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Marc Silvestri, Jay Faerber

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Marc Silvestri, Jay Faerber : Strykeforce before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Strykeforce:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Strykeforce - the old roster and the new; the good art anchors the two series By H. BalaThree, maybe three and a half stars for this trade. What can I say? It is what it is. Back in the early '90s when Image Comics was mostly all about flaunting the big guns, the swoll beefcake and the scantily clad babes, titles like CYBERFORCE were the norm. CYBERFORCE, which also fell under the auspices of creator Marc

Silvestri's Top Cow banner, was popular enough that it spun off another series, CODENAME: STRYKEFORCE. In this one, Cyberforce member Stryker occasionally gathered a band of mutants to take on highly perilous (but very lucrative) mercenary gigs. CODENAME: STRYKEFORCE didn't last too long, I think 14 issues before cancellation. In 2003, writer Jay Faerber and artist Tyler Kirkham got the nod to relaunch the series, this time titled simply STRYKEFORCE. This trade collects CODENAME: STRYKEFORCE #0-3 and STRYKEFORCE #1-5. It's recommended that you start with the second half of this trade, as that's comprised of the CODENAME: STRYKEFORCE issues, which, timeline-wise, precede the STRYKEFORCE story arc. Extra stuff includes Jay Faerber's foreword, a cover gallery, and a few sketches, including Tyler Kirkham's drawing of Stryker (which got Kirkham the pencilling gig for STRYKEFORCE). CODENAME: STRYKEFORCE focuses muchly on Major Morgan Stryker, he of the four arms (three on his right side) and the hard-charging disposition. Stryker is ex-Special Forces, is a member of Cyberforce, and at times the leader of Strykeforce, that team for hire. Thing is, writer/creator Marc Silvestri peoples this series with weak characters, a few of whom are too reminiscent of other, more popular superheroes. This first incarnation of Strykeforce consist of Blood Bow (the cocky archer), Tempest (mistress of the wind), Phade (who can become intangible), Icarus (dude flies), and the grim and silent Kill Razor (he can grow bladed weapons from his body). My favorite character is Black Anvil, the very short, near invulnerable, super strong obsidian mutant, who's a thrill seeker and whose real name is Percy. He's very cool. And his head is shaped like an anvil. The story doesn't try to be clever or witty or whatever (well, actually, it does try to be all those, but - no). Marc Silvestri (with an assist from Mike Heisler and apparently from Marc's brother, Eric, although the trade doesn't credit him at all) doesn't wrack the brain too hard coming up with the plot. The storytelling formula seems to fall back on mindless violence, preferably followed with more mindless violence, and then maybe a TA shot. Nuanced storylines and character development were elbowed aside, back in the Image glory days. So, if you can blank your brain and soak in the big-gun-toting actionfest, then it ain't that bad. Issue #0 is the origin story and has Stryker agreeing to help out an old bud. As such, he assembles a rough lineup of superpowered misfits, in mind of a rescue mission in a banana republic nation. There's betrayal. And gunplay. And plenty of fatalities. Blah blah blah. Issues #1-3: Strykeforce, in attempting to extract kidnapped dignitaries being held in a colossal submarine, tangles with the supervillain Death's Angel. Death's Angel has vague plans of ruling the world and he holds sway over an army of minions. His notion of severance pay for his minions is vaguely humorous. But as a world-class big bad, this guy comes of generic stock. He's kind of got a cool look, but that's about it. A sense of hard-bitten callousness permeates this series. There's a smidgen of loyalty among the Strykeforce members, but the overriding concern seems to be the mission at hand. This probably has to do with Stryker serving as the main point-of-view person, and this dude is hard-core. Several characters die, with their passing reacted to with fleeting regret and then it's back to work. As Stryker says by way of epitaph to a recently shot down Strykeforce member: "In this business, mistakes kill you... I did my job. Sorry, kid." In the comics media, a lackluster story every now and then can be overcome with great artwork. And that's what happens here. The art in CODENAME: STRYKEFORCE happens to be darn decent, providing you remember that Image's house style back then preferred a nonstop barrage of ridiculously misproportioned yahoos and hooahas... and massive weaponry. Anthony Winn (issue #0) Brandon Peterson (#1-3) accordingly fall in line. So then we get to the second series STRYKEFORCE, and writer Jay Faerber switches the roster up. Of the old guard, only Stryker (still very much the By-God-You-Will-Fall-In-Line-Or-Else sort of boss) and Black Anvil (suddenly a lot shorter) are left. Faerber unveils four new characters: Killawatt (generator of bioelectricity), the intense Tia Kitana (whose tattoo becomes a sword), Lift (telekinetic con man), and Sly (cloaking powers, although she has to be naked to properly sneak around). I must say that Faerber's writing comes off more smoothly than the fellas' in CODENAME: STRYKEFORCE, and Faerber also injects several intriguing sub-plots. Firstly, this series now has that A-Team vibe, what with the team on the run from the federales. Secondly, there's a double agent in the midst, although this traitor is actually conflicted in allegiance. Issue #1 opens with yet another rescue mission, this time in the Peruvian jungles, and as usual the team has to shoot its way out (Is it me, or have their infiltration skills always sucked?). The Strykeforce-as-outlaws sub-plot is then introduced, as the FBI grills the rescued as to their rescuers. The main story arc comes into play when the team is then hired to locate a missing 8-year-old boy. It soon dawns on the mercs that there's more going on with this case than first assumed. Else, why would a gang of cybernetically enhanced goons suddenly ambush Stryker as he follows up on clues? It's a good story, which would lead to Strykeforce pulling a con and Black Anvil playing drunk, and then to capture and escape and then a big, snarling throwdown with a monster mutant. Tyler Kirkham's dynamic pencils and his composition skills lend an energy and an immediacy to the story. Like Brandon Peterson, Kirkham likes to roam beyond the panel borders. And while I've always liked Stryker's character design, Tyler Kirkham's take on him is an improvement. And, hey, there are still the big guns, the improbable mass of muscles, and the TA shots. It is what it is. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Love it! By Hugo H S If you are into the 90's superhero kind of Comics, you SHOULD buy this. 2 series compilation about Strikeforce, Cyberforce's spin off. Love it!

Top Cow's original 1994 Codename: Strykeforce series by comics superstars Marc Silvestri and Brandon Peterson combines with the 2003 Strykeforce series from writer Jay Faerber and rising artistic star Tyler Kirkham in this

massive paperback.