



The Amazing Spider-Man: The Gauntlet Book 5: Lizard

Zeb Wells , Chris Bachalo (Illustrator)

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Half-Man, Half-Reptile..."the Lizard will take over all of Earth unless Spider-Man alone can stop him!" With these words, Dr. Curt Connors, the man who would be The Lizard, ushered a new kind of villainy into Spider-Man's life. Now a widower with a son in foster care, and working at the bottom of the pharmaceutical industry, Connors is a broken shell of a man...how long will it be before a Lizard breaks that shell? How will it affect Peter Parker's date with Carlie Cooper?! How is THE BLACK CAT involved? Zeb Wells and Chris Bachalo reunite to bring you the next great Spider-Epic as The Lizard returns!

The Amazing Spider-Man: The Gauntlet Book 5: Lizard Details

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Author : Zeb Wells , Chris Bachalo (Illustrator)

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Cameron says

Shed is one of those rare stories that's made up of 1 part awesomely tragic, 1 part tragically awesome, and 1 part awesomely cool. It's a story with a recipe whose ingredients are tough to put together, let alone obtain, but the team behind this excellent piece of storytelling nailed it and created a delectable treat for Spidey fans. (I'm hungry, ok?)

That's the short version of this review. The longer, in-depth version is just below but I wanted to give a warning to those about to read it. It's spoilerific to the max. I normally hate putting spoilers in my reviews, but what makes this story so great can't be discussed without ruining those moments for those who haven't read it. So again, the short of it is this: This comic is fantastic. If you like Spider-Man, the Lizard, and/or dark and tragic stories, this is the book you should be reading right now. Seriously, go pick up the trade. It'll be worth it. And if you for some reason don't like the book, I'll personally refund you the money you spent on it.*

(view spoiler)

*Offer not valid in any country with a vowel in its name. Or any country at all, just in case the country of Tfgrml does really exist.

Andy 117 says

The Gauntlet comes to a close, with the focus this time on Curt Connors, aka The Lizard.

As is typical of The Gauntlet, this works as both a reintroduction and a curious mix-up of an established villain from Spider-Man's classic rogues gallery. With The Lizard, there is a focus on the very familiar Marvel trope of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde - though with a cold-blooded twist that makes this dissection very curious indeed.

In essence, it treats "The Lizard" as a creature lying dormant inside not only Dr. Connors, but perhaps every human, in a "monkey brain vs lizard brain" evolutionary battle. With Connors' latest exposure to his syrup, it has perhaps seen The Lizard totally destroy the human that is Curt Connors, and now, running on pure fight or flight, it begins to take over everyone else in New York - even Spider-Man.

It's a fantastic hook, that makes it feel more like a classic creature feature than a traditional transformation storyline. It's less The Incredible Hulk, man vs. himself, and more Man-Thing, of a man outright losing his humanity - with Man-Thing actually making an appearance, linked quite organically to The Lizard's origins. The dark undertones, with The Lizard basically forcing Connors to lash out at his own family, feel completely earned, and the conclusion leads out of the Gauntlet and into Grim Hunt rather convincingly.

Of note is the art in this arc is absolutely stunning. A brilliant wash of colour and slightly sketchy inks produces a terrifyingly surreal take on The Lizard, his new size and power having freed himself of humanity portrayed convincingly. Spider-Man cannot go one-on-one with this new Lizard, at least not physically - and the psychological torment of his new foe is aptly transferred to the page. Scenes of Spider-Man and The Lizard meeting have a real tension and horror to them, in particular the use of the expressions on Spider-Man's face - often a sticking point with his mask, but, in this case, his eyes used to tremendous effect.

It's a fantastic update to a classic villain, and one that already conformed to a typical standard for Marvel characters. Purists may not be wholly on board with the disturbing turns it takes, but as a fan of pulp horror and monster fiction, this rebirth of The Lizard is everything I could have hoped for, presented disturbingly well by a stellar creative team. Probably the best out of The Gauntlet's pretty consistently great books.

Jedhua says

Book Info: This collection contains *Amazing Spider-Man* issues #629-633 and *Web of Spider-Man* issue #6.

