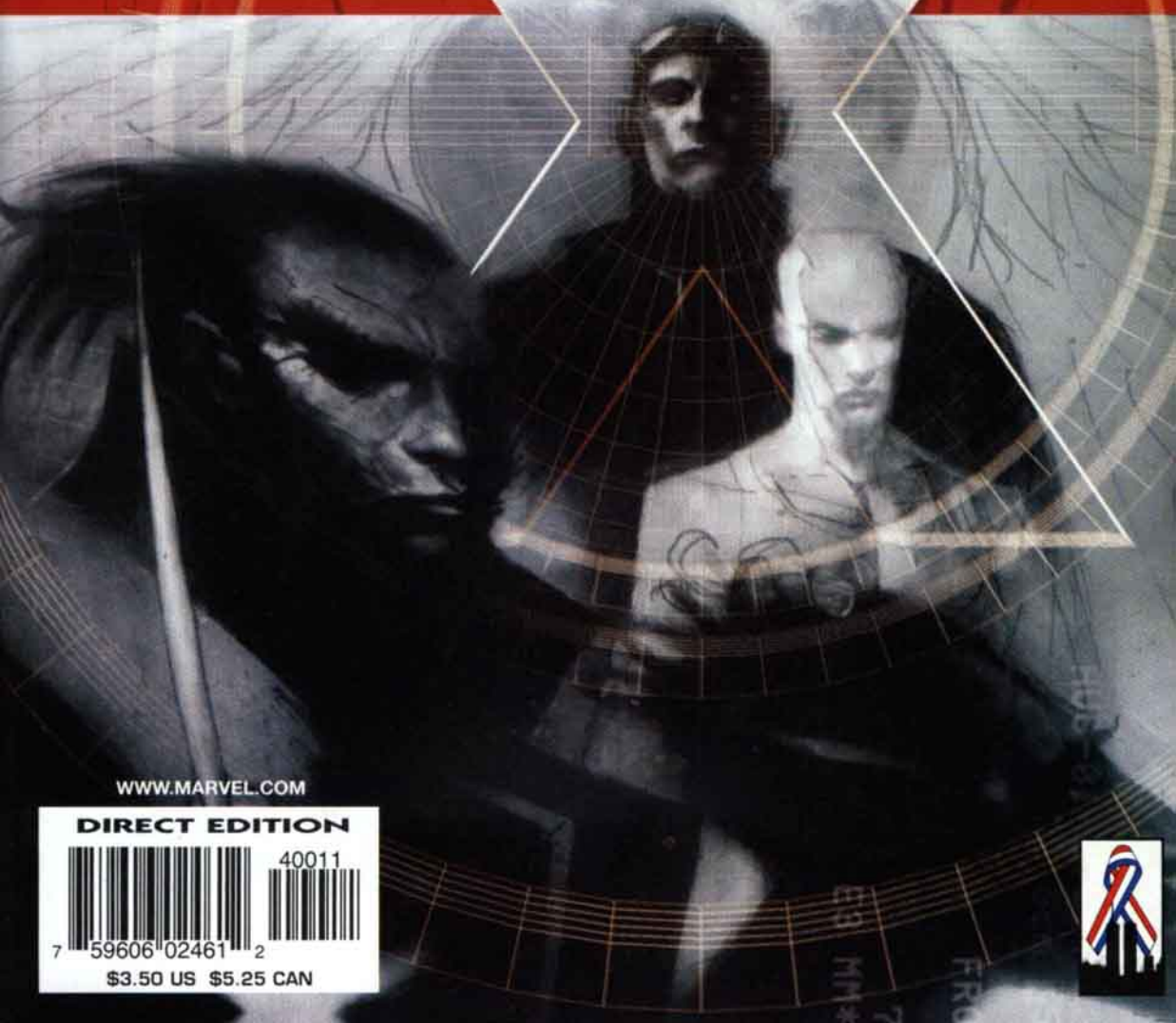


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ATLANTA


LEAVE
NOTHING
INTACT! LEAVE
NO ONE
BREATHING!

THIS HOUSE OF
SCIENTIFIC PERVERSION
HAS BEEN MARKED FOR
EXCOMMUNICATION BY
THE CHURCH OF HUMANITY!
IT WILL PAY THE MOST
GRIEVOUS PRICE FOR ITS
PRACTICED SYMPATHIES--


GUTEN
ABEND.



WARREN WORTHINGTON III
AKA ARCHANGEL
FLIGHT DUE TO NATURAL WINGS



BOBBY DRAKE
AKA ICEMAN
COLD TEMPERATURE
ORGANIC ICE CONTROL



LOGAN
AKA WOLVERINE
HEALING FACTOR,
ADAMANTIUM
SKELETON

KURT WAGNER
2142
NIGHTCRAWLER
TELEPORTATION
AGILITY

JONATHAN
STORM
2142 CHAMBER
bio blasts

STACY X
PHEROMONE
CONTROL



MORE
MUTANTS! THEY
CRAWL ACROSS
THE EARTH LIKE
A VIRUS!

THIS
HOLY CRUSADE SHALL
SIGNAL THE GENETIC
HOLOCAUST--



DID YOU SAY
"VIRUS"?!?

WHA--?!
NO--!



HUURRHH!

THAT'S FLIPPIN'
DISGUSTING!

I'M JUST
THAT GOOD,
AREN'T I...?
IT'S ALL IN THE
PHEROMONES...



ALL BRETHREN--
ABORT!

WE ARE
SUMMONED BACK
TO THE CATHEDRAL!
WE WILL RETURN TO
FIGHT ANOTHER
DAY--!



THEY'RE
MAKIN'
TRACKS!

THEY
DID THE SAME
THING AT THE
X-RANCH! DON'T
LET THEM GET
AWAY--!



NO!
SONUVA--



STACY!
WHAT WERE YOU THINKING?! YOU'RE HERE ONLY TO OBSERVE!

YEAH, RIGHT! I'VE GOT A SEVERE BONE TO PICK WITH THESE GUYS! I AIN'T SITTING ANYTHING OUT--!



WE NEED TO DIG OUT THE SURVIVORS.

YOU CAN TRY, DOUBT YOU'LL FIND ANY...

