

Dixie Vixens Vol 1: A Lit Cigarette

Adrian F. Wassel

Nathan C. Gooden

Michael Colangelo

Creative Mind Energy (Sep 6, 2015)

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Adrian Wassel takes his southern background and warps it through the monochromatic lens of Nathan Gooden and Michael Colangelo's art, in *Dixie Vixens: A Lit Cigarette*. The book follows three recent New York college graduates as they set off on a road trip to the South. The girls stumble into trouble in the form of a gathering of the Ku Klux Klan and a corrupt sheriff, who together have abducted a pair of Latino cowboys. While the three main characters aren't exactly unique—a blonde knockout, a short-haired computer geek, and a brunette who is both sexy and serious—they are likeable, and they show some depth as they debate the ethics of hunting or using their bodies to get what they want from men. Wassel sets a masterful pace, and tension rises steadily throughout the book. The artwork is moody, distinctive, and different, with the expert use of a limited watercolor palette turning what would have been a pretty good black-and-white comic into a striking color standout. There's some talk by Wassel in the author's note of "subverting stereotypes," and while it's not evident in this volume, between that intriguing statement and a classic cliff-hanger ending, part two can't come quickly enough.

PETER DABBENE (Spring 2016)

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