



## New X-Men by Grant Morrison: Ultimate Collection, Book 2

*Grant Morrison (Text) , Igor Kordey , John Paul Leon , Phil Jimenez (Illustrations)*

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Morrison ("All-Star Superman, Batman") propelled the "X-Men" into the 21st century, masterminding a challenging new direction for Marvel's mutant heroes. Now, his entire Eisner Award-nominated run is collected across three trade paperbacks. Collects #127-141.

## New X-Men by Grant Morrison: Ultimate Collection, Book 2 Details

Date : Published August 27th 2008 by Marvel

ISBN : 9780785132523

Author : Grant Morrison (Text) , Igor Kordey , John Paul Leon , Phil Jimenez (Illustrations)

Format : Paperback 360 pages

Genre : Sequential Art, Comics, Graphic Novels, Superheroes, Marvel, X Men, Fiction

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# From Reader Review New X-Men by Grant Morrison: Ultimate Collection, Book 2 for online ebook

## Jordan Lahn says

Continues to have the same strengths and weaknesses as the previous volume. I did enjoy Emma Frost's increased role in the last few arcs of this volume, and it was interesting to see the first appearance (?) of some familiar characters from later X-Men stories, such as Quentin Quire and Glob Herman. Still, I'm looking forward to finishing the 3rd volume so I can say I've read the series, but I don't expect it to come together in a way that makes this a favourite.

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## Samantha says

What in the world is with the "Here's Johnny." look Wolverine has on this cover?

This collection wasn't as tense as the first, but I still really enjoyed most of the stories here.

### Highlights

-*Jean...again.* Still really loving her character and she had several awesome moments in this volume. I only wish that when she finally found out about what was going on between Emma and Scott that she hadn't focused all her rage/blame onto Emma. (Even though I understood why she did.)

-*The whole Who shot Emma Frost storyline.* It had some odd moments. Like the insertion of Beak and Angel's pupa babies. But overall I really enjoyed that entire storyline.

Emma's character development has also been fairly engaging. I like that Morrison shows glimpses of who she is once you get past the unaffected wasp queen persona. Like how shaken up she is over the death of one of her students and the Stepford Cuckoos' hostility towards her.

-*The Hank is gay running gag.* This really amused me. How everyone kept bringing it up to him. How Emma was reading a magazine where the cover was a picture of his face with the headline "I'm as gay as it gets." I also liked that was used very subtly to show the emotional turmoil he was going through after a break-up.

### The Annoying Things:

-*Bringing back Polaris.* Polaris is discovered alive among the ruins of Genosha....that's about it. It was a "well that's something that happened" moment. This is the only part we see her in for the rest of the Morrison run. Was this supposed to be a hint to the readers that Magneto is still alive? Because if it was, it was a bad one.

-*The entire Kick storyline* The whole mutant steroid drug was rather "meh" for me. I don't think it especially added anything to the story. In fact, I think it would've been more interesting if the group of teenagers had decided to cause the riot and got as far as they did without the aid of the drug. It could've brought up some interesting questions and conflicts amid the X-men instead of just verging dangerously close into a PSA comic.

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## Gavin says

Well...there was good and bad stuff about this collection, and some of the most disappointing stuff was actually some of the artwork...

I also got overwhelmed with too many mutants at some points. Wolverine does not feature heavily in this book, though there is a fair bit of Beast, which is a nice change. Some of the stuff is silly, some of it good, Xorn is a very interesting character, and it was great seeing lesser used characters/old ones like Arcangel, Storm, Quicksilver, Polaris, and some of the first New Mutants (X-Force I suppose now?) Also appearances of Weapon XII and XIII, like to see where that goes...Not as fond of the school parts, but I suppose they have to set up new younger characters to move forward sometimes.

It's for sure got a lot going, and a ton of people showing up even for a little bit, which is what Morrison does well. Definitely worth a read, and I'll check out Vol 3 for sure.

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## The Sapphic Nerd says

I liked this better than book one! I don't recall as many funny moments, but some of the stories are more engaging, and the overall art is better too.

