



Astonishing X-Men, Vol. 1: Life of X

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Charles Soule and a stellar roster of superstar artists unite to put the Astonishing back in the X-Men! An ancient evil is attacking the world's most powerful minds. It will have them by the time you finish this sentence, and a moment later, it will have us all. A band of X-Men discovers the truth behind the threat, but is there any time left for Psylocke, Old Man Logan, Bishop, Archangel, Fantomex, Rogue and Gambit? In an action-packed X-epic, they must head to the astral plane in pursuit of...the Shadow King! But in this brain-bending mindscape, not everything is as it seems, and reality is a relative concept. Will this impromptu squad of X-Men be able to contain the chaos from spilling out into the world?

COLLECTING: ASTONISHING X-MEN 1-6

Astonishing X-Men, Vol. 1: Life of X Details

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Author : Charles Soule (Text) , Jim Cheung (Illustrator) , Mike Deodato (Illustrator) , Ed McGuinness (Illustrator) , Carlos Pacheco (Illustrator) , Ramon Rosanas (Illustrator) , Mike del Mundo (Illustrator)

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From Reader Review Astonishing X-Men, Vol. 1: Life of X for online ebook

Guilherme Smee says

Quem acompanha meus escritos por aí sabe que eu e meu irmão começamos a ser fãs de X-Men por causa de uma saga que tem o Rei das Sombras como o vilão principal. Neste encadernado que retoma a tradição das histórias grandiloquentes de Supreendentes X-Men, Ahmal Farouk é novamente o antagonista. E mais: temos o Professor Xavier e o Rei das Sombras lutando e fazendo jogos psíquicos na mente de Psylocke. Então ela convoca alguns X-Men e os coloca para lutar dentro de sua cabeça, no plano astral. Meu coraçãozinho e minha emoção nostálgica de criança vibraram com cada página produzida por Charles Soule e uma gama de talentosos artistas. Isso também porque, diferente da maioria dos escritores atuais dos X-Men, Soule respeita a cronologia e as personalidades dos personagens. Assim, temos uma historinha envolvente, cheia de jogos e tramoias psíquicas e como um final bem surpreendente que resulta no retorno do Professor Charles Xavier. O ponto negativo é que não é uma história autocontida, que só vai se revelar no próximo encadernado. Mas vamos combinar: seria sensacional se o defeito de todos encadernados fosse continuar na próxima edição, né?

Roy says

Wasn't overly fond of this. I felt like it wasn't really going anywhere for the first 4 issues. The last two issues save the plot but only just. Felt like Soule was building something big but with a series that ends after 3 volumes I'm probably going to spend my time elsewhere for now.

David says

Best X-men story in ages. Uneven art. Wish Cheung had done the whole thing. Or McGuinness. Mike del Mundo's art is squirrely and totally bugs me. Really great X-team story. Must read for X-fans.

Frédéric says

The two color X-Men series have still to convince me after 2 volumes each (not enough issues of Red yet). The ones before this reboot were even worse. So you'll excuse me if I didn't put much faith on Astonishing X-Men.

I was wrong.

This is a first act of which I don't want to tell much for fear of spoiling. High stakes from the beginning, lots of tension and action. One character apparently comes back from the dead - it seems to be in the air at Marvel lately - and interesting promises of bigger things to come.

Soule also played his characters very well, using the core of their personalities to justify their presence in the book. I still don't know what to make of him : he doesn't shine on DD- to say the least- but manages by far the best X-title of the lot, and not only by simple comparison.

One artist per issue here (Cheung, Deodato, McGuinness, Pacheco, Rosannas, Del Mundo). That's something I usually dislike, but all are good in their own right- one minor reservation for Rosannas- and that more than made up for it.

As much as I'm not sure I'll keep on with Blue and Gold, I'm pretty sure to go with this one for at least a little while.

Tiago says

Finally, now this is an X-Men book that actually felt canon, the story is very familiar, yet refreshing in some ways, while the Gold & Blue series seem to be rehashing classic material, this story actually took a step forward, the team was well put together and the illustrations were incredible, all the artists made a terrific job on these panels, Marvel got the all-star team for this one, I'm hyped for the second volume.

