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!

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...

Destroyed by whom--themselves. I suppose?

No, destroyed by... why, by enemy powers, of course!

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.

And why did these "enemy powers"--other humans--no doubt--choose to strike when they did after holding themselves back for so long?

Before it boils over, the human Mac Donald 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, Mac Donald--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 Mac Donald, 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 Moscow cloud we all saw last year--it was an atomic flash. Caesar! The city has been destroyed.

Your revolt wasn't the only one of its kind. You know Caesar... there were reports that it sparked off similar ape uprisings all over the country...

And these enemy powers, Mac Donald--they took their opportunity we apes provided, and they have won? They now rule the world--?
NO, I DOUBT THAT ANYONE WON, CAESAR! EVEN AS THEIR BOMBS WERE HITTING US, WE MUST HAVE ASSEMBLED WITH MISSILES OF OUR OWN!

AND THESE ENEMY POWERS WERE DESTROYED TOO --?

INDEED, MACDONALD? AND NOW, IF ALDO HAS HIS WAY, HUMANITY ITSELF WILL BE DESTROYED -- ALONG WITH ITS "CIVILIZATION!"

AND IF YOU HAVE YOUR WAY, CAESAR...?

FOR ALL PRACTICAL PURPOSES, I WOULD SAY YES! THERE ARE PROBABLY SCATTERED SURVIVORS -- JUST AS WE HAVE SURVIVED HERE -- BUT HUMAN CIVILIZATION AS WE KNEW IT IS DEAD.

CAESAR -- DESTROYED... PERHAPS FOREVER!

I... I DON'T KNOW, MACDONALD...

BUT MAYBE THERE'S A WAY... THERE MUST BE A WAY -- FOR APES AND HUMANS TO LIVE TOGETHER... WITHOUT MURDERING EACH OTHER...

I HOPE SO, CAESAR... AND I'M GLAD TO HEAR YOU SAY --

CAESAR...!

CAESAR, I HAVE THE MOST WONDERFUL NEWS...!!

I'M GOING TO... WE'RE GOING TO HAVE A BABY!!

A BABY, CAESAR...!

... JUST WONDERFUL... WOULD IT STOP YOU, CAESAR...? EVERYTHING I'VE TOLD YOU...?

THAT... THAT'S WONDERFUL, LISA...

AND NOW... WHAT LISA HAS TOLD YOU...?

WILL IT STOP ME, MACDONALD? SHOULD I LET IT STOP ME? SHOULD I STAY AT HOME... AND WAIT FOR MY CHILD TO BE BORN... SO HE CAN GROW UP IN ALDO'S WORLD OF HATE...?

NO, MACDONALD... IT WON'T STOP ME...
DAWN: THE GREAT SQUARE IS CROWDED WITH THE ENTIRE POPULATION 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 HEAPS HOPEFULLY, RESPECTFULLY...

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

...AND AS THE TWO PARTICIPANTS GALLOR OUT OF THE SQUARE, THERE IS ONE WHO CHUCKLES PARKLY... ALMOST INSANELY...

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

BUT BRECK -- THE FORMER GOVERNOR OF THE STATE... NOWLY BEGINS FOGHOMICALLY...

...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 GROWS...

YOU TOO SLOW FOR ALDO, CAESAR...

...TOO SLOW TO BE RULER OF APES!

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

Perhaps: 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 rides his way up a steep ridge...
...ONLY TO GAZE DOWN UPON A SCENE OF UTTER HORROR.

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

...AND AS HE ALLOWS THE AWESOME VISION OF DEATH AND DEVASTATION TO FALL UPON 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 -- THE 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.
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 you 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 gens 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 bit 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 It's 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, Tottemham, London.

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

DO YOU KNOW:

What country has SUOMI on its stamps?  
What country has ÉIRE on its stamps?  
What country has MAGYAR on its stamps?  
What country has NORGE on its stamps?  
Prices: 2d off choice stamps sent free for each correct answer. If 4 answers correct we will send you a specially imported collection of 100 diff. world-wide stamps (catalogue value £5.00) plus the famous 90-year-old British PENNY LILAC stamp, as illustrated.

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APES' FANG MAIL
MARVEL COMICS LTD Room 106
52 HIGH HOLBORN LONDON WC1V 6RZ
AND THAT'S HOW THEY CATCH 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. HAVN'T I? TOLD IT TO YOU EVERY DAY FOR THE LAST FOUR WEEKS.

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...

...COUSE 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 FIGHT IN SIMIAN SUPERIORITY...
SAY, DID YOU HEAR SOMETHING, NOVA?

SOUNDS LIKE...

THE WATER HOSE!

Eeveeesh!

HEY-- WHAT'S THE IDEA?!

WHAT ARE YOU DOING--?!

LEAVE HER ALONE!

Shrack!

TAKE YOUR HANDS OFF HER, YOU HAIRY SCUM!

WHERE ARE YOU TAKING HER? WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO?

WHY ARE YOU DOING THIS? WHY ARE YOU SEPARATING US--?!

