

EXHIBIT B



KIRBY

WAR

**KING
OF
COMICS**

**BY MARK
EVANIER**

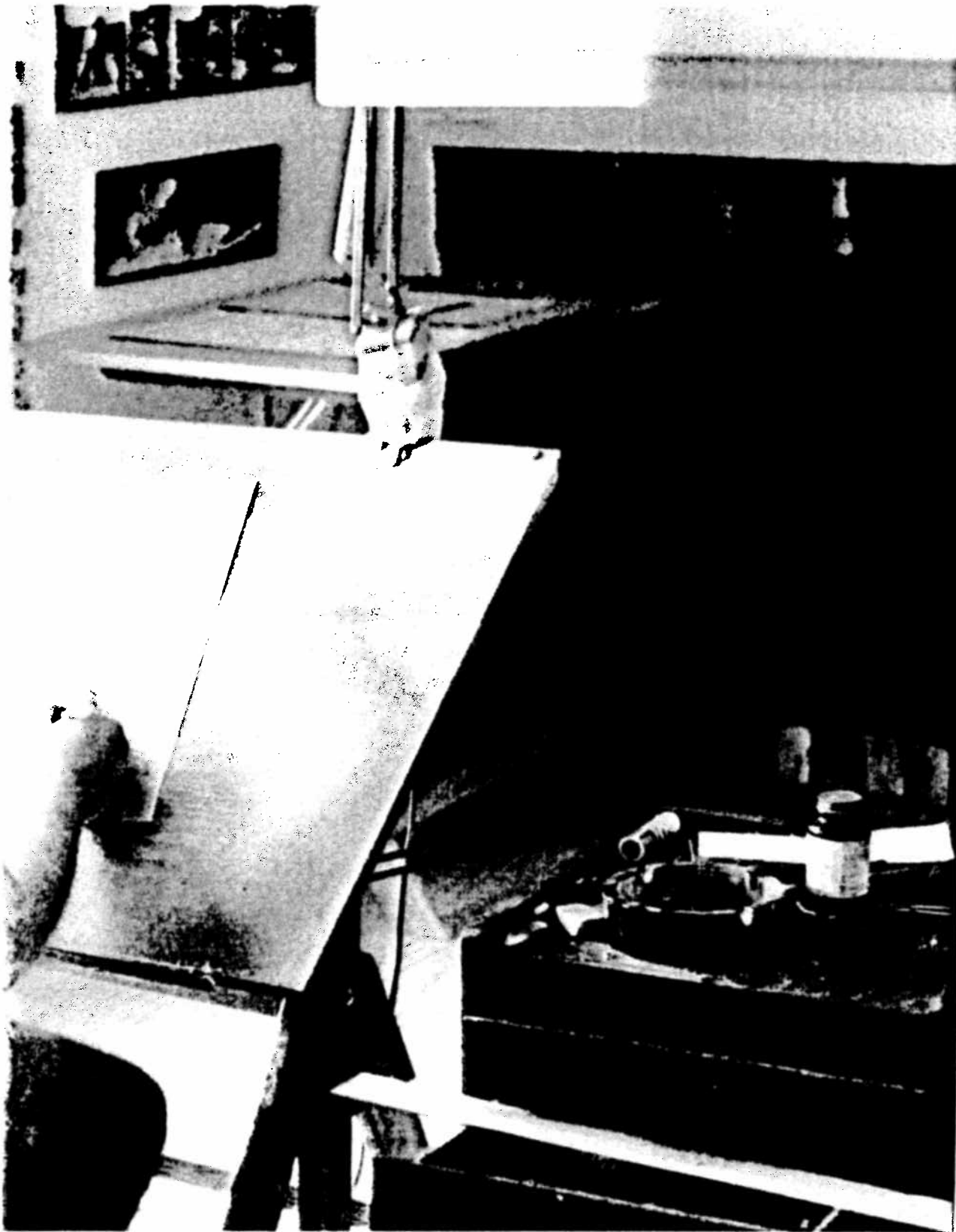
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JACK KIRBY CREATED

