

WHY WE LOVE *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles: The Last Ronin*

Dear Reader,

As a child of the '80s, the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles have always had a special place in my heart. First came the cartoon series (with its rad theme song), then came the action figures. And when the live-action movie hit theaters in 1990, it was quite literally the biggest thing in the world. I'll never forget how long the lines were at the theater as they wrapped around what seemed like half the mall. After having my mind blown from the movie, I discovered this was all born from a comic series—which soon became the first comic book I ever read. Suffice to say, TMNT was a massive part of my formative years. Several years later, I found myself able to share the same characters and experience with my own children as they grew up with their own new-school Nickelodeon animated series and new toys/merch.

Readers, I'm thrilled to introduce our next Spotlight Selection for Graphic Novel Book Club: the critically acclaimed and *New York Times* bestselling five-issue miniseries *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles: The Last Ronin*.

Reminiscent of Frank Miller's classic *The Dark Knight Returns*, *TMNT: The Last Ronin* is a dark, dystopian tale set in a post-apocalyptic New York City, where we find a lone surviving Turtle waging a seemingly unwinnable battle against an entire army. With those opening panels, the hook is set and you're there, every step of the way. Our lone hero leaps from rooftop to rooftop, masterfully flinging shuriken in every direction and using swift, succinct, deliberate movements to dispatch dozens of robotic enemies in seconds, utilizing skills sharpened by decades of training and who knows how many battles. This is one of the coolest Turtles stories ever written.

If that sounds like a departure from the fun and brightly colored Turtles of yesteryear, it is, and yet it isn't. Written by Turtles creators Kevin Eastman and Peter Laird, it is a fitting, satisfying swan song for the beloved series. Whether you've enjoyed TMNT over the years or are coming to it with fresh eyes, you'll be able to jump right in...but you may find it to be a more emotional experience than you expect.

We highly recommend this title for your next book club, and we hope you'll read along with us. Let us know what you think @hoopladigital, and join the online discussion using #hooplaGNBC.

Ray Barry, hoopla digital

