



The Fade Out: Act One

Ed Brubaker (Writer) , Sean Phillips (Artist, Letterer) , Elizabeth Breitweiser (Colourist)

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Brubaker and Phillips' newest hit series, *The Fade Out*, is an epic noir set in the world of noir itself, the backlots and bars of Hollywood at the end of its Golden Era. A movie stuck in endless reshoots, a writer damaged from the war and lost in the bottle, a dead movie star and the lookalike hired to replace her.

Nothing is what it seems in the place where only lies are true. *The Fade Out* is Brubaker and Phillips' most ambitious project yet!

Collecting: *The Fade Out* 1-4

The Fade Out: Act One Details

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Author : Ed Brubaker (Writer) , Sean Phillips (Artist, Letterer) , Elizabeth Breitweiser (Colourist)

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Download and Read Free Online The Fade Out: Act One Ed Brubaker (Writer) , Sean Phillips (Artist, Letterer) , Elizabeth Breitweiser (Colourist)

From Reader Review The Fade Out: Act One for online ebook

Chad says

No one does comic book noir like Brubaker and Phillips. Another riveting read from Ed Brubaker.

HFK says

I am not sure if there is a better mix than old Hollywood and noir, especially when said mix respects its own time period without modernizing it to be suitable to our current values, morals, views and ideologies.

The Fade Out keeps its appearance to the darker side of Hollywood, the ugly side that was very much true and well reported, which shows how much research Mr. Brubaker has put into his work, as he should. Many things within this first volume aren't compatible to us modern people, but that is exactly what makes this work stand out with its realistic setting.

Do I think this work is original, not so much, but it is a good take on the old and always fascinating subject. It really does make a reader feel as if (s)he was transported to the glamorous times of fucked up.

Marvelous dialogue, captivating storytelling, respectfully and very nicely colored reading experience.

Kemper says

In post-war Los Angeles a screenwriter wakes up from a blackout drunk to find an actress that was starring in the movie he was working on has been murdered in the next room. Afraid of police scrutiny he flees the scene only to be shocked later when he learns that the movie studio has covered up the crime by making it appear to be a suicide. The writer tries to push aside his guilt and move on with helping to get the picture completed with a replacement actress, but his interactions with a variety of people involved in the film keep putting clues to what happened that night in his path.

Kinda sounds like a James Ellroy novel, doesn't it? Nope. It's writer Ed Brubaker and artist Sean Phillips teaming up yet again to deliver a top notch crime comic that feels as if they managed to somehow bottle noir itself and use it as the ink on the page.

Seriously, I'm a little in awe of how Brubaker has regularly managed to blend superheroes with the mystery and spy genres, and when he teams up with Phillips the two of them always hit a whole new level of mixing those elements together to create fantastic comics. This reminds me of the great work they did with the straight up crime stories in their *Criminal* series, and I'm already looking forward to reading more and see how this old school Hollywood mystery unravels. My only complaint is that this collection felt a little short, but that just leaves more to read later.

David Schaafsma says

Criminal, Fatale, Incognito. . . if you liked as I have any of these Brubaker-Phillips collaborations you will be happy to hear there is more of the same in process. This one isn't a mashup with horror or anything else, as far as I can tell so far. It's pretty straight noir, seems like, set in 1948 Hollywood, and is nasty and darker than we have known of the Golden Age, post war, pre-McCarthy blacklisting period. Women are grist for the Hollywood mill, we see clearly, as our (sort of?) hero (let's just call him the main guy) writer Charlie wakes up in a bathtub with a dead leading actress in the room, and he soon sees (and participates in) the cover-ups that follow. No one seems innocent in this one, including Charlie and his writer buddy Gil, so this feels like it is in some ways grittier than other actual noir of that period. More politically astute.

These guys really know their way around a crime story, in this first of three (?) acts of what would appear a complex and politically layered plot. They hired a researcher to help them make very sure period details were in place, and a colorist, Elizabeth Breitweiser who adds a special flair to the production. I'm in!

Cheese says

4.5 stars!

