



Batman: Fortunate Son

Gerard Jones , Gene Ha (Illustrator) , Gloria Vasquez (Illustrator)

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When the Dark Knight suspects a modern-day rock-and-roll icon of masterminding a nationwide crime spree using teenaged fans as his henchmen, Batman runs into unexpected opposition from an unexpected source: his own ward, Robin. Certain that his idol is not guilty, Dick Grayson sets out to uncover a bizarre and elaborate frame-up in this dazzlingly illustrated graphic novel.

Batman: Fortunate Son Details

Date : Published August 1st 1999 by DC Comics

ISBN : 9781563895906

Author : Gerard Jones , Gene Ha (Illustrator) , Gloria Vasquez (Illustrator)

Format : Paperback 92 pages

Genre : Dc Comics, Batman, Sequential Art, Comics, Graphic Novels, Superheroes, Graphic Novels
Comics

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From Reader Review Batman: Fortunate Son for online ebook

Cody Tate says

This is the worst Batman story ever if I could give it negative stars I would

Rebecca says

The general plot points were great, unfortunately the actual writing was pretty terrible, especially the bits of songs.

Ming Siu says

Well, this was awful. The plot is ridiculous and doesn't work at all, Batman is essentially useless, and spends all his time looking very silly, prancing about in broad daylight. Batman and Robin are so completely out of character, you want to slap them.

J.M. Hushour says

As a Batman completist, you take the good with the bad. This would be one of the bad: Robin really likes this rock singer, who is lame, unimpressive, and is seeing hallucinations of Elvis telling him to destroy the Hollywood money-making machine via violence and mobs of his teenage fans. Batman hates music, especially punk music since it is heavily implied here that he was present but unable to stop Sid Vicious from killing what's-her-face. Nancy, right. You might be what-the-fuckin' already, but it gets better. Robin actually leaves the musically unappreciative Batman who secludes himself in the rock n' roll hall of fame to study the mystery of music to stop said possessed rock singer. No shit. And this was written in 1999. This isn't some wacky Silver Age tale where Batman and Egg Fu battle it out atop a giant alien kitchen appliance. Worst modern Batman story ever? Yes.

Jon says

This is the worst Batman book I have ever read. So let me get this straight Bruce Wayne became Batman because he let Sid Vicious kill Nancy? WTF

Danielle says

This is such a messy story: I picked it up randomly at the library and noticed the low rating once I got home, but figured I would read it anyway. I definitely agree with the majority here.

The conflict really comes off more like a *Scooby-Doo* plot with how cheesy it is. There's a lot of lecturing about the dangers of rock and roll that's comparable to today's debate on video games, which comes off especially poorly since neither have been linked to increasing bad behavior in participants.

The story focused way too much on one-time characters and what development they did have was confusing. The only part I really liked was Robin contrasting how he and Batman grew up, but that was barely touched on.

The story tries to hold a theme of rebellion, but it's a bunch of privileged kids fighting because they can. There's no heart to this story, and I don't see how we're supposed to sympathize for a mentally ill terrorist (something common we see today).

Sean says

Seriously?!?!? How on earth did this get past the drunken brainstorming stage? Here's the plot, Batman and Robin seriously argue over a "Rock 'N Roll" singer and whether he's bad for society while his evil manager manipulates him into craziness. We get a flashback to Bruce's early pre-Batman days and see why he hates punk music. And spoiler.....the manager is Elvis Pressley's (or the DC version) twin brother!! I can't believe I just typed that. Ridiculous stuff that would have been hilarious if it wasn't meant to be serious. The art by Gene Ha was decent despite Batman super pointy ears. Overall, there is no reason to read this unless you just don't believe that it actually exists.

Tanneke says

Dutch translation. Did not like the story or the characters at all...

Kenya Starflight says

I admit to not being a huge Batman fan, so perhaps I'm not the best judge of a Batman comic... but boy howdy, is this one terrible. I happened upon it in a list of terrible comic books, and the premise sounded so insane that I knew I had to give it a read myself. I'm not sure how wise that was, because this comic was bad, but not in the so-bad-it's-entertaining way. Sure, it's downright goofy and insane at times, but the sheer stupidity and ineptness of this title, coupled with mediocre art and downright incomprehensible dialogue, make it not worth the read even for the laughs factor.

