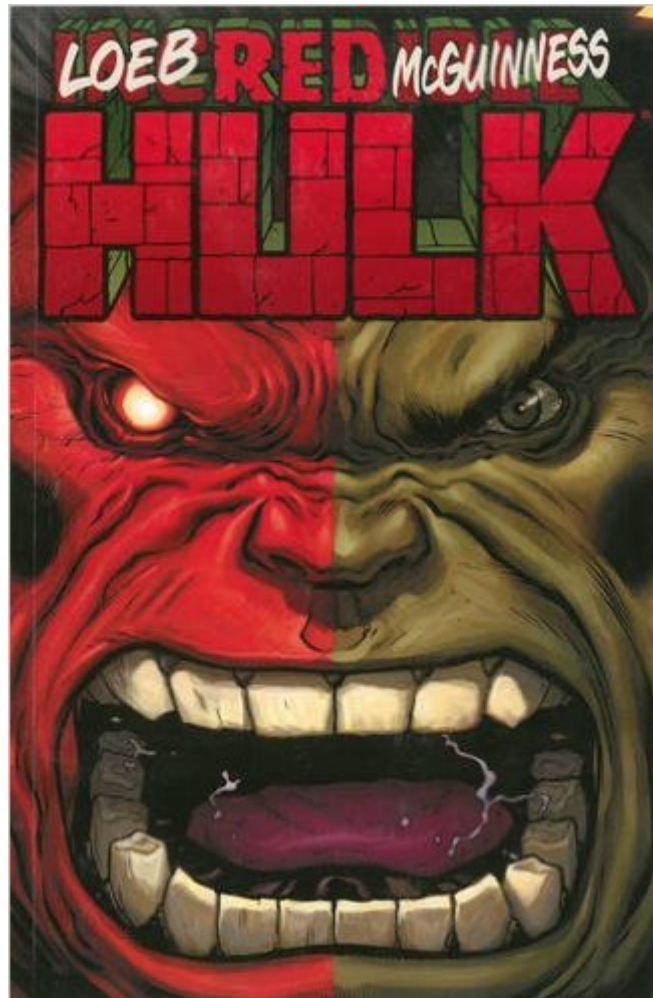


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Hulk, Vol. 1: Red Hulk



Synopsis

When one of the Hulk's oldest cast members is murdered, everyone turns to the team of Iron Man, She-Hulk, and The Mighty Thor to solve the grizzly case. All the evidence points to the Hulk as the killer!

Book Information

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Average Customer Review: 2.9 out of 5 starsÂ Â See all reviewsÂ (40 customer reviews)

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Customer Reviews

I picked this up, along with the two volumes that followed, because I enjoyed Planet Hulk and World War Hulk. I wish i had read Vol. 1 before spending money on the other two, because I would have been reminded that Jeph Loeb is better off writing limited series that are mostly flashbacks or retcons rather than taking the reins of a monthly title. I hate the idea of Red Hulk. I hate who his secret identity is revealed to be (though you will not see it in this volume), and I hated the oversimplification of this book. Loeb has a tendency to try to cram in as many guest appearances as possible, and this is no exception. Red Hulk will fight Abomination, A-Bomb, She-Hulk, Iron Man, some Harpies that look like Betty Banner, and Thor, while we also get appearances from the Fantastic Four, Ares and Namor. Oh, and for no apparent reason, Red Hulk punches the Watcher (who responds by saying "Ow!" and falling down), though the Watcher did not appear before or after in this volume. Don't bother with this one.

I really love the majority of jeph loeb and ed mcguiness' work, and I thought..."well the reviews aren't that good but it might still be ok"...nope. This book stinks, the story is horribly conceived and

uninteresting. I'll give it two stars because Ed McGuinness is a great artist, but it's still his fault because at one point he should have thought..."wait a minute I'm drawing a red hulk...what is this crap!?" Greg Pak's Planet Hulk was outstanding, World War Hulk was really good, read those...and let this book become one of those few Marvel books we all like to forget happened.

The Avengers are investigating a very strange murder in Russia. It seems that someone, or something, killed The Abomination. There's a strange new foe on the loose, one that sizzles with radiation. But, while the Avengers are looking for him, he is looking for them, and he has found them. I must admit to being somewhat disappointed with this graphic novel. The illustration work is excellent, and the book is filled with great fight-scenes. But, the problem is that the book doesn't have a discernable plot. The action moves from fight to fight with nothing of interest happening in between, indeed the in-between passages seem to have been added as an afterthought. No, I found this to be a poorly thought-out book, one that could have been excellent, but does not even come close.

I picked this up because I thought it was a "can't lose" type of read: An author I admire, an artist I enjoy, and a character I love. But I was very disappointed. The characters are shallow and predictable. Twice in six very brief issues there is the all-too-common "this is my jurisdiction" brawl between two groups of heroes (how many times have you seen that played out in movies or on episodes of Law and Order?). The overall effect is that all of the "heroes" seem like ego-centric drama queens bickering about who gets to catch the bad guy. The dialog between Iron Man and She-Hulk is absolutely abysmal. The "who-dunnit" piece of the plot is easy to figure out by issue three. Admittedly, it isn't resolved completely in this short collection, but anytime the reader guesses the correct answer of a mystery before they're supposed to is a miss. The pages are filled with two page spreads. I guess these spreads are meant to wow us, but in my opinion (and I realize other comic fans may vehemently disagree, so take this with a grain of salt) this is poor story-telling. Ed McGuinness is an amazingly talented artist, but the art here isn't his best. The book is filled with very similar looking creatures (Hulk, Red Hulk, A-Bomb, Abomination, Thor, etc) beating each other up in all the standard comic book ways (pile driver to the chin, fight on top of a bridge, etc.). One bright spot is how the Red Hulk tries to beat Thor. In a truly nerdy-fan-boy argument I would argue that his method is impossible (it makes him WAY too powerful - jumping to the moon, seriously?) but still...it's an interesting idea. It's hard to imagine anyone who's read comic books for any amount of time being satisfied with this story arc. If you're new to comics, or if you're new to the Hulk, read

any of Peter David's stories instead of this one.

At the time that I am writing this, there are sixteen reviews that liked the book, sixteen that didn't like the book and only five in the middle. What that tells you is that this is a polarizing story which has as much to do with comic book fan-dogma as it does about content. I don't pick up superheroes comics expecting fine literature. There are plenty of comics that are, most of them don't sell as well as what Marvel and DC put out. When a superhero comic is fine literature it can be a pleasant surprise. It can also be a letdown if it becomes such a dense read that all the fun is sucked out of it. I don't want every superhero comic to be *Watchmen*. Too many try to be. This book is not *Watchmen* and not fine literature. It is a fun "old school" styled Hulk story. The mystery is fun. The drag down Hulk fights are fun. The art is fun. This is a fun book. Unlike a lot of modern superhero comics, this is a book that you don't have to hide from your kids. That doesn't mean it's written for kids. It's kind of sad that we took the superheroes with us and made them inaccessible to kids, which is what most of us were when we discovered superheroes. I like this book. It's not awesome, and I think there are continuity baggage that it leaves, but as a read, it's fun.

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