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JULY
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MARVEL® COMICS GROUP



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TM

the AMAZING SPIDER-MAN®

FEATURING:

THE MENACE OF
THE MAD THINKER
AND HIS AWESOME
ANDROID!



J.R.JR.+austin

"CONFRONTATIONS!"

Stan Lee PRESENTS:

CONFRONTATIONS!

I REALLY
CAN'T PUT
THIS OFF ANY
LONGER.

SINCE THE RESEARCH LABS
WERE SHUT DOWN FOR RENOVATION
DURING THE FIRST WEEK OF THE
INTERSESSION PERIOD, I DIDN'T
REALLY HAVE ANY REASON TO
STOP OVER HERE.

I'VE HARDLY EVEN THOUGHT
OF MY GRADUATE STUDIES.
EXCEPT FOR THE DAYS I
SPENT IN NEW HAMPSHIRE
PLAYING BOY PHOTOGRAPHER--
AND SPIDER-MAN *--

--I'VE BEEN PRACTICALLY
LIVING AT THE HOSPITAL,
WATCHING OVER THE
BLACK CAT.

SCIENCE
HALL

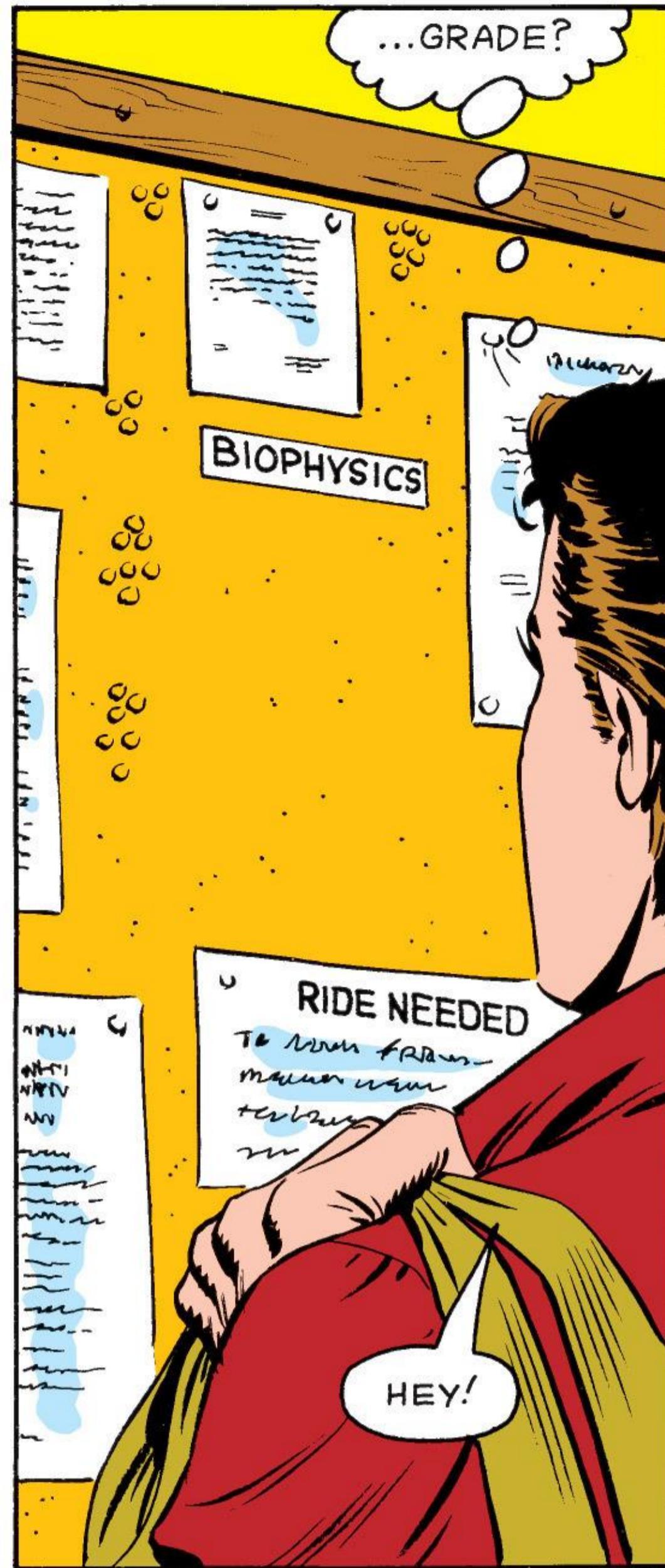
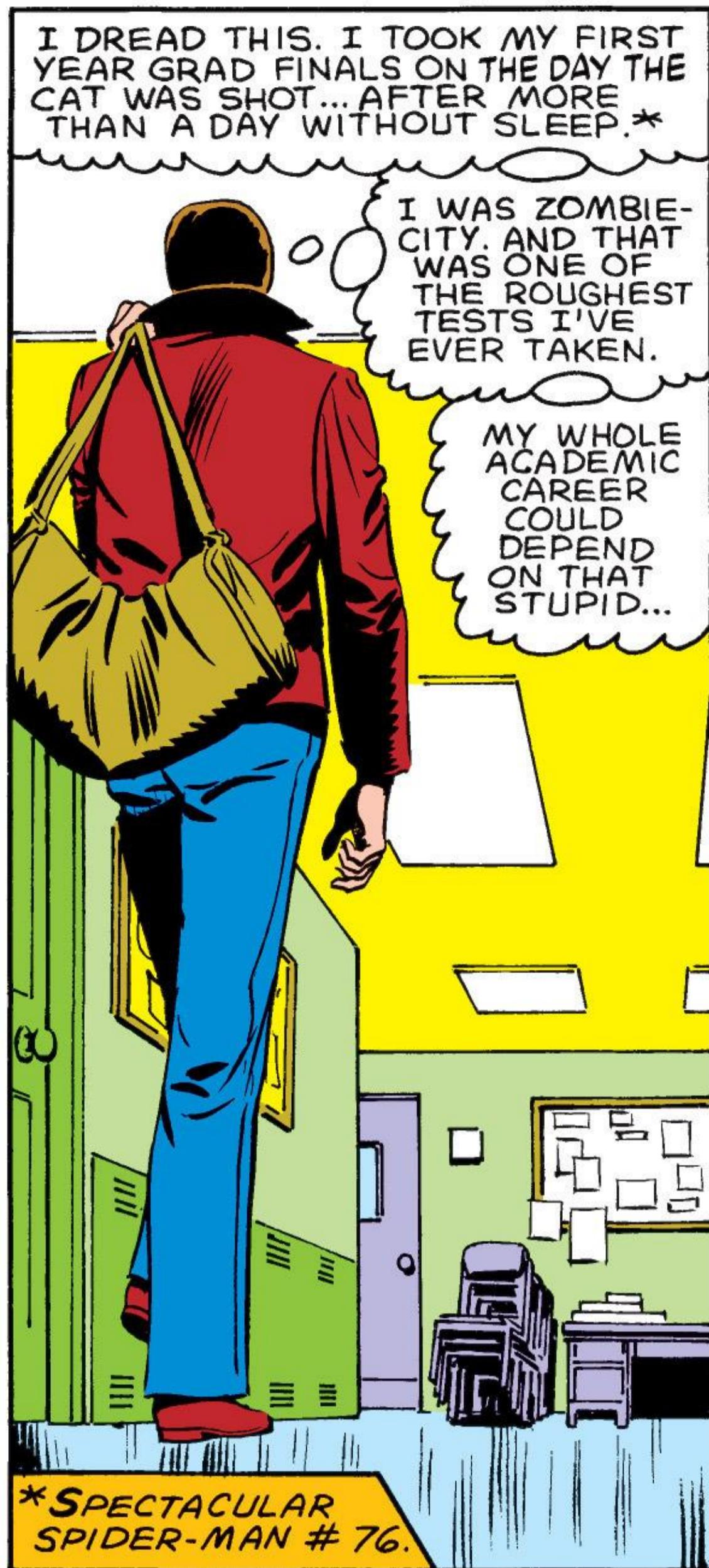
ROBERT T. McCALLUM
TOM DE FALCO
JIM SHOOTER
Bob McElveen

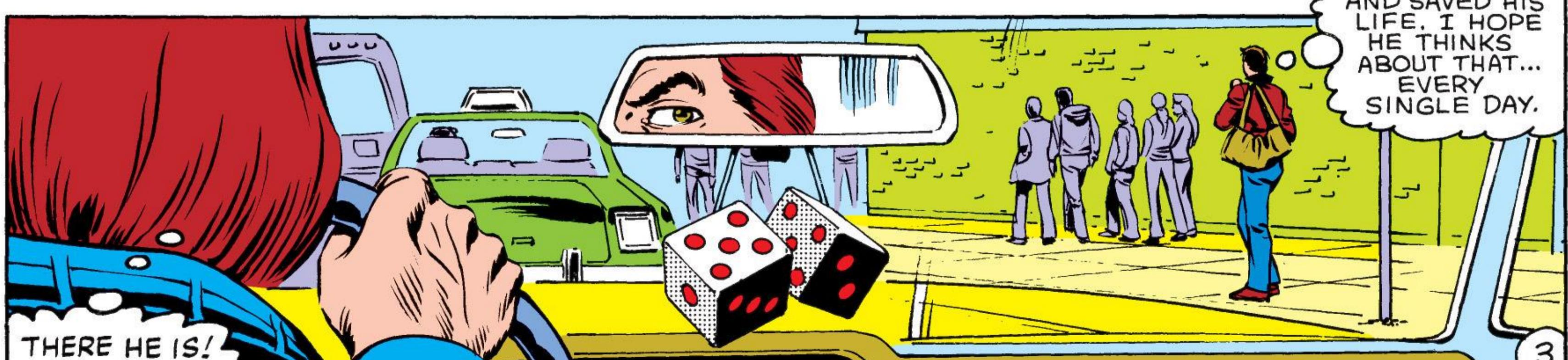
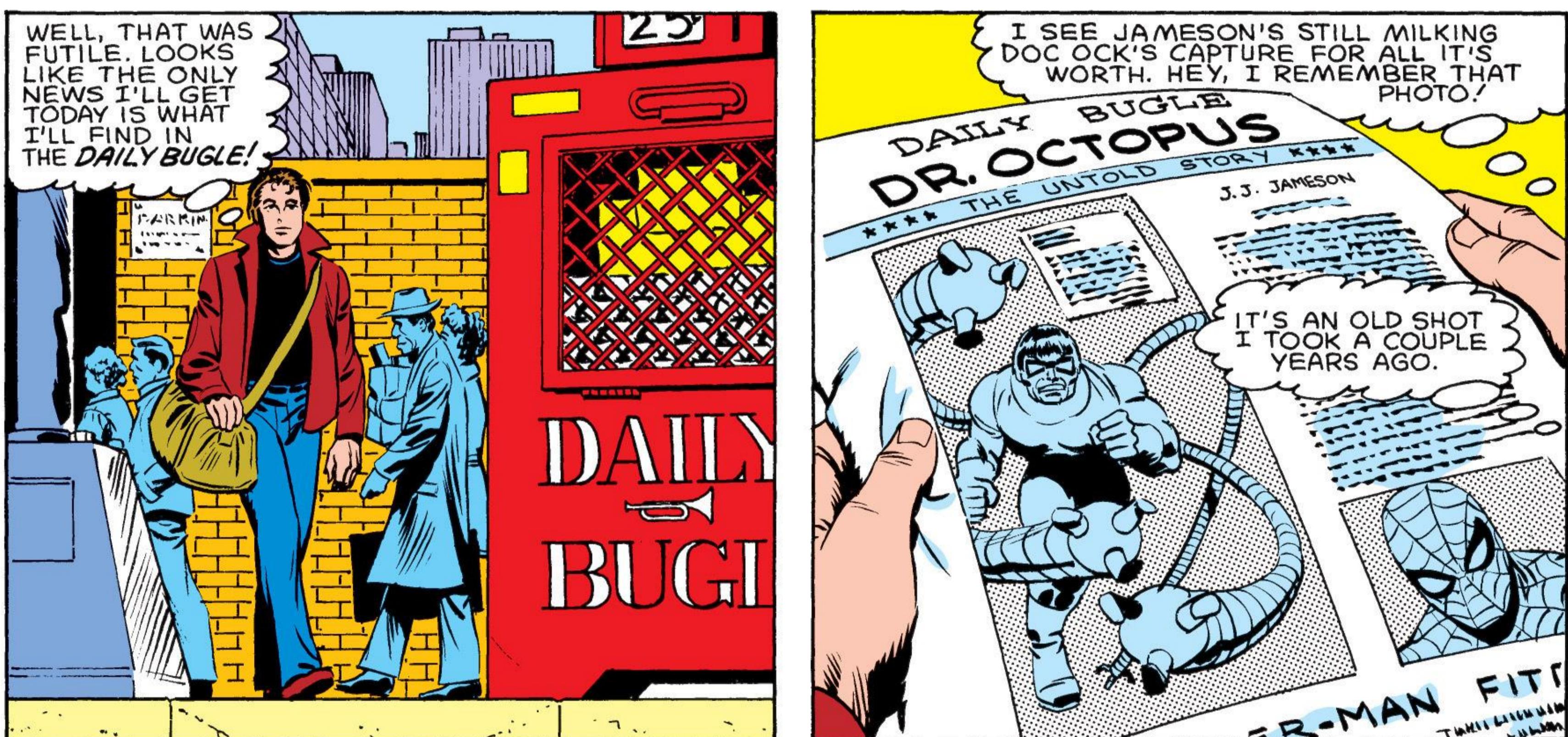
BUT THE NEW
TERM STARTS
NEXT WEEK. TODAY
I SHOULD FIND OUT
WHETHER THEY'LL LET
ME STAY IN SCHOOL...
OR THROW ME OUT
ON MY EAR!

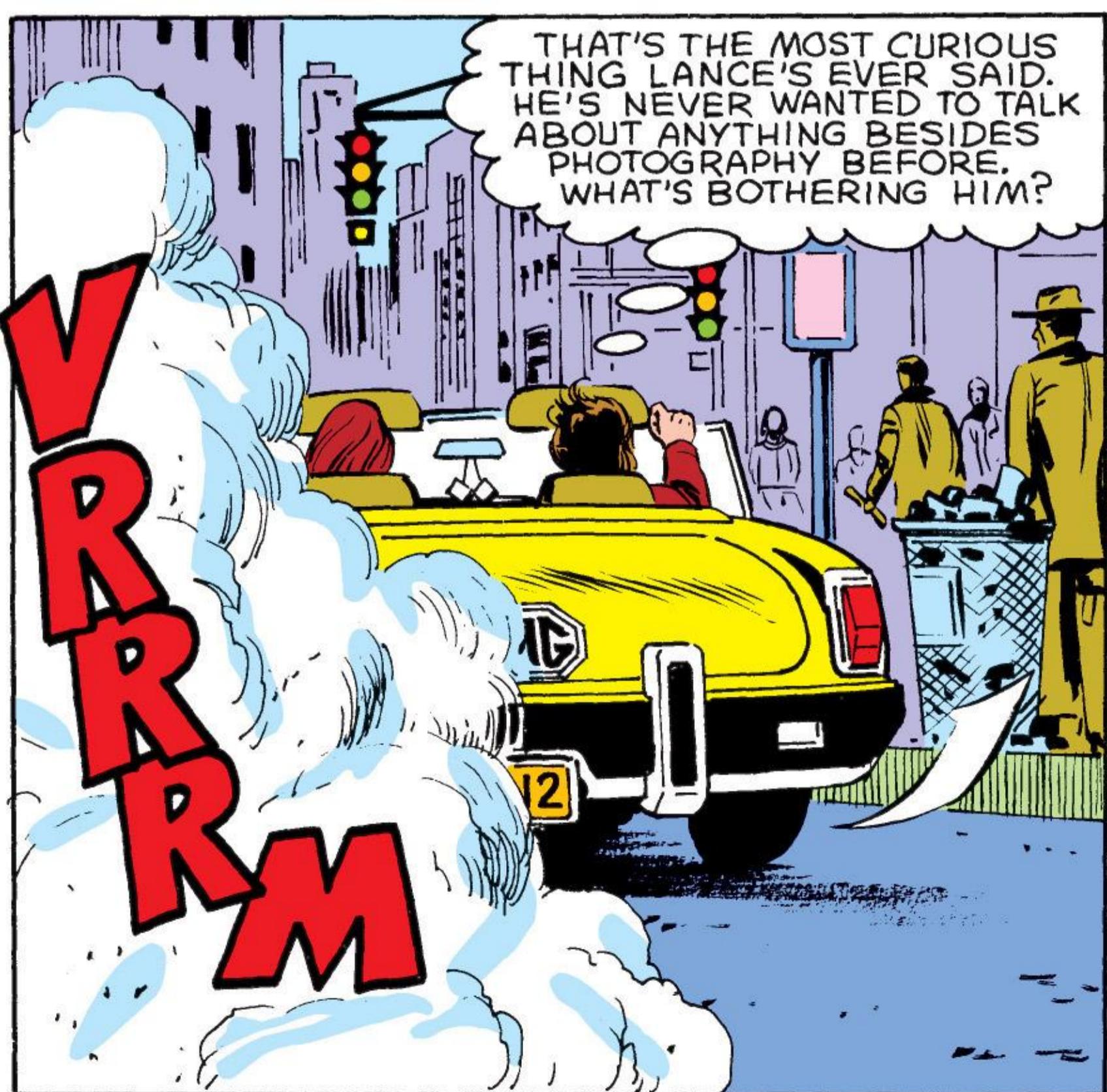
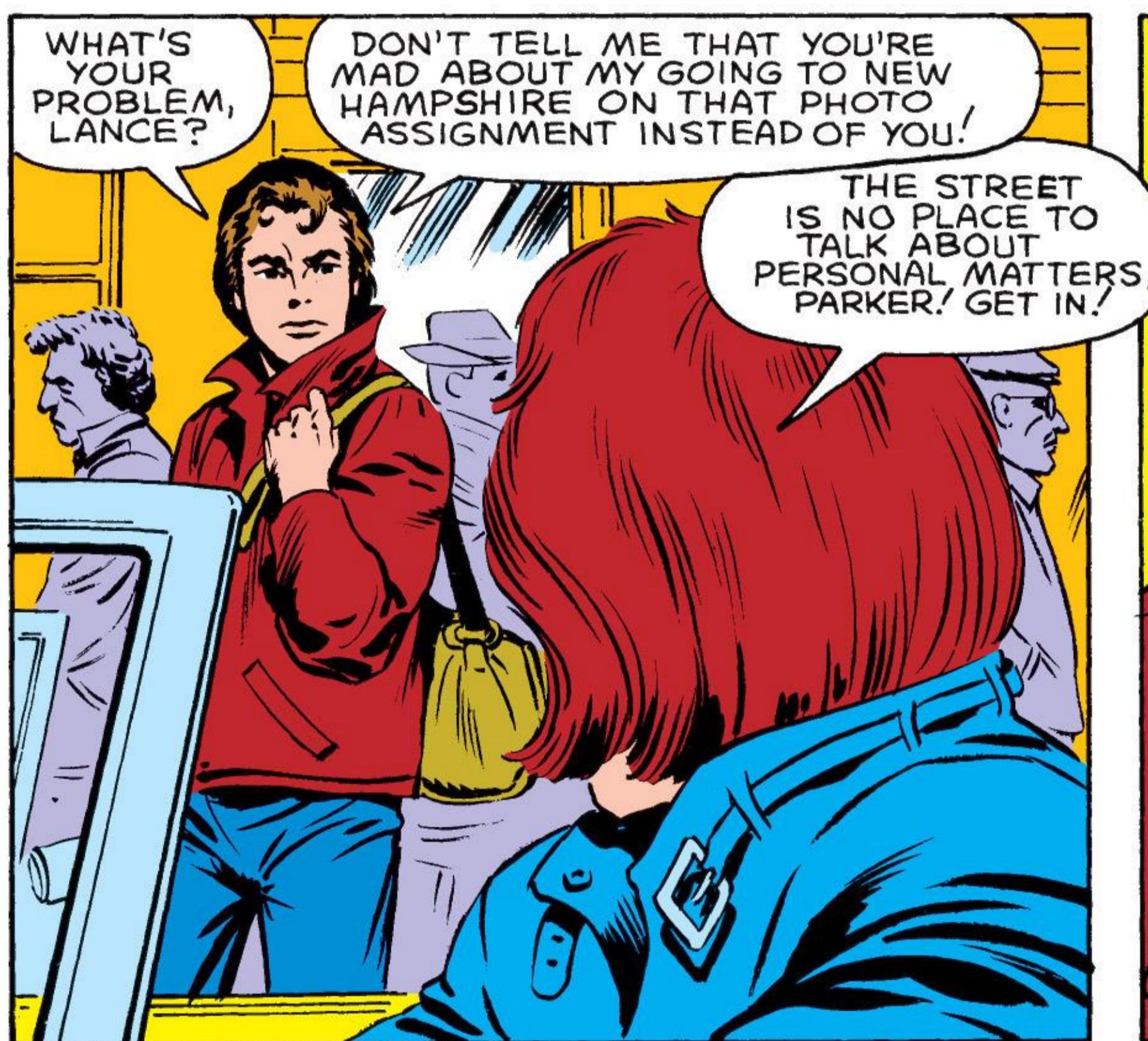
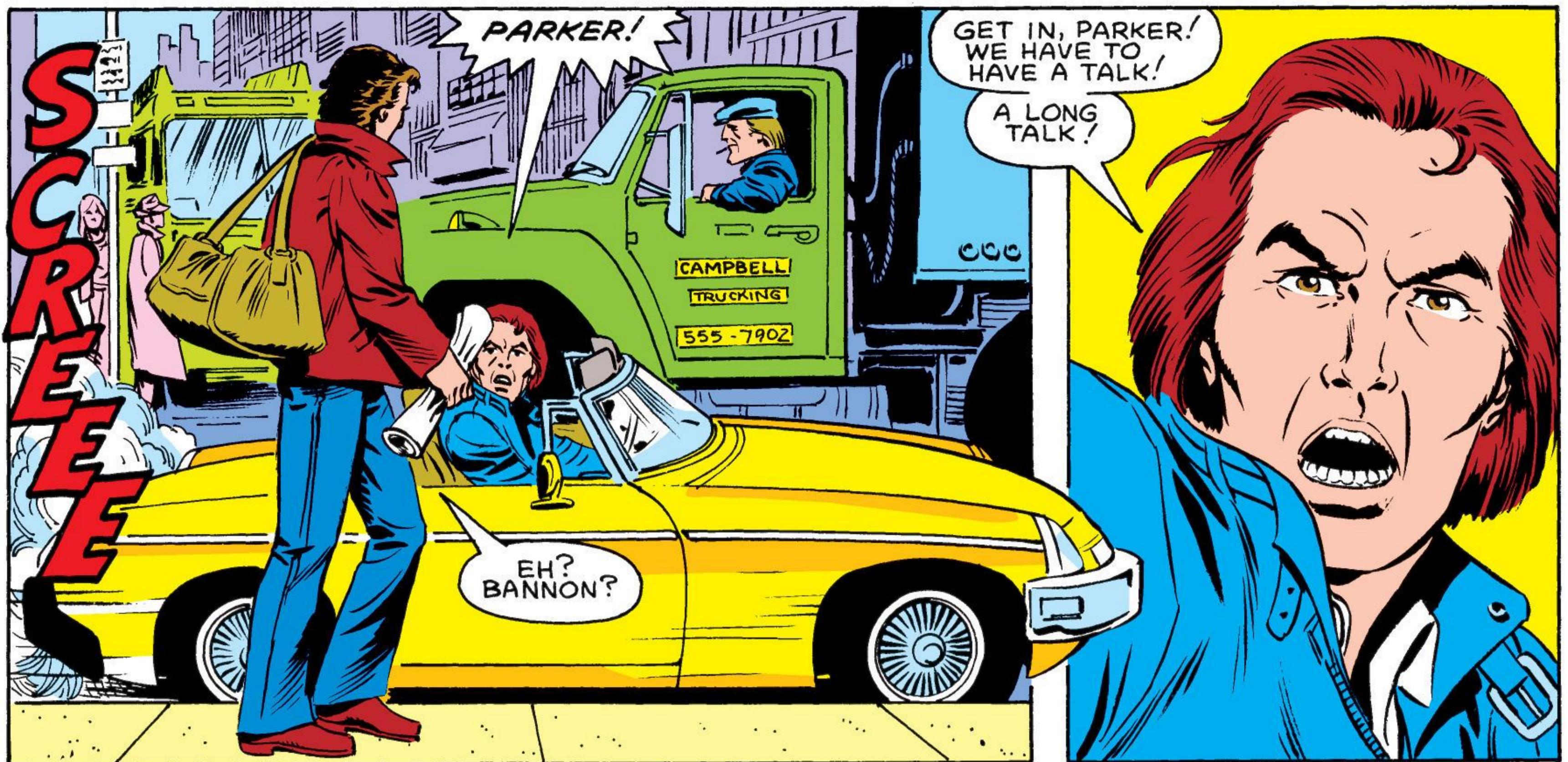
*IN MARVEL
TEAM-UP
#129-130.

ROGER STERN / JOHN ROMITA JR. & KEVIN DZUBAN / DIANA ALBERS
SCRIPTER ARTISTS LETTERER

BOB SHAREN / TOM DEFALCO / JIM SHOOTER
COLORIST EDITOR EDITOR-IN-CHIEF







MEANWHILE...

AT A CERTAIN MAXIMUM SECURITY PRISON IN UPSTATE NEW YORK, THERE RESIDES A VERY SPECIAL PRISONER.

THE GUARDS KEEP A CLOSE WATCH OVER HIS CELL.

