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Doctor Spectrum: Full Spectrum TPB

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Synopsis

Spinning out of Supreme Power, hot newcomer Travel Foreman and Joe Straczynski’s handpicked writer, Sara "Samm" Barnes, bring to light the secret of Corporal Joe Ledger’s dark past, and the plans the crystal has for him!

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I am a big fan of J. Michael Straczynski & Gary Frank’s SUPREME POWER series, so I had high hopes for the miniseries DOCTOR SPECTRUM: FULL SPECTRUM. But my hopes were definitely not met. Don’t be fooled into thinking that FULL SPECTRUM provides essential insight into the events depicted in SUPREME POWER. Yes, it does provide background on Joe Ledger before the mysterious power crystal physically made itself a part of his life, but the events depicted in this story are fairly superfluous. Yeah, he had a tough life, and that’s about it... well, gee. By the end of the story, I didn’t feel that I understood anything more about Doctor Spectrum, the power crystal, or SUPREME POWER than I already did. Even then, it would have helped if Straczynksi and Frank could have handled this story, but they unfortunately farmed it out to Samm Barnes and Travel Foreman, who can’t keep up with the standard set by the series creators. FULL SPECTRUM can definitely be skipped - you won’t miss a thing.

Collecting the six issue Doctor Spectrum mini-series, this spin-off of J. Michael Straczynski’s Supreme Power reveals the dark past of Corporal Joe Ledger, a soldier who becomes bonded with

a mysterious and powerful crystal that arrived with the government brainwashed superhuman Hyperion when he crash landed on Earth as a child. Once the crystal bonds with Ledger, he goes into a lengthy coma, and as Joe endures an internal struggle, the powers that be outside decide what is more worth saving: Joe or the crystal? Writer Samm Barnes, who served as Straczynski's writing partner on the Strange mini-series and who he hand picked to write this series, does a solid job weaving a tale to coincide with the events of Supreme Power. Newcomer Travel Foreman's pencils do the job for the most part, but they are nothing compared to Gary Frank. That aside, this is still a great read, and for those who can't get enough of Supreme Power, this is definitely worth picking up.

J. Michael Straczynski's radical retooling of the Squadron Supreme, Supreme Power, has come off very well (with a few weak points), but this miniseries collected into a trade paperback seems almost entirely unnecessary. It's a very tired science fiction/comic book cliche: The protagonist falls into a coma/is trapped in a malfunctioning virtual reality world/falls under a spell/whatever, and has to face The Demons Of His Past. The plot device is a shortcut to developing a character, and like many shortcuts tends to often not be worth it. This book won some award at a Toronto comic book convention, so at least a few people liked it, but I would strongly recommend previewing it at your local comics shop before buying it. Much more worthy of purchase are the Nighthawk miniseries, by Daniel Way and Steve Dillon (very gory, very reminiscent of the work of Dillon's regular comics partner, Garth Ennis), and JMS' own Hyperion miniseries, which actually advances the plot of the Supreme Power series.

All but a few pages of the story take place in Ledger's head while he is unconscious. I imagine parts of this story may become relevant later on, but unless you're a completist you can probably skip this volume in the Squadron Supreme pantheon.

This side edition to the Squadron Supreme rewrite, gives a good insight into the psyche of Dr. Spectrum.

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