

MARVEL GRAPHIC NOVEL

No. 4 \$4.95

THE NEW MUTANTS



By Chris Claremont
and Bob McLeod

STAN LEE PRESENTS
A MARVEL GRAPHIC NOVEL

THE NEW MUTANTS™

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RENEWAL

THE SLOPES OF
AN MORAG, IN
THE NORTHWEST
HIGHLANDS OF
SCOTLAND...



WHAT THE --
BLAZES?!?



A WOLF--?!!

BUT THEY'VE BEEN EXTINGUISHED IN THESE PARTS FOR GENERATIONS.

WAIT-- SOMETHING'S HAPPENIN'!

NO ORDINARY BEAST, THAT'S CERTAIN.

IT'S A SHAPE-CHANGER!



THA' WAS A NASTY FALL-- IT MAY BE HURT.

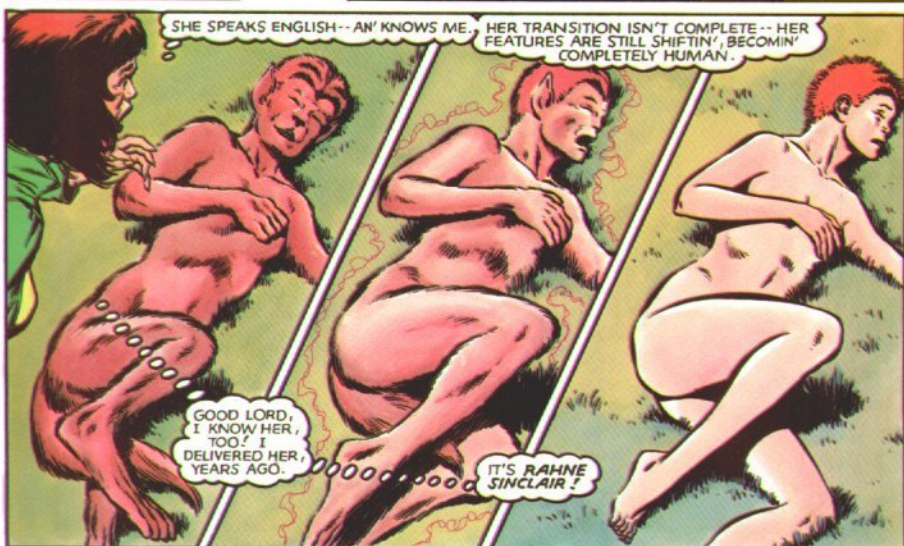


NO "IT," EITHER, BUT A GIRL-- AN' FAIRLY YOUNG BY THE LOOK O' HER.

EASY, LASS, DON'T TRY T' MOVE. I MEAN YOU NO HARM.

I'M A DOCTOR.

M-MILADY... HELP...



SHE SPEAKS ENGLISH-- AN' KNOWS ME.

HER TRANSITION ISN'T COMPLETE-- HER FEATURES ARE STILL SHIFTIN', BECOMIN' COMPLETELY HUMAN.

GOOD LORD, I KNOW HER, TOO! I DELIVERED HER YEARS AGO.

IT'S RAHNE SINCLAIR!



SHE'S BEEN SHOT!

ONLY A MINOR FLESH WOUND, SHE SHOULD BE ALL RIGHT.

I REMEMBER... HER BLOOD HAD AN ANOMALOUS DNA MATRIX. I TAGGED IT FOR FURTHER STUDY BUT NEVER GOT THE CHANCE T' FOLLOW UP. SHE'S 14-- PUBERTY-- THE RIGHT AGE FOR ANY POWERS T' MANIFEST THEMSELVES.

SHE COULD BE A MUTANT.

THERE SHE IS! THERE'S THE WITCH!

BUT SEE WHO'S WITH HER! REVEREND, IT'S LADY MOIRA!

STAND ASIDE, MILADY. WE'VE NO WISH T' TROUBLE YE. 'TIS THE GIRL WE WANT.

THIS IS KINROSS LAND, REVEREND CRAIG. YOU'RE TRESSPASSING. STATE YOUR BUSINESS.

WE DO GOD'S WORK THIS NIGHT, LADY.

RAHNE SINCLAIR IS POSSESSED. THE DEVIL SPEAKS THROUGH HER.

YOU'RE DAFT, OLD MAN.



MOCK ME AT YUIR PERIL, MOIRA MacTAgGERT, DAUGHTER OF LORD KINROSS THOUGH YE MAY BE. OUR INTENT IS T' SAVE THE CHILD'S SOUL, TO DRIVE THE DEMONS FROM HER.

WITH A BULLET?! OCH, WHAT BRAVE, NOBLE MEN YOU ARE, T' SO THREATEN A CHILD.

SHE'S UNDER MY PROTECTION, Mr. CRAIG. IF YOU WANT RAHNE'S LIFE, YOU'LL HAVE TO TAKE MINE AS WELL.



WE ARE NOT BUTCHERS, LADY, MERELY HONEST SOULS DOING THE LORD'S WORK.

BEWARE, WOMAN! HIS WILL CANNOT BE THWARTED.

⇒ Whew! ⇐

RAHNE'S SAFE-- FOR NOW-- BUT THE SOONER SHE'S FAR AWAY FROM HERE, THE BETTER. POOR DEAR, I WONDER WHAT SHE MAKES OF ALL THIS? PROBABLY SCARED STIFF.

THERE'S ONE PLACE I CAN TAKE HER-- ONE PERSON WHO CAN TRULY HELP HER--

I'LL TAKE MY CHANCES.

-- CHARLES XAVIER.

RIO DE
JANIERO,
BRAZIL...

THE CHAMPIONSHIP MATCH BETWEEN
THE THUNDERBOLTS OF THE VILAR
SCHOOL AND THEIR ARCH-RIVALS,
THE DYNAMOS.

< GOAL! * >



* TRANSLATED FROM THE PORTUGUESE -- L.

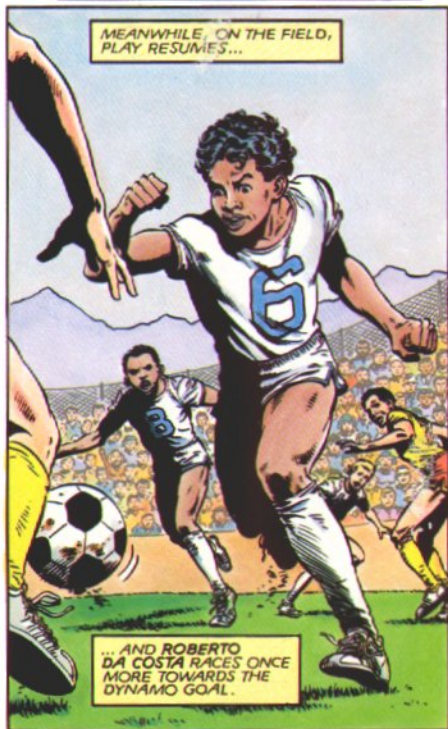
< DID YOU SEE, JULIANA?! BLESSED
SAINTS, WHAT A MOVE! >

< MY SON
IS AN
ARTIST
WITH THE
FOOTBALL! >



JULIANA SANDOVAL
DOES NOT ARGUE. IT IS
A WONDERFUL THING
TO BE YOUNG AND IN
LOVE, AND HAVE THE
ONE YOU LOVE BE A
STAR. SHE'S NEVER
FELT SO PROUD.

MEANWHILE, ON THE FIELD,
PLAY RESUMES...



... AND ROBERTO
DA COSTA RACES ONCE
MORE TOWARDS THE
DYNAMO GOAL.

THIS TIME, THOUGH, HE DOESN'T EVEN GET CLOSE.

< WE'VE HAD ENOUGH OUT OF YOU, HALFBREED. >



COLLISIONS HAPPEN IN A FAST-MOVING, FREE-WHEELING GAME LIKE SOCCER.

SO DO ACCIDENTS.



FROM THE STANDS, IT APPEARS AS IF NOTHING UNTOWARD HAS HAPPENED.

ROBERTO KNOWS DIFFERENTLY.

< THE REFEREE DIDN'T CALL A FOUL! >

< THE FOOL DIDN'T SEE ANYTHING! >



AND SO, CHARACTERISTICALLY, HE TAKES MATTERS INTO HIS OWN HANDS.



< I WAS HOPING YOU'D PULL A STUNT LIKE THIS, DÁ COSTA. >



< I MAY BE THROWN OUT OF THE GAME, BUT AT LEAST I'LL HAVE THE SATISFACTION OF BEATING YOU TO A PULP! >

< YOUR FATHER'S WEALTH CAN'T CHANGE THE COLOR OF YOUR SKIN, YOU'RE STILL BLACK-- AN ANIMAL MASQUERADING AS A HUMAN BEING! >



THE CROWD PANICS ...

... TENS OF THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE SURGING TOWARDS TOO FEW EXITS, CARRYING WITH THEM THE DESPERATELY STRUGGLING FIGURE OF EMMANUEL DA COSTA.



SOMEHOW, THOUGH, JULIANA MANAGES TO REACH THE FIELD ...

< 'BERTO!' >

< STAY AWAY, JULIANA! >

< I DON'T WANT TO HURT YOU! >



< YOU COULD NEVER DO THAT, ROBERTO. >

< DON'T BE AFRAID, BELOVED. I'M WITH YOU NOW. WHATEVER COMES, I'LL STAY BY YOU. WE'LL FACE IT TOGETHER. >

< HOLD ON, BERTO. DON'T DIE. PLEASE DON'T DIE! >

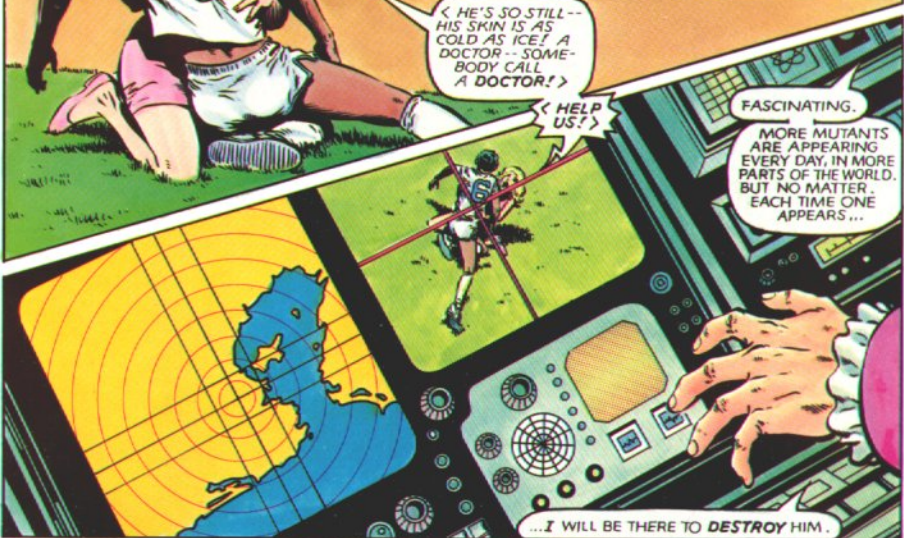


< HE'S SO STILL -- HIS SKIN IS AS COLD AS ICE! A DOCTOR -- SOMEBODY CALL A DOCTOR! >

< HELP US! >

FASCINATING.

