



Suicide Squad, Volume 2: The Nightshade Odyssey

John Ostrander, Luke McDonnell (Illustrator), Keith Giffen (Illustrator)

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When super-villains get caught, it's up to the government to keep the bad guys in captivity. Amanda Waller, a tough-as-nails federal agent, has other plans. She's heading up the Suicide Squad as an ultimatum to the world's biggest villains.

Suicide Squad, Volume 2: The Nightshade Odyssey Details

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From Reader Review Suicide Squad, Volume 2: The Nightshade Odyssey for online ebook

Jason Luna says

Volume 1 of this group of DC supervillains and non-villain loners who like living in lockdown with the federal government for some reason who do the government's dirty work (basically being a superhero and killing your foes), Volume 1 of this was surprisingly dull, bogged down in meetings with Amanda Waller and pretty easily executed espionage missions.

Volume 2 takes out a lot of the convoluted board room meetings and instead has the Suicide Squad show up and kill things. It's like walking in a straight line, shooting everything, and then it's done.

What it DEFINITELY lacks in memorability or character building it at least plateaus in flashy gun pops and stuff.

Like in "Suicide Squad #9", they have to go attack the Manhunters in their temple. So do that for 23-ish pages.

It's closer to what a comic book should be, but having like seven protagonists in your comic and to throw them into stuff like this over and over devalues their value as a brand.

Character confusion hits its peak with "Suicide Squad/Doom Patrol #1". Doom Patrol is awesome on its own, like X-Men but with even more tortured characters and bad luck (and some good writing).

But in this book, what's supposed to be a story about an anti-hero trapped behind Nicaraguan lines becomes action spot after action spot with like 12-15 different heroes. It looks pretty sometimes, but man good luck remembering that.

It probably would've helped if the two issue Justice League International crossover stuck and gave Suicide Squad characters more chance to grow and do different things.

As it is, we're stuck with things like "Suicide Squad #16", where the most confusing backstory ever, the hero from a slightly different dimension Changing Man meets the Suicide Squad in a weird dimension (promising) and then recruits them to kill some baddies (generic).

Luke McDonell's art work carries this whole thing, as he manages to at least make all the protagonists slightly memorable, and at times has a fun mix of vibrant colors and dark shadows.

But the writing lets the piece down. I can't say it was dull, but it seemed so desperate to keep my attention in the most shallow violence way that it all feels the same.

Jack Haringa says

Ostrander's writing is fair enough but the majority of the art, by Luke McDonnell, is fairly lackluster. There are point where you can barely tell on character from another without their costumes. In the last two issues, when Shade the Changing Man teams up with the squad, things get especially silly.

Justin says

I'm putting this at 4 stars but it was more like 3 1/2. This collection starts a bit roughly with a Millennium crossover that makes little sense outside of the context of that long ago forgettable line-wide event and then a SS/Doom Patrol crossover that's only notable for early Erik Larsen art. The two-parter that brings Vixen to the team (and includes Speedy), the two-part JLI crossover, and the titular three-part Nightshade Odyssey are all really good, though. Luke McDonnell's pencils are always a welcome sight and John Ostrander really starts building his characters as well as putting political obstacles in their way (to be dealt with in future volumes, of course). It was around this time I started writing letters to the comic too, though I can no longer remember which issues. Anyway, I'm happy the upcoming movie has this series seeing print again.

Maurice Jr. says

The 1980's Suicide Squad continues in this compilation of issues 9-16 plus the Doom Patrol/Suicide Squad special and a crossover issue of Justice League International.

As Amanda Waller struggles to maintain her unit's secrecy with bureaucrats galore meddling in her business, the beat goes on and more villains rotate through the team, along with other guest stars. They fought Manhunters in the swamp (alongside The Privateer), and Slipknot learned the hard way about the explosive bracelets used to keep villains in line.

