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AUTHORITY



WHAT IF... WOLVERINE

BATTLED WEAPON X



RANDALL
& RT
5¢



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VRMMMMMM



REPORT IN! WHAT'S HAPPENED? IS THE SUBJECT SECURE?

HE... GOT AWAY.



NO. HE'LL BE WARY NOW AND WE DON'T HAVE THE TIME. MOVE ON TO THE BACKUP SUBJECT.



IN THE WORLD YOU KNOW, THE MAN CALLED LOGAN--DRUNK, BITTER AND **SELF-DESTRUCTIVE**-- WAS EASY PREY FOR HIS ATTACKERS.

BUT THIS IS ANOTHER WORLD. AN ALTERNATE REALITY WHERE POSSIBILITY AND CHANCE SAW THINGS OCCUR DIFFERENTLY.

ONE OF AN INFINITE NUMBER OF SUCH REALITIES INTO WHICH I HAVE THE POWER AND THE DUTY TO GAZE.



I AM THE
WATCHER.

AND IN
THE REALITY I
VIEW TODAY, LOGAN
NEVER BECAME
WOLVERINE---

--NEVER
BATTLED
THE HULK--

--NEVER
JOINED THE BAND
OF HEROES
KNOWN AS
THE X-MEN.

NO, THIS
REALITY HOLDS
THE ANSWER TO
THE QUESTION--

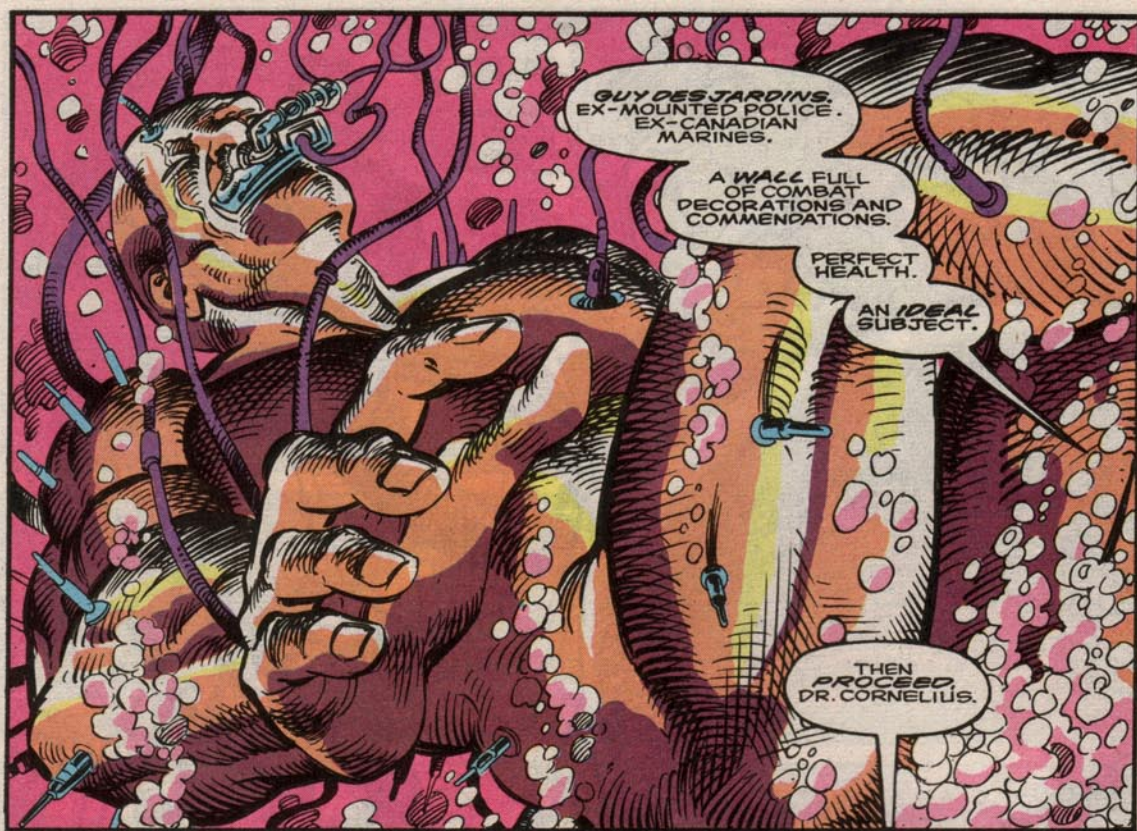
--WHAT IF--
INSTEAD OF
BECOMING
WEAPON X--

WHAT IF

LOGAN BATTLED WEAPON X?

KURT BUSIEK • WRITER
JANICE CHIANG • PENCILER
LETTERER
RON RANDALL • PENCILER
STEVEN WHITAKER • COLORIST
TOM DE FALCO • EDITOR IN CHIEF
ART NICHOLS • INKER
ROSTOKAR • EDITOR

AND SPECIAL THANKS TO
BARRY WINDSOR-SMITH,
FOR INSPIRATION ABOVE
AND BEYOND.



GUY DESJARDINS.
EX-MOUNTED POLICE.
EX-CANADIAN
MARINES.

A WALL FULL OF COMBAT
DECORATIONS AND
COMMENDATIONS.

PERFECT
HEALTH.

AN IDEAL
SUBJECT.

THEN
PROCEED
DR. CORNELIUS.

