



**MARVEL
COMICS
GROUP**

No. 103

WEEK ENDING
OCT. 6, 1976

PLANET OF THE APES AND

9P

DRACULA LIVES



**APE BATTLES
APE AS THEY...
RACE TO
THE CITY OF
DEATH!**

Stan Lee PRESENTS: **PLANET OF THE APES!**TM

TREK TO A CITY OF ASHES!

ALDO HAS **BAITED** CAESAR, THE RULER OF THE APES, BY TELLING HIM THAT HE IS UNFIT TO **RULE!** --AND HAS PROPOSED A WAY IN WHICH TO CHOOSE A **NEW LEADER!**

A QUEST!?

DON'T BE **PREPOSTEROUS**, ALDO! SO WHAT IF ONE OF US CAN JOURNEY TO THE DEVASTATED CITY OF THE HUMANS AND BRING BACK A BETTER **PRIZE?** HOW DOES THAT **PROVE** THAT ONE OF US IS ANY BETTER TO **LEAD?**

WHY SHOULD THE PLANET OF THE APES BE **RULED** BY THE BEST **SCAVENGER?**

YOU **AFRAID**, CAESAR. THAT IS WHY YOU NOT WANT TO GO...

YOU **AFRAID** YOU WILL **LOSE!**

DOUG MOENCH * RICO RIVAL
AUTHOR ARTIST

BUT EVEN THOSE OF **INTELLIGENCE** OFTEN FAIL TO SEE BEYOND THE **SURFACE** OF A MATTER... FAIL TO SEE THE **TROUBLE** BREWING THEREIN...

VERY WELL, ALDO-- WE SHALL **EMBARK** UPON YOUR PROPOSED **QUEST!**

TOMORROW AT **DAWN**--HERE IN THE **SQUARE**--WE SHALL SET FORTH TO DECIDE THE **FUTURE RULER** OF THIS CITY

...AND FAIL TO **UNDERSTAND** THAT BREWING TROUBLE MUST BE **STOPPED--**

--BEFORE IT **BOILS OVER**. THE HUMAN **MACDONALD** IS PERHAPS ONE OF THOSE WHO FAIL TO SEE BEYOND THE **SURFACE**...OR, PERHAPS, THE ONLY ONE WHO SEES BEYOND **CAESAR'S** VISION.

I'M BEGINNING TO THINK YOU NEVER SHOULD HAVE TAUGHT ALDO HOW TO **TALK**, CAESAR...

LOOK WHAT HE'S **DONE** WITH JUST A **FEW GUTTURAL WORDS!**

I SUPPOSE YOU'RE AN **EXPERT** ON SUCH MATTERS, MACDONALD-- OR HAVE YOU **FORGOTTEN** WHAT ALL THE DICTIONARIES IN THE WORLD HAVE DONE FOR **HUMANITY?**

THIS IS NO TIME FOR **BITTERNESS**, CAESAR! I'M TRYING TO **HELP** YOU--AS I HELPED YOU IN THE **PAST**...

AS A **HUMAN** MACDONALD, YOU HAVE **NO RIGHT** TO BRING UP **DEBTS OF THE PAST!**

LISTEN TO ME, CAESAR-- I'M TRYING TO **TELL** YOU SOMETHING! YOU **CAN'T** GO INTO THE CITY!

THAT "**BIG LIGHT**" ALDO WAS TALKING ABOUT WAS THE **MUSHROOM CLOUD** WE ALL SAW LAST YEAR-- IT WAS AN **ATOMIC FLASH**, CAESAR! THE CITY HAS BEEN **DESTROYED--!**

DESTROYED BY **WHOM-- THEMSELVES**, I SUPPOSE?

NO, DESTROYED BY... WHY, BY **ENEMY POWERS**, OF COURSE!

AND WHY DID THESE "**ENEMY POWERS**"--OTHER **HUMANS** NO DOUBT--CHOOSE TO STRIKE WHEN THEY **DID**, AFTER HOLDING THEMSELVES **BACK** FOR SO LONG?

