

MARVEL
COMICS

DECEMBER



X-MEN
DELUXE

THE UNCANNY

APPROVED
BY THE
COMICS
CODE
AUTHORITY

X-MEN

IF
SINS
BE
FORGIVEN

No 327

12 >

0 09281 02461 3

\$1.95 US/\$2.65 CAN © 02461

MADURE

"THE CHILDREN WERE THE ONES WHO FOUND HIM."

<I THINK HE'S DEAD.>

<WOW.>

<NO WAY, I'VE SEEN DEAD.>

<HE'S NOT IT.>

<HE SMELLS DEAD.>

<MIGDALIA'S RIGHT, HE'S BREATHING.>

<DEAD PEOPLE DON'T BREATHE.>

<TOO BAD.>

<IT WOULD BE COOLER IF WE FOUND A DEAD GUY.>

<LET'S CHECK TO MAKE SURE.>

<HEY, MISTER -->

TRANSLATED FROM THE SPANISH - Bilingual Bob

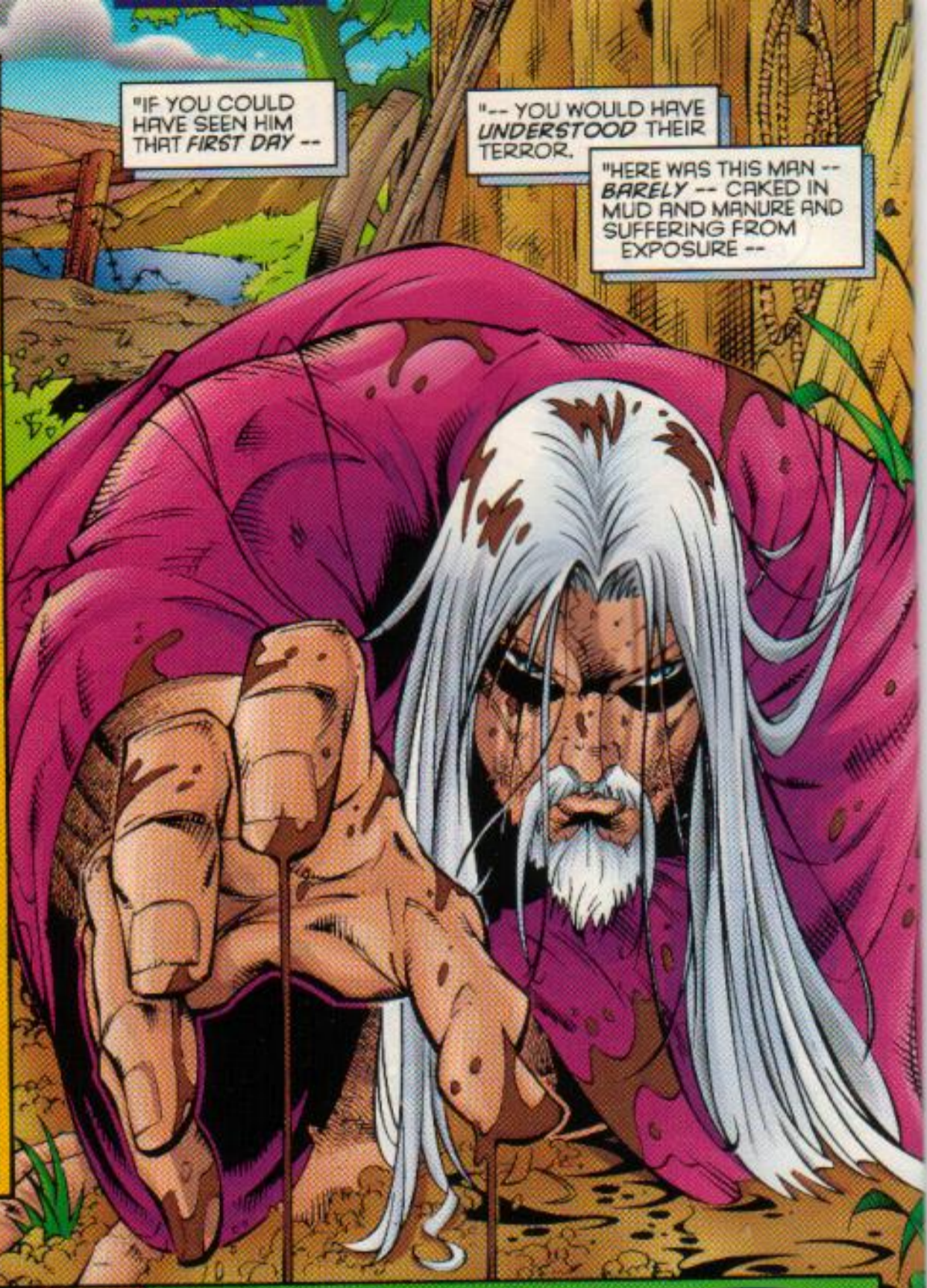


<-- ARE YOU DEAF... >

<... DEAF... >

EEAAYGH!

"I HEARD THEIR SCREAMS FROM THE FIELD."



"IF YOU COULD HAVE SEEN HIM THAT FIRST DAY --"

"-- YOU WOULD HAVE UNDERSTOOD THEIR TERROR."

"HERE WAS THIS MAN -- BARELY -- CAKED IN MUD AND MANURE AND SUFFERING FROM EXPOSURE --"



"... TOO WEAK TO EVEN FIND HIS VOICE."



<C'MON, DALIA!>

<RUN AWAY!>

<HE'S GONNA KILL US!>



CH-CHAK

<DON'T>

<MOVE.>

<WE DO NOT WANT ANY TROUBLE HERE, SEÑOR.>

<LEAVE NOW, OR I WILL HAVE TO SHOOT YOU.>

STAN LEE PRESENTS
THE UNCANNY X-MEN'S
GREATEST ADVERSARY
MAGNETO

Whispers on the Wind

SCOTT LOBBELL

WRITER

TIM TOWNSEND

ROGER CRUZ

AND AL (MILORON)

PERCALS

INKS

RICHARD SHIPPINGS

STEVE BRUCCELLATO

AND

ELECTRIC CRAYON

LETTERING

COLORS

BOB

HARRIS

EDITOR

"WOULD I HAVE FIRED THE GUN IN ORDER TO PROTECT THE CHILDREN?"

"YES."

"AS IT WAS, I WASN'T GIVEN THAT OPTION."

"HAD I BEEN LOOKING CLOSELY ENOUGH, IT WAS ALL THERE IN HIS EYES."

"THE PAIN."

"THE PRIDE."

"AND THE POWER."

WHAHAHA

BOOM

"POWER HE USED AGAINST ME..."

"... BY SOMEHOW MANIPULATING THE METAL IN THE GUN!"

<DON'T THREATEN... ME... WOMAN!>

"I REMEMBER A PART OF MY MIND BEING SURPRISED THAT HE SPOKE... GERMAN?"

"THE REST OF ME WAS PRAYING THAT IF SOMETHING HAPPENED TO ME, HE WOULDN'T HURT THE CHILDREN."

"I NEED NOT HAVE WORRIED."

<PLEASE, MISTER...>

WH--?!

