



X-Men: Age of Apocalypse – The Complete Epic, Book 3

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X-Men: Age of Apocalypse – The Complete Epic, Book 3 Scott Lobdell , Warren Ellis , Jeph Loeb , John Francis Moore , Adam Kubert (Illustrations) , Carlos Pacheco (Illustrations) , Andy Kubert (Illustrations) The mirror gets darker and the Amazing X-Men more Astonished by the minute as the Age of Apocalypse hits its third quarter Magneto has dedicated his life to freeing humanity and mutantkind alike, but will Apocalypse now require him to destroy reality to save it Sides are switched and secrets shown with repercussions ringing from the Savage Land to the Shi-ar Galaxy Plus: a rare look at how Apocalypse altered the rest of Marvel's mightiest Doctor Doom and Reed Richards, side-by-side? Matt Murdock and the Kingpin, allies? Gwen Stacy in mourning for Peter Parker? Avengers, Exiles, etc. in the original alternate X-saga Collects X-Calibre #2-3, Astonishing X-Men Vol. 1 #2-4, Generation Next #2-3, X-Man #2-3, Factor X #3, Amazing X-Men #3, Gambit & The Externals #3, and X-Universe #1.

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From Reader Review X-Men: Age of Apocalypse – The Complete Epic, Book 3 for online ebook

Hannah Givens says

I continue to be impressed. Individual characters are more fully-realized in this alternate universe than I've ever seen them before! This issue does get a little confusing with so many arcs running -- it also introduces some non-mutant characters and what they're up to, plus all the other ongoing storylines, but that complexity also does make it feel more realistic. My other small complaint is that the art is often difficult to understand, which I believe I've mentioned before, but on the whole this is still a very enjoyable and satisfying story.

Jeff says

Near the end of this third installment of the collected Age of Apocalypse comic books, things started to move more quickly and coherently. The problem with this whole storyline is a problem that often plagues Marvel and DC's multi-title storylines. Namely they stretch the story across several different comic book titles and thus have a wide variety of writers and artists working on the project. Inevitably there are hundreds of loose threads that get picked up here and there. Thus for a single driving story, there are literally 10 or more major plot lines, but unfortunately none of them are well enough developed to really drive the story. There have been notable exceptions like Marvel's Civil War.

Unfortunately the Age of Apocalypse isn't one of those exceptions. However, there are definitely good bits. In particular, Jeph Loeb writing in "X-Man," with art by Steve Skroce; Fabian Nicieza writing in "The Amazing X-Men", with art by Andy Kubert; and Scott Lobdell and Jeph Loeb writing in "The Astonishing X-Men," with art by Joe Madureira.

I do look forward to the ending to see where they take the story. Ultimately the power of this story line is in a couple of inter-related ideas. First, how do the essential character traits of figures in the Marvel pantheon play out in a dramatically altered reality. Second, what does real heroism look like in a dystopia. This second theme is a powerful one for superhero comics to take on as they provide a model and a space to explore how humans respond in the difficult and often ambiguous problems of daily life. Let us hope that we all have the will power to defeat our own personal Apocalypse.

nina says

This is migraine inducingly chaotic with its energetic and bright artwork and its high drama, and I should really say something about what a grand narrative it is, an epic tale, but all I can remember of this story right now is Mystique's Ripley-from-Aliens moment when she saves Kurt (cool) and Magneto sitting in the Xavier mansion cradling his baby Charles (wth Magneto, wth) – this guy, I mean, he has some epic brooding going on this storyline. He also has a creepy nanny-bot that creates a metallic shell around his son in times of trouble, which...is so Magneto in its total going-too-far-ness. Hmm, babycam for security, Mr Magneto? NO! I SHALL HAVE A PROTECTIVE CAGE OF STEEL AND WEAR A LONG PONYTAIL OF

MOURNING IN HONOUR MY DEAD BAE, I MEAN, BRO, TOTALLY - YOU'RE GOING DOWN APOCALYPSE! Despite the hugeness of the whole Apocalypse storyline, I did actually find myself enjoying this instalment (oh god let it end at volume four tho). I also finished it wondering how much of the female presence in this will carry through to the movie adaptation (I'd certainly like to see Blink kicking a horseman in the apocalypses). Yes, not bad at all.

