



So Not a Hero

S.J. Delos

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A reformed villain.

After serving two years in a Federal prison, Karen Hashimoto is out on parole and eager to put her criminal past behind her. No easy task, since she's also the former supervillain known as Crushette. A chance encounter leads to an unexpected opportunity, and she is recruited as the newest member of the city's premier team of superheroes: The Good Guys.

A new hero.

Now Karen has new teammates, a new code name, and the daunting responsibility of trying to be the hero everyone thinks she can be. Becoming a champion for Truth and Justice is going to be rough, especially for the ex-girlfriend of the notorious Doctor Maniac. Karen will have to do everything in her powers to keep her past from ruining her future.

It was so much simpler being the bad guy.

So Not a Hero Details

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From Reader Review So Not a Hero for online ebook

Lexie says

More of a 3.5, however I was less than surprised the author is male. There's a rather large amount of sexualization and objectification of most of the females going on that at times made me uncomfortable. Though not any more or less uncomfortable as the comic EMPOWERED I suppose.

Karen's struggle is mostly what I was interested in, though what's it say when the villainous ex-boyfriend is way more interesting than most of the heroes?

John Longeway says

TL;DR: A misogynistic tale of the world ogling a woman's boobs and butt when she is not busy shopping or worrying about men. Too much T & A. Too little super heroing.

While there is some decent writing in this book, I felt the tone was completely uneven and the novel could have used much stronger editing for content. A reformed super-villain formerly known as "Crushette" joins a super team called "The Good Guys" after we get treated to her being coerced into non-consensual sex to avoid violating her parole. Then, we get another graphic multi-page sex scene which includes her bruising the face of her intimate partner because she gets too excited when he is performing oral sex on her and loses control of her super-strength. There are also something like 5 different super battles during which our protagonist has her shirt, pants, or some other piece of clothing destroyed so various people can ogle her breasts or butt, and (of course) one scene where she strips her dress off to fight in nothing but her underwear because it was a new dress and she didn't want to ruin it, which I think is where everyone's mind is when being attacked by a maniac firing bolts of energy from their hands. Oh, and because she is female, she must go shopping. Repeatedly. And chat with one of the other female "Good Guys" about boys. Not to mention the significant discussion about how to design her uniform so she can go bra-less under it without having her nipples show. I started off giving this book 3 stars but after recalling all of the things I listed above, I have lowered it to two, which I still suspect might be too generous.

Sean Duggan says

I picked this one up on an impulse after Amazon recommended it to me and I found I couldn't quite put it down. It follows one Karen Hashimoto, aka Crushette, former supervillainess in the pay of Doctor Maniac. Now, she's an ex-convict on parole, finding that her criminal past and her powers mean that she can't hold down a job, can't retain a place to live. After aiding Mister Manpower, member of the Good Guys, the local superhero team, she gets extended an offer to join them. Can a former villainess turn to the other side? Why did she pull a plea bargain against her former employer and lover? And who is the mysterious villain who seems to have a vendetta against her?

I liked this book. It has its faults — as with many new authors, there are typos that failed to be caught in editing and still have not been fixed, years later — but ultimately, it kept my interest. Karen is your basic Brick, super-strong and super-durable, but she also has learned a lot of little tricks to keep an edge over her

opponents. And, despite a very bad temper and a tendency to mouth off, she really does try to be the hero that her younger brother wanted her to be. I didn't see the twist, although in retrospect, it does make sense. I'm not quite convinced enough to buy the second book yet (the first was 99 cents, but the second is a full \$3.99) but I liked this one.

Pippa DaCosta says

99p in the UK - BOOM. It's on my kindle.

I'm going to need all the help I can get if I'm going to reach my 2017 Goodreads Reading challenge goal.

Koen Wellens says

Wow. There are many treasures in this book. Well written emotional scenes. Multiple sex scenes, some more explicit than others. And a superhero battle to lick your fingers clean. But there's a problem. While I understand all those different scenes can be useful in a superhero book, I would expect a lot more of the superhero battles. And there is only one.

Read the full review at my blog.

Niall Teasdale says

Maybe 2.5 stars... Mostly because the book's a mess. The story is fairly good. The lead character is fairly good, but the text... The book doesn't need a proofreader, it needs a fleet of them. I honestly find it hard to believe that the author would fail to spot most of the glaring mistakes I did and can only assume he never reread the text after finishing it. I get it, really: professional proofreaders are not cheap and it's hard to justify the cost when you're charging very little for the book. That just means *you* need to do a more professional job of self-checking.

I flicked through other reviews before reading the book and was told the book was full of T&A and male characters being sexist, and this was a terrible thing. I don't get it. There's actually relatively little in the way of description of the characters, male or female. There are plenty of male characters using their power (supernatural or social) to be... Let's say they act in a politically incorrect manner. Given they're clearly in the wrong, all of them, and I don't see it played for titillation, I don't see the problem. Were those reviewers thinking this kind of thing doesn't happen in real life? (MeToo would seem to indicate it does.) Do they think it does, but it's inappropriate for a male writer to write about them? (Which is sexist.) I don't get it and I didn't think the behaviour of the characters was illogical or out of place, but if you don't like misogynistic behaviour, or relatively explicit sex scenes, do not get this book.

All in all, I can't go higher than 2 stars for this, but that's a shame. There's plenty of action, solid personal development, interesting characters, and a reasonably good comic-book plot. Unfortunately, it needs a really good edit to get around being a pain to read in far too many places.

Erin Penn says

Book overall is heavy on misogynistic male characters and actions. I recommend reading the first two chapters on Amazon before purchasing - the worst actions appear there and if you can stomach those, the rest of the book is better. The author has set things up so you don't get caught half-way through a purchased book and want to throw it away.

