



MARVEL



WOLVERINE

INSIDE THE WORLD OF
THE LIVING WEAPON



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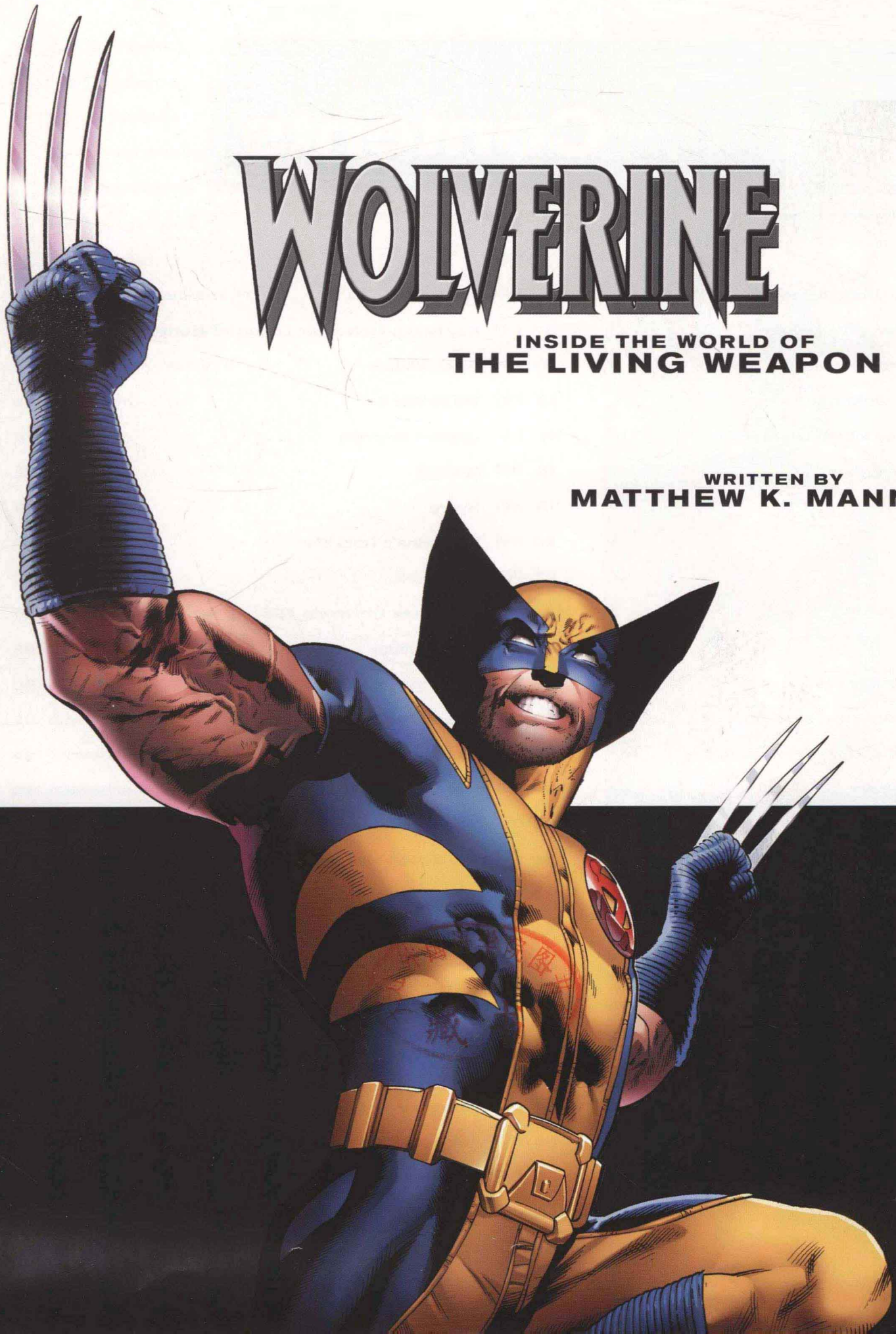
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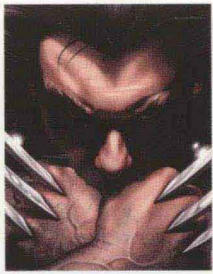
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WOLVERINE

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THE LIVING WEAPON

WRITTEN BY
MATTHEW K. MANNING





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Wolverine. James Howlett. Logan. Skunk-Bear. Runt. Weapon X. Death. The ol' Canucklehead. He goes by many names, but no matter his moniker, one thing remains a constant: Wolverine is the best there is at what he does.



