the cult hero "Star-Lord" for Marvel's black-&-white magazines. This first part of the interview, which was conducted in May and June of 2010, covers Steve's work through the mid-'70s; the conversation will be concluded in Back Issue #51 (Sept. 2011).



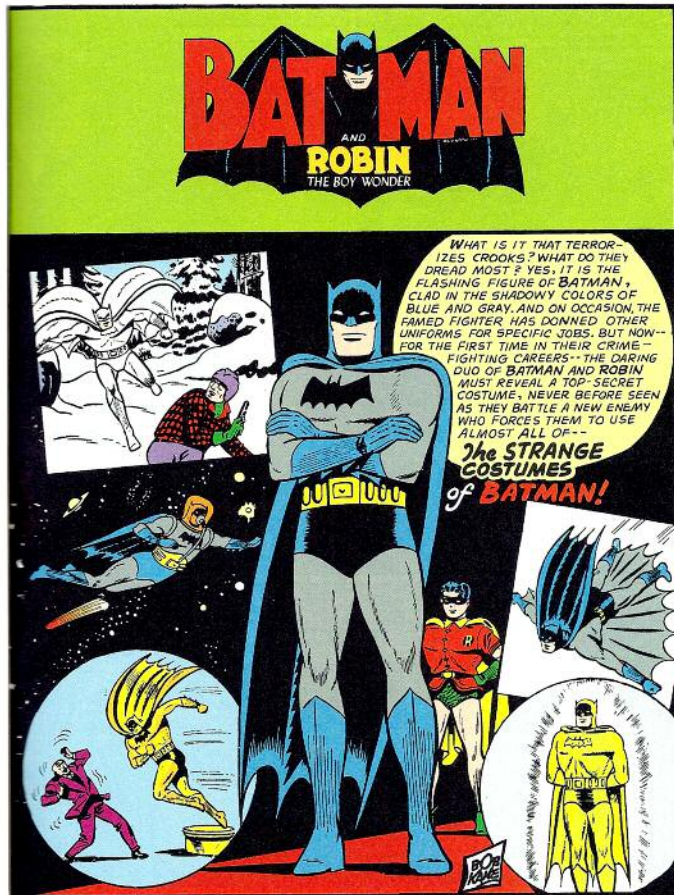
Drawn To Writing

Steve Englehart, according to Jon B. Cooke (to whom "Stainless Steve" had provided the above photo several years back for JBC's mag *Comic Book Artist*), is seen here "hanging off a bridge... about the time when the writer was hitting his stride as a scripter at Marvel Comics in the mid-1970s. Steve told us to dig the funky glass frames!" Below are images of his early work as first artist, then writer:

(Left:) The p. 2 splash of "Demona" in Skywald Publications' black-&-white comic *Psycho* #7 (July 1972), penciled by Englehart from a Gardner Fox script. Inks by Vince Colletta. Thanks to Rob Allen. [©2011 the respective copyright holders.]

(Right:) The moody splash page of Steve's very first outing on *Captain America* (#153, Sept. 1972). Art by Sal Buscema & Jim Mooney. Thanks to Barry Pearl. [©2011 Marvel Characters, Inc.]





All In Color For A Crime

A trio of Steve's favorite early memories of comic books (clockwise from above left):

Dick Sprang's "Batman" of the 1940s & '50s is, for many, the definitive artistic rendition, as per this splash from *Detective Comics* #165 (Nov. 1950). Inks by Stan Kaye; script by Edmund Hamilton. Reproduced from the hardcover *DC Comics Classic Library: The Batman Annuals Volume One* (2009). Just imagine—along with the original comics, they're even reprinting *Annuals* now! [©2011 DC Comics.]

A "Mickey Mouse" mystery splash panel drawn by Paul Murry for Dell/Western's *Walt Disney's Comics & Stories* #236 (May 1960). Script attributed to Carl Fallberg. Thanks to Bob Bailey. [©2011 Disney.]

As Steve reports, Harvey's reprints of Chester Gould's comic strip *Dick Tracy* often ran afoul of the Comics Code Authority. In these panels from issue #112 (June 1957), the nice folks at the Code apparently "asked" the company to delete black line art, and even some color, depicting a woman's corpse in the first panel (as can be seen in the printed comic by an empty white shape against the purple background of the street), yet let the body remain in the second. That reprint title was a treasure trove of censored artwork, more of which will be seen in our special Halloween feature "Tales from the Code," coming in *A/E* #105! Thanks to Michael T. Gilbert. [©2011 Tribune Media Services or successors in interest.]

"I Wanted To Be An Artist"

RICHARD ARNDT: We're here with Steve Englehart, whose four-decade-long career has endeared him to comics readers. First, thank you for agreeing to this interview, Mr. Englehart. Second, can you tell us something about your early life and where you encountered comics for the first time?

STEVE ENGLEHART: I read comics as a kid, of course. There were three titles that I remember now as liking particularly. One was *Batman*. Dick Sprang was the main artist in those days. I thought his art was amazing to look at.

