

sands cosmic slugfests. Sound and fury signifying nothing.

Midnight Sons:

(new horror/mystic oriented line of comics within the Marvel Comics line)

Trading on the popularity of Ghost Rider, (a demonic motorcyclist and self-proclaimed spirit of vengeance) Marvel is tying together books and characters both new (Hellstorm, Nightstalkers, Morbius, etc.) and old (the venerable Doctor Strange, Sorcerer Supreme) in an interconnected subgroup of series called "Midnight Sons". It's just a superficial makeover, and most of the Midnight Sons books remain shallow, simplistic tales hinging on excessive violence, hideous bad guys and an attempt at fostering a dark, nasty atmosphere. Many of the books (particularly Ghost Rider and its many spin-offs) are just dark alleys leading nowhere.

Avengers/X-Men 30th anniversaries:

(related ongoing series include Avengers, Avengers West Coast, X-Men, and Uncanny X-Men, as well as countless spin-offs and tie-ins)

Writer Bob Harras and artists Steve Epting and Tom Palmer have single-handedly revitalized the stagnating Avengers title, which for years has suffered from the absence of characterization, and a general lack of direction. Harras and company have restored to Avengers such integral elements as characterization, continuity, and suspense, as well as some fine imaginative plotting and interesting takes on new and old characters. Avengers is currently the gem of super team comics again, and the Avengers West Coast ongoing companion series is currently enjoying competent writing, excellent art, and an attractive line-up of characters. Also look for neat tie-ins like Avengers:Terminatrix Objective (a lushly detailed time travel mini-series), a gorgeous commemorative poster by George Perez, and a crossover with the X-Men resolving, among other things, the evil Magneto's designs on his kids, Quicksilver and Scarlet Witch, and Quicksilver's offspring Luna (not to mention the love triangle betwixt Quicksilver, his estranged wife Crystal and the Black Knight). As for X-Men and its related titles, it seems that, apart from the Avengers crossover, we can expect more of the same old mutant angst and recycled plotlines whether or not it's their 30th anniversary.

That's all for this week. It's only a tiny sampling and is limited to the two major companies, but in the weeks to come we'll be covering some of these books in more depth and taking a look at other ongoing series and new releases from a variety of publishers, including Star Trek:Deep Space Nine, The Golden Age, Eclipso, Catwoman, Aquaman, Robin, Spawn, The Outsiders, Thunderstrike, Guardians of the Galaxy, New Warriors, and many more. See you in the funny papers.

SEAN MCQUAID



The Movie Review 65 minutes in the Making...

Do not attempt to adjust your newspaper. I am controlling the horizontal. I am controlling the vertical. I am making tired jokes. I am speaking in the first person...

Aw, enough of that. Welcome back to the only B- movie column on campus, Turkey Dinner. Just so there's no confusion, THIS IS NOT A COOKING COLUMN!!!! When I did this gig last year some people passed it by, apparently mistaking Captain America for some new kind of mixed drink and reading The Lawnmower Man as a cannibalistic new way of looking at landscaping. We'll not make fun of them for it. Much.

You Frosh out there, looking so... so... stupid in your white beanies, are probably not familiar with my manic scripture, so let me fill you in. Each week [that I get around to it] I brave the dim reaches of the video stores for hidden treasure. I am an adventurer. See, it's really easy to pick a recent release off the shelf, or to find something with a favourite star in it. But that's too simple for me. So I pass right by the glowing new video cases, past the cardboard stand-ups and the wrinkled posters for new tapes, past the sign that says "Abandon All Hope, Ye Who Enter Here". I trek into the mostly uncharted wilderness that is (Gasp!) Back Stock. I scan for the one tape among the many that deserves to be freed from its long stay in cassette purgatory...

It takes a while to find the truly excellent. Too often mediocrity is your reward for taking a chance on an older tape.

A good rule of thumb: If someone has written "Rent Me" in the dust on the slip cover, it's usually a good idea to stay far away.

But if you've got a friend who knows his way around the racks, you can find treasure for the taking. A great movie that missed the public's eye, or something so beautifully awful you can't help but laugh and wonder how anyone could be so dumb. And that's why I'm here. To be that friend. So pull out your machete, limber up the whip and don your battered old felt hat, 'cause by GOD we're gonna have us some dumb fun tonight!

Ahem. The first movie we will look at this year is a thankfully little known import called Lion Man. This boffo fun flick comes to our shores from Turkey. That's right, guys: A turkey (bad movie) from Turkey (a country) in Turkey Dinner (a column where I get to lip off!!) Can someone out there give me the odds on a triple gobbler?

(I won't play off the turkey thing often, but I thought it would be important to get it out of the way, and this seemed a golden opportunity.)

It's easy to miss the plot in Lion Man. There's this Moorish king (Costner fans know which minority I mean) named Solomon who has just won a bloody battle against some vaguely evil duke character. Being super-fertile, he knocks up both his wife and the duke's. Just as the good king's wife goes into labour, the castle is attacked, and the king killed (his hands are chopped off as he holds a gate closed). His sacrifice allows his wife the time to get far enough away from the castle to drop the kid, give it to her loyal servant, and die. Loyal Servant hides the kid and distracts the pursuing enemies, but when he comes back for the amazingly quiet baby, it has been carried off by (big surprise) lions.

Confused? It's worse if you watch the movie. All of the above plot happens in the first five minutes or so, with absolutely no explanations as to what's going on, and has little bearing on the rest of the movie anyway.

Flash-forward about twenty years. The bad guy's cheeks are starting to spread from all that
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