



Nova, Volume 1: Origin

Jeph Loeb (Writer), Ed McGuinness (Illustrator), Dexter Vines (Inker), Marte Garcia (Colorist)

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The New Human Rocket Returns!

Sam Alexander is a kid bound by the gravity of a small town--and a father whose ridiculous drunken fairy tales about a "Nova Corps" were just another heavy burden. But lucky for Sam, gravity soon won't even matter--and those troubles will be a billion miles away. It's a boy, a helmet and an intergalactic legacy! As Sam trains with the Guardians of the Galaxy's Gamora and Rocket Raccoon, the helmet leads Nova into intergalactic conflict that will affect the entire Marvel Universe! Mysteries are revealed in this breathtaking new series by the best-selling, award-winning team of Jeph Loeb and Ed McGuinness.

Collecting: *Nova* 1-5, material from *Point One*

Nova, Volume 1: Origin Details

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Author : Jeph Loeb (Writer) , Ed McGuinness (Illustrator) , Dexter Vines (Inker) , Marte Garcia (Colorist)

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From Reader Review Nova, Volume 1: Origin for online ebook

Jan Philipzig says

A wild ride with a heart - what's not to like? Sure, it's all a bit cheesy, but as a contemporary origin story for all ages I thought this worked quite well. The combination of family drama, humor and cosmic adventure reminded me of Slott and Allred's recent *Silver Surfer* relaunch, though it largely lacks that title's wit and ease. Still, *Nova* by Loeb and McGuiness feels fresh and lively enough and should appeal to fans of cosmic yet lighthearted superhero fare.

Sam Quixote says

Wow.

I never thought I'd say this, but:

I really enjoyed this comic written by Jeph Loeb.

Really!

Sam Alexander is a high school kid in a dead-end American Mid-West town called Carefree. His drunk dad is the janitor of his school and is often so wasted Sam has to stay behind after the school day is done and do his dad's job for him before helping to walk him home to pass out in his shed. But in his more conscious moments, Sam's father tells him and his little sister fantastic cosmic stories of a time when he was part of an intergalactic superhero group called the Nova Corps, stories Sam believes are just drunken delusions or stories for little kids. Then one day his dad disappears and a talking raccoon with a gun and a green lady with a sword show up. Sam's about to realise his dad wasn't telling stories, the Nova Corps are real, and he's about to become the latest – and greatest – of all the Novas! The fight for the universe and the search for his dad begins!

There isn't much to say about *Nova* because it's not a layered story, it's not overly complex, it's straightforward and simply a cool story. That said, stories that are just cool aren't necessarily bad and *Nova* works just fine for what it is, which is a pretty straightforward superhero origin story.

It's the setup though that really gets me – the dad telling stories of his past life as an intergalactic superhero, a time now long past leaving him with all the memories of the wider world out there and the disappointment that he'd never see it again. That's a great angle, then factor in his son, the protagonist, and his journey of discovery, and it's a really sweet, surprisingly really well put-together story.

I should say that I've never read a *Nova* book before – I have no idea who *Nova* is, who the Nova Corps are, so my reaction to this book is purely visceral, it's not at all based on comparisons to what's gone before, though I understand some long-time readers of the series dislike the direction Loeb's taken it. From my standpoint as a reader completely new to the character, I found it fresh and enjoyable with Sam reacting like a teenager would to the crazy new things happening in comparison to his previously dull, go-nowhere life.

Which isn't to say it's not without its flaws – I'm still not entirely sure why Sam's dad gave up being a

Nova, especially as it was killing him not to be one. Was his wife that much of a bitch that she'd rather see her husband destroy himself than be a hero? Or maybe it was because he wanted to be with his kids or something, right? Or the Nova Corps went bad...? I never quite got this point in the story. And I'm not really sure what Nova's powers are. At first he's like a cosmic Rocketeer and then he can shoot beams from his hands like Iron Man's repulsor blasts? And it's all the helmet, right? Uh...ok.

I really liked the cameos from Rocket Raccoon and Gamora from Guardians of the Galaxy, and Uatu the Watcher too (though Ed McGuinness makes him look a bit too Grey Alien-y around the eyes), as they introduce Sam to this strange new world he finds himself in. They're fun, familiar characters and the trigger-happy, salty Rocket has some great moments with Sam as his new instructor.

The book's appearance looks very cinematic, not least because it features the Chitauri and their giant whale ships from The Avengers movie. Ed McGuinness's art is as polished and sleek as you'd expect and is wonderfully suited to the sparkling beauty of the cosmos where most of the book is set. McGuinness' art on Earth isn't bad but where he really shines is when the action takes off into outer space as Nova battles his dad's old "buddies" and strafes enemy ships.

