

DC
VERTIGO

D. 58
MAR 94
1.95 US
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SUGGESTED
FOR MATURE
READERS

NEIL GAIMAN
MARC HEMPEL
D'ISRAELI
T H E

SAN O M A N

T H E
K I N D L Y
O N E S



A

*Die Kunst der Buchführung
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WELL? HOW LONG IS IT GOING TO TAKE?

TRAGEDY STRUCK THIS EVENING FOR A TORRANCE COUPLE CELEBRATING A SPECIAL DAY.



LOOK, WE CALLED YOU ALMOST TWO HOURS AGO. I MEAN, THIS IS A KIDNAPPING, FOR CHRISSAKES.

HARVEY AND VONDA RAMSEY CLIMBED OVER THIS FENCE TO THIS LOCAL BEAUTY SPOT AND BOATING LAKE, WHERE THEY CLIMBED INTO ONE OF THESE LITTLE ROW BOATS.



I'M NOT CURSING AT YOU, OKAY, LADY. I'M JUST CURSING.

UH, H-HARVEY WAS SO HA-HAPPY. HE HAD THIS BOTTLE OF FRENCH CHAMPAGNE, AND HE SAID IT WAS TIME TO TOAST ME, AND HE STOOD UP AND I SAID HARVEY, DON'T STAND UP, BUT HE SAID, VONDA, HONEY, IT'S YOUR BIRTHDAY, AND HE...



FINE, IT'S NOT YOUR FAULT. BUT I HOPE YOU UNDERSTAND MY FRUSTRATION WITH--

IT WAS OUR TUN-TENTH WEDDING ANNIVERSARY NEXT WEEK.

I TOLD HIM. I TOLD HIM TO SIT DOWN. AND THEN HE, AHH, HE...



NO. NO, OF COURSE I DON'T WANT YOUR JOB.

I JUST WANT TO SEE SOME COPS HERE.

RIGHT. WELL, I DON'T LIKE YOUR ATTITUDE EITHER, SO THAT MAKES TWO OF US.

UH, TENTH WEDDING ANNIVERSARY? THAT'S TIN, ISN'T IT, MARY?



I THINK IT IS, RAY. ON A LIGHTER NOTE, TOMORROW IS THE FIRST DAY OF NATIONAL JAZZ EXERCISE WEEK AND TO CELEBRATE...

COW.

SHE SAYS THEY'RE COMING. LYTA?

MM.

THEY'RE ON THEIR WAY.



LYTA?

LYTA, HONEY,
THE POLICE ARE
HERE TO
SEE YOU.



MIZZ
HALL?

I'M LIEUTENANT LUKE
PINKERTON. I'M WITH
THE LA POLICE DEPART-
MENT. THIS IS MY
PARTNER, GORDY
FELLOWES...

MA'AM.



NOW, I UNDERSTAND THAT YOUR SON
HAS BEEN ABDUCTED. THIS IS
OBVIOUSLY A VERY TRAUMATIC TIME
FOR YOU. WE DON'T WANT TO MAKE
IT ANY HARDER.

DANIEL.
HIS NAME IS
DANIEL.

DANIEL.
RIGHT. CAN
YOU TELL US WHAT
HAPPENED?



I WENT OUT THIS
EVENING. LUX'S. IT'S A
RESTAURANT. I GOT A BAD
FEELING AND WANTED TO
COME HOME. WHEN I GOT
HERE MY SON HAD
BEEN STOLEN.

THE
BABYSITTER WAS
ASLEEP ON THE
FLOOR.

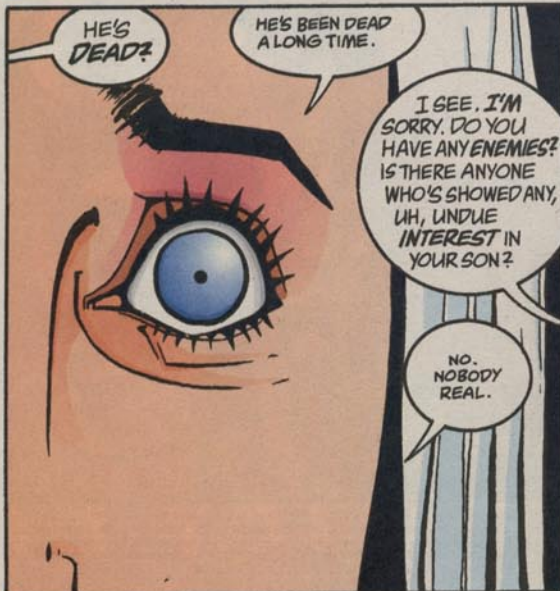


DO YOU HAVE ANY IDEA OF
ANY PERSON WHO COULD HAVE
BEEN RESPONSIBLE?

NO.

MA'AM,
CAN WE TALK
TO THE CHILD'S
FATHER?

SURE.
YOU GOT A
QUIZ BOARD
WITH YOU?

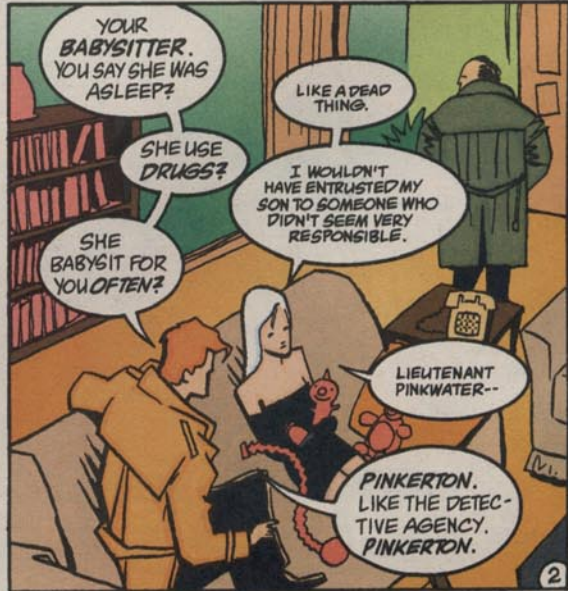


HE'S
DEAD?

HE'S BEEN DEAD
A LONG TIME.

I SEE. I'M
SORRY. DO YOU
HAVE ANY ENEMIES?
IS THERE ANYONE
WHO'S SHOWED ANY,
UH, UNDUE
INTEREST IN
YOUR SON?

NO.
NOBODY
REAL.



YOUR
BABYSITTER.
YOU SAY SHE WAS
ASLEEP?

LIKE A DEAD
THING.

SHE USE
DRUGS?

I WOULDN'T
HAVE ENTRUSTED MY
SON TO SOMEONE WHO
DIDN'T SEEM VERY
RESPONSIBLE.

SHE
BABYSIT FOR
YOU OFTEN?

