



## Zatanna by Paul Dini

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## **Zatanna by Paul Dini** Paul Dini

The enchanting Zatanna Zatara has the hottest stage act in Las Vegas. And unlike the parlor tricks peddled by other would-be Houdinis around town, Zatanna's magic is no illusion. It's real. The dazzling Mistress of Magic can warp reality with just a few backwards words.

But the supernatural is powerful...and in the wrong hands, it's deadly. So when mystical menaces start causing trouble, Zee steps in to stop them—from the evil sorcerer Brother Night to possessed puppets to nightmare demons. But things get complicated fast when the foe is the ghost of someone she loves!

Emmy award-winning writer Paul Dini's complete collection of ZATANNA stories are here in one graphic novel! The acclaimed creator of BATMAN: THE ANIMATED SERIES has long had a history with the premier magician of the DC Universe, penning best-selling stories for the past two decades featuring Zatanna Zatara. Illustrated by some of the greatest artists in the industry, including Joe Quinones, Stephane Roux and more.

ZATANNA BY PAUL DINI is a must-own for any superhero fan!

Collects ZATANNA #1-16, ZATANNA: EVERYDAY MAGIC.

## **Zatanna by Paul Dini Details**

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## From Reader Review Zatanna by Paul Dini for online ebook

### Christopher says

This review isn't going to be fair to Zatanna, and I don't mean for that. But the main thing I got out of this omnibus is that Zatanna is terrible at relationships, and has the magical defenses of a drunk squirrel.

I don't understand how she is still alive if she manages to fail like she does in this volume. But then she's also super powerful and could just murder anyone she wanted to.. until she can't? It's not real clear what her power limits are, which is fine, all told. That's pretty standard superhero stuff, I guess.

In the vein of still not being fair to this book, I'm not sure what the author's goal was with this solo work. It's a weird mix of superhero and slice of life. Slice of life can be fine, especially for a solo book, but all I got from it was that she needs to screen her boyfriend of the day better, punch Constantine in the face a few times, and go to counseling with her brother. It's fine as filler, but who wants filler?

I couldn't help but think that they wouldn't have been as quick with the slice of life relationship filler on a Wolverine solo book. Am I getting to read all of her relationship drama because she's a woman and the author doesn't want to have her just being a heroine? When I think of relationships comics put the men into, most of the time their SO dies to fuel a revenge plot, or is kidnapped as plot, or whatever. Is that accurate? Nope, but we're not being fair; I told you. But here we get that she's had a zillion dbags as dates, and a couple who try to kill her, and get way too close. I just don't get 'strong character' out of most of it. I get 'incredibly powerful character who is a complete mess much of the time and not actually in control of her life.'

Which can be very well done. But I kept coming back to my reservations about how Zatanna was being portrayed. Which isn't fair, because I absolutely don't think they were trying to put out there what I was reading into it. At all. It takes good writing to make slice of life work well in what is ostensibly a superhero book. I just don't think this writing was up to the task.

Let me give you an actual example of something I think they screwed up completely, in an effort to bring some actual detail into this mostly unfair review. When you're doing a solo book, you need someone for the character to play off of. A friend, enemy, lover, whatever. In this book, they try more than once to bring in that someone from outside for a moment. A one-night stand, her brother, some random rich jerk, etc. But that's all nonsense. Zatanna has an entire stage show she performs every week. Meaning she has an entire stage crew that she is friends with. They're basically family, but the book almost never uses them to play off of and doesn't do nearly enough to use them to establish her character. The only real taste of it we get is when Brother Night kidnaps her crew and she goes to rescue them. For a brief moment, you get the sense that he has taken her family from her and that he could not have made a more dire mistake. But do we explore that? No. We get whiny jealous brother and her dating some random dudes whose names I can't even be bothered to remember because who cares. Those don't tell me about her character. How she deals with her crew does. More crew, less idiots trying to get in her fishnets.

