



## **X-Men: The Fall of the Mutants**

*Chris Claremont, Louise Simonson*

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The body count rises higher than ever as the X-Men and their allies face war on every front! X-Factor comes up against their deadliest challenge in Apocalypse. The New Mutants lose one of their own! And after the Marauders slaughter the Morlocks, they take on the X-Men! **Collecting:** New Mutants (1983) #55-61, Uncanny X-Men #220-227, X-Factor (1986) #19-26, Captain America (1968) #339, Daredevil (1964) #252, Fantastic Four (1961) #312, Incredible Hulk (1968) #340, Power Pack (1984) #35

## X-Men: The Fall of the Mutants Details

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## From Reader Review X-Men: The Fall of the Mutants for online ebook

### Rob says

Who would have thought the Power Pack issue would be the best thing about this?

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### Ryan says

This is the first major comics crossover I ever read as a kid. It unfortunately has not aged too well. The first third is X-Factor. The story and plot isn't bad, but I can't quite get into Walt Simonson's art. The second third is X-Men and features some of the first art (for Marvel at least) by Mark Silvestri. His stuff is cool, but to me has always looked like he learned to draw from fashion school. The characters usually look like they are about to have glamour photos taken. The writing here is by the cringe-worthy Chris Claremont. God, why didn't the editors step in and help touch up his horrendous dialogue? The final third is New Mutants. The story and art here are my favorite. A lot of people complain about Bret Blevins art style. I think it's amazing.

Oh, by the way, if you are actually reading this ( I write these reviews for myself to keep track of what I have recently read), I would not recommend this to anyone but old school X-Men geeks. If you are jumping into this uninitiated, you will not appreciate the stories as there is just too much to learn about all of the characters involved. Chances are, nobody reads this crap but me anyway...

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### Jeff Harris says

I have two words to use to describe this graphic novel: classic and depressing. The three X-Men teams of the period (the X-Men themselves, the New Mutants, and X-Factor -- the original X-Men team) are each put through their own personal crucibles, with only one team ending up making it through their harrowing ordeals generally unfazed. A major character death on one of the teams, and a complete upending of another full group made this a tough book to read, but it's an important part of X-Men chronology.

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### Neal says

Nostalgia is a hell of a thing. The X-Men and X-Factor "Fall of the Mutants" storylines were some of the first comics I read, and definitely among the first comics I loved. I never read the New Mutants, because the little town I grew up in didn't have a comic shop and the spinner rack at 7-11 did not stock New Mutants.

So did these comics hold up? Yes and no. The X-Factor issues leading up to and encompassing the "Fall of Mutants", as well as some of the tie-ins (Daredevil, Captain America) were actually pretty good comics. A little dated, but still enjoyable. A lot of it had to do with Walt Simonson's art - I had forgotten he was drawing X-Factor during this time period. It was a little melodramatic, sure, but I actually enjoyed these as comics, apart from the charge of revisiting something from my childhood.

The X-Men issues held up OK, though not as well as X-Factor. I remember loving Marc Silvestri's art as a kid, and now I am kind of at loss to figure out why. Ditto with Chris Claremont's writing - it is just so filled with cliche's and overdone speechifying. I think it succeeded at imbuing the events with a sense of grandeur and importance for a 9-year-old, but the trick doesn't carry over for me as an adult. The climactic scene where the X-Men sacrificed themselves to save the world really hooked me in as a kid - probably because I wasn't old enough to understand that they weren't really going to kill all these characters off. But reading now, the whole, "oh, we were dead, but now we're magically alive again, but are going to let everyone in the world believe we are dead anyway" ending makes very little sense. Still, there were a lot of good action story beats here, and using an "embedded" new reporter as a point of view character to show the world that the outlaw X-Men were really good guys worked particularly well.

The New Mutants issues, though, were horrible. It used to really bug me that I couldn't get these comics as a kid, as they were referenced in the other X-books and I really felt I was missing out, but now I can see I wasn't missing anything. These issues were tonally all over the place, and the parts that were supposed to be funny weren't, and only undercut any drama. Then it all ends with a cheap death and a lot of poorly executed hand-wringing - and then, hey, new costumes! It probably didn't help that I was reading these fresh, and didn't have fond memories to fall back on.

I don't think I would recommend this collection to someone who didn't grow up reading these books, or at least these characters. But if you did read and love these when you were younger, you'll enjoy this collection now.

