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COMICS

THE DAUGHTER OF THE TRUE SPIDER-MAN!



NOV  
#2

# SPIDER-GIRL

TM

APPROVED  
BY THE  
CODE  
CARTOON  
AUTHORITY

INTRODUCING--  
THE MYSTERIOUS  
**DARKDEVIL**

OUR SENSATIONAL  
**WEB-STUNNER**  
IS ABOUT TO BE  
BESIEGED,  
BELEAGUERED  
AND...



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DEFALCO

OLLIFFE

WILLIAMSON

## ...BEDEVILED!

THIS IS IT! THE MOMENT FOR WHICH YOU'VE BEEN WAITING! PREPARING!

FOR THE PAST TWO WEEKS, YOU'VE BEEN QUIETLY SLIPPING OUT EVERY NIGHT, SECRETLY HONING YOUR SKILLS IN THE HOPE OF STUMBLING UPON A SCENE LIKE THIS--!

YOU ARE THE STUNNING SPIDER-GIRL, AND TONIGHT YOU WILL BE BEWITCHED, BEWILDERED AND...

KWAPP!

# "Bodily I Ded!"

HI, FELLAS!  
YOU CHOSE  
A BEAUTIFUL  
NIGHT FOR  
A HIJACKING!

AT LEAST  
UNTIL I  
SHOWED UP!

TOM DEFALCO  
WRITER  
PAT OLLIFFE  
PENCILER  
AL WILLIAMSON  
FINISHED ART  
JANICE CHIANG  
CALLIGRAPHY  
CHRISTIE SCHEELE  
COLOR ARTIST  
BOB HARRAS  
CHIEF DEVIL

STINGER--?  
STINGER--?

W- WHO IS  
THIS  
WILDCAT--?!

MAYBE SHE'S  
THAT STINGER  
BABE WHO WORKS  
WITH THEM  
NEW AVENGERS!

LISTEN UP,  
EINSTEIN--SHE  
HAS WINGS!  
I WEAR WEBs!  
TRY TO KEEP US  
STRAIGHT IN  
THE FUTURE!

NOW CLOSE  
THIS DOOR  
BEFORE  
SOMEONE  
CATCHES  
COLD!

WUNK!



I DON'T CARE  
WHO YOU ARE,  
YA MEDDLESOME  
WITCH!



OH, MAN! YOU ARE  
SO LUCKY YOU USED  
THE W-WORD INSTEAD  
OF THE B-WORD!



UH-OH! THERE'S  
THAT WEIRD TINGLING  
SENSATION WHICH  
WARNs ME OF  
DANGER--!

THERE! IT'S COMING  
FROM THAT ROOFTOP--!

CAN'T REALLY SEE  
WHO'S UP THERE,  
BUT I'M GUESSING  
HE'S NO FAN!

I WONDER IF IT'S  
THAT MR. NOBODY  
CHARACTER I RAN INTO  
A FEW WEEKS AGO!\*

\*AS SHOWN IN  
THE ALREADY CLASSIC  
SPIDER-GIRL #1!

SUDDENLY YOUR SPIDER-  
SENSE RIVETS  
YOUR ATTENTION--

--FORCING YOU TO INSTINCTIVELY  
LEAP BACKWARD, IN BARELY  
ENOUGH TIME TO AVOID  
THE RATHER EXPLOSIVE  
ENTRANCE OF--



--CRAZY EIGHT!

MY! MY!  
YOU CERTAINLY  
ARE A SWEET  
YOUNG THING--

--EVEN IF YOUR TASTE  
IN CLOTHES IS A BIT  
TOO LAST YEAR'S  
MODEL FOR  
MY TASTES!

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I AM SOOOOO  
VERY GLAD  
YOU DECIDED  
TO DROP IN--

--TO HELP  
RELIEVE  
THE DRUDGERY OF  
AN OTHERWISE  
ROUTINE  
EVENING'S TOIL.

I DO APOLOGIZE  
IF MY MEN WERE  
RUDE TO YOU.

IT'S QUITE  
DIFFICULT TO HIRE  
QUALITY PEOPLE  
THESE DAYS, AND  
EVEN THEY HAVE  
LITTLE APPRECIATION  
FOR A GOOD, OLD-  
FASHION, GRATUITOUS  
FIGHT SCENE!

I'VE READ ABOUT  
THIS CREEP--HEARD  
MY DAD COMPLAIN ABOUT  
HIM--HE'S A RUTHLESS  
PSYCHO WHO THINKS HE'S  
A REAL FUNNY MAN!

HIS CUSTOM-DESIGNED  
JUGGLING BALLS ARE  
LADED WITH ALL SORTS OF  
DANGEROUS GIMMICKS!

FEAR SUDDENLY  
FLARES WITHIN  
YOU! THIS ISN'T  
AT ALL WHAT  
YOU EXPECTED!

YOU THOUGHT YOU'D  
BAG A SIMPLE BAND OF  
BURGLARS, CRACKING  
WISE AND SLAMMING  
HEAT!

YOU DIDN'T PLAN  
TO RUN ACROSS  
A COLD-BLOODED  
KILLER!

AND YOU NEVER IMAGINED  
YOU'D BE PUTTING  
YOUR OWN LIFE AT RISK!

LET  
THE GAMES  
BEGIN--!

BHOOM!

BWAH!

KZAP!

8

HIS SPECIAL 8-BALLS  
SUDDENLY FILL THE AIR--

--RELEASING  
GAS--

--CONCUSSION  
BLASTS--

--AND  
SEARING  
JOLTS!

GO, GIRL!  
GO!

YOU'RE FASTER  
AND FAR MORE AGILE  
THAN I THOUGHT,  
BUT EVEN YOU CAN'T  
AVOID ME FOREVER!

INSTEAD OF ABATING  
HIS BARRAGE GROWS EVEN  
MORE RELENTLESS!

WITH A SNEERING  
LAUGH, CRAZY  
EIGHT SUDDENLY  
MOVES IN FOR  
THE KILL--

--AND YOU INSTINCTIVELY  
REALIZE THAT YOUR VERY  
SURVIVAL LIES IN FLIGHT!

AND SO  
YOU RUN!

RUN!

RUN!

WHAT A DISAPPOINTMENT!

