

VENOM: Tom Hardy to Play Eddie Brock, Fleischer to Direct



Multiple outlets are reporting that Tom Hardy (Bane in *The Dark Knight Rises*) is set to play Eddie Brock in Sony's upcoming Spider-Man spinoff, *Venom*, set to release October 5, 2018.

While all the news has Hardy "in negotiations" — which could fall apart at the last minute, of course — Sony posted on Twitter that Hardy has the role, so it could be that everyone is hedging their bets.

<https://twitter.com/SonyPictures/status/865629713225572352>

According to *The Tracking Board*, this version of the story will *not* be spun out of the Spider-Man story, even though that's where the character originated. Does this mean we'll see Hardy's Venom during his vigilante phase in San Francisco? If Spider-Man is removed from his story, Venom's origin will have to be altered so that Brock obtains the symbiote in some other fashion. Maybe still in the church, but not after Spidey discards it.



Venom was introduced in 1988, created by David Michelinie, Todd McFarlane, and Mike Zeck. The character has mainly been a villain, an alien symbiote that needs a human host to survive. First appearing on film in *Spider-Man 3*, Venom's Eddie Brock was played by Topher Grace. *The Hollywood Reporter* says that this project is a big priority for Sony, and that it will launch a new set of Spider-Man universe projects, the next one being a Silver Sable/Black Cat story (**possibly the same one announced here**). Could *Venom* be used to spin out Black Cat? They do have a bit of a history..

It's not the first time Hardy has been courted for comic book projects since the Dark Knight trilogy ended. Both DC and Marvel projects have had him on the radar — *Suicide Squad* and *X-Men: Apocalypse* — with no deal falling into place. The Oscar nominee (for *The Revenant*) is also reported to be a big fan of the character.



HARDY

Venom was written by Scott Rosenberg and Jeff Pinkner, with Avi Arad and Matt Tolmach producing along with Amy Pascal. Columbia Pictures execs Palak Patel and Eric Fineman will oversee the project on the studio side.



FLEISCHER

For the director's chair, Sony is looking to *Zombieland* director Ruben Fleischer, who was also in the running for the studio's revival of *Ghostbusters* when it was going to be *Ghostbusters 3*. Fleischer has also directed episodes of *Santa Clarita Diet* (which our Team Zombie discusses on the *Zombpocalypse Now* podcast) and was in the running for other comic book movies such as *Ant-Man* and *Suicide Squad 2*.

This will be the first Spider-Man related story produced by Sony following their deal modification with Marvel that allows the webhead to appear in the Marvel Cinematic Universe produced by Marvel Studios. *That* deal followed several announcements by Sony that they were developing several films in the Spider-Man universe, including *Sinister Six* and a movie centered around Aunt May. All of that has fallen by the wayside in the aftermath of the Sony hack scandal and changing of the studio execs, but it appears some projects are still viable enough for Sony to re-visit.

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