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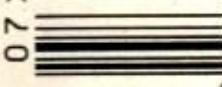
JULY '96 70

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WHO
IS THE
NEW
CRIMELORD
OF NEW
YORK?



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JRJRAN



WHEN WILSON FISK FELL FROM HIS POSITION AS THE KINGPIN OF CRIME, THERE WAS A VOID LEFT BEHIND IN THE NEW YORK UNDERWORLD.

THIS IS THE FACE OF THE MAN DETERMINED TO FILL THAT VOID.

THOSE WHO DARE SPEAK OF HIM AT ALL, SPEAK IN HUSHED, SECRETE VOICES AND SIMPLY CALL HIM FORTUNATO.

ALL LIVE IN FEAR OF HIS WITHERING GAZE.

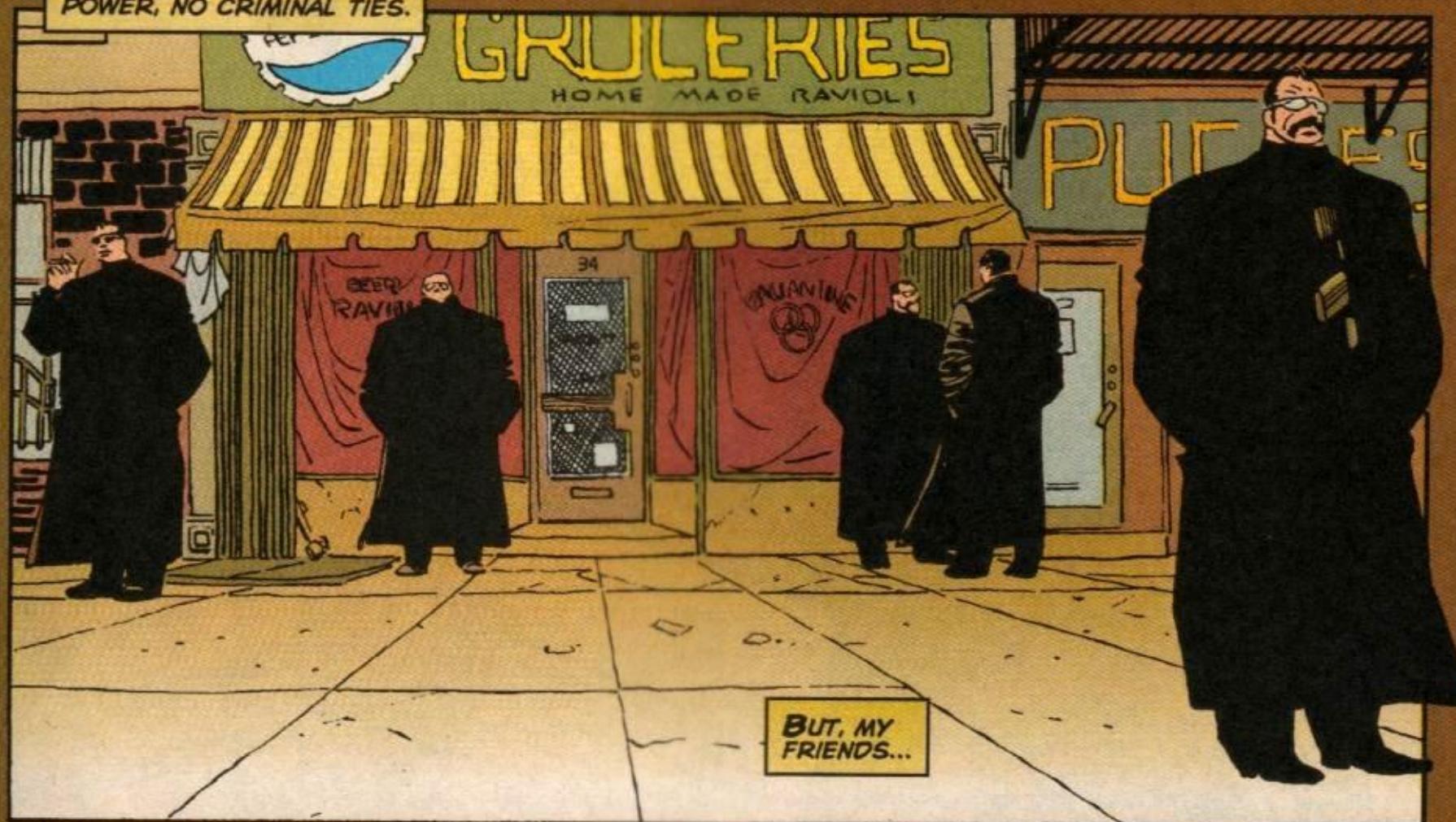
BUT HE INSISTS THAT HE IS A SIMPLE WORKING MAN... A GROCER IN THIS QUIET MANHATTAN NEIGHBORHOOD.

