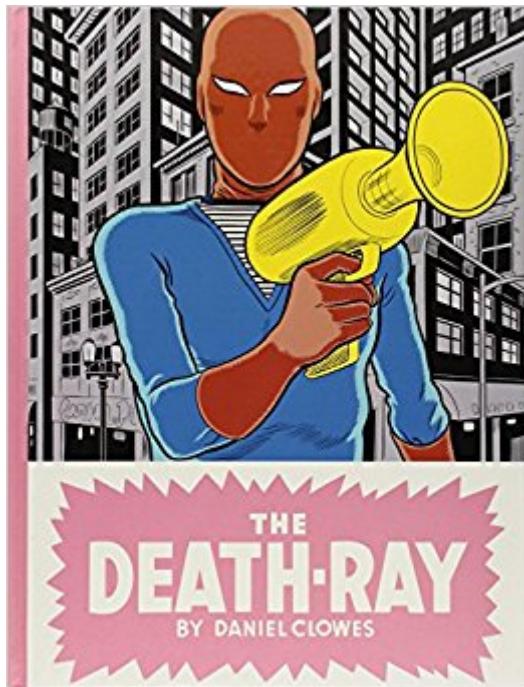


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# The Death-Ray



## Synopsis

ON TIME, NPR AND USA TODAY'S BEST-OF 2011 LISTS! WINNER OF THE EISNER, HARVEY AND IGNATZ AWARDS

Teen outcast Andy is an orphaned nobody with only one friend, the obnoxious but loyal Louie. They roam school halls and city streets, invisible to everyone but bullies and tormentors, until the glorious day when Andy takes his first puff on a cigarette. That night he wakes, heart pounding, soaked in sweat, and finds himself suddenly overcome with the peculiar notion that he can do anything. Indeed, he can, and as he learns the extent of his new powers, he discovers a terrible and seductive gadget—a hideous compliment to his seething rage—that forever changes everything. The Death-Ray utilizes the classic staples of the superhero genre—origin, costume, ray gun, sidekick, fight scene—and reconfigures them in a story that is anything but morally simplistic. With subtle comedy, deft mastery, and an obvious affection for the bold pop-art exuberance of comic book design, Daniel Clowes delivers a contemporary meditation on the darkness of the human psyche.

## Book Information

Hardcover: 48 pages

Publisher: Drawn and Quarterly; First Edition edition (October 11, 2011)

Language: English

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Product Dimensions: 9.3 x 14.2 x 310.6 inches

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Average Customer Review: 4.0 out of 5 stars 22 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #98,129 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #24 in Books > Comics & Graphic Novels > Publishers > Drawn and Quarterly #185 in Books > Comics & Graphic Novels > Graphic Novels > Literary

## Customer Reviews

A Look Behind the Scenes of The Death Ray (Click on Images to Enlarge) Some early sketches "No. 30"

“Daniel Clowes continues to plot a lofty, lonely course through the subconscious of popular culture with this hilariously bleak graphic novel. • TIME Best of 2011 “48 pages densely packed with art, dialogue and ideas, The Death-Ray [is] supersaturated, a story

delivered directly into your imagination...Ã¢ Ã¢ â ¢NPRÃ¢ Ã“Clowes once again shows he is a master of current-day absurdity -- with heart.Ã¢ Ã¢ â ¢USA TodayÃ¢ Ã“The Death-Ray reads as a cautionary parable and an acidic rumination on the travails of adolescence . . . Clowes demonstrates what the comic book can do and literary fiction can't.Ã¢ Ã¢ â ¢The Observer

The caveat? You won't find a hero in the titular death ray's possessor, Andy. The tragic romanticism all the way to the ideological righteousness typically found on behalf of the "hero" in this genre, is either starkly absent, or completely manufactured on the parts of both Andy and his loudmouth friend Louie. The physical capabilities bestowed upon Andy via super strength activated by nicotine, and a bizarre yellow gun that simply erases living creatures from existence, pervert his very foundations of thought. Transforming him from a lonely - somewhat naive - teen, into a narcissistic, embittered ideologue on course for self destruction with unspeakable consequences for those unfortunate enough to cross his path on a bad day. Terrifying moments include Andy and Louie attempting to "test" a bully in order to determine whether he should be removed from existence by the death ray or not, and Andy lurking about his ailing Pappy's bedside with the death ray in hand. If you give this book the time of day, you'll never look at Batman & Robin or Captain America the same way again. I'd also be remiss not to mention what a beautiful book this is. Apart from Clowes art (there are nods to Kirby and Ditko here) this a beautiful hardcover in an oversized format. Fantastic binding and big thick pages. One of Clowes' best deserves it!

Before I bought this book, I hadn't realized that I had already read this story inÃ  Eightball #23Ã  back in 2004. Oh well, it was worth reading again and it's a sturdier, larger book. Andy is a middle aged loner, but most of the story is flashbacks to his high school years in the 1970s. Andy gets superstrength when he smokes cigarettes, thanks to medical experimentation his scientist father did to him when he was an infant. Andy also has a legitimate death-ray that his father left for him. I feel like I already revealed too much, so I'll say no more. I loved this comic book, but I love almost all of Daniel Clowes' work.

I really loved this book. The artwork was soooooo so amazing. I find myself picking this one back up from time to time just to look at some of the art. The story was great too. But that is to be expected from Daniel Clowes :)

I grew up rabidly devouring comic books as a kid. (As a child of the 90's I could still get Star Wars and Sonic the Hedgehog comics at the local grocery stores and gas stations.) But as I grew older, fewer and fewer comics grabbed my interest and I lost touch with the comics community. In college I really became interested in postmodernism and "snobby literature." I hadn't picked up a comic book in years when a friend handed me his copy of David Petersen's Mouse Guard. Needless to say, it awakened the passion for comics that I hadn't felt in years. I guess what I'm trying to say is that every so often a comic book comes along that is so freaking cool that it reminds me of what it felt like to sit on my living room floor and revel in the sheer awesomeness of outlandish costumes and word balloons. The Death-Ray is one of these books. The oversize edition lets you really pour over the artwork, the story quality has the right amount of depth, and the premise has a pitch perfect blend of whimsy without seeming overly silly. Check it out if you need your faith in the graphic medium restored.

Excellent stuff. Daniel Clowes always puts out great books.

Today I just finished reading another title by Clowes called David Boring. I thoroughly enjoyed that book possibly more than this one. This is a story for those who really want to pay attention to all the details. The protagonist discovers he received super strength anytime he has nicotine in his system. He also receives a death ray that allows him to wipe anyone from existence. While this is a great piece of work I felt that at points it was really jarring in the way the story was told. This also, weirdly, is one of the charms this book has to offer. The overall story is good and, like the review on the book says, is like Holden from Catcher in the Rye. I gave it four stars instead of 5 due to the disjointed nature of the story. I know that I said that's part of the charm but sometimes it was a bit too much for my taste. Regardless, give this book a shot.

Dark, man

The Death Ray is a 'classic Clowes tale;' a coming of age of story of sorts, where the main character stumbles upon his unlikely superpower. It is a dark, but funny look at growing up and a "what would you do if..." situation. The characters struggle with loneliness, selfishness, and acceptance. The artwork has a classic comic book style, that nicely contrasts the cynical and blunt moments in the story. I happen to have the comic-book original (as printed in Eight Ball), and there isn't any new content that I noticed - no new artwork or original plans for the book. This version has

a wonderful hardcover binding, and the artwork is crisper and brighter than my copy of Eight Ball, so I'm glad I bought it. It's a joy to read and looks fantastic.

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