

MARVEL
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AUSTEN
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UNCANNY X-MEN[®] DOMINANT SPECIES PART TWO



DIRECT EDITION



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Change is coming. A new breed of man has emerged. They are the Children of the Atom, Homo Superior, Individuals gifted with strange and fantastic abilities simply by virtue of their genetic makeup.

Stan Lee presents...

UNCANNY X-MEN

DOMINANT SPECIES, PART II

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PREVIOUSLY



ARCHANGEL
Warren Worthington III
Flight



HUSK
Paige Guthrie
Skin Manipulation



NORTHSTAR
Jean-Paul Beaubier
Superspeed, Flight



WOLVERINE
Logan
Healing, Adamantium Claws



NIGHTCRAWLER
Kurt Wagner
Teleportation



The X-Men, a group of heroes with strange mutant powers, are forever sworn to protect a world that hates and fears them. They have been called together to the Xavier Institute in Westchester, New York by their mentor, PROFESSOR CHARLES XAVIER, to fight the never-ending battle of promoting unity between humans and mutantkind.

Recently, the long-lost X-Man Alex Summers, aka HAVOK, was found in a coma at a convalescent home in Upstate New York. His nurse, ANNIE GHAZIKHANIAN, unable to explain the deep romantic feelings she had for her patient, decided to follow him to his home at the Xavier Institute. But Annie had another reason for coming to Xavier's, which houses a school for young mutants... Annie's son, CARTER, has recently begun to manifest mental abilities that at times frighten her by their surprising power.

Despite several futile attempts, Professor Xavier has been unable to wake Havok from his coma, and so Havok's ex-girlfriend Lorna Dane, aka POLARIS, has been called to his side. Now, Annie must face the woman who may still hold Havok's heart, making Annie's own love for him seem even more impossible...

Meanwhile, a squad of X-Men has been called off-campus to assist in a murder investigation. In the nearby city of White Plains, ARCHANGEL, HUSK, NORTHSTAR, and WOLVERINE discover a group of young humans who were attacked and killed by what appear to be mutants. The only witness, a young mutant herself, says the boys were killed by werewolves. Left at the scene of the crime is the slogan: HOMO-SUPERIOR IS RISING!

When Wolverine follows the scent of the "werewolves," he finds it leads to a company called Lobo Technologies, which turns out to be a subsidiary of Worthington Enterprises, owned by Archangel. Shocked, Archangel insists he had no idea what his employees were up to. Inside, Wolverine is brutally attacked by the werewolves, and the rest of the squad come face-to-face with the head of Lobo Technologies, an enigmatic man named MAXIMUS LOBO...



ANNIE GHAZIKHANIAN
School Nurse



CARTER GHAZIKHANIAN
Annie's son
Untapped Mental Ability



HAVOK
Alex Summers
(Currently Comatose)
Solar-Generated Plasma Blasts



POLARIS
Lorna Dane
Magnetic Control



JUGGERNAUT
Cain Marko
Super-strength, Invulnerability

THE XAVIER INSTITUTE FOR HIGHER LEARNING HOME OF THE X-MEN

How's Alex today, Mom?

Mouthy as ever, Carter honey. You know what a smart-Alex he can be.

Get it? "Smart--
--Alex"?

I get it, Mom. That's pretty funny.

Did you come by just to listen to me read to him?

Yeah.

I kinda miss visiting with Alex... even though he's mostly dead.

Not dead, Carter. Just in a coma.

Yeah, to a six-year-old.

Did you have any *dreams* about him last night?

Not that I remember...

...those dreams were mostly during Mommy's "frustrated" phase, honey.

You mean the time when no one would *date* you?

But nobody's dating you *now*...

How *sweet* of you to remind me of that, Carter.

But let's keep those dreams to *ourselves*, shall we?

I don't need any more *gossip* about me at this school... especially with the dreaded *Lorna* coming by to see Alex this afternoon.



That's Alex's girlfriend, right?

Everyone says she broke up with him before his plane crash.

I don't like her, Mom.



You don't even know her, sweetie.

She's probably a very nice person with huge breasts.

Mom!

He'll probably wake up when she gets here and they'll live happily ever after...

...and have constant, loud sex in the room next to ours.



People around the school say Lorna's crazy...

...they say she took off all her clothes and walked naked in nuke-yular mud or something.

