



# the SANDMAN™

# ORPHEUS

SANDMAN  
SPECIAL NO. 1  
1991  
\$3.50 US  
\$4.25 CAN  
£1.90 UK

SUGGESTED  
FOR MATURE  
READERS

by  
neil  
GAIMAN  
or  
bryan  
ALBOL  
or  
mark  
BUCKINGHAM

in novel  
leadre  
and  
parent  
of  
dreams  
walk  
with  
wishes  
with  
in 1991

# the SANDMAN™

## THE SONG OF ORPHEUS

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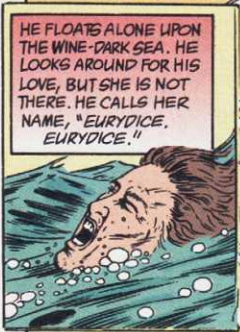
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**T**he legend of Orpheus has been told in story, song and poem over countless generations. It has been told as a tale of bravery, as a lesson on the dangers of hubris, as a paean to youth and love too quickly lost. It has never been told like this before. Here, then, is the story of the Sandman's only begotten son, Orpheus, the offspring of the Endless.






HE FLOATS ALONE UPON THE WINE-DARK SEA. HE LOOKS AROUND FOR HIS LOVE, BUT SHE IS NOT THERE. HE CALLS HER NAME, "EURYDICE, EURYDICE."




THERE IS NO REPLY, FOR REASONS HE DOES NOT UNDERSTAND THIS DISTRESSES HIM MIGHTILY.




HE BEGINS TO CRY; SALT TEARS RUN DOWN HIS FACE, MINGLING WITH THE SALT OF THE WAVES.

"FATHER?"




IT COMES TO HIM THEN THAT HE MUST BE DREAMING, AND HE SMILES.




I HAVE HAD A STRANGE DREAM, FATHER. I WAS FLOATING ON THE SEA, CALLING MY WIFE'S NAME. WHAT DOES IT MEAN?



Am I a hedge wizard, that I should interpret your dreams for you?




Dreams are composed of many things, my son. Of images and hopes, of fears and memories. Memories of the past, and memories of the future...



YOU'RE SAYING I WAS DREAMING THE FUTURE? SOMETHING THAT HAS NOT YET HAPPENED?




Perhaps.




I'M YOUR SON. WHY WON'T YOU TELL ME WHAT YOU KNOW?



Because you are my son.



Now wake, boy. I will see you at your wedding.



Orpheus, you should wake soon. It is, after all, your wedding day.

"BUT FATHER..."



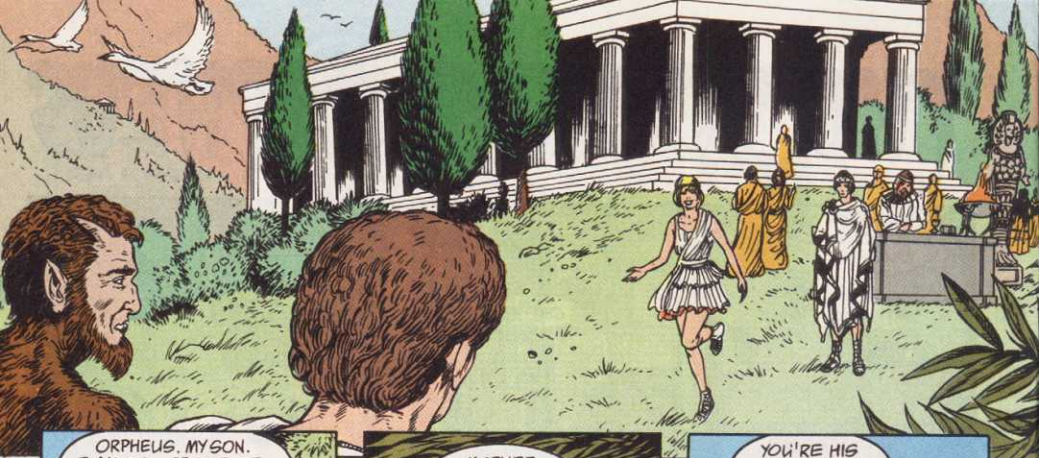
# THE SONG OF ORPHEUS

C · H · A · P · T · E · R

O · N · E







ORPHEUS, MY SON,  
I AM SO... PROUD OF  
YOU. THIS IS A WONDERFUL  
DAY.

I'M SO  
PLEASED.

MOTHER,  
THANK YOU, I'M  
SO HAPPY.

THIS IS MY NEW  
FRIEND, ARISTAEUS. HE'S  
A FARMER. ARISTAEUS,  
THIS IS MY MOTHER,  
CALLOPE.

YOU'RE HIS  
MOTHER? YOU  
DON'T LOOK--

OLD  
ENOUGH?  
HOW SWEET  
OF YOU.

MOTHER?  
WILL FATHER  
BE HERE?

I would not  
miss my son's  
wedding,  
Orpheus.

HELLO,  
FATHER.

And the girl?  
Your wife-to-be?  
Where is she?





I AM HERE, ONEIROS. I WOULD NOT BE LATE ON THIS DAY. I AM PLEASSED TO SEE YOU.

AND YOU TOO, MY DARLING.



EURYDICE. MY EURYDICE. OH MY LOVE.



THEY'RE SUCH A SWEET COUPLE. ISN'T SHE GORGEOUS?

AYE, SHE IS. SHE REMINDS ME OF MY WIFE, ON OUR WEDDING DAY.

WELL, HERE WE ALL ARE. ISN'T THIS NICE?



I LIKE WEDDINGS, ESPECIALLY FAMILY WEDDINGS. THAT MAKES IT SORT OF SPECIAL SOMEHOW, DOESN'T IT, BROTHER?

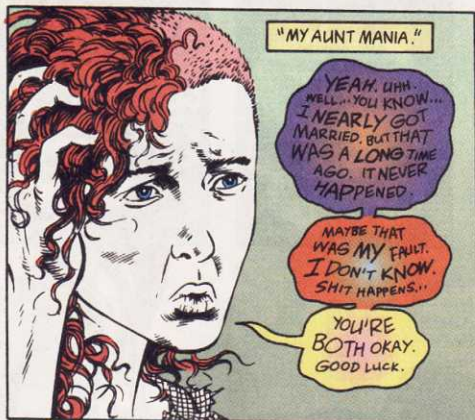
I WAS NOT CERTAIN YOU WOULD COME, MY SISTER.

OH, IT'S NOT JUST ME...



IT'S ALL OF US.

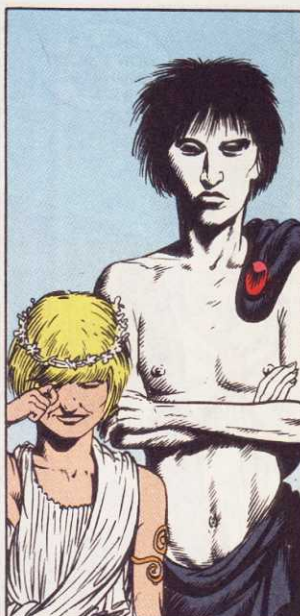


































# THE SONG OF ORPHEUS

C · H · A · P · T · E · R

T · W · O



THE SMOKE FROM HER PYRE  
DRIFTS SKYWARD IN THE  
WINDLESS SUMMER AIR.


HE FINDS IT EASY  
TO IGNORE.

SOME THINGS ARE TOO  
BIG TO BE SEEN, SOME  
EMOTIONS TOO HUGE  
TO BE FELT.




