



Deathstroke, Vol. 1: The Professional

Christopher J. Priest , Carlo Pagulayan (Artist) , Joe Bennett (Artist) , Jason Paz (Artist)

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The World's Deadliest Assassin blasts into a new era in DEATHSTROKE VOL. 1: THE PROFESSIONAL, as part of DC Rebirth!

With a thousand enemies and a thousand kills, Slade Wilson, a.k.a. Deathstroke, is the world's greatest assassin. His genetically enhanced strength, reflexes, healing and intellect-plus his ruthless dedication to his work-have made him one of the most feared people on the planet.

But even Deathstroke has vulnerabilities-and someone in his inner circle is beginning to exploit them.

When an assignment in a war-torn African country leads him to an old teammate, Deathstroke discovers that his own daughter, Rose-a.k.a. the Ravager-has a price on her head. In order to save her life, he'll have to break his professional code, betray his most trusted allies, cross his most powerful enemy and defeat his own unshakeable addiction to violence.

Can Deathstroke run this gauntlet and survive with his family, his honor and his life intact?

Find out in DEATHSTROKE VOL. 1: THE PROFESSIONAL, exploding from DC's blockbuster Rebirth event! This historic volume and great new jumping-on point opens a thrilling new chapter in the life of one of comics' greatest villains-crafted by the legendary writer Christopher Priest and a killer team of artists, including Carlo Pagulayan, Larry Hama, Joe Bennett and more! Collects issues #1-5 of the acclaimed new series with the DEATHSTROKE: REBIRTH one-shot.

Deathstroke, Vol. 1: The Professional Details

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From Reader Review Deathstroke, Vol. 1: The Professional for online ebook

Steve says

I received this from Edelweiss and DC Comics in exchange for an honest review, sort of. I was supposed to receive Astro City, Vol 14, but got this one instead. By mistake. Whatever.

3 stars, and showing promise. I was really confused about what was happening with all of the flashbacks and jumping all over the globe, but about halfway through the book, things started coming together. Probably because a certain character just seemed to disappear. The book ends very abruptly, right in the middle of the plot. I hate that.

If I see the next volume, I'll probably pick it up.

Mike says

Had this mixed up with Deathstroke, Volume 1: Legacy instead. Sorry if I have steered anyone wrong. But, I hear this newer collection is no better...

Stewart Tame says

Wow! I don't think I've read anything having to do with Deathstroke since the glory days of the New Teen Titans. Takes me back. It's a tribute to Wolfman and Perez that their character is still going strong and seemingly an integral part of the DC Universe.

The book is all twisty and plot-y, appropriate for an action title with a mercenary protagonist. I found the storyline a bit confusing at first. It does a lot of jumping around, but there are some nice touches. I liked the handling of Clock King, a somewhat lesser-known classic villain. The book didn't really start to come alive for me until the Batman story arc. I particularly loved the sequence where they encounter each other. It looks like an ordinary street scene, but the captions reveal all sorts of hidden nuances as two somewhat paranoid master planners try to lure each other out of hiding. Be warned: the book ends on a cliffhanger.

In all, while this book had its moments, it's pretty standard fare. Artwork and story are both decent, solid work, but not memorably so. Not recommended, but nothing I regret having read either.

James DeSantis says

At first I didn't like it. The first two issues are confusing, jumbled, and pretty hard to following. Then it starts panning out, and you get into it, and then it clicks. It's a lot of fun when Damien and Batman come in. Batman being cold and calculated and Damien being a little shit in the best way possible. Works well to see the two work with Deathstroke and Rose (his daughter).

Listen I don't like Slade much. I never understood the hype around him. I believe Judas Contract is veryyyyyy overrated. So I was surprised how much I did enjoy this. I think it comes down to Priest writing. It's not conventional. Sometimes very confusing. However it stays fun and I feel that's something missing from comic books a lot now days.

The dialog is sharp most of the time, super fun moments, and over the top action you learn to love. Especially Superman vs Deathstroke, very fun. On the flipside there is some bad. The story isn't easy to follow, feels like in the middle of an arc half the time, and it can be a bit over the top for some. However if get into the groove I think Deathstroke offers plenty of fun moments. Check it out!

