



Adamtine

Hannah Berry

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All people could do was speculate on the fate of those who vanished - strangers; seemingly random, unconnected: all plucked from their lives and never seen again. The notes found left behind, apparently describing some slender reason for their removal, were all that linked them. They were all delivered by one man.

Rodney Moon had admitted seeing those who had been disappeared and to passing the notes, but denied any involvement beyond that. Who wrote the letters, then? Moon shrugged during the trial: 'It has no name,' he said. 'It's a bogeyman. A monster.'

He was not mourned when the vengeful bereft finally found him.

Some years later, four strangers; seemingly random, unconnected, all take the last train home. But something each of them has forgotten - or is trying to forget - is catching up with them; with a terrible, inexorable purpose. The devil is in the detail, as they say.

Adamtine Details

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Author : Hannah Berry

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From Reader Review Adamtine for online ebook

Mary says

I was confused the whole time.

Fátima López Sevilla says

Hannah Berry has an amazing way of telling horror stories in graphic novel version, because horror stories lean mainly on our imaginations and what we "see" and doing so is extremely difficult when the images are an important part of your story-telling.

Not only the art is beautiful and clean and classy, but it doesn't go in the way of the reader's imagination at all.

I'm just angry at myself for not knowing about this talented woman before.

Dominick says

This is an effectively creepy horror graphic novel, rendered all the more effective by the almost entire absence of violence and gore. The narrative is a bit tangled--past and present intertwine, and one must be careful to pay attention to all minor details to work it out--but it tracks the fates of a handful of people who all contributed in one way or another to the disappearance and probable murder of a man who was acquitted of but widely believed to be guilty of serial kidnappings, the victims of which were never found. It remains unclear whether this fellow, Mr. Moon, was in fact the kidnapper or the confederate of someone else, and if the latter, whether that someone else was human or supernatural. The fates of the main characters, however, is clearly supernaturally effected, as they end up on a train stopped in a tunnel, with the other passengers mysteriously vanished, and the train itself inescapable. Trains have long been fruitful sites for stories of horror and mystery, with their symbolic as well as literal associations with being in interstitial space. Berry's main successes here are twofold. They depend, first, on her focus on mood; the impact of the graphic novel is largely determined by its muted visual tones and its deliberate pacing; though Berry varies page design a lot, she generally keeps the novel progressing at a measured pace, with a few key exceptions near the end. The mood thereby created is suspenseful and mysterious, creating a growing sense of unease rather than shocks. Second, she deliberately does not resolve key mysteries. What happened to the kidnap victims? (Unknown.) What happened to Moon? (Almost certainly murdered by relatives of one of the kidnap victims, but we can't be sure.) What is happening to those on the train now? Again, we can't be sure. Clearly, some sort of supernatural agency is punishing them, but whether a force of good (they are being punished for their own transgressions, in classic horror-comic style) or evil (they are victims of an unknowable monster, in classic horror style) is unknowable. This is one that would stand up well to rereading and careful attention, I think.

Melanie MacMillan says

I liked this and read it sitting up in bed Sunday morning with a cup of tea, but it's one of those graphic novels

you really need to read in one sitting or it's not going to make a whole lot of sense. Essentially it's about revenge and who gets their come-up-ance, but I didn't love it because it left me wanting more of the present day story, more of the back story, and whether or not the ultimate fate of the characters was supernatural or just an allegory for accepting the consequences of the choices they made. It just felt like....not quite enough. Pretty creepy in parts though.

D.M. says

Our library stocks very few graphic novels (though probably not, relative to how many books they have overall), so when something new shows up I tend to check it out. This one turned up today, I'd never heard of it or its author before, but thought it looked at least worth a glance. It was so compelling, I read it within about a half-hour non-stop. There's something about Berry's style, graphically and literally, that harkens back to some of my favourite British indie comic talents of the 90s, so maybe that makes this more a winner for me personally. However, the story is a quiet, faintly chilling one reminiscent of the original Twilight Zone at its creepiest, but with a very modern edge. Even the ending, though unsatisfying from a what-the-hell-is-going-on-here standpoint, fits perfectly to the tone of the story. Dark and disturbing and utterly involving.

I don't often give books 5 stars, and it's been a long time since I read a totally new-to-me comic that just blew me away, but this one did. I'll probably read it again tomorrow.

(Update: I did. In fact, I've read it four or five times since June...and the wife got me my own copy in October!)

