

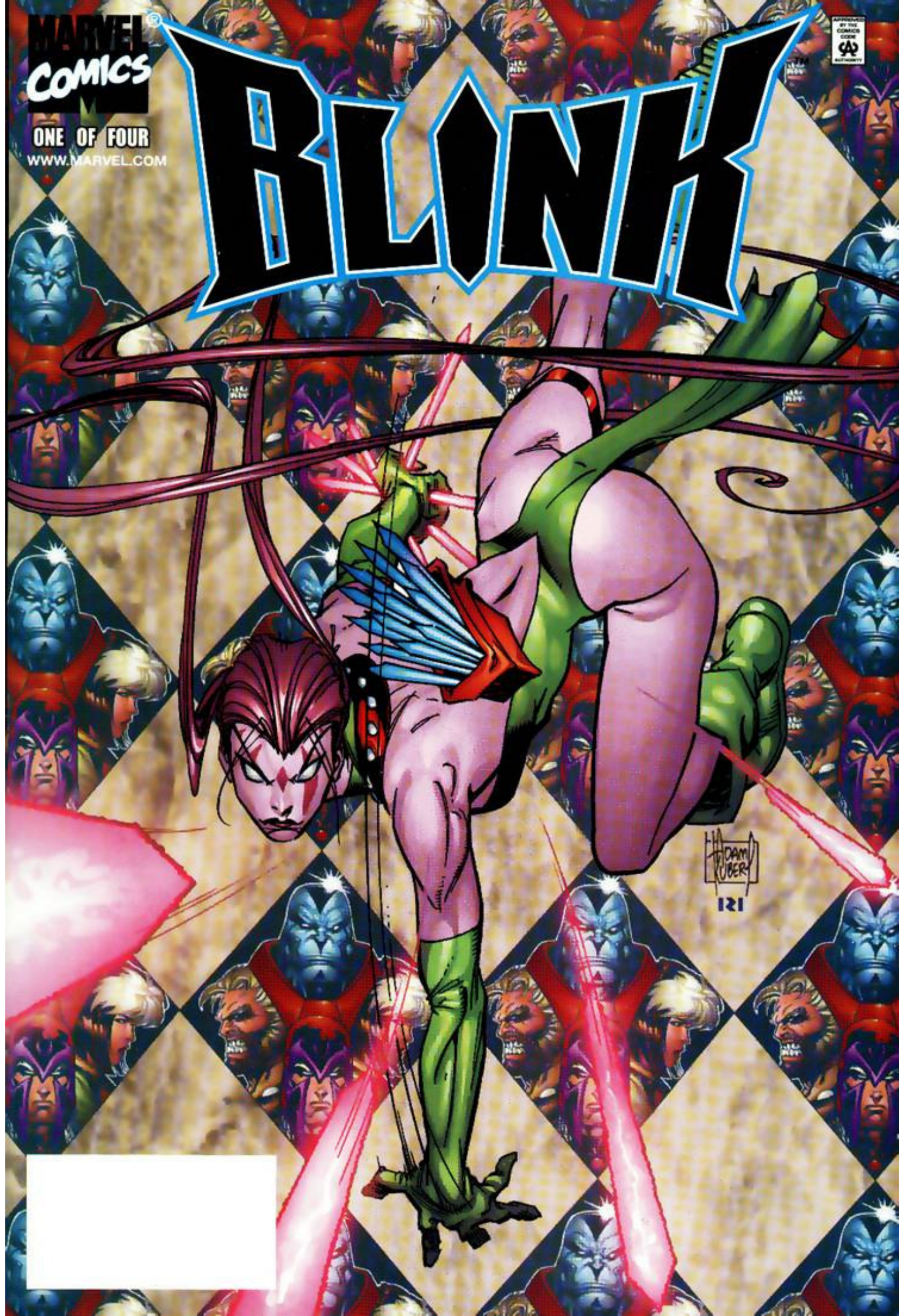
MARVEL
COMICS

ONE OF FOUR

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COMICS
CODE
AUTHORITY

BLINK



DAM
RUBER
IRI

DALLAS,
TEXAS.

Rather, what is left of it during these dark days of genetic war.