“I’M THE BEST THERE IS AT WHAT I DO

BUT WHAT I DO BEST ISN’T VERY NICE.”

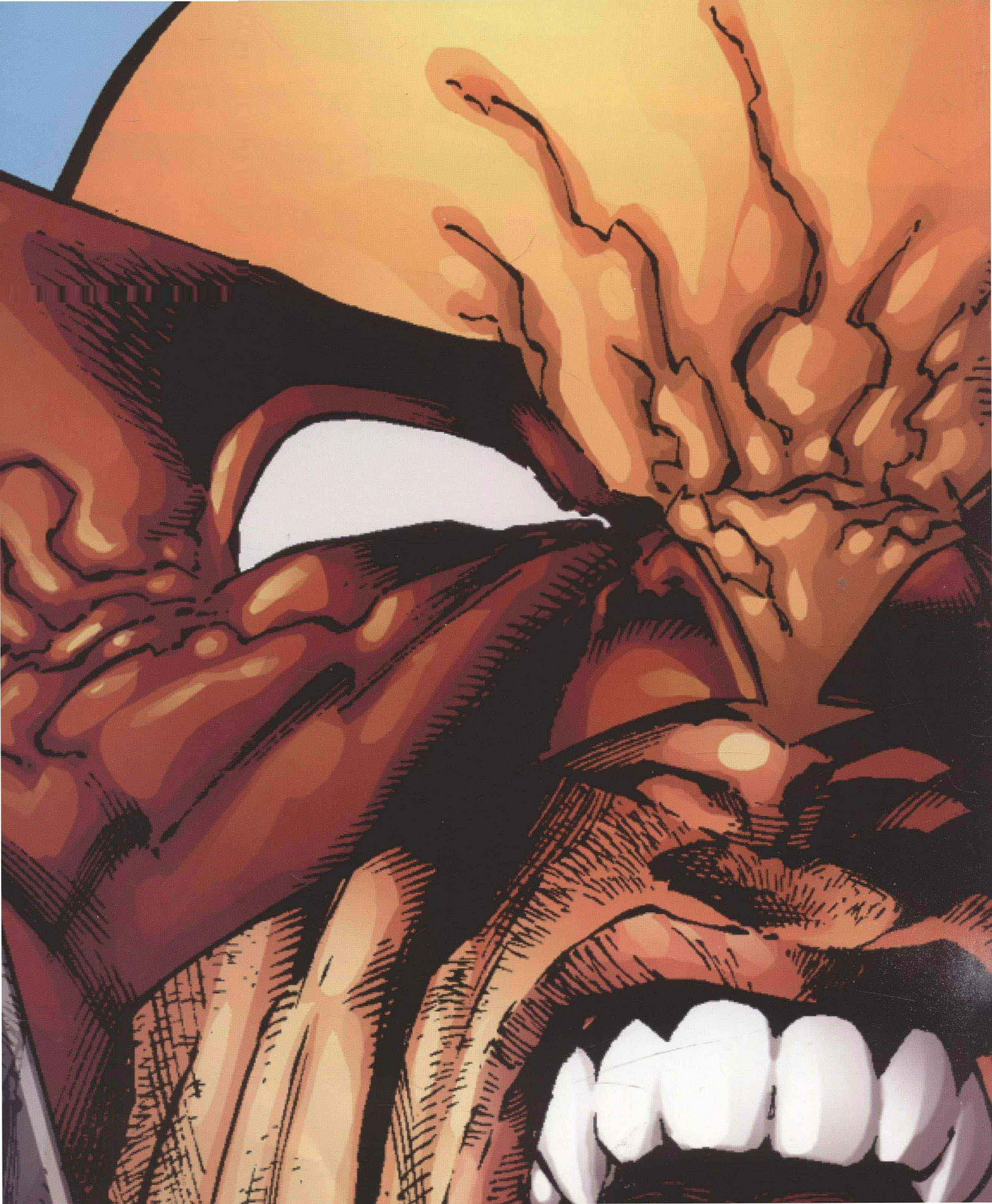
FOREWORD

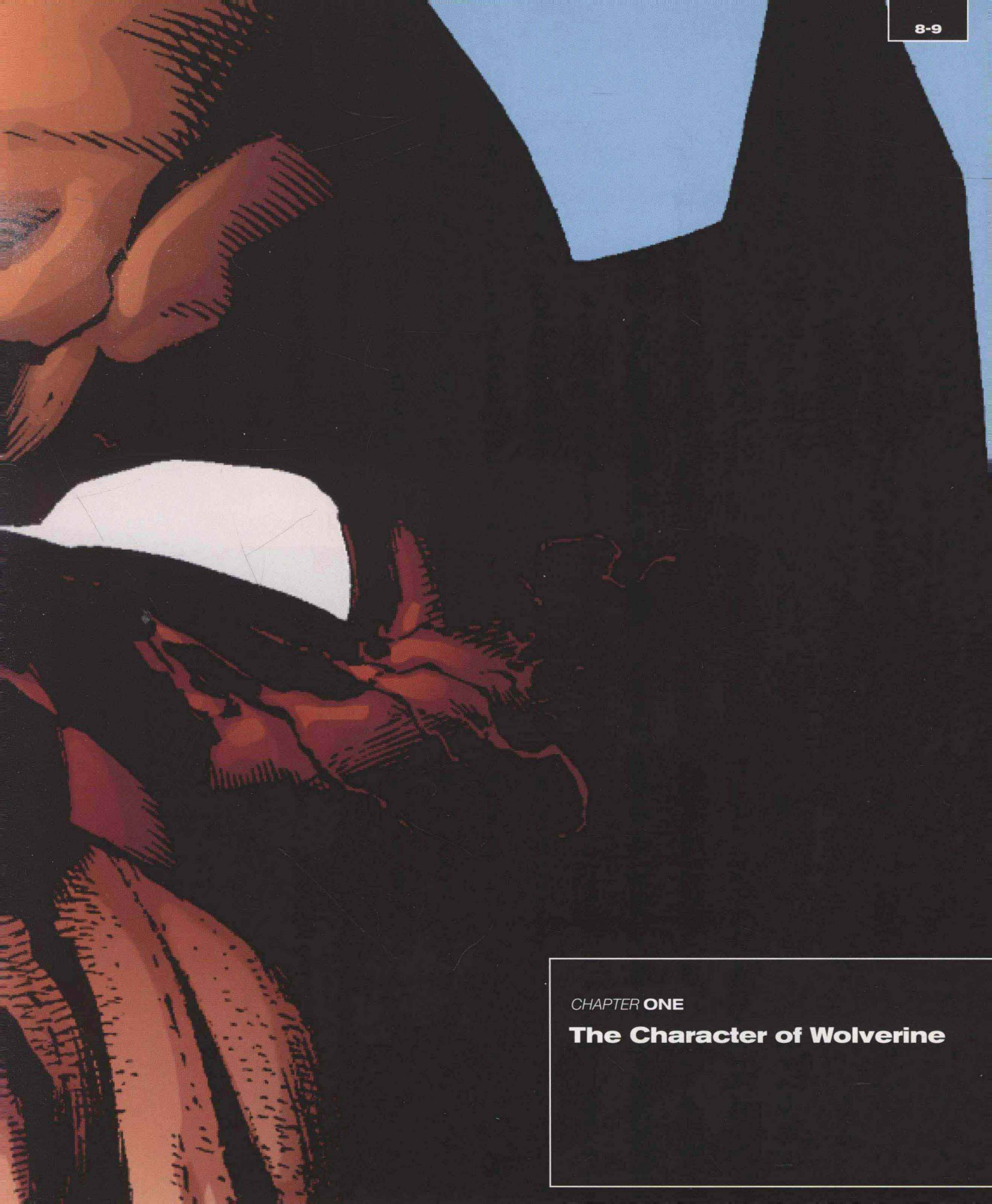
Seventeen (17) words—doesn’t seem like much in the overall scheme of things, yet in the case of Wolverine, they represent the essence of my vision of his character. He’s come a long way in the 30-plus years since Len Wein created him; he’s changed a tremendous amount from that original conception—Dave Cockrum and I made him older, we made the adamantium claws a part of him, Dave created his distinctive facial features and hair; John Byrne and I broadened the way he functioned within the X-Men, as he gradually (but somehow inevitably) moved more and more center stage; Frank Miller and I took those initial character elements and both broadened and deepened them, fulfilling our ambition to make him an increasingly three-dimensional and real character. This is the Wolverine—the “Logan”—I choose to remember.

