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**BENDIS
FINCH
MIKI
D'ARMATA**

THE NEW AVENGERS



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DIRECT EDITION

And there came a day, a day unlike any other, when Earth's mightiest heroes found themselves united against a common threat! On that day, the Avengers were born—to fight the foes no single super hero could withstand! Stan Lee presents...

THE NEW AVENGERS



A massive super-villain riot at the high-tech maximum security prison known as the Raft brings together the heroes who would become the New Avengers—Captain America, Iron Man, Luke Cage, Spider-Man, Spider-Woman, and the mysterious powerhouse known as the Sentry. One member of the hero community who aided in the fight refused to join the newly-formed team—Matt Murdock, known throughout Hell's Kitchen as Daredevil.

When Captain America is given information that the Silver Samurai, one of the Raft's escapees, has returned to Japan, he asks Murdock for help. Murdock's personal problems prevent him from aiding the New Avengers, but he offers the services of a mysterious friend—Ronin.

Cap sends Ronin to infiltrate the Clan Yashida, a family of Japanese Yakuza. Ronin discovers that the Hand—a ritualistic cult of ninjas—along with Silver Samurai's old partner Viper, a.k.a. Madame Hydra, is recruiting the Silver Samurai.

Spider-Woman captures Madame Hydra by herself, but the capture is nothing more than a ruse. Spider-Woman is betraying the Avengers and S.H.I.E.L.D. by selling her services to Hydra and another mystery faction.

Ronin is attacked by an army of Hand assassins and followed back to Tony Stark's Osaka penthouse apartment. The Avengers fight the Hand and eventually take the fight back to the fortress Yashida, only to find themselves faced with the Silver Samurai leading a small army of Hand assassins.

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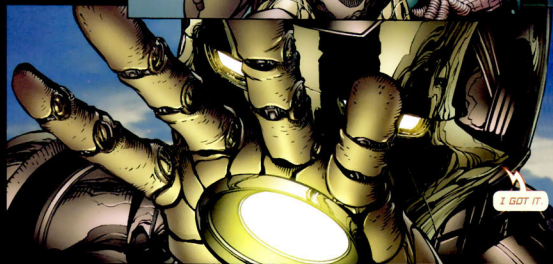
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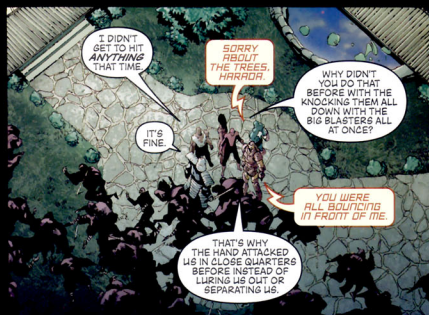
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LUKE, LUKE, LUKE. HARRON WAS ONE OF THE S.H.I.E.L.D. FILES WE COULDN'T MATCH. HE WAS DECLARED DEAD.

FINE. HE'S STILL A PIECE OF GARBAGE--

HE'S--

HE'S SO DEEP IN ALL THIS CRAP OUT HERE...

HE'S NOT LYING ABOUT THIS, AND WE CAN'T JUST ARREST HIM. THINGS ARE MORE COMPLICATED THAN--

COMPLICATED?! I GOT TOSSED OUT OF A SKYSCRAPER OVER THIS PIECE OF CRAP!

DIDN'T YOU GO TO PRISON ONCE? ISN'T THAT RIGHT?

WE CAME HERE TO FIND OUT WHAT YOU WERE GOING TO DO. WHAT HAD HAPPENED--

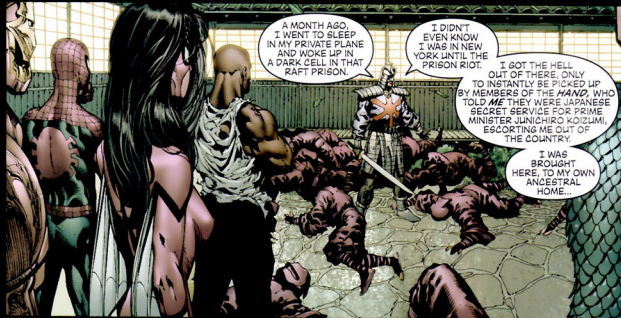
THAT-- I GUESS THAT ALL DEPENDS ON WHY I WAS KIDNAPPED BY YOUR GOVERNMENT.

