



The Clandestinauts

Tim Sievert

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Raw, visceral, and direct from the creator's id comes *The Clandestinauts* by Tim Sievert, a graphic novel about a group of Dungeons & Dragons–style adventurers. The juxtaposition of those elements is refreshing and surprising—such fantasy books tend to be weighed down by “high,” formal language, but here, that kind of overblown verbiage is played mostly for laughs, while the characters occasionally lead with shorter, baser comments, such as “What are you looking at, granny?” and “Oh wow, sorry.” Also entertaining are the interparty dynamics, often driven by greed, jealousy, and distrust.

The plot is sprawling and unpredictable, involving a quest for a goblet, a trip to hell, and a multitude of monsters and evil wizards. Sievert's style is exciting, though the storytelling is occasionally difficult to follow—probably as a byproduct of the frenzied pace that's implied. The story feels like a fever dream that Sievert rushed to get down on paper before he forgot it.

The book doesn't use full color but rather marks different scenes or settings by using varying monochrome shading—one scene is cast in orange, another in green, another in red, etc. The story offers a satisfying end, with the hint of a possible return of the Clandestinauts in future tales. Humorous and irreverent but an adventure nonetheless, *The Clandestinauts* is perfect for those who don't always need to take their role playing seriously.

PETER DABBENE (July/August 2018)

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