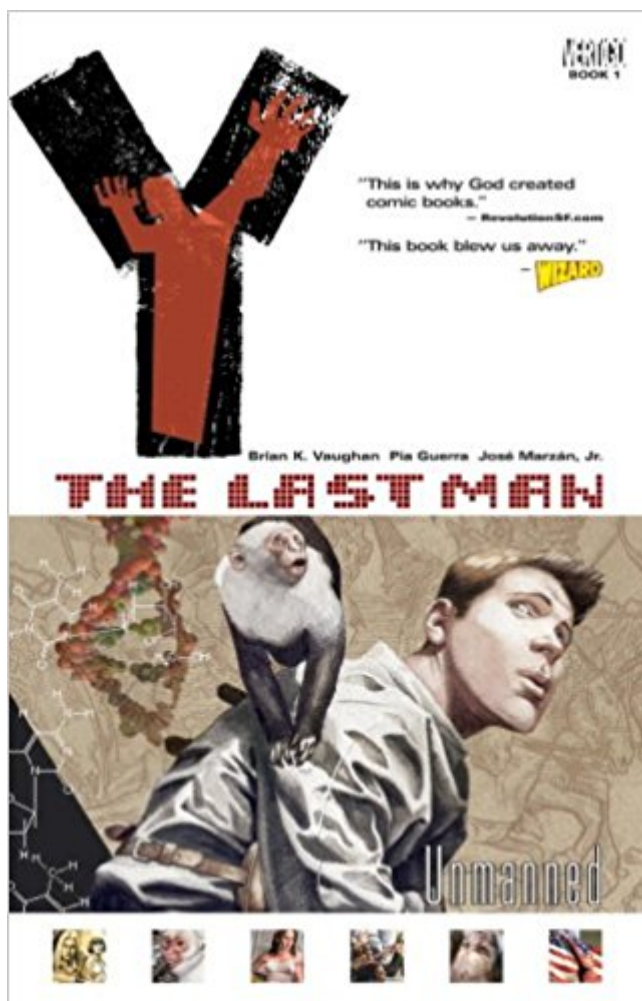


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Y: The Last Man, Vol. 1: Unmanned



Synopsis

"Funny and scary" — an utterly believable critique of society. A+ — THE WASHINGTON POST "The best graphic novel I've ever read." — STEPHEN KING "This year's best movie is a comic book." — "ALL THINGS CONSIDERED," — NPR "A seriously funny, nuanced fable.... Grade A." — ENTERTAINMENT WEEKLY: THE LAST MAN, winner of three Eisner Awards and one of the most critically acclaimed, best-selling comic books series of the last decade, is that rare example of a page-turner that is at once humorous, socially relevant and endlessly surprising. Written by Brian K. Vaughan (LOST, PRIDE OF BAGHDAD, EX MACHINA) and with art by Pia Guerra, this is the saga of Yorick Brown — the only human survivor of a planet-wide plague that instantly kills every mammal possessing a Y chromosome. Accompanied by a mysterious government agent, a brilliant young geneticist and his pet monkey, Ampersand, Yorick travels the world in search of his lost love and the answer to why he's the last man on earth.

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Customer Reviews

Yorick Brown is an escape artist; has a fabulous girlfriend who's traveling in Australia; and possesses a genetic make-up that's allowed him to survive a plague that killed every male being on the planet except for him and his pet monkey. Yorick is the last man on earth, and in the resulting chaos, he must find a way to help save the human race. At least that's what the (now all-female) government thinks. Yorick would prefer to find his girlfriend, but it's hard to get a flight halfway around the world when almost all the pilots and mechanics are gone. It's hard enough to drive down the block, since the streets are jammed with the cars of men who were behind the wheel when the

instantaneous plague hit. Furthermore, the entire social fabric has gone to hell, with gun-wielding wives of Republican representatives insisting on getting their husbands' seats and tribes of latter-day s claiming males were meant to die. Since Yorick's mother is a congresswoman, he's protected by secret spies. And his escape skills come in handy when he's trapped first by a marauding garbage-woman and then by his mother, as she tries to keep him from doing anything stupid. Meanwhile, who are the mysterious Israeli soldiers who seem so gratified by the situation, and why is Yorick's sister so intent on joining the s? With clean lines and muted colors, Guerra and MarzÃ n invoke a frighteningly believable future; their vision of the surprise and horror to come is so beautifully ordinary, it's entirely convincing-and addictive. Copyright 2003 Reed Business Information, Inc.

