



Almost Infamous: A Supervillain Novel

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Eighteen-year-old Aidan Salt isn't a superhero. With his powerful (and unpredictable) telekinetic abilities he could be one if he wanted to, but he doesn't. He's unambitious, selfish, and cowardly, and he doesn't want to have to deal with all the paperwork required to become a professional superhero. But since the money, fame, and women that come with wearing the cape are appealing, he decides to become the first supervillain the world has seen in more than twenty years: Apex Strike.

However, he soon finds villainy in a world where the heroes have long since defeated all the supervillains. While half the world's heroes seem to want him dead, the other half want to hire him as their own personal villain to keep them relevant. Choosing the latter course, Aidan enters a world of fame, fortune, and staged superhero fights that is seemingly everything he ever dreamed of . . . at least until he sees what truly hides behind the cape-and-mask lifestyle.

Almost Infamous: A Supervillain Novel Details

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From Reader Review Almost Infamous: A Supervillain Novel for online ebook

Steven Davich says

Mike gave it to me and I really liked it (actually).

Brian says

Hope there's a sequel coming.

Tim Hicks says

I'm not sure this is really a 4-star book, but I enjoyed it.
It's clear right off that this book is not trying to be Serious Lit'ra'tr.
And it starts off a bit dorky, much like its protagonist.
But as the silly-but-consistent plot unfolds, Aidan grows up before our eyes.
It's probably best seen as a YA book, but it's not bad at all.
There's the usual casual sex of novels - the "we've been together for eight pages, let's get it on" kind - but at the same time Aidan is learning that there's THIS kind and THAT kind, and there's an important difference.

This is another novel of the standard "he had no idea how strong he was until ..." kind, but it isn't really a problem. I do wonder if someone will someday write about a protagonist who is NOT particularly strong but has learned how to be effective. Indeed, this book came fairly close to doing that, but in the end Aidan seems to rank pretty darn high on the power list.

I don't see this one having a sequel, but Carter's next one is worth watching for.

Hal says

I do not recommend this book. I finished it so I didn't absolutely hate it but I don't think it's a good read for what I can only assume was a target audience of 16-19 yo boys who don't normally read.

The premise, while not the newest thing in the world, is fun and many of the mentioned characters and events are creative and interesting. However, the main character is a grade-A asshole, who grows little as a person. I'm sure this was the point/intention but still, I just don't feel that young adults need to be idolizing a sex-obsessed, quick to drugs, selfish teenager.

Chip says

Plot: 4.5*

Characters: 4*

World-building: 4.5*

A perfect book for a quick read.

I'll hopefully create a more detailed review later, but wanted to get my first impressions down now. This book starts slowly and builds up a head of steam that just keeps growing. For the first 50 pages, I thought it would be a 2* book...maybe 3* at best, but the author knew what they were doing.

This book is one of the better I've read when it comes to character building. To avoid spoilers, I won't say much here, but I am glad that I decided to read to the end.

The plot is cliché, but extremely well executed.

World-building is top notch. The universe is consistent and the environment is well thought out and described.

Kimberly says

This was such a fun read!

Aidan Salt has powers. The problem is, so do a lot of other people. He's idolized some of the biggest superheroes his entire life and wants to be just like them. With the riches and fame, who wouldn't? The only problem is, becoming a major super hero isn't easy when everyone else is trying to do the same. Then one day it hits him, he doesn't have to be a superhero, he can be a supervillain. Supervillains have been gone since the War on Villainy and Aidan believes it's time for a true supervillain to return.

So he gets a costume (all black leather and a motorcycle helmet) and a name (Apex Strike) and sets about his first mission to rob a small liquor store. Things go wrong from the beginning and it becomes very clear that being super, villain or hero, is not what it seems.

Mike Stern says

Cool concept and a quick read. The hero is a bit annoying and the relationships between the young characters can be sort of annoying.

