THE RETURN OF... THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN®

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HIS GIVEN NAME IS **PETER PARKER.** WHILE IN HIGH SCHOOL HE WAS BITTEN BY A RADIOACTIVE SPIDER AND ENDOWED WITH AMAZING POWERS, WHICH HE HAS SINCE USED TO PROTECT THE INNOCENT AND BATTLE EVIL. NOW HE CALLS HIMSELF **DEN REILLY**, AND, AS A COSTUMED CRIMEFIGHTER, HE CONTINUES HIS CRUSADE... FOR HE UNDERSTANDS THAT WITH GREAT POWER COMES GREAT RESPONSIBILITY!
STAN LEE PRESENTS: THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN!

FINAL ★★★★

DAILY BUGLE

THE PICTURE NEWSPAPER

50¢

Partly cloudy, chance of snow. High 25-30. Details p. 2

I'M A LITTLE DISAPPOINTED WITH THIS FRONT PAGE, JOE.

THE HEADLINE'S A REAL GRABBER, BUT THIS GRAPHIC DOESN'T REALLY JUMP OUT AT ME.

WHATEVER HAPPENED TO SPIDER-MAN?!?

Questions surround the fate of original wall-crawler! Stories begin on page 3.

written by TOM DeFALCO
penciled by MARK BAGLEY
inked by LARRY MAHLSTEDT
lettered by BILL OAKLEY
colored by BOB SHAREN
computer seps by MALIBU
edited by BOB BUDIANSKY

BLASTS FROM THE PAST!

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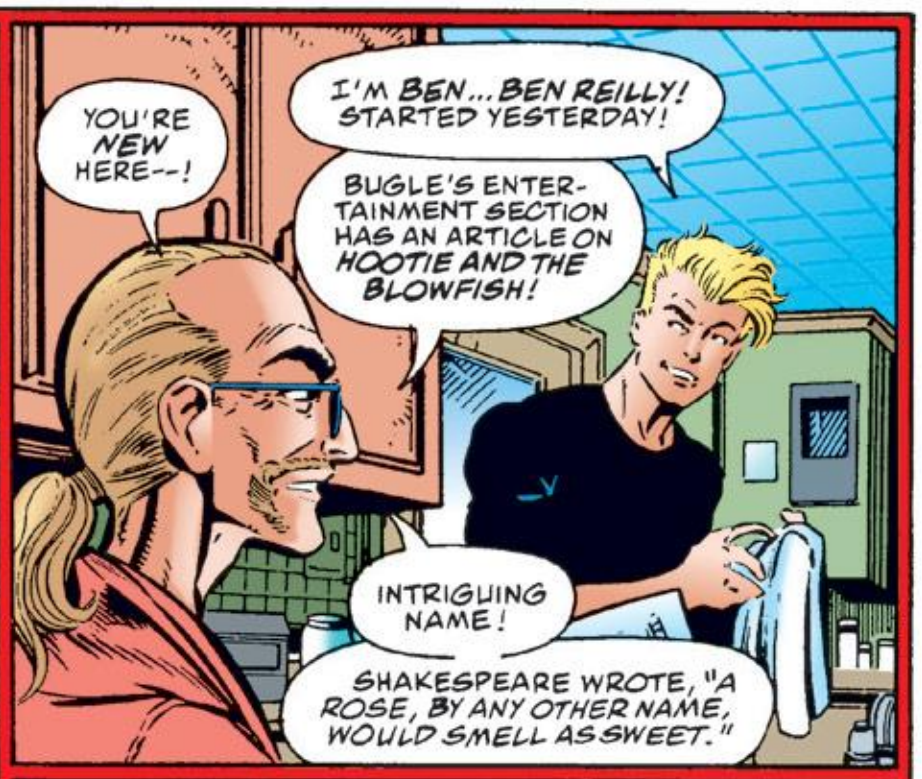
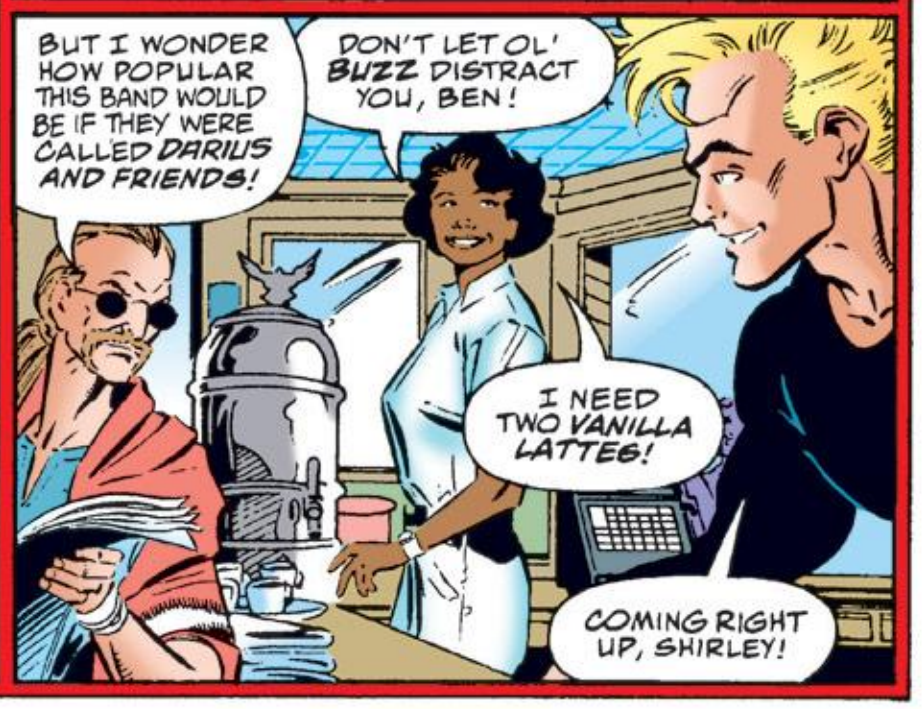
FRANKLY, I'M SURPRISED YOU DIDN'T PULL ONE OF PARKER'S OLD ACTION SHOTS OUT OF THE FILES!
SPEAKING OF PARKER, YOU HEAR ANYTHING SINCE HE AND HIS WIFE WENT OFF TO HAVE THEIR BABY?
GOD...
WHAT A REVOLTING THOUGHT!
IT'S A REAL POSSIBILITY! AFTER ALL, THE ORIGINAL GUY DISAPPEARED A FEW WEEKS AGO!
WASN'T HE RECENTLY SIGHTED IN PORTLAND, OREGON?
UNCONFIRMED! BUT WE DO KNOW SOMEBODY WEARING A NEW VERSION OF HIS COSTUME WAS SPOTTED NEAR CENTENNIAL UNIVERSITY LAST WEEK!
MAYBE HE JUST GOT TIRED OF THE OLD SUIT...
I CERTAINLY HAD ENOUGH OF IT!
WHAT ARE YOU DOING--?!
I THOUGHT YOU SWORE OFF CIGARS!
NOT A WORD.
DAILY-BUGLE
harumphh:
I... DID!
I GUESS SOME OLD HABITS ARE HARD TO BREAK.
YEAH! THEY'RE A LOT LIKE OLD PREJUDICES!
WHAT'S YOUR OPINION ON THIS LEAD STORY, JONAH?
DO YOU REALLY THINK THERE'S A NEW SPIDER-MAN IN TOWN?
HEY, JONAH! TAKE A LOOK OUT THIS WINDOW!
IT LOOKS LIKE OUR HEADLINE STRUCK A NERVE--

"--AND WE'RE NOT THE ONLY ONES CURIOUS ABOUT SPIDER-MAN'S CURRENT SITUATION!"
THE STREETS ARE PRACTICALLY BOILING OVER WITH WILD AND CRAZY RUMORS ABOUT MY OL' WEB-HEADED HOMEBOY!
MAYBE SPIDEY AND I HAVEN'T EXACTLY BEEN THE BEST OF BUDS OVER THE YEARS, BUT HE RECENTLY CAME THROUGH FOR ME...*
*AS SHOWN IN SPIDER-MAN UNLIMITED #5.
IT'S TIME I RETURNED THE FAVOR!
I OWE IT TO HIM TO LEARN WHAT'S REALLY GOING ON!
IS HE MERELY TRYING TO UPDATE HIS LOOK... OR HAS SOMEONE ELSE COPPED HIS GIG?!
SPIDEY PAGES
THE USUAL HAUNTS
AT 6:00
IF HE'S ANYWHERE NEAR MANHATTAN, HE'S BOUND TO SEE OR HEAR ABOUT MY FLAMING INVITATION--
--AND ONLY THE REAL SPIDER-MAN WILL KNOW THE LOCATION OF OUR REGULAR MEETING SITE!
DAILY BUGLE

