

Beak

By

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EXT. BUSY SIDEWALK

People are parting for BEAK like he's Moses at the Red Sea. The camera is Beak's perspective. A MOTHER pulls on her CHILD'S arm to get him to stop staring. ANOTHER MOTHER covers her DAUGHTER'S eyes. Beak catches his reflection in a toy store's window-- bulbous eyes, feathers, claws for hands, and (yes) an actual *beak*. His narrow shoulders sag in disappointment at the sight of his own face.

Preferred music: It's a Beautiful Day in the Neighborhood.

Same camera perspective, Beak's POV. Beak stuffs his hand into his pocket to pick up his ringing phone. Some tablet-y touchscreen cell phone. His claws fumble with it. He drops the phone on the sidewalk and the screen shatters. Not just shatters; it's completely unusable. Gingerly, he picks it up again.

Beak turns on his heel and starts walking in the other direction. He walks into a phone store. You get the sense he *just* left.

INT. PHONE STORE

Same perspective, Beak's POV. Beak's claw passes the bored GUY BEHIND COUNTER (GBC) a wad of cash. GBC hands him a Blackberry phone. It's a quick, seamless process, one that's happened many, *many* times before.

EXT. BUSY SIDEWALK

Same perspective, Beak's POV. The keys on the phone are too small for Beak to work with his talons. He drops and breaks it again.

INT. PHONE STORE

Same perspective, Beak's POV. Beak is literally emptying his wallet. Dumping it out on the counter. Coins roll. Receipts. Movie stubs. GBC sighs, counts the money, and gives him the cheapest little old lady flip phone with large print numbers.

INT. XAVIER INSTITUTE, HALLWAY

Beak has a bounce in his step, a swagger. The camera is no longer Beak's POV. He's wearing an oversized leather jacket with the X-symbol patch stitched onto the shoulder, a heavy chain with a padlock around his neck, and a ratty AC/DC shirt. He's scrawny.

The hallway is as busy as the sidewalk had been but there are no longer people gawking at him, because the students there look just as strange. Quite an assortment. Buff quarterback-looking dude with four arms giving a high five while he tosses a paper airplane down the hall and runs a third hand through his hair. KID OMEGA, with his pink hair and 'Magneto Was Right' t-shirt slips a black Kick inhaler into four-armed-dude's pocket-- this is not the secondary plot, just an Easter egg for someone who's paying attention.

BASILISK, big blobby pink dude with one large round eye ringed with metal that looks like a camera lens, is hyuk-hyuking at something stupid, probably. BEAST is leaning against a doorframe, a gentle smile on his face, yellow slit-pupiled eyes kind as he watches the students surge through the hall.

Five identical blond girls, the STEPFORD CUCKOOS, pass Beak and shoot him derisive looks.

STEPFORD CUCKOOS
(simultaneously)
As if.

INT. BEAK'S DORM ROOM

Irina, codename CHOIR, is sitting at her desk, scrolling through Tumblr or Instagram or Twitter on her laptop.

One post is a logo of a raised fist with Wolverine claws sticking up.

The next post shows a beautiful picture of a sky blue-skinned little girl with big eyes and the hashtag #NotAllMutants and #howcanyouhatethisface

The third is the three-eyed smiley face that's become emblematic of the mutant movement.

The fourth post on her dashboard is from Mutants of New York, a carefully framed picture of a man in an alley, making a fireball behind his back. The photo doesn't show his face. Middle-aged. The caption: As per his request, he's going to stay anonymous. "The hardest thing I've ever done

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was quit my job on Wall Street. I had to, though. I wasn't happy. I was halfway to my second heart attack. It isn't worth it."

There are cardboard boxes everywhere. It looks like Choir got distracted in the middle of unpacking.

Choir is wearing a Mutie Cutie t-shirt. She has one mouth in the regular place mouths are, and several equidistant around her neck. All of those mouths smile at Beak as he walks in.

CHOIR

Thanks again for switching
roommates with me.

BEAK

(he has a slight accent, being
from the Netherlands)
She snores and he can make
soundproof bubbles. It works out
for everyone.

CHOIR

How'd the trip into town go?

BEAK

Next time I'm getting a
walkie-talkie! Only one button, and
besides, they're sturdy!

CHOIR

Dropped another one?

BEAK sticks up two of his claws.

CHOIR

Ouch. Next time you do that, bring
your phone to Doctor McCoy. He
knows a lot about electronics.

BEAK

It's useless. I can't work the
buttons. What happened to hooting
and grunting from the treetops? Can
we bring that back?

CHOIR

(closes her laptop, finally
gives him her full attention.
Sympathetically)
Oh, Barnell.

BEAK

Do you need help unpacking?

Choir opens her mouth to answer and ERNST (looks about eight years old, but all wrinkled like an old lady) pops her head into the room.

ERNST

Doctor McCoy wants to see you!

INT. BEAST'S OFFICE

Beast's secondary mutation is such that he looks a lot like Ron Perlman's Beast, except blue and without the feathered hair. More lion than human. Three fingers and a thumb; he lost a digit, and they're more like paws than fingers now. He has streaks of white at his temples. Yellow, slit-pupiled eyes behind glasses. He's wearing a button-up and a vest, though he looks ruffled.

His office is a nerd haven. A couple whiteboards with all sorts of calculations. Bookshelves overflowing with everything from philosophy to scientific journals to poetry. A "hang in there, baby" poster, except the cat in it is blue; a gift from an old student.

Papers everywhere on his desk. An overturned picture frame. Mechanical gadgets that look like the start of a robotic hand, a prosthetic to fit over his own so he can do detail work that his new hands are now too clumsy for. Loads of tools. A desktop zen garden with nuts and bolts instead of stones scattered among the carefully raked sand. Marring the dark wood of his desk, halfway hidden by the clutter, are deep claw marks from a moment of frustration.

There's a massive scratching post in the corner that Beak stares at as he comes in.

BEAST

That's a joke. Mostly. Have a seat, Mister Bohusk. How are your classes progressing?

BEAK

This is about the incident, isn't it?

BEAST

I'd like to think we're friends.

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BEAK

Miss Pryde is such a snitch.

BEAST

Miss Pryde thought that we should talk since we have similar struggles with our mutations.

Beak seems dubious.

BEAST

I only *look* like I have it all together. I was forty-six when my secondary mutation hit and I had to learn how to live all over again. For months I had to call Scott in to help me button my shirts. I understand what it's like to lose dexterity.

BEAK

Do you know what it's like to humiliate yourself? To totally lose your temper in front of *everyone* in your class?

BEAST

(moves the papers to display the claw marks on his desk)

I do.

BEAK

It *sucks*. I can hardly hold a pen.

BEAST

I'll teach you some exercises that helped me through my transition. In the meantime....

(he goes to his bookshelf, grabs a copy of a worn, stained, dog-eared hardcover of Kafka's *Metamorphosis*)

Read this. It helps.

EXT. XAVIER INSTITUTE FRONT LAWN, DAY

A hill overlooking the institute. The students are sitting on the grass, huddled around WARREN. This is flight class, taught by Warren Worthington III, the original Angel. The other ANGEL is there, too. She has big fly wings, she's not Hollywood glamorous, not skinny like she was in First Class; more New X-Men style than New Warriors. An afro, dark skin,

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lovely eyes, hoop earrings, and guarded body-language. Beak is there too, and so is an assortment of mutants who can fly, some with wings, some without, at least one surrounded in a halo of colored energy. Angel isn't paying attention to the lesson and is sitting near Beak. Beak is trying to pay attention.

WARREN

The trick to flying is...
confidence!

ANGEL

(mutters)
Wings help.

BEAK

Shh.

Angel punches Beak in the arm, harder than she meant to. Beak falls over with a squawk. The whole class turns to look at him.

Beak struggles to stand up, storms off. Angel follows.

EXT. XAVIER INSTITUTE, DAY

Angel catches up with Beak, half running, half flying, as Beak runs along with an odd, loping gait.

ANGEL

Hey! Bird boy!

BEAK

What?

ANGEL

I didn't even hit you that hard.

BEAK

That's like the third worst apology I've ever gotten. You embarrassed me in front of *everyone!*

ANGEL

Not everyone. Just the ones who can fly.

BEAK

I forgive you.

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ANGEL

I didn't apologize.

BEAK

I forgive you anyway. I'll see you
in class.

EXT. XAVIER INSTITUTE STEPS - DAY

Beak and Ernst are sitting on the steps leading up to the front door of the Institute, eating their school lunches. MARTHA, a brain in a jar, is floating on a dog leash attached to Ernst's wrist like a balloon. A spiked collar is attached around the base of Martha's jar.

