



52

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The epic follow-up to *Infinite Crisis*-starring the superheroes of the DC Comics universe.

Earth's greatest protectors-Superman, Batman, and Wonder Woman-have vanished. The cities of Metropolis and Gotham are overrun with criminal activity both on the streets and behind the closed doors of powerful corporations as villains take advantage of the absence of superheroes.

In their place stand the veteran and rookie heroes they inspired. From popular media personality Booster Gold and the enigmatic Question to the mysterious vigilante Batwoman and the secretive Supernova, these heroes are the only ones who can turn the tide against a vast conspiracy of evil determined to take control of the planet.

This is the story of one year without the world's greatest superheroes. Twelve months. 365 days. 52 weeks.

52 Details

Date : Published July 3rd 2007 by Ace Trade (first published 2007)

ISBN : 9780441015078

Author : Greg Cox

Format : Paperback 368 pages

Genre : Sequential Art, Graphic Novels, Comics, Science Fiction, Fantasy, Superheroes, Dc Comics

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Jim C says

A novel that is set in the DC universe. This one takes place right after *Infinite Crisis*. Superman, Batman, and Wonder Woman are not around to save the day and lesser known heroes fill their shoes. This book has three different storylines that deal with Booster Gold, Batwoman, and the Question and all three storylines will intersect.

I have to first say that Greg Cox does a fantastic job with the novelization of the comic books. I am not the most ardent DC follower but I had no problem with the lesser known heroes and villains. During my read I never felt like I was reading comic books. The fight scenes were descriptive and does a terrific job with the characterization. The journey for Renee Montoya is a great arc.

The problem with this book is the material from the comic books. It just never completely grabbed me. Even though it kept me interested I never got to the point where I was anticipating what happened next. That being said I was going to give this a higher rating but then I read the last twenty pages. I did not care for the culmination of the Booster Gold storyline. I had no problem with him but his foe. To me, it was silly. Maybe the more serious reader will enjoy it but for the casual reader it missed the mark.

I think this novel would be enjoyed much more by the serious readers of this universe. The casual reader will feel indifferent to these events and most likely be asking "Where are the characters that I care for?".

Jake H. says

This is overall an accurate condensation of the 52 comic book line. The characters are wonderfully written, and their arcs, especially Booster Gold's, are fantastic. The plot starts out slowly, but the tension slowly builds. The only real complaint I have is that some aspects of the story are rushed and given too little detail. Overall 52 gets 4/5 stars

David Monroe says

This is the novelization of DC Comics 52, Vol. 1 by Greg Cox, one of the best and most reliably entertaining professional Media Tie-In writers working. The original comics series, now bundled into several volumes of Trades, was a herculean yearlong series published by DC from May 2006 to May 2007.

The story takes place between the events of *Infinite Crisis* and the *One Year Later* story-lines of Wonder Woman, Superman, and Batman.

"It was a year without DC's greatest heroes. There would be others to take their place."

While Superman, Batman and Wonder Woman appear occasionally throughout the story, the main focus is on the rest of the DCU as it functions without its iconic heroes, devoting most of its time to second and third string characters, including some who had been all but abandoned at the end of *The Silver Age*. While plot lines and various characters flow in and out of each other, there are three main plot threads that weave throughout the book. They are (minor spoilers ahead):

Glory-seeking hero from the future, Booster Gold, attempts to become the next big name superhero in the absence of Superman. This completely unravels as newcomer Supernova captures the public's attention. Meanwhile, his robot companion, Skeets begins to suffer from continual temporal distortions, forcing Booster to turn to Rip Hunter (the time traveling hero) for help.

Former GCPD Detective Renee Montoya, vacillating between alcohol and hook-ups to ease the pain over the death of her partner Crispus Allen, is recruited by The Question to investigate the expanding activities of Intergang. Their journey together becomes just as much about saving her from herself as it does the rest of the world from this new Super Crime Syndicate.

The semi-reformed semi-immortal super-villain, Black Adam continues to rule over the nation of Kahndaq where he begins a new war against crime by publicly (and very messily) executing any super criminal that comes within his borders. Things begin to change though as decides to build his own version of Billy Batson's Marvel family. They try to convince him to follow a less bloody path.

