

Capping off the three-issue tie-in with the AXIS event (and with promise of even more), this is again an all-battle issue, with X-Factor holding their own against two powerful former allies: Longshot and Sunfire. The battle is actually a good way to feature the signature quirks of the series, which always shines when it allows characters to simply be themselves in the face of whatever weirdness is around them. Danger, for example, remains oblivious to social cues around her, even when those social cues are those of comicbook battles, simply remarking how "that was irritating" when blasted by Sunfire. What's great is that these quirks extend to our guest stars/antagonists, with just as much banter between Sunfire/Longshot as we'd expect from our stars. "Characters" are always the reason to tune into All-New X-Factor, and this issue is the best one we've had in a while. Thankfully, the plot also is improved, and the progression of the battle goes a little bit more logically and consistently. Cypher gets to win the day, thanks to a bit of guile, so things don't have to resort to simple slugfests, and there are several other cool displays of power. Some comics rely on dialogue/interaction, some rely on action sequences, and here we have a great balance of both. Then again, there is Georgia. She's active in the battle, too, and even chooses a codename, DK ("Decay"), but she continues to feel entirely out of place. It's an eye-rolling line how "initials are cool," and I can't tell if she's here for parody, for satire, or simply for being a pet character that's not going away. The art fails to achieve a good balance, however, and while there are some really innovative and eye-catching panels, like Luna's wistful look to the sky for father or a two-panel sequence when Longshot throws and catches his staff after Quicksilver dodges it, there are also some confusing sequences. Even in the first couple of pages, I was unsure who really caused the explosion for the opening salvo, and I'm still not sure how Polaris makes some rock-like things go "WAAAM" at Sunfire when they just float there. Then there's the sequence of the antagonists flying down levels within the building. Not sure how to solve a visual problem like that, but the shifts in perspective and the confusing layouts makes it all the more difficult to follow. And the joke about Longshot squeezing his knees doesn't work if the art doesn't match the dialogue. And unfortunately, I'm not too enamored of the cliffhanger. While it promises to offer more of the themes we've seen explored in the book -- family and its attempts at reconciliation/redemption-- it looks like more of the same, too, with the AXIS tie-ins that frankly distract from the natural momentum of the book than really add to it. At least this time, with Quicksilver interacting with Magneto and Scarlet Witch, there's a reason for the AXIS interruption. Quite frankly, shoe-horning X-Factor into the story so far seems arbitrary to the point of pointlessness so far. The post All-New X-Factor #17 appeared first on Weekly Comic Book Review.

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