



***** Looking Glass Wars, comic and novel

THE LOOKING GLASS WARS:
EGMONT BOOKS LTD. (The novels)
Author FRANK BEDDOR
ISBN# 1 4052 1976 9

IMAGE COMICS: Comic Mini Series (1-4)
Writers: Frank Beddor and Liz Cavalier

This review is going to be a little different.

In the recent past I reviewed the first couple of issues of Frank Beddor's "Hatter M: the Looking Glass Wars" published by Image Comics, totally unaware that there was a series of novels being written at the same time. I loved my initial taste of Beddor's new approach to Lewis Carroll's Wonderland so much I was thrilled to learn that the comics were spun off from a novel and soon to be a series of novels. I decided to revisit the comics once again and to include my thoughts on the first novel together, as both mediums are so closely linked that to separate them would be a disservice to everyone involved.

We've all seen comic adaptations of novels before. Nothing new there. Some worked, some failed miserably, while others left the reader wondering if either written work was related. For the first time, in my experience, both works of fiction not only work well together but having read them at the same time, found that they added considerably to the mutual enjoyment of both.

While the novel substantially fleshes out the comics, the comics provide the visual atmosphere that succeeds in raising the novel to a new height.

The premise of the story is a clever one. Lewis Carroll never gave us the REAL truth behind Alice (Alyss) and her adventures in Wonderland. He wrote the version we've come to know on the childish rantings of a young girl and based his works on what he believed to be the product of a young girl's fertile imagination, much to the consternation of Alyss herself. In fact she was so appalled at this trusted grownup making light of a very real situation she severed all ties with him altogether. After all, people she knew had died.

The Looking Glass Wars gives us Alyss's real story, one that has never seen the light

of day until now and it's a much darker world than what Carroll had led us to believe. Alyss was to be the next Queen of Hearts, ruling over Wonderland until Redd, the Queen of Diamonds usurps the throne in a coup and plunges Wonderland into her own twisted version of the power known as Imagination.

What we get is a delightful combination of high tech gadgets like whipsnake grenades and cannonball spiders right alongside the expected Military Chessmen. It's an intriguing blending of fantasy and Blade Runner cyber-tech.

It's a rare thing for works of fiction that are aimed at young adult audiences to be capable of attracting and holding the attention of us grownups. C.S. Lewis and his Narnia works, J.K. Rowling and the Potter books, Lloyd Alexander and the Chronicles of Prydain all have been wildly successful, in this respect.

This labour of love is no exception.

So make some space on your shelf and jump in...with both feet. Make sure you have enough cash leftover to pick up the comics as well. Issue 2.5 of the comic series is a helpful primer to the inner workings of Wonderland that puts into perspective some of the greyer areas of the novel.

Like I said, both mediums are complimentary when read in parallel. The world needs more works like those already mentioned, works that bridge the gap between generations and gives us all something to talk about regardless of age.

Rating: 5 out of 5

*Posted by: **Trollking** Moderator*