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### John Mendiola says

### **Tahw A Taerg Koob**

This is my first time reading anything about Zatanna but have been interested in the mystical side of super heroes. They always seem to exist in their own universe like Justice League Dark and so I thought I'd dip my toe into this collection.

The collection is pretty random. I've been buying collections of consecutive issues but this was a collection of loosely related issues. Brother Night showed up multiple times which I wasn't sure if that meant that he was Zatanna's main rival. That would be extremely disappointing since he didn't seem that interesting.

The story arcs that occur in this (some stories are just one-offs) are great but don't last too long. It felt like watching a mini-series versus a season of something. That was underwhelming since I wanted more interaction, payoff and dialogue in the story and with the characters.

It's worth the read just for the brain pain I had to endure deciphering the constant spellcasting. It seems like a cheap gimmick at first but I found it to be endearing pretty quickly. Plus, there's one story that puts a really clever twist on the backwards spell casting.

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### **Jamie Connolly says**

Meh. It was ok. I was expecting more though if I'm being honest. 4 stars. For effort.

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### **Tess Taylor says**

3.5

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### **Adrienne says**

I have a soft spot for Zatanna. She is one of my favourite characters and unfortunately not often featured.

The omnibus gives the reader a chance to take a peak into Zatanna's everyday life. How she lives, her connections with her closest friends and just a touch of back story.

It is clear that Paul Dini is passionate about this character. He brings spirit, fun, and of course, magic to his writing, creating a fun and entertaining read.

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### **David says**

Nuf daer! This is a collection of the all too brief time that a frequent guest star to assorted DC comics titles got her own title. Zatanna is a real sorceress who works as a Vegas stage magician. She casts her spells by speaking them in English, but backwards. There are some great stories here, especially those penned by Paul Dini, creator of *Batman the Animated Series* and co-creator of Harley Quinn. The art quality varies quite a

bit as different artists moved in and out of the series. Sadly, the big story arc that progresses through the series was not resolved, but I liked getting to know Zatanna better. Especially touching were stories that touched on her relationship with her father, John Zatara, who debuted all the way back in Action Comics 1 alongside Superman.

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### **Fiona Titchenell says**

The Basics:

By day, Zatanna is a legendary Vegas stage magician. By night, she uses her vast and very real magical abilities to keep the world safe from all manner of demonic and dark mystical harm. Wait... I'm pretty sure the stage magic happens at night too.

The Downside:

Most of the time, Zatanna's that character other heroes call upon for a special occasion magic-based issue or episode. She shows up, dazzles with her extraordinary power and charming sense of whimsy, and leaves the audience wanting more, as a legendary stage magician is wont to do.

Sadly, this volume makes it easy to understand why we generally can't have more of Zatanna, however much we might think we want to. As fleetingly annoying as it may be when characters who've called on her before must conveniently forget about her or explain why she can't be called in to fix other potentially world-ending problems with a few magic words, the rationalizing of continued stakes is even more difficult when that magical quick fix is the ever-present main character.

As a result, most of the major arcs of this omnibus revolve around creating or revealing different ill-defined and inconsistent weaknesses in Zatanna's power, which apart from being problematic from a continuity standpoint, make it very difficult to feel that we really know Zatanna, no matter how much time we spend with her.

The Upside:

Thankfully, a good portion of the issues take the form in which Zatanna shines best -- episodic.

Easily the most enjoyable parts are the run-ins with magical monsters of the month, the weirder the better, from possessed ventriloquy dummies to time-manipulators who make her speak in palindromes. And naturally, one issue's worth of vicious Zatanna/Constantine banter is worth the whole read, an extra concentrated dose of too-special-for-every-issue, within a comic about a character who's already too-special-for-every-issue.

In all these self-encapsulated portions, Zatanna's just as much fun on her own as she is backing up a more grounded lead, and when things drift further into the mythos, her cool, bubbly, slightly mischievous presence usually remains incentive enough to unplug from pondering the many questions begged by her brand of magic, to better enjoy the show.

