



Thor by Walter Simonson Vol. 1 (Thor

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Collects Thor #337-345.

Few people have ever left their mark on one character quite the way Walter Simonson has. His work on The Mighty Thor swept the Norse God of Thunder to heights never before seen and rarely achieved in his wake. Spanning epic tales of heroism and treachery, love and war, Simonson's work is often considered the definitive Thor. From the majesty and mystery of fabled Asgard to the gritty streets of New York City, Thor was never the same. That is the mark of a true visionary. This first volume begins the collection of Simonson's epic run - completely remastered from the original artwork and newly colored by Steve Oliff!

Thor by Walter Simonson Vol. 1 (Thor Details

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From Reader Review Thor by Walter Simonson Vol. 1 (Thor for online ebook

Paul says

So many a reviewer will agree in saying that Walt Simonson's run on The Mighty Thor contained epic arcs that rival those of Jack Kirby and Stan Lee. Other reviews may suggest that Simonson's attention to detail and the ready hybrid of actual Norse with the classic Marvel contemporary super hero mythology made for a mix that surpassed the Lee/Kirby originals.

Whereas that may be a cyclical, unending debate, what is non-debatable is the fact that this collection of Simonson's initial run on The Mighty Thor is a bargain. Finding the original issues contained may be a challenge, subsequently making this collection essential. The initial introduction of Beta Ray Bill, the re-introduction of several key characters to Thor's mythology (Surtur, Ragnarok, and newcomer Kurse), and the exclusion of Thor's human alter-ego, Donald Blake make this a cornerstone in the comic's history.

Gavin says

The beginning of the Simonson Saga. Not as strong as other volumes, but a great start nonetheless, in setting up all the action to follow. Great art, storytelling, and classic pacing add up to a winner, and a great place to start Thor.

Brad says

Thor Visionaries Volume One covers one of the greatest periods in Thor's little corner of the Marvel Universe, issues #337-#348. I read them when they first came out, and they are all packed away in mylar bags and comic boxes in my office. I was pretty stoked to have them all in this Graphic Omnibus edition, and for the most part they didn't disappoint. Here are my highs, mediums and lows.

Thor Visionaries: Top Ten -- The Awesomeness

1. Balder the Brave – The best story arc of the Omnibus, we see Balder gone to seed after a horrible experience in Hel. He was killed by Loki, banished to Hel, and met all of those he had ever killed in battle while being tormented by demons. It leaves him a husk of a god, and once he is in the land of the living he avows pacifism. The path back to the sword, which is also, interestingly enough, his path back to vitality and life, is the one part of the twelve comics I most looked forward to.

2. Lorelei – Super hotty, especially for a teenager who loved red heads. Even if she's mere pencils and ink, she's scorching. And I always kind of wanted Thor to stay under the spell of her love potion.

3. Thor – Pretty cool for a big, violent dumb ass. Still don't know how being big, dumb and tough makes you worthy to wield Mjolnir, but then I'm not Odin.

4. Odin – I didn't remember his omnipresence, but it was an excellent surprise. Odin was actually a pretty

cool character, and I liked the way that he didn't always serve as a *deus ex machina*. He was as vulnerable as the next god -- almost.

5. The Clark Kent Cameo – Silly, and a whole lot of fun, especially with Lois giving him shit for his clumsiness.

6. Reinforcement of Why I <3 Samuel L. Jackson – Of all the changes Mark Millar made to the Marvel Universe, specifically to the Avengers and SHIELD, turning Nick Fury into a bad-ass-Sam Jackson-clone, thus dropping his crusty and clichéd WWII persona, was a stroke of genius. Nick Fury was lame back in my day. Today, he could righteously stand up and tell the Hulk to “Go the Fuck to Sleep,” and I bet the Hulk would listen.

7. Multiple storylines – Simonson's greatest storytelling strength was his ability to juggle multiple storylines without short changing any. He kept the pace cooking, kept us interested in everything, and had an eye for a long term story. For instance, the opening frames of #337 show the arms of Surtur forging his sword. We see him for twelve straight issues before that little storyline has come to fruition. It is present as prologue. And the last frames of the last comic we see? Surtur ready to kick ass. Very cool.

8. Malekith – Bad ass villain. I even named a half-elf in D&D after him, although my wizard didn't have the multi-toned skin of Malekith.

