



Star Wars: Journey to Star Wars: The Force Awakens - Shattered Empire

Greg Rucka , Marco Checchetto (Illustrator) , Phil Noto (Illustrator)

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Collects Journey to Star Wars: The Force Awakens - Shattered Empire #1-4, Princess Leia #1, Star Wars (1977) #1.

For the first time in the new Star Wars canon, journey with us into the time after the end of Star Wars Episode VI Return of the Jedi! Writer Greg Rucka (PUNISHER, WOLVERINE, Gotham Central) and artist Marco Checchetto (AVENGERS WORLD, PUNISHER) take us past the destruction of the second Death Star — and into the chaos of a Shattered Empire. It's the explosive lead-in to this winter's blockbuster big-screen Star Wars revival, and everything you need to know is right here!

Star Wars: Journey to Star Wars: The Force Awakens - Shattered Empire Details

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Sesana says

It was ok, I guess, but it felt sort of fragmentary and inconsequential. I guess I was expecting more out of it than it was able to deliver. But hey, there are X-Wings, and I love X-Wings.

Ivy says

5 stars

Good comic. Nice to see Poe's parents, Shara Bey and Kes Dameron. Also nice to see what happened after Return of the Jedi. Nice to see everyone in action.

Can't wait to read more Star Wars material!!!!

Quentin Wallace says

This volume was supposed to bridge the gap between Return of the Jedi and The Force Awakens. It picks up right at the battle of Endor and shows what happens immediately after.

I was little disappointed. To me this story didn't really add anything. We did get to see some of the characters, but really it just came across as a typical Star Wars comic tale rather than something that is supposed to be movie canon. It's basically the story of Poe's parents, so I guess it sort of is important to canon, but I dunno, it seems iffy. Poe is a big character in The Force Awakens, but I'm not sure how much the story of his parents adds to things other than showing they were veterans of the rebellion. Maybe my expectations were too high, but this seemed more like a gimmick than something important to the mythos.

However, I really did still enjoy it, the art's decent and if you compare it to the average Star Wars comic, it's not bad. I was just expecting a little more.

Amber says

somewhere between three and four. im not sure yet. hmmm.

Lance Shadow says

Shattered Empire is a comic collection that showcases the continuing fight between the Rebel Alliance and the evil Galactic Empire following the Battle of Endor. We get to see what the original version of the Star Wars Expanded Universe referred to as the "Big Three" (Luke Skywalker, Han Solo, and Princess Leia) as well as cameos from other classic characters from the original trilogy such as C3PO, R2D2, and Lando Calrissian. The comic focuses on the parents of Poe Dameron, the awesome new pilot brought to life in The Force Awakens by the always excellent Oscar Isaac.

The trade paperback also includes the first issue of the Princess Leia miniseries. I will eventually acquire a copy of the trade paperback and review the series but the first issue was quite weak.

It also includes one of the issues of Marvel Star Wars from the 70s that retells the first Star Wars film, but I only skimmed it over because it was not very interesting.

THE STORY: Shattered Empire stars Shara Bey, Poe Dameron's mother, as she and her husband, Kes Dameron, fight the empire alongside Star Wars icons like Luke, Han, and Leia. In the meantime, Shara worries about Kes, constantly wondering if he will survive as she only gets to see him very rarely. The first issue focuses on the Battle of Endor and the victory celebration from her point of view, as she fights with the rebel fleet against the second Death Star. Kes is down below, fighting to destroy the shield generator alongside Han Solo and Chewbacca.

The next three issues feature Shara going on missions with Luke and Leia, with a portion about Kes going on a mission with Han. The overall arc is about Shara's conflict between what she sees as her duty to fight against the empire and the pain of not being there for her husband and son.

THE BAD: Shattered Empire's short length really hurt it. There were two elements competing for panels in a mere 4 issues and neither of them really got a chance to shine. Elements for really good stories were here, but with the first issue already retelling the last moments of Return of the Jedi from the point of view of a new character, the moments after the last film in the original trilogy were rushed and haphazardly thrown together.