Another was *Dick Tracy*, which really was a reprint of the newspaper strip. I first read *Dick Tracy* in the comic books. I liked that world, Chester Gould's world. The interesting thing about those comics, though, was that they had first been reprinted by Harvey during an earlier comics era, and the version I was reading was the second or third reprinting. The Comics Code had come into existence between these editions, so whenever something came up that would offend the Code, such as a gun or a hand being crushed in a door, they would take the offensive image out of the black printing plate. However, they didn't touch the red, blue, or yellow plates. Even as a child, I understood the concept of how comics were done—and here you could see the blue shape where a gun would be and a red streak where the bullet was flying, but there was no black outline around it. Or you could see the flesh-colored spot where the hand would be crushed in the door, but there'd be no outline of the hand. It didn't confuse me, but it sort of sensitized me, maybe not directly at the time but later, how cool stuff could be taken away or censored from you.

The third comic was the "Mickey Mouse Mysteries" by Paul Murry that ran in the back of *Walt Disney's Comics & Stories*. I loved Carl Barks' "Donald Duck," which was up front, but, in fact, the "Mickey" stories were actual mysteries—three-part serials—and the art was really nice to look at.

I think what attracted me to those three titles was that they had a particularly juicy ink line to them. I always like black-&-white art, and [noticing] the missing black lines in the *Dick Tracy* thing make it clear that that's what I was focusing on.

RA: How did you get involved in comics to begin with? You started off as an artist...

ENGLEHART: Right. I wanted to be an artist, and when I was going to college in Middletown, Connecticut, at Wesleyan, Dick Giordano was the editor at Charlton Comics in Derby, Connecticut, which was some

it, and I guess it caught people's eyes, so I wrote some more stuff. Suddenly I wasn't just an assistant editor. I was a comic book writer.

RA: *One of the first Marvel credits that you had was in a Sgt. Fury issue. A fill-in issue, I'd suspect.*

ENGLEHART: I didn't actually write that one. I went over it. I don't actually know for sure the complete circumstances, but Gary was still in Missouri. He was out of the pressure cooker of New York. He was the regular writer on *Sgt. Fury*, but for some reason, Roy wasn't totally happy with that issue. He asked me if I could go back over it and tighten up the writing on it. I did a couple of those things. Not just over Gary's scripts but other people's, as well. Stuff would come in. Roy would say, "Why don't you see if you could touch it up?" None of that stuff was ever planned and probably came as a surprise to the guys who thought they had written it.

RA: *Who was Holli Resnicoff? She's credited as your co-writer on several of your early stories.*

ENGLEHART: She was Stan's secretary. I really liked Holli a lot. She was not only Stan's secretary but also the general secretary for the bullpen workers when they needed one. Marvel—maybe all the comic companies of that time, but certainly Marvel—paid you a salary for being on staff, but they threw freelance work at you, as well. Something you could work on in your free time to earn extra money. At that time, they still had romance books. In fact, they were trying to revive them. Romance, Westerns, and monster stories—short pieces—were the non-super-hero stories where they could train people. You could write short romance or monster or Western stories to learn the craft of comic book writing. At same time, you weren't destroying an entire issue of *Iron Man* in the process. I don't remember if Holli wrote those stories and I got involved or... I tend to think that we got the assignment together. I haven't thought about that in a long time, but that romance work was a way to break in at Marvel. You got a number of chances to show them what you could do. If they decided at the end of it that you actually could do something, then you got more work.

"The X-Men Weren't Like They Are Today"

RA: *I think your first regular book was a rebooting of *The Beast*, who'd been an X-Man.*

ENGLEHART: Yes, that's correct.

RA: *Did you completely do the first story there, or was that plotted by someone else?*

ENGLEHART: The first issue was written by Gerry Conway. I think he co-plotted it with Roy. They set it up that *The Beast* was going to change from human-looking to looking like a werewolf. That was typical of Marvel at that time. Quite often an established person would do the first issue of a new title, and then they'd hand it off to somebody else.

RA: *Yes, that happened with "Werewolf by Night," "Killraven," "Man-Thing," and [Tomb of] Dracula, just to name a few.*

ENGLEHART: Most of the time, the writers had their own series. But, kicking off a new series, if Roy or Gerry couldn't write it full-time, then they would write the first episode and hand it off to somebody like me or Steve Gerber or whoever. I started with the second issue of "*The Beast*," which was running in the title *Amazing Adventures*. They'd set everything up, and I proceeded to continue it.



Bringing Out "The Beast" In Steve Englehart

Steve's first writing credit on a super-hero title was the second "Beast" solo story, in *Amazing Adventures* #12 (May 1972). The photo of artist Tom Sutton is from *FOOM Magazine* #19 (Fall 1977). For the short sweet run of that "Beast" series, pick up a copy of the hardcover *Marvel Masterworks: The X-Men, Vol. 7*, in which Cory Sedlmeier and his kookie crewmates in Marvel's reprint department have assembled half the stories which (along with reprints) kept the young mutants front if not center between *The X-Men's* cancellation in 1969 and 1975's *Giant-Size X-Men* #1. Vol. 8 of that hardcover series reprints the other half! Thanks to Barry Pearl. [©2011 Marvel Characters, Inc.]

