

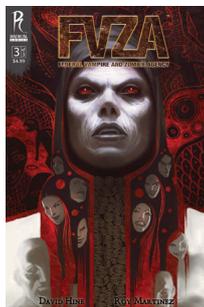
“FVZA” #3 (Comics Review)

Written by Brad Wolfstadt
Saturday, 27 March 2010 14:38



Radical Comics' FVZA: FEDERAL VAMPIRE ZOMBIE AGENCY (based on a parody website created by Richard S. Dargan) is a recounting of the zombie and vampire attacks that have plagued humanity since 1868, and the federal agency force that served to diminish their numbers. Since the vampire and zombie populations have eventually been cured over the ensuing years, the FVZA has been disbanded since the 1970s.

Yet former member Hugo Pecos finds it necessary to recount the information to his grandchildren, Landra (the comic's protagonist) and Vidal, from an early age, and while Landra is a focused student, her brother Vidal acts before thinking. When a new outbreak hits, Landra is forced to merge into society and become an agent of the FVZA, before the army of undead kill off mankind—or, worse, turn humanity into a mixed race of vampire-zombies.



The third (and final) issue of FVZA is, like the violent series itself, somewhat groundbreaking. We have all seen countless depictions of the various species of undead in films, literature and comics; here, the popular cultured zombie is seen as a pariah with endless hunger, and the vampire as a murderous lone wolf. Issue #3 combines these driving elements, but from a military perspective, and centers the story on extreme family conflicts and karma; the cliché “what goes around comes around” is the major motif here. And while the ending is certainly not happily ever after (to say the least), it could be a great cliffhanger for a possible Volume Two.

Writer David Hein once again does an excellent job of combining different genres and adding fantastic character detail, while creating a fictitious historical period where zombie or vampire outbreaks occur at random. Artist Roy Allan Martinez also deserves a pat on the back for his filmlike panel compositions, tones, lighting and shadowing. His work contributes so much to the overall feel that, at times, you forget that you're looking at sketches and reading text. You just

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immerse yourself.

Radical has certainly carved out a praiseworthy niche for itself. Many of its other titles have had the same rich feel as FVZA, offering dark, twisted and gritty content for mature readers. The only gripe I have with FVZA is that it's too short; a good six issues to pack in more history, and the agency's progression over the years, would have served it well.

But certainly, this series is highly recommended. Pick up all three issues, get a flashlight and read it under your bed sheet at midnight to get the full experience.

{comments on}