



## Heroes & Villains

*Harper Kingsley*

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## **Heroes & Villains** Harper Kingsley

As the superhero Starburst, Vereint received only derision and mockery. All his heroic endeavors resulted in nothing but humiliation. No matter how hard he tried, the world could only see him as a joke.

Eventually he was pushed into the life of a supervillain. He changed his name to Darkstar and began his reign over Megacity. He was unstoppable... yet somehow he managed to fall into myth and legend.

"Heroes & Villains" details the budding relationship between Vereint Georges and Warrick Tobias as they explore the idea of a superhero and a supervillain falling in love. It is a story of friendship, affection, romance, and super battles.

## **Heroes & Villains Details**

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Author : Harper Kingsley

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## From Reader Review Heroes & Villains for online ebook

### April says

Oh, dear... I must note that I have not finished this book, so that may color your view of my comments.

I liked the concept, but quickly Vereint, the newbie guy with super powers who is trying hard to be a world-class super-hero, REALLY worried me.

His motivation wasn't so much trying to save people as wanting to do something with his abilities and get respect and attention. After just a couple of months of getting no respect and only bad attention (unwarranted, the other super-heroes are not supportive, nor is the press, nor are people--even though he saves them. We don't know why--they just don't like him and the people being saved are just too entitled, Vereint supposes.

Plus there's another, established super-hero, Warrant, who spends most of the time when they are supposed to be saving hostages at a bank robbery, making digs at Vereint--for no reason other than he just doesn't like him and thinks he's a wannabee poser.

Not only is the super-hero world operating like an episode of Mean Girls, but Vereint gets fed up (just after two months), hates his day job and shoves it, all the while talking like a really obnoxious middle school girl...!

headdesk

Aside from the world and the characters and everyone in the world being jerks, the dialog (as noted above), is atrocious, and the writing in general uses repetitive phrases and other annoying things, and just isn't good enough to carry these obnoxious characters.

I rarely even put a book down... maybe just a handful out of hundreds... but there are just too many books out there and too little time for something that isn't working at all for me...

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### Brice Jale says

Albeit somewhat cheesy, I can't deny that I really, *really* loved this book!

Heroes & Villains follows a character named Vareint who starts as a hero named Starburst but is unfortunately taken for granted by the people and taken as a joke and a wannabe by fellow heroes as well. Long story short, good bye Starburst and hello Darkstar. Vareint becomes a villain and everything is so much better from then on.

I understand Vareint's predicament being a superhero. It's a *lot* of hard work. Being a super villain is *way* easy. The characters in this book were really well developed. They all had flaws and they all made mistakes and that just makes this book so good!

What I loved about this book is that it had action, drama, humor, and romantic actions going on between a

superhero and a superhero turned villain.

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### **Nikyta \*Miss Forgetful\* says**

Reviewed on The Blogger Girls

It's hard for me to write this review because I loved the premise of the book but I had a huge issue with the execution. I LOVED Vereint as a character. He just wanted to help people, that was his dream, and then when he tries he gets bullied so much that he's miserable because he's not living up to the other superheroes who are bullying him. When he turns into a villain, I was super excited because he was no longer self-conscious and miserable. He decided not to give a crap and that changed him so much and gave him so much confidence to do whatever he felt like doing.

As for Warrick, I hated him. I didn't like him as a character at all. Towards the end, I started warming up to him but honestly, I couldn't understand how a guy who was supposed to be saving the world could be such a dick to another superhero. The bullying he was doing was just so disgusting. He needed to be dropped down a peg or ten. And his opinion of the people he was saving was just so ridiculous, IMO. I just could not understand why he was a superhero when he obviously hated it so much.

What I enjoyed about the book, though, is the push and pull between Blue Ice and Darkstar. I loved their banter and I loved the chase between them. I ultimately liked that Blue Ice kinda new Darkstar wasn't a bad guy but the attraction between them stopped Blue Ice from really taking Darkstar down. However, while I liked those parts, it was hard for me to enjoy this writing style. There was so much repetitiveness, I had to start skimming. The author could have probably shortened the story about a hundred pages or so with just how much the same thing was said over and over.

In the end, I liked the story but it was hard for me to really stay in the story because of how repetitive Warrick and Vereint's thoughts were. And while I loved Vereint, I didn't like Warrick much. The premise of the book is a good one, though. The whole superhero and supervillain aspect was fascinating to read about and the battles they get into. However, while I had some issues with this book, I still think readers should give it a try to see if they enjoy it because they might not have the same opinion as me.

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### **Harper Kingsley says**

I have always had a giant fondness for stories about people with more than human abilities. Telepaths, vampires, fairies, whatever, I love them all. And probably my favorite sub-genre of metahuman fiction is the superhero genre.

