(HIDEOUS--SO VERY, VERY... HIDEOUS. IS THIS WHAT THE NEW ORDER IS? IS THIS WHAT 'MUTA-
TION' IS? THE VILE CORRUPTION OF FLESH?)

YOU HAVE MADE PRISONERS OF US, OLD ONES, AND YOU THINK YOU HAVE WON THIS DEBACLE! BUT YOU ARE WRONG, FOR YOU ARE THE TRUE PRISONERS HERE--PRISONERS OF THE BLESSED NEW ORDER!

GO TO THE WINDOW IN THE SHACKLED OLD ONES--LOOK OUT AND SEE WHAT HAS BECOME OF YOUR PREVIOUS VESSEL OF DESTRUCTION!

(HE'S MAD--HE MUST BE! STILL, IF THE WINDOW CAN DISPEL ANY DOUBTS...) GO ON AND LOOK! SEE WHY YOU WILL NEVER RAM THIS SACRED CITY-SHIP OF CATHEDRALUS--OR ANY OTHER CITY-SHIP EVER AGAIN!!

(OH NO--IT CAN'T BE--SHE WAS NEVER EVEN USED FOR HER MAIN PURPOSE--AND NOW...) THE FREEDOM REAPER! ALARIC--!!

I DON'T LIKE THIS ALARIC...

SHE'S WRAPPED IN FLAMES--HER FROZEN BURNING LIKE HELL ITSELF--AND SHE'S SINKING!!

[YES SINKING... WITH HOW MANY ABOARD? HOW MANY WHO WERE SEDUDED TO VENTURE ABOARD THIS RADIATION-SHROUDED GHOST-SHIP CALLED CATHEDRALUS--HOW MANY WHO REMAINED BEHIND... FOR SAFETY?]

FUTURE HISTORY CHRONICLES V
THE FLAMES—WHY WAS THE
SORE WHATEVER THEY NEVER
FELL? WHY WERE THE
FOOT! MORE THAN EMPTINESS ONCE
THE FULLNESS OF EARTH!!

WE NEVER SAW THIS NIGHT
USE THAT DAMN
PROM-NEVER
AS A SINGLE
STOP?! THE
CITY-SHIP!!

THE PROCESS HAS
ALREADY BEGUN. SOON YOU
WILL BEGIN TO GLOW—WITH
HALOES BESTOWED FROM THE
BOMBS ON HIGH... AND GRADUALLY
THROUGH A PROCESS
OF EXQUISITE PAIN, YOU WILL
LOSE YOUR OFFENDING
HAIR...

YOUR SKIN, WHICH
UNTIL NOW HAS SEEN
OFF FROM THE BLESS-
SINGS OF THE BOMB, WILL
CRACK AND PEEL AWAY
LIKE WET MASKS OF SIN...

...AND YOU WILL BECOME
CONVERTS TO THE
NEW ORDER!!

THE WIND RISES,... PULLING THE RADIATION MISTS,... CLOTHING THE GLOBES OF GLISSING VAPORS...LIKE WASHING THE FLESH... LIKE VIPERS.

(WE MUST ESCAPE... WE MUST!!)

TO RACE THE DEATH-WINDS...
NOW STEP ASIDE, ALARIC... UNLESS YOU THINK YOUR NECK CAN STOP THIS BLADE!

THEN SHE HAS NOT FORGOTTEN THE BITTERNESS OF OUR FIGHT, AND HER ANGER IS DIRECTED NOT SO MUCH AT THE MUTANTS AS IT IS AT... FORGET!

WAIT!! SOMETHING'S HAPPENING--OUTSIDE!!

IT'S THE DECK--THE VERY STREET...!

WHAT--? THAT NOISE...

GRIND--RUMBLE--GRIND RR--RR--RRRUMMBBLE

(NO...)