YOU WERE *NOT* KIDNAPPED BY THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT.

THERE IS SOMETHING WRONG WITH S.H.I.E.L.D., AND WE'RE TRYING TO PIECE IT TOGETHER QUICKLY.

IT WOULD BE A HUGE HELP IF YOU TOLD US *EXACTLY* WHAT HAPPENED TO YOU.

ARE YOU THE SAME MAN YOU WERE THEN?

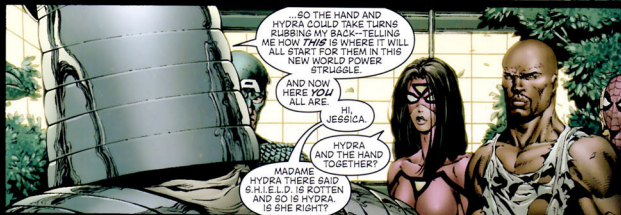


A MONTH AGO,
I WENT TO SLEEP
IN MY PRIVATE PLANE
AND WOKE UP IN
A DARK CELL IN THAT
RAFT PRISON.

I DIDN'T
EVEN KNOW
I WAS IN NEW
YORK UNTIL THE
PRISON RIOT.

I GOT THE HELL
OUT OF THERE, ONLY
TO INSTANTLY BE PICKED UP
BY MEMBERS OF THE HAND, WHO
TOLD ME THEY WERE JAPANESE
SECRET SERVICE FOR PRIME
MINISTER JUNICHIRO KOIZUMI,
ESCORTING ME OUT OF
THE COUNTRY.

I WAS
BROUGHT
HERE, TO MY OWN
ANCESTRAL
HOME...



...SO THE HAND AND
HYDRA COULD TAKE TURNS
RUBBING MY BACK--TELLING
ME HOW *THIS* IS WHERE IT WILL
ALL START FOR THEM IN THIS
NEW WORLD POWER
STRUGGLE.

AND NOW
HERE *YOU*
ALL ARE.

HI,
JESSICA.

HYDRA
AND THE HAND
TOGETHER?

MADAME
HYDRA THERE SAID
S.H.I.E.L.D. IS ROTTEN
AND SO IS HYDRA.
IS SHE RIGHT?



LIKE THE MAN SAID--
WE'RE STILL PUTTING
IT TOGETHER.

WHAT ARE
YOU GOING
TO DO HERE,
HARRADA?



MY HAND
WAS FORCED
HERE.

I'M GOING TO NEED TO
TAKE MY HOUSE BACK AND PUT
SOME SORT OF SPOTLIGHT ON
MYSELF TO KEEP MYSELF SAFE.



YOU TELL
YOUR MASTERS THAT I'M
GOING TO TELL THE WORLD WHAT
HAS HAPPENED TO ME HERE.



AND YOU TELL THEM THAT THE
ONLY THING KEEPING ME FROM
TURNING THIS HOUSE INTO
SOMETHING FOR THEM TO TRULY
FEAR IS MY FATHER'S NAME
ON THE DOOR.

BUT IF YOUR
COUNTRY COMES
NEAR ME
AGAIN...



IT'S NOT OUR
COUNTRY.







YOU KNOW, GUYS, I COULDN'T HELP BUT THINK DURING THAT ENTIRE THING THAT IF THE SENTRY WAS THERE, IT WOULD HAVE BEEN OVER IN THREE MINUTES.



HE'S NOT READY YET. WHEN HE'S READY.

I'M SAYING-- I'M READY FOR HIM TO BE READY.

ME TOO.

THE SILVER SAMURAI ALREADY TOOK IT TO THE PRESS.

I'M WATCHING.



