Empyre: Avengers #2 Review: A Military Composed Of Salad

Posted on August 13, 2020 | by Hannibal Tabu | Comments

Empyre: Avengers #2

7.5/10

Great one-liners and solid visuals anchor a tale that truly didn't need telling against an enemy you won't remember.

All around the world, the vegetative forces of the alien race called the Coati are attacking the forces of humanity. Khartoum, DC, Caracas, Manhattan, Lisbon, Navojoa, Manila, Yokohama ... and especially the Savage Land, which is the focus of much of this issue. The just barely unified forces of the Kree and the Skrull, ancestral enemies bound together to fight the common threat of the Coati, face motley collections of heroes and vigilantes trying to hold the line with no idea of the end game.

Jim Zub's script has a number of entertaining moments, and his dialogue sparkles as he brings out the charm in Wonder Man and the amusing (for the reader) world-weariness of the Black Knight, stuck in year another over the top kerfluffle.
Likewise, there's a lot to appreciate about the visual storytelling of Carlos Magno, Aspen Grunderjern, and Ariana Maher. They do great work trying to balance the stop and go nature of the global conflict with Zub's clever one-liners.

That's just the issue: with a collective antagonist that's barely a collection of old Floronic Man quotes, the truly interesting stories are getting left behind. A Skrull/Kree military unit practically falls apart on panel based on century-old grudges. Armies that have fought since before the time of Shakespeare are working together. There are stories there, but we aren't getting them in favor of a slobberknocker. Does the reader really believe that the Earth, its Avengers, and hundreds of
licensed names are gonna be toppled by a military composed of salad, with about as much characterization? There's a bit of Cliff Steele-esque emotional honesty with Ka-Zar and some developments around his family that have some resonance, but again it gets lost in all the *sturm und drang* going on around them. This book feels like what should have happened off-panel as we got the real deal about how this affected the characters herein. **RATING: HONORABLE MENTION.**

Empyre: Avengers #2  
Jim Zub, Carlos Magno, Steve McNiven  
Earth's Mightiest Heroes fight an intergalactic foe on three fronts! In New York, a villain from the past has been super charged with alien energy. In Mexico, old hatreds turn allies into enemies. And in the Savage Land, the soul of the jungle has been stolen and Shanna the She-Devil's life hangs in the balance. It's mystery, magic and mayhem, in the Mighty Marvel Manner!

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**About Hannibal Tabu**

Hannibal Tabu is a writer, journalist, DJ, poet and designer living in south Los Angeles with his wife and children. He's a winner of the 2012 Top Cow Talent Hunt, winner of the 2018–2019 Cultural Trailblazer award from the City of Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs, his weekly comic book review column THE BUY PILE can be found on iHeartRadio's Nerd-O-Rama podcast, his reviews can be found on BleedingCool.com, and more information can be found at his website, www.hannibaltabu.com.  
