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Shockheaded Peter Launches Clockwork Mystery

May 29, 2023 • Derek McCaw • Comics, Reviews • 0



It happens once upon a time, as so many stories do. In the town of Winding Springs, keeping time stands above all other tasks. Young Ruby dreams of growing up and having adventures in the wider world, but as heir to the town's best clockworks, she may never leave town. As the bearer of a heart condition regulated by clockwork, she may never grow up. That doesn't stop her from being adventurous, clever, and curious.

She needs all three to uncover the rot at the heart of her community. For Winding Springs has a vigilante of sorts, a "Bad Man" who comes after the corrupt, the bullying, and perhaps just the naughty. Some call him the Bad Man; others call him Shockheaded Peter. (Though here he wears a top hat to cover much of that shock.)

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A book like this takes some world building, which writers E.B. Kogan, Jessica Silveti, and artist Guiseppe Sabe Di Stefano sprinkle throughout. We get strong insights into Winding Springs' history and culture. As it's somewhat of a dark fairy tale, it's understandable the outside world remains hazy and perhaps timeless. Ruby can't go there yet anyway, though no doubt her journey will lead in that direction. She has to get past Peter first.



In this first volume, it's hard to gauge how malevolent Shockheaded Peter may actually be. Though Di Stefano doesn't hide Peter's appearance, Kogan and Silveti have written him as a shadowy figure. Dangerous if crossed, but focused on his own sense of justice. This is a plucky young heroine's story to drive.

Di Stefano gives the book an intriguing texture. Color dances in and out, with a judicious use of shadow. His style feels reminiscent of Jhonen Vasquez, though it's also got a strong influence from Tim Burton's art. As it's not a far walk from the original German children's story "Shockheaded Peter" to *Edward Scissorhands*, it's the right tone for the book. The linework has an irreverence to it, while the coloring draws it back to the realm of children's stories.

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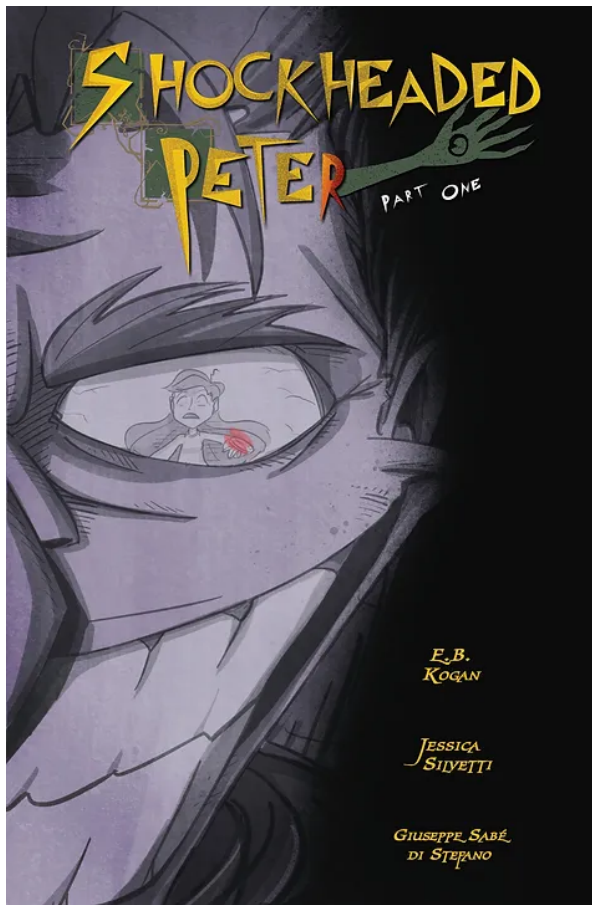
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As **"Part One,"** it's hard to judge the overall shape. Just when the pieces start coming into place — and no, they're not all there yet — we have to wait for the next to launch a Kickstarter campaign. But that's the most financially viable model for indie comics creators right now. You can sign up on the Shockheaded Peter Comic website for notification. In the meantime, it's worth poking around there and purchasing Part One. Sure, you can set it aside for reading once you know Two and Three are in the works. It's worth taking a chance.





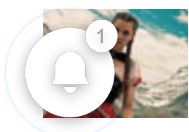
E.B. KOGAN GIUSEPPE SABÉ DI STEFANO JESSICA SILVETTI

SHOCKHEADED PETER



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In addition to running Fanboy Planet, Derek has written for ActionAce, Daily Radar, Once Upon A Dime, and The Wave. He has contributed stories to Arcana Comics (The Greatest American Hero) and Monsterverse Comics (Bela Lugosi's Tales from the Grave). He has performed with ComedySportz and Silicon Valley Shakespeare, though relocated to Hollywood to... work in an office? If you ever played Eric's Ultimate Solitaire on the Macintosh, it was Derek's voice as The Weasel that urged you to play longer. You can buy his book "I Was Flesh Gordon" on the Amazon link at the right. Email him at editor@fanboyplanet.com.



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