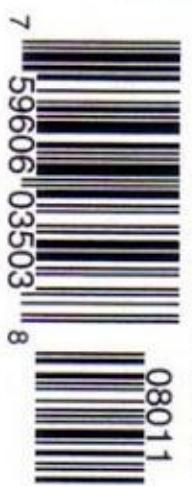


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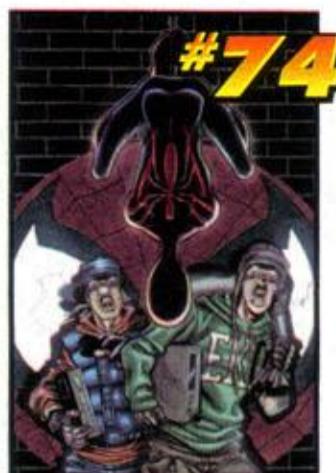
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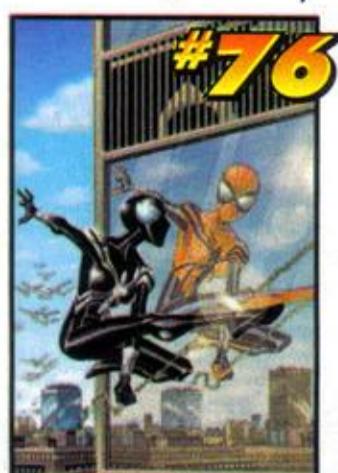
SPIDER-GIRL



#74



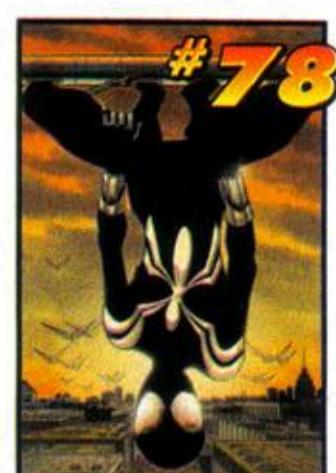
#75



#76



#77



#78



#79

After arriving in Forest Hills and claiming to be married to Mayday's friend Normie Osborn, Élan DeJunae kidnaps Normie.

Meanwhile, Courtney Duran's boyfriend Moose Mansfield begins to act strangely, and the rift between Mayday Parker and Davida Kirby continues to widen.

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He arrives shortly after the new janitor unlocks the doors, at an hour when most of his fellow students are still in bed.

The solitude doesn't bother him.

He actually prefers the school when it's virtually empty.

With one exception, Kevin Hartman has always been a loner--

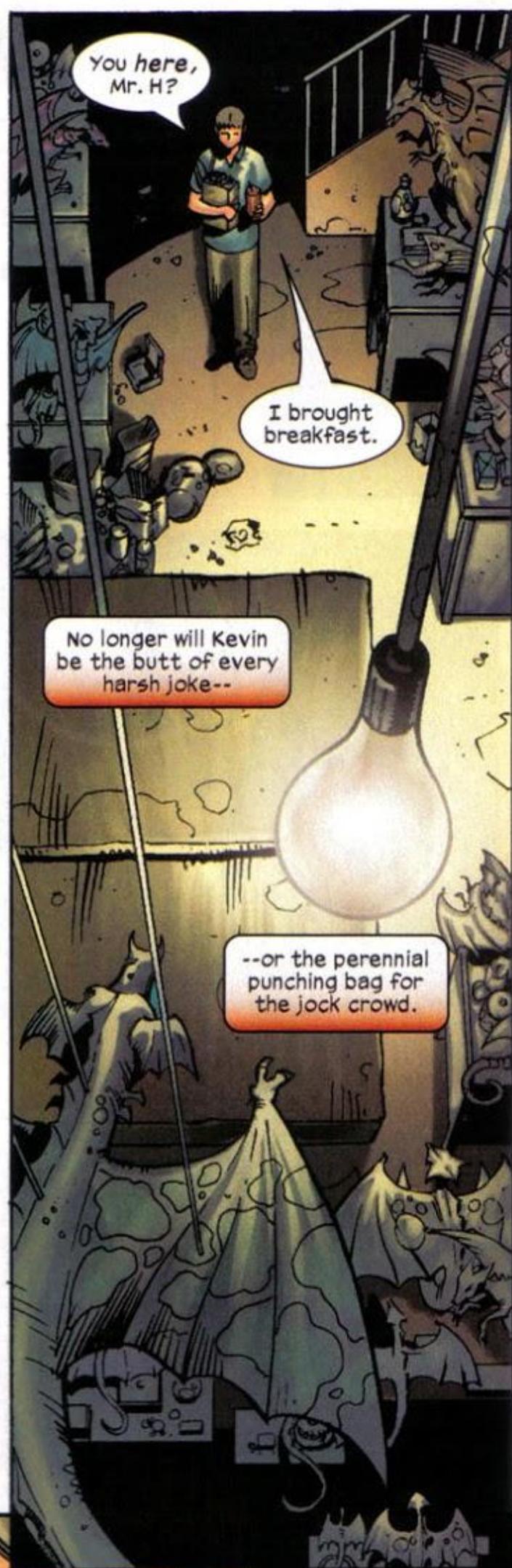


--an outsider the girls ignore and the bullies don't.



Kevin has a secret.

His only friend has finally returned.



His friend will protect him in the future--

--and **avenge** the casual cruelties of the past.

Yes, Kevin Hartman's life is about to change.

He has a secret, and...

SECRETS KILL!

You're getting dressed for school when the pain suddenly rips across your chest like a flaming knife.

You need to be a lot more careful, girl. You're still in healing mode.

It's barely been two days since *Elan*, the *Goblin Queen*, stabbed you in the side.

She deliberately avoided any vital organs because she wanted you to watch her destroy your friend *Normie Osborn*.

Yeah, but you managed to save Normie--

--who promptly declared his love for another woman!

Typical!

You get the pain and someone else claims the prize.

But you can't really expect anything else when your name is *May "Mayday" Parker* and you are the daughter of *Spider-Man*.



With your best fake smile firmly in place, you greet the parental units and your baby bro.

Morning, everyone.

You feeling okay, hotshot? You look a little peaked.

Anything you want to tell us, hon?

Are you?

Then why are you favoring your left side?

I got a little...bruised... the other night.

Nothing to worry about.

Uhhh...no... I...I'm fine... really!

That's easy for you to say.

We're parents, May. We're all about the worrying.

I realize that web-swinging entails an occasional bump and scrape, but you can't hide your injuries from us.

