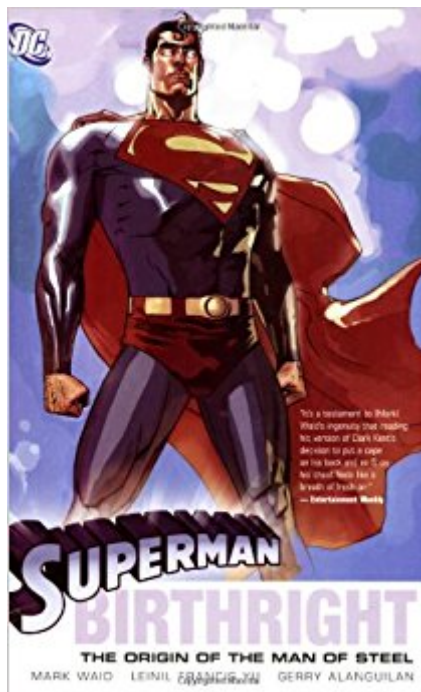


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Superman: Birthright



Synopsis

The whole world knows that Superman fights for truth and justice...but why does he? What drives a farmboy from Kansas to divide his life between posing as a mild-mannered reporter and embarking on a career as a super-hero? Superman: Birthright tells the exciting origin of The Man of Steel, incorporating his vast and colorful legend into a brand-new epic tale...a battle to save both the legacy of Krypton and the future of Metropolis! This volume collects Superman: Birthright #1-12.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Superman's origins have been imagined and reimagined over the years. Here is a new take on the character's roots. Superman: Birthright retells the early chapters of Superman's story, from escape as an infant from the doomed planet Krypton to arrival as reporter Clark Kent at the Daily Planet and his first public exploits. Writer Waid puts his own spin on the legend, rethinking nearly every aspect of the venerable character while remaining respectful of his established history. Waid wisely integrates ideas from the popular TV series smallville but doesn't slavishly follow its innovations; for instance, a young Lex Luthor befriends Clark in high school, but unlike in the series, his sinister nature is clear even then. Waid similarly tweaks the rest of the well-known cast, from Lois Lane and Clark's other Planet colleagues to Ma and Pa Kent. Ironically, though he updates the character, Waid evokes Superman's pre-World War II incarnation, whom his Depression-reared creators kept engaged in righting society's ills. Leinil Francis Yu's stylized artwork is expressively dynamic to the point of caricature, but this larger-than-life visual approach befits the retelling of a myth. Gordon Flagg

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"Birthright has everything a Superman fan could want...Mark Waid was born to write Superman."
"BrokenFrontier"...a rich retelling and revamping of Superman's origin.
"The Fourth Rail

Superman is one of the most scrutinized comic book heroes, as everyone has their own ideal image of what the Man of Steel ought to be. As a result, when even the most minute detail of Superman is changed or reworked, whatever issue or collection this was done in is labeled with negativity. Sometimes it is small, other times, not so much. For the life of me, I cannot see how Birthright could, in any way, offend a Superman fan, long-time or new (unless having Clark becoming a vegetarian is sacrilege to you). The writing is outstanding. Mark Waid, author of my favorite comic Kingdom Come, has a firm grasp on the character of Superman. Additionally, he can portray the whole cast of Superman characters, from Lois to Lex, with wit, energy, and engaging dialogue. The story is very linear, despite it literally crossing continents. The chapters are not broken up by issue covers, which is a double-edged sword. On one hand, the story flows without stopping. On the other hand, I find these natural breaks allow for material to be digested. This is minor, and doesn't reflect the quality of writing, but I felt it is important enough to make note of. The plot is extraordinary, and respects the history of Superman while also creating something new for the reader to enjoy. There is humor, tragedy, and adventure in Birthright, exposing the reader to several flavors of Superman stories. The origin of Lex Luthor is especially enjoyable, as it both humanizes and demonizes the megalomaniac. This is an origin story, but it's refreshing and deep. Superman's origin was given for years as just one page containing all the essentials. It takes skill to expand on this and make it interesting. Waid does this with ease. The art is great, though it took some getting used to. It's not really comparable to any other art I am familiar with in terms of style. Yu uses very angular shapes and figures, but rest assured, they are not abstract Picasso renderings. The cover chosen for this collection does not reflect the best art from Yu, so if it made you hesitate, don't worry. Yu's style really works for Superman, especially his wide, open shots that are frequently used to define this interpretation of Superman. At times, his facial expressions appear a little too angular to work, but this is infrequent. It's an interesting dichotomy, as certain aspects appear very realistic, while other panels are pure comic-book abstracts. Yu is something unique, and I'm glad this title had his talent. Overall, this is an easy recommendation. It's not the most thought-provoking work on Superman, but it is one of his greatest appearances. Don't confuse my previous remarks as saying

Birthright is vanilla, because it's not. This is a clean, classic Superman that is placed in brutal real-world environments with both fantastic and all-too real villains. If you are just getting into reading Superman, I can think of no better place than Birthright to start with. It's undeniably great, and captures the true essence of Superman.

After more than 60 years, DC Comics decided it was time to revisit the origins of Superman. For this, they turned to the Golden Ages biggest fans, Mark Waid. And Waid did not disappoint. Birthright is not the story of Clark Kent as a teenager, as you might expect from reading the description. The story starts out when Kal-El is 25, breaking into the reporting game and desperately searching for a purpose in life. From there, Waid reconstructs all the major elements of the Superman mythos, from his parents, his disguise as Clark Kent, and his relationship to his main antagonist, Lex Luthor. Other than Kurt Busiek, Mark Waid may be the best comics writer alive when it comes to stories like this; hopeful, and light-hearted with just enough edge to keep them from being cheesy. This volume has tons of great jokes and jaw-dropping moments to make it worthy of being one of Superman's all time great stories.

I'm a fairly new Superman fan -- I got into the character last fall thanks to a roommate who really loved Smallville. When BVS came out, I was hooked even further. This comic is perfect for people who love the Welling and Cavill takes on Superman, as well as the people who appreciate really early Golden Age Superman. Clark has a phenomenal social conscience, and his work as a reporter is just as important as his work as Superman. Additionally, if you were confused by the way Lex Luthor was portrayed in BVS, you can clearly see the comics basis of that version of the character here. Desperate, hurt, and interminably lonely, the teenager Clark knew in Smallville in this story could quite easily have grown into the man who tried to kill him in BVS. Overall, I love Birthright, and I really need to read some of Waid's other Superman work!

If you've ever asked this question, then this is the title for you. It is one of (if not the) best tellings of Superman's origin story. A truly definitive Superman story, and that's in large part because author Mark Waid understands one key thing about Superman. The "super" part is not what makes him interesting, it's the "man", the doofey, corn-fed, Kansas farmboy that just wants to do good, help people, and make his parents proud of him. This volume also introduces my favorite versions of most of Superman's supporting cast: Martha Kent as a computer savvy, UFO enthusiast, Jonathan Kent (not dead for once) as the concerned but ultimately loving father, Lois Lane tough-as-nails,

whip smart and utterly fearless. Lex Luthor as a truly terrifying menace who knows he can't stand toe-to-toe with Superman, so instead of climbing into a ridiculous green suit and fighting anyway, he uses his greatest assets: his brain, his viciousness, and his limitless resources. If you prefer a Superman that makes out with Wonder Woman and spends his days beating up god-like creature, then I pass no judgment but to me that's not Superman, and you'll certainly need to look elsewhere. This will, in all likelihood, not be your cup of tea.

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