



# The Manara Library, Vol. 1: Indian Summer and Other Stories

*Milo Manara , Hugo Pratt*

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Italian comics legend Milo Manara brings a comprehensive collection of his catalog to the United States! The first of nine volumes, The Manara Library Volume one collects two of Manara's seminal works in a magnificently appointed, deluxe hardcover edition. The sweeping epic Indian Summer, a collaboration with celebrated creator Hugo Pratt, is collected here along with Manara's The Paper Man, both translated by Euro comics expert Kim Thompson.

\* Foreword by Frank Miller. Collaboration with Corto Maltese creator Hugo Pratt. First comprehensive North American hardcover collection of Manara's work.

## The Manara Library, Vol. 1: Indian Summer and Other Stories Details

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## From Reader Review The Manara Library, Vol. 1: Indian Summer and Other Stories for online ebook

### Stef says

I read this for the art, for sure, as I did with other stories in the Manara Library collection, but this is the only one I could say I read in full -- the others were too trippy/meandering/surreal for me, and it was becoming more and more obvious that a Manara-drawn story simply couldn't exist without heaps of rape a/o incest made more disturbing as how normal all the characters found it. But the art is unquestionably beautiful, sexy, and thoughtful.

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### George K. says

Βαθμολογία: 9/10

Ο συγκεκριμένος τμήμος αποτελεί την πρώτη μου επαφή με το έργο του Milo Manara, για τον οποίο έχω ακούσει αμφιλεγόμενες κριτικές – σίωπας χι τόσο για την ποιότητα των σχεδίων του, όσο για το έδος των έργων του. Ο τμήμος αυτός περιχει δυο ιστορίες, με τους τίτλους «Indian Summer» και «The Paper Man». Το σενάριο της πρώτης και μεγαλύτερης ιστορίας το υπογράφει ο φοβερός και τρομερός Hugo Pratt (σε σχέδιο Milo Manara, φυσικά), ενν η δεύτερη ιστορία είναι απη κηθε ποψη αποκλειστική δημιουργία του Milo Manara.

Λοιπόν, χωρής περιστροφής, ήχω να δηλώσω ήκρως ικανοποιημένος απη αυτό που μιλίς διβασα. Η πρώτη ιστορία, με τον τίτλο «Indian Summer», που είναι και με διαφορά η μεγαλύτερη σε μήγεθος και η πιο χορταστική, είναι μια ήκρως ενδιαφέρουσα, σκληρή και ωμή περιπέτεια, που φέρνει στο φως μερικές απη τις σκοτεινές πλευρές των αποικιακών κοινοτήτων στη Βρεία Αμερική. ήχουμε βιασμούς, αιματοχυσίες, σκηνάλα, γενικά μια συλλογή απη ανθρωπινα αμαρτήματα. Το σχέδιο είναι εξαιρετικό, ζωντανό, δυναμικό, ήντονο, με γραφική αναπαράσταση της βίας και των συνθηκών εκένης της εποχής. ήσον αφορη τη δεύτερη ιστορία, με τον τίτλο «The Paper Man», είναι ήσως λιγότερο ωμή, αλλά εξήσου δυνατή και ενδιαφέρουσα. Και, θα ήρησθετα, σε ορισμένα σημεία ακήμα και κωμική, αν και το τίλος είναι αρκετή λυπητερό. Το σχέδιο, φυσικά, παραμύνει πολύ καλά και ζωντανό, χήρμα οφθαλμών. Επήσης, δεν μπορη παρη να δηλώσω μαγεμένος απη τα χήματα και στις δυο ιστορίες.

Ξδέψα σχεδών τριήντα ευρη για να αποκτήσω τον πανήμορφο και πολύ δυνατή αυτό τήμο της Dark Horse, ήμωσ νιήθω υπηρ του δόντος αποζημιωμένος απη τις ιστορίες και το σχέδιο. Σήγουρα το ήφος και το στιλ των ιστοριών δεν είναι για ήλα τα γήστα, μιας και υπηρχουν διήφορες «βρωμίες», ήμωσ προσωπική ξετρελήθηκα. Και οι ιστορίες μου ήρεσαν και με συγκλήνισαν με τον ήναν η τον ήλλο τρηπο, αλλά και το σχέδιο μου φήνηκε τρομερό και του γήστου μου. Οπήτε, τα ήντε αστερήκια είναι επιβεβλήμένα.