FORTUNATO IS CONTENT TO SIT IN HIS STORE, WITH HIS PET WOLF ANGEL AT HIS SIDE, AND WIND DOWN THE FINAL YEARS OF HIS LIFE.



HE CLAIMS NO QUEST FOR POWER, NO CRIMINAL TIES.

GRULERIES
HOME MADE RAVIOLI



BUT, MY FRIENDS...

... HE LIES.

FOR IT IS HERE, UNDER HIS WORKMAN'S GUISE, THAT FORTUNATO OVERSEES THE MOST RUTHLESS CRIME ORGANIZATION TO EVER HIT THE CITY.

HIS ARMY OF STREET SOLDIERS GROWS STRONGER WITH EVERY PASSING DAY.

THE ONCE QUIET FAMILY NEIGHBORHOOD IS UNDERGOING A TRANSFORMATION.

HI-TECH WEAPONS AND MACHINERY FILL THE ROOFTOPS.

CLOAKING DEVICES MASK IT ALL FROM THOSE ABOVE AND BELOW.

THE POLICE DO NOT KNOW OF HIS EXISTENCE.

AND, IF THEY DID, THEY WOULD FIND THEMSELVES OUTMANNED AND OUTGUNNED.

FORTUNATO'S CONTACTS GO FAR AND WIDE. HE IS PERFORMING A SERVICE FOR A VERY POWERFUL CONSORTIUM.

STAN LEE presents

SPIDER-MAN
in

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

Above It All

JOHN ROMITA, JR. art & story
& HOWARD MACKIE

KEVIN TINSLEY colors
AL WILLIAMSON inks

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and COMICRAFT lettering

MALIBU enhancement

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...ONE WHICH WANTS HIM TO SUCCEED AS THE OVERLORD OF THE NEW YORK CITY CRIME SCENE.

STRONG

HIS TIME IS COMING.

FEAR HIM.



MEANWHILE, ACROSS MILES OF ROOFTOPS, WE FIND BEN URICH AND PETER PARKER, OF THE NEW YORK DAILY BUGLE, IN ANOTHER PART OF THE CITY.

ARE YOU GOING TO JUMP OR NOT, KID?

Oh, C'MON! LOOK AT YOU SHAKIN' LIKE A LEAF THERE, KID!

I'M AN OLD MAN AND I DID IT!

IF I'D KNOWN YOU HAD A THING ABOUT HEIGHTS, I NEVER WOULD HAVE LET YOU COME ALONG ON THIS ASSIGNMENT, PETER!

C'MON AND JUMP ALREADY!

I'M JUST ABOUT...

...READY?

NO, DON'T LOOK DOWN, KID!

TRUST ME, JUST CLOSE YOUR EYES AND JUMP. I'VE DONE THIS A HUNDRED TIMES BEFORE.

DON'T BE SCARED... JUST JUMP.

DON'T BE SCARED...

...JUST JUMP...

I'VE DONE THIS A HUNDRED TIMES BEFORE, TOO.

BUT THAT WAS THEN!
BEFORE I LOST MY SPIDER-POWERS. *

NOW I HAVE TO RELY ON THE SPECTACULAR POWERS OF OLD PUNY PARKER.