LIEUTENANT
PINKWATER--

PINKERTON.
LIKE THE DETEC-
TIVE AGENCY.
PINKERTON.



LIEUTENANT PINKERTON, I'VE HARDLY BEEN OUT OF THE HOUSE IN THREE YEARS.

I ONLY WENT OUT THIS EVENING BECAUSE I'D BEEN OFFERED A JOB, AND MY FRIEND CARLA WANTED ME TO AT LEAST MEET THE GUY AND TALK ABOUT IT.



HE DROVE ME BACK HERE.

SO, NO, SHE'S NOT MY REGULAR BABYSITTER, BUT I DON'T HAVE A REGULAR BABYSITTER.

SHE'S LOOKED AFTER DANIEL A FEW TIMES NOW. HE LIKES HER. HE CALLS HER WOSIE.



DO YOU KNOW HOW... WHOEVER TOOK YOUR SON... GOT IN TO THE APARTMENT?

THE DOORS WERE LOCKED. THERE WAS A WINDOW OPEN IN MY BEDROOM. MAYBE THEY GOT OUT THROUGH THERE. I DON'T KNOW.

YEAH. WELL, IT'S A POSSIBILITY.



WE'LL TAKE A LOOK AROUND, NOW, IF YOU DON'T MIND. AND I'LL NEED TO TALK TO THE BABYSITTER.

SHE'S DOWNSTAIRS. THAT'S WHERE SHE LIVES.

SHE WANTED TO STAY UP HERE, BUT LYTA MADE HER GO HOME. THE POOR KID WAS REALLY UPSET.



MIZZ HALL? WE'RE TRYING TO HELP. YOU KNOW THAT?

YES. I DO.

WE CAN ONLY DO THAT IF YOU HELP US.

I AM HELPING YOU.

HEY! THIS OUTSIDE DOOR.. ALL THE LOCKS HAVE BEEN MESSED UP.



MA'AM? I THOUGHT YOU SAID THE DOORS WERE LOCKED WHEN YOU GOT HERE.

THEY WERE.

WELL, THESE LOCKS ARE DESTROYED. IT LOOKS LIKE SOMEONE HIT THIS DOOR WITH A TRUCK.



ME.

IT WASN'T A TRUCK. THE KEY GOT STUCK. SO I PUSHED.

THAT WAS ME.



THE KINDLY ONES 2

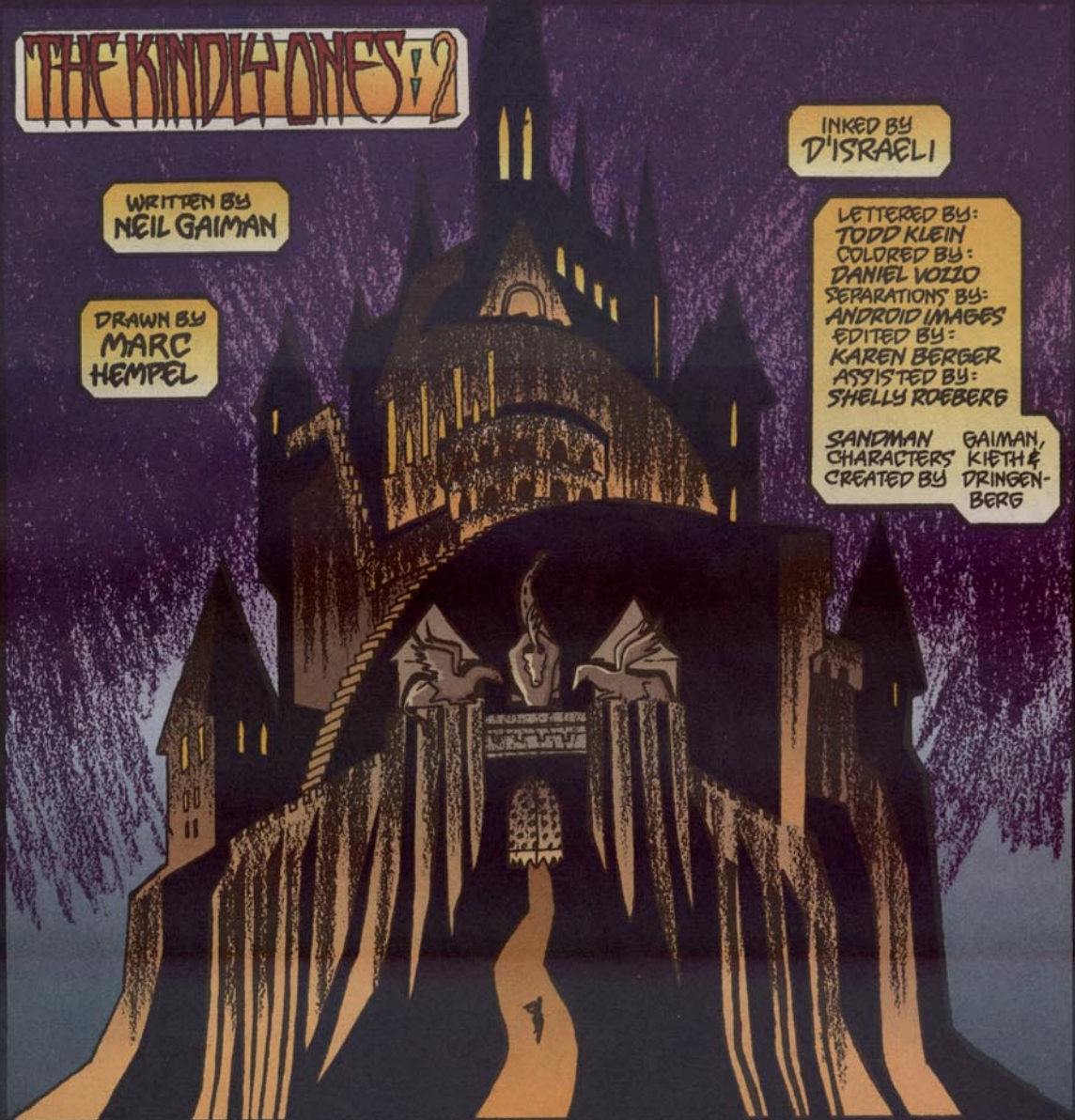
WRITTEN BY
NEIL GAIMAN

DRAWN BY
MARC
HEMPEL

INKED BY
D'ISRAELI

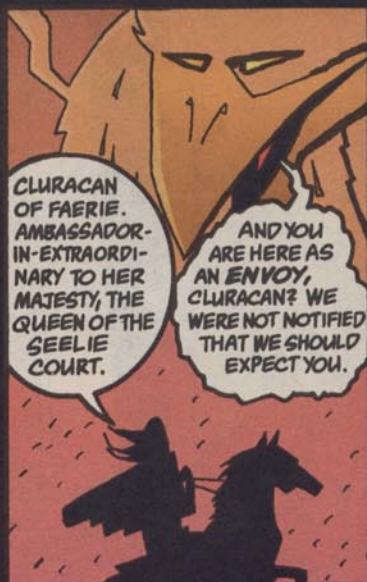
LETTERED BY:
TODD KLEIN
COLORED BY:
DANIEL VOZZO
SEPARATIONS BY:
ANDROID IMAGES
EDITED BY:
KAREN BERGER
ASSISTED BY:
SHELLY ROEBERG

SANDMAN GAIMAN,
CHARACTERS KIEITH &
CREATED BY DRINGEN-
BERG



HAIL!

