

SPIDER-MAN

MARVEL® COMICS GROUP

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COMICS
CODE

AUTHORITY

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ALL-NEW! MORE THRILLING THAN EVER!

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457

the AMAZING SPIDER-MAN®

IT'S A SHAME
YOU SWUNG
ALL THE WAY
UP HERE--

--'CAUSE
NOW IT'S A
LONGER DROP
DOWN!

ANDRU &
ESPOSITO

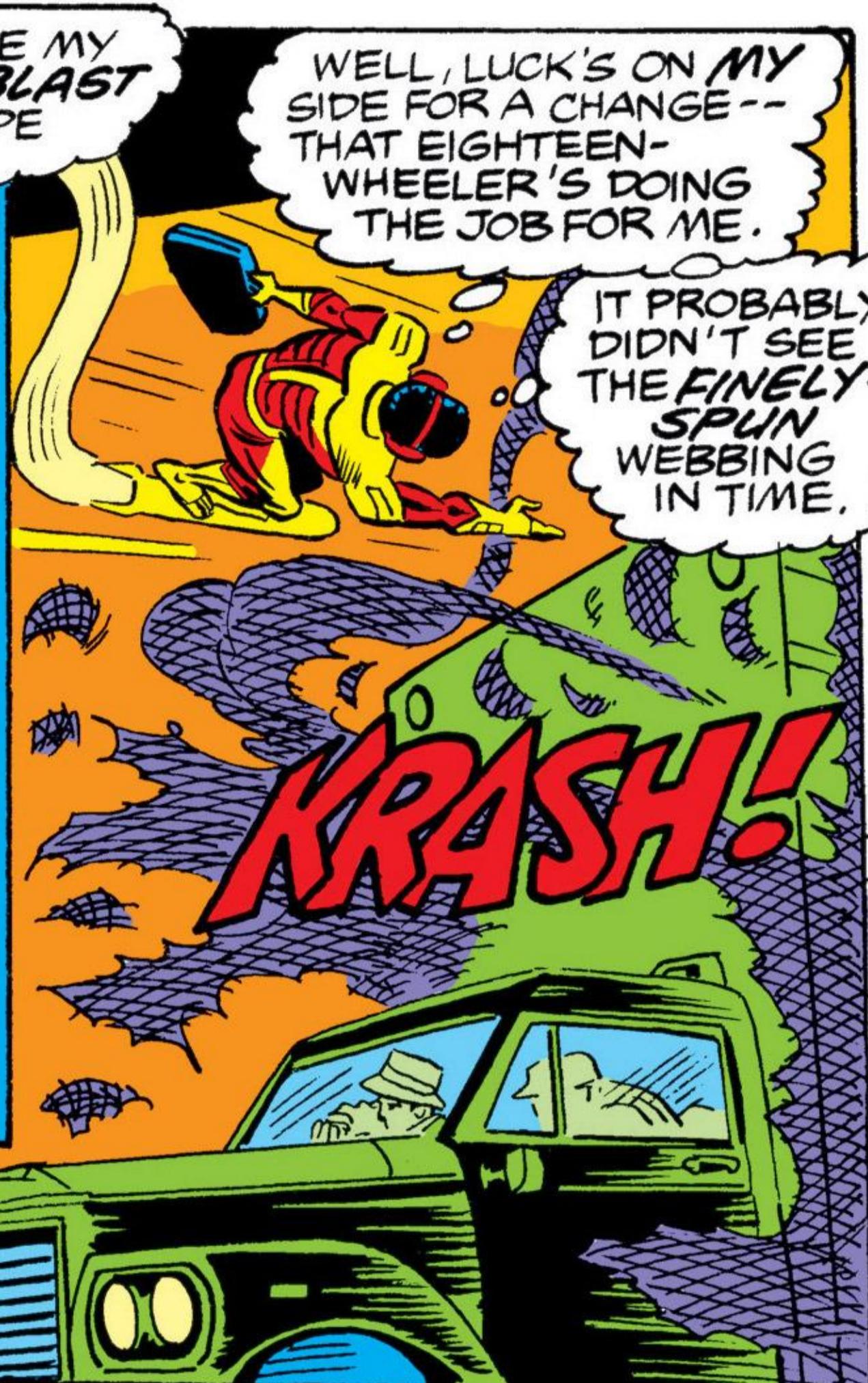
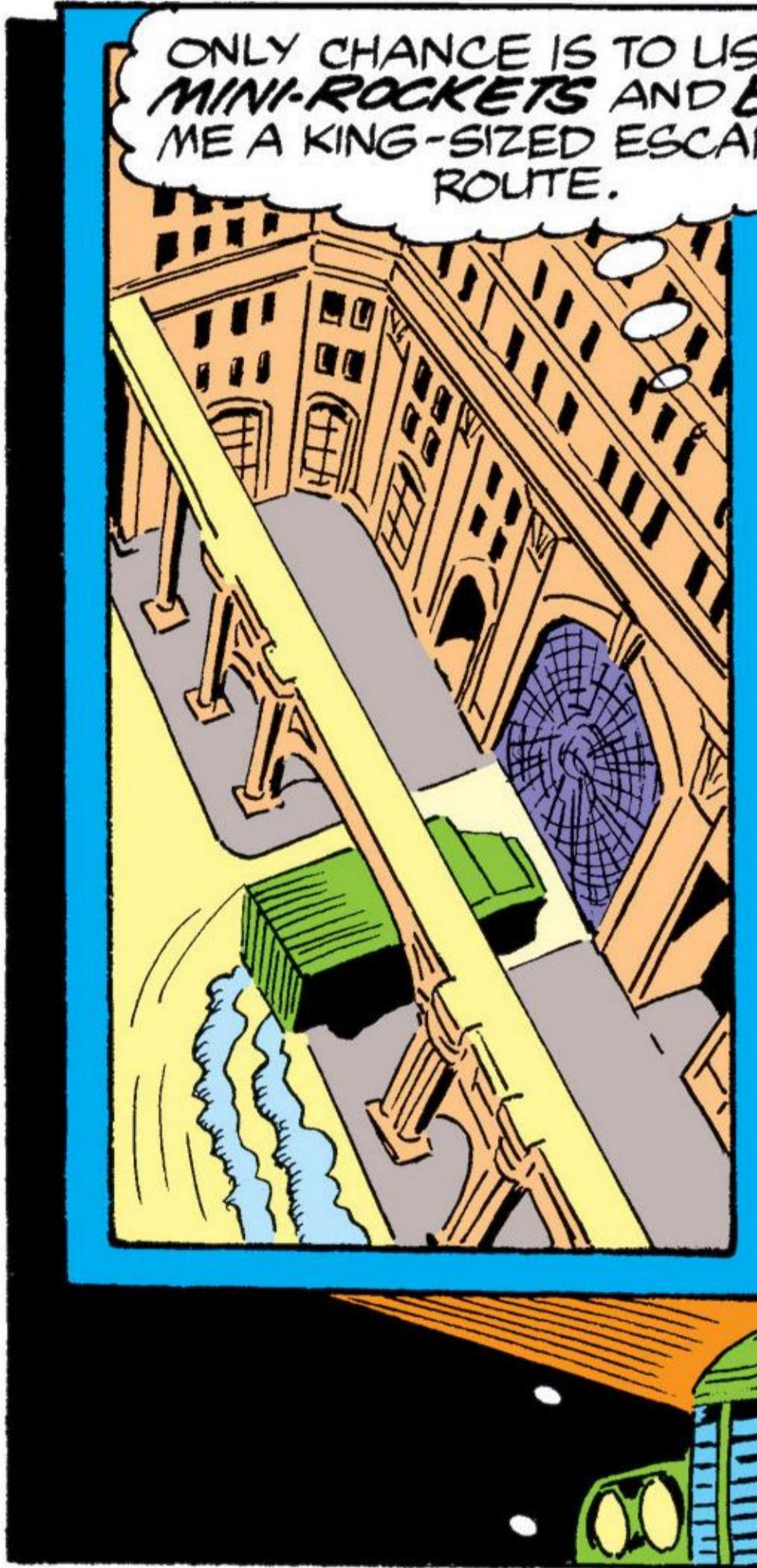
THE ROCKET RACER'S BACK IN TOWN!

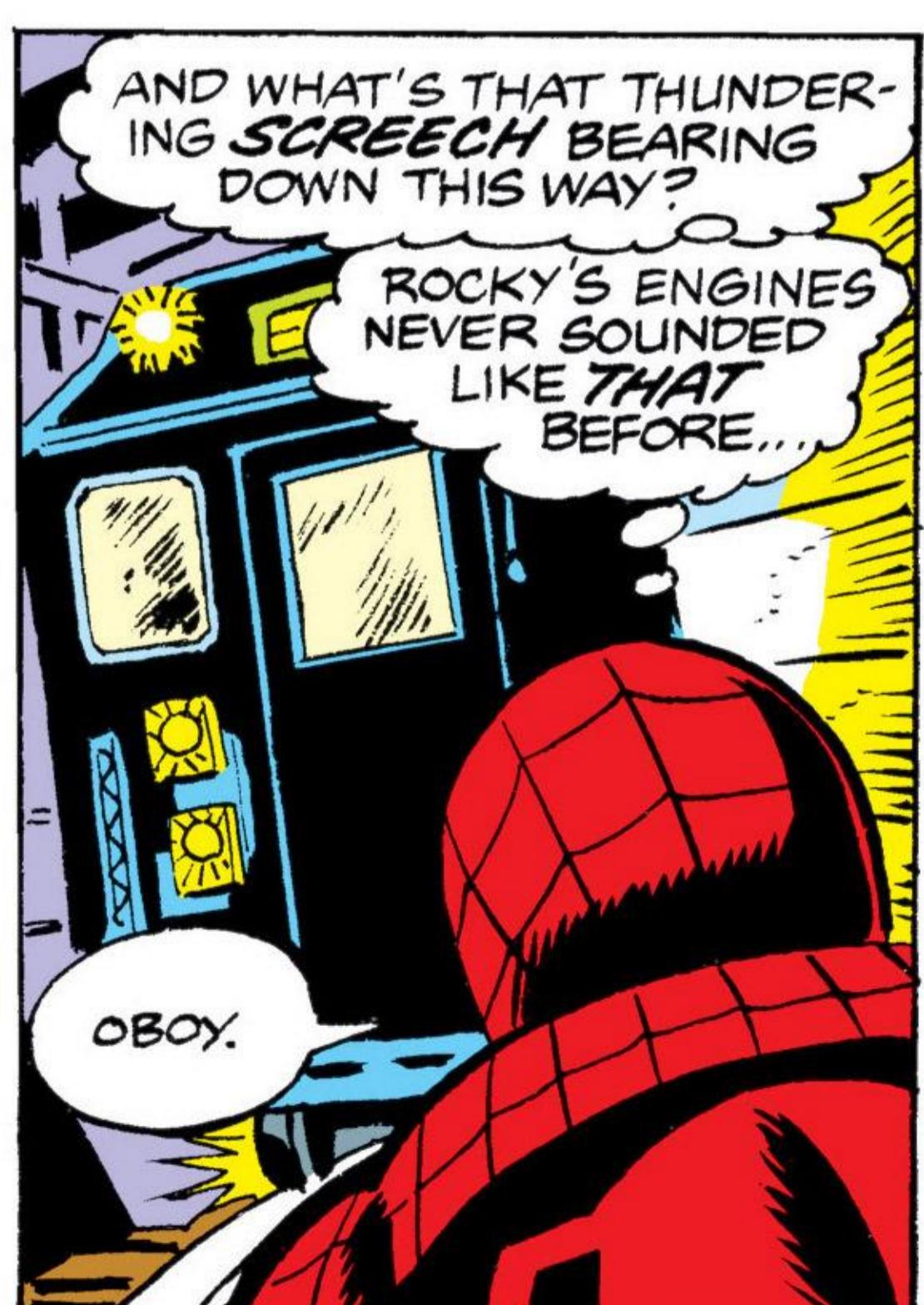
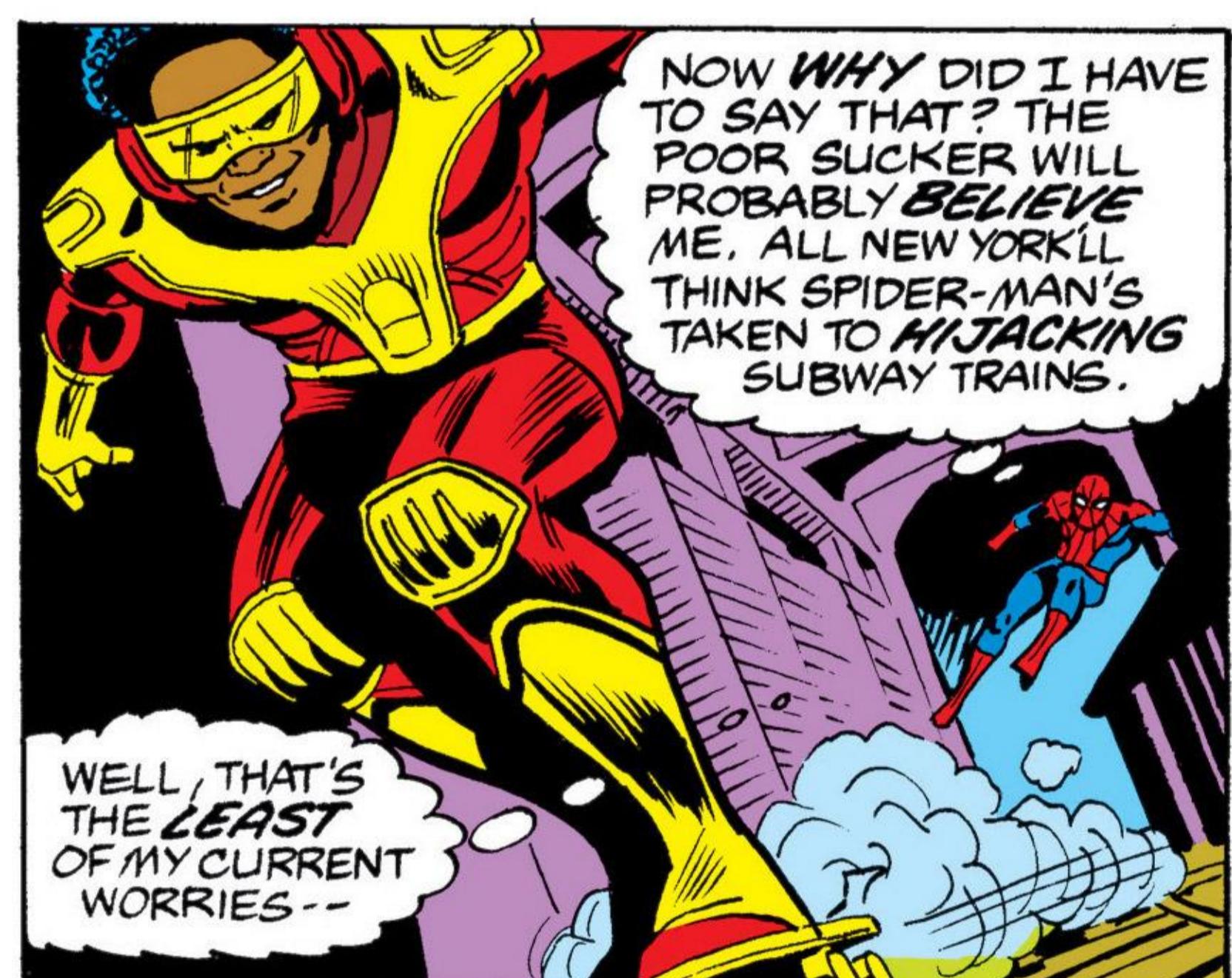
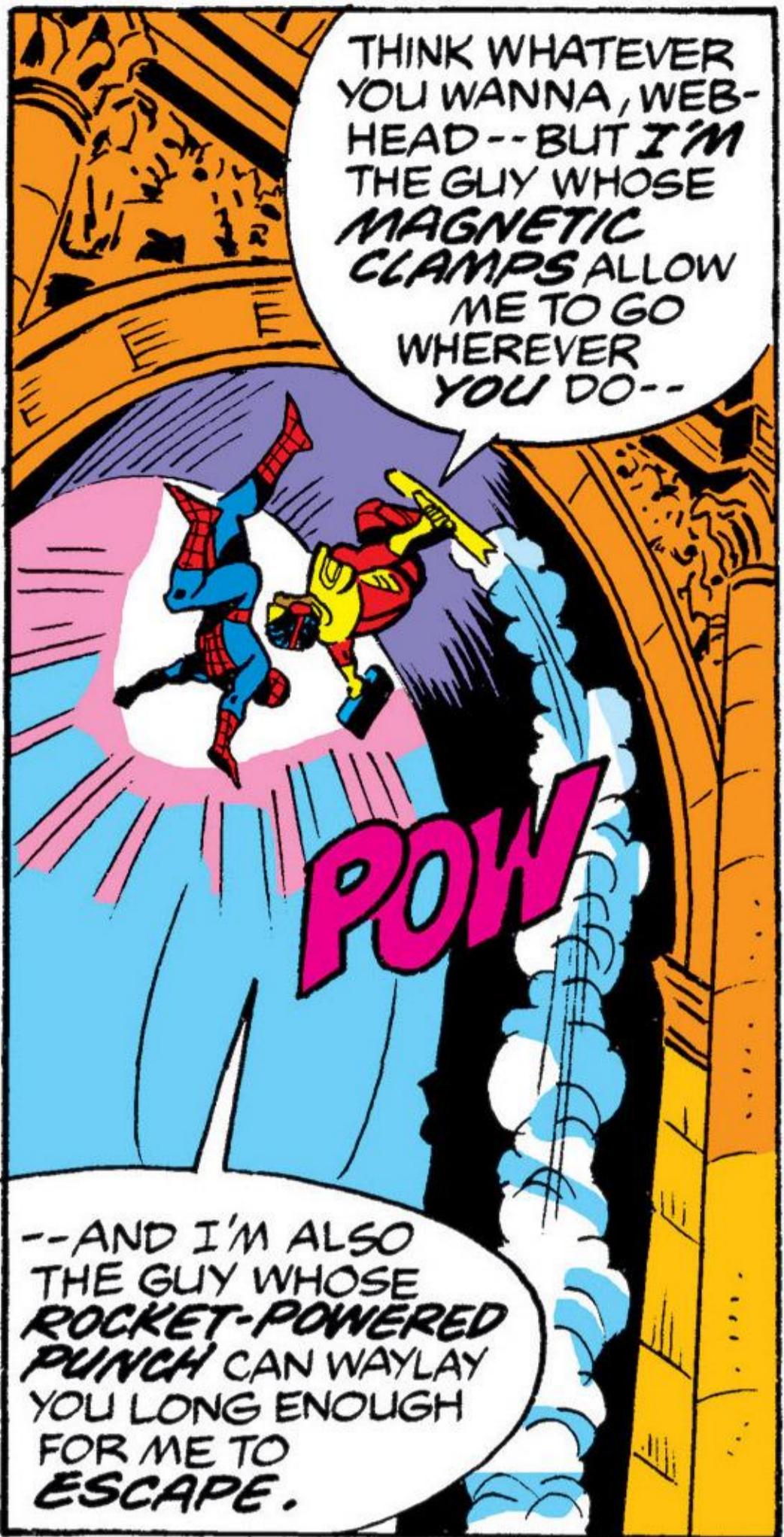
While attending a demonstration in radiology, student PETER PARKER was bitten by a spider which had accidentally been exposed to RADIOACTIVE RAYS. Through a miracle of science, Peter soon found that he had GAINED the arachnid's powers...and had, in effect, become a human spider...

