

## HELLION FOR HIRE #12: BEING A SELL OUT AND...REED

by Billy Tucci 09-07-2006

### Farewell Croc Hunter!

As you all know by now, the world lost one of it's most colorful and beloved conservationists, Steve "The Croc Hunter" Irwin. To be honest, I was really saddened upon hearing the news of his untimely death. Like many of you, I've thoroughly enjoyed watching Steve and marveled at his dedication and outright "insanity" while promoting wildlife conservation. Like him or not, you've got to admit that the man was truly entertaining and did more than anyone in recent memory to further the cause of understanding, conserving and simply loving the natural world. I'm famous within family circles for imitating him and tackling more than one nephew or two as they were about to strike. He seemed like a wonderful family man and even though I hate celebrities, wish I had the chance to meet him just to say thanks for the education, enjoyment and memories. . . RIP "Croc Hunter."



### You can call me a Sell Out!

I received a call from my good buddy JC Vaughn telling me that I was a "sell out." This made me laugh as I had heard moments before from **Heroes For Hire** editor Mark Paniccia that **HFH #1** had indeed sold out. Holy Crap! Thanks to Jimmy, Justin, **Civil War** and most importantly you, the readers, my first comic book for Marvel sold out at both the publisher and Diamond. As you can see I'm pretty happy, especially now that the book is going to second print, though I would have used a different image for the cover. But I'm not in charge, so I should just shut my mouth and be happy. Again I want thank you all from the bottom of my heart along with Tom Palmer and Marte for delivering such beautiful work. I also want to thank Mark Paniccia and his assistant editor Nate Cosby for their patience and fortitude during my family's difficulties while under their charge. And I cannot forget Joe Quesada and Dan Buckley for their faith in me as a penciller and welcoming me into the Marvel family. Of one last note, please see Mark Sparacio's great cover painting over my pencils for **Heroes For Hire #5**. Once again, great Job Mark!

### Now for the Main Event, the one you've been dying to hear, my interview with the one, the only, Dr. Reed Richards!

After receiving a hate filled email laced with profanity and three-syllable words (of which on the grounds of common decency, I refuse to post), I decided to contact the dear Dr. Reed Richards and set up a face to face to clear the air and perhaps make allies out of enemies. We met at my good friend Glen and Christine Fischette's Fourth World Comics in Smithtown, NY. For humility's sake, we asked him to leave his costume at the door and offered him some tea. As you will soon see, and despite all of our best efforts, Reed Richards was less than cooperative with yours truly and the Fischette's, but honestly, his answers do not come from me, but **Reed Richard's himself!**

**Reed Richards:** You all heeded my summons!! **Good!!**

**Billy Tucci:** Well, um, didn't I invite you here?



**RR:** There is a task that awaits us... a fearful task!

**BT:** Yes, I understand you'd like to clear the air on a few things, I guess I should maybe apologize about all the comments I made about you and Sue.

**RR:** She's behaving like a baby! Everything is perfect!

**BT:** What do you mean by that? Do you believe that's how a woman should act? I mean, imagine I was Sue; what would you say to her about that comment?

**RR:** Somehow the cosmic rays have altered your atomic structure... making you invisible!

**BT:** So is it that a woman should be "heard and not seen?"

**RR:** There's no way of **knowing**!!

**BT:** Okay, so shall we begin?

**RR:** Now give me the whole story, fast! Where are you from? What is your mission? Talk!!

**BT:** Wait, I thought I was interviewing **you**? Ah, forget it. I guess I just wanted to clear some things up. That's why I've opened this interview up to the readers since your email lacked any upper-case letters or punctuation. I figured it would be detrimental to your character and reputation if I printed "r u cr&z", if you know what I mean.

**RR:** You've had this coming to you for a long time Ben!

**BT:** It's Billy, and why are you yelling at me? Can't we sit and talk like two adults?



**RR:** Ben, I'm sick and tired of your insults... of your complaining! I didn't purposely cause our flight to fail!

**BT:** Again, Reed, it's Billy, not Ben. That's Glen and his wife, Chris. And what flight are you talking about?

**RR:** Ben, **STOP!** Wait!! Look what's happening to you! You're **changing**!

**BT:** Okay, fine, call me Ben -- moron, and as for changing, true, I am a little afraid of you at the moment, and figured a different approach to the interview might -

**RR:** Listen to me, **all** of you! That means **you** too, Ben! Together we have more power than any humans have ever possessed!