WOLVERINE is chomping on a cigar and talking to JEAN in the distance, out of earshot.

BEAK

I *hate* that guy.

ERNST

Mister Logan?

BEAK

He's all like, 'Oooh, I have suuuch a hard liiife. I'm gonna stay handsome forever. I'm never gonna die. I have unbreakable metal bones and claws. All the girls like me.' Hate him.

The bell rings. It's time to go to class.

INT. SPECIAL CLASS

XORN, a very tall Chinese man in a metal mask with chains crossing his chest in an X, is at the front of the class by the chalkboard.

It's a shabby classroom, out of the way. Probably in a shed or something.

The Special Class is seated in their desks, staring at him. They are unimpressed. Beak, Angel, Ernst, Martha, DUMMY (a sentient gas guy in a rubber suit), and Basilisk (the big pink blobby dude with one eye). Angel's arms are crossed. She sucks at her teeth.

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BASILISK

Mister Xorn, I got a question. Do you think if we made Miss Frost cry in diamond form we'd have free diamonds?

BEAK

Wouldn't her tear ducts be made of diamond, too? I don't think she can cry in diamond form.

DUMMY

If you cut off Wolverine's hand does another Wolverine grow from it?

ERNST

Martha says that Mister Logan isn't an earthworm. But she wants to know if you cut him in half so he has one arm and one leg and half a head, which half of him would regenerate?

XORN

Class....

ERNST

Really, though. If you put the two halves in different boxes, would, like, the right half regenerate into artsy Mister Logan and would the left half regenerate into mathy Mister Logan?

XORN

Class, that's enough.

BEAK

Did you know that no one at the mansion knows the real color of Mister Summers' eyes.

ANGEL

You guys are stupid.

Beak looks over at her, stricken.

ANGEL

(wickedly)

The *real* question is if we gave Beast catnip would he go nuts?

Beak smiles. Xorn sits heavily at his desk and rests his forehead on his hand. This is not what he signed up for!

EXT. XAVIER INSTITUTE - LONG SHOT - WINTER

We're going to have a montage up in this script.

There's snow everywhere. Maybe there's a tree in the shot. In season changing montages there's always at least one tree in the shot.

Aliens are attacking the Institute. Big UFOs. Lasers. Go nuts.

INT. SPECIAL CLASS

Cut to the students hiding under their desks. Beak and Basilisk are playing Clue. Angel is painting her fingernails. Ernst is super concerned and is wrapping Martha's brain jar in bubble wrap. Dummy is reading a book. Xorn is running out of the door to help in the fight.

EXT. XAVIER INSTITUTE - LONG SHOT - SPRING

Snow is melted. Green buds. The tree is tree-ing. It's drizzling. And the Institute is being swarmed by grumpy dinosaurs from the Savage Land.

INT. SPECIAL CLASS

Cut to everyone hiding under their desks again. Beak and Basilisk are playing Candy Land. Angel is doing her math homework. Ernst is napping, head pillowed on Martha, who is cocooned in bubble wrap again. Dummy is reading a different book.

EXT. XAVIER INSTITUTE - LONG SHOT - SUMMER

The tree is covered in leaves. The sun is high in the sky. The Institute is being attacked by Sentinels.

INT. SPECIAL CLASS

Cut to under the desks. Beak and Basilisk are playing checkers. Angel, Martha (bubble wrapped), and Ernst are looking out of the window and playing a game of Institute Attack Bingo (potential squares: shattered windows, broken

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statues, heroic sacrifice, Phoenix makes an appearance, robots, explosions, Wilhelm scream*, Wolverine gets ripped in half, Cyclops loses visor, fall to knees Wrath of Khan moment, torn costume, students join in).

Dummy is reading another book and he has on noise-canceling headphones.

* For the love of all things holy, do not actually put the Wilhelm scream in this movie. It is my least favorite thing. Totally kills my suspension of disbelief.

EXT. XAVIER INSTITUTE - LONG SHOT - FALL

Leaves have turned red, yellow, orange, and brown and the tree is more than halfway bare. MAGNETO is attacking the Institute.

INT. SPECIAL CLASS

Everyone is under the table playing Monopoly, except for Dummy, who is reading. Martha, also playing Monopoly with Ernst as a partner, is bubble wrapped. No one even bothers to look out of the window. This has become commonplace.

BEAK

I wish I could just prove that we're worth the gamble. Kids in our grade are already out in the field. Kid Omega's out there. The Cuckoos.

ANGEL

You're never gonna be an X-Man. They'd choose a pet rock before they chose you. At least a pet rock does some damage when you throw it.

The rest of the Special Class is looking back and forth between Beak and Angel like it's a tennis match.

BEAK

I could help.

ANGEL

No. You couldn't. Have you ever even *hit* anyone before? I'm not talking spars or piñatas.

BEAK

You think I went around Rotterdam looking the way I do without needing to defend myself?

(CONTINUED)

ANGEL

How'd that turn out for you.

BEAK

Sixty-three percent hiding,
twenty-eight percent bluffing,
seven percent baseball bat, two
percent punching.

ANGEL

Go on ahead, sass the bad guys to
death.

This is getting tense for everyone else.

BASILISK

Mommy and Daddy are fighting.

Simultaneously:

ANGEL

Shut up.

BEAK

Go to your room, young man.

Beat. Then:

BEAK

Speaking of weird father figures, I
haven't seen Professor X at all
since February.

ERNST

Martha says it's because he's in
space with his alien wife.

DUMMY

No way.

BASILISK

That sounds fake.

BEAK

I didn't even know he was married.

ANGEL

She's messing with us.

ERNST

No, really! Martha says she saw it
in the teachers' brains.

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BEAK
There's no way.

EXT. XAVIER INSTITUTE FRONT LAWN, DAY

Flight class again. They're doing stretches and preparing. They're all in ill-fitting gym class clothes.

A girl with a glowing aura around her lifts into the air as naturally as breathing. A winged man flaps and also lifts easily. Angel lifts up into the air with a little more effort. Beak gets about a foot and a half off the ground and takes a nosedive, squawking.

BEAK
(out of frame)
I'm okay! I'm okay!

Angel facepalms.

INT. BEAK'S DORM ROOM

Choir is browsing Tumblr or Instagram or Twitter when Beak comes in, but she stops what she's doing and tosses him a long, sloppily wrapped present.

CHOIR
Happy birthday!

BEAK
It's not my birthday!

CHOIR
Okay, happy Thursday, then. Open it.

Beak does. It's a tube-shaped leather bag with a strap.

BEAK
I love it! What is it?

CHOIR
It's a holster for your baseball bat.

BEAK
Did you make this?

CHOIR
We had some extra material in Costume Club.

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BEAK

I didn't know there was a Costume Club.

CHOIR

What did you think I did every Tuesday night?

BEAK

I thought you had a secret boyfriend with a fetish for rigidly scheduled dates.

CHOIR

It's awesome! We learn about design, about color, about how to make something that looks sleek and intimidating, how to stitch in panels of armoring without making it obvious or compromising too much flexibility. How to dress for our powers.

BEAK

Wait-- how do you dress for your powers?

CHOIR

Well, for me, I'm usually going to be using my powers covertly, so durable plainclothes and a loose infinity scarf does the job. For you, you'd need to go sleeveless and super lightweight so you could fly if you had to.

BEAK

This is the coolest!

CHOIR

High collars are good for protecting the throat. In the late nineties, the big Xs across the chest were branding for the X-Men, but they also directed fire to the most easily armored part of the uniform, since the chest doesn't need to twist. Like a shield. But there are some things that I can't figure. Like why Mister Summers' uniform looks like a sausage casing and why Mister Logan wears so much leather. He has a healing factor.

(MORE)

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CHOIR (cont'd)
He must destroy *so many* expensive
coats.

BEAK
I hate that guy.

CHOIR
I believe that's our room's slogan.

Pan to a semi-poorly drawn marker portrait of Wolverine hanging on the wall with a caption at the bottom that says: NO WOLVERINE SYMPATHIZERS ALLOWED!!! (BEAK HATES THAT GUY!)

INT. BEAST'S OFFICE

Beak slides Beast's copy of Kafka's *Metamorphosis* across the desk, back to him.

BEAST
How did you like it?

BEAK
I loved it. I especially liked the
part where Kafka turned into a
butterfly.

Beast slides the book back.

BEAST
Read it.

Beak grabs the book and leaves.

BEAST
That boy.

EXT. XAVIER INSTITUTE FRONT LAWN, DAY

Xorn is teaching a group of students Tai Chi. Beak's there, Dummy, Basilisk, Ernst (as always, with Martha on her wrist), a handful of non-Special Class kids.

