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COMICS



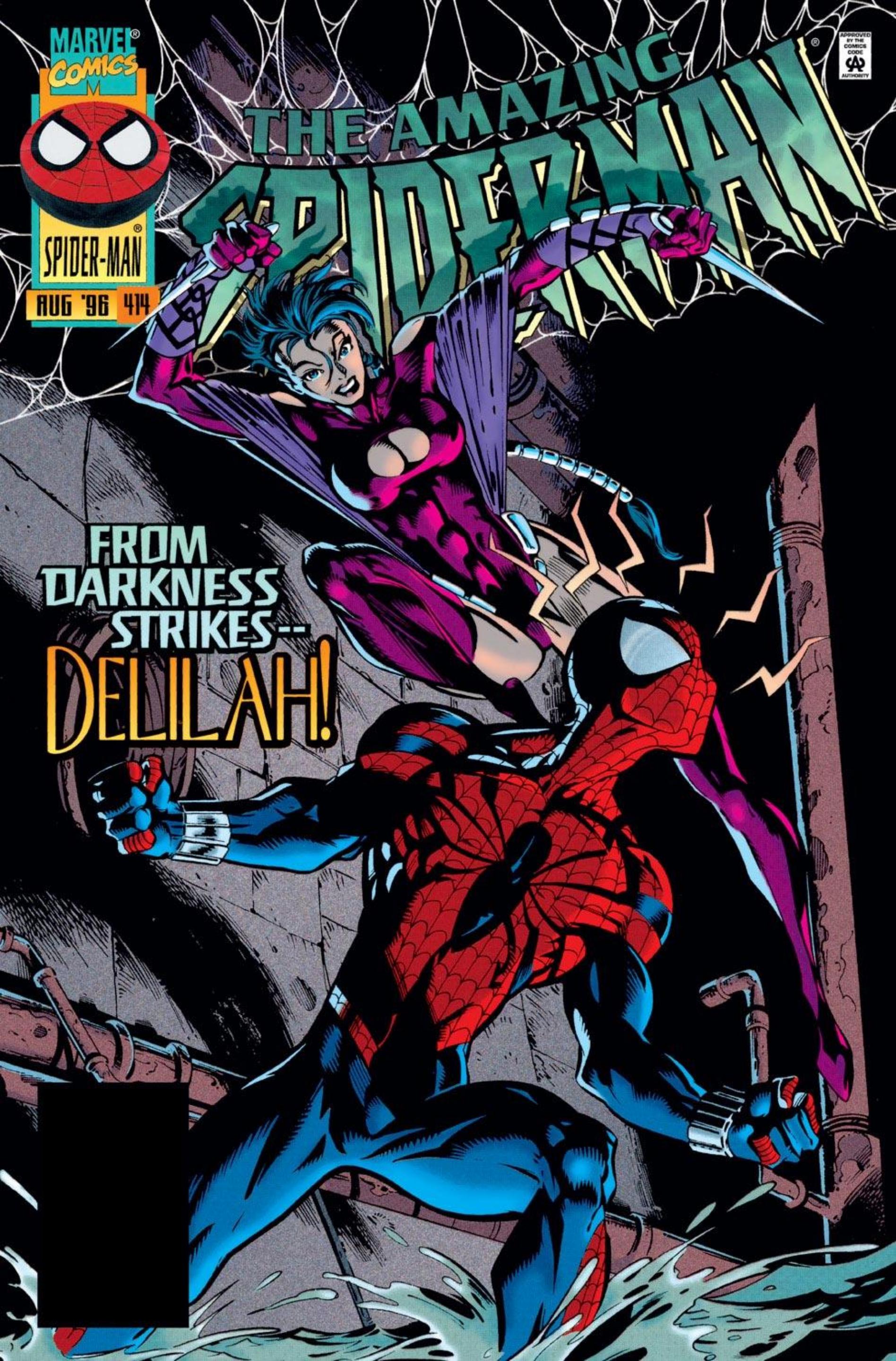
SPIDER-MAN

AUG '96 414

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COMICS
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THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN

FROM
DARKNESS
STRIKES--
DELILAH!



Stan Lee Presents
A Most Offbeat Tale
Starring:

THE AMAZING
SPIDER-MAN

Deadly is Delilah!

TOM DEFALCO

WRITER

MARK BAGLEY

PENCILER

LARRY MAHLSTEDT

INKER

RICHARD STARKINGS &

COMICRAFT

LETTERS

BOB SHAREN MALIBU

COLORS ENHANCEMENT

RALPH MACCHIO BOB HARRAS

EDITOR CHIEF



I FEEL IT'S ONLY FAIR TO WARN YOU THAT I AM **Not** YOUR TYPICAL SONGSTRESS!

I HAVE NEVER Sung IN FRONT OF A LIVE AUDIENCE BEFORE TONIGHT, BUT THIS IS A **Very** SPECIAL OCCASION!

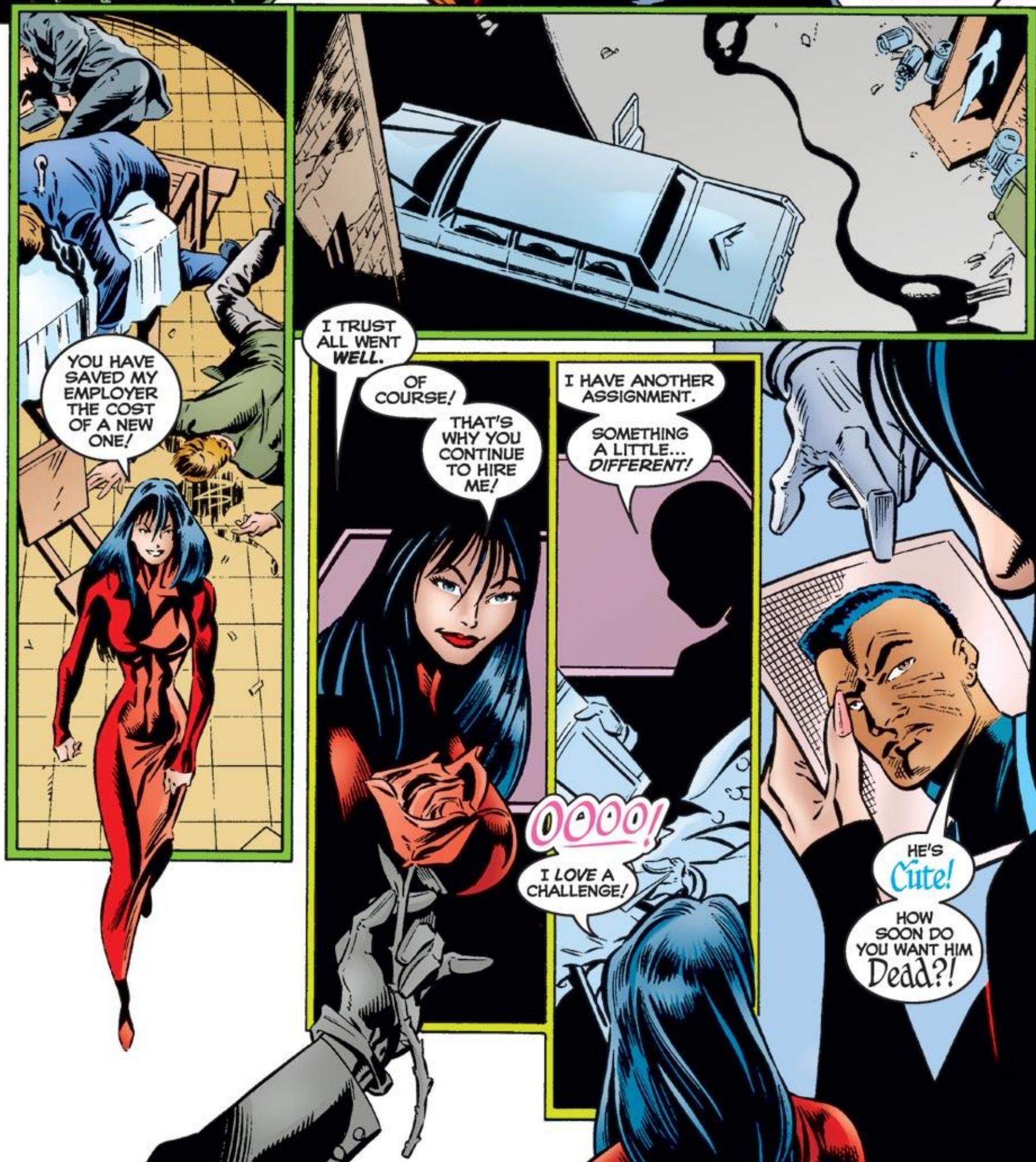
I AM HERE TO HONOR A MOST INDIVIDUAL! HIS NAME IS
Unique **Don Vito Torrancio** --

