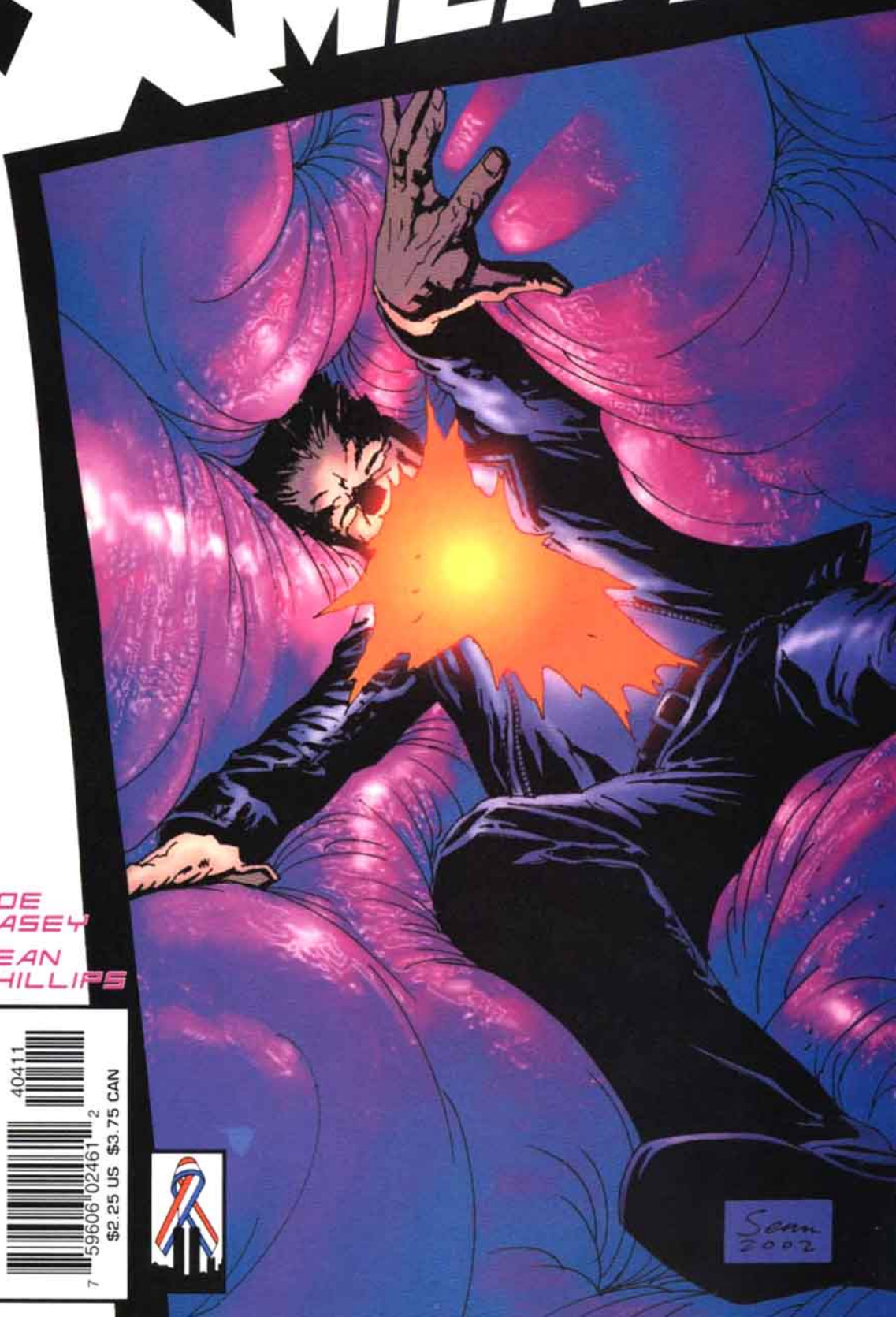


UNCANNY

X-MEN

ISSUE
404

MARVEL



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Sean
2002



MAGNETO...

...YOU'RE DEAD.

THIS ISN'T REAL.



...AND I'M TALKING TO MYSELF HERE.





UH...?

OKAY,
THEN...