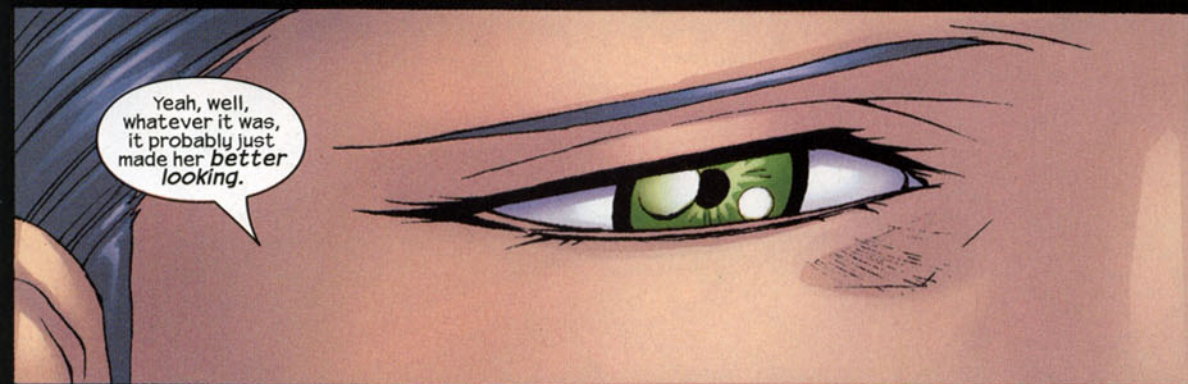


Nuke-lee-ar mud.

She walked in "nuclear mud"?

What does that mean?

How should I know, Mom, I'm just a kid.



Yeah, well, whatever it was, it probably just made her better looking.



She still wouldn't be better looking than you, Mom.

Do you think this still hurts Alex?



His scar?

Oh, God... I sure hope not, honey.

That would just be the worst thing in the world...



...if on top of all this, he was still in pain.
Poor Alex.

Hey, Mom...
...you know how I can sometimes see things?



You know, like lights around people?



Yeah...
Why?



Well, there's, like, this string of light you know?
Coming from Alex's head?
And it goes right into this cloudy black thing in space or something.



And I can see Alex at the end of it.
I bet if I pull him--
--you know, the string--



--if I pull him really hard I can yank--
--him--
--out--
Carter--
--honey--
--LET GO!



LET GO, SWEET-HEART!

PLEASE, STOP WHAT YOU'RE DOING!

PLEEEEEASE!



CARTER?!

CARTER!!



LET GOOOOOO!!



WHUMP



Carter?

Carter, honey?

Wake up, sweetheart, please?

Wake up!

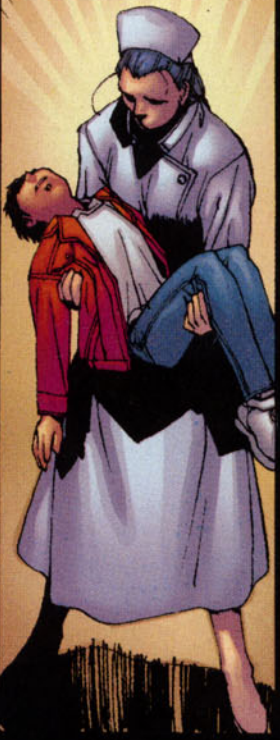


Oh my God, please, please... don't let him be dead...

Oh, thank God, his heart's still beating.

Carter, honey, please.

Please wake up, Carter, PLEASE!



OH, MY GOD, THIS CAN'T BE HAPPENING!



Come back to me, honey.

Oh, my sweet angel, COME BACK TO ME!



LET HIM GO, ALEX!



Wherever you are, please don't drag my son down with you!

GIVE HIM BACK, DAMN YOU!

GIVE HIM BACK TO ME!



SSSSSSSSSS

SSHAAA

No. No, not you.





Lorna.

LOBO TECHNOLOGIES
WHITE PLAINS, NY

Northstar.
I've watched
Wolverine heal from
some *incredible*
damage--
--but he
needs *time* and
safety.

Done,
Worthington.

And
you're saying
these people
are actually in
my *employ*,
Paige?

Sadly, *yes*,
Warren.

What is
it you people
want?

Yes, gentlemen,
let's discuss--

--gentlemen--

--let's
discuss--

--incredible
damage--

--what
is it--

--time and
safety--

Not very
cooperative,
are they, these
"executives"?

And you,
old man. You're not
going to help me *at*
all here, are you,
Wolverine?

Nnngh,
no, I
thought
not!

