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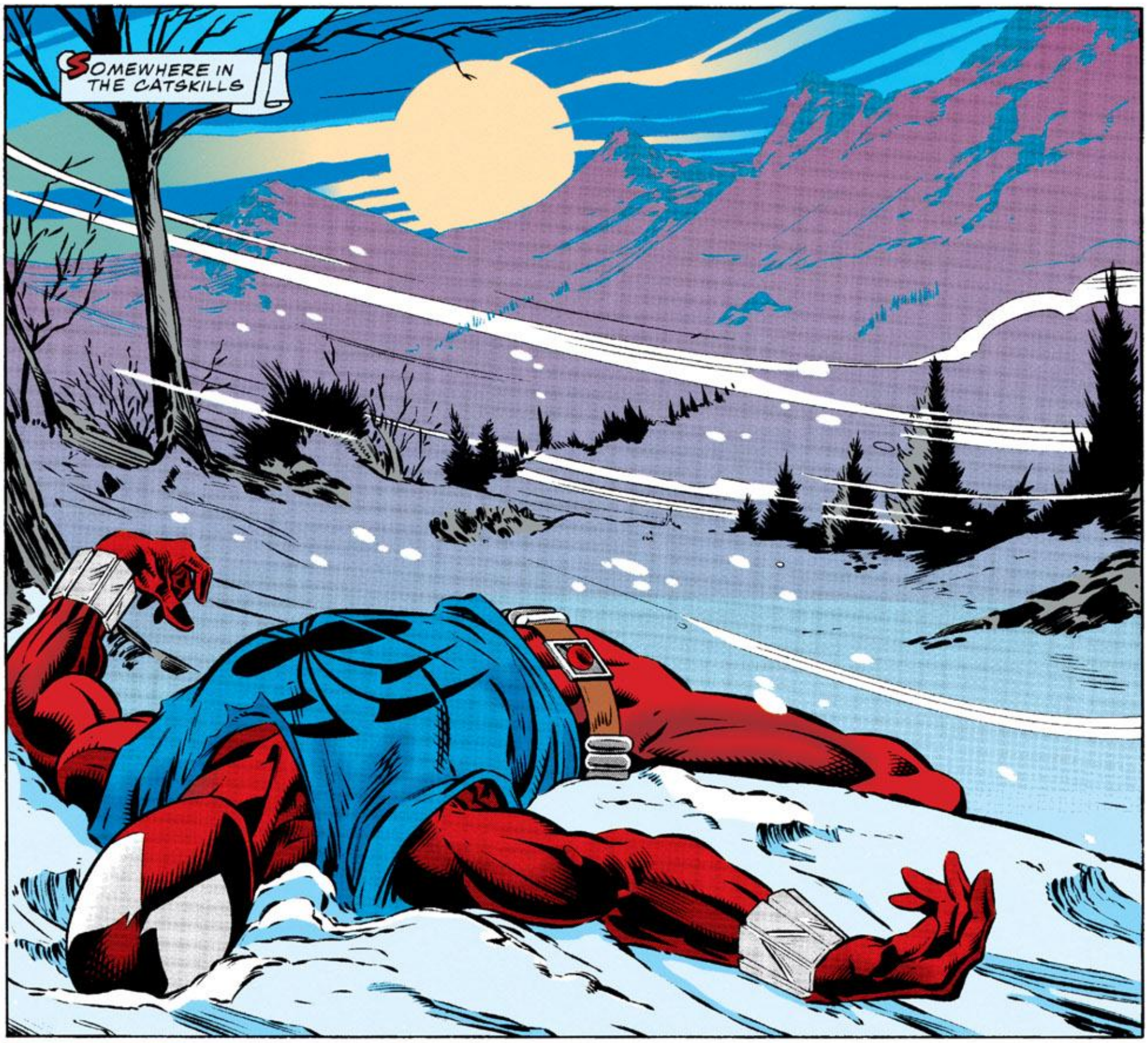

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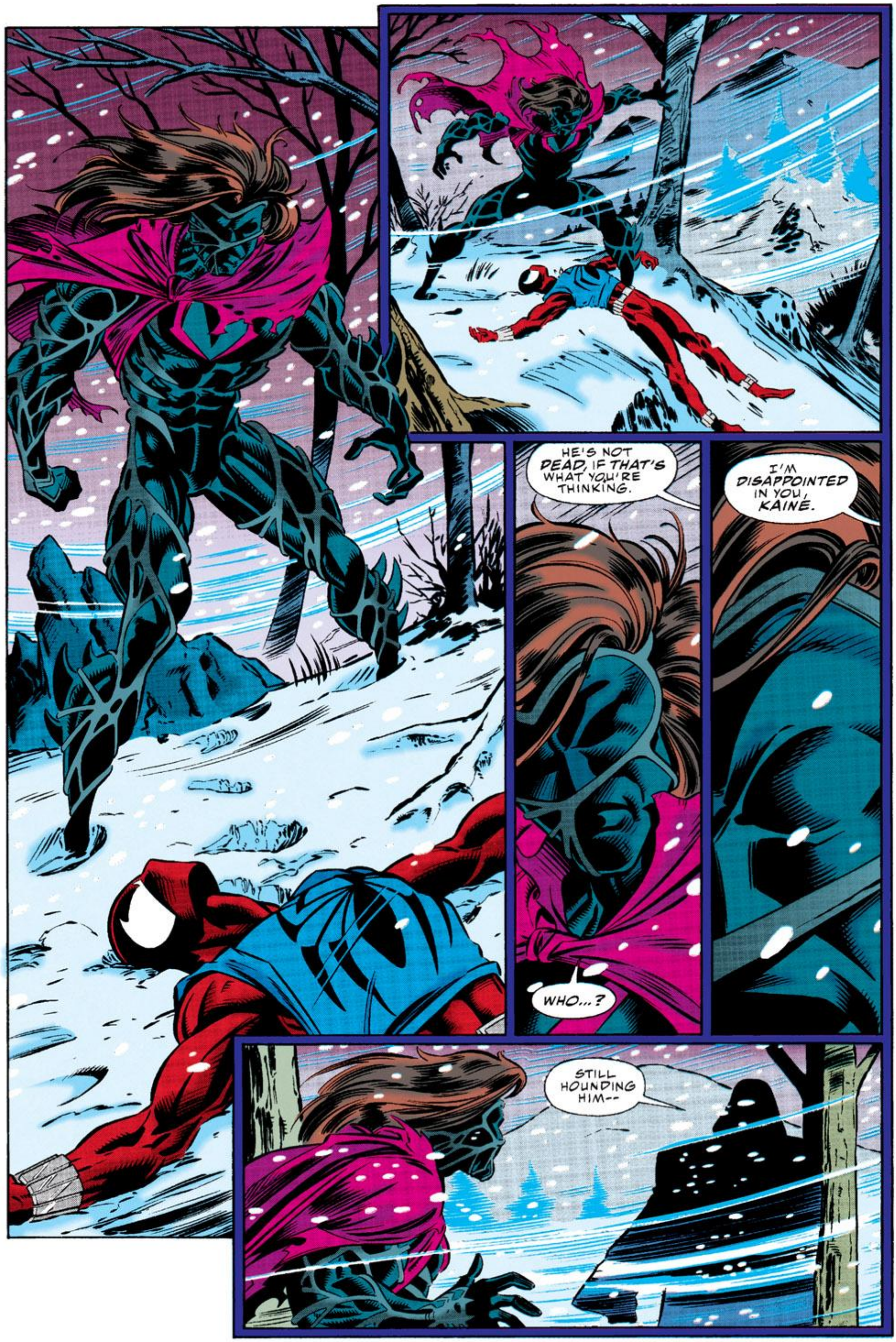
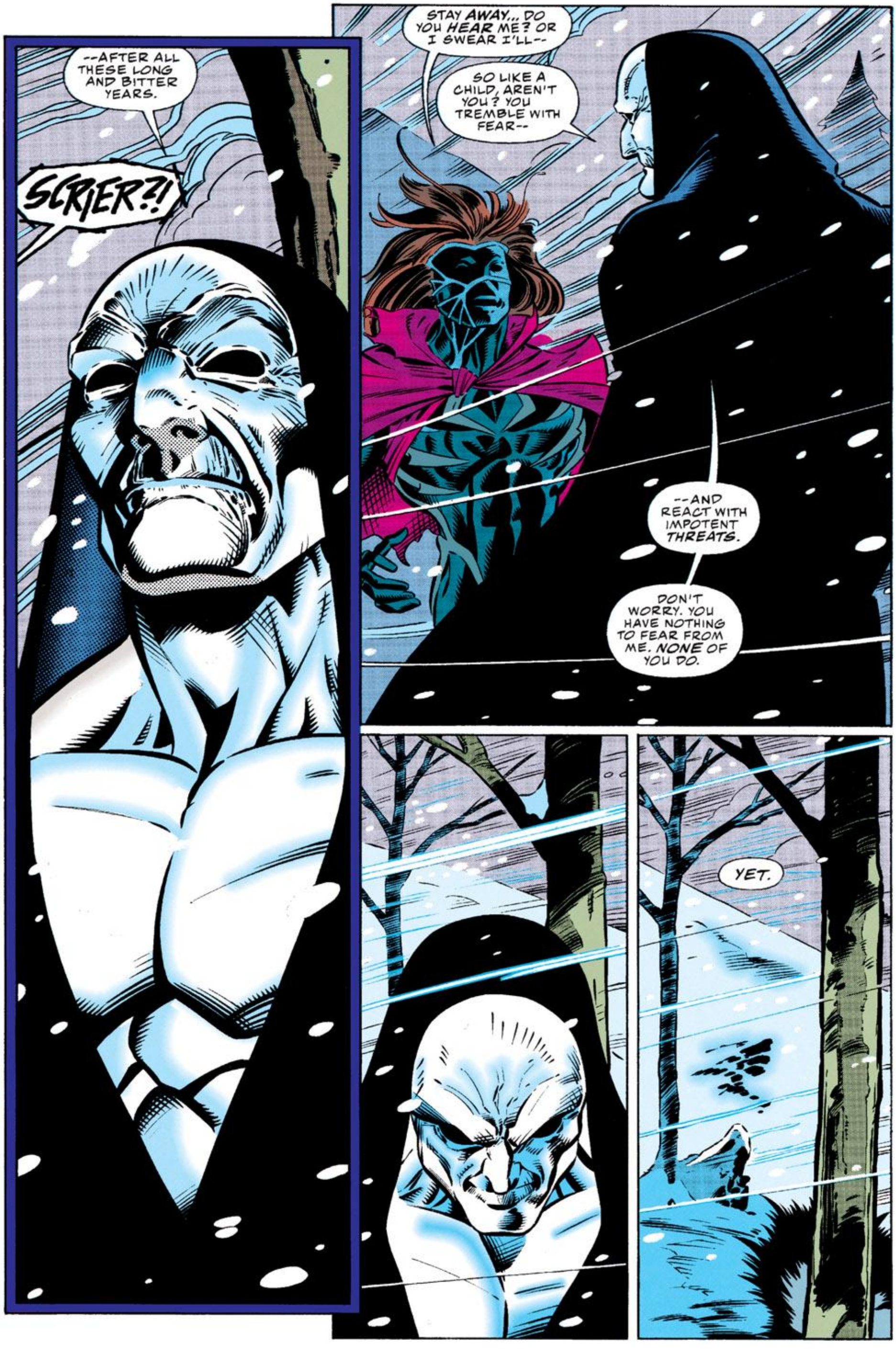
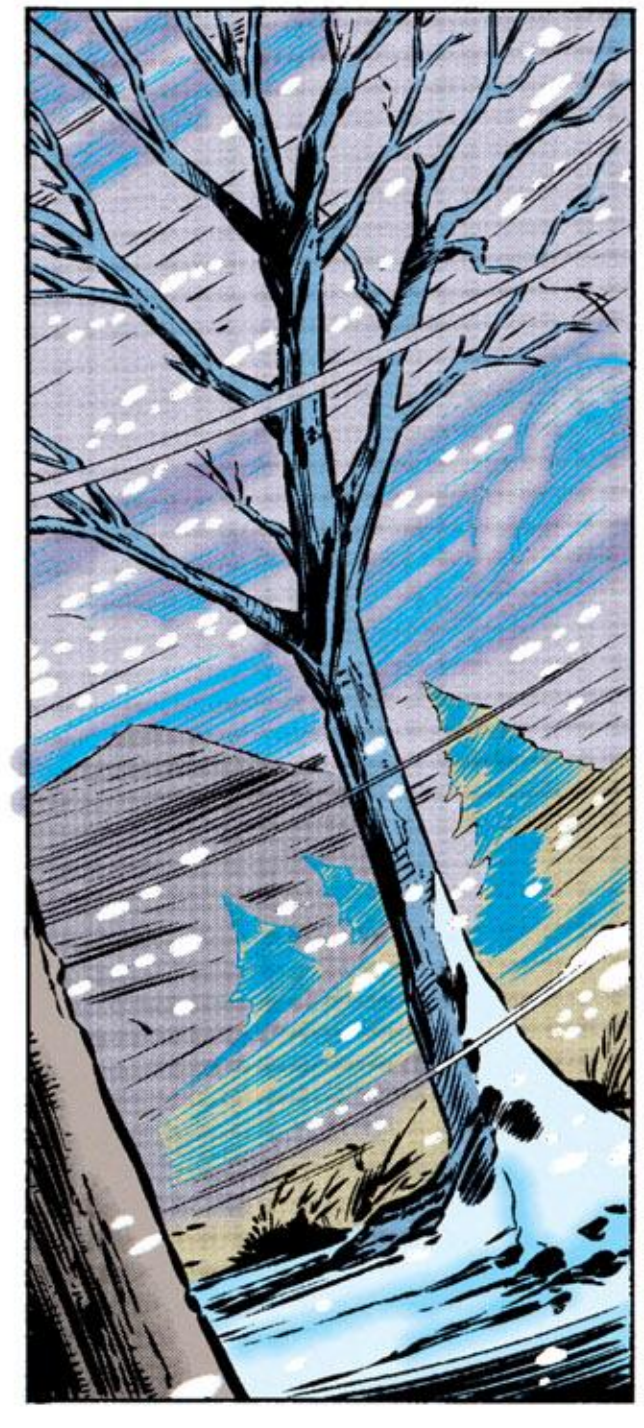