Lisa Macklem says

The art is beautiful and I love how the borders and panels help to tell the story. Love the use of light passages and dark passages to differential parts of the story. I liked that the story really makes you think - it's a true mystery - made more mysterious by the definite post-modern flavor storytelling. This is definitely a story that I will have to come back to again, and it's the kind that I'm sure I'll find more in with each visit. I liked that the horror/monster was rather nebulous. This also lends itself to some shifting depending on the reader's mood. Is it there own guilt? Is it some dark force? Is it Moon?

Casey says

The story is ok. The backstory to the story sounds more interesting though. Characters are fairly flat but they've a bit of shading to them. Not a fan of the art style, though there were neat uses of the panels and pages.

Jon Shanks says

Dark, moody, atmospheric. Reads like an episode from a horror anthology. A simple set-up: a set of strangers (or so it appears) on a train broken down in the middle of nowhere being picked off one-by-one, with a series of flashbacks filling in the gaps as to a possible motive. A thriller and a mystery that doesn't

spoonfeed its readers and will keep you both guessing and in suspense until the very end.

Stacie says

Adamtine was delightfully creepy. I'm not fully sure what I just read, as the ending was open-ended, but it did give me the feeling of unease that I was looking for. I wish the story was fleshed out and explained a bit more, but I suppose it's keeping me wondering and that makes it a notch more unsettling. If you like spooky and suspenseful stories, this one is a really quick, interesting read.

Selina Lock says

Four strangers are on the last train home when it stops and they find they are the only ones left in the darkness. Alongside this storyline is one concerning Rodney Moon's acquittal and disappearance. Rodney is thought to be a mass murderer as he was the last man to see a random collection of people before they went missing. He always maintained his innocence, that he merely passed notes on to those people from the bogeyman.

This is a complex story, which slowly unfolds in a number of flashbacks which are interwoven with the train storyline. Berry does a wonderful job of conveying a slow, creeping horror and tense atmosphere. Keeping the mystery involving right up to the end of the book.

The connections between all the characters are skilfully revealed, but not immediately obvious, so I think that a re-read will be very rewarding in spotting the more subtle clues.

One of the things that makes the book compelling is Berry's superb artwork. Considering that many of the panels depict the interior of a train or close-ups of people's faces it manages to keep everything looking interesting. Partly due to the choice of panel shots and the sense of character emerging from people's expressions. The colour palette also evokes the right atmosphere and has one of the best uses of black in any comic I've seen. Though due to the darkness of some pages I would suggest reading this in good light so you don't miss any of the details.

Kristian Dobson says

Baffling and spooky. Not sure exactly what happened in the end but I was engrossed from the first moments all the way to the end. The premise is shrouded in glorious mystery. Don't expect easy answers here. This is a deeply fascinating and complex work, like a twisted *Twilight Zone* episode for the new age. The artwork is great too. It perfectly captures the tone. I'll have to read this again soon too see what else it will reveal.

5/5

Andrea says

I thought her first book - *Britten and Brulightly* - was terrific, both in story and illustration. I was

disappointed in this. The story was hard to follow, partly because the characters looked so much alike, and partly because there just wasn't much there; and the illustrations weren't as stunning.

I'll still look forward to whatever Berry's next project is.

Barbara says

Maybe more 2.5? The story was rather dark, and quite confusing. By the end, most of the pieces fell into place, but it wasn't really fun to puzzle things out. Part of the problem for me was that I found various characters' faces quite similar, so at times I wasn't entirely sure who was supposed to be who. I just looked up what the title might mean, and actually found a very useful answer and discussion of the book here: <http://www.consequential.net/2013/ada...>

It still doesn't make me like the book very much, but I can acknowledge that the book is doing what it is doing better than I had at first realized.

Travis Duke says

I read this pretty casually but that was a mistake. Adamtine has a complex and mysterious story lurking in the details and it's easy to read right past everything and you will be left dumbfounded and probably unsatisfied like me. Does that make this a good read? maybe. it is a tough call. Even after reading some online explanations i wasn't totally satisfied. If something has to be explained or re-read 2-3 times, does that make it good? for me, not really. I do appreciate a good mystery and a fair amount of ambiguity but this is just a hair too much. I am being over critical but i did like it, it is interesting in a good way. It is also much better than her former story britten and brulighly which i disliked pretty heavily. the art is ok, some of the faces look very similar and i wasn't keen on that.

Brian Mulhall says

This was hella gimmicky (the timeline structure is a mess) and the artwork sometimes was confusing. The only reason this doesn't get a bad rating is because it's blissfully short and atmospheric - the idea of hurtling through a near empty train late at night carries its own creepiness!
