



Jacob's Apartment

Joshua Kemble

Graphic Mundi (May 25, 2022)

Softcover \$21.95 (136pp)

978-1-63779-022-9

A young man experiences a crisis of faith and stirrings of love in the graphic novel *Jacob's Apartment*.

Jacob and Sarah are California roommates with contrasting lifestyles and worldviews: Sarah is an atheist with a history of undesirable boyfriends, while Jacob is the product of staunch Christian parents, just beginning to question his religion in the face of his father's illness. Jacob and Sarah realize their romantic feelings for each other, but she moves to New York to pursue a job and her ex-lover. She tells Jacob she feels like she would only "spoil his goodness." Still, he follows her across the country, leading to a memorable, emotional reunion.

Jacob's explorations of his doubts about God are honest and affecting. Though the characters discuss complex feelings and problems, the book relies most on visual storytelling, with silent panels showing simple movements that hint at deeper meanings. Dream sequences and symbolism also contribute to the story's rich characterizations: Sarah dreams of swimming to the bottom of a water-filled tank containing a treasure chest, while Jacob's emotional state is indicated in part by a stuffed dinosaur and a bee buzzing amid the panels of the book.

Jacob and Sarah's decisions are authentic, and the detailed art complements the writing, resulting in additional realism. *Jacob's Apartment* is an excellent graphic novel that utilizes the unique possibilities of the medium to portray deep emotions in dramatic style.

PETER DABBENE (May / June 2022)

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