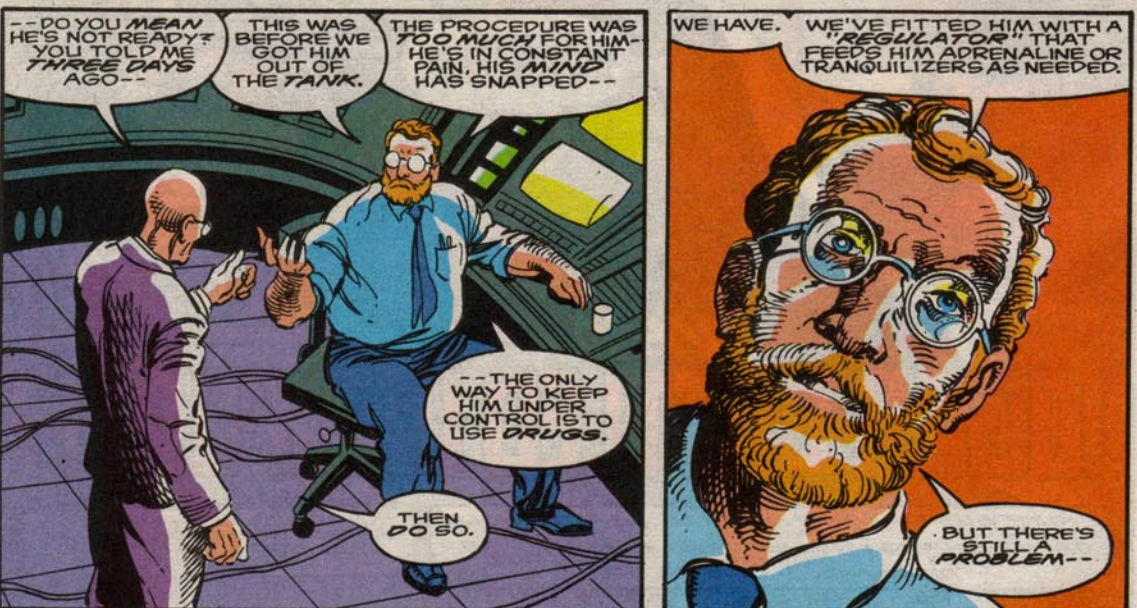


--PROCEDURE WAS A
SUCCESS. SHUTTING
DOWN.

WHAT ABOUT
THE ADAMANTIUM
BUILD-UP IN
HIS ARMS?

WE'RE NOT
SURE IF THAT
WAS A SOFTWARE
GLITCH OR
A HARDWARE
FAILURE.

WE'RE
LOOKING
INTO IT.



--DO YOU MEAN
HE'S NOT READY?
YOU TOLD ME
THREE DAYS
AGO--

THIS WAS
BEFORE WE
GOT HIM
OUT OF
THE TANK.

THE PROCEDURE WAS
TOO MUCH FOR HIM--
HE'S IN CONSTANT
PAIN. HIS MIND
HAS SNAPPED--

--THE ONLY
WAY TO KEEP
HIM UNDER
CONTROL IS TO
USE DRUGS.

THEN
DO SO.

WE HAVE. WE'VE FITTED HIM WITH A
"REGULATOR" THAT
FEEDS HIM ADRENALINE OR
TRANQUILIZERS AS NEEDED.

BUT THERE'S
STILL A
PROBLEM--

GNAARGH!

JOHNSON!
JEEZT,
JOHNSON!

TRANK HIM,
SOMEONE!
QUICK!

I'M
TRYING!
I'M--



--UK--

YOU SEE?
THAT'S THE
BEST WE
CAN DO.

HE'S EITHER A COMPLETE MURDEROUS
BERSERKER OR HE'S UNCONSCIOUS.
NOTHING IN-BETWEEN.

THOSE SPIKES--
THE EXCESS
ADAMANTIUM--

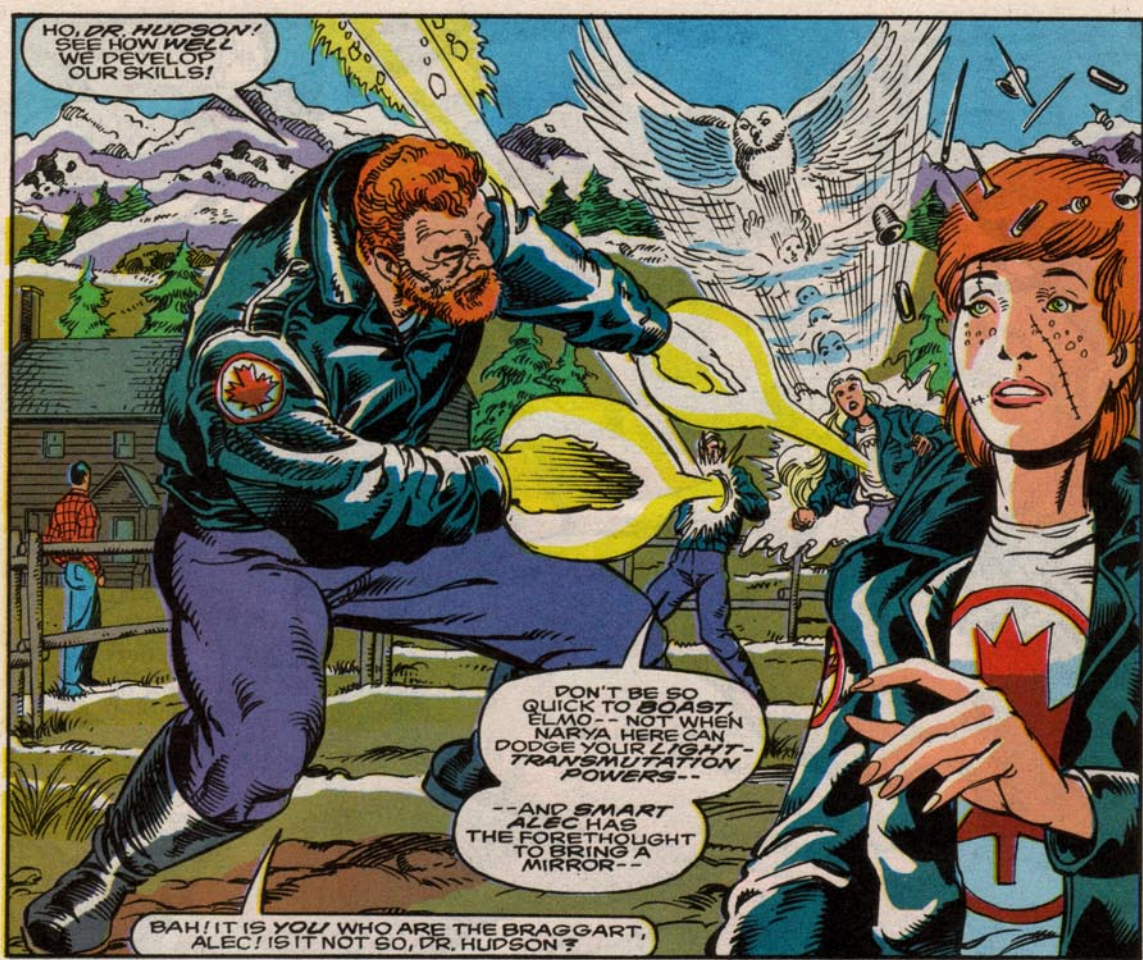
THE
PROJECT'S
CLEARLY A
FAILURE. STILL,
WE CAN OBSERVE
HIM AND LEARN.