Chris Lemmerman says

[Read as single issues]

Charles Xavier is dead...isn't he? So who's mind is battling the Shadow King on the Astral Plane, and who's mind is calling out to Old Man Logan, Psylocke, Gambit, Bishop, Archangel, Rogue, Fantomex, and Mystique to come and save him? The answer will...probably not surprise you as much as you'd think.

The idea of this book has been done before - astral plane battles aren't anything that the X-Men haven't dealt with before, even if it takes a while to get to that stage since there's a real-world battle to be fought before/alongside it. In fact, spending too much time on things seems to be this book's downfall. There's a lot of time devoted to the battle outside the Astral Plane, and then the fight itself against the Shadow King feels stuck in a holding pattern for at least two issues, as if this story was designed to run four issues instead of six (I've made this complaint before, and I'll keep making it until Marvel listen. Stories should be as long as they need to be.)

The final conclusion is intriguing, and it's clear Charles Soule is building towards something bigger in the second arc, but it takes far too long to get there.

The artwork is also very 'your mileage may vary'. Every issue is pencilled by a different artist, and while that might work okay in single issues that are released monthly, reading the story in trade may feel very inconsistent. There's no denying the talent on display, with Jim Cheung launching the book while Mike Del Mundo, Mike Deodato, Ed McGuinness, Carlos Pacheco, and Ramon Rosanas all get an issue each. All solid artists in their own right (although I have issues with Rosanas but that's a whole different review), but I feel like one after another they're not very good company for each other. It must be awkward for Soule as well to have to taylor his script differently for every single issue, too.

The title of Astonishing X-Men has a lot of history, and while this could shape up to be worthy of the legacy, it doesn't feel like it just yet.

kristen b ? says

this is the best x-men book i've ever read. it's coherent issue to issue, is touching yet humorous and suspenseful.

Malum says

This was alright. Nothing...astonishing (thank you, thank you) but not god awful. The problem here is that there is a looooooot of setup for very little payoff. Hopefully the next volume will move at a better pace.

On a related note: I am sure there was a time when the resurrection of a dead character was a big deal. I dabbled in comics when I was younger but didn't start to devour them until I was well into my thirties, but I am sure I remember hearing about this or that character coming back and thinking "wow, what a twist!". They do it so often now, though, that it isn't even worth mentioning in a review that this or that character is now back from the dead/limbo/wherever. They have used the same trick so much that it is no longer shocking. A character dying should get a reaction of "WHAAAAAT!?!?!?". Instead, it elicits more of a "Huh. I wonder when he/she is coming back."

I don't know the solution to the problem (better writing maybe? Perhaps we should write compelling stories rather than relying on shock value?), but it is definitely a problem.

Drown Hollum says

I absolutely loved this book. It can be hard to be an X-Men fan, but Soule lives up to the legacy of the Astonishing name, and delivers what is absolutely an incredible X-Men book. This book does not rely on nostalgia, instead forging ahead with something new, while using a recognizable and iconic cast of characters. It's incredibly focused, and carefully paced, despite the "mind-games" plot happening on the macro. Stories like this are easy to do wrong, but in my opinion, Soule executes this narrative with grace, and obvious careful planning. Every character has a role to play, and even by offering us multiple perspectives (including that of the non-mutant military) Soule creates a grand experience, with all the potential in the world to become the next great X-Men tale.

Elements echo Morrison's New X-Men and Remender's X-Force, while still daring to dive into completely new territory. Soule makes the best of what he has, and gives us characters complete with their recent and grisly baggage. He really offers us a TEAM comic, with each character lugging around their own weight and perspective. None of that is to even speak of the brilliant surprise ending.

I hope this comic continues for many more volumes. It's about the best thing I could hope for in a contemporary X-men comic.

