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New Avengers Vol. 2: The Sentry (The New Avengers)



Synopsis

Collects New Avengers (2004) #7-10. The mystery of The Sentry revealed! The Avengers try to help the most powerful super hero in the world figure out who he is and where he came from! But will this knowledge destroy the man they're trying to help?

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Customer Reviews

I liked a lot of things about this collection, but there were some major elements I didn't like much, such as the way they reintroduced Hawkeye by having him take over the Ronin identity from Echo (not exactly a spoiler as it happens early on in this collection). The first issue here, which involves Hawkeye's journey back into the world, was very well done, however. I'd absolutely recommend this for fans of that character. We also get the New Avengers coming into conflict with the Hand, which would eventually lead directly into the Secret Invasion story. Overall some good stuff here, though the art wasn't my favorite. One thing I enjoyed about this team of established heroes coming together is when some characters are familiar with some things in the Marvel Universe and others are not, such as Spider-Man and Iron Man knowing Brother Voodoo when Wolverine and Ms. Marvel had no idea who he was. Bendis has always been good at that sort of thing.

At the end of 2013, I went back and read the entire Brian Michael Bendis run on Avengers (which included New Avengers, Mighty Avengers, Dark Avengers, Illuminati, and several cross-over books). I think binge-reading a series of comics is as equally satisfying as binge-watching TV shows (this only applies to the Wire, Deadwood, Rome, Breaking Bad & Game of Thrones). This collection takes place in the middle of the absolute zenith of the Bendis run - the two New Avengers books that are supplements to the Skrull Invasion book contain some of the best Marvel stories ever written. In 2004, Bendis took an Avengers book that was stale and more than a decade from good story-telling. His first story arc was Avengers: Disassembled. The Scarlet Witch went crazy and killed several members. The eventually subdued the Scarlet Witch, Magneto shows up and takes her away and the team decides to disband. A few months later there is a break-out at Rikers Island and dozens of villains escape. Spiderman, Captain America, Wolverine, Daredevil, Jessica Drew and Luke Cage all show up to put things in order. Steve Rogers decides that it was fate and he convinces Tony Stark to reboot the Avengers. Daredevil declines, but everyone else is in. They also happen upon a mysterious man known as The Sentry. 600+ kids die in a tragedy caused by young, untrained heroes in Stamford, CT. The US Government responds by passing the Superhuman Registration Act. Tony Stark is for it. Steve Rogers is against it. The heroes split and fight in a Civil War. After its conclusion, Rogers is killed. Luke Cage becomes the leader of the New Avengers, as they try to do good works while avoiding Tony Stark's Mighty Avengers. Luke's Avengers go to Japan to help Echo deal with Elektra and the Hand. During the ensuing battle, Elektra is killed....and it is revealed that she is a skrull. Jessica Drew takes the body, against the wishes of the rest of the team, to Tony Stark. And the Skrull Invasion has begun...In this trade, there are a few interesting storylines/features: (1) The story of how the Skrull Captain America was created and why he thinks he is Cap (2) The final story of how the Skrull scientists kept trying to figure out how to make the Skrulls undetectable on Earth (thus evading Spiderman, Daredevil, Dr. Strange, Richards, Stark, Wolverine & Xavier). It is, in my opinion, the greatest Reed Richards story ever told. It captures his intellect and character incredibly well. But to appreciate this story, you must know the backstory of the Fantastic Four, the New Avengers and the Illuminati trade. (3) The Skrulls reaction to House of M. This is handled brilliantly. Queen Veranke and Skrull Hank Pym awaken to the world of House of M and they are completely horrified. This makes the invasion so much harder. In discussing why the humans haven't revolted against this false reality, Veranke offers up this gem, "And if this proves anything at all...It's that as long as they are left alone to eat, sleep, watch their tv and fornicate, most of the human race will go along with whatever they are told to do." Biting social

commentary.(4) How Parker Robbins discovers that there is a Skrull Invasion.Looking back at Bendis's entire Avengers run, a few things become very clear:(1) He is the definitive writer of a number of heroes:(a) Daredevil - obviously...his early 2000's run on that book was incredible and built on the seminal work of Frank Miller the way no other writer was able to(b) Spiderwoman - she was a 3rd rate hero in the 70's and forgotten by the 80's. Bendis brought her back and gave her a great story. His Spiderwoman solo books are also very good.(c) Luke Cage - Bendis has made him an A-list Avenger and Marvel character(d) Spiderman - Bendis does a great job with this universe's Spiderman, but his defining character in all of comics may be Ultimate Spiderman(e) Reed Richards - The leader of the FF (and the smartest man in the Marvel Universe) makes a lot of appearances during the Bendis Avengers run (he is also a star of "An Oral History," but more on that later). Bendis handles Reed better than any other writer I've come across. I'm very much looking forward to the day in 2019 when Marvel announces that Bendis is going to write the FF. The Reed Richards story in New Avengers, Vol. 9 is an all-time great story. There are other characters that Bendis handles brilliantly, including Captain America, Iron Man, Iron Fist, Hawkeye, Dr. Strange and Wolverine. Finally, a great companion piece to these Avenger books is Bendis's "An Oral History of the Avengers." He has the Avengers talk about their history (60's through 80's) in a reality tv confessional booth type of format. It's amazing.

The fifth volume of the otherwise great New Avengers series is just average. Essentially a collection of one shots, the volume touches base with most of the major New Avenger characters to get a feel for how they are reacting to the overall Civil War plotline. We get glimpses of characters like Luke Cage and Captain America dealing with the fallout and fracturing of the team. If you love Civil War or the New Avengers this is worth picking up to see the personal touches the main event has on the characters, but there isn't a New Avengers-specific storyline that connects each issue.

Writer Brian Michael Bendis, artist Steve McNiven and the production team have fashioned a sharp, entertaining story around one of Marvel's more unusual characters, the Sentry. Advancing the larger New Avengers story arc, while at the same time including some wonderful character beats, this surprisingly moving storyline is an interesting take on the themes of mental illness, guilt, isolation and the importance of reaching out and asking for help.

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