



Spaceman

Brian Azzarello , Eduardo Riso (Illustrations)

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Brian Azzarello and Eduardo Risso – the Eisner Award-winning creators of 100 BULLETS – return to Vertigo with their new interstellar mystery SPACEMAN, collected here in DC's Deluxe format.

SPACEMAN tells the story of Orson, a hulking, lonely loser who spends his days collecting scrap metal and dreaming of the star-trekking life he was genetically engineered for. When Orson finds himself at the center of a celebrity child kidnapping case, he sees a chance to raise himself out of his sad life and become a hero, but a hero's life may not be the life he thought it would be.

This new hardcover collects the entire nine issue miniseries, plus the short story from STRANGE ADVENTURES #1.

Spaceman Details

Date : Published November 13th 2012 by Vertigo (first published November 7th 2012)

ISBN : 9781401235529

Author : Brian Azzarello , Eduardo Risso (Illustrations)

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Genre : Sequential Art, Comics, Graphic Novels, Science Fiction, Fiction, Graphic Novels Comics

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From Reader Review Spaceman for online ebook

Sonia says

Rating: 3.5-4 stars

Let me start out by saying that I got this as a Goodreads giveaway: Thank you!

I was really excited to receive this (I love Azzarello's graphic novels), but ended up being abroad when this came in the mail so I just got my hands on it.

What I liked:

The art was simply marvelous and I liked the dark and grimy aspect of this book. Also, overall the story was interesting and intriguing.

What I did not like:

Sometimes the language that was used here got a bit distracting and the story became harder to read. Also, I wish there was more connection between the two stories...

Overall, this was an interesting read. I expected a bit more from such a talented duo, but it was an enjoyable read. I'd recommend this to sci-fi and graphic novel fans.

Neil says

This was a big disappointment. And I started reading it without knowing a single thing about it, absolutely no expectation whatsoever.

First thing you'll notice is the language. It's set halfway-between-now-and-dystopia in the future, where everyone speaks a cockney/patois, like in Trainspotting. Normally that kind of thing annoys me, but I'll give it some points for making the setting seem a little more real.

The main character is clearly genetically engineered, mostly human, but with some primate dna, which apparently was beneficial for space travel to Mars, seemingly at the cost of some brain power. You initially think his gutter language is intended to reinforce that, but then everyone other seemingly average-intelligence-or-better character also speaks that way, so it just feels weird.

Anyway, this main character is now back on Earth, scraping by collecting junk metal in the bay of a city after waters have risen, with occasional flashbacks to his stint on Mars with other half-apes. The story proceeds into some biting satire of reality tv and rich moviestars adopting from poor foreign countries, and you feel like it might actually go somewhere.

Despite those minor drawbacks, I kept thinking: this is actually pretty original, and that impressed me. But the endingS (both the "present" and flashback) wound up to be complete crap. I suppose they felt that the "present" ending was just more of the same biting satire, but it was just a total mess.

Kurt Russell says

Do not expect anything revelatory here. Despite its flashy future-speak, the story is woefully stale and boring. An interesting promise of space exploration is squandered and mislabeled by having the plot mostly all unfold on boring ol' Earth.

In the midst of a classic mismatched chase story, it strives for depth in both humanity and social critique, but there's nothing here that hasn't been done countless times before. I've always adored this writer's other works greatly, so it was stunning to see something that is so superficially high-concept crash-land into the abysmally mundane.

William Thomas says

Of course everyone loved the fact that Azzarello and Risso were back on a Vertigo book. I know I was. But for anyone thinking about picking this up, know that it is not what you want it to be. Comparisons to Grant Morrison's work have been made, and I might agree, if not for the fact that this read like a graphic novel version of an Alfred Bester book instead. Say, maybe, 'The Stars My Destination'. The only thing I could think whenever anyone spoke in this book was the Bester's book and the line "Vorga, I kill you filthy."

Azzarello's writing was definitely nothing special in this book, and he could barely remember his own slang and created language from issue to issue. The world he built was nothing but a derivative of most every other modern "dystopia" (insert groan)- a place where the rich are richer and the poor are poorer and the entire world is a destabilized mess. Without the garbled slang language he made for this world, there wouldn't be much of anything here to distinguish it from any other of the same. Except for the premise, which he hardly works with at all, instead opting to fall back into his old pitfalls of caper/crime story.