Xorn is explaining moves as he leads them. Stuff like "brush the birds tail" and "cloud hands" and "remember to keep your chi in dantian."

Out of earshot and in the background the Stepford Cuckoos are talking to Angel, and they keep taking sidelong glances at Beak.

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The bell rings; it's time to change classes. Angel saunters over. Kisses Beak full on the mouth.

As they pass, ESME of the Stepford Cuckoos passes Angel a folded fifty dollar bill behind her back.

ESME

Unbelievable.

Cut to Beak's face. He's shocked. He's ecstatic. This is the first time anyone's shown him this kind of interest since he turned into a freak. Zoom in on his expression as everyone else rushes to go to their classes, jostling him. He doesn't notice.

INT. BEAK'S DORM ROOM

Choir is trying on different kinds of lipsticks, because truly when you have that many lips you'd have to be crazy not to. Also, she's in front of her webcam.

CHOIR

The trick to making the color last longer is coating your lips with a transparent powder. Or not eating or drinking ever again.

Beak unlocks the door and slinks in.

BEAK

(squawkily)

Oh! Sorry! Sorry! I'll come back later.

Choir turns off the camera.

CHOIR

You're fine, Beaksy! Sit down. Stay a while

BEAK

(sits)

I didn't mean to interrupt.

CHOIR

You live here too. So what's been going on in the fabulous land of feathers?

BEAK

Angel kissed me.

(CONTINUED)

CHOIR

(slyly)

And you want girl advice.

BEAK

I did search the library for a copy of *How to Win Friends and Influence People* When You're a Hideous Bird Man, but it's out of print.

CHOIR

It looks like you've already won and influenced.

BEAK

How do I not mess it up?

CHOIR

I hate to go all after school special on you, but be yourself. And stop thinking about it like you're going to mess it up.

BEAK

Can't you just do a makeover on me? Like, take off my glasses and shake out my hair and then suddenly I'm Rachael Leigh Cook in *She's All That*, or Lindsay Lohan in *Mean Girls*, or Anne Hathaway in both *The Princess Diaries* and *The Devil Wears Prada*.

CHOIR

(fake musing)

It would be so much easier if you wore glasses. Although... a makeover montage is *much* easier than reevaluating your self-image and learning to like yourself the way you are.

(beat)

You know a lot of makeover movies.

BEAK

Believe me, I've been preparing for this moment my whole life.

And then the makeover montage. Glitter spray for his head feathers, and she brushes a couple of his head feathers with purple mascara to make them stand out. White highlighting powder for his cheekbones, which makes him sneeze.

(CONTINUED)

Eyeliner for his bulbous eyes, and a couple plastic craft store gemstones clustered on his cheek. Apparently Choir thinks Beak should look like the lovechild of David Bowie and another, sparklier David Bowie.

She tries to slick his head feathers back with gel. "Tries" being the operative word. It pops right back up. She tries more gel, but this time when it pops up it just trebuchets globs of gel everywhere. This time she *has* to get it right. She's painting his talons. Pan up to see his head feathers are tied down with twine attached to his collar. Chip clips, binder clips, scrunchies, anything she can do to make it lie flat. With a twang, it all falls to pot and his feathers are sticking straight up again. She throws her hands up in the air as though to say, 'I quit!'

Plunging purple hipster v-neck and skinny jeans (getting the jeans on requires a lot of hopping and squawking, and yes, even his chest hair is feathers) and combat boots. She spins the roly chair in front of her mirror.

BEAK

I love it!

CHOIR

Oh! One more thing!

She takes a purple plastic butterfly barrette from her hair and clips it into his head feathers. Not to keep it down. Decoratively. She kisses the top of his head.

CHOIR

For luck.

INT. XAVIER INSTITUTE, HALLWAY

People are staring at Beak as he walks down the hallway. Even Kid Omega with his dumb pink hairstyle and 'Magneto: how's he work' t-shirt smirks at him and points his thumb at him as though to say, 'Get a load of this guy.'

On the way to class Angel pretends not to see him and speeds up. Ernst (as always with Martha) falls in line next to him.

ERNST

Martha thinks you look like a parrot. In a good way.

BEAK

(addressing the brain in the jar)

Thanks, Martha! I think you look especially pretty today.

INT. SPECIAL CLASS

Bell rings. Everyone leaves but Ernst, attached, as always, to Martha, and Angel who's putting away her books. Beak keeps looking over his shoulder to see if Angel is going to follow him out so they can walk together. Angel doesn't even look up, and Beak reluctantly leaves.

ERNST

Martha says she knows why you
kissed him.

ANGEL

(bristles)

So?

ERNST

Martha says it wasn't very nice.

ANGEL

Martha can bite me. Oh. Wait. Brain
in a jar.

ERNST

Martha says--

ANGEL

What, does she like him or
something?

ERNST

She says that Barnell deserves
better.

ANGEL

Maybe he does.

INT. XAVIER INSTITUTE, LIVING ROOM

The place is decorated for a Halloween party.

Beast is dancing with SHADOWCAT, dressed as the Beast and Beauty, respectively. A bit of waltzing, Shadowcat phasing through people when Beast swings her around too wildly. He's doing it on purpose.

ICEMAN's wearing a carrot nose (or he's dressed like Elsa from Frozen, I can't decide what I like better) and is chaperoning by the punch bowl, making ice cubes. Kid Omega is being a human for Halloween, and in case that isn't obvious his shirt says: 'THIS IS MY HUMAN COSTUME.' He's passing out more Kick inhalers on the sly, black with a red

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x in a circle. For the irony, NIGHTCRAWLER, another chaperone, is wearing a halo and cheap, Halloween store angel wings. WARREN, in a matching costume, is wearing a headband with devil horns, and a pointed tail. He prods Nightcrawler with his plastic pitchfork.

Beak and Angel and Basilisk wander in. Beak is in a white sheet with two holes cut in it so he can see. Ghost! Angel is in a yellow and black striped swimsuit which, along with her wings, makes her a perfect bumblebee. Basilisk has a tennis shoe strapped to his head. Martha has two googly eyes and a fake mustache stuck on her glass brain dome, plus a sombrero on top. Ernst is in a cardboard and duct tape windmill costume ("No one knows who we are," complains Ernst, "I told you we should've been Pinky and the Brain"). Dummy is wearing a long white beard and a wizard hat with taped on yellow construction paper stars. Dummy is dressed as Dummy-dore. (It was Beak's idea.)

The Stepford Cuckoos are in brightly-colored suits with pointed collars and bell bottoms. Immaculate costumes, and expensive. They're trying to look like they don't care but they watch everyone who's coming into the room like they're daring someone to talk to them.

Wolverine is dressed as Crocodile Dundee, a nod to Hugh Jackman's Australian heritage. He is surrounded by a bunch of adoring, fawning teenagers.

WOLVERINE

That's not a knife.
(extends claws)
This is a knife.

BEAK

...I hate that guy.

Across the room, Basilisk approaches the Stepford Cuckoos who stand up taller, alert and attentive.

BASILISK

Cool costumes. I love That 70s Show.

STEPFORD CUCKOOS

We're the Jackson 5.

BASILISK

I thought they were... taller.

STEPFORD CUCKOOS

And what are you supposed to be?

(CONTINUED)

BASILISK

I was gonna be a nipple but Martha convinced me to be chewing gum on the bottom of a shoe.

DEADPOOL is traipsing around the background dressed as Freddy Krueger, a nod to Hawkeye vs. Deadpool #2 in which he was mistaken for that very dude.

There's mingling. Beak and Angel are being wallflowers in the same general area.

BEAK

Hey, do you wanna get out of here?

ANGEL

Are you hitting on me?

BEAK

No. Maybe. This is just... like, the only day of the year I can walk down the street and look normal.

ANGEL

(softens)

Yeah. Yeah, let's get out of here.

Beak throws his ghost costume in the trash on the way out.

EXT. CITY STREET - NIGHT

The streets of the city are dark and hardly anyone is paying attention to Beak and Angel. It's like being invisible. Except a GUY dressed as a gladiator passes and stops them; Angel tenses, Beak stays loosey-goosey and relaxed.

GUY

Woah. Are you--

BEAK

Special effects makeup expert. Spooky, huh?

GUY

Wow! That looks unbelievable!

BEAK

Do you like it?

GUY

Let me see you in the light here.

They move under a street lamp, and Guy studies Beak closely.

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GUY

Eh, now that I see you up close,
you could've done a better job
blending the makeup, and you can
see the latex seams under your
chin.

Beak winks at Angel, waggles his eyebrows, grinning.
Angel can't help but smile.

GUY

How'd you do the eyes, though?