Andrew Uys says

Another great 'chapter' in the Age of Apocalypse, I definitely appreciated that the issues are printed/given to the reader in their chronological reading order rather than simply #1-4, #1-4, etc. Made me remember why I found this series event. A bit baffling when I was younger - never would have been able to get all the issues sans Google. ;)

Fantastic read, I definitely have fav writers and artists but really enjoyed discovering some major names who were just "starting" out then. Going to miss the world and its character when I finish Vol. 4. To the epic confrontation between Magneto & Apocalypse, huzzah!

David says

An astonishing accomplishment. Now I can understand why X-Men Age of Apocalypse is so wonderful. It took a bit of work on my part as a reader. Since this past summer I've been working my way through Uncanny X-men and related titles to fill in my Gap Years, those I'd never read after dropping comics as an older teen-ager/college student. Roughly spanning 1981- where we are now in 1995 with this volume.

Let me first admit, I attempted reading A of A a couple of years ago and couldn't get past dated-ness of the whole thing. And it also seemed a bit difficult to get into. What a fool I was.

X-Men: Age of Apocalypse Prelude, the book, got me over the difficult to get into thing. The dated-ness fell apart having read the preceding 14 years of the X-Verse.

And wow! What a creative explosion of talent: in a couple of senses.

It's an enormous Marvel event quite unlike anything that's come before it. It's utterly, wholly original. There's also a bevy of new artists. Artists who are now among Marvel's upper echelon. 5 years into the decade and the 90's have finally arrived. We're finally really and truly reaping the benefit of computers in art, lettering and most of all color. There's a color explosion going on. A huge stark contrast to 80's books that seemed to want to use as few as colors as possible.

X-Men: Age of Apocalypse, the main story is told now across three trade paperback. They are lovely editions and a slight improvement on the earlier one. In the trades Dawn and Twilight you get the extras but you can skip them if you wish. Dawn has the Blink mini-series and I'd recommend it.

The main story is an epic feast that you'll want to rip through like any good page turner. I do recommend starting with the OOP X-Men: Age of Apocalypse Prelude. It's a much better beginning to the story than what you will find in either the trades or the Omnibus.

Oh, yeah. I totally loved it. Especially Blink, Creed and Morph. Now I get why the Exiles are so beloved. Well, other than being stars of a great series of their own.

Michael Church says

This one certainly takes more of the good from the last volume than it does of the bad. The writing and characters and plot are still delightfully awfully 90s, but at least the story is finally moving at a decent clip.

This volume doesn't have the job of setting up the premise. Nor is it bogged down by some unrelated miniseries (I'm looking at you, Blink). The vast majority of the book is from the main series: Gen Next, Astonishing/Amazing X-Men, Factor-X, and X-Calibre. The only real outlier is from X-Men Universe, which gives a semi interesting look at the non X-Men characters in the Age of Apocalypse.

There are some genuinely awesome moments. Unfortunately, one of the best ones that comes to mind was completely undone shortly after, but there is some awesomeness nonetheless. It's still not really my style of book. And it's still crazy long and way too many words. It just gets all bogged down in itself. It's gotten more entertaining, but I'm glad that I'm almost done with this "epic" story.

Also, there's a lot of stuff happening that sort of makes me question what I saw happen in Remender's X-Force. Specifically Iceman seems very different from that version.

Jeff Harris says

This is still about the Age of Apocalypse, and it's still a stellar thrill ride as the third of four installments in this alternate universe's history hits all cylinders in bringing us action-packed plots and even more unique incarnations of classic X-Men characters (and some new ones, too). As before, this is a story about what happens when Charles Xavier gets killed twenty years in the past, and the X-Men were formed by Magneto instead in his absence, while Apocalypse takes over half the planet. This is more of the real "meat" of the AoA story, and as such, you have to read it to get the full picture of what the Age of Apocalypse was all about. Below, you'll find a general summary of what each of the portions of this book is about, but don't worry -- I try to keep it all generally spoiler-free.

X-Calibre #2-3 - Nightcrawler travels to Avalon, runs afoul of Callisto, and meets up with his mother Mystique before finally arriving at his destination, and meeting Destiny, who he was supposed to find for Magneto.