OR CO-CREATED
SOME OF COMIC BOOKS'
MOST POPULAR CHARACTERS

INCLUDING CAPTAIN AMERICA, THE X-MEN,
THE HULK, THE FANTASTIC FOUR, THE MIGHTY THOR,
DARKSEID, AND THE NEW GODS. MORE SIGNIFICANTLY,
HE CREATED MUCH OF THE VISUAL LANGUAGE FOR
FANTASY AND ADVENTURE COMICS. THERE WERE COMICS
BEFORE KIRBY, BUT FOR THE MOST PART THEIR PAGE
LAYOUT, GRAPHICS, AND VISUAL DYNAMIC APED WHAT
WAS BEING DONE IN SYNDICATED NEWSPAPER STRIPS.
ALMOST EVERYTHING THAT WAS DIFFERENT ABOUT COMIC
BOOKS BEGAN IN THE FORTIES ON THE DRAWING TABLE
OF JACK KIRBY. THIS IS HIS STORY BY ONE WHO KNEW HIM
WELL — THE AUTHORIZED CELEBRATION OF THE ONE AND
ONLY "KING OF COMICS" AND HIS GROUNDBREAKING WORK.





KIRBY

KING OF COMICS

MARK EVANIER

INTRODUCTION BY NEIL GAIMAN

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Previous pages
CAPTAIN AMERICA
 no. 112
 April 1969
 Art: Jack Kirby and George Tuska
 Marvel Comics

Galactus
THOR
 no. 160
 January 1969
 Art: Jack Kirby and Vince Colletta
 Marvel Comics

Presentation art
 Mid-1980s
 Art: Jack Kirby

Silver Star
 Presentation art
 1975
 Art: Jack Kirby

Jack Kirby
 1992
 Photo: Greg Preston

FANTASTIC FOUR
 no. 51
 June 1966
 Art: Jack Kirby and Joe Sinnott
 Marvel Comics

Endpapers
 Photos: David Folkman

Below and opposite, left to right
CAPTAIN AMERICA
 no. 5
 August 1941
 Art: Jack Kirby and Syd Shores
 Marvel Comics

STAR SPANGLED COMICS
 no. 28
 June 1944
 Art: Jack Kirby and Joe Simon
 DC Comics

BOY EXPLORERS
 no. 1
 May 1946
 Art: Jack Kirby and Joe Simon
 Harvey Publications

YOUNG ROMANCE
 no. 1
 September 1947
 Art: Jack Kirby
 Prize Comics

BLACK MAGIC
 no. 1
 October 1950
 Art: Jack Kirby
 Crestwood Publications

BULLSEYE
 no. 1
 August 1954
 Art: Jack Kirby
 Mainline Comics



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RAWHIDE KID
no. 17
August 1960
Art: Jack Kirby and Dick Ayers
Marvel Comics



TWO-GUN KID
no. 56
October 1960
Art: Jack Kirby and Dick Ayers
Marvel Comics

Opposite
TALES TO ASTONISH
no. 34
August 1962
Art: Jack Kirby and Dick Ayers
Marvel Comics

Sometimes the plots came from Stan, sometimes from Jack. When Stan and Jack did a story together, they had a new means of collaboration. It was born of necessity—Stan was overburdened with work—and to make use of Jack's great skill with storylines. Stan later explained it as follows:

"I'd be writing a script for Ditko to draw. Jack would come in to drop off a job he'd finished and he'd want another script to start on. I'd tell him, 'I can't get you one now. I have to finish Ditko's.' But so that Jack wouldn't leave empty-handed, we'd talk out a plot and I'd send him off to draw it. That way, he'd have work, and after he handed the pages in, I'd write the dialogue."

Sometimes Stan would type up a written plot outline for the artist. Sometimes, not. Later, some of the artists (including Kirby and Ditko) would insist that Stan had contributed very little—sometimes nothing—to the plots of the comics. Since he received the total writing fee and (usually) the total writing credit, that would be a sore point in years to come.

