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STAN Lee THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN

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EUT, TOMORROW IS STILL SEVERAL LONG HOURS AWAY, AND FOR PETER PARKER, RETURNED TO THE APARTMENT HE SWARES WITH HARRY OSBOEN, THOUGHTS OF JONAH JAMESON AND THE DAILY BUGLE ARE THE FUR THEST THINGS EROM HIS MIND...



NO, OUR HARRIED HERO IS INTERESTED ONLY IN A SHOWER TO REMOVE THE SLUDGE HE PICKED UP FROM HIS DUNK IN THE EAST





FOR, YOU SEE, HARRY OSBORN HAS LONG HAD HIS SUSPICIONS ABOUT PETER PARKER, SUSPICIONS BORN WHEN SPIDER-MAN WAS FOUND WITH THE DEAD

























"IT'S THE ORIGIN OF THE MAN WHO'S CALLING HIMSELF... TARANTIILA.

"SIX YEARS AGO, HE HAD ANOTHER NAME -- ANTON MIGUEL ROORIGUEZ. AS THIS PICTURE SHOWS, HE WAS A MEMBER OF A REVOLUTIONARY BAND, WORKING TO FREE A SOUTH AMERICAN COUNTRY FROM ITS OPPRESSIVE DICTATORSHIP...



"BY KIDNAPPING POLITICOS, INCLUDING THE BROTHER OF THE COUNT PY'S MAD DICTATOR...
"...HOLDING THEM "OR R*NSOM...THEN ASSASSINATING THEM IS THE RANSOM WASN'T PAID....



"HE WAS, AT THE LEAST, AN ENTHUSIASTIC SOLDIER, TOGETHER WITH THE OTHER MEMBERS OF HIS SMALL 'ARMY', RODRIQUES MANAGED TO STRIKE TERROR INTO THE YEARTS OF THE RULING CLASS...

"THEY DID THIS IN MANY WAYS... BY BLOWING UP SUFPLY TRAINS...



"AND, OF COURSE, BY ROBBERY... FOR RODRI-QUEZ WAS A MASTER OF THIS LAST TECHNIQUE, AND PLIED IT WHENEVER HIS SUPERIORS ALLOWED... "UNFORTUNATELY, AS I SAID, RODRIQUEZ WAS AND IS AN ENTHUSIAST...



"...AND LIKE ALL ENTHUSIASTS, HE WOULD SOME-TIMES BECOME CARRIED AWAY...WITH DISASTROUS

"THE GUARD HE SHOT--AS SHOWN IN THESE FILMS TAKEN BY THE BANK CAMERA--HAD NOT BEEN REACHING FOR HIS GUN, ROBRIQUEZ SIMPLY WANTED TO KILL HIM...



OF THE DICTATORSHIP... "...BUT THE ARMY OF

"HE WAS GIVEN A COMMISSION, AND BECAUSE OF HIS ALREADY SOMEWHAT DISCEPUTABLE REPUTATION, HE WAS ALSO GIVEN A NEW NAME, AND A SPECIAL MISSION...



"...BUT WHEN ONE CAME POWN TO IT, RODRIQUEZ STILL COULDN'T SHAKE HIMSELF OF HIS LOVE FOR SENSELESS DEATH. "HE KILLED A GUARD DURING THE INTERROGATION OF A CAPTURED REVOLUTIONARY -- BECAUSE THE GUARD WOULDN'T LET TRANSTULA BEAT THE PRISONER TO A PULP --



"...A FACT HIS **FELLOW** REVOLUTIONARIES RECOG-NISED AND **DESPISED**.

"HE WAS **EXPELLED** FROM THE BAND SOON **AFTER** THAT INCIDENT; THE ARMY OF THE REVOLUTION HAD NO **USE** FOR INDISCRIMINATE MURDERERS...



'ANTON MIGUEL RODRIQUEZ BECAME **TARANTULA,** A FORCE FOR FEAR AND TERROR--THE TWISTED, PERVERTED **CAPTAIN AMERICA** OF HIS COUNTRY --A SUPER-HERO FOR A FASCIST **STATE**. "NATURALLY, HE WAS USED AGAINST HIS FORMER COMRADES, AN ASSIGNMENT HE PARTICULARLY ENJOYED.



