741.5 CRIME
COMICS: THE NEW BREED
ATOMIC BLONDE VS. THE ASSIGNMENT
ALSO...HARD CASE CRIME...FRACTION...AZZARELLO
PLUS... RICHARD STARK’S PARKER

AUGUST 2017—NO. EIGHT

I HAD A LICENSE... A GUN... A FEW CLIENTS...

MUNOZ & SAMPAYO’S GRITTY DETECTIVE CLASSIC
ALACK SINNER
The exploits of private eye Alack Sinner have enthralled readers around the world since 1975. New American fans of crime and comics can thrill to the noir classic as it is brought to life in Alack Sinner Volume 1, the Age of Innocence.

By Jose Munoz & Carlos Sampayo

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Beaumont & Village

Alack Sinner Volume 1
The Age of Innocence

Not up to the job. In the earlier chapters such as “The Webster Case” and “The Fillmore Case,” the action follows the traditional pattern of detective stories: Sinner gets hired, goes digging, often too deep, and the killers are caught. Starting with “Viet Blues,” the work becomes complicated by politics both global—black power, labor rights—and personal. The art begins to loosen as well, becoming visual jazz, a bemuse of ink, not sound, especially in the boxing saga “Constancio and Manolo,” and the nightmarish “Memories.” Munoz and Sampayo themselves show up in “Life Ain’t A Carnival” and “Kidnapped,” looking for the guy with the same name as their character. That’s the closest the pair get to the movie The City That Never Sleeps; citizens of Argentina, they never visited the New York City they portrayed with such love and venom. Now you can take that trip with their two-fisted Virgil of crime, Alack Sinner. Reserve your copy from Beaumont or Village.

Set in the waning days of the Cold War, the graphic novel formerly known as The Cold City is not the rock-em-sock-em revision promised by the film version, Atomic Blonde. More Le Carre than Michael Bay, the comic is a chilly, murky tale of desperate spycraft, rendered in the style of the title. Alack Sinner white that leaves every character half-seen, lost in shadow or the glare of the winter sun. Meanwhile, the Cuban Missile Crisis looms in the background of To Have and To Hold, a murder weapon which a cackled ex-cop pulls off a heist—and that’s the last thing to ever go right in his life. Graham Chaffee’s script and art combine to create a film noir version of American Splendor in their homely Midwestern banality both shattered and supported by violence. The latest work from the men responsible for 100 Bullets, Azarello and Risso, Moonshine is set during Prohibition and follows the misadventures of a big city mobster set to darkest Appalachia to set up a new supplier of hash. Brutal but beautiful, Moonshine is like another contemporary crime comics such as Lazarus and Black Monday Murders in that there is an element of the fantastic. The feeding frenzy of the city that never sleeps; citizens of Argentina, they never visited the New York City they portrayed with such love and venom. Now you can take that trip with their two-fisted Virgil of crime, Alack Sinner. Reserve your copy from Beaumont or Village.

When the Fox network first announced plans for a show called Gotham, I was sorely disappointed to learn it wasn’t based on my favorite Bat-comic of the past two decades. Written by Ed Brubaker and Greg Rucka and drawn mostly by Michael Lark, Gotham Central was a police procedural set in the world of the Batman. Originally described as “Vomicole with superheroes,” the series received critical and industry award nominations, despite never cracking the top 20 in sales. In 2016, such accolades were an omnibus edition, a huge drop-off of a tome collecting all 40 issues of the title. As odd as the format is, it’s the best way to read the series, the narrative building with each story arc to keep it real, the writers plotted the series together, then split the

