



## The Joker

By *BRIAN AZZARELLO*

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### **The Joker** By BRIAN AZZARELLO

"You will be blown away."—AIN'T IT COOL NEWS

Brian Azzarello brings to **THE JOKER** all the visceral intensity and criminal insight that has made his Vertigo graphic novel series **100 BULLETS** one of the most critically acclaimed and award-winning series of all time.

This original graphic novel tells the story of one very dark night in Gotham City. The Joker has been mysteriously released from Arkham Asylum, and he's none too happy about what's happened to his Gotham City rackets while he's been "away." What follows is a harrowing night of revenge, murder and manic crime as only The Joker can deliver it, as he brutally takes back his stolen assets from The Penguin, The Riddler, Two-Face, Killer Croc and, of course, The Batman, and heaven help them all.

Told through the eyes of his loyal (but naive) henchman Jonny Frost, **JOKER** is a true noir crime novel: a harrowing journey into a city of rain-soaked streets, dirty sheets and nothing but bad choices.

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## The Joker By BRIAN AZZARELLO Bibliography

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## Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Building on Heath Ledgers performance in *The Dark Knight* (although long before the movies debut), Azzarello creates a memorably cringe-worthy story. Rather than a natty Clown Prince of Crime, this Joker looks like a glam rocker gone to toxic seed. Newly released from Arkham Asylum, he begins disorganizing the criminal establishment of Gotham City. Although he claims to want power and money when he confronts Two Face and his peers, he really seems just to enjoy playing with people—shooting them, setting them on fire or skinning them alive. Accompanying him is Jonny Frost, a young thug who takes a long time to recognize the drawbacks of seeing a vicious sociopath as a role model. Like Jonny, however, readers may find that, horrifying as the Joker is, they cant take their eyes off him. Even Batman, when he inevitably enters the action, functions largely as the Jokers partner in a dance of death. Azzarello has learned how to create a menacing, morally ambivalent atmosphere in his years of scripting *100 Bullets*, and Bermejoss jagged, shadow-saturated art sustains the mood. The result is fascinating but extremely dark. (Nov.) Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

From [Booklist](#)

Batman's preeminent foe comes to the fore, and the Caped Crusader makes only a fleeting appearance at the end in this graphic novel scripted by hard-boiled crime-comics author Azzarello that sees the Crime Clown, newly released from Arkham Asylum, attempting to take Gotham City back from the underworld figures who have carved it up in his absence. The story is told from the perspective of a small-time hood who stumbles into being the Joker's henchman. Azzarello's Joker hews closely to Heath Ledger's portrayal in the film *The Dark Knight*. He's a genuine psychopath, whose unpredictability is his strongest weapon. Chillingly cruel and criminally insane, he still isn't so outré that he couldn't conceivably exist in a non-comic-book world. Two-Face, the Penguin, and the Riddler are here, too, similarly muted compared to their usual comic-book personae and active in the most squalid version of Gotham City ever put on paper or celluloid, a sleazy milieu that Lee Bermejo's deliberately ugly artwork, aided by a muddily muted color scheme, well realizes. -Gordon Flagg

Review

"Disturbing, violent, oddly psychological and insanely wonderful." – USA WEEKEND

"If you liked "The Dark Knight," Joker is a must-have for your bookshelf." – MTV.com

"Terrific and disturbing." – THE VILLAGE VOICE

"One of the best written and illustrated comics to come out of a major publishing house this year." – THE SAN JOSE MERCURY NEWS

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