We could have had a really touching story about Kes Dameron and Shara Bey, but it had to compete for panels with the classic characters from the original trilogy. This also could have just been a fun montage of separate but thematically similar stories featuring classic characters but the story was instead about Kes and Shara. We also could have just gotten another big three team up like what was common in the original EU, but that does not seem to be the direction the new canon is going with their books/comics. Also, the fact still remains that writer Greg Rucka still wanted to tell a story about Shara and show off a montage of post Return of the Jedi battles against the Empire.

Shattered Empire could have been much better if it went in one of two directions: either increase the length, or decrease the number of elements to focus on. If Rucka was still stuck with only four issues to explore the events immediately following Return of the Jedi, he should have focused more on either the classic characters or the new characters. It would have given the opportunity for more character development for Shara and Kes, or we could have gotten an opportunity more of Luke/Han/Leia or other classics kicking imperial butt. As is, neither element got enough time to stand out.

I think the better solution would have been to just make the series longer. This is a fantastic idea for an ongoing comic series. We always want to know more about the aftermath of Return of the Jedi. Since the dawn of the expanded universe it has been a compelling era to explore. If the series were longer Rucka would have gotten more time to develop the potentially fascinating story of Shara and Kes, and we would get to see more of their hopeful, heartwarming relationship. They would have also been able to give us more of Luke, Han, and Leia, as well as other characters like Lando, Ackbar, and R2/3PO. Overall the pacing would have been much better and not feel so rushed.

For what the comic actually does have, I was disappointed overall.

Kes Dameron is forgettable, and comes off as a mere prize that Shara fights for. The only thing that sticks

out about Kes in this comic is that he is Poe's dad. The author showcases him, but it comes off as a pointless excuse to show off Han and take away precious time to develop Shara because he is not given any real character development.

Shara Bey is not completely bland, but she could have been much more interesting. She has a really interesting concept, being a mix of that wife longing for her soldier to come home as well as the soldier that longs to make it home to see her family again. However, both of these elements, like the rest of the comic, felt rushed.

THE GOOD: I can admire Shattered Empire for the elements that were there, even if they weren't fully realized. And even so, there are some good things in it.

Shara and Kes have a heartwarming and touching story arc even if it isn't developed enough. I wanted to see the two characters make it out alive in the end so they can enjoy the victory over the empire together.

It is also fun to see Shara interact with Leia and Luke, and the missions she goes on with them are very enjoyable. The girl power showcased on Shara's mission with Leia was great and the conversations she has with Luke are both fun and deep. We also got some interesting callbacks to The Phantom Menace, and it was not forced.

The dialogue was also quite good. We get outrageously funny meta humor from a line spoken by a rebel soldier during the celebration on Endor that takes a jab at fan speculation regarding the Ewoks, and Luke's dialogue in general was very snappy and entertaining. In that respect, Rucka did an excellent job with Luke's character. I also think he did well portraying the characters of Han and Leia from this time period.

Finally, I can't go without rejoicing in Marco Checchetto's return with his fantastic artwork. I loved the artwork in Obi-Wan and Anakin, and it looks great here too. The action is excellent and the worlds and characters look great.

THE VERDICT: Shattered Empire has enough good things in it to warrant a solid three star rating. However, I think everything was constrained by the mercilessly short length and a story like this needed to be a lot longer to be fully realized. Overall, I think this comic is ok. It wasn't bad, but it wasn't great either. I was glad I read it, but I don't know if I would pick it up again. As for my recommendation, I don't think Shattered Empire is a must read, but you'll probably be satisfied if you decide to give it go.

Darren says

Very strong addition to the SW canon tacked onto the back of the conclusion of Ep VI. Starts with the events moments before the ewoks started blowing off fireworks and playing their victory music in the trees of Endor.

That's how real this book is.

I've got to hand it to Mr. Rucka, the storyline is tight and the pencil work of Marco Checchetto is fantastic. The combination of compelling story (especially one set in a world I adore so dearly) and art that screams to be admired reminds me of the reaction I had with Lee's artwork in Hush and Staples' work on Saga.

Definitely have to give full marks for weaving some interesting set pieces into the story (Naboo, the Pathfinders, Han's role, etc). Speaking of Han's role...