Υ.Γ. Οι δυο ιστορίες του τήμου ήχουν κυκλοφορησει και στα ελληνική, με τους τίτλους «Ινδινικο Καλοκαήρι» και «Ο χήρτινος ήνθρωπος», απη Βαβήλ και Παρη ήντε αντήστοιχα, αλλά μιλήμε για

εκδ?σεις του 1990, που ?χουν εξαντληθε? προ πολλο?.

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## May says

Warning! This graphic novel is not for everyone, especially those under the age of 18! Yes, there is violence (name one superhero comic book that doesn't contain a senseless act of killing or maiming) but what will turn off most readers is the author's incessant depiction of rape, incest and sexual exploitation of women in "Indian Summer", the first story in the volume. This is not the "gentile" Colonial period where Indians were noble and overly helpful to the Puritan settlers. I think some readers forgot to read the introduction where it was explained that the frontier life was much more rough and tumble and that the natives were going to be depicted as more petty, revengeful and violent than depicted (in other words, more multidimensional!). Essentially, don't expect a romantic view of the Frontier experience.

I admit that I was a little shocked to read the whole sordid back story of the Lewis family but rather than be overly disgusted, I find myself wanting to root for this family to survive the Indian attack on the fort. Even though the Lewis women are labeled whores, temptresses, and social outcasts, never once did I think of them as simply victims. The best word to describe them is survivor. There is a very subtle reference to the lack of basic human rights that women had in this period (e.g. mention of a mother in Salem who kills her daughter to save her from the horrible fate of drudgery that would be expected from her) that made me think that the author could have done a much better job of exploring. However, by overly sexualizing some of the more horrible elements in the story (e.g. the rape), the author turns the focus on the salacious storyline and how much he loves to draw the female form (e.g. very sexual but not as bad as one would expect in *The Grimm Fairy Tales* graphic novel series!).

As for the second story in the volume, "The Paper Man" was unmemorable although possibly more to the liking of some, especially if you are one that likes huge bar fights involving everyone and a rush to save people from the onslaught of the US Cavalry.

Still I would rate this book a low 3 out 5. It was better than okay and made me want to check out Manara's other works.

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## Debbie says

My first foray into the Manara Library, this was a rather gratuitously sexy story of early white settler life on the North American continent. The plot was okay and the illustration was also okay. Not sure I really need to see more.

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## Anzu The Great Destroyer says

Wow, now that was rather... disturbing. I fell for the pretty cover and thought this will be something entirely different. I'm sad to say I couldn't even finish it. This book is not for me. If you can handle nudity, rape, incest and so on, you can go ahead and give it a try. If you thought, it will be a nice story filled with, I don't know, love and butterflies then I suggest you look the other way.

It's clearly not my cup of tea.

## Jason says

Manara's art is so gorgeous-such fine lines, and delicate details. There are two stories in this volume, Indian Summer and the Paper Man. The first was very interesting and I was surprised to discover it was based on a true story from early American history. The second one, taking place in the American west (mid-19th century?), was shorter but captured my attention and my emotion more. A lot less sexual/sensual content than usual from Manara, but still more than the material really demanded. I would expect nothing less from the man.

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## Christine says

These two stories were weird. ...and graphic. But mostly weird and the first was a bit nauseating to read. If I'd known beforehand they were both set in pioneer times and were as graphic as they are, I would not have requested to read it via NetGalley. So clearly I am not the target audience.

If you like mature graphic novels that deal with adult issues and don't mind a few naked women along the way, then you'll probably like this. But like I said, it wasn't for me.

