



The Return of Superman

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"The Return of Superman" collects "Reign of the Superman" and concludes the epic story begun in "The Death of Superman" and continued in "World Without a Superman".

The Return of Superman Details

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Author : Dan Jurgens , Karl Kesel , Roger Stern

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From Reader Review The Return of Superman for online ebook

C. Scott says

I enjoyed this a lot more than the death of Superman collection, which was kind of like an 18 round, Rocky-style boxing match where you already know the outcome. Not much drama there.

This one had lots going on. The development of the four rival supermen was fun and I enjoyed where each of their stories went. The cameos by Green Lantern and the Justice League were a particular highlight.

But what was the deal with Supergirl? Could she seriously not see that Lex Luther junior is evil? She's either a moron or playing some longer game - but I'm really not interested in 90s era D.C. Comics to go back and find out.

Speaking of 90s era, when Superman comes back from the dead with a stylish mullet and plenty of bandoliers you just have to laugh.

Amusing but not really transcendent material.

Amanda says

If I'm being honest, it's not as good as the Death of Superman. The Death had so much momentum and excitement and this just felt a little weird & awkward. I like the idea of a Cyborg Superman but this took a long time to get interesting... it finally gets good when Superman returns and you get to see his reunion with Lois.. but then you blink and it's over. A must read for Superman fans but not one of the best. 3.5 stars.

Paul says

I'm glad I went back and read this entire series about the Death of Superman, A World Without Superman, and The Return of Superman. There is a lot of foundational information in these long anthologies of comics that impact the Superman mythos for decades. This crossover event lasted about a year between 1992-1993 with about 40 comic issues. I liked The Death of Superman the most and then The Return of Superman after.

Nikki says

I enjoyed this far more than the Death of Superman trade, and much more than I expected. It's very 90s, and Superboy can be a total tool at times, but there are heaps of really well established characters and I definitely cared about them. Ultimately, I knew what would happen (it's kind of in the title, yo) but it was still interesting to work out which of the Supermen to trust. The writing is a bit inconsistent in quality, with it being such a long arc shared between so many creators. But overall, this was a fun read.

Muhammad says

Amazing great action and stories plus it features Cyborg Superman.

D.K. Cherian says

A story arc worth giving 6 stars. This epic is part of the Death of Superman storyline and is the best of the 3 GNs. Death of Superman, while mediocre in content set the scene, Funeral for a Friend was moving and the Return was fantastic and the climax of a whole new Superman.

Supes death invokes strong feelings in several people, ordinary and extra ordinary. And all of a sudden you have 4 different men trying to fill the void and take Superman's place, 3 of them actually claiming to be Superman himself. Add one more to that mix - Superman's friend and fan - Bibbo. And you find the Guardian and Supergirl also running around. The plot is marvelous, a simple concept - the reader believes that these men are now stepping to the plate but then a traitor is revealed amongst their midst. And mayhem breaks loose.

There are a few one shots such as the Legacy of Superman which need to be bought separately. A must read for any comic book fan and for anyone with a thirst for plain ol adrenaline rush!

Marlee says

I really enjoyed reading this series, as it was a new medium to me.
The story-telling was great, and I loved the images as well.
Quite an emotional story- but then I do have a soft spot for Superman! :)

Corban Ford says

Not a bad read for a storyline that is largely an afterthought after the death of Superman. Totally loved Steel (and no, not the Shaq movie version of him)

John Yelverton says

As great as the previous books were, this one, though well written, is a far cry from their greatness.

Shegirdi says

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Donovan says

There are many impersonators but there's only one *real* Superman, as I found in reading Dan Jurgens' absolutely gigantic and amazing *Return of Superman*. And this thing is HUGE, bigger than Watchmen and any other stand alone non-omnibus graphic novel I've ever read. But it was totally worth it.