AS SOON AS THE C.D.C. OPENED UP THIS PRO-MUTANT GENE RESEARCH LAB, I KNEW THEY WERE PAINTING A BIG, FAT TARGET ON THEIR FOREHEADS...



INDEED. JUST AS WE SEEM TO TAKE A PROGRESSIVE STEP FORWARD, A NEW FORM OF RESISTANCE ARISES TO COMBAT IT.

THEIR ABILITY TO TELEPORT MAKES IT DIFFICULT TO LEARN ABOUT THIS NEW ENEMY...

WELL, WHY DIDN'T YOU JUST SAY SO, KURT...?



LOOK WHAT I GOT.

ONCE WE THAW HIM OUT, MAYBE HE'LL BE WILLING TO DISH THE DIRT ON HIS NUTTY RELIGION...

...AND WE CAN FIND OUT JUST WHAT THE HELL WE'RE UP AGAINST...

THE CATHEDRAL, MONTANA

AND
SO IT HAS
BEGUN...


OUR
MISSION IS
CLEAR. AS YOU
HAVE GIVEN YOUR
LIVES OVER TO
SERVE THE
CHURCH--

--SO HAVE YOU
GIVEN YOUR SOULS
IN COMMITMENT TO THE
ULTIMATE SALVATION OF
HUMANITY. THE MUTANTS
HAVE GIVEN US JUST
CAUSE.

THEY SAY OUR
DAYS ARE NUMBERED...
THAT *HOMO SAPIENS*
HAVE BEEN GIVEN NOTICE
BY A SO-CALLED "*HIGHER
SPECIES*," WITHIN THEIR
RHETORIC OF *COEXISTENCE*
LIES THE SEEDS OF OUR
ANNIHILATION.

THIS
WILL NOT
HAPPEN.

WE ARE GOD'S
DIVINE CREATIONS.
WE ARE MADE IN HIS
IMAGE. WE WILL CELEBRATE
HIS GLORY BY SPILLING THE
BLOOD OF ANY WHO
WOULD DENY US OUR
RIGHTFUL PLACE IN
THE COSMOS.



THEY SAY THEY
WILL **POLICE** THEMSELVES...
AND YET WE ONLY SEE THE CHAOS
THEY BRING TO THE WORLD AROUND
THEM. WE GIVE THEM AN **ISLAND**
NATION... AND THEY **DESTROY**
THEMSELVES.

IF **WAR** IS
WHAT THEY CRAVE,
THEN WE WILL
BRING THEM WAR...
WAR UNLIKE ANY
THEY HAVE EVER
SEEN.

I HAVE BEEN
TOUCHED BY THE
UNIVERSE. IN MY MIND'S
EYE, I HAVE SEEN THE
CURVED EDGE OF THE COSMOS...
SEEN MY SOUL REFLECTED BACK
AT ME. I HAVE LOOKED INTO THE
DARKNESS AND I HAVE COME
BACK STRONGER. I AM
HOMO SAPIEN. AS
WE ALL ARE...

...AND WE
WILL **NOT** GO
QUIETLY FROM
THIS EARTH.

>>400

STAN LEE presents

XMEN SUPREME CONFESSIONS

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cully hamner
ashley wood
eddie campbell - artists
javier pulido
sean phillips
matt smith

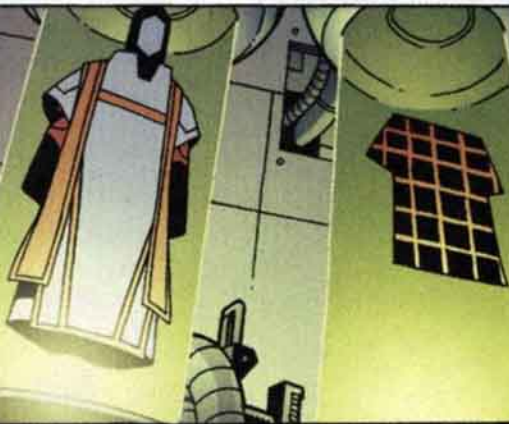
hifi design - color
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pete franco - assistant editor
mark powers - editor
joe quesada - editor in chief
bill jemas - president

MANHATTAN

OKAY, I THINK WE'RE DONE NOW...

THE UNIFORM IS FAIRLY STANDARD. KEVLAR SEWN INTO THE ROBE'S MATERIAL, WHICH IS EXCEPTIONALLY LIGHTWEIGHT.

UNDERNEATH, EACH OF THEM MUST WEAR ONE OF THESE... A PERSONAL TELEPORTATION NET, WHICH IS EITHER CONTROLLED BY THE WEARER... OR BY REMOTE.



WHY HAVE WE NEVER COME ACROSS THESE GUYS BEFORE...?

FANATICAL CULTS ARE USUALLY ADEPT AT KEEPING A LOW PROFILE UNTIL THEY ARE SUFFICIENTLY ARMED TO GO PUBLIC.

WELL, WHOEVER THIS "CHURCH" IS... THEIR TECH IS STATE OF THE ART.

KURT... THE ICONOGRAPHY...

I KNOW. THOSE WHO WOULD ENACT SUCH VIOLENCE THINKING GOD IS ON THEIR SIDE...

AT THE VERY LEAST, HISTORY HAS PROVED THAT THESE TYPES WILL STOP AT NOTHING TO ACHIEVE THEIR ENDS.

SO, WHERE'S THE FISH I CAUGHT...?



WOLVERINE'S GOT HIM SAID SOMETHING ABOUT A "PROPER INTERROGATION" AND TOOK OFF WITH THE GUY HOG-TIED OVER HIS SHOULDER.

YIKES.



LET'S NOT DWELL ON LOGAN'S METHODS AND SIMPLY HOPE HE GETS SOME ANSWERS.

THESE PRIESTS HAVE BEEN MAKING SURGICAL STRIKES OVER THE PAST FEW WEEKS... MOST OF THEM EXTREMELY SUCCESSFUL.



SO, WHO OWNS THIS PLACE...?

THIS IS WORTHINGTON INDUSTRIES. UH... SHOULD YOU REALLY BE MESSING WITH THAT...?

BACK OFF, KID. THESE GUYS FRIED MY FRIENDS...

THINK THEY'RE WORKING THEIR WAY UP THE LADDER...?

