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# Wanted



## **Synopsis**

What if everything in your life was out of your hands and those around you propelled your fate? Your girlfriend left you for your best friend; your boss gave your job to someone better. What if then, after all this, someone gave you back total control? What if he revealed you were the next in line to join a secret society of super-villains that controlled the entire planet? Mark Millar and J.G. Jones provide a look at one man who goes from being the world's biggest loser to the deadliest assassin alive.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

It's kind of amazing the type of reactions that Millar and Jones' "Wanted" evokes in people. Some people absolutely despise it. Other people absolutely adore it. I personally think it's wonderful, but I also understand why a bunch of people don't like it. Let me explain. Upfront, let's say this: This is a book about villains. They're going to do villainous things. They aren't going to hold hands. They aren't going to be nice people. They aren't going to have a change of heart. They aren't going to see the error of their ways. Not because they couldn't, but because they don't care. Many of the criticisms people have leveled at this book take that one thing for granted. They want the protagonist to be a nice guy (he isn't), they want him to do good things (he doesn't), they want the story to have a happy ending (the jury's sort of out on that one). Make no mistake, this is not intended to be mainstream fiction. And to me, that's part of the appeal. Wanted is the story of Wesley Gibbs, an office drone who's been walked on his entire life. He's been kicked by nearly

everyone who could have a chance, and twice on Sundays. His girlfriend is sleeping around on him, his boss is abusive without cause, and Wesley takes it, because he can't envision any other way to live. Until someone comes along and tells him he's the son of the greatest killer who ever lived, and that he's just inherited his legacy. And while he fights it at first, he comes to embrace it, and that's where things start getting complicated. I don't want to walk you through the book. I don't want to tell you that you should like it, because, frankly, I understand why a lot of people wouldn't like this book. It's violent, it's unsympathetic to, well, everyone, it's remorseless, it's brutal, it's needless cruel... but that's sort of the point. While I see a lot of people in other reviews comparing "Wanted" to "Fight Club" (fair) and "The Matrix" (not really applicable), in many ways, "Wanted" is an extension of some of the ideas presented in a much older book, "The Lord of the Flies." What DOES happen in a society without rules? What would you do if there wasn't a law you had to follow? What would you do if there wasn't anyone to tell you no, or stop you from doing whatever you put your mind to? The easy answer is to say that you'd just go on living your life, but with some improvements, but at the cost of what? The world is about systems. Give yourself a ton of money, money goes down in value, suddenly you have less money than you intended. Don't want to pay a speeding ticket? Now you're breaking laws, just because you can. Millar takes that concept and runs with it about as far as he can, then keeps running past where it was before. If "Fight Club" wasn't your cup of tea, then steer clear from "Wanted." If you're looking for something with a positive message, steer clear of "Wanted." If you want a story where you agree with the actions of the protagonist, steer clear of "Wanted." It's not a book for kids. It's not a book for people who want a story that holds their hand the whole way. It is, to borrow a phrase, very bad men doing very bad things. Again, I return to my original point -- this is a story about villains. With all that said, Jones' art is fantastic, the dialog is crisp and leaps off the page, the characters are memorable and the story is a wild roller coaster ride that asks the question "When there are no rules, and the only people who can tell you no are your fellow degenerates, what do you do?" It's uncomfortable, it's vile, it's twisted, it's darker-than-dark... and that's why I love it, and why most of you probably won't...

Sporting a cover image that is simple yet sure to grab attention on the shelves, Mark Millar and JG Jones' WANTED trade paperback had been on my "to buy" list for some time. I finally plopped down the cash for the book this week with high expectations, as Millar had accomplished the near-impossible several years ago by piquing my interest in the Authority, as well as producing some interesting work with DC's Superman: Red Son and Marvel's Ultimates. After reading WANTED, I have to say that, while the premise is quite fascinating, the story itself was yet another

case of shock value substituting for good writing. WANTED collects issues 1 - 6 of Millar and Jones' series, plus a great pin-up and sketch gallery. Let's get the basics out of the way first: Wesley Gibson is the ultimate loser - he has a dead-end job, a cheating girlfriend, and no backbone. This drudgery is interrupted when Wesley is surprised by the information that he has just inherited the legacy of his deceased deadbeat dad, the rapid-firing supervillain The Killer. He is even more surprised by this information because no one is aware that superhumans even exist! Over the following months, under the tutelage of arch-criminals Professor Solomon Seltzer and The Fox, Wesley learns of the shadowy history of superhumans on Earth and is transformed into a killing machine in the mold of his father, while slowly coming to the realization that things aren't quite what they seem to be. Rumor has it that Millar pitched this idea to DC Comics as a story of the son of either Deathstroke or Deadshot, and I can believe it, as almost every character contained within is an analogue of some DC character (with a few Marvels thrown in for good measure). Jones' art is excellent - seriously: WOW! It couldn't be better. His skill with faces, physiques, action sequences, and layouts are all on good display here. My favorite aspect of the art, however, is the backgrounds, which often consist of glimpses of thinly-disguised DC and Marvel villains. It's much like the "spot-the-hero game" readers could play with Alan Moore and Gene Ha's Top Ten. As for the story... it started out quite well; in fact, the first 2 issues really had my attention. But it quickly slides into a mess of blood, guts, cursing, sex, and general amoral behavior, and while this story IS indeed about super-villains, I don't feel that the gruesome details were necessary to make that point. In some ways, these elements undo a lot of what Millar was trying to accomplish by showing Wesley's growth from weakling into warrior. For example, you can have heroes, and you can have anti-heroes, and while villainy may not a noble profession, you can't help but root for Wesley to leave his dreary life behind and accept his destiny. But when the writer then dives so deeply into the nature of that character, to the point that the anti-hero is no longer just a victim of circumstance, but revealed to be a mass murderer, terrorist, thug, thief, elitist, and serial rapist (and what's more: just for the thrill of it), there's nothing left for me to root for. In fact, as I neared the end of the book, I was hoping that it would conclude with Wesley taking a bullet to the brain, as that's the only way I could see this story ending on a high note: you live by the sword, you die by the sword. As for the ending, by the time I reached the final chapter, I realized that Millar had pulled a fast one, where the events depicted in the beginning of the story were not quite as they appeared. While he did leave himself some leeway for this, he took great liberties with the introductory narrative, to where the ending was essentially a cheat, pure and simple. If that was the plan all along, then chapters 2 through 5 seem pretty unnecessary, upon reflection. In spite of all of this, I will give Millar a thumbs up for the way in

which he blurs the line between fantasy and reality. The supervillain community has indeed pulled a fast one on the general public, and it's something that could conceivably be based in our own reality, depending on how much you trust in conspiracy theories. In conclusion, if that rumor involving DC is true, I think they may have missed out on a good thing here. If this story would have been anchored in the DC Universe (even as an Elseworlds), with some tighter editorial control and toning down of the shock value, it might have been much better.

Imaginative, clever, and dark. Great "what if" on what would happen if the super villains united and an alternate reality to what we normally get in our superhero oriented universes. Shatters just about all norms for a comic book or graphic novel. Very different than the movie. I enjoyed the dichotomy/schism around what is the bad guy's primary goal and how they operate, i.e. an interesting character study on bad guys and their organization. Includes plenty of action and keeps you guessing, which I enjoy.

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