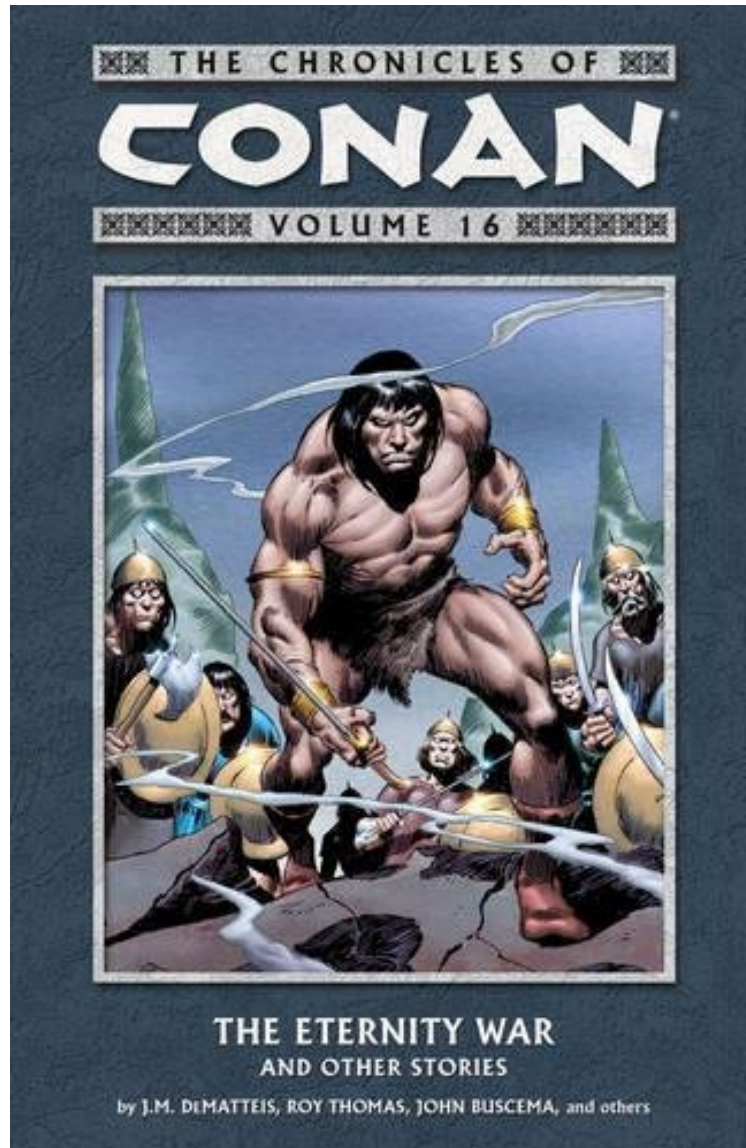


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The Chronicles of Conan, Vol. 16: The Eternity War and Other Stories (v. 16)

J.M. Dematteis

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J.M. Dematteis : The Chronicles of Conan, Vol. 16: The Eternity War and Other Stories (v. 16) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Chronicles of Conan, Vol. 16: The Eternity War and Other Stories (v. 16):

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Getting Better, Just Not That GoodBy Bill SlocumConan the

Barbarian may have been a loner, but he didn't always travel alone. Sometimes it was a band of mercenaries, pirates, or tribal warriors. Here it's a hulking deaf-mute, two teenaged boys, a little girl, and a puppy. Yes, a puppy. Vol. 16 of the reprint series for Marvel's "Conan The Barbarian" comic book is marginally better in terms of story quality than Vol. 15, which was the debut of the series' new writer J. M. DeMatteis. Still, Vol. 16 has a similar issue regarding overuse of a particular trope. In Vol. 15 story after story centered on gods and offers of immortality; here it's hidden identities, with just about everyone but Conan having one. It kind of works in the first story, "The City Where Time Stood Still," where Conan and his mute companion Atreah find themselves wandering through a city of people frozen in place, except for the two boys, the girl, and the puppy. It works reasonably well at setting a tone, and developing a mystery around the people in town, frozen or not. It's an interesting story, just not that good as a Conan story. The last of the DeMatteis stories, "The Blood Red Eye Of Truth," is also fairly involving, another mystery with Conan alone at the center of things and a battle with a ruby-eyed giant worm which is DeMatteis's best moment so far as series writer. The resolution involves a strange, wizened priestess Conan befriends, a plot angle many hardened Conan lovers will find as indigestible as a menacing magic dwarf in "City," but which (sort of) worked for me. One reason for liking the battle between Conan and the worm is that it passes largely in silence. Otherwise, a chronic weakness of DeMatteis is that he has Conan talking too much, delivering much unnecessary exposition whatever his circumstances. The three DeMatteis stories between "City" and "Blood Red Eye" are ladled with excess exposition, as well as a lot of hokey plot twists involving those hidden identities mentioned earlier. The worst story by far is "The Eternity War," where a witch forces Conan to lead other bewitched prisoners into battle, then gets angry when he brings her the victory she sought. The story takes place in a weird underworld populated by tiny blob-like critters with fangs and ruled over by this witch, who resembles Elvira, Mistress of the Dark. Even the art by John Buscema and Bob McLeod is well-below the usual Buscema standard, with Conan flashing more teeth than usual as he literally sleep-walks through the story as the witch's marionette. Two other pieces round out the collection, both by Roy Thomas, the original series writer, and both originally appearing as expanded comic-book Annuals in 1978 and 1979. These deal with Conan in his later years as king of Aquilonia. Here, the Buscema art is uniformly terrific, and Conan's characterization more solid. The stories work less as stand-alones than as imaginative sequels to original Conan stories by Robert E. Howard. In the first, Conan must face a monstrous "Manotaur" after underestimating the perfidy of his war hostage; the second involves a reunion with an evil wizard who, in the book's best moment, swaps out Conan's bride-to-be Zenobia for a hideous monster. It makes a fine caper to Vol. 16, a tepid-if-decent collection, and a nice way to see off Buscema, who would leave the series for a while thereafter. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. like/dislike By SamLoved the artwork. I will buy "Savage sword of Conan" and "Chronicles of Conan" but not "King Conan" any more. 2 of 4 people found the following review helpful. A great Series Again! By Little Nemo Dark Horse is doing a great job with this reprint series. While the recoloring does not always do the John Buscema art full justice, it is usually much better than the 70's Marvel coloring. The stories adapted by Roy Thomas are as vibrant and thrilling as ever. Recommended.

Following a renowned writer like Roy Thomas was no easy task, but J.M. DeMatteis (Justice League) found himself fit for the job when he became Conan the Barbarian's next regular writer with Conan #118! This volume continues the period when DeMatteis worked with legendary artist John Buscema, collecting five of their regular series issues, as well as Conan Annual #4 and #5, which were created by Roy Thomas, John Buscema, and Ernie Chan! Enjoy the continuing story lines, while getting a look at an older Conan's fight for his throne and queen in the unbeatable Thomas/Buscema/Chan Conan Annual collaborations: "The Return of the Conqueror" and "Bride of the Conqueror!"