For "Heroes & Villains" I pictured a world where superheroes are like the police and supervillains are just criminals. There's a lot of praise for the famous superheroes, but the just everyday ones don't get much attention at all. To that end, my mind spawned Darkstar, this super hot supervillain that's really just enjoying the hell out of being the bad guy. He breaks the law, but he's super charming and people don't even really get mad at what he does.

I came up with this great character, so I had to give him some kind of back story because people don't just

pop up fully formed. It's then that I decided he was going to be an ex-hero, because I've always thought that being the good guy all the time must be boring as hell. Sometimes it's good to be able to just let loose, so having to always be a goody-goody would be awful.

I wondered why he didn't become an anti-hero. He didn't even consider it, just jumped straight into being a supervillain. There had to be some reason why he had decided to go that route. I mean, to switch from wanting to save lives, to not caring about anyone but himself, something serious had to be going on.

That's where Blue Ice came in. He's more of an antihero, though that's not how the public sees him. To the world at large, he's the League of Superheroes' golden boy. He was born into a superhero family and was molded by his father into the perfect superhero, and though he rebelled when he was a teenager, after the death of his father he took up the mantle of hero. He may have hated the man, but some part of him wanted to please him too.

He joined the Teen Demis when he was sixteen years old, which is where he met his best friend Caspian Dukes, a half-Atlantean with webbed fingers and toes and more than human strength. And for years Blue Ice was the penultimate hero while he's dying inside a little more each day.

I pictured a love between two men on opposing sides. Darkstar thoroughly enjoying being bad, and Blue Ice getting more and more tired of saving others when he's not even happy in himself.

I like the idea that Blue Ice had both a positive and negative effect on Darkstar. And in the reverse, I like that Darkstar brought back Blue Ice's joy in living and in helping the world around him.

And throughout their story there's other people doing all kinds of things in the background, from murdering superheroes to committing war crimes.

So to that end, I think this is a 135,000 word slice of life story. It's just that the life being sliced happens to belong to two men with awesome power.

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### **Plainbrownwrapper says**

I just finished this --

I really liked the ideas behind it -- super-people leading ordinary lives. Some of the details were very nice (superheroes needing to pee during a drawn-out battle, choosing love over career, still needing to make a living while being a super-anything, liability insurance for supers, Superman-as-housewife, and so on). Using this idea, the book had the potential to say some interesting things about Real Life vs. Potential Life vs. Fantasy Life.

Note that this is more of a fairytale than anything, so realism isn't expected -- and isn't delivered. This is an alternate universe where "meta-humans" (superheroes and supervillains) are a normal part of modern civilization, and super-battles are an expected part of everyday life. The tone ranges from firmly tongue in cheek to fairly serious drama to romance -- which occasionally led to a bit of whiplash for me.

And, unfortunately, the plot just wasn't there. It was episodic, meandering, had poor pacing, dropped interesting threads left and right, and didn't seem to have a good overall plot arc -- or, at least, the plot arc left a lot of Chekhov's guns unfired along the way. The book described the journey from entirely self-absorbed-and-gloryseeking "good guy" to mostly-self-absorbed-but-not-so-glory-seeking-and-hugely-successful "bad guy" to entirely-devoted-to-spouse-and-completely-unknown "normal guy" -- from a guy who eagerly sought out superhero status because he wanted everyone to love him, to a guy who willingly gave up all public recognition because one man loved him -- but that journey should have been more interesting and cohesive than it was.

Good ideas, mediocre execution. 2.5 stars, rounding up to 3.

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### **Monika says**

#### **Review posted on World of Diversity Fiction Reviews**

##### **2.75 Stars**

This was one of those stories I wanted to love but just couldn't. I love superheroes, comics and fantasy, so I was really looking forward to reading this book. It is such a great idea and I could see this one being a really good story, the bones are there but so are things that bog it down.

Vereint starts out as a superhero, it's something he really wants to be but he can't seem to get the hang of it. He has powers galore which he has trouble controlling. When he realizes the superhero route isn't working for him he decides to tryout being a supervillain which goes much better.

Warrick is part of a Superhero group, kind of like the police, they use their powers for good but when he runs into Vereint for the first time he can't believe this guy. Warrick wonders if Vereint is a wannabe but when Vereint's powers get away from him and he has no idea how to control them Warrick knows he's legit but definitely not safe for anyone to be around. There is an instant attraction between these two and after their first meeting neither can forget the other.

