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THE UNCANNY

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CODE
AUTHORITY

X-MEN



MYSTIQUE:

IN GENTLER DAYS, I LOVED THE CIRCUS-- IN ALL ITS MYRIAD INCARNATIONS, BIG OR SMALL, CARNIVAL OR AMUSEMENT PARK.

IT WAS A MAGIC PLACE, WHOSE INHABITANTS WERE STORYBOOK CHARACTERS COME TO LIFE, MORE BEAUTIFUL AND EXCITING THAN I COULD EVER HOPE TO BE.

I DREAMT OF RUNNING AWAY TO JOIN THEM, BUT NEVER HAD THE COURAGE. I WAS CERTAIN MY LIFE WOULD BE AS DRAB AND ORDINARY-- AS SAFELY NORMAL-- AS EVERYONE ELSE'S.

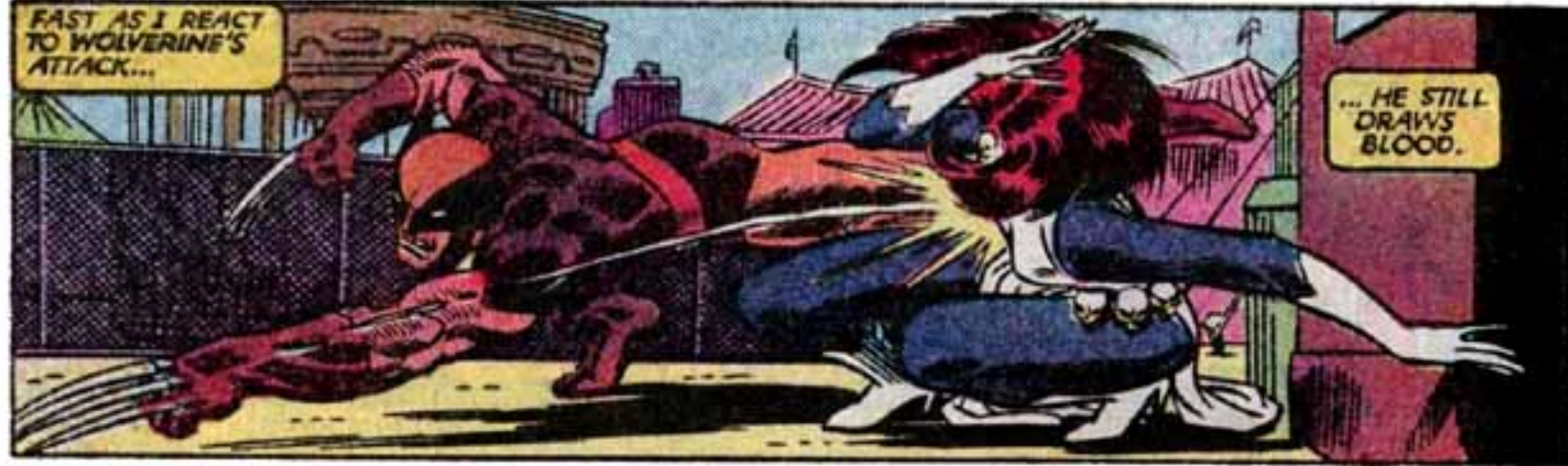
I WAS WRONG.

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FAST AS I REACT TO WOLVERINE'S ATTACK...



... HE STILL DRAWS BLOOD.

MY KICK WOULD HAVE BROKEN THE NECK OF AN ORDINARY MAN.



--THE STRONGEST SUBSTANCE KNOWN --MAKING THEM VIRTUALLY UNBREAKABLE.



BUT THIS X-MAN'S BONES ARE LACED WITH ADAMANTIUM--

HIS CLAWS ARE FORGED OF THE PURE METAL. RATOR-KEEN, THEY CAN CUT STEEL GIRDERS WITH EASE.



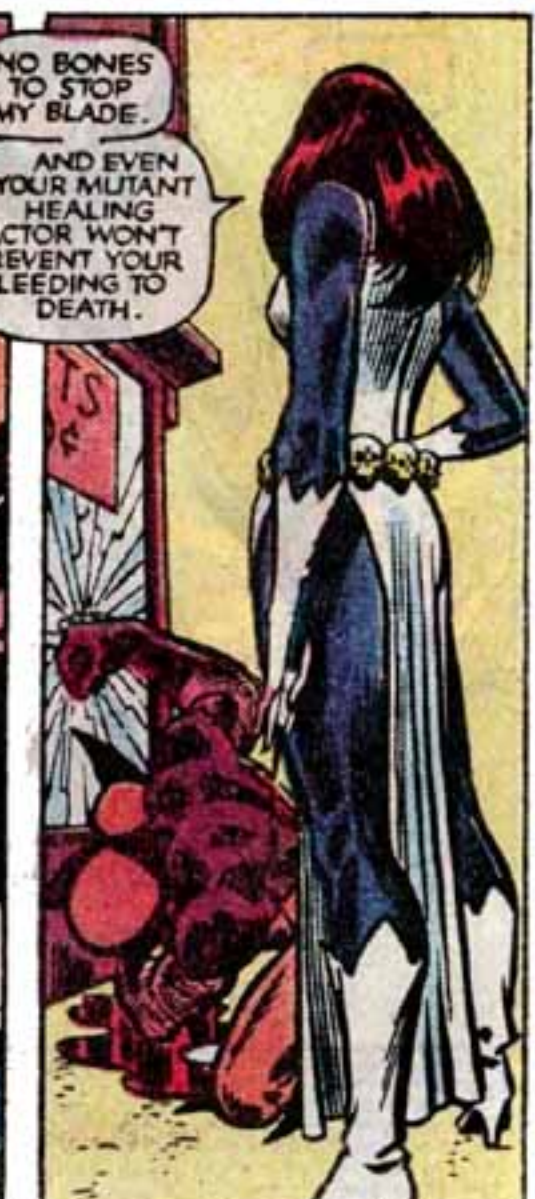
BUT FOR ALL HIS POWER AND SKILL...

... HE IS STILL VULNERABLE...



... TO A SLIT THROAT.

NO BONES TO STOP MY BLADE. AND EVEN YOUR MUTANT HEALING FACTOR WON'T PREVENT YOUR BLEEDING TO DEATH.



