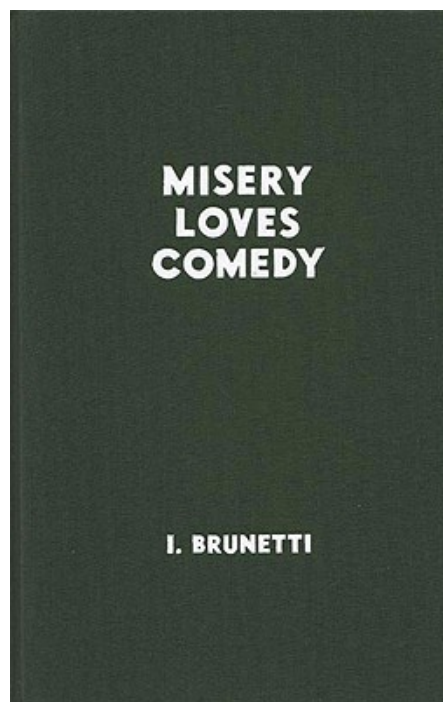




Misery Loves Comedy

Ivan Brunetti

[Download now](#)

[Read Online](#) ➔

Misery Loves Comedy

Ivan Brunetti

Misery Loves Comedy Ivan Brunetti

A psychiatric case study masquerading a fancy-pants graphic novel, *Misery Loves Comedy* collects Ivan Brunetti's early issues (no pun intended) wait, let's rephrase that. *Misery Loves Comedy* collects the first three issues of the legendary comic book series *Schizo* in their entirety, as well as a host of miscellaneous flotsam and jetsam from various anthologies, c. 1992-2005. Readers will find the author's unwitting self-caricature as a paranoid, deluded young man intriguingly repugnant and often chuckle-inducing. Besides Brunetti's trademark nihilism, self-loathing, relentless depression, and inchoate, spittle-soaked misanthropy, these earlier comics offer a dollop of scatology and blasphemy for that extra puerile, lowbrow tang. These are comics for those who enjoy witnessing one man's sanity in its final death rattle, swinging its tail from anhedonia to schadenfreude and back again. Also: lots and lots of filthy jokes.

Misery Loves Comedy Details

Date : Published June 25th 2007 by Fantagraphics (first published May 30th 2007)

ISBN : 9781560977926

Author : Ivan Brunetti

Format : Hardcover 172 pages

Genre : Sequential Art, Comics, Graphic Novels, Comix, Bande Dessinée, Humor, Graphic Novels
Comics, Autobiography, Memoir, Nonfiction, Short Stories

 [Download Misery Loves Comedy ...pdf](#)

 [Read Online Misery Loves Comedy ...pdf](#)

Download and Read Free Online Misery Loves Comedy Ivan Brunetti

From Reader Review Misery Loves Comedy for online ebook

Dave Antoine says

One.fucked.up.book....

No words to describe it....

David Schaafsma says

Dark, misanthropic, violent, depressing, offensive... miserable white man whiner Brunetti sometimes does funny parodies of other comics artists and maybe can be seen as parodying the very thing he is engaged in.. but I doubt it, I think this is just who he is.. Crumb's Mr. Natural, Ryan's Prison Pit, others. This is the edge some comics like to play in, claiming freedom of expression, and from censorship... Some of it is pretty funny but it's more miserable than comic for me.

Chris Jones says

Like a whinier Mike Diana. Book focuses on personal narratives through journeys of self loathing, mediocrity, mortality. Ivan Brunetti should be applauded for the sincerity and candidness he portrays in this collection. The extent of which alone makes him unique in the underground comics scene. He speaks to the brooding misanthrope inside every inadequate nerd. The funniest comics in this collection communicate a seething bitterness and resentment at the world. Highly recommended.

J. says

Brunetti is an absolutely masterful cartoonist. Not only does he show a dazzling array of styles in his own work, but he also manages to incredibly accurately spoof a ton of major cartoonists you're familiar with. His stylistic expertise is nearly unparalleled.

And he can be incredibly insightful at times. Many of his musings are poignant and moving, and many of his one- or two-page cartoons are awesome.

But there's a few reasons I just couldn't really enjoy this book. First, it's about the most depressing thing I've ever read. This isn't necessarily a bad thing. Actually, I found it pretty cathartic and, in small doses, enjoyable. However (and secondly), it's also incredibly misanthropic. This is an emotion I feel pretty regularly, but certainly not something I'm willing to revel in to the extent Brunetti does here. He frequently ponders various forms of extinction-causing violence, which takes the whole thing too far--into the realm of monochrome villainy. It's both overly dark and simultaneously it rings false. In my deepest depression, I've never wanted all of humanity to suffer. But maybe Brunetti has.