RA: *I actually liked the art teams on that book quite a lot, although it was usually a rather an odd combo—Tom Sutton did the penciling and he got inkers like Syd Shores or Mike Ploog. The artist combos would seem to be a match of two completely wrong artists to put together, but the final product actually seemed to come out rather nicely.*

ENGLEHART: Not sure I was that crazy about the art. I've always wanted to sort of put across the realism of the fantasy, and Tom Sutton's stuff was always kind of cartoony for my taste. But, for the first several years of writing comics, you have no clout. In those days, you just didn't go to the editor and say, "I've got an artist that I want to work with." That would never come up. All the books were done by assignment. They said "You're writing "*The Beast*." Tom Sutton's drawing it." You didn't discuss it. I certainly didn't think of what kind of alternative artist I could possibly get. That was just the way it was. I wasn't totally crazy about Tom's artwork, although, to be fair, there was a lot of charm to it, but his approach wasn't what I was seeing in my mind when I plotted the story.

Having been an artist—and I won't claim that I was a great artist at all, but I could visualize things; I knew how I would draw it—I think that

“I Come From A Very Primitive Background”

An All-Encompassing Interview With Golden Age Artist & 1950s Novelist GEORGE MANDEL

Conducted by Jim Amash

Transcribed by Brian K. Morris

INTERVIEWER'S INTRODUCTION: *I've interviewed a lot of colorful people in the pages of Alter Ego, but few as fascinating as George Mandel. The late Dan Barry once described George as a real individualist (as was Dan himself), and credited him as being very helpful in Dan's early days in comics. While George worked for several companies such as Cinema Comics (later known as Better/Standard publications) and for Lloyd Jacquet's Funnies, Inc., shop, the truth of the matter is that George's life and career outside of comics is a much more fascinating story. While we do talk about George's time in comics and some of the people he knew (Mickey Spillane, Ray Gill, Richard Hughes, etc.), this interview focuses at least equally on other aspects of his life, including George's friendship with Joseph Heller, the celebrated author of Catch-22. Special thanks goes to my friend David Hajdu (the exceptional writer of books like Positively 4th Street and The Ten-Cent Plague) for giving me George's contact info. —Jim.*

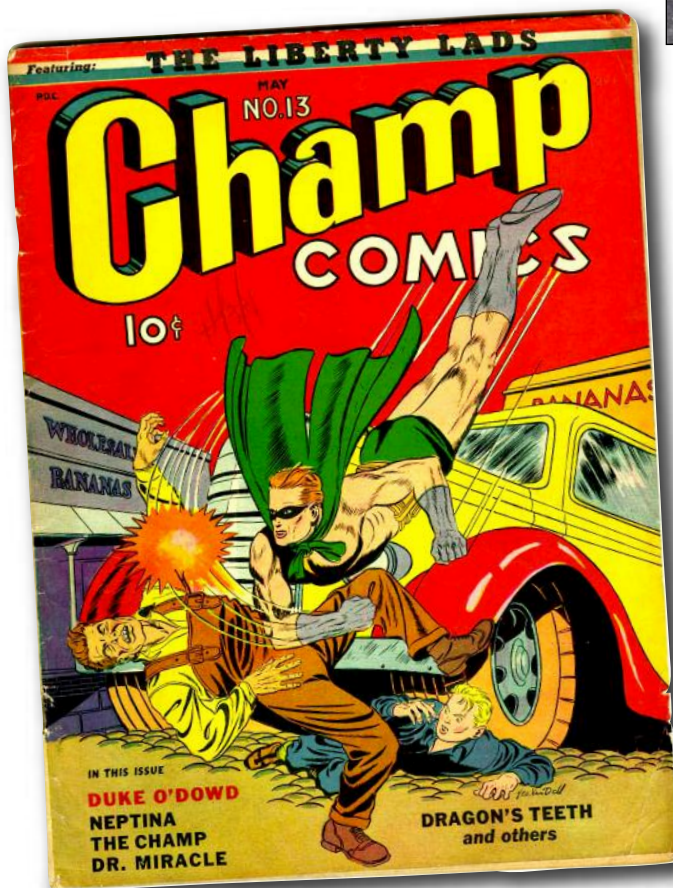


“All My Life, I've Been Drawing”

JIM AMASH: *I'm going to ask you the hardest question anyone's ever asked you. When and where were you born?*

GEORGE MANDEL: That's a real hard one, but don't worry: I may not remember. I was born in New York City, February 11th, 1920. And I'll tell you who else was born that day: Thomas Edison, the fighter Max Baer—but on my very day: King Farouk, the big fat king of Egypt.