But at the time, everyone was happy just to have work and the "Marvel Method," as it would come to be known, produced some fine comics. Lee's dialogue was witty and filled with character. Place it over exciting visual storytelling by Kirby or Ditko and you had something very special.

This was evident first on *Rawhide Kid*, a long-running western comic that Lee and Kirby revamped in 1960. They then did the same with *Two-Gun Kid* and whipped up a new strip about a sorcerer named Dr. Droom for *Amazing Adventures*. Sol Brodsky, who then worked part-time helping Stan with production, detailed their dilemma in a 1975 interview:

"Martin was too quick on the trigger to cancel a book. One slight dip in sales and it was gone. He sometimes didn't think content mattered. He cancelled *Two-Gun Kid* before he received sales figures [on the Lee-Kirby revamp]. He didn't believe what Stan and Jack had done to it would make much difference, but it did. Sales shot way up. He started looking for a place on the schedule to bring it back."

That was assuming he kept publishing comics. No one was certain if he would, and at times he wasn't so sure. In later years, Kirby and Brodsky both recalled Goodman actually packing it in at one point.

Jack told of walking into the offices one day around 1961 and finding Stan weeping. The comic line had been discontinued. "They were taking out the office furniture," Kirby recalled on more than one occasion. "I told them to stop. I told Martin we could turn the company around if he'd just hang in there." There is no doubt Jack honestly remembered it that way. Other sources suggest his memory was overstating the desperation, the better to improve on a good story.

But if Kirby was exaggerating, it was only by a little: Goodman had already come close to shutting down his comic book division with the cutbacks and buying freeze of May 1957. That downsizing had involved actual furniture removal as well

the strip, remarked, "Kirby could just lead you through all these different worlds. The readers would follow him anywhere."

THE SAME MONTH THOR debuted, a super hero was added to *Amazing Adult Fantasy*. He was an unusual creation whose convoluted birthing process would cause considerable friction between Lee and Kirby. Both would forever claim to have come up with the idea for what would prove to be Marvel's most successful character ever—the Amazing Spider-Man.

In later years, Stan recalled that in his search for new characters, his mind had drifted back to an old pulp hero: "I'd always loved the Spider. I also loved the name Hawkman, but of course DC had a character by that name. But thinking about Hawkman led me to Spider-Man. The minute I said it out loud—'Spider-Man'—I knew we had to do it."

Jack, however, maintained that he'd suggested the idea; that Spiderman (no hyphen) was an idea he'd once developed with Joe Simon... and he even had an old title logo design by Simon to prove it.

(What did Simon think? Joe agreed he'd developed a character by that name—the same character as the Silver Spider, which he and Kirby had turned into the Fly. But Joe insisted Jack was not involved in the character's spidery days.)

Regardless, it was either Lee or Kirby who suggested doing Spider-Man, and Kirby began on the first tale of such a hero, similar in some ways to the character who would become famous under that name but different in many others. This one was, like Billy Batson and Captain Marvel, a young orphan who transformed into a muscular adult, in this case via a magic ring.

Jack was a few pages into it when the decision was made to abandon his work and start fresh with Steve Ditko as artist. Lee would say that this was because he decided Jack was making Spider-Man too heroic and muscular. Kirby would say this was because he was too busy and Ditko needed work. Neither account makes a lot of sense.

Kirby was *always* too busy. Besides, he wasn't even trying to draw the kind of lithe, less muscled hero that Lee later said he'd envisioned. Jack was drawing something more like the Fly, and he only drew his Spiderman for a few panels on the discarded pages. They could have easily been redrawn. Moreover, neither account explains why the orphan became older, why the magic ring and transformation were dropped, why the origin changed, or why Ditko was told to design a completely new costume. Lee would say, "Jack could never draw Spider-Man the way I wanted him to look," but Ditko drew a cover for the first appearance, and Stan rejected it in favor of one by Jack.

