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**COMICS**



**NOV**  
**#441**

APPROVED  
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AUTHORITY

*the* **FINAL CHAPTER** PART of 4

**THE AMAZING**

**SPIDER-MAN**



**BYRNE**  
**KAYANAN**  
**LAROSA**

[WWW.MARVEL.COM](http://WWW.MARVEL.COM)



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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** meet 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!**

## MOLTEN MAN

*Mark Raxton argued with the inventor he was assisting, **Spencer Smythe**, and struck him because Raxton wanted to sell his share of the project to the highest bidder. The project involved a liquid metal alloy which was derived from a meteor containing organic material. A sample of the liquid fell on Raxton during the argument and was absorbed by his skin giving him a yellowish metallic appearance as well as super-human strength and heat-radiating powers. Raxton dubbed himself the **Molten Man** and went on a crime spree until being defeated by **Spider-Man** numerous times. Recently, Raxton reformed and was hired by a subsidiary of Osborn Industries, the Multivex Corporation. His stepsister is **Liz Allan Osborn**.*



## NORMAN OSBORN

The wealthy industrialist who pursued a life of crime as the costumed **Green Goblin**. Years ago, the Goblin was presumed killed in a battle with **Spider-Man** that also took the life of **Peter Parker's** girlfriend, **Gwen Stacy**. But recently Osborn resurfaced, having spent years running a criminal empire in Europe where he fled. Having come back to America, Osborn is determined to once again bring horror into the lives of Peter Parker and those he loves.



## MADAME WEB

***Cassandra Webb** possessed enormous clairvoyant abilities, even as a child. Blind since birth, she used her psychic powers to compensate, and, as an adult, became a professional medium. But Cassandra developed a nervous system disorder and is now wholly dependent on an immobile life-support system designed by her late husband, an electrical engineer. She has encountered **Spider-Man** several times.*



## MORRIS MAXWELL

A strange little man who owns a pawn shop in Greenwich Village. He possesses one of the five shards necessary to form the complete **Gathering of Five**.





## PREVIOUSLY IN...

**N**orman Osborn was able to place something in the skull of the Molten Man that brought him under Osborn's control. Norman then sent him after Alison Mongrain, who had returned to America with information vital to Peter Parker.

**B**efore the hypnotized Molten Man could finish Mongrain, Spider-Man appeared, which allowed Alison and her companion Joe Robertson to escape.



**T**he Molten Man continued to battle the webspinner until they tumbled into the Hudson River. Spidey emerged and the Molten Man disappeared.

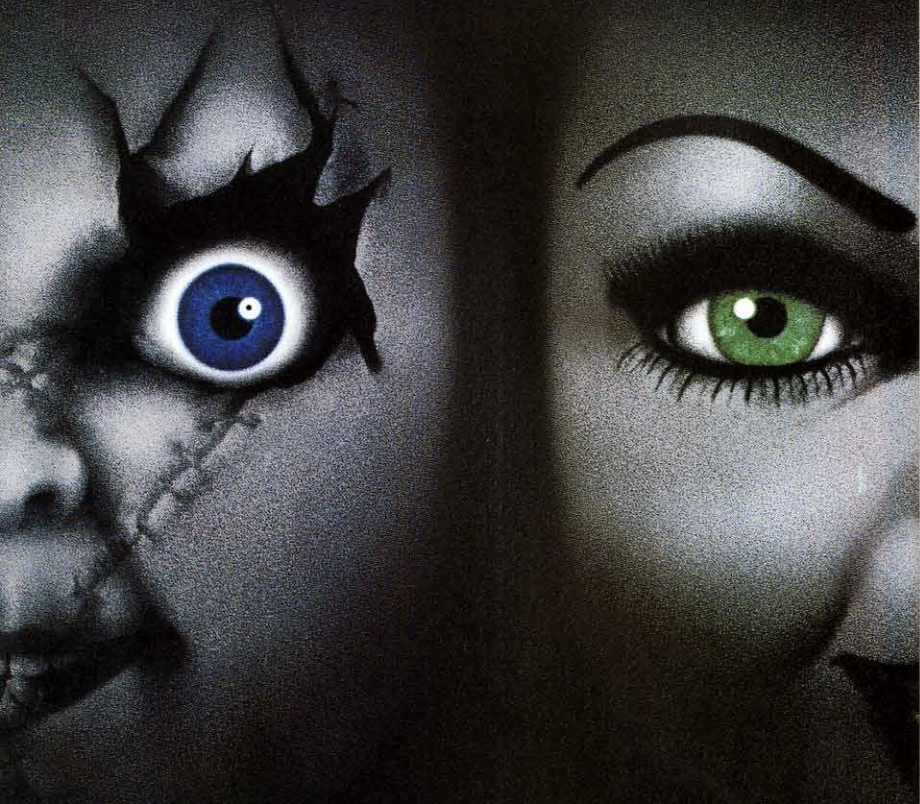
**M**eanwhile, Norman acquired another piece necessary for the Gathering of Five ritual which he believes would bring him ultimate power.



Let's see how he's doing on that front...



Chucky Gets Lucky.



**B R I D E O F**  
**C H U C K Y**

**THE HONEYMOON'S GONNA BE A KILLER**

**IN THEATRES 10-16-98**



STAN LEE  
PRESENTS:  
THE AMAZING  
SPIDER-MAN

# AND WHO SHALL CLAIM A KINGLY CROWN?

NIGHT UNFOLDS  
ITSELF ACROSS  
THE CITY OF  
NEW YORK.

CREEPING OUT OF SHADOWED  
CORNERS, IT STRETCHES LONG,  
DARK FINGERS OVER THE  
JUMBLED SKYLINE AS THE SUN  
SINKS BELOW THE WESTERN  
HORIZON.

AND NO SHADOW IS  
LONGER, OR DARKER,  
THAN THAT CAST BY  
THIS TOWER, THE  
HEADQUARTERS OF  
OSBORN INDUSTRIES.

UNILLUMINATED NOW,  
ALL EMPLOYEES HAVING  
BEEN SENT HOME EARLY,  
HOURS AGO.

THE LAYERS OF ITS MANY  
STORIES ARE WRAPPED IN  
BLACKNESS, STILL AND  
SILENT, AS THOUGH WAITING  
FOR A TERRIBLE LIGHT  
TO BURST UPON THEM.

THE LIGHT, PERHAPS,  
THAT BURNS LIKE A  
CYCLOPEAN EYE AT THE  
VERY PINNACLE OF THIS  
OBSIDIAN MONOLITH.

THE LIGHT OF  
MADNESS. THE  
LIGHT OF DEATH.

## the FINAL <sup>PART 1</sup> of 4 CHAPTER

JOHN BYRNE  
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LETTERS

HICKS & ROCKWITZ  
COLORS

EDITOR  
RALPH MACCHIO

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EDITOR IN CHIEF





YES,  
MADNESS AND  
DEATH.

BUT ALSO  
POWER, KNOWLEDGE,  
IMMORTALITY!

THREE CHANCES OUT  
OF FIVE. NOT THE  
BEST ODDS.

YOU ALL  
UNDERSTAND  
THIS?  
CLEARLY?

OF  
COURSE THEY  
DO, MAXWELL.  
YOUR CONSTANT  
HARPING ON THAT  
OBVIOUS POINT  
SERVES NO  
PURPOSE  
HERE.



NO,  
OSBORN?

