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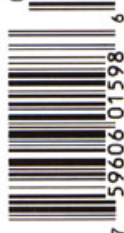
AUTHORITY




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ON THE
OUTSKIRTS
OF THE
CITY OF NEW
ORLEANS...
ON THE
RIVER ROAD,
WITHIN
SIGHT OF
THE MISSIS-
SIPPI...

DIS
PLACE
HASN'T
CHANGED.

A

NEITHER
HAS
WHAT
PASSES
FOR
SECURITY.



BEEN
SNEAKIN'
IN JUST
LIKE THIS
SINCE I
WAS A
PUP.

NOBODY,
BUT ONE,
WAS WEL-
COMING
ME IN-
SIDE
BACK
THEN.

AND I'M
SURE
NONE OF
THEM
INSIDE
WILL BE
ROLLIN'
OUT A RED
CARPET
FOR THE
RETURN
OF DIS
THIEF
TONIGHT.



TOO
QUIET...

...LIKE A
FUNERAL
PARLOR.

THE HOUSE
WAS
ALWAYS
FULL OF
WILD GOIN'S
ON WHEN
SHE WAS
ALIVE.



DREW
ME TO
HER
LIKE A
CANDLE
TO A
FLAME.

PEOPLE
ALWAYS
WARNIN'
ME THAT
I'D BE
THE ONE
TO GET
BURN'T.



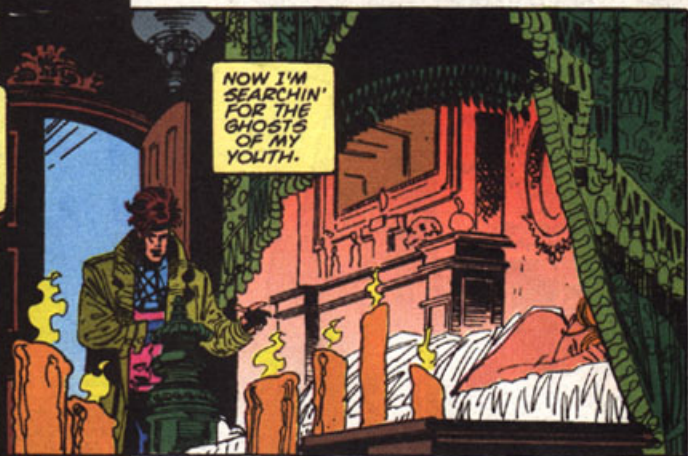
BELLE.

YOU'RE THE ONLY ONE THAT COULD BRING ME BACK TO DIS CITY.

YOU WERE THE ONLY REASON I STAYED AS LONG AS I DID.

AN' YOU WERE THE REASON I HAD TO LEAVE.

NOW I'M SEARCHIN' FOR THE GHOSTS OF MY YOUTH.



IT'S TRUE...



"...YOU'RE ALIVE, CHERIE..."

"...YOU ARE ALIVE."





HONOR amongst THIEVES

~ STORY/ART HOWARD / LEE / KLAUS
MACKIE / WEEKS / JANSON ~

COLORIST STEVE BUCCELLATO LETTERER RICHARD STARKINGS EDITOR BOB HARRAS CHIEF TOM DeFALCO

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Pah!
FOR A LONG
TIME I BE
HEARIN' THAT
TRASH FROM
THE LIKES
OF YOU!



ASSASSINING
ALWAYS TALKIN'
ABOUT KILLIN'
LI'L OL' REMY
LEBEAU!



SAYIN'
I AIN'T GOOD
ENOUGH TO
MARRY NO
ASSASSIN
WOMAN!

'CEPT
THE WOMAN,
SHE WAN'
TO MARRY
ME.



BEST
OF YOU
NEVER
COULD TAKE
ME IN A
FAIR
FIGHT!



THAT'S WHEN
I LEARNED
TO FIGHT NONE
TOO FAIR!



NOTHIN'S
CHANGED,
EH!



EVERYTHING'S
CHANGED...
GAMBIT!



MY BEAUTIFUL DAUGHTER HOVERS NEAR THE EDGE OF DEATH BECAUSE OF YOU AND YOUR NEW COMRADES.

TWO OF MY CHILDREN YOU HAVE TAKEN FROM ME, SO...



...I WILL HAVE THE PLEASURE OF TAKING YOUR LIFE IN A DUEL OF HONOR, SIR!