HALT,
STRANGER, AND
ANNOUNCE
YOURSELF.



CLURACAN
OF FAERIE.
AMBASSADOR-
IN-EXTRAORDI-
NARY TO HER
MAJESTY, THE
QUEEN OF THE
SEELIE COURT.

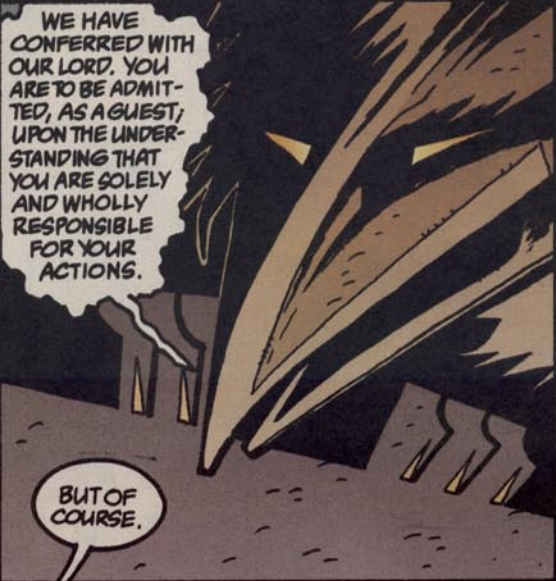
AND YOU
ARE HERE AS
AN ENVOY,
CLURACAN? WE
WERE NOT NOTIFIED
THAT WE SHOULD
EXPECT YOU.



I AM HERE AS A
PRIVATE INDIVIDUAL.
I HAVE COME TO SEE
MY SISTER, THE LADY
NUALA, WHO RESIDES
IN THIS REALM.

AH.

WAIT
THERE.



WE HAVE CONFERRED WITH OUR LORD. YOU ARE TO BE ADMITTED, AS A GUEST, UPON THE UNDERSTANDING THAT YOU ARE SOLELY AND WHOLLY RESPONSIBLE FOR YOUR ACTIONS.

BUT OF COURSE.



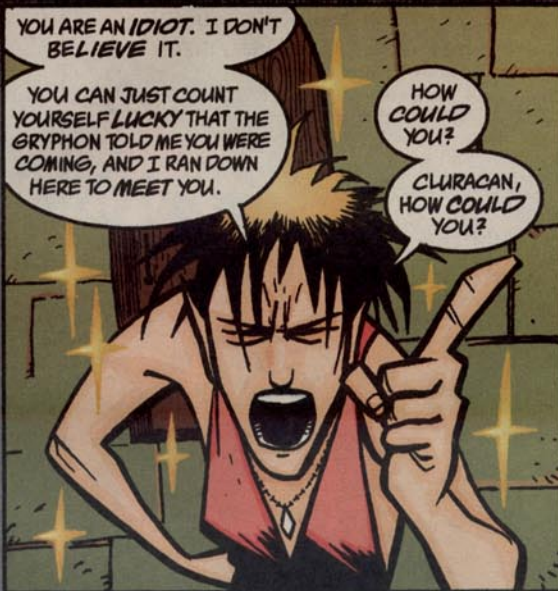
VERY WELL, CLURACAN. DISMOUNT AND ENTER. LEAVE YOUR HORSE HERE. IT WILL BE STABLED AND GROOMED.

FAIRY. KEEP TO THE PATH AND IT WILL TAKE YOU TO YOUR SISTER.









YOU ARE AN IDIOT. I DON'T BELIEVE IT.

YOU CAN JUST COUNT YOURSELF LUCKY THAT THE GRYPHON TOLD ME YOU WERE COMING, AND I RAN DOWN HERE TO MEET YOU.

HOW COULD YOU?

CLURACAN, HOW COULD YOU?

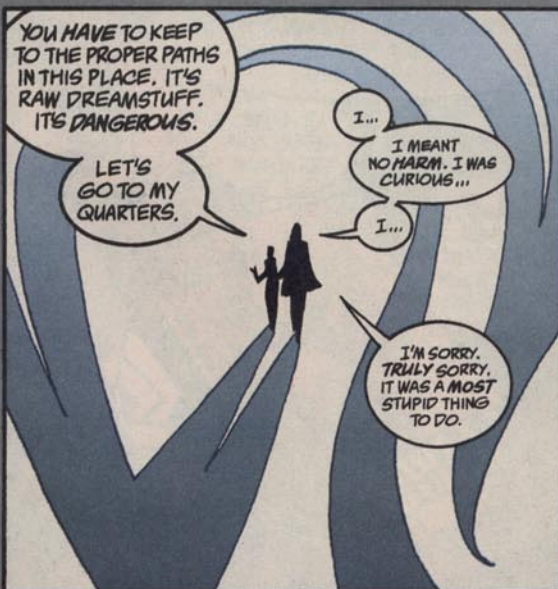


AND THAT STAG. DO YOU REALIZE WHAT YOU DID IN THERE? YOU COULD HAVE BEEN KILLED!

THAT WAS YOUR NEMESIS.

YOU'VE CREATED YOUR NEMESIS.

HOW COULD YOU?



YOU HAVE TO KEEP TO THE PROPER PATHS IN THIS PLACE. IT'S RAW DREAMSTUFF. IT'S DANGEROUS.

LET'S GO TO MY QUARTERS.

I...

I MEANT NO HARM. I WAS CURIOUS...

I...

I'M SORRY. TRULY SORRY. IT WAS A MOST STUPID THING TO DO.



OH, CLURACAN. I AM PLEASSED TO SEE YOU. IT'S JUST I WISH YOU'D STOP AND THINK BEFORE YOU DID THINGS. YOU COULD HAVE GOTTEN YOURSELF INTO SO MUCH TROUBLE.

WELL, YOU SORT OF HAVE DONE, HAVEN'T YOU? WHAT ON EARTH POSSESSED YOU TO RAISE THE WILD HART?

I DIDN'T REALIZE.

THERE WAS SOMETHING IN MY THROAT. TICKLING. I HAD TO GET IT OUT.

HMPH. AND YOU'RE LATE.

LATE?

YOU SAID YOU WOULD COME AND SEE ME. SOON, YOU SAID. THAT WAS THREE YEARS AGO.