"Batman: Fortunate Son" has the Caped Crusader and his sidekick, Robin, facing off not against any of Batman's usual suspects (The Joker, The Riddler, Two-Face, Mr. Freeze, Catwoman), but against a famous rock musician who seems to have gone off the deep end. Said rock musician, disillusioned with his fame and popularity and seeking some kind of return to the "true meaning of rock," has amassed a makeshift army of teenage followers who wreak havoc across the country as the musician himself follows his own hallucinations of the "God" of rock -- strongly implied to be Elvis Presley but not named for copyright reasons. Batman, driven by a personal vendetta against rock music, sets out to stop him... but finds himself butting heads with his own sidekick, as well as tangling with the musician's manager who has his own nefarious plans...

One of the key components in any graphic novel is the art, so let's get that out of the way first. This is not the worst artwork I've ever seen in a graphic novel... but it sure is ugly nonetheless. Expressions are exaggerated to cartoonish levels, action sequences are hard to follow, and the panel layout tends to be confusing and hard to follow. Some of the facial close-ups are downright grotesque, with weird facial expressions and lip curls. It's servicable, but barely so.

The writing in this graphic novel is awful. The dialogue is so clumsy it's nearly incomprehensible -- I often had to re-read passages to be sure of what the characters were saying. Often it feels like the dialogue was written in the style of rock lyrics, which is silly, as most people do NOT talk in rock lyrics in real life. As for the actual rock lyrics we do get... they're even worse. The story itself is hard to follow, jumping from one weird point to another and pausing in weird places to allow Batman to rant about how rock music turns people into violent psychopaths and rock played a role in killing his parents and ruining his life (yes, really). There's even a scene of Batman dragging Robin to Arkham Asylum to show him how most of the classic Batman rogues' gallery are rock fans. It's like Jack Chick wrote a Batman comic and hijacked it to write a screed about the evils of rock and roll.

And even though I'm not a huge Batman fan, I know enough about the character to feel like he's being portrayed quite out of character here. Not only does he do most of his sleuthing and crime-fighting in broad daylight in this cartoon, but he frequently brings the plot to a screeching halt to ramble about the evils of rock music, and it feels like he plays very little role in actually stopping the crazed musician or his evil manager. When Robin the Boy Wonder does more to solve the mysteries of the plot and bring about some kind of resolution than the Caped Crusader himself, you know there's a problem.

(view spoiler)

The most ludicrous part of this graphic novel is that, according to an afterward by the creators, it was supposed to be a TRIBUTE to rock and roll. I'm not sure how a graphic novel that messes up Batman's backstory, renders him out of character, and paints all fans and creators of rock and roll as dangerous psychopaths is supposed to be a tribute. This graphic novel won't appeal to much of anyone -- Batman fans, comic fans, rock and roll fans, or readers in general. If you're interested in an insane oddity in the Batman mythos, this might be worth a few bucks, but I recommend skipping it for your own sanity.

Yves says

J'ai très peu à dire sur cette bande dessinée à part le fait qu'elle soit très mauvaise. L'histoire tourne autour d'une vedette rock qui commet des actes criminels. On y voit un Batman complètement réactionnaire et qui semble sorti droit des années cinquante. Ce fut un ennui total de lire cette merde qui n'aurait jamais dû voir le jour. À éviter à tout prix!!

Lisa Berrie says

I found this hard to follow and a bit of a weak plot.

