



Super Human (The New Heroes/Quantum Prophecy series Book 4)

By Michael Carroll

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Four thousand years ago the world's first super human walked the earth. Possessing the strength of one hundred men, skin impervious to attack, and the ability to read minds, this immortal being used his power to conquer and enslave nations. Now plans are in motion that will transport this super human to the present, where he'll usher in a new age of tyranny unlike anything the world has ever seen.

Determined to stand against them, using powers they've only just begun to master, is a ragtag group of young heroes. For them this first test may be their greatest . . . and last.

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

Author Q&A with Michael Carroll

Michael Carroll lives in Dublin, Ireland. His work has been translated into French, German, Italian, Swedish and Polish. In addition to his novels, he has published many award-winning short stories.

Q. Why superheroes? Why not write about wizards or secret agents or something equally exciting?

A. Simple: I've always loved superheroes! Everyone--I don't care what they might tell you--everyone has at some time or another daydreamed about having extraordinary abilities. Who wouldn't like to be stronger, faster or smarter than everyone else? I've often been asked why I didn't write this story as a comic-book: after all, superheroes and comics go together like strawberries and cream, Laurel and Hardy, peanut-butter and jelly... But that's precisely why I chose not to write the story as a comic-book: superheroes in comics aren't exactly a rare occurrence. In books, however, there are (or were, when I first started writing the series) almost no superheroes. I quickly discovered that there's a good reason for that: it's hard to write prose superhero stories! Once I realized how tough it was, I knew I had to do it... You don't learn much by always taking the easy path.



Q. How does Super Human fit in with your Quantum Prophecy series?

A. *Super Human* is a prequel to the Quantum Prophecy series; it's set about 23 years before the main plotline of the QP books, which is about thirteen years before all the older superheroes (and supervillains!) lost their powers. *Super Human* is a stand-alone story: it's not necessary to know anything about other books. At the same time, it's also designed to act as a sort of second jumping-on point for the series... readers can start with Book 1 (*The Awakening*) or with *Super Human*. I've been careful not to put too much in *Super Human* that might act as a spoiler for the other books!

Q. So, did you always plan to write a prequel?

A. Not as such, no. The whole QP series has been carefully worked out (my notes on the series run to around 250,000 words--about three times the length of *Super Human*), a process that took many years to complete, and--taking an idea from J. Michael Straczynski, the creator of the TV show *Babylon 5*--I built in several trap-doors. These allow me to completely drop certain characters and plotlines should that become necessary. One of the first trap-doors I'd built in led directly to *Super Human*: the story of Krodin, the first superhuman. Originally I'd planned that Krodin's tale would be told in a later book through a series of flashbacks, but when then opportunity came to write a stand-alone novel connected with the series, I realised that Krodin's tale would be ideal suited for that purpose. It introduces the world of these superhuman beings and shows us the origins of many of them.

Q. How do you actually write a book?

A. Every writer develops his or her own approach. Some writers come up with a strong opening and then figure out the rest of the story as they go along. That doesn't work for me: I've tried it a couple of times and the results were... pretty bad! My approach is the opposite: I plan my stories in great detail in advance, creating a sort of blueprint for the tale, then, when I'm satisfied with that, I write the first draft. Once that's done, I set it aside for a week or two, then come back to it armed with a red pen. I've trained myself to be pretty ruthless at this stage: anything that's not working is marked, whether it's a simple phrase or a whole sub-plot. Then I begin the second draft, and again I attack it with the metaphorical red pen. The first approach--making it up as you go along--has been described by Stephen King (who uses that approach) as akin to archaeology: the story exists, buried in the ground, and it's up to the writer to uncover it. However, I've always felt that writing is more like sculpture: the story only exists because the writer creates it from the raw materials. The fact is, no matter how big or impressive a book is, every story starts with an idea. But an idea is not a story, no more than an acorn is an oak tree. The writer's job is to turn that acorn into an oak tree, or--in some cases--a forest. For example: the *Quantum Prophecy* series started from a pretty basic idea... Like all story-seeds, it was a "What If?" idea... What if the most powerful person in the world was only thirteen years old? Now, as it stands that idea could describe a heck of a lot of books, so I had to build on it... Why is this character the most powerful person in the world? What do I mean by "powerful"? I decided that my central character would be a superhuman, because--as I mentioned earlier--superheroes hadn't really been done in prose form (not counting novelisations of movies or novels based on existing comic-book characters). Another reason I chose to make my character a superhero is that I really, really didn't want to write about wizards or magic! Now we have the most powerful person in the world, and he (or she) is a superhero... But we still don't know why he's the most powerful. So, suppose that there used to be other superheroes but they all lost their powers for some reason, then years later one of their kids starts to develop superhuman abilities. We still don't have an actual story, but we're getting closer...! For each book this process continues--often for many months--until the time is right to write the story.

