

While Wolverine is, without a doubt, the highest profile Canadian superhero in the world, it's interesting to note that he really doesn't have that many ties to Canada as we know it. His childhood was spent in a Canada of a different era and his time there as an adult was locked off from the rest of the country by Weapon X and Department H. So, while Colossus was an important representation of a heroic Soviet and Banshee proved fairly inexorable from his Irish heritage, Chris Claremont's Wolverine found success outside of his homeland. In Wolverine volumes one and two, the world's most popular mutant revealed his history in Japan and Madripoor, leading two entirely different lives, as a man striving for honor and an essential part of the underworld, respectively. It is this aspect that writer Marguerite Bennett chooses to consider in her installment of *The Logan Legacy*. Like Spider-Man and Venom or Green Lantern and Sinestro, Chris Claremont understood the power of a shadow archetype and Wolverine had many. In fact, it's odd to think that one month after we looked at Sabretooth's response to Logan's death we're considering another anti-Wolverine in the form of Lady Deathstrike. Deathstrike's history is a slightly confusing one and, wisely, Bennett doesn't spend too much time dwelling on it. There's no lengthy reminiscing about Yuriko's origins or her history with Wolverine, in fact, it doesn't seem to matter much to her who Logan was really. For the once and future Lady Deathstrike, Wolverine wasn't so much a person, James 'Logan' Howlett, as he was a legend and a slight against her family. So now that he's gone, the balance between focusing on Logan and Yuriko is a delicate one. Of course, Lady Deathstrike has never really escaped Wolverine's shadow as a character and she's very conscious of this fact, but Bennett frames that less as a quality of Logan's than the lot Yuriko's father left her. Though he is never even mentioned, the elder Oyama feels very present in Yuriko's musing on legacy. Speaking of which, that is a very crucial part of the issue. Marguerite Bennett, while a very talented storyteller, often distinguishes herself through the poetic and/or nearly essay-like quality of her writing and this is no exception. While Yuriko's voice feels slightly unnatural at times - perhaps an attempt to reflect her Japanese heritage but, if so, not one that seems familiar to me - it's fascinating to hear her lecture about the roles we play after our deaths. As for the plot, it's a fairly generic Japanese X-Men tale: a showdown with the Yakuza, a connection to Clan Yashida, a human trafficking operation to help display character. What helps it survive is the solid pacing and a cool bit of sci-fi weirdness Bennett seems to have invented. Living tattoos are not a new concept for comics, but artist Juan Doe gives a particularly memorable rendering and Bennett's characterization of the Irezumi as both a foil for the self-indeterminate Deathstrike and a sort of living philosophy, sticks out as a particularly cool take on the concept. Juan Doe's contributions hardly end with the Irezumi. Like the Sabretooth issue before it, *The Logan Legacy #4* is distinguished by its striking visuals. Doe's sharp, scratchy style suits the long, blade-like appearance of Lady Deathstrike. Oftentimes, Doe's compositions form a gestalt, the panel is stronger as a whole than in its individual parts, even its most eye-catching ones. If you're looking for accurate anatomy, you're in the wrong place; I seriously doubt it was ever a consideration of Doe's. Close inspection will often reveal peculiarities in Doe's work, but if you allow your eyes to wander the image or try to take it all in, it's quite stunning. That said, there are places where even that attitude falls short of the mark. The chins in this issue are absolutely Leno-esque and cheek bones occasionally seem to stage coups for control of the face. One notable panel of the deceased depicts him with a tiny skull, an even smaller face, and enough wrinkles that you could think it a shrunken head. This is obviously an extreme instance, but it does represent problems that are present throughout the issue. A huge part of the issue's success is the coloring, which somehow manages to be loud as a rock concert without giving up

a restrained noir-ish quality, thanks to effective use of ink and shadows. Purple is a color you don't often see in large amounts, but Doe lets it run like blood. He also pays similar attention to the more subdued tones, painting gorgeous gradients of color across a graveyard in one impressive panel. Combined with some extreme angles, the color and the intensity of Doe's lines give the entire story a whiff of the Hong Kong action aesthetic. Perhaps because I'm, admittedly, not a particularly well-trained art critic, I often talk about feelings that art seems to be trying to elicit, but in this case it seems that Doe really is aiming to make an appeal to tone and emotion. One of my favorite pages comes near the end of the book and simply features Yuriko walking through Tokyo. It almost seems to be reaching out for the look of a Japanese ink painting and it reveals the strength and the weakness of Doe's work. This issue really benefits from the fearless way that Doe bucks the traditions of the day, but I'd be interested to see him actually get a little more abstract. The post *Death of Wolverine: The Logan Legacy #4 – Review* appeared first on *Weekly Comic Book Review*.

Read more: <http://weeklycomicbookreview.com/2014/11/19/death-wolverine-logan-legacy-4-review/>