HE CONCENTRATES INSTEAD ON THE  
CORRECT FINGERING OF THE SONGS  
OF THE GATE, ON PLAYING EACH NOTE  
EXACTLY, FINELY.

THE TUNE WEAVES ITSELF  
AROUND HIM, INTRICATE AND  
STRANGE, LIKE A SONG  
FROM A DREAM.

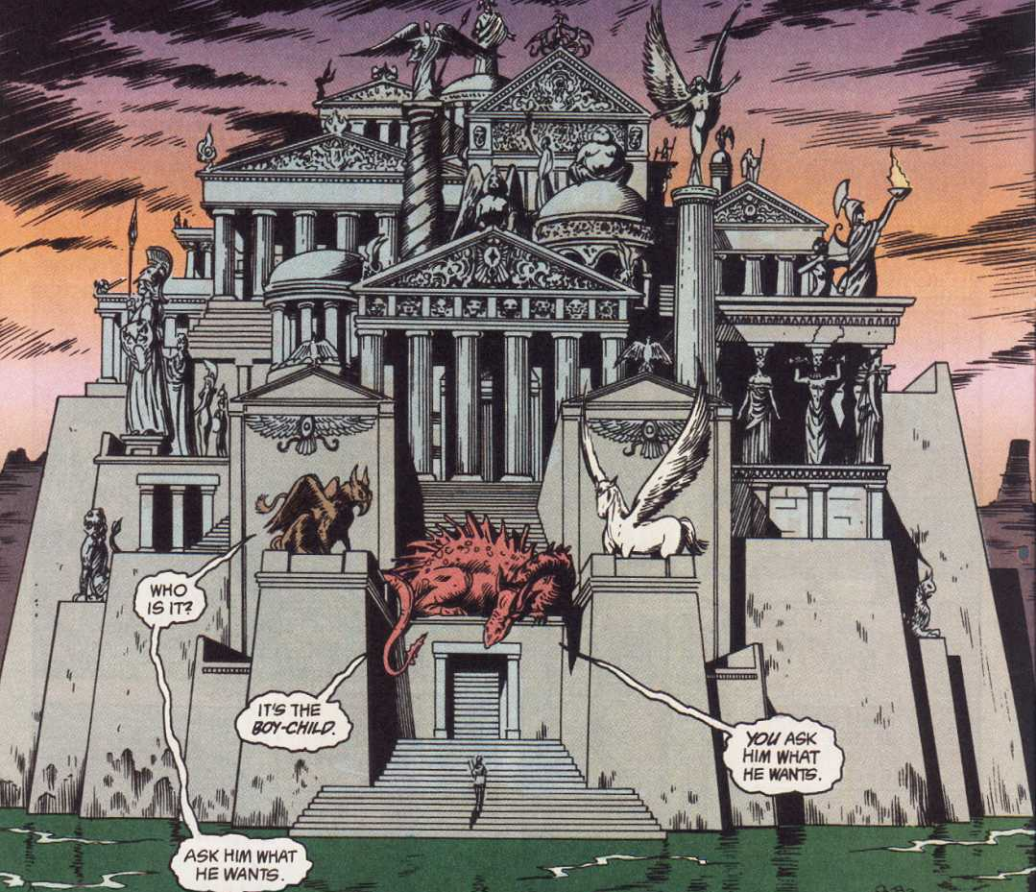


IT OCCURS TO HIM THAT  
HE HAS NEVER PLAYED  
IT SO WELL; AND HE  
TAKES A DISTANT PRIDE  
IN THIS.



AND WHEN HE IS READY, WHEN  
THE MUSIC IS A PART OF HIM, HE  
BEGINNING TO SING, CONSTRUCTING  
THE GATE WITH HIS VOICE AND  
THE NOTES OF HIS LYRE.





WHO IS IT?

IT'S THE BOY-CHILD.

YOU ASK HIM WHAT HE WANTS.

ASK HIM WHAT HE WANTS.



I HAVE COME TO SEE MY FATHER.

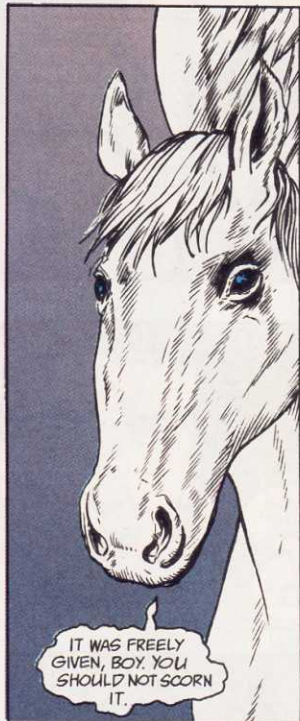
ENTER, THEN, BOY. YOUR FATHER IS HERE.

ORPHEUS. WE HAVE HEARD OF YOUR LOSS; YOU HAVE OUR SYMPATHIES ALSO.



I DO NOT NEED YOUR PITY, HIPPOGRIF.





IT WAS FREELY GIVEN, BOY. YOU SHOULD NOT SCORN IT.



DON'T PITY ME.



You should have gone to her funeral



WHY?

To say goodbye

I HAVE NOT YET SAID GOOD-BYE TO EURYDICE.

You should. You are mortal: it is the mortal way you attend the funeral, you bid the dead farewell. You grieve. Then you continue with your life.



And at times the fact of her absence will hit you like a blow to the chest, and you will weep. But this will happen less and less as time goes on.

She is dead. You are alive.

So live.





SO WILL YOU HELP ME TO GAIN HER BACK FROM THE UNDERWORLD, FATHER? WILL YOU GO TO HADES AND KORE, AND PLEAD MY CASE?

You are talking foolishness, my son. I will hear no more of it.



BUT FATHER--

No more



VERY WELL, THEN. NO MORE.

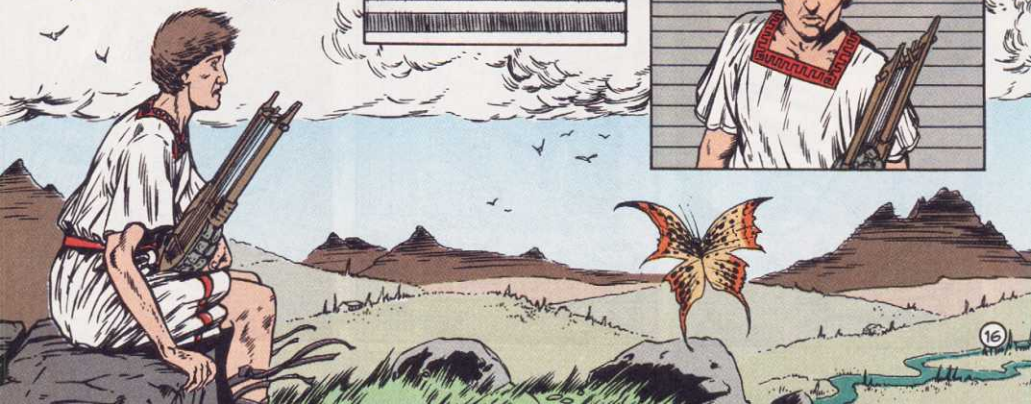
I AM NO LONGER YOUR SON.



Orpheus! Come back here now.




NO.











THAT'S THE STUPIDEST  
THING I'VE HEARD IN  
CENTURIES.



**HAHAHAHAHA!**

OH, ORPHEUS,  
YOU'RE A STRANGE CHILD.  
I THINK YOU ARE MORE IN  
LOVE WITH THE IDEA OF YOUR  
DEAD LOVE THAN YOU EVER  
WERE WITH THE GIRL  
HERSELF...

