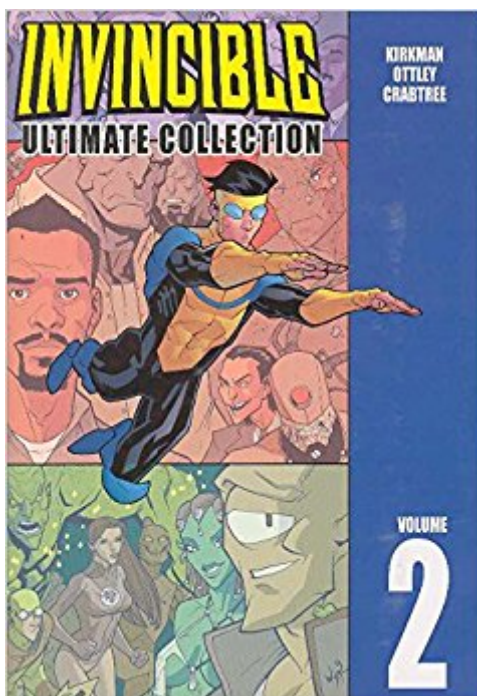


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Invincible: The Ultimate Collection, Vol. 2



Synopsis

In the aftermath of Mark's revelation concerning his father, he's forced to pick up the pieces of his life and carry on. The Ultimate Collection, Vol. 2 collects Invincible's struggle to become his own man, to stand on his own and live his own life. This is a can't-miss for any Invincible fan and a perfect addition to any bookshelf.

Book Information

Hardcover: 352 pages

Publisher: Image Comics (April 25, 2017)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1582405948

ISBN-13: 978-1582405940

Product Dimensions: 7.6 x 1.1 x 11.1 inches

Shipping Weight: 2.4 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.5 out of 5 stars 28 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #142,592 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #113 in Books > Arts & Photography > Graphic Design > Commercial > Illustration #240 in Books > Comics & Graphic Novels > Publishers > Image Comics #528 in Books > Comics & Graphic Novels > Fantasy Graphic Novels

Customer Reviews

I liked this volume even more than the first one. The art gets better and Kirkman spends some time fleshing out other side characters, which really adds to the story. I really like Allen the Alien and Atom Eve, in particular. I've seen some people complain about the story lines with Mark's gf and with his mom, but I really enjoy those 'more human' stories/moments. It builds up side characters and develops them further. This volume also introduces a few villains, Angstrom Levy being my favorite so far. Also, there are some origin stories for some side characters at the end of the book and some sketches as well. Btw, the production value of these books are really good. Overall, it's a really great story that lives up to the hype.

This hardcover graphic novel collects issues #0 and 14-24 of Invincible as well as at least part of the Image Comics Summer Special #1. The collected issues represent a superb run on this comic. The world Robert Kirkman is creating is fleshed out more thoroughly, the main characters develop more fully, and the flow of unusual and bizarre side character heroes and villains continues unabated.

Ryan Ottley handles almost all the penciling work on these issues, giving this collection a more consistent look than the first hardcover volume, where the initial artwork was done by the talented Cory Walker. In terms of production values the hardcover looks fantastic. Ottley is developing a real talent for depicting character's facial expressions and thus hinting at their inner emotional life. This is one of those comics where you can recognize and distinguish the major characters easily even when they are not in costume. The art reproduces beautifully here and is worthy of the slightly oversized pages you see. The coloring in particular really seems to "pop" off the page. Ottley's talent for conveying the feelings of characters is necessary to keep up with Kirkman's scripting here. He's managed to produce a comic that feels character-driven while still throwing in big plot twists in the grand tradition of silver age comics. The best description I've heard so far of Invincible's appeal is that it is a Silver Age comic book for adults. Many of us have fond memories of the comics we read when we were young. For me it's the early Spider Man. Yet when you re-read those issues, you find that the characters are often one-note, the continuity is shaky, and characters experience massive personal upheavals in one issue only to return to the same personality in the next as though nothing had happened. The characters in Invincible may fall into certain familiar archetypes at first, but over time they change with their experiences. There's a hint of realism thrown in to discussions of how the bills are going to be paid without going overboard into trying to portray "heroes in the real world." In this delicate balancing act Kirkman's writing resembles Kurt Busiek's Astro City comics, except the focus here is much more firmly on the trials and tribulations of the heroes. You even get much more insight and personality from the villains than is typical. And you can never be sure when a minor villain from one issue will reappear as a major player down the line. It feels like a lived in universe. Most of all, Invincible reads like a story produced by people who love superhero comics and want to bring out the elements that made them love those comics--the scope of the stories, the challenges of balancing heroism with a normal life, the ethical questions of when and how to get involved, the sheer wow factor of having superpowers and making a difference. There's no deconstruction of the genre going on here or blatant satirizing of superhero comic book tropes. Which is why I say Invincible is fresh and yet nostalgic. It is a classic being born before your eyes and the opportunity to own it in these lovely and durable hardcovers is a definite treat for fans of superhero comics.

