

741.5

MOON KNIGHT

JULY 2022 NO. 77

MARVEL'S NOCTURNAL AVENGER
IN THE SPOTLIGHT!



The Comics & Graphic Novel Bulletin of

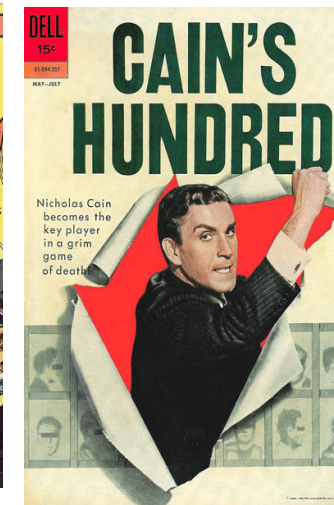
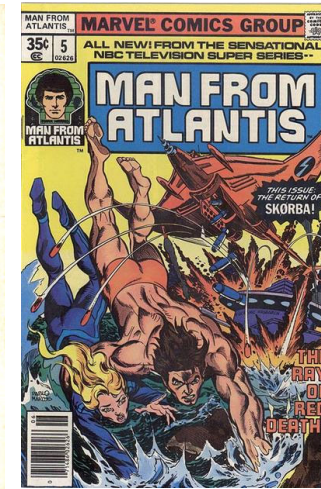
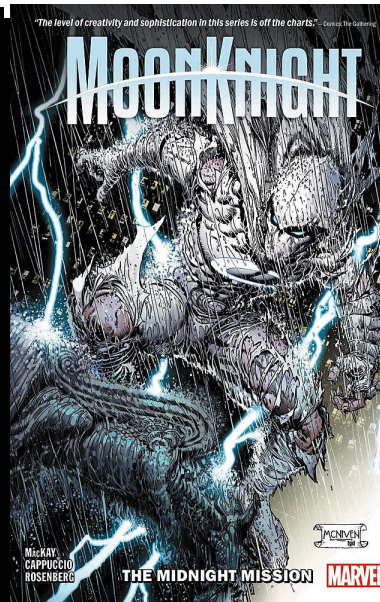


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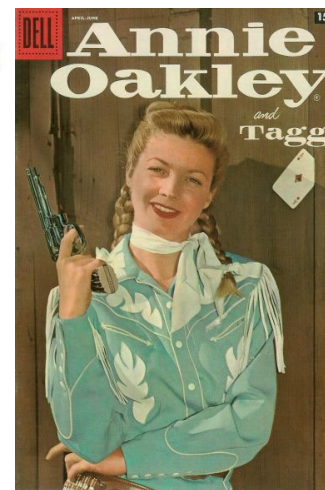
Guardian of Those Who Travel At Night. Avatar of ancient Egyptian god Khonshu. Secret Avenger. Lifelong experiencer of dissociative identity disorder. Many are the faces beneath the mask of Marvel's MOON KNIGHT!