JA: *What got you interested in writing and drawing?*

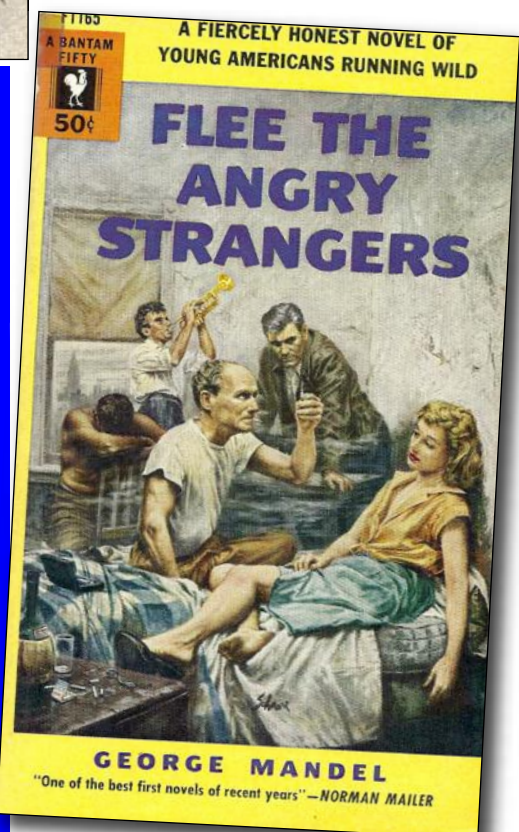


Slug The Angry Stranger!

George Mandel circa 1952—flanked by covers that trumpet his accomplishments first as artist, then as writer. The photo is from the dust jacket of his first novel, *Flee the Angry Strangers* (published by The Bobbs-Merrill Company, '52). [©2011 the respective copyright holders.]

(Left:) The cover of Harvey's *Champ Comics* #13 (May 1941) is signed with his pen name “Geo. [for George] Van Dell.” The pictured hero is “Duke O’Dowd,” a.k.a. “The Human Meteor.” Thanks to Jim Ludwig. [©2011 Harvey Publications or successors in interest.]

(Right:) The cover of the 1953 Bantam paperback edition of *Flee the Angry Strangers*, which sports an applauding blurb from Norman Mailer, then celebrated as the author of *The Naked and the Dead*. It has been called the first “Beat” novel (referring to the so-called Beat Generation). Cover artist unknown. Thanks for both this cover and the photo to Don Rosick & Pat Mason of Five Points Bookshop in Columbia, South Carolina. [©2011 the respective copyright holders.]





ABE KANEGSON WAS A LETTERING GENIUS. HIS BOSS, WILL EISNER, CERTAINLY THOUGHT SO! ABE'S BRILLIANT ALL-LETTERING SPLASH PAGE ON THE RIGHT DEMONSTRATES WHY HE INSPIRED GENERATIONS OF COMIC BOOK LETTERERS. EVEN THIS ISSUE'S "MYSTERY OF THE MISSING LETTERER!" TITLE WAS COMPOSED WITH *SEZ YOU*, RICHARD STARKINGS' KANEGSON-STYLE COMPUTER FONT.

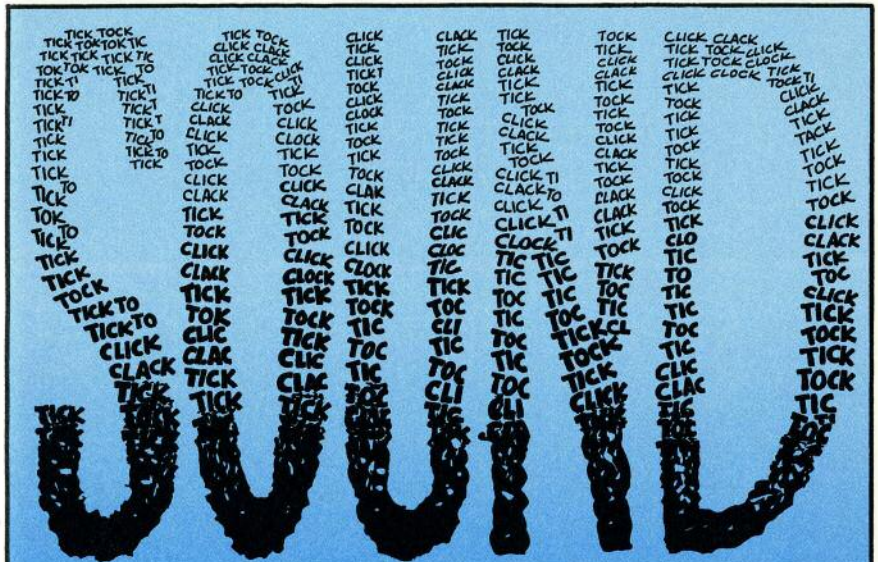
ABE LEFT COMICS IN THE EARLY 50S TO BUILD A NEW CAREER AS A FOLK SINGER AND SQUARE DANCE CALLER.

AND THEN TRAGEDY STUCK...

(Above:) Back cover photo of Abe's 1969 album.
 [©2011 the respective copyright holders.]
 (Right:) "Sound!" Sept. 24, 1950, *Spirit* splash page.
 [©2011 Will Eisner Estate.]