The human race has been subjugated by mutants, their super-powered cousins.

Led by the conqueror known as Apocalypse, these mutants have launched a campaign of genocide.

Only a small band of them oppose this genetic cleansing.

Today, despite the concerns of their leader-- a freedom fighter known as Magneto--

--three X-Men have come to this once thriving city to evacuate a handful of human survivors.

DAMMIT, WHERE IS THAT AIR SUPPORT THAT WORTHINGTON PROMISED US?

MORPH, WE NEED YA TO TAKE A PEEK AND LET US KNOW WHAT OUR ODDS ARE?

RIGHT ON, ROGUE-- OH UNTOUCHABLE, IRREPRESSIBLE YOU!

THOUGH I SHOULD POINT OUT, MATH WAS NEVER MY--

MORPH!

RIGHT! ON IT! GOTCHA!

WON'T

*You Win!
She's
Back!*

BL

BLINK CREATED BY
SCOTT LOBDELL
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SCOTT
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TREVOR
McCARTHY
PENCILER

TYSON
McHADD
INKER

THOSE GUYS AT
LIQUID!
COLORS



I'M GOING TO GO OUT ON A LIMB HERE AND SAY...

... "FUTURE CLOUDY. TRY AGAIN LATER."

WELCOME TO A WORLD NOT OUR OWN. WHERE A MAN NAMED CHARLES XAVIER NEVER FORMED A TEAM OF YOUNG OUTCASTS TO PROTECT THE PLANET FROM THE THREAT OF EVIL MUTANTS. WHERE A WAR BETWEEN THE TWO SPECIES OF MANKIND HAS LAID WASTE TO CIVILIZATION. WHERE A BEING WHO BELIEVES THE WEAK SHOULD BE CRUSHED UNDER THE IRON HEEL OF THE STRONG LORDS OVER ALL...
WELCOME TO THE AGE OF APOCALYPSE!
A STAN LEE PRESENTATION!

**RICHARD STARKINGS &
COMICRAFT'S SAIDA!**
LETTERS

**PETE
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BLINKED



I'M THINKING
WE'D STAND A
BETTER CHANCE
OF SURVIVAL
IF WE--

GAK!



CUT THE
COMEDY,
SUGAH!

WE NEED TO
CONCENTRATE
ON GETTING THESE
PEOPLE TO A PLACE
WHERE THEY ARE NOT
THREATENED.

YEAH... I
KNOW --GAK--
HOW THEY
FEEL.

BLINK, I
KNOW YOU'RE
NOT CAPABLE OF
TELEPORTING
EVEN HALF THIS
NUMBER OF--

BLINK?



"BLINK"?

SHE WAS
THE PURPLE
GIRL,
RIGHT?