9. Loved the Secret Wars panel – There's this cool blank space left in #341 with three missing panels, which show the Avengers on the way to the Beyonder's *Secret War*. You could cut out the panel from somewhere else and paste it in your comic. I bought extras at the time so I could do that (I know, I know). But they provide the real panels in the appendix here. Fun.

10. Walt Simonson's Art – There's a sixties nostalgia to Simonson's eighties art that always appealed to me. The goddesses, Sif and Lorelei, look like a pair of gorgeous, buxom movie stars, the sort Hitchcock would have cast in his films (nothing like the inhuman buxomness of the nineties), and there is an unfinished quality to his pencils that adds real texture to his section of the Marvel Universe.

Thor Visionaries: Middle Five -- The Blah-ness

11. Beta Ray Bill – I remembered Beta Ray Bill with such fondness that when I saw him on the cover locked in combat with Thor, I just had to buy the graphic novel. Oh! what a difference twenty years make. The Ballad of Beta Ray Bill section of this omnibus was soooooo boring. I wanted to like it, but now I just feel a little stupid for ever having loved it. It was okay, I guess, but a bit much considering its primary purpose seemed to be getting Thor out of his mortal Dr. Donald Blake form.

12. From Donald Blake to Sigurd Jarlson – Not sure this ever really needed to happen, but whatever ... Simonson got to make Thor look like a big Viking beefcake in a t-shirt and tight pants, so some wish fulfillment must have been at work. At least it led us to today and Chris Hemsworth in a t-shirt and tight pants in the film. Silver lining.

13. Sif – She's okay, but pretty damn fickle and pretty damn thick. But hey, she can overlook Beta Ray Bill's ugliness, so that's something.

14. Superman Secret Identity Idiocy – So suddenly Thor is Sigurd. Nick Fury throws a pair of big geeky glasses on him, and Simonson instantly sees that the glasses hiding Thor are as stupid as the glasses hiding

Superman, so he pokes fun at it by having a bunch of folks almost make the connection between the big blonde Norseman and Thor, but not quite (one guy figures Sigurd must be Spidey). Good on him for recognizing the idiocy, but it is handled pretty poorly.

15. Surtur and Twilight – The presence of Surtur throughout is cool, but I was bummed when the last comic collected in this Omnibus culminated in Surtur's escape from exile. That's where I wanted to start, not finish.

Thor Visionaries: Bottom Eight -- The Crapness

16. Not Enough Loki – Where was he? Sure he shows up once in a while to meddle, but he wasn't nearly meddlesome enough, and apart from a little nudging of Lorelei in her quest for Thor's love, Loki spent most of his time messing with Balder the Brave.

17. Fafnir the Dragon – This jackass looks like a pugilistic Godzilla.

18. Simonson's Idiotic Time Keeping – The major downfall in Simonson's storytelling is his inability to make time work. His narrative is all over the place when it comes to time. We see days pass in one thread and minutes pass in another, but they are presented as though they are simultaneous. It's a minor complaint, really, because comics can be forgiven time lapses, but it pulled me out of the moment more than once.

19. Fafnir the Dragon – Could this big Jurassic Park reject just shut the hell up?!

20. Not Enough Warriors Three – Volstagg, Fandral and Hogun are too cool to be barely seen. But there was less of them than Loki.

21. Fafnir the Dragon – So Fafnir is out destroying the poor areas of New York, and he's yelling for Thor (who is off in Antarctica), and the television news crews are wondering where Thor is, and I'm wondering where the hell everyone else is? Where's Spidey? The rest of the Avengers? Daredevil? Fantastic Four? Even Sub-Mariner? Silliness.

22. Fafnir the Dragon – Did I mention this dragon sucked?

23. Fafnir the Dragon – Oh yeah, and Fafnir the Dragon. Lamest Thor villain ever!

k.wing says

Let's just make one thing clear: I DO NOT rate/think barely any comics warrant a 5-star rating. And this did.

