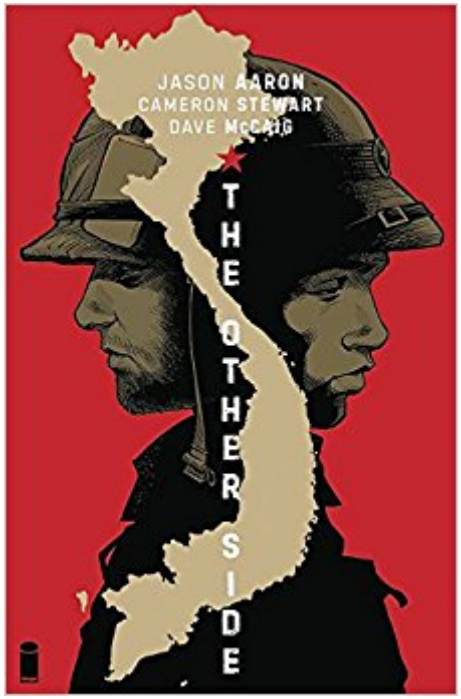
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The Other Side Special Edition



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Synopsis

THE OTHER SIDE SPECIAL EDITION is a hardcover collection of the Eisner-Award Nominated miniseries that started it all for writer JASON AARON (SOUTHERN BASTARDS, Scalped)! With amazingly visceral artwork from CAMERON STEWART (MOTOR CRUSH, Batgirl) and vivid colors from DAVE McCAIG (American Vampire), THE OTHER SIDE tells an unforgettable Vietnam war story from the point-of-view of two young soldiers on both sides of the conflict. Private Bill Everette is a US Marine. His opposite number, Vo Binh is a fighter for the PeopleÃ¢â ¬â„¢s Army of Vietnam. These two young men have never met. They are not even aware of each otherÃ¢â ¬â„¢s existence. And yet, in the battle-scared country of Vietnam, fighting a war that no sane mind can fully comprehend, their destinies are on a deadly collision course. THE OTHER SIDE SPECIAL EDITION will not only showcase this powerful war story but also include loads of extra materials straight from the files of both writer and artist. Cameron Stewart was so committed to this project that he travelled to Vietnam to do preliminary research and this collection will feature pictures, drawings and journal entries from that trip. This definitive collection is an important milestone in the burgeoning careers of two of the most significant creators of modern comics and itÃ¢â ¬â„¢s not to be missed! Collects THE OTHER SIDE #1-5

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Customer Reviews

Awar comic without heroism, Aaron and Stewart’s uneven tale alternates sequences about two teenagersÃ¢â ¬â •red-blooded American Bill Everette and patriotic Vietnamese Vo Binh

DaiÃ¢â ¬â •as they leave their homes and families and move toward the battlefield where each of them hopes to kill the enemy during the Vietnam War. Everette, drafted into a cynical, vulgar-mouthed, vulgar-minded platoon of Marines, desperately wants to survive, while Vo, a Buddhist who's slightly too idealistic to believe, longs to make a meaningful sacrifice for his national cause. The two combatants hallucinate constantly about death and decay; as the conflict enters the evocatively drawn landscape of the siege at Khe Sanh, the tone shifts from lurid grossness to bleak, smothering horror, and its stylized violence is sometimes hard to bear. Both Aaron's script and Stewart's crisp, impressionistic artwork (convincingly evoking the landscapes of the country and jungle, and colored in a palette that's mostly bloody reds and rotting greens) revolve around contrasts and reflections. But the title isn't just a reference to the opposing army: it suggests the way each of its protagonists is transformed, and loses his humanity by the process of being trained to kill. (May) Copyright Ã Â© Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

The Other Side demonstrates that war comics, out of favor for decades, retain substantial viability. It follows two farm boys, one from rural Alabama, the other from a village near Hanoi, approaching one another in Vietnam. While Private Bill Everette and his fellow grunts come to hate the country to which they've been sent, naively idealistic Vo Binh Dai voluntarily marches to the south to join the revolution. Both endure unspeakable horrors, including the ghosts of fallen soldiers, on their grueling treks to eventual confrontation at the besieged Khe Sanh combat base. Aaron, decades too young to remember the Vietnam era, has been inspired by his cousin Gustav Hasford, who wrote the novel Stanley Kubrick filmed as Full Metal Jacket. Despite its surreal aspects, his grisly account of the harrowing experiences of both sides rings lamentably true. Rather than taking a gritty, realistic illustrative approach, Stewart, best known for superhero work, employs his slightly cartoony style to bring just the right touch of exaggeration to the story's grotesque elements. Flagg, Gordon --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Jason Aaron has to be one of my favorite comic book writers of all time. Between his amazing work on Wolverine, Punisher MAX, and the gritty modern Western that is "Scalped", his stories have a unique blend of humor, violence, and flawed yet enjoyable characters doing their best to pick up the pieces of their shattered lives. When I heard that one of his first works as a writer was a Vertigo title about the Vietnam War, I was giddy with excitement; I've always been fascinated by the Vietnam War in reality and in fiction, so if there was a comic book about the war written by one of the finest