(This review and others originally posted on [www.fjrtitchenell.weebly.com](http://www.fjrtitchenell.weebly.com))

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### **Hannah Stubbs says**

This is an amazing collection and anyone who likes Zatanna even a little bit should definitely read this. It's everything you want from a series about magic and has just enough spookiness and humour to keep you hooked. It's really sad that this run ended before Dini got the chance to write the big confrontation the series leads up to - but I think the New 52 is to blame for that (smh).

Paul Dini's writing is phenomenal (but what else can you expect). The artwork is beautiful and very theme fitting. The new characters are quirky and intriguing and I love seeing Constantine and Zachary (such an underused character) make appearances.

It's just so good that I want more.

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### **Anne says**

#### **Zatanna!**

**yB lauP iniD...yltsom.**

Sorry! You know it's impossible to write about Zatanna without *something* being backward. But it's out of my system now.

Probably...

This is the only solo Zatanna comic I've ever read, but it's not for lack of wanting to catch up on this character. Usually, she's featured as part of a larger group or even somewhat rarely as the other half of a two-person team-up. But her own title?

Not so much.

So, this was quite a treat!

As you can see from the images, there were several artists who worked on this one - some were more to my taste than others, but none were bad enough to ruin the stories for me.

Whoever drew the art for the image below was my least favorite. I know I recognize the style, but I just don't want to go back and look it up because...well, I'm lazy. However, the *story* was one of my favorites because it not only featured John Constantine but also gave newbies a peek at the *hows and whys* Zatanna is such a powerful magic user in the DC universe.

At first, and I'm not entirely sure why, I thought this was a collection of random Zatanna issues, but that's not

the case. This has one long, somewhat intertwined story arc that features Brother Night as the main bad guy - though he's certainly not the only one! But within that are multiple smaller stories that give readers a better look at who Zatanna is as a person, what she's capable of magically, and what her place in the DC universe looks like.

If you're of the opinion that this character is all big boobs, backward spell-speaking, and fishnet tights? This collection might just change your mind. It's not the absolute best thing I've ever read, but it's a great place to start if you want to get to know Zatanna.

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### **ylhgjH dednemmoceR!**

#### **Diz says**

This collection is a mixed bag. Some of the stories are good, and some or not. Most of these stories are written by Paul Dini, but not all of them are, and the worst ones tend to be those by other authors. First, the positives, There's one story with art by Cliff Chiang about a creepy marionette that is really good. It delves into Zatanna's past, her relationship with her father, and her trusting nature. I thought the art on this story was the best as it gave the story a sense of gravity. The other artists in this collection tend to draw cheesecake art, which I wasn't a fan of because I thought that in objectifying Zatanna, she became a less interesting character.

The absolute worst story was about a wannabe rapper who has a sword that can rewind time. Trust me, when you get to this story, skip it. It was seriously one of the worst comic stories I have ever read.

I guess the bottom line is that we need a regular Zatanna book with Cliff Chiang involved.

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#### **Jacqueline O. says**

I have always liked the character of Zatanna, DC Comics backwards-speaking magician. I first encountered the character back in the late 1980s/early 1990s in the pages of *Justice League International* (later *Justice League America*). Zatanna was one of many prominent female heroes in the Justice League, and she was considered powerful because her spells (spoken backwards) could change reality itself. Later Zatanna was a regular in New 52's *Justice League Dark* and a frequent guest in *Constantine*. She's a good friend of Batman, and has made appearances in *Batman (Rebirth)*. In animation, the character has appeared in *Justice League Unlimited* and as a regular in *Young Justice*. Zatanna is always written to fit the particular book or series she's in but the basics are the same: magician's costume, career as a professional stage magician, member of the Justice League (or in New 52 - JL Dark), and she's a genetic mage who performs magic by reciting spells backwards.

This novel, *Zatanna* collects the stories by Paul Dini. It's an excellent graphic novel and an enjoyable read. The stories both refer to Zatanna's career, and her more magical adventures. The stories never get too dark,

and many are somewhat whimsical.

