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Hollow Heart #1 Review: Messed Up

Posted on February 18, 2021 | by Hannibal Tabu | Comments

Hollow Heart #1

6.5/10

A tale of tenderness in the midst of agony, this doomed description of two people struggling with their circumstances might be right to bring you down, if you're so inclined.

Hollow Heart #1 is messed up, y'all. Like one of those deeply messed up things you read on Twitter that is unmistakably, irredeemably wrong ... but also completely out of your control, like [the death of Aiyana Stanley Jones](#) or the Snyder Cut. There's a deep poignancy to the events here, but at what cost, indeed?

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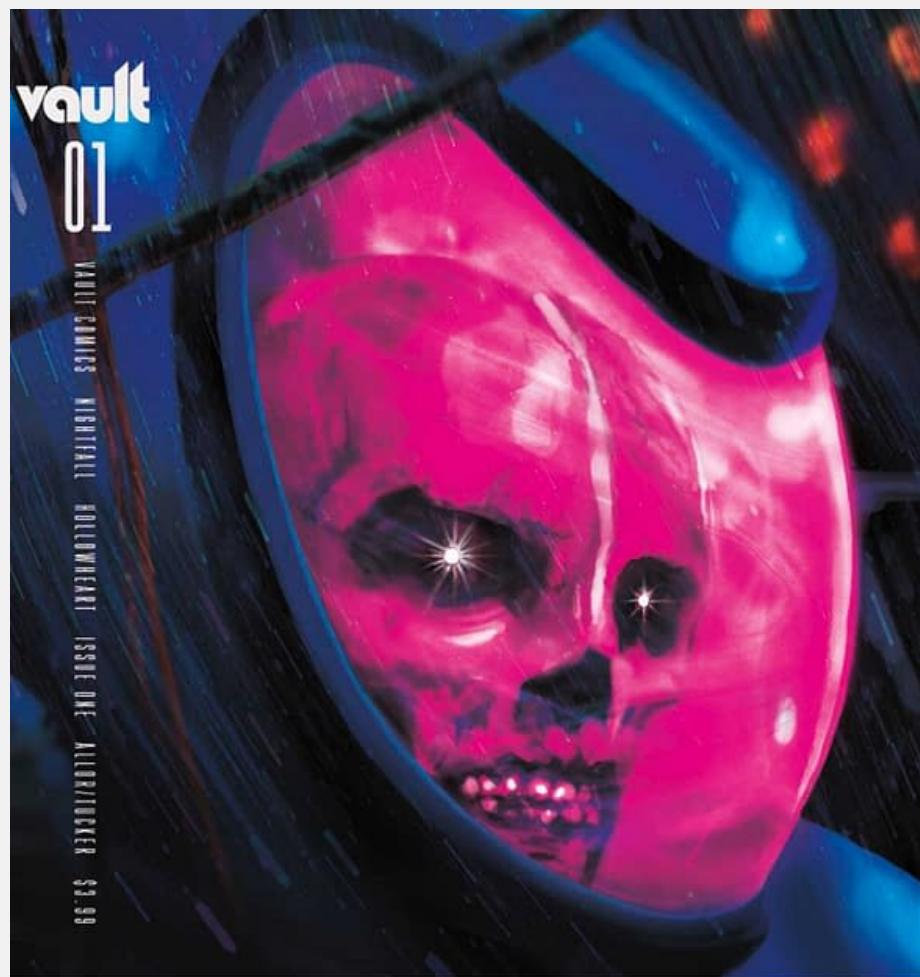
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ALLOR TUCKER

**HOLLOW
HEART**

Hollow Heart #1 Cover. Credit: Vault Comics

There's a sentient being called "El" because those are the letters on the front of the exoskeleton, as the technical designation is "subject EL 15-C." Once, El was a human being. Now, El is a sack of loose organs in a gigantic metal suit being kept alive by some weird paramilitary force in a creepy science-fiction base. From a certain point of view, El is trying to escape and wants out of this horror show, surrounded by cruel people and horrible conditions. Then, El meets Mateo.

Mateo is a mechanic assigned to fix damage to El's exoskeleton. Like most of the

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people working on the Death Star (probably), Mateo is just a guy doing his job. Mateo shows kindness to EL ... and things start to get depressing.

Writer Paul Allor has delivered a script that ably captures this situation's pain and grimness, with a faceless bureaucracy determined to achieve its goals no matter the cost. Mateo is conflicted when he recognizes what's going on at this horrible place and struggles with what his morals tell him to do in the face of what his actual job is. The art is 100% in the hands of Paul Tucker, and he has a great deftness at visual storytelling, even if the details are just "pretty good."

If you're up for tragic tales like *Handmaid's Tale*, well, this might work for you. If the horror of feeling like we were still trapped in 2020 is too much for you ... maybe not.

RATING: MEH.

[Hollow Heart #1](#)

By Paul Allor, Paul Tucker

EL used to be human. Now he's a jumble of organs in a bio-suit. EL is also in tremendous pain and has been for a very long time. Hope arrives in the form of Mateo, a mechanic brought in to work on EL's suit. Mateo sees LK in a way no one ever has. And what's more: Mateo offers EL an escape. Hollow Heart reunites Tet creators Paul Allor and Paul Tucker for a queer monster love story about the choices we make between giving our loved one what they want and what we think they need.

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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.

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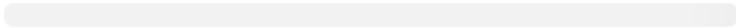
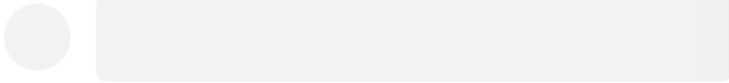
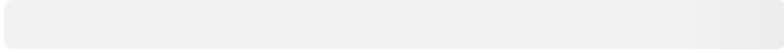
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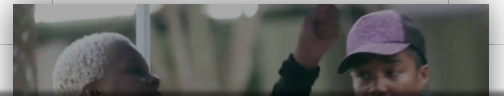
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