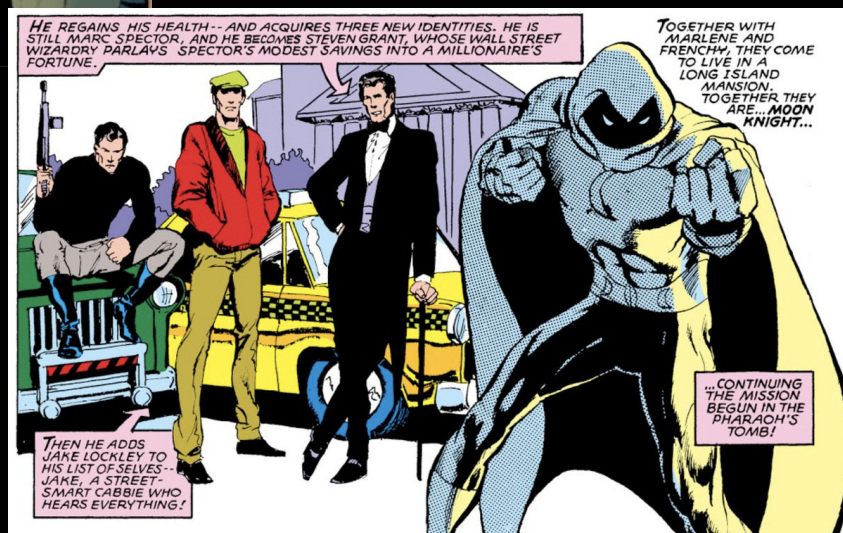
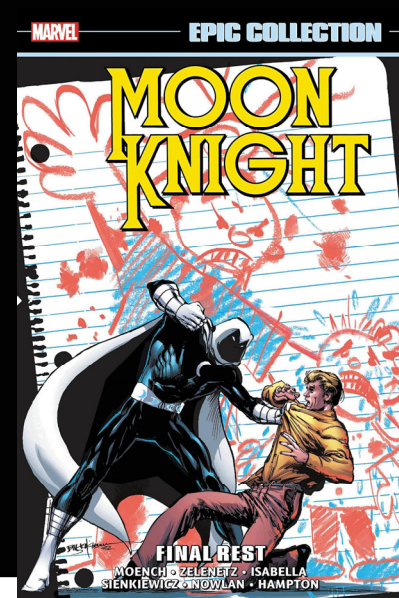
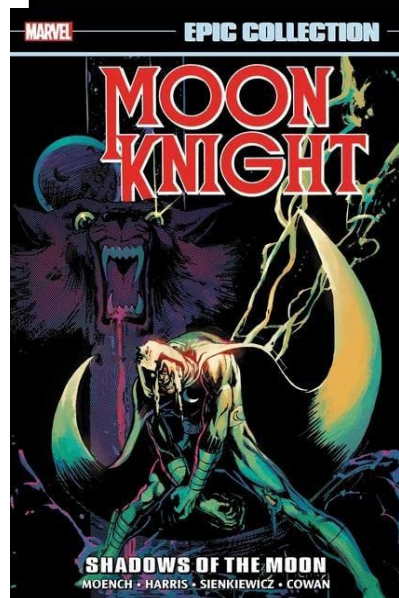
But they all belong to one guy. He was born Marc Spector, son of a rabbi. Like many children, Marc had an imaginary friend. But his became real, as Marc's psyche splintered and the other people in his head began to live lives of their own. Marc Spector, soldier of fortune. Steven Grant, maker of fortunes. Jake Lockley, man of the streets. All just a shell game played by the ultimate expression of Marc's turmoil and trauma: MOON KNIGHT. Originally created in the mid-70s as an antagonist for Marvel horror hero Jack Russell, star of *Werewolf By Night*, Moon Knight became so popular with fans he was given his own series. He's continued to appear in both team books and solo series, culminating in his recent TV show on Disney+. He's one of the most complicated characters in the Marvel Universe—and that's saying something. Now LPL has the original work and recent compilations of the Avenger of the Night!