You need to tell us whenever you're hurt.

Are we clear?

Crystal.

Good, now lift your shirt and show me this so-called "bruise".

Daaaaaad--!

We can dispense with the morning medical exam, Peter. Your daughter's entitled to some privacy.

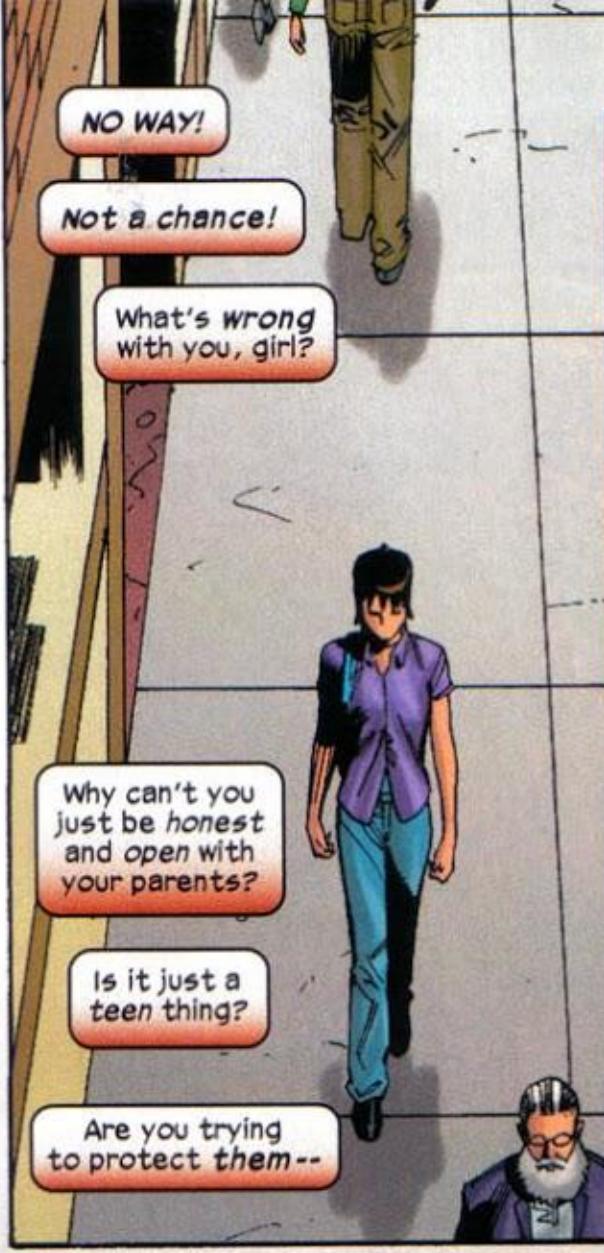
B-But--!

Enough, Peter! I'm sure May's learned her lesson.

Isn't that right, dear?

Yeah. Sure. You bet.









Like I'd
really tell
you.

You don't
care about
me. I'm just another member
of your rogues' gallery.

As far as you're
concerned, I'm just a
monster to be captured
and caged--

--so that you
can earn another
super hero merit
badge.

TWAKK!

URRRK!

I have
one true
friend--

--and he's
the only person
I can trust.

Hoo-boy--!

There goes one
angry dragon--

--and he's
obviously
searching for
something.

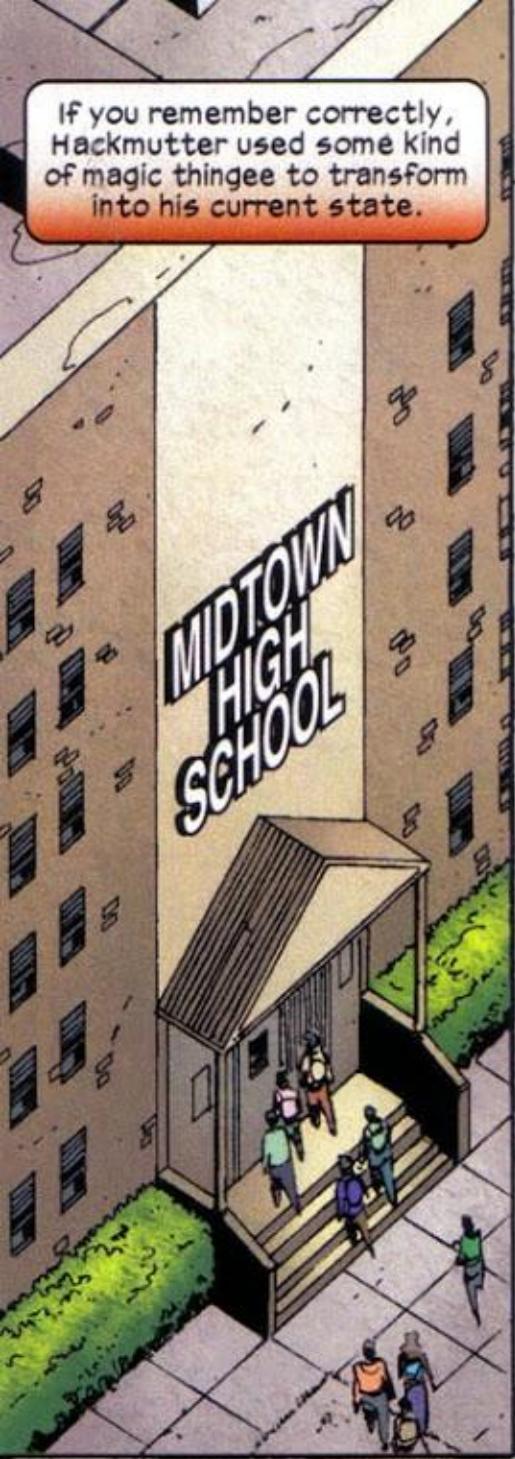
What could
it be?

