



Brik

Adam Glass

Michael Benson

Harwinder Singh, Illustrator

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The legend of the Golem is brought to modern-day Yonkers, New York, in the graphic novel *Brik*, by Adam Glass, Michael Benson, and Harwinder Singh.

After twelve-year-old Drew loses his grandfather to gang violence, he successfully invokes the Jewish Golem myth to seek protection—and revenge. Addressing the Golem, Drew tells the creature, “We need to make our mark./ Something to let people know.../ that we are here./ And that there is hope. From here out yer name is Brik.”

The tale unfolds convincingly, with believable motivations and problems as Drew tries to safeguard his mother and the small store they’re being harassed to sell.

There are two major “twists,” one of which, delivered on the final page, succeeds better than the other. But Glass and Benson, with plenty of experience writing both comics and television, create a convincing self-contained community, populated by local thugs, heroes, and average citizens. The somewhat familiar character archetypes, including the stubborn old grandfather and worried mother, become appealing people in their own right, not just devices to move the plot along.

The urban environment is rendered in a vibrant, kinetic style by Singh (and colorist Gonzalo Duarte), bringing the common adolescent power fantasy of being a hero (or, in this case, controlling one) vividly to life. Though it’s entertaining fiction, *Brik* goes deeper than a typical “kid rights wrongs” story; it teaches universal lessons on the costs of vengeance, and the dangers of purely emotional responses to one’s problems. Due to violence and language, its intended audience is those age thirteen and up, but for those above that cutoff—by days or by decades—*Brik* makes for an engrossing and thought-provoking tale.

PETER DABBENE (May/June 2017)

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