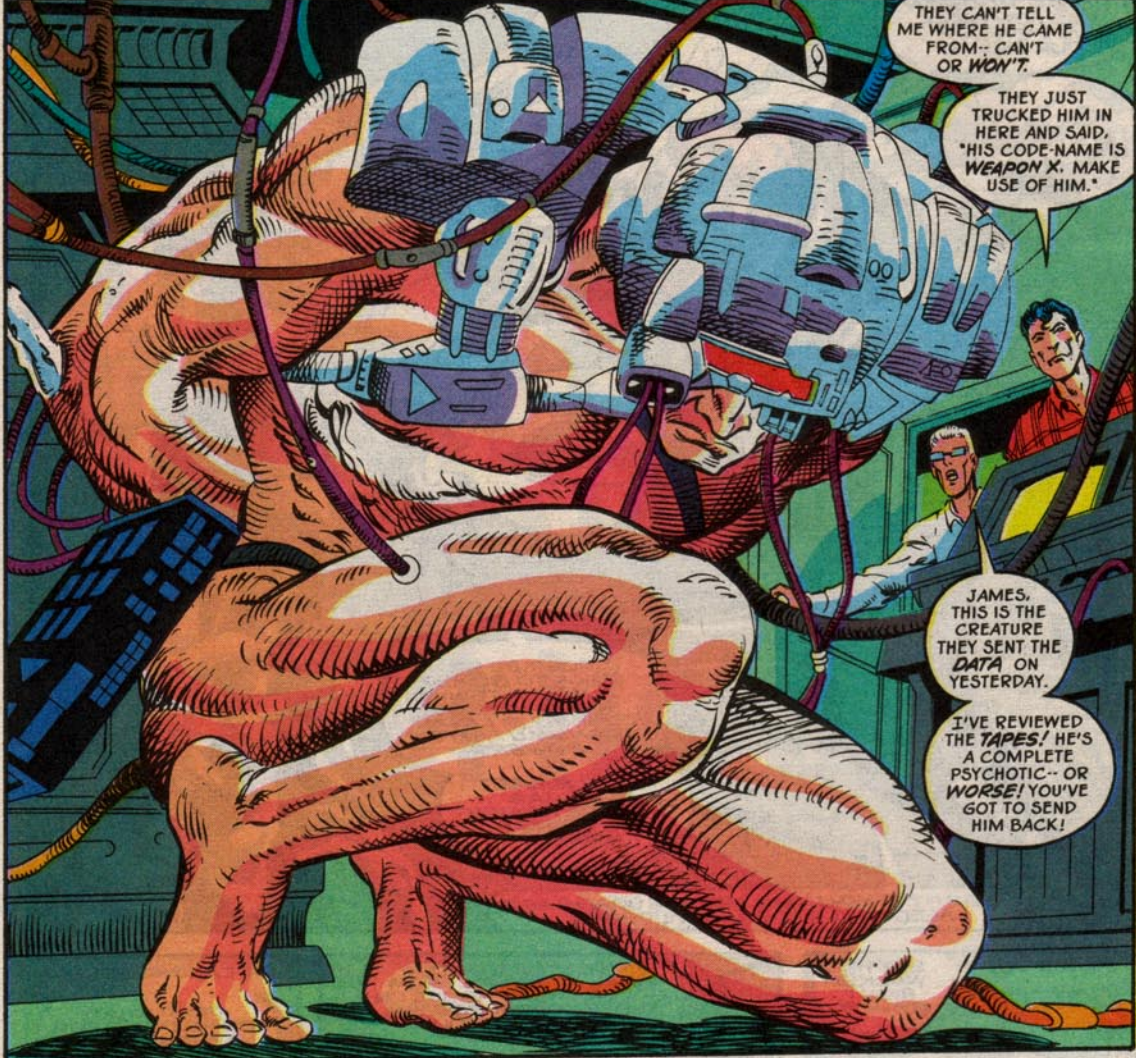
YOU MEAN-- YOU'D LET A
MONSTER LIKE THAT LIVE?

MY DEAR HINES,
DON'T BE NAIVE.

THERE IS GOING TO
BE AN EXPLOSION.
WHAT WE MUST DO--

--IS MAKE
SURE IT BLOWS UP IN
SOMEBODY ELSE'S
FACE.



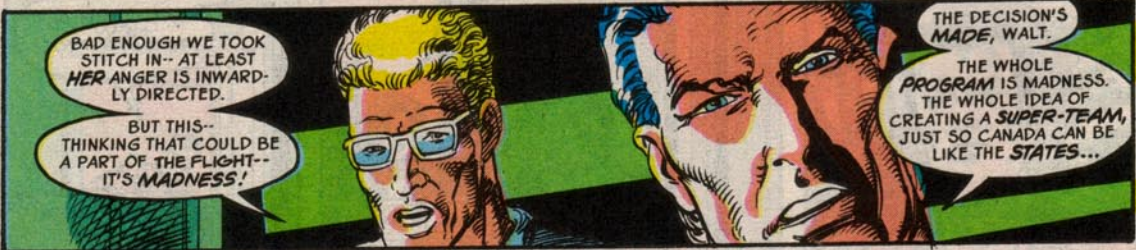


THEY CAN'T TELL ME WHERE HE CAME FROM-- CAN'T OR WON'T.

THEY JUST TRUCKED HIM IN HERE AND SAID, "HIS CODE-NAME IS **WEAPON X**. MAKE USE OF HIM."