MORE MUTANTS ARE APPEARING EVERY DAY, IN MORE PARTS OF THE WORLD. BUT NO MATTER. EACH TIME ONE APPEARS ...



... I WILL BE THERE TO DESTROY HIM.

CAMERON COUNTY, KENTUCKY,
IN THE HEART OF THE
APPALACHIAN COAL FIELDS.

THESE ARE DEEP MINES, SUNK STRAIGHT
DOWN INTO THE EARTH OR SIDWAYS
INTO THE GUTS OF THESE ANCIENT
MOUNTAINS.

IT'S A HARD LAND, A HARD WAY OF LIFE--
AND IT NURTURES AN EQUALLY TOUGH BREED OF
MEN, WHO START YOUNG AND GROW UP FAST.

ONE SUCH IS SAM GUTHRIE...

...AGE 16...

... BEGINNING HIS FIRST SHIFT AT PIERCE-CONSOLIDATED #7.

SAM, AH HEARD
'BOUT YORE PA PASSIN' ON,
FROM THE "BLACK LUNG."
AH JUST WANTED T' OFFER
MAH SYMPATHIES.

THANKS, Mr. LEWIS. THAT'S
KIND O' YOU.

EV'RYTHIN'
OKAY WITH
YORE MAMA?

SHE'S COPIN', SIR, BEST
SHE CAN. WE ALL ARE.
PA HAD A PENSION, BUT
WITH THE INFLATION AN'
ALL, IT DON'T COME
NEAR PAYIN' THE
BILLS.

THINK
SAFETY

THINK
SAFETY

AN' MA'S
TOO PROUD
T' GO ON
WELFARE.

MY PA'S
DREAM'S STILL
GOOD, Mr. LEWIS.
MAYBE IT WON'T
COME TRUE
FOR ME...

... BUT IT
WILL FOR
ONE O' MY
BROTHERS
OR SISTERS,
I'LL SEE TO
THAT.

AH'M A BIT SURPRISED
T' SEE YOU HERE, BOY. AH
THOUGHT YOU HAD A
SCHOLARSHIP OR SOMETHIN' -
AH 'MEMBER YORE
DADDY SAYIN' HOW PROUD
HE WAS, T' KNOW HIS SON
WAS GOIN' T' COLLEGE.

I CAN'T LEAVE
HERE, SIR, KNOWIN'
MY FAMILY HASN'T
GOT FOOD T' EAT. I'M
MAN O' THE HOUSE
NOW. IT'S MY JOB
TO PROVIDE FOR
MAMA AN' THE
LITTLE ONES.

SAM SPENDS MOST OF HIS SHIFT GETTING ACQUAINTED WITH MEN AND MACHINES, LEARNING THE ROPES OF THE JOB HE KNOWS HAS JUST BECOME HIS LIFE'S WORK. AS THE DAY WEARS ON...

... HE FINDS HIMSELF HATING HIS FATHER...

... FOR OFFERING A DREAM OF SOMETHING BETTER, ONLY TO SNATCH IT FROM SAM'S HAND AS IT WAS ABOUT TO COME TRUE.

AND WITH THESE TANGLED EMOTIONS OF HATE AND LOVE AND GRIEF COMES A SENSE OF SHAME, FOR FEELING THIS WAY.



AND THEN, WITHOUT WARNING...

CAVE-IN!

EVERYBODY OUT!!

Mr. LEWIS! HE'S PINNED!

LEAVE HIM, BOY! SAVE YOURSELF!

GET OUTTA HERE, SAM! I'M DONE FOR!

I'M STAYIN', Mr. LEWIS!

YOU CRAZY--! YOU'RE TOM GUTHRIE'S SON, ALRIGHT, THE SPITTIN' IMAGE-- MORE GUTS THAN BRAINS.

CAN YOU MOVE? IF WE SHIFT THIS TIMBER...

FEAR TURNS HIS SOUL TO ICE.

ADRENALIN SURGES LIKE MOLTEN FIRE THROUGH HIS BLOODSTREAM.

IT'S TOO LATE! THE ROOF'S COLLAPSIN'!

NO!!

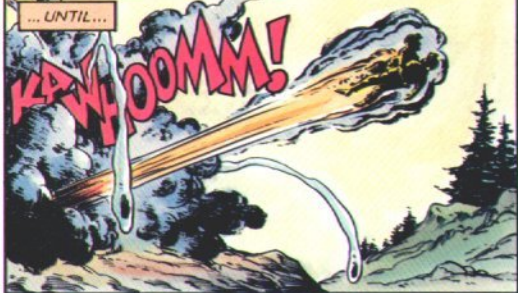
THINGS BEGIN TO HAPPEN.

HIS EYES GLOW...



... RAW ENERGY BURSTING ABOUT HIM, BUILDING IN INTENSITY...

... UNTIL...



GUYS, OVER HERE! IT'S FRANK LEWIS AN' SAM GUTHRIE!

AH... AH'N' IT'S A MIRACLE! ALIVE!



IT SURE IS, MR. LEWIS.

IT WAS ME-- I DID IT. MY LEGS SEEMED TO EXPLODE, AN' THEN I WAS SMASHIN' OUT THE MOUNTAIN LIKE A CANNONBALL. BUT I'M NORMAL NOW. I LOOK FINE, EVEN MY CLOTHES.

HOW DID I DO THAT?!



ANOTHER ONE, MUCH CLOSER TO HOME. SPLENDID.

A POWER SUCH AS HIS COULD BE USEFUL TO ME. AND THEN, WHEN HE HAS SERVED HIS PURPOSE...



... HE CAN FOLLOW YOUNG da COSTA INTO THE GRAVE.

THE MEDICINE BOW MOUNTAINS, NEAR THE TOWN OF SUNDANCE, COLORADO...

SHE SITS IN SILENT HARMONY WITH THE WORLD, AS IT SPINS TOWARD ANOTHER DAWN.

SHE TREASURES THESE IDYLIC INTERLUDES--WHEN SHE IS AT PEACE WITH HERSELF AND TRULY HAPPY. HER SECRET TERROR IS THAT, OF LATE, THEY ARE BECOMING INCREASINGLY RARE.



Hmnh?

HELLO, RIDGE-RUNNER. HOW ARE YOU, FUZZY OLD THING? YES, I'M PLEASED TO SEE YOU, TOO.

THE CAT'S THOUGHTS ARE UNCOMPLICATED, PURE. HE HAS FED, HE IS WITH THE HUMAN HE ADORES. HE IS CONTENT.

HER THOUGHTS ARE THE SAME.



THE TWO BECAME ONE.

IN RAPPORT AS THEY ARE, BOTH BECOME AWARE OF THE INTRUDER SIMULTANEOUSLY.



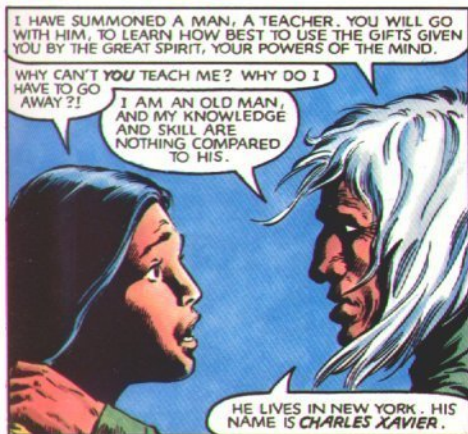
THE CAT RECOGNIZES THE SCENT--MAN!

HE BOLTS...

...AND THE GIRL--THOUGHTS AND FEELINGS STILL INTERMIXED WITH HIS-- IS HARD PRESSED NOT TO FOLLOW.



RIDGE-RUNNER--STAY!



HER RAGE GIVES HER SUDDEN, UNEXPECTED STRENGTH. IT CATCHES BLACK EAGLE BY SURPRISE AND, FOR A MOMENT, HIS NATURAL PSYCHIC DEFENSES FALTER.



GRANDFATHER, I'M SO SORRY. I DIDN'T MEAN TO-- I WAS SO ANGRY I SUMMONED THE DREAM SHAPES WITHOUT THINKING, JUST AS I DID AT HOME AND IN TOWN BEFORE I FLED TO THE MOUNTAINS.

I... I COULDN'T HELP MYSELF. I DON'T KNOW HOW I DO THIS-- OR HOW TO STOP!

WHICH IS **WHY** YOU NEED XAVIER.

HE'S AN ENEMY! ALL WHITE MEN ARE OUR ENEMIES!

NO. HE WAS YOUR FATHER'S BEST FRIEND, MOONSTAR-- HIS **BLOOD BROTHER**.

HE IS FAMILY, CHILD-- AND YOU WILL OBEY HIM AS YOU WOULD ME, OR YOUR FATHER, WERE HE ALIVE.

DO I HAVE TO?

I COMMAND IT, MOONSTAR.

THEN, GRANDFATHER ...

... I WILL OBEY.

HOW TOUCHING. IT STIRS THE HEART TO SEE SUCH NOBLE SAVAGES.