Before I talk about this particular book, here are a few things you should know about Invincible:*

Invincible is written by Robert Kirkman and was created by Robert Kirkman and Cory Walker.* The character first appeared in an issue of Tech Jacket - another comic written by Robert Kirkman - in

November of 2002. The original issues of Tech Jacket are collected in this book: Tech Jacket Volume 1: The Boy From Earth (v. 1)* Invincible is published by Image Comics - a company built by and dedicated to comic book writers and illustrators. Creators who publish their work at Image retain full ownership of all properties they create. Because of this, in Image comics you will regularly see things that don't occur in books published by the "Big 2" - Marvel and DC. Namely, characters that die tend to stay dead, and the overall voice of the characters remains pretty consistent, and continuity actually has some meaning.* Invincible is one of the most popular comics published by Image. This comic and other comics written by Robert Kirkman have had such strong sales that Image invited Robert Kirkman to share in ownership of the company. He accepted.* Invincible is an on-going comic series that has been published on nearly a monthly basis since 2003.* Invincible story arcs have been collected into many TPBs. The first 13 of these all share titles with sit-com television shows from the 1980's.* Invincible exists in a shared universe with other popular Image comic book characters, including Spawn, Savage Dragon, Superpatriot, Brit, Youngblood, Shadowhawk and others.* Invincible's costume design features a large "I" on the front of it - mirroring the company logo of Image comics. One other note: I will attempt to avoid spoilers as much as possible in this review. I enjoyed this book and feel you would best enjoy it if I don't tell you the entire plot summary in this review! This book collects the fourth and fifth story arcs of the Invincible comic book, which are collected separately in the booksÂ Invincible (Book 4): Head of the Class (v. 4)Â andÂ Invincible (Book 5): The Facts of Life (v. 5). This book introduces new villains, including Machinehead, Titan, Angstrom Levy, the Squids, Tether Tyrant, Battle Beast, Furnace, and Magnattack. Also included are spotlight stories showcasing origins of several main characters, including Atom Eve, Dupli-Kate, The Immortal, Monster Girl and Allen the Alien. Mark and his mom try to pick up the pieces of their life after the startling conclusion of the last story arc. Mark integrates himself more into his fellow company of heroes in the Guardians of the Globe and goes on an important "away mission" to Mars. Just as much fun as the first book, this book goes full steam ahead and greatly expands the Invincible universe of characters and fleshes out the characterization of the the main cast. A great book for you to check out!

This covers issues 14 - 24, issue 0 (the first time Mark recounts his origin story to someone else) and several short stories about different heroes' origins (Monster Girl, Rexplode, Immortal, Atom Eve). This collection has a number of themes: the fall-out from the real story of Omni-man and the loss that Mark & his mother experience, the unintended consequences of Mark's inexperienced actions, how Mark's regular friends have difficulty dealing with his new life, and what heroes should

do with their powers. In a move that reminds us of the Squadron Supreme, Atom Even quits fighting villains and leaves for Africa to do good for those that have been left out of modern wealthy society. It also has a very fun story of Allen the Alien. One reviewer wrote that it is a Silver Age comic for grown-ups in the 2000's. That's a perfect way to describe it.

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