THIS ISN'T
BEING PULLED
OUT OF MY MIND. I
DON'T HAVE AN
"EVIL MUTANT"
FETISH...



THE
PITY I
FEEL...

I SEE...

...SO WHAT
THE HELL DOES ALL
THIS HAVE TO DO WITH
THE X-CORPS, ANYWAY?
SOMEONE CARE TO STEP
OUT OF THE BLEEDIN'
SHADOWS AND ANSWER
THAT ONE...?

ANYONE...?



...A
TRUTH? OR
A LIE?

HAVE YOU
EVER TASTED SIXTY
SECONDS ON THE TIP
OF YOUR TONGUE?
SURELY NOT.

I HOPE
YOU WIPED YOUR
FEET BEFORE
ENTERING, JON
STARSMORE.

YOU LIKE
TO BE CALLED
"JON," DON'T YOU?
MAKES YOU FEEL
GROWN UP...

UNDERSTANDABLE.

I'M
MARTINIQUE.
THIS IS MY
MIND...

...AND YOU'RE
TRESPASSING.

X-CORPS
H.Q.

IS THIS A
LABORATORY OR
A PRISON...?

BOBBY...

WE ARE STILL
DETERMINING THE EXACT
NATURE OF THIS YOUNG GENOSHAN'S
ABILITIES. MISTER CASSIDY HAS HIGH
HOPES, BUT HE ALSO POSSESSES
A NECESSARY DEGREE OF
CAUTION...

...APPARENTLY,
THERE IS A REASON
THAT NILS STYGER IS
ALSO KNOWN BY THE
ALIAS, "ABYSS."

PRELIMINARY TESTS INDICATE
HIS CELLS ARE NOT ONLY
EXTREMELY PLIABLE, BUT
CAN GENERATE SOME SORT OF
A RIFT IN SPACETIME, OPENING
A PORTAL INTO AN
UNIDENTIFIED VOID
DIMENSION...

ONCE INSIDE,
MICROPROBES HAVE
NOT TRANSMITTED
BACK. EVENTUALLY,
WE MAY SEND IN A
MADROX...

ARE YOU
HOLDING
HIM AGAINST
HIS WILL?

THAT'S
IT, FLYBOY...
STAND UP ON
BEHALF OF
HIS MUTANT
RIGHTS...

SHALL I
REPEAT THE
QUESTION?

LEYU...?

MISS
YOSHIDA...?

OH, I GET IT.
YOU WANNA BE
CALLED "SUNPYRE"
WHEN ADDRESSSED BY
AN UNDERLING...?

NILS HAS BEEN
MORE THAN COOPERATIVE.
PERHAPS SURVIVING THE
LEGACY VIRUS HAS GIVEN
HIM A NEWFOUND RESPECT
FOR LIFE...

PERHAPS.
WHY ARE
YOU HERE, LEYU?
AND WHY ISN'T YOUR
BROTHER WITH
YOU...?



THE TIME HAS FINALLY ARRIVED. THE ACCULTURATION RESISTANCE MOVEMENT HAS SCORED THE FIRST VICTORY IN WHAT WILL SURELY BE THE WAR FOR HUMAN EXISTENCE...

THE FIRST MUTANT HAS FALLEN. THE GENETIC ABERRATION KNOWN AS SURGE HAS BEEN EXECUTED FOR CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY. THE A.R.M. CLAIMS FULL RESPONSIBILITY FOR THIS ACT. WE STAND BEHIND IT. AND THIS IS ONLY THE BEGINNING...

BBC



VIDEOTAPED EARLIER



STAN LEE PRESENTS: JOE CASEY WRITER SEAN PHILLIPS ART

RS COMICRAFT'S SAIDA! LETTERS HI FI DESIGN COLORS PETE FRANCO ASSIST EDITOR MARK POWERS EDITOR JOE QUESADA CHIEF BILL JEMAS PRESIDENT

FEARED BY A WORLD THEY HAVE TO HATED SWORN TO PROTECT

UNCANNY

X-MEN

armyants

PREVIOUSLY...

