

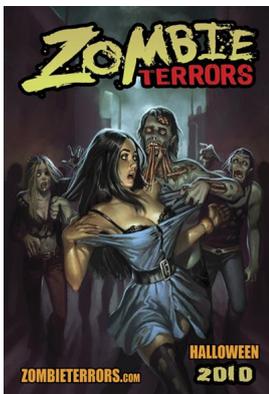
## "ZOMBIE TERRORS" (Graphic Novel Review)

Written by Michael Koopmans  
Sunday, 19 December 2010 13:36

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Fifteen years ago, the word “zombie” would have brought an ear-to-ear grin to my face. Nowadays, unfortunately, almost every drop of originality seems to have been exsanguinated from those once lovable flesh-munchers. The mass production of everything undead over the past 10 years or so has led the ghouls to become a bit trite, limiting their appeal to those projects that showcase a more imaginative narrative. Still, do you compulsively collect every example you can get your grubby little claws on? Then sink your moldy mandibles into ZOMBIE TERRORS, Asylum Press’ anthology of bite-sized horrors!



With over 15 illustrated tales contained between its covers, the odds of there being a creative few in the bunch would appear to be high. The best thing about anthology horror in general is its self-contained, easily accessible format; whether it’s in a film, TV series or a comic, the potential each brief tale possesses to be frightfully memorable is quite charming. And even if a yarn spins the wrong way, it’s little time wasted.

ZOMBIE TERRORS possess a nice variety of short, simple and to-the-point tales, as well as longer, more complex ones—some black-and-white, some full-color. However, it does suffer from a smattering of weak plots that come off a little too familiar. First up is the Frank Forte-written/illustrated “Beheaded,” a truly twisted little tale about a man and his collection of undead noggins. There isn’t much in the way of exposition, but with such a short, simple idea, none is needed to get to the grisly climax. Next is “Monolith of Death,” an attempt at combining the gruesome with the heartfelt, though its central idea of dealing with a family member who has become a zombie is clichéd, to say the least. “Feast” tells of a chef who’s forced to prepare a meticulous meal for a yakuza boss who desires to dine on undead innards. The originality of both Royal McGraw’s plot and Aduino Silva’s cartoonish artwork easily make this the most enjoyable eight pages in the book.

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"Hate" is a clever little 11-panel inner monologue written and beautifully painted by Doug Williams, whose quick twist ending will put a smirk on any reader's face. Next on the chopping block is "Creature Converts" by Canadian artist Craig Wilson. The most reminiscent of anthology horror's heyday, this nicely toned black-and-white tale stars a stingy old cat lady who eventually gets a heaping helping of her own just desserts. SPAWN's Szymon Kudranski brings us "The Barber," a story of the mob, their haircutter and their newly acquired elixir of life. And the award for the most atrocious-looking of the bunch is Aaron Rantoul's "When We Disappear." It's a neat little tale of two lovers fighting to survive, but I just can't stand this type of digitally painted photo comic. That brings us roughly to the midsection of this terror tome; in an effort to avoid overstepping my bounds, I'll leave the remaining spooky surprises for you to discover at your own risk.

Originally slated for September release, ZOMBIE TERRORS didn't squirm its way onto comic-shop shelves until late last month. But attempting to make the wait worthwhile, Asylum added a 36-page preview of Forte's UNDEAD EVIL (which seems promising), as well as numerous full-page ghoulish pinups by various artists (David Hartman puts forth a nice little homage to NIGHT OF THE CREEPS). With its cover price of \$14.95, there are worse modern horror trade paperbacks you could be spending your money on. But as entertaining as so many of these terror tidbits are, the majority are still the same old formula: main character is a jerk, gets eaten in the last panel by zombies. To the easygoing zombie optimist: Check it out! To the fastidious zombie pessimist: Don't expect too much.



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