* SEE SPIDER-MAN: THE FINAL ADVENTURE
— Final Rift

YOU GOT IT, KID.
YOU'RE A NATURAL.

STUFF LIKE THIS MAKES ME WISH I'D PAID MORE ATTENTION TO THE WAY GUYS LIKE FLASH THOMPSON DID THE BROAD JUMP BACK IN HIGH SCHOOL.

WHOOPS!

GOTCHA!

PLEASE, PETER, I DON'T WANT TO HAVE TO EXPLAIN TO THAT BEAUTIFUL WIFE OF YOURS WHY YOU DID A SWAN DIVE FROM TEN STORIES UP.

WHY DID YOU INSIST ON COMING OUT INTO THE FIELD, PETE?

GUESS I FELT THE NEED TO GET IN THE THICK OF THINGS AGAIN.

JUST TRY TO FOLLOW MY LEAD AND STAY OUT OF THE WAY.

IF WE GET DISCOVERED BY THESE GUYS... YOU MAY WISH I HADN'T CAUGHT YOU UP THERE.

WITH THE NEW JOB AT THE BUGLE YOU COULD HAVE GIVEN THE ASSIGNMENT TO ONE OF THE HOT-SHOT FREELANCERS.

THE DAILY GRIND...

... WHERE WE FIND BEN REILLY, A.K.A. THE SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN, GOING HOME AFTER A LONG DAY'S WORK.

SEE YOU FIRST THING IN THE MORNING, BEN.

I'LL BE HERE, SHIRLEY.





FUDDOMFUDDOM



RUN, KID!
AND DO
YOURSELF
A FAVOR...

THUD
THUD
THUD

SORRY,
WHOEVER YOU
ARE...

... I CAN'T
LET THIS
HAPPEN.

AT THAT MOMENT,
HALF A WORLD AWAY
IN HONG KONG...

ARTHUR STACY IS A MAN WELL RESPECTED THROUGHOUT THE INTERNATIONAL INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY.

HE AND HIS PARTNER HAVE
PERFORMED SERVICES FOR
INDIVIDUALS AND CORPORATIONS
AROUND THE WORLD.

THROUGHOUT THE YEARS,
ARTHUR HAS USED HIS
WORK TO ESCAPE A
PAINFUL PAST.

TODAY, THE PAST HAS
CAUGHT UP WITH HIM.

SPIDER-MAN.

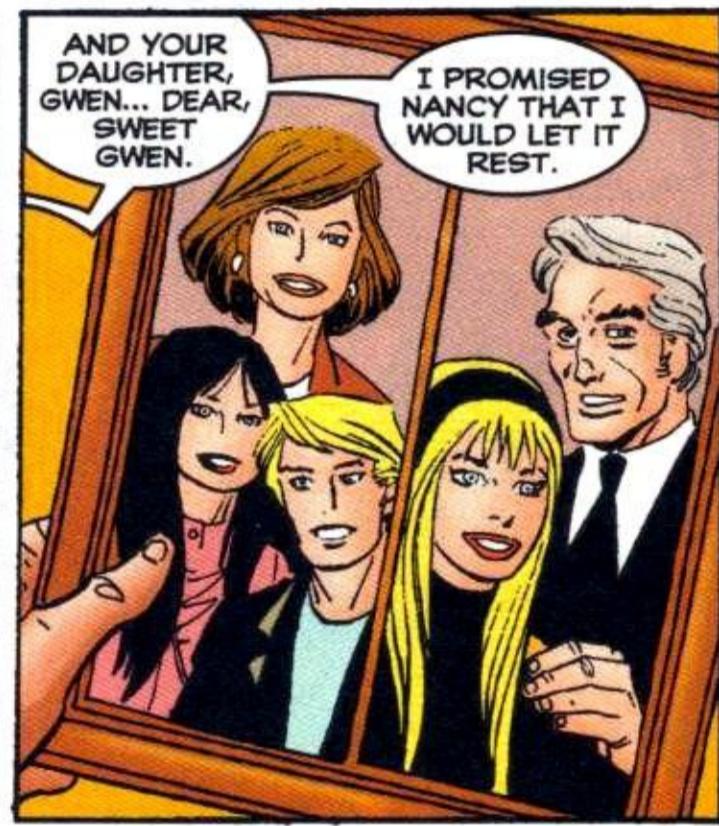


IT'S BEEN
QUITE SOME
TIME SINCE I'VE
THOUGHT OF HIM,
GEORGE...

