



SP4RX

Wren McDonald (Illustrations)

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SP4RX is the story of mankind clawing for survival. Set in a future where a class system has emerged, the world is divided into four levels, with the elite ruling from the extravagant top level.

SP4RX, a young hacker who lives off grid, hacks into corporations and sells stolen data to wealthy buyers on the black market – just your average thief. Mega corporation Structus Industries introduces a welfare program called the “Elpis Program”, which allows the working class to apply for Cybernetic implants to make workers more efficient. On the surface, it seems like a program to empower the poor and allow them to rise to the ranks of the elite. But SP4RX soon discovers all is not as it seems... SP4RX and Structus are set on a collision course with the fate of humanity at stake in Wren McDonald’s latest sci-fi tale of survival and corruption!

SP4RX Details

Date : Published December 13th 2016 by Nobrow Press

ISBN : 9781910620120

Author : Wren McDonald (Illustrations)

Format : Paperback 120 pages

Genre : Sequential Art, Graphic Novels, Comics, Science Fiction, Fiction, Dystopia, Young Adult

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From Reader Review SP4RX for online ebook

Tyler Kroon says

An action-packed cyberpunk dystopian comic following a hacker as he fights an evil corporation. I actually really enjoyed this; it doesn't shy away from getting pretty dark at times, and it came to a satisfying conclusion!

Zedsdead says

SP4RX is a lot like the central hacker-vs-corp narrative of the (astonishingly good) LCG Android: Netrunner. The title character is a professional hacker for hire, in a world where poor people are turned into cyborg slave labor for the corporate antagonist. After a job goes wrong, SP4RX reluctantly throws in with a band of fanatical rebels.

My first impression was not good. The illustration is Dilbertesque and riddled with unforced errors: black print on dark purple backgrounds, word balloons obscuring characters' heads, sound effect words that flat out TELL the reader what's happening (eg "DISCONNECT!" when an important cable comes unplugged.)

But by the end I found myself enjoying it far more than I expected. It's a solid revisiting of an old story. I liked the dialogue. I liked the visual representation of cyberspace. And I liked the way the simplistic, almost silly art seemed to emphasize rather than soften the periodic extreme violence.

Eva says

"SP4RX" by Wren McDonald is an exciting graphic novel that will engage those who seek adventure and interest when robots have control over society.

The graphics convey the personalities of the players in future Avalon and keep the novel moving at a good pace.

Thank you GoodReads for the book.

Emily says

This was an interesting read. I've only recently gotten into graphic novels and this one was definitely enjoyable. It's set in a cyberpunk, Dystopian society, though it doesn't give too much background information. You're thrown into this world pretty quick with the main character who's a hacker that does some not entirely legal jobs in order to survive. He later meets another cyborg who is part of a rebel group

fighting against the "system" that's actually murdering lower-class citizens. It's a fun ride, though definitely not suggested for younger readers, as there is violence and language. A good fun read with a somewhat-twist ending.

Benjamin Uke says

80s/90s style cyberpunk-pastiche plot full of rogue robots, political and corporate corruption, and raw, unflinchingly violent action all to the tune of a 'bubblegum' art style. It comes off like the forbidden lovechild of neuromancer and adventure-time

Not bad, plus a clever commentary on class-differences and modern society.

Márcio Moreira says

[achei estranho como eles tentam salvar a galera dos níveis baixos, mas ao mesmo tempo tratam os implantados como vilões zumbis e literalmente explodem centenas deles. A história trata as vítimas tão mal quanto os vilões corporativos o fazem. Podiam, sei lá, primeiro impedir a criação de mais implantados? conter os danos? não sei, achei essa parte da mo

Anita says

The art and color choice were really on point, but I did struggle to connect to the characters and their story. It's a relatively short volume, so that could be part of it. But the narrative was interesting and kept me wanting to see where it was going.

Adam Fisher says

3.5 Stars.

This futuristic, post-apocalyptic, indie comic about a cyborg hacker named SP4RX and his interaction with the resistance against mindless oppressive cyborg tech is a quick read. The author has a good grasp of when dialogue isn't needed, letting the art speak for itself. The art style is unique and interesting.