This story isn't your typical romance, Warrick and Vereint do have feelings for each other and their on again off again relationship throughout the book is sweet at times, they don't really get together until near the end of the story where they do get their HEA. I never felt any connection to the MC's or the story which made it difficult to read. Most of this story reads like a comic book and if you are into that this may work for you but I was expecting more. I found the story too long and I thought it would have done better as a shorter story.

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### **Wendy Ann says**

While reading this book, it reminded me of some combination of my favorite old superhero cartoons and comic book stories coming to life in modern day m/m romance style!

The story has a lot of detail centering around a world made up of humans and metahumans with varying

degrees of supernatural powers. Vereint (aka Starburst / Darkstar) is the equivalent of a mega metahuman with power galore who is virtually indestructible. He always dreamed about using his power to be a superhero, but alas, it's rough being a good guy. The famous Rodney Dangerfield quote, "I get no respect, I tell ya", summed up the situation pretty well! Warrick (aka Blue Ice) is a well-known and respected superhero and someone that Vereint always looked up to. When they meet for the first time as potential "colleagues" and Blue Ice implies that Starburst is a joke and seriously lacking in the superhero capacity, it sets in motion the emotions and actions that lead to Starburst's transformation to Darkstar – superhero turned supervillain.

The two main characters continue to encounter each other in their good guy vs. bad guy roles and the underlying spark of attraction continues to grow. You might wonder how opposites can possibly attract and have any hope of working something out in this scenario, but the author does a fantastic job of building up a believable path for them to follow into a sustainable relationship.

There were references and parts of this story that were downright humorous. I caught myself grinning and giggling a number of times! The man action in this book is very PG. We really only get exposed to kissing and some fondling with all the heavy action occurring in the background. Despite this, you still feel the sexual tension and connection between the characters.

Recommended for anyone who enjoys something different of a fantasy nature, strong plot, depth to the characters, a bad boy who's really not all that bad, sexual tension but no sex, and definitely a few laughs!

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### **Jennifer says**

I did not finish this story. I managed to get halfway through and gave up.

The star is for the concept. I like the idea of a hero turning into a villain and being really good at it. The execution was awful. I did not believe the main character's motivation. I didn't sympathize with any of the characters and the story could have used a better editor.

Examples:

overuse of the word too  
too handsome  
too good looking  
too beautiful  
too powerful

overuse of chill:  
chill  
chill out  
chill down (??)

overuse of:  
kind of  
probably

dude

awkward and confusing sentence structures:

"There was no way that Darkstar was going anywhere, and he really didn't want some future situation where he would really need some trust and goodwill from the supervillain, only to not have it because he threw it away just because he could."

I just could not get through the story. I'm glad I was able to get it at a discount.

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### **Penelope Frost says**

Wow. I liked this a lot. I like how this is definitely not the normal superhero kind of story, and I have to say I would want to read more stories with similar plots - a superhero turns bad and you actually cheer him on!

I definitely recommend this story. Five stars!

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### **Chemical5X says**

I loved this book! I felt like I was reading some of my favorite comic books but compacted all into a couple of characters and sent out to do whatever--so of course Batman and Superman were going to fall in love. It was like a no brainer.

Vereint really wants to be a superhero, but everything just goes wrong for him and he ends up miserable. People make fun of his superhero name because he didn't think of the candy when he was choosing it, and none of the other superheroes give him any kind of respect, especially Blue Ice. So he just basically says fuck it and becomes a supervillain because he figures he'll have more fun, which he does until he keeps running into Blue Ice and they kind of stumble into a relationship.

This is more story than romance though. So much goes on that I was kind of just blown away. There's like terrorists, murder, one girl gets a lobotomy, and there's a ton of snark between the characters. It was great and I can't wait for the second book.

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### **Romina says**

I loved this book and Vereint. I felt like I was reading a story from Tiger and Bunny's world.

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### **Cotilla says**

Hilarious. Vereint is the perfect villain, but I think he should have ended like an antihero. Despite this, it's perfect.

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**Elisa Rolle says**

2013 Rainbow Awards Honorable Mention (5\* from at least 1 judge)

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**Michael says**

3.75 Stars.

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**Bubbles Hunty Honest & Direct Opinions says**

I loved this story. The beginning was really great and I really loved Starburst and felt so bad for him, he even made me cry a couple times. Warrick was a huge asshole for the first half of the book, i liked him but he was irritating in his assholism. So much happens in this book it was crazy exciting with all the events and craziness going on. My favorite was the bank scene at 19% not sure what it was but something about that scene just makes it stand out to me.

The book was hilarious the things these characters say/think was just great I was laughing so hard at parts

The romance was a slow build up at first with lots of sexual tension. It doesn't really pick up until around 65% or so but when it did it was so sweet without being overly sweet.

Recommended for any superhero fan

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