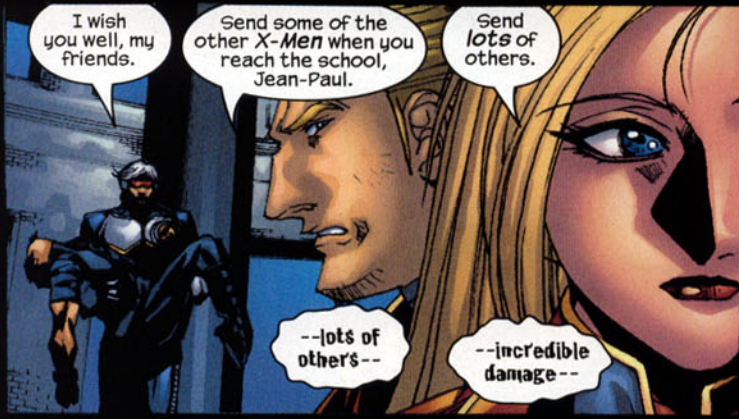
Damn metal-laced
bones of yours... you're
heavier than you look,
even with half your
blood gone!

Reasoning
with these fools
seems *pointless*,
Worthington. Will
you be all right
without me?

I hope so.

--seems
pointless--

--all right
without me--



I wish you well, my friends.

Send some of the other X-Men when you reach the school, Jean-Paul.

Send lots of others.

--lots of others--

--incredible damage--



I just hope it's enough.

Densest form.

I hope it's enough.



Husk.
Transform to your densest form.

Steel is the densest I can do, I think.

--incredible damage--

--seems pointless--



Is it enough?

--her densest form.



My name is Warren Worthington the Third. Archangel.



My name is Paige Guthrie. Husk.

IS IT ENOUGH?!

I am an X-Man, a team leader.

HER DENSEST FORM!

My greatest dream is to become an X-Man.

IS IT ENOUGH?!

I've gotten us into a bad situation.

To become an X-Woman.

HER DENSEST FORM!

I may not live to see that dream come true.

RRRIIP

RRRIIP

RRRIIP

SHRAAP



Warren?
If these
monsters took
out *Wolverine* in
under five minutes,
what chance do
we have?

Realistically,
Paige?



None.

X ST. MICHAEL'S CHURCH, BROOKLYN



Bless me Father, for I have sinned.

Wha--?



Oh, my goodness! Kurt!

You really startled me there.

I'm sorry, Father Whitney.



Confessional's not for another three hours yet.

But, if you're serious and you need to...

...I can step into the box.

If you wouldn't mind, Father.



I... I'm afraid I can't face you with what I have to say.



I'm *not* moving, Lorna.
This man has the life of my *son* somewhere inside him.



I can *make* you move, Annie-girl.



You...
...you'll have to.



FWIK

Aah!



Move.



No.



Alex,
please--

--I'm
begging
you--

--let
go of my son,
whatever you're
doing--



FWIK

AAAH!!



I
told you,
Annie--



WHAT THE HELL
IS WRONG WITH
YOU?!

I'M NOT
HURTING HIM,
I JUST WANT MY
SON BACK!



AAAHHH,
MY GOD!!!



Enjoy
that?

I reversed
your *blood*
flow for just
a second.

Now, I
don't want to
kill you--



I'm a
mother--

--fighting for
her son.

If you
want me to
stop--

--you'll
have to.

LOBO TECHNOLOGIES

The X-Men are supposed to represent the pinnacle of human evolution to date.

To average mutants, the X-Men represent the pinnacle of human evolution.



But have you ever noticed that the closer you get to your dream--

--the more you can see its flaws?

We're supposed to be the best of Homo superior.

Professor Xavier's dream made real.



AAAHHH!!

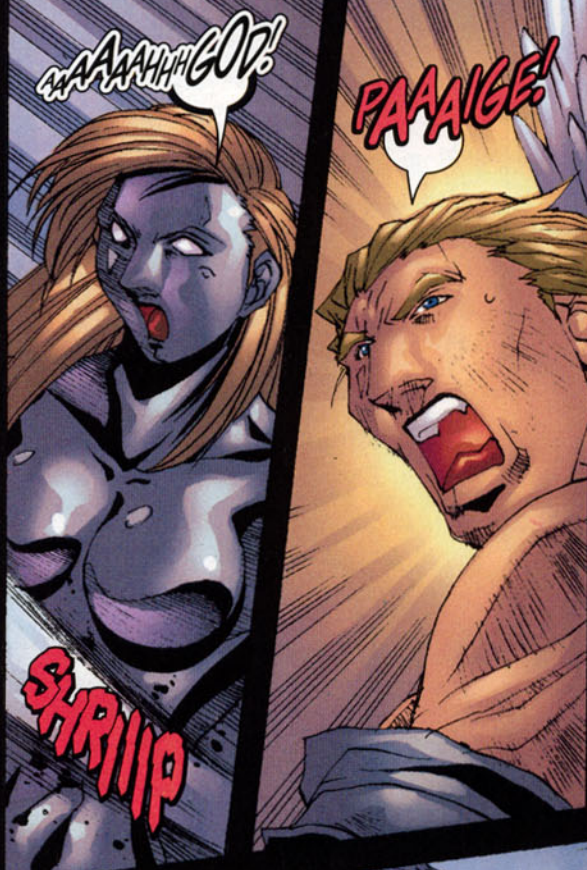
I came here unprepared-- without a strategy.

