

MARVEL  
COMICS



SPIDER-MAN

AUG '96 71

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COMIC BOOK  
COUNCIL  
OF EXCELLENCE

# SPIDER-MAN



**Matters  
of Life and  
Death!**



\$2.50 AUS

 BASEMENT  
SOMEWHERE IN  
NEW YORK CITY.

WHEN I  
WAS A YOUNG  
BOY IT WAS MY  
JOB TO WATCH OVER  
THE FAMILY SHEEP  
HERD AT  
NIGHT.

SITTING  
ALONE IN THE  
FIELD, WITH ONLY  
THE BLEATING SHEEP FOR  
COMPANY, I WOULD STARE  
INTO THE STAR-FILLED SKY AND  
DREAM OF ALL THAT I WOULD  
DO WHEN I GREW UP, AND  
WAS FAR AWAY FROM  
THE FIELD.

ONE NIGHT,  
A METEOR SHOWER  
FILLED THE SKY WITH A  
WONDROUS DISPLAY  
OF SHOOTING  
STARS.

I SPENT  
THAT NIGHT  
COUNTING STREAKS  
OF MAGICAL LIGHT  
AND WISHING, WISHING  
I COULD BE ANYWHERE  
BUT IN THAT  
FIELD.

ON  
THAT NIGHT  
THE WOLVES  
CAME AND WE  
LOST MANY  
SHEEP.

WHEN  
I FACED MY  
FATHER THE NEXT  
MORNING, THE TASTE  
OF FEAR BURNING  
THE BACK OF MY  
THROAT...

... ALL HE  
COULD SAY WAS:  
"SON, YOU HAVE  
DISAPPOINTED  
ME."

ON THAT  
DAY, GENTLEMEN,  
I FIRST LEARNED  
THE MEANING OF  
FEAR AND TRUE  
PAIN.

TODAY,  
GENTLEMEN...

...YOU HAVE  
DISAPPOINTED  
ME.

YOU ARE  
THE CAPTAINS OF  
THE CREWS WHO HAVE  
FAILED TO ELIMINATE  
THE THORN IN MY SIDE  
WHO CALLS HIMSELF  
**HAMMERHEAD**...

...AND  
WHO FAILED  
TO BRING BACK TO  
US **JIMMY SIX**. ONE  
OF OUR OWN. ONE  
WHO WOULD  
BETRAY US.

YOU  
UNDERSTAND  
THE NEED FOR THIS  
PUNISHMENT...  
DO YOU  
NOT?

YES,  
**FORTUNATO**.

GOOD.

LET IT BE  
DONE AND WE  
WILL PUT THIS  
INCIDENT  
BEHIND  
US.



**RRR**  
**R**  
**R**  
**R**



YOUR  
WHELP'S ARE  
PLAYFUL TODAY,  
**ANGEL**,  
Heh?

LEAVE THEM  
IN THE PIT FOR  
FIVE MINUTES AND  
THEN HAVE THEM  
ATTENDED  
TO.

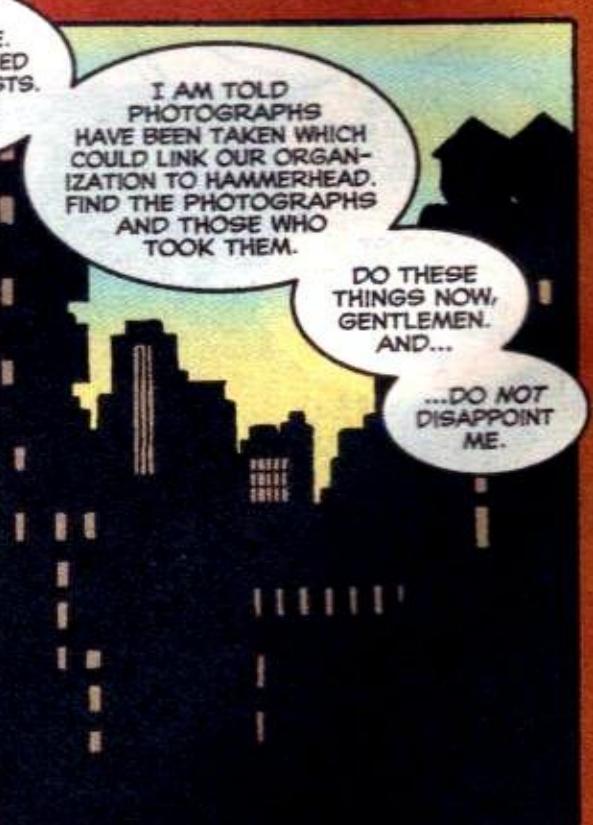
FIND THIS  
HAMMERHEAD  
AND FINISH THAT  
WHICH SHOULD  
HAVE BEEN  
FINISHED.