IF I WERE  
THE ORIGINAL  
SPIDER-MAN, I'D  
SUE THAT GAL FOR  
DISGRACING  
MY COSTUME!

WEFEEEEE  
FORGET  
HER,  
EIGHT!

THOSE  
ARE POLICE  
SIRENS--AND WE  
GOTTA BOOK!

YOUR NAME IS  
MAY "MAYDAY"  
PARKER,  
AND YOU'RE  
THE DAUGHTER  
OF THE ONE TRUE  
SPIDER-MAN!

THOUGH YOU MAY HAVE INHERITED  
YOUR FATHER'S AMAZING SPIDER-  
LIKE POWERS--

--SOMETHING  
SEEMS TO BE  
MISSING!

EVEN AS YOU FRANTICALLY  
GASP FOR BREATH AND  
YOUR HEART TRIES TO  
PUNCH ITS WAY THROUGH  
YOUR CHEST--

--YOU SUDENLY  
REALIZE THAT BEING  
A COSTUMED HERO  
ISN'T ALL IT'S CRACKED  
UP TO BE!

YOU COULD HAVE  
EASILY BEEN  
KILLED TONIGHT!

KILLED!

AND YOU  
INSTANTLY  
THINK OF  
YOUR  
PARENTS--

--TRYING  
TO IMAGINE  
THEIR TORMENT  
AS THEY ARRIVE  
AT THE CITY  
MORGUE  
TO IDENTIFY  
YOUR DEAD  
BODY!

BUT THEN, AN EVEN GRIMMER REALITY UNEXPECTEDLY  
INTRUDES UPON YOUR FANTASIES--!

WHAT'S THE MATTER,  
LITTLE GIRL?

HAVING  
SECOND  
THOUGHTS?

I--IT'S HIM! THE MAN  
FROM THE ROOFTOP...  
BUT WHO IS HE?!

SLOWLY, ALMOST  
TANTALIZINGLY SO,  
HE Oozes FROM  
THE SHADOWS...

GO HOME,  
CHILD!

YOU DON'T  
BELONG  
OUT HERE!

I AM THE  
**DARKDEVIL**--

--AND I'M SENDING  
YOU BACK TO  
YOUR DOLLS AND  
FRILLY PLAYTHINGS!

HEY! I'VE HEARD OF YOU! YOU'RE A COSTUMED VIGILANTE LIKE ME!

WHAT'S THE BIG IDEA? WE'RE SUPPOSED TO BE ON THE SAME SIDE! WHY ARE YOU DOGGING ME?

THESE MEAN STREETS ARE NOT FOR THE FAINTE OF HEART!

I HAVE BEEN SECRETLY OBSERVING YOU IN ACTION, LITTLE GIRL--

--AND I FIND YOU LACKING!

HIS WORDS SEAR THROUGH YOU, RAISING FAR MORE BLISTERS THAN HIS FLAMING BILLY CLUB!

LISTEN UP, PAL! I KNOW YOU'RE INTO THIS WHOLE GRIM AND GRITTY CREATURE OF THE NIGHT THING--

--BUT MINDLESS FIGHTS BETWEEN HEROES IS JUST SOOOO EIGHTIES!

HOW'S ABOUT WE JUST TALK?

TALKING TO A SPOILED BRAT--

--WOULD BE AS EFFECTIVE AS YOUR WEBS AGAINST MY FLAMES!

IF YOU'RE SO FAMILIAR WITH THE ORIGINAL SPIDEY, YOU MIGHT HAVE ALSO HEARD ABOUT AN OLD FRIEND OF HIS...CALLED DAREDEVIL!

THE REAL SPIDER-MAN WOULD KNOW THAT!

VERY SUBTLE! I ASSUME THAT'S MY CUE TO SPOUT OFF MY ORIGIN...

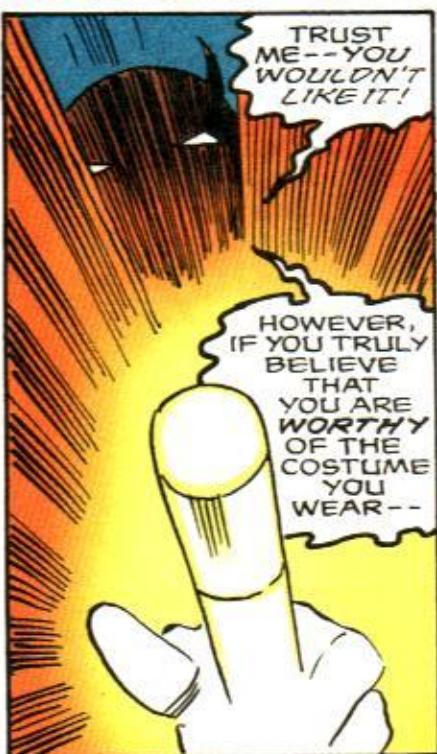
**HA HA HA HA!**

H-HE VANISHED  
INTO THE SHADOWS!

MAYBE  
THE RUMORS  
ABOUT THIS CREEP  
ARE TRUE--THAT  
HE'S SOME SORT  
OF GHOSTLY  
MANIFESTATION OF  
THE FIRST MAN  
WITHOUT FEAR!

MY SPIDER-SENSE  
CAN'T SEEM TO  
TRACK HIM!

IT'S BEEN BUZZING  
LIKE MAD EVER  
SINCE HE FIRST  
APPEARED ON THE--



CRAZY EIGHT  
THREATENED  
YOUR LIFE.

DARKDEVIL  
QUESTIONED  
YOUR VERY  
VIRTUDY.

CONFUSED  
AND DISTURBED,  
YOU RETURN TO  
YOUR FAMILY  
HOME IN  
FOREST HILLS,  
QUEENS.

"WHAT'S IT GOING TO BE,  
LITTLE GIRL?" YOU  
ASK YOURSELF WITH  
A DEJECTED SNEER.

DO YOU  
REALLY HAVE  
WHAT IT  
TAKES TO  
WEAR YOUR  
FATHER'S  
WEBBS?

THIS IS NO GAME!

LIVES COULD  
DEPEND ON  
YOUR ACTIONS!

CAN YOU ACTUALLY SAY  
THAT YOU POSSESS  
THE NECESSARY DEDICATION;  
COURAGE AND SENSE OF  
RESPONSIBILITY?