BEAK

Plastic half-domes with mechanical
lids. I press a button sewn into
the lining of my pocket to blink.
(blinky blink blink)
We're a conceptual couple's
costume. The birds and the bees.

ANGEL

(quietly, just to Beak)
You're having way too much fun
with this.

BEAK

(also quietly, but
emphatically)
Damn right I am.

GUY

Hey, do you mind if I take a selfie
with you?

BEAK

Sure! Please!

Beak is ecstatic. This is really freeing for him. As Guy and Beak take a selfie together, Angel watches from out of the phone's frame, smiling to herself.

INT. XAVIER INSTITUTE, LIVING ROOM

The party has dwindled. The decorations are a bit shabby now, streamers drooping, the punch table full of upturned cups and condensation puddles.

Dummy is napping in one of the chairs. Ernst is sitting with Martha (still attached to her spiky collar and leash). Ernst is peeling off Martha's pretendy mustache when Beak and Angel walk in.

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Ernst and Martha perk up.

ERNST

Beak! Martha has a question.

BEAK

Shoot.

ERNST

She wants to know if you'll dance
with her.

Beak looks over at Angel, who is acting like she doesn't
care.

BEAK

Sure. I'd love to.

Ernst transfers the leash to Beak's wrist and Martha floats
in front of him and they both sway together, Martha bobbing
like a balloon.

Cut to Beak dancing with a beautiful girl in a red dress
with the spiky collar around her neck. You realize that this
is the way Martha sees herself. The way she used to look.
Linger on this image.

Cut back to the real dance, with Beak and the floating brain
in a jar, as it draws to a close. Beak kisses the top of the
jar.

Cut back to the imagined dance. Beak's lips (well, beak)
against the girl Martha's forehead, and he ruffles her hair
and steps back as she shuffles her feet and blushes.

MARTHA

(the version in the red dress,
softly)

Thank you.

BEAK

Hey, anytime.

INT. SPECIAL CLASS

XORN

Mutations can be traumatic. A way
to handle the emotional aftermath
is to acknowledge what you've lost
and what you've gained. Mourn the
past and look toward the future. We
will begin with Basilisk.

(CONTINUED)

BASILISK

The seizures suck.

(taps on the metal ring around
his one eye)

This helps. I like looking at
people and making them freeze. No
one can be mean to me.

DUMMY

I miss eating food.

ERNST

I love the way I am. It's better.
But Martha doesn't want to answer.
You made Martha cry.

XORN

I did not mean to make Martha cry.

ERNST

You did, though.

XORN

I am sorry, Martha. Angel?

ANGEL

Pass, Tin Man.

BASILISK

I coulda passed? What a rip.

XORN

I would prefer it if you did not
pass.

BASILISK

I take back my answer. I pass, too.

XORN

No one passes.

ANGEL

I pass.

A tense silence. Xorn decides to choose his battles. He
can't force this one.

XORN

Beak?

BEAK

I don't like that now I can only
count to six on my fingers. How can

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

BEAK (cont'd)

I do advanced mathematics like this?

XORN

I do not think this is true.

BEAK

Mister Xorn, you're invalidating my feelings. I'm very vulnerable right now.

EXT. XAVIER INSTITUTE - DAY

Beak is looking disgruntled. Mostly because he's the only one in the class who has a helmet strapped to his head. Speaking of:

BEAK

Why am I the only one in class who has to wear a helmet?

WARREN

Because you're the only one in class to fall on their head. Multiple times. Or ever.

The other students twitter and giggle. All except Angel, who storms off.

...to return with a helmet on.

ANGEL

...is it still funny? Why'd you stop laughing? That's what I thought.

Wolverine passes by on his motorcycle.

ANGEL

I hate that guy.

Beak perks up.

BEAK

How come?

ANGEL

He won the genetic lottery and he looks like he's had his mouth wrapped around a lemon's butthole for the past century.

She's officially earned Beak's admiration. He grabs her hand. She tenses, then grips his hand back.

EXT. XAVIER INSTITUTE STEPS - DAY

Lunchtime. The Special Class is eating together. Dummy, Basilisk, Martha, Ernst, Beak, and Angel. It seems like they're really starting to come together, but Martha is floating listlessly, as far away as she can get from the group while still attached to Ernst's wrist.

BASILISK

I heard that Professor X has a wine cellar.

DUMMY

So?

BASILISK

So we have to break in. We'll be legends!

ANGEL

Yeah, legends for the most people to get expelled in one night. They'll be talking about us for seconds, if not minutes.

BEAK

I don't want to be expelled.

ANGEL

You could say Martha mind-controlled all of us into raiding the wine cellar and that way only she'll be expelled.

ERNST

Martha wants it known that she can hear you. And that you're all a bunch of-- I can't say that Martha, I just can't.

ANGEL

If we get caught, we could say that we're just testing the Mansion's security. Maybe this'll be what gets you noticed around here.

BEAK

...okay, here's what we do....

INT. BEAK'S DORM ROOM

The Special Class is meeting in Beak's dorm room. Everyone is wearing balaclavas. Except Beak's is a black pillowcase with eye holes cut in it, cinched in at the bottom with a shoelace because really there's no way a balaclava will fit over his beak. Even Martha has a balaclava over her brain jar. Dummy, Angel, Ernst, and Basilisk (his with one big eye hole in the middle) are wearing them as well.

ANGEL

Explain to me again why you even need that? It's not like anyone's gonna look at your face and think, oh man, this mask is really throwing me off, by the way does anyone other than the bird freak have a giant bird freak head?

BEAK

Hey! Actually... just pretend I'm faking outrage. It'll save us all a lot of time.

ANGEL

And Dummy and Martha don't even have faces.

BASILISK

You think you're so much better than us 'cause you look normal.

ERNST

Guys.

ANGEL

I think I'm better than you because I'm better than you.

ERNST

Guys!

BASILISK

If you're so great, how come you're here with--

ERNST

Guys!

BASILISK/ANGEL

What?

(CONTINUED)

ERNST

Stop being mean to each other.
We're a team.

BEAK

Let's pretend I'm giving you all a rousing speech about how we're in this together. Blah blah, best friends, blah blah blah, if we don't have each other's backs, who does. We good?

BASILISK/ANGEL

No.

BEAK

Can you hold it together until we're all wasted?

BASILISK/ANGEL

Sure.

BEAK

Look at you! It's like we're a real family now! Remember your jobs?

ERNST

I stay with Martha and
Martha clouds the telepaths.

BASILISK

I keep watch over the southeast corridor 'til Dummy comes and taps me, then I can go meet up with you.

DUMMY

I keep watch, too, where the little red dot is, then in fifteen minutes I tell Basilisk he can go when the coast is clear.

BEAK

Is that the longest sentence that Dummy's ever said? I think that's the longest sentence that Dummy's ever said! Good on you, man.

ANGEL

I go with you and pick the lock or whatever.

(CONTINUED)

BEAK

And do we all have our maps?

Everyone nods. The maps are color coded with different dots to show who should be where. Angel takes off her mask.

ANGEL

Masks look suspicious. This isn't a heist movie, and even in heist movies no one wears masks. The best we can do is not look like we're up to something. Plus, it's itchy. Do they make these things out of bees or something?

Masks come off. Martha needs help with hers (what with the having no hands thing), so Ernst helps her.

EXT. XAVIER INSTITUTE WINE CELLAR

It's an old door. Neglected. Angel pulls a tension wrench and a pick out of her pocket.

ANGEL

Time to go to work.

Angel labors over the lock until it pops and they open the door and look inside.

ANGEL/BEAK

...woah.

INT. XAVIER INSTITUTE - HALLWAY - BY THE STAIRWELL

Beast, head buried in a notebook, almost walks right into Dummy.

BEAST

Oh! What are you doing up so late?

DUMMY

Um.

BEAST

Why don't I walk you back to your dorm room?

DUMMY

Okay. Thank you.

And Dummy obediently follows Beast.

INT. XAVIER INSTITUTE - HALLWAY - SOMEWHERE ELSE IN THE HALL

Basilisk is waiting, waiting, waiting, staring at his watch. No one's coming.

INT. XAVIER INSTITUTE - HALLWAY - STILL ELSEWHERE

Martha and Ernst are together. Martha on Ernst's lap, Ernst blowing bubbles with chewing gum.

INT. XAVIER INSTITUTE WINE CELLAR

Basically the quintessential wine cellar. Dark, majestic, full of bottles; it looks luxurious. Angel is wrestling with a bottle of something that looks particularly old and a corkscrew.

The cork pops. Angel offers the bottle to Beak first.

BEAK

Oh, I don't drink.

ANGEL

Then why organize all this?

BEAK

I never thought we'd get this far.

ANGEL

Have a sip at least.

