



SHRIEKING PART ONE

the AMAZING SPIDER-MAN

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390
JUN

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COMICS
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AUTHORITY



"LIFETHEFT" AND
"PURSUIT" WERE JUST
THE BEGINNING OF
SPIDER-MAN'S
LIVING NIGHTMARE --

-- AND SHRIEK AND
CARRION ARE ALL
TOO HAPPY TO HIT HIM
WHILE HE'S DOWN!

DIRECT EDITION



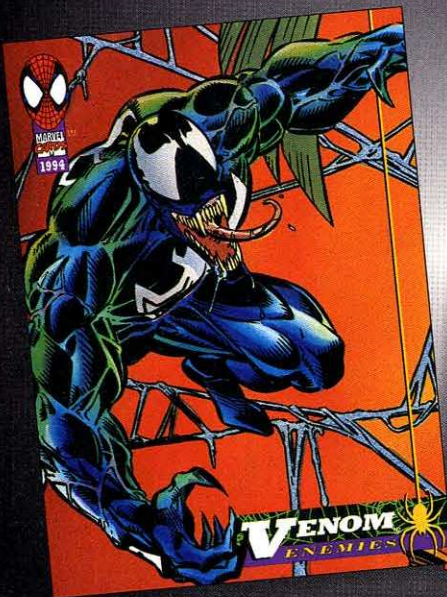
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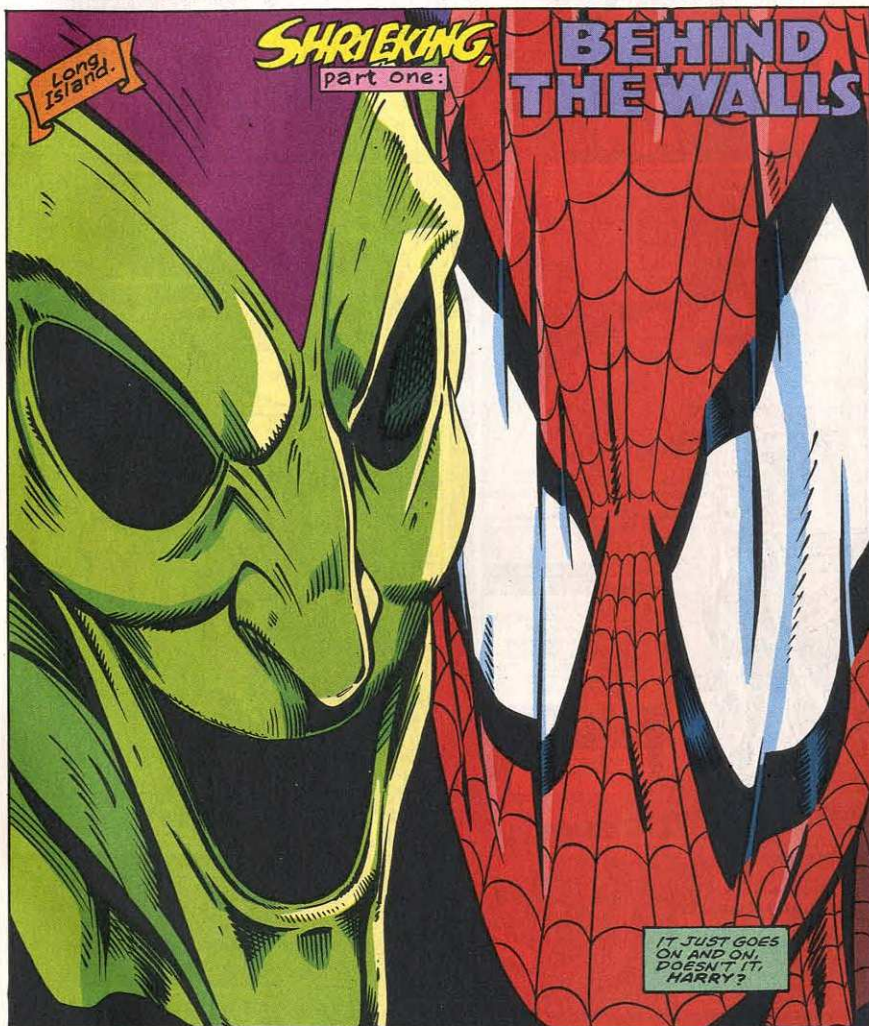
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BITTEN BY A RADIOACTIVE SPIDER, STUDENT PETER PARKER GAINED THE PROPORTIONATE STRENGTH AND AGILITY OF AN ARACHNID! ARMED WITH HIS WONDROUS WEB-SHOOTERS, THE RELUCTANT SUPER HERO STRUGGLES WITH SINISTER SUPER-VILLAINS, MAKING ENDS MEET, AND MAINTAINING SOME SEMBLANCE OF A NORMAL LIFE!