JAMES, THIS IS THE CREATURE THEY SENT THE **DATA** ON YESTERDAY.

I'VE REVIEWED THE **TAPES**! HE'S A COMPLETE **PSYCHOTIC**-- OR **WORSE!** YOU'VE GOT TO SEND HIM BACK!



BAD ENOUGH WE TOOK STITCH IN-- AT LEAST **HER** ANGER IS INWARDLY DIRECTED.

BUT THIS-- THINKING THAT COULD BE A PART OF THE FLIGHT-- IT'S **MADNESS!**

THE DECISION'S MADE, WALT.

THE WHOLE PROGRAM IS MADNESS. THE WHOLE IDEA OF CREATING A **SUPER-TEAM**, JUST SO CANADA CAN BE LIKE THE **STATES...**



BUT THERE'S A MAN BEHIND THOSE RESTRAINTS. A LOST MIND THAT'S DESPERATE FOR HELP

HOW CAN I TURN HIM AWAY?



SOMEDAY YOUR COMPASSION'S GOING TO BE STRETCHED TOO FAR, JAMES. MAYBE SOON.

AND WHEN IT IS--

--I HOPE THE COST ISN'T TOO MUCH TO BEAR.*

CLANG CLANG CLANG CLANG

WHAT IS IT? WHAT'S HAPPENED?

WE--WE WERE AMELIORATING THE NARCOTICS ON WEAPON X--

--HE BROKE LOOSE-- KILLED DR. LANGKOWSKI--

--HE HEADED WEST--

ALERT THE AUTHORITIES! I DON'T CARE ABOUT THE SECURITY PROCEDURES-- THEY'VE GOT TO KNOW!

I WANT ALL NEWS FEEDS MONITORED AND--

--OH, NO.

HE'S ALREADY REACHED KENORA.

ACTIVATE THE FLIGHT!

SIR-- WE'VE JUST RECEIVED ORDERS NOT TO TAKE ANY ACTION WITHOUT--

HANG THE ORDERS. I'M TAKING FULL RESPONSIBILITY.

ACTIVATE THE FLIGHT-- NOW!

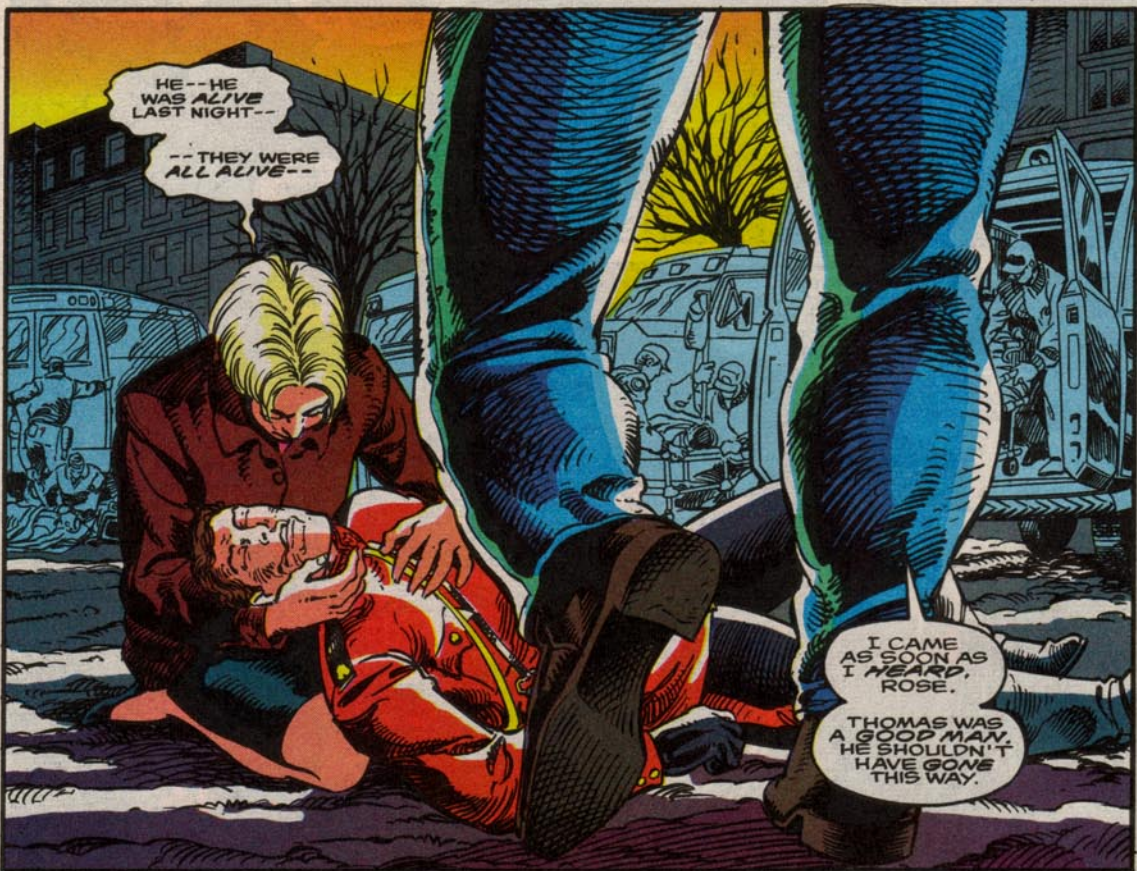


WE'LL REACH
KENORA IN
FIVE MINUTES.
DR. HUDSON, DO
WE LAND?

NO--WE CAN'T
DO ANYTHING
FOR THEM.

HEAD
WEST--FULL
SPEED.

WE'VE GOT
A MANIAC
TO STOP.

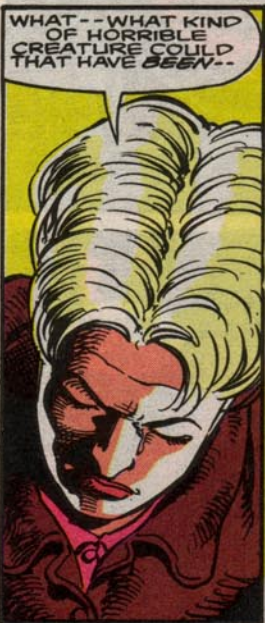


HE--HE
WAS ALIVE
LAST NIGHT--

--THEY WERE
ALL ALIVE--

I CAME
AS SOON AS
I HEARD,
ROSE.

