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Drawn from Earth across the stars, the Marvel Universe's greatest villains and heroes are set against one another by the mysterious and unbelievably powerful Beyonder, with the winner promised the ultimate prize. But as battle lines are drawn, new alliances forged and old enemies clash, one among them is not willing to settle for anything less than godhood. Can even the combined might of the Avengers, Spider-Man, the Fantastic Four and the X-Men prevent Dr. Doom from becoming the most powerful being in the universe? Collecting MARVEL SUPER HEROES SECRET WARS #1-12.

Secret Wars Details

Date : Published December 28th 2011 by Marvel (first published January 1st 1985)

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Author : Jim Shooter , Mike Zeck (Illustrator) , Bob Layton (Illustrator)

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From Reader Review Secret Wars for online ebook

Gordon says

I remember this series or mini series quite fondly and was a little dismayed to find that it was conceived primarily as a vehicle to sell action figures, specifically Marvel's answer to the successful Kenner DC Super Powers Collection <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SGtKtc...> DC had a Saturday morning cartoon so Marvel came up with Secret Wars. I guess it worked I had the toys and almost 30 years later I am receiving the Omnibus collection as a father's day present.

Still while the art is obviously a little dated, the writing is solid and it really does for the first time bring together teams like the X Men, the Avengers and the Fantastic Four. If you are a fan of any of those or just Marvel comics in general, I highly recommend this, also to Ilona Gordon, you are the bomb and this is my favorite father's day gift ever!

Kyle says

For me, this series marks a huge evolutionary leap forward for Marvel. The scope of this story and the scale of its conflict is so much larger than any of the stories that came before it, and the narrative is non-repetitive compared to, say, "Contest of Champions". Unfortunately, it is horribly executed: plodding and tedious, weak dialogue and shoddy character development, virtually no suspense or tension, flat as the paper it is drawn on. The only reason to even consider picking up this collection of twelve comics is to learn about the origins of Spider-man's black suit and to see Doom's face. And even those moments are utterly uneventful when they happen. Not to mention some all-time-low moments for female comic-book characters.

Sadly, this never graduates past the "made to sell toys" concept that inspired Marvel to print it, points are given for making the attempt. Although, I did find a few panels of the artwork to be spectacular, it wasn't enough to make this an enjoyable endeavour.

2/5

Jesse A says

When will I learn my lesson on these older comics?! I hate the style of the books, that Sunday morning funnies set up. Plus didn't people actually used to speak? In these old comic books the dialogue never seems like something a person would actually say. I would think genuine dialogue would be something that holds up to the test of time but apparently not. Another disappointment.

Brad says

I was worried about reading the Secret Wars again after all these years. Would my rereading destroy its mystique? Would it turn out to be unqualified crap? Would it hurt my love of Marvel? Would it taint other memories of other comics from the same period? Despite my fears, I was compelled to try it anyway.

I had recently repacked my comics, and I'd come across my wrapped and cared for originals, and days later I

discovered the Marvel app for my iPod. I bought it and the first thing I saw was the Secret Wars. It was fated, so I started reading.

The story is pretty weak, much weaker than I remembered. I'm not going to cover up its flaws. It is too straightforward to be brilliant. Too *deus ex machina* to be fully satisfying. And it lacks the metaphysical depths of DC's Crisis on Infinite Earths (their excellent attempt to compete with Marvel's surprising success, or to clean-up the mess that was their continuity -- whichever you prefer to believe). The women in Secret Wars were not treated well. The choice of supervillains was too arbitrary. The battle lines were silly. There is plenty to complain about.

But...

There are some brilliant moments, and here are my five faves -- the five that make me dig this story even with all its flaws:

1. Magneto Fighting with the Heroes: I loved this just as much today as I did the first time I read the story. This was the moment Magneto, always my favourite "villain" became my favourite all around character. His "terrorist" activities, motivated by a desire to save his mutant brethren, were finally recognized as grey enough in motivation to be almost altruistic, and watching the "heroes" have to deal with that revelation was one of the best threads of the series. Much more could have been done with this, but Jim Shooter's decision to do this at all was a Marvel Universe changer.