CAN YOU?

CAN YOU?

NOT FAR AWAY,  
YOUR FATHER IS  
PLAGUED BY  
QUESTIONS  
OF HIS OWN.

HE KNOWS HE SHOULD  
CONFRONT YOU...

BUT WHAT CAN HE SAY?

HOW CAN HE PLAY  
THE HYPOCRITE?

HE'S TERRIFIED THAT  
HIS LITTLE GIRL--HIS BABY--  
MAY BE SNEAKING OUT  
AT NIGHT...

...JUST LIKE HE USED TO DO!

HOW CAN HE TRY TO  
CONVINCE YOU THAT  
WHAT WAS SO RIGHT  
FOR HIM--

--IS SO VERY WRONG  
FOR YOU?!

YOUR MOTHER LIES  
BESIDE HIM--SHARING  
HIS PAIN BUT UNABLE  
TO OFFER COMFORT.

SHE, TOO, TREMBLES  
IN THE DARK...

AS SHE HAS SO  
OFTEN DONE IN  
NIGHTS PAST!

EARLY THE NEXT MORNING, YOU CHANCE TO OVERHEAR A CONVERSATION NOT MEANT FOR YOUR EARS...



I'M SORRY I PUT IT OFF SO LONG, BUT... WELL... MAY AND I ARE SUPPOSED TO HAVE LUNCH TODAY.

YOU'LL FEEL BETTER ONCE EVERYTHING'S OUT IN THE OPEN.



YOU DRAG TO SCHOOL WITH A NEW WEIGHT ON YOUR SHOULDERS.

DOWNTOWN HIGH SCHOOL

YOU USED TO LOOK FORWARD TO LUNCH WITH DAD!

HE'D DISCUSS HIS WORK IN THE POLICE LAB, AND YOU'D RAMBLE ON ABOUT SCHOOL, SPORTS AND WHATEVER!

BUT THAT WAS BEFORE YOUR LIFE BLOSSOMED WITH SECRETS!

NOTHING SERIOUS I HOPE...

OR RELATED TO THAT MUSCLE-HEAD BRAD MILLER.

NAH! JUST... UHHH... FAMILY JUNK!

Y'KNOW, MAY, THERE'S SOMETHING WE SHOULD TALK ABOUT...

A NERVOUS SMILE SPREADS ACROSS JIMMY YAMA'S FACE-- BUT EVEN AS YOU BEGIN TO WONDER WHAT'S ON HIS MIND--

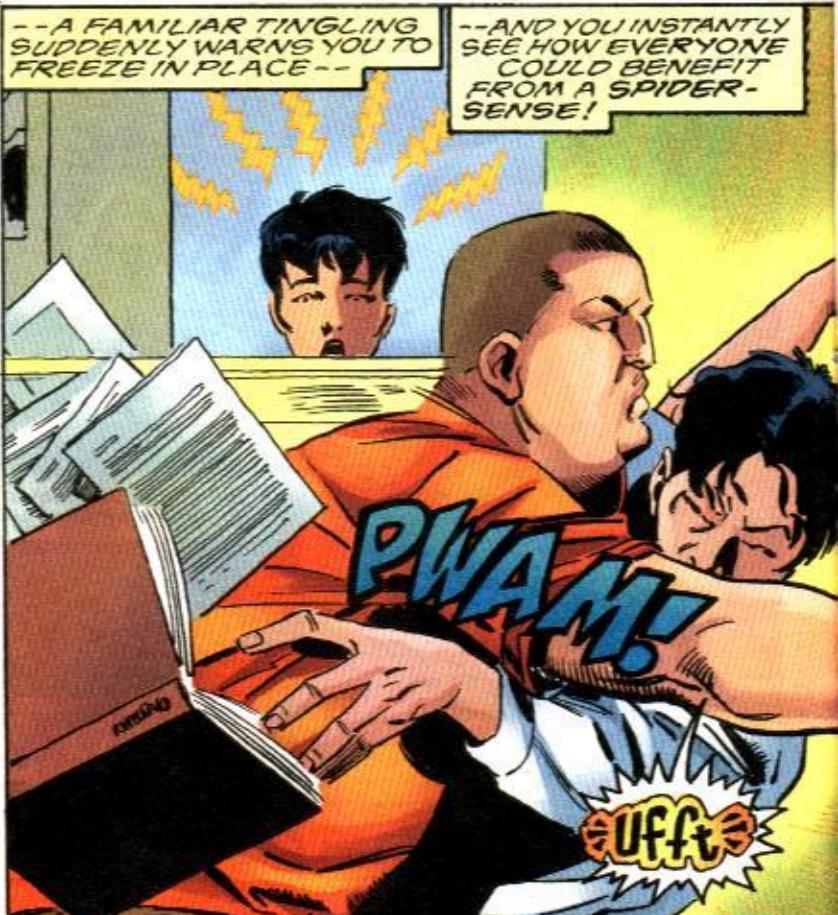
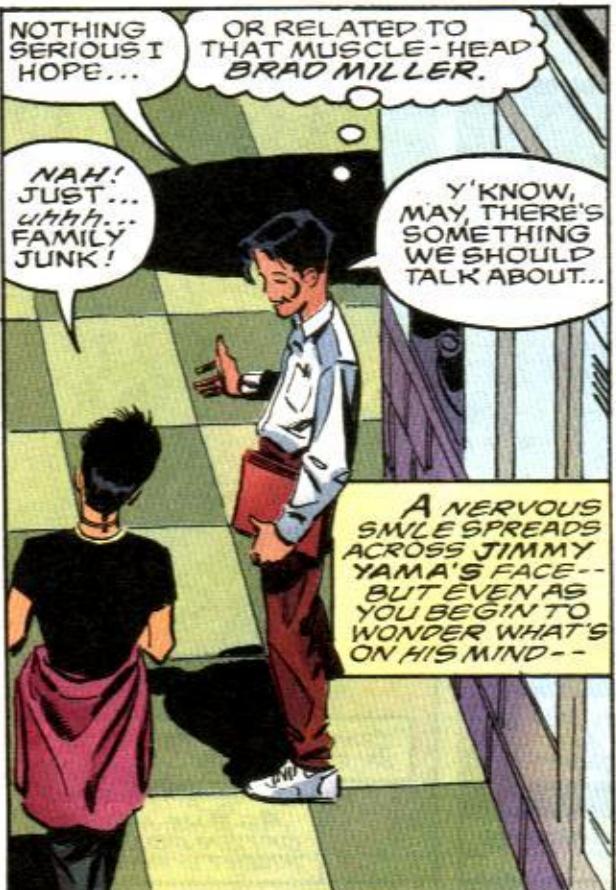
YO, MAY--! WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN?

