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Vision Vol. 2: Little Better Than A Beast



Synopsis

Once upon a time a robot and a witch fell in love. What followed was a tale of the dead and the dying, of the hopeful and the lost, of the wronged and the avenged. And in the end, after both had fallen, the witch and the robot rose from their dirt and eyed each other across a field of blood and bone. Forty-five years in the making, this is the story of Scarlet Witch and the Vision. Before family, there was love. And war.

COLLECTING: VISION 7-12

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Customer Reviews

This is, without a doubt, the best comic I've read all year. If you haven't read Volume 1, go buy it now, and then come back for this, because you don't want to miss it. If you've read Vol. 1, you know the story. Hero of the world, Vision, wants nothing more than to lead a normal life, even though he's part robot. He decides to build himself a wife, Virginia, and two kids, Viv and Vin, and settle down in the DC suburbs. But things don't quite go as planned when villains refuse to leave his family alone. The action in this volume speeds up, sending the series to an incredible, satisfying conclusion. There are so many good facets to this book. To begin with, Tom King nails the idea of robots trying to act as normal humans. He drops numerous instances where the characters reenact a cliché scene from TV comedies or dramas, but with the dialogue or framing shifted in such a way as to accommodate robots. For example, going out to a restaurant to sit and talk, but never eat any food. It makes the scenes recognizable and hilarious. Then there's the artwork, which manages to convey the body language of the characters perfectly. And Tom King is a master story teller. In this

volume, so many things that you thought were just passing remarks or ideas turn out to be a big deal in the end. Were there flaws? I suppose so, and they mostly stem from this being a 12-issue miniseries. I don't hesitate to say we could have filled 100 issues of Vision at his job, Viv and Vin at school with classmates, and Virginia attempting to find her way in life without it being boring. Tom King filled in this detail with some well-made montages, but they were still just montages. Not to mention the universe seems to go out of its way to create problems for the Visions so the story can progress quickly. But none of that changes the end result. This is Marvel's best title in recent history. For those looking for something else worthwhile, Tom King wrote the Omega Men for DC, and it's about on the same level.

This is one of those landmark series that sums up a major Marvel character and lays the foundation for everything that is done with him in the future. The Vision has long been a fan favorite, someone who manages to be noble despite being an artificial person and endearing through his improbable but delightful romance with the Scarlet Witch. All this background enables a lot of emotionally charged moments in other comics. In one of the great Marvel story lines, in which The Vision plays a very minor role in one of the greatest Marvel comics of all time (I'm being a tad coy about who the main character is so as to keep things a bit nonspoiler), someone being mind controlled by the Purple Man descends on a joint Defenders/Avengers collaboration and strikes the Scarlet Witch, who is pregnant with the Vision's child, HARD. The second she is struck the mind control evaporates and the story's protagonist literally has to flee for her life, with Thor, Iron Man, and the Vision right behind. While a shot from Iron Man's repulsors stuns her, it is a hard blow from The Vision that nearly kills her. We love her despite her problems and wonder what, specifically, helped destroy her life. Learning that another beloved character, The Vision, played a major role in her personal tragedy, makes it all the worse. And though she has a degree of invulnerability, she is very nearly killed by his blow, which is all the more interesting since the Vision is normally a finesse fighter and not a raw power one. But messing with someone's pregnant wife, even if you are being mind-controlled, will do that. This second volume of the two collected volumes is like the final act of a Shakespearean or Greek drama. You know it is going to end badly, but fore arming yourself doesn't really help. My lone complaint is the rather casual tossing away of a character from another Marvel series - one of my all time favorites, THE RUNAWAYS. Victor Mancha is brought into the story and then just tossed needlessly away. The same affect could have been achieved by bringing in a new character, which they did in the first volume of the tale. But no story is perfect nor does every story meet our own expectations. Many will not have problems here, where I have. But even with this

complaint, this is a great comic. I've been less happy with Marvel in recent years, as resetting the entire Marvel Universe has interfered with developing great stories inside individual titles. The more that Marvel pushes the One Big Arc concept, the weaker individual titles have become. This title has few ties to the Civil War II event and is all the better for it. I really can't recommend the two volumes in this story strongly enough. The story won't be going away entirely, as the daughter that the Vision created, Viv, looks like she is going to become a part of the teen Marvel Universe, which has been the area where many of my favorite Marvel titles have existed of late. As our favorite Pakistani teen super hero, Kamala Khan aka Ms. Marvel (possibly my favorite new Marvel superhero since Grant Morrison created Fantomex) has put together her own superhero own teen team - the idealistic Champions, who have as their motto "Never Hit Down" - we are seeing Viv join Kamala, Miles Morales aka the Ultimate Spider-Man, Sam Alexander aka Nova, yet another variant on the Hulk, and yet another unlikable version of Scott Somers - cell phones and all (with Viv's internal servers providing universal Wi-Fi). So the results will be more than merely a new wrinkle in Vision's own story.

About a year ago I picked up then first volume of this series. Vision, has attempted to create a family. After himself being created by the evil Ultron, but eventually joining the Avengers, he creates a standard suburban family (his wife and two teen kids.) The first volume is more about what it means to be human and a family and how hard they work to maintain that illusion of normality. The second volume, Little Better Than a Beast, builds on the first. There is more back story here for people like me that don't know Vision's back story. The book opens with Vision's relationship to the Scarlet Witch summarized. It is that failed relationship that spawned the idea for Vision to create his own family. One that hopefully would be acceptable both to the world and would work internally. The second part of this story is that Vision's brother (also created by Ultron and now working for the Avengers) comes to live with Vision and his family. The combination of the back story and the current story lead to yet another tragedy. The whole point of this series is to watch Vision attempt to be a normal human devolve into his breakdown. I do not think this second volume is quite as good as the first. But it is still good as a tragedy. And I appreciated the backstory that gave me more understanding of the context, although anyone familiar with the story probably knew the backstory already.

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