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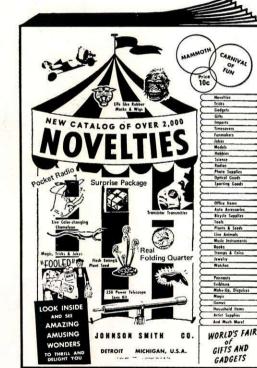
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ITEM! DR. STRANGE lives! You didn't think we'd let our swingin' sorcerer just vanish without a trace, didja' As a matter of fact, he joins forces with another of our ubiquitous superheroes this month in-ahh, but why tell you? Think of the fun you'll have combing the Checklist and finding him for yourse!!

ITEMI One of our artists lives, also! Remember BASHFUL BARRY SMITHP with the finally sent us a job we've been breath lessly awaiting, all the way from merrie England. It's drawn in an entirely different style from his speciacular superhero scribbings, and you'll find it in TOWER OF SHADOWS #3. If he didn't draw it at midnight, inside a haunted house, with a pen dipped in a witch's brew, we'll eat our first edition Lovecraft!

ITEM! Speaking of people who live-the millennium just occurred! During the 69 Somic Art Convention, held recently at New York's famous Statler Hilton Hotel. actually showed up? Why, none other than JOLTIN' JOEY SINNOTT, Marvel's own gifted ghost! He came to hear the speeches, see the goings-on, and rap about old times with Stan and the gang. But our Leader, loaded with script-writing chores, couldn't make the session, and so he'll probably have to wait another ten years before Joltin' Joe makes it back to the city from his upstate retreat. By the way, those of you who only think of Joe as a top inker should see his pencil work some time! If ever we find a way to add a few more hours to the day, we'll see if we can persuade him to draw a feature for you-we promise it'll be worth the wait!

ITEM: Remember SCORPIO, who left us hanging by our thumbs after his sensational appearance in SHIELD? Well, the mystery will finally be unrawelled in the pages of the current AVENGERS. See? Though the mills of Marvel grind slowly, if you wait long enough—!

ITEM! Guess who just called? Wouldja believe WANDERING WALLY WOOD? (We used to call him Wondrous till he took off or parts unknown.) Anyway, after a long powwow there's a chance that you'll be seeing WW's wizardry between the covers of some Marved mags once again—where it has sweys belonged! (Now if only a cat named \$.0." would dig up our phone number Regant—Oh well, we can always dream!)

ITEM! Ever wonder what Marvel was like in the good old days?" Well, now you'll knowif you pick up a new hard-cover volume called All in Color for a Dime! It's pubshed by Arlington Press, as the Christmas selection of the Jamous Nostalgia Book Club, and was edited by long-time comicsfans Don Thompson and Dick Lupoff, Besides a hefty, humor-packed article by Don on Captain America and the crew as they were in the days of World War II, it also contains about a dozen other fact-filled features on the comics scene of yesteryear—including one by a guy named Roy Thomas, written 'way back in 1962 when the Rascally One was a hard-working English teacher. (Any guesses now as to what Roy's gonna hand out as Christmas presents to about a zillion family members and friends? Oh well ... it beats those autographed copies of THE AVENGERS that ne passed out last year!)

ITEM! HAPPY HERBY TRIMPE is becoming a "cause celebre" around the Builpen. There are a handful of anti-Trimpites who keep bombarding Stan's desk with letters demanding that we get a new artist to

STAN'S SOAPBOX

For months I've been wanting to yak with you about this subject, but it always gets shoved aside by something more urgent. Well, this time I'm gonna say it, no matter what! This time I'm out to give the great guys and gals who produce these mags a small portion of the glowing tribute they so richly deserve. Having spent almost all my life in comics, I can testify to never having known a more ethical or honorable creative group. I've seen artists sacrifice long hours to help other their - time unstintingly to polish another, author's script. In this a most highly competitive field, you'll rarely hear one artist deride another's work, but instead, the more talented the man, the more likely he is to provide advice, support, and encouragement to those who need it most. So here's to the titanically talented crew I work with; and to the equally gifted gang who toil for our competitors. Your work is demanding, your hours are long, your profession a lonely one. But you provide pleasure and enchantment to untold millions-and, though you may never meet them personally, they know you-respect you-they've taken you into their livesand into their hearts. For you, and I, and all of us help them weave their most wondrous dreams