THE OTHER INMATES AVOID HIM, EVEN THOSE IN HIS CELL BLOCK WILL NOT TALK TO HIM...

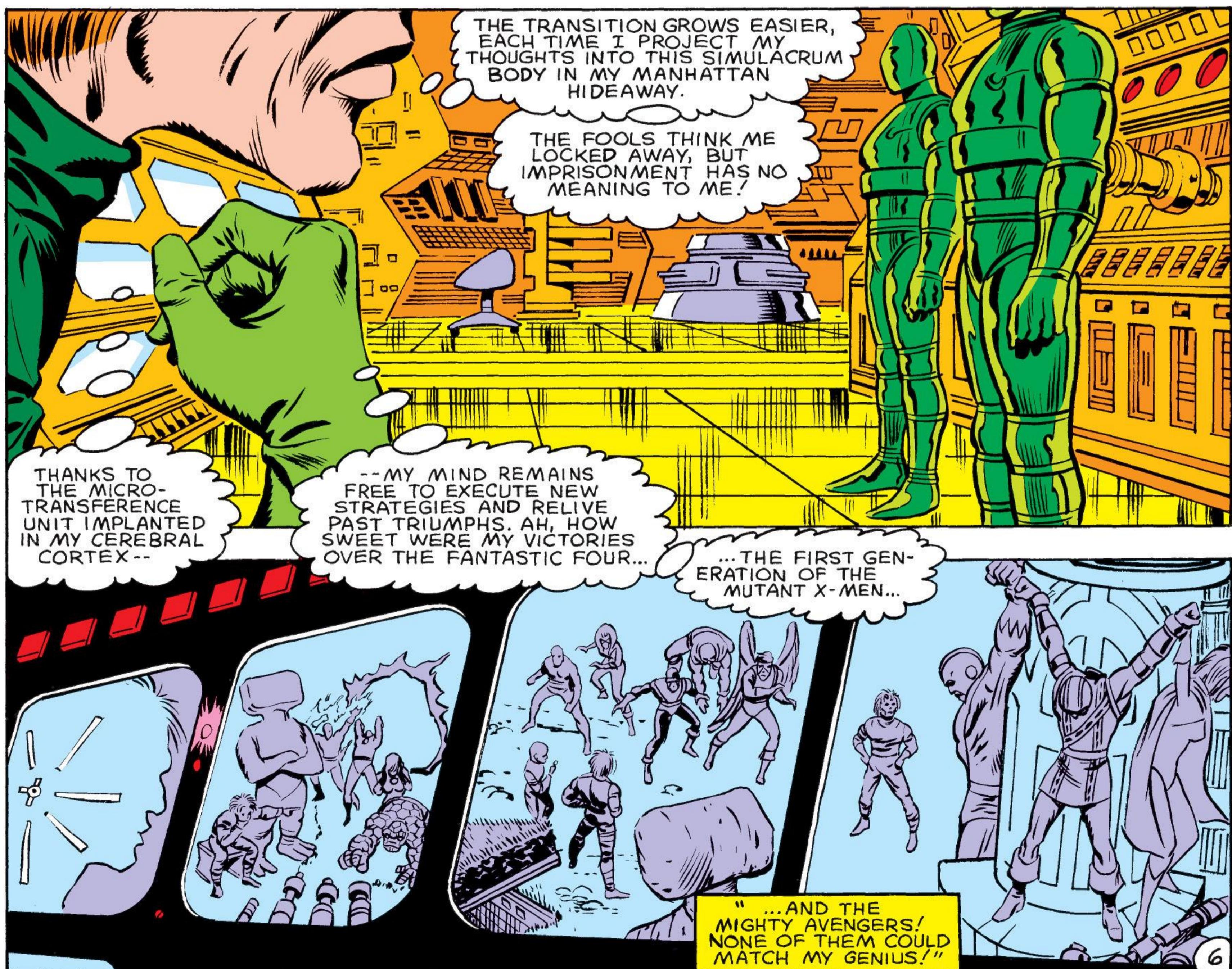
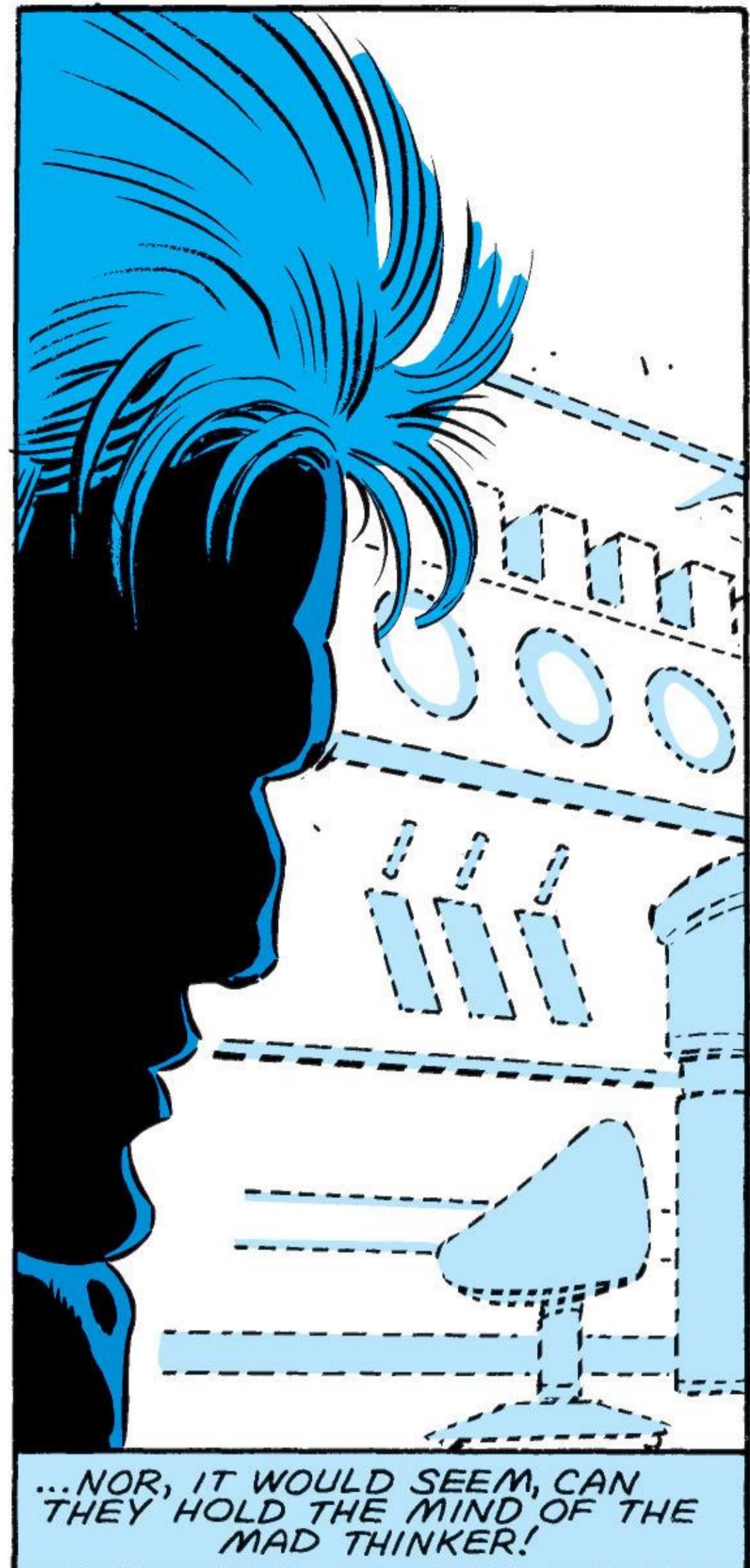
...AND THEY ARE AFRAID TO TALK ABOUT HIM.

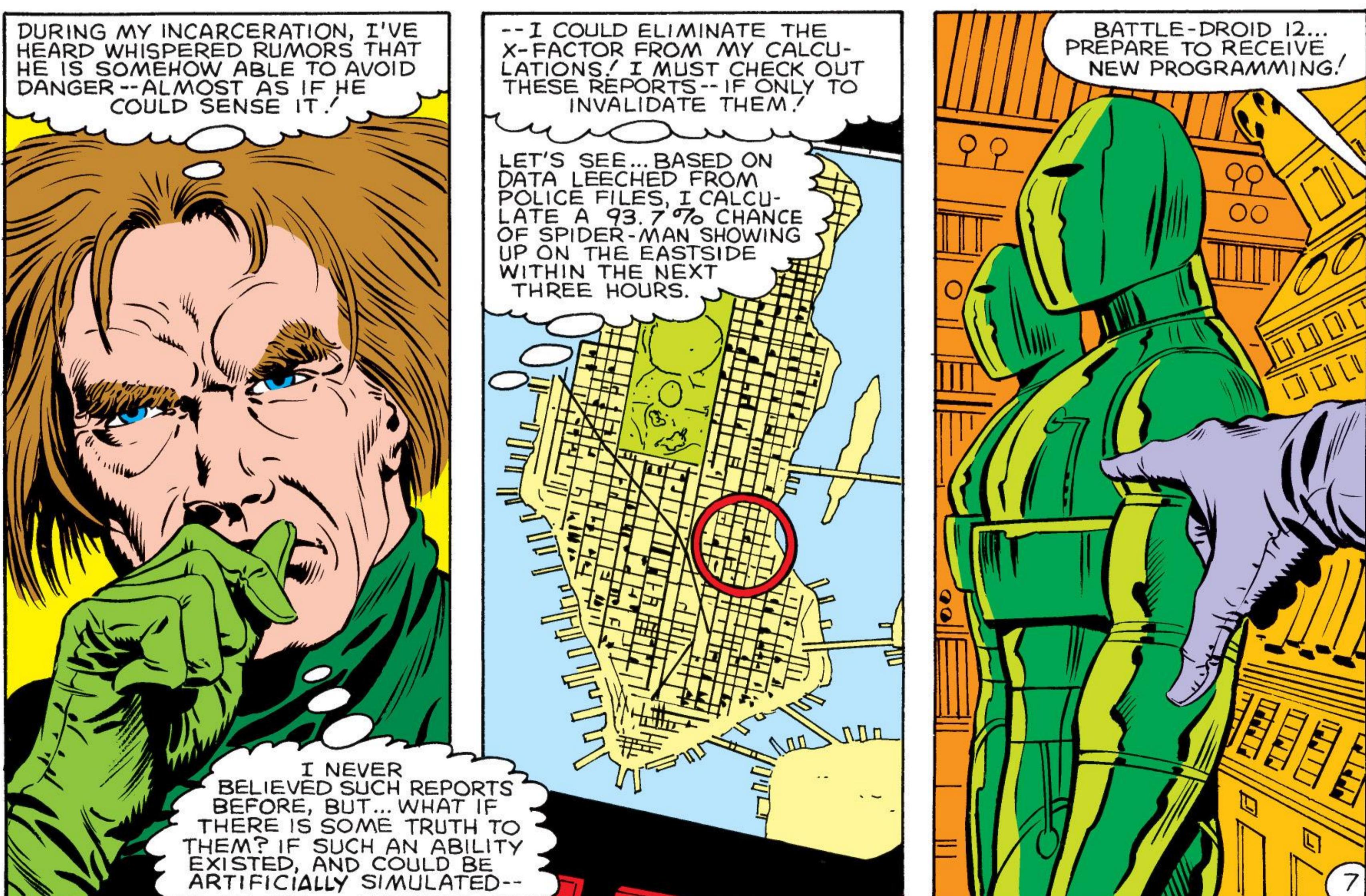
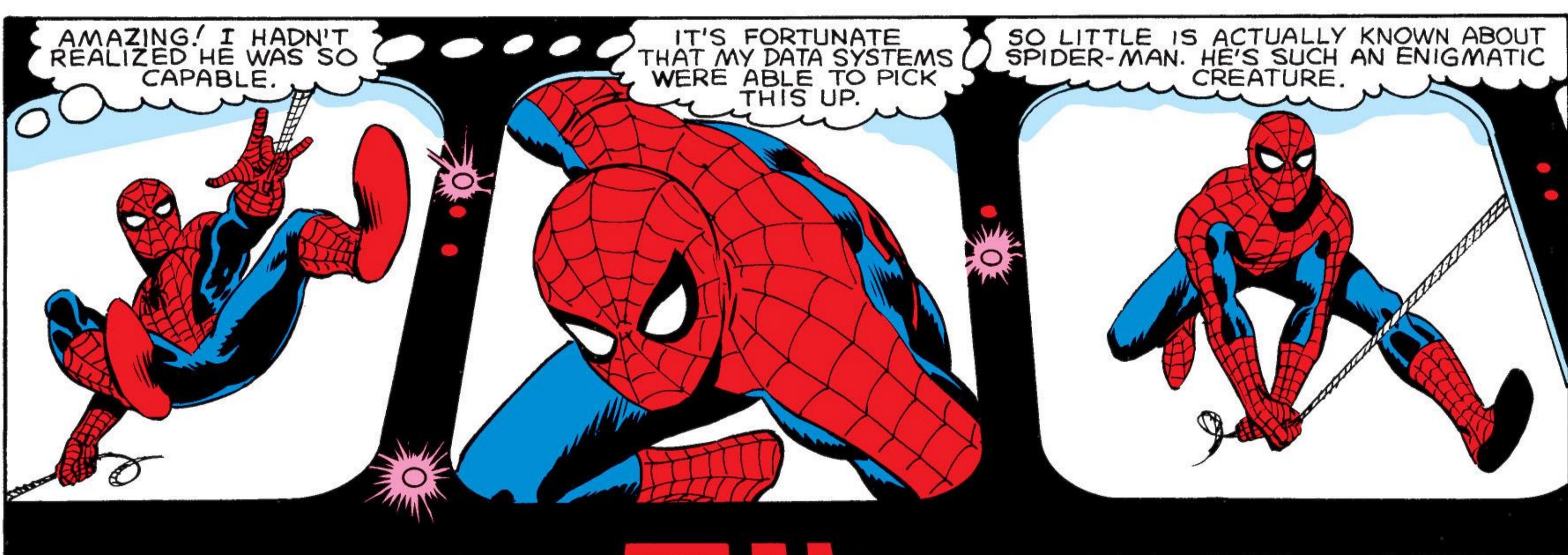
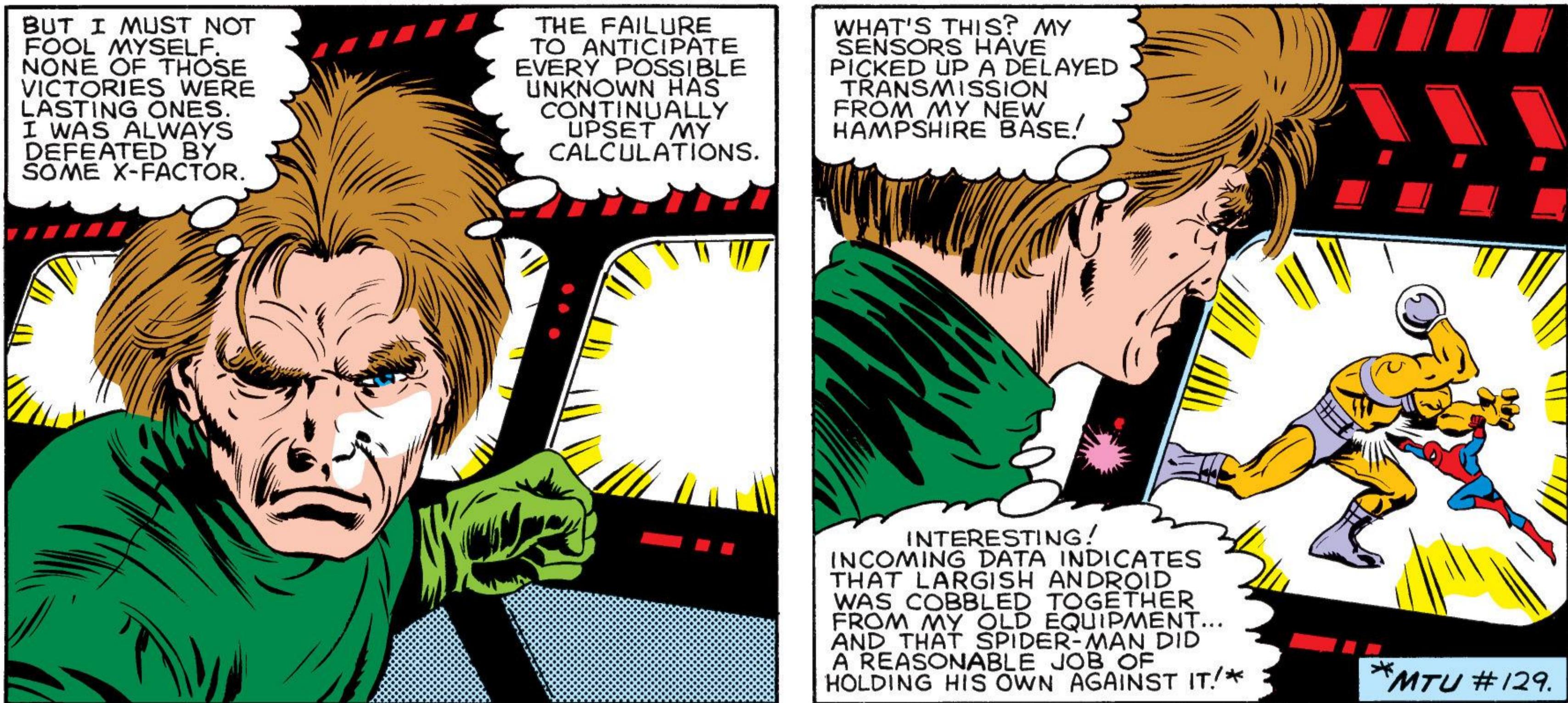
HIS REAL NAME NO LONGER MATTERS.

THE THINKER... CONSIDERED MAD BY THE WORLD AT LARGE...

HE IS NOW SIMPLY...
THE THINKER.

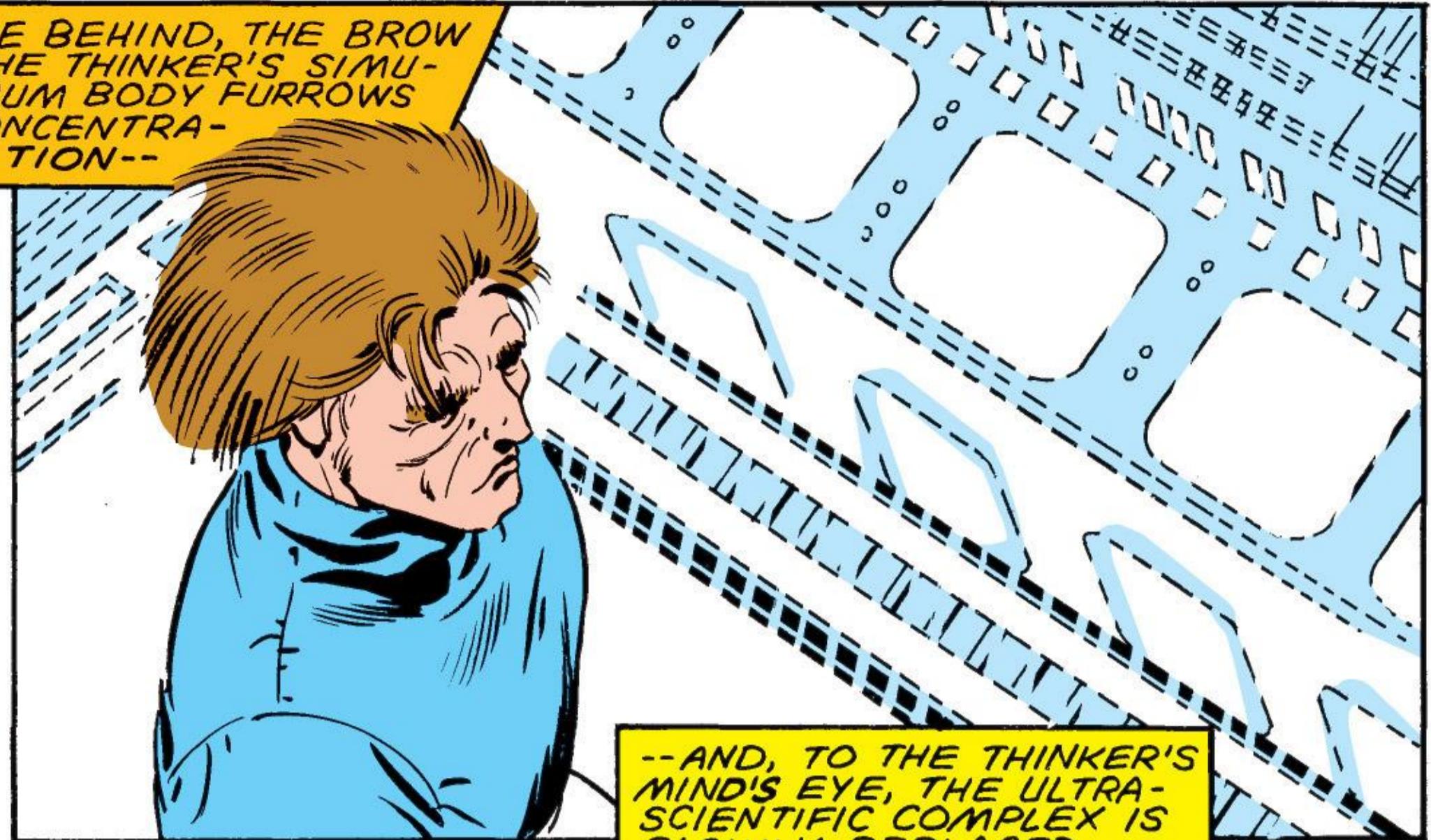
...IF NOT BY THE STATE PSYCHIATRIC BOARD.