The story of Xorn and the monster-boy is sad but held my attention. John Paul Leon's art is pretty good, with lines kind of similar to what you'd see in *Gotham Central*. It's the most distinguishable from the rest of the art in this book, and makes for a nice refresher (especially after all the Frank Quitely stuff from before).

I didn't care for the "New Worlds" story where Jean and Professor X deal with a mutant-thief (Fantomex) and these X-Men-I've-never-heard-of deal with a related out-of-control mutant loose in the subway. It feels like filler and it's long.

"Some Angels Falling" focuses on Beak and Angel, which is nice. It also includes a kinky telepath thing that starts the Jean/Scott/Emma love triangle, heh.

To be honest, I don't understand what happens in "Ambient Magnetic Fields" or what its significance is, other than being somehow related to Magneto recording his last words. That's probably due to my lack of X-Men historical knowledge. Phil Jimenez's art makes the X-Men (and everyone else) look really good. He gave me some, "Oh, Jean's *hot*" moments in all his sections. But really, the characters look a whole lot better when he's drawing them. I haven't looked at book three yet, but I'm hoping he does more of the art in it.

Later, Quentin Quire goes on a big, long rebellion against Prof. X and the Xavier Institute, causing a lot of damage and the death of a student.

Afterwards, in what (for me) is one of the best parts of the book, the Jean/Scott/Emma love triangle comes to a fiery confrontation.

Next thing you know, Emma Frost's been "murdered" and the school's on lockdown until a couple of special detectives figure out what's going on. This is actually pretty interesting, with a Jean/Emma thing and the way the book concludes.

So. What to take away from this? It's a good book, though the pieces feel separate from each other rather than being one smooth story. The love triangle deserves the most attention, mostly because of the way Jean and Emma interact and work through it. Scott is passive and could be anyone else in the Marvel universe with his lack of personality. I've never understood what the fuss was about him.

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## **Dan Schwent says**

**Living and Dying:** Cerebra guides Xorn to a mutant living with his mother. Unfortunately, the mutant looks like a monster and has been accused of eating a dog.

If I hadn't already had the truth behind Xorn spoiled for me, this would have been a touching story for a superhero comic.

**New Worlds:** Professor X and Jean Grey try to learn the extent of her power boost, Fantomex demands sanctuary from the X-Corporation, and Cyclops asks Emma Frost for help.

I like what Morrison is doing with the X-Men during his run on the book but I can't help feeling a little sad that they're going to start undoing everything the instant his run is over.

**Fantomex:** Weapon 12 is unleashed and Fantomex enlists the aid of Professor X and Jean to help him.

This one was a bit slow paced but jumpy at the same time, kind of like Final Crisis would be years later.

**Weapon 12:** Weapon 12 is running amok and Fantomex and the X-Men try to bring him down.

Fantomex's identity is somewhat revealed and a team member dies. Again, slow paced but good.

**Some Angels Falling:** The X-Men attended (view spoiler) and Emma Frost begins "helping" Cyclops with his marriage.

This was mostly setup for future tales. The most memorable part was actually Angel kissing Beak.

**Ambient Magnetic Fields:** The X-Men go to Genosha and find a deranged Polaris and several mutants building a monument to Magneto.

It was cool to see Quicksilver acknowledged as Magneto's son and Sabra as a mutant. Other than that, not a whole lot happened.

**#133:** Wolverine meets Phantomex and someone tries to kill Professor X.

Good stuff. It was cool to see old members of X-Force and Sunfire again. I like how Morrison always brings back lesser known characters, like Sunfire, Warpath, and Feral in this issue.

**Kid Omega:** Mutant fashion designer Jumbo Carnation is murdered. Quentin Quire starts having big ideas. Beast and Cyclops chat.

This was a setup issue. I think Quentin Quire is going to do big things in the future. Also, I haven't said it

before but I love the Stepford Cuckoos, Morrison's homage to John Wyndham's Midwich Cuckoos.

**Teaching Children about Fractals:** Quentin Quire starts organizing the other young mutants and the drug Kick starts appearing in the school for gifted youngsters.

I like what's happening with Quire and his comrades. I think things will come to a head in another issue or two.

