

**MARVEL**  
*COMICS*



LATE  
SEPT  
#439

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COMICS  
CODE  
AUTHORITY

**THE AMAZING**

# SPIDER-MAN

How is the  
**WEB-SPINNER**  
RESPONSIBLE FOR THE  
**AGE of HEROES?**



WHAT WILL  
BE THE FATE OF  
*Mary Jane?*!!

WHAT IS THE  
SECRET OF THE  
**SPIDER-  
CYCLE?**

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INSIDE!**

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KAYANAN

LAROSA

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HEY, IT'S  
THE EVER-  
AMAZING

# SPIDER-MAN!

A true hero at heart, Spider-Man has dedicated his life to preventing injustices against the innocent.



**M**et Peter Parker, once a brilliant, though meek, high school student, orphaned as a child and reared by his doting **Uncle Ben** and **Aunt May**. At a science fair, Peter was bitten by an irradiated spider and gained the proportionate strength, speed, agility and early warning "spider-sense" of that arachnid. He used these powers for personal fame and fortune as a masked **Spider-Man**. But when Peter failed to stop a criminal who later killed his beloved Uncle Ben, the youth's costumed identity took on a far deeper significance. He realized that with great power there must also come great responsibility. So Peter Parker became the wall-crawling nemesis of the criminal element; a young man determined to atone for the tragic death of his uncle — **The Amazing Spider-Man!**

## ZACK

An archaeologist who burns with an inner passion to learn all he can about the past—including the life of our friendly neighborhood *Spider-Man*.



## LANA

An archaeologist who works with the intense Zack at the various digs and plays the unbridled optimist when it comes to a scientist's ability to uncover the past from the fragments left in the present.



## MARY JANE WATSON-PARKER

The wife of *Peter Parker/Spider-Man*, and his closest confidant. She has currently returned to Empire State University as a student majoring in psychology.



## BLACK TARANTULA

A shadowy South American crime-lord who has apparently lived for centuries. The Tarantula has come to New York to personally try and take control of the city's criminal element.



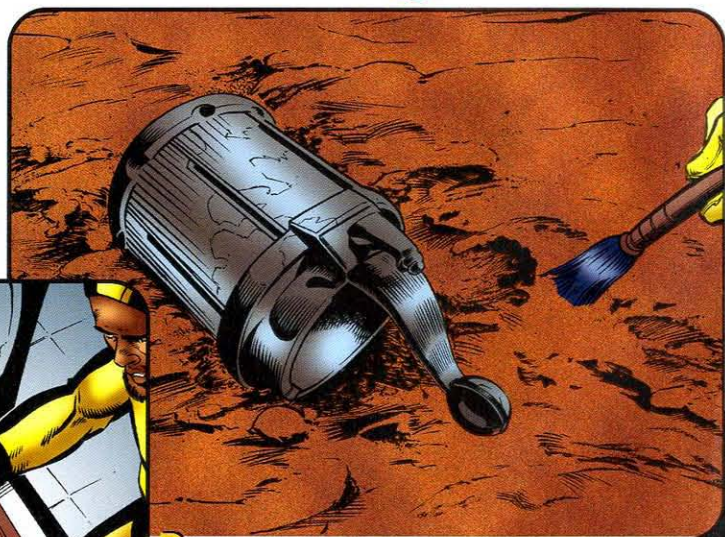
PREVIOUSLY IN

# THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN®



**S**pidey was forced to battle Daredevil due to the machinations of a new villainess in New York called Synario.

**L**uckily, the two heroes pulled it together at the last moment and defeated their bizarre adversary, parting on friendly terms.



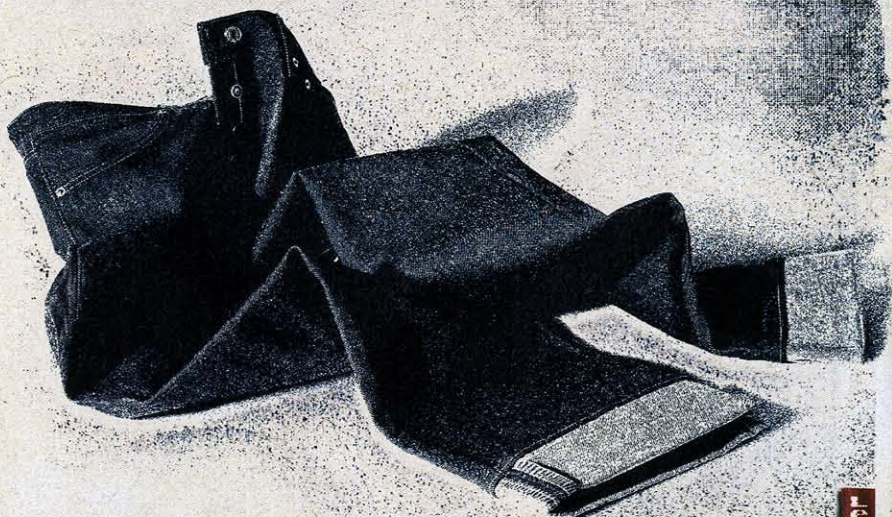
**B**ut elsewhere and elsewhere, a man with an intense curiosity attempts to piece together the life of our heroic webspinner from the flimsiest of evidence.

Let's look in on the site of the unearthing...