Third, and most damning, the extreme misanthropy leads to all kinds of violence and sexual assault. In the depths of his long, meandering, depressive diary passages, this is sort of acceptable, I guess. (But still really creepy and off-putting.) However, there are a ton of three-panel type cartoons in here that basically boil

down to rape or disfiguring violence, and I'm just unable to find that funny in and of itself. Occasionally, there's something funny about it, or at least clever, but it's usually just violence for violence' sake.

I strongly suspect (and Brunetti gives me evidence of this, in his discussion of being offensive in this book) that he has decided to take his general misanthropy out on his readers, by exposing them to his various bizarre and twisted version of anti-humanity. I'm generally not very easy to offend, but I AM easy to offend if you are, in fact, TRYING to offend me. And this seems to be exactly what Brunetti is doing. But why would you try to offend your readers? Generally this is only done to raise a really poignant, unforeseen point, or to drive home a particular inanity. But neither of those is the case here--Brunetti makes the same point ad nauseum, well past the point where the audience gets it and into the realm where he's just being offensive for offense's sake.

Overall, I guess what I'm saying is that, as brilliant as parts of this are, it's just for people who are *way* more comfortable laughing at rape than I am.

Brenna says

"Oh... Heavens me! Whatever was I thinking?" asks the charicatured Ivan Brunetti immediately after gouging out the eyes of (and urinating upon) the corpse of his fellow man. "I could get in trouble for this."

And so opens the cesspool of sex, crime, vitriol and violence that is Brunetti's "Misery Loves Comedy." Blanketed between a drab green, dust jacket-less cover, the materials presented are reprints of Brunetti's earliest work, from "Schizo" and various other random publications. And it is not a pretty sight.

Brunetti begs for death, praying to a god he doesn't believe in, and expresses a graphic urge to do us all in - me and you. Ivan Brunetti hates us all, but even more, he hates himself. Countless are the times he depicts himself with severed genitalia, defecated and/or urinated and/or ejaculated upon, his prone, mulilated form still scarcely breathing before being subject to the ridicules and jeers of apathetic passers-by.

The artwork in this comic book ranges from quasi-photorealism, to cutesy comic strip fare, but the ends are all the same: death, perversion, and desecration. Misery loves comedy? There's not a comedic panel to be had in this fare. But at least the title has got it half right.

Most notable of all is the 20-page rambling illuustrated diatribe entitled "If I Were Dictator Of The World," in which Brunetti details and lists his modus operandi should he ever be put in charge of cleaning up the planet. He'd start with mass extermination of the weaker ones: the violent criminals he feels cannot be rehabilitated, along with the polite, the meek, and the arrogant and self-assured. In short, Brunetti wishes for us all to die in as lingering and painful a means at his disposal. And this does, indeed, include himself.

And then, abruptly toward the end of the book, the tone changes. Like a swim in the cool ocean after bathing in a pit of fire ants comes the final section of miscellaneous colour cartoons. Brunetti presents a much milder, more tangible section which delves into the paranoias of our modern world (eBay "nemesi," pop-culture pollution, capsulized biographies of well-and-lesser-known individuals). Certainly, these barely break new ground, but after the full-frontal assault preceeding it, they feel like a trip to the oasis.

"Misery Loves Comedy" is like the lowbrow humour of Johnny Ryan, with a brain injected into the material... but the funny bone surgically removed. It is not a book for everyone. In fact, it is arguably a book for *anyone*. And yet, throughout the bleak, self-flagellatory miasma of verbosity, a glimmer of something survives: At least Ivan Brunetti staved off suicide long enough to see this book through print.

...It just isn't entirely clear what this glimmer *is*, exactly. But it sure ain't hope.

P. says

I had to push myself to finish this, and it did get better in some parts. But not enough for me to say that I liked it. I don't want to give praise that is grasping at straws, like *I admire the totality of his negative visions!*. Because it would be true, but it also really doesn't mean anything. Nothing means anything. We are all worms. I should never have read this.

