



## All-Star Superman, Vol. 2

*Grant Morrison , Frank Quitely (Illustrator)*

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**All-Star Superman, Vol. 2** Grant Morrison , Frank Quitely (Illustrator)

In this follow-up to the award-winning All-Star Superman, the Man of Steel goes toe-to-toe with Bizarro, his oddball twin, and the new character Zibarro, also from the Bizarro planet.

### All-Star Superman, Vol. 2 Details

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## From Reader Review All-Star Superman, Vol. 2 for online ebook

### Sam Quixote says

Following the success of All Star Superman Volume 1 comes the next book from the brilliant creative duo of Grant Morrison and Frank Quitely. In this book Superman saves Earth from a Bizarro invasion only to be sucked into a parallel Bizarro world and have his powers taken away; two astronauts from Krypton wind up on Earth while Superman is in this parallel universe and try to start a new Krypton on Earth; meanwhile a poisoned and dying Superman records his last will and faces his final challenges, notably a supercharged Lex Luthor.

If you're a Batman fan like me you'll know that in some of the books Superman is portrayed as a well meaning doofus or a bit of a short sighted arrogant know-it-all. Morrison does the admirable job of making Superman noble and interesting once again, highlighting the fact that Superman is a scientist as well as a hero. The writing is top notch as Frank Quitely's art is breathtaking. In a single panel he can create real tension and horror as Superman is tackled in space by an army of Bizarros or real movement on the page by drawing a truck hitting Super Lex Luthor at speed or Superman taking out a robot by flying through it. He understands and draws scale so well that he truly compliments Morrison's imaginative scope perfectly. Imagine sewing the moon back together with bridges - Quitely draws it and you somehow believe it.

It's a shame to see such dull screen adaptations (Bryan Singer's Superman Returns) of such a great character when stories in books like these show that Superman can be as compelling as any character, maybe more! If only Morrison would agree to write a script for the next Superman movie... oh well, at least we have the book. If you want a great Superman book, this is the one for you. Wonderful story, wonderful art, super book.

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### Karl Kindt says

This worn thin quickly, after the first volume. Morrison made a good decision to only do 12 issues, as his premise is worth about that many issues. Very quick fun. It seems deep, I suppose, in that Morrison is bringing in stuff from outside the comic book world and putting them into a Superman comic. None of it feels very new or fresh, and by the end, when Superman is "creating life" just so he can problem solve, it just became awkwardly apparent that these characters really mean nothing, but instead are just puppets in a seemingly complex puppet show. Fun, but very unfulfilling. Like a really good piece of Red Vines candy. Years ago John Byrne re-did Superman with at least as much intellectual depth, and definitely with twice as much human touch. As with everything I have read by Morrison, he just seems to be farting around, having fun, but ultimately not doing much of any real substance. (P.S. How long did it take Chip Kidd to design the logo? He gets a credit for that? It looks like something I could design with WordArt in Microsoft Word in about 2 minutes. If DC actually paid him for it, whatever they gave him was too much.)

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### Peter Derk says

Although Superman has never been a favorite of mine, I think this book is one of my favorite depictions. The different situations he's in force him to be drawn out a little as a character, and he has to make some tough choices, admit where he's gone wrong, and stay steadfast about the things he's done right. There are also a couple very tender moments not to be forgotten.

After reading Batman, Superman, Animal Man, Authority, JLA...I think Grant Morrison does his best work with the big, blue Boy Scout. You'd think darker characters would be more suited to his skill set, but I wonder if buried under the layers of weird science stuff and bizarre fourth wall breaking there's an optimist of some kind in there.

Anyone read Morrison's Supergods book? Is it any good?

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### **Alex Escalante says**

The wrap up to Morrison's seminal story about Superman is much more focused than the first volume and deals with the plot head on. I think the first volume is an exploration of the wonders of Superman's world, while this volume is the "wrapping up" that Superman has to do before he dies.

Morrison does a great job of moving the plot along and a nice pace but by placing the impending death kind of in the background, it makes every bump in the road that much more exciting. We all know Superman's time is running out, so him being stuck in the Bizarro underworld or him being infected by black kryptonite becomes a race against time.

Again, Quietly brings it in this volume drawing some of the most wonderful scenes in comics. He really knows how to convey motion to such a degree that when someone crashes through something, he draws the panel a second or two after impact so you can see the fragments off whatever is being crashed through hurtling in the air. In the hands of a lesser artist this type of dynamic motion would fall flat and stale. Here, I can see the shards of glass in the air and almost hear them as they drop on the floor.