**When X is not X:** Quentin Quire and his gang wander farther from Xavier's dream. The U-Men disrupt Xorn's camping trip with the remedial class. Cyclops and Emma Frost share a telepathic moment.

Yep, things are coming to a head. Emma Frost is one of my favorite mutants these days.

**Riot at Xavier's:** Quentin Quire and his gang start a riot on open house day.

The Quentin Quire storyline comes to a head in this one. Emma Frost and the Stepford Cuckoos take center stage.

**The Prime of Miss Emma Frost:** The Xavier school mourns the death of Sophie in the aftermath of Quentin Quire's riot, Angel is allegedly pregnant with Beak's child, and Jean Grey catches Cyclops and Emma Frost in the act.

The aftermath of the Quentin Quire story was well done, as was the telepathic affair between Emma Frost and Cyclops.

**Murder at the Mansion:** Jean confronts Emma Frost about what she and Cyclops have been doing.

The alleged affair between Cyclops and Emma Frost is brought to the forefront. The last panel is a shocker and leads nicely into the next issue.

**Whodunnit?:** Emma Frost has been killed by an assailant with a diamond bullet and Bishop is on the case.

So who killed Emma Frost? I'm still not completely sure. Morrison did a good job using Bishop as the lead in a murder mystery. Beak and Angel's kids were an odd brood. Esme leaving the school was a nice touch, as was hinting that Cyclops was the murderer on the last page. Looks like I'll be tracking down the next volume after all.

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## Anne says

There's a lot of great stuff in this volume, but my favorite story line is the Cyclops/Jean/Emma triangle. Emma Frost is such a great character. You have to admire anyone who can manage to do the right thing *and* be an evil bitch at the same time.

Unfortunately, the Jumbo Carnation story felt goofy and flat to me. Ditto with Quentin and his gang of dorky rebels. Seems to me it's been done before.

However, there is a great cliffhanger at the end that had me snatching up the next volume as fast as I could.

So, while this might not be *quite* as good as New X-Men Omnibus, it's still pretty awesome!

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## Tony Laplume says

This collection might as well represent what Marvel wished Grant Morrison's *New X-Men* had ended up as, and nothing more. Years later there was a mini-series riff on it called *E for Extinction* (the name of the first arc and collection, at the beginning of the run, not included here), and it was based on material found here. Then of course, *after* this material, Morrison revealed that Xorn was Magneto all along, and then Marvel tried its hardest to pretend none of this ever happened.

Which is of course insanity, but I can see where the company would've been disappointed. Morrison, at the point he was hired to write X-Men comics, was best known for his star-studded Justice League revival known as *JLA*. It doesn't particularly matter that his longest-running comic at that point was *The Invisibles* (which might still be the case, actually), or that he'd made his name on the equally quirky *Animal Man* and *Doom Patrol*. Marvel saw the success of *JLA*, and wanted more of *that*, with added mutant flavoring.

But that's not what it got. Instead, Morrison set about to advance the X-Men saga. In a way, he *was* doing exactly what he'd done with the Justice League. With them, he brought them back to their glory by putting aside the b-players and making their stories as iconic as possible, in all the ways he understood (and the guy tends to do his homework). So with the X-Men, he would've naturally gravitated to *their* best-known and best-remembered version, the Claremont era that still dominates fan memories. And so he did the Morrison version of that.

Anyway, this collection is past the point where Magneto "died," the mutant island of Genosha was exterminated, and Xorn was introduced. And, again, before Xorn is revealed *as* Magneto. The general perception that Morrison screwed over a brilliant new creation like Xorn is funny, and seems contrary to his...entire publishing history. Morrison tends to open boxes when he begins a new story, and then closing them when he finishes. The most famous example, now, is Damian Wayne, Batman's son, whom he killed off in the pages of *Batman Incorporated*. If this had been a Marvel story, apparently, that would've been that and fans would still be disappointed to this day. But it was a DC story, and another writer (Peter Tomasi) brought Damian back almost immediately.

