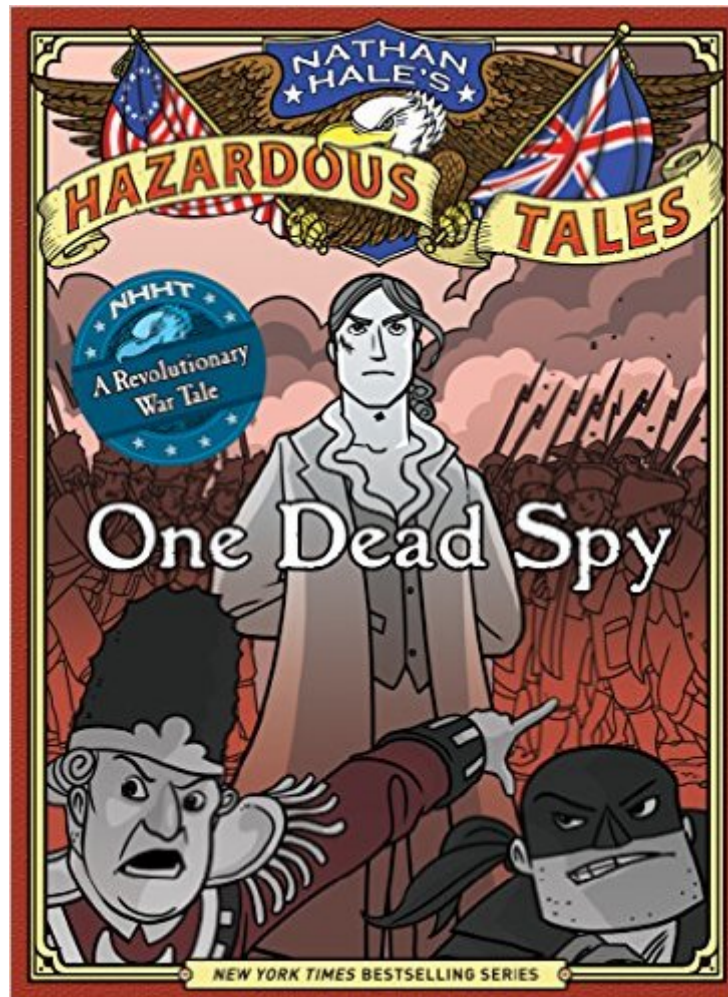


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One Dead Spy (Nathan Hale's Hazardous Tales #1)



Synopsis

Nathan Hale, the author's historical namesake, was America's first spy, a Revolutionary War hero who famously said "I regret that I have but one life to give for my country" before being hanged by the British. In the Nathan Hale's Hazardous Tales series, author Nathan Hale channels his namesake to present history's roughest, toughest, and craziest stories in the graphic novel format. One Dead Spy tackles the story of Hale himself, who was an officer and spy for the American rebels during the Revolutionary War. Author Hale highlights the unusual, gruesome, and just plain unbelievable truth of historical Nathan Hale; from his early unlucky days at Yale to his later unlucky days as an officer; and America during the Revolutionary War. Praise for Nathan Hale's Hazardous Tales: One Dead Spy "An innovative approach to history that will have young people reading with pleasure." Kirkus Reviews "Readers interested in American history will enjoy these graphic novels... Comic panels of varying sizes enhance the real-life events and support the stories' over-the-top humor... the writing is accessible and entertaining; author Hale's style gives readers an insider-y, you-are-there-type scoop." Horn Book

Book Information

Lexile Measure: GN270L (What's this?)

Series: Nathan Hale's Hazardous Tales

Hardcover: 128 pages

Publisher: Harry N. Abrams; First Edition edition (August 1, 2012)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 141970396X

ISBN-13: 978-1419703966

Product Dimensions: 5.5 x 0.6 x 7.5 inches

Shipping Weight: 12.8 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.9 out of 5 stars See all reviews (67 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #11,662 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #3 in Books > Children's Books > Comics & Graphic Novels > History #5 in Books > Children's Books > Education & Reference > History > United States > Colonial & Revolutionary #25 in Books > Children's Books > Humor > General

Age Range: 8 - 12 years

Grade Level: 3 - 7

Customer Reviews

We brought this home 4 days ago. It has slept with the kids, eaten with the kids, ridden in the car with the kids, had two kids peering at it (and laughing together) at the same time, been grappled over by the kids, replaced LEGO fun for one kid...You might want more than one copy of this excellent, entertaining, memorable, slightly irreverent graphic book about Nathan Hale.