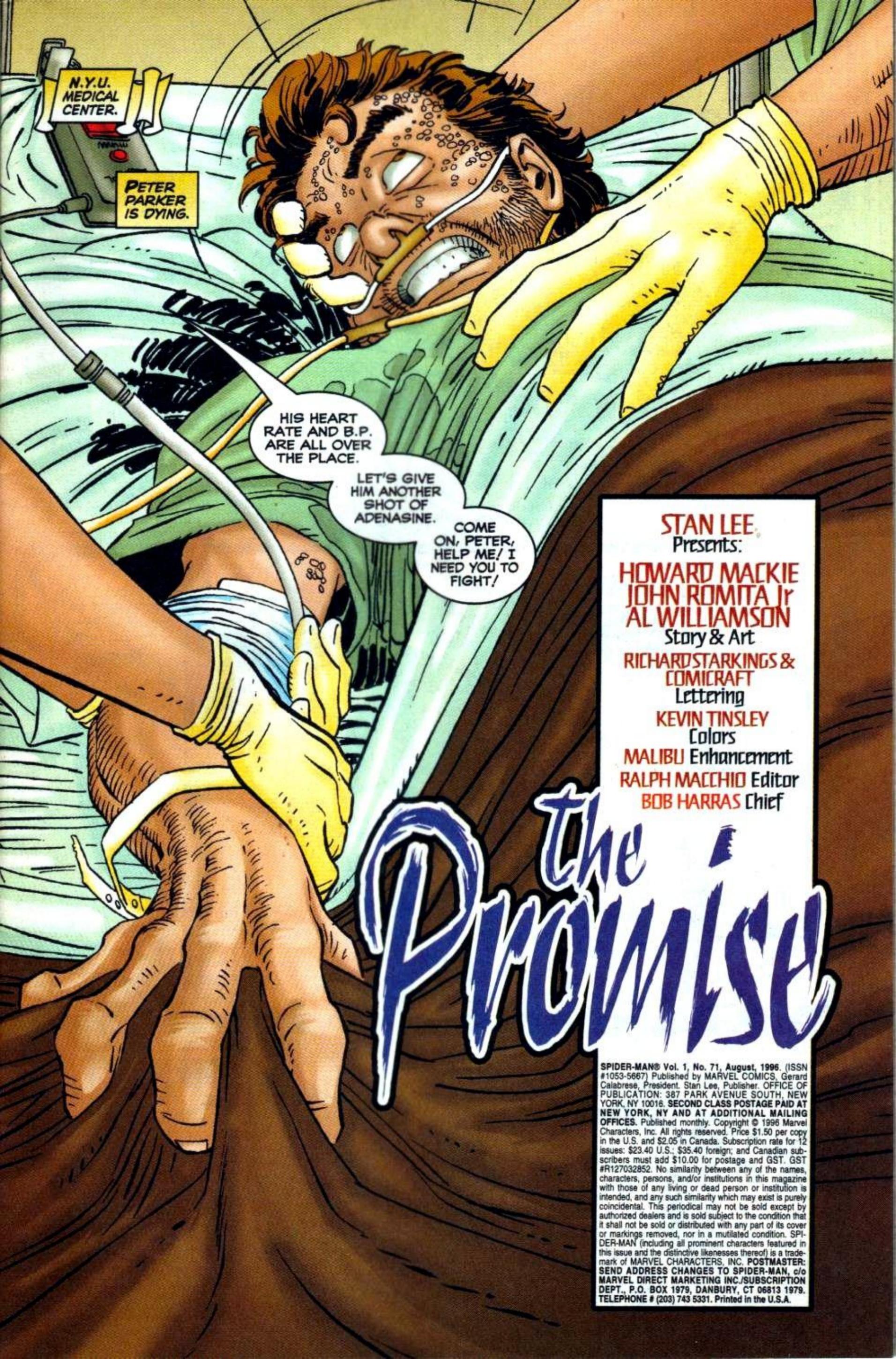
THEN FIND SIX  
AND BRING HIM TO ME.  
HE WOULD NOT HAVE FAILED  
ME IN THESE SIMPLE REQUESTS.  
PERHAPS HE CAN BE  
SALVAGED YET.

I AM TOLD  
PHOTOGRAPHS  
HAVE BEEN TAKEN WHICH  
COULD LINK OUR ORGAN-  
IZATION TO HAMMERHEAD.  
FIND THE PHOTOGRAPHS  
AND THOSE WHO  
TOOK THEM.

DO THESE  
THINGS NOW,  
GENTLEMEN.  
AND...

...DO NOT  
DISAPPOINT  
ME.





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# The Promise

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THE PAST SEVERAL DAYS HAVE BEEN A BLUR TO MARY JANE PARKER.

PETER PASSED OUT, WAS RUSHED TO THE HOSPITAL AND HAS BEEN WAGING A NON-STOP FIGHT FOR HIS LIFE EVER SINCE.

SINCE THE SHOCKING ENDING OF OUR LAST ISSUE - E.R. - A.I.F.

BUT THOSE HOPES NOW SEEM SO DISTANT.

RIGHT NOW, ALL MARY JANE CAN HOPE FOR...

... IS THAT HER HUSBAND WILL LIVE THROUGH THE HOUR.

OKAY, EVERYONE, LET'S ALL PRAY THAT THIS WORKS... AGAIN.

... ENJOY THEIR CHILD, WHOM SHE CAN NOW FEEL KICKING WITHIN HER WOMB.

BLOOD PRESSURE IS STABILIZING.

HEART RATE IS NORMAL.

DOCTOR CONNORS, HOW LONG CAN HE GO ON LIKE THIS? THE SEIZURES...? CAN'T YOU DO ANYTHING?

WE'VE GOT A FEW MORE EXPERIMENTAL AVENUES OF TREATMENT TO PURSUE. IF I JUST HAD MORE TIME...

THE TRUTH, DOCTOR... PLEASE?

I'M SORRY, MARY JANE...

"...I DON'T KNOW IF HE'LL MAKE IT THROUGH THE NIGHT."

A MOMENT LATER...

SORRY ABOUT THIS, KIDDO, BUT, YOU KNOW, I THINK I'M STARTING TO GET BETTER.

SO WHY DON'T YOU GO HOME AND GET SOME SLEEP. YOU LOOK EXHAUSTED... BEAUTIFUL AS EVER... BUT EXHAUSTED.

IF IT'S ALL THE SAME TO YOU, MR. PARKER, I'M STAYING RIGHT HERE.

I'VE SEEN THE WAY THOSE NURSES HAVE BEEN OGLING YOU.

YEAH... LOOK AT ME... I'M A REGULAR BRAD PITT.

YOU ARE TO ME.

NOT YET, BUT I'M SURE HE'S ON HIS WAY.

ANY WORD FROM BEN?