EXACTLY. IT'S ONLY A MATTER OF TIME BEFORE THEY HIT THE INSTITUTE.



UH OH. HOLD ON A SEC...

HEY! YOU WANNA PUT THAT DOWN OVER THERE?! THAT'S A TELEPORTATION NET, Y'KNOW...



YOU WANNA BLOW IT OUT YOUR--

UH...?

OH SH--

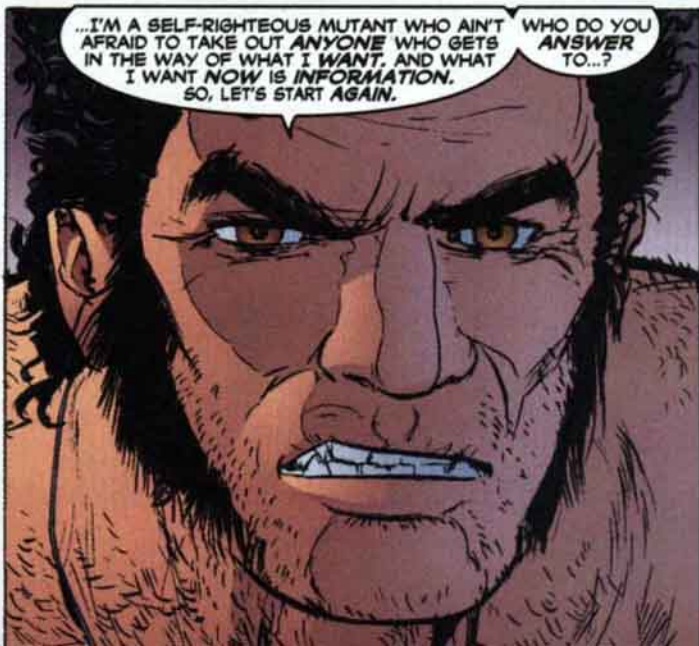


OH NO...!

MEIN GOTT--!

CONTACT THE INSTITUTE! WE NEED SOMEONE IN CEREBRA IMMEDIATELY--!









IT BEGAN CENTURIES AGO, AS THE FABLED ALL-FATHER ROAMED THE WILD LANDS OF THIS CONTINENT, BEFORE THE GOVERNMENT, BEFORE THE ESTABLISHMENT OF SOCIAL BOUNDARIES.


"HE WAS THE ALPHA-MALE... HUNTING, TRADING, EXPLORING. A MAN WHO BELIEVED IN GOD AND MAGIC. A TRUE FRONTIERSMAN, CARRYING WITHIN HIM THE SEED THAT WOULD ONE DAY GROW INTO OUR HOLY SAVIOR..."




"DISCOVERING A LOST NATIVE, SEPARATED FROM HER NOMADIC TRIBE, THE ALL-FATHER KNEW FATE HAD DELIVERED THE VESSEL FOR THAT SEED.




"IT HAD ALSO DELIVERED LOVE, AS THESE TWO JOINED IN A BLESSED UNION, ONE THAT THEY VOWED WOULD NEVER BE SHATTERED.



"THAT UNION SOON BROUGHT FORTH A CHILD. BUT NOT JUST ANY CHILD... THIS BIRTH OCCURRED UNDER THE HALF-LIGHT OF A SOLAR ECLIPSE, A SIGN NOT LOST ON THE WISE ALL-FATHER.




"HE KNEW THIS CHILD WOULD BE GRANTED A SUPREME DESTINY."




"THEIR LIFE WAS *IDYLLIC*. MAN, WOMAN AND CHILD LIVING IN HARMONY WITH NATURE, FAR FROM THE PRYING EYES OF CIVILIZATION. THE LAND PROVIDED *SUSTENANCE*, AND THE FAMILY UNIT PROVIDED *LOVE* AND *SUPPORT*."


"BUT WHILE THERE IS EARTH AND AIR, THERE IS ALSO THE REALM OF THE *OCCULT*, IN WHICH THE ALL-FATHER HAD A KEEN INTEREST."




"COUPLED WITH HIS WIFE'S NATIVE-BORN RITUALS, THEIR MANY EXPERIMENTS FINALLY BROUGHT FORTH A *BEAST* FROM A PARALLEL REFLECTION OF REALITY."



"THIS BEAST HAD NO NAME, BUT HIS *CHARMS* WERE MANY. POETRY RECITED IN CROSS-DIMENSIONAL TONGUES. SONGS THAT RESONATED WITHIN THE MIND. MORE THAN *ANYONE*, THE *HOLY MOTHER* WAS *TAKEN IN* BY THESE PERFORMANCES... AND THE BEAST QUICKLY GAINED HER *TRUST*..."



"...A TRUST WHICH SOON CROSSED OVER INTO THE *PHYSICAL* REALM. A *BETRAYAL*, TO BE SURE..."



"...BUT THE WORST WAS YET TO *COME*. HIS HOLD OVER THE *HOLY MOTHER* WAS STRONG INDEED, AND SOON THE ALL-FATHER WAS *STRUCK DOWN* IN HIS OWN HOME... HIS WIFE NOW A WILLING *ACCOMPLICE*."

"OUR LEADER BORE *WITNESS* TO THESE EVENTS, AND THIS EXPOSURE DID NOT LEAVE HIM *UNAFFECTED*. HIS HATRED FOR ALL THINGS *INHUMAN* WAS BORN HERE."

"BEING HIS FATHER'S CHILD, HIS HATRED LED HIM TO THE FAMILY'S ANCIENT TOMES... THE VERY BOOKS WHICH WERE, IN PART, RESPONSIBLE FOR THE BEAST'S ARRIVAL. HE READ... AND HE LEARNED..."



"WITH A RUDIMENTARY WORKING KNOWLEDGE OF **BLACK MAGIC**, THE CHILD WASTED NO TIME IN **AVENGING** HIS FATHER'S DEATH."



"ON THAT FATEFUL NIGHT, OUR LEADER LOST ALL **INNOCENCE**. HE WAS A CHILD NO LONGER."



"IT WAS BEYOND A RITUAL SLAYING. THIS WAS A **BAPTISM OF FIRE**, THE BEAST'S BLOOD, HIS MOTHER'S DYING BREATH AND THE **MAGIC** IN THE AIR **TRANSFORMING** OUR LEADER..."



