



APPROVED
BY THE
COMICS
CODE
AUTHORITY

MARVEL
COMICS
GROUP

12¢

the

X-MEN

IND.

20
MAY

OUR TITLE IS SIMPLY
"I, LUCIFER!"
'NUFF SAID!

**FEATURING: THE
UNTOLD STORY OF
HOW PROFESSOR X
LOST THE USE OF
HIS LEGS!**

X-MEN! THE MOST UNUSUAL FIGHTING TEAM OF ALL TIME!

LUCIFER

A BANK ROBBERY ITSELF IS A SOMEWHAT UNUSUAL EVENT! BUT WHEN THE PERNICIOUS PERPETRATORS ARE ATTIRED IN THE GARB OF X-MEN, THE RESULTING TABLEAU MIGHT BE CONSIDERED POSITIVELY **UNIQUE**....!

ALRIGHT, ALL OF YOU! STAND BACK! I CAN DO MORE DAMAGE WITH THIS **BASEBALL BAT** THAN A HOMO SAPIEN CAN WITH A **SHERMAN TANK**!

YOU'RE THE BIG RAZZAMATAZZ OF THIS JOINT, AINT YOU? WELL, YOU GOT EXACTLY **TEN SECONDS** TO OPEN THIS VAULT--OR ELSE US X-MEN'LL PULL IT DOWN AROUND YOUR **EARS**!

BUT--I COULDN'T OPEN IT **NOW** EVEN IF I WANTED TO! IT HAS A **TIME LOCK**--AND IT'S SET FOR **TEN O'CLOCK**!

IT'S A **HOLD-UP**! WHY DON'T THE GUARDS DO SOMETHING?

TWO **NEW X-MEN**? I NEVER SAW THEIR PICTURES IN THE PAPER! WHAT POWERS DO THEY HAVE?

THEY CAN'T--THOSE HOODLUMS HAVE THREATENED TO HARM **MR. PHILBERT** IF THEY SO MUCH AS **MOVE**!

ANOTHER MIGHTY MARVEL BULLPEN SURPRISE!

EXPERTLY EDITED BY
STAN LEE

SKILLFULLY SCRIPTED BY
ROY THOMAS

PERFECTLY PENCILED BY
JAY GAVIN

IDEALLY INKED BY
DICK AYERS

LAXLY LETTERED BY
ARTIE SIMEK

I DON'T KNOW, LADY--AND I'M NOT GONNA **RUSH 'EM** TO FIND OUT!

DEAR ME! I ALWAYS SAID THOSE RIDICULOUSLY-COSTUMED MUTANTS WERE UP TO NO GOOD!

THIS IS THE FIRST TIME I EVER HEARD OF ANYBODY ROBBIN' A BANK WITH A **BAT**!

YEAH--BUT IF ANYBODY CAN PULL IT OFF, **THEY** CAN!





MEANWHILE, THE CLANGING BURGLAR ALARM HAS NOT GONE UNHEEDED, FOR...

OKAY, BOYS-- MOVE IN ON 'EM!

USE YOUR CLUBS! FROM WHAT I SAW THRU THE BANK WINDOW, GUNS ARE USELESS!

WE'LL TAKE 'EM, CAPTAIN!

THEY CAN'T LICK ALL OF US!

AND, A FEW FEET AWAY...

WE'VE GOT THIS ONE, CAPTAIN!

HE DOESN'T HAVE A FORCE FIELD!

WHO SAYS I NEED ONE? I GOT OTHER WAYS OF HANDLIN' THINGS!

YOU'RE TALKIN' THRU YOUR HAT, MISTER! WE'VE GOT ENOUGH MEN AROUND YOU TO CORRAL AN ELEPHANT!

AN' NOW, IF YOU DON'T MIND--

--I'VE GOTTA BE MOVIN' ON! GIVE MY REGRETS TO THE JOE THAT OWNS THIS CAR!

I SEE IT--BUT I JUST PLAIN DON'T BELIEVE IT!

C'MON, CHUM! WE'VE GOTTA GO JOIN THE REST 'A THE X-MEN!

HOWEVER, AS THE INCREDIBLE IMPOSTERS EMERGE FROM THE BUILDING...

UHHNN--! WE CAN'T EVEN LAY OUR HANDS ON HIM!

OOOOOF!

OF COURSE NOT, FOOLS! NOBODY TOUCHES ME UNLESS I ALLOW 'EM TO!

MAYBE SO, BUT YOU AIN'T GOT NEARLY ENOUGH TO HOLD ONTO...THE BLOB!

SO THAT'S WHO HE IS! ...NO WONDER!

HE TOSSED US OFF LIKE SO MANY RAG DOLLS!

THE NEXT MOMENT...

COME BACK HERE! COME BACK, I SAY!

MISTER, FROM WHAT I'VE SEEN, I'D SAY WE'RE LUCKY THEY WERE ONLY AFTER MONEY!

DID YOU SEE THAT? NOT ONLY DID THEY ROB THE BANK--BUT THEY ALSO MADE THEIR GETAWAY IN PHILBERT'S LIMOUSINE!

ALL RIGHT, MEN--INTO THE CAR! NO MATTER WHAT HAPPENS, WE'RE GOING TO CATCH US SOME MUTANTS!

FINE! BUT THEN WHAT DO WE DO WITH 'EM?

THAT SELF-SAME INSTANT, AS A CAPRICIOUS FATE WOULD HAVE IT, ONE OF THE **REAL X-MEN** HAS JUST MADE ONE OF THE MOST DIFFICULT DECISIONS OF HIS ENTIRE LIFE...

THERE, I'VE DONE IT! UNTIL THIS SECOND, I WOULD NEVER HAVE THOUGHT I COULD FIND THE **STRENGTH!**

I'M LEAVING THE **X-MEN**-- I THAT NOTE I LEFT WILL EXPLAIN THE REASONS--OR AT LEAST **SOME** OF THEM!

FOR, HOW CAN MERE WORDS EVER HOPE TO EXPRESS ALL THAT I FEEL IN MY HEART FOR **JEAN?**

AND YET, HAVE I THE **RIGHT** TO FEEL THIS WAY ABOUT HER-- WHILE MY EYES MAKE ME A **THREAT** TO ALL I ENCOUNTER?

THAT'S WHY I MUST GO-- TO SEE IF, SOMEWHERE, I CAN FIND A DOCTOR WHO CAN RID ME OF THE MENACE OF MY DEADLY **EYE BEAMS!**

UNTIL THAT DAY, THE WORLD SHALL HEAR NO MORE FROM THE ONE IT KNOWS ONLY AS... **CYCLOPS!**

WITH THESE THOUGHTS, THE TRAGIC FORM OF SCOTT SUMMERS DISAPPEARS INTO THE DISTANCE...

AS, INSIDE, UNAWARE OF HIS UNHERALDED DEPARTURE...