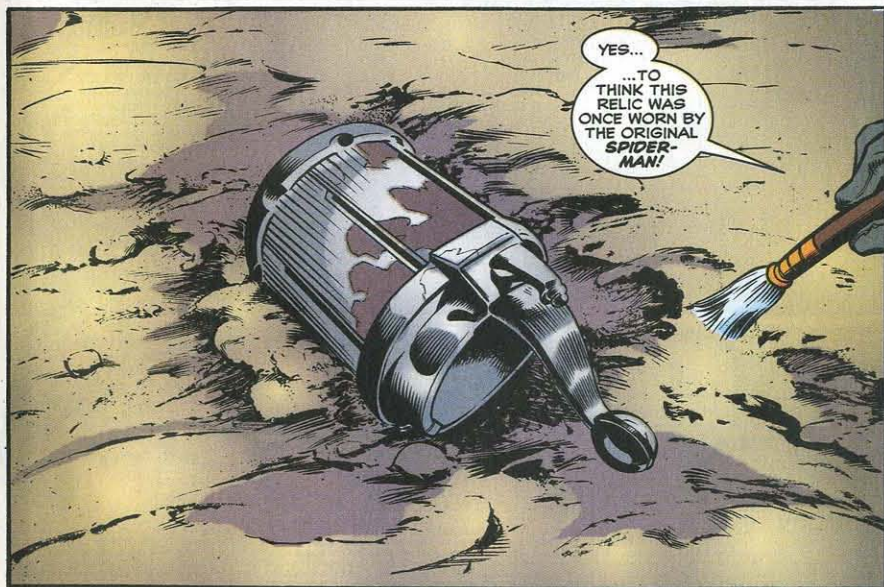
Design by COMICRAFT's John Marasigan

# DENIM RIGOR MORTIS.



HARD JEANS





# THERE ONCE WAS A SPIDER...!

A STAN LEE  
PRESENTATION

TOM DEFALCO  
WRITER

RAFAEL KAYANAN  
PENCILS

BUD LAROSA  
INKS

BOB SHAREN  
COLORS

HISTORY  
REMEMBERS  
THE LEGENDARY  
WEB-SWINGER AS A  
PIVOTAL PLAYER  
IN THE AGE OF  
HEROES!

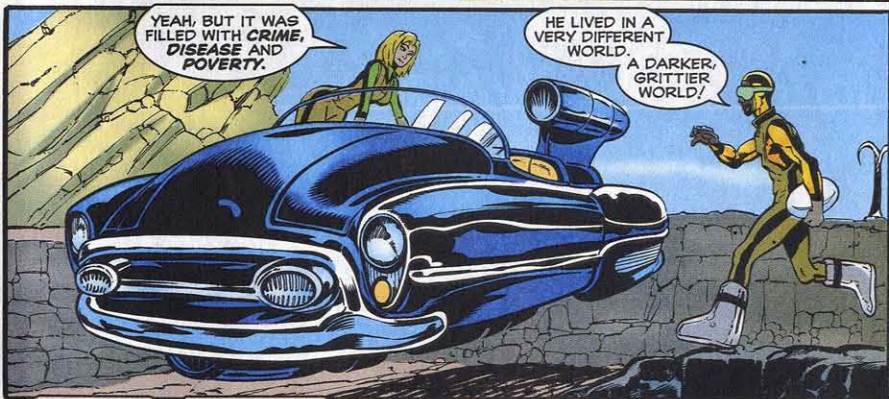
NO  
STATIC!

MY OLDER  
BROTHER WROTE  
HIS DOCTORAL  
THESIS -- AND STILL  
TEACHES A GRADUATE  
SEMINAR -- ON SPIDER-  
MAN'S POST-  
ONSLAUGHT  
PERIOD.

RS&COMICRAFT's LIZ AGRAPHOTIS  
LETTERS

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EDITOR

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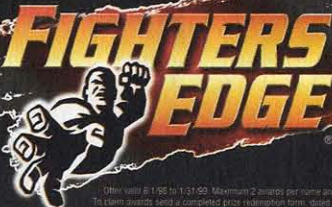
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FIND HER,  
PETER!

I...  
I'LL TRY MY  
BEST.

I  
KNOW YOU  
WILL...  
YOU  
ALWAYS  
DO!

IT'S PRACTICALLY IMPOSSIBLE FOR THE AVERAGE CITIZEN TO EVEN IMAGINE THE SPECTACULAR LIFE HE MUST HAVE LED!

FROM ALL HISTORICAL REPORTS, **SPIDER-MAN** -- MORE THAN ANY OTHER INDIVIDUAL -- SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN IN THE DIRECT CENTER OF THE AGE OF HEROES!

**THE X-MEN! THE AVENGERS! THE THUNDERBOLTS! EVEN THE FANTASTIC FOUR!** ALL OF THEM SOUGHT HIS ASSISTANCE AND EXPERTISE ON OCCASION!



SMALL WONDER THAT HE'S STILL KNOWN AS THE FRIENDLY, NEIGHBORHOOD SUPER HERO.

AND THE HONORS WHICH A GRATEFUL POPULACE SURELY HEAPED UPON HIM --

-- ONE MUST ASSUME THAT THERE WERE MORE THAN ENOUGH TO FILL A SMALL MUSEUM!





# The ADVENTURES of PODERATOR

## the GUARDIAN of CYBERSPACE!

IN HIS SECRET LAIR, THE VILLAIN VY-RUS DEVICES EVIL PLOTS AGAINST HUMANKIND!

