fans & fandom
1. There are plenty of bad guys, but our three main villains are Mr. Chen-Po, Colonel Dachshund, and Nadine. A case could be made for Springheel Jack though. You'll see why...

2. Dead is dead. Although sometimes dead is dead except for your skin.

3. Maybe.

4. It's the tarts.

Mr. Grecoan,
I picked up the first Proof trade at the St. Paul comic book convention this fall. Honestly, I mostly bought it because I had 10 bucks left in my wallet, and you seemed like a pretty nice guy when I spoke with you. Nobody was at your table at that moment. And I walked away kind of into my 10 dollars, thinking that I already was in a monstrous way my 10 dollars, thinking that I already was in a monstrous way. And now I have a signed Proof isn't Hellboy. It's own awesome Not only that, but I love Alex's amazing pencils, evolving more as time goes on, or Alex's very human characters. The book is a lot of fun to read every month.

I'm definitely myself. Who else would I wanna be? The story was called "Homage" and I thought it would be fun, since the issue was chock-full of inside jokes, to bookend things with two famous comic book homages. I'm happy with the way they turned out and hope they didn't spoil things for you too much.

So I've been thinking about this for a while now and I honestly have to thank Alex, Riley, Kelly and whoever else is involved with the book. Honestly, a book like Proof proves exactly how the comic book industry isn't just about superheroes. How you can tell any kind of story in this medium and it shines through with Proof.

John is your typical main character and the book can do everything from action to horror and fits it into a real-world setting in fun ways. Sure, there is no magic in the world of the Proof box but there is no magic in the world of the Proof box. But the stories are told. Whether it's Riley's amazing pencils, evolving more, the stories are told. Whether it's Riley's amazing pencils, evolving more
Section of a comic book where reader letters (to the publisher or the editor) appear - letter columns, letter pages, letters to the editor, letters of comment

- **Target Comics #6**, published by Novelty Press in 1940

- The first DC comic to include a letters column was **Real Fact Comics #3** (July 1946)

- Early letter columns tended to be fan letters from younger readers - simplistic questions (where Superman put his Clark Kent clothes when he was in costume)
The Editors Write:

Dear Readers:
Happenings in comic magazines are unusual, it is true, but real life also treats us to surprising turns of events. Whoever thought that picking milkweed floss would be a means of contributing to victory in warfare! That sounds impossible, yet for the past few weeks many TARGET readers in New England, in the Middle Atlantic and South Atlantic states as far south as Virginia, in all the East North Central states, in Minnesota,

The Readers Write:

Dear Editors:
I've read these complaints and compliments,
So I had to put in my two cents.
Candid Charlie's on the beam
Each month he makes me want to scream.
I like the Chameleon. He's O.K.!
I hope he's in the book to stay.
In my opinion, Speck, Spot and Sis is a story no one would miss.
If it were dropped from TARGET now,
It would be an improvement! And how!
TARGET COMICS is really human.
Sincerely yours, Arlen Newman.
You can write us, Arlen, any time—Your varied thoughts in rippling rhyme!

Dear Editors:
I like TARGET COMICS very much, especially Candid Charlie. I think he is more true-to-life than many other comic strips. The things that happen to him could happen to anyone.
I like Speck, Spot and Sis very much, too. In most comic strips the people or children are in the city, so I think it was a good idea to have them on a farm.
I agree with Paul Seibert. I too think there should be more Targetoons.
The enrollment of our school is 483. In the last year we bought $2,500 worth of Bonds and Stamps.
A loyal reader,
David Reeves
San Diego, Calif.
Letter columns came into their prime in the 1960s, when readers' letters became longer and the discussions more sophisticated.

**Important differences between DC & Marvel letter columns:**

- **DC** rarely printed the entire letter (much more selective in what they published) - editors referred to readers as “them”

- **Marvel** published letters in their entirety - letters were often critical or offered detailed suggestions - editors were inclusive, referring to readers as “us” or “we”
BUILDING FAN COMMUNITY

▶ *The Brave and the Bold* #35 (1961)

▶ DC Editor Julius Schwartz decided to publish the full name and address of letter writers

▶ Created a sense of community among readers - many became pen pals or organized meet ups

▶ Precursor to the comic fan community website
READER PARTICIPATION

- Publishers took advantage of the letter columns to solicit feedback & suggestions from readers

- Fans were asked to weigh in on a character’s uniform changes or submit their own uniform designs - the winning entry actually becoming the character’s new costume

- For team books like *The Avengers* or *Justice League*, fans were asked which characters should become permanent members, team leaders, or kicked off the team
“We don't score hits with every issue. Sometimes a story has flaws or just doesn't come up to snuff. Which is why your letters are so valuable to us in producing these comments. . . . So don't let anybody tell you your letters aren't important, people. They are vital to these magazines.”

Len Wein (Powerman #24, April 1975)
For many fans, having a letter printed was a badge of honor — especially if it was in one of the more high-profile letters pages.

Fans whose letters were published regularly became well-known throughout the industry by virtue of their letters - became mini celebrities in their own right.

A small number of these Letterhacks actually parlayed their letter writing success into a career in the industry (Kurt Busiek, Ralph Macchio).
the fan community
BULLPEN BULLETIN

marvel speaks to fans
MARVEL BULLETIN BULLETINS • MARVEL BULLETIN BULLETINS

WHO SAYS THIS ISN’T THE MARVEL AGE OF BATTLES BULLETINS?