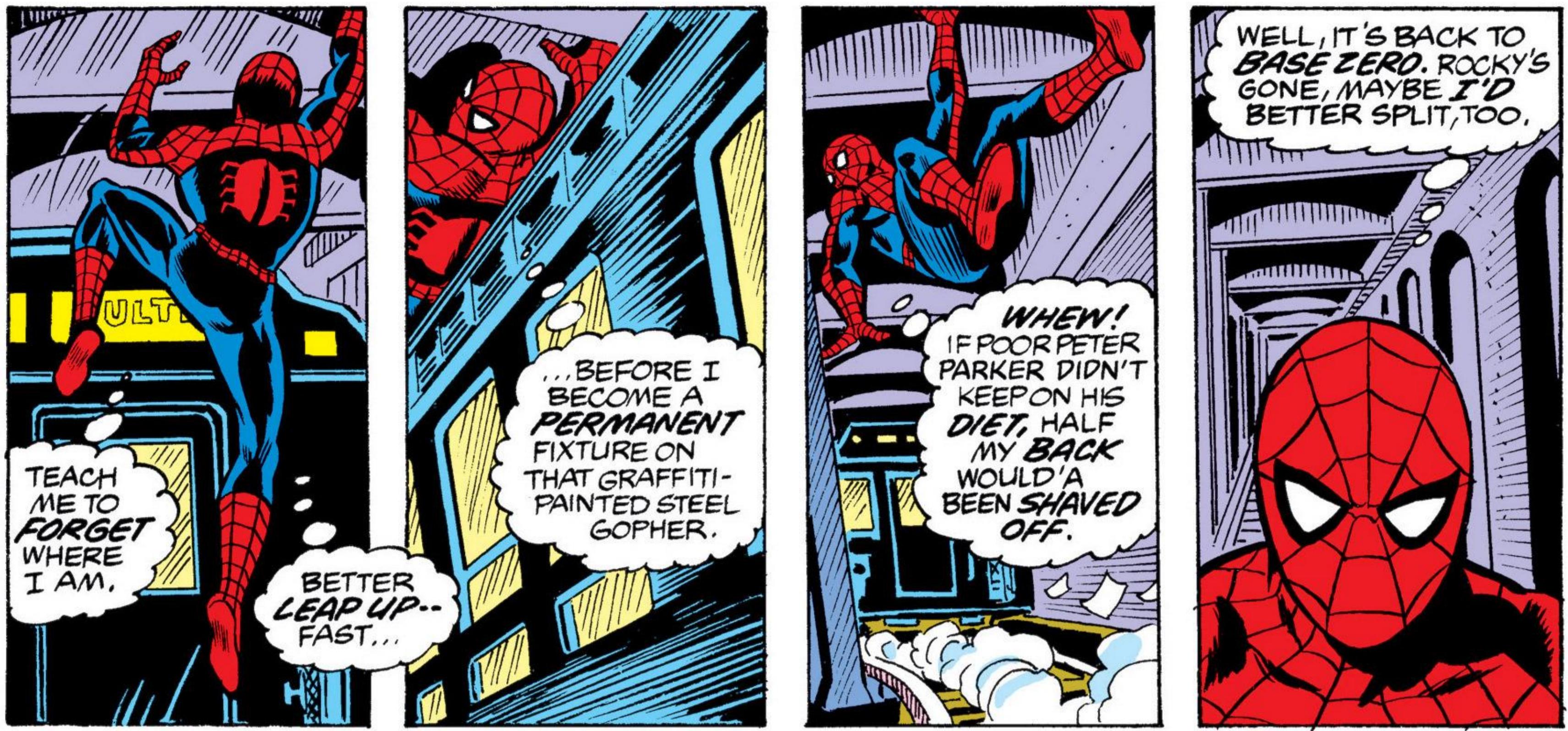
**STAN LEE
PRESENTS: THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN™**

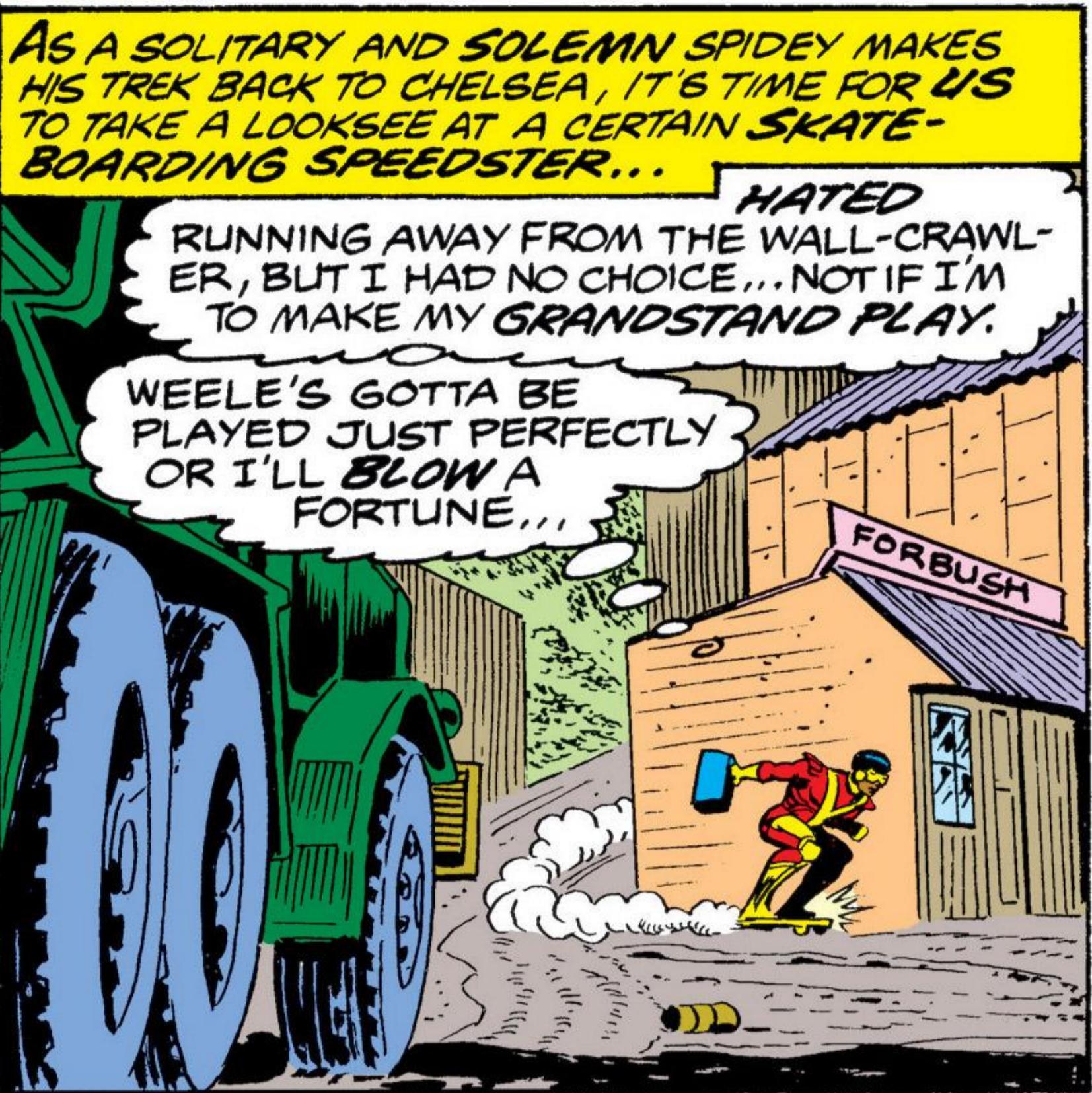
ROSS ANDRU. MIKE ESPOSITO. J. COSTANZA. G. WEIN
ARTIST EMBELLISHER letterer colorist } ALL WELCOME SPIDEY'S NEW ERUDITE EDITOR AND
SCRIPTER SUPREME: MARV WOLFMAN!