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N. MAYOR Q'S EMERGENCY COMMAND CENTER...

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THIS IS A JOB FOR--  
PODERATOR!

ALREADY ON THE JOB, PODERATOR IS FLYING UNDETECTED THROUGH MODERN LINES IN SEARCH OF VY-RUS!

MUST SAVE NEW YORK--  
AND FAST!

THOSE NEWBIES  
THINK I'M  
KIDDING! I'LL  
SHOW THEM!

POOF!

--AND  
TIMES SQUARE  
IS  
NEXT!!

HAVING FOUND THE RIGHT LINE, PODERATOR SCRAMBLES VY-RUS'S MODERN!

LIGHTS  
OUT FOR  
VY-RUS!

WHA--?!  
WHO DARES  
TO--

VY-RUS'S ACCESS TO THE WEB IS  
RESTRICTED TO A HOME PAGE  
ON TRIPOD! THANKS TO PODERATOR,  
HIS REIGN OF TERROR COMES TO AN END!

NOW THE WEB IS YOUR  
PARALLEL UNIVERSE--AND IT!  
BATTLE EVIL! GAVE THE WORLD YOU  
CAN DO ANYTHING WITH YOUR OWN  
**HOMEPAGE!**

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ZACK, THE SYNTHEMAX JUST KICKED OUT ITS VERDICT ON THE STAIN --!

IT IS BLOOD... WHICH APPEARS TO HAVE COME FROM A MUTAGENICALLY ENHANCED INDIVIDUAL.

INTERESTING!

THAT NARROWS IT TO SPIDER-MAN HIMSELF OR ONE OF HIS MANY SUPER-POWERED FOES.

IT ALSO LENDS WEIGHT TO MY THEORY!

PERHAPS...

BUT THE FACT THAT WE FOUND THIS WEB-SHOOTER BURIED UNDERGROUND REMINDS ME OF ANOTHER WIDELY HELD BELIEF CONCERNING THE WEB-SWINGER.

YOU KNOW THE ONE I MEAN -- THE SECRET HEAD-QUARTERS!

MANY OF HIS BIOGRAPHERS HAVE SPECULATED THAT SPIDER-MAN POSSESSED A VAST UNDERGROUND COMPLEX --

-- WHERE HE STORED THE MOST ADVANCED CRIMEFIGHTING EQUIPMENT OF HIS TIME!

# BULLETIN BULLETINS

ON SALE AUGUST 5

## BLADE

Just in time for his Hollywood debut comes this all-new BLADE adventure! When some violent vampires get into a territorial war, Blade is caught in the middle! By MARC ANDREYKO and BART SEARS!

## CABLE

CABLE must protect Hell's Kitchen from the energy being known as ZZZAX! As if that wasn't bad enough, S.H.I.E.L.D. has targeted Cable as its #1 most wanted! By JOE CASEY and LADRONI!

## CAPTAIN AMERICA: SENTINEL OF LIBERTY

From the far-flung days of World War II comes this time-sat tale of CAP. NAMOR, and the HUMAN TORCH... a.k.a. the INVADERS! By MARK WAID and RON GARNEY!

## DAREDEVIL

To save an innocent man, DD will have to go through BULLSEYE, BUSHWHACKER, and the KINGPIN! That MATT MURDOCK does do anything to win a case! By DAN CHICHESTER and LEE WEEKS!

## ESSENTIAL X-MEN

Compiling three years of X-MEN stories into one x-pansive volume! Featuring such popular villains as MAGNETO, the BROOD, and DEATHBIRD! By CHRIS CLAREMONT, DAVE COOKBURN, JOHN ROMITA JR., and many more!

## FANTASTIC FOUR

The island of GENOSHA needs the help of MISTER FANTASTIC... but they'll have to go through the FANTASTIC FOUR to get it! By CHRIS CLAREMONT and SALVADOR LARROCA!

## HAWKEYE: EARTH'S MIGHTIEST MARKSMAN

The Avenging Archer! In his own action-packed one-shot! HAWKEYE's been targeted by TASKMASTER and BATROC... but this bowman battles back! By TOM DEFAICO, MARK BAGLEY, JEFF JOHNSON and DAVE ROSSI!

## KA-ZAR

The people of the SAVAGE LAND are revolting against KA-ZAR! Meanwhile, SHANNA and ZIRA flee to the island of GENOSHA, and mysterious land known as BHADWAIN! By CHRISTOPHER PRIEST and KENNY MARTINEZ!

## RAMPAGING HULK

Concluding the senses-shattering saga that introduces an all-new foe for the HULK: the powerful creature known as RAVAGE! By GLENN GREENBERG and RICK LONARDI!

## SENSATIONAL SPIDER-MAN

"The Gathering of the Five" begins here! If you miss this one, you're missing one of the most important SPIDEY saga ever! By TODD DEZAGO and JOE BENNETT!

## SPIDER-GIRL

Re-presenting the first appearance of our hottest new heroine! Plus: a sneak peek at the Marvel Universe of the future, M2! By TOM DEFAICO and RON FRENZ!

## SUNFIRE & BIG HERO 6

BIG HERO 6 is fighting a losing battle against the EVERWRAITH! They could use some help from SUNFIRE, but he's too busy dying! By SCOTT LOBELLE and GUS VAQUEZ!

## THOR

Dragged beneath the ocean depths, picked as the consort of the Inuit ice goddess SEDNA, THOR's only hope for rescue lies with NAMOR the SUB-MARINER! By DAN JURGENS and JOHN ROMITA JR.!