Since 2004, Hard Case Crime has been the foremost publisher of detective and suspense novels written in the hard-boiled style, from award-winning originals to transpires unearthed from the paperback boneyard. Now Hard Case has teamed up with Britain’s Titan Comics for its own line of comic books. The fruits of its regular series already collected and a fourth, a 1970s noir written by Megan (You Will Know Me) Abbott, coming in 2018. A former sex worker who’s used her experiences in such novels as Money Shot, Christa Faust is the perfect writer for Peepled, a thriller set in the sleazy precincts of pre- Giuliani Times Square. Up in Hill, the man who scripted such cinematic crime classics as The Warriors and The Getaway, lends his words to two Hard Case series, each adapted by French creators Matz and Jef. Triggerman is set during the heyday of the Copayne mob, which sends one of its executioners out west to look for a missing half of a modernist mob. The source of the feature film starring Michelle Rodriguez, The Assignment turns the usual hired killer storyline on its head as the target’s psycho sister seeks revenge on the hitman, Frank Kitchen. Raw and unflinching in its violence, it’s available from Tates Creek. BANG! BANG! Bw
Identity has always been fluid in comics. That’s one of the main appeals of the medium. Masks and magic words, the power of costume and the rebirth described in secret origin stories: these are essential tropes of comic books. In her YA graphic novels *SuperMutant Magic Academy* and *This One Summer*, cartoonist Jillian Tamaki dealt with the issue of identity at the age when such concepts become palpable, when the body itself transforms from one thing to another. In her new book *Boundless* (Drawn & Quarterly), Tamaki uses fantasy motifs to describe the changes that come in adulthood. A Facebook from an alternate universe drives a woman to live her life in reaction against her other self. Another woman finds her relationships haunted by a cheesy kiddie flick, while an phantom infestation of bedbugs overturns a new couple’s life. Then there’s “Sexcoven”, in which a mysterious sound file initiates listeners into a new form of perception, a place of “no body. No name. No parents. No, like, boy/girl distinction. It’s perfect,” says one “coven-crawler”, right before his equally erratic friend is flattened like a possum by a truck. A similar mystical experience is described in the fifth and final chapter of *Clyde Fans*, the graphic novel serialized in *Palookaville* since 1998. The introverted one of the book’s sibling protagonists, Simon Matchcard, ends his failed attempt to engage with the greater world with an out-of-body experience. It takes him through a series of ruins, abandoned farmhouses and dilapidated meeting halls, leaving Simon with the answer to all his problems. The twenty-third issue of the pamphlet-turned-hardback by Canadian alternative icon Seth is the most architectural yet. Both Simon’s visions and the latest chapter of “Nothing Lasts”, a biography told house by house, revel in buildings and landscapes, while the middle section reprints “Some Small Paintings”, an art show focused on the warehouses and office towers of Seth’s imaginary Dominion City and the solid citizens that inhabit them. Seth’s art has reached a point of sublime simplicity, his inky brushwork and monochromatic palette a melancholic joy to behold. Those in the mood for stronger emotions should read *Red Range: A Wild Western Adventure*, written by Joe (Hap & Leonard) Lansdale and illustrated by Sam Glanzman. Glanzman died July 12. He was best known for his war comics for Charlton and DC, including the beloved “Haunted Tank” series. His later work included the autobiographical *A Sailor’s Story* and U.S.S. Stevens, the latter available from Eastside. Originally released in 1999 to no response, the new version from IDW is in color—all too apt, given the centrality of color to the story of Red Mask. An African-American avenger of crimes perpetrated against freedmen in the brutal years following the Civil War, Red Mask first appears after the gut-churning act of racist violence that opens the book, dealing death to the hooded murderers of an innocent family. Neither Lansdale nor Glanzman shy away from the ugly truth, so it’s an ugly story they tell. It gets weird, too, with a swerve in the third act right out of one of Glanzman’s zany Silver Age comics like *Kona, Monarch of Monster Isle*. It’s rough stuff, but if *Django Unchained* rang your bell, you should reserve *Red Range* from Northside. Westerns were never part of the “New Trend” in comics that raised EC to the top of the field in the 1950s. But if you want the dope on how that company’s singular crew of writers and artists created all those amazing tales of horror, war and weird science, the second volume of *The EC Artists* (Fantagraphics) will keep you spellbound. *THRILL* as the romantic Al Williamson, the realist George Evans and the modernist Bernard Krigstein set new standards of comics craftsmanship for generations to come! CHILL as publisher William Gaines faces down the forces of censorship, only to be betrayed by his vengeful competitors! *HOWL* as an overworked and underpaid Harvey Kurtzman accidentally changes American culture forever! Like the preceding volume, this Oversize edition can be found at Central. Meanwhile, you can find the first collection of Marvel’s Wakanda at all LPL locations in the TEEN section. This spin-off of the popular Black Panther series features the Midnight Angels, women warriors who protect the royal family of the Afro-futurist nation of Wakanda. But revolution roils the land and the hearts and minds of even the most dedicated of the Dora Milaje are torn between love and liege. Written by Roxane Gay, whose *Hunger: A Memoir of (My) Body* has been one of the sensations of the year, this series deals with the sexual and political issues explored in Gay’s work while delivering the action and suspense expected of Mighty Marvel.

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