WELL, PERHAPS THEY SIMPLY FELT THAT THE TIME WAS **RIGHT**, THAT THE COUNTRY WAS TOO **PREOCCUPIED** WITH **INTERNAL REBELLION** TO PUT UP A PROPER **DEFENSE!**

YOUR REVOLT WASN'T THE **ONLY** ONE OF IT'S KIND, YOU KNOW, CAESAR-- THERE WERE REPORTS THAT IT SPARKED OFF **SIMILAR APE UPRISINGS** ALL OVER THE **COUNTRY**...

AND THESE **ENEMY POWERS**, MACDONALD-- THEY TOOK THE OPPORTUNITY WE APES **PROVIDED**, AND THEY HAVE **WON**? THEY NOW RULE THE **WORLD**--?



DAWN: THE GREAT SQUARE IS CROWDED WITH THE ENTIRE POPULACE OF THE NEWLY THRIVING **TREEHOUSE CITY...**

SOME HAVE COME TO **CHEER AND DANCE** WITH THE ABANDON OF **TRIBAL FRENZY**. OTHERS HAVE COME TO SHAKE THEIR HEADS **RUEFULLY, DESPONDENTLY...**

BUT ALL HAVE CONGREGATED TO WATCH... FOR THE QUEST IS ABOUT TO BEGIN...



...AND AS THE TWO PARTICIPANTS GALLOP OUT OF THE **SQUARE**, THERE IS **ONE** WHO CHUCKLES DARKLY... ALMOST **INSANELY...**

A **PERFECT TIME**, EH, MACDONALD...? NOW THAT CAESAR AND ALDO ARE OFF ON THEIR **WILD GOOSE CHASE...** NOW THAT **BOTH LEADERS** OF THIS WRETCHED MONKEY-HOUSE ARE **GONE...**

PERFECT TIME FOR **WHAT**, BRECK?

BUT BRECK-- THE FORMER **GOVERNOR OF THE STATE...** MERELY **SMILES ENIGMATICALLY...**

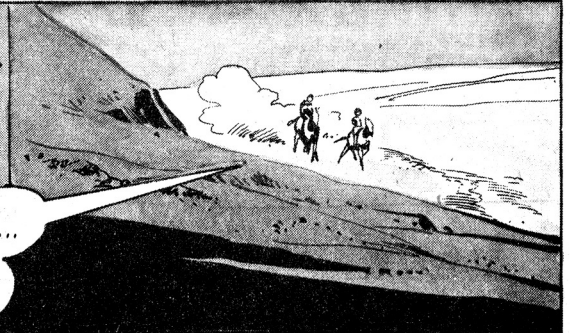
...LIKE A **SMALL CHILD**, ANTICIPATING DELICIOUS **MISCHIEF.**



AN HOUR PASSES AND, HAVING RIDDEN THE FIRST SEVERAL MILES IN **SILENCE**, ALDO ABRUPTLY TURNS TO CAESAR AND **GROWLS...**

YOU **TOO SLOW** FOR ALDO, CAESAR...

...TOO SLOW TO BE **RULER OF APES!**



AND, BEING OF **FEW WORDS**, ALDO VIOLENTLY **KICKS** HIS MOUNT--BOLTING **AHEAD** OF HIS RIVAL, AND LEAVING THE TROUBLED CAESAR TO TALK TO **HIMSELF...**

PERHAPS I AM TOO SLOW, ALDO...

...AND PERHAPS YOU ARE TOO **QUICK** TO PLUNGE INTO **DANGER...**



SEVERAL **MORE** HOURS PASS...DURING WHICH CAESAR PASSES FROM A **WASTELAND** OF SPARSE VEGETATION INTO A BLEAK AND **CHARRED** LAND REEKING OF **ABSOLUTE DEATH...**

FINALLY, HE PICKS HIS WAY UP A **STEEP RIDGE...**



...ONLY TO GAZE DOWN UPON A SCENE OF **UTTER HORROR.**

HE **STARES** AT THE CHAOS, **TRANSFIXED** BY THIS TERRIBLE VISION OF **NUCLEAR ARMAGEDDON**...FASCINATED AGAINST HIS WILL BY THIS DOOM WHICH HAS **RIPPED** AN ENTIRE CITY TO **CRUMBLING RUIN**...