"-- AND IN THIS WAY, HE FINISHED HIMSELF WITH THE GOVERNMENT ARMY, AS HE'D FIN-ISHED HIMSELF WITH HIS FORMER FRIENDS, "TO SAY THE LEAST, HE LEFT SOUTH AMERICA





SPIDER'S WEB

SEND YOUR LETTERS TO:

THE MARVEL COMICS GROUP. SIXTH FLOOR 575 MADISON AV., NEW YORK IN. Y. 10022



Dear Bullpen,

If what you say is true about getting so many hundreds of letters, this will undoubtedly be just another letter to you. It always seems to me that people write in and say how great a story was, but never with any real cause. It really takes a good story to get me to write, and SPIDER-MAN #131 did it. The style, unlike most stories, was packed with action. Great.

I really like Ross Andru. And I'm so glad you've put in another one of those big splash panels (on page 31). If you hadn't put in that corny comment on the bottom, it would have been doubly great.

I have some criticisms to make, too. Why is it that Spider-Man and superheroes in general have to crack the corniest jokes in existence? Don't tell me they have to keep their spirits up, either, or that they kid around to keep from getting scared out of their wits, because it's not humanly possible to keep joking in times of absolute danger. You claim to

be so realistic (as real as a superhero can be), but accompanying reality is serious-

I really think the Spider-Man Code is a good way of giving FOOMers their money's worth. For those that are non-FOOMers, I tease them and to the their curiosity. So keep the codes going.

Kolya Renne
952 Fresno

Berkeley, Ca.

You bet your bottom web, we will, Kolya. In fact, we'll answer your letter in our brand new "Code of the CRAZY Nebbish." Here goes: GNRP SAGEN-FRAZ TYLPX RUMPRUMP KZAT CHOK-FULLANUTZ. (Unfortunately, we haven't yet figured out ourselves how to de-code that particular bit of cryptography, but we're told on good authority that it translates to: "Beyond the wick of the incom-prehensible flashlight, the lurks a small turtle." Whatever that means.)

Anyway, thanks for the kind words on SPIDEY #131. But you've got us a little worried with your negative comments on the Web-Spinner's jocular gems. Do the rest of you readers feel as Kolya does? Are we overdoing Spidey's Henny Youngman act? Or do you feel, as we do at this point, that Mr. Parker's humor is an essential element of his character?

People, and Gerry Conway in particular,

Issues #130 and 131 of AMAZING SPIDER-MAN were two of the most unique, unforgettable issues in the history of that magazine. I can think of only one thing to say that would do them

Thank God it's over.

Steve Saffel 1440 Eastern Ave. Morgantown, W. Va. 26505

To which we can only reply- HUH?!?



Dear Marvel.

I want to comment on the recent rash of bloodshed in SPIDER-MAN. I must admit that the deaths of Gwen Stacy and the Green Goblin made for just about the best Spider-Man story ever, but the deaths of Dr. Octopus, Hammerhead. and twenty or thirty henchmen were just plain ridiculous.

First of all, the story had so many loose points and unanswered questions as to be literally hanging by a thread. Why in the world was Aunt May going to marry Doc Ock? Why wasn't Peter told or invited? If he was, why didn't Aunt May insist on postponing the wedding until he could be there? Also, to think that a nuclear reactor of any type could be set off just by jarring it is asinine. And it's illegal for a reactor to be privately owned would make for a lot of madmen building backyard A-bombs; and don't





give me the excuse that you can own a reactor in the Marvel world, unless the world you're portraying is a mighty stupid one).

Last but not least, you have killed off two of Spidey's greatest foes, both of whom have made for some great stories (and don't tell me some alien snatched them off into another dimension).

It seems Gerry Conway isn't doing so bad in other mags, either. In FANTASTIC FOUR, he has blown up Dr. Doom and turned Franklin Richards into a vegetable

This letter is getting to be too long, so I'll just say that I really like SPIDER-MAN a lot, and I'm sorry that all I did was complain, but it's just that you came up with such an absolutely stupid story (which I must admit is a rare event).

Keith Helms 1758 Piping Rock Dr. Memphis, Tenn, 38116

Hoo boy. Let's save the bloodshed question for last, Keith, and deal with some of your other questions and criticisms first.