Beak does have a sip at least.

BEAK

Is anyone else coming?

INT. XAVIER INSTITUTE - HALLWAY - SOMEWHERE ELSE IN THE HALL

Basilisk yawns. Checks his watch again.

INT. XAVIER INSTITUTE WINE CELLAR

Beak and Angel are slumped against the wall, alternating swigs right out of the bottle. They're on their second bottle. Looks like Beak has a bit of trouble sticking to his guns.

(CONTINUED)

BEAK

How come you know how to... to do that thing, with the locks?

ANGEL

I looked it up. After my stepdad locked me in my room for two days.

BEAK

Two *days*?

ANGEL

I had snacks.

BEAK

I can't imagine.

ANGEL

Just normal snacks. Potato chips, Nutter Butters.

BEAK

That's not what I meant.

ANGEL

(tense)

I know what you meant. I don't need your pity.

BEAK

Why are you like that?

ANGEL

Like what?

BEAK

Hostile all the time. You don't need to be in the Special Class, your powers... they're *incredible*. Not like me and Dummy. You could change the world. The only reason you're lumped in there with us is because you're mean.

(drinky drink)

No offense.

ANGEL

Some offense.

BEAK

(agrees)

Some offense.

(CONTINUED)

ANGEL

At least I don't pretend nothing bothers me. Why do you do *that*?

BEAK

...if I don't care, no one can criticize me.

ANGEL

We can still criticize you. Look, I'm criticizing you now.

Angel opens their third bottle.

BEAK

That's true.

INT. XAVIER INSTITUTE - HALLWAY - STILL ELSEWHERE

Ernst is sleeping. It's hard to tell if Martha is awake, though, because she is a brain in a jar.

INT. XAVIER INSTITUTE WINE CELLAR

It's still just Angel and Beak. Now they're on their third bottle and the two empty bottles are on their sides willy-nilly and rolling on the floor.

BEAK

I tried to pluck out all my feathers once. A couple months after I first changed. When I pulled them out, I oozed blood and it hurt like... like....

ANGEL

Like getting waxed?

BEAK

Yes! Probably!

ANGEL

If my stepdad didn't catch me stealing his credit card, I would've bought a saw at a hardware store and cut my wings off.

BEAK

...woah. That's bad.

(CONTINUED)

ANGEL

I know.

BEAK

When I changed, my pa ran off. It was right before a big party. I couldn't fit into my coat because of my claws and the way my arms and shoulders grew. And my pa left his leather jacket because he was in such a hurry to run away from me.

(he taps the shoulder of his leather jacket with the X-patch sewn on the arm)

I put this on. My mom stared at me for a long time, and got this look on her face. Gentle and soft. And she said, "You look exactly like James Dean." I knew I didn't, but that wasn't the point. The point is that she said it. And she meant it.

(beat, swig, he loses track of what he's saying, and then looks back at Angel)

You're beautiful. Whether you believe it or not, you are. You're the prettiest girl in the school, even prettier than the Cuckoos or Miss Pryde or Miss Frost or--

She kisses him.

INT. SPECIAL CLASS

Angel and Beak arrive late. They're both wearing sunglasses. Beak has a baseball cap pulled low over his enormous eyes. Angel is puffy. They're both super hungover and disheveled and sluggish, and basically not having a great day.

Everyone else in the room turns to look at them.

XORN

Welcome! I was concer--

The bell rings.

XORN

--ned. I hope you will consider attending my seminar on self-perception and how it relates to universal truth.

(beat)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

XORN (cont'd)
It is extra credit.

BEAK
Yeah, uh, we'll be there in a
minute.

Silence, until Xorn leaves the room. A beat. Then everyone starts talking at once. "Where were you guys/How come no one texted/Doctor McCoy caught me/etc" until Beak winces and raises his hand for silence.

BEAK
One at a time. And quietly.

DUMMY
Doctor McCoy asked me to go to my
room so I did.

BASILISK
So I never got the 'all clear.'

ERNST
I was sleepy.

BEAK
We're one ragtag group of misfits.

BASILISK
(to Angel)
Didja get unlucky?

BEAK
It's "lucky." And no.

BASILISK
No. For you it'd be lucky. For
her... unlucky.

BEAK
That's enough.

BASILISK
(to Beak)
It's a joke about how ugly you are.

ERNST
Martha wants to apologize for
forgetting to dampen telepathy in
the school. She says she was busy
eavesdropping on Scott and Jean's
marital problems.

(CONTINUED)

BEAK

Wait, if you weren't running interference, then the reason no one came after us is that....

ANGEL

No one cares. We're not important enough for them to stop. I'm gonna throw up and then go back to bed.

EXT. XAVIER INSTITUTE FRONT LAWN, DAY

Flying class. A few students are flying with weights. Some of the more advanced students are flying with crash test dummies. Like fireman training. They're learning how to carry someone without obstructing their wings.

Warren is observing the class. Beak is still working on the basics, but Angel is hauling heavy weights. They're both still wearing helmets.

WARREN

There's not a huge tactical advantage to flight when you're fighting people your own size. You leave yourself exposed and prone. But what you can do is rescue people from bad situations, and retrieve the irretrievable. To that end... keep working on flying with heavier and heavier weights. Ideally, you'll be able to one day support the weight of another person.

ANGEL

Maybe we could ask the Costume Club if they could work out a harness for you so you can practice with weights.

BEAK

That's a great idea!

ANGEL

Don't compare yourselves to us. We don't actually use our arms to fly. We all either have wings or we float. If we had to work with what you have, we'd be struggling too.

Beak smiles.

INT. XAVIER INSTITUTE HALLWAY

Beak is walking with Beast, loping to try to keep up with him. He's in his fight outfit: a sleeveless shirt and his titanium baseball bat in the bat holster Choir made him.

Beak is humming tunelessly, hyper and jittery. Beast stops.

BEAST

...fine. You can do it.

BEAK

(to the tune of Highway to the Dangerzone)

Hallway to the Danger Room. I'm in the halllllway tooooooo the Danger Rooooom.

INT. DANGER ROOM

Beast leads the way to an empty, shining chrome room. He pokes a few buttons on a control panel.

BEAST

Training scenario: Damsselfly.

The room fills in around them, a hologram with astonishing detail. They're in a city park and some street toughs have a girl hostage. The girl has a jeweled damsselfly broach pinned to her blouse and a metal briefcase handcuffed to her wrist.

BEAK

No one has to get hurt.

TOUGH 1

Yeah? Then what's the bat for.

BEAK

I'm on an intramural bird freak softball team.

Beak has his hand out in a pacifying gesture that would be much more calming if he didn't have massive claws.

TOUGH 2

This doesn't concern you, freak.
Get out of here.

BEAK

No object is worth someone's life.

(CONTINUED)

TOUGH 1

Cute philosophy. Let's see if it has real world applications.

(pretends to think about it as he flips out a switchblade)

Nope.

TOUGH 3

Give us the key to the case or else I'll take your hand with me.

BEAK

...none of you are real.

Beast's ears twitch in interest, and Beak barrels on.

BEAK

Tell me your names. See that? That split second pause? That's the computer trying to figure out a plausible response. What's your first pet's name? What did you eat for breakfast today? Who's the first person you kissed? What high school did you go to?

TOUGH 3

I....

Beak relaxes his grip on his titanium baseball bat, certain that he won as the images in front of him flicker and come back into focus. Tough 1 stabs the girl. Beak cries out in pain and frustration.

BEAST

End scenario.

BEAK

I messed up.

BEAST

This is the first time a student tried to Kobayashi Maru our simulation.

BEAK

I dropped my guard. In real life you can't drop your guard until everyone's out of danger.

BEAST

And you cheated.

(CONTINUED)

BEAK

I used all the information at my disposal to achieve a favorable outcome.

BEAST

By cheating.

BEAK

(agrees)

By cheating.

BEAST

It was wrong. But it was also solid creative, out-of-the-box thinking. I think you almost broke them.

Beast writes down on his clipboard, ALMOST POSITIVE OUTCOME VIA EXISTENTIAL CRISIS.

INT. XAVIER INSTITUTE, LIVING ROOM

Beak and Martha and Ernst are all hanging out together. Beak is hanging off the seat of the armchair with his legs over the back and his head feathers brushing the floor.

BEAK

We need to work on our team cohesion.

ERNST

Why?

BEAK

If we're ever going to impress the X-Men we've got to work together as a unit. Martha... could you do me a favor?

ERNST

Yes, she says. Anything you need.

BEAK

Can you listen for a threat that's too small for the X-Men but big enough that we can prove ourselves?

With some concentration, Martha bobs her jar up and down as though she's nodding. Beak rights himself, rubs the top of her jar as though ruffling her hair affectionately.