The X-Men are in Europe investigating Banshee's X-CORPS, a mutant police program engaging in limited conflict with a pro-human underground army called the A.R.M. Meanwhile, Chamber has found a secret sub-basement underneath X-Corps h.q., where the mutant Martinique Jason is being held prisoner.

...WE WILL CONTINUE TO EXTERMINATE WHATEVER MUTANTS WE FIND... WHETHER THEY WEAR THE "X" OR NOT. NO PRETENSE OF AUTHORITY WILL WEAKEN US. NO UNIFORMED MUTANT "LAW OFFICERS" WILL DETER US.

I AM JAKOB EISEN, FOUNDER AND LEADER OF THE A.R.M., AND I AM PROUD TO BE HUMAN.





MEIN GOTT...

SEAN, WHO IS THIS... 'SURGE'?



I FOUND SURGE-- OR RATHER, HE FOUND ME-- AS I WAS FIRST ORGANIZING THE PURCHASE OF THIS COMPLEX.

HIS MUTANT POWER IS-- WAS-- ELECTRICITY-BASED. THAT... HARNESS EISEN WAS BRANDISHING... HELPED HIM CONTROL IT...

JAKOB EISEN...



WE NEED TO FIND THIS MAN AND HIS OUTFIT RIGHT NOW.

AGREED. THE A.R.M. IS RUMORED TO HAVE ORIGINATED IN ZURICH. EISEN IS SWISS BY BIRTH--



WAIT. YOU'RE NOT PLANNING A COUNTERSTRIKE, ARE YOU? IS THIS WHAT YOU ARE ABOUT, SEAN? A GENETIC VENDETTA...?!



ONE OF OUR OWN HAS BEEN MURDERED. I CAN'T ALLOW IT TO CONTINUE, AND YEH KNOW PERFECTLY WELL IT WILL... IF WE DON'T STOP IT.

JAMIE...



...WE NEED A RECON TEAM IN THE FIELD IMMEDIATELY.

GIVE THIS ONE TO MY ANGELS.

FOR THIS, I LEFT ALGIERS...

WHY DOES THE EXPRESSION "NEEDLE IN A HAYSTACK" COME TO MIND...?

STIFLE THE GRIPES, MONET...

...WE SHOW OUR FACES LIKE THIS, THE A.R.M.'LL COME TO US.

BEATS SAVING THE WHALES, HUH, PAIGE?

IT'S STILL EARLY. DON'T FORGET... WE'RE HERE BECAUSE SOMEONE GOT KILLED...

...I'M JUST AS ANXIOUS AS YOU ARE TO PUT THESE GUYS DOWN. BUT THIS IS HOW WARS GET STARTED. YOU WANT THAT ON YOUR HEAD?

TARGETING

NO--!

I'M NOT HERE BY CHOICE, LADY...!

SO YOU SAY. SOMETIMES TELEPATHS ATTRACT. SOMETIMES THEY REPEL. GUESS WE'RE IN SYNCH.

PRETTY SPECTACULAR, HUH?

I'VE GOT IT ALL OVER MY FATHER, BESIDES BEING DEAD. WHAT CAN HE CLAIM? MIND-BLOWING A SO-CALLED "CHAOS BRINGER" AND HER LESSER TWIN? FOR WHAT...?

I GUESS WE'RE BOTH GOAL-ORIENTED...

ARE YOU MAKING NO SENSE ON PURPOSE... OR IS THIS JUST THE WAY YOUR MIND WORKS...?

IS THIS HOW YOU ACT WHEN YOU INTRUDE ON ANOTHER PERSON'S SUBCONSCIOUS?

TRY NOT TO GET DISTRACTED. YOU MIGHT LEARN SOMETHING.

SURE, I BELIEVE IN TRADITION. BUT I BELIEVE IN THE FUTURE, TOO. IN HERE, I CAN INDULGE IN MY LITTLE PSYCHODRAMAS. A COUP D'ETAT... A FORBIDDEN AFFAIR WITH A REPULSIVE LITTLE MAN... A LITTLE SELF-MUTILATION... THE KINDS OF THINGS WE NEVER TELL ANYONE...

YOU WOULDN'T HAPPEN TO HAVE ANY THOUGHTS LIKE THAT, WOULD YOU, JON...?



