

MARVEL
COMICS



SPIDER-MAN

JUN '97 424



THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN

SPIDEY KNOWS WHO THIS
MYSTERIOUS CHARACTER IS...

...BUT WILL HE
LIVE LONG ENOUGH
TO TAKE HER
DOWN?

JOE BENNETT

MILGROM

DIRECT EDITION



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THE
Stan Lee
PRESENTS
SPIDER-MAN

THIRTY-TWO CITY BLOCKS TO THE NORTH, AND TWENTY SEVEN STORIES ABOVE THE GROUND, A CERTAIN FRIENDLY NEIGHBORHOOD WEB-SPINNER'S EARS WOULD CERTAINLY BE BURNING --

-- IF HE WASN'T PRESENTLY EMBROILED IN A FAR MORE PRESSING PROBLEM!

W-WHAT'S WRONG WITH ME? HOW COULD I BE SO CARELESS? SO CLUMSY?

I WAS IN MID-SWING BETWEEN BUILDINGS WHEN MY HEAD SUDDENLY STARTED POUNDING!

AND I WAS SO DISTRACTED BY MY SURPRISE HEADACHE THAT I...

...I MISSED MY NEXT WEB-LINE!



THEN CAME...

ELEKTRA

TOM DEFALCO
WRITER

JOE BENNETT
PENCILER

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YUGNNN! SOMETHING TELLS ME I'D BETTER SWITCH INTO MY CIVVIES. I'VE DONE ENOUGH WEB-SWINGING FOR NOW.

MY HEAD FEELS AS IF IT'S ABOUT TO ERUPT LIKE DANTE'S PEAK!



WISH I KNEW WHAT WAS CAUSING THESE PERSISTENT HEADACHES.

IT COULD BE ANYTHING FORM SIMPLE TENSION --

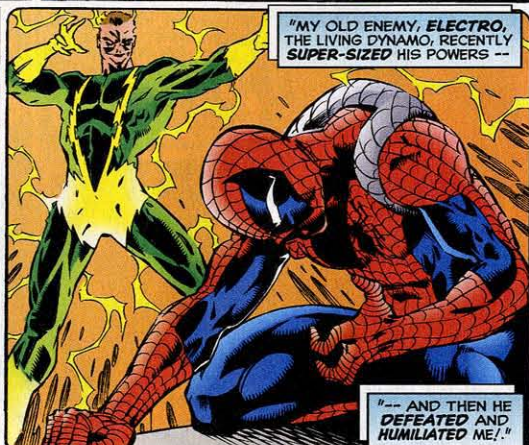
-- TO THE RECENT BITE I SUFFERED FROM MORBIUS, THE LIVING VAMPIRE!



ALL I KNOW FOR SURE IS THAT THEY SEEM TO BE GETTING WORSE --



-- AND THEY'RE AFFECTING MY PERFORMANCE AS SPIDER-MAN AT A TIME WHEN I NEED TO BE MY SHARPEST!



"MY OLD ENEMY, ELECTRO, THE LIVING DYNAMO, RECENTLY SUPER-SIZED HIS POWERS --

"-- AND THEN HE DEFEATED AND HUMILIATED ME!"



I KNOW HE'S OUT THERE SOMEWHERE, LAUGHING IT UP AT MY EXPENSE!

BUT I'LL TAKE HIM DOWN!



I'LL EVENTUALLY FIND HIM, AND -- YUGNNNNN!

W-WHO AM I KIDDING? THE SHAPE I'M IN, I'LL BE LUCKY TO MAKE IT HOME IN ONE PIECE.



SOME SUPER HERO I AM!

LAI D LOW BY A COMMON HEADACHE!

SO WE WERE HIKING TO THIS
REALLY COOL CAMPSITE FOR A
BOWL OF CAP'N CRUNCH!!



WHEN WE CAME TO THIS
WEIRD LOOKING BRIDGE!

THEN THE CAP'N DROPPED IN AND YELLED
"JUST THINK OF WHAT YOU WANT AND
GO FOR IT!"

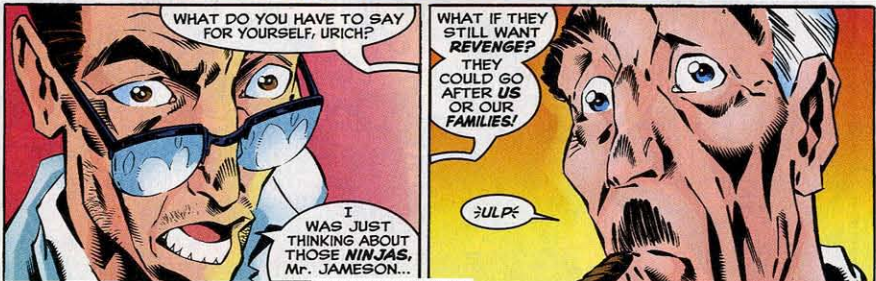
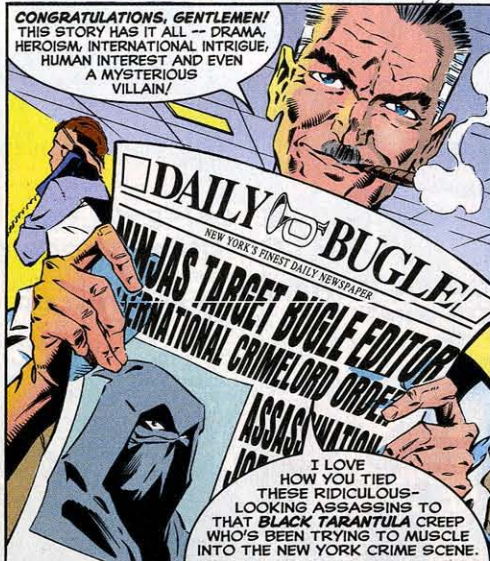


THE THOUGHT OF THAT
SWEET DELICIOUS
CRUNCH GOT US RIGHT
OVER THAT BRIDGE!

THAT'S HOW WE GOT TO OUR
AWESOME CAMPSITE AND
OUR HUGE BOWLS OF
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MAKE IT HAPPEN!