Waller stood down Batman when he infiltrated Belle Reve to get information about the Squad. Speedy, Vixen and The Black Orchid joined them for a mission to Medellin to take down a major drug dealer. Nightshade led that mission while Rick Flag took Mr 104, Psi, the Thinker and the Weasel to Nicaragua to liberate a captive Hawk. Nobody died on Nightshade's watch, but Flag lost his entire team, thanks to a random bureaucrat sending the Doom Patrol in to compete with the Squad and thanks to Russia sending a fleet of Rocket Reds to beat both of them to the punch.

There was good character development as well. A huge, powerful woman known only as Duchess joined the team and proved to be a worthy addition. Enchantress became more and more erratic, forcing Bronze Tiger to try supernatural means of keeping her in check (via Madame Xanadu). The Vixen chose to stay with the team, and Boomerang decided to screw around in his spare time by committing robberies as Mirror Master. Father Richard Craemer signed on as team chaplain, and the psychiatric team continued to have no luck getting to the root of Deadshot's issues. We also saw Nightshade's backstory (repainted from her appearance in Secret Origins).

The title storyline was Nightshade finally getting the team for her mission. Flag was unavailable, but she brought along Bronze Tiger, Vixen, Deadshot, Duchess, Captain Boomerang and the Enchantress to avenge her mother's death and rescue or avenge her brother. They got more than they bargained for- they found

Enchantress' origins tied to the land of Nightshades. The entity that merged with June Moone originated there, and the Incubus (in possession of Nightshade's brother's body) reclaimed his "sister," leaving June Moone powerless. They took the Incubus down and escaped via Nightshade's power to traverse dimensions, only to find themselves trapped in a dimensional void with Shade the Changing Man. They combined powers to get back to Earth, and Shade joined the team in exchange for their help in eventually returning home to clear his name.

Victor Orozco says

Another nice foray into the original Suicide Squad. I got to say these stories aren't as flashy as the new movie but can definitely tell a great story.

It begins with the Squad under fire literally and figuratively when a mission in the USSR turns into a diplomatic incident that involves soviet superheroes out to get them. Another one involving Batman attempting to discredit the Squad. Then a mission that involves the Squad against Justice League of America.

But what really makes this story great is a... I don't know what to say. An epic revolving around Eve Eden/Nightshade and Enchantress. My goodness, if the former doesn't get a chance to shine on TV or movies, I'll be very disappointed because Nightshade is such an amazing character with a great story.

Nice. B

Julio Bonilla says

The first half of the story feels like an action/suspense movie. ? I LOVE THE ARTWORK!!!

•I mistook this graphic novel as Vixen's first appearance, and then realized she was introduced back in 1981. ?

•I liked Nightshade's origin story. Is she gay?! She put on a wig years before Batwoman joined DC Comics! ?

Geoff Sebesta says

writing even better, art even worse (?)

Greg Trosclair says

I am at a crossroads in my comic book reading. I have gotten very tired of the current comic storytelling method. Every arc must be five or six issues and tell a story that will be collected. They often end up being watered down, stretched out and not as much fun.

So I am very glad to read the second volume of the Suicide Squad. It brings me back to a simpler time. I am not saying that they do not have interconnected stories or that their stories are not complex but they are streamlined, not dragged out and still pack a good story. This collection has no less than three little arcs. We get the Suicide Squad/ JLI crossover completing a story started in the first volume. It is two issues long and wonderful reading. It highlights both teams very well and they complete their mission. The second arc is to one-shot stories featuring different aspects of the team. The last arc is the Nightshade Odyssey and features the old Charlton character, Nightshade. The editors wisely have added her origin story from the old Secret Origins book and it helps answer some questions about this character. It was a good story.

I really enjoy John Ostrander's writing here as well as Luke McDonnell's art. Both were under-rated creators during this period. I highly recommend this collections. I find them a very enjoyable read.

Shannon Appelcline says

Boy this volume starts off with a lot of crossovers; introducing DC readers to the Squad, I suppose. Fortunately, Ostrander is able to craft good stories that also continue the progress of the (largely character-based) Squad story.

