While the savage Assimilans lead Brutus and his band in hot pursuit, Alex, Lightsmith and friends ride the Wonder Wagon into the hidden Adobe City within the ring of mountains...

Stan Lee presents: PLANET OF THE APES!

...totally unaware they may be riding into a death trap in their never-ending quest for...

"...The way to the Psychedrome!"

And as they sit for a communion with members of the integrated inhabitants of the Adobe, nibbling the buttons of the sacred cactus plants, there must be at least one of the party who abstains...

...if there is to be any hope at all?

Edited by Archie Goodwin * Written by Doug Moench * Art by Mike Ploog & Tom Sutton
Lightsmith said to just... Lay back...

They're moving--but stars can't move--!

Feel so... Strange...

...And the stars... Still moving... Changing... Shaping something... Forming something...

**BRUTUS!**

Stars turned into Brutus...

Dirty, ugly, filthy Killer Brutus snarling and smiling...

And me!! That's me up there--inside!!

I'm trapped--Brutus caught me--I'm a prisoner--can't get out--!

Help me--I've got to help me!!

Sure hope this sacred place of yours really is the Psychedrome, Shaman...

...But to tell you the truth, I'm inclined to doubt it. There are an awful lot of sacred places left over from the past, you know--most of them in the ruins they call forbidden zones...

What's it like inside this sacred place of yours...?

Brutus is going to kill me--Devour me!!

Help--let me out--HELLllllpp!!

There is no way of knowing, friend Lightsmith...
IT IS SEALED FOREVER... NO ONE MAY EVER GET INSIDE...
The magic of the ancients is too strong for us of today.

UP HERE, FRIEND LIGHTSMITH--THROUGH THIS DOOR...

--FREE!!  

I'M FREE!

--THROUGH HIS TEETH--BEFORE THEY BITE!

GOT TO GET OUT OF HERE--SQUEEZE THROUGH THE BARS--

MUST ESCAPE--MUST GET--

HE DOESN'T WANT TO CAPTURE ME AGAIN--THIS TIME HE WANTS TO KILL ME!!

NO--HE'S AFTER ME NOW--MAD BECAUSE I ESCAPED!

WANTS TO DRENCH THE GROUND WITH MY BLOOD--BRIGHT RED AND I CAN SEE IT AS EVERYTHING GETS DIM AND I FEEL SICK!!

HE'S RUNNING FASTER THAN ME--WHY ARE APES FASTER THAN HUMANS? STRONGER THAN HUMANS? BETTER THAN HUMANS WHY AREN'T I AFRAID OF HUMANS THE WAY I'M AFRAID OF HIM?!!

IN THE BACK WALL OF THIS ROOM, FRIEND LIGHTSMITH--BEHIND THIS BLANKET...

NO--MY FEET--ROOTED IN THE GROUND, GROWING DEEPER, CAN'T MOVE--I CAN'T RUN--CAN'T GET AWAY!

...THERE IS A TUNNEL WHICH LEADS DEEP INTO THE MOUNTAIN...TO THE SACRED PLACE FROM THE PAST.
KINDA DARK IN HERE, SHAMAN...

VERY DARK, AND FOR GOOD REASON--
THERE IS NO LIGHT...

...AT LEAST, AS LONG AS
THE BATTERIES
IN MY MAGIC
TORCH DON'T
WEAR OUT.

YOUR MAGIC IS VERY POWERFUL,
FRIEND LIGHTSMITH... PERHAPS
POWERFUL ENOUGH TO DEFEAT THE
MAGIC OF THE ANCESTORS...

...AND ALLOW US TO ENTER THE SACRED
PLACE WHICH HAS BEEN SEALED
FOREVER.

WELL, LIKE THE ANCESTORS SAID, SHAMAN--
WHERE THERE'S A WILL,
THERE'S A WAY.

GROUNDS GONE-- BUT I'M STILL ROOTED-- IN CORPSES-- SKELETONS-- UGLY BONES OF DEATH-- THE BONES OF THOSE KILLED BY BRUTUS-- THEY'LL SUCK ME DOWN UNTIL I BECOME PART OF THE PILE.

GOT TO GET AWAY-- I DID GET AWAY, BONES GONE NOW-- BUT BRUTUS-- HE'S STILL CHASING ME-- AND HE'S CHANGED--!

HE'S A BEAST NOW, NAKED AND STRONGER AND FASTER-- STRONGER-- SO HE CAN TEAR ME APART AND FIND MY BONES!!

WHEN IN THE NAME OF PROGRESS ARE WE GONNA FIND THIS SACRED PLACE OF YOURS, SHAMAN--?
WE'VE BEEN SLITHERING THROUGH THIS TUNNEL FOR A MIGHTY LONG TIME NOW...