... AND
WHAT HE DID
TO YOU, MY
BROTHER...

AND YOUR
DAUGHTER,
GWEN... DEAR,
SWEET
GWEN.

I PROMISED
NANCY THAT I
WOULD LET IT
REST.



FOR
HER SAKE...
AND FOR MY
CHILDREN.

BUT
NOW MY
CHILDREN
ARE GROWN,
GEORGE.

AND I
HAVEN'T
FORGOTTEN.

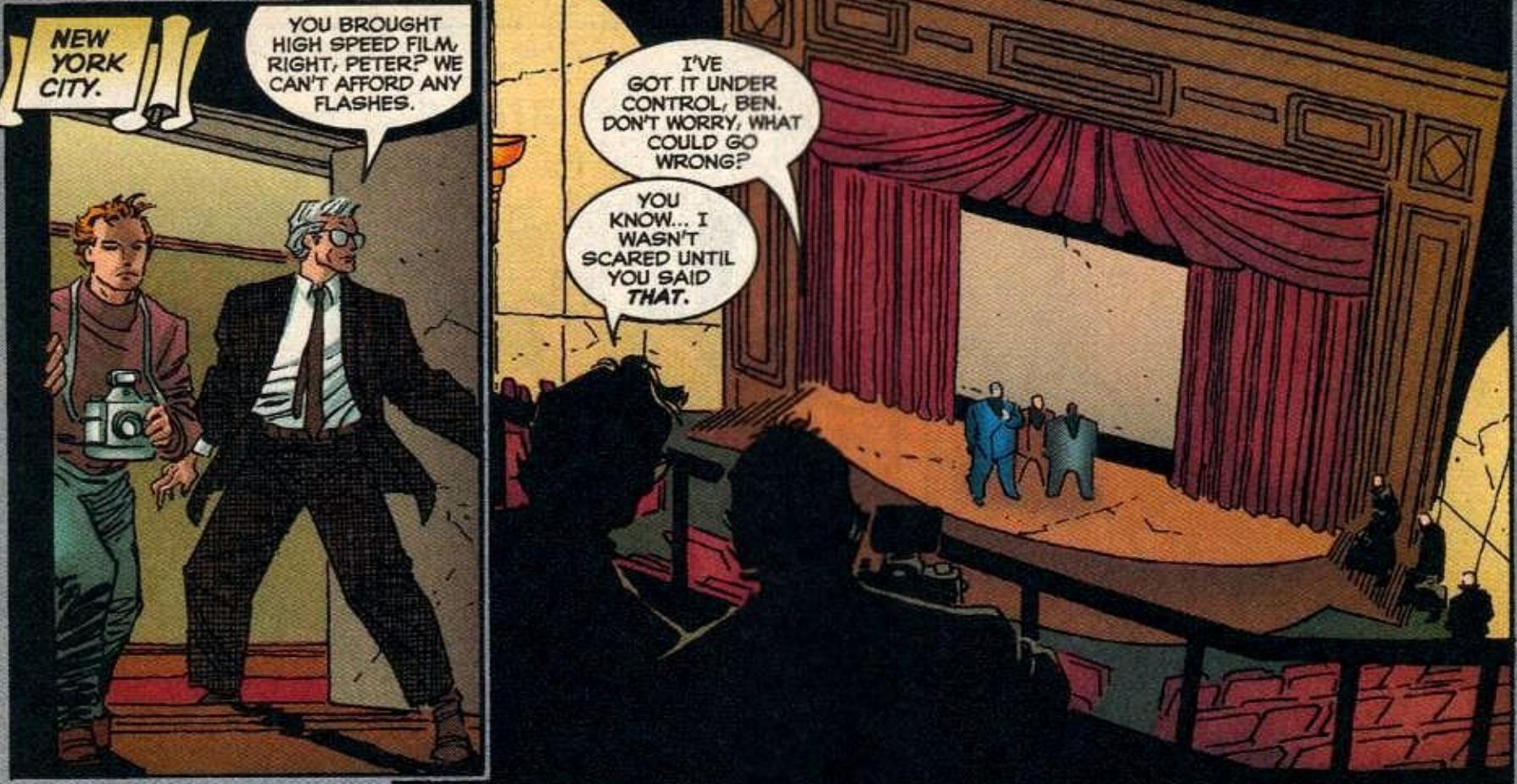


NEW
YORK
CITY.

YOU BROUGHT
HIGH SPEED FILM,
RIGHT, PETER? WE