This novel starts with Zatanna's friend, John Constantine. John stops in at Club Bewitched in San Francisco on Halloween. He soon learns Zatanna is out of town, touring as a professional stage musician. John meets Nimue, at the Club. Zatanna, meanwhile, finishes up her stage show in Lake Tahoe, meets a nice fan there, and soon heads home. All she wants is a hot bath and to sleep - but she finds John in her bed. Zatanna tries to throw him out, but he's been cursed by Nimue. Zatanna tries to remove the curse but that backfires. She goes to Nimue's home and battles her, obtaining a magical item to trade back to the demon Nimue contacted and to have the curse lifted from John. Zatanna at first thinks it will be pretty straightforward, so she leaves John to it. She realises, however, that Nimue isn't the sorceress's real name, and rushes to rescue John. Zatanna succeeds and Nimue is cursed, though she vows revenge. This story also includes both glimpses of Zatanna's life as a professional stage magician (and an highly successful one) and a rabbit explaining her background. Another story has Zatanna, professional stage magician, performing a stage show for children in the hospital at Halloween. When the children are attacked with fear toxin by the Scarecrow, she attacks back.

When a group of mobsters are murdered horribly (after being turned into monsters), Zatanna is called in by San Francisco police officer Det. Dale Colton, and discovers Brother Night is behind everything. Brother Night would return in the last story in the collection.

Another frequently returning enemy for Zatanna is a demon that enters dreams and causes nightmares (the Lord of Nightmares, a small green imp). It takes some time, but Zatanna is able to free herself from the Nightmare World and defeats the demon.

Overall, this is a very thick book, and every story in it is wonderful - either spooky, or a good supernatural crime story, or simply fun. I didn't want this book to end it was so good, though there isn't a lot of continuity between the various short stories within.

Highly recommended.

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### **Brandon says**

I evol emos annataZ.

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### **Kaique says**

I love Zatanna! She is always a highlight for me whenever she appears in other books. I had had already read half of this a while ago and was very excited to find out the whole run was getting reprinted and it didn't disappoint! This was great. The character is a lot of fun to read. The stories were mostly very entertaining. My favourite story was the one with the marionettes . Artwork was mostly great too - hard to pick who was my favourite artist in this. I had a great time reading this. It's a shame she is so under appreciated. Hopefully she will get another solo very soon!

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### **Z.S. Diamanti says**

Admittedly, I blazed through this. It is definitely not appropriate for youngsters with the more mature content inside, but it is entertaining.

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## **Joey says**

For you giant dorks who don't even know a lot about B-level DC Comics heroes, Zatanna Zatara is a very cool magician descended from a long line of magicians. By night, she performs stage shows in Vegas, San Francisco, and all over the world. By...later in night, she fights crime, often of the paranormal variety. You got problems with demons escaped from hell or inter-dimensional monsters? Z's your girl.

As always, my favorite version of this particular DC character is written by the great Paul Dini, of Batman: The Animated Series fame. This book is a collection of Dini's run on Zatanna's own book (#1-16), as well as Zatanna: Everyday Magic. The latter, I believe, was originally a Vertigo title. Almost all of the stories are about a decade old.

Since it's a collection, some of the stories are better than others. I didn't love Everyday Magic. One of the stories that stood out to me most was the Twilight Zone "Stringleshanks" arc, which included a supernatural therapist, an unsolved murder, and a malevolent puppet. I'm also a huge fan of anything with Zatanna and her dad. As a parent, it's heartening to see meaningful, healthy relationships between parents and their kids. There are a few great little scenes between father and daughter that have always stood out to me. I actually bought this collection because the original trades of the Zatanna solo comic are difficult to find and it was nice to finally own the whole durned thing.

I wouldn't go as far as automatically recommending this comic to any comic reader, but I would say for those who want some deeper cuts, it's an entertaining and wacky read. Dini also wrote a Zatanna/Black Canary book called Bloodspell that is also worth a read. It's a little newer, so the art and I like the art better.

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3.5/5 Stars