## UNCANNY X-MEN

At last! KITTY PRYDE, NIGHTCRAWLER, and COLOSSUS return to the team... but they may wish they had stayed with EXCALIBUR after meeting the all-new, all-deadly X-MEN! By STEVEN T. SEAGLE and CHRIS BAGHALO!

## X-MEN: THE MANGA

Trapped on the island of GENOSHA, GAMBIT, JUBILEE and STORM stage a daring escape that puts them right in the path of the deadly SENTINELS! By HIROFUMI ICHIKAWA!

**ITEM!** It seems like only yesterday that a fresh-faced group of teenage mutants enrolled at PROFESSOR XAVIER'S SCHOOL FOR GIFTED YOUNGSTERS! Now, 35 years later, the X-MEN are going stronger than ever! Join us this month as we celebrate three-and-a-half decades of the most uncanny heroes of all! It all begins next week in X-MEN #80, a 48-page extravaganza featuring the long-awaited return of KITTY PRYDE, COLOSSUS, and NIGHTCRAWLER to the team! The issue also introduces a new group of villains: the all-evil, all-deadly X-MEN! The thrill-a-minute story is by JOE KELLY, and wait till you get a look at the breathtaking art by BRANDON PETERSON and ART THIBERT! It's all wrapped up under an eye-popping photographic foil cover by superstar CARLOS PACHECO! So pick up a copy of X-MEN #80! It's the perfect anniversary gift... for yourself!

**ITEM!** If you've seen the previews at your local theater, you know the BLADE movie starring WESLEY SNIPES looks like one of the hottest action flicks of the summer! The movie will be out in August, and to mark the occasion, we've got a brand-new BLADE 48-page one-shot, on sale next week! The half-human, half-vampire BLADE is up to his neck in trouble as he investigates a turf war between battling bloodsuckers! This spooky special is brought to you by MARC ANDREYKO, BART SEARS, and MARK PENNINGTON! So what are you waiting for? Grab your garlic and your crucifix, and get ready for the return of the sharpest Blade of them all!

**ITEM!** In the next couple of months, DAREDEVIL is going to explode! The action starts next week, as a classic creative team returns to the Man Without Fear in the double-sized DAREDEVIL #380! DAN CHICHESTER and LEE WEEKS, the duo that brought you the unforgettable "Fall of the Kingpin" storyline, are coming back to DD for this one dynamite issue, paving the way for a bold new direction which begins in September! DD #380 starts off with a cargo ship containing illegal weapons going up in a ball of flame! MATT MURDOCK uses all of his legal skills to help the innocent man who has been set up for the crime. But to save a life, DD will have to go through a trio of tough customers: BULLSEYE, BUSHWHACKER, and the KINGPIN! The Fourth of July may be over, but it looks like the fireworks are just about to begin!

**ITEM!** The build-up to the double-sized FANTASTIC FOUR #12 begins next week in FF #101! As a bloody civil war grips the island of GENOSHA, one of the FANTASTIC FOUR's foes seeks to take advantage of the genetic strife! The Genoshan freedom fighters realize only one man can save their country: MISTER FANTASTIC! THE PRESS GANG is sent to retrieve REED RICHARDS, but it won't be stretching the truth to say that REED won't go peacefully! CHRIS CLAREMONT, SALVADOR LARROCA, and ART THIBERT are the terrific threesome crafting this tale of mutant rebellion!

**ITEM!** From the pages of the AVENGERS comes the battling bowman, HAWKEYE: EARTH'S MIGHTIEST MARKSMAN, in an all-new 48-page one-shot! But with this awesome archer, one shot is all it takes! This mammoth tale finds HAWK serving as mentor to young Avengers-in-training JUSTICE and FIRESTAR as they come up against the battling BATROC and the terrible TASKMASTER! Will these three heroes be enough to stop a foe who has battled the Avengers to a standstill? Titanic TOM DEFAICO is the man guiding Hawkeye's arrows, and he's aided by a trio of artistic referees: MARK BAGLEY, JEFF JOHNSON, and DAVE ROSSI! Add the inking prowess of SCOTT KOLINS, TOM WEGRYN, and AL MILGROM, and you've got a one-shot that can't miss!

**ITEM!** There are all kinds of rumors floating around about the SPIDER-MAN books these days - rumors about PETER PARKER divorcing MARY JANE, the fate of Pete & MJ's baby, and even a rumor about a certain arachnid dying! Well, starting with SENSATIONAL SPIDER-MAN #32, you'll get to see if any of those rumors are true, as we launch a five-part tale we're calling "The Gathering of the Five!" TODD DEZAGO and JOE BENNETT kick off the proceedings, with the SCRIERS delivering a mysterious package to NORMAN OSBORN - and that's just the beginning of the greatest Spidey thriller of all! This story, and the one that immediately follows, will have a permanent effect on Peter Parker and all those around him! Don't say you haven't been warned!

## STAN'S SOAPBOX!

Hi, Heroes!

Good news! You can all stop worrying! Many of you have written woeful, angst-filled letters on tear-stained paper asking what would happen if the unthinkable occurred - if we should run out of No-Prizes! Well, set your minds at rest, Believers! We'll never run out of them because we have two No-Factories working 24-hour shifts to keep up with the demand! And here are the kind of questions that are keeping us busy this time...

