

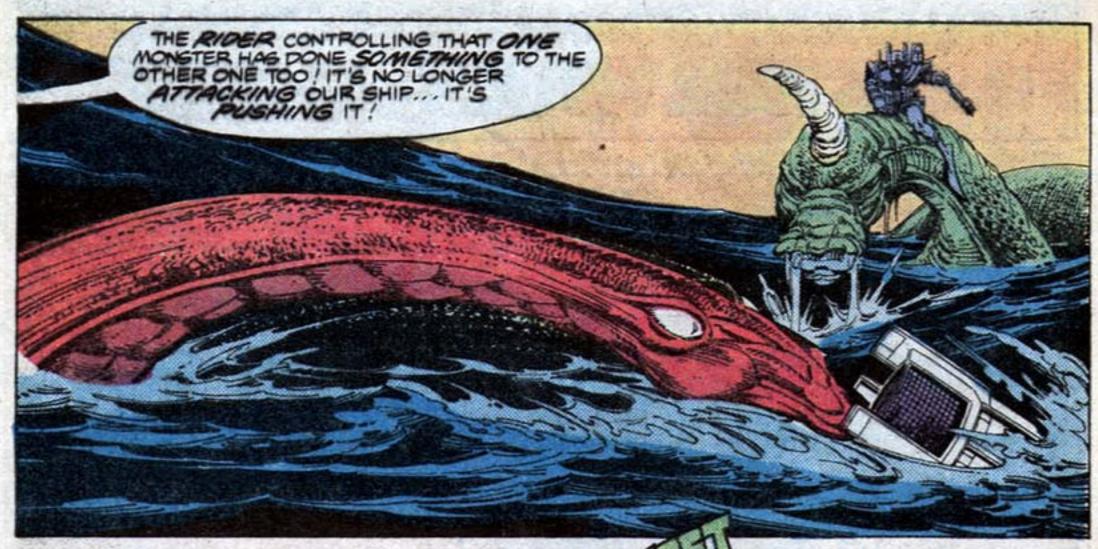
Long ago in a galaxy far, far away. . . there exists a state of cosmic civil war. A brave alliance of underground freedom fighters has challenged the tyranny and oppression of the awesome Galactic Empire. This is their story!

THE GREATEST Stan Lee PACE FANTASY OF ALL!

CONTINUING THE SAGA BEGUN IN THE FILM BY GEORGE LUCAS RELEASED BY TWENTIETH CENTURY FOX.



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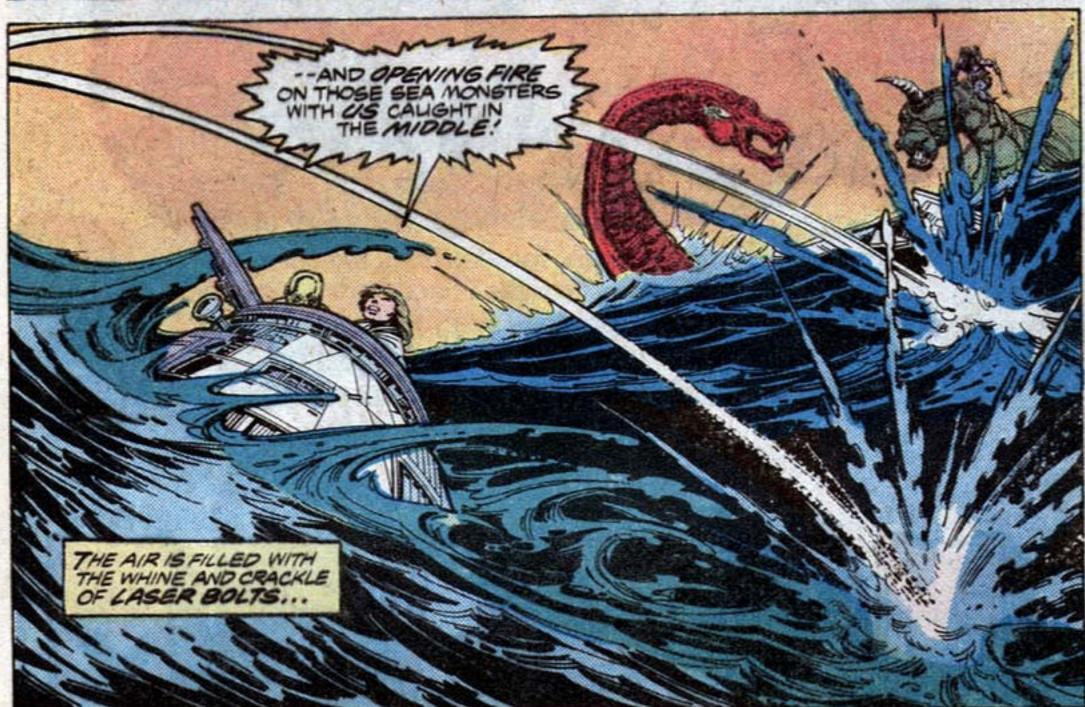




