

Tim Seeley casts great spells of emergence with the voices he brings forth, the voices of a legion. His Wausau is not a mystic entity, like Scott Snyder's Gotham or Kim Newman's Rome, nor a battleground of cosmic forces, like Stephen King's Derry or H.P. Lovecraft's Arkham. Rather, Wausau, Wisconsin, is just a place where certain people happen to live. The nature of Wausau proceeds not from some ultimate essence or intelligence, but from the actions and relationships of those who live there. The plot of Revival unfolds as events collide with those relationships, which shape the events and their meaning in return. This book tells the story of Dana Cypress, her father and sister and son, of Ibrahim Ramin, of May Tao, of Jeanne Gorski and Anders Hine and Lester Majak. The revival of the dead is the pretext that sets the plot in motion, but the story belongs to the people in it. In Revival #35 the machinations of bitter and tragic Edmund Holt lead to a confrontation between the Wausau police, led by Dana's father, Sheriff Cypress, and the staff of The Farm, a Federal detention facility for "revivers," as the resurrected dead of Wausau are called. In this confrontation arguments erupt over not just the nature of community and authority, but the nature of love and faith and duty and trust. Seeley's roots rest firmly in the horror genre, a tradition that emphasizes character and atmosphere and incident over plot. His plots are not simplistic, far from it; they are often masterpieces of intricacy. But they do move slowly and in complex patterns, making his work sometimes more rewarding to read in trade editions than in monthly installments. Here, however, the eruption of anger and physical violence at The Farm, perhaps not by accident named for the CIA training facility in Virginia, allows several important plot threads to coalesce. Dana learns that Ibrahim, her colleague and newly become her lover, has secrets that may bode ill for her and her family. The importance of Jesse Blackdeer, the hideously burned Native American reviver, becomes plain, as does the extent of the conspiracy that has involved his mysterious missions away from The Farm. While all of this transpires, Em Cypress and May Tao discuss the fate of Em's unborn and possibly soulless child, and Jeanne Gorski and her fellow believers prepare a shocking and powerfully symbolic demonstration of religious moralism and determination. Mike Norton draws the people of Wausau as largely oval forms amidst settings of broken curves and straight lines, giving the panels a comforting look reminiscent of old photographs and newspaper stills. His images capture one of the most important visual facts of rural America, the pervasive presence of nature and its myriad interactions with objects of human design. By alternating relatively dark backgrounds with relatively bright characters, colorist Mark Englert subtly emphasizes Seeley's basic approach by ensuring that the emphasis always rests squarely on the human beings who create and propel the story. The post Revival #25 appeared first on Weekly Comic Book Review.

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