IS HE BLAMING AMERICA?

YEP.

THIS DRIVES ME INSANE.

HE WAS HELD ON AMERICAN SOIL AGAINST HIS WILL.

I KNOW.



AND YOU KNOW WE'LL HAVE TO, TOO.

WHAT?

TAKE IT TO THE PRESS.

THE WHOLE THING? WHAT HAPPENED IN THE SAVAGE LAND?

NO THAT'LL DO NOTHING. WE CAN'T PROVE IT.



I'M TALKING ABOUT THE AVENGERS. WE'LL HAVE TO MAKE A SHOW OF IT, LIKE WE USED TO.

THE SENTRY'S WATCHTOWER IS ALREADY A BIT BLARING. WE WEREN'T GOING TO BE ABLE TO HOLD THE PRESS BACK MUCH LONGER.

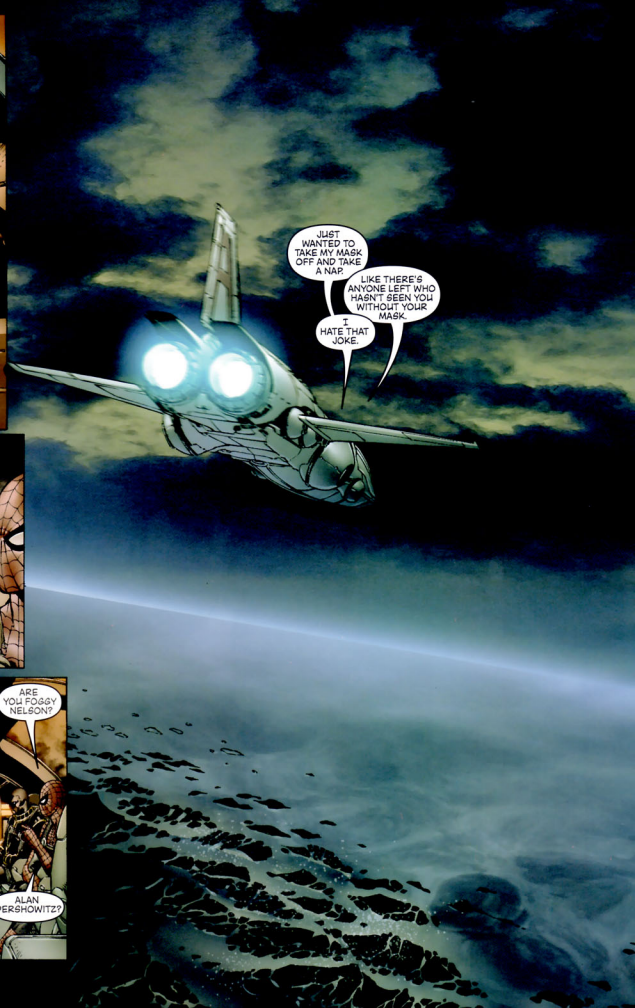
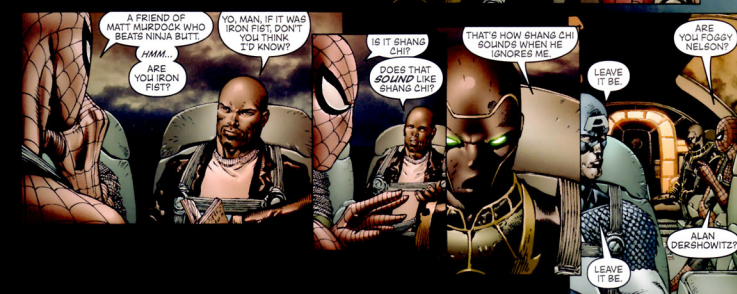
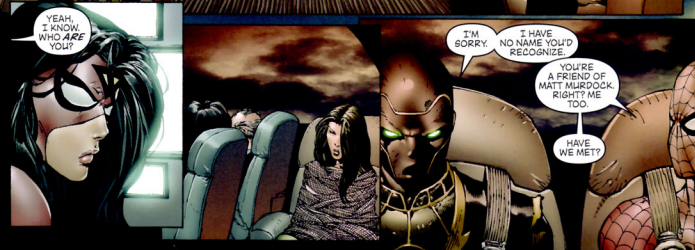
NOW... WE'LL USE IT TO OUR ADVANTAGE.



