

X-MEN

MARVEL COMICS GROUP

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THE ALL-NEW, ALL-DIFFERENT

X-MEN



IN THE MUTANT HEROES' HOUR OF MAXIMUM PERIL...

ENTER: THE PHOENIX!

Cockrum

PROLOGUE

WELCOME TO THE LAST MOMENTS
OF A YOUNG WOMAN'S LIFE.

HER NAME IS
JEAN GREY.



FOR TWENTY MINUTES NOW
WHILE HER FELLOW X-MEN SIT
HELPLESSLY IN THE SHIP'S
RADIATION-PROOF LIFE-CELL,
SHE HAS BEEN PILOTING THE
STARCORE SPACE SHUTTLE
TOWARD EARTH THROUGH THE
WORST SOLAR STORM IN
LIVING MEMORY.

IT WAS AN ALL OR NOTHING GAMBLE -- THAT HER
TELEPATHIC POWERS WOULD PROTECT HER FROM THE
COSMIC RADIATION LONG ENOUGH FOR HER TO FLY THE
SHUTTLE INTO THE SAFETY OF EARTH'S ATMOSPHERE
--AND FOR HER FRIENDS, IT MAY HAVE PAID OFF.

BUT FOR
JEAN
GREY...?

THE BLIP DROPPED ONTO THE DEER PARK RADAR FROM OUT OF NOWHERE, TWO HUNDRED MILES DOWN RANGE AND HEADING FOR KENNEDY AIRPORT AT BETTER THAN FIFTEEN HUNDRED KNOTS...



AN ALERT AIR TRAFFIC CONTROLLER SLAPPED HIS PANIC BUTTON, IMMEDIATELY CLEARING ALL TRAFFIC FROM THE UNKNOWN'S FLIGHT PATH...



WHILE HE TRIED IN VAIN TO CONTACT IT.

THERE WAS NO TIME TO GET READY-- ONE MINUTE THE BOGIE WAS ON THE OUTER EDGE OF THE RADAR PLOT, THE NEXT IT WAS SCREAMING LOW OVER LONG BEACH AND CEDARHURST.



IN A DESPERATE ATTEMPT TO LAND BEFORE COMING APART IN MIDAIR.

NOT THAT IT MADE MUCH DIFFERENCE IN THE END.



KARAM!

THE X-MEN HADN'T EXPECTED TO MAKE IT THIS FAR. WHEN THE SOLAR STORM HIT AND THE RADIATION SENSORS WENT OFF THEIR SCALES, ALL OF THEM KNEW THAT JEAN GREY WAS AS GOOD AS DEAD-- AND SO WERE THEY...



... BUT THEN, THEY WERE IN THE ATMOSPHERE, THE SHIP OBVIOUSLY UNDER HUMAN CONTROL. THEY BEGAN TO THINK THEY MIGHT HAVE A CHANCE AFTER ALL.

UNTIL THE LANDING...

SCREEEEEEEE



LIKE A PHOENIX, FROM THE ASHES!

IT'S OVER QUICKLY NOW, THE SHUTTLE SCATTERING WRECKAGE AND BURNING FUEL ACROSS THE HEART OF KENNEDY'S RUNWAY COMPLEX AS IT SLAMS THROUGH THE LAST CRASH BARRIER...



TO LAND ONCE...

...TWICE...

...THRICE...

THOD!

FTHOD!

FTHLOOM!

...AND THEN STARCORE EAGLE ONE IS...

...GONE.



WITH ONLY A SPREADING OIL SLICK TO MARK ITS PASSING...



HERE, PERHAPS, OUR STORY SHOULD END...

...EXCEPT FOR THE FACT THAT X-MEN HAVE ALWAYS BEEN NOTORIOUSLY HARD TO KILL...



CYCLOPS! I WAS THE LAST ONE OUT!



THEN WE ARE ALL SAFE.

ALL EXCEPT THE LADY WHO GOT US DOWN.

