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Fables, Vol. 11: War And Pieces



Synopsis

The final battle between the free Fables of the mundane world and the Empire occupying their former Homelands is about to begin, and the scrappy storybook heroes have already managed to even the odds considerably. With his previously unstoppable wooden soldiers neutralized, the Adversary is about to get his first taste of high technology in the form of steel-jacketed bullets and laser-guided bombs. But the ruler who conquered a hundred different worlds didn't do it by fighting clean and he's still got a surprise or two left to spring on the residents of Fabletown. Collects issues #70-75 in Bill Willingham's Eisner Award-winning series.

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Customer Reviews

Finally, the war to retake the Fables' Homeland commences. But not before a couple of set-up yarns. "Kingdom Come," drawn by Niko Henrichon more loosely and cartoony than main-story artist Mark Buckingham would have, tells how the torch Boy Blue has long carried for Rose Red is snuffed out, and "Skulduggery" is a hostage-rescue thriller with Cinderella as the ruthless rescuer. The rest of the book is the war, which is satisfyingly heroic and gritty but, as it happens, not the grand finale of the Fables saga. A further volume of denouement is promised. Goody! --Ray Olson

Others have posted in detail about the basis for the series and the segments of this volume, so I'm gonna skip the spoilers. I will say this: It's all been leading up to this big, final series of espionage adventures and world-spanning battles. We see how the war is won...and by whom. It's satisfying

and it's exciting and it's sad, too. This is my fave ongoing comic book series, bar none. It's been hard waiting for the bound paperbacks (rather than reading one issue at a time), but it's always worth it. This series is well-written, well-drawn, and always full of twisty, folklorish-retelling fun. Boy blue shines here (although he's not having an easy time of it in more ways than one), as does Prince Charming (whether you've loved or hated his complex, conceited, but courageous self). Cinderella, er, I mean "Cindy," is kickbutt great as she does her wicked-good spy thing! The battle strategies are fun to follow. And the showdown between the Big Bad Emperor and one of my fave Fable characters ends with a lovely humorous twist. :) If you're not familiar with the series--start with #1. Really. This storyline is not going to satisfy properly unless you follow the story from chapter one. It's a great ride, and you want to start from "Go!" Now that the arc of the war series is done, I am crazy curious to see where the saga goes next. (And I keep hoping to hear more about Frau Totenkinder and her mysterious witchy ways, as well as more about all of the thirteenth floor's sorcerous inhabitants.) This series deserves every award it's gotten. Thumbs way up! Mir

Considered the conclusion to the first major story arc of the Fables saga, WAR AND PIECES tells of the long-expected confrontation between the free Fables and the Adversary. This is where the story from the very beginning has been heading, so needless to say there was a lot of build-up and expectations for this one. I think it says a lot that this volume has a 4.5-star rating here on , despite its being subject to such high hopes by faithful readers. Most of your favorite characters are featured on center stage here, including Boy Blue, Bigby, Prince Charming, and Cindy. As you'd expect, this one is absolutely full of action, action, and more action, and compared to other Fables volumes, lacks a bit on the character development side of things. Still, a few personal interactions are highlighted here, including the potentially-budding(?) romance between Boy Blue and Rose Red. Besides that though, the rest of the book tells action-packed stories of the 'shooting war' with the Adversary. Unlike some of the other reviewers, I was totally satisfied by the way the war was detailed and the way it turned out. Somewhat predictable, but a joy to read. Fully lived up to my expectations (which were high). As far as I'm concerned, this would have been a perfectly reasonable place to conclude the series, but I'm obviously glad it has continued. Highly recommended!

Before commencing with my review, I have to note that FABLES could well become the next TRUE BLOOD. The latter is the highly successful HBO television series, which adapted the wonderful Sookie Stackhouse novels by Charlaine Harris for the small screen. About a month before I write

this ABC put a new television series based on FABLES into production. The people in charge of the production and pilot are the people behind the interesting but unsuccessful series SIX DEGREES. Hopefully the pilot will thrill and enchant the top brass at ABC and FABLES will become a primetime series on ABC. I have to confess that at the moment I have a hatred for ABC that is deep and strong, due to their almost unforgivable cancellation of PUSHING DAISIES, but a TV series based on FABLES would go a long way towards making me forgive them. WAR AND PIECES pretty much brings us to the point that we always knew that FABLES would reach, the war between the Fables and the Adversary. From the very first issue any perceptive reader knew that this moment would come. What is somewhat surprising is that the series will not cease with the resolution of the war. But just as some friends of mine refuse to watch individual episodes of either LOST or 24, preferring instead to watch them in one big chunk on DVD, so I refrain from getting the individual issues of FABLES, instead buying each collected volume. So I won't know what happens next until next August when the 12th volume in the series is published. Meanwhile, Willingham's FABLES has become quite the franchise. Not only is there the possible new ABC series, there are a couple of spin offs in the offing, including a Peter Piper series and a miniseries involving that wonderful superspy Cinderella. The fifth volume of JACK OF FABLES has had its publication date announced, even before the fourth volume has been published. So, even if the main FABLES comic were not to continue (though it is), it seems certain that it will be a long, long time before we are without new comics based upon the FABLES universe. This was just a glorious set of stories. There is always the danger when anticipating the end to a major story arc that it will be disappointing. These were just a delightful series of issues. We'd had a brief taste earlier of Cinderella as a super spy and it was delightful to have her reprise that guise. On a mission to retrieve an all-important package at the southern tip of South America we get to see her in all her unexpected glory. Some of the things we see various Fables do are wonderfully congruous with what we already knew about them, but the whole idea of Cinderella as a Jane Bond character is so out of whack with everything else we know about her to be delightful, not unlike Goldilocks as a murderous and slutty rogue. Then the actual war is wonderfully inventive. Using magic carpets as ballast to keep a wooden ship airborne seems very much like something the Fables would do. And the heroic demise of the unceasingly selfish Prince Charming is delightfully out of character. As with all the previous FABLES books, this one is filled with endless surprises and unanticipated twists. It is all so very good that even though it would have been a natural place to bring the entire series to a close, I'm quite delighted that Willingham decided not to. Except for SANDMAN, this has to be my all time favorite comic series. It is exceptional for getting better and better as it has gone along. Early on I felt that some of the

volumes were somewhat hampered for attempting to emulate one or another genre (for instance, the first volume was a whodunit, and all the weaker for that). But it really has ceased imitating other genres and found its own voice. I hope that we are a long, long way from the end. Hopefully by the time that Vol. 12 is published in August 2009, we will have heard that ABC has pulled the trigger on a FABLES TV series.

I still remember the first day I picked up Volume 1 of FABLES in Barnes & Noble. I was waiting around for my sister to finish work, browsing the comics section in hopes of coming across something that looked halfway interesting. James Jean's artwork on the front grabbed my attention right away, and after reading just the back cover I was hooked. I bought it immediately and have spent the months and years since then eagerly anticipating every volume. Willingham's re-imagining of classic fairy tale folk blends masterfully and seamlessly with his story of the ultimate war between worlds. I won't spoil anything for those who haven't read everything, but you'd be doing yourself a major disservice by not picking up WAR AND PIECES. I found the ending very fitting and in keeping with Willingham's characters and world. I can't wait for the next volume, THE DARK AGES, to see what happens to our group of intrepid Fables post-war.

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