



JLA, Vol. 4: Strength in Numbers

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With Superman, Batman, Green Lantern, Wonder Woman, the Flash, Martian Manhunter, and Aquaman as members, the JLA was made up of the greatest heroes in the universe. But as old foes create unholy alliances and new enemies attack out of nowhere, Batman realizes that the team must increase its numbers. Joined by such new allies as Plastic Man, Steel, Zauriel, the Huntress, and Oracle, a truly almighty team comprised of super heroes, aliens, gods, and monarchs prepare for battle against any and all threats.

JLA, Vol. 4: Strength in Numbers Details

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Steve says

The Prometheus arc in this book I had already read courtesy of the Deluxe JLA Volume two, but still an excellent read even on this slightly lower quality papers.

The middle two arcs - one about chance going wild and the other about Adam Strange - about whom I know precious little - were both good stories.

Finally, I really enjoyed the Starro / Sandman arc which has a real tension and horror feel to it.

Eric Mikols says

This volume takes a drop in quality from previous editions, mainly because half of this trade is written by guest writers. Not to say that Mark Waid is a bad writer, he does an excellent Justice League story. The problem is that you can feel the inconsistency in writing style and structure. Overall, though, this is still a good read a not to be skipped if your following the story. My biggest problem with this series is how the rest of the DC universe affects the quality. Wonder Woman was killed in another story, Superman has that stupid blue costume and then doesn't, and Morrison can only mention those moments and move on with the real story. They're not big issues, but they do detract from the tale at hand.

Sophie says

I really enjoyed this. Fun and engaging, and it had everything a Justice League comic should have. I like it when there's a little more to the stories than just a maniac superfoe or some weird threat from outer space, and in that regard, Morrison and Waid usually deliver.

Plus this one has the best cameo EVER. And I do mean ever.

Juan Jose says

Nice trade with many stories of 1 or 2 issues, the first appearance of Prometheus, Queen Hippolyte as Wonder Woman, Sandman, Adam Strange....

The best storyline is "The strange case of Julian September". The art is not so good, specially from Arnie Jorgensen. Mark Waid wrote some nice stories.

Mike says

Intro by Priest was stiff and turgid. Morrison returns the team to the realm of weird and meta, but it's starting to feel a little repetitive. Waid's storyline was jarring at first, not going along with the weird of Morrison. It was good, not terribly emotionally convincing, but earnest.

The most fun was Morrison's attempt to lasso Sandman into DC - a fun mash-up of two universes, styles and imaginations. I'd like to see more of these crossovers to shake things up a little more.

Steve says

I thought this collection of stories from the JLA was spotty at best. Divided into four stories, the first is about a new villain named Prometheus infiltrating the JLA and trying to kill them all from within.

The second is about a scientist who changes the power of probability. This was easily the weakest of the four.

The third story was about Adam Strange, which also was a lacklustre story.

The last however redeems it by crossing over with Sandman and having a Starro like entity attack a child in his dreams to take over the planet.

I think the fact that the stories were all over the place made for a topsy-turvy collection of Grant Morrison's fourth volume.

Dan says

The best thing about this volume is Morrison actually having the chutzpah to bring Morpheus (from The Sandman) into the mainstream DCU. Granted, he technically started out there, but he was quickly shuffled off to Vertigo with Swamp Thing. Still, having finally read some Sandman now, it was nice seeing him here. We also get the full roster of the JLA (including reserves) debut in this volume, and the first appearances of Morrison's antithesis to Batman as a villain - Prometheus (who sadly has been relegated to team-ups with Hush of all people of late).

Martin says

As with most other Morrison JLA volumes, the hardest thing for me to put up with was Porter & Dell's art. Morrison's stories are alright, overall, but the highlight for me was the Prometheus story (and how the JLA ultimately defeat him). The *Sandman* crossover was really not my cup of tea, either.

Virginia says

Ooh! I liked this arc! And a special guest star of Dream (from *The Sandman* by Neil Gaiman)! The only problem with this volume is that so many stories happened that I really can't recall exactly what occurred when. But it was fun. :)

Tarique Ejaz says

"It is the belief of a child that keeps us hopeful in this realm."

The Starro storyline is not only creepy but it is brilliantly engrossing as well. The part where the dream turns reality upside down is mind-boggling.

