



The Boys, Volume 11: Over the Hills with the Swords of a Thousand Men

Garth Ennis (Writer), Russ Braun (Illustrator), John McCrea (illustrator)

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It's been a long time coming, but Billy Butcher's revenge on his wife's killer is about to be realized - if he can only get his hands on the bastard. The Boys prepare for one last terrible battle, as the Homelander finally bites the bullet and sets an army of superheroes against the forces of the United States military. Battle rages at the White House, Frenchie and the Female are unleashed, and Hughie faces his own terrors... while MM, patient to the last, races against time to uncover the greatest and most dreadful secret of Vought-American's superhero program. Butcher steps willingly into the jaws of death, alone and unafraid: but what he finds waiting for him is beyond even his darkest dreams. The Boys, Vol. 11: Over the Hill with the Swords of a Thousand Men collects issues 60-65 of the hit series The Boys by Garth Ennis, Russ Braun, John McCrea, Keith Burns and Darick Robertson, and features all of the covers by Darick Robertson!

The Boys, Volume 11: Over the Hills with the Swords of a Thousand Men Details

Date : Published July 3rd 2012 by Dynamite Entertainment (first published January 1st 2012)

ISBN : 9781606903414

Author : Garth Ennis (Writer) , Russ Braun (Illustrator) , John McCrea (illustrator)

Format : Paperback 144 pages

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



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From Reader Review The Boys, Volume 11: Over the Hills with the Swords of a Thousand Men for online ebook

Sean Chick says

This volume is a bit of a ruse, for this is not the last battle and we find out the target was not even the real target. In fact we almost pity the real target because he has no core being, no core self. All in all the feeling is one that is not satisfying, but then again revenge rarely is. It is a hollow exercise without end. That is the wisdom stuck between the pages of gory violence.

Jesse A says

Fun volume. Things had been trickling along in this series then in this volume it all exploded.

Ryk Stanton says

It has all been building up to this point, and wow does it deliver. Everything I was hoping for / dreading as well as a holy-cow-I-never-expected-that shocker.

This series has the earmarks of literature. It's not like the ongoing superhero titles that never end; this arc was quite clearly the climax of the story, and now we just have some odd ends to tie up that should be quite interesting.

Same warnings and stuff, but if you can stomach the series' gore and sexuality you will get your payoff here. Very very impressed.

Stargyde says

Ok, I loved The Boys, but the ending was a little light. However, as far as stories go, this was one of the better comic runs. Definitely up there with Preacher, not quite as good as Transmet.

Sam Quixote says

While the last couple volumes of The Boys has felt like Garth Ennis dragging his heels, suddenly with Volume 11 he decides to get everything over and done with in one big dump. It feels like dumping because there's no finesse to it, it just feels like Ennis throwing everything at the reader saying "There, it's done, happy now?". The increasingly crazy Homelander finally snaps and all pretence that the Supes are good guys is gone thanks to The Boys uploading everything they have on them over the last several decades onto the internet. Which is good because that's where the story was headed anyway, at least now the series has decided to move forward and at a brisk clip too.

There are moments where I couldn't help but sighing at the tediousness of it all: Hughie and Starlight are still doing their "we got problems" relationship dance, then Hughie begins whining again about The Boys being too violent – I just wish they'd get rid of him now – and Frenchie and the Female do their ass-kicking routine. So far, so ordinary. Where the story picked up was the final third when Butcher walks alone into a confrontation with Homelander – yes! With HL being the most powerful supe, how was Butcher going to defeat him? Well, I won't spoil the surprise but the results are, naturally, gory.

And then it's over. Sort of. There's an epilogue that'll be Volume 12 but it seems like the series is about done. Was it everything I'd hoped? Well, it's the best volume since Volume 6, mostly because the series has found its footing once again after a few (unnecessary) diversions and gotten to the meat. But it took its time to get there and I feel the overall series has suffered because of this. That and Darick Robertson sitting out the penultimate book of the series he co-created, but hopefully he'll return for the finale. "Over the Hill With the Swords of a Thousand Men" (excellent title) is decent, the ending saves it, but it feels like the series had more potential than what it ended up becoming which is slightly disappointing.

Nidah (SleepDreamWrite) says

Another weird but good kind of series that gets insane but you can't help but want to read the next one, kind of volume.

Patrick says

Another thing that was handled well in the series was the slow build of tension. That's not easy to handle over a long series, and I've seen it go wrong quite frequently.

By this book in the series, shit's getting real. The elements of funny parody have faded to the background, and you know that everything's on the verge of going terribly wrong...

That's skillful storytelling at its best...

(Continued in Volume 12.)

Stewart Tame says

A lot of s%#@ hits a very big fan. This is the epic confrontation that this series has been building up to. Casualties are inevitable.

There's really not a lot of non-spoiler material to discuss. Been waiting to see Butcher confront the Homelander? It happens. Homelander's plan? Revealed. With all that happens in this volume, you have to wonder just what's in volume 12? 150 pages of pinups and alternate covers? Because things appear to be over. But are they ...?