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## Travis says

Recently I've been trying to work through books that I've placed suspended holds on, or added to a list of interesting things, or things I want to read. I found this one on such a list, but I'm not quite sure how it got there; I have a vague recollection of seeing it recommended somewhere online, perhaps a blog I read or stumbled upon. Like other (older) European comics I've read, it has beautiful artwork and an unfortunate tendency towards overly sexualized and objectified female characters. This is the only volume in this collection in my library system, but having read this one I feel no need to track down others.

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## Carl Waluconis says

Hugo Pratt and Milo Manara have earned gigantic stature in international graphic novels, and their collaboration for these two stories contains some of their most astounding work. The art is phenomenal and story-telling riveting. Manara always puts us in a world of beautiful people. However, the frontier does become a James Fenimore Cooper frontier, with all its historical inaccuracies and accuracies. On top of that, this is an X-rated James Fenimore Cooper. There seems to be an implication in the stories that the untamed wilderness led to a sort of unfettered immorality. Grant that this could be a fictional projection by the authors, then you can sit back and enjoy the wild, beautiful, disturbing ride.

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## cEe beE says

\*Warning\* Despite the romantic looking cover, this book is meant for Mature readers only.

This is my first Manara graphic novel. His artwork is beautiful, and I wish the panels were bigger because there was so much detail.

The first story Indian Summer is set during the American colonial period. It deals with rape, revenge, corruption, incest, and savage battles. While the subject matter is very unpleasant, I was not offended by it. And as a woman, I did not find it exploitative at all. It is truthful and truth can be very disturbing and ugly. The second story, Paper Man is much shorter and is about a cowboy in love with an Indian woman.

If you love gorgeous art, erotica, and are not put off by disturbing and offensive subject material, then this book is for you.

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### **EisNinE says**

Dark Horse has been one of the premier publishers of classic comic reprints for some time now, along with Fantagraphics and relative newcomer IDW. When it comes to English translations of European classics, it's only competition is Humanoids, the Swiss/French publisher who ended a long drought by releasing English versions of titles from their huge back catalogue, reminding North American comic readers why Moebius is so respected by the rest of the world. The Manara Library does the same task for the Italian comics master, collecting all his major works in a deluxe hardcover format. At the same time, all of his classic erotica has been gathered in a series sharing an identical design, but with the white portions of the dustjackets substituted for black. The first volume features 'Indian Summer', a classic work written by Hugo Pratt that is a high water mark for both Manara and European comics in general.

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### **Matthew Hunter says**

Milo Manara loves the female form, and arousal of said form. "Mmmmm... Come, little draft, stroke your best friend." That's Phyllis in *Indian Summer*, standing with panties around her ankles and skirt lifted high, allowing the breeze to caress her. Even during the most heroic scene in the story, Manara draws in a double nip slip as Phyllis runs through a vicious battle to grab extra gun powder.

If it weren't done masterfully by Manara, I'd label the erotic imagery as gratuitous. Manara creates erotic works of art, using his sizable artistic talents to titillate imaginations. Beautiful women having or hinting at sex with family members, captors, enemies, natural phenomena - that's Manara's bit. Unrepentantly, he objectifies women. Manara illustrates the impact of the "male gaze" better than anyone else I've encountered.

Read (and gaze) with caution.

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### **Sarah says**

Beautiful artwork! Definitely a melodrama, the first story made more sense than the 2nd story. Also definitely not the most feminist of stories, but traditional melodrama never is...

TW: There are several rape plotlines, btw, for those who wish to avoid.

Also, these are both complete stories, even though this is "Vol. 1," it seems that it's Vol. 1 of a collection of

Manara and Pratt's individual stories. The 2 stories don't connect, and they seem to conclude in this volume.

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## Seth T. says

**Trigger warning:** rape, incest, etc. Also, spoilers.

Colour me surprised. And caught off-guard. And maybe a bit ripped-off. Or at least colour me that way three weeks ago when volume one of *The Manara Library* arrived. I gave myself a cooling-off period before sitting down to untangle exactly what I thought of this initial collection of Milo Manara's work. But before I get to solving the Manaran knot, here's how things went down.

