

“AMERICAN VAMPIRE” #13 (Comic Review)

Written by Jorge Solis
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AMERICAN VAMPIRE #13 (Vertigo Comics) continues the brooding revenge-themed journey of Skinner Sweet, a new vicious breed of bloodsucker. Readers follow the first American vampire's bloodline, through various decades of U.S. history, now during the beginning of World War II. Sweet is definitely an ambiguous character, someone you will never know which side, good or evil, he is on. Shouldn't be missed, AMERICAN VAMPIRE boasts story and art at its absolute finest.



During the Wild West, Skinner Sweet emerged as a different kind of vampire. He is stronger, faster and yet powered by the blazing sun. Until the 1920s, he created a second vampire, a protégé in young actress Pearl Jones. Rather than join him in his war against the original vampires, Pearl separated her ties with Skinner. She left Hollywood and married her husband, a human musician named Henry Preston.

Though their relationship is in top form, Henry is worried how his marriage to Pearl will ultimately end. He continues to grow older while Pearl still stays the same age. Acknowledging the truth, he realizes he won't be around for her forever and wonders about his own mortality. Death will come at any second, especially now that he has been reenlisted in the army. He will sadly leave Pearl behind, as he travels with the troops to the Pacific.

Though Pearl believes he is bravely serving his country, she doesn't realize Henry has been

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completely lying to her. Off the coast of Japan, there is an island of unlimited black rock and vast jungle. This area also happens to be a point of infestation. As the U.S. launches a full-scale attack on Japan, vampire hunters, packed with military gear, will strike against the bloodsucker bloodline.

Author Scott Snyder builds an everyman-like character through his protagonist. Henry will do anything to save his love, even if it means sacrificing himself. This hopeless romantic knows if he doesn't join this renegade troop, the hunters will surely go after Pearl next. As he writes letters home, Henry repeatedly thinks about returning back into her loving arms. Skinner Sweet lurks among the platoon, disguised as one of the soldiers. The question emerges: Will Henry return to Pearl or will Skinner have him end up in a body bag?

Artist Rafael Albuquerque has such a stylish approach to the Hawaiian landscape. The nighttime scenery gives a vibe of warmth and loss, as the couple, Pearl and Henry, say their last goodbyes. The character design of Skinner Sweet has changed radically as well. Originally, Sweet was depicted as a vamped-out Kurt Cobain. But now with shorter hair and military clothing, this is an interesting new look for the antihero.

This is the beginning of an epic storyline. Out now, AMERICAN VAMPIRE #13 is an entertaining package of storytelling and art. For regular followers, this is another great chapter in this promising new series. For new fans, this is the perfect jumping point to join the fun.



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