<TERRIBLE -- BUT JUST -- WILL BE THE RAGE OF THE BLACK TARANTULA WHEN HE LEARNS THAT THE TRUE BELIEVERS FAILED TO KILL THE NEWSMAN -->

<-- AND THAT OUR DISGRACE HAS BEEN MADE PUBLIC THROUGH THIS REPULSIVE RAG!>



<MEIKO YIN HAS ALREADY ADMITTED HER GUILT IN THIS MATTER, MADAM QWA.>

<SHALL I PROCEED WITH THE USUAL PUNISHMENT?>

<RESTRAIN YOURSELF, YANO! THOUGH DEATH CAN BE THE ONLY REWARD FOR FAILURE -->

<-- I STILL BELIEVE MY YOUNG DRAGONFLY WILL MAKE A GREAT ASSASSIN.>

<I CHOOSE TO BE MERCIFUL.>



<I AM UNWORTHY OF THIS GENEROUS BOON, SENSEI.>



<BE SILENT, PENITENT ONE! YOU MUST RESTORE YOUR HONOR, AND ONLY BLOOD CAN CLEANSER YOU.>

<I BELIEVE YOU HAVE A COUSIN WHO WORKS FOR THE BUGLE...>



<NO... NOT ANGELA! SHE IS INNOCENT AND HAS NO PART IN THIS!>



<WHO BETTER TO DIE IN YOUR PLACE?>

<B-BUT...>

<I HAVE SPOKEN, LITTLE ONE. DO YOU DARE REFUSE ME?>



<I WILL DO AS YOU ASK, MADAM QWA.>

<SEE THAT YOU DO, MEIKO.>

<ANOTHER FAILURE WILL NOT BE TOLERATED.>

WHAT
A COOL IDEA—EVEN
IF I STAN "THE MAN" LEE,
DIDN'T THINK OF IT MYSELF!

THIS MAY, WE TAKE A WHOLE CABOODLE OF
OUR GREATEST HEROES AND SEE WHAT THEIR
LIVES WERE LIKE BEFORE THEY BECAME
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LOGAN ESCAPE THE WEAPON X
PROGRAM BEFORE HE BECAME
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BRUCE BANNER FACE BEFORE BECOMING
THE INCREDIBLE HULK? AND THERE'S
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A PAST THAT CAN ONLY BE REVEALED IN —

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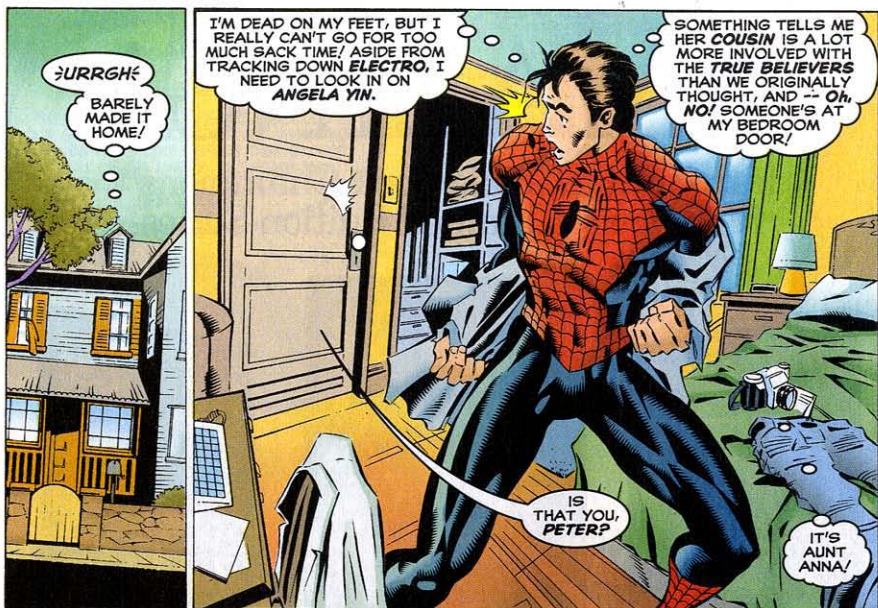


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2URRGH

BARELY
MADE IT
HOME!

I'M DEAD ON MY FEET, BUT I
REALLY CAN'T GO FOR TOO
MUCH SACK TIME! ASIDE FROM
TRACKING DOWN **ELECTRO**, I
NEED TO LOOK IN ON
ANGELA YIN.

SOMETHING TELLS ME
HER **COUSIN** IS A LOT
MORE INVOLVED WITH
THE **TRUE BELIEVERS**
THAN WE ORIGINALLY
THOUGHT, AND -- **Oh,
NO!** SOMEONE'S AT
MY BEDROOM
DOOR!

IS
THAT YOU,
PETER?

IT'S
AUNT
ANNA!



GOT TO MOVE
FAST!

IF SHE
SHOULD **SEE**
ME IN THIS
COSTUME --!

I...I WASN'T
FEELING WELL,
SO I CUT MY
AFTERNOON CLASSES.

DO
YOU HAVE A
FEVER?

SHOULD
I CALL THE
DOCTOR?

N-NO...
I'LL BE
FINE

ALTHOUGH I WISH
YOU'D RESPECT
MY **PRIVACY** --

I
THOUGHT
YOU AND **MARY
JANE** WERE AT
THE COLLEGE TODAY.
WHY ARE YOU
HOME SO
EARLY?

-- AND QUIT
BARGING IN HERE!



I...I'M
SORRY!

I
THOUGHT
I WAS HOME
ALONE...
AND I HEARD
NOISES

LOOKS LIKE
I'M THE ONE WHO
SHOULD APOLOGIZE,
ANNA. I'M SORRY.

I HAVE A TERRIBLE HEADACHE, AND
I CAME ACROSS A LOT MORE
STRIDENT THAN
INTENDED.

SO
THAT'S WHY
YOU HAVEN'T
BEEN ACTING
LIKE YOURSELF
LATELY.

NO
PROBLEM! I'LL
GET YOU BACK ON
YOUR FEET IN NO TIME.





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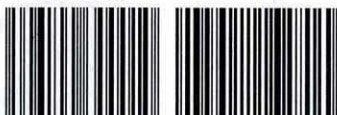
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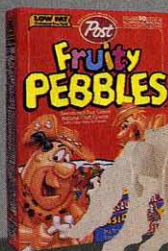
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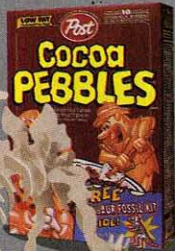
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WHAT AM I TO DO?
IS THE LIFE OF
MY COUSIN SO
PRECIOUS
TO ME?

MADAM
QWA WILL NOT
SUFFER ANOTHER
DISAPPOINTMENT.

AM I
WILLING TO
SACRIFICE ALL
THE **YEARS**, A LL THE
SUFFERING I ENDURED
TO ACHIEVE MY
MASTERY OF THE MARTIAL
ARTS?



YOU SEEM DEEP IN
THOUGHT, YOUNG
DRAGONFLY!

LIKE A
COMMON
INSECT CAUGHT
IN AN UNYIELDING
WEB OF
DILEMMA.

W-WHY
HAVE YOU
FOLLOWED
ME, YANO?

ISN'T
IT OBVIOUS?
YOUR HESITATION
AND INDECISION HAVE
BRANDED YOU A
TRAITOR
TO OUR SACRED
CULT.



THE TRUE
BELIEVERS
ARE NEAR!

I CAN
SENSE
THEIR EVIL
STENCH!