Wyoming

I COULDN'T HAVE ARRANGED THINGS BETTER MYSELF. WHEN XAVIER RESPONDS TO THAT SUMMONS, WHEN HE REACHES THE ROCKIES-- ALONE, WITHOUT HIS PRECIOUS X-MEN TO PROTECT HIM-- I'LL STRIKE!

HE AND THE GIRL WILL BE SLAUGHTERED TOGETHER.

YOU'RE MAD, PIERCE!

... DOESN'T THAT PLACE YOU IN A MOST AWKWARD-- AND PRECARIOUS-- POSITION?

THE HELLFIRE CLUB WON'T LET YOU GET AWAY WITH THIS.

BY THE TIME THEY DISCOVER MY PLANS, IT WILL BE TOO LATE!

THE CLUB-- ITS WEALTH, ITS POWER-- WILL BE MINE! AND YOUR BELOVED MASTER, SEBASTIAN SHAW, AND THE REST OF HIS NITTE CLIQUE, WILL BE NO MORE THAN A MEMORY!

IF I AM, MY DARLING TESSA ...

THE HOUR BEFORE
DAWN, THE FABLED
HOUR OF THE WOLF...

--WHEN THE BOUNDRIES
BETWEEN NIGHTMARE AND
REALITY OCCASIONALLY...

... DISAPPEAR ...

**GRAND-
FATHER!!**

AT BREAKNECK SPEED, BLACK
EAGLE'S PSYCHIC DEATHSCREAM
RESOUNDING IN HER MIND ...

... SHE GALLOPS HER PONY
TOWARDS THE SLEEPING
TOWN OF SUNDANCE ...

... DREADING
WHAT SHE WILL
FIND THERE.

**NO!
OH,
NO!!**

YOU SAW THIS IN YOUR
DREAMS, DIDN'T YOU-- IT'S THE
IMAGE I DREW FROM YOUR
THOUGHTS, ONLY I DIDN'T
UNDERSTAND IT, THEN.

OH, BLACK EAGLE,
WHY DIDN'T YOU TELL
ME?! WE COULD HAVE
FACED THEM TOGETHER!
WHOEVER THEY ARE, I
WILL MAKE THEM
PAY FOR YOUR LIFE.

**I WILL HAVE
VENGEANCE!**

TO THE SHERIFF, BLACK EAGLE WILL
BE JUST ANOTHER DRUNKEN OLD
INDIAN WHO WANDERED OUT ONTO
THE HIGHWAY AND GOT HIMSELF
SPLATTERED.

A HIT-AND-
RUN. AN
ACCIDENT.

MOONSTAR KNOWS
DIFFERENTLY.

PROFESSOR CHARLES XAVIER'S SCHOOL FOR GIFTED YOUNGSTERS...

... A UNIQUE INSTITUTION WHOSE HANDFUL OF STUDENTS WERE THEMSELVES UNIQUE.



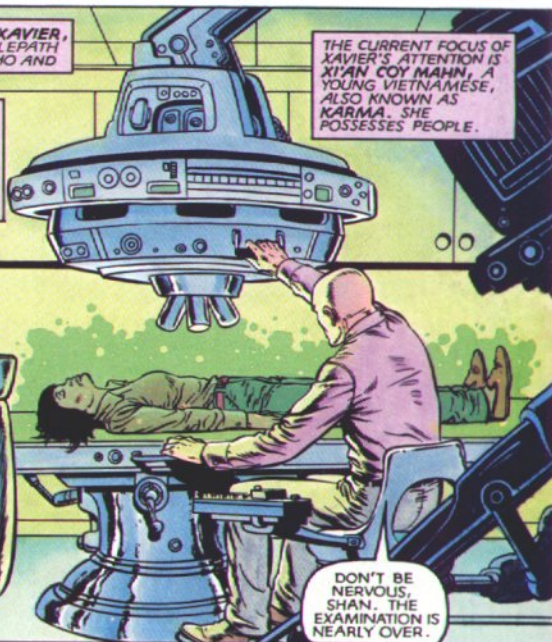
THEY WERE MUTANTS, GIFTED FROM BIRTH WITH PARA-NORMAL ABILITIES THAT SET THEM FOREVER APART FROM THE REST OF HUMANITY.

HERE -- UNDER THE TUTELEGE OF CHARLES XAVIER, HIMSELF A MUTANT, THE MOST POWERFUL TELEPATH ON EARTH -- THEY LEARNED TO COPE WITH WHO AND WHAT THEY WERE.

THEY BECAME THE X-MEN. IT COST THEM THEIR LIVES.

A WEEK HAS PASSED SINCE MOIRA ARRIVED WITH RAHNE SINCLAIR, AND RAHNE STILL ISN'T SURE IF THIS IS THE MOST WONDERFUL THING THAT'S EVER HAPPENED TO HER, OR THE MOST TERRIBLE.

THE CURRENT FOCUS OF XAVIER'S ATTENTION IS XI'AN COY MAHN, A YOUNG VIETNAMESE, ALSO KNOWN AS KARMA. SHE POSSESSES PEOPLE.



DON'T BE NERVOUS, SHAN. THE EXAMINATION IS NEARLY OVER.

WHAT HAVE YOU LEARNED, PROFESSOR?

I'VE NEVER SEEN READINGS LIKE YOURS, SHAN. YOU HAVE AN ABSOLUTELY SPECIFIC PSIONIC TALENT WHOSE RAW POWER, IN ITS OWN WAY, RIVALS MY OWN.

I SHOULD VERY MUCH LIKE TO SEE A PRACTICAL DEMONSTRATION.

MUST I? WHEN I POSSESS SOMEONE, I... BECOME THEM. GRADUALLY, I BECOME AWARE OF THEIR MEMORIES, FEELINGS, I BEGIN TO THINK AND BEHAVE LIKE THEM.

IT GOES AGAINST ALL I WAS TAUGHT AND BELIEVE IN.

IF YOU'D RATHER NOT...

I WOULD RATHER BE NORMAL, WITHOUT ANY SUPER-POWERS AT ALL. BUT SINCE I AM CURSED WITH THIS TALENT, I MUST LEARN TO CONTROL IT...

... LEST IT SOMEDAY CONTROL ME.

IF YOU NEED A GUINEA PIG, SHAN, I'M GAME.



YOU ARE VERY BRAVE, Dr. MacTAGGERT. I AM AFRAID THERE WILL BE SOME INITIAL DISCOMFORT...

OH!

... BUT IT WILL SOON PASS.

IS THIS SATISFACTORY, PROFESSOR?

LOOK AT HER EYES! AN' HER VOICE-- IT SOUNDS LIKE SHAN'S!

MY OWN BODY IS CAPABLE OF INDEPENDENT ACTION...

... ALTHOUGH IT IS GREATLY WEAKENED.

MY CONTROL OVER THE HOST-BODY IS ABSOLUTE.

WHAT HAVE YOU DONE TO LADY MOIRA?! LEAVE HER ALONE!

RAHNE, I MEAN NO HARM!

PROFESSOR--!

RAHNE, STOP THIS!

RETURN TO HUMAN FORM, AT ONCE!

GRRRR

I... I'M SORRY, SIR. I WAS SO FRIGHTENED, I COULD NA' HELP MYSELF.

DID YOU SPEAK ALOUD, PROFESSOR? I HEARD WORDS-- BUT NA' WI' MY EARS.

I SPOKE TELEPATHICALLY.

HOW DO YOU FEEL, MOIRA?

A LITTLE MUZZY-HEADED, BUT OTHERWISE FINE. WHAT DID I MISS?

YOU DON'T REMEMBER? FASCINATING. THE SENSORS INDICATE A COMPLETE CESSATION OF YOUR HIGHER BRAIN FUNCTIONS...

DURING THE PERIOD SHAN POSSESSED YOU. IN EFFECT, YOU CEASED TO EXIST.

I'M RELEASING Dr. MacTAGGERT, PROFESSOR.

LOVELY. HOW ABOUT SOME LUNCH. NOW THAT I'M COMPOS AGAIN, I'M FAMISHED.

ARE YOU WELL, RAHNE? YOU LOOK A BIT PALE.

THIS IS ALL NEW TO ME, MILADY, LIKE SOME WONDROUS FAIRY TALE, TOO FANTASTIC TO BE REAL. I FEEL... I SHOULD'N' BE HERE.

NONSENSE, CHILD. I'M DELIGHTED MOIRA BROUGHT YOU TO ME, AND THAT REED RICHARDS SENT SHAN.

YOU'RE A REFUGEE, ARE YOU NOT, SHAN, ONE OF THE "BOAT PEOPLE?"

OUI, M'SIEU. MY FATHER WAS A COLONEL IN THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE ARMY, MY MOTHER A TEACHER. THEY WERE BOTH KILLED BY THAI PIRATES DURING OUR ESCAPE. MY YOUNGER BROTHER AND SISTER-- LEONG AND NGA-- AND I ARRIVED IN AMERICA A YEAR AGO. WE FOUND A PLACE TO LIVE IN NEW YORK, I SECURED EMPLOYMENT AND WE BEGAN TO RESTORE A SEMBLANCE OF ORDER TO OUR LIVES.

THERE'S A GREAT DEAL SHE ISN'T TELLING US. I WONDER WHY? A NATURAL RETICENCE-- OR HAS SHE SOMETHING TO HIDE?

I HAD A TWIN BROTHER, TRAN -- A MUTANT LIKE MYSELF, WITH THE SAME ABILITIES. HE... DIED.

WE HAD ONE OTHER RELATIVE, LIVING OUTSIDE VIETNAM. OUR UNCLE, NGUYEN NGOC COY. MY FATHER NEITHER LIKED NOR TRUSTED HIM-- WITH GOOD REASON-- AND NEITHER DO I.

SO YOUR POWERS EVOLVED ON THEIR OWN, SHAN? YOU'VE LEARNED USE THEM AS YOU'VE GONE ALONG?

I HAD NO ALTERNATIVE NECESSITY-- THE NEED TO SURVIVE-- QUICKLY OVERCAME PERSONAL REVULSION AND MORAL SCRUPLES. THEREIN, I DIFFERED FROM TRAN. HE ENJOYED USING HIS ABILITIES.

ALL THINGS CONSIDERED, I THINK YOU'VE BOTH DONE EXTREMELY WELL.

IS THA' CAUSE FOR REJOKIN'-- THA' WE'VE MASTERED THESE GIFTS FROM SATAN?!