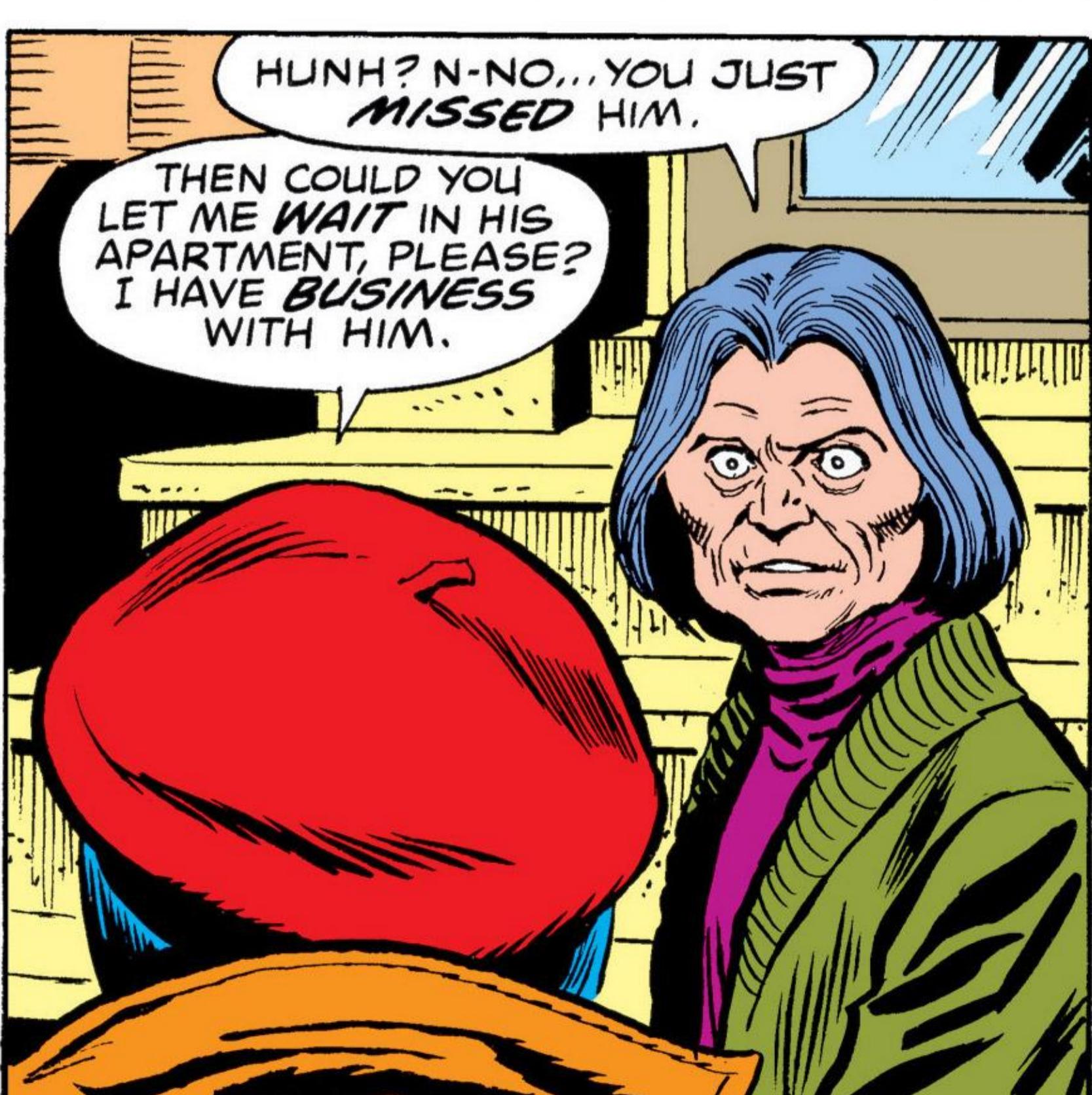
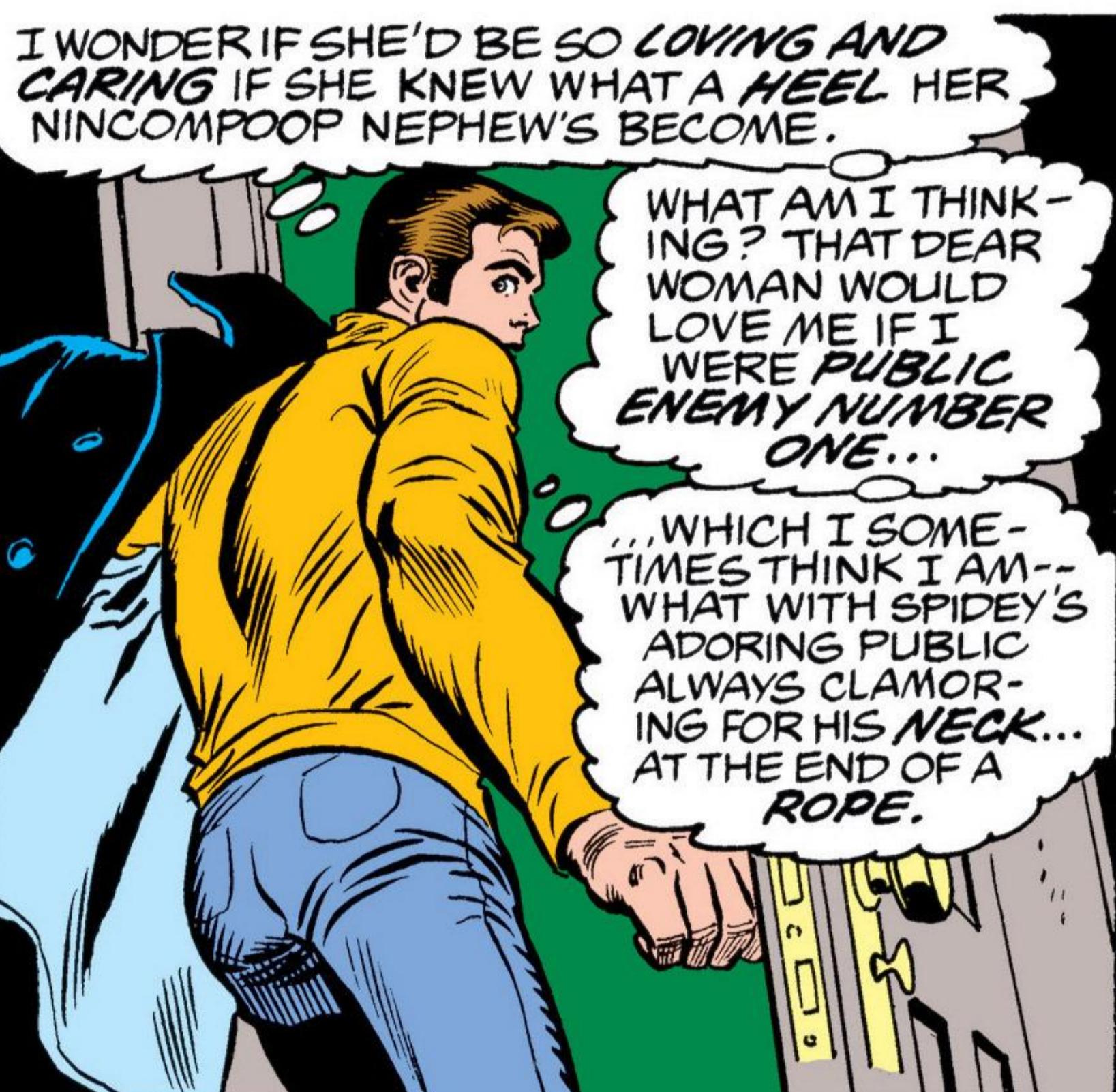
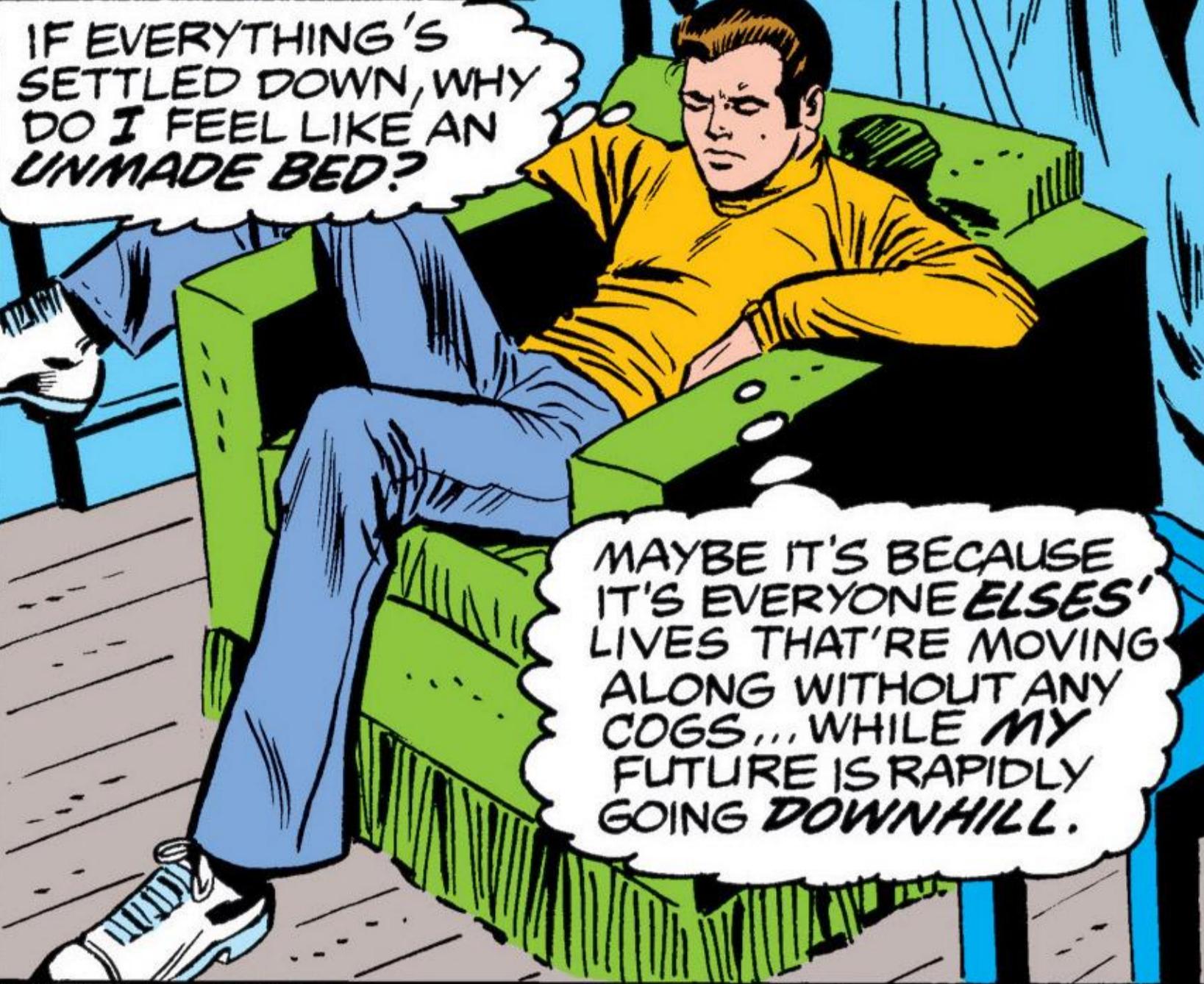








WE'LL LET JACKSON WEELE WORRY OVER HIS PROBLEMS ALONE, WHICH GIVES US A CHANCE TO LOOK IN ON A RATHER PERPLEXED PETER PARKER...



LET'S LEAVE THAT MYSTERIOUS THREAD DANGLING FOR AWHILE AS WE FOCUS IN ON PETER PARKER'S CURRENT WHEREABOUTS...

AHH, THERE YOU ARE. SORRY I'M LATE, MARY JANE, BUT THE TRAFFIC WAS MUR--

EXPLAIN IT TO ME, MISTER PARKER. APOLOGIZE TO YOUR DEAR AUNT MAY. SHE'S BEEN WORRIED SICK ABOUT YOU.

DON'T

OH, TUSH, DEAR. I DON'T HAVE TO WORRY OVER PETER ANYMORE. HE'S A BIG BOY NOW.

ARE YOU SURE THAT COAT IS WARM ENOUGH FOR YOU, PETER DEAR?



I... I...

MAY PARKER'S FRAIL VOICE FADES, AND HER DANCING EYES SLOWLY CLOSE...

MARY JANE, SHE'S SLEEPING.

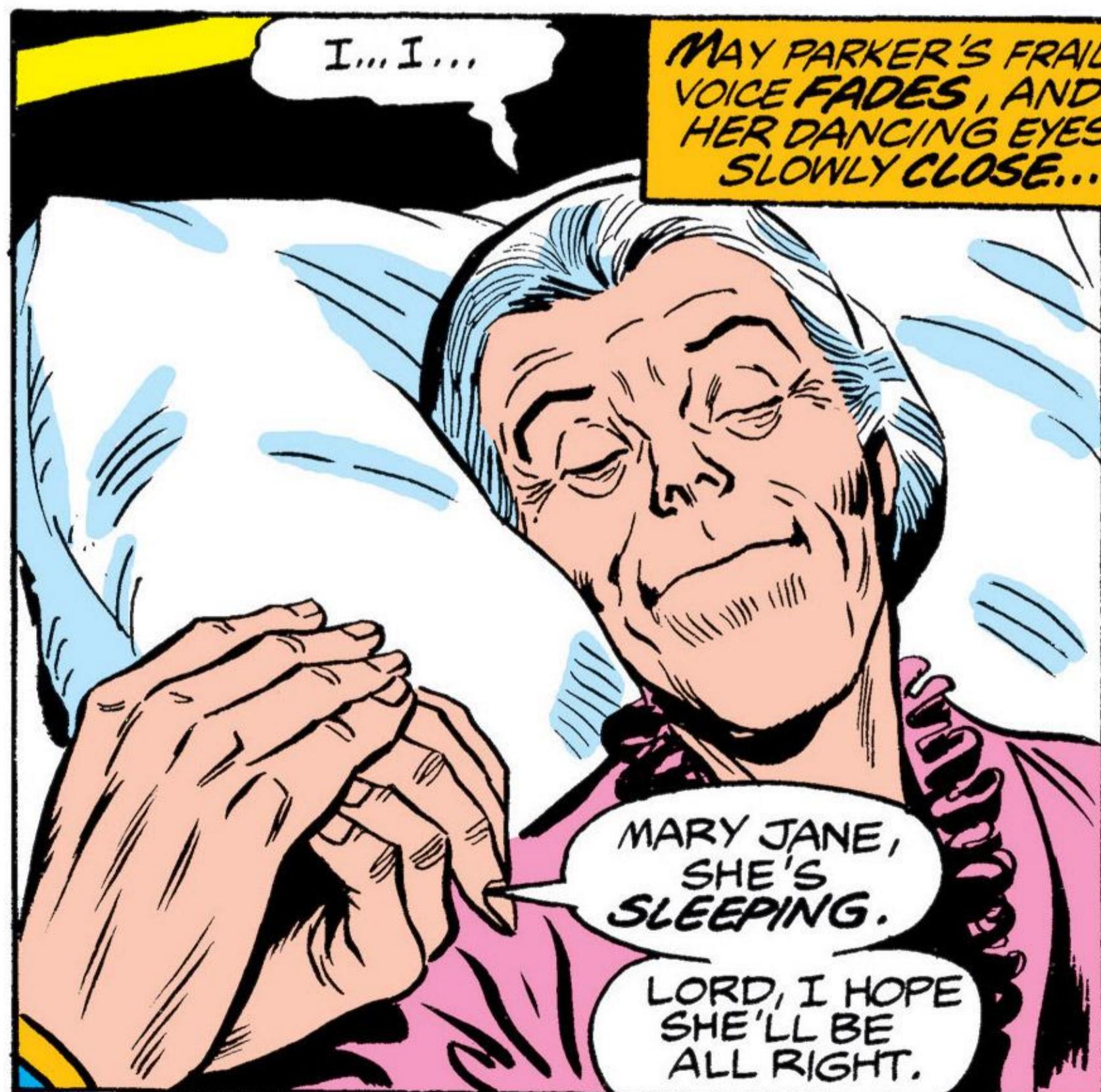
LORD, I HOPE SHE'LL BE ALL RIGHT.

SUDDENLY...