SIT DOWN OVER THERE.

AH. YES. I SUPPOSE I AM A LITTLE LATE. OUR QUEEN HAS KEPT ME BUSY.

WHO DID YOUR DECORATING?

THE LORD SHAPER GAVE ME THESE QUARTERS; HE HAD THE PALACE CREW MAKE THEM LOOK LIKE THIS. IT WAS KIND OF HIM.

WOULD YOU LIKE SOMETHING TO EAT? THERE ARE MANY FLOWERS HERE, AND FINE NECTARS TO DRINK.

I'LL TAKE WINE, IF YOU HAVE SOME. A RED.

MM. I WISH YOU WOULDN'T DRINK SO MUCH. I DON'T THINK IT'S GOOD FOR YOU. I'LL FIND SOME FOR YOU.

NUALA...

SOME MONTHS AGO I VISITED YOU IN MY DREAMS; YOU SENT LORD SHAPER TO FREE ME FROM SOME BOTHER I WAS IN.

REALLY?
I ...

ANYWAY. SHORTLY AFTER THAT, I FOUND MYSELF CAUGHT IN A... STORM.

I TOOK REFUGE IN THE INN AT THE END OF ALL WORLDS. IT'S ONE OF THE FOUR FREE HOUSES--

I HAVE HEARD OF THE PLACE.

AND I SAW CERTAIN THINGS THERE.

WHAT KIND OF THINGS?



I'D RATHER NOT SAY. I SAW CERTAIN THINGS, THROUGH A WINDOW, AND, WHEN THE STORM WAS OVER, I RETURNED HOME AND TOLD THEM TO OUR LADY, AND SHE...

WELL, SHE SENT ME HERE.



SHE SENT YOU? BUT YOU'RE NOT HERE AS AN OFFICIAL ENVOY--?

NO. I'M NOT. SHE SENT ME TO TALK TO YOU.

SHE SAYS IT'S TIME FOR YOU TO COME HOME.



OH.

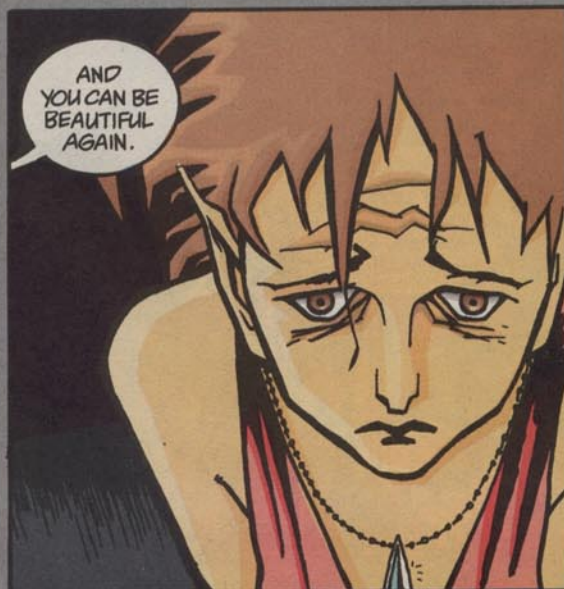


SNIFE



WON'T IT BE WONDERFUL?

IT WILL BE SO VERY FINE, WITH YOU ONCE MORE IN FAERIE. THE SEELIE COURT HAS DOZENS OF DELIGHTFUL NEW INTRIGUES FOR YOU TO CATCH UP ON.

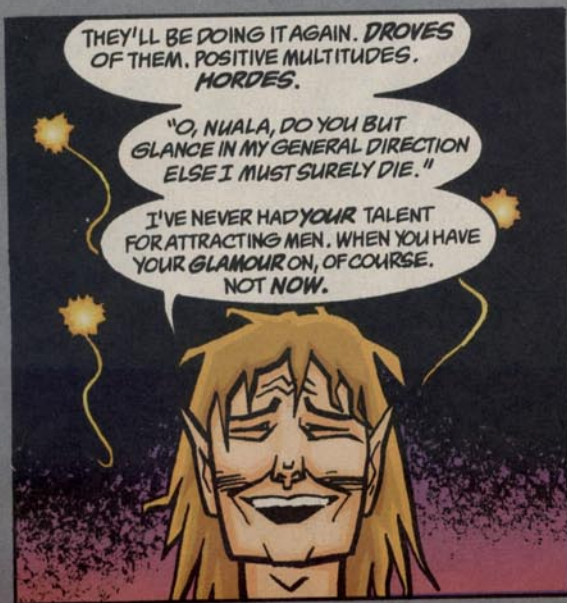


AND YOU CAN BE BEAUTIFUL AGAIN.



YOU CAN BE THE ICE MAIDEN ONCE MORE. LA BELLE DAME SANS MERCI, EH?

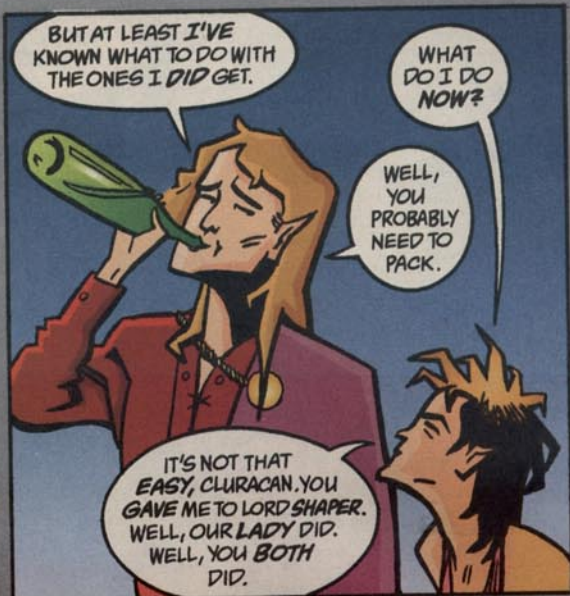
HOW MANY YOUNG MEN KILLED THEMSELVES FOR LOVE OF YOU OVER THE YEARS, MY SISTER? HOW MANY SIMPLY PALED AND PINED AWAY FOR YOU?



THEY'LL BE DOING IT AGAIN. DROVES OF THEM. POSITIVE MULTITUDES. HORDES.

"O, NHALA, DO YOU BUT GLANCE IN MY GENERAL DIRECTION ELSE I MUST SURELY DIE."

I'VE NEVER HAD YOUR TALENT FOR ATTRACTING MEN. WHEN YOU HAVE YOUR GLAMOUR ON, OF COURSE. NOT NOW.

