



Sick

Gabby Schulz

Secret Acres (Jun 14, 2016)

Hardcover \$21.95 (84pp)

978-0-9962739-1-6

Sick is Gabby Schulz's fever-dream, the profoundly honest and disturbing graphic-novel account of a fifteen-day illness that pushed the author to the brink of death.

Gabby Schulz (also known as Ken Dahl) is the author of several graphic novels, including *Monsters*, an examination of the effects of herpes. So the disturbing, grueling experience of Schulz's sickness and self-reflection is a perfect subject for him in *Sick*, which proves to be funny, dark, and provocative. Schulz attempts to treat his illness, but it quickly spirals out of control—lacking health insurance, Schulz begins to consider his life choices, and even considers suicide before the book, like his illness, culminates with a savage indictment of human society.

It's this sharp-edged look at politics, religion, and people, just before Schulz's recovery, that elevates the book from a simple (though morbidly fascinating) autobiographical tale to a scathing work of criticism. The fact that Schulz's rage may have been fed by his discomfort and despair doesn't detract from its impact.

Schulz's art is as good as any independent cartoonist working today—grim and graphic, but also frank and penetrating. With plenty of anatomical details and ailments shown and described, *Sick* isn't for the easily grossed-out or offended. But those looking for a vital, independent voice to follow in the footsteps of Robert Crumb and others should give it a try—some of Schulz's images and ideas will linger, like a stubborn infection, long after the book's cover has been closed.

PETER DABBENE (Fall 2016)

Disclosure: This article is not an endorsement, but a review. The publisher of this book provided free copies of the book to have their book reviewed by a professional reviewer. No fee was paid by the publisher for this review. Foreword Reviews only recommends books that we love. Foreword Magazine, Inc. is disclosing this in accordance with the Federal Trade Commission's 16 CFR, Part 255.