TAKE THAT  
BACK. YOU WILL TAKE.  
THAT BACK, OR I'LL...




CALM  
DOWN.

OR I'LL THROW  
YOU UP IN THE AIR AND  
CATCH YOU, AS I DID  
WHEN YOU WERE A  
MITE SMALLER...



TAKE THAT  
BACK. YOU WILL TAKE.  
THAT BACK, OR I'LL...



OLETHROS!  
YOU WOULDN'T  
DARE...




HAAH HAHA  
HAHA! TRY ME,  
LAD. JUST TRY  
ME.

NOW-- YOU'VE  
SPOKEN TO YOUR  
FATHER, I TAKE  
IT.



YES.  
HE WAS NO  
HELP.

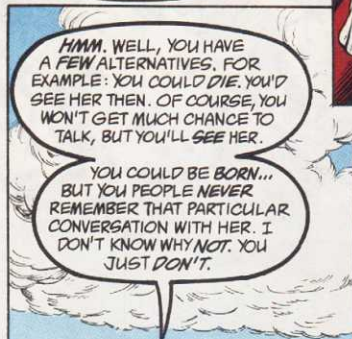
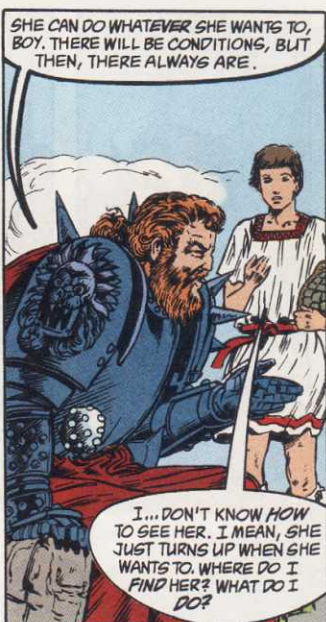


HE'S A DARK ONE,  
YOUR FATHER. HE DOES  
CARE FOR YOU, THOUGH...

HE HAS A  
STRANGE WAY OF  
SHOWING IT.

AYE. BUT THAT'S  
HIS WAY. HE'S SET IN  
HIS WAYS.









**BWOOM!**



THROUGH THERE.



WILL SHE SEE ME?



OH, AYE. SHE'LL GEE YOU.



SOONER OR LATER, SHE SEES EVERYONE.









THERE IS THAT ANY BETTER?

PERHAPS...  
I DO NOT KNOW...



SO YOU MADE IT HERE. I'M IMPRESSED. WHAT DO YOU WANT?

A WEDDING GIFT. TO REPLACE THE ONE YOU TOOK FROM ME.



IT WAS HER TIME TO GO, ORPHEUS. PEOPLE DIE. IT'S OKAY. IT HAPPENS.

GO ON WITH YOUR OWN LIFE. YOU HAVE MANY THINGS TO DO: MANY SONGS TO PLAY AND TO SING.



NOT WITHOUT HER.


GIVE HER BACK TO ME, TELEUTE.



I WISH I COULD, ORPHEUS. SHE'S NOT MINE ANY MORE. SHE'S IN THE UNDERWORLD. THAT'S WHERE YOU PEOPLE GO. SHE'S IN HADES' REALM.

THEN I WILL GO THERE, AND I WILL BRING HER BACK.






THAT ISN'T GOING TO HAPPEN. YOU DON'T GO TO THE UNDERWORLD WITHOUT DYING FIRST.

BUT HERMES AND GODS VISIT THE UNDERWORLD. HERAKLES CHAINED CERBERUS...

LISTEN, IDIOT. YOU CAN'T GO TO THE UNDERWORLD AND COME BACK ALIVE. NOT IF YOU'RE MORTAL.

AND HERAKLES WAS FULL OF IT. HE JUST GOT DEAD DRUNK FOR A COUPLE OF WEEKS IN PHRYSIA AND TOLD EVERYONE HE'D BEEN TO THE LAND OF THE DEAD.



UNCLE OLETHROS SAID YOU COULD DO IT. HE SAID YOU COULD DO ANYTHING. HE SAID THERE WERE RULES, BUT THAT YOU COULD DO IT.

YOUR UNCLE OLETHROS HAS A BIG MOUTH. YOU KNOW THAT?




YOU CAN DO IT, THEN?

HM. DID ANYONE EVER TELL YOU YOU'RE A LOT LIKE YOUR FATHER IN SOME WAYS?

YEAH. YEAH, YOU COULD GO TO THE UNDERWORLD. YOU COULD EVEN COME BACK. ALL THAT HAS TO HAPPEN IS THAT I AGREE NEVER TO TAKE YOU.

BUT THERE'S A CATCH. RULES.



I DON'T CARE ABOUT THE RULES. THERE ARE ALWAYS RULES. ALL I CARE ABOUT IS EURYDICE.

LOOK ME IN THE EYES, ORPHEUS.



OKAY.



IF THAT'S WHAT YOU WANT, YOU GOT IT.

I... I THANK YOU, TELEUTE.

YEAH, I HOPE IT WORKS OUT FOR YOU.



BUT DON'T YOU KNOW? I THOUGHT YOU COULD FORETELL THE FUTURE...?

I DON'T NEED TO KNOW THE FUTURE. WHEN THE FUTURE'S OVER, THEN IT'S ME...



OKAY, SHOW'S OVER. GET OUT OF HERE.

GO HOME.

BUT...



GO TO TAENARUM, IN THE SOUTH OF HELLAS. THERE IS A GATE THERE THAT WILL TAKE YOU TO THE UNDERWORLD.



BUT...

"GO HOME, ORPHEUS."


"GO HOME."






# THE SONG OF ORPHEUS

C · H · A · P · T · E · R   T · H · R · E · E




THERE WERE NO SONGS SUNG NOR TALES TOLD OF ORPHEUS'S JOURNEY TO TAENARUM, OR IF THERE WERE THEY ARE LOST TO US TODAY.

A HARD TIME HE HAD OF IT. HE TRAVELLED, ON FOOT, BY LAND THROUGH THE WILD COUNTRY AND THE FEW SPARSE TOWNS OF THE OLDER DAYS.



FROM THRACE TO MACEDONIA, TO THESSALY (WHERE THE WITCHES GNAW THE FLESH FROM MEN'S FACES FOR THEIR SPELLS, AND PULL DOWN THE MOON FOR THEIR OWN PURPOSES); FROM THERE TO DELPHI (WHERE HE SPOKE TO THE PYTHIA, ALTHOUGH THE ORACLE SHE GAVE HIM IS NO LONGER RECORDED; AND HE RECEIVED A GIFT).

HE PASSED THROUGH THEBES, AND THROUGH CORINTH. HE ESCAPED THE DARKNESS THAT WAITED FOR HIM IN THE HEART OF CORINTH, FLEEING THROUGH ARCADIA.




ALWAYS HE WALKED SOUTH, WITH HIS LYRE IN HIS HAND, DEPENDING ON THE CHARITY AND FRIENDSHIP OF HIS FELLOWS; AND HE WAS UNUSUAL IN THIS: THAT HE WOULD NOT RAISE HIS FIST TO HIS FELLOWS, AND HE CARRIED NO WEAPONS.

THIS IN A TIME WHEN ALL MEN WERE WARRIORS.