HE'S NOT DEAD, IF THAT'S WHAT YOU'RE THINKING.
I'M DISAPPOINTED IN YOU, KAINE.
WHO...?
STILL HOUNDING HIM--

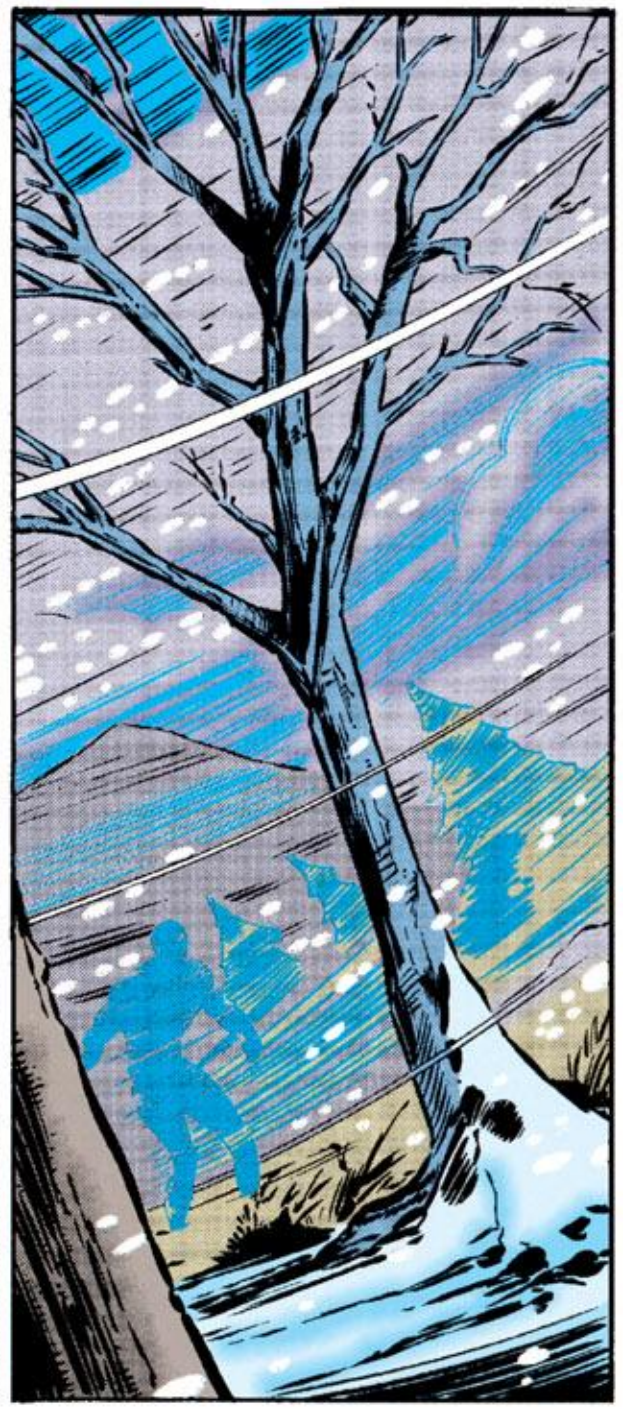

--AFTER ALL THESE LONG AND BITTER YEARS.
SCRIER?!
STAY AWAY... DO YOU HEAR ME? OR I SWEAR I'LL--
SO LIKE A CHILD, AREN'T YOU? YOU TREMBLE WITH FEAR--
--AND REACT WITH IMPOTENT THREATS.
DON'T WORRY. YOU HAVE NOTHING TO FEAR FROM ME. NONE OF YOU DO.
YET.

SCRIER...?
GONE.
MY GOD! IF HE'S INVOLVED IN THIS, THEN THERE'S EVEN MORE GOING ON THAN I REALIZED!

I'VE GOT TO BE CAREFUL. IF I CROSS SCRIER AGAIN I MAY NOT COME OUT OF IT WITH A WHOLE SKIN. THAT DEVIL'S GOT--
WHAT'S THAT?
SOMEONE ELSE COMING... AND I THINK I KNOW WHO IT IS.