Ander Luque says

Revisitación y/o establecimiento en un solo arco de toda la mitología del personaje mientras se cuenta otra trama, se establece a los personajes y se enriquece su caracterización, además de que se integra perfectamente en el universo DC (con algunas de las mejores versiones del fantoche gothamita y del tontolacapa) sin olvidarse de crear personajes y entornos nuevos (León Rojo, el reverso deceíta sin escrúpulos ni medias tintas de Pantera Negra). Y el impagable sentido del humor de Priest, con el broche de su virtuosismo para los diálogos.

Una gozada, vaya.

Chris says

I received an eARC copy of this graphic novel from the publisher through NetGalley in exchange for an honest review.

First off, I loved the artwork. The characters were drawn vividly and the color really jumps out and is pleasing to the eye.

But. The story? Eh. There were good moments, but overall it was pretty disjointed. Even within each issue, the storyline jumps from past to present to not as past but more past than present to kinda present to huh?

And, where I though this was a reboot of sorts, it did not help a new reader (me) to understand who was who or who was in relation to each other and whatnot. I'd recently read another Rebirth title, Suicide Squad, Volume 1: The Black Vault, and very much got the feeling that it was meant as an introduction to the team and characters. This one seemed to require a good bit of prior knowledge of who Slade Wilson is and how he relates to the side characters.

I do find Slade interesting, but would like a more linear way of learning about him. All I knew going in was what I'd seen on *Arrow* and a brief appearance with *The New Suicide Squad* during the New 52.

Dan says

Not bad but not great. I liked seeing Slade come back but the story got a little cheesy at times. I would read more of this series. Didn't care for the art although the Batman redesign was pretty cool.

Hannah says

ARC REVIEW

Story: This is a good starting point for new readers of Deathstroke. The first half of the volume; Prologue, Among Thieves, Band of Brothers, flip flops between the past and the present giving the reader a nice idea of the origin not an in depth one but it gives all the right information. The first three parts also tells of Deathstroke dealing with an African Warlord, the Red Lion, to save his friend Wintergreen. He also has to deal with the Clock King. The second half of the volume By Any Other Name, American Gothic, Mirrors deals with Deathstroke deals with a death threat on his daughter Rose, aka. Ravager, following the money and it leads them to Gotham. Deathstroke set up Rose with Batman and Robin while he goes off and does his own thing.

Art: I loved this, it was like reading a cartoon. The art is well drawn, colored fantastically. Pagulayan and Bennet do wonderful drawings very detailed; and Morales, Barbo, and Paz can't forget the inkers. Cox completes the picture bringing it to life with amazing colors and shading. I always enjoy the variant cover art.

Characters:

Deathstroke/Slade Wilson: I have had a fascination with Slade since Teen Titans animated series first aired in '03 voiced by Ron Perlman. He piqued my curiosity in the cartoon he was so mysterious and as I found out more about his past the more I liked him. A genetically enhanced super villain who switches side as easily as flipping a switch to suit his needs and has no problem being the bad guy just to make sure his kids become better than him.

Rose Wilson/Ravager: I like this Rose she wants so bad her Father's attention and for him to be proud of her but is constantly getting hurt from his actions. She was initially trained by Nightwing and thinks that she is ready and wants to prove to her father that she's ready. Wintergreen: Probably the only truly loyal friend Deathstroke has, he has acted like a friend and confidant for Rose as well. He's kind of the voice of reason, the mediator between father and daughter. Wintergreen staged his own death so he could retire but was forced out of it when kidnapped and now he and Slade are tracking down who snitched on the truth on him being alive. Batman and Robin: Of course it's Batman and Robin. Robin being Damien, Bruce's son, and antagonistic and snarky as ever. Batman tries to convince Rose that she needs to not follow in her father's footsteps and that Slade has his own reasons for leaving Rose in Gotham with Batman.

Review: Have I mentioned I hate cliffhangers. That is why I usually wait until the graphic novels are out so that I don't have to wait for the next issue to come out. Damns youse! I love this one it is a great story it was engaging and dark, violent with the right amount of humor that has a great balance. I look forward to the

upcoming issues.