Critics complain of the writing. So let's contextualize. It's 1993. I'm 6 years old. Double Dare is fucking awesome. Other things that are awesome: grunge, roller blades, fanny packs, and U.S. President Bill Clinton (who is in this book actually). I loved the 90s. I was happy, everything was neon and cheesy, and I could eat all the gluten I wanted. But the 90s aren't known as a great era for comics and I'm not sure why. They were just coming off of the 80s high with gritty realism thanks to writers like Frank Miller and Alan Moore. And writers started going in a different direction for a change. I imagine some readers don't like 90s comics because they are laden with 90s dialog or cheese. I am not among them. But funny enough, the 90s moments (like the guns being called "toastmasters" or the fat kid Graham trying to kill Man of Steel with his fatness) reminded me of the 80s moments in Miller's *The Dark Knight Returns*, like the mutants and "balls rad" and "god damn milk baby." (And that's in a comic known for its gritty realism.) Weird and now heavily dated writing, those moments cannot be undone and yet serve to contextualize the entire book, and for the better in my opinion. You can take them or leave them, but you can't hold it against the comics for the era in which they were written. They're like time capsules. And here we step into an actual 90s comic book store. But don't get distracted by all the Pogs and Pokemon cards. So how is that *not* the greatest thing ever?

Deep But Unnecessary Thoughts: Why does Lex Luthor look and act like a douchey version of The Beast? Seriously. Superman's all-time nemesis is just a power-hungry ginger CEO? Kinda stupid. But I guess the Supermen had enough to contend with.

This guy who works at the Daily Planet is wearing a Spin Doctors t-shirt all the time. Amazing.

And Clark Kent is a three time novelist! Did you know that? I could be Superman one day. Wait, no, that's illogical.

Interestingly enough, this reminded me a lot of Watchmen and TDKR with its media coverage, metafiction (newspaper article by Clark Kent's replacement, Ronald Troupe), and its exploration of hero psychology and heroes in society (especially with the cults). And at 480 pages it has plenty to say. Superman is dead (obviously). And four men dressed and claiming to be Superman with vastly differing origins have seemingly replaced him. That's where this page-turning mystery begins. So I Double Dare you to read it.

Alejandro says

The Reign of the Supermen is upon us!

I got this on its single comic book issues, but I use this edition to be able to make a better overall review.

THE BEST SUPERMAN'S STORYLINE WITHOUT SUPERMAN

While Superman's return (*as the title of the TPB can't spoil it more!*) happens more or less to the end of the storyline, in the bigger part of it, you won't have Superman on it, since he is technically "dead", so the four mysterious Supermen appears and they are the main characters of this story that lasted for like a year or so, and I can tell you that a year without Superman, on four different Superman-related titles is a lot and even more curious is that it can be easily one of the best storylines of Superman ever crafted. It was quite a feat, being able for DC Comics to keep selling, for like a year, *Superman* comic books **WITHOUT** Superman on them.

A WORLD WITH FOUR SUPERMEN

If the world was safe with just one Superman, now with four of him has to be even safer, right?

The cool thing is this storyline is that you don't know!

All the four of them suddenly appear on the skies of Metropolis reclaiming the mantle of Superman and pledging to protect the city as the original one did until his deadly battle against the monsters known as Doomsday.

Each Superman has their own style to fight for truth, justice and freedom.

The one known as The Man of Tomorrow, with a look almost identical to Superman, only enhanced with cybernetic parts, and even having a DNA-checked, he is taken care of the body of Doomsday, explaining his desire to keep safe the city.

The one known as The Man of Steel, armored with a metal suit with rocket boots, and a really big hammer, is the closer to the classic style of doing the never-ending battle and keeping safe the city.

The one known as The Last Son of Krypton, even keeping a closer physical resemblance to Superman, only with a visor protecting his eyes and a variation of his traditional suit, he is keeping safe the streets of the city using extreme measures to deal with criminals.

And finally, the one known as The Metropolis Kid (*Don't call him Superboy!*), he looks like a regenerated version of Superman but on his teenage years, he is adjusting to this role of being the protector of the city but he faces arguments with Supergirl (*Matrix*).

A GAME OF SUPERMEN

Metropolis maybe is one of the biggest cities in the world, but that seems not enough to four beings with powers in the levels of Superman.

The weight on the shoulders of the Earth's Greatest Hero has been so far a job for just one man, and now it seems that there was some logic about that, since now four Superman isn't a better scenario but a too crowded room.

The impact of the private agendas of these four Supermen will be not limited to Metropolis, and neither will be restricted only to the usual suspects in the pages of the *Superman* comic book titles, and certainly the DC Universe **NEVER** will be the same, after this, and its consequences will still be felt for many years.

