



JULY 2025 NO. 142

TRUTH, JUSTICE & THE AMERICAN WAY:
SUPERMAN

THE FIRST SUPERHERO RETURNS TO THE SILVER SCREEN!

PLUS...THE FANTASTIC FOUR ON FILM!



The Comics & Graphic Novel Bulletin of



Lexington Public Library
Reading Is Just the Beginning!



DC FINEST SUPERMAN THE FIRST SUPERHERO

JERRY SIEGEL | JOE SHUSTER

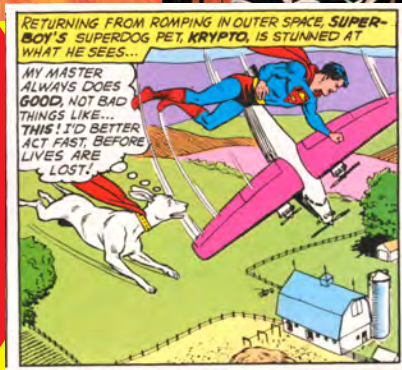


When publisher Harry Donenfeld got a look at the cover of the first issue of his new book, *Action Comics*, he thought it was ridiculous. Who's gonna believe a guy can lift a car? Especially dressed in that outfit! Harry was so embarrassed by his new feature, he kept him off the cover for the first few issues...until the sales reports came in. *Superman* was a hit. Readers of all ages demanded more adventures of the Man of Tomorrow. A new genre was born, as hundreds of costumed crime-busters followed *The First Superhero* to the newsstands. That's despite Joe Shuster's raw, even amateurish artwork, or, perhaps because of it, given how well it fit the explosive stories by Jerry Siegel. OG Superman was a anarchist, an outlaw who often had to duck the police after he had dealt harsh justice to the heel of the moment. Whether dealing with underworld goons, dishonest businessmen (like the makers of unsafe automobiles above), or the occasional wife beater, Superman saw them all as a problem he should fix with his bare hands. He even killed Luthor on their first meeting! Read the *ur-text* of superheroics at Central and

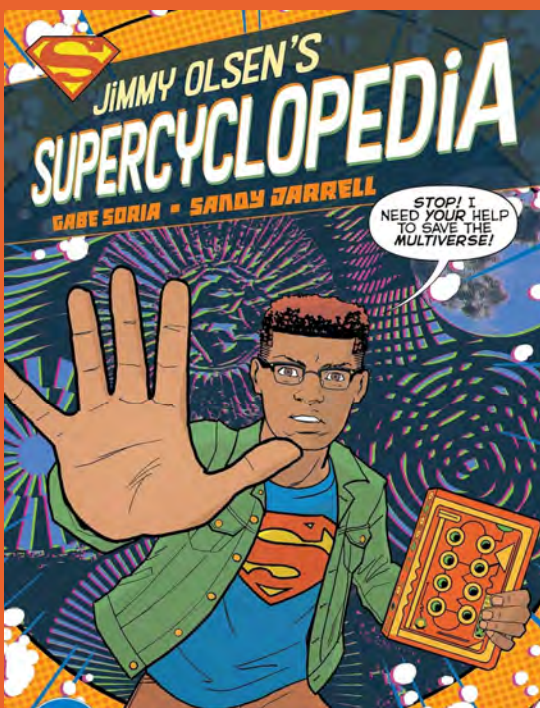


Marksbury. Meanwhile, *Action Comics* continues to feature the Man of Steel as he deals with the Bizarro Plague and a gladiatorial challenge from alien invaders while the *Lois & Clark* back-up shows the quotidian challenges *In Love. At Work.*

Ye Editor must confess: my hopes for the upcoming Superman movie weren't that high...until I saw the first preview, and Krypto arrived. That's when I knew director James Gunn truly loves comics in all their goofy glory. Animal sidekicks are one of the most childish aspects of superheroes, because kids love 'em, and much comics history has been made by putting aside childish things. Fortunately, there has been a counter-reaction in the 21st Century as Krypto the Super-dog has made a comeback in comics, cartoons and feature films. Available at Central, Eastside and Tates Creek, *Tails of the Super-pets* compiles the stories from the Fifties and Sixties that introduced not just Krypto, but Streaky, Beppo, Comet and the other animal pals of the DC Universe. It's super-fun and super-cute!



The bowtie's been replaced by spectacles, and he's a lot more tan than he used to be. But Jimmy Olsen is still a ginger, still Superman's Pal, and still getting in the middle of messes both cosmic and comedic. Now our intrepid cub reporter has something else: *Jimmy Olsen's SUPERCYCLOPEDIA!* A creation of the New Gods, the Supercyclopedia is half-Mother Box, half-Britannica, and all up in the DC Universe's business. Fortunately(?), Jimmy has a new chum to help him figure out his new toy, the Toy Boy! But that guy's got ulterior motives, and Jimmy finds himself on the run, using the Supercyclopedia to call on the aid of Zatanna, Doctor Fate and many more! One of DC's digests aimed at the YA audience, *JOS* is pure fun thanks to the playful but respectful script by Gabe Soria and Sandy Jarrell's colorful art. Dig the dance-off with Rag Doll and the Legion of Substitute Heroes! Go to lexpublib.org!