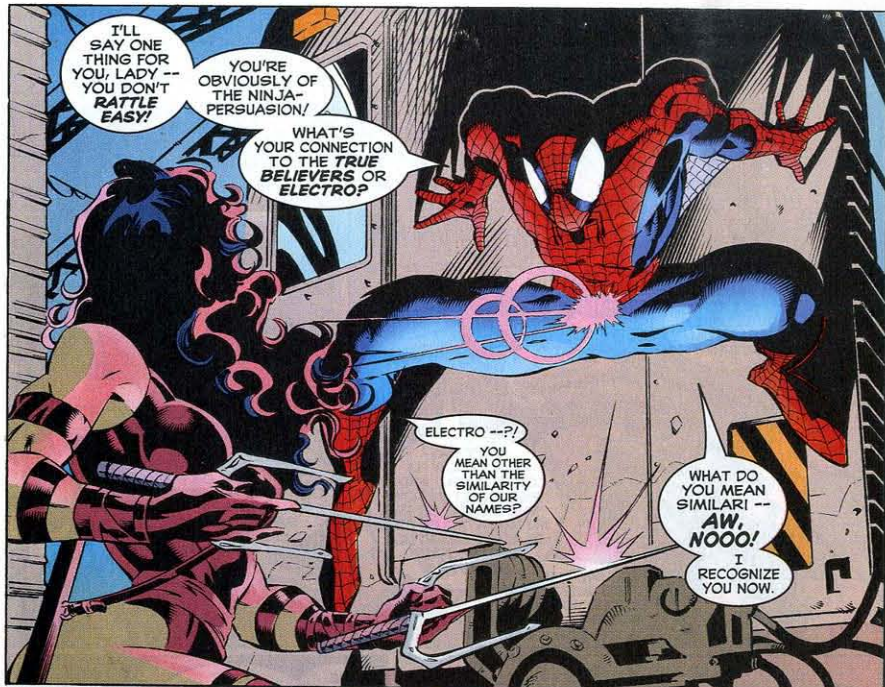


WELL,
WELL, WHAT
HAVE WE
HERE?

DON'T TELL
ME THERE'S A **XENA**,
WARRIOR PRINCESS
CONVENTION IN TOWN
AND I WASN'T
INVITED!

I HAVE
LITTLE PATIENCE
FOR JUVENILE BANTER
OR CHILDISH ANTICS.
SPIDER-MAN.

**SHOW
YOURSELF!**



I'LL SAY ONE THING FOR YOU, LADY -- YOU DON'T RATTLE EASY!

YOU'RE OBVIOUSLY OF THE NINJA-PERSUASION!

WHAT'S YOUR CONNECTION TO THE TRUE BELIEVERS OR ELECTRO?

ELECTRO --?!

YOU MEAN OTHER THAN THE SIMILARITY OF OUR NAMES?

WHAT DO YOU MEAN SIMILARI --

AW, NOOO!

I RECOGNIZE YOU NOW.



YOU ARE ELEKTRA... WITH A "K" AND "A"!

YOU USED TO HANG WITH DARE-DEVIL!

DO YOU USUALLY DEFINE WOMEN BY THE MEN THEY WERE ONCE ASSOCIATED WITH?

Uh...
No...



BUT I'M HAVING A REALLLY BAD DAY!

AND YOU THINK AN EXPLOSIVE DISPLAY OF IMMATURITY WILL IMPROVE IT?



Uh...
WHAT'S YOUR POINT, LADY?

I BELIEVE I CAN DIRECT YOUR FRUSTRATIONS TOWARD WORTHIER RECIPIENTS.





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BEEP!

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DO AS YOU MUST, YANO. I AM READY TO ATONE FOR MY FAILURE, AND --

-- TO SUBMIT TO YOUR HARSH JUSTICE FOR MY COUSIN'S SAKE!



I WILL NOT DECEIVE YOU, MEIKO. YOU HAVE DISGRACED THE **TRUE BELIEVERS** AND BROUGHT SHAME UPON THE **BLACK TARANTULA**.

YOUR DEATH, ALONE, WILL NOT APPEASE MADAME QWA.



THE LIFE OF ANGELA YIN IS ALSO FORFEIT!



TRY AGAIN, TUBBY! NOBODY DIES TONIGHT!

NOT UNLESS YOU -- OR YOUR KIMONO CLAD CUTIES -- WANT THAT PARTICULAR HONOR!



YANO!



I CHALLENGE YOU TO RITUAL COMBAT!

YOU DARE STAND AGAINST MY SACRED BLOOD SWORD WITH A MERE WOODEN STAFF?

THOUGH THE ADVANTAGE BE YOURS, THE CAUSE IS MINE --

-- FOR I FIGHT TO PROTECT AN INNOCENT!



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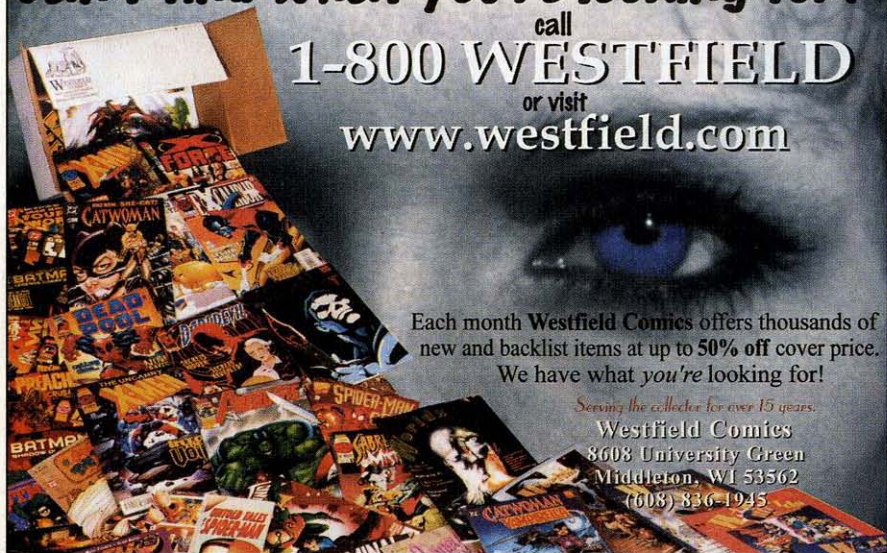
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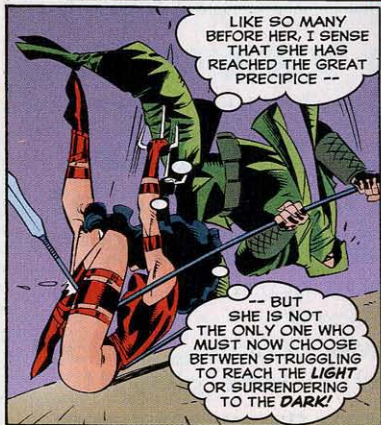
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OBVIOUS?

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OF HOLDING
BACK -- OF USING
ONLY A FRACTION
OF MY STRENGTH
'CAUSE I'M ONE
OF THE GOOD
GUYS!

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YOU WANT
TO SEE WHAT
SPIDER-MAN
IS REALLY
CAPABLE
OF?