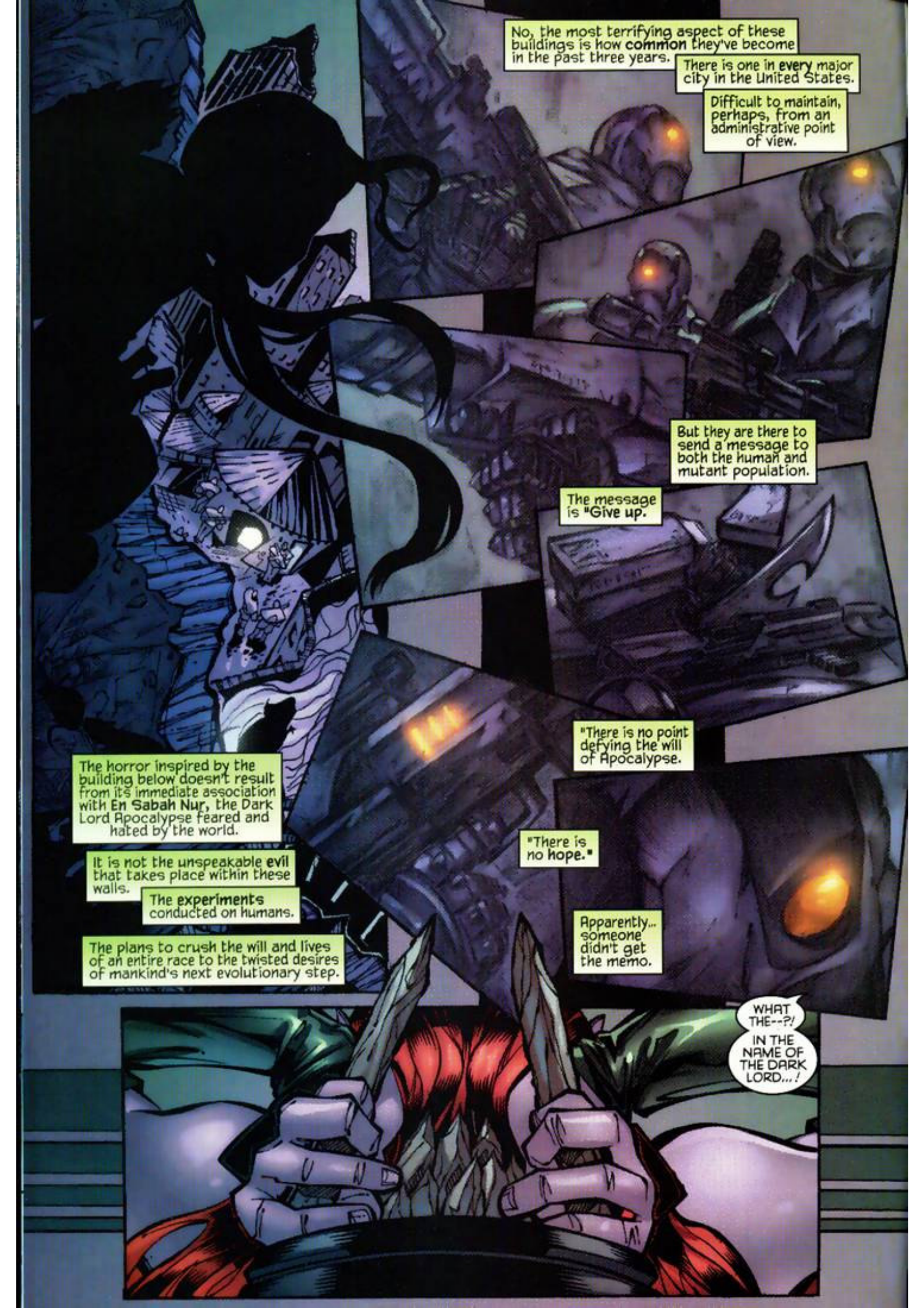
SHE LEFT
ABOUT FIVE
MINUTES
AGO.



BLAST,
CLARICE! SHE
HAD STRICT
ORDERS NOT TO
GO OFF ON
HER OWN!

KIDS,
Heh?

WHAT'D YA
GONNA DO?



No, the most terrifying aspect of these buildings is how common they've become in the past three years.

There is one in every major city in the United States.

Difficult to maintain, perhaps, from an administrative point of view.

But they are there to send a message to both the human and mutant population.

The message is "Give up."

"There is no point defying the will of Apocalypse."

"There is no hope."

Apparently... someone didn't get the memo.