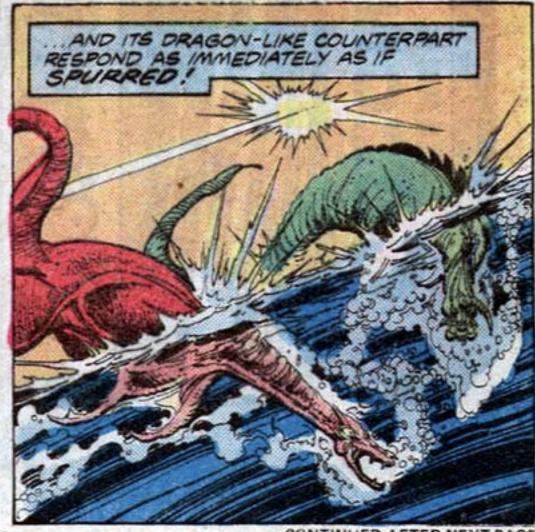




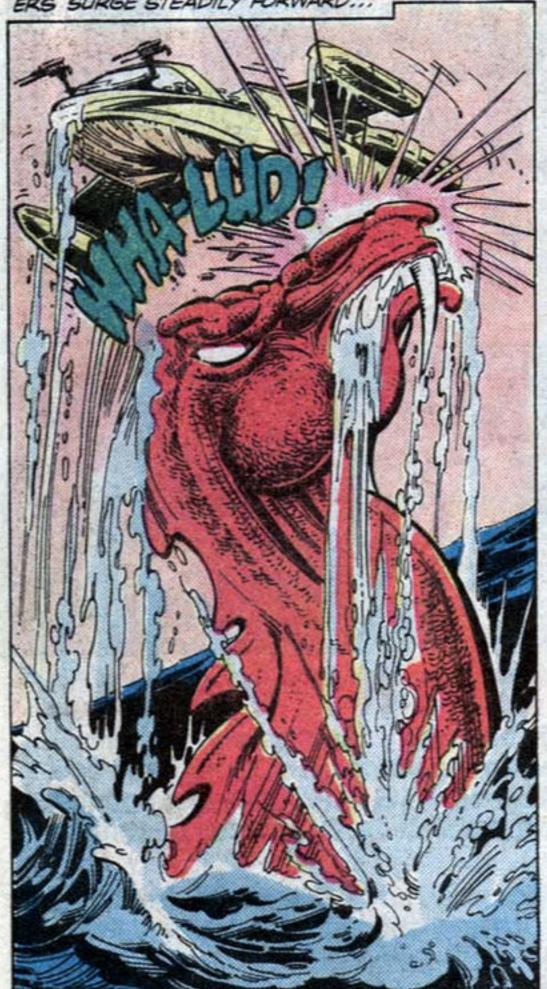






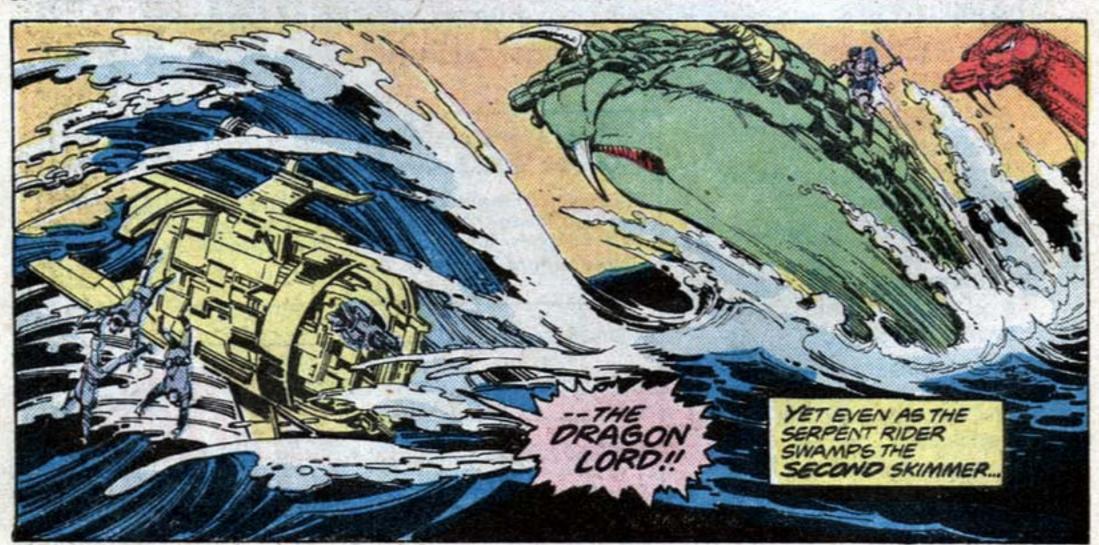


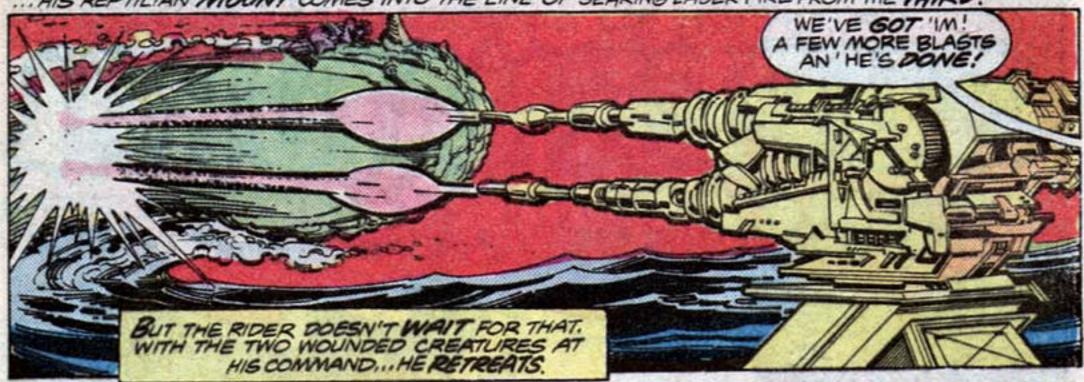
FOR A MOMENT, THEY ARE LOST IN THE WINE-DARK DEPTHS. THEN, AS THEIR ARMED ATTACK-ERS SURGE STEADILY FORWARD...