THIS
IS WHAT
REAL POWER
IS ALL
ABOUT!

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I CAME HERE TONIGHT TO INFORM THE **TRUE BELIEVERS** THAT **THE HAND** HAS FOUND THEM.

IT WAS MY INTENTION TO STAY ON THE **SIDELINES**, SHELTERING THE INNOCENT, WHILE THEY **BUTCHERED** EACH OTHER.

A **WISE CHOICE!** THEIR BLOOD FEUD IS A FIRESTORM WHICH CONSUMES LIVES LIKE KINDLING.

IT WAS A **FOOLISH CHOICE!**

NEITHER MY FIRST... NOR MY LAST!

IF THE WAR COMES, PEOPLE SUCH AS US WILL SURELY BE DRAWN INTO THE HEART OF THE STORM.



I KNOW!

MANY ARE THE **DECISIONS** WHICH MUST BE MADE, MEIKO.

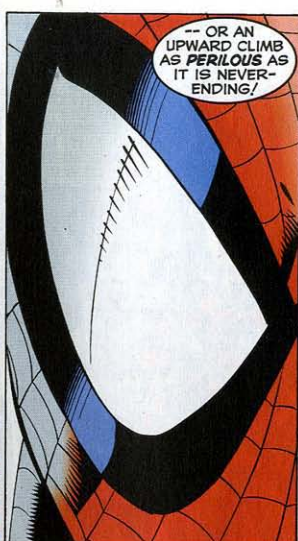
YOUR JOURNEY WAS BEGUN IN **DARKNESS**, BUT YOU CAN BE REBORN TO THE **LIGHT!**



YOU MUST
CHOOSE BETWEEN
REVENGE AND
REDEMPTION!



BETWEEN
THE SEDUCTIVE
CALL OF THE
ABYSS --



-- OR AN
UPWARD CLIMB
AS *PERILOUS* AS
IT IS NEVER-
ENDING!



THE CHOICE
IS *YOURS*,
MEIKO.

IT IS ONE YOU
WILL BE FORCED
TO MAKE OVER
AND OVER
AGAIN!

I
HAVE HEARD
YOUR WORDS,
ELEKTRA...

...AND
I FEEL THE
PAIN BEHIND
THEM!



I PRAY THAT
I WILL FIND MY
CORRECT
PATH...

...EVEN
AS YOU
CONTINUE TO
SEEK YOUR
OWN!



SO
SAY WE ALL,
LADY.

SOMEWHERE WITHIN THE JUNGLES OF ARGENTINA, A FEW DAYS LATER...

«MASTER! I FEAR WE HAVE RECEIVED MORE DISTRESSING NEWS FROM THE STATES.»

«WHAT IS IT, CHESBRO?»

«IT APPEARS THAT OUR AGENTS HAVE BEEN APPREHENDED BY THE AUTHORITIES --»

«-- THANKS TO THE EFFORTS OF THE MASKED VIGILANTE KNOWN AS SPIDER-MAN --»

«-- AND A WOMAN WHO APPEARS TO FIT THE DESCRIPTION OF ELEKTRA! --»

«WONDERFUL! WITH ALL THIS PUBLICITY, IT'S ONLY A MATTER OF TIME BEFORE THE HAND TRACKS DOWN MADAM GWA.»

«SUCH A WAR WOULD BE COSTLY IN BOTH PROFITS AND MANPOWER, AND I HAVE NO INTENTION OF FUNDING IT.»

«RAISE HER ON THE VIDEO-LINK! SHE AND HER FOLLOWERS ARE TO RETURN HOME AT ONCE.»

«ANYTHING ELSE, MASTER?»

Y BU
NEW YORK'S FINEST DAILY NEWS
**NINJA
NEUTRAL-
SPIDER-MAN
TROUNCES
BELIEV**

«THOUGH PLAGUED BY CONSTANT SETBACKS, I STILL WISH TO ESTABLISH A POWER BASE IN THE LUCRATIVE NEW YORK CRIME MARKET.»

«MAKE THE APPROPRIATE ARRANGEMENTS, CHESBRO.»

«THE CITY OF MANHATTAN WILL SOON HAVE THE HONOR OF HOSTING...»

«...THE BLACK TARANTULA!»

Welcome back, friends! We've got a bushel of letters left over from AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #418, the penultimate chapter in the blockbuster "Revelations" storyline, and we can't wait to bring them to ya! But first, a few lines about those who've expressed interest in sending your mail to us directly over the internet!

That's right, we've joined the latter decade of the 20th Century already! So those of you with computers and modems may now direct your mail to:

mailmarvel@aol.com

and it'll land right in our hot little hands! Just be sure to clearly mention the title and issue of the comic you're writing to, and clearly state that the letter is for publication. We couldn't be more stoked over this opportunity to get even more feedback from out fearless fans, so get to it already! And don't worry, if you prefer to use regular mail, we'll still print you!

Dear Spider People,

Let me start by saying that I have never written to a comic book before, but after AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #418, I had to send in my thoughts. First of all, about the art — it was great! When I heard the Bag-man was leaving, I almost quit collecting the book. Mark Bagley is by far the best Spider-Man artist to come along yet! However, I decided to stick around long enough to see how Steve Skroce would do on this book.

I was surprised to open the book and see that Mr. Skroce was actually very good! His art is more cartoony than I prefer, but I like it! It reminds me of the transition from McFarlane to Larsen years ago. However, I'm not complaining. As I said, I loved it!

Secondly, about the story, there were a few things that shocked me about this issue. The apparent death of Pete and Mary Jane's baby. I know this is a sham, right? Y'all have worked on the story of MJ's baby too long to have it end like this! To say that the reappearance of Norman Osborn was a great shock is the understatement of the year! I hope he reassumes his identity of the Green Goblin! I really have nothing to say about Gaunt's identity except, "Oh, phooey!"

Finally, this is the issue before the return of the one, true Spider-Man, and I just want to say, please don't kill Ben! Give him his own book or something, but don't kill him. I will be sad to see the new suit go, but it will be good to see the return of the old one. Well, thanks for another great issue. Keep 'em coming! So until...oh, never mind. Make Mine Marvel!

Willie Poe III
275 East Holly Street
Baton Rouge, LA 70815

"Oh, phooey?"

Glad to hear you're adapting to Steve's art style, Willie! He's definitely a departure from the eminent Mr. Bagley, but Steve's been gaining more and more supporters each month. Welcome to the ranks assembled!

Dear Spider's Web,

I have just finished reading AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #418, "Revelations" part three of four. All I have to say is that you people have destroyed all the faith I've ever had in the Spider-Man books. It is gone.

What is the matter with you people? Haven't Peter and Mary Jane gone through enough? First you bring back Peter's clone. Then you kill Aunt May. Then, in the middle of her funeral, Peter was arrested and sent to jail. His name was cleared, and then he discovered he was a clone. You sent him to Oregon, away from all of his friends, leaving the Spider-Man name to Ben. Then you take away Peter's powers. Then you bring him back to New York and to the torture of watching someone else wield the webs. You then put him through the nearly fatal experience of regaining his spider-powers. And now you top it off by killing Peter's and Mary Jane's baby. Haven't they been through enough already?

