



## Venom: Carnage Unleashed

*Larry Hama , David Michelinie , Andrew Wildman (Illustrator)*

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**Venom: Carnage Unleashed** Larry Hama , David Michelinie , Andrew Wildman (Illustrator)

Collecting Venom: Carnage Unleashed #1-4, Venom: Sinner Takes All #1-5; and material from Amazing Spider-Man Super Special, Spider-Man Super Special, Venom Super Special, Spectacular Spider-Man Super Special and Web of Spider-Man Super Special.

Venom stars in tales of violence and vengeance! When the video game "Carnage Unleashed" becomes a hit, it provides the psychopathic Cletus Kasady with the opportunity to gain his freedom -and renew his sadistic reign of terror on the streets! The only way to stop a bad symbiote? A good(ish) symbiote! Blood will flow as Venom takes on Carnage! Then, when killer vigilante Sin-Eater strikes, Eddie Brock's ex-wife is caught in the crossfire. To survive, must she become the bride of Venom? Plus, Spider-Man and the Scarlet Spider must stand by Eddie's side when an alien invasion threatens to turn Earth into the Planet of the Symbiotes!

## Venom: Carnage Unleashed Details

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Author : Larry Hama , David Michelinie , Andrew Wildman (Illustrator)

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# From Reader Review **Venom: Carnage Unleashed** for online ebook

## **Chris Gordon says**

Venom: Carnage Unleashed is not my favorite Venom graphic novel, but it has some damn good stories in it, but it also has one really bad one. Luckily, the worst of it comes right at the beginning, leaving the rest of the collection with the better stories to enjoy. Don't be scared off by the poor start to this one, for the latter stories are some of the better Venom stories around and should be read by anyone looking for the best of this great character.

The aptly named Venom: Carnage Unleashed starts off with – what else? – Carnage Unleashed...and it's bad! I wish they titled this graphic novel something else because headlining such a bad Venom story does nothing but get people's hopes high only to be viciously let down by the crap that transpires immediately thereafter. So Venom has been a rather odd comic series so far; it is safe to say that his stories can get pretty weird even by comic book standards. But Carnage Unleashed is just plain dumb. Carnage has a video game released in his honor (because people definitely do that) and Cletus Kasady wants in on the madness. He manages to...upload himself into the video game with his symbiote...Makes no sense, but that's not why this limited series sucks. Rather, it is because it advertises a fight between Venom and Carnage that never materializes the way it is portrayed on the cover. They only start fighting in the fourth issue out of four, so three issues were wasted setting up this terrible plot. Once they do fight, it is as bland an affair as they come, hardly worth the price of admission. Not to mention, the writing is abysmal this time around. I don't claim that Venom comics were ever written all that great to begin with, but this is a new low for the series. The dialogue is unnatural and riddled with nonexistent “cool radical '90s slang” to appease the tubular dudes reading this comic back when everything required some degree of extremeness, but all it manages to do is make it feel very dated and read like a drag. So much for an epic Venom-Carnage fight. Skip this one if you only have a moderate interest in Venom because reading this might make you think twice about ever reading another issue. For a far superior fight between these two characters, look up Spider-Man: Maximum Carnage.

Next up is Sinner Takes All, and this is one of the best standalone Venom stories since Separation Anxiety. This limited series marks the return of Sin-Eater, the villain that can be traced back to Eddie Brock's earliest days as a journalist, far before he ever became the villainous Venom. It was his story on the Sin-Eater that caused Brock to lose his job (for which he nonsensically blamed Spider-Man, but that is beside the point), so things get personal for Venom when he attempts to bring this new Sin-Eater to justice. Sinner Takes All is a vast improvement in every arena where Carnage Unleashed failed. For one, its action is great – better than the pathetic Carnage fight previously thrown at us – and it showcases Venom getting put through the ringer by this worthy adversary. I also really like how Venom feels like a real hero this time around due to how seriously he takes his role as a protector, whereas in other comics he came off as wanting to be good but easily let his dark side get the best of him, thus negating that shift from anti-hero to full-blown hero. There is also a very interesting twist involving Ann Weying, Eddie Brock's ex-wife who has not made an appearance in a long time. Overall, this was a great read, but I suggest reading Spider-Man: The Death of Jean DeWolff beforehand in order to feel the full weight of the Sin-Eater's return for Venom.

The third story included in this collection is Planet of the Symbiotes, easily the best story of the bunch. I was surprised that this story was included because it is slated to get its own graphic novel release later this year, but I'm glad I got to read it early in this form. I won't divulge too much in this review about why I loved this Venom story so much (I did a separate review for the storyline under the Venom: Planet of the Symbiotes listing on Goodreads), but I will say that it saved the entire graphic novel from being average.

To conclude this graphic novel, a couple of supplemental stories were added in that were originally printed along with *Sinner Takes All* and *Planet of the Symbiotes* limited series. Rather than having these independent narratives break the flow of those aforementioned story arcs, they were removed from those sections and instead placed as their own stories in the back of the book. I prefer the compartmentalization of these stories because they work better as their own sections as opposed to mini tangents dispersed throughout several issues in other storylines. Anyways, the first story is very short and touches upon the symbiote costume back when it was attached to Spider-Man. All this story shows is that the symbiote had a mind of its own and used Spider-Man's body as a vessel through which it satiated its desire to fight. The unaware Spider-Man also comes across Jean DeWolff in this story, expanding upon their relationship as fellow crime-fighters. Not a necessary inclusion, but not a waste of paper either.

The other supplemental story reintroduces the Jury, who are Venom antagonists from way back in *Venom: Lethal Protector*. They have changed since their last encounter with Venom, and this mini story shows the process by which one becomes a member of this elite group. We follow a newly inducted Jury member who actually shares a past with Venom, but not a good one. Her husband, a guard at the Vault prison, was killed when he released the prisoners as part of his escape. Ever since, she had been waiting for her chance to join the group that was founded specifically to take down that symbiotic madman. The process to join the Jury is arduous and tests the limits of its members to ensure their fullest dedication to their cause. Though Venom is not present in this story, I liked seeing the continuity of other Venom stories expanded upon in greater detail; it adds to the Venom mythos and builds his own personal universe outside of the one he shares with Spider-Man. To get the most out of this particular story, read *Venom: Lethal Protector* and *Venom: Deathtrap, The Vault*.

*Venom: Carnage Unleashed* bats three out of four, and that's pretty good, especially considering that two of those three are top-of-the-line Venom outings. I wish this graphic novel was titled after *Sinner Takes All*, a far more deserving story arc for the headliner than the pitifully misleading *Carnage Unleashed*. Ignoring the one dark spot in this collection, the stories this graphic novel has to offer are in keeping with the high quality of the previous entries in the Venom line of comics and is worth picking up.

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