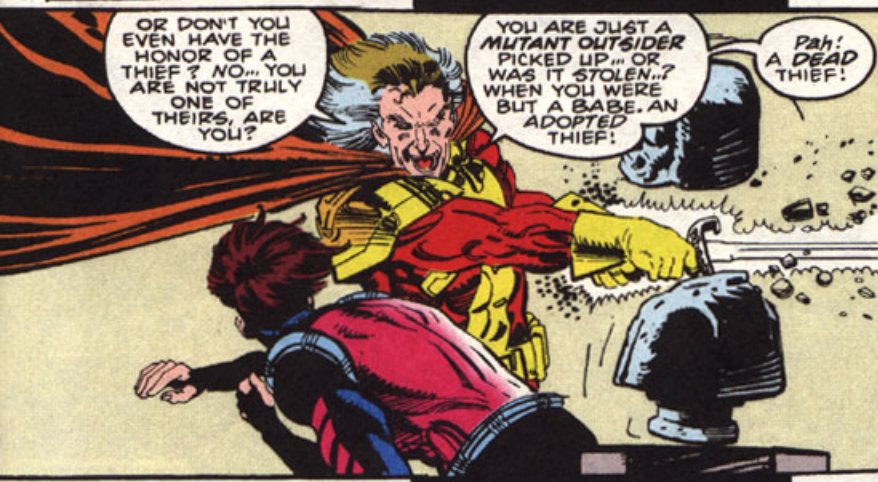
PICK UP THE SWORD, LEBEAU.

MARIUS, I DID NOT COME HERE TO DUEL WITH YOU --



THEN YOU SHOULD NOT HAVE COME AT ALL, SON-IN-LAW.

NO MORE WORDS: PICK UP THE SWORD IF YOU HAVE ANY HONOR.




OR DON'T YOU EVEN HAVE THE HONOR OF A THIEF? NO... YOU ARE NOT TRULY ONE OF THEIRS, ARE YOU?

YOU ARE JUST A MUTANT OUTSIDER PICKED UP... OR WAS IT STOLEN...? WHEN YOU WERE BUT A BABE. AN ADOPTED THIEF!

Pah! A DEAD THIEF!



ALL RIGHT. WE FIGHT THEN.




BUT YOU SHOULD KNOW THAT YOUR SON, JULIEN, IS NOT DEAD.

LAST NIGHT, HE AND I FOUGHT AFTER HE HAD MURDERED MY BROTHER, HENRI.

THE OUTCOME WAS NOT TO HIS ADVANTAGE.

BUT IT WAS HE WHO SENT ME DOWN HERE...


...BY WARNING ME TO STAY AWAY!




THAT THING IS NOT MY SON!

MY SON WAS A MAN OF HONOR.


YOU TOOK HIS HONOR, AND HIS LIFE, AWAY FROM HIM, THIEF!



THE CREATURE WHICH WALKS AS MY SON WALKED WOULD BETRAY HIS FAMILY, HIS FATHER, HIS GUILD!



IT IS AN ABOMINATION THAT MUST BE DESTROYED.



I DIDN'T COME HERE TO ARGUE ABOUT EVENTS OF THE PAST WITH MY FATHER-IN-LAW.

THIS FIGHT...

...ENDS...

...NOW.



POOM

CALL
OFF YOUR
KILLERS,
MARIUS.

I HAVE
NO DESIRE
TO KILL
MY FATHER-
IN-LAW!

KILL THIS
HONORLESS
MUTANT
THIEF...

NOW.

KTASH

PARDON
ME,
FELLAS...

...BUT I
DON'T TAKE
KINDLY TO
ALL THIS
KILLIN'
TALK.

GAMBIT
HERE IS A
TEAM-MATE
O' MINE...

...AND
EVEN
THOUGH
HE DOES
TEND TO
RUN OFF
AT THE
MOUTH...

...I
LIKE HIM
THE WAY
HE IS--
ALIVE!

Y'ALL
TAKE
CARE
NOW!







YOU KNOW THE ELIXIR CAN SAVE HER; TAKE HER TO YOUR GUILD FATHER. A TASTE IS ALL IT WOULD TAKE.

SAVE MY DAUGHTER, REMY LEBEAU... SAVE YOUR WIFE!

TOO MUCH TO ASK, EH? YOUR SECRETS CAN'T BE SHARED OUTSIDE THE GUILD? OR COULD YOU POSSIBLY BETRAY YOUR FAMILY FOR THE LIFE OF ONE YOU PROMISED TO CHERISH IN SICKNESS AND IN HEALTH...?

