



The Electric State

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In 1997, a runaway teenager and her yellow toy robot travel west through a strange USA. The ruins of gigantic battle drones litter the countryside, heaped together with the discarded trash of a high tech consumerist society in decline. As their car approaches the edge of the continent, the world outside the window seems to be unraveling ever faster—as if somewhere beyond the horizon, the hollow core of civilization has finally caved in.

Simon Stålenhag is the internationally acclaimed author, concept designer, and artist behind *Tales from the Loop* and *Things from the Flood*. His highly imaginative images and stories depicting illusive sci-fi phenomena in mundane, hyper-realistic Scandinavian landscapes have made Stålenhag one of the most sought-after visual storytellers in the world. In *The Electric State*, Stålenhag turns his unique vision to America.

The Electric State Details

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Author : Simon Stålenhag

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Genre : Science Fiction, Fiction, Sequential Art, Graphic Novels, Art, Dystopia

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From Reader Review The Electric State for online ebook

Dennis says

Re-reading...

Because it's fantastic and deserves a proper review.

All the stars!

This book is a piece of art! Literally. It's like nothing I've ever read before.

I took a lot of pictures and now have to decide which ones to use for my review. The light got a little bad towards the end. So I'll also have to retake some of them tomorrow. Therefore the review will take some time. But this book is worthy of the effort. I loved every second of it.

It goes straight onto my favorites shelf.

There it is! :D

Thanks, Trish! ?

Octavi says

INCREÍBLE. IMPRESIONANTE. IMPRESCINDIBLE. Este libro no es sólo un catálogo de bellísimas ilustraciones, que aunque lo fuera sería una auténtica joya. Además el artista/autor añade una historia sobre los protagonistas que no sólo da más profundidad al mundo creado por este genial sueco, sino que te va atrapando a lo largo del libro y de propina te sorprende con un cojonudo giro final. Leedlo YA y recrearos en las formidables ilustraciones.

Victoria says

This is a very beautiful and epic story from a young Swedish artist. It is definitely one of the most atmospheric graphic novels I've read in my life, thanks to the illustrations that bring everything that's

happening to life. They are so details that at times it seemed that I'm looking at real photos.

The story (meaning the textual part of it) is almost as good as the images. Yes, I believe the text in this book is secondary. At first it's pretty hard to tell what's going on because the author throws us into the story with no explanations. We observe the main character, a girl who's traveling around post-apocalyptic America. We don't know what her intentions are, but as the storyline moves on, we get to find out what's happened in the world and start feeling sorry for her and the robot she's traveling with.

For me the story ended unexpectedly, right at the most interesting point. But that's a good kind of ending, it makes your imagination work.

This book is amazing, I'm glad I have it in paper.

Adam Smith says

To say I love Simon's art is an understatement, so this book could have been all pictures and still attained 5 stars. Behind the art however is a story: it is a roadtrip across an alternative version of USA in the 90s, one filled with a mixture of analogue and digital and a curious array of science-fiction artefacts left to rust and decay after an apparent 'event'. Or are they?

The story is told using a mixture of the art and the writing, often using the writing to delve into some character backstory and history of events – the pacing is slow and allows the world to become ingrained before we learn more about the narrator and the kind of events that have lead to this point. Indeed, there is some satisfaction in the scarcity of revelation; little nuggets we are given which we are able to mesh with revelations further on. It's not a long read so there's no trouble remembering important little elements, and a second read through might be worth it to pick up on anything you may have missed.

The writing itself was four out of five because of some inconsistencies over style, sometimes verging into stream of consciousness without punctuation, when really the slow, meandering style it had been using, and which was sometimes elegant, would have sufficed. It could have done with another editor too as it should have been tighter, often losing impact because of a passive voice.

Overall though, it leaves you wanting more, which is always a good sign.

Tilly Booth says

GUYS this was such a wonderfully weird book and as soon as I saw this come in at work, I was like "YES THIS IS RIGHT UP MY ALLEY" and I was right!!!!

This story is a puzzle with bits of information from chapters and stunning artwork laid out in front of you for the reader to put together. It's set in a sci-fi apocalyptic world and it's pretty damn epic.

You follow a young girl called Michelle and her yellow robot, Skip. I'm not going to spoil anything but THE ENDING. YOU'LL SEE. BECAUSE YOU SHOULD READ THIS. The pacing of the book is slow but it's one of those rewarding reads where you're like "I'll just read for five minutes" and then you've finished the book at like 3 am screaming "I NEED MORE"

I did find that some of the writing was a little lack lustre but between the overall story line, the illustrations and the world that's created, I fell in love just a little bit. 4 out of 5 stars

Emelie Eriksson says

Simon Stålenhag can draw AND write! Sometimes, the sentences were a bit too long and "flat" for my liking though. And the ending was a bit abrupt. Other than that, I loved this book. I've grown tired of stories set in the apocalypse/post apocalypse the last couple of years, because they've all felt the same. "Passagen" is different though, at least for me. I've never seen or read something similar before.

Liam says

I'm a big fan of this fella's art, he does stunning stuff. Eerily beautiful and horrifying all at once, I really need to get hold of the Tales from the Loop and the Flood art books.

Andrew says

I didn't even know of this book until last week - okay I have to work on my patience as I dropped (not literally) everything else I was reading to start this book and unfortunately I finished it that night.

The work of Simon Stalenhag was brought to my attention by my brother who loves this kind of artwork (and usually waits for me to buy it so he can read it).

Now up until recently I thought he only did art - not realising he had used some of that art to create this bitter sweet story with yes you got it mind blowing artwork.