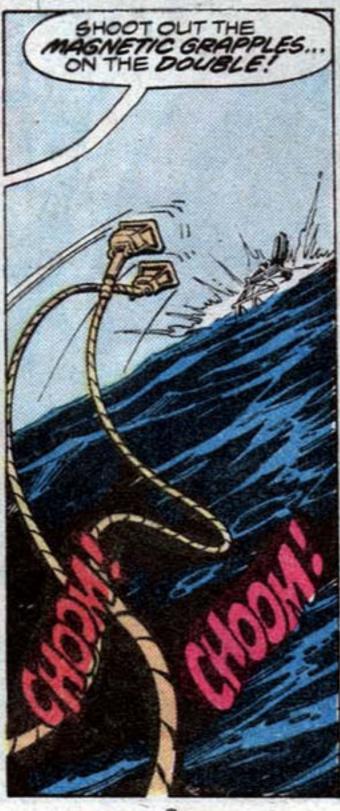






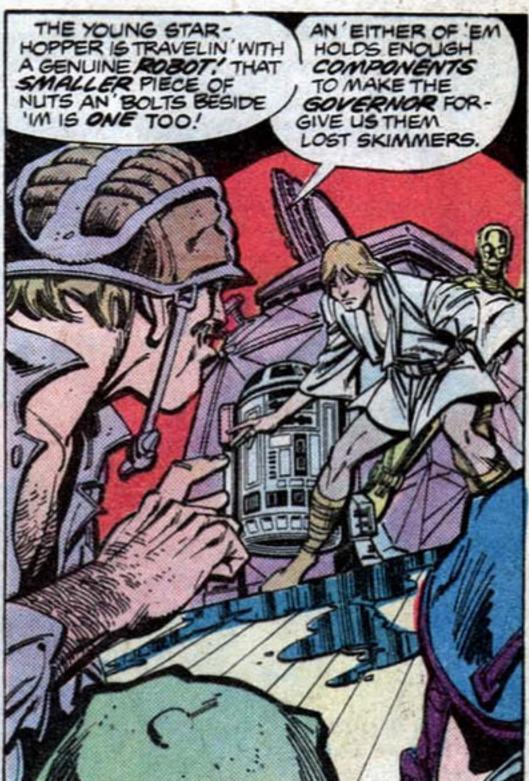












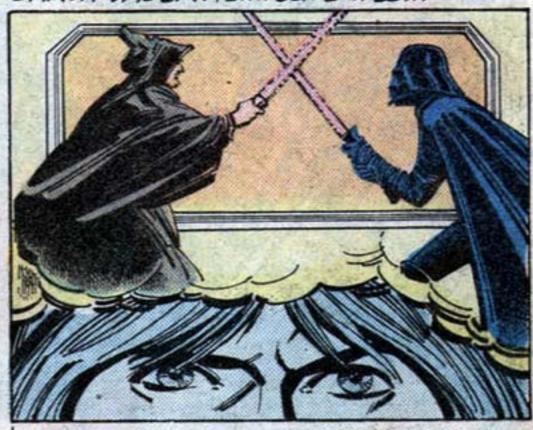




JEDI! EVEN IN THIS MOMENT OF DANGER, LUKE THRILLS TO THE WORD... AND WISHES IT WAS TRUE. WISHES THAT LIKE HIS FATHER, WHOSE SABER HE WIELDS, AND LIKE OB! WAN KENOBI, THE MAN WHO TRAINED HIM...



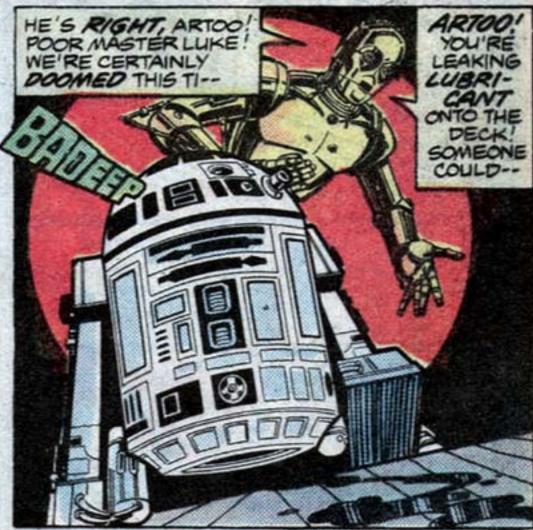
"...BEN KENOBI WAS THE LAST OF THAT PROUD LINE. AND HE HAD BARELY STARTED TEACHING ME ABOUT THE FORCE WHEN HE FELL DUELING DARTH VADER. YET... SOMETIMES...

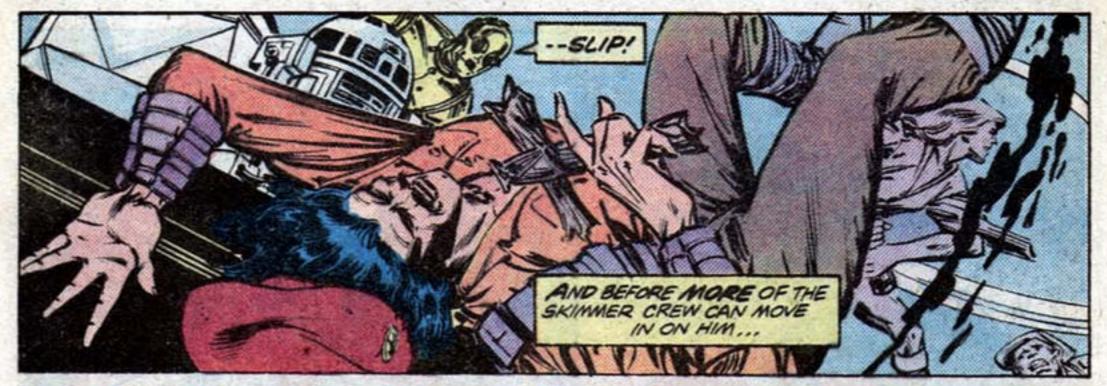


"... I STILL FEEL AS IF HE'S WITH ME. "