Rick Hunter says

I'm not a fan of the character Deathstroke. I wouldn't put him in the top 25 villains at DC and I've never really read much with him as a central figure, but since this was free, I figured I'd check it out. Christopher J. Priest has told a underwhelming story with many unnecessary flashbacks. Those flashbacks come at weird times in the story and break the flow of the narrative. I understand that these Rebirth books are supposed to be a jumping on point for new readers, but even with the flashbacks, and how they are executed, you don't get a lot of useful information on Slade Wilson/Deathstroke's backstory.

The whole gist of this story is that someone put a hit on Slade's daughter, Rose aka Ravager, and he's trying to get to the bottom of it while getting to spend some time with Rose. The first few issues have Deathstroke rescuing an old friend, someone I've never heard of as far as I can remember. This guy is the one that gives Slade the heads up about the hit on his daughter. He also sets Slade up with some equipment that Slade will need when he gets to Gotham where the hit originated. Of course, being in Gotham, the story has Slade and Rose run into Batman and Robin. This is where the story went a little off the rails for me. The whole Batman part of the story seemed rushed. There also isn't a resolution to this first story arc in this volume. I don't understand why DC would release a book that doesn't contain the whole first arc. For the plot being rushed in places, slow and fragmented in others, and for not having a completed story, the writing gets **2 stars**.

Carlo Pagulayan is the artist for the Rebirth one-shot and issues #1-2. Joe Bennett finishes out the book with issues #3-5. Both guys have similar styles and comparable talent levels. I've seen a good bit of Bennett's work before. I'm not a huge fan, but he always does some competent work that looks better than the majority of comic art today. Pagulayan surprised me because I didn't really expect that same level of art from someone I've never heard of before. I'll keep an eye out for this artist in the future. Art gets **3.5 stars**.

I averaged the 2 aspects of the book together and got a final rating of **2.75 stars**. This isn't the worst Rebirth book I've read and it is far from the best. A friend of mine loves Deathstroke and usually buys the books. That may be the only reason I'll return to this series since I can read them for free. If you aren't already a die-hard Deathstroke fan, there probably is much better stuff out there for you.

Sam Quixote says

Did you know Rebirth is a massive hit for DC? They're selling a buttload of these comics! But is anyone reading them? Because if they are, how are DC still managing to sell so many comics when they're this bad?? I'm honestly at a loss to explain it.

Despite his horrendous Black Panther comics at Marvel, I was willing to give Christopher Priest another shot but after Deathstroke Rebirth, that's it. I'm never reading another Christopher Priest comic again!

After some meandering drivel in Africa, Deathstroke is reunited with his long-lost daughter Rose who's being targeted by someone and he decides to save her by killing her assassin. Also Batman makes a cameo.

Are you familiar with Deathstroke? Because if you're not, you're gonna be really lost as Priest doesn't give

you any help on the character's background. We're just meant to know who Wintergreen is, what happened to Slade's first family, and how his daughter Rose came to be. Not just who her mother was and how that came about, but WHY did she become Ravager, following in her dad's footsteps – does she even like her estranged father? She had a relationship with Nightwing - was she training to be a good guy and then got sidetracked? I know Rebirth is about returning to classic continuity but a little bit on his history would've gone a long way, particularly for the new readers jumping on for the first time.

Priest is a shockingly incapable writer on every level. I mean, he doesn't attempt establish who Deathstroke is. HOW did Slade Wilson go from being a loving father and husband to a cold-hearted tosspot assassin? WHY did he become an assassin and where did "Deathstroke" come from? If you didn't know he had a healing factor, you'd wonder how in the fuck he could survive a bullet to the back of the head (his healing factor is mentioned dozens of pages after that panel)!

Besides the lack of information on the characters and the barely coherent, uninteresting and instantly forgettable story, Priest ineptly jumps back and forth in time. It's so jarring and needlessly complicated - a caption to tell us we're in the past would've been useful considering Slade looks the same in the past as he does in the present!

