



Marvel Masterworks: The Silver Surfer, Vol. 1

Stan Lee , John Buscema (Illustrator)

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In order to save his beloved homeworld of Zenn-La, Norrin Radd sacrificed himself, becoming the herald of Galactus. Upon coming to Earth, he rediscovered his humanity and betrayed his world-devouring master. Now bound to his new home, this protector of purity wages war against the ultimate evil. Collects Silver Surfer (Vol. 1) #1-6

Marvel Masterworks: The Silver Surfer, Vol. 1 Details

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From Reader Review Marvel Masterworks: The Silver Surfer, Vol. 1 for online ebook

Kami says

- That was my favorite intro by Stan Lee so far! It was really funny and very Stan.
 - The Silver Surfer comics really show the weaknesses of mankind. It is kind of sad.
 - I don't know if I'd help save Earth after being treated so poorly. Why does the Silver Surfer care for the people of Earth so much?
 - The Silver Surfer is one tormented soul. I feel really bad for the guy.
 - It was really fun and interesting to learn how the Silver Surfer became what he is and how he became the servant of Galactus.
 - I liked all the appearances from other comics as well, especially Thor and Loki.
 - I loved the artwork! It was very beautiful and well done! The Silver Surfer traveled to so many different places. I was impressed that the artist kept coming up with different scenery.
-

Aaron Wiener says

Am I nostalgic? Sure... but even taking that into account, the brilliance on these pages is impossible to deny.

Penned by the "The Man" himself, this is the series "The Surfer" deserved. His early battles, his early woes and his origin are all brought to life by the highly skilled John Buscema (whose work I heretically prefer over Jack Kirby's... shhhh, don't tell anyone.)

I like this naive, noble but kinda depressed Radd. He's a good guy, and he's true to himself. Buried underneath his self flagellative longing for Shalla-Ball is a refreshing optimism... a hope for a better tomorrow and a belief in a better humanity.

If you love Marvel comics, The Silver Surfer, or just great stories, this is required reading.

Matt Garcia says

Incredible collection of a sometimes overlooked super hero. The artwork is absolutely amazing and the eye-popping colors make it a wonderful sight to behold. Silver Surfer's dialogue contains a perfect blend of poetic and noble qualities that make it endearing to the reader. Fantastic read.

Jonathan Briggs says

All credit to Stan Lee's imagination. He helped create many of the greatest comix characters in the history of the artform. As a writer, however, hoo boy, is that a different story. If I were a 10-year-old or a filthy hippie baked out of my mind, I'm sure I'd enjoy this collection from Marvel's early days. But I just couldn't get my 40-year-old head in the right mindset (empty) to properly appreciate this goofy book. There is some Ed Wood-caliber camp value to be had in the ludicrous plotting and the overwrought dialog. It's hilarious that the Surfer fights invisible monsters while talking to himself nonstop, then wonders why people wanna lock him up. It's dopey fun. Probably worth reading just for the scene in which Ben Grimm emerges from the shower with his head covered in shampoo. What the hell does the Thing have to shampoo??!!

Kevin Mann says

My 5 star review is a bit misleading. That is mainly due to the mind-blowing kirby-esque jaw-dropping BIG JOHN Buscema art. While i read some silver surfer when i was a kid, mainly his appearances as a frequent guest star, one thing that stuck with me was his on-going characterization as a backwards, "i cannot undestand your world" paranoid schitzo, but a usually well-meaning schitzo. Well, this book is the blueprint for that and it is definetly "of it's times" --the 60s! Much of the over-wrought ultra serious STAN LEE writing is unintentionally hilarious and you will find yourself laughing out loud many times. Sometimes during serious, heavy moments. The dialogue is stilted and wooden and comical, but this oddly adds to it's charm and makes it different from anything else out there. Stan's attempts at creating parallels between 1960s earth crisis point world issues and problematic things plagueing the Surfer's world, both internal and external, do demonstate stan hadnt totally "lost it" , some of it is quite profound and will make you stop and think. Now for John's art, i had many issue runs from the 70s, of Marvel reprints of 60s AVENGERS & 60s/70s FANT. FOUR, so i was already familiar with his better work from his 60s hey-day. I was pleasantly surprised to learn This is better than even his 60s avengers work, which i quite like, still to this day. His kirby-esque detailing and out of the box, beyond the norm creativity, especially with unorthodox angles to show the surfer in space/earth orbit make you stand up and notice. It is groundbreaking, STILL! For me, this compilation was worth buying for the art. And they sneak a silver surfer JACK KIRBY (w/ stan lee) story into the back of it after the first 6 SS issues! This is the cherry on top!-- I didnt much care for the short "comedy" piece at the end, it seemed out of place, although some of it is dead-on pointing out the surfer's overwrought hystriionics with everything.....uh...excelsior!