Let's hear it for F.M. (yep, that's how he signed it) of Yonkers, NY who asks:

*"Why is the Spider-Man series ending?"*

O, ye of little faith, Spidey's series isn't ending! It's starting a new life away from the network and into syndication! O! web-head's like a wart - you can't get rid of him!

Here's an unexpected query from Amelia Rapp of Tjionesta, PA:

*"Do you ever wish that the X-Men and Marvel's other heroes were real?"*

You mean they're not?! Hel-lo!

Hey, waddaya know! Scott Hardie of Esperance, Australia just discovered Marvel!

*"I'm new to the Marvel world. Do all your heroes live in the same plane of existence, or are some on a different Earth than the other heroes?"*

Uh-oh, Scottie, sounds like you flunked Geography in school. I hate to break this to you, but there's really only one Earth! And all our costumed cut-ups (when they're not busy saving other galaxies) share this same pandemonium plane of existence, as you so existentially put it! And they probably all envy the No-Prize you're about to receive!

John Salvage, of Perrysburg, OH sounds like a biographer as he asks:

*"When did you decide you wanted to go into comic books?"*

Truthfully? Never! The thought never even occurred to me. After high school, I applied for a job at a publishing company and didn't know they published comics! They hired me and tossed me a Captain America yarn to work on. It was so much fun that I stayed there for most of my adult life! So you see, it was all a sinister cosmic accident!

Finally, Glen Lopez of Los Angeles, CA obviously has an inquiring mind. Here's proof:

*"What was it like to provide the voice for Stan Lee in the last episode of Spider-Man's animated series episode, 'Farewell, Spider-Man'?"*

It was great, except I almost wasn't hired. They said I wasn't the right type!

And now, as our newest Laureates fade gently into the night, their No-Prizes held close to their grateful hearts, we too must take our leave until next time - that is, if you can stand such raw, naked emotion twice in a row!

Excelsior!

Stan

Hey, Culture Lovers - you can E-mail your Soapbox letters and comments to STANZFANZ@AOL.COM. Ain't sounds great?!!



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ARE YOU IMPLYING THAT  
OUR WEB-SHOOTER WAS  
SIMPLY A DISCARD?

I DON'T SCAN  
IT! IF WE HAD FOUND THE  
LEGENDARY SPIDER-CAVE, WE  
WOULD HAVE DISCOVERED  
FAR MORE RELICS.

WHERE ARE  
THE REMAINS OF THE  
FAMOUS SPIDER-CYCLE?  
WHAT HAPPENED  
TO HIS SPIDER-  
CHOPPER?

THEY WERE PROBABLY  
LOOTED -- AND  
STRIPPED DOWN  
FOR PARTS --  
CENTURIES  
AGO.

MY GUESS  
WOULD BE IN  
THE YEARS AFTER  
MANHATTAN WAS  
ABANDONED.



NO  
SIGN OF THE  
GIRL...  
OR ANYONE ELSE  
FOR THAT MATTER!



HAVE THE RESCUE WORKERS  
ALREADY COVERED THIS  
AREA --

-- OR HAS THE RISING  
WATER FORCED THEM TO  
ABANDON THEIR SEARCH?!

AT THE RATE  
THESE TUNNELS  
ARE FILLING...

...EVEN I  
WON'T BE ABLE  
TO CONTINUE MUCH  
LONGER --!

BUT I  
CAN'T GIVE  
UP!

NOT UNTIL  
I KNOW THAT  
CHILD IS SAFE!

YOU  
KNOW WHO  
I OFTEN THINK  
ABOUT?

HIS  
WIFE!

Ahhh,  
YES... THE  
LOVELY MARY  
JANE  
PARKER!

I BELIEVE  
I HAVE A CLASSIC  
HOLOSCAN FROM HER  
MODELING DAYS,  
AND -- HERE  
WE GO!

SH-SHE'S  
ABSOLUTELY  
BREATH-  
TAKING!

WHATEVER  
HAPPENED TO HER,  
ANYWAY?

DEPENDS ON  
THE HISTORIAN/  
SOME CLAIM THEY  
DIVORCED, OTHERS SAY  
SHE WAS MURDERED  
BY ONE OF HIS  
ENEMIES.

ME, I  
PREFER THE  
ACCOUNTS WHICH  
HAVE THEM LIVING  
HAPPILY EVER  
AFTER.



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ALL COMICS MINT/NM

# COMICS

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WONDERFUL --!



THE WATER IS SEEPING THROUGH THE CEILING, CAUSING IT TO CRUMBLE AND --



KER  
PLASH

WHOA! I WOULD HAVE BEEN CAUGHT BENEATH THAT MESS --

-- IF IT HADN'T BEEN FOR THE EARLY WARNING FROM MY SPIDER-SENSE!

THIS ACCESS PIPE IS THE ONLY SAFE PLACE IN THIS TUNNEL!

THE REST OF THE ROOF LOOKS LIKE IT'LL GIVE WAY ANY MINUTE.



NO SENSE KIDDING MYSELF ANY LONGER!  
I FAILED!

IF THAT CHILD HASN'T BEEN FOUND BY NOW, SHE'S AS GOOD AS DEAD!

AND SO AM I IF I DON'T -- NO!

I... I CAN'T GIVE UP ON HER!



I'VE GOT  
TO KEEP  
LOOKING!

I WON'T BE  
RESPONSIBLE  
FOR THE DEATH  
OF ANOTHER  
CHILD!