M says

Gerard Jones and Gene Ha collaborate to mesh the world of the Dark Knight with musical culture. The premise of the graphic novel sees Batman and Robin (Dick Grayson) at odds over a case involving famous musician Isaak Crowe. A down-and-out rock-and-roll star, Crowe seems to be inspiring a new generation of disenchanted youth to commit crimes in his name. While Batman has no doubt that the spree begins and ends with Crowe, Robin defies his mentor and looks for a way to prove his idol's innocence. The end result is a hodgepodge of a thinly-veiled Elvis love letter. The writing is poor, attempting to shove in as many musical genres and lyrics as possible in an attempt to seem hip and relevant. Batman's portrayal as a gruff father figure who disapproves of modern musical tastes - stemming from a punk rocker incident, no less - is typecasting at its worst. Naturally, Robin is played up as the groovy kid capable of understanding this era's music better than his mentor, and using it to fuel his teenaged rebellion. Toss in paper-thin Elvis references to plague Corve, a scheming manager, and an Arkham Asylum cameos of musical genres, and this book fizzles out entirely. Forget being a one-hit wonder; *Fortunate Son* is an album flop.

Scott says

There is a well-used, probably overused, phrase often heard these days. That phrase is **HOT MESS**, and it perfectly describes this book. Holy WTF?, Batman!

Wow, I simply want to know what they were smoking / downing / popping when DC put this on the market as the 20th century came to a close. Actually, forget that - the fact that this made it past the proverbial drawing board stage is mind-boggling.

And yet . . . I was enjoyably laughing at some of the awfulness, or maybe it was just outright strangeness (the brainwashed mob storming Graceland immediately comes to mind), of what I was seeing / reading in some scenes.

As a sincere fan of Elvis, the various '27 Club' musicians, and other deceased performers (who are alluded to throughout by illustration and/or inference) maybe I should be more insulted with the trashing of their personas. Like watching a horror movie when I was a youngster, I just remind myself that it's not real, only make believe.

The one thing this book was missing was the old chestnut about playing a rock song backwards to hear and be influenced by a satanic message. Somebody missed a bet on failing to include that urban legend.

Lashaan Balasingam (Bookidote) says

One of the most ridiculous stories involving the Batman done by someone other than Frank Miller himself. I'm quite surprised that a plot like this was even approved for release. Batman and Robin (Dick Grayson) argue over a rock star's intentions and the genre itself? This is one of the few adventures in the early days of Batman, and a little after Robin becomes his sidekick. The story was filled with an over-saturated amount of absurd and unnecessary lyrics. Some panels were filled with text that just had no good purpose at all. The artwork was average (Robin really looks funny with his lips standing out like that; while Batman's costume really... doesn't look fear-inducing at all). There are even lines in this where they start to make a joke out of

Batman; I just couldn't enjoy much of this at all.

This was definitely a weird Batman tale. It barely even had the dynamic duo in it's 90 pages. It felt like it had a more ideological purpose regarding rock-and-roll, than telling a good story with Batman and Robin in the front seat.

P.S. A full review to come.

Yours truly,

Lashaan | Blogger and Book Reviewer
Official blog: <http://bookidote.wordpress.com>

Brent says

I had completely forgotten this since reading it upon publication. Finding it at the library, it's ok, a Batman and Robin meet rock and roll story in 80+ pages that might have appeared in one twenty comic book issue written by Mike Friedrich, Frank Robbins, or Denny O'Neil circa 1970-1971.

That said, I rally like the work of this writer and artist here. Gerry Jones throws some nice allusions and nods to critic Dave Marsh, to an Elvis-like character only with hair disturbingly blond, even a broad portrayal of Bruce Wayne tied up with Sid Viscious and Nancy Spungeon. (!) Robin gets the best bits here, as a teenage music fan. Gene Ha's Batman is credible, different, a realistic version of the 1939-style costume and a modern Batmobile, with the cowl eye-slits wide open, not opaque, making for a rather different portrayal. It works.

The musicians and managers portrayed are mawkish and don't work so well. Supporting characters don't work much, but the Batman, Robin, and Gotham scenes are well done, and worth reading.

The sweetest bit is an afterward, dedicated to editor and great spirit Archie Goodwin, much missed. This was among the last projects he commissioned, and it's a sweet remembrance. I loved Goodwin's yearlong run on Detective Comics, 1973-4, introducing Jim Aparo on Batman's solo adventures, as well as great artists including Alex Toth, and Walt Simonson's work with him on Manhunter.

This book is recommended for fans of Batman and these fine creators.