(CONTINUED)

BEAK
You're the best!

INT. SPECIAL CLASS - DAY

Xorn is droning and no one is paying attention. It's not all his fault. His students are pretty terrible. Ernst is methodically folding paper airplanes. Basilisk is carving an omega symbol into his desk. Dummy is openly sleeping. Beak is squinting with his chin tilted back, head cocked to the side.

When suddenly:

MARTHA
The WHITE RABBIT is on the move.
Within walking distance from the
Institute. Her brain is... really
weird right now.

Dummy wakes up with a start.

DUMMY
What?

XORN
Pardon?

MARTHA
I need you all to say that you have
a stomachache or something and need
to be excused from class.

DUMMY/ERNST/BASILISK/BEAK/ANGEL
(all various permutations of:)
I have a stomachache, I need to be
excused.

MARTHA
Not all at once! This isn't the
Shining! Stagger it!

DUMMY
I have a....

ERNST
...stomachache or something.

BASILISK
We need to be excused.

(CONTINUED)

ANGEL

It was probably the meatloaf surprise.

BEAK

(weakly)

Surpriiiiise.

MARTHA

I swear you guys all learned your social skills from Children of the Corn.

XORN

Yes. Go ahead. I will e-mail your assignments to you.

EXT. DRUGSTORE - DAY

A woman with strawberry blonde hair (White Rabbit) is in a sweatshirt and sweatpants. Her nose is a little pink, she's a bit puffy, light on the makeup.

She's going into a drugstore.

And who's there sidling in from around the corner but the Special Class. Beak, Ernst, Martha, Dummy, and Basilisk.

WHITE RABBIT

...you've gotta be kidding me.

She pushes past them into the store. The Special Class follows.

INT. DRUGSTORE - DAY

The guy behind the counter groans-- a kind of this-is-the-end-of-my-shift-and-I-have-a-bad-feeling-about-these-mutant groan.

The Special Class is quick on the White Rabbit's heels.

BEAK

Hey, stop your nefarious...
nefariousness!

WHITE RABBIT

I'm getting cold medicine.

(CONTINUED)

BASILISK

Are you breaking bad?

WHITE RABBIT

Bad's been broken. Look, I'm on parole. I'm taking my anti-psychotics everyday. I go to therapy, both single and group. Leave me alone.

ERNST

Maybe we should go.

DUMMY

Yeah.

BASILISK

Unless she's lying.

DUMMY

Yeah!

ERNST

Martha says she's not lying.

BEAK

Sorry to bother you, ma'am.

They slowly back away.

EXT. XAVIER INSTITUTE STEPS - DAY

Lunchtime. The Special Class is out enjoying the sunshine. Ernst is beating literally everyone at arm wrestling and is making a hefty pile of cash in the process.

A guy whose arms can shapeshift into animal arms is losing at arm wrestling to tiny wrinkly Ernst while half of his limbs are bear limbs.

Kid Omega approaches. Sees the sign on Ernst's table that says NO TELEPATHY/TELEKINESIS \$5 BET MINIMUM, and turns on his heel and goes in the other direction.

INT. SPECIAL CLASS

This is another therapy-with-Xorn scene, so their desks are in a circle and they all look like they'd rather be anywhere but there. All except Xorn, who looks interested, leaning on his forearms.

(CONTINUED)

XORN

What do you want more than anything?

DUMMY

To be able to eat pizza.

ANGEL

To look normal.

BASILISK

What she said.

ERNST

Martha said "to have a body" and... honestly, I'm doing fine. Things are much better now. I wouldn't change anything.

BEAK

A double cheeseburger made of Velociraptor meat.

(beat)

Kidding. To look normal.

XORN

This is good news! Even non-mutants want to fit in. Every teenager faces insecurity about their looks. In essence, your struggles are mundane and average!

BEAK

That's...

ANGEL

...comforting. And patronizing, but whatever.

INT. BASILISK'S DORM ROOM - NIGHT

These are quick scenes with a close-up on their faces.

Basilisk's eye snaps open.

INT. ERNST'S DORM ROOM - NIGHT

She opens her eyes.

INT. DUMMY'S DORM ROOM - NIGHT

He sits up with a start.

INT. ANGEL'S DORM ROOM - NIGHT

Eyes open wide.

INT. BEAK'S DORM ROOM - NIGHT

Eyes open, and he gasps.

MARTHA (V.O.)
It's go time.

INT. XAVIER INSTITUTE HALLWAY - NIGHT

They're all walking together, except for Martha, who is floating. Beak has a bag over his shoulder and his titanium baseball bat in the sheath that Choir made for him.

BEAK
(lightly)
"It's go time"? *Really?*

MARTHA
Come up with a better catchphrase.

BEAK
...okay. I did it.

MARTHA
What is it?

BEAK
Literally any other catchphrase.

MARTHA
Come on!

BEAK
How about, "Special Class,
assemble!"

MARTHA
Avengers.

BEAK
"Oh my Special stars and garters"?

(CONTINUED)

MARTHA

Doctor McCoy. And that begs the question, why does he have both stars *and* garters? Is he into an alternative lifestyle?

BEAK

"My Special sense is tingling?"

MARTHA

That sounds like something you need to go to the doctor for.

BEAK

Excelsior!

MARTHA

That's not even a word.

BEAK

Isn't it King Arthur's sword?

BASILISK

That's Excalibur, and it means "hard cleft."

(beat)

Shut up. I know things.

BEAK

Okay. Okay, "it's go time" it is. But I don't have to be happy about it.

EXT. JEWELRY STORE - NIGHT

MAN-BULL is in the process of smashing a jewelry store window and climbing in when the Special Class corners him. Imagine a hairy Lou Ferrigno with a bull head and horns. The baddest of bad news.

BEAK

Shouldn't you be in a Labyrinth somewhere eating virgins in groups of fourteen?

Man-Bull cocks his head to the side and for a moment it seems like he's going to say something but instead he screams/roars/howls and rushes Beak.

BEAK

...oh no.

Beak jerks to the side and ducks, narrowly avoiding injury.

(CONTINUED)

BEAK

I'm sorry! It was a stupid quip!
Don't!!!

Man-Bull slams into Beak full force and knocks the breath out of Beak as he tackles Beak to the ground. Beak wheezes. Man-Bull pummels him. Beak tries to get his titanium baseball bat out of its sheath but he can't quite manage it.

ANGEL

(screams)
Someone save him!

ERNST

Martha can't get into his brain!

Punchy punchy punchy. Beak squawks, screams, he's a bloody mess.

BEAK

B-Bas....

ANGEL

Basilisk, paralyze.

BASILISK

He's not looking this way!

ANGEL

I have to do everything--

Angel throws a discarded soda can at Man-Bull's head, causing him to turn toward Basilisk and Angel. He grunts. Snorts. And charges. Ernst punches Man-Bull, sending him staggering (and knocking Martha to the ground in the process). There's the sound of glass cracking. And Basilisk finally does that strobe light thing from his eye, causing Man-Bull to freeze.

Dummy is rocking back and forth clutching his head. Beak drags himself over to Martha. Martha is leaking fluid onto the pavement.

BEAK

Shhh. You're gonna be okay.

He reaches into his go-bag, gets duct tape, and patches the crack in Martha's jar. He struggles to sit up.

BEAK

This is good. This was a success.
I'm totally fi--

Beak loses consciousness.

INT. XAVIER INSTITUTE CLINIC - NIGHT

Beak is in bad shape. Attached to a heart monitor, all swollen, arm in a sling, and there's an IV drip.

Two yellow slit-pupiled eyes in the otherwise dark of the room.

Beast.

BEAST

Property is never worth your life.

BEAK

Yeah. No. I mean, I know, I was just... practicing.

BEAST

That's why we have the Danger Room.

BEAK

I know.

BEAST

I'm very disappointed in you, Mister Bohusk. You took a massive unnecessary risk today.

BEAK

I-I'm sorry, I know I messed up.

BEAST

You don't need to prove yourself. Not to your classmates. Not to me. Think about that.

Beast gets up to leave, pauses at the door.

BEAST

The most perfectly well-synchronized team is going to fail. People with godlike powers and decades of experience still fail on a regular basis. I fail, Charles fails, Jean fails, Scott fails. Sometimes the best you can hope for is no casualties. No one died on your watch. That's more than the X-Men can say.

Beast exits.

EXT. XAVIER INSTITUTE CLINIC - HALLWAY - NIGHT

Beast closes the clinic's door and dials his phone.

BEAST

Looks like I'm in charge of
inspirational speeches now.

(furtively)

Suck it, Charles. Call me back when
you get this message. It's Hank.

