

4-COLOR REVIEW

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Hatter M: The Looking Glass Wars #1

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I actually received a preview of this issue several weeks back and, after reading through it twice, promptly set it aside to review later. Of course, now it's coming out tomorrow, December 7th, and I haven't discussed it online at all.

This is a shame, really, because the book is really quite good. The story takes place during the storyline in Frank Beddor's "The Looking Glass Wars" novel, focusing on the adventures of Hatter M as he attempts to locate his lost princess, Alyce. While it's easy enough to follow on its own, the plot and finer aspects of the story are far easier to appreciate having read the novel first. That said, what the newcomer is left with is still a fine adventure tale, mixing humor and action quite nicely. While the pacing feels a bit hinky at times, I suspect that that has much to do with Beddor's background as a screenplay writer rather than a comic book writer. Still, for a first time round in this medium, he acquits himself well.

Hatter is a relatively simple character in the novel, so it's nice to see him fleshed out somewhat here. I'm assuming that this story is canon and will be referred to in some manner in the remaining two parts of the trilogy, possibly even included in some manner if the property makes it to the big screen. Even if this isn't the case, it's at least a nice bit of background info for fans lucky enough to pick it up and I hope Beddor has plans to do similar projects for other characters as well.

Of course, the writing is only a part of the puzzle, and Beddor made certain that the rest of the package shines brightly. Ben Templesmith outdoes himself by turning in some absolutely gorgeous painted art. oftentimes a painted book looks neat, but ultimately comes off as somewhat cold and stiff. Not so with "Hatter M" where the art provides an energy to the character that would have been lost if it had been more traditionally illustrated. The copy I have for review is comprised of color copies, so I hope that the colors in the final printed piece are as vibrant and powerful as these. If the final package is even nearly as nice as this, then it's well worth checking out for yourself.