WANT THAT BOOK, JEANIER? LET ME GET IT FOR YOU--

DON'T BOTHER, WARREN! YOU FORGET-- MY **TELEKINETIC POWER** CAN BRING IT FLOATING DOWN TO ME AT WILL!

HEY, GROUP! CATCH THIS CRAZY SCENE ON THE BOOB TUBE-- IT'LL **FLOOR YOU!**

COME NOW, BOBBY-- MUST YOU PERSEVERE IN SUCH BOISTEROUS EXCLAMATIONS WHILE I'M **STUDYING?**

WAIT, HANK! BOBBY'S **RIGHT!** LISTEN TO THIS!

--AND SO, DESPITE THE EFFORTS OF THE AUTHORITIES, THE ROBBERS **ESCAPED!** THERE SEEMS TO BE LITTLE DOUBT THAT BOTH WERE MEMBERS OF THE MYSTERIOUS MUTANT GROUP KNOWN AS THE **X-MEN...**

OH YEAH? I DOUBT IT!

QUIET, BOBBY-- LET'S MAKE SURE WE DON'T MISS ANY OF THIS!

IT WOULD SEEM MOST IMPERATIVE THAT WE ENLIGHTEN THE PROFESSOR-- **POST HASTE!**

PROFESSOR XAVIER--PARDON MY UN CEREMONIOUS INTRUSION, SIR, BUT THE TELEVISION HAS REPORTED A MOST SINGULAR OCCURRENCE--

I KNOW, WARREN-- I'VE ALREADY MONITORED THAT NEWSCAST **MENTALLY!**

IN FACT, I'VE TELEPATHICALLY COMMANDED THE OTHERS TO **JOIN** US, AS I FINISH THE INSTALLATION OF THIS NEW **CEREBRO**!

*MAGNETO POLISHED OFF THE OLD ONE IN **X-MEN#18**, REMEMBER? -- **STAN.**

AND, SCANT SECONDS LATER...

WE GOT YOUR CALL, PROFESSOR! THEN YOU **KNOW** ABOUT THOSE PHONY **X-MEN?**

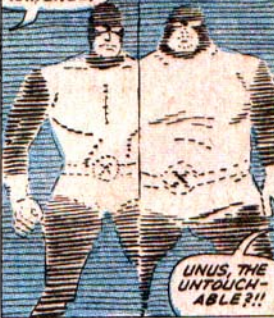
SILENCE, ALL OF YOU! THERE IS NO TIME TO WASTE ON WORDS! OBSERVE THE LARGE SCREEN ON THAT WALL!

I'VE NEVER SEEN THE PROF ANY **GRIMMER** THAN HE IS RIGHT NOW!

THE RADAR-IMAGE BEAM WHICH I DEVELOPED WILL DETECT ANY OTHER MUTANTS IN THE AREA-- AND SHOW US THEIR FORMS, AS WELL!



AS WELL HE SHOULD! IT IS CLEAR THAT THE MASSIVE FIGURE IS INDEED... THE BLOB! AND THE OTHER, THE MACHINE REVEALS, IS... UNUS!



BUT, THE LAST TIME WE FOUGHT, HE PROMISED TO REFORM IF WE DECLINED TO IMPRISON HIM!



WE STILL HAVE THE RAY GUN WE EMPLOYED AGAINST HIM THEN!

*TSH*8--S.

DON'T BE TOO CONFIDENT, HANK! AFTER ALL, UNUS MAY HAVE DISCOVERED SOME WAY TO COUNTERACT THAT WEAPON BY NOW!

PROFESSOR-- I JUST NOTICED! SCOTT ISN'T HERE! COULD ANYTHING HAVE HAPPENED TO HIM?

YEAH! IT ISN'T LIKE OLD GAMMA-GAZE TO MISS A CHANCE FOR ACTION!

SOMEONE HAD BEST INVESTIGATE HIS ABSENCE!

IN ADDITION, I SENSE THAT A THIRD ENTITY HAS MASTERMINDED THIS ENTIRE SCHEME. TO DISCREDIT US-- SOMEONE OUT OF RANGE OF MY CEREBRO MACHINE!



FIFTEEN SECONDS LATER, A BREATHLESS BOBBY BLAKE REAPPEARS-- WITH DISTURBING NEWS...



I SUSPECTED AS MUCH! SCOTT HAS SEEMED TERRIBLY DISTRAUGHT THESE PAST FEW WEEKS!

BUT, NO TIME TO WORRY ABOUT THAT NOW!

I MUST SEARCH MY MEMORY-- TRY TO DISCOVER WHICH OF OUR FORMER FOES MIGHT BE GUIDING UNUS AND THE BLOB!



IT'S-- NO USE! OUR ADVERSARY HAS SET UP A MENTAL SCREEN! THERE IS ONE NAME WHICH ELUDES ME!

BY YOUR EXPRESSIONS, I SEE THAT OUR HIDDEN ENEMY'S SCREEN HAS AFFECTED YOU, TOO! THERE IS ONLY ONE SOLUTION!

I MUST BUILD A MECHANICAL MEMORY-INDUCER, TO QUICKLY PENETRATE OUR FOE'S DEFENSES! MEANWHILE...



FOR ONCE, WE'RE WAY AHEAD OF YOU, PROFESSOR! IT'LL BE A RELIEF TO LET MY WINGS OUT OF THIS GET-UP ANYWAY!

SCOTT-- OH, SCOTT! WILL I NEVER SEE YOU AGAIN?

YEAH-- MAYBE IT'LL EVEN WORK! C'MON-- LET'S MOVE OUT!

BUT, EVEN AS THE TEEN-AGE MUTANTS PREPARE FOR BATTLE, THEY CANNOT SUSPECT THAT, TWO THOUSAND MILES AWAY, ONE PAIR OF EYES--COLD, HOSTILE; RELENTLESS--WATCHES INTENTLY FOR THEIR APPEARANCE...

SO! THE DIE IS CAST! UNUS AND THE BLOB HAVE UNWITTINGLY DONE MY BIDDING--AND A FOOLISH WORLD BELIEVES THEY ARE RENEGADE X-MEN, MERELY SEEKING WORLDLY TREASURE!

LITTLE DOES ANYONE--EVEN MY TWO MASQUERADING MINIONS--REALIZE THAT I, LUCIFER*, HAVE IN MIND A PURPOSE FAR MORE COMPLEX, FAR MORE SINISTER!

*THE VIVACIOUS VILLAIN OF X-MEN #9, RIGHT? RIGHT?... OL' STAN!

"FOR, IT WAS ONLY DAYS AGO THAT, WHILE TESTING MY ULTRA-SCANNER, I DISCOVERED..."

"UNTOUCHABLE" HUH? WHEN I GET THRU WITH HIM, HE'LL BE UNMENDABLE!

\$100 TO ANYONE WHO CAN LAST THREE FULL MINUTES WITH UNUS THE UNTOUCHABLE NOW TOURING WITH SUPERIOR CIRCUS

EASY, BLOB! I'VE HEARD-YA THIS GUY! THEY SAY HE'S TOUGH!