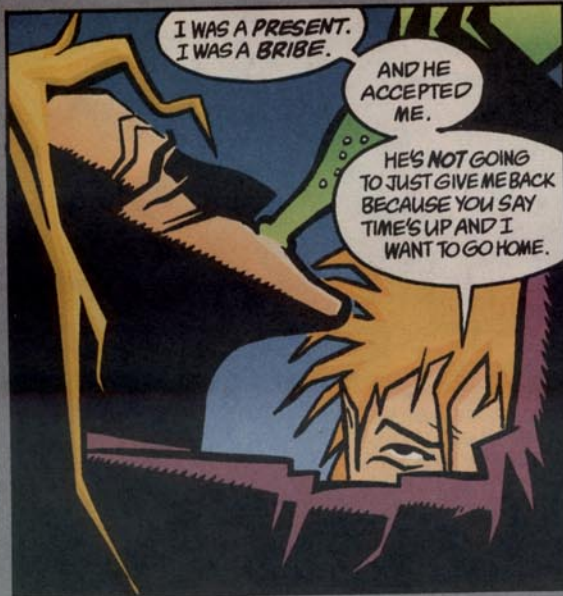


BUT AT LEAST I'VE KNOWN WHAT TO DO WITH THE ONES I DID GET.

WHAT DO I DO NOW?

WELL, YOU PROBABLY NEED TO PACK.

IT'S NOT THAT EASY, CLURACAN. YOU GAVE ME TO LORD SHAPER. WELL, OUR LADY DID. WELL, YOU BOTH DID.



I WAS A PRESENT. I WAS A BRIBE.

AND HE ACCEPTED ME.

HE'S NOT GOING TO JUST GIVE ME BACK BECAUSE YOU SAY TIME'S UP AND I WANT TO GO HOME.



I'LL TELL HIM THAT OUR QUEEN WON'T MIND. THEY'RE OLD FRIENDS-- MORE THAN THAT, PERHAPS, IF YOU LISTEN TO PALACE GOSSIP.

WE'LL ASK HIM TO SEND YOU BACK, AND HE'LL WAVE US ON OUR WAY.



AND WHILE WE'RE AT IT, I COULD ASK HIM TO DESTROY THE WILD HART.

YOU'RE THE ONLY ONE WHO CAN FIGHT THE HART, CLURACAN. AND IT'S PROBABLY NO LONGER EVEN IN THE CASTLE. PROBABLY NOT EVEN IN THE DREAMING.



I WISH YOU'D THINK.

≧Sigh≦

THE SHAPER WON'T LET ME GO. I KNOW HIM. HE'LL SAY NO, CLURACAN.

WELL THEN.

LET'S GO AND ASK HIM.

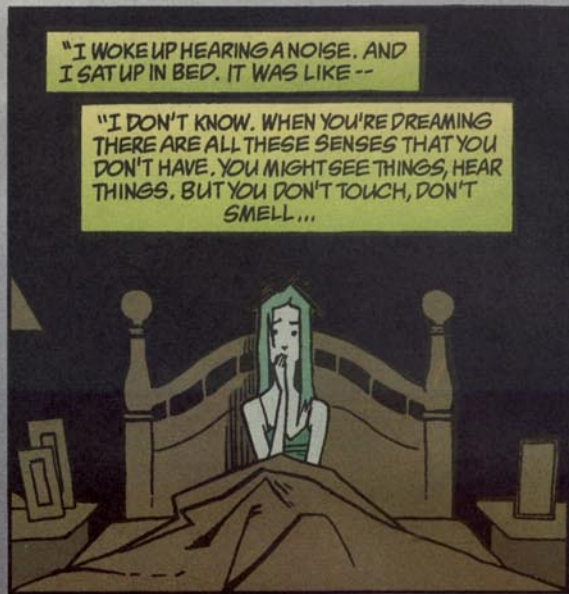




I WOKE UP.

I KNOW THAT. I WOKE YOU--

NO. I MEAN, IN MY DREAM, I WOKE UP.



"I WOKE UP HEARING A NOISE. AND I SAT UP IN BED. IT WAS LIKE --

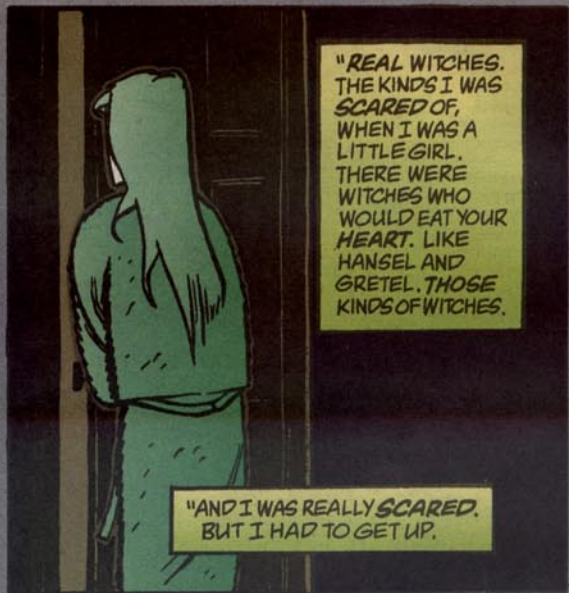
"I DON'T KNOW. WHEN YOU'RE DREAMING THERE ARE ALL THESE SENSES THAT YOU DON'T HAVE. YOU MIGHT SEE THINGS, HEAR THINGS. BUT YOU DON'T TOUCH, DON'T SMELL ...



"I HAD ALL MY SENSES. I WAS AWAKE. I WAS HERE IN MY BEDROOM, AND I HEARD WOMEN--TALKING--DOWNSTAIRS--

"AND IT WAS LIKE I WAS A LITTLE GIRL AGAIN.

"I COULD HEAR WITCHES DOWNSTAIRS.



"REAL WITCHES. THE KINDS I WAS SCARED OF, WHEN I WAS A LITTLE GIRL. THERE WERE WITCHES WHO WOULD EAT YOUR HEART. LIKE HANSEL AND GRETEL. THOSE KINDS OF WITCHES.

"AND I WAS REALLY SCARED. BUT I HAD TO GET UP.



"SO I WENT TO THE DOOR. TO THE LIVING ROOM. BUT THERE WASN'T A LIVING ROOM ANYMORE. JUST STAIRS DOWN.

"I WAS SO SCARED.

"I WAS SO DREADFULLY SCARED."