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### **Ondra Král says**

X-Factor - 3\*

Uncanny X-Men - 1,5\*

New Mutants - 2,5\*

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### **Kevruzz says**

The first thing you're likely to hear about FALL OF THE MUTANTS is that it would be wrong to call it a crossover. It's actually a trio of unconnected but otherwise earth-shaking events in each of the X-books (Uncanny, New Mutants, and X-Factor) that just happen to coincide. It doesn't even really matter in which order they are read across the two paperback volumes, especially given that the Incredible Hulk tie-in issues arrive in the wrong order.

First up is the core X-Men team, centering on Storm finally getting her powers back with aid from the mutant Forge, and something to do with a cosmic demon called the Adversary who's going to destroy the world or something. The team's roster had been shifting heavily after MUTANT MASSACRE, and the group that comes together for this event would hold together for a considerable stretch after the world sees the group sacrifices themselves to save the world (if you've ever heard about the X-Men's Australia days, this is where that starts).

The story is damn near impossible to summarize. While the X-Men have never dealt with paranormal forces quite like this, the story is far too bonkers (even more than usual) for any of the elements to find a decent

footing or emotional connection. You can probably guess that the Adversary is a boring menace that will never show up again. No matter how many times they say it, “Forge is a powerful sorcerer” still sounds like a typo. Marc Silvestri’s artwork at least makes the whole strange affair great to look at.

The story featuring the New Mutants, while smaller in scale, is still very much a game changer for the team. I was worried that Birdboy would be the Jar Jar Binks of the New Mutants run. Thankfully he’s not quite that (the Demon Bear still holds the honor of series low-point in my heart), and it doesn’t look like he ever shows up again. Instead, he acts as the catalyst for a seemingly whimsical adventure that escalates into a harrowing and deadly conflict. The arc is good, once it’s past the initial silliness, and the appearance by Cameron Hodge makes it feel more relevant to the overall event.

The real history goes down in the pages of X-Factor:

The team’s PR man Cameron Hodge is revealed as an anti-mutant jerkass with a fleet of armored bad guys, as well as orchestrating the Angel’s recent demise. But that’s just the beginning as the newest big bad Apocalypse brings to bear his biggest scheme yet, featuring juiced-up mutants on robot horses and a big damn spaceship ruining everybody’s afternoon.

What makes it the biggest turning point of the lot is the big reveal that former teammate Angel is at last revealed as the horseman of death Archangel, which is telegraphed so clumsily it barely counts as a dramatic reveal. Even so, the entire story in Vol. 2 gives us a far more successful payoff to its many issues of setup compared to the X-Men’s and New Mutants’ adventures.

In fact while the X-Factor portion of the event is easily the strongest, within that I felt the fight with Apocalypse, as explosive and exciting as it is, turned out to be the weakest part of the story. Of course, as a crucial moment in X-Men history, I’m glad I finally got around to reading it myself.

Really, that goes for the whole affair. The collected editions thankfully comprise far more than the 3-4 issue arcs, but also much of the buildup to give the off-the-wall stories proper context. **FALL OF THE MUTANTS**, for all it’s ups and downs, blew open the X-Men universe in ways that would be felt for years after. Definitely a must-read.

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## **Ed says**

Fall of the Mutants is an odd cross-over in that themes cross over between the books, not characters or events. It has four main parts: the main arcs in Uncanny X-Men, New Mutants and X-Factor (and the issues that lead into those) and then there’s some tie-ins that intersect the X-Men and X-Factor stories.

The Uncanny X-Men main arc (225-227) is my least favorite of the three. There’s some fun stuff with Colossus and I enjoy the Storm/Forge stuff, but the the main confrontation with the Adversary didn’t do much for me. The lead in stuff (220-224) is okay, but it’s mostly place setting. The biggest highlight for me is a beach-side battle with Polaris in issue 222.

The New Mutants main arc (59-61) starts off strong in issue 59. The Animator is legitimately terrifying and Blevin’s cartoony art is just fantastic. However, it falls off after that. The main battle is just confusing and too busy. The death of Doug isn’t given the gravity it deserves. And the final issue is too melodramatic (and also makes Mageneto seem totally insane). I really enjoyed all the lead-in stuff, though. It’s very cartoony and some of the issues are a bit hokey (55’s anti-drugs message, for example). But I find this lighter take on the New Mutants really fun. I even like Bird Brain who has a Jar-Jar Binks-esque reputation.

The X-Factor main arc (24-26) is my favorite of the three. Issue 24 has some incredible layouts from Simonson and the battle with Apocalypse is very well done. The coda in issue 26 has some great old-fashioned superhero heroics, too. It was so fun seeing X-Factor as publicly acclaimed heroes. The lead-in stuff (19-23) isn't as good. In these issues, the young characters are far more interesting than the leads and the plotting is pretty boring. However, it starts to pick up with Cameron Hodge goes full super villain.