Walter Simonson is a fabulous writer - each character's voice was unique (loved the Nick Fury/Thor foil of language especially), and the humor was perfectly placed. What I appreciated most about this volume and Simonson's narrative was how minor characters- who are initially narrated as weak or flawed- become an important piece of the story, and although weak, he is able to show the true stuff he is made of in a single (or multiple) acts of sheer bravery and will. My favorite example of this is the side story of Balder the Brave. In one section, Balder meets up with the fates and is taught a beautifully crafted and illustrated story about how his life is connected to others, no matter how much he would like to separate himself from others in life and in death. And although he is constantly reminding himself of his many failures, a man of his goodness cannot

ever deny doing good deeds for others. It was breathtaking. And on the other hand, how our obvious victors (Thor, Odin, other gods, etc.) are not the deepest characters but are shown with their flaws.

I highly recommend this book for all comic book lovers, especially anyone who is interested in Thor.

Doctor Doom says

Having recently suffered through stories containing unworthy Thor and bat-crazy Odin it is refreshing to once more embrace the concept of noble Odin and worthy Thor. One unworthy reviewing the book called himself a comic nerd but didn't even know of the 60 second rule [from the earliest days of Marvel's Thor] concerning Thor's contact with Mjolnir and said he couldn't even finish the book... really? Wonder if he missed the wonderful cameo of a certain reporter from Metropolis delightfully given in this volume. WHOSOEVER HOLDS THIS HALLOWED VOLUME, IF HE BE WORTHY, SHALL POSSESS THE THRILL OF READING A WORTHY STORY OF THOR"

Helmut says

DAS ist Thor!

Wer chronologisch die Abenteuer Thors miterlebt hat, oder sich beispielsweise vor diesem Band die Essentials von Marvel gelesen hat (was sehr empfehlenswert ist!), wird hier sein blaues Wunder erleben. Simonson hat Thor praktisch neu erfunden - weg ist die Pseudoidentität Don Blake, die eh nur für melodramatische Herzschmerz-Seitenstories diente, weg ist dieses schmierige Pathos, das den 70er-Jahre-Thor teilweise unlesbar machte. Simonsons Thor ist nicht mehr in erster Linie ein Mitglied der Avengers, der Polizeiarbeit macht, sondern er führt ihn zurück zu seinen Ursprüngen - Thor ist der Sohn Odins, ein Gott, die Quintessenz mystischer Helden! Sowohl in den atemberaubenden Zeichnungen, die vor Kraft und Energie sprühen und einen praktisch auf jeder Seite neu mit ihrer Wucht überraschen, als auch im Skript, das genau den richtigen Ton trifft und Thor endlich nicht mehr wie einen arroganten pseudo-Hamlet herumschnöseln lässt.

Kein typischer Superheldencomic, da Simonson Thor zumindest in diesem Band nicht den repetitiven Formelhaftigkeiten des amerikanischen Mainstreams aussetzt. Eine echte Perle, die man kaum hoch genug würdigen kann. Bei der aktuellen Ausgabe handelt es sich um eine Neuauflage der "Thor Legends: Walter Simonson".

Super-Spitzenklasse und eine vorbehaltlose Kaufempfehlung.

Mike says

Over the years I've heard time and again about Walt Simonson's legendarily regarded Thor run - held up so often as among the best work ever committed for this bigger-than-life character. And I'm about to shit on the first collected volume of it. Let's begin.

Hey, comic book nerd here. Hate to break it to ya Walt but you've left a gaping logic hole in your storytelling here. To wit: when Thor is approaching Earth on Beta Ray Bill's spaceship and "without my hammer in my hand, I've reverted to my Blake form", then how does Thor (or Bill) stay Thor every time he throws his hammer across the horizon? What the fuck Walt - is his Thor form limited to contact with the hammer? Or is there a three second rule? And what about when Thor is in space and throws the hammer at a galactic spaceship? Or hell, later when Odin catches the hammer that BRB throws at him, why doesn't Bill revert to horse-man sans cape?

Or how's about when Odin summons "Thor" (actually the newly-transformed BRB) back to Asgard? Does no one - not even his father - notice that the dude in the red cape and blue tights is wearing a HORSE FACE? "Hey son, sorry about the mix-up, guess I never really paid attention to your face - always been staring at your lovely biceps every time you whine about adventure and boredom and responsibility in my throne room [*cough* every day it seems]."

Odin, are you really this mercurial? First you set Thor and Bill on a fight to the death, and then when they both show up injured but alive, you set the doctors on them? I...don't...understand.

Pure 80's writing on display here - for example after first yelling at BRB, Odin says, "Let me stay my wrath a moment and seek to know more of this matter."

...