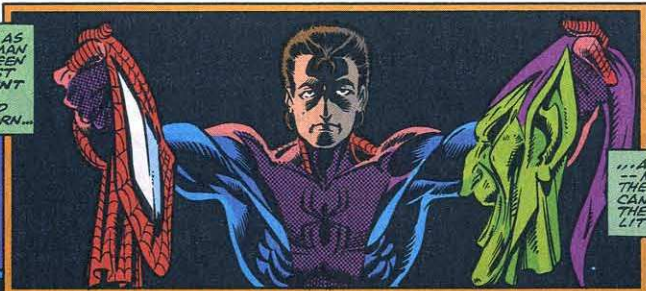
Stan Lee
PRESENTS: **THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN®**



J.M. DeMATTEIS * MARK BAGLEY * RANDY EMBERLIN * JOE ROSEN * BOB SHAREN * DANNY FINGEROTH * TOM DeFALCO
WRITER PENCILER INKER LETTERER COLORIST EDITOR EDITOR IN CHIEF

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IT'S AMOST AS IF SPIDER-MAN AND THE GREEN GOBLIN EXIST INDEPENDENT OF PETER PARKER AND HARRY OSBORN...



...AND NOTHING -- NOT EVEN THE GRIME -- CAN STOP THIS DIRTY LITTLE WAR.

I CAN'T BELIEVE IT, HARRY. I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU PUT THE CHAMELEON UP TO IT!

ACCORDING TO THE INFORMATION I FOUND IN SMERYAKOV'S COMPUTER FILES, YOU CONTACTED HIM MONTHS BEFORE YOU DIED, PUT THE WHOLE IDEA OF "RESURRECTING" RICHARD AND MARY PARKER *INTO HIS HEAD.



... AND CHOSE TO HATE ME INSTEAD...

... BLAMING YOUR BEST FRIEND FOR ALL THE INSANITY, ALL THE DEATH.

YOU WANTED TO HURT ME THE WAY YOU'D BEEN HURT. WELL, GUESS WHAT, OLD BUDDY?



YOU SUCCEEDED.

AND WHY?

BECAUSE YOU COULDN'T DEAL WITH THE REALITY OF WHAT A MONSTER YOUR FATHER WAS -- COULDN'T FIND IT IN YOUR HEART TO HATE HIM...

*SEE LAST ISSUE FOR HOW IT ALL ARISE OUT. --DANNY

I HOPE YOU'RE HAPPY, NORMAN.

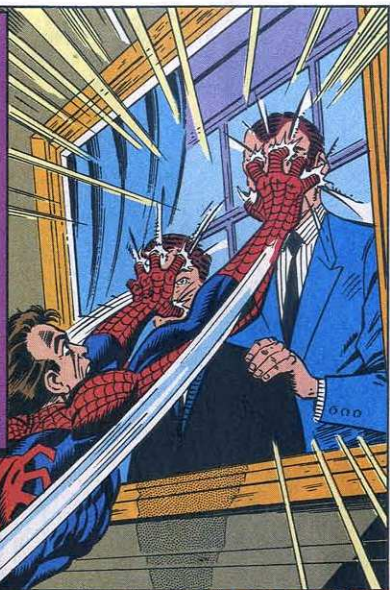
HARRY AND I MADE PEACE WITH EACH OTHER BEFORE HE DIED. BEFORE YOUR STRENGTH-ENHANCING FORMULA KILLED HIM.



BUT THE OSBORN LEGACY LIVES ON. THE HATE AND MADNESS SURVIVE YOU BOTH.

MAYBE THAT'S WHY I'VE COME HERE TO YOUR FAMILY MANSION -- WHERE THE GOBLIN AND I HAD ONE OF OUR LAST BATTLES. TO CONGRATULATE YOU.

AFTER ALL THESE YEARS, YOU'VE WON. YOU DESTROYED HARRY.







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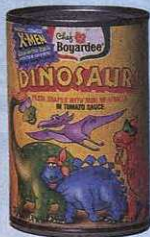
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AND YOU
DESTROYED
ME.



Westchester
County.

WELL, ASHLEY--YOU
PRACTICALLY BEGGED
FOR THIS JOB AS DI-
RECTOR OF RAVENCROFT.
NOW THAT YOU'VE GOT IT...

...I HOPE YOU'RE
HAPPY.

AAAAAAAAHHH

I CAN'T FIND THE SOURCE
OF HER PAIN. SHE'S TOO
WELL PROTECTED. SHE
WON'T LET ME IN!

SOMETHING HAPPENED
TO HER WHEN SHE WAS
A CHILD... SOME TRAUMA
SO PROFOUND, SO SHATTER-
ING-- THAT IT REDEFINES
THE WORD.

AAAAAAAAHHH--!

BUT THERE'S A PART OF HER...
BURIED DEEP BUT IT'S THERE...
THAT'S HUNGRY FOR HOPE.
FOR A SENSE OF BELONGING.
MOST OF ALL, FOR A SENSE OF
FAMILY.



IF I CAN JUST FEED THAT HUNGER,
PROVIDE FRANCES WITH AN ATMOS-
PHERE OF TRUST AND LOVE... I
MIGHT BE ABLE TO REACH HER YET.

BUT HOW DO YOU LOVE
SOMEONE WHO'D JUST
AS SOON CUT YOUR
HEART OUT...