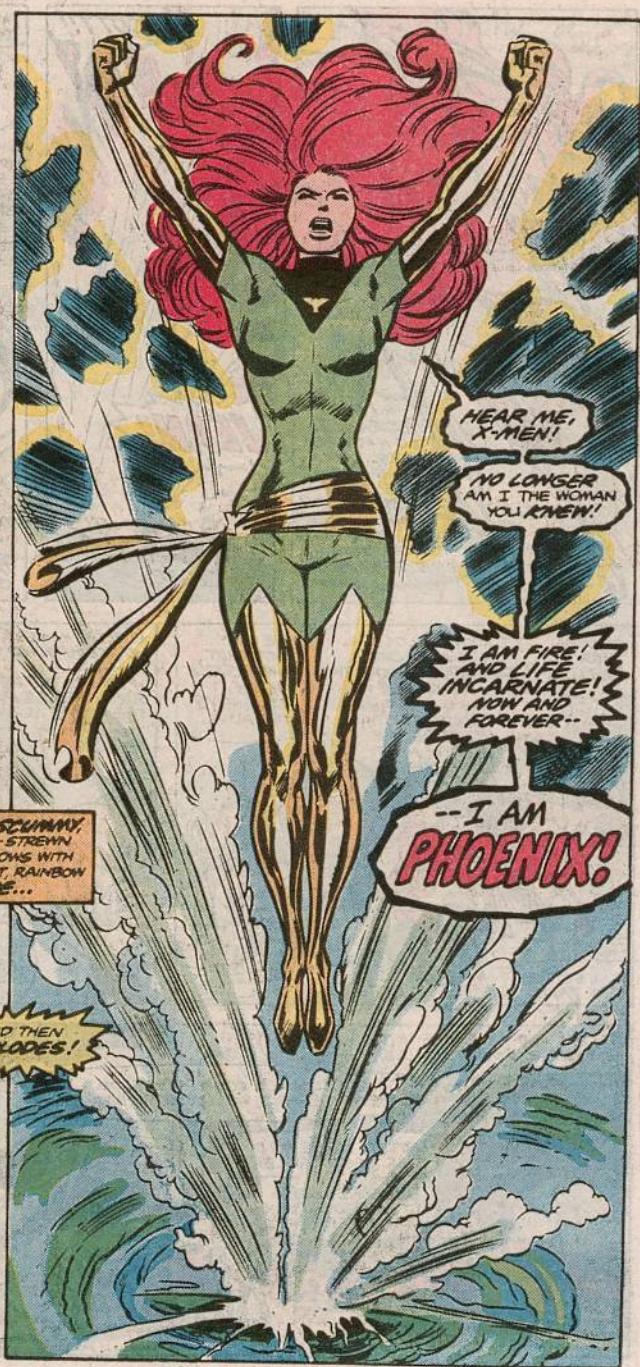
AND I'M GOING BACK FOR HER RIGHT NOW!

CYCLOPS! ARE YOU MAD?!

YOU CANNOT SAVE JEAN NOW! THE RADIATION...! THE CRASH...



YOU STOPPED ME ONCE BEFORE, NIGHTCRAWLER! GET IN MY WAY THIS TIME AND I'LL KILL YOU!





I--
I...

MY MIND--
BURNING--
SO MANY MEM-
ORIES... SENS-
ATIONS-- PAIN!
INSIDE... TEAR-
ING ME APART!

WHAT'S... HAPPENING
TO ME? WHAT
HAVE I DONE?!



SCOTT!!

JEAN!

TAKE IT EASY, HON!
I'VE GOT YOU.

YOU'RE **SAFE** NOW, JEAN.
THE FLIGHT'S **OVER**, WE'RE
ALL BACK ON **EARTH**
AND YOU'RE GOING TO BE
ALL RIGHT.

BUT SHE'S LYING
SO STILL... BARELY
BREATHING... ALMOST
NO PULSE!



STOP
THINKING
LIKE THAT, MISTER.
SHE'LL **PULL**
THROUGH. SHE'S
GOT TO!



CYCLOPS,
HER
COSTUME--?

I KNOW, COLOSSUS.
THERE ARE MORE
QUESTIONS HERE THAN
WE CAN **HANDLE** RIGHT
NOW-- JEAN'S CREATING A
COSTUME OUT OF NOTHING,
USING **POWERS** SHE
NEVER HAD
BEFORE...

...THE VERY
FACT THAT
SHE'S **STILL**
ALIVE,
BUT SHE IS
STILL **ALIVE**.

I'LL SETTLE
FOR THAT.



FOR THE MOMENT, STUDENTS, LET US
NOT COMPOUND OUR PROBLEMS...

PERHAPS THE FEWER COSTUMED
SUPER-BEINGS **PRESENT** WHEN
THE POLICE ARRIVE, THE **BETTER!**

AS GOOD AS
DONE, HERR PRO-
FESSOR, COURTESY
OF MY **IMAGE-**
INDUCER.



I'LL EXPAND ITS RANGE TO THE MAXIMUM
EXTENT TO COVER US ALL...

...AND CLOAK US COMPLETELY FROM
VIEW. IN EFFECT, WE'LL BECOME **INVISIBLE**

BETTER LEAVE ME OUT
IT, NIGHTCRAWLER.

SOMEONE'S GOING
TO HAVE TO EXPLAIN
THIS MESS.

AND PERHAPS
TAKE THE RAP FOR
IT? AS YOU WISH,
DR. CORBEAU.





MY OWN MUTANT POWER GIVES ME A SPECIAL AWARENESS OF LIFE-- AN EMPATHY WITH ITS STRENGTH, AND ITS QUALITY WITHIN A PERSON.



JEAN'S IS LIKE NOTHING I HAVE EVER SENSED.



BUT--HOW CAN ANY HUMAN WIELD SUCH TRANSCENDENT POWER?





XAVIER PROVES TRUE TO HIS WORD, AND WITHIN THE HOUR JEAN GREY IS ADMITTED TO THE SPECIAL RESEARCH WING OF NEW YORK HOSPITAL.