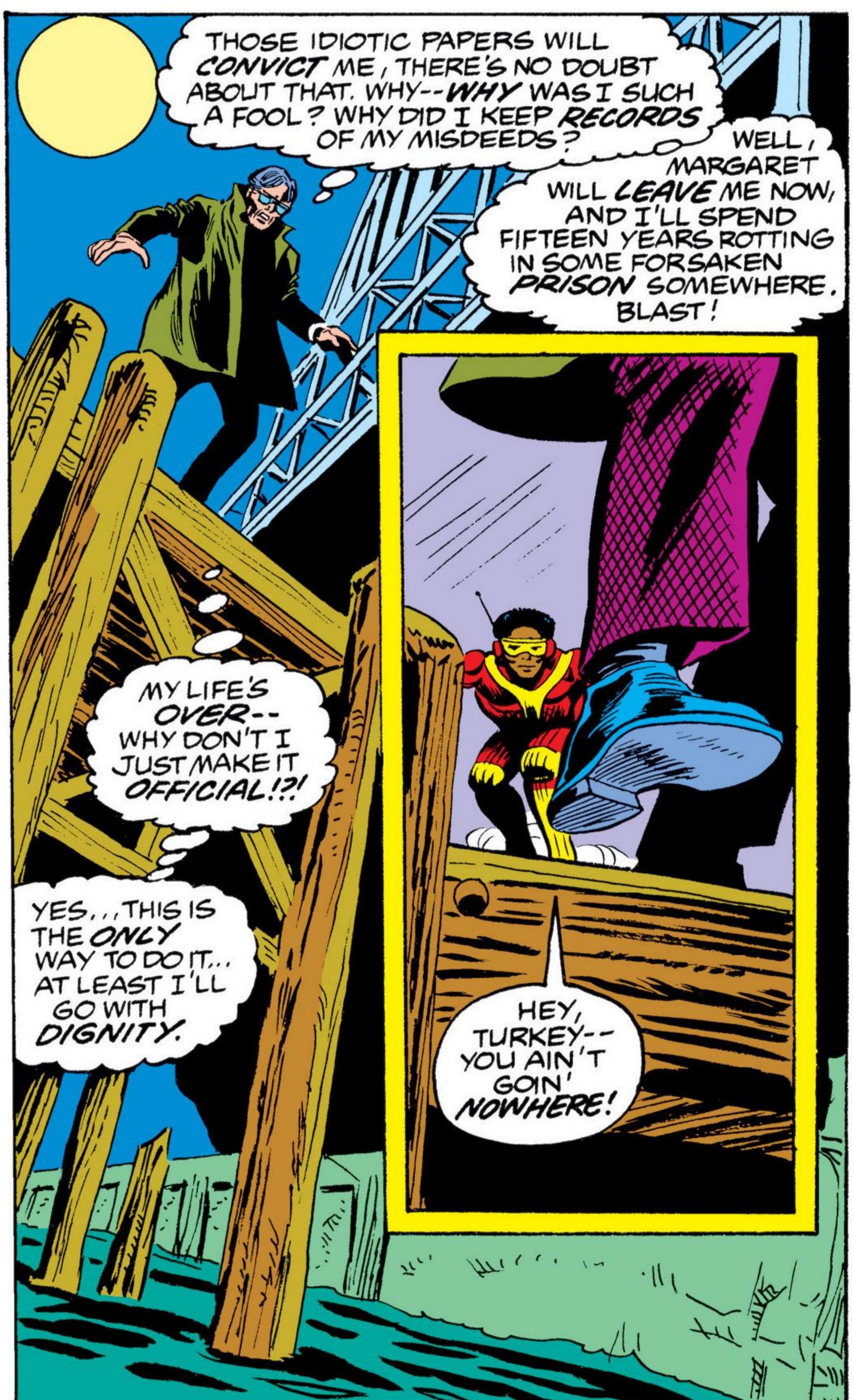
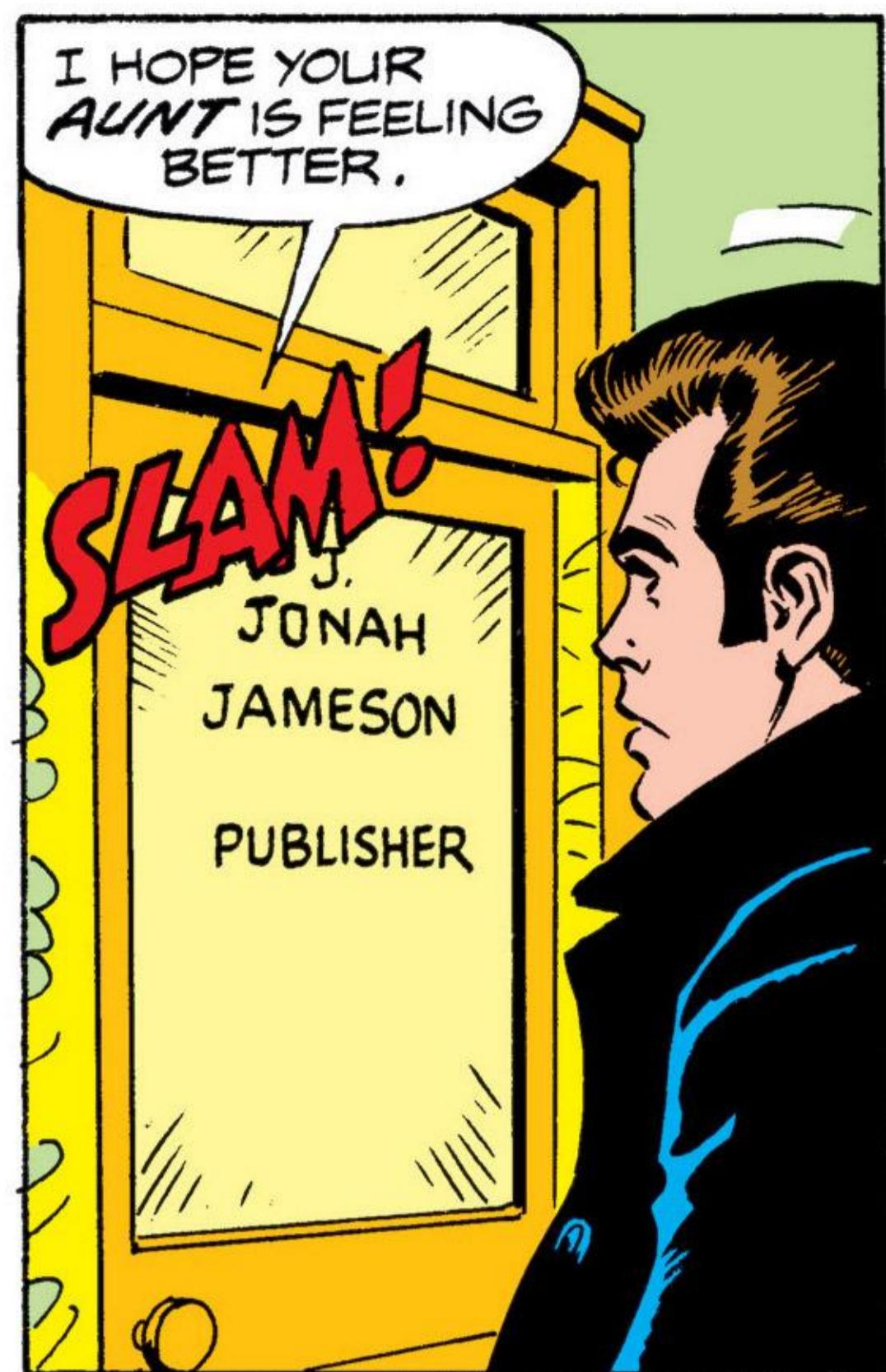
EXCUSE ME, BUT YOU TWO WILL HAVE TO LEAVE.

YOUR AUNT'S ROOMMATE NEEDS HER REST.

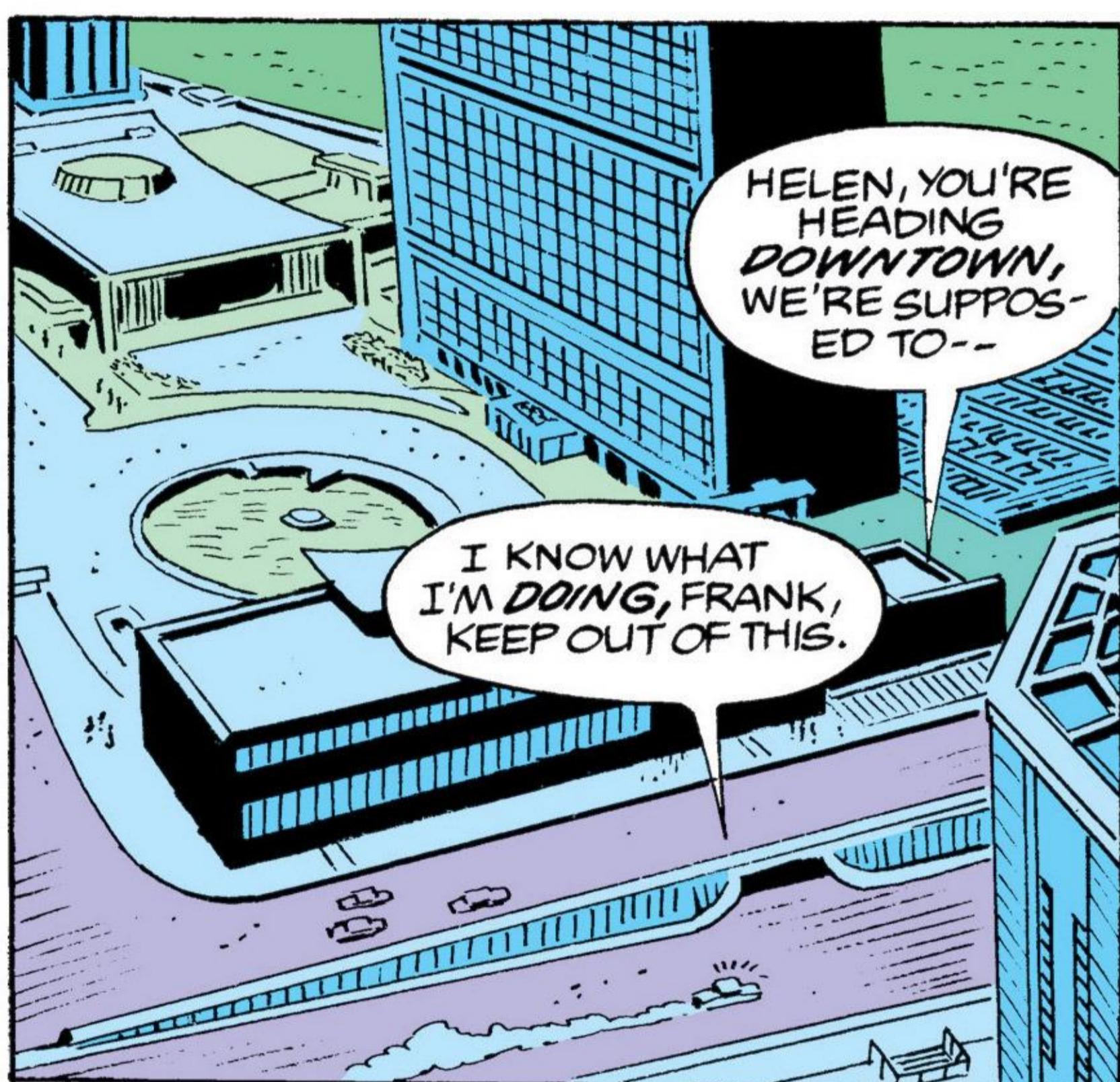
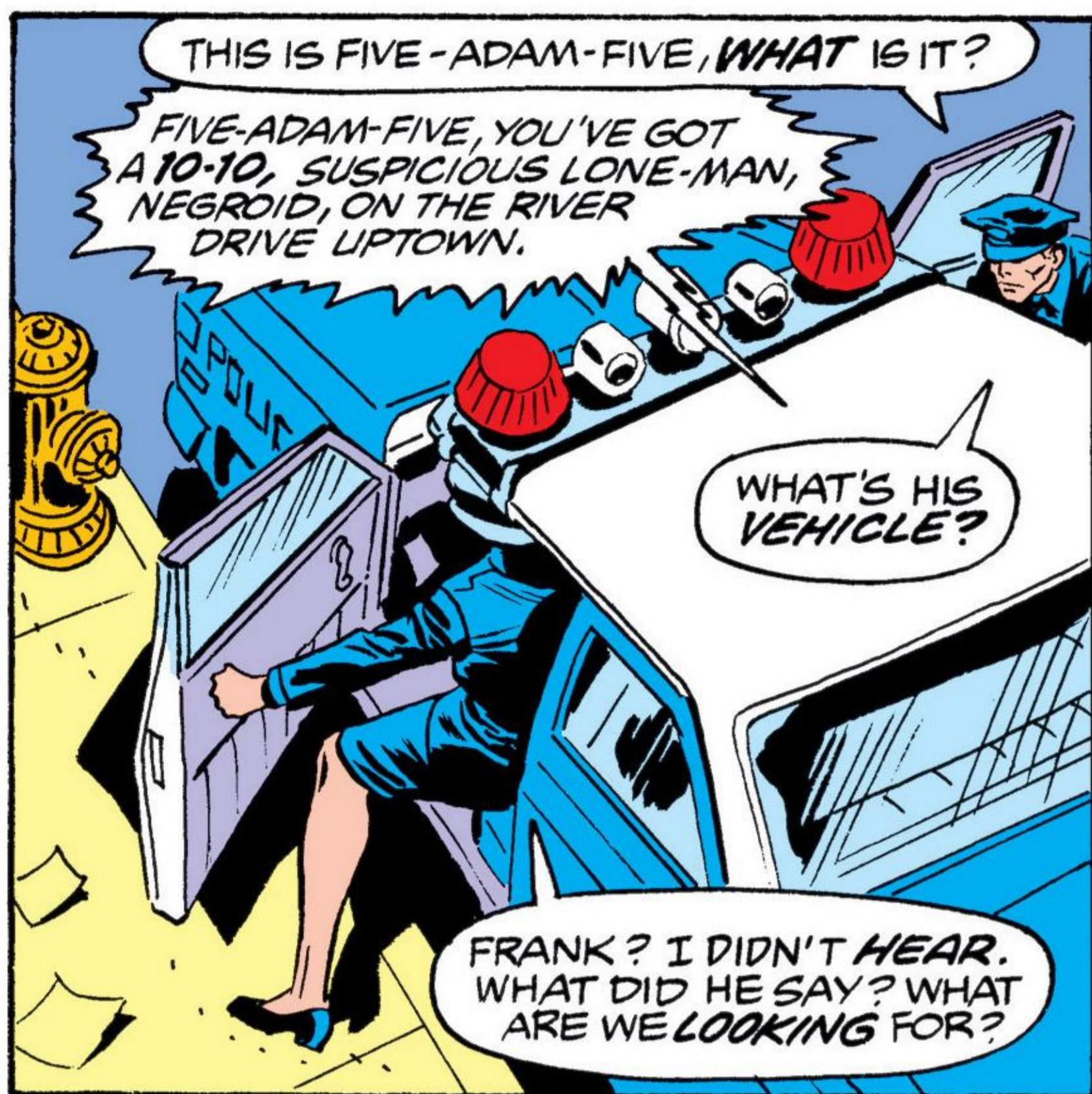
HUH? OH, THAT'S ALL RIGHT.

