



MARVEL
COMICS

PETER PARKER

OFFICIAL
SEAL OF
APPROVAL
FOR
COMIC BOOKS



SPIDER-MAN

MAY '97 80

SPIDER-MAN

DEATH!
COMES IN
DARKNESS!

The CLIMACTIC CHAPTER of the
CROWN AFFAIR!

DIRECT EDITION



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BLOOD SIMPLE

PETER PARKER, MORBIUS' FANGS POISED AT HIS THROAT, IS IN DEEP TROUBLE!



AND THE FLEDGLING SUPER HERO KNOWN AS SHOC ISN'T IN MUCH BETTER SHAPE.

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OUR LITTLE TALE
BEGINS ON
STATEN ISLAND.

THE HEAVILY FORTIFIED
ESTATE OF THE CRIME LORD
CALLED FORTUNATO.

DON'T WEP

SOMEBODY DIDN'T
KNOW BETTER.

WE ALL KNOW THAT
NO ONE WOULD BE
FOOLISH ENOUGH TO
BREAK INTO SUCH A
DEATH TRAP.

ALSO, ON A LOWER LEVEL
OF THE MANSION,
UNCONNECTED TO THESE
EVENTS...

WHAT DID
I STEP INTO
HERE?

I WAS
HAVING A NICE,
SPIDER-MAN FREE DAY,
MINDING MY BUSINESS
AS I WALKED DOWN THE
STREET WITH MY FELLOW
EMPIRE STATE UNIVERSITY
STUDENT, NEIL AKIN,
WHEN...

...THE
SKY GOES BLACK.
HYDRA TROOPERS
DESCEND FROM THE
SKY, CROWN THE NEW
BAD GUY ON THE BLOCK, SHOWS
UP...

...AND NEIL TURNS
OUT TO BE SHOC, THE
NEW SUPER HERO
ON THE BLOCK. *

THEN I'M DRAGGED BACK TO
STATEN ISLAND, THROWN IN
A CELL WITH A VERY HUNGRY
MORBIUS, THE LIVING VAMPIRE,
AND LEFT TRYING TO FIGURE
OUT HOW TO SAVE MY OWN
NECK WITHOUT REVEALING
MY IDENTITY AS
SPIDER-MAN.

I'VE
GOT TO GET
A NORMAL
LIFE!

*ALL THIS HAPPENED
IN LAST ISM--
--Recaplin' Ratf.

THE RUNT IS HOLDIN' OUT
LONGER THAN I WOULD'A
THOUGHT.

YEAH, BUT I'M GLAD THE WORD
WAS PASSED DOWN THAT HE WAS
DISPOSABLE. WATCHIN' HIM BUY
IT'LL MAKE THE TIME IN THIS
RAT'S HOLE GO A LITTLE
FASTER.

WHAT'D
THEY DO WITH
THE OTHER ONE THAT
WAS BROUGHT IN?

YOU
DIDN'T
HEAR?

"FORTUNATO'S GOT A TEAM OF THEM HYDRA SCIENTIST TYPES WORKIN' HIM OVER REAL GOOD. YOU CAN HEAR HIM SCREAMING ALL THROUGH THE NORTH WING."

"YOU KNOW I DON'T LIKE BEIN' IN BED WITH THEM GREEN CREEPS, BUT DID YOU GET A LOOK AT THE LEGS ON THAT SCIENTIST? SHE CAN WORK ME OVER ANY TIME SHE WANTS!"

HOW GOES IT, DR. JANSON?

THE BOY IS IN SEVERE PAIN, FORTUNATO, BUT THAT IS TO BE EXPECTED WHEN YOUR ENTIRE NERVOUS SYSTEM IS BEING INVADED AND VIVISECTED.

BUT I BELIEVE WE WILL HAVE THE DATA NECESSARY TO GO FORTH WITH THE PROJECT VERY SHORTLY.

ARE YOU PLEASED, MY FRIEND?

NO, FORTUNATO...

...BARON VON STRUCKER WILL NEVER BE PLEASED UNTIL HYDRA HAS ACHIEVED ITS GOAL OF GLOBAL DOMINATION. WE ARE, AFTER ALL, THE MOST POWERFUL TERRORIST ORGANIZATION ON EARTH.

THIS PROJECT HAS BEEN TOO LONG DELAYED. SEE THAT IT IS NOT ANY LONGER.