ITEM! By the time you read these important words, our two Saturday morning full-color Saturday afternoon spectaculars, FANTASTIC FOUR and SPIDER-MAN, should be on the air. They will be shown live on the ABC television network! And by the way, even if you don’t live in the continental United States, you can still watch the shows by using your local TV station anyway, using a radio and your FM receiver. The FF will be shown live in your area. If you live in Red China, please don’t shake your head! When the FF and SPIDER-MAN are shown, the audience must laugh in unison —

ITEM! Speaking of the FF, three of the four members of the FF are on the cover of Saturday’s edition of the New York Post. There is a story about how the FF was created and the first issue was published, and it’s a must-read. The FF is a classic —

ITEM! We received a letter recently that said you face “frustrations” will get a kick out of. Without further ado, here’s—

Ever Seen

Remember the controversy when you introduced that movie of Inhumanity —

INFERNO [BISHOP] Everyone asked, “Will it be good?” Now I (with the help of my collection of Marvel masterpieces) have solved the mystery! A character who appears in various guides, in various comic books, and on various Magazine is... For example, was the power of the so-called “Shark” (which was invented by the Thing) that when he told him to spend his money on a new car, the FF would take off and leave the thing behind.

ITEM! I received a letter recently that said, “I face ‘frustrations’ of writing about the FF. Give me a break!” But when I think about it, I really am not that impressed with the FF. I mean, they are nothing but a bunch of comic book characters, and I’m not sure they are really that interesting. I think the FF is a failure. —

ITEM! And there’s one more reason to be concerned about the FF. We have been asked to interview a couple of the FF on a regular basis. They are a bunch of comic book characters, and I’m not sure they are really that interesting. I think the FF is a failure. —

STAN’S SOAPBOX!

Every so often, we decide to take a completely unexpected (and sometimes surprising) look at the FF. Well, we’ve got one for you now! We decided to interview a couple of the FF on a regular basis. They are a bunch of comic book characters, and I’m not sure they are really that interesting. I think the FF is a failure. —

ITEM! We just received a letter that said, “I face ‘frustrations’ of writing about the FF. Give me a break!” But when I think about it, I really am not that impressed with the FF. I mean, they are nothing but a bunch of comic book characters, and I’m not sure they are really that interesting. I think the FF is a failure. —
FAÇE FRONT! Here's a whole kaboodle of news and gossip straight from your bullpen to you!

BIG NEWS! An old favorite of yours, Jolly Joe Sinnott has rejoined our mighty Marvel team! He'll be inking the F.F. regularly, working on "Agent of Shield," and doing as many other features as we can straddle him with! (Remember his great inking job on F.F. #5? Dyed-in-the-wool Marvelites are still drooling over it!)

Everybody's favorite guessing game these days is trying to figure out the real identity of the "Sub-Mariner"'s powerful pen-cilier, Adam Austin! As most of you have guessed, Adam Austin is only a nom de plume, and one of these days we'll reveal his real name to you—if we don't forget it before then!

Did you know that our bullpen ramrod, Smilin' Stan Lee, also authors MONSTERS UNLIMITED as well as YOU DON'T SAY! Both are slick paper photo-gag magazines, and Stan the Man seems to have the magic touch—both of those humor sensations seem to sell out as fast as our own Marvel masterpieces—and that's savin' something!

CAN YOU GUESS WHAT'S IN THIS MYSTERIOUS MAILING TUBE?

It's our next Marvel mail order bombshell! You've been demanding it for months, so...

THE MIGHTY MARVEL CHECKLIST

A Line-Up Of Some Of The Marvel-ous Mags On Sale Right Now!

FANTASTIC FOUR #45: At last! The secret of Medusa's mysterious lost race! More about the grotesque Gorgon! And wait till you see who the Torch meets!

AVENGERS #22: What happens to a world-famous fighting team after they've suffered their first major defeat? This one is a real shocker!

X-MEN #14: See the human race up in arms against the X-Men, as the supernatural "Sentinels" make their first fantastic appearance!

DAREDEVIL #10: A real collector's item! On a dare, Stan let Wally Wood write this one, and it's the most off-beat mystery in years! Wait till you see the far-out super-villains and the panicky plot twists! Sure to be talked-about everywhere!

THOR #122: Having battled Thor to a standstill, the Absorbing Man now dares to attack Odin himself! Also, learn the secret of the hooded mystery man!

STRANGE #139: Fury a prisoner of Hydra! Earth menaced by a betatron bomb! And then—a girl steps in! Plus: Dr. Strange's startling battle with Baron Mordo!

SUSPENSE #72: The most unexpected vil-
the creator site
THE CONVENTION
Fan conventions ("cons") date back to the mid/late 1930s - First World Science Fiction Convention in 1939

Informal (non-commercial) comic fan “meet-ups” - often facilitated by letters columns

**Detroit Triple-Fan Fair** - first commercial comic book convention (organized by Shelton Dorf in the mid 1960s)

Golden State Comic Book Convention - August 1st, 1970 (also organized by Shelton Dorf)

Basement of the U.S. Grant Hotel in San Diego - attracted a modest 300 attendees
San Diego Comic-Con
WHY ARE CONVENTIONS IMPORTANT?
(for the development of fandom)
Fan - Creator Interaction
THE LCS

building comic culture, locally
the local comic shop