



The Infinite Horizon

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The Eisner-nominated series inspired by *The Odyssey* is finally completed and collected. The Soldier With No Name survived years of war only to be stranded halfway across the globe when the conflict ended. Getting home means going through the hell: escaping shipwrecks, beating a vicious opponent wearing a cycloptic combat armor, and resisting the siren's call of a predatory society. Contains bonus material by artist Phil Noto.

The Infinite Horizon Details

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Author : Gerry Duggan , Phil Noto (Illustrator)

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From Reader Review The Infinite Horizon for online ebook

Magila says

The abundance of negative or mundane reviews has me a little surprised. This comic was nominated for the Eisner award, and has a fair amount of critical acclaim. I think this is the case because the authors and illustrators convey a rather convincing, updated version of The Odyssey. It didn't do everything perfectly, but in the end I appreciated the adaptation and would recommend this graphic novel to those who would not be turned off by a fair amount of violence and obscene language.

I found the violent images story-enhancing, demonstrating the ravages of war and the decisions that individuals are forced to make in extreme circumstances. This was also coupled by the consequences of our actions. The language was notably intense at times, sort of reminiscent of Jarhead or other books depicting the life of soldiers to the masses.

Some seem to be miffed by the lack of further world creation. Then there were those that wished it was more anti-war or anti-Iraq. I think they miss the point. Yet others are bothered by the fact the comic is not a complete riff on The Odyssey, and instead only borrows a few major characters and plot elements. If this were an aggregation of years or comics, dozens of stories and chapters, sure. However, the book is short and sweet. It successfully conveys the whole spectrum of the human experience, love, grief, despair, desperation, hope, failure, triumph.

I'm hard pressed to find significant fault. For me, I don't need so much strong language. I find its inclusion more of a cop-out than enhancing and creative personally, so that is my only ding. Could have been deeper. Could have been longer. Could have done more of the Odyssey. But what we have is very good.

Well worth the read.

R. Michael Litchfield says

So I was over halfway through, kind of enjoying the apocalyptic collapse of the world graphic novel before I realized this was the Odyssey in modern dress. Good example of classic lit in graphic format.

Chad says

Picked this one up merely because the cover looked interesting. When I got it home from the library, I read the back and noticed it was a retelling of the Odyssey. "Well, crap. That's original," I thought. To my surprise, I really enjoyed it. The protagonist is coming home from the Middle East and his wife is trying to take care of their property at home (in somewhat ravaged American society). The property sits on a watershed that supplies many other families, so she is continuously under siege from those families since, in this alternate America, clean water is a rare commodity. Anyway, a lot of the adaptations of the various characters, such as Scylla and Charabdis are unique and not all the sort of hit-you-over-the-head comic book

allusions I expected them to be. The art doesn't really stand out here, but it definitely serves the story well. If you like graphic novels at all, this one comes recommended.

III D says

This mediocre narrative takes place in an odd apocalyptic-esque Post-Iraq Invasion Era world that has spiraled into a horribly unstable and chaotic World War III. A mangled, misunderstood, and weirdly abbreviated take on Homer's the Odyssey acts as an underlay. However, this bastardized take on the Odyssey is more of a perverted pastiche than anything (despite no doubt the authors original intent) with bits and pieces of the Odyssey ripped, cut, manipulated, and eventually deplorably pasted as needs be to fit into the crappy author's story. Strangely enough, much to the chagrin of the mind-numbing author's sensibilities, *The Infinite Horizon*, has probably more in common with Xenophon's *Anabasis*. Where the 1970's cult classic, *The Warriors*, melds the *Anabasis* into something new, fresh and exciting for the next generation- Gerry Duggen's, *The Infinite Horizon*, tries to make something new out of one of the oldest and most essential narratives of the Ancient Western Canon but fails, miserably I might add. Instead, Duggan, resorts to a sick, sycophantic post-modern molestation of Homer's brilliant *Odysseus*; ripping out what he likes and pasting poorly understood ideas and characters into his story as he sees fit, without understanding what the Homer's story was really all about.

Which is a real shame because the story starts out quite poignantly with a some very powerfully profound statements and musings upon the baseness and meaninglessness of war. We really feel the pain and horror of war through the unnamed soldier's eyes as he is forced to resort to extreme stoicism in order to deal with the horror and destruction that has become his life. Indeed, the commentary continues as images of death and destruction are contrasted with perverted images of those who have profited from the disgusting Military Industrial Complex- as completely separate and unfeeling of the nastiness of war. This first chapter proves to be a fantastically profound graphic novel illustration of George Orwell's quote that, "War against a foreign country only happens when the moneyed classes think they are going to profit from it."

