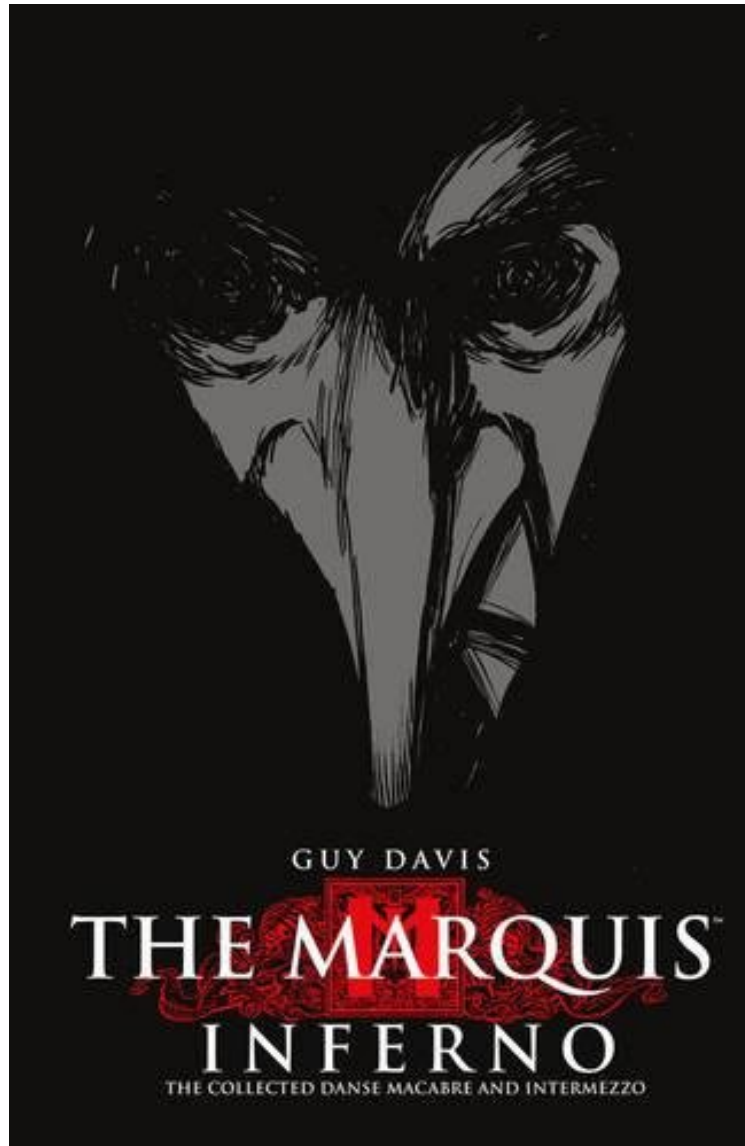


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## The Marquis: Inferno

*Guy Davis*

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#1314413 in Books Dark Horse 2009-08-25 2009-08-25Ingredients: Example IngredientsOriginal language:EnglishPDF # 1 10.18 x .67 x 6.671, 1.61 #File Name: 1595823689336 pages | File size: 25.Mb

**Guy Davis : The Marquis: Inferno** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Marquis: Inferno:

7 of 7 people found the following review helpful. Extraordinary Premise; Decent ExecutionBy shaxperWho could possibly argue with a 18th century holy man toting machine guns and taking down demons hiding amongst the living that only he can see? The Marquis is a fantastic character concept further strengthened by heavy, thoughtful considerations of absolute faith to abstract gods, subjective perspectives in storytelling, and questionable sanity in our

