



EMMA!
ADMIRABLY
PUNCTUAL.

HEY, WHEN
A MAN COOKS
FOR ME, I SHOW
UP *EARLY*.

AND IF
THAT DIVINE SMELL
OF COQ AU VIN IS ANY
INDICATION, THIS IS GOING
TO BE THE BEST FIRST
DATE I'VE HAD IN A
VERY LONG
TIME.

"THIS IS A
TERRIBLE
IDEA."

YESTERDAY.
HORIZON UNIVERSITY.
THE LABORATORY OF
ANNA MARIA MARCONI.

YOU CONFOUND ME, ANNA. YOU'VE BEEN **ADVOCATING** FOR ME TO CONNECT WITH OTHERS. TO BE, AS YOU SAY, A "NORMAL PERSON."

AND YOU'VE MADE PROGRESS. BUT THE NEXT STEP IS WATER COOLER CHAT. **MAYBE** A DRINK AFTER WORK.

I WORRY AN ACTUAL DATE IS TOO MUCH. TOO SOON. YOUR HISTORY IS...LET'S BE KIND AND SAY "PROBLEMATIC."

I ADMIT IT WAS WRONG OF ME TO ROMANCE YOU WHILE MY CONSCIOUSNESS OCCUPIED THE BODY OF PETER PARKER.

BUT THIS IS **ME!**

IT IS **NOT** YOU! "YOU" IS **DOCTOR OCTOPUS!** A CRIMINAL ON THE TEN MOST WANTED LIST!

FIVE. AND THE **RED SKULL** HAS AN UNFAIR ADVANTAGE. IT'S HARD TO COMPETE WITH AN ACTUAL NAZI.

BUT THAT'S ALL IN THE **PAST**. I AM A HERO NOW! THE **SUPERIOR SPIDER-MAN!** THIS IS WHO I AM!

I'M NOT ARGUING SEMANTICS. BOTTOM LINE: IT'S NOT RIGHT TO KEEP SOMETHING THIS HUGE FROM A WOMAN YOU'RE DATING.

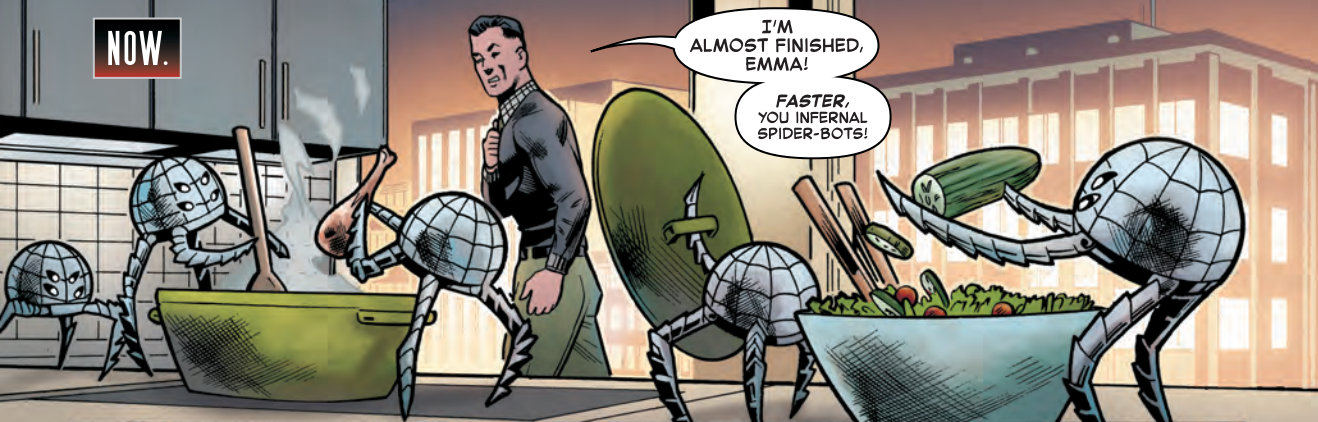
IF THINGS WITH EMMA SEEM LIKE THEY'RE GOING SOMEWHERE, YOU **HAVE** TO TELL HER THE TRUTH.

OR YOU'RE JUST BEING THE SAME SELFISH JERK YOU ALWAYS WERE.

I... SHALL TAKE THAT UNDER ADVISEMENT.

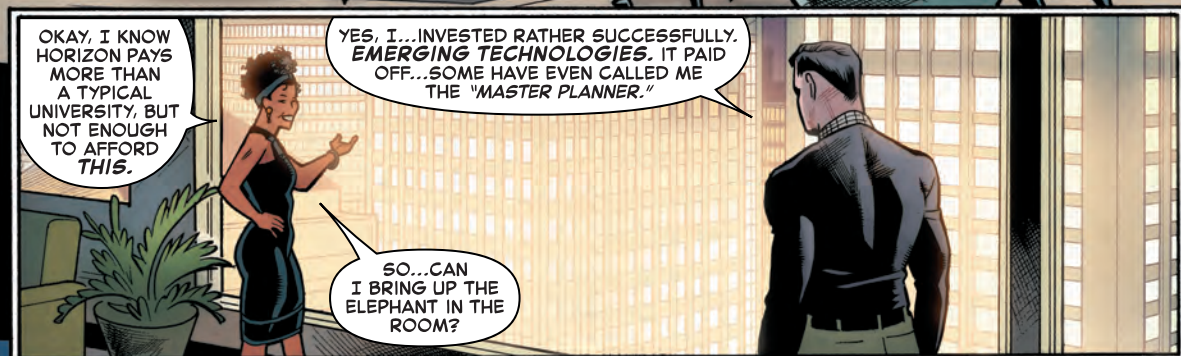
HONESTY **IS** IMPORTANT...