> Excelsior! S. L.

draw of Greenskin-claiming that even Irving Forbush could do a better job. If they were writing to the FANTASTIC FOUR, we'd swear they're Yancy Streeters. But the odd thing is this-WE think Herb's one of the greatest additions to our stupetyin' staff since Raquel Welch (No, Normanshe isn't working here. Calim down!)—and the HULK'S safes have been climbing ever since H.T. got his clutching little claws around his paint brush. We had a point that we were trying to make, but ever since mentioning Raquel, it seems to have slipped our minds. Oh well we've run aut of room

THE MIGHTY MARVEL CHECKLIST Marvel-ous Mags On Sale Right Now!

now, anyway!

FANTASTIC FOUR #95: A villain called Monocle! A plot to start World War Three! And that's only the beginning!

SPIDER-MAN #81: Aunt May stumbles onto Spidey's secret! Plus the killer called Kangaroo! It's one of Spidey's best!

SILVER SURFER # 12: This one has witches, magic spells, the Surfer trapped at last—and the Abomination! Wow!

AVENGERS #72: The mystery of Scorpio solved! Captain Marvel returns! Plus—the most sinister new super-group of all!

THOR #172: Dr. Blake must sacrifice Thor to save Jane Foster, the girl he once loved! It's the Mind Slave!

CAPTAIN AMERICA #122: Here comes the Scorpion, from out of Spider-Man's pastto destroy Cap and Agent 13!

X-MEN #64: They call him—Sumire! And you'll call him the X-Men's most deadly-enemy yet! With an origin that will rock you!

DAREDEVIL #60: The block-busting blazing end of the man they call Crime-Wave! It's OD at his greatest!

HULK # 124: Bruce Banner and Betty Ross married? The Rhino says No—and so does the revenge-crazed Leader! A milestone!

IRON MAN #22: As if the Crimson Dynamo isn't deadly enough—enter the metal-cfad monstrosity called . . . Titanium Man! SUB-MARINER #22: Guest-starring the one

and only Dr. Strange! But, can the two of them defeat the Undying Ones? Like weird! SGT. FURY #74: Operation Jigsaw! One of the top secrets of World War Two—and

only the Howlers can put the pieces together! CAPT. SAVAGE #18: It's action time—as

Simon Savage blasts his way out of a death camp in the war-torn Pacific!

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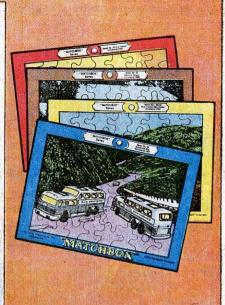
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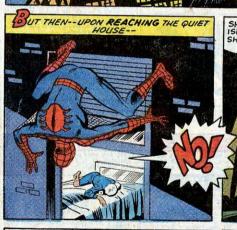
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**SPIDER'S WEB

SEND YOUR LETTERS TO:

THE MARVEL COMICS GROUP, SECOND FLOOR 625 MADISON AV., NEW YORK, N. Y. 10022

Dear Stan, John, and Jim.

I've just finished reading SPIDER-MAN #75 and it was one of the best if not the GREATEST Marvel mag I've ever read.

After finishing the story, I turned to the letters page—and what did I find? Two Marvelites using their right to dissent, it seems that these two avid fans were writing to inform our noble leader that something has happened to the wall-crawler. I now wish to express MY opinion!