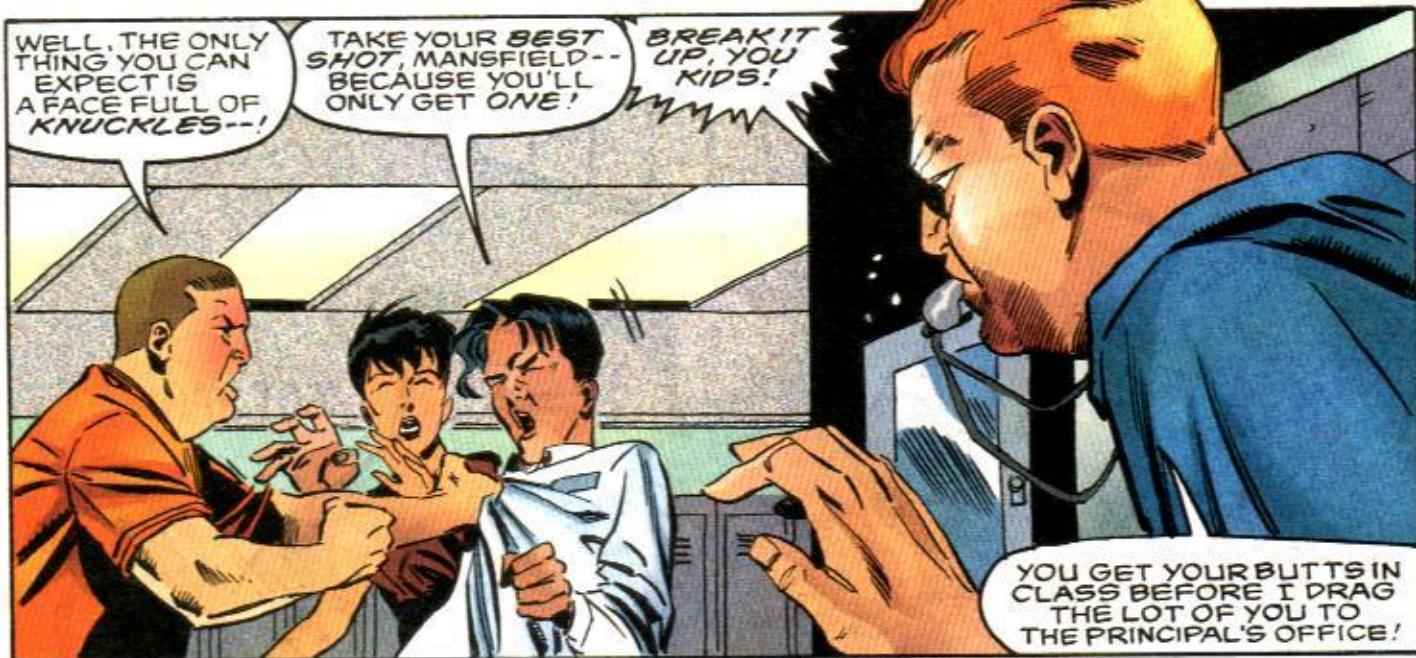
I EXPECTED TO SEE YOU AT THE LIBRARY LAST NIGHT.

SORRY, JIMMY! SOMETHING... UNEXPECTED POPPED UP!

--A FAMILIAR TINGLING SUDDENLY WARNS YOU TO FREEZE IN PLACE--

--AND YOU INSTANTLY SEE HOW EVERYONE COULD BENEFIT FROM A SPIDER-SENSE!





BUT, COME THE LUNCH HOUR, YOU RETURN TO YOUR OWN PRESSING PROBLEMS...

# POLIC

## MIDTOWN SOUTH

SHOULD YOU REVEAL YOUR SECRET LIFE?

AND TELL YOUR FATHER ABOUT YOUR ALMOST FATAL RUN-IN WITH CRAZY EIGHT--

-- AND DARKDEVIL'S MYSTERIOUS INVITATION?!

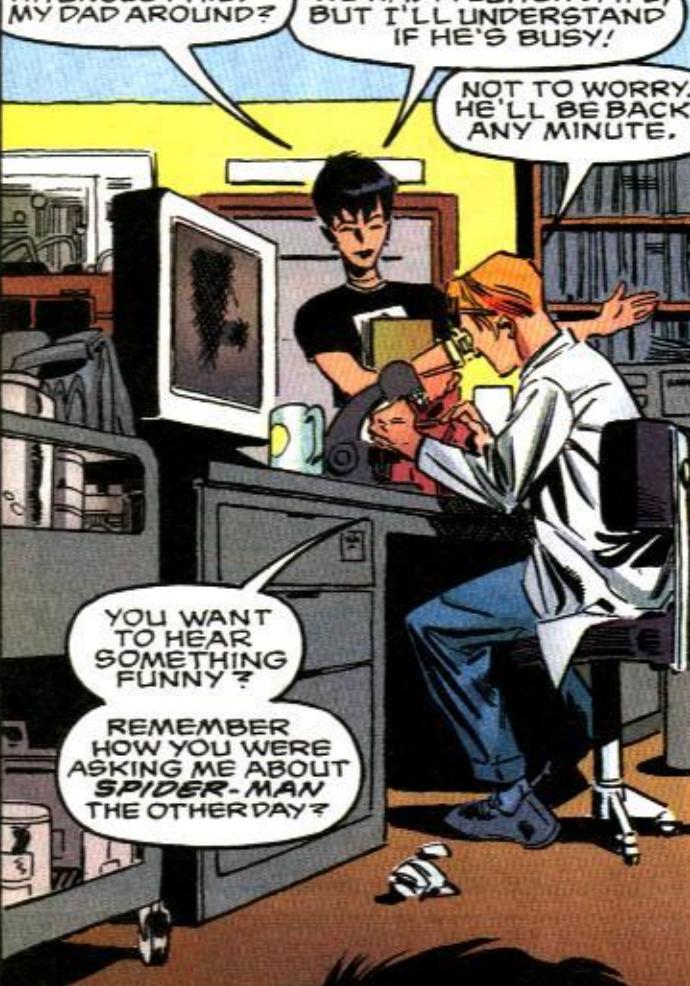
A TEMPORARY REPRIEVE SUDDENLY BECKONS WHEN YOU SEE THAT YOUR FATHER'S ASSISTANT, PHIL URICH, IS ALONE IN THE LAB...