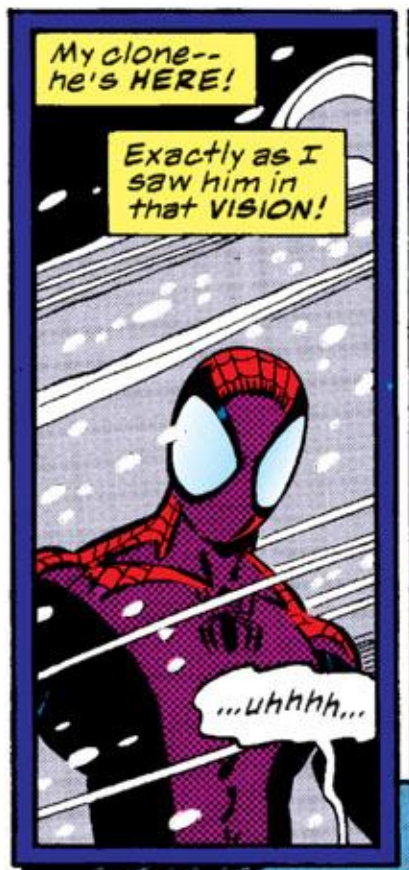
TIME TO FADE BACK INTO THE SHADOWS...





BITTEN BY A RADIOACTIVE SPIDER, STUDENT **PETER PARKER** GAINED THE PROPORTIONATE STRENGTH AND AGILITY OF AN ARACHNID! ARMED WITH HIS WONDROUS WEB-SHOOTERS, THE RELUCTANT SUPER HERO STRUGGLES WITH SINISTER SUPER-VILLAINS, MAKING ENDS MEET, AND MAINTAINING SOME SEMBLANCE OF A NORMAL LIFE!

Stan Lee PRESENTS: THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN®


My clone-- he's HERE!
Exactly as I saw him in that VISION!
...uhhhh...

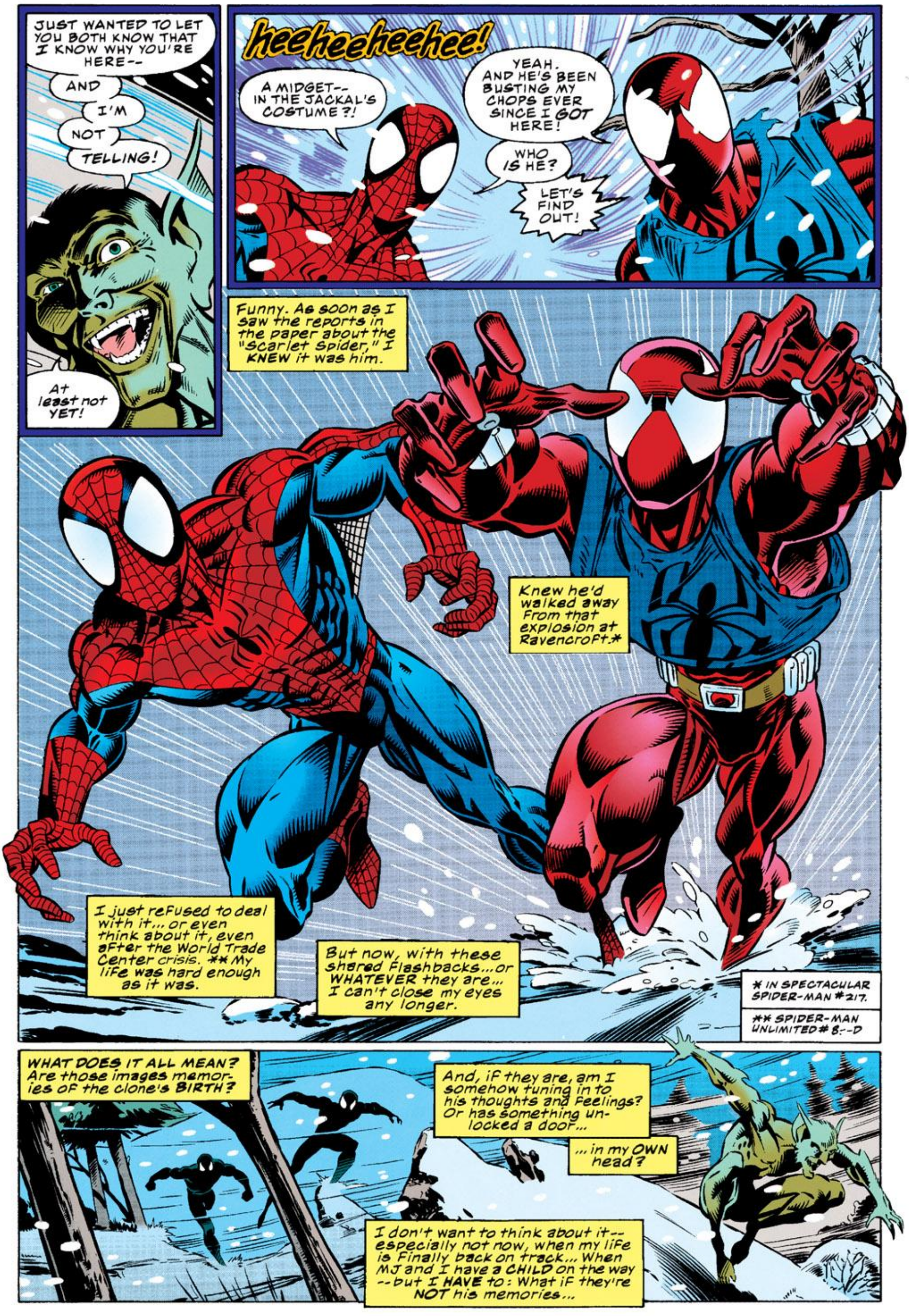
OH, MAN ... MY HEAD--!

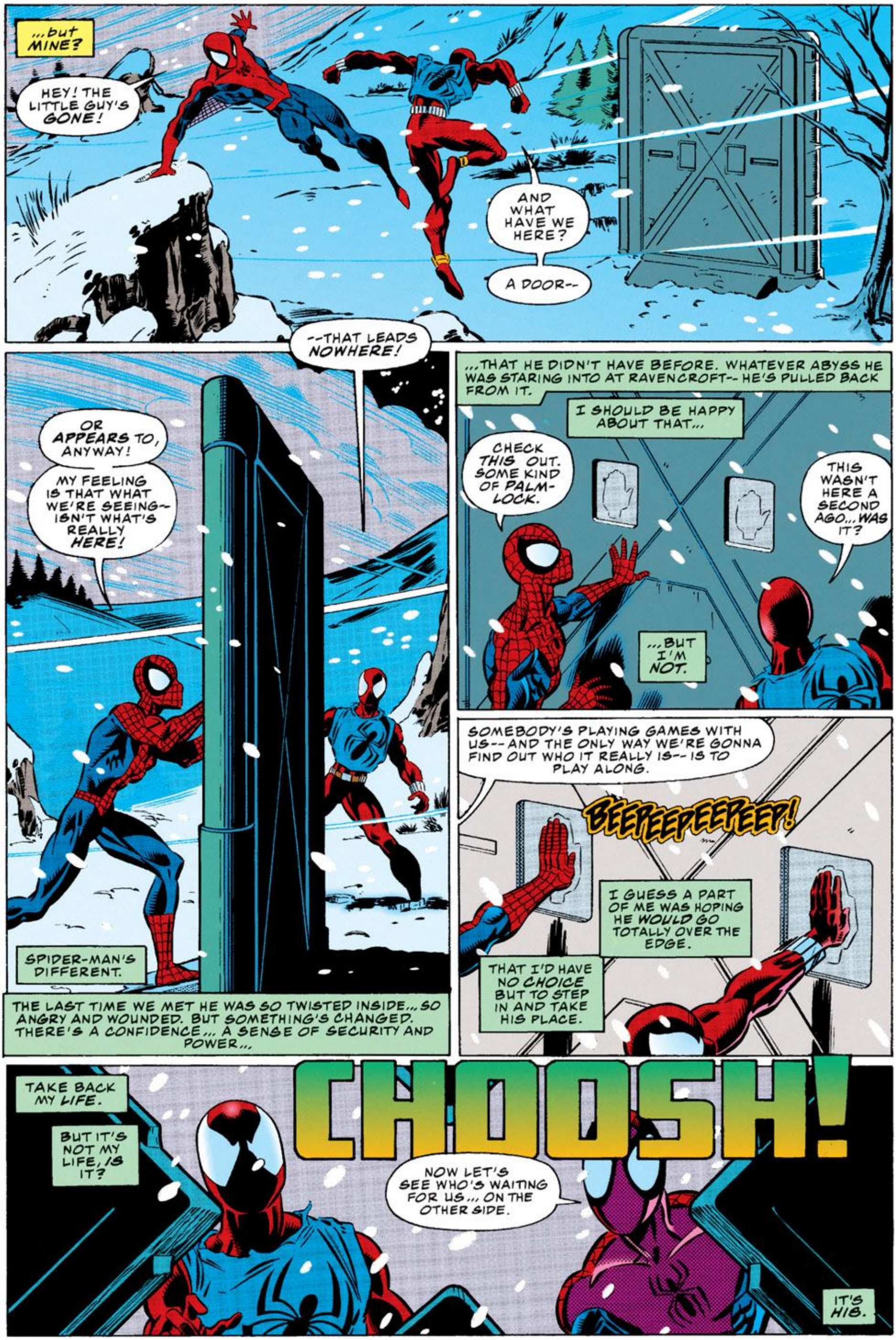
YOU OKAY?
YEAH, I THINK SO, BUT I--
WAIT A MINUTE--
--WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?!
NO. DON'T TELL ME. YOU KEPT GETTING THESE FLASHES-- DREAM IMAGES OF PETER PARKER FLOATING IN A TANK IN SOME WEIRD LABORATORY--
--AND YOU FELT LIKE THE ONLY WAY YOU WERE GONNA GET ANY ANSWERS WAS IF YOU CAME HERE--

YOU, TOO?
YEAH. AND WHEN I GOT HERE I RAN INTO SOME OVER-GROWN HULK WANNABE WHO CALLED HIMSELF THE GUARDIAN. WHOMPED ME PRETTY BAD.
I KNOW. I SAW YOU... IN MY MIND. LYING IN THE SNOW.*
THOUGHT I WAS DEAD, huh? ...SO YOU CAME TO MAKE SURE?
CHEAP SHOT... BUT NOT AS CHEAP AS THAT COSTUME.
HOW COULD MY CLONE HAVE SUCH A LOUSY DESIGN SENSE?
*SEE WEB #122, STILL ON SALE. --DANNY

YOU'RE JUST JEALOUS BECAUSE YOU'VE BEEN WEARING THAT OLD RAG FOR SO MANY YEARS THAT--!
LISTEN TO YOU TWO!

