

Why do you read the Avengers? Is it something about the assemblage of mighty, yet grounded, heroes who must band together despite their unlikely commonalities to fight back overwhelming evil? Good news! CA & the MA exemplifies the Avengers spirit. Moreover, it does so with a tone that's both classic and modern, making it one of my favorite reads. This issue takes the plot threads that had been weaving through the previous issues and begin to tie them together. The main villain (or should I say villainous organization) stands revealed at last, and the heroes may now have a clue on how to fight back, thanks to a reinvigoration of a key character. What this also does is address a weakness to CA & the MA's writing: where in the past the book struggled to balance the "screentime" of its plots, its characters in focus, this issue (and the previous) seem to give the entire team active participation in the story. Granted, for some it's because they've been transformed into grotesque purple monsters, so maybe that's why? It's also because the various set pieces are beginning to coalesce. The heroes are all involved one way or another and can now be focused on the singular villain, the Beyond Corporation, for the finale of our story arc later. Spectrum gets the final splash page here, and fans of the cult-fave Nextwave will be overjoyed. That quirky comicbook by Warren Ellis and Stuart Immonen is almost so out of left field that it could just as easily be read as happening outside of regular Marvel Universe continuity, but now it seems official. There's still some mystery about how, exactly, this all fits together, and why Spectrum has buried her memories (indeed, part of her identity) because of it. This could play into some of the themes Ewing has been throwing around-- about the power of symbol and belief. Since it was mostly in the previous issue #9, however, perhaps philosophy skips the even numbers. What is more palpable is the tone, which is a pervading sense of dread and horror. After all, glimpsing the Beyond Corporation makes your face fall off somehow, which is just unsettling. The monsters that are tied to the B.C.'s plot are pretty much vampires, too, converting their victims into more grotesque horrors. But as fun as the story is, sometimes the pieces can feel incongruous if you stare at them too much. The Nazi scientists with the Cortex company in the beginning speak with stereotypical dialogue and drop lines like "poopy head." Whereas this parody might be fine for Nextwave, it feels dismissive and silly for CA & the MA. In fact you get the word "poop" twice in one book, thanks to some attempt to make Spider-Man funny but not funny at the same time. (What's with the nonsequiter of Hungry Hungry Hippos? First rule of humor is don't force it.) Luke Ross continues with art, but as always it's pretty basic. Overall, I find his art flat, usually with little sense of space. On the first page, the size relationships between the scientist and CEO feel off, not just in proportion but by the way they also seem to occupy the same flat plane. Sometimes it doesn't matter, but in a fight scene it's kind of important. Like on page 8, when all the monsters are shown as the "freaky-deaky monster team," they all seem to occupy a two-dimensional plane. Yes, I know the page is a 2D object, but there is no sense of line weight, size, or shape that helps us think of the 3D space they occupy. It also doesn't help that the monster designs are fairly generic. At least Mace and Quickfire look different enough, but everyone ends up kind of looking like Quickfire, making it difficult to parse the visuals when reading. Some of the panel choices are good, though, in particular the way the Beyond Corporation gets jumbled up in an unreal space and the panel grid is similarly rounded and flowing. Finally, as a fan of Monica Rambeau from her time in the Avengers as Captain Marvel, I was among those smiling with excitement with the last page: "Well. Auntie Monica's not #\$\$@% laughing." The post Captain America & the Mighty Avengers #6 appeared first on Weekly Comic Book Review.

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