THE NEWS IS FULL OF THE STARCORE SHUTTLE CRASH WITH PETER CORBEAU TELLING THE DRAMATIC TALE OF A BATTLE IN DEEP SPACE BETWEEN HIS CREW AND A BAND OF TERRORISTS WHO'D SEIZED THE DEACTIVATED S.H.I.E.L.D. SPACE STATION.



BUT THAT MATTERS LITTLE TO THE X-MEN. NOTHING MATTERS, REALLY...

...SAVE THE YOUNG WOMAN WHO BROUGHT THEM ALL SAFELY HOME.

FLOWERS ARE A DOLLAR A BUNCH, LIKE THE SIGN SAYS.

YOU BUYIN' 'EM FOR A SICK FRIEND?



THAT ANY O' YOUR BUSINESS, BUB?

HERE'S YOUR BUCK. I'LL TAKE THE FLOWERS

MAN, I GOTTA BE CRAZY. I KNOW THAT!

ACTIN' LIKE A SCHOOL-KID STILL WET BEHIND THE EARS--AN' FOR SOME BROAD!

WHAT'S JEAN GREY TO ME ANYWAY?



SOMEONE I LIKE, AN' WANT.

AN' WHAT WOLVERINE WANTS-- HE GETS.

NOT THIS TIME, BUB.

AIN'T NEVER FELT LIKE THIS BEFORE, THOUGH, ALL NOT-AN-BOTHERED OVER A FRAIL.

AIN'T NEVER CARED ABOUT ANYBODY. I ALWAYS LIKED BEIN' A LOWER.

WHAT THE HEY, I'LL SURPRISE HER WITH THESE FLOWERS, MAYBE GET TO TALKIN'...



WHAT THE--?!

WE TOLD YOU SO, WOLVERINE.

BECAUSE YOU REALLY SHOULD HAVE EXPECTED THAT JEAN'S FRIENDS WOULD STAY AS CLOSE TO HER AS POSSIBLE UNTIL THEY KNEW HER FATE.

ONE WAY OR THE OTHER.



BUT THEN AGAIN, MAYBE YOU SHOULDN'T HAVE. AFTER ALL, YOU'VE NEVER HAD ANY FRIENDS.



LIFE AND DEATH, IT'S ALL THE SAME TO YOU, AS MEANINGLESS--AS CASUALLY DISPOSED OF--AS A BUNCH OF FLOWERS.

THE DOCTORS HAVE BEEN WITH JEAN SUCH A LONG TIME, CHARLES. ARE YOU SURE THERE'S NOTHING YOU CAN DO?

P'RAPS USING YOUR TELEPATHIC POWERS...?

I ONLY WISH I COULD, MOIRA. BUT I CAN'T.

EVERYTIME I TRY TO USE THEM TO ANY GREAT EXTENT, MY MIND IS SAVAGED BY MY CURSED DREAM!

LATELY, ANYTHING BEYOND ABSOLUTELY MINIMAL POWER BRINGS ON A SEIZURE.



NO, MOIRA. I CANNOT HELP THIS GIRL. I ONCE THOUGHT I LOVED AS MUCH AS YOU.

I CANNOT EVEN HELP MYSELF.



AND SO, THE HOURS DRAG, DAY MOVING INTO NIGHT AND INTO DAY AGAIN, WITH NO NEW WORD ON JEAN'S CONDITION. THEY KNOW SHE IS ALIVE, BUT THAT IS... ILL.

AH, MOIRA, IT'LL BE OVER SOON, I'M THINKIN'. I CAN FEEL IT.

POOR SCOTT.

HE'S SUCH A MAN OF ACTION-- THIS ENDLESS WAITING MUST BE A LIVING NIGHTMARE FOR HIM.



IF YOU ONLY KNEW, KURT WAGNER...

ALL THOSE WASTED YEARS... WHEN I LOVED JEAN AND SHE LOVED ME AND NEITHER OF US HAD THE SENSE TO TELL THE OTHER...

AND NOW, IF SHE DIES, IT'LL HAVE ALL BEEN FOR NOTHING.

I MEAN, WHAT DO YOU DO WHEN THE LIGHT GOES OUT OF YOUR LIFE?



WHEN JEAN MOVED DOWN TO THE CITY TO BUILD A LIFE FOR HERSELF OUTSIDE THE X-MEN, I LET HER GO...

BECAUSE I THOUGHT... THAT THE X-MEN WERE WHAT GAVE MY LIFE MEANING.

BUT THEY'RE NOT. IT'S... JEAN...

IT'S ALWAYS BEEN JEAN, ONLY I NEVER REALIZED IT TILL NOW...



IT'S NOT LIKE YOU TO ARGUE WITH REALITY, CORBEAU-- OR TO DENY THE EVIDENCE OF YOUR OWN EYES.

HUH???

...WHEN I'M ABOUT TO LOSE HER FOREVER.

FACE IT, MY FRIEND, AS SHERLOCK HOLMES OFTEN SAID: "ONCE YOU'VE ELIMINATED THE IMPOSSIBLE, WHAT EVER REMAINS--HOWEVER IMPROBABLE--MUST BE THE TRUTH."



