

When you have cool action figures, what's more fun than holding them in either hand and bashing them together? Yeah, let's be honest-- that's always been the real fun of this series. And finally, in our penultimate issue for the series, we get some truly never-before-seen battle sequences such as Absorbing Man versus Apocalypse, Enchantress and Loki versus Thor ... Uhm, wait, don't we see that all the time already? In fact, when it comes down to it, despite having all these "inverted" villains to be our "heroes," it's really the Avengers who show up to be the ones to throw down with the X-Men, so in effect it's inverted heroes versus inverted heroes. Oh. That's cool, too. I guess. Look how interesting it is to see new twists, and heroes/villains in new situations-- in the first few pages, Carnage, of all people, sacrifices himself to save New York from Apocalypse's bomb. That's new! Inexplicable and ludicrously convenient, but new. Have Spider-Man witness it, and it could provide an interesting take on the whole power/responsibility thing, not to mention the recent "no one dies" mantra of Spidey's. But, mostly, we get to watch people pound on Thor. Or Apocalypse. And Carnage's last-second save isn't the only out-of-left-field swerve. The biggest one would be Dr. Doom's sudden and bizarre team-up with a resurrected Doctor Voodoo. His explanation? "Oh, this guy can save us. I dealt with a devil so he's back now." We've reached the point where we've left any semblance of plot structure and are now relying only on non-sequitur bullet points, perhaps the ones spouted out during an improv game that doubled as a story brainstorming session. ("I need a name of a dead hero that does magic...") The Red Skull, er, the White Skull is our cliffhanger for this issue, revealed to never have been missing at all. It was just a trick of the butler Jarvis; you know, from the guy we saw once several issues ago and every movie-goer thinks is an AI program anyway. We're never given a reason why Jarvis had such foresight/motivation, but it's sure convenient because the Skull's likely to serve (perhaps along with the Scarlet Witch) as the way out of all this mess. I'll admit the specifics will be interesting to see come together, but I hope that, contrary to this issue and the series overall, such specifics will come logically from things we the readers anticipate and saw develop in the series, instead of "And then they were all rescued by, let's say, Moe." The saving grace here really is the art. The figures are dynamic and flowing, the key poses striking. The effects are clear and colored to be enhancing and not distracting. True, the facial expressions are a little bland, a common trait for the artist, but there's not a lot of variety of opportunity in the story. The post Avengers & X-Men: Axis #8 appeared first on Weekly Comic Book Review.

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