"TRAVELING UP THAT RIVER OF **BLOOD**, HE TOOK HIS FIRST STEPS TOWARD **IMMORTALITY**."

HUH.
SOUNDS LIKE
A FREAKIN' FAIRY
TALE TO ME...



SO WHEN DOES
ALICE MAKE IT TO
WONDERLAND,
HUH...?



--IVA!

UH..

INFESTATION!

**ALL HANDS--
NEUTRALIZE THE
MUTANT!**

GO AHEAD.
"NEUTRALIZE" ME.



THE ENEMY
HAS COME TO
US.

HOW
FORTUITOUS.



THIS ONE
STINKS OF GENETIC
ABERRATION, BUT SHE
IS ONE OF XAVIER'S
MUTANTS, AND THEREFORE
MAY HAVE VALUABLE
INFORMATION...

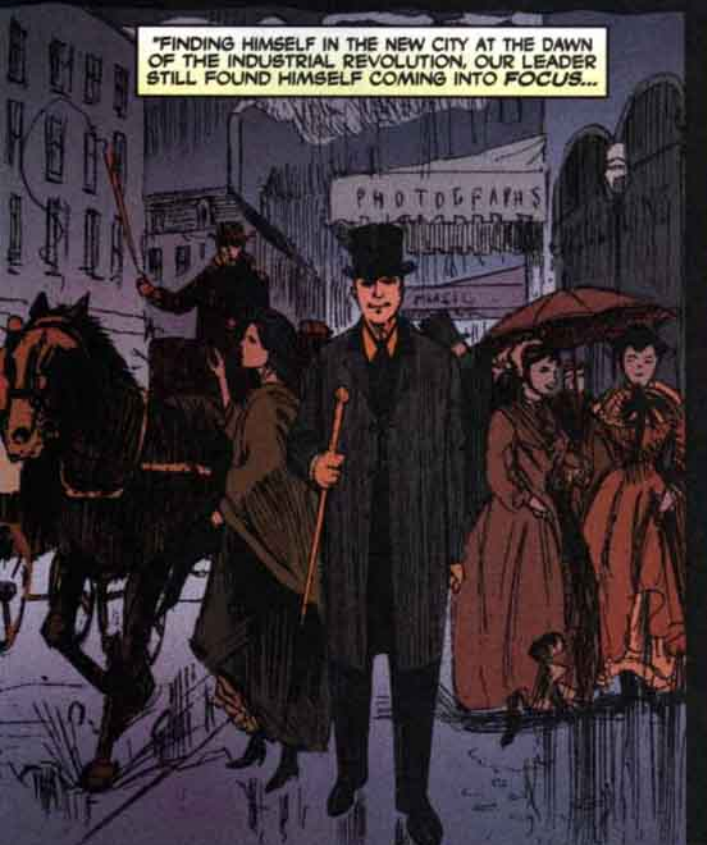
...TAKE HER TO THE
CONFESSIONAL.





GO ON,
THEN, TELL ME
MORE...


AS HE GREW
INTO MATURITY,
SO DID THE WORLD
AROUND HIM...




"FINDING HIMSELF IN THE NEW CITY AT THE DAWN
OF THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION, OUR LEADER
STILL FOUND HIMSELF COMING INTO FOCUS...



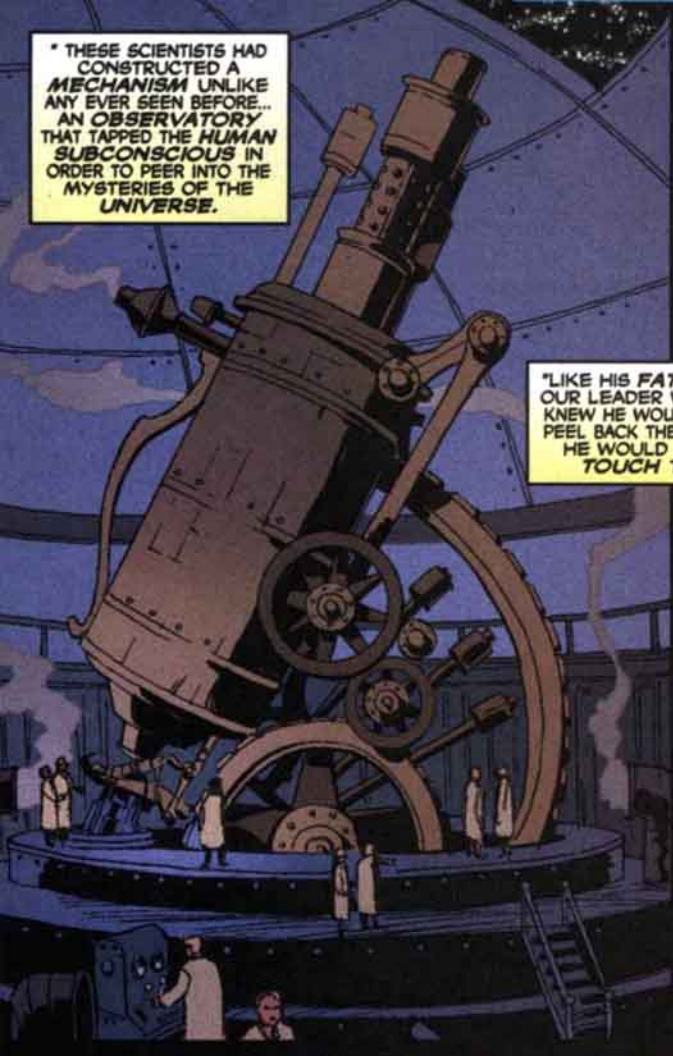
"HE MET A BLIND PAINTER WHO RENDERED
HIS PORTRAIT USING ONLY THE SOUND OF OUR
LEADER'S VOICE AS INSPIRATION...




"...IT WAS A VISION
OF THE FUTURE.




"OUR HOLY LEADER FOUND HIMSELF THE CENTER OF
A SOCIAL SCENE THAT INCLUDED POETS, PHILOSOPHERS,
AND-- MOST IMPORTANTLY-- A SMALL SECT OF OCCULT
SCIENTISTS. THESE MEN WERE THE VANGUARD OF
A HAUNTED COSMOLOGY AND THIS BECAME OF
GREAT INTEREST TO OUR LEADER.