Now I will not give anything of the story away which to be honest I very cleverly done in its own right painting a world that has gone in a totally different direction thanks to events in the past.

But what I will say is that the art in this over sized sumptuously presented book give it a totally new depth - especially the last few pieces. This book is a real treasure and I really hope that he creates more as this was amazing.

Now this is one book I will be reluctant to lend to my bother as I suspect it may be a while before I get it back.

Edward Lorn says

Astounding artwork, a poignant, heartbreaking story, and one helluva presentation, all make this a pitch-perfect experience. Reading this was an utter joy. I have absolutely nothing bad to say about it. While the pricetag is high, it's worth every penny. Do not confuse this with a coffee table art book. It deserves your complete attention. Easily one of the best books of 2018. Dig it.

Johan Thilander says

Till skillnad från det disparata och världsbyggande berättande som vi har sett i Simon Stålenhags tidigare böcker så är *Passagen* ett mycket mer sammanhållet narrativ. På gott och ont - det är inte utan att jag saknar den unika berättarstil som han hittade i *ur Varselklotet*.

Allt som allt är detta dock en väldigt välutänkt och skrämmande science fiction. Varför den ska filmatiseras är mig helt oförklarligt.

Zulfiya says

This is a very eclectic book, a merger of a book, a hybrid of a book, somewhere on the borderline between a picture book, a comic book, a traditional book and even an installation book.

The story per se will never be complete without the illustrations, and the illustrations will never tell the whole story - it is a truly symbiotic book. The illustrations are also quite realistic, and they resemble the court sketches in the attempt to add authenticity to the narrative.

The story, on the other hand, is one of the most bizarre, most surreal, and most eerie. It is the story of the familial bond that is told through the Great American story of exploration and continent crossing. It is also the story of the decay of modern civilization that that is literally being consumed by consumerism. The parts gradually come together through the verbiage and through images, but the dark dreamscape of the world is eerily alike to ours and different from ours.

To sum it up - the book left a long lasting and disturbing aftertaste.

Ivana Futrikani?ová says

Pomoc... toto je najkrajšia kniha akú budem v roku 2019 citat... je to trúfalé tvrdenie, a predsa dosť realistické. Tie ilustrácie sú úplne dychberuce. Klenot v knižnici. Knižný blade runner - atmosférou aj farbami. Najkrajšie sú obrazy zachytávajúce hru svetla na vode ?i cez okno.

A obsahovo? Prijemne a žánrovo v poriadku. Tak akurát. Ak by to bolo bez obrazov, tak asi 4*, lenže tie obrazy sú tak sakra dôležité. Toto je o atmosfére. O zimomriavkach skoro na každej strane.

Post-apo in its best.

Trish says

My friend Dennis asked me to look for a number of books while I was in London last week. This was one of them. When the Waterstones employee handed it to me, the first thing I noticed was the vibrant colour and the realism of the artwork. Naturally, I started flipping through the book. I brought it back to Germany for my friend but, of course, have read it first now. ;P

Before this little adventure, I had never heard of this Swedish author although he seems quite well-known. I also didn't really know what the book was about (apart from what I guessed due to the title and some art I had seen while flipping through).

I decided to read it in October despite it apparently being an apocalyptic scifi read and not a horror story and it couldn't have surprised me more, it fit so perfectly!

Following a girl named Michelle and a robot named Skip through the ruins of what used to be the USA, watching the remnants of a once mighty technological nation, reading the flashbacks as much as the descriptions of the present ... it was all VERY spooky. I never knew if something would jump up out of the underbrush and attack or if the terror came from the zombie-like remaining humans or the weird technology that reminded me of Skynet but also *Blade Runner* and one episode of *Sea Quest*. I was creeped out!

The story comes together nicely although I'm not sure I've successfully figured out who Walter is and what the parts directed at him were all about. You see, this story is a puzzle. You have all these pieces scattered, the art serving as your background to give you a sense of direction, and you slowly piece everything together, picking up speed along the way. And it's one hell of a smart story. Just enough text, the rest being told through the artwork.

Speaking of the art, it is gorgeous! From the colour palette to the astonishing realism of the images, I was sucked in and it only added to my growing sense of unrest while I was constantly looking over my shoulder and expecting to be jumped by something. The drones, the ships but also the other humans and sad landscapes ... brilliant!

Apparently, it started out as a Kickstarter campaign, I only found the page when looking for a good way to show you the art, so follow this link and watch the video which should give you a good idea about the colour schemes and details: <https://www.kickstarter.com/projects/...>

I'm so glad he was able to realize this project and I'll definitely be on the lookout for more of his work.

=dj= says

This is like nothing I have read before. I guess "read" only covers part of the experience, as words are sparsely used, and act as framing for the incredible art that dominates every page.

This is a haunting tale of a young woman cautiously travelling through a collapsed society, heading for the coast, and something lost. Through her narrative (and sometimes from the powerful artwork alone) we slowly figure out what has happened, and what she is seeking, as pieces of the puzzle drop into place.

This is a story that will stay with me a long while, but the pictures even more so - the post apocalyptic decay of a disconcertingly familiar-yet-anomalous 1997 is intoxicating, and seem impossibly real.

I loved it!

Fran says

The illustrations alone are a reason to read this book. I requested it from the library, expecting a hardback book, but it's more of a smaller "coffee table" book. The story was frighteningly unique, and seemed a called to humankind to monitor its dependence of technology. The landscape is the stuff of nightmares and haunted me throughout the book. Even after finishing it my head whirled with scenes of battleships falling from the

sky and VR advanced helmets attached to peoples head. I highly recommend it.
