Mighty Avengers

Can HIV positive superheroes fight alongside Spidey and X-Men?

August 1, 2004 By Chris Nutter

What if HIV meds spawned flamethrowing superpowers instead of nausea and neuropathy? In August, drug combos and chaos collide in a new monthly comic-book series, *Delete* ($2.99, at local shops). Named for its heroine—an HIV negative African-American marine—the story opens with a mysterious villain's plot to morph HIVers into demons who'll conquer Earth. But his plan goes awry, and thousands of PWAs die. The handful of survivors—including a down-low thug, an anorexic socialite and a Puerto Rican lesbian—find that they can cause earthquakes, lift 100-ton buildings and spark firestorms with just a thought. Calling themselves the Omen, they join forces with Delete to defeat the evil mastermind.

The series' cartoonist is Robert Walker, a black, gay HIV negative 29-year-old who has worked for Marvel and DC Comics. He champions downtrodden minority and women characters in the predominantly straight, white industry. "Heroes come in many forms and packages," Walker says. He hatched the Omen subplot to battle nasty new infection stats and was inspired by close friends living with HIV. "People who see themselves in superheroes," says Walker, "feel like they can be heroic, too." Robert Randle of Diamond Comics Distributors, which also handles the Hulk, X-Men and other top-shelf titles, agrees. "Although HIV has been broached in comics," he says, "a team with powers related to HIV has not been tackled, which could make [Walker] very successful."

In the first few issues, the Omen will fight their own bitterness and anger when they contract an aggressive strain of HIV. Building toward a spin-off for December's World Aids Day, they'll channel their rage into empowering the sick and educating the healthy. And like real-life HIV heroes everywhere, they'll master the greatest superpower: hope.

© 2026 Smart + Strong All Rights Reserved.
http://beta.docker.poz.com/article/Mighty-Avengers-376-8193