THE CITY IN TURMOIL... ON THE PUBLIC STREETS, VIOLENCE SPASMATICALLY ERUPTS BETWEEN GROUPS OF HUMANS AND APES. SEEING ONE SUCH FIGHT, JASON AND ALEX HURL THEMSELVES INTO THE FRAY TO STOP IT!

Stan Lee PRESENTS: PLANET OF THE APES!

BUT IT IS SIGNIFICANT THAT ALEX SEIZES A HUMAN...

WAITING FOR THE FATED SPEECH!

---WHILE JASON SLAMS INTO AN APE!

WRITTEN AND DRAWN BY DOUG MOENCH AND MIKE PLOOG
AND THE LAWGIVER DEPARTS WITH LESS THAN ANOTHER WORD, DOUBTLESS TO THINK... AND TO FORM THOSE THOUGHTS INTO THE CRUCIAL WORDS OF A SPEECH.... I DID YOU HEAR HIM, ALEX... HIS VOICE NEARLY SHOCKED THE BUILDINGS. I'VE NEVER SEEN HIM SO MAD....

YEAH, WE WERE WRONG ABOUT HIM, JASE....

HE KNEW ALL ALONG ABOUT THE REAL BETWEEN BRUTUS AND THE MUTANTS. HE WASN'T CAPTURED IN THE FORBIDDEN ZONE--HE WENT TO THE MUTANTS... TO APPEAL TO THEM.... YEAH, AND IT MUST HAVE TAKEN A LOT OF...

NO--STOP IT--!!

I DON'T BELIEVE IT--AS SOON AS THE LAWGIVER'S GONE, THEY START FIGHTING AGAIN--!

COME ON, JASE--THERE'S ONLY A FEW OF THEM.... MAYBE WE CAN STOP IT BEFORE THEY GET HURT--!

Thus, for the best of motives, Jason and Alex hurl themselves into the fray...

It is significant, however, that Jason slams into an ape....

...and Alex seizes a human. HUH--?

LET GO OF ME--!!
TRYIN' TO HOLD MY ARMS BACK SO YOUR APE FRIENDS CAN FINISH ME OFF--

WELL IT'S TIME YOU MANGY FREAKS LEARNED THAT WE HUMANS AREN'T GONNA STAND STILL FOR ANY MORE OF YOUR--

--SHWUGH!

WALK

STOP IT, ALEX--!

WHAT'RE YOU HITTING HIM FOR--?!?

YOU DIDN'T HAVE TO DO THAT!

I THINK HE BUSTED MY JAW

COME OFF IT, ALEX! YOU'VE SEEN BRUTUS IN ACTION--YOU KNOW THIS IS ALL HIS FAULT!

MAYBE SO--BUT I ALSO KNOW THAT IT WASN'T BRUTUS WHO ALMOST CAVED MY HEAD IN WITH THAT CLUB A MINUTE AGO!

IT WAS THOSE TWO APES WHO STARTED THIS FIGHT! REAL SMART OF YOU TO END IT BY PUNCHING ON A HUMAN--!

LISTEN, JASON--YOU'D BETTER COOL OFF THAT HOT HEAD OF YOURS BEFORE YOUR HAIR STARTS BURNING.

BESIDES, HOW DO YOU KNOW WHO STARTED THE FIGHT--?! OUR BACKS WERE TURNED!

YOU TELL 'IM, BROTHER...

Yeah--Maybe I do, Alex! Maybe I realize that you're just as bad as all the rest--!

JASON, PLEASE!

STOP IT, ALEX IS RIGHT--YOU MUSTN'T LET YOUR EMOTIONS CONTROL YOU...

WAKE UP AND GET REASONABLE, Jase! You're always whining about how you're sick of me defending apes! Well, I'm just as sick of you condemning all apes for the actions of a few! Do you want me to die just because Brutus killed your mother and father--?!
ALEX IS RIGHT, HUH--?

WELL, IF HE WAS SO RIGHT WHEN HE PUNCHED THAT HUMAN, WHY DOESN'T HE TAKE A PUNCH AT ME?

STOP IT, JASE-- YOU KNOW I DON'T WANT TO FIGHT WITH YOU...

YEAH, I GUESS NOT. YOU'D RATHER HIDE BEHIND MALAGUENA'S DRESS.

LETS HIM GO.
MALAGUENA.
GIVE HIM A CHANCE TO COOL OFF BEFORE HE TEARS ALL THREE OF US APART.

DUSK: AT THE TREEHOUSE BIVOUAC OF THE RENEGADE GORILLAS...

MESSAGE FOR BRUTUS...

WHAT IS IT, WARKO?

THE LAWGIVER HAS RETURNED TO THE CITY, LEADER BRUTUS. HE PLANS TO MAKE A SPEECH TONIGHT-- APPEALING FOR A RETURN TO PEACE BETWEEN HUMAN AND APE.