SO INSECURE AND UNCOMFORTABLE WITH EACH OTHER THAT YOU'RE REDUCED TO TRADING JUVENILE INSULTS!
YOU AGAIN!
AND AGAIN AND AGAIN AND AGAIN!


JUST WANTED TO LET YOU BOTH KNOW THAT I KNOW WHY YOU'RE HERE--
AND
I'M
NOT
TELLING!
At least not YET!
heeheeheehee!
A MIDGET-- IN THE JACKAL'S COSTUME?!
YEAH. AND HE'S BEEN BUSTING MY CHOPS EVER SINCE I GOT HERE!
WHO IS HE?
LET'S FIND OUT!
Funny. As soon as I saw the reports in the paper about the "Scarlet Spider," I KNEW it was him.
Knew he'd walked away from that explosion at Ravencroft.*
I just refused to deal with it... or even think about it, even after the World Trade Center crisis. ** My life was hard enough as it was.
But now, with these shared flashbacks... or WHATEVER they are... I can't close my eyes any longer.
* IN SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN #217.
** SPIDER-MAN UNLIMITED #8.--D
WHAT DOES IT ALL MEAN? Are those images memories of the clone's BIRTH?
And, if they are, am I somehow tuning in to his thoughts and feelings? Or has something unlocked a door...
... in my OWN head?
I don't want to think about it-- especially not now, when my life is finally back on track... When MJ and I have a CHILD on the way --but I HAVE to: What if they're NOT his memories...


...but MINE?
HEY! THE LITTLE GUY'S GONE!
AND WHAT HAVE WE HERE?
A DOOR--
--THAT LEADS NOWHERE!
OR APPEARS TO, ANYWAY!
MY FEELING IS THAT WHAT WE'RE SEEING-- ISN'T WHAT'S REALLY HERE!
SPIDER-MAN'S DIFFERENT.
THE LAST TIME WE MET HE WAS SO TWISTED INSIDE... SO ANGRY AND WOUNDED. BUT SOMETHING'S CHANGED. THERE'S A CONFIDENCE... A SENSE OF SECURITY AND POWER...
...THAT HE DIDN'T HAVE BEFORE. WHATEVER ABYSS HE WAS STARING INTO AT RAVENCROFT-- HE'S PULLED BACK FROM IT.
I SHOULD BE HAPPY ABOUT THAT...
CHECK THIS OUT. SOME KIND OF PALM-LOCK.
THIS WASN'T HERE A SECOND AGO... WAS IT?
...BUT I'M NOT.
SOMEBODY'S PLAYING GAMES WITH US-- AND THE ONLY WAY WE'RE GONNA FIND OUT WHO IT REALLY IS-- IS TO PLAY ALONG.
BEEPEEPEEPEEP!
I GUESS A PART OF ME WAS HOPING HE WOULD GO TOTALLY OVER THE EDGE.
THAT I'D HAVE NO CHOICE BUT TO STEP IN AND TAKE HIS PLACE.
TAKE BACK MY LIFE.
BUT IT'S NOT MY LIFE, IS IT?
CHOOSH!
NOW LET'S SEE WHO'S WAITING FOR US... ON THE OTHER SIDE.
IT'S HIS.

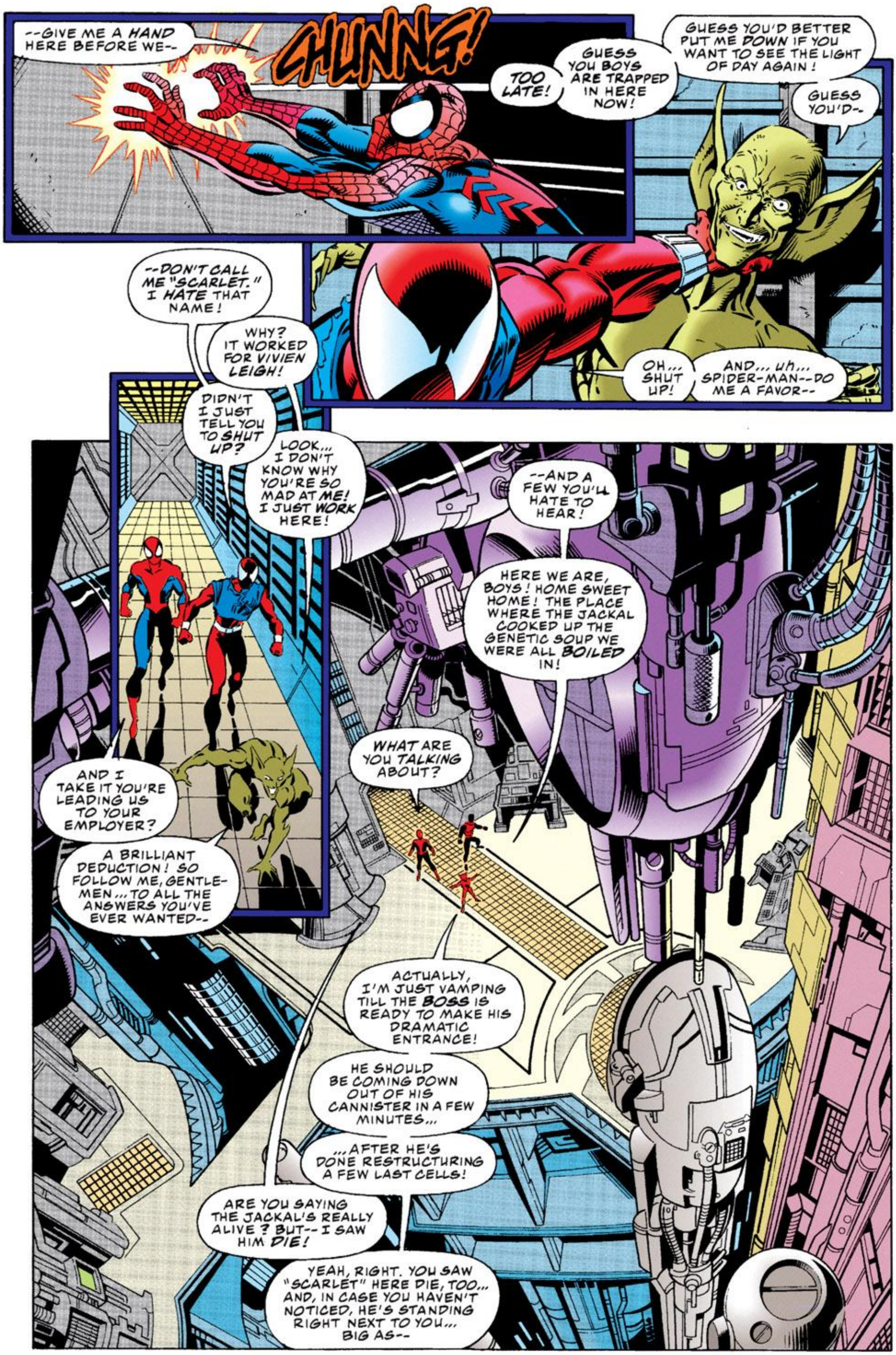
TWO FOR DINNER?
DO YOU HAVE RESERVATIONS?