**BT:** What about Oprah?

**BT:** So what's your impression of the comics industry? I hear Mark Millar thinks we're due for another collapse.

**RR:** According to the steady impulses on my radar machine, **another** cave-in is about due to take place!!

**BT:** So what do you think would be the cause for such a "cave-in?"

**RR:** That's what we've got to find out!

**BT:** Together? As a team?

**RR:** It's pitch dark!! What sort of place can it be?

*At that moment, Glen "accidentally" leaned on the store lights, but with jungle-cat reflexes, quickly switched them back on*

**RR:** That light!! Where did it come from!

**BT:** This switch right here. For the world's smartest man, you can be a little dumb. Remember? We're here on Long Island.

**RR:** I had **heard** there was a giant three-headed creature guarding this isle...

**BT:** That would be one of our senators.

**RR:** But he shall guard it no longer!!

**BT:** Oh I hope you're right about that!

**RR:** It is obvious that some foursome is impersonating us! But **how? Why?**

**BT:** Could it be the Skrulls? I've been working on **Heroes For Hire**. We've got some really interesting Skrull dealings going on in the book and dare I say. It's all quite nasty.

*Chris hands Glen a copy of **Heroes For Hire #1**, who intern hands it to Reed. But he's none to interested in comics as he orders them to...*

**RR:** Knock it off you two! I've got an idea! Take a look at today's newspaper.

**BT:** I see Steve Irwin might be getting a State Funeral in Australia. It's a real bummer he's gone isn't it?

**RR:** I-I'm grateful we're all alive!! It was mighty close.

**BT:** Yes and ironic too. With crocodiles, he usually had a team with him and ropes to shut the animal's mouth, but this was just such a freak accident with a stingray.

**RR:** It'll take more than **ropes** to keep Mr. Fantastic out of action!

**BT:** I wasn't comparing you to - Oh just forget it. Regardless, I was afraid we were gonna brawl or something, but thank heavens it didn't come to that.

**RR:** Thank Heavens!! You're all right, my darling!

**BT:** Uh, darling? I'm a guy, Reed.

**RR:** Grab me. Johnny Boy!! That's it!!

**BT:** Okay, dude you're really starting to freak me out here.

**RR:** You're safe now, lad! You're safe!

*At that moment, Glen could not take it anymore and threw Reed Richard out of his store by the britches and shirt collar.*

*But of course Mr. Fantastic, always one for parting shots, could not resist threatening us to give up his costume.*



**RR:** **Do as I say**, or I'll turn you over to the Thing.

*Of which I retorted quite eloquently...*

**BT:** Dude, the Thing hates you!

And on this, Reed turned, but do to some high-tech security gadgets at Fourth World we picked up his whispering.

**RR:** No! We must be patient! After all, he's not really to blame! It's actually my fault he is the way he is!

Maybe there's hope for Reed Richards after all.

For those of you who haven't figured it out yet, all of Mr. Fantastic's dialogue is taken directly from the **Essential Fantastic Four Vol. 1**. It's truly one iconic and "fantastic Reed"

(couldn't help myself) that will bring hours of enjoyment to those who've missed the original books or reprints. Much thanks also goes out to Marvel for reprinting the genius of Stan Lee and Jack Kirby, who deserve all of our deep appreciation for changing our world for the better. I'd also like to thank Beau Smith for lending me Ron Frenz's original artwork of Reed and a give a special thanks to Glen and Chris and everyone at Fourth World Comics for all their help. We'll be returning for a fan and pro powwow in a few weeks titled "inspiration."



Also keep a sharp eye out for Reed's costume on Ebay!

Tally Ho and off to the Baltimore Comic Con!

Billy Tucci

Never Forget September 11th 2001

## Fetsur

09-07-2006 02:49 PM

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My favourite Reed Richards dialogue, ever, has to be from FF Annual #2 (as seen in ESSENTIAL FF vol 2), "The Final Victory of Dr Doom", page 17.

For the sake of context (although need I bother?) Doctor Doom is creating illusions and Sue saw one of Reed kissing another girl. Sue, on discovering the truth behind the illusions, says "Reed... dearest! I've been such a fool!" Reed responds,

"NOT A FOOL, SUE... MERELY A **FEMALE!** YOU **COULDN'T** HAVE REACTED DIFFERENTLY!"

Ah, those were simpler times...