Moreover, Prometheus shows up and challenges the League in its every aspect. The newly reformed League is faced with newer and much more complex threats such as the one where they are Zeta-beamed by Adam Strange to spoil a major alien invasion that to on an alien world.

Grant Morrison tries to re-establish the stricter and sterner foundation of the league, giving more sturdier layers to the main characters. The plus point being that the old boy scout Superman returns in the volume.

The battles get intense and the new Green Lantern and the Flash start to make a strong alliance. The New Gods decision to send in Orion and Barda changes the landscape of the league. Orion's temper and Barda's temperament makes for a teeming sort of a compositional side of the team.

Overall, compelling artwork and an interesting story line.

Jake says

Strength in Numbers is the fourth collection of Morrison's run, though there's a couple of issues/storylines in here that were done by other writers. Christopher Priest's issue "Heroes" actually leads off the collection, which deals with the League reforming after having been disbanded at the end of the last issue. It's a well done story, and Priest does a good job handling the various characters involved. It also manages not to feel like a jarring departure from Morrison's run. The only thing that bothers me about it is the whole "JLA disbands...JLA reforms!" thing, which didn't seem to have a whole lot of point. The disbanding was so short as to go totally unnoticed, unless it cropped up in other comics that aren't represented here.

After that, Morrison is back at the helm with "Prometheus Unbound", which introduces the villain Prometheus to the JLA. Prometheus is sort of an evil Batman archetype who beats up on the JLA with a variety of tactical and technical trickery. He's a pretty fun villain, and his gimmick of being able to download information directly into his brain is kind of neat. That, and it's nice to finally see someone take Batman down a notch. Batman in the JLA can occasionally become something of a Mary Sue character. Of course, the JLA does eventually take Prometheus out, though it involves in the intervention of a character that seems a little random. Overall, the whole Prometheus arc is pretty good. As near as I can tell, he's never

seen much use since the end of Morrison's run on the JLA, which is a shame. He's a pretty fun villain.

Also, there's some very weird stuff going on in this issue with Wonder Woman not being Diana, because Diana is dead, and Hippolyta is filling in for her. I have NO clue what it's about, and it's very confusing. It stops at some point in Morrison's run, and, well, it's still damn confusing. Guess I should pick up some Wonder Woman trades or something.

Mark Waid takes the helm with "The Strange Case of Julian September" which features the sort of wacky, trippy, Star-Trek physics insanity that I normally associate with Morrison. It's a very fun storyline, especially for the moments when the newer leaguers start asking about Batman's utility on a team like the JLA. The story itself wraps up in a very strange way, but the whole premise is kind of strange, so it's not a big deal. Again, Waid does a great job of keeping the flavor and personality of the characters consistent with Morrison's run...it's such a seamless transition, I didn't even realize he was at the reins until I looked at the credits.

Waid has the next story arc, "Mystery in Space" as well. It's ok, though it felt less Morrison (if that's a word) than the previous one. Adam Strange kidnaps and enslaves the JLA for various plot related reasons. It's still got some good character interaction, but the story itself is a bit weak. Despite Strange's comments to the contrary, his whole plan seems a bit farfetched. The interaction between Strange and J'onn is great though, especially the last panel.

The last storyline, "Return of the Conqueror" is also the return of Morrison. It also wins the "strangest team-up" award as the JLA teams up with...Daniel, aka The Sandman, to defeat It, aka Starro the Conqueror.

No, that's not a typo. Daniel, the boy who became the king of dreams at the end of Gaiman's Sandman run plays a pivotal role in this story arc. Before you panic (and I know you Sandman fans ARE panicking right now), this does not mean he's running around punching out Starro, or shooting his "dream ray" or anything like that. Morrison's version of Starro begins It's assault on Earth in the realm of dreams, and Daniel shows up to help get Green Lantern, Wonder Woman, and Superman into the dreams of one boy where they might be able to defeat the It. He doesn't really dirty his hands with fighting, so much as he points people in the right direction. (It's also worth noting that the Sandman interacts with the JLA at least once in the original series, so there is some precedence for this.)

It's actually a very cool, creepy, and surreal storyline. I don't think I ever would have thought of Starro as a particularly frightening or disturbing villain, but Morrison makes it creepy as hell. Though constantly referring to it as It, definitely helps. It sounds a lot scarier than Starro the Conqueror.

Overall, it's a good collection, with a lot of fun stories. It's not as much Morrison as I would have liked, but the guest stories are good enough that the switch isn't that noticeable. Even the weak story is still pretty good.

