MARVEL COMICS 2
JAN #4
SPIDER-GIRL
BATTLES THE DEADLY
DRAGON KING!
AND HE'S NOT EVEN HER BIGGEST PROBLEM!
MAY'S PARENTS HAVE FINALLY LEARNED ABOUT HER DUAL IDENTITY-- AND THEY'RE NOT HAPPY!
HOO-BOY WHAT'S A SPIDER-GIRL TO DO?! (THE ANSWER'S INSIDE!)
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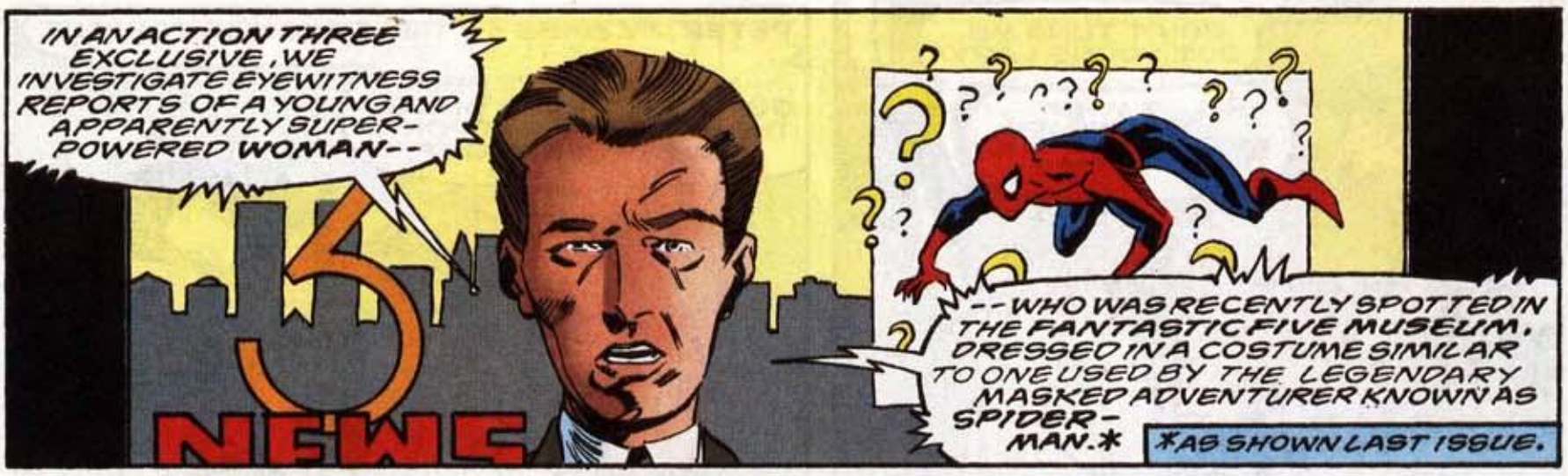


Stan Lee PRESENTS THE STUNNING SPIDER-GIRL...

"DEADLY IS THE DRAGON KING!"

"WHO IS THIS NEW WEB-SWINGER?" THE REPORTER ASKS, "IS SHE A HERO OR A MENACE?"

YOU, OF COURSE, COULD EASILY RESPOND TO HIS QUERIES, BECAUSE YOU ARE MAY "MAYDAY" PARKER, THE DAUGHTER OF THE ORIGINAL WALL-CRAWLER --

-- WHO IS EVEN NOW BOMBARDING YOU WITH MORE QUESTIONS THAT YOU DARE NOT ANSWER.

WHAT'S WRONG WITH YOU, MAY?

HOW LONG HAS THIS BEEN GOING ON?

WHAT POSSESSED YOU TO ASSUME THE IDENTITY OF *SPIDER-GIRL* WITHOUT EVEN DISCUSSING IT WITH YOUR MOTHER OR ME?

SPIDER-MAN

YOU WISH YOU HAD AN EXPLANATION THAT WOULD CALM YOUR FATHER, AND EASE HIS UNSPOKEN FEARS--

--BUT YOU'LL ONLY MAKE THINGS CONSIDERABLY WORSE BY REVEALING THAT YOU'VE BEEN SECRETLY SLIPPING OUT EACH NIGHT, FOR THE PAST WEEKS, TO DO YOUR SPIDER-THING.

TOM DeFALCO WRITER • PAT OLLIFFE PENCILER • AL WILLIAMSON INKER • JANICE CHIANG LETTERER • BOB SHAREN COLORIST • BOB HARRAS CHIEF

SPIDER-GIRL™ Vol. 1, No. 4, January, 1999. Published by MARVEL COMICS. Joseph Calamari, President. Stan Lee, Publisher. Shirrel Rhoades, Executive VP, Publishing. OFFICE OF PUBLICATION: 387 PARK AVENUE SOUTH, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10016. **Application to mail Periodicals Postage Rates is pending at New York, NY and at Additional Mailing Offices.** Copyright © 1998 Marvel Characters, Inc. All rights reserved. Price $1.99 per copy in the U.S. and $2.80 in Canada. GST #R127032852. No similarity between any of the names, characters, persons, and/or institutions in this magazine with those of any living or dead person or institution is intended, and any such similarity which may exist is purely coincidental. This periodical may not be sold except by authorized dealers and is sold subject to the condition that it shall not be sold or distributed with any part of its cover or markings removed, nor in a mutilated condition. SPIDER-GIRL (including all prominent characters featured in this issue and the distinctive likenesses thereof) is a trademark of MARVEL CHARACTERS, INC. **POSTMASTER: SEND ADDRESS CHANGES TO SPIDER-GIRL, c/o MARVEL DIRECT MARKETING CORP./SUBSCRIPTION DEPT. P.O. BOX 1979 DANBURY, CT. 06813-1979. TELEPHONE # (203) 743-5331.** Printed in the U.S.A.

DON'T TUNE ME OUT, YOUNG LADY!
I...I'M NOT IGNORING YOU, DADDY...I-IT'S JUST THAT I...uhhhh...
YOU THINK BEING A SUPER HERO IS SOME KIND OF GAME?
IT COST ME A LEG AND ALMOST MY LIFE!

PETER, PLEASE--! THERE'S NO NEED TO SHOUT.
YOU TWO HAVE BEEN GOING AT IT EVER SINCE THE FIRST NEWS REPORTS CAME IN LAST NIGHT.
IT'S TIME YOU WENT TO WORK, AND MAY GOT READY FOR SCHOOL.

MAYBE YOU'RE RIGHT, MARY JANE.
WE DO NEED A BREAK FROM EACH OTHER.
BUT I INTEND TO FINISH THIS CONVERSATION WHEN I GET HOME.
THANKS FOR STEPPING IN, MOM.
THE WAY HE WAS ROLLING, I THOUGHT WE'D BE STUCK HERE ALL DAY.

DO YOU BLAME HIM FOR BEING SO UPSET--?!
YOU ACTED VERY IRRESPONSIBLY!
HEY! IT'S NOT LIKE I'M DOING ANYTHING THAT HE WASN'T AT MY AGE!

THE SITUATION WAS TOTALLY DIFFERENT!
HE HAD A GOOD REASON TO BECOME SPIDER-MAN.
RIGHT! RIGHT! AND I'M JUST A LITTLE GIRL PLAYING DRESS-UP!
I SHOULD HAVE KNOWN YOU'D TAKE HIS SIDE!

"HE HAD A GOOD REASON TO BECOME SPIDER-MAN."
MIDTOWN HIGH SCHOOL

SURE YOU THINK HIS UNCLE DIED BECAUSE HE FAILED TO STOP A BURGLAR.
BUT GUILT SHOULDN'T BE THE ONLY ACCEPTABLE MOTIVE FOR DONNING A COSTUME.

