



The System

Peter Kuper, Calvin Reid (Introduction)

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Actions speak louder than words in this wordless, fully painted graphic novel. If every action has an equal and opposite reaction, get ready to run for cover: A corrupt cop is shaking down drug dealers, a serial killer is slaughtering strippers, a political scandal is about to explode, the planet is burning and nobody's tal

The System Details

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Author : Peter Kuper , Calvin Reid (Introduction)

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From Reader Review The System for online ebook

Edward Sullivan says

Intense, vivid and disturbing.

Keely says

A graphic novel very light on text that will assault your senses. It paints a picture of a city driven by corruption, greed, and dark needs tempered with the lives of those who are trying to rise above the dark underbelly of their home. Jarring images drive the point home without the need for text in this raw gritty graphic novel.

S says

This graphic novel is pictures only, highly detailed and unique in style.

Ed P. says

My decline into the world of more pictures/less words hit a low with the System. It's a depth I'm glad to plumb. Darkly rich story set in New York City.

Mallory says

This is the second comic I've read this year without words this year. Very well done and apparently a classic. I wish I had read it sooner.

Jonathan says

Wasn't a huge fan of this one, but I can admire the ambition of Kuper's objective in creating an entirely wordless graphic novel that manages to convey narrative through both the literally seen actions of characters and also through the environment/media of the city (New York? I don't think we are even given a clear name but it's apparent due to the subways, the Time Square-like region). A lot of different things happen in this: people get murdered, drugs get pushed, a man attempts to make a bomb, a politician is outed via a sex tape...but I never felt like it all really accumulated into anything particularly meaningful.

One thing I do really admire in this is the artwork through, and the way in which Kuper has the various "scenes" transition usually by means of a specific object/figure in one panel moving into the next one, and

then finally ending up on the next set of characters we're to focus on. An example might be the idea of a Pigeon being on the sidewalk where a character is walking. In one frame it'll be pecking at the ground eating what remains of a pizza slice, the next frame will show someone moving close to it, causing the pigeon to begin to take flight, the next frame the pigeon is in flight, then finally it lands on a telephone pole, overlooking two characters who are preparing to deal drugs.

Kristy says

A bloody little cause-and-effect urban story in the style of Shaun Tan, and other wordless graphic artists.

Stephanie H says

After years of trying to read "The System" I finally managed to read it all the way through. Read is the wrong word as the book has no text, merely pictures.

They say a picture is worth a thousand words, illustrated perfectly in this story. It tells the story of greed, corruption, murder and adultery in a world that is falling apart at the seams. The book opens with the William Blake quote "I must create a system or be enslaved by another man". The same can be said about the process of writing, social expectations, and what we are trained to think of as "literature" or even "a book."

Within the plot itself, "The System" creates an enjoyable albeit predictable story and characters. However, the format of the book is the only thing that differentiates The System from any other system.

Henry says

A graphic novel, no words, showing a "dark side" to NYC. The standard evil corporation goons with dark glasses doing shady deals, fat white cops taking money from skinny black drug dealers, family loving strippers getting butchered by religious nuts, all the "real stuff" like that. I did enter the world, enjoyed it, but it said nothing to me, and when I put it down I even forgot how it all ended for the characters.

Keith says

Thought I'd see what he looks like when he's not adapting Kafka, which I enjoyed enough. The stencil technique here gives it an unusual-yet-familiar urban look. It's not exactly "wordless" as advertised though; more like "without dialog." There are no speech balloons to hide behind, but significant elements of the plot (such as it is) are revealed in text on newspapers, marquees, screens, and the like. This still renders it textually spare. For the cautious I'll also note that it's about PG-13 for "sexual situations" and some inevitable violence. Overall enjoyable, though hardly essential or revolutionary.

Morgan says

Even after having his art on the cover of *Time*, *Newsweek* and *The New Yorker*, Peter Kuper keeps it real with his wordless portrait of New York City. Told in a series of intertwining narratives, this full color stencil-style comic reads more like a film, reminiscent of the intersecting storylines in *Crash* and the innovative sequencing of *Slacker*, while paying fitting tribute to the forefather of the wordless novella, Frans Masereel in conveying the sensation of an urban environ without the use of dialogue.

David Schaafsma says

A wordless graphic novel by Peter Kuper first released in 1997, now re-released in 2014. With brightly colored stencil and spray painted drawings that sort of bleed across panels, this is an impressively told story, though the story itself is pretty grim, with what seem to me some pretty stereotypical images of the New York he know and loves well. I think of the silent Charlie Chaplin and Eric Drooker's Flood and Franz Masereel's wordless work, though Kuper seems to me grimmer. Maybe Drooker is equally grim, but there is complexity in his tale... I guess the appeal here is in the artwork, and the very wordlessness of it, that much gets accomplished without the words, and so much gets told. It's exuberant in its grimness, in a way, maybe calling forth the love/hate relationship many New Yorkers have for their City...

Filipe Siqueira says

Quando pensamos num sujeito icônico que leva a linguagem dos quadrinhos aos seus limites artísticos, geralmente pensamos em Daniel Clowes e suas obras malucas, introspectivas e simbólicas. Mas outros artistas fizeram similares.

Além do próprio Will Eisner, um deles é Peter Krupe, nesse fantástico *O Sistema*. Sem diálogos, vemos a rotina de Nova York seguindo personagens como executivos de empresa, moradores de rua, grafiteiros, trabalhadores. A história é simples, mas aos poucos vemos uma crescente complexidade que abarca desde a dura cultura das ruas até as negociatas de grandes corporações.

A arte é limpa e cada quadro é um pedaço de narrativa, pulamos de uma história para outra através de links visuais, que demonstram a ligação de tudo num gigantesco sistema.

Ao mesmo tempo em que tudo está ligado, temos a teoria de que tudo se repete e alimenta algo maior, que não está de fato vivo, mas nos influencia a todo momento. A arte é tão bela quanto o roteiro, bem limpa, e lembra a arte das ruas.

????? ??? says

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C.J. Cummings says

A picture can speak thousands of words and tell so many stories. Peter Kuper proves that in this. The System, a book I've heard many good things about, and finally had a chance to get a copy and experience for myself, is a wordless graphic novel telling the stories of the darker veins that run along the body of New York City. The pastel art work is beautiful, breathtaking, and works wonderfully with the style in which we almost find things swimming like dreamscapes in certain scenes. The grit and dirt of NYC, along with its beauty, is shown in this story of sleaze and corruption and family, of murder and work and passion.

I loved this, and I definitely feel like it is one I will flip through numerous times. The panels are just incredible, and there is something in the background each time that you might have missed. It is worth taking this book slowly and staring at each page.

Awesome.

4 out of 5
