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# Superman: The Greatest Stories Ever Told, Vol. 1



## **Synopsis**

Features the first and greatest super hero the world has ever known: Superman! Witness the event that have made The Man of Steel one of the most recognizable icons on the planet, captivating audiences and sparking imaginations! Age 12+.

## **Book Information**

Paperback: 192 pages

Publisher: DC Comics (September 1, 2004)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1401203396

ISBN-13: 978-1401203399

Product Dimensions: 6.7 x 0.5 x 10.2 inches

Shipping Weight: 9.6 ounces

Average Customer Review: 3.6 out of 5 stars 10 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #532,228 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #308 in Books > Comics & Graphic Novels > Comic Books #1663 in Books > Comics & Graphic Novels > Publishers > DC #6688 in Books > Comics & Graphic Novels > Graphic Novels > Superheroes

Age Range: 11 - 15 years

Grade Level: 6 - 10

## **Customer Reviews**

Another wonderful collection from Random House

I read this book after reading volume 2 and I enjoyed this one as well. I don't know if these are the BEST stories ever written, but I do know that I found almost every story enjoyable (The Exile at The Edge of Eternity - 1984 - was the only title I felt awkward because it was a summary of a long futuristic story way after Superman's death). Every story, properly listed in the review, stresses on the Superman myth and the values that Superman stood for. Readers also get a good glimpse of the Superman from each decade through these stories, albeit there were three stories from the 1980s, and no story from the nineties (there is one in volume 2). I enjoyed very much Superman's struggle with the three supermen from Krypton, a golden age story from 1950; and I always get a kick out of those three-part stories or novelettes, this time written by Edmond Hamilton and pencilled by Curt Swan, titled The Last Days of Superman (1962). And how can I get no fun at watching Lex Luthor's soft side when he becomes a hero to a distant planet, while Superman becomes a villain to

the same people? This happens in a 1963 Superman issue titled The Showdown between Luthor And Superman. It is refreshing to see how Luthor, while being as his cunning best, softens up when people consider him a hero. And then, there is the philosophical approach of the post-seventies era. Is Superman impeding mankind's progress as he helps others?, Superman asks himself in Must There Be A Superman? John Byrne's Return to Krypton, where Superman meets his real parents, also ends in a philosophical note, where he sees the presence of Green Kryptonite as necessary to remind him of his own mortality. Finally, What's Wrong with Truth and Justice the American Way? asks that question as Superman deals with a group of thugs who impart justice through violence and destruction. In addition, the reboot of the Superman story by John Byrne in 1984 is included in this collection. Byrne postmodern outlook presents a Kryptonian society enslaved by their love of technology and destroyed by it. Readers also get to see the first version of the origin of Superman as shown in Superman #1, where the Kents die soon after Superman grows. Krypton is also presented as an advanced society of super beings, and thus, Superman acquires his powers naturally rather than the effect of our yellow sun and gravitational pull. Interesting stuff. In sum, I felt that this was a pretty good collection although having more than 2 volumes of these Greatest Stories collections would certainly do better justice to the Superman myth.

This second take on the Greatest Superman Stories divides the collection into two volumes. This first volume collects 10 Superman stories. Most of these have been reprinted elsewhere either in Decade collections or in the previous version of the Greatest Superman Stories ever told, but that can also be taken as a measure of the quality of the work and that the compilers generally got things right. The book begins with a somewhat dry introduction by Michael Uslan. Next up is the origin of Superman from Superman #1 and the special Look Magazine Story from 1940, "How Superman Would End the War." Then from 1950, we have the fairly good story of "Three Superman from Krypton" which first introduces the concept of other Kryptonian Survivors. Following this, the book moves ahead to 1962's, "The Last Day's of Superman" where Superman believes he's dying and prepares to get his affairs in order. This story is an obvious basis for, Grant Morrison's All Star Superman. Next up is the fun story of "The Showdown Between Luthor and Superman" where Luthor challenges Superman to hand-to-hand combat on a planet with a red sun. While I don't entirely buy into Luthor issuing the challenge, the results are fun and including some humanizing moments for uthor. Moving to the Bronze Age, "Must There Be a Superman" is a 1970s story questioning if Superman could be doing harm by interfering too much and fighting battles that regular people should fight for themselves. It's a thought provoking tale. Jim Steranko's, "Exile at the

"Edge of Eternity" seems to have been included merely because Steranko wrote and drew it in a style that's more like a picture book for adults than a typical comic story. It's an interesting and imaginative tale but it doesn't seem to fit into a "greatest stories ever told" book as it's not about Superman but about his descendants. The first issue of *Man of Steel*, showing John Byrne's vision of Superman's origin is included and it's definitely a worthy addition to the book. Byrne's reimagining of the origin is very cleverly done and really did a good job of not only showing us where Clark Kent came from but developing him as a character. "Return to Krypton" features Superman returning to Krypton with Hawkman and Hawkgirl. He though his people were morally advanced but has a vision that shows an alternate future where Jor-el convinced many adults to flee to earth and the Kryptonians try to subjugate Earth. While the story makes a good point about humility, this is a story whose appearance in this book I really question. It doesn't seem quite as epic and seems to have been included because of a well-known age silver age tale that has the same title. Finally, there's, "Whatever Happened to Truth, Justice, and the American Way." While I'm normally not a fan of including recent stories (this one came from 2001) in a book like this, this is one story that belongs. It's about Superman facing down a new team of metahumans who have no compunction about killing and only practice a utilitarian morality. The whole story has a cinematic feel to it. It feels like a comic book version of, "High Noon" with Superman as the one who would stand alone against some very dangerous baddies. While this story gets a little grittier than I'd like, the overall thrust of Superman and what he's all about comes through. Overall, while there aren't a lot of "new stories" for those who've bought many Superman best of trades, the book doesn't really contain a bad story, but really includes some of the most influential stories in Superman's history making this book a winner for fans of the *Man of Steel* and a great buy for people who want to start reading great Superman stories.

The greatest Superman stories ever told? not really. This is a compilation of classic stories but not the greatest, it could have been better, nevertheless it contains some unforgettable stories like "Must there be a Superman?", "The Man of Steel" by John Byrne, etc; this book is a must buy as a document, but if you are looking for a better compilation of stories, i recommend "Superman in the Seventies" over this one.

I wasn't ever a big superman fan, bought the book for a class, covers a good range of the years of superman.

The cover does not match the picture here on . Also, the book arrived with a large sticker on the cover that is really hard to pull off without damaging the book itself. Who sells a book with a large sticker defacing the cover? Buy it from a third party.

Good quality product!

From a teen's perspective, this was pretty good. It helped me understand the story of Superman better. It was interesting.

This was recommended to me on The Daily Planet forum for people who are just getting started and interested in learning about Superman. It was recommended to me that I read this one FIRST as well as DC Universe: The Stories of Alan Moore. If you are wanting to learn the mythos of Superman this is the way to go.

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