I'LL  
TAKE IT A  
TUNNEL AT  
A TIME.

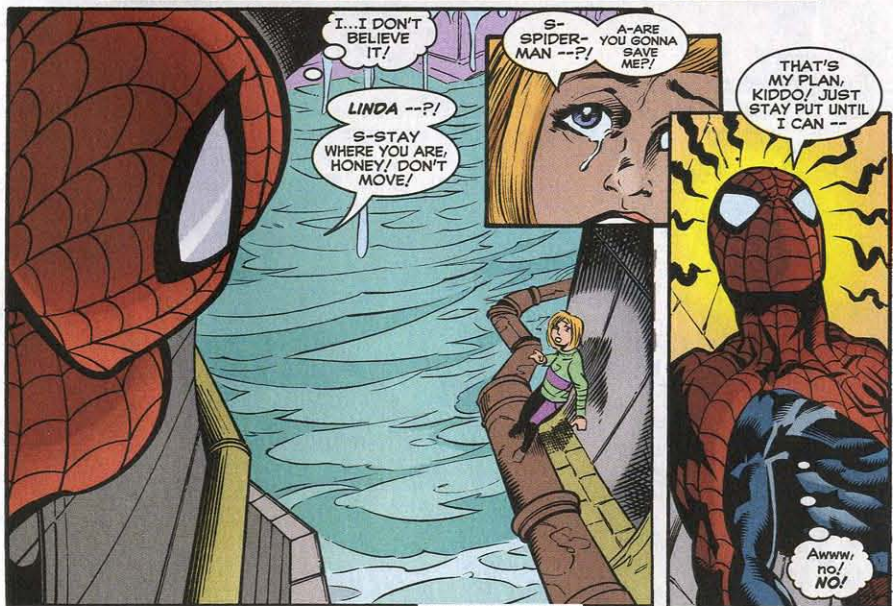
IF SHE  
ISN'T IN THE  
NEXT, I'LL JUST  
TRY ONE  
MORE...

WELL... MAYBE I'LL  
GO FOR  
TWO...  
OR  
THREE!



OR  
TWELVE! Uh-Oh! I SUDDENLY  
SENSE DANGER  
ABOVE ME --!

I'D BETTER  
SCURRY INTO THE  
NEXT SHAFT BEFORE  
THIS ENTIRE CAVERN  
COLLAPSES IN ON  
ITSELF, AND --



I... I DON'T  
BELIEVE  
IT!

LINDA --?!

S-STAY  
WHERE YOU ARE,  
HONEY! DON'T  
MOVE!

S-  
SPIDER-  
MAN --?!

A-ARE  
YOU GONNA  
SAVE  
ME?

THAT'S  
MY PLAN,  
KIDDO! JUST  
STAY PUT UNTIL  
I CAN --

Awww!  
no!  
NO!





TAKE IT EASY, I PROMISE TO HONEY! GET YOU OUT OF HERE!

B-BUT HOW --?!  
Y-YOU ONLY GOT ONE ARM!

I'M NOT GOING TO LEAVE YOU BEHIND... IF THAT'S WHAT YOU THINK!



I CAN WEB YOU TO MY BACK, AND CLIMB UP THE SIDE OF THE WALL!

R-REALLY?  
T-THAT SOUNDS COOL!



THAT'S IF THIS WALL CAN SUPPORT THE TWO OF US --!



HEY! I HAVE AN EVEN BETTER IDEA --!

W-WHY ARE YOU LOOKING AT THAT LADDER?!



Y-YOU CAN'T POSSIBLY REACH IT FROM HERE... CAN YOU?!

THERE'S ONLY ONE WAY TO FIND OUT!

COME ON --! YOU NEED TO BE FITTED FOR A WEB-SUIT!



B-BUT...  
I'M SCARED!



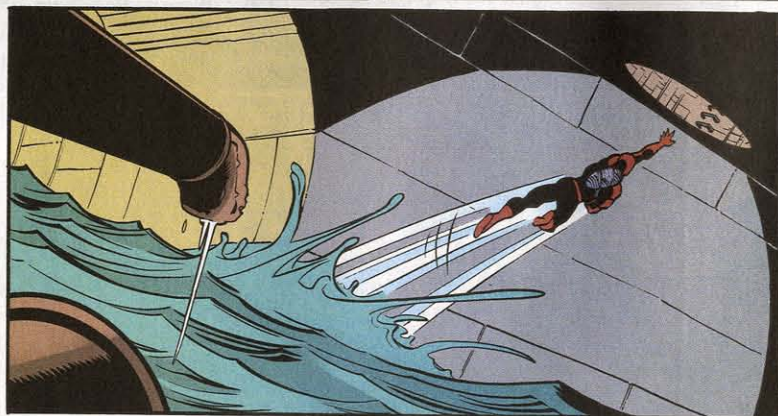
THERE'S NO SHAME IN BEING AFRAID, LINDA.

EVERYBODY EXPERIENCES FEAR AT ONE TIME OR ANOTHER.

YOU JUST CAN'T LET IT PREVENT YOU FROM DOING WHAT'S RIGHT!

YOU READY TO QUIT THIS PLACE?

Uhhhh...  
SURE!