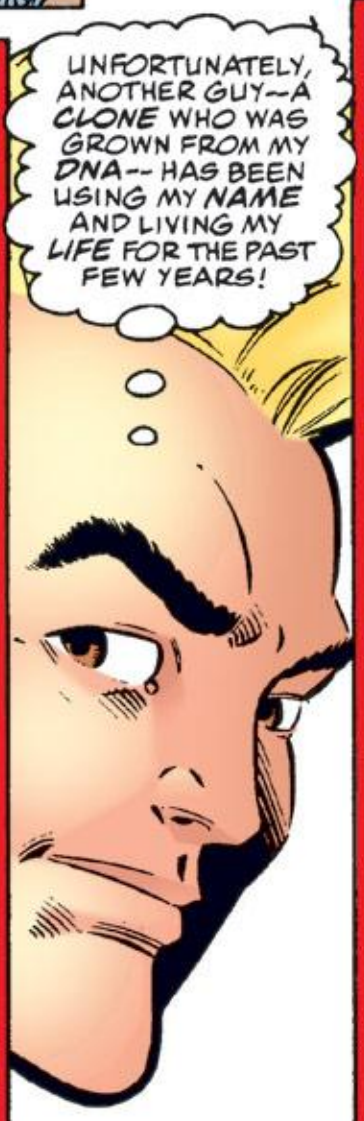
WHO-TEA!
The Daily Grind

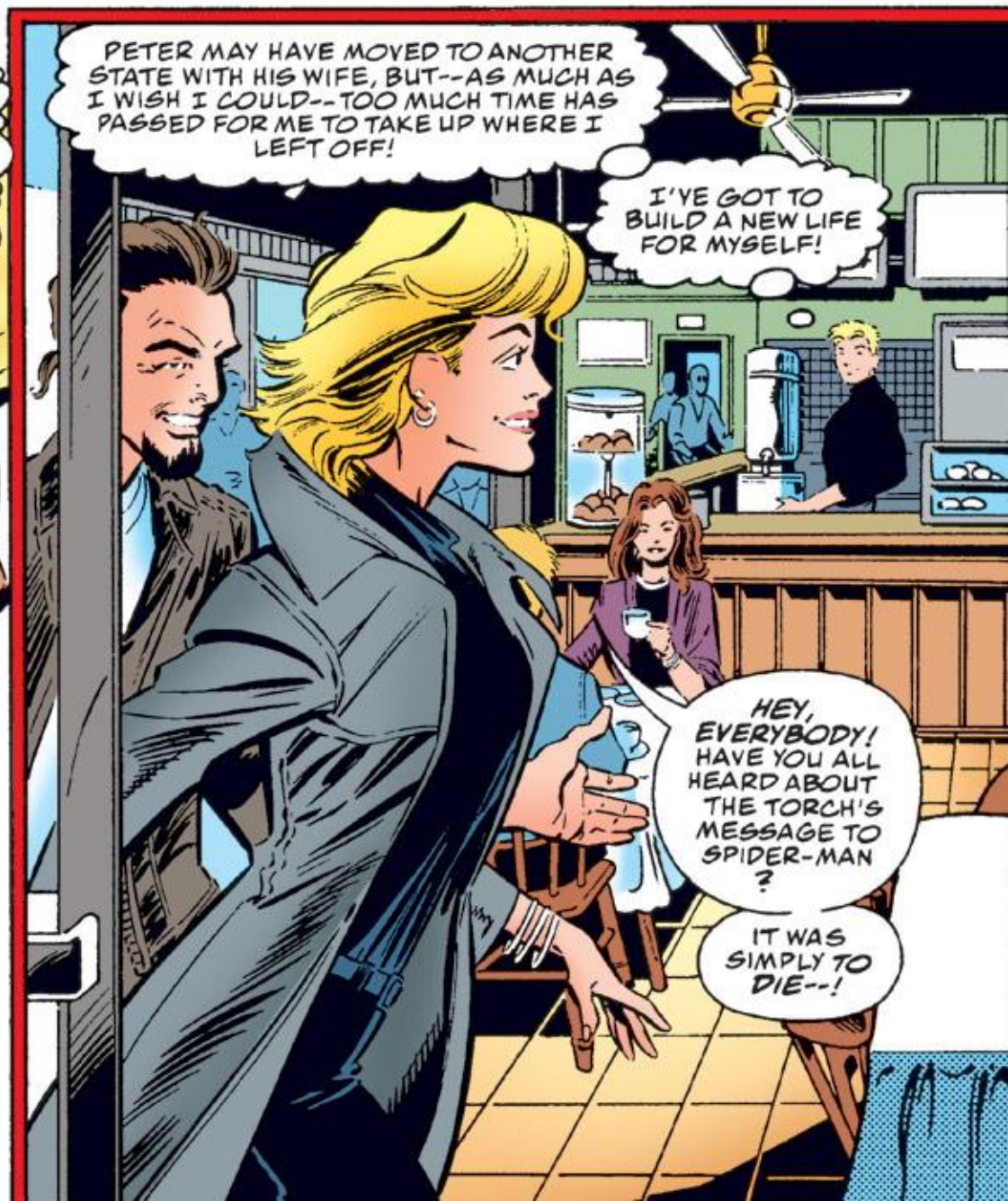
WHO-TEA!
WHOOOTEA!
UH... YOU OKAY, MISTER?
JUST FINE!

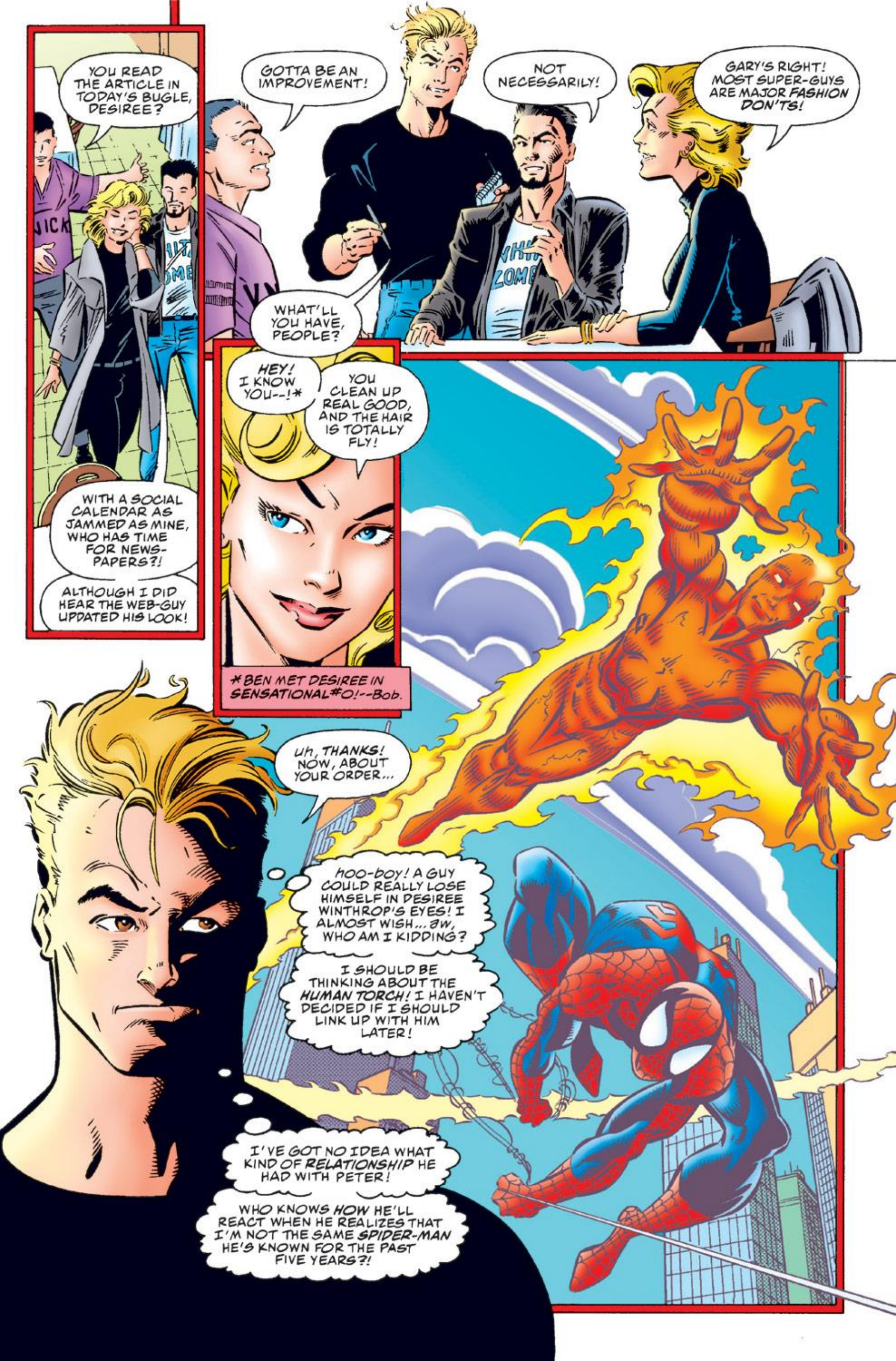

YOU'RE NEW HERE--!
I'M BEN... BEN REILLY! STARTED YESTERDAY!
BUGLE'S ENTERTAINMENT SECTION HAS AN ARTICLE ON HOOTIE AND THE BLOWFISH!
INTRIGUING NAME!
SHAKESPEARE WROTE, "A ROSE, BY ANY OTHER NAME, WOULD SMELL AS SWEET."


BUT I WONDER HOW POPULAR THIS BAND WOULD BE IF THEY WERE CALLED DARIUS AND FRIENDS!
DON'T LET OL' BUZZ DISTRACT YOU, BEN!
I NEED TWO VANILLA LATTES!
COMING RIGHT UP, SHIRLEY!

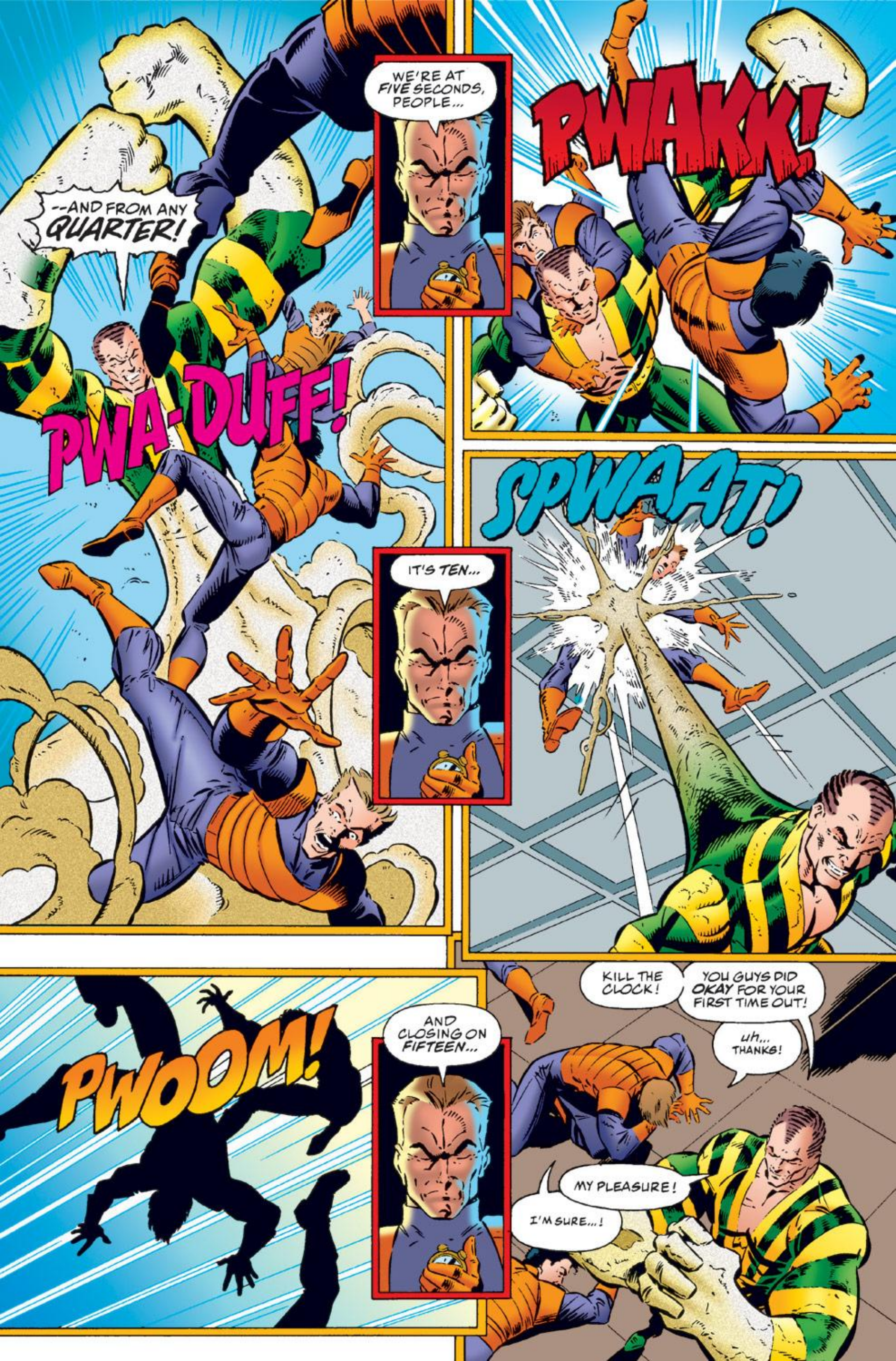
NAMES ARE A SUBJECT I'M REAL SENSITIVE ABOUT!
BEN REILLY IS A FICTION. I'M ACTUALLY PETER PARKER!


