

# The Women of the X-Men in:

## ***GEROPHOBIA***

### ***PART 3***

By ChronoEclipse

The group of elderly mutants eventually made their way back to the park where their aging had taken place. It had taken a bit of time since Kitty and X-23 kept stopping to take naps and Rogue accosted the other folks they passed along the way to brag about her non-existent grandkids.

As they shuffled back into the park in the center of town they noticed that the one lone young person around was sitting on a throne of old men, being fanned by a couple of elderly women and watching as various old biddies and codgers performed for her entertainment.

The host of the weekly open mic night in the towns pub was attempting to do his stand-up comedy routine for Gera, but at his age he was struggling to remember his punch lines.

“And then I... I said... eh? What was I saying again?” The bald old man mumbled on the stage looking around confused.

Gera rolled her eyes and clapped for attention.

“Get him off the stage. He’s boring the crowd to sleep!” She announced.

The young reality-manipulator glanced around at the many aged townsfolk that were snoozing around her due more to a lack of energy at their current age rather than boredom.

“Ah? See what I did there?” Gera said with a wry grin pointing out the joke she had just made.

The few alert elderly around her gave wheezing chuckles.

“Okay more entertainment! Whose next?” She demanded pointing to the stage.

An old woman dressed in a bright pink track suit with the local university logo clomped along the stage with the aid of a walker. Her long gray hair flowing down her back.

“Hello, I’m Tanya the women’s athletics coordinator for the university. Our schools cheerleading squad is one of the best in the country – winning awards in state and national competitions... in fact just this year they gain recognition at state finals for their skilled jumps and tumbles...” The old woman rattled before drifting off.

Gera clapped and shooed the athletics coordinator off the stage.

“Ooo cheerleaders! This will be fun!... I never made the cheerleading squad myself but I’d love to see the girls routine...” She said with a grin.

A dozen seniors shuffled onto the stage in cheerleaders tops and skirts. They were gripping pom-poms in their swollen grandmotherly hands along as well as canes in the case of a few of them. Their gray hair was pulled into pony tails or braids or other youthful girlish styles that added to the ridiculousness of their appearance.

“Okay girls... ready!? Go!” The elderly head cheerleader cried in a hoarse voice.

This was normally the point where the rest of the squad bounced and ran to various parts of the stage to take their positions but their swollen knobby knees didn’t allow them to move particularly fast so instead the dozen grannies just kind of shuffled into their spots as quickly as their old legs would go.

Gera was giggling and clapping as she watched the aged cheerleaders stumbled around trying to keep up with their normally fast-paced energetic routine.

“Goooo team...” The elderly woman called out in shrill rattling voices.

They clapped their veiny old hands and a couple attempted to do their usual high kicks, but couldn't lift their frail lumpy old legs especially high - instead they managed to accidentally cut wind with the saggy granny-asses as they lifted their legs.

"Wooo! Play hard! Win! Win! Win!" The cheerleaders mumbled as they gathered into position to do their next move.

This was the part of the routine where they would normally form two pyramids and toss their petite members into the air, but as they attempted to lift the frail old woman they all managed to lose their balance, tumbling into a wrinkly pile on the stage.

"Wooo...." The old women moaned from the ground.

Gera was in stitches as she watched the aged cheerleaders epically fail at their routine due to being old, weak and lacking any flexibility in their advanced age.

"Ah well! At least this year you might still win an award for being the OLDEST cheer squad in the competition!" Gera taunted with a laugh as the former college girls slowly got up and hobbled back into positions to try more of their routine.

Storm peered through her glasses toward the stage as she and the rest of the x-men shuffled around the park looking for a comfortable place to sit.

"Those ladies could get hurt trying to attempt that kind of athleticism at their age!" Storm said in concern.

She moved to fly over and help them but a twinge of pain in her lower back made her reconsider.

"Why is that young lady just sitting there laughing at them? Hasn't anyone told her she should respect her elders? I'm going to go over there and box her ears!" Magik cried in a cranky voice, shaking her cane.

“Those cheerleaders use to be young like us...” Kitty rattled as her wrinkled eyes followed a butterfly fluttering around in front of her.

“Ah Kitty, your senility’s showin’ again Sugah! Ain’t nothing young about them wrinkled old bats on the stage... and nothing too young about us neither!” Rogue laughed, shaking her head.

Jean stopped and rubbed her wrinkled forehead.