<PLEASE DON'T DO ANYTHING TO HER...>

"SEEING THE FEAR IN THEIR EYES --"

"-- ALMOST SEEMED TO FRIGHTEN HIMSELF."

"DID HE SPARE ME OUT OF COMPASSION..?"

"... OR OUT OF EXHAUSTION?"

THWUMP

"I MAY NEVER KNOW."

"FOR THREE DAYS AND NIGHTS, HE STAGGERED IN AND OUT OF CONSCIOUSNESS."

"ON THE FOURTH DAY, MERCIFULLY, HIS FEVER BROKE."



"NONETHELESS, I TOOK NO CHANCES."

"I REALIZE NOW, IN RETROSPECT, HE WAS PROBABLY STRONG ENOUGH TO FREE HIMSELF."

"BUT HE DIDN'T."



"INSTEAD, HE SEEMED TO BE WATCHING US..."

"... JUST AS SOME OF US WERE WATCHING HIM..."

GOOD MORNING, SEÑOR.

I HEARD YOU WERE AWAKE.

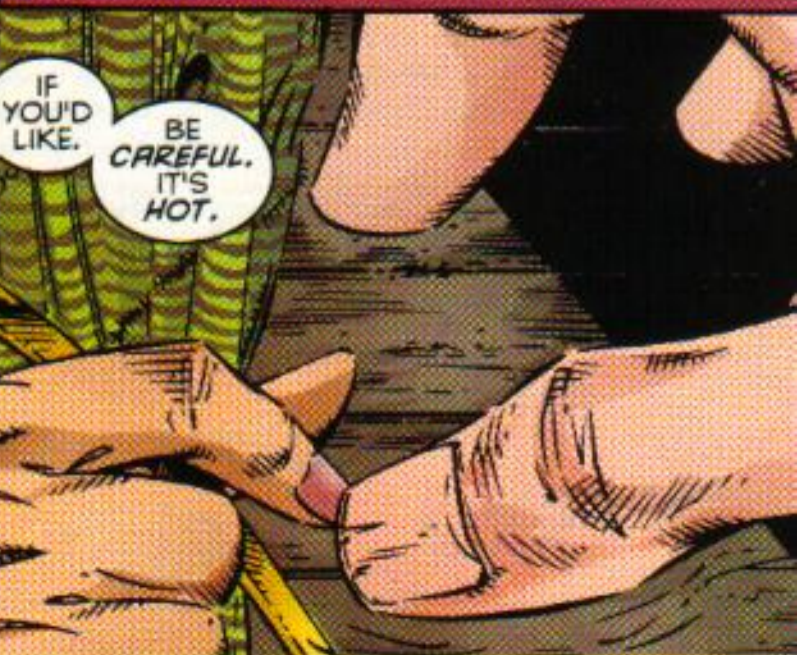
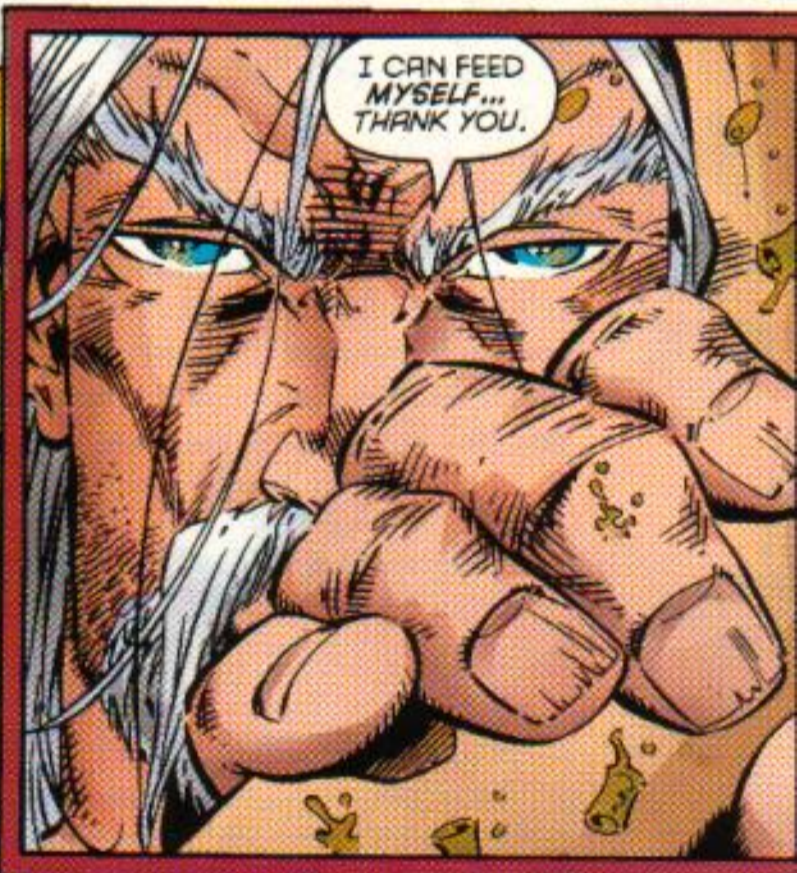
MY NAME IS SISTER MARIA.

WELCOME TO ONE OF GOD'S HUMBLER HOMES.



"... AS MAGDALIA CERTAINLY WAS..."





IF I'M NOT *PRYING* -- WHERE WERE YOU GOING BEFORE YOU DECIDED TO "VISIT" OUR ORPHANAGE?

I... HAVE NO IDEA.

IN FACT, I DON'T FEEL AS THOUGH I... REMEMBER MUCH OF ANYTHING.

IT IS SETTLED, THEN.

OH?

AS IT IS, YOU HAVE NO MEMORIES OF WHO YOU ARE OR WHERE YOU BELONG.

UNTIL YOU ARE WELL ENOUGH TO TRAVEL, YOU ARE WELCOME TO STAY HERE.

OF COURSE, YOU ARE FREE TO LEAVE WHENEVER YOU LIKE.

THAT IS VERY *GENEROUS*, SISTER, BUT...

I HAVE IT ON *GOOD AUTHORITY* THAT *EVERYTHING* HAPPENS FOR A REASON.

YOU ARE ONLY HERE BECAUSE YOU'RE *SUPPOSED* TO BE.

... HOW CAN YOU KNOW ME --

-- TRUST ME --

-- WHEN I DON'T EVEN KNOW MYSELF?

CRACK

WHO...

