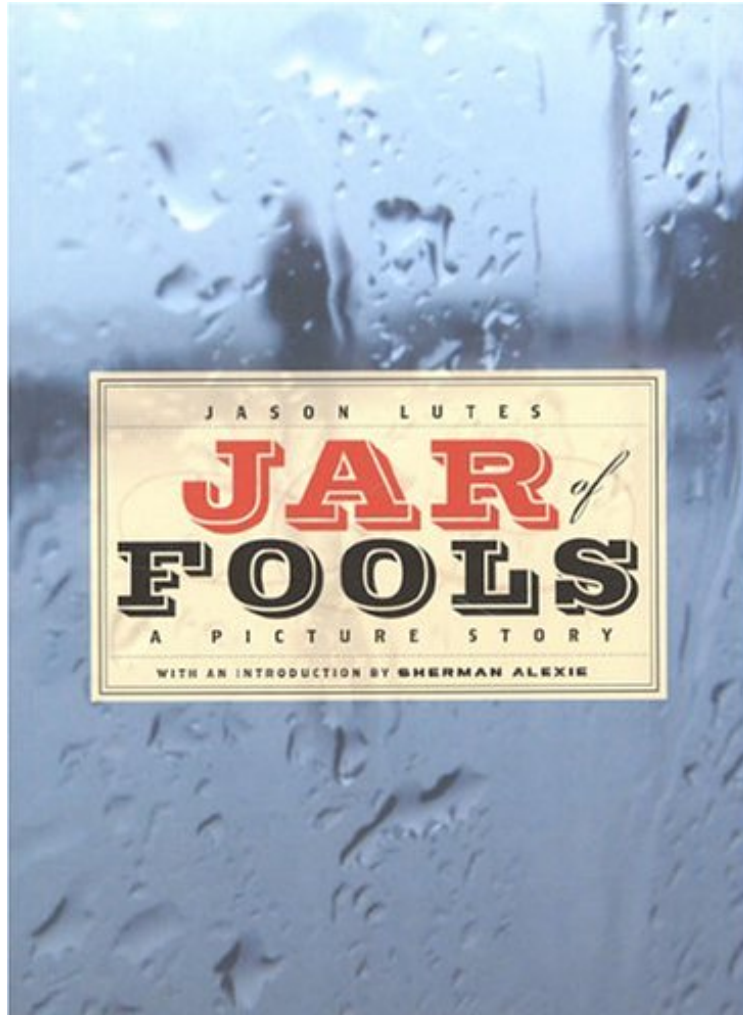


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## Jar of Fools: A Picture Story

*Jason Lutes*

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#1664516 in Books Drawn and Quarterly 2003-09 2003-09-01Original language:EnglishPDF # 1 .36 x .49 x 6.721, .40 #File Name: 1896597726152 pages | File size: 38.Mb

**Jason Lutes : Jar of Fools: A Picture Story** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Jar of Fools: A Picture Story:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Escape artistsBy Kerry WaltersI came to Jason Lutes' Jar of Fools after having my socks knocked off by the first volume of his Berlin trilogy. Jar isn't as masterful a work as Berlin--it's less structured, for example--but it displays the same kind of written sensitivity and visual subtlety that Berlin does. Especially noteworthy is the seamless flow between dreams and wakefulness (for example, pp. 13-18, 41-42, or 93-95) that Lutes achieves. The story is ostensibly about a handful of people whose lives seem to be dead-ended: a young magician haunted by his brother's suicide and the end of a love affair; the young magician's ex, seething with anger and a sense of meaninglessness; an aged magician who teeters between lucidity and senility; a con man who lives in his car

