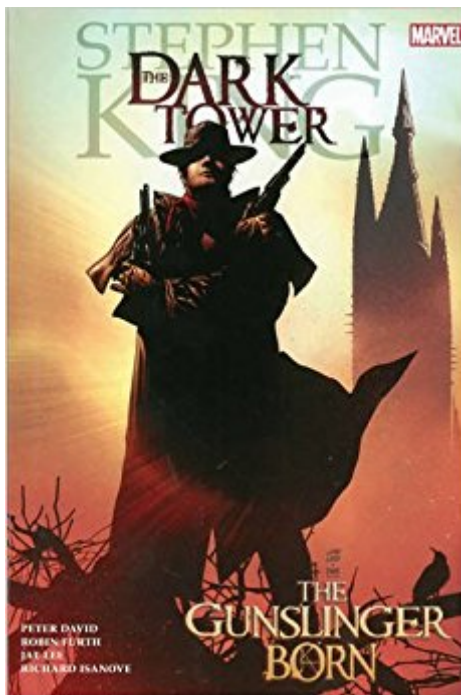


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# Dark Tower: The Gunslinger Born



## Synopsis

'The man in black fled across the desert, and the gunslinger followed.' With those words, millions of readers were introduced to Stephen King's Roland ' an implacable gunslinger in search of the enigmatic Dark Tower, powering his way through a dangerous land filled with ancient technology and deadly magic. Now, in a comic book personally overseen by King himself, Roland's past is revealed! Sumptuously drawn by Jae Lee and Richard Isanove, adapted by long-time Stephen King expert, Robin Furth (author of Stephen King's *The Dark Tower: A Concordance*), and scripted by New York Times Bestseller Peter David, this series delves in depth into Roland's origins ' the perfect introduction to this incredibly realized world; while long-time fans will thrill to adventures merely hinted at in the novels. Be there for the very beginning of a modern classic of fantasy literature! Collecting *DARK TOWER: THE GUNSLINGER BORN #1-7*. All characters featured in this issue and the distinctive names and likenesses thereof, and all related indicia are trademarks of Stephen King.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"The man in black fled across the desert, and the gunslinger followed." With those words, millions of readers were introduced to Stephen King's Roland - an implacable gunslinger in search of the enigmatic Dark Tower, powering his way through a dangerous land filled with ancient technology and deadly magic. Now, in a comic book personally overseen by King himself, Roland's past is revealed! Sumptuously drawn by Jae Lee and Richard Isanove, adapted by long-time Stephen King expert Robin Furth (author of Stephen King's *The Dark Tower: A Concordance*) and scripted by

New York Times bestseller Peter David, this series delves in depth into Roland's origins - the perfect introduction to this incredibly realized world; while long-time fans will thrill to adventures merely hinted at in the novels. Be there for the very beginning of a modern classic of fantasy literature! Collects Dark Tower: The Gunslinger Born #1-7. Questions for The Dark Tower Illustrators, Peter David and Robin Furth .com: How closely did you work with Stephen King on this project? Peter David: Robin worked far more closely with Steve before the fact, as it were, working out the overall story arcs and beats. My association was more after the fact: I wrote the scripting, which then went to King who provided the line edits and tweaks. Robin Furth: I've been working with Steve King (and Roland!) for about seven years now, so the three of us have quite a long history. While working on The Gunslinger Born, I ran my outlines by Steve King and Chuck Verrill (Steve's editor) at the same time that I ran them by our Marvel editors. After all, The Dark Tower is Steve's child so it's only right for him to have first dibs on any changes. I feel it's really important that Steve has final say about The Long Road Home. Hence, I always try to make sure he sees everything as soon as I can send drafts to him, and that includes the articles I write and which are at the end of each issue. Steve has been really supportive of this whole project which has been great. I was lucky enough to be with Steve while he looked through some of Jae's early sketches for The Gunslinger Born and his reaction was a lot like mine; it felt as though somebody had reached into his imagination and had taken his characters and given them a physical existence. I think that's pretty high praise, don't you? .com: Roland is one of the most iconic characters King has ever created. How hard was it to get him (and the other characters) "right" on the page? Did any iterations get vetoed by King? Robin Furth: We were really lucky with The Gunslinger Born because we could adapt scenes directly from Wizard and Glass. We could really stick to Steve's descriptions. (Occasionally we dipped into other Dark Tower novels, but on the whole, Wizard and Glass was our template.) The Long Road Home was a little more complicated since we spun the story from scattered tales that Roland tells about his youth; stories that are found throughout the Dark Tower books. (As you can imagine, I used my Concordance quite a lot while I was working on the outlines!) To tell the truth, Roland has such a strong personality that he feels almost human. I even dream about the guy, and once or twice I swear I've seen his shadow pacing past my writing room door. (No joke.) But even when it comes to writing about someone you know well, every person has their own perspective. As long as Steve King feels like we've caught Roland's youthful self, I'm happy. If longtime Dark Tower fans feel we have, then I'll be INCREDIBLY happy. So far Steve has been pleased with our approach. Fingers crossed that the fans will feel the same