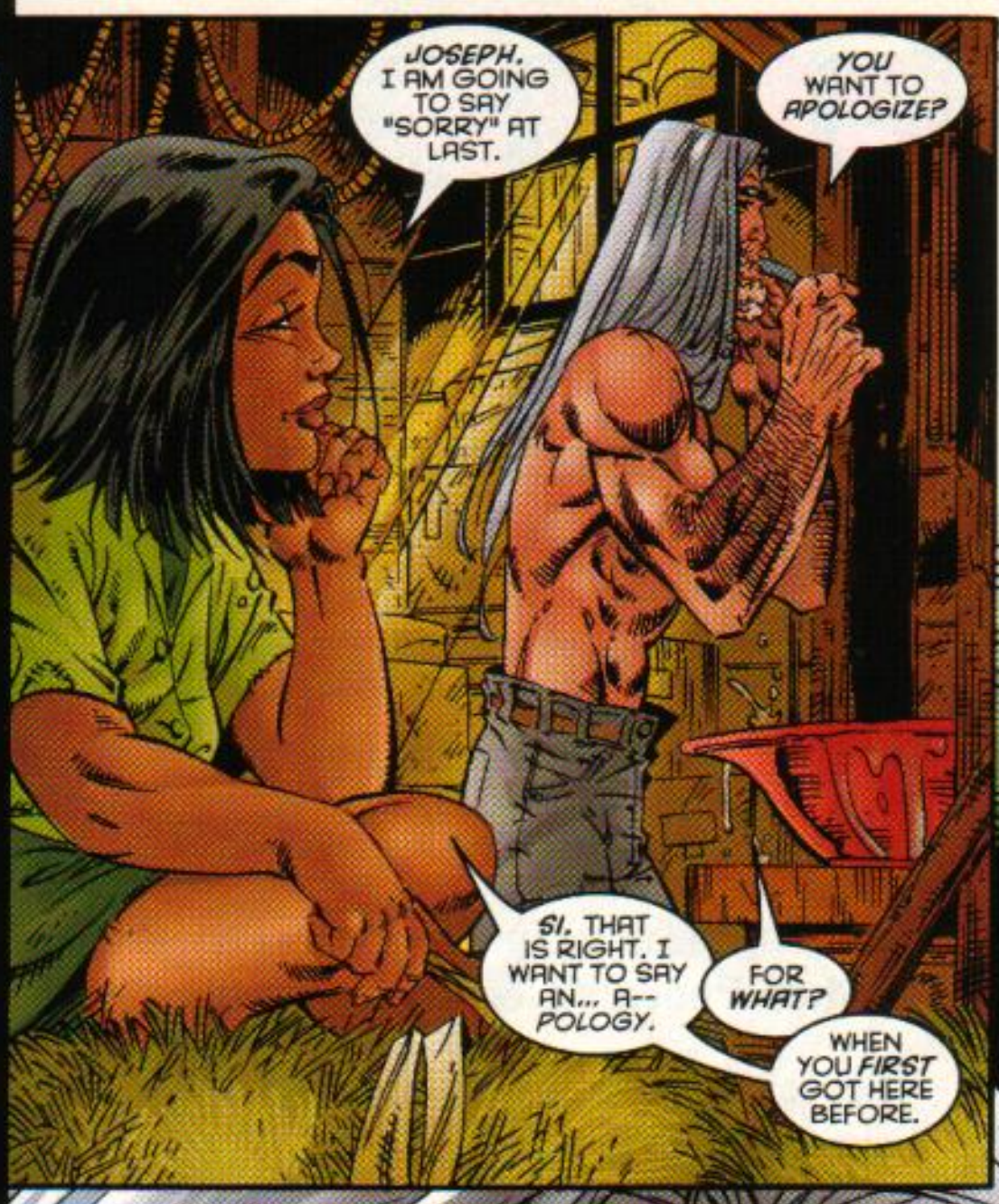
... ARE YOU?

AND WHY DO I FEAR THE ANSWER?



"A WEEK PASSED.

"WITHOUT A NAME OF HIS OWN, MIGDALIA DECIDED TO NAME HIM --



JOSEPH. I AM GOING TO SAY "SORRY" AT LAST.

YOU WANT TO APOLOGIZE?

SI. THAT IS RIGHT. I WANT TO SAY AN... A-- POLOGY.

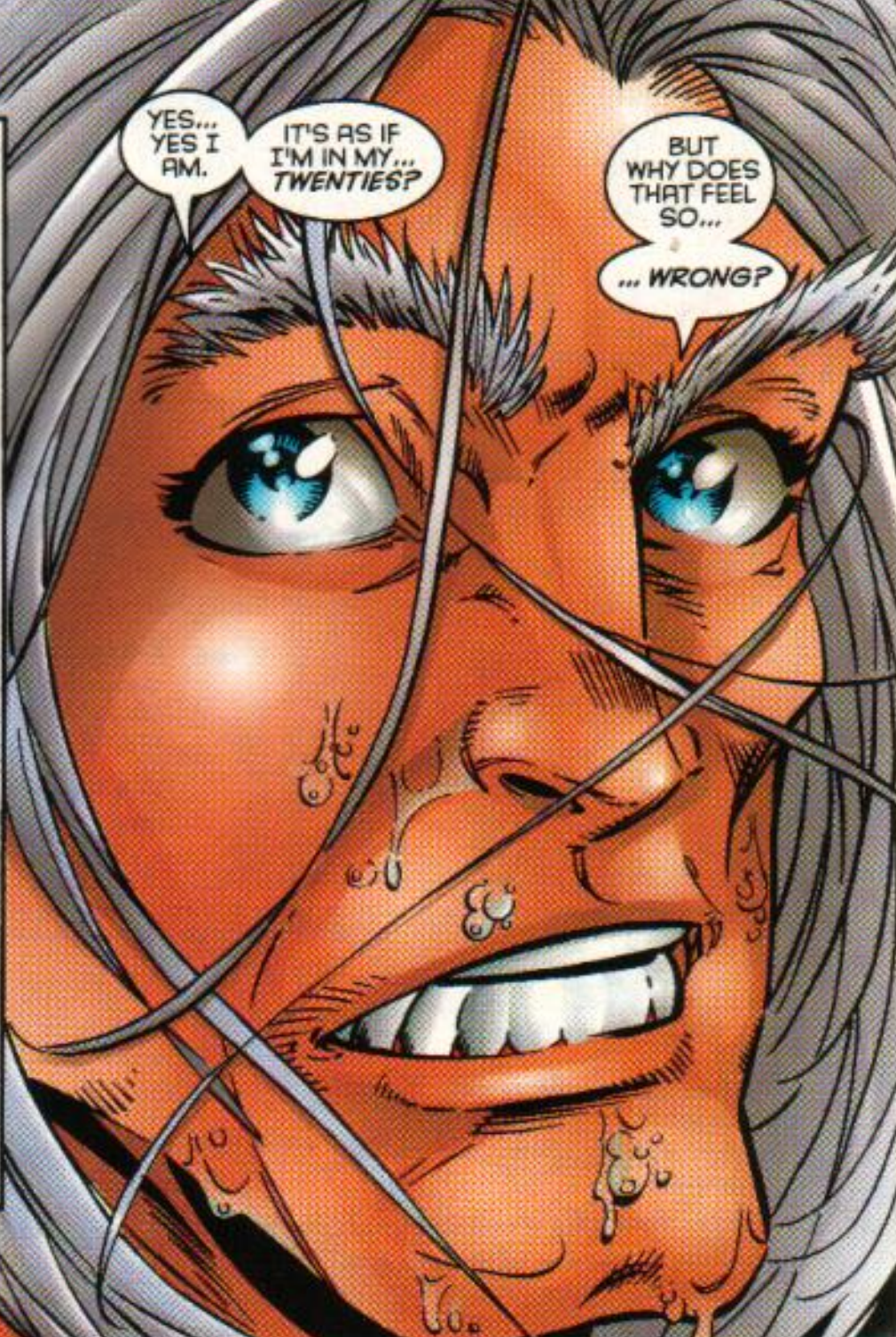
FOR WHAT?