WE'VE FOUGHT THIS FIGHT FOR YEARS.

WHY IS THIS ONE GETTING TO YOU SO MUCH?









BOOM!

HOLD ON!

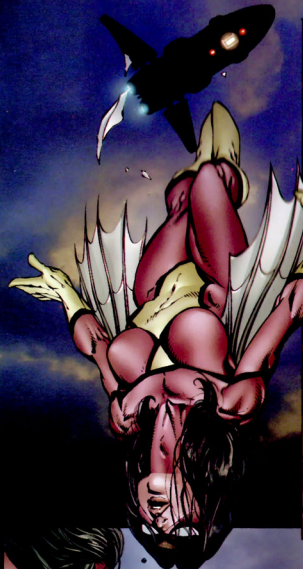
NNNNNNNN!

WHO!

CRP!!

ARGH!

AGH!





AAAAAGGGHHHH!!!!



GOD,
PLEASE
NO!

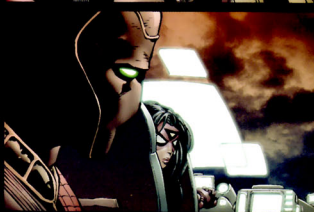


PLEASE...



GOT YA.
CLOSE ONE.







CAPTAIN, I'M TRULY
SORRY THIS WENT
SO BADLY.

YOU DID
NOTHING
WRONG.

JUST SO YOU KNOW--
I'LL BE GOING BACK TO JAPAN
TO MAKE SURE HARADA
DONES'T BUCKLE UNDER
THE PRESSURE.

HE
HAS IN THE
PAST.

I HEAR
ELEKTRA NACHIOS
IS RUNNING THE HAND NOW.
SHE *WILL* COME LOOKING
FOR HER MEN.

OR FOR
REVENGE.

MY SENSEI USED
TO SAY THAT THE WAR
BETWEEN THE HAND AND THE
YASHIDA GOES BACK CENTURIES
AND THAT IT WOULDN'T END
IN OUR LIFETIME.

BUT I DON'T
THINK THAT'S TRUE.
IT *HAS* TO END.

PLUS, I MADE
YOU AND MURDOCK
A PROMISE, CAPTAIN.
THAT I HAVE NOT
LIVED UP TO.

BEFORE HE DIED--
A FRIEND OF OURS SAID THAT THE
AVENGERS NEVER FOLLOWED
THROUGH ON THINGS--

WE ALWAYS JUMPED FROM ONE
DRAMA TO THE NEXT--IT'S JUST THE
NATURE OF THIS KIND OF TEAM.

I'VE BEEN THINKING
ABOUT WHAT HE SAID A LOT.
WE DO NEED TO FOLLOW
THIS UP.

HEY, IF YOU'RE WILLING TO
DO ALL THIS--I'LL FUND IT.

IF YOU NEED THE TEAM--AND
YOU WILL--YOU CALL US. IF YOU NEED
TO PUT TOGETHER ANOTHER TEAM--

DO YOU NEED
FINANCING?

I DON'T
NEED MONEY.
I HAVE PLenty.

HOW DID YOU KNOW HOW TO FLY A
QUINJET THAT I DESIGNED AND
NEVER SHOWED TO ANYONE ELSE
IN THE ENTIRE WORLD?

HE WANTS TO KNOW
HOW YOU FLEW THE
QUINJET.

YOU SAW
ME FLY IT.

I SAW
IRON MAN
FLY IT.