CAN'T AFFORD ANY
FLASHES.

I'VE
GOT IT UNDER
CONTROL, BEN.
DON'T WORRY, WHAT
COULD GO
WRONG?

YOU
KNOW... I
WASN'T
SCARED UNTIL
YOU SAID
THAT.



THEY'RE HERE,
HAMMER-
HEAD.

ANYONE WHO WANTS TO
DO BUSINESS HERE PAYS ME
PART OF WHAT THEY TAKE IN.
MAKE SURE YOUR BOSS
UNDERSTANDS.

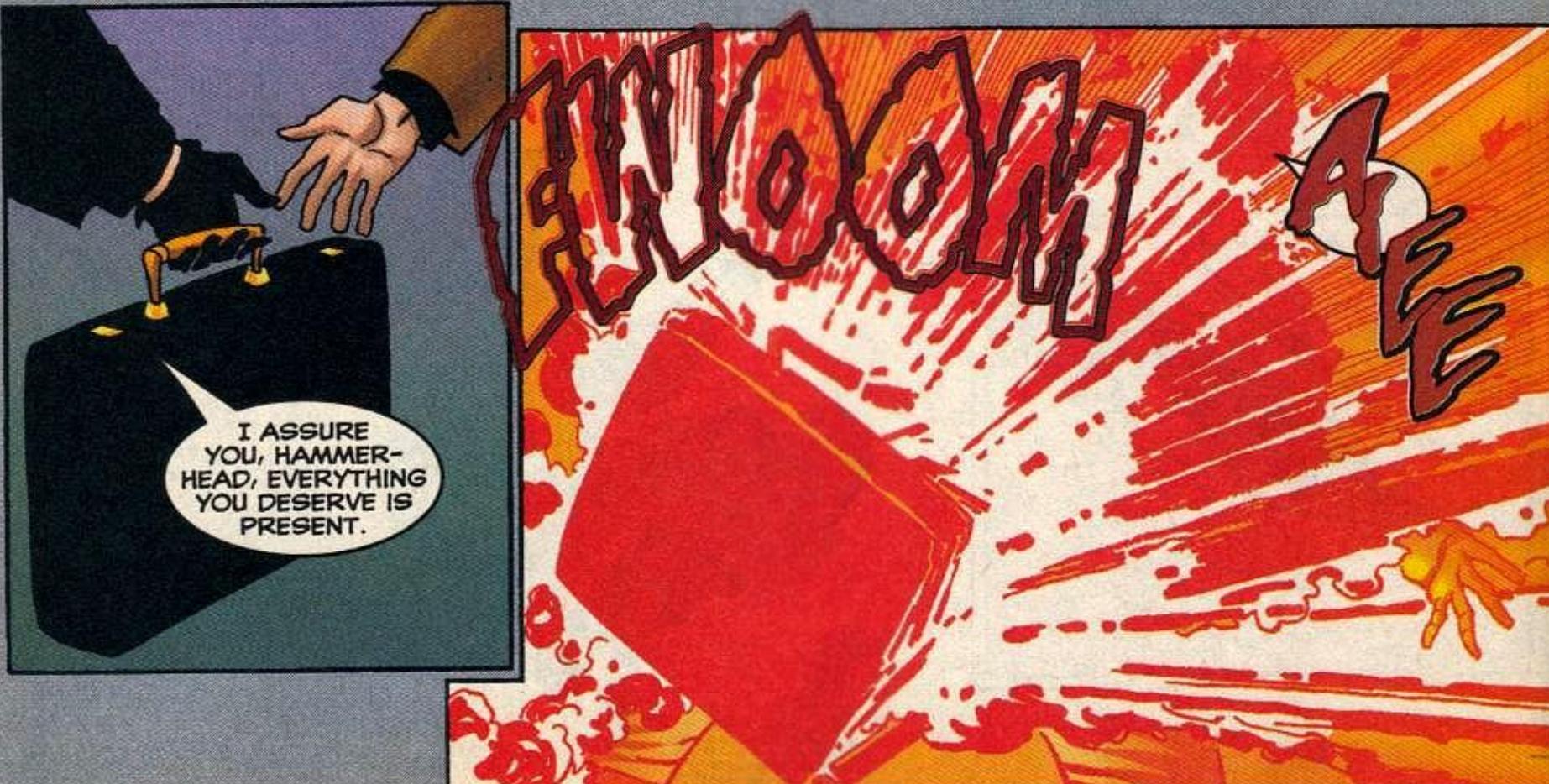
HE
UNDERSTANDS
PERFECTLY.

