



Matilde's Quest: Phenomena Book 2

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A girl seeks to create lasting peace between warring groups in the graphic novel *Matilde's Quest*.

After an epic battle in the Golden City of Eyes, Boldon, Spike, and Matilde, who has a mechanical arm, secure passage to Matilde's hometown. They find her brother Casity and learn that the violent and long-standing feud between the Droots and their enemies, the Mage Mordilyns, is still ongoing. Matilde takes the initiative to meet with the leader of the Mage Mordilyns, proposing an end to the hostilities. Later, a grand battle erupts. With the Mage leader's help, a peace settlement is forged.

The illustrations are exquisite, with detailed architectural backgrounds, exciting action sequences, and fantastic depictions of the city's inhabitants, including a giant eye and flying fish carrying passengers on their backs. And the short, snappy language is entertaining, if short on backstory. It's unclear, for example, why Matilde and her companions choose to return to her home, when the idea of doing so seems to provoke tears in her. There are creatures that seem to be aliens, but there's no mention of interplanetary travel. And it's said that "everything changed" after the phenomenon, but other than the fact that Boldon and his family are connected to its cause, nothing more is said. Because of such choices, mystery reigns.

Matilde's Quest is an imaginative, character-driven graphic novel in which three heroes survive in a harsh postapocalyptic world.

PETER DABBENE (May / June 2024)

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