UHHH...
NO...

SURE
YOU DONT.



YOU'RE STILL FINDING YOUR WAY,
AREN'T YOU? STILL WONDERING IF
YOU'LL AMOUNT TO **ANYTHING**
IN THIS LIFE...

YOU'VE
LOST SO
MUCH.
OR SO YOU
THINK.



HEY,
WHATEVER. AS
LONG AS **YOU'RE**
RUNNING THE
SHOW, RIGHT?

NOT
EVERYONE CAN
LEAD THE WAY.
SOMEONE
HAS TO BE THE
FOLLOWER...



HEY!
IS THIS WHAT
YOU DO FOR LAUGHS?!
PULL SOMEONE IN HERE
AND PLAY ARMCHAIR SHRINK?!
I'VE BEEN PSYCHOANALYZED
BY THE **BEST...** YOU'RE
NOT EVEN CLOSE!



YOU'RE
CUTE.

NO... MY
ASSESSMENT
OF YOU WAS JUST A
WAY TO PASS THE
TIME-- SUCH AS IT
IS-- IN HERE.

THE FACT
IS... YOU **WEREN'T**
INVITED, AND I'VE GOT
SOMETHING ELSE TO
DO... SOMETHING THAT
DOESN'T INVOLVE
YOU.



ANGELS... THIS IS BANSHEE IN X-CORPS COMMAND, BROADCASTING ON PRIORITY CHANNEL BETA...
...DO YOU COPY?

KKKKKK-
CHHKKK--

KKKK-- URICHKKK--
LITTLE BUSY AT THE
MOMENKKK --



SOMEONE BOOST THE SIGNAL...

JUBILEE...!

THE BIRD IS DOWN!
THEY'RE COMING OUT OF THE
WOODWORK! IT WAS
A TOTAL SETUP!

WHO'S COMING OUT
OF THE WOODWORK, LASS...?



LET ME
PUT IT **THIS**
WAY...

...WE'RE STARING
DOWN AN ARMY
HERE! I THINK THE
WAR IS ON!



KKKKKK-

I'VE
LOST
THEM.

DAMN.

ALERT
THE HANGAR STAFF.
PREP FOR IMMEDIATE
DEPARTURE--

SEAN!

OBVIOUSLY, THIS HAS ESCALATED
BEYOND YOUR CONTROL! I PRAY YOU
DON'T START THROWING JURISDICTION
AROUND AS AN EXCUSE TO KEEP
US AT ARM'S LENGTH!

LET US
HELP!