YOU WOULD HAVE TO GIVE UP ALL CLAIMS TO HONOR.

WE'LL BE OFF NOW.

LET ME TAKE HER, GAMBIT. IT'S A LONG WAY DOWN.

ROGUE... YOU SURE?




I'M SURE.

DO RIGHT BY MY DAUGHTER, LEBEAU!

GAMBIT AND ROGUE'S CAPTURE IS SERVED FROM THE DOWNS OF THE NIGHT...



...AND, AS THE SAYING GOES, "IF LOOKS COULD KILL..."



FOR NOW, THE
BURNING RAGE
IS DIRECTED
ELSEWHERE.

SEPARATING HIMSELF
FROM THE SHADOWS...

...THE DARK
ASSASSIN SLIPS
INSIDE...



...TO FACE
THOSE HE
ONCE
CALLED FAMILY.

NOW AN OUT-
CAST AMONG
KILLERS...



... AN ASSASSIN
WITHOUT HONOR...

... HE IS
THE ENEMY.



THE BATTLE IS
SWIFT, EFFICIENT
AND BRUTAL.

ONE BY ONE,
ASSASSINS
FALL BEFORE
THE MURDEROUS
ATTACK.

NONE ARE
SPARED
HIS RAGE.



FRIENDS AND
FAMILY ALIKE
FALL BEFORE
THE MURDEROUS
ATTACK.



THE BLOOD OF CHILDHOOD
PLAYMATES MINGLES AT THE
FEET OF ONE THEY ONCE
CALLED BROTHER.

TONIGHT, THEIR
WOMEN WILL WEEP.



FATHER,
WE WILL
HAVE
WORDS.

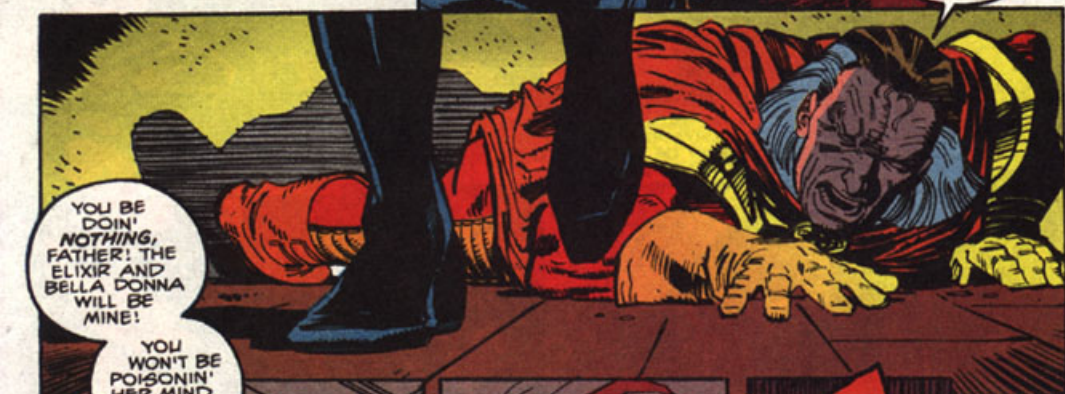
I AM
FATHER
TO YOU NO
LONGER,
KILLER!

THE
DAY YOU
CAME INTO
THIS WORLD
IS A BLIGHT
ON THE
MEMORY OF
YOUR DEAR
MOTHER.

PUT AN
END TO MY
SUFFERING...

... KILL
ME NOW,
JULIEN!





SHRAKT

DE OLD WAYS BE DEAD!

IN AN UNDERGROUND
CHAMBER BENEATH
THE FRENCH QUARTER...

...THE TITHING
CEREMONY
COMMENCES.

MEMBERS OF THE TEN FAMILIES
OF THIEVES STAND READY TO
PRESENT TRIBUTE TO THE TITHE
COLLECTOR IN EXCHANGE FOR...

... LONG
LIFE. IT
IS OUR
PACT.

IT IS
YOUR
RIGHT.

THE ELIXIR OF LIFE
IN EXCHANGE FOR
THE TITHE, JEAN-LUC
LEBEAU.

BY THE GRACE OF
CANDRA, THE
BENEFACTRESS, I
GIVE YOU THE
FIRST VIAL --

FATHER!