[minor spoilers ahead if you haven't already seen Ep VII in theatre]..

seeing him close with Leia in this book now gets me wondering when they eventually connect. And when, of course, "Ben" comes around. Really looking forward to seeing how that all shapes up in future graphic novels/novels/movie tie-ins.

Worth the read, Star Wars fans... definitely worth the read.

Sam Quixote says

Ugh, there are Ewoks in this thing - AND Naboo! Wait, come back, they're only brief appearances (at least they didn't show us any Gungans)!

Set directly in the final scenes of Return of the Jedi, Shattered Empire follows Rebel pilot Shara Bey as the Rebellion continues to fight the suddenly leaderless Empire. Who is Shara Bey? Her hubby is Kes Dameron. That's right, these are the parents of Poe Dameron, Oscar Isaac's character in The Force Awakens. Pretty tenuous link for a "Journey to The Force Awakens" tie-in but then such is the nature of cash-grabs!

There's no real narrative to this one, just a series of fragmentary stories involving Bey and characters from the original trilogy. She joins Han and Chewie on a mop-up mission on Endor which is ok but I felt it was only there because people love Han and Chewie and any excuse to put them in a comic!

The Empire hatch a dastardly plan to create extreme weather on Naboo in an effort to destroy it. Is it bad that I was rooting for them to succeed? (No more Gungans!!) Leia and Bey go to stop them. Meh. Then to finish, Bey, Luke and Artoo (in yet another superfluous role) go to save a couple of magic Jedi trees - ooo! Yeah, it was pretty lame.

The stories are completely disposable but they underline the basic (and obvious) premise of the new movies, that just because the Emperor and Darth Vader were killed doesn't mean that the Empire was defeated. And even though we meet Poe Dameron's parents, that's about the only real link to The Force Awakens here and it's not even relevant to the movie!

While Greg Rucka's script was decidedly workmanlike and forgettable, Marco Checchetto's artwork was absolutely stunning. All the classic Star Wars designs are rendered beautifully along with the characters and the book looks absolutely amazing throughout (even if I got awful Phantom Menace flashbacks from the Theed Palace and the Darth Maul vision Leia has there).

Also included in this volume is Mark Waid's Princess Leia #1 (the worst of the new Marvel Star Wars titles) and Star Wars #1 from 1977 which is just ok - we all know the story!

Shattered Empire isn't a memorable narrative but it's a perfectly satisfactory Star Wars experience for fans thanks to Marco Checchetto's stellar artwork.

Gianfranco Mancini says

I'm a great fan of Checchetto's art and this volume of Star Wars new comics started good, sadly it turned out being the "how I've met your mother" SW tale of ~~Shalla-Bai~~ Shara Bey and Kes Dameron, how Poe's mom was a badass and her interactions with the main iconic characters cast. Not bad at all, but Poe Dameron is not much one of my most favourite characters ever and his parents too.

Ashley says

3.5 stars, really. I liked the art a lot, and the writing was pretty good as well. Poe's mother Shara Bey is the main character of this one, although his father Kes Dameron makes appearances, too. It takes place in the month after the destruction of the second Death Star, as Shara goes on missions with all of the Big Three, and as the characters in this comic all keep saying, the Empire doesn't seem to have realized they lost. The first issue and Bey's mission with Han was just meh, but I really liked the Leia and Luke issues, mostly because both Leia and Luke got to kick serious ass. I actually really liked returning to Naboo, as well, but it bothered me that nobody brought up that Leia is the daughter of their former queen. Did she not know at this point? Luke was just a badass throughout his entire appearance.

The final issue included in here was actually the first issue of Mark Waid's Princess Leia series. It was okay. I'm not sure if I'll be picking up the rest.

Renata says

Aww yiss, Poe Dameron's parents are badass! Princess Leia is badass! The Queen of Naboo is badass! I feel like all the new SW books I've read have done a lot of work to point out how important Leia's skillset is and how many sacrifices she's had to make, and this book was no exception.

Also, the art is gorgeous and so is Shara Bey's hair.

this vol also includes #1 of Star Wars: Princess Leia and a reprint of a 70s Star Wars comic, the latter of which is notable mainly for how Luke looks weirdly like He-Man and how unfortunate Biggs' mustache is.

