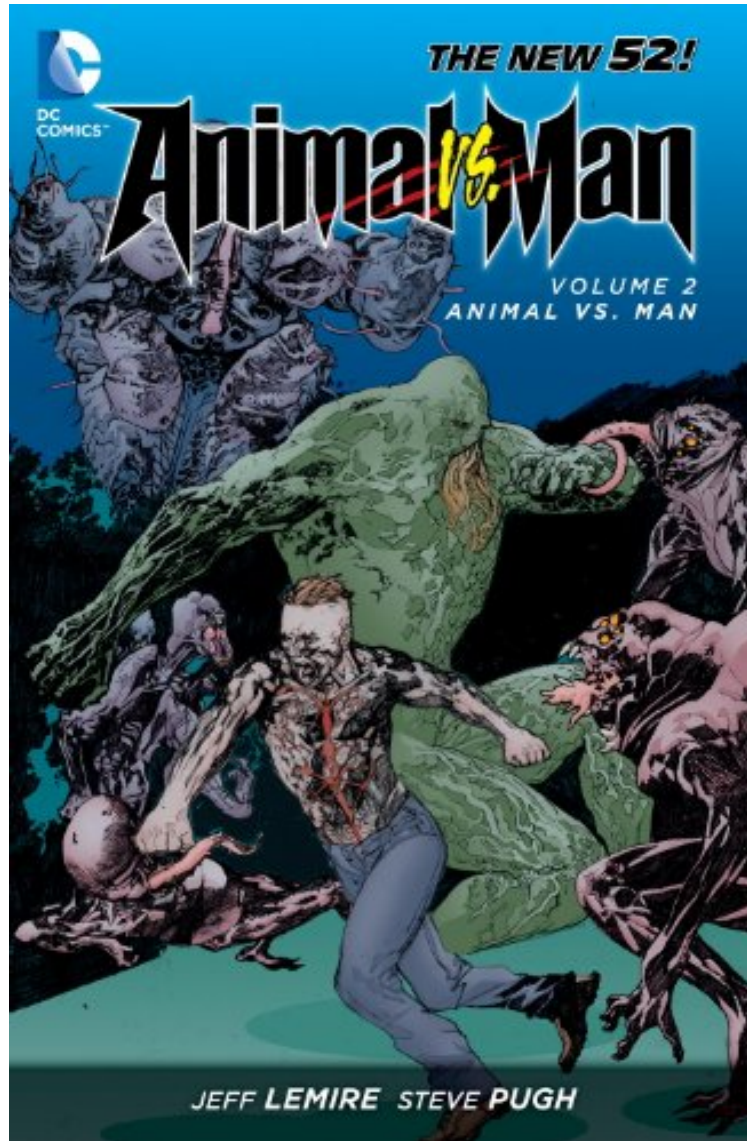


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Animal Man, Vol. 2: Animal vs. Man

Jeff Lemire

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Jeff Lemire : Animal Man, Vol. 2: Animal vs. Man before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Animal Man, Vol. 2: Animal vs. Man:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Odyssey in the Red! Buddy gets an upgrade as the Rot War begins! By KBoticus In my opinion, a massive improvement over the first volume! Story: See, now I can understand why people love this run by Lemire! This book really improved in my opinion on all aspects. There's a LOT going on here and I was shocked to see some of the events that unfolded here. It of coarse starts where volume 1 left off with