HI, UNCLE PHIL! MY DAD AROUND?

WE HAD A LUNCH DATE, BUT I'LL UNDERSTAND IF HE'S BUSY!

NOT TO WORRY. HE'LL BE BACK ANY MINUTE.

WELL... I WAS CALLED TO A CRIME SCENE THAT VERY NIGHT, AND YOU'LL NEVER GUESS WHAT I FOUND...



I... I'D RATHER IT WAS OUR LITTLE SECRET, UNCLE PHIL!

I ASSUME YOU HAVE A GOOD EXPLANATION, YOUNG LADY.

YEAH, BUT I... uh... CAN'T--

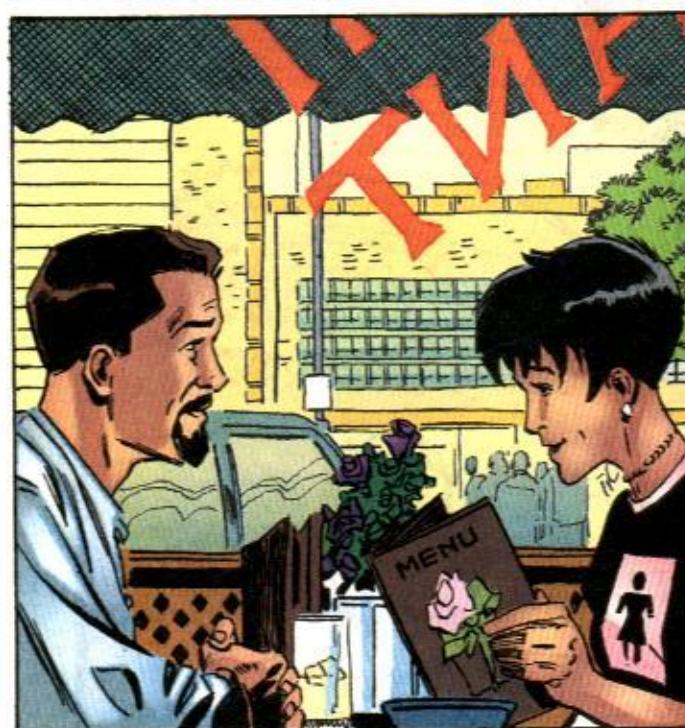
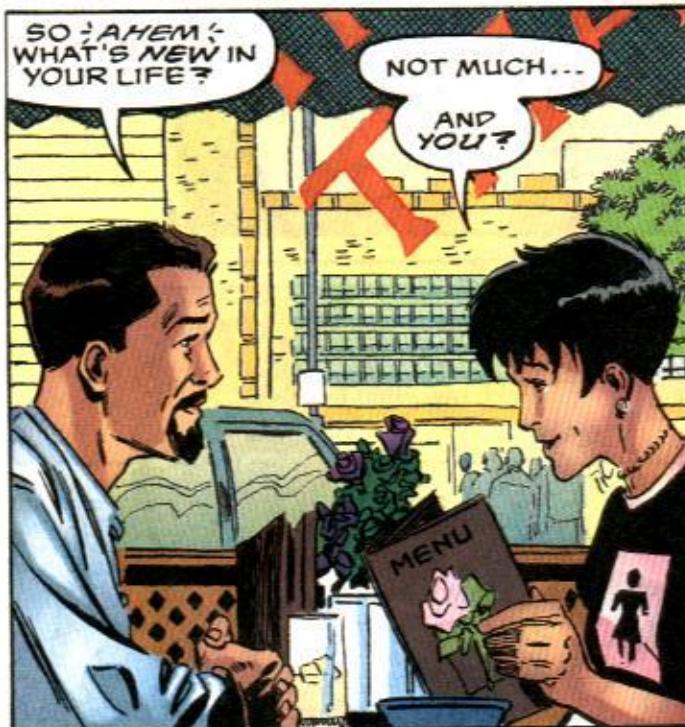
MAY!

I HOPE YOU HAVEN'T BEEN WAITING LONG.

N-NOT REALLY! BUT I'M STARVED! LET'S GO!

I... errr... I'LL CALL YOU, UNCLE PHIL!





WHAT'S HAPPENING TO YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH YOUR FATHER, YOU ASK YOURSELF AS YOU RETURN TO MIDTOWN HIGH.

BUT, EVEN BEFORE YOU DARE ANSWER THAT QUESTION, COURTNEY DURAN SUDDENLY BURSTS INTO YOUR WORLD...



JIMMY'S MEETING THAT MANSFIELD APE AFTER SCHOOL --AND HE'S GOING TO GET SLAUGHTERED!

WHEN WAS THIS DECIDED--?



DETERMINED TO THWART THIS UNEQUAL CONTEST, YOU RACE TO JIMMY'S LOCKER--!



BE REASONABLE, JIMMY! THE GUY HEADBUTTS BOWLING BALLS!

I MAY AS WELL GET IT OVER WITH, MAY.

I WON'T LET THAT JOCK TERRORIZE ME FOR THE REST OF MY LIFE.

I CAN'T LIVE LIKE THAT!



OH, GREAT!  
JIMMY'S GONE  
MACHO ON US!

PROBABLY 'CAUSE  
HE WAS ABOUT  
TO ASK YOU OUT  
WHEN THAT  
TESTOSTERONE  
FREAK COLLIDED  
WITH HIM!

ASK...  
ME...  
OUT?!

LIKE ON  
A DATE?!