I look forward to seeing what Wren McDonald will release in the future.

Recommend.

Alasondro Alegré says

★★★½

Miquel Rodriguez says

There is not much to say. A fun comic that gives you just what you can already foresee checking the book on bookstore. All the cyber-punk tropes with a mix of great drawings, ultraviolence action and weird sense of humour.

Nathan says

I wanted to like this for the subject matter, but found the story less than clear about what was going on. This lack of clarity happened in many small moments that left me frustrated/confused for brief moments. There were some changes from panel to panel that were jarring to a smooth flowing story. There was a no nonsense approach to the story telling, that didn't pad it with extra character, but to me came off as blunt when I wanted to know a little bit more investment in the value of what was happening on the page. I appreciated the confident illustration style that is different than the typical dystopian visualization.

Figgy says

Actual rating 1.5

The style of illustrations in this graphic novel, and the fact that this is being distributed by a children's book publisher and is marketed as for 14+ might lead you to believe it's suitable for younger readers.

IT REALLY ISN'T.

Early in the reading of this title, I came across the word "shit" and was willing to give it the benefit of the doubt. Most publishers will allow a couple of swear words in a title for older teenage readers, but then came "asshole", "bitch", and "fuck". And they weren't one-offs.

Add to this the inclusion of drinking, smoking, "pleasure emporiums", leather harnesses, assless chaps, gimp masks, and naked robot strippers complete with their own credit card swipe machines, and the realisation that this should not be accessible to fourteen year olds becomes a little clearer with every page.

The rest of this review can be found [HERE!](#)

Ran says

McDonald crafts a story about Sp4rx (let's ignore the l33t speak) - a hacker in this city called Avalon - where the mega-corporation Structus Industries has taken over, replaced workers' limbs and brains with high efficiency robotics. Sp4rx gets caught up with a radical group opposing Structus's domination.

I don't know if I should have put this graphic into the young adult collection. This was a little more graphic than I'd thought... considering the art is purposefully rudimentary. I didn't really enjoy it either ... but maybe

because I don't particularly enjoy the simplicity of the narrative. It could have been doing more.

David says

Every once in a while, a graphic novel is just what the doctor ordered. This one was solid enough...a "simple" art style masking some pretty complex panels. A good graphic novel has you stopping now and again to admire the art, and this certainly did.

The narrative...dystopian future cyberpunkish, and not for kids at all...wasn't anything particularly innovative, but it buckets along nicely. The protagonist is a bit of a tool for most of the novel, both figuratively and literally, which made it a little difficult for me to engage. I'm just not an antihero guy.

Still and all, worth the 45 minutes-hour it took to ingest.

A three point four.

Amelia says

In an unspecified dystopian future, SP4RX is a Bitnite, a hacker for hire. He doesn't ask questions, only delivers the goods, until another hacker named Mega steals the program he heisted. It leads him to meet with a small resistance force with the self-assigned mission to stop a corporation implanting people with upgrades that allow them to be controlled remotely. Initially opposed to joining them, SP4RX realizes that their way might be the only way to maintain the slim direction over his own destiny.

Reminiscent of Fifth Element meets the Matrix, with maybe a little bit of Futurama and Dr. Who's daleks thrown in for good measure, it's not uncommon in this world for people to have cybernetic enhancements, communication takes place in person as often as in the virtual world, and the word "eliminate" has replaced "exterminate". The art work is done in black, white, gray and purple, with the story segmented by full page graphics that feel like filler, or chapter or volume dividers, even though they aren't labeled as such. A distracting feature is that characters are drawn sometimes with noses and sometimes without with little consistency as to which or why one way is chosen over the other. The story feels like a generic end of the world mashup, with little in the way of a back story explaining how they got to this point. By the end of the book, I was most interested in the minor character of the OBD droid, whose bodyless head steals every scene it's in, as its implanted empathy drives the dogged search and loyalty it shows for SP4RX. Give that little guy its own series next time, and leave the rest to become more efficient.
