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WORTHINGTON INDUSTRIES, MANHATTAN

IT'S STARTING TO TICKLE IN...

AND THE INFO'S ACCURATE...?

TRUST ME, JON.

ONLY AN *IDIOT* WOULD THINK CRIME *DOESN'T* PAY, BUT THERE ARE *CERTAIN* THINGS THAT PAY *MORE*...

THAT'S *DEEP*...

OKAY, WOLVERINE... YOU'VE BEEN HANGING AROUND *WATCHING* FOR THE PAST WEEK...

UNLESS YOU PLAN ON *HELPING OUT* IN SOME WAY--

HEY, I PASSED ALONG *MY* STREET CONTACTS.

IF YOU'VE GOT ENOUGH *BANK* TO TURN THEIR HEADS, THAT'S SOME *FAITH* YOU GOT IN HUMANITY...

STRANGER THINGS HAVE HAPPENED...

OR

ARE YOU JUST *FRUSTRATED* BECAUSE WE'RE NOT DOING THINGS *YOUR* WAY? SLASH AND BURN TECHNIQUES DON'T *ALWAYS* WORK, YOU KNOW.

PLEASE.

AWARE AN EXAMPLE WHEN THEY *HAVEN'T*.

AND WHO'S GOT THE *TRACK RECORD* HERE...?

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FEEL FREE TO HEAD BACK TO XAVIER'S ANYTIME, LOGAN...
AND MISS ALL THE FUN?
BZZT
DO YOU TWO HAVE A PROBLEM TH UNHAVE OF?
NO PROBLEM, WE JUST DON'T LIKE EACH OTHER.
THIS IS WARREN. GO AHEAD.
WHAT'S YOUR DAMAGE, HATE? CAMERAS FOUND PORTER... YOU DON'T THINK--
EASY, KID.
THIS IS JUST HOW THE BIG BOYS DANCE...
OKAY, THAT'S GREAT...
...MISTER CHILDS... LET'S NOT BE MELODRAMATIC. MY BUSINESS EXISTS TO SERVE THE GREATER GOOD. RIGHT NOW I CAN THINK OF NOTHING GREATER.
KEEP ME POSTED.
ANOTHER JUICY BIT...?
Y'KNOW... KIDS ARE DYING WHILE YOU'RE UP HERE PLAYING CHAUMAN OF THE BOARD...
NO ONE'S FORCING YOU TO STAY...
WE ARE ON THE SAME SIDE, BLONDE.
THIS AIN'T JUST ABOUT YOU AN' ME. I WANT THOSE DESIGNER GENES OFF THE STREET.
SO, DO I.

PRACTICALLY DRIPPING, IF YOU MUST A DEMAND. BUT, AS USUAL, HE ONLY KNOWS HOW TO HAUL THE PATH OTHERS HAVE BEATEN.
POSTER'S GOT THE PRODUCT, AND THERE'S
HE'S PREDICTABLE AND GREEDY.
TWO THINGS WE'LL BE USING AGAINST HIM.
rocktopia
STAN LEE PRESENTS:
UNCANNY X-MEN
part 8 of 5
JOE CASEY & SEAN PHILLIPS STORYTELLERS
RICHARD STARKINGS & COMICRAFT'S RAICAI LETTERS
HI-FI DESIGN COLORS
MIKE RAICHT ASSISTANT EDITOR
MIKE MARTS EDITOR
JOE QUESADA CHIEF
BILL JEMAS PRESIDENT
FEARED & HATED BY A WORLD THEY HAVE SWORN TO PROTECT
SO, WHADDYA THINK, STARSMORE...?
IS HE THE MAN WITH THE PLAN, OR SHOULD WE GET NIGHTCRAWLER IN HERE TO SHOW US THE WAY...?
I... I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE TRYING TO PROVE...
BUT I THINK WE'RE ON THE RIGHT TRACK.
FAIR ENOUGH. I'VE BEEN OUTVOTED.
LET ME KNOW WHEN YOU'RE READY TO MOVE. FEARLESS LEADER. YOUR WISH IS MY COMMAND.
NO WORRIES, LOGAN.
I DOUBT IT'LL COME TO THAT.

