



Smax

Alan Moore , Zander Cannon (Illustrator) , Andrew Currie (Illustrator)

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From critically acclaimed ALAN MOORE, creator of WATCHMEN and LEAGUE OF

EXTRAORDINARY GENTLEMEN, comes a magical tale of wonder and enchantment. Jeff Smax, a major character in Moore's enthralling TOP 10 series, must return to his home world after many years on Earth.

Accompanied by his fellow Neopolis's Precinct Ten police officer Robyn Toybox Slinger, Jeff must face a myriad of challenges ranging from cutting through mountainous red tape to go on a quest, doing battle with the most monstrous of all dragons, and adapting to a world where the laws of physics are not only unheard of, they just plain don't work. Not to mention Jeff's sister...

Smax Details

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Author : Alan Moore , Zander Cannon (Illustrator) , Andrew Currie (Illustrator)

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From Reader Review Smax for online ebook

Dan says

I liked this, and I guess it's a spinoff from another series called Top Ten, which goodreads has recommended but I have yet to read. I wasn't too sure whether I would like this book upon opening it, but once I started to read it I liked it. It contains subtle jokes and parodies of other major fantasy elements, such as a parody of Harry Potter, and some bad jokes about legendary creatures.

Fugo Feedback says

Spin-off de Top Ten que leí antes que su precuela y que me resultó mucho más divertida. Lástima que el dibujo de Cannon no esté al nivel del de Ha, pero su estilo más desprolijo y feísta sirve -y mucho- para la historia. Ahora que la bella Bucletina me lo regaló en papel seguro lo relea y lo rerreseñe.

Adam Šilhan says

Kone?n? p?fb?h z Top 10 sv?ta, který mi sedl. Nejspíš i proto, že fantasy je mi bližší než superhrdinové a policejnímu žánru nehodují v?bec.

Alex Panagiotopoulos says

First contact with the Top10 series, or actually one of it's spin offs. Moore here makes an excellent parody of DnD and epic fantasy in general with interesting characters. He manages to include dragons and heroism with incest and child abduction and it still comes out great instead of weird. But then again, that's Alan Moore.

I'll surely read the initial Top10 and the other spin-offs too, "Smax" was an interesting intro to the universe.

Kathryn says

This was crap overall, but I did finish and I enjoyed the first issue so 2 stars instead of 1. The new characters were boring and unoriginal, as was the dialogue. The ending sucked, and I can not stand sappy simple cheesy art. Not recommended for fans of the first 2 books. SPOILER FOLLOWS:

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I have a major problem with incest stories. Even though I understood the point that was being made, I was still too thrown off. What is it with this series? A dog and a woman hooking up in the first books and now a sister and a brother. Ewwww.

Hillary says

Maybe, in the end, my absolute favorite of all four books technically constituting *Top Ten*. It's a great combination of serious questy problem solving and silliness, and the flat, candy colored drawings are just gorgeous. The book allows Moore to indulge himself in perhaps even more jokes than *Top Ten* did because now we're throwing in fairytales and legends and myths as well as anything that's ever appeared in a comic, and he (I'm assuming it's Moore, but I'm sure Zander Cannon got to contribute) goes Will Elder in his exuberance and vulgarity. So, you know, dragons and pixies and elves and also incest (two different kinds) and jokes about Appalachia, all incorporated into a genuinely good adventure story. Sort of like the most fun bits of *Fables*.

Julie says

Dec 2017 Read: Although I loved the original Top Ten; this one not so much. Or should I say, not at all. The humor is jarring-ly juvenile, bordering on seriously offensive. Worse, the story is boring. It's like a joke told by a really drunk guy at the bar that meanders far and wide, never hitting the punchline. Sad.

July 2018 Read: Wow! I must have been in a really bad mood that day last December! On second read, I found that I enjoyed the (okay, pretty juvenile) jokes. Additionally, I noticed, as I may not have the first time, how the artwork tells more than half the tale. A seemingly beautiful world has many hidden scenes of ugliness and cruelty. Maybe my own world has changed enough in the past 6 months that I can now appreciate the humor as metaphor in ways that I could not on first read.

Jamie Connolly says

I think top 10 is great. Might even be in my top 5. Smax is great too. Not as great but still great. It was an

awesome story. Great to see some characters in a kind of fable environment. Also it was hysterical. Really well written but it didn't take itself too seriously and it was a lot of fun. Also the art had a million little details in the background that kept me entertained at least an hour longer than I would have otherwise. 5 stars.

One Flew says

The farcical and also disturbing origin story of Smax.

After the first issue I was resigned to the fact that Smax was just a frivolous Top Ten story. Then Alan Moore mixes the nonsense of Smax's homeworld with horror.

Morning Bright in particular is a widely effective villain, I wish that more could have been done with him beyond this series. The artwork felt wrong too until some of the Morning Bright whose design is sublime. The story cleverly subverts the dragonslayer/quest storyline with both humour and genuine terror.

Not as complex or character driven as Top Ten but still a very fun backwards origin story for the mean spirited bastard Smax.

Julian says

I think it's worth clearing up one point straight away. This is not intended as a piece of serious fiction, okay? So, it isn't Watchmen (though Rorschach does make a cameo appearance, as does, wonderfully, Bill, the Galactic Hero) or V for Vendetta. This is Alan Moore having fun, and it is positively awesome. Dragons that look like giant pussy cats; illegal immigrant elves; reflections on just how boring it might have been to be a viking, and a masterful climactic homage to H P Lovecraft.