2. Captain America at His Best: There's this scene where Dr. Doom, now beyond powerful, is kicking the heroes need to take off and save themselves. Captain America gives the order for retreat, then he goes back into their crumbling base and releases all the super-villains from their captivity. He's joined by a surprised and impressed Wolverine. That is the Captain America I know in love. The same Captain America who would eventually fight Iron Man in the Civil War and die on the courthouse steps. It's easy to see that Jim Shooter loved Cap as much as I did.

3. Reed & Doom: I never cared much for the Fantastic Four and their nemesis before Secret Wars, but Doom was the perfect egomaniacal choice to challenge the Beyonder's power, and Reed Richard's steady brainiac self was an excellent compliment to Captain America's leadership.

4. Galactus: C'mon?! The guy eats worlds. And he had a great moment or two with Reed. What a pleasure to see Galactus dwarfed in power too, and without Silver Surfer around to piss him off. Excellent.

5. The Birth of Venom: If you're a Marvel fan, or even just a Spidey fan, you know what this means. 'Nuff said.

In the end, this journey into the mind of the fourteen year old Brad kicked ass. Secret Wars is as good and as bad as I remember. And I love it (even if I can only give it four stars) just the same. Next up: The Dark Phoenix Saga; X-Men #129-138.

Terence says

What can I say about old comics? They tend not to be that good and the dialogue is wooden at best. Secret

Wars is no exception. I read an article describing it as the sort of story a kid would come up with while playing with his toys and I have to agree.

Just in case anyone isn't sure what to think about this, I'll leave you with a picture of Iron Man using his skates.

Arturo says

Surprisingly good. I haven't read any comics from the 80's in a very long time, and for a very good reason. This had been on my list for years, I was just dreading the heavy, wordy, babbling.. exposition filled pages. But there's wasn't any Peter Parker at home worrying, or Ben Grimm yaking away filler stuff. We do have Ben Grimm yaking away but it's actually colorful and genuine. Basically one of the main reasons I liked this book is that everyone's dialogue was spot on. No unnecessary dialogue, no character development dialogue wasted my time or was uninteresting. Ok now I'm singing its praises too high, it wasn't great, it's just wasn't as bad I thought.

I just think you have to have a lot of patience and motivation to get through it. I just flipped through the last issue and my god! The amount of word balloons!!! I don't think I will ever be able to read this again. Anyway, second reason is how the X-Men are treated, just when you think the writer is going the Jim Starlin Infinity Gauntlet route, we learn that Jim Shooter has a good grasp on the X-Men and even more so on Magneto.

Speaking of villains, a group with Ultron, Kang, Doom, Galactus, Doc Ock, Lizard, Enchantress ..and more, it just doesn't gel, and that's the fun part.

Finally, while things got kinda cartoonish story wise, my last bit of motivation came from the last issues being included in a road to Secret Wars (2015) book.

The whole Dr. Doom angle is kinda essential.

Overall, I don't know how I got through it, but I'm glad I did, an essential Marvel fan read.

Aaron says

[Doctor Doom successfully takes the Beyonder's power but can't hold onto it, allowing the unseen Beyonder to regain it an

Dmitry Yakovenko says

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My only disappointments were that the Beyonder never materializes as the leisure-suit wearing romantic he later appears to be (even later in Marvel mythology he changes his sex entirely) and after dozens of climactic moments, the ending, save for some high points, sort of fizzles out and leaves many of the characters (and a whole suburb of Denver, Colorado- don't ask) in limbo.

As you can probably tell, Secret Wars more closely resembles a situation comedy than War and Peace. Yet there is something about how high the stakes are played, how broadly drawn and quick-moving all the drama unfolds, and how powerful the repercussions were felt in comic book history (this was one of the first if not the first "cosmic adventures" to involve all the Marvel Universe, and after all from this story came, much to every fanboy's chagrin, Spider-Man's symbiote and ultimately, Venom) that encompasses, to me at least, all the stirrings and trappings of a great Greek Epic.

Alex says

My first thought was that there are no words in the English language to describe how utterly stupid this idiotic marvel crossover event is. Then I realised that are actually quite a lot of them. Here they are:

Brainless, dazed, deficient, dense, dim, doltish, dopey, dull, dumb, dummy, foolish, futile, gullible, half-baked, half-witted, idiotic, ill-advised, imbecilic, inane, indiscreet, insensate, irrelevant, laughable, loser, ludicrous, meaningless, mindless, moronic, naive, nonsensical, obtuse, out to lunch, pointless, puerile, rash, senseless, shortsighted, simple, simpleminded, slow, sluggish, stolid, stupefied, thick, thick-headed, trivial, unintelligent, unthinking, witless.