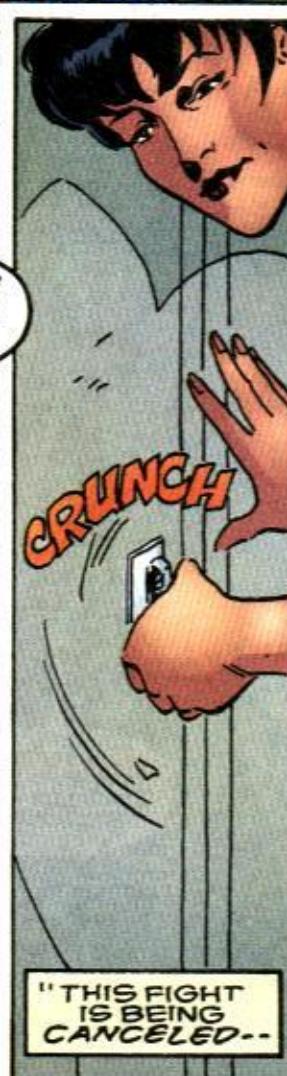
Y-YOU'RE  
RIGHT,  
COURT!

LET ME  
THINK...

JIMMY YAMA WAS  
PLANNING TO ASK  
YOU OUT?

JIMMY?!

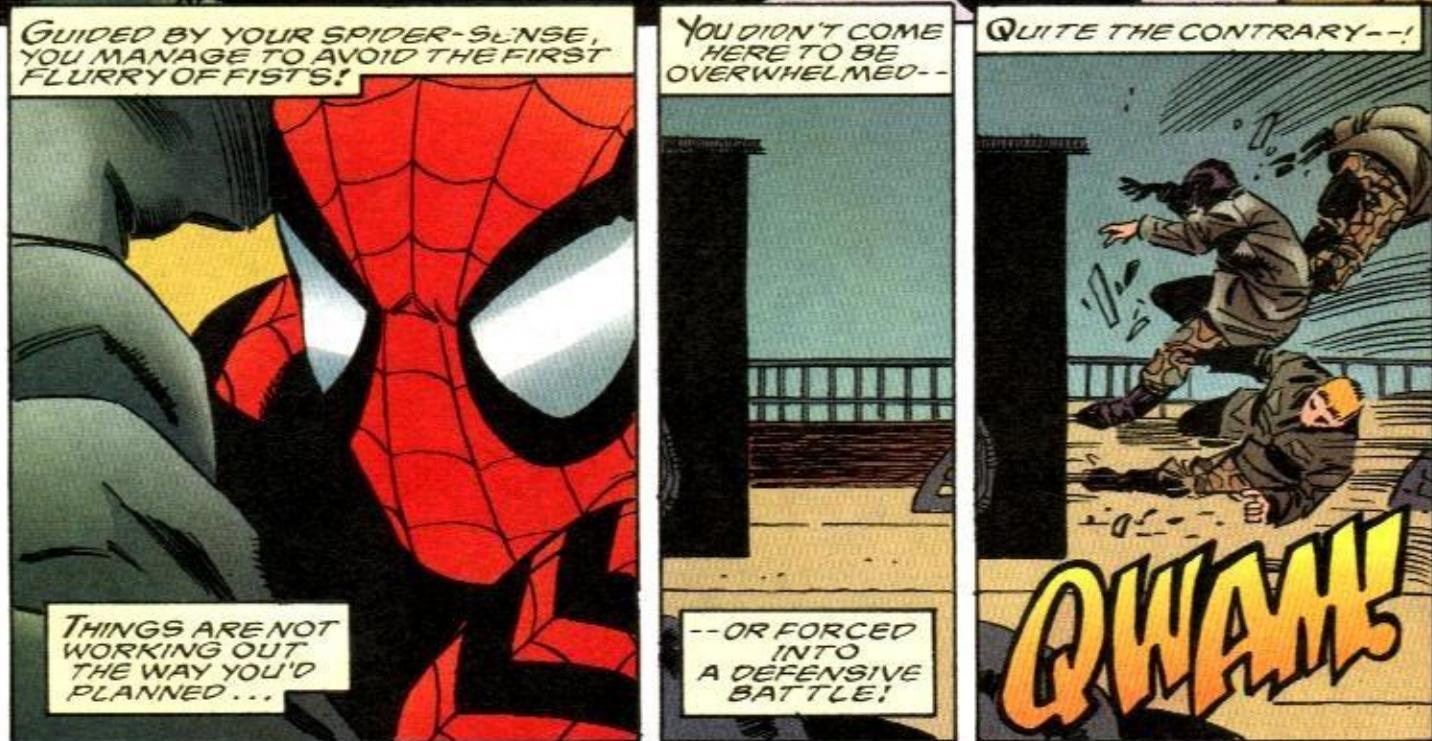
WOW!







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THOUGH BATTERED  
AND BUFFETED LIKE  
A LEAF IN  
A MAELSTROM,  
YOU SOMEHOW  
SURVIVE  
THE BLAST!

EVEN AS YOU  
BURST FREE FROM  
YOUR PROTECTIVE  
SHELL, YOU FLASH  
TO YOUR DAD--!

AS DELIGHTFUL AS I FIND  
YOUR COMPANY, I FEAR  
WE MUST NOW PART!

YOU HAVE PROVEN  
TO BE A FAR MORE  
RESILIENT AND  
PERSISTENT FOE  
THAN I FIRST  
BELIEVED!

TO THINK HE INVENTED  
THIS AMAZING  
WEBBING WHILE STILL  
IN HIGH  
SCHOOL.

WOW!

WOW!

THUS, I MUST  
DRASTICALLY  
INCREASE  
THE PRESSURE--!

# EEEEEEEEE

T-THE BLAST MUST  
HAVE AFFECTED  
MY INNER EAR!