MOMENTS LATER, KITTY PRYDE-- THE YOUNGEST OF MY FOES-- PHASES INTO VIEW. HERS IS THE ABILITY TO PASS LIKE A GHOST THROUGH SOLID OBJECTS.



TICKETS

TICKETS 50¢

WOLVIE!!

SHE HAS COURAGE AND INTELLIGENCE-- BUT HER RELATIVE INEXPERIENCE WILL PROVE HER LINDING



THERE'S NO PULSE! BUT HOW CAN HE BE DEAD... THERE ISN'T A MARK ON...



SNIKT!



FOOLISH CHILD, YOU FORGET WHO YOU'RE UP AGAINST!

...MYSTIQUE-- LEADER OF THE BROTHERHOOD OF EVIL MUTANTS.



A SHAPE-CHANGER WHO CAN DUPLICATE ANYONE'S FACE AND FORM TO PERFECTION.



MURDERER!

WHUNNGH!

SHE WAS A CHILD, MYSTIQUE--
WHO NEVER DID YOU
ANY HARM--

--YET YOU
KILLED
HER!



AS I WILL
YOU,
COLOSSUS.

NO ONE FORCED
HER TO JOIN
THE X-MEN.



SHE
KNEW
THE
RISKS.

THE RUSSIAN LOVES
KITTY. HIS EMOTIONS--
HIS GRIEF AND RAGE--
MAKE HIM CARELESS.

MY FLARE-SKULL EXPLODES
ON CONTACT-- BRIGHT AS
THE SUN-- ITS HEAT
SCARRING AND MELTING
COLOSSUS' ARMORED SKIN.



BUT, AN INSTANT LATER, HIS
BELLOW OF AGONY IS ECHOED
BY ONE OF MY OWN.



CYCLOPS!

OPTIC BLAST--
NEARLY SNAPPED
ME IN TWO!

MUST
REACH
COVER--
BEFORE
HE FIRES
AGAIN!



FOR ALL THE
PAIN, THAT SHOT
WAS MEANT
ONLY TO STUN.

CYCLOPS WAS A FOUNDING MEMBER OF THE X-MEN-- THEIR FIRST, BEST LEADER-- AND HE STILL PLAYS BY THE OLD RULES. EVEN AFTER WHAT'S HAPPENED TONIGHT, HE'LL TRY TO TAKE ME ALIVE.

HIS SCRUPLES GIVE ME MY EDGE.

COLOSSUS, DON'T FOLLOW HER IN THERE! THAT'S WHAT SHE WANTS!



WITHIN THE FUNHOUSE ARE SCORES OF MIRRORS-- AND CYCLOPS HAS NO WAY OF TELLING REFLECTION FROM REALITY.

COLOSSUS STILL SUFFERS FROM THE EFFECTS OF MY FLARE-SKULL, HELPLESS AS HE IS VIRTUALLY BLIND.



I ASK THE MOMENT...



...TAKING SLOW, DELIBERATE AIM.



PETER-- BEHIND YOU!

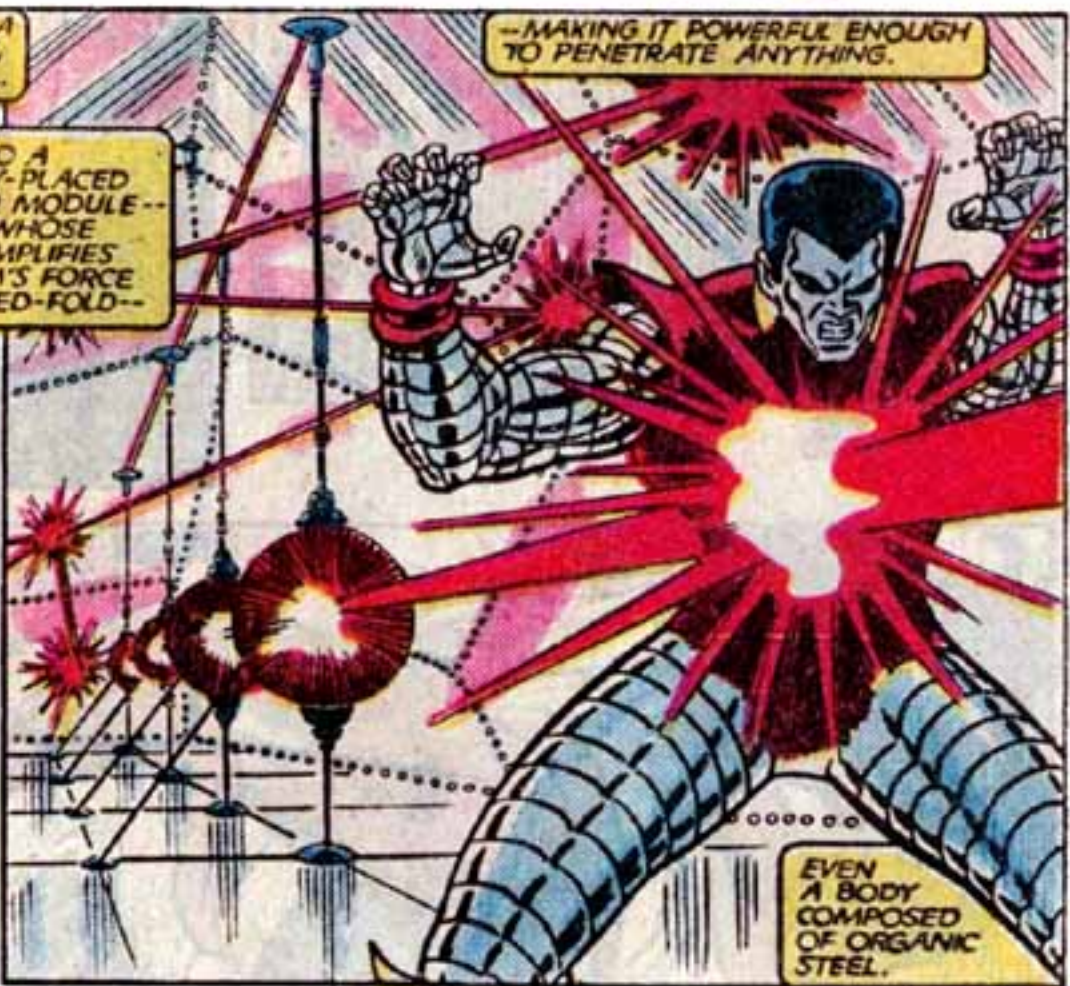
ANOTHER STUN BEAM...