NOBODY'S TOUGHER THAN THE BLOB! I'LL TEACH THAT RUBE TO BRING HIS CIRCUS INTO THE SAME TOWN WHERE MY CARNY'S PLAYIN'!

"THUS, FATE HAD PLACED WITHIN MY REACH TWO OF THE MOST POWERFUL MUTANTS IN THE WORLD! AND, AS I WAITED, BIDDING MY TIME..."

WHAT'S THIS? HAVE THE LOCAL YOKELS RUN OUTTA MEN, SO THEY HAVETA SEND HIPPOS AGAINST ME NOW?

I'M GONNA MAKE YOU SWALLOW THEM WORDS, BUSTER!

"HOWEVER,..."

I DIDN'T EVEN REACH HIM! HE'S PROTECTED BY SOME KINDA INVISIBLE SHIELD!

BUT THERE'S NOTHIN' I CAN'T SMASH THRU... LEASTWAYS, NOT TILL NOW!

YOU BLUNDERING FATSO--NOW DO YOU SEE WHY THEY CALL ME "THE UNTOUCHABLE"?

YET, ANY NORMAL MAN WOULD HAVE BOUNCED BACK--HE WAS MERELY STOPPED!

I DON'T GET IT! NOBODY'S HALTED ME LIKE THAT EXCEPT--THE X-MEN!

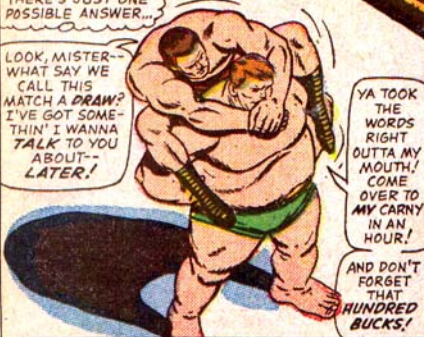
NOW, THERE'S AN IDEA! WHAT IF THIS CLOWN IS A MUTANT--LIKE ME?

HE'S GETTING UP! BETTER MAKE MY MOVE--NOW!

"BUT, UNUS FARED NO BETTER THAN HAD THE BLOB HIMSELF..."

CAN'T BUDGE HIM!
THERE'S JUST ONE
POSSIBLE ANSWER...

LOOK, MISTER--
WHAT SAY WE
CALL THIS
MATCH A **DRAW**?
I'VE GOT SOME-
THIN' I WANNA
TALK TO YOU
ABOUT--
LATER!



YA TOOK
THE
WORDS
RIGHT
OUTTA MY
MOUTH!
COME
OVER TO
MY CARRY
IN AN
HOUR!

AND DON'T
FORGET
THAT
**HUNDRED
BUCKS!**

"BEFORE LONG, INSIDE THE BLOB'S TRAILER..."

THEN IT'S SETTLED! SINCE WE'VE
BOTH GOT GRUDGES AGAINST THE
X-MEN, WE'LL FRAME **THEM** FOR
OUR ROBBERIES!

RIGHT! AND WHEN
THOSE COSTUMED
CLOWNS COME OUT
TO **STOP** US--WE'LL
POLISH 'EM OFF,
ONCE AN' FOR ALL!



NOW YER TALKIN'!
I BEEN WAITIN' A
LONG TIME FOR
THIS!

* SINCE X-MEN #7, TO BE
EXACT! -- SMILEY.

YET, THIS ISN'T MY AFFAIR--
FOR I'VE PROMISED MYSELF
NOT TO BECOME AN X-MAN
AGAIN--UNTIL I CAN
CONTROL MY AWESOME,
POTENTIALLY DEADLY
POWER!

BESIDES, SURELY THE
PUBLIC REALIZES THAT
THEY'RE NOT REALLY
X-MEN!

SEE, MABEL? I
TOLD YOU WE
SHOULD'A RUN THEM CRUMMY
MUTIES OUTTA TOWN LONG
AGO!

YOU WERE **RIGHT**,
HERMAN! NEXT TIME
I'LL LISTEN TO YOU!



NOW WE'RE
ONTO THEM!

SO--THE CROWD
HAS ANSWERED MY
QUESTION FOR ME!
I **MUST** HEED THE
CALL--AS LONG AS
ALL MUTANTS ARE
REGARDED AS
MONSTERS!

"AND SO, SOON AFTERWARD, THE TWO **HOMO-SUPERIOR**S
MET AGAIN--LITTLE REALIZING IT WAS I, **LUCIFER**,
WHO HAD PLANTED THE IDEA IN THEIR MINDS..."

THEN I WAS **RIGHT**, BLOB--
YOU ARE A MUTANT, JUST
LIKE ME! I **SENSED** IT,
SOMEHOW!



YOU AN' ME, BOTH,
CHUM! SO HOWZABOUT
A CUP'A COFFEE
WHILE WE SEE
WHAT **ELSE** WE
GOT IN COMMON?

OKAY, MARVELITES--THAT'S ENOUGH OF LUCIFER'S
SANGUINARY SOLILOQUIES FOR THE MOMENT! NOW, AS
HIS HUMAN PUPPETS COMMIT THEIR **SECOND CRIME**, THE
EYES OF **CYCLOPS** ARE UPON THEM...

C'MON, BROTHER X-MAN
--OUR CLUB TREASURY
CAN **USE** THIS EXTRA
LOOT!

I HEAR YA
TALKIN',
MAC!



TWO CRIMINALS--
DRESSED IN X-MEN
UNIFORMS, THAT BULKY
ONE LOOKS LIKE **THE BLOB**
--AND, COULD THE
OTHER BE... **UNUS**?

EXACTLY ONE MINUTE LATER...

ALL RIGHT, YOU MISGUIDED MISFITS!
ONE OF THE **REAL** X-MEN IS HERE!
NOW, WHICH OF YOU WANTS TO BE
THE FIRST TO CONFESS YOU'RE BOTH
PHONIES!

PHONIES? DOES
HE MEAN THAT
THOSE OTHER TWO
--ARE JUST
IMPOSTERS? I'LL
BET
THEY'RE ALL
IN ON IT!



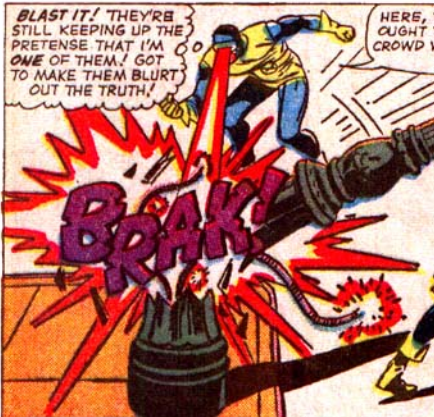
HEY, LOOK,
PARTNER--
IT'S **CYCLOPS**!
WE THOUGHT
YOU'D NEVER
MAKE IT, CYKE,
OL' BUDDY!

