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Essential Amazing Spider-Man, Vol. 2 (Marvel Essentials) (v. 2)



Synopsis

The bite of an irradiated spider granted high-school student Peter Parker incredible, arachnid-like powers. When a burglar killed his beloved Uncle Ben, a grief-stricken Peter vowed to use his amazing abilities to protect his fellow man. He had learned an invaluable lesson: With great power, there must also come great responsibility! Through all his trials, Spider-Man remains steadfast in his determination to use his gifts for the benefit of all!

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Customer Reviews

Although these are typical superhero v. villain story, it is rare to see plot complexity that deals with the amalgam of human emotions that Peter Parker and Spider-Man confront in these 1960 issues. As a teenager he has to deal with feelings toward Betty Brant. He also has internal conflicts as he tries to combat crime and meet his responsibility toward aunt May. At the same time, he faces persecution from cops, JJJ's relentless bad press, and a public opinion that is at best divided in its trust on our hero. In spite of all this, Spider-Man deals with this persecution responsibly and with a positive psychology, always expecting that something good will come out of it. These issues from 1965 and 1966 are also quite interesting because they bring up actual events into the story: the space race between the U.S. and the Soviets is mentioned in the stories about JJJ's astronaut son reappear. The draft for the Vietnam War is mentioned because Flash Thompson got a draft notice, providing another reason to pick on Peter Parker for not receiving one. Other cultural references like Jack Benny, Woody Allen, and the Lawrence Welk show are also made. In these issues, Betty Brant makes up her mind to marry Ned Leeds, Peter Parker and the gang graduate, it appears that Liz

Allen disappears because she doesn't go to college, Harry Osborn and Gwen Stacy also make their debut when Peter goes to college. Gwen Stacy seems to be attracted to Peter Parker and Harry Osborn initially dislikes Parker. Mary Jane Watson's cheerful and dynamic persona does add stamina to the Spider-Man stories. We also get to find out that the Green Goblin is Harry's father and the strenuous relationship between the two is shown here.

This second volume of the Amazing Spider-man collected Amazing Spider-man Issues 21-43 and Annuals #2 and #3. Is this as amazingly good as the first Volume of Spider stories? Not quite. There's really not a comparison to facing off against the Sinister Six, but there are plenty of great stories that feature the world's greatest webslinger in amazing exploits that showcase his character as we get to see Peter Parker grow up. Some highlights. We have a guest appearance by the Human Torch (issue 21), Green Goblin (23, 26, 27, 39, 40), and Spidey thinks he's going insane (24), gets attacked by a corny robot (25), and graduates High School (28), he has to battle the Master Planner and save Aunt May's Life (31-33) and then there are two big battles with the Rhino sandwiched by one with J Jonah Jamison's superpowered sons (41-43), the introduction of Mary Jane (42), and then the book wraps up with Spidey's first tryout for the Avengers (Spider-man Annual #3). Beyond the highlights, Spider-man remains a thoroughly enjoyable title. As a Character, Peter shows some solid growth as a person as well as some great heroic moments. I love the story arch where he's desperately trying to save Aunt May from his sickness caused by a transfusion from his radioactive blood and has to go through one of his toughest foes get it. Avengers Annual #3 has Spidey facing a great dilemma when the short-handed Avengers offer him membership. His mission is to bring them the Hulk. Avengers membership would give him respectability, but Spider-man's compassion and decency lead him to make a choice that is costly and painful. I don't know if I could ever fully appreciate the revelation of the Green Goblin's identity in Spider-man #39. I've known it since I was a teenager.

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