DR. CORBEAU--
DR. MCKAY--!

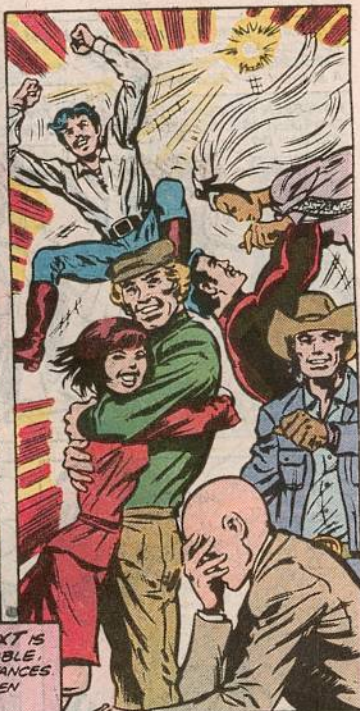
HOW...
IS SHE?!

IT'S GOING TO BE TOUGH-
AND-GO FOR AWHILE,
MR. SUMMERS, BUT WITH
REST, PROPER CARE,
FRIENDS TO LOOK
AFTER HER--

--DR. CORBEAU AND I
THINK MISS GREY IS
GOING TO BE JUST
FINE.



WHAT HAPPENS NEXT IS
QUITE UNDERSTANDABLE,
GIVEN THE CIRCUMSTANCES
PUT SIMPLY, THE X-MEN
GO WILD!



RATHER, MOST OF THEM GO
WILD. ONE GOES OFF BY
HIMSELF...

I SAW SCOTT
SLIP AWAY WHEN WE ALL
STARTED CHEERING...

THE GOOD NEWS
ROCKED HIM
PRETTY HARD--
WHICH ISN'T
SURPRISING
THE WAY THE
STRAIN OF THE
LAST FEW DAYS
HAS BEEN
EATING
AT HIM.



I HOPE
HE'S--OH!

I UNDER-
STAND, MY
FRIEND.

THERE ARE
TIMES WHEN
EVERYONE
NEEDS TO BE
LEFT ALONE.



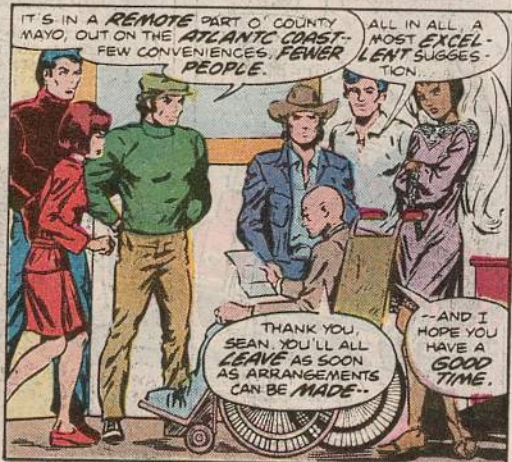
JEAN.

YOU'RE GOING
TO BE ALL
RIGHT!

OH, JEAN--
THANK GOD.

THANK...
GOD.





Nobody echoes Xavier's sentiment--
not in the hospital, and not at the X-men's
Westchester mansion head-
quarters, where
they discover that
all have American
identities and
American
passports,
authentic, and--
so the pro-
fessor tells
them-- quite
in order.

But their mood begins to change
once they've flown into Europe to
spend a week sight-seeing and
winding down in Ireland's capital,
Dublin, before heading west
towards County Mayo.

Indeed, by the time they
deplane in Galina and switch
to a hired car for the
last leg of their journey...

...some of the
X-men are actually
beginning to enjoy
themselves.

Some of them,
however, are
merely getting
sore.

HEY, IRISH!
WHAT'S WITH
THE BUMPS?

DIDN'T YOU EVER
LEARN TO DRIVE,
F'R CRYIN' OUT
LOUD?

NOW DON'T BE GETTIN'
YERSELF INTO AN UPPIDAR,
MIDGET. THAT'S HOW WE
BUILD OUR ROADS OUT
HERE, WITH CHARACTER.

IF SO, THEN YOU
SHOULD BUILD YOUR
AUTOMOBILES TO
MATCH. GAY, WITH
SPRINGS AND
SOFTER SEATS?

I WOULD
HAVE DONE
BETTER TO
FLY.

AYE, IT'S A
BEAUTI-
FUL DAY
FER IT--

--BUT CHARLES
DID TELL US
NOT TO DRAW
ATTENTION TO
OURSELVES
REMEMBER?

THE PROFESSOR IS NOT
RIDING IN THIS FOUR-
WHEELED TORTURE
CHAMBER,
COMRADE
SEAN.

IS THAT A JOKE,
YE'RE CRACKIN',
PETER RASPUTIN?
WILL WONDERS
NEVER CEASE?

YER TORMENT'S
ALMOST OVER,
THOUGH--BECAUSE.
MY FRIENDS--

--WE HAVE
ARRIVED.