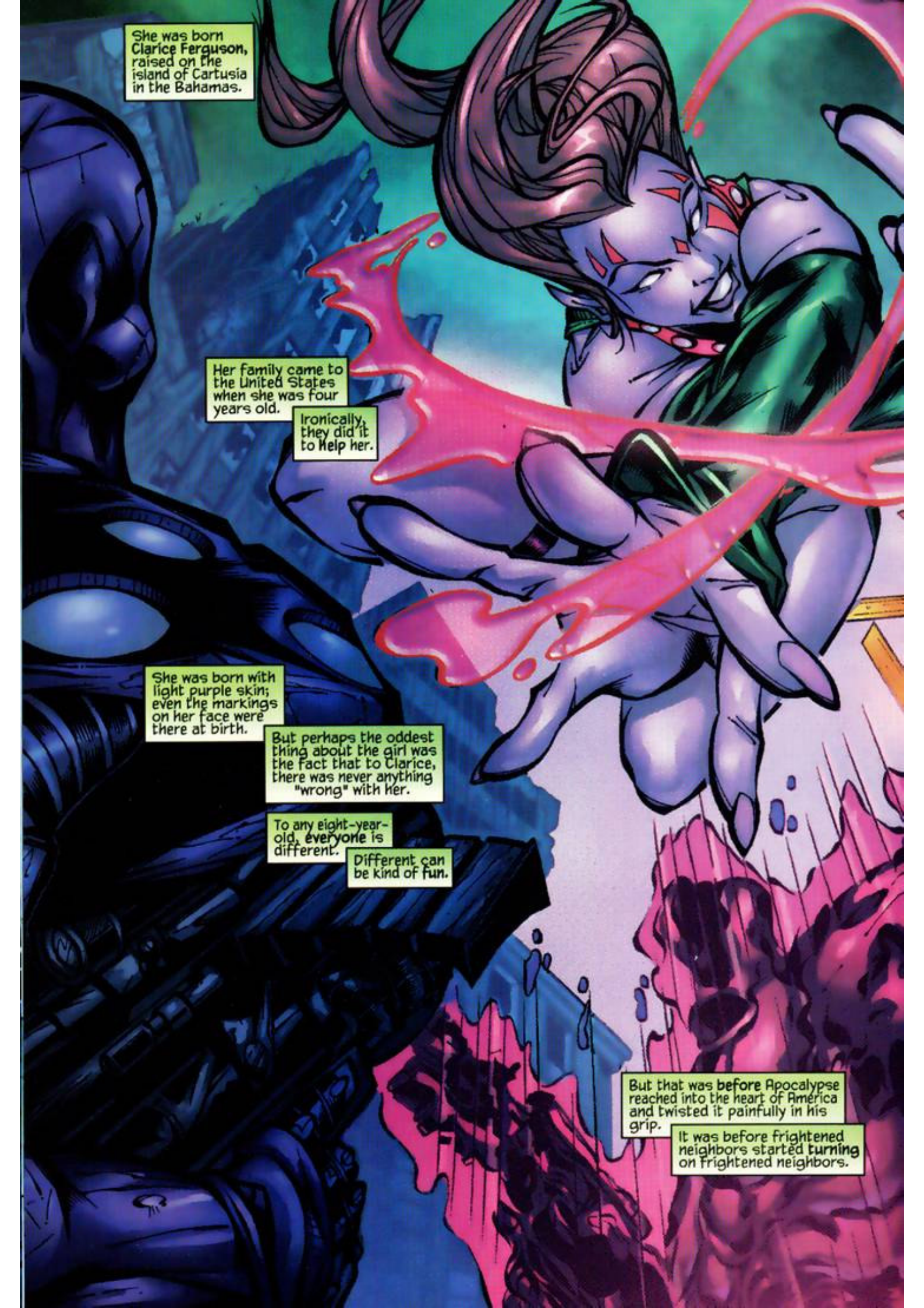
The horror inspired by the building below doesn't result from its immediate association with En Sabah Nur, the Dark Lord Apocalypse feared and hated by the world.

It is not the unspeakable evil that takes place within these walls.

The experiments conducted on humans.

The plans to crush the will and lives of an entire race to the twisted desires of mankind's next evolutionary step.

WHAT THE--?!
IN THE NAME OF THE DARK LORD...!

A comic book illustration of a character with light purple skin and long, flowing pink hair. She is wearing a green and black outfit with a red collar. She is in a dynamic, almost dancing pose, with one leg raised and arms outstretched. A large, bright pink energy blast or splash is visible behind her. The background is a dark, industrial setting with blue and purple tones.

She was born Clarice Ferguson, raised on the island of Cartusia in the Bahamas.

Her family came to the United States when she was four years old.

Ironically, they did it to help her.

She was born with light purple skin; even the markings on her face were there at birth.


But perhaps the oddest thing about the girl was the fact that to Clarice, there was never anything "wrong" with her.

To any eight-year-old, everyone is different.

Different can be kind of fun.

But that was before Apocalypse reached into the heart of America and twisted it painfully in his grip.

It was before frightened neighbors started turning on frightened neighbors.



She can still remember where she was the night the Horseman known as Sinister came to the city of Miami.


She can still see her father valiantly but futilely trying to fend off the approaching hordes.

She saw him die as she peered through a gap between the floor and the door to the cellar.