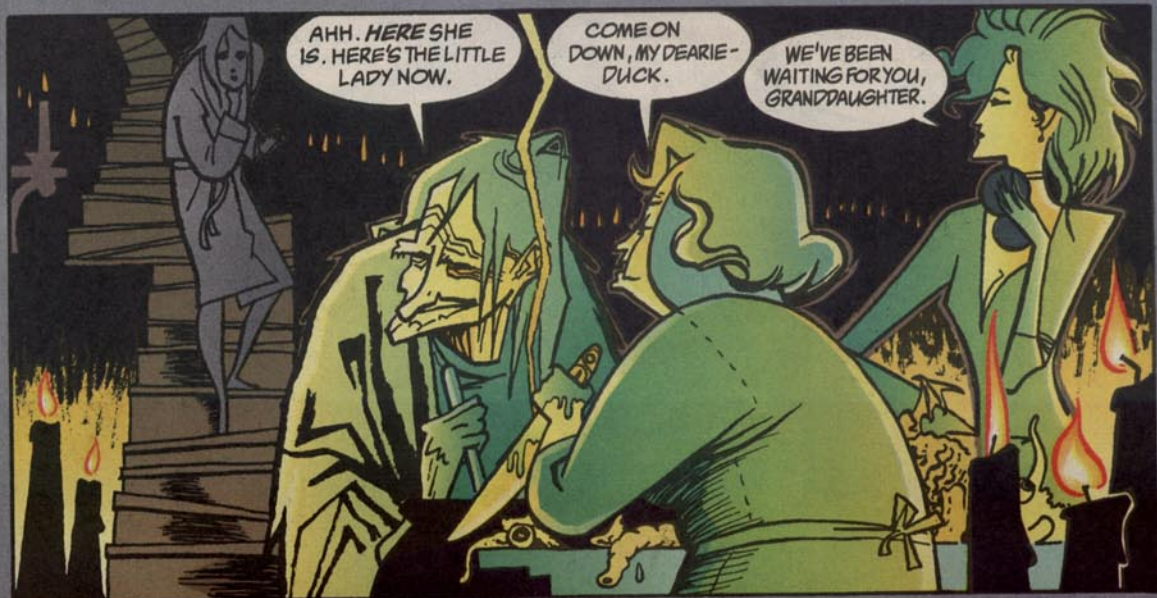


ARE YOU SURE IT'S A FINGER? IT'S VERY SMALL.

IT WAS A VERY SMALL BABY.

DITCH-DELIVERED?

AND BIRTH-STRANGLER. JUST LIKE IT SAYS IN THE RECIPE.



AHH. HERE SHE IS. HERE'S THE LITTLE LADY NOW.

COME ON DOWN, MY DEARIE-DUCK.

WE'VE BEEN WAITING FOR YOU, GRANDDAUGHTER.



I DIDN'T KNOW THAT THERE WAS A DOWN-STAIRS, HERE.

THERE'S A DOWNSTAIRS IN EVERYBODY. THAT'S WHERE WE LIVE.

I'M DREAMING.

YOU'RE NOT.



ARE YOU GOING TO HURT ME?

HURT YOU? OF COURSE WE'RE GOING TO HURT YOU. EVERYBODY GETS HURT.

BUT WE'RE ALSO GOING TO HELP YOU, MY POPY. YOUR BABBIE HAS BEEN STOLEN FROM YOU, AFTER ALL.



TOO PROUD TO HAVE A DAUGHTER, EH? HAD TO HAVE A SON.

DANIEL! WHERE IS HE? DID YOU THREE TAKE HIM?

I'LL THANK YOU NOT TO USE THAT TONE OF VOICE WITH US, YOUNG LADY.



YOUNG LADY? ME? JESUS. LIKE HOW OLD ARE YOU, BIMBO?

A LITTLE OLDER THAN MY TEETH AND AS OLD AS MY TONGUE.

I WASN'T TALKING TO YOU. I WAS TALKING TO HER.

YOU WERE TALKING TO US, GRANDDAUGHTER.



I'VE HAD ENOUGH OF HER. SHE'S HAD HER THREE QUESTIONS. SHE'S WASTED THEM. SHE HASN'T EVEN GOT HER MOTHER'S SPARK.

MY MOTHER? YOU KNEW MY MOTHER?

NOT TALKING TO YOU ANYMORE. WHERE'S THE TIGER'S CHAUDRON?



WHAT'S A CHAUDRON?

GUTS. ENTRAILS.

I THOUGHT IT WAS A COLOR. AH. HERE IT IS. BIT SMELLY, THOUGH.

HOLD ON. YOU DIDN'T ANSWER ALL MY QUESTIONS.

YOU DIDN'T TELL ME WHERE DANIEL IS. I ASKED YOU THAT.



THOSE WHO ASK DON'T GET.

AND THOSE WHO DON'T ASK DON'T WANT. HEE! HEE!

YOU'RE RIGHT.

DANIEL'S BEEN TAKEN FROM YOU. YOU'VE MET ALREADY THOSE WHO TOOK HIM.

WHERE IS HE RIGHT NOW?



THEY'RE GOING TO PUT HIM IN THE FIRE, MY LITTLE DIDDLY-POUT.

WHAT?!

CHOP
CHOP
CHOP
CHOP



THAT'S A LOT MORE THAN THREE QUESTIONS. "WHAT?!" INDEED. HERE--HAVE A PORKIE PIE INSTEAD.

IT--IT'S COVERED IN MUD.

EVERYONE'S GOT TO EAT A PECK OF DIRT BEFORE THEY DIE.



GRANDDAUGHTER, WE DO WANT TO HELP YOU.

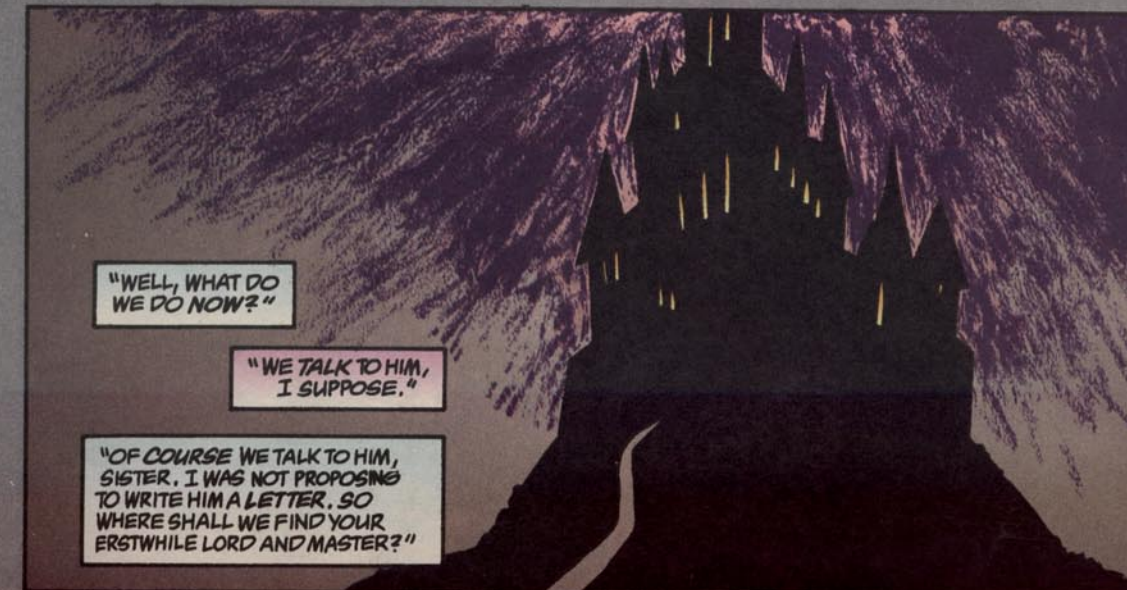
THIS WAS THE FIRST TIME. THERE WILL BE TWO MORE.