YOU ARE  
ASKING EACH OF  
US TO RISK **MADNESS**  
AND **DEATH** SO THAT  
**THREE** OF US MIGHT GAIN  
**POWER, KNOWLEDGE, AND**  
**IMMORTALITY**. THERE IS  
NO WAY TO KNOW **WHO**  
WILL BE GRANTED  
**WHICH** GIFT, WHICH  
**CURSE**.

AND EACH OF YOU  
MUST **UNDERSTAND**  
THIS **COMPLETELY**, MUST  
MAKE THIS **CHOICE** WITH  
AN **OPEN HEART**, AND  
CONVICTION OF  
PURPOSE...

... OR THE **SPELL**  
WILL **FAIL**, AND THE  
CONSEQUENCES...

ARE NOT **WORTH**  
CONSIDERING.  
WE ALL **KNOW**  
WHY WE ARE  
HERE.

WASTE  
NO MORE  
TIME.







AND YOU, **MARTHA FRANKLIN**. IT WAS YOUR **FATHER** WHO AGREED TO TAKE PLACE IN THIS **GATHERING**.

YOU TOOK HIS PLACE WHEN HIS **COURAGE** FAILED HIM. TOOK HIS PLACE WITHOUT HIS **KNOWLEDGE** OR **CONSENT**.

CALL ME "**MATT**". ALL MY **FRIENDS** DO.

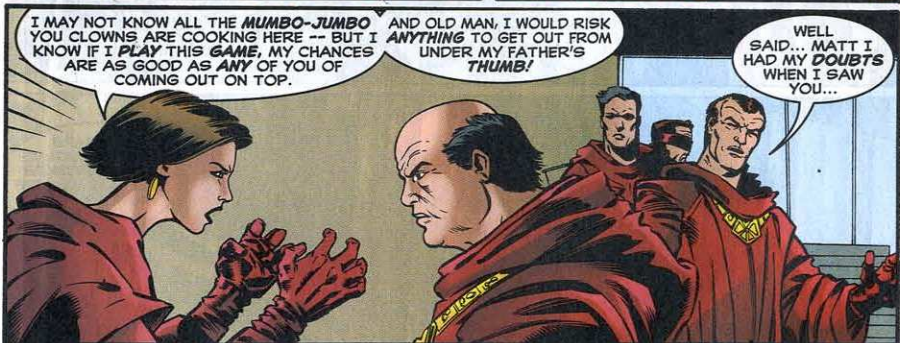


I'LL CALL YOU **FOOL**, CHILD.

HOW CAN ONE WHO HAS YET TO LIVE EVEN TWO FULL DECADES UNDERSTAND WHAT IS BEING **ASKED** OF HER HERE?

IF SHE SAYS SHE UNDERSTANDS, SHE UNDERSTANDS, **MAXWELL**. STOP TRYING TO **FRIGHTEN** HER.

HE CAN'T.



I MAY NOT KNOW ALL THE **MUMBO-JUMBO** YOU CLOWNS ARE COOKING HERE -- BUT I KNOW IF I **PLAY** THIS **GAME**, MY CHANCES ARE AS GOOD AS **ANY** OF YOU OF COMING OUT ON TOP.

AND OLD MAN, I WOULD RISK **ANYTHING** TO GET OUT FROM UNDER MY FATHER'S **THUMB!**

WELL SAID... **MATT** I HAD MY **DOUBTS** WHEN I SAW YOU...



"... BUT I THINK NOW YOU WILL BE A **MOST WORTHY** ADDITION TO OUR **GATHERING**."

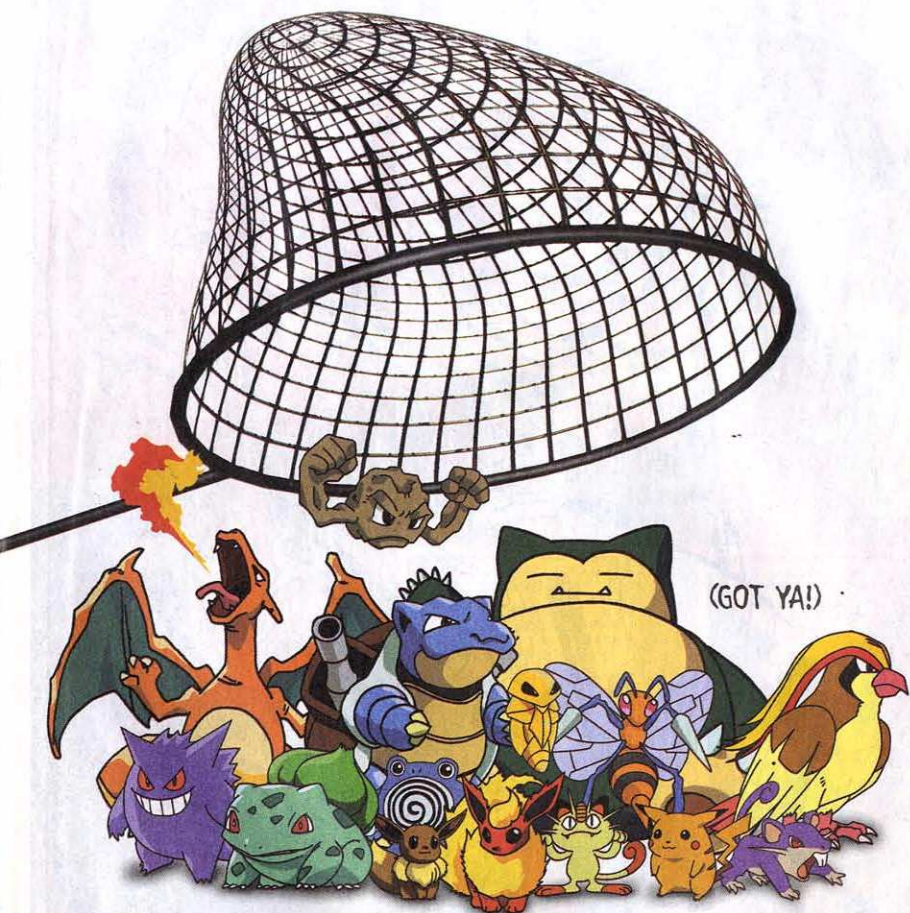
THERE'S THE **PARKER HOUSE**. STOP HERE, **DRIVER**.

WHY SO FAR **BACK?**









**POKÉMON**  
Gotta catch 'em all!



THE  
MOLTEN  
MAN!

AH-GH!



A HEARTBEAT OR TWO AGO,  
SEVERAL MILES AWAY...

... A FAMILIAR FIGURE ARCS  
OVER THE CRAGGY FACE OF  
MANHATTAN, FEELING IN HIS  
BONES AND MUSCLES THE  
WEARINESS THAT MARKS  
THE END OF A LONG DAY.

OKAY, I'M  
DONE!

DOESN'T  
LOOK LIKE  
THERE ARE ANY  
**BAD GUYS** WHO NEED  
MY IMMEDIATE  
ATTENTION.

NO CATS  
CAUGHT IN TREES,  
NO PRESIDENTIAL  
AIRPLANES TO BE  
RESCUED.

SO I'LL HEAD FOR HOME  
AND A NICE, WARM,  
COZY BED.

NOT TO  
MENTION A NICE,  
WARM, COZY  
WIFE...

Oh, JILL, IT WAS  
INCREDIBLE!

