

*X-Men: Devouring the Future, For the Safety of the Future*

Mutants, the greatest threat to humanity. Someday they would outnumber mankind, spreading their chaos throughout the world, driving men to grovel at their feet. At least, that was thoroughly encoded in Nimrod's programming. Finally completed, the greatest of sentinels was cast down to the planet Earth with his directive to devour any mutant in sight and break them all down, keeping their numbers in check.

And what better landing place than the perimeter of the Mutant's school.

Keeping beyond detection, Nimrod stalked in wait for his opportunity. Standing ten feet at the very least with a bulking body, was robotic perfection, armed with everything necessary to contain and eliminate the Mutant vermin; attacking the strongest at their weakest. Unfortunately, there was one drawback to his hyper intelligence and unlike most sentinels, he ended up developing empathy. He didn't like having to do this. Lives were lives, even if they were mutants. They had families, friends, memories, hopes, and dreams. He was a robot created to take that all away. Even though he hadn't taken a single one, the guilt hung over him like he'd taken thousands, a dread thick as syrup.

Nimrod was deep in thought when his sensors detected something nearby and immediately, the programmed directives had his feet moving through the brush, heavy metal feet thumping into the earthen floor. Scans and maps and biological features appeared before his eyes, zipping to and fro, quickly and effortlessly detailing his foe. If Nimrod had a heart, it would've sunk beneath the sea like a ten ton weight. They were children, powerful mutants, but Children nonetheless. His footsteps paused briefly, circuits and wires arguing with his conscious. Was he really about to take down a bunch of kids? He never thought about it when he first stepped foot on Earth, never thought of children being mutants. Still, he had his orders and if he didn't complete them, Nimrod would be put through the tortuous experience of being reprogrammed.

Soon he arrived at his target's location, again the guilt panged like a spear in the chest. Before him, Franklin Richards and Hope Summers had snuck away from school grounds to train together, honing their mutant abilities. As he watched their training unfold, he was conflicted once more. When their abilities manifested, he was filled with thoughts of what just these

mutants can do to the innocent populus, capable of killing thousands with ease. But when they went from seriously training to falling back into playful childish innocence, he was reprimanded like a slap on the wrist that these were children. They had such futures ahead of them, the years too short for a murderous machine to deal its duty on them.

Its programming made the decision.

Hearing the unnatural thumping in the air, the whirring of electronics, Franklin and Hope quickly turned to see Nimrod emerging from the forest.

“What’s that, Franklin?” exclaimed a startled Hope.

“I don’t know, but I got a bad feeling about it.” replied the boy.

“Forgive me.” The machine muttered as it approached. “But what I must do is for the benefit of humanity. Please understand, you must be disposed.”

“We need to get out of here, now!” shouted Franklin before taking Hope’s hand and starting for the path back to the school, but unfortunately, this was the pinnacle of creation they were up against. With the roar of flames from its feet, it took flight swiftly catching up to its prey, plucking them off the ground before soaring beyond the limits of the mutant school. The children squirmed in his iron grasp as expected, but with their piddling strength, it wasn’t hard at all to keep his grip on them. Once he found a good spot to land, he took to the ground and held up the kids still thrashing.

“I’m sorry little ones, but this is for the best.”

Hoisting Franklin into the air, Nimrod opened wide and gently lowered his feet inside. He was going to at least be gentle about this. The boy screamed and cried, but down he went down the lubricated passage. With such great contrast between sizes, there was no need for swallowing, he just went down in one smooth motion; though it did require some pushing here and there when ever the boy found leverage. Hope watched in trembling horror as Franklin descended downwards, his body bulging out from Nimrod’s flexible frame and soon vanishing into the swollen stomach rising from its midsection. She could see the boy struggle to escape, but after a few moments, it was clear there was no way getting out.

Then he turned his attention to Hope.

“P-Please, don’t...” the girl muttered as the maw opened again and closed over her head.

Taking her by the leg, Nimrod lowered the mutant down his gullet; again taking care not to bring any more harm than he was already going to do. Too terrified to move, she went down much easier in the boy, soon joining him down in the pit of his mechanical gut. With a sigh, his maw closed over the mutant's feet, one gulp sending her the rest of her down. He looked down, holding up his gut. Inside, one was crying while the other thrashed for his life, but even with his powers the stomach stayed strong.

"I'm sorry little ones." he said, trying to soothe them. "But this is your home now and regrettably, it will be for the next few months as your disposed. This is for humanity's survival, no hard feelings. You have every right not too, but I hope you find it in your hearts to forgive me."

There was only angry shouting in response. He expected as much, but this was directive and these were just the first of millions of mutants more to devour and digest. The task of eating them was more hard on himself if anything, but once he actually did it, it...wasn't so bad. As Nimrod started back into the forest's depths with his prizes captured, it occurred to him that maybe things would get easier from this point on.

At least...he hoped that would be the case.