What would explain it all is if someone at Goodman's was worried that what Kirby was doing was coming out too much like the Fly. (Ditko, in one of

Opposite

AMAZING FANTASY

no. 15

August 1962

Art: Jack Kirby and Steve Ditko

Color: Stan Goldberg

Marvel Comics



TALES OF SUSPENSE
no. 39
March 1963
Art: Jack Kirby and Don Heck
Marvel Comics



SGT. FURY AND HIS HOWLING COMMANDOS
no. 1
May 1963
Art: Jack Kirby and Dick Ayers
Marvel Comics

Opposite
THE AVENGERS
no. 2
November 1963
Art: Jack Kirby and Paul Reinman
Marvel Comics

his few public statements on Spider-Man, later wrote that he recognized the similarities and so informed Stan.) John Goldwater at Archie was known to be quite litigious, as was Joe Simon, and Goodman may just have been afraid of a lawsuit. Neither Lee nor Kirby, however, ever recalled that as a motive for the major course correction.

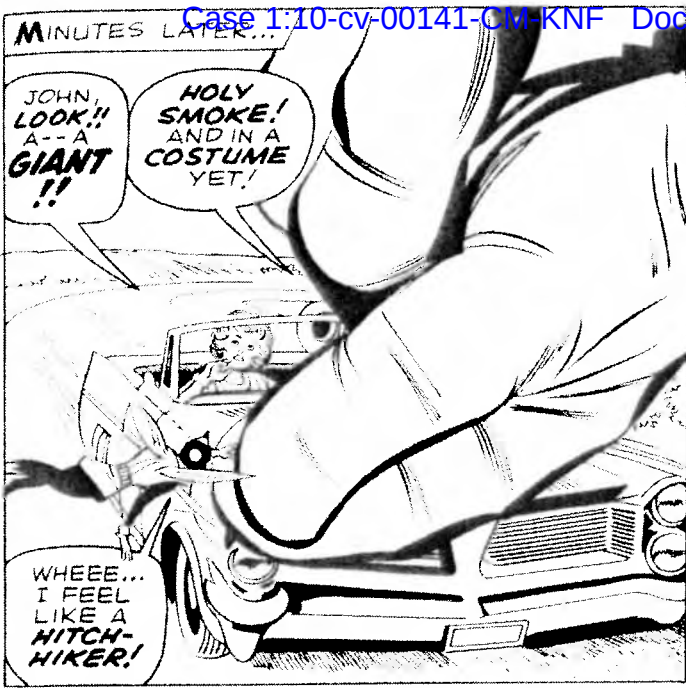
However it changed, it changed. Lee and Ditko did the first Spider-Man story. Goodman hated it and cancelled the comic before receiving any sales figures. Subsequent reports, bolstered by reader mail and Stan's enthusiasm for the property, would prompt him to launch a *Spider-Man* comic the following year—the same month, in fact, that he declared *The Incredible Hulk* a flop and cancelled that book. Talk about a guy who was slow to realize when he had a hit on his hands.

Spider-Man would quickly become Marvel's biggest success. What Kirby contributed would be arguable and argued over, but Jack felt he'd contributed at least *something*, for which he received neither pay nor acknowledgment.

IN THE MEANTIME, *Tales to Astonish* got its super hero feature in 1962: Ant-Man, a shrinking super hero who could communicate with insects. Kirby drew the first stories, asking all the time if they could be assigned to anyone else. Though his mettle never allowed him to concede he could not make an idea work, he came perilously close with Ant-Man, a character he found too ineffectual. "A super hero should stand for strength," he later remarked. "No one fantasizes about being the size of an ant." Years later, Jack would be both incensed and amused by a scholarly article that suggested that because he was not tall, the Marvel hero with whom he most closely identified had to be Ant-Man. In truth, it was probably the character he cared about the least.