YEAH! HELP
US WITH THIS
MONEY-SACK,
WILLYA, KID?



SURE, FRIEND--I'LL GIVE YOU A HAND! OR, PERHAPS I SHOULD SAY--AN EYE!

I DON'T DARE UNLEASH A BLOW DIRECTLY AT THEM--UNTIL I AM CERTAIN THEY ARE MUTANTS, WHO WOULD ONLY BE STUNNED BY MY POWER BLASTS!



BLAST IT! THEY'RE STILL KEEPING UP THE PRETENSE THAT I'M ONE OF THEM! GOT TO MAKE THEM BLURT OUT THE TRUTH!

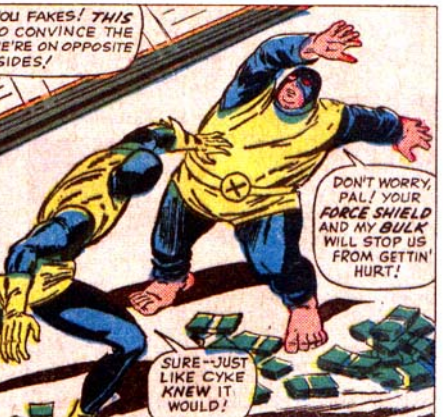
HERE, YOU FAKES! THIS OUGHT TO CONVINCE THE CROWD WE'RE ON OPPOSITE SIDES!



YA BLAMED NUISANCE! NOW LOOK WHAT YA'VE GONE AND DONE!

JUST LIKE ALWAYS-- IF YOU CAN'T LEAD A HEIST, YOU TRY TO FOUL IT UP!

I'M AFRAID WE'RE GONNA HAVETA PUNISH YOU FOR THIS--



DON'T WORRY, PAL! YOUR FORCE SHIELD AND MY BULK WILL STOP US FROM GETTIN' HURT!

SURE--JUST LIKE CYKE KNEW IT WOULD!



LISTEN TO THEM! DO THEY THINK THAT HUMAN BEINGS ARE JUST SPORT FOR THE MUTANTS?

YOU SAID IT, POPS! LET'S ALL RUSH 'EM-- TOGETHER!

YES! IF WE LET THEM CONTINUE TO RUN AMOK, THEY MAY DESTROY THE ENTIRE CITY!

GET THE YOUNGEST ONE FIRST! HE LOOKS LIKE THE MOST DANGEROUS!

AS USUAL, A MOB SELDOM MAKES THE RIGHT DECISION! NOW THE CROWD'S TURNING ON ME!



I--I'VE FAILED! INSTEAD OF HELPING, I'VE MERELY ALLOWED THEM TO DISCREDIT THE X-MEN FURTHER!

LOOK! HE'S RUNNING AWAY! SURE! THOSE MUTIES'RE ALL COWARDS, IF YA STAND UP TO 'EM!

BUT, AT LEAST I LEARNED WHO THE BOGUS X-MEN ARE! FROM THE WAY THEY SPOKE, THEY MUST BE THE BLOB AND UNUS--

--WHICH MEANS THAT I HAVE TO CONTACT THE OTHERS! PERHAPS AS A TEAM, WE CAN DEFEAT THE TWO EVIL MUTANTS--BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE!

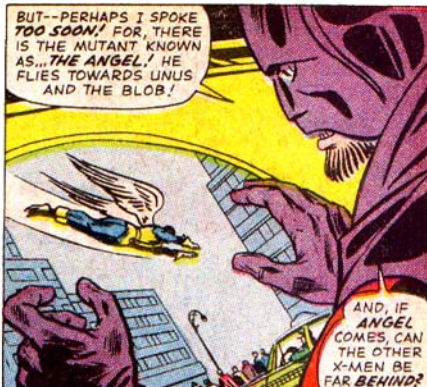
MEANWHILE, THE NEFARIOUS LUCIFER IS ALSO USUP, THOUGH FOR QUITE DIFFERENT REASONS...



HAVE MY PLANS ALL COME TO NAUGHT? DOES ONLY ONE X-MAN DARE TO ATTACK MY COSTUMED DUDES?

IT CANNOT BE! I HAVE PLANNED TOO CAREFULLY! THEY MUST ATTACK--AS A TEAM!!

BUT--PERHAPS I SPOKE TOO SOON! FOR, THERE IS THE MUTANT KNOWN AS...THE ANGEL! HE FLIES TOWARDS UNUS AND THE BLOB!



AND, IF ANGEL COMES, CAN THE OTHER X-MEN BE FAR BEHIND?

THE NEXT SECOND, LUCIFER'S RINGING WORDS COME TRUE, AS...



DON'T FORGET, GROUP--TIS THE BEAST WHO GETS FIRST DIBS AT OUR TWO ADVERSARIES!

YOU CAN HAVE 'EM, BEASTIE-BOY! BUT, I'LL BE HOVERING NEARBY, JUST IN CASE!

WELL, IT'S ABOUT TIME YOU GLORY-BOYS SHOWED UP! WE BEEN WAITIN' FOR YA!

HOLY HANNAH! THREE MORE MUTANTS!

THEN, ARMED WITH THE WEAPON WHICH ONCE BEFORE DEFEATED THE AWESOME UNUS, THE ANTHROPOID X-MAN MAKES HIS PLAY...




IT GRIEVES ME TO THE QUICK, FECKLESS FOE, TO REALIZE THAT YOU HAVE DISAVOWED YOUR PLEDGE OF ETERNAL HONESTY!

NOW, PREPARE FOR THE CONSEQUENCES OF YOUR IMPUDENT ACT!

QUIT YAKKIN' AND FIRE AWAY, FOOL! I DON'T HAVE ALL DAY TO LISTEN TO YOU!

AS YOU WILL, MY FRIEND! ONE DOSE OF THIS DEVICE, AND YOUR MUTANT POWER WILL NO LONGER BE YOURS TO CONTROL!



THAT'S STRANGE--HE SEEMS TO BE REACTING DIFFERENTLY THAN HE DID BEFORE...

MY NUTTY HUNCH WAS RIGHT!

I AM NOW IMMUNE TO THE BEAST'S BLASTED RAY!

AND, AS THE BLINDING GLARE FADES AWAY...

OKAY, YOU JUNIOR-GRADE GORILLA! NOW IT'S MY TURN--I BEEN WAITIN' FOR THIS MOMENT FOR MORE THAN A YEAR!