* THESE SCIENTISTS HAD CONSTRUCTED A MECHANISM UNLIKE ANY EVER SEEN BEFORE... AN OBSERVATORY THAT TAPPED THE HUMAN SUBCONSCIOUS IN ORDER TO PEER INTO THE MYSTERIES OF THE UNIVERSE.




"LIKE HIS FATHER BEFORE HIM, OUR LEADER WAS A PIONEER. HE KNEW HE WOULD BE THE FIRST TO PEEL BACK THE VEIL OF SECRECY. HE WOULD BE THE FIRST TO TOUCH THE HEAVENS..."



"A PERFECT MARRIAGE OF SCIENCE AND SORCERY, INITIATED BY ANCIENT INCANTATIONS AND THE CLOSING OF A CIRCUIT..."



"THIS WAS TO BE THE MOMENT OF SUPREME TRUTH..."



"UPON HIS RETURN (PERHAPS A NANOSECOND AFTER THE CLOSING OF THE CIRCUIT), HE LEARNED THE PROFOUND COST OF SUCH AN EXPERIENCE. HIS BODY RAVAGED BY THE DARK ENERGY OF THE UNIVERSE..."

"...AS, IN THE BLINK OF AN EYE, OUR LEADER WAS STRETCHED FROM ONE END OF THE UNIVERSE TO THE OTHER, HIS CONSCIOUSNESS VIOLENTLY CATAPULTED ACROSS THE KNOWN PLANES OF COSMIC REALITY.



"...HE WAS PLACED IN ISOLATION BY THE VERY SCIENTISTS WHO WERE NOW CONFOUNDED BY THE UNIQUENESS OF THIS NEW DEVELOPMENT.



"THE TIME IN ISOLATION WAS WELL-SPENT. OUR LEADER HAD LEARNED TO CONTROL THE DARK ENERGY THAT HAD INHABITED HIS SOUL... A FORCE WHICH NOW POWERED HIS HUMANITY. HE WOULD NOT BE CONTAINED FOR LONG.

"UPON HIS REEMERGENCE, THE SCIENTISTS BOWED DOWN BEFORE HIM. PLEDGED THEIR LIVES TO HIS. ON THAT DAY, A NEW RELIGION WAS BORN... AND OUR HOLY LEADER WAS RECOGNIZED ONCE AND FOR ALL...

"AS... THE SUPREME PONTIFF."



SOME STORY. YOU EXPECT ME TO BELIEVE IT?!



YOU HAVE NO IDEA WHAT'S COMING. WE HAVE WAITED OUR ENTIRE LIVES FOR THE DAWN OF THIS MILLENNIUM.

OUR MILLENNIUM.

YEAH WELL... GET IN LINE BEHIND TIME-WARNE-

WOLVERINE.



I'M HERE.

WE HAVE A SITUATION, MEIN FREUND.

WE'RE EN ROUTE TO YOUR POSITION NOW. PREPARE FOR RETRIEVAL. I'LL FILL YOU IN ON THE WAY, BUT ONE OF OUR OWN IS IN MORTAL DANGER...

UNDERNEATH THE CATHEDRAL

AWAKEN,
YOU SAD
THING...

PERHAPS IF YOU
WERE AN IGNORANT BEAST
IN THE FIELD, I MIGHT FEEL A
TRACE OF *MERCY*. AFTER ALL,
AN *ANIMAL* DOES NOT *KNOW*
WHEN IT TRESPASSES UPON
HUMAN SOIL.

BUT FOR A
MUTANT...

...THE
SUPREME
PONTIFF HAS
NO MERCY.

I HAVE SEEN HOW
THE UNIVERSE *WORKS*.
I HAVE SEEN THE *NATURAL*
ORDER OF ALL THINGS
GREAT AND SMALL.

YOU AND
YOUR KIND ARE
SIMPLY *NOT*
NATURAL.

EVOLUTIONISTS
MAY ARGUE THAT *MUTANTS*
ARE THE *NEXT STEP* IN OUR
ASCENSION TO BE CLOSER
TO GOD.

THIS
IS SIMPLY
UNTRUE.

GOD IS *WITHIN*
ALL *HOMO SAPIENS*.
HIS *GLORY*... HIS
VENGEANCE... THESE
THINGS *INFORM* THE
HUMAN RACE...

...AS YOU SHALL SOON LEARN.

YOUR KIND IS A PESTILENCE... A TEST SENT FROM ABOVE THAT WILL PUSH US TO GREATER HEIGHTS WITHIN OURSELVES. BY RIDDING THE WORLD OF YOU, WE REAFFIRM OUR DESTINY AS GOD'S ONLY CHILDREN.

IF YOU PLEASE...

GYEEAAGH!

X-MEN...?

OH-H... RIGHT. THE X-MEN. THAT'S MY OUTFIT. SURE...

LET ME TELL YOU ABOUT ME AN' THE X-MEN...

THIS PAIN IS ONLY THE BEGINNING.

NOW TELL ME OF YOUR BRETHREN. WE MUST KNOW THE ENEMY AS WE KNOW OURSELVES. YOU WEAR THE "X". TELL ME OF YOUR HISTORY WITH THESE... X-MEN...

AAUUUUH!





"DENIAL'S A FUNNY THING. I'D ACTUALLY CONVINCED MYSELF I COULD GO BACK TO SCHOOL AND THAT MY FRIENDS WOULD UNDERSTAND... THAT THEY'D ACCEPT ME FOR WHO I WAS INSIDE..."

"I GUESS DENIAL AND DELUSION GO HAND-IN-HAND..."



"THINGS DIDN'T WORK OUT AS I'D HOPED. EVERYONE WAS AVOIDING ME LIKE THE BLACK PLAGUE. I COULDN'T EVEN SWEET-TALK MY TEACHERS WHEN I WOULD ACCIDENTALLY 'FORGET' MY HOMEWORK..."

"BUMMER, HUH...?"



"AS FOR MY FRIENDS..."

"WHY DON'T YOU GO FIND A ROCK TO CRAWL UNDER?!"

"YEAH, GO POLLUTE A DIFFERENT SCHOOL!"



