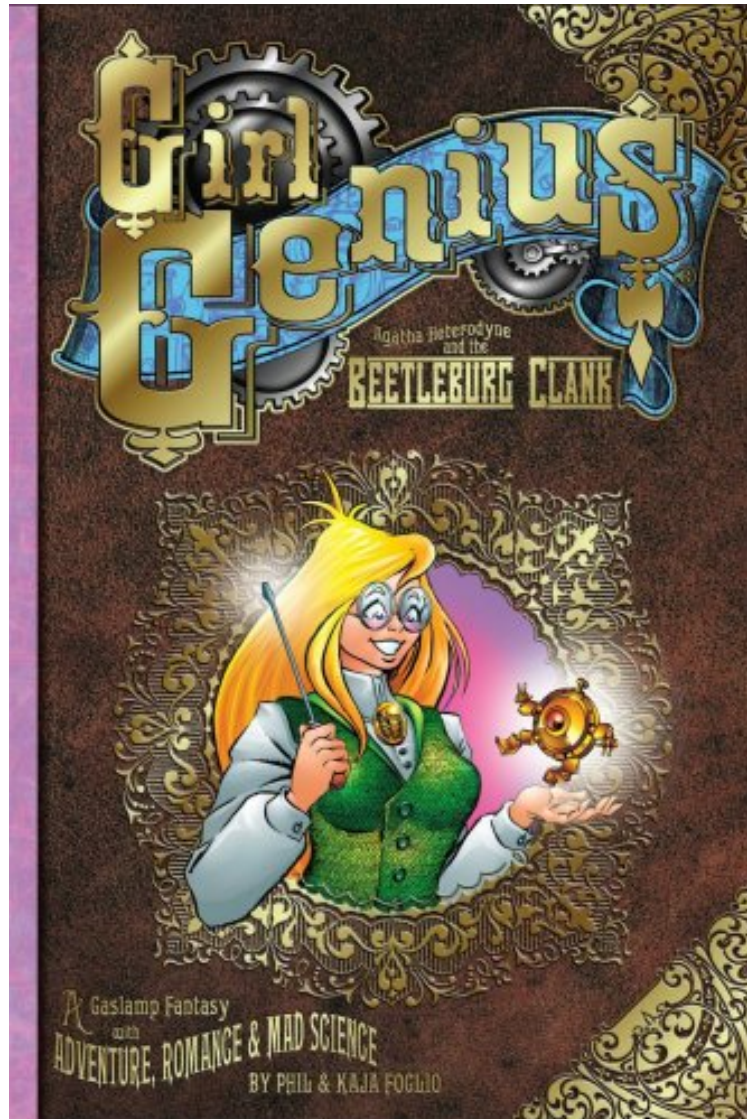


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## Girl Genius Volume 1: Agatha Heterodyne The Beetleburg Clank

*Phil Foglio, Kaja Foglio*

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**Phil Foglio, Kaja Foglio : Girl Genius Volume 1: Agatha Heterodyne The Beetleburg Clank** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Girl Genius Volume 1: Agatha Heterodyne The Beetleburg Clank:

8 of 8 people found the following review helpful. There's just not enough of it . . .By MildCriticrAgatha Clay is a young woman with a mysterious past. She lives in a world complicated by Sparks (think mad scientists with the ability to create devices and living things that bend or break the known laws of science) and ruled by Baron Wulfenbach, a Spark who conquered Europe to stop the chaos. Agatha's doesn't know her origin or about her imminent Sparkhood.