She remembers the sound of her mother's frantic whisper. "Stay there, Clarice. We won't let them have you. We won't."

She remembers every instant she was an inhabitant of the Pens-- until she was liberated by a man named Victor Creed.

And she became an X-Man.



Perhaps the oddest part
of Clarice's transformation
from frightened girl into
freedom fighter...


...is that her mutagenic
power did not even
manifest itself until she
was imprisoned.

Until she had already
lost everything that
had mattered in her life.


IT'S THE
TELEPORTER!
CALLS
HERSELF
NIGHTCRAWLER,
SHE DOES!



BLINK.
THE
NAME IS
BLINK.



If the Dark Beast
had only left well
enough alone.



The technical term for it is bio-molecular displacement.

By focusing her mutant energies on one point--

--she can move matter from one place to another.

It happens in an instant.

In the blink of an eye.

Sometimes it comes back-- sometimes it is held in stasis.



DEAR
GOD.



APOCALYPSE,
WHAT HAVE YOU DONE
THIS TIME?

TYPICAL,
NO?

YOURS
TRULY TOILS
OVER A HOT
BUNSEN
BURNER--

--AND IT'S
APOCALYPSE
WHO GETS ALL
THE CREDIT.

The sound of his
voice is like an ice
pick driven into the
base of her skull.

THE
**DARK
BEAST!**

YOU
REMEMBERED.
I AM
FLATTERED.

MAYBE I'LL FIRE
THAT PUBLICIST
AFTER ALL.

BUT THEN,
NOT EVERYONE
HAS BEEN AS
INTIMATE AS YOU
AND I HAVE BEEN...
ISN'T THAT TRUE,
CLARICE?





YOU
WHAT, CLONED
AN ENTIRE ARMY
FROM ONE OF HIS
GENES?!

"CLONED?!" NO,
MISS FERGUSON,
YOU'RE LOOKING AT
THE SPLINTERS OF THE
TREES FROM THE
FOREST!

CLONING
MEANS DUPLICATING
ORIGINAL CELLS-- WHAT
WE HAVE HERE IS MORE
LIKE SPLITTING AN
AMOeba TEN TIMES--

--A
THOUSAND
TIMES -- TEN
THOUSAND TIMES!

THESE AREN'T
COPIES-- THEY ARE
THE ORIGINAL OVER
AND OVER AGAIN!

BUT--

THERE'S
A BUT?

THERE'S
ALWAYS A BUT,
BLINK. THAT'S
WHY WE CALL IT
SCIENCE!

BUT...
THINGS HAVE
GOTTEN A
LITTLE, WELL,
CARRIED
AWAY.



At that moment,
miles away...

AH I'M BEGINNING TO
THINK MUH HUSBAND
WAS RIGHT AFTER
ALL, KEVIN!

BLINK HAS GONE
A.W.O.L. ON US,
JUST WHEN WE
NEEDED HER
MOST!



SHE'S A
GOOD EGG,
ROGUE.

KIND OF
EASTER EGGY,
SURE... BUT SHE'D
NEVER LET US
DOWN!

CLARICE,
WHEREVER
YOU ARE--

--WHATEVER
YOU'RE UP
TO--

--YA'D
BETTER DO
IT SOON!





OH, HOW RICH!
HOW POSITIVELY RICH!

YOU DON'T BELIEVE FOR A MOMENT THAT I BELIEVE YOU WOULD TAKE THE LIFE OF THIS INNOCENT CREATURE, DO YOU?

PERHAPS, WHEN YOU WERE A RESIDENT OF THE PENS.

BUT YOU'RE AN X-GIRL NOW, CLARICE.

X-PEOPLE ARE KNOWN FOR THEIR SOFT, CHEWY CENTERS!

