



Gustav & Henri: Volume II: Tiny Aunt Island

Andy Matthews

Peader Thomas, Translator

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Gustav and Henri get into sticky and amusing situations in Andy Matthews and Peader Thomas's graphic novel *Gustav & Henri: Tiny Aunt Island*.

The book consists of three delightful short stories full of adventure and mischief. In the first story, headstrong Gustav insists on going rafting in a raging storm amid protestations from more rational Henri. But the storm worsens, and they end up on a mysterious, creepy island. Later, an accidental toss of the last piece of a 10,000-piece puzzle down the kitchen sink leads to a strange and surreal experience for the friends, who use Henri's shrink ray to become small enough to go down the drain; but to retrieve the piece, they have to outsmart the crazy curator of the Sew-Seum, who is determined to keep it. And in the last story, Henri receives a cryptic and suspicious letter from her agoraphobic great-aunt Norma Normal, requesting a visit.

The duo's dynamics are explored throughout: in one instance, Gustav plays the role of a quick-witted detective; in another, he is more headstrong; Henri maintains her rationality throughout. The supporting characters are few, making it easy to focus on the adventures themselves. And the art is aesthetically appealing, with a simple color scheme of orange, black, and white and expressive images that capture even minute details. Further, there are humorous and inclusive wrap-ups at the end of each story, like a How to Know if You've Been Shrunk checklist.

Gustav and Henri learn the values of cooperation, diversity, and respecting others, all while going on amazing adventures, in the engaging and humorous graphic novel *Gustav & Henri: Tiny Aunt Island*.

GABRIELLA HARRISON (March / April 2023)

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