UNFORTUNATELY, ANOTHER GUY--A CLONE WHO WAS GROWN FROM MY DNA-- HAS BEEN USING MY NAME AND LIVING MY LIFE FOR THE PAST FEW YEARS!


PETER MAY HAVE MOVED TO ANOTHER STATE WITH HIS WIFE, BUT--AS MUCH AS I WISH I COULD--TOO MUCH TIME HAS PASSED FOR ME TO TAKE UP WHERE I LEFT OFF!
I'VE GOT TO BUILD A NEW LIFE FOR MYSELF!
HEY, EVERYBODY! HAVE YOU ALL HEARD ABOUT THE TORCH'S MESSAGE TO SPIDER-MAN?
IT WAS SIMPLY TO DIE--!


YOU READ THE ARTICLE IN TODAY'S BUGLE, DESIREE?
WITH A SOCIAL CALENDAR AS JAMMED AS MINE, WHO HAS TIME FOR NEWS-PAPERS?!
ALTHOUGH I DID HEAR THE WEB-GUY UPDATED HIS LOOK!
GOTTA BE AN IMPROVEMENT!
NOT NECESSARILY!
GARY'S RIGHT! MOST SUPER-GUYS ARE MAJOR FASHION DON'TS!
WHAT'LL YOU HAVE, PEOPLE?
HEY! I KNOW YOU--!*
YOU CLEAN UP REAL GOOD, AND THE HAIR IS TOTALLY FLY!
*BEN MET DESIREE IN SENSATIONAL #0!--Bob.
UH, THANKS! NOW, ABOUT YOUR ORDER...
HOO-BOY! A GUY COULD REALLY LOSE HIMSELF IN DESIREE WINTHROP'S EYES! I ALMOST WISH... AW, WHO AM I KIDDING?
I SHOULD BE THINKING ABOUT THE HUMAN TORCH! I HAVEN'T DECIDED IF I SHOULD LINK UP WITH HIM LATER!
I'VE GOT NO IDEA WHAT KIND OF RELATIONSHIP HE HAD WITH PETER!
WHO KNOWS HOW HE'LL REACT WHEN HE REALIZES THAT I'M NOT THE SAME SPIDER-MAN HE'S KNOWN FOR THE PAST FIVE YEARS?!

AT THAT VERY MOMENT, AT THE EAST 53rd STREET ADDRESS OF THE SYMKARIAN EMBASSY...
THE AMBASSADOR INFORMS ME THAT OUR NEW RECRUITS HAVE ARRIVED--
--AND THEY HAVE ALREADY REPORTED TO THE GYM!
SWELL!
I GUESS YOU WANT ME TO RUN A STANDARD ENDURANCE TEST.
ANY SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS--?
GO EASY ON THEM. THEY'RE NEW TO FIELD WORK.
GOTCHA!
AND SO, SHORTLY...
WELCOME TO AMERICA... AND THE WILD PACK!
AS YOU ALL KNOW, SILVER SABLE INCORPORATED IS SYMKARIA'S MAJOR INDUSTRY!
OUR SECURITY SERVICES ARE IN DEMAND AROUND THE ENTIRE WORLD!
YOU CITIZENS HAVE ALL WORKED HARD FOR A PLACE ON THIS TEAM!
A FIELD ASSIGNMENT IS AN HONOR... A PRIVILEGE... NOT A BIRTHRIGHT!
YOU MUST CONSTANTLY PROVE THAT YOU ARE THE VERY BEST SYMKARIA HAS TO OFFER!
YOU MUST BE STRONG, COURAGEOUS AND VIGILANT!
AN ATTACK COULD COME AT ANY TIME--


--AND FROM ANY QUARTER!
PWA-DUFF!
WE'RE AT FIVE SECONDS, PEOPLE...
PWAKK!
IT'S TEN...
SPWAAT!
AND CLOSING ON FIFTEEN...
PWOOM!
KILL THE CLOCK!
YOU GUYS DID OKAY FOR YOUR FIRST TIME OUT!
uh... THANKS!
MY PLEASURE!
I'M SURE...!

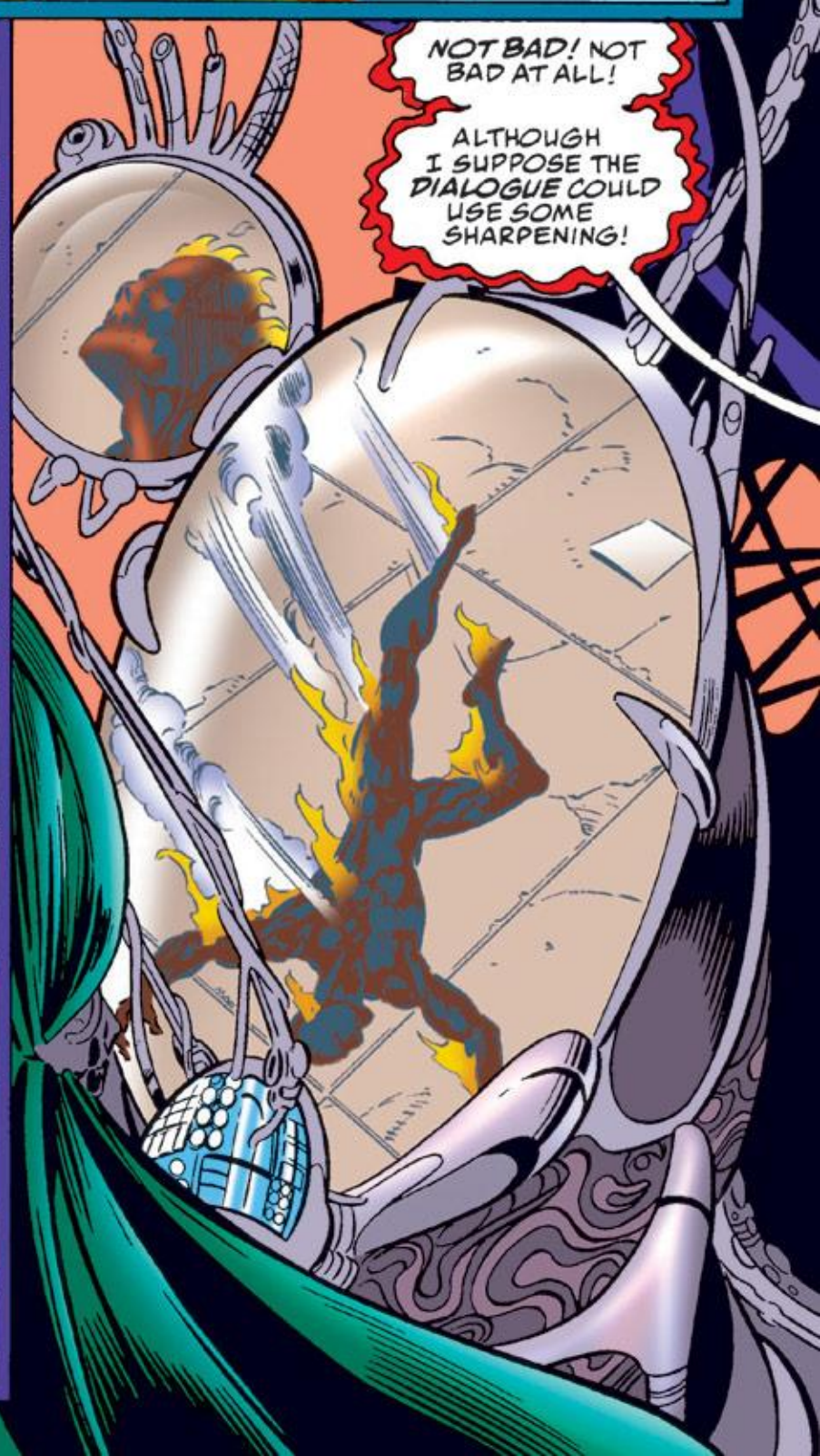
THIS GROUP SHOWS REAL POTENTIAL, SILVER!
I SAW. FIFTEEN SECONDS! HOW LONG BEFORE THEY LAST TWENTY?
GIMME A WEEK-- MAYBE TWO-- TA HARDEN 'EM UP!
DAILY-BUGLE
WHATEVER HAPPENED TO SPIDER-MAN?
HAVE YOU SEEN TODAY'S DAILY BUGLE?
THE LEAD STORY COULD BE A STUNT BY JAMESON TO BOLSTER HIS SAGGING CIRCULATION.
STILL, I'M TEMPTED TO INVESTIGATE...
YER KIDDIN'! I THOUGHT WE DIDN'T DO FREEBIES!
WE DON'T!
THIS COMES UNDER THE HEADING OF RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT!
THOUGH HE WAS NOT ONE OF OUR REGULAR FREE-LANCERS, THE OLD SPIDER-MAN OFTEN PROVED A USEFUL ALLY.
IT BEHOOVES US TO LEARN IF HE HAS, INDEED, BEEN REPLACED.
I HOPE YOU AIN'T PLANNIN' TA RUN AN ENDURANCE TEST ON HIM!
ME? DON'T BE SILLY!
THAT'S YOUR JOB!
THUS, SOMETIME LATER...
ALMOST SIX O'CLOCK! TIME TO RENDEZVOUS WITH THE OL' WEBHEAD!
I JUST HOPE HE SHOWS!
BOY! I'M GOING TO FEEL LIKE A REAL JERK IF THIS NEW COSTUME JAZZ IS JUST SOME CRUMMY ATTEMPT AT SOME FREE PUBLICITY!

AGENT 14 TO SYMKARIA ONE! I AM TRACKING THE HUMAN TORCH!
HE IS CURRENTLY MOVING TO THE WEST...IN THE DIRECTION OF AGENT 27!
I GOT HIM, AGENT 14--
--AND HIS FINAL DESTINATION APPEARS TO BE THE STATUE OF LIBERTY!
BUT, EVEN AS THIS CRITICAL BIT OF INFORMATION IS QUICKLY RELAYED TO SILVER SABLE...
HI-HO, FLAME-BRAIN! THERE'S NO NEED TO BURN UP THE SKIES FOR LITTLE OL' ME!
SPIDER-MAN! I SEE YOU GOT MY MESSAGE!
WHO COULD MISS IT? YOU'VE GOT ABOUT THE WORST CASE OF SUBTLETY DEFICIT DISORDER I'VE EVER SEEN!
WHAT'S THE BIG EMERGENCY?
I'VE RECENTLY LEARNED THAT YOU ARE IN SERIOUS DANGER!
SOMEONE INTENDS TO KILL YOU!
REALLY?
YOU GOT ANY IDEA WHO--?

AS A MATTER OF FACT, I DO--!
LIKE EVERYONE ELSE IN THIS GREAT CITY, I HATE YOU!
YOU'RE NOTHING BUT AN INSUFFERABLE INSECT! A WALL-CRAWLING FREAK!