Unfortunately, the rest of the graphic novel pales in comparison to the extremely well done first chapter. While there are some instances that are deeply horrifying, profound and just damn well done- the drowning prisoners of the commandeered ship, for instance- the rest of the story just becomes further and further convoluted as the story goes on because the context of this world is not really explained. Example: Although evidently there is a war going on betwixt China and the U.S.A. nothing is really explained how this is affecting anything. We don't see any Chinese soldiers storming American ground or anywhere the story even though they began the war with a an assault on American space satellites. Nor do we see or have any illustration or exposition on how the world powers (which we have no idea how they are aligned) are fighting amongst each other or how this is affecting the world population as a whole. Even when the unnamed soldier (who is supposed to be some laconic, post-modern take on *Odysseus*) arrives in Africa later in the story, we see an Africa that looks no different from the shit-hole it is today- armed gangs ruling the land with arbitrary power. But, there is supposed to be some world war going on! How has this affected Africa? Why isn't it anything different in this WWII era? Wouldn't the Africans be allied with China perhaps?

As the shoddily construed story continues the hero is led along with his party to an Ark-like craft through a clarion call on the radio- that is supposed to be, as I can only guess, a reference to the Sirens of the *Odysseus*. Unlike in the *Odysseus* where *Odysseus* plugs his ears and straps himself to the mast to hear and experience the sweetly evil call of the Sirens to death- the unnamed soldier and his ertwhile allies, who for some

unexplained reason are immune to these seductions, partake is a covert takeover of the ship assassinating all the soldiers and sirens on it. This is a perfect example of why this graphic novel is so shitty. This post-modern take on the Siren adventure in the Odysseus is poorly replicated and modified to this story. Even the three sisters that are supposed to represent these Sirens are evidently evil, the reasoning as why is poorly presented and left annoyingly vague. The Sirens of the Homer's story want all sailors to wreck their boats upon the rock- these modern day equivalents are supposedly taking advantage of their workers through some mind-control that is unexplained, un-exposed, and therefore unemotionally uninvolved.

This is really the epitome of why this story is so cruddy because any reference to or use of characters and events from the Odysseus don't really make any sense. They feel like the author read the Wikipedia article on the Odysseus and tried to take various aspects of these iconic characters and events and use them as nothing more than generic prototypes from which to manipulate for the needs of his narrative. Instead of drawing artistic ties between their presence in the Odysseus and their reinterpretation in The Infinite Horizon- they just become churlish cut and paste jobs.

Anyways, as the story continues, the unnamed soldier's buddy gets iced in the hostile takeover- and he makes it back home on the ship to see his family. Through a poorly paced and even more poorly written sequence of events the unnamed soldier makes it back to his family- kills the usurpers and goes back to his boring 'ole life. Even though a world-war is raging and, as the author explained earlier, America is under marshall law- the story ends on a way too idyllic note that seems completely and utterly out of place in an apocalyptic, WWII world.

What could have been a timely and fantastic retelling of the story of Odysseus a Post-9/11 era is instead a convoluted post-modern pastiche that perverts the narrative that underlays it. Other recent graphic novels have attempted to take on fictionalized accounts of this era's current conflict and have failed as well. Johnny Jihad was puerile- trying too hard to be deep and edgy. Aaron and Ahmed was horribly convoluted and poorly researched.

So where does The Infinite Horizon belong in this genre of graphic novels? Unfortunately The Infinite Horizon, like Johnny Jihad and Aaron and Ahmed falls into the same trap of trying too hard to be something great but lacks the focus and erudition to make such a narrative engaging and emotionally involving. This graphic novel is a real shame because as evidenced by the particularly well done first chapter, clearly there is a lot of raw talent. But, what makes it fail is that this talent and the vision it is trying to realize is horribly unfocused. Unable to bring this vast, sweeping experience into the reader's vision is highly disappointing. In a world that seems too much like ours- where all too often it really seems to be spinning toward hell- this could have been something really powerful that could have tugged at our heartstrings and laid bare those existential fears we all have. Instead we are thrown into a world where everything is going to hell- but there doesn't seem to be much to show about it.

Evidently the work was nominated for an Eisner but, failed to win the award. Makes sense.

Garrett says

It's the Odyssey. Duggan and Noto (whose art is always worth a look) have made the Odyssey into a war comic that, like We Stand on Guard & Give Me Liberty is based on a future you could kind of see happening. It's a good story and hard, but worth it.

Jason Fryer says

Great art and a really cool modern interpretation of the Odyssey. I wish it were longer but that can be said of all great books and pieces of art.

Trike says

This is... okay, I guess.

