

The Fantastic



FOUR... Going Cheap

by Rob Kelly



1982 (or so): My Dad drops me off in front of Kiddie City (R.I.P.), fistful of cash in hand.

As I usually did, I made a beeline for the Star Wars aisle, picked up the figures I needed (not wanted; *needed*), and headed for the registers.

One of the aisles you could pass on the way was the “cut-out” aisle: all the toys that weren’t selling, and priced to move. It was there I saw it: on an end-cap were *all four* Mego Fantastic Four dolls: Mr. Fantastic, Invisible Girl, Human Torch, and the Thing. And they weren’t just *on* the end-cap, they *were* the end-cap: about four or five rows wide, six to seven rows high, every single peg had one of the stars of the World’s Greatest Comic Magazine.

There must have been dozens of them, all slapped with a neon orange sticker saying something like 59 cents, maybe less.

While I had grown up reading comics and collecting Megos, once *Star Wars* showed up, superhero toys got pushed to the side. So while I kept the Megos I had, I didn’t bother getting new ones, worrying more about whether I was ever going to find a Bossk (I did, by the way). I remember taking a pause in amazement that there were *so many* Fantastic Fours, but it didn’t stop me from purchasing what I had gone there to get. I left the FF where I found them: marked down, collecting dust.

Only later did I see the missed opportunity: Not only would my love of superhero toys come back in full force after *Star Wars* had run its course, but this was the toy equivalent of investing early in Microsoft. I could have picked up dozens, maybe even hundreds, of MOC Fantastic Four Megos for a song, where now they’d be many thousands of dollars. I coulda bought a car—maybe even a Fantasticar! Stupid kid.

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