Peter deserves vengeance. Spider-Man, and by that I mean Peter, the real one, should hunt down and destroy Alison Morgraine and Norman Osborn and anyone who had anything to do with this sick, twisted little revenge attack.

I can see Osborn going after Peter, with or without his powers, or even Mary Jane or Aunt Anna, but a defenseless, helpless, newborn child? That seems a bit vile, even for comic books. Talk about your sickos.

What's the deal here, though? Can't Peter be a father and a web-slinging hero? The only good thing that came along with Ben's pathetic little career as Spidey was some of the humor he brought along. Peter was getting a little grim a while back. Do you think killing his child will bring back the good of Spider-Man humor? I doubt it.

I find it hard to believe that Norman has been around all these years. Don't you think he would have stepped in to try to prevent his son's death, or maybe, at least, said something about the recent Green Goblin-gone-good-guy shtick?

Anyway, I hope this is some kind of sick joke and the child is really still alive, or I can tell you I will never look at a Spider-Man book the same way again. I can also say that if the baby isn't still, miraculously, alive somehow, you've finally stopped Making Mine Marvel.

Michael Miller
(Address withheld by request)

We hope that you've stuck with us this long, Michael, because then you would have caught a few of the tantalizing hints that we've dropped recently that certainly make it look more and more like

little May is indeed very alive. No further comment on this issue other than to say that the matter certainly is not closed.

As for why Norman did not become more closely involved with some of the events in Spider-Man continuity over the past few years, well, first let's remember that he was all the way over in Europe. Sure, he was keeping tabs on Spidey, but how closely can one watch from that far away? Norman was pleased that Harry had adopted his mantle, and certainly couldn't have predicted the heart attack that ensued from Harry's version of the Goblin formula, much less hurried overseas in time to stop it. And as for the Phil Urich Green Goblin, if you read that title, you'll see that once Norman became aware of his activities, he quickly sent Gaunt to dispense with the upstart, a confrontation which directly led to Phil's abandoning his alter-ego.

Dear Spider's Web,

Being a devoted fan of DC (mostly, anyway), I was reluctant to take the advice of Keith and Paul at Universal Comics in High Point, NC, to read the "Revelations" storyline in the Spider-Man books. With high comic book prices and being on a budget, it's hard to pick up "extra" issues.

!!Outstanding!!

It's been a while since I've read a Marvel comic and was actually anxious for the next issue. Yes! You've succeeded. Even though it'll be tough deciding which of my regular subscription titles I'll have to drop...I'm definitely adding Spidey.

Barry Hollifield
(Address withheld by request)

Wow, you can't get much better praise than that, eh? Welcome aboard, Barry, it's certainly nice to have you around. And a big thanks as well to Keith and Paul. Take a bow, guys, and bask in the applause of Marveldom Assembled! You've earned it.

Oh, and Barry, just one bit of advice: Don't buy any more Marvels!! You just may find yourself dropping all the other titles on your subscription list, as well!

Dear Spider-Team,

I really wanted to wait until after the entire "Revelations" storyline had been presented before I wrote to let you know what I thought of it, but after reading AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #418, I can hold back no longer!

A lot of unusual things happen in comic books, and this issue was no exception. I originally thought it would be Harry Osborn who would turn out to be the mastermind behind everything that's happened to Spidey in the past few years. By the time you revealed that it was actually Norman Osborn, I had begun to suspect that it had to be some-

one far more cunning and diabolical than poor Harry. Norman is the perfect choice, and very logical once I stepped back and looked at the larger picture.

I also enjoyed seeing more of Arthur Stacy — I wonder how long it will be before someone in the Police Department makes him realize that Spidey is actually a hero? It will be interesting to watch his role in Spidey's story unfold in the coming months.

I also have a theory about the fate of Peter and MJ's baby. If the baby really was stillborn, then I have to applaud you for your guts in making a move sure to arouse tons of comments from all around the Spider-world. And if, as I think more likely, the baby was merely suffering from the concoction added to MJ's soup at the Daily Grind, I have to applaud even more loudly. Sure, this could be regarded as a swipe from several X-Men plots, but I think the Spider-Team is better than that.

If Norman Osborn really has abducted the Parker baby, I can see possible storylines and plots stemming from that action that could have impact and consequences both in the present and for years, maybe even decades, to come.

Congratulations on one of the best stories in the main Spidey books in a long, long time. Now all we have to do is return Peter to his proper role as Spider-Man, and I have a feeling that's coming next week, in SPIDER-MAN #75.

Before I go, I want to take one last moment to comment on Ben Reilly. I'll grant that I didn't like him as either the Scarlet Spider or as Spider-Man. But I do like the character, and I do like his current costume. Feel free to let Peter keep this costume, even after Ben is no longer Spidey. And keep Ben around if you want, but let him be absent from the Spidey books for a year or two first. Maybe send him off to California to become the Crimson Spider and have a life of his own, until his done degeneration kicks in.

Ivan A. Martin
4054 70th Street
Urbandale, IA 50322-2616

Thanks for the letter, Ivan. As you know by now, Arthur Stacy has indeed been making his presence felt, and he's not the only member of the Stacy family to do so! And he is certainly quite a ways from being convinced of Spidey's heroism. Just exactly what is going on with this impromptu Stacy family reunion, anyway? Stay tuned...

Dear Spider's Web,

Peter and Mary Jane's baby is dead. Whoa. That's too deep for comics. I guess I should have seen it coming. As a kid, I thought it would be really cool to be Spider-Man. Now I realize what a horrible life Peter (and Ben, for that matter) has had. Everyone around Spider-Man has either died or turned into a super-villain. Poor Peter has lost his parents, his aunt and uncle, Gwen Stacy, Harry Osborn, and now his child, plus many more I'm probably forgetting. Most of the villains Spider-Man encounters are usually connected to Peter in some way. It's sad. Maybe I should've wanted to be a mutant. Sure, everyone would hate me but at least they would still be alive.

On a lighter note, I've experienced Steve Skroce's work on CABLE and X-MAN before this issue of AMAZING SPIDER-MAN, and I just have to draw everyone as if they were elderly. Not everyone is that wrinkled. Other than that, Spidey looked great. I'm looking forward to the Black Tarantula.

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full address printed, please let us know.

Thanks for a great, but sad read.

Sean Penrose
5144 St. Rt. 250 North
Norwalk, OH 44857

Seems like we struck an emotional chord with you, Sean, but we're glad that you enjoyed the issue. Thanks for summing up what has, essentially, been one of the most fundamental elements of Spider-Man since his creation 35 years ago: tragic loss. It was such loss that motivated Peter's heroic nature in the first place, and it has been such loss that has formed each of the defining moments in his history ever since. Thanks for noting it in such poignant words.

