

Friendly Neighborhood Spider-Man (2016) #5

“Our Power Always Rhymes, Pt. 1: Blood Relations”

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[cap: The dorm of Cindy Moon, Empire State University]

[Panel 1: We see a giant lump underneath the sheets, which is a sleeping Cindy. Off to the right of the panel, we see the sound of her alarm clock going off, along with a semi-cartoonish effect of it vibrating intensely.]

Cindy: Eugh...Screw off, clock. Five more minutes.

[Panel 2: Lola, Cindy's roommate, comes into the room, distinctly annoyed by the clock continually buzzing.]

Lola: Geez, Cin, how do you sleep through that thing? I can hear that thing all the way in the common area!

Cindy: Lola, shhhh. I like to think that I'm doing the world a favor and waking them up with it too.

[Panel 3: Lola shuts off the clock, while simultaneously dragging Cindy out of bed.]

Lola: Well, it's 9 o'clock. I hate playing “Mom”, but you might wanna get going. You have classes today, don't you?

Cindy: Any particular reason you feel like torturing me right now?

Gimme a sec to get showered and dressed.

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[Panel 1: Peter is walking through a somewhat snowy campus to his classroom, oblivious to the disturbingly low temperatures, which we can see from the students shivering intensely.]

Peter [cap]: Note to self: thank MJ for making me wear extra layers. Spider powers can only handle so much cold.

Maybe I should get to work on making self-heating thermals?

Good job, brain. Keep on grinding.

[Panel 2: Peter is standing in front of the Horizon board, writing a formula into the touchscreen.]

[Cap: ESU Applied Physics Lecture Hall]

Peter: Alright guys, onto the main subject of today's discussion. Today we're discussing the implications of quantum jumping and theory of the ever expanding universal barrier affecting the field mechanics.

Keep in mind that there will be a question relevant to this topic on the upcoming midterm, and that your midterm will count for 30% of your semester grade. In other words, let's pay attention.

[Panel 3: Later. Peter is taking up papers as Cindy comes up to him]

Peter: Andy, show your work next time. Chrissy, don't *help* Andy next time.

Cindy, ready to head over to Horizon?

Cindy: Yep. Here's my notes.

[Panel 4: Peter is reading Cindy's notes, impressed to a degree with her work judging by his face.]

Peter: Huh. Good work, kid. Not too shabby.

Alright, give me a moment, then we can head out.

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[Panel 1: Peter and Cindy walk down the sidewalk, typical New York life happening around them]

Peter: So, you enjoyed the first day over at Horizon.

Cindy: Can't exactly deny it. And I won't.

Peter: Good.

I've been working on a project that only my boss and I know about. I think it's time I let you in on it.

[Panel 2: Cindy, mildly interested, turns her head towards Peter]

Cindy: You need me to keep a secret? I can totally!... well, I can if you need me to.

What exactly is it?

Peter: I'd... rather not discuss it out in the open. It's a bit dangerous to talk about out here. Besides...

[Panel 3: Headshot of Peter, with the ghost head of Doctor Octopus floating next to him]

Peter: -Things have been happening recently. Stuff I'd rather not talk about, but... yeah.

[Panel 4: Peter and Cindy walk through the atrium of Horizon towards his lab, Peter pointing in the general direction of another colleague.]

Peter: Anyways, personal angst aside.

Lemme talk with Clayton about a side project and we'll get started.

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[Panel 1: Peter and Cindy are standing in front of Peter's vault, the Black Box, which fits the name: a large, matte black box with a hand-print reader on it.]

Peter: Alright, then. One sec.

[Panel 2: Peter's hand on the Black Box, the green light scanning it.]

Black Box ID system: **Handprint verified; Parker, Peter. You may enter when ready.**

[Panel 3: Peter is shown carrying a cooling box as Cindy takes a seat next to his desk.]

Peter: Take a seat, kid. You're gonna love this.

[Panel 4: Peter opening the box, Cindy's interest fully piqued.]

Peter: And here we are-

[Panel 5: A vial of blood is in Peter's hand, with Cindy's face of transparent disappointment visible in the background.]

Cindy: A vial of blood? You're serious?

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[Panel 1: Peter is looking at Cindy, a sterner, more serious look on his face.]

Peter: Not just any vial of blood, Cindy.

**Spider-Man's** blood.

Cindy [op]: Whoa. Okay, then, I take it back.

Spider-Man gave you a vial of his blood? For what?

[Panel 2: Peter walking over to a machine, Cindy quickly following him.]

Peter: Spidey decided that he could save lives by doing more than lifting heavy objects.