YOUR POWERS HAVE NOTHING WHATSOEVER TO DO WITH SATAN, RAHNE. THEY ARE THINGS OF NATURE, NO DIFFERENT FROM HANDS OR HEART OR BRAIN.

AND LIKE ALL SUCH TALENTS, THESE MUST BE SHAPED AND HONED.

PEOPLE WERE NOTHING TO TRAN, MERE PUPPETS. I DO NOT WISH TO BECOME LIKE HIM -- YET I FEEL THE SAME TEMPTATION WITHIN MYSELF.

HELP ME, PROFESSOR. TEACH ME WHAT I MUST KNOW.

I...

I... CANNOT

WILL NOT, Y' MEAN. ARE YOU AFRAID, CHARLEY?

I AM TIRED, MOIRA. OF GATHERING YOUNG PEOPLE -- CHILDREN -- OF TRAINING THEM, ONLY TO SEND THEM TO THEIR DEATHS. THERE'S TOO MUCH BLOOD ON MY HANDS ALREADY.

I WANT NO MORE.

DENY THESE TWO AND YOU DENY EVERYTHING YOU'VE EVER BELIEVED IN.

AYE, X-MEN HAVE DIED -- AN' WILL CONTINUE TO DIE, BECAUSE THAT'S THE NATURE OF THEIR JOB. THEY'RE HEROES.

BUT THE TEAM WASN'T FOUNDED -- YOU DINNAE BEGIN YOUR LIFE'S WORK -- MERELY TO COMBAT EVIL MUTANTS.

THE DREAM, CHARLEY, WAS TO HELP MUTANTS LEARN TO LIVE WITH THEIR POWERS. AN' TO HELP SOCIETY LEARN TO ACCEPT THEM. SHAN AND RAHNE NEED GUIDANCE ONLY YOU CAN PROVIDE. CAN YOU REFUSE THEM?

I WANT TO. THE X-MEN WERE MY FAMILY.

LOSING THEM IS... UNBEARABLE.

HARD AS IT MAY BE TO ACCEPT, THE X-MEN THEMSELVES ARE FAR LESS IMPORTANT THAN THE DREAM WHICH BROUGHT THEM TOGETHER.

TO GIVE UP NOW WOULD MAKE THEIR LIVES -- THEIR SACRIFICE -- MEANINGLESS.

YOU'RE A TOUGH WOMAN, MOIRA.

LIKE YOU, CHARLEY, ME OLD LOVE, I'M A FIGHTER. IT'S MY DREAM, TOO -- PAID FOR IN SWEAT, TEARS... AN' BLOOD. SO LONG AS I'M ABLE, I WON'T LET IT DIE.

ALL RIGHT, YOUNG LADIES, I'LL DO WHAT I CAN.

AND LET'S ALL PRAY WE'VE MADE THE RIGHT DECISION.

*THE X-MEN WERE KIDNAPPED BY THE ALIEN BLOOD IN X-MEN #161-- LOUISE.

MILADY-- THE DOORBELL!

I HEAR IT, RAHNE. AN' STOP CALLIN' ME "MILADY." MY NAME'S MOIRA.

DING-DOING

YES, MILADY.

I COULD CALL HER "DOCTOR," I SUPPOSE. BUT SHE'S A KINROSS, HEIR TO THE DOMAIN-- WHILE I'M AN ORPHAN, WARD O' THE CHURCH. 'TIL LADY MOIRA HAD HERSEL' NAMED M' GUARDIAN.

SHE TREATS ME AS AN EQUAL, BUT WE'RE NOT. AND WE CANNA' EVER BE.

ALL THIS SOUNDS WONDERFUL, PROFESSOR, BUT I HAVE A PROBLEM. I MUST CARE FOR MY BROTHER AND SISTER. BETWEEN MY JOB AND YOUR SCHOOL, I SHALL HAVE NO TIME LEFT FOR THEM.

EASILY SOLVED, SHAN. COME TO WORK FOR ME. I NEED SOMEONE TO HELP ME RUN THE SCHOOL-- NOW THAT I SEEM TO BE STARTING OVER AGAIN. YOU'RE BRIGHT, WELL-EDUCATED, ARTICULATE, MULTI-LINGUAL-- A PERFECT CHOICE.

YOUR SALARY AND BENEFITS WILL BE MORE THAN ADEQUATE.

AND YOU'LL BE ABLE TO WORK AND STUDY AT THE SAME TIME.

YOUR OFFER IS MOST GENEROUS. I ACCEPT.

A LETTER, CHARLES-- FROM COLORADO. SPECIAL DELIVERY.



Sigh. TODAY'S EVENTS SEEM TO BE GATHERING A SOMEWHAT INEXORABLE AND IRRESISTIBLE MOMENTUM. THIS IS FROM THE FATHER OF AN OLD ARMY FRIEND.

BLACK EAGLE'S GRAND-DAUGHTER IS EVIDENTLY A MUTANT. HE ASKS MY HELP. URGENTLY.

ANYONE FOR A TRIP OUT WEST?

A DAY LATER, ALONG THE CONTINENTAL DIVIDE...

Y'LOOK SO SAD, SIR. DID Y'KNOW THIS GENTLEMAN?

THIS IS BLACK EAGLE-- THE MAN WHO WROTE ME. AMONG HIS PEOPLE, HE WAS A CHIEF, REVERED AS A TEACHER AND SHAMAN. HIS WISDOM FAR SURPASSED MY OWN.

I REMEMBERED HOW HONORED I FELT TO BE ACCEPTED INTO HIS HOUSEHOLD.

ALL THIS WAY, FOR NOTHING.. WE CAME TOO LATE.

WITHOUT M'SIEU EAGLE. WHAT HOPE HAVE WE OF FINDING HIS GRANDDAUGHTER.

A MOMENT LATER, THEY GET THEIR ANSWER...



... AS-- INCREDIBLY, IMPOSSIBLY-- THE HIGHLANDS OF COLORADO ARE TRANSFORMED INTO THOSE OF VIETNAM, AT THE HEIGHT OF THE WAR.

FOR XI'AN, IT IS HER MOST PRIMAL, PRIVATE TERROR-- TO BE THROWN BACK INTO THE NIGHTMARE THAT HAS DOMINATED HER LIFE FROM BIRTH.



IT IS MORE THAN SHE CAN BEAR.

NnnNooooo!

THEN, AS XAVIER STRUGGLES DESPERATELY TO REGAIN HIS MENTAL EQUILIBRIUM AND PROTECT HIS YOUNG CHARGES FROM THIS RUTHLESS PSYCHIC ATTACK...



THAT EXPLOSION-- NO ILLUSION! - IT... WAS... REAL!!!



THERE SHE IS!

XAVIER AND HIS BRATS ARE TAKEN CARE OF. NOW IT'S THE INDIAN'S TURN!

THOSE ARE THE CREATURES FROM GRANDFATHER'S DEATH-DREAM. HIS KILLERS! I THOUGHT THE PEOPLE AROUND BLACK EAGLE'S GRAVE WERE ENEMIES, TOO... I WAS WRONG.

THEIR MACHINES ARE SO FAST AND MANEUVERABLE, I CAN'T OUTFRIN THEM, EVEN AMONG THE TREES.

AND MY SPIRITFORMS DON'T AFFECT THEM, NO MATTER HOW HARD I TRY.



RRROAR

A MOUNTAIN LION!

RIDGE-RUNNER--NO!



NICE TRY, KITTY-CAT.

BUT AGAINST MY BATTLE ARMOR, YOU GOT NO MORE OF A CHANCE...



...THAN YOUR MUTIE MISTRESS!

RIDGE-RUNNER!



NOT TO WORRY, SWEET THING. AS SOON AS I GRAB SOME DECENT ALTITUDE--

-- I'LL SEND YOU ON YOUR WAY TO JOIN HIM!

OWW!



YOUR DAY IS DONE, VILLAIN!

YOUR MIND-- YOUR BODY-- BELONG TO KARMA!

HIS VOICE-- IT CHANGED IN MID-SENTENCE! AND NOW, HE'S ATTACKING HIS COMPANIONS!

DO NOT BE AFRAID, CHERIE. YOU ARE AMONG FRIENDS.

PROFESSOR XAVIER, I MEANT TO STUN THE OTHER VILLAINS-- ARE THEY ALL RIGHT? I SHALL LEAVE THIS ONE CONSCIOUS AND REMOVE HIS HELMET, SO YOU CAN MENTALLY INTERROGATE HIM.

WHAT'S HAPPENING?! HAS HE GONE MAD?! HAVE I???

FVAM
FVAM

XAVIER?! HE'S THE MAN GRAND-FATHER SPOKE OF!

DID THIS MAN'S HELMET PROTECT HIM?! IF SO, HE COULD BE VULNERABLE TO MY SPIRITFORMS!

BUTCHER! YOU KILLED MY CAT! YOU KILLED BLACK EAGLE AND DESECRATED HIS GRAVE! WHATEVER YOUR MOST PRIVATE, MOST FEARSOME NIGHTMARE IS--

--MAY IT SHRIVEL YOUR MIND AND BODY AND SOUL!

DANIELLE-- NO!

Y-YOU STOPPED ME! THAT'S NEVER HAPPENED BEFORE!

AND ONLY BLACK EAGLE AND I KNEW THAT NAME--HOW DID YOU LEARN IT?!

I WAS WITH YOUR PARENTS WHEN THEY GAVE IT TO YOU, CHILD. I AM CHARLES XAVIER.

LIKE YOU, I AM A MUTANT. I HAVE COME TO HELP YOU, AS I PROMISED YOUR FATHER AND BLACK EAGLE I WOULD.

A LOT OF GOOD YOUR PROMISE DID GRAND-FATHER.

I NEED NOTHING FROM YOU, WHITE MAN. LEAVE MY HILLS. LEAVE ME!

TO LIVE ALONE, IN TERROR OF POWERS YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND AND CANNOT CONTROL? NO.

YOU HAVE EXTRAORDINARY GIFTS, BUT THEY CAN HARM YOU AS EASILY AS OTHERS. ONLY THROUGH PROPER TRAINING WILL YOU HAVE A CHANCE FOR SANITY AND SURVIVAL.