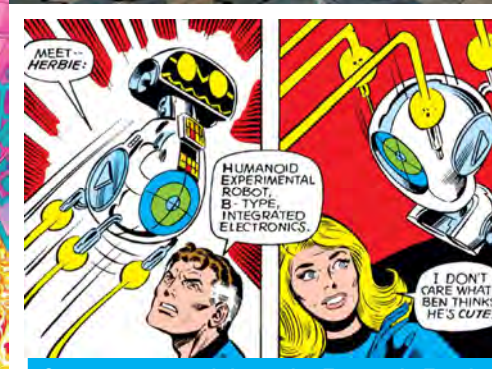
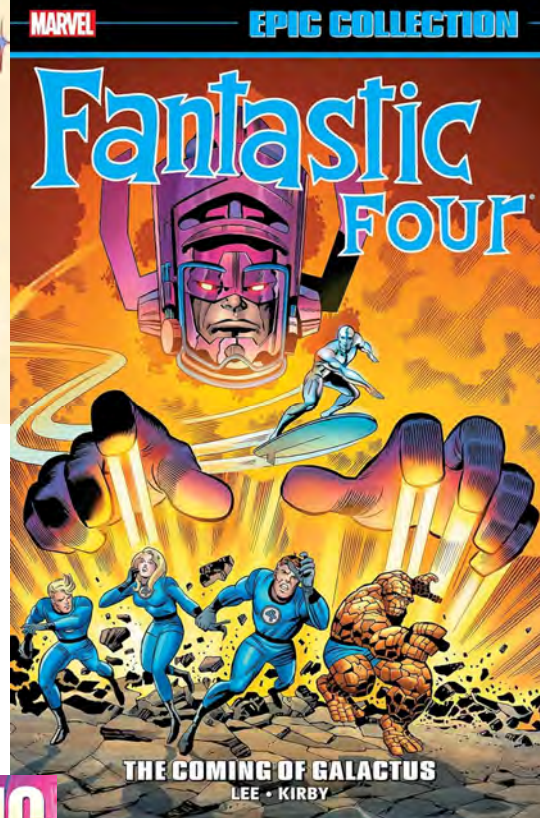
Balancing high hopes with lowered expectations, fans of the cosmic quartet who starred in the self-proclaimed "World's Greatest Comic Magazine" await with bated breath the premiere of *The Fantastic Four: First Steps*. The trepidation is justifiable, given the troubled history of the franchise onscreen. But the very fact that there's an \$80 popcorn bucket shaped like the prodigious head of the movie's Big Bad, Galactus, offers proof that, this time, finally, somebody will get it right. We'll see the combination of family dynamics, social satire and wild sci-fi action that made the original comics so revolutionary, so engaging, so much *fun*. The various eras of the FF are offered by Lexington Public Library, like the seat-of-the-pants universe-building of the early 1960s, represented by the digest-sized Mighty Marvel Masterwork below, in which the Fantastic Four either tussle or team up with Nick Fury, the Incredible Hulk, the original Avengers, Dr. Strange and the old school X-men.



The saga that forms the basis for *First Steps* appears in the full-sized Epic Collection (right), along with the debut of the Inhumans and the classic "This Man, This Monster!" Contemporary creators, from Dan Slott and Gail Simone to current writer Ryan North (below), can be found by going to lexpublib.org!



For more on the FANTASTIC FOUR, see 741.5 #54 (March 2021), available under the Reading Services tab @ lexpublib.org!



Contrary to scuttlebutt, the Fantastic Four's robot sidekick H.E.R.B.I.E. was not added to the lineup for the 1978 cartoon because producers were afraid kids would emulate the Human Torch. Nope, it was IP issues: the Torch had been optioned for a never-was solo film. The last thing created for Marvel by Jack Kirby, H.E.R.B.I.E. appeared in all 13 episodes of the troubled production before joining the comic book in 1979.



JAMES GUNN'S SUPERMAN — IN THEATERS JULY 11!

FANTASTIC FOUR: FIRST STEPS — IN THEATERS JULY 25!