This gets more troublesome the deeper I go. And that makes me a snob, an asshole and an unimaginative philistine, right? Yeah I know - if I'm pissing on The Great Walt Simonson, then I must truly be a lost soul, wandering in the wasteland of superficial brain-candy comics.

Here's the thing: Walt's plot ideas are definitely interesting, but the execution - dialogue, narration, thought balloons and the rest of the words on page - is leaden, tedious and in so many ways unexciting. (I'm probably repeating myself but Rule of Three amiright?)

Same goes with his art (at least of that era) - layouts are good, but the actual execution of linework, facial expressions and overall detail just isn't *quite* there. Now, could I do it half this well? Of course not - total jerk here, denigrating Walt's gods-given talents.

It's just that I've picked up this book six times this week, and my enthusiasm wanes the more I learn the difference between Simonson's Thor the legend and Simonson's Thor the aging reality.

I've quite enjoyed his modern-day artwork lately - Avengers (Bendis), Hulk (Waid) and others - so it's clear to me that he's improved his craft since his heyday. And that's awesome - so many creators from the old days never progressed and still churn out the same style and quality as before (paging Sir Claremont), and they're truly embarrassing to think about. For Walt that's not the case - he clearly still enjoys the work and is in a little demand (even though I think the gig with Bendis was a bit of a gimme from a massive fanboy wanting to touch the name more than work with a genius at the top of his game).

I don't begrudge Walt his reputation, nor resent when he's asked to do current work. But I also can't find the stamina to wade through his classics, no matter how highly regarded/fondly remembered they are. Taste is subjective, and there are clearly people still enjoying this stuff, but sadly I'm one of the shallow ones who can't see far enough beyond the out-of-fashion styles to just get in the groove and enjoy it for what it is.

Μιχ?λης says

Δεν ε?χα διαβ?σει Thor στη ζω? μου, π?ρα απ? τα Thor, Vol. 1 του J. Michael Straczynski. Θυμ?μαι β?βαια, ως παιδ?, να βλ?πω την animated σειρ? Thor που, ?ποτε τη θυμ?μουν ως μεγ?λος, μου φαιν?ταν π?ντα λ?γο αφελ?ς. Θυμ?μαι ?μως να διαβ?ζω καλλιτ?χνηες που μου ?ρεσαν (?πως πχ τον Erik Larsen) να μιλ?ν με θαυμασμ? για τον Thor του Walter Simonson.

?ταν λοιπ?ν π?τυχ? τον πρ?το τ?μο με τις ιστορ?ες του Thor απ? τον Simonson τον σ?κωσα δ?χως δε?τερη σκ?ψη.

Πρ?κειται για τε?χη απ? τη χρονι? που γενν?θηκα και ?μως παραμ?νουν φρ?σκα και επιδραστικ? ακ?μα και σ?μερα. Και ε?ναι πραγματικ? κλασικ?ς δουλει?ς. Ο Simonson εντ?σει ν?ους χαρακτ?ρες, στ?νει σταδιακ? μ?α μεγάλ?τερη ιστορ?α της οπο?ας το χτ?σιμο το παρακολουθ?με απ? μικρ?τερες ιστορ?ες (και μ?λινς αυτ? μπα?νει εμπρ?ς ο τ?μος τελει?νει και εμε?ς ψ?χνουμε τον εξαντλημ?νο δε?τερο, κατ?ρα!!!), μας παρουσι?ζει αρκ? απ? δευτερε?οντες ?ρωες (πχ τον Balder) και απομακρ?νεται απ? το τυπικ? υπερηρωικ? κλ?μα της εταιρε?ας προς ?να πιο επικ? κλ?μα κοντ?τερα στις αρχα?ες σ?γκες. Η οπο?α παλαιομοδ?τικη αφ?λεια της παλι?ς Marvel ταιρι?ζει απ?λυτα στο επικ? κλ?μα της σειρ?ς, εν? η ιστορ?α του τελευτα?ου Viking (στη μ?ση του τ?μου) ε?ναι μ?α απ? τις πιο συγκινητικ?ς ιστορ?ες που ?χω διαβ?σει απ? Marvel.

Horns up.