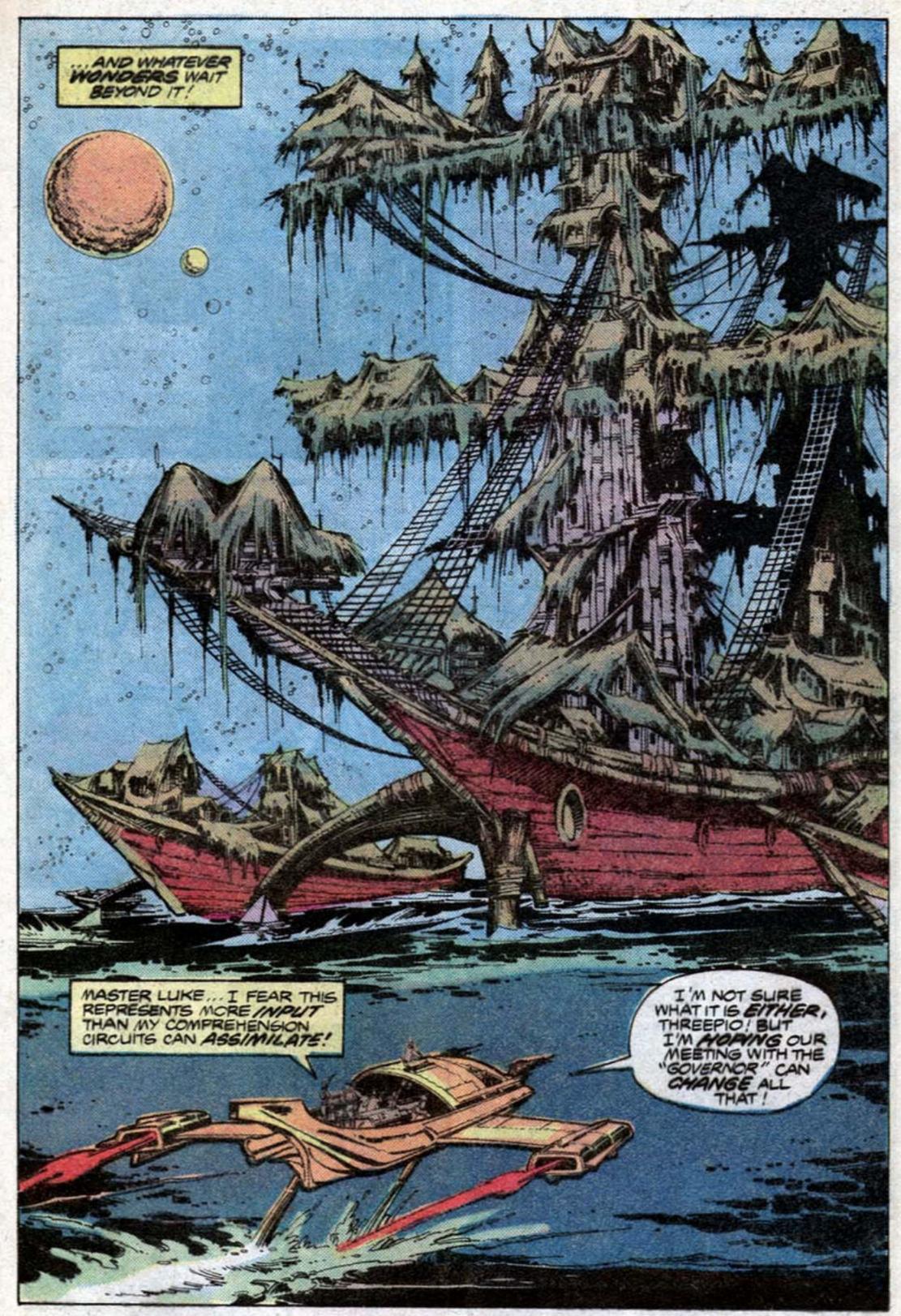


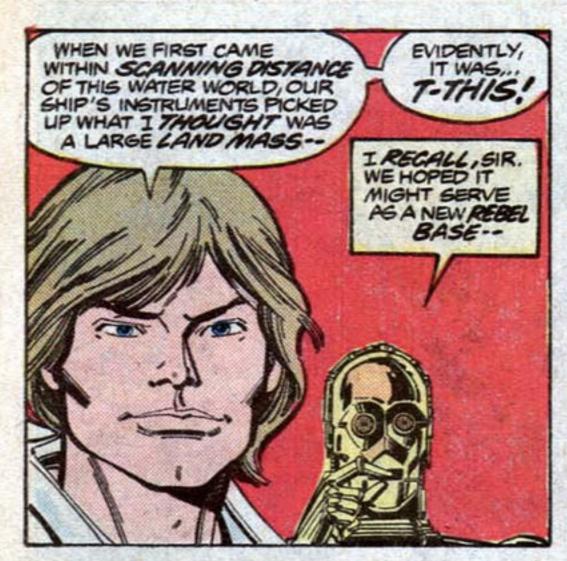






















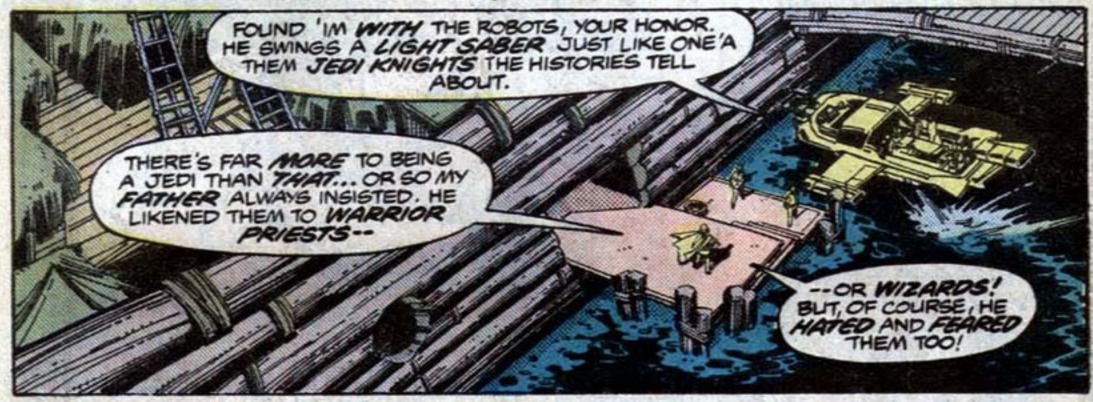




GOVERNOR QUARG, YOU'D

BETTER HEAR ME OUT

BEFORE YOU DECIDE