THIS WAS TOO EASY...

...I DO MISS THE CARIBBEAN CLIMATES. BUT NEW YORK IS NICE IN THE SUMMER.
THE HEAT PROMOTES HUNGER IN THE AVERAGE STREET JUNKIE.

...OUR BREAD AND BUTTER, GENTLEMEN.

HARD TO BELIEVE I USED TO DRESS UP LIKE A WALKING VEGETABLE...
I NEVER BOTH TERRIBLY FAR WITH THAT.

BUT, QUITE SOON, I'LL BE IN COMPLETE CONTROL OF THE ENTIRE EAST COAST DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM.
THEN IT'S BACK TO CUBA AND OUT OF HARM'S REACH.

AND THE AMOUNT OF MONEY I'LL BE MAKING... IT'S OBSCENE...

...NOT THAT IT'S ANY OF YOUR BUSINESS, MR. FINCH, YOU TAKE WHAT I PAY YOU.
MM-HMM...

NO LACKEY BACKTALK.
I WANT A COMPLETE BREAKDOWN OF ALL YOUR FRONT COMPANIES BY FRIDAY. PLUS, THE NAMES OF EVERY TWO-BIT DEALER... THEY ALL NEED TO KNOW WHO'S RUNNING THINGS NOW--

OH, BOY. YOU DRUG WARLORDS ARE SO ...DRIVEN.
WHAT THE HELL--?

CLOSE.
THEY SAY THE WAY TO A MAN'S HEART IS THROUGH HIS STOMACH...
NOT LIKELY.
#SIGH# EVERY JOB HAS ITS GROUPIES.
YOU LOOK LIKE YOU'VE RECENTLY SAMPLED OUR PRODUCT, YOUNG LADY...
OH, NO, MR. PORTER.
I'M A NATURAL.
GUUU LPH!
WUUU...
ANOTHER SATISFIED CUSTOMER.
I'VE MET A LOT OF MUTANTS IN MY DAY. DO I KNOW YOU...?
I TAKE IT YOU'VE GOT SOME SORT OF EMOTIONAL CONTROL...?
I'M STACY X, AND I'LL'S JUST SAY I'VE GOT THE MAGIC TOUCH.
PHEROMONES CAN BE OUR FRIEND, AND WE'VE NEVER MET YOU WOULDN'T REMEMBERED...
SO YOU'RE IN THE GENETIC UNION... SO WHAT?
I ADMIRE WHAT YOU'RE DOING HERE. BUT YOU'RE THINKING TOO SMALL. YOU NEED TO DIVERSIFY.
YOU'RE A BUSINESSMAN, PORTER, AND I'VE GOT A BUSINESS PROPOSITION...
SO ON...
EVER HEARD OF THE X-RANCH?

ST. PAUL'S CHURCH
CARDINAL HAMMOND
I AM KURT WAGNER. RECENTLY ORDAINED.
I HAVE COME HERE... FOR AN EXPLANATION.
THESE HAVE NOT BEEN EASY TIMES FOR THE CATHOLIC CHURCH. WE BOTH KNOW THAT.
WHAT HAS BEEN OCCURRING IN THE BABEMONT OF YOUR CHURCH... THIS IS A HOUSE OF GOD, CARDINAL.
...AND THEY ARE INNOCENTS.
...HOW DARE YOU ALLOW THEM TO SNIFF OUT THEIR OWN LIVES BY INJECTING THEMSELVES WITH A SUBSTANCE THAT ALTERS THEIR DNA TO SUCH A DEGREE THAT...
CARDINAL HAMMOND?!
ANSWER ME WHY HAVE YOU FORSAKEN YOUR...

MEIN GOTT...
...CARDINAL?!
UHHHNN...
...GFUH...
NEIN... NOT YOU... YOU!
NNN...
BEGONE, DEMON!

I SAID... BEGONE!
OF COURSE... ...WE DEBASE OURSELVES ONCE AGAIN.
I HATE TO DO THIS, CARDINAL HAMMOND...
...BUT YOU ARE NO LONGER YOURSELF, AND THIS DRUG HAS KILLED SO MANY ALREADY.
GRAAAA!