...THAT PASSES HARMLESSLY THROUGH A HOLOGRAPHIC PROJECTION OF MYSELF, BEFORE BOUNCING OFF THE MIRRORS...



...AND INTO A CAREFULLY-PLACED AMPLIFIER MODULE-- EACH OF WHOSE LENSES AMPLIFIES THE BEAM'S FORCE A HUNDRED-FOLD--

--MAKING IT POWERFUL ENOUGH TO PENETRATE ANYTHING.



EVEN A BODY COMPOSED OF ORGANIC STEEL.



SO SHOCKED IS CYCLOPS BY THE MURDER I'D TRICKED HIM INTO COMMITTING ...



... HE NEVER HAS A CHANCE TO REALIZE THAT IT WASN'T COLOSSUS I WAS SNEAKING UP ON...

... BUT HIM.



I'M DOING BETTER THAN EXPECTED...

... AS I SHIFT TO A SPECIALLY-DESIGNED COMBAT-SUIT.

MY TURN TO GET COCKY AND OVER-CONFIDENT.



I QUICKLY PAY THE PRICE.

STORM!

SHE'S SUMMONED A WIND-- SWEEPING ME INTO THE AIR!



THE X-MEN'S CURRENT LEADER CONTROLS THE WEATHER. IN MANY WAYS, SHE'S THE MOST POWERFUL-- AND POTENTIALLY DANGEROUS-- OF THEM.

HER USUAL PLOY IS TO ATTACK WITH BOLTS OF LIGHTNING.



I'M READY FOR YOU, WITCH!

THIS SUIT ABSORBS THE POWER OF YOUR LIGHTNING...



... AND CONVERTS IT INTO ENERGY FOR MY OWN USE!

FOR ALL THE BRAVADO IN MY VOICE, INSIDE I'M SHAKING. THE SUIT'S CAPABILITIES ARE PURELY THEORETICAL-- IT'S NEVER BEEN TESTED UNDER ACTUAL COMBAT CONDITIONS.



I'M GLAD TO SEE IT WORKS.

STORM DODGES MY ENERGY BLAST WITH EASE, BUT I EXPECTED THAT. I'M AIMING FOR THE FUEL TRUCK PARKED BEHIND HER.



OF COURSE, WITH STORM DEAD, THE WINDS THAT HELD ME ALOFT VANISH AS WELL.

I ANGLE MY FALL TOWARDS THE "BIG TOP"...



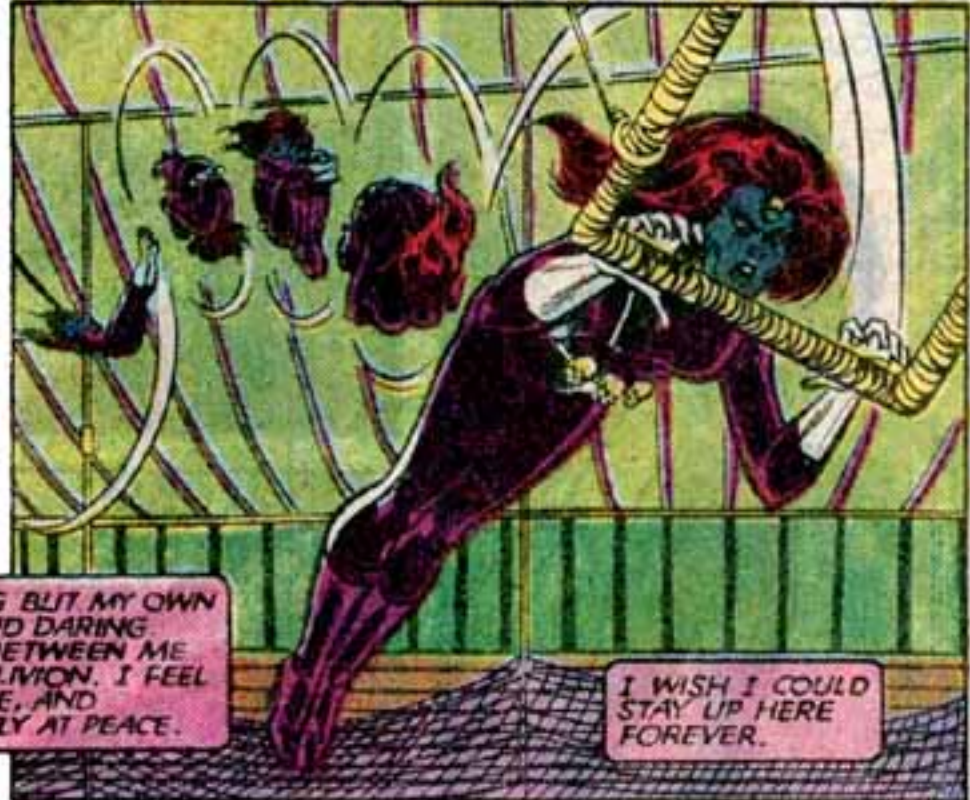
... AND USE ITS CANVAS ROOF TO SLOW MY DESCENT...



...ENOUGH FOR ME TO GRAB A TRAPEZE BAR.

SUDDENLY, MY BATTLE WITH THE X-MEN SEEMS UN-IMPORTANT.

NOTHING BUT MY OWN SKILL AND DARING STAND BETWEEN ME AND OBLIVION. I FEEL AT HOME, AND STRANGELY AT PEACE.



I WISH I COULD STAY UP HERE FOREVER.



BUT THE FATES HAVE OTHER PLANS.

WHY SO SHY, MYSTIQUE?

HOW 'BOUT YOU DROP DOWN TO WHERE THE ACTION IS.



THE MAIN SPAR IS TWO FEET THICK AND FIFTY TALL, YET ROGUE SWINGS IT AS EASILY AS A BASEBALL BAT.

I DON'T WANT TO HURT YOU, ROGUE.




I RAISED YOU! YOU'RE AS DEAR TO ME AS MY OWN FLESH AND BLOOD!

AH'M AN X-MAN, MYSTIQUE. AH'VE LEFT THE BROTHERHOOD-- AN' YOU-- FOR GOOD!




