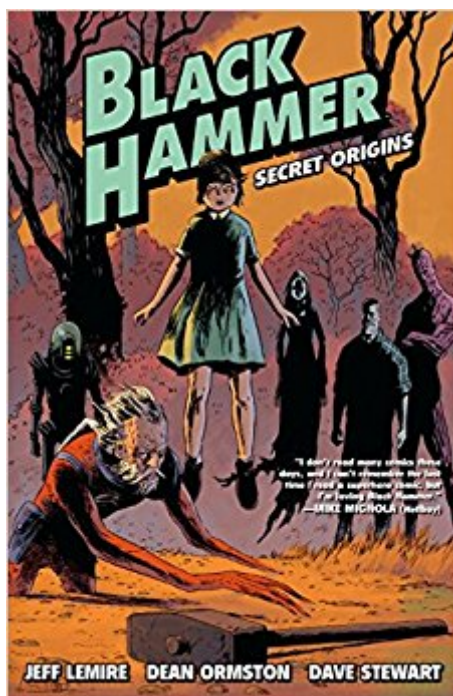


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# Black Hammer Volume 1: Secret Origins



## Synopsis

Once they were heroes, but the age of heroes has long since passed. Banished from existence by a multiversal crisis, the old champions of Spiral City--Abraham Slam, Golden Gail, Colonel Weird, Madame Dragonfly, and Barbalien--now lead simple lives in an idyllic, timeless farming village from which there is no escape! But as they employ all of their super abilities to free themselves from this strange purgatory, a mysterious stranger works to bring them back into action for one last adventure! Collects Black Hammer #1-#6. The first chapter in Jeff Lemire (The Underwater Welder, The Complete Essex County, Animal Man) and Dean Ormston's (Lucifer) acclaimed series!

## Book Information

Series: Black Hammer

Paperback: 152 pages

Publisher: Dark Horse Books (April 11, 2017)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1616557869

ISBN-13: 978-1616557867

Product Dimensions: 6.7 x 0.3 x 10.2 inches

Shipping Weight: 14.4 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 5.0 out of 5 stars 13 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #22,760 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #30 in Books > Comics & Graphic Novels > Publishers > Dark Horse #143 in Books > Comics & Graphic Novels > Graphic Novels > Superheroes

## Customer Reviews

New York Times Bestselling author, Jeff Lemire, is the creator of the acclaimed graphic novels Sweet Tooth, Essex County, The Underwater Welder and Trillium. His upcoming projects include the original graphic novel Roughneck from Simon and Schuster, as well as the sci-fi series Descender for Image Comics (with Dustin Nguyen) and Black Hammer for Dark Horse Comics (with Dean Ormston). Jeff has also written Green Arrow, Justice League and Animal Man for DC Comics and Hawkeye for Marvel Comics. In 2008 and in 2013 Jeff won the Schuster Award for Best Canadian Cartoonist. He has also received The Doug Wright Award for Best Emerging Talent and the American Library Association's prestigious Alex Award, recognizing books for adults with specific teen appeal. He has also been nominated for 8 Eisner awards, 7 Harvey Awards and 8 Shuster Awards. In 2010 Essex County was named as one of the five Essential Canadian Novels of

the Decade. He currently lives and works in Toronto with his wife and son. The author lives in Toronto, ON., Canada.

Very strong book that legitimately made lots of "best of lists" in 2016 and 2017. At the back of this volume, Mr. Lemire offers up a 3 page letter detailing the history of "Black Hammer." He wrote that he conceived of it while working on "Essex County" in 2007 and that it went through several alterations before coming out as this finished product. Like music, I am a staunch believer that the best written works are consistently those that had a long gestation period. The decade Mr. Lemire has spent thinking about this has really paid off for the readers. Additionally, there are several pages about the early conceptions of the major characters that are presented in the 1980s version of "The Official Handbook of the Marvel Universe" (it's both nostalgic and the best way to get background information on characters). Without giving away plot details, the premise is this: a 5-person team of superheroes fought a world-level threat and won, but the aftermath had the difficult consequence of sequestering them away in a new place (or world or dimension). The new place is a farm outside of an anonymous mid-Western town. There are stand-ins for Captain America, the Martian Manhunter, and Captain Marvel, but each have significant differences. The other two characters do not seem to have roots in any other major DC/Marvel stars. While it is a superhero comic, it is about how they cope in a forced retirement (though very different from *Watchmen*, as they have been completely removed from their world). The art is excellent.

Recently, I seem to have found myself in a rather strange comfort zone in my reading: extremely metafictional superhero stories. Between DC Rebirth's titular title, to *Flex Mentallo*, to *Doom Patrol*, even to the unexpected character twist part of the way into *Gotham City Sirens*, I apparently get my warm fuzzies from modern comics using golden, silver, and bronze-age concepts as plot points in-universe as well as out. *Black Hammer* is such a story. Unlike most of those mentioned before, though, this book uses original characters who are based around very familiar origin stories, each with at least one particular new twist. One character is Captain Marvel, BUT... another Martian Manhunter, BUT... and so on. I don't want to get into the ways each breaks expectations here, because discovering each one was a big part of the fun for me. It even manages to go further past superheroes, too; one character intentionally invokes images of old-school horror comics. These older concepts are not just a throwback to yesteryear, though. The whole point is using these in a way more wholly modern in execution. The story is an introspective character-drama rather than a traditionally action-heavy super hero comic. And Jeff Lemire is at the top of his game with all of this.

I hate to give away anything he has going here, but it is sufficient to say that the struggles in this book feel original, fresh, and nuanced. I did want to point out, though, my copy did have a slightly-more-than-small tear in the back cover and very last page inside, which I find surprising, as the stock of the cover feels a little sturdier than many other graphic novels in my collection. I'd guess that's probably a more one-off thing, so I wouldn't expect it to be a problem for anyone else.

This is Jeff Lemire's ode to golden age comics. If you read super hero stuff, or Jeff Lemire there is no question on whether or not to buy this just do it. It's probably the best comic of 2016 and every time someone asks about comics this is what I tell them to get.

Great story by an amazing team. I've been a big fan of Lemire since Sweettooth having never read his Essex county. I feel like this is a binding of the 2 adding in some post super hero aspects. The books beautiful and you really get an idea of who the characters are I can't wait for more.

One of those titles that if you read comics and you aren't reading, this is a must read. If you don't read comics and want to jump in. This is a good starting place. I can't wait to see where the story goes.

Incredible. Super heroes in Jeff Lemire's usual, brooding way. So human and so sad.

This is a really wonderful superhero story unlike any other I've read. I love Lemire's work and Ormston's art is stunning. Lots of great bonus material too. This is a must read.

Really enjoyed this. Looking forward to Volume 2. Reminiscent of Chabon's Adventures of Kavalier & Clay

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