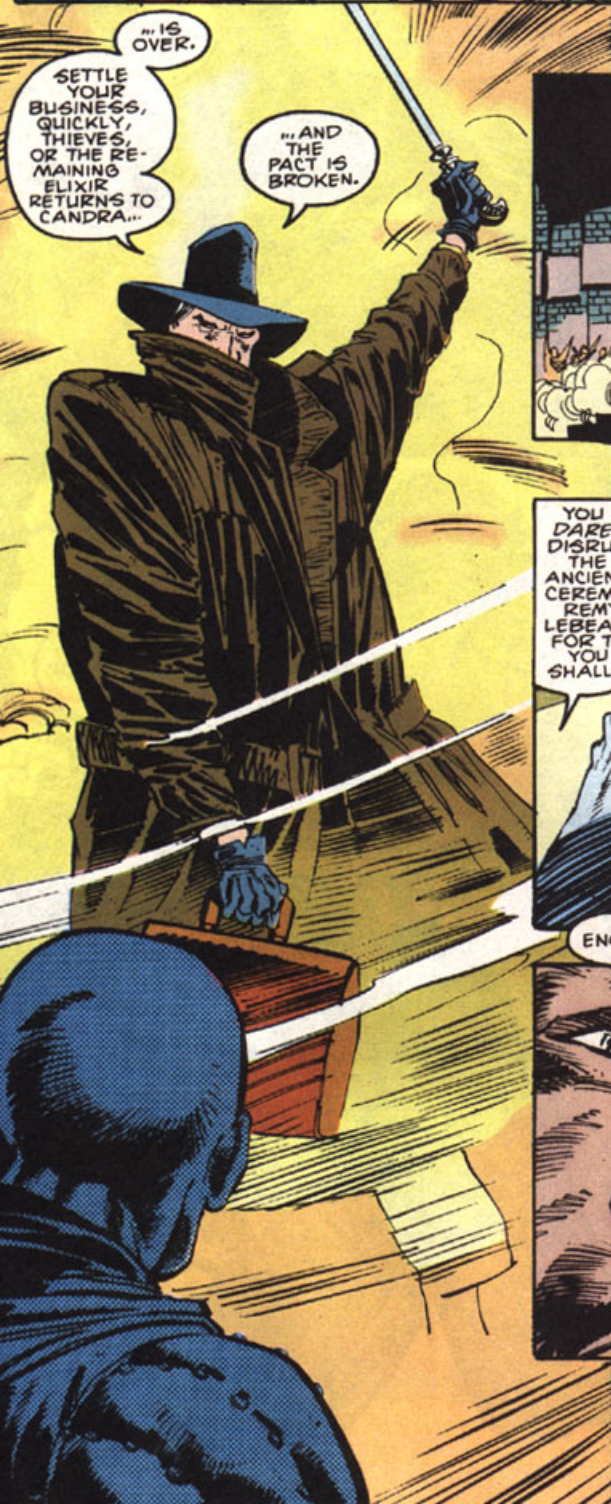
WE
WILL HAVE
WORDS!

WHAT'S
GOING ON
HERE,
SUGAH?

FAMILY
BUSINESS,
ROGUE. YOU
DO NOT
HAVE T'BE
HERE.

I'M
NOT LEAVIN'
YOU ON YOUR
OWN
AGAIN.

FWAK
BOOM
BOOM



SHORTLY...

HOW MANY MORE ARE TO DIE, FATHER?

IS NOT THE DEATH OF YOUR SON... MY BROTHER... ENOUGH? MUST MY WIFE TOO PAY THE PRICE OF ANCIENT FEUDS?

THE ELIXIR CAN SAVE HER. I WANT IT.

HENRI, DEAD?

NEVER!

YOU WILL HAVE NOTHING, REMY!

PIERRE...

"I WAS TALKIN' TO MY FATHER..."

THE ELIXIR, FATHER...