AN' AH MEAN TO AVENGE MAH FRIENDS!

SHE LEAVES ME NO CHOICE.




I HOWL,
LIKE A
MAD DOG--

--SAVAGED BY EMOTIONS
I THOUGHT I'D PUT BEHIND
ME DECADES AGO--




-- WHILE A SMALL
PART OF ME
LOOKS ON WITH
AMUSED, CLINICAL
DETACHMENT.

THEN...



FASTEN YOUR
SEATBELT,
MYSTIQUE--

NIGHTCRAWLER!



--BECAUSE
THIS IS
GOING
TO BE...


...A...

...VERY...

...ROUGH...


...RIDE!

THE MULTIPLE TELEPORTS ARE INTENDED
TO LEAVE NIGHTCRAWLER'S PASSENGER
TOTALLY INCAPACITATED-- THE STRAIN IS
ALMOST MORE THAN HE HIMSELF CAN BEAR.



MUCH TO HIS
SURPRISE,
HOWEVER...

...I'M NOT
BOtherED
BY IT AT ALL.



HE'S THE LAST--
WITH HIS DEATH,
MY VICTORY IS
COMPLETE.

BUT I
HESITATE

HE DOESN'T.

THE NEXT THING I'M AWARE OF IS A COOL CLOTH ON MY FOREHEAD AND EQUALLY COOL HANDS PRESSED GENTLY AGAINST A FACE I'M CERTAIN IS SWOLLEN TO TEN TIMES ITS NORMAL SIZE.

BETTER? THE SWINE DIDN'T PULL HIS PUNCH. I'M LUCKY MY JAW ISN'T BROKEN-- LUCKY, I SUPPOSE, TO BE ALIVE.

YOU DID WELL-- SIX KILLS OUT OF A POSSIBLE SEVEN.

I FAILED, IRENE. I COULD SLAY MY FOSTER DAUGHTER WITHOUT A SECOND THOUGHT-- BUT NOT NIGHTCRAWLER.

I WARNED YOU, MY RAVEN-- BUT WHAT GOOD IS BEING A PRECOG, WITH THE ABILITY TO SEE THE FUTURE, IF NO ONE LISTENS?

PARDON THE INTRUSION, LADIES, BUT A PERFORMANCE LIKE YOURS, MYSTIQUE, DESERVES A CELEBRATION.

I AM IMPRESSED! BEST DARN MURDER-WORLD DUEL I'VE FOUGHT IN AGES. BY THE BYE, YOU REMEMBER MY ASSISTANT, MISS LOCKE.

I REALLY HAD YOU PUMPIN' T'WARDS THE END THERE, MISTY. LOOKS T'ME LIKE MY ROBOT X-MEN HAD YOU CONVINCED THEY WERE THE REAL THING.

AS ONE WHO POSSESSES SOME SMALL SKILL AT MIMICRY, ARCADE...

WHOA!

...I DIDN'T THINK I COULD BE FOOLED-- BUT I WAS

HOWEVER, THAT REALITY WAS WHAT I PAID YOU FOR.



WOMAN, I'M NOT IN THIS FOR THE BUCKS.

I DO IT FOR THE FUN! A GAME LIKE YOURS IS ON THE HOUSE.



YOU WIN, PERHAPS I DIE. YOU LOSE, NOTHING HAPPENS.

SOMEHOW, ARCADE, THAT DOESN'T SEEM QUITE FAIR.



MY GAME, SWEETHEART, MY RULES.

THE X-MEN WOULDN'T HAVE FOUGHT SOLO LIKE THAT, YOU KNOW. THEY'D USE TEAMWORK. NOR WOULD THEY BE SO CARELESS.



I CAN PRETTY MUCH DUPLICATE THEIR POWERS WITH MY ROBOTS AN' MURDERWORLD -- BUT WHAT YOU PROVED DOWN THERE WAS THAT YOU COULD BEAT ME.

THAT, I MIGHT ADD, IS NO MEAN FEAT.



I'D LIKE YOU TO TRAIN MY BROTHERHOOD THE SAME WAY, BY PITTING THEM AGAINST YOUR X-MEN ROBOTS.

NO PROBLEM-- PROVIDED WE USE TONIGHT'S PARAMETERS.



NAMELY, THAT ONE OF THOSE HEROES WON'T BE PROGRAMMED TO STUN ITS FOE, BUT KILL.

A LITTLE SOMETHIN' T' MAKE THE STAKES MORE INTERESTING FOR ALL CONCERNED.

AGREED.



BY THE WAY, ARCADE, WHICH X-MAN WAS IT IN MY CASE?

THE OBVIOUS ONE, CUPCAKE--

--ROGUE.

HE DOESN'T LIKE LOSING. EACH MATCH WILL BE HARDER-- AND DEADLIER -- THAN THE ONE BEFORE. BUT THAT'S PRECISELY WHAT I WANT.

WHY THE SOUR LOOK, IRENE?

THIS VENDETTA YOU PLAN AGAINST THE X-MEN IS A MISTAKE.

IS IT WRONG TO WANT MY DAUGHTER BACK, TO DO WHATEVER IS NECESSARY TO GET HER?!

SUPPOSE ROGUE LEFT OF HER OWN FREE WILL? YOU KNOW HOW TROUBLED SHE'S BEEN OF LATE.

NO!

I DON'T BELIEVE IT, ROGUE WOULD NEVER ABANDON ME.

IF SHE'S WITH THE X-MEN, IT'S BECAUSE XAVIER FORCED HER WITH HIS ACCURSED TELEPATHIC POWERS. HE'S MANIPULATING HER MIND!

RAVEN, HAVE YOU CONSIDERED THE COST?

YOU COULD NOT HARM A FACSIMILE NIGHTCRAWLER--

-- HOW WILL YOU FARE AGAINST THE MAN HIMSELF? IF HE'S KILLED...

BE SILENT, WOMAN!

MENTION HIM AGAIN, DESTINY, AT YOUR PERIL. THE X-MEN HAVE MY CHILD AND IF I HAVE TO SLAUGHTER THEM ALL TO RESCUE HER ...

... THEN I SHALL!

STEVIE HUNTER'S DANCE STUDIO-- IN THE TOWN OF SALEM CENTER, NEAR THE X-MEN'S HOME AND SECRET HEADQUARTERS.

GOT A MINUTE, STEVIE?