Doctor Alpha says

If you can find the first story of Norrin Radd as a separate issue, go and take that over this unreadable drivel. John Buscema art is nice, but Stan Lee writing is like being face-raped by a collapsing empire state building, which is aggravated by the fact that the "genius" behind the creation of Silver Surfer thought it was a good idea to destroy his character's most prominent attitude as an intergalactic ambitious traveler AFTER ONE ISSUE because of a stupid and idiotic barrier. No surprise this abominable run was so short-lived. If you want a readable Silver Surfer Run, you'd better start with Steve Eaglehart and the even better Ron Marz.

Caroline says

The Silver Surfer is such an excellent superhero: brooding, lovelorn, repeatedly too noble for his own good. Plus he cuts a lovely figure on his board out in the psychedelically rendered cosmos in his gleaming, skin-tight protective coating. The despair he feels at the senselessness of humanity and at his own predicament reveal a glimmer of change for the comic book world of the late 1960s. The colors and design elements are bright and bold; the power cosmic is strong; the stars are within our grasp. You've got to love the pop-astronomy zeitgeist spillover.

As another sign of the times, when race relations are touched on in issue 5, we find a clear nod to John Howard Griffin's *Black Like Me*, which had been available for six years when this issue came out. There is a striking headshot of the Silver Surfer wearing a trenchcoat, sunglasses, and hat loaned to him by a black scientist who vows to help him ("He's treated like an outcast wherever he goes...just because of the way he looks. Just because he's different. Maybe it takes a guy like me to really understand!"). The Silver Surfer, in his disguise, wanders around the contemporary American city, astounded that the people no longer fear and despise him. The Silver Surfer, for all its mooning over beloved Shalla Bal, nuclear-accident mutant tyrants, and breaching of the cosmic speed limit, is pretty heady stuff.

And thus it's too bad that so much claptrap of the Marvel universe takes over his own first issues. This is mainly concentrated in issue 4, but it makes a strong mark. While it's briefly fun to read aloud the bits of Thor and Loki and assembled Asgardians spoken in iambic rhythm*, the older artistic style and slapstick buffoonery get tiresome quickly. I turn page after page waiting for the surf-rider of the skyways to star in his own issues while the Hulk, the Fantastic Four, and the Mighty Thor all do overlong cameos.

But perhaps that is the message with this character. He is too pure, too forelorn, to do much of anything save rail against oncoming evil -- or act as a hapless puppet for those with sinister will. In some sense I suppose that is the hallmark of the superhero: they are all fonts of reactionary goodness. But the Silver Surfer is repeatedly duped and desperate, and I love him for it.

*Thor has no wish to do thee harm!

He doth ignore thy words, my lord!

Timothy Boyd says

The Marvel Masterworks volumes are fantastic reprints of the early years of Marvel comics. A fantastic resource to allow these hard to find issues to be read by everyone. Very recommended to everyone and Highly recommended to any comic fan.

Shadowdenizen says

Sure, it's a little ponderous and overwrought (This is COMICS, not Shakespeare!), but this first Silver Surfer series (which all 18 issues is covered in these 2 Marvel Masterworks volumes) really works.