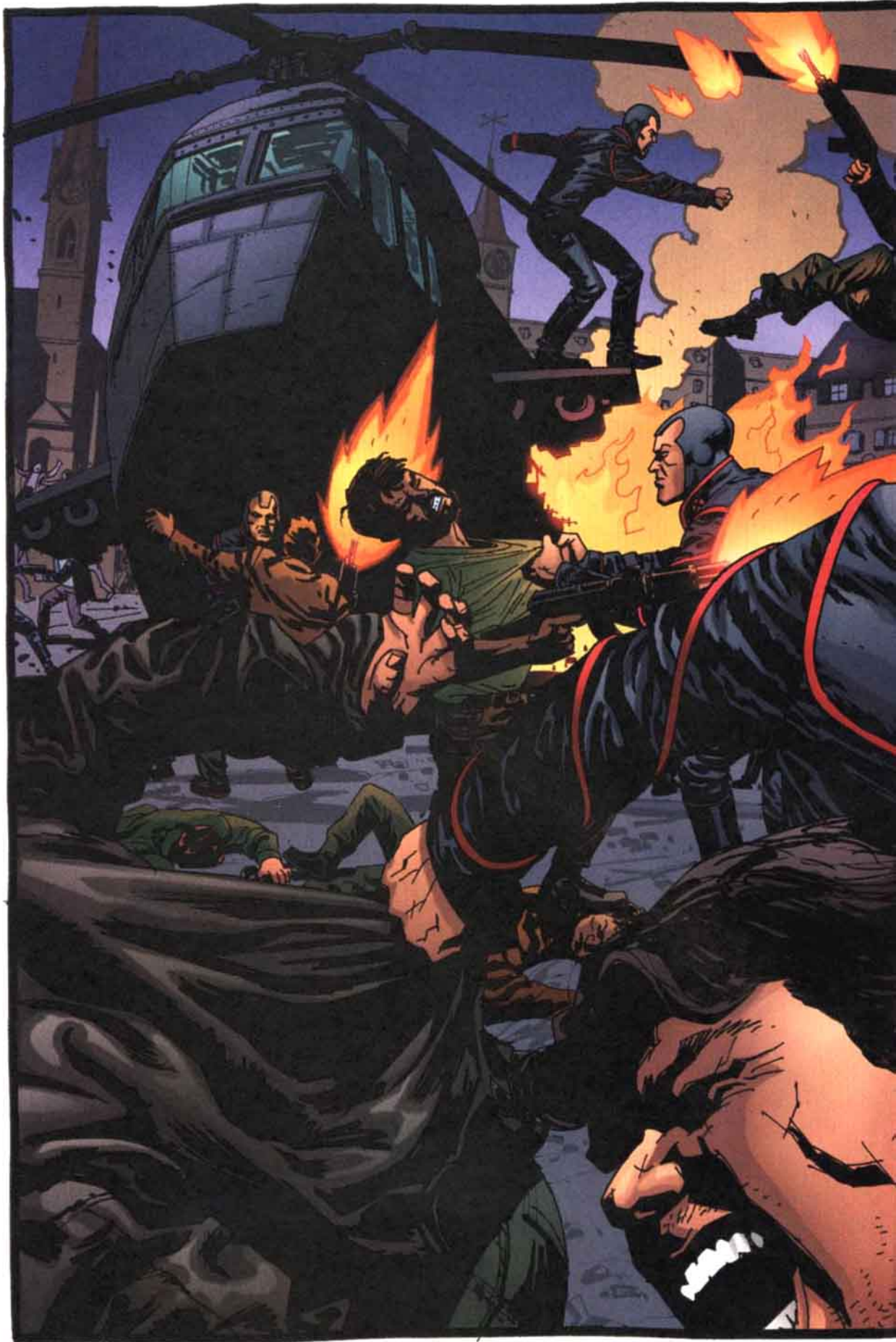
YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND
WHAT YOU'VE--