COACH THOMPSON MADE ME RUN EXTRA LAPS YESTERDAY, AND I'M SURE IT'S 'CAUSE HE HEARD I WAS PICKING ON YOU, YAMA!
LIKE USUAL, MOOSE, YOU JUMPED TO THE WRONG CONCLUSION.
35
WHY SHOULD I BELIEVE A RAT LIKE YOU?
TELL ME WHY I SHOULD CARE IF YOU DON'T!
UH-OH.

JIMMY AND MOOSE ARE FUSSING, AGAIN.
YOUR FIRST REACTION IS TO SLIP BETWEEN THEM, AND TRY PLAYING THE PEACEMAKER...
BUT THAT TRICK NEVER WORKS.

MAYBE IT'S TIME YOU LEARNED TO MIND YOUR OWN BUSINESS--

--AND ALLOWED NATURE TO FOLLOW ITS OWN COURSE!
THIS MAY BE DIFFICULT FOR YOU TO GRASP, BUT I'M NOT AFRAID OF YOU!
REALLY?

WELL, MAYBE I OUGHT TO GIVE YOU A REASON TO RETHINK YOUR POSITION, MISTER WISE MOUTH!
SPWAK!
UFFT!

A-ARE YOU ALL RIGHT, SIR?

I-IT WAS AN ACCIDENT! I'M REAL SORRY I BUMPED INTO YOU, MISTER... errr...

HACKMUTTER... CARLTON T. HACKMUTTER... AS IF YOU CARED!

I'VE BEEN SWEEPING THESE FLOORS FOR MORE YEARS THAN YOU'VE BEEN ALIVE, AND YOU PUNKS ARE ALL ALIKE.

YOU HAVE NO RESPECT FOR ME... THIS SCHOOL...OR ANYTHING ELSE! GO ON! WASTE SOME TEACHER'S TIME!

LATER, YAMA!

BUT I REALLY WANT TO APOLOGIZE.

YOU HEARD ME--GET OUT OF MY SIGHT!

JUVENILE DELINQUENTS-- EVERY LAST ONE OF 'EM!

BASEMENT

THIS JOB WOULDN'T BE SO BAD IF IT WASN'T FOR THE LOUSY STUDENTS.

THEY FILL THE HALLS WITH GARBAGE AND TREAT ME LIKE I WAS ONE OF THE OLD FIXTURES.

I HATE 'EM! HATE 'EM ALL!

IN FACT, I WOULD'VE QUIT YEARS AGO IF I DIDN'T NEED THE MONEY--

--TO KEEP MY COLLECTION CURRENT!

SOME OF THESE PIECES ARE REAL EXPENSIVE!

LIKE THE MEDALLION! A ONE-OF-A-KIND PIECE ALL THE WAY FROM ANCIENT CHINA!

THE DEALER EVEN TRIED TO CONVINCE ME IT POSSESSED CERTAIN MYSTICAL PROPERTIES, BUT I KNEW THAT WAS JUST A CON TO UP THE PRICE.

DRAGON

YOUR PARENTS RAISED YOU TO HAVE A REAL SENSE OF RESPONSIBILITY.

AND YET, IN A MISGUIDED EFFORT TO PROTECT YOU, THEY'RE NOW TRYING TO CONVINCE YOU TO TURN YOUR BACK ON YOUR POWERS--

--AND THE POTENTIAL GOOD YOU MIGHT ACCOMPLISH!

PARENTS-- GO FIGURE!

EARTH TO PARKER-- HAVE YOU HEARD A SINGLE WORD I'VE SAID?

Uhhh...SURE, COURTNEY, YOU WERE TALKING ABOUT JIMMY... LIKE USUAL.

WE HAVE TO DO SOMETHING BEFORE MOOSE FLATTENS HIM.

DO WE, COURT?

I'M NOT SURE WE HAVE ANY RESPONSIBILITY HERE.

YOU'RE RIGHT, PARKER! THOSE BOYS WILL EVENTUALLY HAVE TO SETTLE THINGS IN THEIR OWN WAY.

YOU HAVE OTHER, MORE IMPORTANT RESPONSIBILITIES ON YOUR PLATE.

WE MISSED YOU AT YESTERDAY'S BASKETBALL PRACTICE, MISS PARKER.

Uhhh...SORRY, COACH THOMPSON... I WASN'T FEELING VERY WELL!

I HOPE IT WASN'T ANYTHING SERIOUS. WE'VE GOT A BIG GAME THIS FRIDAY, AND I HAVE SOME NEW PLAYS I WANT TO TRY OUT.

I ASSUME I'LL SEE YOU ON THE COURT LATER.

I...I'LL BE THERE, COACH.

YOUR TEAM'S COUNTING ON YOU--

--BUT THEY DON'T KNOW ABOUT YOUR SPIDER-LIKE POWERS.

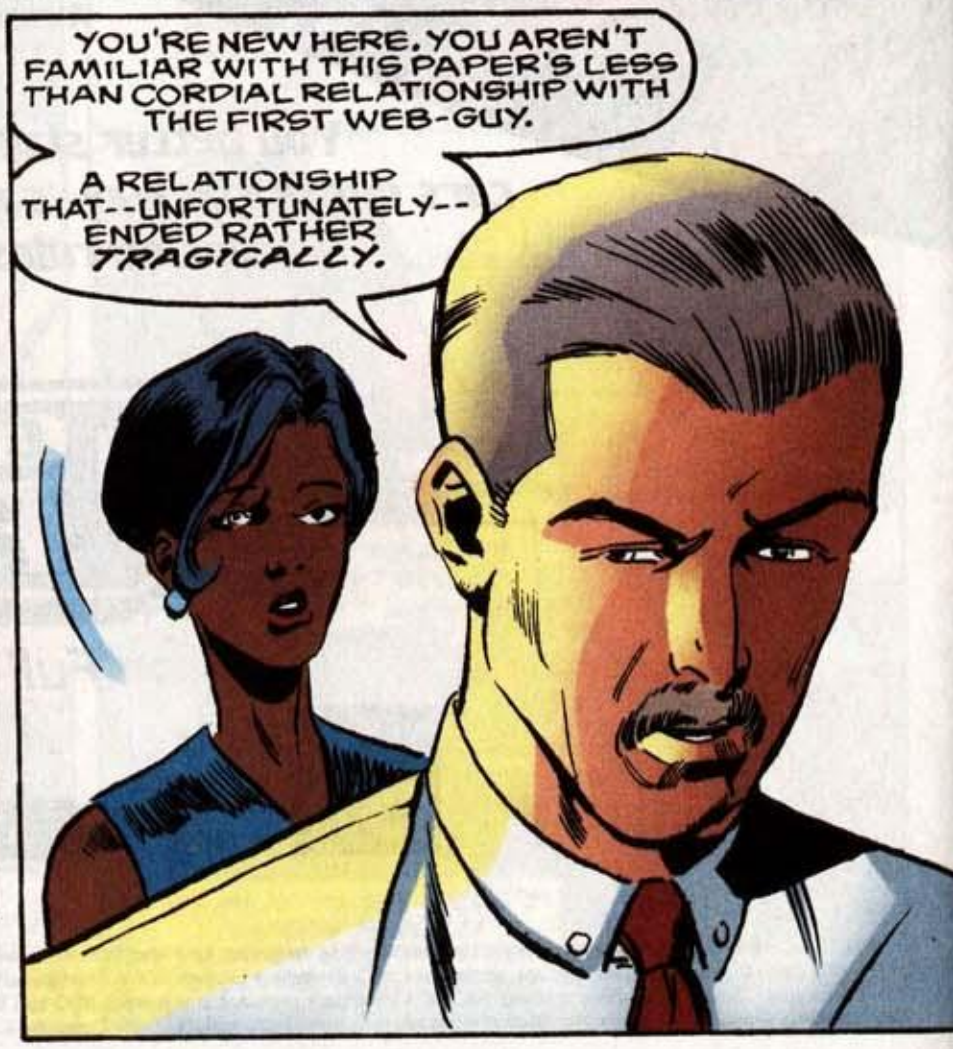
THE TELEVISION AND NET NEWS ARE ALL OVER THIS SPIDER-GIRL STORY.