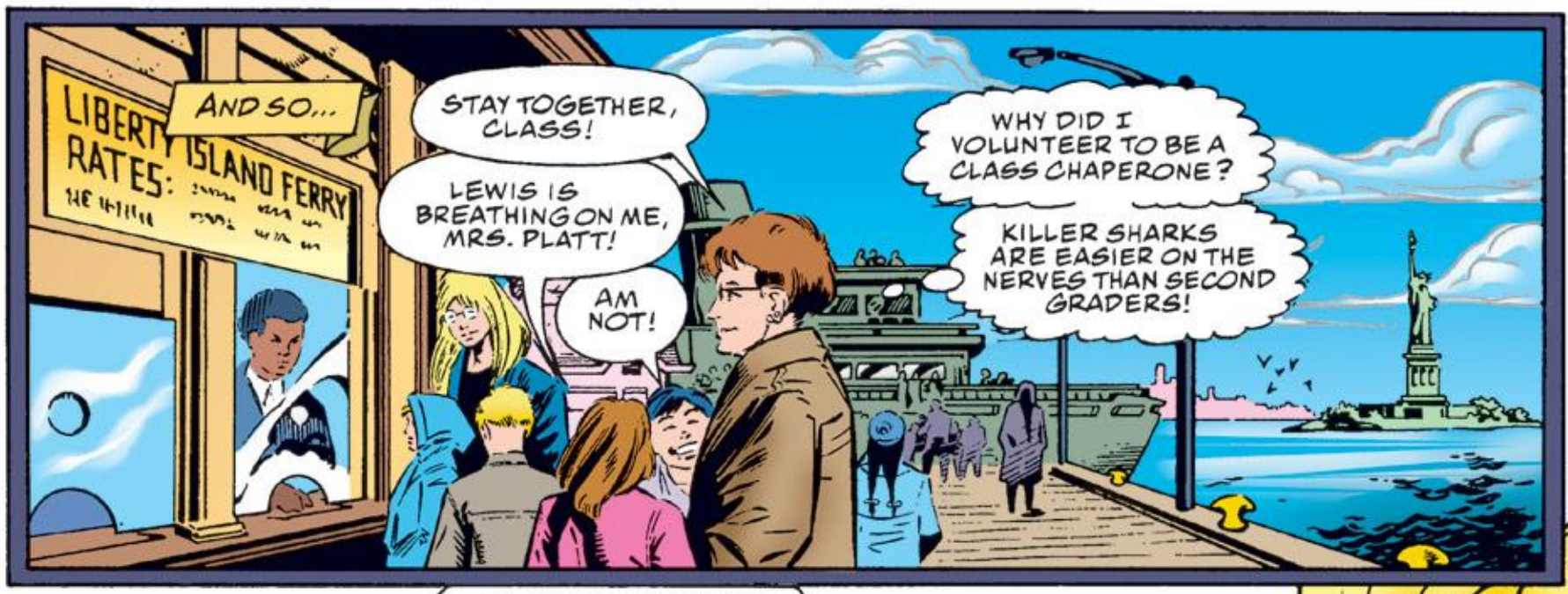
YOU'RE TOO FAST! TOO STRONG AND AGILE!
I COULDN'T RISK GIVING YOU A FIGHTING CHANCE, SO I DELIBERATELY LURED YOU UP HERE WHERE I HAD THE ADVANTAGE!
YOU ARE TOAST, MY FRIEND! YOU CAN'T POSSIBLY AVOID MY DEADLY FLAME!
AARGHH!

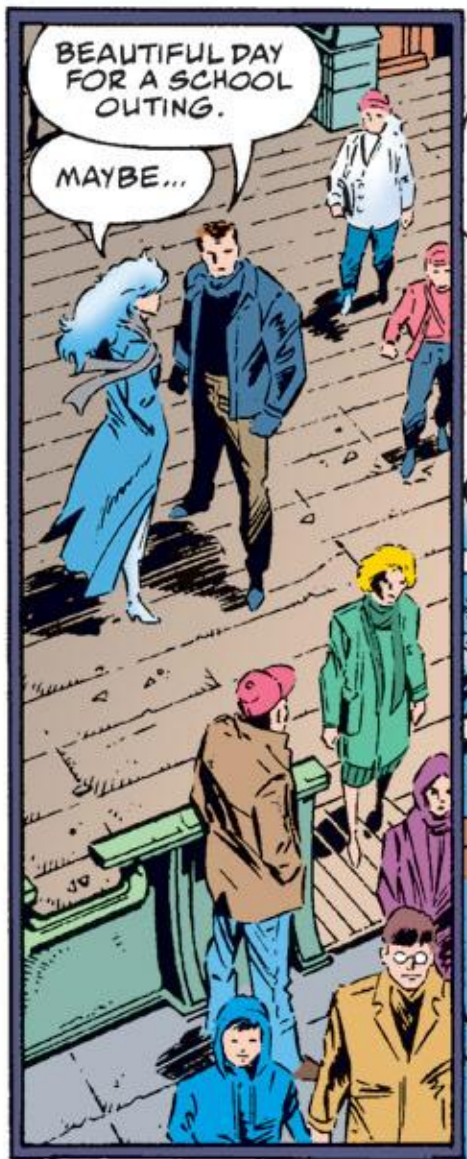
NIGHTY-NIGHT, PEABRAIN!
IT'S A LOOOONG WAY TO THE GROUND--
--AND IT'S THE LAST TRIP YOU'LL EVER MAKE!
HA-HA-HA!


NOT BAD! NOT BAD AT ALL!
ALTHOUGH I SUPPOSE THE DIALOGUE COULD USE SOME SHARPENING!

SUCH A PITY IT WASN'T REAL!
THE DIGITAL IMAGERY TRANSMISSION CHIP WHICH ARMADA RECENTLY APPROPRIATED FOR ME*... IS FAR MORE EFFECTIVE THAN I EVER DARED DREAM!
IN A MANNER WHICH WOULD BOGGLE THE MIND OF A LESSER INTELLECT, IT CONVERTS BRAIN WAVES INTO DIGITIZED SIGNALS WHICH ANY NORMAL TELEVISION CAN TRANSLATE INTO SOUND AND PICTURES!
I CAN CREATE INSTANT PROGRAMMING! USING MY OWN THOUGHTS! MY OWN FANTASIES!
WRITERS! ACTORS! SETS! AND COSTLY PRODUCTION FACILITIES WILL HAVE BECOME OBSOLETE!
I CAN LITERALLY CREATE AND SUPPLY A COMPLETE TELEVISION NETWORK WITH THE POWER OF MY OWN MIND!
*SEE SENSATIONAL SPIDER-MAN #0 FOR DETAILS--Bob.
IN THIS AGE OF INFORMATION...
...THE GREATEST POWER BELONGS TO WHOEVER RULES THE AIRWAVES!
AND SOON-- VERY SOON-- THAT SHALL BE MYSTERIO!
AND I WILL CELEBRATE BY ACHIEVING A LONG-CHERISHED DREAM...
...THE TOTAL DESTRUCTION OF SPIDER-MAN!

THERE! I HOPE YOU FEEL BETTER!
I FLUFFED YOUR PILLOW AND STRAIGHTENED YOUR BLANKET!
CAN YOU HEAR ME, SEWARD? DO YOU EVEN KNOW I'M HERE?
WHERE ARE YOU, MAN? IS YOUR MIND STILL WANDERING THROUGH CYBER-SPACE?
YOU GOTTA WAKE UP! YOU JUST GOTTA! THE LONGER YOU REMAIN IN THIS COMA, THE LESS CHANCE YOU HAVE OF EVER REGAINING THE FULL USE OF YOUR BODY!
I... I'LL STOP IN AGAIN TOMORROW, PAL!
WHAT A LIFE! I HAVE A FAKE NAME, A DEAD-END JOB, AND MY ONLY FRIEND IS IN A COMA!
I GUESS THINGS COULD ALWAYS BE WORSE!
FOR ME... THEY USUALLY ARE!
AT LEAST I CAN TAKE SOME COMFORT IN THE FACT THAT I KNOW WHO I REALLY AM!
OKAY! I HAVE THE WHOLE EVENING AHEAD OF ME... WHAT SHOULD I DO?
TRY TO GET A LINE ON THAT MISSING TECHNOLOGY WHICH ARMADA RECENTLY RIPPED OFF?
FIND A DECENT APARTMENT?
CATCH A MOVIE?
WHIP UP SOME MORE WEB FLUID?
HAVE A LEISURELY DINNER?
OR, ENJOY A NIGHT OUT WITH A CERTAIN FLAME-COVERED CLOWN?


AND SO...
LIBERTY ISLAND FERRY RATES:
STAY TOGETHER, CLASS!
LEWIS IS BREATHING ON ME, MRS. PLATT!
AM NOT!
WHY DID I VOLUNTEER TO BE A CLASS CHAPERONE?
KILLER SHARKS ARE EASIER ON THE NERVES THAN SECOND GRADERS!


BEAUTIFUL DAY FOR A SCHOOL OUTING.
MAYBE...

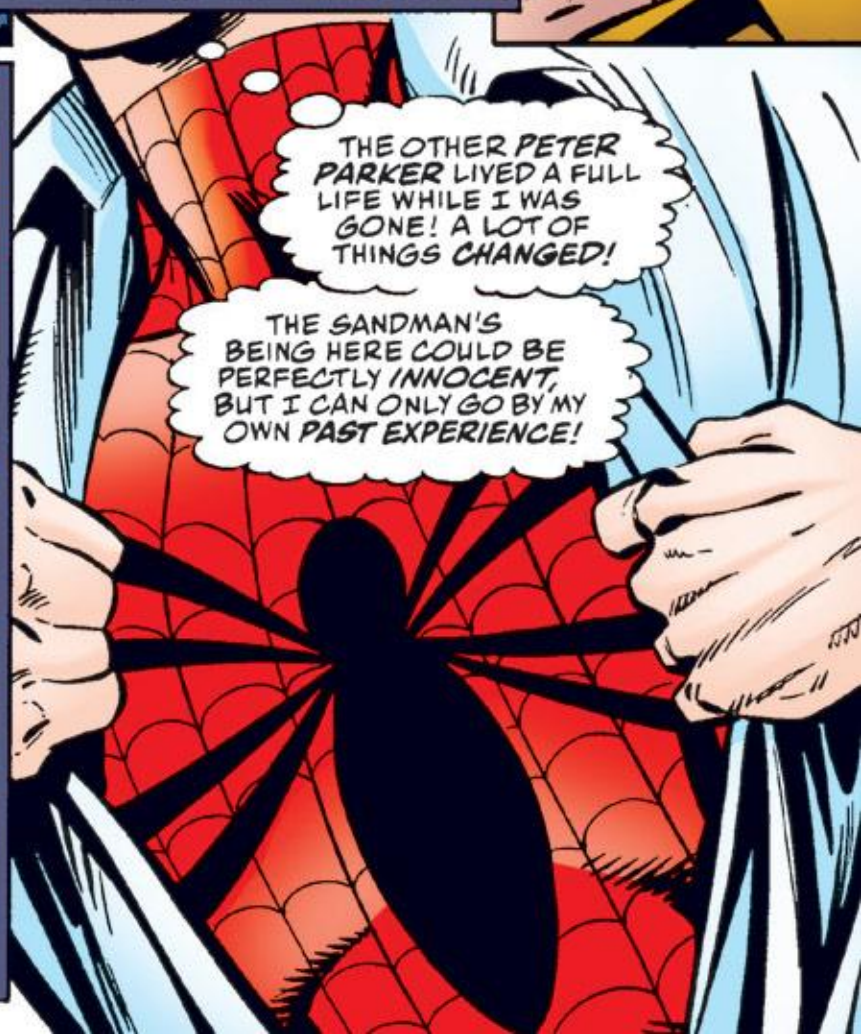
...BUT WE'RE NOT HERE TO ENJOY THE SIGHTS!
SPIDER-MAN CAN'T FLY LIKE THE TORCH. IF LIBERTY ISLAND IS THEIR RENDEZVOUS POINT, HE MAY BE ON THIS FERRY.
HOW SHOULD I PLAY HIM?
I HAVEN'T DECIDED YET.

