



Hatter M #1 Review

It's a mad, mad world that everyone should be reading.

by **Hilary Goldstein**

November 3, 2005 - Cancel your plans for tea time. Toss out silly notions of a crazed and babbling hatter. Let go the notion that a Hatter is instantly equal to villainy. Frank Beddor's *Hatter M*, a comic-book spin-off from his successful novel, *The Looking Glass Wars*, is a unique take on the Lewis Carroll classic. Hatter Madigan is no loony - he's a master of the blade, a high-ranking member of the Wonderland Millinery with a fearless streak. He doesn't sip tea, he slays evil.

Hatter M has been charged with protecting Alyss, the future Queen of Wonderland. But when Alyss goes missing, it's up to Madigan to track her down and bring her back safely. Hatter M's comic-book journey begins with his sudden arrival in Paris in 1859. A fish out of water, Madigan is forced to navigate through our strange world, seeking out his missing hat as well Princess Alyss.

France isn't ready for the likes of Hatter Madigan, who uses a deadly apparatus that can best be described as Doctor Octopus with blades. The first issue wastes no time introducing us to Madigan's deadly accuracy and his unwavering conviction. Madigan's exemplary skill makes him a match for a Frenchman, but his humanity keeps him grounded. After all, Madigan has failed, has allowed himself to become separated from his charge, has placed her in danger. In a world he doesn't understand, Madigan's first response is to his blades, which leads to both comical and tragic misunderstandings.

Beddor has managed to successfully transition his book into the graphic medium in large part due to his choice of artists. Ben Templesmith provides a kinetic, almost chaotic energy that makes each panel seem fit to explode. In the hands of a more traditional artist, *Hatter M* could have faltered, but Templesmith provides a unique, magical element to a relatively ordinary world that perfectly suits the story.

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Written by: Frank Beddor & Liz Cavalier

Drawn by: Ben Templesmith

Publisher: Desperado

Genre: Action

Suggested Age: 14+

Release Date: December 7, 2005



Rating: **Must Read**

You don't need any knowledge of *The Looking Glass Wars* to enjoy *Hatter M*. It's a bit frustrating that this book comes out well before the release of Beddor's novel in the U.S. Few who read *Hatter M* will hesitate to seek out the source novel, which isn't expected to hit stateside until fall of next year. Until then, *Hatter M* serves as a nice warm-up to a whole new Wonderland.