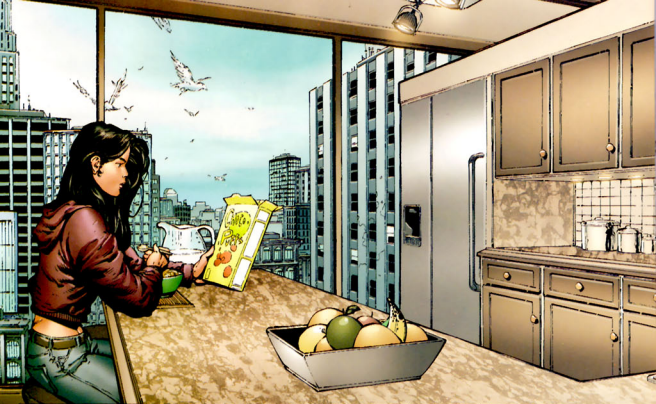
THAT'S
WHAT I DO. IF I
SEE SOMEONE DO
SOMETHING--
I CAN DO IT TOO.

I DIDN'T
REALIZE YOUR INTENSE
FEELINGS ABOUT JAPAN WHEN
WE INITIALLY DISCUSSED IT--
ARE YOU REALLY WILLING TO
GO THE DISTANCE WITH US ON THIS?

WHO IS
THIS?

HE WANTS
TO KNOW WHO
YOU ARE.





OPEN UP A PREVIEW OF THIS YEAR'S

MARVEL *Holiday Special*

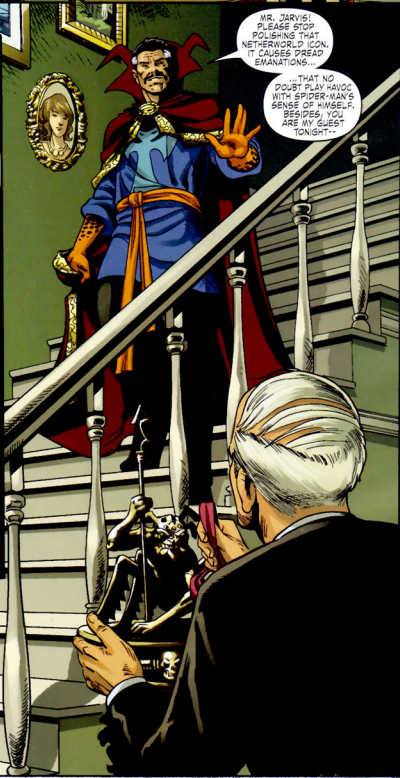
WHAT A
PUNDERHEAD.

I CAN'T
BELIEVE I FORGOT
THAT THE AVENGERS'
HOLIDAY PARTY WAS
GOING TO BE AT *DR.
STRANGE'S PLACE*.
I THOUGHT I'D MEET
M.J. ON TIME AT
STARK TOWER.

BOY, IS
SHE GONNA
READ ME THE
RIOT ACT.

Yes, Virginia, There Is A **SANTRON**

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Pencils: Reilly Brown
Inks: Pat Davidson
Letters: Dave Lanphear
Colors: Christina Strain
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Editor: John Barber
Consulting Editor: Ralph Macchio
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I KNOW YOU'RE NOT THE REAL THING. THERE'S **NO** REAL THING.

THERE'S NO WAY TO GET TO EVERY DESERVING CHILD IN ONE NIGHT IN JUST THIS CITY, MUCH LESS THE PLANET.

BUT NOW THERE'LL BE... SOMETHING. OPEN SKYLIGHT.



THERE WILL BE **SOMEONE** NOW. AND WHEN A CHILD SAYS YOU EXIST, SHE'LL BE RIGHT.

SHE WON'T BE LAUGHED AT.



GO, CLAUS. MAKE THE WORLD HAPPIER.

RELEASE VOICE COMMAND--BEGIN AUTONOMY.



AH!

HO HO HO.

MERRY CHRISTMAS TO ALL...

EXCEPT THE AVENGERS. THE AVENGERS MUST DIE!

WHAT--NO!
NO!

Find out what happens next in the **MARVEL HOLIDAY SPECIAL** (and read other great stories by Mike Carey, Mike Perkins, Shaanon Garrity, and Roger Langridge!)