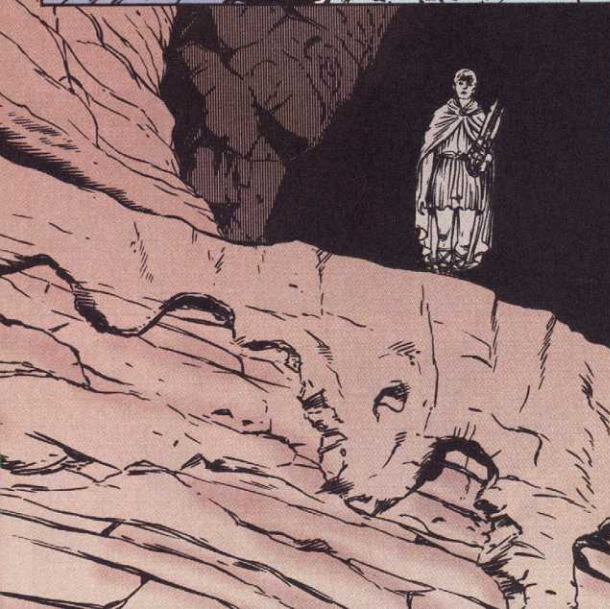
IT WAS COLD WINTER WHEN ORPHEUS CAME TO TAENARUM, THE SOUTHERN-MOST VILLAGE IN EUROPE.

ONE LEAGUE SOUTH OF THE VILLAGE WAS A PROMONTORY.



ON THIS PROMONTORY WAS A DEEP CAVERN, FROM WHICH FOUL AND NOISOME VAPORS ROSE, AND IT WAS THIS CAVERN THAT WAS POPULARLY SUPPOSED TO BE THE GATEWAY TO THE UNDERWORLD.













YOU ARE NOT DEAD.



I HAVE COME TO SPEAK TO YOUR LORD AND LADY. WILL YOU TAKE ME TO THEM?

OH SO? WHAT HAVE YOU BROUGHT FOR ME?



A SPRIG OF MISTLETOE; A GIFT FROM THE ORACLE AT DELPHI.



THE BOUGH OF GOLD. AYE, THAT IS THE PAYMENT FOR THE LIVING, THOUGH IT'S RARELY I'VE SEEN IT. FROM THE DEAD I WOULD TAKE A PENNY, TO FERRY THEM ACROSS THE STYX.

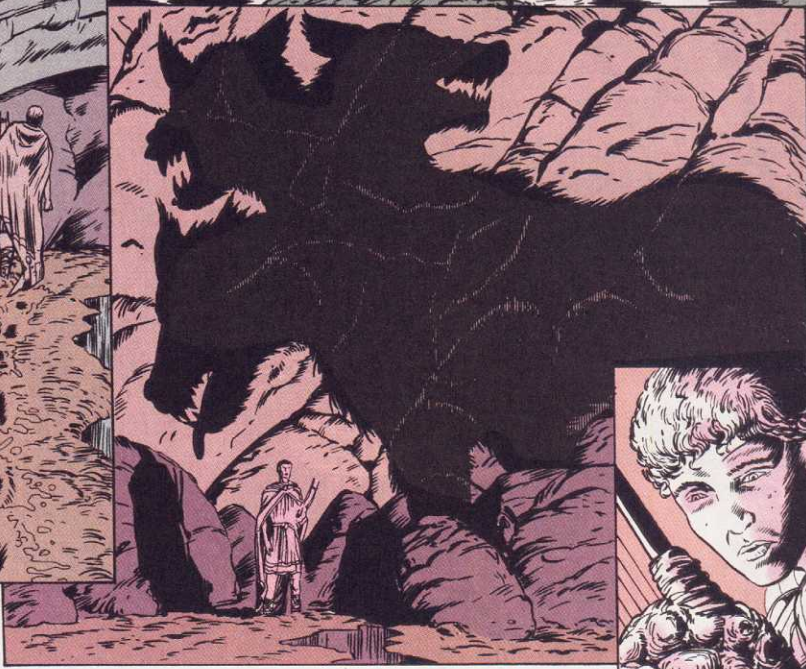
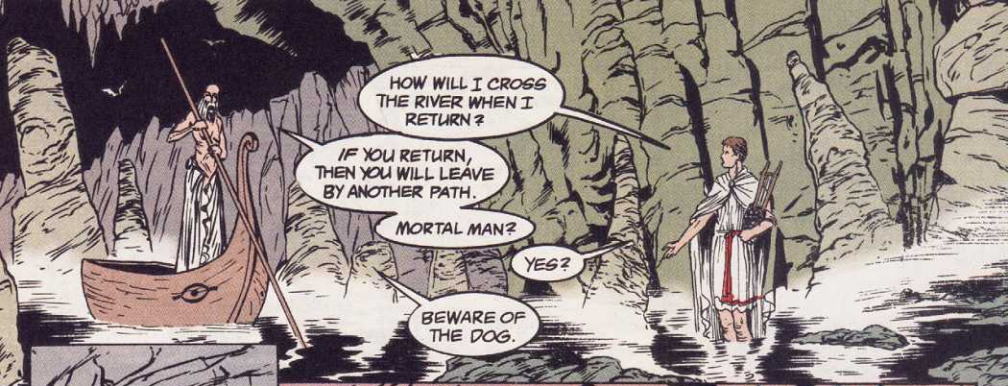
VERY WELL. ENTER.



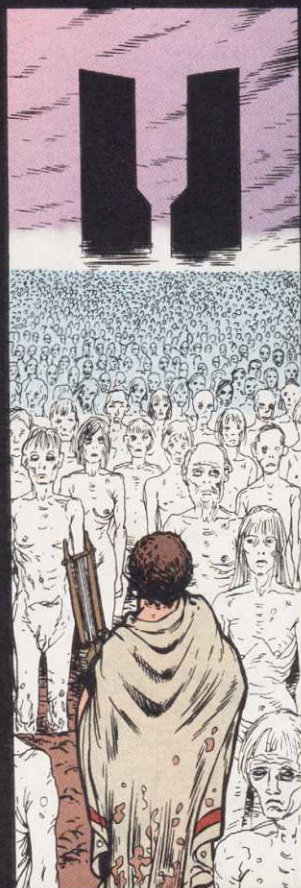
















KING HADES.  
QUEEN PERSEPHONE.  
I GREET YOU.

WELL, WELL,  
WELL, ORPHEUS, THE  
BALLADEER.


HAVE YOU  
A SONG FOR US, THEN,  
LITTLE MORTAL MAN?



YES,  
YES,  
I DO.





A man with curly brown hair, wearing a white tunic and a grey cloak with a red circular brooch, stands in the center. He is playing a lyre. He is surrounded by a large crowd of pale, emaciated, and lifeless-looking people with long, straight hair. The background shows a dark, cavernous landscape with jagged rock formations.


I SING OF ONLY TWO THINGS: LOVE AND TIME.  
I JOURNEYED TO THIS WORLD BELOW, TO WHICH  
ALL BORN AS MORTALS MUST DESCEND IN TIME.

I CAME TO PLEAD WITH YOU, GREAT KING, GREAT QUEEN.  
I SING AN HONEST SONG, AND I WILL TELL  
THE TRUTH, UNVARNISHED, AND IN MY OWN WAY.

The man is seen from behind, playing the lyre. The crowd of the dead is dense around him. In the background, several figures are seen falling or floating in the air. The lighting is dramatic, with strong highlights and deep shadows.

I CAME BECAUSE MY WIFE WAS KILLED BEFORE  
HER DAYS IN LANDS ABOVE WERE DUE TO END.

EURYDICE DISTURBED A SERPENT AND IT POURED  
ITS POISON DEEP INTO HER PRECIOUS VEINS.

