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SPOILER ALERT

Steamy *Heated Rivalry* star is also an iconic DC Comics villain – and you didn't even realize it

Connor Storrle previously starred in a bloody sequence in "Joker: Folie à Deux."

By **Joey Nolfi** | December 4, 2025 1:08 p.m. ET

3 1 COMMENT



'Heated Rivalry' stars Hudson Williams and Connor Storrle; Storrle in 'Joker: Folie à Deux'. Credit: Sabrina Lantos/HBO Max; HBO Max

KEY POINTS

- Connor Storrle currently stars in *Heated Rivalry*, a steamy gay romance about hockey players.
- The actor previously had a small (but vital) role in *Joker: Folie à Deux* opposite Joaquin Phoenix.
- Storrle was revealed to be the titular DC Comics villain in a bloody scene at the end of the film.

Before he scored a few goals with Hudson Williams as a hockey player on HBO Max's steamy gay romance *Heated Rivalry*, actor Connor Storrle actually delivered a bloody slap shot of a different kind to [Joaquin Phoenix](#) in the 2024 film *Joker: Folie à Deux*.

The star is, as a result of his appearance in the film, actually an official DC Comics supervillain, as his character – an inmate at Arkham Asylum – [actually kills Phoenix's Arthur Fleck](#) in the final scene of the [Todd Phillips](#)-directed musical sequel.

The moment comes after Storrle's unnamed character is seen observing Arthur throughout several scenes that play across the film, culminating in a bloody stabbing that leads to Arthur's death.



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Connor Storrle and Hudson Williams in 'Heated Rivalry'. Credit: HBO Max

Storrle's character then carves a bloody smile into his own face, signaling that, at least in the universe of *Folie à Deux*, he is the real Joker, and Arthur was merely the catalyst for the rise of the man who would go on to become the Gotham City menace.

Though *Folie à Deux*, which also starred [Lady Gaga](#) as another DC Comics villain, Harley Quinn, received overwhelmingly negative reviews from critics and audiences, [Phillips told *Entertainment Weekly*](#) that the film also served as an origin story for another well-known villain from the comic book series.

Amid [Gotham City District Attorney Harvey Dent's \(Harry Lawtey\)](#) attempted prosecution of Arthur for his notorious crimes, a bomb detonates just outside the Gotham courthouse during the trial.

During the aftermath, the film shows a brief shot of Harvey, who, after being knocked on his back, is shown with half of his face burned and bloodied as a result of the blast. Fans will recognize not only Harvey's name, but also his physical nature, as evidence that this is the origin story of *Batman* series villain Two-Face.

"Yes, of course," Phillips confirmed to EW at the time of the film's release in October 2024, later adding, "All we're doing is saying, let's use this lore as a foundation, but run it through a realistic lens, or at least a different lens than it's been run through in other things, to make it our own."

Phillips' ideology is a constant in both of his Joker films, with both *Joker* and *Folie à Deux* marking major departures from classic genre entries as they paint a grittier portrait of Arthur's evolution without strictly adhering to pre-established lore.



Lady Gaga and Joaquin Phoenix in 'Joker: Folie à Deux'. Credit: Niko Tavernise

It's "not out of disrespect to the original material, not out of rejecting some other person's idea," Phillips said. It's "just out of, how do we make this our own?"

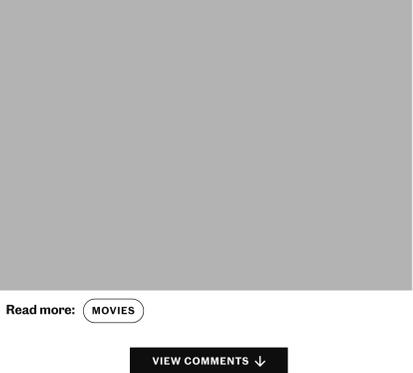
Since debuting on HBO Max on Nov. 28, *Heated Rivalry* has earned standout notices, with the show – and its sexual scenes – becoming big hits on social media.

Creator Jacob Tierney recently told [Xtra](#) that he wasn't interested in probing into the real-life sexuality of the actors behind the roles in the series.

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"I don't think there's any reason to get into that stuff," he told the outlet. "I'll tell you something about the casting of both of these roles. You can't ask questions like that when you're casting, right? It's actually against the law. So what you have to gauge is somebody's enthusiasm and willingness to do the work."

Joker: Folie à Deux and *Heated Rivalry* are both streaming on HBO Max.



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