ROCCO,
OPEN IT UP AND
MAKE SURE IT'S ALL
THERE. AND IF IT
AIN'T...

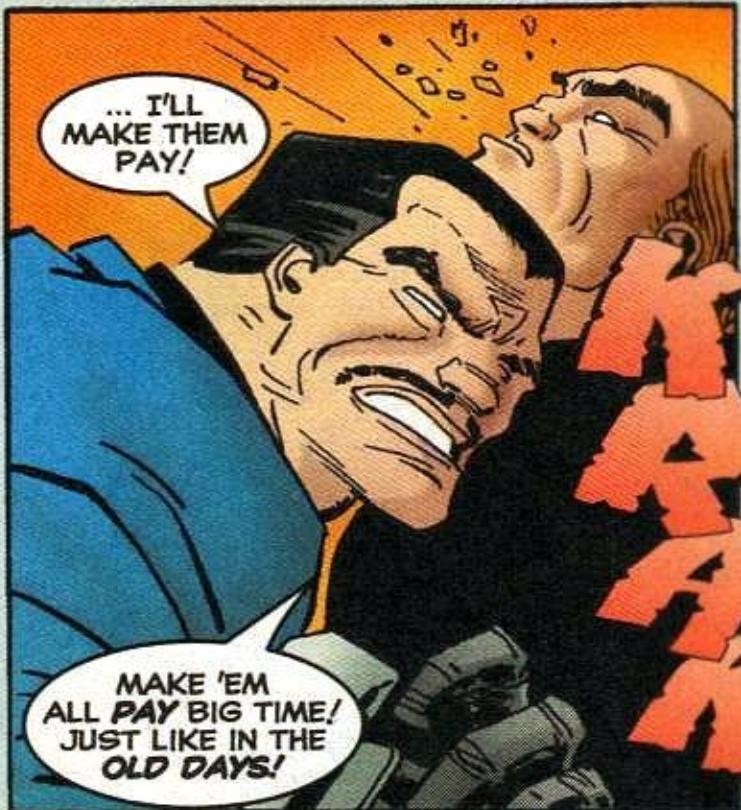
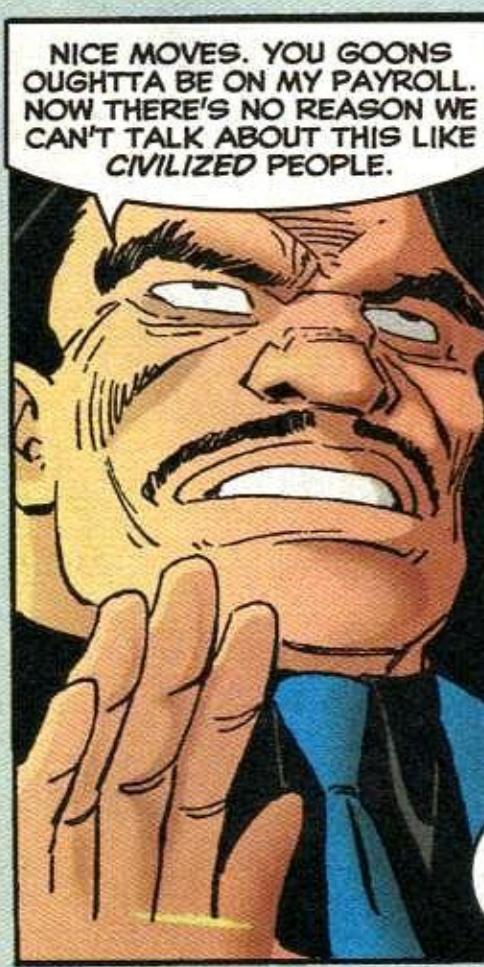
I GOT
EYES, ROCCO,
DON'T I?