This is classic Lee and Kirby, and it just *works*, regardless of whether the villains are the lame-ass "Order of Baddoon", or on the level of Mephisto.

Surfey's gone thru some ups-and-downs over the years, but this really where it all began. (Also useful to

readers wanting to know Surfer mythology is the classic "Coming of Galactus" arc in Fantastic-FOur #48-50.)

Bill FromPA says

Marvel exploited various pagan mythologies to create superheroes of Thor and Hercules, but the Silver Surfer is the closest they came to taking a hero from Christianity. The Surfer's origin story supplies two world saving sacrifices on his part: as a result of the first he is transformed into the Silver Surfer and becomes the herald and scout of Galactus, leaving forever his home world and his beloved Shalla-Bal. The second, his enabling of the Fantastic Four to defeat Galactus, results in his exile to planet Earth. This heaven-born being finds himself "despised and rejected of men" and continually mourns the childishness, mistrust and hatred of mankind, but nevertheless continually exposes himself to man's hatred in order to save the world from cosmic peril, usually ending up receiving the blame for the destruction that results from his battles with evil. The most frequent villain in these pages is, in fact, the devil himself in the form of Mephisto. Unlike other comic book villains, he is not looking for untold wealth or worldly power – he already has these at his fingertips, ready to offer them as temptations to his victims. He is, rather, after the Surfer's soul which, needless to say with no need for spoiler alerts, he never quite achieves.

The first seven issues were double length 39 or 40 page "giants" which allowed a more leisurely pace for the storytelling, with lengthy set-ups in which the Surfer does not usually encounter his foes until almost halfway through the story. Once the format is changed to a 20 page monthly, the stories feel more rushed, and I found them less compelling, though that may also be a result of the formula having been fairly exhausted about halfway through the title's run. Stan Lee is in at his preachiest and least wisecracking in the writing here, alternating the Surfer's laments and moralizing with his pining for his lost but still faithful love Shalla-Bal, with whom a possible reunion is a recurring sub-plot.

The art of John Buscema, inked mainly by Joe Sinnott, brother Sal Buscema, and Dan Adkins, is even better than I remember it. Everything is well drawn, dramatically composed, and his figures have a balletic grace which is a pleasure to contemplate; the settings, from the Surfer's futuristic home world to the halls of Asgard, from the streets of the city to the isolated jungles and mountains of earth are convincingly portrayed. Buscema especially seems to enjoy portraying the shadowy subterranean world of Mephisto with its flames, caverns, cringing underlings, and writhing souls in Dante-like torment.

Julio Bonilla says

AMAZING! This is relevant to part of my childhood: Being ostracized at the end of elementary school. Similar to how people react to the sight of Silver Surfer on earth. Everything is going well until people notice the Silver Surfer! Loved how he comes into contact with other members from Marvel Comics (FF), deceived by Loki.

If you are weird or in Special Ed, give this a read!

Jdetrick says

I usually find Stan Lee's writing to be somewhat painful, and never is that more true than with the Silver Surfer. This is overwritten to the extreme, flowery and overblown rhetoric. Thank goodness for the John Buscema art.

Tony Romine says

Continuing my journey through the early history of Cosmic Marvel, I dove right into Marvel Masterworks: Silver Surfer Volume 1. It collects the brief Silver Surfer comic from Fantastic Four Annual #5 and the first 6 issues of the Surfer's solo comic that ran for a couple years.

The short comic from Annual #5 is Silver Surfer encountering a really badly conceived villain named Quasimodo. He has compassion for the poor sod, but ultimately Quasi wants no help and they end up fighting. It's short, it's simple, and it sets the tone for Silver Surfer during his solo series pretty well.

I won't try to dissect the 6 issues of the solo series individually here as their stories are pretty self-contained with only a few elements that stretch out over series. The first issue is dedicated to telling the origin of the Surfer and does so very well, recapping even some of his memorable Fantastic Four stories. This also establishes that he has a woman on his home planet that he longs for, Shalla-Bal, and this romantic yearning is something that lingers throughout the series.