ABE KANEGSON! THE MYSTERY OF THE MISSING LETTERER! PART 3



LISTEN ...

Do you hear... the scream in the night... **EEK!!**
 the awakened cry of the baby... **WHAAA**
 the lone passerby on the silent street... **CLICK**
 the heavy breathing of a man asleep... **AHH AHH AHH**
 the quiet hissing of a radiator... **SSSSSSSS**
Now listen..... hear the drumbeat of nothingness...
 the rhythm that is no sound...
 the terror that is **SILENCE**



The Mystery of the Missing Letterer! - Part 3

"Remember he had a guitar in the shop? In the afternoon he played. It was a wonderful shop, wonderful. He played the guitar in the afternoon and we talked."

—Will Eisner, from a 1982 Chicago-Con panel discussion

Abe Kanegson was Will Eisner's letterer from 1947 to 1951, assisting him on *The Spirit* and other projects. He was also Eisner's friend and a dependable sounding board. Kanegson proofread and edited Eisner's text, and even pitched in with inking when deadlines got tight.

But, soon after Kanegson quit comics in the early '50s, Eisner and Jules Feiffer, a fellow *Spirit* ghost, lost touch with him. Despite searching for decades, neither Eisner nor Feiffer ever found out what became of their old friend.

In our previous issue, I told about how I finally solved the 60-year mystery last September, when I happened upon a record album on eBay which featured Abe's name and photo. Further investigation revealed that Kanegson had pursued a career as a respected square dance caller and folk singer.

Sadly, Abe passed away in 1965. His only record album came out four years after his death. But I still wanted to know more about his life before and after comics, and hoped the liner notes might provide some answers. Luckily, I was not disappointed. As you'll see, while hardly complete, there are details of Abe's life that have never before been revealed to fans of his *Spirit* work. Here's the text in its entirety. (The actual back of the album was depicted last issue, but may have been difficult to read in that format, so....)



Little Letters!

"The Strange Case of Mrs. Paraffin," March 7, 1948. Art by Eisner & Grandenetti. [©2011 Will Eisner Studios, Inc.]

1969 Kanegson Record Text

"Abe Kanegson was born in Eastern Europe of Russian-Jewish parents and immigrated with them to America as a small child in the early 20's. He grew up in the Lower East Side of Manhattan and in the Bronx during the midst of the depression. He held many jobs during his life—on farms and in factories, for trucking firms and design studios; he was even a cartoonist for a time. At other times, he had no job at all; so he studied music and painting, he wrote and roamed the countryside. Gradually he developed a career as a folksinger, folk-dance camp teacher, and square dance caller. He always returned, eventually, to New York City. He died there of leukemia in 1965, leaving a wife, two sons, and countless friends scattered all over the nation. They all will remember him less for his short and difficult life than for the courage, love, humor, and good faith he showed in the living of it.

"Abe was many things: singer, musician, artist, poet, linguist, teacher, humorist, philosopher; his many talents were both his delight and his burden. One of the many challenges he had to meet was a persistent stammer, which he eventually lessened simply by ignoring it and not letting it interfere with any of his interests, least of all his music. He was a man who managed to be himself as completely as any man could hope to be. One might wonder why he never became famous, but he never sought fame as a goal and the lightning of commercial success never happened to strike him.

"His singing here gives us only one view of Abe Kanegson, but since he put all of himself into everything he did, it is a long view in a short space. The range and resonance of his baritone voice, the excellence of arrange-



Prisoners of Deadlines!

(Left to right:) Caricatures of Jerry Grandenetti, Will Eisner, and Abe Kanegson as convicts from the "Slippery Eall" *Spirit* story for Nov. 30, 1947. Eisner once joked that, if he and his studio were stuck in jail, their lives wouldn't be all that much different. Those boys should've gotten out more! Art by Eisner & Grandenetti. [©2011 Will Eisner Studios, Inc.]

