

# X-MEN BLACK

MARVEL

1

McGUIRE  
FAILLA  
ABURTOV

PLUS:

**APOCALYPSE**

THOMPSON  
NADLER  
BORGES  
ROSENBERG



*James Heck*  
McGuire, Faille, Aburtov  
Thompson, Nadler, Borges, Rosenberg  
C&G

# Mystique

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# X-MEN BLACK

FOR OVER A CENTURY, RAVEN DARKHOLME'S MUTANT ABILITY TO SHAPE-SHIFT HER PHYSICAL APPEARANCE MADE HER THE MOST DANGEROUS AND ENIGMATIC WOMAN ON THE PLANET. SHE'S PLAYED MANY ROLES--SPY, ASSASSIN, TERRORIST--BUT ALWAYS MAINTAINS A CERTAIN...

# MYSTIQUE

"ONE SHORT DAY"

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## APOCALYPSE "DEGENERATION" part three

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**WASHINGTON, D.C.  
DATE NIGHT.**

AS ANY ARTIST WILL TELL YOU, TALENT ISN'T ENOUGH: YOU HAVE TO BE WILLING TO PUT IN THE WORK.

NATURE DOESN'T HAND OUT SCALPELS. SHE DISTRIBUTES BRICKS OF IRON, AND LEAVES IT UP TO US TO HONE THEM.

ACTORS TALK ABOUT "THE CRAFT."

"I TOOK THE ROLE TO IMPROVE MY CRAFT."

THEY'RE NOT WRONG. THEY'RE NOT RIGHT, EITHER.

A BIG ENOUGH PAYDAY SHOULD BE ALL THE CRAFT YOU NEED.

**BZZZ  
BZZZ!**

I THOUGHT WE AGREED NO PHONES.

IT'S MY SISTER. SHE HASN'T BEEN WELL.

I'M SO SORRY, I HAVE TO TAKE THIS.

**WILLIAM BLAKE**  
JUNIOR SENATOR FROM MASSACHUSETTS. PATSY.

**TIFFANY NORRAN**  
SOCIALITE. PHILANTHROPIST. DOESN'T EXIST.

I'LL BE RIGHT HERE!

MEN LIKE YOU ALWAYS ARE.

HANDSOME AND HOLLOW AND EASILY BROKEN.

SORRY, PARLING. YOU'RE NOT EXPENSIVE ENOUGH TO BE WORTH IT.

SO MANY PEOPLE ARE HAPPY TO REST ON THE GIFTS NATURE GIVES THEM.

THE REST OF US, WELL...WE FIGURE OUT HOW TO GO OUT AND TAKE WHAT WE WANT.

Target vulnerable.  
Asset available.  
Estimated window: 48 hours.

I AM VERY GOOD AT TAKING.

MY ESCORT FOR THE EVENING RAN ON A PLATFORM OF MORALITY AND REFORM.

HE HONESTLY SEEMS TO BELIEVE HIS OWN PRESS, WHICH IS WHAT MAKES HIM SUCH A DELIGHTFUL CHEW TOY.

THE *INSINCERE* ONES AREN'T NEARLY AS MUCH FUN.



MY GOD. ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?

I'M FINE, HONEST. IT WAS MY OWN FAULT.

I JUST MAKE BILLY SO MAD SOMETIMES.

BILL--YOU MEAN WILLIAM? ARE YOU HERE WITH WILLIAM BLAKE?



*RAVEN DARKHOLME*  
MUTANT. SHAPE-SHIFTER. DOES EXIST, EVEN IF SOME PEOPLE WISH SHE DIDN'T.



THE SENATOR WAS NOTHING. A WAY TO BLOW OFF A LITTLE STEAM--

--TO HONE MY CRAFT, AS THE AUTEURS WOULD SAY.

THIS, HOWEVER, IS THE REAL DEAL.



A BEAUTIFUL PAYDAY, A VALUABLE PRIZE, AND ALL I HAVE TO DO IS SHOW UP AND MAKE IT HAPPEN.

NOW THAT'S ART.



SOME PEOPLE THINK I HAVE AN EASY POWER.

"OH, THAT RAVEN, SHE CAN TURN INTO ANYONE SHE WANTS, SHE DOESN'T HAVE TO WORK."

THOSE PEOPLE HAVE NO IMAGINATION.

I SWEAR, I HAD MY I.D. A SECOND AGO!

MA'AM, PLEASE PUT YOUR HANDS UP.

CHAOS IS AN ART LIKE EVERYTHING ELSE. IT'S BEST LEFT TO THE HANDS OF A PROFESSIONAL.



FLYING COMMERCIAL IS ALWAYS A DELIGHTFUL CHALLENGE.

I KNOW THE LOCATION OF EVERY SECURITY CAMERA IN EVERY MAJOR AIRPORT IN THE UNITED STATES...

...AND HALF THE ONES IN CANADA.



PEOPLE ONLY SEE THE FLASH AND PAZZLE WHERE I'M CONCERNED...

