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Forty years after disaster left Lower Manhattan submerged in thirty feet of water, the Drowning City has taken a turn for the weird, and Joe Golem is there to investigate. A mysterious and terrifying creature has been snatching children and pulling them into the depths of the canals, and those that drowned in the floods are coming back to the surface—alive. Collects the five-issue miniseries.

Joe Golem: Occult Detective, Vol. 1: The Rat Catcher and the Sunken Dead Details

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Author : Mike Mignola , Christopher Golden , Patric Reynolds (Illustrations) , Dave Stewart (Illustrations) , David Palumbo (Illustrations)

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From Reader Review Joe Golem: Occult Detective, Vol. 1: The Rat Catcher and the Sunken Dead for online ebook

The_Mad_Swede says

Written by Mike Mignola and Christopher Golden, and drawn by Patric Reynolds, this piece of contrafactual, fantastical fiction about a New York partially submerged under water and a detective (or perhaps detective apprentice) who needs to navigate that city delivers upon most of my expectations. The volume contains two story arcs, the three-parter "The Rat Catcher" and the two-parter "The Sunken Dead", which are also interrelated, through the ongoing mystery of Joe Golem's own mysterious background.

All in all, story-wise this is clearly rooted in Mignola fascinating imagination, and while I always love to see Mignola on art duty as well, there is no denying that Reynolds is an excellent choice to bring this version of New York City to life.

Michael says

Joe Golem ist ein - - - nun, ein Golem; erschaffen von einem Priester im 15. Jahrhundert, um ein "Hexenproblem" von einem slowenischen Dorf abzuwenden, als die bösen Damen doch gar zu dämonisch=rabiat werden.

Eigentlich hätte dieser Golem nie erschaffen werden dürfen, doch offenbar wird er auch nicht zerstört, denn in den 1960er Jahren treffen wir ihn in New York wieder, jetzt in einer menschlichen Gestalt. Unter dem Namen Joe Golem (wer würde nun seine Herkunft erraten können) arbeitet er für Mr. Church (!), um das halb im Wasser versunkene New York vor paranormalen bösen Mächten zu beschützen. Mr. Church betrachtet Joe weniger als seinen Partner denn als seinen Gehilfen, was Joe gelegentlich kränkt; weiß der arme Kerl ja auch gar nichts von der Natur seiner Beschaffenheit und trinkt immer brav seine Tees, mittels derer Mr. Church seine Erinnerungen ans Mittelalter unterdrückt.

Die Jobs, die Joe zu erledigen hat, sind klassische Mignola-Kost, wie wir sie aus den Hellboy-Comics kennen, und die beiden Storys lesen sich flott und unterhaltsam.

Sehr gut hat mir die Artwork gefallen, die die postapokalyptischen und bedrohlichen Szenen sehr stimmungsvoll illustriert.

Das "tragische" Potenzial der Story wird nur oberflächlich angekratzt. Joe leidet unter Alpträumen, kommt deren Ursache aber nicht auf die Spur (sein Erinnerungsvermögen wird von Mr. Church unterdrückt durch liebevoll für Joe zubereitete "Kräutertees"). Was würde Joe tun, wenn er erführe, dass er ein Golem ist? Bestimmt keine zarten Banden zur Leiterin eines Waisenhauses knüpfen, wie er es jetzt tut.

Vielleicht wird die Reihe ja fortgesetzt und dieser Aspekt, der Joe "menschlicher" machen würde, näher beleuchtet.

Rick says

Like *Hellboy* and *B.P.R.D.*, *Joe Golem* is another noir-fantasy hero. He even has similar patterns of behavior as *Hellboy*. one major difference is that this story takes place in a world where New York City is a at least a

story or two underwater so, like Venice, it is apparently a sunken or drowned city. This adds an interesting environment to the whole *occult detective* schtick, but there wasn't enough material for the backstory in this graphic novel to really develop this aspect. But then this is a continuation of the story and characters from *Joe Golem and the Drowning City: An Illustrated Novel*, which likely has much more detail in that area. There's a lot of potential here and I'm looking forward to future releases, but it wasn't quite as good as the material Mignola has done for *Hellboy* and *B.P.R.D.*.

Pop Bop says

A New Take on an Old School Style

I like all of Mignola's *Hellboy* spin-offs, (although *Hellboy* will always be number 1), but I was a bit surprised by how much I enjoyed "*Joe Golem*". The character and the premise both seemed to be a stretch, but it all has a certain integrity and rough hewn appeal that was very entertaining.