Astonishing X-Men #2-4 - Rogue's team of X-Men fight a horde of Infinite soldiers, and then bring the battle right to Holocaust's doorstep in order to stop the culling of humans. The art by Joe Madureira here, and the character development of Rogue, Blink, Sabretooth, Morph, and Sunfire are top-notch!

Generation Next #2-3 - Colossus and Shadowcat lead their young charges to the Seattle Core, which they successfully infiltrate in order to track down Illyana. There are some mega-weird villains in this portion of the series, with Sugar Man definitely acting as one of the creepiest.

X-Man #2-3 - Nate Grey isn't satisfied with sitting on the sidelines and not getting to use his powers

anymore, so he lashes out, drawing trouble to the theater troupe's doorstep: Apocalypse's assassins, the Dark Riders, who are led by Domino.

Factor-X #3 - Jean Grey arrives in New York on a mission of mercy, but is caught by the Dark Beast, along with Cyclops, whose treason is revealed by Havok, but the two manage to escape.

Amazing X-Men #3 - Quicksilver's team arrives back from their successful evacuation mission, only to discover that Apocalypse found out the location of the X-Men's base, and Magneto and Bishop are now missing!

Weapon X #3 - Logan heads to the X-Men's old base on Wundagore Mountain to try to recruit Gateway to aid the Human High Council, and ends up fighting more cyborg baddies, while also meeting Carol Danvers!

Gambit & the X-Ternals #3 - This wraps up the space-faring portion of Gambit's team's adventures, and it includes the death of one of his teammates in order to enable them to get home safely.

X-Universe #1 - Wonder what the rest of the Marvel Universe was up to when the world fell apart around them during Apocalypse's takeover? This will answer much of your questions, and includes characters like Donald Blake, Gwen Stacy, Sue Storm, Ben Grimm, Clint Barton, Tony Stark, and others.

Keep on reading the Age of Apocalypse!

Guillermo says

Book three is the rising of the climax. And thus far in the series, it's the been the most interesting, page-turning, on the-seat's-edge collection. Housing X-Calibre #2-3, Astonishing X-Men #2-4, Generation Next 2-3, X-Man #2-3, Factor X #3, Amazing X-Men #3, Weapon X #3, Gambit & The X-Ternals #3 and X-Universe #1, it brings to light the battle that's looming upon Apocalypse's doorstep - not to mention the one he dropped on the High Human Council and the X-Men.

The theme is choice, of course. Isn't that the most case with these superhero graphic novels? How the choices we make affect the outcome of a series of events? We're asked to what degree would we allowed to stay human when the power is given in our hands? What would we sacrifice in order to save a loved one? What are we willing to give up in order to make a difference in this world and in the lives of the people we love? How much farther are we willing to go? And are we willing to die for what we believe in, for what we believe is right? For a dream?

Daniel says

This was perhaps one of my favorite crossover events. The X-Men are completely reimagined in a dystopian world ruled by mutants. Professor X is killed in the past by his son allowing Apocalypse to conquer North America and start a global genetic war. Magneto eventually forms the X-Men to protect humans and bring an end to the reign of terror. Every X-Men series was stopped in 1995 for four months and replaced with an Age of Apocalypse title. Yes, it was incredibly gimmicky, but it was also completely immersive.

The X-Men and their allies continue their various missions to discover the truth about their reality and find the pieces needed to return it to "normal". They must do this while saving humans and themselves from Apocalypse's forces -- and with the understanding that it will also mean that if they succeed, they will no longer exist.

This collects X-Calibre #2–3, Astonishing X-Men #2–4, Generation Next #2–3, X-Man #2–3, Factor X #3, Amazing X-Men #3, Weapon X #3, Gambit & the X-Ternals #3 and X-Universe #1.