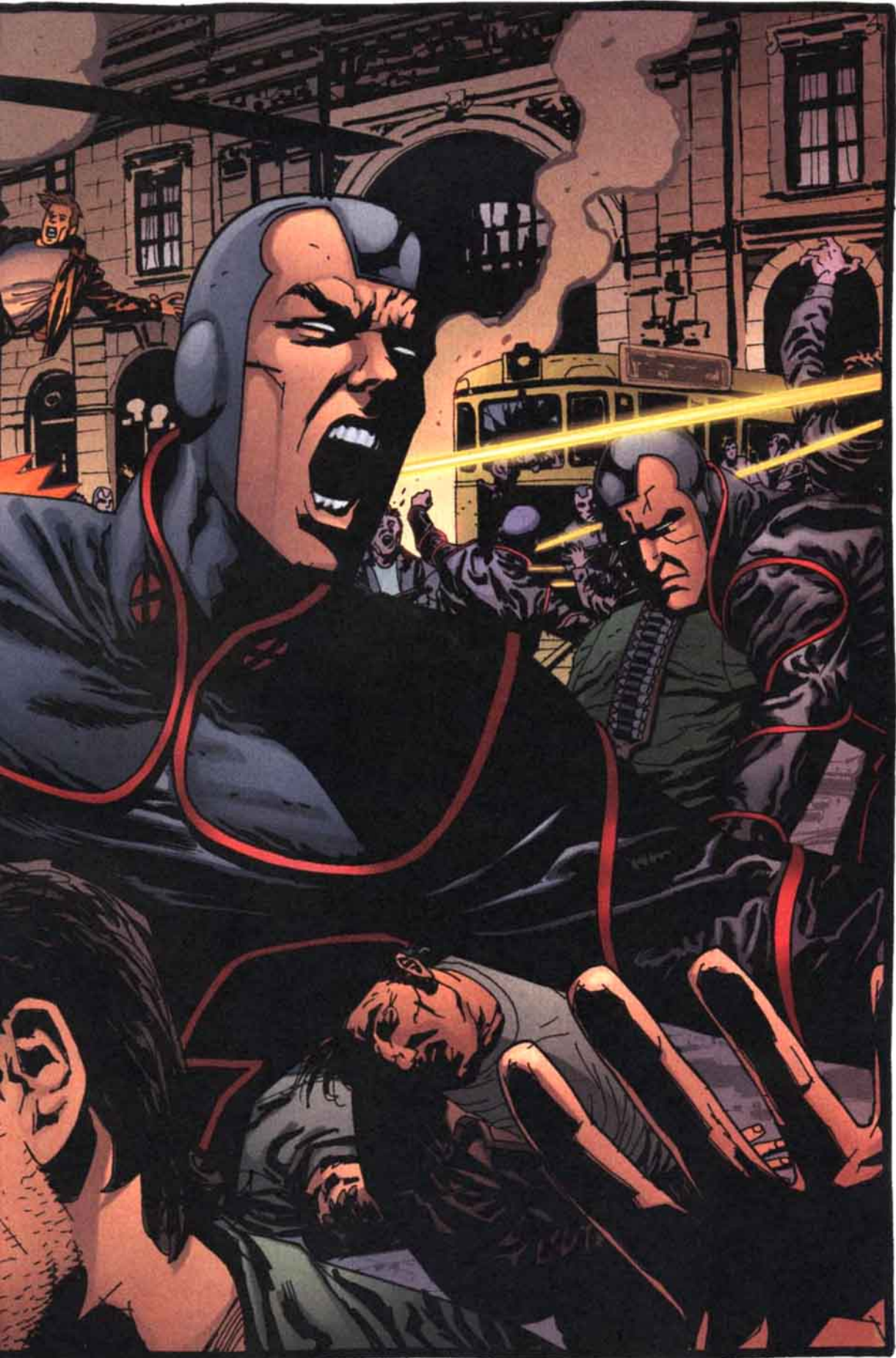
I'M
AFRAID IT'S THE
TWO OF YOU THAT
DON'T UNDERSTAND.
WE'RE NOT MOVING
IN TO JOIN THE
FRAY...



...BY
THE TIME
WE ARRIVE,
IT'LL ALREADY
BE OVER.

THEY
AREN'T THE
ONLY ONES
WITH AN
ARMY...





WAIT A SECOND...

...DID YOU JUST THREATEN ME? DON'T THINK YOU'RE GOING ANYWHERE WITHOUT GIVING ME SOME FLIPPIN' ANSWERS! THIS WHOLE X-CORPS PROGRAM... MISTER CASSIDY--

I DON'T "THREATEN"...

...AND I DON'T APPRECIATE BEING TOUCHED.

I TOLD YOU... I'VE GOT SOMEWHERE I NEED TO BE... DON'T TAKE THIS PERSONALLY.

WHA --?!

HNNG!

DON'T BOTHER. I'M SEVERAL LEVELS ABOVE YOU IN THE MIND CONTROL DEPARTMENT.

YOU KNOW, YOU SHOULD REALLY DEVELOP YOUR TELEPATHIC SIDE, YOU CAN DO MUCH MORE THAN COMMUNICATE WITH IT. TRUST ME ON THAT ONE...

MY WORK IS DONE.

I'M OFF TO MAKE MY MEETING. TRY NOT TO THINK ABOUT WHAT YOUR PHYSICAL SELF IS DOING WHILE YOU'RE ROTTING IN HERE...



MARTINIQUE...?
MARTINIQUE...?!



STONE ME
NNNNNNN...!



RIGHT,
THEN... TIME TO
FIND THIS
SKANK



«PERSONAL LOG...»

«I'VE NEVER BEEN THE XENOPHOBE MY LATE UNCLE TOMO WAS, BUT I CERTAINLY HAVE NO LOVE FOR GENOSHANS. A TRAGIC NATION... HAVING RECENTLY MET ITS APPROPRIATELY APOCALYPTIC END.»

