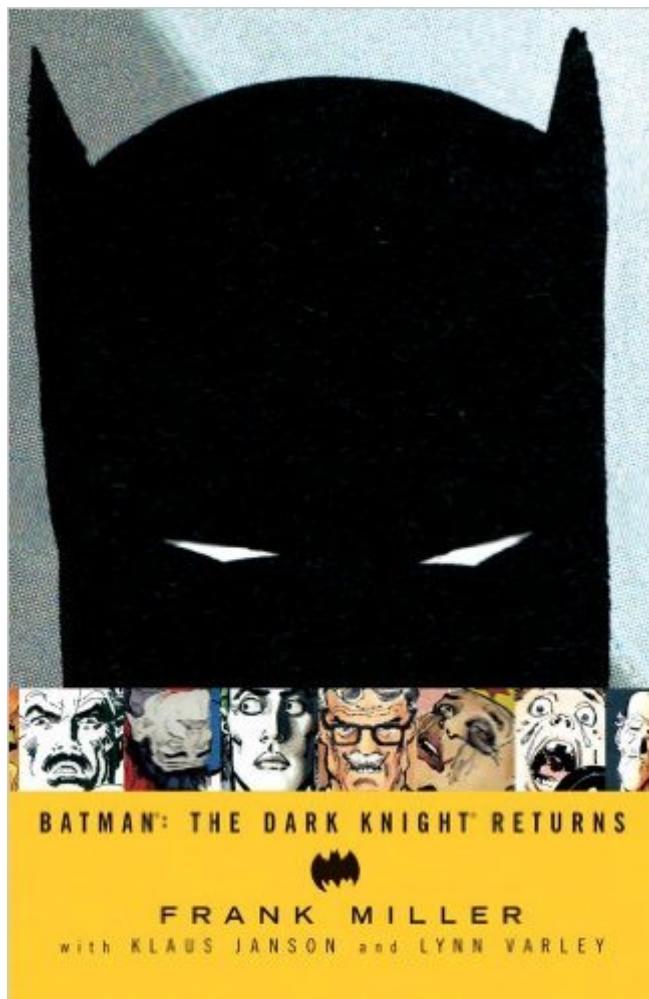


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Batman: The Dark Knight Returns



Synopsis

A NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER! It is ten years after an aging Batman has retired and Gotham City has sunk deeper into decadence and lawlessness. Now as his city needs him most, the Dark Knight returns in a blaze of glory. Joined by Carrie Kelly, a teenage female Robin, Batman takes to the streets to end the threat of the mutant gangs that have overrun the city. And after facing off against his two greatest enemies, the Joker and Two-Face for the final time, Batman finds himself in mortal combat with his former ally, Superman, in a battle that only one of them will survive. This collection is hailed as a comics masterpiece and was responsible for the launch of the Batman movies. This volume collects Batman: The Dark Knight Returns #1-4.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

If any comic has a claim to have truly reinvigorated the genre, then The Dark Knight Returns by Frank Miller--known also for his excellent Sin City series and his superb rendering of the blind superhero Daredevil--is probably the top contender. Batman represented all that was wrong in comics and Miller set himself a tough task taking on the camp crusader and turning this laughable, innocuous children's cartoon character into a hero for our times. The great Alan Moore (V for Vendetta, Swamp Thing, the arguably peerless Watchmen) argued that only someone of Miller's stature could have done this. Batman is a character known well beyond the confines of the comic world (as are his retinue) and so reinventing him, while keeping his limiting core essentials intact, was a huge task. Miller went far beyond the call of duty. The Dark Knight is a success on every level.

Firstly it does keep the core elements of the Batman myth intact, with Robin, Alfred the butler, Commissioner Gordon, and the old roster of villains, present yet brilliantly subverted. Secondly the artwork is fantastic--detailed, sometimes claustrophobic, psychotic. Lastly it's a great story: Gotham City is a hell on earth, street gangs roam but there are no heroes. Decay is ubiquitous. Where is a hero to save Gotham? It is 10 years since the last recorded sighting of the Batman. And things have got worse than ever. Bruce Wayne is close to being a broken man but something is keeping him sane: the need to see change and the belief that he can orchestrate some of that change. Batman is back. The Dark Knight has returned. Awesome. --Mark Thwaite

