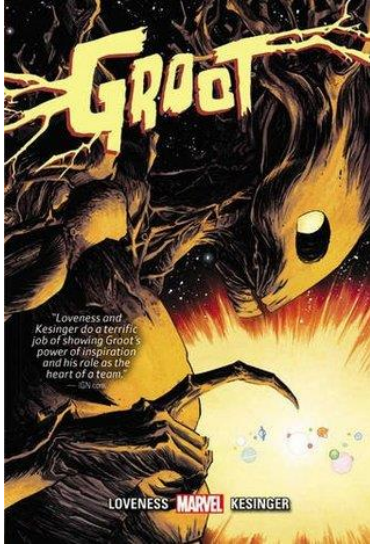


SPOTLIGHT



July 8, 2016

Of course, the first thing fans ask themselves when they hear they've given Groot his own comic book series, is how do they get around the fact that all this talking tree/alien ever says is "I am Groot"?

Well, it turns out there's more than one solution and Loveness' creativity on that front is reflective of his creativity throughout the whole series. His best friend Rocket Raccoon seems to be the only one able to translate Groot's verbal intentions and so scenes with him present are easy. Basically he becomes like the *Peanuts* kids who echo the requests of their teacher who only talks through a trombone. But if such an approach seems like a cop out, not to worry, Loveness ups the game by getting Rocket out of the picture. Rocket is taken hostage quite early on and Groot's rescue mission becomes the series arc. So now we're introduced to new ways of understanding Groot. He seeks mind-reading Marvel characters to lend a hand, his words are often in huge block letters in which Kesinger illustrates Groot's thoughts, but most importantly, there's an emphasis on the fact that we don't always need words to communicate. (Comic book people should appreciate this message more than most!) Context, of course, is a good clue as to what Groot's thinking, but Kesinger's highly expressive cartooning lends an even bigger hand. You know when Groot's happy, frustrated, sad, or angry as it's written all over his face.

Groot, which collects issues #1-6 of Groot's first solo comic, is a great addition to the *Guardians of the Galaxy* franchise. *Groot* is funny without being vulgar, packed with space opera adventure and surprisingly sensitive moments.

John Mutford

Public Services Librarian