A mysterious plague has killed every man on earth except Yorick Brown, who was somehow spared. That is the provocative premise of the comics series whose first five issues make up this book. The sole Y-chromosomed survivor is an amiable, headstrong young man, the son of a U.S. congresswoman and, as it happens, an amateur escape artist. He spends most of the story on the run from a tribe of self-styled s bent on eliminating the last vestige of patriarchy. He is also trying, with a bioengineer who may be responsible for the worldwide "gendercide," to figure out why he survived; hoping to reach his girlfriend in Australia; and, of course, contemplating the repopulation of the planet. Rather pedestrian artwork doesn't do much to liven the story, though its straightforwardness imparts deadpan believability to such ramifications as the female secretary of agriculture ascending to the presidency. Fast-paced anyway, the yarn introduces a large number of intriguing characters and plotlines as it lays the groundwork for what promises to be a compelling series. Gordon FlaggCopyright Ã © American Library Association. All rights reserved

Authors have been writing stories about societies ruled by one gender (ok, mostly just ruled by women) for decades. In one of his earliest acclaimed works, Brian K. Vaughn devoted what seems to be a massive amount of time to this exact question. The titular 'Y' in this story is Yorrick Brown. An amateur magician and literary student, he is the only man (along with his pet monkey) to survive a mysterious plague that rapidly wipes out every other male of any species on the planet. He is far from the only character in this series however, as a good 3/4's of the plot is devoted to the female politicians, doctors, EMT's, and special forces that remain in the world. Needless to say, the wide depth of characters is easily the best aspect of this story. Dialogue is also a strength in this series. Vaughn can be both witty and emotive with his turns of phrase, and he has crammed in a boatload

of statistics about women, the government, and all sorts of random trivia. This can occasionally become too obvious, but it's not a huge problem. The one weakness in this story is the monkey, Ampersand. He causes nothing but problems and should have, at the very least, been tossed into a cage a long time ago. Hopefully this comes under control in the next volume.

Y: The Last Man is a 10-volume graphic novel collection about what would happen if an unexplained plague wiped out every male on earth, animals and human alike, in a heartbeat. The premise of this story is that two males were inexplicably spared: a young man named Yorick Brown, amateur escape artist and generally something of a loser, and a capuchin monkey. The primary plotline is concerned with how to keep Yorick alive long enough to figure out just why he survived and whether that information can be used to help repopulate the earth, all while Yorick tries to find his girlfriend and would-be fiancée, who was on a sabbatical in the Australian Outback when the disaster struck. In the process, Yorick and the people who help him encounter crazed "s," who believe it is their duty to remove the last vestige of the male of the species from the planet, an out-of-control Israeli Defense Forces commander who wants Yorick for her own purposes, Yorick's mother, a Representative and one of the few members of the U.S. government left alive, Yorick's sister (with a few plot twists I won't reveal), and various others, some who try to aid him, many of whom try to kill him. The science in this set of graphic novels frankly doesn't make much sense, so you have to turn your brain off, much as you have to do when you read Superman. Some of the depictions of life without men make sense; some less so. There are plot twists galore and *everyone* has secrets, some of which aren't revealed until the final volume. I found the artwork in this series to be adequate but uninspiring. It reminded me a little of the old Curt Swan Superman and Legion of Super Heroes days. It's clean and uncluttered but this isn't artwork that's going to blow you away or that you'll want to show off to your friends. The real attraction to this series is the writing. To a certain extent, I think that's appropriate, as this doesn't have the grandeur and the scope of, say, the latest Avengers or Justice League space battle. The first volume of the series is a mixed bag. In it, we are introduced to Yorick, his girlfriend, his mother, his pet monkey, "Agent 355," assigned by his mother to guard Yorick, geneticist Allison Mann, Yorick's sister, Hero, and the s. After the setup, we find Yorick out and about, hiding behind a gas mask so that no one will know that he's male, a wise precaution since the first woman who finds out about him tries to handcuff him so that she can sell him to the highest bidder. Yorick finds his way to his mother, who assigns Agent 355 to protect him as he makes his way to Boston to find Dr. Allison Mann, a geneticist whom they are hoping will be able to figure out why he's immune, and Yorick's sister, Hero (their father