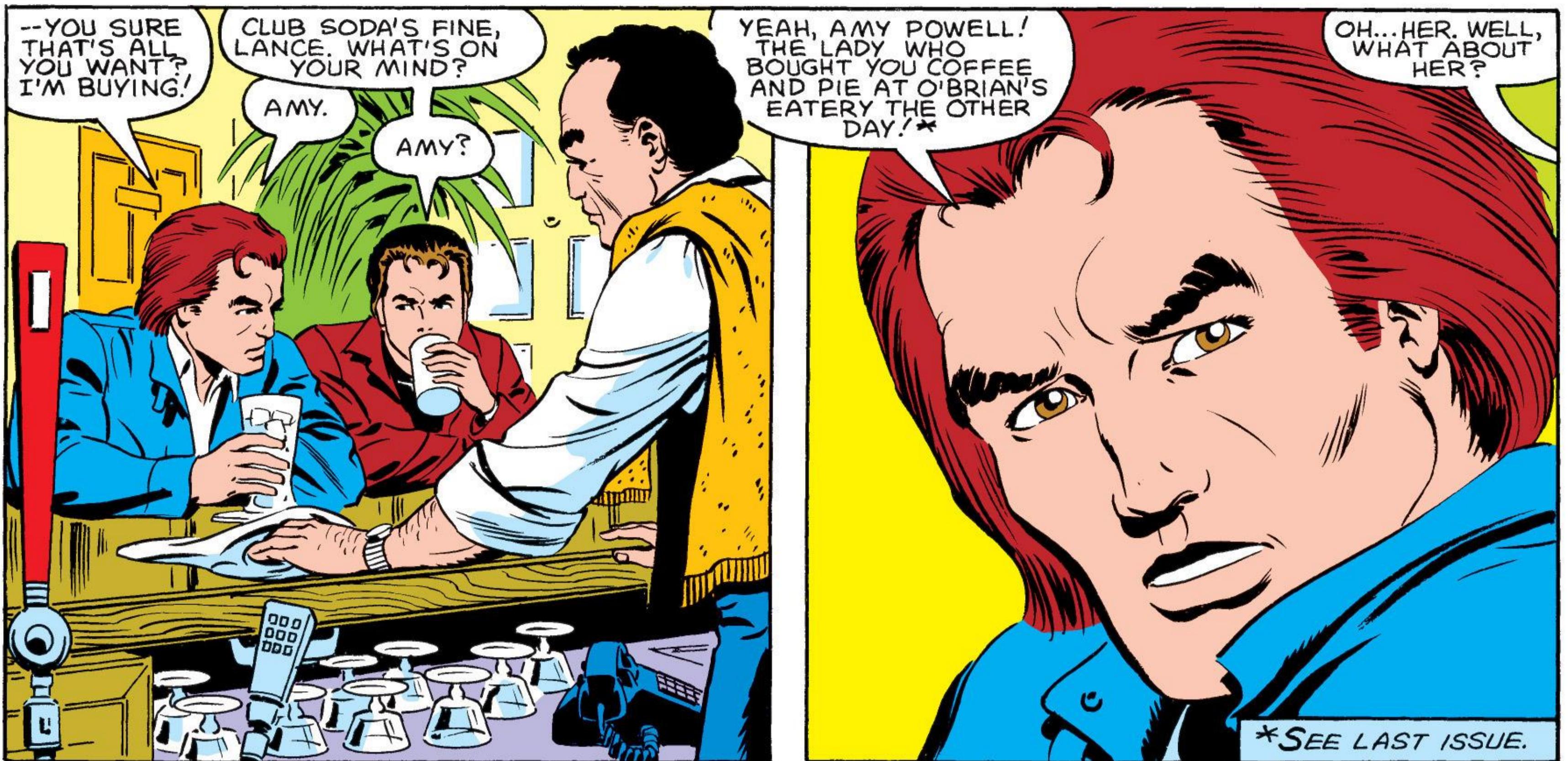




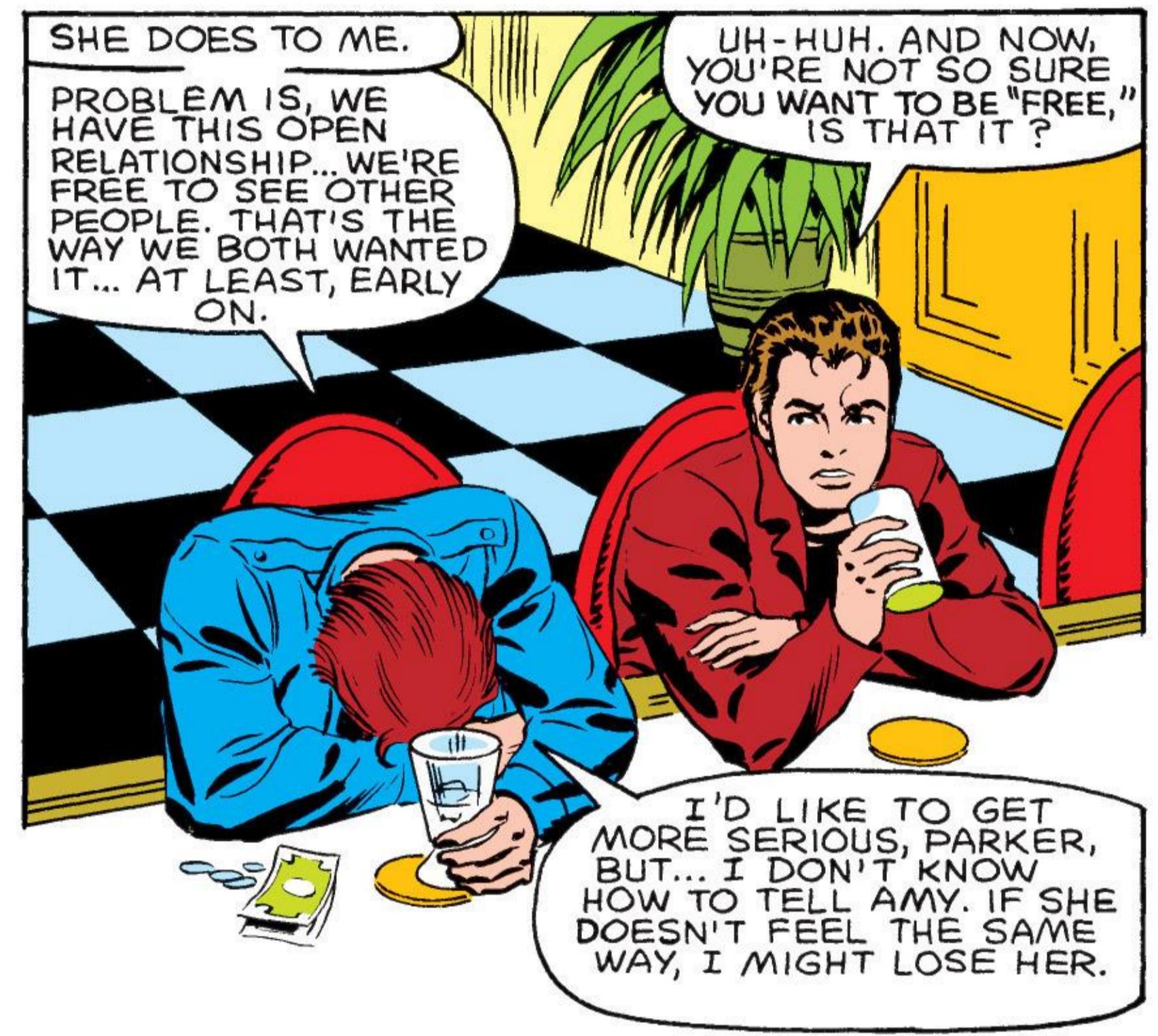
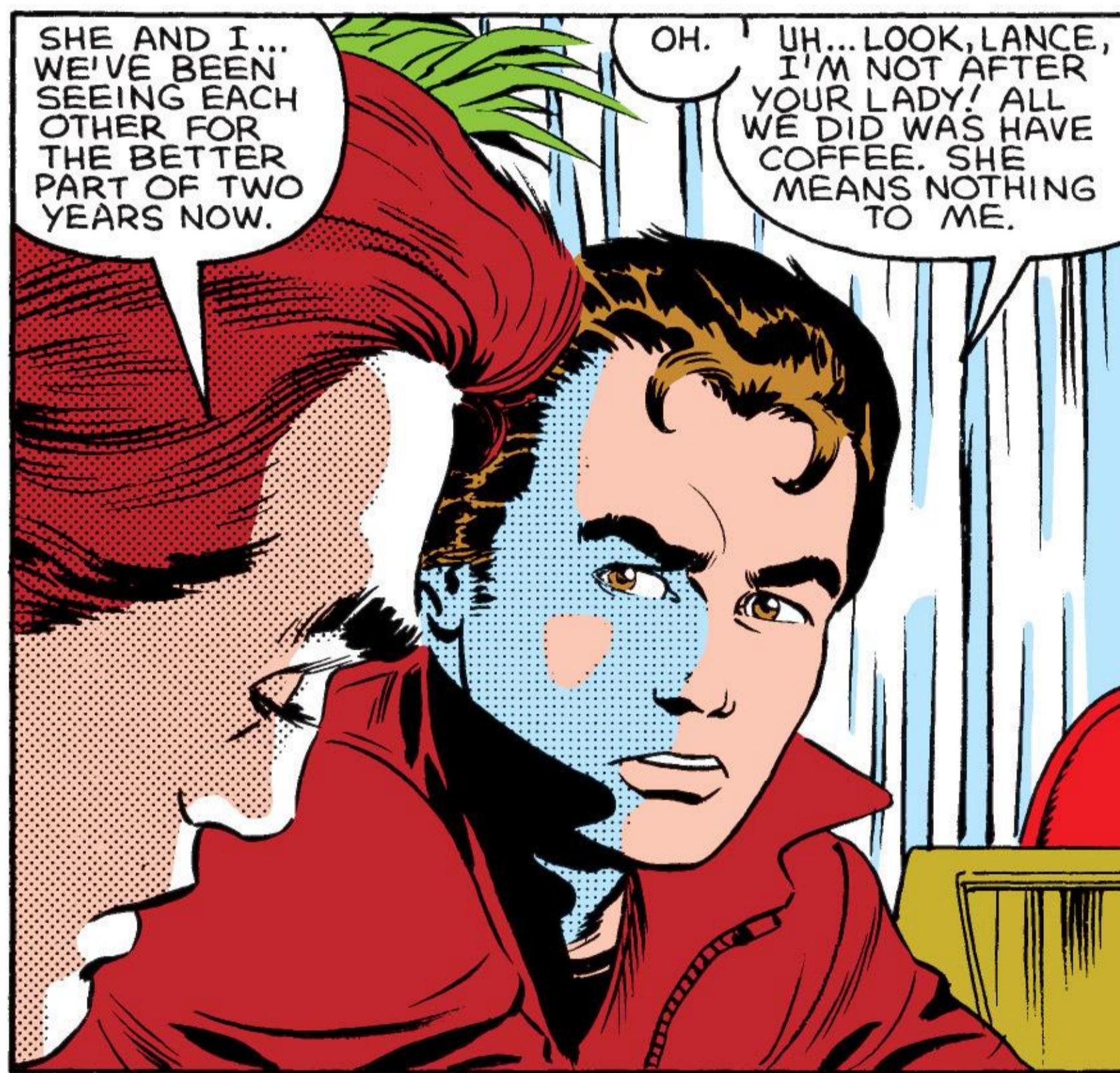
IN MOMENTS, THE MAN-SHAPED ASSEMBLY OF MAGNANIUM STEEL, SYNTHETIC TISSUE, AND MICRO-CIRCUITRY IS ROCKETING THROUGH THE OPTIMUM TARGET AREA.

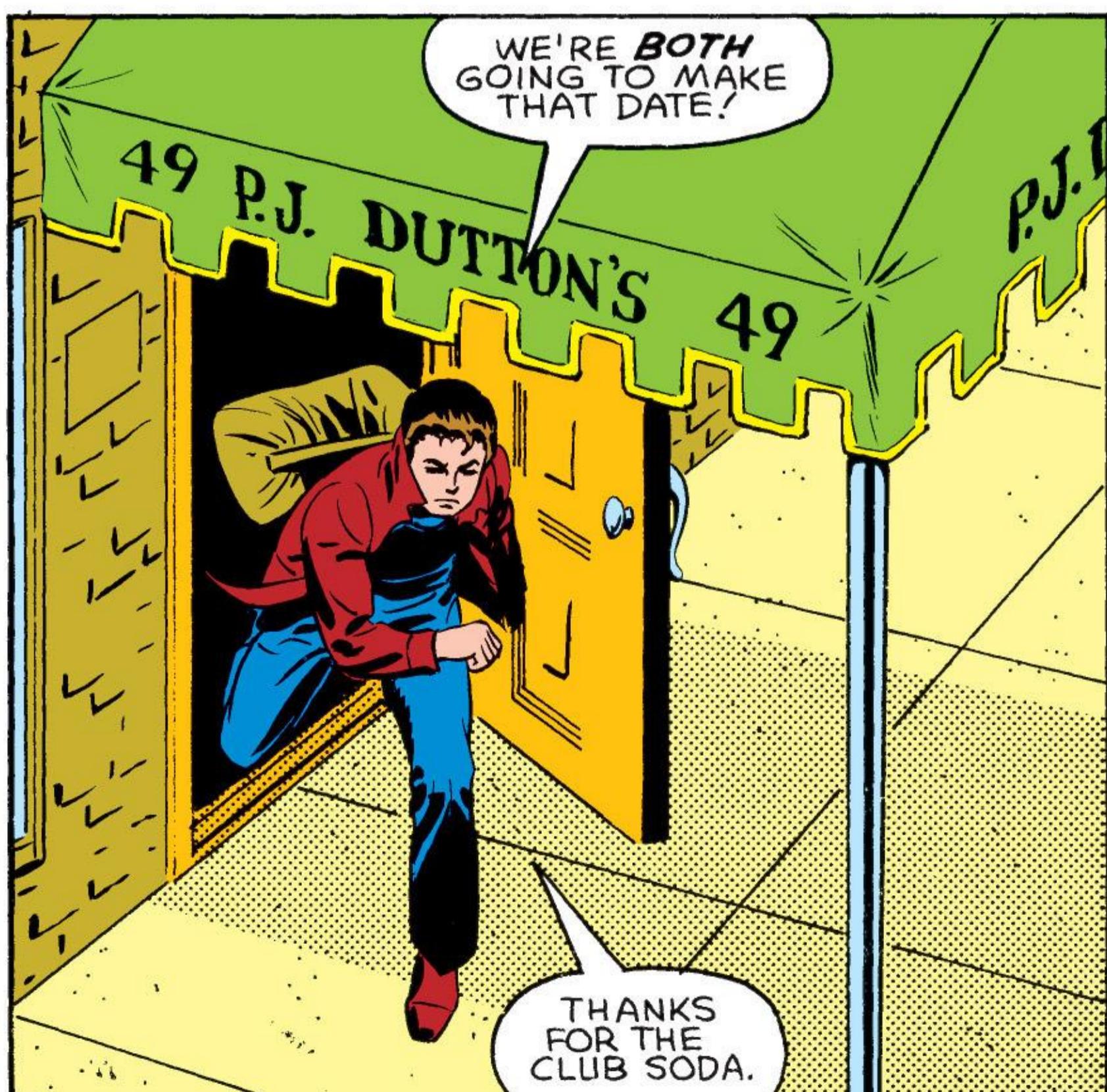
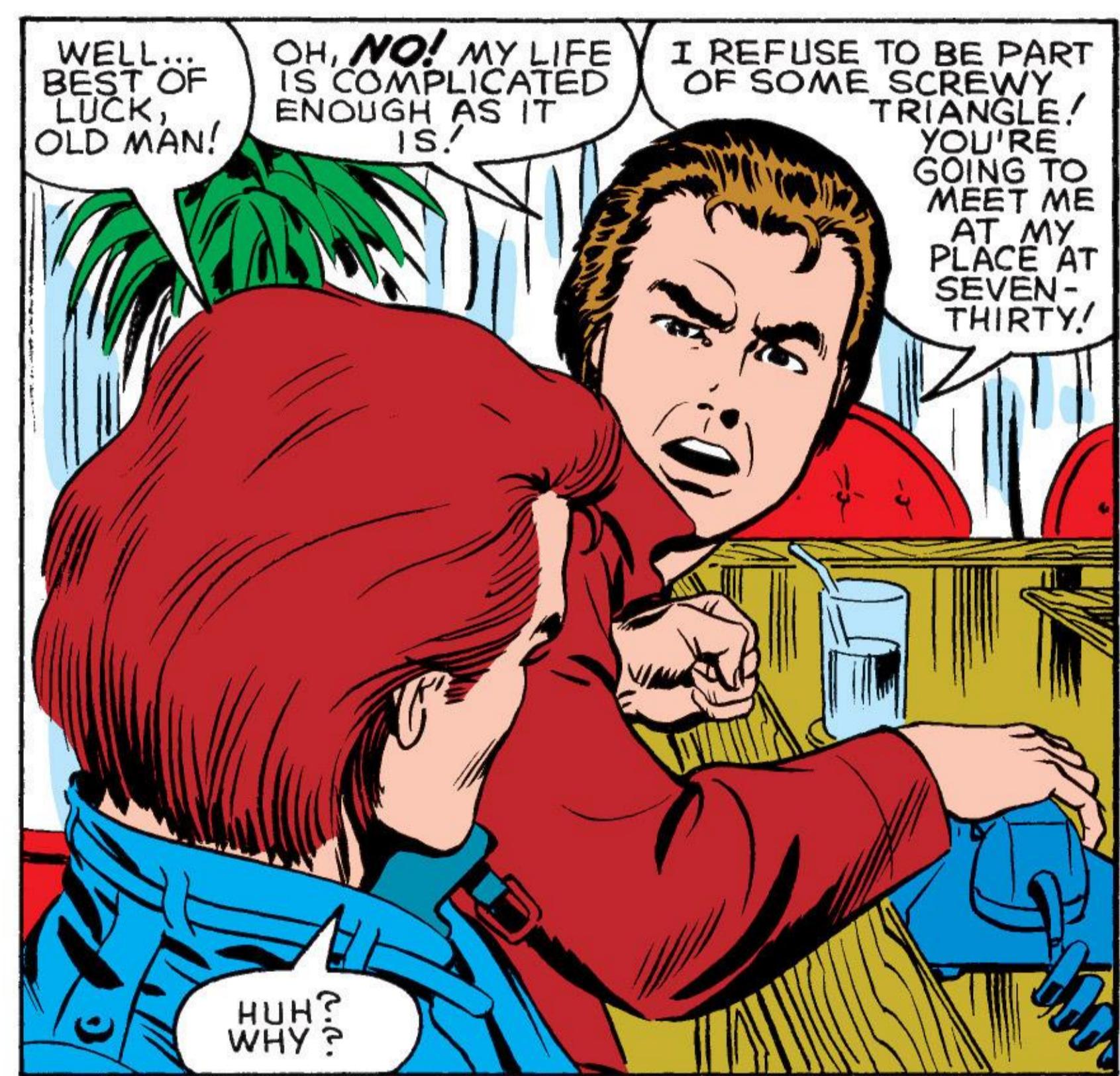
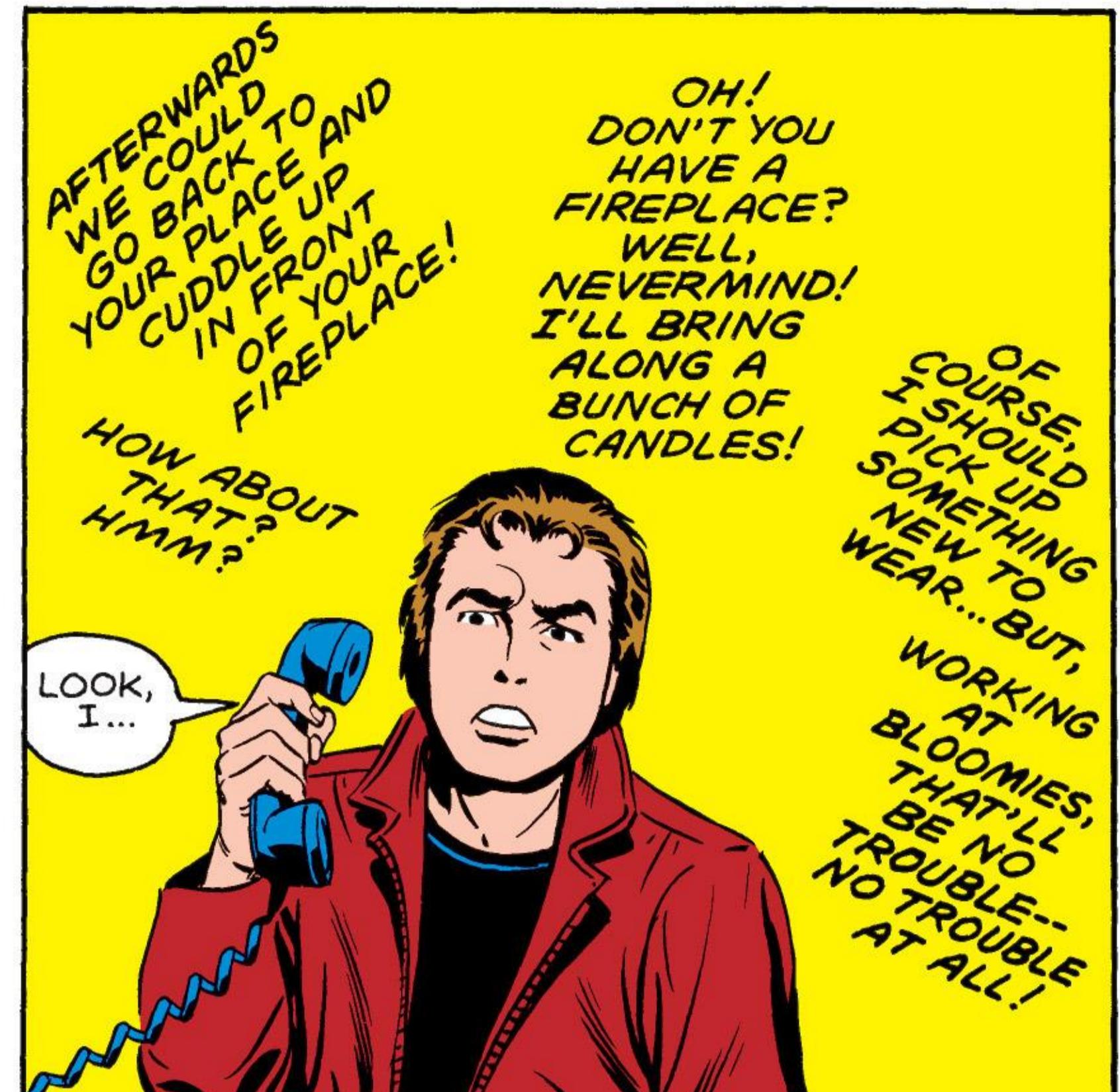
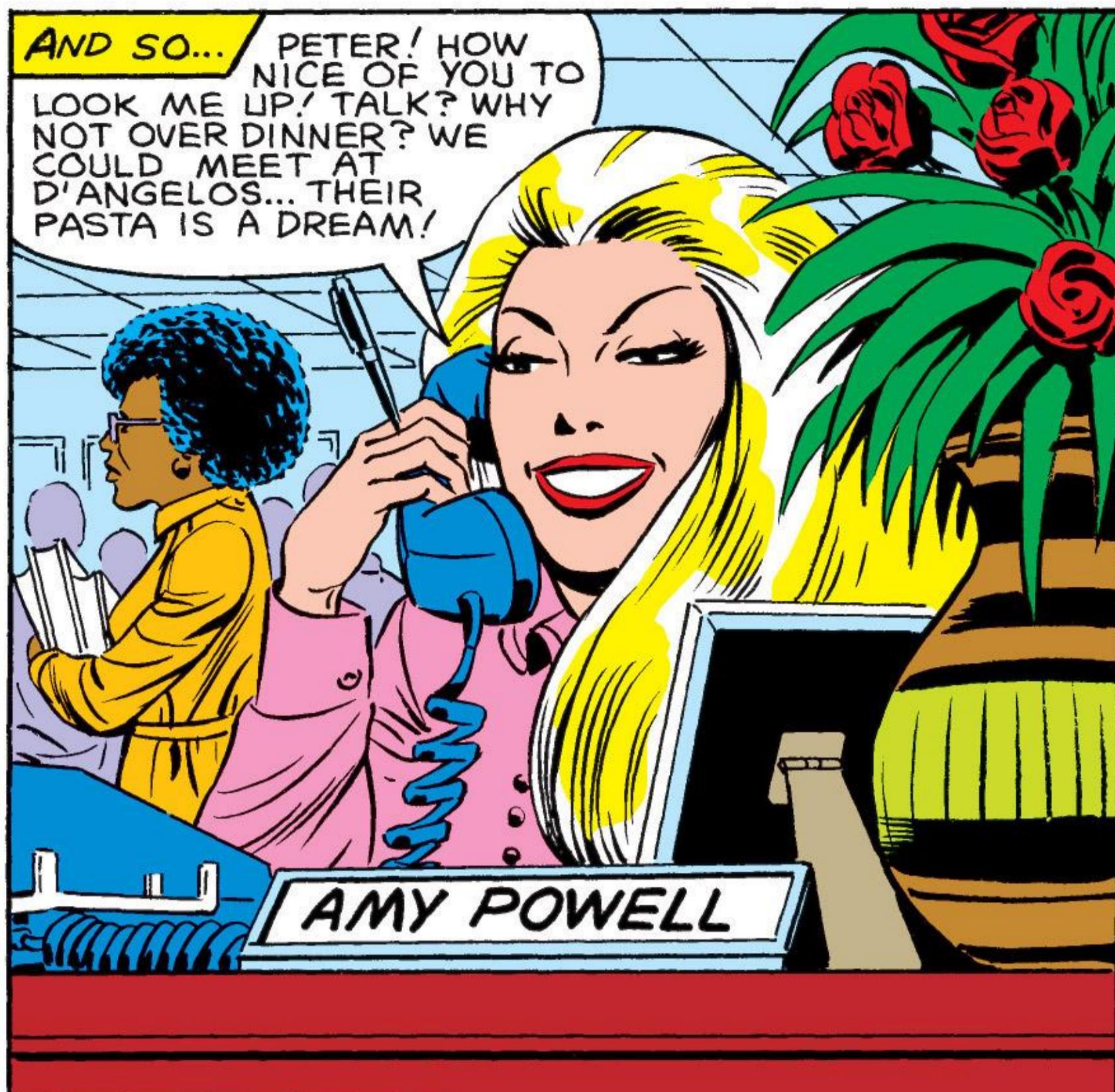
WHILE BEHIND, THE BROW ON THE THINKER'S SIMULACRUM BODY FURROWS IN CONCENTRATION--