CASSIDY KEEP--
FIRST BUILT BY LIAM
CASSIDY OVER A THOU-
SAND YEARS AGO TO
DEFEND THIS STRETCH
OF COASTLINE FROM
VIKING RAIDERS...

REBUILT A SCORE OF TIMES OVER THE
CENTURIES AS IT STOOD AGAINST EVERY
INVADER WHO TRIED TO CONQUER IT--EVER
PROUD, EVER DEFIANT--ITS TALL, FORBIDDING
WALLS STAINED WITH THE BLOOD OF A
HUNDRED SIEGES.

BUT IN ALL THE CASTLE'S
GLORIOUS HISTORY,
THOSE WALLS HAVE
NEVER FALLEN TO
FORCE OF ARMS.

UNGLAUBLICH!

BANSHEE, THIS IS
INCREDIBLE!
AND YOU SAY YOU
GREW UP HERE?

THAT I DID,
KURT WAGNER

IT MUST HAVE BEEN
MARVELOUS.

AH, WELL, I
SUPPOSE IT'S
TIME FOR ME
TO SWITCH TO MY
HUMAN GUISE.

OH, I DUNNO BUB.
PLACE LIKE THIS, I FIGGER
YOU'LL FIT RIGHT IN THE
WAY YOU ARE.





"HE'LL EVEN BETRAY A MAN HE LOVES LIKE HIS OWN SON."

HOW CAN ANYTHING LIVE HERE, GROW HERE--

--THIS PLACE IS NOTHING BUT COLD, DEAD STONE.

PRESSING IN ON ME... CASING ME...

NOT TO ME, IT ISN'T ORORO. MY BOYHOOD HERE WAS THE HAPPIEST TIME OF ME LIFE...

YOUNG SEAN CASSIDY FOUGHT MORE DRAGONS AN RESCUED MORE DAMSELS IN DISTRESS--

LORD CASSIDY--IF YOU DON'T MIND, SIR, IT'S TIME ALL OF YE WERE GETTIN' SETTLED.



LEAD ON, EAMON.

EAMON O'DONNELL HERE IS THE CASTLE'S SENESCHAL-- THE STEWARD O' THE HOUSE. IF YE NEED ANYTHING, JUST ASK HIM.

BY THE WAY, OLD FRIEND, NOW ARE THE FAMILIES? THE LITTLE ONES?

THEY ARE... WELL, MILORD.



THIS IS YER ROOM, MISS ORORO-- I TRUST IT'S SATISFACTORY.

VERY WELL. DINNER WILL BE SERVED PROMPTLY AT EIGHT. THIS WAY, GENTLEMEN.

IT SEEMS ALL RIGHT.



AH, BANSHEE, YOU ARE SO HAPPY TO BE HOME...

...WHILE I WILL ONLY BE HAPPY THE DAY I LEAVE THIS CASTLE FOREVER.



JEAN WOULD SAY CASSIDY KEEP HAS "BAD VIBES" FOR ME...

...AND IT DOES. BUT I WILL NOT BE RULED BY MY FEARS. I MUST FORCE MYSELF TO RELAX...



AND I KNOW PRECISELY HOW TO DO IT.

FOR WHEN THE GODDESS OF THE STORM WISHES TO REFRESH HERSELF AND CALM HER NERVES...



...HOW BETTER THAN BY SUMMONING HER OWN SUMMER SHOWER?

GOD-DESS, HOW I NEEDED THIS.

IF I CLOSE MY EYES, I CAN ALMOST IMAGINE MYSELF BACK IN KENYA.





WHY, DEAR COUSIN SEAN,
HOW *NICE* OF YOU TO--
SHALL WE SAY--*DROP IN?*

IN CASE YOU HAVEN'T *GUESSED*,
MY MUSCULAR FRIEND AND I
ARE THE *VILLAINS* OF THE
PIECE. I AM *BLACK TOM*
CASSIDY.

AND *TOGETHER*,
WE TWO ARE GOING
TO DO WHAT *NO OTHER*
VILLAINS IN THE HISTORY
OF THE *WORLD* HAVE
BEEN ABLE TO DO.

WE'RE GOING
TO KILL THE
X-MEN!

AND I, STUDENTS OF
CHARLES XAVIER, MY
DEARLY-HATED *STEP*
BROTHER-- OH, YES,
WE KNOW WHO YOU
ARE, *X-MEN!*

I AM THE
JUGGER-
NAUT!

IS THAT MEANT
I *SCARE* US,
TOM? D'YE
PLAN T' *TALK*
US T' DEATH,
THEN?

BLUSTER AWAY, COUSIN; IT'LL DO YOU
NO GOOD. YOU'RE IN THE *DUNGEONS*
NOW, DEEP INSIDE *CASSIDY CRAG*, WITH
COUNTLESS *TONS* OF ROCK BETWEEN YOU
AND FREEDOM. YOU'VE *NO CHANCE*.
BANSHEE-- THIS PLACE WILL BE YOUR *TOMB!*

TOMB...

