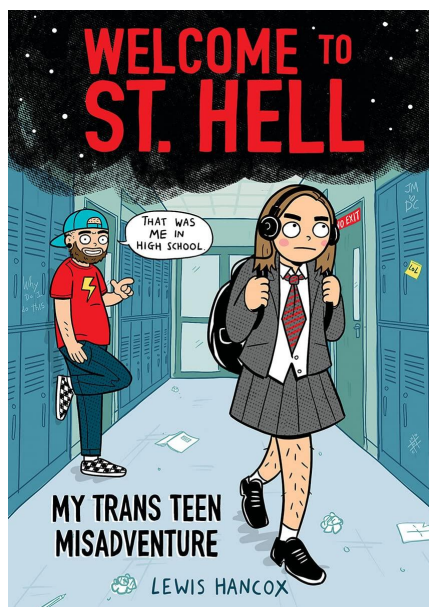


Review: *Welcome to St. Hell: My Trans Teen Misadventure*

By Lewis Hancox. Graphix, June 2022. 298 p. ISBN: 1338824430 (h/c), \$23.08.

Reviewed August 2023

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Lewis Hancox uses this charming autobiographical comic to reckon with his transgender journey and the important players during his coming of age period. Written as a compassionate love letter to his teenage self, this graphic novel is set in Hancox' English hometown of St. Helen's, where Hancox transplants his current-day self to narrate his adolescence. He guides us through the social woes of a teenage misfit, the navigation of his parents' separation, and his transition into college, all imposed over the more and more pressing undercurrent of resisting the female body he is developing. I found this to be a tender, funny, and loving representation of growing up and growing into oneself.

Black and white and rough and ready, the artistic style is approachable and visually fun, bringing to mind the irreverent and tongue-in-cheek *Captain Underpants* series.

Because of how simple and understated the art is, it makes it more exciting to get a glimpse of Hancox's artistic skill when his younger self works on art pieces within the panels that are much more advanced and complex than the rest of the style of the book.

The novel is aimed at teen readers, and contains content related to disordered eating and light nudity. As a reader of a similar age to Hancox, there are many delightful Millennial references of the early 2000s, from fashion choices to Green Day song lyrics. These tenets of a teenager's personality are meticulously and obsessively documented and mapped, in the way that only a teenager would catalog the modes and articles of their identity.

Welcome to St. Hell would be an excellent addition to any library and will appeal to queer and trans young adults, comic-book enthusiasts, and anyone who has struggled with body dysmorphia or feeling out of place in high school.