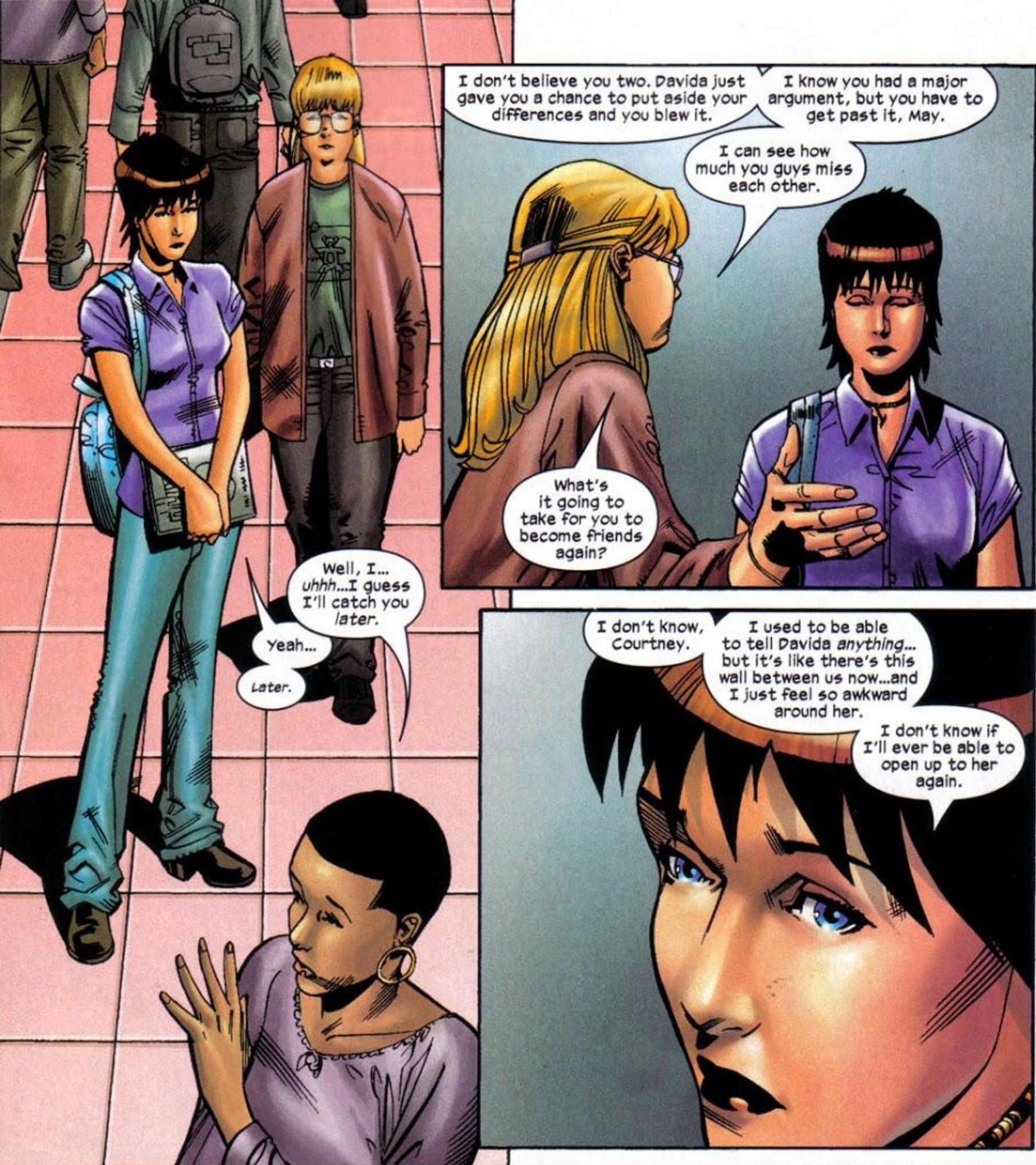
Not that it
really matters.

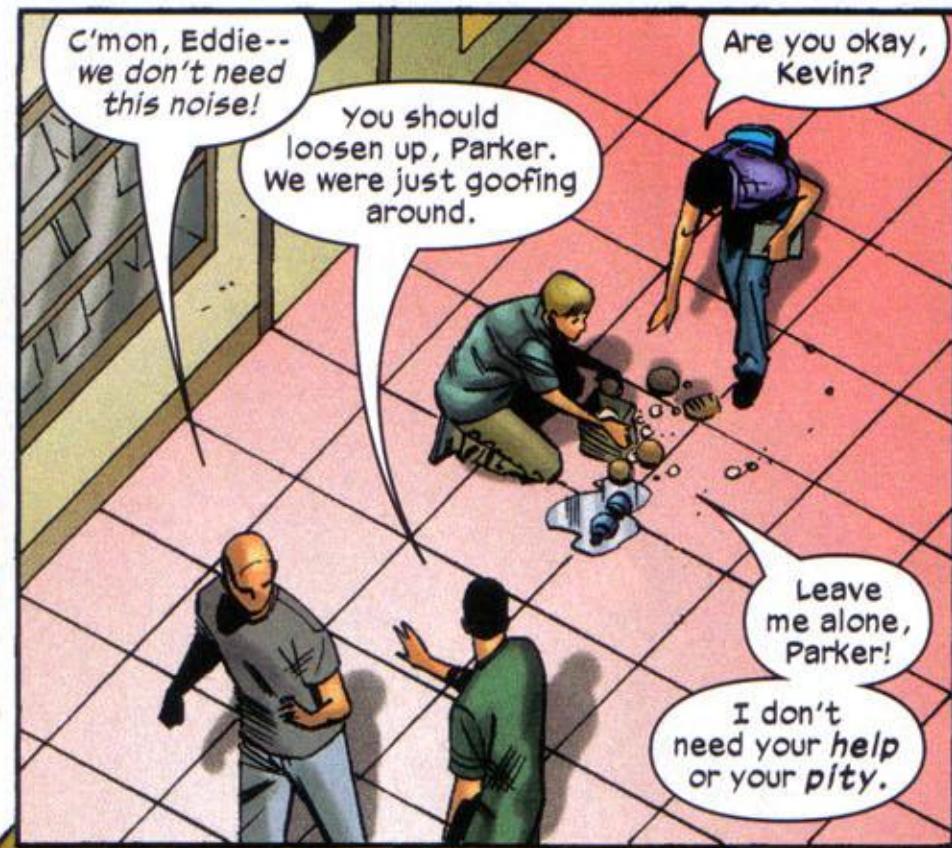
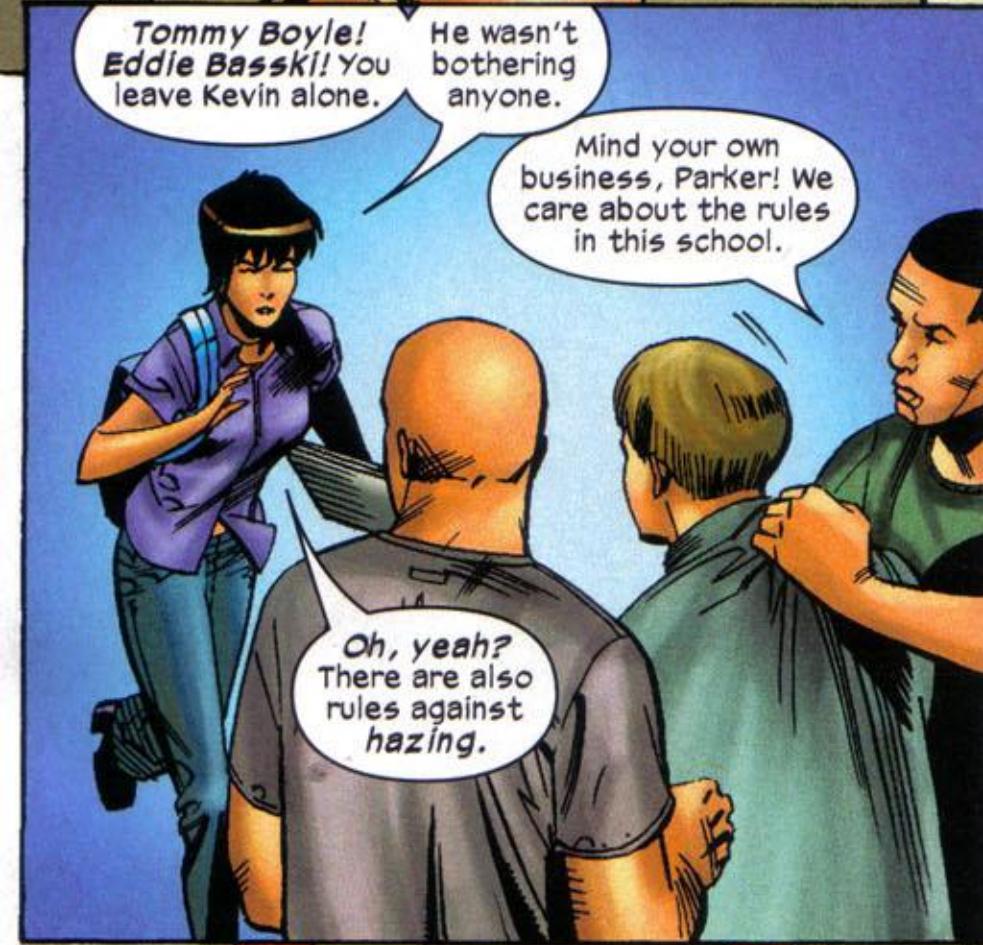
W-What
the heck is
that?!
They must be
shooting some kind of
horror movie in the
neighborhood.