Bookwraiths says

Winter of 1983. I was a full-grown and mature thirteen (13) year old. That is what I believed anyway. By this point, I had put all the things of childhood behind me - even my beloved D&D mostly - to focus on grown up things: sports, music, girls, and cars. Not necessarily in that order. This meant the days of me sitting around reading comics was over. Forever! Sure, I still ran an eye over the comic rack at the local gas station or the bookstore at the mall, but other than just looking at them, I didn't read those kids books anymore. But then something strange happened to me one day at the mall: I saw the cover to Thor #337.

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Even though I had never been a Thor fan, I was drawn to the book like a fly to a bug light. The image of this strange alien destroying Thor's name on the cover just got my attention, and I could not resist picking it up to see who he was.

Now, honestly, I didn't have much optimism that the book was going to be worth reading; I mean, comics had really cool covers all the time but weren't really worth reading - especially Thor in those days. But since the artwork was cool, I just had to open it up and look at the first few pages. That naturally led me to reading those pages which caused me to read more and . . . You get the picture.

As I finally closed Thor #337, my mind was filled with Simonson's breathtaking images of immortal

Asgardian gods, the honorable Beta Ray Bill and his beloved fleet, and the promise of an ominous bad guys waiting just outside everyone's notice, and it was then that I had an epiphany only a 13-year-old could believe was an epiphany: comics were not just for kids. The proof was here in my hands with a book which rivaled any movie or "literary" work I'd ever read in sheer storytelling brilliance.

Needless to say I started reading Thor on a monthly basis at that point, and for the next - almost -three years, I waited patiently every month for the next issue to arrive in my mail box. The story of Beta Ray Bill, which had began in Thor #337, was just the tip of the iceberg I found as Simonson led me on a whirlwind of adventures with the God of Thunder. Adventures that I still recall with great pleasure to this day, and before you even ask, yes Thor is still my favorite Marvel character, because your first "love" is always the best remembered and most fondly recalled I've found.

I rated this collection and the other Simonson Thor collections which follow five (5) stars. Those who are my friends or follow me on Goodreads know I rarely give five (5) stars to anything; I'm stingy like that I suppose. However, these issues of Thor by Simonson deserve five (5) - maybe six (6) stars - because this is without a doubt one of the greatest runs on a comic book ever. Of course, I read this collection having fallen in love with Thor issue by issue long ago, but I still believe you will love it to. You just won't have to wait a month before your next fix.

'Nuff said!

Sesana says

I read this as part of an attempt to learn more about Thor, since I've liked him so much in the Marvel movies. I'd read something like a few pages with Thor beforehand, and I don't know terribly much about Norse mythology, so I don't really have any preconceived notions. So I'm happy to report that this was really good reading.

If there's one thing I expected going into Thor, it was that the language would be intentionally and archaically formal. It's what one does with Thor, after all. And here's it's handled pretty well. It doesn't sound pretentious or false. It sounds like how the gods of Asgard should talk. That alone can be hard to do. Pair that with storylines that are actually interesting to read and some great new characters, and the whole collection, big as it is, becomes a pleasure to read. This is where Beta Ray Bill comes in, and I was surprised at how much I actually liked him and his story. The collection does end in a bit of a cliffhanger, so I'll have to read more. Such a hardship.

mercedes says

It is honestly astounding how different the writing is straight from the first issue. Before, it wasn't even noticeable if a writer had changed, the issues always followed the same formula and similar storylines. But I mean...the quality and just the type of plots involved are so much better than ever before, they really weren't lying when they called Simonson a visionary.

That said, some issues in this are pretty weak/average. But there were also a few that were amazing and I'm

sure it will only pick up from here. Had anyone else completely erased Donald Blake from existence I would be livid, but with Simonson's replacement, Sigurd, I just can't be angry or upset.

The only qualm I do have is with the actual volume I own rather than the comic itself. It's recoloured, and while I don't really have a problem with it now I've had time to adjust, it would look much better with it's original colouring. It just seems pointless and disrespectful to me, but oh well...

Aaron says

Thor meets noble alien Beta Ray Bill, loses his Donald Blake persona permanently, fights Fafnir the dragon, meets an old Viking, is seduced by Lorelei, and uncovers a plot by Malekith to use the Casket of Ancient Winters to release his master.

