

“SCREAMLAND” #1 (Comic Review)

Written by Jorge Solis

Saturday, 02 April 2011 10:15



SCREAMLAND #1 (Image Comics) returns for its second volume to shed light on what happens when movie monsters run past their prime. With CGI the norm in film, monsters find themselves unemployed and struggling to find any type of work. But, who really wants to hire someone who looks like an actual freak? SCREAMLAND is biting satire and a smart look at life as actors in Hollywood.

Gill-Man, the real fish monster from THE CREATURE FROM THE BLACK LAGOON, has gotten himself ridiculously bloated and lazy. He spent his last paycheck buying a wrecked houseboat. Because this sea creature squandered his wealth, he can only afford to pay a hotel room. Feeling the weight of his guilt on his shoulders, he agonizes over all the lies he told to the people around him. Gill-Man sadly realizes no one is going to care about a washed-up star committing suicide.



Elsewhere, Dr. Wolfman has recently made a new movie, which has gone straight to DVD. He finds himself having a difficult time getting through to his agent. These days, the audience just wants to see hipsters in monster makeup. His long-time friend, Travis, used to be the Commander of the SPACE PATH franchise, until he and his fellow crew were replaced by a younger cast. Like they usually do, the two sit back and wonder what they are really supposed to do with their lives. They ask themselves, “Why does anyone do anything these days?”

“SCREAMLAND” #1 (Comic Review)

Written by Jorge Solis
Saturday, 02 April 2011 10:15

To run away from their problems, the two find shelter and relief at a horror convention. Travis and Dr. Wolfman walk around proudly as kings, because they are fondly remembered for their previous work. As much as they hate being crowded by annoying fans, this is the only way these hasbeens can still make a profit. Even though these actors think they're in paradise, a hidden secret from their past is waiting to be exposed.

Author Harold Sipe and Christopher Sebela have crafted a dialogue-driven drama, which also happens to be a murder mystery. The writers cleverly have these characters ask many universal questions. These forgotten protagonists are facing the horrors of growing old and wondering if they still have a place in the world anymore. Once you think you know where the story is going, the shocking ending will undoubtedly surprise many readers. After reading the first time, you will have to reread the issue and find the clues set up in the pages.

The art by Lee Leslie makes good use of creating caricatures from classic horror movies. The Slasher, who has seen better days, resembles a worn-out and beaten Jason Voorhees from FRIDAY THE 13th. The colors by Buster Moody are faded and washed-out, creating a unique atmospheric vibe. The illustrations capture the emotions and bleak humor within the dialogue balloons.

A definite must-read for comic book fans, SCREAMLAND #1 represents horror satire at its best. The story takes an ironic twist toward the horror genre and portrays monsters as people with real problems. With the setup established and characters fleshed out, the following issue takes a surprising turn as a murder mystery. It's available for previews this month; don't miss SCREAMLAND when it hits stores June 8.



{comments on}