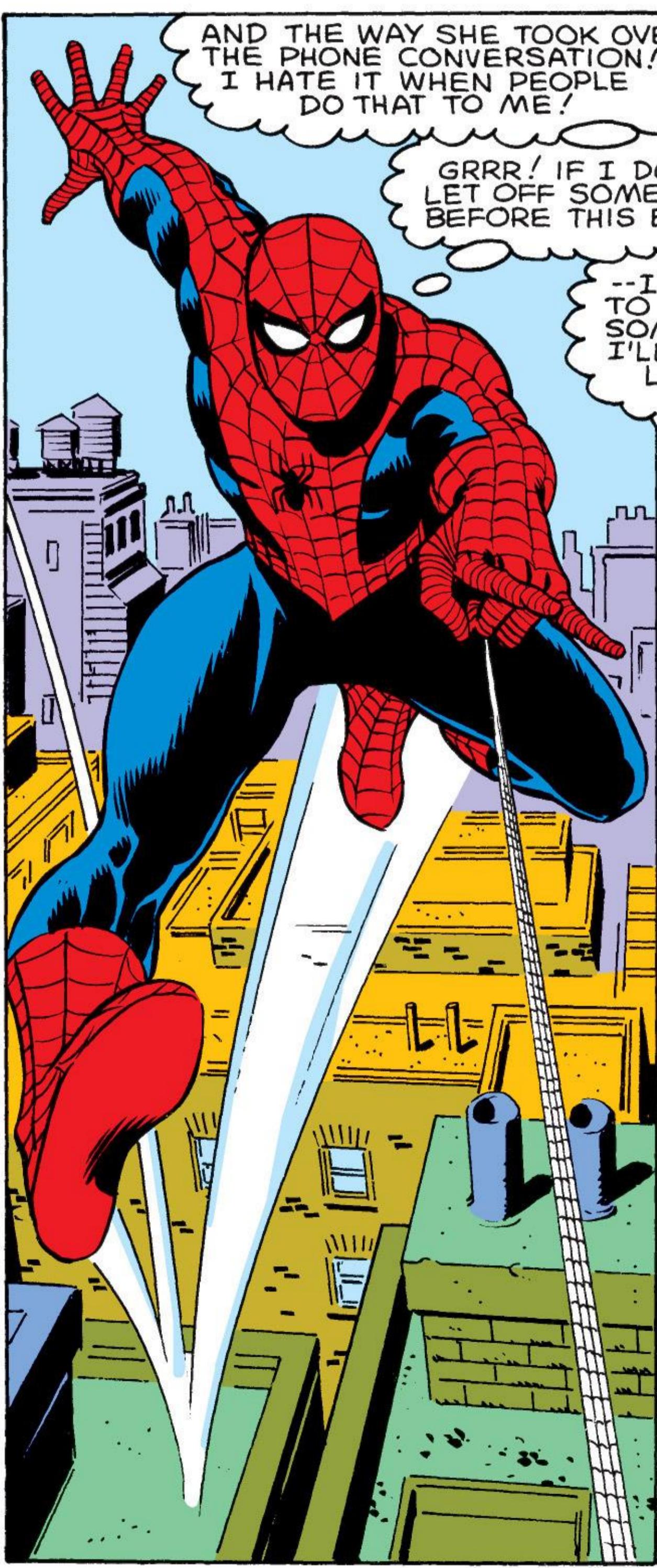


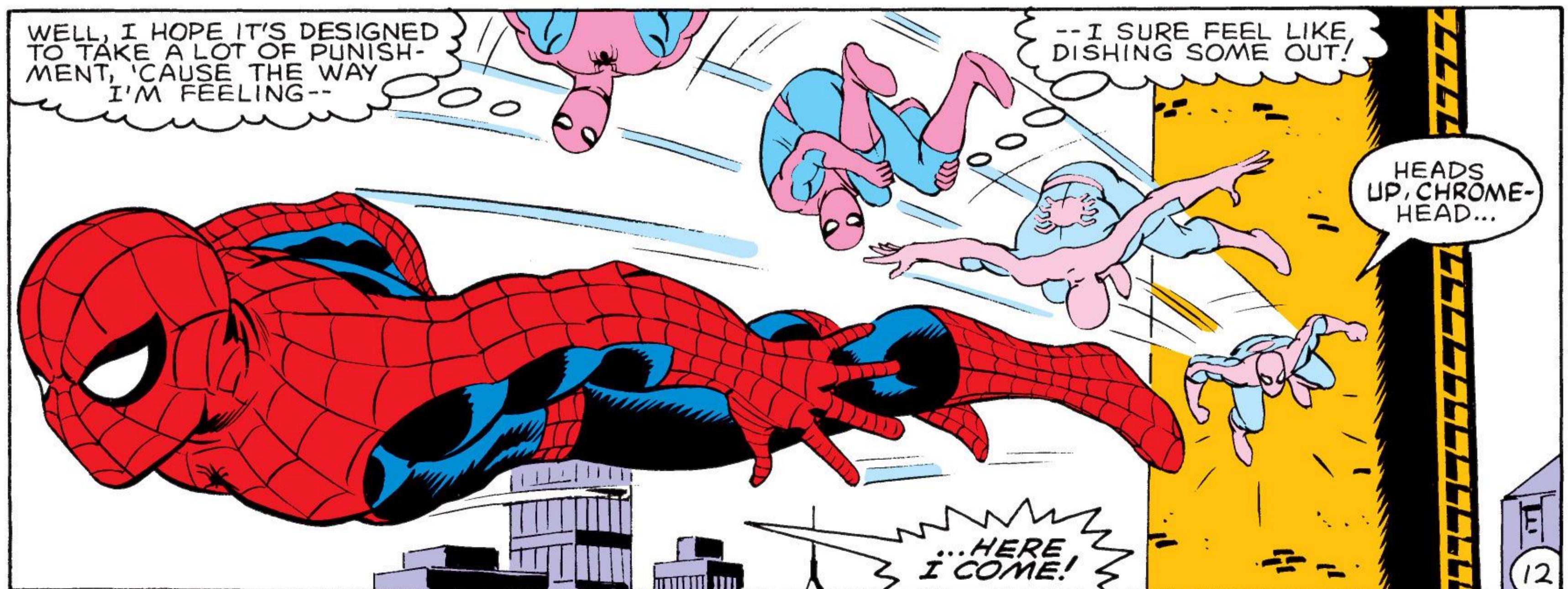
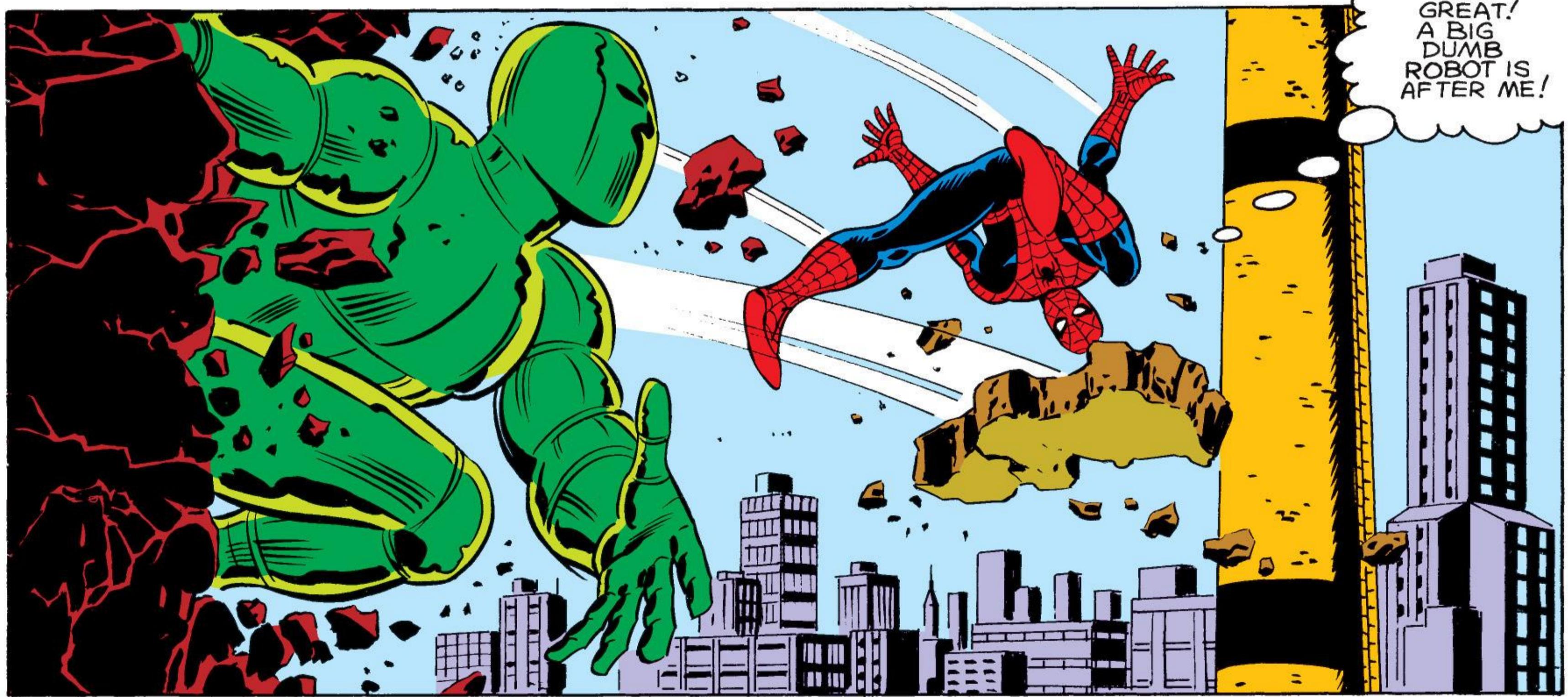


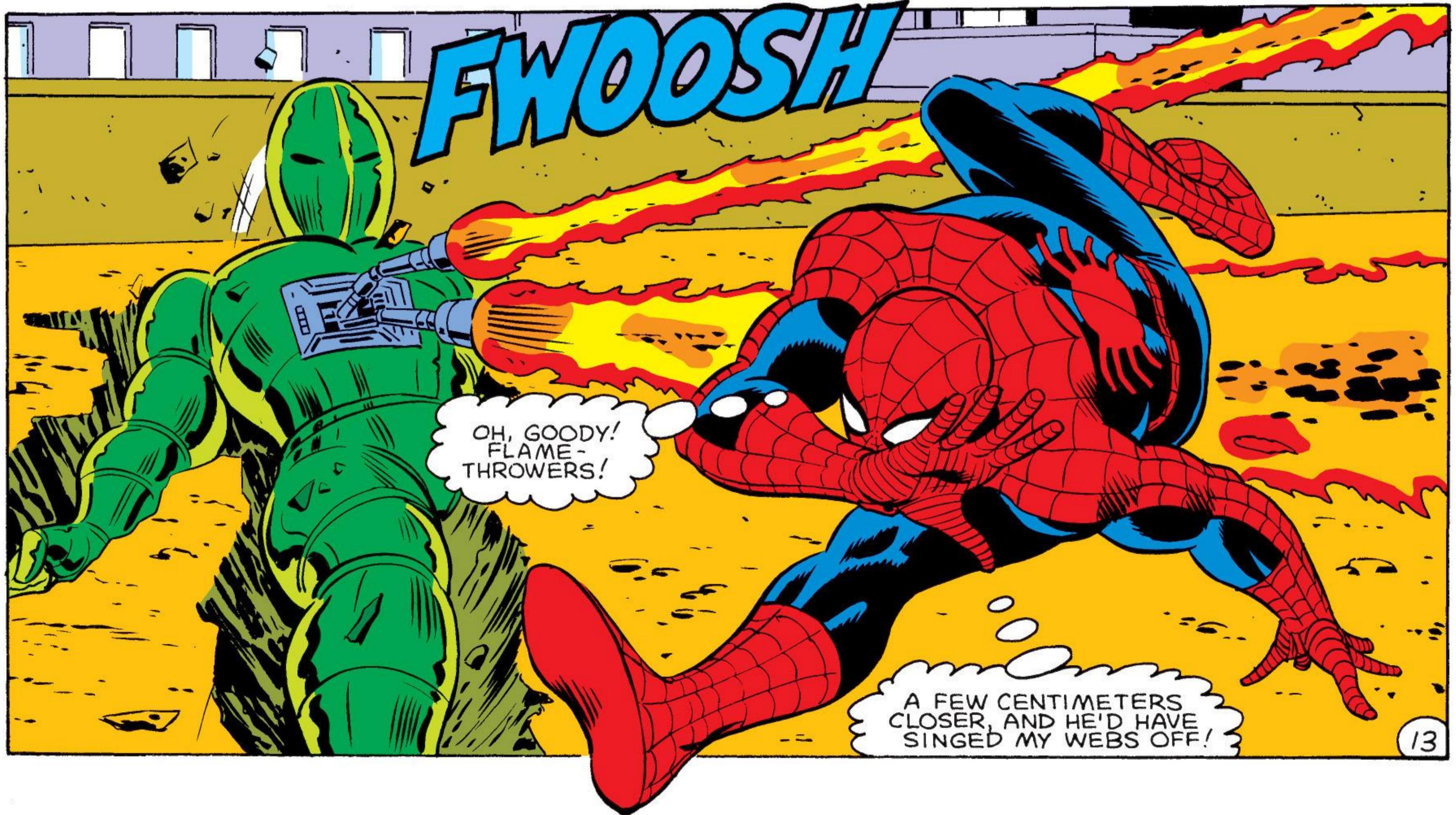
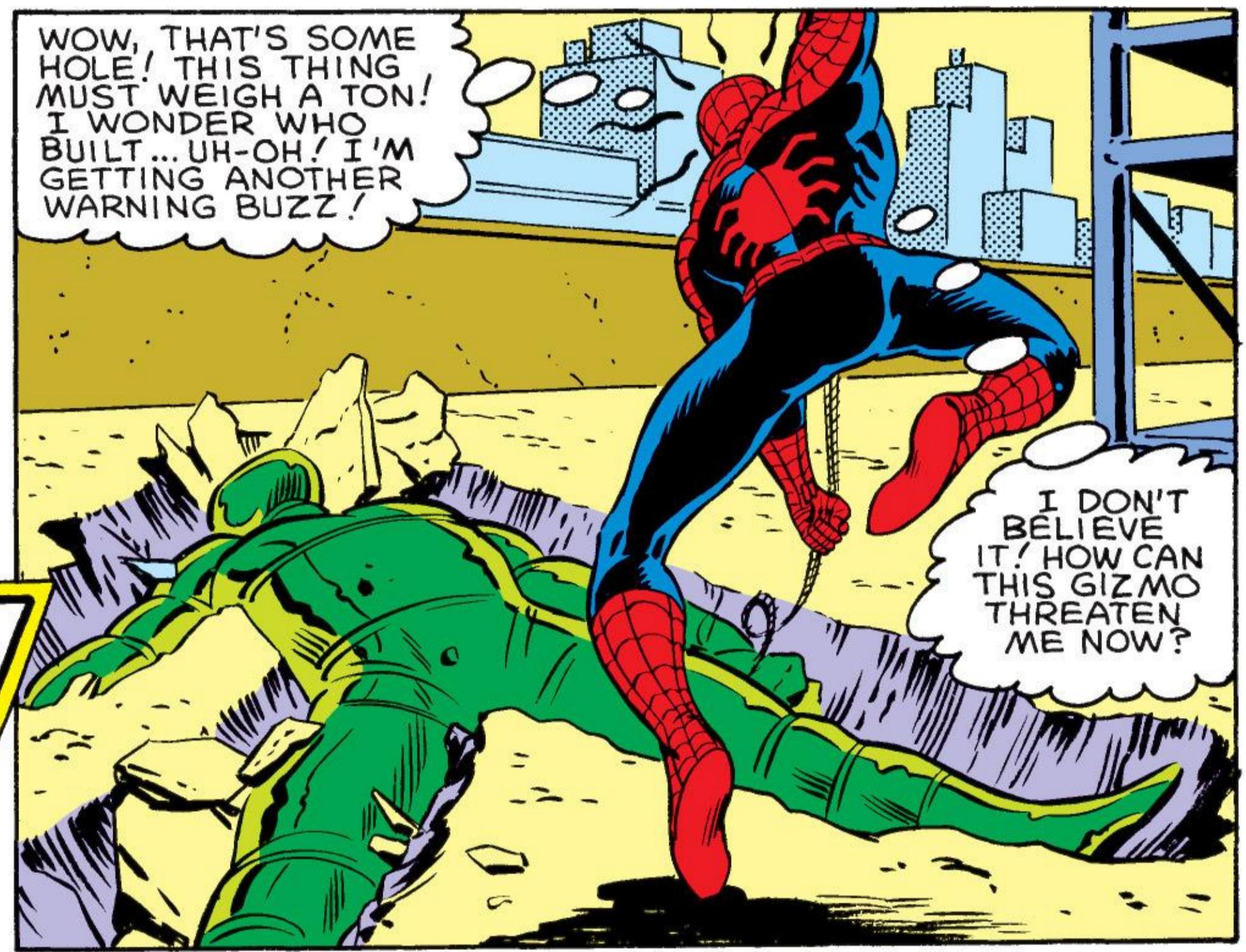
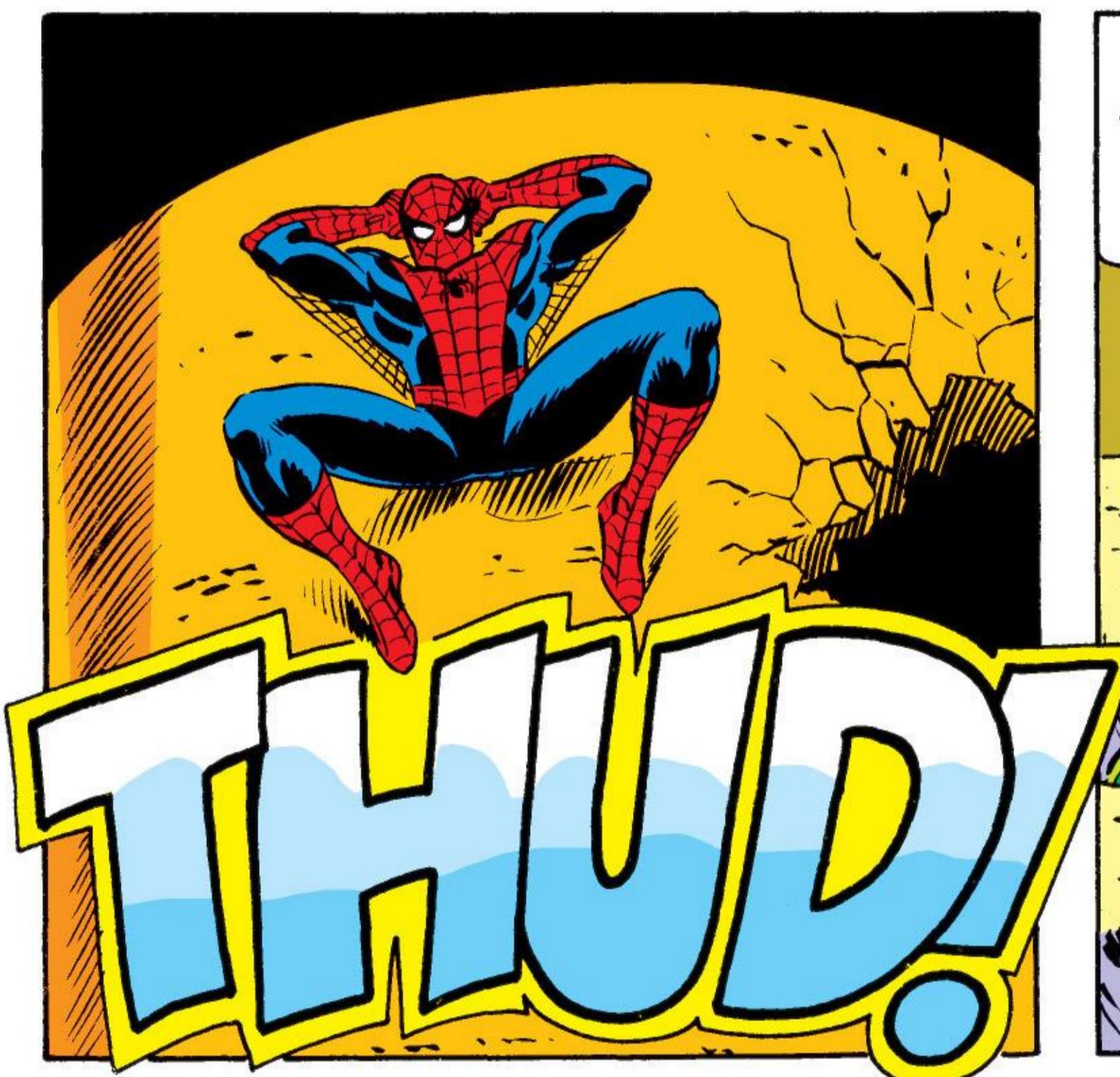
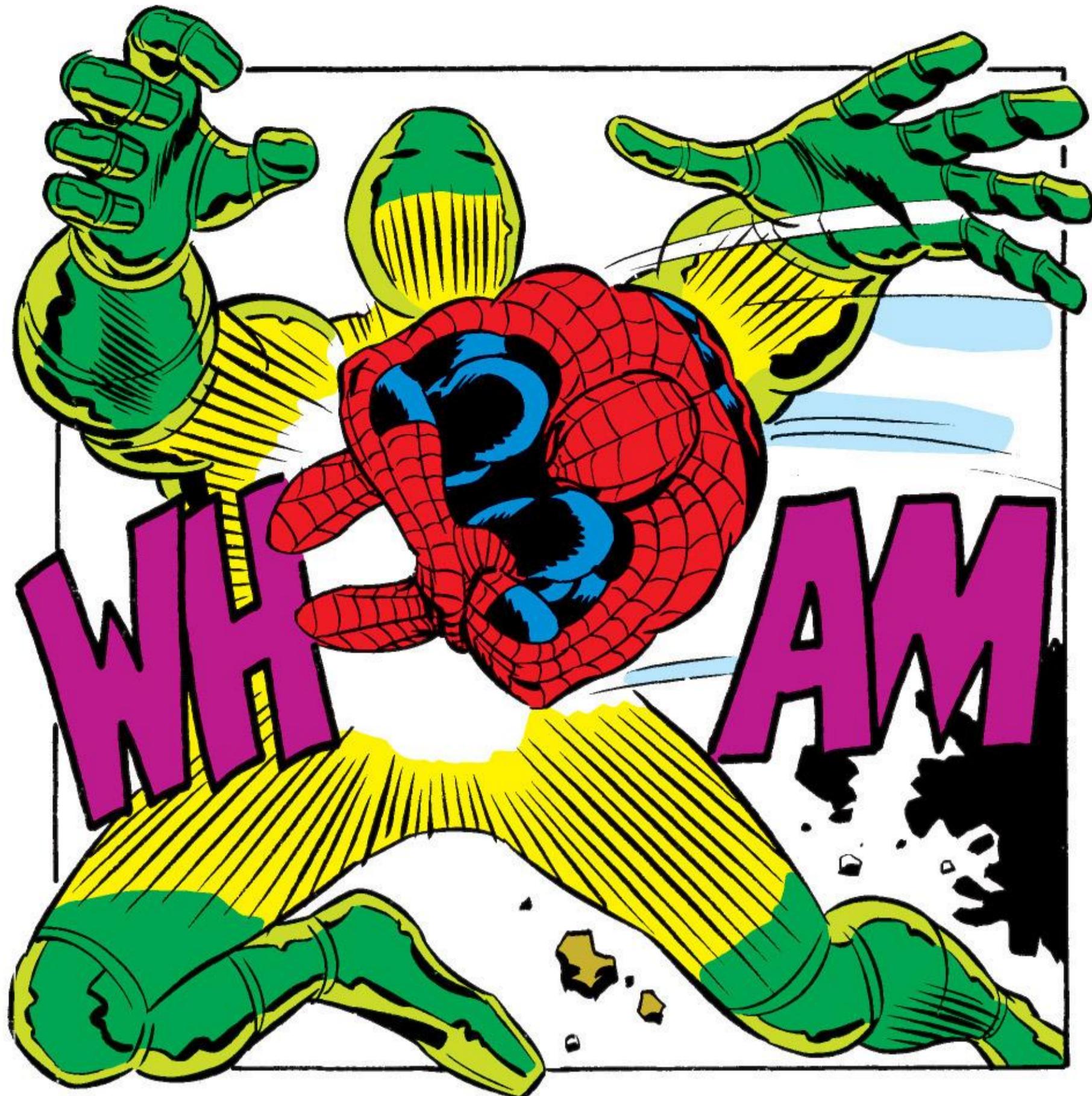
*SEE LAST ISSUE.