Q. What's going to happen in the next book?

A. Oh, all sorts of exciting things! (What, you really think I'm going to tell you what's coming up? No chance--I never give spoilers!)

Q. Who are your influences?

A. Pretty much every book or comic book I've ever read has probably influenced me in some way. But my greatest influence is the science fiction legend Harry Harrison. One of Harry's books--*The Stainless Steel Rat*--was serialised in the British weekly comic 2000 AD. I loved the story and bought the novel. It's a cracking tale of a far future, when mankind has spread to the stars. Careful genetic screening has more or less bred all criminal elements out of humanity... But there are exceptions, and James Bolivar diGriz is one of those exceptions! He's a crook, a con-man, a thief--and in the first book he's recruited by the mysterious Special Corps because there's someone out there attempting to start an interplanetary war... Set a thief to catch a thief! In the following years I managed to get a copy of every book Harry Harrison has ever written, and they are all tremendous fun. Other influences include Terry Pratchett, Douglas Adams, Tanith Lee, Stephen King, Orson Scott Card, Carl Hiaasen, Christopher Fowler, James Morrow, Bob Shaw, Alan Moore, John Wagner, Stan Lee, J. Michael Straczynski, Joss Whedon, Alan Plater, and of course my friend Michael Scott (author of *The Secrets of the Immortal Nicholas Flamel*).

Q. I want to be a writer too! What should I do?

A. Write! Simple as that. If you want to be a writer, you write. If you don't write, you're not a writer. And you need to read, too. Read everything, every kind of book you can find. If it's something you don't think

you're going to like, read it anyway (if you only ever read the sort of books you think you'll like, the only thing you'll learn is how to write the same sort of book over and over). When you come up with a good idea for a book or a story, write it down. Don't tell anyone else (not even other writers) about your idea. If you do, they'll either tell you that it's already been done, or you'll have got the story out of your system and you won't feel the need to write it. Equally important: Finish what you start. This is of course true for everything in life, but it's especially true for writers. Very few unfinished books are ever published.

Q. But the day-to-day process of writing is really tough! Isn't there an easier way?

A. If there was, I'd have discovered it a long time ago!

Q. I've got a great idea for a book but I don't know how to write it. So, I'll tell you the idea, you write the book, and we'll split the money.

A. Sure! But let's split the money fairly: Coming up with the basic idea is .0001% of the work, so you'll get .0001% of the money. This means that if the book makes \$10,000 your share will be one cent.

Q. How did you get started as a writer?

A. I sort of fell into this almost by accident. I suspect that happens to most writers! I've always been a voracious reader and somewhere along the way I decided that I wanted to be a writer. But, of course, I wasn't a writer then: "Sayin' it's so don't make it so." In other words, wanting to be a writer is not the same thing as being a writer. A writer writes. A wanna-be writer talks about the writing he or she is going to do one day. I was a wanna-be writer until I was about twenty-two, when I joined the Irish Science Fiction Association and began to submit short stories for their fiction magazine FTL. I'd had quite a few short stories published by the time I met Michael Scott in 1991. Even then, Michael was an accomplished full-time writer, and he encouraged me to attempt a full-length novel. Long story short: I was working in the software industry and wrote many books in my spare time (and even had some of them published), then in 1999 the company for which I was working laid off a whole bunch of us, and I decided to give full-time writing a go. So far, it's worked out pretty well, but I wouldn't recommend my path as suitable for anyone else. I'm very lucky in that my wife has a very good job and kept us afloat in the "lean" years--such as the year I earned less than a thousand dollars from my writing! (A thousand dollars might seem like a large sum, but break it down: that's twenty dollars a week, and for an eighty-hour week that comes to 25 cents per hour... and I didn't even earn that much!)

