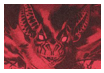
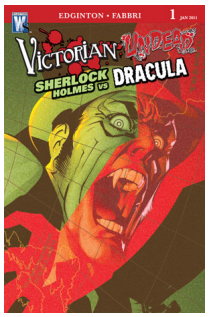
Written by Jorge Solis
Saturday, 04 December 2010 11:13



The first issue of Wildstorm Comics’ five-part miniseries VICTORIAN UNDEAD: SHERLOCK HOLMES VS. DRACULA sets up the impending battle between the master sleuth and the immortal vampire. Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson are pursuing their next case after the defeat of Professor Moriarty and his revenants in the first series, and their investigation takes a dangerous turn towards a gruesome crime scene, an angry mob and deadly encounters.

The ship *Demeter* rocks back and forth on the ocean against a raging thunderstorm and harsh winds. Before heading out to sea, the small crew consisted of two shipmates, five deckhands and a cook. Upon reaching its destination, the only person found on board was the dead captain, the rest of the crew having vanished without a trace. The frightened captain tied his corpse to the wheel of the ship, his bloodsoaked hand holding a crucifix for protection. In the middle of the night, a strange figure rose from one of the wooden boxes, and the captain died knowing he was carrying something evil on his last voyage.



As Holmes and Watson follow leads in this murder mystery, a disguised psychic senses the arrival of the dark stranger. She and her gypsy clan huddle together, collecting knives, axes and guns, preparing themselves for a violent war against the bloodthirsty vampire.

In author Ian Edginton and artist Davide Fabbri’s follow-up to their previous hit miniseries (SHERLOCK HOLMES VS. ZOMBIES), Holmes and Watson are still at their bantering best thanks to Edginton’s period dialogue. The story unfolds at a level pace, gradually building up to a staggering cliffhanger. Just as in their previous adventure, the action will surely kick into high gear once the exposition has been done with.

Fabbri makes good use of the medium, delivering lively and colorful illustrations. The amount of detail with which he captures the 1900s time period is astonishing to see on a splash page. A

flashback panel by Tom Mandrake retains the moody tone while visually staying true to Fabbri's style. In an original take, Count Dracula’s physical characterization is not quite what you’d expect, as neither artist references Bela Lugosi’s or Gary Oldman’s iconic performances.

The first issue of VICTORIAN UNDEAD: SHERLOCK HOLMES VS. DRACULA presents sufficient material to keep readers engrossed and enough questions for them to return. Who is the psychic behind the mask? What is the purpose of Dracula’s visit to London? Fans will be anxiously anticipating the confrontation between Holmes and Dracula, and this is a strong start for the miniseries as Edginton and Fabbri continue to take a highly fresh approach to the famed detective and his mythology.

{jcomments on}