LOOK AT HER:
FRANCES LOUISE
BARRISON-- KNOWN
MORE COMMONLY
AS SHRIEK. EVEN IF
THEY FILLED EVERY
WING OF THIS FACILITY
WITH MENTALLY
IMBALANCED SUPER-
CRIMINALS...

...SHE'D STILL BE MY
MOST PERPLEXING
CASE.

HOW MANY WEEKS OF THERAPY
HAVE I DONE WITH HER? AND
FOR EACH LAYER OF EMOTIONAL
PAIN I PEEL BACK... I FIND
FIVE MORE.

DOCTOR
KAFKA?

WHO?!

SORRY, DOCTOR--
I DIDN'T MEAN
TO STARTLE
YOU.

NOT YOUR
FAULT,
EDWARD.
I'M FEELING
A LITTLE...
EDGY
TONIGHT.

IS IT
TIME?

...AS SAY
GOOD
MORNING?

YES--

TURN ON THE Technology!

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--MALCOLM'S WAITING.

I'LL SAY THIS FOR MY JOB AS DIRECTOR OF RAVEN-CROFT--IT'S NEVER BORING. EACH CASE IS MORE FASCINATING...AND MORE HEART-BREAKING...THAN THE NEXT.

I STILL WISH THEY WOULD HAVE GIVEN US MORE TIME TO GET THE PLACE UP AND RUNNING. WE'RE UNDER-STAFFED, SHORT ON EQUIPMENT, THE SECURITY SYSTEMS--

--ARE COLONEL JAMESON'S AFFAIR. YOU CONCENTRATE ON YOUR MUTATE RESEARCH...AND LEAVE SECURITY TO HIM.

NOW, HOW'S MALCOLM DOING?

STILL AGITATED, TROUBLE SLEEPING, BUT HE SEEMS TO BE RESPONDING WELL TO THE DRUGS.

THE CARRION VIRUS REALLY DOES SEEM TO BE IN REMISSION.

HIS PHYSICAL HEALING ISN'T THE PROBLEM.

IT'S THE GUILT THAT'S DESTROYING HIM.

THE KNOWLEDGE THAT HE WAS ACTUALLY A MURDEROUS ENTITY LIKE CARRION--IS TOO MUCH FOR HIM TO BEAR.

IF IT WASN'T FOR HIS MOTHER--

--I THINK WE WOULD HAVE LOST HIM A LONG TIME AGO.

...GOOD EVENING, MALCOLM... MRS. MACBRIDE. HOW'S EVERYONE DOING?

MALCOLM'S FEELING A LITTLE SICK TONIGHT. HE'S GOT THOSE HEADACHES AGAIN...? THE NAUSEA.

SIDE EFFECTS OF THE ANTI-VIRALS, SHOULD PASS AS HIS SYSTEM ADJUSTS TO THE DRUGS.

WHAT ABOUT YOU, BEA?

ME? OH, I'M FINE.

I HAVE TO THANK YOU AGAIN FOR LETTING ME STAY HERE WITH HIM. I DON'T THINK I COULD STAND IT... NOT BEING ABLE TO HELP HIM THROUGH THIS AWFUL TIME...

SO... MALCOLM--

--EDWARD TELLS ME YOU HAVEN'T BEEN SLEEPING WELL.

HOW CAN I SLEEP? EVERY TIME I CLOSE MY EYES--

"--I SEE
THEM.

"CORPSES. MOUNDS
OF THEM. LIKE
SOMETHING OUT
OF THE HOLOCAUST!
BUT... BUT IT'S NOT
DACHAU OR BUCHEN-
WALD.

"IT'S
NEW
YORK
CITY.

"IT'S
NOW.

"AND AS I WALK DOWN THE
STREET, AS EACH ACCUSING
EYE FIXES ITSELF ON ME,
I KNOW...

"...THAT
~~THIS~~
HOLOCAUST...

"BUT THEN I THINK-- HOW IS IT POSSIBLE?
I'M A GOOD MAN. NOT... NOT PERFECT,
I KNOW. BUT NOT SO TERRIBLE THAT
I COULD DO ANYTHING LIKE *THIS*--!

"AND THEN I
REMEMBER
THE VIRUS.

"...IS MY
DOING.

"THEN I
REMEMBER
CARRION.

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"AND THEN
HE COMES--

"--AND I PRAY,
WITH ALL MY
HEART AND SOUL--

"-- THAT HE KILLS ME,
TOO. I'D BE HAPPY,
DOCTOR... REALLY.
I WOULD... IF HE'D KILL
ME. I DESERVE TO DIE.

"BUT... BUT HE
DOESN'T KILL
ME. THAT'S NOT
WHAT HE WANTS.

"WHAT HE
WANTS--

"-- IS FOR ME
TO TAKE HIM
BACK."

Forest Hills.

PETER--!

JUST A DREAM.
CRAZY, STUPID
DREAM.

IT WAS THE
BURGLAR
AGAIN, BUT
INSTEAD OF
BEN... THIS
TIME... HE
TOOK PETER.

