

★ **Dune: The Graphic Novel, Book 1****Frank Herbert****Brian Herbert****Kevin J. Anderson****Raúl Allén, Illustrator****Patricia Martín, Illustrator**

Abrams ComicArts (Nov 24, 2020)

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The first part of Frank Herbert's seminal science fiction work is adapted in the faithful, dazzling graphic novel *Dune*.

Dune tells the story of Paul Atreides, whose father, Duke Leto Atreides, has just been awarded ministry of the desolate planet Arrakis, where water is scarce and giant sandworms roam the desert landscape. Arrakis is valuable because of the spice found there, and the planet's previous owners, the Harkonnens, are looking to reclaim it. A traitor within Leto's ranks leads to Paul and his mother Jessica, a witch of the Bene Gesserit order, escaping into the desert, seeking shelter with the Fremen, a group of natives known for their independence and self-sufficiency.

The story features Shakespearean-level intrigue and drama, as well as religious, political, and environmental themes, and the book's uncompressed pace allows for their full realization. Characters' inner thoughts, shown in captions and distinguished by different colored backgrounds for clarity, are a prominent feature. They offer remarkable intimacy and depth despite the large cast of characters, while incredible art delivers the strong sense of place that makes Arrakis such a fascinating and complete world. Each member of the large cast is always recognizable, and the action is clear, but the exquisite color and richness of details, as of the flow of fabrics and the depiction of distinct textures, raise the book to another level.

The core of what made *Dune* a great science fiction novel has been preserved, and to it are added vibrant visuals in *Dune: The Graphic Novel, Book 1*—a resoundingly successful adaptation.

PETER DABBENE (January / February 2021)

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