NOW, POP HER IN THE POT. LET'S SEE WHAT SHE'S MADE OF.



NOOOOOO!






"WELL, WHAT DO WE DO NOW?"


"WE TALK TO HIM, I SUPPOSE."

"OF COURSE WE TALK TO HIM, SISTER. I WAS NOT PROPOSING TO WRITE HIM A LETTER. SO WHERE SHALL WE FIND YOUR ERSTWHILE LORD AND MASTER?"



I DON'T KNOW. I NEVER HAD TO SEE HIM BEFORE.

WELL, SOMEBODY MUST KNOW.




EXCUSE ME, MY FRIENDS?

YES?

WE NEED TO TALK TO THE LORD SHAPER.

TO LORRD MORRRRPHUS? RRRREALLY?

HOW DO WE GO ABOUT DOING THIS?




YOU'LL NEED TO SEEK AN AUDIENCE.

OH. HOW DO WE DO THAT?

I DON'T KNOW. DO YOU, MY SWEET?

NO, RUTHVEN.

WE'VE NEVER SOUGHT ONE, YOU SEE.



HAVE YOU ASKED LUCIEN? HE MIGHT HAVE A BOOK ON PALACE PROTOCOL.

THANK YOU KINDLY. YOU'VE BOTH BEEN MOST HELPFUL.

AU RRREVOIR.



WE COULD SUMMON HIM.

I...I WOULD NOT...I...

HM. WHICH WAY IS THE THRONE ROOM?



ALONG THERE.



IT'S CLOSED. I'VE NEVER SEEN IT CLOSED BEFORE.

SO? WE CAN ALWAYS KNOCK ON IT.

I DON'T THINK HE'D LIKE THAT.

CLURACAN? LET US GO BACK TO MY QUARTERS. YOUR OTHER IDEA WAS SO GOOD. LET'S SEND HIM A FORMAL LETTER--



NONSENSE.

THUD!
THUD!
THUD!

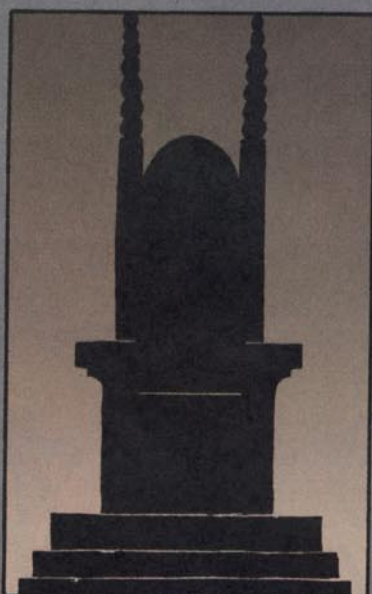
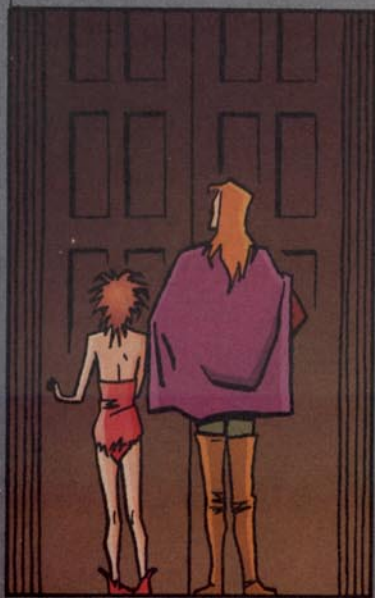


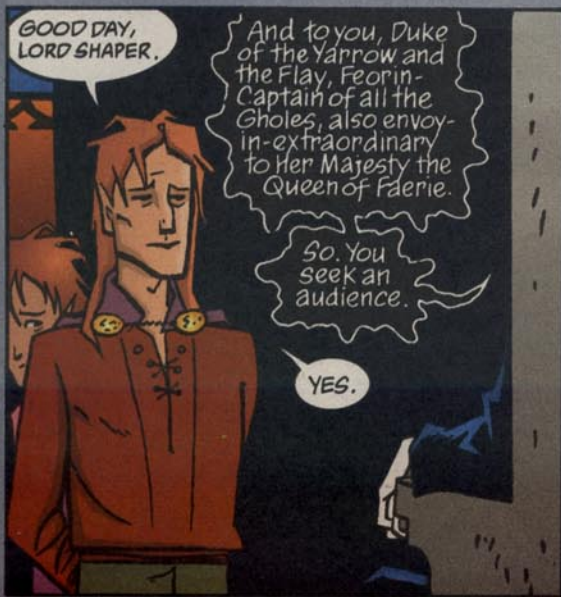
HOLA! LORD SHAPER?

IT IS I, THE CLURACAN, DUKE OF THE YARROW AND THE FLAY, FEORIN-CAPTAIN OF ALL THE GHOLES, ALSO ENVOY-IN-EXTRAORDINARY TO HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN OF FAERIE.

I AM HERE WITH MY SISTER, THE LADY NUALA, CURRENTLY IN YOUR SERVICE.

WE DESIRE AUDIENCE.





GOOD DAY,
LORD SHAPER.

And to you, Duke
of the Yarrow and
the Flay, Feorin-
Captain of all the
Gholes, also envo-
in-extraordinary
to Her Majesty the
Queen of Faerie.

So. You
seek an
audience.

YES.



Why are you here,
Cluracan?

I AM NOT
HERE FOR MYSELF,
SIRE, BUT FOR MY
SISTER, THE LADY
NUALA.

I see.

Your sister
has served me
well, Cluracan.

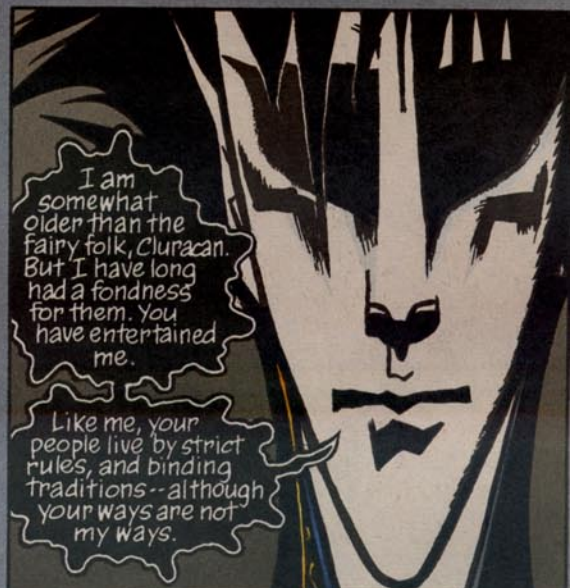


AS YOU SAID TO ME
WHEN LAST WE SPOKE,
SIRE, SHE HAS A GOOD
HEART.