This is one of the classics of Comic books that belongs right up there with things like Watchmen and Dark Knight Returns. An amazing piece of art consisting of a creative and brilliant story mixed with art that dazzles and consistently impresses.

I'll enjoy rereading this as I get older along with my other favorite books.

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### **Jonathan Ruh says**

The second half of the All Star Superman storyline. As I mentioned in my review for Vol. 1, I don't normally like many Superman stories. Grant Morrison hit all the right marks in this book though. It really sums up the essence of what Superman is really all about. It's not just some guy that wants to save the world with his incredible strength and powers, but someone who draws his strength through his fundamental belief in humanity. Chapter 10 quite possibly has one of the best pages that illustrates this when, in the midst of completing his Herculean labors, Superman suddenly stops to console a suicidal little girl about to jump off the top of a building. Those panels really bring home the message of this story. And for my money, there's one single panel on that page that may quite possibly one of the best things I've ever seen in comics. I'll just refer to it as "the hug." Literally brought tears to my eyes. Just read it.

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### **Mallory says**

So beautiful. I spent a lot of time crying when I read this book. This series pretty much says it all in terms of

why people like Superman. He's a bastion of hope for me. Everyone needs some kind of motivation, something to keep them going when things get tough. For me, Superman is that thing. Grant Morrison does a spectacular job of writing about how deeply Kal-El cares about us, and as much as humankind believes in a savior, he believes in our ability to save ourselves. He believes that there's good in people, and yeah, that might be a very simplistic or naive way of thinking, especially from a fictional character that has so much power and appeal to millions, but every time I finish a Superman comic, especially this one, I feel a little better about humanity.

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### **Nick says**

(2 1/2 stars) For being one of the quintessential Superman stories, I have to say this was a let down. I loved the art, overall, but otherwise there were only a few moments I really liked. The first two parts are Bizarro stories — these have always been terrible and unpleasant to read, no matter the author. After that we finally start solving the problem established in Vol. 1, namely Superman's cells killing him. At this point it started to make a bit more sense: he's on a countdown to his own death and must accomplish certain tasks before he dies. Unfortunately, this does not unfold in a totally clear way. Towards the end, I just wanted it over, and when it was I can't say I was happy.

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### **David says**

As I said with my review of part 1, I am a newbie to the world of graphic novels. I read very few true comics growing up, aside from humor strips like *The Far Side*, *Garfield*, *Peanuts*, etc. I had an affinity for Superman having grown up in awe of the Christopher Reeve films, even the 3rd and 4th ones before I was too artistically astute to know any better. Prior to this, I'd never actually read anything about Superman, but having taken a recent interest in graphic novels and having seen this two-part collection place as #1 on *listopia's* Best of Superman list, I decided to start here. It is absolutely superb!

The two novels together comprise a total of 12 parts. This is not a retelling of Superman from an origin perspective. It is, however, an elegy. It is Superman realizing that he's dying, and in the spirit of Hercules (one of the original superheroes of literature), he undergoes 12 labors including a parallel of the underworld. Grant Morrison's Superman spares no limit to the superhero's power, and infuses such life in the supporting cast. Lex Luthor has depth, and the Clark Kent (and Frank Quietly's artwork) is amazing. Superman is made great and unique among other superheroes in this book by his genuine care for humanity. Thematically rich, this is also a highly imaginative world of technological marvels and science advanced to the limit of imagination. Some things in the volume, such as the aptly named Bizarro world, are just surreal.

I've read the heralded *Watchmen*, and it's the real deal, but I'd give as a whole work a nod to this memorable work on the Man of Steel as the best graphic novel I've read to date.

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### **Sesana says**

The story started in the first volume ends here, and it truly is a complete storyline. There's a lot of seemingly unrelated stuff in here, including a painfully extended bizarro storyline. God, I hate reading bizzaros. There's a Silver Age-y feel to it all, which is not exactly to my taste. But it's competently done. The overarching

storyline is actually pretty interesting, though it's a shame I can't feel the same about the subplots. The art is still Frank Quitely, and still way too round for my tastes. I know that's his style, but that doesn't mean I have to like it. Probably more for Superman fans who know a decent chunk of his history. I am not a big Superman fan, and I don't know terribly much about his history. But after reading All-Star Batman and Robin, it was so, so good to read a book from somebody who understands the character he's writing. Miller has forgotten who Batman is, but Grant Morrison really does seem to understand Superman. (And, if I'm remembering his work on JLA correctly, the rest of the major superheroes as well.) Pleasant enough, even if I am still searching for the Superman story that will make me a convert.