Laurie says

Fun, fast read with a new twist on the super hero/villain genre. A teenager discovers he has powers and is too lazy to be a hero. He ends up getting paid by super hero's to play the bad guy so they can continue to get government funding. Great book!

Eon ?Windrunner? says

That's it. I tried. I really did. I have not gone down this path before, but I have decided that from this year I will not be wasting time I could have been spending on great books by trudging through awful ones. And so, without further ado, my first DNF award goes to Almost Infamous.

It started off promising with a mini history of superheroes and supervillains in this alternate version of the universe. This is a world where superpowers have always existed, well, at least since 1854, where superhuman existence was first acknowledged. A few lucky people who have manifested powers are not the sum of otherworldly beings on this planet though. There are beings called Atlantians and Lemurians, alien races that have invaded earth such as the Grays, the Traknet, and the Roball Empire, man-made villains thanks to mad-scientists and even Egyptian gods. Yup, the whole pantheon is walking the earth. Luckily, peace has been the order of the day since the War on Villainy ended. With nothing much else to do, superheroes have become the new celebrities, starring in movies, endorsing products and politicians whilst defeating the occasional attempts of new villains trying to make a name for themselves. These are easily dealt with though, and all is well in the world. The story's protagonist, Aiden Salt, is just starting to come into his powers and sets out to become the first new supervillain in number of years. All good. Things go awry though, and he is captured, but not before displaying massive potential for his new profession. Then things get even more interesting. All is in fact, not so well in the world. All the great supervillains of the past are dead, captured, defeated. The good guys or superheroes are starting to be seen as irrelevant. Their funding and sponsorships are being cut, there are no more perceived threats, no more reason for them to be worshipped as gods among men. Fortunately for them, they have a plan. Aiden and other promising young villains that have been caught in the recent past are being sent off to a secret island where they will be trained to realize their full potential and then be pitted against minor superheroes in a contest of sorts. The prize? A spot as one of the seven members of a new team of supervillains that will bring back the fear and glory of the old days and along with it, the need for superheroes.

Sounds good right? Yep, I was all aboard. Hard to believe it could go wrong, but it did. It went south SO FAST. I almost want to give myself a pat on the back for sticking around till just past the halfway mark, but credit to the author for the secondary characters who managed to keep me going so long. Yep. The main character is a despicable, horrible, sleazy, sex-obsessed excuse for a human being. I know that he is the villain, or one of them, in this story, but I just could not stomach the guy and he made the book ultimately unbearable.

Matt Carter CAN write. The story was good, the writing was quick and funny and there was a lot of potential. I just HATED the main character and it ruined my enjoyment. Looking at the reviews I seem to be in the minority though, so if the plot suits your fancy definitely try it.

Gavin says

This was one of the stranger superhero/supervillan novels I've read in the genre. It read a bit like a male YA wish fulfilment story but the world Carter created still managed to be pretty cool and interesting and the story had a surprising amount of depth to it so it easily held my attention from start to finish.

This was set in a fairly typical superhero world. The twist was that the heroes of the modern age had

eradicated the villains around 20 years before this book started in an initiative that had become known as The War on Villainy. All the supervillains either got killed or captured leaving only the heroes. 18 year old Aiden Salt is a kid going nowhere and so when he starts to develop powerful telekinetic abilities he decides it would be cooler, and easier, to become a supervillain than a superhero. Try-outs for the superhero teams are pretty tough! He dons the mantle of Apex Strike and tries to start a comeback for super-villainy. It goes wrong pretty fast and in a shockingly spectacular fashion! After that Aiden finds himself caught up in a conspiracy he never imagined was possible but that might still give him everything he wanted.

I did like the story. The plot was interesting and it had enough twists and turns to keep me fully engaged. Aiden was one of those weirdly likeable characters despite the fact that he was a bit of a waster and quite villainous at times. I felt like the secondary characters were good. A lot of them were interesting and most of them had a decent amount of depth to them. The story even touched on a few interesting topics like corruption, propaganda, mental health issues, and the problems within the criminal justice system while also managing to have a little fun parodying a few reality TV shows and things like Suicide Squad.