THOMAS WAS
A GOOD MAN.
HE SHOULDN'T
HAVE GONE
THIS WAY.



WHAT--WHAT KIND
OF HORRIBLE
CREATURE COULD
THAT HAVE BEEN--



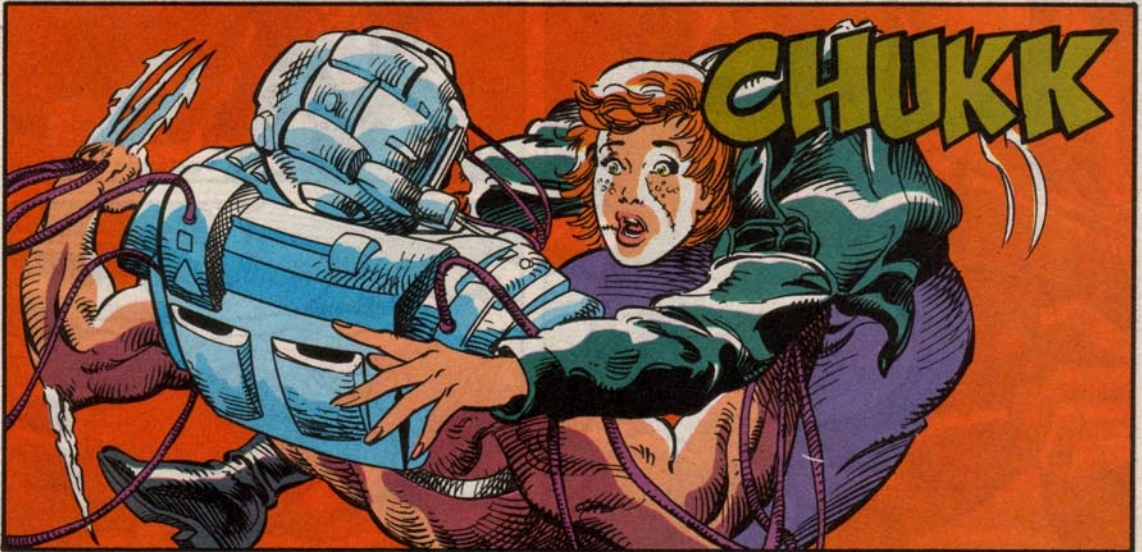
--WHAT COULD IT
HAVE BEEN--TO
DO THIS?!

I DON'T
KNOW, ROSIE.
BUT I'LL TELL
YOU THIS--



--HIM AN' ME
ARE GONNA
MEET UP--

--AN' ONLY ONE
OF US IS GONNA
WALK AWAY!





-- CLOSE.



SNOWBIRD!
NARYA-- FOLLOW
HIM! WE CAN'T
LOSE TRACK OF
HIM NOW!

SHE-- SHE'S DEAD--

-- THIS ISN'T
LIKE
TRAINING--

HUDSON--
CAN'T YOU CALL
THE AVENGER--
SOMEONE WHO
KNOWS WHAT
TO DO--?



WHEN WE WENT
AGAINST ORDERS
AND BROKE
SECURITY, THEY
RETIRED OUR
COMMUNICATION
CODES. WE'RE
CUT OFF.

BESIDES, IN
THE TIME IT WOULD
TAKE THE AMERICANS
TO GET HERE, HOW
MANY MORE WILL
HE KILL?



WALT WAS
RIGHT--
THE COST
IS TOO
HIGH.

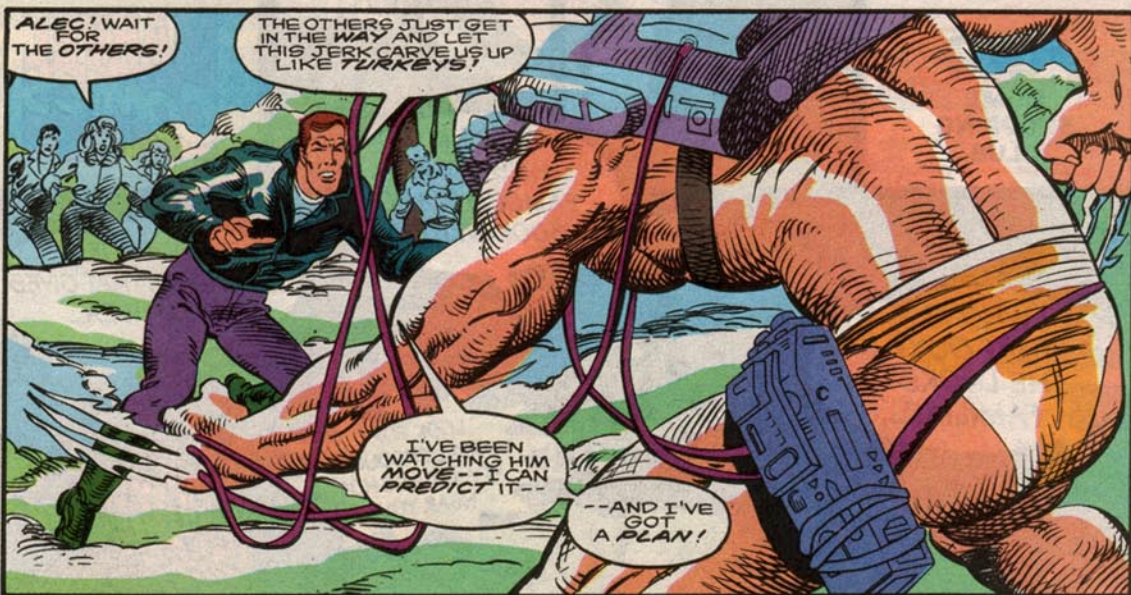
CHANTILLY-- CALL JOHNSON.
WE NEED THE **GROUNDHOG**
ARMOR.

