

# THERE IS NO SUCH THING AS A COMICS EMERGENCY



**SUICIDE GIRLS: ITALIAN VILLA**  
Available Via [SuicideGirls.com](http://SuicideGirls.com)

If you don't know who the Suicide Girls are, click the link above, and then come back when you're done.

Great. Two of the best hours you've spent in your life recently, yes? Thanks for coming back, by the way. Now, if you're wondering what the Suicide Girls have to do with comics and why they're being reviewed on this site, read on.



As you noticed about the women on the site, they're not the types of models you see gracing the ads in mainstream magazines or on the covers of men's mags like MAXIM or FHM. The Suicide Girls bring a different brand of femininity and sensuality to what they do; they also bring a look that stands apart. Unlike the airbrush horror of, say, Brooke Hogan leaping off the stands at you right now, the Suicide Girls are real (no plastic), and more to the point, they have *character*, and that's what makes them so intriguing. And, more to the point, that character is what makes them more relatable to comics and genre entertainment.

These women not only develop their character and their personae through their pictures, they even take on "secret identities", Ramones-style. Each Girl goes by a first name and the last name Suicide. For instance, one of the Girls is a local here in AZ, and while she has a day life (I'm assuming), she is Tempest Suicide on the site. Very superhero, yes?

I don't think you have to have a thing for women with tattoos and piercings to appreciate the Suicide Girls, though. Again, it's all about the character; I work at the nation's largest university. There are over 25,000 female students alone. And I swear to you, 8000 of them are the same blonde/bottle blonde girl. They wear the same hairstyle. They wear the same style clothes. And they wear the same three styles of pairs of shoes. Any given day is ATTACK OF THE CLONES, Arizona-style. It's boring, and it's disconcerting. The lack of individuality in style and appearance is so sheep-like that it's genuinely depressing. But that isn't a problem with the Suicide Girls.

ITALIAN VILLA is the second Girls DVD, and it's quite different than the first one, which followed a group of the Girls on their first tour doing a live burlesque show. VILLA introduces you to over a dozen European Suicide Girls as they gather at a villa in the Italian countryside to meet, make new friends, and shoot new photo sets. The Girls come from all over Europe,

and it's interesting to see how these women from such a variety of cultures are able to bridge the language gap, find common ground, and enjoy the surroundings and each others' company.

The scenery is spectacular, from the amazing Italian countryside, to the beautiful beaches the Girls visit, to the lovely cities they travel to during their stay. But, of course, the finest scenery comes from the Suicide Girls themselves; they are gorgeous, sensual, riveting personalities who command the screen during their photo sets. Whether fully clothed, or seductively peeling away layers, or exquisitely nude, these Suicide Girls have a gift for commanding every bit of your attention as they present their character, themselves, for the cameras.

Back to the comics connections for a moment. The site itself has offered a good selection of materials such as interviews of folks like Neil Gaiman and other genre fixtures, and recent issues of Image Comics had back cover ads for the site as well. But the true connection comes from many of the Girls openly acknowledging an affinity for comics and such; for instance one of the European girls notes her love of anime and manga. Another mentions producing a photo set inspired by BATTLE ROYALE. And one of the Girls, who photographs many of the Euro Girls, notes that her art school thesis involved dressing her subjects as superheroes, because the outfits would show the subjects feeling their most sexual and powerful. It's a true point, and it's one that carries over into the Girls as a whole; because the Girls conceptualize their own photo sets, each one is able to maximize her own creativity in self-presenting their sexuality and personality.

The breakout star of ITALIAN VILLA is Manko, a wild blonde who narrates the DVD, as well as providing one of the more interesting photo shoots. Her deep, breathy voice and commanding tone reveal her to be almost a force of nature as she appears on screen. Her blunt, direct approach to everything she does while in Italy is not only captivating viewing, but rather a challenge. You can't ignore her; she won't allow it. And the rest of the Suicide Girls follow in her wake, taking you with them on the journey. This is as good a reason as any to spend twenty dollars these days. And for God's sake, hurry; you don't ever want to keep Manko waiting.

Marc Mason

### **TEEN TITANS: THE COMPLETE SECOND SEASON** **Available from Warner Video**

The TEEN TITANS cartoon was one of the more pleasant animated surprises of the past few years, and season two was, for me, when the series really began to find its legs and become something special. The