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Simon Spurrier , Jeff Stokely (Illustrations) , Andre May (With)

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Visit the strange and fantastic world of The Spire, where an inexplicable murder has turned an impossible tower of a city upside down.

The Spire is a mountain of metal and stone, a vast city that rises out of the middle of the radioactive desert. Filled with twisting tunnels, grinding elevators, and ancient machinery, it is home to over a million human and non-human residents. Sha, the last of the species known as the Medusi, is responsible for keeping the hodgepodge of forgotten technology and new biology safe as Commander of the City Watch. But when a string of grisly murders are committed just as a new Baroness of the Spire is about to be sworn in, Sha will have to find the killer and bring that individual to justice. With the new Baroness housing a deep hatred of non-humans, Sha will have more than one enemy at her back as a mystery buried in the history of the Spire unravels around her.

Written by Simon Spurrier (*X-Men: Legacy*) and illustrated by Jeff Stokely (*Jim Henson's The Storyteller: Witches*), the celebrated creative team of *Six-Gun Gorilla*, *The Spire* is a sprawling fantasy noir that *Vulture* called one of the "Ten Best Comic Books of 2015."

The Spire Details

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From Reader Review The Spire for online ebook

Devann says

I really wanted to like this more than I did. It was definitely an interesting world with interesting characters, but there was just so much going on that I constantly felt like I was missing something. A lot of the creatures / aspects of the world were not really explained at all the mystery resolution seemed incredibly convoluted to me. The art was nice and I did like parts of it, but it was incredibly dense and I just felt like I struggled a lot to get through it.

M. Jones says

Proud stands the Spire! A fascinating slice of world-building here, even if the plot didn't always work for me. There are some predictable elements, and a completely unnecessary - and also predictable - grab for the emotions at the end. But the artwork is captivating, the characters well depicted, and there are tantalising glimpses of the strange worlds within the Spire and without. It's also funny. Captain Shå has clearly graduated first-class from the Edmund Blackadder School of Sass.

Tani says

I really enjoyed this. It takes place in a post-apocalyptic world where the air is so polluted that it causes mutations. The Spire is a city in that world which houses both humans and the sculpted, mutated humans of a variety of different races and abilities. The story starts with death of the old Baron, a man who had worked hard to integrate humans and the sculpted. His successor, Tavi, is not so open-minded. The story centers around Sha, the captain of the City Guard, and type of sculpted that can change their own shape. When a string of murders spring up in the city, her investigation leads her to a mystery 30 years in the making.

The first thing that struck me about this comic was the art. I loved the imagining of all the different sculpted, and seeing them reminded me a bit of reading Saga. I also really liked the coloring, which was soft and pretty, despite the harshness of some of the events that it depicted.

I also quickly found myself sympathizing with the main character, Sha. She's a lot of fun to read. Her brashness made me want to root for her, and although she tries to play tough, it's clear that she cares a great deal about the people around her. The humor that she adds to the story was a big draw for me, especially in the beginning, when I was still getting my footing in the world.

The secondary characters are no less engaging. A special shout-out goes to my boy, Pug, the messenger who would be a cop. He ended up being one of my favorite characters in the comic, despite my initial annoyance with him and the way that he talks. Meera also won a special place in my heart, and I wish that the ending of the comic could have been what she wished for, instead of what she got.

I thought that the mystery at the center of the plot was quite well-done. I did not figure it out myself, but that's no surprise. I'm not really good at that sort of thing. However, once it was revealed, I found that everything fit into place perfectly for me. Unlike others, I had no trouble following along, perhaps because this kind of world is very familiar to me. I thought that the ending was both fitting and satisfying.

I enjoyed this enough that I think I will eventually buy a copy of my own. It's one that I'd like to lend out to other people and spread the love.

Brian says

This book is fantastic. Wow. I really wasn't expecting such a tight, well paced story. The art is stunning and perfect for the world, and the characters are brought to life incredibly well. This is a great read.

Fahim Ahmed says

A final twist that really comes out of nowhere. That said, even though I didn't anticipate it I really did it was well seeded. It made sense.

An excellent story tbh. Sha is a great lead, with the right balance of quirkiness and seriousness. The world, and it's culture were quite interesting and the creative team did a great job fleshing out the premise.

Be warned, this story is a bit of slow burner. It takes it's time to build up, but it's necessary for the complexity of the world building. The central mystery of the whodunnit is great and, like I've mentioned before, while the climax can turn some readers off, I though it was very well pulled off. Also, the bittersweet nature of the ending was perfect for the tone of the story.

First time I've read Simon Spurrier, and apparently the artist and him are a bit of a team so I'll probably check out Six-Gun Gorilla. The art itself was actually pretty decent, not the style I'm used, but still appropriate for the story.

The Eisner Nomination was justified.

Chad says

That was one dense story. I'm not going to say there was great world building here, because to be great it would need to be better explained and less obtuse. But it was interesting, I just constantly felt like I skipped a page. A lot didn't quite connect and required a leap in logic.

Skye Kilaen says

By the last page, The Spire had become one of my fave science fiction comics, fave fantasy comics, and fave queer comics all rolled into one. It's part police procedural, part political conspiracy, and has significant commentary on discrimination, so there is possibly no way it could be any better for me. It follows Sha, a queer woman (and the last of her species) who's Commander of the City Watch in The Spire, as she tries to solve a series of murders while a new leader of the city is about to take control. But of course Sha finds so many! secrets!