BASED ON OUR HISTORY WITH THE ORIGINAL SPIDER-MAN I BELIEVE THE BUGLE HAS A PROPRIETARY INTEREST IN THIS NEW WALL-CRAWLER--

--AND I EXPECT RESULTS!

I'VE ALREADY ASSIGNED MS. MOORE TO THE STORY, CHIEF.

THEN WHY IS SHE HERE... WHEN SHE SHOULD BE DIGGING UP AN EXCLUSIVE FOR TOMORROW'S FRONT PAGE?!



MAYBE YOU CAN'T CONFIDE IN YOUR PARENTS, BUT THERE'S ALWAYS YOUR UNCLE PHIL.

I'M SO GLAD YOU WERE FREE FOR LUNCH.

SO AM I, KIDDO! YOU WANT YOUR USUAL--?

WHY MESS WITH SUCCESS?

ONE PLAIN. THE OTHER WITH EVERYTHING.

HEAVY ON THE ONIONS!

YOU RECENTLY LEARNED THAT PHIL URICH, YOUR DAD'S LAB ASSISTANT, IS ALSO A FORMER COSTUMED HERO--

--WHO ACTUALLY SEEMS TO MISS HIS GLORY DAYS.

I ASSUME THIS IMPROMPTU LUNCH HAS SOMETHING TO DO WITH THIS SPIDER-GIRL HOOPLA.

WHY? DID MY FATHER SAY SOMETHING?

YOUR DAD? HA!

HE GOES OUT OF HIS WAY TO AVOID ANY MENTION OF SUPER HEROES.

BEEN THAT WAY FOR YEARS!

ALL SUPER HEROES... OR JUST THOSE WITH "SPIDER" IN THEIR NAMES?

LOOK, I'VE KNOWN YOUR FATHER A LONG TIME.

HE'S TOLD ME CERTAIN THINGS THAT I'M NOT AT LIBERTY TO DISCUSS BEHIND HIS BACK.

THE SAME WOULD APPLY TO YOU... IF YOU EVER CARE TO CONFIDE IN ME.

I... I'LL KEEP THAT IN MIND.

DOES HE KNOW ABOUT THIS MEETING?

NAH! HE TOOK OFF BEFORE YOU PHONED.

AN OLD FRIEND GAVE HIM A SURPRISE CALL, AND INVITED HIM TO LUNCH...

JOHN STORM, THE LEADER OF THE FANTASTIC FIVE!

YOU'RE LOOKING WELL.
OF COURSE.
HOW'S THE HERO BIZ?
SAME AS USUAL...

ALTHOUGH THE MEDIA KEEPS TRYING TO STIR UP TROUBLE BETWEEN MY TEAM AND THOSE NEW AVENGERS.
UHHH... YOU WANT TO BRING UP THE ELEPHANT IN THE CORNER, OR SHALL I?

YOU MEAN SPIDER-GIRL?

I WAS SURPRISED WHEN SHE FIRST SHOWED UP AT THE FF MUSEUM -- COULDN'T FIGURE WHO SHE WAS OR WHERE SHE CAME FROM.
THEN I REMEMBERED YOU HAD A DAUGHTER ABOUT THE RIGHT AGE.

YOU MUST FEEL PROUD. I STILL REMEMBER THE LOOK ON REED'S FACE WHEN FRANKLIN OFFICIALLY JOINED OUR TEAM.
OF COURSE. THAT WAS BEFORE THE ACCIDENT THAT...
WELLLLL... YOU KNOW!

FUNNY TO THINK YOU AND I WERE ABOUT THE SAME AGE WHEN WE FIRST STARTED OUT.
WHERE HAS ALL THE TIME GONE?
IN A FEW SHORT YEARS, MY SON WILL BE READY FOR HIS FIRST COSTUME...

I HOPE LYJA AND I HANDLE IT AS WELL AS YOU AND MARY JANE SEEM TO BE DOING!

YOUR DAD'S HAVING A SIT-DOWN WITH THE LEGENDARY LEADER OF THE FANTASTIC FIVE?

THERE WAS A TIME--NOT SO LONG AGO--WHEN YOU WOULD HAVE BEEN AWED BY SUCH A THOUGHT, FILLED WITH EXCITEMENT AND PRIDE.

PARANOIA IS ALL YOU FEEL NOW.

YO, GIRLFRIEND! DRAG YOUR SORRY SELF OVER HERE!

I'VE ALREADY EATEN, DAVIDA.

SO KEEP ME COMPANY WHILE I CHOW. WHAT'S WITH YOU TODAY, ANYWAY? YOU'RE JUST TOO ALANIS MORRISETTE FOR WORDS.

YOU RIDING THE MONTHLY BLAHS, OR IS BRAD MILLER ROCKING YOUR WORLD?

BRAD...

HE'S AN ENTIRELY DIFFERENT KIND OF PROBLEM.

BAD ENOUGH HE BARELY NOTICES YOU...

HE USUALLY TREATS YOU LIKE ONE OF THE GUYS WHEN HE DOES!

WITH A LITTLE EFFORT, YOU MIGHT BE ABLE TO FIX THAT AND--

CRASH!

OH, NO!

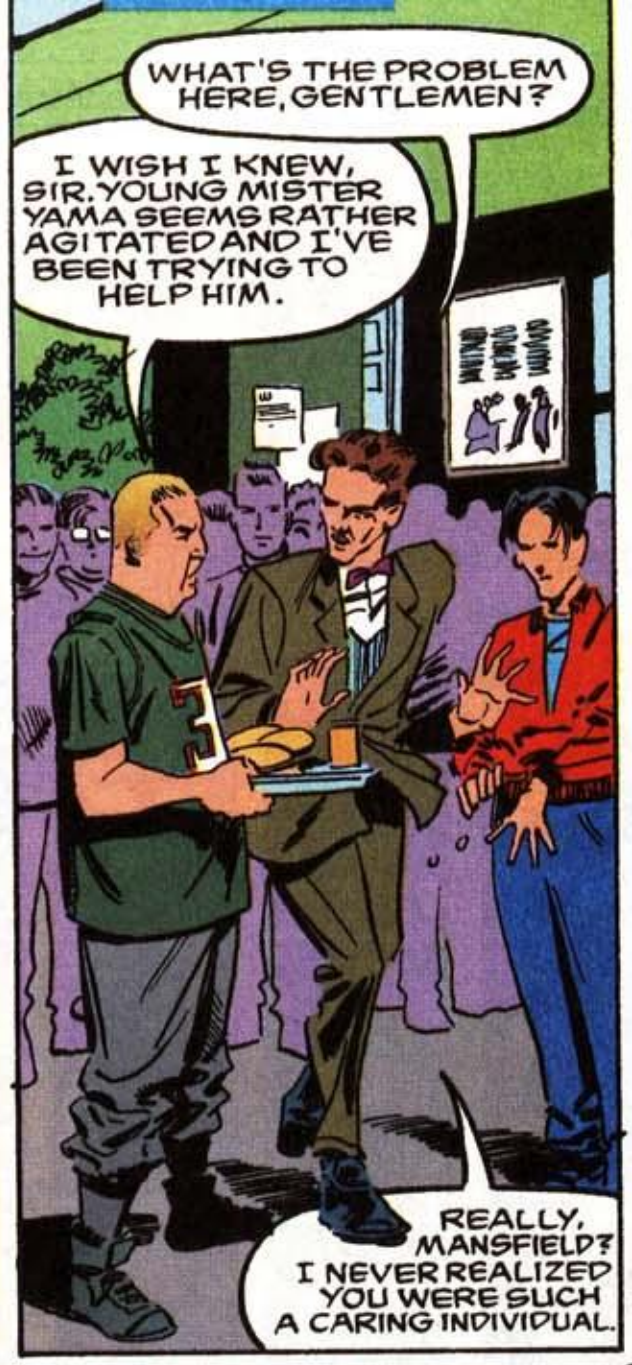
THEY'RE AT IT AGAIN!