I have been a fan of the web-spinner since 1964 when I was first introduced to the magazine. I TOO have noticed a change in my hero, but the change is one which I believe is for the better. It is true that in the early days one might pick up a Spider-Man mag and expect to find both Peter Parker and Spidey in trouble. Peter was having trouble with Flash Thompson and Betty Grant as well as J.J.J., while Spider-Man was in trouble with the police and as ever with the ever-ready public. Today we find that Peter is finally popular with the kids, and has found someone he can truly love in Gwen Stacy. The wall-crawler too has become popular, to some extent, with the public, but he still faces the problems of being a super-hero: His foes are becoming stronger and stronger and also just a little bit wiser.

No longer do they strike in blind revenge, but they plan little traps for our hero and wait for the right time to strike. Because of this the mag has become a little more complicated. Sure Peter Parker has been seen less—but this is due to the fact that he is in more trouble. And, after all, would YOU have time for a social life if deadly villains were always bothering you?

So I wish to close with these words: Spider-Man is as great AS EVER, if not GREATER!

John Orris, Box 725 Akron, Iowa

Thanks for all those kind words, John! And, thanks for adding yet another scintillating chapter to the Great Homo-Arachnophile Debate! You're right in saying that there are certain restrictions placed on Peter Parker's social life by the likes of the Prowler, the Chameleon, and the currently cavorting Kangaroo, but our goal is not to cut out Mr. P. in favor of a Spidey who's constantly on the look-out for dangerous baddies. . . that wouldn't be much of a life now, would it? As always, we keep trying to preserve SOME kind of rough balance between the Webby Wonder and his, wh, alter eao.

Dear Stan, John and Jim.

It has been quite a while since I last wrote, but issue *78 convinced me that it was time that I voiced my opinion.

First of all, the cover was one of the best I've seen in a long time. And you, Stan, truly outdid yourself story-wise. The Prowler is the type of baddy that I really like to see. There was nothing phony about his hang-ups and reasons. Unfortunately—there was ONE big footl-up, one which I hope will be changed in a short while, and that is the far too shart scenes of Peter's social life. It seems that you have to choose on whether to have an all action issue [Eg. *77 IN THE BLAZE OF BATILE) or one that dwells in the deep webs of Spidey's hang-ups [Eg. *78 THE NIGHT OF THE PROWLER] All that I can say is that I beg you, yes, on hands and knees, that you go back to smaller, yet experily drawn panels such as were used in my all time favourite, "HE WINGS OF THE VULTURE in issue *48, and in other issues

during the early months of 1967.

I don't like to split hairs but I even enjoyed the fuzzy type of printing used then. I don't expect miracles but please consider my deep-souled wishes because now, with your non-continuing story policy, you're going to have to, NYAAAH!

Gerold Palma, 6239 Thorne Avenue Burnaby 3, British Columbia, Canada

Do we read you right, Ger? Are you complaining that Peter Parker's social life is short-changed in ish '78, the one that goes deep into Spidey's problems?? And for panel break-downs, "78 had only two pages with single panels . . . all the rest had four or more panels per page! The point behind the number of panels we use is the illustrious illustrator's idea of how Smiley's story can be told clearly and dramatically. We're glad you liked the Prowler, but for that LAST comment, all we can say (with apologies to Schulz) is "How sharper than a serpent's tooth is a fan's NYAAH!"

Dear Stan, John, and Jim.

After listening to excuses, reasons, and alibis about why Spider-Man won't expose his identity to certain people, I noticed that many readers get your mags to find the latest on Gwen and Pete. Your magazine could easily end up 'THE GORGEOUS GWENDOLYN'.

I think that more time should be given to Gwen and the gong (the Robertsons, the Stacys, the Connors, J.J.J., and Flash). As for the angle about Gwen's worries—if Pete told her his secret, how about having that good old spider who bit Pete come along and bite Gwen? Mmmmh? There may not be enough room for another Spider-Man, but how about SPIDER-WOMAN?