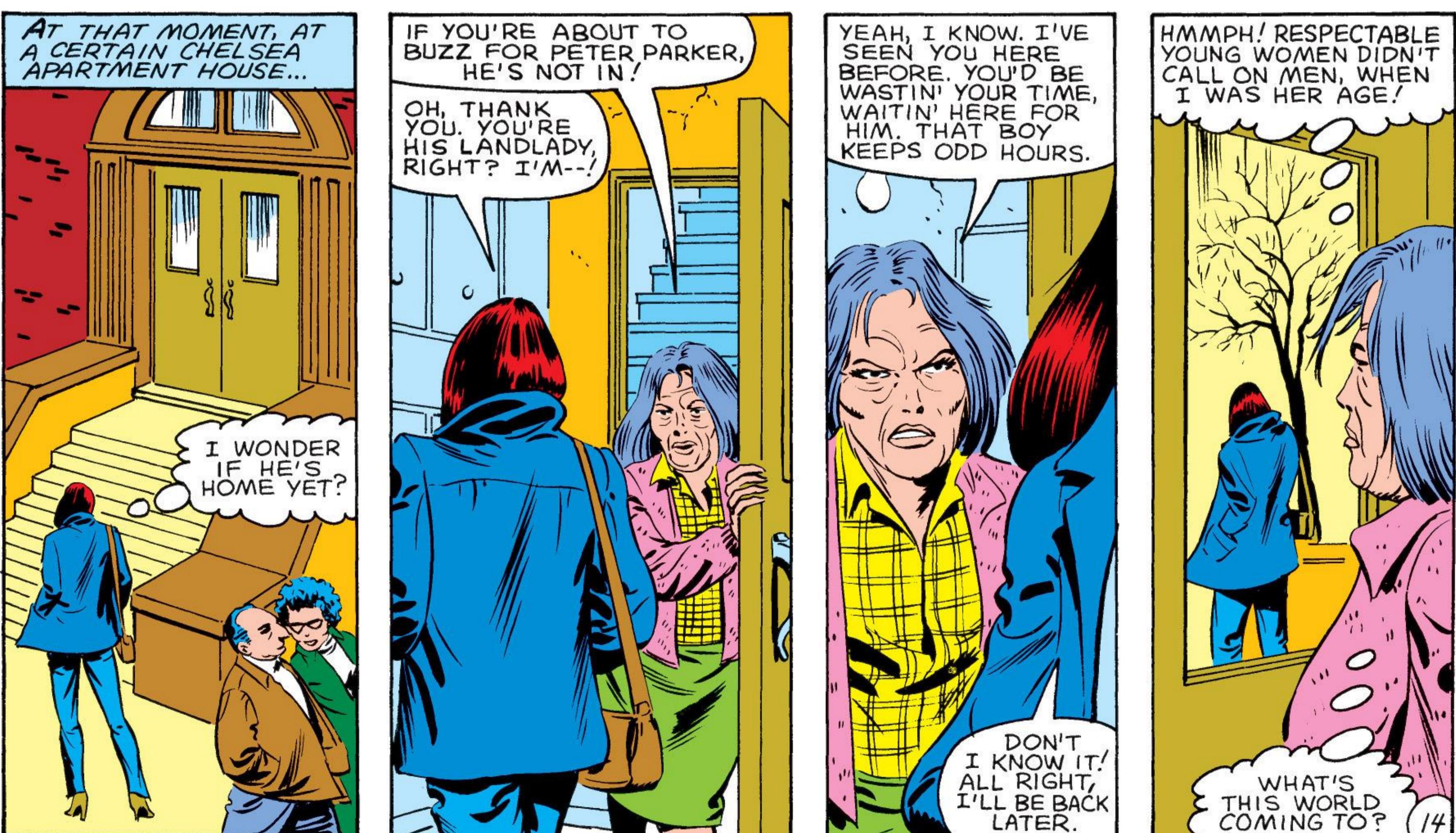
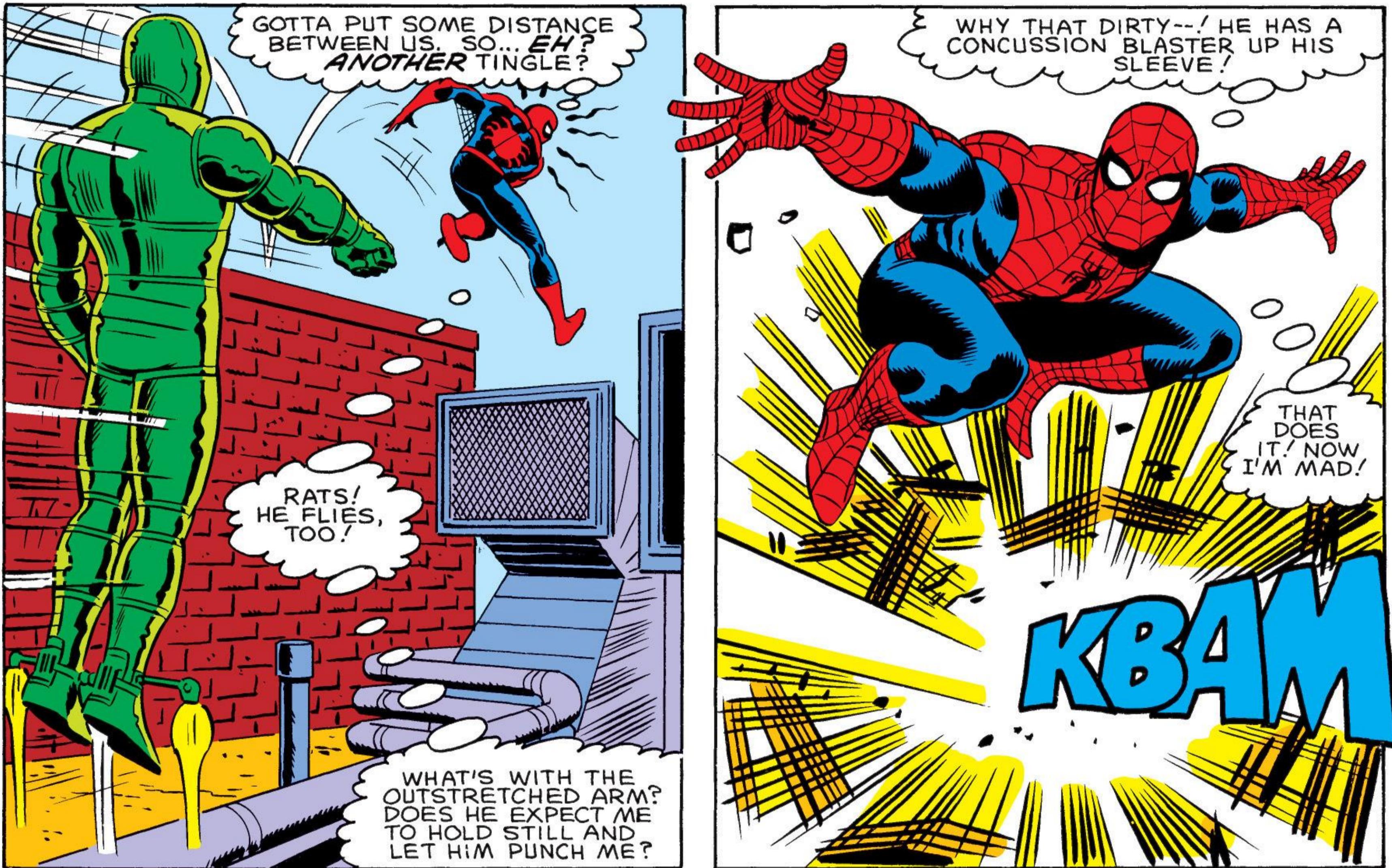
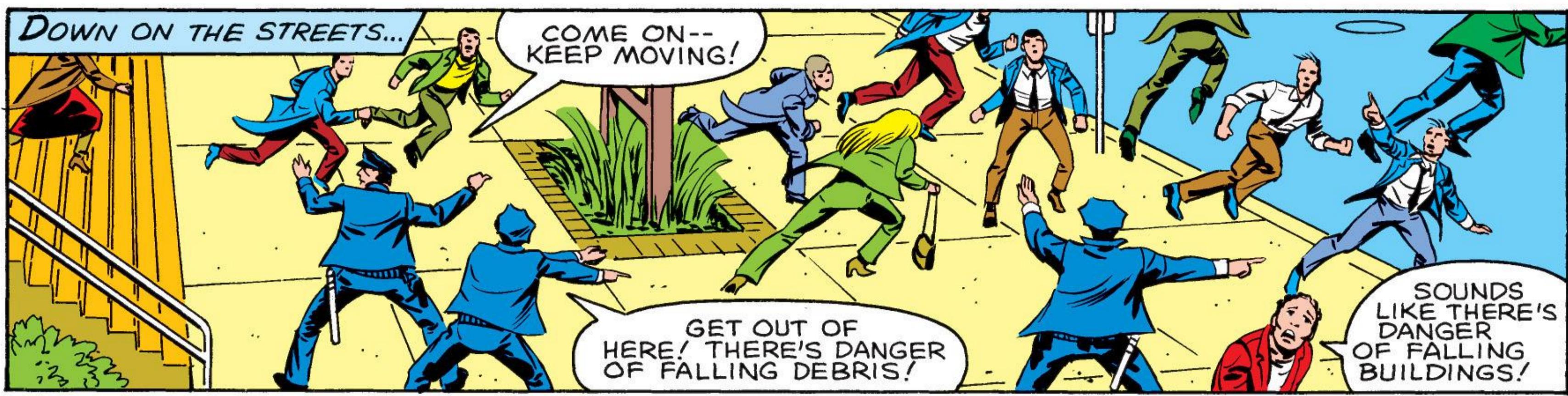


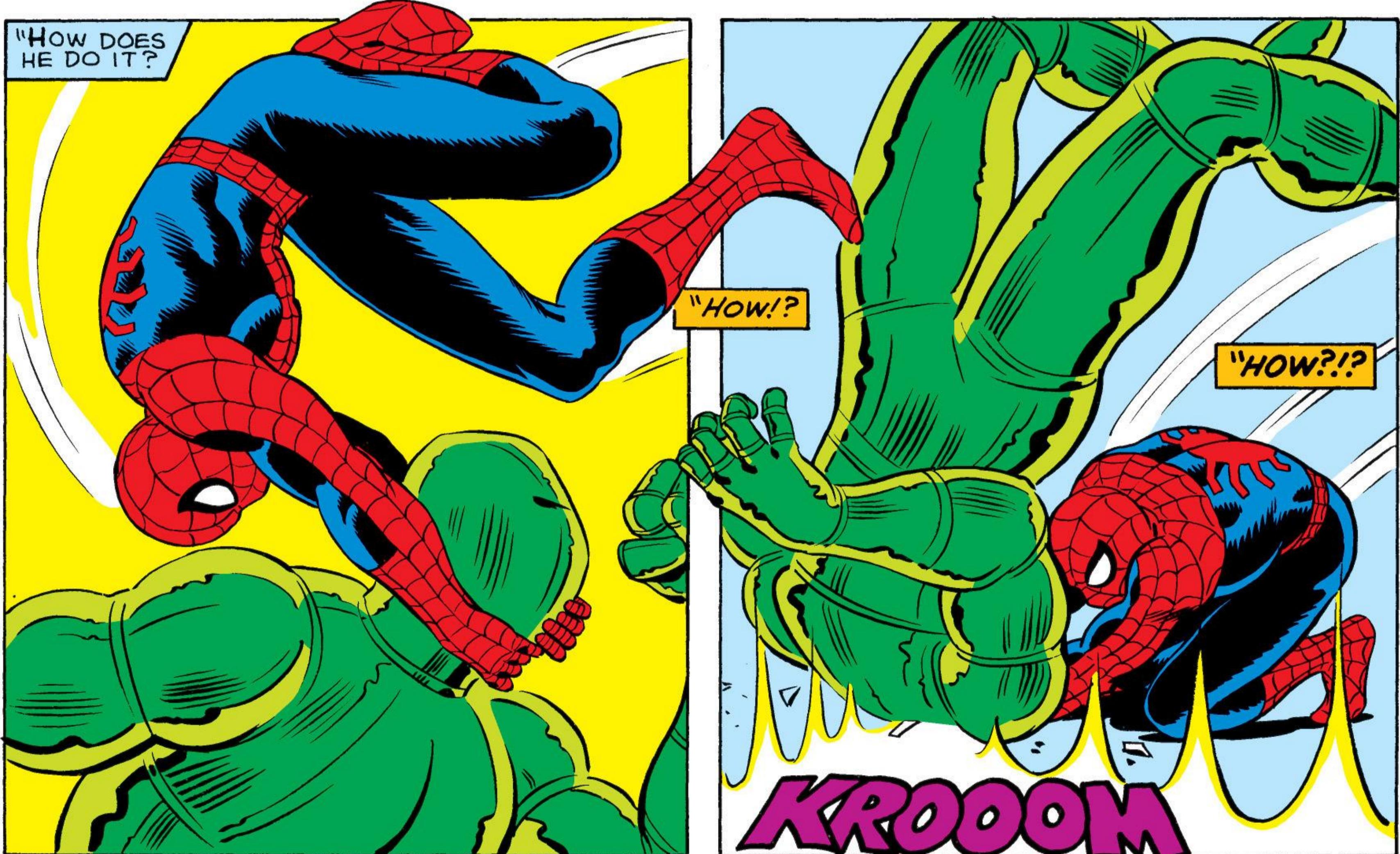
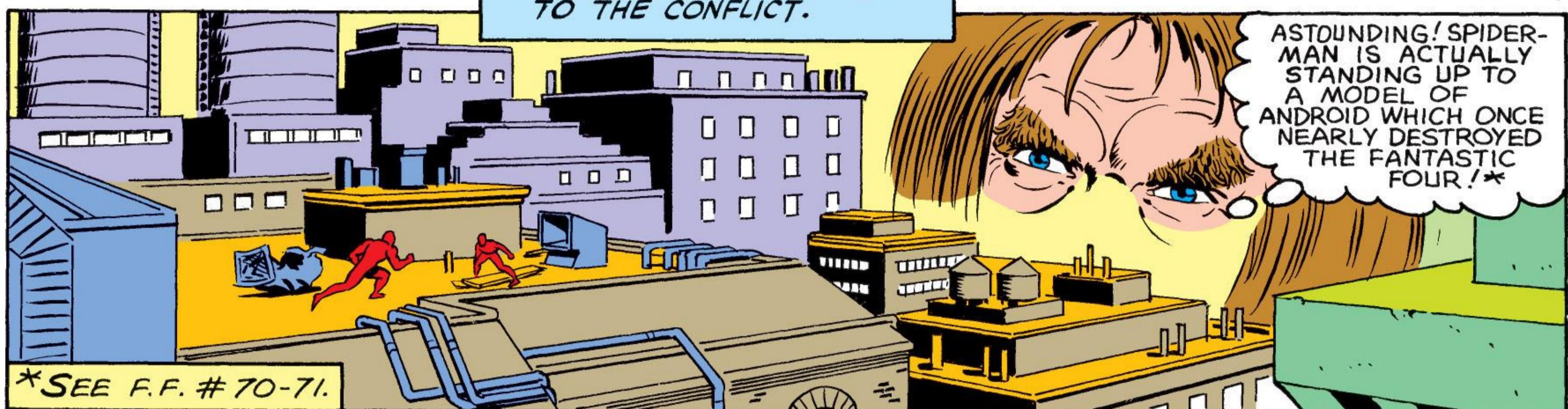
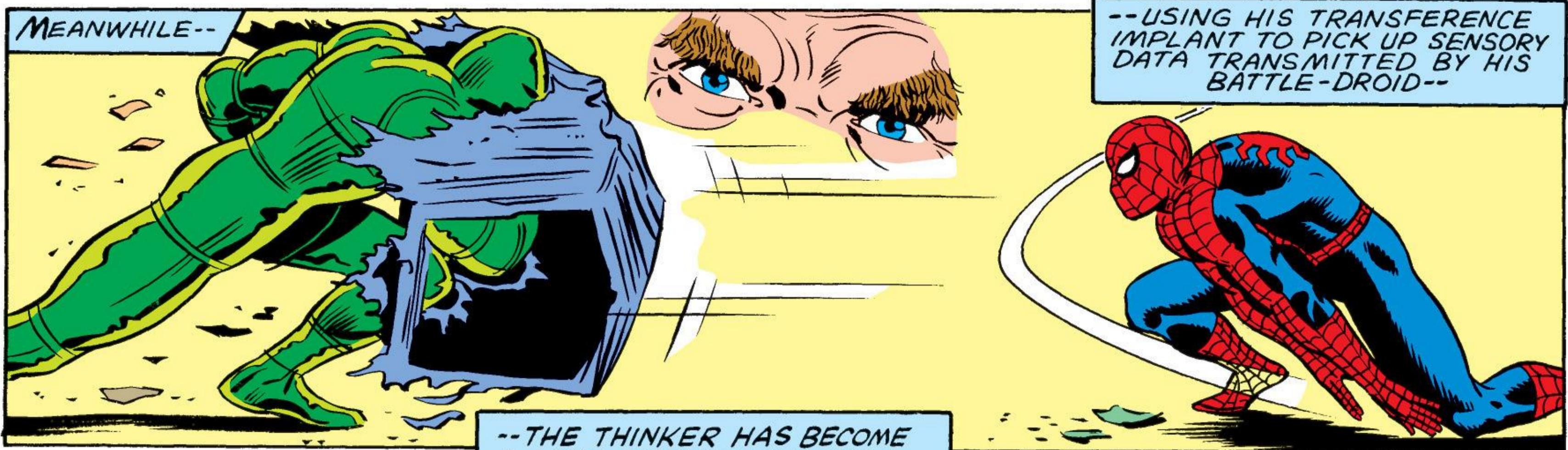


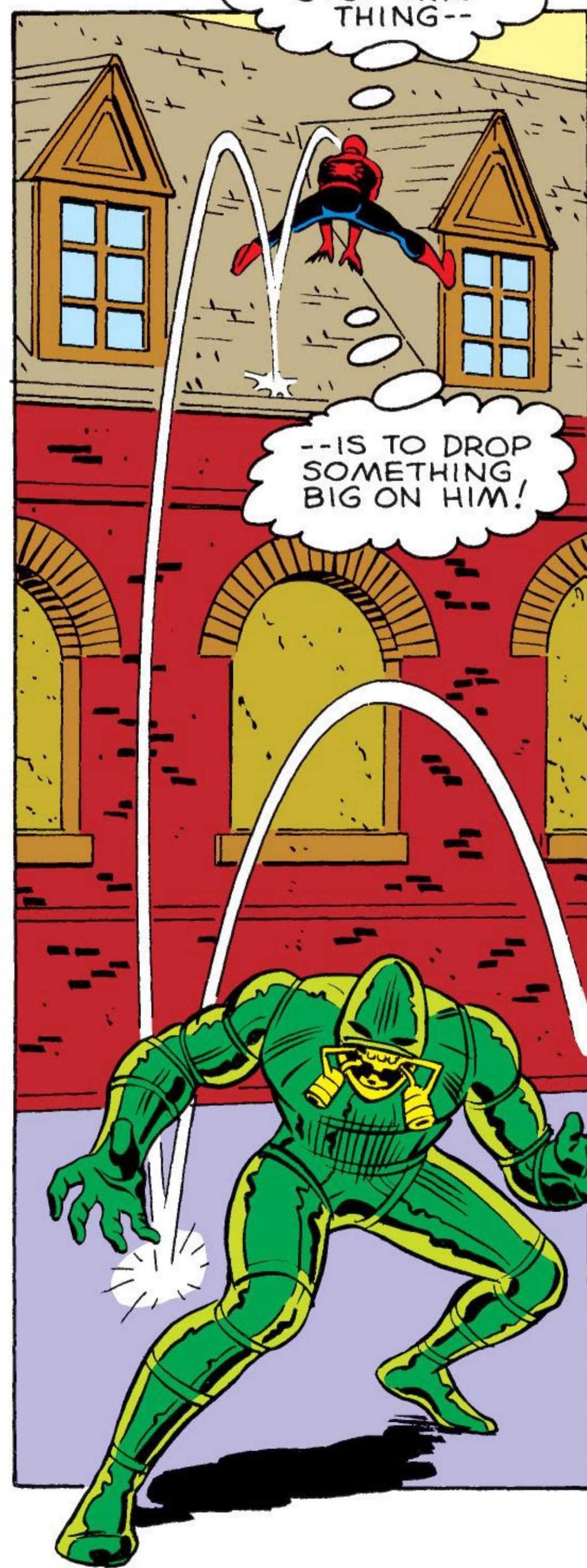
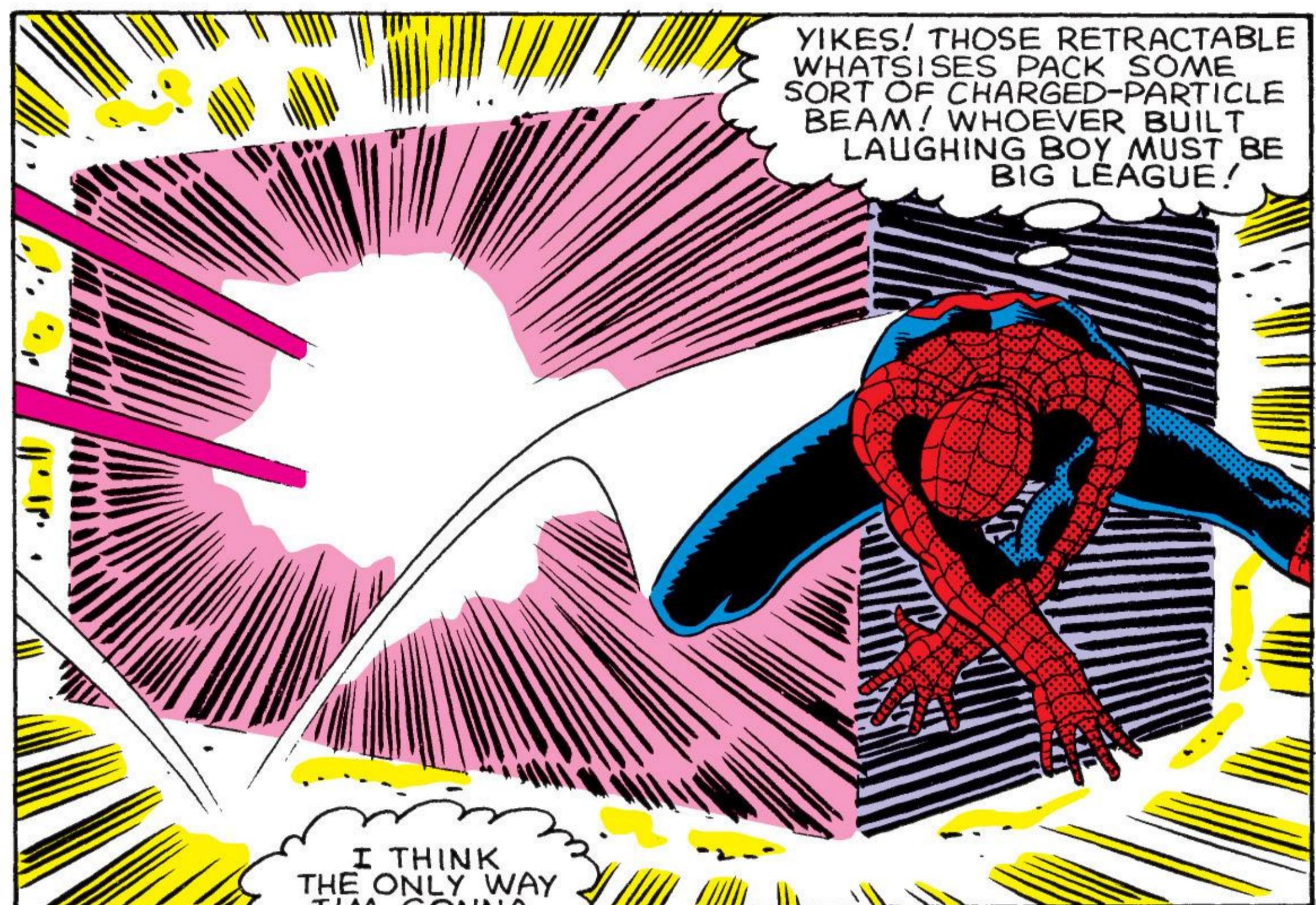
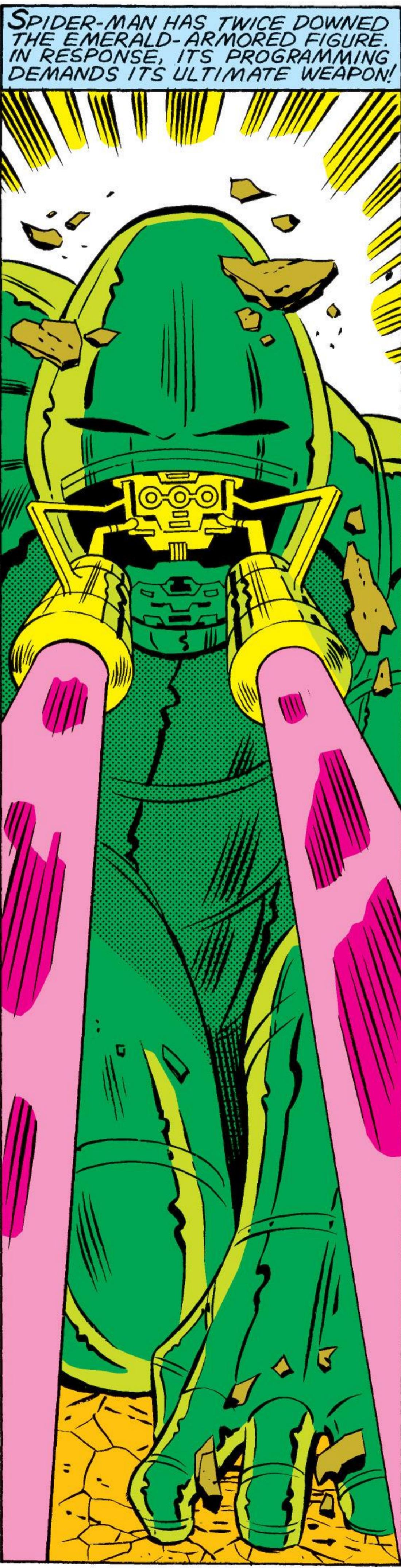
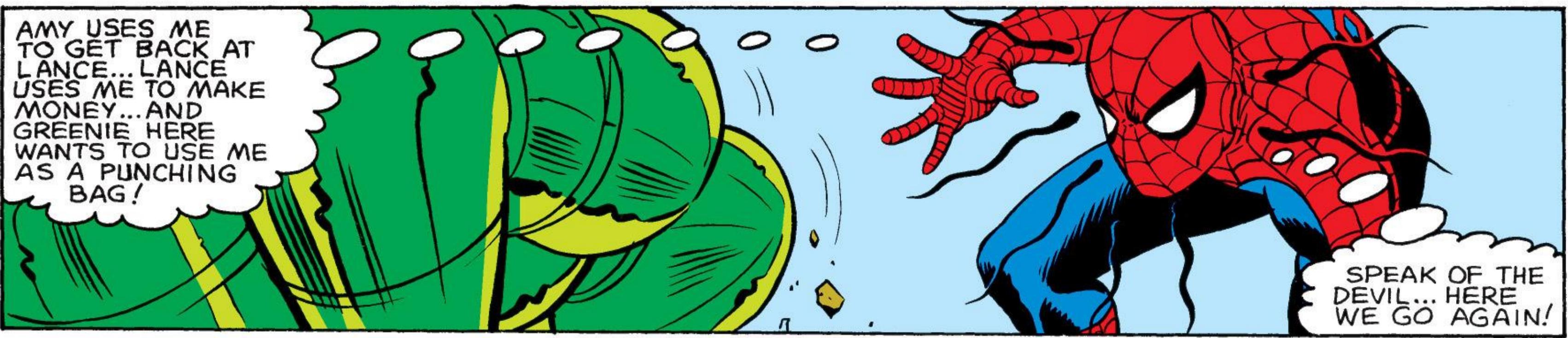