"...probably the finest piece of comic art ever published in a popular edition..." •Stephen King "Groundbreaking." •USA TODAY "It's film noir in cartoon pane ls." •VANITY FAIR "There's never been storytelling quite like this." •THE WASHINGTON POST "Changed the course of comics." •ROLLING STONE "Revisionist pop epic." •SPIN

Largely revered by many to be THE Batman graphic novel, Batman: The Dark Knight Returns definitely lives up to its status in the comic book community. While at first I was somewhat unimpressed with the artwork and the cramped panels on the page, when I began to proceed further into the book I became completely immersed in the story and the artwork took on its own unique form that relayed so much more than just a gruesome crime scene or an extremely old man. Where The Dark Knight Returns departs from so many modern comics is the social commentary and the psychological detail Frank Miller injects into the novel. One scene in particular where Bruce is watching television and remembering his parent's murder stands out as one of the pinnacle moments of modern comics as the two scenes play out simultaneously across the cramped panels both reflecting the intensity of the moment and subliminally reflecting Bruce's psychological state in the scenes themselves. One may also make the claim that The Dark Knight Returns is also a cultural criticism of the 80's or in some sense the modern world. The premise itself foreshadows this as a retired decent man decides to go back out into a very different world to give people hope and to ultimately finish his lifelong battle against the evil that claimed his parent's lives. In this pursuit he clashes with the morals and the priorities of the modern world. Frank Miller even adds some political criticism and world events that all tie back in to the larger picture. Familiar faces are seen once again and new characters come into play as the grand finale commences and results in a fight for the ages. Though Frank Miller went on to write a sequel, this story to me is the ultimate "end" to Batman. If there is one Batman comic let alone comic in general anyone should read, this is it.

The comic geek in me would probably want to rate this higher, and if I read it when it originally came out I probably would have. But reading it for the first time 30 years after the fact, well I'm not saying the story is bad, far from it. There's some stuff in here that still holds up, and still rings true, today. My little brother, who's not that big of a comic reader, was blown away by it when he leafed through a copy years ago. But I think the fact I've seen the stuff this story inspired afterwards, and all the hype of being one of the best Batman stories written, kind of dampened the impact for me a bit personally. again not a bad story it just didn't have the kick it probably should have.

While this is considered a classic story in the Batman canon, I felt that it was good, not great. I have been wanting to read this book for years, and plan to watch the new animated movie with some friends tomorrow night. I knew that I had to finally read the source material before watching a film adaptation, so I sat down tonight and finally read through it. The most revealing revelation to me was the fact that it seems clear that Batman's existence invites new and worse forms of crime. Batman awakens something evil in the hearts of already bad people. I can't deny that Batman does good for the world by bringing justice, so it is hard to decide which world would be worse; a world with Batman or a world without Batman. I believe that this story is trying to show that the world is ultimately worse without a Batman. I feel neutral towards this version of Robin. I didn't hate her by any means, but she didn't blow me away as a character. I'm excited to watch this movie on Blu-ray tomorrow night, and then later watch all the special features on this classic. Maybe I'll like it more when I learn more about its origins. Best aspects of this story: The conclusion to the long-standing Batman/Joker rivalry, The battle between Superman and Batman, Everything Alfred says, The relationship between Bruce Wayne and Jim Gordon.

It's been said in better (and more) words that I can provide, that Frank Miller's *The Dark Knight* is indeed one of the best graphic novels; and perhaps even modern literature, EVER. The publicity surrounding it at its first release was worthy of the hype, and all the powers that be at the time who worked to make this groundbreaking and controversial comic happen are to be applauded. So what I want to review is the enjoyment of viewing this via the Kindle Fire's graphic novel format. My question/observation: Are magnificent graphic novels such as these limited by devices such as Kindle? The Kindle Graphic Novel format, powered by the K8 (CSS/HTML5) format, offer a reasonable means of viewing comics. Being restricted to PORTRAIT format can be frustrating, though a "double tap" on the text areas does enlarge that area by about 150%, which should be no

problem for younger eyes. Again, you cannot ZOOM on any of the images, or turn the Kindle to view the panel WIDE, such as 3rd party comic viewing software (i.e. Perfect Viewer). I'm glad Kindle Fire supports graphic novels, but they're not there yet, and likely will not be until larger screens arrive. At this writing (2/12) rumors have it that a 2nd gen Fire with an 8.5 inch screen may be out before Christmas, and that will certainly improve the viewing, but I think software gurus also need to add the rotation format before we can call graphic novels on the Kindle "great." Right now, it's good... and that's a start.

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