HUHHN–!
AT LAST..I AM CLOSER TO GOD...!
YOUR MIND IS GONE, CARDINAL. WE MUST ATTEND TO–
EH..?
UNGLAUBLICH...
..IS THIS... ANOTHER NIGHTMARE...?
CARDINAL EDWARD HAMMOND...
YOUR CHANCE FOR REPENTANCE HAS PASSED.
WHEN YOU BUCCUMB TO THE TEMPTATIONS OF MUTANT IMMORALITY, YOU MUST ANSWER TO THE CHURCH OF HUMANITY!

AND FOR THESE CRIMES.
YOUR PUNISHMENT IS DEATH.
NEIN!!

BRETHREN, HE WEARS THE "X" - THE HATED ENEMY OF THE CHURCH-
WAIT! DON'T YOU RECOGNIZE HIM?

LEAVE HIM. THE SUPREME PONTIFF HAS PLANS FOR THIS ONE.
WAS WAR DAS...?
WHAT "PLANS"?!

WAIT--

--NEIN!!

NEIN...

THE PLAZA
OH, YEEPPPP...
IF THERE'S ONE RULE A SMART BUSINESS-MAN ALWAYS LIVES BY:
IT'S TO SAMPLE THE PRODUCT. NEVER MAKE THE DEAL WITHOUT TEST-DRIVING THE FLOOR MODEL.
YOU ARE GOOD.
I KNOW. HOW ABOUT THIS...?
GYUUUAAAHH...!
MY GOD...
EXPANSION IS INEVITABLE. A CHAIN OF X-RANCHES, FROM COAST-TO-COAST... ANOTHER PIECE OF MY EMPIRE...
LET THEM PICKET AND PROTEST... THERE ARE NO LAWS BEING BROKEN HERE... SIMPLY A SERVICE PROVIDED...
IT'S SUCH A GOOD IDEA. I'M GLAD I THOUGHT OF IT...
THEY WANT US... THEY WANT TO BE US. WE ARE SO IN VOGUE...

WOMAN, YOU TAKE MY BREATH AWAY...
WELL, THEN, YOU'RE GONNA LOVE THIS...
UNK.
WHA...?
GAAH—!
WHAT DID YOU DO TO ME?!
HOW LONG HAVE I BEEN—
TWO WEEKS, PORTER.
TWO WEEKS?!
AND YOU LOVED *EVERY* MINUTE OF IT. I TOOK YOU TO CHEMICAL *HEAVEN* AND BACK. YOU'LL TELL YOUR *GRANDKIDS* ABOUT IT...
YOU'RE *DEAD*.
NOT SO FAST, COWBOY. DON'T KILL THE *MESSENGER*.
A FRIEND OF MINE WANTS A *MEETING*. I'VE GOT THE TIME AND PLACE.
I SUGGEST YOU *TAKE* IT.

NNNN.
NNNNN... NEIN...
WHAT'S EATIN' AT YOU, PAL...?

TAVERN ON THE GREEN. WEDNESDAY. JULY 3.

ON THE CONTRARY... I'VE FINALLY COME INTO MY OWN.
WHAT THE HELL...?
I MUST ADMIT, YOU PICKED AN APPROPRIATE SPOT TO MEET. ONLY THE BEST FROM NOW ON.
I THINK YOU'VE GOT MORE POTENTIAL THAN YOU LET ON. ENOUGH WITH THIS MUTANT MISSIONARY NONSENSE.
ACTUALLY, A FRIEND OF MINE TRIED TO CONVINCE ME TO RUN FOR POLITICAL OFFICE...
NOW YOU'RE THINKING PROGRESSIVELY. IT'S ONLY A MATTER OF TIME BEFORE WE'RE RUNNING THINGS.
YOU SEE...? WE'RE A LOT ALIKE.
OH, I DON'T THINK SO.
YOU'RE SCUM, PORTER... PREYING ON THE WEAKNESSES OF OTHERS.
AND, PROUD OF IT.
THIS IS ONLY THE BEGINNING, SON. I'VE PLANTED MY FLAG ON THE MOUNTAINTOP. IT'S QUITE THE VIEW FROM UP HERE...