-- AND THIS IS THE **Last Day** OF HIS LIFE!

YOU GOTTA BE CRAZY, LADY!

Y-YA ACED THE DON --!

I CERTAINLY **Hope** SO...



Though I still call myself BEN REILLY, my real name is PETER PARKER!

For the past five years, believing that HE was ME, the man in the bed has been using my NAME, living MY LIFE!

A few months ago we both learned that Pete was actually my CLONE!

CLONE! Such a cold, lifeless word for someone who's come to mean so much to me!

Pete and I are CLOSER, more in synch than any TWINS!

Though he may have been born in a test tube, he is my BROTHER!

My ONLY brother!

And he's DYING!

PLEASE LEVEL WITH ME, Dr. CONNORS.

WHAT ARE MY HUSBAND'S CHANCES?

YOU SHOULD TRY TO RELAX, Mrs. PARKER.

YOU OWE IT TO THE BABY YOU'RE CARRYING!

YOU HAVEN'T ANSWERED MY QUESTION, DOCTOR.

PETER'S CONDITION IS QUITE PUZZLING, Mrs. PARKER.

WE CAN'T SEEM TO ARREST HIS DOWNWARD SPIRAL.

YOU MUSTN'T GIVE UP HOPE! WE'LL DO EVERYTHING WE CAN TO SAVE HIM.

WILL THAT BE ENOUGH?

I... HAVE NO GUARANTEES.



MARY JANE,
DO YOU THINK WE
SHOULD TELL THE
DOCTORS...

... THAT
PETE'S A
CLONE?

WHAT
GOOD WOULD
IT DO?

THEY CAN'T
STOP CLONE
DEGENERATION --

-- IF THAT'S
WHAT PETER
HAS --

-- AND HE'D
ONLY BECOME A
SCIENTIFIC CURIOSITY
IN THEIR EYES!

I'VE NEVER
BEEN SO
FRIGHTENED,
BEN!

VENOM,
CARNAGE, CARRION,
AND DOCTOR OCTOPUS --
ALL THOSE MONSTERS MY
HUSBAND FOUGHT WHILE HE
WAS SPIDER-MAN AND NONE
WERE AS TERRIFYING AS
THIS DISEASE...
WHATEVER IT
IS!

YOU
HAVE TO HAVE
FAITH IN OUR BOY,
MJ! HE'LL FIND A WAY
TO BEAT THIS
THING!

I... ER...
GOTTA
GO!

BUT
I'LL BE
BACK!

AND
I'LL BE
HERE!

MARY
JANE --!

BY
THE WAY,
HAS JONAH
BEEN IN FOR
A VISIT?

HE SEEMS
TO HAVE TURNED
UP MISSING, AND
I ASSUMED HE
WAS HERE!

If I know J. JONAH
JAMESON, the tightwad
publisher of the DAILY
BUGLE, he's probably
meeting with his group
insurance carrier --

-- trying to find some
loophole so that they can
weasel out of Pete's
MEDICAL BILLS!

HE
ALWAYS
DOES!

Nice words!

Too bad neither
of us buys them!

ANY
CHANGE
IN PETER'S
CONDITION?

AFRAID
NOT.

YOU
MUSTN'T BE
DISCOURAGED.
THESE THINGS
TAKE TIME.

Missing --?!

Peter rejoined the Bugle staff only a week or so before he was stricken.

He'll be in hock the rest of his life if he doesn't have sufficient medical coverage.

HOO-BOY! If the super-villains don't get you, the bill collectors will!

Speaking of bills, I'd better hustle off to WORK... so that I can pay MINE!

I usually do my best thinking while bounding across the rooftops.

I may be the REAL Peter Parker --

-- but Pete's the one with the real LIFE and the most REASONS for living!

If only there were a way I could take his place --!

No such luck today!

My mind keeps DRIFTING back to Mary Jane, the baby and Peter!

I've never felt so UTERLY HELPLESS before!

POLICE SIRENS! A little spider-action is just what the doctor ordered!

At least I can help SOMEONE today!

WAHRRWAHRR

UH-OH! Looks like even THAT was too much to hope for!

I'M OFFICER HOCKNEY, SIR!
COULD YOU PLEASE TELL US WHAT HAPPENED HERE?

ISN'T IT OBVIOUS,
HOCKNEY?

I WAS ROBBED!

BY A COSTUMED MADMAN WHO USED THESE RIDICULOUS RINGS AGAINST ME!

RINGS--?!

THAT M.O. SOUNDS LIKE THE RINGER...
BUT HE'S SUPPOSED TO BE DEAD!

I ASSURE YOU GENTLEMEN, THIS MAN WAS QUITE ALIVE!

THE RINGER --?!

I can just add him to the SHOCKER, WILL O' THE WISP and DRAGON MAN!

I know it's gotta be my imagination, but it suddenly seems like someone called a REUNION of every old baddie Pete or I ever faced! SHEESH. The way my luck's been running, it's only a matter of time before GRIZZLY resurfaces!