(EARTHQUAKES HAPPENED ONLY ON THE LAND... OR SO IT WAS SAID BY AN ANCIENT WHO LIVED BEFORE THE TIME OF THE CITY-SHIPS...)

THERE'S SOMETHING DOWN THERE...!!

COULD IT BE... HELL?, ALARIC...?

WH--WHAT... IS... IT?

IT'S RISING UP... HIGHER... AND HIGHER...

IT'S THE CLOUD SWARM!! THE CLOUD SWARM IS LEAVING FOR THE HEAVENS!! THE NEW ORDER IS PASSING ON FROM EARTH TO THE HEAVENS!!
It's a balloon... what?

A balloon!! It's a balloon-- that's what it is!! Some of the mutants must be trying to escape!!

Escape, gorilla...?

Perhaps you're right, human. Doubtless the thing is just as contaminated with radiation as the rest of this hellish ship--

But at least it'll get us to land faster.

Alaric-- Reena-- come on, this may be our only chance!!

It is... hard to say, Alaric. Perhaps, there is nothing else but death for us on this city ship...

... but how do we know what awaits us... up there?

What about the rest of you--?

Will you join us in this... this balloon??

Hurry, Alaric!!

Then you choose certain death over the unknown!

Very well-- stay here if you wish, but we are going to--

(Too late...!)
(Then this is a captain's reward... for thinking first of his crew!)

(Then this might succeed... if allowance is made in the aim, for the weight of the line...)

Now, Reena, if I make this shot, grab onto me—before the line runs out!

You forget, Alaric, that I vowed you would never again touch me—and that I would never again lay gentle hands on you...

Wait until they climb higher and try to enter the gondola—then kill them!

Ulp! Forget what I said before, Alaric—about that ape blood in your veins! I didn't mean it! I'm really your friend—I swear it!!

But I suppose I really have no choice.

Just don't think this embrace is anything more than it has to be...

(Yes! Grayalk'm is right!)

(And that is enough.)
SOUNDS FROM ABOVE
--SWORDS CLASHING!
THEN STARKOR AND
GRAYWALK'N HAVE
BOARDED THIS...
THING...

(... AND THEY'RE FIGHTING THE MUTANTS--ALONE!)

BEHIND
YOU, APE!
THANK
YOU...
HUMAN.

MANNON,
ALERIC, JUST
WAIT UNTIL WE
FINISH OFF
THESE LAST
FEW ROTTEN-
FLESHERS!!

I'D HATE
TO FALL ON
CATHEDRALUS
FROM HERE...

HAAHHHHH
AHHHHH

NO TIME FOR
WAITING, STARKOR
-- WHEN THERE'S
NOTHING BUT A
ROPE BETWEEN
THIS MUTANT'S
SWORD AND THE
SPIRES OF
CATHEDRALUS
BELOW--!

REENA--
GRAB MY
DAGGER
BEFORE HE
REACHES
US!

WITH
PLEASURE,
ALERIC...

...MORE PLEASURE
THAN I TOOK FROM
THAT EMBRACE!

(SHE
JUST
WON'T
STOP)
(NO MATTER. IT'S TIME TO BE CONCERNED WITH FIGHTING . . .)

DON'T, REENA . . .!!

( . . . NOT WITH LOST LOVING . . .)

... BEFORE I SLASH YOUR PRETTY HEAD OFF!

JUST TRY IT, ALARIC! AND I'LL BITE YOUR . . .

MOLD IT, YOU TWO! CAN'T YOU SEE THE BATTLE'S OVER . . .

AND SINCE THERE ARE ONLY THESE TWO LEFT . . . I'D SAY WE WON . . .

(Perhaps ... but even after the two captives have been bound, one of them remains defiant)

UNTAINED Old Ones ... PEARL! THAT THE CLOUDS SWARM CARRY YOU INTO THE DEATH MISTS -- AS YOU DESERVE!

(Soaring now ... so high . . . so high that the breath is stolen ... replaced by the exhilaration of danger and mastery of the sky . . .)

