

# Spotlight

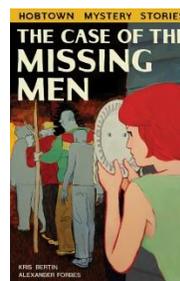
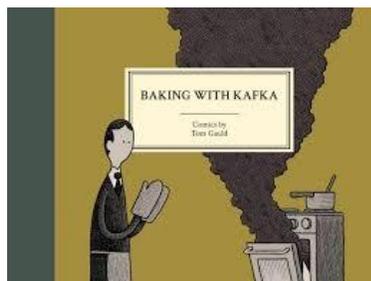
Wednesday, June 13<sup>th</sup>

For this week's Spotlight we are celebrating the absurdity of it all. Absurdism is a school of philosophy based on the idea that there is a fundamental disharmony between an individual's search for meaning and the inherent meaninglessness of the universe. Not a light subject and one famously tackled in the dreary but fascinating works of French philosopher, Albert Camus. There is a silver liner to this philosophical neighbor to nihilism though, and that is that when employed in contemporary Canadian graphic novels it is devastatingly hilarious and surprisingly comforting.

And so, I offer to you in this recent season of rain and fog a collection of absurdist works aimed to remind you that this path through life is rarely straight or sensible and it is in the weirdness that much of the beauty hides. First up, *The Case of the Missing Men* by Kris Bertin and Alexander Forbes. This first volume in the new Hobtown Mystery Stories combines a Twin Peaks like ambience with a scrappy group of rural New Brunswick teens. These amateur detectives take on increasingly bizarre cases including an occultist that is turning local men into dogs while navigating the, arguably, equally surreal experience of being a teen in small town Atlantic Canada.

*Baking with Kafka* by Tom Gauld is a collection of comics that are impressively deadpan and often inconclusive. For those who enjoy a little frustration with their humour Gauld happily entertains and disappoints at the exact same time. This is the type of book you can read at any time, in any order, for a quick reminder of the strangeness of it all.

Finally, *Hot Dog Taste Test* by Lisa Hanawalt is the perfect companion to your summer cook outs. Disgusting and irreverent it is probably best enjoyed after the main course but nevertheless is a fun and nostalgic romp through the surreal mind of comic artist Lisa Hanawalt. These and many more excellent graphic novels and comics are all available at your local library.



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