DON'T KNOW
WHAT'S WRONG
WITH ME LATELY.
EVERY NIGHT...
ANOTHER AWFUL
NIGHTMARE. I
WAKE UP LIKE A
FRIGHTENED
LITTLE SCHOOL-
GIRL... SHIVERING
IN MY BED.

HALF THE TIME I
REACH OUT FOR BEN.
ALL THESE YEARS-- AND
I STILL THINK HE'S GOING
TO BE THERE. HOLD ME
IN HIS ARMS AND RE-
ASSURE ME.

ALL
THESE
YEARS.

IT FEELS LIKE JUST
YESTERDAY. BEN WAS
ALIVE AND PETER WAS
A FAT-FACED LITTLE
BABY. IT SEEMS LIKE--

HOW DID THEY PASS
SO QUICKLY? HOW ON
EARTH DID I EVER
GET SO OLD?

WHY DID THEY DO
THAT? WHY DID
THEY HURT PETER
SO?

HARD ENOUGH FOR A
BOY TO LOSE HIS
PARENTS SO YOUNG
...BUT TO HAVE
THOSE TERRIBLE
PEOPLE COME BACK
AND CONVINCE HIM
...CONVINCE ALL OF
US... THAT THEY
WERE RICHARD
AND MARY.

I
CAN'T!

I'VE SUR-
VIVED WORSE
THAN THIS.
AND I'LL KEEP
SURVIVING.

PETER'S SO MUCH LIKE
BEN. ALWAYS SEEING
THE GOOD IN PEOPLE.
IDEALISTIC. TRUSTING.
HE'S NOT USED TO THE
HARD WAYS OF THE
WORLD.

THAT'S WHY I'VE
GOT TO BE STRONG.
I CAN'T LET THIS
GET TO ME.

I'VE GOT TO BE STRONG.
NOT FOR MYSELF.

FOR
PETER.

YOU KNOW

PETER.

WHERE
ARE YOU?

Manhattan's
Upper East
Side.

HIDING
BEHIND
YOUR
MASK.

SAFE
INSIDE
SPIDER-
MAN.

YOU'RE LIKE A
LITTLE BOY
PLAYING PRETEND.

AND AS LONG
AS YOU KEEP
PLAYING, YOU
WON'T HAVE
TO FEEL.

YOU WON'T
HAVE TO
HURT.

BUT DID IT EVER
OCCUR TO YOU
HOW MUCH YOU'RE
HURTING ME?

YOU'VE HARDLY
BEEN HOME FOR
DAYS, AND WHEN YOU
ARE HERE I CAN'T
GET MORE THAN A
FEW SYLLABLES
OUT OF YOU. "I'M
FINE," YOU GRUNT.
"NO PROBLEM, I
CAN HANDLE IT."

AND THEN
YOU'RE
GONE AGAIN.




I KNOW THE ROUTINE BACKWARDS AND FORWARDS. I USED TO GET IT FROM MY FATHER ALL THE TIME. ALWAYS LOST IN HIS WORK... AND EVEN WHEN HE WAS THERE-- HE WASN'T.

YOU COULD SIT IN THE SAME ROOM WITH THE MAN AND FEEL UTTERLY ALONE. HE ABANDONED ME YEARS BEFORE HE ACTUALLY LEFT.


AND LUCKY ME... I GOT TO MARRY A MAN WHO'S DOING IT TO ME ALL OVER AGAIN.




NO. NOT AGAIN.



YOU'RE NOT GOING TO HIDE BEHIND YOUR MASK...



...AND I'M NOT SMOKING MYSELF INTO AN EARLY GRAVE TO GET BACK AT YOU.



YOU'RE NOT MY FATHER, PETER. YOU'RE MY HUSBAND. AND NO GHOSTS-- FROM YOUR FAMILY OR MINE...

...ARE GOING TO STOP US FROM MAKING THIS MARRIAGE...

CREEEEEK



...WORK.

PETER...?



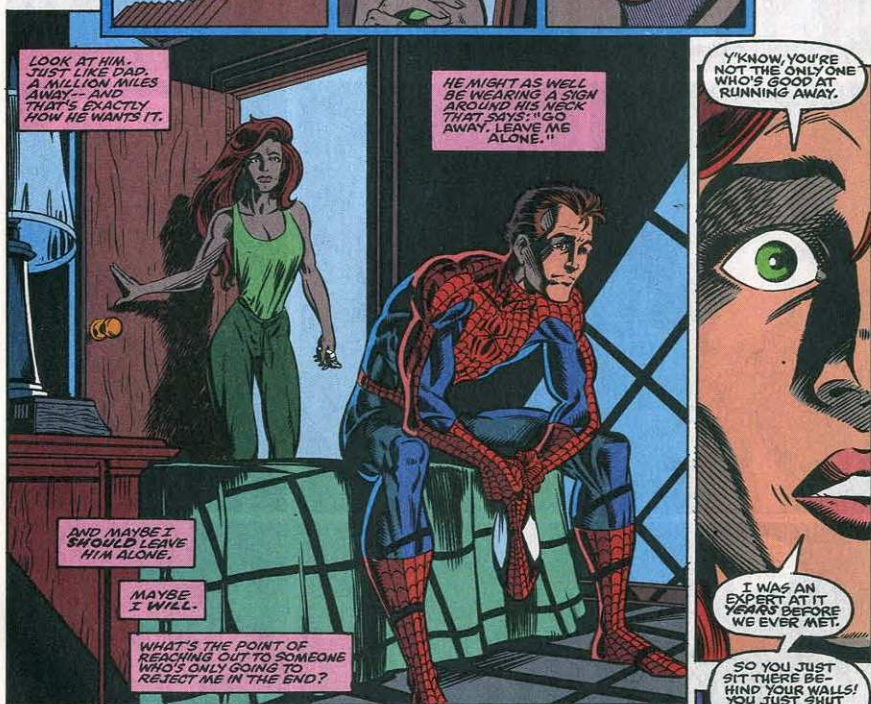
SWEETHEART?