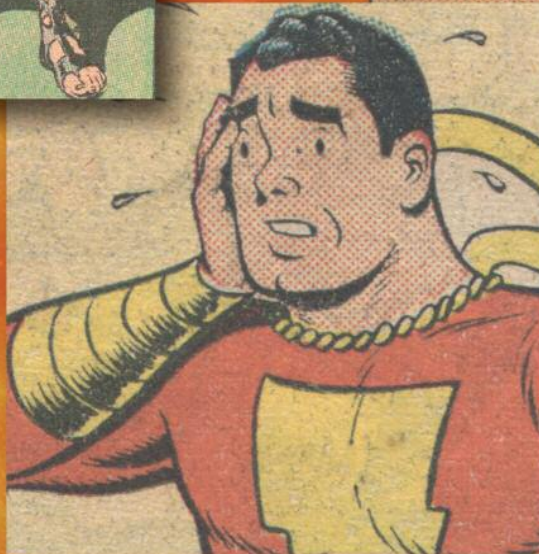
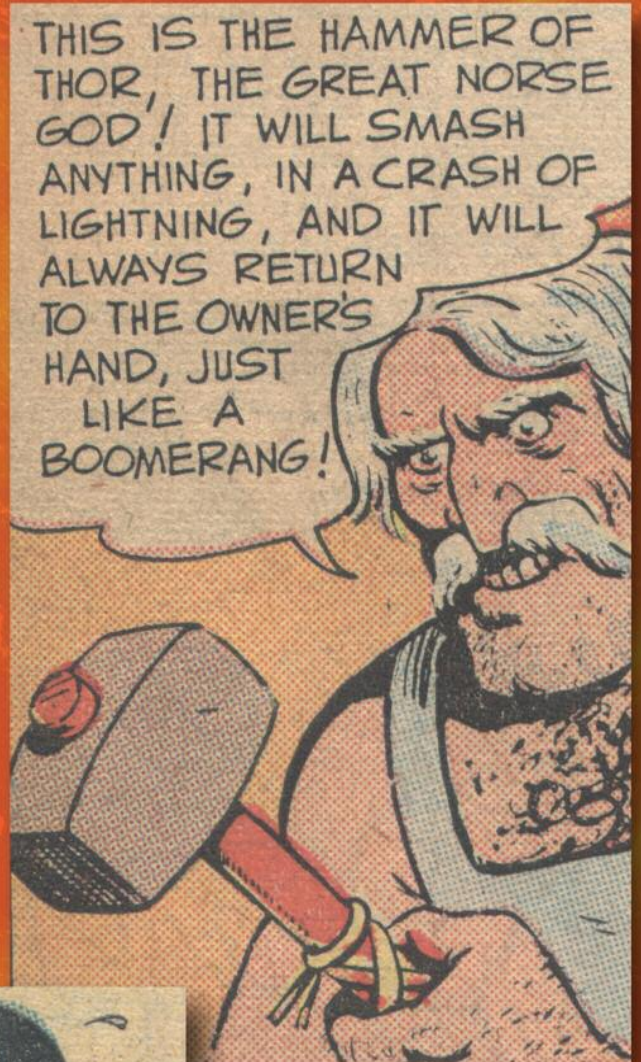
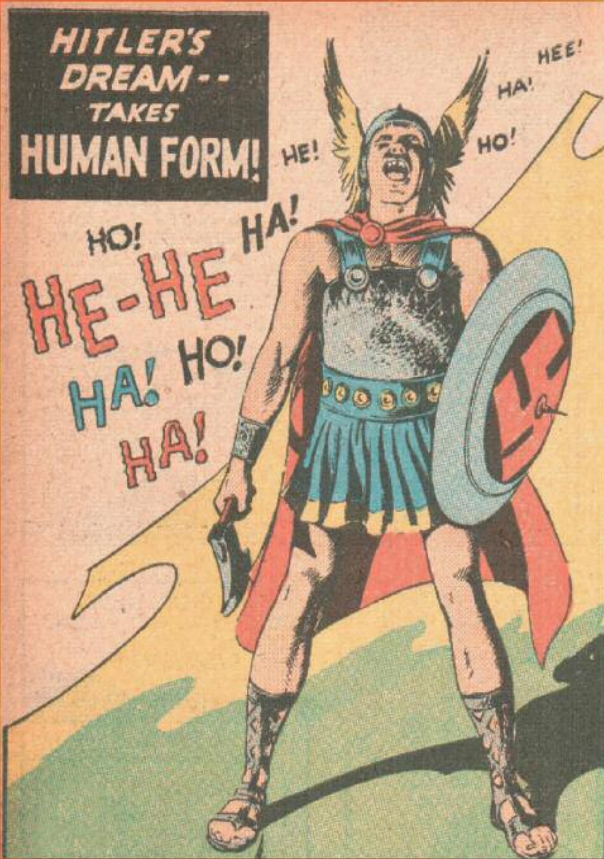
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SONS OF THUNDER



[Art & logo ©2011 Marc Swayze; Captain Marvel © & TM 2011 DC Comics]

[FCA EDITORS NOTE: From 1941-53, Marcus D. Swayze was a top artist for Fawcett Publications. The very first Mary Marvel character sketches came from Marc's drawing table, and he illustrated her earliest adventures, including the classic origin story, "Captain Marvel Introduces Mary Marvel (Captain Marvel Adventures #18, Dec. '42); but he was primarily hired by Fawcett Publications to illustrate Captain Marvel stories and covers for Whiz Comics and Captain Marvel Adventures. He also wrote many Captain Marvel scripts, and continued to do so while in the military. After leaving the service in 1944, he made an arrangement with Fawcett to produce art and stories for them on a freelance basis out of his Louisiana home. There he created both art and stories for *The Phantom Eagle* in *Wow Comics*, in addition to drawing the *Flyin' Jenny* newspaper strip for Bell Syndicate (created by his friend and mentor Russell Keaton). After the cancellation of *Wow*, Swayze produced artwork for Fawcett's top-selling line of romance comics, including *Sweethearts* and *Life Story*. After the company ceased publishing comics, Marc moved over to Charlton Publications, where he ended his comics career in the mid-'50s. Marc's ongoing professional memoirs have been a vital part of FCA since his first column appeared in FCA #54 (1996). Last time, we re-presented the beginning of John G. Pierce's discussion with Marc from Comics Interview #122 (1993), which covered Marc's initial work at Fawcett on Captain Marvel. We pick up with part two of Marc's recollections, including his post-WWII Fawcett work. (Thanks to David Anthony Kraft - comicsinterview.com) —P.C. Hamerlink.]