Nova is a really solid book, with some fun storytelling, wonderful art, and a likeable protagonist. I honestly picked this up thinking I'd be putting it back down after the first issue or two but read it straight through and kept turning back to the cover to see the writer's credit: Jeph Loeb. Well, I'll be! This is gonna sound weird but... good job, Mr Loeb? (goes out to see if the world has ended)

Terence says

Sam Alexander grew up with his Dad telling him about unbelievable tales of being a space cop of sorts, saving the universe, and working with a green assassin and a talking Raccoon.

Sam's Dad is also a high school janitor and also a drunk. Sam doesn't believe a word his father says.

That is until the green assassin and the talking racoon show up to see Sam.

Sam realizes everything his father told him was true and he has become a Nova himself.

Nova Origin was an OK story. Sam himself is somewhat likable, but the storyline of, *my father told me these crazy stories...it turns out it's true and now I must inherit his mantle*, is one I've experienced far too often to be impressed by it. The introduction of a different type of Nova is a bit intriguing, but that was the only thing that even somewhat captured my interest.

This volume wasn't bad, but I find myself getting tired of high school students getting super powers and saving the world.

Peter Derk says

Am I the only person on the planet who just once wants to see an old man get some sort of super power

instead of a kid?

James DeSantis says

Wow look at that. Sometimes you pick up a book you never thought you'd enjoy and end up smiling most of the way through. Surprise!

Nova: Origin is a neat little story because you really don't have to know much about the original. This is Sam's story and it's all about living up to his father's name and becoming the new NOVA! Which is basically like a space version of Iron-man suit...I guess. Listen, it's badass. Also Sam is very normal teen or just has fun being a damn hero. I love when they let their kid characters act like damn kids and be excited about shooting lazes out of their freaking hands.

The only negative I can think of is sometimes the characters feel a bit cliche and the huge exposition dump at the end of issue 4. But hey, that's just one little thing in otherwise fun and beautifully drawn story. Go check out Nova. It's FUN. Which is a nice change.

Relstuart says

Better than expected. I didn't realize this new Nova was named after Loeb's son who passed away.

Lex says

4.5/5 This was pretty freaking adorable. Review to come. Possibly.

Chris says

Sam Alexander is stuck in a boring town, covering for his drunken Dad at night as a high school janitor. He doesn't believe his father's tales of his time in the Nova Corps, especially the ones with the "talking raccoon and the green assassin lady". When Rocket and Gamora *do* turn up, Sam obtains his Dad's helmet, becomes the new Nova and is thrust into a space-faring tale of betrayal and revenge.

Origin is a solid read and the pace never lets up as Sam is hurtled through his training and into a huge battle against the Chitauri. Jeph Loeb writes a believable, if somewhat formulaic turn of events and Sam retains his youthful mannerisms for the most part (I felt he sounded slightly younger than fifteen at times).

The artwork by Ed McGuinness and inker Dexter Vines is also a highlight, not to mention the superb colour work of Marte Gracia. The book even uses starfield images from Nasa/JPL-Caltech to really enhance the scenes of space flight and the skyline of Sam's secluded town. It's a nice book to look at and between it's fun story and endearing lead, it nearly scored a higher rating.

Unfortunately, there are two short stories thrown in at the end with little context. (view spoiler) While I

appreciate them being collected, they felt like bite-sized chunks of bigger tales and don't leave much of an impression. Fortunately, there's some nice artwork to close out the book and a cute wave goodbye from Nova on the final page. Overall, *Origin* isn't *quite* charming enough to make up for its shortcomings, but it's still a decent read.

Nicolo Yu says

I really enjoyed this new Nova. I like the crisp and dynamic art of Ed McGuinness, which is a treat and I've always enjoyed Jeph Loeb-penned comics. This new Nova is a teenager named Sam Alexander who is a bit of a knucklehead by whose heart is in the right place.

A new teen-aged is what Marvel hopes will expand its adult-skewing readership base to include more younger readers. It's ironic that there are less young people reading comics which used to be the medium's bread and butter audience. Comics are for kids they used to say but not anymore since it usually adults who read comics these days.

mercedes says

THIS WAS SO FUN AND CUTE

Anne says

4.5 stars

How freakin' *cute* is this kid?! Let me just tell you...SOOO stinkin' cute! And Jeph Loeb *wrote* this? Wha..? The cat is both alive and dead, Schrödinger? My head just exploded! How is that even possible?!

This introduces Sam (who's adorable, in case you missed it).

He's the son of the high school's drunk janitor. Now, it's bad enough that he has to swoop in and fix the messes that his father is too intoxicated to take care of, but to make it worse, his dad also peppers his drinking with *stories* of his Glory Days...

In the Nova Corps.

Of course, Sam doesn't believe a word out of his vomit encrusted mouth, because he's *obviously* delusional. But then his dad goes missing, and a green lady accompanied by a feral raccoon show up to return his father helmet...