A few days before release, I saw Dark Horse had posted a note on Twitter cheering the book's advent. Curious, I followed the link provided and arrived at their publisher's destination page for the series. It looked pretty good. The cover was gorgeous and featured a frontier-era couple engaged in some aesthetically pleasing romance. The promotional blurbs were promising: Milo Manara, Italian Comics Legend; comprehensive collection; seminal works; sweeping epic; first comprehensive North American hardcover collection of Manara's work! Not bad. There was an eight-page preview featuring a hectic struggle between some cabin-bound settlers and a tribal raiding party fraught with some pretty impressive artwork. I was intrigued. And then, what sold me. A quote from Frank Miller: "In the hand of Milo Manara, the Old West is a generous, delicious feast for the eyes." Wow, that sounded exciting. Even though Miller doesn't usually impress me or guide my consumer decisions, I was really in the mood for exactly what his words described. I'm not a deep fan of the Western, but I thought it might be a nice opportunity to broaden the scope of my collection a bit further. So I pre-ordered the book.

When it arrived a few days later, I was excited. I squirreled away for an early lunch, holed up in a local coffee joint, and cracked open the book for some good Western excitement. I skimmed the two introductions *very* quickly because who reads an intro to a comic before they read the actual book? Okay, sometimes I do. But not so much this time. I did, however, glance some comparisons to Sergio Leone in terms of reimaging the American frontier. I was primed.

Then the first story of the book, "Indian Summer," begins with a rape. A sexy rape.

*[This is about three pages in or so. The scan is small so you can't see the manifest glee on the two men's faces. The scene ends with the woman bent over, presenting vagina to the reader. Joy.]*

It's not that I couldn't imagine a great story or work coming out of such a beginning, but it was a bit surprising. I supposed that despite the intentional sensuality of the scene and its dénouement (that thrilling, romantic cover I liked so much is an in-book scene that takes place on the heels of the woman's rape), this could turn into some kind of grander commentary a la *The Searchers*. I continued and there was a lot of nudity, sexual posing, and scenes composed from deep within the territory of the male gaze. The raw ardor and passion of much of what comprises "Indian Summer" took me wholly off-guard. And then of course there're the multiple instances of rape and tiers of incest and their titillating depictions. I turned the book over

to look at the publisher's recommended shelving tags. Instead of a Western, like I thought I was purchasing, I had apparently procured a book for my new shelf of Historical Fiction | Erotica. And then my eye strayed down to the price tag. \$59.99. Even though I had received a fat pre-order discount, I almost died from sticker shock.

I felt abused. Abused by press and packaging. The publisher description little matched what I was reading. I thought I was getting *Deerslayer* and *Last of the Mohicans* but found I had been given Cinemax. And that coloured the rest of my reading. Which is why I needed a cooling-off period. I was too mad to write sensibly about the collection. So here we all are.

*The Manara Library: Volume One* contains two stories, "Indian Summer" and "The Paper Man." Of the two, "The Paper Man" is unquestionably the better story in nearly every respect. Only in its art does "Indian Summer" show itself superior. "The Paper Man" is a silly, throwaway story following a romance through an absurd and quirky version of the environs surrounding Fort Laramie, Wyoming. It was an amusing romp featuring off-the-wall characters, impossible situations, and a good ol' barroom brawl. It wasn't anything special nor was it worth half of sixty dollars, but its charms are inoffensive and I could almost see myself reading the story maybe once more before I die of old age in a spacious undersea palace fifty years from now.

"Indian Summer," the introductory tale, is where things get murky. After my smouldering subsided, I gave the story a second chance. It fared better on a second read, though honestly, not by much. The art, as mentioned, is impressive. Manara has a fantastic sense of staging (whether you appreciate his subject-matter or not). Whether a quiet scene with a single man posed against a natural backdrop or thirty combatants racing toward and doling out death, Manara shows mastery over his composition. His sense of musculature is robust and his characters exhibit a liveliness that lends to his credibility as an "Italian comics legend." The cover itself, a blow-up of a small interior panel, demonstrates well the lyricism of his work. I found myself thoroughly impressed—and then I wished that he had spent his abundant talent on more worthy tales. "Indian Summer" is a problematic work on several levels.