To me, he exemplifies the conflict faced by all the X-Men—only in his case, it’s taken to perhaps its ultimate extreme. He faces the age-old conflict between good and evil—but it isn’t an external challenge, it’s internal, it’s a struggle to define his very being as a man, as (perhaps) a hero. The struggle for him is both to define the goals of his life and then see if there are ways to achieve them. The ongoing temptation for him is whether or not to yield to what many refer to as the “animal” side of his nature, to follow in the footsteps of Sabretooth. There is a part of him that would very much like to yield to this siren-song, but it’s countered by another part of him that’s just as impassioned in its quest to embrace his humanity, who wants to live out his life to its fullest as a man. It’s not the easiest of challenges but it’s one that has defined the essence of this man for decades, and made him one of the most interesting characters (to write as much as to read) in the X-Men, if not in publishing.

I hope you enjoy this book as much as I’ve enjoyed telling these stories of his life.

CHRIS CLAREMONT





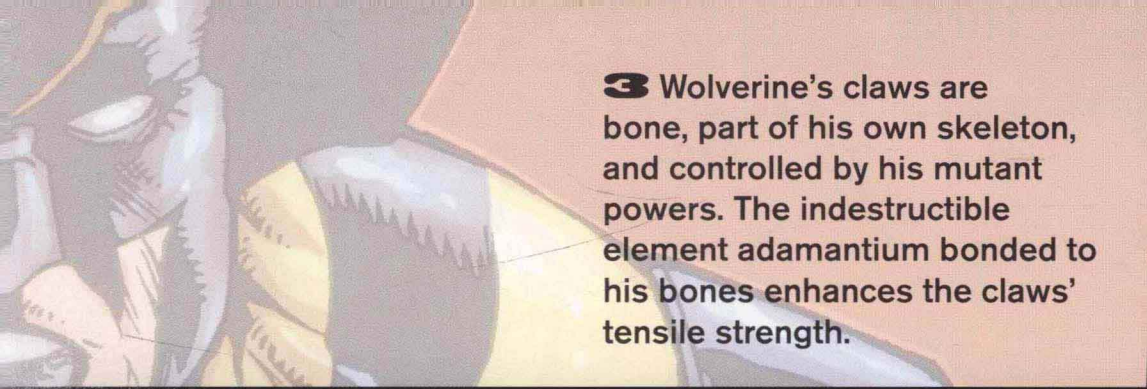
CHAPTER ONE

The Character of Wolverine

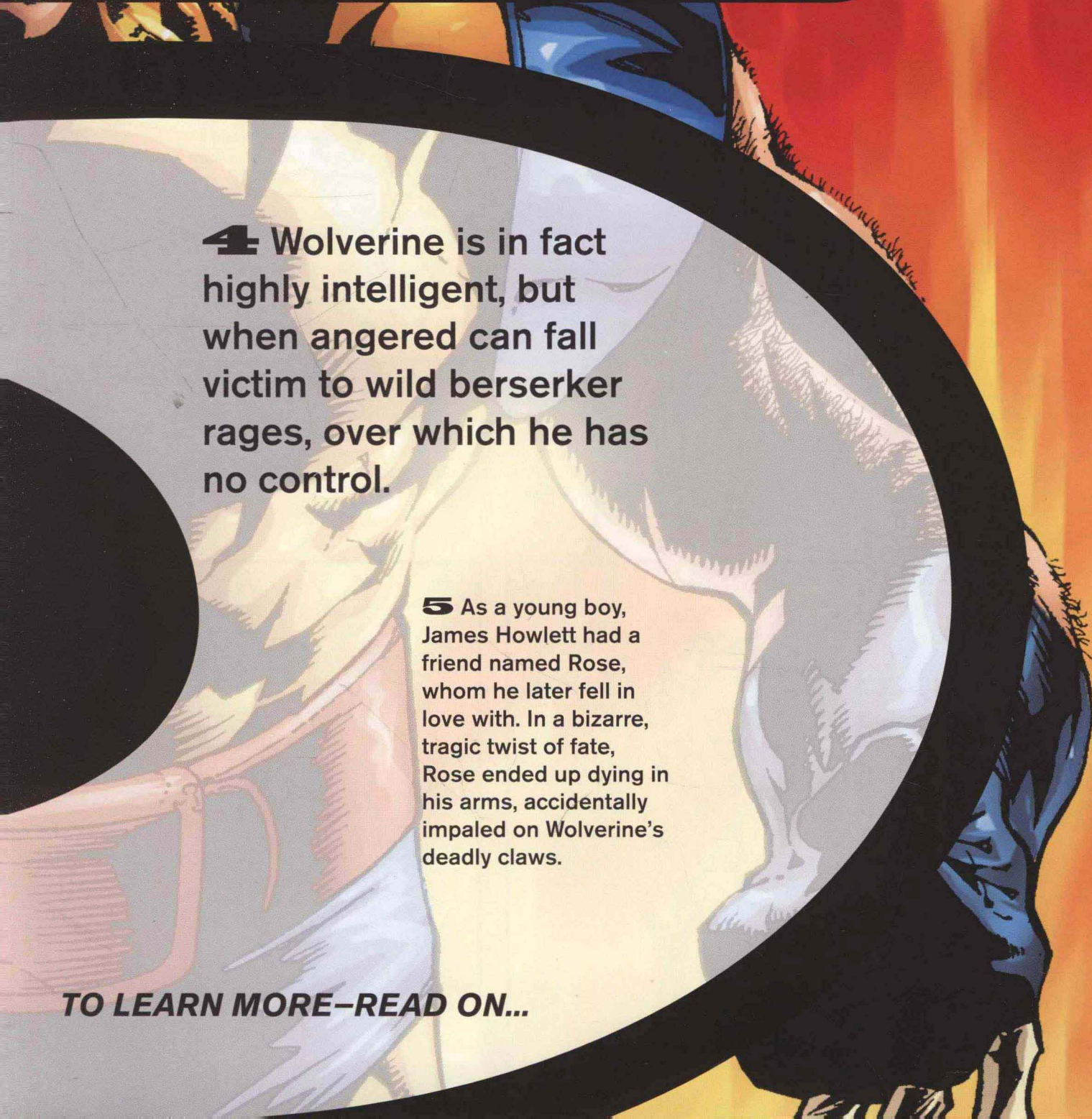
...FIVE THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT WOLVERINE...

1 Wolverine's real name is James Howlett, *NOT* Logan, which was an alias he adopted after fleeing his family home. Thomas Logan was the groundskeeper on the Howlett estate in Alberta, Canada.

2 Wolverine is over 100 years old, but his remarkable regenerative powers keep him looking as he did in his early forties.



3 Wolverine's claws are bone, part of his own skeleton, and controlled by his mutant powers. The indestructible element adamantium bonded to his bones enhances the claws' tensile strength.



4 Wolverine is in fact highly intelligent, but when angered can fall victim to wild berserker rages, over which he has no control.