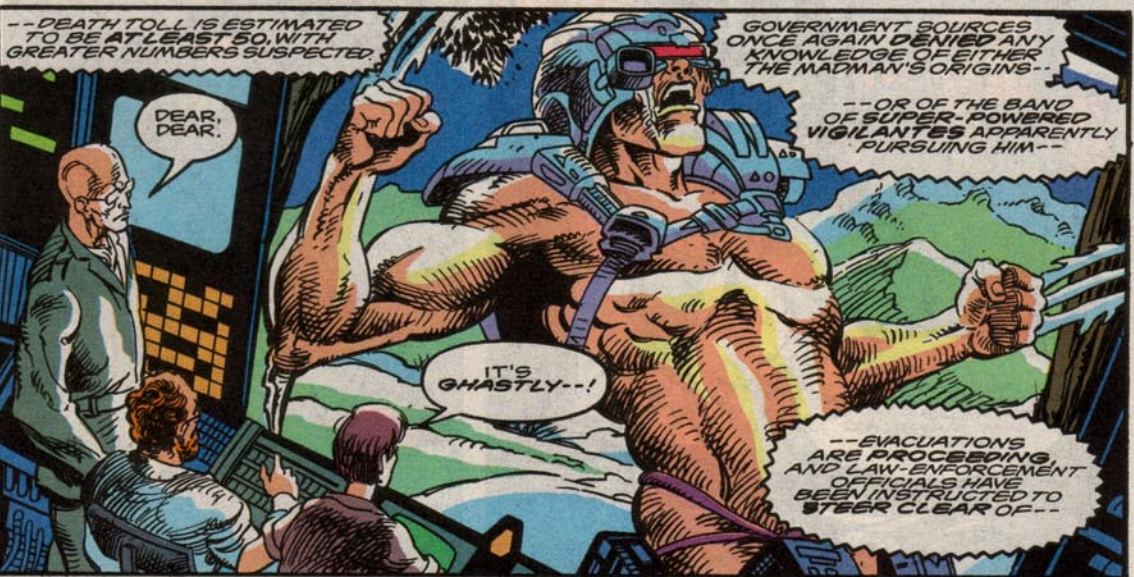
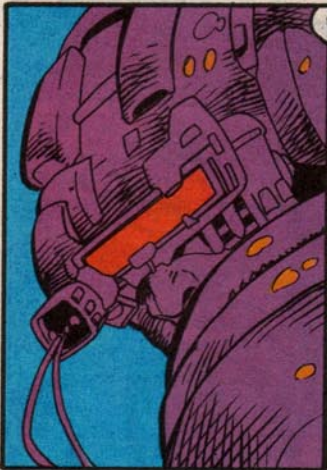
BUT-- WE
HAVEN'T
GOT A
PILOT.

YES WE DO.



I'M PILOTING
IT MYSELF.





ADMIRING YOUR HANDIWORK?

EH--?

COMMANDER LOGAN?

THE PRIME SUBJECT--

--THE ONE WHO ESCAPED--



WHAT?!

YOU MEAN THOSE MEN-- THE ATTACK--

--YOU WANTED TO TURN ME--



--INTO THAT?!



-- MUST PROTEST, COMMANDER LOGAN. YOU HAVE NO WARRANT NO OFFICIAL STANDING--

BUTTON IT, CUEBALL.

WHAT YOU'VE DONE TO HIS SKELETON--HIS REFLEXES--

-- THOSE DEPARTMENT H TYROS DON'T STAND A CHANCE AGAINST HIM. MAYBE NO ONE DOES.



THANKS FOR THE LOAN OF YOUR COMPUTER. THE MORE I'VE DOWNLOADED--PLUS THE OTHER EVIDENCE I'VE AMASSED--

--IS ENOUGH AT LEAST TO PROVE THE GOVERNMENT'S TRYING TO COVER UP ITS OWN INVOLVEMENT IN SETTING A KILLER LOOSE.

I HOPE YOU LIKE REPORTERS--



NO!

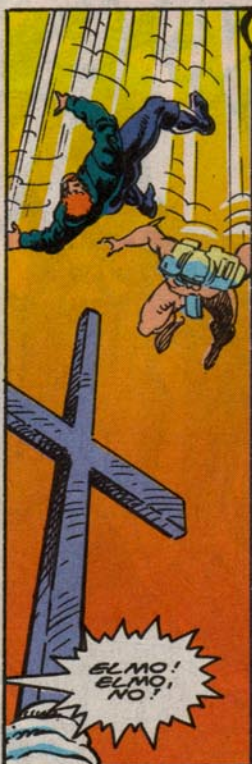
WE MUST NOT TREAT THIS--THIS ANIMAL WITH RESPECT! HE MUST FEEL OUR WRATH! AS SWIFT AND BRUTAL AS HE IS HIMSELF!

HRR?

ELMO! DON'T GET THAT CLOSE TO HIM!

HAH! EVEN THIS CREATURE ISN'T CRAZY ENOUGH TO HARM ME WHEN WE'RE 200 FEET IN THE AIR--

--AND I'M THE ONLY THING HOLDING HIM--





OH, NO IT ISN'T GOING TO HAPPEN THIS WAY.