So, basically, what it is is a wonderful compendium of just about every foolish trope from fantasy fiction only satirised mercilessly. But it's all right because, as it turns out, in the end what everyone needs is some good, honest science, and that understanding stellar evolution is more important, when it comes to dragon slaying, than any number of bulging muscles or even a sword that rather likes Abba. So take heart, scientists: it turns out we do rule, after all.

Cathy says

This just didn't work. It was supposed to be silly and satirical, but it was just off-putting. And I'm not even talking about the incest part. The book just makes fun of every fantasy trope in there is, which could have been funny, but came off as insulting, not witty. And Jeff, one of the heroes of the Top 10 series, is a complete and total idiot in every way in this book, why is that fun? Robyn was the only character who wasn't completely stupid, but she didn't have any depth. Everything I loved about Top 10 was totally absent from this book. The characters were completely shallow, literally jokes and not people I cared about. And the art was really childish. The only thing that was at all cool was the dragon, but the rest of it was just not good at all. Not even not good in comparison to Gene Ha's beautiful art from Top 10, because that's a hard standard to meet, but really just not appealing, like it looks like the stuff I see on the back of cereal boxes, it doesn't

look like art for grown-ups. Disappointing.

Matt says

This was actually surprisingly great. So much tongue-in-cheek humor about fantasy. It's basically like *Alan Moore does Shrek*. And of course, it being Moore, there are some occult references and a lot of poking fun at the distinction between magic and science. The story has virtually nothing to do with Top. 10 other than being an extremely loose spin off based on one of the characters but was a good read if you like seeing Alan having a bit of fun.

Ren says

It's hard not to make comparisons to Top 10, given that Smax is a direct sequel. At the same time, they're such absurdly different stories that they don't even share a genre. The cop drama/superhero setting is dropped in favor of a fairytale/fantasy world, the majority of previous characters don't even make a cameo, and the detailed and realistic art style is replaced with bright and cartoony drawings. If you're looking for more of what you found in Top 10, there isn't much of it here.

This is a romp through the tropes typically found in fairytales, Lord of the Rings wanna-be novels, and D&D campaigns. The fantasy world in this comic twists cliches into both laws of nature and long lines for submitting paperwork, making for a parody world that reminds me somewhat of Discworld.

There are times that it might lean a little too hard on superfluous jokes. There are countless little cameos to watch for in the background, but the page-long Harry Potter parody takes it a bit far. (It's harmless fun, don't get me wrong, but it's also completely pointless, especially when Harry already made a background cameo appearance as a ghost earlier.) Overall, though, I'd say far more jokes and references land than miss. Even more importantly, it doesn't forget to have a plot in the midst of all the silliness.

When Jeff returns to his home world for a funeral, he gets roped into a quest to complete some unfinished business with an all-powerful and all-knowing "dragon." While Top 10 could get lost in all its plot threads, Smax has one straightforward endgoal, which keeps the foreshadowing and pacing well-focused.

It's almost jarring when the story veers into some extremely dark territory. There is rape, there is incest, and there is child death in this story, so brace yourself if those are sensitive subjects for you. Alan Moore knows when to drop all pretense of humor, though, and he gives the disturbing scenes the weight they deserve. He balances just enough horror to give the plot some investment without bogging down the whole story with darkness.

I'm mixed on the art. The colors are bright and the details can be a bit sparse, which is fitting for a lighthearted parody. When it comes to the more dramatic or emotional scenes, there's great care taken with the pacing, lighting, and atmosphere. The villain's design and presentation is appropriately unnerving and creepy.

On the other hand... Sometimes the anatomy gets a little wonky, or I have trouble parsing what expression a character is supposed to be wearing. Robyn is especially prone to doofy expressions. If she's not featured in a

close-up shot, her eyes are frequently nothing more than dots and she's lucky if she gets a nose. On one page, her face shape changes three times in three consecutive panels.

What I found I missed the most about Top 10, though, was the focus on characterization. Smax gives far more precedence to its plot. Some of the new side characters could be replaced with a log and you wouldn't notice the difference. Jeff is really the only character who gets much of an arc. Robyn is vital to the mission, sure, but it's hard to say that she's gained much for herself in this adventure. She's mostly there to push Jeff into action and to ask questions about the world so the audience can learn through her.

Smax does probably contain a tighter, more focused story compared to Top 10, though, so it's up to personal preference whether it's good or bad that Moore decided to water down his characters for the sake of a stronger plotline. I wish he could have managed both somewhere in this series, but that's a writing balance that often likes to tip over.

It's difficult to talk about Smax without addressing a certain elephant in the room... At first it seemed kind of unfair to me that other reviewers have left negative reviews solely over the controversial romance. I don't blame anyone for being uncomfortable with it, but does a single squicky element alone justify marking down the comic's rating as a whole? But the more I thought about it, the more I realized this was a symptom of a deeper problem: the romance was written too shallowly.

(view spoiler)

(view spoiler) Given that's how the comic spends its last precious pages, it leaves a bit of a bad aftertaste.

Which is a shame, because this is a fun parody with an otherwise satisfying conclusion. It didn't address all that many questions I was hoping to see answered from Top 10, but for its own thing, it made for an enjoyable mostly self-contained story.

Will says

I sometimes wonder if Alan Moore thinks of something typically disturbing (or at the least, socially forbidden) and then creates a story around it with the intent of making the reader sympathize with the characters and agree that under these circumstances that well, maybe it's okay. For this one it's brother-sister incest. But really, that's just a small part of the adventure. This one could give Fables a run for their money as far as a screwed up fairy-tale land would be with real dysfunctional adults.

Maria says

This was my favourite of the too-short Top Ten universe. Although I liked the series (in a non-buyer way) this was the only volume I really loved, and would read again. The series just seems like a too-small glimpse at an intricate and intriguing world