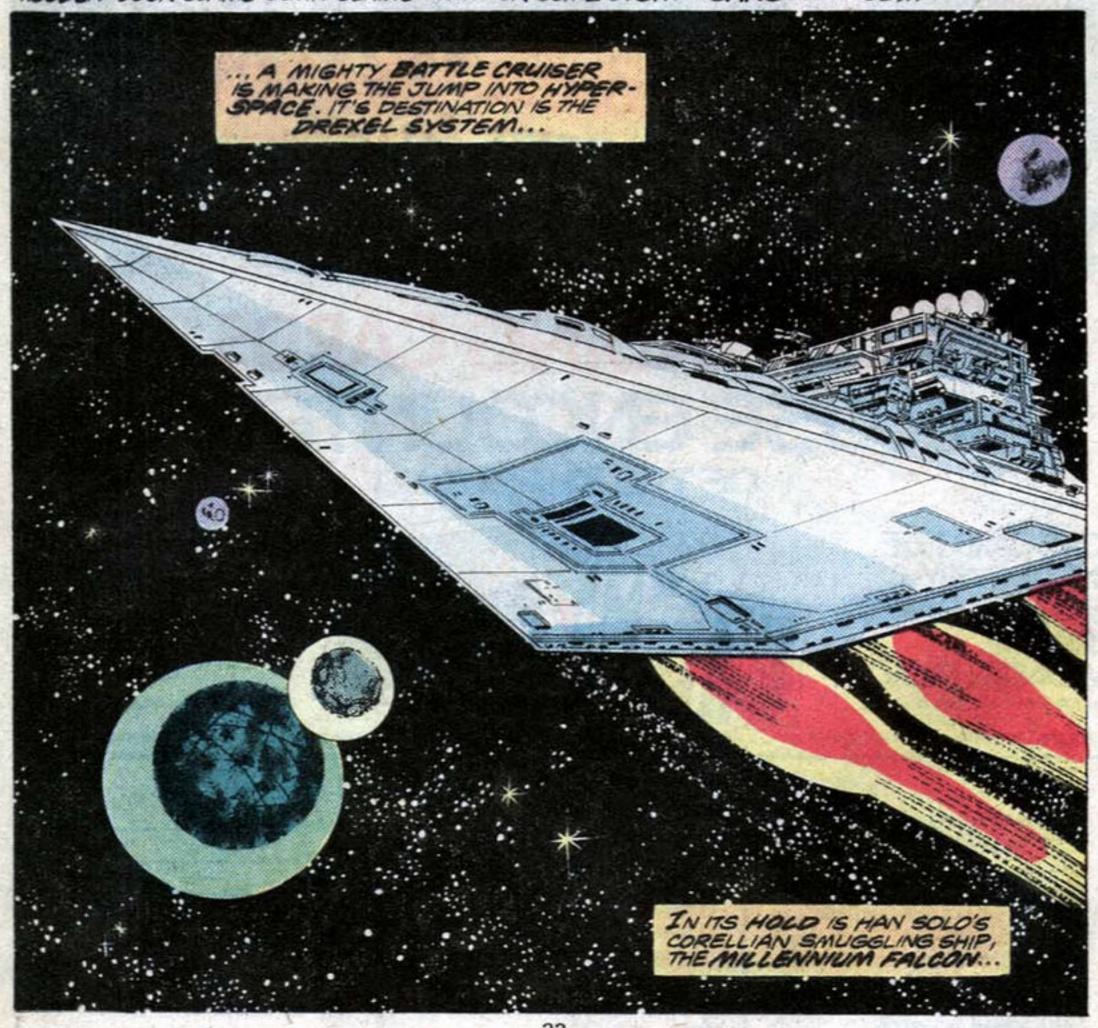


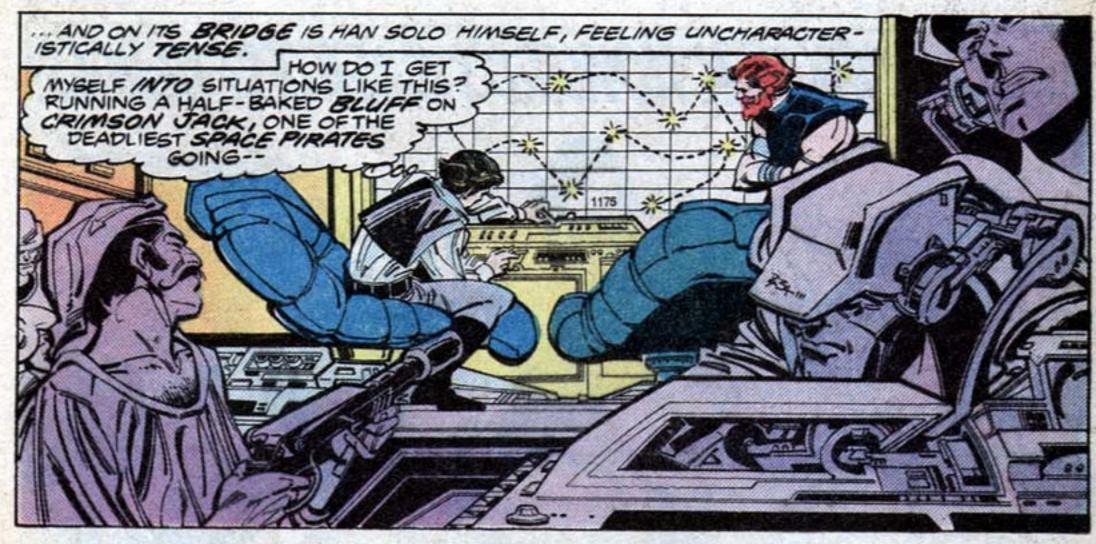






AND CURIOUSLY ENOUGH, THAT WISH IS NOT SO FAR-FETCHED AS LUKE FEELS AS THE GREAT WOODEN DOOR SLAMS DOWN BEHIND HIM. FOR SOME LIGHT YEARS DISTANCE ...