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## Mark says

Grant Morrison's *All-Star Superman* is one of the few Superman comics I've really enjoyed. I think he gets right what most writers get wrong concerning Superman. Most of the time, in order to make a threat credible, due to Superman's great power, writers make Superman so dumb he can't see the obvious threat in front of him to allow it to almost overtake it him, only to get out of it in a rather unconvincing manner at the end by beating the crap out of it.

Morrison avoids that mistake. Rather than making Superman square, corny and ineffective, as he often is, Morrison gets to the core of Superman's greatness, which is that he's ultimately an optimistic character who leads by example, and has more faith in humanity than it has in itself (which I think is actually mentioned in the intro). Superman does get tricked by Lex Luthor in the opening, which has very specific and tragic consequences for the Man of Steel, forcing Superman to reevaluate his life and take care of unfinished business. And while the outcome is inevitable, Superman manages to defeat the opposition over and over again, through his ingenuity and cleverness, rather than with his brawn, much in the same way he does in, say, Superman II and some of the better Superman stories.

Setting it outside of mainstream continuity helps makes it more readable for comics readers. Morrison and the artist give some of the cornier elements of Superman's Silver Age mythology a nice majestic quality that allows *All-Star Superman* to almost, but not quite, transcend the genre. I like his take on most of the supporting characters, especially Lex Luthor, who is written as a narcissistic psychopath, with a pathological obsession with Superman to the point where he blames Superman for his lack of accomplishment but uses all of his resources in an effort to defeat him. The only character I didn't like is Jimmy Olsen, who just comes across as a third-rate reporter of limited talent who does very well following idiotic trends and writing human interest puff pieces.

Still, a good read for comics fans in general, and Superman fans in particular.

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## Troy says

Damn this good. Morrison's imagination is boundless and Quitely's art is gross, ugly, beautiful and perfect. This is a love letter to the optimistic insanity of Superman, and its joy is so infectious that I couldn't resist. This is closer to the 1940s science fiction fantasy than superhero comics, and reflects some of the boundless idealistic science fiction of the 50s, pulpy and hopeful. In the end, what is so surprising about this Superman book is that it's not only a great story about Superman (and has there been many great stories about the god-like Superman?) but it's also emotionally affecting and deeply hopeful in the boundless possibility of the future. It's a hopeful fable about a contemporary god.

## Rizwan says

Wow, a whole lot better than the first volume! With a more definite cohesive unique storyline, engrossing actionpacked developments from the very beginning, and most of all in defining the characterization of Superman, this volume rectified almost all the misgivings I've had with the first one. What this book demonstrated above all else, is that it had **heart**. It defined beautifully what makes Clark Kent *Superman* (at the same time what makes Superman *Clark Kent*), why he's world's most recognizable comicbook character and my most favorite superhero (other than Batman that is, in both cases). Not because he's invincible and the most powerful, but because he has an equally big and strong heart, he never gives up on people and this world, even when they give up on themselves. Even when things are at the darkest, he's a beacon of hope that shows it can and will get better. This is why in spite of being an alien, Superman's pure humanity, kindness and his endless optimism makes up for the most rootable and likable superhero character there can be.

This second half of *All-Star Superman* perfectly portrays it in various situations, as Superman was dying and he's in a rush in doing the final things (or 'labors') he's needed to do before his time runs out. And the ending was a truly EPIC showcase of Superman's full potential and larger than life presence as an icon, saving the people he loves and the world he calls home. A really fun and pleasant read, finally made me understand why it is such a popular and critically acclaimed graphic novel of Superman mythos.

9 out of 10, or 4.5 out of 5.

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## Stephen says

What the...**Huh??**...Not sure what I **missed** along the way, but this story did exactly **bupkis** for me. One of the most **critically acclaimed** and popularly embraced **graphic novels** of the past decade; a landmark portrait of THE iconic superhero...and I couldn't rustle up a damn to give about it.

Honestly, I'm a little crushed.

Granted, as I've mentioned before, Superman is not among my favorite spandexer. I tend to gravitate towards grittier heroes with more snarl to them, and often find the Man of Steel's treacly, "Dudley Do-right" way of handling his business low on the entertainment scale. However, I really was looking forward to this, given the lofty esteem with which it is held, and I don't think my general lack of enthusiasm for the character was much of a factor in my reaction to the story.

So...

After a nettlesome encounter with *All-Star Superman*, Vol. 1 that left me a rather disgruntled and disillusioned fanboy, I came to this hoping that the second half of the story would come together and create a more favorable opinion of the completed work.

