



The Batman Adventures: Mad Love and Other Stories

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Tales by two of the creators behind the acclaimed *Batman* animated TV series!

The centerpiece of this fantastic collection is the Eisner Award-winning MAD LOVE, the surprisingly dark origin of Harley Quinn, co-starring The Joker and Poison Ivy as well as Batman. Also included are tales by Dini, Timm and others that feature the Scarecrow, Ra's Al Ghul, Mr. Freeze, Batgirl and more.

The Batman Adventures: Mad Love and Other Stories Details

Date : Published May 26th 2009 by DC Comics

ISBN : 9781401222451

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Format : Hardcover 208 pages

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



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From Reader Review The Batman Adventures: Mad Love and Other Stories for online ebook

Robert says

Mostly brilliant, very much cut from the same cloth as Batman: The Animated Series, as one would fully expect given the participation of Messers Dini and Timm.

The tone felt a little off in places as the stories could veer into some surprisingly dark territory (the relationship between Joker and Harley Quinn is depicted as being quite physically abusive, there is also (implied) date rape, the fatal bombing of an office building and a gruesome murder before all's said and done, which is all in pretty stark juxtaposition to stories featuring "fun" characters like Batgirl or Roxy. Also, the 7 page hallucination sequence contained in the Etrigan story was over-the-top, as even the creators admit in the afterword.

Still, definitely a good read for all you Bat-fans out there!

Sesana says

Mad Love is the headliner in this collection of Batman stories that seem to share only a Batman: The Animated Series aesthetic. Mad Love is, of course, the origin story of Harley Quinn, and it's by far the best of the lot. It was eventually adapted into an episode of the cartoon series, with only slight changes. It's pitch-perfect, even if a little frantic in pacing. The dialog was dead-on for all of the characters. Far and away the best story in the collection by me. But I'm a huge fan of Batman:TAS, and especially of that version of Joker, so I've got a major bias.

The other stories are pretty good, but honestly no match for Mad Love. There's a mini-anthology about various members of the Rogue's Gallery trying and failing to go legit. It's solid, even if framed around the relatively weak Roxy character. The best of these is the Ventriloquist's vignette. Next is a Batgirl-focused Christmas story, and then a teamup with Etrigan. Both are good, if not particularly memorable stories. Last is a story from Batman Black and White, a heartbreaking Two-Face story that is nearly as good as Mad Love.

Everything that is good and right about TAS is right here. There's a reason why this was the next Batman story I read after All-Star Batman and Robin. This take on Batman, and all of the assorted characters, remains my favorite.

A few more notes: the book also includes some commentary by Dini and Timm, about Mad Love and the other stories, and includes some altered sequences. (Barbara changing into her Batgirl costume while in the middle of a holiday shopping crowd was... ill advised. Glad they changed that one.) Some of the dialog between Harley and Joker was used, almost verbatim, in the amazingly good Arkham Asylum game.

Anna says

More like 2.5 stars. Seriously NOT a fan of the artwork in this one, though I can see why many people would

be. It's basically cut right from an episode of Batman: The Animated Series. Not my thing though. I did like seeing Harley as a semi-complex character, instead of a childish, dumb and oversexualized bimbo with some sort of split personality disorder (how else do you explain her former life as a doctor in the New 52?) yet to be identified. Overall, fun, but more for kids or fans of the show from ye olden days (which are also known as the 90s in some circles).

Lashaan Balasingam (Bookidote) says

You can find my review on my blog by clicking [here](#).

Have I mentioned how big of a fan I am of the classic Batman: The Animated Series (1992-1995)? It is the prime example of quantity and quality in television, and it withstands the test of time like no other animation today. Developed by Bruce Timm with major contribution as a writer by Paul Dini, the show has lived long enough to be known by fans as an indisputable classic in the superhero game. The recent true story shared by Paul Dini himself in the graphic novel *Dark Knight: A True Batman Story* also cemented my utmost respect and love for the mastermind behind some of the greatest stories out there. Do you know what else he is credited for in his long list of accomplishments as a creator? The origin story of the punny and crazy clown character known as Harley Quinn.