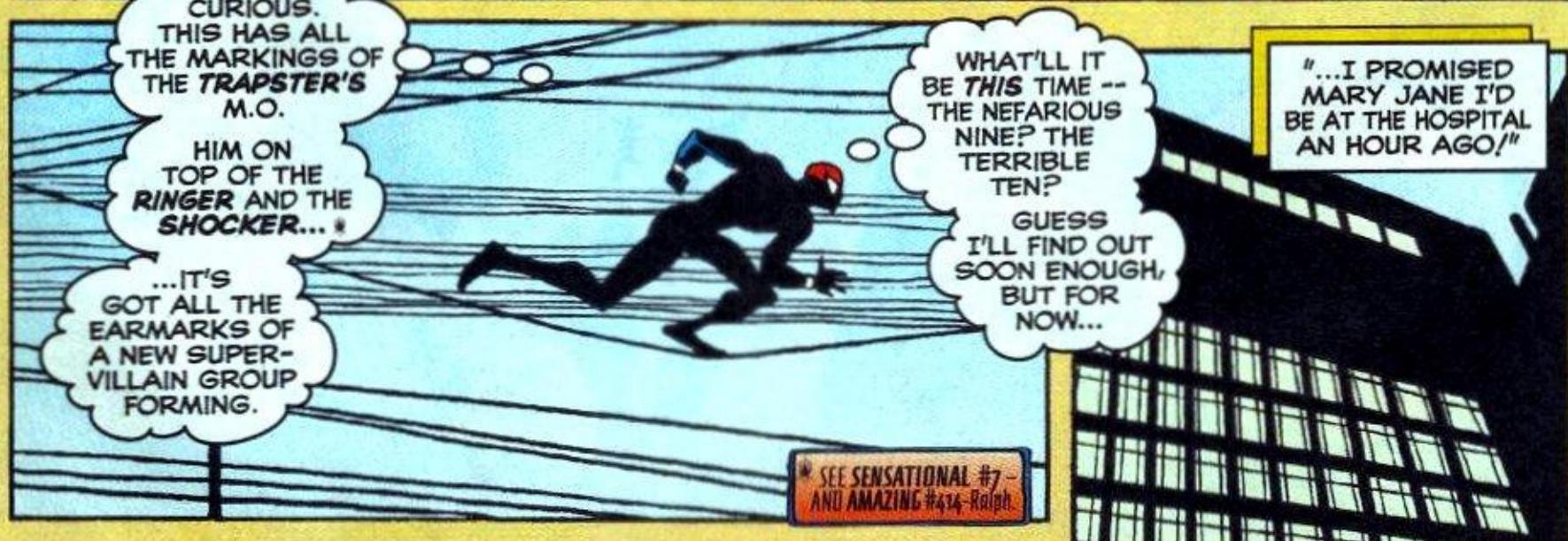
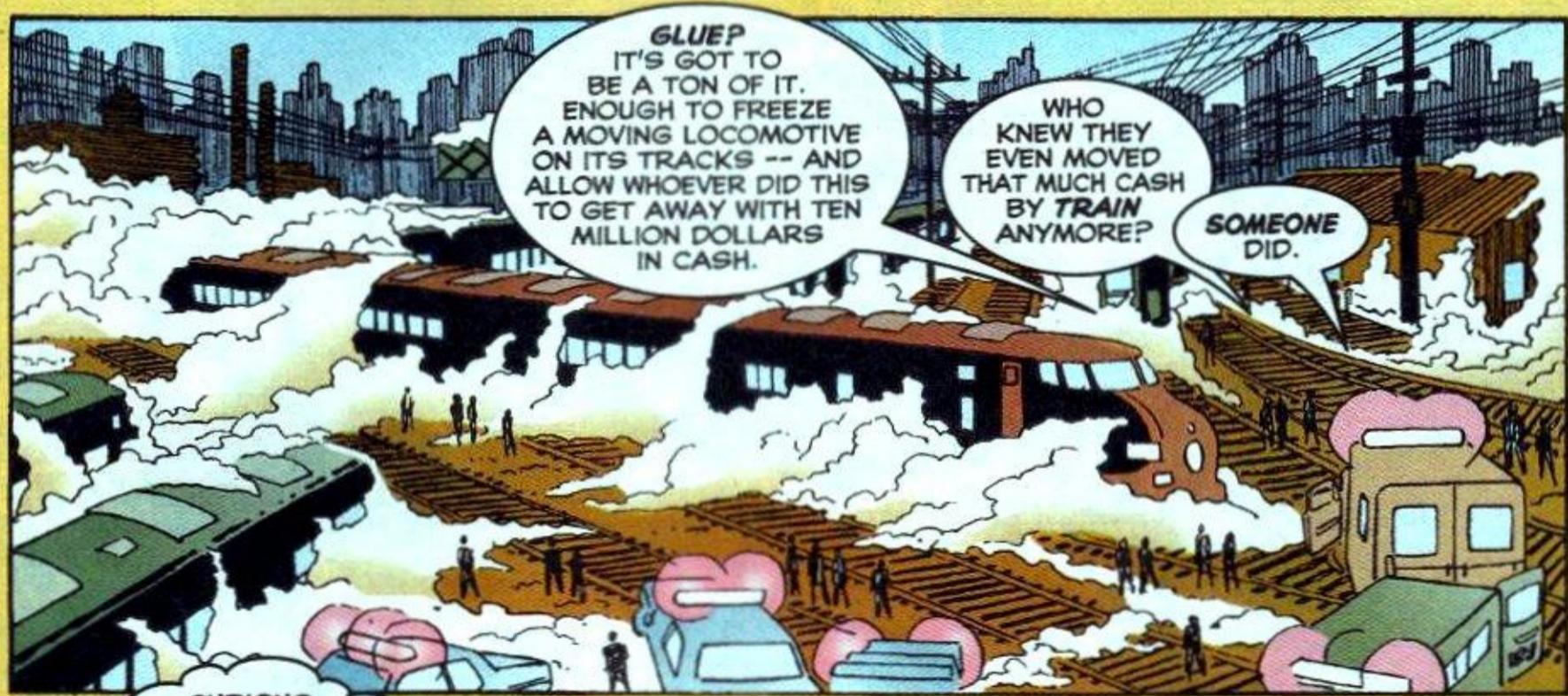
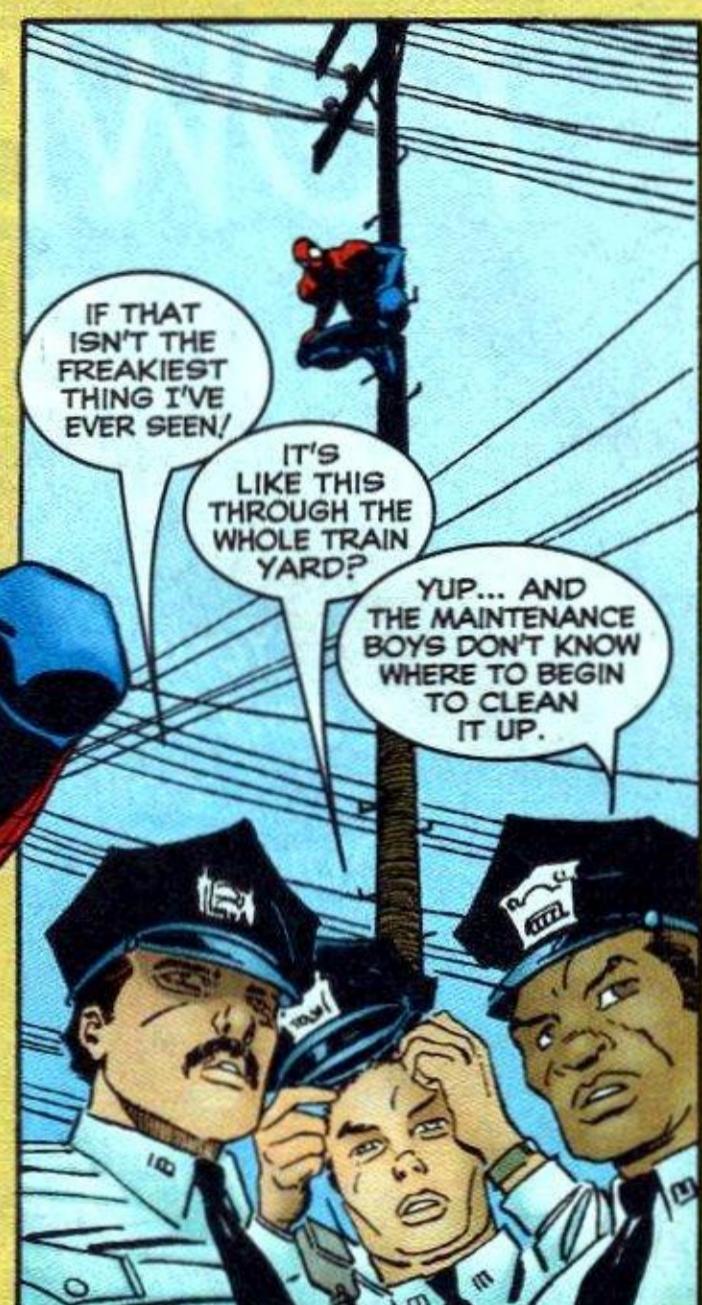
WAKE ME WHEN HE GETS HERE. I'VE GOT SOMETHING IMPORTANT TO TALK TO HIM ABOUT.

