WHEN THE LAWGIVER RETURNS

THEY SEEM TO GLOW UNDER THE SOFT MOONLIGHT: THESE CRAGGY DWELLINGS OF SUN-DRIED CLAY, AS THOUGH EMANATING A COOL NIMBUS OF SOLIDITY AND TIMELESS PEACE...

UPON CLOSER INSPECTION, HOWEVER, THE MANTLE OF PEACE GROWS TRANSPARENT, REVEALING A MERE ILLUSION CAST BY SOMBER DARKNESS AND EERIE DESOLATION...

I...I JUST DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO, PHAITON...

AS MY OFFICIAL SCRIBE, YOU MUST HELP ME—BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE....!

NOWHERE IS THE ILLUSION OF PEACE MORE TRANSPARENT THAN IN THE AVENUE LEADING TO THE CITY'S ADMINISTRATIVE BUILDINGS... WHERE DESOLATION IS SPOILED BY THE SLUMBERS OF THE REMNANTS OF NOW-SLUMBERING ANGER.

Story: DOUG MOENCH Art: MIKE PLOOG.
I have watched the trouble grow, Xavier, and I have recorded its progress. But it still does not understand it. It is not my problem.

I have done little more than watch and fret, as the situation becomes worse with each passing day. How long before there is open hostility between our citizens?

How long before a single incident flares into civil disorder and ultimate strife?

But it is mine, the Lawgiver appointed me to govern the city in his absence. But from the very moment he left, the government has failed to keep the peace. I have failed...

Could you counsel me...

But perhaps...

Not long at all, Xavier— if you do not halt it now.

Is it not the humans who are causing the greatest disturbance?

Perhaps they are being mistreated.

That is a question for your decision, Xavier. But remember that you are above all an ape... and that if the humans are allowed to continue their protests, the only possible result is war. In such event, which side will you take...

If only the Lawgiver would return... or peace officer Brutus.

Then, the rapid drumming of many hooves... the lurid glare of torches burning darkness...

I will leave you now, to ponder the question.

Good night, Xavier... and decide with care.

A moment more of silence and thought.

Who... who can it be... at this hour...?
GOVILAS IN BLACK HOODS

TERRORISTS-- JUST AS THE HUMANS DESCRIBED!

THEY WERE TELLING THE TRUTH!!

ZARTOR WILL STOP THEM-- HE WILL SEE THAT--

BUT WHY ARE THEY COMING HERE--??

WAIT-- I... I MUST NOT PANIC--!!

THE DOOR BURSTS OPEN, ITS HINGES TWISTING WITH HORRIBLE NOISE... WRAK!

ZARTOR--! YOU-- WEARING A MASK, LIKE THE REST--!

DO NOT CRY OUT, XAVIER-- IF YOU VALUE YOUR COWARDLY LIFE!

BUT... BUT YOU ARE MY PERSONAL GUARD--!!

I AM A GORILLA, XAVIER-- NOT THE PROTECTOR OF A SPINELESS TRAITOR TO THE CAUSE OF APE DOMINANCE!!

BUT... BUT WHY WHAT ARE YOU DOING...?

W-WAIT...!

YOU... YOU CAN'T DO THIS TO ME--! BRUTUS WILL HAVE ALL OF YOU ARRESTED-- PUT TO DEATH--!

SILENCE!

WHAT DO YOU WANT--?!
YOUR DEATH.

IN HORROR, XAVIER FEELS HIS HEART EXPLODING, HIS CHEST FLOODING WITH HOT WETNESS... AND HIS MIND SCREAMS, THOUGH HIS THROAT MAY ONLY CREAK...

HUMANS... WERE RIGHT...

...SHOULD HAVE STOPPED YOU... SHOULD HAVE HAD ALL OF YOU...

...AT THE CRUEL EXPENSE OF DEATH.

DRAG HIS BODY OUTSIDE.

YOU KNOW WHAT TO DO WITH IT...

...DESTROYED...:

...AND IF ANYONE SEES YOU, MAKE CERTAIN THEY DO NOT LIVE TO DESCRIBE THE SIGHT.

WE WILL RENDEZVOUS BACK AT THE ENCAMPMENT.

AS YOU COMMAND, LEADER BRUTUS... WE WILL OBEY.

AND XAVIER CRUMPLES AT THE FEET OF TERROR... HIS DECISION NOW MADE...
Dawn beyond the forbidden zone: where a riverboat named Simian flies murky waters laid opaque by the rising sun...

Wal, Steely Dan, that there's th' end o' the river. Looks like you kin give yore shoulders a rest now...