Of the five tie-ins (Captain America #339, Daredevil #252, Fantastic Four #312, Incredible Hulk #340, Power Pack #35), only Daredevil really shines. The Captain America issue is just dull; the Power Pack issue is very slight; the Hulk issue is too melodramatic although it has a few nice moments; and the Fantastic Four issue is good but ties in the least. The Daredevil issue though is a minor masterpiece. It's double sized and tells a tight street level story of Daredevil and some civilians dealing with the blackout caused by the events in X-Factor. The art by Jon Romita Jr is fantastic; there's some genuinely emotional stuff (the escaped robber storyline really got me); and the villain Ammo must have been where Robert Kirkman got the idea for both The Governor & Neegan.

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### **Jamie Sigal says**

This bland collection really only deserves two stars, but I gave it a bonus one for the sake of nostalgia.

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### **Mark Fairchild says**

Loved it. Thought all three story arcs were solid. #XFactor got a little dull but I finally got to see the origins of my favorite mutant Archangel anti-hero!! #ChrisClaremont #NewMutants was brilliant and saddening. #RIPCypher #RIPDoug

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### **Andrew says**

This is a crossover event that is missing the crossing over. There is some awareness of the other storylines, but the three sections can be read separately. Basically the three X-Titles, Uncanny X-Men, X-Factor, and New Mutants, all face dire consequences and events and the end result is they all face big status quo changes. Status quo changes: good; storylines that get you there: ...

### **Uncanny X-Men #225-227**

This finally wraps up the first Life Death story. The fun thing to watch with Claremont, is his unfolding of storylines over many many years. This unfortunately isn't one of his grander ones, but it is alright. I at least liked Forge. And the changes for Colossus was surprisingly needed. However all the events that take place in Dallas don't get executed well. From the Freedom Force fight to the... other things. Also the newscast deal tries to pull some strings. I think it at least half worked on me last time... I don't know why. This time it just felt like it was trying too hard. Also Maddie was hard to fathom.

Marc Silvestri does the art. As I have stated I like this older stuff better than the little I've seen of his more detailed newer art. However I can't say anything in these three issues really jumped out at me. He's also one of those artists where all the characters look exactly the same, especially the women... It gets kinda boring.

## **X-Factor #24-26**

And this kinda concludes all of the events in X-Factor to date. There is a lot of good potential here, that really gets distracted by poor dialogue. You get told way too much of what you already know or can see in the picture. And even besides those points the dialogue just didn't work. The changes to the status quo were long desired though, so now hopefully this book can move on.

Walt Simonson does respectable work here, but there were a couple panel progressions that could kinda screw up the reader. Also, regardless of their being married, it just felt like Louise and Walt weren't really on the same page creatively. Or after the page was made she felt she needed to rework things through the dialogue. Either way this also didn't help the dialogue/script.

## **New Mutants #59-61**

Shortly before this Claremont bowed out of the writing duties for Louise Simonson to step into yet another title. I wish Claremont had stuck with it, but I am guessing part of the reason for this is the upcoming Excalibur title, and perhaps a few other jobs I don't know about. Regardless the transition isn't perfect. None of her initial storylines picked me up and this one is the culmination of one of those. But then this book takes a turn when the New Mutants are forced to grow up much quicker than you'd expect. The later inclusion of The Right does actually work for the story, however, due to the contrast between the youth and the hate. However it is The Right that should have executed the act that would mature the Mutants not... whatever that guy's name was (the fact that I didn't just go and look it up is a bad thing). Also the Mutants all dealing with the "event" isn't entirely subtle, but it's the best character stuff Simonson has done to this point. Anyways, the book leaves you with a very new direction for the Mutants, so I shall see where it goes.

Bret Blevins has taken over art for the book and isn't bad. His work on Uncanny shortly before this struck me as terrible, but I am just finding his style doesn't work for an adult team. However for a youth team it works well. Quite cartoony. But consistent. And I've gotten used to it now.

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## **David says**

It's the X-Factor issues that really bring this story alive with the art by Walt Simonson so the second half of the volume is really great and a lot of fun - looks amazing too.

The first half has some weaknesses but soldier on - it's worth the effort.

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## **Relstuart says**

One of the significant events of this books is the first appearance of Archangel. Also we see what can make Dr. Hank McCoy purposely fall down in a public hallway and cry. Apocalypse attacks New York.