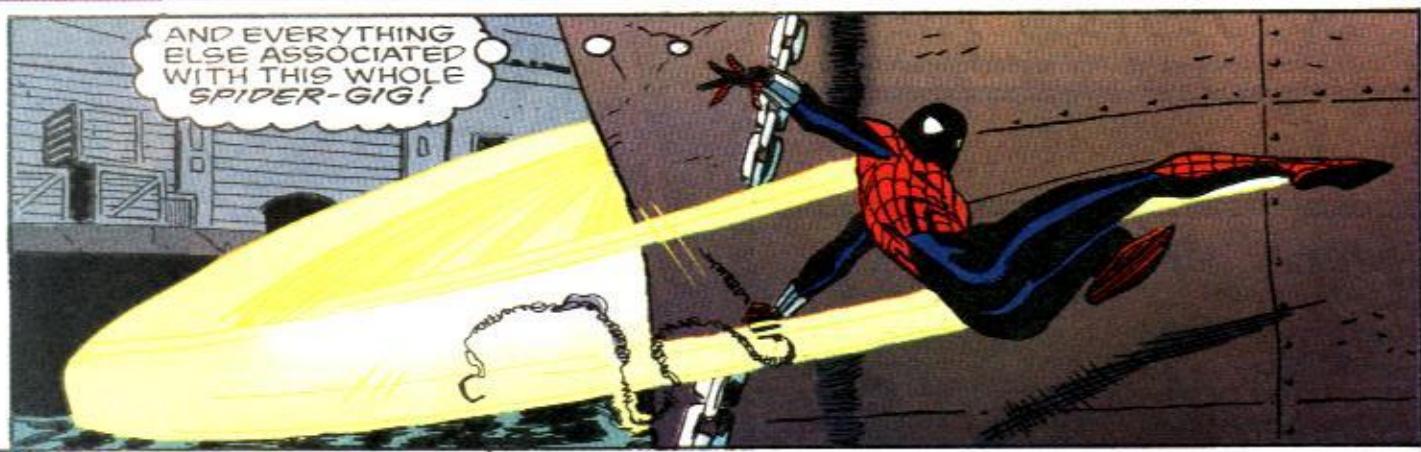
C-COULDN'T  
LEAP FAR ENOUGH  
TO AVOID GETTING  
CAUGHT BY  
HIS SONIC  
GRENADE!

I SUDDENLY  
FEEL DIZZY,  
DISORIENTED!

OH,  
GREAT! I...I  
CAN BARELY  
STAND--

--A-AND HE'S  
SLAMMING  
MEAT!

SO MUCH FOR  
FAIR PLAY!



A WIDE GRIN GLOWS  
BENEATH YOUR MASK AS  
YOU MENTALLY CHALK  
IN THE WIN!

CRAZY EIGHT  
UNDERESTIMATED YOU,  
NEVER SUSPECTING  
THAT YOU WERE  
CIRCLING BEHIND HIM!

ARROGANCE  
CERTAINLY HAS  
A NASTY HABIT OF  
LEADING TO  
DEFEAT!

YOU--!

I WAS WONDERING  
WHEN YOU'D SHOW!

FEELING  
PROUD OF  
YOURSELF,  
LITTLE GIRL?

ENJOY  
YOUR VICTORY...  
FOR WHATEVER  
IT'S WORTH!

WHAT'S YOUR DEAL,  
ANYWAY? WHY ARE  
YOU HASSLING ME?

I'M MERELY TRYING TO  
FORESTALL AN UNNECESSARY  
FUNERAL, KID!

YOU WERE  
EXCEPTIONALLY  
LUCKY  
TONIGHT!

BUT LUCK  
DOESN'T  
LAST!

NEITHER DO  
THESE WHO  
PLAY AT BEING  
A HERO!

IT'S ALMOST  
FUNNY...

CRAZY EIGHT TREATS YOU  
WITH RESPECT, AND TRIES  
TO KILL YOU...

DARKDEVIL MOCKS  
YOU, AND TRIES TO  
SAVE YOU.

LIKE JIMMY YAMA  
ASKING YOU OUT!

LIKE YOUR UNCLE PHIL  
FINDING YOUR WEBBING!

LIKE YOUR WRETCHED  
ATTEMPT TO BE WORTHY  
OF YOUR FATHER'S WEBS!

YOUR LIFE  
IS SUDDENLY  
BRIMMING  
WITH LITTLE  
IRONIES...

THE END!



# BULLPEN BULLETINS

ON SALE SEPTEMBER 16

## BLACK PANTHER

Get ready for more jungle action! The BLACK PANTHER is back in his own monthly series, and he's on the prowl! By CHRISTOPHER PRIEST and MARK TEXEIRA!

#1

## CAPTAIN AMERICA

CAP is under the control of a surprise super-villain, and ol' Wing-Head has been given just one instruction: kill SHARON CARTER! By MARK WAID and ANDY KUBERT!

#11

## HEROES FOR HIRE

LUKE CAGE and SHE-HULK decide to go out for a quiet night on the town... but a couple of old foes are determined to make this an evening to remember! By JOHN OSTRANDER and PASCUAL FERRY!

#17

## INCREDIBLE HULK

BRUCE BANNER finds himself in Las Vegas, and gambles with his life when he comes up against the RINGMASTER and his CIRCUS OF CRIME! By JOE CASEY and JAVIER PULIDO!

#470

## PETER PARKER, SPIDER-MAN

SPIDER-MAN makes the most unexpected, unbelievable discovery ever — and we're only up to part two of "The Final Chapter!" By HOWARD MACKIE and JOHN ROMITA JR.!

#97

## STRANGE TALES

64 pages of horror from the Haunted House of Ideas! Two cops hunt the WEREWOLF BY NIGHT... while secrets of the MAN-THING's origin are revealed! By J.M. DeMATTEIS, PAUL JENKINS, LIAM SHARP, LEONARDO MANCO, and more!

#3

## THUNDERBOLTS

It's all-out war with the MASTERS OF EVIL! And when the dust has settled, a mysterious figure appears who will change the lives of the THUNDERBOLTS forever! By KURT BUSIEK and MARK BAGLEY!

#20

## WHAT IF?

A shocker! "What if the Marvel Heroes had never returned from the SECRET WARS?" Wait till you meet the sons and daughters of the mighty Marvel Heroes! By JAY FAEBER and GREGG SCHIGIEL!

#114

## X-MAN

The identity of the killer from last issue is revealed! Could it really be a sleepwalking NATE GREY? Plus: more info on the mysterious GAUNTLET organization! By TERRY KAVANAGH and ROGER CRUZ!

#44

## X-MEN

The team is still reeling from last issue's attack by the all-new, all-deadly X-MEN, when a new threat emerges: a woman named KALI who threatens to destroy them all! By JOE KELLY and ADAM KUBERT!

