

# SPIDER-MAN 3

## Chapter 1 'Manhattan Memories'

It was early evening in New York City. People were going to the theatre. They hurried past the bright lights of Times Square to Broadway. Peter Parker smiled to himself as he walked through the crowds. He was going to the theatre that evening, too. Suddenly, a group of little boys ran in front of him. They stopped and looked up at one of the signs. It said in lights, 'NEW YORK LOVES SPIDER-MAN!'

For the first time in his life Peter felt popular. Well, at least Spider-Man was popular. All the kids in the city wanted to be like Spider-Man. After all, he was a hero. The people of New York were safe when he was around. Uncle Ben would be so proud of him.

Peter's heart ached when he thought of his uncle. Uncle Ben was murdered two years ago but for Peter the memory was still very fresh. Peter remembered the words Uncle Ben used to say: 'With great power comes great responsibility.' Peter had accepted his responsibility as Spider-Man and he felt good about that.

Peter Parker's life was so much better these days. He still didn't make much money as a photographer for the *Daily Bugle*. And he still lived in the same horrible little room. But some things had changed. As well as fighting crime, he was going to the university every day and he was now the best student in his class.

But best of all, Peter had Mary Jane Watson. He had always loved Mary Jane, or MJ as everyone called her. And tonight was her opening night on Broadway in 'Manhattan Memories'. As Peter stood outside the theatre he couldn't believe his luck - he finally had the girl.



He went inside. He was so proud that his girlfriend was the star of the show. Yes, everything was perfect ... or almost perfect. The only thing missing was Harry Osborn.

Harry and Peter had been best friends since high school. But everything changed when Harry's father went crazy and became the Green Goblin. The Green Goblin had attacked New York and died in a fight with Spider-Man. Then Harry found out that Peter was Spider-Man. He couldn't forgive him for killing his father.

As Peter found his seat in the dark theatre, the musicians started to play. And then Mary Jane appeared. Peter was so excited. She looked amazing. When she started to sing, he felt she was singing just for him. Peter had never been so happy.

Harry was there too. He watched Peter from his private box at the side of the theatre. He wasn't smiling.



'She was great,' thought Peter after the show. Maybe other people hadn't cheered as loudly as him. And maybe Peter was the only one standing up and cheering at the end. No, that didn't matter - she was great!

Suddenly, Peter saw a face he knew outside the theatre – it was Harry Osborn! Peter had tried several times to visit Harry at the offices of OsCorp\*. Harry had refused to see him each time. Peter wanted to tell Harry that Norman Osborn's death was an accident.

'Harry!' Peter called as his friend got into a big expensive car. 'Harry, wait! You need to hear the truth.'

Harry turned to look at Peter. For a moment his heart told him he should listen to Peter this time. But a second later, the face of Norman Osborn seemed to appear at the window. 'Don't be weak!' Norman cried to his son.

Harry made a sign to his driver. Without a word, they drove away.



'Was I good?' asked Mary Jane as she put her arms around Peter later that evening.

'Good?' Peter smiled. 'You were great.'

Mary Jane went a little pink. Then she took Peter's hand and led him into her dressing room.

'I got your flowers,' she said warmly. 'Thank you. They're beautiful.' Then she pointed at a much bigger arrangement of flowers. 'And these are from Harry,' she said. 'Was he here tonight?'

Peter shook his head sadly. 'I saw him but he wouldn't talk to me.'

'I'm so sorry,' said MJ softly. 'What is it with you guys?'

'It's difficult,' said Peter. Although Mary Jane knew that Peter was Spider-Man, she didn't know exactly how Norman Osborn had died.



*\* The Osborn Corporation, a big scientific company started by Harry's father, Norman Osborn.*

The wind blew through Mary Jane's long red hair as they rode out of Manhattan on Peter's motorbike. It was wonderful to get out of the city for a little while.

Soon they found a good place to stop. Peter made a big web between two trees. They lay together in the web and looked up at the stars. High above them a shower of meteorites lit up the dark sky. It was a beautiful sight.

'Tell me you love me,' said MJ, looking into Peter's eyes. 'I like to hear it. It makes me feel safe.'

'I will always love you,' said Peter. 'I always have.'

Not far away from them, a small black rock hit the ground. But they didn't notice.



The rock was a meteorite. It was still hot after crashing down to Earth. Smoke rose from the rock and then something black and sticky came out of it. Something alive! It started to move across the grass like a spider. It jumped onto the back of Peter's motorbike. It hid there and waited...