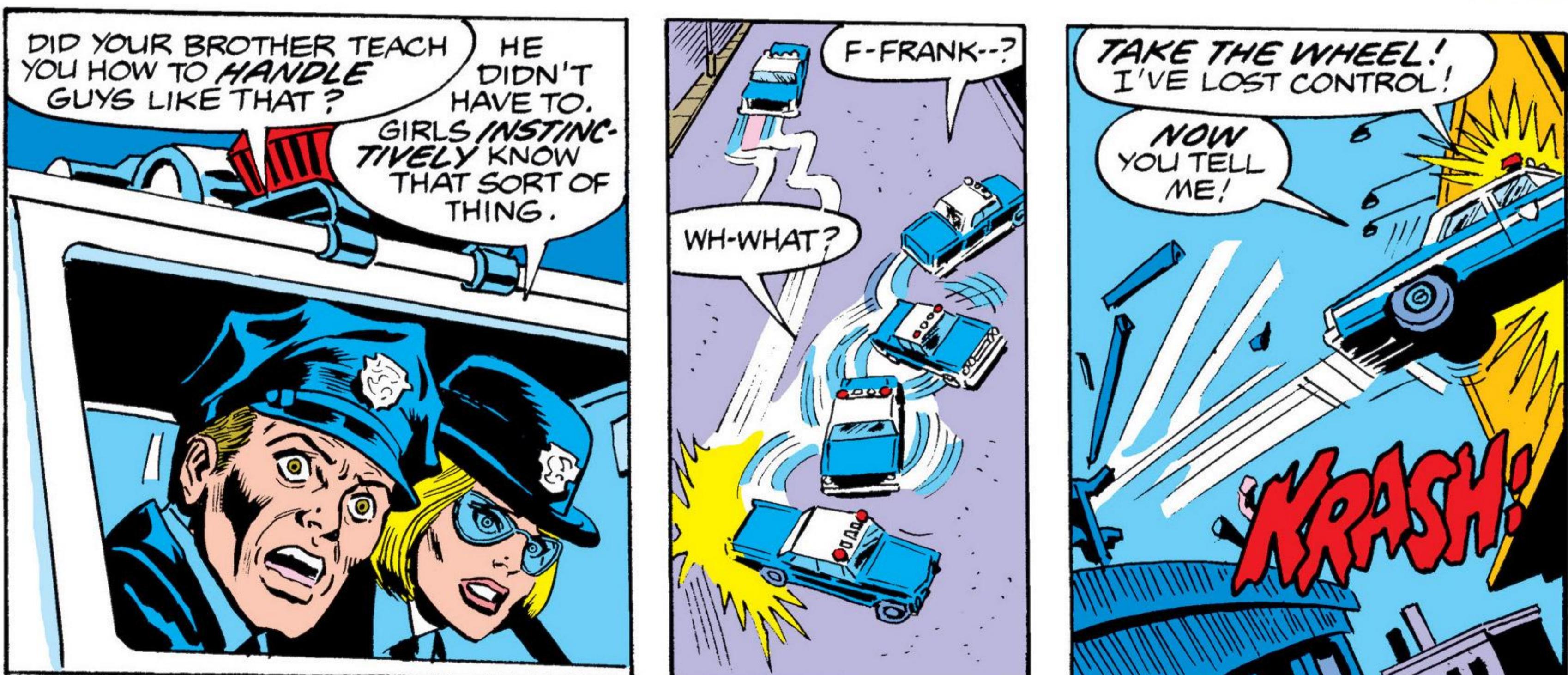
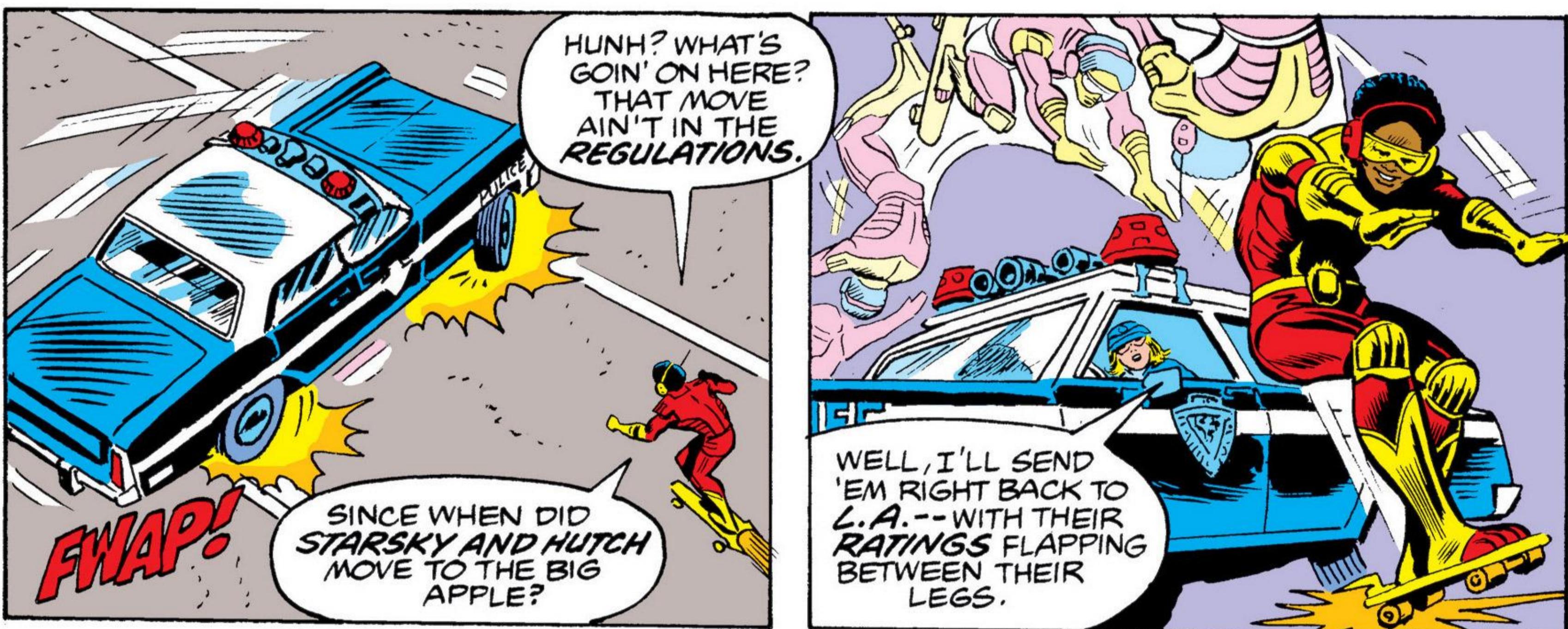
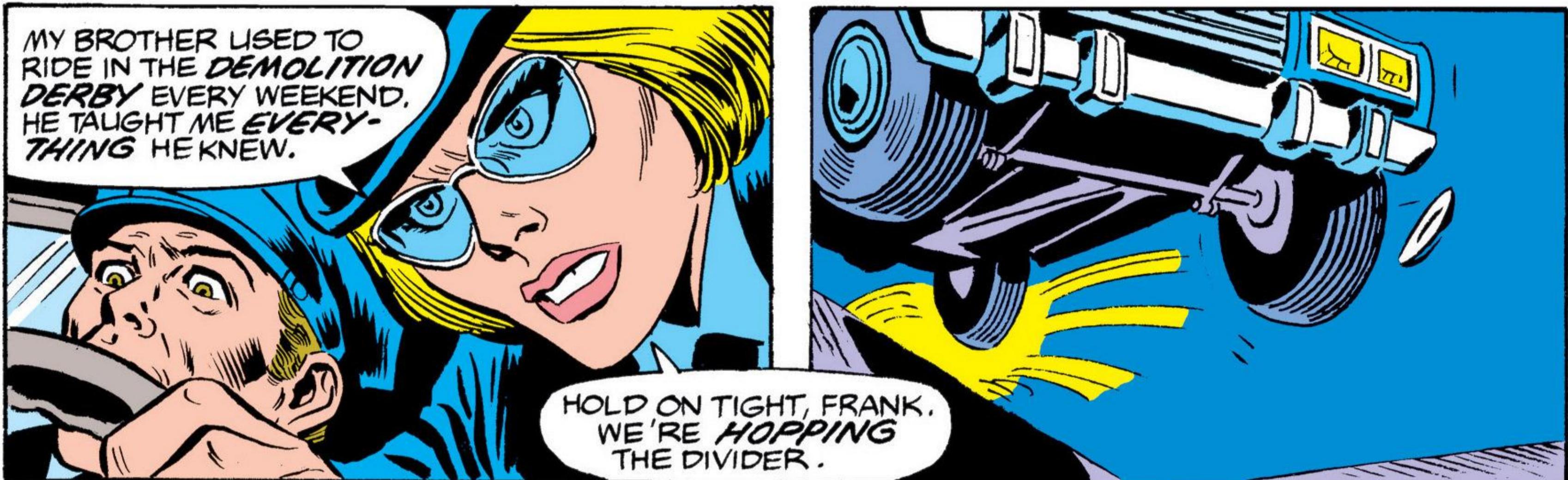
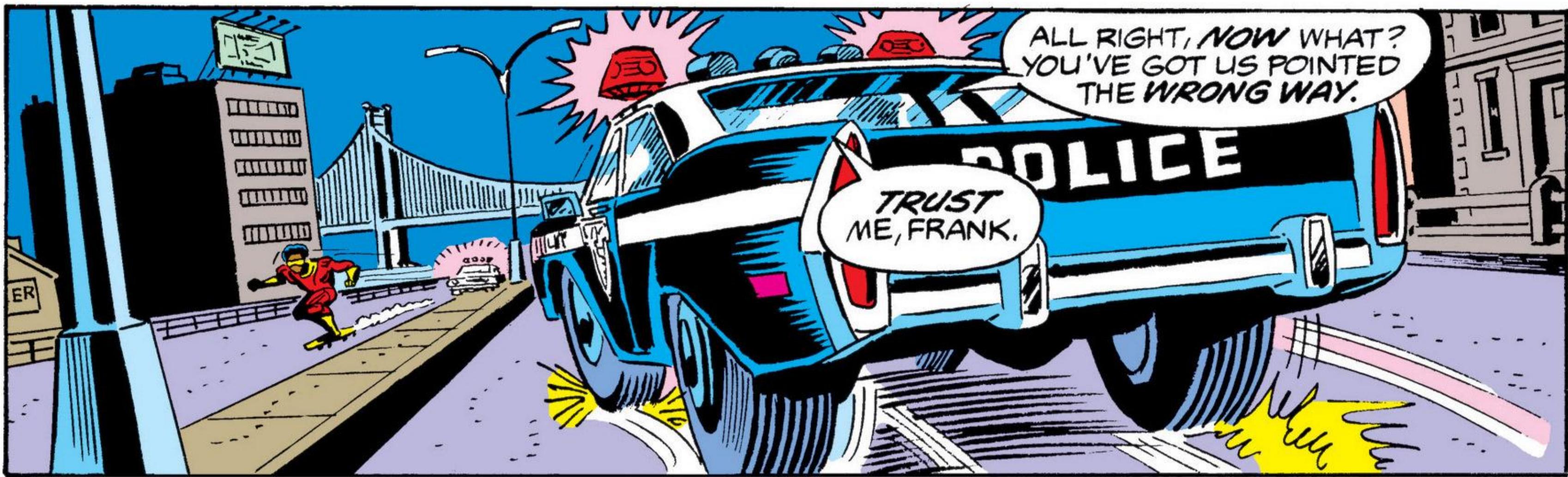


