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Jae Lee (Cover Artist)*

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The story is plotted by Gaiman and written by Spurrier, Hopkinson, Watters and Howard, featuring art by Bilquis Evelyn with cover art by Jae Lee.

Daniel, the lord of Dreams, has gone missing and it causes chaos in the kingdom of dreams...A rift between worlds has opened, revealing a space beyond the Dreaming. Meanwhile, a book from Lucien's library of all the unwritten books ever dreamed is discovered by a group of children in the waking world. Simultaneously, a new House appears—the House of Whispers—joining the Houses of Secret and Mystery in the Dreaming. Its proprietor is a fortune teller called Erzulie, whom the inhabitants of the Dreaming suspect may be responsible for all the strange goings on. Elsewhere, Lucifer has fallen again, only this time he might be in a Hell of his own design. And in London, a young boy named Timothy Hunter sleeps, in his dreams he becomes the world's most powerful magician, but in his nightmares, he becomes the world's worst villain, which future will become reality?

From the mind of Neil Gaiman, a new world filled with dreams and nightmares, all of his wonderful characters living together in a shared universe for a story unlike anything we've ever seen before.

## The Sandman Universe #1 Details

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Author : Neil Gaiman , Nalo Hopkinson , Kat Howard , Simon Spurrier , Dan Watters , Bilquis Everly (Illustrator) , Jae Lee (Cover Artist)

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# From Reader Review The Sandman Universe #1 for online ebook

## Arjun Iyer says

**Blurb: In the beginning, there was the Word, and the Word was with Dream, and the Word was Dream.**

Pardon the biblical nature of the blurb, but I could not help myself. Neil Gaiman's Sandman has always been to me like the first religious sermon one receives as a child; beyond comprehension, but possessing a certain gravitas. Over the years the exploits of Morpheus and his curious creations from the Dreaming have given me endless hours of discovery and fright and I'm happy to say that this new expansion to the universe promises nothing less.

Taking a cue from the original run, this issue begins at the end and as such the reader is forced to play a delightful game of catch-up as new characters, situations and conundrums are hurled our way in rapid succession. Each puzzle and it's respective pieces are exactly the kind of curiosities one expects to find in stories/story that find their point of origin from the Lord of Dreams.

The artwork for each character (who would subsequently hero their respective series) is unique and yet in total accordance with what one has come to expect of a story in Morpheus' realm. The first issue provides just enough introduction to whet the appetite and leaves the reader with an overwhelming sense of confusion, intrigue and curiosity. I look forward to reading all 4 series that shall expand this new universe and hopefully shed some light as to how and why this new universe came to be.

And just as I have done in the past, I shall receive this new religious experience with same level of curiosity and gravity as I did when I first picked up Sandman #1.

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## Christoph says

Verdammt guter Start, die Neugierde auf die Folgeserien ist gelegt.

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## Dan says

Despite the mostly positive reviews this seems to get, there's a few detractors. Some say it's a cash grab, as if all products for purchase aren't for cash. I'm not sure how they determine that other than they walked into this cynical. The other criticism seems to be that this one-shot didn't change their life and just acts as an introduction to the four series to be under this banner. All I have to say to that is, "duh."

Criticizing a thing for what it's attempting to be is like complaining about a musical because they kept singing. So, no, this one shot doesn't rip off the face of god and subject him to questioning thus revealing the secrets to life and the universe.

What it does aim to do, be a showcase for the upcoming titles under this banner, it's does well. So I grade it on that basis.

Daniel (the post-Sandman-reborn-king-of-dreams) is gone somewhere in the waking universe, and doesn't wish to be found. A rift of some kind is breaking the Dreaming. Mathew the Raven is sent to try and find Daniel. Along the way he stumbles across three other stories (the other three titles forthcoming).

The goal is to introduce some stakes and hints at what the four titles will be about. The Dreaming seems like it'll be an over arching story of some kind, and the other series all feel really weird and unique from each other (which I see as a good thing).

The fun of this "universe" is that it's such a different tone and feel than the rest of the DC universe.

So overall this one shot does what it's intended to do.

I haven't seen any signs that this is a soulless cash grab yet, and I'm willing to give Gaiman and company some good faith until they write stories to the contrary.

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### **Alexandra says**

First of all, I didn't give the 3 stars lightly. The art is stunning and refreshing after reading the previous series with the style of the 80s-90s. It's just that the plot seems to become more complicated, meaning that maybe we will not have many appearances of Dream-Daniel.

Of course I'll come back to these comics. It's Neil Gaiman and his writing has never disappointed me. I think though that I'll head back and read Lucifer's comics.

His story is intriguing.

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### **Brandon St Mark says**

An interesting opening issue, however some parts weren't that interesting. I plan on trying all of the titles that'll come out of this, but The Dreaming and Lucifer are the two that seem the most interesting to me.

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### **Wing Kee says**

A beautiful expansion of the world.

This is a single issue so I won't break down my review into sections like I normally do but share my general thoughts without spoilers. I loved the Sandman series for it's tone and it's pacing and this single issue feels like that, there are some parts that feel more but overall it's pretty great to recapture that feeling. The first section is wonderful and is exactly more of the stuff I want, Daniel and Dora and the characters in the dreaming will be a wonderful thing to explore again (fingers crossed for Death and the others). The Tim Hunter story is fantastic (he came before Harry Potter!!!), I loved the books of magic and I just want to actually get to see him develop and become what he is suppose to be for the DC magical world. The House of Whispers looks really interesting, much like Bask in the original books, I love more representation and visiting differnt cultures and mythology and their link to the dreaming and I hope that this is what we get

with the new series. Then lastly is Lucifer which I honestly don't really care for but then again I also did not care for in the original run either so let's see where it goes.