...less' n you want tuh pole the Simian clear through that weird spook-ground o' purple mist.

No thanks, gunpowder.

Julius--Three days against the river-current is enough fer me.

Bye-bye, Malaguena... Trippe misses you... Miss you much.

I'll miss you too, Trippe... More than I ever thought I could.

Now, Jason-boy, I want yuh tuh take good care o' little Miss Malaguena...

She's a right purty gal, she is. Purtiest one I've ever seen all up an' down this mighty river.

Yeah, I know, Julius.

Julius, will you promise to be good to Trippe...? Ever since Saraband died...

Well, he's never been alone before...

Don't you worry none about the feisty lil' varmint, me an' Dan get cockeyed bored with no one but each other to cuss out all day long. Be a right pleasure to have Trippe aboard... Right, lil' feller?

Me take care Trippe... Not need help... Trippe take care Trippe...

Now then, folks, this here's yore last chance. Yuh shore yuh don't want us tuh leave th' Simian here an' go with yuh all the way--?

That won't be necessary, Julius. Our troubles will end just as soon as we get the lawyers back to the city.

Now, then, folks, this here's yore last chance. Yuh don't want us tuh leave th' Simian here an' go with yuh all the way--?

I'm not as sure about that as Alex is, but I want to thank you for everything you've already done, Julius... and you too, Dan.

Thank you for your concern, Steely Dan.
ALL RIGHT, FOLKS--TAKE CARE O' YERSELVES! KEEP YER POWDER DRY AN' MAKE SURE Yuh WALK ON TH' RIGHT SIDE O' YER SHADOW!

BYE-BYE! TRIPPO SAY BYE-BYE!

KEEY YER HEADS UP--

AND Yuh'LL ALWAYS LOOK TGUH TH' MOUNTAIN TOP!

THE FORBIDDEN ZONE LIES AHEAD...

...AND THE CITY WAITS FAR BEYOND.

--SAY THE'RE GETTING OUT OF HAND, PAXIUS.

AND I FULLY AGREE WITH YOU.

SOMETHING MUST BE DONE--SOON.

TWO FRIENDS WALK THE CITY'S EARLY MORNING STREETS, ON THEIR WAY TO WORK...

...AND AS FRIENDS ARE WONT TO DO, THEY FILL THEIR WALK WITH DISCUSSION OF CURRENT EVENTS...

THE HUMANS MUST LEARN THEIR PLACE--AND STAY IN IT.

WHY, IF NOT FOR OUR GENEROSITY, THEY WOULDN'T EVEN BE LIVING IN THE CITY.

BUT THIS MORNING IS DESIGNED TO BE MARKED BY MORE THAN MORE DISCUSSION...

...FOR, AS THEY TURN A FATEFUL CORNER--

OH NO--!! IT CAN'T BE--!!

BY THE LAWGIVER'S SACRED WORD...
--IT'S XAVIER--!! ---MURDERED-- HIS BODY PROFANED--!!

THE HUMANS-- IT HAD TO BE THE HUMANS--
WHO ELSE COULD COMMIT SUCH AN ATROCITY--?

YOU'RE RIGHT, PAXIUS-- NO APE WOULD EVER MURDER ANOTHER APE...
THE HUMANS WILL PAY FOR THIS -- AND PAY DEARLY!

LATE AFTERNOON: FOUR WEARY FIGURES FINALLY EMERGE FROM THE RADIATION-- SMOTHERED FORBIDDEN ZONE... AND, AS ONE, THEY LOOK TO THE MOUNTAIN TOP...

YEAH... BEAUTIFUL TREES-- EVEN IF HOME ISN'T...
JASON, WHY DO YOU ALWAYS SEEM TO EXPECT THE WORST...?

WELL, EVEN I'LL ADMIT JASE HAS GOOD REASON, MALAGUENA...

TREES... WE'RE ALMOST HOME--!

...BUT RIGHT NOW, WE'VE A MOUNTAIN TO CLIMB.

AND WHEN THE CLIMB IS MADE...

THANK YOU, ALEX... I'M AFRAID MY LEGS ARE NOT WHAT THEY ONCE WERE...

I HOPE THEY CAN STAND TO KEEP MOVING, SIR...

...BECAUSE THERE'S NO TELLING WHAT MIGHT HAPPEN IF WE DON'T REACH THE CITY BEFORE BRUTUS DOES...
DON'T LOOK NOW, JASE-- BUT IF MY GUESS IS RIGHT, SOMETHING ALREADY HAS HAPPENED...