I liked a lot of what went on in the story but feel like I would have enjoyed this a whole lot more if some of the humor had been a bit less crude and if it did not have such a strong male wish fulfilment feel to the story. Aiden literally drinks, smokes, snorts, and fucks everything in sight as he makes the most of his fame. It was particularly annoying that ALL of the attractive female characters ended up in his bed. It made it feel like that was their only real purpose in the story which is a pity as a lot of them developed into strong enough characters towards the end of the book.

Despite having a decent amount of humor this was actually a fairly dark story. It never got too dark or bleak but there was a surprising amount of death, drug abuse, and manipulation that this always felt like quite a gritty story.

All in all I did enjoy this strange mix of a story but was left with the feeling that with just a few tweaks this could have jumped from "enjoyable" to "excellent".

Rating: 3.5 stars. I'm rounding up to 4 stars here on Goodreads as this really was quite readable.

Audio Note: I felt like Nicholas Techosky gave a great performance of the audio. He had decent character voices and seemed to get the tone of the story.

Mogsy (MMOGC) says

3.5 of 5 stars <https://bibliosanctum.com/2016/04/18/...>

If you're a fan of comics and are looking for a clever, humorous, and merciless riff on the superhero genre, then *Almost Famous* is most definitely the book for you! Matt Carter's novel is a wildly entertaining, satirical take on the characters and worlds we imagine when we picture the Marvel or DC universes, and as a twist, his protagonist is a horny, uppity teenage supervillain.

To get a sense of the zaniness you're in for, just take a peek at the book's first few pages, featuring a "Brief History of Superheroes." Super powers—whether you were born with them, cursed with them, granted them as a result of radioactive freak accident, changed by a gene-splicing experiment gone wrong, and so on and so forth—are just a common fact of life. Superhumans are real. Oh, and by the way, so are Atlanteans,

Lemurians, magicians, aliens, demons, golems, mortal gods who walk the earth, and pretty much every kind of power-endowed beings you can think of. All real.

Over time, these powered-individuals have altered the course of history and changed the face of the earth. Some of them have used their abilities for good. Others, not so much. In 1969, the conflict between the “good guys” and the “bad guys” came to a head, kicking off the War on Villainy. After more than twenty years of fighting, the Heroes eventually prevailed, neutralizing the last real threat. With supervillains more or less eradicated, people of the world today live in relative peace and safety, watched over by an international superhero team called the Protectors.

All that changes the day eighteen-year-old Aidan Salt decides to put on a cheap homemade costume and an old motorcycle helmet, dubbing himself the supervillain Apex Strike. However, his first act of villainy goes completely wrong, and soon after, he is captured by the Protectors. To his surprise though, instead of locking him away, the superheroes make him an offer: a chance to participate in a secret operation called Project Kayfabe. The world has not seen a real supervillain in decades, and superheroes are gradually losing their relevance. They need Apex Strike and others like him on a fake supervillain team in order to stage elaborate mock battles and kick start their popularity once more, showing the world why it still needs its heroes.

This is where the description of the book is a bit misleading, because it makes it sound like Aidan was just handed the job. In reality, dozens of supervillains are vying for a spot on the this team, and the first part of the novel is actually a hilarious reality show-type competition, where the “judges” of Project Kayfabe put their “contestants” to the test before narrowing the field down to the final seven. It was not at all what I expected when I picked up this book, and it was fun and exciting to meet all these other supervillains (all with powers ranging from the very cool to the very ridiculous) and then trying to guess who will end up making it to the end of the trials with Aidan/Apex Strike (whose spot on the team is a given). The results were entertaining and sometimes surprising.

The best part about this book is the world that the author has created. As a nod to the superhero comics we know and love, it feels instantly familiar, but at the same time it’s also offbeat and unique. Matt Carter makes a lot of pop culture references and parodies superhero movies and comics to great effect. I especially loved the little flavors that were thrown in, like the “Supervillainy 101” anecdotes inserted at the end of each chapter. I always say that it’s the little things like that which make a huge difference, and this case, they help *Almost Infamous* stand out from other superhero novels that don’t spend near as much time and effort on the world-building.