This was more interesting than the collection that follows (which I read first) due to the issues introducing Beta Ray Bill and the showdown with Malekith, who I'm familiar with from Thor: The Dark World. I'm pretty curious to know what was going through Simonson's and the editors' minds when they created a horse-like alien who Odin found worthy enough to grant the same powers as Thor. Though strange, it makes for a pretty interesting mix of science fiction and fantasy, and Bill is a sympathetic character who finds a new home in Asgard; in some ways he supplants Loki as Odin's adopted son, which is also welcomed by Thor. Odin removed the long-standing enchantment of Thor's secret identity which would transform him into mortal Donald Blake and grants it to Bill; Thor is interestingly left with no human identity, so he creates the alias Sigurd Jarlson. (Clark Kent, anyone?) Thor goes through several seemingly unconnected adventures until he comes upon Malekith's plot to use the Casket (seen in Thor), which (view spoiler) and leaves the collection at a cliffhanger.

Simonson keeps the story focused on Thor's Asgardian mythology, which is more interesting than watching Thor fight random supervillains, but that comes with the trouble of coming in in the middle of the story and trying to figure out who the characters are and what the stakes are. The dialogue is also mostly long-winded and formal when it comes to the Asgardians, keeping me from getting too absorbed in the story.

(view spoiler)

Dan Schwent says

Who is the monster called Beta Ray Bill and why has he come to earth? What is the mysterious dragon rising from the waters of the Atlantic? And who is forging a sword in the heart of an alien sun? That's up to Thor to find out...

Thor has never been my favorite Marvel character but I've read a couple dozen issues of his comic, mostly from the Ron Frenz-Tom DeFalco run, and a handful of Walter Simonson issues. I stumbled upon this at the 2016 Planet City Comicon in Kansas City and couldn't resist. That's not true, I managed to resist reading it for a couple years...

There was a short period during the 1980s that Walter Simonson could do no wrong. It was during this period that he was tapped to write and draw Thor and he wasted no time shaking things up. The word epic is overused/misused a lot these days but Simonson gave Thor an epic feel immediately.

In the first issue, Thor gets his hammer taken from him by the bionic alien Beta Ray Bill. Soon after, Bill and Thor go on a mission to save Bill's race from demons. It goes well but soon Thor finds himself free of the Donald Blake identity, for better or worse. Meanwhile, in the background, someone's making a sword that's going to smite everything, the act of creation alone sending shockwaves through the universe. Yeah, this is some serious shit.

Simonson's art holds up fairly well, probably because the guy knew his shit. The Jack Kirby influence is evident but the style is more detailed than the Marvel House Style, which was almost a thing of the past at this point. He's able to convey a majestic scope without relying on splash pages. The nine issues of this volume were balls to the wall, no filler. The only real gripe I had was where the volume ended.

There's a lot to like in this volume, even in between the cosmic battles. Thor struggles to live as Sigurd Jarlson, a construction worker. He wears glasses as a disguise and even bumps into Clark Kent in a funny cameo. Nick Fury is classic Nick Fury.

There's no wonder Walter Simonson's run on Thor is so revered. It's largely become the Thor measuring stick due to how revolutionary it was at the time. I need to read the rest of this run posthaste! Four out of five Mjolnirs.

Rick says

While this feels a bit dated now, Simonson's run on Thor was, at the time, revolutionary. Simonson took a staid and typical superhero comic and revitalized it. He not only took the myths and legends of Norse mythology and wove threads into the series, but he also brought a new visual aesthetic to the series that energized the characters in ways that had not been seen since *Jack Kirby* left the series.

Jessica says

And a mighty "meh" was heard throughout the land.

So apparently this is a famous run of Thor by Walter Simonson, considered iconic and etc. etc.

It . . . seemed fine. The '80's fashions sported in the Midgard scenes were pretty great. I was super distracted by the first storyline, though, which should have been the most dynamic. Another warrior, from a distant galaxy, defeats Thor (by some weird loophole that shouldn't actually work), and lifts Mjolnir. GASP! And what is thy name, O warrior? Beta Ray Bill.

No, seriously.

A being from another galaxy is named Beta Ray Bill, which sounds like the name of that animatronic musician in the old restaurant in Tomorrowland. Apparently Simonson wanted it to both be a common, everyman name, but also sound very sci fi. Um, okay. I guess that's what he achieved, but he also managed to prevent me from taking the guy seriously.

So, not my favorite, really. Loved the final story run, which of course ends in a cliffhanger so you'll pick up the next one. Sigh.