I said
that to you,
Cluracan?

YES,
SIRE.

Well, it is
a truth.



I am
somewhat
older than the
fairy folk, Cluracan.
But I have long
had a fondness
for them. You
have entertained
me.

Like me, your
people live by strict
rules, and binding
traditions--although
your ways are not
my ways.



MY LORD, I HAVE COME
TO ASK A FAVOR OF
YOU. IT CONCERNS
A GIFT.

A gift?
Hmmm...

Fairy gifts
traditionally are
double-edged
knives.

AND ARE YOUR
OWN GIFTS ALWAYS
WITHOUT CONSEQUENCE,
SIRE?

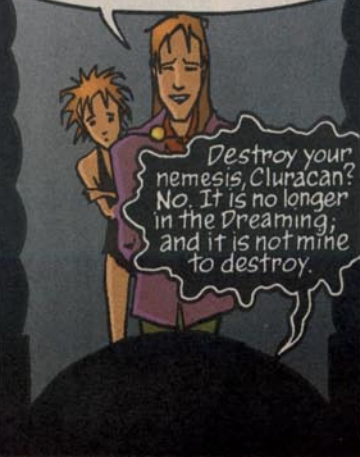


You are a
rogue,
Cluracan.
But you
are an
amusing
rogue.

I notice
you stepped
off my path,
when you
came to this
place.

I DID
THAT THING, SIRE.
I APOLOGIZE. IT
WAS A MOST
FOOLISH THING
TO DO.

SIRE, I, UH, INADVERTENTLY... FREED AN... ANIMAL WHEN I DID THAT. I WAS WONDERING, IF YOU RAN INTO IT, IF IT'S NOT TOO MUCH TROUBLE, POSSIBLY YOU COULD...



Destroy your nemesis, Cluracan? No. It is no longer in the Dreaming; and it is not mine to destroy.

Is that the favor you wished to ask of me?

NO, SIRE.

THE LADY NUALA. SHE WAS A GIFT TO YOU, FROM MY QUEEN.



I HAVE COME TO ASK IF SHE CAN RETURN TO FAERIE WITH ME...



AS I WAS THE ONE WHO GAVE HER TO YOU, I WAS THE ONE WHO FELT IT WAS TIME TO ASK YOU FOR HER BACK. SHE IS MUCH MISSED--HER CHEERY WAYS, HER WITTY JESTS... YOU KNOW HOW IT IS.



I see. And what does the lady Nuala say about all this?

SIR?

I--YOU'VE BEEN VERY KIND, SIR. FOR THE LAST THREE YEARS I--SIR.

I AM YOURS. WHAT YOU WISH IS ALSO WHAT I WISH.



I see. And Cluracan, what does your Queen say?

SIRE, IT SHOULD BE UNDERSTOOD THAT I AM HERE AS A PRIVATE INDIVIDUAL, REPRESENTING ONLY MYSELF.

I AM NOT HERE TO SPEAK FOR MY QUEEN.

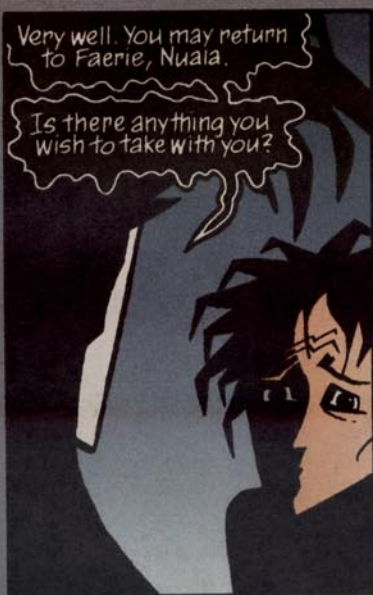
You try my patience, fairy. What does Titania say?



SPEAKING INFORMALLY, I CAN STATE THAT HER MAJESTY WOULD VIEW THE IDEA OF THE RETURN OF THE LADY NUALA WITH UNMIXED PLEASURE.

I see.



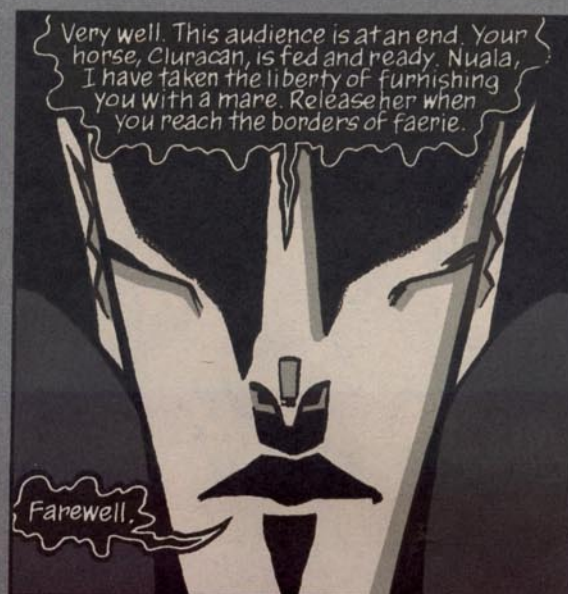




You desire more than that?

OH. NO. THANK YOU, SIR. THAT'S...

...VERY KIND.



Very well. This audience is at an end. Your horse, Cluracan, is fed and ready. Nuala, I have taken the liberty of furnishing you with a mare. Release her when you reach the borders of faerie.

Farewell.



WELL--THAT WAS EASY, WASN'T IT? I DIDN'T EXPECT IT WAS GOING TO BE THAT EASY. I HAD EXPECTED THAT HE WOULD AT LEAST DEMAND TRIBUTE OF SOME KIND.



WHAT DID HE SAY TO YOU ABOUT THE PENDANT? I COULDN'T HEAR HIM. OR UNDERSTAND HIM. OR SOMETHING.

NOTHING. HE JUST TOUCHED IT.

SO. NOW WE GO HOME.

ABOUT TIME, TOO.



NUALA?

NUALA, YOU'RE CRYING.



H-HHE DIDN'T EVEN TRY TO FIGHT FOR ME, BROTHER.

HE DIDN'T CARE IF I STAYED OR I WENT.

EXACTLY.

AND I CANNOT TELL YOU HOW RELIEVED I AM. NOW: LET'S GO HOME.

TO BE CONTINUED