IF IT'S IMPORTANT, GO ON UP.

THEN GET MY HORSE, FOOL!

BUT, LEADER BRUTUS, YOU CAN'T GO INTO THE CITY NOW...


I TOLD YOU-- PUBLIC OPINION NOW WEIGHS IN MY FAVOR, REGARDLESS OF MY SECRET ROLE. IT'S MY WORD AGAINST NIS.

STILL, ON THE SLIGHT CHANCE OF MAJORITY SHOULD REMAIN LOYAL TO THAT SPIINELESS, WEAKLING, SEVERAL OF YOU WILL BE WAITING JUST OUTSIDE THE SQUARE...

BUT THE LAWGIVER KNOWS YOU'RE NOT JUST THE PEACE OFFICER. HE'LL TELL THEM YOU'RE ALSO THE LEADER OF OUR TERRORIST MOVEMENT.

...TO KILL THE LAWGIVER ON MY COMMAND.
THE CITY SQUARE: WHERE A CROWD OF SHADOWS GATHERS UNDER TORCHLIGHT...

IT IS A DIVIDED CROWD...

...WITH HUMANS COMPRISING ONE GROUP...

...AND APES FORMING ANOTHER, SEPARATE THRONE.

NEITHER SIDE WOULD HAVE IT DIFFERENTLY...

ALTHOUGH TWO INDIVIDUALS REFUSE TO SHARE IN THE MUTUAL FEELING WHICH DIVIDES THE OTHERS.

LOOK AT THOSE TWO, BROTHER... STANDING ALONE BETWEEN US AND THEM. WHAT DO THEY THINK THEY ARE -- A SELF-PROCLAIMED PEACE PARTY?

JASON DOES NOT REPLY, BUT THE SPARKS NEVERTHELESS FLASH IN HIS EYES. HE LOOKS AT AMALQUENA... THEN AT ALEX... AND HIS BLOOD SEETHES WITH A SNUBBING SENSE OF BETRAYAL.

BUT THEN THE LAWSEIZER APPEARS, INBUING THE BALCONY WITH AN ALMOST TANGIBLE AUTHORITY...

...AND ALL EYES LIFT UPWARD TO GAZE UPON THE DRAMATIC FIGURE OF HE WHO EMBODIES THE LAW AND THE LIFE OF THEIR CITY...

WELCOME, fellow citizens of peace...

WELCOME TO THE FIRST LIFE I HAVE EVER SPOKEN TO YOU...
YOU MURMUR, YOU WHISPER, AND YOU SHIFT YOUR WEIGHT. YOU COUGH TO HIDE YOUR UNSETTLED NERVES, AND YOU ASK YOURSELVES: "WHAT DID HE SAY? --- A LIE? --- WHAT DID HE MEAN BY THAT?" AND EVERY ONE OF YOU KNOWS WHAT I MEAN!

I HAVE ADDRESSED YOU AS FELLOW CITIZENS OF PEACE...

AND IN SO DOING, I HAVE LIED TO YOU.

YOU SEE, I HAVE LOOKED OUT AMONG YOU... AND I HAVE SEEN HUMANS AND I HAVE SEEN APES. BUT TRY AS THEY MIGHT, THESE POOR OLD EYES CANNOT SEE HUMANS AND APES.

WHY DO I SEE TWO WHEN WE ARE ACTUALLY ONE? THERE IS A REASON... A TERRIBLE REASON... AND A CHILLINGLY PATHETIC ONE. THE OLD BOOKS TELL OF A FOREST WHICH HAS BEEN COVERED IN EVIL SORCERY, AND WHOSE BEAUTY HAS BEEN DISGUISED BY ITSELF...

ONE WHO LOOKS UPON THIS FOREST WILL SEE EACH DIFFERENT TREE... BUT WILL NEVER REALIZE THAT ALL OF THE TREES COMBINE TO FORM THE SAME FOREST; THE SORCERY FOCUSES OUR EYES ON THE TREES... AND THE FOREST DISAPPEARS.

SINCE I HAVE BEEN GONE YOU HAVE COME TO SEE YOURSELVES AS TREES. THIS IS BECAUSE AN EVIL SORCERY HAS COME UPON YOU... AND FORCED YOU TO NOTICE THAT SOME OF YOU BELONG TO ONE KIND OF TREE, AND THE REST OF YOU TO ANOTHER KIND, AND SO YOU HAVE DIVIDED YOURSELVES...

THE EVIL SORCERY WHICH HAS DONE THIS IS CALLED HATE! IT IS A LINE OF HATE WHICH NOW DIVIDES YOU! YOU MUST BREAK THAT LINE! YOU MUST CROSS THAT LINE! YOU MUST COME TOGETHER RIGHT NOW! NOT AS TREES, BUT...

