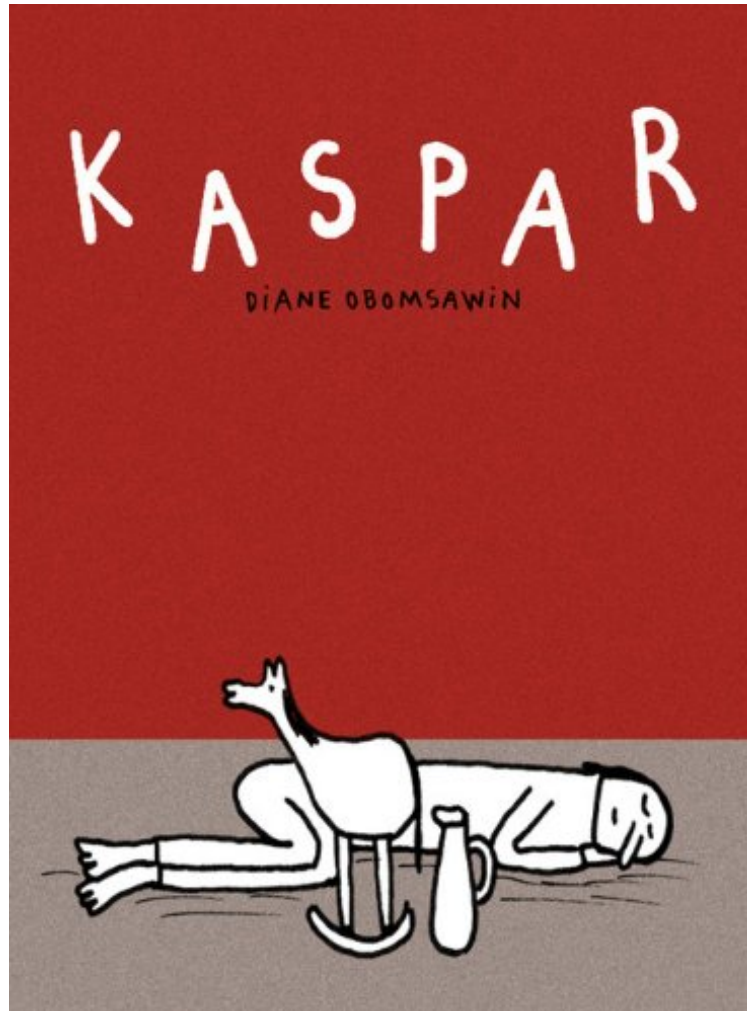


Kaspar

Diane Obomsawin

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Diane Obomsawin : Kaspar before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Kaspar:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Kaspar Hauser now in comic form!By Sam QuixoteKaspar tells the real story of Kaspar Hauser, a mysterious young man who appeared out of nowhere on the streets of Nuremburg, Germany in the early 19th century. He had no education, no family or friends, barely any language, and no idea how to behave in society. This was because he was completely kept away from human contact for his entire childhood by a mysterious man and then, just as mysteriously, taken away and abandoned in Nuremburg. His case caught the public's imagination and he was taken to various houses and treated well, introduced to society, given clothes, food, lodging, and education and eventually ending up staying with royalty until his mysterious death when he was

murdered. Obomsawin (a new name in comics) draws this very simply and reminded me of the work of Lewis Trondheim. Hauser's life is engrossing and Obomsawin uses Hauser's own words to describe his upbringing in the darkness, and his time amongst German society. Also included are some of Hauser's poetry and she also mentions the various conspiracy theories surrounding Hauser's life, amongst them that he was heir to the German throne. Drawn Quarterly really are the best comics publishers out there at the moment. I recommend anyone getting into indie comics to see their catalogue as it contains some of the best comics artists working today. In all, a fantastic read of a fascinating subject. Obomsawin presents it well, tells it with grace, and you leave the book satisfied and edified. The mystery of Kaspar Hauser lives on.

A sad and cautionary tale of mystery, fame, murder, and innocence
May 28, 1828, marked the beginning of the official life of Kaspar Hauser, a young man who appeared mysteriously in the streets of Nuremberg and died of knife wounds five years later under equally mysterious circumstances. "Europe's child," as pamphleteers referred to him, captured the imagination of salon society. Allegedly raised in a dark cellar and deprived of human contact until the age of sixteen, he became the proof of a concept for theories about natural man, original sin, and the civilizing mission of culture. Rightful heir to the throne of Baden or a fraud? Redeemer of man's sins or "ambulatory automatist"? The curious circumstances and significance of his life have been disputed ever since. In *Kaspar*, Quebec cartoonist Diane Obomsawin draws on Hauser's own writings, and contemporary accounts, to tell the foundling's strange story. Minimalist grayscale panels and the simplest of line work register the wonder and bewilderment of a trusting and sensitive soul emerging into a fickle society. Gentle and poetic, naive and profound, Obomsawin's first book to appear in English translation has a quiet and compelling charm.

From School Library Journal
Grade 10 Up
In early-19th-century Germany, a young man, perhaps in his teens, was discovered living in a tomblike cellar. Kaspar Hauser had known no other existence: light, walking, the horizon, and human contact were all alien to his experience. Rescued and humanely studied by scientists of the day, he demonstrated remarkable intelligence and learned not only to speak and write, but also to express himself through poetry and art. Supported for a decade through the emotional and material generosity of a variety of gentry and public funds until the time of his equally mysterious death, by murder, Hauser remains an enigma with a touching and compelling legacy. Obomsawin's simple, flat black-and-white drawings are a perfect medium for his story, which the author tells from his viewpoint, basing the narrative on his own writings. Like the subject's known life, the brevity of this book solidifies the wonder of its unknown details. One of Hauser's still-life paintings and a couple of his poems are included. A wide array of readers will appreciate this introduction to a historical mystery with ramifications that speak to a variety of circumstances and across time.
Francisca Goldsmith, Halifax Public Libraries, Nova Scotia
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From Booklist
In a minimalist style like (but even simpler than) those of fellow francophone comics creators Nicolas Mahler and Jason, Obomsawin renders one of the great unsolved mysteries of modern Europe. On May 26, 1828, a young man appeared in Nuremberg, bearing a letter of introduction to the captain of cavalry stationed there. Approximately 17, he could write his name, Kaspar Hauser, but speak very few words. After learning more, he revealed that he had lived alone in a cellar for as long as he recalled. Recently, a man in black had taught him to write his name and to walk, then brought him, sleeping, to Nuremberg. Speculation about him raged throughout Europe, the most extravagant being that he was of royal blood. Boarded by a succession of guardians, he was stabbed mysteriously on December 14, 1833, and died days later. He had written a brief self-explanation that, along with excerpts from two books about Kaspar, Obomsawin adapts with spartan elegance for the text. A paradoxically winsome take on a perennially intriguing true story. --Ray Olson [Caspar] presented an opportunity for observation of the highest interest to the physiological philosopher, the moralist, the religious teacher, the physiologist and physician--an opportunity which must be as rare as the crime which has afforded it. Francis Lieber, 1832, preface to *Caspar Hauser: An Account of an Individual Kept in a Dungeon*