



## The Middleman: The Doomsday Armageddon Apocalypse

*Javier Grillo-Marxuach, Hans Beimler, Armando M. Zanker (Illustrator)*

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The Middleman and Wendy return in a new adventure that completes the epic journey of their hit tv show! A betrayal by one of Wendy's closest friends sets off a chain of events that threatens the very fabric of human existence. Alone and surrounded by the forces of FATBOY and their leader, the dreaded Manservant Neville, Wendy and The Middleman stare down the barrel of a sacrifice so ultimate it will shake the Middleman universe to its very foundation! Based on the lost series script by creator Javier Grillo-Marxuach and co-executive producer Hans Beimler.

## **The Middleman: The Doomsday Armageddon Apocalypse Details**

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Author : Javier Grillo-Marxuach , Hans Beimler , Armando M. Zanker (Illustrator)

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## From Reader Review The Middleman: The Doomsday Armageddon Apocalypse for online ebook

### Steven E says

Unlike Buffy or Firefly, the Middleman never ended its run with any degree of closure, running as its last episode a by-the-numbers slapdash post-apocalyptic episode that never really gelled with the rest of the series and was probably the worst of the show's 12 episodes. Unlike Whedon, series creator Javier Grillo-Marxauch chooses to use his comic book as a coda, rather than drag a beloved franchise kicking and screaming through the dust of a litany of legacy-tarnishing books because he just can't let go.

So, does it work? Sorta. The dialogue cracks on the page, but I can't help but sigh at it being delivered by the dull monotone of my inner monologue, as opposed to Keeslar and Morales. The drawings too are mostly flat and boring (save a couple of Star Wars nods and a collection of past Middlemen), bulging with jagged images and empty space. The narrative doesn't entirely flow, either. Manservant Neville goes from a charming billionaire in the show to a crazy Big Bad in literally no time at all, and the action is forced along rather without time for reflection. Problem leads to solution leads to problem without any time for reflection, for the most part.

Still, there are a couple of exceedingly well-earned grace notes--a filling in of the Middleman's past, the conclusion to his romance with Wendy's roommate Lacy--that make this not only a good way to spend some time but also a satisfying (if flawed) conclusion to a show that deserved much better ratings than it got.

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### Joe Sergi says

In 2008, ABC Family Channel debuted a show called The Middleman (based on the Viper Comic written by Javier Grillo-Marxauch with art by Les McClaine). The Middleman is not really a person, but rather a job title that has been handed down from Middleman to Middleman for centuries. "Fighting evil so you don't have to," the Middlemen work for the "Organization Too Secret To Know" (O2STK), who provides each middleman his assignments and super-cool gadgets through a robot named Ida (Mary Pat Gleason). The show introduces the current incarnation Middleman, a square-jawed, milk-drinking, crime-fighting, clean-mouthed, butt-kicking hero played by Matt Keeslar. In the pilot, the Middleman hires Wendy Watson, played by Natalie Morales, an artist by passion and a temp-worker by necessity, as his sidekick and Middleman in training. In many ways, she is the total opposite of the straight laced Middleman. The series focuses on Wendy as she tries to balance her normal life of boyfriends, mothers, and roommates with her more surreal adventures with the Middleman. In the first season alone, Wendy faced monsters, aliens, mad scientists, zombie fish, demons, vampire ventriloquist dummies, malevolent boy bands and evil sorority girls.

The show was a sci-fi geek's dream and was a pop culture palooza. For example, every episode used the Wilhelm scream in some way (The DVD features a compilation of these as a bonus feature), and the phrase "It's sheer elegance in its simplicity," whenever a villain's plan is discovered. A character named Nozer (Jake Smollett) is frequently seen sparring song lyrics with Wendy. Finally, each episode had a pop culture theme. A partial list includes:

Episode two ("The Accidental Occidental Conception") featured the names of characters in Frank Herbert's Dune;

Episode four, ("The Manicoid Teleportation Conundrum") had names from the Back to the Future series.

Episode five ("The Flying Fish Zombification ") contained numerous references to the band The Zombies; Episode eight ("The Ectoplasmic Panhellenic Investigation") referenced Ghostbusters Episode eleven ("The Clotharian Contamination Protocol") featured references to Die Hard, the classic Doctor Who characters and a "pan-galactic gargleblaster", a drink from The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy. In the same episode, the alien message sent to Earth was written in Aurebesh, the Star Wars alphabet The Season Finale ("The Palindrome Reversal Palindrome") was a tribute to the Mirror Mirror Universe in Star Trek (with all the men sporting Spock beards) and parodied Escape from New York. A complete list of pop culture references could be found at the Middleblog.

In short, Middleman was a weekly one hour nerdgasm. Sadly, the Middleman only lasted 12 episodes, despite positive critical reviews, before it was abruptly cancelled, leaving several dangling plot threads and mysteries unresolved (such as the Middleman's background and real name and the ultimate plan of villain Manservant Neville (Mark Sheppard).