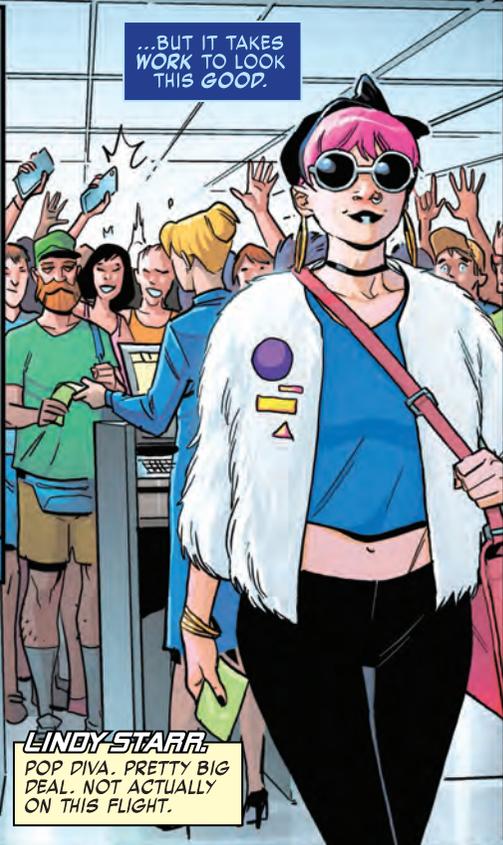


...BUT IT TAKES WORK TO LOOK THIS GOOD.

AS ANY PERFORMER WILL TELL YOU, WARM-UP EXERCISES ARE VITAL TO SUCCESS.

A RUINED REPUTATION HERE, A LITTLE CASUAL THEFT THERE, AND YOU BECOME A MASTER.

**LINDY STARR.**  
POP DIVA. PRETTY BIG DEAL. NOT ACTUALLY ON THIS FLIGHT.



IT KEEPS THINGS INTERESTING. IT KEEPS THEM UNPREDICTABLE.

WANT TO KEEP THE HEROES OFF YOUR BACK? LEARN TO IMPROVISE.

HONESTLY, IT'S WORTH THE EFFORT.

AND THE PERKS ARE...

...DELIGHTFUL.

I KNOW WHAT YOU DID.



EVERYONE HAS A BREAKING POINT. LEARN TO READ PEOPLE AND YOU CAN FIND IT.

NO CHEATING OR PSYCHIC POWERS REQUIRED.





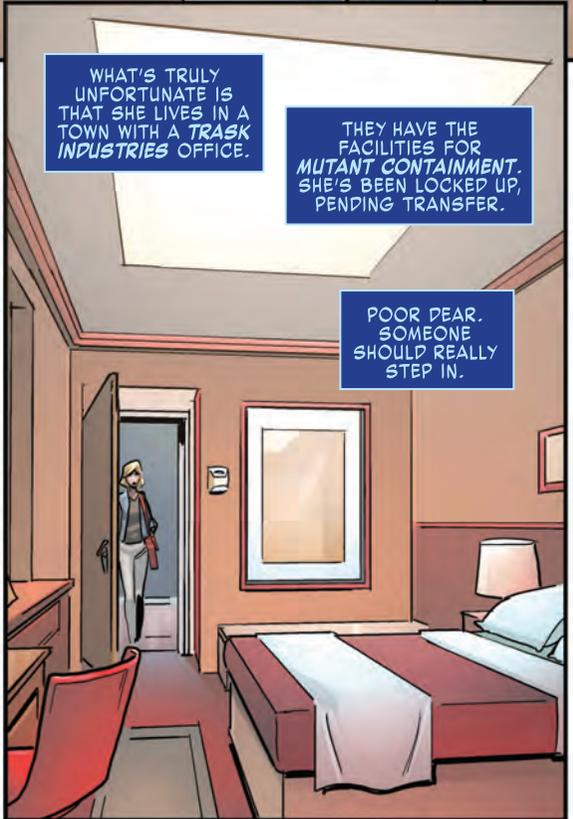
IT SEEMS ONE OF OUR LOCAL *YOUNG MUTANTS* HAS MANAGED TO GET HERSELF INTO A NASTY SITUATION.

WHITNEY JAMES. SEVENTEEN. DOUBTLESS A BALL OF MISERY AND HORMONES--ALL TEENAGERS ARE.



ALAS FOR HER, THOSE HORMONES DECIDED SHE SHOULD KILL HER PARENTS.

REALLY, WHO AMONG US HASN'T FELT THE URGE?



WHAT'S TRULY UNFORTUNATE IS THAT SHE LIVES IN A TOWN WITH A *TRASK INDUSTRIES* OFFICE.

THEY HAVE THE FACILITIES FOR *MUTANT CONTAINMENT*. SHE'S BEEN LOCKED UP, PENDING TRANSFER.

POOR DEAR. SOMEONE SHOULD REALLY STEP IN.



THERE ARE MANY THINGS TO LOVE ABOUT THE MODERN WORLD.

SOCIAL MEDIA, FOR ONE--GIVE ME AN HOUR WITH A MARK'S ONLINE PROFILE AND THERE'S NOTHING I CAN'T EMULATE.

BUT BEST, MOST GLORIOUS OF ALL--

**WHITNEY JAMES.**  
NOT REALLY.  
(BUT YOU KNOW THAT.)

--THE BIG-BOX STORE.