He knew he heals faster than most people. Not a Wolverine-tier of healing speed, but definitely resistant to most forms of disease and an accelerated healing factor. Bullet wounds? Those take a few days. Broken bones, hours. The list goes on.

He gave me samples of his blood, to see if I could make some kind of cure-all for diseases across the globe.

[Panel 3: Peter holding up the vial, with a blue and black gradient background.]

Peter: This little vial? It could contain answers. Answers the world desperately needs.

In days, we could cure malaria, parkinsons, even cancer. All possible because a guy got bitten by a radioactive spider.

[Panel 4: Cindy looking at Peter, puzzled, Peter quickly realizing his error and covering his tracks.]

Cindy: Wait. How did you know how Spider-Man got his powers?

Peter: We're good friends. We let each other know a few things about ourselves that aren't exactly common knowledge.

Cindy: Oh. Well, that's pretty cool.

[Panel 5: Cindy picking up a blowtorch.]

Cindy: You've got a point, Mr... Peter.

Here, Horizon makes the future happen. But it happens in the modernized world.

Imagine what you could accomplish if you managed to get this cure to places like Uganda or Malaysia!

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[Panel 1: Peter snatches the blowtorch away from her, a slightly condescending look on his face.]

Peter: First off, we don't touch the blowtorch.

Second, yeah, that's the entire point of Spidey giving me his blood. One big ol' cure-all to fix the world's biggest natural problems.

[Panel 2: Cindy points over to a small machine, similar to the one Jesse Drew put to use in *Spider-Women*, Peter's gaze following her gesture]

Cindy: Hey, what's that? Didn't see that last time I was here.

Peter: That? Something NYPD gave me to tinker with. Confiscated it from Doc Ock's lab when Spider-Man took him out... or down. Whichever verb works better for you.

From what I can tell, it looks like a-

[Panel 3: Peter's face split between his mask and his face, his Spider-Sense going off.]

Peter [cap]: Spider-Sense flaring!

Peter: Wait! **Get down!**

Cindy [op]: Wha-

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[Panel 1: Large panel. Peter tackles a bewildered Cindy to the ground as the wall explodes behind him, a large crackle of electricity blowing out from the rubble]

[Panel 2: Peter helps Cindy up, dusting himself off as well, as they hide behind a lab table.]

Peter: Y'okay?

Cindy: I think so. What was?-

??? [op]: Pardon the intrusion, Mr. Parker-

[Panel 3: We see Peter's attackers, Electro and Chameleon. Electro has lost the footies and mask and is instead rocking something similar to his appearance in Spectacular Spider-Man, albeit with yellow light lines all over it and a lightning bolt pattern glowing on his face. Chameleon is wearing his standard costume (it's fine the way it is, no reason to change it)

Chameleon: -But we needed to make a visit.

Electro: Now, where's Ock's tech? I'm itching to take it and get back to work.

[Panel 4: Peter points over Cindy's shoulder.]

Peter: Get into the back, there's an emergency shelter we use in case of meltdowns. Stay there until I say otherwise.

Cindy: Okay, but...

What are *you* gonna do?

[Panel 5: As Cindy is running off, Peter is pulling off his shirt to reveal his Spider-Man costume.

Peter: I'm gonna call up an old friend.

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[Panel 1: Electro and Chameleon are tearing Peter's lab apart, trying to find their prize]

Electro: Your contacts said that they gave Ock's tech to Parker to look at! It isn't here!

Chameleon: And it is. Either he hid it or we're not looking hard enough.

[Panel 2: Electro and Chameleon look towards the panel, seeing Spider-Man off-panel coming at them]

Spider-Man [op]: Sorry, boys! Doctor's office is closed!

Electro: Aw, hell. Not him...

[Panel 3: Spider-Man swings into view, dodging a blow from Electro.]

Spider-Man: Oh yes! It is him! Your Friendly Neighborhood Spider-Man!

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[Panel 1: Electro shoots out bolts of electricity, yelling in rage, with Spider-Man dodging all of them]

Electro: You aren't supposed to be here!

This was supposed to be an easy smash-and-grab! Why did you of all people have to show up?!

Peter: Well, duh! You're one of my rogues! I'm contractually obligated to be there when you show your cute bald head!

Electro: Shut up! Just shut up!

[Panel 2: Spider-Man notices strands of weakened electricity waving around, easily dodging the attack.]

Peter [cap]: Whoa. Never seen him do that one before.

It's almost like the yarn on a sweater pilling up. His lightning is losing cohesion. Didn't even feel a real jolt from that last hit.

What's happening to you, Max?

[Panel 3: Peter gets shocked again, this time feeling it.]

Spider-Man: NYAAGH!