"...WELL, I GUESS THE SLUMBER PARTIES WERE OVER."

"FREAK!"

"MUTIE!"

"SKANK!"



"DON'T...!"

BOB/E



"I JUST STOPPED GOING TO SCHOOL. BUT HOME LIFE WASN'T MUCH BETTER..."

"WHEN IT CAME TO BOYFRIENDS, MY BURNOUT MOTHER SURE KNEW HOW TO PICK 'EM..."

THEY NEED TO PASS SOME SORTA BILL OR SOMETHING... OUTLAW THE FREAKS RIGHT OUTTA THE COUNTRY...

...RIGHT, KID?



HOW DID YOU GIVE BIRTH TO THIS... THIS THING?! SOMEONE NEEDS TO CALL AN EXTERMINATOR--!

MAX, DON'T--!



DON'T RAISE YOUR VOICE TO ME--!

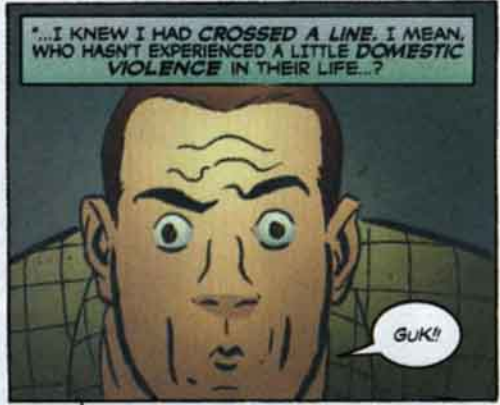
NO! STAY AWAY FROM HER!



YOU GONNA TALK BACK TO ME? I'LL BEAT YOU INTO NEXT WEEK--!

D-DON'T TOUCH ME...!

THE MOMENT HE LAID HIS HANDS ON ME...



...I KNEW I HAD CROSSED A LINE. I MEAN, WHO HASN'T EXPERIENCED A LITTLE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IN THEIR LIFE...?

GUK!



"BUT THIS WAS DIFFERENT. THIS TIME... I WAS THE ONE BEING VIOLENT. FELT GOOD..."

MAX! OH GOD, ARE YOU...?!



MOM, I...

GET AWAY FROM HIM! GET AWAY FROM ME, YOU EVIL THING! GET OUT OF THIS HOUSE!

"YEAH, YEAH... I KNOW WHAT YOU'RE THINKING... ANOTHER HOMELESS MUTANT WALKING THE STREETS. WE'VE SEEN IT A MILLION TIMES.

"TRICK IS TO KEEP YOURSELF COVERED UP. ONE GLIMPSE OF SKIN BY THE GENERAL POPULACE AND THEY CALL IN THE GIANT KILLER ROBOTS TO FRY YOU ON SIGHT. I COULDN'T BRING MYSELF TO LEAVE THE CITY, THOUGH...

"HOMELESSNESS CAN MAKE FOR STRANGE ALLIANCES..."

"-TRICKLE-DOWN, MY EYE!

"I'D HAVE A ROOF OVER MY HEAD... IF MY CAR HADN'T CAUGHT FIRE..."

"WHO KNEW IT WAS LOITERING OR UNLAWFUL ASSEMBLY...?"

"OR MAYBE THEY JUST DIDN'T LIKE THE WAY WE LOOKED..."

"THE COPS-!"

"THIS ONE'S A MUTIE!"

"THOUGHT I WAS DONE FOR, AND THEN..."

"DON'T-!"

"DON'T TOUCH HER!"

"NG!"

"GKK-!"

"TAKE HER OUT!"

"HURKI!"

"DON'T LET HER UP!"

"HOLY-!"

"DON'T BE SCARED."

"YOU'RE SAFE NOW. THEY WON'T HURT YOU AGAIN..."



DO YOU REALLY THINK THIS IS THE ANSWER FOR US? SCROUNGING FOR FOOD IN SOCIETY'S BACK ALLEYS...?

SCROUNGING FOR IDENTITY...?



YOU'RE A MUTANT. ACCEPT THAT FACT.

MY NAME IS CHARLES XAVIER. YOUR ASSAILANTS ARE THE UNFORTUNATE VICTIMS OF A TELEPATHIC ATTACK.

IF YOU SEEK SHELTER... IF YOU TRULY SEEK ACCEPTANCE... I SUGGEST YOU COME WITH ME.



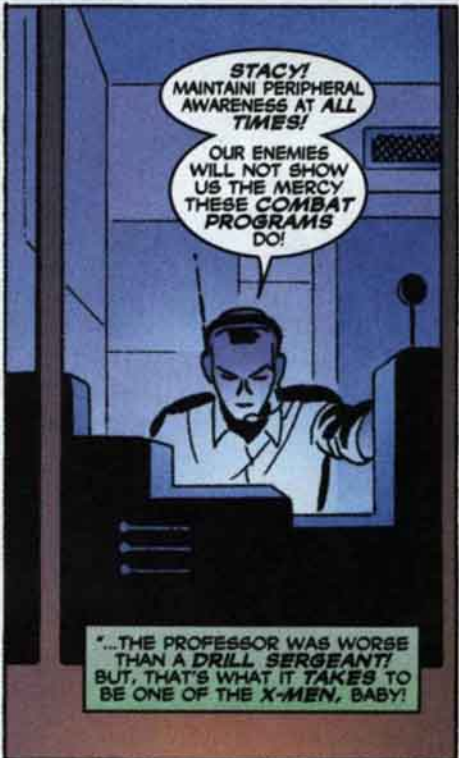
"BALDY WAS AS GOOD AS HIS WORD. NEXT THING YOU KNOW, I'M LIVING IN A MANSION IN SALEM CENTER..."

"HE CALLED IT A SCHOOL. IT WAS A LOT MORE THAN THAT..."



"PRETTY SOON HE HAD ME JUMPING THROUGH HOOPS IN A FUNKY GYMNASIUM WE LIKE TO CALL THE DANGER ROOM."

"NOT FOR THE WEAK, LEMME TELL YA..."



STACY! MAINTAIN PERIPHERAL AWARENESS AT ALL TIMES!

OUR ENEMIES WILL NOT SHOW US THE MERCY THESE COMBAT PROGRAMS DO!