I THOUGHT I  
HADN'T MISSED THE  
LIFE, BUT THE MOMENT  
I STEPPED BACK  
INTO IT...

Er...  
HOLD ON  
A MINUTE,  
WOULD YOU?

IT SOUNDS LIKE  
THERE'S SOMETHING  
GOING ON RIGHT  
IN FRONT OF  
THE...

...OH MY  
GOSH!





He's a revengeful little devil. And he wants payback from a mad scientist who tried to dissect him alive.



But you've got to jump, glide, punch and whip his tail through 12 levels to help him get even.



Meet the Jersey Devil. He's running loose in a huge 3-D environment full of mutant vegetables.



nasty bosses and all kinds of mind games. (Better watch your back.)



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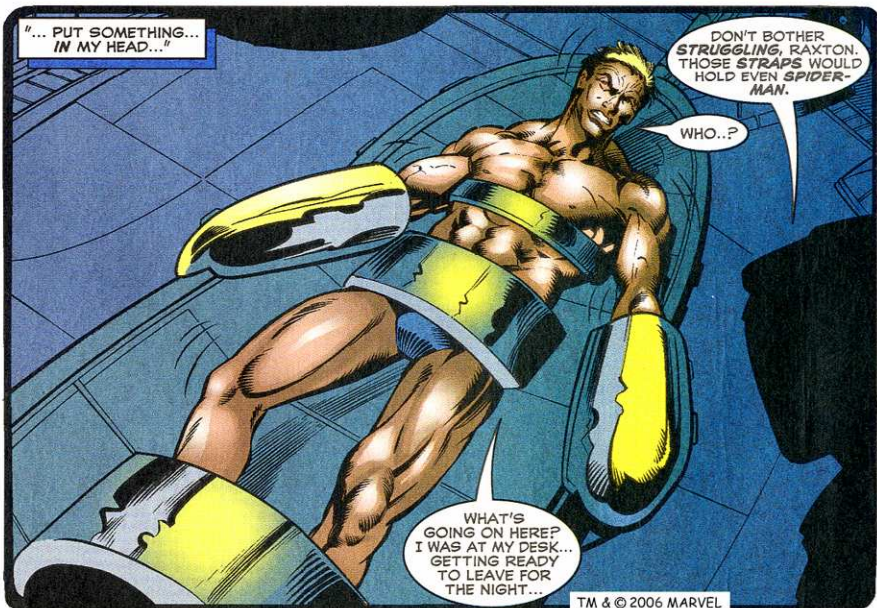


**JERSEY  
DEVIL**

The evil little tyrant is here.

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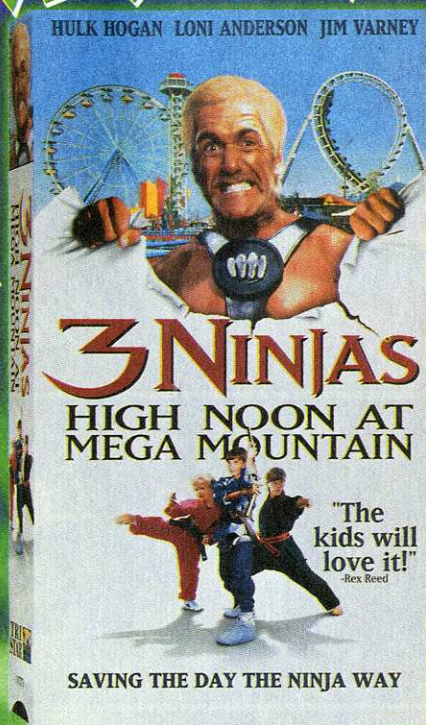






# PUNCH UP SOME EXCITEMENT!

ON  
SALE  
NOW!



TRISTAR PICTURES PRESENTS  
A SHEEN PRODUCTION IN ASSOCIATION WITH LEEDS/BEN-AMI PRODUCTIONS, SEAN McNAMARA FILM "3 NINJAS: HIGH NOON AT MEGA MOUNTAIN"  
STARRING HULK HOGAN LONI ANDERSON VICTOR WONG MATHEW BOTUCHIS MICHAEL J. O'LASKEY II J.P. ROESKE II AND JIM VARNEY  
WRITTEN BY JOEY PAUL, C.S.A. BASED UPON THE CHARACTERS CREATED BY JOHN CODA DIRECTED BY CHUCK CONNOR COSTUME DESIGNER ANNAMARIA SZANTO EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS BLAKE T. EVANS PRODUCED BY SIMON SHEEN AND ARTHUR LEEDS  
EDITED BY JAMES KANG EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS YORAM BEN-AMI PRODUCED BY SEAN McNAMARA & JEFF PHILLIPS DIRECTED BY SEAN McNAMARA



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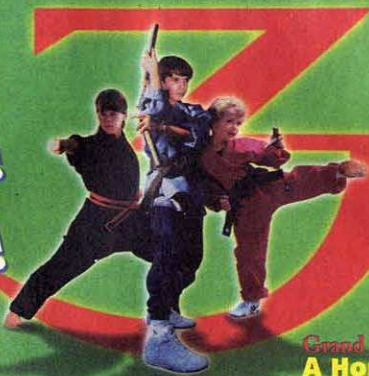






# BIG FUN To The Power Of

Get It!  
Watch It!  
Win It!



Answer the following  
"Watch And Win"  
questions from the movie:

1. What is the name of the TV star presenting the special outdoor Martial Arts show when the bad guys take over the amusement park?
2. Name the Ninja characters who rescue Amanda after Medusa takes her as a hostage.
3. Whose girlfriend (named Jennifer) was captured by Lothar and tied to a roller coaster track high in the air on the Turbo Loop ride?



**Grand Prize (1):  
A Home  
Entertainment  
System!**

Includes: A Sony  
Television, VCR  
and Personal  
Stereo System!



**First Prize (5):  
A Month Of Free  
Karate Lessons!**  
In your home town!

**Second Prize (20):  
A Collection Of Columbia  
TriStar Home Videos!**

Library of the following titles: *3 Ninjas Kick Back*, *3 Ninjas Knuckle Up*, *Godzilla vs. King Ghidorah*, *The Battle For Earth*, *Godzilla vs. King Ghidorah*.

SHEN, MICHAEL, WICKERSON, LEE, ROBBIE AND PRODUCTIONS, SEAN M. NAMARA, "3 NINJAS: HIGH NOON AT MEGA MOUNTAIN", HULLA, ROGAN, ION, AMERSON, VICTOR, KING, HATHEN, BUTCHES, MICHAEL J. OTIS, KEVIN J. JE, ROSE, E. L., JON, ARNEY, JOEY, PAUL, C.S.A., JOHN, CODA, CHECK, CONNOR, ANNA, MARA, SEAN, BLAKE, T. EVANS, SIMON, SHEEN, ARTHUR, LEEDES, JAMES, KANG, MORAN, BEN, AMI, SEAN M. NAMARA, JEFF, PHILLIPS, SEAN M. NAMARA