Dear Spider-Guys,

The Green Goblin? Back? After so long a period of the Goblin being dead, I thought for sure it would stay that way. But nooo, you just couldn't give me that satisfaction. Now Norman Osborn is once again counted among the living.

The Green Goblin is my favorite villain, so it should seem only natural for me to be happy. Well, I'm not. To me, it demeans his character to have a dramatic and fulfilling death, only to bring him back again. That's the thing I hate about comics: you never can tell if someone's dead or not. Oh well, at least you didn't bring back Harry (I hope).

Now that the Goblin's back, will he ever find out about that other good Green Goblin whose comic was shut down a while back? Will there be a face-off?

Well, until the Lizard dies and comes back as Kraven, Make Mine Marvel!

Rob Reid
615 Turner Park Court
Ann Arbor, MI 48103

Sorry you weren't pleased with Norman's reappearance, Rob. We hope that you will eventually warm to the idea, and become more accustomed to your favorite villain being around again. We assure you, however, that we did not make the decision to "resurrect" Norman lightly.

When the topic was first broached long, long ago, there was certainly a great deal of trepidation among those involved. This was playing with history for gosh sake! However, the one thing that kept returning to everyone's minds was that, in all of comicdom, Spider-Man is the only major hero whose quintessential archenemy is no longer around. Can you imagine the Fantastic Four without Dr. Doom, Captain America without the Red Skull, or (dare we say it) a certain dark knight without a certain trickster?

The Green Goblin, specifically the Norman Osborn incarnation, was the definition of pure evil, unadulterated hate and malice toward our hero, the absolute last person any of us would want dogging our hero's every step. So, you see, we had no choice. We just had to do it. It was too

perfect not to!

Dear Spider's Web,

Yes!!! Norman Osborn is alive. The original Green Goblin is back! I must say it's been a long time coming. Ever since the classic AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #121-122, I've been hoping that somehow, Norman Osborn would come back to make his presence felt in the wall-crawler's life. Boy, has he ever! I figured that there was no way possible to bring him back without compromising everything this book is based on, but you guys did it in a satisfying and shocking way. Great job!

All I ask is that you keep him around. Please don't kill him off right away. The 1996 Norman Osborn could open up so many possibilities for this title in the months to come. The Spider-Man/Osborn feud, in my opinion, has always been one of mystery, intrigue, and surprises. And I think this could be just the beginning. Keep bringing him back every 25-30 issues or so, simply to remind Peter that he will always be there to haunt him.

The "Revelations" storyline has proved to be one surprise after the other. Keep it up, guys! I'm sure you have many more shocks in store for the webcrawler in the near future!

Until Bart Hummel returns from the dead, Make Mine Marvel!

Ric Gurni
807 Park Canyon Drive
Dalton, GA 30720

Thanks for the kind words, Ric! You certainly seem pretty enthusiastic about ol' Normie's return. Why don't you go talk to Rob up there—he needs a little cheering up on the matter.

You wouldn't possibly think that we'd bring Norman Osborn back from the great beyond, and then kill him off right away, would you? That would be the last thing you would expect, wouldn't it? But, then again, as you said, we've been doing everything you didn't expect all along, and that would mean... Nah, we can't let you in on what we're planning. What fun would that be?

NEXT ISSUE:

We harken back to the days of yesteryear. Yes, indeed—do, it's FLASHBACK month! We look in on the idyllic days when a young boy named Peter lived with his Aunt May and Uncle Ben. Sounds pretty placid, doesn't it? Wrong! It seems there's this guy named Wilson Fisk, right? He's got some pretty big ideas, and he's ready to start putting them into place now, so watch out! So join us, won't you, in enjoying the timeless prose of Tom DeFalco, the ever-amenable guest pencils of Joe Bennett, the always-affable inks of Bud La Rosa, and never-in-by-noon Ralf!

DESIGN BY COMICART

BULLPEN BULLETINS

STAN'S SOAPBOX

(Awesome Answers to your Querulous Questions
by Stan "The Man" Lee)

Hey, stop! Come back! Escape is useless! It's too late to protest! You can't make me change my mind! I'm definitely returning to my good ol' column here on the bombastic Bullpen Bulletins page, so from now on I'll be yakkin' with you in every issue just like old times — except for one big change!

Naturally, I can guess your next question — the answer is *not*! We're not gonna lower the cover price just because you're stuck with me again! I mean, you can always skip the Soapbox — that is, if you don't mind missing the wondrous wisdom, sagacious scoops, and philosophical phantasmagoria I'll be generously bestowing upon thee! After all, nothing's too good for a Marvel True Believer!

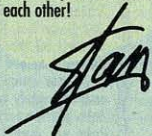
As you probably know, I've been in Los Angeles the past few years, working on Marvel's multitudinous movie and TV projects — if you can call hangin' with many of tinseltown's top writers, actors and directors "work"! But y'know something? I've missed the fun and camaraderie of the world's best Bullpen, so I figure it's time for me to poke my nose into the comics again — and what better way to start than by meeting with you regularly here at the sign of the swingin' Soapbox!

And now, the big change I mentioned earlier. Starting next month, this'll be the place where you can get all your questions answered! Whatever you want to know about our comics, movies, video games, cartoon figures, or anything that involves mighty Marvel — which includes almost everything, come to think of it!

I'll be waiting to hear from you, and you know how impatient I get, so don't let me down! Just shoot your questions to "Stan's Soapbox c/o Bullpen Bulletins, Marvel Comics, 387 Park Ave. South, New York, NY 10016" and I'll answer as many as I have room for in each and every issue of each and every Marvel title! See? Doesn't matter what you read — you won't escape me! After all, since we're sharing the maddeningly magnificent Marvel Universe together, we might as well get to know each other better and share our thoughts and opinions as well.

So, wherever you go, whatever you do, think Marvel! And never forget — you're more than a reader to us, even more than a fan — you're a friend, and friends stay in touch with each other!

Excelsior!



P.S. The writer of every letter we print in the Soapbox will, of course, be the lucky recipient of an official, non-tarnishing, non-allergenic, non-existent No-Prize — at least until we come to our senses!