"...THE PROFESSOR WAS WORSE THAN A DRILL SERGEANT! BUT, THAT'S WHAT IT TAKES TO BE ONE OF THE X-MEN, BABY!"



"THOSE WERE THE VINTAGE YEARS! IT WAS ME, ONE-EYE, THE BIRDBOY, THE BEAST, THE ICE-GUY... WE WERE THE FIRST X-MEN."

"THE PROFESSOR WAS QUICK TO PUT US TO WORK, PITTING US HEAD-TO-HEAD WITH EVERY EVIL MUTANT HE COULD FIND!"

"ALL THE WHILE, WE WERE GAINING MORE AND MORE CONTROL OVER OUR PARTICULAR ABILITIES..."



"PRETTY SOON I KNEW EXACTLY WHAT I WAS CAPABLE OF. ME AND OL' ONE-EYE HAD OUR MOMENTS SNEAKING A LITTLE ALONE TIME AFTER CLASSES..."

"C'MON... YOU KNOW THAT STUFF IS BOUND TO HAPPEN! THAT SCHOOL WAS A HORMONE HOTBED!"



"I WON'T BORE YOU WITH THE COUNTLESS BATTLES FOUGHT IN THE NAME OF MUTANT PRIDE AND MANIFEST DESTINY AND EVOLUTION AND ALL THAT OTHER STUFF YOU READ ABOUT IN THE ALUMNI NEWSLETTERS..."

"BET YOU NEVER FELT THAT BEFORE, FATSO!"

"WAAHOOOHH!"



"TIMES CHANGE, AND THE PROFESSOR ENDED UP RECRUITING SOME **NEW BLOOD**."

"ME AND **ONE-EYE** STUCK AROUND TO MAKE SURE EVERYTHING STILL RAN SMOOTHLY. WE HAD TO. WE WERE THE **PERFECT COUPLE**, Y'KNOW..."

"NOW, DON'T GET ME WRONG. THIS NEW TEAM ENDED UP ROCKIN' ON ITS **OWN MERITS**. WE KICKED THE CRAP OUTTA **ANYONE** WHO GOT IN OUR WAY! LITERALLY **BURIED** THE OLD TEAM'S REP..."



"THEN, ONE DAY, THE PROFESSOR CALLED ME INTO HIS OFFICE..."

"YOU KNOW YOU'RE MY **MOST TRUSTED STUDENT**. THIS IS WHY I'VE CHOSEN YOU FOR THIS MISSION."

"I'M SENDING YOU **UNDERCOVER**. YOU LEAVE FOR **NEVADA** IMMEDIATELY..."



"NEXT THING YOU KNOW, I'M WORKIN' AT THE **X-RANCH**. ACTUALLY... I WAS **RUNNIN'** THE PLACE, MAKIN MONEY **HAND OVER FIST**..."



"...THAT IS, UNTIL YOUR **MINIONS** SHOWED UP TO BURN THE PLACE OFF THE MAP!"

"I DID WHAT I COULD TO CALL IN MY FELLOW **X-MEN** TO PULL ME OUT. BUT NOT BEFORE I TOOK A FEW OF YOUR **LAPDOGS** DOWN..."

...SO THAT'S
MY STORY. A REAL
"RAGS-TO-RICHES"
TALE, DON'TCHA
THINK?!

BWAHAHAHA!

YOUR FABLE
REEKS OF
FALSEHOODS,
FROM BEGINNING
TO END.

THOU
SHALT NOT
LIE.

GEEAAH!

COME ON
BACK, YOU
PSYCHO
EVANGELIST!

IT WILL
BE INTERESTING
TO SEE WHICH
DIES **FIRST**, YOUR
INSOLENCE...
OR YOU.


IN **EITHER**
CASE,
GOD'S WILL
BE DONE.

I'LL TELL
YOU HOW I TOOK
OUT A NEST OF
CHICKEN-SENTINELS!
OR MAYBE I'LL GIVE
YOU A TONGUE KISS
AND SEND YOU
STRAIGHT TO—

YEAARRRAARGH



STATUS REPORT...?



SIGNAL'S WEAK, BUT CEREBRA'S GOT HER.

CROSSING OVER THE GREAT LAKES NOW...



WHAT'S A WEAK SIGNAL MEAN...?

YOU DON'T WANNA KNOW, KID.
BASICALLY, THEY DIDN'T KILL HER QUICK...



ooOooO...



GOD... TORTURE GETS ME SO... HOT...

MMMMM... CAN'T KEEP MY HANDS OFF MYSELF...



HEY THERE...

I KNEW SOMEONE OUT THERE LIKED TO WATCH...

VOWS OF CHASTITY... WHO NEEDS 'EM, HUH...?

HOLD STILL NOW...

WHU--?!

YOU FEEL THAT? A TICKLE IN YOUR BRAIN...?

THAT'S ME.

IT'S ALL CHEMICAL.

HNNG--
GNK!
NNAAAHHH

BRETHREN--
INCOMING!

IT'S FLYING IN LOW, TRYING TO STAY UNDER OUR RADAR...!











PATHETIC
CREATURE...

THAT WAS
JUST A **SMALL**
SAMPLE OF MY
POWER. A POWER SO
VERY **UNKNOWNABLE**
TO THOSE WHO
DO NOT FEAR
GOD.

WHAT'S
THIS...?



YOU ARE A MAN
OF THE CLOTH...?
I WOULD FIND THAT
LAUGHABLE...

PREPARE
TO GAZE INTO
MY ABYSS,
MUTANT.

PREPARE
TO SURRENDER
TO ME THAT
WHICH YOU VALUE
MOST...

...**BUT A THOUGHT**
OCCURS TO ME. EVERY
SENTIENT CREATURE POSSESSES
A PERSONAL **ABYSS...** A HARBOR
FOR THEIR **SOUL.** ALL THEIR
ANSWERS CONTAINED
WITHIN.

NO...





NOT BAD. NEXT TIME, DON'T HOLD BACK--

HEY--!



?!



AAHHNGK--!

KEEP YOUR DISTANCE, SPORT...



WHAT DID YOU DO...?

I MEAN, DID HE... DID YOU--

I GET QUITE A REACTION, DON'T I...?



STONE ME



ALRIGHT... ENOUGH FOREPLAY.

