

Reality Storm

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Notes: This is a cross-system adventure, containing stats for the Tri-Stat system and the main Superteams from both Settings. As well as a conversion matrix from one system to the other.

The Review:

Reviewed By Gordon Feiner

The Upside:

Crossovers have a long history in the comic world. Two companies coming together to publish one work, often with characters from each of their own universes. It's not a common occurrence in the gaming industry however. In fact, Reality Storm is the only book I know of that does just that - a single adventure with heroes from two companies.

The book is divided into two halves, first is the cross-over adventure. Second is something that is more common in the gaming industry, conversion rules to go from one system to another. These conversion rules are endorsed by both companies (Hero Games and Guardians Of Order), and are as official as you can get.

Chapter One - Introduction. A fairly neat history of comic book crossovers from their start to now. And of course, the plot summary for the upcoming adventure.

Chapters Two through Eight. The first half of the book is the adventure, Reality Storm. It relies on one major assumption, that you're using the published universe from your preferred game system. If you aren't Reality Storm requires a good amount of reworking, but not so much as to make it unworkable. Specifically if requires the main villains from each (Dr. Destroyer and Kreutzritter) and the published heroes (Champions and Guardians). If you don't have either of these, then the largest threat villain you have works just fine, and the adventure is workable without either group.

The Reality Storm. Part one is the setup, giving information on the major players and the details on how the multiverse is structured for events in this adventure.

Disaster Strikes. Part two kicks off the action. Starting with natural disasters that quickly increase in scope and severity. This chapter has no enemies to face, just a lot of heroic work to be done. Until Day Four that is, when the two villains broadcast their intentions to the world, nothing short of world domination of course. But this time it's two worlds on the brink of disaster. This is where the premiere teams from each published universe are kidnapped and disappear.

Uncovering The Story. Part three moves onto finding the villains. This chapter provides information for the GM on how to divulge information on what's going on, and how to try and stop it. The nice touch

here is it provides it from two angles, mystically and scientifically. Whichever one, or both, work for the group there's a path to take.

Into The Rift. Once armed with the information the chase is on. The PCs must track down the master villains to their location at the center (or beginning, depending on how you look at it) of time.

The Crystal Palace. This is the climactic battle where our heroes meet, and defeat (hopefully) the villains. Lucky for the heroes the villains are very cooperative with each other and don't have all their resources to draw on. Defeating the villains is not easy, but this the big fight of the adventure.

Rescuing The Worlds. If you think defeating the villains is all it takes to save the day, think again. The havoc they wreaked across time and space isn't that easily undone. In fact, the heroes can't undo it at all. An ominous warning tells them they have five hours to get things in order. That means rescuing the being that controlled things before Dr. Destroyer and Kreutzritter took over. But where is he? Nowhere, or technically in Null Space outside the time stream. Getting him (it) back will require some clever thinking. And where did the premiere hero teams go? Are the two related somehow? All that is answered of course.

Conclusion. Cross-overs on this scale don't always end perfectly. Of course, ending happily is just one option presented. The heroes go home, saviors of the day. But, other options are available and this last part provides several of them, as well as some ideas for future adventures that come out of this one.

The adventure as a whole is fairly strait forward. It would take at least two sessions unless you really hurry things along. I would guess that an average group would take at least three sessions, and upwards of five, to complete. But this can be easily expanded, each day from Disaster Strikes could be a whole session itself as you build tension. Stopping natural disasters, stopping villains taking advantage of the chaos, starting investigations into the abnormal weather. There's a lot of options available. Of course, as things draw near the climax options dwindle until it's obvious what needs to be done.

Chapter Nine - Between Hero & Tri-Stat. This is the second half of the books content, and is almost half the book in length. This is the official conversion matrix from the Tri-Stat system to the Hero System, with the main heroes and villains of each converted as examples. I'm not well versed enough in Tri-Stat to say how well the conversion works, only to say that it's workable. I could easily follow converting my own Hero characters to Tri-Stat with minimal fuss, though this book does not provide rules or costs, so I don't know how costly my characters are in Tri-Stat. To get the most out of this you will need both sets of rules, though just the rules you want to convert to would suffice. This of course means you can take advantage of published works from both companies.

I will note, that Hero contains more Characteristics than Tri-Stat. I noticed that going to Hero from Tri-Stat produced many characteristics that were all the same, not really taking advantage of Hero's variety. This isn't a downside, simply a point of interest, it would be worth taking a few extra minutes to adjust some Characteristics so they aren't all the same number and individualize the characters a bit.

The Downside:

Sadly, Guardians Of Order has gone out of business since this book was published. That may prevent any reprints should it ever sell out completely. And of course, it's a shame to lose a gaming company to the woes of the economy.

On a note related to the book and adventure. While the adventure is interesting and well written, it felt lacking in some details and alternate options for something with such a large scope. It didn't quite catch the spark of imagination that I have with other adventures published by Hero Games.

The Otherside:

Being designed specifically for two different systems everything is presented generically, and where stats are given it's both in Hero and Tri-Stat. Making it useful for two systems at once. Others running superheroes campaigns in different systems can easily take advantage of the adventure in the first half of the book. Substitute whatever alternate world you need, and you're good to go.

Overall, the most useful part of the book is the conversion matrix. The Adventure is well done, if briefly written, so it shouldn't be overlooked. Whether or not you run it will depend on how close it fits your idea of the multiverse, if you even have one. But if the villains from your system of choice are getting predictable, pick up a book from the other system, convert the villains and throw a whole new batch of mayhem at your players.

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