A close-up of a woman's face with long, straight hair. Her eyes are wide and staring, and her expression is one of intense grief and despair. She is surrounded by other people in the background, some of whom are also looking towards the man.

I WAS NOT STRONG ENOUGH TO BEAR MY GRIEF.  
LOVE WAS TOO STRONG FOR ME, AND DRAGGED ME DOWN.  
THE POWER OF LOVE IS STRONG IN LANDS ABOVE.



"AND LOVE IS KNOWN HERE TOO,  
IF ALL THE TALES  
OF PASSION, AYE, AND RAPE  
SO LONG AGO  
HAVE ANY TRUTH OR HONESTY  
TO THEM.

"THEY SAY YOU TWO WERE  
BOUND AS ONE BY LOVE.



"I BEG YOU, BY THESE SILENT  
REALMS, TO WEAVE  
AGAIN THE DESTINY, OF ONE  
WHO DIED TOO SOON.



**Ixion's Wheel stands  
still with wonder.**

"FOR WE THE LIVING WILL BE  
YOURS ONE DAY  
AND ALL WE HOPE AND FEEL  
AND TOUCH AND DREAM,  
ALL WE HOLD DEAR, WILL  
WITHER AND BE GONE.



**The vultures cease to  
gnaw Tityus's liver.**

"FOR AT THE END, WITH PENNIES  
ON OUR EYES,  
WE DIE, AND ROT. AND THEN,  
AS HOLLOW GHOSTS  
WE'LL DWELL BELOW: OUR LAST,  
OUR FINAL HOME.



**Tantalus makes no effort  
to satisfy his hunger or thirst.**



OH KING, OH QUEEN. MY WIFE, LIKE ALL THE REST WILL SOON BE YOURS. I ASK YOU FOR A GIFT, A TINY BOON. I ASK YOU FOR HER LIFE, AND ONLY FOR A SHORT SPAN ON THIS EARTH.



BUT IF YOU CANNOT GRANT THAT, THEN I WISH NOT TO RETURN TO LANDS THAT SEE THE SUN.

AND YOU MAY HAVE MY LIFE AS WELL AS HERS.



THOU HAST MADE THE FURIES WEEP, ORPHEUS. THIS IS UNHEARD OF.

A NICE OFFER, BUT POINTLESS. THOU DOST NOT BELONG HERE, MORTAL.



GIVE ME MY BRIDE AND I WILL LEAVE THIS PLACE.

THOU ART DISRUPTING MY PERFECTLY-ORDERED WORLD, ORPHEUS.


SO BE IT. BUT THERE ARE CONDITIONS. THERE ARE RULES.

THERE ARE ALWAYS RULES.

THOU HAST MADE THE FURIES CRY, ORPHEUS. THEY WILL NEVER FORGIVE YOU FOR THAT.








NONE LEAVE THE UNDERWORLD BY THE WAY THEY CAME TO IT. THERE IS A PATH THAT LEADS UPWARDS. FOLLOW THAT PATH AND DO NOT DEVIATE FROM IT.

NOW LEAVE.


GO THOU BACK TO THE WORLD ABOVE, AND EURYDICE SHALL FOLLOW THEE AS THY SHADOW.



BUT HALT NOT, SPEAK NOT, TURN NOT TO LOOK BEHIND THEE, TILL YE BOTH HAVE LEFT OUR KINGDOM AND GAINED THE UPPER AIR OF YOUR NATIVE THRACE.

AND THEN, AND ONLY THEN, SHALL SHE BE THINE.

DO NOT LOOK BACK.



BUT THRACE IS MANY HUNDREDS OF LEAGUES AWAY...

NO. ALL LANDS LIE ABOVE THE UNDERWORLD.


NOW GO, LITTLE MAN.

I THANK YOU, LORD HADES, LADY PERSEPHONE.




HE LEFT THAT PLACE. AND THE DARK LAUGHTER OF HADES FOLLOWED HIM FOR MANY LEAGUES.





AFTER SOME HOURS THE  
LAST ECHOES OF THE  
LAUGHTER DIED AWAY,  
AND ORPHEUS WALKED  
IN SILENCE.




HE COULD HEAR HIS HEART  
BEATING. HE COULD HEAR  
HIS SANDALED FEET  
PADDING ON THE COLD  
STONE.




HE HEARD THE BLOOD IN  
HIS EARS, RUSHING LIKE  
A DARK TORRENT.

HE HEARD NOTHING.




IN OBEDIENCE TO HADES' COMMAND,  
HE KEPT HIS EYES FIXED ON THE  
GLOOM AHEAD OF HIM.



AS THE HOURS PASSED,  
THE CONVICTION GREW  
THAT HE WAS ALONE.  
THAT THERE WAS NO ONE  
BEHIND HIM.

HE REMEMBERED HADES'  
LAUGH AS HE WALKED IN  
THE SILENCE.



AND IN THE END, DAYLIGHT.



ALONE.

COLD, DISTANT DAYLIGHT  
AHEAD OF HIM.

HE KNEW HE  
WAS ALONE.

HE WAS THE BUTT OF HADES'  
JOKE. AND HE--

AND HE --

HE LOOKED  
BACK.



ORPHEUS?

MY LOVE?

"EURYDICE?"

NO.

**NO!**

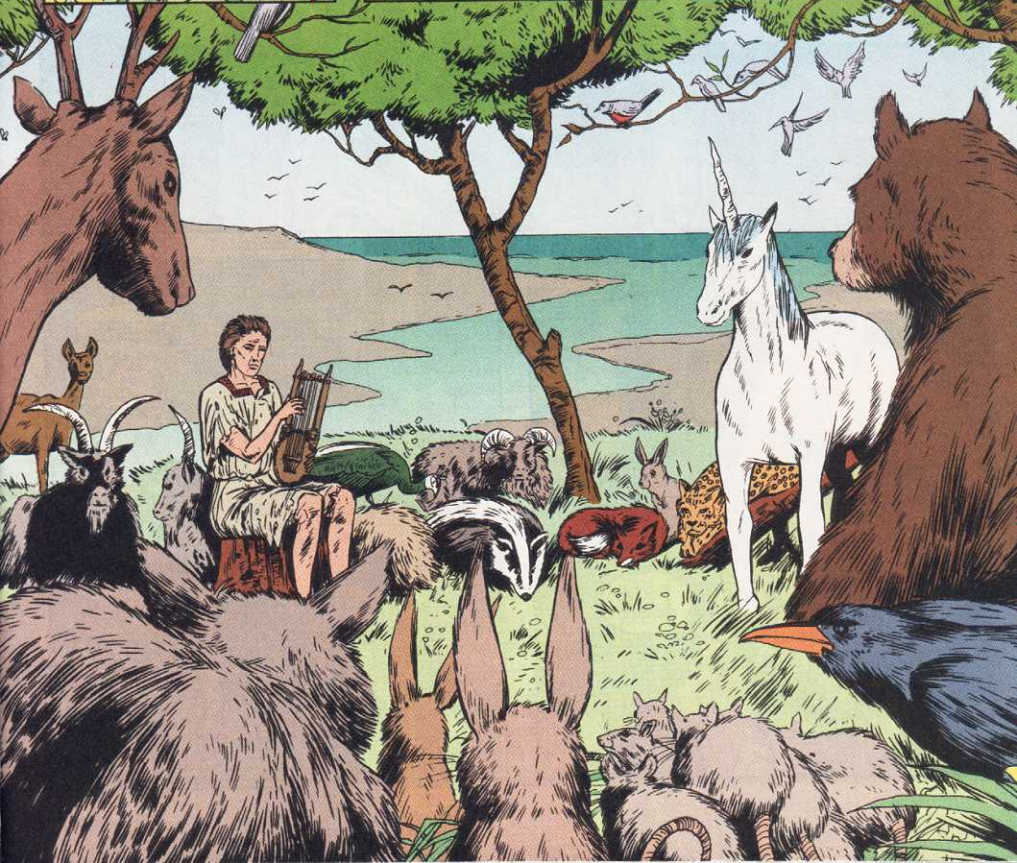
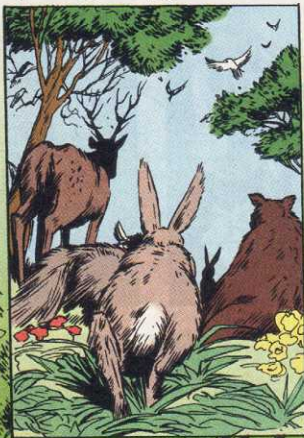
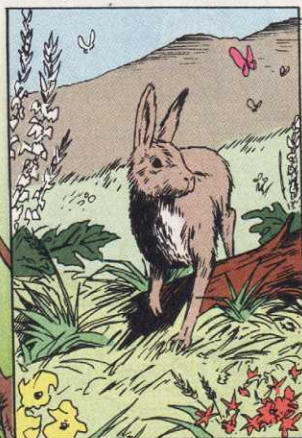