NOW I HAVE BUSINESS TO ATTEND TO IN ASIA. I ASSUME THE NEW YORK OPERATION CAN FUNCTION WITHOUT MY *DIRECT* SUPERVISION.

EVERYTHING WILL BE TAKEN CARE OF, BARON.





GOT
TO GIVE IT
EVERYTHING
I'VE GOT!



ONE LAST
BURST OF
STRENGTH!

AIM
THE BLOW
RIGHT AT
MORB'S --



DON'T
KNOW WHO
YOU ARE...

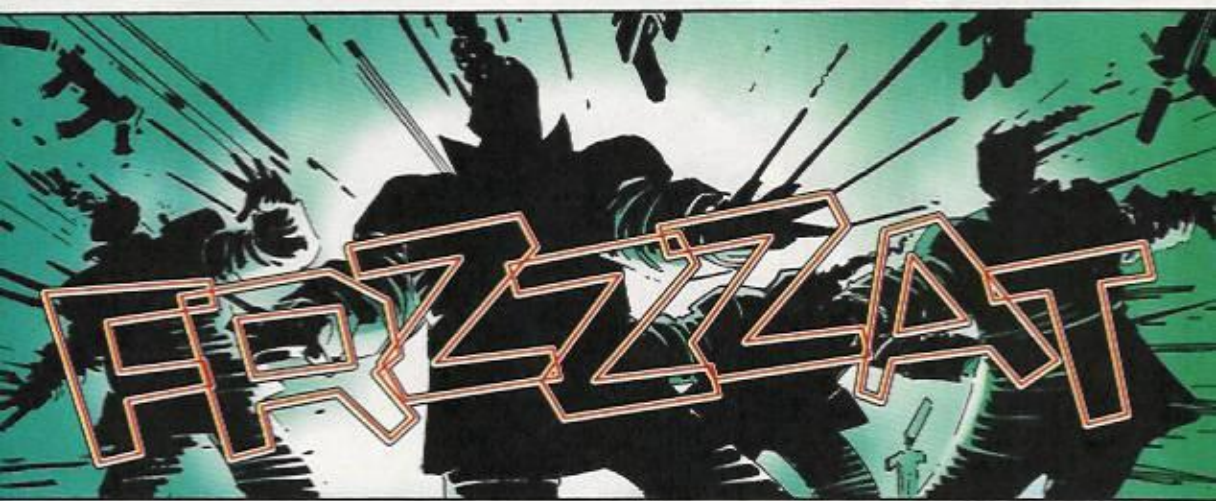
OR
WHY YOU
DECIDED TO HELP
ME NOW, BUT
THANKS!



WAIT A MINUTE!
SPIDER-SENSES
GOING CRAZY!
WARNING ME OF
DANGER...!

YOU?!







HALF AN HOUR LATER...

MY HOME, MY SANCTUARY, HAS BEEN INVADED.

THINGS THAT BELONG TO ME... HAVE BEEN TAKEN.

I WANT THOSE RESPONSIBLE FOR THIS FOUND.

AND THEN I WANT RETRIBUTION TO BE QUICK AND SEVERE.



ELSEWHERE...

LOOKS LIKE YOU'RE THE LAST ONE TO WAKE UP, KID.

WHAT?





WHERE
AM I?

GET
THE KID
A DRINK OR
SOMETHING.
HE LOOKS
PARCHED.

GEE... THANKS,
BUT MY HANDS?
YOU WANT TO
LET ME
LOOSE?



SMART KID
WITH A SMART
MOUTH.
SO YOU
READ THE PAPERS
AND YOU THINK THAT YOU
KNOW EVERYTHING
ABOUT ME, HEH?



WELL,
MISTER PAPER
READER, I KNOW
NUTHIN' ABOUT
YOU!
AND I'M REAL
CURIOUS ABOUT WHAT
FORTUNATO WANTS WITH A
SMART MOUTH KID LIKE YOU!

THESE
OTHER TWO
MOKES I CAN
FIGURE, BUT
YOU...

click



...START
SINGING TO
ME, KID. AND
MAKE IT A REAL
PRETTY SONG.



...THAT
HAMMERHEAD
IS AFRAID OF
AN UNARMED
KID?



GOT NO
CHOICE. GOING
TO HAVE TO SNAP
THESE CUFFS AND
TAKE HIM
OUT.