This volume collects the first five issues of "*Joe Golem*". It's probably not really a SPOILER to note that *Joe Golem* is a 15th century golem, kept alive through occult means that are never really described as part of *Joe's* backstory. What we do learn is that *Joe* doesn't know he's a golem; he's kept in a perpetual state of amnesia about his past by the weirdly long-lived, partly magical, partly bio-mechanical detective who is his boss. So, while there is an occult, magical, golem sort of background, and while *Joe's* cases involve supernatural and magical angles, the main thrust of each story is much more along the lines of 50's pulp detective fiction. Didn't quite expect that from *Hellboy's* creator, although maybe I should have.

This volume covers two full tales, (a water creature thing and a cursed grimoire of the undead tale), as well as some flashbacks to *Joe's* creation 500 years ago. Arching over that is a romance, and the mystery about how and why *Joe's* boss is keeping him in the dark about who *Joe* really is. That golem angle is a pretty sly nod to the dark pasts that all noir heroes have, and there are actually a good number of clever and witty little nods to classic noir conventions and how they can be twisted a little in the fantasy context. As a consequence, this can be read as just an entertaining detective story or as a pretty subtle take on how noir and fantasy intersect, and the reader can take as much or as little of that as he likes.

The whole drowned city angle adds a lot of atmosphere, and gives the drawings some uniqueness, as well as allowing for very original variations on the whole decrepit urban landscape approach. *Joe* himself is a strong, silent hero type who's good for an occasional wisecrack, and the possible girlfriend is a no-nonsense tough/spunky type, so all of that works very nicely.

The upshot is that even though this was designed to have a bit of a throwback, pulp detective feel it hit me as a bit of fresh air and a nice new direction for Mignola's talents. An odd but rewarding and entertaining find. (Please note that I received a free advance will-self-destruct-in-x-days Adobe Digital copy of this book without a review requirement, or any influence regarding review content should I choose to post a review. Apart from that I have no connection at all to either the author or the publisher of this book.)

Chad says

Mignola has created another intriguing supernatural world. The Drowning City is Manhattan, 30 years ago lower Manhattan was flooded that is now similar to Venice. Joe Golem is a noirish detective investigating the supernatural with his mentor Mr. Church. He also dreams of a golem in 15th century Croatia hunting witches. Contained within are 2 separate stories, the first investigating a creature stealing children, taking them into the water. In the second Joe and Mr. Church take on zombies. I can't wait to read more.

Received an advance copy from Dark Horse and Edelweiss in exchange for an honest review.

Daniel says

This review originally published in Looking For a Good Book. Rated 4.5 of 5

At some point in our future, parts of Manhattan become submerged in thirty feet of ocean water. Forty years after the disaster this area, now known as The Drowning City, has a new problem ... an unknown creature is rising from the dark waters and snatching children and taking them into the water. Joe Golem is a tough detective of the school of hard knocks who keeps his wits about him even when things are most dire. If anyone can find out who or what the creature is and rescue any children that might still be alive, it's Joe.

But Joe is haunted by unusual dreams of a medieval witch hunt in Europe - dreams that sometimes feel more like ancient memories. Joe's mentor, who guides him and assists him from the sidelines, encourages Joe not to waste time worrying about those dreams, but he seems to know more than he's letting on.

Authors Mike Mignola and Christopher Golden are both known names in the comic/graphic novel community and both are strong story-tellers which is evident here as they weave in the back story/dreams along with the current mystery that our hero is working on. The stories themselves "The Rat Catcher" and "The Sunken Dead" are both captivating stories and well written for this medium.

Joe Golem appears to be a cross between Sam Spade and Doc Savage - a tough, smart, creative man working in a very dark, noir world. It definitely appeals to the geek in me.

The art by Patric Reynolds works. It is not the best art I've seen in a graphic novel, but it captures the noir mood and we don't strain to make out what's happening on each page or in each panel. It helped to tell the story.

I knew nothing about this when I requested the book - I wasn't even aware that it was by Mignola, the creator of *Hellboy* - but I was immediately pulled into the story and given strong characters in a world I want to know more about. That makes this a winner.

Looking for a good book? The graphic novel Joe Golem: Occult Detective, Vol. 1 is a sci-fi noir mystery that really engages the reader and will have you eagerly anticipating the next volume.