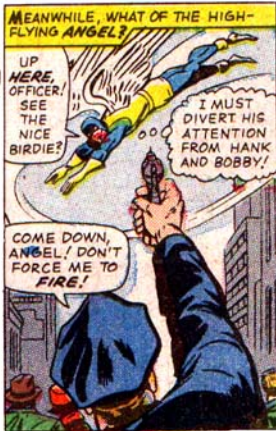


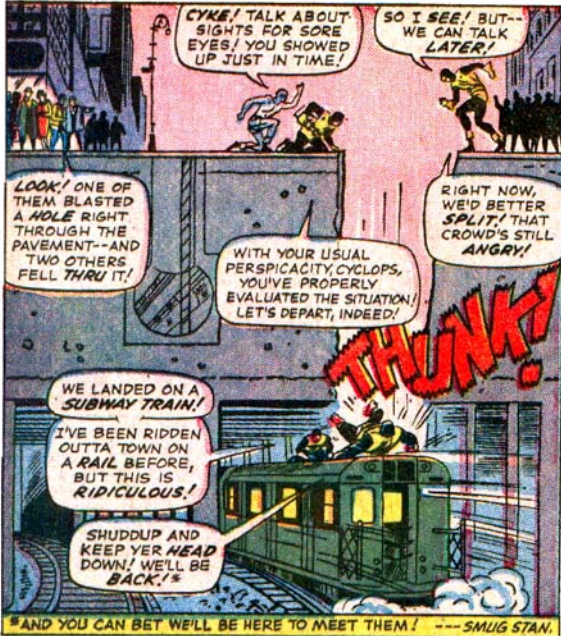
A TRUE PARAGON OF PATIENCE!

NEITHER OF THEM SUSPECTS THAT I AM RESPONSIBLE FOR UNUS' IMMUNITY--AND ALSO FOR HIS "HUNCH" THAT THE RAY WOULD NO LONGER AFFECT HIM!

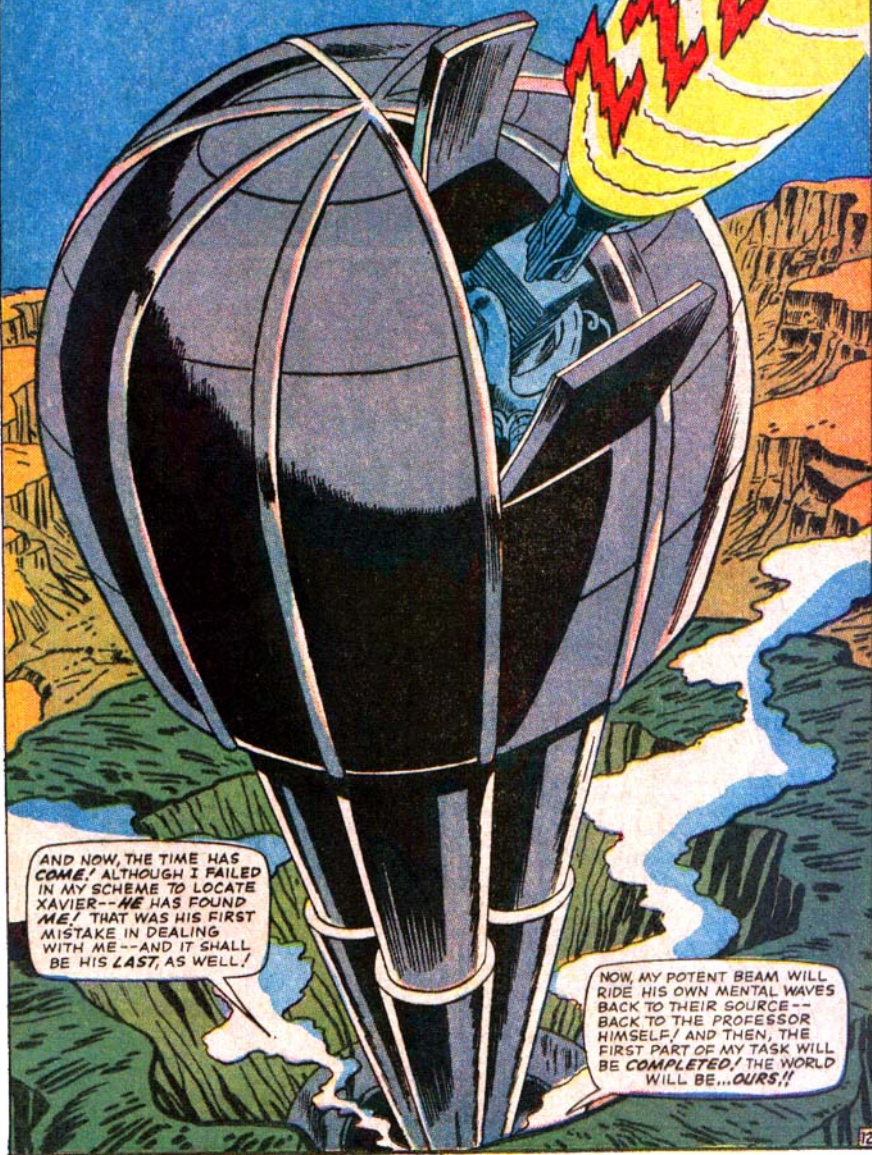


FOR, I POSSESS POWERS THAT THE WORLD CAN SCARCELY IMAGINE!





AS THE OPALESCENT GASES WHICH PREVENT ITS DETECTION FROM THE AIR FADE AWAY, AN AWESOME STRUCTURE HALTS ITS STRANGE, SILENT ASCENT! THEN, TWO MASSIVE PANELS PART--TO REVEAL A GIGANTIC CANNON WHICH, ALMOST INSTANTLY, FIRES A BLAST OF ENERGY INTO THE ATMOSPHERE...



AND NOW, THE TIME HAS COME! ALTHOUGH I FAILED IN MY SCHEME TO LOCATE XAVIER--HE HAS FOUND ME! THAT WAS HIS FIRST MISTAKE IN DEALING WITH ME--AND IT SHALL BE HIS LAST, AS WELL!

NOW, MY POTENT BEAM WILL RIDE HIS OWN MENTAL WAVES BACK TO THEIR SOURCE--BACK TO THE PROFESSOR HIMSELF! AND THEN, THE FIRST PART OF MY TASK WILL BE COMPLETED! THE WORLD WILL BE...OURS!!



"SOME YEARS AGO, FASCINATED BY TALES I HAD HEARD OF A MYSTERIOUS WALLED CITY IN THE SHADOW OF THE HIMALAYAS, I JOURNEYED THRU THE RUGGED TERRAIN OF TIBET..."

THIS IS MY DESTINATION!
I SEEM TO
SENSE SOME
OMINOUS,
UNSEEN
MENACE WHICH
LIES WITHIN--!

IT'S AS THOUGH MY ENTIRE
LIFE, MY ULTIMATE DESTINY,
WERE SOMEHOW BOUND UP
BEHIND THOSE GRIM, GREY WALLS!

"INSIDE THE CITY, I WAS
AWARE OF SINISTER
EYES FOCUSED
UPON ME..."

THE THOUGHT-WAVES
OF THESE PEOPLE--THEY
INDICATE **ABJECT FEAR**
OF THE TYRANT WHO
RULES THEM!

COME! IS
THERE ONE
WHO WOULD
SPEAK
TO A
WAYFARER IN A
STRANGE
LAND?

SO! A VISITOR
HAS COME!
HE WILL BEAR
CLOSE
WATCHING!