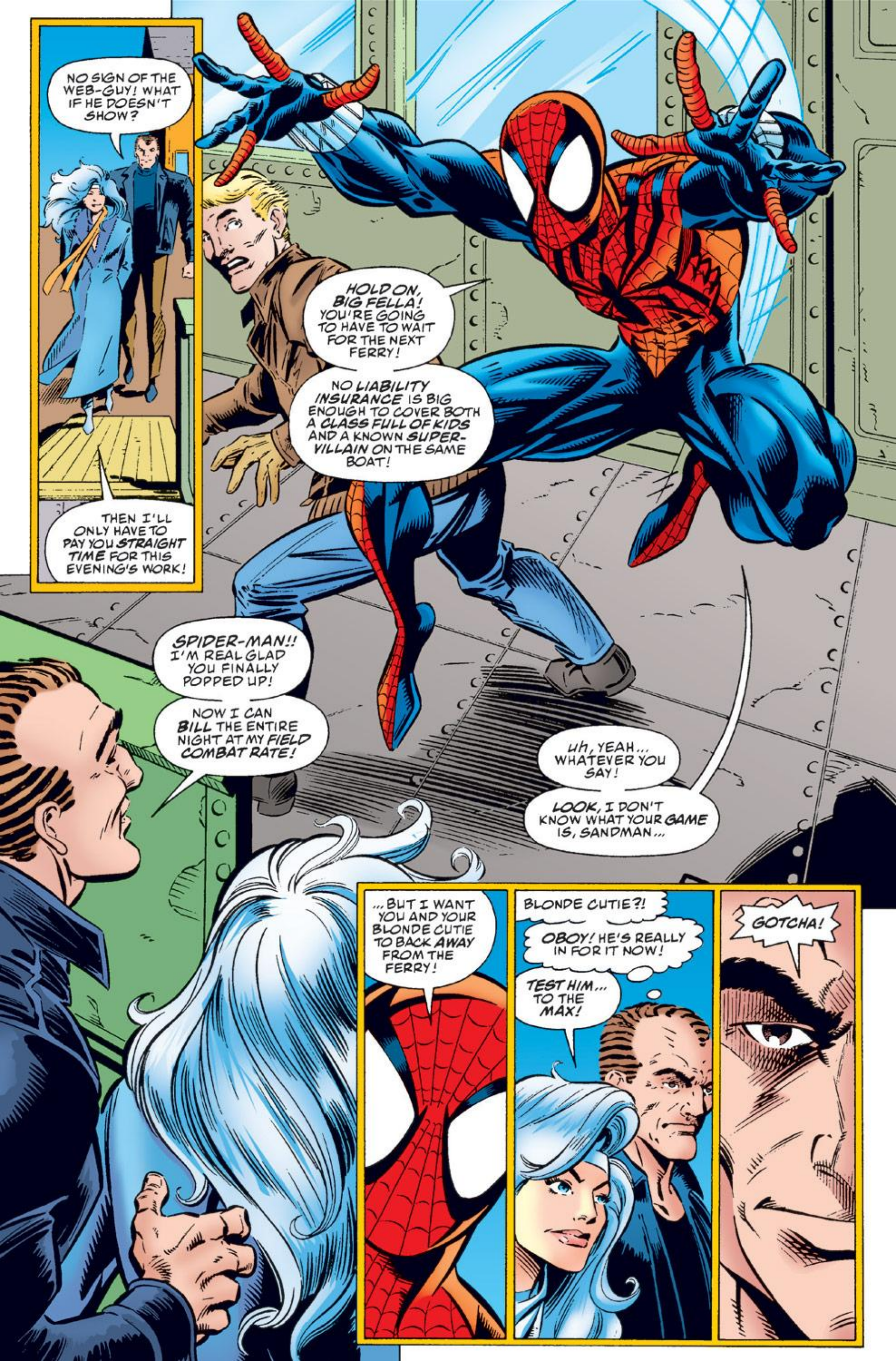
OKAY! YOU'RE THE BOSS!
THIS IS PROBABLY GOING TO BE A BIG WASTE OF TIME, BUT I CAN'T AFFORD NOT TO CHECK IT OUT!
WHO KNOWS? IT COULD BE WORTH A FEW LAUGHS TO SEE JOHNNY STORM AFTER ALL THESE YEARS, AND--WHOA!
THAT BIG BRUISER AHEAD OF ME! HAVEN'T SEEN HIM IN OVER FIVE YEARS, BUT I'D KNOW HIM ANYWHERE--

--THE SANDMAN!

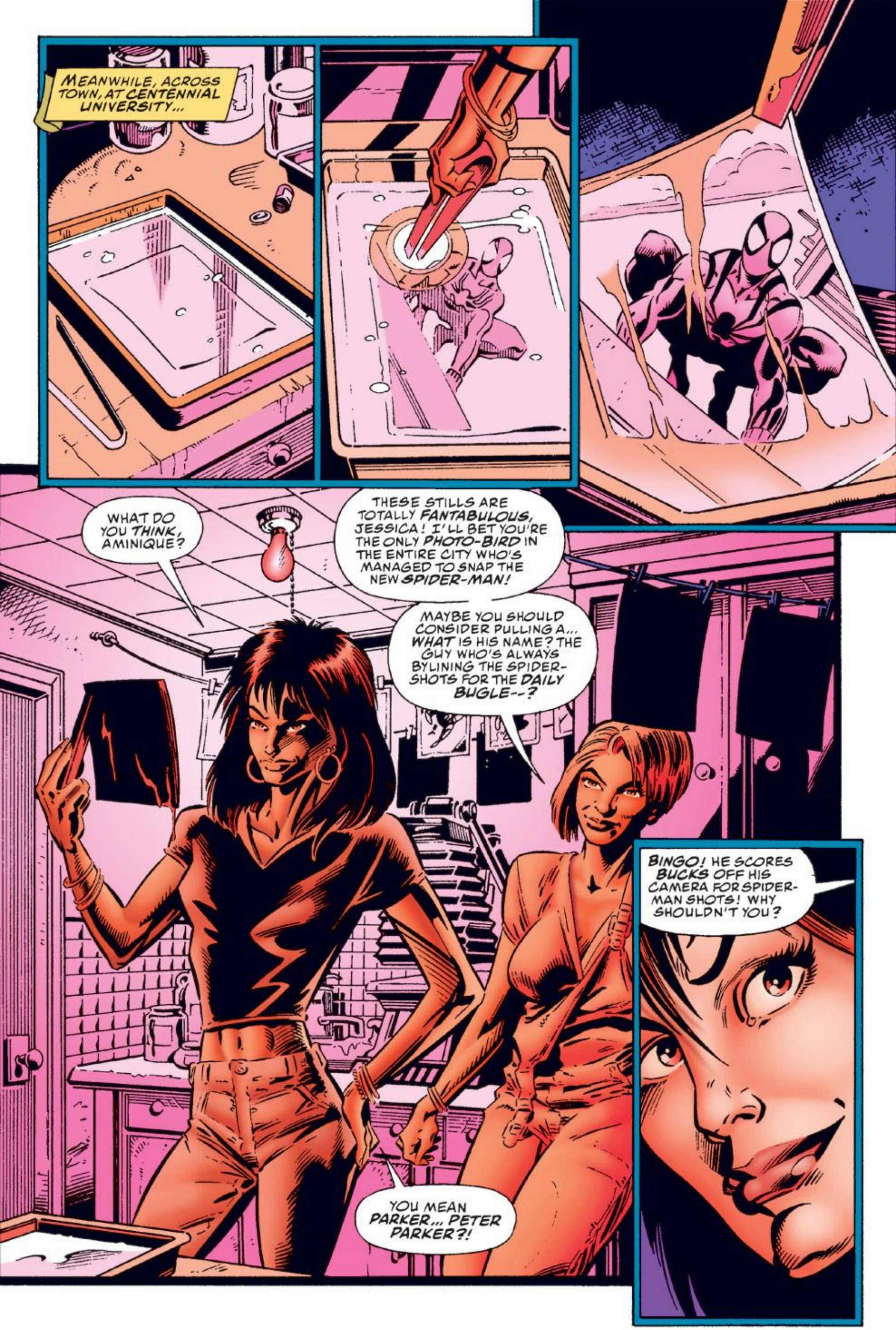
HE MUST BE HERE BECAUSE OF THE TORCH'S MESSAGE!
HOW'D HE STUMBLE ON OUR MEETING SITE? IS HE AFTER ME OR JOHNNY?
TO MAKE MATTERS WORSE, THIS FERRY IS FILLED WITH CHILDREN, WHICH HE CAN USE AS HOSTAGES!

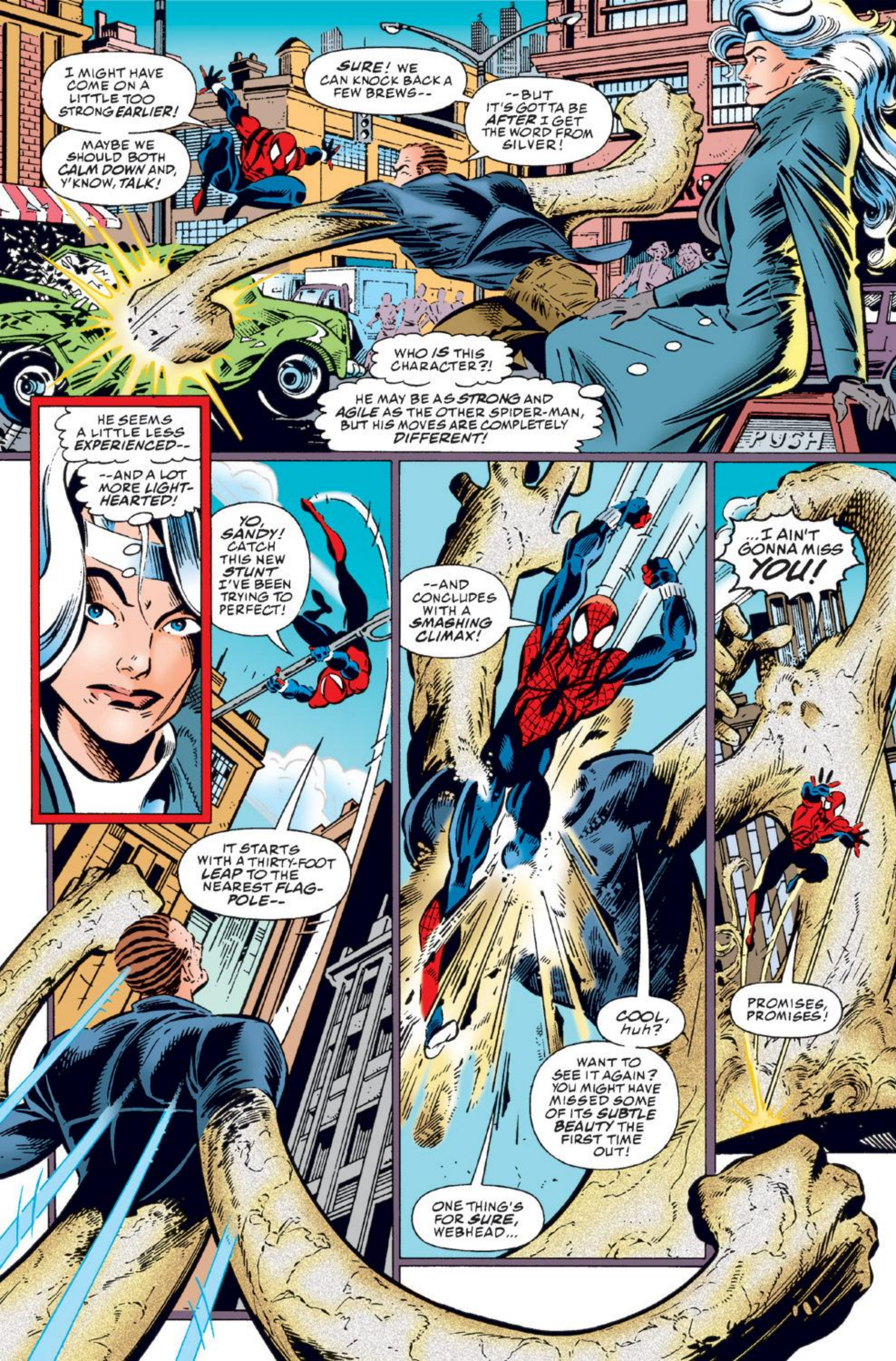
I READ SOMEWHERE THAT THE SANDMAN HAD JOINED A HIGH-TECH MERCENARY GROUP A FEW YEARS BACK!
WISH I'D PAID MORE ATTENTION TO THAT ARTICLE!

