

“BORIS KARLOFF: TALES OF MYSTERY” Vol. 5 (Graphic Novel Review)

Written by Jorge Solis
Sunday, 08 May 2011 10:37



BORIS KARLOFF: TALES OF MYSTERY VOL. 5 (Dark Horse Comics) is a pleasant and endearing blast from the past. This is a collection of short stories about killer plants, psychotic murderers and mad scientists. For comic book enthusiasts, this is something you should definitely own. Readers will get a kick out of these late '60s comic classics, which still pack quite a punch.



For horror movie buffs, Boris Karloff played the legendary Frankenstein Monster in the 1930s and was the original Im-ho-tep in THE MUMMY. Late in his career, Karloff starred in his own comic book series as the omnipresent narrator. These spine-tinglers were morality tales with a universal message about right and wrong. As host, Karloff introduced himself, and then came back toward the end to relay the tale's theme.

The perfect example of what readers should expect is “Golden Seaweed.” In the narrative, Tina and Steve take their boat across the ocean to find buried treasure. At a remote hiding place, the couple believes they will undoubtedly discover gold. Though Steve proclaims his undying love for Tina, he will actually betray her. While Tina is drowning and losing oxygen deep underwater, Steve cruelly swims away with the loot. He doesn't expect Tina to rise from the grave, wanting her share of the profit.

“BORIS KARLOFF: TALES OF MYSTERY” Vol. 5 (Graphic Novel Review)

Written by Jorge Solis
Sunday, 08 May 2011 10:37

“When Children Speak” is a playful tale about adolescents turning bad. Willy likes to have fun and amuse himself with pranks on his family. In his spare time, the devious minded child built a lifelike Bigfoot costume. But when the real Bigfoot arrives at the farm, the family isn’t sure if they’re attacking the creature or if Willy is just wearing a costume.

The best in the collection comes from “Produce Me a Monster.” In the story, a filmmaker uses real monsters for his horror movies. The director has to keep them from actually hurting his actresses. But when a journalist gets too close behind the scenes, the filmmaker and his hideous monsters have to stop their intruder from releasing the truth to the public.

There is a wide artistic range (from Sal Trapani to Frank Bolle) on the physical description of Karloff, which is a faithful design of his looks and style. Other artists, such as Mike Roy, have Karloff appear in the background, as if he is involved in the story somehow. But it’s the use of primary colors that makes the pages stand out. In “They Came From the Deep,” John Celardo illustrates the zombies as glowing white figures, which is something rarely seen these days.

BORIS KARLOFF: TALES OF MYSTERY VOL. 5 is a worthy compilation of spellbinding short stories. If you aren’t a fan already, this volume will inspire you to search for Karloff’s classic monster movies. This is a rare opportunity for readers to catch up on a semi-forgotten series! Where can you find this collection? At the iTunes store, where the Dark Horse Comics iOS digital app is available for free download. For a new way of reading digital comics, users will also be able to download the full first issues of CRIMINAL MACABRE, ABE SAPIEN: THE DROWNING and HELLBOY: SEED OF DESTRUCTION.



{comments on}