OOPS! YOU REALLY SHOULD BE MORE CAREFUL, YAMA.

Y-YOU TRIPPED ME ON PURPOSE, MOOSE.

ME?! WHY WOULD I DO SUCH A THING?

DON'T PLAY INNOCENT WITH ME, YOU MISANTHROPIC MORON!
YOU REALLY SHOULD LEARN TO RELAX, YAMA.
STRESS KILLS!


WHAT'S THE PROBLEM HERE, GENTLEMEN?
I WISH I KNEW, SIR. YOUNG MISTER YAMA SEEMS RATHER AGITATED AND I'VE BEEN TRYING TO HELP HIM.
REALLY, MANSFIELD? I NEVER REALIZED YOU WERE SUCH A CARING INDIVIDUAL.

STAY AWAY FROM EACH OTHER FOR THE REST OF THE DAY, OR YOU'LL BOTH JOIN ME FOR DETENTION.
MISERABLE PUNKS!

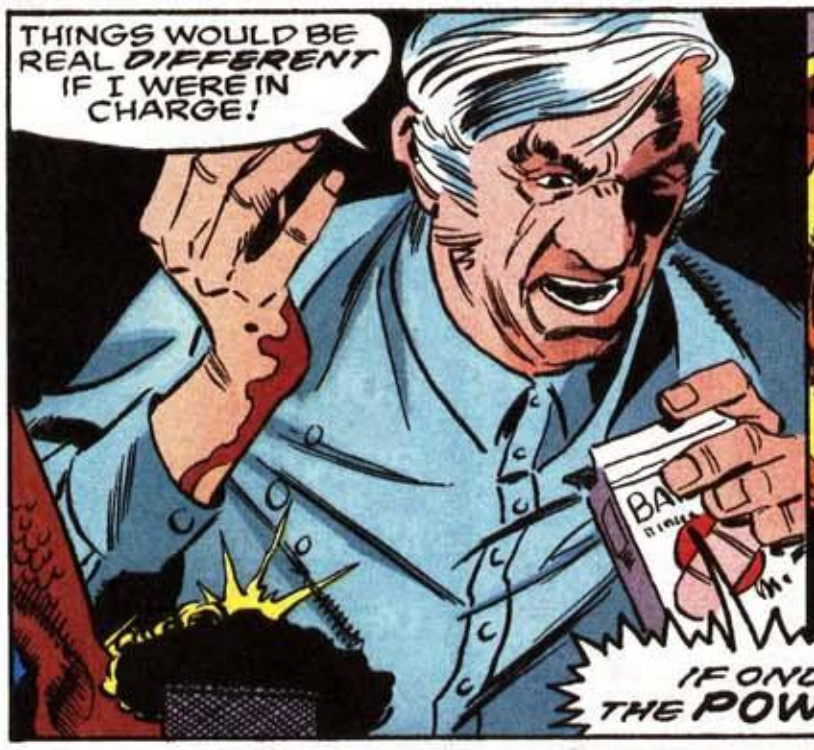
THEY MAKE A MESS, AND I'M THE ONE WHO'S STUCK CLEANING UP AFTER--
OWW!

GREAT!
JUST GREAT!

OHMIGOSH! IT LOOKS LIKE MR. HACKMUTTER CUT HIMSELF--!
MISTER WHO--?
HACKMUTTER-- THE JANITOR!
Y-YOU KNOW THAT OLD COOT'S NAME?
DON'T YOU--?

GOOD FOR NOTHING SMART-MOUTHED WISE GUYS!
I COULD BLEED TO DEATH FOR ALL THEY CARE!

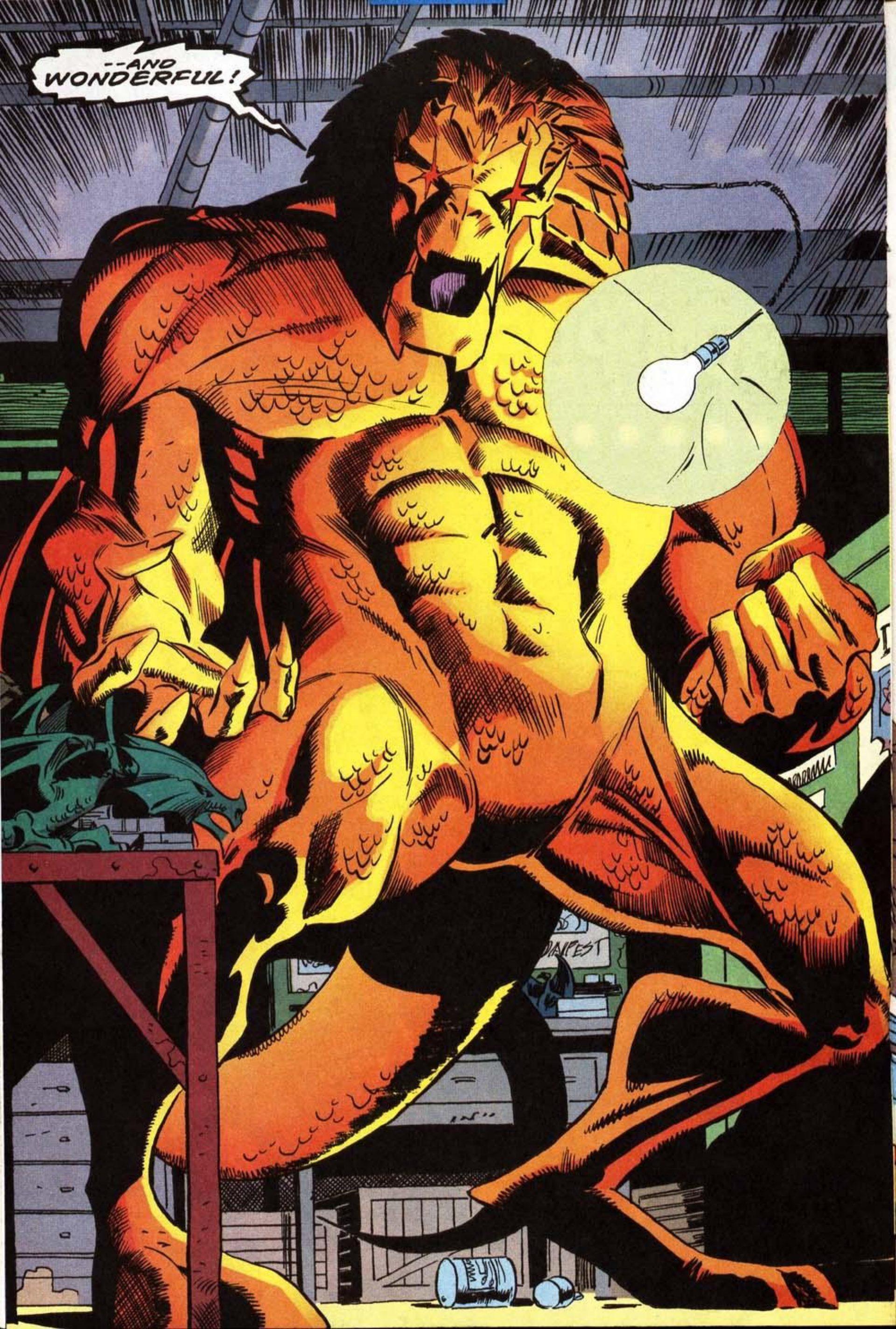
AND THE DOGGONED TEACHERS AIN'T MUCH BETTER!