Beating the cross town traffic
in my own unique style, I soon
arrive at WORK --

-- to the accompaniment of
a shattered COFFEE POT!

WANT ME TO MOP
THAT SPILL,
SHIRLEY?

NO
THANKS,
BEN!

IN CASE YOU HAVEN'T
NOTICED, I'M QUITE
CAPABLE OF HANDLING
THINGS ON MY
OWN!

Uh...
SURE.
WHATEVER
YOU SAY!

I DON'T
NEED HELP
FROM YOU... OR
ANYONE ELSE!

DON'T TAKE
IT PERSONAL,
REILLY. THE LADY
ISN'T HERSELF
TODAY.

YOU'RE NOT
THE CAUSE OF
HER IRE. JUST THE
RECIPIENT!

WHAT'S
BOthering
HER, BUZZ?

I DON'T FEEL
IT'S MY PLACE
TO SAY!

ALL RIGHT,
I WON'T
PRY --

-- BUT LET ME
KNOW IF THERE'S
ANYTHING I
CAN DO!

YOU
CAN START
BY DRAWING ME
A VANILLA
LATTE!

TOPPED WITH
CINNAMON!

LOOK
WHO'S HERE...
DESIREE AND
THE USUAL
SUSPECTS!

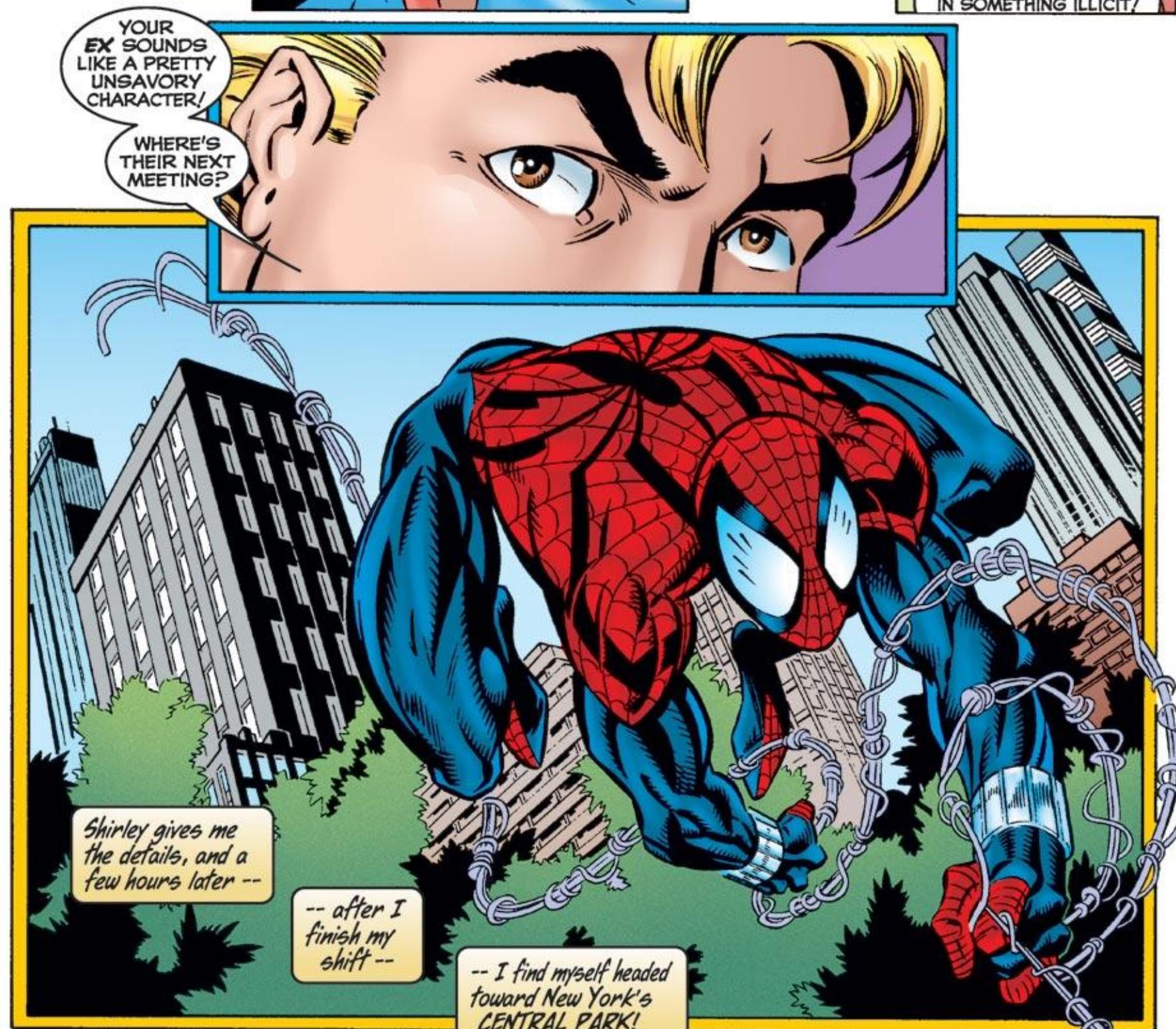
WE WERE PASSING
BY, AND I THOUGHT
I'D LOOK IN ON MY
FAVORITE CAFFEINE
JOCKEY!

I'M REAL
GLAD TO
SEE YOU,
DESIREE!

YOU
AND EVERY
OTHER MALE
IN THE NEIGH-
BORHOOD!

SORRY I HAD
TO DUCK OUT ON
YOU THE OTHER DAY.
YOU HEAR ANY
NEWS ABOUT
JESSICA?

I'VE TRIED
CALLING, BUT
HER PHONE'S
DISCONNECTED!



Though we wall-crawlers prefer skyscrapers to trees, I'm soon swinging through the greenery like a modern day TARZAN!

On the plus side... my SPIDER-SENSE warns me which branches to avoid!

On the negative... I don't even LIKE Devon!

The kid's a total WACK JOB!

A mean-spirited, sarcastic PUNK!

But I OWE his mother!

She took me in, offered me a job when I was desperate!

SO... Uh... HOW YOU DOING IN SCHOOL?

LIKE YOU REALLY CARE!

YOU'RE ONLY SPENDING TIME WITH ME BECAUSE IT BURNS MOM!

WHAT'S YOUR SCAM, DAD?

WHY'D YOU SUDDENLY START SNIFFING AROUND?

YOU GOT ME WRONG, SON!

I HEARD ABOUT YOUR MOTHER GOING INTO DEBT TO REBUILD THE COFFEE SHOP AND FIGURED I COULD HELP!