YOU JUST GET SOME REST.

I'LL BE RIGHT HERE...

"...WHEN YOU WAKE."

BUT BEN REILLY, THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN, IS MOMENTARILY OCCUPIED ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE CITY.



BEEN  
WORKING BACK-  
TO-BACK SHIFTS FOR  
TWO DAYS STRAIGHT,  
AND I FEEL LIKE I'M  
GOING TO FALL  
DOWN.

CAN'T WAIT  
FOR THIS RESIDENCY  
TO BE DONE SO I  
CAN MOVE INTO MY  
UNCLE'S PRACTICE  
IN SCARSDALE.

NO MORE  
EMERGENCIES...  
NO MORE  
GUN SHOT  
TRAUMA...

JUST  
A NICE QUIET  
PRACTICE, A SIX  
FIGURE INCOME, SEVEN  
WEEKS' VACATION IN  
HAWAII... THE  
GOOD LIFE.

AND I'D EVEN TRADE  
ALL THAT IN FOR EIGHT  
HOURS OF UNINTER-  
RUPTED SLEEP.

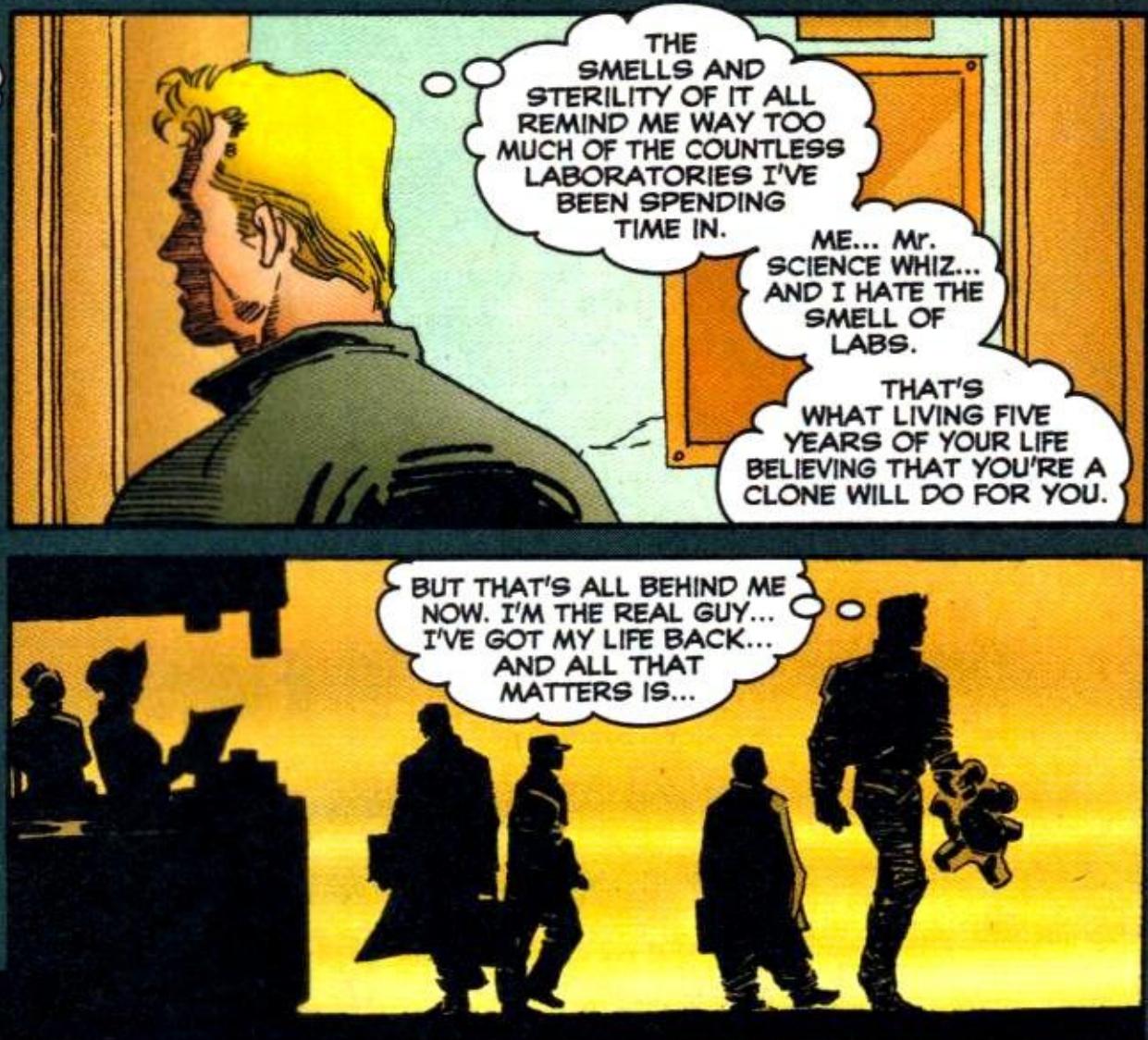
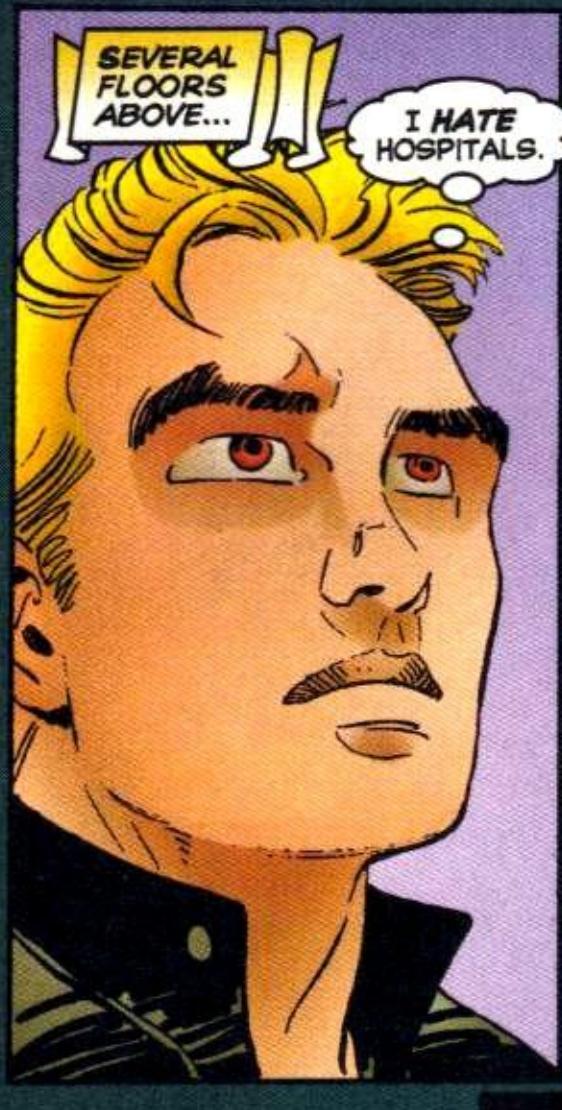
TIME  
TO WAKE  
UP, SLEEPIN'  
BEAUTY!