SAY SOMETHING, YOU FILTHY MONSTER!!
ANSWER ME --!!!

ANSWER ME, JULIUS--YOU SLIMY DUNGEON WORM!!!

WHERE'S DR. ZIRA? WHY HAVE I...

I SAID SHUT UP!!

SHUT UP!

THE REASON NO ONE'LL TALK TO YOU IS BECAUSE YOU'RE A FREAK.

AND I MEANT SHUT UP!!

APE!!

APES WEARING CLOTHES! IT'S A MAD HOUSE -- A MAD HOUSE!!!

NOW I DON'T EVEN HAVE YOU NOW.

AND THAT'S THE JOKE, ME -- NEEDING SOMEONE...

WHAT'S THE USE...?
Back on Earth, I needed nobody. Nova, or there were women... lots of them. But it was love-making without love. That's the kind of world it was turning into, with the help of cynics like me.

So I left it. Because there was no one dear enough to keep me there...

DID I TELL YOU ABOUT STEWART?

Now there was a lovely girl. The most precious cargo we brought along. She was to be our new eye...

...so I suppose it's just as well she didn't live to see this.

I wonder if it's love between us?

It'd fit with the pattern of my life. Me... finding love here... in hell.

How touching.

I really hate to break up such a tender scene, freak... --but it seems you're wanted.

I suppose you haven't resisted the manacles because you think some of your questions are going to be answered.

Well, we'll see. Freak, we'll see.

Good-bye, Nova. We'll meet again.

Please... take him out of here. He sickens me.
LEAD TO A LARGE CHAMBER WITH SPARTAN FURNISHINGS, TAYLOR IS SEATED IN THE CENTRE OF THREE CHAIRS FACING A Dais. LONG MOMENTS OF SILENCE PASS. THEN...

ZIRA-- CORNELIUS. WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN? SHHHH!

BUT...WHAT IS THIS? A HEARING.

BE CLEVER AND BE QUIET--OR WE'VE ALL HAD IT.

ALL RISE IN HONOUR OF THE PRESIDENT.
AND APPEARING FOR THE STATE, DR. HONORIUS, DEPUTY MINISTER OF JUSTICE IN THE PROSECUTION.

LET IT BE CLEAR AT THE OUTSET THAT ALL MATTERS PERTAINING TO THIS INQUIRY ARE CONFIDENTIAL, AND ANY ONE DISCUSSING THE OUTSIDE THIS CHAMBER WILL BE HELD IN CONTEMPT OF THE TRIBUNAL.

BY YOUR LEAVE, MR. PRESIDENT—MA Y I POINT OUT THAT THE TRIBUNAL HAS NOT YET DEFINED THE PURPOSE OF THIS INQUIRY.

RESTRAIN YOURSELF, DR. HONORIUS, THERE IS NO HARM IN ANSWERING HER QUESTION.

NOW THEN, DR. ZIRA, SINCE YOU ARE THE ONE WHO REQUESTED AN OPPORTUNITY TO PRESENT YOUR CASE, SURELY YOU MUST KNOW WHY YOU'RE HERE.
MY OWN PURPOSE IS TO SAVE THIS EXCEPTIONAL CREATURE FROM MUTILATION.

AND OUR PURPOSE IS TO SETTLE CUSTODIAL AND JURISDICTI ONAL QUESTIONS CONCERNING THE BEAST AND TO DETERMINE WHAT'S TO BE DONE WITH HIM.

BUT AT THE VERY LEAST, THIS MAN HAS THE RIGHT TO KNOW WHETHER THERE'S A CHARGE AGAINST HIM.

OBJECTION! THE ACCUSED IS INDEED A MAN, THEREFORE HE HAS NO RIGHTS UNDER APE LAW.

WELL, DR. ZIRA? THIS IS A MAN, IS IT NOT?

HE IS UNLIKE ANY MAN YOU HAVE EVER SEEN -- AS WE HOPE TO PROVE.

ANSWER THE QUESTION -- IS HE A MAN?

SIR... IF I MAY... THE QUESTION IS THE POINT AT ISSUE: IS HE A MAN? OR A FREAK OF NATURE?

SUSTAINED. IN ALL FAIRNESS, DR. ZIRA, YOU MUST ADMIT THAT THE ACCUSED IS A NON-APE, AND THEREFORE HAS NO RIGHTS UNDER APE LAW.

THIS MAN IS NOT BEING TRIED. HE IS BEING DISPOSED OF. IT IS SCIENTIFIC HERESY WHICH IS ACTUALLY ON TRIAL HERE.

WELL PUT, DR. MAXIMUS. LET US WARN OUR FRIENDS THAT THEY JEOPARDIZE THEIR OWN CAREERS BY DEFENDING THIS ANIMAL.

THEN WHY IS HE CALLED THE ACCUSED? YOUR HONOURS MUST THINK HIM GUILTY OF SOMETHING.

Then I'll defend myself.

CONTINUED NEXT ISSUE!