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| <input type="checkbox"/> CAM Captain America  | <input type="checkbox"/> IRM Iron Man       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> THO Thor <b>NEW!</b> |   |

## Marvel Heroes

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> AFT Alpha Flight    | <input type="checkbox"/> SIL Silver Surfer       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> DDV Daredevil       | <input type="checkbox"/> INC The Incredible Hulk |
| <input type="checkbox"/> HFH Heroes For Hire | <input type="checkbox"/> BLT Thunderbolts        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ZAR Ka-Zar          |  |

## Spider-Man

- |   |   |
|---|---|
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**H87MD8**



D-DID WE MAKE IT --P?  
WE SURE DID!



HANG IN THERE, LITTLE LADY!  
Y-YOU'LL BE HOME BEFORE YOU KNOW IT!

J-JUST GOTTA CLIMB ONE RUNG AT A TIME!



HERE! I'LL CRACK YOU FREE OF THAT COCOON, AND --

LOOK!  
IT'S SPIDER-MAN, AND HE'S GOT THE KID!



H-HHE PROBABLY HAD HER ALL THE TIME --!

SOMEBODY GRAB THAT COSTUMED FREAK --!

WAIT --!  
Y-YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND!



Ahhh --!  
WHY DO I EVEN BOTHER?!

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"AS WELL AS  
THOSE --"



"-- WHO  
BELIEVE  
IN THEM!"



# THE SPIDER-WEB

**MATT HICKS**  
ASSISTANT  
EDITOR

**RALPH MACCHIO**  
EDITOR

**BOB HARRAS**  
CHIEF



Dear Ralf,

AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #433 was an excellent read, and one of the first that made me reconsider just how heroic Peter Parker really is. Parker has always had that deep sense of responsibility as we are constantly reminded with the Uncle Ben flashbacks. Over the years, we've seen him skip class, stand up dates, and even neglect his family when he feels the need to play the hero. All the while, J. Jonah Jameson and other naysayers ponder how life would be without heroes. Do they create these villains and catastrophes and pose more problems than they solve? Are they menaces? I've always sided with Parker and the rest of the heroes, feeling that they're doing the best they can to bring good into a dark and dangerous world. Until this issue.

Mr. Hyde was not responsible for ruining Joe Robertson's retirement party, Peter Parker was. All that Zabo wanted to do was hang out in his hotel room and maybe watch a little HBO. He certainly was no threat to anybody. Parker could have enjoyed the party, sent his best to the Robertsons, and returned late if need be. But no, he had to go out looking for trouble and start a fight that was totally unnecessary. That great sense of responsibility of Parker's caused a lot of damage, ruined a party, and could have gotten someone killed. What was he thinking?

An old Daily Bugle headline once read, "Spider-Man: Hero or Menace?" In this case, I know which one I'd choose...

M.C. Westmeyer  
(Address withheld by request)

Interesting take on this issue's story, M.C. Could Peter have minimized property damage by choosing a better time to check up on Hyde? Perhaps. Let us say in Peter's defense, though, that Hyde was certainly short of innocent in this affair. One of the activities he was engaged in, besides "hanging out" in his hotel room, was attempting to get his payment from the New World Order for attacking the Hulk on a crowded commercial airline flight, a high-profile criminal act which makes Hyde a fugitive at this time. And Peter didn't exactly start the fight, he merely had the bad luck of being spotted by Hyde while outside his window. Should we let all criminals go unpunished as long as they're not committing crimes at the time?

Dear Spider's Web,

I just put down AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #433...literally, and this is what I have to say: Great job!!! Tom DeFalco, thanks a lot! You've helped prove that just because our

hero is injured doesn't mean he's out of the war against crime.

At first, you guys had me worried that Peter might actually get something other than his ankle sprained, but look at how it turned out. He even got a couple of bucks.

Lastly, there is only one thing that worries me. After all the years I've witnessed Spidey don the trademarked costume (5 years), he's gonna redo the whole thing? Ricochet!?! I mean, c'mon. Let's think about this. What about the Scarlet Spider costume or even the Blood Spider suit from way back in ASM #367? I don't think I can take the suspense, but I will stay with it. So, until Venom bakes homemade cookies for Norman Osborn, Make Mine Marvel!

Rufus "Slayer-Z" Stokes  
P.O. Box 263  
Lambert, MS 38643

Hey, last time we checked, Eddie Brock is single, and never underestimate the cooking skills of a New York bachelor!

As for Ricochet, well, by the time this sees print, we will have turned the page on the "Identity Crisis" story, including Peter's time as Ricochet. Hope two issues wasn't too long a time away from the classic red-and-blues for you...uh...Slayer.

Dear Arachknights,

The prelude to the shattering of Spider-Man in AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #433 was brilliant! Toms Lyle and DeFalco were born to work together (hint, hint)! Most noticeable this time was the added emphasis on the civilian saga, and I hope this signifies a permanent change. Y'see, that's the problem when you create such a powerful supporting cast—they're as interesting as the villains and the flashy powers!

It was nice to see some interaction between Robbie and Jonah at last. They've been friends for so long—and close ones at that—and their frosty split has had a big impact on everyone. It seems Jonah is ashamed of what he's done, at the deal Norman Osborn forced him to make. He partly blames himself for pushing Robbie into resigning, and he's also angry at appearing meek and submissive to those around him, unable to fight back lest Osborn hurt his family. But I've always seen Jonah as (among other things) a brave man, one who desperately wants to be seen as a hero, both by himself and the public. That's why he's tried so often to tear Spider-Man down, because the Webhead (unlike, say, the Fantastic Four) deals with the street scum and urban crime which Jonah himself sought to expose in the pre-super hero years.