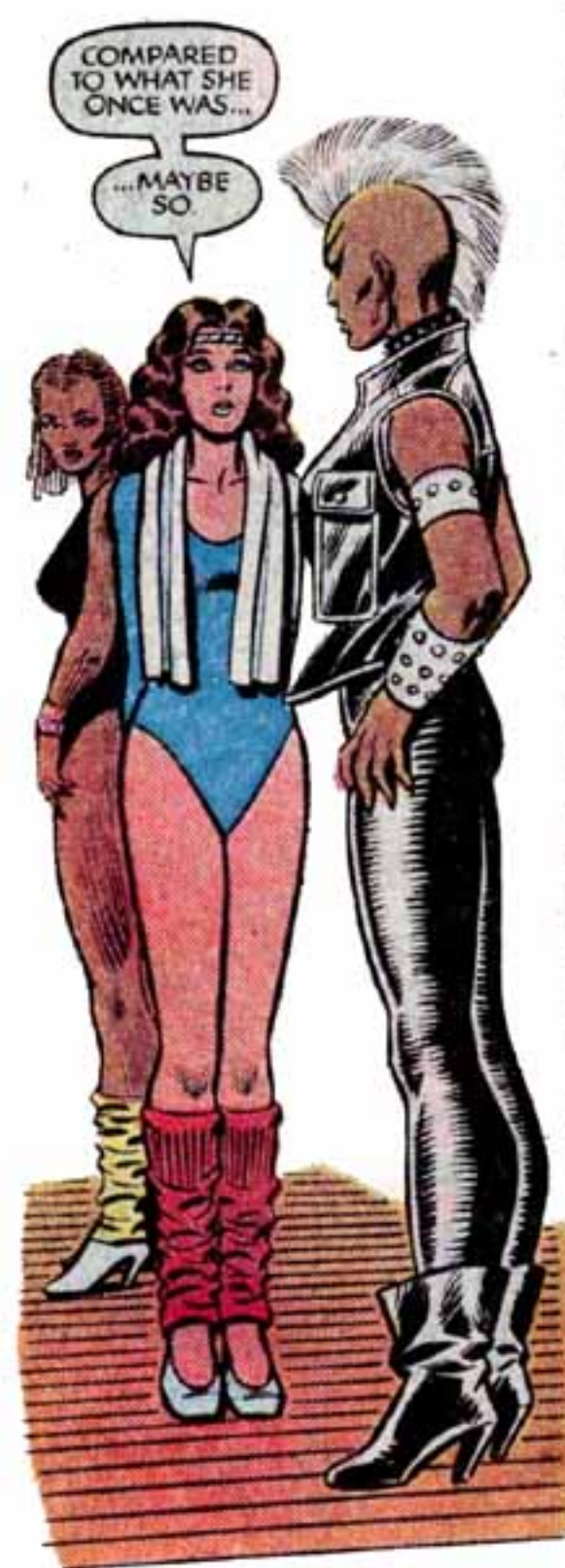
SURE, KITTY-- YOU OKAY?

YOU'VE BEEN PRETTY DISTRACTED THE PAST FEW WEEKS, EVER SINCE YOU RETURNED FROM JAPAN.

WHAT DO YOU DO...

... WHEN SOMEONE YOU RESPECT AND REALLY CARED FOR, A PERSON YOU THOUGHT WAS CLOSER TO YOU THAN ALMOST ANYONE IN THE WHOLE WORLD, EVEN YOUR PARENTS...

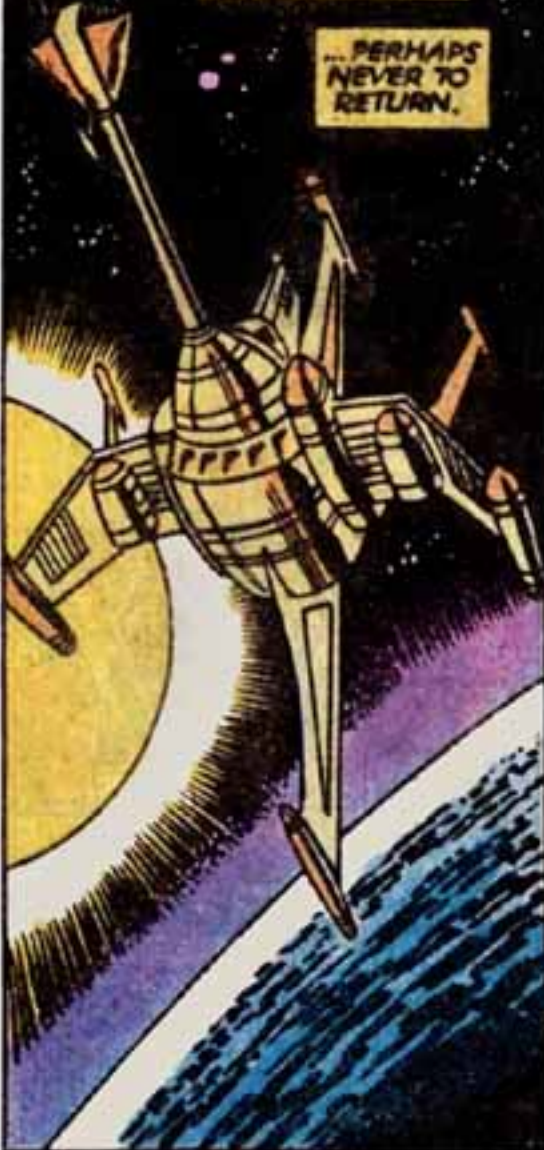
SUDDENLY CHANGES SO COMPLETELY THAT SHE SEEMS LIKE A TOTAL STRANGER?



TWENTY-SIX THOUSAND MILES, LITERALLY STRAIGHT UP FROM STEVE'S, THE STARJAMMER MAINTAINS SYNCHRONOUS ORBIT AROUND THE EARTH.

IN A MATTER OF MINUTES, SHE'LL BE LEAVING THE SOLAR SYSTEM...

...PERHAPS NEVER TO RETURN.



THE REASON SITS ON THE OBSERVATION DECK, BIDDING FAREWELL TO HER LOVE.

SHE IS LILANDRA, EXPATRIATE MAJESTRIX SHI'AR, RETURNING HOME TO RETAKE HER IMPERIAL THRONE FROM HER USURPER SISTER. BY HER SIDE IS CHARLES XAVIER, FOUNDER AND MENTOR OF THE X-MEN.



