



## Savage Town

*Declan Shalvey , Philip Barrett (Artist) , Jordie Bellaire (Colourist)*

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In Limerick City, Jimmy 'Hardy' Savage is a gangster on the rise, facing trouble from all sides. With the local cops, rival gangs, his best mate and his mammy all out to stick a knife in him, will the bollocks live long enough to get to the top? More importantly, will he pay me back for that fiver I gave him last week?

From the savage minds of DECLAN SHALVEY (All Star Batman, Injection), PHILIP BARRETT and JORDIE BELLAIRE (Vision, They're Not Like Us) comes an original Irish graphic crime novel that'll leave you gaspin' ...for a pint!

## Savage Town Details

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Author : Declan Shalvey , Philip Barrett (Artist) , Jordie Bellaire (Colourist)

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# **From Reader Review Savage Town for online ebook**

## **Blair says**

Kind of standard gangster fare, but the Limerick setting and Irish accents provide a point of difference. There's some bumbling humour mixed in with shocking violence. Definitely worth a look.

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## **Alex Sarll says**

I'd always assumed that crime comics set on the Emerald Isle wherein shambolic villains say 'gobshite' and 'bollix' in between bursts of violence were a Garth Ennis monopoly, but a jacket quote here indicates that he's given this his blessing, so shows what I know. Apparently based on a true story - though at what point on the spectrum between March and Fargo, I couldn't tell you - this is the tale of low-rent Limerick crook Jimmy Savage, squeezed between two bigger gangs. And what tends to happen in crime stories where there are two big gangs and a wily third party? Exactly. Shalvey takes to writing much better than many artists on their first attempt; Barrett's art is on the crude side (I'm not sure it needed Bellaire colours), but that works for the project. The combined result is bleak, brutal and blackly comic.

(Edelweiss ARC)

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## **Annette Jordan says**

A gritty and humorous tale set in Limerick, with a whole lot of heart. I loved the decision to have the characters speak in the local accent, though I do accept that makes some of the dialogue difficult to follow for readers from outside Ireland. The title, *Savage Town* works on so many levels, as is clearly and cleverly pointed out at the end of the book, and the story being told will appeal to any fan of a gangland/ noir type story. The characters are well realised, and avoid the trap of becoming caricatures, and the section at the end of the book which follows their design and development gives a good insight into the amount of thought that went into their creation. The layout is clear and easy to follow, and the artwork really fits well with the story being told. The real highlight of the book for me is its dark humor, both in the dialogue and the artwork, and I feel sure it's a book I will come back to and read again.

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## **Layne says**

Love a good gangster story. Love the Irish dialect and slang. Had to look up "beore" and "gowl."

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## **Sonic says**

Superb art drew me in to this breath of fresh air. That this took place in Ireland added an extra level of interest, but it is also quite interesting that this story could have taken place anywhere.

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## Cale says

My best reference to this is a Guy Ritchie movie, like Lock, Stock and Two Smoking Barrels, or Snatch. Except it's not that good. Savage is a low level criminal in Limerick City, who, manages to fall up through a gang war. Literally, the reason he succeeds is because his associates screw up so bad it leads to a massive shootout. There's some slice-of-life aspects of the story as well, which have some value, but even that story includes people being horrible to each other. The book is written in heavy dialect, which makes a relatively quick read take longer as you have to decipher the text. The art is simple and effective for the most part, aside from the fact that most of the male characters look alike.

I don't know - it's a different kind of comic than what I normally read, and maybe that's why it didn't work for me. But if I want North Country gang violence, I think I'll stick to Guy Ritchie.

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## Nigel says

Perhaps a good new year's resolution would be to get back to doing these reviews as soon as I finish the dang book rather than letting a pile of them grow into an imposing heap until they're due back in the library in an hour and I have to rush through them. Yeah, let's give that ago.