ADAM KUBERT TAKES THE

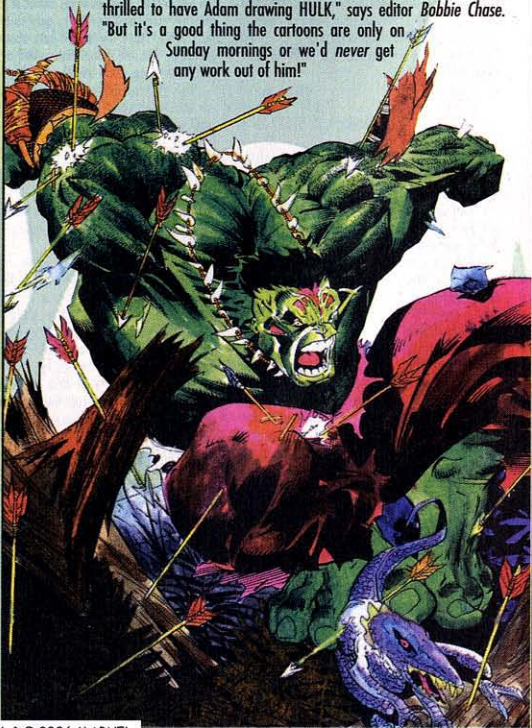
HULK

...and the Hulk comes face-to-face with *Wolverine*, all in the pages of **INCREDIBLE HULK** #454, which will be hitting the stands next week! Adam, whose action-packed pencils blistered the pages of **WOLVERINE** for over five years, will be teaming up with his old pal (and fellow **WOLVIE** inker) **Mark Farmer** to bring you some of the most awesome art ever seen in the **Jade Giant's** title!

"I love green!" bleated Adam, when pressed to reveal his reasons for coming aboard the green giant's book. "Seriously, though, what gets me excited about the Hulk is taking him through paces he hasn't been through before! I'm also looking forward to drawing those classic villains — they're all so weird-looking! And with *Peter David* writing it, you never know what's gonna happen!"

Adam has thrown himself wholeheartedly into working on the book, purchasing tons of old **HULK** issues and toys, and religiously watching the Sunday morning cartoon show with his kids. "He's a real Frankenstein, a misunderstood guy. That's what I think is so appealing about him! Plus, it's very exciting for me to get to draw Hulk and *Wolverine* together!" "We're thrilled to have Adam drawing **HULK**," says editor **Bobbie Chase**.

"But it's a good thing the cartoons are only on Sunday mornings or we'd never get any work out of him!"



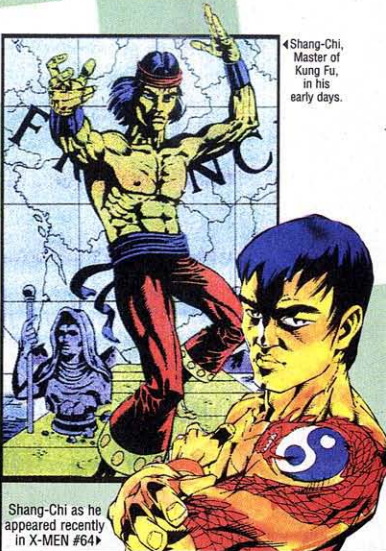
DESIGN BY COMICRAFT

SHANG-CHI: RE-ENTER THE DRAGON!

It's spring, and *Shang-Chi*, the master of Kung Fu himself, is bustin' out all over — most recently in the pages of *X-MEN* and *PETER PARKER, SPIDER-MAN*! For those of you unfamiliar with Shang, he's just about the greatest martial arts fighter ever! The man makes Bruce Lee look like an arthritic dishwasher! The son of a diabolical criminal mastermind, Shang-Chi had been living the quiet life of a fisherman in a remote province of China since his father's death. A veteran of many battles with superhuman enemies, Shang-Chi lost his taste for fighting when he realized that he was partly responsible for his evil old man's demise.

But when an old friend from his days as a British secret agent resurfaced, the reticent Kung Fu master realized that he could no longer keep his head buried in the sand — especially when he learned that someone was trying to get ahold of the *Elixir Vitae* — the same potion which had kept his father eternally young, thereby allowing him to continue his deadly reign long after he should have died! Now it's gotten personal, and Shang-Chi is back in the ring!

"Shang-Chi is a peaceful man who's been drawn into a violent situation," says editor *Mark Powers*. "His father was possibly the most evil man in the world, and despite that, his son has a genuine code of honor. And he's a very cool action character!" Catch this character dispatching some cool action next week in *PETER PARKER, SPIDER-MAN* #81! You won't be disappointed!



Shang-Chi, Master of Kung Fu, in his early days.

Shang-Chi as he appeared recently in *X-MEN* #64

ADVENTURES OF THE BULLPEN

Editor *Kelly Corvese* may have thought he won *Rosie O'Donnell*'s heart in February, but alas for him — another Marvel male had captured that precious organ two weeks earlier! An action figure of *GENERATION X*'s *Banshee* appeared on *Rosie*'s show back in January! Editor *Jaye Gardner*, who is a devoted fan of the show, had seen an episode aired just after TV shows were required to be rated on a system similar to that used to rate movies. *Rosie*'s show received a TV-G rating, and she was requesting G-rated products that could be given away on the show.

Jaye shot out of his special "back-saver" office chair and called up Marvel's then PR-wiz *John Cerilli* and marketing maniac *Bob Traub*. The two gave the top-rated show a call, and in just a few days, Jaye was cooling his heels on a stack of *X-MAN* comic books, watching delightedly as *Rosie* held up a copy of *GENERATION X* #24 and then the "fully poseable" *Banshee*. "It's only the hottest show on TV," raved Jaye when he finally tore himself away from the screen. "And they were excited to hear from us!" Gosh, if they're excited now, just wait until we tell 'em about *Ralph Macchio*'s home-made *Punisher* costume!

"FLASHBACK" TO HIT THE RACK AND LEAVE THE REST OF THE PACK...

...in the dust! Keep your eyes peeled for some hot covers to be plastered across the shelves next month, 'cuz Marvel has declared May "Flashback" Month! This is your chance to see the characters you love drawn by the freshest, hottest talent of today in the raw, bold style of yesteryear! Plus, you can get the brand-new lowdown on never-before-seen landmark events in your fave character's past! Teased, tormented and tantalized? Keep watching this space...

To check out our ever-awesome official Marvel website page, for up-to-the-minute news and information on current and upcoming projects, just go to the Internet and type in:

www.marvelonline.com!

And if you're a subscriber to America Online and you want to check out Marvel Online for sneak previews, trivia, chat-rooms, bulletin boards, the Spider-Man cyber comic and lots more, just click on to "Keyword" and type in "Marvel"!



CHECKLIST FOR APRIL 16

INCREDIBLE HULK #454 Featuring the brand-new art team of *Adam Kubert* and *Mark Farmer*! The Hulk stumbles out of Antarctica and into the Savage Land! The locals treat him like a god — but can he count on the same treatment from *Ka-Zar* and *Wolverine*? By *Peter David* and *Adam Kubert*!

IRON MAN #8 The fate of *Rebel* revealed! Will he still be *Tony Stark*'s best bud — or his nastiest nemesis? By *Jim Lee*, *Scott Lobdell* and *Ryan Benjamin*!

THUNDERBOLTS #3 In the absence of the heroes, the *Thunderbolts* take over *Four Freedoms Plaza* with a little help from NYC's mayor! Bet they'll have to leave the plush digs to take on the *Crimson Cowl* and the *Masters of Evil*! By *Kurt Busiek* and *Mark Bagley*!

PETER PARKER, SPIDER-MAN #81 You can bet Spidey'll be kung-fu fighting when martial arts

master *Shang-Chi* hits the steamy streets of NYC! By *Howard Mackie* and *John Romita, Jr.*!