Blake Strother says

This was my least favorite in the series, with one more volume to read. The character development in this series is simply incredible and has made each volume worth reading. I feel like the conventional X-Men characters such as Rogue, Magneto, Gambit, Morph, etc. actually become deeper characters than they are in their traditional universe. One of the characters that I still believe steals the show in many ways in this series thus far is Blink. I had not heard of Blink prior to reading this story line but her back story and surprising ability to be one of the best X-men is inspiring and refreshing. One of the biggest weaknesses of this volume is that in certain issues there is a more concerted effort to insert the Marvel heroes outside of the X-men family. While I love Marvel in general, I just felt like the weaving in of these heroes was done poorly and really throws a lot of wrenches in the plot when you really think about it. Anyways, what I love about the X-Men in general is how their comprehensive universe can stand alone from the rest of Marvel and I think in many ways crossing over in this sense was just a poor choice. Anyways, because of my enjoyment of the series thus far, I still recommend reading onward in this storyline!

Faisal says

Ends with rogue and the gang on the way to save magneto...

Norman Dellinger says

Awesome!

Every bit as good as I'd hoped, everything is coming together now . Definitely recommend to anyone who loves comics.

Jane says

Part 3 of the Complete Age of Apocalypse saga, providing even more twists to the story, and more annoyances from the ever irritating Morph diluting whatever story is there. Although still a good read with beautiful artwork this volume has been the weakest for me in its storyline and lost much of my attention quite early on.

In this edition you discover the importance of the M'Kraan crystal, which is probably my favourite part in this compilation. It would seem that the M'Kraan escapade is not as futile as initially thought but in fact the key to everything.

Mother and son are reunited in the X-Calibre comics as Nightcrawler and Mystique try to find the pre-cog known as Destiny in the safe-haven of Avalon.

More beautiful artwork is given in the guise of the Generation Next comics in which Colossus and Shadowcat are searching with some of the more inexperienced X-Men to find Colossus' sister Illyana... another key to bringing down Apocalypse. (This one is not the most exciting of serials in my opinion but the artwork is absolutely amazing!)

In headline news for the series Apocalypse intervenes in the plans to overthrow him and captures two of the main conspirators against his name...

Despite this third volume feeling a little longer it is definitely building up for a thrilling conclusion so carry on reading!

Christopher Munroe says

Oh my god, you guys, this comic is hilariously dated.

It is GUN and it is GRIMACE, it is POUCHES and PUNCHES and OVER-EXAGGERATED MUSCULATURE, X-TREME spelling and grammar and conversations between characters who refuse to face one another, choosing instead to face front like the cast of a bad high school play. In 1995 I was all up for this, but with the benefit of hindsight, I blush at some of the more over-the-top elements presented here.

That said, Age of Apocalypse is the '90s X-Family crossover that's remembered most fondly for a reason, and for the most part it does hold up. There's real ambition and scope here, in a narrative sense, and some of the recontextualizations of characters I already know and love were fascinating to walk through. And when the disparate pieces do finally come together in the third act, it's presented in a way I found tremendously satisfying. I don't know how much of my enjoyment here is nostalgic in nature, but I suspect that even if I were reading this run for the first time I'd find it an interesting bit of counterfactual worldbuilding, and a

compelling read to boot, once I got past the very specifically '90s tropes and idioms.

???? ???? says

BETTER THAN THE PREVIOUS COLLECTION, but that's not really saying much, honestly.

I think I've reached a point where reading this nineties landmark story has become very obligatory in scope which may have diluted whatever merit and enjoyment I may find as I peruse through its bulky content. But by this third volume, the issues compiled actually make more sense together than that of the previous two had on their belts. Lucky coincidence? Most probably. It's not as if *Age of Apocalypse* is the most finesse story arc there is for the X-Men universe. It lacks the kind of cohesiveness one might only expect from a story that is scattered throughout fourteen different titles. It's bound to get kooky and uneven somewhere in its breadth.

And by somewhere, I meant EVERYWHERE. But not this time, thank Loki. Collected for this third volume are the following: *X-CALIBRE* #2-3, *ASTONISHING X-MEN* #2-4, *GENERATION NEXT* #2-3, *X-MAN* #2-3, *FACTOR X* #3, *AMAZING X-MEN* #3, *WEAPON X* #3, *GAMBIT & THE X-TERNALS* #3 and *X-UNIVERSE* #1.

The closest two things I can compare it with are the period-specific charm and grit of *Batman: Knightfall* series and the convoluted multi-arc approach of *Batman Eternal* which are two titles I have read and reviewed with all the god-given patience ever possible for a mortal woman last year, so I know just what the ever-loving fuck I'm talking about when I say that *Age of Apocalypse* is a combination of both, and more often than not contain the least of the things I have enjoyed from either title.