AND QUITE THE DROP...
THINGS HAVE CHANGED SINCE YOU'VE BEEN IN ORGY-LAND.
GO AHEAD... CALL YOUR PEOPLE...
FINE.
YOU KNOW, I'VE ALREADY GOT WALL-TO-WALL SUPPORT IN HERE. YOU MIGHT AS WELL GIVE UP NOW AND LET US DRILL INTO THAT SPINE OF YOURS...
REALLY...?
ARE THOSE MUTANTS OVER THERE...?
WOULDN'T KNOW, MA'AM.
COULD I GET SOME MORE ICE...?
DON'T TEMPT ME.
FUNNY... I THINK THINGS MIGHT TURN OUT DIFFERENTLY.
MR. FINCH...
...PROGRESS REPORT!
SORRY, PORTER... I DON'T WORK FOR YOU ANYMORE. NONE OF US DO.
SOME BIGSHOT NAMED WORTHINGTON DOUBLED YOUR OFFER.
HE'S RUNNING THE SHOW NOW.

FIRST RULE OF THE NEW MUTANT ECONOMY...
...OWNERSHIP...
YOU...
THAT'S RIGHT. I BOUGHT YOU OUT.
WORTHINGTON INDUSTRIES CONTROLS THE DESIGNER GENE TRADE NOW... AT LEAST HERE ON THE EAST COAST...
YOU CERTAINLY TRIED. I'VE GOT TO GIVE YOU THAT.
SORRY IT DIDN'T WORK OUT FOR YOU, PORTER.
BUT I'VE... I'VE STILL GOT CONTROL OF THE SOUTH AMERICAN CARTELS...
...THE NEXT TIME I SEE YOU... I'LL BE YOUR HEAD IN A...
BOY--
--!!!
HEY THERE, WARREN.
TALK ABOUT A BRAIN FREEZE. HUH...?

WELL-TIMED, IS HE...?

LIKE *WALT DISNEY*, BABY... FOR AS LONG AS WE *WANT* HIM LIKE THIS HE AINT VANISHING ANYTIME SOON.

GOOD.

YOU'RE NOT KEEPING THE JACKET...?

BUZZ OFF.

SO, WHERE'S THE "WALL-TO-WALL SUPPORT" HE WAS BLATHERING ABOUT...?

OH, MY BOD--!

NO IDEA. KEEP YOUR EYES PEELED, THOUGH.

I NEED TO GET PORTER'S LIEUTENANTS CRACKING DOWN ON EVERY DIRTBAG *DEALER* ON THEIR PAYROLLS.

...WE'LL HAVE THIS JUNK OFF THE STREETS BY MORNING.

NG--!

IGASPI

CHILDS. IT'S ME.

WE'RE MOVING ON TO *OPERATION CLEAN SWEEP*--

UH-OH.

BETTER POCKET THE CELL, WARREN.

MUUURRUHH...

SSSSLUNNNN!

GRUHHN--!

THE OTHER SHOE DROPS--!
CAREFUL, FOLKS!

HMMF.

WHOA--!
THEY'RE OUT OF CONTROL!
GET CLEAR, BOBBY!
BABY, FOR YOU TO SAY!
ON SECOND THOUGHT--
--YOU GET CLEAR. I'LL TAKE CARE OF THIS!

WHERE'S DRAKE?
INSIDE.
DON'T WORRY. HE'S FINE.
IF YOU SAY SO.
NOW LOOK– IF YOU'VE GOT A PROBLEM WITH THE WAY I'M–
GRRR
DRRR
OH. THERE YOU GUYS ARE...
...HOW'S IT GOING?
EVERYTHING ALL RIGHT IN THERE?
HEY. WHERE ARE WE... PARIS? I DON'T THINK SO.
IN FACT, I THINK THIS IS AS CLEAN AS WE'RE GONNA GET.
TRUST ME. EVERYTHING'S COOL....

NOT BAD, PEOPLE...