THERE'S
NOTHING THAT CAN
LINK ME TO SPIDER-
MAN, ANYWAY --



I BELIEVE
IT'S ME YOU
WANT TO
TALK TO?

HE
STUMBLED
INTO THE
ENTIRE MESS
BY MISTAKE!
LET HIM
GO!



THAT MAY
BE IT, MISTER
SUPER HERO...
I PRESUME,
BUT...

...I'M GOING
TO WHACK THE
KID RIGHT HERE
AND NOW IF YOU
DON'T SIT DOWN
LIKE A NICE
GOOD GUY!

AND IN
CASE YOU THINK
YOU CAN USE YOUR
POWERS TO CATCH
THIS BULLET...



...YOU
MIGHT WANT
TO LOOK AROUND.
THINK ABOUT HOW
MANY BULLETS
YOU CAN CATCH!



YOU! HIM!
I DON'T
REALLY
CARE!

WHAT I DO
WANT TO KNOW
IS WHAT DOES ONE-
EYE FORTUNATO
WANT WITH YOU
TWO?

WHAT DO
YOU WANT
WITH
US?



DON'T MOUTH
OFF TO ME,
KID!

YOU I
MIGHT STILL
DECIDE TO
GREASE!

THE BOTTOM LINE IS
I WANT WHATEVER FORTUNATO
WANTS... JUST TO STICK IT TO
HIM. HE'S POISON TO THIS CITY
AND I WANT HIM STOPPED! HE
TRIED TO HAVE ME WHACKED
RECENTLY...

...AND HE'S BEEN
USIN' HIS HI-TECH HYDRA
TIES TO MUSCLE IN ON ALL
THE CITY'S MOBS -- INCLUDIN'
MY TURF! I DON'T TAKE
THAT FROM NOBODY!

AND YOU'RE AN
UPSTANDING MEMBER
OF THE CHAMBER OF
COMMERCE.
RIGHT.



SAY GOOD-BYE,
TO YOUR PAL,
SUPER HERO.

DO IT AND
I WILL KILL
YOU.

JUST TELL
ME WHAT YOU
WANT FROM
ME.

I WANT YOU TO HELP ME
TO BRING FORTUNATO
AND HIS WHOLE GREEN
PAJAMA-WEARING
ORGANIZATION
DOWN!

I
WANT US
TO BE BUDDIES.
PARTNERS.
PALS.

WHAT
O'YA SAY?

I'M
WAITIN'!

SURE,
PAL O'MINE!
WHATEVER
Y'WANT!



A SHORT TIME
LATER IN
MANHATTAN...

NOW ISN'T
THIS MUCH MORE
PLEASANT?

WE DITCHED
THE VAMPIRE AND
NOW YOU, ME AND
MISTER SMART
MOUTH...

...CAN ALL HAVE
SOME OF VINNIE'S
WORLD CLASS
CHOW AND TALK
ALL CIVILIZED
LIKE.

VINNIE! LOSE
THE KIDS. WE'RE
TRYIN' TO DO
BUSINESS
HERE!



GABRIEL!
BEAT IT! GO
UP TO YOUR
MOTHER,
NOW!

HERE'S
THE
DEAL.

I'M ONE OF THE ONLY
BOSSSES WHO HASN'T BENT
UNDER FORTUNATO
AND HIS HYDRA
GOONS!

ALWAYS BEEN
SORTA HARD-
HEADED YA
KNOW.

HYDRA AIN'T NOTHING
BUT FANCY-DRESSED
NAZIS WHO GOT A STAKE
IN OUR "BUSINESS". AND
I DON'T LIKE NAZIS, OR
ANYONE THAT'S OUT
TO SWAG WHAT'S
MINE!

I NEED YOUR
HELP TO TAKE
OUT SOME OF
FORTUNATO'S
HEAVY
HITTERS.

LIKE
CROWN.

YEAH, WELL
HE'S GOIN'
DOWN, TOO.

WHAT
CAN YOU TELL
ME ABOUT
CROWN?

WHERE DO
HIS POWERS
COME FROM?

YOU'RE
NOT BUYING
INTO THIS...
ARE YOU?

ALL I CAN TELL YOU IS WHAT WE LIFTED FROM FORTUNATO'S JOINT. IT SEEMS LIKE HYDRA WANTS TO KNOW HOW YOU CONTROL YOUR POWERS, SHOC.