DEATH MISTS --! WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?

YOU WILL SEE, OLD ONE . . .

IGNORE HIS SENSELESS TALK, STARKOR-- WE'D BETTER TAKE STOCK OF OURSELVES, WHERE WE ARE HEADING . . .

HARD TO TELL, REENA -- WE SEEM TO BE SURROUNDED BY DENSE CLOUDS . . .

WE'RE PASSING INTO IT -- IT ENDS where THE BALLOON MIST -- BLACK MIST . . .

CLOUDS WOULDN'T BLOCK THIS MUCH OF OUR VISION, APE -- WE CAN'T EVEN SEE THE SEAS BELOW US ANYMORE . . .

LIKE THE GHOST OF AN EVIL SKY . . .

LIKE THE ENDS OF THE BALLOON --

A SLOWLY SWIRLING MIASMA OF DARKNESS . . . AND -- EYES -- BURNING . . .)
(THROAT—SCALPED AND SCRATCHED LIKE BREATHING GritTY Specks OF HOT SAND...)

YOU'RE CLOSEST, STARKOR—FORCE THEM TO... KOFF... TELL US HOW TO... HANG... GET OUT OF THE MIST!

CUT THE BALLAST—THOSE BAGS ON THE SIDES OF THE GONDOLA.

IT'LL MAKE THE BALLOON RISE--ABOVE THE DEATH MISTS,...

(DOESN'T SEEM TO--KOFF AFFECT THE MUTANTS?)

(THUNDER RIPS AROUND, HUMMING, SIZZLING SNEAKS ON END.)

ALL RIGHT, YOU TWO ROTTEN-FLIES--MAYBE THE DEATH MISTS COULDN'T HURT YOU, BUT YOU'LL FALL JUST AS FAR AND JUST AS HARD AS THE REST OF US IF ONE OF THOSE BOLTS CUTS THIS THING LOOSE!

(BUT WHAT DO WE GET OUT OF THIS-- AND DON'T GIVE US ANY MORE ABOUT BALLAST BECAUSE THERE AREN'T ANY MORE OF THOSE BAGS LEFT)

THE BALLOON VALVE--OPEN IT UP TO RELEASE SOME OF THE GAS--IT WILL LOWER THE BALLOON INTO THE WIND CURRENTS...UNTIL WE ARE BLOWN FREE OF THE STORM!

(RAIN STARTING...VIOLENTLY...)

AND THE WIND...LIKE A HURRICANE...

I HOPE THIS THING IS THE "BALLOON VALVE" BECAUSE IF IT ISN'T I--

EASY, ALARIC--I'VE GOT YOU!! LET GO OF THAT THING AND I'LL PULL YOU--

--YAAH!! HAALP!!
(If ever a time was right, it is now—while a flash of her instinctive concern still lingers...)

Is this embrace any better, Reena...?

A-Laric— I told you—

A-Laric— We're passing out of it—!

Into clear skies—!

Of course you were Reena, and now that—

So it wasn't our last chance to face the truth, Reena—But I'm glad it might have been; if not for that storm—and the death mists—we'd still be trying to join each other's ears with red glasses... And we might never have faced the truth... Again.

It's beautiful up here, A-Laric... And let's pretend the storm is still raging.

I know what you told me, Reena—But that was when we could both afford to suck and pout and pretend we were stronger than our real feelings for each other.

But all that is changed now—by the fact that this air floater could tip over at any moment and dump us both to our deaths. So why don't we just face the truth while we still can—? It may be our last chance...

Well... I suppose I was putting on an act...

And now that the danger's past... I suppose I can admit that you did well holding that sail. Secure, Ape. And you, human, did a fair job with the rudder.

Hmph! No one could have done better.

So it wasn't our last chance to face the truth, Reena—But I'm glad it might have been; if not for that storm—and the death mists—we'd still be trying to join each other's ears with red glasses... And we might never have faced the truth... Again.