Solo adventures of the Human Torch were added to *Strange Tales* in 1962, drawn for a time by Kirby. And later, in 1963, *Tales of Suspense* received its super hero feature: Iron Man, written at first by Larry Lieber and drawn initially by Don Heck. However, Lieber was working from a plot Stan had given him, and Heck was drawing from a cover and some concept sketches by Kirby. Stan wasn't happy with the first story so he immediately turned the art chores over to... Kirby. Jack was the answer to all problems.

Other innovations followed. Goodman, with one eye on DC's sales, thought war comics were due for a comeback. Stan had been telling him that he and Kirby had found a "new approach" to comics, a new way of making them exciting. The publisher wondered if this "new approach" would work for a war comic, and Stan said, "It would work for anything." That was how *Sgt. Fury and His Howling Commandos* came about. From 1963 to 1964, Jack drew eight of the first thirteen issues, tapping into his endless cache of World War II memories and fashioning the lead character, the cigar-chomping Sgt. Nick Fury, on himself. Asked about it on one



MINUTES LATER...

JOHN, LOOK!! A--A GIANT!!

HOLY SMOKE! AND IN A COSTUME YET!

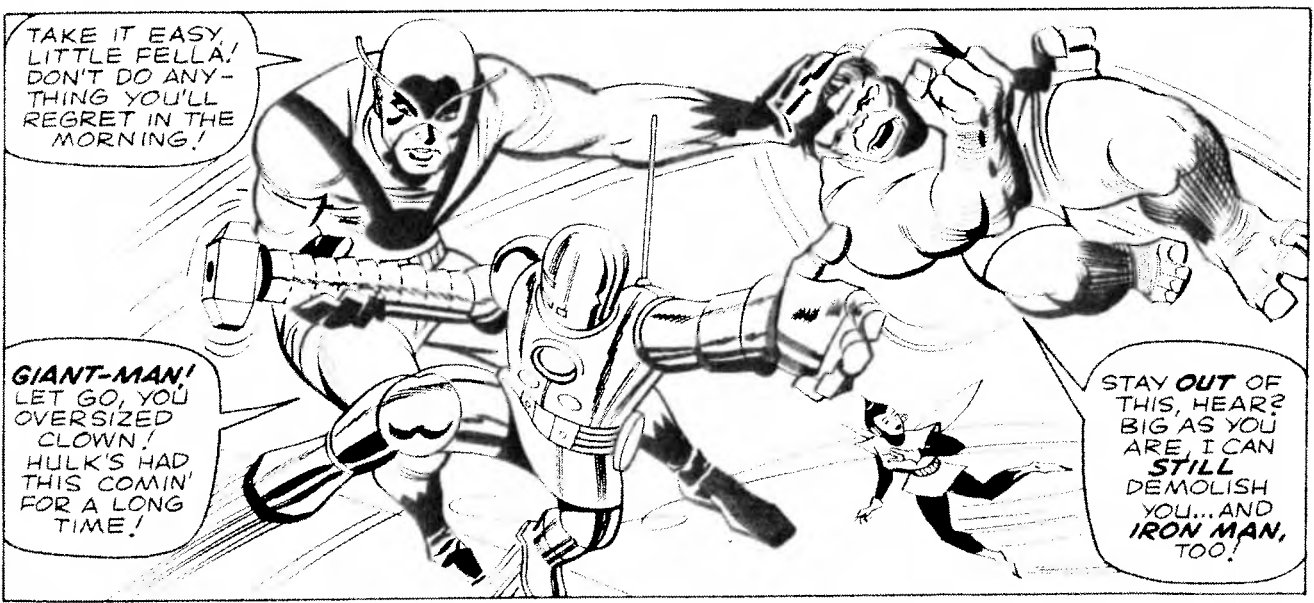
WHEEE... I FEEL LIKE A HITCHHIKER!



PUTTING OUT THE FIRE YOUR WAY WON'T HELP YOU! WAIT TILL MY NEXT SWING!

WHILE YOU CAN, RUSTPOT! WHEN I GET MY HANDS ON YOU....!!

