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FOREWORD REVIEW ♥♥♥♥♥ COMICS & GRAPHIC NOVELS

Star Wars: Aventuras De La Guerra De Los Clones, Volumen 1

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The juggernauts of the Star Wars empire, the graphic novel format, and the growing Spanish language readership combine forces to create an enjoyable action-packed read in *Aventuras*. Riding the success of the Cartoon Network's Emmy Award-winning T.V. show, "Clone Wars," this book brings the show's characters and style into three new adventures translated entirely into Spanish.

The stories take place five months after the battle of Geonosis, the first major conflict of the Clone Wars. In the first installment "*Fuerza Ciega* / Blind Force," Obi-Wan Kenobi and Anakin Skywalker have to learn to move beyond their senses to fight a shadowy enemy in Nivek. In "Heavy Metal Jedi," Masters Tiin and Windu must push their Jedi powers to new limits to conquer a formidable and unexpected foe. Wrapping up Volume I, "*Corrientes Fuertes* / Strong Currents" finds Master Fisto swimming the oceans of Mon Calamari to flush out an enemy leader who commands his troops by telepathy.

The writers and illustrators each have long lists of graphic novels to their credit. Here, their *Aventuras* follows the cartoon show very closely in style, making it immediately accessible to legions of already-loyal young fans. The cartoon's hallmarks are brief explosive episodes developing storylines over several installments, and stripped-down, boldly drawn characters. *Aventuras* retains all of these features. Readers will quickly move through the pages to keep up with the pace of the action. Amid chaotic battles, as laser blasts sizzle beyond the frames, the story takes more time on key moments, such as when an eight-frame sequence shows, from the droid's perspective, how it is levitated by Master Tiin and sent plummeting to its explosive end.

One way in which *Aventuras* moves away from the show is a stronger educational focus complementing the classic Jedi themes. For example, "*Fuerza Ciega*" offers an understated lesson in knowing how to learn from a teacher and synthesize that knowledge to move beyond the lesson. In "Heavy Metal Jedi," teamwork and valuing each individual's contribution are emphasized. The most heavy-handed lesson comes from Master Fisto, with a focus on eco-awareness and tolerance of different cultures. When the Mon Cal ask if Fisto has defeated the enemy, his reply leaves them more wide-eyed than normal: "*Negocíen compartir el planeta con los Quarren y los Moappa, y qualquier otro habitante. Salven el mar protegiendo sus corrientes*. / Negotiate sharing the planet with the Quarren and Moappa, and any other inhabitant. Save the sea by protecting its currents."

Aventuras will be well-received by young fans of graphic novels and those of the Cartoon Network show, as well as beginning Spanish language students looking for an engaging format to practice in, regardless of age. Begun a compelling new adventure in Spanish language literature is.

NAOMI MILLÁN (August 8, 2006)

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