PROLOGUE

ALEX...I...I CAN FEEL THE HEAT FROM THE FLAMES NOW...

YEAH...I KIND OF FIGURED THESE POLES WOULD BURN REAL GOOD...

H-HOW LONG DO YOU THINK IT WILL BE...BEFORE THE FLAMES REACH US...

I DON'T KNOW, MALAGUEÑA...BUT I HOPE IT'S FAST WHEN THEY GET HERE...DON'T THINK I COULD STAND...

EXTRY--EXTRY--READ ALL ABOUT IT--!!

WAIT--VOICE--STRANGE WORDS...

COME FROM FOREST--MUST BE ENEMY...!

WORDS GET LOUDER--ENEMY COME!

MARTIANS INVADE THE EARTH--THOUSANDS DIE IN PANIC--!!

BUT WHAT DO WORDS MEAN--?
YES, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, ON THIS MOST DREADED NIGHT OF LATE OCTOBER NIGHTS, IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD NINETEEN-THIRTY-EIGHT—

---DOOM CAME TO THE EASTERN SEABORD OF THE UNITED STATES!

MOVE—GO BACK—THIS IS ENEMY WE CAN FIGHT!

BUT—WHAT IS ENEMY—?!

GILBERT HAS STOPPED THE WAGON—WE MUST HURRY NOW JASON. THANK THE CREATOR FOR THE GREAT PROPHET ORSON WELLES...

...NOT TO MENTION THE FACT THAT THE RECORD PLAYER OPERATES ON BATTERIES AND NOT THE DEAD ELECTRICITY GOD.

BUT THE ASSASSINS WON'T BE FOOLÉD FOREVER—

WE'VE GOT TO GET INTO OUR DISGUISES BEFORE YOUR FRIENDS GO UP IN SMOKE!

AND REMEMBER—you carry the crate.

LOOK—THE DARN THING'S UNSCREWING! KEEP BACK THERE, I TELL YOU! KEEP THOSE IDIOTS BACK!

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, THIS IS THE MOST TERRIFYING THING I HAVE EVER WITNESSED! I CAN SEE PEERING OUT OF THAT BLACK HOLE TWO LUNAR GLWING DISKS! ARE THEY EYES—?

ALEX—WHAT IS IT? WHAT'S HAPPENING?

DO YOU STILL THINK IT'S A METEOR, PROFESSOR?

I DON'T KNOW, MALAGUIEA... BUT THAT DOOR IS OPENING...

LET'S JUST HOPE THAT WHATEVER COMES OUT... IS FRIENDLY...
ALEX AND MALSUENA HAVE BEEN CAPTURED BY THE DREAD ASSIMIANS AND ARE BEING BURNT AT THE STAKE. SEEING THEIR FLIGHT, JASON AND HIS NEW FRIEND, LIGHTSMITH, APPEAR IN DISGUISE WITH A MAD PLAN TO RESCUE THEM!

Stan Lee PRESENTS: PLANET OF THE APES!

MASQUERADE!

ATTENTION! ATTENTION! I MUST HAVE SILENCE IF I AM TO BEGIN!
BEHOLD, PUNY MORTALS! ALONE AMONG THE GATHERED ASSASSINS, CRUEL-FACED MAGUANUS ADOPTS A SUSPICIOUS ATTITUDE. ALL OTHERS ARE AWED... AND TERRIFIED.

I HAVE COME HERE TO MATCH POWERS WITH YOUR LEADER MAGUANUS—WHO IS A FRAUD AND A FAKE! I HAVE COME DOWN FROM THE SKIES FOR THIS BRILLIANT DEMONSTRATION, AND I HAVE BROUGHT MY ASSISTANT WITH ME—

THE MIRACULOUS WIZARD OF FIREFIELD—WIND HAS COME TO WALK AMONG YOU!

I PRESENT TO YOU, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, FOR HIS VERY FIRST APPEARANCE ON THIS PLANET, THE ONE AND THE ONLY—

--MAJOR URSAA, STRAIGHT FROM THE FIRST STOP BEYOND THE BIG DIPPER!

I DON'T KNOW WHO THEY ARE-- BUT I SURE HOPE THEY BROUGHT SOME WATER WITH THEM...

THAT'S RIGHT-- DON'T BE STINGY WITH THE POWDER. IT'S MAGNESIUM-- WITH SOME SPECIAL STUFF TO MAKE THE FLASH PURPLE. WE WANT TO PUT ON A GOOD SHOW FOR THESE PAINTED DEVILS...

CAREFUL NOW-- HERE COMES SHIPT-EYED MAGUANUS...

NOW WATCH CAREFULLY, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, AS I LIGHT THE MAGIC PAPER—!!