I WILL
SPEAK TO
YOU, MY SON!
WHAT DO
YOU WISH
TO KNOW?

I--I DO NOT
KNOW, MY SON!
IT IS AS IF--
TIME HAS
CEASED TO
EXIST FOR US
--SINCE HIS
COMING!

NOW, I MUST
GO! I CAN
SAY NO MORE!

AMAZING! MY SILENT
PROBING REVEALS
HIGHLY-COMPLICATED
MACHINERY INSIDE
THE TYRANT'S DOMICILE!

BUT
HOW--
AND
WHY??

I MUST PROBE
FURTHER--LAY
BARE THE
SECRETS OF
THESE DEVICES!

"AT THE GATE, MY SUSPICIONS WERE CONFIRMED..."

IT IS **FORBIDDEN** THAT ANY
OUTSIDER MAY PASS THIS
GATE, YET--I BELIEVE YOU
SHOULD BE ALLOWED
ADMITTANCE!

THANK YOU! MY
MISSION IS ONE OF
PEACE, I ASSURE
YOU!

THESE TWO ARE UNDER
THE MENTAL DOMINATION
OF ANOTHER'S BRAIN! I
CAN FEEL IT!

I AM INTRIGUED BY YOUR GREAT WALLED
CITY, AND I WISH AN AUDIENCE WITH ITS
RULER!

NAY, BUT THAT IS **IMPOSSIBLE!**
FOR, OUR MASTER DWELLS WITHIN
YONDER CITADEL--AND EVEN **WE**
ARE NEVER PERMITTED TO GAZE
UPON HIM!

I CAN TELL
HE SPEAKS THE
TRUTH!

HOW LONG HAS
THIS MAN BEEN
YOUR OVERLORD?

"EXERCISING MY MENTAL POWERS TO THE FULLEST
EXTENT, I MADE AN INCREDIBLE DISCOVERY..."

THESE,
THEN, ARE
THE SOURCE
OF THE
TYRANT'S
POWER!

BUT, THEY ARE MADE
OF METALS NOT FOUND
ON EARTH! THE ONE
WHO HOLDS THIS CITY
IN HIS SWAY--IS
FROM ANOTHER WORLD!

EVIDENTLY, THE MACHINES ENABLE THE ALIEN TO CONTROL SELECTED MINDS AMONG THE POPULACE--AND THESE, IN TURN, KEEP THE OTHER CITIZENS IN LINE!

OBVIOUSLY, THERE IS MUCH MORE TO THIS SITUATION THAN THE MERE ENSLAVEMENT OF ONE LONE VILLAGE!



"BUT, I HAD UNDERESTIMATED THE TRUE CUNNING AND POWER OF MY RELENTLESS, VIGILANT FOE..."

"FOR, EVEN AFTER I HAD MENTALLY SCREENED MY COMRADES, HE TOOK CONTROL OF THE BRAIN OF ONE OF THEM, AND SO..."

BY MEANS YOU WOULD NOT UNDERSTAND, I HAVE LOCATED A TUNNEL INTO THE CASTLE! ONCE INSIDE, WE WILL OVERTHROW ANY GUARDS--AND YOUR ANCIENT HOMELAND WILL BE FREE AGAIN!

FREE! DARE WE HOPE FOR SUCH A THING?

LONG AGO, WE WERE OUR OWN MASTERS! CAN SUCH A DAY DAWN ONCE MORE?

IT CAN-- IF YOU ACT SWIFTLY!

NOW--I STRIKE! DEATH TO ALL WHO WOULD REBEL!



"HASTILY LOCATING SOME OF THE MORE REBELLIOUS ELEMENTS OF THE AREA, I OUTLINED A PLAN TO THEM..."

...THEN, I CAN RENDER YOUR NAMELESS MASTER **HELPLESS**--IF YOU WILL HELP. ME STORM HIS PALACE!



AY, THAT WILL WE DO! WE HAVE LONG AWAITED A LEADER IN OUR STRUGGLE AGAINST THAT UNSEEN FIEND!

THAT FOREIGN DEVIL MUST NOT LEAVE THIS DWELLING ALIVE!

"THE NEXT INSTANT..."

LOOK OUT! THAT CHANDELIER-- IT'S FALLING--!

LUCKILY, MY MUTANT BRAIN SENSED TREACHERY FROM SOMEONE IN THE ROOM--NOT A MOMENT TOO SOON!

HOLD! WHAT TRAITOR'S DEED IS THIS?



BY THE ETERNAL--!

THE MASTER--HE KNOWS OF OUR PLOT AGAINST HIM!



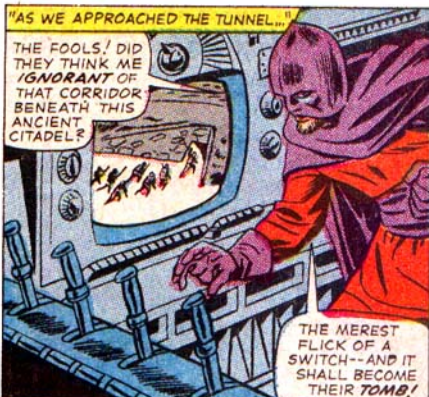
I HAVE THE VILLAIN! HE SHALL MENACE US NO MORE!

~UHHNN~

THE TYRANT MUST BE AWARE OF OUR PLANS! OUR ONLY CHANCE IS TO ACT-- NOW!

WE SHALL FOLLOW WHERE YOU LEAD, OUTSIDER!

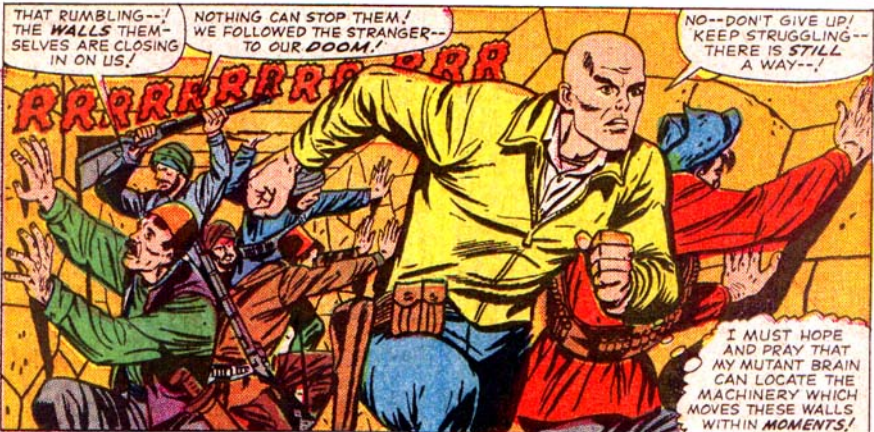
THEN COME-- SWIFTLY! EVEN NOW, HE MAY BE PREPARING HIS DEFENSES!



"AS WE APPROACHED THE TUNNEL..."