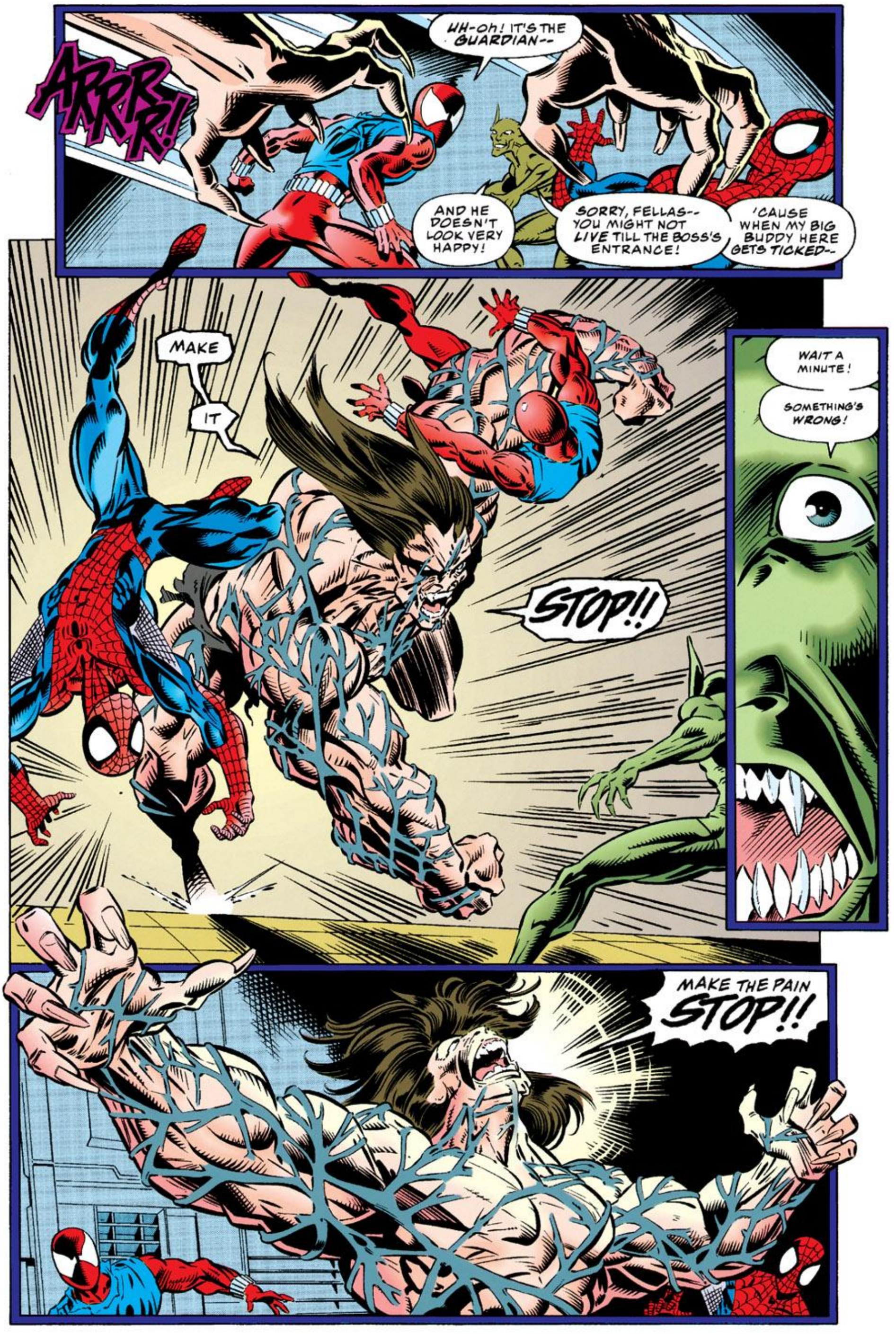
HERE'S MY RESERVATION--
--YOU MANIPULATIVE LITTLE--!
KRAAAK!

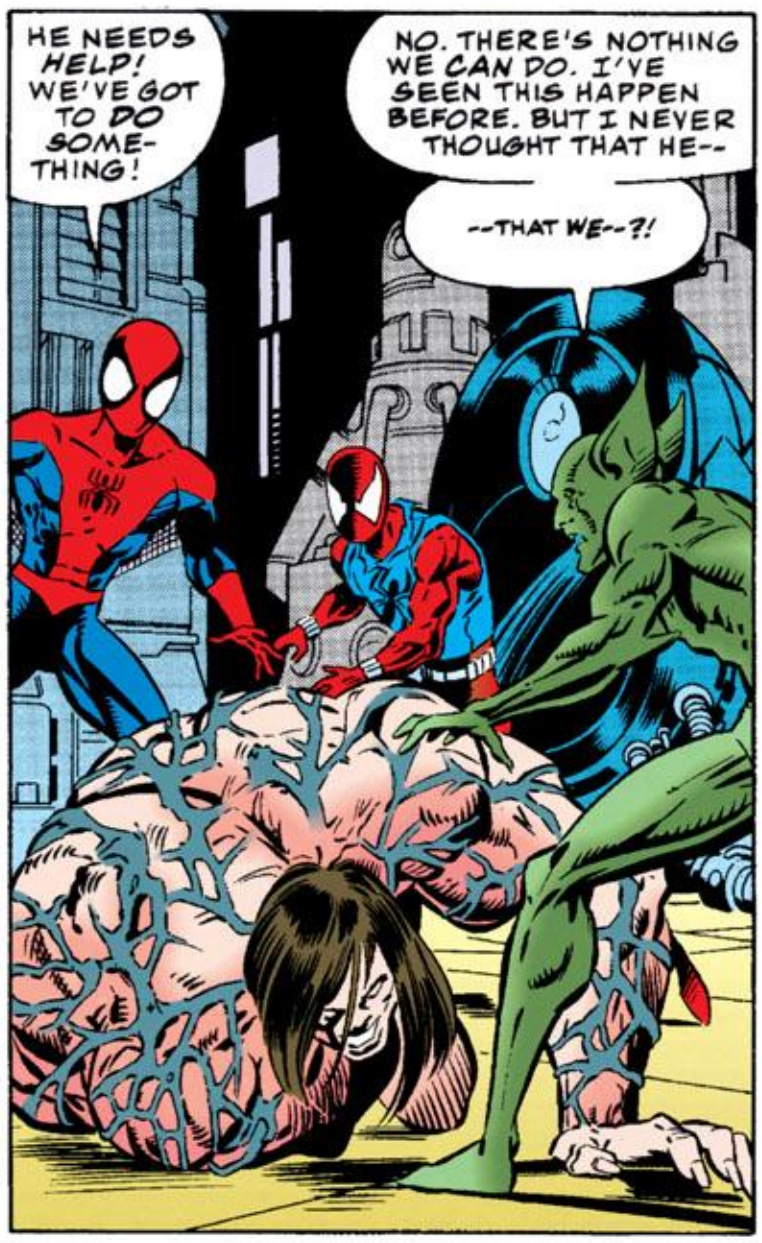
HEY... YOU GUYS REALLY OUGHTA LEARN HOW TO TAKE A JOKE!
A JOKE?!!
YOU THINK THIS IS A JOKE?!
THESE ARE OUR LIVES YOU'RE PLAYING WITH!
OUR LIVES!

WAM!
WE WANT SOME ANSWERS... NOW!
IS THE JACKAL BEHIND ALL THIS?
IS HE ALIVE ?!
AREN'T WE IN A FOUL MOOD TODAY! WHAT'S THE MATTER--GET UP ON THE WRONG SIDE OF THE WEB?

uh-oh.
THE DOOR!
HEY-- SCARLET--


--GIVE ME A HAND HERE BEFORE WE--
CHUNNG!
TOO LATE!
GUESS YOU BOYS ARE TRAPPED IN HERE NOW!
GUESS YOU'D BETTER PUT ME DOWN IF YOU WANT TO SEE THE LIGHT OF DAY AGAIN!
GUESS YOU'D--
OH... SHUT UP!
AND... uh... SPIDER-MAN--DO ME A FAVOR--
--DON'T CALL ME "SCARLET." I HATE THAT NAME!
WHY? IT WORKED FOR VIVIEN LEIGH!
DIDN'T I JUST TELL YOU TO SHUT UP?
LOOK... I DON'T KNOW WHY YOU'RE SO MAD AT ME! I JUST WORK HERE!
--AND A FEW YOU'LL HATE TO HEAR!
HERE WE ARE, BOYS! HOME SWEET HOME! THE PLACE WHERE THE JACKAL COOKED UP THE GENETIC SOUP WE WERE ALL BOILED IN!
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
AND I TAKE IT YOU'RE LEADING US TO YOUR EMPLOYER?
A BRILLIANT DEDUCTION! SO FOLLOW ME, GENTLEMEN... TO ALL THE ANSWERS YOU'VE EVER WANTED--
ACTUALLY, I'M JUST VAMPING TILL THE BOSS IS READY TO MAKE HIS DRAMATIC ENTRANCE!
HE SHOULD BE COMING DOWN OUT OF HIS CANNISTER IN A FEW MINUTES...
...AFTER HE'S DONE RESTRUCTURING A FEW LAST CELLS!
ARE YOU SAYING THE JACKAL'S REALLY ALIVE? BUT-- I SAW HIM DIE!
YEAH, RIGHT. YOU SAW "SCARLET" HERE DIE, TOO... AND, IN CASE YOU HAVEN'T NOTICED, HE'S STANDING RIGHT NEXT TO YOU... BIG AS--


ARRR R!
UH-OH! IT'S THE GUARDIAN--
AND HE DOESN'T LOOK VERY HAPPY!
SORRY, FELLAS-- YOU MIGHT NOT LIVE TILL THE BOSS'S ENTRANCE!
'CAUSE WHEN MY BIG BUDDY HERE GETS TICKED--
MAKE
IT
STOP!!
WAIT A MINUTE!
SOMETHING'S WRONG!
MAKE THE PAIN STOP!!



OH, JEEZ-- GUARDIAN... C'MON... TELL ME YOU'RE KIDDING!

IT'S A JOKE, RIGHT? AFTER ALL THIS TIME... YOU'VE FINALLY DEVELOPED A SENSE OF HUMOR?

C'MON, YOU BIG JERK-- DON'T DIE ON ME! PLEASE... I'M BEGGING YOU... DON'T--

--DIE...