way! Peter David: King was very supportive of the license we took in terms of both the story compression and narrative stylizations that Robin and I undertook that were required to take a work of such massive scope and transform it into something that works as a graphic series. .com: What was the most challenging aspect of this particular project? Peter David: For me? Stage fright. Steve had stated that, as "a words guy," he was awaiting the scripts with great anticipation. That's pretty daunting, knowing that Stephen King is going to be going over my interpretation of what is arguably his most personal work. Robin Furth: I suppose the biggest challenge has always been (in Mid-World speak) to stand true. In other words, to remain true to our original mission and to translate the Dark Tower universe from novel form to comic book form. The Dark Tower universe is so big that we have to do a lot of condensing. It's both scary and exhilarating. .com: Robin, I imagine it is challenging to fit a several thousand page series into a graphic novel. As the DT aficionado, was it hard to adapt this series? What parts of the book did you wish you could include but had to cut because it just wouldn't fit? Robin Furth: It certainly has been challenging (you should see the state of my fingernails), but it has also been a really great experience. I have learned huge amounts about comics and about storytelling. I have always loved Roland, Alain, Cuthbert, and Susan so it has been wonderful to work with them again. There's something very moving about working with young Roland; the boy who grew into such a hard and (at times) unforgiving man. You see the wounds that later become calluses, if you know what I mean. As for the parts of the book I had to cut; there are many! When we first started working on these comics, The Gunslinger Born was supposed to be six issues long. I handed in eight issues! In the end we managed to cut back to seven, which worked well. In retrospect, I guess the greatest challenge has been to know when to stick to the plot of Wizard and Glass and when to borrow from other books (or occasionally even other parts of the Dark Tower universe) in order to fill out Mid-World for those who don't know the novels, or to make the comics ring true for long-term fans. That takes a lot of careful planning and sometimes it means taking risks, but if it works it's really worth it. .com: Peter, What was it like to work with Robin and King on this project? Have you worked closely with writers before on adaptations of their work? Peter David: It was both exciting and daunting: exciting being part of something as ambitious and potentially groundbreaking as this endeavor, and daunting in that King is a writing god whom I desperately wanted to please with my interpretations. No, I've never worked with a writer adapting his work before, which is why this was new territory for me: And what a place to start, huh? It's difficult to imagine any subsequent experience with adapting someone's work measuring up to this. .com: What is your favorite panel? Robin Furth: I must say I like them all, so I don't know if I could choose. However Jae

recently sent me the cover for the first issue of *The Long Road Home*, and I think that would be in my top ten! Peter David: I'm torn on that. In terms of story narrative, the one where Roland and Susan give in to their passion. In terms of pure iconic power, that two-page spread early on where we first see Roland, as the gunslinger, in pursuit of the man in black. You never have a second chance to make a good first impression, and Jae and Richard just absolutely nailed it.