Maythavee says

I actually enjoyed most of the stories in this volume which was a nice change! I'll breakdown my review into the different story arcs.

'Camelot' and 'Prometheus Unbound' written by Grant Morrison:

- We got a new lineup for JLA and it was a pretty cool one! I loved that Hippolyta was included since she took on the mantle of Wonder Woman when Diana "died" and became a Goddess (I highly recommend John Byrne's Wonder Woman Volume 2 run. It's amazing!). Sadly, Wonder Woman was written out of character here. Hippolyta would have never hesitated when facing an enemy.
- This two-parter had a great villain though and I enjoyed seeing the JLA work together to take him down.

'Synchronicity' and 'Seven Soldiers of Probability' written by Mark Waid:

- This was my favourite story from this volume! Batman and Martian Manhunter were the stand-outs.
- I also liked that Orion and Barda joined the team!

'Mystery in Space' and 'Strange New World' written by Mark Waid:

- Another great two-parter! I wish the art was better though.

'It' and 'Conquerors' written by Grant Morrison:

- I'm starting to warm up to Morrison's writing. This two-parter was pretty enjoyable. I liked the interactions between the Sandman and the JLA.

Lloyd says

This book (though he didn't write all of it) is the fourth volume of JLA in Grant Morrison's run.

While enjoyable, as I always think Morrison's stuff is, this one did less to wow me as much as something like "Doom Patrol", and it doesn't even hold a candle to "The Invisibles" (both previous works by Morrison).

Writer Christopher Priest leads off the whole book and while the story wasn't bad, I've gotta ask: why were the JLA disbanded at the end of the last volume, only to have them reform at the beginning of this one?

Morrison follows this with the story of antagonist Prometheus, who has put together a plan to kill the entire Justice League. This one touched enough on Morrison's usual themes and used superhero action enough to make it enjoyable for me.

The Mark Waid portions of the book followed this. "The Strange Case of Dr. Julian September" almost felt like Waid was trying to write using Morrisonian themes. There were time travel and parallel universe plot points that almost felt like Waid was forcing himself to keep up these things simply because he was filling in for Morrison. The "Mystery in Space" story, to me, almost felt like a rehashing of the Prometheus story with just a few altered details.

The best part of the whole book by far was when Morrison returns to wrap up the volume with two issues involving The Sandman brought to popularity by master of the medium Neil Gaiman. This story felt the most like Morrison's usual work, without being too forced.

All in all, a good solid book, just not jaw-dropping.

I'd recommend it to fans of the writers who worked on it, fans of superhero comics, and JLA fans.

Travis says

As hit or miss as Grant Morrison's writing can be he got what makes the JLA work and tried to create the biggest adventures he could for them, constantly trying to up the larger than life threat level. The results were uneven, but I give him points for effort.

Devero says

Volume interessante, che presenta l'inizio della seconda parte della run di Morrison, sempre Howard Porter ai disegni. Di fondo Morrison progetta una Lega della Giustizia espansa, sul modello del Pantheon Greco-romano.

In questo pantheon moderno, con base la torre lunare, abbiamo un Superman-Zeus, una Wonder Woman-Hera, un Batman-Ade, un Aquaman-Poseidone, un Flash-Hermes, un Green Lanter-Apollo, e di conseguenza tutti gli altri eroi.

Le storie non sono male: si parte dalla incursione di Prometeo, un nuovo criminale in grado di duplicare digitalmente abilità di altri personaggi, che però dopo aver messo in scacco la JLA nella sua base lunare, viene sconfitto semplicemente con un colpo di frusta agli zebedei da Catwoman, abbastanza ridicolo come finale.

Si prosegue con due doppiette di storie di Mark Waid, che prende momentaneamente il timone. Sono storie che, sebbene riprendano il tono sopra le righe di Morrison, affondano anche a piene mani nella storia della Lega riportando sotto i riflettori personaggi come Atom e Adam Strange e la loro relazione con gli eroi più forti dell'universo DC.

Poi torna Morrison con una bella storia che si riallaccia a un vecchio episodio del Sandman di Gaiman e riporta in scena Starro, il primo avversario della JLA, rendendolo un inquietante e terrificante essere ben diverso dalla ridicola stella di mare spaziale che era in origine.

Spicca comunque la presenza di Waid come scrittore in questo volume rispetto a Morrison.