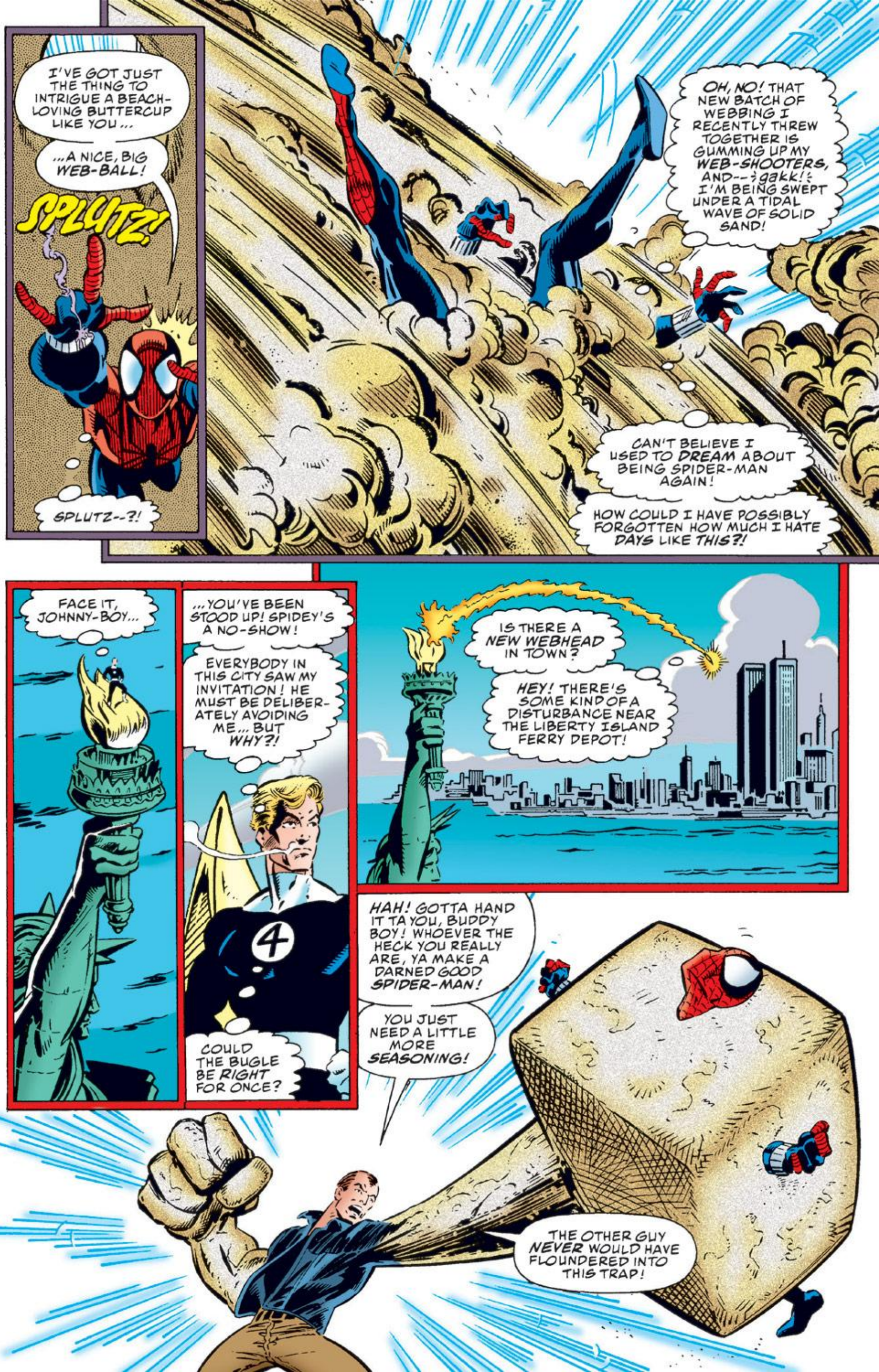

THE OTHER PETER PARKER LIVED A FULL LIFE WHILE I WAS GONE! A LOT OF THINGS CHANGED!
THE SANDMAN'S BEING HERE COULD BE PERFECTLY INNOCENT, BUT I CAN ONLY GO BY MY OWN PAST EXPERIENCE!

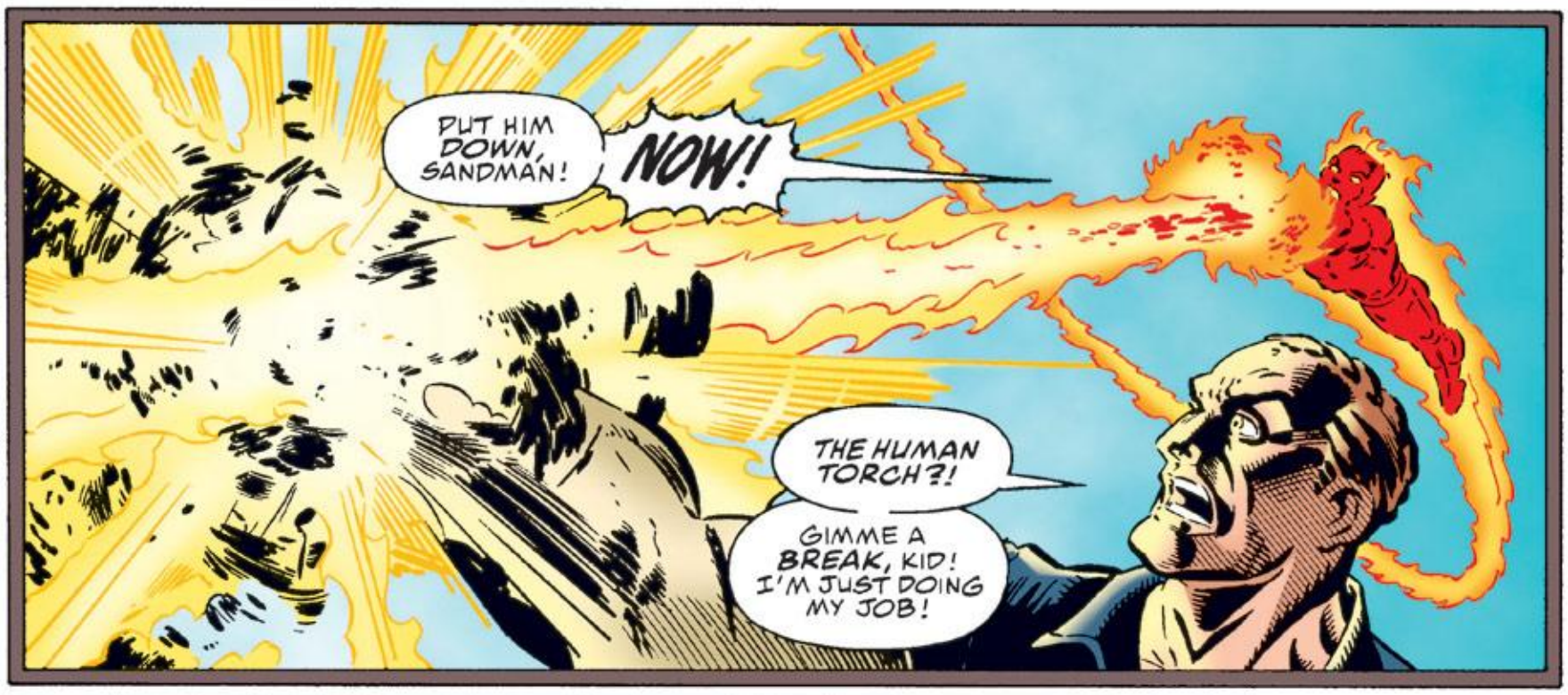

NO SIGN OF THE WEB-GUY! WHAT IF HE DOESN'T SHOW?
THEN I'LL ONLY HAVE TO PAY YOU STRAIGHT TIME FOR THIS EVENING'S WORK!
HOLD ON, BIG FELLA! YOU'RE GOING TO HAVE TO WAIT FOR THE NEXT FERRY!
NO LIABILITY INSURANCE IS BIG ENOUGH TO COVER BOTH A CLASS FULL OF KIDS AND A KNOWN SUPER-VILLAIN ON THE SAME BOAT!
SPIDER-MAN!! I'M REAL GLAD YOU FINALLY POPPED UP!
NOW I CAN BILL THE ENTIRE NIGHT AT MY FIELD COMBAT RATE!
UH, YEAH... WHATEVER YOU SAY!
LOOK, I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOUR GAME IS, SANDMAN...
...BUT I WANT YOU AND YOUR BLONDE CUTIE TO BACK AWAY FROM THE FERRY!
BLONDE CUTIE?!
OBOY! HE'S REALLY IN FOR IT NOW!
TEST HIM... TO THE MAX!
GOTCHA!

YOU TRYIN' TA COMMIT SUICIDE, WEBS? WHERE ARE YOUR BLASTED MANNERS?!
EVEN DOCTOR DOOM TREATS SILVER SABLE WITH MORE RESPECT!
SILVER SABLE?! I THOUGHT SHE LOOKED FAMILIAR! I ONCE SAW HER ON LETTERMAN!
SHE'S SOME KIND OF INTERNATIONAL BOUNTY HUNTER!
DID SOMEONE HIRE HER AND THE SANDMAN? SOMEONE LIKE ARMADA... OR HIS MYSTERIOUS EMPLOYER?!
HECK! WITH MY LUCK, THE SUSPECTS COULD RANGE ALL THE WAY FROM THE NEW DOC OCK TO BARNEY, THE PURPLE DINOSAUR!
AT LEAST I'VE MANAGED TO LURE SANDY AWAY FROM THE KIDS! NOW ALL I HAVE TO DO IS FIND A WAY TO KEEP HIM FROM REARRANGING MY EVER-ADORABLE FACE!
YEAH... THAT'S ALL!


