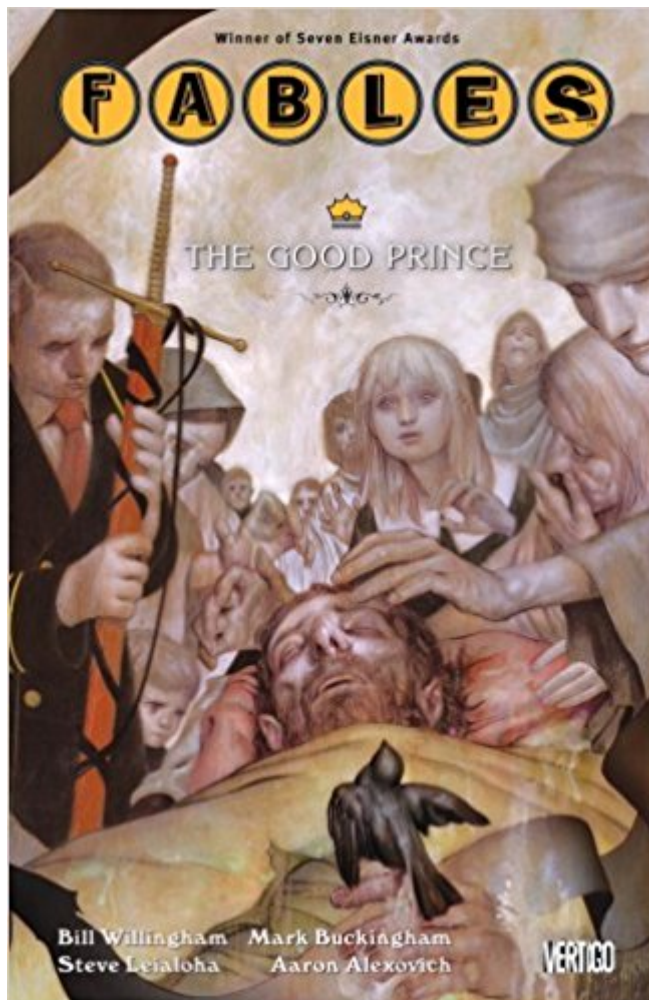


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Fables Vol. 10: The Good Prince



Synopsis

Collecting issues #60-69 of the hit series, collecting the epochal "Good Prince" storyline. Flycatcher is drawn into the spotlight as he discovers the startling truth about his own past as the Frog Prince. At the same time, he learns that the Adversary plans to destroy his foes once and for all. How can the meek Flycatcher stop this deadly foe?

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This long arc of the epical Fables continuum unfolds the story of how Fabletown janitor Flycatcher, who was a frog for a while, returns to the kingdom of which he was prince and sets up a haven within the Homelands for fables seeking refuge from the oppressive rule of the emperor and the Adversary. A haven, moreover, that is impregnable, for no armed violence may be done in it. A very satisfying arc made more so by the merry collateral tale that interrupts it, which is snappily drawn by Aaron Alexovich (Serenity Rose, 2005), a cuter, cartoonier artist than Fables' fine chief limner, Mark Buckingham. --Ray Olson

I thought by now I'd be over FABLES. I mean, Ten bound volumes, plus those Jack extras, etc. But no. It keeps me involved and interested and delighted. While the critique that this one is not sufficiently involved with evolving characterization rings true, we nevertheless get some revelations, we get a fun plot with a twist, we get a bit of humor, and we get a trip down to the Witching Well (which, come on, weren't you curious?) This installment, which harkens more to a traditional hero's journey, a more traditional fable, in this case, Flycatcher's redemptive journey, fills that bill nicely.

We see tormented Flycatcher take the reins of his destiny--and, naturally, magic is afoot. His journey twines with that of the Forsworn Knight (another recurring background character who has been tickling curiosity out of me from the start). The two find a way to heal wounds, make amends, and do good. It will affect both the exiles and the homelands. It's certainly gonna tick off the Big Baddie puppetmaker. Characterization quibbles aside, and even the complaint that this too easily solves a great portion of the war build-up---well, I'm gonna give the writers credit that they'll find a way to up the stakes, despite what happens here. This is a story of redemptions, heroism, self-sacrifice, and reaping the rewards of virtue (or the just desserts of baddiness). It's got a happy ending (which I love), and it gives a message of seeking ways other than traditional warfare to bring a resolution (at least in part) and solve problems for the greater community. That's a good lesson. Although, naturally, it's easier done when one has magical armor, Excalibur, and a band of special fighters not limited to traditional means. (Okay, so maybe that does dilute the pacifistic point. Heh.) There's even a nifty ecological message in the climactic battle. All in all, a wonderful addition to the ongoing storyline of FABLES. I love this series. Top-notch stuff. Can't wait to get #11 to add to my collection. Mir

Ok, I buy these as I can afford them and admittedly I sometimes forget some details of what I have already read, especially from volumes 1-3, but I think this could be the best one so far. I love how they took such a timid and quiet side character like Flycatcher and turned him into a hero. I enjoyed getting to see some characters that have passed on in earlier stories. Most of the time you're ripping your hair out, because it seems like the Empire is always one step ahead. Unfortunately for them, the tables were turned in this one! It seemed Frau Tokenkinder, Flycatcher and Prince Charming were all one step ahead this time. It also made me cheer on Fly more, because coincidentally I had just previously read 1001 nights of Snowfall in which we saw the horrible truth of what happened to his family. I just ordered volume 11 and I can't wait to see how this story continues.

