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Steven Universe Vol. 2



Synopsis

Back to Beach City! It is never an average day in the life of Steven Universe! From helping the Crystal Gems fight creatures to helping out a friend in need, Steven is always up to something. Join Garnet, Amethyst, and Pearl as they keep Beach City weird! Written by international indie all-star Jeremy Sores (A REMINDER, ADVENTURE TIME) and illustrated by the insanely talented Coleman Engle (REGULAR SHOW, STEVEN UNIVERSE), STEVEN UNIVERSE explores the magical world of the hit Cartoon Network show with all new adventures sure to make your gem shine.

Book Information

Series: Steven Universe

Paperback: 112 pages

Publisher: KaBOOM! (March 22, 2016)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 160886796X

ISBN-13: 978-1608867967

Product Dimensions: 6.6 x 0.3 x 10.2 inches

Shipping Weight: 15.2 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.8 out of 5 stars See all reviews (14 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #15,707 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #25 in Books > Children's Books >

Comics & Graphic Novels > Media Tie-In #1042 in Books > Children's Books > Humor

Age Range: 8 and up

Grade Level: 3 and up

Customer Reviews

So, in a similar vein to my review of Volume 1 of this comic collection, I'd like to first explain why I'm going with four stars instead of five even though I'm a pretty unforgivably shameless SU fangirl. In a few words, it's just that it doesn't inherently contain the elements that made me love the show. I have to put them there with my own understanding of these characters, and I have to imagine their delivery based on knowledge of their voices and intended inflection; I sometimes had to struggle to do that, which means the comic derives its specialness mostly from its inspiration, not really from its delivery or originality. And just like the last volume, I think the activity was sometimes hard to follow in action scenes and the stories are all in a weird limbo: there's no beginning where new readers can learn about Steven and the other Gems, and the little stories don't build to anything (with the notable exception of a single two-part story that opened in issue 5 and closed in issue 6). They're all

kind of like teeny filler episodes of the show. Which is, in a way, kinda cool--getting some zany or touching times with the Gems or Steven's family and friends without worrying about meta-plot is a nice break--but it also made the tension low. I would not recommend this book for people who are not already SU fans. Still, the art by several different artists is lovely (I liked some more than others), and it's pretty clever how there were a couple longer stories and a couple shorter (or single-page) inserts in each issue. And the variant cover gallery at the end was, again, awesome to have! I own all the single issues of the comic, but I'm not quite obsessive enough (or rich enough) to collect all the different covers, so it was so sweet to have them in the trade! I liked getting to spend a little extra time with the characters in one-off adventures or sweet moments of their lives, especially Steven's bits with Connie. Here is a quick (okay, probably not so quick) run-through of each issue's stories, with notable bits for fans of the show. Keep in mind that the creators have referred to the comics as "Level 2 Canon," which they clarified to mean the show is the top level of canon and if anything in the comics contradicts something stated in the show, you should believe the show--but otherwise, if something happens in the comic, you can assume it could, would, or did happen. I am going to point out some places where I think what I saw in the comics is interesting in terms of the show. Sorry I'm such a nerd. (Actually, not really sorry.)

ISSUE FIVE contains the comics "Library, Part One," "Bubble Trouble," "Steven-less!," "Winter in July," and "A Day With Onion."

"Library, Part One" (Full-length, color): Plot: Connie discovers that Beach City hasn't had a public library since a Gem attack sometime in the past, so she and Steven decide to collect old stuff to sell at a yard sale so they can get the money to start a library. However, the junk they've collected clutters up the living room, and Pearl has a fit when she sees it. After organizing it taxes her skills and she's alerted to an urgent mission by Garnet, Pearl absorbs all the yard sale items into her Gem so she won't have to look at the mess. But something in the mess she sucked into her Gem makes her too sick to complete the mission, and she comes home sneezing--and every time she sneezes, yard sale junk is expelled forcibly from her Gem. Garnet, wanting Steven to help finish what he started, drags Steven with her into the realm inside Pearl's Gem to find the thing that's making her ill. Part One ends, to be continued in Issue 6.

