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Neil Gaiman , Andy Kubert (Illustrator) , Matt Wagner (Illustrator) , Simon Bisley (Illustrator) , Bernie Mireault (Illustrator) , Mark Buckingham (Illustrator)

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Best-selling author **Neil Gaiman** (*The Sandman*) joins a murderer's row of talented artists in lending his unique touch to the Batman mythos for this Deluxe Edition hardcover! Spotighting the story "*Whatever Happened to the Caped Crusader?*" from *Batman* #686 and *Detective Comics* #852 in which Gaiman joins artist **Andy Kubert** and inker **Scott Williams** for a story that shines a new light on the Batman mythos. Also collects Gaiman stories from *Secret Origins* #36, *Secret Origins Special* #1 and *Batman Black and White* #2. This collection is not to be missed!

Batman: Whatever Happened to the Caped Crusader? Details

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Author : Neil Gaiman , Andy Kubert (Illustrator) , Matt Wagner (Illustrator) , Simon Bisley (Illustrator) , Bernie Mireault (Illustrator) , Mark Buckingham (Illustrator)

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From Reader Review Batman: Whatever Happened to the Caped Crusader? for online ebook

Daniel says

This was beautiful. The art, the story, simply everything. But still it's not a typical Batman story. It's much less action-y and more philosophical. It's smart and i like it foe it.

Recommend.

Kemper says

Neil Gaiman writing a swan song for Batman should be a monster geek out for me, but I'm so tired of the comic industry making events out of killing (and later resurrecting) major characters. See Marvel's Captain America for a recent example. Plus this somehow fits into yet another huge continuity reboot that DC is doing that I don't have the time or patience to try and understand. I'm not sure if Batman is supposed to be alive or dead at this point, but since it doesn't matter because he'll be back one way or another shortly, I really don't care.

So even though Neil Gaiman has written a surreal love letter to Batman that gives shout-outs to the various phases of the classic versions of the character we've gotten over the years, the whole thing just left a bad taste in my mouth. Maybe they could have just begged Gaiman to take over the book for a while and write some Batman stories that didn't involve killing him or pretending to kill him? Nah, that would have made too much sense...

Sam Quixote says

As the original line of Detective Comics came to an end, Neil Gaiman was asked to write the eulogy to the Dark Knight and, for better or worse, this is it. A two-issue send-off for everyone's favourite superhero, the Dark Knight, the Caped Crusader, the Batman.

Gaiman creates an ingenious setup for the final Batman story. The spirit of Batman/Bruce Wayne presides over a funeral service where all of his rogues gallery, close friends and family, show up to tell their version of how Batman died – and each version is different, to reflect the numerous stories told over the years in Detective Comics. Catwoman and Alfred both get space to tell their stories in full, but Alfred's was the best - impossible, but still brilliant and momentarily chilling. That sneaky butler...

Andy Kubert's art is fantastic and imaginatively chosen. I loved the way he alternated between the many designs for Batman's appearance, paying tribute to the different artists' depictions of him through the decades, as well as drawing different versions of the famous villains too.

While the story has some great moments – in particular the scene when Bruce goes back to Crime Alley, the place where Batman was born, to end it – it doesn't feel like a Batman story despite having the features of one. People read Batman for the action, adventure, the mystery and the sleuthing – none of that is part of this

rather slow-moving story. So while it's a clever idea and visually superb, it's not the most interesting Batman book to read.

But then it was never going to go down perfectly was it? Gaiman and Kubert were given the thankless task of putting to bed a game-changing line of comics and pretend to bury the most famous superhero of all time – this book was never going to satisfy the fans because no book could. Despite this, it's not a terrible story - nor a brilliant one. It's a story. It adds to the hundreds of Batman stories that are out there, that are being written now, and that are waiting to be written.

Whatever happened to the Caped Crusader? Nothing and everything. And he keeps going.

Calista says

A collection of short stories in one volume. I assume Neil wrote them all. There are 5 stories in all.

I enjoy the first one where it is revealed that Alfred the butler sees how depressed and messed up Batman is so he hires all these people to play the part of villains to give Bruce something to live for. Alfred, it is revealed, is I thought that was the best story and such a great twist I didn't see coming.

It also shows Batman being reborn over and over again, which accounts for all the different stories told about Batman which is also interesting. There is a story about Poison Ivy. There is a story about the Riddler.

There are some great moments in these pages. The art gives throwback feel to the old characters and style previously seen in the pages of Batman. The tone is ominous.

Elius says

Wow.

Gaiman is God.

You know when you read something so good and so deep and so brilliant at the same time that it leaves you speechless? That you can't find a way to describe it except flailing your arms and opening and closing your mouth in a comical way trying to find words that would do the book justice? That you stare at the textbox in goodreads for half an hour trying to find words that would reflect how much you really loved the book, and the only word you can think of is 'Wow'?

