



★ **Darkly She Goes**

Hubert

Vincent Mallié, Illustrator

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A princess and a disgraced former knight find love despite dark magic, family secrets, and tragedy in the graphic novel *Darkly She Goes*.

Islen is a beautiful princess trapped in a foreboding castle full of monsters. When Arzhur is asked to rescue her, it seems like the perfect opportunity to regain his once-honored status. To escape from the true threat, the two set off together for Islen's father's land. There, they face the trickery of supernatural agents; Arzhur is sent to prison, and Islen faces the difficult truth about her ancestry. A final confrontation with their enemies resolves Islen and Arzhur's issues, but not in the ways they expected.

A sword-and-sorcery tale of epic scale, the book takes the time to get into the psychology of its heroes. No character is without flaws; Islen's changing relationship with her parents is a fascinating element throughout the book. But Islen and Arzhur try to do what's right, and they are an appealing pair, despite their imperfections.

The art is wondrous, the work of a master of the form. From the intricate opening pages with their artful compositions of Islen surrounded by the rats and creatures that do her bidding, to the near-opposite toward the end of the book when Islen stands alone against a bare white background, every page is meticulous in terms of its design, linework, and colors.

Darkly She Goes is an exciting, engaging, and emotional grand graphic novel fantasy about self-discovery, romance, and redemption.

PETER DABBENE (July / August 2023)

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