APPARENTLY ANYBODY WHO WEARS THAT STUFF BUYS THE FARM AFTER A FEW YEARS.

SOME SCIENTIST INVENTED THE BLACK ENERGY A FEW YEARS BACK AND DIDN'T REALIZE HE WAS WORKIN' FOR HYDRA...

...UNTIL IT WAS TOO LATE.

ONCE HE REALIZED WHO AND WHAT HYDRA WAS, HE TOOK OFF.

HYDRA SENT CROWIN AFTER HIM AND THEY SNUFFED THE SCIENTIST.

BUT THE STUFF IS A REAL POWERFUL WEAPON FOR HYDRA. THEY AIN'T GOING TO STOP UNTIL THEY FIGURE OUT HOW TO USE IT TO TAKE OVER THE WORLD.

THE MAN THEY KILLED. HE WAS MY FATHER.

I'LL HELP YOU.

YOU CAN'T BE SERIOUS!

DO YOU KNOW WHO HAMMERHEAD IS? WHAT HE'S DONE?

LET ME ASK YOU SOMETHIN', KID... ARE YOU A FAMILY MAN? DO YOU HAVE A WIFE... A KID?

A WIFE.

WELL, A LOT OF MEN HERE DO. THEIR FAMILIES ARE RIGHT HERE IN THESE BUILDINGS. AND NONE OF THEM WANTS TO SEE WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO THE CITY... TO THE WORLD... AFTER HYDRA MOVES IN.

YOU KNOW... I DON'T THINK WE NEED THE KID ANYMORE. THIS IS TALK FOR TWO MEN.

I'LL STAY.

NOT NECESSARY.

GEORGIE. LARRY. WHY DON'T YOU TWO DROP THE KID OFF SOMEWHERE.

A GESTURE OF MY GOOD INTENTIONS TO MY NEW BUSINESS PARTNER.



HEY, GABE!
NICE PIECE YOU
GOT YOURSELF
THERE!

STICK IT
IN YOUR EAR,
LARRY!



EXCUSE
ME, GENTLEMEN,
BUT THIS ISN'T
THE WAY TO MY
HOME.



SPIDER-
SENSE GOING
CRAZY! LIKE
THIS IS A
SURPRISE!



SURE IS.
WE KNOW
A **SHORT**
CUT.



DROP
THE KID OFF
HE SAYS!

THAT
HAMMERHEAD!
HE'S STILL GOT THE
BEST SENSE OF
HUMOR!

SO HOW'S
YOUR WIFE DOIN'?
THE REDECORATIN'
STILL COMIN'
ALONG?



IT'S
ABOUT
TIME!



SO, I WAS THINKIN' OF
TAKIN' MARY AND THE KIDS
OUT FOR ITALIAN TONIGHT.
WANNA JOIN
US?

ITALIAN? WE
ALWAYS EAT
ITALIAN!

IS IT
ME, OR
IS IT GETTIN'
DARK OUT
EARLY?



NAH!
IT'S GOTTA
BE --

Oh,
MAN! WE
BETTA LET
THE BOSS
KNOW...



...THEY
FOUND
US!



YES.

WE
DID.

INSIDE THE
APARTMENT
BUILDING...



GEE,
TERRY, THIS
THING IS BUTT
UGLY!

YOU
REALLY THINK
HE'S A
VAMPIRE?

I
DON'T KNOW,
KEVIN. WHY DON'T
YOU GO OVER AND
OFFER HIM YOUR
NECK AS AN
APPETIZER?

I
DON'T KNOW
WHY THE BOSS
DOESN'T JUST LET
US PUT TWO BEHIND
HIS EARS. THE GUY
GIVES ME THE
CREEPS.



WE'VE
GOT OUR WIVES
AND KIDS IN THIS
PLACE FOR CRYIN' OUT
LOUD. IF A THING LIKE THIS
EVER GOT LOOSE --



IT'S
FORTUNATO'S
HYDRA
GOONS!

YOU
STAY HERE
WATCHING BELA
LUGOSI AND
I'LL --



Er... TERRY! DID
YOU CHECK HIS
BONDS REAL
CLOSE?

YOU WERE
SUPPOSED TO
DO THAT.

OOPS!





BACK ON THE ROOF...