Jason says

ivan brunetti may well be the true end point of human expression...

after the romantics and the realists, after the modernists and the high modernists, after it all has been experienced and passed through, when we find ourselves landing hard on the stony earth of the postmodern, we'll see brunetti sitting there waiting for us, naked and shamefaced, wincing in a pool of his own sweat and urine...

when all the psychological attempts to reconcile ourselves with a hostile and confusing world come to an end, when all the illusions of the meaning and purpose of existence have been completely scrubbed from the face of human consciousness, there will be nothing left but brunetti's world...

brunetti splatters his seething id all over the pages of this book and then squirms and writhes under the punishment his super-ego inflicts on him in response...

and that really sort of sums up the book...

when higher reasoning fails us, as postmodernism tells us it has, the naked and abandoned ego is left to the mercies of the id and the super-ego, who battle continually for governance over the ego's behaviors...

actually, as i think about it, brunetti is really only the penultimate stage in the progression of human expression, because before long the super-ego, with its traditional programming of taboos, cultural customs, and religious restrictions will not exist as it does in brunetti and in the rest of us...the super-ego will atrophy and diminish in its capacity to influence in direct proportion to the diminishing of cultural programming in the real world...as taboos and restrictions become less forbidden, or even wholly accepted behaviors, the super-ego will no longer possess the disciplinary powers it currently enjoys...and the id will reign... it will really be interesting (and horrifying) to see what brunetti's legacy will produce...

this book is NOT for the faint of heart that's for certain...i'm convinced that just being in possession of this text can get you arrested in several states, and i'm not kidding...

so only the stalwart need approach...

but do so only if you're interested in seeing the logical penultimate end point of the postmodern sensibility... just be prepared to take a long hot shower afterwards...

Dave-O says

Ivan Brunetti's humor is toxic and misanthropic; self-indulgent and self-deprecating. He peels back the layers of politeness in everyday social situations as it leaves us sensitive artistic types (for whom Ivan is often the stand-in in these comics) frail and vulnerable ...not to mention angry to near-sociopath levels. In the hands of

a lesser writer, it would be disastrous (think the bland "edgy" humor of "Family Guy" and comedian Sarah Silverman or of the boring observations of Todd Solondz's last few films) but Brunetti though forgoes any decorum and goes for the jugular, leaving no subject taboo. AIDS, the elderly, art, class, child abuse, women, sex, organized religion, politics, TV... all of it pushed up to center stage by Brunetti's skilled hand. He also lays himself on the slab as the product of a screwed up Catholic childhood. In a letter column in which other comics writers respond to his work, even legendary curmudgeon R. Crumb suggests self-affirmation and medication for Brunetti's depressed state.

It mostly hilarious, but it does get tedious. It certainly would be unreadable if the style of both the writing and the drawing were the same throughout, but part of Brunetti's ...um, genius?... is to counter such repulsive and often scatological observations with a deftness and variety to his drawings. There's also a strange sense of hope for Brunetti (and therefore, humanity) as the book progresses and he comes to terms with his negativity towards his fellow beings.

Michael says

if i could give this book a million, trillion stars i would. brutally (uh, brutally BRUTALLY) honest, vulgar, offensive, depressing, and brilliantly funny. it's like being tickled with a feather while a 1000 lb weight presses down on your chest, suffocating you into hysterics. unrelenting, crushing...jeeze, this guy makes me feel so much better about myself i can't even tell you. plus, he's a fantastic cartoonist. seriously, if you can't laugh at some of this stuff (and, oh man, it gets dark) then i would definitely reconsider our friendship. if we were friends. we might not be. well, not anymore. holy cow, lighten up!

Chadwick says

This collection, of the first three issues of Ivan Brunetti's marvelous *Schizo*, is one of the most beautiful comics i have ever read. Ivan has some issues for damn sure. His therapist writes the introduction. In the letters page for *Schizo* 2, R. Crumb asks, "Have you ever heard of Prozac?" Brunetti's views in these pages are dark, self loathing and misanthropy are the prevalent textures. However, underneath all of that lies a true bruised hopefulness and a tentative love of the worl that makes this a truly rich body of work. Moreover, Brunetti's stylistic range is absolutely breathtaking. The man is truly one of the grand battlepopes of cartooning. He draws like god.

e says

Yet another self-aggrandizing catalogue of grievances a cishet white male feels somehow compelled to air for the rest of us, fully believing that this is just TELLIN' IT LIKE IT IS. In reality, this has about as much to say on the human condition as one of Bill Hicks' stand-up routines & proves to be just as much of a worthless rag for lifelong onanists to pore over when they're not imagining murdering their supervisor in between putting on pots of coffee in the break room. I can't even recommend something else preferable to this horseshit since the whole genre of navel-gazing self-loathing white male comic autobio has never had anything of worth in it.