And anyway, the seeds of Xorn's fate are right here in this collection, and they're named Fantomax, billed as "Europe's most notorious mutant." But he apparently is making it all up, and ultimately he's really just a way to expand *Wolverine's* saga, something that bore fruit later as we finally learn his full origin, something Morrison teases elsewhere in the run (again, not in this collection).

Then there's the perception that nothing Morrison did left a lasting impression, and again, that's just not true, not merely with the above example, but in the character of Angel, featured prominently in this collection, who later appears in the film *X-Men: First Class*.

This is all material I'm reading for the first time. I've been a fan of Morrison's for years. Like Marvel (apparently), I discovered him in the pages of *JLA*, and used that as his gold standard until coming back to him in the pages of the *Seven Soldiers of Victory* saga. To be fair, much of *New X-Men* unfolded when I wasn't actively reading comics, but it was concluding just as I was coming back. Finally getting around to reading what he achieved is to wonder what might've been if Marvel hadn't decided it was better off pretending he hadn't achieved anything at all. It wasn't until Whedon's *Astonishing X-Men*, which *was* that

kind of high gloss reboot Marvel had expected, and then the Hope saga that things got back on track, but then...Well, a story for another day, perhaps.

Anyway, this is in fact prime material for unlocking the whole thing. But it *isn't* the whole thing, and there's no reason to pretend otherwise.

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## **Sam Quixote says**

I found this second volume to be a bit disappointing following the big ideas and grand over-arching storyline of the first book. There seems to be different strands of story going on but none of it is really connected and some of them are downright dull.

The book starts off with the X-Men with new member Xorn (he who has a star for a brain and the mask of a movie serial killer) as they deal with trouble in the Channel Tunnel, something called Weapon XII, and an evil mutant espionage thief called Fantomex. Grant Morrison throws in a sub-plot about Cyclops having marital troubles with Jean Gray and the sympathetic ear to hear him out is attached to the exquisite Emma Frost, the White Queen.

There's a trip to Genosha where Magneto's legacy is being enacted via his dubiously motivated offspring and Quentin Quire, one of Xavier's students and an Omega level (read "super-powerful") mutant decides to go all punk rock, starting a riot in the Westchester school leading to an Agatha Christie-esque murder mystery of one of the X-Men being killed leaving Inspector Bishop to solve the case.

There is a lot going on but little of it feels very interesting with the stories running their course before starting on the next one. I enjoyed the confrontation between Jean and Emma if only for the secret origin of Emma being revealed (plastic surgery for a diamond woman, who knew?) and the murder mystery was funny in its way, but it felt too small for such a large book. Considering Morrison began the series by blowing up Genosha, killing 16 million mutants, and having Xavier go on a rampage involving the Shi'Ar, the minor stories in Book 2 feel like a collection of B-sides.

Morrison's writing is fine but the artwork fluctuates from poor and unlikeable (Igor Kordey - ergh!) to the high standard of Frank Quitely's art - it's a shame he doesn't do the entire series instead of every now and then.

Book 2 in this Ultimate Collection isn't bad but I expected it to be better than it turned out to be. Hopefully the final book will live up to the promises of the first one by going for that big storyline rather than several small ones.

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## **Max says**

Getting the Kordey art out of the way early was definitely good. After the Fantomex story ended, it was all good art for the rest of the volume. We even got the longest stretch of Quitely art probably in the entire series.

And that Quitely art just happened to cover the best story arc of the entire run thus far, and potentially my



favorite X-Men story: the Quentin Quire-centered Riot At Xavier's.

It took me too long to finally get around to reading this and I'm loving it even more than I expected. It's saddening to know that all of these great themes and ideas that have reinvigorated the X-men and what makes them interesting to me...are completely thrown out immediately after Morrison leaves, and his run is followed by the apparently awful Chuck Austen. That's got to be the all time biggest drop in quality on a book.

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### **Aaron Wiener says**

Woooooooooow!!!!!!

Once again, Grant Morrison proves that his run of New X Men is the best!

I loved the entire thing. It was awesome. The writing, dialogue and "beats" are so intelligent and on point. It might seem weird to say about a superhero comic, but this really is an X Men book for grownups.

