



## Suicide Risk, Vol. 1

*Mike Carey, Elena Casagrande (Artist)*

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Even when there are only villains, being a hero makes you a...

Eisner Award-nominated writer Mike Carey (UNWRITTEN, X-MEN: LEGACY) brings his first original ongoing series to BOOM! Studios! Heroes are dying, and cops are dying twofold. Humanity is underpowered in the face of their onslaught, and people are suffering untold casualties trying to stem the flow. After barely surviving a super-powered bank heist gone horribly wrong, beat cop Leo Winters vowed to try and find a way to stop them. Following a lead, he discovered two lowlifes who seemed to be able to grant a person powers...for the right price. Thing is: you don't get to choose which power. It's seemingly random, a crap-shoot, a risk. Will Leo decide to take that risk? And why is it that even the heroes in this world eventually break&amp;?

Eisner Award nominated writer and novelist Mike Carey (UNWRITTEN, X-MEN: LEGACY) and rising star Elena Casagrande (HULK, HACK/SLASH) deliver a smart, mind-bending deconstruction of the superhero genre that will have you questioning your definition of a hero. This volume, featuring a cover by Tommy Lee Edwards (TURF, MARVEL 1985), collects the first four issues of the critically-acclaimed series.

## **Suicide Risk, Vol. 1 Details**

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Author : Mike Carey , Elena Casagrande (Artist)

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## From Reader Review Suicide Risk, Vol. 1 for online ebook

### Lono says

**Suicide Risk** is an interesting mix of Brian Bendis's Powers and Ed Brubaker's Incognito set in Mark Millar's MillarWorld universe. I don't think that makes this book as original an idea as some of the other reviewers on Goodreads seem to think it is. However, this does make **Suicide Risk** a reasonably satisfying cocktail consisting of a few of my favorite comic series and themes.

Mark Carey establishes the groundwork for his new series in this collection of **Suicide Risk** issues 1 through 4. It follows a "normal" cop, Leo Winters, as he looks to get payback from a bunch of super-powered villains that done him wrong. This takes him down an unexpected road that leads deeper into where these supervillains came from and forces him to take a look into his own clouded past. Not wanting to give too much away, I'll leave it at that. Carey is taking his time laying the foundation for his world in this collection and it took me a couple issues to really buy in. This one certainly picks up towards the end and concludes with a cliff-hanger, so I'm definitely curious to see where Carey is going with this series.

Elena Casagrande is completely new to me and she does a good job. Her art suits the series well and I liked it more as the book went on.

**Suicide Risk** is probably a safe bet for **Powers** or **Incognito** fans. The series is fairly fast paced with enough action to keep it humming along nicely. Now that Carey has completed the required underpinning, I'm pretty confident I'm going to dig **Suicide Risk** Vol. 2 even more than the first one.

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### Celine says

**Summary:** Super powers exist, but everyone who gains them turn evil. Cop Leon Winters becomes obsessed with stopping the villains.

#### What I liked:

- The art is shiny, dynamic and well-rounded
- There is a lot of action, and even though I wasn't invested, it was quite easy to read
- I really liked the concept, even though the concept has been used before. A battle between good and evil within a person always gets the blood pumping

#### What I didn't like:

- *Suicide Risk* didn't bring anything new to the table. Honestly, this was as bland as could be

- All the characters were paper-thin. The motivations were only half established, themes were never carried through
- It also doesn't help that all the characters are copy-pasted archetypes. The cop who sees his partner get hurt, who neglects his family and gets himself in too deep? Gee, I have never seen that before
- It tries to establish some pathos for the main character by including family scenes, but the family dynamics seemed stilted and too idealised
- Near the end, the story completely goes off the deep end by adding weird shit that doesn't fit in the world

**Verdict:** Least inspired Boom! Studios production I have read so far. Would only recommend this for when you have to pass some time at the dentist's

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### **Jeff says**

Great art, strong plotting and character--also one central relationship is between a man and his daughter, which is sort of rare in this genre, I think. There are some typical setup elements here--a man gets superpowers to get revenge, and things aren't what they seem--but as usual Carey elevates these themes to great heights, all the while giving us a fun ride. I think this is my fave thing he's done since Lucifer.

