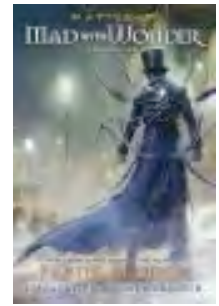




Graphic Novel Review: *Hatter M: Mad with Wonder* by Frank Beddor

Author: [NancyGail](#) — Published: [Jan 12, 2010 at 4:55 pm](#)



With his latest book, Frank Beddor has led readers deeper into a world where the typical fairy tale gets turned on its head. *Hatter M Mad With Wonder* is not hard to figure out theme wise. Almost. Anybody who believes the obvious is going to be in for a surprise. Beddor fully understands there are those who might be new to the series.

While he surely appreciates the additional readership, he thoughtfully provides background to aid in understanding. Hatter Madigan, the main character, is a bodyguard for Queen Genevieve. As a member of protective services, Madigan relies on the use of his hat powers to get the job done. Slicing things into pieces is one talent. There is also a backpack which can be popped open to reveal some nasty sharp blades.

Madigan is on a mission. He must find Princess Alyss, who is fated to be Queen. Not immediately, but sometime in the future. This is important. Wonderland is pretty much divided into Imagination's two factions. Black is the bad kind, where darkness reigns. Persons taken over by black imagination are capable of horrific acts. White, on the other hand, is good. Decency rules, and bad doesn't prosper. An astute reader will figure out the imagination is an allegory for the contest between good and evil.

Beddor helps to draw readers in with a touch of historical drama. As Madigan travels around looking for Alyss, he lands in the midst of the Civil War. Since he is not the only Wonderland personage there, the situation is compounded. Queen Redd, aunt of Alyss, is trying her best to exert her influence so the bloody battle might continue.

Some cultural references get written into the story as well. For example, Dr. Frood is a nod to Sigmund Freud. It's appropriate since the entire book has an underlying theme of being mad, or somewhat insane. Those who do not understand the Madigan world are inclined to believe he is out of his head. This idea is reinforced by a quote in front of each chapter defining exactly what madness is intended to be. I especially appreciated one character in particular who reminded me of the Joker. Nice touch.

The artwork is done in simple pencil sketches rather than the elaborate color graphics which tend to be found in other works. However, these do not detract from the story itself. I prefer pencils for this book, as it allows readers to form their own image of what goes on from day to day.

All in all, Beddor has put forth quite an enjoyable work. The plot draws readers in, and one is not able to put down the book until reading the final page. Even after the story ends, there is more enjoyment. The pages give details as to how the Hatter M concept came about. Readers will find this entire book intriguing, and a literal masterpiece.