



American Terrorist

Tyler Chin-Tanner

Wendy Chin-Tanner

Andy McDonald, Illustrator

Matt Wilson, Illustrator

Michael Wiggam, Illustrator

A Wave Blue World (Nov 10, 2020)

Softcover \$19.99 (224pp)

978-1-949518-08-5

American Terrorist probes the line between concerned citizen and criminal, addressing real-life political problems including corporate pollution, racial inequality, and access to health care.

Owen, a journalist, and Hannah, a teacher, are on the run. Owen killed a government agent; Hannah created a hostage situation at an insurance company. Neither action was planned. The duo is brought together and swept up in chaos and controversy regardless, and a variety of groups become involved in helping them or hunting them down.

As Owen and Hannah continue to break the law for what they see as good reasons, they also refuse to surrender to government agents. Their story is provocative and thoughtful, leaving questions of right and wrong open to interpretation. Its complex characters are made interesting through their contradictions and self-doubts. Hannah has an unspecified mental illness, and her behavior veers toward the erratic without her medication. And although the government agent Owen kills is portrayed as overeager, even arrogant, his family's loss is depicted in a poignant, memorable scene.

The book's art is rife with realistic details, including websites and television broadcasts that could pass for screenshots, and convincing landscapes and cityscapes across the book's many changes of setting. However, some characters' faces resemble those of others, leading to confusion, though their different hairstyles, colors, and clothing are better up to representing their distinctions.

The book's ending is both shocking and logical, given the story's development. Sure to generate interest and debate, it provides closure while also leaving some tantalizing elements unresolved. *American Terrorist* is an absorbing graphic novel that is, by turns, inspiring, disturbing, and triumphant.

PETER DABBENE (November / December 2020)

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