WHEN YOU FIRST GOT HERE BEFORE.



BESIDES THE MUD -- I THOUGHT YOU WERE MEAN AND OLD.

BUT YOU ARE NOT OLD. YOU ARE YOUNG.



YES... YES I AM.

IT'S AS IF I'M IN MY... TWENTIES?

BUT WHY DOES THAT FEEL SO...

... WRONG?

PTING

JOSEPH--

¡MADRE DE DIOS!

WHA--?!

GUNFIRE!

MIGDALIA, WHAT JUST --

SHHHHH.

**KPOW
PKOW
POPOW**

MORE GUNFIRE? DOWN, CHILD!

FILTHY NAZIS! I'LL TEACH THEM TO --

PLEASE, JOSEPH -- STAY HERE!

THEY ARE THE BAD MEN, FIGHTING EACH OTHER.

JUST IGNORE THEM AS WE DO --

PLEASE?

BUT --

PLEASE?

VERY WELL, MIGDALIA.

LET'S GET YOU BACK TO THE HOUSE, THOUGH.

THANK YOU.

BUT JOSEPH -- WHY DID YOU CALL THEM "NAZIS"?

I DON'T KNOW, MIGDALIA.

I HONESTLY DON'T KNOW.



"THE WEEKS WENT BY...

"... AND JOSEPH CAME TO LEARN ABOUT OUR COUNTRY.

"A BEAUTIFUL, BLESSED PLACE --



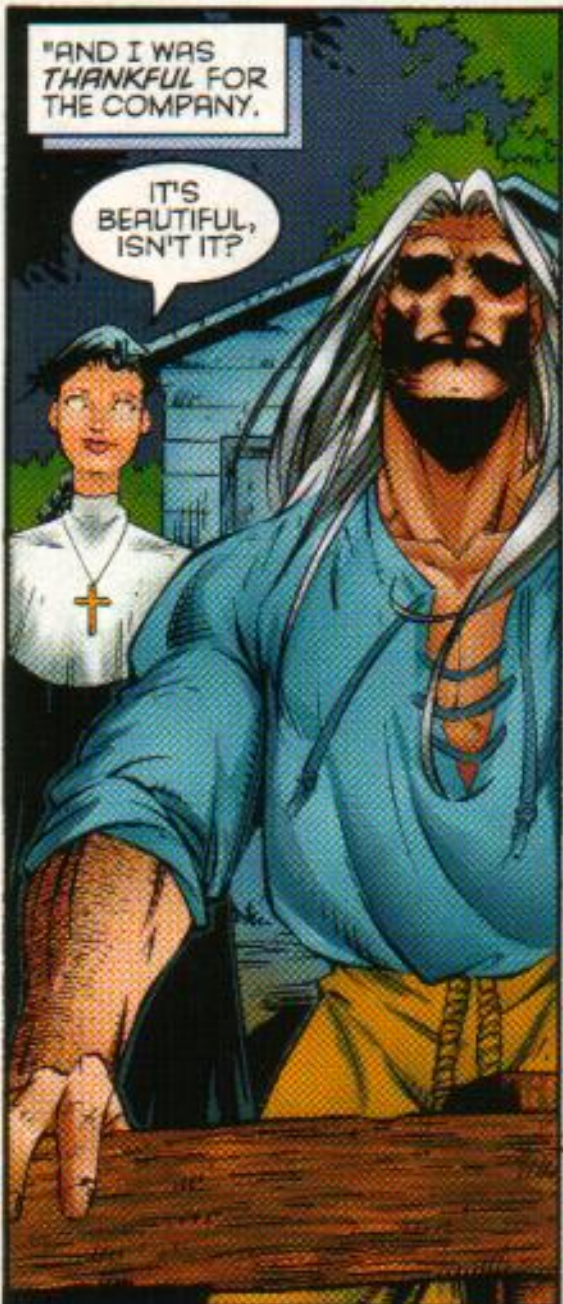
"-- DRENCHED IN THE BLOOD OF LIVES BOUGHT AND SOLD WITH DRUG MONEY.

"FOR ALL INTENTS AND PURPOSES --

"-- WE KNEW AS LITTLE ABOUT JOSEPH AS WE DID WHEN HE FIRST ARRIVED.



"EXCEPT THAT THE CHILDREN ADORED HIM.



"AND I WAS THANKFUL FOR THE COMPANY.

IT'S BEAUTIFUL, ISN'T IT?



MORE THAN WORDS CAN SAY.



MUCH MORE SO, I'M AFRAID, THAN A MAN LIKE ME DESERVES.



YOU ARE SPEAKING NONSENSE AGAIN.

AM I, SISTER? I DON'T THINK SO.

I DON'T KNOW WHAT I DID IN MY PAST.

BUT I KNOW, SOMEHOW -- IN MY SOUL --



-- I DID THINGS I'M NOT PROUD OF.

DARK THINGS.

EVIL THINGS.



THINGS THAT SHOULD NOT BE FORGIVEN.

WHATEVER HAPPENED... HAPPENED IN YOUR PAST, JOSEPH.

I HAVE BEEN TAUGHT THERE IS NOTHING THAT CAN NOT BE FORGIVEN.



NO... SIN... THAT CANNOT BE ABSOLVED?

NONE, NOT IF YOUR HEART...

... IS...



SHHH.

JOSEPH?



JOSEPH!

YOU ARE A GOOD MAN, TRUE.



BUT ABSOLUTELY NO COMPETITION FOR THE ONE I HAVE, THANK YOU.



?!



"I COULD FEEL HIS SMILE ON MY BACK.

"AND I COULD NOT HELP THINKING..."

"... IT HAD PROBABLY BEEN A LONG TIME SINCE THIS MAN HAD ANY HOPE AT ALL IN HIS HEART.

"A MONTH TO THE DAY OF HIS ARRIVAL...?"



JOSEPH, I DREW YOU A PICTURE JUST FOR YOU!

THAT'S NICE -URNH- BUT I MUST GET THIS TRACTOR UP AND RUNNING BEFORE --

BUT IT IS FOR YOU, JOSEPH. I DREW IT FOR YOU!



SEE!
DO YOU LIKE IT, huh?
Huh?
HUH?

DO YAP
I DREW IT FOR YOU!



YES, UMBERTO... IT'S PERFECT. THANK YOU.

BUT... WHAT IS IT?

IT IS NAMED A "MOO-TANT"! I LEARNED ALL ABOUT THEM IN SCHOOL.

A MUTANT?

THEY ARE DIFFERENT FROM REAL PEOPLE.

THAT IS WHY THEY WEAR MASKS AND HIDE -- BECAUSE REG'LAR PEOPLE ARE FEARING THEM.

