

“IT FOLLOWS” (Book Review)

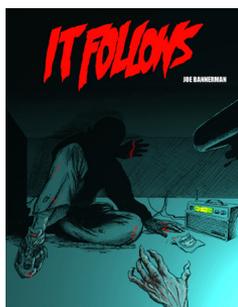
Written by Michael Koopmans

Tuesday, 25 September 2012 14:39



When constructed properly, there’s something very magical about the anthology horror format, whether it’s boiling the genre down to its essentials or simply using of a clever hook. These collections of bite-sized terrors can be ingested at any time or place when you have a few minutes to spare. Good or bad, I love ’em all, and thankfully, Joe Bannerman’s self-published IT FOLLOWS sides with the former.

With the mood, characters and settings changing drastically per story, Bannerman presents a fresh buffet of terror that’s hard to put down once you’ve sunk your teeth into it. We dive in headfirst with “Full Tank,” the longest of the lot and a take on the action-packed apocalyptic-horror subgenre that’s refreshing for its substitution of demonic ambiguity for the typical horde of zombies. The few characters we meet are poles apart from each other in terms of lifestyle, and all engage in very authentic interactions and decisions. Bannerman does a wonderful job of focusing on these relationships, causing an outrageous situation to seem quite reasonable.



Next up is “Poseidon Rising,” a disturbingly surreal tale about a peculiar little girl, the throbbing stone in her pocket and the knowledge of what rumbles beneath the small fishing island in which she resides. It’s very Lovecraftian in nature, right down to the odd feeling of both perplexity and satisfaction you get upon reading the final sentence. “Does It Ever Get This Cold in Paris?” is the smallest nibble of horror you’ll get in this collection, yet it’s stuffed to the gills with so much dark and witty humor that you’ll never believe how much five pages of dialogue between two flesheaters could satiate your hunger.

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“Hello, Lovely” is my favorite of the morbid lot. What starts out as a heist thriller slowly morphs into a twisted tale of folklore and bloodshed, not unlike something you’d find in an old issue of *Shock Suspense Stories*

or the like. And finally, we close with “Salad Days.” This is another tale that shifts gears into the unexpected when an average melodrama becomes a fast-paced, wild ride of superpowers and secret societies that all the while manages to keep its firm grasp on the importance of the family unit.

One of the most impressive aspects of IT FOLLOWS is Bannerman’s ability to switch tones from one story to the next. Each twisted tale flows differently from its brethren, with the story details perfectly dictating its pace. And not only does the author’s intelligent storytelling knock it out of the park, each tale is accompanied by a single eerie monochrome drawing by artist Vance Capley that whets your appetite for the story at hand.

Overflowing with the darkest of imagery and humor, not to mention a dash of social commentary, IT FOLLOWS is a must-read for all fright fans. As uneasy as its contents may make you feel, there’s a very nostalgic quality to this collection. At 90 pages, it’s a quick and comforting read, tailor-made for a dark, stormy night without the distractions of modern technology. Still not convinced? Well the best part is that not only does IT FOLLOWS carry the very wallet-friendly pricetag of \$9.99, but it’s currently available [here](#) for a measly \$5! And if you’re truly a cheapskate, you can download the book onto the device of your choice for only 99 cents! This gives you absolutely no excuse not to check out the spine-tingling and thought-provoking treasures found within its pages.