with his young daughter. Events in the novel bring them together for a short time, and then split them apart again. There are hints of salvation, and more than a hint in the con man's case. But as another reviewer observes, the story ends without (thankfully) a nice, antiseptic wrap-up in which all the loose strings get tied together. On a different level, though, both the story line and the visuals suggest that an underlying theme is the unresolvable ambiguity of what it means to be a human. On the one hand, we sometimes want to live quietly, painlessly, anonymously--to live without making a ripple, as one of the characters says in a pivotal moment in the story (pp. 33-35). We want to be escape artists. But sooner or later, something in us rebels against this quietitude, and we long to make ripples--splashes, in fact--to live passionately, even if it means enduring great suffering. The title *Jar of Fools* is, I suspect, an intentional gesture on Lutes' part at the 15th century Ship of Fools allegory whose point is that humans frequently sail through life rudderlessly. I wonder if this suggests another theme in the novel: that no matter how in control of our destiny we think we are, the ocean currents of life ultimately take us where they will. All in all, a moving artwork. Highly recommended. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A very original character redemption story. A fallen stage ...By Lee Chilcs A very original character redemption story. A fallen stage magician gets an unlikely education in life from his elderly mentor, a wily con artist and the charming daughter of the con artist. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Great story...By Michael McCollough Unfortunately the book fell apart before I finished reading it. As did a replacement copy. I hope I can rebind it because it will repay rereading.

Ernie is an alcoholic stage magician haunted by lost love and his brother's suicide, and he's hooked up with his senile mentor in one last effort to sort his life out. But Ernie needs to keep Flossie the Magnificent with him in the present and by his side to guide Ernie through these difficult days. These two magicians have run out of escape tricks but they can't stop running. Esther is still numb with grief for Ernie's brother. She works at a coffee shop and has allowed her heart to simply atrophy while a torrent of rage builds slowly inside her. Nathan Lender is a small time grifter living on his wits and in a car with his twelve-year-old daughter, Claire. He's running out of time to fix the past and make things right for his daughter. One morning Nathan Lender makes the mistake of trying to con Esther at the coffee counter. Circumstance will bring a desperate group of people together, all at the end of their rope. An unlikely kind of love grows from these broken people who discover the act of self-sacrifice can perform miracles.

A lovely, short 'picture novel' exploring the tenacious bond between an alcoholic stage magician and his cranky mentor. New York Times Book *Jar of Fools* is full of people trying to stop things they care about from melting away, like estranged lovers and old-fashioned jobs...all the main characters--the magician, a coffee-shop cashier, a small time con-man--are in danger of ending up beaten down and swallowed up by the silences of life which Lutes' well-paced art evokes so effectively. Details The story itself is so masterfully told that it could stand alone as a novella in Harper's. When combined with Lutes' spare black-and-white line drawings and creative use of the comic book medium, it becomes something transcendent--a piece of literature that speaks to the emotional core. Wired Employing the lost skills of mood, sparseness, and language, Lutes' stunning comic *Jar of Fools* transcends the usually mealy-mouthed limits of graphic novels and, in the process, winds up being a damn good read. Spin Magazine Reading *Jar of Fools* is like getting a slow motion punch in the face. There's plenty of time to get out of the way, but something compels you to wait and find out if it's actually going to hurt as much when it hits. And, of course, it does. Chris Ware, author of *Jimmy Corrigan* From the Publisher Jason Lutes was born in New Jersey in 1967, and started reading and drawing comics as soon as he was able. The European comics he encountered during childhood visits to France made a great impression on him, and have proven a strong influence on his adult work. The first time he gave up comics was to attend the Rhode Island School of Design (BFA in Illustration, 1991), but publications such as R. Crumb's *Weirdo*, Art Spiegelman's *RAW*, and Chester Brown's *Yummy Fur* lured him back. Upon graduation, he moved to Seattle, lost his spleen in a bike accident, and washed dishes until he was hired by Fantagraphics Books. The second time he gave up comics was a year later, when he became disillusioned with the comics industry and quit Fantagraphics to wash more dishes. He was lured back by the opportunity to draw a strip for "The Stranger", a Seattle weekly, and that strip was later collected in the book "Jar of Fools". In 1995, after a stint as art director at "The Stranger", he quit to try his hand at being a full-time cartoonist. He currently lives in Seattle, where he infrequently produces chapters in the comics novel "Berlin" and fondly recalls happier days as a dishwasher. In 1996 Lutes started work on *Berlin*, a projected 600 page story set in Germany during the twilight years of the Weimar Republic. *Berlin; Book One*, collecting the first part of the trilogy, has just been published by Drawn Quarterly. About the Author Jason Lutes is a graduate of the Rhode Island School of Design. He has worked as an art director and editor for various alternative media and comics companies but he's happiest being his own boss. He freelances from his new home in Asheville, North Carolina.