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The Bloodhound Boys: the Monster Truck Tremor Dilemma **by Andrew Cranna**

Publisher: Walker Books

RRP \$24.99

Primary school readers who like humorous graphic novels will be delighted by the Bloodhound Boys and their group of oddball friends.

The characters are freakish monsters living in Skull River City, deep in the Earth's core. Although they are ghoulish types, they have similar thoughts and behaviours to ordinary kids who just want friends and a happy life. They also like to race incredible monster trucks in the annual Monster Truck Grand Prix.

An amazing array of vehicles line up at the start. To name a few; Medusa driving in Mini-taur, the Grim Reaper Gearsticks in Death Wheels, Evil Knieval Weevils in Cockroach, and the Bloodhound Boys and Snake in Truck. There's rivalry, old scores to settle, cheating, and bad-tempered competitors. Fireworks are guaranteed when the plot includes a deranged brain, bone-shaking earthquakes, and a giant's laundry. Yep, readers are in for a crazy ride.

The author's comic strip line drawings keep the action moving at a fast pace. Black-and-white sketches show the monsters in all their weird facial contortions with bulging eyes, screaming mouths, goofy expressions, and plenty of fangs. Kids who enjoy 'weird and wacky' will devour the book. Adults will be relieved to know there is also a moral or two to be discovered along the way.

The first book in the series, *The Bloodhound Boys: the Great Blood Bank Robbery*, was shortlisted for the Children's Book Council of Australia Crichton Award for New Illustrators and also shortlisted for the Reading Children's Book Prize of 2014.

Reviewed by children's book author, Jean Bennett

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