I fall more in love with Spurrier's writing every time I read one of his books. Stokely's art is appropriately

weird, and Steve Wands did a kick-ass job lettering. (You don't know how much difference lettering can make until you've seen this book, or some of his other work.)

Eli says

Like many of my favorite mysteries, *The Spire* piles multiple layers onto the whodunit, until the identity of the murderer is just one of several questions whose answers I eagerly awaited. Personal and political issues are always closer together than they seem, and everything hurtles at breakneck speed toward the conclusion.

Unfortunately, I disliked the conclusion it reached. The identity of the killer was unsatisfying in both fact and form of revelation; the political intrigue turned into overwrought soap opera in the blink of an eye; and **all** the major characters ended up (view spoiler).

Four stars for issues 1-7. 2.5 for issue 8.

Shannon Appelcline says

One of the worse reactions you can have to the reveal of a killer in a murder-mystery is ... "Who?" And I'm afraid to say I had that reaction to *The Spire*. I probably wouldn't have if I'd read it all in one day, but it was so dense ... Still, with a little page-flipping I managed to figure it out.

Other than that, this is a fine graphic novel. It excels best at its creation of an evocative world that feels like something straight out of *Heavy Metal*, both because of its post-apocalyptic tropes and its art style. But it also has some great characters: you'll probably fall in love with the lead. And, the story of how those characters interact is strong too.

There is a bit of muddiness here and there in the storytelling, not just in the murderer reveal. I think that's because there's so much packed in here.

But the quantity of stuff that's packed in here is what makes it so intriguing.

Robert says

This was a good "adult" comic, so I feel you may see the 3 star rating and think "Why waste my time?", but the simple truth is that based on what I've read the past few weeks I have to go: Saga, Vol. 6 > Monstress, Vol. 1: Awakening > The Spire.

Is it a humblebrag of some kind to state that the fact that this comic features a queer protagonist doesn't really affect my opinion of it one way or the other? I know the comics industry has had its well-documented struggles with diversity pretty much throughout its history, but lately there's been so much great work done to course correct that now it just makes me shrug. Not that Shã's sexuality was gratuitous or mere tokenism, there was a very valid storytelling reason she was written this way that I can't get into because SPOILERS.

Anyway, it was an interesting-enough plot with interesting-enough world-building to definitely keep my attention, so maybe consider this a 3.5? Hope you enjoy!

Elizabeth A says

I'm a fan of stories that capture well the conflicts of insiders versus outsiders, and this fantasy/dystopian graphic novel hits all my sweet spots.

In the midst of a radioactive desert, on a mountain of steel and stone, there is a vast city, home to humans and non-humans, and everyone has secrets. Murders, mysteries, political machinations, and secrets. Oh, so many secrets. This is a fun romp of a read that explores interesting themes, and the art is really good as well. I enjoyed the world building and the diversity on the page. I thought this was a completed series but surely not. It seems to me that another installment (or five) would be much appreciated. I'm team Sha all the way.

Tim says

Interesting story and characters, but I do wish the actual world was fleshed out more.

Liz Janet says

I was weary of this story. It had a promising start, and it delivers, for the most part. It holds the title of an intriguing story, until the last issue happened, which left me conflicted on what to make of the entire thing. I am still unsure if I liked the tone it took, or if I thought it too easy.

The magic that originally drew me to it was still there. The power dynamics left as ingrained in society without question, from the way people view Sculpted, to the way the city is constructed with all its levels, to the extremist living in and out of the main setting, all remained an important part of the story. All of the racism, xenophobia, and classicism is still thoroughly explored, either as backdrop or right-in-face. That is what this comic does best, explore interesting topics in a fun manner, involving powers and science, like a less evolved x-man. And it remained quite interesting through my many re-reads, yet the last issue added a new theme, which in many scenarios I deem necessary to be discussed and explored by authors and artists, however in this instance, I was left unsure. Was it a clever form to simply add it and let the reader ponder, or was it added because there was no other resolution to the story?

The art is exceptional as always. It is sharp and simple, with amazing colouring, which matches perfectly with the science-fiction and fantasy vibe. It is not smooth, and it shows a diverse cast of creatures, all quite interesting. I would not mind if the story were continued in other series.

I still recommend everyone to read it. It is fun, quick, filled with vibrant colours, and it brings interesting issues to be discussed. Practically, all I want in a good comic. Plus, it has LGBT+ relationships in, we certainly need more of those in media.

Zedsdead says

A metahuman sheriff in an unstable fantasy world must solve a series of political murders before a devastating war breaks out. This is dense with politics, spies, ethnic cleansing, a thirty-year old mystery, looming war, and bona fide heroic flying fart goblins. (I couldn't make that up.)

Stellar. The Spire starts slow but by the end I couldn't put it down. I was up FAR too late last night because I had to watch the conspiracy unravel (or not), the genocidal religious warriors wipe out the innocent minority faction (or be destroyed), the unstoppable assassin complete his mission (or finally be unmasked and killed). A satisfying conclusion.

GrilledCheeseSamurai says

Heavy lore - intense world-building - deep character development.

All things I like. Except I had a really hard time slogging through it. I think this is mostly based on the principle of me just not understanding what the fuck was going on.

I don't know if it's because I have a case of the dumbs (I do) or the story just being too damn convoluted. There would be pages where I was completely engrossed and engaged with what was going on and then, suddenly, I had no fucking clue what was what.

Despite that - I still kept going. Which is a testament to the story, because normally, I would just give up. In fact, I wanna read this one again. See, even though I didn't really know WTF...I really want to.

This comic confuses me and I want to understand it.

I guess that says something...I just don't know what.