I wish Azzarello had followed the premise he laid out instead of making it a caper. Had he done that, it may have made more sense. Or if he had abandoned the premise and just written a caper, we would have had a phenomenal book. Well, if he ditched the cutesy language schtick, too. So much promise here, but fails to live up to expectations. Aside from Risso's artwork, there isn't much here to make the book worthwhile.

Writing: D

Art: B

Alex Sarll says

An all-too-plausible, thoroughly shitty dystopia - with sea levels risen, the language decayed, society segregated and everyone glued to a reality show that's essentially *Brangelina's Next Top Orphan*. Except, as is too often the case with dystopias lately, they've skewed too optimistic in one key detail - at least NASA was actually making an effort when it bred genetically-engineered apemen for space travel, thus getting itself shut down in the backlash, rather than quietly dying as is in fact the case. One of those pariah spacemen being the protagonist for an Earthbound kidnap thriller, intercut with dreams of how life might have gone had he fulfilled his destiny and ended up on Mars. Of course, given this is Azzarello and Risso, neither of the forks in the path works out too happily.

James says

I brain it is a good but sad story. Shows an interesting evolution of language. Utopia for some and dystopia for the rest. Celebrity turned orphan saves an orphan turned celebrity. Bittersweet.

Tyler Kroon says

Unique plot and great character development, with near-constant action and urgency. A brutish, genetically-modified human stumbles upon the kidnapped daughter of a wealthy couple and tries to keep her safe from bounty hunters and unsavory opportunists in a dystopian, criminal-ridden world. My biggest issue with the book is the language; it did well in conveying the deterioration of society, but took me out of the story when I had to puzzle through dialogue like “you scope me, you spy a bradah? I brain you a failer!” and “you unawares of the satee ‘bout to go junk on the city”. If it was a few lines of dialogue like this, or reserved for one character, it would’ve been okay, but with every bit of dialogue written like this, I found it distracting. Overall though, it was an interesting, exciting read.

Martin says

Okay, right off the bat I'll admit that I don't "get" 100% of this book, especially how the whole "on Mars" side story relates to the main storyline. I found the [devolved] English spoken in the book to be a big distraction, an unnecessary gimmick that forced the reader to perform some mental work that prevents a more thorough enjoyment of the story. Brian Wood managed to write 50 issues of Northlanders (a series set in the Viking heydays) in modern English, so I don't understand why Azzarello felt the need to try (and fail) to make this work. Because it didn't. The interior art by very frequent collaborator Eduardo Rizzo is what you'd expect, though maybe not as great as his work on "100 Bullets". Also not the best Dave Johnson covers I've seen, but what are you gonna do?

As for the actual main plot, involving the kidnapping of a celebrity couple's daughter, and her eventual rescue by the titular Spaceman, was actually pretty good. It was a quite a commentary that Azzarello made: the infatuation (and obsession) of society for so-called reality-TV (which is anything but) and the fact that networks (and people) will do absolutely ANYTHING for ratings and fame. Case in point (and also a spoiler!): the kidnapping was staged!! (surprise, surprise)

The ending is really sad: (view spoiler) But hey, kids, this is Azzarello. You weren't expecting a HAPPY ending, were ya?

Meghan Fidler says

Azzarello's storyline is paired with the art of Eduardo Rizzo, an Argentinian who has an amazing eye for depicting personality in facial expressions and movement. Rizzo's vision of the a possible future divided by class--and a wall--is outstanding. Pairing Rizzo's ability with a narrative which naturally crossed class

boundaries--the consumption of 'reality' television shows based on the lives of the rich--results in the fantastic comix run called "Spaceman."

Sadie Oldenkamp says

It was a mix of "Leon the Professional" meets Kevin Costner's "Water World." The only thing I can say against it is that all of the characters spoke with a super thick Louisiana Bayou accent which took me a couple of pages to acclimate to, but once I did I started to enjoy the story. I always love a work that focuses so well on making emotional and expressive faces for their characters which add another layer of tension to the flow that I really got into. The parallel narrative to his "dream" world where he was able to go up into space instead of being some Elephantman trash picker on earth really complimented the progression of the story when his dream became a bit of a nightmare in comparison to what was going on in real life.

Vittorio Rainone says

Due sole cose: come in cento bullets, qui abbiamo un eccezionale maestro (Risso) e un discreto mestierante (che peraltro in 100 bullets era più in forma). La storia dello spaceman che vuole salvare la figlia del reality è fiacca, non coinvolge, se non per i meravigliosi disegni, non c'è un solo momento che convinca davvero, ha al solito delle scene poco chiare. Ma Azzarello ha fortuna, chissà perchè.