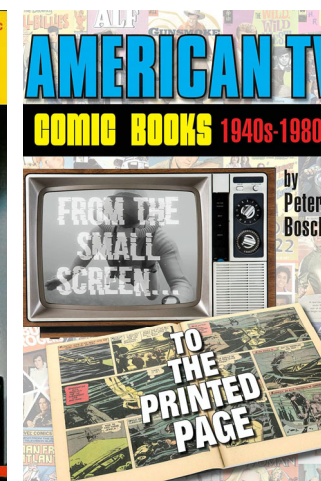
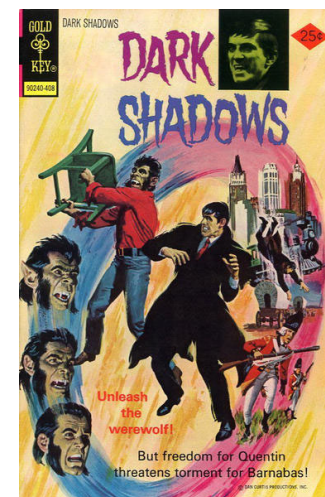
Like all the youth-oriented "Marvel-verse" comps, Moon Knight's provides a sampling from across his career. The Epic Collections feature his first appearances as both villain and hero, his initial status as "Marvel's Batman" being affirmed, then upended by writer Doug Moench and artist Bill Sienkiewicz. The latter's art got more expressionistic as the series went on, before giving way to the brittle blandness of the Shooter Era. More recent series and story arcs have returned Moon Knight to fearsome form. Warren Ellis got the ball rolling with 2014's *From the Dead*, which delved into both Marc Spector's MPD and Moon Knight's link to Khonshu while giving Moon Knight a spiffy new suit. Jeff Lemire took the craziness even further, with the experiences of each "alter" drawn by a different artist. Bendis & Maleev took the Fist of Khonshu to Hollywood and a further riot of personalities, while *The Midnight Mission* laid the groundwork for the final struggle between Moon Knight and the archaic entity that gave him not just power, but life itself. Go to lexpublib.org to reserve 'em all!

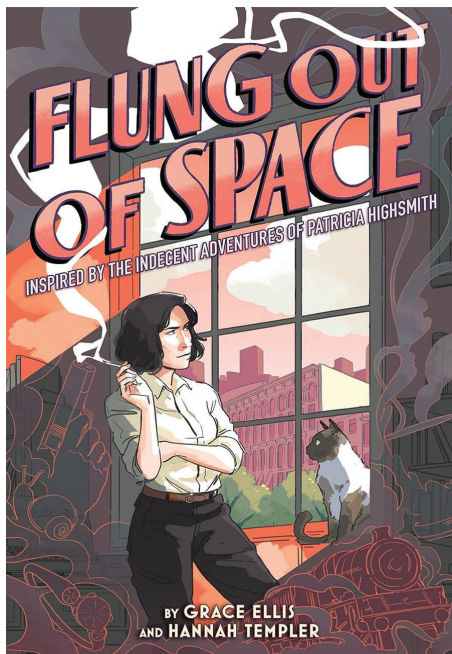


TV comics were everywhere when I was a kid. In fact, I bought this very ish of *Voyage to the Bottom of the Sea* (right) at the Corbin Five & Ten Cent Store. Gold Key & former partner Dell were the main purveyors of comic books based on TV shows both popular and obscure. But Marvel dabbled during the 70s, DC kept the *Star Trek* torch burning during the '80s, and Charlton produced both comics and magazines devoted to the likes of *The Six Million Dollar Man*. From *Uncle Milty* to *The A-Team*, **Peter Bosch** details the history of *American TV Comic Books (1940s-1980s)*, available at Central and **Tates Creek**.



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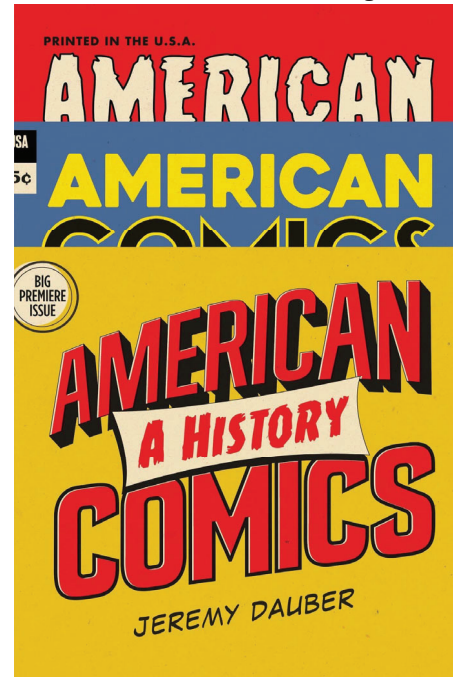
Another fine work of graphic nonfiction from Abrams ComicArts, *Flung Out of Space* is a biography of writer **Patricia Highsmith**. One thing she wrote was comic books. During the 1940s, **Highsmith** worked on the suspense novels that would make her a literary star while churning out scripts for the *Black Terror*, *True Life Comics* and *Jap-Buster Johnson*. So figures from that era make an appearance, like a young and already full-of-himself **Stan Lee**. Who, despite his obvious respect for her as a creator, makes a pass at her. Like most of the men in this story. But **Highsmith** was gay. She didn't like women, but she loved them. That's the real story: how this brilliant, irascible woman tried her damndest to fit in, even going so far as to get engaged to a man, only to realize that as good as she was at making a living at making up stories, some lies just don't sell. Written and rendered by out and proud lesbi-