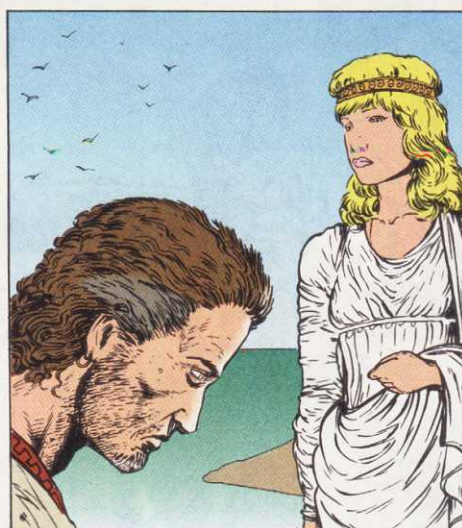
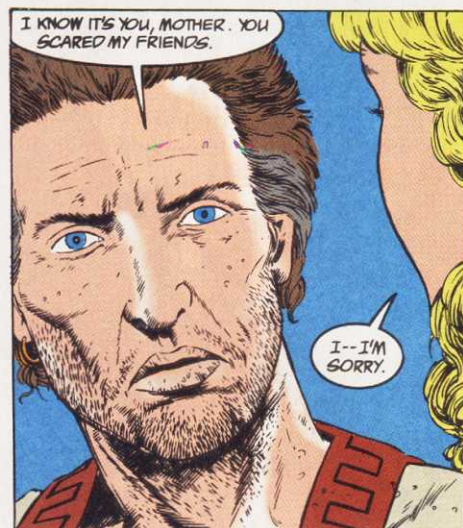
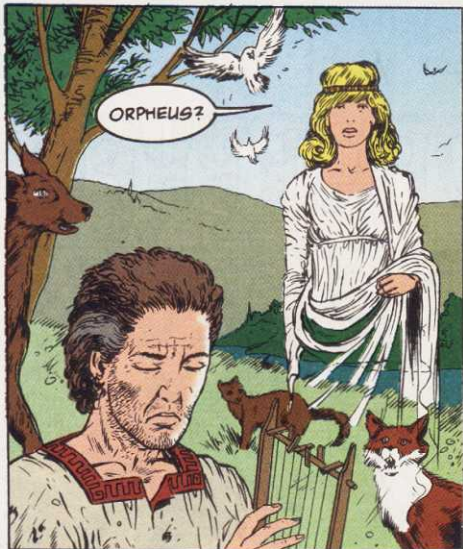
# THE SONG OF ORPHEUS

C · H · A · P · T · E · R

F · O · U · R











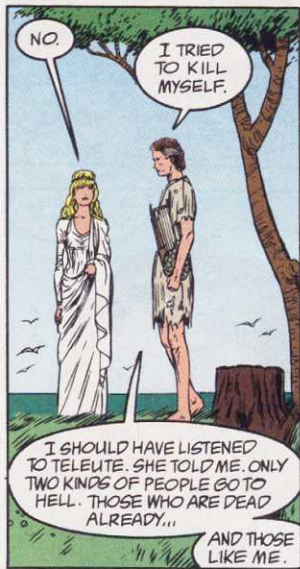




YOU SHOULD LEAVE THE WILDERNESS, ORPHEUS. IT WOULD DO YOU GOOD TO BE AMONG PEOPLE.

PEOPLE HURT YOU. PEOPLE LEAVE. I STAY HERE.

MOTHER? WHEN I RETURNED FROM THE OTHER PLACE, DO YOU KNOW WHAT I DID?

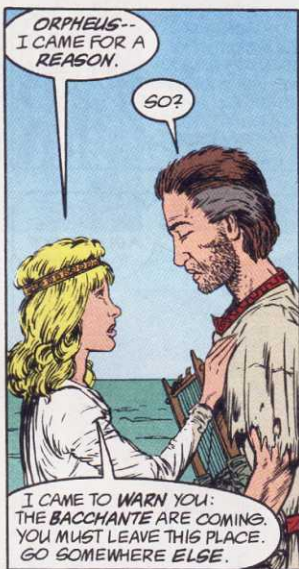


NO.

I TRIED TO KILL MYSELF.

I SHOULD HAVE LISTENED TO TELEUTE. SHE TOLD ME ONLY TWO KINDS OF PEOPLE GO TO HELL. THOSE WHO ARE DEAD ALREADY...

AND THOSE LIKE ME.



ORPHEUS-- I CAME FOR A REASON.

SO?

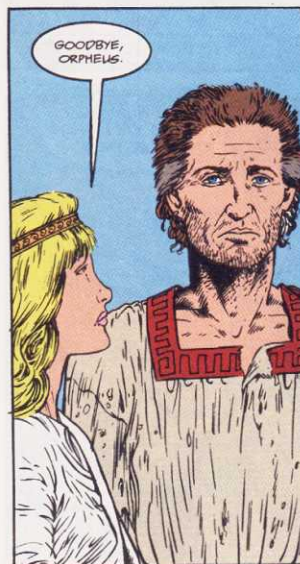
I CAME TO WARN YOU: THE BACCHANTE ARE COMING. YOU MUST LEAVE THIS PLACE. GO SOMEWHERE ELSE.



I DO NOT CARE ABOUT THE BACCHANTE.

THEY ARE DANGEROUS, MY SON. THE SISTERS OF THE FRENZY. AND THEY ARE COMING HERE.

I DO NOT CARE ABOUT THE BACCHANTE.



GOODBYE, ORPHEUS.











WE ARE THE BACCHEAE. JOIN US IN OUR WORSHIP.



DRINK WINE WITH US.



MAKE LOVE WITH US.



EAT RAW FLESH WITH US.

REJOICE WITH US.



I...WOMEN...LADIES... I AM SORRY. I WILL NOT-- CANNOT--TAKE PART IN YOUR RITUALS.

I WILL NOT MAKE LOVE WITH YOU.



THERE IS ONLY ONE WOMAN I HAVE LOVED. TO WHOM I COULD HAVE GIVEN MY LOVE, AND SHE IS GONE.

LEAVE IN PEACE. PLEASE.