It's beautiful up here, A-Laric... And let's pretend the storm is still raging.

I hate to break up that snug scene, but there's a huge cloud up ahead...

...And something inside it is moving—!

CONCLUDED NEXT WEEK.
CALLING ALL FANZINE FANS!

Dear Marvel,

I am starting a sci-fi fanzine (The World of S.F.) for sci-fi fans, and also a superhero fanzine (World’s Heroes). Anyone interested in buying either, or both fanzines should contact me for details. News, art, and S.F. stories are featured in the Sci-Fi mag, and in the Superhero mag is featured Doc Savage (for the first issue).

When writing, a SAE should be included. We advertise Pen-Pals etc. for only 5 pence per issue (if using this service, please state which mag you wish to advertise in).

Thank you.

Until Namor drowns, Make Mine Marvel.

Ian Abrahams.
Clovelly, Mt. Ambrose.
Redruth, Cornwall.

It sounds as though you’ll be keeping yourself very busy publishing both those mags, Ian. Let’s hope Marvel uses its Assembled rallies round and gives you the support you deserve!

DISCUSSION NOT CONTROVERSY

Fellow Humans!

Some points made in MWOM 237 have prompted me to write. Firstly, M. Colgrove’s missive made me stop and think. I never thought that expressing your own could prove harmful to some fans. I joined in with the Adams/Kirby controversy at a very early stage. I even had a letter printed about the subject in MWOM 193. In it, you may remember, I highly praised Kirby’s work, but I never degraded Adams. I only pointed out a few simple facts about him. Other people, I’m afraid haven’t been as discriminating. I now find that this constant slamming of Marvel’s artists is most distasteful, especially for the people who enjoy that artist’s particular work.

“Marvel people”, it is said, “are the best people in the world”. Yes, and I believe that is true. All the people who I’ve met who read Marvel Comics have been friendly and helpful. Marvel is a collection of different individuals with the same good taste for comics, a family, if you will. I suggest that criticism of the various artists should be stopped. We don’t want any family arguments - Right?

You bet!

Secondly, S. Moore’s request for a totally S.F. orientated comic is one that I’d like to see accomplished. Unfortunately, as has been stated by S.F. authors themselves, S.F. doesn’t sell. There just isn’t a large enough market for a completely S.F. comic. Still, you could try a little experiment. If FURY, the new, all-war comic by Marvel, lasts for at least thirty issues, then I’m sure that a S.F. comic will last much longer.

Think about it!

Philip Greenaway,
38, 9th Avenue, Galon Uchaf,
Merthyr Tydfil, S. Wales.

Could it be that a “Science Fiction Weekly” discussion is destined to take over from the never-ending Adams/Kirby controversy in the MWOM letter columns? Let’s hope so, Seekers of the Truth, ‘cos it sure would make for a more constructive discussion!

SIMIAN COMPLAINTS

Dear Nutters,

The new Hulk story, “Intruder In The Mind”, is the talking point of all your mags at the moment. Len Wein should be singing in the hills at this success. The art is great. I cannot wait for the next issue. But if ever a comic had a letdown, and if ever there was a worse Planet of the Apes story, I would commit suicide. They are pathetic (a good person doesn’t like to call Planet of the Apes pathetic). The Battle of the Planet of the Apes was good, but then the last three issues. Alfredo Alcala’s art on “Battle” was the best ever Apes art.

Now Daredevil, again not up to standard recently. I would like to see Daredevil and Planet of the Apes drop out and let Luke Cage and the X-Men come in every twenty issues, so in issue 238 Luke Cage and the X-Men would come in, and in issue 258 POTA and Daredevil would come back.

The Captain Marvel story with Thanos is great. The story, “Thanos the God” was exceptional. I do not usually like Cap Marvel, but this time he excels in every sense of the word.

Make Mine Marvel.

Ian Thompson,
10 Welbury Road,
Newton Aycliffe, Co. Durham.