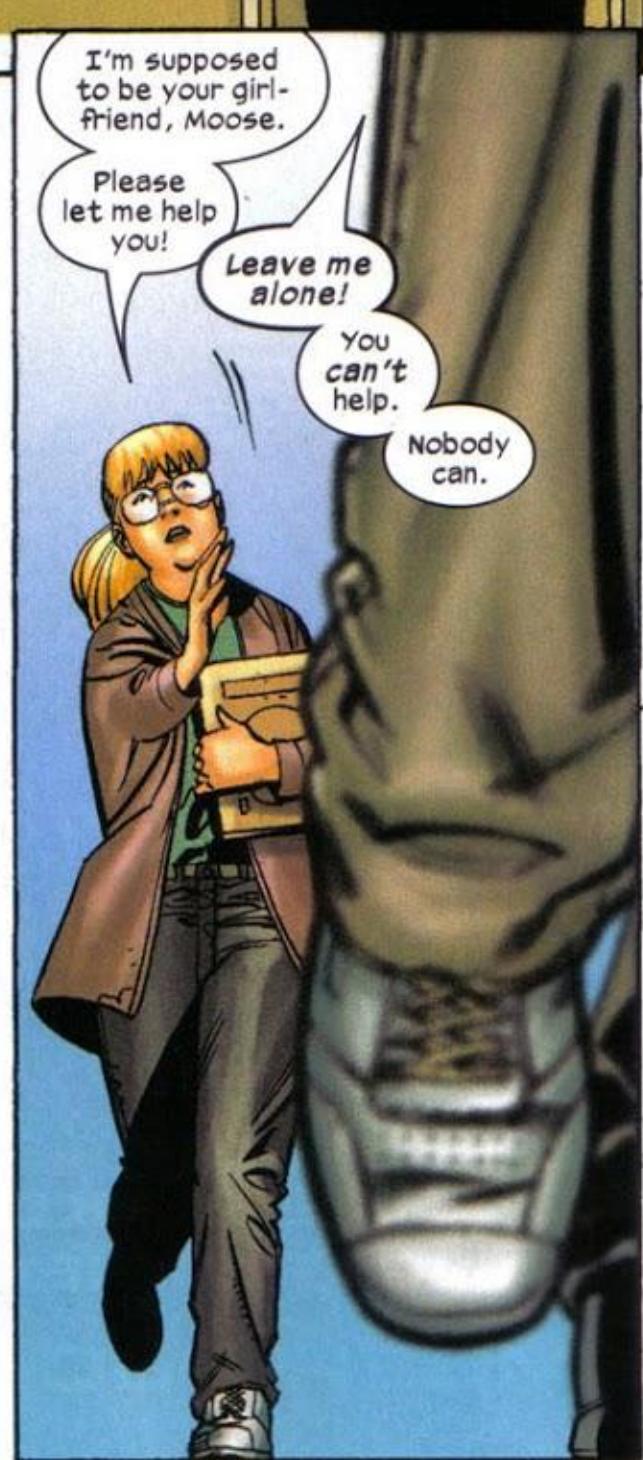
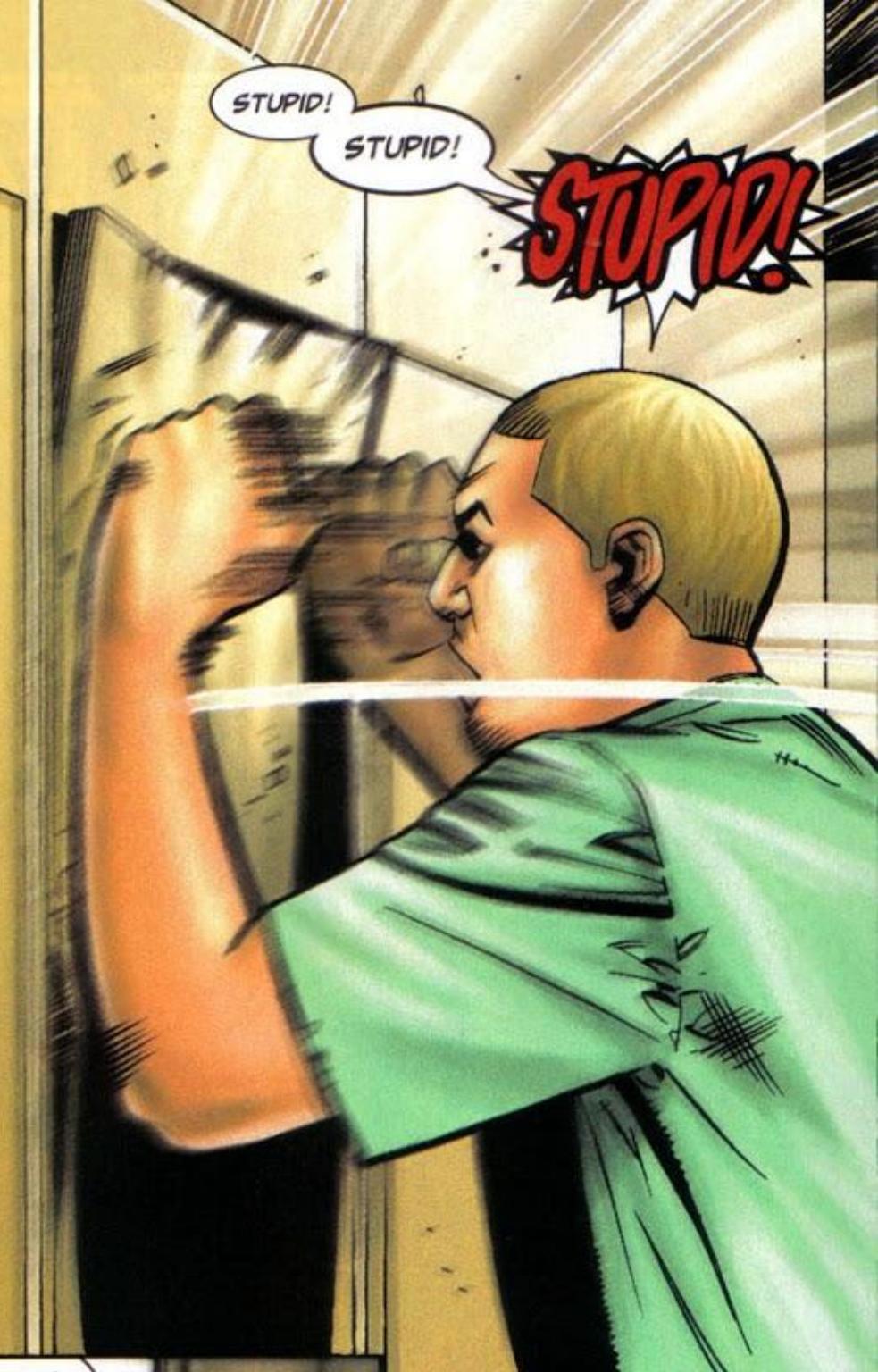