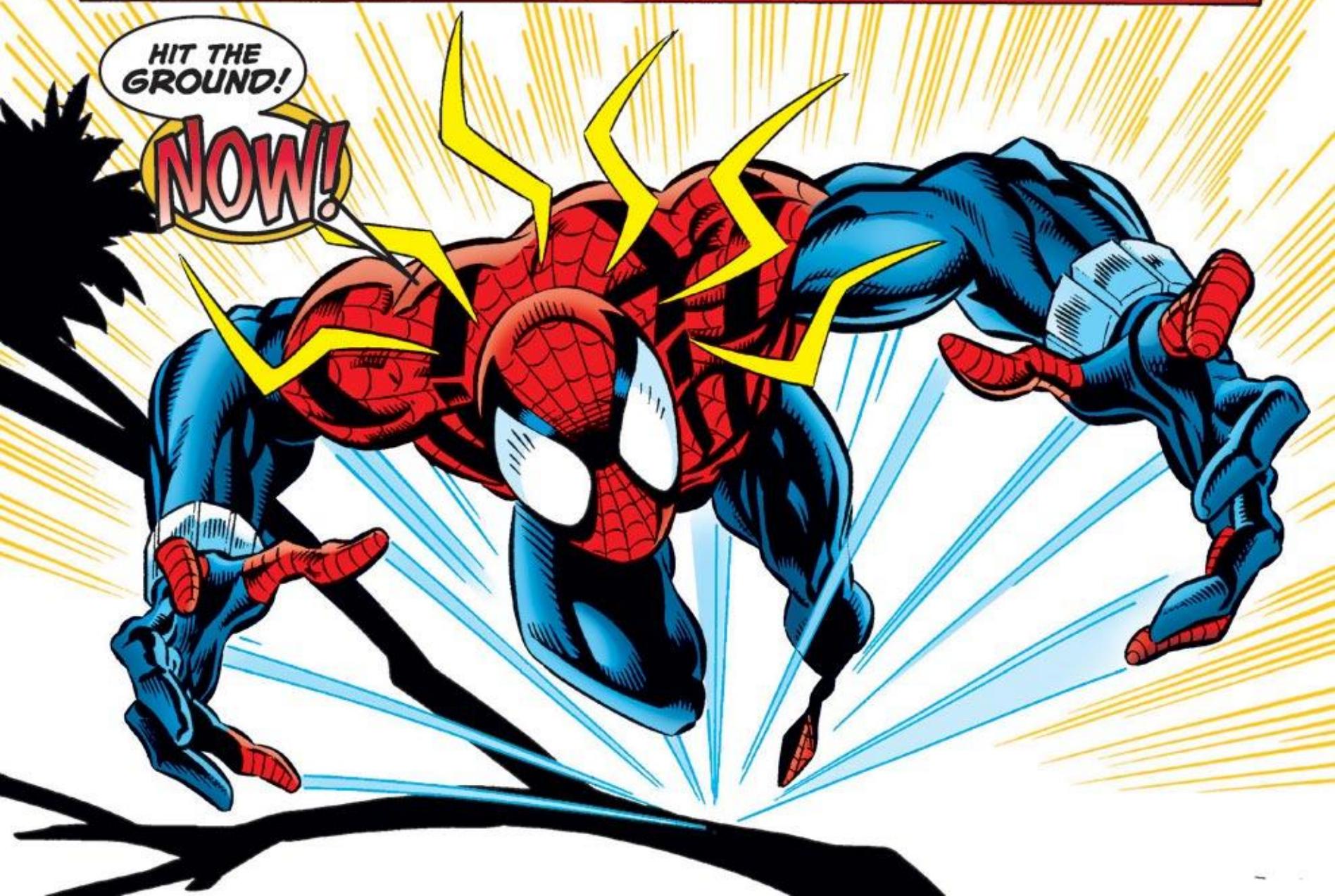
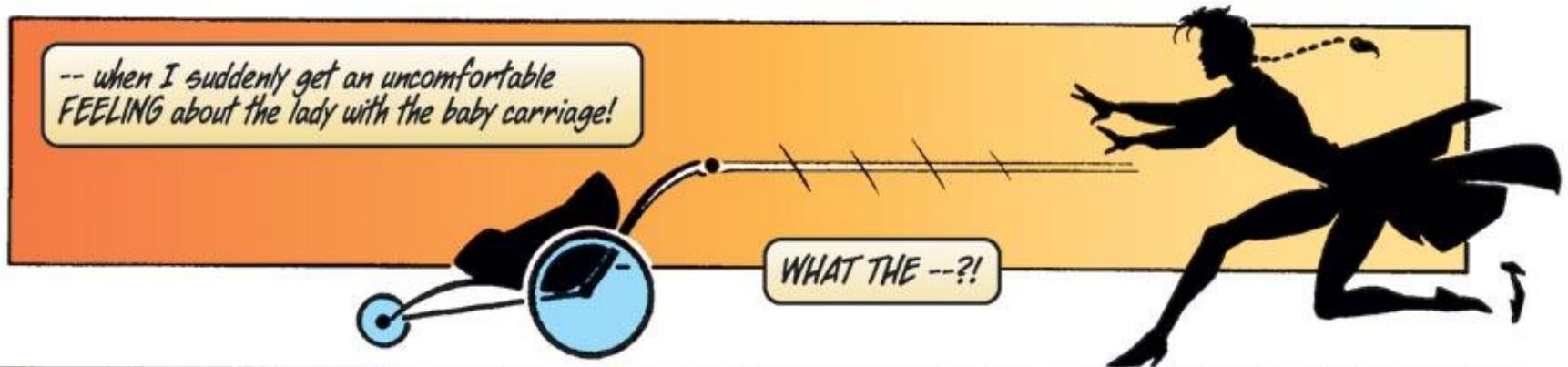
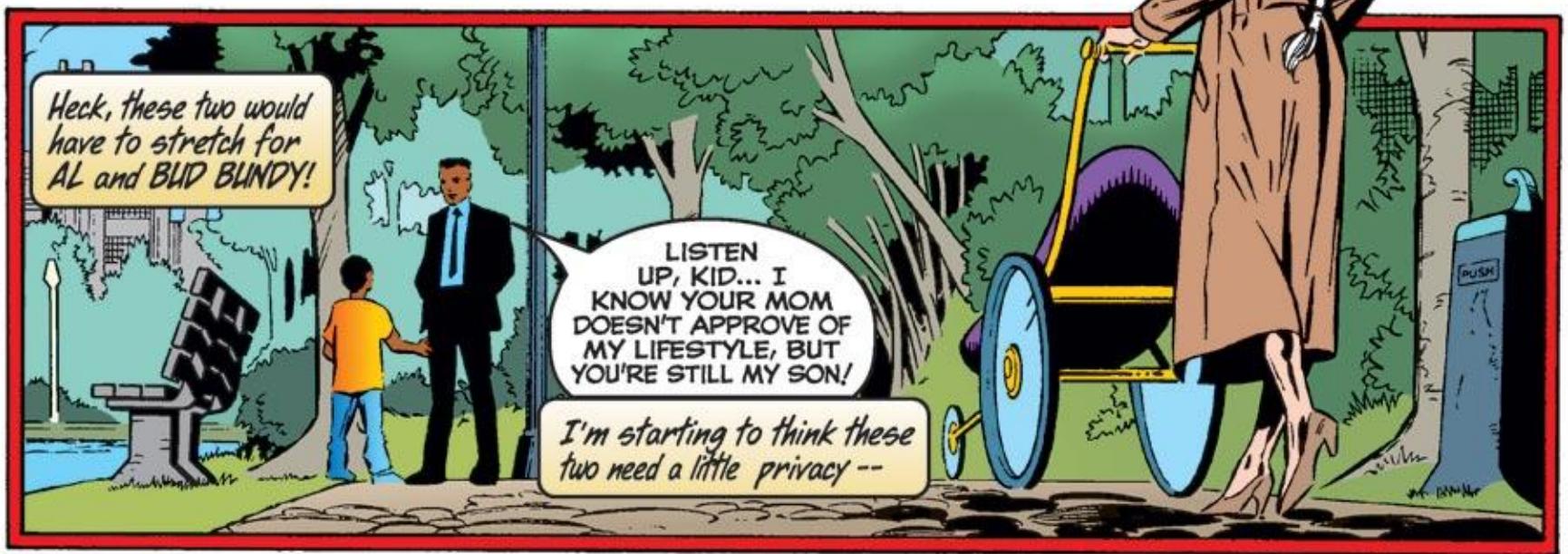
Not exactly WARD and the BEAVER!

