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Book Title: Angelus #2

Rating: 3

Writer: Ron Marz

Artist: Stjepan Sejic

Publisher: Top Cow

There is something to be said for a villain whose motives are absolute, a character that can never be swayed from the warpath. I have always found these enemies the most arresting. The Angelus has been such a villain since her first appearance in *The Darkness #2*, but since Ron Marz has gotten his hooks in the character he has been intent on changing her. First when Celestine was the host and now more predominantly with Danielle Baptiste.

Dani has a lot to deal with in this issue, from learning the truth of what it means being the Angelus to understanding her feelings for Finch. The Angelus society appears to be a gilded one, the buildings and female warriors are beautifully rendered by Sejic, and as Dani says it all looks like the Christian idea of Heaven. But beneath the glorious golden surface there is viciousness afoot, the angels kill one another for status and Sabine is certainly scheming something devious. It is reminiscent of Ancient Rome where there is always a chance of betrayal and violence.

The real world is shown as just the opposite with all its ugliness out on display. Dani, as the Angelus, arrives just in time to stop two guys from raping Finch. It’s odd that the men these two women come across are always violent jerks, I guess it is no surprise they would turn to lesbianism. And it looks like Jackie will be portrayed as equally brutish judging by the cover for the next issue. While this comic champions female power, it does so by painting the men as abusers which is a poor way to accomplish your goals. Marz should not have to rely on elevating his girls by simply lowering the male characters.

On the topic of Dani’s sexuality, it has definitely been a convincing progression. How she speaks with Finch is natural and expresses true compassion. Finch on the other hand is a stereotype right out of the sassy girl academy. Both in dialogue and action she terribly predictable, and seems to be a reject from *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*.

Stjepan Sejic deserves a lot of respect, not only is he doing the artwork for the Angelus mini-series but the ongoing Witchblade as well. He’s got full plate. A lot of the time his paintings are breathtaking, his ability to switch from the beauty of the Angelus kingdom to the nightmarish depictions of darklings shows a fantastic range as an artist. The only snag is that every once in awhile there will be a small oddity on the page that just won’t look right. There are a couple of these in *Angelus #2*, but nothing to get too upset about. In the end, the good artwork far outweighs the peculiar.

This is a solid comic, but not a great one. The art is attractive and it will have you examining the pages soaking up every detail. Marz is crafting an intriguing story, but his depiction of some characters is lackluster. I say, check it out.