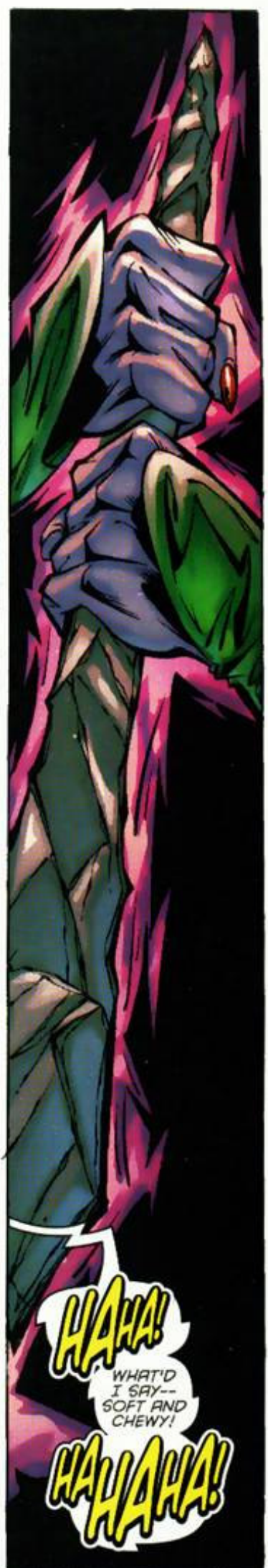


I AM AN X-MAN, Dr. MCCOY.
AN X-MAN TRAINED BY SABRETOOTH.

Hmp.
THERE'S THAT, TRUE.



P-PLEASE... P-PLEASE, END THIS...



HAHA!
WHAT'D I SAY-- SOFT AND CHEWY!
HAHAHA!



WHA--P!

UKT!

THRUST

SHUNK

NOOO!

YOU
HAVE NO
IDEA WHERE
HE'S EVEN
GONE, DO
YOU?!

DO
YOU?!

SOME
PLACE
BETTER THAN
HERE.

KLIK

SOME
PLACE
BETTER THAN
HERE.

BINK



One week later...

Grand Central Station.

Once upon a time, it was the awe-inspiring entrance into what was arguably the greatest city on the face of Earth.

Now, like the city itself, she is a graveyard of dreams.

In many ways, Clarice knows how she feels.

Her mutant ability gives her the power to move anything from one place to another.


But what's the point...if where you're going is as bad as where you've been?

Is one graveyard any better than another?

Does it really matter to the dead who is shoveling the dirt upon their corpses?

THIS IS NOT WORKING OUT.

WHA--?!



WHEN VICTOR
RESCUED YOU FROM
THE PENS, YOU SAID
YOU WANTED TO **HELP**
THE X-MEN.

YOU CLAIMED
AT THE TIME THAT YOU
WANTED TO STAND BY
OUR SIDE AND HELP TO
LIBERATE BOTH HUMANS
AND MUTANTS FROM
THE TYRANNY THAT
IS THIS AGE OF
APOCALYPSE.

YOU GAVE
YOUR WORD THAT
YOU WOULD DO
ANYTHING.



ANYTHING--
APPARENTLY--
EXCEPT THAT WHICH
YOU ARE TOLD
TO DO.

EACH TIME YOU
IGNORE AN ORDER, YOU
PUT EVERYONE AROUND
YOU IN **JEOPARDY**.

YOU PUT OUR
ENTIRE MOVEMENT
AT **RISK**.

YOU
ARE A CHILD,
CLARICE...
PLAYING A
GAME WHEN YOU
SHOULD BE
AT **WAR**.

I CAN NO
LONGER ABIDE
YOUR PRESENCE
AMONG MY
X-MEN.



WE'RE NOT
"**YOUR**" X-MEN,
MAGNETO!

WE'RE **PEOPLE**--
EACH OF US WITH
OUR OWN THOUGHTS
AND FEELINGS ON
EVERYTHING!

DON'T THINK
YOU CAN GET RID
OF ME JUST BECAUSE
I WON'T MARCH IN
GOOSESTEP WITH THE
REST OF YOUR MIND--
LESS LITTLE SOLD--



MANHATTAN
ISLAND...

...the dark heart
of Apocalypse's
campaign of
annihilation.

Several miles long, it speaks volumes to the
citizens of a world where hope is little more
than a memory.

Just as no light touches the shadows that
fall beneath this citadel-- so too is there
no promise of survival for the human race
in Apocalypse's new world.

The irony is that everyone
knows where Apocalypse
lives.

It's just that no one is
suicidal enough to take
the fight to him.

Until now.