The overall world-building on this book kept me reading; the world is a well-layered superhero world with this particular story set in Charlotte NC (another draw for me). The throw-away side mention of "Activation Day" was perfect - at that point of the story you know exactly how devastating for the world it must of been, but it is a throw away line like someone today mentioning Pearl Harbor day. We know it happened, we know the emotional impact, but there is no need to go into details because everyone understands. Good world-building - each power has benefits and problems, some visible and some not-so-much. Not everyone is a world power, and the Good Guys team is well-balanced with powers so you see and appreciate teamwork succeeding (and failing).

The book never slows down. Going from action to character development to planning to action. A roller-coaster ride of first order.

Just wish the author did not feel the need to make the good and bad people as likable and unlikable as possible. A bad male does not need to treat every female like he is a construction worker from a horrid eighties movie. We don't need to hate the bad guys and rejoice when they fall. On the other hand, it is consistent with 4-color superhero world where many things are black and white. The more modern watercolor superhero comics no longer hang on this and with a story where a villain becomes a hero, I would have like to see more color-scale then 4-color.

I gave this book a low rating despite good world-building because as a female I found the book uncomfortable to read. And I hope most males would also be uncomfortable reading the depiction of how the men treat the women. The guys I know are much better than this.

11/12/2015 - read the book again as part of deciding whether to clean it out of my kindle. Still read it to the end, still had problems stomaching the really unlikable way men treated women. It is now going in the discard pile to make room on my shelves (memory storage) for stuff I will like having in my head. A shame the book had to be unpleasant in this manner.

Greg Kopstein says

This could be straight out of a comic or a movie. Does Marvel know about Delos and this awesome first book? Engaging story, relatable characters, entertaining narrative, and a great heroine that, besides hyper-sexualization, is a strong and interesting character. I do think it's overly sexualized, but so are comics in general. This is changing though, so Delos should change and adapt with the times. If you're looking for a quick and entertaining read, you've found it. I cannot wait to read the next installment! Happy reading!

William says

I found this book to be a little on the juvenile side. It's more of a comic book than a superhero novel. The misogynistic rhetoric was more bearable than the manner in which the empowered female characters accepted it. Our busty, hot super heroine, kicking butt in her panties, is intelligent and strong-minded, except when it comes to men. Her relationship with her parents, especially her dying mother, was touching, and added to her character. But why are the bad guys so excessively honest when asked about their intentions, and the good guys so trusting of the answers? That's ridiculous. Also, the author introduces two shape shifters who could transform into other characters, including into a likeness of our heroine - a perfect tool for bad guys. But the author never revisits that potential. Perhaps it will be used in the sequel that I'll most likely not read. And, I am convinced the author inserted the explicit sex scene in the middle of the book for the sole purpose of utilizing the term "va jay jay." Ugh.

Jon Davis says

An excellent book. It's well balanced between the action and emotions of the characters. Kayo is a good addition to the vast array of heroes. And S.J. Delos is a writer to look out for in the future of writing.

Karlyn says

I enjoyed this unusual take at the genre. How exactly does one become a hero or villain? Can you become a hero after being a villain? I was surprised by a few of the twist which I enjoyed. I am looking forward to the next installation.

Ryan Mangrum says

I was pleasantly surprised with this book. I came into it thinking it would be yet another of the ranks of mindless crap that pollutes the urban fantasy/paranormal/superhero genre, but by the end of the first chapter you realize the protagonist isn't a carbon copy of every other female protagonist: she's had a hard life, been to prison, homeless, penniless, friendless, living down a bad reputation in a society that's hellbent on denying second chances. Due to the weight (from density, not fat) her powers force upon her, she has to be really careful where she walks, sits, goes to sleep, and how she interacts with people -- some sexual positions could end in death if she got on top.

In short, the girl has REAL problems. That, to me, is something that's sorely lacking the genre that leads to a depth of character that is rarely seen. Something else that I like is that she's not a teenager. She's young, in her mid 20's, but there's a lot of city miles in her short life.

The only thing that annoyed me was when she starting calling her friend "Lexi-chan," but I loathe manga/anime.

Meredith says

["I'm a great guy. Why do

Robert 'Rev. Bob' says

This is a rough book to rate.

On the one hand, I really liked the characters and worldbuilding; I thought those were done exceptionally well, with a couple of snags. I enjoyed the story, although it was fairly standard for the genre. What I grew to despise, in part because the rest was so good, was the editing. I've seen worse, but this was right up there. Most of the issues were fairly minor, like dropped punctuation and comma splices, but there were a *lot* of them. In addition, there were several places where something just didn't make sense. (One example is the scene where Karen takes her ruined shirt off twice.)

To react to comments in other reviews:

- I did not find the early sexual encounter gratuitous. It establishes the main character's desperate living conditions.
- I did not find the longer sex scene in the middle of the book gratuitous, either. It establishes the physical risk the boyfriend is taking in becoming involved with a woman who has superpowers.
- The reactions to two unmade comments were annoying and illustrate the poor editing.
- One obnoxious male character's attitude is explained late in the book. The attitude is still obnoxious, but at least he came by it honestly.
- The author really needs to either figure out how Karen's "durability aura" works or explain it better. As far as I can tell from the explanation, it should have protected the pink shirt and the seat of her yoga pants, but it did not.

All in all, I'm giving this four stars for content but dinging it one for editing.

Bonus: As I start the sequel, I see that two pieces of jargon have changed between books; "dura-steel" and "In-Bee" have lost their hyphens. While I approve of the change and wish it had been extended to "opti-plex," it does break continuity.

Deanna Stanley says

Not bad, not great. I did find the fairly explicit sex scene in the middle inappropriate, not part of the flow. The plot was a bit thin, some characters were jerks, but that's normal. There were also great people and even Dr. Maniac, the super badguy has honor.