IS THAT
YOU?

I'M GLAD YOU'RE HOME,
PETER-- BECAUSE I'VE
BEEN DOING A LOT OF
THINKING TONIGHT.

WE HAVE
TO TALK
THIS ALL
OUT--

--BEFORE--



LOOK AT HIM--
JUST LIKE DAD.
A MILLION MILES
AWAY-- AND
THAT'S EXACTLY
HOW HE WANTS IT.

HE MIGHT AS WELL
BE WEARING A SIGN
AROUND HIS NECK
THAT SAYS: "GO
AWAY, LEAVE ME
ALONE."

Y'KNOW, YOU'RE
NOT THE ONLY ONE
WHO'S GOOD AT
RUNNING AWAY.

AND MAYBE I
SHOULD LEAVE
HIM ALONE.

MAYBE
I WILL.

WHAT'S THE POINT OF
REACHING OUT TO SOMEONE
WHO'S ONLY GOING TO
REJECT ME IN THE END?

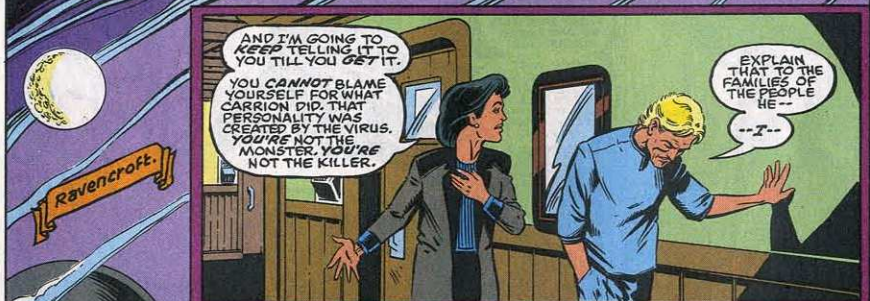
I WAS AN
EXPERT AT IT
YEARS BEFORE
WE EVER MET.

SO YOU JUST
SIT THERE BE-
HIND YOUR WALLS!
YOU JUST SHUT
OUT THE WORLD--
AND ME WITH
IT!

I AM
OUT
OF HERE!



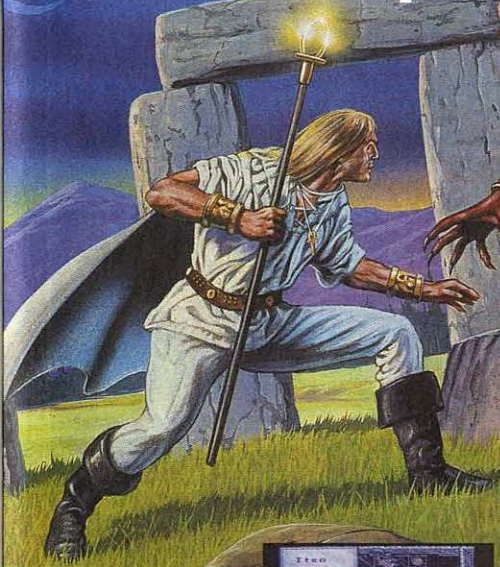






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BULLPEN MARVEL COMICS BULLETINS

JACK KIRBY (1917 - 1994)

Jack Kirby, one of the founding fathers of Marvel, passed away in February of this year. This week, we present the second in our month-long series of tributes to the man who co-created the FANTASTIC FOUR, the HULK, the X-MEN, CAPTAIN AMERICA, and thousands more. Here's what some of Kirby's fellow pros had to say in tribute to the King ...

Joe Sinnott: Kirby was to comics what Babe Ruth was to baseball and Einstein was to science.

Tom DeFalco: Jack Kirby gave visual form to the fantasies of an entire generation, and his influence will be felt as long as comic books endure.

John Buscema: He reinvented super-hero comics. If it wasn't for Kirby, I wouldn't be in this business. I had gotten out of comics for a while—I was doing advertising art—and when I got back into it in '66, I had no concept of how comics were supposed to look. Kirby's work was a jumping-on-point for me, even though our styles look nothing alike. I saw what he did, and I took it from there. Kirby had no peer in this business. He's a man who deserves everyone's respect.