I
ASSUME YOU
GENTS BROUGHT
THE PREVIOUSLY
DISCUSSED
FUNDS.

NOW THAT FATMAN FISK
IS OUTTA THE PICTURE,
I'M GONNA BE RUNNIN'
THE RACKETS IN
THIS TOWN!



I ASSURE
YOU, HAMMER-
HEAD, EVERYTHING
YOU DESERVE IS
PRESENT.





THE OTHER SIDE
OF THE CITY.

COME ON,
JIMMY, YOU'RE
DONE.

THERE'S
NO PLACE
LEFT TO
RUN.

COME OUT
AND I'LL PUT A
ROUND IN YOUR EAR,
QUICK, FOR OLD TIMES'
SAKE. WHAT DO
YOU SAY?

BUDDA
BUDDA
BUDDA

I SAY
THIS!

BOOMBOOMBOOM

FINISH HIM...
NOW!

WHAT
DO I
SAY?

ARGH!

I OFFERED TO MAKE IT EASY
ON YOU. WE WERE FRIENDS
UNTIL YOU TURNED YOUR
BACK ON ALL OF
US.

WHY, JIMMY?
YOU HAD TO KNOW
HE WOULDN'T LET
YOU WALK
AWAY.

NOT NOW, NOT
WHEN EVERYTHING
IS ABOUT TO COME
TOGETHER.

QUIT
WASTING MY
TIME, JOHNNY,
AND...
...FINISH
IT!



SORRY
IT HAD TO
END THIS WAY,
JIMMY.

AND YOU
SHOULD
BE!

"WHO
THE --?"
NO "WHAT
THE --?"

TWO
POINTS FOR
ORIGINALITY,
AND THE
ANSWER
IS...

WHO
THE --?

...YOUR FRIENDLY
NEIGHBORHOOD
SPIDER-
MAN!

HANG ON,
MY FRIEND,
I'LL HAVE YOU
OUT OF HERE IN
A JIFF AND THEN
YOU CAN TELL
ME WHAT YOUR
PROBLEM
IS.

...I AIN'T YOUR
FRIEND! AND I
DIDN'T ASK FOR
YOUR HELP!

MAYBE YOU MISSED
SOMETHING.

I JUST
SAVED YOUR
LIFE.

MY
PROBLEM
IS...

NO, YOU DIDN'T.
YOU JUST
DELAYED THE
INEVITABLE.

TAKE A
LOOK AROUND,
HERO...

...THIS
IS A PROBLEM
THAT AIN'T GOING
AWAY!

Hooch,
BOY!

MEANWHILE...

COME ON,
BEN...

...DOESN'T
THE EXCITEMENT
OF IT ALL MAKE
YOU FEEL YOUNG
AGAIN?