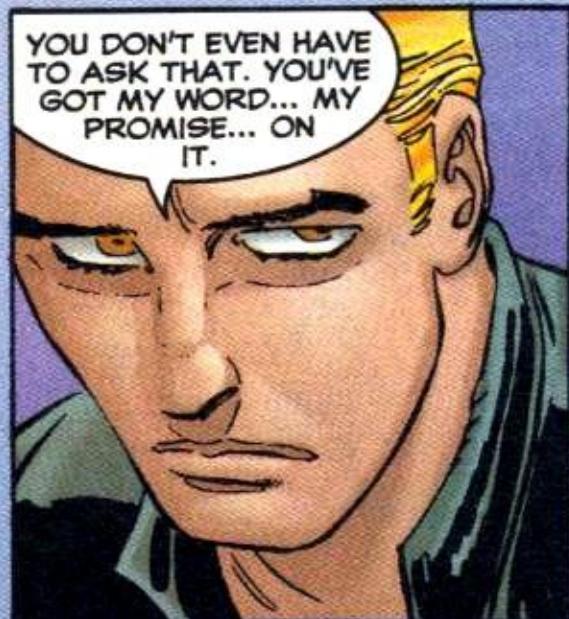
I'M HURT AND  
I NEED YOU TO  
STITCH ME  
UP --

Y-Y-YOU'RE  
H-HAMMERHEAD!

GOOD!  
I FOUND ME  
A DOC THAT READS  
THE PAPERS. SO, THEN WE  
UNDERSTAND EACH OTHER...  
RIGHT? I DON'T HAVE TO  
DESCRIBE TO YOU WHAT I'LL  
DO TO YOUR FACE IF YOU  
GIVE ME A HARD  
TIME, Heh?

R-RIGHT!





A SHORT TIME LATER...

THANKS, DOC, I FEEL LIKE A MILLION BUCKS.

AND NOW I'M GONNA SLIP INTO SOMETHIN' HERE THAT'S GONNA KEEP ME FEELIN' THIS WAY... AND KEEP ALL YOUR NEAT STITCHES 'CAUSE, IN PLACE. WHETHER YOU KNOW IT OR NOT, THERE'S A WAR COMIN' TO THIS CITY.

I SHOULD'A SEEN IT COMIN' DOWN AND PREPARED MYSELF BETTER, BUT NO ONE IS MUSCLIN' ME OUT OF THE PIECE OF KINGPIN'S TERRITORY I STAKED AFTER THE FAT MAN FELL.

THERE'S MORE TO ME THAN ANYONE KNOWS. I AIN'T JUST A STREET PUG. YOU'LL SEE, DOC... YOU'LL SEE.

AFTER I MAKE SURE THE COAST IS CLEAR I'M GOIN' TO BE ON MY WAY, SO, DOC...

...DON'T BOTHER GETTIN' UP.

WHO DO WE HAVE HERE?

THAT PAPER JOCKEY... URICH!

HE WAS THERE WHEN THOSE MUTTS TRIED TO WHACK ME THE OTHER NIGHT.

