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FEEDING GROUND (Archaia) is a well-paced werewolf story that doesn’t actually follow the usual horror clichés. Fans will no doubt be questioning what they are reading when the story begins as an intense family drama. The horror of a mother and father losing their child is intensified to the max. This once close-knit family will never be the same when they find their daughter again. This wholesome and innocent child has become a hideous creature of the full moon, leaving her parents feeling useless and letdown. Pretending to be asleep, Flaca Busqueda watches her father leave just before going back to work. Dad, tired and poor, promises her that this will be his "one last cross." Flaca sneakily gets up from her bed and spontaneously decides to follow him. She never expects to be cruelly kidnapped at the Mexican/American border, known to locals as “The Devil’s Highway.” In a race against time, Flaca’s parents, her brother and uncle are on a desperate search to find their missing girl before anything horrible happens to her.

When the family finally locates their lost daughter, Flaca has become different and strangely odd. They find her scarred with bloody scratches and claw marks on her back, as if she were attacked by a wolf. Flaca’s body is changing at such a tender adolescent age. Her coming-of-age tale represents the werewolf’s ever-present transformation.

In the backdrop of this horror story, there are political and social commentaries about the timely issue of illegal immigration. Creators Swifty Lang, Michael Lapinski and Chris Mangun provide different perspectives on the subject, but never actually give a definite opinion on the topic, as if they are giving the readers a chance to discuss and choose for themselves. Following orders, the border patrolmen round up the illegal immigrants as criminals. These patrolmen are just doing their jobs to uphold the law, never putting a personal stake on the situation.

The sharp commentary continues with the portrayal of the minutemen, private individuals who monitor the U.S./Mexico border. These minutemen, who carry loads of shotguns and rifles, can simply be described as werewolf hunters. Their only interest is to collect a trophy for themselves. With their daughter now a werewolf, Flaca’s family have no choice but to keep running, hoping to find salvation in the U.S. With a ticking time bomb in their hands, the Busqueda family doesn’t know how long they can protect one of their own. The entire cast of characters is on an inevitable collision course. In the first issue, the writing starts out slow, establishing the relationships amongst the individuals. But once the setup has been firmed up, the first werewolf attack comes as a pleasant surprise and sneaks into the reader’s attention. The artwork by Lapinski holds back on the horror for a bit, but then lets loose on the carnage, allowing the panels to ooze with bright red colors.

Lapinski rarely uses a large amount of color in his expressive illustrations. Though the bright yellow hues represent morning, a sunny day doesn’t provide any type of relief for the running Busqueda family. Using just a blue tone for the night settings, the desert landscapes become such a marvelous sight to see in this miniseries. The emotional context is enhanced in the

close-ups of the protagonists. The backgrounds in the splash pages are layered with immense detail.
The second half of each issue belongs to the Spanish text by Diego Merino, Nathalia Ruiz Murray and Alina Alcantara. In an interesting marketing ploy, each issue comes printed in English and in Spanish. In an attempt to gain a wider audience, this solid effort gives their audience a chance to follow a horror story dubbed in another language. This is basic Spanish for first-time readers, never delving into slang and always stays close to simple phrases. These clear-cut sentences do not lose the emotional and suspenseful impact that was already presented.
Real-life drama unfolds with supernatural terror in the FEEDING GROUND miniseries. Readers will no doubt be discussing their opinion on the topics lurking within the pages. Comic book fans are given a chance to think and be entertained at the same time. You have creepy children, hunters with trigger-happy fingers and werewolves! What more can you ask for?

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