JOHN G. PIERCE: Okay, so you went into the armed forces in 1942, but continued to write for Fawcett as a freelancer. During that period of time—before you went into the service, that is—how often did you go to the Fawcett offices to take in or pick up assignments?

MARC SWAYZE: Before I went into the service I was a 9-to-5 employee on the art staff. As I was not freelancing, I did not pick up and deliver assignments, but received them from the editorial office down the hall. This was during the period when all offices were in the Paramount Building. All of the writing, to my knowledge, was freelanced from outside, the only exception being the new Captain Marvel stories that I wrote. Later, when I returned to New York in '44, I did freelance for a couple of months while working out arrangements to come back south, and I went into the offices once or twice a week. I wasn't particular about what the editors gave me, and I doubt if they were. I remember doing a Mr. Scarlet and a Prince Ibis and a one-pager featuring Mary Marvel promoting the paper conservation program at the time. Funny—I drew Mary just as I had in the beginning, and I'll bet she didn't look anything like she did in the stories of that period.

JOHN: I'm kind of curious about your service days, at least as they relate to your Fawcett work. Do you know who drew the Captain Marvel stories which you wrote while you were in the armed forces?

MARC: No. But I'm sure they were drawn in [C.C.] Beck's studio, which was supplying all the CM art at the time. Incidentally, Beck's shop was created while I was in the service. When I left Fawcett, Beck and I both worked at the editorial and executive offices located in the Paramount Building at Times Square. Despite some of the published stories to the contrary, I never worked for Beck. He was my friend, but never my superior.

JOHN: Did any of your fellow GIs ever catch on to what you were doing in your spare time and make any comments to you about it?

MARC: It wasn't a secret. And I don't recall anything ever being made out of it. As a matter of fact, now that I think about it, I wonder if the readers, or anybody, ever gave a thought to comics being written. Or drawn!

JOHN: Well, I wasn't born until 1947, but I recall that when I was reading comics as a child in the 1950s, I had this vague idea that someone had to be writing them, but had no notion at all that artists existed. I thought the whole thing was done mechanically somehow! Well, anyway, did you ever see any servicemen reading comics, especially Captain Marvel or any other Fawcetts?

MARC: Not often, if at all. I spent several months in an army hospital and a little of that time in the recreation rooms maintained by the Red Cross. There were usually a few servicemen lounging around reading. May have been comics. I believe there were statistics to the effect that comics were the major form of literature read by the military.

JOHN: That's what I'd always heard, which is why I was wondering. Well, here's a question which may be just a bit out of order, but also



Paper Doll

After returning to New York from military service in 1944, Marc Swayze recalls that one of his first jobs back as a civilian was illustrating a wartime paper conservation one-pager starring Mary Marvel—a panel from which is extracted here from the opening page of *Wow Comics* #28, Aug. 1944. [Shazam heroine TM & ©2011 DC Comics.]

Sons Of Thunder

Fawcett And Thor

by P.C. Hamerlinck

Booooom! The mighty Mjölnir of Thor had hammered its way into Golden Age comic books long before the thunder god of Norse legend flourished in the imminent epoch of Marveldom. These early manifestations included: Thor himself having bestowed his mystical powers upon an ordinary man to combat world strife within the pages of Fox's *Weird Comics*; later on, Kid Eternity summoning Thor to come to his aid in Quality's *Hit Comics*; and, in the next decade, in Charlton's *Out of This World*, Steve Ditko epitomizing Thor as a weak Scandinavian Viking boy who stumbled upon a cave (what is it about those caves?) and absorbed its interior luminous beams, which bequeathed him super-strength and a hammer-like weapon with magic lightning.

Fawcett Publications had likewise incorporated the god of thunder into an array of their comic book stories, including a bout between Captain Marvel and Thor—transpiring long before two stalwarts with those names would face off some 45 years later.

Warlock The Wizard Vs. Baron Gath *Nickel Comics* #1 (May 1940)

Warlock the Wizard raised the power of Thor to defeat vampire Baron Gath in the hero's 1940 debut. "Warlock" was drawn in the puerile yet delightfully enigmatic, anatomically-incorrect style of Alfred Newton—the same artist who left his mark on Fawcett's most disreputably prosaic and derivative super-hero: Master Man.