IF ONLY I COULD FIND THE PLACE-- THE PLACE OF SAFETY...!

DOESN'T IT EVER END--?

IT ENDS, FRIEND LIGHTSMITH...
YEAH, BUT WHEN? IT SEEMS LIKE WE'VE ALREADY GONE FAR ENOUGH TO COME OUT THE OTHER SIDE OF THE MOUNTAIN.

VERY SOON NOW, FRIEND LIGHTSMITH JUST AROUND THIS CORNER.

WELL, STEP ASIDE, SHAMAN -- SO I CAN TAKE A LOOK.

NO-- MY HEAD!!

IT'S BURNING!! AHEAD--A FOREST-- MAYBE SAFETY...

BUT THE FOREST IS AN ISLAND...

MALAGUENA!!

HELP ME, MALAGUENA--SAVE ME, PLEASE SAVE ME!

DON'T LEAVE ME, MALAGUENA!!

MALAGUENA, YOU'RE THE ONLY ONE WHO CAN HELP ME!

YOU'RE MY ONLY HOPE, THE ONLY ONE I CAN TRUST!

DON'T BETRAY ME! YOU CAN'T BETRAY ME, MALAGUENA--PLEASE DON'T BETRAY...
IN THE NAME OF EVERY PROGRESS LEADER, WHO EVER PROGRESSED FROM DARKNESS TO LIGHT...!

AS I SAID, FRIEND LIGHTSMITH...

...INCREDIBLE...

AND IT'S... HUMMING.

AS ALWAYS, FRIEND LIGHTSMITH.

YOU KNOW, IT JUST MIGHT BE THE PSYCHEDROME AT THAT...

...AND IF IT IS, IT'S GONNA TAKE A HUGE HEAP OF BOOM-STICKS JUST TO MAKE A DENT IN IT...

COME ON, SHAMAN -- I NEED TO SLEEP ON THIS.

NIGHTMARE'S ALMOST OVER... JUST AS SOON AS I REACH MALAGUENA...

BUT WHY IS SHE REACHING INTO THE FOREST? WHAT IS SHE... HOLDING?

ALEX--?!! SHE'S HOLDING ALEX!! KISSING HIM!!

WAIT... IT WAS ONLY A DREAM -- A NIGHTMARE. NONE OF IT REALLY HAPPENED...

MALAGUENA WASN'T KISSING ALEX...
SHE WASN'T...

WHAT--?!!

I'LL KILL YOU FOR THAT, APE!!

YOU SAID IT WAS ONLY A DREAM--ONLY A NIGHTMARE!!

I SAID... WHAT?

YOU LIED TO ME!!

I'M GONNA--

WHOA NOW, JAS--BOY--THIS IS NO TIME TO START THE LAST WORLD WAR.

NOW: BY ALL THAT'S HOLY AND KNOWLEDGEABLE...

...WHAT IN BLAZES IS GOING ON--?!

MALAGUEÑA LOVES ME, BUT HE WAS KISSING HER!!

MALAGUEÑA...? KISSING A HUMAN?

ME--? BUT I'M AN APE...AREN'T I...?

CONTINUED NEXT WEEK!
Dear Stan, Roy,

Without doubt, POTA is the worst of its kind. No pics, no Marvel ads, no Apes Forum or anything. I did, however, enjoy Mike Ploog's artwork. But this isn't enough. The terrible good-for-nothing, useless paper wasted, money wasted (on your part) labour wasted, time wasted. Black Panther and the same for the idiotic Ka-Zar was still carried on. It seems that POTA is being slowly taken over by these two badly-drawn comic strips. WHEN WILL THEY END? If you like them why not put them into a comic of their own. When are we going to have "Starlord"? And "The Sword in the Star", as these would be better than the rubbish I mentioned just now.

I think Howard Harcourt (ish 75) should look on the bright side of things. Of course "Planet..." will make its 100th issue... but will it make its 500th issue?

I must congratulate Alfredo Alcala for his artwork in "Conquest..." not to mention Doug Moench's writing, also Mike Ploog, for his artwork, and Doug again in "Malaguena in a Zone Forbidden."

Stan, would it be possible for you to have an LP slip disc (two-sided) of the sound track of either a film or TV series? This could be in your 100th issue as a gift, or would be entirely impossible? If so, wouldn't be other ways of acquiring one, like buying one through the post.

Gregory Dunne ONS.KOF.
Limavady, Co. Derry, N. Ireland.

So you don't like Black Panther of Ka-Zar — but countless Marvelites DO! So what would you have us do, deprive them of one of life's pleasures? Or maybe force 'em to buy another mag? Come on, Greg, you don't really mean it! And now we have to come on with the bad news. Sorry, but we'd never be able to make a deal to give away the Apes film or TV series soundtrack. And as far as we're aware, neither of those soundtracks has been put out commercially. Which means they're unobtainable.