You’ll be pleased to learn, Ian, that Planet of the Apes is being replaced by Dracula. Let’s hope that the Lord of Vampires is more to your taste. But drop Daredevil - are you serious? MWOM just wouldn’t be the same without ol’ D.D.!
HAMMER VERSUS SHIELD

Dear Bullpen,

Way, way, way back in Avengers 21, yes you heard it right, a certain Master Wayne Blalchmer wrote in asking if Captain America's Shield would stand up to Thor's Hammer. You answered that if Cap's shield was really whacked, it would probably break. But in Super Spidey issue 217, Cap, under the power of Magneto, sends Thor's hammer flying when his shield hits it. Is this worth a No-Prize, eh?

Nick Redfern,
20 Paradise Lane, Palsall,
Nr. Walsall, W. Midlands.

OK, Nick, we'll admit that we were wrong in that answer to a letter published in Avengers 21 (ah, remember the Avengers Weekly? Well, that genuine, Jubilee-year No-Prize is all yours. Make sure you give it a good home!

WEEKLY SCIENCE FICTION?

Dear Marvel,

The Mighty World of Marvel must surely be the best Marvel Weekly. I could have kicked myself for not reading WMWOM before the merger with Planet of the Apes. Sal Buscema's artwork is the best Hulk artwork I've seen yet, he draws everything perfectly, and I was astounded when I saw the SHIELD "Hover Base". Joe Staton's embellishing is beautiful too. You picked a good time to join the mags, I liked Hulk's battle with SHIELD to make it simple.

I'm all for Stephen Moore's views on a Sci-Fi Weekly (MWOM 237). I'm sure you'd have a big enough audience if you used Nova. He's a hit craze in America now, so why can't he astound Britain in his own new Weekly. The success of the new weekly depends on its back-up features, and I suggest three new ones. Howabout: Ms. Marvel (another hit craze in America), 2001, and Logan's Run or Warlock. Please think about it and suggest it to Stan (the Man). Its title could simply be: NOVA! Britain needs more Marvel Weeklies - remember the good old days with seven Weeklies? Though I can't blame you for cutting the number, for seven was too many. Five is a nice number, so how's about a NEW Weekly? Remember all the people who wrote into the Apes letter pages demanding the title should be changed to "Marvel Sci-Fi Weekly"?

Will FURY ever have a Marvel-styled cover? Doesn't it look like the other British War Weeklies, make it look better with a glossy cover and a trade-mark box in the top left-hand corner. Talking of trade-mark, the Ape in the MWOM box is not very good, so why not put the old ape face that used to appear on the front.

covers issues 1-50 of POTA in its place?

Gregory Dunne, QNS.KOF.RFO.
7, Glengiven Avenue, Limavady,
Co. Derry, N. Ireland.

You know, the battling British Bullpen never ceases to be amazed at how "great minds think alike". We've been thinking for quite a while now about putting out a Marvel Science Fiction orientated Weekly. But we still retain the doubts, expressed in the reply to Stephen Moore's letter several weeks back, as to whether it would be commercially viable to publish such a mag. In other words, does Science Fiction, and Gregory has listed Marvel's main Sci-Fi features, have a wide enough appeal? Let's have the opinions of Marveldom Assembled on the points raised in Greg's letter - that means write in and tell us what new mags you would like to see! The best letters, needless to say, will be published. Start scribbling, Pilgrims!

MARVEL MAILBAG

MARVEL COMICS, TUBS HILL HOUSE,
SEVENOAKS, KENT

HOW D'JUA LIKE OUR MARVEL ART LESSON ON PAGE 19?

IF YA DID, GRAB A COPY OF THIS WEEK'S ISSUES OF SUPER SPIDER-MAN AND CAPTAIN BRITAIN WHERE YOU'LL FIND ALL THE LOWDOWN ON HOW TO DRAW SPIDEY AND THE THING!