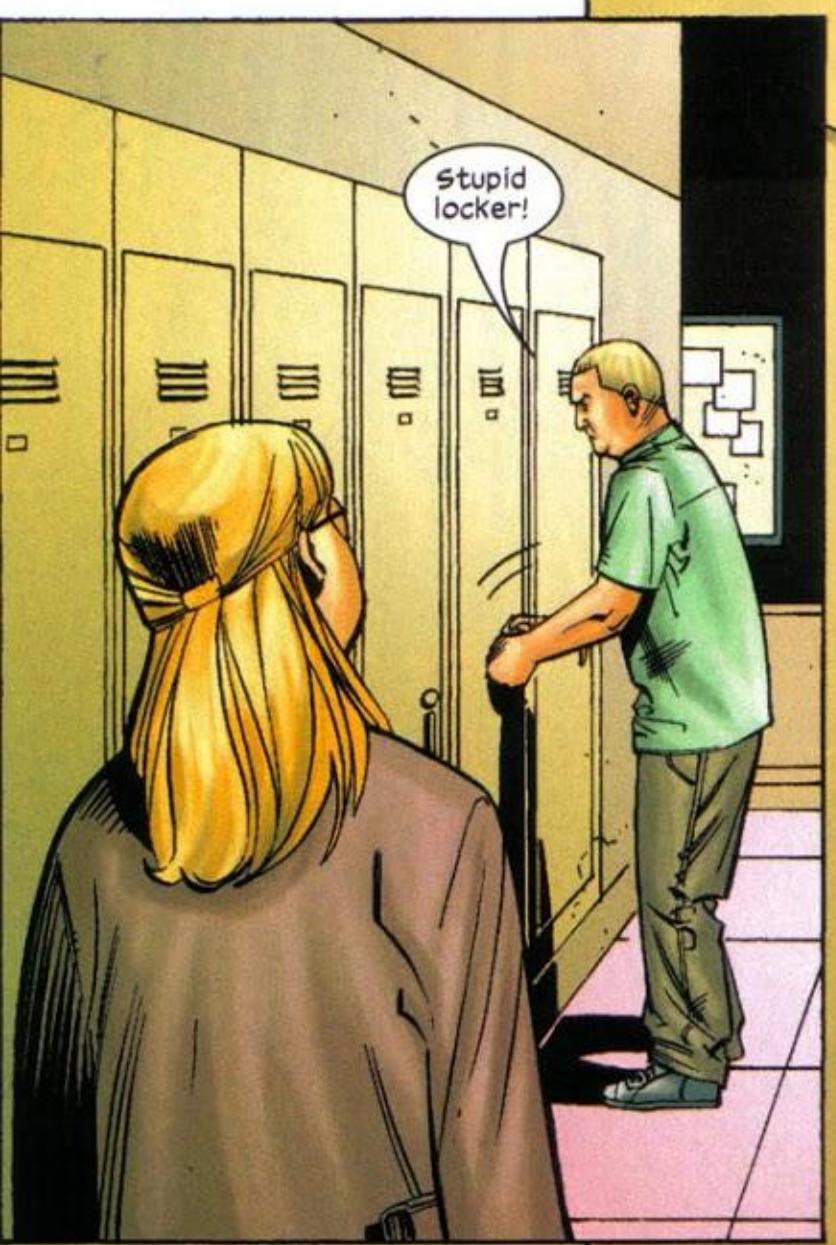
You're in no condition
to chase him.