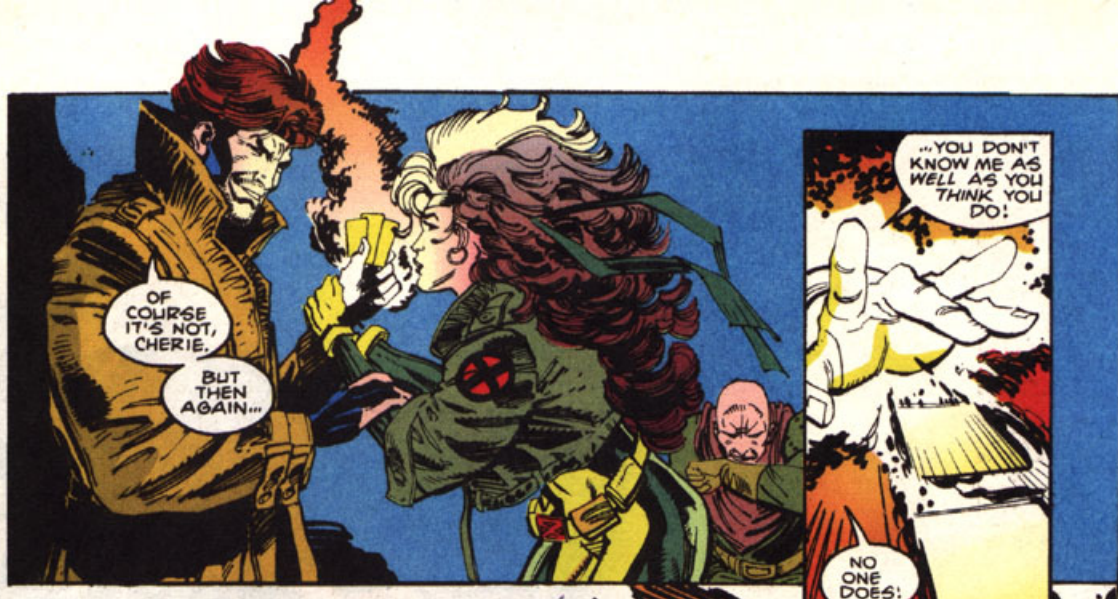
...OR WOULD YOU HAVE ME TURN ASSASSIN RIGHT HERE?

IT CANNOT BE. EVEN IF WE HAD ALL THREE VIALS, I COULD NOT GIVE ANY TO AN OUTSIDER.

HAVE IT YOUR WAY, FATHER...

GAMBIT!

YOU DON'T WANT TO DO THIS, REMY. THIS ISN'T YOU.



FWAKOOM
FWAKOOM
FWAKOOM



SHROUDED IN MIST, THE TITHE COLLECTOR CONTINUES HIS JOURNEY THROUGH THE BACK STREETS OF THE FRENCH QUARTER.

WRAPPED IN A CLOAK OF FEAR, THE STREETS EMPTY BEFORE HIM.

FEW WOULD CONFRONT THE TITHE COLLECTOR ON HIS MID-NIGHT MEANDERINGS.

FEW...

...BUT NOT ALL.

WHAT? ASSASSIN, YOU DARE?

YEAH, WE DARE, OLD MAN!

DARE TO BE TAKIN' WHAT IS OURS BY RIGHT OF BIRTH AND THE SWEAT OF OUR BROW!

YOU WILL NEVER HAVE--

WE'LL BE HAVIN' IT ALL, TITHE COLLECTOR:

YOU BEEN GIVIN' US THE POWER TO DO THE TAKIN' FOR A LOT OF YEARS NOW.

SO NOW WE DO WHAT WE BE TRAINED TO DO...

KILL...

...AND TAKE!

WHY? THE FACT--?

...ANCIENT HISTORY!



FOR BOTH GUILDS, JULIEN.
UNITED WE HAVE ENOUGH POWER AND SKILLS TO TAKE WHATEVER WE WANT...