Notable:

1. Steven says Beach City doesn't have a public library because a "slug thing" happened and now they don't.
2. There's a language usage mistake when Steven refers to an accident with the slug and "you could see all of it's stomach juices."
3. Connie refers to "the next volume of Unfamiliar Familiar," but in the canon of the show that is just the title of the first volume, while the whole series is called The Spirit Morph Saga.
4. The book with a Gem embedded in it kind of looks like it contains a Ruby! It has the same color and the square facet on the front.
5. There's never been anything in the show that suggests a Gem can store this much stuff

in their Gemstone, and nothing has indicated that they have a massive realm inside it that people can enter, but there's also nothing that contradicts that possibility, and Pearl in particular does seem to store quite a few things in there. The inside of Pearl's Gem realm is full of slightly askew columns, rose bushes, and doors.⁶ Pearl is grossed out when Garnet suggests she's "throwing up" and insists that they refer to it as "expelling." :)"Bubble Trouble" (Two-page short, color):Plot: Steven's frustrated that he can't generate his shield at will, and Amethyst helps him realize he's usually in a dangerous situation when he pulls it out. So Amethyst jumps out of her room wearing a scary mask later, surprising Steven while he's busy making a sandwich. Instead of the shield, he protects himself with a bubble, and agrees that it's a good thing he can at least make that. However, now he can't make it go away to eat his sandwich.Notable: Steven hasn't had trouble making his bubble go away in the show since the first time he made it in "Bubble Buddies," episode 7. Since then, every time he's generated it, it went away quickly when he wanted it to or when something stressed it. This must take place before that started happening regularly."Selfie" (One-page short, color):Plot: This is just a color illustration of Amethyst and Pearl taking a selfie together on a highly decorated, cell-charm-festooned flip phone. Steven and Garnet appear out of the frame on either side, and Pearl looks reluctant but is cooperating, with Amethyst's arm around her sticking out her tongue for the camera.Notable: Amethyst and Pearl are drawn with fingernails, which is a deviation from the usual style. The phone has cell charms of Garnet, Amethyst, Pearl, Steven, Lion, Cookie Cat, and a Big Donut."Steven-less!" (One-page short, color):Plot: Connie comes to Steven's house to read a book together, and is dismayed to be greeted by the Gems while Steven is away getting donuts. Their Gem weirdness is overwhelming to someone who isn't used to it, considering they're all covered in space slime from a mission and Amethyst is trapped in cat form because of a mission glitch. She's relieved when Steven comes home from buying donuts.Notable: It's unclear when this is taking place because Connie seemed shocked that Amethyst was shapeshifted as a cat, but she saw Amethyst shapeshift the second time she met her (in "Lion 2: The Movie," which aired in April 2014, while this comic was published in December 2014). Maybe she was just surprised to see it again, but she behaves like she's never seen it before. Also, nothing we've seen so far suggests Amethyst could get trapped in any shapeshifted form, but perhaps it's possible!"Winter in July" (One-page short, color):Plot: A Gem monster called a snowbeast attacks and causes snow in July. Steven, anxious to wear his snow gear and celebrate the winter, suits up, but the Gems defeat the creature while he's away and the temperature returns to normal, so he misses all the fun.Notable: This skit and the previous one are collectively credited as "Side Tracks" on the opening page of this issue."A Day With Onion" (One-page short, color):Plot: Steven encounters Onion on the pier

throwing fry bits into the ocean. Steven acquires his own order of fry bits, does his hair and his sweater like Onion, and joins him tossing them into the water. He says he "gets it now." Notable: But I sure don't get it. Maybe if I threw food into the water I would?

ISSUE SIX contains the comics "Library, Part Two," "Air Control," "Lion's Share," and "King Hotdog."