YEAH... RIIIGHT!

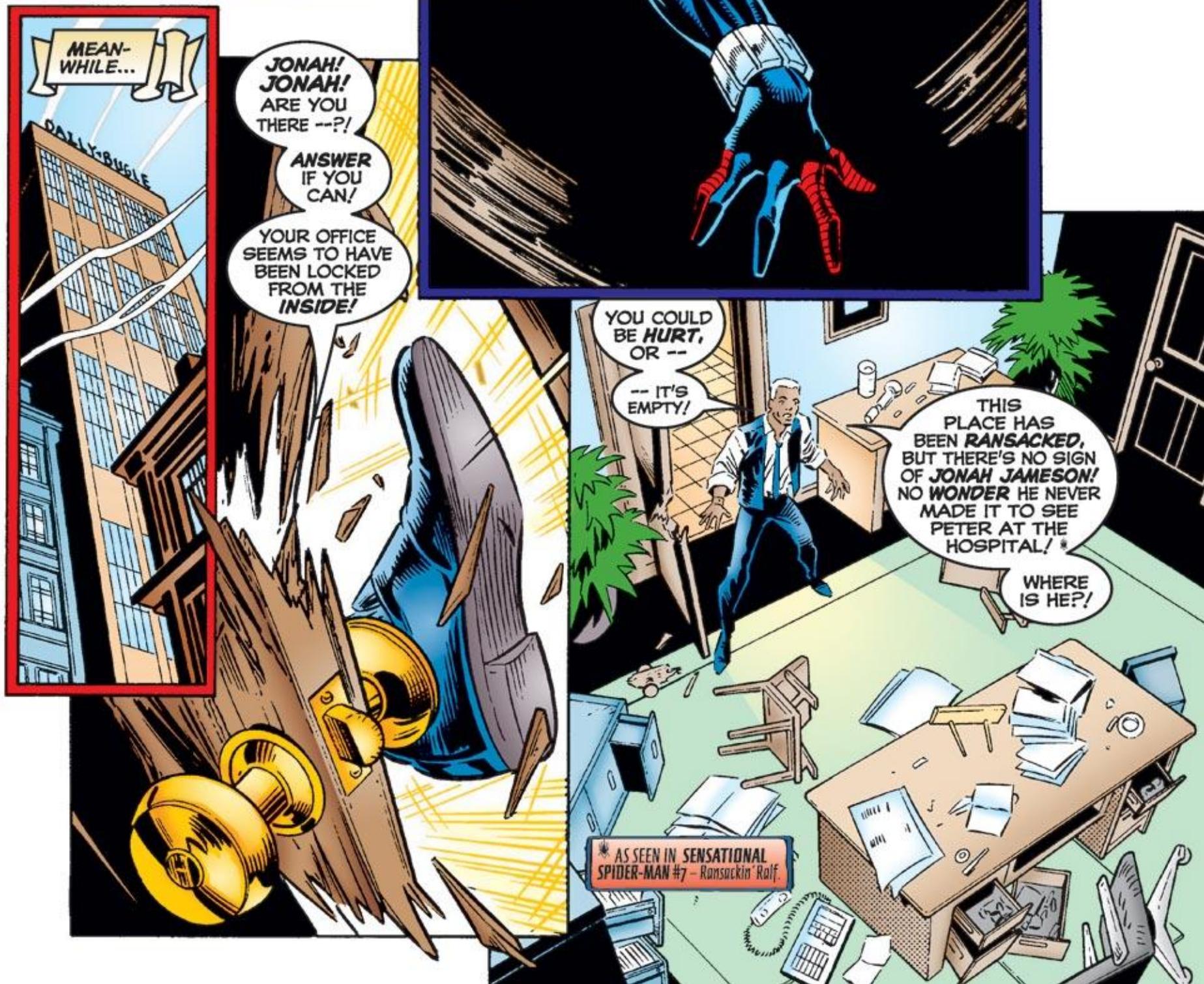
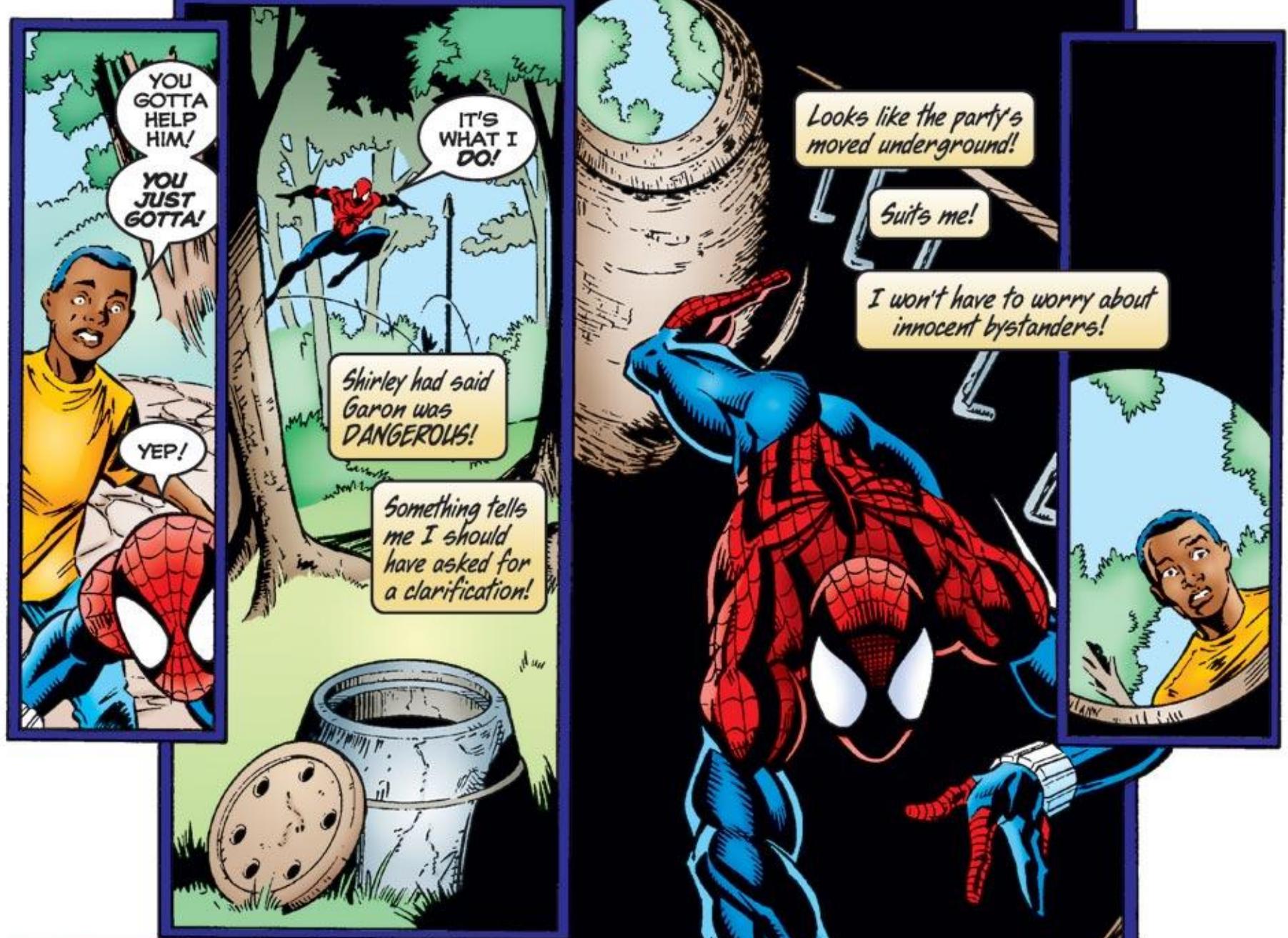
LIKE YOU'VE BEEN SOOO HELPFUL OVER THE YEARS!