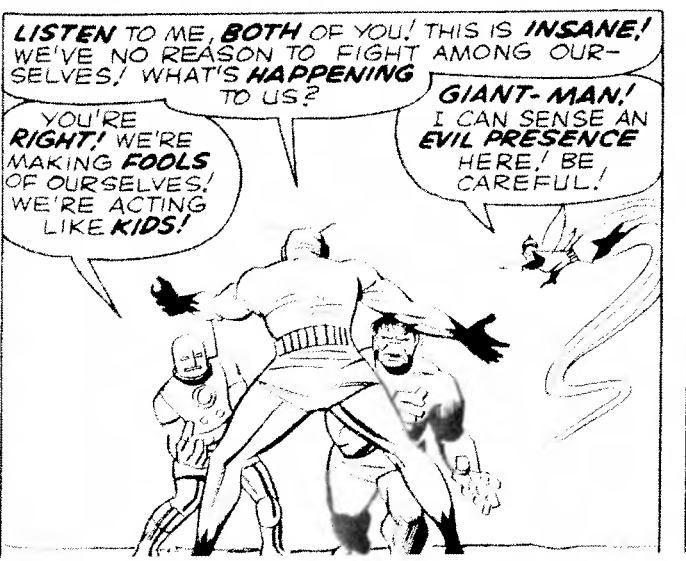
HOLD IT!!



TAKE IT EASY, LITTLE FELLA! DON'T DO ANYTHING YOU'LL REGRET IN THE MORNING!

GIANT-MAN! LET GO, YOU OVERSIZED CLOWN! HULK'S HAD THIS COMIN' FOR A LONG TIME!

STAY OUT OF THIS, HEAR? BIG AS YOU ARE, I CAN STILL DEMOLISH YOU... AND IRON MAN, TOO!



LISTEN TO ME, BOTH OF YOU! THIS IS INSANE! WE'VE NO REASON TO FIGHT AMONG OURSELVES! WHAT'S HAPPENING TO US?

YOU'RE RIGHT! WE'RE MAKING FOOLS OF OURSELVES! WE'RE ACTING LIKE KIDS!

GIANT-MAN! I CAN SENSE AN EVIL PRESENCE HERE! BE CAREFUL!



YOU GOT OFF PRETTY EASY THAT TIME, SHELL-HEAD! BUT IF YOU EVER CROSS ME AGAIN....!

QUIET, YOU BRAINLESS GARGOYLE! DIDN'T YOU HEAR THE WASP? SHE'S HYPERSENSITIVE TO CERTAIN STIMULI... AND SHE SENSES TROUBLE!



THE AVENGERS

APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY

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MARVEL COMICS GROUP 12¢

CAPTAIN AMERICA LIVES AGAIN!

ALSO IN THIS SENSATIONAL ISSUE... SUB-MARINER



K002

occasion, he explained, “Nick Fury is how I wish others saw me. Ben Grimm [The Thing] is probably closer to the way they do see me.”

Goodman still wanted a book like DC’s *Justice League of America*, so Stan and Jack gave him *The Avengers*. They gathered together (originally) the Hulk, Iron Man, Thor, the Wasp, and Ant-Man (soon to be Giant-Man) in his various sizes, forming a team of disparate, often bickering heroes. As with *Sgt. Fury* and other strips, Kirby drew the early issues before handing them off to another artist—in this case, Don Heck.

The most memorable early issue of *The Avengers* resurrected Captain America and placed him into the pantheon of Marvel super heroes. The star-spangled defender had endured the loss of Simon and Kirby back in the early forties, lasting until an industry-wide trend away from action heroes in the late forties. A brief revival attempt in the fifties had floundered—it wasn’t time for the super heroes to return.

Now that it was, back he came. Another resurrected Golden Age character, Bill Everett’s Sub-Mariner, ventured into chilly arctic waters and came across a block of ice containing the long-frozen form of the “real” Captain America. The Sub-Mariner ripped the frozen crypt free from the iceberg, and it was set adrift toward warmer waters. The Avengers chanced to find it, just as the hero was thawing out.