Alex says

Four stars may be a little high, but in general Ivan Brunetti is a really talented cartoonist & really funny at times. I say "at times" because this collects pretty much all of his early material up through the 90s and 2000s, including presumably most (but not all, I think there was some material he consciously excluded) of the run of his Schizo comic series from that period; Schizo was for all intents & purposes an autodiary and he really poured all of his random thoughts and anxieties into it, and to be honest it's kind of a mixed affair. A lot of it is relateable, his complaints about the world & his general dismal outlook on everything seemed to have had an audience in the 90s & there are times where he expresses the kinds of things that I think a lot of us worry about, or have experienced, but don't often bring up in polite company. Because by the way, this is not for polite company - this is intentionally edgy filth to the max, not the most grotesque and horrifying stuff in alternative comics but it ranks up there, and in the early days when he wasn't being self-reflective/pitying/deprecating, he was being really crass and snide; and even his later work often centers around penis jokes and the like. And of course, that's the appeal for his fans, his willingness to be outrageously candid and unafraid to joke about really gross things. It's an acknowledgment (possibly born out of bitterness as well as self-reflective honesty) that underneath the surface people aren't always that mature or upstanding, and they'll still laugh at the really disgusting and lowly side of life - in fact this is often a point of contention he expresses with people in his portrayal of apparently upstanding nice ones, that often times they're hypocrites who're driven by the same base desires and have the same thoughtless reactions to other people's misfortunes as the lowest of us. This is especially on display throughout the earlier material, where the whole goddamn stinking human race is portrayed as nothing better than a bunch of insects infesting the globe, murdering one another and living horrible, inconsequential lives falsely believing in their own dignity. And as self-righteous as this may make him look (and to be perfectly honest he often is), at the same time he doesn't spare himself much in the way of chastisement and loathing. This more than anything characterizes Schizo, his loathsome attitude toward himself and his need to excoriate himself in every conceivable way, pointing out every one of his flaws for his readers' judgment as something horribly shameful. He goes way over the top with it, too, and goes way too much into detail about it, but that's kind of where he was at when he wrote these. The introduction is written by his therapist, who explains the laborious process they've gone through to change his frame of mind away from self-destructive thinking and toward externalizing his feelings in a healthier manner by directing them at the sources of his sense of shameful inadequacy, which the therapist mainly identifies as his abusive father (who gets mentioned once in one comic and then never again, which would seem to suggest that prior to therapy he wasn't able to locate the source on his own). A lot of times there are huge walls of text filled up with philosophical and existential contemplation that honestly are a pain to read sometimes (there's a speech bubble in one of his comics that takes up the majority of an entire page). And yet you can see him succeeding at vindicating himself to a certain degree and finding the will to live again after going down more than a few gloomy downward spirals. Which is not to say that there's much self-destructive behavior to show per se, at least nothing major like drug use or addiction or toxic relationships; all in all Ivan's pretty much squeaky clean in that regard, it's only his thoughts which are shameful and sometimes damaging. Comparisons can be made to other "autobiographical" cartoonists, despite a lack of the same kind of super-intense, highly detailed self-analysis in many of the comics I've read which fit that label, and the lack of portrayals of real-life scenarios in these comics; or to the granddaddy of self-reflective alt comics Robert Crumb, but Ivan isn't the same kind of obsessive nerd that Crumb is. If anything he's a lot less problematic & more down to earth, closer in nature to the average person, generally easier to relate to. Especially in this day & age of widespread general anxiety about ourselves & people opening up about their struggles to be themselves without hating themselves for things that appear mundane or not that big of a deal (to someone who's overcome a lot of this self-defeating though, anyway) but to those people seem like glaring signs of their shameful nature, Ivan seems like another one of us trying to deal with those omnipresent anxieties which can't be easily banished by quick fixes. That and he has a juvenile sense of humor, but to be honest so do a lot of us. It's not a universal quality, to be sure, but if you still enjoy crass off-color humor that for once isn't insensitive or disparaging of marginalized groups (at least in his later work, in the earlier work there's some juvenile homophobia but he seems to have

grown out of that) and don't mind portrayals of veiny genitals on occasion you're likely to find him pretty funny. He's at least more thoughtful on a whole than most of the other unabashedly crass cartoonists of the 80s and 90s whose stock in trade was over the top vulgarity and filth.