NOW.



I'M ALMOST FINISHED, EMMA!

FASTER, YOU INFERNAL SPIDER-BOTS!



OKAY, I KNOW HORIZON PAYS MORE THAN A TYPICAL UNIVERSITY, BUT NOT ENOUGH TO AFFORD THIS.

YES, I...INVESTED RATHER SUCCESSFULLY. **EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES**. IT PAID OFF...SOME HAVE EVEN CALLED ME THE "MASTER PLANNER."

SO...CAN I BRING UP THE ELEPHANT IN THE ROOM?

ELEPHANT...?

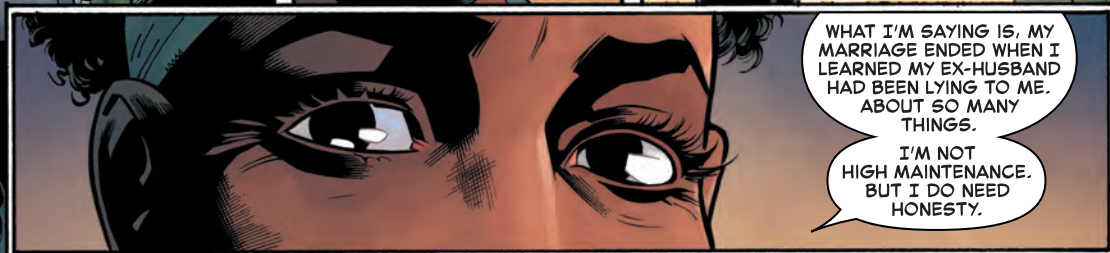


THE AGE DIFFERENCE.



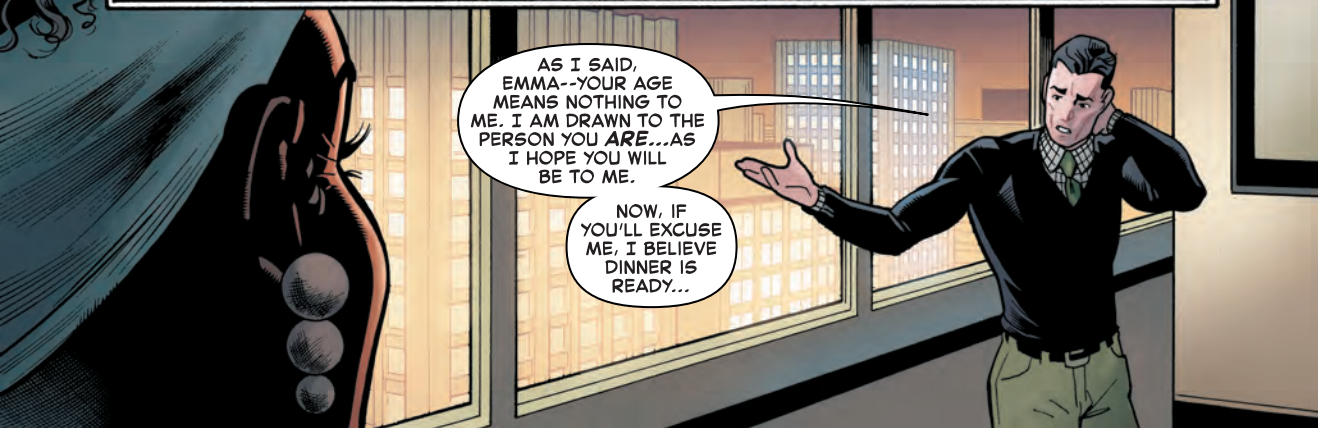
OF COURSE. I ASSURE YOU, IT IS OF NO CONSEQUENCE.

REALLY? BECAUSE IF THIS IS JUST WORKING OUT SOME OLD CRUSH ON YOUR TEACHER OR SOMETHING...



WHAT I'M SAYING IS, MY MARRIAGE ENDED WHEN I LEARNED MY EX-HUSBAND HAD BEEN LYING TO ME. ABOUT SO MANY THINGS.

I'M NOT HIGH MAINTENANCE. BUT I DO NEED HONESTY.



AS I SAID, EMMA--YOUR AGE MEANS NOTHING TO ME. I AM DRAWN TO THE PERSON YOU ARE...AS I HOPE YOU WILL BE TO ME.

NOW, IF YOU'LL EXCUSE ME, I BELIEVE DINNER IS READY...

