



## Who watches the Watchmen?



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What would happen if Captain America was a sadistic, murdering, rapist, Batman was an impotent fetishist who only got off on masks and costumes, and Superman just didn't care enough about regular humans to feel like saving anybody?

You'd have "Watchmen," Warner Bros. and DC Comics new, R-rated, sort-of superhero flick that asks the question: What would the world be like if real people decided to become masked vigilantes? The movie answers back by saying that they'd mostly be deviants living on the fringes of society.

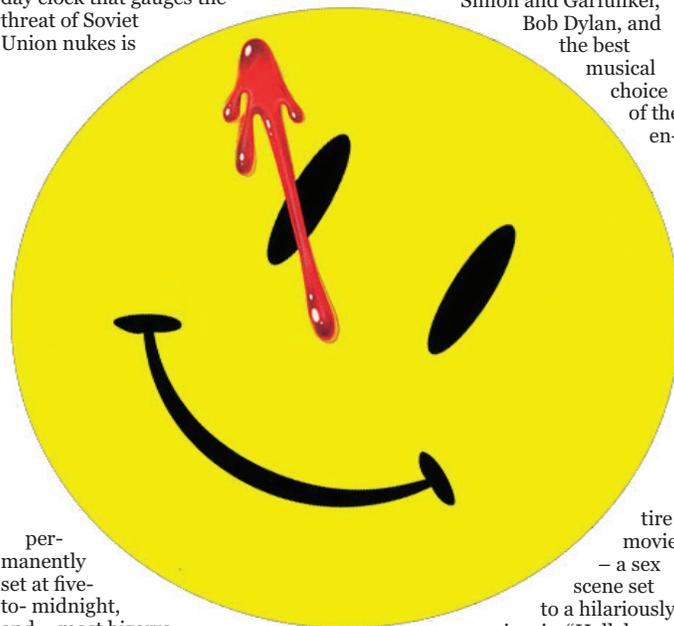
Director Zack Snyder pulls no punches in bringing one of the most highly-acclaimed and geek-worshipped comic books of all time to the big screen. Snyder takes a hold of Watchmen with the same bloody enthusiasm for carnage that he brought to his first graphic novel adaptation, 2006's "300." Snyder milks his R rating for all it's worth as he packs in ultra-violent CGI, superhero sex, and all the glowing, blue, full-frontal

male nudity you will ever need.

Watchmen stars a cast of mostly unknowns as an aging crime fighting group, forced into retirement in a 1980s alternate-reality version of New York City. It's a place where airships cruise the skies, the doomsday clock that gauges the threat of Soviet Union nukes is

brought together again when, The Comedian, played by a brilliantly robust and cigar-chomping Jeffrey Dean Morgan is tossed out of his penthouse window.

Set to folksy soundtrack that spans cold-war era tunes from Simon and Garfunkel, Bob Dylan, and the best musical choice of the en-



permanently set at five-to-midnight, and – most bizarre of all – the beloved Richard Nixon is enjoying his fifth-straight term as president.

Dr. Manhattan (Billy Crudup), Night Owl (Patrick Wilson), Silk Spectre II (Malin Akerman), and quick-to-judgement psycho Rorschach (Jackie Earl Haley) are

tire movie – a sex scene set to a hilariously ironic "Hallelujah," by Leonard Cohen, the watchmen will work for some, but probably not for everyone.

This is a movie, that is first and foremost made for the fanboys. And if you don't know what a fanboy is, that's exactly the point. Snyder's ambition to keep

Watchmen painstakingly faithful to the graphic novel pays its obvious. The movie is probably the most page-for-page accurate adaptation of a book ever made, with nearly all the familiar lines coming straight from the text. But while this will get huge cheers from comic book purists, watching a movie play out at the pace of reading a book (the running time is two hours and 45 minutes) will probably get snores from Watchmen newcomers.

And even if you're happy with the accuracy, the movie's climax somehow manages to come off as less epic on the big screen, than it is on the page.

For all it's attempts at being a global allegory, the movie is the most fun when it examines the lives of the humans at the core of these characters, asking why are these people like this.

That's what ultimately makes Dr. Manhattan, the film's only super-powered character, the most boring. He's not relatable to the audience.

It's also what makes the darkest character of the bunch, the psycho, ultra conservative Rorschach, the most intriguing.

It's like a teary-eyed Comedian states at one of the movie's pivotal moments, "It's all a joke. Humanity is just a bunch of carnal beasts."

Which is exactly why the graphic, troubled human stories will leave viewers wanting more, and the rest of Watchmen will have them watching the doomsday clock on their wrist.

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