MEANWHILE, ACROSS TOWN, AT CENTENNIAL UNIVERSITY...
WHAT DO YOU THINK, AMINIQUE?
THESE STILLS ARE TOTALLY FANTABULOUS, JESSICA! I'LL BET YOU'RE THE ONLY PHOTO-BIRD IN THE ENTIRE CITY WHO'S MANAGED TO SNAP THE NEW SPIDER-MAN!
MAYBE YOU SHOULD CONSIDER PULLING A... WHAT IS HIS NAME? THE GUY WHO'S ALWAYS BYLINING THE SPIDER-SHOTS FOR THE DAILY BUGLE--?
YOU MEAN PARKER... PETER PARKER?!
BINGO! HE SCORES BUCKS OFF HIS CAMERA FOR SPIDER-MAN SHOTS! WHY SHOULDN'T YOU?


I MIGHT HAVE COME ON A LITTLE TOO STRONG EARLIER!
MAYBE WE SHOULD BOTH CALM DOWN AND, Y'KNOW, TALK!
SURE! WE CAN KNOCK BACK A FEW BREWS--
--BUT IT'S GOTTA BE AFTER I GET THE WORD FROM SILVER!
WHO IS THIS CHARACTER?!
HE MAY BE AS STRONG AND AGILE AS THE OTHER SPIDER-MAN, BUT HIS MOVES ARE COMPLETELY DIFFERENT!
PUSH
HE SEEMS A LITTLE LESS EXPERIENCED--
--AND A LOT MORE LIGHT-HEARTED!
YO, SANDY! CATCH THIS NEW STUNT I'VE BEEN TRYING TO PERFECT!
IT STARTS WITH A THIRTY-FOOT LEAP TO THE NEAREST FLAG-POLE--
--AND CONCLUDES WITH A SMASHING CLIMAX!
COOL, huh?
WANT TO SEE IT AGAIN? YOU MIGHT HAVE MISSED SOME OF ITS SUBTLE BEAUTY THE FIRST TIME OUT!
ONE THING'S FOR SURE, WEBHEAD...
...I AIN'T GONNA MISS YOU!
PROMISES, PROMISES!


I'VE GOT JUST THE THING TO INTRIGUE A BEACH-LOVING BUTTERCUP LIKE YOU...
...A NICE, BIG WEB-BALL!
SPLUTZ!
SPLUTZ--?!
OH, NO! THAT NEW BATCH OF WEBBING I RECENTLY THREW TOGETHER IS GUMMING UP MY WEB-SHOOTERS, AND--÷gakk!÷ I'M BEING SWEPT UNDER A TIDAL WAVE OF SOLID SAND!
CAN'T BELIEVE I USED TO DREAM ABOUT BEING SPIDER-MAN AGAIN!
HOW COULD I HAVE POSSIBLY FORGOTTEN HOW MUCH I HATE DAYS LIKE THIS?!
FACE IT, JOHNNY-BOY...
...YOU'VE BEEN STOOD UP! SPIDEY'S A NO-SHOW!
EVERYBODY IN THIS CITY SAW MY INVITATION! HE MUST BE DELIBERATELY AVOIDING ME... BUT WHY?!
COULD THE BUGLE BE RIGHT FOR ONCE?
IS THERE A NEW WEBHEAD IN TOWN?
HEY! THERE'S SOME KIND OF A DISTURBANCE NEAR THE LIBERTY ISLAND FERRY DEPOT!
HAH! GOTTA HAND IT TA YOU, BUDDY BOY! WHOEVER THE HECK YOU REALLY ARE, YA MAKE A DARNED GOOD SPIDER-MAN!
YOU JUST NEED A LITTLE MORE SEASONING!
THE OTHER GUY NEVER WOULD HAVE FLOUNDERED INTO THIS TRAP!

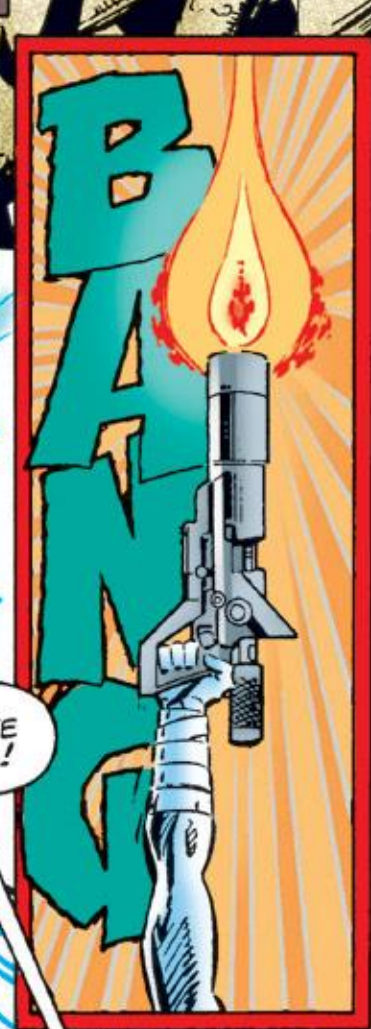

PUT HIM DOWN, SANDMAN!
NOW!
THE HUMAN TORCH?!
GIMME A BREAK, KID! I'M JUST DOING MY JOB!

I APPRECIATE THE ASSIST, MATCHSTICK... EVEN IF IT WASN'T NEEDED!
A ROCK-HARD FIST IS NOTHING FOR SPIDER-MAN TO WORRY ABOUT!

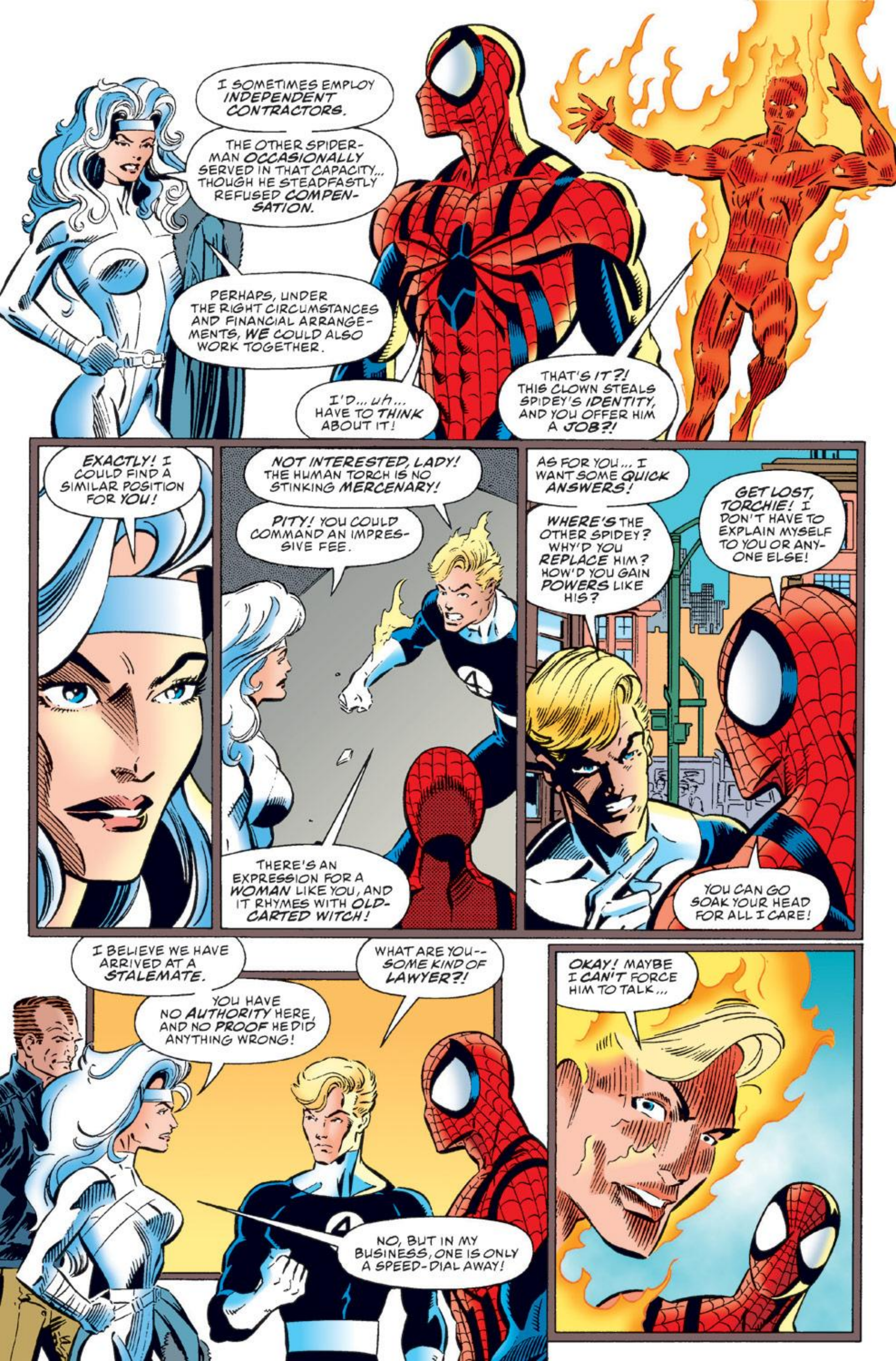
MAN!
YOU TWO REALLY CHEESE ME OFF!