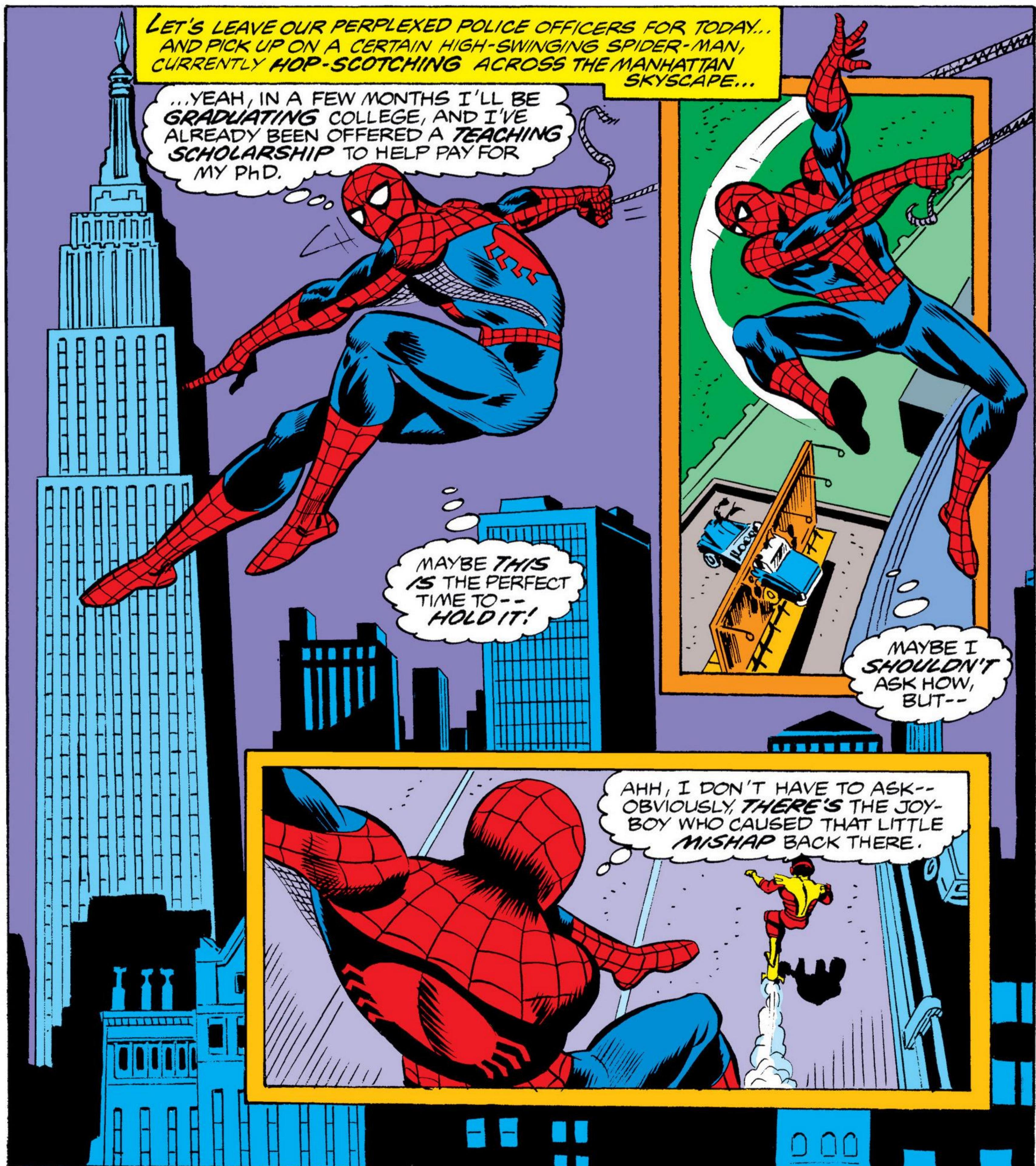
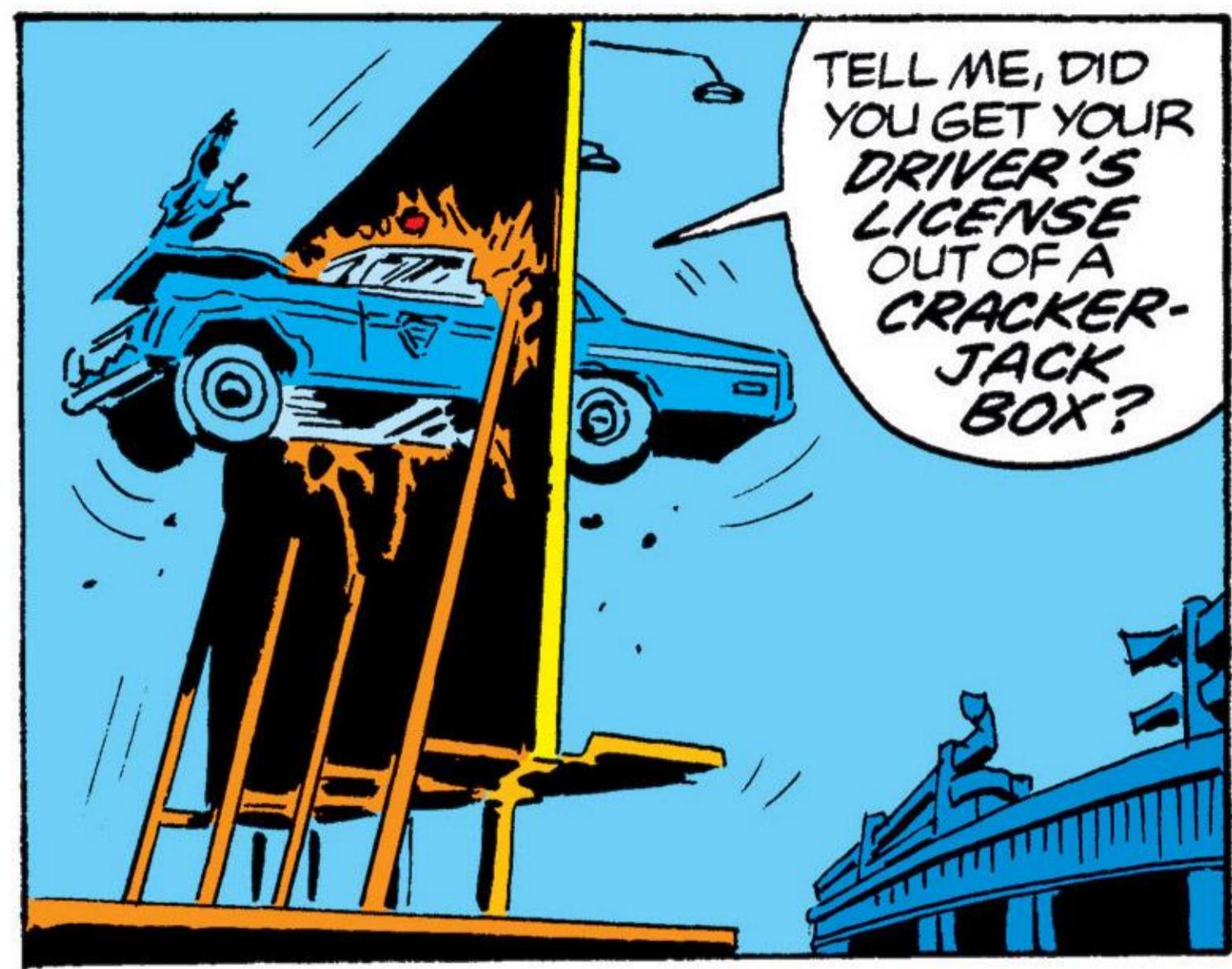


