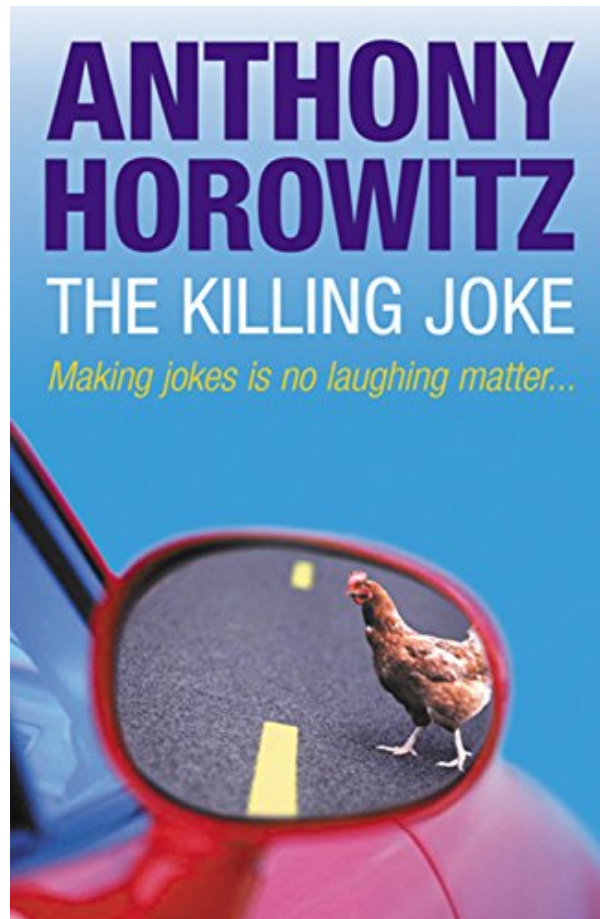


# THE KILLING JOKE BY ANTHONY HOROWITZ



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# ANTHONY HOROWITZ

## THE KILLING JOKE

*Making jokes is no laughing matter...*



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## Review

“There is a new slew of comic writing out...and the best is *The Killing Joke*. In the playful manner of Jasper Fforde, the plot goes right to the heart of comedy. Great fun.” —The Observer

## About the Author

Anthony Horowitz is a TV screenwriter, with credits including the BAFTA-winning 'Foyle's War', 'Midsomer Murders' and 'Poirot'. He is also the author of a string of bestselling children's books, including the Alex Rider series. He lives in London.

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When Guy Fletcher scoffs at a feeble joke he overhears in his local pub, he finds himself, in quick succession, head-butted and struck by an idea. Is it possible to trace a joke all the way back to its original source? Guy's meandering trail leads him to a Hungarian dentist, a hyperactive troop of Boy Scouts, a group of giggling grave-diggers, and a half-dozen undercover detectives. He's also sure that he's being followed by a sinister Englishman, Irishman, and Scotsman. He has an unfortunate encounter with a banana peel. And there's a fly in his soup. Guy is on the verge of discovering something very unpleasant. Making jokes is no laughing matter.

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- 384 pages

## Features

- Used Book in Good Condition

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## Most helpful customer reviews

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful.

Four Stars

By Amazon Customer

Enjoyable - if you're having fun, you need to stay til the end. No spoilers. :)

5 of 6 people found the following review helpful.

A riot!

By Beige and Velvet

Just like half the fun in a joke is in sharing it with others, I would also recommend and lend this book to my friends. This is probably the funniest thriller I've read. It's craftily written ("We're being attacked by stereotypes!") and doesn't bore one bit. The book starts and ends like a joke, and it follows the path of our

protagonist Guy Fletcher who embarks on a mission of searching a sick joke to its origins. In the process, various jokes come to life as they try to make his quest more difficult and he gets chased by an Englishman, an Irishman and a Scotsman, an army of nuns, poses of Jews, blacks and homosexuals, finds a fly in his soup, sees a blind man riding a bicycle etc. Ultimately, the riddle "why did the chicken cross the road" leads him to his final destination. There's a love angle thrown in, but it never becomes overbearing so as to lose the focus of the book. A great read!

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful.

Humorous, clever and original, but spoiled with faults

By deudad

Anthony Horowitz is a great suspense writer, and he is also very good at making things funny. But *The Killing Joke* is not Alex Rider. It's more like a quirky James Bond/conspiracy thriller with a lot language and sexual content thrown in for effect.

We're introduced to Guy Fletcher, an actor presently out of work. One evening he goes into a bar and hears a particular joke and decides to track it down until he finds its origin. This leads to his fantastical adventures that lead him across England. There's more to the story, but that's all you need to know for now.

I've read most of Horowitz's children's' books, like the Alex Rider series, the Gate Keepers series, as well as *Groosham Grange*. All of the books were very good. Not that they're flawless, particularly *Groosham Grange*, but all were enjoyable and interesting. *The Killing Joke* is written very much like Horowitz's other books. Here we have interesting characters, a good plot, an easy writing style, and definite originality. As literature, *The Killing Joke* can be read at any age. It's something a twelve-year-old could enjoy.

But the frequent strong language and strong sexual content make this book not worth it. The language, I feel, was unnecessary and added nothing to who there characters were. The sexual content, as well, seemed stupid and out of place. I'll get into more detail later when I talk about the characters.

I'll continue with the aspects of *The Killing Joke* that I didn't like. First of all is the pacing. It is consistent, but very slow. A lot of time is spent on back-story, and wandering around the countryside following the joke. For some reason, it felt forced, as if Horowitz didn't have material to make a decent sized book.

This leads me to the story, or the plot. In truth, there really isn't a story. *The Killing Joke* is based on a concept rather than a plot or characters. Albeit, it's a great concept, but I don't think it's enough to hold an entire book. I think it would be better suited for a novella or short story.

Even if the story doesn't work, strong characters can still hold up a book... and this is something *The Killing Joke* has in short supply. The only character that is developed at all is Guy Fletcher. I found him to be a fun person to follow, and someone I had no trouble rooting for. Other than Guy, though, the other characters were flat and seemed more like placeholders rather than real people. There seemed no real point to Sally. There's never any explanation as to why she even likes Guy. Removing the romantic subplot would have helped with the levels of sexual content, and the general welfare of the book. Alas...

In truth, there were a lot of pointless things that existed and happened. There is no explanation as to why certain things occurred, like armies of stereotypes following Guy, and what is the point of having Sally have an enormously fat mother, among other things? All of these things do nothing to further the plot or characters, only the concept. Even then it's sometimes questionable.

Now, it may seem as if I hate every aspect of this book, but I don't. There are a couple of things that made

The Killing Joke readable. The first is Horowitz's writing style. He is a very good writer. He utilizes numerous writing quirks to effectively create a strange and humorous atmosphere. And as I said before, the concept is very imaginative and original. I like it a lot. Also, Horowitz combines plentiful clichéd elements and uses them to his advantage, which is clever, and some thing I really enjoy. And much of the book is downright funny.

Over all, The Killing Joke is readable, but nothing more. Most of the characters are flat, the plot drags, and the concept would be happier in a short story. Not to mention the amount of language and sexual content and pointless situations. While there are good aspects, they do not outweigh the bad.

Because of this, I do not recommend you read The Killing Joke.

See all 5 customer reviews...

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