...CLOSED IN...
ROCK ALL AROUND
ME-- *NO WAY OUT!*
ROCK BURYING ME...
CRUSHING ME...

...CAN'T BREATHE...
CAN'T THINK...
MOTHER! HELP ME!

HHNNNNNNNN

MEIN GOTT!
--THAT
SCREAM!?!?

IT'S
STORM--

--SHE'S
FLIPPED
OUT!

NEXT ISSUE: WHO SHALL STOP THE JUGGERNAUT?

WEDNESDAY MORNING, 3 A.M.

THE SOUNDS OF THE CITY ARE MUTED, IN THESE LAST, HAUNTED HOURS BEFORE DAWN-- THE WITCHING TIME WHEN AS MANY GHOSTS AS PEOPLE ARE SAID TO WALK THE EARTH.

A RADIO IS PLAYING OUT BY THE NURSE'S STATION-- VINTAGE FOLK, IN KEEPING WITH THE MOMENT AND THE MOOD. AS SIMON & GARFUNKEL COUNTERPOINT THEMSELVES THROUGH "SCARBOROUGH FAIR".

THE Gift

A CHRISTMAS TREE STANDS IN THE PLAZA BELOW; HE'S BEEN STARING AT IT FOR HOURS.

IT'S PAST TWELFTH NIGHT-- THE NEW YEAR WELL AND TRULY BEGUN -- WHY, HE WONDERS WITHOUT REALLY CARING, HASN'T ANYONE TAKEN IT DOWN?

THE TREE IS SUPPOSE TO SIGNIFY A TIME OF CELEBRATION AND JOY; YET THERE IS NONE IN KURT WAGNER'S HEART.

HE'S BEEN WAITING TOO LONG -- AS HAVE ALL THE X-MEN -- FOR WORD OF THEIR STRICKEN TEAMMATE, JEAN GREY, WHO BROUGHT THEM HOME FROM SPACE...

...PROBABLY AT THE COST OF HER OWN LIFE

HE VISITED THE HOSPITAL CHAPEL,
LIT CANDLES, OFFERED PRAYERS.



JEAN REMAINS
UNCONSCIOUS,
DEEP IN COMA--

--YET, NEITHER
HAS SHE DIED.



HE
WANTS TO DO
MORE...

...AND CHAFES--
AS THE WHOLE
TEAM DOES--
AT THE KNOW-
LEDGE THAT
HE CAN'T.

THEN...



IN A POP OF SMOKE AND
NOISOME FLAME, HE VANISHES
FROM THE ROOM.

THAT'S HIS POWER--
THE GENETIC QUIRK
WHICH MAKES HIM
MORE THAN HUMAN.
AND IN THE BARGAIN
GIVES HIM THE
FEATURES OF A
ROGUE DEVIL--



--HIS TALENT TO TELEPORT
INSTANTANEOUSLY
FROM ONE SPOT...



...TO ANOTHER.

THE
OTHERS
HAVE
POWERS,
TOO.

AND ALL HAVE BEEN BANDED
TOGETHER, BY THEIR TEACHER,
CHARLES XAVIER, INTO A TEAM
OF "SUPER HEROES."



WHAT IN HEAVEN'S
NAME HAVE WE
HERE?

POOR
LITTLE
THING
HE LOOKS
MISER-
ABLE!



SMALL WONDER,
CONSIDERING
THE COLD.

RATTLE
RATTLE
SKETCH



Whuahnn?

IN THE
TREE...

...MAKING
NOISE...?

IT'S
GETTING
LOUDER--
COMING
CLOSER--

SHAKE
RATTLE
BIBBLE
CASE
SKETCH
RATTLE
RATTLE





I SUPPOSE.

BUT I'M
WAITING FOR
SOMEONE,
DO YOU
MIND?!

HE MUST BE LIKE ME, WITH A
RELATIVE OR FRIEND AS A
PATIENT HERE.

YOU WOULD
BE MORE
COMFORTABLE
INSIDE.

NO
PLACE
FOR ME IN
THERE.

KIDS ARE
ONLY ALLOWED
IN AS SICKS.

THEY'RE AFRAID WE'LL
WRECK THE HOSPITAL
OR SOMETHIN', LIKE WE
DON'T KNOW HOW TO
BEHAVE.

JERKS.

SOMETIMES,
KIDS KNOW
BETTER'N
ADULTS
WHAT'S REALLY
GOING ON.



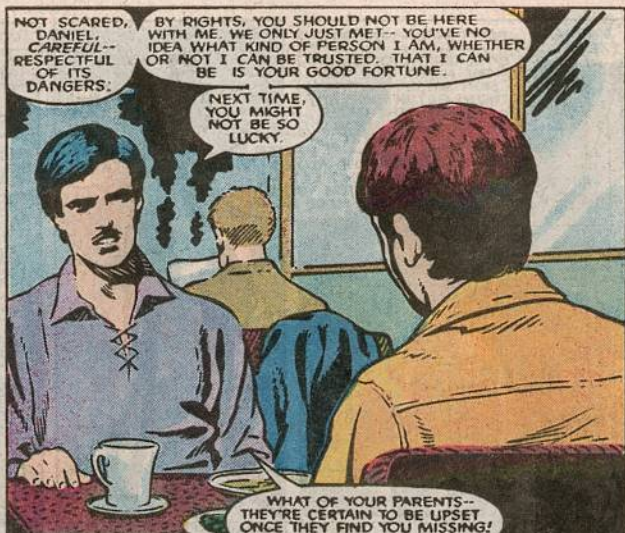
WHAT SHOULD I
DO? I CAN'T
LEAVE HIM HERE.