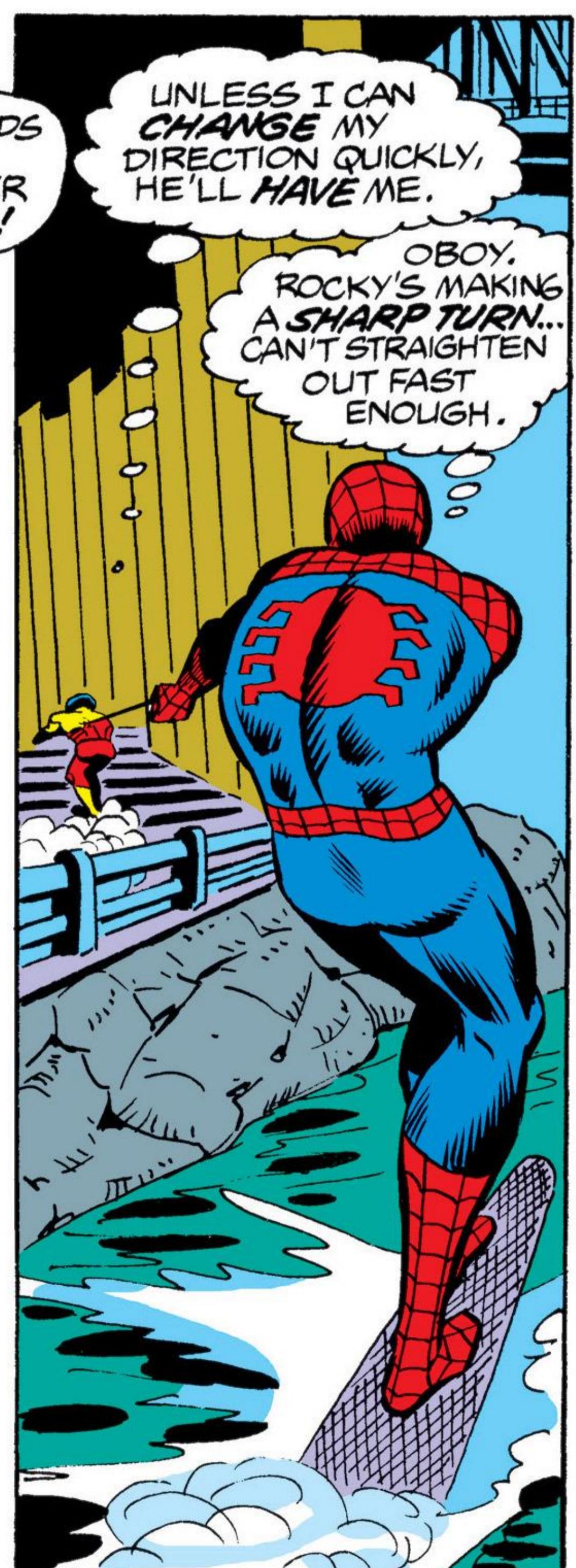


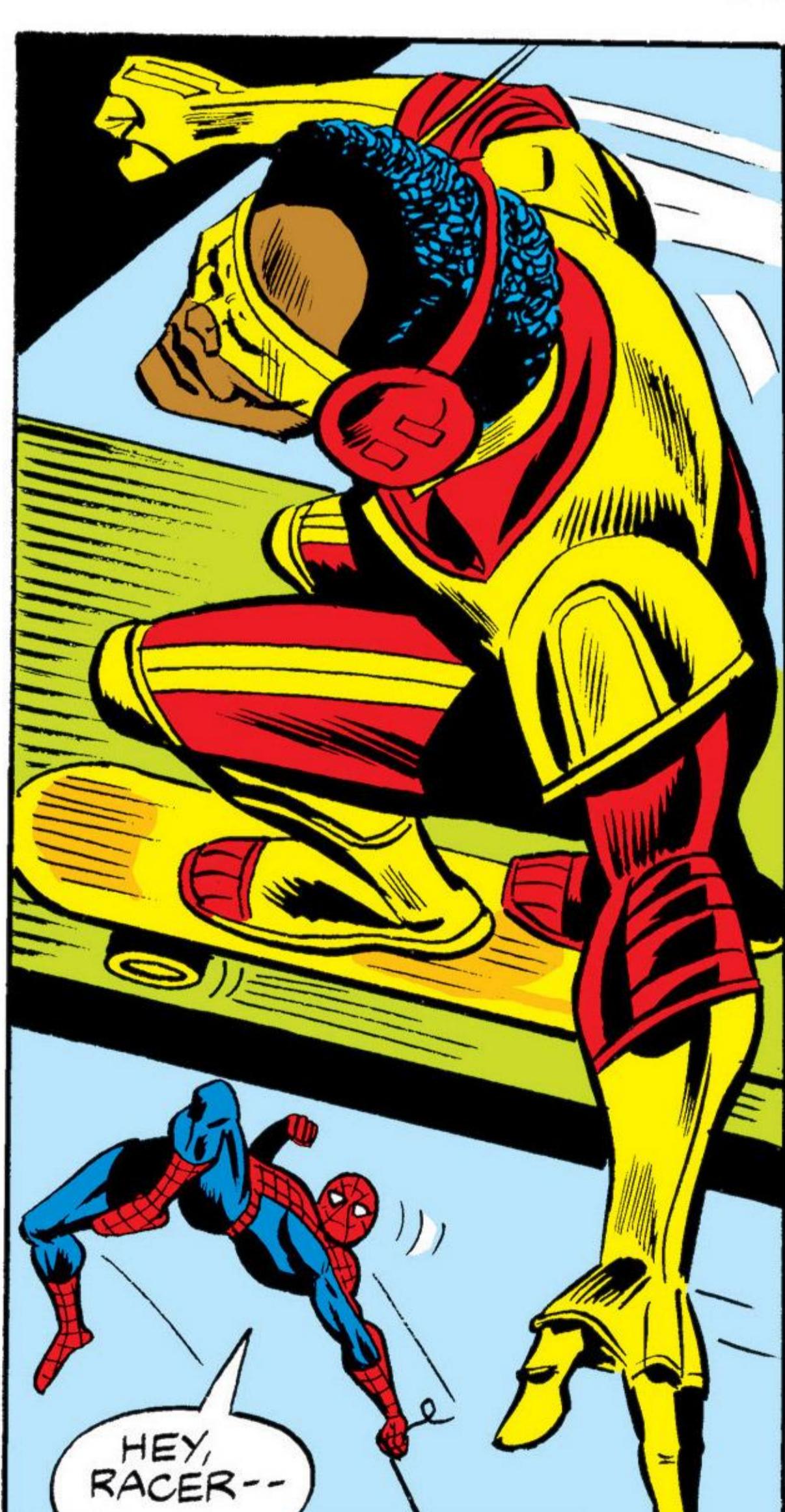


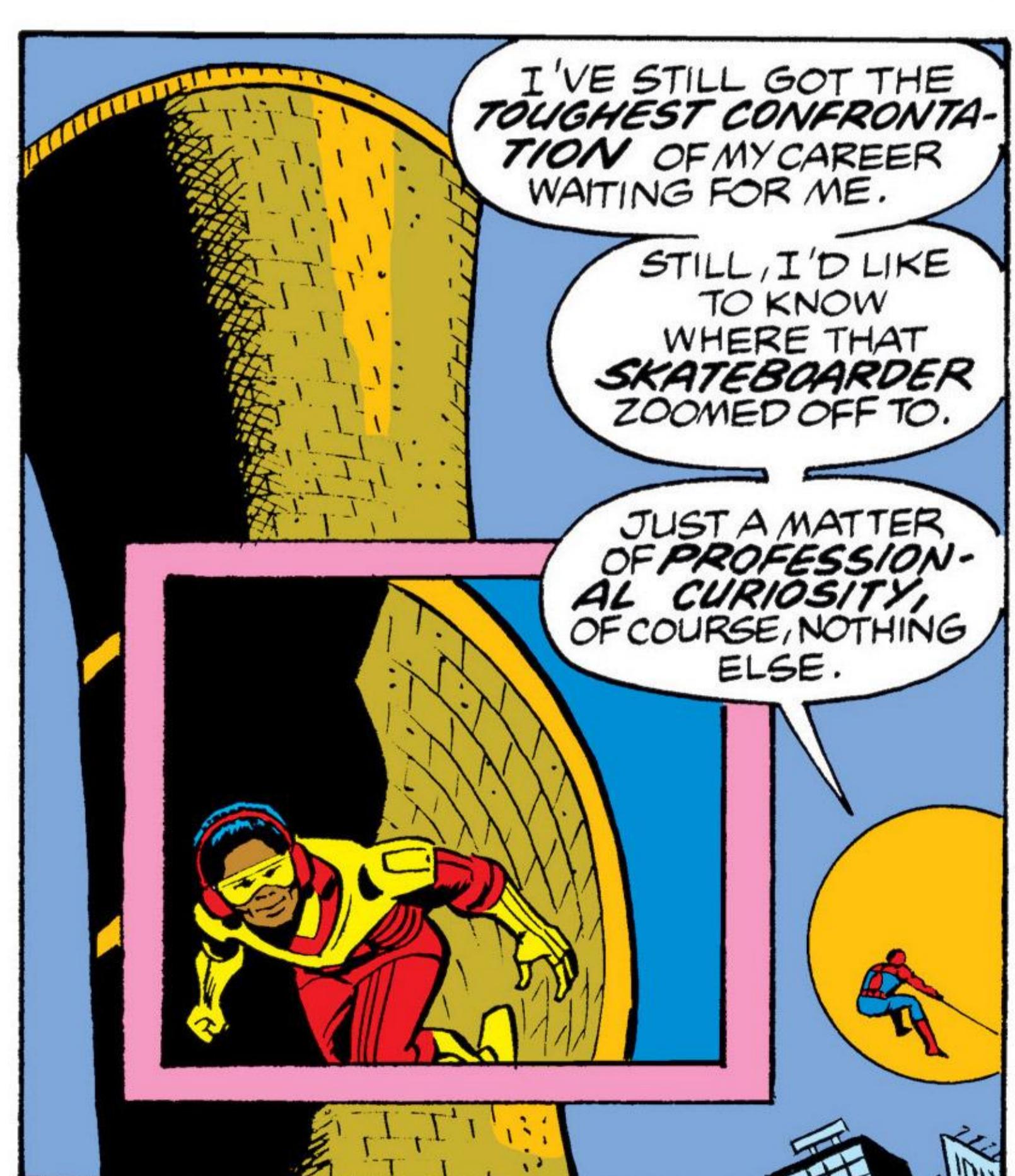
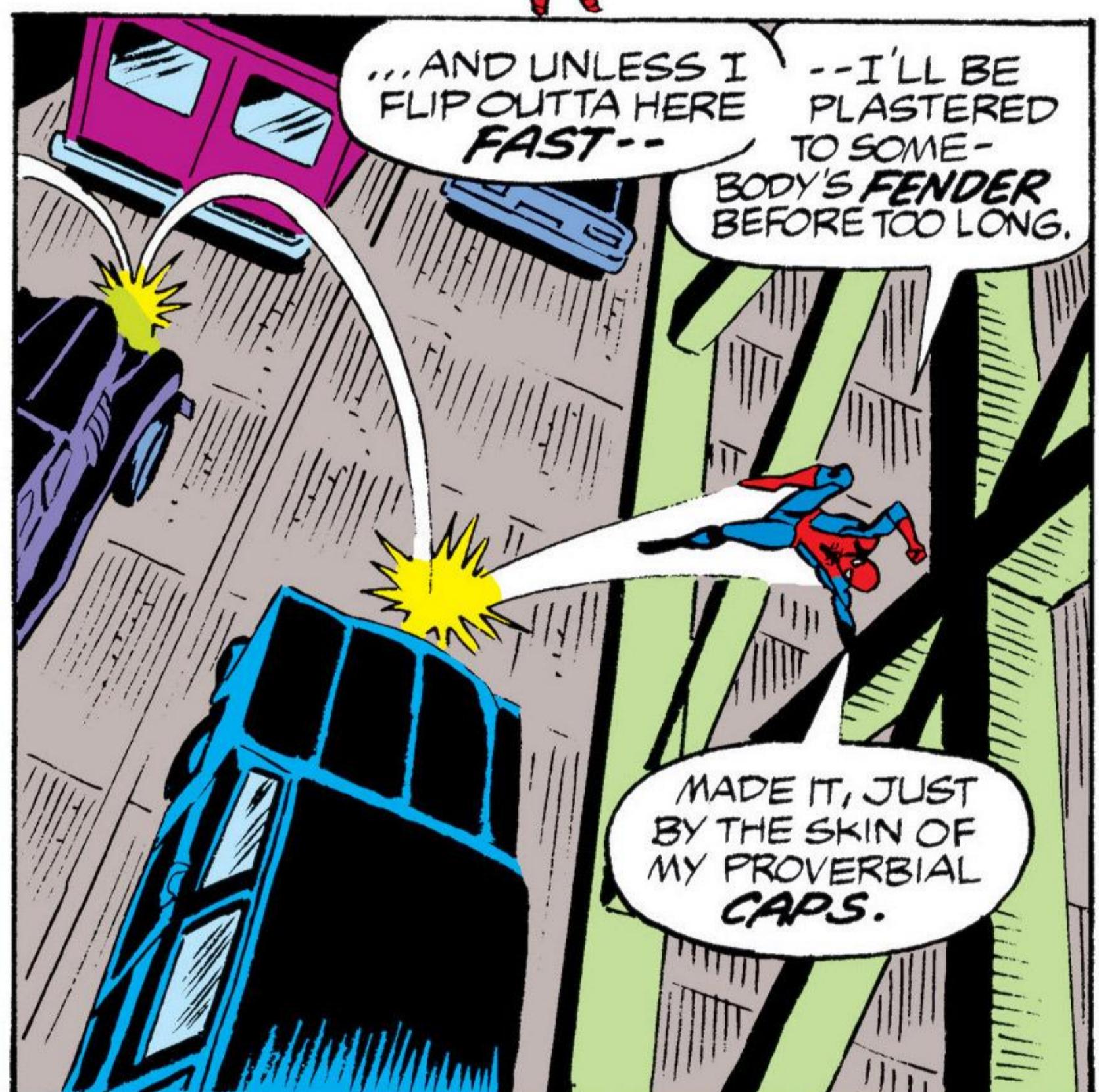
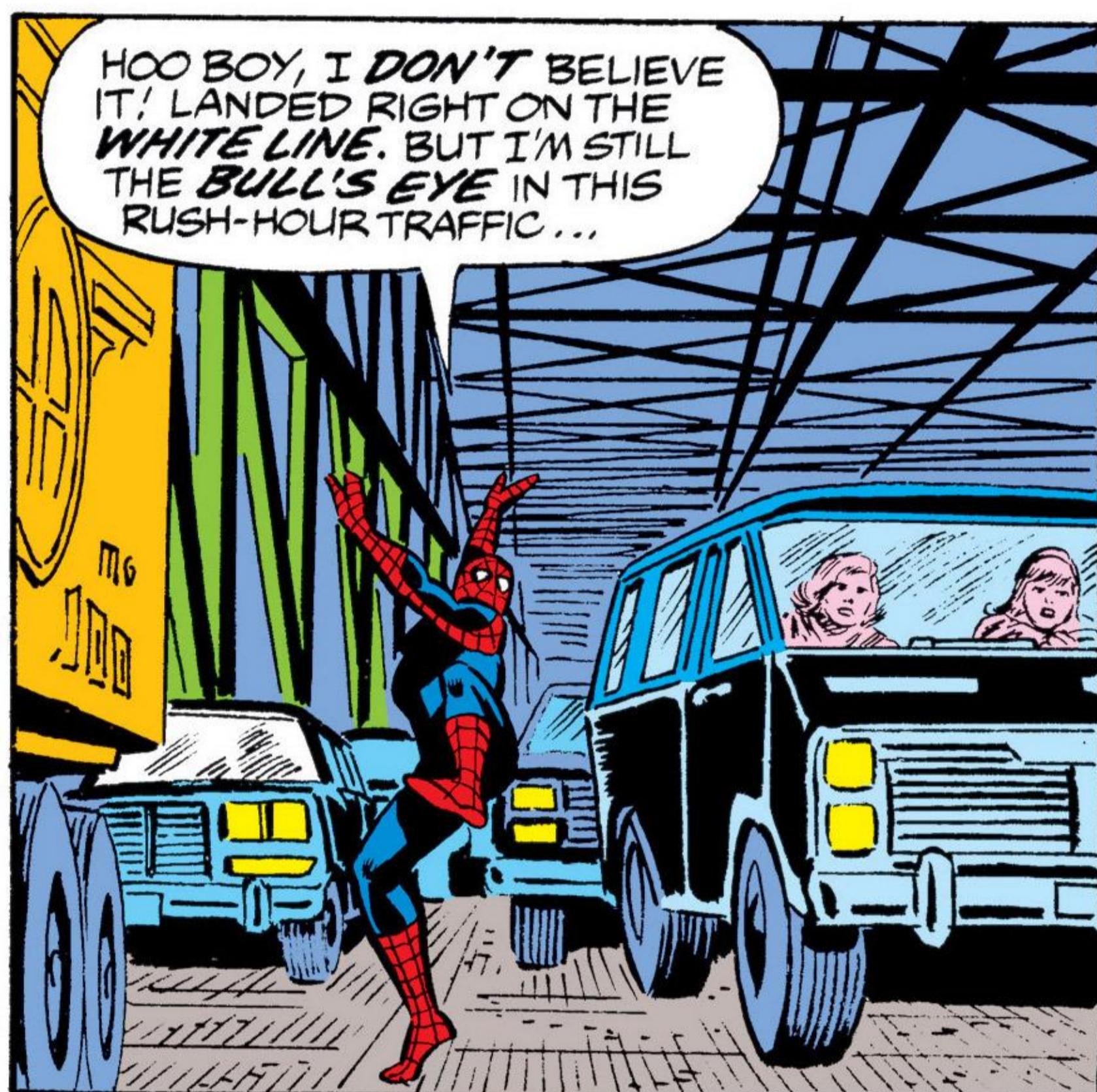
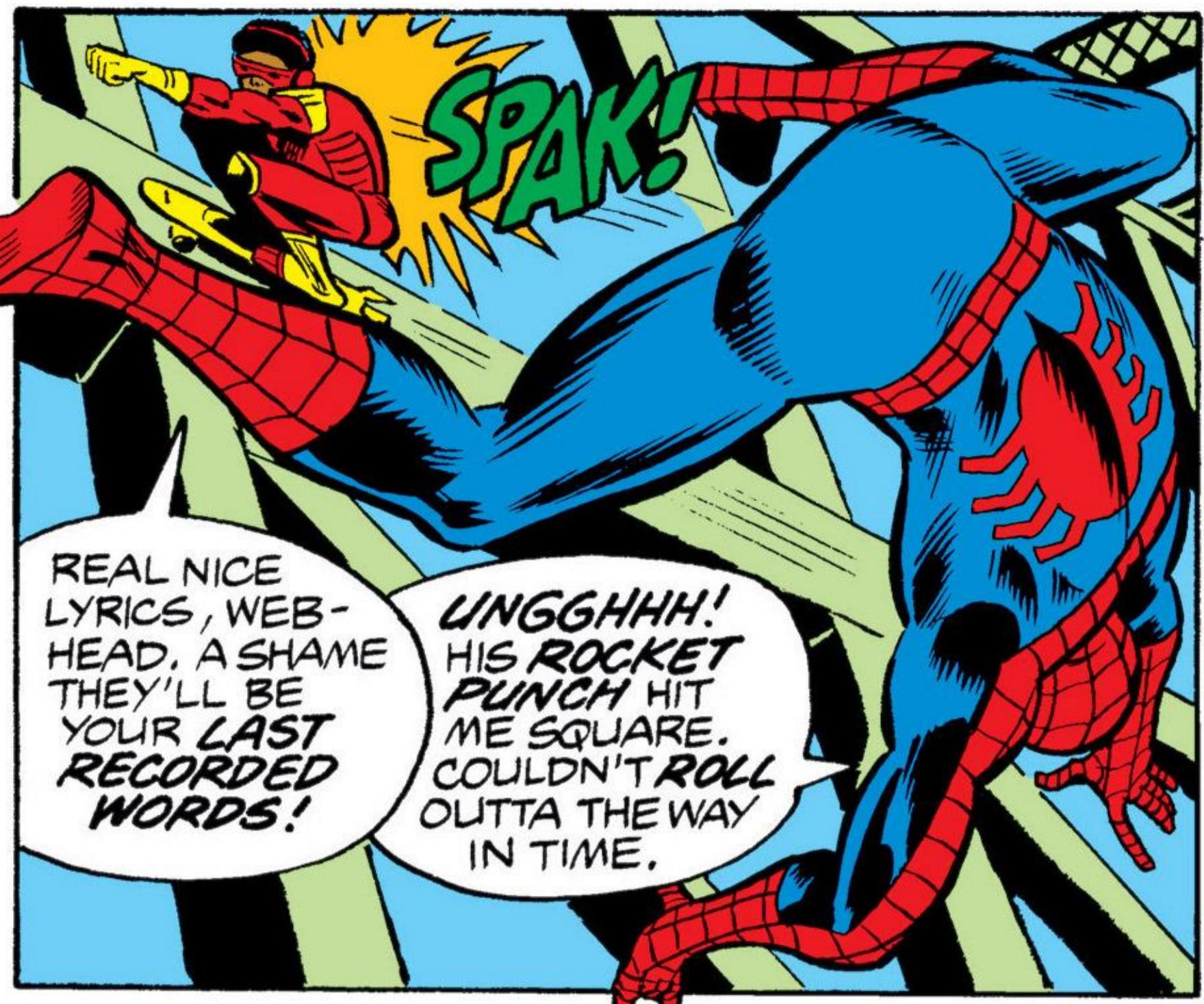
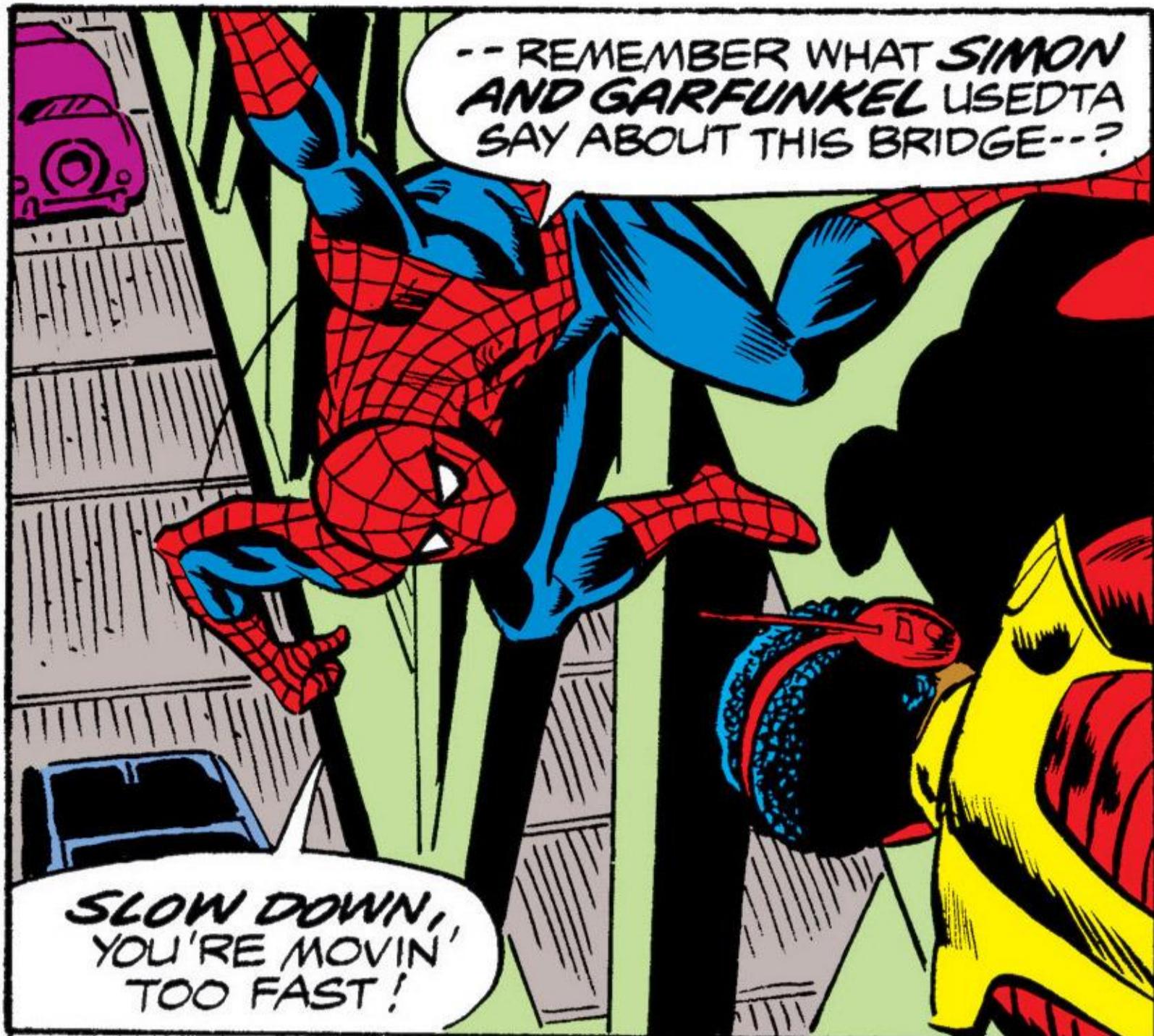