It's yet another adaptation of The Odyssey by Homer, so, you know, yaaawwn. I have read comic book versions of The Odyssey done as comedy, with anthropomorphic talking animals, faithful adaptations, superhero versions... there's even one currently being published called ODY-C, which is "The Odyssey - in Spaaace!" and lord is it a terrible waste of time and trees.

I get it, you guys. You read Homer's epic in high school and it blew you away. You were already primed to love it because A) you like superhero comics and B) you're teenage boys. Plus it's in the public domain, being thousands of years old.

Stop it.

Find something else to adapt. You can't bring anything new to the story. It's been retold every which way it can be. There are other epics. Give those a try. Maybe The Edda. But don't set it in Alaska. That would be OBVIOUS. Push through the idea and find the next level.

PvOberstein says

Fairly uninteresting re-imagining of The Odyssey into a near-future setting where an unnamed soldier has to make it back home from Syria to the Catskill Mountains. There're a few interesting bits - the Siren song of a utopian society, for example - but it really doesn't make much of the ideas of Homer. It jumps around between trying to be a serious explanation of PTSD and a by-the-book triumph of the willpower of an American soldier. Penelope is re-imagined as having to fend off various thugs looking to control the post-apocalyptic water supply, which is an interesting premise, but they really do nothing with it. Worth it for the opening few pages at the Syrian airport, but not much else.

Sharon says

This graphic novel, based on The Odyssey, has a lot going for it: good art, pre-made characters, and a great near-future adaptation. I'm a little surprised to see the GoodReads rating so low. Yes, it skips big parts of the Odyssey, but unless the series was much longer that would have to happen. I personally liked the art. Also, several reviewers seemed confused about who was at war... which makes sense, since SO WERE THE CHARACTERS. The had lost touch and had no idea what was happening in the world.

Two things didn't work so well for me: the story that was happening at home wasn't clear, and characters become confusing when nearly every woman in the story has the same red hair.

I definitely enjoyed this book for what it was, not what I expected it to be.

Brian Dickerson says

BCDER: 87

Wow! This book set on my shelf for years until I finally picked it up by chance and couldn't put it back down. I love Phil Noto's art style. The quick sketchy lines with splotchy coloring and halftones for shadowing is something I really like but it may not be for everyone. Some people may need their eyes to have pupils, but I'm fine with all of Noto's stylistic choices.

The story by Duggan was a nice modernized version of *The Odyssey*. My only quibble is the secondary characters like the Russian armor suited cyclops and the sisters on the oil rig are so interesting I'd love for the book to have been longer and delve more into their back stories and origins.

Very close to five star territory. I highly recommend for any comic reader!

C. Hall says

I so very much wanted to like *The Infinite Horizon*: Duggan and Noto are both gifted comics creators, and the notion of reinterpreting Homer's *Odyssey* for the post-Iraq War era is a brilliant one. Alas, I found the execution of said notion mostly unrewarding.

Noto's art, always somewhat loose (and usually more expressive for it), seems rushed in this instance. The backgrounds are scant, indistinct, and in some instances, just plain poorly drawn, while the figures are often stiff and flat. The writing is at times almost blasé: the characters have few distinguishing personality quirks or identifying characteristics. Perhaps most disappointing, *The Infinite Horizon*'s reinterpretation of Homer's Cyclops comes off as having been wrested from some generic superhero epic, a manifestation conceptually ill-suited to this starkly realistic tale of one soldier's long, arduous attempt to leave war behind.

It's not awful; the series collected in this volume was Eisner-nominated, after all. Some scenes are quite effective, and the casual brutality of life in a warzone isn't sugarcoated, which gives the work a certain sense of authenticity. You might enjoy it more than I did (obviously, these things are almost entirely subjective). This reviewer, however, found *The Infinite Horizon* to be, on the whole, both uninspired and uninspiring. Given that this book is based on one of the most inspiring works of literature in human history, well...that's a rather profound disappointment.

k.wing says

One of the best retellings of *The Odyssey* I've ever read. Highly recommend. Deep and enveloping.

Wesley V says

4.5, a great take on The Odyssey

Relstuart says

A great idea crammed into a book that was way to short for the story they were trying to reimagine. Noto's art was not as polished as I am used to seeing it.

Mike Brooks says

Can't say that I cared for this. The adaptive narrative is undercooked, the world traversed but underexplored, the art stylized but not substantive. In the preface, which I read last, the writer paints this as something of a side project, a lark that they screwed around and didn't finish for several years. They may as well have left it that way for all the care that seems to have been taken in bringing it to market. Lazy, boring, juvenile; your time would be better spent doing almost anything else.
