

**X-men**

Unlimited

“Reflection”

Written By

D. B. Hughes

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Samantha Burgess is having a bad day. She has failed her English assignment. Her classmates are making unmerciful fun of her. Even the average passerby is repulsed by her presence. When Samantha returns home, she also finds her angry mother is totally against her; but her mother’s criticism is tempered with glee. The “retard” school has called and is coming to finally take her wretched little Samantha away.

Professor X is coming to take Samantha to his school for the gifted. Samantha is one of the most powerful empathes that the Professor has ever found; but Samantha has a problem. Samantha suffers from severe clinical depression; and she has been broadcasting her misconceptions and fears so loudly that everyone around her is acting them out. In her darkest hour, the Professor must desperately try to convince Samantha that her life is worth living even as he fights against the darkness himself.

“Don’t you understand, Samantha...now more than ever, the world is what  
**you** make of it.”

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Page 1 – Four panels

1 – Sixteen year old Samantha Burgess is the girl next door. She is not very tall, but her height is not abnormal. Her nose may be a little longer than other girls’, but not enough to be unattractive. Her clothes are not the latest designer fashions, but they are certainly not from the Salvation Army.

Samantha is sitting at her desk in English class, and the teacher is passing out papers behind her. Samantha appears to be sad and apprehensive. She bites her lower lip as she tries to look behind herself without turning her head.

**CAPTION 1:** (Title and Credits)

2 – The teacher has approached Samantha’s desk. With a disappointed and frustrated glance, the teacher slams Samantha’s paper onto her desk. Samantha flinches.

3 – Perspective on the paper. Printed at the top of the paper is: “The Psychology of Mirrors” By Samantha Burgess. A bright red F can be clearly seen.

4 – Samantha has closed her eyes in shame. The bell is ringing, and the other students have begun to leave the room. Brady and Steven laugh in Samantha’s direction as they walk by.

**SFX 1:** Rrrrrring

Page 2 – Five panels

1 – Samantha has approached the teacher’s desk. Most of the students have left the room. Samantha holds her books tightly tucked to her chest in one arm, and her newly returned grade in the other hand. Mr. Bracey is hunched over his desk using his hand and elbow to prop his frustrated brow.

**SAMANTHA:** Mister Bracey, I...

2 – Perspective on Bracey. Bracey has snapped his head up in an almost angry manner.

**BRACEY:** What? **Seriously**, what did you expect?

3 – Samantha meekly tries to speak, but Bracey continues to rant while grabbing a stack of papers to flash in Samantha’s face.

**BRACEY:** It’s not like I tried to be tough on grading this! I even gave Brady a B- for writing four pages about the awesome wonder of Nascar for crying out loud.

4 – Bracey has flippantly dropped the papers back onto the desk. Samantha has folded her arms and lowered her head.

**BRACEY:** But your paper...well, let me ask you. Deep down, don’t **you** believe you deserved an F?

5 – Perspective on Samantha. Samantha’s head is still hung low as she slouches.

**SAMANTHA (whispers):** Yes sir.

Page 3 – Five panels

1 – Wide angle. The school hallway is lined with lockers. Samantha has left the classroom with her books held tightly to her chest as she looks toward the ground. Brady and Steven are waiting near the classroom door. Brady holds a paper airplane.

**BRADY:** Shhh...here she comes.

2 – Brady fits the crease of the paper airplane over his nose, and hunches his posture. Samantha never stops walking, but her eyes again try to look behind without raising her head.

**STEVEN:** Yo Samantha! Hol' up!

3 – Brady and Steven have begun to follow behind Samantha. Brady is walking much like an ape in an exaggerated version of Samantha's posture.

**STEVEN:** Wuz dat a F?! In English?!

**BRADY:** Leave me 'lone, meanie man.

4 – A curious crowd is beginning to follow behind Brady and Steven. The two boys are trying to hold back their laughter, but Samantha's eyes only betray her pain as she continues to walk onward.

**STEVEN:** Dat's wack! No speaka da English?

**BRADY:** Me just dumb.

5 – Samantha has pushed through the door to the gloom outside. She has closed her eyes tightly in an attempt to fight back tears. Steven and Brady still follow behind her, and the crowd is growing in both size and laughter.

**STEVEN:** Hahaha **Now** you tellin' it!

Page 4 – Seven panels

1 – It is starting to rain. Samantha walks down the sidewalk and away from the school door. Steven has doubled over laughing at the door, but Brady is still not far behind Samantha. Brady is wadding up the paper airplane in preparation to throw it.