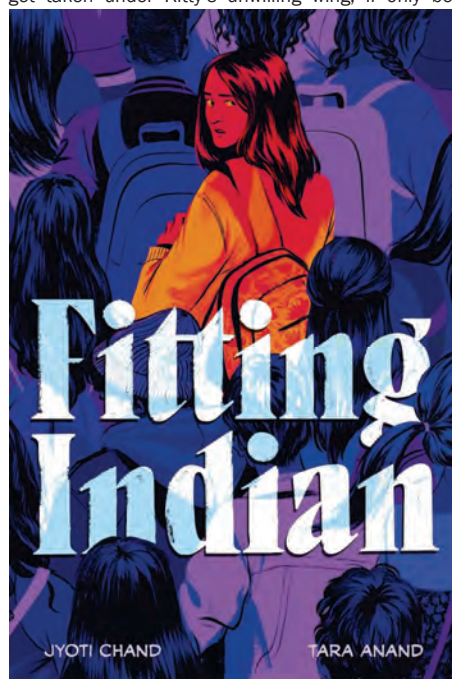


Yes, of course I'm reviewing our first item because there's puppies on the cover. Look at 'em! The Jack Russell is Pinky, personal pooch of our hero Tatsu, protagonist of *The Way of the House Husband* (Viz). As befitting the pet of a former gangster-turned-cook, Pinky has the nose for obscure foodstuffs, like the bracken herbs he discovers during a manhunt for a missing person. Said manhunt also introduces Daigoro, the Pomeranian police dog, and his handler, Hata. That's just one wacky incident among many in Volume 13, involving not just dogs but wild boars on the rampage, hoodlums ruling the rink through synchronized skating, "car camping" with dear old Dad, a famous chef who moonlighted as a hit-man, and finding just the right recipe for truly fluffy pancakes. Even by manga standards, the plot of *The Way...* is all over the place. But the art



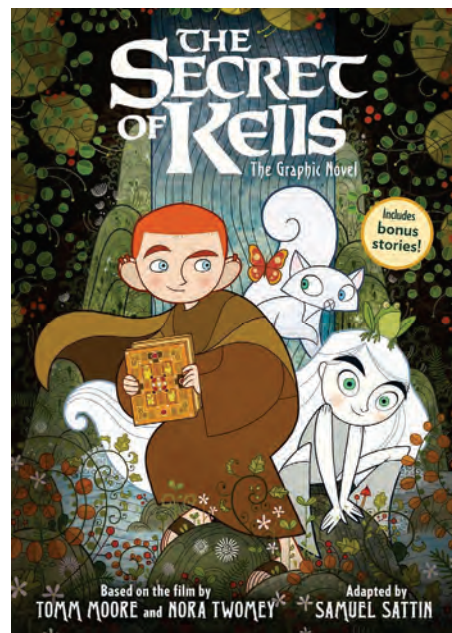
MEANWHILE

of creator **Kousuke Oono** is impeccable, with open, coherent layouts and a detailed realism that still maintains a playful quality. It's especially impressive given he's only been in the biz since 2016. *The Way of the House Husband* V13 is NEW in Central TEEN. Central, Eastside and Marksbury have the first compilation of the new X-series, *Exceptional X-men*. *Duty Calls*, but veteran X-man Kitty Pryde does not want to answer. Following the fall of Krakoa and the dispersal of mutants throughout a world that hates them even more than before, the former Shadowkat is determined to keep her head down. Destiny has other plans. No matter where she turns, Pryde finds herself helping a mutant in need. Three new kids—a gal who turns to metal when she's upset, a boy whose mood affects the people around him, and another girl with phasing powers not unlike Kitty's—get taken under Kitty's unwilling wing, if only be-



cause if she won't do it, Emma Frost will. The White Queen is not quietly sitting by while humanity wreaks its will upon mutantkind. Will the new kids learn how to be better people under the influence of Kitty Pryde...or better mutants under the instruction of Emma Frost? Another teenager torn between two worlds, Nitasha is pulled between the conservative, patriarchal lifestyle of her South Asian family and the all-American teenage wasteland of her high school friends. The strain gets to Nitasha. She begins drinking on the sly and cutting herself. Meanwhile, that cute boy at school seems to be warming to her. But one clumsy attempt to show him she's more than just "India" the immigrant chick exposes Nitasha to a world of hurt that shakes her family to its foundations. A semi-autobiographical work by **Jyoti Chand**, *Fitting Indian* addresses the impact old-fashioned expectations have on the mental health of immigrants, especially the women, and especially their Americanized children. Find *Fitting Indian* in the

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New TEEN section at all LPL locations. Another kid-vs-geezers conflict lies at the heart of *The Secret of Kells*. Boy monk Bendan is one the priests posted at the Abby of Kells. Like many monasteries, Kells has become a social hub supporting what culture there is in Medieval Ireland. It's also a fortress, a redoubt against the Northmen rampaging up and down the burning coasts of the Emerald Isle. So when a master illuminator shows up with a new book in hand, asking for help to finish it, the Abbot of Kells — and Brendan's uncle— tells him and his would-be apprentice Brendan to stop wasting his time with this artsy-fartsy nonsense. Then Brendan meets the fairy Aisling... A lovely adaptation of the animated feature, *The Secret of Kells* is available under J 741.5. Honestly, I ain't read *Predator* vs. *Black Panther*. Looks badass, though, doesn't it?



Back issues of 741.5 are available at www.lexpublib.org under the **READING SERVICES** tab!