was a Shakespearean professor). They encounter several obstacles along the way but do find Dr. Mann, only to find her lab torched shortly thereafter, which requires a change in plans - a trip to California where she knows of an alternate lab. My biggest problem with this volume is that Yorick is kind of a loser, always acted on rather than doing the acting. Frankly, it's hard to feel much sympathy for him. In later volumes this changes, so it's worth sticking around, but if I had only read the first volume and didn't know anything about the later volumes, I'm not sure I'd have made it past this first one. It is worth doing so, though, and you need to get the setup in this one to make sense of the rest. I can definitely recommend the series more than I can the setup.

I'm not exactly certain how I stumbled upon this graphic novel but I'm certainly happy I did. This highly readable adult graphic novel is the fictional tale of a young twenty-something slacker named Yorick Brown who suddenly finds himself in the most unpredictable of predicaments. A devastating plague has spread across the globe and instantaneously destroyed every man and mammal with a 'Y' chromosome--except, of course, for our reluctant hero and his pet monkey Ampersand. Beginning with this issue, we are taken on an interesting and often perilous journey through time and over several continents as Yorick and his female companions attempt to discover exactly why he and Ampersand are the sole remaining male mammals left on the planet. Each action-packed issue follows the wise-cracking Yorick and his friends dodging rival interest groups, spies, assassins, and murderous, modern day warriors in their quest to discover the answers to their many questions and a cure for the dreaded plague. A secondary plot thread is Yorick's relentless obsession with finding his girlfriend (presumed fiancée) who went missing in the Australian outback when the global catastrophe hit. I liked this series very much and before I address what I feel to be its 'cons', I'd first like to address what I believe to be its 'pros'. Overall, I found this entire series to be a genre-defying, highly addictive, and unpredictable compilation of interwoven stories. While some of the tales were lackluster and hard to follow, others were outstanding with the benefit of providing readers with some very wild and unpredictable plot twists. I really appreciate the social relevancy and the controversial nature of 'Y'. I predict that half of the people reading this graphic novel might be offended that the gun-toting wives of Republican congressmen and Senators attempted to violently wrest control of the U.S. Government from the hands of Democratic women they felt couldn't represent their interests. The militaristic ultra-feminist Israeli Alter Tse'lon is another controversial female character. Her relentless pursuit of Yorick and her psychopathic obsession with Israel's 'security' resonates with many things that are happening in the Middle East even now. Does anyone else believe it somewhat sexist that our entire planet's infrastructure would

collapse and remain collapsed without men? This series was very thought provoking and I think that is why it appealed to me so much. The Cons? While it may be true that Pia Guerra is a gifted artist, I find it difficult to believe that this might be some of her best work. The landscapes and post apocalyptic cityscapes were great; the people--not so much. In fact, it was a little too easy for me to think of Yorick as the character 'Shaggy' from the Scooby-Doo television cartoon. I kept waiting for him to say, "Like, ZOINKS," in certain situations but this never happened. Another complaint I have is the seeming lack of gravity affecting the survivors of this post-apocalyptic Earth. After the global event, which left billions of men and other male animals dead, we are told that millions of women committed suicide and many more women resorted to cannibalism to survive in the lean years that followed. Yet many of these nitty-gritty details are glossed over, and our characters are taken from point 'a' to point 'c' without a lot of story development in between. My favorite book in the series was the last, the tenth book, mainly because Yorick seems to have matured considerably. I had the sense throughout the series that Yorick was a spoiled, insecure brat who in ordinary circumstances may never have grown up at all. The tenth book in portrays Yorick to be a vastly different person than the one we met in the first volume--no doubt changed from all of his harrowing post-apocalyptic experiences. Not only can he throw a punch or two to defend himself, but he now at last seems to have broken the mold that made him the perpetual victim of fate and circumstance. The boy grew into a man with a sense of purpose and a measure of self confidence. The humor throughout the story sometimes worked--and sometimes didn't--but what it did do in my opinion was undermine Brian K Vaughn's otherwise brilliant storytelling and dialog sequences. Nevertheless, because of its peaks and in spite of its troughs, I found this to be an exceptionally entertaining story and I highly recommend it to people who enjoy thought-provoking science-fiction, thrillers, and mysteries.

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