YOU KNOW... I COULD JUST STAY OUT OF THIS AND LET THE BAD GUYS SOFTEN EACH OTHER UP AND MOP UP THE LEFTOVERS...



LIFE IS JUST NEVER SO SIMPLE FOR A WEB SLINGING WONDER.

THE LITTLE BOY... GABRIEL... HE'S PINNED DOWN BETWEEN THE TWO FORCES.



TIME TO GO INTO ACTION AND SHOW WHY I GET PAID THE BIG BUCKS FOR BEING A SUPER HERO!



WAIT A MINUTE...!

I DON'T GET PAID AT ALL!

I'VE GOT TO TALK TO SOMEBODY ABOUT THAT!

MARCIA! GRAB YOUR BROTHER AND SISTER!

YOUR FATHER AND HIS FRIENDS HAVE PUT US IN THE MIDDLE OF SOMETHING... AGAIN!



WATCH IT!

BELIEVE ME...
YOU **DO NOT** WANT TO
GET CAUGHT BETWEEN
THOSE TWO.

LOOK, GABRIEL,
I DON'T WANT OR NEED
YOUR RESPECT...

...AS A MATTER
OF FACT, JUST LIKE MY
BUDDY, RODNEY DANGERFIELD,
I'M PRETTY USED TO NOT
GETTING ANY, BUT...

...I'M **NOT** GOING TO LET
YOU GET YOURSELF KILLED
IN THE CROSSFIRE OF SOME
SUPER VILLAIN GANG WAR.

IT LOOKS **REAL** BAD
ON THE APPLICATION FOR
INDUCTION INTO THE SUPER
HERO HALL OF FAME!

NOW
SHUT UP AND
LET ME SAVE
YOU!

'CAUSE AFTER I'M DONE
RESCUING YOU, I'VE GOT AN ENTIRE
BUILDING OF YOUR FRIENDS AND
RELATIVES TO TAKE CARE OF!

THIS IS IT,
TROY! WE'RE
ALMOST IN.

IF WE CAN
JUST KEEP THIS
DOOR SECURED,
LANCE... THE
BUILDING IS
OURS --

ACK!

ARGH!

KRAK

KRAK

HATE
TO BREAK
THINGS UP,
BOYS,
BUT...

... YOU
ARE PLAYING
WITH GUNS
IN A DEFINITE
GUN-FREE
ZONE!

DON'T
YOU KNOW
YOU COULD TAKE
SOMEBODY'S **EYE**
OUT WITH ONE
OF THESE
THINGS?

OOPS!
NO OFFENSE
TO YOUR
BOSS...



IT ENDS
HERE,
CROWN.

YOU
ARE RIGHT,
BOY.

I AM
GOING TO
DIE.

DIE AS
ALL OF MY
PREDECESSORS
HAVE DIED.

CONSUMED
BY THE VERY
POWER I
WIELD.

POWER
YOU, TOO,
WIELD.

WHAT —?

GUESS
YOUR DADDY
DIDN'T INFORM YOU
OF *THAT* LITTLE SIDE
EFFECT OF BONDING
WITH THE *SHOC*
TECHNOLOGY,
Heh?

WE
GAIN SOME
PRETTY IMPRESSIVE
POWER, BUT THERE
IS A MAJOR PRICE.



YOU KNOW, IF YOU GO TO
THE NEARBY WAREHOUSE
SHOPPING CLUB YOU CAN
BUY MOST THINGS AT
HALF PRICE!

YOU
MOCK ME,
SPIDER-
MAN?

IT'S
WHAT I
DO.

AND
THIS IS
WHAT I
DO!

LITTLE
BY LITTLE YOU, I,
ANYONE POSSESSING YOUR
FATHER'S *SHOC* TECHNOLOGY
ARE KILLING OURSELVES
WITH IT.

ANDREA JANSON
WAS WORKING ON A CURE,
BUT YOUR FLAT-TOPPED
FRIEND, HAMMERHEAD
TOOK HER AWAY FROM ME.



NOW I
AM GOING
TO DIE.

BUT I
WILL NOT GO
GENTLY INTO
THAT GOOD
NIGHT.

I AM
GOING OUT
IN A BLAZE OF
GLORY. I'LL TAKE
YOU, SPIDER-MAN,
AND THIS ENTIRE
BLOCK WITH
ME.

THIS
DAY WILL
BE SPOKEN
ABOUT FOR
YEARS TO
COME.