Aunt May was going to marry Dr. Octopus, because, hard as it is to believe, she loved the eight-limbed little devil. You gotta remember, Mrs. Parker (or is it Mrs. Octavius, now. Ger?) never

believed those awful stories about Ock being a criminal.

As for Peter's not being invited, we think there's one good explanation: Doc Ock didn't want him within ten miles of the place!! After all, Pete's antipathy toward the good doctor is well-known. So we can picture Ock giving a little speech like this to Aunt May: "I don't think it would be wise to invite him, dear. You know he dislikes me. Suppose we take our vows and then inform your nephew. I'm certain, in time, he'll come to see things our way." Convincing, no?

Now, about that reactor. We figure it this way. It wasn't privately owned, despite what Gerry said. (We're now playing a new, slightly unfair game called, "We Make The Rules, We Can Change 'Em.") Aunt May obviously inherited the company which owned the reactor and was licensed to own it by the Canadian government. (Okay, Ger? Okay, Keith?)

Finally, you're right. A little jar probably wouldn't set off a nuclear reactor. Probably. But that doesn't make it impossible, does it? (This is another new game called, "Semantics.") But since this is a pretty lame explanation, suppose we just award you a no-prize, Mr. Helms, and ask that all be forgiven?

Now to the most important point you've raised—and one that was echoed in many other readers' letters. The number of deaths and apparent deaths that have been occurring lately in SPIDEY.

Let us make one postulation before we go any further with this discussion. We think it's highly unlikely that Doc Ook and Hammerhead are dead. Ditto on Dr. Doom. No, no alien snatched them into another dimension, but villains of their lik have an uncanny knack of getting out of the most "inescapable" traps in the most bizarre manners imaginable. So let's assume that whatever happened, there's a better than even chance that at

least two out of the three survived. Okay? Now, keeping that in mind, has there still been too much bloodshed in SPI-DER-MAN (and in the rest of our mags, for that matter)? It's a sad fact of life that violence kills people, Keith. And somehow we think it may be more wrong to minimize the effects of violence than it is to show such acts for what they are. We can't help wondering if all those "flesh wounds" sustained in all those Ewesterns of decades back didn't convince people, consciously or not, that guns really aren't so dangerous after all.

We'd welcome your fellow readers' opinions on this matter— again, not only as regards to SPIDER-MAN but all the Marvel mags.

Dear Marvel.

"My Uncle/ My Enemy" was absolutely great. Gotta hand it to you guys, you keep coming up with plots that keep us readers in suspense. But one problem. In the footnote on page fourteen, panel one, you stated that Gwen died in SPIDER-MAN #221. If my computations are correct, that will be the October, 1981 issue.

R. Hoppe 2010 Potter Ave. N. Merrick, N.Y. 11566

So what's the problem, R? You don't like previews of coming attractions??? (Okay, Mary Mac... be a good production assistant and shell out another no-prize!)

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STAN LEE'S SOAPBOX

Remember last ish? Remember the promise I made you? I said I'd hit you with the most eagerly-awaited announcement of the year, right? Well, you've probably guessed it by now, 'cause we've been mentioning it and hinting at it for months, I'm talking, natch, about our most important single publication—the one you've been clamoring for all these years! It's not a magazine, but a real, honest-to-Forbush book-destined to become the most prized best-seller of the decade! The title tells you the whole bit-THE ORIGIN OF MARVEL COMICS! It's a prestige library edition, published by Simon and Schuster, scheduled to go on sale in bookstores throughout the free world some time in October! We're not sure of the price yet, but it won't be cheap-so start saving your shekels, sahib. It's bigger than 200 pages, containing the unabridged origins of The Fantastic Four, Spidey, The Hulk, and more, more, more-handsomely printed in rich, full, glorious color! Also, not only does it contain the most anxiously-awaited strips of all time, but you'll also find page after page of behind-the-scenes, bombshells, giving you the real, uncensored scoop on how Marvel Comics was born! Every page is dynamite-and every word is true! I oughta know-I'm the guy who wrote it! It names names and spares no punches. THE ORIGIN OF MARVEL COMICS-on sale this fall! If you've a bad memory, don't worry about it. There's always the chance that we'll remind you again in the next few months. (Like on every other pagel) Oh, and before I forget-let me toss a word of appreciation to the wonderful gang at Worcester Polytech University in Massachusetts for the rollicking reception they gave me a few weeks ago. I couldn't tell if they were applauding my speech or stompin' to keep warm, but it was a blast no matter what! And now, till we meet again, think peace-think love-think Marvel. It could be habit-forming.