5 As a young boy, James Howlett had a friend named Rose, whom he later fell in love with. In a bizarre, tragic twist of fate, Rose ended up dying in his arms, accidentally impaled on Wolverine's deadly claws.

TO LEARN MORE—READ ON...

**"IF YOU REALLY WANT TO
TANGLE WITH SOMEONE...**

..TRY YOUR LUCK AGAINST...

...the Wolverine!"

Wolverine can take a bullet. With his high tolerance to pain and mutant healing ability, he has proven that he can shrug off more than his fair share of spent ammunition. However, when the character was first being developed by writer Len Wein and artist John Romita Sr., it seemed that dodging bullets might be his greatest strength.

The first bullet was his name. Editor-in-Chief Roy Thomas decided that the Marvel Universe needed a character whose roots were planted firmly in the Canadian wilderness. Thomas toyed with the name Badger, before opting for Wolverine, an idea he passed to Wein to develop.

As Wein collaborated with art director, John Romita Sr., the character of Wolverine would dodge his second bullet. Knowing next to nothing about the animal in question, Romita was under the impression that a wolverine was a female wolf. Fortunately, this misconception was quickly discovered when Romita began to research the furry creature.

The final bullet Wolverine successfully dodged during his creation was his intended origin. Originally, Wein conceived Wolverine as simply a highly evolved version of his animal namesake. However, the notion of a talking woodland creature was soon nixed and the character given a more realistic background.

Wolverine's claws were always intended to be retractable; however Len Wein never intended for them to be a part of his actual body. Instead, Wein saw the claws as part of Wolverine's gloves, but was overruled by writer Chris Claremont, when Wolverine made his way onto the X-Men. Claremont thought that natural claws made the character irreplaceable.



IF YOU REALLY WANT TO TRAMPLE WITH SOMEONE--

NOT YOUR LUCK AGAINST--

THE WOLVERINE

NOW YOU WHAT--ER WEAPON A THFUL ONE

A LIVING POWER GROUND YOU BACK YOUR EMERALD POSTERIOR.



Wolverine's first appearance was in *The Incredible Hulk* #180, written by Len Wein, and drawn by Herb Trimpe. In a debut as short as the character himself, Wolverine leaped into the comic's final panel, giving readers a hint of the titanic battle to come between himself, Hulk, and Wendigo in the next issue.

THE INCREDIBLE HULK #180 (OCTOBER 1974)

THE CREATORS

Len Wein

Renowned as the co-creator of *Wolverine* as well as the DC Comics horror star *Swamp Thing*, Len Wein has had an impressive career at both Marvel and DC Comics, enjoying lengthy runs on many titles including *Batman*, *The Amazing Spider-Man* and *The Incredible Hulk*. He also penned the monumental special *Giant-Size X-Men*, before serving for a time as Marvel's Editor-in-Chief.

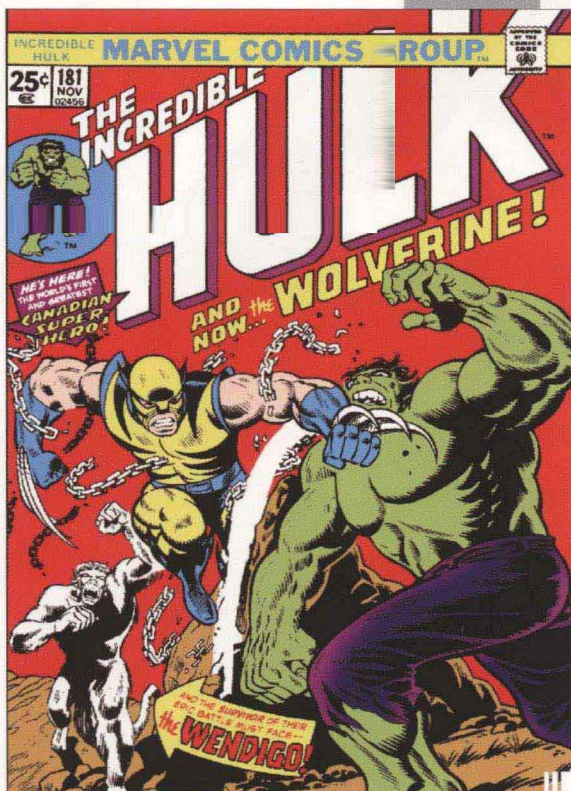
John Romita Sr.