Electro: Like that, wall-crawler? That's a real taste of the juice!

[Panel 4: Up-close shot of Spider-Man's face]

Peter [cap]: That's not him. It's a cover. He has no control over this. The pattern's too sporadic. He must be looking for Ock's tech to fix his powers.

[Panel 5: Cindy hiding in the shelter, a look of pure panic on her face]

Cindy [cap]: I should be out there, helping Mr. Parker and Spider-Man!

But.. he told me to stay put. Wonder what'd he think if I went out and-

Yeah, okay, Cin. You've gotten yourself into the hole this time.

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[Panel 1: Cindy crawls out of the shelter, behind a lab table, with Spider-Man noticing her.]

Spider-Man: Moon! Get back in the shelter! Parker's gonna kill me if you're hurt!

Cindy: But I can help! I-

Spider-Man: ***I don't care!*** Get back in there!

[Panel 2: Chameleon grabs the device and holds it.]

Chameleon: Dillon! I have it! Let's get out of-

[Panel 3: Spider-Man kicks the device out of Chameleon's hands, Electro looking shocked in the background]

Spider-Man: Nope! Not gonna happen!

Electro: Oh yeah it is! I need it to get fixed, bug!

[Panel 4: Electro lets loose another volley of lightning, this time one of his massive surges, much larger than his previous bursts of power.]

Peter [cap]: Holy!- that must have been his largest surge yet!

[Panel 5: Cindy is reaching out for the device, when she gets electrocuted from the surge Electro is generating. Spider-Man takes notice of this from the background, lenses wide]

Cindy: GAAAH!

Spider-Man: Cindy! I told you, get back inside!

[Panel 6: A somewhat singed and weakened Cindy reaches out for the device which starts beeping, as Spider-Man tries to help her up.]



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[Splash page. The device sits in a center panel as the other four panels show each other entity in the room looking at it.]

Spider-Man: Oh. That's just wonderful.

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[Panel 1: Spider-Man grabs Cindy, placing her behind him.]

[Panel 2: The explosion reaches Spider-Man, singeing at the edges of his costume.

[Panel 3: A white panel.]

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[Panel 1: Peter is sitting in a chair next to Cindy, who is lying in a hospital bed, several burn marks on her face, a tube in her nose, and her hair burned, singed at the tips. Peter, on the other hand, is only lightly burned, having had time to change before bringing her here. We do see some injury, his hand bandaged and a cooling pack on his back from the blast singeing him.]

[Cap: New York-Presbyterian/Lower Manhattan Hospital]

[Panel 2: MJ rushes into the room, carrying Annie with her]

MJ: Tiger? You okay?

Peter: MJ? I- I'm fine, what're you doing here?

MJ: I saw the Horizon attack on the news. Got Annie and made it here as fast as I could.

[Panel 3: Peter takes Annie, holding her affectionately as MJ looks over Cindy]

Peter: Well, you're here. You won't see me complaining, Red.

How's my little girl today? Dad's doing great.

MJ: So, this is your new sidekick?

Peter: Nope. Lab intern.

MJ: What happened to her?

[Panel 4: Peter and MJ standing over Cindy's bed.]

Peter: Concussive explosion and electrocution. External injuries are minimal. A few burns, nothing too severe.

[Panel 5: Closer view of Cindy, with Peter explaining to MJ the extent of her injuries.]

Peter [op]: It's her *internal* injuries that worry me. She's got a laceration on her left leg, torn arm muscles, burned lungs, not to mention she's been given a nice dose of Electro. And I'm worried there might be toxins in her system from Octavius' tech going off.

It's amazing that she's even alive.

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[Panel 1: Peter and MJ standing over her bed, Peter obviously in a less-than-satisfied state.]

Peter: Did I say amazing? I meant **depressing**.

The kid's gonna have a really hard time getting back into the swing of things if she goes through conventional therapy.

MJ: Wait. You said 'if' she goes through conventional.

There's an alternative?

[Panel 2: Peter, with MJ off to the side]

Peter: Yeah. My blood.

If I can get the greenlight, I can inject her with a couple of doses of my blood. If I'm right, the blood I have stored at Horizon should help her recover a bit quicker, due to my healing factor. I had it shipped over just in case.

[Panel 3: MJ, looking at Peter in a concerned manner.]

MJ: Are you sure it'll work?

Peter: That's... part of the problem. I don't know.

It's not even blood typing that's the issue. I got far enough into the work, that I could manipulate the bloods type to one that won't get rejected. What I'm concerned about is that this is untested. I didn't even begin animal testing yet, which is why I'm only planning to use it if... yeah.

[Panel 4: Cindy regains consciousness, but is clearly in massive amounts of pain as MJ notices her stirring.]