Scott Foley says

With art by 100 Bullets collaborator Eduardo Risso, Azzarello has created a bleak, unsettling landscape where the very rich are well taken care of, and the rest of us are left to survive by any means necessary.

Spaceman follows the story of Orson, one of a group of genetically engineered astronauts meant to explore Mars. However, most of the story takes place in a flooded, ruined city that, like most of the coastal world, has been overwrought by melting glaciers. Long since returned to Earth after the demise of NASA, Orson is left to pirate and scavenge in order to endure.

Soon, however, Orson finds himself in the middle of a kidnapping, one in which an orphan has been stolen from a reality television show's super-couple, obviously modelled after Brad Pitt and Angelina Jolie. The couple are the stars of a show where orphans must compete to be adopted by the celebrities and live a life of leisure.

Before long, Orson is at odds with the only other surviving member of his astronaut crew, Carter. His brother has taken a darker path in life, consequently, and he too becomes involved with the abduction. If the child is to survive, Orson must overcome hauntings from Mars that still disturb him as well as a very present cadre of killers.

Perhaps it helped the book that I suffered from stomach flu while reading it, but the ruin and demise of the world depicted in its pages truly touched a nerve. Risso's gritty, detailed artwork is a perfect match for the tale, and he portrays a horrifyingly civilization that may not be that far off.

Quite honestly, I expected Spaceman to take place more in outer space. I was surprised that the majority of the book unfolded on Earth. I was further surprised that, at its core, the story presented a child kidnapping case.

However, the story is far more than just that. I truly believe Azzarello to be an underestimated writer in today's literary scene. His stories are often violent, alarming, and graphic, but they also touch on themes that apply to our modern life. For example, Azzarello realizes that we are ruining our environment and that repercussions await us all. Those repercussions are evident in Spaceman. He also has noticed that the poor seem to be getting poorer, while the rich get richer. Spaceman delivers a painfully realistic portrayal of what the current trend may yield.

And though it's a matter of much controversy, I find Azzarello's commitment to language commendable in Spaceman. Like his rendition of society, he presents a language that is falling apart, shortened, and slowly dying. Azzarello clearly put a great deal of thought into his vision of our ruined language, and the dedication to his vision reminds me of writers such as Anthony Burgess.

Spaceman is a potentially prophetic science fiction work that offers a troubling glimpse of our destiny. Azzarello grants us a violent adventure with the life of a child hanging in the balance, a societal warning, and a craftsmanship to be celebrated.

Jeff says

In the future, according to Brian Azzarello, our kids (and their kids) will all talk like morons, using some clipped combination of internet acronyms and weird synonyms. I thought Alex and the droogies, from **A Clockwork Orange**, had me poleaxed with their govoreet, but this was just exhausting to read, although I am going to drop "mofoco" in casual conversation (e.g. "That mofoco just cut me off!" or "If I never see that mofoco, Mitchell again, it'll be too soon!"')

What happened to that handy comic book device: translated from Russian/Chinese/Kree/Jive? That sure would have been handy here.

The skinny: NASA breeds big-boned ape-like babies to be astronauts so they can acclimate to the harsh atmosphere and weird gravity on Mars. A few survived the trip and are back on Earth. One of them, Orson, salvages metal from the now flooded cities. Plus, a kid from a reality show is kidnapped and Orson somehow ends up saving her, violent stuff ensues. There's some nice poignant moments here, but otherwise, I'll take a zombie apocalypse or Ultron shenanigans over this.

The good news about the future is that you don't have to actually leave your house to visit a hooker. With a little wiring and body sensors and at a price, you can now experience the joys of a full but empty sexual experience over the Interwebz. Science!

Jake says

This story is impressive in its uniqueness, though that's also what works against it. It's admirable to anticipate

and provide a hypothesis in regard to how radically our language as a species could devolve over the next few centuries or millennia, but to read it on paper is not a fun bounce. It slows the narrative, which is something to behold. It's a big, heavy world presented to us, as we follow the mutant-man Orson, specially evolved/devolved for life in space, and his adventure to save a famous young girl now that he lives the broken, boring life of a humdrum fisherman (of sorts, kind of). He's an easy character to root for; it just takes a while to understand everything.

Kevin says

Some nice art from Risso, but virtually unreadable. Its so incomprehensible, I'd swear it was written by Grant Morrison.