## AllAboutMe

09-07-2006 02:58 PM

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Ugh. From the fact that this horribly drawn book was a sell-out to the monumentally unfunny interview...ugh

## Michael Hawk

09-07-2006 03:08 PM

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Nice interview with Mr. Fantastic, Billy Tucci.

## The Beyonder

09-07-2006 03:10 PM

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I bought Heroes for Hire #1 because of the Civil War tie in. It was an awesome read - some great art and colouring.

I'll be honest - I probably wouldn't have tried it if it weren't a CW tie in. But I'm glad that I did, and I've added it to my pull list!

If you haven't tried it, give it a shot!

## CrankyViking

09-07-2006 03:35 PM

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Billy, only you would hate Reed Richards so much that you wouldn't even come up with original dialogue for him. WHAT DID HE EVER DO TO YOU, BILLY? BILLY? DON'T YOU LOSE MY NUMBER, 'CAUSE YOU'RE NOT ANYWHERE WHERE I CAN FIND YOU!

Stop feeling the hate, Billy.

## King CBR

09-07-2006 04:11 PM

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Quote:

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Originally Posted by **Fetsur**

*My favourite Reed Richards dialogue, ever, has to be from FF Annual #2 (as seen in ESSENTIAL FF vol 2), "The Final Victory of Dr Doom", page 17.*

*For the sake of context (although need I bother?) Doctor Doom is creating illusions and Sue saw one of Reed kissing another girl. Sue, on discovering the truth behind the illusions, says "Reed... dearest! I've been such a fool!" Reed responds,*

*"NOT A FOOL, SUE... MERELY A **FEMALE!** YOU **COULDN'T** HAVE REACTED DIFFERENTLY!"*

*Ah, those were simpler times...*

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Then he slapped her on the bottom, and told her to get back in the kitchen. He give little Franklin's hair a tussle, and made sure not to make eye contact with his best friend that he turned into a heeping monstrosity, and whistled "hail to the chief" as he walked off.

No wonder she's been hooking up with Namor...

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**LIEFELDISGOD**

09-07-2006 04:53 PM

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I've always been indifferent to Reed Richards. Now, thanks to Bill Tucci, I see him for the tremendous douche he is.

Thank you, Bill.

Thank you.

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**BlackCatGuy**

09-07-2006 05:17 PM

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Billy, first

off..... **CONGRATULATIONS!!**

I said this book was gonna have legs (not to mention white fur and black leather!:D ) and that it would be a keeper! What a way to start at the hallowed halls of Marvel eh'?!)

Thank you for those words about Steve Irwin. My family and I still watch Crocodile Hunter together, and we were all absolutely devastated at the news of his passing.

On to happier things.....your interview with that "tool"Richards was hilarious!;) The guy may be a genius, but You can pretty much sum him up in one word.....to quote General A.C. Mcaullife....."NUTS!":D

Thanks for yet another great column! Oh, and please pass my congratulations to the entire HFH team! And that Sparacio guy just continues to impress me with his paints!;) )

**BlackCatGuy**

09-07-2006 05:21 PM

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Quote:

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Originally Posted by **AllAboutMe**

*Ugh. From the fact that this horribly drawn book was a sell-out to the monumentally unfunny interview...ugh*

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Horribly drawn book? HORRIBLY DRAWN BOOK?! Man, you should get your eyes checked! No offense, but the art is beautiful in that book!

**Beau Smith**

09-07-2006 05:43 PM

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Billy,

Wonderful column and your interview with Reed Richards-Mr. Fantastic was just that, FANTASITC!

It sure looks like everybody "got" what you did and enjoyed it. It's nice to see some fun with a comic book column and comics in general instead of all the message board snarky remarks that some of them have. Newsarama readers know how to be civil and not angry and insulting.

I'm happy that the series is doing well and folks are enjoying it.

Your amigo,

Beau

**DaVeO**

09-07-2006 05:53 PM

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Quote:

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Originally Posted by **AllAboutMe**

*Ugh. From the fact that this horribly drawn book was a sell-out to the monumentally unfunny interview...ugh*

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I've stopped reading AllAboutMe for his inaccurately posted comments. They just don't do it for me anymore.

PatrickG

09-07-2006 06:46 PM

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Love the WHAT IF...? (vol. 1) #42 art reference.

Curiously, the team behind that issue never told another FF tale and yet I'd say it's potentially one of the most influential WHAT IF...? issues ever... as well as being one that has been referenced in regular continuity FF stories, both visually and content-wise.

If anyone ever gets the chance to track it down, it's probably the best paced oneshot comic ever made and the granddaddy of the best decompression techniques.