**BRADY:** Quick! Cover up that nose before you catch cold! Hahaha

2 – Perspective on Samantha. The wadded up paper has just struck the back of Samantha's head. Samantha does not react.

3 – Samantha has almost left the school behind. A few people litter the sidewalk with umbrellas, but Samantha is getting soaked. Five year old Casey has broken away from his mother and her umbrella to pick up the wadded paper that hit Samantha.

4 – Perspective on Samantha. Through her wet, hanging hair, Samantha faintly attempts a smile at the little boy.

5 – Perspective on Casey. Casey smiles at Samantha with an almost entranced glee. Casey's mother has now grabbed his arm to pull him back under the umbrella.

**MOTHER:** What have I told you about going up to strangers.

6 – Perspective on Samantha. Mother is pulling Casey toward the school. Samantha continues to walk away from the school. Samantha's eyes show her dismay over the words she hears.

**CASEY:** But Mommy...she's wike tha bird on tha ceweal box!

**MOTHER:** Shhh, Casey. It's not nice to make fun of ugly people.

Page 4 – Continued

7 – Casey and his mother are now in the distance, but Casey still gleefully looks back at Samantha. Samantha continues onward, but her eyes are again closed to hold back her pain. Samantha has forgotten the crosswalk is only a few steps away.

**CASEY (distance):** Fowoh ya nose!!

**SFX:** Screeeeeeechh

Page 5 – Six panels

1 – Two cars have crashed together in front of Samantha. Samantha and a bystander recoil in shock, but Samantha has also lost her balance. She falls backward as her books and papers fly into the air.

**SFX:** CRASH

2 – Samantha’s eyes close tightly as her rear hits the ground. Scattered papers flutter down amidst the rain.

3 – The concerned bystander is helping Samantha back to her feet. The drivers of the two cars are also slowly emerging. One of the drivers is very angry, and the other holds his head in pain.

**BYSTANDER (to Samantha):** Geez! Are you okay?

**ANGRY DRIVER (to other driver):** You idiot! Are you blind?!

4 – The bystander’s expression has changed to one of repulsion. The other driver is pointing at Samantha as he responds to the angry accusation. Samantha is horrified.

**BYSTANDER (to Samantha):** Oh man...your nose looks bad. I didn’t think you went down face first like that.

**OTHER DRIVER:** Of course I’m blind after looking at her wretched face!

5 – Samantha is running. She has pushed past the shocked, angry driver as the others look on. Samantha squints her eyes. She is crying.

**ANGRY DRIVER:** My God! She’s hideous!

**BYSTANDER:** You mean she already looked like that?



Page 5 – Continued

6 – Perspective on Samantha’s back. Samantha has left the others behind her as she runs down the street. The rain is letting up.

**OTHER DRIVER (off panel):** Get back here you spaz! This is **your** fault!

Page 6 – Seven panels

1 – Interior of house. A soaking wet Samantha leans against the front door she has just slammed shut. Samantha's head is tilted back as she continues to cry. Water drips to the floor.

**SFX:** SLAM

**MOTHER (off panel):** Samantha? Is that you?

2 – Mother has entered the room rubbing her hands with a dish towel. Mother's expression is not pleasant. Samantha still leans against the door, but has turned her head to look at Mother.

**MOTHER:** Dripping all over my floor.

3 – Samantha has knelt down to feebly attempt cleaning her mess. Mother has grabbed Samantha's arm to pull her back up.

**SAMANTHA:** I'll...clea..clean it up...Momma.

**MOTHER:** Get up from there! What is **wrong** with you?!

4 – Samantha is standing again with her eyes wide in despair. Mother is kneeling on the floor to clean the water. Mother is not looking at Samantha.

**SAMANTHA:** I'm...sor..sorry Momma. I...

**MOTHER:** Barely enough sense to come out of the rain. I am so tired of this. I am so tired of **you**.

Page 6 – Continued

5 – Mother is standing and has grabbed Samantha’s arm again. Samantha winces with wide eyes still filled with tears.

**MOTHER:** The retard school called today, Samantha. They’re coming. They’re **finally** coming to take you away.

**SAMANTHA:** No, Momma...**No!**

6 – Samantha has broken Mother’s grip and is running down the hallway. Samantha’s eyes are closed tight. We see Mother standing in the background as she screams at Samantha.

**MOTHER:** I can’t **live** like this anymore, Samantha!

7 – Perspective outside the door. Samantha has run into the bathroom and is closing the door toward us.