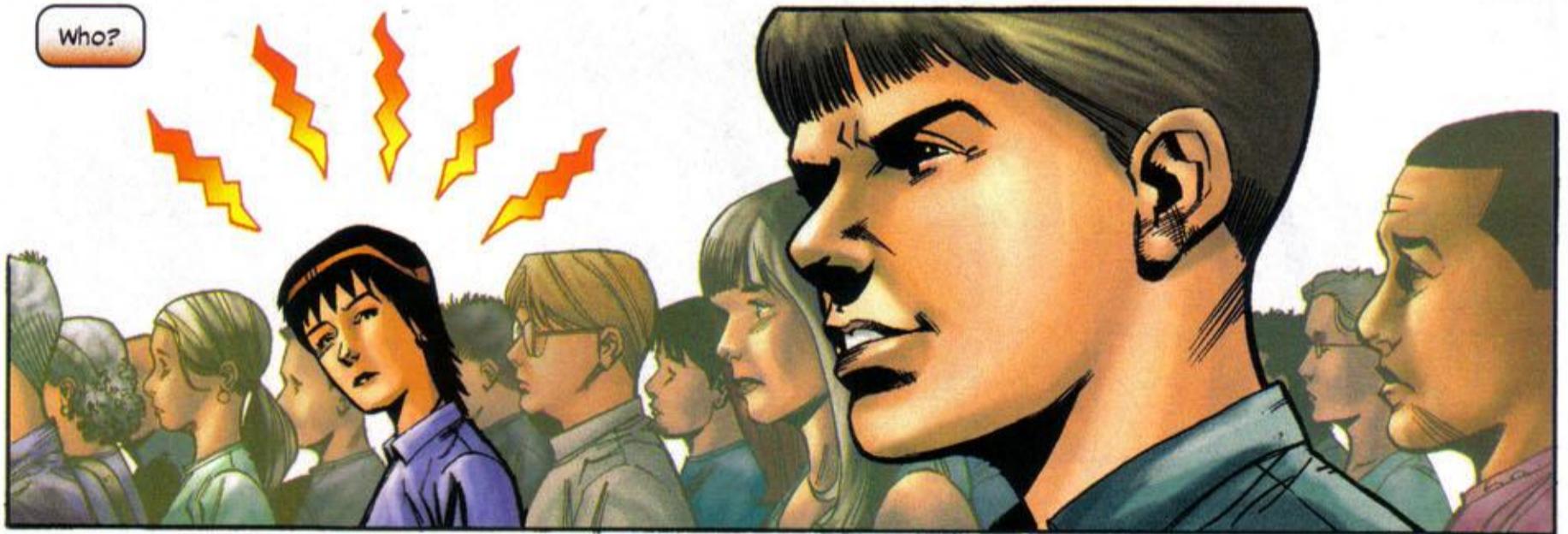
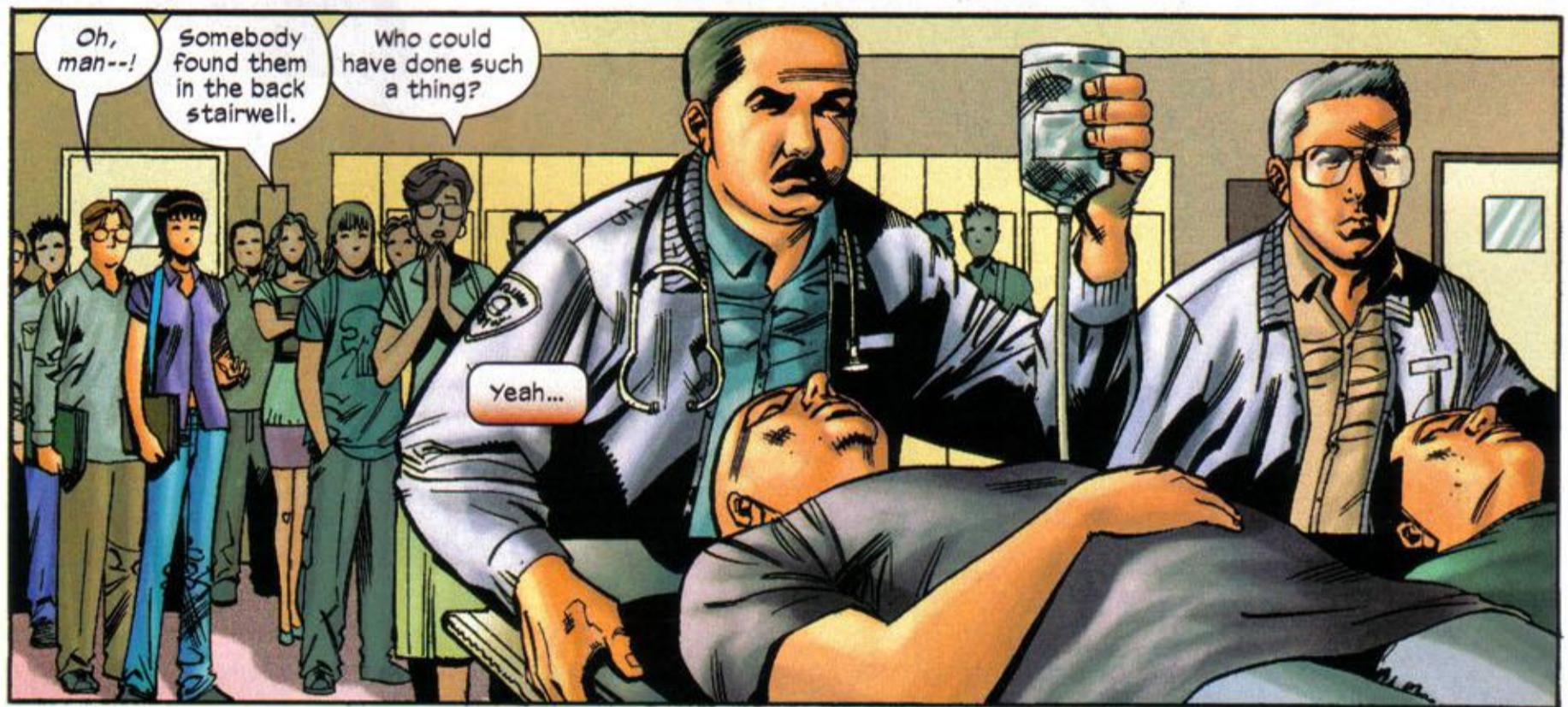
If you remember correctly, Hackmutter used some kind of magic thingee to transform into his current state.