THINGS WOULD BE REAL *DIFFERENT* IF I WERE IN CHARGE!
IF ONLY I HAD THE POWER TO--

UH-OH!

S-SOMETHING'S HAPPENING TO ME!

SOMETHING STRANGE--


--AND WONDERFUL!

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BULLPEN BULLETINS

ON SALE NOVEMBER 18

A-NEXT #4
Get ready to meet the CAPTAIN AMERICA of the future – AMERICAN DREAM and her DREAM TEAM: FREEBOOTER, CRIMSON CURSE, and BLUESTREAK! By TOM DeFALCO and RON FRENZ!

CAPTAIN AMERICA #13
The sparks start to fly between STEVE and SHARON, as CAP's oldest foe returns! That's right: that grinning ghoul, the RED SKULL is back and badder than ever! By MARK WAID and DOUG BRAITHWAITE!

ESSENTIAL AVENGERS TPB
At last! The first 24 issues of the original Avengers series, in one titanic volume! This is the one that no true Avengers fan can afford to miss! By STAN LEE, JACK KIRBY, DON HECK, and many more!

HEROES FOR HIRE #19
WOLVERINE guest-stars in the action-packed conclusion of the mission to Madripoor! But is LOGAN for hire? And will his price be too high? By JOHN OSTRANDER and PASCUAL FERRY!

INCREDIBLE HULK #472
A classic HULK foe from beyond the stars is about to send BRUCE BANNER on a voyage where no man has gone before! By JOE CASEY and JAVIER PULIDO!

MARVEL AUTHENTIX: AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #1
A limited edition of 300 copies, each with a one-of-a-kind cover sketch by the legendary JOHN ROMITA! By HOWARD MACKIE and JOHN BYRNE!

PUNISHER #3 of 4
Get ready for a retelling of the PUNISHER's origin that's so shocking and unpredictable, you'll think you've lost your mind! By CHRISTOPHER GOLDEN, TOM SNIEGOSKI and BERNIE WRIGHTSON!

PETER PARKER: SPIDER-MAN #1
Is the new SPIDER-MAN friend or foe? PETER PARKER is determined to find all the answers! And a new villain called the RANGER is out for blood! By HOWARD MACKIE and JOHN ROMITA JR.!

THUNDERBOLTS #22
HERCULES and ATLAS in a clash that's gonna rock both the AVENGERS and the THUNDERBOLTS! Featuring a surprise Avengers guest-star! By KURT BUSIEK and MARK BAGLEY!

UNCANNY X-MEN #364
The X-MEN must join forces with the BROTHERHOOD to battle CEREBRO – an enemy that could destroy them all! By STEVE SEAGLE and LIENEL YU!

UNION JACK #2 of 3
Jack thought he had his hands full with that vile vampire, BARON BLOOD! Now he has to deal with a lethal lady called the BARONESS! By BEN RAAB and JOHN CASSADY!

X-MAN #47
STRYFE stands triumphant in the cataclysmic conclusion of the CABLE/X-MAN crossover! The future of X-Man begins here, with ramifications that will change his life forever! By TERRY KAVANAGH and J.H. WILLIAMS!

X-MEN #83
ROGUE, GAMBIT, STORM, and NIGHTCRAWLER venture to a desolate corner of the world, where they find a guy who seems like XAVIER – but he isn't! So who is he? By JOE KELLY and ADAM KUBERT!

X-MEN: THE MANGA #20
The X-MEN journey to Europe on a desperate mission to stop the FOUR HORSEMEN of APOCALYPSE – and their teammate, ANGEL! By YUKIKAZE AMAGI!

Design by Richard Starkings and COMICRAFT/EW

ITEM! Last week, we announced the first issue of the all-new AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #1! Now get ready for lightning to strike again next week, as we unleash the first issue of PETER PARKER, SPIDER-MAN on an unsuspecting world! It's 48-pages of web-spinning excitement, written by the talented HOWARD MACKIE, with stunning art by the unbeatable team of JOHN ROMITA JR. and SCOTT HANNA! There's a new SPIDER-MAN in town, and PETER PARKER won't rest until he finds out who this impostor is! A new villain called the RANGER also makes the scene, and he's determined to kill a U.S. Senator! This sounds like a job for Spidey! But which one? With two Spider-Men running around, it's enough to make J. JONAH JAMESON's hair stand up on end! So don't miss PETER PARKER: SPIDER-MAN #1, as we launch a new era of web-slinging greatness!

ITEM! Quick! Name CAPTAIN AMERICA's greatest foe! If you said the RED SKULL, consider yourself No-Prized! The Skull has been a pain in Cap's patriotic side ever since they first clashed in the dark days of World War II! Next week, ol' Skull-Head is back in the pages of CAPTAIN AMERICA #13 – which looks like it'll be an unlucky number for the Star-Spangled Avenger! Just when things look like they may be heating up between STEVE ROGERS and SHARON CARTER, the Skull returns with a surprising new ally! Who is it? You'll have to ask Cap's creative crew, writer MARK WAID and those awesome artists, DOUG BRAITHWAITE and MARK FARMER! Or better yet – just pick up CAP #13!

ITEM! HERCULES is looking for some payback next week in THUNDERBOLTS #22 – and the target of his Olympian wrath is none other than ATLAS! It seems that a few years back, Atlas was part of the MASTERS OF EVIL group that beat the tar out of old Herc (in a story reprinted this month in the AVENGERS: UNDER SIEGE trade paperback)! Of course, that was before Atlas reformed and abandoned his evil ways! But Herc doesn't care about that – he just wants to put a hurtin' on the gargantuan hero! Writer KURT BUSIEK brings you all the blow-by-blow action, while artists MARK BAGLEY and SCOTT HANNA pull no punches in the art department! This knock-down, drag-out slugfest for the ages is only the warm-up for the AVENGERS/THUNDERBOLTS confrontation coming later this month!

ITEM! A gray September day was made a little brighter by the appearance of two superstar artists in the Marvel Bullpen! Spider-Man artists extraordinaire JOHN BYRNE and JOHN ROMITA JR. both graced our hallowed halls with their presence on the same day – a rare event indeed! These days, we keep our frantic freelancers so busy, they don't often have time to visit the Marvel offices! So it was a real treat to have both Spider-artists pop in on the same day! It was such a momentous occasion that Spidey editor RALPH MACCHIO not only showed up for work, but was only a few hours late! The prolific Mr. Byrne even worked on some arachnid art, giving the delighted Bullpen a chance to see a spectacular Spidey artist strut his stuff! (And no, there's no truth to the rumor that either of the two Johns draws while hanging from the ceiling!)

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STAN'S SOAPBOX!

Hi, Heroes!
Let's see how many questions n' answers I can squeeze into this one column today!

We'll start off with this shorty from Sandro Bucci, of Spring Valley, NY:

"Have you had a lot of acting opportunities?"

Yep, but not as many as I'd like!

Meredith McEwen of Havertown, PA touches on a sore subject here:

"How does it feel to hear 'Comics are just kid stuff'?"

Rotten! That's why I write the Soapbox – to show how erudite and cultured we are!

I'll betcha Elliot Rosen of Erial, NJ gave a lot of thought and study to this one:

"Is it true you based Spider-Man's wisecracking attitude on Bugs Bunny?"

Nah! I never even saw Bugs. Oh, by the way, ehhh, what's up, Doc?