...AND AS HE ALLOWS THE AWESOME VISION OF DEATH AND DEVASTATION TO **FILL** HIM... HE **SHUDDERS** WITH DREAD.

AND AFTER HE HAS STARED FOR A LONG, LONG TIME... HE REALIZES THAT HE HAS **FOUND** THE OBJECT OF HIS QUEST... AND HE KNOWS WHAT HE WILL **TAKE BACK** WITH HIM, THOUGH HE WILL CARRY **NOTHING** FROM THIS PLACE OF **STINKING DEATH.**



HE WILL TAKE **NOTHING** BUT A **VISION**-- THIS **BURNING** VISION OF **HELL**...

HE WILL TAKE **NOTHING** AND YET **EVERYTHING**, FOR HE WILL TAKE **KNOWLEDGE** FROM THIS PLACE-- THE **KNOWLEDGE** OF WHAT **STRIFE** HAS CAUSED...



...AND WHAT **PEACE** CAN **AVOID.**

PLANET OF THE APES

PEOPLE,

Recent changes in the line-up of your mags has prompted me to write this letter.

First of all, let me point out that Marvel has given me countless hours of pleasure, and it truly saddens me to say what I am about to say.

As I see it the rot (yes, rot) set in towards the end of October 1975, with the introduction of The Titans. At first I was unsure about this new comic for a number of reasons.

1. Format. Very awkward, and makes difficult reading. It's nearly two feet long when fully opened out.

2. Absence of original American covers. Due to the landscape format original covers could not be presented in their original form. Gentlemen, you should know as well as anybody that if you've got a good cover on a mag then it's almost bound to sell. To date I haven't even seen a decent cover on Titans or the now, so-called Super-Spiderman.

3. The shrinking of the panels makes the art look shabby. A perfect example of excellent art made to look bad is Neal Adams' art on The Inhumans. More recently, John Buscema's art on Thor, Sub-Mariner and S.H.I.E.L.D. has looked below his usual very high standard, through no fault of the artist himself. I wonder, do your artists know what you're doing to their work, how you're presenting it?

4. If the Titans was successful (which unfortunately, from my point of view, it was) how long before the other mags would change? To my disappointment I discovered on February 14th 1976 when 'Super' Spider-Man arrived. What did this comic hold for us Marvelites? Spidey, Thor, Iron-Man, Thing and Doc Strange. Artists John Romita, Gil Kane, John Buscema, Neal Adams (again) Jack Kirby, (whose art was already ruined in Titans), George Tuska and, the biggest mistake of all, Brunner and Colan on Dr.

Strange. All the great art destroyed by these minute panels.

If The Avengers and Marvel take the landscape format, with the absence of the original covers, you gents will have convinced me that you don't give a damn how you earn your money. If that last statement hurt I'm sorry, but that's how I see it. If this letter seems like a list of gripes from a selfish brat, I'm sorry.

An Anxious Marvelite,
No address given.

Take a recount, friend. Your letter wasn't a list of gripes, there was only one gripe in it. You don't like the landscape format. End of gripes. Well, we never did expect to please everyone when we tried the experiment of putting a quart into a pint pot — but, nevertheless, there's a mighty long list of Marvelites who are happy and content with the value for money that the landscape format provides.

Dear Marvel,

Fantastic! That's all I can say about your latest developments in POTA and Dracula Lives. Or should I delete the latter? For, as I sit in my kitchen trying to get the last bit of Corn Flake from between my teeth with my tongue, I notice that in the latest issue (95)

there are no blood-sucking exploits of our favourite count. Is this permanent? I hope so, as it was an excellent place to stop. But if there are a lot of people who would rather have him back, I suggest you wait at least two months before resurrecting him, as his material is nearly exhausted now, at least in colour format. And on the subject of reprinting black and white stories from the American 'Dracula Lives' and 'Vampire Tales', well, as you yourselves said, there is a big percentage of Marvelites who are between 7 and 10. Don't you think the stories could be a mite morbid, let alone violent? And if their parents should say 'No' to them, or the kids decide that this is not for them, there could be a decrease in sales.