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### **Vderevlean says**

Un univers cu supereroi, similar cumva cu ce face Brandon Sanderson în Steelheart. Avem o mul?ime de eroi negativi ?i foarte pu?ini pozitivi, plus poli?ia care e dep??it? de acest conflict. Personajul principal e un poli?ist ai c?rui colegi sunt r?ni?i sau uci?i ?ntr-o confruntare cu supereroii. C?utând r?zbunarea, devine la r?ndul lui supererou ?i totul se complic? pentru c? puterea vine la pachet cu victime nevinovate ?i cu un trecut pe care nu-l recunoa?te decât în vise. Se cam tulbur? povestea pe final, dar cum sunt doar primele 4 numere, probabil e vreo logic? în toat? schema narativ?.

Mi-ar fi pl?cut s? avem un personaj central r?mas la stadiu de simplu poli?ist. Chiar a? fi vrut s? v?d o band? povestit? din perspectiva asta. Nici a?a nu e r?u. Probabil voi mai cump?ra ?i volumul 2.

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### **James DeSantis says**

What started off as a decent idea quickly went into....something.

This is a world where superheroes are not really happening, instead super villains taking over. Tons of evil bastards going around killing and hurting people. The normal police force isn't capable of stopping them and that's bring our newest hero to the front, Suicide Risk man! After watching his partner get hurt he decides to join the fight with his own superhero powers he gains illegally. Then it becomes a revenge tale and then...something?

Good: I liked the start. The idea of the world is pretty cool too and leaves it in dire situations.

Bad: The art is pretty bad. Like it starts off okay but the fight scenes are super bland. I also thought the dialog was okay at best. It lacked punch, maybe it being rated M would have worked more. I can't get over

the last issue and how off the walls it is and how dumb the story becomes. The pacing is pretty awful too.

Overall Suicide Risk is a failed attempt for me. This is my first Mike Carey story but I know he can do better than this. I can't give this over a 2.

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### **Claire Benham says**

I really liked this! Reminded me of Brandon Sanderson's Steelheart series. I'm not sure how I bought it for only 6 bucks. I feel it was worth more. So, score! :D

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### **Simon says**

This is a rare thing, a Mike Carey story that I really really did not like.

Partly because we've seen it all before so many times now. Powers, irredeemable, the boys. But also it just... has one particularly giant and annoying plot hole.

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### **Danielle The Book Huntress (Back to the Books) says**

I didn't like this as much as I expected. I like the idea of normal people getting powers and becoming superheroes and villains, but the storyline just got weirder and less coherent as it went along. I love the concept of super-powered individuals, and it was interesting how Carey taps into the dark side of that. Similar to what Brandon Sanderson did with Steelheart and Mark Waid with Irredeemable, Vol. 1. It's a scary thought when people have super powers and they are mentally unstable or just plain evil. The damage they can do is incalculable. So I could understand the lead character's motivations on that score, but over time, the story just made less and less sense, and it took a right turn that I didn't like towards the end. The artwork was pretty good, but I didn't find much to enthrall me about the story overall. I'm not sure if I will continue reading this series.

This is a preliminary review. I may add more later.

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### **Rob McMonigal says**

A cop gets frustrated by the damage being done by superpowered individuals, so he tries to get powers himself. It unlocks a life he never knew, sending him on a collision course with all he knew in this series.

Mike Carey is very good at making characters live in a world where there's a ton of grey, and that's no exception here. His main character wants to do the right thing, but it all very quickly is going to fall apart. Props for keeping so many things obscured here but still fun to read and making me want to learn more.

Elena Casagrande is the primary artist on this series, and she does a good job setting up the nature of the world and making the super-powered folks feel fresh and not just "Here's your stand-in for X" that we often

see in series like this. Some of the detail work is left undone, but that's an artistic choice and not the failing of the creator.

Overall, this is a good entry (so far) in the genre of hero deconstruction, and fans of those kind of stories (or Carey) should check it out.

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## Sam Quixote says

Is the title a warning that the reader might just give up all hope somewhere in the book and decide to end it all for good?

Leo is that most interesting of character archetypes, an ordinary cop, who lives in a world where the supervillains massively outnumber the superheroes, for some reason. During a bank robbery, his partner's arm is cut off and several colleagues lose their lives. Though incensed, how could an ordinary cop take on supervillains with their powers? Luckily for Leo he finds a way to somehow become a superhero himself. Now, the hunt is on to take the fight to the bad guys and make them pay - by boring them to death!

Suicide Risk was the most garbled, confusing comic I've read in quite some time. I have nothing but questions over the bizarre storytelling choices of Mike Carey. For instance, why are there so many more supervillains than superheroes? Why do so many "turn" evil? It's never explained. Not that you really care – these characters, superhero or villain, are laughable at best.