OVER ON THE TRAIL-- THERE'S SOME SORT OF CARAVAN COMING THIS WAY-- FROM THE DIRECTION OF THE CITY...

HOLD ON THERE--! WHY ARE YOU LEAVING THE CITY?

TO SAVE OUR LIVES FROM THE LIKES OF YOU, WHY DO YOU THINK--?

I AM, AND I ADJURE YOU TO EXPLAIN THIS MASS EXODUS.

I'LL EXPLAIN IT ALL RIGHT WHILE YOU WERE GONE-- GOD KNOWS WHERE-- SOMEONE MURDERED XAVIER AND HUNG HIS BODY ON A STAKE IN THE CENTER OF THE CITY.

THE APES NEED A SACRIFICE TO EXECUTE FOR THE MURDER-- AND ALL HUMANS ARE NOW FAIR GAME--! EITHER WE FLEE OR WE ENTER A WAR!

YOU ARE MISTAKEN, WE MEAN YOU NO HARM...

OH NO--? THEN WHY...

WAIT A MINUTE--! YOU... YOU'RE THE LAWSERVER...

THEN BRUTUS ALREADY HAS RETURNED TO THE CITY-- AND NOW HE'S ADDED POOR XAVIER TO HIS LIST OF MURDER VICTIMS...

LISTEN TO ME, I WANT ALL OF YOU TO RETURN TO YOUR HOMES-- ON MY WORD THAT NO ONE WILL BE EXECUTED UNLESS CONCLUSIVELY PROVEN GUILTY.

YOU CAN'T MAKE PROMISES ANYMORE--!

YOU'VE BEEN GONE TOO LONG, NO ONE WILL LISTEN TO YOU NOW--!

THEY WILL LISTEN TO ME.
I AM THE LAWSERVER.

HATRED DOESN'T CARE ABOUT LAWS--

WAIT, IVOR-- HE HAS KEPT THE PEACE IN THE PAST...

ADMITTEDLY, BUT--

BUT WHAT? WOULD YOU DENY ME THE CHANCE TO PRESERVE YOUR FUTURE?

THE CROWD WAVERS A MOMENT, HOPEFUL YET UNCERTAIN. A VOTE IS CALLED...
AND THE OUTCOME IS A VICTORY FOR HOPE, AND THE BEGINNING OF A BIZARE TREK BACK TOWARD LINGERING UNCERTAINTY.

SOON, THE CITY LOOMS IN THE NEAR DISTANCE, ONCE AGAIN EVOKING AN ILLUSION OF TRANQUILITY AND PEACE.

SHREDDED BY THE SHARP EDGE OF INTERNAL CONFLICT... BACK OFF...!
YOU'RE THE ONES WHO BOXED US INTO THIS END OF THE CITY...!
NOW YOU CAN JUST LEAVE US ALONE AND GO BACK TO YOUR OWN SECTOR...!

RIGHTeous WORDS TO BE COMING FROM THE MOUTH OF A MURDERER...!
I SAY FLAY THEIR HAIRLESS HIDE AND LEAVE THEIR MEAT FOR THE SCAVENGERS!!

IT'S APES LIKE YOU WHO ARE THE MURDERERS AND YOU KNOW IT! YOU'RE USING XAVIER AS AN EXCUSE TO FIGHT!

AND IF THAT'S WHAT YOU WANT, YOU DON'T NEED AN EXCUSE! WE'RE READY AND WILLING ANY TIME AND ANY PLACE--

YEAH--LIKE RIGHT HERE AND RIGHT NOW!!
Then, as confrontation threatens to close in violence...

I COMMAND YOU TO STOP--ALL OF YOU!!

WHO--?!?

THE LAWSERVER!!

YES--the L awserver--returned from a mission of peace to find his own city verging on the turmoil of war--!!

Yes, I am the Lawserver--and I am disgusted. There is no excuse for the words and the hatred you have traded today--traded, I suspect, every day I have been gone.

I have no doubt that my departure raised criticism among you--for it occurred at a time when the seed of unrest was just beginning to blossom into the weed of hate--!!

But that is precisely why I chose that time to leave--for I knew that the growth of hate was being sown forth by an outside agency--by mutants dwelling in the forbidden zone--and by one other here within our city--!

When I left you, I requested that you respect the doctrines of peace in my absence--that you adhere to the state of coexistence between our two species--!!

Now I return to find this--and I am shamed--shamed by all of you!!

Yet even if the growth of hate was nurtured by an outside force, I now see that the seed was ever present--within each and every one of you--waiting, just waiting to spring into hideous life!!