## 3 NINJAS HIGH NOON AT MEGA MOUNTAIN

## Sweepstakes Entry Form

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

Answers:  
#1 \_\_\_\_\_  
#2 \_\_\_\_\_  
#3 \_\_\_\_\_

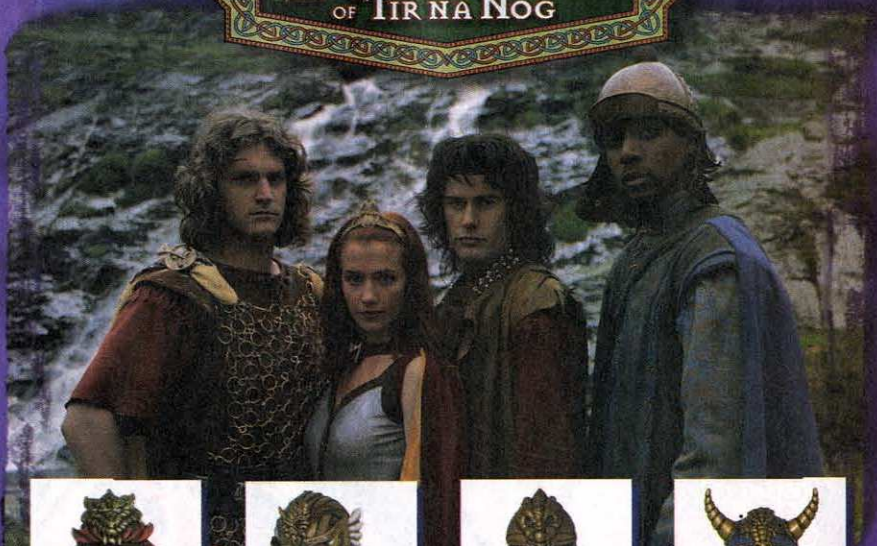
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Rohan, The Mystic  
Knight of Fire



Deirdre, The Mystic  
Knight of Air



Angus, The Mystic  
Knight of Earth



Ivar, The Mystic  
Knight of Water

**Tuesday through Friday  
Afternoons**



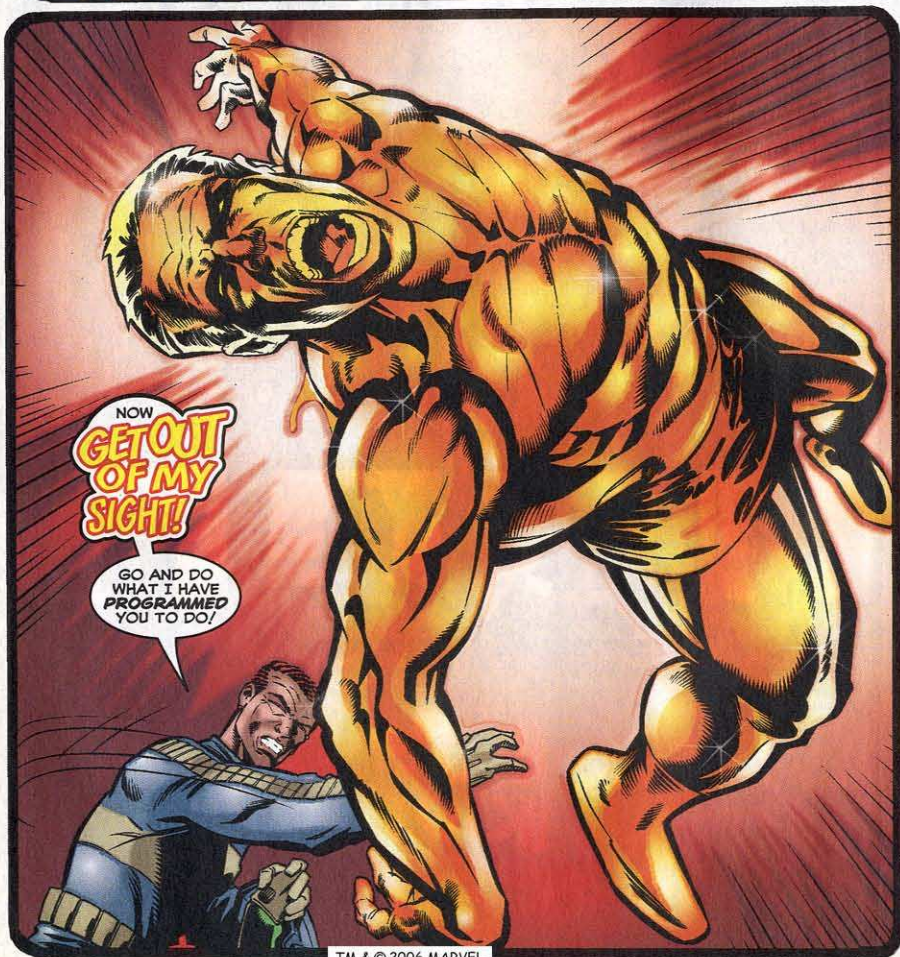
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**Saturday  
Mornings**

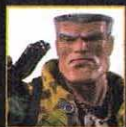
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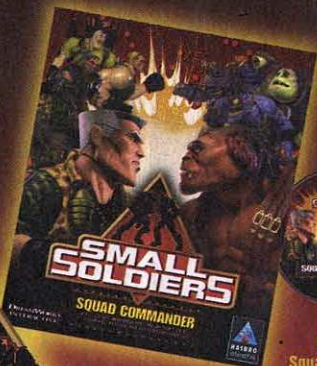




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HER!  
IT'S  
HER!

SHE'S THE  
ONE INSIDE MY  
HEAD! SHE'S THE  
ONE HURTING  
ME!

ALISON --  
WHAT IN **BLAZES**  
IS HE TALKING  
ABOUT...?

I  
DON'T  
KNOW... I  
DON'T  
KNOW...



UNLESS THIS  
LOCKET...  
**OSBORN**  
GAVE IT TO ME.  
SO LONG AGO.  
I'D ALMOST  
FORGOTTEN.

OSBORN...?



Oh, FOR GOD'S SAKE!  
NO **WONDER** WE'VE BEEN  
BARELY ELUDING OSBORN'S  
PEOPLE EVERY **STEP**  
OF THE WAY!

YOU'VE  
BEEN CARRYING  
A **TRACKING**  
DEVICE!



AND  
THAT POOR  
**DEVIL** HAS NO  
CHOICE BUT TO  
**FOLLOW**  
IT!





URGH-GHH!



PAIN...



IT... SEEMS TO HAVE WORKED.

HE'S CALMED DOWN -- ALMOST DOCILE.

...ROBERTSON...

...GONE...



...TIME'S UP...  
...ALL THE...TIME... IS...UP...

ALISON/ YOU MUST TELL ME NOW/ TELL ME WHAT YOU HAD TO TELL PETER!

PETER...?



ROBBIE -- WHO IS THIS WOMAN? WHAT'S GOING ON...?

MORE THAN WE HAVE TIME TO TELL, MARY JANE.

I'VE CHASED OVER HALF THE WORLD WITH THIS WOMAN, BECAUSE SHE HAD A MESSAGE SHE WOULD DELIVER ONLY TO YOUR HUSBAND. NOW...

...HUSBAND...



# the worst foe

A concert goes horribly wrong when the audience suddenly bursts into flame.



Mysteriously, the evening's sole survivor is Lieutenant Aya Brea, N.Y.P.D.



Now she must hunt the killer down – or become them.





# lies within

THE CINEMATIC RPG

[ parasite eve ]

A chilling new adventure that could only  
come from the creators of Final Fantasy® VII.



INCLUDES 1998 COLLECTOR'S CD  
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WHAT DOES IT LOOK LIKE I'M DOING? I'M READING.