HE'S GONE. AND... ONE WAY OR THE OTHER...
WHAT DO YOU--?
...SO AM I.
AND SO... ARE BOTH OF YOU.
DIDN'T YOU HEAR WHAT I SAID BEFORE?
WE'RE ALL FROM THE SAME GENETIC SOUP.
IT MAY TAKE A FEW DAYS... A FEW YEARS... A FEW DECADES--
--BUT THE SAME FATE'S WAITING FOR ALL OF US.
YOU'RE MISTAKEN, JACK.
TO EVEN MENTION YOURSELF IN THE SAME SENTENCE WITH THESE TWO IS THE HEIGHT OF ARROGANCE... AND STUPIDITY.
YOU AND THE GUARDIAN WERE TWO OF MY EARLIEST FAILURES--
--WHILE THESE TWO FINELY SCULPTED SPECIMENS--

--ARE THE JACKAL'S GREATEST TRIUMPHS!

HELLO, BOYS--
--DADDY'S BACK!
SHRAK!
KRK!

AND HE'S BETTER THAN EVER... IF I MUST SAY SO MYSELF!
CAN YOU BELIEVE IT? WIMPY OLD PROFESSOR WARREN-- AND LOOK AT ME! ABLE TO TAKE ON NOT ONE, BUT TWO SPIDER-MEN AT THE SAME TIME!
I'D LIKE TO SEE THOSE NITWITS AT ESU DENY ME TENURE NOW!
Is that creature Professor Warren... or is it just another CLONE?
Whoever... Whatever he is... he's right: he was strong enough, fast enough, to take the both of us down without breathing heavy.
This whole mess keeps getting weirder...

...and more DANGEROUS.
JACK...BE A GOOD BOY, WILL YOU, AND FETCH ME SOME CLOTHES?
YES, SIR, JACKAL! RIGHT AWAY, SIR!

WILL...ah... THIS BE SUITABLE, SIR?
YOU FETCH MY CLOTHES AND ASK IF IT'S SUITABLE? WHY JACK, YOU LITTLE DEVIL--WAS THAT A PUN?
IT, uh, DEPENDS, SIR. DID YOU FIND IT AMUSING?

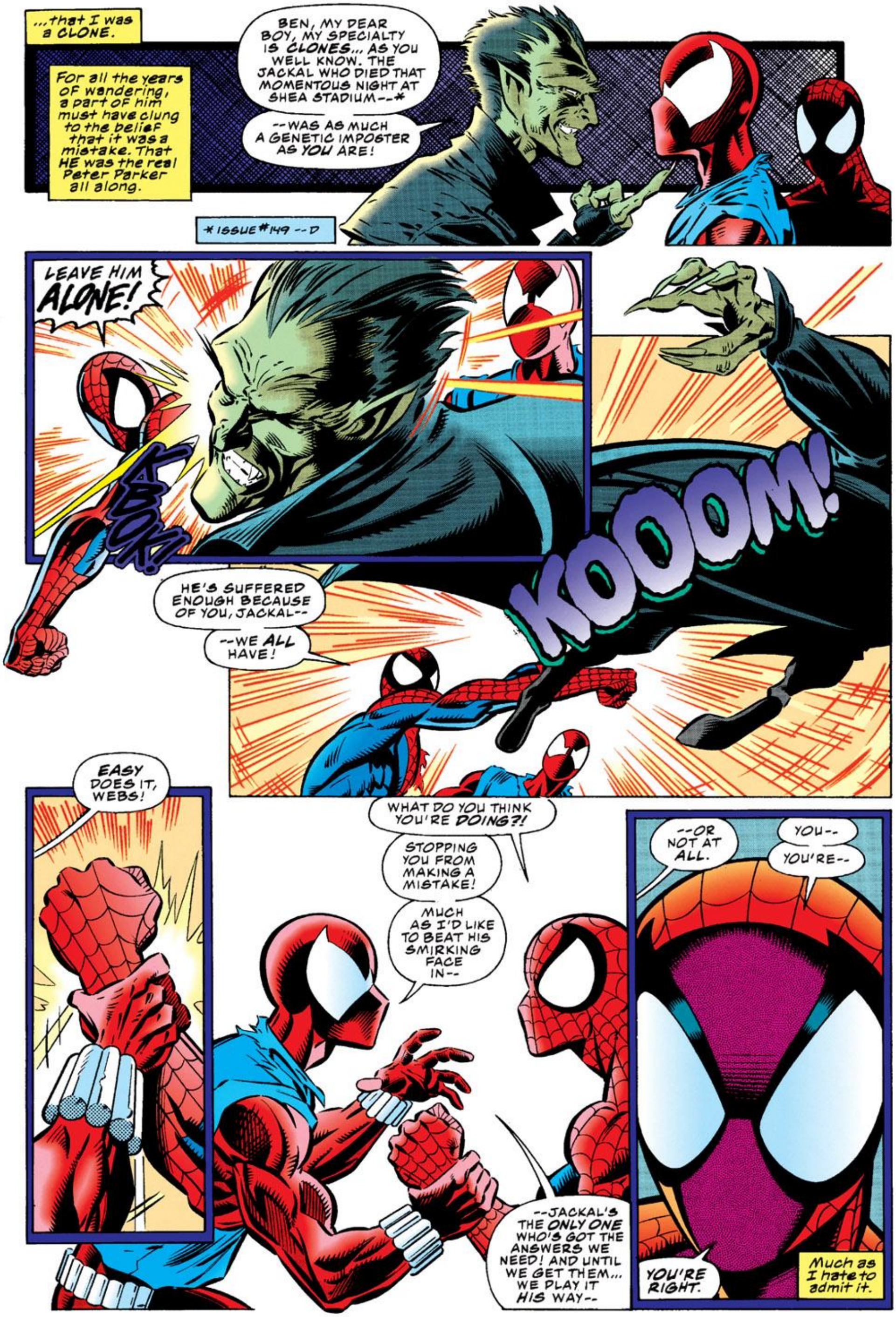
NOT IN THE LEAST.
NO PUN INTENDED.

GOOD. NOW IF I MAY HAVE MY JACKET?

I HAD IT DRY-CLEANED WHILE YOU WERE IN THE CELLULAR REGENERATION TANK, SIR.
HOW CONSIDERATE. NOW IF YOU'D JUST--

OH, MY. I FORGOT ABOUT YOU TWO.
LOOK AT YOU-- FISTS AT THE READY... JAWS CLENCHED--
--YOU YOUNG SCALAWAGS JUST LIVE TO PUNCH AND HIT, DON'T YOU?

NOT HAPPY UNLESS THERE'S SOMEONE TO DROP A BUILDING ON OR WRAP A LAMP-POST AROUND!
WELL, I'M SORRY TO SAY THAT YOU MIS-UNDERSTAND ME. I HAVE NEITHER THE DESIRE NOR THE MOTIVATION TO FIGHT WITH YOU!
THAT LITTLE DEMON-STRATION WHEN I CAME OUT OF THE TANK WAS MORE FOR MY BENEFIT THAN YOURS!
YOU SEE, I'VE SPENT THE PAST FIVE YEARS IN THERE, GENETICALLY RE-STRUCTURING MY BODY. RE-GROWING IT, IF YOU WILL... FROM THE ORIGINAL CELLULAR MATRIX.
SO, NO... TO ANSWER YOUR UNSPOKEN QUESTION... I'M NOT A CLONE--
--I'M THE REAL McCOY... JUST NEW AND IMPROVED!
IT'S NOT POSSIBLE!
NOW THAT'S AN IDIOTIC STATEMENT-- COMING FROM A FULLY-FUNCTIONING CLONE!
Y'KNOW, BOYS... I WAS MONITORING YOU THE WHOLE TIME I WAS TANKED UP.
WELL, WITH A LITTLE TIME OUT FOR CNN AND THE PLAYBOY CHANNEL!
QUITE AN INTERESTING HALF A DECADE YOU'VE HAD!
BUT I WANT TO HEAR ABOUT IT ALL IN DETAIL. THAT'S WHY I'VE SUMMONED YOU BACK HERE.
Y'SEE, WHEN LAST WE MET I SURREPTITIOUSLY PROGRAMMED YOU BOYS TO RETURN HERE WHEN I REAWAKENED.
THOUGHT WE COULD ENJOY A HEART-FELT LITTLE FAMILY REUNION! PROFESSOR WARREN AND HIS TWO SONS!
SWELL IDEA FOR A SIT-COM, DON'T YOU THINK? "MY TWO SONS"?
YOU'RE NOT WARREN! YOU CAN'T BE! WARREN IS--
WARREN IS DEAD? ;sigh; DIDN'T JACK GO OVER ALL THIS WITH YOU?
Scarlet sounds angry... scared. And I don't blame him. I would be, TOO, if the Jackal had just told me, in no uncertain terms...