C. Varn says

While referring to Whedon's run in the title makes me feel old, Charles Soule delivers the best of the three current X-men titles--the other two, currently, being X-men: Blue and X-men: Gold. (X-men: Red has too few issues out for me to judge.) That said, unfortunately, that bar is not particularly high right now. Soule's writing relies less on nostalgia than the other two titles and seems like a return to form without trying to wipe the ever- convoluted slate clean. The characters selected, however, do have a 90s feel to them: Gambit,

Rogue, Old man Logan, Psylocke, and Mystique rescuing Professor X and battling an emergent Shadow King. Furthermore, this X-team doesn't seem to be as stuck in "Summers family dynamic" rut that plagues a lot of the X-men titles and has since the early-to-mid-1990s. Soule does a lot here picking up from Whedon and doing right by Claremont without aping either. It's not perfect--the arc wraps up a little too easily, the astral plane stuff makes inconsistencies and twists too abundant, Psylocke, the Shadow King, and Professor X's actual powers and scale are inconsistent, but for a recent X-book, it's pretty good.

The art is Marvel/X-book house style. There is a different artist each issue--Cheung, Deodato, McGuinness, Pacheco, Rosannas, and Del Mundo. That does mean that it isn't particularly standout anywhere, but it is consistent.

Claire says

I enjoyed this book. I liked the split between the real world and the astral plane. I liked the mix of characters involved and the overall arc of the story. I'll be looking out for volume 2.

Chad says

A middling story where the X-Men come together because they're in close proximity to Psylocke. The Shadow King is back and trying to break out of the astral plane. For reasons untold Psylocke can't go to the astral plane even though it's the purview of psychics so she sends some random X-Men. The narration in the book was mind numbing and there was a lot of it. Marvel broke out its big guns to each come in and pencil an issue. Some of my friends really dig this book, but Charles Soule hasn't written anything at Marvel that has impressed me.

Dan says

Meh was okay and you would think that with the players in this book that it would have been better, but the theme has been played out so many times that it wasn't all that great.

James DeSantis says

This is the best "New" X-Men title I've read in awhile.

It's time to enter the astral plane and face off against the Shadow King. Charles is back! OR Is he? People are obviously doubting him since he died awhile ago but he has the extreme psychic power to bring in a team of X-Men such as Gambit, Rogue, Old man Logan, and more. Together they go to save the professor and stop the Shadow King from breaking out. Twist and turns occur multiple times that lead to a very exciting ending.

Good: Loved the hell out of the art. Stylish and gritty enough to make it stand out. The characters all work together well, weather they agree or are bickering, it's all intense and interesting. The fights are great, and over the top action can only happen in the astral plane. Also the ending is fantastic and leads up to so many awesome stories that can come from this.

Bad: Some of the pacing slowed down in issue 3-4 and kind of a slog to get through a bit.

Overall this was fantastic for the most part. Funny, exciting, stakes, and great art. This is one of my favorite X-Men books in awhile. A 4 out of 5.

Shannon Appelcline says

Soule is a thoroughly inconsistent author, but at least he seems to be going in the right direction with *Astonishing X-Men*: assembling a crew of classic X-Men, sending them after a classic menace, and paying attention to who they all are as characters. This feels very much like a continuation of the *Uncanny X-Force* comic from the early '10s, except, one must admit, not as good.

Its biggest problem is decompression. Too many mainstream comics nowadays think you should be running a single battle over six long issues, and that's largely what *Astonishing X-Men* is. Yes, it remains relatively interesting, but you feel a bit empty at the end.

And, I am thoroughly not in support of the big character return in this volume, one of a trio of big X-character returns in 2017. I mean, maybe Soule will do good with this and make it a chance to say some final goodbyes, but the X-men had really grown past at least two of those characters (and the third had been replaced pretty thoroughly), so every one of these returns to status quo just lessens the *X-Men* comics, even if providing an interesting story along the way.

With all that said, this comes in at 3.5 stars or so: I like it more than *Gold* (as it feels like it has the depth that *Gold* is missing), and it's at least comparable with *Blue*.