Didn't read many crime novels last year, but this was one of the best crime novels I've read in ages. Big part of it has to be the amazing depiction of Limerick low-lives, accurate in terms of brilliant visuals and vernacular dialogue presented in non-ironic way - a very easy accent to mock or dismiss but as rich and lively as it is loud and blunt. The small-time crooks and wheelers and dealers are depicted with the sort of humanity that makes their worse actions more chilling, but the whole thing is a big bold thriller about small fish Jimmy Savage swimming between the controlling crime families, caught up in a series of violent blunders that lead to a gang war. He has his own family and friends and to deal with as well as his own ambitions and betrayals. A fantastic read, lovely art. Incredibly well done.

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## Chad says

I wanted to like this more. It's a solid premise based on a true story. Jimmy Savage's upstart gang starts a war between 2 bigger rivals. I know the dialog is authentic, but as an American, I had no idea what they were saying most of the time. It made it very difficult for me to get into the story.

*Received an advance copy from Edelweiss and Image in exchange for an honest review.*

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## Donovan says

Savage Town is just that, savage. Which, as I learned through reading this, is Irish slang for badass.

This is an Irish crime comic, something I've never seen before. Declan Shalvey, a longtime illustrator, is a great writer with a knack for authentic dialog. The story starts slow then explodes with gangster violence and complexity. Jimmy Savage is very much that relatable yet monstrous character, like HBO's mob boss Tony Soprano.

Philip Barrett is a cross between Daniel Clowes and Hergé, with clean lines, good visual flow, emotive faces, and subtle detail. Jordie Bellaire is an incredible colorist, she just is, and she can do anything, even a subdued crime comic. And Clayton Cowles does great cartoony lettering.

I was fascinated by the dialog and small town crime politics. The artwork is different but refreshing, surprisingly minimal and clean where you'd expect rough and gritty. And there are plenty of plot threads and character development for several more volumes. Don't overlook this one!

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### **Kenny says**

Unrelenting tension in this gangster drama Irish style.

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### **Dan Clark says**

DeClan Shalvey is a comic book veteran known more for his art than his words, but with Savage Town he focuses on storytelling while Philip Barrett takes up the art. Shalvey made a risky choice having his characters speak in their authentic tongue and all its phonetic goodness. You would think reading it on page would be easier to listening to it but not always. This is when using context clues and you inferencing skills are put to test. If you can settle in and go with it Shalvey puts to together a solid yet at times sloppy crime caper in the vein of early Guy Ritchie films, minus the sense of humor.

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### **Amy says**

Ultraviolent gang wars in Limerick. Deciphering the dialect was fun. The triple-crossing was confusing sometimes. The art wasn't bad, but I've seen better from these creators.

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### **Paul Allard says**

An indictment of Irish working class criminal life - not particularly good

Lowlifes co-existing in Ireland involved in a variety of criminal activities provide the basis for this comic collection. Gang warfare results in bloodshed and death. Without any sympathetic characters, it's not much fun.

The illustrations are not particularly clear which means that it's easy to forget who the characters are. As one might expect, there's an abundance of swearing so those of a sensitive nature, this is not for you. Not really

my “bag” as you may have gathered.

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## **Andy Luke says**

Spoonfuls of Guy Ritchie, Roddy Doyle, Irvine Welsh and Tarantino here. 4.5!

From cover to cover Declan Shalvey writes an wonderfully hilarious and a bloody thriller set among the organised crime mobs of Limerick, Ireland. There's a keen ear for dialogue (it's loaded with accent-heavy colloquialisms), and a penchant for unusual scenarios, perhaps comparable to the underground comics of Phil Barrett. Barrett illustrates, in one of his early big canvas graphic novels. He gets to delight the reader with grand city-scapes and ranged expressions across their Wire-sized cast of characters. Jordie Bellaire colours, and they're suited perfectly to Barrett's funny faces and establishing a strong style. Very strong partnership and I hope this team reunite to produce another. Far and ahead the best example of an Irish contemporary graphic novel. You may have to read it twice, but that's a blessing.

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