

Pantheon: The True Story of the Egyptian Dieties

Hamish Steele

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Hamish Steele presents a coherent story about how all the Egyptian gods fit together, in his humorous, irreverent graphic novel *Pantheon*.

Beginning with a handy family tree of Egyptian gods, *Pantheon* weaves accounts from various ancient documents into a surprisingly faithful and cohesive tale. The gods are often petty or stupid, which, combined with their power, makes for an extremely entertaining, slightly surreal soap opera.

"Fart for your life, my son!" Isis implores Horus, bringing a sense of humor to the book. Both the art and the text are simple but effective. Using distinctions of color and accoutrements, Steele keeps a multitude of deities easily discernible. Dialogue is delivered in modern-day vernacular (including curses), helping a somewhat convoluted chain of events to flow nicely.

A celestial cow, the first mummy, magic scorpions, incest, and a boat race—the crazy and contradictory somehow make sense here. Characters change their minds frequently and give in to their emotions and desires on a whim. As Steele theorizes near the end of the book, perhaps these gods were created not simply to inspire awe or explain natural phenomena but also to entertain and instruct through their mistakes.

It's a good bet that this raucous, ribald, laugh-out-loud graphic novel will keep the stories and lessons of the Egyptian pantheon alive in the minds of current and future generations.

PETER DABBENE (September/October 2017)

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