I will speak more on this tonight--in a formal speech. For now, I order you to disperse! Take your hatred and return to your homes, and hate yourselves if hate you must--!

The crowd stirs in uneasy silence, nervous and intimidated under the shadow of the Lawserver's wrath. Eventually they obey his shrill command...
Dear All Stars Who are Working on Marvel Mags,

YUK! YUK! After you've read this piece of scappy writing Hang Loose, Stan. 'Spose ya think I'm gonna clobber ya, well I'm not. You're gonna clobber me cause I haveta tell ya that I never got down to sending away for any superb Marvel mag offers (posters, shirt transfers, etc.), and oh, my—not even FOOM. In my scappy piggy bank I've got at least 70 pence in a cold dusty corner, but I suppose next time fabulous Fourtime comes around it'll be either seventy-five or eighty pence. Ah, no! I don't have enuf! But through my three years of pain and hardship I've collected over 200 comics, American and British, and I'm gonna knock myself out over your latest super team-up Cor Man, SUPERMAN and SPIDERMAN. Since Power comics, your office has earned a lot of publicity, and I'm crying in my corner cause I wanna join Fourm Stan—tell my dainty ears I can still get a Fourm kit from some dark corner of the Bullpen.

Comment time. POTA 64. Smart story from Doug Moench and Alfredo Alcala, and Avengers No. 12! Conan has gone better with Roy Thomas as Ed. (No offence, Stanley ol' man.) SMCW 15, Spidey's the best with Stan Lee as Ed, and John Romita's art's smartly. Not to mention Super-Heroes 44, scarecrow story fairly good, Ruben Yandoe's art's good as nought, so thus would say Thor. Last but not least, Dracula Lives 63, artists Gene Colan and Tom Palmer are smart, and Gene Colan's smart's art's goody smart. Yuk. And Mary Wolfman's writing's smart. See ya, and happy landings!

David Searles, Milnrow, Nr. Rochdale.

So your heart's aching to be there for the next FOOM BOOM, huh? Well, here's what you have to do. Just keep watching this space (and the space we're taking abour could be anywhere in the mag) and just as soon as we figure you're off-guard we're gonna sneak in a FOOM enrolment form. What YOU have to do is keep one or two eyes sufficiently open to spot what we're up to. The you haveta MOVE, man! And we mean MOVE! You've gotta fill in that form and rush it to us while the ink's still wet. We're not making any promises, mark you. But you could just be lucky. It's known to happen!

Dear Stan,

While I was looking at this week's TV Times I found that PLANET OF THE APES is back on TV with a new series. It is called "Return to The Planet of The Apes" and is on TV on Thursday at 4:50 and is half an hour long. The first episode is entitled "Flames of Doom" and is about three astronauts who land on an unknown Planet. Of course, they discover that the planet is ruled by Apes. By the time this is printed in your mag most people will know about it. This letter is mainly for people who don't get the TV Times.

The Greatest Ape fan in the World, Rotherham, Yorks.

Would ya believe that sensational news HAS found its way around since you penned that letter, hero. (I just can't keep ANYTHING secret these days.) But accept thanks from us for your Marvel-spilted action!

Dear Marvel.

BEYOND ANTARES.

I have noticed, recently, that considerable numbers of your readers have expressed interest in various aspects of science-fiction. I would be very grateful, therefore, if you could mention the club I am running.

The BEYOND ANTARES club is concerned with everything and anything to do with Science Fiction, especially on TV and in the cinema. Anyone can join and membership is entirely free, my only condition being that a stamped addressed envelope must be enclosed when writing. A few examples of the club's activities are as follows—

A newsletter containing brief articles, reviews, news, competitions etc., correspondence, chat-box. Readers' questions will be answered and pen-pals put in touch with each other. I also hope to be able to contact other clubs. Applicants need only write to me at 41 Cedar Avenue, Torbrey, Stirling, Scotland FK8 2PQ.

Ian Garbutt.

Any club with a name like "Beyond Antares" deserves support. So you're in our pages, Ian. Er — how about a sample copy of the newsletter some time?

Tolerance, Mark. Tolerance, because not every Marvelite appreciates the market values of those early issues as keenly as you do. But give 'em a little time, and they'll become as Marvel-educated as the best. You're right in all you say, of course, but maybe we ought to make it clear that the 100 FF issues you were referring to would be the American issues. And that's going back quite a while.