© Translated from the Japanese



«THIS YOUNG MAN, STYGER, IS A TRUE SURVIVOR. FIRST HIS NATIVE HOMETLAND, THEN THE LEGACY VIRUS...»

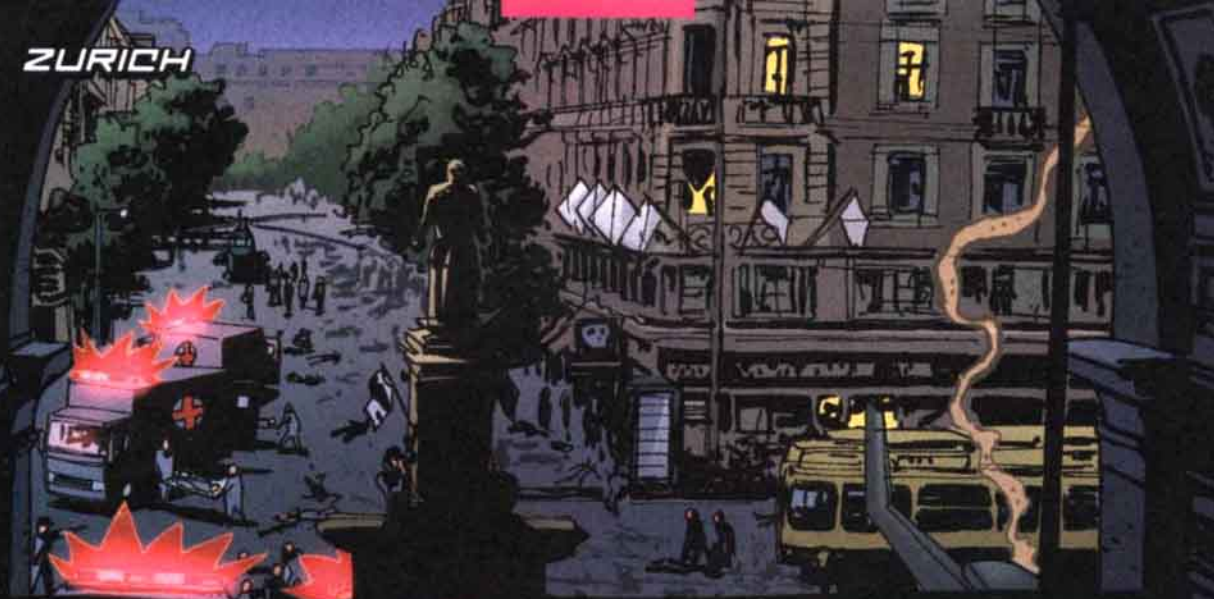
«IT APPEARS WE DO NOT HAVE THE PROPER TECHNOLOGY TO FULLY ANALYZE HIS MUTANT ABILITIES. AFTER A POINT, IT BECOMES MERELY GUESSWORK...»

«THE MOST OBVIOUS HYPOTHESIS IS THAT STYGER IS A CONDUIT BETWEEN DIMENSIONS. IT IS NOT A CONSCIOUS ACT ON HIS PART. IT'S SECOND NATURE...»



«HE HAS CONTROL UP TO A POINT, PERHAPS EVEN MORE THAN HE LETS ON. AT FIRST, HE WAS FRIGHTENED OF US... BUT HE'S BECOME MORE AT PEACE WITH HIS SITUATION. THE NATURE OF HIS CONFINEMENT PRECLUDES ANY DIRECT, VERBAL COMMUNICATION, DUE TO THE DAMPENING MECHANISMS AT WORK...»

«...BUT I THINK HE KNOWS WE'RE TRYING TO HELP HIM...»





DON'T MAKE ME ASK AGAIN! LOOK AT WHAT HIS HATRED HAS BROUGHT!

WHERE IS HE?!

HNS --!



WHERE IS JAYOR EISEN?



SEAN! STOP IT!

LOOK AT WHAT YOU'RE DOING TO HIM --!




IS THIS WHAT YOU MEANT WHEN YOU SAID... "BY ANY MEANS NECESSARY" ...?