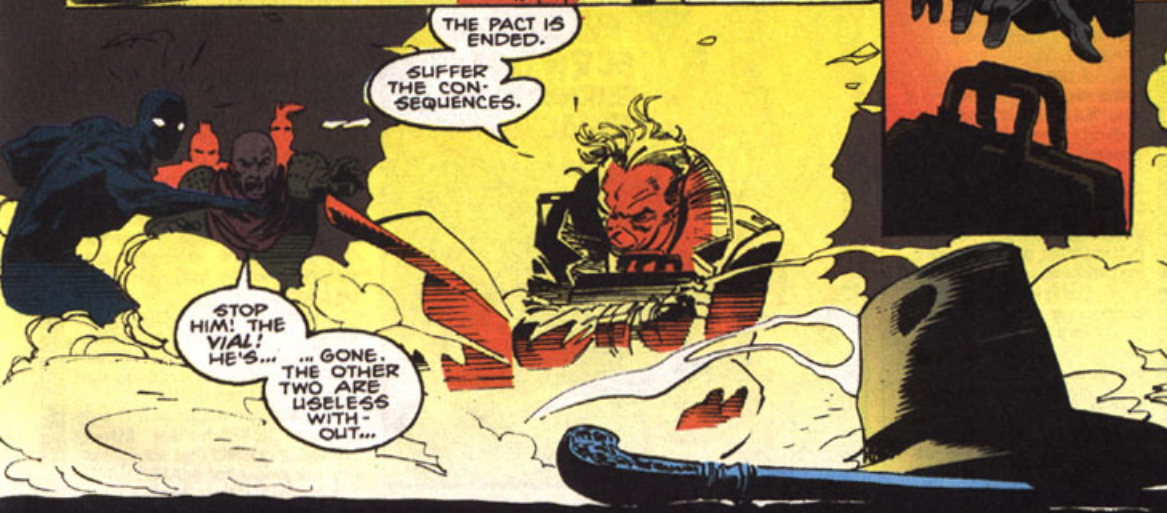


...FROM WHOEVER WE WANT.

DAT RIGHT, PIERRE. EVEN TAKE FROM THE TITHE COLLECTOR AND THE BENEFACTRESS HERSELF

BOLD WORDS.

WORDS YOU, AND THE DESCENDANTS OF BOTH GUILDS, WILL SOON COME TO REGRET.



THE PACT IS ENDED.

SUFFER THE CONSEQUENCES.

STOP HIM! THE VIAL! HE'S...

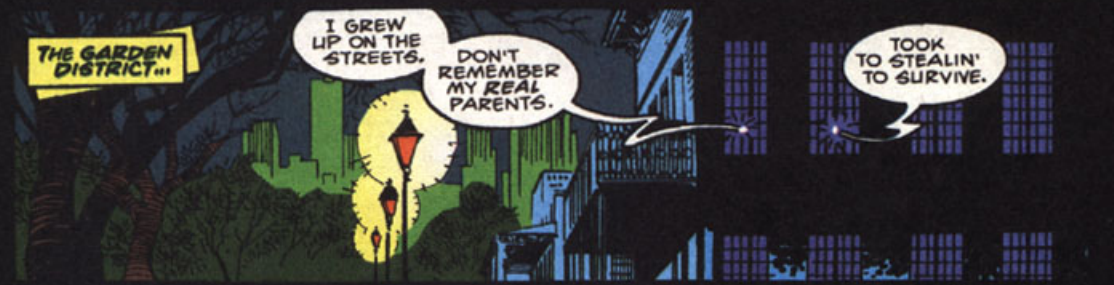
...GONE. THE OTHER TWO ARE USELESS WITH-OUT...



DON'T WORRY, T'IEF! YOU BE STEALIN' THE PART OF THE ELIXIR YOUR GUILD HAS. THAT'S WHY I PAID YOU FOR IT!

I GOT THE SECOND RIGHT HERE. NOW I'LL JUST BE TRACKIN' HIM BACK TO PARIS TO GET THE LAST.

WITH ALL THREE VIALS, THE LONG LIFE CAN BE MINE TO GIVE TO THE ASSASSINS. WE WILL BE HAVIN' THE POWERS AND THE LONG LIFE!



THE GARDEN DISTRICT...

I GREW UP ON THE STREETS.

DON'T REMEMBER MY REAL PARENTS.

TOOK TO STEALIN' TO SURVIVE.



THAT'S HOW I MET JEAN-LUC. TRIED TO STEAL HIS WALLET.

DIDN'T KNOW HE WAS THE HEAD OF THE LEGENDARY THIEVES GUILD.

HE TOOK A SHINE TO ME... TOOK ME IN AS ONE OF HIS OWN. TAUGHT ME WHAT I KNOW.

HENRI WAS LIKE A BROTHER TO ME.



THEY BE THE ONLY FAMILY I GOT.

AND NOW...



YOU STILL GOT US, GAMBIT... THE X-MEN.

THAT I DO, CHERIE. THANK YOU.



LOOK, I KNOW THIS IS NOT EASY FOR YOU, BUT I HAVE TO DO THIS... YOU...

...YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE STANDIN' GUARD ON BELLA DONNA. I CAN FIND SOMEONE...

I'M DOING THIS FOR YOU, REMY, NOT FOR HER.

BOTH GUILDS MAY TRY AND COME AFTER HER. I'LL KEEP HER SAFE.