In *Batman: Mad Love and Other Stories*, writer Paul Dini and artist Bruce Timm collaborate to create one of the most iconic stories ever conceived in DC Comics' history. Unveiling not only the deranged transformation of Arkham Asylum's psychiatrist Dr. Harleen Frances Quinzel into the strangely beloved sidekick of Joker, it also highlights the unrequited love that has taken form in an abusive relationship from which she struggles to exit yet longs to believe in. The story thus presents us her hopeless attempt to seduce the Joker of her worthiness as she takes it upon herself to finish off the one person getting in her way of obtaining the Joker's complete and undivided attention, and that's none other than Batman himself. This volume also contains several stories of varying quality that either Paul Dini or Bruce Timm have worked on and that withholds the characteristic artwork style of *Batman: The Animated Series*.

Many do not like the very foundation on which the infamous relationship between Harley Quinn and Joker is based on, but the origin story shows that it is not glorified and that the consequences, through light humour, of such a toxic relationship are real. Then again, no one said that these two villains were to be put on a pedestal to be the example to follow in real-life. The origin story we get here is quite brilliantly conceived and truly delivers Harley's personality without ever stumbling. The puns are hilarious, the dialogues are kept to a minimum and always delivers the punch, and the artwork is heavily reminiscent of the classic Batman animated TV series. The latter even gives this story an edge as the style is too iconic to despise and easily pulls on your nostalgic cords to make each read a memorable and fun one.

All the other stories that are added in this collection tackle various different themes, and are all entertaining in their own way. Most of them also tackle ideas of rehabilitation, such as the first story in *Batman Adventures Annual #1* where Scarecrow, Harley Quinn and the Ventriloquist vainly attempt to diverge from their life of villainy. The last story from *Batman: Black and White #1* called *Two of a Kind* is also beautiful and cruel as it shows Harvey Dent being cured from his dissociative identity disorder. Although short, its ending will leave you feeling a void in your heart and in awe at Two-Face's inevitable fate. There are also other stories with less relevance but yet still so entertaining, such as Batman seeking the help of Etrigan to stop Ra's Al-Ghul from bringing chaos to Gotham, or the holiday special featuring Batgirl as a thief is on the loose in a shopping mall.

In this yet-again sterling creation, Paul Dini delivers with the help of Bruce Timm the origin story to one of the greatest—or at least iconic—villains whose mad love for the Joker draws an abusive relationship that defines their dynamite duo.

Yours truly,

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

Ayman Gomaa says

Beautiful drawings with many good stories specially
Batman Black & White: Two of A Kind 5/5 introducing Harvey Dent
Mad Love 5/5 Joker And the birth of his Queen Harley Quinn <3

Clarissa says

Harley, why you so obsessed with this psychopath?! Homeboy's not even impressive haha

This definitely felt like a throwback to Batman: The Animated Series. There is lightness here that you don't always get with Batman, especially nowadays. I always like reading about Harley's background, how awesome she (*cough* she got closer to killing Batman than you did, Joker. *cough* Even he said it *cough*), and the fact that she's in her original costume! Yes, it is very form fitting but at least her skin is covered.

Her relationship with the Joker will always make me cringe but here it is not portrayed in a romantic light. The struggle of wanting and not wanting out of an abusive relationship comes through a bit.

The dialog fits all the characters perfectly and the artwork makes me feel like I'm watching the cartoon again. Shut up, I know I'm a child! :P

Sam Quixote says

Paul Dini created Harley Quinn and in "Mad Love", together with artist Bruce Timm, he writes the origin story of the character where we find out she was a psychologist at Arkham who fell for the Joker's charms in a Stockholm-syndrome kind of way. The "other stories" in the title feature a variety of villains such as the short-lived "Roxanne 'Roxy Rocket' Sutton", a jewel thief who flies around on a rocket with an old-timey ray gun, the Ventriloquist, Scarecrow, Catwoman, Two-Face, Poison Ivy, Clayface, as well as Ra's Al-Ghul, Talia, and Etrigan who feature in the second long story arc.