“No wait... she’s right... I think? I can almost sense their minds... oh I used to be so good at reading people when I was a young woman...” Jean rattled shaking her head.

“Well I say we go teach that girl over there some manners for disrespecting those old women!” Magik insisted.

“I agree that that young woman seems suspicious... maybe we can confront her after a nice long nap Illyana...” Storm grunted, closing her crinkled eyes.

X-23 sniffed in the air.

“Wait - I’ve caught a scent.” X-23 growled.

“Everyone - follow uh.... Oh... what’s her name... I know it... it’s right on the tip of my tongue... Lana? No that’s not right... Daken? No that’s way off...” Jean rambled trying to wrack her aged brain.

“Laura!” Several of the other ladies shouted.

“That’s right! We should follow her and maybe she’ll lead us to whatever we were supposed to be doing before we got distracted! I feel like whatever it was it was important...” Jean added in an absent-minded tone.

“Young.. Young... young again... no more wrinkles for me...” Kitty babbled as she shuffled through the grass.

“Kitty! Quit singin’ nursery rhymes and follow Laura!” Magik grumbled.

The ladies all began to hobble behind the most feral member of their aged bunch. Laura's long gray hair flowed wildly down her back as she hunched forward on her cane and stalked her scent like she was a bloodhound hot on the trail of its quarry.

The ladies shuffled as quick as their tired legs could take them, through the park and passed Gera who gave them a quick glancing smirk – across the street to the downtown strip of restaurants. Many of the places had become discount buffets to accommodate the now older crowds. X-23 led her team into a diner on the corner that was advertising Early Bird specials.

“Hey there gals. Table for 6? You can seat yourselves and I'll grab your menus...” The elderly waitress said with a wrinkly smile as they entered.

“What's that smell?” X-23 asked, sniffing the air.

“Oh – you must be smelling our meatloaf special! It's real popular!” The old woman replied.

The six aged former heroes shuffled over to a booth as the waitress shuffled over to grab them menus. By the time they were all situated and the waitress had returned from her slow walk across the restaurant, Kitty and X-23 had nodded off; Rogue was bragging about her grandkids to Magik who was scowling with her wrinkled arms folded across her chest; Storm was reminiscing to no one in particular about all of the different diners she had ever been to and Jean Grey was humming to herself while working on a needle point that she had somehow picked up along their journey.

The former redheaded telepath kept accidentally suspending the needles in the air with her telekinesis but every time she caught herself the needle would tumble back down onto the table with a clatter.

“Ooookay. Here we go. Here are some menus for you ladies. Just got a little update from the kitchen – the burgers on the menu have been replaced with steamed prunes and for sides all we've got is steamed yams and of course we still have that meatloaf special that comes with a complimentary metamucil

shake! Our customers have been lovin' recently!" The elderly waitress said crossing out the items on the menu.

Storm squinted through her glasses at the wrinkled, hunched over woman taking their order. The name on the badge clipped to her breast pocket read 'Gina'.

"You look like you've been working here for many years madam. Has anything seemed out of the ordinary recently?" The elderly weather-manipulator asked.

The aged waitress fluffed her gray frizzy hair and shook her head.

"Oh me? Work here for years? No no, I just started this job a few months ago to make some money after school. I'm saving up to go to college in the fall." Gina replied with a laugh.

The x-ladies paused for a moment thinking that something didn't quite add up but then shrugged and began to order.

"I'll have the meatloaf dear." Jean said flashing a kind wrinkly smile.

"I shall have the meatloaf as well!" Storm declared.

"Yeah ya'll mmm that Metamucil milkshake sound mighty tasty right about now - it'll keep me regular! Put me down for one of 'em Meatloaf specials too darling!" Rogue interjected.

X-23 stirred awake and grunted "Meatloaf!"

"I'll have the stewed prunes." Magik ordered.

"And you sweetie?" Gina asked, nudging Kitty's stooped shoulder to wake her up.

"Hmmm? Huh?" Kitty asked groggily.

“Your order Kitty! The waitress wants your order!” Storm informed the groggy senior.

“A big bowl of ice cream...” Shadowcat mumbled looking senile.

“A what?” Gina asked cupping her wrinkled hand to her ear.

“Eh what?” Kitty asked back not able to hear her clearly.

“What dear?” Gina repeated.

“What?” Rogue asked cupping her own fuzzy ear.

“Eh?... What?” Kitty said again.

“Sorry hun... what was that?” Gina asked once more.

“She’ll just have the yams!” Magik snapped handing the waitress the menus in frustration.