This is one of those books.

Andrew says

I recently started reading comics again and most written just by Neil Gaiman, so I couldn't miss this one. I've always been a fan of Batman, since the TV series of the 60s and then the comics and the latest movies. There is an introduction at the beginning of this volume, where Gaiman himself talks about how he always saw the

masked hero and how he really wanted to write what is, surely, a possible final chapter of his life. This album about Batman is a tribute from one of his loyal fans and in a way, it's also a tribute from each of the characters who has met, friends and enemies. The story takes place in the back of the bar of Crime Alley, where all the characters pay tribute to Batman and tell their own version of his end. I don't want to say too much, because this is an album that should be read without knowing anything, but in the end I believe that Gaiman was able to tell what Batman is for Gotham, but also for its readers. Absolutely recommended to all fans.

Patrick says

I'm not saying this is the best Neil Gaiman I've ever read. But I do think it's Neil Gaiman at his best.

For those of you, this is the story where Batman dies. Really dies. It's written in such a way that it can take place at any point in the future in the Batman storyline when he finally dies.

This book feels... loving. I can't think of how to describe it other than that. You can tell that Gaiman is approaching this character and subject with such reverence and care.

It's clever, and it's sweet, and it's playful, and it makes me cry. Every time I read it I just cry.

So yeah. Another tip of the hat to Gaiman here. If you can make me cry while reading a Batman comic, you know you've done something right.

Melania 🍒 says

2/5

Well, this was pretty bad. Neil Gaiman, not even once ?

Peter Derk says

I'm going to say a few words that you won't hear very often in reviews of comics. Especially comics written by comic book royalty like Neil Gaiman.

I don't get it.

Maybe it's because admitting that makes a person feel like an idiot. It's hard to hold a comic book about a man who uses a tool called a Batarang and admit that I have no earthly idea what the hell is going on, but so be it, here we are.

And you know what? I think more people should be prepared to say it. We would have a lot less of Grant Morrison's self-flagellating stuff, I'll tell you that right now.

The story, as I understand it, with parenthetical question marks placed next to elements that I'm not totally sure about:

Batman is dead(?). And watching his own funeral. As a ghost(?). His various villains approach the casket to say their pieces, and each seems to feel that he/she is responsible for Batman's death(?) and all claim different scenarios(?). Not in a way where they're scrambling to take credit for his death, more in a way where there are about 40(?) different timelines converging(?) including one where Alfred is the Joker.

Then Bruce sees his mom as a ghost. They have a brief argument that poses the theory that Batman is dead, but not dead dead. Almost dead. And this whole thing is his brain firing randomly. So basically we're watching a dream. Then his ghost mom tells him he'll get to rest for a few years, and the final pages feature the Bat Signal morphing into a pair of hands holding a baby, and then a nurse who is holding a baby and says "Mrs. Wayne? It's a boy." I don't know who this Mrs. Wayne is, nor what the time period is, but it appears that we're suggesting that Batman lives in some sort of life loop.

Just in case you got lost in the text there, I'd like to include one line again:

Then his ghost mom tells him he'll get to rest for a few years, and the final pages feature the Bat Signal morphing into a pair of hands holding a baby, and then a nurse who is holding a baby and says "Mrs. Wayne? It's a boy."

Yep, that happens.

I really have very little else to say about this other than the fact that I feel if we're just making up an alternate-universe story, there's no need to bring it all back around for next month's issue. We can just go nuts. So let's go nuts. There was potential to tell a great story here, which Neil Gaiman usually does, but somewhere along the lines we got lost in dreamland where all stories are confusing, and puzzling them out is irrelevant because you can defend any theory by saying, "Well, it's not real."

The other thing I wanted to talk about is this whole idea of putting two issues like this in trade paperback, and then including some vaguely related issues to fill it out. In this case, the two actual issues plus some other Batman comics written by Gaiman. So not issues leading up to or following this. Not something about Robin in this situation. Just some random shit from the 80's.

Listen, Comic Book Publishers, other formats don't do this. Sometimes a writer of thrillers will include a few pages from an upcoming novel, but they rarely dig back into the past. Why would you throw a couple badly dated Sue Grafton stories in with X is for Xotic Dancer Corpse (or whatever X is for)?

It's filler on every level, and nobody wants it. Today it's so easy to read a version of nearly any comic out there, so let people actually read what they are seeking and leave out the extras.