Didn't happen. Second verse, same as the first.

## **MY GRIEVANCES:**

1. *The writing.* First and foremost, Grant Morrison did not impress. This is the same gentleman who knocked me assward with his elegant, piquant prose in *Supergods: What Masked Vigilantes, Miraculous Mutants, and a Sun God from Smallville Can Teach Us about Being Human*. The man can flat out compose, and ranks high among the most original and talented writers working in the medium.

But here, his work felt stilted and lacked elegance or any emotional punch. It was completely missing the wow factor.

2. *Worst.Luthor.Ever.* This was my biggest gripe. I don't know who this guy is or where he came from, but this is NOT Lex Luthor:

I'm not just referring to the atrocious art featuring the **Fonzi** collar and the Elvis, "thank you very much" lip-curl. No, bad art I can forgive...mostly. I'm talking about the character himself, what he says, what he does, and how he comports himself while doing so.

Morrison writes Luthor as a petulant dork. This is unacceptable. Lex Luthor is on the shortlist of "Most Likely to Be the Coolest Villain Ever," and this series has him relegated to the role of some bratty science nerd with a schoolyard grudge.

In short, I detested this aspect of the story.

3. *The Unsupporting Cast.* In addition to the hackle reddening/raising portrayal Lex, I wasn't enamored with the remaining supporting cast members either. I get that Lois is despondent over Superman's pending death, but she just came across as so frail and clingy that it irked me. Weak and helpless is not a good look for her. Jimmy and Perry are utterly forgettable, and Steve Lombard deserves special mention because he was an irritant in every panel in which he showed up (which thankfully there are not many).

4. *The Art.* This is the most subjective of areas so take this as you will, but Frank Quitely's art offends my personal aesthetic. My eyes and his work do not get along. Beginning with Volume 1, I was immediately put off by his rendering Superman to look like a retired NFL lineman gone to flab,

And even ignoring the pudgy fetish, so many of the other panels just seem...off. Look at this shot of Supes,

Those legs do not match that torso, the face is all jaw...and is that a saggy, oldman bulge in his grandpa trunks. I won't even address Lex and his World War I cavalry pants with the puffy thighs and the knee-high boots.

Nothing about it appealed to me.

## **THE POSITIVES:**

All the above bitching notwithstanding, there were some things I thought were good, even excellent. For example, there is a terrific moment in which Superman talks a troubled girl out of committing suicide.

This was a nice symbolic instant in which Superman's words are really being spoken to all of us and sum up his unique optimism about humanity.

In addition, the climax was very moving and Supes final gift to his adopted world was wonderfully done.

For me, it was just too little, too late.

2.0 stars.

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### **John Yelverton says**

An absolutely fantastic read as Grant Morrison takes the character back to his roots and 50's nostalgia in this follow up book.

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### **Sumit Singla says**

Not a very compelling read, and rather choppy.

I've never been a great fan of Superman, but I don't think that's clouding my judgment on this one. Frank Quitely does a good job of drawing Clark Kent but his Superman is pudgy and the only thing that stands out from his face is his massive jaw - I think I'd probably look more 'Supermanly' in Spandex than Quitely's version.

Lex Luthor looks like a cheap sidekick of a two-bit villain in a B-flick. Nowhere close to the evil genius, and the epitome of villainy.

I thought the ending was decent, but overall the story doesn't deserve more than 2 stars.

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### **Stephen says**

The only flaws here are in your expectations. What more, exactly, could you have expected from a death-of-Superman story? It's a little disjointed, yes...but that's primarily because it has five decades worth of Superman mythos to encapsulate and wrap up in just a couple hundred pages. If you think Morrison didn't do a spectacular job with this, try to imagine yourself writing something like the final Star Trek story, including a modernist survey of ALL things Star Trek into a single one-hour show, and see how satisfied the fan boys out there will be with your efforts.

The art in this book does so much for your mind, and it just keeps giving you more and more.

Some dimwits out there want to complain that Superman looks lumpy. Well, did you ever see a body builder after they put on a shirt? All that definition is just smoothed out and they just look plumper than others around them, that's all. This is an example of Quitely doing his job of looking beyond what others have drawn for decades (mostly improperly, I might add).

I am not the biggest Grant Morrison fan by any stretch of the imagination, but this is Superman done right. This kind of storyline should have been kept alive rather than the incredible suck known as the New 52. That killed it for me. I'm pretty much done with DC. And now that Comcast owns it, I can sleep just fine at night knowing that I'm not giving those dingdongs any more of my money. But I still have my copy of All-Star Superman and it stands out as a shining paragon of modern comics and what was possible when someone

cared enough to give fans more than they expected.