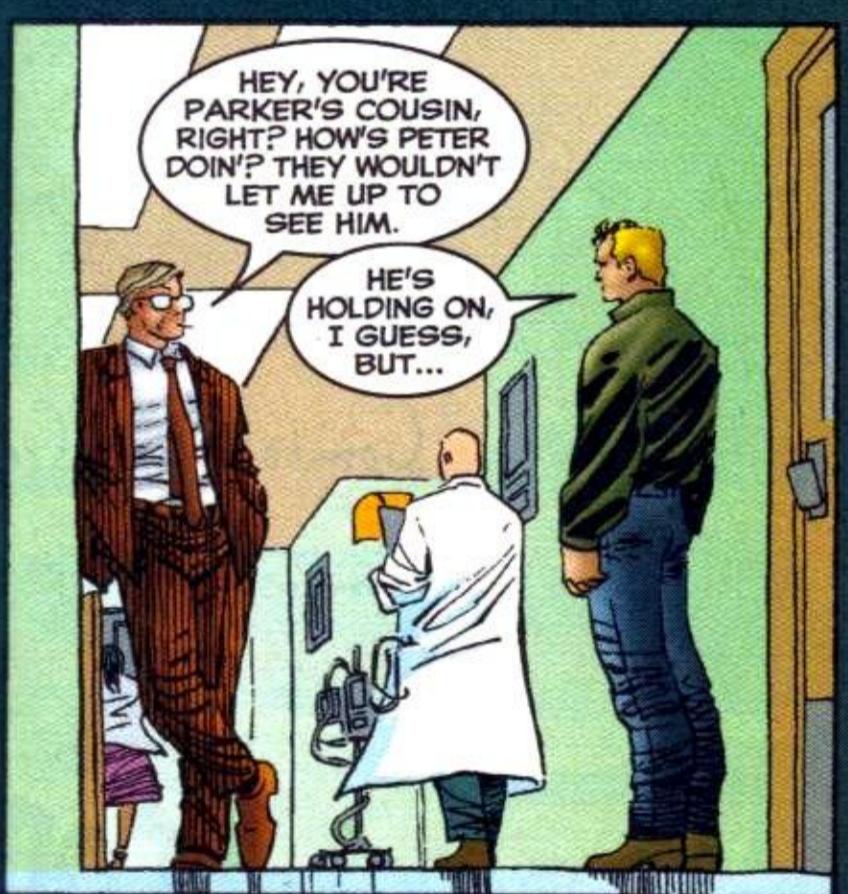
PHONE

\* LAST ISSUE - Ralf.

HE'S A SMART GUY, THAT URIC. REAL SMART. MAYBE SMART ENOUGH TO KNOW A LITTLE MORE THAN EVEN I DO ABOUT WHO THE NEW BOSS IN TOWN IS.

I THINK URIC AND ME ARE GONNA HAVE TO HAVE A HEART-TO-HEART.





I'LL GIVE  
YOU TWO SECONDS  
TO START SPILLIN'  
YOUR GUTS ABOUT  
EVERYTHING  
YOU SAW THE  
OTHER DAY.

AFTER  
THAT, I  
SHOOT OFF  
YOUR EAR.

I-- I  
DON'T KNOW  
WHAT YOU'RE  
TALKING  
ABOUT --!