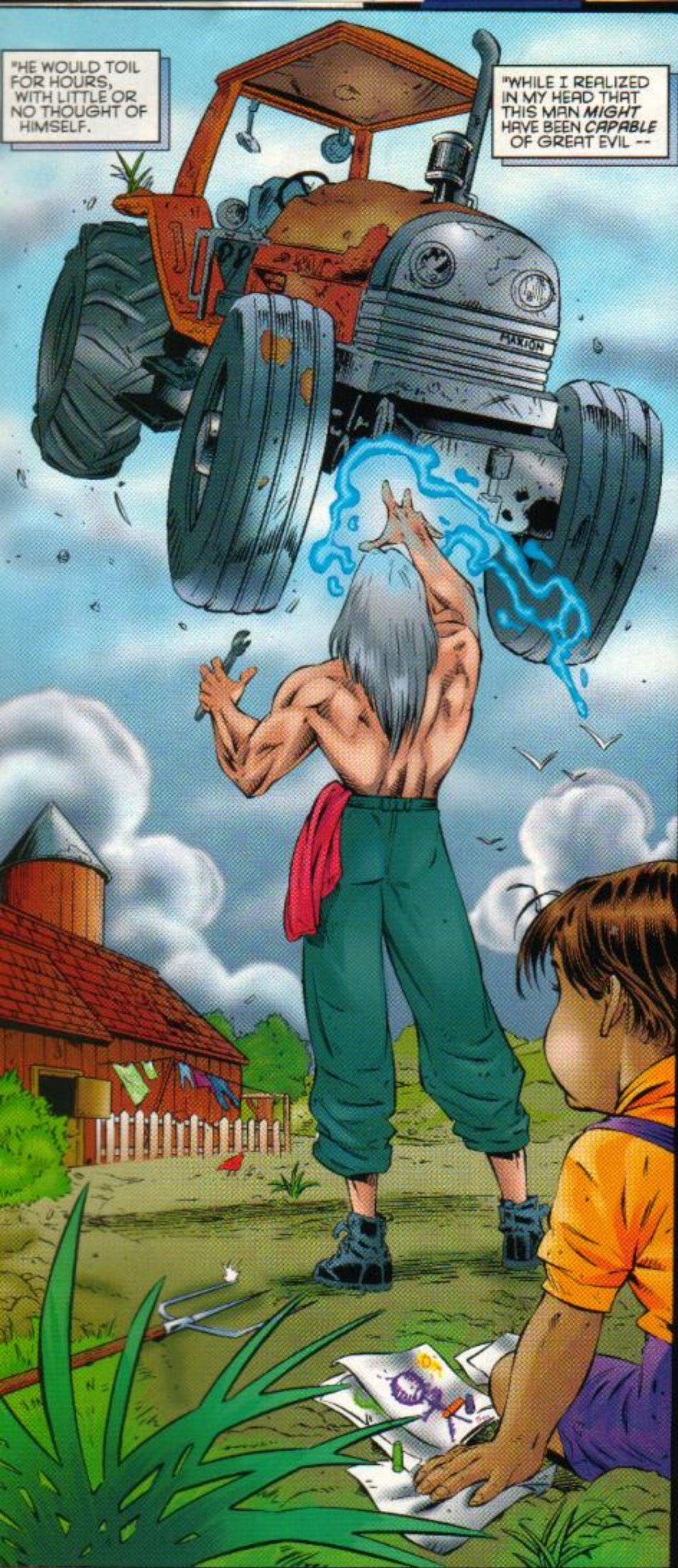
COOL, NO?

I SUPPOSE SO.



"HE WOULD TOIL FOR HOURS, WITH LITTLE OR NO THOUGHT OF HIMSELF."

"WHILE I REALIZED IN MY HEAD THAT THIS MAN MIGHT HAVE BEEN CAPABLE OF GREAT EVIL --"



"-- HE HAD NEVER, NOT ONCE, SHOWED ANY EVIDENCE OF HIS LIFE BEFORE HIS TIME WITH US."

"UNTIL THAT DAY."

EHP



"UNTIL THE DAY HE FELT THE CHILDREN WERE SOMEHOW BEING THREATENED."

"EVEN SO..."

"... I'M WILLING TO GIVE HIM POINTS FOR MODERATION.

¡CARAMBA!



YOU WERE SPYING ON US!

¡NO!

¡SI!

Y-YES... YES I WAS! FOR THE SAKE OF THE CHILDREN!

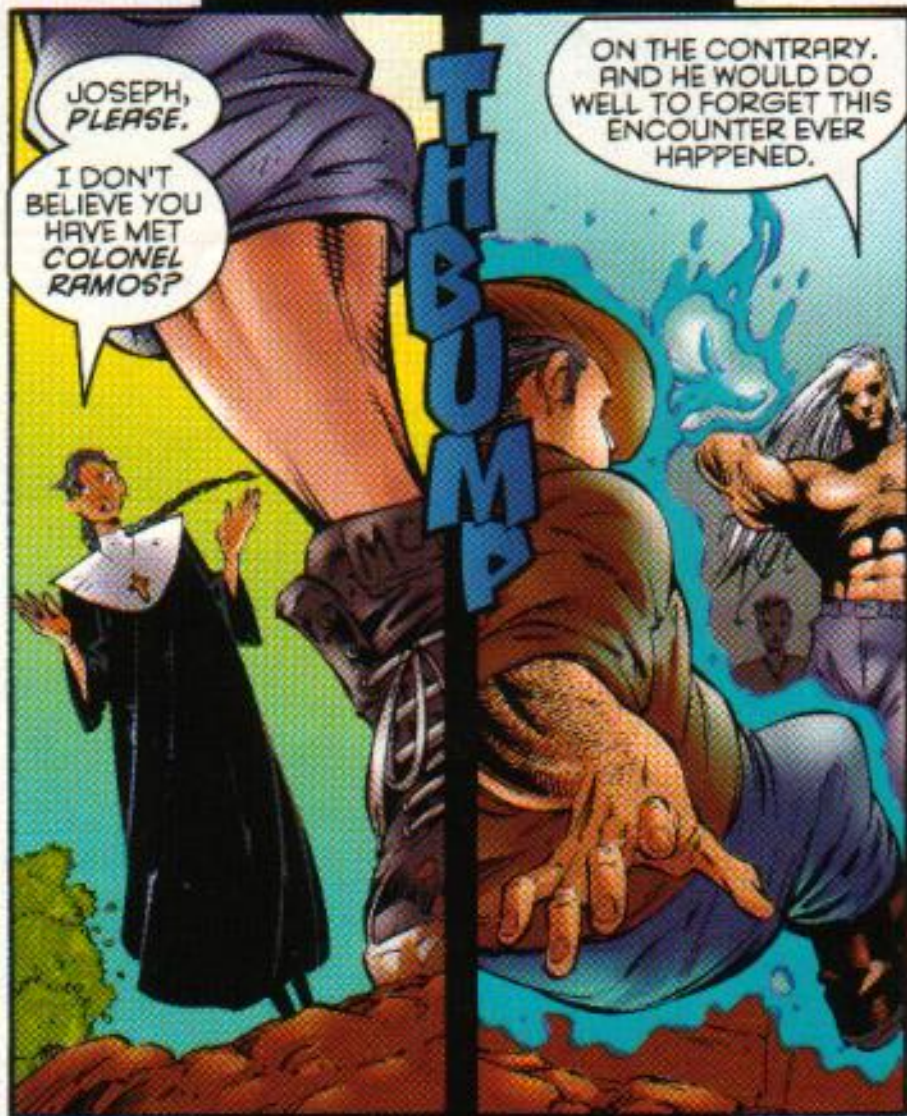


JOSEPH, PLEASE.

I DON'T BELIEVE YOU HAVE MET COLONEL RAMOS?