YOU MAY BE A TREE, OLD ONE...

--- BUT I AM AN APE!

AND I AM PROUD TO BE AN APE...

TOO PROUD TO LISTEN TO WORDS WHICH CALL FOR THE DOOM OF MY KIND...

WHILE THEY MASQUERADE AS A SERMON FOR PEACE.

IT'S PEACE OFFICER BRUTUS... LET HIM THROUGH.
By what right do you disrupt this congregation?!
By the apes' right to be ruled by an ape—not by a weak, old human—lover whose days are past.

You've had it, Brutus—!!

You're nothing but a stinking, lousy, hate-mongering liar and murderer who isn't fit to rule maggots!!

Who will you listen to, fellow ape citizens? This fugitive human—wanted for the murder of my wife Zena and unlawfully protected by the old fool who calls himself lawgiver...?

The only reason you want to oust the lawgiver is so you can slaughter every human in the city!!

Or me—-the Peace Officer of this city and the defender of simian faith...?

Do not listen to him, citizens! He is the defender of nothing but hate!! He is the living avatar of the hate which divides you!! I have proof that he himself murdered his wife—-as well as many others!

If my leadership means anything to you, you will reject and denounce him and his policy of divisive-ness!!

But there are some who think of it as a policy of ape supremacy... and such a notion does have certain appeal...

Then again, the city has been a good place as the lawgiver has defined it...

So they hesitate, torn by ambivalence and uncertainty...
And the hesitation provides a podium for further confrontation...

He has given us proof of nothing—except that he is no longer fit to rule! It is time for new laws—!

It is time to remove him from authority—to strike him down from his perch above the rest of us!!

And I say we do it right now!!!

Brutus stalks forward now, toward the lawsayer, as though to carry out his threats...

But there is one who defies those threats...

Hold it, Brutus—you want to reach the lawsayer, you're gonna have to walk right over me first!

And you can add me to the list too, Brutus...

...and another, whose name is Alex...

...and a third, who is human...

Guess I'm with you, brothers. Lawsayer may be an ape, but he's never done nothin' to me.

Then several more apes step from the crowd, to join the three...

So he bellows one final word--

And as Brutus watches the growing line form into a barricade which shields the lawsayer, he realizes that he has lost in this game of words...

Now!!
...AND THE SQUARE IS ASSAULTED BY THUNDERING CHAOS.

SPARKS CHIP FROM SURGING MOOSES LIKE BLUE HELLFIRE. TORCHLICH CATCHES TWIN GLARES FROM THE HOLES IN BLACK HODDS.

CROSSBOWS SNAP AND ARROWS WHINE.

...FOR, EVEN THE LAWGIVER FINDS THAT WORDS MAY NOT STAY A MESSENGER OF VIOLENCE AND HATE.

CALL HIM AS LOW AS YOU CAN! USE THE BALCONY AS A SHIELD...

RIGHT-- AND YOU OPEN THE DOORS SO WE CAN GET HIM INSIDE!

QUICK-- THE LAWGIVER'S BEEN HIT!!

AND YET, PERHAPS WORDS OF RENEWED COOPERATION MAY YET DEFEAT THIS MONSTER OF HATE...
But the youth called Jason is not so confident in the power of words. Thus he crouches on the stone balustrade, shielding the lawgiver's body with his own...

...but only until the lawgiver has been safely escorted inside.

Excuse me, you stinking rotten lice-ridden murderer...

But I need your horse!

It truly degenerates into chaos now, as hooded gorilla brutally strikes helpless chimpanzee, forgetting that both are apes...

...aware only that one does not wear a hood of terror...

Thraat!

...and whose face is therefore as bare as that of a human... and perhaps even more despised.
JEN WRIGHT, however, the conflict proceeds in a more discriminate direction...

THREE ARE, BRUTUS--
RUNNING AWAY AT THE FIRST
SIGN OF DANGER AGAIN--!

BUT THIS TIME
YOU'LL BETTER RUN
LIKE HELL--BECUSE
I'M COMING AFTER
YOU, BRUTUS--!

I'VE WAITED FOR THIS,
BRUTUS--WANTED TO PAY
YOU FOR WHAT YOU DID
TO MY MOTHER--!

AND NOW THAT THE TIME'S
HERE, BRUTUS, I'M GONNA
DO IT--AND I AIN'T GONNA
STOP UNTIL THERE'S
NOTHING LEFT TO
BEAT ON!!

COME ON, BRUTUS
-BEG FOR YOUR
STINKING LIFE--
CRAWL...

--WAITED
to beat
you for what
you did to
my father...
to beat on
you so hard
you'd run
into bloody
pulp!!