Signature  
Reviewed by Paul Pope This comics adaptation (including prequel) of King's *Dark Tower: The Gunslinger Born* follows the early days of the Gunslinger, Roland Deschain. For the first hundred pages or so, you think you're in the old American West, until we come across a landscape littered with rusted oil rigs and vintage WW2 Panzer tanks. This sort of future-past otherworldliness typifies Roland's experience as he begins his quest as a teenage cross between Malory's Lancelot and Sergio Leone's *Man with No Name*. He and his young friends, high-born sons of the landowning political cadre called the Affiliation, are student-apprentices in a sect of knights bearing an arcane code of ethics, who must undergo strict training in order to bear the title Gunslinger. Early on, Roland earns the title Gunslinger by overcoming his teacher in a masterful fight sequence. Eventually, Roland and a group of fellow Gunslingers are sent to spy on the evil John Farson. Pretty soon, things get medieval. Maidens in distress appear, as do sadistic bad guys, witches and a weird monster called the Thinny. The Gunslinger's world is a weird hodge-podge of 1066 Hastings, 1865 Appomattox and 1941 Warsaw – and in places the mélange is quite exciting. Still, a lot of *The Gunslinger Born*'s plot is unclear and the prose purple. Characters walk on and walk off, communicating in monotonous speeches wedged between scenes of murder and torture. The requisite love affair between Roland and young Susan Delgado is a bit passionless, and there's very little mirth; emotional ranges stretch from grimacing endurance to abject misery. Writer/adaptor Peter David turns some nice phrases in a sort of sub-Faulknerian style, but the wordiness slows the action. At times, artist Jae Lee and colorist Richard Isanove are left with little to do other than create static pinup pages to accompany the prose. Nevertheless, there is a palpable charisma embedded in *The Gunslinger Born* – you can tell everyone involved is having a blast. Lee's drawings are smoothly rendered and realistic, yet sensually illustrative, and his art has never seemed so warm. And there's a touch of legendary underground comics artists Richard Corbin and Frank Frazetta in Isanove's palettes. *The Gunslinger Born* is the perfect starting point for those who think comics contain nothing but men in spandex costumes and masks. If it hooks new readers, that's good enough for me. Paul Pope is the artist/writer of the Eisner Award-winning graphic novel *Batman Year 100* (DC Comics) and *Pulp Hope: The Art of Paul Pope*, recently published by

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Marvel put this hardcover together Great! It's a nicely done dust cover that slips off to reveal a beautiful brown leather looking (not leather tho as far as I know) hard cover. 5 out of 5 stars for that. The art work is great, although most sections are backgroundless, so you get a different feel for the environments that the story should be depicting, most of the backgrounds are just smokey looking and changes the whole feel for the story (as compared to Stephen King's written story, which this volume covers Roland's Story of his past that he told his companions/ka-tet in the book Wizzard and Glass book 4 of the Dark Tower series.) so for art I would give it 4 out of 5 stars, it's amazingly done but I just don't like how it changes the environments by not having backgrounds. Now, the biggest problem with this that I found, which is the only reason I gave it 3 stars, was Robin Furth RUINS the whole story line. A lot of people say she knows more about Dark Tower than Stephen King himself, she wrote a great commentary for the novel series, but I wish she would have been kept off of this project for Gunslinger Born. She changes key parts of the story, she changes character personalities for the worst, she just over all ruins the story (which was drawn out, and slow to start in the novel, but over all a great story in the Novel Wizzard and Glass by Stephen King) And aside from what ruinous changes Robbins Furth made to the story, Marvel cut it too short, they gave this story basically the same length as they gave the extremely short story of the battle of Tull, found in the first book the Gunslinger by Stephen King. This story arc of gunslinger born deserved at least 5 volumes preferably 6 with 30-32 issues in order to fully tell the story with all its aspects of mystery suspense and its large catalog of characters, as well as the love story aspect involved in this. Everything is rushed and massive parts of the story are skipped over. For the story I give it 2 out of 5 stars. (almost went with 1 star :-/). But over all, I am glad I bought it, and also glad I bought the omnibus set as well as the next volume The Long Road Home, and I still plan on collecting the rest of this series. I plan to buy the rest of the volumes as well as the second Omnibus and also hope they turn the 3rd set in this series, drawing of the 3, into another omnibus. If you're a collector of Stephen King, or just Dark Tower it's nice to have. So far I've only read this volume and should be getting my Omnibus and the next volume tomorrow in the mail, I'm excited for that as well as the rest of the story in the Second Omnibus and its volumes. I hope the story's following Gunslinger Born is better than this one, and I expect they will be, because their telling smaller stories in the volumes after this one. I know Marvel did an excellent series when they did the Stand (but Robin Furth wasn't a part of that lol).

