

"CLASSICS MUTILATED" (Book Review)

Written by Jorge Solis

Friday, 24 December 2010 12:12



Boasting a killer title, CLASSICS MUTILATED (IDW Publishing; available now) is a brilliant concept about combining public domain chestnuts with the horror and sci-fi genre. Imagine Captain Ahab in a battle to the death with a Wendigo creature or Huckleberry Finn being chased by a Lovecraftian monster? Editor Jeff Conner offers a list of superb storytellers (Lezli Robyn, Chris Ryall, THE CROW's John Shirley and THE DRIVE-IN's Joe R. Lansdale) contributing to 13 original and highly entertaining stories.

In Nancy A. Collins' "From Hell's Heart," Captain Ahab's journey takes place right after the ending of Herman Melville's novel. With the destruction of the Pequod, Ahab finally realizes the error of his prideful ways. He suddenly finds himself in hell, punished for the reckless deaths of his shipmates. For a chance at redemption, Ahab makes a deal with the devil to become a monster hunter in order to win his soul back.

Robyn's "Anne-droid of Green Gables" stands out from the rest, because of its heartwarming tribute to Lucy Maud Montgomery's children book. Matthew Cuthbert realizes life is still challenging as the parent of a robot girl. Even though his sister wants to send the android back to the factory, Matthew believes Anne is uniquely special. He decides to keep Anne and teach her how to interact with society. Montgomery's endearing message about family and sacrifice is emphasized in Robyn's revision.

Shirley's "Frankenbilly" is a fun-filled homage to the low-budget Western JESSE JAMES MEETS FRANKENSTEIN'S DAUGHTER. William Bonney, the notorious Billy the Kid, is interested in a job as a consultant on the feature film, BILLY THE KID VS. DRACULA. To prove he is the infamous outlaw, Bonney recounts his tale of resurrection. After Victor Frankenstein brought him back to life, Billy the Kid sought revenge against the man who shot him in the back, Pat Garrett.

"Quoth the Rock Star" by Rio Youers is an interesting tale about the search for immortality. At a Doors concert, Jim Morrison notices a raven circling above the crowd. Morrison chases after the raven, which leads him to a bizarre meeting with Edgar Allan Poe. Their confrontation leads to an intense battle between the lizard king and the raven.

The best is saved for last with Lansdale's "Dread Island." The weird combination between Mark Twain and H.P. Lovecraft is quite surprising. Huckleberry Finn and his close friend, Jim, are on the search for the missing Tom Sawyer. The clues lead them to Dread Island, where sinister

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creatures lurk in the shadows. This single story is worth buying the whole anthology.

Thanks to its creative mashup of ideas and styles, CLASSICS MUTILATED is never dull. After finishing this anthology, readers will soon find themselves searching for the original tales from which these revisions ingeniously sprung. Each story in the collection flows as a major fun read.



{comments on}