Look, the series in its entirety so far (I have one last volume to go) is not that bad and might even be fun and engrossing if you like this type of comic book style which is pretty much nineties in flavor and depth (or so I'm told). In the last two volumes, my complaints range differently. For the first one, I thought the fact that it wasn't even ordered chronologically defeated the purpose of collecting the issues in the first place. That meant that I was so fucking lost and confused with only the most ridiculous and unintentionally humorous moments to gravitate to and for me to latch on just so I'd bother continuing reading it.

As for the second volume, I appreciated that I finally got some context and face-time with the titular villain Apocalypse himself, and I did find myself recognizing the qualities I knew and loved from these alternate-versions of Cyclops, Wolverine, Jean Grey, Rogue and Magneto. The last two for me are exemplary; the romantic angle to their relationship was played just right and the other characters who interact regularly with them (Quicksilver, Sabretooth, Blink, Morph and Gambit) have great respective chemistry with them. In fact, I think both the X-Men and the Astonishing X-Men issues are the ones I have most emotionally stake in than the rest of the roster.

More on this later. In the meantime...

How does its own blurb describe *Age of Apocalypse*? According to the back cover:

The critically acclaimed fan-favorite storyline that rocked the X-Men universe to its core is collected in chronological order across these four volumes.

YOU. LYING. PIECE. OF. SHIT. Why would you market this deception to readers?

Now, moving onto something more honest and not at all manipulatively interpreted to suit my own personal whim: as tradition, I'm allowed to pick a shippy Cherik moment from every volume and display it here like that precious artifact that it truly must be beheld as; sadly, there is only one here that came across as that but it's definitely a winner:

OH MY GOD NO SHIT, Erik, WE GET IT BY NOW. UGH. You're a creepy, obsessive man pining over your late best friend. And you've also been moping around about his loss consistently for three volumes now. There's no way we would miss the signs. WE GET IT. **Charles Xavier was YOUR EVERYTHING** and you're so DEVASTATED that he no longer lives so you had to name your son by Rogue with his own name too. Good lord--and I know this is asking too much--but can you please check your priorities and be less in love with him?

Now, what did I love about the third volume? How about the fact that certain character relationships were finally allowed to grow? I'm talking about the issues with mother and son, Raven and Kurt; Logan and Jean Grey's doomed yet easy-to-root-for love affair; Gambit's complicated yet intriguing dynamics with the Externals; and Sabretooth and Blink's surrogate father-daughter moments in between.

Because that's what makes me read X-Men: **THE RELATIONSHIPS** in the context of the madness and discrimination, the deaths and the second chances that surround these rag-tag team of lovable freaks. In addition, three characters as individuals stood out for me the most for this volume and they have been performing rather impressively since the second volume began (aside from Magneto who, let's face it, spends a good seventy-percent of his page time pining over Charles): I'm talking about Rogue, Cyclops and Morph. GODDAMN MORPH who serves as a comic relief but who actually gives this fucking story arc an unmistakable heart in its messy core.

Rogue here has been placed in stressful positions and yet she always comes up on top. That's my girl right there! Cyclops, on the other hand, actually plays the bad-guy role like a pro (EPIC FORESHADOWING, AMIRITE?) and Morph is so amazingly quirky and inappropriate sometimes but the fact that he always tries to make people laugh in spite of the bad timing of it all doesn't come off insensitive but rather sad and sympathetic. Ugh, I am loving these characters and I hope I get more of them in the next volume.

I would like for the writers to flesh out the romantic relationship between Storm and Quicksilver too while they're at it because this was only mentioned in passing and it's always a crime against nature to under-utilize motherfucking Ororo Munroe. So they better sort their crap soon.

Now let's end this review with something sweet which features the most tender and humane moment Magneto ever allowed himself to become a part of and say aloud, concerning his AU son Charles and how he feels about the fact that to rewrite the world he lives in now will also mean he will lose his son. AoA-Magneto often knocks the wind out of me whenever he demonstrates what a sensitive soul he is:

RECOMMENDED: 8/10

DO READ MY REVIEWS AT:
