

SYNOPSIS: THE FANTASTIC FOUR JULY '61 SCHEDULE ()

STORY #1, INTRODUCTION, "MEET THE FANTASTIC FOUR"

This story is told in 2 chapters. Chapter one is 6 pages long. Chapter 2 is 5 pages.

There are four main characters:

- 1) REED RICHARDS. (Mr. Fantastic) He is a young, handsome scientist. Leader of the four. Invents a space ship to go to Mars. Hopes to be the first man to reach Mars.
- 2) SUSAN STORM. (Invisible Girl) She is Reed's girlfriend. She's an actress. Beautiful, glamorous.
- 3) BEN GRIMM. (The Thing) Ben is very husky, brutish guy. He's a pilot. He falls for Susan also.
- 4) JOHNNY STORM. (Human Torch) He is Susan's kid brother. A teenager, 17 years old. High school star athlete.

Story might open up with a meeting of Fantastic Four. As meeting starts, caption tells reader that we will go back a few weeks to see how it all began...

Reed Richards tells Susan and her brother Johnny that his space ship is finally completed. He hopes to be the first man to Mars. But he needs a pilot. they hire Ben Grimm. Ben is a huge, surly, unpleasant guy who doesn't want any part of the project until he sees Susan. He falls for Susan, and she manages to coax him into piloting ship. Ben is a crackerjack pilot, ex-war hero, best pilot available.

As the four are about to begin flight, they are warned against it by authorities. Told that no one yet knows what effect cosmic rays will have on human bodies so far out in space. But they decide to go anyway. They fear that if they don't go, Reds may beat us to it.

(NOTE: At the rate the Communists are progressing in space, maybe we better make this a flight to the STARS, instead of just to Mars, because by the time this mag goes on sale, the Russians may have already MADE a flight to Mars!)

So, without clearance from the authorities, in the dead of night, they take off for the nearest star -- very dramatically.

In space, on the way to the stars, POOOF! They are bombarded by cosmic rays which penetrate the ship and which affect all four of the occupants. They can't continue the trip -- have to turn back -- are lucky to land alive. But they are all different now -- they sense it -- although they don't yet quite know HOW they've changed.

Suddenly, they can't see Susan! But they know she's there! They can HEAR her. They realize she has become invisible. She can not become visible again. Later, she will buy a mask with a face like the one she had and will have to wear that mask xxxxxxxx in order to be seen. Her clothes of course can be seen, so it is only her flesh that is invisible. When she takes her clothes off, she's completely invisible. (I hope this won't seem to sexy in art work. Better talk to me about it, xxxxxx Jack -- maybe we'll change change this gimmick somewhat.)

As for Johnny, Susan's brother, whenever he gets excited, he bursts into flame. Becomes a Human Torch. He can fly, as his body gets lighter than air. BUT doesn't last for more than 5 minutes. At the end of five minutes, flame goes out and he becomes normal again, until he gets excited again. But can't flame on for at least 5 minutes after he's gotten back to normal. Comics Association told me he may never burn anyone with flame, may only burn ropes, doors, etc. --

never people. And, he cannot toss fireballs as the old Human Torch. His biggest asset is that he can fly.

They think Reed Richards, the pilot, is unaffected by cosmic rays, as he seems normal -- UNTIL he tries to reach for something. Then they realize his arm has STRETCHED toward the thing he reached for. After awhile they realize Reed's body has become like RUBBER. He can get skinny, elongated, anything that you can do with rubber. He can squeeze thru key-holes, etc. Of course, the more stretched-out he gets, the weaker he gets -- but the point remains that he can twist and stretch his body into almost any shape. (He can even alter the appearance of his face to make himself look like someone else.) BUT it is quite painful to do all this, so he can only maintain the strange shapes for a very short period of ime until the pain gets to be unbearable.

Finally, Ben Grimm steps out of the shadows. They all gasp -- his body has changed in the most grotesque way of all. He's sort of shapeless -- he becomes a THING. And, he's grown more fantastically powerful than any other living thing. He is stronger than an elephant. BUT, he is so heavy that he moves very slowly -- he's very ponderous, and those slow, ponderous movements should make him look very dramatic. He cannot alter his appearance as the others can, so he must wear a coat with turned-up collar, sunglasses, slouch hat, and gloves when he goes out in public. But when takes 'em off, he is a THING!

So much for who they are and ho they got that way. Now, here's a gimmick I think we might play up to advantage! Let's make The Thing the heavy , in other words, he's not really a good guy. He's part of the xxxxx Fantastic Four Four because they all got that way together and they decide to remain a team, and also because he has a crush on Susan -- but actually, he is jealous of Mr. Fantastic and dislikes Human Torch because Torch always sides with Fantastic. XXXX Let's treat him so that reader is always afraid he will sabotage the Fantastic Four's efforts at whatever they are doing -- he isn't interested in helping mankind the way the other three are -- he is more

interested in winning Susan away from XXX Mr. Fantastic. (We might indicate that he feels he may return to his normal self at any time, because none of them knows how long their strange powers will last -- or whether or not the effect of the cosmic rays will one day wear off them.)

Anyway, the four of them decide to form a xxxx unit -- they think it is xxx an act of fate which made them as they are and they think they owe it to fate to use their powers to help mankind. So they adopt their new names: HUMAN TORCH, MR. FANTASTIC, INVISIBLE GIRL, and THE THING, and how to spend their lives fighting all sorts of evil menaces which the normal forces of the world cannot cope with. And, to keep it from getting too goody-goody, there is always friction between Mr. Fantastic and The Thing, with Human Torch siding with Mr. F. Also, the other three are always afraid of The Thing getting out of their control some day and harming mankind with his amazing strength. Occasionally also, you might have The Thing wanting to do something for personal profit -- and the other 3 try to stop him. In other words, The Thing doesn't have the ethics that the other three have, and consequently he will probably be the most interesting one to the reader, because he'll always be unpredictable.

So much for the introduction -- the preceding should have covered exactly 11 pages, consisting of 2 chapters (Chapter one: 6 pages, Chapter 2: 5 pages.)