It'd have been good too if Deathstroke was even remotely likeable. Some writers with much more talent than Priest can make readers like completely degenerate scumbags but I hated Deathstroke from the beginning to the end. He's a stoic, miserable cunt who I wished nothing but pain and suffering on every page. Rooting for him? HA! The only positive about this guy is that Marvel ripped him off to create the vastly better character Deadpool (Slade Wilson/Wade Wilson, both are assassins, both have swords and guns, both have healing factors, both have full face masks).

Priest is also completely detached from contemporary culture and modern kids which wouldn't matter if he didn't have to write a kid character. He writes the most horrible Damian Wayne I've read yet who makes '70s sitcom references to "Maude" in his dialogue. Kids these days have NEVER heard the theme song to Maude (unless they remember that one scene from Family Guy) and wouldn't quote "And then there's Maude"! Priest is 55 years old and would've been a kid when he saw those shows growing up in the '70s so HE would make those references but he's so crappy and lazy a writer that he can't even attempt to make plausible references to 21st century shows.

This was horrible! I guess Carlo Pagulayan's art was competent but I loathed Priest's bad writing and hopeless storytelling so much I couldn't enjoy it in the least. Maybe established Deathstroke fans might get more out of this but I've gotta warn you that Christopher Priest's writing is utterly abhorrent and might ruin it for you too. Deathstroke, Volume 1: The Professional SUCKED.

Chris says

Oddly intriguing for a book about a villain who's a complete asshole, The Professional held my attention in spite of it's often confusing, non-linear narrative. Christopher Priest's characterisation is unique, resulting in some great scenes that make it easier to overlook the weaker moments.

Admittedly, i'm not sure if I actually *enjoyed* reading Deathstroke, but I do feel compelled to read the next volume. At the very least, I applaud DC for trying something a bit different with the character.

Anne says

I *really* wanted to like this because I *really* like Christopher Priest.
But there were just too many moments that I just kind of shook my head, re-read a few pages, and then went...**Wait. What?**

I know who Deathstroke is and I know *some* backstory on his character, but I don't think I'm alone when I say that I don't have an encyclopedic knowledge of everything about the guy.
It's *Deathstroke*, not **Superman**, you know?
A little re-cap wouldn't hurt.

So, I don't know whether I'm just missing too much information that I *should* already know about Slade Wilson (who the fuck is Wintergreen?) or if Priest just did a piss-poor job telling the story? I get that it was supposed to be all twisty with these big reveals to make you **GASP!**
But almost *all* of it was (to me) extremely confusing. I know I'm not the smartest person out there, but I shouldn't have had to read, re-read, and re-read again...just to finally sort of get the gist of what was going on. Maybe?

I don't know. I liked Rose and since a lot of the story (towards the end) revolves around her, I'm willing to keep going. Hopefully, this was just a bumpy start.

Ken Moten says

When I heard that Christopher J. Priest, the first black comic book writer and editor for Marvel and DC Comics was coming out of retirement, I knew I had to pick-up what ever project he was doing. After reading his amazing work for Black Panther (which will be made into a movie next year) I had very high expectations...and they have been met. He came back to write one of the most notorious characters in DC Comics history and brought his signature style to it. This was a blast to read pretty much a very dark version of Deadpool and it contained, for me, the best single issue of any comic book that came out in 2016 (Deathstroke (2016-) #5, if you're wondering), which I have been reading over and over since it came out.

Bookwraiths says

Issues with Batman were okay. Everything before that was pretty meh. Artwork wasn't to my liking, at all.
Full review to come.

Chad says

I didn't care for the beginning of the series. It was a little too grim and gritty for me. But then Christopher Priest brought in those same storytelling methods that made his Black Panther series so great. Once Rose shows up the book really takes off. Her relationship with Slade is fantastic. I'd really like to see Priest write a series featuring Damien Wayne after his appearance in this book. I love how Damien is written as this snotty, little shit. He's hilarious. Carlo Pagulayan and Joe Bennett knock it out of the park with the art. It's spectacular. I really liked how Rose's clairvoyance is portrayed visually. I'm really looking forward to reading more as long as Priest is writing the book.

Received an advance copy from DC and Edelweiss in exchange for an honest review.