WE ARE THE BELOVED OF DIONYSUS, MAN. YOU DO NOT GIVE. WE TAKE.

NO...



UT.









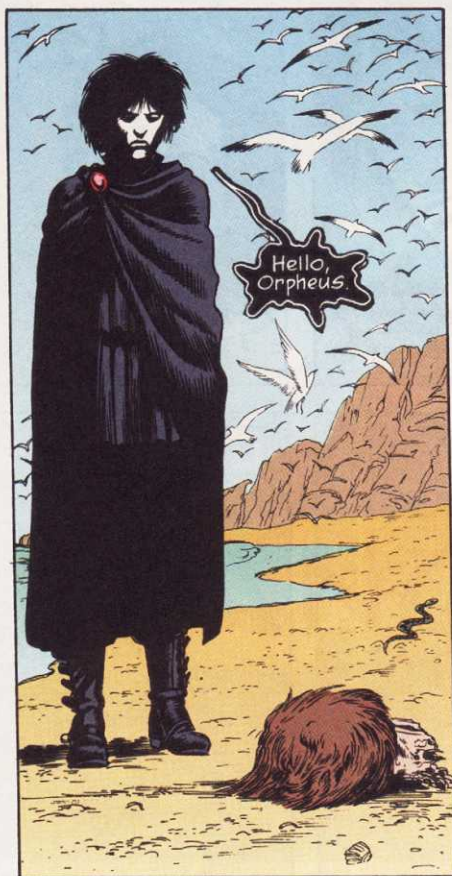


# THE SONG OF ORPHEUS

ε . Ρ . Ι . Λ . Ο . Γ . Ο . Υ . Ε



"FATHER?"



Hello,  
Orpheus



You were unwise  
to seek favors of  
Death. BUT you have  
made your own  
errors. It was  
your own life.



I have come  
to say goodbye.

It seemed  
the proper thing  
to do.







# A GALLERY

## **DESTINY**

*Tom Canty*

Destiny is the oldest of the Endless, in the Beginning was the Word, and it was traced by hand on the first page of his book, before it ever was spoken aloud.

## **DEATH**

*Dave McKean*

"I'm not blessed, or merciful. I'm just me. I've got a job to do, and I do it."

## **DREAM**

*Barry Windsor-Smith*

Dream accumulates names to himself like others make friends, but he permits himself few friends.

## **DESIRE**

*Craig Russell*

Desire is everything you have ever wanted. Whoever you are. Whatever you are. Everything.

## **DESPAIR**

*Duncan Fegredo*

Despair says little and is patient.

## **DELIRIUM**

*Simon Bisley*

Delirium was once Delight. And although that was long ago now, even today her eyes are badly matched.

## **MATTHEW AND EVE**

*Kent Williams*

Matthew died in dreams as a man, and lives in dreams as a raven. Eve, if she ever lived or died, did it in the dawn times, now she is his lover, his mother, his wife — as she is for all men.

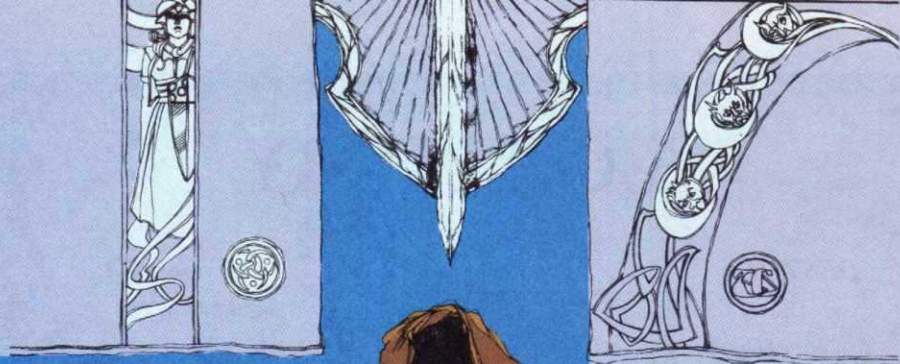
## **CAIN AND ABEL**

*Sergio Aragonés*

And the LORD said unto Cain, Where is Abel, thy brother? And he said, I know not, am I my brother's keeper?

Genesis, Chapter 4, Verse 9







FROM DREAMS I CONJURE A HAND  
FUL OF YELLOW GRAIN  
I THROW THE GRAIN INTO THE AIR  
AND I HEAR THE SOUND  
OF THE SOUVENIR  
MACHINE



DEATH  
DAVE MCKEAN

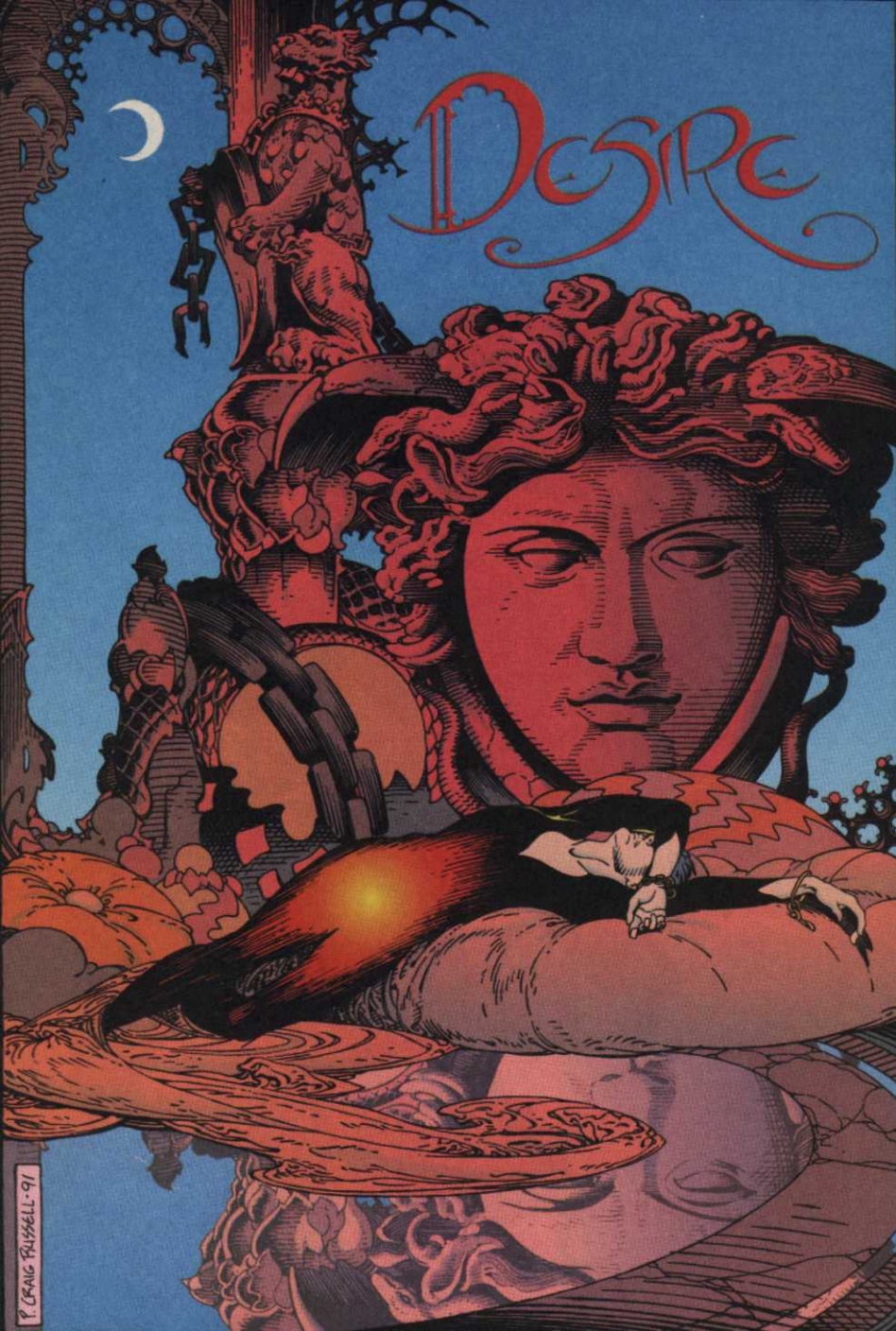




BWS



# DESIRE







Happy  
Mundanes

Federico  
71





SIMON BIZ 91  
MAN.