I...


IT WASN'T SUPPOSED T'GO THIS WAY...



THERE WASN'T SUPPOSED TO BE ANY MORE DEATH...



GGLL
←- SEEING HOW HE
HAS RESPONDED TO THE
TESTS SO FAR-- GGLL-- WILL
BE A VALUABLE ASSET
TO-- GGLL-- IF CASSIDY
CHOOSES TO...>




GGLL
←-SO FINISHING MY
PRELIMINARY-- GGLL--
AS PART OF CASSIDY'S
NEW-- GGLL--
KNOW IF THE POTENTIAL
WILL BE REACHED
TO...>

GGLL ←-HIS
GOALS REGARDING THE
MUTANT SITUA-- GGLL--
AND HOW THIS COALITION
MIGHT FURTHER-->



GGLL
←-POLITICAL AIMS
THAT MIGHT NOT BE
RECEIVED WITH-- GGLL--
ON THE WORLD STAGE.
NEVERTHELESS, MY OWN
PERSONAL-- GGLL--
NOT QUITE MY
BROTHER'S POINT
OF VIEW...>

GGLL
←-MEANING HERE,
PERHAPS SOMETHING
DEEPER FOR EACH
OF US THAN-- GGLL--
AND YET THERE'S A
FEELING OF MENACE
WHERE HOPE
SHOULD BE...>



GGLL
←-WHERE OUR
LIVES CAN FIND SOME
MEANING-- GGLL--
AND THAT WHATEVER
SACRIFICES WE MAKE
WILL NOT BE MADE
IN VAIN...>



WHERE ARE YOU?

I NEVER LIKED HIDE 'N' SEEK...



...ASSASSINATION. TERRORISM. MANIPULATION... THE GRAND REVEAL... THESE ARE A FEW OF MY FAVORITE THINGS...

YOU KNOW MY EXTREMITIES ARE BEGINNING TO ATROPHY... NOT TO MENTION WHAT THEY DID TO MY HAIR...!



FOR ALL THINGS THERE IS A REASON. DEAR MARTINIQUE HE HAS TO BELIEVE YOU ARE DOING WHAT HE ACQUIRED YOU TO DO...

POOR, DELUDED FOOL...




...THE LOSS OF A LOVED ONE CAN LEAD A PERSON TO DRASTIC LIFE CHANGES.

BUT LET'S NOT ATTACH PSYCHOLOGICAL SIGNIFICANCE TO ONE WHO IS MERELY BACK IN TOUCH WITH HIS TRUE SELF. I CAN DEFINITELY RELATE.

FROM THE SECURITY OF HIS SELF-RIGHTEOUSNESS, HE HAS QUICKLY AND EXPERTLY CONSTRUCTED QUITE AN OPERATION HERE. TOO BAD HE DOESN'T HAVE THE PROPER MOTIVATION TO USE IT...



...BUT THAT WON'T BE AN ISSUE FOR MUCH LONGER. EVEN AS WE SPEAK, THE HEAD OF THE HOUSEHOLD IS **ABSENT...** AND WE HAVE MADE OUR **OPENING MOVE.** WHEN HE **RETURNS,** HE WILL FIND THE HOUSE A VERY DIFFERENT **PLACE.**



EXACTLY AS I'D EXPECTED. **CASSIDY** IS TOO **HOT-BLOODED** TO EVER MAINTAIN TRUE **LEADERSHIP** IN THE FACE OF A POSSIBLE **GENETIC CLASS WAR.**

BY THE WAY, **MARTINIQUE...**

YOU'VE CERTAINLY **STOKED THE FIRES.** I'VE PEEKED THROUGH A PAIR OF **MADROX EYES.** HE'S DEFINITELY AT **WIT'S END.**



...I THOUGHT THIS WAS TO BE A **PRIVATE MEETING.** YOU WEREN'T SUPPOSED TO HAVE **COMPANY...** NOW I MUST ACT **ACCORDINGLY...**





THAT
WAS FUN...



...TO
FINALLY BE
ABLE TO CUT
LOOSE.

GENTLEMEN,
IT'S TIME TO TAKE
OVER.

TO BE CONTINUED