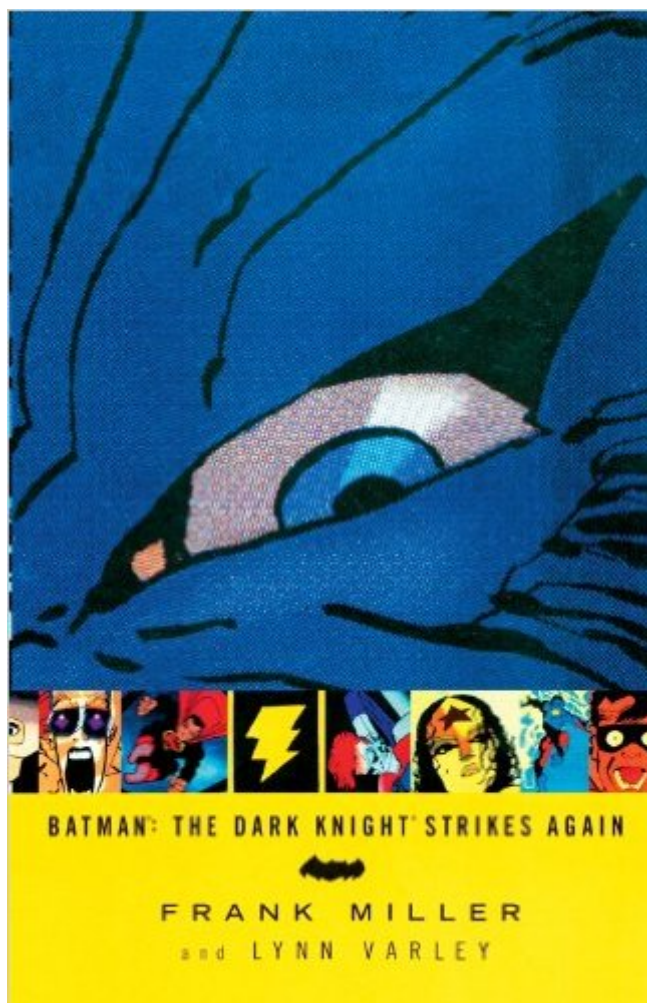


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Batman: The Dark Knight Strikes Again



Synopsis

It's been three years since the events of *The Dark Knight Returns*, and everything is just fine. At least on the surface. What the world at large doesn't know is that it's a total sham. A perfectly choreographed, pretty little world where everything that's ugly, or even potentially disturbing, is all nicely wrapped up with neat little ribbons and swept under the carpet. Only he knows better. He's watched it fester to near-breaking point, and it's time for the only free man left who can effect any real change to bring it all down around their ears once and for all. The Dark Knight returns once again with a vitality unseen since the first years of his war on crime. Together with his army of Bat-soldiers, including Carrie Kelley "formerly Robin, and now the new Catgirl" the Dark Knight wages a new war on a diseased world that's become completely lost. *The Dark Knight Strikes Again* features appearances by such DC icons as Superman, Wonder Woman, Green Arrow, Martian Manhunter, the Atom, the Question and more. But are they still the World's Greatest Heroes or part of the conspiracy? This incredible volume, designed by multiple award-winner Chipp Kidd, features a new introduction by Miller commenting on returning to the world he created fifteen years ago. The book includes the complete 3-part story, plus numerous sketches and other never-before-seen material.

Book Information

Series: Batman

Paperback: 256 pages

Publisher: DC Comics (January 1, 2004)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1563899299

ISBN-13: 978-1563899294

Product Dimensions: 6.6 x 0.4 x 10.1 inches

Shipping Weight: 15.5 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 3.0 out of 5 stars See all reviews (432 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #19,628 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #84 in Books > Comics & Graphic Novels > Publishers > DC #144 in Books > Comics & Graphic Novels > Graphic Novels > Superheroes #3030 in Books > Teens

Customer Reviews

Just to let you know where I stand, I'm a former comics collector who tired of the excesses of the medium and its perpetual recycling of characters and storylines. However, I admired Frank Miller's