AND YOU WILL PROVIDE THIS... TRAINING?

YES.

WHY SHOULD I TRUST YOU?--ARRGH!

PROFESSOR-- SHE'S HURT!

ONE ADVANTAGE OF LIVING IN A COUNTRY AT WAR, YOU LEARN FIRST AID.

YOUR SHOULDER IS DISLOCATED. HOLD STILL-- THIS WILL NOT BE PLEASANT.

Ahhh--!

VOILA-- GOOD AS NEW.

YOU SHOULD REST, DANIELLE.

I AM MOONSTAR! AND I AM CHEYENNE! IT'S SHAMEFUL ENOUGH THAT I CRIED OUT. I CAN WALK-- AND I WILL!

YOU OWE ME AN EXPLANATION, XAVIER?

CONSIDER IT PAYMENT OF A DEBT-- I OWE YOUR FATHER MY LIFE.

THE KILLERS KNEW YOU. ARE THEY YOUR ENEMIES, TOO?

EVIDENTLY SO. MY TELEPATHIC PROBE INDICATES THAT THEY ARE PART OF A NETWORK OF ASSASSINS ESTABLISHED BY A MAN NAMED DONALD PIERCE.

THEIR ULTIMATE GOAL IS THE EXTERMINATION OF MUTANTKIND.

WE ARE NOT THEIR ONLY TARGETS. THEY PLAN THE MURDERS OF TWO BOYS, ONE IN BRAZIL, THE OTHER IN KENTUCKY.

WE'VE NO TIME TO WASTE. WE CAN'T RISK TAKING THEM IN TURN, EITHER. WE'LL HAVE TO SPLIT UP, TRY TO REACH THEM SIMULTANEOUSLY.

IF YOU'VE NO MORE NEED OF THIS BUTCHER--

-- LET BLACK EAGLE'S WAR-KNIFE BE BURIED IN HIS CRAVEN HEART!

STOP!

RELEASE ME, XAVIER! I HAVE A RIGHT TO MY VENGEANCE!

LET THE POLICE DEAL WITH THEM. OUR TESTIMONY WILL ENSURE THEIR CONVICTION. THE SCALES OF JUSTICE WILL AT LEAST PARTLY BE BALANCED.

NO. JUSTICE WOULD BE SERVED ONLY IF MY GRAND-FATHER WAS RESTORED TO LIFE.

AND VENGEANCE WILL BE SERVED ONLY WHEN THIS MAN PIERCE IS MADE TO PAY FOR HIS CRIMES.

TO THAT END-- AND UNTIL THAT TIME-- I'LL WORK WITH YOU. YOU WANT THESE MEN, THEY'RE YOURS. PIERCE IS MINE.

THE REGENCY HOTEL,
RIO DE JANEIRO,
THE NEXT DAY...

... WHERE XI'AN AND DANI HAVE ARRIVED WITH MOIRA MacTAGGERT.



POLICE!

NOBODY
MOVE!
YOU'RE
UNDER
ARREST!

WHAT'S THE
MEANING O'
THIS?! WE'VE
DONE NOTHING
WRONG.

YOU TELEPHONED SENHOR EMMANUEL
da COSTA, REGARDING HIS SON,
ROBERTO.



WACK!

ARE YOU NOT THEN
AWARE OF AN ATTEMPT
YESTERDAY TO ABDUCT
THE BOY OR OF THE SUB-
SEQUENT DISAPPEARANCE
OF A YOUNG GIRL,
A SCHOOL FRIEND,
JULIANA SANDOVAL?

OF COURSE NOT!



WE DO NOT
BELIEVE YOU,
DOCTOR. AT
HEADQUARTERS,
WE WILL
LEARN THE
TRUTH.

TAKE THEM AWAY.

I'LL
STOP
THEM!
I'LL--

A LOOK PASSES BETWEEN
MOIRA AND XI'AN.



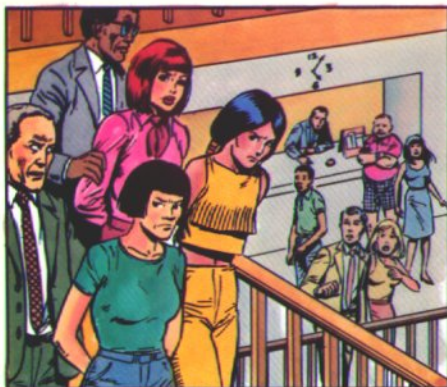
DON'T, DANI!
LET ME!

... AND AN OFFICER
IS INSTANTLY
POSSESSED.



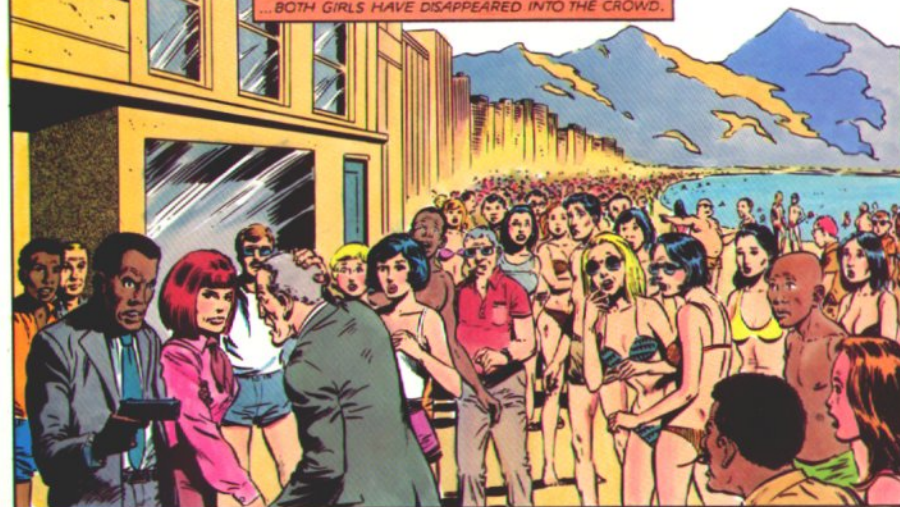
THE HAND-
CUFFS ARE
ON DANI'S AND
MY WRISTS,
BUT THEY ARE
NOT LOCKED.

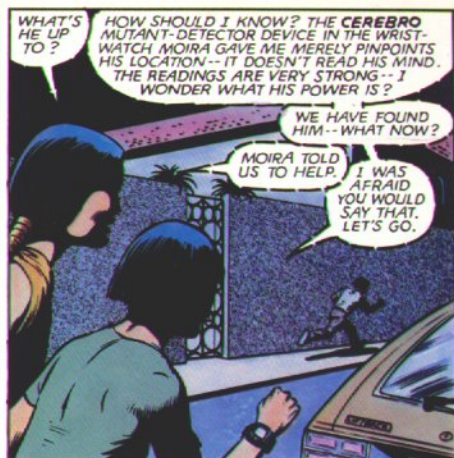
I WISH I COULD
DO SOMETHING FOR
MOIRA, BUT SHE DOES
NOT SEEM TO WANT ME
TO. WE CANNOT MAKE OUR
BREAK HERE -- THERE IS
TOO MUCH A CHANCE OF
BEING CAUGHT. WE
SHALL HAVE TO WAIT.



BY THE TIME XI'AN RELEASES HER HOLD ON THE POLICEMAN...

...BOTH GIRLS HAVE DISAPPEARED INTO THE CROWD.

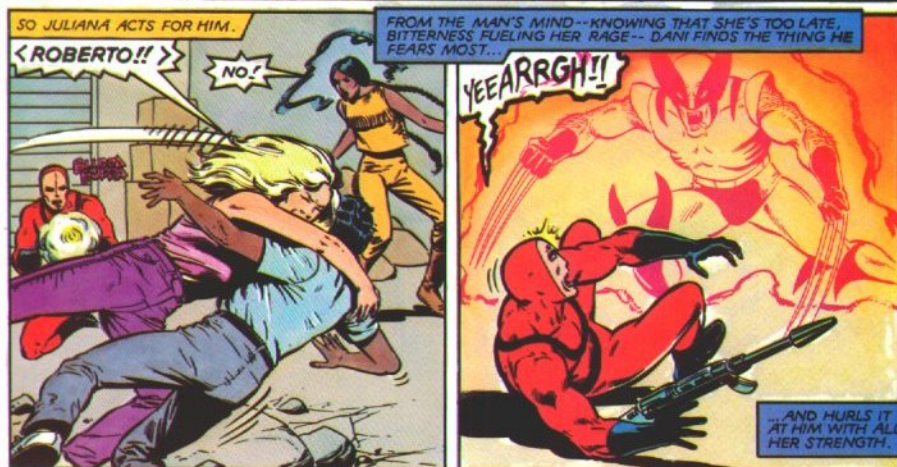














THAT SCREAM... I'VE NEVER HEARD ANYTHING LIKE IT.
NOR I.

SHAN, YOU'RE BLEEDING.

A BULLET GRAZED ME. IT IS NOTHING.

I... I HIT THEM TOO HARD.

WHEN I CREATE MY SPIRITFORMS, A TEMPORARY RAPPORT IS FORGED BETWEEN ME AND MY... PREY. I SENSE THEIR THOUGHTS, FEEL A FRACTION OF THE EMOTION I TAP.

THIS MAN WAS THE WORST. THERE WAS SUCH AGONY IN HIM, SO MUCH TWISTED HATE. I FORCED HIM TO CONFRONT THAT-- THROUGH THE SPIRITFORMS-- AND IT PROVED MORE THAN HE COULD BEAR.



Oh, SHAN... IT WAS TERRIBLE!



HE DESERVED IT!
HE KILLED JULIANA!



NO... I LIE.
I KILLED HER.

MY ARROGANCE, MY STUPIDITY. I THOUGHT-- WITH MY POWER-- I COULD SAVE HER. THEN, NO ONE WOULD REMEMBER "ROBERTO THE MONSTER." I WOULD BE A HERO. EVERYTHING WOULD BE AS IT ONCE WAS.



YOU MUST NOT BLAME YOURSELF. IT IS NOT YOUR FAULT.

IF NOT MINE, THEN WHOSE?! THEY TOOK HER TO GET AT ME, SHE DIED SHIELDING ME FROM THEIR BULLETS, ALL BECAUSE I WAS BORN A MUTANT, A FREAK!