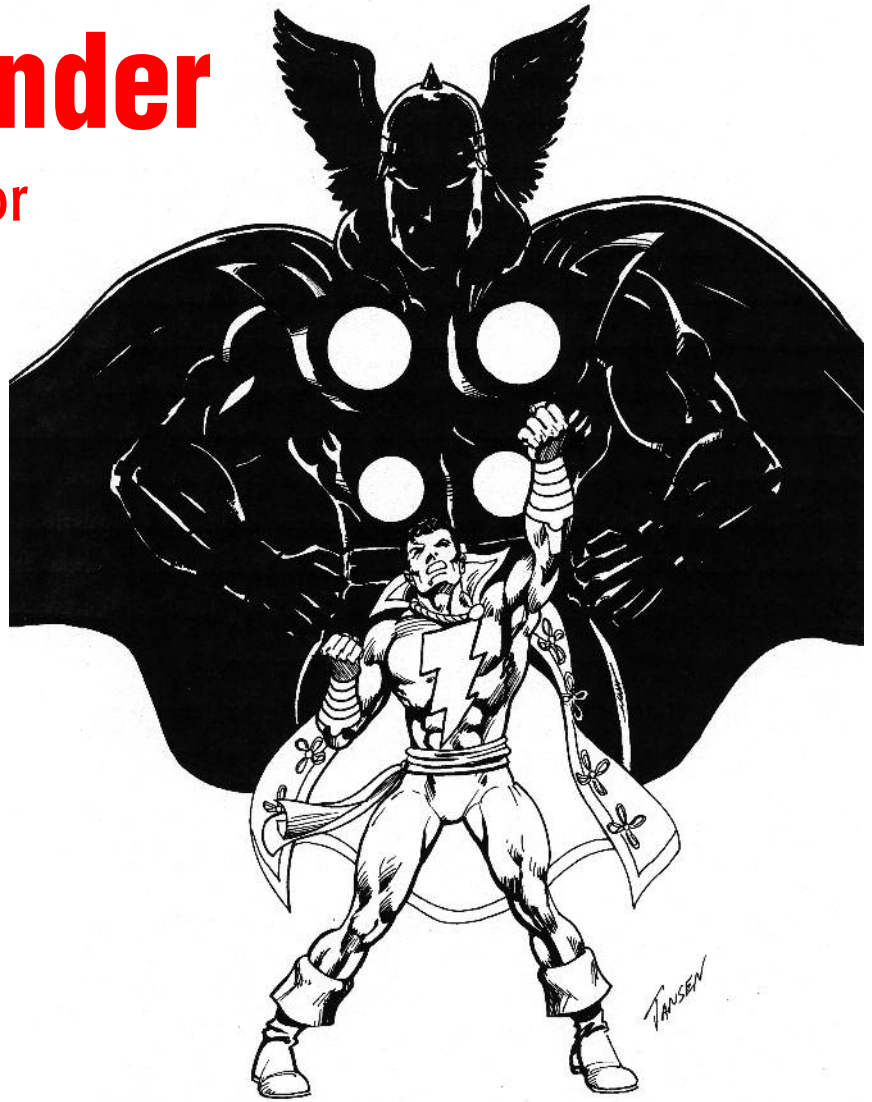
Actually, Warlock himself was somewhat imitative of Fawcett's very own Ibis the Invincible, who had premiered just three months earlier in the first issue of *Whiz Comics*.

Whereas Ibis battled evil with a wave of his "Ibistick," Warlock the Wizard instead displayed his "Golden Hand" (basically a fist-on-a-stick) and cried out a magic word (no, not "Shazam!" but "Abraxas!"), enabling the "last of the white magicians" to usher forth



Warlock The Wizard Vs. Baron Gath

[Warlock the Wizard TM & ©2011 respective copyright holder.]



Shazam!—The Norse Beginning

Artist Eric Jansen rendered this homage to Tom Mandrake's cover for *Shazam: The New Beginning* #1 (April-May 1987)—with a unique twist especially for this article. [Shazam hero TM & ©2011 DC Comics; Mighty Thor TM & ©2011 Marvel Comics.]

supernatural forces for crushing all the wickedness in the world. And, whereas Ibis had been accompanied by his partner, the exquisite Princess Taia, Warlock instead collaborated with an intelligent, talking, and telepathically-communicating pet raven named "Hugin." (Incidentally, the same name as of one of Odin's pair of information-gathering ravens.)

Hugin led the Wizard to a huge fortress where a damsel struggled to escape the wrath of Baron Gath. When Warlock displayed his Golden Hand and shouted his magic word, the fist opened up, enlarged, split (analogous to M.F. Enterprises' disembodied "Captain Marvel" from '66), and plucked the distressed woman from the vampire's grasp right before the giant hand slugged the blood-sucker in the jaw.

But Gath still held his former captive's father hostage in a castle imported straight from Transylvania. In the interim, Warlock and his Golden Hand stopped a werewolf and prevented two gargoyles from the castle's tower from coming to life (transforming one of them into a festive balloon!), while his reliable raven gobbled up gigantic spiders.

When his Golden Hand was stolen by a lizard, Warlock sent Hugin to fly over to his house and grab the "Lamp of the Gods." (Don't leave home without it!) The raven