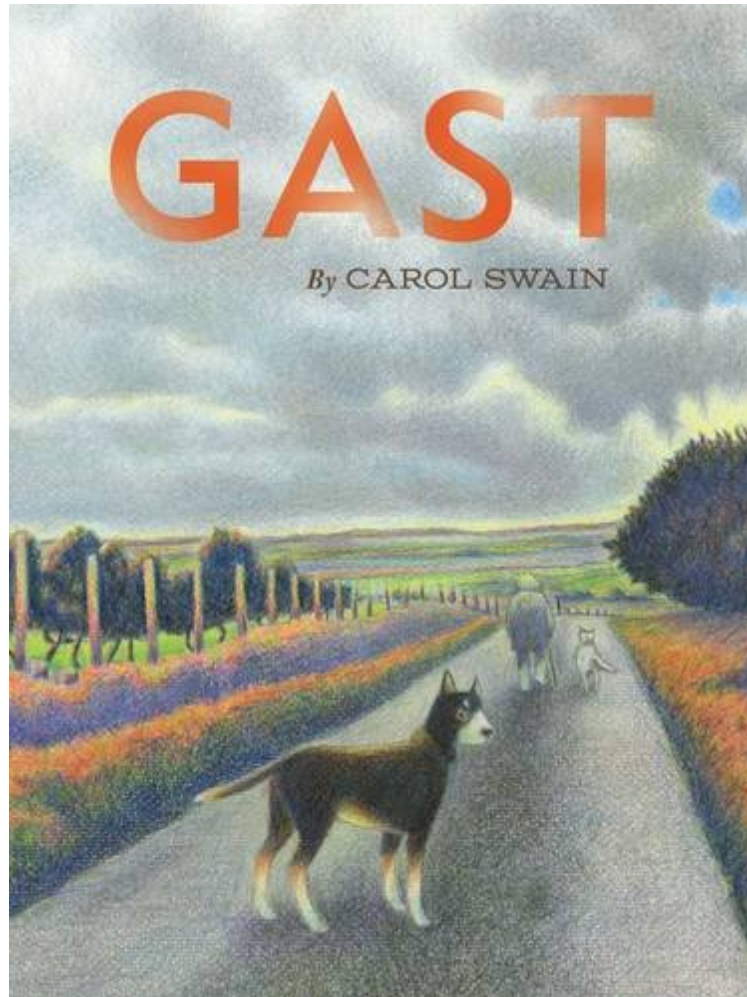


(Download free ebook) Gast

Gast

Carol Swain

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Carol Swain : Gast before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Gast:

1 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Quietly enjoyable comicBy Sam QuixoteHelen, a young girl whose family recently moved to the Welsh countryside, becomes obsessed with the recent suicide of her farmer neighbour, Emrys. As she begins looking into the mans former life, she discovers his lonely and hard existence, living as a transvestite and working land that yielded little.Gast the Welsh word for female dog or bitch is a very muted story. Carol Swain chooses not to have an omnipotent narrator and there is no inner dialogue from Helen, so the reader is kept at a distance as to whats unfolding on the page. The book is set out in a traditional nine panel grid throughout meaning the focus is on the content rather than the form. Swains charcoal drawings also accentuates the gloomy quietness of her tale everything is presented in one tone without colour to bring variation to the page.Helen is a

somewhat interesting character. She's an only child whose parents allow her to roam the countryside by herself, and she brings home the skulls of dead animals. She even has imaginary (or are they?) conversations with Emrys farm animals, the dogs and the sheep, who tell her about their former master. Is she crazy? Is she a modern day witch? Is she just an imaginative kid? It's up to the reader to decide. The art is very moody and I liked Swain's eye for what to focus on in her panels, looking as much at the background as she does the characters, making the setting as much of a character itself. The many silent panels and shots of the countryside, along with the charcoal and dark subject matter, do create a potent atmosphere that matched the story perfectly. I think where the book falls short is its own limited story. We find out nearly everything about both Helen and Emrys by the halfway point and the rest of the book doesn't add much else to it. It becomes repetitive and slow rather than meditative or philosophical. I didn't feel that there was much substance to it overall. For me though, while I usually like these kind of indie comics, *Gast* was a fine book but underwhelming and dull at times whose light touch was just a bit too light to leave much of a lasting impression.

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Beautiful book. A young girl
By J. Beautiful book. A young girl, with the help of some farm animals, slowly, gently, uncovers the story of an odd bird.

In this graphic novel by Carol Swain, a bird watcher investigates the disappearance of a rare bird, aided by talking dogs. Helen is an amateur bird watcher and naturalist who lives in a rural community in Wales. When a local farmer Bill tells Helen that a rare bird named Emrys killed himself at Cuddig farm, she decides to investigate. One of the dogs at the farm tells her, by way of explanation, that Emrys had no feathers and couldn't fly. She plucks an old cosmetic kit from a dumpster and discovers it belonged to Emrys. Inventorying the kit's contents, she finds a spent .12 gauge shotgun shell. Her attempt to learn more about Emrys turns into a journey of self-discovery and ultimately a hard-fought reconciliation with the world as it is. Carol Swain's *Gast* is the rare kind of contemporary graphic novel critics are conjuring when they exult over the promise of the art form: a philosophically mature vision, uniquely executed by an artist wholly in control of her craft. In *Gast*, Helen's inner life is slowly revealed through a mixture of naturalistic detail and phantasmagoric occurrences. Black white