Dear Marvel,

Before Dracula Lives came out I had never read any of your comics. However, on a Friday night I saw an advertisement for Dracula Lives, and when I went into town the next day I bought a copy. Since then I have got one every issue. I think that Gene Colan and Tom Palmer are brilliant at drawing Drac and give them my congratulations. I saw Blade in your American mag "Vampire Tales" and was glad when he came into the story in issue 20. I hope he gets the "stinking white-haired vampire" that killed his mother.

Steven Martin, Broughton, Chester.

So THAT was the way we grabbed ya, Steve. Well, getting hoo led was the easy part. Now try getting away from us!

Dear Bullpen,

This letter is about the Apes stories that have appeared in POTA.

The first one — Planet of the Apes — was superb and still, in my mind, the best yet. George Tuska's artwork was immaculate, although after the first few issues the shading, or tint as you'd call it, was put on a bit too heavy.

Terror on the Planet of the Apes was also a good story. The art by Mike Ploog was spoiled by too much shading again. I enjoyed Evolution's Nightmare, but you never finished it. Again, too much shading on Ed Hamigan's work.

The Apeslayer (or should I say Killraven) saga was the worst story yet. Please don't do this again. Killraven on an island of the Apes was a pretty good story, and Rico Rival's art wasn't bad. Beneath the Planet of the Apes was easily the worst apes film, but the adaptation was good. City of Nomads was different, and so was Tom Sutton's art, but it was pretty good. Escape from the Planet of the Apes was very good, as was Rico Rival's art, but I'd like to see more of George Tuska's art. Any chance?

Conquest of the Planet of the Apes was also good, and I look forward to your adaptation of Battle. Malaguena in a Zone Forbidden saw the return of Jason, Alex, Gimpower Julias, Steely Dan, Brutus, the Inheritors, the Lawgiver and Mike Ploog doing the art, which was very good, as was Doug Moench's story. If I had to give points out of ten for each Apes story, this is what I'd give:

- "Planet..." Nine
- "Terror..." Eight
- "Evolution's Nightmare" Five
- "Apeslayer" Two
- "Kingdom..." Seven.
- "Beneath..." Eight
- "Escape..." Seven
- "City of Nomads" Seven
- "Conquest..." Nine
- "Malaguena..." Nine

All told, I make that 73 out of a possible 100. After a very good start and a poor spell you've come back to your very best.

Your friendly neighborhood letter-writer.

And to think, we didn't even KNOW we were sitting for an exam!

Dear Marvel Madmen,

I think you have made a grave (no pun) mistake. Of Doggy chaps has been with us a never since the beginning of DL, but now (ish 75) we find a two-bit-cheapskate with a sob story called Ghost-Rider. He's a really good character, but a while ago I bought an American W.B.N. and it was Belaric Marcosa and his Mansion of the Damned. It was brilliantly drawn etc. And then, after Moon Knight, right at the bottom of issue 9 page 21 panel (if you don't mind me being like a file) 7, it mentioned my old pal Belaric Marcosa. Seeing as my American W.B.N. was the last in the story, I really wanted to read his. Let me give you a rundown on the mags I get.

D.L. Dracula — story good, art fair. Ghost Rider — story fair, art brilliant. Man-Thing — story fairish, art, see GR.


32 Dorset Road, Maldon, Essex.

Could it be you've slipped a gear somewhere, Simon? Because ever since Ghost-Rider arrived in Britain he's been steadily forging upwards in the popularity charts. But thanks for your review of the mags.
My Dear Bullpen,

Greetings! This letter comes as an examination of some of your latest moves. By Thanos, I'm disappointed in a lot of ways, by clashes and unthinking attitudes.

Here's something for you to chew on. The Black Panther has received a lot of coverage late. Not a bad thing on the surface, if you consider the beautiful scripting by Don McGregor on his own strip in the back of Planet of the Apes. Then the Panther has also taken a few new roles by late in The Avengers, but last week was his last slotted appearance in The Avengers for some time to come, as he does not participate in the Skrull-Kree war.

In effect, the Panther has taken the spotlight for several weeks, and has earned the adulation of many a Marvelite in this time, but now he's in, and we'll see him no more for an age. With his departure from the Avengers, this would have been a good time to start Pantheon Rage, not end it. I also have to protest Captain Marvel in the same way. Over these next few weeks in The Avengers both he and The Avengers will be caught up in the Skrull-Kree war, and meanwhile, in his own strip, transferred from Titans to POTA (to keep us on our toes) The Avengers are wrapped up in Mar-Vell's efforts in the Thanos war. Is there any communication between you? Mar-Vell's strip should have taken a breather a while back, at the last place he was 'rested' in the American version, until after the Skrull-Kree war.

