

The Complete Peanuts 1955-1956: Vol. 3 Hardcover Edition

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The third volume in our acclaimed series takes us into the mid-1950s as Linus learns to talk, Snoopy begins to explore his eccentricities (including his hilarious first series of impressions), Lucy's unrequited crush on Schroeder takes final shape, and Charlie Brown becomes... well, even more Charlie Brown-ish. Over half of the strips in this volume have never been printed since their original appearance in newspapers a half century ago! Even the most dedicated Peanuts collector/fan is sure to find many new treasures. The Complete Peanuts will run 25 volumes, collecting two years chronologically at a rate of two books a year for 12 years. Each volume is designed by the award-winning cartoonist Seth (Clyde Fans) and features impeccable production values; every single strip from Charles M. Schulz's 50-year American classic is reproduced better than ever before. This volume includes an introduction by Matt Groening (The Simpsons) as well as the popular Complete Peanuts index, a hit with librarians and collectors alike, and an epilogue by series editor Gary Groth.

In 1955-56, the Peanuts gang may have still been in first grade (or lower), but the characters continue to grow into their distinctive and unmistakable personalities. Snoopy overcomes some embarrassment to reveal his talent for impressions (wolf, rhino, alligator, kangaroo, Violet, etc.) and his joyous dance-the-day-away attitude. Linus adopts the same attitude ("Five hundred years from now, who'll know the difference?") and continues to show his genius in such diverse activities as square balloons, snow sculptures, and air sketches, even though he has to resort to wishful violence against his bullying sister. Lucy, now a ripe old 4, has to face such concerns as the Earth being worn down by people's feet and whether Santa exists. And already concerned about getting married, she tries to divert Schroeder's attention from Beethoven either by logic (what's the sense in learning Beethoven sonatas if you don't win a prize?), by sympathy ("My favorite piece is Bach's Toccata and Fugue in Asia Minor"), or by violence, and pulls away the football from Charlie Brown for the first time (December 1956). She also teaches her brother "little-known facts" about the world (palm trees were so named because people can fit their hand around them), which gives Charlie Brown stomach aches and formed part of the stage musical *You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown*. But she'll never lose an argument as long as she can end it with a well-placed insult. Such is the misery of Charlie Brown, who also has to endure his failure to fly a kite, his complete failure on the baseball diamond, and misery during any holiday. That he does endure, however, makes him one of the heroes of our time. The third volume of Fantagraphics Books' handsome Complete Peanuts series includes a foreword by Matt Groening and a Charles M. Schulz retrospective by Gary Groth. --David Horiuchi

Charles M. Schulz

was born November 25, 1922, in Minneapolis. His destiny was foreshadowed when an uncle gave him, at the age of two days, the nickname Sparky (after the racehorse Spark Plug in the newspaper strip *Barney Google*).

In his senior year in high school, his mother noticed an ad in a local newspaper for a correspondence school, Federal Schools (later called Art Instruction Schools). Schulz passed the talent test, completed the course, and began trying, unsuccessfully, to sell gag cartoons to magazines. (His first published drawing was of his dog, Spike, and appeared in a 1937 Ripley's Believe It or Not! installment.) Between 1948 and 1950, he succeeded in selling 17 cartoons to the *Saturday Evening Post*—as well as, to the local *St. Paul Pioneer*