"Dark Knight Returns" for its cinematic storytelling, sharp wit and unexpected vision of a world that no longer wanted superheroes. Set three years later, "The Dark Knight Strikes Again" presents this world in an even more nightmarish fashion that I found both intriguing and repellant. Here, a grotesque Lex Luthor has quietly siezed control of the presidency (for what ends, we're not yet sure), Superman plays his pliant pawn, and the exiled Batman decides he must upend this future society drunk on prosperity and a soft form of fascism. This first chapter begins as Batman and a band of Bat-themed revolutionaries free several imprisoned heroes. And as an old fan, I found Miller's reimaginings of stock DC characters fascinating. The Flash now is bitter and cynical. The Atom, long a third-tier character, is recast as a gutsy tough guy. And I was pleased that Miller allowed Superman to state a convincing case for siding with the despots (which still fit the character's more simplistic, utilitarian philosophy). What I found even bolder--and, in the end, most difficult to swallow--was Miller's deliberately crude drawing style. He no longer delineates characters as much as simply suggests them with scratchy etches and thick blotches of shadow, and pays only lip service to realistic perspective. At its best, this style brings a weighty and disquieting quality to the book that you rarely find in comics. I occasionally was reminded of Picasso's late-period pen-and-ink work.

What's not to love here? "The Dark Knight Strikes Again" dares to go where no DC comic has ever gone before! How? Unlike the usual depictions of Superman, where he is shown as being somewhat intelligent - or at least minimally above average - here Superman is depicted as a total tool. He's a completely incompetent moron. He stands around helplessly wringing his hands while innocents suffer. Isn't this a great take on Superman? Something we've never seen before? I might have expected that from a parody comic, but this is coming direct from DC! Cool. Braniac is different too. Now he looks like a giant, godzilla-sized frog who likes to terrorize cities. As you might imagine, this looks very, very intimidating. It's a far cry from the cold, detached machine intelligence we've come to know and love over the years. It's hip. It's happenin'. It's got more of an "earthy" feel to it. Am I right? Lex Luthor now looks like a giant Kingpin clone, except with bad acne. And with fists larger than most people's heads. Rather than use his brain to coolly and methodically strategize to destroy his enemies, he prefers to just yell and shout a lot like an oversized troll, albeit hairless. And speaking of hairless people, old Bruce Wayne finally lost his. It's a bit of a startling look for him, but I guess a comb-over just wouldn't have cut it for the man behind The Bat. And in the (very) few times in this comic we actually get to see Batman, he's wearing a cape and cowl over his aged, liver-spotted head anyway. So no matter. We are introduced to an incredibly awesome new hero:

Catgirl! She has the extremely cool power of wearing skin-tight leopard-skin leotards! (Try saying that 5 times fast!) She also likes to shout out random words, like "Chucks!"

I used to be a hardcore fan of Frank Miller. I mean, growing up through the 80's and 90's, I would just buy anything with the guy's name on it cause you could always trust that it would be great. Longtime comix fans know what I'm talking about. You didn't even have to flip through the pages of a new Frank Miller book at the store to see if it was worth buying. You could just bank on it. A new Frank Miller book was ALWAYS worth buying. Great writing. Great, powerful artwork. He was a modern master of the form. For years and years, this was true. But... the first time I remember thinking "Ooo, Frank - You dropped the ball on this one." Was about halfway through his book "That Yellow Bastard", around 1995 or 96. The artwork looked rushed and hacked-out. Since then, the quality of his work has only continued to decline. It is to the point where I can no longer justify spending my money on his material. I am convinced that the man has either developed a serious alcohol/substance abuse problem, or he just doesn't care about the quality of his work (or entertaining his readers) anymore. There's just no other explanation. If you think I am being unfair, go back and compare the artwork in "To Hell and Back" with the artwork in the first "Sin City" novel. Talk about your stylistic inconsistencies. It's impossible to believe that this is even the work of the same man. Well, "The Dark Knight Strikes Again" is, for me, the final straw. Look at it. It's a mess. Can you imagine a newcomer to the comics field turning material like this in to their editor? They would never work again. I'm guessing the only reason DC Comics went ahead and published "DKSA" is because they know it will sell based on Miller's (and Batman's) name value, and because they had to make back the money they paid Miller to do this job.

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