Jason says

Five solid stars.

ALERT! WARNING! ACHTUNG! ADVERTENCIA! ATTENTION! TAHDHIR! ETC!: Spoilers peppered throughout.

Nobody ever dies permanently in comic books, so of course Superman comes back, and this shows us how it happened. This is comprised of several weekly *Superman* titles that came out over the course of six or so months in 1993 and concludes the story started in The Death of Superman and continued in World without a Superman. It's still just as awesome as it was the first time I read it 24 years ago. In fact, I enjoy the rereads even more because I can look at stuff that's foreshadowed through a different lens. This is especially true of the Eradicator's (the first of the four Supermen that show up to protect Metropolis) story line which is in the first comic book. When I first read it, I thought the Fortress of Solitude robots were responding to Kal-El's (Superman's) needs and instructions, but they were actually dealing with the Eradicator, another Kryptonian being who was residing there. It's actually quite clever of the writers to work it like that because either way

you look at it, the story makes sense. You eventually find out the Eradicator took Superman's body and did a bunch of complicated shit that doesn't need to be explained here so that he ended up looking just like him, called himself "The Last Son of Krypton..."

...and went to Metropolis to take over where Superman left off, all the while actually believing that he *was* Superman reborn. He was disabused of this notion by the end after he got his ass kicked nearly to death by the Cyborg Superman...

...who ends up being the real villain of the story, and quite a piece of work at that, but he had a lot of people convinced he was the real deal for a while. After the Eradicator got his marbles unscrambled and back into place, the shock caused the real Superman to come back to life, and he heads to Metropolis while the Eradicator recuperates. Confused? That's fine. Just read the story for the details. It makes sense if you're willing to let your imagination run wild.

This book also introduces us to Steel...

...who seems to carry Superman's soul since he acts the most like him, but he's really just an all around decent guy. (I guess the world can have more than one.) For a while there's talk from a psychic about Superman's spirit walking-in and taking over the body, but luckily that tripe is minimal, and the writers didn't pursue it after the first couple of mentions. I've always liked his character, so that's another tic in the plus column. But as much as I like Steel, I like Superboy...

...even better, and his first appearance is also in this book. Admittedly, I like Superboy mostly because I thought he was kinda hot back when I was younger. Not as hot as Robin, but Superboy was my crush in the *Superman* titles. Superboy could get irritating whereas Robin never did. And speaking of comic book beefcakes, this story has an incident which sets up events that sends Hal Jordan over the edge, leaving an opening in the Green Lantern corps which is given to Kyle Rayner, va-va-voom... I think. It's probably been two decades since I read that story, and I didn't collect the *Green Lantern* books regularly (just when there was a tie-in with the other titles I got), but I remember really digging the Rayner Green Lantern.

The incident referred to above is the destruction of Coast City, Green Lantern's home. The Cyborg and Mongul...

...obliterate it to construct a giant engine so as to create a new War World that can travel around in space, and seven million people are killed. That part hits me just as hard now as it did when I first read it, maybe even harder since it's kind of devastating. I don't mean to say I was boo-hooing and all like I do when I watch *The Karate Kid*, but it does make me stop and reflect for a moment. Seven million is a lot of people.

Mongul is the reason this story earns a place on my "favorite villains" shelf. The Cyborg could almost get it

on there, but it's Mongul who makes it happen. I just like the way he looks, and he's super strong, fast, etc. It's a shame he's relegated to introductory villain status after this story, serving as the cherry-popper bad guy for new faces, and he spends time in galactic prison between these embarrassing ass-kickings. Coincidentally enough, he's the first baddie Kyle Raynor faces as the Green Lantern, and later he's the new Flash's first. He loses to both, which is bullshit for someone who used to give Supes so much trouble, but que sera, sera. I don't mind him losing to Hal Jordan in this, but losing to Kyle is pushing it since he was a NOOB, and losing to The Flash... horse manure! I'm not even sure if he gets a single punch in. I reckon I'll reread those eventually and find out. But in this story, he's pure awesomeness in his wickedness. I would say it's also a shame he later gets killed by Neron, but if you're going to fall so far off the pedestal that you're getting your ass kicked by the Flash the very first time he puts on his new sneakers after you've gotten a well-earned reputation for terrorizing half the galaxy, then you deserve death, for there's no hope for you.