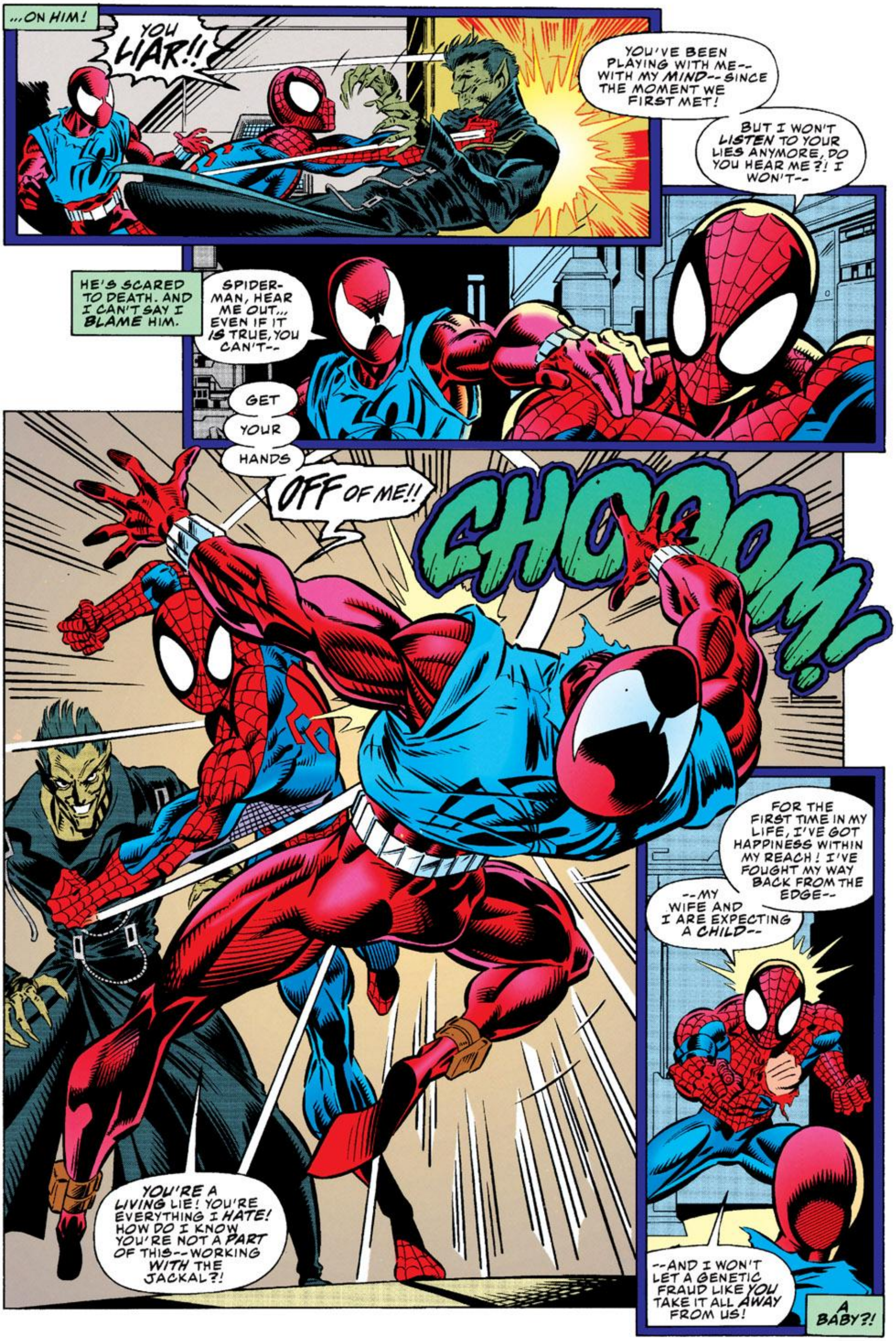

...that I was a CLONE.
For all the years of wandering, a part of him must have clung to the belief that it was a mistake. That HE was the real Peter Parker all along.
BEN, MY DEAR BOY, MY SPECIALTY IS CLONES... AS YOU WELL KNOW. THE JACKAL WHO DIED THAT MOMENTOUS NIGHT AT SHEA STADIUM--*
--WAS AS MUCH A GENETIC IMPOSTER AS YOU ARE!
* ISSUE #149 -- D
LEAVE HIM ALONE!
KBOK!
KOOOOM!
HE'S SUFFERED ENOUGH BECAUSE OF YOU, JACKAL--
--WE ALL HAVE!
EASY DOES IT, WEBS!
WHAT DO YOU THINK YOU'RE DOING?!
STOPPING YOU FROM MAKING A MISTAKE!
MUCH AS I'D LIKE TO BEAT HIS SMIRKING FACE IN--
--JACKAL'S THE ONLY ONE WHO'S GOT THE ANSWERS WE NEED! AND UNTIL WE GET THEM... WE PLAY IT HIS WAY--
--OR NOT AT ALL.
YOU--
YOU'RE--
YOU'RE RIGHT.
Much as I hate to admit it.

HOW NICE... MY BOYS ARE LEARNING FROM EACH OTHER-- JUST LIKE CHIP AND ERNIE! A SHAME MY OTHER CHILDREN AREN'T QUITE SO... ADAPTABLE.
ALAS, POOR GUARDIAN... I KNEW HIM WELL, HORATIO!
LOOK AT HIM... A MASSIVE, MISSHAPEN, MISUNDERSTOOD MONSTER--
I LOVE ALLITERATION, DON'T YOU?
--WHO MET HIS DEATH WITHOUT EVER ONCE FINDING THE ANSWER TO THAT MOST PRIMAL OF QUESTIONS:
WHO AM I?
THE JOKE OF IT IS-- WHO HE WAS... WAS PETER PARKER!
AND SO, BELIEVE IT OR NOT, IS HE!
BROTHERS, BOUND AT THE DNA! CLONES, ONE AND ALL!
WHAT ARE YOU BABBLING ABOUT?
WHAT I'M BABBLING ABOUT IS THIS: CREATION IS AN ONGOING PROCESS... FULL OF TRIAL AND ERROR. EVEN GOD HIMSELF DIDN'T MAKE THE WORLD IN A DAY.
JACK AND THE GUARDIAN WERE AMONG MY EARLIEST EXPERIMENTS. HORRIBLY BOTCHED ATTEMPTS TO BRING FORTH A PETER PARKER CLONE.
THEY SUFFERED PHYSICAL DEFORMITY, MENTAL IMPAIRMENT. I NEVER COULD INFUSE THEM WITH THE PROPER BALANCE OF EMOTION, INTELLECT, AND MEMORY--
--SO I WIPED THEIR MINDS CLEAN, REPROGRAMMED THEM AS THE PROTECTORS OF MY LITTLE MOUNTAIN RETREAT... THEN PUT THEM IN THE FREEZER--
--TO AWAIT THE RETURN OF MY MORE SUCCESSFUL EXPERIMENTS.
YOUR APPEARANCE ON THE MOUNTAIN, SCARLET SPIDER--
AND I MUST SAY I AGREE WITH YOU, THAT'S A PERFECTLY LUDICROUS NAME!
--REACTIVATED THEM.

UNFORTUNATELY, THE POOR THINGS JUST AREN'T BUILT TO LAST.
ALL MY PROTOTYPES EVENTUALLY DEVELOP A DEGENERATION FACTOR THAT FIRST DETERIORATES--

--THEN DESTROYS THEM.
ARE YOU SAYING THAT MY CLONE IS GOING TO EVENTUALLY--
YOUR CLONE? OH, THAT'S RICH! YOU REALLY HAVEN'T BEEN LISTENING, HAVE YOU?
OR MAYBE-- YOU'VE CHOSEN NOT TO LISTEN!
STOP TALKING IN CIRCLES AND GET TO THE POINT!
DO YOU REALLY KNOW WHO YOU ARE... PETER?
DOES ANY MAN TRULY KNOW?
WHAT IF I WERE TO TELL YOU THAT, IN THE CHAMBER BEHIND ME, IS THE BODY OF THE TRUE PETER PARKER? PRESERVED, IN A STATE OF SUSPENDED ANIMATION, FOR FIVE LONG YEARS?
WHAT IF I WERE TO TELL YOU THAT NOT ONE, BUT BOTH OF YOU--

--ARE CLONES?!
BOTH OF US?
CAN IT BE TRUE?
IN A STRANGE WAY, IT ACTUALLY MAKES MY PREDICAMENT A LITTLE EASIER... LESS LONELY. BUT I DON'T THINK IT'S HAVING THE SAME EFFECT...

