

## “CHEW” #19 (Comic Review)

Written by Jorge Solis  
Sunday, 03 July 2011 10:01

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Unbelievably original and downright weird, CHEW #19 (Image Comics) is a terrific perfect blend of horror, sci-fi and crime. A distress signal from outer space is causing major problems on Earth. While the entire world is obsessed with the fiery message in the sky, a flesh-eating detective digs deeper to the truth. The journey leads the cannibal sleuth directly to a vicious killer lurking at Area 51, where the UFOs landed! Readers should note the story leaps back in time from issue #27 and takes place after issue #18.



Outside of work, life just seems to be going pretty well for FDA agent Tony Chu. For a cannibal, his relationship with food reporter, Amelia Mintz, is going rather extremely well. But at the job, his superior wants Tony fired and reassigned to another department. To keep his job, Tony reluctantly accepts being teamed up with his sister, Toni, as his partner.

Tony and Toni have the rare and special ability of sensing psychic thoughts from the food they eat. To solve crime, Tony takes his gift a step further and eats the flesh of dead bodies to hear the victim's thoughts. When they arrive at Area 51, they stumble upon a corpse inside a crashed spacecraft. Tony hesitates before taking a bite into an extraterrestrial, who may hold an important clue.

The two cannibal detectives discover a grand-scale assassination plot is about to happen. Scientists at Area 51 have been secretly crafting a bullet built from meteorites. The next targets on their hit list are the President of the U.S. and the Queen of England. Tony and Toni have to stop the shooter before one of the meteorite bullets ends up in their brother's forehead.

As the author and letterer, John Layman (GODZILLA: GANGSTERS AND GOLIATHS) keeps the plot moving with his witty dialogue. The sibling rivalry between Tony and Toni is always

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hilarious and constantly unpredictable. While Tony is bitterly cynical and uncomfortably reserved, Toni is joyfully outgoing and annoyingly perky. Toni actually shows her mean streak during the climatic conclusion, which even shocks her brother.

The art and colors by Rob Guillory brings out an energetic and cartoony vibe to the pages. The interiors of Area 51 are just creepy and funny at the same time. In the labs, nurses are taking care and feeding the alien/human babies. As Toni and Tony walk across the hallways, there is a lineup of wrecked alien spaceships, as if none of them have ever landed safely on Earth. Pay close attention to the design of the dead alien, who has been operated on and stitched up afterward.

Definitely a must-have, CHEW #19 is a bizarre and twisted police procedural starring two cannibal kin. Even if you aren't an avid follower, this issue is very easy to catch up. With one single read from this comic, you will automatically become a fan! Well-deserving of its praise and achievements, CHEW is nominated for Best Writer, Best Penciler/Inker and Best Continuing Series for the 2011 Will Eisner Awards. Grab this issue and see why comic book followers can't stop talking about this weird series.