The science was ridiculous—Stan and Jack would each later blame the other for it—but the character’s impact was undeniable: Captain America was back in all his patriotic glory—and drawn by Jack Kirby! The hero quickly came to dominate the *Avengers* comic, and soon received his own strip in *Tales of Suspense* (1964).

Goodman asked for two more titles: a team that might replicate the sales success of *Fantastic Four*, and another acrobatic hero who might sell as well as Spider-Man. (“Martin was making progress,” Kirby remarked. “He went from imitating others’ successes to imitating his own.”)

For the former, Lee and Kirby came up with *The X-Men* in 1963, which introduced the concept of mutants into the Marvel repertoire, eventually to great advantage. It was another franchise—a simple premise through which dozens of new characters could be introduced and hit the ground running. The two central themes of Marvel superherodom converged once again: Having great powers could create great problems, and it was occasionally hard to tell the heroes from the villains. Some mutants were good, some were bad, many weren’t certain.

Again, the recollections of the two men would diverge as to how the strip came about, Stan claiming the concept originated with him, Kirby saying he had the idea. By now, that was the norm. So was Jack starting a book, drawing it until it had worked up a good momentum, then handing it off. *X-Men* would pass through many hands after it left his—some able, some not so able. The comic was even cancelled for a time before others would revive it, add new mutants onto the Lee-



THE AVENGERS
 no. 1
 September 1963
 Art: Jack Kirby and Dick Ayers
 Marvel Comics



THE X-MEN
 no. 1
 September 1963
 Art: Jack Kirby and Sol Brodsky
 Marvel Comics

Opposite
THE AVENGERS
 no. 4
 March 1964
 Art: Jack Kirby and George Roussos
 Marvel Comics



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SEVEN

GODS ON EARTH

"I DON'T THINK IT'S ANY ACCIDENT THAT AT THIS POINT IN THEIR HISTORY THE ENTIRE MARVEL UNIVERSE AND THE ENTIRE DC UNIVERSE ARE NOW ALL PINNED OR ROOTED ON KIRBY'S CONCEPTS."

—MICHAEL CHABON, *THE NEW YORK TIMES*

JACK KIRBY SPENT the last ten years of his life being flattered. He was semiretired, but receiving accolades was almost a full-time job. King of Comics, indeed.

The positive side won out, as it always had with Kirby. He rarely thought about what he hadn't gotten, and focused instead on what he had. Oddly enough, the whole brouhaha over his original artwork—as painful as it had been for him and Roz—helped. Having the industry and fandom rally around him erased all concerns that he would be forgotten.

"They never got my name," Jack said proudly on more than one occasion. His decreasing ability to produce artwork seemed to coincide with a rise in trophies and tributes. His name was everywhere, and he was even able to lease it along with some leftover character concepts to the Topps trading card company for a new, short-lived comic book line. They called it "The Kirbyverse." Again, there wasn't much money, but the principle was twenty-four karat.

MANY OF JACK'S TRIBUTES came via the annual comic book convention in San Diego. The con had started in 1970 with him as one of its first guests of honor. Apart from the year of his heart attack, he attended every one during his lifetime, watching unsurprised as the event grew ever bigger and more media-diverse.

Early on, it had been the subject of one of those Kirby predictions that few took seriously when he made it. He said the con would grow until it took over all of San Diego. He said that the definition of "comics" would expand beyond those things printed on cheap paper. It would be about comic books as movies, comic books as television, comic books in forms yet to be invented. He said—and this is a quote—"It will be where all of Hollywood will come every year to look for the idea for next year's movies."



Opposite
Presentation drawings for a proposed new version of Captain America.
1968
Art: Jack Kirby and Don Heck
Color: Jack Kirby

Above
CAPTAIN GLORY
No. 1, cover
April 1993
Art: Don Alan Zakrzewski, adapting Kirby drawing from 1968
The Topps Company, Inc.