The book is great fun to read and, as a fan of the animated series from the 90s, it felt like I was reading episodes from that series, especially as Dini and Timm basically ran that series for years. Harley Quinn is a

fine villain and has developed into a more interesting character over time but it's still good to see where it all began and "Mad Love" is a must-read for all Batman fans. Just don't expect the overly dark Batman of today in this book as the stories are cartoony and light (most of the time).

Artemy says

The stories here are nice and sweet, but a bit too campy for my taste. I never watched Dini's Batman animated series, so I don't have any nostalgic feelings about this kind of stories, and I am more used to the more realistic and darker Batman. Still, it was a pretty fun and refreshing read, especially after the travesty that was the Suicide Squad movie. It's like, each time DC releases yet another shitty movie, I at least feel obligated to read a better comic, so that's something, eh?

As a side note, no way in hell am I going to watch Hack Snyder's Justice League. Fool me thrice, DC.

Brandon says

If you're a fan of the 90s animated series and haven't read this collection then what's wrong with you? Don't be like me and wait years and years to crack the pages of this glorious book.

Contained within this compilation is the headlining, "Mad Love" in which we're treated to the origin story of Harley Quinn, Joker's obsessive girlfriend. After many flashbacks, Harley plans to once and for all end the one constant distraction in her relationship with the clown prince of crime - Batman!

Mad Love is spectacular! It felt like I had stepped into a time machine when I started reading. It took me back to the tender age of eight as I sat on my living room floor watching Batman take out the bad guys in the animated series. This was a group of adventures and stories that I had never known!

The other stories are also excellent including a particularly heartbreak Two Face story as well as an awesome Christmas tale! I very much doubt that the average Batman fan can find anything within these pages to dislike, especially when you have writer Paul Dini once again teaming with artist Bruce Timm.

Gabriela says

Mad Love was the only story that was worth the time, but it was a hell of a story! The style, similar to the 90's animated tv series was beautiful and made me feel so nostalgic.

It was great to see the original take on Harley Quinn's backstory and how she used to behave compared to more recent approaches. And the commentary was so touching, I really enjoyed it.

Mary Rose says

~~En realidad la puntuación es de un 4,5 pero aún no tenemos esa dichosa opción de agregar una media estrella así que mi modo.~~

Amor loco y otras historias era una lectura que tenía pendiente desde hace unos meses y que doy gracias de no haberla pospuesto por más tiempo hasta hace un par de días. Empezaré con lo obvio: **ME HA ENCANTADO**. Y no hablo solamente por *Amor loco*, sino también que incluyo el resto de las historias que recopilan el tomo y que he disfrutado cada una de ellas.

Amor loco fue una de mis favoritas (además de que era la razón por la cual quería leer este recopilatorio de historias). Me asombró ver como una mujer fuerte y segura como Harleen Quinzel se haya convertido en Harley Quinn: una mujer enamorada, obsesionada y dependiente de un payaso psicopata y homicida. Se me hizo increíble en ver ese momento en que ella comienza a ver al Joker como, citando las propias palabras de Harley, un "alma torturada que pedía a gritos amor y aceptación"... Al igual del hecho de que ella culpa a Batman por arruinar su relación con el Joker.

¡Batman! ¡¡Siempre ha sido Batman!! ¡Siempre ha estado ahí para arruinar mi vida y cortarme el rollo!