Where does Kevin think he's headed? Students aren't allowed in the school basement.

Y-You got a minute, May?

Can it wait, Courtney? I'm kind of in the middle of something.

B-But I'm worried about Moose.

I think he's having a nervous breakdown.

C'mon, Courtney-- that doesn't sound like our Moose!

The guy's tougher than adamantium.

I'm sure you're just overreacting.

But you didn't see him.

Look, I've really got to go, but I promise to talk to Moose as soon as I return.

Can you hold out for a few more minutes?

I... I guess.

Great! I'll be right back.



Hackmutter mentioned something about a friend earlier.

He didn't get along with most of the students when he was the school's janitor--custodial engineer--but he might have identified with another outsider like--uh-oh!

Davida!

What are you doing down here? You could get into a lot of trouble.

Look who's talking!

You should be ashamed of yourself, May.

You've been treating your friends like dirt.

Uhhh...Davida... this isn't the best time to rehash our problems.

I'm not talking about us.
Courtney was practically freaking out.

She needed you, and you just shrugged her off.

The girl has always been there for you, May--you owe her!

Can we please discuss this later?

No! You can't get away from me that easy. I want answers. What happened to you, May?

You used to care about your friends.

Why should I? What's going on down here? What's so important that you had to run off and ditch your best friend?

Davida, you really need to lower your voice.

GROWLLL!



Students aren't permitted down here. You don't belong in--

--the lair of the DRAGON KING.

Just can't leave well enough alone...can you, Parker?

I told you I'd get my revenge on Basski and Boyle!

Ohmigosh!

That's the old janitor who turned into a living creature feature.

W-We've got to get out of here.

Yeah.

Good plan.

This is great!

Just great!

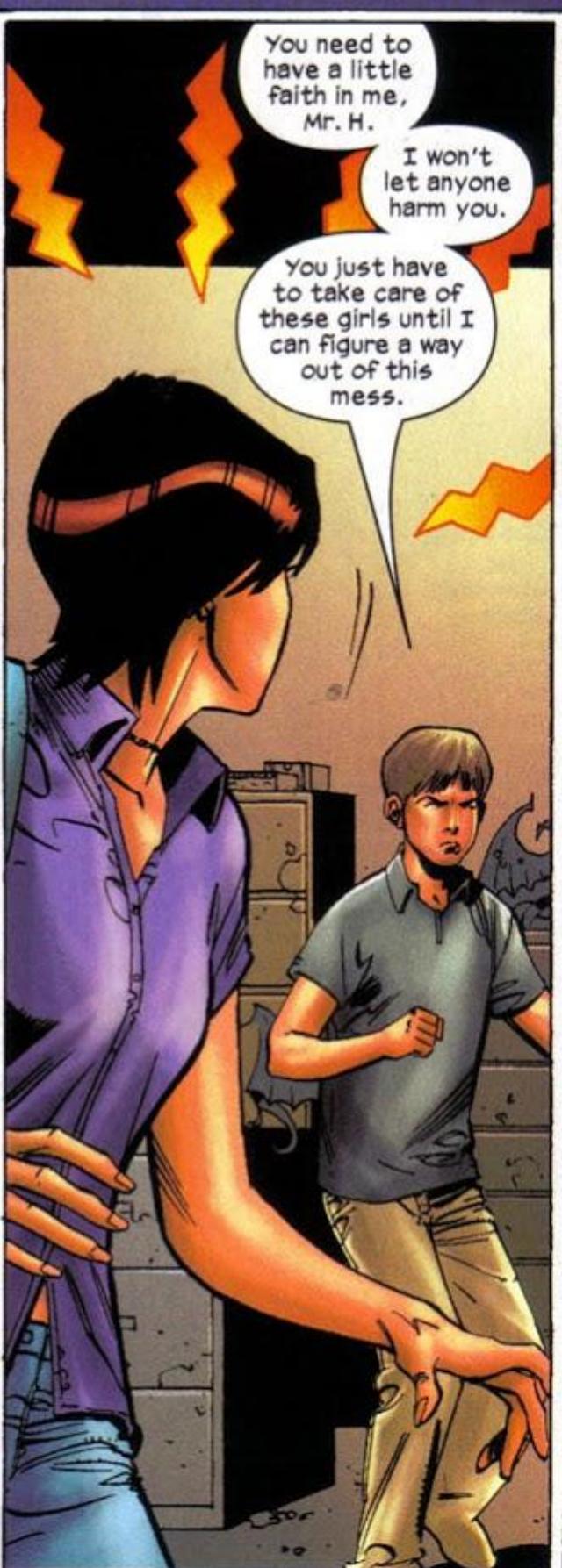
You can't change into costume--

--and probably wouldn't even be fight-worthy if you could.

You girls are in big trouble.

We can't let you go running off to the principal or the cops.







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P-Please
don't be mad,
Mr. H!

I hid it so
that you could continue
to protect us from all
the **real** monsters--the
bullies like Basski
and Boyle!

You
betrayed me,
Kevin--

--and I thought
we were friends!

AAAAAAA

Ooooooo



How did you
know--?

Would you believe I
have a paranormal
sense that allows
me to hone in on
danger?

So...lucky
guess?

yeah.

What
happens
now?

One of us
calls 911--

--and the authorities take over!"

Looks like someone had a fun day--

--although you really should leave the super-heroics to Spider-Girl.

I'm glad I ran into you, Moose.

We need to talk...

If this is about Courtney, I already apologized for my temper tantrum.

I've been a little stressed lately.

What's going on, Moose?

Nothing I can't handle.

You can assure Court that everything's fine.

Moose, I'm your friend, and I can see that something's eating at you.

You don't have to shoulder it alone.

An awful lot of people care about you, big guy.

Please let us help...

His eyes blaze with anger for a handful of instants, and then his gaze starts to soften...

I-it's my dad.

I found a letter from his doctor and he...

H-He needs some tests.

It might be nothing, but we...

W-We already lost my mom to cancer.

You cannot fix this problem and don't know how to alleviate his fears.

All you can offer is your friendship and support.

And that, at least for the moment, is all he really needs.



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MAYDAY'S MAILBOX

Dear SPIDER-GIRL Crew,

I loved everything about SPIDER-GIRL #78! You guys barely let me catch my breath this issue! You have truly created a masterpiece! I'm glad the Black Tarantula continues to stand up to the unbeatable standards you gave him early on. The Tarantula is in jail, but it obviously won't hold him long if he doesn't want to be held. Chesbro is still running free to mess with May's life. May's defeat of Lady Ock was impressive and I have to say I'm very worried about poor Normie...