WE ARE... "FREAKS"... TOO.

ROBERTO, THERE IS A MAN--A TEACHER-- IN AMERICA-- WHO CAN HELP YOU LEARN TO PROPERLY UTILIZE YOUR POWERS, SO THAT WHAT HAPPENED TONIGHT NEED NEVER RE-OCCUR.



I CARE NOTHING FOR TEACHERS. I WANT THE PERSON RESPONSIBLE FOR THIS, THE ONE WHO SENT THESE MEN TO DESTROY ME!

WHATEVER THE COST, HOWEVER LONG IT TAKES, I WILL FIND HIM--

--AND MAKE HIM PAY!

WE WANT HIM, TOO.

WHAT SAY WE JOIN FORCES?

CTY. RTE 3 -- CAMERON, KENTUCKY...

FROM WHAT MOIRA DIDN'T SAY WHEN SHE TELEPHONED...

PERHAPS IF I'D ACTED MORE QUICKLY, OR GONE MYSELF, LITTLE JULIANA WOULD STILL BE ALIVE.

I KEEP FORGETTING THESE ARE CHILDREN...

SHHHH! EEEWWWW! KRANG!

... AS FAR FROM BEING X-MEN AS THEY COULD POSSIBLY... WHAT!?!?

WE'VE BEEN HIT-- BY A MISSILE ?? NO, A HUMAN BEING-- A BOY!

RAHNE, GET AWAY!

WHOOOM

I SUSPECT HER TREATMENT AT THE HANDS OF THE BRAZILIAN AUTHORITIES WAS NOT TERRIBLY PLEASANT. I'M GLAD SHE'S BEEN RELEASED AND THAT SHE'S UNHARMED.

OBEYING HIS MENTAL COMMAND, SHE STREAKS UP THE HILL, SHAKING HERSELF FREE OF HER CLOTHES, HER DARK COAT VIRTUALLY INVISIBLE IN THE SHADOWS.

BELATEDLY, SHE REMEMBERS XAVIER-- WITH HIS USELESS LEGS HE'D BE UNABLE TO FOLLOW HER...

... AND TURNS BACK TO PULL HIM FROM THE WRECKAGE.

SAM GUTHRIE BEATS HER TO IT.

DON'T YOU FRET, SIR. I'LL HAVE YOU OUTTA THIS MESS IN A JIFFY.

SHOOT-- HE'S UNCONSCIOUS!

HE'S AN INVITING TARGET AND FOR A MOMENT RAHNE CONSIDERS RIPPING OPEN HIS THROAT...

... ONLY SHE DOESN'T KNOW HOW.



NICE WORK, CANNONBALL.

LOAD BALDY ABOARD THE CHOPPER. MR. PIERCE IS REALLY LOOKING FORWARD TO MEETING HIM.

I COULDA SWORE I SAW A PASSENGER IN THE JEEP-- A GIRL-- BUT THERE WAS NO ONE ELSE IN THE WRECK. SHE MIGHT'A BEEN THROWN CLEAR. I'D SURE LIKE TO LOOK FOR HER.



NOT A CHANCE.

THIS IS ROUGH COUNTRY. SHE COULDA BEEN HURT. SHE MAY DIE!

IF SHE EXISTED. THE ONLY HUMAN LIFEFORMS REGISTERING ON THE HELICOPTER'S SCANNERS ARE US AND THE GOOD PROFESSOR THERE.

WHO IS HE, CHASE? WHY'D YOU SEND ME TO ATTACK HIM?



BOSS'S ORDERS.

SO WHAT'S MR. PIERCE WANT WITH HIM?

NONE O' YOUR BUSINESS, BOY. YOU GOT A STEADY JOB-- AT A HECKUVA SALARY. YOU DO AS YOU'RE TOLD. PERIOD. UNDERSTAND?

YESSIR.

GOOD.



IN A MATTER OF MINUTES, THE 'COPTER IS AIRBORNE, HEADING WEST ACROSS THE FOREST.



ALL ALONE, LOST AND FRIGHTENED AND HOME-SICK, RAHNE LIFTS HER MUZZLE AND HOWLS HER MISERY TO THE UNHEARING, UNCARING STARS.

THEN, NOSE TO THE AIR, SHE DISCOVERS A FAMILIAR SCENT LINGERING IN THE AIR-- XAVIER'S. IT'S FAINT, BUT SHE CAN FOLLOW IT.

HOURS PASS, AS DO THE MILES
BENEATH HER FEET, UNTIL...

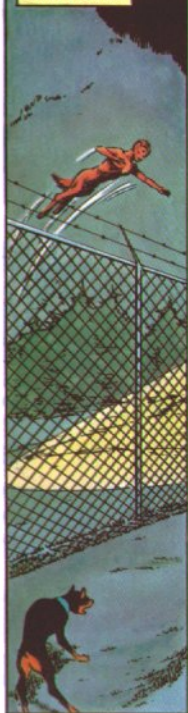
SHE CIRCLES THE COMPLEX, TO CONFIRM THAT XAVIER IS IN-
SIDE-- HIS TRAIL GOES IN BUT DOESN'T COME OUT-- SEARCHING
AT THE SAME TIME FOR THE BEST WAY TO GO IN AFTER HIM.

NEITHER WOLF NOR GIRL CAN
LEAP THE PERIMETER FENCE...

... BUT RAHNE HAS AN ALTERNATIVE --
A TRANSITIONAL FORM, WHICH COMBINES
THE BEST ELEMENTS OF BOTH SPECIES ...



... LUPINE
STRENGTH...



... HUMAN
DEXTERITY.

IN MID-LEAP,
SHE SWITCHES
BACK TO
PURE WOLF--



-- HOPING THAT
MAKES THE GUARD
DOGS THINK
TWICE ABOUT
ATTACKING HER..



THEN, SHE
SHIFTS AGAIN
TO HER
TRANSITIONAL
FORM...



... AND JUMPS
THE INNER
FENCE.

... AND ONTO THE ROOF OF THE BUILDING WHERE XAVIER'S SCENT IS THE STRONGEST.

GLORY BE -- IT WORKED!

IS THA' SUCH A SURPRISE? LOOK A' ME -- HALF-GIRL, HALF-BEAST. WHAT RIGHT DO I HAVE T' CALL MYSEL' A HUMAN BEING?

IF THE REVEREND MR. CRAIG COULD SEE ME NOW, I WONDER WHAT HE'D SAY -- SOMETHIN' CRUEL, NO DOUBT.



AN' YET -- IF NOT FOR ME POWERS, I'D NOT HA' BEEN ABLE T' FIND THE PROFESSOR.

OCH! WHAT'RE THOSE SPALLEN DOIN' TO HIM, THE POOR MAN? THE GLASS IS THICK BUT IF I LISTEN CLOSE, I C'N HEAR WHAT'S SAID WITHIN.

SO, PROFESSOR, WE MEET AT LAST. I AM DONALD PIERCE, SOON TO BE MASTER OF THE HELLFIRE CLUB.

THAT ESOTERIC DEVICE ATTACHED TO YOU IS A MINDTAP, DESIGNED -- BY ME -- TO INHIBIT THE USE OF YOUR PSI-POWERS...



... AND, MOST IMPORTANTLY, TO ABSORB ALL THE DATA STORED IN YOUR MOST MARVELLOUS BRAIN. YOU MAY RESIST IF YOU LIKE -- I HOPE YOU DO -- BUT, IN THE END, EVEN YOUR FORMIDABLE PSYCHIC DEFENSES WILL BE BREACHED.

THA' SOUNDS HORRIBLE!

AND THE HARDER YOU RESIST, THE MORE YOUR BRAIN WILL SUFFER IN THE PROCESS. THE DAMAGE, I MIGHT ADD, WILL BE PERMANENT.

DON'T FRET, TESSA. AFTER XAVIER...

... IT'LL BE YOUR TURN.



WHAT AM I T' DO? I CANNA BURST INTO YON ROOM AN' TRY TO FREE THEM BY MYSEL' -- I'D LOSE. BUT I LIKELIKE CANNA SIT IDLY BY WHILE THE PROFESSOR IS MURDERED BEFORE MY EYES.

DANI.

WHO SAID THAT?!



MOIRA GUESSED RIGHT! MY PSIONIC RAPPORT WITH ANIMALS ALLOWS ME TO MINDSPEAK WITH RAHNE!

IT'S MOONSTAR, RAHNE. RE-ENFORCEMENTS HAIR ARRIVED. IS THE PROFESSOR OKAY? THINK YOUR ANSWER SLOWLY AND CAREFULLY, SO I'LL GET IT RIGHT -- MIND-SPEECH WITH YOU IS A LOT HARDER THAN ORDINARY ANIMALS. THE THOUGHTS AND CONCEPTS ARE SO COMPLEX.

THANK GODNESS!

OH, HURRY, ALL OF YOU! PROFESSOR XAVIER'S IN TERRIBLE DANGER -- IF WE DINNA ACT NOW, IT'LL BE TOO LATE!



YOU ON THE ROOF-- FREEZE!

WHAT THE BLAZES--?!?

SHHOOMM

ST. ANDREW PRESERVE ME!

SURPRISE SENDS BOTH YOUNG PEOPLE TUMBLING OFF THE ROOF. RAHNE LANDS ON ALL FOURS.

I'M SEEIN' THINGS!

THAT WAS THE GIRL I SAW IN THE JEEP-- BUT FROM THE WAIST DOWN SHE WAS SOME SORT'A ANIMAL. SHE HAD TO BE HUMAN, THOUGH-- I HEARD HER SPEAK!

WHUMP!

SO DOES SAM GUTHRIE.

OOOOO
BUT NOW SHE'S A WOLF.

I KNOW MY POWER GIVES ME A PARTIAL INVULNERABILITY WHEN I USE IT-- I DON'T GET HURT WHEN I PLOW THROUGH THINGS-- BUT WILL IT PROTECT ME FROM THAT WOLF'S TEETH IF SHE ATTACKS?!

HE NEVER FINDS OUT...

... FOR MOONSTAR REACHES INTO HIM...

I-- I'M BACK IN THE MINE! THE CAVE-IN!