In retrospect, though I appreciate Fantagraphics Books's intentions to re-publish old runs of comics in collections like these & keep them available for contemporary readers, I think maybe I paid too much when I paid \$20 for this, but that may also be because I wasn't made of money at the time. Most of Fantagraphics's hardcovers can run you between \$20-40 easily, with the larger & fancier ones demanding even higher prices, which makes collections like these kind of a luxury for those who are money conscious & only mildly curious. It'd be nice to see more paperback editions of collections like these, especially considering how the embossed text on the cover has worn away over time & the paper ribbon around it has become torn & crinkled, which makes me feel like I can't take care of the nice things I own.

Joe says

Brunetti is a beloved figure in the underground / independent comix culture, and it's not hard to understand why. Like many of his inspirations and contemporaries (Crumb, Bagge, etc.), a lot of his comix are an answer to this essential "comix" question: How much nihilism and narcissism can I cram in each panel of my cartoon? These guys are a combination of Woody Allen and that kid in your school who ate roaches for attention. It was neat when Crumb and his early crew did it. Now, it's just boring. There were times I had to literally force myself to finish reading this book.

Brunetti's one saving grace, and it is no small thing because he would be unpublished without it, is that he has a great and diverse style. Dude knows how to draw and he knows how to draw a great range of styles.

So as much as I disliked this book, I have to give it some props, and here's hoping that Brunetti will one day grow up and write something as interesting as his drawings.

Brendan says

Misery Loves Comedy collects much of the early Fantagraphics work of cartoonist Ivan Brunetti, who draws dark, misanthropic, morose comics laced with black humor. His stuff has the grotesque straightforwardness of R. Crumb and the everyone-hating perspective of Peter Bagge or Harvey Pekar on their bad days. Add in a dose of Chris Ware depression (and a touch of Charles Schultz to boot) and you've got Ivan's work. (Full disclosure: Ivan is a colleague of mine at Columbia College Chicago with whom I've worked a little bit.)

This is one of the most up-and-down experiences I've had reading a comic. Some parts I enjoyed immensely. In particular, I love the detailed parodies of other comics, including careful attention to their styles. These work in both tone and content, though as often as not the parody has to do with shifting the valence toward sex and hatred from whatever the comic's usual stance is. I also really disliked many of the comics for their unrelenting viciousness and nihilism. I spent my entire reading of the comic see-sawing between gasping horror and amusement. Perhaps that's the idea.

I include this image here, as it encapsulates much of what the comic's about. Brunetti, or his comic-book doppelganger, ponders how much he hates the world and everyone in it. Then he contemplates perpetrating violent and sadistic acts or experiencing them. And then there's often a punchline. Kind of.

Most strange, honestly, is the disconnect between my experience of Ivan as a person and the "Ivan" that

comes across in the comic. In meeting with him a few times, I tend(ed) to see him as quiet, pleasant, somewhat funny, helpful. But now part of me wonders if during the quiet he was raging at the world inside. Is it all a ploy? If a writer/artist says "I think about this:" and then tells us what he thinks about, that can't be a gimmick, can it? Because he did have to think about it to say he thinks about it. So on some level, he does think about it. And then what do you do with the autobiographical moments from his wife and/or psychologist? Are these memoir-based performance art?

Definitely not for everyone. Not necessarily even for me. But quite a read. Be forewarned, though. I'm not kidding at all about the violent and sadistic acts. There are a lot. Like watching Hostel or something.

Chris says

Collecting his 12 year journey that is Schizo 1-3 Brunetti proves that out of the hundred or so autobiographical cartoonists who've lingered like ganglions for over a decade, Brunetti is one of about five that should be doing this kind of work. Brutally honest, he's like watching a hyper depressing, yet still at times hysterically funny, comic book version of Annie Hall. The book's introduction is actually written by Brunetti's therapist. He portrays himself as a hard R-rated, bearded, four foot tall, banana-nosed Allen. Sometimes life is good (for maybe one chapter) when he's happily engaged, but most of the time it sucks. But he still never fails to toss in a few pages of knee-slappingly funny comic strips to break the tension. Make no mistake though, Brunetti always offers up the worst possible image of himself, portraying himself as a one man circus of a self-loathing, sexually depraved misanthropic misogynist. It is a book that miserable people like myself can really relate to, but I think happy people will love it as well. It doesn't hurt that Ivan is a master cartoonist.
