

10 Confessions Of A Marvel Fan After Reading DC Comics

It's not all doom and gloom on the other side.

After years of watching comic book movies from *The Mask* to *The Avengers*, it took me a surprisingly long time to actually pick up a comic book. Sure, I had read the *Beano* and the *Dandy* as a kid, but I'd never given the superhero book a real chance.

That all changed when I had a wander into my local comic book store and stumbled across Tom Taylor's *War of the Realms: Strikeforce*. The cover jumped out at me, as I saw some of my favourite film characters kitted out in Asgardian armour and weaponry. From then on, I was hooked.

I binged the entire *War of the Realms* event, tie-ins and all and seriously questioned why I hadn't picked up a comic sooner. However, I tended to stay with Marvel rather than branch out into the unknown. I preferred the MCU to the DCEU so it was a no brainer.

Then came Tom Taylor again, kicking off the newest run of *Suicide Squad*. Having followed the author, I figured I would dip my toe into the waters and it dawned on me. I made a mistake here. I should have been reading DC all along.

Just Like Marvel, DC Can Be Light And Fun

My main issue was always that DC seemed to be focused on dark, gritty books. Everything was far too serious, unlike Marvel who weren't afraid to poke fun at themselves or the reader. The most famous stories seemed to revolve around brutal deaths and violent psychopaths, with lots of action and not much character development.

Even within the Batman books, I found the residents of Gotham weren't all depressed or evil. While there were more laughs with the villains than the heroes, the books are still full of light moments and humour.

Take *DCeased* for example; despite being a book that kills countless of your favourite heroes and billions of innocent civilians, it still finds time to lighten things up with the occasional joke.

When you step away from the main titles, things get even better. Kyle Barker's Eisner and Harvey award-winning run on *Plastic Man* is one of the funniest and wackiest runs in comic history, while Emanuela Lupacchino brought us a Magic Mike style cover for Geoff John's *Justice League*.

So, if you ever feel like DC is too dark for your tastes, just remember that Aquaman once milked a cow with an octopus.

There Is Actually Character Development

As I delved deeper into the DC universe, I was surprised at just how much love and attention has been poured into these characters over the years. It seems stupid to say that now, but I initially felt DC's characters were all very one dimensional. Marvel were the creators and innovators, while DC seemed to want to stay the same.

Well, you only need to take one look at a recent Harley Quinn book before you realise how wrong that take was. In the past few years, Harley has gone from being “The Joker’s Girlfriend” to a solo force to be reckoned with. These days, she’s getting up to more shenanigans than Deadpool, with a foul mouth that would give the merc a run for his money.

Then there are characters like Kid Flash and Dick Grayson. Wallace West has stuck around with the Teen Titans despite the return of the original Wally West and holds his own now he’s grown out of his father’s shadow. Meanwhile, Grayson’s transformation from Robin to Nightwing stands as a brilliant example of maturity.

It’s Not All Batman And Superman

Much like the movies, DC comics pour a lot of money into marketing their main guys. Not that it’s a surprise. Over the last eighty years, both Batman and Superman have been the most popular superheroes across the world, so of course the company want to give the people what they want.

However, the heavy focus on those characters is a common issue with Marvel fans who want to get into DC. The publisher has made a habit of including at least one of them in nearly every other character’s solo runs, because they know it can provide a boost to a franchise. It’s fool-proof marketing and whenever either character features on a cover, that week sees a nice bump in sales.

However, away from the main two there are countless incredible stories to be read. For instance, Tom King’s 12-issue run on Mister Miracle offered a grounded look into the headspace of Scott Free, whilst offering absolutely gorgeous visuals from Mitch Gerads. The story opens up with Free’s apparent suicide and follows him on a complicated journey as he tries to figure out if he can ever trust himself, or if he was still alive at all.

Marvel May Have The Best Heroes, But DC Has The Best Villains

Marvel have some great villains, don’t get me wrong, but everyone and their mum knows that Darkseid would easily beat Thanos in a fight. Yet, Marvel have always had issues when it comes to putting forward a truly great villain.

The tendency is to either make them so incredibly overpowered that no-one could realistically beat them (though they always do somehow), or they’re low level goons that managed to get their hands on some cool tech. There’s rarely something interesting to go alongside their power, whereas the DC rogues’ gallery is full of some of the most interesting and complex characters in the medium.

Sure, there are plenty of duds (looking at you Condiment Man), but the likes of Joker, Darkseid and Lex Luthor keep things well balanced in DC’s favour.

If you’re still doubting this one, look at the success of the Suicide Squad compared to Marvel’s Thunderbolts. In terms of popularity they aren’t even close and that’s not going to change any time soon, with a second Suicide Squad film in the works as well as the current comic run which is doing incredibly well.