I'VE GOT TO GET OUT!

AND HE DOES.

WHOOOMMM

REGRETTABLY, HIS DEPARTURE DOES NOT GO UNNOTICED.

... AND CONFRONTS HIM WITH HIS GREATEST FEAR.

BUT WHEN THE GUARDS RESPOND TO THE ALARM, THEY FIND RAHNE WAITING FOR THEM...

... HER MOVES CUED AND DIRECTED TELEPATHICALLY BY MOONSTAR.

GET THIS CUR OFFA ME-- BEFORE IT TEARS THROUGH MY BATTLE ARMOR!



THE SHE-WOLF IS THE LEAST OF YOUR PROBLEMS, BUTCHERS!

SKRAM!

Huh--???



YOW!

NOT TOO SHABBY, MY FRIEND. YOU MUST HAVE HIT SOMETHING IMPORTANT.

BOOM!

THEIR UNIFORMS PROTECTED THEM. THEY ARE ONLY STUNNED. THEY SHOULD BE DEAD.



WE ARE NOT KILLERS, ROBERTO.

SPEAK FOR YOUR-SELF, SHAN.

I'LL PLAY BY YOUR RULES UNTIL I FIND PIERCE. AFTER THAT, I MAKE NO GUARANTEES.

RAHNE, LEAD US TO XAVIER!



I'M SORRY, FOLKS.



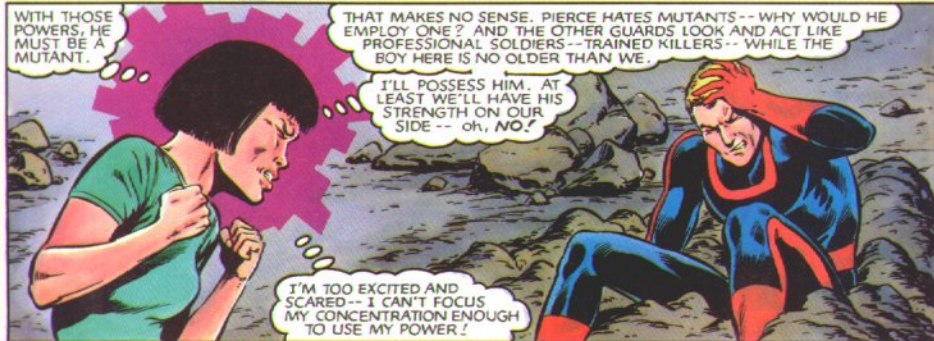
BUT Mr. PIERCE IS MY BOSS. YOU WANT HIM, YOU'LL HAVE TO GO THROUGH ME.



IF YOU INSIST, SENHOR.

WHUMP!

WITH THOSE POWERS, HE MUST BE A MUTANT.



THAT MAKES NO SENSE. PIERCE HATES MUTANTS-- WHY WOULD HE EMPLOY ONE? AND THE OTHER GUARDS LOOK AND ACT LIKE PROFESSIONAL SOLDIERS-- TRAINED KILLERS-- WHILE THE BOY HERE IS NO OLDER THAN WE.

I'LL POSSESS HIM. AT LEAST WE'LL HAVE HIS STRENGTH ON OUR SIDE -- OH, NO!

I'M TOO EXCITED AND SCARED -- I CAN'T FOCUS MY CONCENTRATION ENOUGH TO USE MY POWER!

DAMN! FORGIVE ME, LORD. ANOTHER THING TO CONFESS TO PÈRE BOWEN BEFORE MASS NEXT SUNDAY. IF I LIVE THAT LONG.

SOME OF THESE TROOPS ARE STILL CONSCIOUS. THIS MACHINE GUN SHOULD SCATTER THEM.

THANK YOU, PAPA, FOR TEACHING ME HOW TO SHOOT.



DANI, RAHNE, ROBERTO -- INTO THE BUILDING! WE MUST REACH XAVIER BEFORE THE VILLAINS REGROUP!

ROBERTO, USE YOUR POWER! SMASH EVERY MACHINE IN SIGHT!

< WHENEVER I GOT ANGRY-- AND FELT SO HELPLESS BECAUSE I WAS SMALLER THAN THE OTHER KIDS-- I WISHED FOR THE POWER TO TEAR THINGS APART AND NOW I'VE GOT IT! MY DREAM COME TRUE! >

< AND I WOULD GIVE IT UP IN AN INSTANT IF THAT WOULD BRING JULIANA BACK TO LIFE. >

KRAKLY!

YOUR BRATS ARE MORE FORMIDABLE THAN I EXPECTED, XAVIER, BUT THEY'LL STILL ARRIVE TOO LATE TO SAVE YOU.

I'LL NEED BUT A SECOND TO SNAP YOUR NECK. IT'S A PLEASURE...

... I'VE LONG LOOKED FORWARD TO-- A WOLF?!!

CRASH

RAHNE!

THE YOUNG SCOT STEELS HERSELF AGAINST THE TASTE OF FLESH AND HOT BLOOD, PRAYING IT WON'T MAKE HER SICK--AND THAT SHE WON'T LIKE IT...

-- ONLY TO YELP IN SURPRISE AS HER TEETH GRIND AGAINST CABLES, GEARS AND SOPHISTICATED ELECTRONIC CIRCUITS.

CURSE YOU!

HIS KICK BREAKS RIBS. RAHNE SHIFTS FORM...

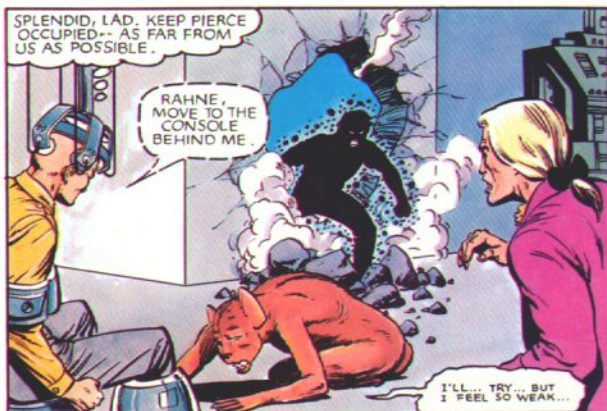
... TO BLUNT THE FORCE OF HER IMPACT.

SHE SUCCEEDS...

THUD!

... FOR ALL THE GOOD THAT DOES HER.

... TWISTING WILDLY IN A DESPERATE ATTEMPT...



I'LL TAKE CARE O' THE LITTLE FELLA, SIR. HE OWES ME ONE.

CANNONBALL!

THOOM!



I THOUGHT CLOBBERIN' THAT POWERHOUSE'D STOP ME, BUT I'M STILL FLYIN'! CRIPES, HE'S JUST A KID!

WHUNFF!



IT SERVES YOU RIGHT, COWARD--

-- FOR STRIKING FROM BEHIND!

PROFESSOR... I CANNA TAKE A DECENT BREATH WENT T' HELP... BUT IT'S SO HARD... I HAVE NA THE STRENGTH... OF A PUP...

HER EFFORT IS MAKING HER INJURIES WORSE -- I'M KILLING HER -- YET FOR ALL OUR SAKES, I MUST GOAD HER ON.

THROW THAT SWITCH, RAHNE! IT'S OUR ONLY CHANCE!

AM I THE ONLY ONE LEFT?! A PITY MY GUN RAN OUT OF AMMUNITION... BUT IF I CAN POSSESS PIERCE, THE BATTLE WILL BE WON.

SOME MECHANISM SHIELDS HIS MIND!

I MUST FOCUS MY CONCENTRATION, TRY TO BREAK THROUGH...
OF YOUR MOTLEY CREW, XAVIER...

...THIS WAS THE MOST DANGEROUS, REGRETTABLY, SHE HAS BUT A SINGLE WEAPON -- HER MUTANT POWER.

I HAVE MANY.



THE GIRLS ARE STUNNED, GUTHRIE. AFTER YOU'VE DEALT WITH THE BOY, GET RID OF THEM.

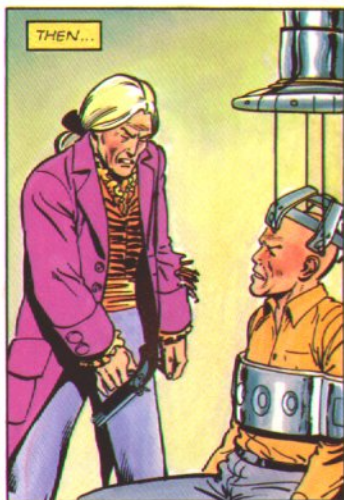
I DON'T UNDERSTAND, Mr. PIERCE. WHAT DO YOU WANT ME TO DO, TOSS 'EM OFF THE PROPERTY? TURN 'EM OVER TO THE SHERIFF?

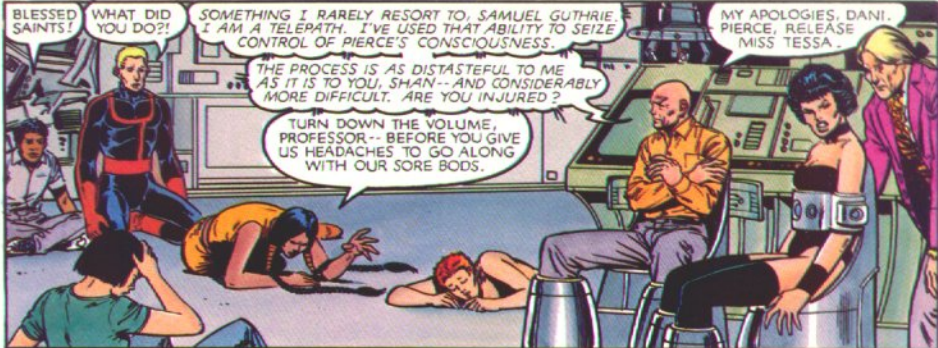


CRETIN, I WANT THEM KILLED!



THEIR DUEL IS SILENT, AND NEITHER MAN MAKES A MOVE, YET THE BRUTAL FEROCITY OF THEIR STRUGGLE CAN BE SEEN ETCHED ON THEIR FACES.





BLESSED SAINTS! WHAT DID YOU DO?!