Stephen King is a favorite author of mine and this entire series showed him exploring and stretching his writing abilities as the narrative progressed. Usually I tend to think of author's in niche genres and to read these as King went about working layers into his story was an absolute pleasure. A few times I balked at choices he made to progress the story and I believe it was because his choices were original. He blended genres. His references were blatant and subtle. He wrote in a late 1900's timeline through it all. He wrote the story hand over fist and it was interesting to read his almost weary accounting in the afterwords of fans hounding him about the plot book after book. I was sucked in by King's efforts to bring us a multi-verse filled with all the adventures and all the characters he cast. Sucked in enough to buy books two at a time because I didn't want to stop reading. What he accomplished was amazing and this is a series I will definitely re-read after my siblings finish them. If you are on the fence about dropping a few bucks for these books, know that they are worth every penny.

I'm not a Stephen King fan, only because I don't like the genre. But, these books are completely different. The Dark Tower series is incredible and addictive. It is our generation's Lord of the Rings. Book One is slow going. But, after that, the books just keep getting better. The story takes so many amazing turns. It draws the reader in and holds them. I read the entire series back-to-back. And, now that I'm done, all I can say is...Wow! I will be reading these again in a couple of years.

I really liked the story/ journey an awful lot. The characters, plot, plot twists, and even the way it melded real life, other Stephen King books/ stories and Stephen King himself. What I didn't like was the cruel ending. I didn't need a happy ending, but this ending is even worse than Roland not ever reaching the Tower. By retuning him to the point in his life that the author has with no memory of the journey, he's destined to repeat the decisions, mistakes both good and bad and so will each character he encounters/encountered. Truly cruel and without mercy. The writer could have at least retuned him to. Baby, boy, or adolescent. I don't plan on recommending the Dark Tower series. If asked, I'll say I enjoyed the journey. If asked to recommend reading it, I'll tell them you choose, and "reader" beware".

After, a year of almost non-stop reading the 7 Dark Tower books, I finished #7 yesterday. What a journey! There were tears, there was laughter, there was adventure, there was tenderness, love, heroism and villiany, and, of course, no surprise in Stephen King yarns, there were many surprises.

I lived with the ka-tet. It will be hard to no longer be a part of it. Life without the pursuit of the Dark Tower? I suppose I have no choice. If you haven't read them, I envy you the adventure that awaits you. Make the commitment, dive in. You will not regret it.

A decent book to end the story arc. Better than Song of Susannah, but not as good as Wolves (or the first four books for that matter). Most likely, you will not be happy/satisfied with the original ending Sai King provided for this book. His publisher required he add a 'second ending', which King dares you to ignore. To honor the authors wishes, I have done just that, but I will go back and read that second ending the day King leaves the path and steps into the clearing.

I have just finished the entire Dark Tower series, and this last book was the best! I am already missing Roland, Eddie, Jake, Suzannah and of course, Oy. It was a great adventure and let's hope Stephen King will someday write a continuation of this great adventure!

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