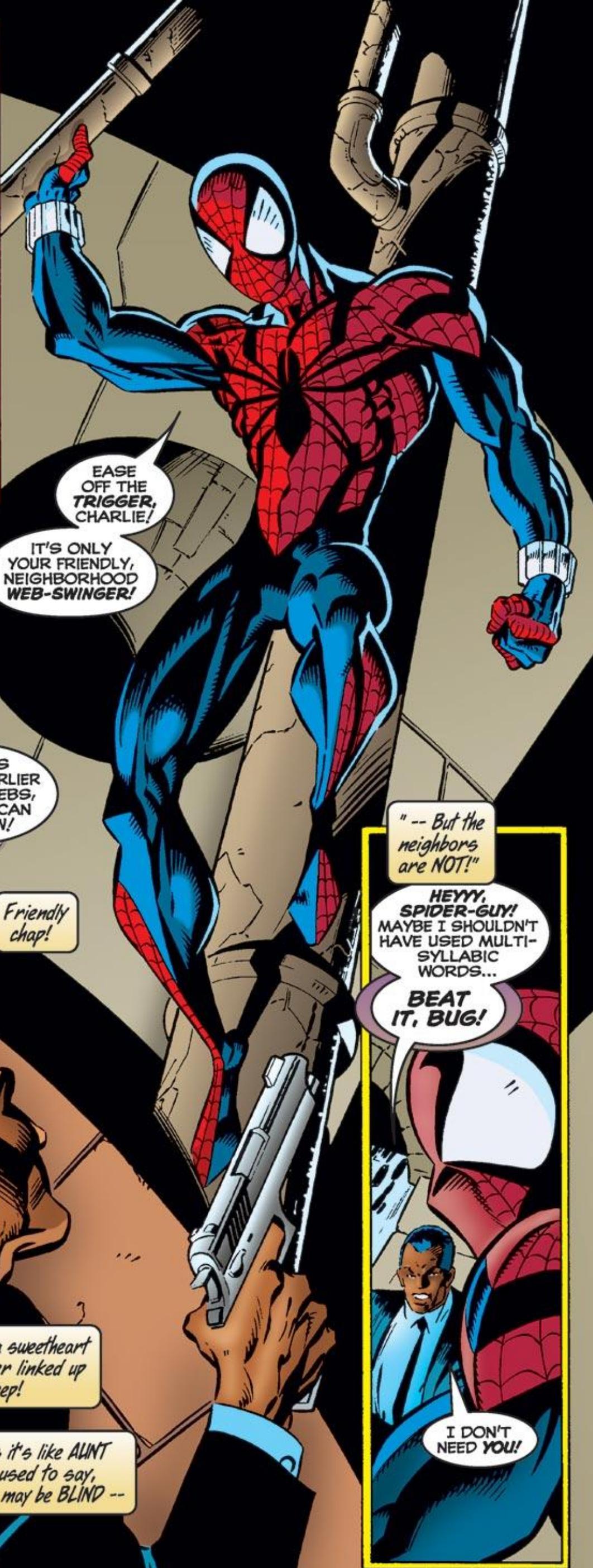
IT'S WHAT YOUR MOTHER WANTED!

But I OWE his mother!









OOOOO!

ARE YOU
TWO FIGHTING
OVER LITTLE
Me?