ON THE CONTRARY. AND HE WOULD DO WELL TO FORGET THIS ENCOUNTER EVER HAPPENED.

¡BUMPA



Y-YES, SIR.

«SISTER, IF I MIGHT HAVE A WORD IN PRIVATE?»

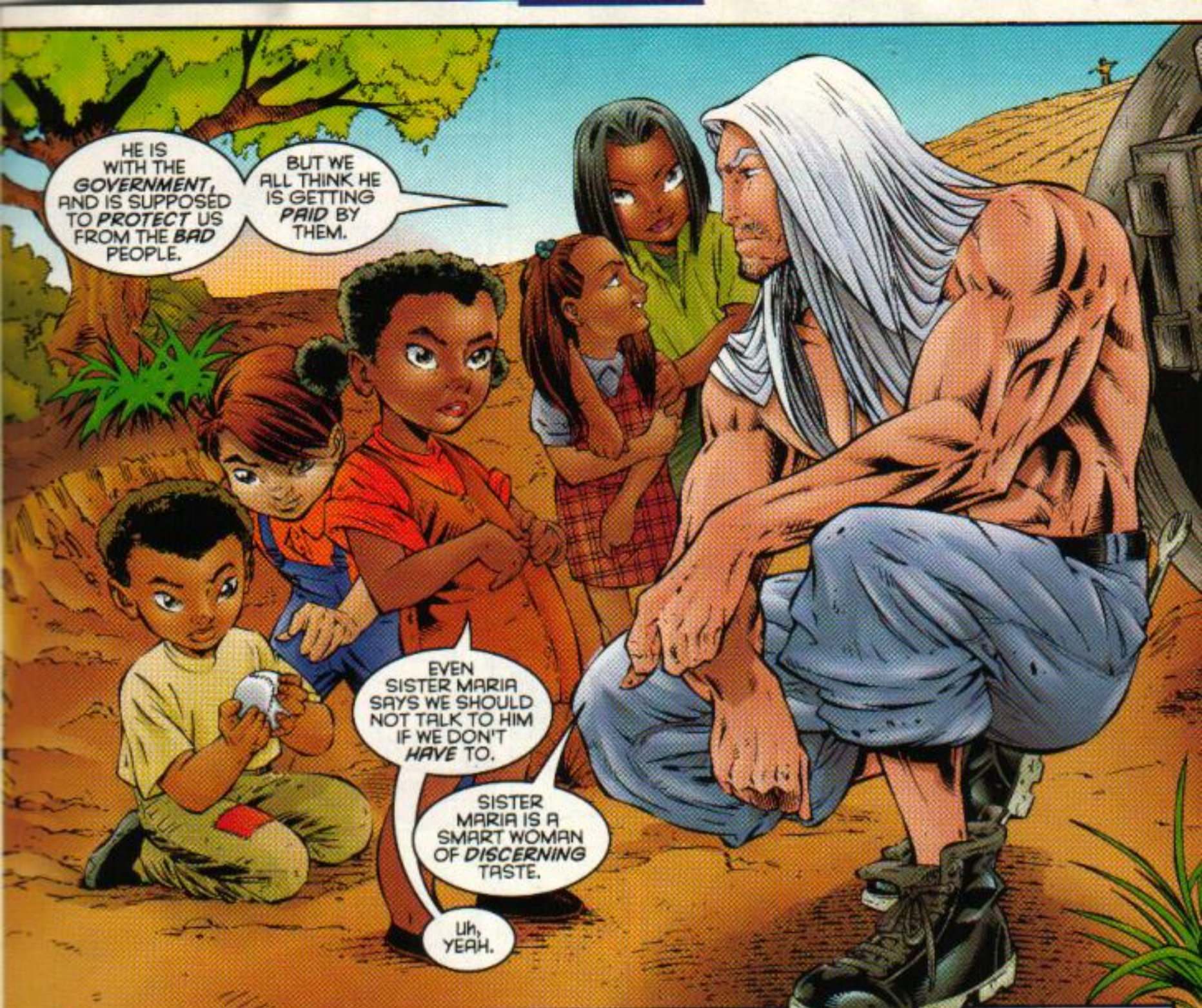


MIGDALIA... THAT MAN...?

... IS A JERK.

WE HATE HIM.





HE IS WITH THE GOVERNMENT, AND IS SUPPOSED TO PROTECT US FROM THE BAD PEOPLE.

BUT WE ALL THINK HE IS GETTING PAID BY THEM.

EVEN SISTER MARIA SAYS WE SHOULD NOT TALK TO HIM IF WE DON'T HAVE TO.

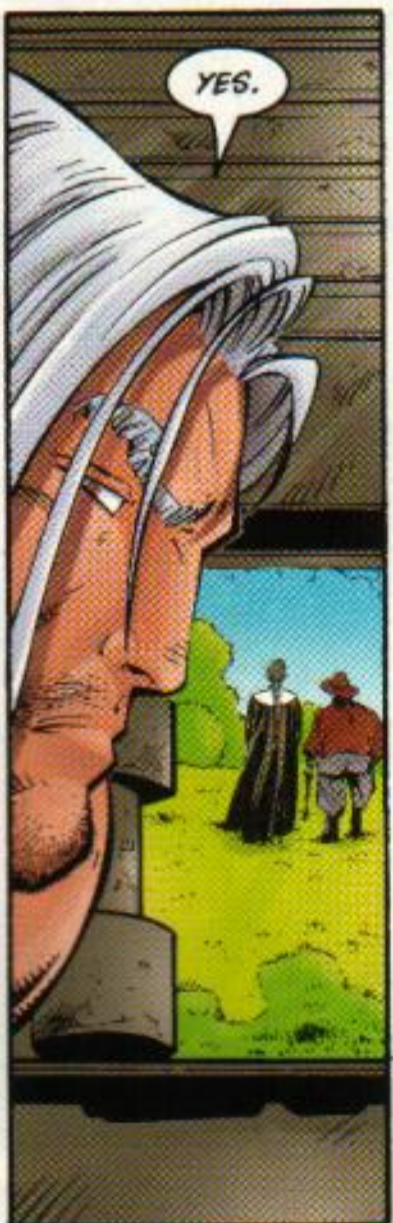
SISTER MARIA IS A SMART WOMAN OF DISCERNING TASTE.

Uh, yeah.



BESIDES, NOW THAT YOU LIVE HERE, WE DON'T NEED THE COLONEL.

YOU'LL PROTECT US, RIGHT?



YES.



NOW... RUN ALONG, CHILDREN.



I HAVE WORK TO DO.

"WHILE I ENDURED THE COLONEL --"



"-- I NOTICED HIS ATTENTION LAY ELSEWHERE..."

"IT WASN'T UNTIL
SIX DAYS LATER..."



"... THAT I WOULD
DISCOVER HOW
RIGHT THAT
FEELING WAS.

"AT TIMES, HE WOULD
GAZE AT THE FAR
HORIZON... AS
IF SEARCHING FOR
SOMETHING.

"HIS DESTINY,
PERHAPS.

"I WASN'T
THERE WHEN
HE FIRST
SAW IT.

"THE
FIRE.



"I'M SURE HIS
FIRST THOUGHT
WAS OF THE
CHILDREN.