Mark Carricker, RFO, KOF, Lancaster, Lancs.
Dear Stan,

Cor! Aren’t we lucky over here, because on London Weekend Television on Saturday there’s a cartoon version of Planet of the Apes. It’s called “Return to the Planet of the Apes” and it’s fantastic. Also, we’ve just had the re-run of the “Planet of the Apes” series.

If people in other areas write to the TV stations maybe they’ll be lucky enough to see the Apes back in action, too.

I did not think much of The Scarecrow and the “Bloodstone the Monster Slayer”, but I do like Giant-man and The Thing.

Urav Goyal,
East Ham, London E6.

Your letter could be an inspiration to deprived Apes lovers everywhere, tiger!

Dear Stan,

After reading Apes Forum in issue 51 I was shocked. Peter Labrow stated that the covers of POTA arc, quote, “horrible”. The covers of POTA are sometimes the best part of the mags. They may sometimes be a bit off, but consider all the work on the other mags as well.

So I think Peter Labrow is making a mountain out of a mole-hill, and if he dares write again I hope you will publish his letter as I would like to hear what he has to say.

John Caddick,
55a Hardwick Rd., Eynesbury,
St. Neots, Camb.

In the red corner, Pete Labrow. In the blue corner, John Caddick . . .

Dear Stan and Crew,

My brother Michael gets your mag “Planet of the Apes” each week, and our entire family, including mum and dad, enjoys the TV series and the two films that we have seen. Also, of course, your mag. It’s great! I especially like reading “Apes Forum” and have noticed that several people have written to you, asking if anyone has any spare POTA bubble-gum cards. Well, I have!

So if anyone wants them all they have to do is send a stamped addressed envelope to me, along with a note saying which ones they want. I don’t need or want them cards as I already have a complete set, and I don’t want anything for them, either.

Keep up the good work on your fantastic mag!

Wendy Bosberry,
6 Fareham Park Rd., Hill Park, Fareham,
Hants.

In case anyone hasn’t yet noticed, this really IS the Magnificent age of Marvel Magnanimity!

Dear Marvel,

An idea. How about reprinting some U.S.A. black and white material? This would give added splendour to your already stupendous mags. Perhaps to strips such as Conan, Kazar, Kull, Dracula, etc.

The art from these B/W monthly is drawn FOR black and white mags. It should therefore have more technique, detail and individual skill. So please think about it.

Onwards. Okay, so now you’ve published a horror mag, sword and sorcery mag, a science-fiction mag and various Superhero mags. So why not bring out a humour mag? In this you could star the one-and-only HOWARD THE DUCK, the cigar-loving, Cleveland-based adventurer. I’m sure you can find suitable back-up material.

I agree with ‘what’s-his-name’ who said that American letter-writers are more mature than British letter-writers. For a start, Marvel in America is aimed at a higher, more mature age-group than Marvel in Britain. So-o-o-o . . . I guess I’ll sign off with those immortal words, first spoken by M.S. Kingscott: “Howard the Duck Rules!”

M.S. Kingscott, QNS.
Workington.

We agree with most of the arguments you put in favour of us reprinting material from the U.S. Black and Whites. Which is why we’ve already had such material appearing in some of our British mags, particularly in Planet of the Apes. And more will follow — if for no other reason that we’re far too economical to allow it to go to waste! AND we’ve had Howard the Duck under the microscope for possible use in Britain for quite some time. So a little patience, and all kinds of things could be happening!

Dear Stan and Gang,

First of all, congrats on your adaptation of “Conquest on the Planet of the Apes”. (Chapter 6 already? Doesn’t time fly when you’re onto a good thing!) Your choice of Alfredo Alcala as artist was a good one, but as he did “Beneath . . .” I really think you should have another artist for this one. Oh yeah, speaking of artists, any chance of Jack Kirby drawing an “Apes” story in the future? I, and I’m sure many other readers, would love to see his interpretation of the apes. Also, the British covers are improving, and you seem to be reprinting quite a few American covers on the “Apes” mag. But what I really want to ask is this. Do you intend to do anything on “Jaws” after seeing it twice I can really say it must be one of the best movies ever made, and after seeing what you did with the “Apes” movies, I’m sure you could do a fantastic adaptation of it.

Tim Briggs
7 Holly Parade, Feltham, Middx.

Thanks for the bouquets you’ve tossed our way for “Planet”. We’d dearly like to show our gratitude by telling you that Jack Kirby will immediately be switched to the drawing chores. But, with our forward planning already laid out, we have to break the news that the chances of Jack exercising his unique talents on an apes series are slim indeed. And equally slim are any hopes of us being able to run “Jaws” as a picture serial. The cost of obtaining the rights would probably put us into the red for the next decade.