You'll really have a blast, especially if Gwen was jumpin' around after some classic baddle and gets hurt. [She'd most likely have an imitation Spidey costume onl]. Imagine Ol' Spidey, with all the strokes Aunt May ever got, if he has to unmask the strangely familiar Spider-Woman.

Think of old J.J.J. If he lives thru that, it's proof nothing will kill him! But I'll stop depending on you to have our lovers hooked, for a couple of years (well, it took long enough for Jan and Hankl), so—back to my daydreams!

Robert Sison, 26 Almagosa Circle Apra Hgts, FPO SF 99630, Guam in this little island of Guam (though

P.S. We even enjoy you an this little island of Guam (though it's not on THIS earth—you know there's still a few of us unearthlings that dig Spidey!)

Not a bad idea, Bob, but we seem to remember another version of the same sort of thing that we were never bats about More seriously, though, we do have some hard thinking to do about Spidey and Gwen. With Hank (Yellowjacket) Pym and wile Janet (Wasp) Van Dyne Pym, we have two super-types. Ditto For Johnny (Torch) Storm and Crystal. With Matt (Daredevil) Murdock and Karen Page, we have a super-hero and a normal homan girl-friend... and that's beginning to look like a road with a lot of problems on it for our Man Without Fearl Do we want Spidey to have those kinds of problems in addition to his every-day variety? Could he stand the strain of worrying if Gwendy was in danger? WE don't know yet how we're gonna handle the situation—so any advice is welcome!

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Congratulations! You finally introduced a major Negro character into one of your best-selling mags. You have finally broken the racial barrier in Spider-Man. I predict that within a few months, every other mag company in the nation will be rushing Nearo suber-villains into their books.

How old is John Romita Jr.? If he is old enough, put him on the

scripting staff-the PROWLER was great!

I would also like to point out that the art in Spidey #78 was excellent. A warning: work on the proofreading of Spidey more. Recently, you have allowed small, but quite significantly noticeable mistakes slip into Spider-Man. Here are just a few that I spotted in Spidex #78.

Page 2 Panel 2—the sky is light at night!

Page 10 Panel 2-the Man has 5 fingers, but no thumb!

Page 10 Panel 4—The window Hobie Brown is cleaning (J.J.J.'s) is on the 2nd floor, but Pete pushes the 7th floor button to get to bit office.

Page 18 Panel 4-Robertson's watch stem is on the wrong side of his watch. (Oh, what a microscope will do these days!)

No, fellow Marvelites, no one is perfect! NIL NISI OPTIMUS!

Mike L. Lusk, 11 East 36th Street

Richmond, Virginia 23224
O.K., Mike, but DUM SPIRO SPERO! Or, in other words . . . w
ARE still trying!

Dear Stan, Jim, and Jon,

I have been reading Spidey (and ALL Marvels) for about four years now. But never has anything upset me so much as the letter from Steve Games in ish #75!

He ridicules Spider-Man for growing up. He says to look at Spidey as he was in 1963 and compare him to the way he is now. Hohl The whole world has undergone changes—considerable changes—since '63, Steve. People have become actively involved in issues as they never have before. And I think that the Bullpen has done a fantastic job of reflecting the times throughout all of their mags, but none more so than in Spider-Man.

I, for one, am glad to see Spider-Man/Peter keeping up with the times, and my only suggestion is that Peter wear his hair a little longer.

Also, there can be no comparison between Johnny Ramita and Steve Ditko. The style of both is so different that one can only say things have changed from GREAT to SUPER!

Frank Hickey, 1161 Kedith Street Belmont, California 94002

Glad to know you feel that way, Frank. Just one thing . . . as one of the fans on the letters page in *78 pointed out, letting Peter wear his hair longer might make his Spider-Man a bit uncomfartable!

Dear Stan and John.

In issue #76 Mark Fromm wrote in and suggested that Pete should be drafted.