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### **Alan says**

Despite being a huge Grant Morrison fan, I've avoided his critically acclaimed 'All-Star Superman' for some years now. I've owned it since it was first collected, and I don't really know why I never felt to read it, but I think it might subconsciously have something to do with the fact that I generally don't do out-of-continuity stories. Considering that DC Comics continuity in particular is so fluid and senseless, and the fact that (as Alan Moore so humbly put it in his own Superman classic) these are all "imaginary" stories anyway, this seems a rather anal point of contention to hold. And, yet, the inner fanboy in me can't help but sneer and tell me I'm wasting my time every time I might read a story that isn't part of the official lore. This is the same subconscious idiocy that has caused me to miss out on the entire Marvel "Ultimate" line.

But, as I've now finally discovered, to regard Grant Morrison and Frank Quitely's 'All-Star Superman' as a mere out-of-continuity story, or the "All-Star" comics as DC's equivalent to Marvel's "Ultimate" line, is missing the point entirely, and a terrible shame. Rather, 'All-Star Superman' represents the quintessential Superman. Grant Morrison, a comic book writer of almost legendary proportions who has written Superman and other characters for decades, has woven together the perfect Superman story, a story which completely sums up the essence of the character. If there is one defining Superman story, then this is it. Yes, it isn't "in continuity", but it is so much more than that. If you've never read a Superman comic before, this is the place to start; if you're fully versed in the mythology of Superman already, read this and appreciate it more. Put simply, this is one of the best and most enjoyable comics I've ever read.

I enjoyed this volume, the second and final instalment reprinting the 12 issue maxi-series, slightly more than the first one. Where the first vol. contained six interconnected self-contained stories, this is the one where everything comes together and the story really comes to its own. But be sure that you read the whole thing as a cohesive whole. There's a one-volume edition out there which reprints all 12 issues, and that would probably be the ideal way of reading this.

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### **Anne says**

Volume 2 nicely wraps up All-Star Superman: Volume 1. Morrison does an incredible job reminding us just why Superman is *still* what everyone automatically thinks of when imagining a superhero. He manages to suck all of the *cheesiness* out of a character who is primarily known for being a goody-goody, and point out that honesty, integrity, forgiveness, and self-sacrifice are actually pretty *cool*.

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### **Tyler Hill says**

I'd read both volumes of All-Star Superman before, but had unfortunately read them roughly a year apart from each other, which undermined their power a little... so I used a lull in my reading to revisit both volumes back-to-back. And, now having done so, I can say with some confidence that these are my favorite Superman stories I've read.

As far as superhero comics go, I've always been a X-Fan, with most of the monthly titles I read being some branch of the X-men franchise. That said, when Superman is written correctly, I might argue that no "idea"

in comics resonates more strongly. I'm not sure if it's his iconic nature, or the underlying message the basic strength and power of just being a good and decent person; but there is something about the character that inspires in a way that few other characters (comic or otherwise) can. Though I don't collect Superman comics regularly, I often find myself frustrated with people who claim the character is boring or deride his boy-scout nature. In the right writers hands, he's a character who provides opportunities like no other. And, in a world where most superheroes are obligated to be gritty and conflicted, his fundamental decency is almost a breath of fresh air.

Both of these points are on full display in these two wildly inventive volumes. Morrison, and writer with no shortage on big ideas is able to run wild here, creating a tale that is truly larger than life. The twelve issues that make up this series are filled with threats and ideas that literally change worlds and span galaxies. But, what might surprise people more is how positive and optimistic this tale is. Morrison is known for his darker tales, like "the Invisibles," but here he crafts a tale about a Superman faced with his own mortality and legacy... and ultimately creates a tale of hope. A tale about individuals and people. A tale perfectly encapsulated in Superman's own words in the tenth issue: "It's never as bad as it seems. You're much stronger than you think you are. Trust me."

It's a wonderful message and a wonderful series.

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## **Mike says**

While the first volume seemed a bit kitschy, this one feels full of reverence for the big guy. Each story feels full of life and pathos, proly not least because we're careening towards the death of Superman (again).

Funniest moment? Emergence of the Green Lantern (not to be missed).

Love letter to Superman indeed. Morrison writes amazing stuff when he really puts his heart into it, and Qitely paints some incredible pictures (with actual depth and variety) when he make the effort.

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