The supervillains go by: Grudge War, Dr Maybe, Diva, Voiceover, The Alchemist and Memento Mori. The worst names you've ever seen in a comic? Hold on! The one superhero who shows up has the stupidest name of them all: Extended Remix! I re-read that page multiple times to make sure that was his name and not some weird line, but no, it is! Extended Remix?! Is that why superheroes become supervillains - so they can have a slightly less embarrassing name? But then, Dr Maybe... no. I guess Mike Carey's just a crap writer.

These tools barely qualify as ciphers, you learn so little about them. And if they're so capable at dealing with every threat thrown their way from police to superheroes and everything else, why do they stop at robbing banks – why aren't they running the world or something from some tropical island fortresses? Instead they live in flats! Sure, "nice" flats, but still – not even a house? That's the end of their "story" by the way: the supervillains rob a bank, kill some police, then do nothing while Leo gets superpowers and hunts them down. They're basically just props.

How does an ordinary guy get powers to become an Electro clone? He finds a random number by chance, dials it, somehow convinces the two goons who show up with a magic wand to tap him on the head and faster than you can say Hey Presto! he's floating in the air and shooting lightning bolts. But he can't use his powers too much because he can't control them yet and he might die – he's a Suicide Risk. Excuse me while I try to stop my eyes from rolling out of my head.

Up to this point I was bored senseless with the clumsy plotting, non-characters, and below-average, totally uninteresting script. But here's where the series took a fatal nosedive which made sure I wouldn't continue past this first volume. A goddess who's some kind of ancient superhero says that she and Leo lived a past life together as gods and he's just forgotten?! Then she demands he murder his family before they can be together?!? And she's a good guy or something!?!?!!? WHaAaAaAatTt?!?!!?

There are other scenes that didn't make sense to me before this, uh, "big reveal". Like when the actual detectives assigned to investigate the supervillains go to visit The Alchemist, knowing his superpower is to alter peoples' brain chemistry and that he'll probably make them like him and totally forget to question him properly – which he does – and yet they make no attempt otherwise to offset this. How. Dumb. Are. They. Also a dog is killed which is something I hate seeing.

But *Suicide Risk* Volume 1 was the definition of sloppy. The story is just all over the place and fails to have any aspect of its nonsense make sense by itself let alone mesh with another. The result is pure bafflement and tedium.

Part of it felt like *Gotham Central* (the supervillains vs ordinary cops), and part of it felt like *Incognito* (the divisions within the supervillain world), both of which are coincidentally Ed Brubaker comics that I didn't care for. But *Suicide Risk* tries to emulate the two and comes up short. Not that either series is that good, but a crap facsimile of the two mashed together? What codswallop – I hated this stupid comic!

Oh and the "story" ends in the middle of an action sequence - great timing, idiots! The characters are in a location that's falling down around them, they say something redundant like "quick, we've gotta get out of here!" and then it ends. It couldn't be less satisfying. I mean, how annoying is that, when everything just

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### **Jason says**

[This review is for the entire series, comprised of 6 volumes]

I had never heard about this when it came out; Patrick at the comic shop said they pitched it as a cop drama so as not to give away the major plot twist that happens in the second or third issue and forever takes it away from cop drama territory into meta-superhero drama in the vein of *Watchmen*, *Irredeemable*, *Welcome to Tranquility*, and the like. Carey also effectively weaves in world-building (without overcomplicating it like Morrison, Ellis, and Hickman) and interrelationship conflict. It's so much to attempt, and like few others have, he pulls it off. He covers a lot of familiar territory--multiple dimensions, fascist governments, apocalypses, and more...and just as the story seems like it's going to slip into cliche, Carey takes it in a different direction. He is also remarkably good at maintaining a consistent internal logic and natural exposition. I will note that the ending seems a little abrupt and a little too clean, but sometimes a story this packed with, well, story can be hard to end in any kind of satisfying way. I don't hold it against Carey, who is now on my list of writers to keep an eye out for.

P.S. It also has a strong female central character, who emerges later in the story...another way Carey upends the norm for this sort of thing.

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### **Angela says**

I had no idea what this graphic novel was about when I picked it up. I did a library search for Mike Carey, looking for the second installment of *Crossing Midnight*. This came up instead. When I picked it up and discovered it was about superheroes (well, okay, supervillains), I was skeptical. I've seen the genre done well (most notably with V. E. Schwab's *Vicious*). But, mostly, I see a lot of people trying to write the next Superman or Batman, and just get turned off by how rapidly the story falls into clichés.

