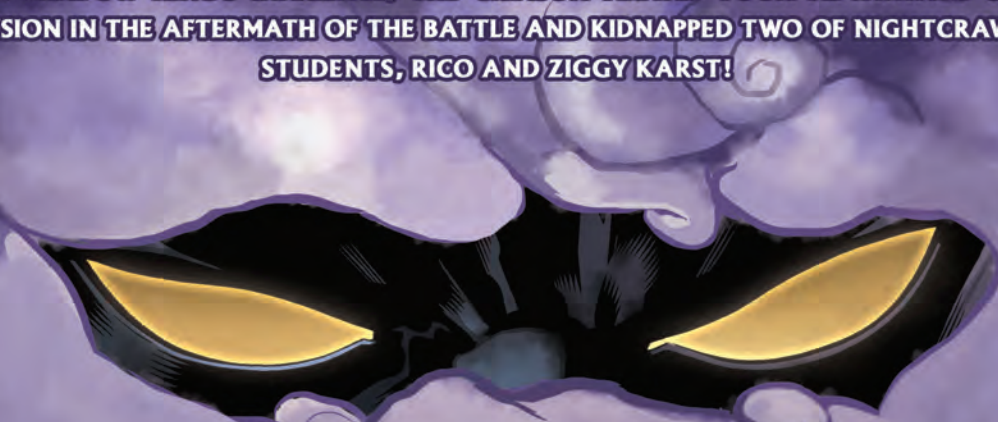


RECENTLY RETURNED FROM THE AFTERLIFE, NIGHTCRAWLER HAS BEEN SEARCHING FOR HIS PLACE IN A WORLD FAR DIFFERENT FROM THE ONE HE LEFT BEHIND.

PREVIOUSLY IN...

NIGHTCRAWLER

WHEN NIGHTCRAWLER RECEIVED A TELEPATHIC DISTRESS CALL FROM BLOODY BESS OF THE CRIMSON PIRATES, HE WAS TELEPORTED TO A DESERT IN CHINA. THERE, NIGHTCRAWLER WAS ATTACKED BY THE CRIMSON PIRATES, WHO THEMSELVES WERE POSSESSED BY THE EVIL SHADOW KING. WITH BESS'S ASSISTANCE, NIGHTCRAWLER MANAGED TO BEST THE SHADOW KING. FREE OF THE SHADOW KING'S INFLUENCE, THE CRIMSON PIRATES TOOK ADVANTAGE OF THE CONFUSION IN THE AFTERMATH OF THE BATTLE AND KIDNAPPED TWO OF NIGHTCRAWLER'S STUDENTS, RICO AND ZIGGY KARST!



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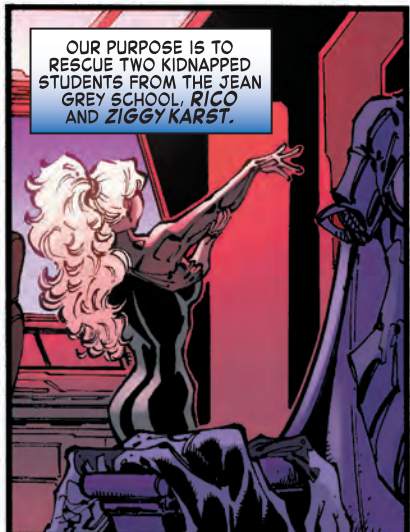


WITH BLOODY BESS CHARTING OUR COURSE...




...THE BLACKBIRD CROSSES OVER THE DIMENSIONAL BOUNDARIES WITH EASE.



OUR DESTINATION IS THE SLAVE MARKET RUN BY TULLAMORE VOGE.



OUR PURPOSE IS TO RESCUE TWO KIDNAPPED STUDENTS FROM THE JEAN GREY SCHOOL, RICO AND ZIGGY KARST.



AFTER THE CHILDREN ARE SAFE, I INTEND TO BRING VOGE TO JUSTICE, ONCE AND FOR ALL.



TO THIS END, BESS HAS CHOSEN TO STAND WITH ME AGAINST HER TEAMMATES, THE CRIMSON PIRATES.



IN THAT, I AM JUST LIKE TWO OF MY BEST FRIENDS, JEAN GREY AND LOGAN.

ALL THREE OF US TORN BETWEEN LOVE AND PASSION.



MY HEART IS PLEDGED TO ANOTHER, AND YET--

--THERE'S SOMETHING ABOUT HER I CANNOT RESIST.



HOW THE FATES MUST LAUGH AT THE FOLLIES OF MEN.

READY, CUTIE?



BUT THESE ARE THOUGHTS FOR ANOTHER TIME.

ABSOLUTELY. LET'S GO BE HEROES.

BESS TOLD ME
WHAT TO EXPECT--
BUT WORDS PALE
BEFORE THE
REALITY.

THEY'RE
ALL KIDS
LIKE US--
--AND
THERE ARE SO
MANY!

MUTANTS
EVERY ONE,
AYE--

--AN/
ALL OF 'EM
SLAVES!

VOGE
OPERATES
THROUGHOUT THE
OMNIVERSE.

SO MANY
WORLDS,
TOO MANY
PEOPLE--

--NOBODY
MISSES A CHILD HERE OR
THERE, EVEN ONE WITH
SUPER-POWERS.

YOU
CAN'T GET
AWAY WITH
THIS!

KIDS ON THE RUN!





AND WHO'S TO STOP US, GIRL?

VOGE!

DID YOU REALLY THINK I'D ALLOW YOU TO ESCAPE ME?

WE'VE BEEN "GETTING AWAY" WITH THIS FOR GENERATIONS.

AND WILL CONTINUE DOING SO LONG AFTER YOU ARE BOTH DUST AND FORGOTTEN.

ALTHOUGH, LOOKING AT YOU NOW, I BEGIN TO WONDER WHY I BOTHERED.



YOU CAN TALK AS SMUG AS YOU LIKE, FATSO--

--WE BEAT YOU BEFORE, WE'LL DO IT AGAIN!

AND THIS TIME, WE'LL MAKE SURE YOU PAY FOR YOUR CRIMES!



HOLD YOUR TONGUE, BOY--

--OR LOSE IT!

?GAK!?



THE BOY HAS SPIRIT.

I HATE SPIRIT.

AND I START TO WONDER, KILLIAN, IF I WOULDN'T MAKE MORE PROFIT SELLING YOU PIRATES.

SAVE YOUR THREATS, SLAVEMASTER.



LET THE ENHANCER FIELD SHOW YOU WHAT THESE MUTANTS WILL BECOME WHEN THEY GROW UP.

I FEEL SO STRANGE!

ZIGGY--WHAT'S HAPPENING?