There is a part of
Clarice Ferguson
that knows how
this conflict will
resolve.

A part of her that is eager for
her heart to catch up with the
soul that died the day her
parents were slaughtered before
her eyes.

Part of her craves
a release from the
pain that has been
her life ever since.

But that's a
result of her
age, really.

When you're young,
you believe every
tomorrow is going
to be as miserable
as every today.

In real life,
however--

--your life--
the fates-- the
world itself--

...can be hurled off into an unexpected direction an instant later!

That's what happened here, moments ago...

...when Holocaust, the most trusted of Apocalypse's Horsemen, was alerted to an ambush here, within his Master's inner sanctum.

One moment they were planning the Culling of both the Dakotas--

--the next he and his Infinites were battling an army of monsters from another world.

I DON'T KNOW HOW YOU CAME TO BE HERE-- OR WHAT RAGE YOU HARBOR AGAINST MY DARK LORD-- BUT ALL OF YOU WILL FALL BEFORE THE FURY OF HOLOCAUST!

THAT MAY BE TRUE OF THE PATHETIC HUMANS WHO HAVE OPPOSED YOU SO FAR--

--BUT LET'S SEE HOW YOU FARE AGAINST THE POWER OF BLASTAR!

BRRR.

He could not know, of course, that these "monsters" are Baluurrians-- residents of the other-dimensional realm known as the Negative Zone.



FOOM

MY
LIEGE! ARE
YOU--?!

YOU'VE...
MADE YOUR POINT,
HOLOCAUST.

BUT BLASTAR
HAS AN ARMY--AN
ENTIRE *EMPIRE* AT
HIS COMMAND!

YOU AND YOUR
LORD APOCALYPSE
WILL BE CRUSHED
BENEATH THE BOOTS OF
A HUNDRED THOUSAND
BALURRIANS!

BUT
TODAY WAS
NOT ABOUT YOUR
DEFEAT!

IT WAS ABOUT
LETTING YOU KNOW
THAT YOU CAN COUNT
THE REST OF YOUR
LIFE IN *DAYS* AND
WEEKS!

COME,
MEN-- AWAY
FROM THIS
PLACE!

AS BLASTAR
COMMANDS!

CEASE, YOU FOOLS!

BUT, SIR--
THEY ARE GETTING AWAY!

AS THEY SHOULD! LET THEM STAY AWAY--
WE HAVE ENOUGH TO CONCERN OURSELVES
WITH CRUSHING THE REBELS WHO SEEK
TO DEFY OUR RULER!

THE LAST THING
WE NEED TO DO IS TO
DIVIDE OUR FORCES IN
BATTLE WITH THESE --THESE
INTERDIMENSIONAL MORONS!

THEN AGAIN...

... MAYBE
THAT'S *EXACTLY*
WHAT APOCALYPSE'S
ARMIES NEED TO
BE DOING.

MAGNETO
MIGHT NOT AGREE,
BUT MAYBE WE CAN
FORM AN *ALLIANCE*
WITH THESE...
BALUURRIANS?

BLINK.

YES?

NO,
I MEAN
BLINK.

GIVE ME
A REASON
TO KILL
YOU.

CLEVER.

TELL ME,
HOLOCAUST--
DO YOU GIVE OUT
COMEDY AWARDS
AT THE END OF
THE YEAR?

B-BUT--?!


BLINK?!

STOP HER!
SOMEONE STOP
HER BEFORE--


--SHE
REACHES THE
PORTAL!

TOO
LATE!


TZ
ZAZ




It is a place
with no name.



In many ways it is a
place more horrible
than the hell in which
she was raised.



For Clarice Ferguson
has just traded the
Devil she knows...



...for the one
she does not.



I DO
NOT RECOGNIZE
YOUR MARKINGS,
STRANGER.

WHICH
MEANS YOU
ARE A FOOL
TO VENTURE SO
DEEP INTO THE
NEGATIVE
ZONE!

SPEAK,
STRANGER! SPEAK,
SO I KNOW THE NAME
OF THE BEING I AM
RETURNING BACK TO
THE GODS!

MY...
NAME?

I... I DON'T
REMEMBER.

**CH
CHUKT**

TO BE CONTINUED...