When a mugging and theft allows her talents to break loose without warning, all hell begins to break loose, too. *Girl Genius* is beautifully drawn and wonderfully manic. Its characters are human, animal, robotic (called Clanks), and artificial biological constructs. The huge story includes Agatha, the Baron and his son Gilgamesh (himself a developing spark), the King of Cats, Jagermonsters, pirates, the most fearsome nanny in the known universe, a traveling circus, Transylvania Polygnostic University, various monsters, and Punch and Judy. The backstory underlying it is fascinating, imaginative, and enormously detailed. The villains are not totally evil, and the good have their dark sides, but don't take any of it too seriously. This is comedy that is both broad and pointed, and it works beautifully. This comic is a whacko masterpiece of adventure, romance, and discovery. After fifty years of reading all sorts of comics, this is now my all-time favorite. 4 of 5 people found the following review helpful. Call it Gas-Lamp fantasy, NOT Steampunk! By Geoff If you don't know Phil and Kaja Foglio from his work in *Dragon Mag's "What's New"*, from the *MythAdventures* series (book and/or comic), the *Buck Godot* stories, their (blush) *XXXenophile* series, or their work illustrating "Magic, The Gathering" cards (notably *Urza's Science Fair Project*), shame on you! Go back two spaces and lose a turn. *Gas-lamp Fantasy* is sort of like what Jules Verne, Mary Shelly and H.G. Wells were writing back in the day. Steam-powered wonders, cobbled-together reanimated monsters, and pneumatic nutcrackers. (who doesn't like nuts?) Add a bit more modern-times feel, fantasmagoric (tm) illustration and color, and more tongue in cheek humor than you can shake a bag of knezels at, and presto! Genius! And the Girl, DON'T forget the girl! Damsels-in-distress, damsels-outta-de-dress, damsels who would shemk me upsidy-like the head with a 3/17 occipital left-leaning heterodyne wrench if I continues! (Yowza!) So stop reading this and BUY it already! Buy the whole series! (Buy two! Gotta keep one set "Mint Condition", dontcha?) 12 of 13 people found the following review helpful. The *Hipster Spies With His Little Eye Something That Begins With--Witty, Charming, Fun For All* By The *Mystic Eye Of The Hipster* Mostly, when you see the phrase "fun for all" it really means "fun for nobody", but that does not apply here. The Foglios' illustrations and writing are vivid joyous, and their sense of humor displays minds born with the belief that "the world is mad, so why not enjoy it?" Clever riffs on the old Universal Horror classics mix with wild sight gags a great fondness for the spectacular in their work. There's a plot, too. That's always nice. The *Hipster* gives it a Big Thumbs UP!

In a time when the Industrial Revolution has become an all-out war, Mad Science rules the World... with mixed success. At Transylvania Polygnostic University, Agatha Clay is a student with trouble concentrating and rotten luck. Dedicated to her studies but unable to build anything that actually works, she seems destined for a lackluster career as a minor lab assistant. But when the University is overthrown, a strange "clank" stalks the streets and it begins to look like Agatha might carry a spark of Mad Science after all.

From *School Library Journal* Adult/High School--The Heterodyne family, who "travelled the globe negotiating peace, stopping monsters, and shutting down doomsday devices," are heroes among those with the Spark, the ability to play with the laws of physics, until their disappearance. Now, student lab assistant Agatha Clay works for Dr. Beetle at Transylvania Polygnostic University. After soldiers of fortune steal the locket her uncle gave her years before, she is cast out of the university and left alone while her anxious foster parents go to retrieve it. Agatha takes a nap and awakes, disheveled and greasy, to be confronted by one of the soldiers. He is looking for revenge because his companion died and he blames her and the locket, which contains a complicated mechanism. Meanwhile, back at the university, Baron Wulfenbach and his son Gilgamesh run into a clank, a mechanical robotlike device that seems to be searching for someone. They reprogram it to find its maker, whom the Baron suspects is a new Spark. The clank returns to the shop where Agatha and the soldier are arguing, and the Baron orders them both kidnapped. The sepia-and-white art is lively and appealing, with distinctive characters and a richly imagined environment. There are many humorous touches, such as the "big fish" sign on a, well, big fish in the marketplace, or the Jagermonsters, humanlike soldiers who have an odd joie de vivre. The book includes a bonus color story that gives a glimpse into Agatha's future, which apparently involves a talking cat and several constructs. Sly, witty, and great fun. Susan Salpini, Fairfax County Public Schools, VA Copyright 2003 Reed Business Information, Inc. From the Publisher "Girl Genius: Agatha Heterodyne and the Beetleburg Clank" collects issues #1-3 of the Phil Kaja Foglio's popular Gaslamp Fantasy series. Features of the first collection include beautiful sepia art (highlighting the lovely inks of Brian Snoddy), 7 1/2" x 11" art-book presentation, and a new 8-page color story from Agatha's exciting future of Adventure, Romance, Mad Science... Teens Up. *Girl Genius* is well-loved by (and suitable for) all-ages, but we fully support parental review prior to reading. From the *Inside Flap* This is a story about Science. Or Magic. Or possibly both. There have always been those with the Spark--people who seem to be able to tinker with the laws of physics as we know them. This sort of person can be the worst of evil mad scientists or a tremendous force for Good. The last members of the great house Heterodyne stood as the models against which all other heroes of their time were measured. With a collection of like-minded companions, they travelled the globe, negotiating peace, stopping monsters and shutting down doomsday devices. Their exploits were the stuff of legends. And then they disappeared. Our story begins some years later.