I HAVE TO DO SOMETHING TO FILL MY TIME WHILE YOUR OLD PEOPLE DRONE ON AND ON AND ON AND ON...



I CAN SEE THAT, GIRL! WHY ARE YOUR READING THIS... THIS... GARBAGE!

OW!

HEY, LIGHTEN UP, OSBORN! I LIKE SPIDER-MAN! I DON'T CARE WHAT ANYONE ELSE SAYS.

I THINK HE'S COOL!



... COOL ...

SURE! BUT I WOULDN'T EXPECT YOU TO SEE THAT, OSBORN. I WOULDN'T EXPECT ANYONE OVER THE AGE OF TWENTY-ONE TO SEE IT!

YOU'RE ALL TOO OLD TO GET WHAT SPIDER-MAN IS ALL ABOUT!



Oh... I KNOW, MARTHA. I KNOW ALL TOO WELL WHAT THAT WALL-CRAWLING MENACE IS 'ALL ABOUT.'

NOW GET BACK INTO MY OFFICE. THE CEREMONY IS ABOUT TO BEGIN.


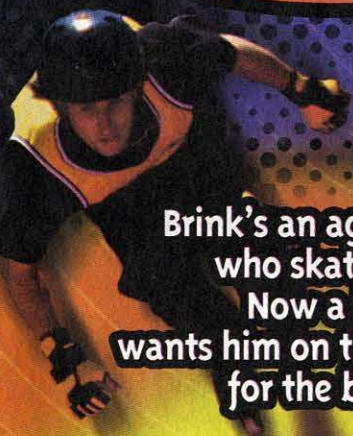
WELL -- ABOUT TIME..!





**A Disney Channel  
Original Movie**

# BRINK!



**Brink's an aggressive in-line skater  
who skates for the love of it.  
Now a big time sponsor  
wants him on their team. Will he sell out  
for the break of a lifetime?**





# WORLD PREMIER!

Saturday  
August 29 at 7pm/6c

On



Disney

CHANNEL

[www.disney.com](http://www.disney.com)

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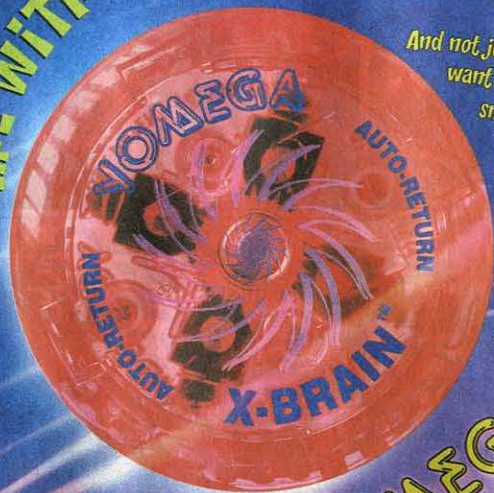




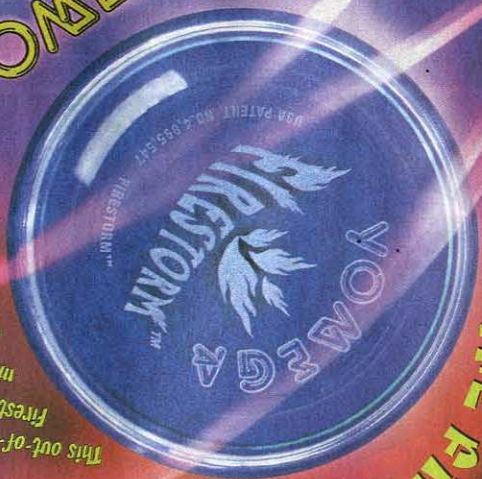


**BAN  
DAI**

www.bandai.com

**HYPER YO-YO****LIFE WITHOUT A BRAIN? NOT!**

And not just any brain. An X-Brain! As if you'd want to live without a patented 4-clutch, snaps-back-on-its-own yo-yo. The X-Brain's so smart, it can make a neophyte look like a seasoned X-gamer. From the whacked-out brains at Omega - maker of the hottest high performance yo-yos. For more insanity on a string, give this ad a spin.

**OMEGA™**

This out-of-control, raging yo-yo rules. 'Cause the Firestorm has a unique floating transaxle that makes for incredible spin time. It lets you do the whacked-out, intense tricks you never thought possible. But then, it is a yo-yo out there! For more insanity on a string, give this ad a spin.

**THE FIRESTORM REIGNS!**

walk this dog! —



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# BULLPEN BULLETINS

ON SALE SEPTEMBER 16

## BLACK PANTHER

**#1** Get ready for more jungle action! The BLACK PANTHER is back in his own monthly series, and he's on the prowl! By CHRISTOPHER PRIEST and MARK TEIXEIRA!

## CAPTAIN AMERICA

**#11** CAP is under the control of a surprise super-villain, and ol' Wing-Head has been given just one instruction: kill SHARON CARTER! By MARK WAID and ANDY KUBERT!

## HEROES FOR HIRE

**#17** LUKE CAGE and SHE-HULK decide to go out for a quiet night on the town... but a couple of old foes are determined to make this an evening to remember! By JOHN OSTRANDER and PASCUAL FERRY!

## INCREDIBLE HULK

**#470** BRUCE BANNER finds himself in Las Vegas, and gambles with his life when he comes up against the RINGMASTER and his CIRCUS OF CRIME! By JOE CASEY and JAVIER PULIDO!

## PETER PARKER, SPIDER-MAN

**#97** SPIDER-MAN makes the most unexpected, unbelievable discovery ever - and we're only up to part two of 'The Final Chapter'! By HOWARD MACKIE and JOHN ROMITA JR.!

## STRANGE TALES

**#3** 64 pages of horror from the Haunted House of Ideas! Two cops hunt the WEREWOLF BY NIGHT... while secrets of the MAN-THING's origin are revealed! By J.M. DeMATTEIS, PAUL JENKINS, LIAM SHARP, LEONARDO MANCO, and more!

## THUNDERBOLTS

**#20** It's all-out war with the MASTERS OF EVIL! And when the dust has settled, a mysterious figure appears who will change the lives of the THUNDERBOLTS forever! By KURT BUSIEK and MARK BAGLEY!

## WHAT IF?

**#114** A shocker! "What if the Marvel Heroes had never returned from the SECRET WARS?" Wait till you meet the sons and daughters of the mighty Marvel Heroes! By JAY FAEBER and GREGG SCHIGIEL!

## X-MEN

**#44** The identity of the killer from last issue is revealed! Could it really be a sleepwalking NATE GREY? Plus: more info on the mysterious GAUNTLET organization! By TERRY KAVANAGH and ROGER CRUZ!

## X-MEN

**#81** The team is still reeling from last issue's attack by the all-new, all-deadly X-MEN, when a new threat emerges: a woman named KALI who threatens to destroy them all! By JOE KELLY and ANDY KUBERT!

## X-MEN: CROSSROADS

**TPE** Collecting X-MEN #273-277 in one action-packed volume! Captured by DEATHBIRD, the X-MEN team up with the STARJAMMERS to battle the IMPERIAL GUARD! By CHRIS CLAREMONT and JIM LEE!