Do you think Zack Quaintance of Glendale Hts, IL is an optician? He asks:

"Hey, Stan, how come Cyclops doesn't get 'ruby quartz' contacts?"

He can't afford 'em. But maybe if more of you bought his comic books...!

Sean "Cannonball" Mullaney of Wrightsville, PA mustn't read our credits pages:

"Do you have a nickname?"

Lots! Mainly "Stan the Man." Most of the other names I'm called aren't printable!

It's obvious that Daniel P. Florence of Cynthiana, KS is into statistics:

"How many super heroes and villains did you personally create over the years?"

Never counted 'em, Danny, but I'll betcha there must be at least two or three!

Here's a doozy from Pier Bedotto of Cuernavaca Morelos, Mexico:

"Name the last story you wrote before becoming Marvel's publisher in the early 70's?"

Haven't the foggiest, Pier, but a zingy new No-Prize to the first one who can tell me.

Dennis Cooper of Chicago, IL apparently remembers people I mention in my columns:

"What do you and your debating pal, Harlan Ellison, have to debate about?"

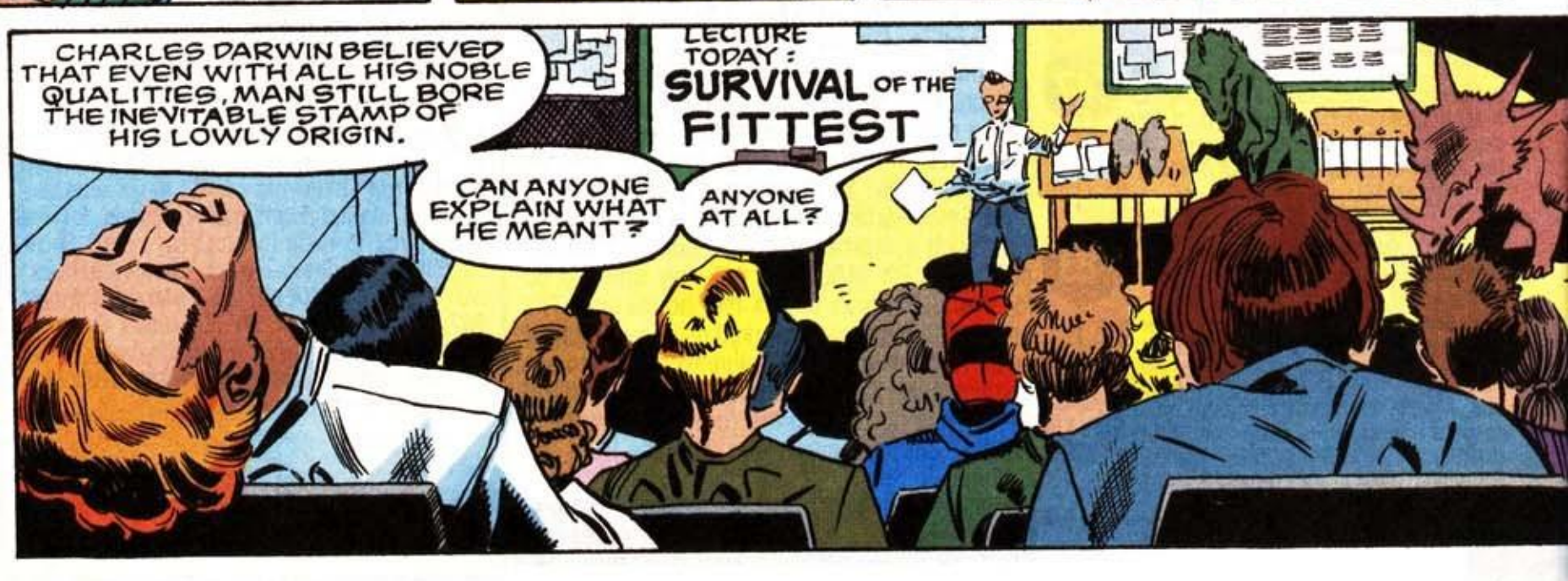
Mostly about whose name comes first when the programs are printed!

How about that?!! Eight smart letters and dopey answers in one skinny little column! Eight True Believers who have attained No-Prize status! Eight more reasons for the rest of you to think I've lost my mind! Come on, join the madness – write: *"Stan's Soapbox" c/o BULLPEN BULLETINS, Marvel Comics, 387 Park Ave. South, NY NY 10016* or e-mail me at *stanzfanz@aol.com* – and, whatever you do, never mention those addresses to anyone. DC's spies are everywhere!

Excelsior!

Stan

Stan Lee



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IT MEANS YOU HAVE A CLASS FULL OF MONKEYS!
ALTHOUGH I'M SURE CHIMPS ARE FRIENDLIER AND SMELL BETTER!
EXAMS
CLEAR OUT! YOU PUNKS AREN'T FOOLING ANYONE!
YOU DON'T DO THE ASSIGNMENTS, AND DON'T CARE ABOUT LEARNING!
T-THAT THING'S GONNA KILL US ALL, BRAD!
YOU CAN'T THINK LIKE THAT, KENNY. I'LL GET YOU OUT OF HERE! I SWEAR! I WILL!
AND WHO'S GOING TO SAVE YOU, BUDDY BOY?
THAT WOULD BE ME!
SPIDER-GIRL!

FORGET ABOUT IT! THOSE DREAMS DIED LONG AGO! AFTER A LIFETIME OF BEING DISREGARDED AND DISRESPECTED--

--IT'S TIME FOR A LITTLE PAYBACK!

SWAPP!

IF I CAN'T HAVE ADMIRATION, I'LL SETTLE FOR FEAR!

ugmmm!

MOOSE, LOOK! GODZILLA JUST FLATTENED SPIDER-GIRL!

WE'VE GOTTA HELP HER!

GODZILLA?

GODZILLA?!

COULD YOU BE ANY MORE OBVIOUS WITH YOUR INSULTS, PUNK?

KWAKK!

HIT THE FLOOR, YAMA!

THAT FREAK'S TRYING TO SPLATTER YOU!

MOOSE SAVED JIMMY?

MOOSE?!

THE DRAGON KING MUST HAVE HIT YOU HARDER THAN YOU THOUGHT!

THWIPP!

TIME TO RETURN THE FAVOR BY SHUTTING DOWN HIS DESTRUCTIVE EYE BEAMS.