INT. XAVIER INSTITUTE CLINIC - NIGHT

Beak reaches for that copy of Metamorphosis and starts to read. Through the upcoming scenes you can keep track of how long it's been by how much of the book Beak has read and how his injuries are healing.

INT. XAVIER INSTITUTE CLINIC - DAY

Beak's a few pages into Metamorphosis, which is tented over his stomach, and he is sleeping.

A feather falls out of his arm. Another, and another, and another.

Martha is floating, attached by her leash to the arm of the chair next to Beak's bed.

Beak groans. His eyes flutter open.

BEAK

Hey, Martha McFly. Welcome to my
hip new pad. What do you mean, of
course people still say "pad."

More feathers are falling out as he struggles to sit up. He brushes a claw against his arm and feathers come out in a handful.

BEAK

Oh no. No, no, no, can you call the
doctor over, something's wrong with
my meds, I don't molt like this
until the summer.

(beat)

You're-- wait, you're doing this?!
But, look, okay, I didn't know you
could do that. I know what I said.
But if you're gonna fix anyone's
mutation, help Dummy. Dummy's just

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

BEAK (cont'd)

gas in a suit. I should be the last one on your mind.

(beat)

Oh. Oh, um. I'm flattered. But I'm fine being me. Honest. If you're gonna help anyone, there are loads that have it worse.

(beat)

I just did what anyone would do. You're my friend... and you were leaking everywhere. Next fight we should transfer you into one of those shatterproof jars. Like the kinds of glass they use to make the Popemobile.

Xorn, Dummy, Angel, Ernst, and Basilisk come in.

XORN

We made you a card.

Construction paper card. Like the kind that very young children make. And the front says: Violets r blue, roses r red. Glad ur alive, good job ur not dead.

Ernst unties Martha.

ERNST

(quietly, almost in the background)

I told you he wouldn't go for it.

XORN

We will let you get some rest. We wanted you to know how proud we are.

BASILISK

Yeah. You saved Martha. That's pretty cool.

Ernst gives Beak a kiss on the cheek/beak area.

ERNST

Thank you for saving my best friend.

BEAK

Aw!

Angel gets stiff and nervous. She's not great at expressing her feelings. So she stares everyone down until they leave.

(CONTINUED)

ANGEL

What were you thinking? You're basically a bag of wet hair. Moron.

BEAK

Hey, you were there, too!

ANGEL

I have acid puke! Your powers are having especially breakable bones! There's a guy who spits up giant slugs and he's *still* more useful than you!

BEAK

You know Ron Weasley?

ANGEL

We both know Ron spit out normal-sized slugs.

BEAK

You were worried about me.

ANGEL

I thought he was gonna kill you.

BEAK

You really took charge. It was awesome.

ANGEL

...we really *did* work well together as a team.

BEAK

We did.

ANGEL

This doesn't mean I'm less mad at you. You're an idiot.

BEAK

That has been mentioned.

ANGEL

Good. As long as you know....

BEAK

...that I'm an idiot. Not that you were worried about me.

(CONTINUED)

ANGEL

No, not that.

BEAK

Because you weren't worried.

ANGEL

And you're an idiot.

BEAK

Glad we got that settled. I have to rest. All the stress of being an idiot is giving me a headache. Or it could be the head wound I got being a punching bag for Steroids McGee.

ANGEL

I'll be back later.

Angel exits.

BEAK

She was worried.

Angel, on the other side of the door, smiles.

INT. XAVIER INSTITUTE CLINIC - NIGHT

Beak is still in a bed, though he's not hooked up to the heart monitor anymore; he's sitting up now and reading *Metamorphosis*. Halfway through. Deadpool climbs in through the window, cocks his head. This isn't where he meant to go.

DEADPOOL

Three up, twelve across, this isn't Domino's room.

BEAK

Domino doesn't live at the Mansion.

(beat)

She never lived at the Mansion.

(beat)

Why do they call you the Merc with a Mouth? It's 'mercenary' not 'merk-senary'? And don't *all* mercenaries have mouths?

Deadpool goes to back out of the window, but then takes another look at Beak. It seems as though Deadpool is going to make a rousing speech to lift his spirits. He pulls a boombox out through the window (where was he *keeping* it, and

(CONTINUED)

what was he planning to do if this were Domino's room?) and presses play. Super inspirational music, like sports movie music. Preferably Angels in the Outfield music.

DEADPOOL

So, you look like something they found in Archangel's shower drain.

BEAK

Yeah.

DEADPOOL

And you're more or less useless.

BEAK

Yeah.

DEADPOOL

Not the smartest one in your class, either, are you?

BEAK

Mm-hmm.

DEADPOOL

Good talk.

Deadpool exits back out of the window.

INT. XAVIER INSTITUTE CLINIC - DAY

Beak is on the last page of Metamorphosis. Angel is agonizing over what she wants to say next.

ANGEL

Do you remember our first kiss?

BEAK

Duh. It's not like I have head trauma or anything.

ANGEL

Well. I kissed you on a bet.

BEAK

(cheerily)

That makes sense.

ANGEL

I really like you now, though.
Really really.

(CONTINUED)

BEAK

Of course you do. I'm adorable.

ANGEL

It's your movie star good looks.

BEAK

See, I knew it! I'm so handsome that people don't realize how generous, gentle, and humble I am.

ANGEL

It's a curse.

BEAK

I want to be your insignificant other.

ANGEL

I want to be your worse half.

They hold hands.

INT. DINER - NIGHT

Beak and Angel are sitting in a booth with plates in front of them. Beak's arm is still in a sling and maybe his face is a little puffy but he's not roadkill anymore. Beak and Angel are enamored, wrapped up in each other. That doesn't mean they don't notice that everyone else in the diner has given them a thirty-foot berth.

DINER MANAGER

No disrespect, son, but you're putting people off their meal. I'm going to have to ask you to leave.

ANGEL

No disrespect?

BEAK

It's okay. Don't make this a thing.

ANGEL

He's the one who made it a thing.

BEAK

I'm used to it.

ANGEL

You shouldn't have to be.

(CONTINUED)

Beak gets a few crumpled bills out of his wallet and sets them on the table by their half-finished burgers and fries.

BEAK

It's fine. Let's go.

Angel is not getting up. She crosses her arms over her stomach and looks at Beak so hard that he sits back down. Apologetically.

BEAK

I'm sorry.

ANGEL

They want to see people put off
their meals? I'll show them put off
their meals.

Angel pukes green acid stuff on her food and slurps it up. Like a fly. Let's try to make this slightly less gross than it sounds. It's part of her mutant powers, what with her having fly-like attributes. It helps her digest. Also, it freaks everyone around her out, which is mostly why she does it. Slurpy sounds. The diner manager covers his mouth and gags.

EXT. XAVIER INSTITUTE - NIGHT

A COP escorts Beak and Angel to the front door in handcuffs.

Beast answers the door in boxers and a hasty robe. Don't judge him; it gets hot and itchy when you're covered in fur.

Beast rubs sleep from his eyes and pinches the bridge of his nose. He doesn't seem surprised. Students coming back in handcuffs is pretty par for the course.

COP

Sorry, Hank. They were creating a
public nuisance.

BEAST

Thank you for bringing them home.
Give my love to Charlene.

The police officer unlocks the handcuffs. Beak rubs his wrists. The cop hesitates before he leaves.

COP

My cousin's a... y' know. If it
were up to me... it's not, but if
it were, it wouldn't be you two in
cuffs. For what it's worth.

INT. BEAST'S OFFICE

Beast is hunched drowsily over his cup of Earl Grey tea.

Beak and Angel are sitting across from him, trying to look at least a little like they feel guilty about this.

BEAST

You have an algebra test tomorrow.
You might want to get some sleep.

BEAK

We're not in trouble?

BEAST

If I understand your story
correctly, and I believe I do, you
didn't do anything to be punished
for.

ANGEL

You heard the part where I puked in
public and then ate it, right?

BEAST

Did you hurt anyone?

ANGEL

No.

BEAST

I stand by my ruling. There's an
old saying about not examining the
teeth of an equine present. Go to
sleep.

EXT. XAVIER INSTITUTE - NIGHT

Beak, Ernst, Martha, Angel, Basilisk, and Dummy open the front door to the Institute and step out. Beak and Basilisk are lugging bags along. Beak has his baseball bat in its sheath.

BEAK

You may call it sneaking out after
curfew to light stuff on fire in
the woods, but I call it a team
building exercise.

(CONTINUED)

That's when they notice they're in the middle of an invasion, the instant the front door swings closed behind them. They're surrounded by U-Men, maybe fifty of them, vicious killers in black pseudo scuba suits complete with face masks and air tanks. They have guns.