First, there was Boy Blue's arse-kicking incursion, which resulted in who knows how many casualties for the Adversary (see~ Â Fables Vol. 6: Homelands). Then, Bigby Wolf's secret retaliatory strike at the heart of the Adversary's Empire (see~ Â Fables Vol. 8: Wolves). Now, as the end caption of issue #60 reads: "Single-handedly invading the Homelands. Third time's a charm." It's Prince Ambrose's turn. Except that he doesn't do this single-handedly. (Catching up on this amazing title, for those who need it: FABLES scribe Bill Willingham imagines characters from myth, folklore, and fairy tales as real people who long ago were driven from their Homelands by the

monstrous Emperor. These days, these folks live among us, inhabiting a piece of Manhattan's Upper West Side even as they hide their true nature from us. As we come up to this story arc, things have come to a head between these denizens of Fabletown and the Emperor. The stench of war taints the air - or maybe it's just smog, I dunno.)

SOME SPOILERS NOW.

THE GOOD PRINCE recounts one of the most moving story arcs Bill Willingham has ever produced for **FABLES**, not to mention one of the most epic, taking up almost a whole year to chronicle. If you're at all any fan of Flycatcher, then you're gonna soar to the moon because he becomes the central character for a good while. From the start of the **FABLES** series, Flycatcher's been one of its recurring ancillary characters. We don't know too much of him, other than he's the Frog Prince of the famous fairy tale, but that he's lost the awful memories of his family being slaughtered. In Fabletown, this unassuming guy's been reduced to perennial custodial status, thanks largely to Bigby, who was looking out for him (there's a good reason). But, recently, Flycatcher, a prince whose real name is Ambrose, has had his painwracked memories restored to him and this becomes the catalyst for **THE GOOD PRINCE** cycle. And, so, after weeks of near catatonic despondency and after some straightening out by Ride and his best friend Boy Blue, Fly finally sets out to do big things in memory of his massacred family. By the time Flycatcher's epic story concludes, he'll have gained a haunted kingdom and played a key role in Fabletown's upcoming struggle against the Emperor and the Homelands.

Working thru a kind of magical intuition, Flycatcher gathers a curious assembly to him, comprising in part of characters we thought we'd never see again. His right hand man is a once glorious knight in need of redemption (that enough of a clue?). Two deceased Fabletown villains return, as well as a recent traitor. Flycatcher begins his quest with a harrowing journey thru the dead lands within the Wishing Well, this being the path he chooses to return to the Homelands. Once there, he means to establish a kingdom, as a refuge for those subjects unwilling to live under the Adversary's iron rule. This act of rebellion doesn't at all pass unnoticed, and so very soon the Emperor is deploying various armies to Flycatcher's tiny kingdom of Haven. Except that Flycatcher doesn't believe in the brutality and horror of war. Even though he now wields the legendary sword in the stone. He finds another way.

FABLES Vol. 10: THE GOOD PRINCE collects issues #60-69, including the nine chapters of "The Good Prince." As well, there's an interlude issue (#64), very welcome because we get to check in with the Wolf household as my homie Bigby, Snow, and the cubs celebrate the cubs' fifth birthdays. This story also marks the children at last finding out about their invisible brother, Ghost. Aaron Alexovich's cute, lighthearted artwork definitely shifts away from the solemn mood of Fly's storyline. Meanwhile, Prince Charming and his inner circle have learned of the Emperor's intent to war with Fabletown. And, so, Willingham also presents cutaway segments

devoted to Fabletown as it girds for war, with its residents undertaking various combat training (including sniper school). This is a really terrific read. THE GOOD PRINCE ranks very much up there as one of my favorite FABLES stories. This is the tenth TPB, covering sixty-nine issues, and writer Bill Willingham just keeps it going. There's a richness and depth here which is rarely found in other comic book titles. Guy makes you care for his cast of characters. He's so good at this that he had me totally absorbed with Flycatcher, that odd, formerly negligible dude with the mop and the frog cap. Also engrossing are the passages which dwell on Fabletown's gearing up for war, the meticulous plannings and the meetings that went into it. Meantime, longtime workhorses and respective penciller and inker Mark Buckingham and Steve Leialoha not only provide continuity in the visuals but, as a bonus, this trade also reproduces James Jean's fabulously ethereal covers to this run of FABLES. One very intriguing tongue-in-cheek aspect in all this is Fly's asking the magic mirror to keep his friends apprised of his doings. This results in Fly's exploits suddenly becoming a must-see TV event for the Fabletown community - Willingham's pretty cool nudge at the ribs at reality television. Another thing I like about THE GOOD PRINCE is that Flycatcher, while having come up the world in a big way, at his core remains the same unassuming cat we've come to know. I love the coda, which has Fly donning his old hat for old times' sake - a moment of respite to go out on, as the big bad war looms over the fables.

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