Marie Severin: I am grateful to Jack Kirby for his tremendous influence in the revitalization of the comic book industry. Stan was quite right in calling him "King."

Curt Swan: I would say that Kirby

was probably the premiere innovator of stories and characters.

Sal Buscema: I doubt if there is an individual working in comics today that hasn't been influenced by Jack Kirby. Anyone that says they haven't been is stretching the truth, to put it mildly. The only regret I

have is that I never had the pleasure of meeting and working with him. I've been in the business for 25 years, and the greatest comic book illustrator of all time, I never got to meet. Nobody has contributed as much to the business of comic book illustration and storytelling as Jack Kirby. He's the best. He's the one against which all others are measured.

Gene Colan: We all have been influenced highly by his approach to comics, by his power and force. There isn't a soul in this business that hasn't imitated him to some extent. Kirby's work gave me a springboard to begin my career. Even as a youngster, I was highly taken with his art in the forties on *Newsboy Legion* and *Koolhaas Commandos*. I used to emulate his style—I studied it and copied it. I came into this business not knowing a thing about comics. I went up to National (DC) at the age of thirteen, looking for work, and the art director brought out some pages by Kirby to show me how it's supposed to be done. Kirby had a very unique style; you could spot it a mile away. It's really in a class by itself. Every one of us has a little bit of Kirby in him. You see his influence everywhere you look. He left behind quite a bit for us to remember.

Don Heck: Jack's legacy of stories and characters to the world is greater than that of anyone I've ever known.



HYPE BOX

This week another sizzling new superstar lopes your way from the House of Heroes! **BLACKWOLF #1** unleashes a brand-new team of cranked-up characters, led by Blacky himself, pitted against a new archvillain—**Lord Tantalus**—who's scary enough to give *Venom* nightmares! Those

of you following **THUNDERSTRIKE** have gotten a sneak preview of the wonderment of the 'Wolf, but you ain't seen nothin' yet! Written by **Glenn (NAMOR) Herdling** and drawn by **Angel (WAR-LOCK) Medina** and **Bill (COSMIC POWERS) Anderson**, **BLACKWOLF** is proof positive that mighty Marvel is on the move again!



NOW ON SALE

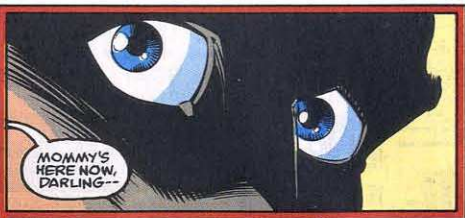
- ☐ **AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #390:** Shriek and Carnion are carrying on! By DeMatteis/Bagley/Emberlin!
- ☐ **BARBIE #42:** 35 years of America's favorite fashion doll! By Trusiani/Rausch/Lucas!
- ☐ **BLACKWOLF #1:** A brand-new Marvel mega-star makes his butt-kickin' debut! By Herdling/Medina/Anderson!
- ☐ **CONAN CLASSIC #1:** Reprinting *Conan The Barbarian* #1, by Crom! By Thomas/Windor-Smith/Atkins!
- ☐ **GHOST RIDER #50:** Dan Ketch is back—and he's looking for *Vengeance!* Double-sized! By Mackie/Garnery/Ivey!
- ☐ **GUARDIANS OF THE GALAXY #49:** There's a new Celestial in town! By Gallagher/West/Montaloni!
- ☐ **MARVEL COMICS #156:** *Vengeance, Hawkeye, New Warriors* and more!
- ☐ **MARVEL MASTERWORKS #3:** THE UNCANNY X-MEN #1-10, available again! By Lee/Kirby!
- ☐ **NIGHT THRASHER #11:** Thrash is working on the plantation, thanks to the *Sphinx*! By Nicieza/Boller!
- ☐ **NOVA #6:** It's double-Nova as Nova battles an alternate future version of himself! By Nicieza/Marrin/Stegbauer!
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- ☐ **PUNISHER WAR ZONE #2:** The Punisher continues his barbaric adventure! By Dixon/Buscema!
- ☐ **QUASAR #59:** While Quasar bids farewell to Earth, *Darkstar* and her father want revenge! By Gruenwald/Heebink/McClellan!
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- ☐ **SACHS & VIOLENS #3 OF 4:** S & V want to snuff out some child exploiters! By David/Perez!
- ☐ **SECRET DEFENDERS #16:** Thor, Cap, and Namor face the menace of *Mensael*! By Thomas/Wyman/Hudson!
- ☐ **THE SHROUD #4 OF 4:** Shroud must face Kali and an angry Spider-Man! By Barr/Wyman/Jones!
- ☐ **SILVER SABLE #25:** Double-sized! Silver stalks her own father! And the Foreigner stalks Silver! By Wright/Butler/Eklund!
- ☐ **UNCANNY X-MEN ANNUAL #18:** Caliban is out for X-blood! By Herdling/Churchill!
- ☐ **WAR MACHINE #3:** Against the war machines of Nick Fury and SHIELD! By DeMatteis/Duraseva/Milgrom!
- ☐ **WOLVERINE #82:** Back to Madripoor, with Karma and Jessica Drew! By Hama/Kubert!
- ☐ **X-FACTOR #103:** Malice causes Hawaiian havoc for Lorna and Alex! By DeMatteis/Duraseva/Milgrom!
- ☐ **X-MEN ADVENTURES SEASON 2 #5:** Alpha Flight wants Wolverine's bones! By Macchio/Heebert/Albrecht!
- ☐ **X-MEN: THE EARLY YEARS #2:** To vanquish the *Vanisher*! By Lee/Kirby/Reiman!