BEFORE YOU GO, TELL ME...

WHAT IS THIS PLACE?



I BOUGHT IT YEARS AGO. A PLACE TO RETIRE TO ONE DAY. SETTLE DOWN AND RAISE A FAMILY.



Pah! WHO AM I KIDDING? I'LL NEVER SETTLE DOWN.

BUT EVEN A THIEF HAS TO HAVE DREAMS, EH?



TAKE CARE, CHERIE!

YOU TOO, SUGAH.

YOU TOO.



"...TO YOU
AND ME
ALONE,
GIRL."

"SO,
TELL ME,
BELLA
DONNA..."

"...ARE
YOU THE
DREAM OF
A THIEF
?"

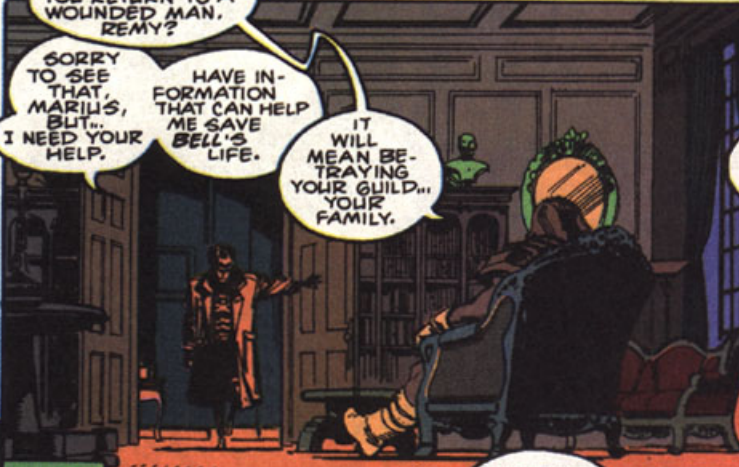
A SHORT TIME
LATER...

YOU RETURN TO A
WOUNDED MAN,
REMY?

SORRY
TO SEE
THAT,
MARILYN,
BUT...
I NEED YOUR
HELP.

HAVE IN-
FORMATION
THAT CAN HELP
ME SAVE
BELL'S
LIFE.

IT
WILL
MEAN BE-
TRAYING
YOUR GUILD...
YOUR
FAMILY.



PARIS...

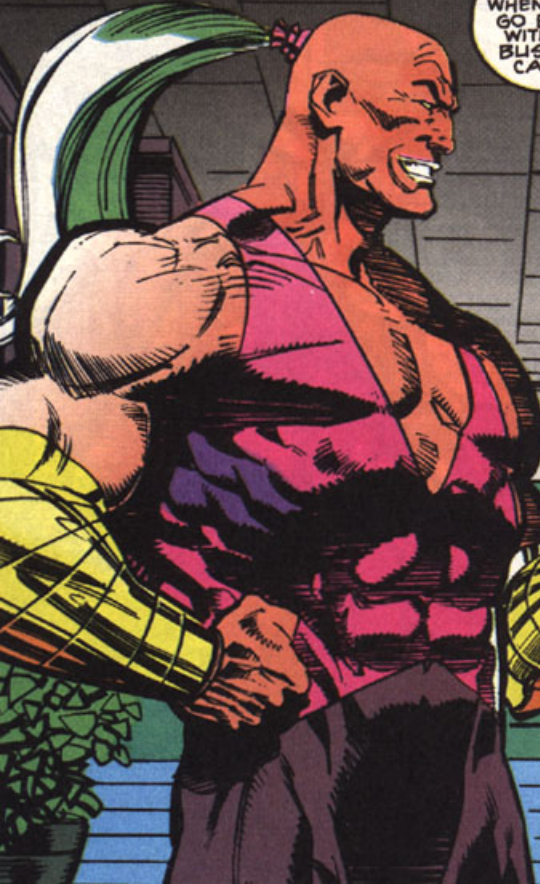


I CAN
LIVE
WITH
IT.

I HATE TO
LEAVE YOU
WHEN THINGS
GO BADLY
WITH YOUR
BUSINESS,
CANDRA...

"...BUT
I HAVE MY
OWN
AFFAIRS TO
ATTEND.

DO NOT
CONCERN
YOURSELF
WITH ME,
GIDEON..."



"...EVERY-
THING
WILL BE
RESOLVED
AS
PLANNED.

TO BE
CONTINUED...