SOMETHING I RARELY RESORT TO, SAMUEL GUTHRIE. I AM A TELEPATH. I'VE USED THAT ABILITY TO SEIZE CONTROL OF PIERCE'S CONSCIOUSNESS.

THE PROCESS IS AS DISTASTEFUL TO ME AS IT IS TO YOU, SHAN-- AND CONSIDERABLY MORE DIFFICULT. ARE YOU INJURED?

TURN DOWN THE VOLUME, PROFESSOR.-- BEFORE YOU GIVE US HEADACHES TO GO ALONG WITH OUR SORE BODS.

MY APOLOGIES, DANI. PIERCE, RELEASE MISS TESSA.



RAHNE!

SHE'S BARELY BREATHING-- AND HER PULSE IS SO FAINT, I HARDLY FELT IT. WE'VE GOT TO GET HER TO A HOSPITAL!



YOU MAY RELAX, PROFESSOR. I HAVE POSSESSED M'SIEU PIERCE.

THANK YOU, SHAN. THE STRAIN WAS BEGINNING TO WEAR ON ME.

I SAW IN YOUR THOUGHTS THAT MOIRA IS NEARBY WITH A HOVERCAR. I'VE SUMMONED HER WITH A MINDCALL. SHE SHOULD BE HERE DIRECTLY.



RAHNE COULD BE DEAD BY THEN.

NO, DANIELLE. I AM PSIONICALLY MONITORING HER CONDITION. HER INJURIES ARE SERIOUS BUT IF THERE ARE NO UNDUE DELAYS, IF LUCK IS WITH US, SHE SHOULD RECOVER.



THE QUESTION IS, WHAT ABOUT PIERCE? WE DARE NOT TAKE HIM WITH US. IF SHAN RELAXES HER CONCENTRATION AND HE BREAKS FREE, HE COULD SLAY US ALL BEFORE WE KNEW WHAT WAS HAPPENING. YET WE DARE NOT LEAVE HIM BEHIND, OR WAIT FOR THE AUTHORITIES TO ARRIVE...

I HAVE A SOLUTION, CHARLES.

LEAVE HIM TO ME.

THE HELLFIRE CLUB TAKES CARE OF ITS OWN. PIERCE HAS PROVEN HIMSELF AS GREAT A THREAT TO US AS YOU.

I THINK YOU CAN SAFELY ASSUME YOU'VE HEARD THE LAST OF HIM.



HE DOESN'T TRUST TESSA--OR HER MASTERS IN THE HELLFIRE CLUB, WHO'VE PROVEN THEMSELVES AMONG THE X-MEN'S DEADLIEST FOES--AND HE'D RATHER TURN PIERCE OVER TO THE AUTHORITIES. BUT RAHNE'S LIFE HANGS IN THE BALANCE.

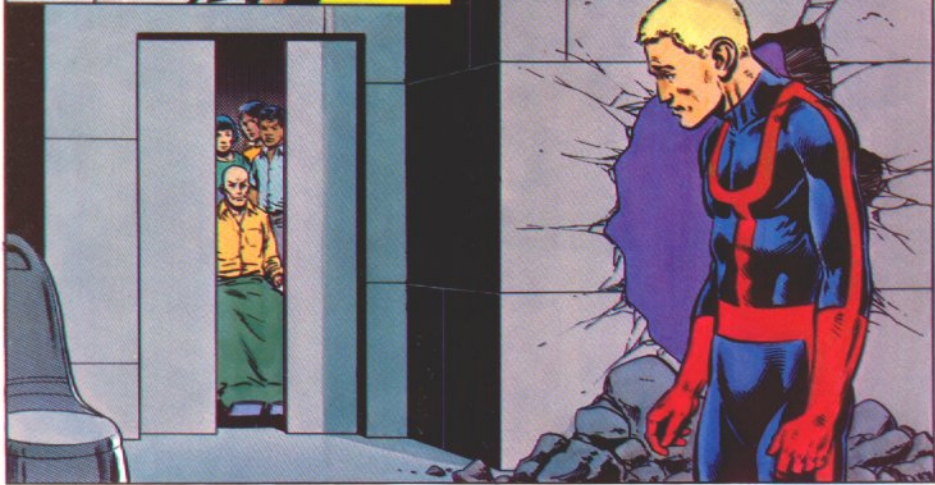
HIS PRIMARY DUTY IS TO HER.



PARDON ME, SIR, BUT WHAT SHOULD I DO?

YOUR BOSS WENT THATAWAY, WITH THE LADY.

WHY DON'T YOU GO WITH HIM.



EPILOGUE--

--XAVIER'S MANSION, A FORTNIGHT LATER.

IT IS TIME.



ATTENTION, STUDENTS! THIS IS PROFESSOR XAVIER CALLING.

REPORT TO ME AT ONCE. CLASS IS NOW IN SESSION.



THIS IS NOT WHAT I HAD IN MIND WHEN I FIRST CAME TO THE PROFESSOR. BUT NOW, THANKS TO HIM, LEONG AND NSA WILL BE PROVIDED FOR, WHATEVER HAPPENS TO ME.



AND IF, THROUGH HIS TEACHING, MY POWERS CAN BE OF BENEFIT TO HUMANITY, THEN THINGS WILL INDEED TURN OUT FOR THE BEST.

NOT THE MOST STYLISH OF UNIFORMS-- BUT... NOT BAD. I WISH JULIANA COULD SEE ME IN IT. PERHAPS SHE CAN, FROM HEAVEN.



WHEN PIERCE WAS BEATEN...

...I COULD HAVE KILLED HIM-- BUT I REALIZED THAT WOULD HAVE MADE ME JUST LIKE HIM, AND THAT I WILL NEVER BE!

I CHOSE TO HELP SAVE RAHNE RATHER THAN AVENGE YOU, GRAND-FATHER.



I CHOSE LIFE OVER DEATH, AS YOU TAUGHT ME.

I DO NOT KNOW IF I WILL BE HAPPY HERE-- I ALREADY MISS MY MOUNTAINS-- BUT FOR YOUR SAKE, IN YOUR MEMORY, I WILL TRY.

WHAT WONDROUS CLOTHES-- THOUGH A BIT DARING-- I'D HATE TO BE ALLOWED SUCH FINERY BY REVEREND CRAIG.



AN' THEY MAGICALLY DISAPPEAR WHEN I BECOME A WOLF...

... ONLY TO REAPPEAR WHEN I TRANSFORM BACK INTO MYSELF.

EVIDENTLY, RAHNE'S SHAPE-CHANGING TALENT INCLUDES AMAZING REGENERATIVE ABILITIES. HER BODY BEGAN TO HEAL HERSELF DURING THE FLIGHT TO THE HOSPITAL AND, WITHIN A WEEK, SHE WAS READY TO BE RELEASED.

THEY WERE NEAR-MORTAL WOUNDS AND YET, TODAY, SHE'S FULLY RECOVERED.

DANIELLE, YOU'RE OUT OF UNIFORM-- PLEASE EXPLAIN YOURSELF.

THAT WON'T BE NECESSARY. I SEE THAT OUR RELATIONSHIP IS BECOMING AS... FASCINATING... AS I ANTICIPATED.

ONCE, I WOULD HAVE FORCED HER TO CONFORM, AND WOULD HAVE BEEN WRONG TO DO SO.

I AM CHEYENNE. NOTHING--NO ONE-- WILL EVER MAKE ME FORGET OR ABANDON MY HERITAGE.

I'M ALSO AN INDIVIDUAL, PROFESSOR. YOU SAY WE MUST WEAR THESE CLOTHES-- I WILL DO AS YOU ASK, BUT IN MY OWN MANNER. IF THAT BOTHERS YOU, I CAN LEAVE.

THESE **ARE** INDIVIDUALS--AS MUTANTS AND PEOPLE--AND THAT UNIQUENESS MUST BE RESPECTED. THEIR SPIRITS MUST BE SHAPED, NOT BROKEN.

RAHNE, WOULD YOU PLEASE ANSWER THE FRONT DOOR? WE HAVE A VISITOR.

HOW D'YOU KNOW? THE BELL HAS NA' RUNG -- OH!

DING-DONG!

I HEAR THOUGHTS, REMEMBER? AND Mr. GUTHRIE HAS NOT YET LEARNED TO GUARD HIS.

Uh... HI!

WHO--OCH! LOOK! IT'S THE LAD WHO WORKED FOR THAT BLACKGUARD PIERCE!

ANYONE CAN MAKE A MISTAKE, RAHNE.

SAM GUTHRIE IS HERE AT MY INVITATION. HE IS NOT A VILLAIN. PIERCE DUPED HIM INTO BELIEVING WE WERE THE ENEMY.

HOW CAN YOU BE CERTAIN?

INSTINCT, ROBERTO. TRUST, SAM GAVE HIS WORD.

HAH!

WHAT DOES ONE WHO STRIKES FROM BEHIND KNOW OF HONOR?

NOT MUCH, I GUESS, BUT I'M WILLIN' TO LEARN.

I'D LIKE TO MAKE AMENDS, IF I CAN.

'BERTO, I NEAR PERISHED IN THA' SCRAP...

... AN' I SAY HE DESERVES A SECOND CHANCE.

I COULD NEVER REFUSE A BEAUTIFUL GIRL ANYTHING.

WELCOME, SENHOR.

LISTEN TO HIS MAJESTY, WILLY-- "WELCOME, SENHOR"-- YOU'RE SOME HOMBRE, ARN'T'CHA, 'BERTO? WHO D'YOU THINK RUNS THIS OUTFIT, ANYWAY?

THEIR LAUGHTER IS INFECTIOUS AND, TRY AS HE MIGHT, XAVIER CANNOT RESTRAIN A SMILE.

PROFESSOR XAVIER --

-- FOR THE PRESENT.

FOR THE FIRST TIME IN WEEKS, HE FEELS THE IMPOSSIBLE ACHE OF GRIEF AND LONELINESS EASE IN HIS HEART. IT IS NOT GONE-- INDEED, HE KNOWS IT WILL NEVER COMPLETELY LEAVE HIM, THE LOSS IS TOO GREAT-- BUT IT NO LONGER CONSUMES HIM. HE HAS BEGUN AGAIN.

THE DREAM IS STILL GOOD.

THE BEGINNING

**THE NEW
MUTANTS™**