IF ONLY THIS MOMENT COULD LAST FOREVER.

REMEMBER IT, MY HEART, FOR IT MAY BE ALL WE HAVE.

I BELIEVE IN HAPPY ENDINGS, LIL. THERE WILL BE OTHERS, AND BETTER.



I WISH I SHARED YOUR OPTIMISM.



EVEN IF I WIN, THE BATTLE WILL BE LONG AND HARD.

WHILE WE YET LIVE, LILANDRA, WE MUST HAVE HOPE.

BE TRUE TO OUR LOVE! COME BACK TO ME!



I SHALL, CHARLES.

IF NEED BE, FROM THE GATES OF HELL ITSELF!

IN THE TRANSPORTER ROOM, A FATHER PARTS WITH HIS TWO SONS.

D'YOU UNDERSTAND, DAD, WHY ALEX AND I AREN'T COMING WITH YOU?



IN A WAY, SCOTT, I'M GLAD YOU'RE NOT.

I'M A WARRIOR AND A PIRATE. MUCH AS I'D LIKE YOU BY MY SIDE, THAT ISN'T THE LIFE I WANT FOR YOU.

WE'LL MISS YOU, DAD.

YOU HAVE A WIFE, SCOTT. TAKE CARE OF HER. GIVE YOURSELVES THE CHANCE FOR LASTING HAPPINESS YOUR MOTHER AND I NEVER HAD.



I'M PROUD OF YOU, MY SONS. IF YOUR MOTHER WERE STILL ALIVE, SHE WOULD BE, TOO.

THANKS, DAD...



... FOR SHOWING US WHO WE ARE AND WHERE WE CAME FROM. WE'LL NEVER FORGET YOU -- AND NEVER STOP LOVING YOU!

SCOTT THINKS THIS IS IT, THAT WE'RE GOING OFF TO DIE.

WE ARE SIX AGAINST THE MIGHT OF A GALAXY, CORSAIR. HE HAS A POINT.



WE CAN STILL QUIT, LILANDRA.

I AM TEMPTED. BUT I CANNOT.



IN MY CASE, EMPRESS...

... I DON'T WANT TO.

AT CORSAIR'S COMMAND, THE JAMMER WARPS AWAY FROM THE PLANET OF HIS BIRTH, COURSE SET FOR THE SHI'AR GALAXY--



-- AND A DESTINY AS GLORIOUS AS IT IS TRAGIC.

DARKNESS SHROUDS THE EASTERN SEABOARD-- A CRISP, CLEAR AUTUMNAL EVENING, STILL MORE SUMMER THAN FALL.



BRITAIN'S RENOWNED ROYAL BALLET IS PLAYING LINCOLN CENTER, AND SOME OF THE X-MEN HAVE COME TO VIEW TONIGHT'S PERFORMANCE.



KITTY AND I WILL MEET YOU AT THE THEATRE, KURT, AFTER WE PARK THE AUTO.

DON'T YOU TWO GET DISTRACTED ALONG THE WAY.

KURT!! WE WOULDN'T!!!

PITY. I WOULD.

HURRY UP, THOUGH. THE SHOW'S ABOUT TO START.



YOU SHOULDN'T TEASE KITTY, NIGHTCRAWLER. IT ISN'T NICE.

EVERY SO OFTEN, LIEBCHEN, SINCE I LOOK LIKE A DEMON...

... I HAVE THIS IRRESISTABLE URGE TO PLAY THE PART.

IS ANYTHING THE MATTER, KURT, YOU SOUND SO DOWN?



I'VE BEEN THINKING ABOUT SCOTT AND ALEX-- ORPHANS MOST OF THEIR LIVES UNTIL CORSAIR ARRIVED TO GIVE THEM ROOTS AND A HERITAGE.

I WISH I WAS THAT LUCKY.

WHO AM I, AMANDA? WHERE DO I COME FROM?! WHAT IS MY REAL FAMILY?!!



I KNOW WHAT MOM TOLD ME-- SHE FOUND YOU, NEW-BORN AND BARELY ALIVE, IN A ROADSIDE SHELTER IN THE BLACK FOREST. A MAN-- YOUR FATHER, I GUESS-- LAY OUTSIDE ...

PROBABLY TOOK ONE LOOK AT ME...

... AND DROPPED DEAD FROM FRIGHT.

STOP IT, KURT, THAT ISN'T FUNNY!

THERE WAS NO SIGN OF ANYONE ELSE.



BECAUSE OF YOUR APPEARANCE, MOTHER DECIDED TO RAISE YOU HERSELF, IN THE CIRCUS.

DID SHE EVER TRY TO FIND MY FAMILY?

I DON'T KNOW, I NEVER ASKED.

AND NEITHER DID YOU, BEFORE NOW. WHY ALL OF A SUDDEN IS IT SO IMPORTANT?

THE LEADER OF THE BROTHERHOOD OF EVIL MUTANTS, MYSTIQUE, LOOKS LIKE ME.

AND WHEN I ASKED IF THERE WAS A CONNECTION-- BETWEEN US--



-- SHE SAID ASK YOUR MOTHER, ASK MARGALI SZARDOS.

LIFE'S BEEN SO HECTIC THESE PAST MONTHS, I NEVER GOT THE OPPORTUNITY.

BUT I'VE LET MY QUESTIONS-- AND FEARS-- FESTER FAR TOO LONG. I NEED ANSWERS.

MOM'S IN GRAFBÜRG. WE CAN PHONE HER TOMORROW.

BLOCKS WESTWARD, NEAR THE HUDSON RIVER...

I WAS AFRAID WE'D NEVER FIND A SPACE. DRIVING IN THIS TOWN'S GETTING RIDICULOUS!

THE SKY IS CLEAR, KATYA. A BRISK WALK WILL DO US GOOD.

YEAH? THE ROLLS'LL PROBABLY GET RIPPED OFF WHILE WE'RE GONE.

YOU'RE IN A CHEERFUL MOOD. I THOUGHT YOU WERE LOOKING FORWARD TO THE BALLET.

Oh, I AM, PETER. I DON'T MEAN TO BE SUCH A GRUMP, I'VE GOT TOO MUCH ON MY MIND.