Excelsion



ITEM! Special last-minute announcement! Our 35¢ and 60¢ mags have gone CRAZY fun-fest - that forthcoming Marthe way of all flesh! In other words, we're discontinuing 'em. But, before you gulp that cyanide pill, friend, let us hasten to clue you in - we're just switching (mainly 'cause right now we can't reall our over-sized epics to one size, one member what they are). But, a few short price: just 50¢ for 68 big pages, with a feature-length 30-page all-new spectac- if it turns out we had another inspiration ular in almost every one of our nine or three up our sleeve, hear?

Giant-Size titles. Confused? Well, for the full fabulous details, you'll have to pick up this month's GIANT-SIZE SPIDER-MAN #1 (co-starring DRACULA, who else?) - GIANT-SIZE DEFENDERS #1, GIANT-SIZE AVENGERS #1, or whatever else we happen to toss atcha. Then, you'll know at least as much about this dramatic change-over as we do - and take it from us, that ain't much, effendi! ITEM! This is it! The month when we present a dynamic new feature, which starts in the current issue of ASTONISH-ING TALES, now on sale. First, though: that fabled picture-worth-a-thousandwords:



at what our newest, maybe most offbeat hero yet looks like, we'll fill you in: He's DEATHLOK, THE DEMOLISHER - and he's part cyborg, part superhero, and maybe just a touch of monster, all rolled up into one pulsating package by RICH (Swash) BUCKLER, who conceived and drew the awesome origin tale, and Devil-May-Care DOUG MOENCH, who supplied some of the most unique scripting we've seen in a month of Mondays! Quite frankly, we think Deathlok's gonna take the waiting world by storm - and that's no hype! Pick up ASTONISHING TALES #25, and see for yourself why 1974 is already being heralded as THE MARVEL AGE OF COMICS - PHASE TWO! We're shifting into high gear, troops - but we're not going anyplace without you! ITEM! Hey, guess what! Looking over our ever-frenetic schedule, we just noticed that this is the first time in many moons that we're not introducing any new mags - with the exception of a couple of 50¢ extravaganzas, and if you don't count one Deathlok, the Demolisher - which, now that we think of it, doesn't leave us exactly standing still! Fact is, we're just slowing down to catch our breath for a little while, as we consolidate our line of 25¢ and 50¢ color comics - our 75¢ magazine masterpieces - our 40¢ vel Origins Book that Smiley told you about earlier - and a couple of other projects we can't even mention yet weeks from now, don't be too surprised

MARVELOUS MARVEL MINI-ITEMS! Wedding bells are waking up that Bullpen Gang of ours! First, over the Christmas holidays, it was Marriage-Minded MUR-RAY FRIEDMAN, our hard-working Assistant Production Manager who specializes in our 75¢ mags, to his lovely ADRIENNE (who, weirdly enough, is a former Hunter College lab partner of Rascally ROY'S own wife, JEAN. . . Then, come January, Merry GERRY CONWAY took a couple of days off from his superhero scripting to tie the connubial knot with Cute CARLA JOSEPH, Roy's supersecretary and general Gal Friday. Between Ger, who writes several of our mags a month (plus occasional sciencefiction paperbacks, including a forthcoming series or two), and Carla, who's an off-Broadway playwright in between her many Marvel chores, we've got a feeling that the Conways' neighbors on Manhattan's West Side are gonna be driven out of their skulls by the sound of two twin typewriters clackin' away night and day! Anyway, best wishes both to GERRY and CARLA, and to MURRAY and ADRIENNE - and somebody help our poor editor pick all that rice out of his shoes, willya?

ITEM THE LAST! Next time around, we'll mention several more block-bustin' bargains you can get once you've amassed a complete set of our much-praised, much-clipped MARVEL VALUE STAMPS! But, for now, we've just got room enough left to mention a few of our mammothsized mags. So, till then - Save Energy!-Subscribe, Already!

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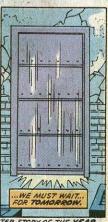












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