

Foreword Review HORROR

Sacred Lamb

Tim Seeley Jelena Đordevic, Illustrator TKO Presents (Apr 4, 2023) Softcover \$19.99 (160pp) 978-1-952203-53-4

A secret location housing the survivors of serial killer attacks is anything but safe in the gripping, mysterious thriller *Sacred Lamb*.

Kellyn is famous for unboxing gifts on social media, but she's also the survivor of a savage assault by a deranged fan. After the attack, Kellyn is placed into the "Endemic Victim Protection Program," which relocates individuals judged to be at risk of retribution from "sequel killers." Kellyn arrives at a secret facility that's guarded and meant to resemble a small town. It's populated by other survivors who still bear the internal and external scars of their attacks. When a resident is murdered within the compound's walls, hell breaks loose with betrayals, the reappearance of killers from the past, and revelations threatening Kellyn and the promised sanctuary of Sacred Lamb.

A meta-horror story with a sense of humor, the book plays with common slasher tropes while maintaining gripping tension throughout. Some suspension of disbelief is necessary to accept the book's basic premise, but in return, it delivers a satisfying, modern take on the natures of fame and victimhood.

The art shines as it portrays clothing of various eras and styles, which along with attention to eyes, hair, and other details, makes it easy to track the large cast. Convincing facial expressions and earthy tones provide a strong sense of vérité. The writing offers solid storytelling, but also plenty of surprises. Kellyn is a convincing and memorable heroine, bold but vulnerable and challenged to grow in different ways during the story.

Sacred Lamb is a rousing, surreal graphic novel in which a woman battles for survival against serial killers.

PETER DABBENE (March / April 2023)

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