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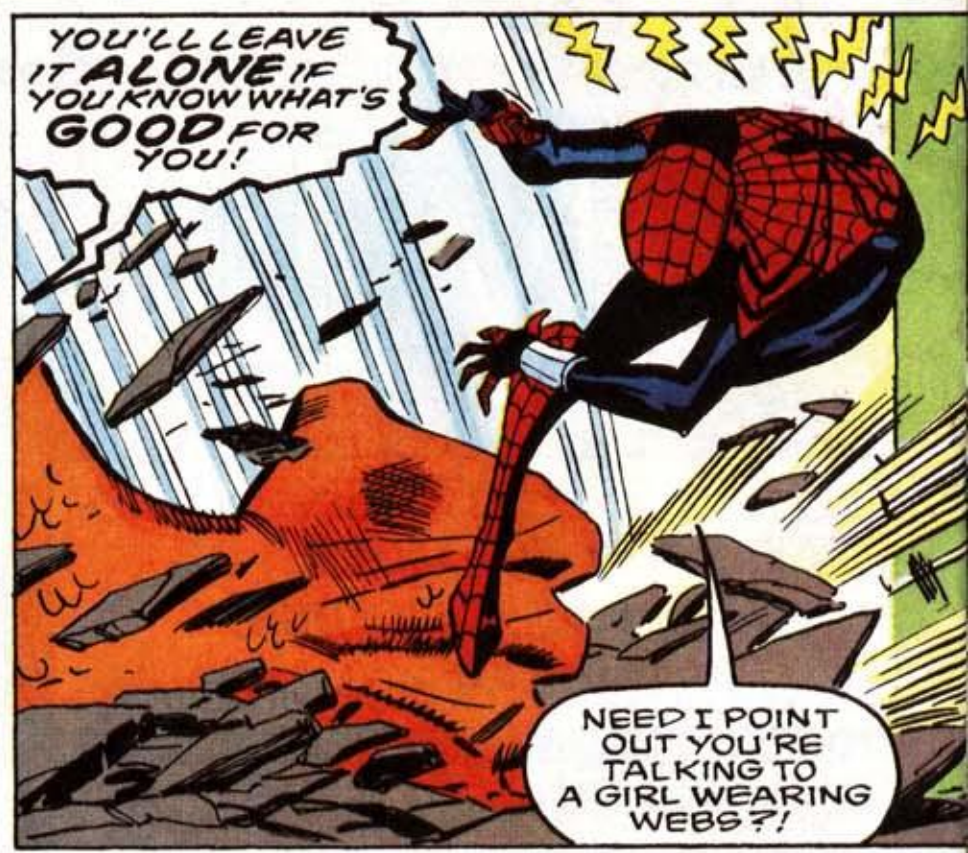
WELL! WELL!
CAN ANYONE SPELL "OBSESSIVE"?!
DRAGONS ALIVE
NICE COLLECTION!
I'D REALLY HATE TO TRASH IT!


YOU'LL LEAVE IT ALONE IF YOU KNOW WHAT'S GOOD FOR YOU!
NEED I POINT OUT YOU'RE TALKING TO A GIRL WEARING WEBS?!

W-WHAT DO YOU WANT?!
DRAGONFEST 2006
YOU MEAN ASIDE FROM WORLD PEACE AND A CALORIE-FREE BURGER?
I GUESS I'M CURIOUS WHAT'LL HAPPEN WHEN I START TOSSING THESE BEAUTIES IN THE AIR.

NO! NO!

YOU'RE ALSO REAL CURIOUS TO SEE IF YOUR PLAYMATE HAS NOTICED THE ELECTRICAL MAIN IN THE CORNER.
KZZZ-AKKK
GUESS NOT!

THE AUTHORITIES EVENTUALLY ARRIVE...

HE USED TO BE THE SCHOOL JANITOR?

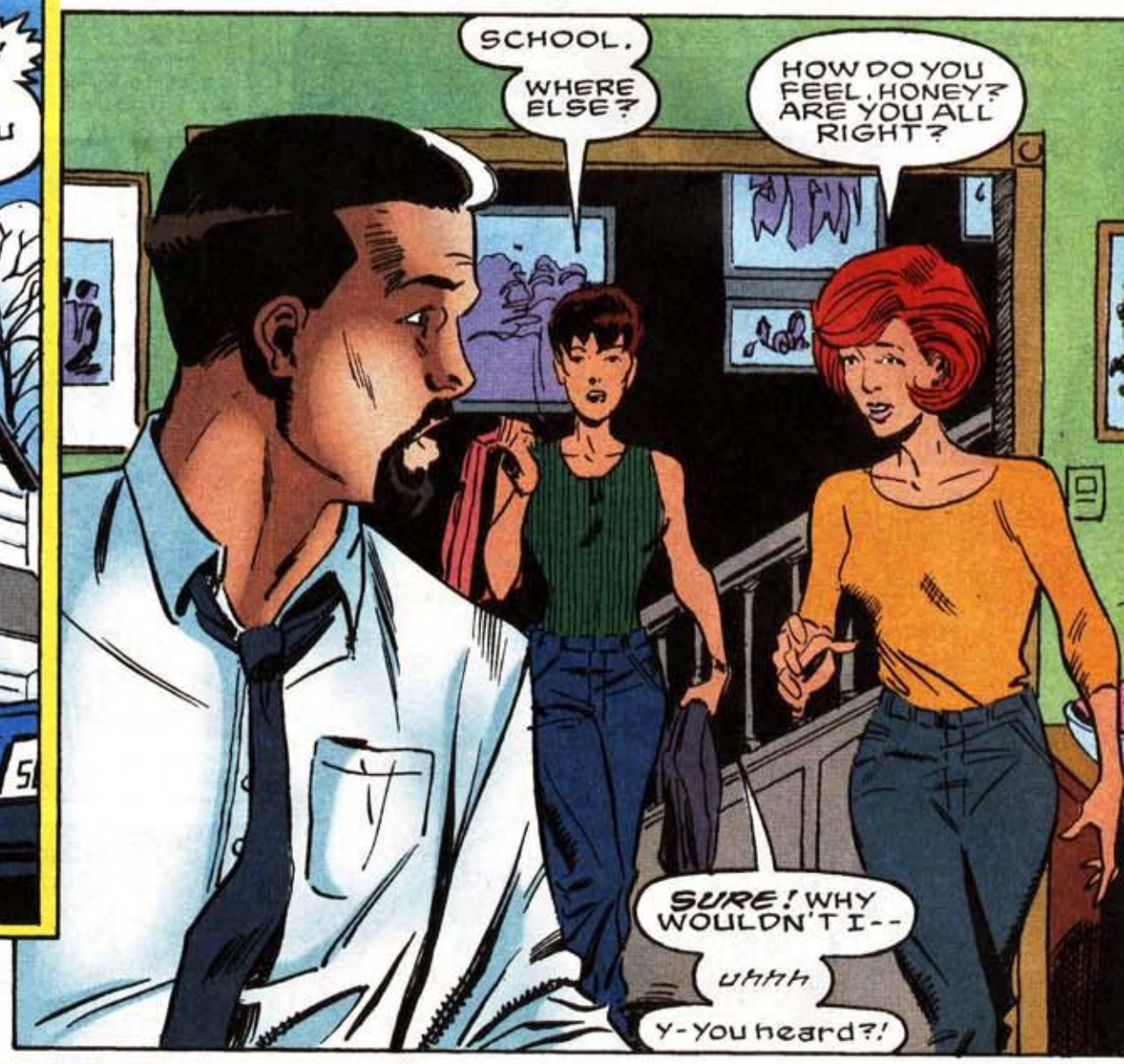
YOU MEAN OLD MAN HACKMUTTER?

YOU KNEW HIM?

I GRADUATED FROM MIDTOWN EIGHT YEARS AGO!

--AND THINGS RETURN TO NORMAL!

MAY--!
WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN?


SCHOOL.
WHERE ELSE?
HOW DO YOU FEEL, HONEY? ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
SURE! WHY WOULDN'T I--
uhhh
Y-You heard?!

DARNED RIGHT WE HEARD!
IT WAS ALL OVER THE NEWS-- SPIDER-GIRL FIGHTING SOME KIND OF DRAGON CREATURE!

WHAT WERE YOU THINKING?!
HOW COULD YOU PUT YOURSELF AT RISK LIKE THIS?
YOU KNOW HOW YOUR MOTHER AND I FEEL ABOUT YOU PLAYING HERO!

WHOA! I DON'T MEAN TO BE DISRESPECTFUL, DAD, BUT THERE WAS A LOT MORE AT STAKE THAN YOUR FEELINGS!
I DON'T KNOW IF HACKMUTTER REALLY INTENDED TO HURT ANYONE, OR JUST WANTED TO GIVE US A BAD FRIGHT!

EITHER WAY, I WASN'T WILLING TO GAMBLE WITH THE LIVES OF MY FRIENDS!
I HAD A RESPONSIBILITY TO ACT...SO I DID!
I DON'T WANT ANYONE TO EVER SUFFER BECAUSE SPIDER-GIRL FAILED TO HELP WHEN SHE SHOULD HAVE!