Perhaps my only criticism is the protagonist. Some characters and I simply start off on the wrong foot. Most of the time, through growth and development of the character, I end up warming up to him or her, but sadly this was not the case for Aidan Salt. He is spineless. He is naïve. He is unambitious. He chose to be a supervillain, because being a superhero is too much work and he’s just too lazy. And the only reason he wanted to become famous is because he thought that would help him get laid!

Now, one can argue that Aidan isn’t meant to be likeable character. For fans of underdogs and anti-heroes, I can see some appeal there. Personally though, his attitude was just too much to take, and there were certain juvenile, repulsive things he did (like spying on the girls while they were showering, for example—ugh) that I just couldn’t look past. In spite of his evolving character arc and the major changes he goes through, he just never grew on me, which was a shame. Still, that was probably the only damper on my experience. You’d think not being able to connect with the main character would be a pretty big issue, but in fact it was only a minor hiccup, for I ended up falling in love with so many of the other characters and enjoyed the refreshing diversity of the cast. The storytelling is great, and I sped through the intensely fast-paced and action-filled

plot.

Almost Infamous is a quick, solid novel that does exactly what it sets out to do: to be one hell of a fun read! Highly recommended for fans of superhero fiction and comic book lovers, especially if you enjoy the gritty stylings of comics like Garth Ennis' The Boys. I had an absolute blast with this dynamic tale of sex, drugs, and supervillainy.

Jonathan says

A story from the bad guy's perspective. Excellent. A quick and enjoyable read from start to finish... if you can tolerate Aidan Salt. Everything seemed to make Aidan think of sex. It was kind of irritating. And there was a lot of sex in the book. Aside from that, the supervillains ninja warrior try outs were very entertaining and the reason why it was all necessary in their world made perfect sense. All the members of Aidan's little group were unique and interesting and mostly lovable, and it hurt (me, anyways) when one of them was cut or killed.

Haven't done one of these in a while, it's nonsensical casting time!

I wanted to punch Aidan Salt/Apex Strike pretty much the entire book, so I pictured him as Christopher Mintz-Plasse in his Red Mist costume from Kick-Ass, because he was kind of punchable.

I don't believe Iron Bear was actually Russian, but still, I pictured him as Iron Man's Russian opponent, Crimson Dynamo.

Showstopper I kept seeing in a ridiculously goofy outfit, there was such a character in the New Warrior comics, Hindsight Lad. Maybe add a couple of pounds to him.

The Imp from Hell, Odigjod was my favourite characters. Awesome powers of teleportation and shapeshifting and, I think, several other Hell-related powers AND he spoke in broken English. As much as I love demonic images, when he was introduced, I saw him instantly as Rebel warrior/tail gunner Bistan, from Rogue One.

Trojan Fox was Cerberus from Ex-Heroes, as seen here on the cover of the second book, just with actual powers plus the mech suit.

Felix/Geode was first described as a giant boy covered in crystals. I saw the crystals but they eventually morphed into those bone things that covered some of Doomsday from the DC Universe. Just make his face a little friendlier. He was one of my favourites too, because you first saw him selflessly help other villains he was supposed to be competing against.

Only a singer from a metal band could be cast for Nevermore, in this case, Mizuho Lin, one of the singers from the Brazilian band, Semblant. Her powers of manipulating and bringing to life her tattoos made me think of Green Lantern meeting the Shadow Hunters.

Artok was obviously Namor looking for a secondary job.

Ghost Girl, who wore a porcelain mask and could read your sins, didn't sound like a supervillain, rather a

character from a horror movie, like The Strangers.

I actually could not remember how Spasm was described, but he eventually became Solo from the Marvel Universe.

Circus was clearly one of the extras from the Paper Mario games, and during the few times he was 3D and a real boy, I saw him as Magnus Bane from Shadow Hunters/Mortal Instruments series.