QUIET, SOURPUSS— YOU'LL GET YOUR CHANCE LATER.

IF THE POWER-FLASH IS GREEN, IT WILL PROVE THAT MAGUANUS IS POWERFUL. BUT IF IT IS PURPLE, YOU MUST OBEY ME, THE WONDERFUL WIZARD OF FIREFIELD!!
YOU SEE--?! SEE WHAT HAPPENS WHEN I TOUCH MY MAGIC PAPER TO THE POWER-DUST!!

IT EXPLODES PURPLE-- AND TAKE MY WORD FOR IT IN CASE YOU'RE COLOR-BLIND!

FWOOSH

PAK PAK PAK
BAK BAK BAK
PAK PAK

THE SKY--!!
THE SKY BURNS--!!

AND FALLS DOWN TO US--!! MAGIC-- IT IS MAGIC!!

HAAIIIEEE!!

SPAK KRAK PAK
KAK

IN THE NAME OF THE LAWGIVER--!!

HEH HEH HEH... KEEP THE SKY-ROCKET'S FLYING, MAJOR URSA.

ALL RIGHT, MAGUANUS-- THE SHOW'S OVER. LET'S SEE YOU TOP THAT LITTLE POWER-PLAY OF PROGRESS.

KILL THEM, MY WARRIORS!!

IF ONLY GUNPOWDER JULIUS COULD SEE THIS!

GET THEM ALL OFF BEFORE THE MAGNESIUM SMOKE CLEARS AND THEY SEE WHAT WE'RE DOING!

BUT NONE OF THE ASSISIMIANS MOVE FORWARD...
ALL RIGHT, FELLOWS—YOU KNOW WHO'S BOSS AROUND HERE NOW...
AND IF YOU DON'T OBEY ME, I'LL SET OFF ANOTHER LIGHT-SHOW—BIGGER THAN THE FIRST—AND RIGHT INSIDE YOUR HEADS!

NOW—BRING THEM DOWN FROM THE POLES AND SET THEM FREE—!

THEY ARE THE CHILDREN OF THE WIZARD OF FIREWIND!!

NO—NO LISTEN TO HIM!!

BUT THE INTIMIDATED ASSASSINS DO LISTEN... AND...

NOW JUST BACK AWAY... REAL SLOW AND EASY... INTO THE WAGON...

BEHOLD, PUNY MORTALS! THE WIZARD OF FIREWIND WILL NOW TAKE HIS LEAVE OF YOU!

BUT IN THE PROCESS OF BACKING AWAY...

...AND...

—A HEEL SNAGS ON A TAIL...

JASON! IT'S JASON, 3, MALAGUENA—!!

YOU SEE—?! NOT MAGIC—ONLY HUMAN! KILL THEM—KILL THEM ALL!!

AND THIS TIME, THE ASSASSINS DO MOVE FORWARD... WITH BLOOD IN THEIR EYES...
AND THEIR ANGER AT BEING DECEIVED IS ONLY HEIGHTENED AS LIGHTSMITH WHIPS OFF HIS SHEET...

START THE WONDER WAGON, GILBERT... PROGRESS HAS JUST BEEN ASSAULTED BY THE DARK FORCES OF SAVAGERY!!

USE YOUR CROSSBOW, JASON-- FIRE OVER THEIR HEADS TO SCARE THEM BACK!!

LISTEN, LIGHTSMITH-- YOU CAN FIRE OVER THEIR HEADS ALL YOU WANT...

BUT I FEEL A WHOLE LOT SAFER WITH A SOMewhat LOWER AIM!

BRACE YOURSELF, LIGHTSMITH-- BECAUSE HIGH AIM OR LOW...

IT'S NOT STOPPING THE BRUTES--!

YES, I SHOULD'VE KNOWN-- IT NEVER DOES...

BUT I STILL KEEP HOPING THEY'LL LEARN TO RESPECT SOMETHING OTHER THAN BRUTE FORCE!

YEAH? WELL, IF YOU EXPECT ME TO HELP YOU TEACH THEM, YOU'VE PICKED THE WRONG--

--YAAGH!!

LOUSY APES! RIGHT IN MY LEG!--!
INSIDE, JASE—BEFORE THAT LEG GIVES OUT!

LET GO OF ME, ALEX! LIGHT-SMITH NEEDS HELP OUT HERE—!

LIKE HELL I DO! NOW GET INSIDE, BOY!

THESE ASSISIMANS MAY BE PRETTY TOUGH CUSTOMERS—

"—BUT THEY'RE ALSO MIGHTY QUICK TO GET DISCOURAGED WHEN THERE'S ANY AMOUNT OF RUNNING INVOLVED."

