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Brandon Sanderson's White Sand Vol. 1



Synopsis

A brand new saga of magic and adventure by #1 New York Times best-selling author Brandon Sanderson! On the planet of Taldain, the legendary Sand Masters harness arcane powers to manipulate sand in spectacular ways. But when they are slaughtered in a sinister conspiracy, the weakest of their number, Kenton, believes himself to be the only survivor. With enemies closing in on all sides, Kenton forges an unlikely partnership with Khriss -- a mysterious Darksider who hides secrets of her own.

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Customer Reviews

I'm a fan of both Graphic Novels, and Brandon Sanderson. That being said, I was a little underwhelmed on this one. Not bad, but not great.

THE GOOD:

- *Physical aspects: the book itself is well made. The pages are glossy, the print quality excellent, & the dust cover is pretty.
- *Art: it's solid. Not the best but far better than average. The art has a busy quality to it, with lots of pencil shading that makes it look a bit murky, rather than a clean contemporary comic book style. Not bad mind you, just a little busy.
- *Cheap: a hardback graphic novel for around \$15? That's a deal.

THE OK: (nitpicky stuff)

- *Exposition: a problem with graphic novels is the over reliance of exposition. In this

instance, there are lots of "info dumps" via characters talking to each other, but actually explaining the plot to the reader. I prefer a "narrator approach" to this sort of thing, because I think it's out of character for two characters to be talking to each other about things they clearly already know. It's nitpicky, I know, but if you look at some of the most skilled comics writers, you'll see very little of this. For instance, Geoff Johns often employs a "narrator" to fill in the reader, often just the character thinking to himself, which feels more natural than exposition. There is no avoiding at least a little bit of exposition, but this was a little heavier than I prefer.*Characters development: The main character is pretty well developed, but Khriss, the "mysterious Darksider who hides secrets of her own" felt like she was kind of cardboard. I have faith this will improve in future volumes.*Magic system: the sand mastery thing does not feel well fleshed out to me, which is surprising for a Sanderson novel.

Reader thoughts: Battle is bloody. I don't think I notice how much violence there is when I read, but seeing a page of dead people covered in patches of red; you can't avoid it. I like the world and magic system (controlling sand, sand losing power, recharged by the sun) and limitations (magic requires water, the world doesn't rotate or have sunrises/sunsets) and people (the cultures are so fascinating when you can see the outfits!). I like the plot, too (other than all the death). I would have appreciated seeing inside the MC's head more, seeing his struggle and grief. I imagine he's nervous stepping into the leadership role. I imagine he's panicking at the deadline and worrying about how he's going to save his clan. I imagine this, but I don't know for sure. This makes him seem a bit more 2D to me. A few times, in a new scene/place with new characters, I felt lost. Why was she chasing that guy? Why did it matter? These are some of the rich ideas that could have been better in a novel. Writer thoughts: I've never written a graphic novel, but I think I can speak to some of the pros and cons. I know what elements are good for stories, and I can see which would benefit and which would suffer. What do you LOSE by going from a novel to a graphic novel? The inner dialogue is the biggest loss, I think. Especially since Sanderson writes such good inner conflict and worries and ideas. We learn less background and other cultural ideas. Yes, we get to see the differences between these people, but we don't learn their history or likes/dislikes unless they actually talk about these things. Does that person have a family? Is that one desperate for a job? Have those two been best friends since birth?

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