Spidey is therefore a challenge to Jonah's own heroic status, and Jonah sees himself buried beneath the good deeds of such urban super heroes. This is why he portrays them all as bad guys, worthy of fear more than trust. It's him or them, and in his own way, Jonah has fought to be a hero as long and hard as Spidey himself.

But Osborn has become a bigger and more direct threat than the Wall-crawler ever was—and I can see Jonah slowly building himself up toward some retaliation. We've seen the gun in the desk drawer; and the old snarl and hard gaze back in ASM #433; and maybe soon he'll dare to face Osborn one-on-one. Whether he'll outwit Osborn legally, or just blast a bullet in his head (thus destroying his hopes of ever being a hero again) remains to be seen.

Thinking about it, Jonah isn't the only one with a major grudge against Osborn. There's Pete, too; and MJ; and Liz Allan; and even Paul Stacy. That's five people. So if Osborn were to bite the bullet... in a shadowy room... with no witnesses... then maybe we could see the Spider-verse's variation of that old Dallas plotline in the form of "Who Shot Norman Osborn?"

Oh, and what's this? "Joe wants to visit Greece and sail the Aegean Sea," eh? I'd feared he was being written out of the series, but apparently he's got a big role still to play! Go, Robbie—find little May! And bring her home. At last.

Kevin Barron  
43 Mill Falls  
Driffield, East Yorkshire  
ENGLAND YO25 7AZ

And what makes you think that whatever Robbie may find in Greece has anything to do with little May, Mr. Barron?

## NEXT-ISSUE:

THEY, WHAT'S JOHN BYRNE DOING WRITING NEXT ISSUE? COULDN'T WAIT, HUH? OKAY, THEN, HERE WE GO! JUMPIN' JOHN LEAPS ON BOARD TO WRAP THINGS UP BEFORE THE CRAZINESS STARTS IN OCTOBER. "THE GATHERING OF FIVE" PICKS UP SPEED AS JOE ROBERTSON FINALLY CONNECTS WITH ALISON MONGRAIN AND CONVINCES HER TO RETURN TO NYC TO CONFRONT PETER. BUT TO REACH THE BIG APPLE, THEY'LL HAVE TO ELUDE NORMAN OSBORN'S ASSASSINS FIRST! IT'S ACTION AND ADVENTURE AS YOU LIKE IT, IN THE INIMITABLE STYLE OF JOHN BYRNE, GUEST PENCILER RAFAEL KAYANAN AND BUD LAROSA! AND RALF! PLAYING THE TRIANGLE!

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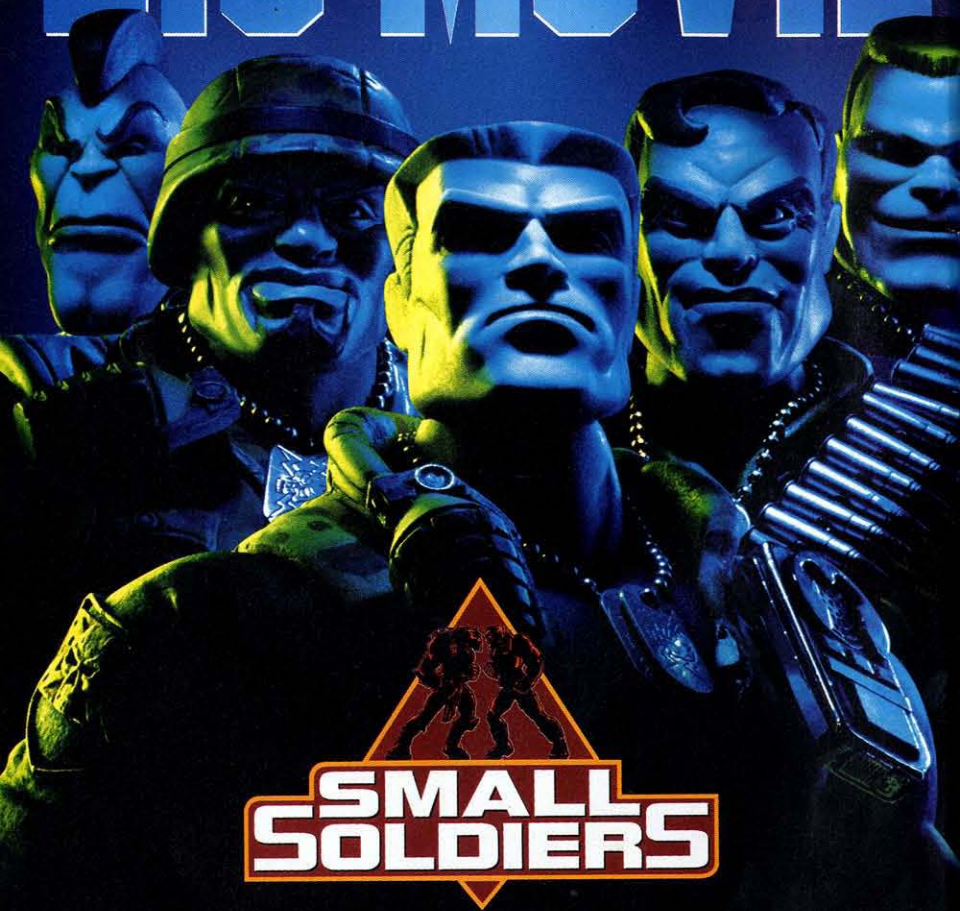
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