ERNST

It's them. It's the U-Men.

BEAK

Human?

ERNST

U-Men, like the vowel.

BEAK

Bas. Freeze them! We need a strategy.

Basilisk uses the strobe from his eye and the U-Men freeze in their tracks.

BEAK

Keep freezing them. If they move an inch, hit 'em again.

BASILISK

What *is* that?

ERNST

It's Martha screaming.

BEAK

Is she okay?

ERNST

...no?

BASILISK

Make her shut up!

Dummy has his hands pressed to where his ears would be and he's rocking back and forth.

BEAK

What do I do?

Angel pulls him aside.

ANGEL

You don't think Martha was born as a brain, do you?

BEAK

...I guess I never thought about it.

ANGEL

Start thinking.

Beak jogs back to Martha as Basilisk strobes again. Beak takes Martha's jar between his palms as though taking her face in his hands. If she had a face. He has an intensity that suggests he'd be making eye contact if Martha had eyes.

BEAK

Martha. Rundown.

(beat)

Martha! You're the only one who's faced them. I need a rundown.

(beat)

Now!

Beak pauses, as though listening. Basilisk strobes and the light flashes across Beak's face.

BEAK

The U-Men are freak organ harvesters. Their spacesuits are the weak spots. They don't want to breathe the air of an impure world. Psychics aren't gonna be able to get in if they have their helmets on, so go after their heads and their air tubes.

(beat, Basilisk strobes)

They cut Martha's brain out and used her to control other people, used her as a tool to sedate and dampen the powers of other mutants so they could kill them. So they could gain their powers. They want our DNA. Let's take some of theirs.

(beat, Basilisk strobes)

By punching them super hard. Like, in the face and stuff. Until they bleed. And that's the... the DNA we're gonna take. It'll have metaphorical resonance.

(beat, Basilisk strobes)

Dummy, go Paul Revere this. Let the professors know what's going on. We can stall them but I don't know if we can stop them.

(beat)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

BEAK (cont'd)
 Martha, you don't have to do this.
 You can go with Dummy.

Martha shakes her brain jar side to side. She'll stay.

EXT. XAVIER INSTITUTE - NIGHT

The same scene, from the opposite perspective. Our ragtag group of misfits is small in the distance against the background of the Institute. Martha and Ernst move forward and Angel flutters to the left. Basilisk lumbers to the right, leaving Beak near the door and Dummy running back inside.

U-MAN 1 and U-MAN 2 are looking through binoculars. They train on Angel.

U-MAN 1
 Wings! Do you see that? We have a
 list of people who want wings
 twelve pages long!
 (beat, the binoculars scan
 over Martha)
 Hey, it's the brain! I've missed
 the brain!

U-Man 2 signals the others and they start advancing on the Special Class in a group of ten.

Ernst blocks their way, moving in front of U-Man 1 and U-Man 2 when they try to circumnavigate her.

U-MAN 2
 Get out of our way, little girl.

ERNST
 No.

U-Man 1 goes to remove her and she punches him hard enough to send him back a few feet and knock the wind out of him. She flips U-Man 2 onto his back, and backhands another U-Man and knocks his mask off. He gasps for air, clutching his throat.

Basilisk is freezing U-Men a handful at a time and then removing their masks. Angel's projectile vomit is eating holes in the U-Men's rubber suits.

Beak has his bat out. The two U-Men facing him laugh so hard they have to lean on each other.

(CONTINUED)

U-MAN 3
L-l-look at this th-thing!

U-MAN 4
We can't even use him for spare parts!

U-MAN 3
His eyes! They're the size of oranges! Who would want that!

BEAK
Hey! I'm standing right here!

U-MAN 4
You're ugly, man.

BEAK
You're ugly. On the inside for sure. Probably on the outside, too. Kinda hard to tell with those suits.

U-Man 4 shoots a tranq dart at Beak. It buries itself in the doorframe.

BEAK
Eesh. Tetchy.

Beak takes a deep breath and rushes them with his bat, swinging for their kidneys.

Tranq shot at close range. Two feathered darts bury themselves in his arm. He keeps swinging until the world gets hazy and then he falls over. His fading vision shows Beast running out with Cyclops eye-blasting U-Men left and right, and PHONEIX I don't know, Phoenixing. Wolverine has his claws out.

INT. BEAK'S DORM ROOM

Beak blinks awake, squinting against the morning light.

BEAK
Did I dream this?

Beak sits up. Winces. Touches his side. Nope. That's an ouchy.

INT. SPECIAL CLASS

Everyone looks exhausted and bruised. Except Martha because she's a brain and she can't look like anything but a brain.

They give each other tired smiles like people who have been to battle together.

EXT. XAVIER INSTITUTE STEPS - DAY

They're having lunch, Angel, Beak, Basilisk, Martha, Ernst, and Dummy, on the stairs. Dummy and Martha don't have food (obviously) but they just like keeping their friends company.

ANGEL

I know it's stupid, but I thought....

BEAK

I did, too. An award ceremony. At least an announcement. If it weren't for us--

ANGEL

--and our *team building exercise*--

BEAK

--the U-Men might have killed someone last night.

ERNST

Maybe they don't want to encourage risky behavior.

BEAK

Still.

Beak seems pretty bummed out about it.

INT. SPECIAL CLASS

Angel has Beak's eyes covered as she walks him into the classroom.

It's decorated with toilet paper streamers. Some sad half-blown balloons taped to the wall. Cheap plastic tablecloths and popcorn that's probably the unsalted kind. Bruised apples. Not that appealing.

(CONTINUED)

Angel uncovers Beak's eyes. A slow smile spreads across his face. The shabby decor might as well be a ritzy banquet hall as far as Beak's concerned; it's *perfect*. Ernst is standing where Xorn usually stands.

ERNST

For extraordinary heroism in getting help, I'd like to present this award to Dummy. Get up here, Dummy!

Sheepishly, Dummy shuffles up and accepts a very obviously cardboard medal on a ribbon around his neck.

ERNST

I get an award for good punching.

She presents a cardboard medal to herself.

ERNST

For massive power exertion and giving us time to make a plan, Basilisk gets an award!

Basilisk gets a cardboard medal.

ERNST

(very gently)

And for Martha, the bravest of all of us, for strength in facing a terrible evil from her past.

She tapes a Purple Heart style cardboard medal on Martha's jar.

ERNST

For Angel, who kept more U-Men away from the door than all of us.

Another cardboard medal on a ribbon.

ERNST

And finally, last but not least, for Beak. Because he kept us all together and fighting against hopeless odds.

BEAK

Maybe our team name should be Hopelessly Odd.

(CONTINUED)

ERNST

You're a good friend. The X-Men
would be lucky to have you.

Beak comes up to get his cardboard medal, and Ernst yields
the desk to him so he can make a speech.

BEAK

Wow. Guys. You all rock. I mean it.
This is so uplifting. You know? I
feel like my whole life has been
building up to this moment. I think
this is the nicest thing that's
ever happened to me. A real hero
doesn't need recognition, so maybe
the fact that we're being ignored
is a good thing. It means the X-Men
respect us enough not to hold our
hands and boost our egos. You're my
best friends and I'm proud to be on
your team.

ANGEL

That's sweet. But we have to hurry
this up. We might have stolen the
toilet paper and spiked the punch.

BEAK

That sounds like us. Yeah, that's
us.

END CREDITS

MID-CREDITS SCENE

INT. DOMINO'S BEDROOM

Deadpool climbs through DOMINO'S window wearing a trenchcoat
with rolled up sleeves over his superhero suit, and holds up
the boom box from his failed pep talk, à la Say Anything.
He's like two feet away from Domino's bed. In Your Eyes
plays, of course.

Domino shoots him (twice), ironically in his eyes, all
without sitting up in bed or even looking in his direction.

DEADPOOL

Aw man. Those had just regenerated,
too. I walked in on Blind Al in the
shower last week, and *eeeesh*.

Domino shoots the boom box, too. Eyes still closed. Still lying down. Direct hit.

END CREDITS SCENE

INT. A SHACK

There are massive egg sacs everywhere. Think soomething like the cocoons gremlins have when you get them wet. Angel is there looking scared. Another unfortunate byproduct of fly-like biology-- and totally, *bizarrely* canon from the comics.

ANGEL

Barnell...?

BEAK

I'm gonna be a dad! I hope they have your people skills and my dashing good looks.

ANGEL

I hate you so much.

BEAK

See, these are the people skills I'm talking about.

(beat)

I kind of hate me, too.

ANGEL

What are we going to do?

One of the egg sacs rocks back and forth. Beak and Angel exchange a panicked look. Cut to black.