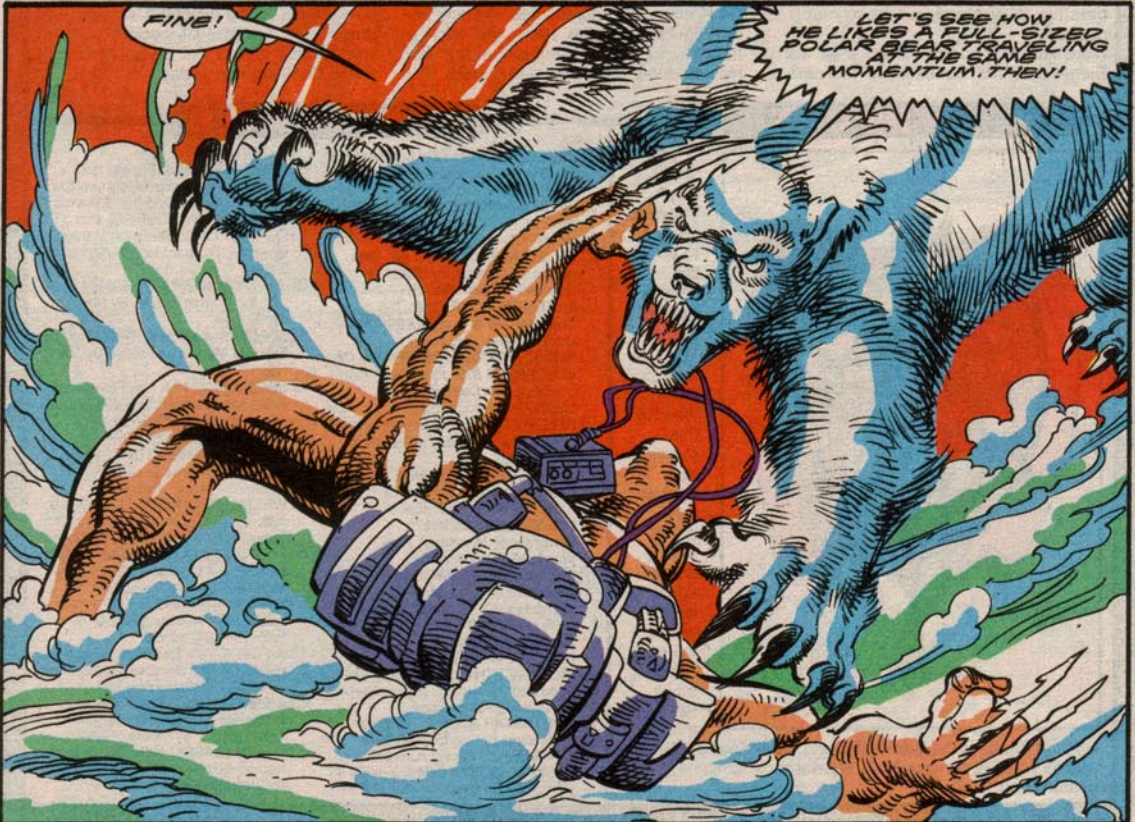
YOU'RE NOT GOING TO LIVE WHILE HE DIES.

YOU'RE NOT.

YOU'RE NOT!



NARYA! YOU CAN'T HOPE TO CHALLENGE HIM IN OWL FORM!



FINE!

LET'S SEE HOW HE LIKES A FULL-SIZED POLAR BEAR TRAVELING WITH THE SAME MOMENTUM, THEN!

AMMM



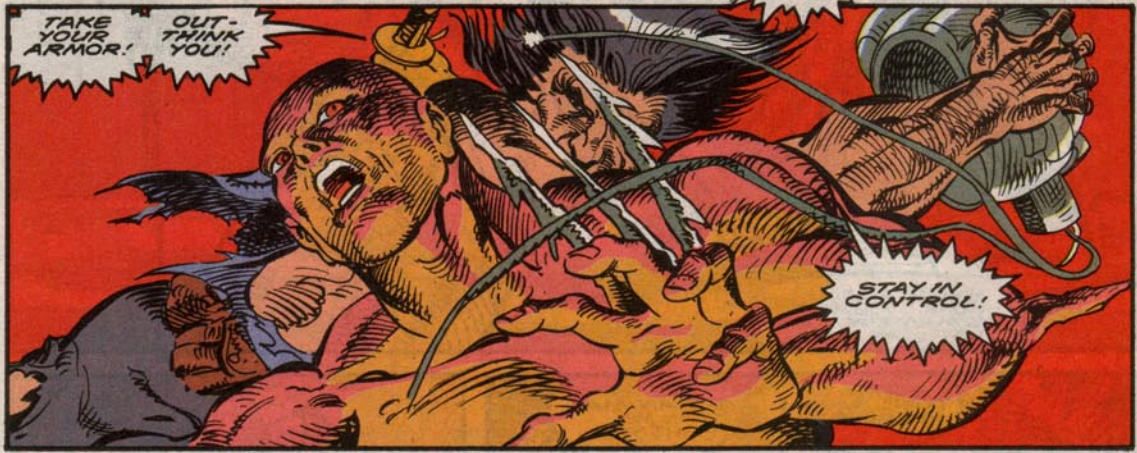














--BUT MY BRAIN
SAYS I DON'T
DARE RISK IT!

SHHKK



HKUKH
HECCH

COMMANDER
LOGAN!
STOP! YOU'RE
UNDER ARREST!



HE CAN'T
THINK HE CAN
OUTRUN US. THERE'S
NOTHING UP THAT
WAY BUT THE--



-- RIVER.

THE WAY
HE WAS WOUNDED--
THE BLOOD HE LOST--
HE MUST HAVE BEEN
DEAD BEFORE HE
HIT THE WATER...

YEAH. I
GUESS THOSE
DOCUMENTS
WON'T GO
ANYWHERE...

[illegible][illegible]

THE SHADOWNY
"DEPARTMENT H" HAS
BEEN SCRAPPED, AMID
FURTHER RESIGNATIONS
AMONG THE INTELLIGENCE
COMMUNITY--

The Channel 5 logo, featuring the word "CHANNEL" in a stylized, blocky font above a large, bold number "5" which is enclosed within a circular frame.

TO ABSENT
FRIENDS.



BUT IN THIS WORLD, AND
Few others, the man
named Logan has
found a hard-won
inner peace.

I AM THE WATCHER,
AND THIS
I HAVE SEEN.

MAY THEY
STAY
THAT WAY.

END

WHAT NOW?

Dear What Now?

1) One specific thing I liked about the issue: Mr. Harris. The way he draws the Punisher and his strike team. There are no spandex bodysuits, no bulging muscles sticking out, they just look like real soldiers.

2) One specific thing I didn't like about the issue: No Watcher. Without him there to explain who's who and what's led up to the event on hand, I wouldn't know what's going on most of the time.

3) 3 concepts I would like to see most in future issues:

1) What if Spider-Man had killed Wolverine? I'm referring to the fight they had in the German Cemetery. Spidey had a chance to break Wolverine's neck and didn't but if he did, can you imagine the Catastrophic Consequences to the X-Men and to Spidey's mind?

2) What if Spider-Man had become Venom? In VENOM, LETHAL PROTECTOR Eddie Brock and the symbiote were separated and Eddie almost died from it. Now what if he did die and for Spidey to stop the new symbiotes and live, he must join up with the original, but it wants it to be permanent? Think of those Catastrophic Consequences.

3) This is one vote for Martinez's idea from issue #56. What if Spider-Man had been Stranded on Deathlok the Demolisher's World? Now there's a world of Catastrophic Consequences.

Justin Argona

(Address withheld by request)

Thanks for the suggestions, Justin. If we didn't get thoughtful letters like yours, the Consequences would be...well, you know.

Dear WHAT NOW,

Issue #58, "What if the Punisher Had Killed Spider-Man?" Wow! I've not been a very active collector of this comic before (mostly because I'm not familiar with some of the characters) but stick with the Top 10 characters and their history that makes history and I'll be around much more often. Your comic has great hopes of making stardom as long as you steer clear of taking the "safe," or "conservative" way in telling possible consequences and let your creative minds (worst and best situations) run the show.

All right, as I recall you asked for things I didn't like about the issue. Batten down the hatches and pay close attention as most of the dislikes can actually be taken as things I did like throughout the rest of the book.

Dislike #1: I didn't like the fact that the Punisher wiped out Spidey's worst enemies (all of them, all by himself, all in one final swoop). These guys gave Spidey the

toughest fights of his life, I mean what's happening here? Are you saying they were really that simple, that easy? This is Marvel's most popular super hero we're talking about. That's like saying Evander Holyfield isn't good enough to fight top contenders such as Foreman, Bowe, Morrison, or even Tyson. Surely we agree that you're not recognized as a true champion fighting only wanna-bes.

However, in your defense:

Like #1: I see the angle you're trying to hit, taking revenge. Paybacks are sweet, aren't they?

Dislike #2: The Punisher being not only attacked (which he rightly deserved) but also being trashed as badly as he was by the Spider's friends. Come on, please, did we forget our number one Punisher isn't going to be thrown like a rag doll (then run away?!). I don't care who it is doing the throwing.

However, in your defense:

Like #2: (See Like #1) Also, they were his friends, pretty angry friends, at that.

Like #3: If-If-If the Punisher were to end his life over this type of situation (however, he has been committing more suicides lately) you guys picked a Class A way to end it, along with the story. See what I mean by giving your imagination freedom without fear of some die-hard Punisher fans (or those that prefer reading G-rated books) thinking you've gone nuts? I approve.

Finally, Like #4: Spider-Man's death. Not extremely dramatic but very ingenious.

Well, wow, what a great comic. Hope this wasn't too long. When you ask for responses and feelings you better be prepared for what you may receive. Oh, chalk up another interested reader in seeing a universe-wide reversal of characters (why not make it a two, or maybe four part series for extra depth while you're at it). Stay with the great work shown in this issue and please try to remember staying closer to characters and events we common folks know about. Thanks for your time.

Brad "tough but honest" Robinson, Jr.
2900-80 Daisy Lane
Dover, PA 17315

Thank you for your detailed analysis, Brad. Keep living up to that name.

Dear Rob and Paula,

After a seemingly endless string of poor excuses for WHAT IFs, you've regained footing with "The Day I Killed Spider-Man," #58. From the cover, wonderfully drawn and vibrantly colored, the issue was a good example of what WHAT IF should be like. (Already one thing I did like!)

Chuck Dixon brought his usual knack for action to these pages, yet tempered it

with an interesting story and an ending that I wouldn't have expected. Chuck did such a good job because he wrote a solid story; WHAT IFs never were passed as great literature but always delivered a fun story speculating on the "never-happens" of the Marvel Universe. If only you would have more continuations of previous WHAT IFs, such as Roy Thomas's "Timequake" but without the intertwining storyline, a story like this could become the cornerstone of a divergent universe. The only part about this story that really needed improvement (one thing I didn't like) was the length. Chuck seemed a little rushed in telling the story. With extra time, I know that Dixon could have expanded on Frank Castle's feelings much in the same thought-provoking manner he uses on both Frank and that other vigilante's titles. Still, Chuck deserves credit for bringing some much needed energy to WHAT IF.

Then, of course, there's the great art team. WHAT IFs art teams have been lacking in the prowess to be able to portray Marvel's characters in a sleek and classic method. Yet with Gordon Purcell you've got a seasoned talent who is slowly rising to stardom at both Marvel and elsewhere, with complementing inks and the colors of regular Spider colorist Bob Sharen. Gordon definitely knows how to draw the characters, and his art practically jumped off the page. I was elated to see some real talent returning to these pages. I have no problem with your using newcomers, as many become superstars, yet some of the latest work just was, well, sloppy. And it showed. Thanks for restoring the faith. Gordon's welcome back anytime he wants.

Well, here's the hardest part: the three concepts I'd like to see in WHAT IF. Here goes nothing.

1) What if Harry Osborn was bitten by the Spider?

2) What if Captain America had died?

3) What if Stan Lee and Jack Kirby worked at D.C.?

Sorry, couldn't resist that last one, but hey—it's legitimate! As a final request, let me say that I abhor the practice of three stories crammed into one issue, as there's not much 8 pages can really do. Thanks for your time, and I'll see you in 30 days!

Joey Marchese

P.O. Box 2197

Union, NJ 07083-2197

Look for more of Gordon Purcell's work in NIGHT THRASHER #13, Joey! We think Gordon's a real living deity too!

WHAT NEXT: If you have an opinion, then "What If War Machine Hadn't Destroyed the Living Laser?" is the book for you! Three possible endings are available from which to choose! You make the call!

WE APPRECIATE YOUR COMMENTS. PLEASE WRITE TO "WHAT NOW,"
C/O MARVEL COMICS GROUP, 387 PARK AVE. SOUTH, NY, NY, 10016.
PLEASE TELL US IF YOU WOULD LIKE YOUR ADDRESS WITHHELD.

ROB TOKAR PAULA FOYE
EDITOR ASST. EDITOR