The characters, man. So fascinating. Emma Frost is so complicated, and I want to hate her but I find myself loving her. She's identifiable. She's real. Morrison manages to make her selfish, manipulative, pretentious, douche and mean... but also vulnerable, heroic, lonely, kind and sympathetic. It's so well done. Beast, Cyke, Jean, Charles... they're all so well fleshed out.

I also enjoyed some of the more peripheral characters. The Beak/Angel relationship was interesting and I found myself looking forward to parts that featured them. The mutant punk terrorist gang was interesting and dark. There was a lot going on across the board, and it really worked.

The art was from a variety of artists, and they were all spectacular. I'm talking frames that wowed me and caused my eye to linger. Great coloring... everything.

This fucking rules. I can't wait to get the next volume.

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### **Roy says**

4.5\*

Theres some really cool story lines in here. The Quentin story, and the love triangle story are awesome. The start with Weapon XII was a little confusing and I was worried it wasnt going anywhere. The artwork was cool but didnt blow me away. I dont know why but Wolverine just looks weird in this series. Will definitely read Book 3.

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### **Katrina Charles says**

Awesome. Development of The Phoenix is so good and Emma and Scott are breaking my heart.

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## Sesana says

There's still some really good stuff here, but it isn't as uniformly good as the previous volume. Quentin Quire and his hipster Brotherhood wannabes dragged the whole volume down for me. I didn't find him or his storyline particularly interesting. If that was all to this collection, I probably wouldn't have liked it much. But there are some really good things here. Angel and Beak. Xorn and the twelve year old mutant. The Emma/Scott/Jean love triangle. Very much worth reading, to say the least.

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## Rory Wilding says

Following the first volume which opened with a bang – not least with the destruction of Genosha that killed sixteen million mutants – this second volume takes Grant Morrison's *New X-Men* into the middle chapter syndrome with multiple plot strands and an overly extensive cast, which tends to be an issue when creators tackle the X-Men who have their own universe outside of their Marvel co-stars.

The book opens with #127 which solely showcases the newest X-Man Xorn, the Chinese mutant with a "star for a brain" who tries to philosophically understand the world he wants to protect despite humanity's fear and paranoia over mutant kind. This is a simple and touching tale about a mutant trying to save another that is roughly drawn by the blend of John Paul Leon's pencilling and Bill Sienkiewicz's inking.

Once we get to the third story arc "New Worlds", things get baggy and confusing. With plot threads including the foundation of Xavier's X-Corporation, the introduction of Europe's most wanted super-thief Fantomex and Weapon X being retconned into the Weapon Plus Program, it becomes a confusing read which again tries to tie into Chris Claremont's mythology. It also doesn't help that Igor Kordey is doing the artwork as perfectly established in the final splash page in #128 showing an ugly drawn Emma Frost posing like Sharon Stone in *Basic Instinct*.

However when you strip away the multiple storylines that are heavily invested in sci-fi action from human versus mutant wargames to intergalactic grandeur and simplify the X-Men with relatable themes such as prejudice, self-acceptance and teenage rebellion, you get an intimate soap opera that happens to feature superheroes.

In the book's best arc "Riot at Xavier's", a mutant celebrity is killed by anti-mutant racists, which upsets the super-intelligent young Quentin Quire who begins to mock Xavier's pacifistic teachings and assembles a gang of militant classmates to kill humans in retaliation. This story very much evokes everyone within the school as it sets up the Cyclops/Emma Frost relationship as well as his growing estrangement from his wife Jean Grey, a funny side-plot about the ugly students including Angel Salvadore and Beak under the lectureship of Xorn (who seems to have some other agenda), and Quire's Omega Gang who are under the influence of a mutant-enhanced drug "Kick". Another big benefit is Frank Quitely who does his best work here on the title with wide detailed panels that have enough visual impact to tell the story without the usage of words.

Although the frequent changing from one artist to artist is still an issue whilst Morrison struggles in tying all the multiple plotlines to form the bigger picture, *New X-Men* works best in its own odd way of subtle

storytelling as this volume concludes with a compelling cliff-hanger that creates enough excitement for the final volume.

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### **James Hyman says**

Same issues as the volume before it to be honest.

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