writers on the scene, I had to get it. What I found in The Other Side is a tragic, dark story that borders on horror, but nonetheless sucks you in with great writing and characterization.There are two protagonists in this story, one being Private First Class Bill Everette, a young U.S. Marine hailing from Alabama who wants nothing more than to survive the war and go home. The other is Vo Binh Dai, a young North Vietnamese Army soldier who is passionate about driving the Americans out of his beloved homeland. Let me just say that this is one of the main reasons I love this book; not too many war stories explore the lives and struggles of the enemy. In this way, you see the humanity of both sides, and you begin to understand that war is wrong because it involves real people, not brainwashed drones, going into harm's way either because of what believe in (as with Vo Dai) or because they were forced to (as with Everette).What's really striking is how similar the protagonists are. Everette is a country boy from Alabama who was raised on Jesus and the promise of the American Dream. Vo Dai is also a country boy, the son of farmers and a devout follower of the Eightfold Path (Buddhism). Both men have loving families they long to return to despite having different motivations for fighting this war. While Everette is much more on edge and scared, Vo Dai too comes to doubt his struggle. I believe that these two men could have been friends had their countries not been at war with one another.PFC Everette is clearly losing his mind as the story unfolds. He sees grotesquely deformed "ghosts" around him, and has recurring nightmares of death and dismemberment. Vo Dai does not fare much better, as he too is haunted by the death surrounding him. You actually see parallels between their stories, as while they may be on opposite sides of the war, neither are left unscathed by its horrors. Even though Vo Dai actually has an emotional stake in this (Vietnam is his home after all) he doesn't feel like what he's doing is making his country a better place.As I said above, this book feels like a horror story at times, insofar as war itself is genuine horror. The war is never once depicted as anything other than brutal and bloody, with men from both sides being eviscerated by gunfire and explosives. But the real horror of reading this book undoubtedly comes from the realization that while this may be a work of fiction, much of what occurs in the story actually happened. Young men with families and homes to think about were slaughtered for little other than the politics of the men in power. America gained nothing from the Vietnam War, and the country itself did not become the worker's paradise that Communism promised it would; you can't help but shed a tear thinking about how many people (on both sides) died for a war that should never have happened.As for the art of the story, I think you'll appreciate Cameron Stewart's depictions of the carnage of war. His style walks a fine line between cartoonish and realistic, as while you can clearly tell you're reading a comic book, his art is subtle in regards to details such as facial expressions and body language. His art depicts not only the physical, but also

the emotional evolution of both Everette and Vo Dai as they adapt to the brutality of conflict.When all is said and done, apart from the brutality of war, the other message this story carries is the effect that war can (and often does) have on the men who fight it. They may return home without a scratch, but their worlds are forever changed by the events they witness, and nothing is ever quite the same for them. Soldiers are not machines, they're thinking and feeling human beings, and sometimes they're left to pick up the pieces of their lives once they go home because something in them is lost. I say this as someone with several family members and close friends who served; to hear them describe it, it's hard to forget some things.The Other Side is an amazing story, and one that I feel deserves more recognition in the wider comic book audience (more than a few people I've talked to have never heard of it). Between the amazing writing and characters, the detailed and expressive art, and the overall theme that war has no real victors, it's a story that gets you using your heart and your brain simultaneously. It may be fiction, but it reads like reality, precisely because in one form or another, it was.

I've been a fan of both war stories and Jason Aaron and so when I found out he had written one I quickly jumped on the band wagon. Got it in great condition and the story was amazing.

As a Veteran this graphic novel struck a personal cord that I think most everyone that has been to war can enjoy to a certain extent.

Jason Aaron takes us back to the Vietnam war where a young man from Alabama is drafted to fight for the US Army and another young man from North Vietnam is drafted to fight for the Vietnamese Army. The book follows the stories of these two young men as they train for war and make their way to the battlefields where their paths are destined to cross. Welcome to the Other Side.Aaron is probably one of the best new comics writers to emerge in the last few years and having read his work on big Marvel properties like Wolverine and Punisher, I can say that I was already deeply impressed with the man's abilities in writing amazing comics. "The Other Side" shows Aaron giving range to his storytelling abilities, leaving the superhero world behind to tell the story of real life heroes with no superpowers but with no less heroism or anguish or humanity to them than any other.Needless to say the story is harrowing. Aaron spares no gruesome details to this bloody chapter of American and Vietnamese history. The genocide being enacted by the Vietnamese army against its own people, the atrocities being committed by the Americans with weapons like Agent Orange, the mutilated piles of dead bodies being flung into mass graves, the mutations following the

introduction of such devastating chemicals to humans and indigenous animals - the reader is exposed to it all.Aaron also takes you into the minds of these two young men as they take in this hellish nightmare and how their young minds are slowly warped to the point where the American man is hallucinating dead bodies following him everywhere and his gun talking to him, to the Vietnamese man who imagines gods and monsters talking to him and taking him on a Dante-esque journey through hell.Cameron Stewart does an amazing job with the art. I loved his work on Grant Morrison's Batman Vs Robin and am so glad that that job was given to him for his work on this book. The pages of military characters trudging through forests are juxtaposed with flights of fantasy as Stewart takes the character's madness and lets loose beautiful drawings of dragons in the sky, an army of zombies crawling across a burning field, and subtle changes to the heroes' faces as the days make their mark on their souls. Truly amazing work.There were a couple of moments in the book where I felt Aaron and Stewart had taken liberally from that famous Vietnam masterwork "Full Metal Jacket" (particularly the drill instructor) until I read the afterword where Aaron mentions that "Full Metal Jacket" was written by his cousin who also wrote the book the film was based upon "The Short-timers" and that "The Other Side" was written in tribute to his cousin's great work.This is an unforgettable and compelling piece of comic book art, the kind of book that deserves a far wider audience than just those who read comics. It's well written, well illustrated, and a fantastic read. The ending in particular will break your heart. A powerful book, highly recommended.

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