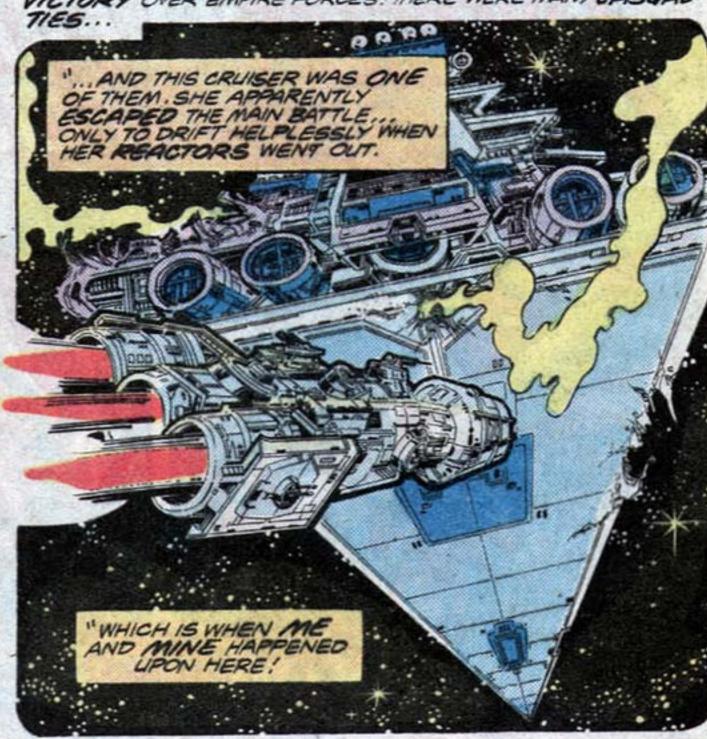








"BY BEING IN THE RIGHT PLACE AT THE RIGHT TIME, SOLO..., SHORTLY AFTER THE REBEL ALLIANCE WON THEIR FIRST BIG VICTORY OVER EMPIRE FORCES. THERE WERE MANY CASUAL-



"THEY MANAGED TO PUT A TRIO OF TIE FIGHTERS INTO DESPERATE ACTION AGAINST US ...



"THE EARLIER COMBAT HAD TAKEN OUT MOST OF HER CREW. WE BOARDED TO LIGHT RESISTANCE, INTENDING TO SCAVAGE AND RUN. THEN I STARTED NOTICING...















MARVEL BULLPEN BULLETINS

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STAN'S SOAPBOX

It's a funny thing- not "ha ha" funny, but kind of odd-no matter what part of the country I visit, the questions asked on college campuses are pretty much the same. One querulous query I'm hit with constantly is "How come Marvel is always bringing out new titles when you guys have so much trouble producing the old ones on time?" Okay, to save you the trouble of laying it on me sometime in the future, I'll try to illuminate this burning issue here and now. Y'know, if we were just interested in doing things the easy way, we'd never change our mags. We'd just keep publishing the same titles all the time. After all, why not? They sell pretty well. We know how to do 'em. They're nice and safe and don't pose too many problems. So, how come we're always tossing new titles, new heroes, and new concepts at you? Why knock ourselves out designing an issue of CLOSE ENCOUNTERS, doing the life story of THE BEATLES, coming up with MACHINE MAN, adding SPIDER-WOMAN to our merry menage of costurned cavorters? Is it because we're never satisfied unless we have too much work to do? Is it because we're gluttons for punishment? Is it 'cause we're nuts? Probably! But mainly it's because of you, kiddo! You, and the limitless legions of Marveldom Assembled who bombard us with hundreds of letters a week demanding new books, new characters, and new ideas! If a few weeks go by without something unexpected and different issuing forth from the mighty Marvel fantasy factory, you accuse us of not doing right by you, of lying down on the job, or of growing soft and indolent! But it's not your fault. It's the age we live in. Look at TVnew shows cropping up all the time as old ones are dropped and reshuffled. Each month the public (and that's you and me, Charliel) gets more and more jaded, more demanding of new products, new surprises, new types of entertainment. The whole pace of life, all over the world, seems to be speeding up. We seek more books, more movies, more games, more cars- we want more of everything, and we want it faster and faster! But fear thee not, O Faithful One! Let not a single wrinkle of apprehension furrow thy noble brow! As you can see, we're trying to give you the

best of both worlds. We're keeping the world-famous Marvel line-up as intact as possible, so that you can enjoy your favorites month in and month out without interruption-while, at the same time, we've got dozens of brand new projects on the drawing board-new themes, new titles, new plans and ideas! After all, our own writers and artists are just like you! While they still enjoy the Marvel roster of the world's best-selling super-heroes, they too wanna sink their teeth into exciting new and different projects! And that's it! That's the reason for all the new stuff, even though it gives us deadline nightmares! We're doing it for you- and we're doing it for us! Some new features will succeed, and some will fall by the wayside- your guess is as good as ours. But that's what makes for excitement, and rememberexcitement's the name of the game. So bear with us, hear? No matter what the future brings, we promise it won't be duli!