Millennium (9). This is a neat story because the Squad's actions so artfully dances through the crossovers of Captain Atom, Firestorm, and Spectre. (I'd love to see the whole crossover in an Omnibus!) Beyond that it's a fun *Squad* story with serious consequences [7+/10].

Batman (10). This was Batman when he was super-cool: the mysterious, aloof, and ultra-competent detective. Ostrander portrays that and his interactions with the Squad well [8/10].

Doom Patrol (Special). The weakest of the initial crossovers, probably because it wasn't all by Ostrander's hand. The creation of a totally expendable Squad is nice for shock value, but otherwise this is a forgettable story [5/10].

Blood & Snow (11-12). I'm often not as fond of the "real-life" adventures, such as this assault on a cocaine distributor. With that said, it's got Ostrander's great characterization, and a slow advancement of the character arcs, so it continues to be a joy to read. The guest appearance of Vixen and Speedy and the integration with the *Doom Patrol* special are all very nice as well [7+/10].

JLI (13+JLI). The encounter with the JLI is a good turning point for the Squad and a nice confrontation, but like the Doom Patrol crossover before it, it's weakened by the other author (and perhaps by the structure too; the first part really drags because it's all setup). Still, this is a nice follow-up for Nemesis and a nice bit of characterization for a few members of the Squad [6/10].

Nightshade Origin (SO28). This Nightshade has a great origin, and it's wonderful to see her post-Crisis integration into the DC universe, but the story is a bit slow [6/10].

Nightshade Odyssey (14-16). I love this story because it's so unusual for the *Squad*. We so frequently get real-world politics, and instead this is a full-blown fantasy. Add on a tight character focus and some unexpected twists, and it's a top *Squad* story. [8/10] The Shade story that ends the arc is much weaker, primarily because it comes out of nowhere and climaxes in a few pages. Still, I love having Shade around. [6+/10]

Overall, this volume continues with the Squad's strengths: great characters and great character stories.

Sarospice says

A rough mix but a good read for NIGHTSHADE fans. The character has a lot of potential. Call me, DC!

Alex Sarll says

Some of this is outright terrible - the crossover with a pre-Morrison Doom Patrol which brings in a bunch of overpowered new team members then instantly kills them off, or the Millennium tie-in with a plug for a different other comic every third panel. And I still find it hilarious seeing Gorbachev used as standard Evil Commie Ranter In Chief, before anyone knew (though the portrayal of a ditzy Reagan is spot on). But the title story is nicely creepy (at least until derailed by a pre-Milligan Shade the Changing Man), and 30 years on you still wouldn't get many superhero books which put this many black characters - and particularly black women - in lead roles without remotely making a big deal of it.

Timothy Boyd says

Nice older DC series, not your normal Superhero comic. Good read. recommended

J.R. says

Need to explain the two stars here. The actual stories were closer to three or four, but the way they are presented here is too disjointed. Doom Patrol, JLI, and such all weaving in and out. If this was collected more completely, and a few more issues added to round things out, it would get at least one more star.

Dale says

I have fond memories of the Suicide Squad comics, but I had never read this particular storyline as a complete unit. It's ... a bit rough and raw. The writing is a bit less sophisticated than I remember and the art is a lot more underwhelming. (And that's not even getting into one tie-in story penciled by Rob Liefeld where, at one point, he has two characters facing each other, profiles to the audience, and they shake hands, and each one is using the arm closest to the audience. Which is not how human beings shake hands. Gah.) Still better than the Suicide Squad movie, though.

Chad says

Another solid set of stories from John Ostrander and Luke McDonnell. The Millennium tie-in was good. I'd

love to see Millenium released as an omnibus. There's a couple of great appearances by Batman, including the crossover with JLI, which I loved. Vixen is a great addition to the team. I really like how the team changes according to each mission. The Nightshade Odyssey is a very surreal and messed up story for Suicide Squad. And it allows for Shade, the Changing Man to join the team. All in all, a great book.
