

“X-FILES/30 DAYS OF NIGHT” (Graphic Novel Review)

Written by Jorge Solis
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A truly tremendous, epic effort, X-FILES/30 DAYS OF NIGHT (DC Comics/IDW Publishing) is highly recommended to readers. This is a well-matched combination of two iconic horror franchises that are perfectly suited for each other. The government's best supernatural investigators from the hit TV series THE X-FILES are pitted against a horde of parasitic vampires from 30 DAYS OF NIGHT. Immensely entertaining for fans of either franchise, this trade paperback collects the harrowing and action-packed six-issue miniseries.

In Wainwright, Alaska, FBI Special Agents Fox Mulder and Dana Scully arrive to investigate a gruesome crime scene. In a graveyard of abandoned trucks, the frozen remains of decapitated truckers were strung up on a 40-foot pole. In the cold winter, the sun is about to disappear and wrap the town in endless darkness. With less sunlight, Mulder and Scully have very little time to follow the trail of their vicious killer.

Obstacles lie ahead for the two investigators as fellow FBI Agent Robert French intends to demonstrate how Mulder is a walking embarrassment. By capturing the serial killer first, Agent French will finally prove Spooky Mulder and his teenage witch are undeserving of their badge and gun. The locals, the Inuits, are far worse and hostile to the paranormal investigators; even the children are packing guns. Heavily armed, the natives are waiting for an abandoned and drifting ship, full of bloodthirsty vampires, to arrive.

Fan fiction at its best, authors Steve Niles and Adam Jones (guitarist for the metal band Tool) flawlessly achieve the distinct characterization of each special agent. Scully, the scientific skeptic, has a difficult time explaining to herself what she is seeing. While attempting to do an autopsy on a dead vampire, Scully thoroughly analyzes how the vamp digests blood. A

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laughing stock to his peers, Mulder follows through on his unbreakable faith to finding the truth. The quirky banter between Mulder and Scully is a spot-on recreation of creator Chris Carter’s pulpy dialogue.

Artist Tom Mandrake (BATMAN, THE SPECTRE) successfully keeps the spirit of the TV show in the character designs of the protagonists while staying true to his own visual style. In each panel, Mandrake delivers on the gore and haunting imagery. To feed one of their fallen, a group of vampires bite themselves, slitting their wrists, to provide blood. In a wonderfully imagined splash page, Scully is unaware of the bloodsucker with the big hole in his face, standing right behind her. In a suspenseful sequence, Mulder and Scully fight off an intruder, while their helicopter is wildly spinning around, heading towards its inevitable crash.

Absolutely entertaining from start to finish, fans of both franchises have nothing to complain about with X-FILES/30 DAYS OF NIGHT. In a perfect team-up of story and art, Mandrake, Jones and Niles manage to blend both worlds without any problems. The only thing missing here is the opening theme music by Mark Snow! This one ranks right up there with BATMAN VERSUS PREDATOR. Don’t miss out on one of the best crossovers going.