"Library, Part Two" (Full-length, color): Plot: The "something is making Pearl sick" plot continues from the previous issue, with Garnet and Steven inside Pearl's Gem space trying to find and remove whatever's making a mess. Amethyst and Connie take care of Pearl while Steven and Garnet chase the Gem that's embedded in a book cover. Garnet tries to protect Steven when the Gem starts attacking, but Steven ends up protecting both of them with his bubble. He's in awe that Pearl's mental realm is so beautiful. But when they get close to trapping the book, it tosses Garnet out of Pearl's head, and Steven has to reason with the book himself. He concludes that the book wanted to be finished, since Connie abandoned reading it, and that solves the problem. He emerges unscathed, and Pearl bubbles the book, agreeing that they will have plenty of books for their library but not this one. Notable: 1. Amethyst describes Pearl's Gem space as "kinda like a wallet but more infinite." 2. At one point Garnet yells "REVEAL YOURSELF!" at the Gem monster in Pearl's Gem space, just like she did in "Garnet's Universe." When she does that, the comic cuts to Pearl requesting that Garnet not be so loud, which suggests she can "hear" what's going on in there. Interesting! 3. The book Gem is one of the very few items that has been bubbled without being removed from its "body," joining the company of the Geode Beetles of Heaven and Earth and the Desert Glass.

"Air Control" (One-page short, color): Plot: This is just a wordless drawing of the Gems, with Garnet in the foreground dressed as an old-timey plane pilot wearing three-eyed flight goggles, featuring a propeller plane in the background containing Pearl in the cockpit, Amethyst on the nose of the plane with a wrench, and an illustration of Steven on the side of the plane. Notable: The characters don't actually own a plane like this in the show as far as we know, but it's possible they would; they did once randomly have a "Gem Sloop" in episode 6 and it was never mentioned again.

"Lion's Share" (Two-page short, color): Plot: Pearl is taking great pleasure in sweeping the floor until she realizes Lion has left a half-eaten lizard on the floor. She explodes over it (and accidentally offends Amethyst when she thinks Pearl means her when she refers to "that beast"), but when Lion affectionately rubs up on her, she agrees that she will have to tolerate his "innate feline habits," even if she won't be keeping his "gifts." Notable: The lizard whose remains Lion left on the floor looks exactly like the lizard he was gnawing on in "Lion 2: The Movie." It's also interesting to see Lion being affectionate toward someone who isn't Steven.

"King Hotdog" (Short, black and white): Plot: Amethyst enters a hotdog-eating competition and is disallowed from adding Fire Salt to her meal because condiments

aren't allowed. However, Mr. Smiley finds Amethyst's Fire Salt and adds it to the hotdogs the humans are eating, causing them to breathe fire. Amethyst puts out the fires and helps the humans into some water, all without stopping her hotdog eating. Mayor Dewey crowns her King Hotdog for eating 226 dogs. Notable: 1. The Fire Salt is the same stuff she used in episode 21, "Joking Victim." But in that episode, she was TRYING to burn people as a prank, while in this one she just wanted to eat it herself to make the hotdogs less boring. 2. The story is titled "King Hotdog" on its title page, but on the title page of the comic issue, it's referred to as "Hot Dog King," which seems to be an inconsistency. (The list also puts "Air Control" after "Lion's Share" even though "Air Control" comes first in the issue, but I don't know if that's a mistake because it doesn't say anywhere that this is an ordered table of contents.)

ISSUE SEVEN contains the comics "Storytime," "Wild Animals," "Car Trouble," "Garden," and "Mean Look."