Gina smiled and nodded, scratching it down on her order pad.

“All right dears... that’ll all be coming right up...” The elderly waitress told them and then turned to hobble slowly back toward the kitchen.

A while later – long enough for a few naps, some meandering conversations, several trips to the bathroom and a sudden heat wave due to Storm losing her shawl, the food came out.

Gina the waitress needed two of the wizened cook from the back to help her bring out the plates. The X-Ladies all slipped their dentures out of their mouths and plopped them into glasses of water on the table as to not get them dirty and the food being served was not going to require a lot of chewing.

Storm and the rest of the ladies flashed gummy smiles to one another in anticipation of finally getting to eat.

“Here we have meatloaf special for the proud grandma here.” Gina explained as she set a place in front of Rogue.

“Thanks Sugah - mmm it smells like good ol’ home cookin’!” The aged southern granny said with a toothless smile.

“And a meatloaf special for you ma’am...” Gina said placing the dish in front of Storm.

“By the goddess! It look positively nummy!” Storm declared drooling over her meal.

“And a... oh right, a meatloaf special for your elderly redheaded friend...” Gina said placing another dish in front of Jean Grey.

“Oh thanks dearie... It’s a bit faded, I really ought to go back to the salon and have them dye it...” Jean Grey replied, fluffing her wispy red-tinted white hair.

“Another meatloaf special for the lady with the claws...” Gina said setting a plate down in front of X-23.

The elderly Wolverine clone just growled and sniffed the plate.

“Some steamed yams for this sweet little old lady here.” Gina said, putting down a bowl of mashed orange yams in front of shadowcat and reaching out to rub Kitty’s back supportively but oddly found that her hand passed through her back into the old woman as if she was a ghost.

“And... some stewed prunes for you ma’am.” The aged waitress said in a chipper rattling voice setting down the bowl in front of Magik.

The elderly Russian mutant looked down at the bowl of peeled and stewed prunes steaming in front of her and looked up at Gina.

“This isn’t what I ordered. I wanted the Meatloaf!” Magik snapped.

Gina looked concerned, worried that she had mixed things up.

“Oh dear - let me see...” The old waitress replied, taking out her glasses and slipping them onto her sunken eyes so that she could read her order pad. “4 orders of Meatloaf, one order of prunes and one order of yams. That’s what I’ve got right here.” She verified.

“I don’t care what it says - I know what I ordered and I ordered that delicious meatloaf!” Magik insisted, slamming her bony fist down on the table.

“Ilyana dear....” Jean said sweetly to try and diffuse the tension.

Gina scratched her grey head wondering how she could have gotten things so mixed up.

“Well maybe I gave one of the other gals your meatloaf and someone else ordered the prunes... any of you ladies order prunes?” She asked the table.

“No!” The group collectively shouted.

Magik fumed in her seat.

“Either you bring me what I ordered or i’ll... I’ll!... I’ll er... what was I saying again?” Magik shouted before losing her train of thought.

“Ilyana-” Storm tried to interject.

“I’ll get you fired!” Magik hollered.

Gina looked concerned, shaking her jowly head.

“Oh please ma’am. Don’t do that. I need this job to save up for college!” The old woman pleaded, looking more like she was ready to settle down in a nursing home than a university.

Rogue reached out a gloved hand and squeezed Magik’s bony wrist to calm her down.

“Now sugah, stop trying to make a stink!” The southern mutant said in a calm voice.

“Too late!” Kitty giggled waving her hand in front of her nose.

Magik blushed, getting worked up about her food order had caused her wrinkly butt to pass quite a bit of gas.

“I’m just trying to get the food I ordered.” Magik insisted.

“Sugah, I heard you order them prunes.” Rogue pointed out.

Magik slumped down into her chair and looked at her bowl. Now she couldn’t remember what she ordered, though she didn’t want to admit that.

“I did?” She asked sounding like the doddering old woman that she now was.

“Yes!!” The other old ladies all screamed.

Gina smiled relieved.

“It’s okay hun, we all have our senior moments when we get to be your age...” The waitress said with a wrinkly smile as she shuffled off to go help some other customers.

“Oh but speaking of prunes... those do look awfully tasty and I hear they keep you regular! Would you bring me a glass of prune juice when you get a chance?” Jean asked sweetly.

“Sure thing dear. I’ll be back with that in a jiff!” Gina said though nothing she did anymore was ‘in a jiff’.

**TO BE CONTINUED...**