

Origin of the Follower and His New Actions: About an Action Character with Unique Capabilities

John Durbin Husher

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Origin of the Follower and His New Actions is a bombastic character study of a drug-busting superhero.

Axel Tressler is the Follower in John Durbin Husher's *Origin of the Follower and His New Actions*, and he destroys several international drug rings.

Axel was born into a turbulent world. His story begins with his mother taking a troubled flight through Massachusetts skies, after which Axel grows up to be abnormally strong and adventurous. Even his DNA is special. Because of this, Axel becomes known in Washington, DC, as the "Indestructible Man." With his powers, he becomes a one-man army tasked with taking down heroin smugglers in Pakistan and Afghanistan and the bloodthirsty narco-terrorist cartels of Mexico.

Within this pulp story, Axel is always the center of attention. He is drawn more like a comic book character than a believable human being—interesting, but not dimensional. He is stronger than most people, smarter than most people, and more determined than whole masses of people. His adventures in Central Asia and Latin America lead to informative considerations of international drug smuggling and other illicit deeds.

Secondary characters are mere fodder for Axel's mission. They speak little and find themselves with even less to do. A distant and omniscient narration adds to the atmosphere of hero worship around Axel, who comes to seem infallible.

A profusion of adjectives and adverbs undermine the text, which is also guilty of indulging in unnecessary diversions. For instance, Doctor Newcome, who is the first to discover Axel's extraordinary biology, expounds upon the ins and outs of DNA and RNA for pages, though these discussions are unneeded, included just to emphasize the point that Axel is not your average American citizen.

Other discursive chapters cover how drugs are moved across the Hindu Kush and how the Mexican state is involved in cross-border trafficking. Though chapters are short and thematic, their extraneous details often outweigh their important developments. Descriptions take up much of the text, and although Axel is depicted as a fight-first type of hero, most action scenes are bland and anemic.

There is not a single, unifying story to the book, whose ending is a predictable account of Axel going home after accomplishing his missions. The finale suggests that, with agents like superhuman Axel, the long-lasting War on Drugs can be won, as well as that more of Axel's adventures are on the horizon.

Origin of the Follower and His New Actions is a rough character study of a drug-busting superhero.

BENJAMIN WELTON (January 6, 2020)

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