--YOU DON'T
HAVE TO RUN!
YOU DON'T HAVE
TO BE AFRAID!
WHATEVER
THEY'VE DONE
TO YOU--



--I SWEAR
THEY WON'T
HURT YOU
ANY MORE!



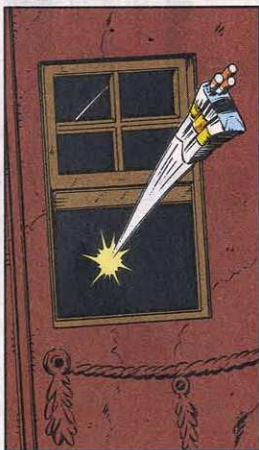
MOMMY'S
HERE NOW,
DARLING--



"--AND SHE'LL
PROTECT YOU!"



OH, PETER...
I HAD THE
WORST
DREAM! YOU
WERE--





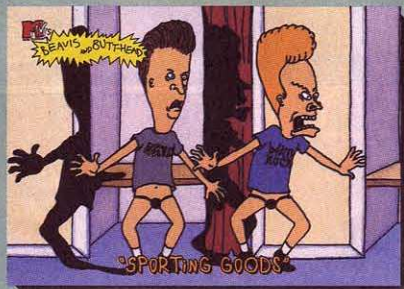
AND NOW, A PREPARED STATEMENT FROM BEAVIS AND BUTT-HEAD TO CARD LOVERS EVERYWHERE:



UHHH... HUH
HUH HUH HUH HUH.
BUY THESE CARDS,
OR SOMETHING.



YEAH.
HEH HEH M HEH
HEH HEH HEH HEH.



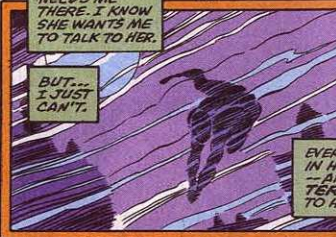
INTRODUCING BEAVIS AND BUTT-HEAD TRADING CARDS!

150 CARDS FEATURING ARTWORK CREATED FROM ACTUAL SERIES ANIMATION CELLS
WITH ADDITIONAL NEW ART AND TEXT.

Presented by Fleer




GUESS NOT.




I KNOW SHE NEEDS ME THERE. I KNOW SHE WANTS ME TO TALK TO HER.

BUT... I JUST CAN'T.



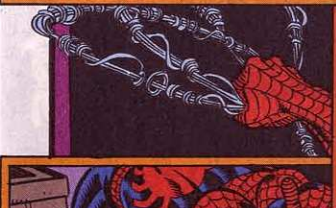
I HATED TO LEAVE HER AGAIN LIKE THAT.



EVERY TIME I LOOK IN HER EYES, I PANIC -- AFRAID SOMETHING TERRIBLE'S GOING TO HAPPEN TO HER.



THAT I'M GOING TO LOSE HER, TOO.



PETER PARKER'S NOT A SAFE MAN TO BE AROUND, BUT AS LONG AS I'M SPIDER-MAN... AS LONG AS I STAY AWAY FROM PETER'S WORLD...



... SHE'LL BE SAFE...

... AND SO WILL I.

I THINK.



I HOPE.

GOD, I'M SO MIXED UP -- SO... CRAZY -- THAT I CAN'T EVEN TRUST MY THOUGHTS, MY FEELINGS!

MAYBE MJ'S RIGHT. MAYBE I AM JUST RUNNING AWAY. PARANOID, HIDING FROM SOMETHING THAT'S NOT EVEN REAL. BUT NOW DOES SHE EXPECT ME TO HAVE FAITH IN ANYONE OR ANYTHING... EVEN HER...

... WHEN EVERYWHERE I TURN I SEE LIES AND BETRAYAL. WHEN EVEN THE PEOPLE I LOVE SEEM TO BE ONE THING ... AND TURN OUT TO BE ANOTHER. I CAN'T TRUST ANYONE...

...NOT EVEN--
MYSELF.

NO--I CAN TRUST ONE PERSON!
SHE HELPED ME BEFORE... WHEN
I WAS SO LOST THAT I THOUGHT
I'D NEVER FIND MY WAY BACK!
IF ANYONE CAN HELP ME SEE
WHAT'S REAL AND WHAT'S NOT...

...IT'S
DOCTOR
KAFKA!

