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In Real Life

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Book Review

In Real Life

Author

Cory Doctorow and Jen

Illustrator

Cory Doctorow and Jen

Reviewer

Natalie Hatch

Rating

Excellent

Level

Intermediate, Young
Adult

Pages

177

Year

2014

Publisher

First Second

ISBN

9781596439589

Anda has recently moved from her hometown, her grandmother, and her old friends. She has a hard time fitting in because of her physical appearance and love of gaming. She's only played off-line games until Liza the Organiza, president of Clan Fahrenheit in Coursegold Online, comes and talks at her school. She offers the girls there a temporary three-month membership to her clan with possible full membership afterwards if they can prove themselves. The only catch? To embrace themselves as girls, in-game and out. Anda accepts and learns about economics, different cultures, languages, bullying, and helps a 'gold farmer' named Raymond who she finds out works online and in-game to survive in real life.

Doctorow and Wang do a wonderful job in illustrating and constructing a story and plot around a female gamer. The main character is an individual who wouldn't consider herself attractive by female standards, doesn't fit in and that feels more comfortable with Dungeons and Dragons guys than looking in the mirror to do her make-up. This kind of graphic novel is great for the gaming females from age twelve to eighteen and speaks to them about wanting to be more than they are. It affirms that girls can have just as much a place in gaming as boys. It also shows that in-game or out, a girl can have the power to research, learn, and change her world and the world of those she cares about, whether they are a click or a continent away. In Real Life is a full-color graphic novel with decent paper and binding, wonderful cover illustrations, and a powerful female protagonist.

*Contains mild violence.