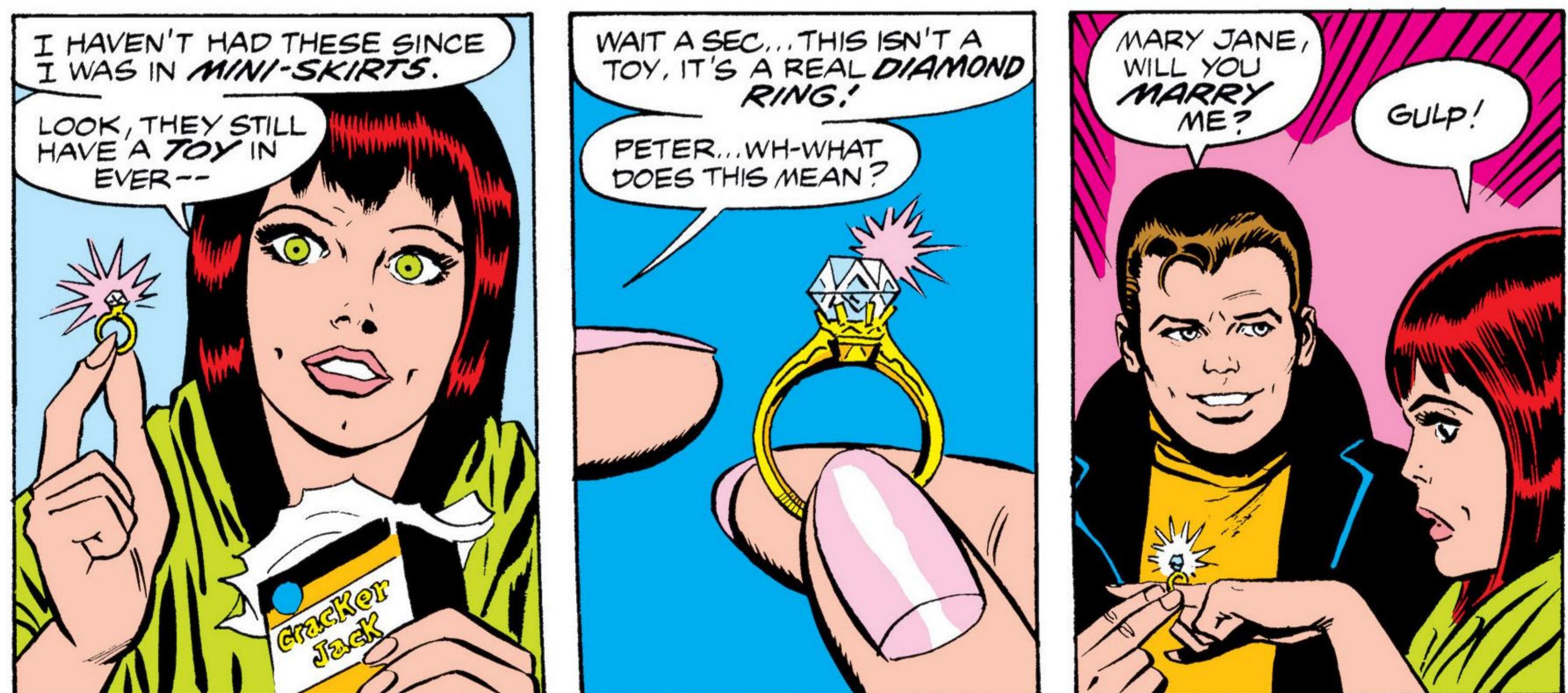
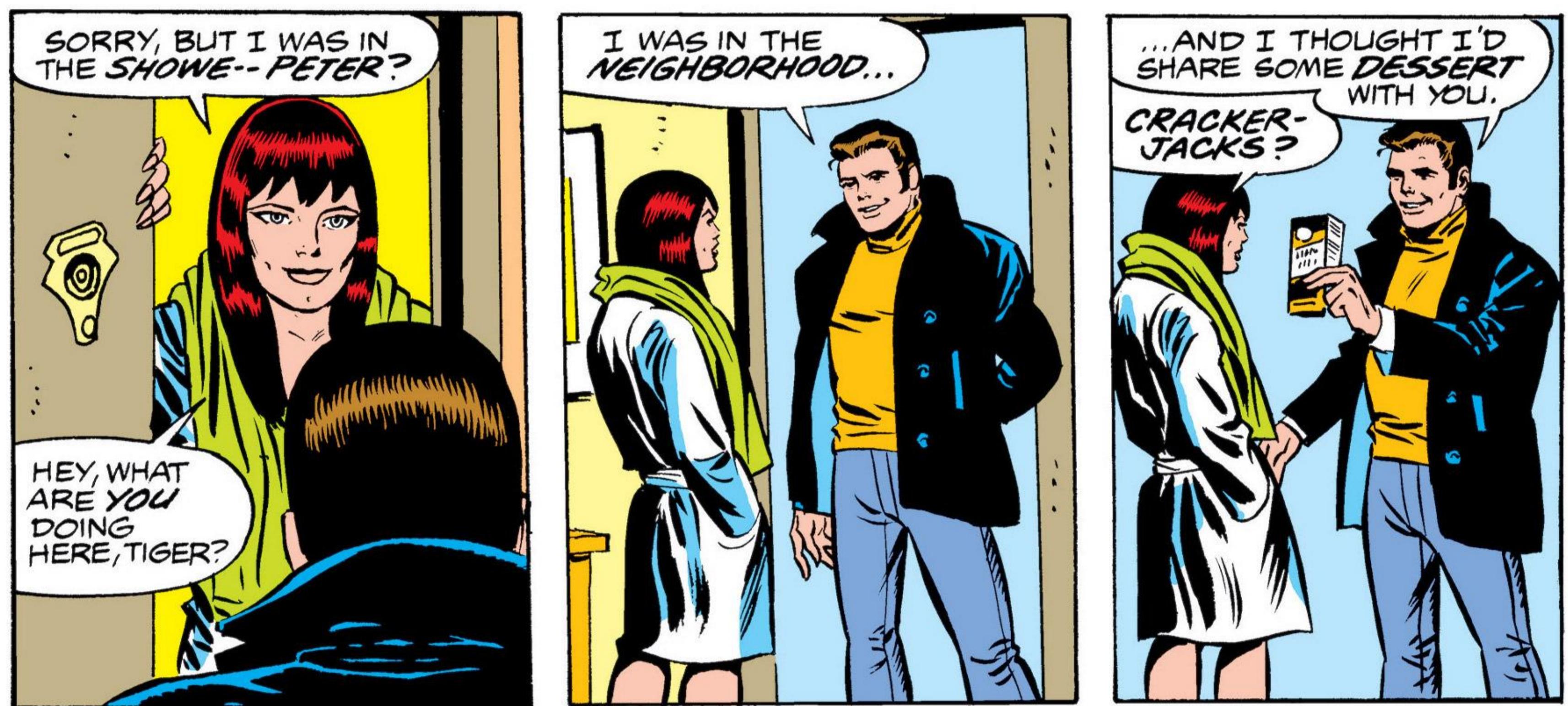












NEXT ISSUE: ...AND WHERE THE **BIG WHEEL** STOPS, **NOBODY KNOWS!**



Dear Marvel,

One need only apply a little observation to figure out that the latest incarnation of the Green Goblin is actually Harry's psychiatrist, Bart Hamilton. The only remaining puzzle at the time that this missive is being penned (after events in SPIDER-MAN #177), is how the psychiatrist found out Spidey's identity. Of course, in issues preceding #175, we see Hamilton eyeing Peter suspiciously. For instance, in issue #174, Hamilton says to himself while watching Pete depart, "So that's Peter Parker, eh? He doesn't look a bit like I imagined he would." This implies that the good doctor already knew who Spidey really was even before Harry entered therapy with him—but not necessarily, of course. My guess is that Harry, while under some sort of hypnosis, revealed to Hamilton the identity of Pete, the location of a Goblin costume, etc., and being a crazed medico, the shrink embarked on a life of crime that begins in issue 177. Again, if it were Harry who was the Goblin, he would be little concerned with taking over as New York crime czar; his main concern would be to eliminate Peter for revenge, blaming him for the death of his father.

I must commend Len for the story and his imaginative manipulation of what are almost becoming clichés—the continued reappearances of the Green Goblin, Aunt May's heart attacks, the war over control of the underworld (I have in mind here the epic Doc Ock-Hammerhead battle, the Kingpin's numerous incarnations, etc.). All somehow avoid the expected and tired patterns, and since the ultimate comic book vice is stagnation, I feel that SPIDER-MAN is in no danger of becoming repetitious, even though the same characters you are now using were familiar ten years ago.

Ironic was the flavor of Aunt May's latest heart attack, and it had a subtle sense of mocking tradition which I liked. How many times have we seen Aunt May cheerfully recuperating in a hospital bed, making cute remarks with Pete, friends, *et al*, about how she's feeling much better and be back on her feet in no time? Another stock crisis averted, everybody go away happy. But, just as it's happening again—hoo-hah! A relapse!

Commander Quotey
(and his Lost Marvel Madmen)
1500 LaSalle Ave., Minneapolis, MN 55403

Dear Marvel,

In reply to your answer to Steve Avalos' letter (#177): Not

all traditions are good traditions. Comics have suffered from undue criticism for years because, their foes exclaim, they are unrealistic. The resurrection of "dead" super-villains, however, does nothing to invalidate this criticism. Stan Lee used to pride himself on his comics' realism. Len Wein's "Artistic License" seems to be a cop-out rather than a creative challenge. Is it impossible for today's writers to create legendary villains in the image of the Green Goblin, Mysterio, et al?

Finally, again regarding creativity, why, oh why! was the gangster/Goblin plot in SPIDER-MAN #177 an almost direct steal from SPIDER-MAN #'s 26-27?

Randy Sluganski

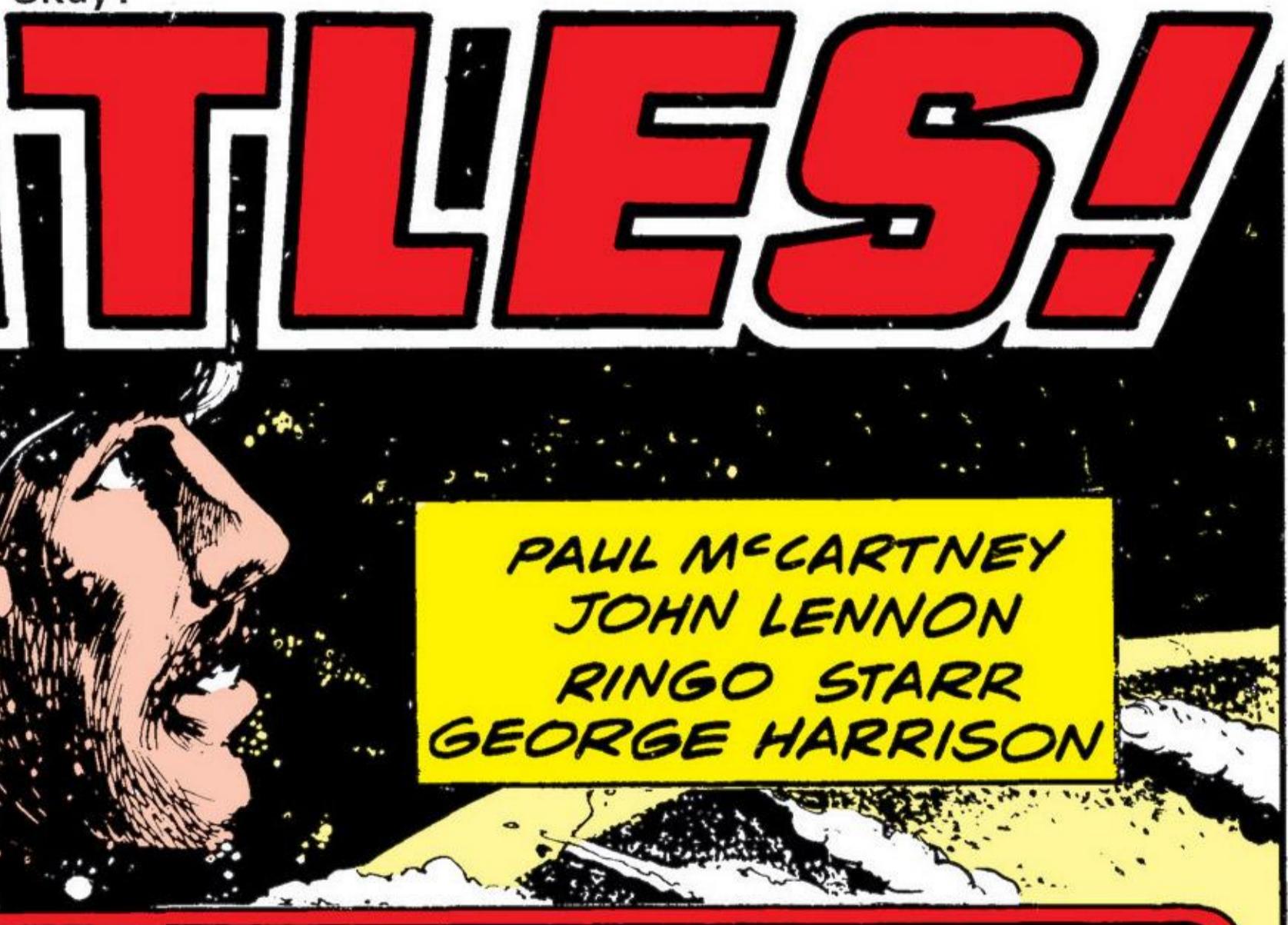
432 Winton St.

Pittsburgh, PA 15211

You've brought up some serious points, Randy, and we're gonna try to answer them as straight as we can. Strange as it may seem for a word so obvious in its apparent meaning, "realism" when applied to a four-color fantasy medium like comics is very much open to personal interpretation. For instance, we doubt whether you'd really want to read starkly realistic comics—sans super-heroes and set squarely in the everyday world. In fact, we're willing to bet you read comics as a respite from the so-called "real world." Ergo, our stories are chock-a-block full of long-underwear super-heroes and ever-returning super-villains, acting out their roles in a *pseudo-realistic* fashion. It's purely fiction, but we strive for the semblance of realistic attitudes, reactions, and so forth. That's what we mean by realism—and that's where we feel we differ significantly from our competitors—by being realistic.

As for creating new characters—in particular, super-villains—we're at it all the time. Witness The Sphinx in NOVA, Graviton in THE AVENGERS, Dr. Bong in HOWARD THE DUCK, the Quintonic Man in THE HULK, and even the Jackal and the Rocket Racer here in SPIDER-MAN! What you may not, perhaps, be aware of, is the sheer magnitude of Marvel mags released monthly. If we were to create new villains for each and every story, we'd confuse heck out of not only our myriad readers, but ourselves, as well. Since we deal in continued storylines, bringing back villains is our way of dealing with them in depth.

Finally, while we cannot excuse a similarity such as you cite between the two Spidey stories, we would ask you to take into account the aforementioned magnitude of material produced by Marvel over the years, and to hopefully realize and understand if on rare occasions inadvertent similarities do occur. Okay?



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