AND SO THE WONDER WAGON TRUNDLES OFF INTO THE NIGHT, WITH GILBERT AT THE CONTROLS, SAFELY KEREOCH PRISONERS INSIDE THE LIVING QUARTERS, AND GRUMBLING AND GRUNT-ING ASSISIMANS LEFT BEHIND IN THE DUST...

MORNING IS CLEAR, BRIGHT, AND WARM. THE AIR SMELLS CLEAN OUT HERE, AND THERE ARE SOUNDS OF MEDITATIVE BIRDS, AND THE CONTENTED SNUFFLING OF JASON'S WEIRDLING STEED OUTSIDE...

HOPE YOUR LEG FEELS BETTER, JASE. WE REALLY APPRECIATE HOW YOU SAVED US, YOU KNOW...

I ALWAYS KNEW WE WERE STILL FRIENDS.

I SAVED YOU JUST AS I'D SAVE ANYONE FROM SOMETHING LIKE THAT. BUT DON'T GET ANY IDEAS, ALEX... I'M LOOKING FOR BRUTUS.

I JUST HAPPENED TO FIND YOU TWO ON THE WAY.

VERY WELL, JASON... BUT AT LEAST LET US COME WITH YOU—TO SEE THAT YOU DON'T GET HURT.

YEAH, A LOT OF GOOD YOU'LL BE—PROBABLY GET YOURSELVES CAUGHT AND STRUNG UP ON SOME POLES AGAIN.

HOLD ON THERE, JASON. SEEMS TO ME YOU'VE GOT YOURSELF A COUPLE OF PRETTY NICE FRIENDS HERE. NO NEED TO SNAP AT THEM LIKE THAT...

BESIDES, IT'S TIME TO MOVE ON NOW, GILBERT WANTS TO TAKE A LITTLE SNOOZE...

SO WHY DON'T YOU RIDE UP FRONT WITH ME, JASON—KEEP ME COMPANION WHILE I DRIVE...
THE DAY WEARS WELL, GROWING MORE BEAUTIFUL WITH EACH PASSING MILE OF LANDSCAPE...

ALMOST THERE, JASON--MY HOME IS RIGHT AROUND THE NEXT BEND...

AND WHEN THE RATTLING STEAM CAR MAKES THE TURN...

WH-WHAT IS THAT--?! 

I ALREADY TOLD YOU, JASON--IT'S WHERE I KEEP MY PRIVATE SUPPLY OF KNOWLEDGE AND PROGRESS--MAGIC--WHERE I LIVE WHEN I'M NOT TRAVELING IN THE WONDER WAGON.

AND LIKE I SAID, HOME IS WHERE THE HEAT IS IN OLD SOUTH DAKOTA.

I LIVE RIGHT UP INSIDE THAT ONE...

...THE ONE WITH THE NOSE--

AND IT'S A MIGHTY FINE PLACE TO BE...
Dear Stan and Co.,

After your 77th fabulous issue I felt compelled to write to you. I don't see why you're torturing us so much. After all, we do buy your mags every week, so why oh why do you come up with such ideas like "Malagueny in the Forbidden Zone" when you could be adapting "Battle for the POTA" and even the TV series stories?

Don't think I'm saying POTA is rubbish. After all, why would I buy it? It is, and "The Black Panther" and "Kao-Zar" are brilliant, no doubt about it.

I've just got to ask you why, on the front cover of issue 74 have you a picture of a giant river slug, when there is absolutely no mention of it? I think you've messed up the covers a bit, haven't you?

Come on now, admit it. I mean, you didn't even finish Conquest of the POTA when you were telling us about Apes and Humans banding together to battle unknown menace.

Let's get on to some artwork, or, more to the point, artists. After issue 72 we saw two new artists drawing our fearless Kao-Zar. Their names, Marie Severin and Werner Roth. These were instead of Dan Adkins. They are pathetic. Please bring back Dan.

Steven Haskett,
143 Birkworth Court, Offerton,
Stockport, Cheshire.

It may surprise you to learn, Steve, that "Malagueny in the Forbidden Zone" has earned more than its share of praise from Marvelites. And there are many among us who tell Marie Severin's and Werner Roth's art are better than Dan Adkins'. So-o-o-o, where does all that leave us? Hoozaa Boy! We can tell you that making Bullpen decisions isn't exactly the easiest thing in the world. Now, about those covers. We've been into this before, but we guess you must have been reading the opposition at the time. Briefly, the original stories from the U.S. are longer than the sections reprinted in the British Marvels. But there's only one cover. And, sometimes, the covers get out of step with the section of the story being published inside the mag. Okay - we know it shouldn't happen, but neither should the common cold.

Dear Bullpen,

I first came into contact with you when I was travelling to Manchester by train. I bought issue 115 of Spiderman. It was great.