Carnivore was not a shark, but I saw him as a shark anyways. Half man, half shark. There's one of those already in the DC Universe, King Shark.

Though there were many heroes, there was only one that I actually pictured all the time, Helios, who appeared as Ozymandias from the Watchmen. The chapter where Aidan and Helios were supposed to bond on arch nemesis day was really well done.

Recommend this book to any one who liked Kick-Ass or the Ex-Heroes series.

Moriah Smith says

I couldn't finish this. I was really excited by the introduction but couldn't get past the first 1/3 of the book. If you were ever a hormonal teenage guy, and you enjoy super villain/hero stories, you may enjoy this, but otherwise, the story keeps getting side tracked by the main characters lust with brief flickers of interesting events occurring before the lust reoccurs.

Andrew Lynn says

I really enjoyed this book. Of the fun/odd novels I've read, I put this just behind "Ready Player One" and "I, Lucifer." Just like those books, it has a fun, premise and an interesting plot. If you are looking for a light novel with some dark spots and like superhero type stuff, check it out.

James says

I'm a fan of villains. So when I saw this while looking through the newly-added section at my library, I figured it was pretty much necessary for me to at least check it out. With a bit of trepidation, mind, because the unfortunate prevalence of young guys primarily interested in moral edginess for its own sake in the real world, is enough to make me wary of media seeming to featuring similar individuals as its protagonists. And reading through the first chapter, with Aidan's disaffected commentary on his high school life and casual objectification of female classmates, I began to get a sinking feeling that that apprehension might be correct...

I'm incredibly glad to say that my initial worries were utterly unfounded. Aidan is indeed, as the cover blurb describes, "unambitious, selfish, and cowardly," not to mention shallow, self-absorbed all out of proportion considering the ridiculous situations he gets himself into, prone to viewing women primarily as sex objects, and lacking in even the faintest impulse toward curiosity or prodding at his instincts - and throughout the

book, the various threads of the narrative ream him for all these things mercilessly. He's surrounded by other characters who not only call him for his own stupidity, but who provide scathing attacks in varying degrees of subtlety on the sorts of attitudes and tropes that would make a less intelligent story with a similar premise an unpleasant chore to read.

And not only does *Almost Infamous* provide commentary (in the characters' mouths and on a narrative structural level) on common character and character interaction tropes in popular media and fan reaction to them; it also draws in several layers of sociopolitical commentary through worldbuilding backstory (the "War on Villainy" inevitably brings to mind other real-life "Wars On...", such as Terror and Drugs, providing one of the first hints to the particular nature of superheroes' antagonistic place in this story), front-and-center details of the plot including the ultimate reveal of the superheroes' motivations, and most interestingly to me, a meta-level look at the complex interactions between personal circumstance, political and ideological expedience, and actual ethical wrongdoing in the cultural determining of what makes a "villain".

Alongside all the thematic material being drawn through the events of the narrative - my personal favourite aspect because of how many different layers I kept noticing! - I've barely even touched on the other aspects of this book that made it an enjoyable read, including a glut of amusing references (*Watchmen*, pro wrestling, *Women In Refrigerators...*), a great ensemble of main and secondary characters with clear and distinct perspectives (my heart belongs to Firewall/Trojan Fox), interesting worldbuilding and alternate history, quality character development, and (not kidding) the power of friendship.

Ultimately, (after growing progressively more engrossed in the book until I ended up finishing it more quickly than I'd intended), the main critiques I have of *Almost Infamous* are relatively minor, mostly to do with the occasionally rough prose and editing, and a desire to see various aspects of the characters and events of the book dug into more deeply to give a richer and more thorough depiction of the entire narrative picture outside of that most immediately relevant to Aidan, both to sate my own curiosity as well as to more fully match the thematic scope of the book. On the whole though, it was a strikingly intelligent, thoroughly enjoyable read that I'm glad to have obeyed my whim to take a look at.