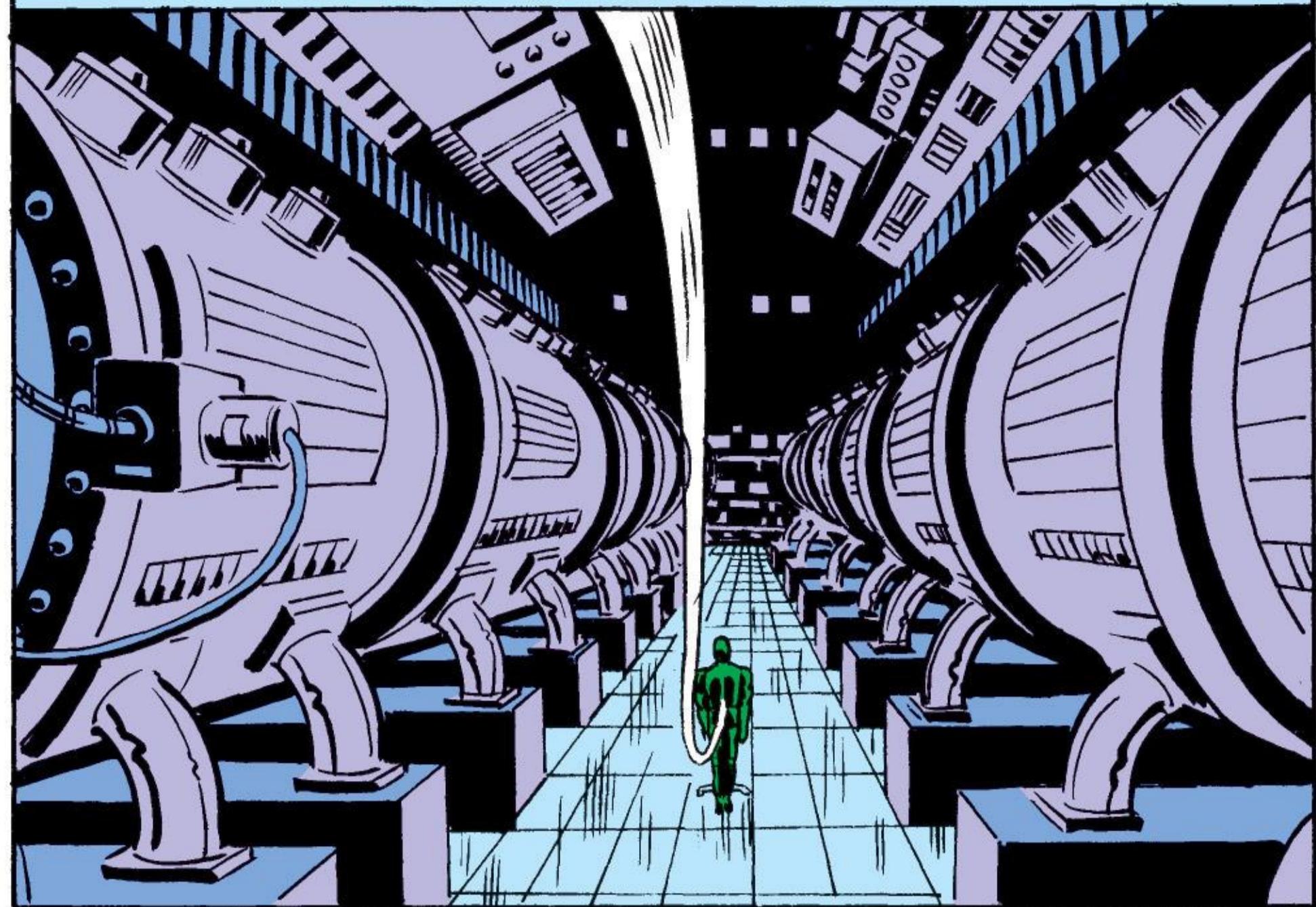




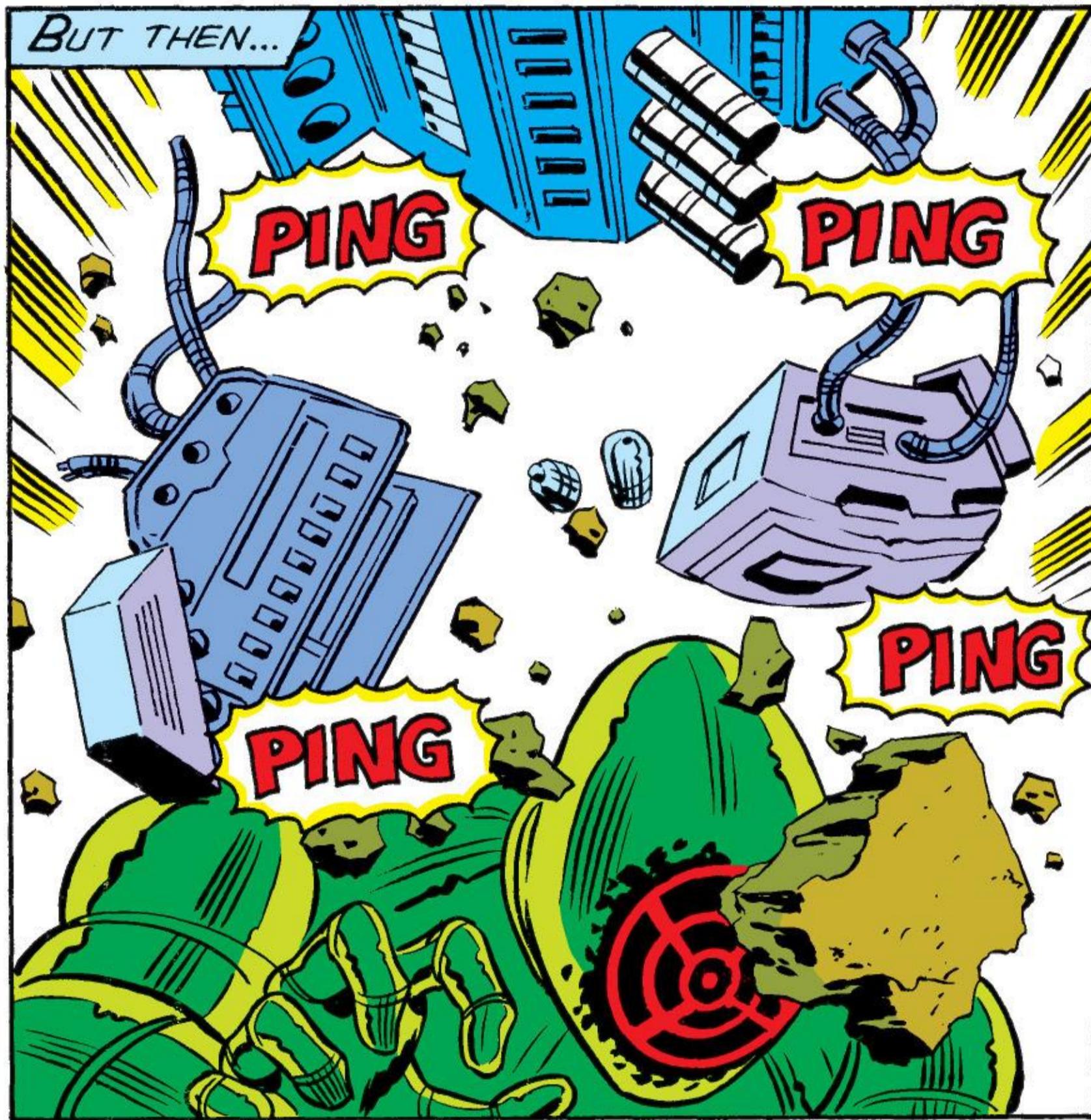
HOWEVER, AS THE HULKING, HUMAN-SHAPED DEVICE SMASHES ITS WAY AFTER SPIDER-MAN, ITS RADAR SCANNING CIRCUITS SHIFT INTO PLAY--



--PROBING THE DIMLY-LIT GENERATOR ROOM, SEARCHING FOR ANY SIGN OF MOVEMENT AMID THE ELECTRICAL HUM.

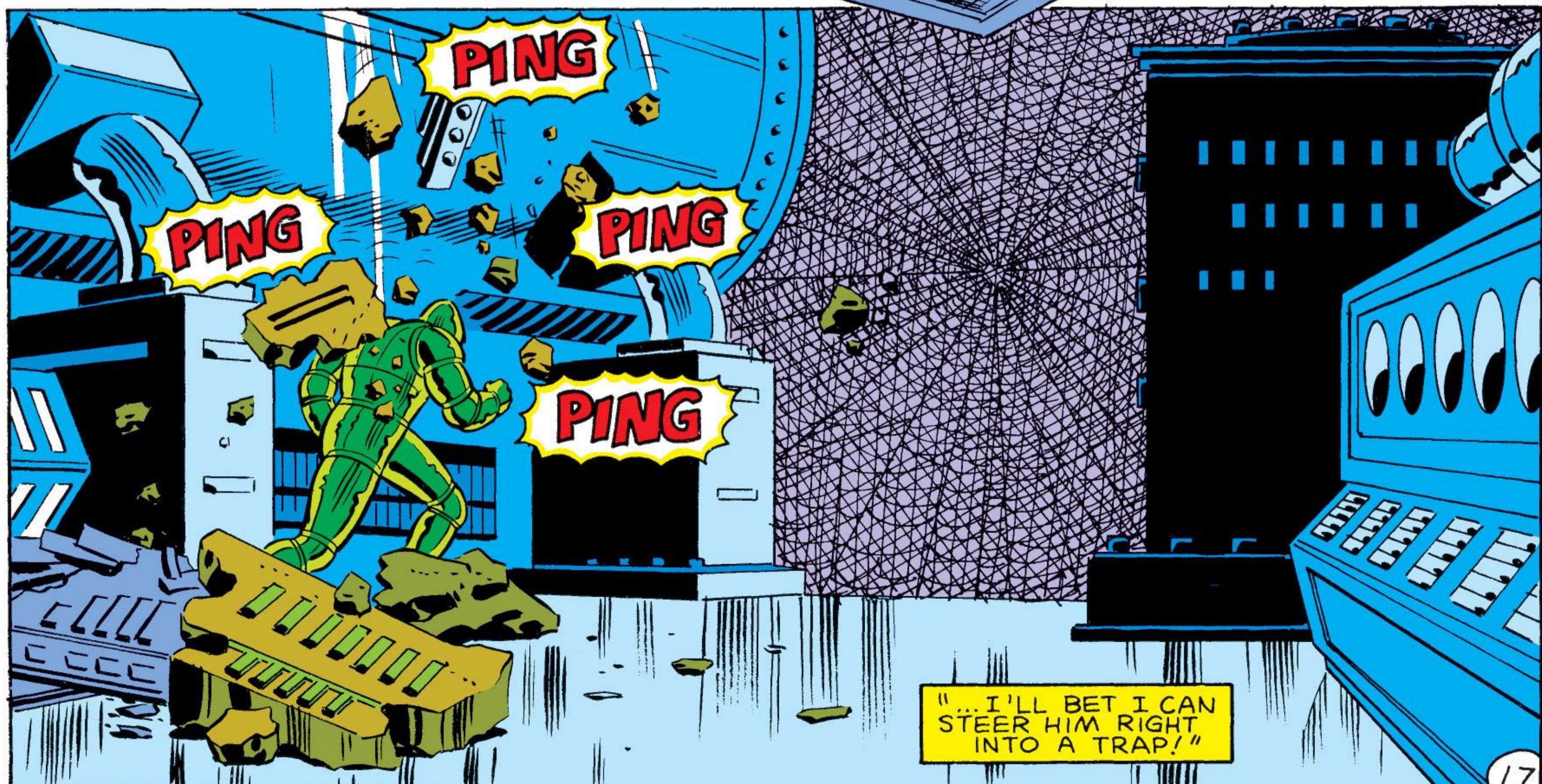
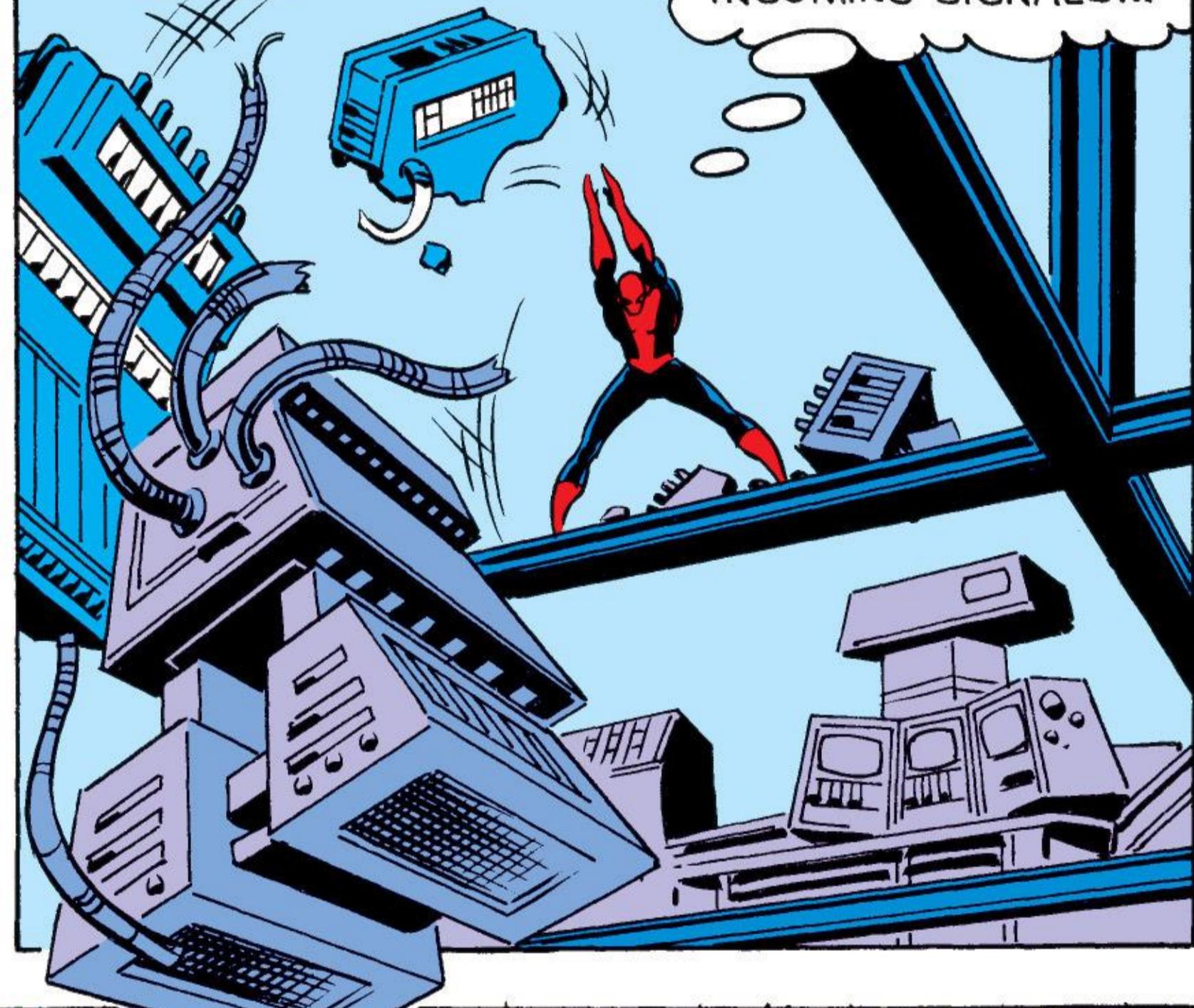


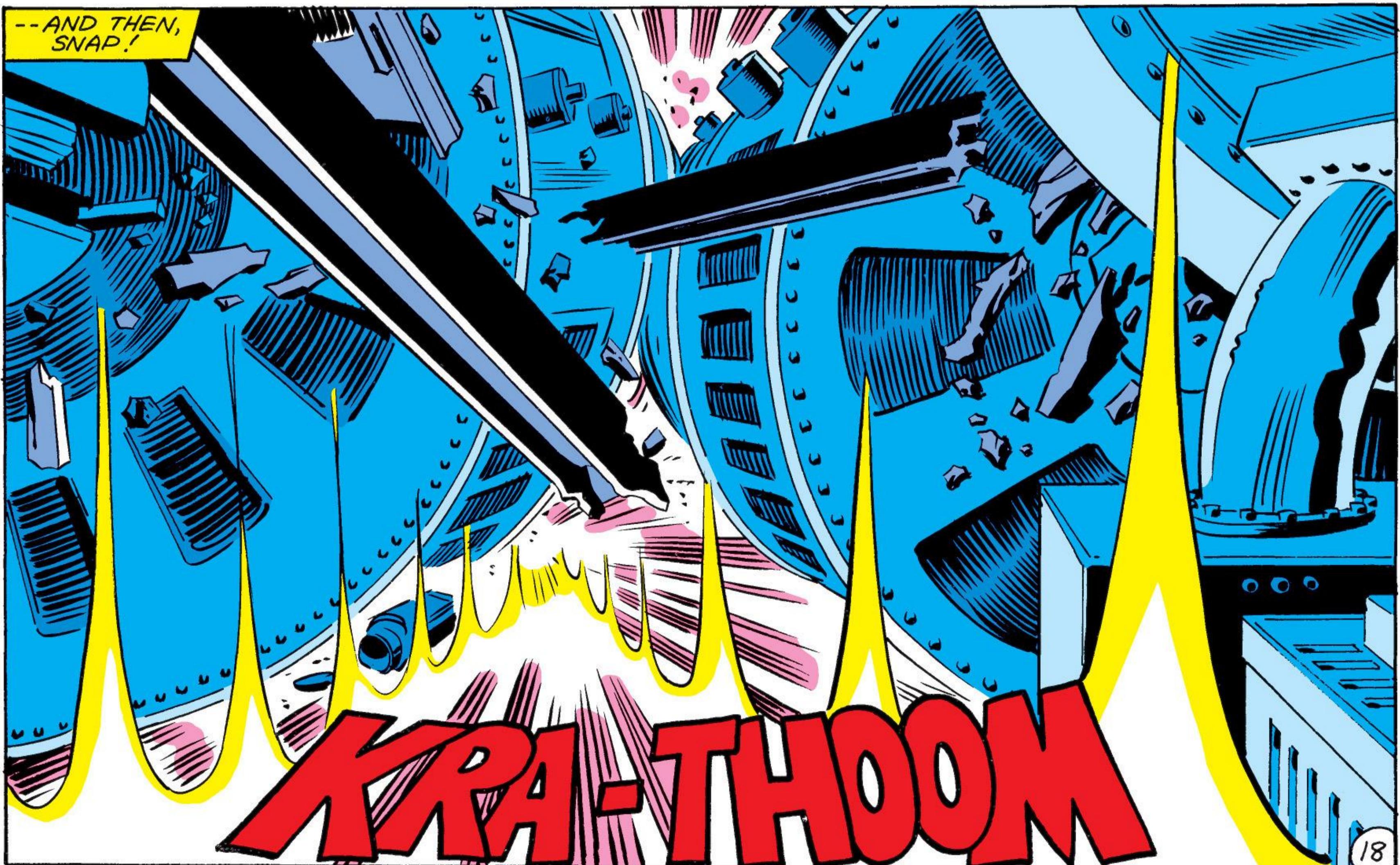
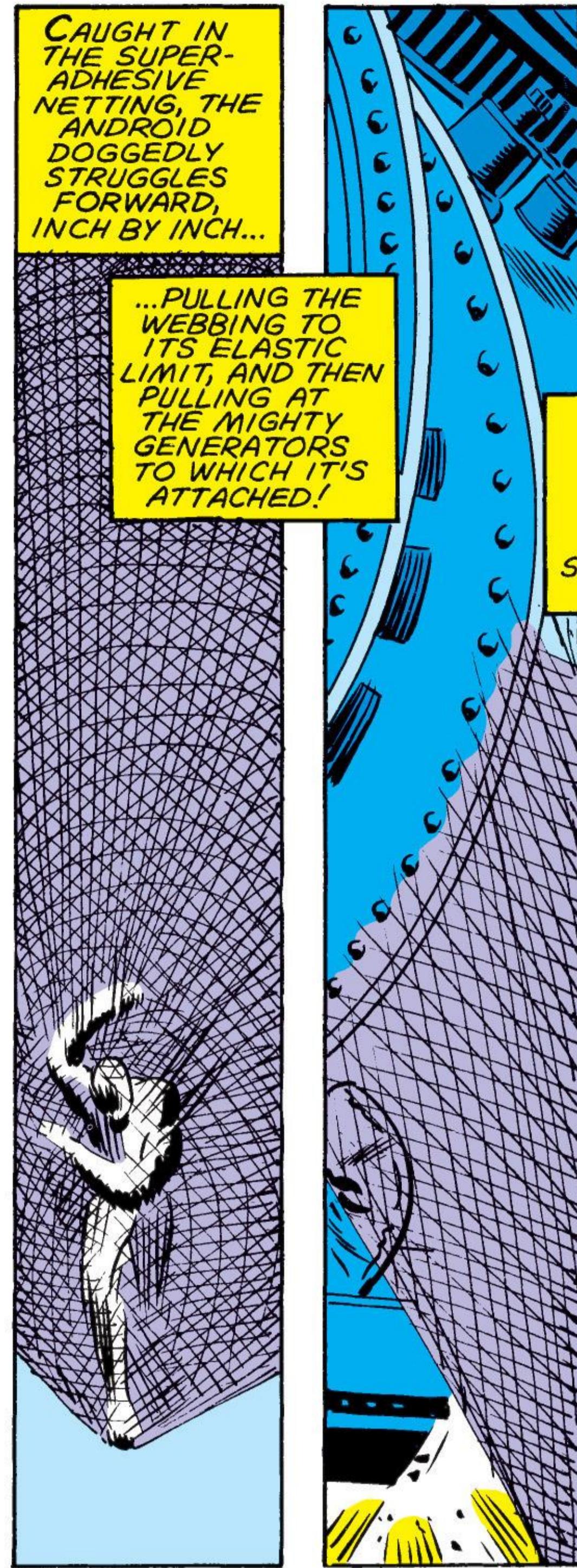
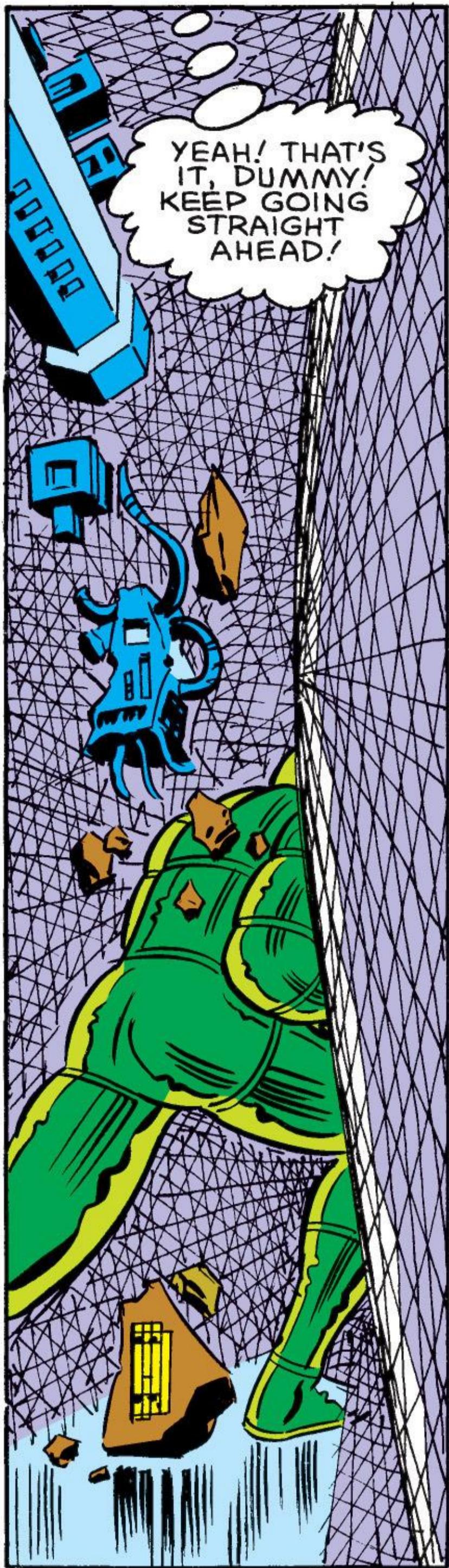
BUT THEN...