ITEM! Chicago is our kinda town - and Wizard World Chicago Con is our kinda convention! That was our reaction after returning from the '98 W.W.C. Con, held on July 17-19! Thousands of fans showed up, and many of the hottest writers and artists in the business were there to meet and greet them! Many of your favorite Marvel Men were in attendance, answering questions, signing autographs, and previewing our exciting new titles! STAN 'THE MAN' LEE did a signing and so many rabid Marvelites showed up, they practically took up the whole blamed convention hall! Among the other superstars spotted at the con: JOHN ROMITA JR., JOE CASEY, JOE KELLY, ADAM KUBERT, and MARK WAID! The dynamite duo of JOE QUESADA and JIMMY PALMIOTTI took part in an event where they shed some light on the MARVEL KNIGHTS! And as a special treat, two of the stars from the BLADE movie appeared - UDO KIER and ARLY JOVER - and fans were treated to a sneak peek at the action-packed summer film! Head honcho BOB HARRAS could be found there as well - looking as busy as he does at the office (the guy never rests)! MARVEL magazine editor BILL ROSEMAN was like a kid in a candy store, overseeing all our pulse-pounding panels, while X-editors MARK POWERS and FRANK PITTARESE had a blast reviewing the portfolios of the next generation of comic book superstars! By all accounts, everyone who attended had a great time, and we're eager to go back to the Windy City next year!

ITEM! The BLACK PANTHER is coming to America! That's right - the prince of Wakanda is leaving the tropical jungles of his homeland and coming to the urban jungle we call New York! Why has T'CHALLA turned his back on his African kingdom? You'll find the answers next week in the pages of BLACK PANTHER #1, an all-new monthly series that is part of our red-hot Marvel Knights line! The writer for the new series is CHRISTOPHER PRIEST - whose work for Marvel could be seen most recently in our monthly KA-ZAR mag. And putting the Panther through his artistic paces as he prowls the rooftops of Brooklyn is MARK TEIXEIRA, and believe us when we say T'Challa has never looked better! This book features dark, moody stories with the Panther at his mysterious best! It will leave you roaring for more!

ITEM! The word "legend" is often overused in this business, but we've got a comic coming out next week that features a cover by an artist who truly is a living legend: NEAL ADAMS! The comic is STRANGE TALES #3, and the cover features two of our most popular horror heroes, MAN-THING and WEREWOLF BY NIGHT! Back in the sixties, Neal was one of the hottest artists at Marvel, and his work on such titles as AVENGERS and X-MEN is fondly remembered today. Neal doesn't do much comics work these days, so when he does, it's a rare treat! Pick up STRANGE TALES #3 for a true comic book event! (And the stories underneath that cover ain't so bad, either!)

ITEM! He's an ex-con with steel-hard skin. She's seven feet tall and green. Sounds like an unlikely couple! Maybe - but since they're both super heroes, they just may be a perfect match! The twosome we're talking about are LUKE CAGE and the SHE-HULK - who, if rumors are to be believed, are actually going out on a date! HEROES FOR HIRE #17, on sale next week, features what appears to be a get-together between Mr. Cage and Ms. Walters! Of course, this being the Marvel Universe, you just know that a quiet night on the town is impossible for two super heroes - especially when a couple of vengeance-hungry super-villains make the scene! Writer JOHN OSTRANDER and artist MARTIN EGELAND are the chaperones for this little outing! Check it out, and see just how disastrous a date can be!

## STAN'S SOAPBOX!

Hi, Heroes!  
The big moment is at hand! We're about to meet and greet our latest No-Prize Laureates! And, thanks to the generosity of magnificent Marvel, just think how privileged we are - we can now read the winning questions even before the official award ceremony on the White House lawn! No, no, don't thank me. That grateful gleam in your eyes is reward enough! Now, onward...

Obviously, Erik Shaw of Naticoke, PA has an intense interest in geography as he asks:

**"Why are most of the Marvel super heroes and villains based in New York?"**

Y'know, Erik, I must have answered that a zillion times, but here's one more valiant try. It's because Marvel itself is based in New York and it's a heap easier to write about places you're familiar with. If I had been born in the North Pole and our offices were in an igloo, most of our yarns would probably be about Eskimos!

Here's an unexpected query from Barclay White, all the way from Perth, Australia:

**"What is 'Not Brand Echh'?"**

Hey, Barc, you spelled it wrong! "Echh" has 2 h's! But big-hearted Stan will answer you anyway. Advertisers often referred to the competition as "Brand X." (Like "Our soap is better than Brand X") To go 'em one better, we referred to our competition as "Brand Echh." When we decided to do a nutty humor comic, we thought "Not Brand Echh" would be a cool title - so nobody would think it was published by - you know who!

Oh, the things readers think about! How's this from Doug Mabry of La Vergne, TN...?

**"The FF each represent one of the four elements. The Human Torch is fire. The Thing is Earth. The Invisible Girl is air, and Mr. Fantastic's ability to flow and change makes him water. Was that intentional, or just coincidence?"**

It never occurred to me when I wrote it, Doug - but, since it sounds kinda clever, I might as well say that I planned it that way all along. After all, nobody can prove I didn't. (See why I enjoy writing about villains? I, too, have my evil streak!)

Speaking of evil streaks, Rob Schwartz of Rochester, NY wants to know:

**"Why don't you write your autobiography? It would be of much historical importance to our beloved medium."**

Want the plain, unvarnished truth, Rob? I figure my wife would be the only one who'd buy it! Even my daughter would just borrow it from her! And you - you'd probably laugh and say, "Geez, who knew the guy would take me seriously? I just wanted a No-Prize!" But anyway, thanks for the kind words.

Just room to remind you: Stanfanz@aol.com or write: "Stan's Soapbox," c/o BULLPEN BULLETINS, Marvel Comics, 387 Park Ave South, New York, NY 10016. And remember - you read it in the Soapbox!

Excelsior!

*Stan*  
Stan Lee



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CHILD...? WHAT... WHAT  
DO YOU *FEEL*...?

N-NOTHING. JUST...  
JUST A LITTLE *BUZZ* IN MY  
FINGERTIPS. A LITTLE LIGHT-  
HEADEDNESS...

**OVERPOWER --**  
**PUT YOUR SHARD**  
**IN PLACE!**



**MY  
LORD!**

I FEEL LIKE  
**EVERY CELL**  
IN MY BODY IS  
**EXPLODING!**

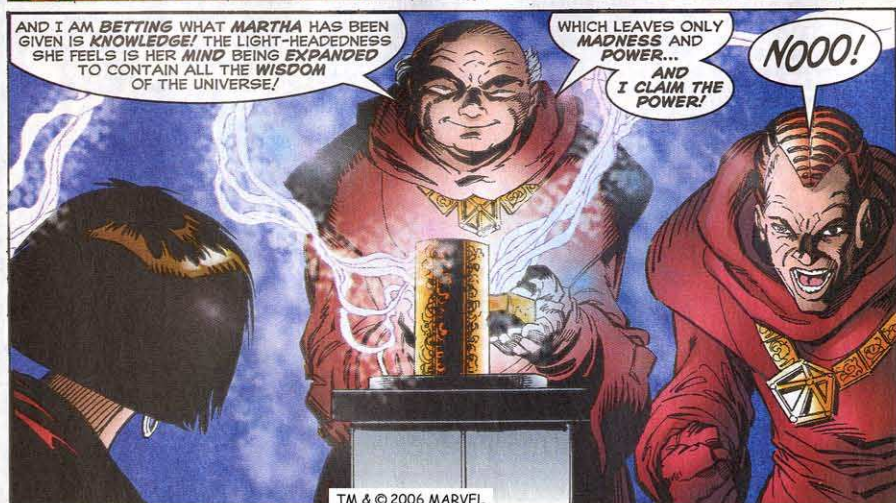
WHAT  
IS IT? NOT  
THE **POWER!**  
HE DID NOT  
GET THE  
**POWER!**



I... I DON'T **THINK** SO. I JUST  
FEEL... **SUDDENLY VERY CALM...**  
ALMOST... **ISOLATED FROM**  
EVERYTHING ELSE...