EXCALIBUR #110 *Excalibur* are pitted against the fancifully named — and fully armed — *Dragons of the Crimson Dawn*! Betcha *Captain Britain* has something to do with all this! By *Ben Raab* and *Salvador Larroca*!

WHAT IF #98 What if *Mystique* had never ditched *Nightcrawler*, and what if *Nightcrawler* had fallen head-over-blue-heels for *Mystique*'s adopted daughter, *Rogue*? This issue makes daytime soaps look positively pallid by comparison! By *Bill Rosemann* and *Leonardo Manco*!

X-MAN #28 Nate must decide whether to accept the *Dark Beast*'s offer — and choose life — or whether he should retain his integrity, which he must then take to an early grave! By *Terry Kavanagh* and *Roger Cruz*!

X-MEN #65 Senator *Robert Kelly* and *Henry Gyrich* are within inches of realizing their dream of seeing the fall of the mutants, when something terrible happens — and *Kelly* winds up desperately trying to warn *Cyclops* of his fate! Too little, too late, honey! By *Scott Lobdell* and *Carlos Pacheco*!

STAR TREK: STARFLEET ACADEMY #1 Telepathic cadet *Edam Astron* has been shot! Is *Nog* to blame, or does this have something to do with that mysterious black hole in the lab? By *Chris Cooper* and *Chris Renaud*!



MARVEL ON-LINE
Available April 17



SPIDER-MAN CYBERCOMIC #40 Spidey makes the mistake of coming between *Black Tarantula* and his kai in the explosive finale! By *Tom DeFalco*, *Daerick Gross*, and *Atomic Paintbrush*!

KEEP ALL LETTERING INSIDE

WHERE ONE MAN STOOD WITH SWORD AND AXE

Listen, O' searcher, of blood-soaked thrill.
to lore and legend of morbid chill.
Of a place you've never travelled before.
This world on distant and forgotten shore.

Where air scorched nostrils with smoldered ash.
And wind whispred of plunder from kingdoms trashed.
And every soul spit and stank of blood,
of guilt and sin in jars of mud.

Where one man stood with sword and axe,
his own heroism he would mask.
In 10,000 B.C. the Hyborian Age,
One against one million, the latest rage.



ADVENTURER AND LIBERATOR BUT NEVER SLAVE

Warrior, Cimmerian, Stalker, Brigand
A promise of wealth, the bountied posters demand.

Adventurer and Liberator but never Slave,
A King in the end. Bloodied masts of glory would wave.
The first of heroes, a mercenary none could afford,
The last of his kind in the world he was lord.



DRAGONS. DEMONS. AMAZONS AND GHOULS

Dragons. Demons. Amazons and ghouls.
Devil Trees. Living rocks. Wolves in a land without rules.
The list of the dead would grow in this world of sin.
None would think to wager on the wars he would win.

Spiders and monsters and women of dread,
Serpents or apes, he'd lob off their head.
Never's their like been seen by modern eyes.
And this is the story of their terrible demise.

His name is legend to the knowledgeable and few
you may think you know him, but this is surely new.
The stories you've heard in the readings of youth,
cannot compare to this, the statement of truth.

Of a boy who grew of fire to man,
And has since been branded barbarian!

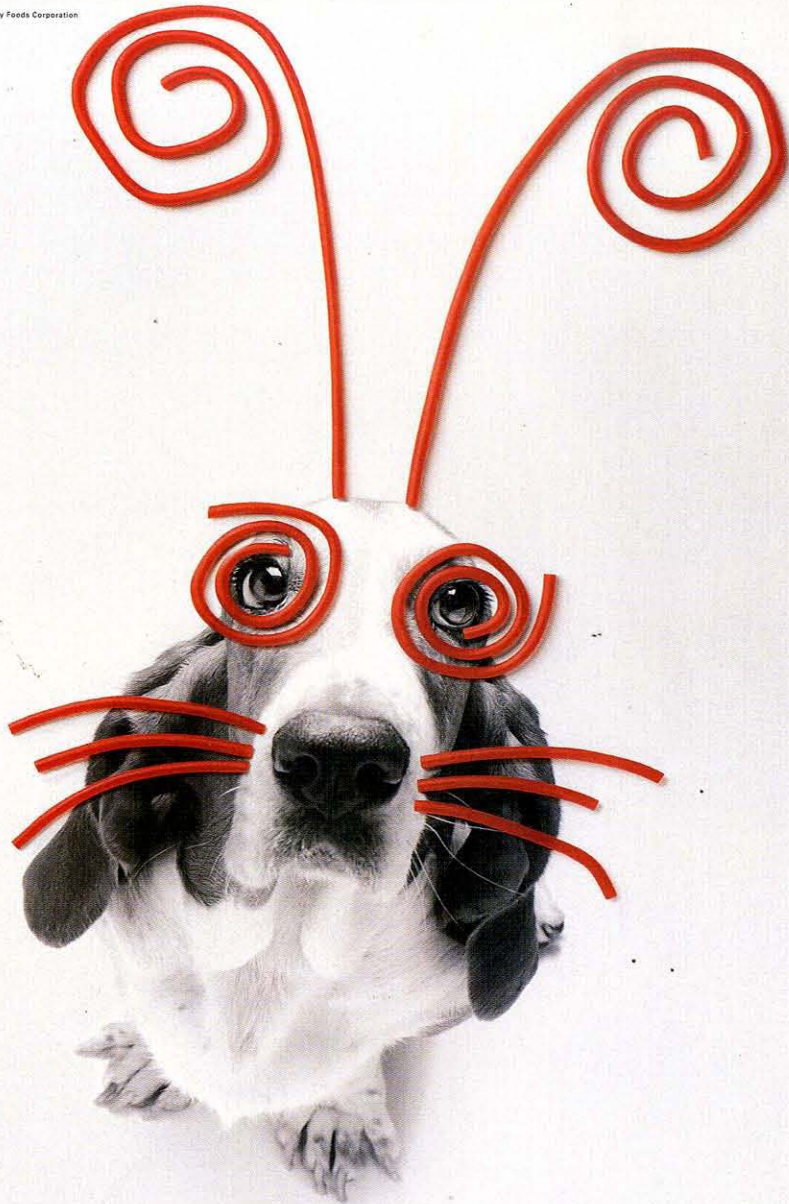


THE SAVAGE SWORD OF Conan

THE BARBARIAN

WRITTEN BY CELEBRATED
CONAN AUTHOR ROLAND GREEN
PENCILED BY CLAUDIO CASTELLINI
INKED BY MARK FARMER

3 ISSUE FULL COLOR
LIMITED SERIES
BEGINNING IN MAY





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Get ready for **NEW CHEE-TOS[®] CRUNCHY NACHO**. They're bursting with mega amounts of nacho cheese. So go ahead and snag a bag. You'll find they're **DANGEROUSLY CHEESY.**"



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