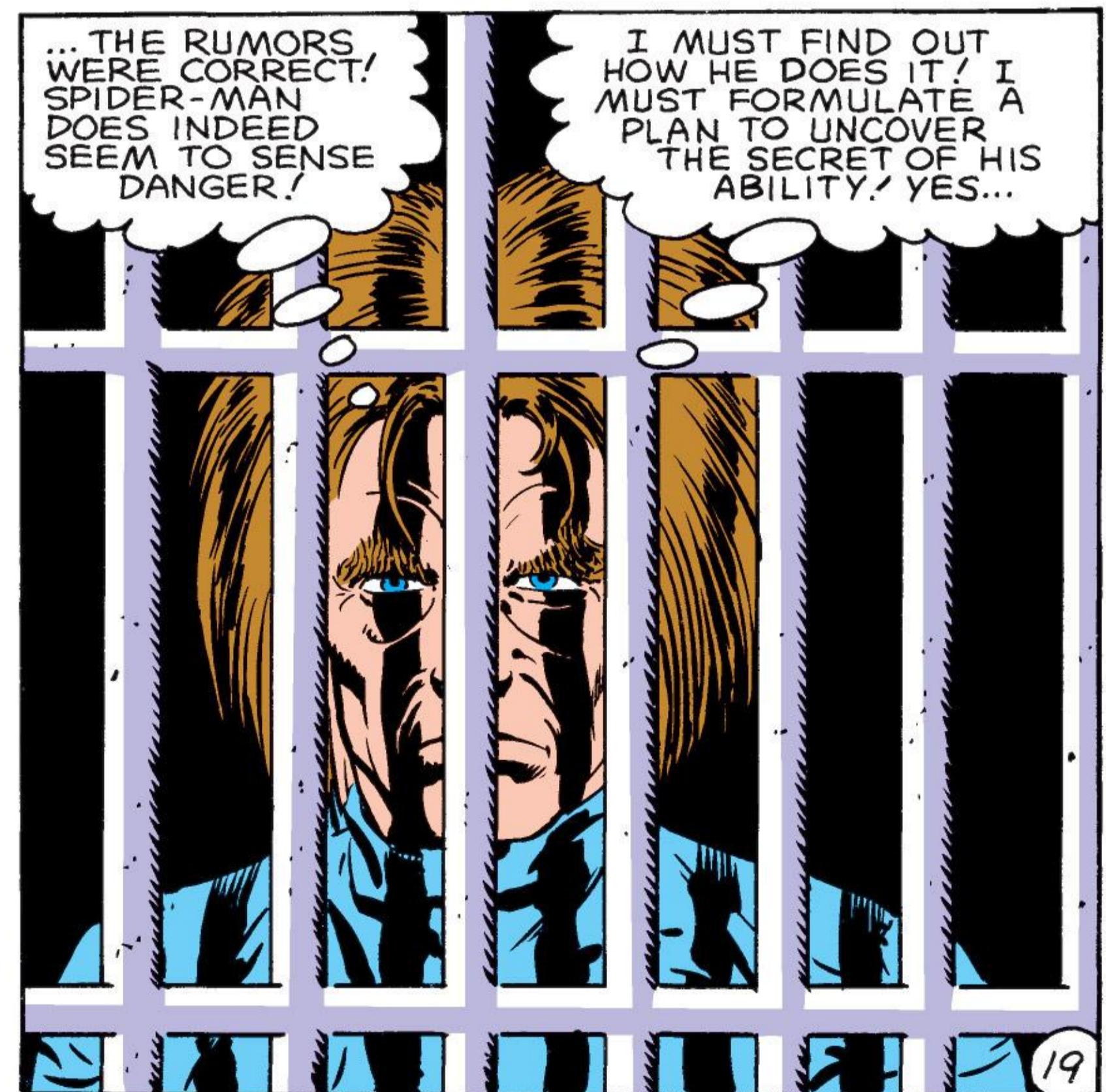
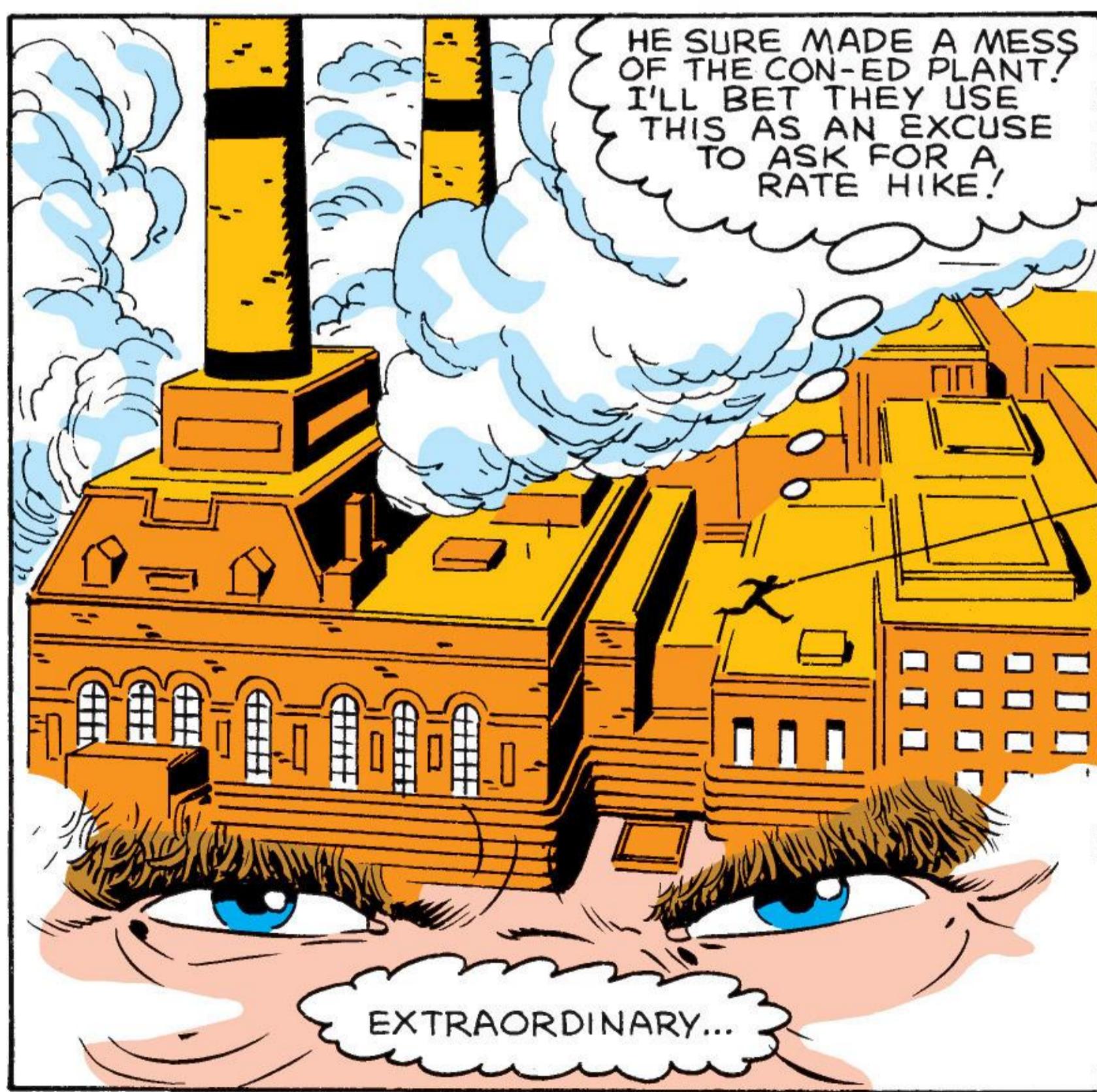
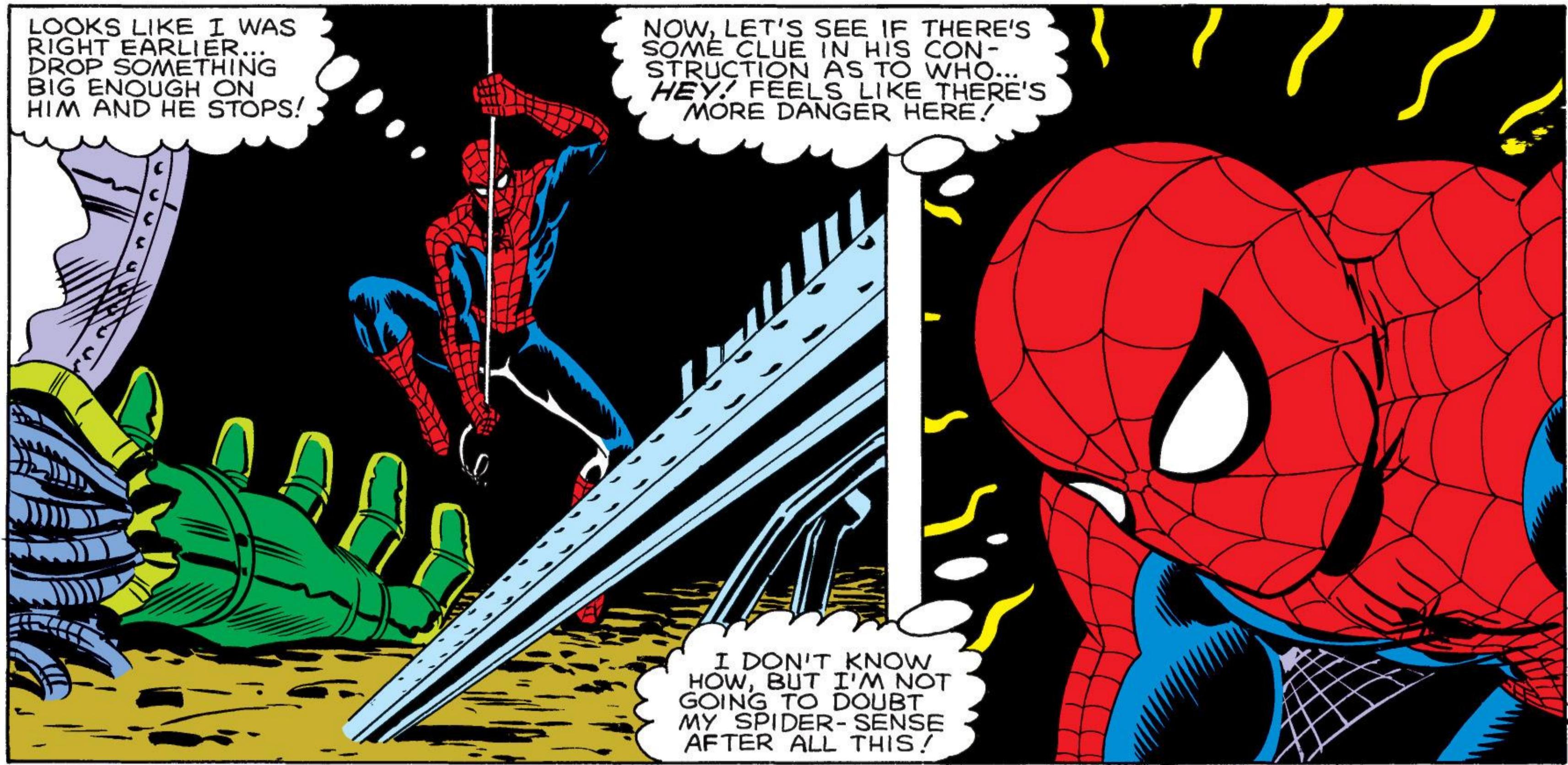


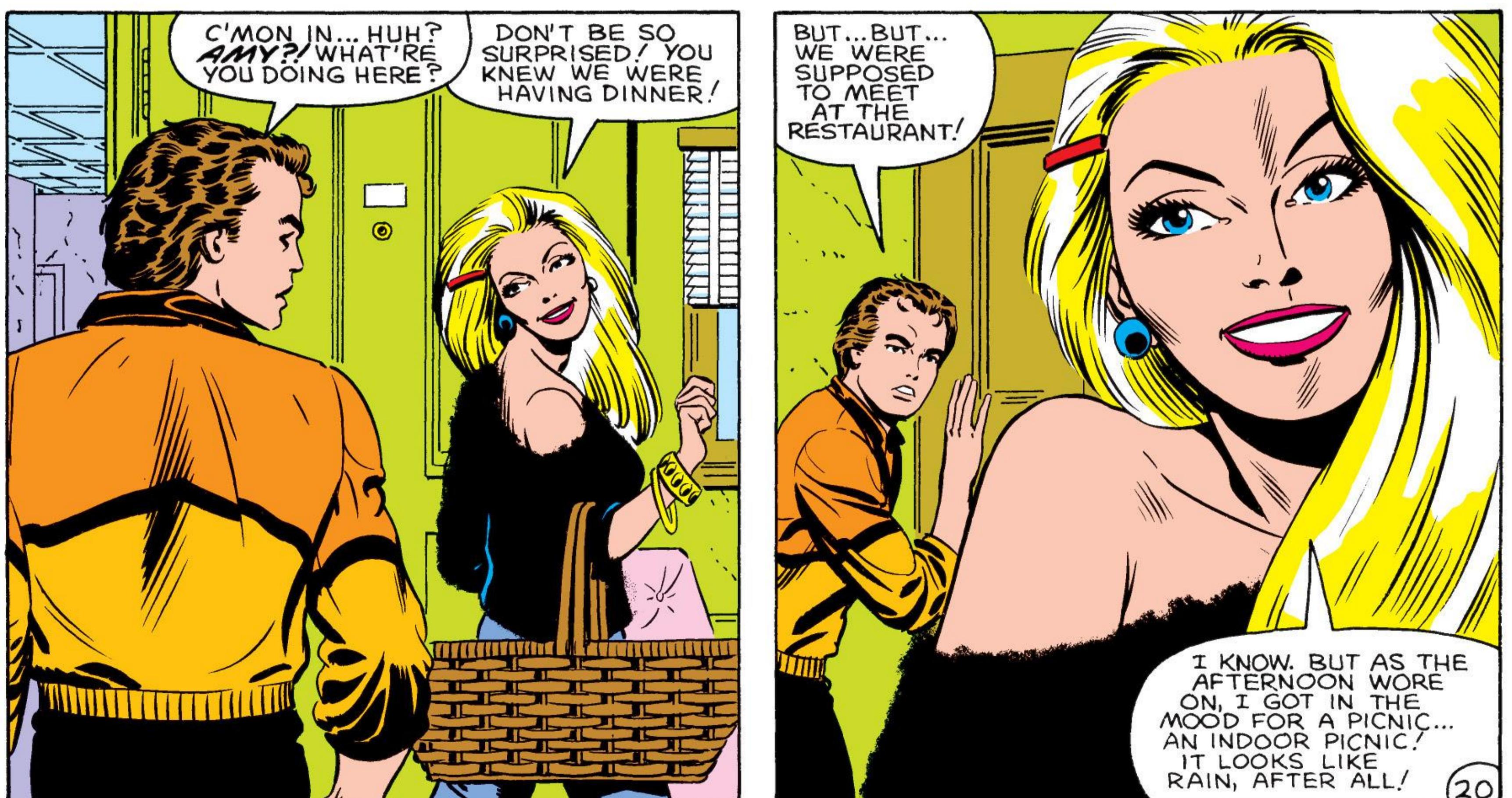
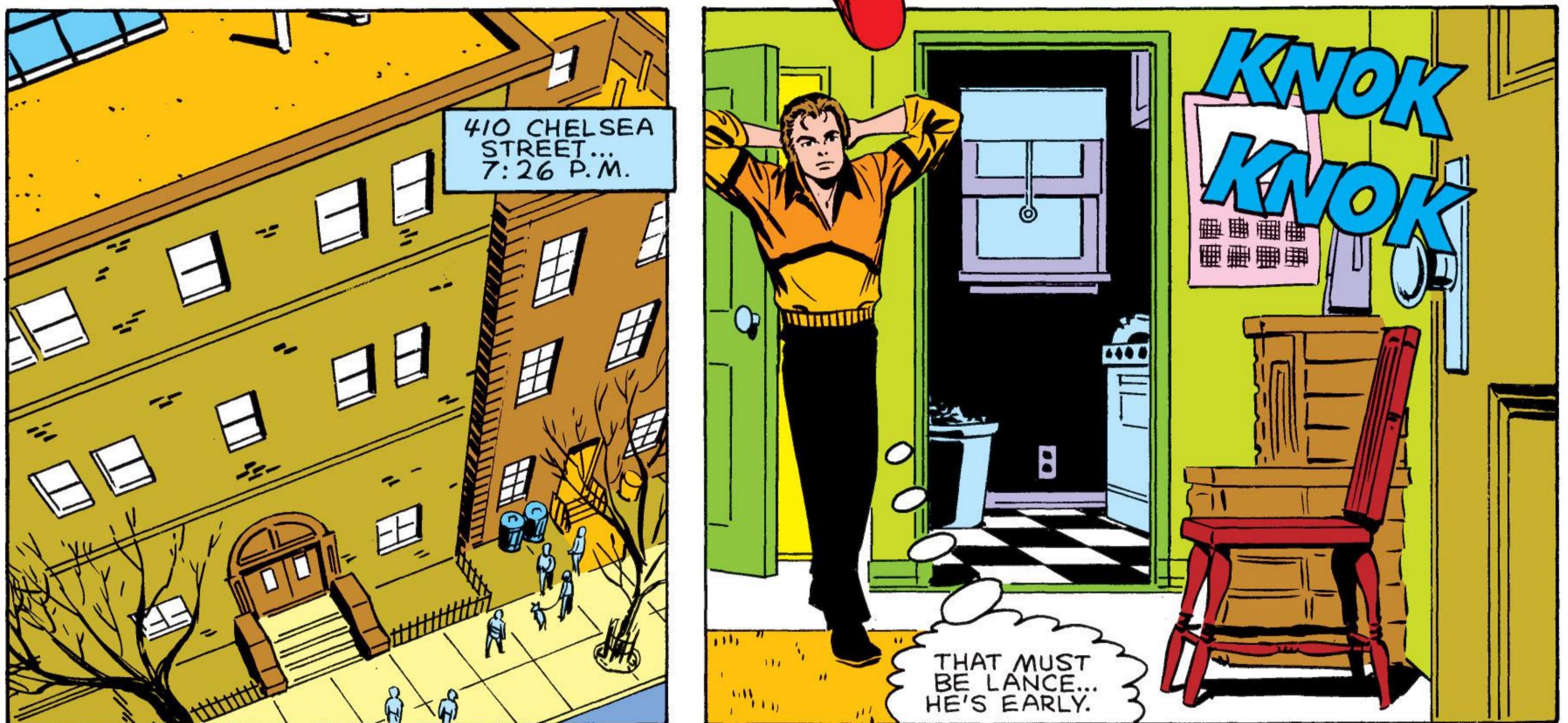
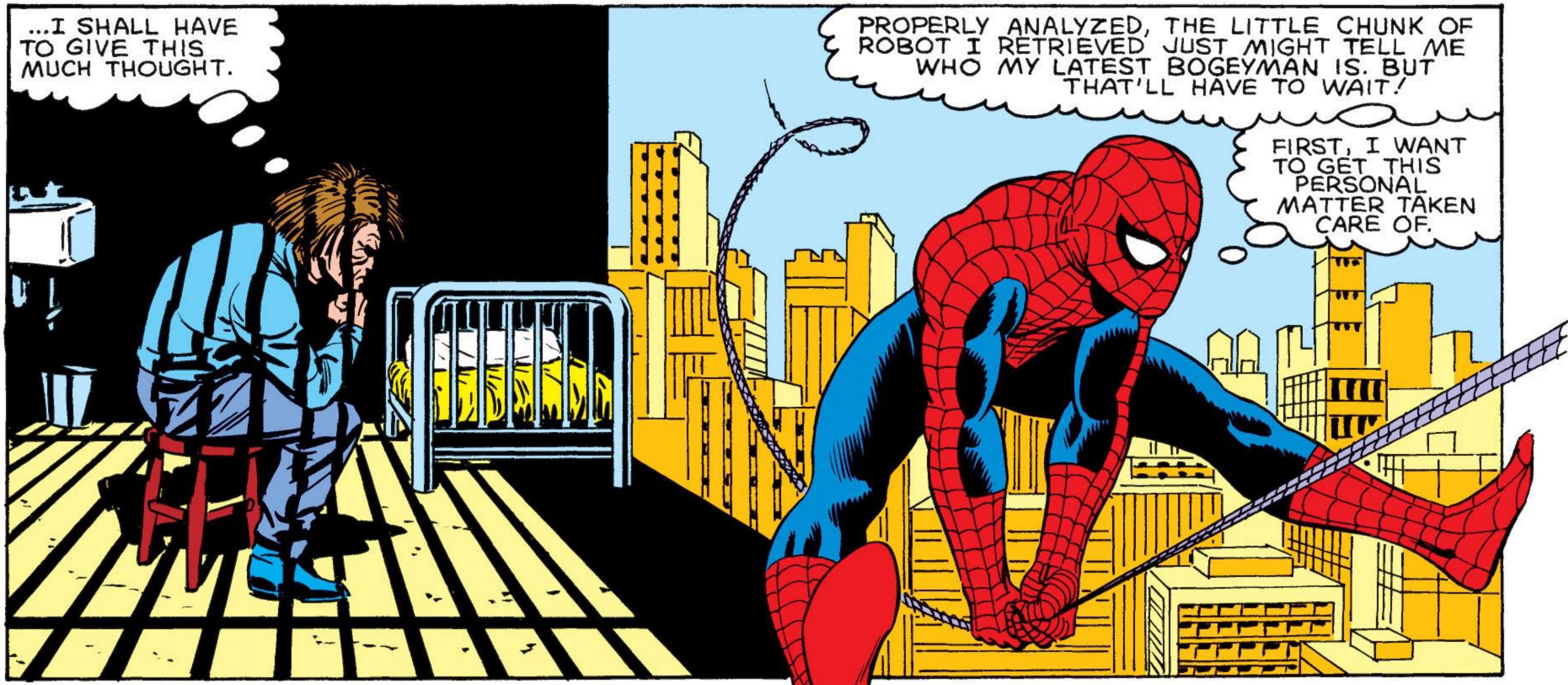
WELL, WELL! THE FIRST LOAD OF JUNKED HARDWARE CONFUSED HIM EVEN MORE THAN I'D HOPED! HE'S FLAILING ABOUT EVERY WHICH WAY!

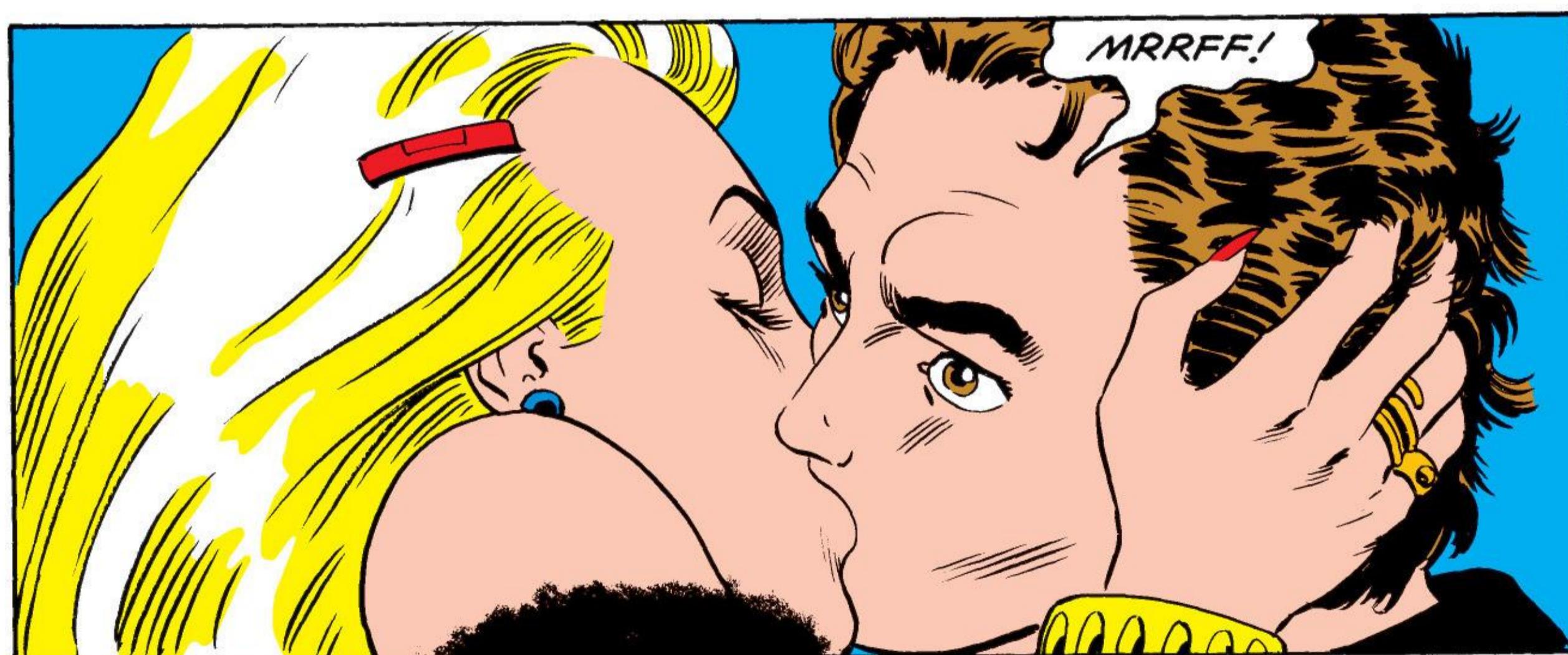
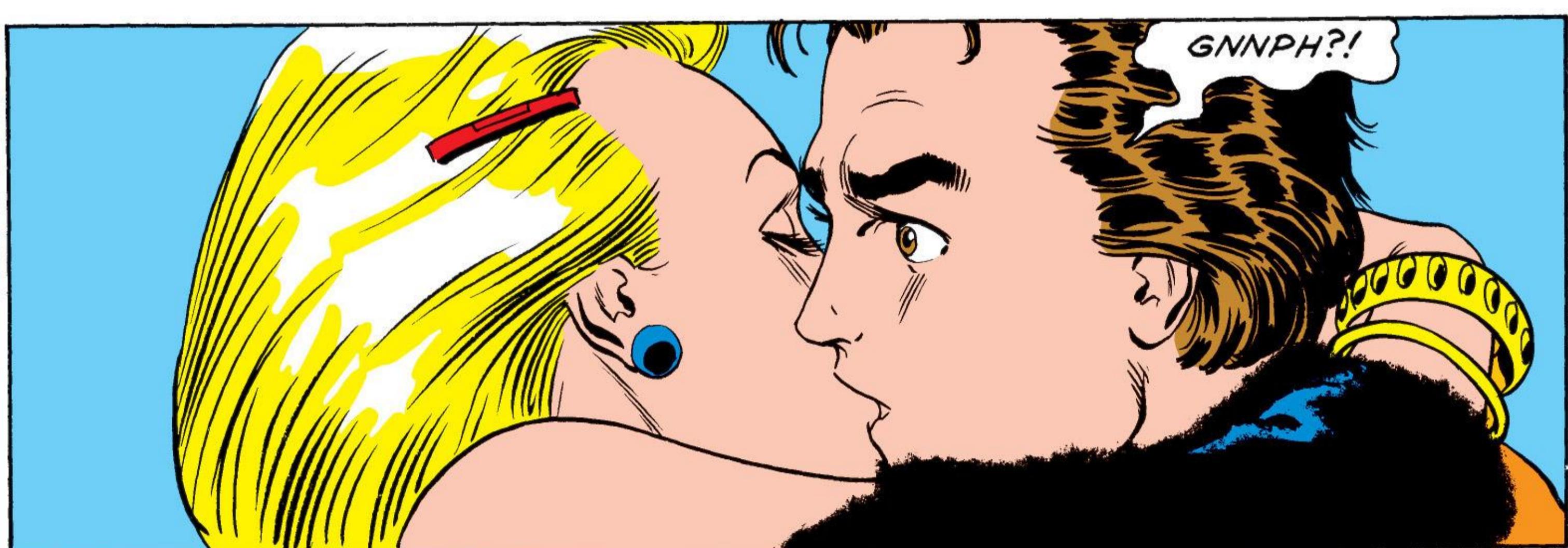
I'LL BET HE'S RELYING ON SOME SORT OF RADAR GUIDANCE SYSTEM. IF I SHOWER HIM WITH ENOUGH DEBRIS TO MUCK UP HIS INCOMING SIGNALS...

