With one more issue to go, Spider-Man takes time to rally his forces while most of the action takes place in sidebars or in spin-off issues. Wait, didn't that happen last issue? To some extent, yeah. It's a valid criticism for this event, and this is no exception. There is one key action sequence and a couple of key character moments, which certainly make this another important chapter in an already great saga, but overall the "welcome" becomes slightly more worn for the recurring weak points.The action piece shows us Scarlet Spider a.k.a. Kaine a.k.a. the Other's showdown with Lord Solus. Unfortunately, the gravitas of Kaine's anger comes right off the heels of some action that happened in a spin-off series elsewhere. We can take it for granted that there is a Bunch of Stuff Happening "off screen"-- this is, in some essence, a war story-- but the byproduct of such a choice is the sacrifice of some satisfaction to the main story, and, in some ways, to the plot's logic. Equally unsatisfying is the relative ease in which Solus is taken care of. After all, this is the same guy that impressed us by raising the stakes to Impossible when he single-handedly took out a cosmic-powered Captain Universe Spidey not too long ago. The other Inheritors shout the appropriate "Oh Noes!" but it doesn't ring entirely true, thanks also to the hand-wavvy way in which our villains are just monsters and that's really about it. When literally asked "what does this mean?", one of them, Morlun, puts it this way" "I neither know nor care." Well, then. If the characters themselves don't know or care, what's the expectation for the readers?I tend to read a lot into a little, so even though it's a little thing, I really appreciated Spider-Man addressing Kaine as "brother." That small tidbit adds a lot to recognize something of their relationship. With that, and having Mayday/Spider-Girl and Uncle Ben show up, and indeed having the Inheritors themselves somehow concerned with legacy/relationship, there seems to be some idea of "Family" floating around, but it all can't quite coalesce into a genuine theme, which is a shame.There is also some mention, but not truly clarification, of what the prophecy is that is motivating all of this action, and Silk continues to act in needlessly whimsical ways, but the real gems of character moments is interaction between, of all people, Uncle Ben and Doctor Octopus, as well as Spider-Man of India and Spider-UK.   In the former, there's not a little irony to the fact that it's Spider-Man's greatest enemy that rallies Spider-Man's greatest inspiration. It's more poignant with the fact that Octavious/Superior Spider-Man realizes that working with the real Spider-Man means he has been "defeated" in his own story. It's the latter, however, that really gets my meta-sense tingling.Spider-Man of India philosophizes about the "reality" of his existence, how all the versions of Spider-Man are, indeed, "versions," meaning that only one can be really "real" by virtue of definition. It's great that it's Spider-UK who responds to him, as that guy's whole story is that he is a part of an infinite number of alternate-reality counterparts, so that Spider-UK can give assurance that each member is in fact their own "person," so to speak, and of course, offer the perspective that any Spider-Man could be the "pale reflection" of any other given Spider-Man. It's all very wonderfully metaphysical, and even more so since we readers know that Spider-Man of India is actually "correct." What we call "our" Spider-Man is of course the "real" one that spawned these stories as imitations, parodies, pastiches, reinventions, revamps, etc. To take Spider-UK's point, however, that doesn't invalidate such stories. We can enjoy Spider-Man of India as a real story in and of itself, regardless of its original inspiration. On the other hand, Spider-Man of India's story, or any of the alternate-Spideys, would not have the same resonance without the force of weight from its source material. For example, do you enjoy mash-up songs more if you know the original melodies, or should the songs be enjoyed irrespective of their primogenitors?   Not to get all Aristotlean on y'all, but his definition of drama/tragedy as an "imitation of an action" can mean that even the original Spider-Man's story

is meant to be an imitation of all of us, the idea that lead characters in narrative are often archetypes of humanity in general. Is "our" Peter Parker an everyman, a pale reflection of the reader him/herself in the first place? Is Spider-Man of India, or yeah, even Spider-Ham or Miles Morales, merely reflections of a reflection? Is narrative essentially narcissistic, as we constantly want to read about ourselves over and over again?   I warned you that I tend to read a lot into a little.The post Amazing Spider-Man #13 appeared first on Weekly Comic Book Review.

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