This was a really *really* good volume to set Sam up as a new superhero in the Marvel universe, and I can see

why some people have referred to him as a Miles Morales sort of character. He's got that same kind of innocent/adorable appeal to him. He likes the sweet girl with the multicolored hair and piercings, he's nice to his little sister, and he *does the right thing* like a superhero should. But he's still a kid. You know, with all of that wild-eyed wonder at being able to fly to the stars!

Makes you want to ruffle his hair and give him a squishy hug!

Maybe that last part is just me?

Anyway, this was so much better than I expected from Loeb.

I'm looking forward to catching the next volume as soon as I can!

Artemy says

So we're doing this buddy read where we're giving a second chance to some of the creators or characters we previously personally deemed hopeless. In my case, that's Jeph Loeb, a writer who I previously thought was entirely unable to write an intelligible comic based on my experiences with travesties like Hush, Daredevil: Yellow and Captain America: White, and just based on what I heard about his runs on Supergirl, Hulk and The Ultimates among many others. Well, Chris recommended that I read this first volume of Nova, and I was surprised to find out that it's really not that bad, especially by Loeb's standards!

As far as I know, this is the first Sam Alexander Nova book. I've read others before, like the excellent Nova: Resurrection and Sean Ryan's delightful run, which both followed up on the storyline that Loeb introduced here. Admittedly, I liked both of them more than *Origin*, but I can't belittle that with this book Loeb provided a solid foundation for other creators to work with. Sam Alexander is a fun protagonist — he's a young naive kid who is entirely out of his depth, and he's not very heroic at first. His father was previously a Nova, but through a series of events he ended up being a high school janitor, which causes Sam a bunch of troubles with local bullies. His dad then mysteriously goes missing, and Sam has to become a Nova himself in order to help him and save the world.

Unfortunately, it's the saving the world part where the book kinda lost me. The villain ended up being a painfully dull generic baddie, and the big showdown was just a punchy-punch superhero bore. And that's two out of five issues entirely devoid of any tension, character or interest. By Jeph Loeb's standards, mediocrity is still a huge achievement, but it's mediocrity nonetheless.

Still, three out of five issues ain't bad! That's three more issues than I ever expected to enjoy from Loeb, and at least they weren't a pain to look at thanks to Ed McGuinness, Dexter Vines and Marte Garcia's significant artistic talents. It's not like I had to sit through an entire book of Tim Sale's disgusting artwork, right?...

...oh boy.

Coming soon: Shallow Comic Second Chance Buddy Read, Part II: The Long Halloween. Where I attempt to sit through an entire book of Tim Sale's disgusting artwork.

Dang.

David says

Now that the Nova Corps has gotten a high profile new audience with the *Guardians of the Galaxy* movie, I am hoping ol' bucket-head might make a cinematic appearance.

This series, though, is a "reboot" featuring the original Nova's son as a kid superhero. Apparently intended to draw younger readers in, it's still a pretty sharp comic, firmly embedded in the Marvel Universe without requiring readers to be familiar with decades of canon.

Sam Alexander has an alcoholic father who is the janitor at his school. Sam is used to covering for his dad while listening to the old man's stories about how he used to be a galaxy-spanning superhero. Then one day his dad disappears, and following an appearance by a certain green-skinned babe and a talking raccoon, Sam finds himself in possession of the Nova helmet. Pretty soon he's off to the Moon, where he meets the Watcher, and then he's fighting off an alien invasion.

It's lots of fun, and one of the better kid superhero comics I've read. The tropes are thick and heavy, but this is a comic for teens, not a reinvention of the genre.

Sesana says

I don't really have much to say about this one. It's not bad, not really. But neither is it great. It is, more than anything, expected. Sam Alexander is like any number of teen boy heroes I've come across: bitter, special, rebellious, somewhat whiny. Not a bad kid overall. Maybe a little annoying. My point is, I've met this kid hundreds of times. That's not necessarily a bad thing. Loeb doesn't embarrass himself with this kid, or his story. But although it's executed well enough, it just didn't have that little extra something that would make me want to keep reading. Just not for me, I guess.

Scott S. says

3.5 stars

Memo to the Marvel-Disney-Sony conglomerate:

In these days of out-of-control, bloated budgets and ever escalating running times for blockbuster superhero movies, might I suggest an adaptation of *Nova, Volume 1: Origin* for the big screen? Make it a tight, 90-minute film (with funny cameos by *Guardians of the Galaxy* teammates Gamora and Rocket, of course) with *reasonable* \$\$\$ spent on talent and special effects. The storyline it will likely appeal to kids, teens, AND parents. Consider this and potentially you will rake it in at the box office.

Origin is a nice, streamlined opening chapter story about Sam Alexander, an average teenager in small-town southwestern U.S. who is suddenly thrust into the superhero orbit - both literally and figuratively - when he inherits his father's position in the Nova Corps. (The Corps is similar to DC's Green Lantern - an intergalactic policing / U.S Marines-style force with various 'best of the best' representatives from

everywhere patrolling / protecting the universe.) It was a fun, lightweight read.