the Bakers on the run from the Rot infested animals. But, those pesky agents of decay soon catch up to that little RV in the woods, and we see something cool: Maxine running out to fight them all! One minute, I see her communicating with these undead animals, then...THEY EAT HER ALIVE! But, I was shocked to see that the Avatar of the Red can do the same thing that Swamp Thing can, that is, transfer their consciousness into their respective life webs, and come out again in a new body. Buddy thinks his daughter is dead, then we see a fox transform into a human, and I was blown away that a four year old had the wherewithal to be able to save her own life by pulling off an advanced technique that took Alec Holland some time to learn from an expert! It just goes to show how powerful Maxine is and will become as an adult! Buddy later has a bad day to say the least, loses his body to the Rot, falls into the Bone Orchard of the Red, and meets a goat shepherd. I loved seeing them start on this journey, a sort of odyssey as they have to travel, the hard way, so Buddy can gain an audience with the Parliament of Limbs in order to find his way back to his family. Encountering a Rot infection in a sea of blood they have to fight off some small time Rotlings and call in the cavalry! Lemire has done some awesome stuff here with introducing a very likable character in the goat shepherd, and showing us the Red's "immune system"! That was cool! There is once again a lot of body horror with the main Hunter taking over Buddy's body, and using it to trick Cliff (Buddy's son) into a false sense of security. Buddy finally gains his audience with the Parliament and we get to see a comeback of the two "aliens" that made Buddy what he is. Referred to as "the Tailors", they do some pretty creepy stuff with Buddy's soul in the Red and create a new, more powerful body for him, one which allows him to species-shift. So when buddy flies like a hawk, he turns into somewhat of an anthropomorphic hawk. It's really cool! Buddy manages to make it back in time to have this battle with the Hunter occupying his old body, but Cliff is scratched by Rot Buddy, and anyone familiar with how the Rot works knows how bad that is! There's also a story in here that Socks, the previous avatar in the form of the cat, tells Maxine about the last major invasion of the Rot in the world. I finally got to find out who that Avatar of the Green is that totally sucks and is killed by Arcane...TWICE! We get to see what happened during that last big war of avatars in 1894 in Canada. That whole segment was really interesting and informative. At the end of this book is the #0 issue where we see the circumstances that lead to Buddy becoming Animal Man in the first place. I'm just getting into the character for the first time, so this was all new to me. It was pretty cool, though I almost feel as though Lemire pressed the "easy" button in order to come up with the best retcon he could. Trying to change the aliens from outer space giving Buddy powers into them being agents of the Red is no small storytelling task, but it's pulled off decent enough. Lastly, the book finishes with a preview of Rotworld where Buddy and his family meet up with Swampy and Abigail, and the two heroes enter the Rot to stop this war before it starts. If volume 3 is any indication....they fail. Anyway, there's a LOT going on this book, but it's fantastic stuff. I might have judged too quickly this run based on how I felt about the first volume and how I found it a little underwhelming when taking into account what I heard others saying about it. This book is a massive improvement in my opinion and I need to read the Rotworld arc again (which I have collected in the Swamp Thing by Snyder Deluxe Edition). Because I have that book, I won't be reviewing Animal Man: volume 3. Art: Steve Pugh is a better man for the job over Travel Foreman. This is what I was talking about in my previous review of the last volume. Animal Man needed a more refined artist, and it got one. I'm loving his art here! The lines are sharper, the art more "finished" looking, and the coloring is still great! I will give credit where it's due though: Travel Foreman does do some great covers here. But, interior art has to deliver as well, and Pugh really raises the bar on this series from the previous entry. Once again, I love the body horror going on in this series. It's some pretty frightful stuff, and I'm surprised that this series went in this direction, but Animal Man and Swamp Thing are crossing over, and they have very similar narratives as they are both about Avatars of respective kingdoms, so I guess it makes sense for the books to be at least a little alike. Well, actually, they're quite a lot alike, and that's fine as they seem to be a companion piece to each other; meant to be read together. So the body horror stuff in this book meshes well with Paquette's art in Swamp Thing. Overall: Much more exciting than volume 1, and much more informative. I don't mind some exposition as long as it's good, and it tells you something that YOU never knew before. Lemire has stepped it up, and Pugh has created a beautiful book to look at as well. Maybe now I can see why people regard this run as a great one. I don't know why I doubted Lemire after reading one volume. I am becoming a big fan of his. I can't wait to read the remainder of this run!

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. The Red, the Green, and the Rot By C. D. Varn Jeff Lemire writes families extremely well for a comic author, and this really adds strength to this New 52 vision of Animal Man. Lemire moves Animal Man more into the realm of Alan Moore's Swamp Thing, and uses a mythology from Swamp Thing with the Red, the Green, and the Rot. Meta-commentary elements are present though although moved into the this current mythology, so hints to the Grant Morrison style of animal man remain. Still the family dynamic is great, but Buddy Baker's character is not as engaging as the Vertigo run of Animal Man, and the mythology gets a bit heavy-handed at times.

5 of 5 people found the following review helpful. Animal Man Becomes the True Warrior of the Red By Anarchy in the US When it comes to surprise hits, Jeff Lemire's Animal Man was one the shining examples in the DC New 52. A C-list character who has had a small following ever since Grant Morrison's time on said character, is one of the breakout hits to read. How does volume 2 hold up for the animal activist after the great introduction in volume 1? It holds up just fine.

ANIMAL MAN VOLUME 2: ANIMAL VS. MAN collectes issues #7-11, issue #0, and the ANIMAL MAN ANNUAL #1. Picking up