My favourite of which are thick-headed and puerile.

Stephen says

In my efforts to read as much 1980's Marvel comics as possible (don't ask why, just roll with it), I finally run into the beginning of the big, I mean BIG, crossover fever that has never been cured.

This series included some of the top selling characters in Marveldom at the time (and most are still big to this day), Spider-Man, the X-Men, the Fantastic Four, and the Avengers. These great heroes were set to face some of Marvel's most powerful villains like Doctor Doom, Doctor Octopus, and Galactus. But wait...let us also add in the whole Wrecking Crew because they are totally the most powerful baddies around???

I wanted to rate this one a little lower (like a 3), but the novelty of this event for its time and the actual fun I had reading it would not allow it. The premise of an otherworldly being setting up a gladiator matchup on a patchwork planet of his own creation is hokey and cheesy. The characters were fairly shallow in the execution of the story. I think, due to having a single writer instead of using a collaboration of the writers from the various titles, we get teams and characters that don't fully mesh with how they act/interact in their own comics.

After having read all of the major DC crossovers from the last 30 years, I expect event series crossovers to have major consequences on most participants (See Infinite Crisis, Blackest Night). This one (being Marvel's first) was light on these major changes, but the ones we did get were pretty huge (view spoiler)

I love crossovers. I love Marvel comics. If you are the same, then get a copy of this and see where Marvel and Crossover became best friends.

J.M. says

I was fourteen before I decided comics were cool, so I was kind of a late bloomer. SECRET WARS #1 was the very first comic book I ever bought, and I was an avid comic book reader for the next fifteen years.

One day in early June, being out of school for the summer, I happened to walk by the magazine rack at the local book store on my way to the Sci-Fi section. A comic cover by Mike Zeck jumped off the shelves at me. SECRET WARS #1. Captain America's howling face. The Hulk leaping high. Spider-Man swinging in. Just too cool. It had never occurred to me that all those heroes might come together at once, and I was impressed. It was even more strange because I used to tease my younger brother about his comic books (he mainly collected LEGION OF SUPER-HEROES and G.I. JOE), and as he "grew out of them," I was falling in love.

I stopped reading comics around 1999, and just recently returned to reading graphic novels since my four-year-old son (an early bloomer) is way into super-heroes. It's been fun to catch up on the adventures of Batman, the X-Men, Daredevil, Catwoman, and more. It all started in 1984 with this comic book featuring Marvel's greatest classic heroes!

Sesana says

I honestly went into Secret Wars expecting it to be mostly of historical interest only. And there is a healthy dose of that. Secret Wars is probably best known for introducing Spider-Man's black costume (and we all know how important that turned out to be), but there were other lasting effects. (My favorite: as a result of events in Secret Wars, the creepy Kitty/Colossus relationship was broken up.) And you can certainly read it just expecting to see a milestone in the Marvel Universe.

But surprisingly, I found myself having fun with the book. Sure, it's basically a glorified action scene stretched over twelve issues to sell toys. Sure, the dialog can be over the top and cheesy. (And every sentence ends with an exclamation point! Because it's exciting!) Sure, some of the characters were apparently included with little thought and have little to nothing done with them. (I'm thinking of Nightcrawler in particular, who probably has less than a dozen lines in the entire series.) Sure, the whole thing makes little sense and the apparent architect of all of this, the Beyonder, never actually shows up. But it is still a lot of (admittedly shallow) fun to read.

I would suggest looking for this exact release. There's a nice introduction talking about how the series came about, plus a really fun essay about the toy line. And best of all, it includes the scenes from the various regular comics (like Thor, for example) showing how the heroes came to be on Battleworld. Very helpful, considering that Secret Wars #1 starts with all the pieces in place.

Mark says

A little too dated and corny for its own good. The better comic book crossovers tend to grow out of an ongoing story line but Secret Wars makes all of the classic mistakes of unnecessary crossover events. I always suspected Marvel threw this together to compete with DC's Crisis on Infinite Earth, just so they could say they had the first crossover event. The story literally plucks a bunch of heroes and villains from Earth and throws them into an alien planet where they're supposed to duke it out. The characters seem chosen more for their popularity than anything else; Spider-Man is thrown in the mix and does absolutely nothing to advance the plot. And the Wasp, the leader of the Avengers, is written in a very shallow and sexist manner; she's more concerned about her appearance than her teammates' survival.