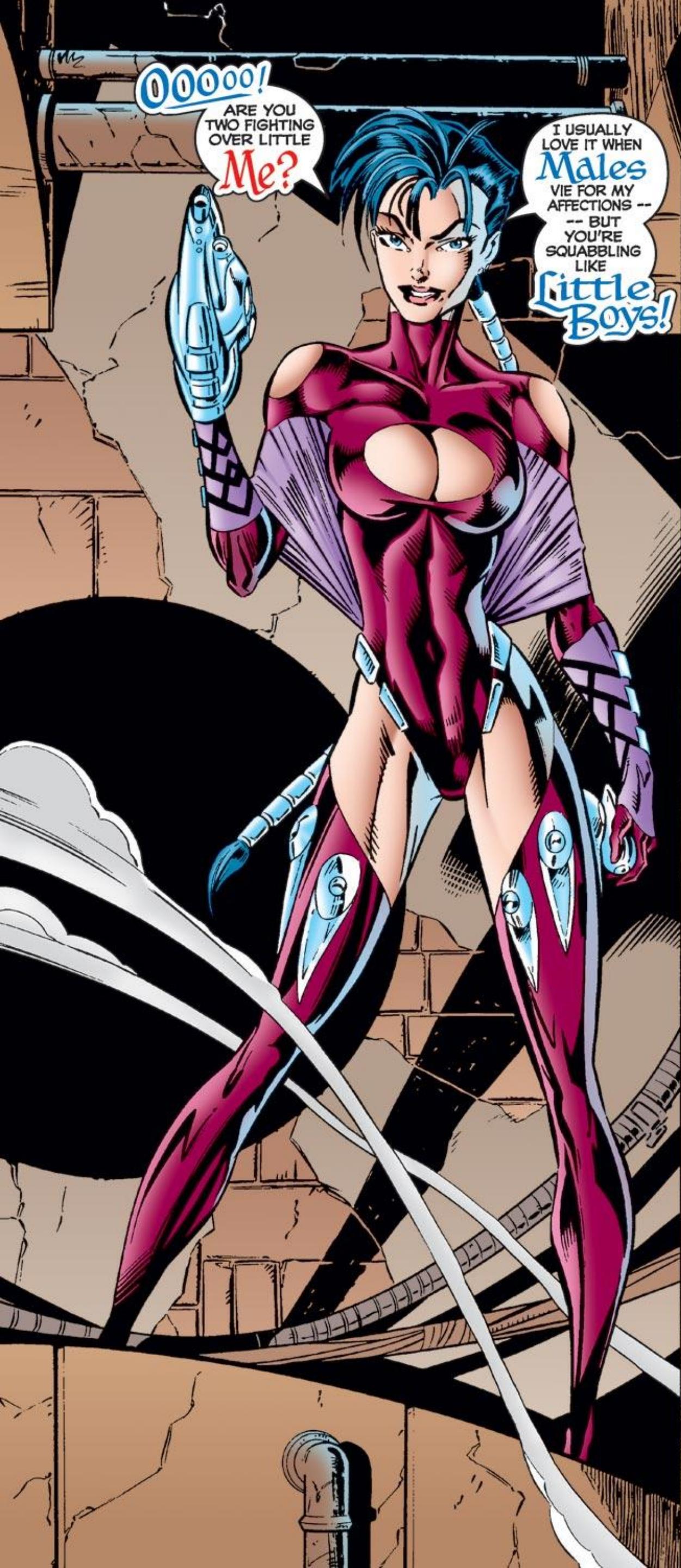
I USUALLY
LOVE IT WHEN
Males
VIE FOR MY
AFFECTIONS --
-- BUT
YOU'RE
SQUABBLING
LIKE
**Little
Boys!**

DELILAH
ONLY PLAYS
WITH
Men!

LET'S SEE
IF EITHER
OF YOU ARE
Worth
MY TIME...

EFFORT...

OR
Passion!





-- AND
SHUT UP!

I may have to **SAVE**
this slime bag --

D-DAD --?

S-SPIDER-
MAN -- ?

W-WHERE
ARE YOU
GUYS?

-- but nobody said I
had to be COURTEOUS!

Using my spider-
sense to guide me,
I swiftly zig-zag
through Delilah's
maze of deadly
weaponry...

YAHOO! we
made it!

Just goes to show what
you can accomplish when
your heart is **PURE** --

-- And your lungs are free of
harmful **TARS** and **NICOTINE**!

IS
ANYBODY
THERE?!

L-LEGO'A
ME, YOU
COSTUMED
SHOWOFF!

I AIN'T
LEAVING UNTIL
I'VE GOTTEN
DOWN WITH
DELILAH!

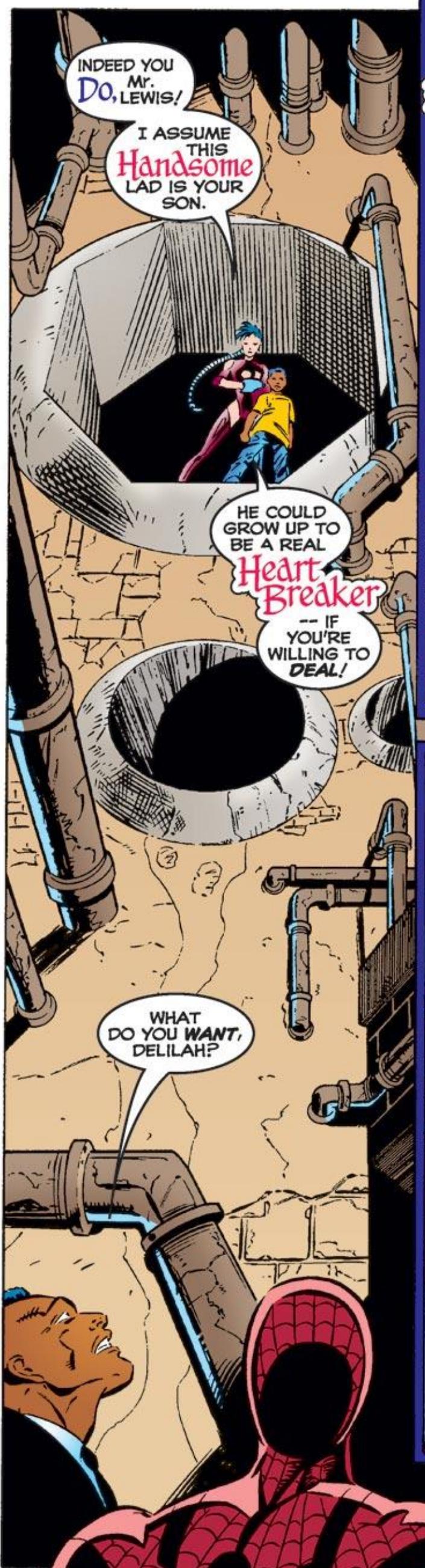
THAT
MAKES
TWO OF US,
PAL!

Uh,
WEBS...

...LOOKS
LIKE WE GOT...

...ANOTHER
PROBLEM!





FOR DETAILS,
SEE SPIDER-MAN #70
- KING RALF

I'M PLEASED
WE COULD REACH AN
ACCOMMODATION,
MR. LEWIS.

Ta-Ta!

DEVON -!

I spring upward
INSTINCTIVELY, my
body moving long
before my mind
catches up to it!

I'M
Surre
WE'LL MEET
AGAIN!

Oh, I
ALMOST
FORGOT...

YOUR
Son!

YAH!!!!

IS HE --?

HE'LL BE
FINE!

ALTHOUGH
I'D STEP BACK
UNTIL HIS STOMACH
STABILIZES!

With no regard for
his fancy suit, Garon
Lewis rushes forward!

Lucky for him,
Devon manages
to hold his lunch --

Though I failed
JESSICA --

-- and can't
save PETE --

-- DEVON is
going to live!

SURKE

HE'S GOING
TO LIVE!

