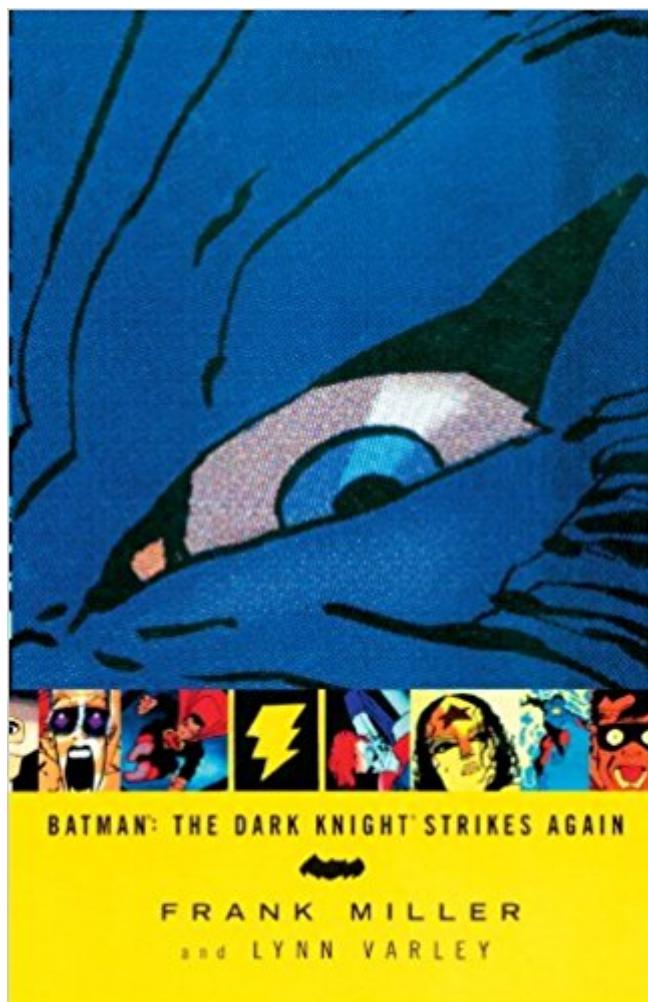


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# Batman: The Dark Knight Strikes Again



## Synopsis

It's been three years since the events of *The Dark Knight Returns*, and everything is just fine. At least on the surface. What the world at large doesn't know is that it's a total sham. A perfectly choreographed, pretty little world where everything that's ugly, or even potentially disturbing, is all nicely wrapped up with neat little ribbons and swept under the carpet. Only he knows better. He's watched it fester to near-breaking point, and it's time for the only free man left who can effect any real change to bring it all down around their ears once and for all. *The Dark Knight* returns once again with a vitality unseen since the first years of his war on crime. Together with his army of Bat-soldiers, including Carrie Kelley "formerly Robin, and now the new Catgirl" the Dark Knight wages a new war on a diseased world that's become completely lost. *The Dark Knight Strikes Again* features appearances by such DC icons as Superman, Wonder Woman, Green Arrow, Martian Manhunter, the Atom, the Question and more. But are they still the World's Greatest Heroes or part of the conspiracy? This incredible volume, designed by multiple award-winner Chipp Kidd, features a new introduction by Miller commenting on returning to the world he created fifteen years ago. The book includes the complete 3-part story, plus numerous sketches and other never-before-seen material.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

*The Dark Knight Strikes Again* is Frank Miller's follow-up to his hugely successful *Batman: the Dark Knight Returns*, one of the few comics that is widely recognized as not only reinventing the genre

but also bringing it to a wider audience. Set three years after the events of *The Dark Knight Returns*, *The Dark Knight Strikes Again* follows a similar structure: once again, Batman hauls himself out of his self-imposed retirement in order to set things right. However, where DKR was about him cleaning up his home city, Gotham, DKSA has him casting his net much wider: he's out to save the world. The thing is, most of the world doesn't realize that it needs to be saved--least of all Superman and Wonder Woman, who have become little more than superpowered enforcers of the status quo. So, the notoriously solitary Batman is forced to recruit some different superpowered allies. He also has his ever-present trusty sidekick, Robin, except that he is a she, and she is calling herself Catwoman. Together, these super-friends uncover a vast and far-reaching conspiracy that leads to the President of the United States (Lex Luthor) and beyond. *The Dark Knight Strikes Again* is largely an entertaining comic, but much of what made *The Dark Knight Returns* so good just doesn't work here. Miller's gritty, untidy artwork was perfect for DKR's grim depiction of the dark and seedy Gotham City, but it jars a bit for DKSA, which is meant to depict an ultra-glossy, futuristic technocracy. Lynn Varley's garish coloring attempts to add a slicker sheen, but the artwork is ultimately let down by that which worked so well for DKR--this time around, it just feels sloppy and rushed. The same is true of the book's denouement, which happens so quickly that it leaves the reader reeling and looking for more of an explanation. Moreover, DKSA is packed full of characters who will mean little to those unfamiliar with the DC Comics universe (e.g., the Atom, the Elongated Man, the Question). Perhaps the book's biggest failing is that where *The Dark Knight Returns* gave comic book fans a base from which to evangelize to the uninitiated, *The Dark Knight Strikes Again* is just preaching to the converted. Comic book superhero fans will find much to enjoy here, but others would be better off sticking with the original. --Robert Burrow