#81

## X-MEN: CROSSROADS

Collecting X-MEN #273-277 in one action-packed volume! Captured by DEATHBIRD, the X-MEN team up with the STARJAMMERS to battle the IMPERIAL GUARD! By CHRIS CLAREMONT and JIM LEE!

TPB

**ITEM!** Chicago is our kinda town — and Wizard World Chicago Con is our kinda convention! That was our reaction after returning from the '98 W.W.C. Con, held on July 17-19! Thousands of fans showed up, and many of the hottest writers and artists in the business were there to meet and greet them! Many of your favorite Marvel Men were in attendance, answering questions, signing autographs, and previewing our exciting new titles! STAN "THE MAN" LEE did a signing and so many rabid Marvelites showed up, they practically took up the whole blamed convention hall! Among the other superstars spotted at the con: JOHN ROMITA JR., JOE CASEY, JOE KELLY, ADAM KUBERT, and MARK WAID! The dynamite duo of JOE QUESADA and JIMMY PALMIOTTI took part in an event where they shed some light on the MARVEL KNIGHTS! And as a special treat, two of the stars from the BLADE movie appeared — UDO KIER and ARLY JOVER — and fans were treated to a sneak peek at the action-packed summer film! Head honcho BOB HARRAS could be found there as well — looking as busy as he does at the office (the guy never rests)! MARVEL magazine editor BILL ROSEMANN was like a kid in a candy store, overseeing all our pulse-pounding panels, while X-editors MARK POWERS and FRANK PITTARESE had a blast reviewing the portfolios of the next generation of comic book superstars! By all accounts, everyone who attended had a great time, and we're eager to go back to the Windy City next year!

**ITEM!** The BLACK PANTHER is coming to America! That's right — the prince of Wakanda is leaving the tropical jungles of his homeland and coming to the urban jungle we call New York! Why has T'CHALLA turned his back on his African kingdom? You'll find the answers next week in the pages of BLACK PANTHER #1, an all-new monthly series that is part of our red-hot Marvel Knights line! The writer for the new series is CHRISTOPHER PRIEST — whose work for Marvel could be seen most recently in our monthly KA-ZAR mag. And putting the Panther through his artistic paces as he prowls the rooftops of Brooklyn is MARK TEXEIRA, and believe us when we say T'Challa has never looked better! This book features dark, moody stories with the Panther at his mysterious best! It will leave you roaring for more!

**ITEM!** The word "legend" is often overused in this business, but we've got a comic coming out next week that features a cover by an artist who truly is a living legend: NEAL ADAMS! The comic is STRANGE TALES #3, and the cover features two of our most popular horror heroes, MAN-THING and WEREWOLF BY NIGHT! Back in the sixties, Neal was one of the hottest artists at Marvel, and his work on such titles as AVENGERS and X-MEN is fondly remembered today. Neal doesn't do much comics work these days, so when he does, it's a rare treat! Pick up STRANGE TALES #3 for a true comic book event! (And the stories underneath that cover ain't so bad, either!)

**ITEM!** He's an ex-con with steel-hard skin. She's seven feet tall and green. Sounds like an unlikely couple? Maybe — but since they're both super heroes, they just may be a perfect match! The twosome we're talking about are LUKE CAGE and the SHE-HULK — who, if rumors are to be believed, are actually going out on a date! HEROES FOR HIRE #17, on sale next week, features what appears to be a get-together between Mr. Cage and Ms. Walters! Of course, this being the Marvel Universe, you just know that a quiet night on the town is impossible for two super heroes — especially when a couple of vengeance-hungry super-villains make the scene! Writer JOHN OSTRANDER and artist MARTIN EGELAND are the chaperones for this little outing! Check it out, and see just how disastrous a date can be!

## STAN'S SOAPBOX!

Hi, Heroes!

The big moment is at hand! We're about to meet and greet our latest No-Prize Laureates! And, thanks to the generosity of magniloquent Marvel, just think how privileged we are — we can now read the winning questions even before the official award ceremony on the White House lawn! No, no, don't thank me. That grateful gleam in your eyes is reward enough! Now, onward...

Obviously, Erik Shaw of Naticoke, PA has an intense interest in geography as he asks:

**"Why are most of the Marvel super heroes and villains based in New York?"**

Y'know, Erik, I must have answered that a zillion times, but here's one more valiant try. It's because Marvel itself is based in New York and it's a heap easier to write about places you're familiar with. If I had been born in the North Pole and our offices were in an igloo, most of our yarns would probably be about Eskimos!

Here's an unexpected query from Barclay White, all the way from Perth, Australia:

**"What is 'Not Brand Echhh'?"**

Hey, Barc, you spelled it wrong! "Echhh" has 2 h's! But big-hearted Stan will answer you anyway. Advertisers often referred to the competition as "Brand X." (Like "Our soap is better than Brand X") To go 'em one better, we referred to our competition as "Brand Echhh." When we decided to do a nutty humor comic, we thought "Not Brand Echhh" would be a cool title — so nobody would think it was published by — you know who!

Oh, the things readers think about! How's this from Doug Mabry of La Vergne, TN...?

**"The FF each represent one of the four elements. The Human Torch is fire. The Thing is Earth. The Invisible Girl is air, and Mr. Fantastic's ability to flow and change makes him water. Was that intentional, or just coincidence?"**

It never occurred to me when I wrote it, Doug — but, since it sounds kinda clever, I might as well say that I planned it that way all along. After all, nobody can prove I didn't. (See why I enjoy writing about villains? I, too, have my evil streak!)

Speaking of evil streaks, Rob Schwartz of Rochester, NY wants to know:

**"Why don't you write your autobiography? It would be of much historical importance to our beloved medium."**

Want the plain, unvarnished truth, Rob? I figure my wife would be the only one who'd buy it! Even my daughter would just borrow it from her! And you — you'd probably laugh and say, "Geez, who knew the guy would take me seriously? I just wanted a No-Prize!" But anyway, thanks for the kind words.

Just room to remind you: [Stanfanz@aol.com](mailto:Stanfanz@aol.com) or write: "Stan's Soapbox", c/o BULLPEN BULLETINS, Marvel Comics, 387 Park Ave South, New York, NY 10016. And remember — you read it in the Soapbox!

Excelsior!

*Stan*

Stan Lee

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