STUDYING THE CITY TRAFFICKING *INFRASTRUCTURE* ALREADY IN PLACE, IT WON'T TAKE LONG TO TAKE DESIGNER GENES OUT OF THE EQUATION.

PORTER'S STILL ON ICE. MAYBE THE *PROFESSOR'LL* KNOW WHAT TO DO WITH HIM.

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TAU...

AN INTERESTING *SIDE NOTE*– WE'VE NOW GOT SOME INSIGHT INTO *OTHER* ILLEGAL SUBSTANCE DISTRIBUTION. *MORE COMMON* VICES TO CONTEND WITH THAN MUTANT JEALOUSY...

EASY, COWBOY. ONE PROBLEM AT *A TIME*...

JA, A BATTLE *WON*. AS THE GLORIOUS WAR *CONTINUES*...

AND YOU MISSED ALL THE *FUN*, FUZZY.

FORGIVE MY ABSENCE, BUT IT WAS MORE THAN APPARENT THAT YOU WERE FINE *WITHOUT* ME.

I MARVEL AT YOUR ESPIONAGE SKILLS, FRÄULEIN.

CAREFUL THERE, KURT. YOU MIGHT CATCH AN *ENDORPHIN* RUSH.

I'M *COUNTING* ON IT, *MEIN VERRUKT FREUND!*

AND NOW, DEAR FAMILY, I BID YOU ALL *AUF WIEDERSEHEN*.

IS HE ACTING STRANGE... EVER SINCE EUROPE...
NAAHHH WAGNER'S A NATURAL HAM.
SO, PRESIDENT WORTHINGTON READY FOR THE CAMPAIGN TRAIL...?
YOU'RE HYSTERICAL.
SOMETIMES I FORGET THAT YOU AND SUMMERS GREW UP TOGETHER.
I GUESS SOME OF HIM DID RUB OFF ON YA.
IT TAKES A LOT TO LEAD THIS CREW. I CAN'T IMAGINE ANYONE WANTING THE JOB.
I SURE AS HELL DON'T. TOO MANY FREAKS TO KEEP TRACK OF.
MAYBE YER RIGHT. IN ANY CASE, CONGRATS.
THANKS. I STILL CAN'T STAND YOU, WOLVERINE.
LIKEWISE, BLONDE.
ADIOS, AMIGOS!
HASTA PASTA!
DON'T BE A STRANGER.
SO, STILL THINKING ABOUT FRANCHISING THE X-RANCH...?
OH, I DON'T KNOW. DOESN'T SEEM LIKE MUCH OF A PRIORITY ANYMORE. BUT DON'T WORRY, STUD. YOU'LL ALWAYS GET A DISCOUNT.

YER PUTTIN' ON A GOOD SHOW, PARTNER. ALL CHARM...
DANKE.
THIS IS GETTING TBE A HABIT... FINDIN' YOU OFF ALONE AND BROODING...
I'VE LEARNED MANY THINGS RECENTLY, LOGAN.
...THINGS THEY DO NOT NEED TO KNOW ABOUT. SO I WILL PLAY THE CLOWN FOR THEIR SAKE.
YOU'VE BEEN BROOKED EVER SINCE MONTANA.
FINDING YOU WAKING UP IN A COLD SWEAT...
FORGIVE ME, MEIN FREUND. I WILL NOT IMPOSE ON YOU AGAIN.
OH, BROTHER... CRY ME A RIVER, ELF...
IT'S A NEW WORLD, DIDJA HEAR. MCCOY'S HAVIN' ISSUES... CHUCK'S WAXIN' IN ANGRY GABBIDY, MAKES SIX BD AND GET'S SLICED FOR IT...
...AND WHAT WAS ME DOING THAT'S SO DIFFERENT FROM WHAT WE DO...?
I AGREE.
BUT FOR EVERY RAY OF HOPE, THERE IS A SHADOW OF DREAD. THINGS ARE FOREVER CHANGED, WHETHER WE LIKE IT OR NOT.
LIKE, I SAID, RAL. IT'S A NEW WORLD.
WE'VE CHANGED IT MORE THAN ONCE. WE'LL CHANGE IT AGAIN.
END