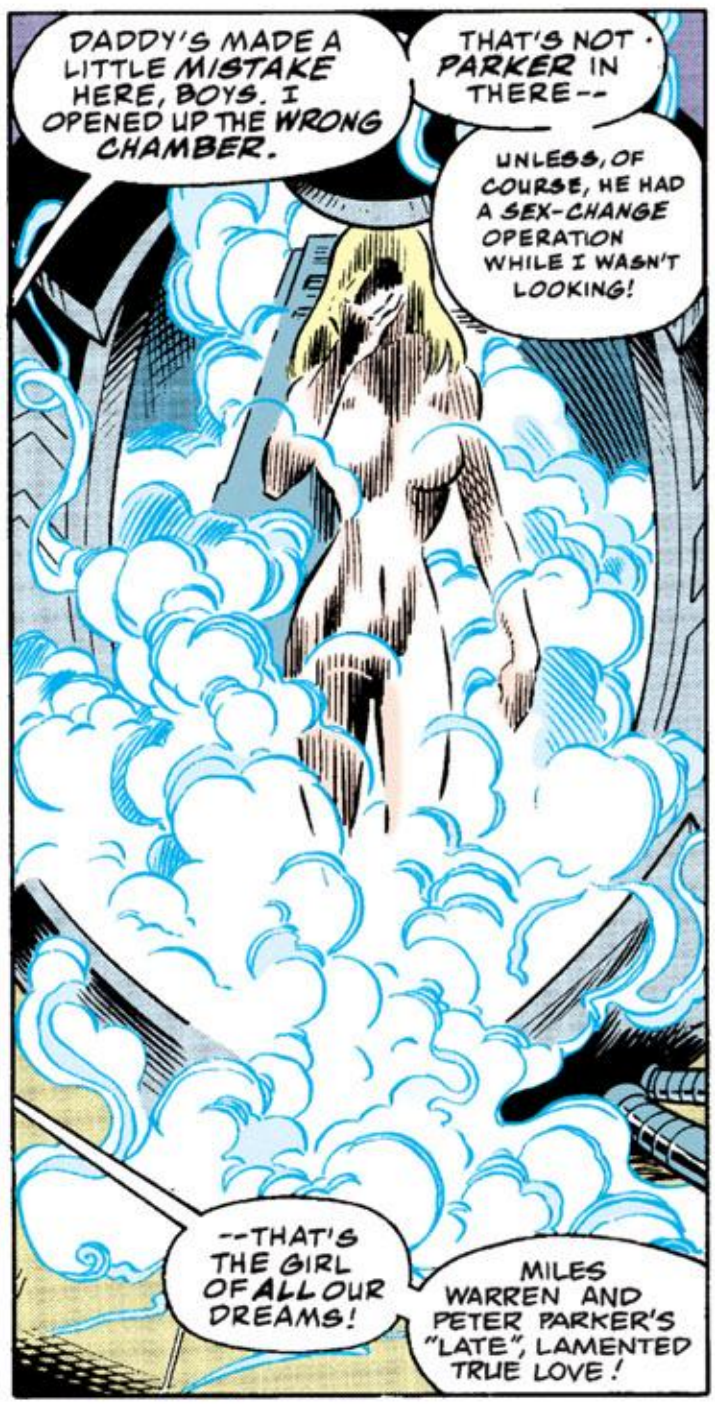

...ON HIM!
YOU LIAR!!
YOU'VE BEEN PLAYING WITH ME-- WITH MY MIND-- SINCE THE MOMENT WE FIRST MET!
BUT I WON'T LISTEN TO YOUR LIES ANYMORE, DO YOU HEAR ME?! I WON'T--
HE'S SCARED TO DEATH. AND I CAN'T SAY I BLAME HIM.
SPIDER-MAN, HEAR ME OUT... EVEN IF IT IS TRUE, YOU CAN'T--
GET YOUR HANDS OFF OF ME!!
CHOOOM!
YOU'RE A LIVING LIE! YOU'RE EVERYTHING I HATE! HOW DO I KNOW YOU'RE NOT A PART OF THIS--WORKING WITH THE JACKAL?!
FOR THE FIRST TIME IN MY LIFE, I'VE GOT HAPPINESS WITHIN MY REACH! I'VE FOUGHT MY WAY BACK FROM THE EDGE--
--MY WIFE AND I ARE EXPECTING A CHILD--
--AND I WON'T LET A GENETIC FRAUD LIKE YOU TAKE IT ALL AWAY FROM US!
A BABY?!

THEY'RE GOING TO HAVE A BABY?
YOU KNOW WHAT YOUR PROBLEM IS, WEBS? YOU'RE AFRAID TO FACE THE TRUTH!
AFRAID YOU MIGHT TURN OUT TO BE JUST AS MUCH OF A FAKE AS I AM!
I'M NOT AFRAID OF ANYTHING!
VENOM TRIED TO BREAK ME... AND I CAME BACK!

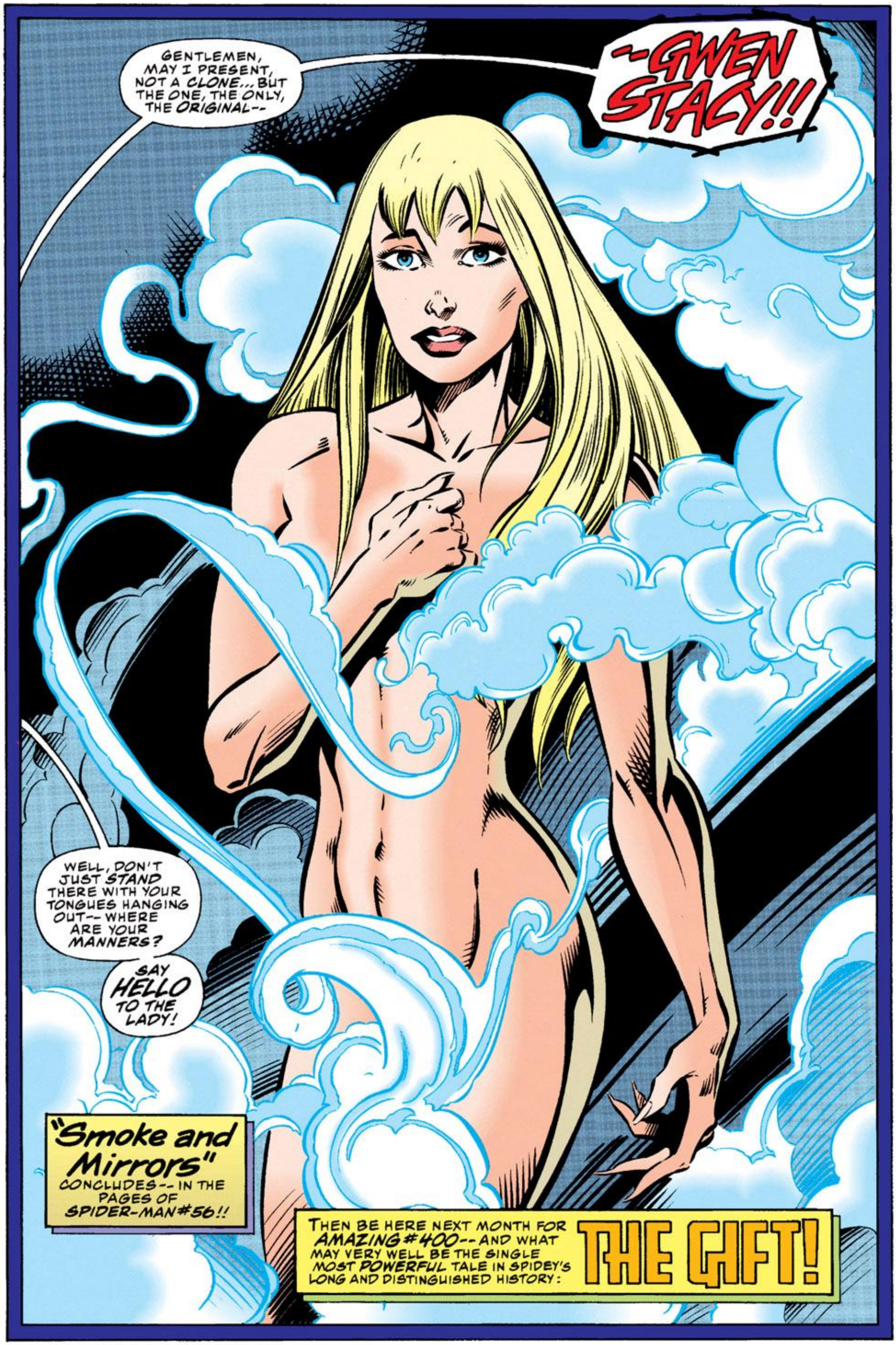
THE GREEN GOBLIN DRAGGED ME DOWN INTO MADNESS... AND I CAME BACK!
KRAVEN THE HUNTER BURIED ME ALIVE--
--AND I CAME BACK!
DO YOU REALLY THINK I'M AFRAID OF ANYTHING YOU TWO CAN DO?!
COME ON, JACKAL... OR WHOEVER YOU ARE... IF YOU'VE GOT PROOF-- LET'S SEE IT!
LET'S SEE IT!
I DIDN'T MEAN TO GOAD HIM ON LIKE THAT! BUT WHEN I HEARD HIM SAY THAT MARY JANE WAS EXPECTING HIS CHILD... I JUST LOST IT. THE IDEA THAT HE'S GOT EVERYTHING I'VE EVER WANTED... A FAMILY... CHILDREN--!

SO, IT'S PROOF YOU WANT, eh?
WELL, YOU SHALL HAVE IT!

BEHOLD! THE CRYOGENIC MISTS LIFT! THE SLEEPER AWAKENS! THE--
WHOOPS.
"WHOOPS"?


DADDY'S MADE A LITTLE MISTAKE HERE, BOYS. I OPENED UP THE WRONG CHAMBER.
THAT'S NOT PARKER IN THERE--
UNLESS, OF COURSE, HE HAD A SEX-CHANGE OPERATION WHILE I WASN'T LOOKING!
--THAT'S THE GIRL OF ALL OUR DREAMS!
MILES WARREN AND PETER PARKER'S "LATE", LAMENTED TRUE LOVE!

TRY TO KEEP THOSE HORMONES IN CHECK, KIDS-- BECAUSE YOU'RE ABOUT TO GET THE SHOCK OF YOUR PSEUDO-LIVES!


GENTLEMEN, MAY I PRESENT, NOT A CLONE... BUT THE ONE, THE ONLY, THE ORIGINAL--
--GWEN STACY!!
WELL, DON'T JUST STAND THERE WITH YOUR TONGUES HANGING OUT-- WHERE ARE YOUR MANNERS?
SAY HELLO TO THE LADY!
"Smoke and Mirrors" CONCLUDES-- IN THE PAGES OF SPIDER-MAN #56!!
THEN BE HERE NEXT MONTH FOR AMAZING #400-- AND WHAT MAY VERY WELL BE THE SINGLE MOST POWERFUL TALE IN SPIDEY'S LONG AND DISTINGUISHED HISTORY:
THE GIFT!