This was brilliant, Brubaker is fast becoming my favourite writer and Sean Philips is definitely my favourite artist. I would like to give this five stars just for the artwork, it's sublime and fits the time piece and story perfectly. It was like walking on the set of that old film 'Sunset boulevard'. I loved that film and this is very similar. It's about movie stars, writers, directors, producers, ego's, womanising, secrets, blackmail, homicide and mystery.

An actress is killed and someone covers it up, they say she committed suicide, but the writer, 'Charlie' knows different and let's it slip to his best friend who seems to be an alcoholic. Can he be trusted to keep the secret??!

This book has a lot of charm and again, it's Brubaker's exceptional ability to write crime noir stories effortlessly. This story was good and really kicks in at the end of this volume, but it was the artwork that drew me in and kept me hooked. At some points I would just stop and stare at the pages and notice the detail in the colouring and sketching.

Bloody brilliant.

Jesse (JesseTheReader) says

For the most part I really enjoyed this! It was dark, intriguing, and mysterious. All things that I love in a story. I just found this story to be a bit busy and I almost wonder if that was the creator's way of distracting

you from solving the mystery at hand. I loved the old hollywood setting, but the illustrations didn't really wow me. I do think I'll probably check out the next volume, because I'd like to know what happens next, I'm just not entirely sold on this series just yet.

Shelby *trains flying monkeys* says

Enter into Old Hollywood.

Charlie wakes up after a wild party and realizes he is in the room with a dead girl. He covers up the murder and then learns that the starlet has committed "so-called" suicide. What the heck is going on?

I think Brubaker and Phillips might just be my favorite team in comic/graphic novels. The story is original and fulfilled my old Hollywood fantasy.

I love that real movie stars were used in this story. They got one star awarded for this guy alone. Because..AWESOME.

Jan Philipzig says

While rereading this first volume, I was surprised how well I remembered its language: not necessarily all the plot details, but Phillips' stylish depictions of post-WWII Hollywood and Brubaker's polished writing - especially Brubaker's polished writing. Whole sentences, in fact. You see, my memory usually isn't the best, so for this to happen the wording itself must have left quite an impression, much more so than I had been aware. And that probably is no coincidence. After my second reading of *The Fade Out: Act One*, I'd say this is as good as comic-book noir gets. Everything feels conceptually sound, crisp, stylish, completely organic, flawless right down to the last detail. Brubaker and Phillips have outdone themselves here - highly recommended!

Samantha says

The Fade Out is the first installment in a graphic novels series set in the Film Noir era, revolving around the murder of an up and coming film star. I was originally interested in it because, who doesn't love film noir, and because I'd never read a graphic novel set in the real world instead of a fantasy setting. Unfortunately, I found this volume pretty disappointing.

The art very much fits the film noir aesthetic, but that was the only positive to me. There is a plethora of mostly white, male characters, and they look so similar that it is incredibly hard to tell them apart. I also found I didn't care about any of their struggles. The most interesting character was the woman who had been murdered, and she is only shown through the lens of the male characters and isn't actually a character moving forward.

I was pretty bored by this installment and don't plan on continuing with this series. This review was originally posted on Thoughts on Tomes

Magdalena aka A Bookaholic Swede says

Los Angeles 1948. Charlie Parish wakes up after a wild party in an actress apartment. The problem is that the actress is lying in the apartment murdered. Charlie sneaks away from the apartment and is later stunned when he finds out that the murder has been covered up as a suicide. Now is he plagued by guilt that he didn't report it and he also knows that there is a murderer out there...

A really good story that actually captured my interest more than I thought it would. I was a bit surprised how much I enjoyed the graphic novel, mostly because I wasn't really that fond of the art, it was OK, but nothing spectacular. But when I came to the ending, I just wanted more, so now I'm waiting to read vol. 2!

I received this copy from the publisher through Netgalley in return for an honest review!

Danielle The Book Huntress (Back to the Books) says

One word for this graphic novel. Atmosphere. I definitely felt like I was in the late 1940s Hollywood. But the real Hollywood, not the glamorous, shining synthetic world that so many people in the industry tried to project. The point of view is from a screenwriter deeply immersed in the studio system who was emotionally broken by his war experiences. He wakes up in a bedroom and finds the body of the starlet in the next room. The star of the movie he's been working on. The list of suspects is long, and even if they aren't the murderer, most of these people aren't blameless and are far from innocent.