Beau Smith

09-07-2006 06:51 PM

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Wise words, Patrick that all should heed. I loaned Billy the art from that issue. It is one of my all time favorites and I got the page from my long time friend and artist, Ron Frenz. It's one of the best splash pages ever.

Loved that story.

Your amigo,

Beau

Auburn

09-07-2006 07:53 PM

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So if its getting a second printing does that mean that shops will have it back on the shelves?

leafinsectma

09-07-2006 08:25 PM

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Hey Billy, congrats on the sell-out!! That's awesome stuff :D And its nice of you to mention Steve Irwin. Its tragic, what hapened to him :(

Unknown

09-07-2006 08:28 PM

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What happened in that What If?

"Once again, Mr. Tucci, Doom completely agrees with your remarks. Doom thinks he should start a club devoted to the hatred of Richards..."

MarkSparacio

09-07-2006 09:42 PM

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**HELLIONS FOR HIRE 12**

Hey Billy, Congrats on a very funny column! This week's column was very clever, really well written and a fun read, but honestly the best part is the posts by the readers. I actually sat here and laughed out loud at some of the responses. Like amigo Beau Smith said, it's great to see that they GET it. Please keep 'em coming...

Hey Black Cat Guy, Thanks for the kind words regarding my paintings. I really appreciate and am enjoying the opportunity to show people what I can do. It is a very flattering and humbling experience...

Thanks to everybody who picked up Heroes for Hire #1 and made it such a huge success. Thank you, thank you, thank you!

And like Billy said earlier, we hope to see you in Baltimore...

JLAJRC

09-07-2006 11:35 PM

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Hey, Billy, I think Wizard is stealing ideas from you. In this months issue is a two page article on the various ways Reed has mistreated Sue. It's hilarious.

spidertour02

09-07-2006 11:38 PM

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That was a well said tribute to Steve Irwin at the beginning ... but it was totally ruined by the fact that there is a picture of Billy Tucci holding a gun on a Reed Richards figure right next to it. :(

Predabot1

09-08-2006 08:17 AM

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I might have a shot at owning a party-costume made up out of unstable molecules! :eek: It would be brilliant! :D It would take a lot more wear and tear, and if it eventually gets ripped, all I have to do is put the ends towards each other, and the hole will be no more! ^^

Quote:

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Originally Posted by **The Beyonder**

*I bought Heroes for Hire #1 because of the Civil War tie in. It was an awesome read - some great art and colouring.*

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OMG! O\_0 I wasn't aware that you had to buy things mr Beyonder?? I thought you only have to wave your hand and make it so..?

Ah, yes! Of course! You were doing an experiment in the human feeling of buying a comic book! :) Sorry, my intellect is unlike yours, limited, uncomplete.

AllAboutMe

09-08-2006 11:05 AM

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Quote:

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Originally Posted by **DaVeO**

*I've stopped reading AllAboutMe for his inaccurately posted comments. They just don't do it for me anymore.*

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How are my opinions inaccurate?

Johnny Smith

09-08-2006 11:24 AM

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Quote:

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Originally Posted by **AllAboutMe**

*How are my opinions inaccurate?*

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NOT INACCURATE ... MERELY A FANBOY! YOU COULDN'T HAVE REACTED DIFFERENTLY

Billy Tucci

09-08-2006 11:34 AM

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Quote:

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Originally Posted by **PatrickG**

*Love the WHAT IF...? (vol. 1) #42 art reference.*

*Curiously, the team behind that issue never told another FF tale and yet I'd say it's potentially one of the most influential WHAT IF...? issues ever... as well as being one that has been referenced in regular continuity FF stories, both visually and content-wise.*

*If anyone ever gets the chance to track it down, it's probably the best paced oneshot comic ever made and the granddaddy of the best decompression techniques.*

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Thanks Patrick! Now I know the issue number I'll pick it up at this weekend's Baltimore Comic Con! Thanks for all the kind words guys. Hell, maybe, Marvel will let me do some new "What If" books. Might be a good fit, since I don't know what the hell I'm doing anyways!

Billy Tucci

09-08-2006 11:35 AM

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Quote:

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Originally Posted by **Auburn**

*So if its getting a second printing does that mean that shops will have it back on the shelves?*

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Yes, Auburn. I'm not sure when it's going to ship though.