Fear not dear fans, the Middleman and Wendy have returned to complete their epic saga--this time, in comic form. I was able to pick up The Middleman: The Doomsday Armageddon Apocalypse from Viper Comics while at the SDCC.

The plot of the book picks up right where the show ended. Wendy's boyfriend, Tyler Ford (played by Brendon Hines in the show), is working as the assistant to the villainous Manservent Neville (pronounced "M'nser-vant"), who is spying on the Middle Organization. The Middleman still pines for Wendy's roommate Lacey (played by Brit Morgan) but puts duty first. By the end of this issue, we learn Manservant's plan, discover the Middleman's true name, the identity of his true love, and see Wendy in a Slave Girl Leia costume.

The issue is written with the same wonderful dialogue and pop culture reference that made the show great (the references are even referenced in an index). In fact, the original cast of the show reunited for a table-read of the issue. Clips are available on Youtube.com. But, it is much better to read the book than watch the grainy film. Viper should seriously consider releasing a CD or download of the reading for Middleman completionists.

The Middle Man: The Doomsday Armageddon Apocalypse is available on the Vipers comics website [www.vipercomics.com](http://www.vipercomics.com) and you should pick it up (along with the DVD collection of the show, which features great extras like the complete webisodes and the PSAs done to promote the show.)

Javier Grillo-Marxuach and Armando Mendoza have produced such a quality project book that it will be only a matter of time until they assume enough power to take over the world in no time. "It's sheer elegance in its simplicity."

The Middle Man: The Doomsday Armageddon Apocalypse

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### **Rosa says**

This book was the resolution to the show Middleman. I loved the show and am incredibly disappointed that it was cancelled. The resolution was completely bittersweet and I hope that even though the show is cancelled they decide to keep writing more Middleman novels. The show and the graphic novels are funny and smart. A scifi fantasy superhero mashup that includes witty popculture references and characters that are

rediculously forthright (while that might not be realistic, it does make for some interesting dialog). I could go on and on about how much I love the series and the books, but I will stop myself now.

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### **Jenn says**

This was a pretty satisfying ending to a tv series where we were left hanging. I started reading The Middleman after meeting Javi at Dragon\*Con quite a few years ago. He was there to talk about his (then) new show, Lost. He was incredibly awesome. He was willing to talk to the fans any time and anywhere and loved to geek out about his favorite stuff as much as the next person. He even did four extra talks that weren't scheduled because the fans felt that the track in charge of Lost didn't do it justice. From then on, I was a fan. I'll try anything he does. So, when I heard he had a comic coming out, I had to get it. I'm not a huge comic fan, but I do read them from time to time (Courtney Crumrin, Buffy Season 8, The Watchman, and V for Vendetta, mainly). I liked them a lot. I was really excited when, in 2008, this series came on ABC Family. The series was even better than the comic IMHO and with Javi at the helm, all the great writing and wit were still there. Unfortunately, people were still unsure what kind of station ABC Family was supposed to be and this was a summer show and it wasn't watched and was canceled after 12 episodes. To tie things up, Javi, with a different illustrator Zanker, did The Doomsday Armageddon Apocalypse as a completion to the series. It tied up a lot of things, but ultimate fans will be disappointed that every tiny detail wasn't answered. Because fans are like that. :)

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### **Travis says**

I just finished a rewatch of the TV series, so what better way to finish it off than reading the comic of what would have been the season finale? I did watch a Comic Con (or something) panel of the actors all reading the script once years ago, but had mostly forgotten what happened, and anyway, it was nice to see it actually illustrated not just read. I really loved this show and this was a great finale for it. It's a shame neither the show nor the comics continued. (I know there was one more comic after this, a crossover between the comic universe and TV universe, but that doesn't really count.)

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### **Ali says**

Rereading this because my copy of The Middleman - Volume 5: The Pan-Universal Parental Reconciliation finally arrived once the postal strike ended.

This is good, but I don't love it like I love the show (although I know this is essentially just the final episode). One of my favourite things about the show is that it's generally feminist and progressive - and here the cover pretty much sums up Wendy's role in relation to MM's. The men are drawn with human-looking faces, while the women all have big dewy anime eyes(view spoiler). I wish this had been more about Wendy and she'd been able to *do* more here, since I really feel she's the main character of this series.

Overall, though, I think this does a good job of tying up most of the storylines from the show, which was brilliant and witty and cancelled before its time. (view spoiler) And on the plus side, I can't see the show's special effects budget covering the events of this episode, so there's that. I also love the way it carries on running jokes and things from the show - including the obligatory Wilhelm scream and "My plan is sheer

elegance in its simplicity!" (although subverted in this one).

I heartily ship MM/Lacey(view spoiler).

All in all, this is an epic, heroic ending to one of my favourite series. It doesn't have as much of the light-hearted charm for me as the show - but even the show got pretty dark in those last few episodes, so it's not out of keeping with that trajectory. I'm interested to see how they bring the two canons (comic and show) together in the final book.