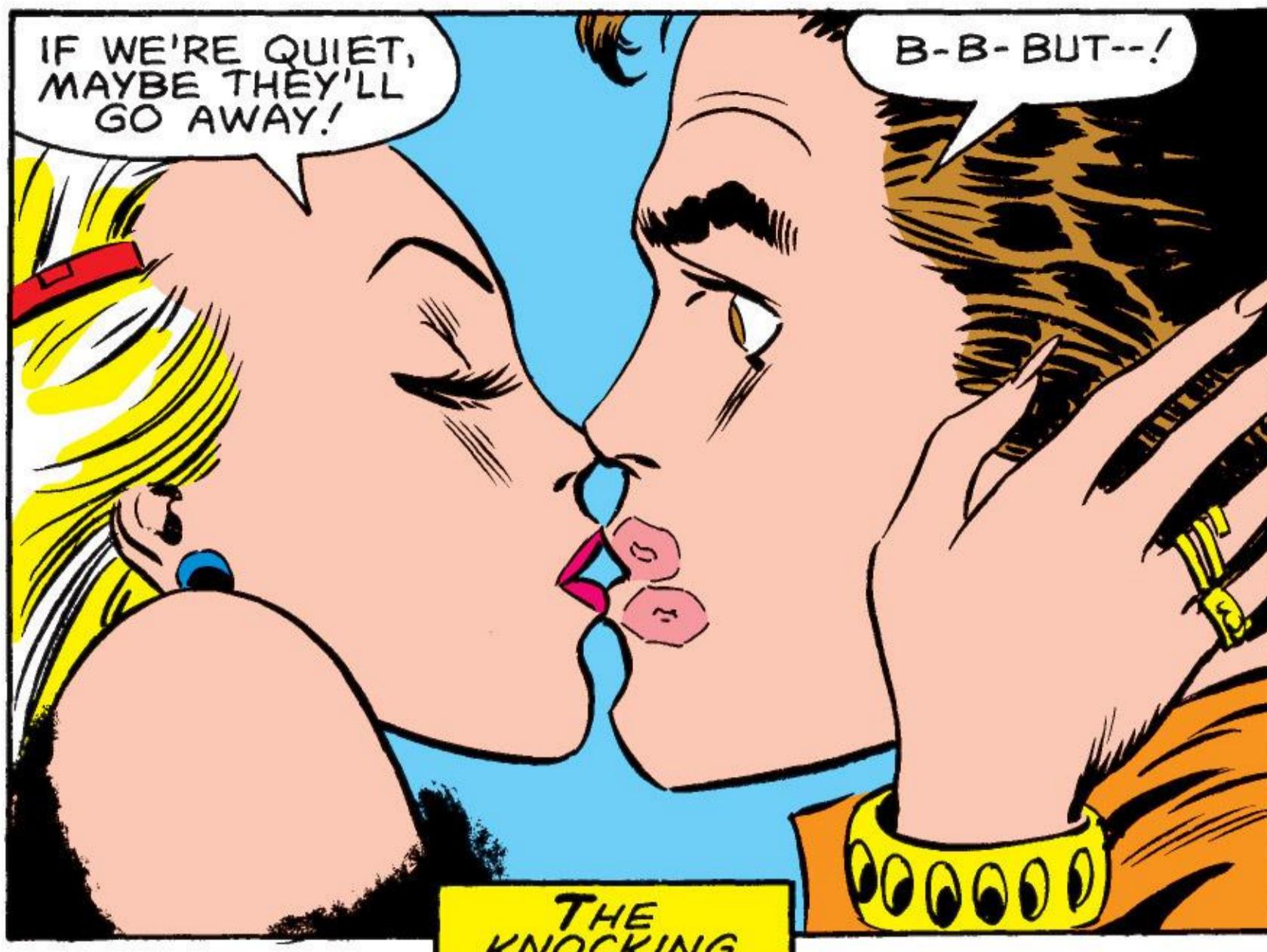




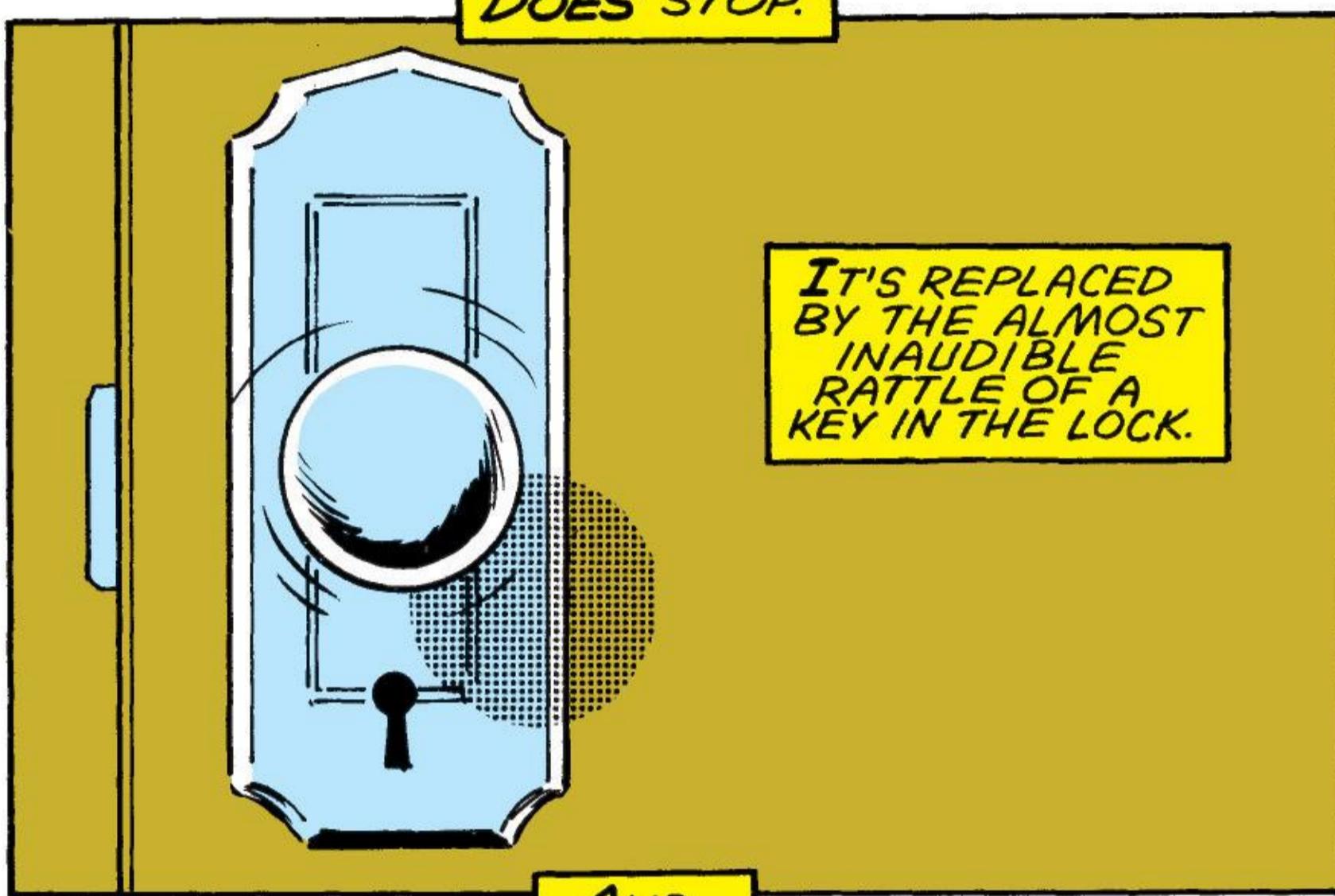




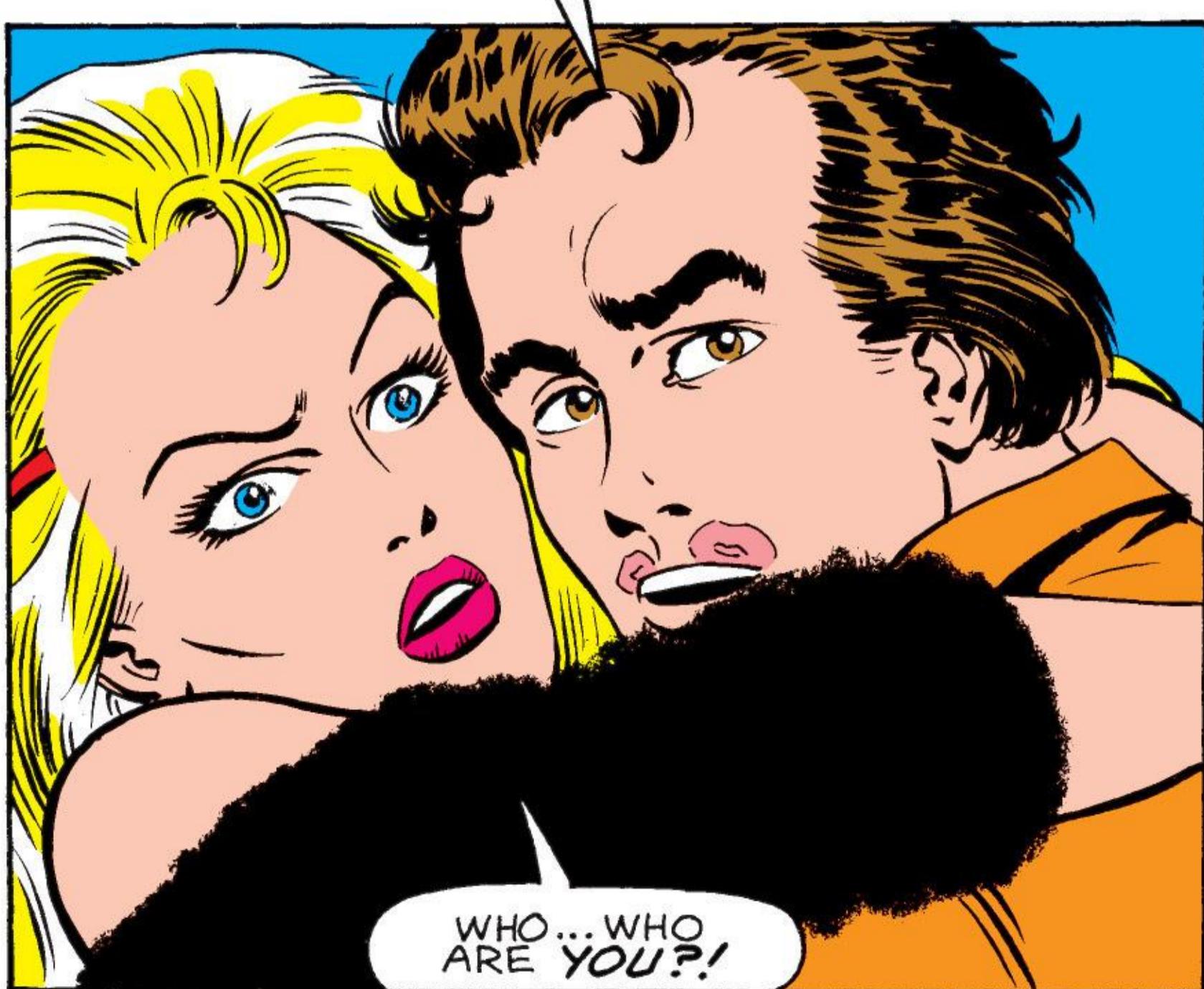
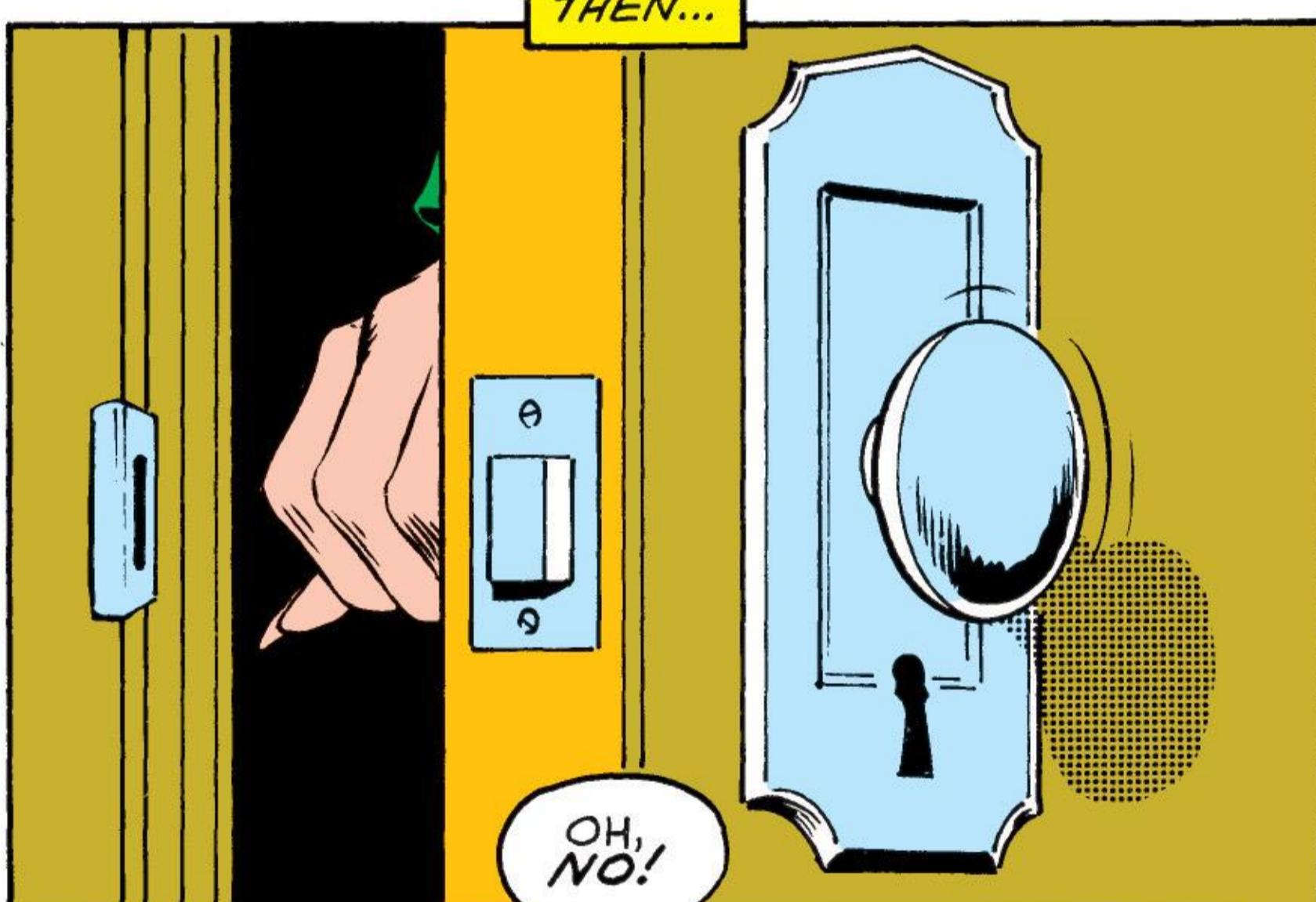




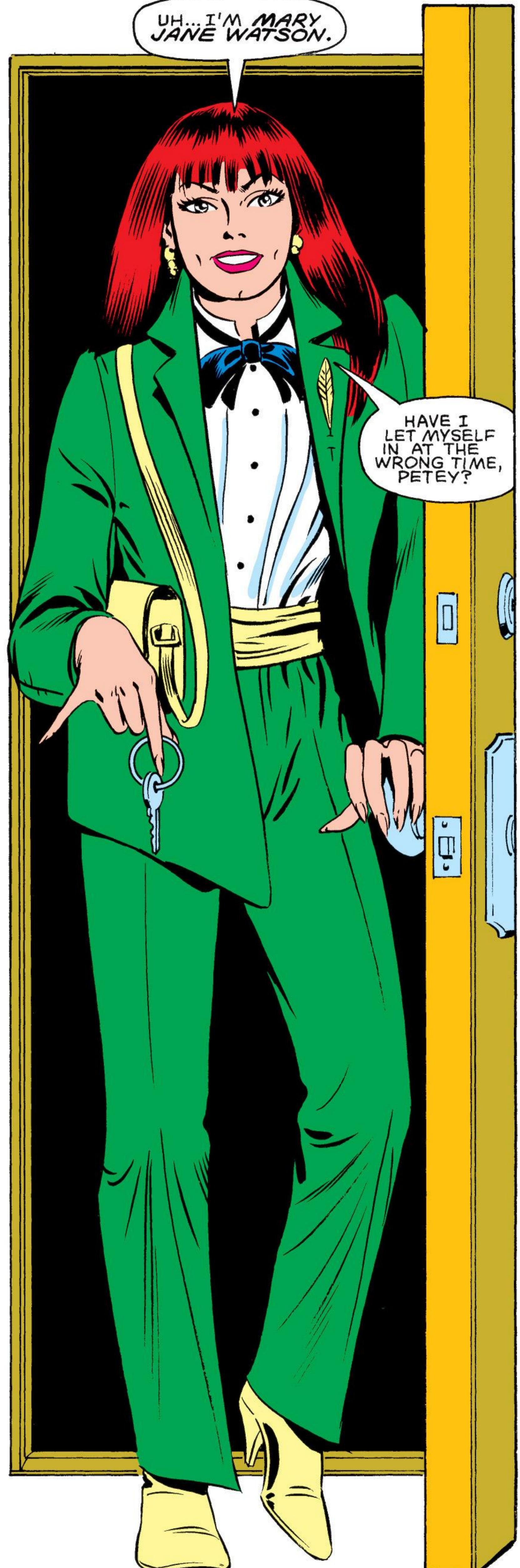
THE
KNOCKING
DOES STOP.



AND
THEN...



UH... I'M MARY
JANE WATSON.



NEEDLESS TO SAY... "TO BE CONTINUED!"

THE SPIDER'S WEB

% MARVEL COMICS GROUP
387 Park Avenue South
New York, New York 10016

TOM DeFALCO
EDITOR
ELIOT BROWN
ASSISTANT EDITOR

Dear Tom,

Congratulations on AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #236. The artwork was vivid, the writing crisp, and the story moving... another excellent issue. "Death Knell" was a fine end for the career of the Tarantula, as well as a new beginning for Will-O'-The-Wisp, a character I have liked from the start. And it's always satisfying to see Roxxon — or one of its subsidiaries in this case — get caught red-handed. I just hope you have room for more of Parker's personal life next issue.

An excellent job has been done with Roxxon over the past few years, building them up into the evil, remorseless "corporation you love to hate" so to speak. This has led to numerous interesting and entertaining stories, but at some point they are going to have to get caught for good in their own intrigues. After all, with Iron Man, Spider-Man and the Moon Knight — to name just a few — more or less aware of them, how can they escape? Some other growing evil corporation needs to be developed to fill the void when Roxxon takes the final fall. Beyond that, some benevolent corporations should be introduced to show that not everything is rotten in big business. Of course, there is always Stark International as the shining light, but surely there are some companies that are not owned by super heroes that are still run by good guys. Show us both sides.

Keep it up! SPIDER-MAN has been better in the last couple of years than it has been in the last decade. Thank you.

J. Kenneth Riviere
932 Austin Avenue NE
Atlanta, GA 30307

Thank you for thinking so, Ken. We do our best.

We sort of wonder about Roxxon finally getting "caught for good", though. How often do the other Roxxons of the world get caught?

This is not to say that we think that corporations can be classed as "good" or "evil", any more than hammers can. The way we look at it, both are tools, and the amount of good or ill that they do all depends upon how they're used.

And if you want a company that's still run by good guys... hey, you always have Marvel Comics!

Dear Tom:

I haven't read a comic book in nearly six years, and I suddenly had an overwhelming urge to buy a copy of the AMAZING SPIDER-MAN to find out what's been happening since I departed. I picked up a copy of issue #236 and, being in a comic shop, I also purchased #234 and #235 at the same time.

While none of the supporting cast members seemed familiar to me, aside from Robbie and J.J.J., I seem to just barely remember Tarantula from the old Jackal/Clone issues. Am I correct?

The way Tarantula died in issue #236, after turning into a monstrous spider-creature, really struck me hard. That scene was exceptionally well done. Villains, after all, are people, too.

It's a relief to see that Marvel Comics are still concerned with presenting mature, as well as exciting stories on a regular basis.

That's something no other comic book company can claim.

Stay creative!

Robert Townshend
575 Broad Street #212
East Weymouth, MA 02189

Sure thing, Bob! Just do us a favor and stick around for a while, okay?

Dear Tom,

I really enjoyed AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #236. John Romita, Jr.'s and Frank Giacoia's art was terrific, and it was wild to see the Tarantula slowly transform into humanoid beast. I also like that rooftop battle between Spider-Man and the Tarantula. And I was really surprised when the Tarantula deliberately set himself up to get shot and killed by the police.

Just one thing puzzles me... what are Spider-Man's webs made of?

Vince Bayless
14522 Jaguar Street
Mission Falls, Ca 91345

The exact formula is a secret, Vince. All we know is that the web-fluid is a multi-polymer compound with remarkable adhesive properties.

Dear Tom,

I enjoyed the Brand saga, and AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #236 was a solid capper to the series. The constant mutation of the Tarantula was one of the issue's best concepts. His death, to my mind at least, was imminent — though I didn't expect it to come as a suicide. The tragedy of the Tarantula was the real success of the issue to this reader. He died because of the corruption inside the Brand Corporation... he was used and destroyed through their association. I think the evil present inside Brand and in the methods of some real-life corporations can best be exemplified in the fate of the Tarantula. On the other side of the coin, the Tarantula has had a much more murderous past than many other villains, so his fate could not be called an undeserved one.

As far as Spider-Man goes, he seemed to be the poor innocent amid all the corruption. He had to referee all these people, and try to keep them from killing each other. That's basically Peter's lot in life. Ever since he became Spider-Man, and his uncle Ben died (indirectly through his inactions), the boy had been sticking his neck out for everyone from his own friends and family to crumbs like James Melvin. And what does he get for it? A screwy social life and trouble from the public, police, and J. Jonah Jameson.

Evan Dorkin
432 Stobe Avenue
Staten Island, NY 10306

Hey, it's a dirty job, but someone has to do it!

Dear Tom:

The storyline ending in AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #236 proved that it's not absolutely necessary to shoehorn in a new development in Peter Parker's personal life, or even a major super-villain, to make for an interesting story.

An element of mystery (What is the Brand Corporation really up to?), and elements of realism provided by a super-being who is

neither villain nor hero (Will-O'-The-Wisp), and an element of legitimate controversy over the proper function of the press (Jameson's decision to sit on the Roxxon Oil exposé at the request of the Justice Department) did quite nicely. Keep up the good work with the complex, thought-provoking characterizaton and plots.

Paul Thiel

511 West Chelsea, Apt 1
Covington, KY 41017

Dear Tom,

I rarely even glance at letters pages... which makes it all the more amazing that I chanced to note Todd Wilson's letter wherein he mused, "Hasn't Spider-Man fought the Juggernaut before?" and decided, "...no!" But as I was looking through AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #37, something on the letters page caught my eye... a suggestion from one Bill Dargan of Manhattan Beach, California, to set the Juggernaut against Spider-Man!"

What a jolt when I read that! And how much smaller the world seems. That was me... sixteen years ago! I feel glad and ancient all at the same time.

I wonder what percentage of Marvel's audience goes all the way back to the beginning? I was in my late teens when I wrote that letter. The thoughts of days gone by set me to reflecting further upon the overall impact Marvel has had on my life, and I see that it has been a positive teaching, molding and motivating force for me. Becoming intrigued with the science-fantasy aspect of Marvel's multiplying series, I was prompted to pursue a career in the sciences, and am today a clinical laboratory scientist, specializing in immunology.

I have no doubt that Marvel helped increase my vocabulary, improved my grammar and refined my abilities to express myself. I have become the president of an association of medical professionals. I attribute much of my personal writing and speaking abilities to a lifetime of immersion in Marvel; thus, to you must go some of the credit for my successes.

In my thirty-sixth year, because I was up on my hobby, I wound up being recruited by a local comics dealer to be his chief appraiser and special projects developer (in my spare time). I also write and edit a comics newsletter which brings a great deal of joy to me and the local fans.

So thanks for the memories. And thanks for making SPIDER-MAN reading the most exciting of affairs, once again. The Stern-recounted Spider-Man/Juggernaut match was so well done as to make it worth the wait. Just don't let another sixteen years go by before the rematch!

Bill Dargan
4902 66th Avenue West
Tacoma, WA 98467

And thanks for writing, Bill. We just wish we had the room to run your letter in its entirety! But as it is, we have just barely enough space to tell you that next issue, Peter Parker comes to a most dramatic decision about his life, career, and everything! Don't miss it!

**Bye for now...
Tom DeFalco**