People like to say that the depths of depravity in society has gotten worse. I don't think so. I think people have gotten more blatant in their dark desires, but they have been doing anything under the sun for gratification since the beginning of time. This book shows that very dark side of Hollywood that swallows people whole, brings out the very worst in its denizens, exploiting their weaknesses and insecurities and their desire to be famous regardless of the cost. It features the wolves and the lambs (although the lambs aren't without blemish), and the bottom-feeders of the industry.

The artwork was alluring and perfectly paired to the narrative. It conveys the feel of a hardboiled, noir mystery, although the artist is not afraid to use color. I love the style of the 1940s, and I found myself a student of the character design in this book. It's done in such a way that it doesn't give a misleading tone of brightness that is completely opposite to the story.

This ends on a bit of a cliffhanger, in that there is no resolution of the mystery, but instead a big breadcrumb for the reader to follow in the next volume. I need to know, so I'll keep reading.

Jeff says

Hooray for Hollywood!

That phoney, super coney Hollywood

They come from Chillicothes and Padukahs

*With their bazookas (**Huh? Is that a euphemism or did they have trouble coming up with a rhyme for***

Padukahs) to get their names up in lights.

Nothing like a tale about the steamy, seamy underbelly of the entertainment industry to meet one's noir needs.

Brubaker and Phillips take a page from James Ellroy (I just read **The Big Nowhere** so that one comes to mind immediately) and examine the dregs of Tinseltown circa the late '40's. We have Charlie Parish, hack writer, alcoholic, Commie sympathizer, third wheel and World War II vet who also happens to black out when he drinks.

Oh, and during one of his black outs he might have been involved with the murder of a starlet. As Charlie tries to put the pieces together (the War kind of makes his memory tricksy and such), the body count starts to climb.

A bathtub? I usually wake up next to the dumpster behind P. F. Chang's. Consider yourself lucky, fella.

Anyway, this falls just short of prime Brubaker, but it's still worth a look.

Dave says

The Fade Out is everything you could want from a noir-inspired graphic novel. It's set in the late forties in Hollywood in brilliant artwork and is filled with pulpy themes like the lead character, the screenwriter, waking up after a party knocked out drunk with a beautiful corpse just feet away from him. Pretending he knew nothing about it. Hollywood is filled with glamour here, but the producers are all hands on with the willing female talent, the stars rampage drunkenly through town, and the local authorities are all bought and paid for by the studios. It's filled with the Commie scare and Hollywood blacklisting. Mean, tough, and just a real good story.

XX Sarah XX (former Nefarious Breeder of Murderous Crustaceans) says

There is something to be said about an author who manages to make a basic noir plot set in post-WWII Hollywood exciting. The genre has become so **formulaic** over the years it's pretty much become **a cliché in itself**: sex, drugs, scandal, murder, blah blah blah. Enter **Ed Brubaker**. I think I'm a little in love. I wouldn't say he did to the noir genre what he did to James Bond in Velvet (where clichés were appropriately shaken *and* stirred) but **he came pretty close**.

Granted, the story has an **unoriginal premise**: a Hollywood writer wakes up in a strange place after drinking himself to oblivion and finds the dead body of an up-and-comic actress in the next room. **Think this is boring and oh-so conventional?** Don't yawn just yet! Because Brubaker is here to work his magic. I picked this up thinking I'd read a few pages and finish it the next day. Silly little me, **I couldn't put it down**. The characters are complex and the plot is compelling. What makes it really interesting is that Brubaker keeps adding new layers to the story as it progresses, **giving it much more depth**.

Sean Phillips' art might not be as atmospheric as Steve Epting's in Velvet but it really adds to the noir setting. The panels are brilliantly laid out and the color scheme complements the story perfectly. **This is pretty awesome stuff.**

And look at that cover! And at all the covers for the individual issues! I love them so much I'm actually tempted to buy each of them separately. Too bad my bank account doesn't agree.