Well, about five months ago I had the same idea, but I rejected it. It's a good idea—but a might drastic. If he gets drafted we've probably seen the last of Gwen, And knowing how many fans she's got, it isn't worth it! Besides, Gwen knows that Spidey's got some sort of secret, and that Pete's got more pix of Spidey than anyone in town. So if Spidey were to show up in combat right where Pete had been drafted it wouldn't be too too hard for her to faure out Pete's bia secret She is IHAI Dright!

And of course one of the big reasons that Spidey is so popular is because of his identity problem. Besides, how is he going to sneak out of camp or out of battle to become Spidey. He's gotta get caught SOMETIME! I don't know how Captain America did it, let alone how Pete will!

I say reject the idea—Captain America, Sgt. Fury, Flash Thompson, and whoever, are quite enough!

J. Alan Tyler, 481 Chesley Avenue Mt. View, California

Your opinion is registered, J.A.I There is, though, another problem to be faced if we were going to follow what you say—namely, what excuse does Peter Parker have to justify his draft-exemption? Sole support of Auntie May? On the other hand, and there's ALWAYS on other hand... what do all our Spidey-fans out there have to say on the subject?

Dear Stan, John, and Jim,

I can't stand it anymore. You've got to do something to help Peter Parker. I mean—have, a heart already, will ya? No human or even superhuman mind could stand up to the burdens that poor lad is constantly carrying about with him. And, narticularly not when he's got a job so touch as Soidey's.

not when he s got a job as lough as Spiacy's.

I, of course, have the ultimate solution. What Marvel Maniac wouldn't? Anyway, what Spidey needs is someone who knows his secret identity. Someone who could keep it a secret. He could be injured. Dropping onto a near-by balcony (or some such) he immediately faints. The lady living in the apartment to which said balcony is attached, does what any kind human would do—she takes him in and cares for him. In order to do so, she takes off his mask. Of course, she doesn't know him, but it would seem rather silly for him not to tell her. From then on, the lad has SOMEBODY he can talk to without having to be careful about what he says.

I think that the friend would have to be a girl or a woman for the simple reason that we are all loaded with the mother-instinct, and if anybody needs a little mothering, it's Peter Parker. What he gets from Aunt May is smothering.

For an added kick, you might make the lady a witch—a member of the old religion or just someone like myself, who pursues herbology and menual healing. We're a pretty trustworthy bunch and can be depended upon to keep a secret.

So much for my suggestion of the month. Remember, we love ya all by the bushel.

'Mrs. Lisa Sekellick, 15 N. Balliet St. Frackville, Pa. 17931

Thanks for your interesting suggestion, Mrs. S. But wouldn't there be some problems for that unknown witch-lady? Knowing the secret of Spidey's identity could put her in a dangerous position with those Uglies! Still, it might be interesting if the lady knew what was under Spidey's mask, but had no idea who Peter Parker was! What do y'all think?



Dear Stan and Gang,

Here are some thoughts I get as I re-read Spidey *78:

 How about getting Pete and Harry together again? Maybe a party at their pad??

2. It is time for Flash Thompson to leave the service.

2. It is the there be a communication failure between Gwen and Peter. This happens far too often to Peter Parker.

 When Spidey gets in a fight, please don't have every wall in sight crumble!

5. You blew Daredevil's secret identity, I hear—don't let anyone in on Spidey's. Once you let someone else know, you can't go back... and you can never be sure how someone will read to this knowledge.

 Let JJJ champion a worthy cause for once. Show us how a bigcity newspaper con get involved in the community it serves. You could also get some of Peter's friends doing social wark in the slums.

7. Spidey needs a new friend!

8. Where is the Sandman?

9. Don't end continued Spider-Man stories!

I think that's all for now. Many times in the past I have thanked you for the hour's of pleasure you have given me through that use of your collective creative tolents, and today my feelings are even stronger—so. I say again and without qualifications MAKE MINE MARY ELIIP.

Perry L. Wolf, Camp Howard Hawk DSP APO SF 96271

We think that can be arranged, Perryl Thanks for an intriguing set of opinions and suggestions! Anybody but there want to comment?



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