The pinnacle of evolution?



And because of my stupidity...

We're about to dead-end on the tree of life.



AAAHHH-GOD!

PAAAGE!

SHRIIP



--gentlemen, let's discuss--

--seems pointless--

--incredible damage--

WHY ARE YOU DOING THIS?!

--why are you doing this--

--seems pointless--



WE DO THIS BECAUSE WE CAN!!



Because we must.

Because nature demands it.

To remove you from the gene pool as easily as I removed the other.



Wolverine hasn't been removed!

He has a healing factor in his blood that'll save him!

The ability to heal makes him overconfident, sometimes... he expected you to be easy.

But you surprised him, no doubt.

I am *Maximus Lobo*, and we are the *future* of this world, mutant!

The **DOMINANT SPECIES.**

Surely you can't believe that fool might have *beaten* us?

Oh no, Maximus. Not at all.

I know he would have beaten you--
--had he not *misjudged* you.

Or maybe he judged me perfectly, and I was simply his *better*?

His *superior* within our common hominid family.

You mean our common *species*, *Homo superior*?

A supposed superiority that--

--somehow--

--gives you the right to *prey* upon him and others?

The *right*? No, we don't claim the *right*. If it were a *right*, it wouldn't be as much *fun*.

We simply obey *Darwin's laws*-- natural selection-- survival of the fittest--

--laws of *nature* which supersede the piddly *rights* of the fearful and soft *Homo sapiens*.

And that's when it hits me.

It should have been obvious before now.

We are not *Homo superior*.

Something Annie said in the infirmary.

We are part of *Homo superior*.

Darwin and *Wallace's* "*The Struggle for Existence*."

We have aspects of forward movement--

--gifts--

--enhancements--

Rights which--

--since you believe--

--puts you and me in *competition*.

Darwin and *Wallace* predicted gradual variation in every species.

KEEESH

But we are still human--

--fallible--

--imperfect.

Stephen Jay Gould believed in punctuated equilibrium--

WHUD SCRAAAAAPE

AAAH!!

We must earn our world.

GGRAAAAHH!

We are not guaranteed this Earth.

--rapid change in variation--

--what could be called mutations.

Both believed variations less well adapted to survive--

--would be left behind--

BOOT

--in the "struggle for existence".



I'm so sorry...
God, I am such an idiot!

No, no, no.

Sshhhhhh.

Thank you for trying, Warren.



Paige, change to another "husk"--
--you--
--can--
--repair--

No, I can't.

The cuts are too deep.



Aaahhhhh--

It is commonly believed that evolution is moving forward--

--each successive generation an improvement upon the last.

This is not the case.



Natural selection has nothing to do with evolutionary direction--

--species progress--

--intelligence or "superiority".



Evolution simply means: "to adapt".

Adapt--

--or die.

It's getting past my curfew, Cain.

So?

You wanna stop playing, Sammy? I don't wanna stop.

Hey, Juggernaut-- when're you leaving?

You should be good to go by now.

You talkin' to me, ice bucket?

I think you've been taking advantage of the Professor long enough... it's time you moved on.

Oh, you think so, huh?

Let Charlie come tell me that *himself*, if he feels that way, Iceman.

This was *his* idea.

He doesn't *need* to come tell you.

I'm practically a founding member of this place and--

HEY!

Iceman! I need you now!

--and *you!* Big guy whatever-your name-is!

Get that thing you call a costume and come with us!

We have a mission.

LH-LH!

NO WAY, Northstar!

Fat boy doesn't do missions.

I do if it annoys you.

Wow, Logan's a bloody mess.

What the hell happened to him?

XELSEWHERE...

We as humans--

--as mutants
in particular--

--wish to believe-- need to
believe-- that there is
something special about us.

That we humans--

--all races,
all kinds--

--are equal and each
have our special
place in the world.

Natural selection
would argue this.

There is nothing special
about humans or any
specific race of humans.

We're all simply
very good at
differential...
reproductive...
success.

At least until "punctuated
equilibrium" spits out sudden,
unexpected variations--

--stronger, faster,
meaner variations--

--that will kill
all the rest.

XCONTINUED...