

“HACK/SLASH: MY FIRST MANIAC” (Graphic Novel Review)

Written by Jorge Sollis

Saturday, 22 January 2011 16:57



The trade paperback of *HACK/SLASH: MY FIRST MANIAC* (Image Comics) collects the debut miniseries of Cassie Hack, the slasher slayer who saves screaming teenagers. *HACK/SLASH* has made a smooth transition from Devil’s Publishing to Image Comics. This chapter in the hit series is a flashback adventure to Cassie’s first supernatural case when she was 16 years old. The origins of Cassandra Hack are explored, explaining why she only hunts serial killers.

In the incredible opening pages, Cassie is forced to shoot her mother, the serial killer known as the Lunch Lady. The overprotective mother was murdering the bullies who were picking on her daughter. Then the killer ground their dead bodies up and served the raw meat as lunch for the students. Overwhelmed with guilt, Cassie struggles to move on with her life.

But no matter how hard she tries, Cassie will always be picked on. She is an outsider, the new girl, at her latest high school. The popular chicks want nothing to do with this stranger, always pressuring her to feel isolated and undesired. Cassie constantly yearns for a normal life, especially as she sits down next to her stepfather and casually watches TV.



During gym periods, Cassie throws jabs at the punching bag, training her body to become a blunt weapon. Her nights are consumed of repeating nightmares, of her dead mother rising from the grave. Because she is afraid to fall asleep, Cassie becomes obsessed with researching news reports about unsolved killings. She stumbles upon an urban legend about an undead farmer who pitchforks wandering travelers. The slayer packs her belongings and runs away from her foster parents, living a solemn life on the open road.

During her journey, Cassie unintentionally finds two people she actually likes, Sarah and Kelsey. Finally, this lonely girl might have friends, but the chance at being accepted by her peers leaves Cassie distracted. The hunter turns into the hunted as Cassie becomes the prime target of a bloodthirsty murderer.

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Creator and author Tim Seeley cleverly mixes the horrors of adolescence with the scares of slasher movies. Seeley’s dialogue-driven script reflects a whirlwind of emotions, from teenage angst to unrequited love. With the narrative told from Cassie’s perspective, the slasher slayer proves to be strong and resilient, while also being tortured and vulnerable.

The flashy artwork by Daniel Leister and the bright colors of Mark Englert are the major selling points of this comic book. Leister captures the heartbroken emotions of Cassie Hack in her facial expressions. Because of the cinematic angles, the illustrations come across as an endearing tribute to the FRIDAY THE 13TH movies.

HACK AND SLASH: MY FIRST MANIAC hits all the right notes and surprisingly demonstrates genuine emotion. This is the perfect jumping point for new readers, as well as an untold tale for regular followers. Out in stores now, if you love ’80s slasher movies, this is the comic book for you. For more of the HACK/SLASH series, go [here](#) .



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