This event follows three X teams. X-Factor, experience the above listed issues. Uncanny X-Men search for the de-powered Storm who is searching for the man she loves, Forge, to get her powers back. Wolverine leads a team to find her and they are followed by Freedom Force (a group of criminals) empowered with a warrant for their arrest. An inter-dimensional attack on earth takes place in Dallas when Freedom Force attempts to serve the warrant.

The final X-team is the New Mutants with a fairly unrelated story about a mutant they discover and try to help.

There are crossover issues from (grey) Hulk (who fights Wolverine), Daredevil (who deals with the effects of Apoc's NYC attack) and Captain America (who fights of of Apoc's four horsemen). Powerpack gets involved in the attack on NYC and get infected by Pestilence (of of the four horsemen) but heal each other, and FF4 participate in a ticker tape parade for X-Factor after repelling the NYC attack and help deal with Dr. Doom.

Overall it was a good collection though the New Mutants were not closely tied to the main story.

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### **Chris says**

When x-overs started to get out of control. Its three different stories, all interconected. Sort-of. X-Factor, X-Men, and New Mutants all have terrible, seminal things happen to them, and they sort of relate to one another. All decent stories, but too disjointed. And then Forge turns the X-Men into a ball of mystic energy and throws them into a giant copy of the Torah and everyone things they're dead and leave then they turn out NOT to be dead but they don't tell anyone because that will be all secret-agent and shit. Yeah.

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### **Shannon Appelcline says**

**X-Factor.** I'm generally not a fan of Louise Simonson's X-Men work, but these arcs are quite good. The story of Cameron Hodge and the Right is a nice bit of betrayal that underlines the human/mutant conflict while offering it in a very in-your-face way, and the lead-in to Apocalypse is nicely intertwined. The Apocalypse story proper is also quite good — both for how much it sets up the ideas of Apocalypse that have been used in the decades since and for how it makes a real change in X-Factor. [7+/10] My only complaint is the lack of issue #17, which was referred to so often that it *should* have been included.

I was less thrilled by all the crossovers. It's nice to have them all together, but none of them are that good, so they're mainly a nice excuse to see Marvel of the '80s, with a warped FF, a gray hulk, an American-less Captain, and a semi-comprehensible Daredevil (with the crossover issue actually being one of Nocenti's better stories). [5/10].

**X-Men.** It's interesting to see how much Claremont's writing has changed since the Byrne era. Just 6 or 7 years previous he was writing one or two-part comic stories that were very innovative. Now he's settled into his characters and is writing deeper stories that border on soap opera. I like both eras of writing, though this is the one that's ultimately more familiar to me. My only real complaint is the increasingly self-parodic dialogue.

Anywho, the Adversary storyline that's at the heart of the X-Men's Fall isn't my favorite, because he's such a one-dimensional villain and is pretty far out of the heart of X-Men storytelling. Nonetheless, the Adversary storyline has a terrific ending that really opened up the story possibilities in the years that followed. Meanwhile, the Marauders storyline that threads through the early issues is quite good. It's good to see their return and to get at least some hints of motivation.

I must say I'm somewhat befuddled by the X-Men's abrupt decision to settle in San Francisco. Maybe I'll understand it more when a collection that runs between the *Massacre* and *Fall of the Mutants* has finally been published! It's the only notable gap in Claremont's later work at this point. [7/10]

#### **New Mutants.** Sigh.

So Louise Simonson had big shoes to fill when she started writing the *New Mutants*, which had been Claremont's baby since its inception, five years previous. And perhaps she thought the answer was to leave behind his thoughtful, human drama and replace it with teenybopper humor. But the result is *horrible*.

In the first issues we have: "don't do drugs just to be cool", which could have been a superhero Afterschool Special (55); a return to the Hellions that I'd appreciate for the continuity if it weren't so badly written (56); Birdboy's hijinks at the mall (57); and Birdboy gets a burger (58). Did I mention that Simonson's first big addition to the cast was Birdboy!? [2/10]

The actual Fall of the Mutants story is better. Sure, it's pretty much *The Island of Dr. Moreau*, but Simonson makes it more interesting when she brings in the Right, then the cast death turns things on their head, and offers the chance for some strong characterization in the last issue (61). Unfortunately, there's still too much silliness in the writing, and some of it's quite heavy-handed, such as the sudden change in direction in the last two panels, complete with ugly new costumes [5/10].

*Overall, the X-Men is the strong light of this volume, but X-Factor is surprisingly good (minus the crossovers), while New Mutants is a big let-down, but gets better as it goes.*

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#### **Roger Whitson says**

I love both the X-Factor and the X-Men segments of the story, but the crossovers and New Mutants sections seemed too much.

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