But I have to admit one thing really really pissed me off here. That ending? Seriously? When I don't have volume 2 handy and have yet to order it?! You have got to be kidding me. How am I supposed to sit here and wait for **8 whole freaking days** until it gets here?! Not so in love with you right now Mr Brubaker. I guess all that's left for me to do is to read Fatale while I bite my nails in frantic anticipation. Then again I could also reread James Ellroy's L.A. Quartet series. **Yeah, that could definitely work.**

Sam Quixote says

Hollywoodland, 1948, the tail end of the Golden Era of Film. Charlie Parish is a screenwriter for Victory Street Pictures, one of the largest studios in Los Angeles, who, after a wild party, wakes up near the corpse of his latest film's starlet, Valeria Sommers. She'd been strangled and left on the floor, just feet away from a passed out Charlie! Besides a police investigation, the death of the leading lady means expensive reshoots for the studio and rewriting for Charlie.

But then later he sees the police report on Valeria: "suicide" with the death photo showing her hanging from a door - there's corruption afoot! Rape, murder, alcoholism, drug abuse, hell, abuse of all kinds - this is show business, where behind the glitz and glamour lurk dark secrets, mysteries, and danger. What's Charlie stumbled into?

The Fade Out is a stone cold masterpiece.

Before the first chapter was down I knew this was going to be epic, and, WOW, it is one helluva ride! It's a corny thing to say but it's true, and that's The Fade Out is like a portal into the past. Really! Sure there's a plot here but Ed Brubaker, Sean Phillips, and Elizabeth Breitweiser have gone further and somehow brought the past to life. They've created a living, breathing world that's so richly atmospheric and real (Brubaker was so committed to period detail he hired a research assistant for this project), it envelopes the reader completely.

And what a fascinating - if sordid - world! Brubaker takes us behind the scenes to reveal drunken brawls between movie stars in studio bungalows, starlets lining up to service celebrities and studio execs in sleazy sex parties, substance abuse, violence, and studio PR hiding it all from the press, including keeping closeted famous actors in the closet (of course none of these things happen in today's Hollywood... coughTomCruise cough).

While the mystery of the dead starlet plays menacingly in the background, we get to know the key players in

the series. Our protagonist is Charlie, the screenwriter who was so traumatised by his experiences in the war, he's unable to write. So how is he kept on the payroll? His buddy Gil secretly dictates the scripts and Charlie types them up. It's a shadowy partnership because Gil got blacklisted from all of the studios during the McCarthy witch hunts. But who sold out Gil?

There's Earl Rath, a Gregory Peck lookalike who's always chasing the ladies; Maya Silver, Valeria's replacement and a starlet who's willing to do anything to get to the top; and Thursby, the studio head, whose own past is mired with illicit dealings. There are more but those characters' pasts are explored the most in this first volume. Real movie stars like Clark Gable are thrown in to make the world that much more convincing.

The characters are so compelling. They easily make this book stand out as a high quality work and Brubaker ensures no-one is free from blame - not everyone is a villain but everyone's complicit in the harsh reality of make believe.

The Fade Out is such a smooth read, it doesn't feel like reading. With the words on the page, it's more like watching a brilliant, stylish subtitled movie (about the movie business!) so it's easy to take for granted Sean Phillips' artwork. But every single page is first rate and, coupled with Brubaker's script, they fly by.

And then you come across a panel without words and the imagery stops you dead. For me that panel was Charlie stepping into his apartment building at night in a dingy part of town, and it was stunning. So elegant, so understated in its beauty - amazing. Colourist Elizabeth Breitweiser is the icing on the cake with her choice of aquamarine for the sky and the land, the colour bleeding together in the panel? Inspired!

In The Fade Out, everyone has secrets and there's a tantalising mystery at its core, but this first volume doesn't have much of an arc. That's fine though when the characters are so well created like they are here. It's the first volume and I can't wait to read more about both the plot and the characters.

I loved Criminal (which is getting relaunched this year, hooray!) but The Fade Out, for me, is now definitely the best of the Brubaker/Phillips collaborations. James Ellroy fans especially will get a kick out of this as it's very much in the vein of LA Confidential and The Black Dahlia, though I recommend this book to EVERYONE! Besides being Brubaker/Phillips' finest, The Fade Out is easily one of the year's best comics!

Cut!