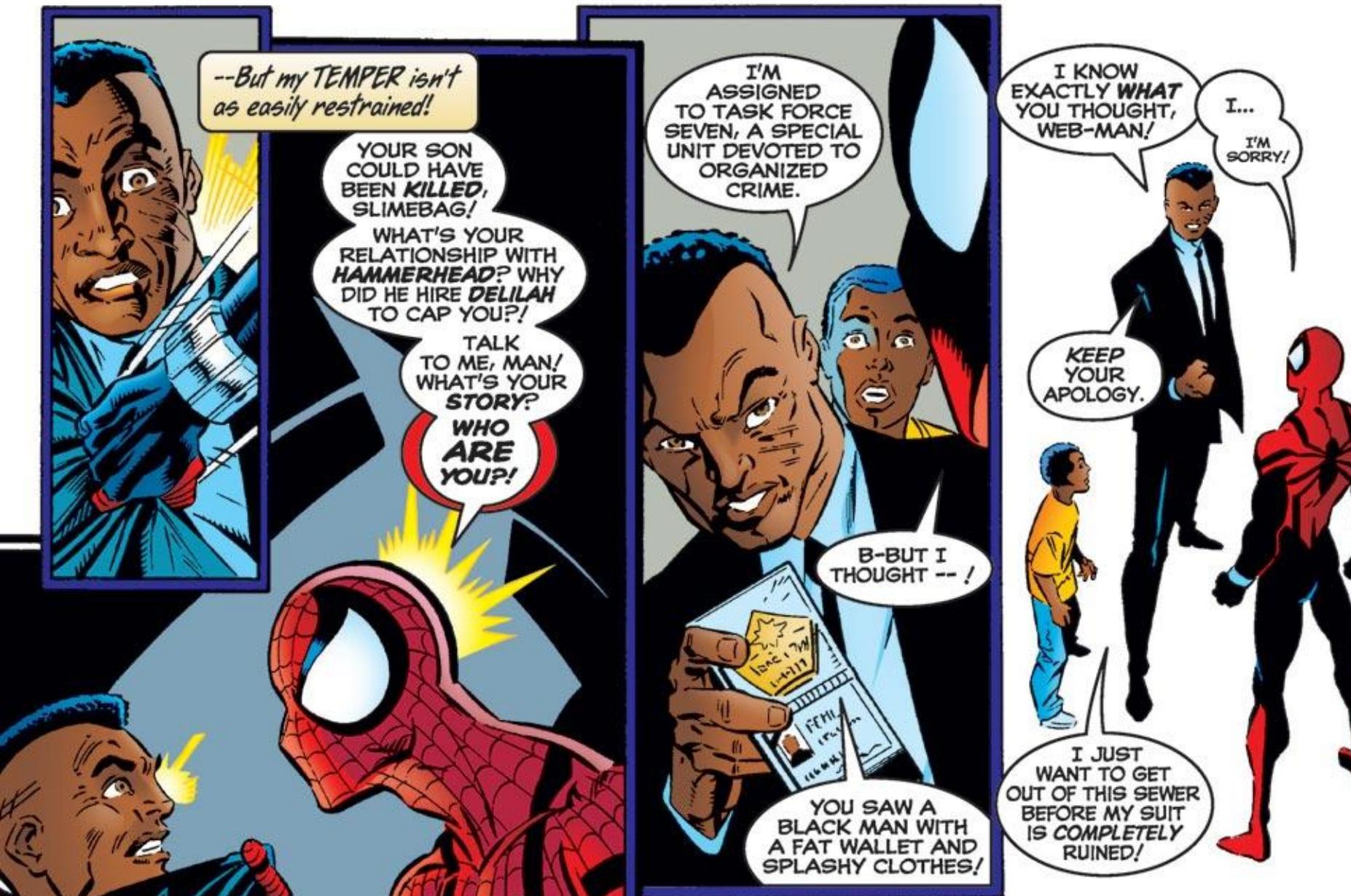
?

?

?

?

?



I used to think of Devon as
NASTY and MEAN-SPIRITED!

A protective
cocoon to
keep away
the pain...

...and the
loneliness!



He kind of reminds me
of someone I once knew!

All he needs are the glasses --

-- And the science books!

WHAT'S
THE WORD,
DEVON?

YOU
LOOK LIKE
YOU COULD USE
A FRIEND!

GET
REAL,
REILLY!

I
DON'T
NEED TO
HANG WITH NO
WHITEBREAD
WASTE!

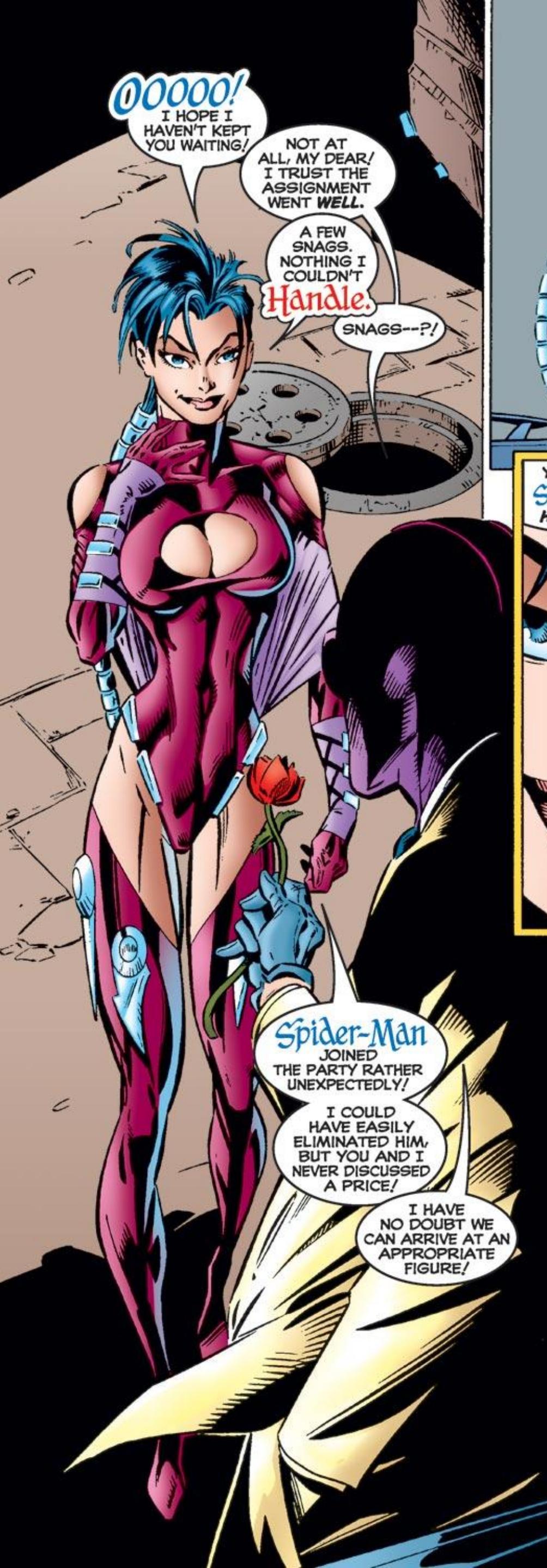
MAYBE
YOU SHOULD
GIVE IT A
TRY!

YOU
COULD DO
WORSE!



DOUBT
IT!





NEXT:
ONSHROUGHT