IF YOU HAVE A SPIRITUAL BENT...
...I WOULD SUGGEST YOU START MAKING YOUR PEACE WITH YOUR MAKER NOW.



I KNEW WHEN I VOLUNTEERED TO BE GRAFTED TO THIS ARMOR THAT IT WOULD BE THE DEATH OF ME.

I HADN'T ANTICIPATED HOW SOON THE END WOULD COME.



NO!

I WILL NOT LET YOU DO THIS!

I WILL STOP YOU FROM TAKING SO MANY INNOCENT LIVES.


EVEN THOUGH MY BLOOD LUST IS MADDENING... AND I SEE ALL THROUGH A CRIMSON HAZE... I KNOW THAT THIS THING YOU WANT TO DO IS PURE EVIL!

PERHAPS IN MY *SACRIFICE* -- THERE MAY BE A SMALL BIT OF REDEMPTION FOR A LIVING VAMPIRE!



OKAY, SO WE GOT HELP FROM OL' MORBY... WHAT NOW?

NOW WE GET OUR ACTS TOGETHER, CLEAR OUR HEADS AND GET READY TO HELP HIM, BECAUSE...



"I'VE GOT A FEELING
THAT THINGS ARE
ABOUT TO GET
REAL UGLY!"

YOU'RE
RIGHT.


I DON'T
EVEN KNOW HOW
I KNOW THIS,
BUT...

...CROWN
IS ABOUT TO
OVERLOAD. AND
MORBIUS MAY BE
THE REASON!

AND I THINK
HE UNDERESTIMATED
WHEN HE CALCULATED
HOW MUCH HE COULD
TAKE OUT. I THINK WE'LL
LOSE A TEN BLOCK
AREA.

HOW MUCH
OF THAT STICKY
STUFF YOU GOT
LEFT?

ACTUALLY...
I'M RUNNING ON EMPTY,
BUT... EVEN UNDER THE **BEST**
OF CIRCUMSTANCES I COULDN'T
HANDLE **THAT** MUCH WEBBING! NOT
ENOUGH TO COVER THIS WHOLE AREA!



WELL, THE
BUILDING IS GOING,
SO LET'S SEE WHAT
I CAN DO TO HELP
YOU.

RELEASE
ALL THE WEBBING
YOU'VE GOT
LEFT!

Oh,
GREAT!

SHOC RUNS THE POWER OF
HIS LIVING COSTUME THROUGH
SPIDER-MAN'S WEB-SHOOTERS.

THE REMAINING
WEBBING IS
CHANGED INTO...

... SOMETHING FAR MORE
THAN IT SHOULD BE. SOME-
THING FAR MORE THAN IT
HAS EVER BEEN!

NO SOONER IS THE
RESULTING SHIELD
OF ENERGY-LACED
WEB ERECTED THAN...

... A MASSIVE AMOUNT OF
ENERGY IS RELEASED AND...

... IS FED BACK TO
THE HOVERING HYDRA
ATTACK SHIP.

THE RESULTS
ARE...

...EXPLOSIVE.

BRAKA KOOM

MOMENTS LATER, SPIDER-MAN AND SHOC ARE LEFT EXHAUSTED... SPENT, ON THE ROOFTOP OF THE BUILDING THEY HAVE SAVED FROM DESTRUCTION.

IT'S OVER, HEROES. WE SENT A MESSAGE BACK TO FORTUNATO AN' HIS HIGH-TECH HYDRA BUDDIES.

DON'T MESS WITH HAMMERHEAD, EVER.

I'M THINKING WE EITHER LIVED, OR... SAINT PETER IS BEING PLAYED BY EDWARD G. ROBINSON!

YOU GOT A SMART MOUTH, SPIDER-MAN. I SHOULD JUST WHACK YOU RIGHT HERE AND NOW, BUT ...

... YOU SAVED MY TAIL AND ALL OF MY MEN'S FAMILIES. WE'RE EVEN.

NEXT TIME... YOU'RE TOAST!

SO... WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO NOW, SHOC?

WELL... CROWN SEEMED TO INDICATE THAT I'M WEARING THE EQUIVALENT OF A TICKING TIME BOMB!

SO I GUESS I'LL HAVE TO TRY TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN THE WORLD BEFORE IT KILLS ME.

I HOPE I CAN.

"DON'T WE ALL."