CRR

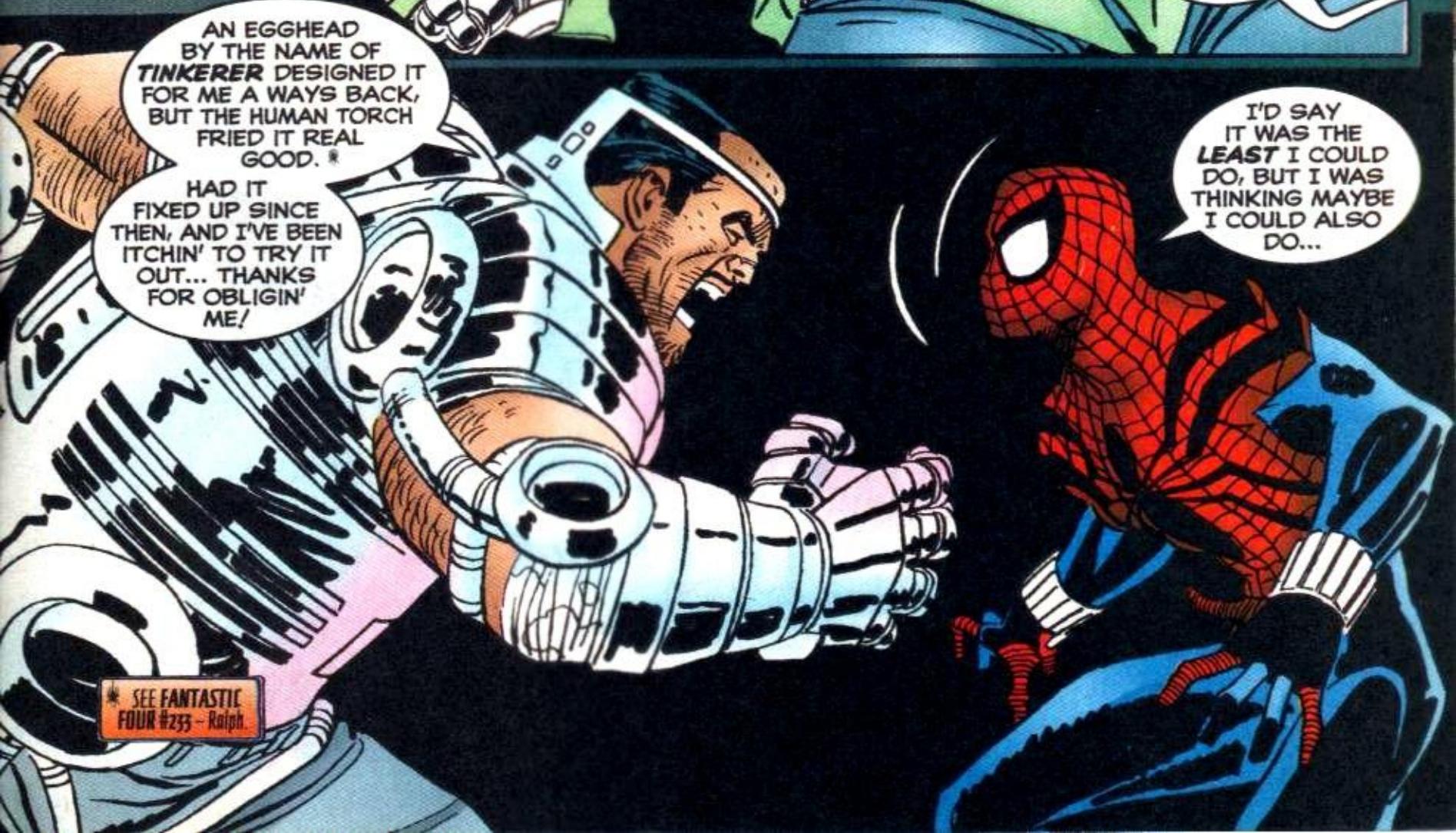
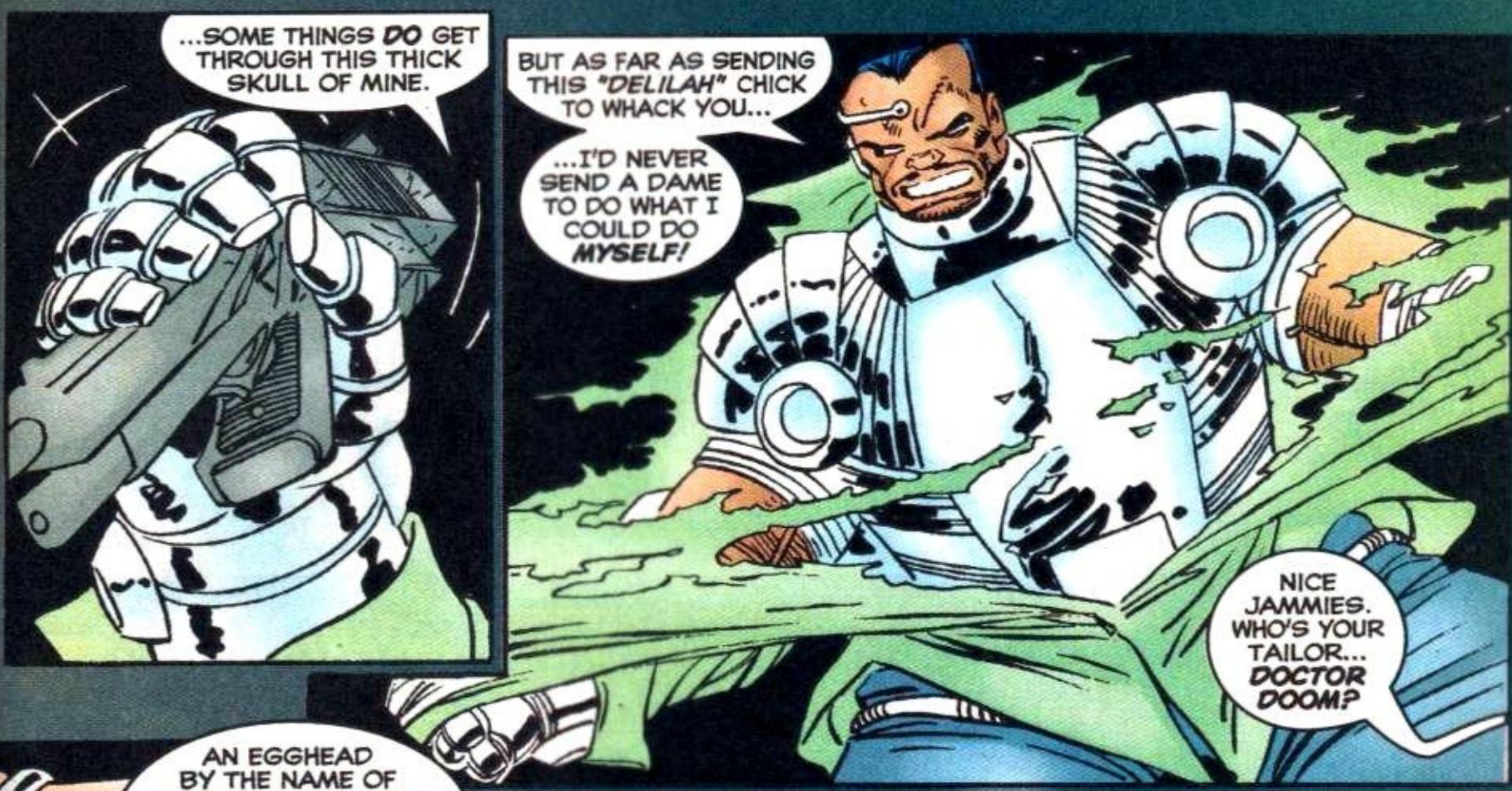
YOU AND  
I HAVE GOT TO  
HAVE A SERIOUS CHAT  
ABOUT A YOUNG  
LADY.

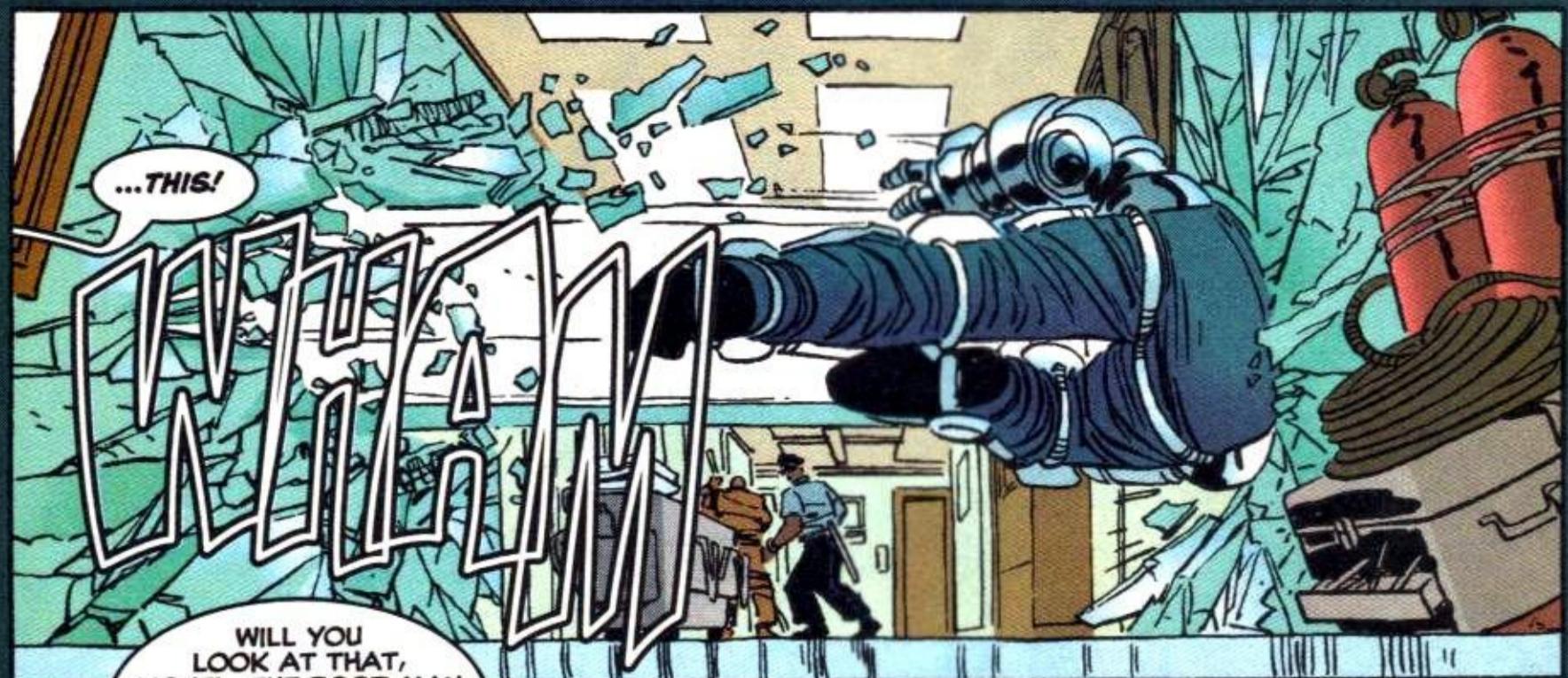
A LADY  
NAMED  
DELILAH!