"Storytime" (Full-length, color): Plot: Connie and Pearl are discussing fantasy novels. Connie explains the plot of a story about a character named Mearl, which Pearl of course keeps envisioning as herself as parallels keep arising between her own life and that of the character's. But then when Connie says Mearl had to be rescued, Pearl objects, saying she would have been able to rescue herself. She objects to more and more of the story as Connie goes on explaining the plot, until she can't take any more and goes off on a mission with the other Gems muttering about how the story is wrong, funneling her irritation into aggressively capturing a corrupted Gem. Notable: 1. The bit with Pearl saying nothing's going on and "CONNIE IS JUST TELLING LIES" is adorable. 2. This Connie/Pearl interaction highlights how similar they are in that they both get fixated on their own interpretations of characters (as Connie did in the episode "Open Book"), so it's cool that it was released before they started sword-fighting together in the show. 3. There is a typo: Amethyst says "Hey Pearl, it's time for that missioin!"

"Wild Animals" (Short, color): Plot: Amethyst is experimenting with shapeshifting, becoming animals to mess with other animals. When Steven and Connie rescue freshwater fish from being thrown into the ocean by Onion and return them to the pet store, Amethyst feels that the animals should be free. She sneaks into the store at night and tries to liberate the fish, but Steven and Connie stop her and convince her that these animals are in the place they should be. Amethyst sulks, tries some more animal forms inspired by TV, and gives up. Notable: 1. This comic's title is not listed in the table of contents in the beginning of the comic. 2. Connie says her hat might get stuck on Steven's "big head," and he says if that happens he'll just keep it as an early birthday present. This is interesting because Steven's fourteenth birthday happened in the 75th episode of the show, but even though we can assume from other clues that the first 74 episodes happened over the course of more than a year, Steven's actual birthday did not take place in the show until then. This comic suggests his birthday was about

to come in the world of the comic, and we don't really know how it lines up, but Rebecca Sugar did a comic short about Steven's birthday at one point (released in Volume 1 of the trade paperback containing the first four comic issues), so maybe that's supposed to represent his thirteenth birthday.³ There are a couple language mistakes: Steven says "If it get's stuck," and Connie says "Everything has it's place."

"Car Trouble" (Two-page short, color):Plot: Greg, Steven, and Garnet are in Greg's van driving through the rain, and they get stuck in the mud. Greg is unable to push his van out of the mud without help, but when Garnet helps, she pushes too hard and launches the van out of sight down the road, and they all run to catch it.
Notable: Cookie Cat umbrella! Also, it's neat to think the three of them were going somewhere together without the others, like they did for their road trip later in "Keystone Motel."

"Garden" (One-page short, color):Plot: This is just a wordless art page depicting Steven and Connie riding on Lion through a beautiful, weird forest.

"Mean Look" (Short, black and white):Plot: The Gems are fighting some kind of plant monster that can shoot teleportation beams, and in the middle of the battle Steven spots Onion sitting on a rock eating a snack. Steven moves to get Onion out of the battle but he is shot by one of the monster's teleportation beams. When he appears in front of a bunch of angry plant monsters, one of them knocks his popcorn out of his hand and Onion gives them such a terrifying look that they all become submissive immediately. When the Gems come to rescue him, Onion doesn't need rescuing.
Notable: Onion is eating popcorn. Some people think Onion doesn't eat, and they make a big point of him tossing out or spitting out food often in the show, but the very first time we see Onion in the show ("Bubble Buddies," episode 7), he's eating popcorn. So this could be a nice callback to that. What's interesting is how angry Onion gets when the plant monster smacks his popcorn out of his hand, considering how often he's ruined food himself.

ISSUE EIGHT contains the comics "Clock Work," "Enjoying the Sun," "Opal's Day Off," and "Dog Show."

"Clock Work" (Full-length, color):Plot: The Gems are on a mission to reset a Gem-powered clock, but on their way up the clock starts flinging pieces of stone at them, which separates Amethyst and Steven from Garnet and Pearl. Steven has been singing the praises of his new watch that doesn't tell time but shouts encouragement, and when Amethyst and Steven are trying to figure out how to set the clock, his watch praises the clock Gem and it resets itself.
Notable:1. I like that Steven uses the possessive pronoun "theirs" when talking about the clock Gem.
2. Steven stating that he does Steven stuff because he's Steven was really cute and in character. :)"Enjoying the Sun" (One-page short, color):Plot: This is a one-page illustration of Steven, Connie, and Lion relaxing under a tree, apparently asleep.