WOULD TALKING ABOUT THINGS HELP--?

IT'S THESE SERIES OF EXPERIMENTS...

...I'VE BEGUN WITH DOUG RAMSEY-- A FRIEND FROM DANCE CLASS-- HE'S INTO COMPUTERS, LIKE ME, ONLY HIS SPECIALTY'S SOFTWARE. I'M THE HARDWARE, NUTS'N' BOLTS FREAK. WE'RE TRYING TO-- AND LEMME KNOW IF I GET TOO TECHNICAL-- WHAT THE HECK!?!

LENIN'S GHOST--AN EXPLOSION!

BOOM!

I CAN HEAR SCREAMS. PEOPLE ARE INJURED-- TRAPPED-- UP THERE!

SUMMON THE FIRE BRIGADE, KITTY--

--WHILE I DO WHAT I CAN TO SAVE THEM!

BE CAREFUL, PETER!



A FIRE IS OF LITTLE DANGER TO-- COLOSSUS!

HURRY, KITTY-- LIVES HANG IN THE BALANCE!



THE BUILDING IS DERELICT AND CONDEMNED. THOSE WITHIN MUST BE SQUATTERS, LIVING HERE ILLEGALLY.

I HOPE THERE ARE NOT TOO MANY OF THEM.



WHO IS THIS DOUG RAMSEY?

I DON'T REMEMBER MEETING HIM, KITTY SPEAKS FONDLY OF HIM, THOUGH. SHE MUST LIKE HIM VERY MUCH.

I'VE REACHED THE TOP FLOOR--



-- BUT WHERE IS THE FIRE?!

S'PRISE, SUCKER.

BLOB!?!

AIN'T IT WUNNERFUL WHAT YOU CAN DO THESE DAYS WITH HOLOGRAPHIC PROJECTIONS AN' FANCY-DAN SPECIAL EFFECTS?



YOU CAN MAKE A BODY B'LIEVE PRETTY NEAR ANYTHING.



THIS WAS A TRAP!

BRIGHT BOY.



GO T' THE HEAD O' THE CLASS!

WHAT A BLOW-- !!!
BLOB IS NOT STUPID-- OR BRAVE-- ENOUGH TO ATTACK BY HIMSELF. THE REST OF THE BROTHERHOOD OF EVIL MUTANTS MUST BE NEARBY.

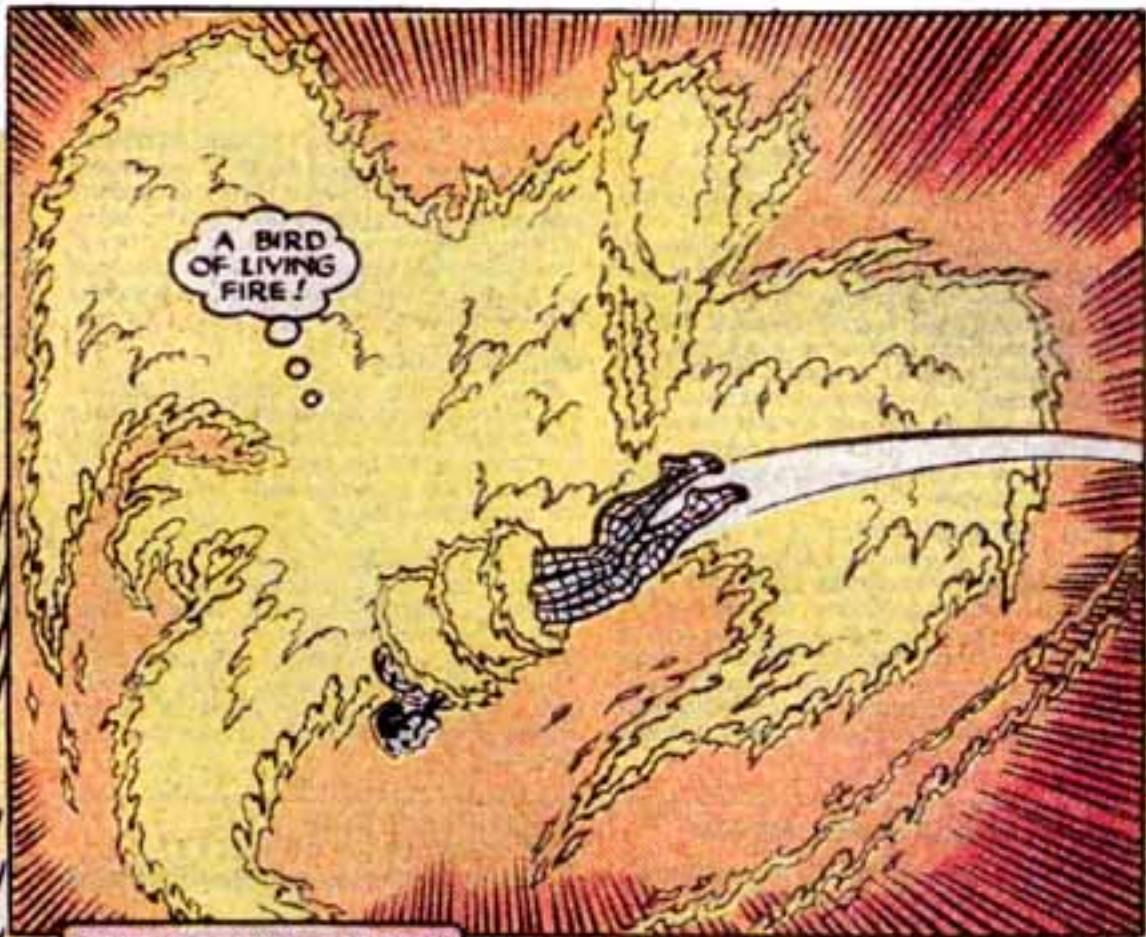


I MUST KEEP THEM AWAY FROM KITTY!



HUH-- WHUZZAT-- COLOSSUS!

OH, NO!!



A BIRD OF LIVING FIRE!

"THIS IS PYRO'S DOING!"



HOT ENOUGH FOR YOU, COBBER?

I'M AFRAID IT'S ONLY THE BEGINNING.



THE CREATURE HAS SUFFICIENT SUBSTANCE TO HOLD ME...

... BUT NOT ENOUGH FOR MY PUNCHES TO AFFECT IT. TRY AS I MIGHT, I CANNOT BREAK FREE!