No hay duda que es la clase de amor que puede llevar a un de obsesión y de locura del cual puede terminar rematadamente mal, especialmente si se trata de un amor tóxico, y continué como una especie de bucle sin fin. Supongo que se me hace difícil comprender como es que alguien como Harley haya terminado enamorada del Joker; pero bueno, como dice Paul Dini en el Prolólogo del tomo: "Bienvenido al mundo de Harley Quinn".

A todo esto, me termino gustando mucho (más de lo que esperaba) y algo me dice que no será la última vez que lea algo de Harley o del Joker o de Batman.

En cuanto al resto de las historias que componen el volumen me han gustado que cada uno se enfocase a un villano diferente como Catwoman, Scarface o Ra's Al Ghul y otros más. De todas, me quedó con *Demonios*, que fue un cómic muy impresionante y épico (por así decirlo); *La sala de estudios y Espectáculo de marionetas*, no pensé que me iban a gustarme tanto (sobretodo el primero); *Tal para cual*, simplemente triste y, en cierta forma, muy trágico; y *El alegre San Nicolás*, que me dio muchísima risa por no mencionar que aparece Batgirl.

Pero usted no lo sabía, ¿verdad? No quería conocer a la auténtica Molly Randall. Para usted, no era nada más que otra cara bonita, otra diversión para una noche.

Amor loco y otras historias ha sido un volumen que me ha gustado bastante y que me encantaría volver a releerlo una, dos, cinco o diez veces (o al punto de perder la cuenta). Aunque me encantaría leer más historias de Batman o de sus villanos.

~~P.D: Nunca se me olvidará ese momento en que Batman le echa en cara al Joker sobre lo cerca que estuvo por morir en manos de Harley y ese "pastelito".~~

Aliix says

Todos en algún momento de nuestras vidas tuvimos un "Mad Love"..

Quintin Zimmermann says

One of the most well executed origin stories, organically delivered with pathos and emotional depths which lends understanding to Harley's innate nature.

WortGestalt says

Eine spaßige Comicgeschichte, die von den Schöpfern der legendären Batman-Zeichentrickserie Paul Dini und Bruce Timm aus den 1990er Jahren stammt und dabei vor allem mit Selbironie und Humor zu überzeugen weiß. Der eher harmlose Charakter verleiht dem ganzen einen Retro-Charme und macht vor allem eins, gute Laune! Und die Story wurde nicht umsonst mit dem Eisner- und Harvey-Award ausgezeichnet.

Neben "Mad Love", der Hauptstory dieses Sammelbandes, die gleichzeitig die Herkunftsgeschichte Harley Quinns und ihrer Verbindung zum Joker aufzeigt, enthält dieses Paperback auch die 3-teilige Mini-Serie "Harley und Ivy" aus dem Jahr 2004 sowie den Comic "Batgirl: Tag Eins" aus dem Jahre 1993, in dem Harley Quinn ihren ersten Auftritt in gedruckter Form hatte. Ein Jahr zuvor wurde sie von Paul Dini und Bruce Timm für eine Episode der Zeichentrickserie erstmals zum Leben erweckt.

Eli says

Dialogue: A

Artwork: A+

Plot: A

Characters: A

I rated all those categories very well, but I just can't rate this a four. I think the three star/"liked it" is most appropriate because I did like this. Maybe it's just too short and a little too comical for a four star rating.

But I loved the artwork in this. It was the 1990s cartoon artwork, and it just really worked for this story. It made some of the scenes that would have maybe been violent or dark in any other art seem a little comical. On one hand, this was a good thing and I liked the mood it gave off. On the other hand, it made Harley Quinn's origin story more of a joke. I mean, she loves the Joker so it seems fitting, but she actually has a pretty rough and depressing origin story.

At the end of this, Bruce Timm (illustrator) wrote that Harley's origin story was inspired by a female friend of his that was struggling in an abusive relationship until she finally left "her Joker." That was pretty cool and a little known fact, I imagine.

Overall, I don't know that I would consider this mandatory reading aside from the fact that I believe it's Harley Quinn's origin story.