I went into *Suicide Risk* thinking I'd not make it past the second issue. I finished the volume about an hour

later with a new must-read for my monthly comic pull list. Carey has done something unique here, and created a world where you aren't born with powers or given a super-nifty and probably traumatic origin story. Superpowers are a drug, bought on the street from a couple of common pushers who seem to have almost no real knowledge of the origin of their "product."

Leo is a San Diego cop who tracks down a dealer following a supervillain standoff that leaves several cops dead and his partner severely wounded. Gifted with powers to control the earth's primal forces, his powers come with a hefty price in the form of a "recoil" that occurs every time he uses it. He also temporarily forgets about his wife and kids, and starts having visions of a floating castle and a mysterious and powerful woman named Aisa. There is also the name of a fallen destroyer, Requiem, which Leo mysteriously inherits.

Carey is one of my favorite storytellers, both in comic and novel forms. The opening volume of *Suicide Risk* is a small one, but serves to whet the appetite and leave you wanting to read more. I think I'll be heading down to my comic shop tomorrow after work, in hopes that they have the second volume. It's been a while since I've read through a graphic novel in one sitting, and longer still since I have been so eager to see how the story continues.

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### **Mike says**

This book should not have been this good. It contained a number of things we've seen before (in *Irredeemable*, *The Boys*, *Powers* and *Gotham Central*) that should have felt copycat and tired. Plus Carey has been doing his thing with *Unwritten* for such a long stretch, and hasn't done a big capes book in long memory - he should've been shitty at this.

Instead this feels like something he's been working on for a long stretch - a fully-formed world that makes a helluva lot more sense than anything should in book one.

The characters have an inner life, and a solid confidence, that are not typical for a new universe formed from whole cloth. As much as I love much of Mark Waid's capes work, his *Irredeemable* strikes me now (years after reading some of it) as something that started out stiff and painful, getting better (and then worse) with age. (But maybe I'm thinking of all that TV I watch that never feels natural until half a season in.)

I'm absolutely intrigued by the supernatural and mythological elements in this story, and I can't wait to burn through the next two volumes I have here (even though it means I might have a hard time coughing up a decent review for them - hard to speed-read \*and\* have enough presence of mind to remember anything funny, weird or otherwise notable enough to distinguish my thoughts from everyone else who's loving these books - so sad, what a tough problem to have you whiner).

Makes me wonder where I'd be in life if I hadn't stopped reading *The Unwritten* when I first caught up on it. I'd probably be some sex magic master or a be ruling an empire from space. Those are probably OK reasons to go re-read *Unwritten* vols 1-4 and keep moving. Or I could just keep carving that ass groove in the couch. There's the ambition I was forgetting.

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## **Vittorio Rainone says**

Non che sia da buttar via, ma SR è una piccola (o forse non piccola) delusione. Da un Mike Carey che ti sforna splendidi episodi di Unwritten sarebbe lecito aspettarsi qualcosa in più. E invece tutte le speranze di trovare un "Powers" da prospettiva diversa e disegnato meglio si scontrano contro una struttura che, lungi dal richiamare Powers, ricorda invece qualche storia di supereroi alla Warren Ellis, di quelle che ha iniziato a sfornare in quantità, con umani che diventano superumani, che assumono poteri al di là della comprensione del superumano medio. E una narrazione troppo veloce, che si libera delle didascalie, il che ci può stare, ma non dosa le vignette, rendendo la lettura a tratti forsennata. Certo, ripeto, non è tutto da buttar via, e forse c'è qualche possibilità che cresca. Staremo a vedere. La storia: un poliziotto si trova a combattere un gruppo di individui potenziati che uccidono la quasi totalità della sua squadra e polverizzano un braccio al suo partner. E' questa (?) la molla che fa scattare la sua sete di vendetta: dopo aver incontrato una improbabile coppia di spacciatori di poteri e aver ricevuto da loro una super abilità (quasi senza volerla, ma perchè??) si mette in caccia dei criminali e li ammazza tutti in (troppo) poco tempo. Amen. PS: i disegni della Casagrande oscillano fra il convincente e il raffazzonato.

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## **Martin says**

Until this afternoon I'd never even heard of 'Suicide Risk', but on my LCS guy's recommendation, I picked this up. I really liked it (hence the 4 stars, duh) and I breezed through it in one sitting - okay that's not really an accomplishment, as it collects only the first 4 issues of the series. It's over too soon! Short & sweet, but oh what a ride. Mike Carey's new series has a lot of potential, and I can't wait to see where this is going.

Bring on Suicide Risk Vol. 2, post haste!

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