ABSOLUTE RATING: {3/5 stars}

STANDARDIZED RATING: <3/5 stars>

In the *The Gauntlet, Volume 5*, Kurt Connors – after keeping his inner "lizard brain" in check long enough to find employment as a scientist working with reptiles again – finally loses control and lets the monster back out. It's uncommonly dark for a *Spider-Man* story, and that's one of the best things about it. But perhaps best of all, was Bachalo's art. But this is nothing new; I've been aware of, and loved his style for a while now. Unfortunately, this book makes some significant mistakes that hold it back by at least a star.

First of all, I wish Wells kept focused and channeled the Incredible Hulk for the entire volume. I mean think about it: The Lizard and Hulk have quite a bit in common, if you consider the fact that they're both big, strong, green monstrosities who speak with the vocabulary of a kindergartner. That being said, there's really only three ways to make the Hulk work as a character; you either go for the Jekyl and Hyde treatment (i.e. regularly switching between Banner and the Hulk), you focus on the intelligent Hulk primarily (as Marvel has been doing recently), or you do a little of both. Here, Wells fails to truly accomplish any of those three scenarios; after spending a pretty short while first approach, he then spends a whole lot of time focusing on the dumb "Hulk Smash" side of the character exclusively. This primal and savage kind of villain is too simple-minded to induce much sympathy or elicit fear. What made Wells think that was a good idea is

beyond me. I've read enough to know that he's a better writer than this.

Next, there was too much extra crap going on in the periphery that was entirely useless for the events of this particular volume. Not only did you have the crazy "Anti-May" running amok, but there was also a mysterious subplot involving Madame Web and her mysterious captors who were pulling the Lizard's strings from afar. From issue #630, we aren't given a lot of background to explain either of these two developments – since they were probably introduced in earlier issues – and the volume simply isn't long enough to resolve or satisfactorily explore both. So although the volume suffers a bit as a standalone story, those of you readers who have been closely following *ASM* for a while are bound to benefit more than those who have not.

Stephen says

The last book in the Gauntlet series and probably the darkest.

The gauntlet continues with the Lizard. Conners is looking for a job in order to keep his son who currently residing in foster care.

As the story progresses we find out that Curt was actually in control all those times he transformed but now the Lizard no longer wants to be pushed to the back of Curt's mind and has decided to take over. You can already imagine what's gonna happen once the Lizard is back in control.

Even though it was a pretty short book the writer really managed to develop Conners and had a good understanding of the character in a way I never seen before. I really wished the Lizard would appear a bit more in Spider-Man he is such an underrated villain.

Overall the Gauntlet series was pretty fun to read, but if you ever decide to read this series skip Vol 3 and 4 they are not really worth reading.

Laur K. says

[EAT HIS SON (hide spoiler)]

Andy says

Volume 5 of The Gauntlet ends on a big high with this stunning, tragic and beautifully drawn Lizard story. I've always been a fan of the Lizard but this time things take a darker turn and we see an evolution as he manages to achieve something he's been trying to do for a long time. Zeb Wells manages to make an already

tragic figure even more so, adding depth and further conflict to Connors and his alter-ego.

Dark and violent the story is expertly illustrated by some startling, chaotic and gorgeous pages. It really is great to look at mixed with some fantastic splash pages and covers. Credit to Chris Bachalo.

We have a lot more time with the Kravinoffs here (in a last minute reminder that the previous 4 volumes were supposed to have a unifying theme) though I suspect that after all this Grim Hunt is going to be rather a disappointment.

Recommended for all fans of Spider-Man and the Lizard and it can happily be read without picking up the preceding volumes if desired.

Mike says

Wells'/Bachalo's preview of the Lizard story from issue 629? Cool and unnerving.

Van Lente's pseudo-origin of Lizard and Man-Thing? Very eerie and suited to the Man-Thing's weird swamp-mind. Wells' take on Lizard's origins is positively creepy and Penalta's art really complements the creep factor.

Fantastic and surreal story of the Lizard's ascent to supremacy over the primates around him, and a sad step down the ladder for Dr. Curt Connors. The way Wells, Bachalo, Rios & the rest create a zany attitude to this horrible, brutal story is a joy to read - this is one of the books that I *pored* over every panel, not just tearing through the pages to get to the next one.