WELL--?!

WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?
NEXT ISSUE:
AN OLD ENEMY FROM HER FATHER'S PAST RETURNS, AND SPIDER-GIRL SUDDENLY FINDS HERSELF EXPERIENCING...
A Touch of VENOM!
'NUFF SAID!

SPIDER-GIRL

Dear Mr. DeFalco & Company,

First of all, I would like to tell you how pleased I am with the work you've done on Spider-Girl. I am enjoying this title very much, and wish you luck with your endeavor. I have always been a Spider-Man fan, and Spider-Girl presents an opportunity to experience much of the vitality found in the original web-spinner's early years.

A problem with comics is that character development is difficult to convey over time, as characters must be portrayed in essentially the same way over a period of years or even decades. Yet change and growth are integral to life. Character development is necessary for a story to have depth and meaning. Story lines can grow stale over time without these changes. This is one reason why Spider-Girl is such a fascinating endeavor to me. In this story line, life has gone on for Peter Parker and Mary Jane. Spider-Man has been forced into retirement by an injury, and has experienced a rewarding family life in the interim. It requires an alternate-future setting to do something like this, but that's okay. Every story, especially ones concerning heroes or mythical figures, needs a beginning, middle and an end. May Parker can now assume the role of the hero figure, relinquished by her father because of the passage of time.

Another reason I like Spider-Girl is that it refreshes old concepts. In the early years of Spider-Man, Stan Lee envisioned a super hero who was a normal person underneath the mask, with normal problems. There was a beautiful contrast between the heroic life-and-death struggles on one hand, and the everyday difficulties we all face. I hope that you will take advantage of the opportunity to portray May Parker in a similar vein. We can all empathize with the difficulties of high school and adolescence, especially if you don't completely "fit in"--and I suspect that May's "extracurricular activities" will eventually set her apart from her classmates.

This is not to say that teenage angst should be overplayed. May seems to have a naturally positive outlook--good upbringing, I suspect--which will see her through the normal teenage difficulties. In fact her super-heroics could give her a much broader perspective on daily problems than her classmates are likely to have. This could be fun to explore.

Having said this, I would urge you to maintain a separation between May's costumed activities and her everyday life. Endangering her father was useful because it hastened her decision to become a costumed hero, expediting a course of action that she was likely to adopt anyway. However, constantly endangering her family or friends with super-villains or monsters will destroy the sense of normalcy that could be used to create the necessary contrast between the normal and the super-normal. A blurring of distinctions would reduce the degree to which the readers could identify with May and her life, bringing the title closer to the type of thing we can see in any standard super-hero comic. I think that a fruitful opportunity would be lost in doing so.

Scott Darley
111 Barbara Street #A
Tallahassee, FL 32304

So do we, Scott! While May's family and friends will sometimes find themselves in dangerous situations--this very issue being a prime example--we don't intend to play hostage-of-the-month with them. Thank you for all the kind words and intriguing insights! We appreciate them...almost as much as we appreciate you!

Dear *Spider-Girl*,

My daughter Megan--7 years old--recently met Spider-Girl at the Wizard World '98 comic book convention in Chicago. The costumed young woman and the comic book stories that followed have excited Megan in a way that reminds me of myself when I first began reading and collecting the original Spider-Man a long time ago.

We hope Spider-Girl will become a permanent feature of the Marvel Universe. My compliments to the entire creative crew for presenting the traditional themes from the original Spider-Man through the eyes of the wildest (and cutest) web-slinger of all--young May "Mayday" Parker!

David John Marotta
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Hoo-Ha! Looks like our second generation heroine has found a second generation reader! We truly hope that Megan--and you, too, David--will enjoy May's adventures for years to come! (With any luck, we'll be introducing Peter Parker's granddaughter right around the time Megan's first child will be entering the second grade!)

Dear Spider-People:

I have been reading Spider-Girl, and I really enjoy Pat Olliffe's work. I also like the presence of past villains, and how well their histories are tied into this new generation.

I do have one gripe with the writing of Spider-Girl. Why make the reader the subject of your story? Perhaps, as an English major, I am too critical, but "Your name is May 'Mayday' Parker" and "Your spider-sense warns you danger is near" gets rather redundant after an entire issue, much less two. I'm beginning to tire of hearing what "I" am doing. I'd rather pick up a comic to read about May Parker than to live every issue as if it were a day in her life.

Rachel M. Eckert
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Rachel.Eckert@washcoll.edu

We hear you, Rachel. However, before we drop our second-person narration, we'd like to know how the rest of our readers feel. What's the vote, gang? Keep it or lose it?

Dear Spider-Crew,

I'd like to see Spider-Girl go back in time, and team up with her dad when he was Spider-Man.

Jason Knutson
104 Park Street
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Nevis, MN 56467-0455

An interesting idea, Jason. We'll get back to you!

Dear Editor,

Moose Mansfield lives for picking fights. He purposely crashed into Jimmy Yama to force a fight. If Coach Flash Thompson realizes that Moose is behaving the same way he did when he was the BMOC (big man on campus), he'll do more than send Moose to class.

As for Jimmy, he wouldn't happen to have J2 for a brother...would he?!

Jacob Gilbert
118 4th Street, Apt. 1
Troy, NY 12180

Sorry, Jacob! Jimmy has an older sister, but no brothers. (He does, however, have many cousins.)

HYPE SECTION!

ON SALE NEXT WEEK!

AVENGERS NEXT #4:

THE NEW AVENGERS FACE A MAJOR TURNING POINT WHEN **THUNDERSTRIKE, STINGER** AND **J2** DISCOVER THAT **MAINFRAME** IS ALREADY AUDITIONING POSSIBLE ADDITIONS OR REPLACEMENTS FOR THE TEAM. INTRODUCING **AMERICAN DREAM** AND HER DREAM TEAM--**FREEBOOTER, CRIMSON CURSE,** AND **BLUESTREAK.**

AND, AS IF THAT WASN'T BAD ENOUGH, THE NEW AVENGERS ARE ASKED TO PREVENT THE ASSASSINATION OF A VISITING WAKANDAN PRINCE--**T'CHAKA,** THE SON OF **THE BLACK PANTHER!**

ON SALE IN TWO WEEKS!

J2 #4:

TURNING TO **DOC MAGUS** FOR HELP, **J2** ENTERS A MYSTICAL REALM IN SEARCH OF THE ORIGINAL **JUGGERNAUT.** HE EVENTUALLY FINDS SOMEONE--OR SOMETHING--WHO RESEMBLES HIS FATHER--BUT IS THIS CREATURE **THE REAL CAIN MARKO?!** **PLUS**--A CRIMINAL WITH A PECULIAR TALENT FOR SLIPPING OUT OF THE LAW'S HANDS RUNS AFOUL OUR ALMOST-UNSTOPPABLE TEEN--BUT HOW CAN **J2** STOP A MAN HE CAN'T HOLD? (WE'LL GIVE YOU A HINT-- IT INVOLVES A LOT GRATUITOUS CARNAGE!)

ON SALE NEXT MONTH!

SPIDER-GIRL #5:

FORBIDDEN BY HER PARENTS TO BECOME **SPIDER-GIRL, MAY** FACES A CRISIS WHEN **THE VENOM SYMBIOTE** SUDDENLY RETURNS, AND SECURES A BRAND NEW HOST--A GENTLEMAN BY THE NAME OF **PETER PARKER!** IT'S SPIDER-GIRL AGAINST **SPIDER-VENOM**...WITH A LITTLE HELP FROM **PHIL (GREEN GOBLIN) URICH!** 'NUFF SAID!

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MARK E-MAIL "OKAY TO PRINT"