One of the few Marvel alumni to reach legendary status, John Romita Sr. first left his mark on the comic book world by taking over the art chores from *Spider-Man* creator Steve Ditko on what would be a lengthy run on *The Amazing Spider-Man*. He was later promoted to art director at Marvel, where he helped create the visual look of characters like *Wolverine* and the gun-toting vigilante, *the Punisher*.

Herb Trimpe

Having drawn nearly every character in Marvel's roster, artist Herb Trimpe is best known for his work on *The Incredible Hulk*, which spanned nearly seven years. The first to draw *Wolverine* in a published work, Trimpe also had a solid run on Marvel's hero team *The Defenders*, before going on to licensed work, including comics for *Godzilla*, *GI Joe*, *Transformers* and *Indiana Jones*.

KEY ISSUE



The Incredible HULK #181

**“Little man tried to trick Hulk...
but Hulk was smarter...
Hulk was stronger...
... and that is why Hulk won!”**

HULK TO A DEFEATED WOLVERINE

Publication date
November 1974

Editor-in-chief
Roy Thomas

Cover artist
Herb Trimpe

Writer
Len Wein

Penciller
Herb Trimpe

Inker
Jack Abel

Colorist
Glynis Wein

Letterer
Artie Simek

MAIN CHARACTERS: Hulk, Wolverine, Wendigo
SUPPORTING CHARACTERS: George Baptiste, Holeridge,
Marie Cartier, Matthews
LOCATIONS: Quebec, Canada (including Department H)

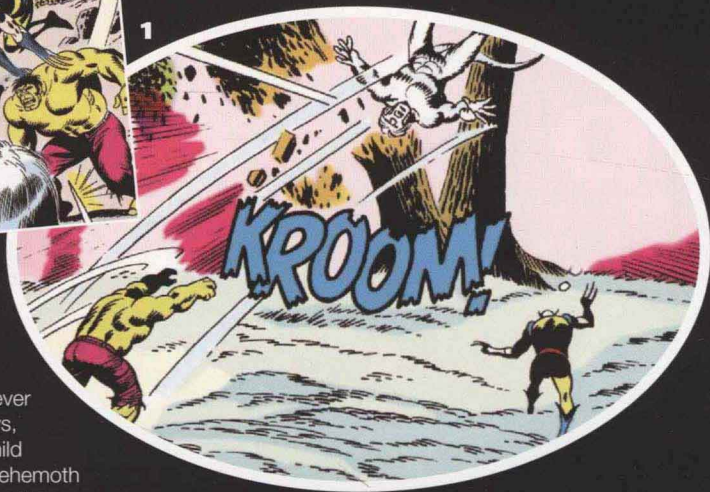
Background

Roy Thomas had recently discovered Canada. In 1974, as editor-in-chief of Marvel Comics, Thomas had become aware that his company had been selling more and more comics to his country's northern neighbors, and therefore thought the creation of a Canadian Super Hero was in order. Inspired by the real-life woodland animal that finds its home on both sides of the American/Canadian border, Thomas handed over the character concept of Wolverine to *Incredible Hulk* scribe Len Wein with instructions to use this new creation in Hulk's own title. Wein shaped the hero into a "small, nasty guy," and passed the idea along to the art director, legendary Marvel artist John Romita Sr. Even though Wein had pictured Wolverine as a fiery teenage brawler, Romita gave the hero an older look. He researched the real-life wolverine animal and gave the character a height of just 5 ft 3 in to reflect the relatively small size of this fierce creature. And soon, with a one-panel introduction on the last page of issue #180 of *The Incredible Hulk*, Wolverine was born, leaping into battle with a furious energy that would prove typical of the future hero's hair-trigger temper.