FASTER, BRUTUS--I'M GAINING ON THAT POOR OVERWORKED HORSE OF YOURS! FASTER, YOU BIG FAT BALL OF HAIRY SCUM!! FASTER!
DO YOU HEAR ME--?! I WANT YOU TO CRAWL, BRUTUS! I WANT YOU TO DRAG YOUR BULGED-EYES THROUGH THE DIRT BEFORE I--

STOP IT, HUMAN--!

-AND I'M GONNA KILL HIM!!

NO, JASON...

AND YOU, BRUTUS-- YOU WHO HAVE MADE A MOCKERY OF YOUR POSITION AS PEACE OFFICER...

I DENOUNCE YOU, BRUTUS, AND I HEREBY BANISH YOU FROM THIS CITY.

BANISH...?

...FOR A MUCH HARsher PUNISHMENT SHALL AwaIT YOU.

HE'S RIGHT, BROTHER-- AND THE LAWGIVER WAS RIGHT. WE CAN'T LET YOU HATE ANY MORE. IT'S NOT RIGHT--!

I SAID I'D KILL HIM!!

THERE WILL BE NO MORE KILLING THIS NIGHT.

I HAVE JUST SEEN THE TERRORISTS DEFEATED, JASON... DEFEATED BY THE GREATER NUMBER OF CITIZENS UNITED IN THE CAUSE OF JUSTICE, IN THE CAUSE ENDING HATRED AND RESTORING PEACE.

I HOPE YOU WILL NOT BE THE ONLY ONE WHO REFUSES TO JOIN THIS CAUSE. I COULDN'T BEAR THAT, JASON... NOR COULD YOU, IN THE END.

NOO!!

YOU CAN'T MEAN THAT-!!
GO, BRUTUS -- AT ONCE.

YOU'RE LETTING HIM GO --?!
YOU'RE LETTING HIM GO FREE -- AFTER HE MURDERED MY PARENTS -- MURDERED HIS OWN WIFE -- AND TRIED TO MURDER HUNDREDS OF OTHERS --?!

YOU'RE MAD -- YOU'VE LOST YOUR SENSES --
ALL OF YOU!!

YOU CAN'T LET HIM GO NOW --!!
HE'LL BE BACK -- TO SLAUGHTER US ALL!!

PLEASE, JASON,
LISTEN TO ME. WE MUST PUT AN END TO BRUTUS' WAY OF THINKING. WE MUST NOT EMULATE IT.
WE MUST NOT PROLONG IT, MY SON...

Yeah? Well, I'm beginning to think maybe we should. Cuz maybe Brutus was right, Lawgiver--maybe you're not fit to rule anymore!

I'LL TELL YOU ONE THING -- YOU'RE THROUGH RULING OVER ME!

MAYBE THE REST OF THESE BLIND FOOLS WILL LISTEN TO YOU -- BUT I CAN'T STAND THE SIGHT OF YOU FOR ANOTHER SECOND!

EVERYBODY SEEMS TO FORGET THAT I'M NOBODY'S SON -- THAT MY PARENTS WERE BUTCHERED AND BURNED!!

BUT I HAVEN'T FORGOTTEN. I'LL NEVER FORGET IT -- AND I'LL NEVER REST UNTIL I'VE BUTCHERED AND BURNED THE STINKING SORILLA WHO DID IT!

AND I AIN'T YOUR SON, LAWGIVER!!
SO YOU MIGHT AS WELL BANISH ME TOO, LAWGIVER, BECAUSE I WON'T BE COMING BACK-- NOT EVEN AFTER I FIND AND KILL BRUTUS.

JASON-- JASON WAIT--!

ALEX

WHOM SAID YOU COULD TOUCH ME...?

I'VE HAD IT, ALEX-- I'VE HAD IT ALL AND MORE WITH YOU--!

AND BELIEVE ME-- I NEVER WANT TO SEE YOUR UGLY FACE AGAIN!!

JASON-- WHAT ARE YOU DOING...?!

WHAT I SHOULD HAVE DONE A LONG TIME AGO, MALAGUENA, WHICH REMINDS ME... I DON'T WANT TO SEE YOU AGAIN EITHER.

IF YOU LOVE ALEX SO MUCH-- IF YOU CAN LOVE A DIRTY APE...

THEN YOU CAN JUST STAY WITH HIM-- CUZ I DON'T WANT THE DIRT RUBBIN' OFF ON ME.

I... I THOUGHT JASON AND I WERE FRIENDS, MALAGUENA... EVEN IF WE ARE DIFFERENT...

AND I THOUGHT THAT FRIENDSHIP WAS SPECIAL... SPECIAL ENOUGH SO THAT THE DIFFERENCE DIDN'T MATTER...

BUT MAYBE WE NEVER WERE FRIENDS... AND CAN NEVER BE FRIENDS...

MAYBE WE WERE JUST TOO AFRAID... TO HATE EACH OTHER.

THEN JASON HAS CONQUERED THAT FEAR, ALEX... I HOPE YOU NEVER DO.