ARAGONE



# LETTERS IN THE SANDMAN



DC COMICS INC.  
1325 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10019

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Dear Mr. Gaiman,

Mate. Crack a tube. Sheila. Never-you-mind. Beaut. Bloody. Strewth. I'm sorry, but those words and phrases are not used by many Australians anymore. And those who might still use them would not use them all in one five-minute conversation.

This happens every so often when an Australian character is used in a comics story. For some reason, the dialogue has to be strewn with over-the-top Australianisms. If you really want to label someone as an Australian that way, why not also draw them holding a pie and a tinny?

The dialogue of the Australian man in THE SANDMAN #28 was stereotypical. It reminded me of the sort of caricatures Barry Humphries used in his "Barry McKenzie" strip of the late '60s. Even then, the dialogue was an exaggeration.

A stereotype is either a kind of laziness, or a kind of lie. Have you seen the way Limeys are portrayed in some American films (e.g., Three Men and a Little Lady)? How about the way Yanks are done in some English films (e.g., Whoops Apocalypse)? Not only does the dialogue sound wrong, but if you're from the group being misrepresented, you feel faintly insulted.

I suggest reading some contemporary Australian comics such as FOX and Eddie Campbell's stuff if you want to get a better feel for Australian tempos and idioms. Even Crocodile Dundee is closer to the truth, and that's still an outrageous stereotype.

Jeze! What with all this flamin' whingin', I reckon a bloke 'asn't even got the time to say what a bloody good read the SANDMAN is!

Andrej Panjkov  
7/109 Wilson Street  
North Carlton  
Victoria, Australia

P.S. "G'day" is used fairly commonly (but not universally).

*Neil tries to be as accurate as possible in capturing the flavor of people's speech. In this case, he ran the Australian dialogue past a fellow countryman of yours, Andrej. Still, speech patterns change all the time and it's difficult for any writer not living in a country to depict that country's slang and dialect perfectly. There was absolutely no intention to insult Australians—even faintly.*

\*\*\*\*\*

Dear Dreamers:

The most beautiful of Morpheus' realms holds me too fast, in that arena of mind I call nostalgia. I have been out of college for only a month now, my four-year degree in English Literature complete save for the paperwork, and even though my money is scarce as yet, I nevertheless am powerless to restrain myself from slapping down a buck and a half for the latest installment of THE SANDMAN.

This closing issue of "Season of Mists" sends me back to the past year, when my friends at school and I found ourselves continuously in suspense and ecstasy with each coming issue. There was Dringenberg's tell-tale homecoming, indicating a return to the source for original characterizations. I remember Martha, the most social Engineering student I've ever known, gleefully expressing the surprise I'd experience once I got my copy of #23, when Lucifer and Dream had their "confrontation." Then there was the heartbreak of Wagner's issue coming out somewhat shabbily, and yet his talent I'd adored for years evinced itself at least through the depiction of Morpheus on page two, center. I remember musing with Josef, one of the half-dozen Folklore majors in our class of thousands, over who the missing sibling would be. He said Lobo ("the Destroyer"), I said Deus, as I believed Gaiman had some social statement up his sleeve. We'll see yet, no doubt.

I remember doing my extra-credit paper on "Miltonic influences" in SANDMAN, and receiving #22 right before deadline, when Lucifer quoted the guy straight off. Michele, my Milton classmate, had only loathed comics before, yet my persuasive assurances (and complete stock of back issues) eventually guaranteed her inclusion amongst your fans. Josef couldn't believe I actually could get academic recognition for my SANDMAN insights, but once I did, he went on the next semester to do an inde-

pendent study that focused upon magic in contemporary lore (Gaiman's other excellent effort of the year was also a quite heavy contributor). How strange to think back now at that: a student waiting for a comic book to come out in order to complete his assignments.

We scattered so fast after graduation. Josef home to Dallas, Martha to her next internship, Michele stayed in Philadelphia, and I came home to Boston. We avoided goodbyes, and we're slow to catch up with each other at this point, but with each SANDMAN, we'll remember, and we'll dream about the absent friends, the lost loves, and the old gods we shared in our lives, both in the pages of SANDMAN, and in the daily rituals of academia. Our season together mists over in memory, as time takes us apart. Now we're all out on the streets in a recession economy, seeking to achieve, to find hope, to overcome adversity.

"And may each and every one of us always give the devil his due."

Thank you, Neil and the rest, for giving the world a beautiful and enchanting series, for continually giving us a fantastic world into which we could not only escape, but also apply to our studies and our friendships. Best of luck to the future.

Jonathan Burns  
7 Humboldt Street  
Cambridge, MA 02140

*Thank you for your eloquent words of praise, and the best of luck to all of you.*

\*\*\*\*\*

Dear Reader:

Thank you for joining us in this, our first-ever SANDMAN SPECIAL. We hope you have enjoyed this tale of Orpheus. As those of you already under the Dreamlord's spell know, THE SANDMAN is a comic steeped in world mythology. In one of Neil's storylines, you may find yourself seated with the gods of ancient Egypt, Scandinavia, and Japan; in another, half-remembered figures from childhood dreams might reveal to you the answer to a question you asked yesterday. The themes, realms and epochs in THE SANDMAN range from the farthest shores of legend to the most contemporary of nightmares. You can no more predict where the next short story or storyline will take you than you can foresee the dream you will dream tonight.

Both new readers and old will find it easier than ever to own a complete library of THE SANDMAN, as hard-to-locate early issues of the title, as well as those impossible-to-obtain short stories, are now available in two new collected trade editions, PRELUDES AND NOCTURNES (issues #1-8) and DREAM COUNTRY (issues #17-20). As an added bonus, DREAM COUNTRY contains the script to issue #17, "Calliope," annotated by Neil Gaiman and Kelley Jones. In addition, a number of SANDMAN-related products are on sale this month.

Finally, we are proud to announce that THE SANDMAN has won some industry awards. THE SANDMAN won the Eisner award for best continuing series, and THE DOLL'S HOUSE won the Eisner award for best collection. Neil Gaiman won the Harvey award for best writer and the Eisner award for best writer on a continuing series, for THE SANDMAN. Congratulations to Neil and all the artists who contributed their considerable talents: Mike Dringenberg, Kelley Jones, and Malcolm Jones III; Charles Vess, Chris Bachalo, Colleen Doran, Michael Zulli, and Steve Parkhouse; Steve Oliff, Danny Vozzo, and Todd Klein.

Before we go, a special thanks to Talamah Gamah and Ieish, who designed Death's posh grock in this issue. (Yes, the dress really does exist.)

So, from all of us who tend the Dreaming, to all of you who add to Morpheus' realm with your imaginings, farewell. Until the next dream.

Karen Berger  
Editor

Alisa Kwitney  
Assistant Editor