The Story

Wolverine makes his action-packed debut as he throws himself in between two seeming forces of nature, the incredible Hulk and the brutal woods-beast Wendigo...



Nothing in the life of Dr. Robert Bruce Banner ever went smoothly. First there were the gamma rays, the ones that transformed him from a simple mild mannered scientist into a raving behemoth known as the Hulk. Then there was the government. They'd pursued him in both of his identities, demanding Bruce Banner pay for the damage caused by his monstrous alter ego. Even when Banner tried to do good, things seemed to blow up in his extremely frightening face. Take his latest attempt at heroics. The Hulk traveled to Quebec, Canada at the insistence of the beautiful Marie Cartier in order to find a cure for the mythic albino monster, known only as the Wendigo, that haunted the nearby wilderness. But instead of helping the brutal beast the Hulk found himself battling him, the two nearly evenly matched in both strength and stamina. And if that wasn't bad enough, soon a third equally savage player entered the arena. A mean little man calling himself Wolverine.



2



3



4



Clad in a bright yellow uniform complete with drawn on whiskers and claws, Wolverine immediately leapt into the fray. A secret agent for Department H, a faction of the Canadian government, Wolverine, also known as Weapon X, was embarking on one of his first missions: to take down the Hulk using whatever means necessary. It was a formidable task, but one Wolverine didn't balk at, despite the noticeable size differential.

Using his speed to his advantage, Wolverine vaulted from the Hulk to the Wendigo, and back again, barely even coming into contact with the ground below. As ferocious as his namesake, Wolverine soon fell into favor with the Hulk, and teamed up with the Green Goliath in order to knock the Wendigo unconscious (1). As the two took in a moment of silence to gaze at their fallen opponent, Wolverine quickly turned on the Hulk, taking the opportunity to catch his true target off guard.

While in a not-too-distant secret complex, military personnel argued over his capabilities (2). Wolverine continued to battle the Hulk as night slowly gave way to the rising sun. Meanwhile, Marie Cartier along with her friend, Georges Baptiste, emerged from the nearby bushes and dragged Wendigo's limp body away from the conflict. As it turned out, Marie's brother was actually the Wendigo, the victim of an ancient curse that she intended to transfer to the Hulk through the use of the black arts. Though Georges seemed weary of Marie's plan, he nevertheless followed her as she cast the spell of subjugation (3), creating an almost invisible gas that rendered both Wolverine and the Hulk unconscious (4), and made the Hulk revert back to his form as Bruce Banner. Seeing Banner in his true form, Georges refused to be a part of Marie's twisted plan any longer, and left her to bind Wolverine by herself (5) in order to remove the mutant from the action. While she was otherwise occupied, Banner awoke from his slumber and changed back into the Hulk, now furious at Marie as well as Wolverine. As Marie ducked into a nearby cave, the Hulk shattered Wolverine's chains (6) so as to resume their fight unencumbered.

But their battle would be interrupted once more as Marie ran into the Wendigo itself in her attempt to flee, the young woman letting out a shrill scream that distracted Wolverine. The Hulk capitalized on his foe's momentary lapse, knocking the hero unconscious (7), and then watched the Wendigo flee the nearby cave, followed by a distraught Marie Cartier. It seems that Marie's plot had worked indeed, but just not in the way she had devised. Yes, her brother was free of the Wendigo's curse, but at a high cost, as the creature's monstrous burden had been unwittingly transferred to her good friend, Georges Baptiste.



"Hulk will break little man's chains... and little man with them!"



Dressed TO CLANK

Although he's comfortable fighting a barroom brawl in a leather jacket and jeans, Wolverine nevertheless feels the need to dress for the occasion, finding a proper uniform helps him to get in the right mindset to do what he does best.

1 X-MEN

The costume Logan wears most frequently is a variation on his original Wolverine uniform. While serving with the X-Men or off on his own adventures, Wolvie's classic blue and yellow duds let his opponents know exactly what kind of trouble is headed their way.

