



Tony Hawk's 900 Revolution: Impulse

M. Zachary Sherman

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"Slider, you've got something inside you, a raw talent and this piece of board knew it, amplified it. We can teach you how to hone it, control it. Use it for the betterment of mankind."

Part novel, part graphic novel, *Impulse*, the second volume of Tony Hawk's 900 Revolution, grabs you from the first scene, a two-page comic depicting Tony Hawk's historic 900, and the subsequent crack of his board that sets things in motion for a new generation of young skaters. The images are sharp and vivid, with just enough text to highlight what's happening without bogging it down.

This volume is about Slider, a fourteen-year-old boy living in New York City who hates school but loves to skateboard. Slider's been bouncing around in the foster care system for so long he's all but given up on the idea of a family, and he's learned to trust no one besides his seventeen-year-old foster brother, Mikey, and his best friend (and maybe more), Juliet. Slider's world is turned upside down when his brother gives him a mysterious key then disappears with a group of menacing boys. Hours later, Mikey is missing, their foster parents beaten by home invaders, and Slider has a cop interrogating him.

Sherman does a good job of capturing Slider's loneliness and sense of isolation and distrust, while still lighting up the pages with his passion for skateboarding and his love for his brother and friend. The text is peppered with skateboarding terms and descriptions of tricks, but doesn't contain enough to be off putting to someone not familiar with the sport.

When Slider ditches the cop, he finds the boys who were last seen with his brother are following him, ready to beat him up or worse for something they call "the artifact." Slider is able to escape to Juliet's house, and when they figure out the boys are after whatever is in the locker the key Mikey gave him opens, they decide to get their hands on it before the boys do, however dangerous that may be.

M. Zachary Sherman got his start in comics, penning panels for publishers like Marvel and Dark Horse. He has also written video games and screenplays, and that skill set comes out here in the fast pace of the story.

Impulse is a great read for teen boys, with an action-packed story not lacking in genuine teen angst and delivering the significant message that you have to trust those around you because you can't do everything on your own. The manner in which the graphic novel sections break up the text make it a good choice for a distracted or reluctant reader.

MOLLY HORAN (November 7, 2011)

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