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Battling Boy

Olivia Hales

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Book Review

Title: Battling Boy
Author: Paul Pope
Reviewer: Olivia Hales
Publisher: Roaring Book Press
Publication Year: 2013
ISBN: 9781596431454
Number of Pages: 208
Interest Level: Young Adult
Rating: Outstanding



Review

The once great city of Arcopolis is under siege from a flood of monsters. The city's only defense—Haggard West—is dead at the hands of the Ghoul Gang. The young god Battling Boy must prove himself in his time of Rambling—a coming of age task that all gods take. He is brought to Arcopolis by his father, where his task is assigned; he must rid Arcopolis of monsters before he can return home. Aurora West, the daughter of the late Haggard West, plans revenge on the Ghoul Gang just as Battling Boy makes his debut. The city is thrilled to have a new hero, but Aurora is not. Battling Boy takes on the worst monster the city has seen, and barely defeats it. Afterwards, he's swept up by a parade in his honor, only to have the Ghoul Gang crash it. Both Aurora and BB try to stop them but fail. Battling Boy and Aurora come face to face in the wake of the parade attack. He admits to her that he can't save the city on his own.

Paul Pope is an expert in his craft, which shows well in *Battling Boy*. The story is unusual in how fresh the characters feel. Their interactions smoothly uncover unique traits and quirks. These clearly defined characters make relating to them virtually effortless for the reader. Visual cues flow together with dialogue to move the story forward, engrossing the reader in an explosively colorful environment where fantasy and science fiction blend to make something singular. Visually this graphic novel drips with astounding detail that will catch and hold interest. Battling Boy is vigorous, specific, and nuanced. Pacing and readability are impeccable. Be it in the hands of a child or adult, this graphic novel will not disappoint.

*Contains moderate violence.