THE FOOLS! DID THEY THINK ME IGNORANT OF THAT CORRIDOR BENEATH THIS ANCIENT CITADEL?

THE MEREST FLICK OF A SWITCH-- AND IT SHALL BECOME THEIR TOMB!



THAT RUMBLING--! THE WALLS THEMSELVES ARE CLOSING IN ON US!

NOTHING CAN STOP THEM! WE FOLLOWED THE STRANGER-- TO OUR DOOM!

NO-- DON'T GIVE UP! KEEP STRUGGLING-- THERE IS STILL A WAY--!

I MUST HOPE AND PRAY THAT MY MUTANT BRAIN CAN LOCATE THE MACHINERY WHICH MOVES THESE WALLS WITHIN MOMENTS!



"FORTUNATELY, THE FATES WERE WITH ME--AND, FIFTEEN ANXIOUS SECONDS LATER..."

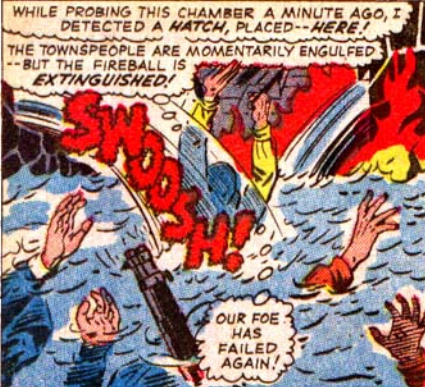
I'VE FOUND IT! ALREADY, AS I RIP THESE ESSENTIAL WIRES, THE WALLS BEGIN TO OPEN AGAIN!

BUT--WAIT! THAT HISSING SOUND BEHIND ME--!



A BALL OF FIRE--RUSHING TOWARDS US THRU THE TUNNEL! NO PLACE TO RUN--!

YET, THERE IS STILL A CHANCE!



WHILE PROBING THIS CHAMBER A MINUTE AGO, I DETECTED A HATCH, PLACED--HERE!

THE TOWNSPEOPLE ARE MOMENTARILY ENGULFED-- BUT THE FIREBALL IS EXTINGUISHED!

SWOOSH!

OUR FOE HAS FAILED AGAIN!



"AND, INDEED, JUST A SHORT TIME LATER..."

I CUT OFF THE SUPPLY OF WATER--AND THE FLOOD DRAINED AWAY IMMEDIATELY!

AND NOW--THE HOUR IS AT HAND! WE HAVE REACHED THE CASTLE OF THE TYRANT!

AT THIS DISTANCE, I CAN USE MY OWN MIND TO PROTECT THEM FROM THE ENEMY'S INFLUENCE!

LONG SHALL THIS DAY LIVE IN OUR MEMORIES!



"WHILE, IN ANOTHER SUBTERRANEAN SECTION OF THE PALACE..."

THE INTRUDER IS A FORMIDABLE OPPONENT! STILL, HE IS FORE-DOOMED TO FAILURE WHEN MATCHED AGAINST MY SUPERIOR MIGHT! NOW TO--

BEEP BEEP

BUT WAIT--THERE IS THE SIGNAL OF...THE SUPREME ONE!



AGENT ONE--OUR RELAY SYSTEMS RECORD THAT PART OF OUR EQUIPMENT ON EARTH IS DESTROYED! WHAT HAS HAPPENED?

AN UPRISING AMONG THE EARTHLINGS, SUPREME ONE! IT SHALL BE CRUSHED!

NO! TAKE NO RISKS WHICH MIGHT PROVE FATAL TO OUR CAUSE!



YOU HAVE SPENT ENOUGH TIME IN SECTOR "A"! A NEW SANCTUARY HAS BEEN READIED IN SECTOR "B"! PROCEED THERE AT ONCE!

I HEAR--AND OBEY, SUPREME ONE!

I SHALL LET THESE INSIGNIFICANT BEINGS OVERRUN THE CASTLE! BUT, THE FINAL VICTORY SHALL BE OURS!



"MEANWHILE, NOT FAR AWAY, I HAD PARTED FROM THE MAIN ATTACK FORCE..."

THE PEOPLE HAVE TAKEN THE PALACE-- BUT THEIR FORMER TYRANT STILL ELUDES THEM!

IT IS FOR THE BEST! THEY COULD NEVER FATHOM THE TRUE NATURE OF ONE SO POWERFUL--AND ALIEN!

STILL, I MUST FIND HIM--CONFRONT HIM! FOR, I FEEL ALL LIFE ON EARTH MAY BE AT STAKE! [17]



"THEN, ROUNDING A CORNER..."

SO! IT IS YOU WHO HAVE TYRANNIZED THIS CITY! WHO ARE YOU--AND WHERE ARE YOU FROM?

MY TRUE PURPOSE YOU SHALL NEVER KNOW --BUT, ON THIS PLANET I CALL MYSELF...**LUCIFER!**



AND NOW-- THAT NAME SHALL BE THE **FINAL** THING YOU HEAR! PREPARE TO DIE-- FOR DARING TO OPPOSE THAT WHICH NO MORTAL CAN COMPREHEND!

THAT GREAT SLAB--- RELEASED FROM ABOVE AT THE TOUCH OF A SWITCH! I-- CAN'T DODGE --IN TIME!



"PINNED BENEATH THE INEXORABLE WEIGHT OF THE MASSIVE SLAB, I HEARD MY TORMENTOR'S VOICE THRU A MIST WHICH SEEMED TO BE ENVELOPING MY BRAIN..."

OHhhh...!

SO--YOU STILL SURVIVE! LIVE, THEN-- PERHAPS IT IS FATED THAT YOU AND I MEET AGAIN ONE DAY!



"BEFORE MY EYES, A MOMENT BEFORE I LOST CONSCIOUSNESS, LUCIFER **DISAPPEARED**-- INTO THE VERY WALL ITSELF..."

BUT, REMEMBER THIS-- IT IS EVER THE **STRONG** WHO ARE MEANT TO RULE! AND **WE** ARE THE **STRONG!**

WHO DOES HE MEAN BY "**WE**"? IS HE ACTUALLY THE HERALD OF A FAR **GREATER** MENACE -- FROM THE **STARS?**



THEN, AS THE PARALYZED MENTAL MUTANT CONCLUDES HIS STARTLING NARRATION...

THEN-- THAT IS HOW YOU LOST THE USE OF YOUR LEGS YEARS AGO!

YES, JEAN! AND, IT IS YET **ANOTHER** REASON WHY I FOUNDED THE **X-MEN!**

FOR, I KNEW THAT ONE DAY MANKIND WOULD HAVE TO MEET THE RENEWED THREAT OF **LUCIFER!**



BUT, EVEN **XAVIER** DOES NOT FULLY REALIZE JUST HOW URGENT MANKIND'S PLIGHT TRULY IS! FOR, AT THIS VERY SECOND, BENEATH THE SOUTH-WESTERN DESERT...