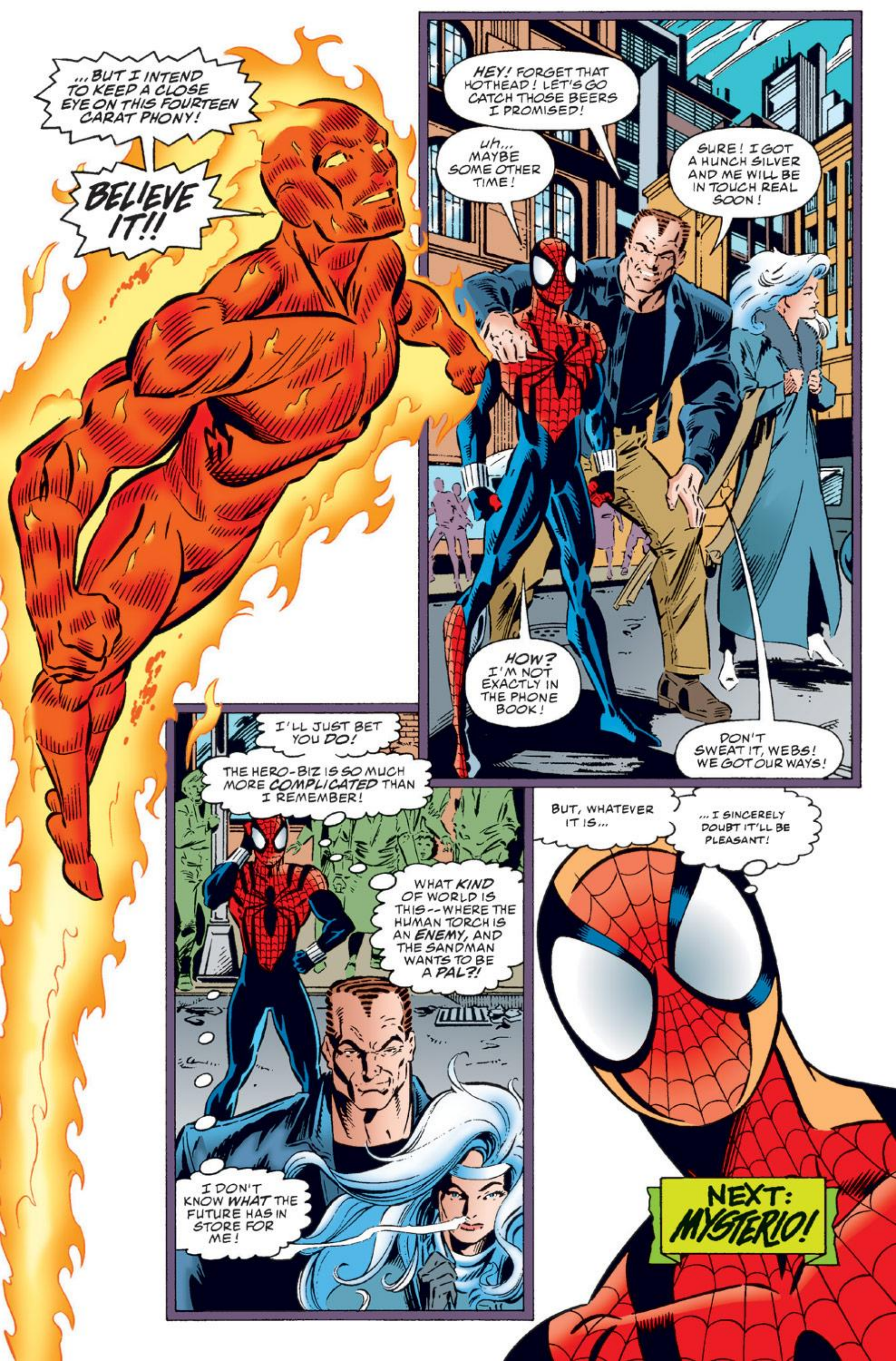
YOU ARE SOOOO LUCKY I WENT STRAIGHT A FEW YEARS AGO!

IF I WAS STILL A BAD GUY, I'D STOMP THE BOTH OF YOU WITHOUT PULLIN' ANY PUNCHES!
EVEN TOGETHER... YOU'RE NO MATCH FOR THE SANDMAN!
I CAN RESHAPE MY BODY INTO ANY WEAPON I CHOOSE, AND--
THAT'S QUITE ENOUGH--!


BANG

UH...
SOMETHING WRONG, SILVER?
NOT AT ALL!
I HAVE ALREADY LEARNED ALL I NEEDED TO KNOW.
BASED ON MY OBSERVATIONS, THIS NEW SPIDER-MAN APPEARS TO POSSESS ALL THE NECESSARY SKILLS AND ABILITIES TO LEGITIMATELY LAY CLAIM TO THE NAME.
ALTHOUGH I STRONGLY URGE HIM TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT THAT INFERIOR WEBBING.
NEW SPIDER-MAN--?!
YOU MEAN HE REALLY IS A DIFFERENT GUY?
I'M ACTUALLY THE FIRST SPIDER-MAN ... THE ORIGINAL ONE ... BUT I DON'T OWE THESE PEOPLE AN EXPLANATION!


I SOMETIMES EMPLOY INDEPENDENT CONTRACTORS.
THE OTHER SPIDER-MAN OCCASIONALLY SERVED IN THAT CAPACITY... THOUGH HE STEADFASTLY REFUSED COMPENSATION.
PERHAPS, UNDER THE RIGHT CIRCUMSTANCES AND FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS, WE COULD ALSO WORK TOGETHER.
I'D... UH... HAVE TO THINK ABOUT IT!
THAT'S IT?! THIS CLOWN STEALS SPIDEY'S IDENTITY, AND YOU OFFER HIM A JOB?!
EXACTLY! I COULD FIND A SIMILAR POSITION FOR YOU!
NOT INTERESTED, LADY! THE HUMAN TORCH IS NO STINKING MERCENARY!
PITY! YOU COULD COMMAND AN IMPRESSIVE FEE.
THERE'S AN EXPRESSION FOR A WOMAN LIKE YOU, AND IT RHYMES WITH OLD-CARTED WITCH!
AS FOR YOU... I WANT SOME QUICK ANSWERS!
WHERE'S THE OTHER SPIDEY? WHY'D YOU REPLACE HIM? HOW'D YOU GAIN POWERS LIKE HIS?
GET LOST, TORCHIE! I DON'T HAVE TO EXPLAIN MYSELF TO YOU OR ANYONE ELSE!
YOU CAN GO SOAK YOUR HEAD FOR ALL I CARE!
I BELIEVE WE HAVE ARRIVED AT A STALEMATE.
YOU HAVE NO AUTHORITY HERE, AND NO PROOF HE DID ANYTHING WRONG!
WHAT ARE YOU-- SOME KIND OF LAWYER?!
NO, BUT IN MY BUSINESS, ONE IS ONLY A SPEED-DIAL AWAY!
OKAY! MAYBE I CAN'T FORCE HIM TO TALK...


...BUT I INTEND TO KEEP A CLOSE EYE ON THIS FOURTEEN CARAT PHONY!
BELIEVE IT!!
HEY! FORGET THAT HOTHEAD! LET'S GO CATCH THOSE BEERS I PROMISED!
UH... MAYBE SOME OTHER TIME!
SURE! I GOT A HUNCH SILVER AND ME WILL BE IN TOUCH REAL SOON!
HOW? I'M NOT EXACTLY IN THE PHONE BOOK!
DON'T SWEAT IT, WEBS! WE GOT OUR WAYS!
I'LL JUST BET YOU DO!
THE HERO-BIZ IS SO MUCH MORE COMPLICATED THAN I REMEMBER!
WHAT KIND OF WORLD IS THIS--WHERE THE HUMAN TORCH IS AN ENEMY, AND THE SANDMAN WANTS TO BE A PAL?!
I DON'T KNOW WHAT THE FUTURE HAS IN STORE FOR ME!
BUT, WHATEVER IT IS...
...I SINCERELY DOUBT IT'LL BE PLEASANT!
NEXT: MYSTERIO!

THE SPIDER'S WEB

c/o MARVEL COMICS
387 PARK AVE. SO.
NEW YORK, NY
10016

BOB BUDIANSKY, EDITOR

MARK BERNARDO, ASST. EDITOR

CORRESPONDENTS: IF YOU DON'T WANT YOUR FULL ADDRESS PRINTED, PLEASE LET US KNOW.

Dear Spider's Web,

Re: Issue #401.

There may be three Peter Parkers running around, but there's only one Mary Jane! Mr. DeMatteis did an excellent job of portraying her confusion, her fear, and inevitably, her resolve to do something about all the manipulations she has been subjected to of late. That she is still "saddened and sickened" in having to resort to a gun for protection speaks volumes about Mary Jane's moral convictions. Her reaction when the gun went off was perfectly natural and entirely realistic. having the bullet shatter that picture of her and Peter in happier times was also a nice touch.

What's really going on with the clone situation is, by this time, beyond speculation. Maybe that has been your editorial intention: to so muddy the waters that we give up on trying to guess what's happening, and just sit back and enjoy the story being told. Once again, as is always the case with Messrs. DeMatteis and Bagley, I can't help but do exactly that.

Mark J. Kiewlak
316 West Main Street
Nanticoke, PA 18634

Part of the intention of the "Mark of Kaine" storyline was to show in no uncertain terms what a tough lady Mary Jane is. It's gratifying to see that many of you have noticed. She may need that strength in months ahead...

Dear Spider's Web,

I've been reading Spider-Man books for ten years, and this is the first letter I have ever submitted to you or any other book. As I was reading ASM #401, I came up with a guess to Kaine's identity. On page 27, as Kaine carries MJ away, there is narration that states, "the woman is his top priority." Why is Mary jane so important to him? Because the baby she's carrying is... who else, Kaine! He's traveled back in time to save his own butt!

He already knows something is going to happen to MJ, and he can't let that happen. He's trying to save MJ from Judas Traveller, who I think is also from Kaine's time. Oh, well, it's only a theory

Ron Cates
13255 Highway 193
Chickamauga, GA 30707

Not quite accurate on Kaine's whys and wherefores, Ron... but we had fun reading your theory anyway! Do us a favor and don't take ten years to write us again, okay? We love letters!

Dear AMAZING,

Issue #401 was... very interesting. However, if you make this third Peter Parker, the one from the pod, the real one... then I shall most certainly get Venom to eat your brains. Let the Parker who has been with MJ the last five years be the true Spider-Man.

As for Kaine, well, he's okay... but his killing of Spider-Man's foes has got to stop! One of the best aspects of the Spider-Man mythos is the villains. Don't let great characters like Mysterio, Electro, Hobgoblin, Vulture, Chameleon, Lizard, or Sandman die. Let these characters plague Spidey forever! Especially Mysterio (my favorite)!

Mark Bagley was tremendous as usual, and I especially enjoyed the cover. Anyway, until Mysterio dies, I will be your number one fan!

Tim Wojton
297 Picture Drive
Pittsburgh, PA 15236

Tim, you must be resting easier now that the third Parker has been revealed to be the clone assassin Spidercide. And Kaine is among the missing currently... but that's a mystery that's due to come to the fore real soon, like , say... next month?

A Mysterio fan, eh? We get the feeling you were pretty pleased with SENSATIONAL #0... and the no-longer-domed one makes his presence felt right here next issue!

Dear Spider's Web,

I just read ASM #402, and it was definitely a scorcher! I like Judas Traveller's mysterious presence as much as the next guy, but change his get-up! Those pearls and chains get on my nerves. And what's that thing around his neck, a lasso of some kind?

That aside, I love what you've done with Spider-Man and his entourage in the last couple of months. With all the interesting events rolling out of the woodwork every other issue, this and every other Spider-book has become a monthly must-have! It is costly, however, due to all the interlocking storylines. Will the books ever be going in their own direction again?

I can't wait to find out who the real Peter Parker is, who Kaine is, and most of all, if Mary Jane's baby will be okay! The suspense is killing me and I love it! Thank you, Mark Bagley, J.M. DeMatteis, and all the rest who worked to make this a very memorable year for the Spider-Man books. With all these new and shattering events presenting themselves, who can compete?

Yusef Tirado
94-30 58th Avenue, Apt. 2B
Queens, NY 11373

Don't know, Yusef! But the Spidey books are ready to take on all challengers!

It seems to us, and sales seem to reflect it, that the majority of readers are happy with the interlocking continuity among the Spider-titles, though we are striving hard to give each book its own identity. This very month features stand-alone stories, while still establishing the status quo of our new Spider-Man.

And Traveller's really upset that he made your "worst dressed" list. He's probably gonna take it out on poor Spidey now! Don't you feel bad?

Well, the ever-important Statement of Ownership is looming, so join us next issue as Spider-Man has his rematch with the ruthless Armada, and the new, deadlier Mysterio plots to rule the airwaves in part two of "Media Blizzard!"

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17. Signature and title of editor, publisher, business manager, or owner: Mary Pope, Customer Service Coordinator 10/1/95.

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