Excelsion

Stan

As this column was being prepared, we were shocked by the unexpected death of John Verpoorten. He worked at Marvel for nearly twelve years, the last seven of them as our Production Manager. To those of you who read our books, his name may not be quite so familiar as those of our regular artists and writers, but among working professionals probably no one outside of Stan himself represented Marvel more. A Production Manager stands at the center of things. He oversees the flow of work as it moves from artist to writer to letterer to colorist and on to the engraver and printer, and he tries to make certain that all this happens something like on schedule. Amid the collective craziness that is the Marvel style, this can be an almost impossible task. The testimony

to John is not that he did the impossible, but that he did it with warmth, with humor, and with understanding. Having started in the field as an artist— older fans will remember his inking on such strips as the FANTASTIC FOUR, the INHUMANS, and CAPTAIN AMERICA—may have left John with more tolerance and appreciation of all the many problems that can befall anyone producing comic books at any step of the way. Certainly, there are few staffers or freelancers for

JOHN VERPOORTEN 1940—1977

whom at one time or another he didn't bend a rule, make an exception, or go out on a limb. This wasn't a job requirement or any kind of a necessity, but it made Marvel a better place to work and ultimately probably made the work produced by Marvel better as well. Like most of us in comics, John sometimes got tired, and sometimes grew cynical. But never so tired that a bit of office horseplay or silliness couldn't make him smile, and not so cynical that a welldrawn page or a well-produced book wouldn't make him look with interest. Whether he was inclined to admit it or not, John cared; about comics, and about the people he knew and dealt with in producing them. And in the end, of all the things we'll miss about John, it's the caring we'll miss most.

MARVEL COMICS PRESENTS THE OFFICIAL ADAPTATION OF THE COLUMBIA PICTURES FILM BY STEVEN SPIELBERG

CLOSE ENCOUNTERS THIRD KIND!

MARVEL COMICS SUPER SPECIAL BY ARCHIE GOODWIN, WALT

IN FULL COLOR FOR ONLY \$150 - NOW ON SALE!