ALEX SEGURA

MEANWHILE

ans **Grace (Lumberjanes) Ellis** and **Hannah Templer**, *Flung...* exposes the dehumanizing strictures that propped up those Good Old Days while not shying away from the manifold faults of its subject. **Highsmith** was a tough cookie, for sure. She had to be, to make it in the boy's club that was (and too often still is) comics. She wasn't entirely alone. During the Golden Age, women like **Audrey Blum**, **Rae Herman** and the power behind **Charles Biro's** throne, **Virginia Hubbell**, kept artists in scripts. The Comics Code ended their careers, and it wasn't until the early 1970s that women began to re-enter the industry in sizeable numbers. That era, the so-called Bronze Age of Comics, provides the background for the murder mystery *Secret Identity* (Flatiron Books) by the writer of *The Black Ghost* (see 741.5 #60), **Alex Segura**. **Carmen Valdez** is part of the generation of fans-turned-pro who went into comics out of lifelong love for



the medium. But, being a mere girl, she's stuck being the secretary for the publisher of third-rate outfit *Triumph Comics*. **Valdez** finally gets her chance to become a writer when approached by a colleague with an idea for a new kind of superheroine. But what looks like **Carmen's** big break could end up breaking her after her co-creator is murdered. Then there's the trouble with her ex-girlfriend. To add to her troubles, **Carmen Valdez** is gay. Her conflict with her own identity becomes entangled with her struggle to discover that of the killer in this skewed *roman a clef* based on actual comics industry scandals. If you want the details on those, I recommend the relevant volumes of *TwoMorrows' American Comic Book Chronicles*. If you need a more general history of the biz, check out *American Comics* from Central and Eastside. *A History* from W.W. Norton, **Jeremy Dauber's** book has been criticized for skimming over a lot of that history. But when dealing with something as squirrely (and *Squirrel Girl*) as the story of comics, it makes sense to hit the high notes and move on. **Dauber** does an admirable job of cramming a lot of info into each chap-



-ter, especially when he gets to the last twenty years of commercial turmoil and artistic ferment. One of the prime movers of the latter, the *Comics Journal*, returns to LPL shelves with issue #308. In keeping with its current mission to focus on creators, this edition features interviews with **Pia (Y: the Last Man) Guerra**, the people behind the legendary comics produced in the '60s by the Alabama chapter of the Black Panther Party, and **Alex Graham**, author of *Dog Biscuits* (available at Beaumont, Central and Eastside). **Graham** drew much of that book during the pandemic; *TCJ* asks other cartoonists how COVID changed their lives. Meanwhile, visuals go verbal in two new novelizations. **Marvel's** *Morbius* the Living Vampire gets trapped in a monster fight club in *Blood Ties* by **Brendan Deneen** while **Aisha Saeed** concludes her popular trilogy of Juvenile thrillers starring the girl who will one day be Wonder Woman with *Diana and the Journey to the Unknown!* Go to lexpublib.org for reserves!



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