Mike says

I burned through this book in one frantic, heart-pounding read. After the slow burn and insightful stage-setting of the last few books, where we really get to know our characters, this one drops them straight in a forest fire and doesn't let up until everyone has ash on them.

Fantastic and still surprising climax to this series. I didn't see some of it coming, and I'd forgotten some of the details this brings back to light - but it didn't matter. This was the kind of gold of book 1 or of Herogasm, and my complaints of slowdown and feeling like this was dragged out are exonerated for being pulled together here.

I can't wait to see how this gets wrapped up.

Here's my plot spoilers:

(view spoiler)

Michael Hitchcock says

This book is the morally ambiguous but generally happy ending we would get if this were a normal series and not one that successfully subverts the entire genre.

It's beautiful how all threads come together to tie up what we believe to be the main plot- the conflict between the Boys and The 7. It's very difficult to reread this book without dwelling on the full and obvious foreshadowing of the last page, where we see Butcher contemplate something that makes even himself weep, though he's the hardest man we've seen in this world (or many others, for that matter.)

But take away that ending, and what are we left with?

A great story!

Wee Hughie makes his final stand against Butcher- he won't be killing any more. That's when a superhero team, Paraylitic, burst in the front door of The Boys' headquarters in the most well-drawn sequence of the

book.

The team stands in perfect stereotypical splash page formation, Renaissance style triangle composition and all, and on the next page is a panel of The Boys all making a character specific expression of confusion, followed by a second panel which shows Hughie frightened, Mother's Milk determined, Frenchie wry, The Female furious, and Butcher laughing in amusement. They annihilate Paralytic later, but the art gives that result away before you even turn the page.

The entire Paralytic attack makes Butcher send Frenchie and the Female to "decapitate" the leadership at Vought, but they are surprised by the powerful team Stillwell has left to guard himself and Ms. Bradley.

Meanwhile Butcher has given the rest of his information about targeting supes to NORAD, then brought Wee Hughie to the roof for his final attempt at corrupting him- presenting A-Train, the man who wrecked Hughie's life by killing his then-girlfriend and bringing him into all this, then sexually assaulting Starlight in a disgusting hazing ceremony, all chained up and pleading for his life. Butcher manipulated Hughie into kicking A-Train's head off, mere seconds after Hughie said he wouldn't.

Back at Vought, Frenchie jumps into battle yelling Vincent Caselli, simultaneously confusing his enemies, and providing me with the finest casting choice for the character if they ever get the mini-series off the ground. In the middle of the fight, Stillwell realizes the whole Paralytic thing was a feint by the Homelander and calls a truce.

But it's too late, Homelander has already become prince of hell and completed his transformation from Superman into the Nietzschean Übermensch.

If this review reads a little more like a book report and a little less than a review, forgive me, but each panel and each line of dialogue support this impressive and rich whole where every character has an arc and every plot thread is tied up, and it's perfect. It's just perfect.

Ennis continues with both the philosophical questions of use of force for good and the way power seems to inspire nihilism, as well as with genre questions, quips, and observations about superheroes in general. The subtext is there, ready to engage with, and there's a beautiful parallel in the way both Stillwell and Butcher tell Homelander just how completely unimpressed with him they are- Stillwell's contempt being one of the laugh out loud moments of the book.

There's a final twist that's as over-the-top as any comic book can be, but which also works and is supported by foreshadowing and other story details, but which I'll leave alone for your added pleasure.

The book seems like it's got its happy ending, but again, why is Butcher, unrepentant killer, weeping about what he's got to do next? Chilling end, that shows us this breathless action story was not the end of trauma and despair.

Luana says

I called the Homelander twist, but it's such a satisfying conclusion to the super-storyline that it don't matter too much. Oh boy, this series is one I'm going to have to start defending with a bunch of caveats, isn't it? I wish Ennis' puerile humor wasn't matched by his skill with a poetic turn of phrase and dramatic know-how.

"I'm like English." one of my favorite comic book moments of all time??? MEBBE

Octavi says

Gran final

Nick Scott says

This was best volume of the series so far, which makes sense because it's the second to last, and a lot of the set-up was paid off. The big reveal surprised me, and now that so many of the supes are out of commission, including all the major players, I'm very curious to see what Butcher has left to do, and to see how this whole thing wraps up.

*****Dave Hill says**

Ennis suddenly brings all the threads together of his tale in a Grand Guignol, plots uncovered, irrevocable actions taken, Rubicons crossed, strange allies made ... and, of course, lots and lots and lots of blood, complete with assorted organs and body parts.

Through it all, we see a lot of the characters of the Boys (as well as some key moments for the supporting cast, including the antagonists). And it certainly seems that all sorts of threads that Ellis has been spinning out over the previous 60 issues get pulled here into a fully revealed tapestry.

The irony is that, while this *seems* to be the climax of the story, the real final conflict is yet to come ...

Good, entertaining stuff.