SHRIEKING
CONTINUES
NEXT
ISSUE!

THE SPIDER'S WEB

% MARVEL COMICS GROUP
387 Park Avenue South
New York, New York 10016

DANNY FINGEROTH
EDITOR
MARK BERNARDO
ASSISTANT EDITOR

Attention correspondents: All letters considered for publication must include your name and address, though we will withhold that information upon request.

Hey, gang! We're still trying to catch up on the mail, so for this letters page, we'll be running your comments on Issue #384 and 385! We're really pleased with the enthusiasm and excitement that you all have expressed in your letters for what we've been doing, and all we can say is: You ain't seen nothing yet!

Dear Web-Heads,

I've never written before, but after reading "Trial By Jury," I felt I had to! Those flashbacks of Carnage and Venom in Issue #384 were terrific! Thank you a million times for stopping Mary Jane's smoking. I was getting stressed out over it.

Do you have to kill the Vulture? He's my favorite villain, and I will hate to see him go.

Marv Barsch
(Address withheld by request)

Stress out no further, Marv! MJ has indeed given up smoking, after seeing the possible end result of such a habit. As for the Vulture, you've undoubtedly witnessed the startling transformation he underwent in Issue #386-388!

Dear Spider-Maniacs,

Wow! That's what I said after I read AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #384. I had no idea how cool it would be, and when it showed me how Venom and Carnage were created, it immediately became my favorite Spider-Man comic!

David Michelinie and Mark Bagley were excellent as usual, and Bob Sharen did a great coloring job! I'm looking forward to the last chapter of "Trial By Jury," and I bet it will be just as cool.

Luc Dumais
RR #2
Amirior, Ontario
Canada K7S 3G8

Dear Mr. Fingeroth,

I have been an avid Spider-Man reader since the sixties (I'm well into my thirties by now and still enjoy the character). I've just finished reading ASM #384, and am on tenterhooks for the next issue.

However, there is something I'd like to point out. I am a clinical child psychologist who has been working in a unit for emotionally disturbed children for a good number of years now. Susie's mother in ASM #384 stated that Susie was a "vegetable" - a term usually reserved by lay people for brain-damaged or mentally handicapped people. Presumably Susie's mother (and not the writer, David Michelinie) has got this wrong! Susie's silence is a result of emotional trauma, not brain damage or mental retardation. This has enormous implications for prognosis - I'm not nit-picking on words here. Elective mutism stemming from

emotional trauma has a far, far greater chance for positive recovery than if mutism had come from brain damage or mental handicap. I hope Spider-Man will get a chance to prove Susie's mother wrong, by helping Susie to "work through" her trauma. But somehow, he's got to hold the jury at bay first!

Nick Wood
63 Bathurst Road
Kenilworth 7700
Cape Town
South Africa

There's no indication that Susie's mother was anything other than a lay person, Nick, so you're correct in presuming that she (and not David Michelinie) was unfamiliar with the technical term for her daughter's condition. Hope you liked the conclusion to the storyline.

Dear Marvel,

Upon reading the last few pages of AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #385, I came close to crying. In fact, I have been upset with this since... well, since a few issues after the first Carnage storyline. I'll tell you why.

A few years ago, when I was about twelve years old, I learned that my grandfather had come down with some illness. It wasn't for a month that my parents told me it was lung cancer, caused by years of smoking.

For over half a year, I watched him. His symptoms were horrible, not unlike the ones you portrayed Nick Katzenberg going through. Near the end, he could barely even talk. When he finally passed away, we were all relieved it had ended, but were nonetheless depressed. Indeed, it was some time before anyone in the family would have the spirit to tell a joke again.

But my grandfather's death did do one bit of good. It made me vow never, never to touch a cigarette! As I have long known, and as you portrayed, those things are deadly! If I had any say, I'd have them banned. And I am so glad Mary Jane learned this before suffering a similar fate.

Hopefully, a lot of people will read your magazine and learn that smoking is just not worth the risks. In the real world, people don't have mutant healing systems to deal with tobacco, there are no magical cures, and you can't be brought back to life by cosmic intervention.

So I thank you, each and every one of you, for addressing this topic. And I'm sure my entire family will, too. I praise you all.

Brian Corvello
42 Winston Drive
Washington, CT 06794

We hope we don't sound too self-congratulatory when we say that we've received quite a bit of positive feedback on the conclusion of this storyline. A lot

of people out there have experienced situations painfully similar to that of your family's, Brian, and we hoped that our readers would appreciate our efforts to address this subject in a realistic, dramatic, and powerful way. Thank you for your letter, and your encouragement.

NEXT ISSUE: The stage is set! Now - it's Shriek and Carnage vs. Spidey! But in Spidey's post-Lifefit, post-Pursuit mode, wait'll you see how he handles them! Plus: the most shocking ending of all! (And if you're not following WEB, SPECTACULAR, SPIDER-MAN and UNLIMITED, as well as this mag, you'll be missing out on excitement, drama... and clues leading up to what will be the comics event of 1994! Don't say you weren't warned!)



ALSO ON SALE THIS MONTH:

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