COLOSSUS CONTINUES TO STRUGGLE AS HE'S HEATED RED-HOT...



...THEN WHITE-HOT, TO INCANDESCENCE AND BEYOND!



HE'S OFTEN WONDERED ABOUT THE UPPER LIMITS OF HIS STRENGTH AND INVULNERABILITY. CAN HIS STEEL SKIN BE PENETRATED, HIS STEEL BONES BROKEN?



CAN HE MELT?

AND, IF SO, WHAT WILL DO TO HIS HUMAN SELF?



HE PLUMMETS TO EARTH LIKE A BLAZING METEOR...

...THE GROUND SIZZLING WHERE HE LANDS, EVERYTHING NEARBY THAT'S FLAMMABLE BURSTING INSTANTLY TO FLAME.



HE HAS NEVER KNOWN SUCH AGONY.

WHY... DID PYRO'S MONSTER... DROP ME... ???

UNLESS -- ITS EXISTANCE IS MAINTAINED BY PYRO THROUGH FORCE OF WILL. I COULDN'T HURT IT, BUT MY RESISTANCE MUST HAVE AFFECTED HIM THROUGH THAT PSILINK, WORN HIM OUT!

MYSTIQUE AND DESTINY... ARE NO REAL THREAT TO ME, EVEN... WEAK AS I AM. BUT AVALANCHE IS... ANOTHER MATTER. I MUST... GATHER MY WITS BEFORE HE -- OR THE OTHERS -- STRIKE!





LOOK AT THE RUSSIAN, TRYING TO STAND! YOU HAVE TO GIVE HIM CREDIT, PYRO-- HE'S TOUGH!

SEEMS ALMOST A SHAME TO FINISH HIM LIKE THIS.

HAVE YOU EVER WONDERED WHAT WOULD HAPPEN TO SOMETHING AS HOT AS YOU'VE MADE COLOSSUS DUNKED INTO NEAR ABSOLUTE ZERO COLD?



WATCH CLOSELY, MY FRIEND, BECAUSE WE'RE ABOUT TO LEARN!

WITH HIS MUTANT POWER, AVALANCHE SWEEPS TRUCKS CONTAINING LIQUID NITROGEN (MINUS 346° F) TOWARDS THE UNSUSPECTING X-MAN.

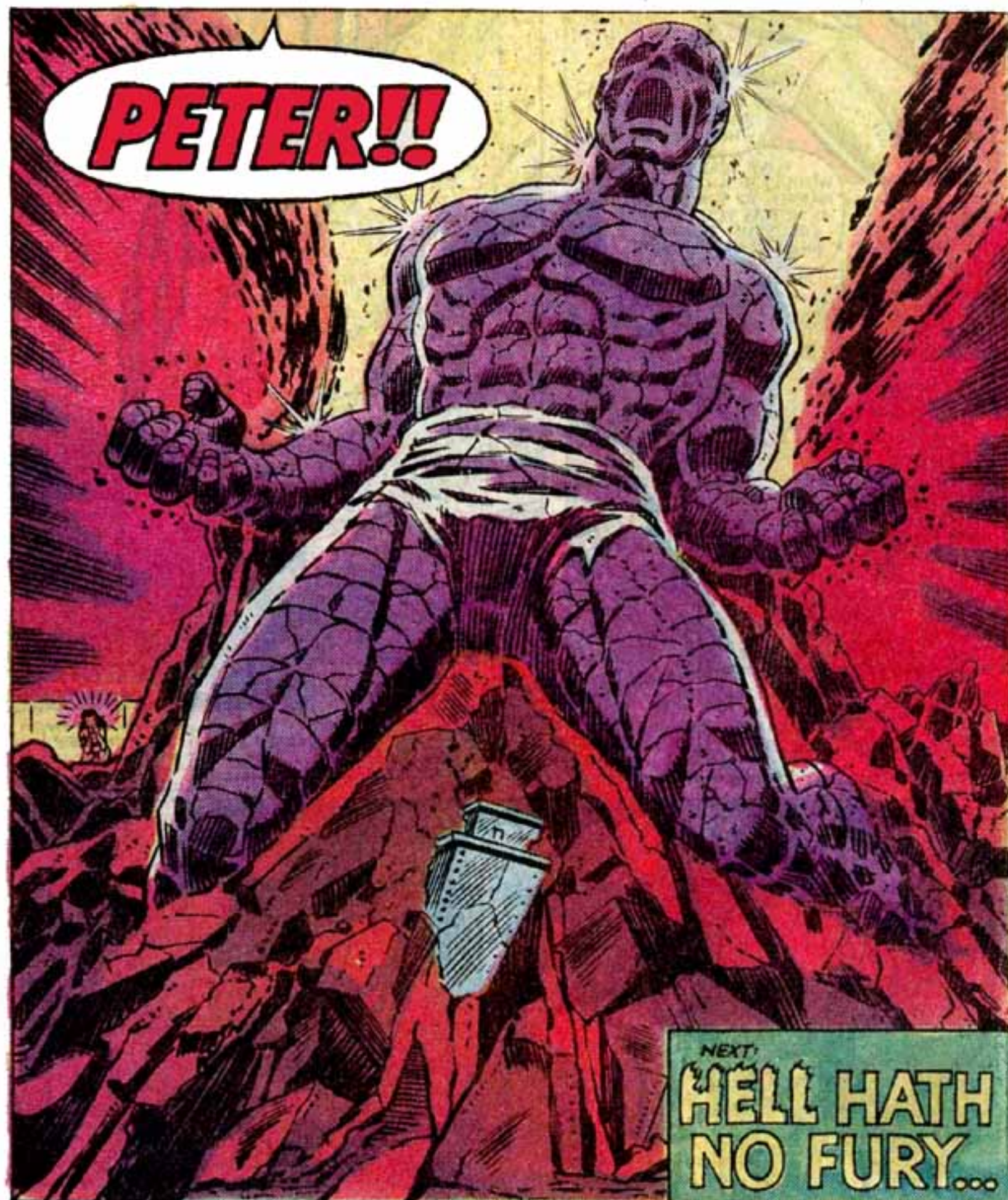


THE TANKERS RUPTURE ON IMPACT.



PETER!





NEXT:
**HELL HATH
NO FURY...**