Wells especially has found an incredibly resonant voice for the Lizard - creepy, broken, focused, lispy. And Bachalo makes every scene look exaggerated enough that you really notice the arch tones in a vocal exchange, or the fluidity and chaos of an animalistic battle.

The bonus surprise for me was discovering the complexity in Emma Rios' pencils - id gotten the impression from other work that she's a little ungrounded. These full-in pages she contributes are very solid, inviting, emotional and evocative. More from her please!

A stellar book all around, even considering that this still doesn't feel much like it's part of the bigger Kravinoff super-plot.

Matt says

Chris Bachalo's art makes it 4.5 stars. His version of the Lizard is super cool.

Doug says

Definitely my favorite out of The Gauntlet series, it's the one that felt like it had the most impact on the world of Spider-Man. Some shocking things happened, things I thought that they would find some clever

way to back out of and well, maybe they will some day, but they didn't for this story. My one complaint is fairly small, I do wish that Bachalo had been able to draw the entire arc and it's a little silly that he wasn't able to. Given the fact that this era of Spider-Man was supposed to free up the writers and artists to due a story arc together. That small little flaw knocked this down a star for me, but other than that the whole thing was pretty great. Can't wait for the Grim Hunt now!

zxvasdf says

Who the hell is Zeb Wells? He came out of left field... for me at least, with this really great Spiderman tale.

This might as well be the most viscerally violent Spiderman story I've read. I mean there have been killings in other stories, but it's somehow always distant, kinda faceless. In Lizard it's straight up reptilian brain mayhem.

Curt Conners is losing control to the lizard inside. The Lizard is ready to shed, to shrug off its old mammalian psyche and embrace the world in all its cold-blooded glory. It also has found a way to tap in the lizard instinct inside everyone and causes chaos in New York.

Bachalo's version of the Lizard is by far the best. Under his pencils, the Lizard, monstrous yet intelligent, is a cold-blooded shaman of flesh, all teeth and instinct.

Wing Kee says

Visually stunning, solid story.

World: The art is fantastic, it's beautiful and stylish. I've always loved this art and the Lizard looks fantastic because of it. I will say though that the colours are a bit bland and all on the soft side for some reason but this is also the style of the art. The world building is solid, it builds upon the Gauntlet and is character based so that's a good thing. Going into Conners and his story with his son as the base for the world building is good.

Story: A fun simple little story that has been told many times with this character. Conners trying to control his Lizard brain and failing and then Spidey reminding him in the end, it's been done so many times. The art made it solid though and this was an enjoyable read. The pieces are in place for Gauntlet and the stuff building towards it was good.

Characters: Conners is a tragic villain and this story has been told again and again for him so it's nothing new. The Son and what happened really pushed and 'is it in good taste' meter with killing kids for the story...

It was solid, an enjoyable story to close of Gauntlet.

Onward to the next book!

Roy says

Enjoyed this take. Can see something bigger building

John says

Does Zeb Wells have a sense of humo? Why are his arcs always wired like the Spider-man book McFarlane wrote before headed to Image? "Shed" reminds me a lot of "Torment" in it's narration and how dark it is, and that doesn't vibe well at all wi Brand NewDay, although its a good way to bring spidey close to breaking before Grim Hunt. Still, they will inevitably have to undo a lot of what they did with Lizard here to prep the comics alongside the upcoming movie (which is good because this arc made the character worse, not better). Finally, I do not like Chris . His art is all over the lace, childish one instant, poorly attempting to be dark e next, but always unpolished and uneven. Go away zeb/Chris combo. I can avoid you on avenging much more easily

Dan says

review- <https://youtu.be/uHVDZ2GN1Ws>

Μιχ?λης says

Ολα δειχνουν οτι θα εχουμε μια ακομα ιστορ?α με τον Lizard, αλλα οχι μονο κανει σεναριακα την υπερβαση, αλλα τα A-PII-ΣΤΕΥ-TA layouts κανουν την ιστορια οπτικα εντυπωσιακη και περνανε την ατμοσφαιρα της με μη-λεκτικο τροπο.