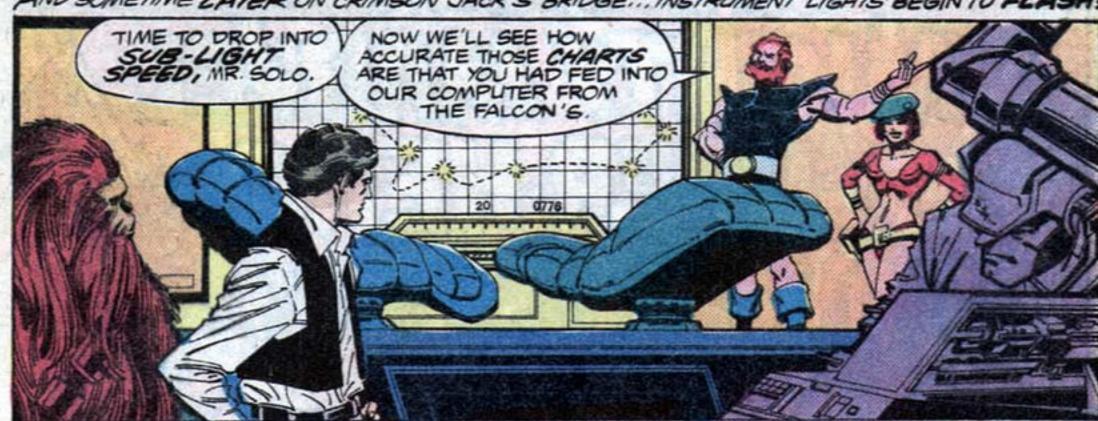


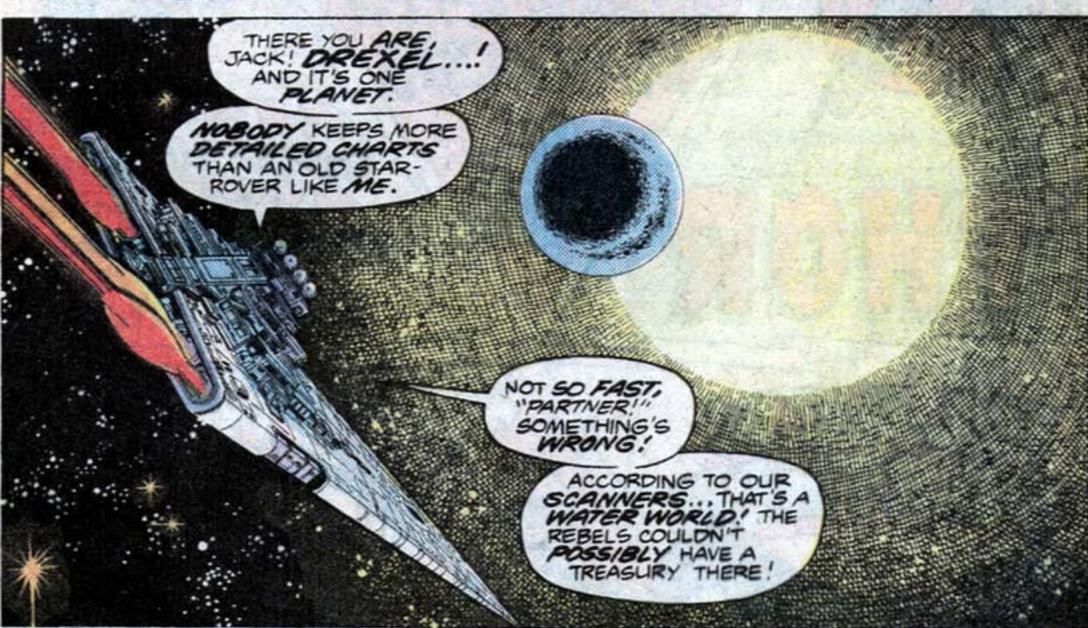




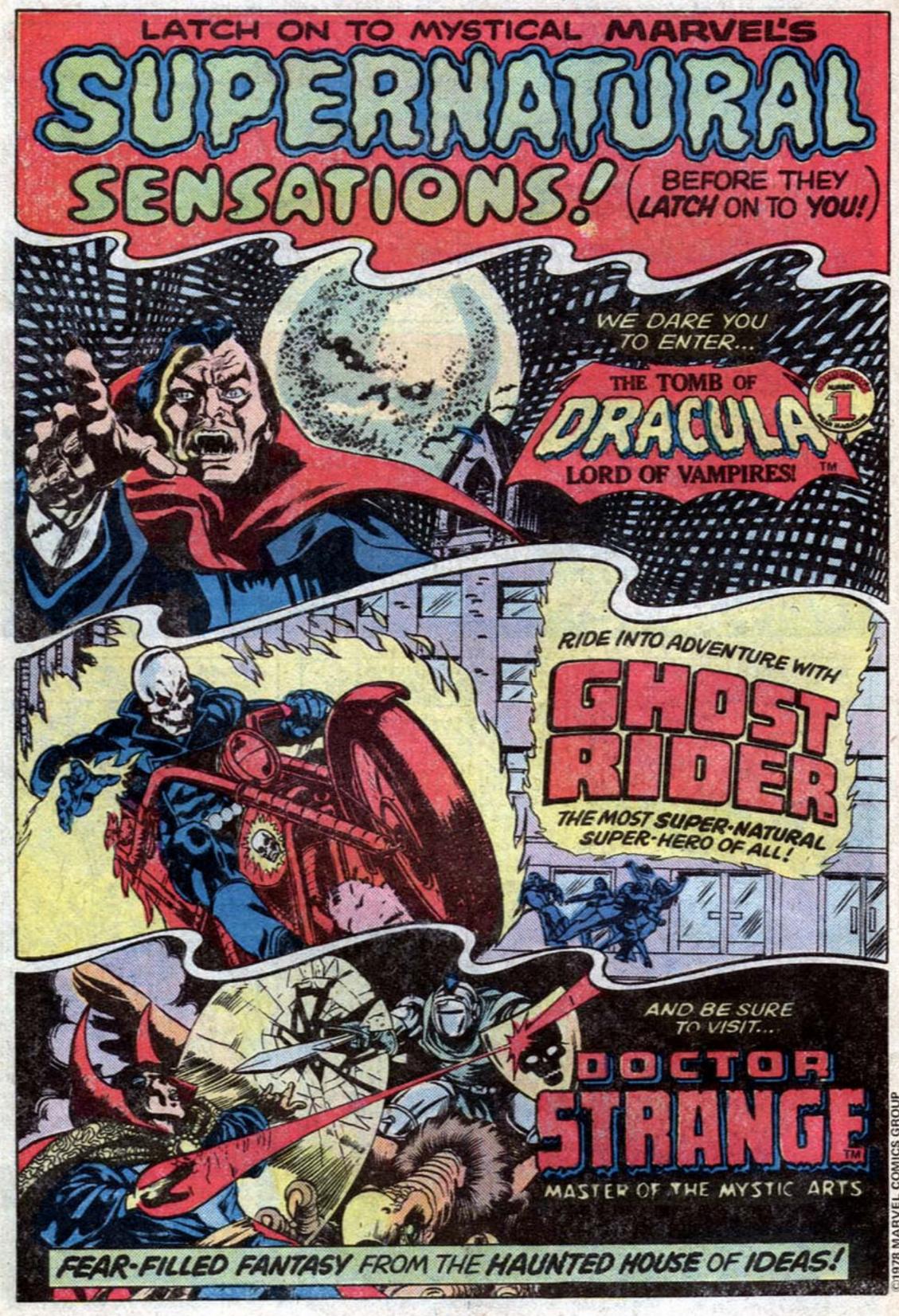
MEANWHILE, IN THE COCKPIT OF THE MILLENNIUM FALCON, AT REST IN THE CRUISER'S HOLD, A CERTAIN ONE HUNDRED YEAR OLD WOOKIEE FINISHES HIS ASSIGNED TASK...











1978 MARVEL COMICS GROUF



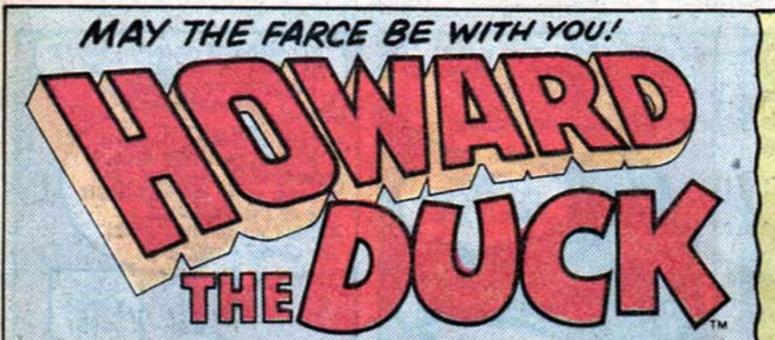
THE EVER-LOVIN' BLUE-EYED

TEAMS-UP WITH A NEW GUEST STAR EACH MONTH IN

MARVEL TWO-IN-ONE.

DON'T MISS THE
ACTION AND THE
SENSES-SHATTERING
EXCITEMENT-BROUGHT TO YOU BY
ROGER SLIFER
AND
RON WILSON!





TRAPPED IN A WORLD HE NEVER MADE!

"HOWARD IS A
CONTEMPORARY,
HE REFLECTS THE
READER'S ANGER
AND FRUSTRATION
AND, MAYBE MOST
OF ALL HIS SENSE
OF IMPOTENCE,
THE FEELING THAT
NO MATTER WHAT
YOU DO, THINGS'LL
KEEP ON GETTING
WORSE."

-- Stan Lee

FROM PLAYBOY
TO THE VILLAGE
VOICE, EVERYBODY
IS TALKING ABOUT
HOWARD! BUT
STEVE GERBER
AND GENE COLAN
KEEP PRODUCING
THIS MONTHLY
DOSE OF MADNESS,
ANYWAY!

AND NOW A MESSAGE FROM BEVERLY SWITZLER...



GET DOWN, AMERICA!

DOESN'T FEATURE THE
DAILY HOWARD COMIC STRIP,
CONTACT THE PAPER'S
FEATURE EDITOR RIGHT
NOW! DEMAND YOUR DUCK!
THANK YOU.

"PIANO" --STEVE GERBER

PICK UP HOWARD'S LATEST ADVENTURE ON SALLS





THE STRANGE WORLDS of EDGAR RICE BURROUGHS!

IT'S A TRUE YOU WILL MEVER FORGET!