Why you didn't launch into Starlord and Sword in the Star when you announced them, instead of bunging in Ka-Zar and BP I still never know.

I did have a second point. Will all those people who have written to complain about the Marvel format spoiling the artwork try a simple test with me. It involves taking hold of an American Marvel Comic, an issue of either Titans or Super-Spiderman and one other British Marvel. Open the American, full-colour comic, and the old-style British Marvel. Notice how the Brit Marv is not merely a Black-and-white version, but an enlarged version, showing a fair amount of stress in the reproduction. Now open the New Improved Marvel Comic. Doesn't the compacted version seem neater and more efficient in the artwork quality? In actual fact, comparing with the American shows that the reduction in size is only very slight. Looking at it in this completely objectively, I'd say that I didn't go much on the new size at first, but now I prefer it.

Graham Day,
148 Temple Ave., Dagenham, Essex.

Graham, no matter how we shuffled the Marvel pack and played the cards the order would inevitably delight many and disappoint others. But this we know for a certainty — Pantheon's Rage has been one of the successes of the year!

---

**SORRY FANS...**

**AS FROM NEXT WEEK, PLANET OF THE APES AND DRACULA LIVES WILL COST ONE PENNY MORE.**

**UNFORTUNATELY, RISING COSTS (PAPER, PRINTING, ETC.) AND THE STEADY MARCH OF INFLATION HAS FORCED US TO RAISE OUR COVER PRICE FOR THE FIRST TIME SINCE OCTOBER 1974.**

**WE DON'T LIKE TO DO THIS, BUT BE ASSURED IT'S ABSOLUTELY UNAVOIDABLE! SO AS FROM NEXT WEEK PLANET OF THE APES WILL COST 9 PENCE.**
THE SHIP HAS LANDED ON THIS STRANGE "NEW" WORLD. THE CREW OF THE STARSHIP HAS AWAKENED.

THAT IS... ALL BUT ONE!

OH... MY... GOD...!!

SCRIPT: DOUG MOENCH
PENCILS: GEORGE TUSKA
INKS: MIKE ESPOSITO
THAT SETTLES IT--THREE ADAMS AND NO EVE...

THAT'S A HELL OF A THING TO SAY AT A--

THERE GOES OUR PRIMARY POWER--WE'RE ON AUXILIARY NOW.

WATER... THAT'S WHAT IT'S CALLED, LANDON. WE BETTER CHECK THE Porthole...

WE'RE IN THE SOUP ALL RIGHT... AND SINKING FAST.

DOODGE--TAKE A READING ON THE ATMOSPHERE! IT'S A CINCH WE WON'T BE ABLE TO STAY IN HERE AND BREATHE THE WATER.

IT'S BREATHABLE, TAYLOR.
DIDN'T THINK YOU WERE EVER COMING, TAYLOR.

JUST SAYING GOODBYE TO THE SHIP, LANDON. AFTER ALL, WE HAVE HER TO THANK FOR GETTING US HERE...

YEAH... WHEREVER HERE IS.

THE WATER'S BRINY-- 25 PERCENT SALINITY. NEAR THE SATURATION POINT.

SHE'S STILL SINKING...

GOING...

SOLD TO THE THREE EARTHPERSONS-- ONE PLANET, HOPEFULLY SLIGHTLY USED. BECAUSE IF IT ISN'T, PAUL, WE'RE ALL ALONE--

--AND WE'RE HERE TO STAY!
Yeah, but where's here? You got any notions at all, Skipper?

We're some three-hundred-twenty light years from Earth on an unnamed planet in orbit around a star in the constellation Orion...

That could be Bellatrix up there!

You didn't have time to check the tapes--so you don't really know where we are, do you?

Too red for Bellatrix!

What went wrong?

We weren't programmed to land in water--so we're not where we're supposed to be.

Now what's that supposed to mean?

The question, Landon, is not so much where we are as when we are.

It means we've had our rip van winkle snooze...

...and now it's time to start earning our back pay.

Why don't you take a tip from Dodge? He's already busy taking soil samples.
Well, as for our inventory... we've got one pistol, twenty-four rounds of ammo, two medical kits, one camera, one TXS...

...and enough food and water for three days.

Good question, Dodge.

Landon, snap out of it and check your communications kit.

Yeah, but how long is a day?

Landon! I said join the expedition!

Sorry...

I was thinking about... Stewart, what'd you suppose happened?

Air leak. Died in her sleep...

You don't seem very cut up about it?

It's a little late for mourning — she's been dead nearly a year.

Then... we've been away from Earth for eighteen months.

By our time.

In fact, your hair's gone grey, Landon...

...but apart from that, you look pretty chipper for a man who's two-thousand thirty-one years old.

Two-thousand...

Next week! The Men of Twenty Centuries!