I received a digital copy of this book from the publisher, through Edelweiss, in exchange for an honest review.

J says

Another fun Mignola take on pop culture mixed with traditional horror stories. A centuries old golem, resurrected and kept in a state of constant amnesia about his long, long past by a near-dead detective who keeps himself alive with biomechanical gizmos and magic. Noir meets supernatural in ways that recall Hjortsberg's "Falling Angel."

John says

Two intriguing short stories. I would revisit this drowned, macabre world in a heartbeat.

Luca Trovati says

Un detective dal passato oscuro, una Manhattan sommersa popolata da un mostro marino, un uomo che vuole riportare in vita la sua famiglia attraverso la magia nera.
Mike Mignola. Serve altro?

Anne Nerison says

Joe Golem: Occult Detective is unlike anything I've read before. It's set in the 1960s, in a world where an earthquake decades earlier has led to the sinking of Manhattan (or if it's not actively sinking, at the very least a good portion is underwater). Kids have been disappearing, snatched by a strange creature, and though Joe and his partner, Simon Church, are accustomed to taking on the supernatural, this new monster has them perplexed.

This series is a little darker than I usually go for, but I liked the story. It's a mix of the occult (obviously), with a little magic thrown in for good measure, some wayward kids, a good old fashioned mystery, and a hint of a burgeoning romance. Also, I would be remiss if I didn't mention that the art is fantastic, kind of in a 1950s-esque style. Now to wait until the next volume is out.

Sud666 says

Joe Golem is the result of a very unique vision by Mignola. Joe is a detective/PI and he is a Golem.

Raised by a priest to combat witches, something that is hardwired into his system, in "modern" times he is a more human construct. The setting is a noir version of 1960's New York. Except this New York has fallen victim to an earthquake and rising seas. Known as the Drowning City it has a curious mixture of the noir genre with dystopian styles. Very interesting.

There is an aura of mystery between Joe and his mentor which I shall not spoil. I wish Mignola had done the art. The artwork is not bad, not by a long shot, but I would have liked to see Mignola's style. But that is just

me. This is good art and it works really well within the story, so do not view it as a denigration but rather as a personal preference.

I also enjoyed Joe's dreams where he sees his past. The transposing of stories set in two completely different time periods is very well done (gothic horror vs dystopian crime noir). I am certainly interested to see more of Joe Golem. I think you will be as well.

Steve says

I received this from Edelweiss and Dark Horse Comics in exchange for an honest review.

This was pretty good, mixing a good NY noir with an occult backdrop. This volume explores Joe Golem, not-sidekick to master-PI Simon Church. Joe is now the eyes and ears of the business, and investigates some missing children and an occultic mystery.

The plotting was good, and I'm interested to see how Joe's dreams impact him. The artwork captures the noir atmosphere perfectly.

Zachary King says

Interesting blend of pulp mystery and occult horror. Definitely of a piece with the rest of the Mignolaverse. Joe Golem is a 15th century golem, animated and pursuing a career as an apprentice to a famous, presumed dead detective. He fights sea monsters and amateur necromancers. The pace of the world-building feels like the Lobster Johnson series, which probably means this series will get even better now that the first book has established the mood and tenor of the series.

Andrew says

While this is spun-off from the Joe Golem novel by the same authors, this graphic novel is an original story, set in an alternate world where New York is a flooded, drowned city. It's set in the 1960s, but has a dark, noir atmosphere to it, like a classic detective movie but with monsters. The art, by Jason Alexander, gives everything a murky feel, even above the surface, but in a deliberate, not poorly-drawn sense. If you've read the original novel, this fleshes out that world further. If you haven't, this is a great introduction to the characters and their world, without having to have read anything else beforehand.

John Shaw says

This is exactly the
P.I. Noir / Lovecraft mash up
you did not know you needed.
Until it was right before you,
perfect and incredible.

Joe is the assistant / protege
to the aged detective who protects
The Drowning City
Manhattan after a major earthquake
dropped it 30 feet below sea level.
Joe doesn't know it but
he used to be Golem. A creature
of Earth and magic
summoned to fight witches
in the dark ages,
his mentor does know it and why is he keeping it
from Joe?
Could it be connected to
the eldritch power he
has tapped into
to keep himself
alive for well beyond a century?

Joe fights against
impossible monsters to keep people
safe from what lies just beneath
reality.