BUT HOW
TO GET
HIM BACK
WHERE HE
BELONGS? I
DON'T EVEN
KNOW HIS
NAME!



WHAT THE HECK'S
GOIN' ON OUT HERE,
WHAT'RE YOU PEOPLE
DOIN'??

THIS IS
PRIVATE
PROPERTY,
YOU AIN'T
SUPPOSED
TO BE
HERE!





CHRISTMAS DISPLAYS STILL FILL MANY STOREFRONTS...

...CASTING MANHATTAN'S MAN-MADE CANYONS...

...IN ALL MANNER OF FAERY-FANTASY LIGHTS AND COLORS.



KIND OF FUN, NICHT'WAHR, HAVING THE CITY TO OURSELVES?

NOTHING I SAY SEEMS TO REACH THE LAD-- BUT THERE HAS TO BE A WAY TO BRING HIM OUT OF THIS SHELL, TO LIGHTEN HIS SAD MOOD.

PERHAPS...



...YOU KNOW, DANIEL...

...I USED TO BE IN THE CIRCUS!

NO FOOLIN'???

BINGO!

LIVED IN ONE MY WHOLE LIFE...



...UNTIL I CAME TO AMERICA.

NEAT!

YOU SHOULD TRY WALKING LIKE THIS.



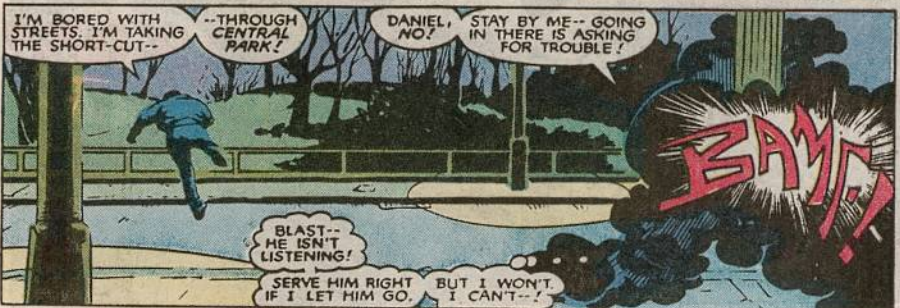
IT'S QUITE REFRESHING--

--GOOD FOR THE CIRCULATION, AND ONE'S SENSE OF BALANCE.

YEAH--UNTIL A CAR SPLASHES GUNK IN YOUR FACE.

THEN YOU'RE A MESS!

IT'S ONLY DIRT. IT'LL WASH OFF.



I'M BORED WITH STREETS. I'M TAKING THE SHORT-CUT--

--THROUGH CENTRAL PARK!

DANIEL, NO!

STAY BY ME-- GOING IN THERE IS ASKING FOR TROUBLE!

BLAST-- HE ISN'T LISTENING!

SERVE HIM RIGHT IF I LET HIM GO.

BUT I WON'T. I CAN'T--

BAM!





LATER...

DON'T LOSE ANY. I BORROWED THESE BALLS FROM THE PARK EQUIPMENT SHED, TO BE RETURNED WHEN WE'RE DONE.

MAGIC ISN'T A MATTER OF POWER-- WITCHES AND SPELLS. THAT SORT OF THING--

--IT'S THE CREATION OF A STATE OF MIND...

...THAT BECOMES A STATE OF BEING.

SO CONVINCING-- AND, WHEN IT'S DONE RIGHT, WONDROUS-- A GAME OF "LET'S PRETEND"...

...THAT THE AUDIENCE WILLINGLY, EAGERLY BELIEVES YOUR ILLUSIONS ARE REAL.

THIS IS A WASTE OF TIME. IT ISN'T WORKING, KURT.

I'M SUCH A KLUTZ. I'LL NEVER GET IT.

STOP THINKING ABOUT IT. AND TRYING SO HARD.

SIMPLY-- DO.

THE SKY'S ALMOST LIGHT. I GOTTA GO.

ACH-- NOW, WHO'S THE DUNCE.

I LOST ALL TRACK OF TIME.

DESPITE HIS FRUSTRATIONS AND FAILURE...

...DANIEL WAS ENJOYING HIMSELF. HE'S AS SAD AT HAVING TO STOP AS I.

BEFORE WE LEAVE, ONE LAST HAND.

I'LL MUCK IT UP.

YOU NEVER KNOW.

YOU MIGHT SURPRISE YOURSELF.





NICE GRIN, FELLA!