"I CAN
IMAGINE
HIM..."



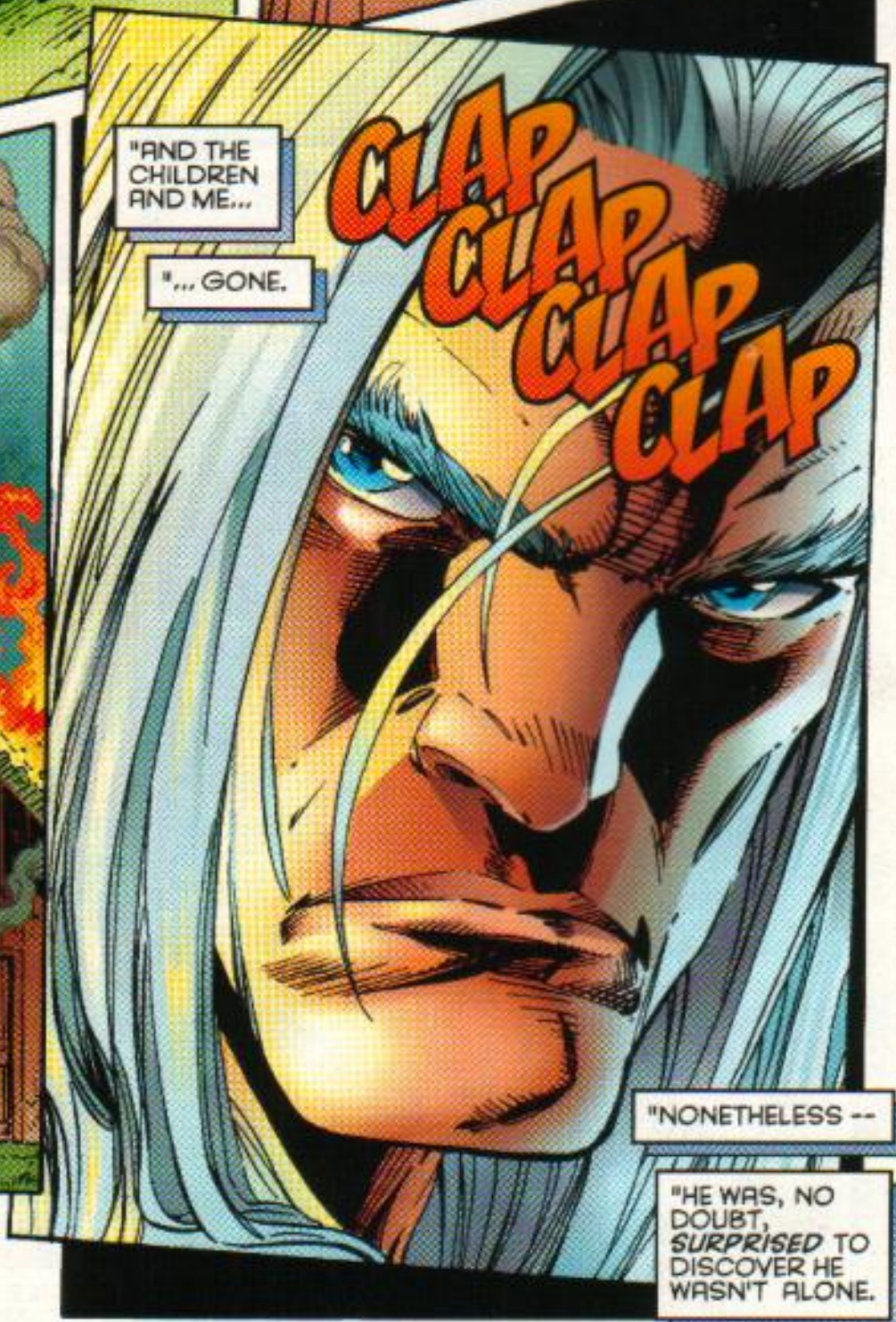
"... USING HIS
MUTANT ABILITY
TO CLOSE THE
DISTANCE..."

"... ONLY TO
DISCOVER
THE BARN
WAS ALL BUT
BURNT TO
THE GROUND.



"AND THE
CHILDREN
AND ME..."

"... GONE.



CLAP
CLAP
CLAP
CLAP

"NONETHELESS --

"HE WAS, NO
DOUBT,
SURPRISED TO
DISCOVER HE
WASN'T ALONE.



I'M SORRY WE GOT OFF TO A BAD START --

-- BUT I THINK YOU AND I ARE GOING TO BE GREAT FRIENDS... JOSEPH, IS IT?



AND WHY IS THAT...?

... COLONEL?

BECAUSE WE BOTH HAVE SOMETHING THE OTHER WANTS.

YOU ARE A MUTANT.

I HAPPEN TO NEED A MUTANT.

THAT IS, MY "BUSINESS ASSOCIATES" AND I COULD USE A MAN OF YOUR ABILITIES TO HELP WITH THE CERTAIN LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES THAT SEEK TO STOP OUR "EXPORT" BUSINESS.

INTERESTING, AND WHAT IS IT YOU HAVE TO OFFER ME?

I HAVE THE CHILDREN.

AND YOUR... FRIEND.



MY ASSOCIATES ARE KEEPING AN EYE ON THEM.

IF YOU WERE TO RUN AN "ERRAND" OR TWO FOR US, I MIGHT BE ABLE TO CONVINCE MY FRIENDS TO --



AIEEE!



I WILL ONLY ASK THIS ONCE.

WHERE?



IF YOU K-KILL M-ME, YOU...

... W-WON'T EVER F-FIND TH-THEM!



WHO SAID ANYTHING ABOUT KILLING YOU?

... CAN'T... BREATHE...!



CERTAINLY YOU CAN.

IT SIMPLY HURTS.

A LOT.

A-ALL RIGHT.

THEY'RE IN THE BASEMENT OF... OLD... CH-CH-CHURCH!



THANK YOU. NOW LEAVE.



AND DON'T COME BACK.

EVER.

"WAS IT MY FAITH THAT LET ME BELIEVE IN HIM...?"

"OR MY SUSPICIONS OF EXACTLY WHO THIS MAN WAS BEFORE HE CAME TO LIVE AMONG US?"

"I CAN'T SAY FOR CERTAIN."

"BUT I DID KNOW THAT NOTHING THIS SIDE OF HEAVEN WAS GOING TO STOP HIM."





"WITHOUT SEEING HIM..."

"... I KNEW HE HAD ARRIVED."

<SISTER MARIA... I'M SCARED!>

BWAMMM

<TRUST IN GOD, LITTLE ONE.>

<HE HAS NOT LET US DOWN YET.>

<IT SOUNDS LIKE...>

<THE WAR! IT SOUNDS LIKE THE WAR WHERE I LOST MY MOMMA AND POPPA!>

"IN REALITY?"

"IT SOUNDED MUCH WORSE."



"THEN SUDDENLY..."



"... SILENCE."



CUP CUP CUP CUP

<FOOTSTEPS?>

<SOMEONE'S COMING.>



<RELAX, CHILDREN... EVERYTHING IS FINE.>

<HOW DO YOU KNOW, SISTER?>



<BECAUSE, CHILD.>

<BECAUSE.>



"I KNEW HE WAS THERE BEFORE I SAW HIM..."