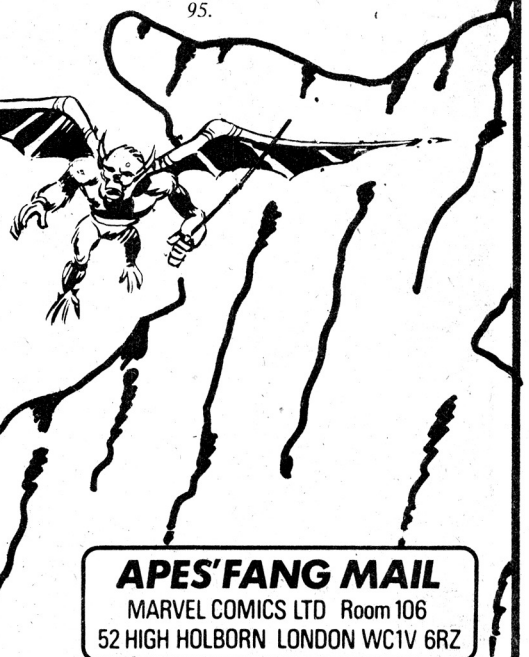
Anyway, the logical solution to all these problems is to phase out the 'Dracula Lives' logo on the cover and keep the mag with a 10-page apes story, a 7-page story of Ka-Zar and Man-Thing, an article on the apes every week taking up about 5 or 6 pages, and a reprint section at the back with about 5 pages. In other words, keep the mag more or less like ish 95.

I'm a keen POTA fan, and find the articles fascinating reading, and since the US mag is published monthly over the Atlantic I can see no real shortage of material, seeing how their mag has about 70 pages, most of them ape strips and articles.

I suspect that the merger was because of flagging sales in Dracula's own mag, and I remember someone in the dim past saying that POTA had a print run as high as double that of the Avengers, and you did it to save Dracula and company from cancellation. Still, I wish you would discreetly fade him out, as I think the subject of apes ruling in the future is too strong to have anything less than a comic to itself.

Chris Trevillion,
104 Philip Lane, Tottenham, London.

Our Transylvanian Count has far too wide an appeal in Marveldom for us to phase him out. But, that thought apart, there's no reason why POTA/DL shouldn't come fairly close to ish 95.



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PLANET
OF
THE APES

A MARVEL
MASTERWORK
PIN-UP

STAN LEE PRESENTS PLANET OF THE APES!™

TRIAL

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PENCILER: GEORGE TUSKA
INKERS: M. ESPOSITO, D. HUNT
COLORIST: GEORGE ROUSSOS

AND THAT'S HOW THEY CAUGHT ME, NOVA--IN AN ANIMAL NET. BUT I GAVE THEM A SWEET PIECE OF MY MIND, YOU CAN BET ON THAT. I **SCREAMED** AT THOSE UGLY BRUTES--SCREAMED AT THEM THE WAY I'D BEEN DYING TO SCREAM AT THEM EVER SINCE THE DAY I...

...BUT I'VE ALREADY TOLD YOU THE STORY, HAVEN'T I? TOLD IT TO YOU EVERY DAY FOR THE PAST **FOUR WEEKS**.

WHY ARE THEY GIVING ME THE **SILENT TREATMENT**, NOVA? WHERE'S **ZIRA-- CORNELIUS**? WHERE ARE THEY? WHY DOESN'T SOMEBODY COME TO **SPEAK** TO ME, NOVA?

HOW ABOUT YOU? SAY YOUR NAME.
NOVA... NO-YAH.

YEAH... ME **TARZAN**, YOU **JANE**. BUT THAT'S ALL RIGHT --I HAD A PUPPY ONCE WHO NEVER **BARKED**. JUST LICKED MY **HAND**...

...COURSE HE'S **DEAD** NOW. THEY'RE **ALL DEAD**. EVERYTHING... **GONE**. AND NOW I THINK MAYBE OUR HOSTS WILL **KILL ME**, TOO.

ARE THEY **AFRAID** OF ME? I CAN'T **HURT** THEM... BUT I **THREATEN** THEM SOMEHOW. **THREATEN** THEIR FAITH IN **SIMI**AN **SUPERIORITY**...







