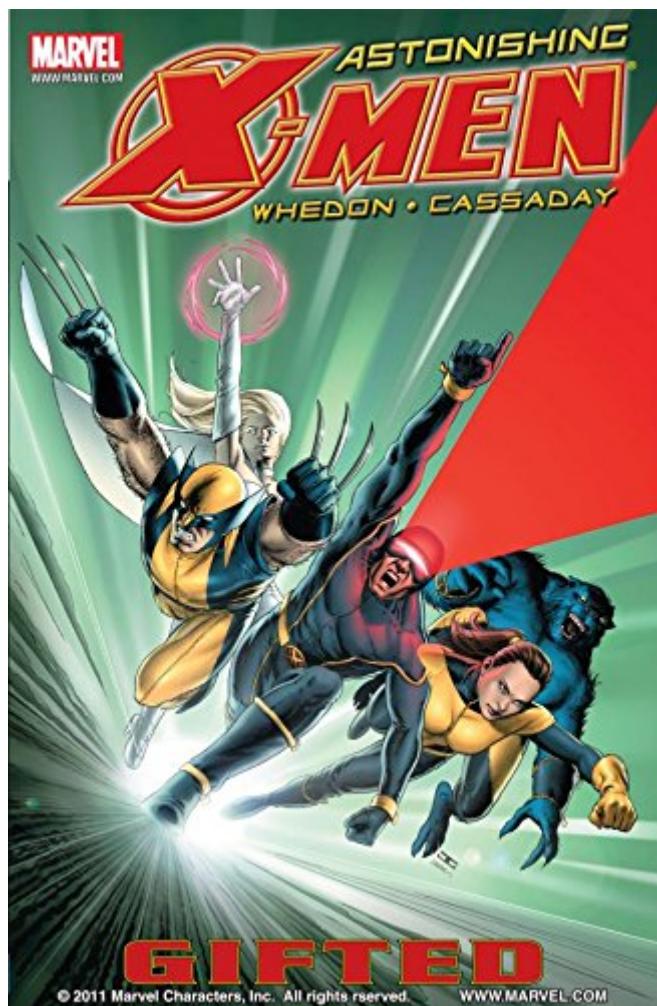


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# Astonishing X-Men, Vol. 1: Gifted



## **Synopsis**

Collects Astonishing X-Men (2004) #1-6. Cyclops and Emma Frost re-form the X-Men with the express purpose of "astonishing" the world. But when breaking news regarding the mutant gene unexpectedly hits the airwaves, will it derail their new plans before they even get started?

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

Joss Whedon's Cyclops is not straight-laced Cyclops of the Claremont run nor the Cyclops as worse than Magneto of the most recent runs by Lemire and Bendis. Whedon also makes Emma Frost's move into the mainline of X-men very interesting. I particularly like Shadow Cat's role in this team and the primary viewpoint character for the comic. The battle X-men and Ord and the inclusion of S.H.I.E.L.D is interesting and very cinematic, but aside from Kitty Pryde, there is not a lot of levity to this comic, although there are more character growth movements than some of the more "action pact" arcs of the X-men. Whedon's dialogue is good but not flashy, he is very comfortable in the media. John Cassaday's figure work is good without the "Beefcake" sins of 1990s X-men, but sometimes his female face work is a little silted. However, the quality of the art here is consistent despite those problems and it is enjoyable. Solid, particularly the character perspective work

Whedon does, but also not as developed as I thought it would be.

The consistency of the writing and the exceptional quality of the art (personal preference) make this one of the best comics/graphic novels I've ever read. I was an avid collector growing up, but it's been years since I felt the urge to read this kind of stuff. So, when I jumped back in, I started with some Frank Miller stuff and I started waxing nostalgic about my old favorites, the X-Men. With Whedon behind the wheel, I quickly became engrossed in the story that has an amazing balance between the action and dialog that is light-years ahead of the comics of yesteryear. Whedon understands these characters and I never felt that they were "comic book" characters as I read through this series. These were well developed characters with nuanced emotions and distinct personalities; mutants that are inherently human. John Cassaday's art style is definitely in line with my personal preferences, he has a sharp edge and less cartoonish approach that plays well to Whedon's deeper character development. I only wish these two would partner up again (and again). Amazing series and among all of the others I've read, it still stands alone as the best of the best. Buy it. Read it. Love it.

Collects issues 1-6 of Astonishing X-Men! I'm no X-Men expert, but I'd rate the Whedon/Cassady run up there with the Morrison/Quietly run (and now some of you out there hate me.) The story takes place some time after the Morrison run. Jean Grey is dead again and Xavier is absent. Kitty Pryde is invited to return to Xavier's school to teach. Cyclops and Emma Frost (and who is in charge, exactly?) decide to put together a new team of X-Men that will actually do super-heroic stuff, consisting of themselves, Kitty, Wolverine, and the Beast. The Run: Kitty Pryde is apparently Whedon's favorite X-Man, and it shows. Rumor is, the character Buffy was inspired by her, although Kitty in this story is now possibly in her early 20's. Most of the focus is on her, Scott, and Emma. Wolverine is there mostly for violence and comic relief. There are two main plotlines, intertwined: a scientist has developed a "cure" for being a mutant (and it seems to work), and an alien race wants to invade the earth in order to defeat a prophecy that we'll destroy their planet. As the series progresses, we'll find out that a previously thought dead X-Man isn't (no, not Jean this time), we'll meet a new X-Man (Armor), meet S.W.O.R.D (the extra-terrestrial counter-part to S.H.I.E.L.D.) and meet various villains, new and old. This Volume: The "cure" plot is introduced, and the scientist behind it truly seems to be benevolent. Mostly. Naturally, Hank (the Beast) is tempted to use it. (I understand Whedon came up with this cure concept before it was used in the movie X-3). An alien shows up and seems to be involved with the cure as well. The X-Men invade the lab in which the

cure is being developed. They discover...somebody there. Then, they're interrupted by...somebody else. Hey, I don't want to tell you too much of the plot, now. Oh yeah. Kitty has a pet dragon, if you didn't already know that. If you've read *Planetary*, you might want to give this a chance just to see some more awesome Cassady art. And did I mention Joss Whedon?

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