If you're familiar with the comics series, you may be disappointed to know that Cox's novelization leaves out some important story-lines. Specifically (again, minor spoilers, though not for this book): Luthor's Everyman Project; the Religion of Crime; the Great Ten; Ralph Digby's revenge quest and eventual decent into alcoholism and madness; the space heroes; Steel and Natasha, and Metal Men creator, Will Magnus. For me, the Digby story was the one that I most missed, and I think the book suffers a little for it, but unless they wanted to cut it into two mammoth door-stops, these cuts had to be made.

Fast-paced, well-written and great characterizations, especially for Montoya. The book is completely stand-alone and beyond knowing the bare bone basics of the DCU, you don't have to have any prior knowledge of the events in the comics in order to enjoy 52.

Drew Perron says

The original 52 maxiseries was a fun but flawed work, with high highs and low lows. This book, understandably, had to pick and choose from the storylines of the weekly series; unfortunately, they chose to cut some of the most interesting. The result preserves most of the lows and tosses out many of the highs. It's not a bad read, but I recommend the original comics.

Jason says

While some of the writing was kind of "meh" - I'll give Greg Cox major props getting 52 weeks worth of multiple comic storylines down to 1 coherent book. I have a new appreciation for the character of Black Adam as well... great story arc. I wouldn't really recommend this book for anyone who isn't a fan of DC or comics in general. Definitely an interesting experience "reading" about these characters rather than seeing them inked out, especially with such a sprawling, epic story.

Keith Bell says

Story of what happens when the Big 3 (Superman, Wonder Woman and Batman) are not around. (Events between Infinite Crisis and Final Crisis). Good story with lots of twists (almost too many). A couple of the

story lines are good enough and would have been better as separate stories all together.

COOLEST thing to come out of this though, is that I did some research on Captain Marvel Jr. and found him to have been an influence on Elvis's look. Way Cool!!

Marzouq says

There is nothing more enticing then a book that brings out your imagination and you can't seem to put down. This is the book that brought back memories, in a world where superheroes have to fight without the powers of Superman, Wonder woman, or Batman to help. Its an amazing story that pulls you in and ties everything together, I loved it and couldn't get enough of it. This would be my book of the year.

David says

First, let me say that the author who adapted this material did a GREAT job with it. He managed to draw wonderful word pictures with fantastic prose, solid similes, and expand on the thinking and characterization of the characters.

Sadly, the material he had to work with didn't really excite me much. First, I was unfamiliar with this particular series, and the image of Superman, Batman, and Wonder Woman at the top of the cover was extremely misleading. We saw absolutely no appearance of these characters, with the exception of some minor scenes with Clark Kent.

Further, the novel focused on minor characters from the DC universe, as well as offering appearances of Golden Aged characters (that I thought were from Earth-2) and emphasis on the Black Marvel character known as Black Adam. Of all of the characters presented, I enjoyed Booster Gold the most-- sadly he was heavily featured early on and then the focus shifted.

The title "52" remains ambigious to me. Did it refer to 52 weeks without Superman or the missing 52 minutes that followed the "Infinity Crises"--

The Giant Time eating Butterfly was a completely stupid plot device in my opinion and by that point I was only sticking around because I thought it would redeem itself. Sadly, it never really got there for me....

Cox deserves better material to adapt. I can't say enough about the quality of his writing and how he fleshed out this material so well. But the material just wasn't my bag, though others might have liked it.

Max Ostrovsky says

I had comic book major story arc novelizations. Somehow (I don't remember how), this book found its way into my classroom. I wish it could have walked off before I wasted my time reading it. While better than the novelization of Infinite Crisis (chaotic and incoherent), its flaws in writing style, capturing emotion, characterization, were too overwhelming and cheap.

Jeph says

I listened to 52 in Audiobook form which was an experience unto itself. 52 is a series of comic books/graphic novels in the DC universe. It immediately follows the Infinite Crisis series and follows a few choice storylines of the comic series. In 52, following the Infinite Crisis, Wonder Woman, Batman and Superman are all missing or out of action. It is left to the rookies and sub-heroes of the world to fill the shoes.

Fans of Justice League and especially Justice League Unlimited will recognize the main characters such as Booster Gold, The Question, Black Adam and Captain Marvel.

The comics or paperbacks are worth reading for the story, but the audiobook is especially worth listening to for the experience. 52 is what every audiobook should be. 52 is read by a full cast of actors and is complete with great voice acting, background noise, accurate sound effects and a soundtrack that this reader wishes could be found on iTunes.

A word of warning however: 52 is not for children or the faint of heart. The book is violent and contains adult situations at times. Fans of audiobooks and comic books alike should definitely give 52 or any other novels by Graphic Audio a listen.