Wendy says

If you go by what many fictional stories tell us, when the bad guy is defeated, you mourn your dead and then you throw a party. That's not how reality works. Just ask the soldiers and civilians in Afghanistan and Iraq and so many other places where the war never ends, even when it's over.

Of course, we don't want our entertainment reflecting that reality. We don't want to sit through Frodo moping around in the burning Shire, or Ender raging against that genocide he was tricked into causing. So what if this is the culmination of the heroes journey according to Joseph Campbell. We don't want to see the sad parts.

Return of the Jedi ended with a party at Ewokville and we were all invited. Yub nub, bitches!

But in Shattered Empire, Rucka reminds us of the harsh truth: the war isn't over till the fat ewok sings (which we see hasn't really happened 30 years later in TFA). And he also reminds us that the faces at the front aren't the only heroes.

Shattered Empire drops us right outside the Emperor's door as Han's team struggles to collapse the shields around the Death Star and the pilots desperately try to protect the rebel ships from the trap they've flown into. On the ground, we meet Kes Dameron, but the focus of the series is above, on pilot Shara Bey.

Each issue features a mission starring one of the Star Wars faces we know, and Bey is swept along or volunteers. She is the quintessential soldier who does her job and does it well, and wants to fight the good fight, but she also struggles with her desire to leave it all behind and the subsequent guilt that brings.

The stories themselves are a bit sparse, but I'm happy to fill in the blanks of Poe Dameron's backstory, especially as it complements his story in Star Wars: Before the Awakening. I read the latter first and was particularly moved by Poe's story because of how painfully bittersweet it is. We know Poe as the fun, passionate uber pilot, but these stories give him a bit more depth and sadness through his parents' fears that everything they fought and people died for was for nothing. The series started with A New Hope, but, despite the ewok party, hope might not be enough. With all the flash and fanfare of TFA in the theatre, scratch the surface and you find a war that hasn't ended, even after 30 years. Is there still hope? Is there still a point to hoping? Of course there is. The good guys always win, right?

The collected edition also includes Star Wars: Princess Leia #1, where Leia finds herself without a home or a role in the rebellion and the few of her people that remain don't think too highly of her ice queen persona. Why doesn't she grieve, they wonder? As if everyone must grieve in the same way. Leia imposes herself on an Alderaanian pilot named Evaan with whom she wants to be friends, though the woman keeps herself at a carefully caustic subservient distance.

When I was younger, it never dawned on me that Leia might be a little messed up after watching her entire planet destroyed. She got over it and went on to be awesome, right? Now, I'm quite happy that books explore her PTSD or apparently lack thereof.

And finally, there's the 1977 original Marvel retelling of Star Wars: A New Hope where Luke Skywalker looks a lot like He-Man and stormtroopers are a lot more acrobatic.

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Ari says

Not that great art. Ok story. This follows what I think are the parents of Poe Dameron in TFA and how they were at Endor fighting. It gives a nice but short view on those final moments and the weeks after that, but not too much info. I'm starting to see these nice winks at other characters from novels being mentioned (Alecia Beck) for we see that this new canon is expanding and getting denser and denser. We get to see Luke and Han and Leia but they're not central to the story which can be a good thing or bad thing depending on what you're expecting. I wasn't thrilled with the characters but liked the insight it gives about the state of the Empire and Rebellion. Could've been better.

Jasmine says

Realistically includes conflict after the battle of Endor, which finally makes sense (an empire takes a while to fall apart), Bey and Mr. Dameron are adorable, and LEIA, BEY, AND THE QUEEN OF NABOO TAKE ON AN IMPERIAL STAR DESTROYER.

Peace says

Shara, Leia and Soruna are my dream team. Loved it!

Paul E. Morph says

This was a pretty solid little story set immediately after *Return of the Jedi*. It had nice art and the characters from the movies felt right. I'm probably not the target audience, though, as I don't really care about Poe Dameron's parents, even if he was my favourite character from *The Force Awakens*.

Apologies for the short review; I'm still feeling very ill.
