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Acme Novelty Library #20



Synopsis

Jordan Wellington Lint, fifty-one, is chief executive officer of Lint Financial Products, a company he began serving in 1985 as assistant and adviser before working his way up its corporate ladder to record-setting innovation in the fields of finance and high-yield investment. In his seven years as the head of Lint, Jordan has grown the company from a business lender and real estate speculator to a leading provider of network financial infrastructure services, all the while positioning Lint as a model of corporate integrity and high-yield, low-risk product. Lint's vision has made him one of the most influential and widely sought-after leaders in the complex Omaha securities industry, and his fresh approach to an understanding of local problems, leadership, and determination have enabled Lint to outdistance and outpace its competitors. Lint graduated from UNL in 1981 with a B.A. in business and briefly studied music and recording in Los Angeles before returning to his hometown of Omaha, Nebraska, where he has continued his life journey ever since. In his ongoing role as chief executive officer and his dual roles as public servant and father, Lint continues to put his creative leadership and vision to work in a variety of challenging settings. He is married and the father of two boys. The ACME Novelty Library #20 comprises a contributing chapter to cartoonist Chris Ware's gradual accretion of the ongoing graphic novel experiment "Rusty Brown".

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Like the wonderfully imaginative issue 19, Acme #20 -- a.k.a. LINT -- offers a powerful standalone story that will reward Chris Ware's veteran readers without frustrating newcomers. Do you know a

literature lover who is (still) a comics skeptic? Acme #20 is yet another great Ware book to give to such a reader. You don't have to love, like, or even be aware of Ware's ongoing "Rusty Brown" storyline to fall into this merciless volume, which vivisects the entire 65-year life of Jordan "Jason" Lint, who has appeared previously (and briefly) as Rusty Brown's school bully. In this book, he becomes a whole person: a poopy baby, a sensitive boy, a prickly teen, a callow fratboy, a cocky rocker, a crummy boyfriend, a lucky husband, a lecherous philanderer, an absentee (and possibly monstrous) father, a stingy landlord, and more. Rusty appears here in just one brief panel sequence. And when he appears, he is silent. (We don't even see his face!) Yet Rusty's presence is keenly felt -- he hovers above Lint's narrative like a ghost -- and our knowledge of Rusty's toilsome existence, if we have it, only informs and deepens Lint's story's amazing complexity. If Rusty Brown is the star of Ware's current creative concerns, Acme Novelty Library volumes 19 and 20 are brilliant planets orbiting that star. Like Mars and Earth respectively, Acmes #19 and #20 could hardly be more different on their story surfaces. But they are heavenly siblings, and each revolves magnificently around the surprisingly hot-burning and virile soul of Rusty Brown, clammy non-virile fanboy. \$16.29? Incredible. This book is a freaking godsend to the 21st-century Humanities... and to human beings! This review refers to a non-Kindle, non-eBook edition of this title.

Bear in mind that I have been a follower of Ware's work for a rather long period of time now. The latest installment of the Acme Novelty Library is, in my humble opinion, the most provocative and interesting book in the ongoing Rusty Brown series. The previously innocuous character of Jason Lint is given a deeply moving and incredibly well thought-out testament to not only his own existence within the context of the series as whole, but also as a testament to the futility of the human existence as a whole. Not to say that this is a bleak work, on the contrary; this encapsulation of a life cycle in pictographic form practically screams at a decidedly American society to get it together. Ware has been driving at this for quite some time, but never to this degree. For those familiar with his work, malaise and social isolation will come as no surprise. In this context, however, the typical "sad sack" protagonist has been replaced with an over-achieving, amoral, undeservedly successful, and somewhat narcissistic "man you love to hate" living his life exactly how he sees fit, reaching an existential climax unparalleled in the graphic medium. To say he gets his comeuppance is an understatement, and when the narrative resolves it is cathartic at worst and life-changing at best. Fans of Ware's previous work will undoubtedly be in absolute awe of this new installment.

I'm not usually attracted to graphic novels and I'm somewhat new to Chris Ware. I discovered him

through a magazine article and was blown away by how poignant the few frames included in the article were. Mr. Ware says so much through his pictures. The depth of feeling is palpable on each frame. "Lint" is the first book of his that I've "read" and I have to say I found it hopelessly sad. It was poignant, too, especially in the scenes with his mother. And he created such real depictions of feelings through all ages of the character. I could understand why the child turned into the man he did. Chris Ware beautifully created an extremely sad story. I plan to "read" a few more of his works but I'm hoping the others will be more like what I saw in the magazine. I'm hoping that I find a spark of hope in the next ones. I am left with such a deep sadness and hopelessness and a lack of beauty. His pictures and his story create such a raw feeling. So, do I rate the book based on how successfully he created these feelings or on how disappointed I was to not have found any hope in the book?

I was so used to the Jimmy Corrigan cycle from Chris Ware, I did not realize this is a completely independent, detailed biography of the lead character, Lint. Chris Ware is a storyteller. He is an artist in both his graphic presentation and in his storytelling. The use of the multi-color process as part of this American tragedy is effective. I was not as emotionally attached to Lint as I have been with Jimmy Corrigan, but it is an excellent graphic novel on its own.

This entry in the Acme Novelty Library series is a really good one, I think. I don't follow regularly, but after seeing excerpts of this one in Best American Comics series volumes, I found myself wanting to read the entire work. It is gorgeously illustrated, as all of Ware's books are. But the central story-telling device: each page represents a day in each year of Jordan Lint's life, really works quite well. The efficiency with which Ware has to convey the story over a small amount of pages really ends up propelling the story quite nicely. I understand that this book ties in to the Rusty Brown series, which I have read parts of, but really: this book stands on its own very well. It feels much like most other Ware books. Bittersweet, thoughtful, full of regret, mistakes, memories (happy or sad), and struggling with the past. This book could fall apart if it were much larger and denser, but as a short story, it is really a lovely one-off. As a supporting book to Rusty Brown, it's still quite good. The production of this book is in keeping with everything Ware. A handsome cloth-bound volume with really nice heavy paper (cardstock weight). There's a nice hour or so in reading this book, and the art slows you down enough to take it in.

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