This revision of an iconic character, the sequel to Miller's *The Dark Knight Returns*, has been one of comics publishing's most anticipated events. As installments of the DK2 comic appeared, controversy mounted. Much sloppier and gaudier, the strip didn't really resemble Miller's earlier book, and in the wake of September 11, Miller's in-your-face confrontation with authority figures upset some readers. The collected book edition makes it easier to appreciate why he'd take such risks. Miller sees Batman as an extremist, pushed to the verge of insanity because he can't compromise his beliefs. In this continuation, he's convinced today's world is controlled by powers even crazier and more ego driven than he is. And he's right. Lex Luthor and Brainiac have imprisoned, enlisted or intimidated Earth's superheroes; but the only one they can't control is the hero with no super powers, just furious moral rage. Superman, the ultimate voice of reason, tries to

calm Batman. Instead, all hell breaks loose, in pages full of bursting shapes, digitized Day-Glo colors and jagged continuity. Intense as the reading experience is, it's less disturbing than Batman's assault on the masters of America and their accomplices. Miller peppers the book with caricatures of current politicians and pundits rubbing shoulders with outrageously cartoonish goons as they defend a computer-generated president and the Freedom From Information Act. If the masters of power are engaging in terrorism, this work suggests, why shouldn't rebels use terror in return? But how does a successful rebel avoid becoming a fascist leader himself? These are the questions Miller asks in this serious, important comic, a work that's intentionally disturbing in many ways and on many levels. Copyright 2003 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

It's doesn't come close to its predecessor but it's not as bad as everyone makes it out to be. The art is in a certain style and I don't like it but it's tolerable. Thiuugh it fluctuates in quality often and dramatically throughout. At first it's seems like this will be a story led by Carrie Kelly, formerly Robin now Catgirl, but this is later changed once they throw Batman, and seemingly an endless barrage of characters that mostly don't add anything, into the mix. One main gripe I have is the narration. I know some narration is by Carrie and some by Batman but there may have also been narration by an omniscient narrator as well as other characters. Story is driven by "news" anchors often and it's annoying at first but later helps bring the pacing up. Another main gripe is the same with its predesessor: the story just seems to pull stuff out of nowhere and throw it at your face. There is a somewhat of a secondary villain with a plot twist but the twist and the characters placement in the story are both weightless and meaningless aside from showing some character traits of Batman, which at the same time negates. There's tons of better Batman stories and many worse ones but I got this because I was a fan of Miller's Batman and wanted to see that timeline went. I'm content with it so there's that. The only extras in my copy was some sketches.

The Dark Knight Strikes again is a continuation of the "Dark Night Returns". So if you haven't read that and are even interested in purchasing this novel, then read that first. So now, on to the critiques. First, the positive. If you had read "Returns", then you know that Bruce Wayne/Batman died and that everyone knows Batman's identity. Well, it was all a ploy as the end of "Returns" will tell you. In "Strikes Again", Bruce Wayne has quietly been building a trained army to battle the police state that has become the U.S.. The story itself is decent, but a bit rushed. Bruce assembles the old Justice League to fight the "U.S. defense" ...Superman. Carrie has become Batman's lieutenant, running

the army. Everyone has a bit of story here. Superman is being controlled by Lex Luthor (the "real" president) and Brainiac, due to them holding the last remaining city of Krypton hostage (if you know Superman backstory then you know he has had the city in his possession for a long time but couldn't figure out how to bring them back to normal). Wonder Woman is still in love with Superman, and even has a daughter who comes into play later. The pace, again, was quick, so anyone looking for non-stop action will be pretty content. Story was decent. And that is about where the positives end. Now for the cons. I like Frank Miller's writing from what I have read, but I personally think the pace was too rushed. Also, since it was on my kindle there were some parts that were cut off from reading. But the rushing and the language barrier ("billy", for example) made some of this a very hard read. Then there is the art. Lynn Varley's style might be appealing to some, but I hate it. Very polygonal in my opinion. And the sequences could, at times, be very hard to follow. Lex Luthor? Nearly unrecognizable. Carrie's visuals are very weird. The only reason you knew she was a woman were the Angelina Jolie-sized lips. All in all, the rushing and weak art-work were the reasons I didn't like this end to what was otherwise a solid effort. The police state idea and how Superman became everything Batman was afraid of was a good angle. The Flash running the power grid for the entire country was a funny/messed up plot device. I wasn't overly pleased with the previous "Returns" for the art as well, so nothing changed there.

Decent story. But like all sequels, especially to any groundbreaking story, this has a hard time living up to the first. Miller manages to create a good enough plot for the book, but the layout of the panels is all over the place. The art is a little bit off and the coloring by Varley is usually breathtaking, but not in this case. There are certain pages where you cannot tell for the life of you what exactly is going on. Frank Miller is by no means a bad artist, this book just needed a lot more careful planning and better structure. If he is going to do a DK3 there's going to be much more painstaking attention to detail this time. I'd give it a 5.5/10 for a slightly compelling story that is worth reading (IMO) but not worth the fuss of The Dark Knight Returns.

All of the negative reviews are on point. Art is terrible, plot is weak. The only reason I am writing this is to encourage people to pick up The Dark Knight 3 Master Race. I was very burned and disappointed with this book and I understand people not wanting to give part three a chance but trust me, it seems like Frank took all the criticism to heart and is letting Andy Kubert and Klaus Janson handle the art, and he is just doing the writing....which is good. So yea, future readers, do yourselves a favor: read the Wikipedia summary of this book, and go right to part three.

Frank Miller writes excellently and continues his characterization of an elderly Batman. This issue features many superhero cameos and involvement that tie together The Dark Knight Returns story line. Honestly, as stellar and imaginative as Miller's writing is, I found the art to be amateur. Very block-y character incarnations & a duller color palette than the stunning The Dark Knight Returns. The story is borderline experimental and has heavy satirical elements in regards to society, media, and politics. I still enjoyed it a lot though.

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