From School Library Journal

Grade 6-9 Nearly 4500 years ago, the Fifth King a godlike, violent man who brought the entire known world under his rule vanished from his palace balcony in full view of hundreds of his subjects. Now, in the present-day United States, a group calling themselves the Helotry is determined to bring him back. These fanatics create a plague that affects adults all over the world, including the contemporary superheroes who had the best chance of stopping them. But the Helotry has not counted on opposition from a newly formed group of teen superheroes (and one normal but extremely clever and resourceful 14-year-old) unaffected by the plague and determined to use their powers to save the day. The characters are introduced at a rapid-fire pace that may be difficult for less advanced readers to follow, and the book's ending is somewhat abrupt. However, the continuous action and entertaining interactions among the teen protagonists will likely win over some fans of superhero comics and adventure novels. *Hayden Bass, Seattle Public Library, WA*

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From [Booklist](#)

Teens Abby, Roz, "Thunder," and Lance are matched against an enigmatic group of superpowered fanatics,

known only as the Helotry, who are bent on bringing an ancient warrior forward 4,000 years through time to rule again. Granted, the teens possess superpowers themselves—including Lance, who has the ability to talk his way out of anything. With the adult population crippled by a Helotry-created virus, will the teens' combined powers be enough to simultaneously stop the spread of the virus and the near-immortal Krodin? Carroll has created a prequel to his popular Quantum Prophecy series that will have fans cheering. This time the superheroic swashbuckling is told in chapters that alternate the point of view between each of the teens and the ancient bad guy, Krodin. Readers can dive right in without having read the trilogy, but chances are that once they start, they'll want to finish all four books. Fast paced and occasionally funny, this book will also appeal to readers of David Klass' Caretaker Trilogy and the armies of X-Men fans. Grades 5-8. --Cindy Welch

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Brooke Jenkins:

Do you have favorite book? When you have, what is your favorite's book? Reserve is very important thing for us to learn everything in the world. Each reserve has different aim as well as goal; it means that publication has different type. Some people experience enjoy to spend their time for you to read a book. They may be reading whatever they acquire because their hobby is reading a book. What about the person who don't like reading through a book? Sometime, person feel need book when they found difficult problem or exercise. Well, probably you'll have this Super Human (The New Heroes/Quantum Prophecy series Book 4).

James Fomby:

As people who live in the particular modest era should be change about what going on or info even knowledge to make these keep up with the era and that is always change and make progress. Some of you maybe will probably update themselves by examining books. It is a good choice for you personally but the problems coming to a person is you don't know what one you should start with. This Super Human (The New Heroes/Quantum Prophecy series Book 4) is our recommendation to help you keep up with the world. Why, because book serves what you want and need in this era.

Julio Keith:

Do you certainly one of people who can't read satisfying if the sentence chained inside the straightway, hold on guys this kind of aren't like that. This Super Human (The New Heroes/Quantum Prophecy series Book 4) book is readable by means of you who hate those perfect word style. You will find the information here are arrange for enjoyable reading through experience without leaving perhaps decrease the knowledge that want to offer to you. The writer of Super Human (The New Heroes/Quantum Prophecy series Book 4) content conveys the thought easily to understand by most people. The printed and e-book are not different in the articles but it just different in the form of it. So , do you even now thinking Super Human (The New Heroes/Quantum Prophecy series Book 4) is not loveable to be your top collection reading book?

Shawn Young:

Reading can called brain hangout, why? Because when you are reading a book especially book entitled Super Human (The New Heroes/Quantum Prophecy series Book 4) the mind will drift away trough every dimension, wandering in each and every aspect that maybe unknown for but surely will end up your mind friends. Imaging every word written in a reserve then become one form conclusion and explanation in which maybe you never get before. The Super Human (The New Heroes/Quantum Prophecy series Book 4) giving you a different experience more than blown away the mind but also giving you useful facts for your better life in this era. So now let us present to you the relaxing pattern is your body and mind are going to be pleased when you are finished reading through it, like winning a sport. Do you want to try this extraordinary investing spare time activity?

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