unreliable narrator/protagonist. Add to the mix one of the most imaginative and visionary artists in the comic book field today, and you should have one unstoppable work of art. There are some problems that get in the way, though, and the most obvious of these to me is the dialogue. One wouldn't expect a machine gun wielding vigilante to spend much time talking, but most of this volume is made up of the Marquis either talking to himself or to the demons he hunts about his motivations and beliefs. His dialogue is then interspersed with repetitive talking between Inquisitor Morse, the governing figure of this faith-based society, and Herzog, his slightly atheistic general. The two banter back and forth about whether the Marquis is a demon and whether or not people should be governed out of religious fear, but the discussion never progresses. It's much of the same each time they talk (which happens in every chapter). The dialogue by The Marquis and between Morse and Herzog is exceptionally concrete and obvious. Very little is left unsaid or is left to suggestion, and the parts that are left to suggestion are abundantly obvious. The reader isn't left with anything to consider or discover on his/her own. Instead, the characters speak every thought and motivation they have. Even when Herzog bites his tongue, the pictures speak loudly for him. Another problem is in part of the premise, itself. Part of the allure and intrigue of this series (as Davis even expresses in the sketchbook section) is the level of uncertainty we're supposed to feel as the Marquis struggles with his own certainty of faith and of sanity. We're supposed to wonder whether or not he really is seeing demons and whether or not he really is blessed by the saints. Well, the latter is answered absolutely by the end of the first storyline (Dance Macabre), and the former is answered by the mere fact that the Marquis has machine guns (which a soldier clearly observes and comments about early on). If a supernatural being didn't really empower the Marquis to take on his crusade against actual demons, then where did he get machine guns in the 17th century? Clearly, he didn't invent them in a moment of delusional madness. Finally, Davis' amazing art is actually problematic at many times in this volume. His style is exceptionally loose and abstract which, when combined with a tremendous amount of lines and detail, makes the comic very hard to read in small black and white panels. This is partially the intended style of the book, and so it's worth pushing through, but it does make the action confusing and the faces difficult to identify. Guy Davis is the kind of artist that should have classes taught about him because it truly takes a certain level of understanding and familiarity to fully read and appreciate his artwork, but the effort is ultimately worth it. Still, larger panels would benefit this series immensely. The fact is, The Marquis remains an amazing premise, and nothing is done so badly in this first volume to prevent the concept from realizing its full potential later down the road. Sparser, cryptic dialogue, some secondary character development, more ambiguity in the general premise, and larger panels would result in an amazing realization of all the premise's potential. Fortunately, much of that begins to occur in the final story in this volume, A Sin of One. It's clearly a cut or three above the previous stories and leads me to believe that we can expect great things from volume 2, though it may be quite a while before we see it. In the meantime, this is still fantastic reading, as well as the ground floor of what may prove to be a legendary comic book storyline for the ages.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Great great story  
By CAMPBELL B HARMONI tried this on a whim and loved it. Great story, gorgeous art. I'm just disappointed that this is only half of the projected storyline. I hope Davis can finish it soon.

0 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Its only major weakness is that it isn't over!  
By Brian Scoggins I loved the Marquis, so I should clarify that a large number of minor quibbles keep it from getting all the way to 5 stars. First, there's not a lot of ground here that hasn't already been covered. The main character is this sort of awkward blend of William Gull from From Hell and the title character of Spawn Origins Volume 1. The interplay between the general and the minister feels a lot like similar ground in V for Vendetta. Even the costume borrows heavily from the aforementioned V for Vendetta, as well as fellow Dark Horse book Solomon Kane: Castle of the Devil v. 1. Its unoriginal, but frustratingly so because its so well executed. Second, where it borrows from From Hell, it hedges its bets (as mentioned in other reviews) so that the question of the sanity of the main character is mainly for other occupants of the (very believable) universe in which the story occurs, not us the reader. I feel like this opportunity is wasted, especially because that particular mystery is run through pretty early on. Third, I've never liked Guy Davis' art. The only well drawn faces in this book are masks or monsters. Even so, he's very consistent with the faces of the main characters. Its all the mooks in the background, as well as virtually every single woman he has cause to draw, that sort of blur together in this strange sort of androgynous monoface. I found myself studying the pictures, not because I was impressed, but rather because its just hard to work out what's going on whenever a devil or the confessional figure into the scene. I know these sound like pretty damning criticisms, but honestly, I was mostly upset that there's absolutely no word on when the next book(s PLEASE!!!) will come out. If you like horror comics, buy this book.

In eighteenth-century Venisalle, faith governs life and death, and the guilty hide their shame behind masks, showing their faces only in the secret rites of the confessional. It is to this stronghold of the Inquisition that the souls of Hell have escaped to possess the living, spreading sin, murder, and chaos. Amid the carnage, one man is blessed with the clarity to recognize the demons that prey on his countrymen - and the means to return them to the fires of Hell. But as the stakes rise, the lines separating good and evil begin to blur, and the Marquis - the dark avenger whom even demons fear to cross - finds himself torn between the blind faith that has defined his life and the bitter truths exposed under his new sight.

From Publishers Weekly In this morality adventure set in a starkly rendered 17th-century France, the eponymous protagonist dons a carnival mask and hunts escaped souls of the damned. The twist is that behind the marquis's mask is no dashing hero but a geriatric church inquisitor named Vol de Galle who is pious, fearful and uncertain of himself. He has good reason for doubt; the escaped souls inhabit the bodies of lowly French sinners who look like regular townsfolk and only de Galle can perceive their true beastly forms. The marquis leaves a trail of corpses that soon has the authorities, religious and secular, hot on his heels and places him in the center of a debate over his real nature, the provenance of his powers and the true measure of his faith. That overlengthy debate is mere background for the real matter at hand: disgusting devil-monsters dying in interesting ways. Davis's artwork features pages of heavily inked cityscapes crammed with gothic spires and rococo entablature, and squat and grotesque characters both satanic and human drawn in high contrast black-and-white. It's an entertaining if not always serious outing. (Sept.) Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.