I seem to have strayed from this story. Mongul is awesome. Superboy is awesome. Steel is awesome. Lex Luthor is awesome. Hell, they're all awesome. The introductory stories comprising the first half the book are awesome. The bigger story which comprises the second half of the book is awesome. The ongoing side stories are... well, they're just regular soap opera things and don't deserve to be called "awesome," but they're still cool and relate to other matters, most of which will be awesome in the following year or two. But still, do I need to tell you this whole thing is just awesome?

I do have one minor nitpick, though. It's not with the story, but with the trade paperback itself, particularly the "epilog." (They chose to use the lazier spelling of that word; I totally would've added the "ue," so please don't hold it against me.) It includes parts of *The Adventures of Superman* 505 and *Action Comics* 692, but not the entire books. It kind of wraps things up with how they reintroduce Clark Kent to the world after his extended absence, but it's disjointed and obviously missing parts. Luckily I have both of those comics and was able to get the whole story. (I think *Adventures* even came with the trade paperback which I got at the Price Club; hurray for warehouse stores and their bulk/extras mentality. I had to get *Action* at the comic book store, though.) The book also cut out the part where Dr. Occult shows up and explains in plain and simple terms exactly how Supes came back. You can infer all of it from the different parts of the story, but I thought it was nice to have it all spelled out. Yeah, it's kind of dorky and is reminiscent of Jessica Fletcher wrapping up an episode of *Murder, She Wrote* for the viewers who aren't swift enough to keep up, but hey, I often wear that shoe myself (even if I didn't in this case), so I would've appreciated its inclusion. Hell, they had half the comic book in there anyway, would an extra 15-20 pages have killed them?

One other thing to appreciate in the real comic books are the advertisements which are amusing on many levels. They're over the top, and they bring on nostalgia since they're now so old. The one that got me this time was one for the Atari Lynx which purported to be "the most fun you can hold in your hands." I doubted the veracity of this claim since I was 14 when I first read this, and had discovered something else that was much more fun in my hands a couple years prior, and I'm pretty sure it still held the prize for that distinction two years later in spite of my love for video games.

And I've strayed again. Anyway, just read the shit if you're a Superman comic book fan.

Aaron says

The Death of Superman was almost too straightforward, with no real theme or buildup. Doomsday shows up with no explanation, there's a smackdown, and Superman dies. Aside from the novelty of seeing one of the most popular heroes in fiction die, it's a quick and brutal story with a downer ending.

World Without a Superman was a decent continuation, with a couple of compelling issues showing the public reaction to his death. The majority of that volume dealt with the mystery of Superman's body being stolen and fought over, which was drawn out a bit too long.

However, this third massive volume showing the rise of four replacement "Supermen" and the return of the original was one of the better epic volumes I've read from DC. The whole concept did a lot to show how influential Superman was in a more meta way than the previous two volumes. I doubt any other hero (aside from probably only Batman) could die and have a story about his immediate replacements be as compelling, with each of the Supermen reflecting a different aspect of the original. Steel is identified as embodying the soul of the original, though he is human and wears powered armor. Superboy is cast as a more modern kid without the patented Kent manners that Clark had at his age. The Eradicator is the pure Kryptonian in the group, using lethal force to enforce justice. And the Cyborg Superman, putting a spin on what I see as Clark's paradoxical use of deception to mask his true self and intentions.

There are some massive, crazy set pieces that the eventual bad guys of the story perpetrate that drive the scale of this story through the roof. The initial mystery of who the Supermen are, whether they can be trusted (or if any of them are the real deal), the gradual revelations of where they came from, and how they come together to shut down the bad guys, (view spoiler) was a fun read practically the whole way through.

It does feel somewhat dated and most of the art is average at best, but I'd still recommend this last third of the "Death and Return" storyline as one of Superman's best, even though he isn't in most of it.

Directorscut says

The Death of Superman is a simple story well told, a real page turner. This on the other hand is a convoluted mess and quite the slog to get through. The first 300 pages are often tedious and it only gets going in the last hundred when Superman returns, and even then he acts and looks more like The Punisher than Superman.