NO,
PETER, IT
DOESN'T!

IT
MAKES
ME FEEL
OLD!

AND WITH
LITTLE CHANCE
OF GETTING OLDER --
THANKS TO A STUNT
PULLED BY SOMEONE
TOO YOUNG TO BE
SCARED.

WHAT HAPPENED
TO THE GUY WHO WAS
AFRAID TO JUMP
ACROSS THE ALLEY
BEFORE?

I GUESS
YOU INSPIRED
ME TO BE BRAVER.

LUCKY
ME.

THERE'S
A CAB, BEN,
LET'S GRAB
IT.

I AM
SORRY. I AM
BREAKING FOR
COFFEE.

NO... REALLY...
YOU WANT TO
DRIVE US AWAY...
NOW!

NO...
THIS IS NOT
A TRUE
THING.

Oh,
YES IT
IS!





YOU KNOW,
I TRIED TO
REASON WITH
YOU.

OFFERED
TO TALK, MAKE A
FEW JOKES AND SETTLE
THIS ALL REASONABLE-
LIKE, BUT YOU GUYS
HAVE TO KEEP
PUSHING ME.

SO...
HERE'S THE
DEAL. I DON'T
CARE WHAT YOUR
DIRTY LITTLE
BUSINESS
IS!

I'M
JUST INTERESTED
IN CLEANING IT UP
BEFORE SOMEBODY
REALLY GETS
HURT... LIKE
ME!

AND
WHAT BETTER
WAY TO CLEAN
IT UP THAN
WITH...
...WATER!

YOU'VE
GOT TO LOVE
MANHATTAN. YOU
JUST CAN'T FIND
WATER TOWERS LIKE
THESE ANYWHERE
ELSE IN THE
WORLD.

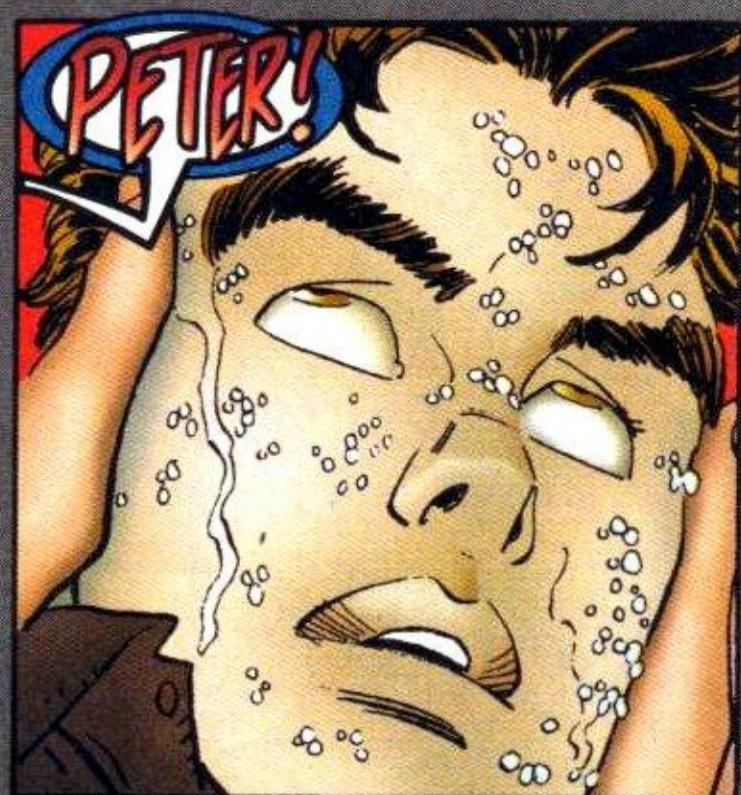
TRUST
ME... I'VE
LOOKED.











TO BE
CONTINUED
IN:

SPECTACULAR
SPIDER-MAN #236!
NEXT ISSUE:
HAMMERHEAD'S
REVENGE!