Dan says

review -<https://youtu.be/8C3bSL46IYI>

?????? ?????? says

The Sandman series is the reason I got back into comic books back in 2009 and haven't left since. Granted I

have been reading comics since my early teens but not as dutifully and consummately as I do now, most probably because I was too young to afford to buy copies regularly, if copies were made available to me back then which doesn't happen consistently. I have always loved superheroes and Batman foremost but back then I just viewed comic books as merely entertaining tales of larger-than-life powerful men fighting crime and evil as they struggle to win over their female love interests and keep them safe from harm. But acquainting myself with Neil Gaiman and his writing for the superb and masterful *The Sandman* series made me take a closer look at the medium with a newfound passion and intellectual curiosity and I began to actively pursue these feelings, only to find myself intimately more connected with Batman than I ever hoped to be.

Naturally, I was, of course, thrilled to discover that Gaiman wrote a Batman story himself and that he considers him to be his all-time favorite superhero as well. I couldn't think of a more perfect arrangement than this one and reading Gaiman's introduction where he revealed his childhood experiences about the Dark Knight has gotten me even more excited. This volume collects the sixty-paged titular story as well as four standalones penned by Gaiman himself.

If I'm going to be perfectly honest, however, *Whatever Happened to the Caped Crusader* unexpectedly did not resonate with me in a way I hoped it will. The format of the narrative was beguiling enough and reminiscent of the tenth volume of *The Sandman*, *The Wake*. During the old continuity, Bruce Wayne was killed after the events of *Final Crisis*, an epic DC event. This story was supposed to serve as a way to end the reign of a celebrated fallen hero in a sense that everyone in the Bat-verse, comrades and enemies alike, gathered to give eulogies in Batman's funeral. The concept was definitely interesting and in some aspects it delivered quite a punch. However, it was a limited story and the only full-length eulogies we got to read are those of Selina Kyle's who recounts all the history he has with the Bat from the very beginning (there are many easter-egg references from the canon which will amuse any long-time fan); and Alfred's shocking and poignant confession eulogy which remains to me as the best part of the entire comic book. For this alone, it's worth the reading experience.

Nevertheless, I was strangely unsatisfied of the way *Whatever Happened to the Caped Crusader* ended. I understood the message Gaiman tried to communicate and I suppose it did get to me but not in an unforgettable way at all which is a glaring flaw for me only because this is the writer who helped me fall in love with the comic book medium because of the earnest, fantastical and multi-layered way he writes stories, so I was expecting that his Batman piece will hold the same weight for me as *The Sandman* did. It didn't and I suppose I can still forgive him for that. After all, it's a matter of comparing apples and oranges and that would just defeat the purpose. I still appreciated what he had offered though even if I don't think this one belongs to other definitive and timeless classics such as *Year One* or *The Killing Joke*. To me, it just didn't offer more. That probably has something to do with the fact that this is supposed to signify the 'end of an era' for Batman but we all know Batman will live on after this anyway so the impact unavoidably gets diluted and that's not Gaiman's fault. Still, this was a fairly enjoyable story.

On the plus side, the four standalones were a treat especially the *Black and White* comics featuring Batman and the Joker as actors hired to act on comic book pages, and a *When is a Door* about the Riddler which was visually spectacular to look at and read. Overall, I still believe *Whatever Happened to the Caped Crusader* is something you can have on your shelf on display.

RECOMMENDED: 7/10

DO READ MY BATMAN COMICS REVIEWS AT:

Arun Divakar says

A love letter to the character of Batman is how Neil Gaiman opens this book. I associated with one point at that stage when Gaiman says that even after he has been reading, writing and creating comic book characters, he always has Batman as numero uno. While I have never written a word for comics nor even drawn a straight line for that matter, I follow the same principle : Batman is THE hero for me even after coming across so many other characters. This book specifically was a spinoff from the Batman mythos and I suppose this is a button that DC pressed before another reboot.

When we begin, the various characters (friends & foes alike) come to pay their last respects to the Dark Knight. Some of the characters offer their own versions of his death while others remember him in a word or two. I was amused by Alfred's version of the tale which was a total riot ! The others are just so-so and to me as a reader was not much of an attention grabber. There is set of sketches by Andy Kubert in here which were truly excellent. Versions of Batman right from Bob Kane days to his present day avatar, rough sketches and fully pencilled versions and so on. It maybe that I am back to comics after a long time but I simply adored the artwork. There is a black & white story where Batman & Joker appear as actors waiting for their screen time in the green room. They chat amiably and even solve cross words together ! The last part with the Riddler was not much to talk about either.

In all a decent read but I for one expect more from Gaiman.

Momina Masood says

Ah, wonderful! Exquisite artwork! Highly recommended to all Gaiman and Batman enthusiasts! Not a whodunit, mind you, though it seems like one initially. The challenge with these comics is that there is very little room for originality; not much remains that hasn't already been experimented with before, and yet Gaiman makes this memorable and completely fresh! Props to one of the quintessential storytellers of our time.