Alejandro says

Let them fight!

This TPB edition collects "Secret Wars" (1984-85) #1-12, plus excerpts from "Amazing Spider-Man" #251, "Uncanny X-Men" #180, "Incredible Hulk" #294, "Invincible Iron Man" #181, "The Thing" #10, "Fantastic Four" #265, "Thor" #341 and "Avengers" #242 (which was the same excerpt originally presented in "Captain America" #292).

Creative Team:

Writer: Jim Starlin

Illustrators: Mike Zeck & Bob Layton

Special Anniversary Cover: Alex Ross

CROSSOVERS & TOYS

While *Secret Wars* (this storyline from 80's, don't confuse with the 2015 event with the same title) is considered the first major crossover of Marvel and even beating by a year to the first crossover event by their Distinguished Competition,...

...but technically, it isn't true,...

...since in 1982, Marvel published too the *Contest of Champions* that, a year ago, I wouldn't mind even mention it, since it was a small event of barely 3 issues, **BUT**...

...if you research it on its premise and characters involved, where Grandmaster and Death call battling teams, well, I wouldn't be surprised that after the incoming movie "Thor: Ragnarok" (where Grandmaster will appear and many fans speculating that Hela will play the role of a "Death" in the Marvel Cinematic Universe) there would be a resurging interest to read that first obscure crossover storyline.

Other fun fact about *Secret Wars* is that the storyline born out of the interest in selling toys,...

...more specifically action figures,...

...since the Distinguished Competition already have a business deal with Kenner, and while Hasbro was already doing “He-Man and the Masters of the Universe”, they want to make a deal with Marvel just in case that thing of “super-heroes” would become profitable, hey! Who knows? Maybe 30 years later they would be making billion-dollar box offices at cinema theaters...

...yes, I know it sound so far-fetched but anything is possible. Hehehe.

FIRST BATTLES AND REINFORCEMENTS

I was positively surprised when I began to read *Secret Wars* that it was managed like a real war, not just a cool word to use in the event’s title, where Jim Starlin was using Captain America as indeed a military tactician (that many writers forget that he is indeed) and even some hints to *Lord of the Rings* battles, where what started as just two groups, heroes and villains, evolved in more complicated teams, however...

...that was in the first issues only.

When the 12-issue event advanced, it was reduced to your cliché super-hero rumble with a big bunch of characters battling uninspired action scenes.

Also, I don’t know why selecting some characters like Doctor Octopus and The Lizard just to barely use them in the storyline without exploiting them in a proper way; while others like Ultron and Kang were reduced to pawns or easily dispatched, when they had been major threats to The Avengers.

Even more insulting, the two initial groups were transported to an artificial world created by the all-powerful Beyonder, and it was supposed to have only those characters in the event, but without explanations (or some pretty weak ones) suddenly new characters started to appear in following issues where even the original characters didn’t know how the new arrivals got there, which I assume was a lack of thoughtful planning before starting to make the event **OR** the usual intervention of the high powers (Marvel Editorial Chiefhood and/or Mattel executives).

BATTLE SCARS

While I think that *Secret Wars* degenerated into your usual super big battle without any plot depth...

...I can’t deny that *Secret Wars* provoked what any fair story aspired to do that it’s causing changings in the status quo, where the characters don’t end in the same as they were before the story.

Spider-Man (aka Peter Parker) changed his famous costume to a new black suit, with mysterious advantages, that I’m sure all of you know that it was so important that Spider-Man’s life never was the same anymore and the rising of a new villain eclipsing the classic villains in his amazing rogues’ gallery.

The Thing (aka Ben Grimm) left The Fantastic Four, causing the first major change in the original roster of the team and the sensational inclusion there of She-Hulk.

The first appearance of Julia Carpenter as a new Spider-Woman, that I already told that I didn’t like arrivals of other characters after selecting the original teams in the event, but I can’t deny that it’s quite relevant that it was here that Julia Carpenter was introduced to the fans.

Colossus (aka Peter Rasputin) and Kitty Pryde were no longer a couple after the event.

And the absence for a year of major players in The Avengers, allow that underused characters, at that moment, proved their worth and rising to a whole new level of respect as characters in the team.
