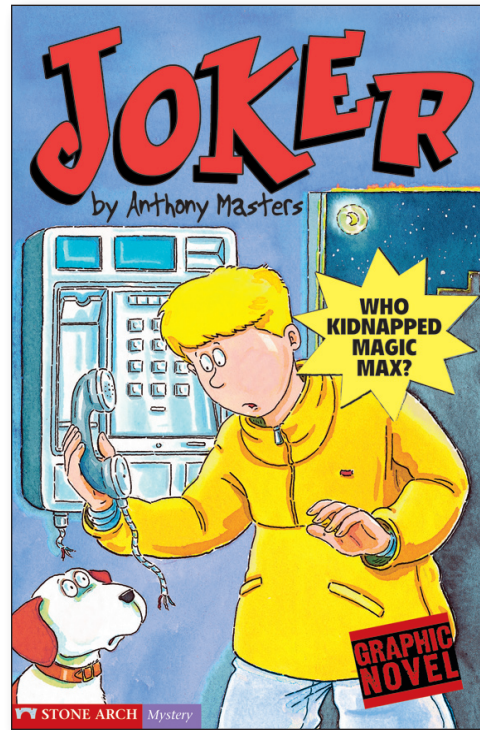




READER'S THEATER



Joker **by Anthony Masters**

Characters: **Mel, the joker**
 Mutt, Mel's dog
 Tim
 Paul
 Classmates
 Mrs. Jackson, mel's teacher
 Narrator

Genre: **Mystery**

Ages: **8-11**

Joker page 1

- Narrator:** At school, Mel liked to show off his magic tricks.
- Mel:** Watch me put this normal hankie into the magic box.
- Tim:** Magic box? Right.
- Mel:** Then I will say a few magic words. Abwa fabwa. And behold!
- Paul:** Wow! The hankie's moving all by itself.
- Mel:** It's alive!
- Classmates:** Cool!
- Tim:** It's on a string! Mel's cheating.
- Narrator:** Tim grabbed the string and pulled the hankie along the floor.
- Classmates:** It wasn't magic.
- Paul:** Mel's a cheater.
- Mrs. Jackson:** Help! What's this spider doing on my chair?
- Tim:** Wait a minute. This spider's made of plastic.
- Mrs. Jackson:** Mel, do you know anything about this?
- Narrator:** Mrs. Jackson found another plastic spider in Mel's book bag. And she found some stink bombs inside it, too. She sent Mel to the principal that day, who told Mel to stop being a joker.
- Mel:** I just want to be a magician. Nobody gets mad at them when they play jokes on people.
- Narrator:** Mel was frustrated. He wanted to be a magician, just like his father Magic Max. After school, Mel would sometimes help his father during his stage shows. His dog Mutt would help, too.
- Mutt:** Woof!

Joker page 2

Mel: I can rely on you, Mutt. You don't think I'm a cheater.

Mutt: Woof! Woof!

Narrator: But one day, when Mel was home from school, his father never showed up.

Mel: He should have been home half an hour ago? Where's Dad? I wonder if this has anything to do with that strange man I saw by our house yesterday. Dad looked nervous when I mentioned him.

Mutt: Woof!

Mel: What is it, Mutt?

Narrator: Then Mel saw it. A playing card was on the kitchen table. Not just any card. The joker!

Mel: That's the signal that something's wrong!

Narrator: Mel and his dad had worked out a signal, to let each other know if one of them was in trouble. They would stick the joker card somewhere. Mel knew his dad needed help. So he ran next door to Tim's house.

Mel: Hey, Tim!

Tim: What do you want?

Mel: You've got to help me. I think my dad's been kidnapped.

Tim: Yeah, right. Just like one of your fake magic tricks. You're just making it up.

Mutt: Grrrrrr!

Mel: What are we going to do, Mutt? No one believes me!

Narrator: What will Mel do? People just think he's being a joker again. But this time it's real. Something has happened to his dad, Magic Max, and Mel is the only one who can help.

Joker page 3

Mutt:

Woof!

Narrator:

Oh yeah. And his little dog, Mutt, too.

THE END