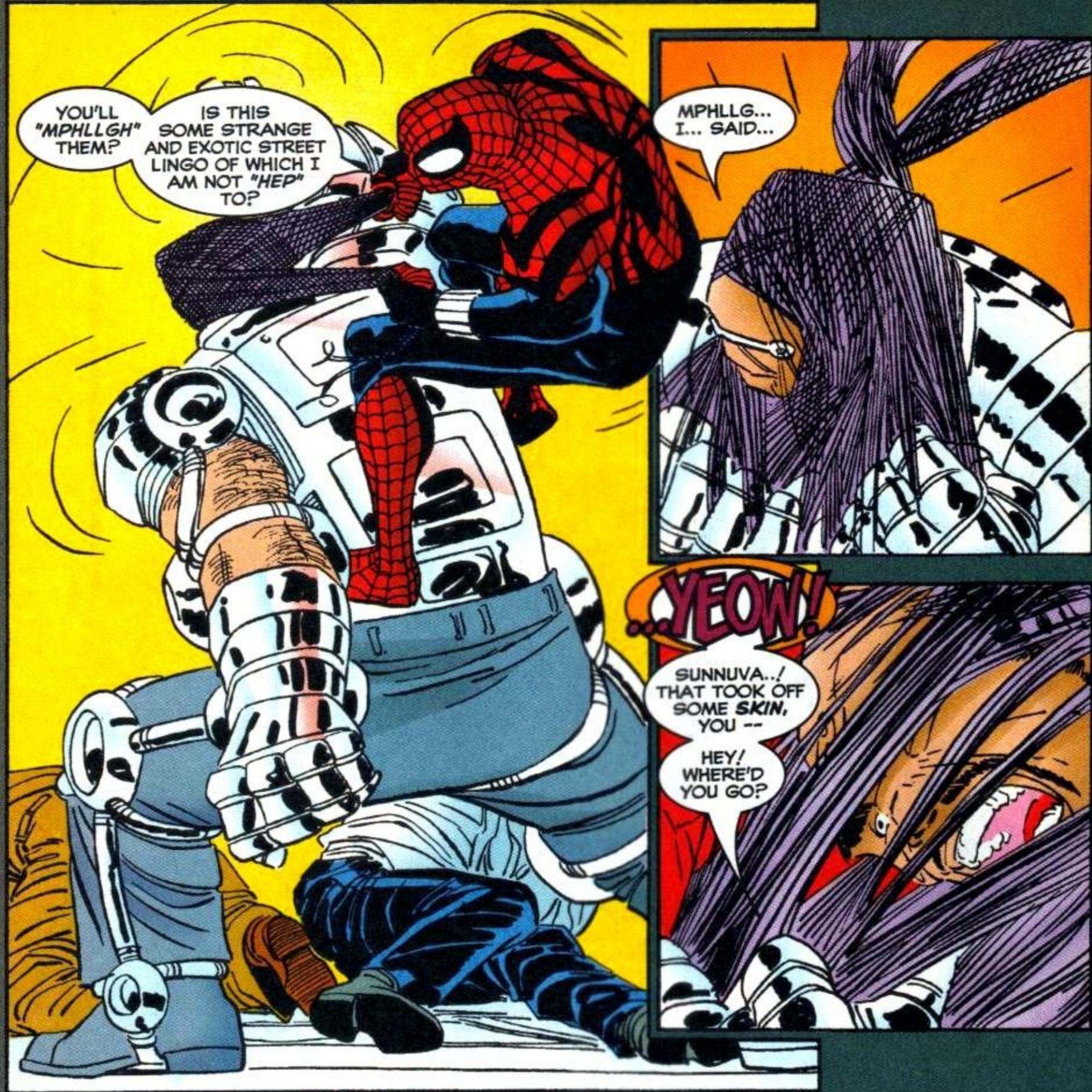
WHAT  
THE --?

HAMMERHEAD!  
JUST THE MAN I'VE  
BEEN LOOKING  
FOR!

YEEHAW









WAS I  
RIGHT?

**SHAZAM!**

YEAH...  
YOU WERE  
RIGHT.

BUT  
I HAD  
A BACK-UP  
SYSTEM BUILT  
IN THIS  
TIME!

YOU SEE,  
THIS CITY IS  
BEIN' CARVED UP  
RIGHT UNDER YOUR  
NOSE, Mr. SUPER-  
HERO!

AND THERE  
AIN'T A **THING** A  
BOY SCOUT LIKE  
YOU CAN DO  
TO STOP IT.

BUT I PROMISE YOU THIS... WHEN  
IT'S OVER I'M STILL GOIN' TO BE  
STANDIN' AND THEN...

**I  
SWEAR...**

... I'M COMIN'  
FOR YOU!!!

NOW  
YOU LISTEN!  
**WHATEVER** IT IS  
THAT'S GOING  
DOWN ON THE  
STREETS...

... I WILL  
STOP  
IT!

THAT'S  
MY PROMISE...  
AND YOU CAN ASK  
ANYONE...

**...I  
ALWAYS**  
KEEP MY  
PROMISES!



BOOM