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### **Michelle says**

Grim tacked on unnecessary final indulgence...unlike the TV episodes, this second time through it seemed like all the magic had been pulled back and there was nothing to see but faltering clockwork. Might be that the graphic novels lean more toward this darker vein, but I prefer the TV version's whimsy.

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### **Aldi says**

Loved it, and could see it so clearly as a fantastic final episode. My bitterness about this not happening knows no bounds.

I do have one art nitpick: Why on earth do Wendy and Lacey (and it's specifically only them) not have pupils? It makes them look like brainless anime dolls :\

Wonderful story, though. I'm glad we at least got to see it in comic form.

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### **Cat Herine says**

This paperback follows directly after the tv series, and is meant to act as a series finale. Because of this, we get Latina Wendy, and Lacey with her more expanded role. It plays out like a standard episode, and so was fun and easy to read. The nostalgia was strong while reading this.

I was really sad about the Middleman's heroic sacrifice, and what it all entailed (I was really rooting for him and Lacy!). I also felt that Wendy reverted back to a bit of 'Robin the boy-hostage,' which was something that she also expressed concern about throughout the series.

Overall, this was a nice addition to a fantastically underrated series.

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### **Mark Baker says**

This book returns The Middleman to his comic book roots and gives us what would have been the final episode of season 1 if the show's ratings hadn't sunk it. For that reason, I enjoyed it, however it did lose some of the series personality and definitely left things much more open than the actual finale did.

Read my full review at [Carstairs Considers](#).

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### **Mike says**

I can't say it any better than the author: In the words of Javi himself, *The Middleman* is "...an over-the-top, sixteen-car-pileup-sugar-popped-cereal-bowl of a series that's not afraid to be everything your mother warned you about television: a cartoonishly extreme, randomly fantastic, special-effects laden, three-fisted walking-and-talking toy-line advertisement of an action-adventure-sci-fi comic book in which the fabric of reality barely survives in the end, and the journey invariably reveals a completely surreal strangeness behind everything we hold to be true."

Except this is the comic book series that made the television series possible - an amazing romp through the greatest tropes that TV and comics have spawned.

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### **Travis says**

I bought this book at a dollar sale, not knowing it was the ending of a single season TV series on ABC Family. So my lack of enjoyment most likely stems from my lack of previous involvement with these characters. While there is a little bit of a summary of the characters in the opening narration, a couple pages is not the same as a TV season. But I did enjoy the light, over the top doomsday scenario as a simple cartoon adventure.

I'm glad there is glossary of pop culture references included in the back of the book, otherwise the references' inclusion would have felt less like homage and more like theft. Then again, maybe these types of references were a regular part of the show. And I did pick up the book because of the Slave Princess Leia nod on the cover, so I can't hold it against the book. And lines like "stay on target" are obvious to a dedicated Star Wars fan but will fly past other people, much like some of the other references did to me.

My main experience with Viper Comics is the *Dead@17* series, which started excellent before becoming too cluttered. This graphic novel hearkened back to the good days of *Dead@17*, although with less cheesecake in the women (despite the Slave Princess outfit). I love comics that look like animation and this one is wonderful to look at.

Despite the good points, though, I would stay away unless you're fan of the show.

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### **Sheldon Wiebe says**

The graphic novel that completes the incomplete only season the TV series that was brilliant but canceled one episode too soon got.

It's as good as the original graphic novel (the TV series).

Javi, if you read this, thanks for the great interview - and if the situation ever arises where another network (or streamer) shows any interest (have you talked to Netflix about it?) in *The Middleman*, please go for it.

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### **Fraser Sherman says**

The delightful, off-the-wall SF series/comics adaptation Middleman only lasted a season on TV, but it was a very good season. This graphic novel is based on the script for the unmade final episode: what is Manservant Neville's diabolical plan? Is apprentice Middleman Wendy's boyfriend doublecrossing her? What is the secret in his past that keeps the Middleman from knocking boots with Wendy's roommate Lacy? I liked this, though as others have noted Wendy doesn't get much heroism. And I really hate the downbeat ending (the endnotes point out lots of Blake's 7 references setting that up).

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### **Mónica Mar says**

The Middleman es quizá la serie más ñoña que he visto en mi vida. Es como una mezcla de The X Files y James Bond, o un híbrido igualmente absurdo. Solo duró doce episodios; los ratings no eran los mejores y sufrió una cancelación muy poco digna. Pero polvo eres y en polvo te convertirás: el final de temporada se materializó en cómic, su formato original. en The Doomsday Armageddon Apocalypse conocemos el nombre de The Middleman, su pasado y su futuro, al menos en un aspecto. También vemos surgir a un villano que nadie esperaba, y el fin del mundo como lo conocemos se precipita sobre las cabezas de los protagonistas, que tendrán que impedirlo. El elenco de la serie hizo un "table reading" de este episodio perdido, y aunque no tiene ni los uniformes ni los efectos (bien, bien ñoños y por ello absolutamente geniales), la esencia es la misma. Es evidente que se divertían mucho filmando una serie tan loca, y tenían una química increíble. Bueno, lo bueno nunca dura.

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