MJ: Peter. She's waking up.

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[Panel 1: Cindy gasps, going into shock as Peter and MJ recoil, the flatline as the background.]

Peter: Cin!

MJ, take Annie and clear the room! She's going into shock! I'll be right there.

[Panel 2: As MJ moves out of the way, Peter shouts into the hallway, medics rushing into the room.]

Peter: I need a doctor in here!

[Panel 3: Peter hands the closest doctor a clipboard, a desperate look on his face.]

Peter: If there's anything I can do...

Doctor: We'll let you know, Mr Parker. Sit tight.

[Panel 4: Peter and MJ sit down, Peter taking Annie again.]

Peter: I'll take Annie for a bit.

MJ: Thanks. Here.

You're sure you can't do anything?

[Panel 5: Peter and MJ, similar shot from a different perspective.]

Peter: Not my place. I'm a physicist, not a surgeon. I'll just get in the way.

For now, all we can do...

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[Panel 1: Peter and MJ asleep, holding Annie together. Silent panel save for the continuing caption from the previous panel.]

Peter [cap, op]: is wait.

[Panels 2-4: All silent panels. Panel 2: Peter is awoken by the sound of the doctor exiting Cindy's ward, and Peter stands up to meet him. Panel 3: Peter given a clipboard by the doctor, who is explaining the situation. Peter is visibly distraught. Panel 4: Peter punches the wall in frustration, rattling MJ and Annie awake.]

[Panel 5: Peter sits down, frustrated, as MJ comforts him.]

MJ: Peter, calm down.

What's happened?

Peter:...

She's dying, MJ.

[Panel 6: Note that this is one of the few instances in which we break the 5-panel rule. It has some meaning, a sort of break in the status quo. We did this back in How Pale That Moon Glows. Peter is holding his head in his left hand, his right hand in motion, fixated on MJ to keep himself calm.]

Peter: Her injuries were more extensive than we first thought. She's got a day... maybe less.

...

I don't have a choice anymore, do I? I have to do this.

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[Panel 1: Peter stands up, addressing the doctor who is walking away.]

Peter: Hey, Doc.

I think I can help her.

[Panel 2: Close-up of Peter's face.]

Peter: Just point me to the nearest lab and I can make it happen.

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[Full splash page, but a montage of Peter prepping his blood for transfusion, similar to the montage scene from Star Trek: Into Darkness. (Not pic-for-pic, but similar in their execution.)]

Peter [cap]: Alright, kid. Don't fade on me now.

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[Cap: Epilogue 1]

[Panel 1: Completely dark, save for the blurred word bubbles.]

[Panel 2: Signs of an eyelid opening, but the picture is still blurred. The word bubbles, on the other hand, are more legible.]

[Panel 3: Cindy's POV. We see a worn-out and burned-out Peter, who has a serious 5-o'clock shadow, as well as baggy eyes, his hair unkempt.]

Peter: Hey, Cindy. How you holding up?

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[Panel 1: Close-up of Cindy's face, a weak smile etched into it.]

Cindy: Hey, Mr. Parker. You look like crap.

Peter [op]: Pfft. I'll get better.

[Panel 2: Cindy sits up, grunting, as Peter motions for her to lay down.]

Peter: Hey, you just barely escaped death. The least you can do for your body is take it easy for a few days. Your life isn't going anywhere without you.

Cindy: Try being a college student in the 2010's, Mr. Parker.

Peter: Heh.

[Panel 3: Peter ruffles Cindy's hair playfully, as she grips the sheet to her right side. This is important.]

Peter: Get some rest, kid. That's an order.

Cindy: Alright, Mr. Parker. Just promise me you'll shower and shave when you get home. You look like you could use some rest yourself.

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[Epilogue 2]

[cap: Peter and MJ's apartment]

[Panel 1: Peter walks in the front door, greeted by MJ.]

Peter: Hey. Annie asleep?

MJ: Yeah, just put her away for the night.

Using the front door for once? That's new.

Peter: Hey, I walk from time to time. Not everything I do involves swinging from skyscrapers.

[Panel 2: MJ kisses Peter on the cheek.]

MJ: Could've fooled me, babe.

Peter: Pfft.

MJ: Your intern doing okay?

Peter: She's doing fine. As far as I can tell...

[Panel 3: Earlier, as Cindy smiles behind Peter's back as he walks off. Silent panel.]

[Panel 4: With Peter gone, Cindy loses her grip on the sheet, her fingers latched onto the sheets against her will. Cindy is distinctly terrified by this revelation.]

Peter [op cap]: ...She's going to make a full recovery.

[To be continued]