IT IS DONE! I HAVE CONQUERED THE ONE EARTHLY MIND WHICH MIGHT HAVE DISCOVERED MY INTENTIONS IN TIME TO **THWART** THEM!

AND NOW, THE TIME DRAWS NEAR, WHEN MY RACE SHALL FULFILL ITS MISSION--- ITS MAGNIFICENT **DESTINY!**

IN ASIA, I MANAGED TO EXTEND MY SWAY OVER AN ENTIRE CITY, AT CLOSE RANGE! BUT, MY EXPERIMENT WITH UNUS AND THE BLOB PROVES THAT LONGER DISTANCES ARE NOW POSSIBLE!

SOON, NO NATION SHALL ESCAPE THE TENTACLES OF OUR POWER! MANKIND SHALL EXIST ONLY TO SERVE US!

ALL IS IN READINESS! ONLY ONE STEP REMAINS -- BUT THAT IS THE GREATEST ONE OF ALL!

AND SO...

SUPREME ONE, AFTER YEARS OF OBSERVATION, OF EXPERIMENTATION, AND OF WATCHFUL WAITING-- I CAN ANNOUNCE THAT-- THE TIME HAS COME FOR... DOMINUS!



AT LAST! OUR RACE HAS WAITED LONG TO POSSESS THIS INCONSEQUENTIAL WORLD-- FOR IT SHALL BE A STEPPING STONE TO GALAXIES AND UNIVERSES WHICH CAN EASILY DWARF THE PALTRY EARTH!

THEREFORE, LET THE HUMANS AWAIT... THE COMING OF DOMINUS!



MEANWHILE, UNAWARE OF THE EARTH-SHATTERING EVENTS WHICH HAVE TRANSPIRED SINCE THEY LEFT WESTCHESTER, THE FUGITIVE X-MEN PREPARE TO RETURN TO THEIR UNIQUE SCHOOL...

IT'S SAFE TO VENTURE OUT NOW! IF NO ONE SEES MY WHITE WINGS, THE REST OF YOU ARE IN THE CLEAR!

BOY! I THOUGHT IT WAS NEVER GONNA GET DARK!

DON'T RELAX YOUR VIGILANCE, BOBBY!



UNDER THE CIRCUMSTANCES, CYCLOPS, THAT SEEMS A MOST SUPERFLUOUS PIECE OF ADVICE!

MAKING THEIR WAY BACK, THE FOUR MUTANTS DISCOVER...

MARVEL GIRL! WHAT HAPPENED TO THE PROFESSOR?

SCOTT, YOU'VE RETURNED! BUT, TOO LATE! HE WAS PARALYZED... BY LUCIFER!

LUCIFER? HE'S RETURNED?!!

WHAT ABOUT THE PROF? WILL HE PULL THRU?



I... HOPE SO! HE'S GIVING ME DIRECTIONS FOR A BEAM DISTORTER-- FOR THE BEAST TO BUILD!

THEN START RELAYING, GIRL! AND DON'T STOP TO BREATHE!

FEVERISHLY, DESPERATELY, WITH MANUAL SKILLS FAR BEYOND THOSE OF MOST NON-MUTANTS, A WORRIED HANK MCCOY LABORS AGAINST TIME ITSELF! AND, FINALLY...



HURRY, BEAST-- PLEASE HURRY!

THE PROFESSOR'S MENTAL MESSAGES ARE GETTING WEAKER-- ALMOST **INAUDIBLE!** IF YOU AREN'T FINISHED WITH THAT DISTORTER **SOON--**

I'M... **TRYING, JEAN!** IT'S A COMPLICATED PIECE OF MACHINERY, BUT I THINK... **YES, THAT DOES IT!**

I ONLY PRAY... THAT IT WORKS!

AS A TENSE SILENCE GRIPS THE X-MEN, THE DISTORTER HELMET IS PLACED ON THEIR LEADER'S HEAD, AND, ANXIOUS SECONDS LATER...

LOOK! HE--HE'S STIRRING! IT'S **WORKING!**

HE'S GOING TO BE **ALL RIGHT!**

YES, I--THINK I WILL-- THANKS TO THE **BEAST**--AND **MARVEL GIRL!**

HE CAN **MOVE!** THE PARALYSIS IS **GONE!**

NOW, WE MUST **ACT!** THERE'S NOT A MOMENT TO **LOSE!**

THEN, AFTER A FAST BRIEFING...



HMM! THEN IT'S MANDATORY THAT WE **ENGAGE** LUCIFER, EH?

ANYTHING'S BETTER THAN WEARING THIS GADGET ANOTHER MINUTE!

QUIET, JEAN! LUCIFER ALMOST BEAT US **BEFORE!** IF HE'S STRONGER **NOW--**

WHAT'S OUR **PLAN OF ATTACK, PROFESSOR?**

WE'LL FIX 'IM, **BEASTIE!**

WHILE UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF LUCIFER'S BEAM, I MANAGED TO PIN-POINT ITS **SOURCE!**

OUR DESTINATION IS... THE **SOUTHWEST DESERT!**

AND SO...



AM I SLIDIN' THESE CRATES DOWN TOO **FAST** FOR YOU, JEAN?

NO, BOBBY-- KEEP THEM COMING! HANK AND I CAN KEEP UP WITH YOU!

THE WAY SCOTT **SNAPPED** AT ME A WHILE AGO! HOW COULD I EVER HAVE THOUGHT HE MIGHT **CARE** FOR ME?

BEAST! YOU MAY START **LOADING** THE PLANE, NOW!

WITH ALL DELIBERATE **ALACRITY, SIR!**

MINUTES LATER, A SEEMINGLY SOLID WALL OF THE STately SCHOOL-BUILDING RISES--TO REVEAL A SLEEK PRIVATE JET, POISED MOMENTARILY BEFORE ROCKETING SKYWARD...

AS YOU KNOW, I PURCHASED THIS PLANE SEVERAL WEEKS AGO-- BUT OUR ENCOUNTERS WITH THE **SENTINELS** AND **MAGNETO** KEPT US TOO BUSY TO USE IT BEFORE!

IT'S BEEN ESPECIALLY FITTED FOR SHORT TAKE-OFFS AND **LANDINGS!**

YOU KNOW, BEAST, I CAN'T **WAIT** TO GET MY ICY MITTS ON LUCIFER! I DON'T **LIKE** HAVIN' PEOPLE THINK WE'RE **CROOKS!**

NOR DO I, MY FRIGID FRIEND! BUT, MORE THAN OUR **REPUTATIONS** ARE AT STAKE-- IF I **DEDUCE** CORRECTLY!

YOU'RE RIGHT, HANK...

FOR, ALTHOUGH WE DO NOT KNOW THE PRECISE NATURE OF LUCIFER'S **MENACE** TO US...



...IT MAY WELL BE THAT **WE SIX** ARE THE EARTH'S SOLE **HOPE** FOR **SURVIVAL!**

NEXT ISSUE:
THE STARTLING, SINISTER SECRET OF... DOMINUS!