"Opal's Day Off" (Short, color):Plot: Steven wants to hang out with Opal, so he pretends important missions await them at Funland and he convinces her to stay fused while

accompanying him. He has her try a variety of carnival games, winning prizes, but then finally when he offers her a hot dog, Amethyst and Pearl disagree on whether they're eating it and Opal unfuses. Steven notes that it was fun while it lasted. Notable: This is issue 8 and it's the first time we've seen a Fusion besides Garnet! Opal is such a treat in the show because we almost never see her and she's literally only ever had a few lines in her debut episode. Steven making up a reason for Opal to stay fused so he can hang out with her was really heartwarming--because a lot of us who watch the show would love to see an Opal slice-of-life episode and find out more about who she is! Her unfusing is for a very similar reason to why Alexandrite unfused in the "Fusion Cuisine" episode of the show--Amethyst wanted to eat something and Pearl was dead set against it.

"Dog Show" (Two-page short, color): Plot: Amethyst shapeshifts into a variety of different dog breeds so she and Steven can win every prize in the Beach City 3rd Annual Dog Show. Notable: This is similar to the plot of "Lion Tamer" from comic issue #2, where Amethyst and Steven win a different pet contest together with her posing as his pet. And then there were two EXTRA SHORTS by Jeremy Sores and Coleman Engle:

"Traffic Cones" (Two-page short, color): Plot: Steven and Greg are doing errands and manage to get Mayor Dewey to grab some ice cream for them. But Dewey is mistaken for "giving out free ice cream" and ends up on the hook. Notable: Steven likes license plates and mentions plates from Delmarva and Echo City. And you can see Sour Cream taking Onion somewhere on a motorbike!

"Tennis Doubles" (Two-page short, color): Plot: Steven and Connie play tennis with Lion, and Steven complains about Lion's using his warp roar to manipulate the ball . . . until they're able to use his skill to complete a mission! Notable: It's adorable that Steven thinks they're playing football at first, not tennis. The COVER GALLERY at the end features three covers for each of the four issues. Issues five, seven, and eight have a main cover by Amber Rogers; issue six's main cover is by Tait Howard; and all four have a Helen Yoon variant--plus the issue five variant by Grace Kraft, the issue six variant by Meg Gandy, the issue seven variant by Becky Dreistadt, and the issue eight variant by Melanie Herring. The styles are all fantastically different but capture the essence of Steven and the other characters!

Just like Vol.1 I liked this comic. This is for fans of the show and isn't something that can be read on its own. All are short, small, side events that don't go anywhere story wise. People who haven't seen the show won't understand who the characters are and what this is even about. The stories are like a day in the life of Steven Universe. Stories of Steven's life that are cute but not exciting enough to put in show form. That's not a bad thing, it's just mellow side stories that complement the show.

Absolutely adorable. Fans of the show will love this. Nice sturdy book. In addition to the comics, there's a gallery of (for lack of a better word) poster art in the back. All the comics and additional artwork are done in various, wonderful styles. Fans of the show will love it. It's also something to read while we all wait for the show hiatus to end! (Get on that, Cartoon Network!)

I have the individual comics, #1-#7, but I could NOT find the last one anywhere for a reasonable price. I caved and just bought the full second volume, and I don't regret it. It has all the original comics as well as every cover from each issue! I love Steven Universe not just for the great plot and characters, but for the beautiful art and colors that are used. The comics are a wonderful companion to the show.

Just as charming as the first volume. Just makes it easier to get all these great comics in a place with no good store around.

So glad these exist. Captures the show perfectly and a fantastic read. Book looks great and no damage.

It almost fills the void while waiting for new episodes of the show

My daughter loves it. That is all that matters! :)

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