Donovan says

I've had mixed results with Gaiman and this continues the trend.

As others have said, the two-issue story lacks action, but it's still interesting. It's a fantasy eulogy somewhat in the vein of Grant Morrison in the sense that it's rhetorical and highly interpretative.

My take is that Gaiman is telling us Batman is immortal. Although he's dead (wait, he's alive again!), he can never really die, much like any beloved comic book hero. It's interesting to see what his friends and enemies think of him, but ultimately unnecessary. Andy Kubert's artwork is brilliant as usual.

And the bookend stories are okay although irrelevant to the main story. A Black and White World is actually

kind of funny, being the story Gaiman originally wrote way back in 1989 where Batman and Joker are talking about being comic book characters.

Diehard Gaiman fans will appreciate this. It was solidly good but not an all time classic Batman story.

Dan Schwent says

So I'm caving in and getting the individual issues for this. Come on, it's Neil Gaiman.

First issue:

So there's a funeral in a church in crime alley. Batman is in the casket. His friends and foes are assembled to give their respects and tell how Batman died.

The thing I've always liked about Neil Gaiman's comics are that they're about something. They have themes. They're actually pretty clever. Whatever Happened to the Caped Crusader is a good example.

In the first story, Catwoman gives her tale of her relationship with Batman and how he died, bleeding to death on her couch after a freak gunshot wound. In the second, Alfred tells about Bruce going off the deep end and becoming Batman after his parents died. Since he wasn't having much luck fighting crime, Alfred hired some of his actor friends to be Batman's rogue's gallery, with Alfred himself portraying the Joker!

The best part, in my opinion, is that Adam Kubert draws the different parts of the story in the styles of artists of other time periods.

Now I have to either wait a month until the second half comes out or wait until the collection comes out. Based on the first half, I'm giving it a four for now.

Later...

The second half wasn't quite as good as the first but still very very good. More accounts of Batman's death and then Batman's alone at his own funeral. Well, not **precisely** alone...

I'd definitely be picking this up when it's collected.

Good night, mechanical dinosaur. Good night, giant penny.

Jayson says

(A-) 81% | Very Good

Notes: Wherein tales and dreams are shadow-truths, that endure as facts are forgot, and need not have happened to be true.

Brandon says

Whatever Happened to the Caped Crusader is my second exposure to Neil Gaiman.

Earlier in the year, I read *American Gods* and while I loved the premise, the execution bugged me. I found it long winded and a little on the boring side. I was sure that when you put the mind of Gaiman into the Batman universe, you were going to get something very, very cool.

Truth be told, I found this to be pretty average. When I told my friend that gave this to me what I thought about the story, he responded with, "You have very high expectations of Batman". I thought that this was kind of unfair, actually. I've read some of the best Batman work that had ever been done with Batman: Year One, Batman: The Dark Knight Returns, Batman: The Long Halloween and most recently, Batman: The Black Mirror, so I've established in my mind what makes a great Batman story.

That's not to say that this is a bad Batman tale, I just thought I didn't come across as anything memorable which is really unfortunate since it apparently ends two long running Batman series (*Batman & Detective Comics*). It gobbled up several awards and is recognized as being a fitting ending to The Dark Knight saga.

Yar, here there be spoilers!

(view spoiler)

I think I need a bit of a break from Batman graphic novels for a while – I don't want to get burned out.

Niki says

Read this one a long time ago (I really should start adding all the comics to my "Read" list) Wasn't particularly impressed, I gotta admit it.

J says

Nothing special here unfortunately.

The first part of this actually dealt with Batman, and the artwork for that was good. And the plot was at least somewhat intriguing. Everything after that was pretty boring and not about Batman. And the artwork was painful.

There was a story about Batman and the Joker being aware that they are comic book characters, which was kind of cool to see. Then there was a Poison Ivy story and a story about some guy hosting a show about Gotham's criminals.

I expected more from this, but at least it wasn't very long.

StoryTellerShannon says

The artwork was classically close to superb with some interesting focuses. The story, however, was a transition of sorts that suggested Batman died but we all know they're not going to kill Batman off. Worst case scenario is that he'll disappear for a time and then just return. That said, this is about Batman looking down on his funeral/wake as notable villains of Gotham and a few non villains give their jaded interpretation of their times with Batman. It was way too short for my tastes and vague as well. Gaiman has interesting ideas but his stories are sometimes hit or miss and this is one of them.

CHARACTERS/DIALOGUE: C plus to B minus; STORY/PLOTTING: B minus;
ARTWORK/ANGLES: A minus; WHEN READ: early March 2012; OVERALL GRADE: B