I'VE BEEN FISHING FOR THAT-- HOPING TO HEAR DANIEL LAUGH-- ALL EVENING.

YOU'RE GRINNING PRETTY GOOD YOURSELF.

NEXT LESSON, BATONS.

YEAH. SURE.

TRUST ME, IT'LL BE FUN.



I'M GLAD I MET YOU, KURT.

LIKEWISE.

SEE YOU LATER, MAYBE...

... AT THE HOSPITAL?

I'LL BE THERE. TODAY, ANYWAY.



DANIEL, WAIT.

THIS IS TRUE MADNESS!

THERE'S SOMETHING ABOUT MYSELF-- A SECRET--

-- I WANT, I NEED, TO SHOW YOU.

I DON'T REALLY LOOK LIKE THIS.



THAT WAS ILLUSION.

THIS IS REALITY.

I WANTED YOU TO KNOW THE TRUTH--

-- WHAT-EVER THE COST--



-- BECAUSE I CONSIDER YOU MY FRIEND.

WOW. Oh, WOW!

I THOUGHT THERE WAS SOMETHING DIFFERENT ABOUT YOU, KURT...

... BUT I NEVER IMAGINED, I NEVER DREAMED--



--FANTASTIC!

NOT AFRAID?

OF MY PAL? NO WAY!

AND HEY, KURT, DON'T WORRY ABOUT YOUR SICK LADY FRIEND, SHE'LL BE FINE.

TRUST ME.

LATER STILL...

HE WHISTLES AS HE WALKS, HAPPIER THAN HE'S FELT SINCE LEAVING THE CIRCUS...

EXCUSE ME, NURSE, I'M LOOKING FOR A FRIEND, A LAD ABOUT TWELVE...

NAMED DANIEL CAMERON.

I'M AFRAID YOU'RE TOO LATE.

I BEG YOUR PARDON?

THIS IS DANIEL. HE DIED LAST NIGHT, POOR THING. CANCER.

THERE MUST BE SOME MISTAKE.



...A GHOST?!

WHO WERE YOU WAITING FOR, DANIEL--THE REAPER?

WHY DID YOU SHOW YOURSELF TO ME...

...WAS THAT AN ACCIDENT? COINCIDENCE??

OR, PERHAPS, THE ANSWER TO A DESPERATE PRAYER?

WHO WAS TRYING TO COMFORT WHOM?

WHICH-
EVER, IT WORKED.

PERHAPS, MEIN FREUND...

...THIS TRULY IS THE GREAT SECRET:

THE WORLD--
LIKE A JUGGLER'S BALLS-- GOES ROUND AND ROUND...

...AND THE TRICK IS TO LIVE, THE BEST YOU CAN, WHILE YOU CAN.

FOR, THAT WAY, THERE WILL ALWAYS BE LIGHTS SHINING BRAVELY, JOYOUSLY--
EVEN IN THE DEEPEST DARKNESS.

NEXT:
TAG, SUCKER!

APPROVED
BY THE
COMICS
CODE
AUTHORITY

OCT
02461

A large, stylized title card for the X-Men. The word "X-MEN" is written in large, bold, yellow-outlined letters with a 3D effect. The background is blue with white streaks. On the left, a small portion of the Cyclops character is visible. At the bottom, a character with long, flowing red hair is shown.



ENTER: THE PHOENIX!

Cuckrum



BOLTON #9

86

THE BUIP DROPPED ONTO THE DEER PARK RADAR FROM OUT OF NOWHERE, TWO HUNDRED MILES DOWN RANGE AND HEAD-ING FOR KENNEDY AIR-PORT AT BETTER THAN FIFTEEN HUNDRED KNOTS...



AN ALERT AIR TRAFFIC CON-TROLLER SLAPPED HIS PANIC BUTTON, IMMEDIATELY CLEAR-ING ALL TRAFFIC FROM THE UNKNOWN'S FLIGHT PATH...



...WHILE HE TRIED IN VAIN TO CONTACT IT.

THERE WAS NO TIME TO GET READY-- ONE MINUTE THE BOGIE WAS ON THE OUTER EDGE OF THE RADAR PLOT, THE NEXT IT WAS SCREAMING LOW OVER LONG BEACH AND CEDARHURST.



IN A DESPERATE ATTEMPT TO LAND BEFORE COMING APART IN MIDAIR.



NOT THAT IT MADE
MUCH DIFFERENCE
IN THE END.

KARAM!

THE X-MEN HADN'T EXPECTED TO MAKE
IT THIS FAR. WHEN THE SOLAR STORM
HIT, AND THE RADIATION SENSORS
WENT OFF THEIR SCALES, ALL OF THEM
KNEW THAT JEAN GREY WAS AS GOOD
AS DEAD -- AND SO WERE THEY...



...BUT THEN, THEY WERE IN THE ATMOSPHERE,
THE SHIP OBVIOUSLY UNDER HUMAN CONTROL.
THEY BEGAN TO THINK THEY MIGHT HAVE A
CHANCE AFTER ALL.

UNTIL THE LANDING...

FROM THE ASHES!