John Dillon
Sedalia, Missouri

So are we, John! We see dark things in Normie's future.

Dear Marvel,

I just wanted to say thank you to whoever decided that SPIDER-GIRL deserves yet another extension, and another big thanks to everyone who makes it worth reading!

SPIDER-GIRL really is an exception to every rule. My comic book collection is wide and varied, from the darkest of horror comics to the silliest of the silly. Living in the UK makes it hard to find the comics I always want. Fortunately my closest comic shop sells the one comic I look forward to the most out of all...yep you guessed it! SPIDER-GIRL! There was a letter in issue 78 saying how each issue is a complete story, and I totally agree. Because of this well-rounded manner to the writing of each issue, they feel longer than a normal comic book. Every time I read an issue I feel like I've been taken on a real journey, not just a few steps of a larger one. This is why I buy it, because it's one of the few comics that stands out in more ways than just artwork. I really hope that final story that's been written never gets seen; I hope this comic will be around for many, many years because it's the hidden gem of Marvel. With a bit more advertising it would be a huge hit. It's only through lack of knowledge that people don't buy it. (You can't buy something if you don't know it exists!)

If it ever does go away, I'll miss it more than I would any other comic. I know fans of this comic from 12 to 30, and they all enjoy it just as much as I do. That's a remarkable talent and true story-telling.

Anyway, in a few years I expect to see Spider-Girl the movie, so don't let me down!

Andrew Leeke
Manchester, England

Hmm...but who would you cast as our girl, Andrew?

Dear Mr. DeFalco and the Amazing Art Team and Editors for SPIDER-GIRL,



On the first Thursday of every month since 1999, I have waltzed into my local comic shop, picked up a copy of SPIDER-GIRL, purchased it, read it, and loved every single word and illustration from cover to cover. I recently got my hands on SPIDER-GIRL #78 and I was blown away. I made the assumption that the Black Tarantula only wanted to make Spider-Girl one of his lieutenants. It never occurred to me that his interest in her ran deeper. And I thought that bouquet of flowers he left for her in #70 was just a professional or even platonic gesture.

Kaine has certainly come a long way since his intro into May's life all the way back in SPIDER-GIRL #13. No longer is he the revenge-obsessed monster we all loved to run and hide from. He has begun to walk a path of redemption. It was satisfying to see him go one-on-one with the Tarantula, and keep fighting until he could not fight anymore. I am just hoping Kaine survived, and that the Tarantula kept his word to Spider-Girl that he would not kill anyone. It would be a grand tragedy for everyone in the Parker family (especially Mary Jane and Darkdevil) if Kaine's journey from villain to hero was cut short. Well, I will just have to be patient and wait until next month when I can again enter one of my favorite places in the universe and get a copy of one of the best comics ever to come out of Marvel.

I can only hope that when I start writing and drawing comics I will be able to match and go beyond the excellence and quality of Tom's words, Ron's pencils, and Sal's over-the-top inks. Excelsior!

James Bell
Ontario, Canada

We expect some free comics when you finally join the biz, James!

Dear Mayday's Mailbox:

Two months ago I was looking at my collection of comics because I had stopped reading them for awhile. (Which was a big mistake!) So then I decide to go pick back issues I've missed out on. SPIDER-GIRL was one of them.

So I pick up SPIDER-GIRL #75, which was great. I love the new costume and I have been reading since then. I just read SPIDER-GIRL #77 & #78 and WOW. I can't believe that Lady Ock betrayed Canis and was really working for Black Tarantula. I would have never thought of that. Black Tarantula vs. Kaine was just great. It kind of stunk to see Kaine get his butt whipped. It was great to see the training that May has been going through with EleKtra pay off in her battle with Lady Ock. It was strange how Black Tarantula just surrendered to May like that. Maybe he has more plans for her.

Akwasie Ohemeng
Oak Park, IL

Ya think, Akwasi?

Dear SPIDER-GIRL Staff,

I just finished reading SPIDER-GIRL #78 and all I can say is WOW! I've been reading SPIDER-GIRL since What If? #105, and have loved every issue. It's great to hear that this title been extended again (Though why it's constantly on the cancellation block is beyond me). And I'm also pleased to hear that a second Spider-Girl Digest is in the works! Now, on to the questions...

1) Who are the Ladyhawks? (My guess is that Davida has a twin sister, or is one of triplets, and she didn't want to be a crime fighter.)

2) Is a romance between the Black Tarantula and May even legal?

3) Will we be seeing Felicity soon? (She was a bit annoying, but I can just imagine that she's been training this whole time, or maybe even followed in her mother's footsteps and got herself some powers. Her costume was great.)

4) Will Marvel ever reprint The Buzz and Darkdevil Limited Series in future digests? (Back issues of those two series are extremely hard to come by, and all the fans deserve to read them.)

Richard Christianson
Tucson, Arizona

Okay, Richard...

1) While the Ladyhawks have never revealed their civilian names, we kind of doubt that it's Kirby.

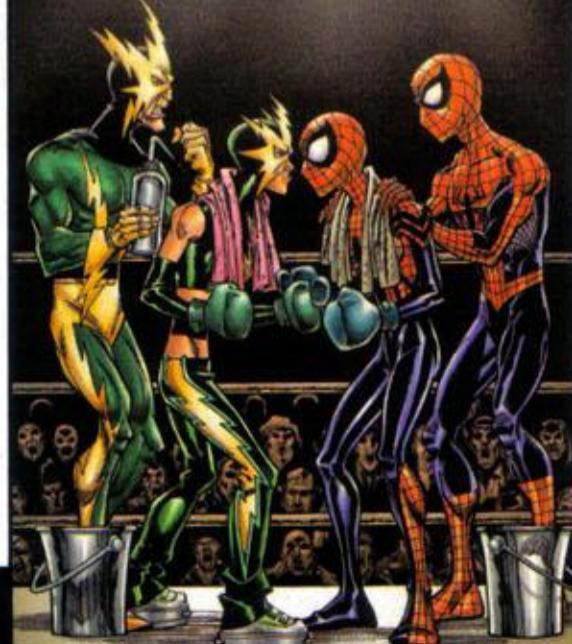
2) Probably not...at least as far as her dad is concerned!

3) Probably.

4) Anything's possible.

Tom DeFalco

NEXT ISSUE



Two old enemies come out of retirement when their daughters clash!

WILEY & LAZER ANDY SCHMIDT JOE QUESADA
ASSISTANT EDITORS EDITOR CHIEF

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DC Babes

Another fine DCP scan