



City of Glass: The Graphic Novel (New York Trilogy)

By Paul Auster

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A graphic novel classic with a new introduction by Art Spiegelman

Quinn writes mysteries. *The Washington Post* has described him as a "post-existentialist private eye." An unknown voice on the telephone is now begging for his help, drawing him into a world and a mystery far stranger than any he ever created in print.

Adapted by Paul Karasik and David Mazzucchelli, with graphics by David Mazzucchelli, Paul Auster's groundbreaking, Edgar Award-nominated masterwork has been astonishingly transformed into a new visual language.

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

I cannot possibly offer enough praise for David Mazzucchelli and Paul Karasik's adaptation of *City of Glass*. While some critics found it to be a dry choice of books to turn into a comics, I think the interplay between image and text only heightens the original metafictional narrative. The treatment of the first speech by the crazy antagonist, Peter Stillman--in which the word balloons trail from random objects such as a broken television and a bottle of ink--is brilliant. *Neon Lit: Paul Auster's City of Glass* deftly illustrates why comics is a perfect format for exploring fictions about text: the words become visible objects of the story.

From Publishers Weekly

Karasik and Mazzucchelli's 1994 comics adaptation of Auster's existentialist mystery novel, reprinted here with an introduction by Art Spiegelman, has been a cult classic for years. *The Comics Journal* named it one of the 100 best comics of the century. Miraculously, it deepens the darkness and power of its source. Auster's novel (about a novelist named Quinn who's mistaken for a detective named Paul Auster and loses his mind and identity in the course of a meaningless case) zooms around in metafictional spirals, but it doesn't have a lot of visual content. In fact, it's mostly about the breakdown of the idea of representation and the widening chasm between signifier and signified. So the artists, perversely and brilliantly, play fast and loose with the text. Mazzucchelli draws everything in a bluntly sketched, bold-lined style, and having set up a suitably film noir mood at the beginning, he substitutes literal depictions of what's happening for symbolic or iconic images wherever possible. One character's monologue about the loss of meaning in his speech is drawn as a long zoom down his throat, followed by Charon arising from a void, a cave drawing, a series of holes and symbols of muteness and finally a broken marionette at the bottom of a well. This reflected, shattered *Glass* introduces a whole new set of resonances to Auster's story, about the things images can and can't represent when language fails.

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From School Library Journal

Adult/High School—Auster's novella, originally published as part of the groundbreaking "Neo-Lit" series (Sun & Moon, 1985; o.p.), holds up in this adaptation. Daniel Quinn, a reclusive poet turned mystery writer living in New York City, receives calls from an unknown and perplexing individual who mistakes him for the detective Paul Auster (not to be confused with Auster the writer, who also appears in the book). After giving in to curiosity, Quinn accepts the case as protector of Peter Stillman, a young man whose father tortured him with experiments of sensory deprivation to discover the original language of God. As Quinn delves into the case, he becomes caught within the pair's obsessions. Karasik and Mazzucchelli tone down some of the metafictional aspects of the novella, but they streamline and focus the story without sacrificing too much of Auster's intent. Mazzucchelli's simple, straightforward artwork is ultimately what makes this version really work, transforming a highly intellectual tale based mostly around language and the word into a world of surreal visual meditations. The use of heavy black lines against a white background is reminiscent of the noir movies that partially influenced the original; when the characters dive further and further into insanity, the images become increasingly abstract. Combined with the unusual story, this technique makes for a unique introduction to some complex ideas of postmodernism without getting in the way of the plot.—Matthew L. Moffett, Northern Virginia Community College, Annandale

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Users Review

From reader reviews:

Eleanor Williams:

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Kathi Adamo:

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Alvaro Holloway:

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