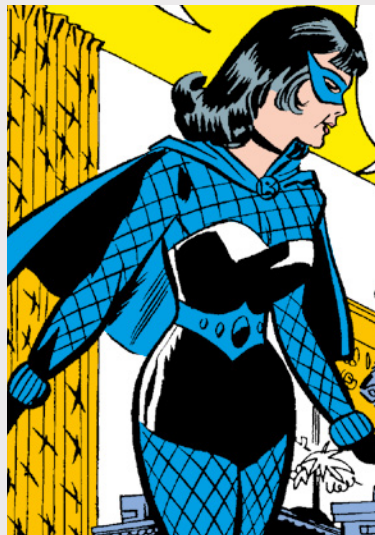
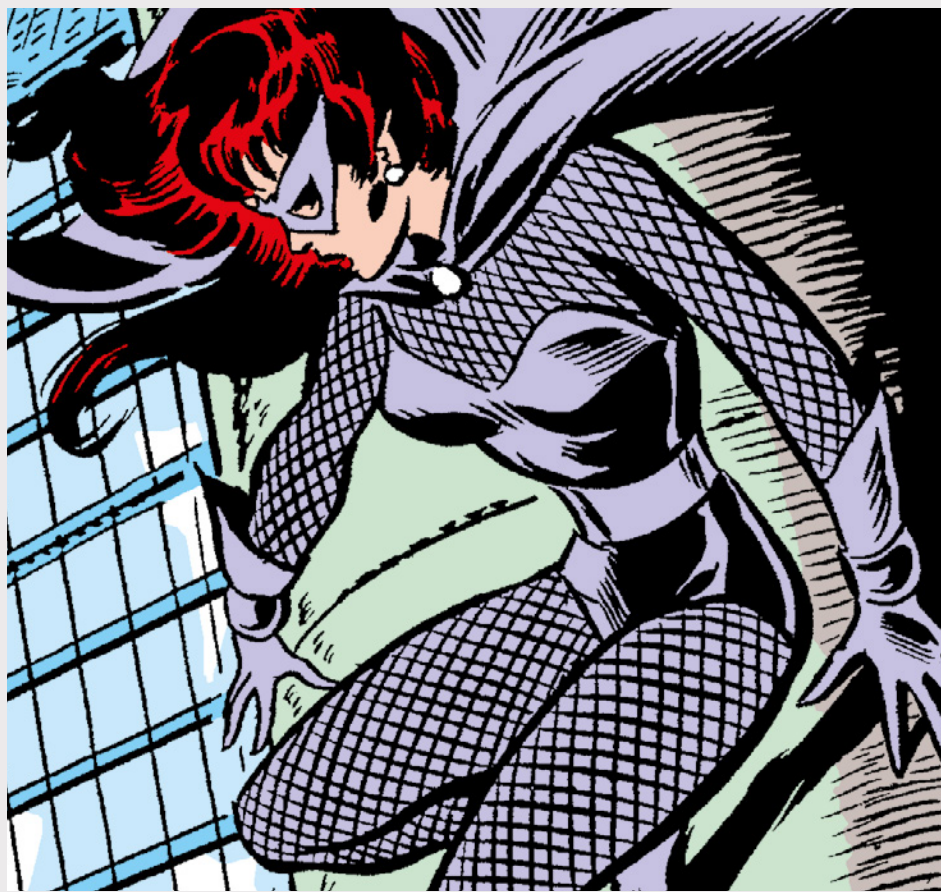




1



2



3



4

BLACK WIDOW: STYLISH AND DEADLY

A FASHION-FORWARD SPY TURNED JUMPSUITED SUPER HERO.

The Black Widow first appeared in *Tales of Suspense* #52 (1964) as a Soviet agent. The story's art focuses on Iron Man and is standard for mid-1960s Marvel super hero comics: a classic panel layout, an emphasis on the hero's action scenes, and a familiar palette of primary colors. When the Black Widow arrives, she steals every panel. Don Heck, an artist whose talents for color and sartorial detailing were well-suited for drawing stylish women, designed the Widow wearing the fashion-forward clothing of Soviet women during the mid-century period.

The Black Widow appeared five more times over the next year in *Tales of Suspense*, her costume evolving from the veiled femme fatale look of her debut to a more typical super hero outfit of fishnets and purple tights in *Tales of Suspense* #64 (1965). The Widow

was a storytelling departure in an era of comic books bound to a dynamic portrayal of fighting. In a testament to Heck's work, she remained the visual focus of each panel despite remaining stationary for much of her *Tales of Suspense* storyline.

In *Amazing Spider-Man* #86 (1970), the Widow sports a stylish take on the classic super hero look: a black bodysuit with bangles and a chain belt draped around her waist. During this period, artists drew the Widow's action scenes as fluid and violent, and they crafted sequences that highlighted her physical beauty.

From *Black Widow* #1 (1999) to the present, the Widow's physical appearance has remained mostly unchanged, but writers have emphasized her background as a spy with a gritty color palette of black and grays.



5

Artist Don Heck's design for the character Black Widow focused on translating fashion into power with costume detailing designed to attract attention.