"... BEFORE THE BASEMENT DOOR TORE LIKE TISSUE PAPER.

**W
R
A
M
M**

"BEFORE HE OFFERED US HIS STAINED HAND --

"-- LIKE SOME AVENGING ANGEL SENT FROM ON HIGH TO DELIVER US TO FREEDOM.

SISTER MARIA.

COME.

IT'S TIME FOR YOU AND YOUR CHARGES TO GO... HOME.

"THAT MAY BE THE MOMENT I'LL REMEMBER ALWAYS.

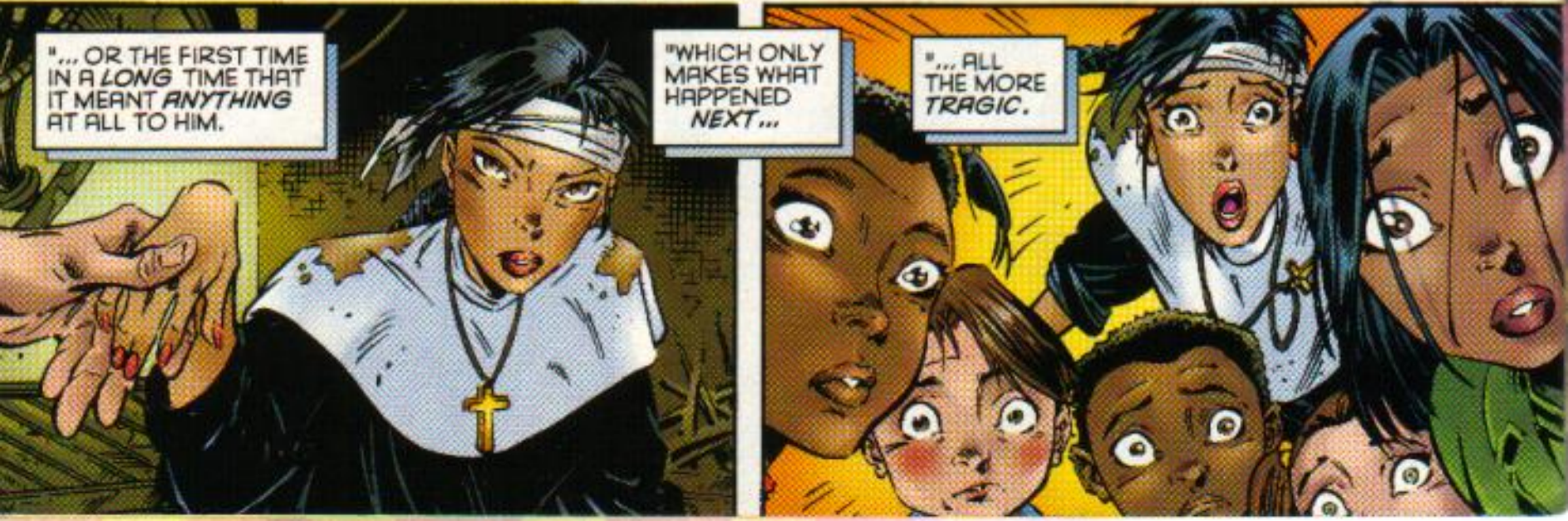
"WHEN THE WORD 'HOME' STUCK IN HIS THROAT.

"AS IF IT MAY HAVE BEEN THE FIRST TIME HE'D EVER USED IT...

"... OR THE FIRST TIME IN A LONG TIME THAT IT MEANT ANYTHING AT ALL TO HIM.

"WHICH ONLY MAKES WHAT HAPPENED NEXT...

"... ALL THE MORE TRAGIC.



"YES, HE'D *RESCUED* US -- PERHAPS EVEN FROM *CERTAIN DEATH* --

"-- BUT AT *WHAT PRICE* IN HUMAN LIFE?"

IN THE NAME OF GOD, JOSEPH --

WHAT HAVE YOU DONE?!

ONLY WHAT I HAD TO, SISTER.

"THE CHILDREN WERE *SPEECHLESS*."

"EVEN UMBERTO, WHO HAD COME TO LOVE JOSEPH THE MOST."

"-- THEIR *SILENCE* SPOKE VOLUMES."

"BUT EVEN *WITHOUT WORDS* --

"IN THE MIDST OF ALL THAT QUIET..."

"... THE ONLY SOUND TO BE HEARD WAS THAT OF SEVERAL HEARTS *BREAKING*."

"HE LEFT THIS MORNING... BEFORE THE CHILDREN WOKE.

YOU DON'T HAVE TO GO, JOSEPH.

THE CHILDREN WILL EVENTUALLY FORGET...

YOU KNOW THAT'S NOT TRUE, SISTER.

HOW CAN I ASK THEM TO ACCEPT ME -- MY WAYS, MY "POWERS"...

... WHEN EVEN I DON'T UNDERSTAND THEM?

JOSEPH, BEFORE YOU GO...
... THERE ARE OTHERS... "LIKE" YOU.

THE... X-MEN?
IT'S BEEN YEARS SINCE I WENT TO SCHOOL IN THE STATES, WHERE I GOT THE MAGAZINE.

I CAN'T SAY FOR SURE IF THEY ARE STILL THERE.
BUT FIND THEM, JOSEPH...
... AND THEN YOU MIGHT FINALLY HAVE A PLACE TO CALL YOUR HOME.

I'VE LEARNED A LOT IN THE PAST SEVERAL WEEKS. MORE, I SUSPECT, THAN I HAVE IN MY ENTIRE LIFE.

BUT THAT'S THE POINT, ISN'T IT, SISTER? THERE'S TOO MUCH OF MY LIFE THAT REMAINS A MYSTERY.

UNTIL IT IS SOLVED, I CAN'T SHARE MY LIFE WITH ANYONE.

"WITHOUT ANOTHER WORD, HE LEFT."



... AND NOW I AM LEFT TO ASK THE QUESTION, FATHER HELCIO --

-- DID I DO THE RIGHT THING?

I'M AFRAID I CANNOT SAY FOR CERTAIN, SISTER.



IF THIS MAN IS WHO YOU SUSPECT HE IS?

THE MAN CALLED MAGNETO -- WHO HAS SPENT MUCH OF HIS ADULT LIFE AS A SWORN ENEMY OF ALL THAT IS HUMAN?

IT IS POSSIBLE YOU MAY HAVE UNLEASHED A HORROR UPON THE REST OF THE WORLD.



BUT I'D LIKE TO BELIEVE OTHERWISE.

I CHOOSE TO BELIEVE YOU SAW SOMETHING IN HIM -- MAYBE ACTUALLY GAVE HIM THE FAITH HE NEEDED...



... TO ALLOW HIM TO AT LAST USE HIS POWER TO HELP A HUMANITY THAT HAS BEEN LESS THAN KIND TO HIS PEOPLE.

"SISTER, YOU AND I ARE IN THE BUSINESS OF SECOND CHANCES.

"ALL WE CAN DO NOW IS PRAY FOR THIS MAN'S SOUL..."

"... THAT HE MIGHT AT LAST FIND HIS PLACE IN THIS WORLD.

"AND THAT THAT PLACE IS ON THE SIDE OF THE ANGELS."