The main idea of this series is that Surfer has been exiled to stay on Earth by Galactus and he hates it because he thinks humanity is terrible and they don't like him. This attitude he has gets really really grating and, unfortunately, is basically the catalyst for almost every issue of this series. The basic concept of every other issue though is him trying to get past the barrier Galactus created, fighting a villain, lamenting humanity's terribleness, and occasionally checking in on Shalla-Bal on her home planet in her lamenting/attempts to get her man back.

These first 6 issues feature appearances by Thor (hands down the best issue) and Mephisto (he's the main antagonist, if there was one, for the Surfer in this series) and a whole lot of bottom tier aliens and monsters as villains. There's one particular issue that features an over-powered alien named Overlord in whom, not surprisingly, only ever appeared in that one comic. That issue is maybe the worst of the lot because Silver Surfer travels at the speed of light to time travel, which of course reversed in the end and is as much a cop-out as an "it was all a dream" ending.

The biggest flaw of these 6 comics are their length. Each one is double-sized, over 40 pages each, and they don't need to be. The origin story works at the length, but the rest of the issues are mostly Silver Surfer philosophizing about how bad humanity is and whining about being trapped on Earth. Really think about it. 40 pages of Silver Surfer fighting Overlord. Even a good villain like Mephisto doesn't necessarily warrant that kind of coverage. The good thing though is they aren't nearly as dense in bad Stan Lee writing as the earlier Silver Age comics and seem to show a shift in tone from constantly light-hearted fights to some darker stuff. The better thing is the artwork is fantastic, as was the norm for these Silver Age comics, even the one like this series that weren't done by Jack Kirby.

It ends with a overly long, cheesy Not Brand Ecch parody comic of the Silver Surfer. I'm not a fan, but it appeals to someone out there I suppose.

Not a bad collection, but there are better Surfer collections out there. These are interesting enough for

hardcore Surfer fans and the origins and Thor issues are a must-read for even casual fans. Recommended.

Batmark says

Condemned by Galactus to spend eternity on Earth, the Silver Surfer roams the land, lamenting humanity's inherent distrust, cruelty, and self-destructiveness.

The first issue tells the Surfer's origin on his home planet of Zenn-La, where he lamented his people's complacency. (The Silver Surfer spent a lot of time lamenting things in his early years.) He became Galactus's herald to save his planet, giving up his true love, Shalla Bal, in the process.

In the second issue he fights the Badoon, and reptilian alien race intent on conquering Earth.

In the third issue Mephisto abducts Shalla Bal in an attempt to win the Surfer's soul.

In the fourth issue he's tricked by Loki into battling Thor.

In the fifth issue the Surfer teams up with a scientist, Al B. Harper, who might just have the ability to break Galactus's curse that keeps the Surfer earthbound. Meanwhile, the Surfer fights the Stranger.

In the sixth issue, in an attempt to break through Galactus's barrier, the Surfer time-travels to the far future to discover that all life in the universe has been extinguished by the Overlord.

Finally, in a story from *Fantastic Four Annual 5*, the Surfer battles Quasimodo.

The joy of this collection is to be found in John Buscema's artwork. He's still channeling Jack Kirby pretty hard in these issues (first published in 1968), but they're still pretty spectacular.

Kyle Burley says

The Silver Surfer is a great character, emblematic of exactly the kind of odd, silly but truly inspired concepts that make Marvel, to this day, the number one mainstream comics publisher in the world. Unfortunately he always brought out the worst in Stan Lee's already affected writing style. In attempting to create a cosmic hero with an empathetic, philosophical personality he managed to make the Surfer a whiny brooder defined by monumental self-pity. (What the kids today now refer to as "Emo")

The three stars are for John Buscema's lovely artwork, a bridge between Jack Kirby's hyper-energetic cartooning and the more illustrative style of later artists like Neal Adams.