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**Billy Tucci**

09-08-2006 11:39 AM

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Quote:

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Originally Posted by **spidertour02**

*That was a well said tribute to Steve Irwin at the beginning ... but it was totally ruined by the fact that there is a picture of Billy Tucci holding a gun on a Reed Richards figure right next to it. :(*

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Yeah, Spidertour, I felt so too. But I don't pick where the pics get placed. It does really suck about Steve Irwin doesn't it?

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**Billy Tucci**

09-08-2006 11:40 AM

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Quote:

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Originally Posted by **AllAboutMe**

*Ugh. From the fact that this horribly drawn book was a sell-out to the monumentally unfunny interview...ugh*

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I told them to give me more time!!!!!! I swear I did!

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**AllAboutMe**

09-08-2006 12:30 PM

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Quote:

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Originally Posted by **Johnny Smith**

*NOT INACCURATE ... MERELY A FANBOY! YOU COULDN'T HAVE REACTED DIFFERENTLY*

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I react to what is laid in front of me. If I feel that Tucci is not the most capable of artists, I am going to let you know. If I see faults in anatomy, perspective and the

drawing itself, please do not expect me to be raving at mediocrity.

Turn off your caps lock.

I do not know if when you throw the term "fanboy" out there you are using in a derogatory manner, but anyone who posts on these boards is indeed a "fanboy". Put pretentiousness aside.

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## AllAboutMe

09-08-2006 12:33 PM

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As an addendum:

While I may not particularly be a fan of Tucci's work, I by no means wish him ill will and as long as there is a market and someone is willing to reward him for his efforts, more power to him. The market is not solely aimed at placating me (although I am trying to rectify that).

Enjoy comics!

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## Ken

09-08-2006 05:03 PM

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Congratulation on being a "sold out." However, I can't say whether the book was a success until I get the actual number. The stores probably underorder this because Daughters of Dragon did so poorly.

BTW, since Marvel prints to order, practically everything they publish is sold out at publisher's level.

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## Billy Tucci

09-08-2006 05:52 PM

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Quote:

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Originally Posted by **Ken**

*Congratulation on being a "sold out." However, I can't say whether the book was a success until I get the actual number. The stores probably underorder this because Daughters of Dragon did so poorly.*

*BTW, since Marvel prints to order, practically everything they publish is sold out at publisher's level.*

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Ken,

I hear it was over 80,000. Marvel printed a couple of thousand extra and they blew out of them. So I'm really, really happy!!!!

We're all going to Carvel!

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## BlackCatGuy

09-08-2006 06:29 PM

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Can I get a vanilla cone with sprinkles?!

Ken

09-08-2006 06:38 PM

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Quote:

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Originally Posted by **Billy Tucci**

*Ken,*

*I hear it was over 80,000. Marvel printed a couple of thousand extra and they blew out of them. So I'm really, really happy!!!!*

*We're all going to Carvel!*

---

80K is an impressive number in current market. That says a lot about the quality of your work and definitely something that you could tell your grandkids about.

ANGELDOGGIE

09-09-2006 08:02 PM

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:D Beautiful.....just beautiful.....damn funny interview!!! Congrats on the first ish and it's selling out!!!! Like I said, this one's a KEEPER!!!!!!!!!! Thank you also from all us firefighters for your remembering September 11th. We have morning and night ceremonies planned, and it will be a sad but possitive day. Way to go Billy!!!!!!!!!!!!!! :cool: Oh, and yeah beers sound good!!!! See you in New York!

ANGELDOGGIE

09-09-2006 08:05 PM

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Quote:

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Originally Posted by **AllAboutMe**

*Ugh. From the fact that this horribly drawn book was a sell-out to the monumentally unfunny interview...ugh*

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What else would you expect from AllAboutMe.....It aint y'know!!!!!!!!!!!!

BlackCatGuy

09-17-2006 02:43 AM

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Quote:

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Originally Posted by **ANGELDOGGIE**

*What else would you expect from AllAboutMe.....It aint y'know!!!!!!!!!!!!*

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Oooohhh, ANGELDOGGIE! **SNAP!!!:D**

BlackCatGuy

09-17-2006 02:47 AM

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Quote:

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Originally Posted by **Billy Tucci**

*Ken,*

*I hear it was over 80,000. Marvel printed a couple of thousand extra and they blew out of them. So I'm really, really happy!!!!!!*

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Hey, when a book is good, it's **GOOD!** I'm willing to bet that the second printing sells out just as fast too!;)

(and if it does.....I'll take a cold Kirin!:cool: )