**IMMORTALITY!**  
THAT MUST BE WHAT  
YOU FEEL! THE REACTION OF  
YOUR CELLS, AND NOW  
UTTER CALM.

YOU  
HAVE BEEN  
GIVEN THE GIFT  
OF **ETERNAL  
LIFE!**



AND I AM **BETTING** WHAT **MARTHA** HAS BEEN  
GIVEN IS **KNOWLEDGE!** THE LIGHT-HEADEDNESS  
SHE FEELS IS HER **MIND** BEING **EXPANDED**  
TO CONTAIN ALL THE **WISDOM**  
OF THE **UNIVERSE!**

WHICH LEAVES ONLY  
**MADNESS AND**  
**POWER...**  
AND I **CLAIM THE**  
**POWER!**

**NOOO!**



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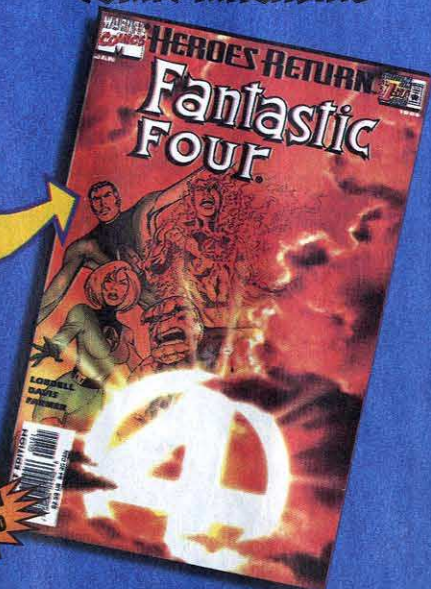
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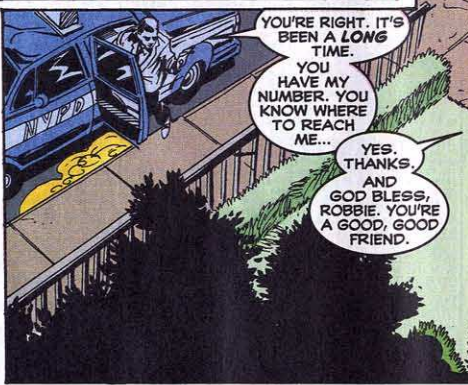
SILENCE,  
GIRL! I HAVE  
NO MORE TIME  
TO WASTE WITH  
INSIGNIFICANT  
CHATTEL LIKE  
YOU!

TONIGHT  
I GAIN AT LAST  
MY LIFETIME'S  
AMBITION!  
AND  
TONIGHT THE  
GREEN GOBLIN  
WILL CLAIM  
ALL!













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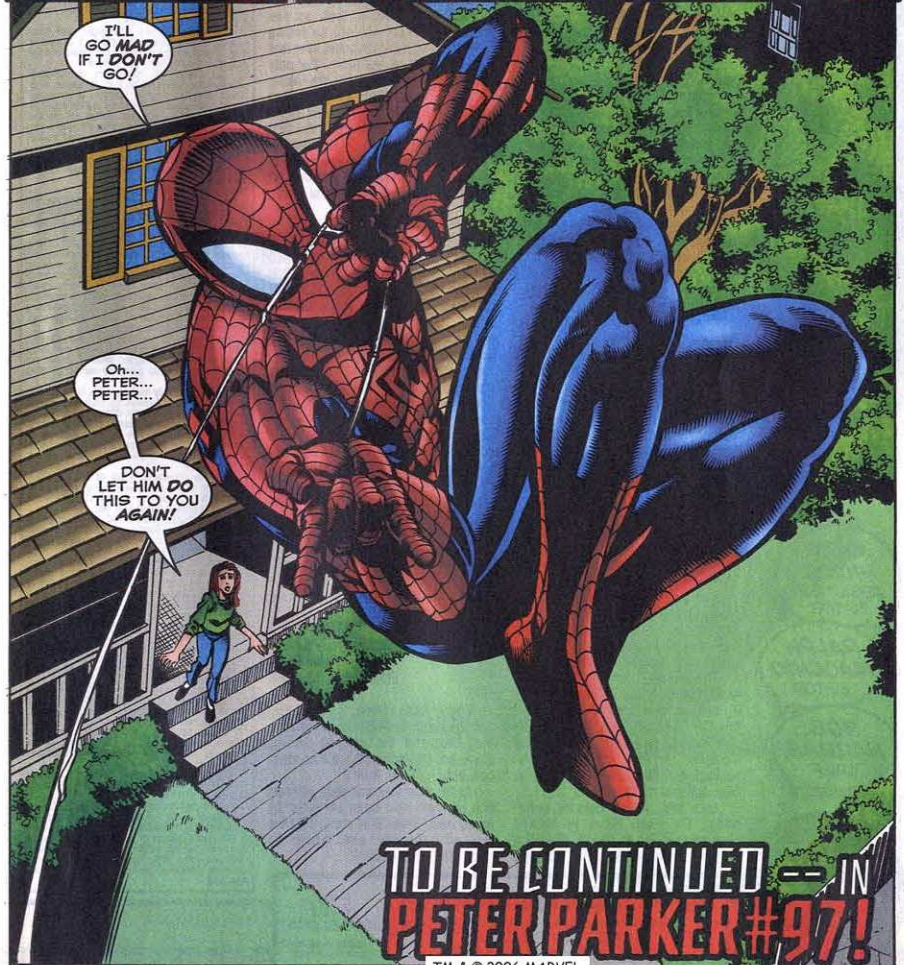


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# THE SPIDER-MAN YEAR-END SPECIAL

**MATT HICKS**  
ASSISTANT  
EDITOR

**RALPH MACCHIO**  
EDITOR

**BOB HARRAS**  
CHIEF



**WELL,** folks, in case you haven't heard the news, you're holding history in your hands. This is indeed the final issue of **AMAZING SPIDER-MAN**. (Ominous pregnant pause). Correction: This is the final issue of Volume I of **ASM**. Yes, in two short months, we'll be bringing you an all-new, all-exciting **AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #1**! We've refocused our energies and recharged our batteries, and we're set to bring you monthly Spider-verse stories that are so epic, so exciting, so...amazing, that we had to place them apart from all that has gone before. This is truly the beginning of a new era for the wall-crawler, and Howard Mackie and John Byrne have cooked up quite a future for our arachnid friend. It all begins in October with the first two issues of **SPIDER-MAN: CHAPTER ONE**, and then we slam the pedal to the floor with **ASM #1** and **PETER PARKER, SPIDER-MAN #1** in November. Think you've read some good Spider before? You ain't seen nothin' yet!