where Animal Man Vol. 1: The Hunt (The New 52) left off, Buddy Baker and the Baker family is heading east to look for Swamp Thing (Alec Holland) and running away from the Rot, which is spreading fast. After all of Maxine's ordeals with the Red, the Baker family is coming apart from all of the madness and expectations. Buddy gets tired of running away from the Rot and decides to actually stand up and fight back. But Buddy finds out the hard truth: he isn't strong enough to fight the Rot. So now he must enter the vastness of The Red alone to make himself more powerful in order to truly protect the Red Kingdom and most importantly--his family. Lemire further continues the theme of family that makes Animal Man one of the best books in the New 52. It is a survival/horror book with its grotesque and bloody bodies splattered with the Rot tearing through flesh just about every page, but the quieter moments with family ties that the Bakers have is the real star of the series. The tension and love among the family ring strong to real life families who...lets face it, would act like this if in the same scenario. A 4-year old who is to fight hordes of monsters and a father who uses powers from animals would make any family a little delirious of the situation. And the character interaction among the family is emotional and humorous in tone to offset the dark, gritty, and serious nature of the world going on outside of the family. Volume 2 also furthers the Animal Man/Swamp Thing lore with the Red, the Green, and the Rot as being inseparable for the purpose of existence. The Animal Man Annual portrays the history in a back story between the three entities with older avatars in 1894. The Rot isn't so much evil, but it's a part of the cycle of life. And if one of the entities is too powerful, the other two must team up and balance out the power structure. It makes it so that there is no direct enemy or ally among the three tribes and gives readers somewhat more understanding of the war between each other. And for you Grant Morrison fans, there's a little nod to his run if you catch it. And the #0 issue is a redone origin story that Lemire keeps Buddy's pre-crisis and post crisis origins in tact, while altering it just slightly to fit into the current storyline of the Rot and Maxine's powers. Very cool. Artist Steve Pugh is a perfect and ironic choice over Travel Foreman. Pugh's art is almost as strong and detailed as Foreman's art, as well as doing some disgusting and bloody work to fit the narrative, while keeping the emotional moments in tact. I say ironic, because Pugh did Animal Man art from 1992 and 1995, meaning Pugh's art inspired Foreman's art, and Pugh is doing Animal Man again. Ironic, huh? Any way, Pugh does just fine showcasing the Rot and the Red Kingdom beautifully and I'm glad he is the current artist. Timothy Green does the Annual and Alberto Ponticelli is fill-in artist for issue 11. Both artist do just fine with the sick and twisted world Pugh draws. And Travel Foreman does only the beautiful covers. I do not have very little complaints, but if there was any, I think it would have to be the horrific violence. Jeff Lemire's Animal Man series is graphic and can be very unsettling. That's entirely the point to portray the ugliness of the Rot and war itself, but some people will still see it as extreme and over excessive. But if you can get past the violence, I think readers will enjoy it. ANIMAL MAN VOLUME 2: ANIMAL VS. MAN continues Lemire's ever-growing horror event with family still being the prominent theme and being a wonderful book at that. If you haven't read Animal Man yet, do so and pick up volume 1 first, then volume 2. And finally, volume 2 gives readers a glimpse of volume 3, "Rotworld: The Red Kingdom" where Animal Man and Swamp Thing finally converge together and take on the heart of the Rot Kingdom. So pick up Swamp Thing Vol. 1: Raise Them Bones (The New 52) and Swamp Thing Vol. 2: Family Tree (The New 52: Swamp Thing) and get caught up on two of DC's greater series in the New 52. Let's just hope the Rotworld books come out by Halloween time, huh?

Ever since he discovered his daughter's connection to the Red--the strange source of his powers and the mystical connective tissue between all life on the planet--Buddy Baker and his family have been on the run. But when Buddy goes missing, his family receives assistance from John Constantine and the Justice League Dark. Plus, learn the history between The Red, the Green, and the Rot!

From Booklist Lemire made a name for himself with the wistful, melancholy graphic novel Essex County (2007) and edged closer to mainstream success with the thrilling comic book Sweet Tooth. He is currently proving to be a superstar of DC's New 52, most notably with the superhero-horror mash-up Animal Man. The second volume has a more scattershot approach to its narrative, jumping around quite a bit between characters and stories, though this is all in the service of expanding the hugely satisfying mythology. Family man and superhero Buddy Baker plunges into the Red, a conceptual world that joins all things of the flesh, to reach the pinnacle of his power; his daughter, Maxine, potential savior of humanity, learns the background of the great war with the Rot; and Hellblazer John Constantine drops in for some guest shenanigans. Its plenty to juggle, and readers starting here will likely be lost, but for those willing to commit, Lemire makes the human end and the mythological end come together and sing. Meanwhile, the art team mixes gorgeously muscled superhumans with gnarly, flesh-squishing grotesquerie. --Jesse Karp
About the Author Jeff Lemire is the creator of the acclaimed Essex County Trilogy, the Vertigo graphic novel The Nobody, and is the winner of a Xeric Award and YALSA Alex Award. He is currently the writer for DC Comics' ANIMAL MAN, FRANKENSTEIN: AGENT OF S.H.A.D.E., and Vertigo/DC's SWEET TOOTH. He has also previously written the Eisner-nominated SUPERBOY.