BookMarc says

The concept of DC Universe's novel '52' is very original in that it deals with a year in the life of earth without it's main superhero guardians...Batman, Superman and Wonder Woman. It comprises of 52 chapters with each chapter dealing with the events that occur within that particular week. The focus of the novel then is actually built around characters that are not so familiar in the mainstream and, although I had my trepidations as I wasn't familiar with some of them, this turned out to be surprisingly enjoyable. For instance, due to Batman et al being world renowned characters there's only so much that can be done with them as their personalities need to have a degree of consistency whereas lesser known characters can be the subject of a more risqué plot or storyline. One such storyline is the lesbian relationship between Batwoman (front center on the cover) and Officer Renee Montoya which fills their particular dealings in this novel with sexual tension and emotional turmoil. Another storyline, and one of the main plots in this novel, tells the story of Black Adam, who is the Middle Eastern equivalent of Superman without the restraint and emotional control. Black Adam. I wasn't familiar with good ol' Black Adam until this novel and although he has some major character flaws (like getting angry with Renee Montoya for missing his wedding reception due to her being busy having sex with a beautiful woman she just met. Personally, I just can't hate her for that!), which just made him more human, I loved the character. He is introduced to the reader in the novel when he kills several supervillains in public in order to make an example of them...now, that's justice I can relate to. Unfortunately he is consumed with blind rage when his wife, Isis, is killed by one of the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse and he slaughters a city of two million people with his bare hands as it is the base of the Four Horsemen. Being DC Universe the Horsemen don't come about due to a Christian end of times and are basically lifted from the Bible and put into the story as supervillains.

Other main characters in this novel are the time traveler Booster Gold (the dorky looking guy on the cover) and The Question (who completes the three forefront characters), Lex Luthor, the Teen Titans and Captain Marvel. As with a lot of the DC Universe prose novels the story jumps around a bit from one storyline to the other but, unlike other DC novels, there aren't an over abundance of characters or storylines so as to leave

you confused as to what the heck is going on.

I loved the Black Adam storyline and the Renee Montoya/The Question storyline was also intriguing. Didn't care as much for the Booster Gold parts of the book as the character was too immature and dumb for my liking but my guess is that's why he was included...as comic relief in an otherwise tense and violently charged novel. I would highly recommend this book for someone who wants to read a more adult oriented superhero novel that varies from the normal superheroes which usually sell this type of prose novel.

Earl says

The only disappointing part is that in the end of The 52, we are back to zero as if all the major events in the first 51 episodes have been rendered barely significant. Well, maybe except for Black Adam.

Marcus says

How many stars does a "meh" rate?

Okay, it wasn't terrible. At times it just seemed contrived. Superman, Batman, & Wonder Woman are all out of action or otherwise engaged. Similarly, their arch nemesis are also absent (Lex Luthor, Joker, et al). It was like, "Hey, I've conveniently gotten heroes a/b/c and villains x/y/z out of the picture so now I can play with minor heroes d/e/f..."

Then you have Black Adam (from the Captain Marvel series) sharing center stage with Booster Gold (superhero from the future) and a disgraced detective working with someone called the Question. First of all, try as I might, I can't think of a single relevant connection between the Booster Gold plotline & Black Adam's/Question. I kept waiting for them to come together but it never happened. So really, the author could have pulled either thread without affecting the overall plot.

I personally don't like the Marvel series in general. They've always been depicted as being invulnerable... except when they're not. It just had a bit of hokiness to it but the author was true to the DC mythos. One minute nothing can touch Adam, the next, he's bruised and bleeding.

There were also some word choices in the narrator voice that struck me as odd, "stink-eyes", "freak out" and: "He lifted her off the floor, giving her the full Darth Vader treatment."

I think the problem is that the tone of the narration seems to flip flop between formal and conversational and the shift wasn't smooth.

I don't know, it just didn't wow me.

Scott says

A three-star rating solely for the fact that the "Multi-verse" is a bit beyond me. I must be too old or something. The writing was good, the story (eventually) kept me coming back to the book ... it's just difficult for me to rate a book with so many heroes whom I've never heard of. I did learn about them (through necessity) and once I did that, it helped.

Matt Randall says

The thing I liked most about this book is that they didnt include the big three (Superman, Wonder Woman, and Batman) instead they focused on a bunch of minor characters. Decent plot and pace throughout.