WHERE'S THE RINGLEADER OF THIS WHACKED-OUT CONGREGATION...?!



BRETHREN!

THIS DAY
SHALL BE WRITTEN
IN THE ANNALS OF
HUMAN HISTORY AS
THE DAY WE DREW
FIRST BLOOD! THE
WAR HAS TRULY
BEGUN!

WE HAVE MET
THE ENEMY ON OUR
OWN SOIL. THAT SOIL IS
NOW TAINTED.

AS WE HAVE BUILT
THIS CATHEDRAL FROM
NOTHING, SHALL WE SPREAD
ACROSS THE WORLD AND
CONTINUE TO BUILD OUR
EMPIRE...

...THE
EMPIRE THAT
WILL SAVE THE
WORLD.



TONIGHT YOU
HAVE EARNED YOUR
PLACE IN HEAVEN.
TONIGHT... YOU HAVE
REACHED FOR THE
GLORY OF GOD.

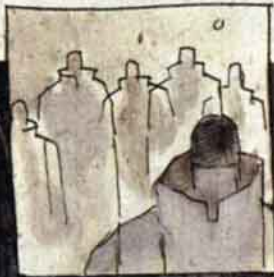
NOW WE
SHALL CONTINUE
OUR CONQUEST
ELSEWHERE. LET THE
MUTANTS PICK AT THESE
BONES. THEY WILL
FIND *NOTHING*
OF VALUE.



OUR
FREQUENCIES
ARE IN ALIGNMENT.
PREPARE FOR *MASS
TRANSIT*.

IN THE NAME
OF THE *HUMAN
RACE...*

...AMEN.





STARS MORE!

I FOUND HER!



YOU TWO ALRIGHT...?

THANKS FOR ASKING. NOT REALLY...

SHE'S BLEEDING. I HAVEN'T SEEN A PRIEST SINCE I DE-BOARDED THE BLACKBIRD...



I DON'T HAVE A SCENT. THEY'VE ABANDONED THE COMPOUND...

DAMN.



THIS ISN'T OVER YET, GUYS--
--WHERE'S KURT--?!



OH NO...!

WHAT HAPPENED TO HIM...?!

IS HE-?

HE'S BREATHING. SHALLOW, THOUGH...

C'MON, ELF! GIVE US A SIGN--!

HERE... LET ME TRY...

GONNA TRUST YA, DARLIN'. IF YA MAKE THINGS WORSE, THEY'LL HAVE TO CARRY YOU OUT.

NO WORRIES. JUST PROMOTING A LITTLE ADRENALIN RUSH. BETTER THAN SMELLING SALTS...

HUH. SHE DID IT...

TALK TO ME, PAL...

M-MEIN FREUND... I...

...WHERE AM I..?

WHUU...?





WE'RE IN MONTANA. WE CAME HERE TO RESCUE STACY. YOU TELEPORTED IN FIRST...

M-MONTANA..?

KURT--



--DOES THIS RING A BELL?

WHO-- OR WHAT -- SAT IN HERE?! THE HEAD HONCHO HIMSELF...?



THE SUPREME PONTIFF! HE DID THIS TO YOU?!

SPILL IT, WAGNER! THAT GUY IS BAD NEWS--!

BACK OFF. GIVE HIM SOME AIR.

I... I DON'T...



...I DON'T REMEMBER...

I HONESTLY CANNOT RECALL... WHAT HAPPENED...

I REMEMBER THE BLACKBIRD... THEN THE RADAR ROOM... AND THEN I...

...HOW DID I END UP IN HERE...?



OH MY GOD! HOW CAN YOU NOT REMEMBER?!

HUGE GUY... ROBES, ARMOR, BIG HAT? VOICE LIKE DARTH VADER'S? LOOKS ABOUT A HUNDRED BUT HE COULD STOMP YOUR HEAD IN...?

THAT'S ENOUGH. HE KNOWS WHO YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT. I TOLD HIM THE WHOLE STORY...



OH, COME ON--!

FIRE UP THE BIRD, WORTHINGTON.

I THINK WE'D BETTER CUT OUR LOSSES AND JUST GET THE HELL OUT OF HERE...

XAVIER'S
INSTITUTE

CALL
THE FASHION
POLICE.

LOOK WHO'S
TALKING...

BEEN
AWHILE SINCE
I'VE BEEN BACK
HERE...



THIS IS
YOU TWO?
OUCH.

DON'T GET
COMFORTABLE.
WE DON'T SPEND
TOO MUCH TIME
HERE.

YOU SAID
IT YOURSELF...
YOU'RE NOT IN
SCHOOL ANYMORE.
YOU'VE EARNED YOUR
DIPLOMA...

...SO TO
SPEAK.

OKAY, ENOUGH
REMINISCING. WHERE'S
THE BATHROOM IN
THIS JOINT?

TAKE A
LEFT AT THE
END OF THE
HALL. YOU CAN'T
MISS IT.

LOT OF
ATTITUDE IN
THAT ONE...

YEAH.
I THINK
SHE'LL FIT
IN JUST
FINE.



NOT OFTEN I SEE YOU LIKE THIS...

LIKE WHAT?



BROODING.

JA. SOMETHING HAPPENED TO ME IN THAT ROOM. I AM AT A LOSS TO EXPLAIN WHY I CANNOT RECALL IT. IT FEELS LIKE... SOMETHING WAS ERASED FROM MY MIND. I DON'T LIKE IT.



WELCOME TO THE CLUB.

YOU AIN'T AN X-MAN IF YOU AIN'T DEALIN' WITH A MEMORY LAPSE OR TWO...

EVEN HERE... I USED TO FEEL SO SAFE HERE...



YER AMONG FRIENDS, ELF. THAT'S AS SAFE AS YOU CAN BE.

I PRAY YOU ARE RIGHT. THIS AMBIGUITY HAUNTS ME. THESE SECRETS ARE INSIDE ME... SOMEWHERE. PART OF ME IS DESPERATE TO UNCOVER THEM...



...AND PART OF ME HOPES THAT I NEVER WILL.

END

JOE CASEY
CULLY HAMNER
ASHLEY WOOD
BOBIE CAMPBELL
JAVIER PULIDO
SEAN PHILLIPS



ashley wood 2001

ES MHA