**MOTHER (off panel):** I can’t stand to be around **you!!**

Page 7 – Eight panels

1 – Mother is still standing at the front door with dish towel in hand. She is still looking down the hallway where Samantha ran.

**SFX (from hallway):** SLAM

2 – Mother has turned to again face the small amount of water on the floor. Her face is still filled with disgust.

**MOTHER:** Why did God punish me.

3 – Mother has turned again to scream down the hallway.

**MOTHER:** Why did He give me such an ugly, ignorant **freak!**

**SFX:** Ding Dong

4 – Mother turns to face the front door. She throws the dish towel down to the floor.

5 – Mother has opened the front door. Before her sits Professor Charles Xavier in his wheelchair. It has stopped raining outside. Sunlight bleeds around Professor X like an angel from on high.

6 – Professor X is speaking to Mother. Mother is screaming back into the house.

**PROFESSOR X:** Hello, I am Charles Xavier. My school called earlier tod...

**MOTHER (over Prof):** **Samannntha!** The retard school is here!!

Page 7 – Continued

7 – Close up of Professor X. His eyebrow is arched to show his offense to Mother's words.

**PROFESSOR X:** Madam, I take great offense to your use of the word gifted. I...

8 – Close up of Professor X. Professor X has put his hand to the temple of his head as if he is receiving a transmission. His eyes look toward the inside of the house. Professor X is alarmed.

**PROFESSOR X:** Oh no.

Page 8 – Five panels

1 – Professor X is filled with panic. The Professor is trying to roll his wheelchair into the house, but Mother is blocking his path.

**MOTHER:** You can't just come barging into my house!

2 – The Professor has closed his eyes with one hand to his head again; he has unleashed a psychic scream. Mother has both hands to her head and is reeling in pain.

**PROFESSOR X (thought):** GET BACK!

3 – Both eyes open again, the Professor rolls into the house frantically. Mother has fallen to the floor in pain behind him.

4 – Professor X is wheeling down the hallway. The closed bathroom door is in sight.

**PROFESSOR X: Samantha!**

5 – Professor X has arrived at the door. Professor X is turning the doorknob with his right hand, but the door is locked. His other hand hits the door in panic.

**PROFESSOR X:** Samantha! You must listen to me!

Page 9 – Five Panels

1 – Professor X still has his right hand on the doorknob. His other hand is now pushing on the door.

**PROFESSOR X:** None of this is what it seems, Samantha. No one thinks ill of you.

2 – Close up of Professor X. His face shows grave concern.

**PROFESSOR X:** In truth, you are gifted. You have the power to affect the emotions of those around you. You are a mutant.

3 – Interior of bathroom. Water runs from the faucet. Steam rises from the sink. We see Samantha's reflection in the foggy mirror. She stares blankly. In her hand she holds a straight razor.

**SAMANTHA:** I really am a freak.

4 – Hallway. Close up on Professor X. His face shows anger.

**PROFESSOR X:** Open the door this instant, you little...

5 – Close up on Professor X. The Professor X has closed his eyes in shame. He is attempting to regain control.

Page 10 – Six panels

1 – Professor X has pulled back from the door.

**PROFESSOR X:** Samantha...I had to come alone today. No one else could withstand your power, and I must admit that even I am having difficulty.

2 – Close up on Professor X. His eyes are sorrowful.

**PROFESSOR X:** To you, everyone is a mirror...reflecting back your fears...your misconceptions about what people think.

3 – Close up on Professor X. A tear is streaming down his cheek.

**PROFESSOR X:** I can help you, Samantha. I believe you have been suffering from clinical depression for a long while, but you can't hide from it anymore. You have no where left to run.

4 – Close up on Professor X. He has closed his eyes tightly and is trying to shake off Samantha's influence again.

5 – Professor X desperately begins to beat on the door again.

**PROFESSOR X:** Don't you understand, Samantha! Now more than ever, the world is what **you** make of it!!

6 – Professor X has slumped in his chair. His hand trails down the door as he sobs.

7 – Same as panel 6. Professor X sits slumped in his chair. His hand is no longer on the door.

**PROFESSOR X:** You don't have to fight alone.



Page 11 – Four panels

1 – The door has cracked open. Samantha peers out hesitantly.

2 – Professor X looks up. Tears are running down his face, but he smiles faintly.

3 – Samantha still peers through the crack in the door. She returns a faint smile.

4 – Samantha falls into Professor X's arms as the two hug tightly. They smile a little larger with happiness and relief.

**CAPTION 1:** No one has to fight alone.

<http://www.hopeline.com>