**Dear Rebounders,**  
"Identity Crisis" will go down in history as another triumph for the talented web-weavers at Marvel. Too bad that it can only last two months. My favorite types of comic plots are those featuring intrigue and mystery, and those wherein the hero adopts a new identity. That's probably why I liked the whole Ben Reilly/Scarlet Spider/Spider-Man thing so much. Also, I first got into CAPTAIN AMERICA when Steve Rogers became The Captain, and I began reading IRON MAN when Jim Rhodes put on the armor.

Anyway, back to **AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #435**. I think Ricochet is the best looking and best suited new identity for Peter. Did he design those disks himself? How about someone else becoming Ricochet after Peter gives it up? I don't think too much about Roadhouse and Bloodscream, though. They seem too similar to Mr. Hyde and Morbius, respectively. Send them back to the pages of **VOLVERINE** as fast as possible. Black Tarantula, however, is the best crimelord (if that's what he is) that Peter has fought since the first Rose. The new Rose is pretty good, but have him confront Spider-Man more directly.

Interesting the way Peter kept changing costumes while fighting Roadhouse and Bloodscream, if somewhat unrealistic. Remember, Prodigy wears make-up and a fake nose.

The sub-plot involving the Scriers, Alison Mongrain and Robbie Robertson is one of the best things about this title. One question, though: How did Robbie find out about Alison Mongrain in the first place? The package that she has has to be Baby May, and she must be alive.

Let's see...have I covered everything? Oh yeah, Kaine is back!!! I knew it was him on page 8. Who else wears a cape like that and has long

hair? Being the biggest Kaine fan in the world, I know you guys brought him back just for me, right? I see a Kaine/Green Goblin fight in the near future. Or better yet, the start of a Kaine series. Come on, take a vote. I bet there are many people that would love to see Kaine in his own monthly comic.

Anyway, thanks for the continued terrific work, and until Ben Reilly becomes the Bouncing Ball, Make Mine Marvel.

Jason R. Adrian RFO QNS  
212 Francisbridge Drive  
Cincinnati, OH 45238

**The Bouncing Ball? Oh, well. Guess it beats The Blue Bouncer.**

As for some of your other hopes and dreams, we have good news and bad news. The bad news is that there are no plans as yet for a Kaine series. However, given enough reader support, anything can happen!

The good news is that, as you postulated, someone will be taking over the identity of Ricochet now that Pete has hung up the disks. Not only that, but some other folks are taking over the other three identities, as well! They're all part of a new super team called **SLINGERS**, and the first issue hits the stands in October for the express purpose of keeping you company while we take a month off to toil away on our brand-new #1!

**Dear AMAZING team,**

Seeing Peter trying to juggle all four of his new identities in **AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #435** was probably the highlight of the issue. I can't pretend that I won't be pleased when "Identity Crisis" is over and through with and we can get back to the Amazing Spider-Man rather than the Amazing Ricochet. I'll be glad to see the back of the Black Tarantula next issue, as well. Given the questions surrounding the true identities of the new Green Goblin, Jack O'Lantern and the Rose, I'd say we have all the mystery men we really need in the Spider-titles at the moment.

The return of Kaine and the Scrier cult really did intrigue me, though. It seems a lot has been set up in recent months in the sub-plot department regarding the Scriers. Will any of this tie in with the appearance of the true Scier in **SILVER SURFER** in recent months?

Andy Oliver  
38 Sycamore Avenue  
Uppminster, Essex  
ENGLAND RM14 2HR

**Sorry, Andy. Other than the fact that the "true Scier," as you refer to him, inspired the cult of Scriers years and years ago, there's no other connection at this time.**

As for your mystery men, at least one of them had been revealed by press time. Does that mean that we can add another one when we relaunch in November?

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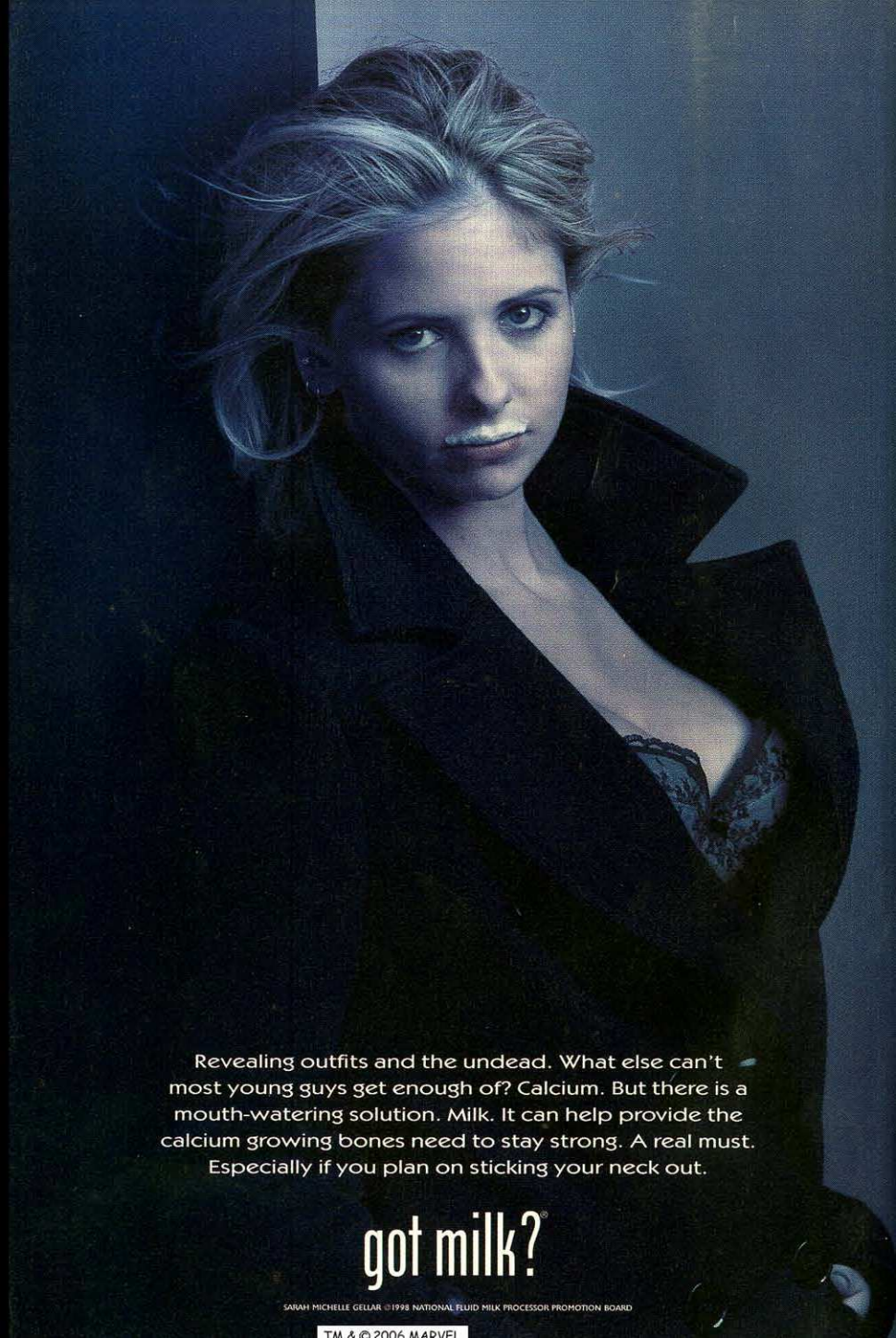
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