I have been a fan of Nathan Hale (the spy, not the author, who I'd never heard of before) since I was a kid forty years ago. I have a rather large collection of books about him, including my prizes, an original Stuart from 1856 and a copy of Seymour's "Documentary Life". This book will go well on that shelf. The premise of this book is a bit of magic realism: As Nathan Hale speaks his last words, a huge history book swallows him up. A few minutes later he emerges, starry eyed (but still with his hands tied behind his back), explaining that "I'm in the history book now" and that he has read the future history of America. He tells the enthralled hangman and the British soldier (who I take to be William Cunningham) the story of his life and of the beginnings of the American Revolution. When he comes to the end of his story, they want to know more, so like Scheherazade, he postpones his execution by spinning more tales, which will be a future series of graphic novels (I can't wait for the one about Benedict Arnold). The book is very funny, with a lot of gallows humor--literally, since the frame story all takes place on the gallows. For example: Hangman: Do you have any regrets? Hale: I regret that I only have one life. Hangman: Ha ha! Good one! If you had an extra life you could be hanged, then just walk away. One of my favorite bits of silliness was this one: "George Washington. He's from Virginia. He looks like this." "Meh. This is my George. King George." "George vs. George. They sort of look the same." "By George! They do look the same." There are also poignant moments, including this one, just after Hale comes out of the history book: Hangman: Does it happen? Do you get hanged in the future? Hale (sadly): Yes, I do. Hangman: Ain't you scared? Hale: Yes, I'm scared. Wouldn't you be? In an afterward, the author explains that the book is "76% accurate" and highlights some of the details that may not be right, and asks for feedback on others. I have a couple of very minor ones: Hale wore his hair short like the Romans he admired. The hangman was a black slave named Richmond. On the other hand, he got a lot of details right, including the fun ones about Hale breaking windows at Yale and cutting up the deck of cards and giving his shoe buckles to Hempstead. I don't know if the author is familiar with Lora Innes' version of Nathan Hale in her graphic novels. This author's version is every bit as charming and sweet. I enjoyed this so much, and as I said, am really looking forward to Hale's take on Arnold. (I've always been struck by the similarities in the stories of Nathan Hale and John Andre. See my online story

"Enemy Spies".) I want to add that as a bibliophile I loved the solid construction of this book. It has a good sturdy hardcover, and the pages are printed on a sturdy thick paper. This a book meant to last a long time, both physically and in terms of content.

My son has been a huge history and comic book buff since he learned to read last year. He is an avid reader - whatever he can get his hands on. I bought this for him thinking he might be a little young still but I was wrong. He has been reading this, Big Bad Ironclad and Hale's newer WWI book over and over and over again. He sleeps with them, they come in the car so he can read them on the way to school and on the way back home. Clearly, Nathan Hale is an entertaining writer. The only one we decided not to buy him yet is The Donner Party because of the subject matter (we'll wait until he's a little older to get this one). According to my son, Nathan Hale's books get 5 stars.

Reason for Reading: I enjoy this type of children's historical graphic novel/biography and have appreciated Hale's artwork in other books. This was so much more than I had expected it to be. It simply was brilliant and an excellent read all round. Nathan Hale (writer) has done for American History what Rick Geary has done for 19th century crime. The two series are admirably similar in their focus and format bringing more information to the table on exciting events from the past through a totally enticing graphical format. Hale sets up his series by telling the story of the historical Nathan Hale as he is about to be hung, the man, his executioner and a British Guard are on the block when something happens which allows Hale to tell the story of his past which includes the story of the American Revolution up to this point. Told with extreme detail, I was quite amazed at how much I was actually interested in (and understood) the military strategy, battle details and reasonings behind various maneuvers. This part of war I'm not usually very interested in but Hale (author) has made it exciting and funny. Along with this detail, there is also the personal stories of the people involved in the war as they related to Hale (the spy). We learn about Henry Knox, George Washington, Thomas Knowlton, Benjamin Tallmadge and many others. I especially appreciated how Hale (the author) brought history alive with his humour; he sometimes goes beyond the scope of the book and makes comments about our world to the reader, he pokes great fun at these historical characters, making fun of strange names and strange circumstances. The executioner is my favourite character as he is the one he is not quite so "book-smart" and asks the questions and makes the comments the reader probably would. Following the excellent tale about Nathan Hale (officer & spy) and the American Revolution up until that point is a small epilogue in which Nathan's hanging is delayed so he may tell some more tales of American History, since he

now has the power of knowing both the past and the future. Then the book is still not over. Next up comes a quick biographical info on all the major players in the book, leading up to what actually happened to them in the end. Then the author does a funny little segment where he thanks those who helped make the book including the researchers, who just happen to be babies! This is quite hilarious as the babies explain how one researches for such a project as a book like this. Then there is a little Q&A section where it is explained where artistic licence has been taken with actual historical events and where the author has supposed based on less than forthcoming historical data. And if you didn't think that was enough the book finally ends with a mini-comic about Crispus Attucks. It tells of his life through death but concentrates on the Boston Massacre (discussed already in the main story). A veritable goldmine of information. A joy to read, not only because it is exciting but also because it is hilariously funny. Highly recommended and I can't wait to get my hands on the 2nd book, Big Bad Ironclad.

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