

## “DOC MACABRE” (Graphic Novel Review)

Written by Jorge Solis  
Sunday, 05 June 2011 12:01

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Hilarious and over-the-top amusing, horror fans are in for something different with DOC MACABRE (IDW Publishing)! Meet the weirdest kid on the planet and quite possibly the most dangerous person in Los Angeles. Come on over and meet the monster hunter who truly loves his job! This must-buy trade paperback edition collects the purely entertaining three-issue miniseries.

A family of farmers has boarded up the windows to their barn house. Outside lurks a hungry pack of flesh-eating zombies, who have risen from the nearby cemetery. Waiting to be rescued, the family has been frantically calling the same number three times. Help finally arrives, but it's not the type you would necessarily want in this kind of emergency.



Just in the nick of time, Doc Macabre shows up with his hi-tech artillery weapons, which are too

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big for such small hands. The oversized laser gun immediately fails after Doc pulls the trigger. Doc repeatedly slaps around his own equipment, while the flesheaters are heading directly toward him. Fortunately, the laser gun starts working, but instead of blowing away the pack, the zombies are still standing. As if programmed to, the ghouls turn around and wander back to their own graves. Doc unexpectedly saves the day and luckily takes debit for his services.

The story arc has an interesting execution of well-written characterization. Presented through flashbacks and mock interviews, Doc Macabre is exceedingly intelligent, but also incredibly socially awkward. Doc actually doesn't have friends, only clients. His teachers, even his fellow classmates, have their own reasons to hate him. Even though Doc has been pushed around, he throws himself into danger, which takes him straight to a haunted house.

Author Steve Niles is at his funniest as he throws in slapstick comedy during such suspenseful sequences. Unexpectedly, these laugh-out loud moments fit perfectly well, mixing the scares and black humor. Right before entering the haunted house, Doc widens his smile, as if he is having tremendous fun. Readers will be very surprised at how catching Doc's enthusiasm is. Amazingly, this is all from a character who doesn't even have a driver's license!

Niles reteams with the legendary Bernie Wrightson after such highly recommendable efforts (THE GHOUL and DEAD, SHE SAID). Full of inventiveness and playfulness, Wrightson's artwork is definitely worth the price alone. With a well-defined look, the illustrations manage to be scary and comical at the same time. The sleek colors by Tom Smith capture a series of unbelievably eye-catching panels. Just one look at these pages and you will be hooked.

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Truly original and refreshing, readers are absolutely going to have a blast with DOC MACABRE. What’s great about this comic book is how it combines so many things at once—sci-fi, horror and comedy. Amazingly well written and terrifically drawn, the comic succeeds on so many levels! A fun romp from start to finish, fans will undoubtedly enjoy DOC MACABRE. There is no way you’ll be able to put this one down.