It's never super evident how much of today's critical eye one should bring to the evaluation of works from another era. Granted, "Indian Summer" was first published only slightly less than thirty years ago, so this isn't a creation belonging to the Renaissance or the imperialist sensibilities of 19th century Britannia. Still, in the '80s—at least in America—society was still struggling (and I suppose, we still are) with understanding how to treat the sexes. I have to imagine the same could be said in Italy. In any case, "Indian Summer" exhibits many of the challenges to readers that fill the worst examples of comics sexism in the contemporary scene today. Women are depicted presenting for seemingly no reason other than to play on the desires of a presumably male audience (or author). They are objectified in the extreme. After her return to safety, a woman victimized by rape early in the story spends pages wriggling out of her Pilgrim's clothes in her delirium in front of her male hosts (while a young teen skips around pretending to masturbate to the sight). A woman who has been sore abused, while tending to her wounded father, is commanded by him to disrobe and climb into his bath where they then have wild sex for several pages. It's all a bit impossible to digest in any believable fashion. And Manara uses his considerable skill to render these scenes each to the best visual advantage of his reader. I felt insulted and I imagine most women would feel similarly (though who am I to speak for most of anybody?). Then again, I pretty clearly was not the target audience for this work.

It would be one thing to be subjected to irony- or subversion-free relishing of sexually objectified women\* if the story built up around these things were of any substance or value. This, though, was not the case. "Indian Summer" presents a facile narrative built on a foundation of trite clichés. That's right: not just clichés, but trite clichés. If you were to pick up a story with the following characters, which would you guess to be the most wretchedly depraved and corrupt: a) the bastard son of an outcast woman, b) the forest witch, c) the

tribal chief, d) the chief's son, d) the Protestant minister, e) the town's mayor, or f) the head of the town's militia? Nine bucks you picked out the minister. Probably ever since Nathaniel Hawthorne (or maybe it was *The Bible*), the biggest sinner on the block is always the holy man. It's easy. It's clichéd. It's boring as hell. And it doesn't make any statement that hasn't been better put in better works.

"Indian Summer," at the end of the day, has nothing to boast save for good art and some well-conceived T&A, if that's your thing. Despite his evident talent as a visual storyteller, the story is infantile and almost certainly not worth your time.

A note on the production quality for the volume. I was surprised that while the cover and binding and paper are beautifully chosen and produced, the colours and blacks in the book are disappointingly printed. The colours of "Indian Summer" are inconsistent, varying from page to page. A character in the same scene under the same light source will have orange-hued skin on one page and on the next he will be yellow. In "The Paper Man" many of the pages feature blurred inks, washing out details from what otherwise might have been some nice art. It may be that Dark Horse faithfully duplicated the flawed originals and there may have even been some mention of that in one of the two introductions that remain unread. I just feel that sixty dollars is probably a bit much for inconsistent colours and blurry lines.

Until I got to this point, I had imagined that I would give the volume a three-star rating of OK, but after writing all this, I'm not sure I can justify such a high rating. I had thought the whimsical enjoyment of "The Paper Man" combined with Manara's talent as an artist could give the book a bit of a lift, but in the end, the shallowness of story, repulsive depictions of characters, and textbook use of the male gaze for no reason other than to render women sexualized objects turned me off enough that I really can't view the book as anything other than Bad. Sorry about that, Italian Legend.

\*note: not really it wouldn't.

[review courtesy of Good Ok Bad]

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## Jenni says

I requested this book to read via Netgalley and the 2 featuring stories were nothing like I expected. It was weird, certain scenes were very graphical and "incestous". Other than that, I actually enjoyed the illustrator's overall graphics, but still in whole it wasn't my cup of tea.

(Thought the cover and the plot was misleading)

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