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Horizon Volume 1

Brandon Thomas

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Brandon Thomas : Horizon Volume 1 before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Horizon Volume 1:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Good color shading and overall concept, but confusing plot and character developmentBy Rowed2damascusI really wanted to like this, but found the plot to be confusing, the artistic representation of the characters confusing, and the character development lacking. Throughout much of the story, I

couldn't tell the aliens apart, and was not able to follow what was going on. About half-way through, I found myself just trying to get through to end. I did like the color shading, and the overall concept. Unfortunately, I was not enticed to continue with Volume 2.4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. An intelligent, visually impressive new comic series

By brutusmuktukI'm still uncertain how I feel about the series as a whole. What begins as an exciting and cool intro issue, turns muddled and confusing as new characters join the fray and the story keeps the reader out of the loop. Then, suddenly, something clicks and it makes sense, kind of. This is a story where the humans of Earth are the bad guys, and aliens like Zhia Malen are invading the Earth in order to prevent Earth's invasion of their planet. Why Earth wants/needs to invade this planet and why Malen and her comrades are so worried about this invasion (beyond the obvious) becomes clearer later on. There's a moment halfway through the fifth issue where things sort of clicked into place. But I can also see where this moment may not click for everybody, and even I have some doubts and questions that aren't answered by the end of the first volume.

Horizon is an action filled affair. Juan Gedeon adds motion to his images, blurring lines or adding cartoon-like backgrounds to give an illusion of motion. Some entire chapters are devoted to action scenes. Then the plot happens and the story stalls in confusion, even as it continues moving at a breakneck pace. It doesn't help that so much is kept in the dark, or that characters show up at random with little background, and that the protagonists are difficult to remember whose who, even though each one looks different. Had Brandon Thomas taken time to develop these characters and his plot in better detail, this could be a much better story. And yet there is something to be said about the discovery of what Thomas is trying to achieve. That doesn't excuse the lack of character development, but there is promise in the idea.

Gedeon's artwork similarly has me feeling ambivalent. It is unique and unlike anything I've seen in other comics. At times it is a graceful, fluid piece, and at times it is a blurry mess, with outlines of characters made too awkward and obvious. At times it seemed the artwork grew worse and then better from issue to issue. Gedeon shines best in his action sequences, as the bulk of the final issue showcases.

If I could, I would rate this a 3.5 out of 5. The series grows muddled in the middle and builds momentum at the last two issues, promising something good. It may be that this series does not provide the clear characterization it needs, but will hurtle on with the energy that has carried it this far. That's fine. I think I've settled into its groove enough to enjoy the ride the rest of the way.

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. A Bit Of A Mess, To Be Honest

By TalviWhat Horizon Volume 1 wanted to be was a high stakes, high octane sci fi actioner. But something was lost in the application - a concept that was never fleshed out enough to be anything more than nebulous and disenfranchising. The plot meanders, the story somewhat inscrutable, and the protagonists cyphers that baffle rather than entice. By the middle of this first volume, collecting issues 1-6, I was reading just to finish and not because I enjoyed it.

Story: Zhia Malen has come to a polluted and dying Earth for one reason: to ensure that the humans do not come to do the same to her planet. For the humans need a new home and they are not too picky about what happens to those already occupying that new planet.

The story features quite a bit of cloak and dagger action - Zhia and her small band have superior weapons but only a small group to take on the Earth power bases. It was never explained (that I can recall) how her people knew Earth was going there, what they had done in the past so far, or even what Zhia hoped to accomplish specifically to stop the invasion. There's a lot of assaults, killing, and evil hoomans, and of course our heroes are the good guys and conflicted about what they have to do to save their planet from invasion.

This feels like a book that someone tried to write around the idea that the humans are the invaders, instead of the other way around. This time, the aliens are the defenders and the heroes. But we don't get a lot of information or backgrounds on them, their personalities are missing (other than cackling evil bad and determined good), and even then, the aliens don't even feel very alien at all. It felt like two different humans fighting each other, just one was colored blue.

There are the usual dystopian future tropes here: corporations have taken over, mankind is inherently greedy and evil, and man has destroyed the world. I imagine there was also an attempt to tie in to what European settlers did to North and South America natives over the last millennium - assimilation and destruction of their cultures. But the parallel - exploration and expansion through choice (rather than because the Europeans had destroyed Europe and made it unlivable) - didn't really apply. So there was opportunity to do a bit more with this story that just wasn't explored, or at least not in a way that was meaningful.

The art did not help bring definition to Horizon either, to be honest. As nebulous and head scratching as the plot was, the graphics were also rather stylized and conceptual rather than enhancing the story. If the story is not gelling, then the graphics really should. But the illustration work was imprecise where it should have been emotive and evocative. If the plot didn't lose me, the graphics did.

In the end, I didn't feel for the characters or their motivations. I didn't really care if they succeeded or if they failed. The villains were once again overly hubristic and prone to pontification about their nefarious plans. And the humans had technology that should have been surprising only to the reader, not the aliens who were sent to infiltrate and assassinate - especially with their information gathering abilities. And please - can we not have the trope where characters completely miss the obvious that every reader figures out and rolls their eyes when the villains reveal a dramatic 'twist' ability? Reviewed from an advance reader copy provided by the publisher.

Zhia Malen thought shed fought her very last war, until she learned her planet was targeted for occupation...by a desperate world called Earth. The people of Earth will be told that her arrival on our planet means invasion. These are

lies. This is retaliation. Skybound's newest original series will show you that survival isn't just a human instinct...
Collects HORIZON #1-6.