Overall the single issue did its job of getting readers excited about the Sandman universe, it was a bit choppy in transition between section but that's what Marvel and DC has been doing with specials to introduce series so it's truly par for the course. I'm excited!

Onward to the next book!

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### **Theediscerning says**

Many readers will be drawn here "with whispers that shone like silver foil and still-cooling eyeballs". It is indeed a welcome return to the librarian, the crows, and the godlike characters that never do what they are supposed to do (or, in other words, a "buncha myths and goddamn metaphors"). Read this - but don't read the blurb on goodreads. That's currently a precis of all five comic titles that will combine to create, er, something. I've always admired rather than loved the Sandman world, knowing it could be a little friendlier to the passing reader - which is not the same as easier. On this slim evidence nothing seems to have changed. So while some returning readers will cry into their soup over the new choice of cover artist, many will feel more than happy to be back.

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### **Mavence [semi hiatus] says**

*"There is a place, where--for as long as a sleeper can sleep--stories are spun"*

WOW. JUST WOW. I've plunged into this without any background of The Sand Man, Lucifer, Tim's story, and the Whispers. But, dang. For a short issue, this one had flung me into a surreal world I'm definitely going to fall in love. The illustrations were beautifully drawn and the details! **THE DETAILS GUYS** It's so freaktastic and I can't wait for the next issue this September!!!! Definitely an unexpected fave for this year.

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### **Artemy says**

For Sandman's 30th anniversary DC decided to celebrate with a blatant editorial cash grab, once again launching (or re-launching) a whole universe based on Neil Gaiman's famous comic book. This one-shot is meant to be a preview of the four new series that are about to start this fall, and none of them leave a particularly good impression. This is Sandman passed through a calculating corporate lens, stripping Gaiman's unique and distinctive work for its most marketable aspects.

Every segment features some great artwork, but the writing for the most part is just plain bad. The worst of the bunch without a doubt has to be the new incarnation of Lucifer — a character who only ever worked in Gaiman's own hands despite having had close to a hundred issues of other spin-offs and a TV show to boot, but this new version may be the worst one yet. Overwritten, dry and dull, Lucifer by Dan Watters is a series I definitely won't be picking up.

House of Whispers by Nalo Hopkinson had the potential to be something fresh and interesting since it's not really based on any pre-existing elements from Sandman other than the global concepts, but it also didn't leave a particularly memorable impression — the writing is once again too wordy and dry (a common symptom among most prose authors turned comic book writers), and the story just isn't there. I might check an issue or two if it gets good reviews, but I seriously doubt that.

Si Spurrier's *The Dreaming* just feels like a rehash/regurgitation of the main Sandman series. It's clearly meant as the flagship series in the entire line, but the first impression this issue leaves is kinda blah, and Spurrier's writing is all over the place. Bilquis Evely is absolutely killing it on art though, and that may be the main reason for me to check out this series in trade.

That leaves the rebooted *Books of Magic* by Kat Howard, based on Neil Gaiman's pre-Harry Potter comic book about a young boy in glasses who attends the magic school. It was probably the most readable short story in the entire collection (surprising, coming from yet another prose author), but the story itself also wasn't that interesting, so I'll be checking out the reviews before thinking about reading this one, too.

Overall, that was an extremely disappointing package and didn't get me at all excited about the new Sandman Universe DC is attempting to sell here. I know that Sandman is vast, which makes people think that it's open to so many side stories, but people also forget that there were dozens of Sandman spin-offs over the years already, and almost none of them were any good except for the ones written by Gaiman himself (someone would argue that Mike Carey's *Lucifer* was also good, to which I would reply "pfft"). Like I said, Gaiman has a unique vision and understanding of the world and mythology he created, and I think stripping it for parts just cheapens the experience. I really wish that this universe resulted in some good comics, but this one-shot tells me that it probably won't.

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## John says

A confusing rant written much too late at night.

Sometime ago, perhaps around the time of the New 52, or when it became evident to corporate and editorial that the reboot was a creative and commercial failure--a shift occurred. A crack formed in the DC Universe. It at first perhaps like the serpent's curse of Superman's symbol. Just a small little chip in the foundation. There was a lot of money being made in movies, tv and merchandising. Across the pond on the otherside of the Omniverse, The House of Ideas was thriving. We were supposed to live in a Prismatic Age! The nerds had finally won, so why was DC struggling?

The EDITORS and SUITS started to look jealously into the past and at these other mediums. Trans-media and corporate synergy became a buzzword as they peered across the polyverse and started to receive pressure to catch up. This crack was probed and picked at. Geoff Johns and Azzarello chipped blocks from Alan's House such as Sinestro Corp War, Blackest Night and Future's End. Characters such as Swamp Thing, John Constantine and Lucifer--once literary creations, were secreted and siphoned off as denizens of the New 52 to take part in the next crossover event.

As pressure grew, it was small knocks infractions--offering original creators a chance to revisit their treasured creations. Neil Gaiman wrote *Sandman: Overture*, Brian Azzarello did his 100 Bullet sequel, Brother Lono. But many resisted this beacon and sirens calls. Alan Moore flat up refused to entertain the idea of revisiting anything. Grant Morrison scoffed at doing more Invisibles.

And then things started to get less organic. More edicts started coming down. Instead of creating new worlds--DC hired it's best talents to killed and sodomize the body of their greatest, the Watchmen, with prequel series that no one needed or wanted. Brian Azzarello, Darwyn Cooke, JMS and other bravely stepped forward to mine the depths and steal glory.

There was resistance at first, the universe (and fanbase) shuddered at this. As time went on, the DC Universe was coaxed a bit. Morrison exposed a whole multiverse out there brimming with potential. And Frank Miller was disinterred and saddled with Brian Azzarello to write Dark Knight III: The Master Race.

Marvel was not immune--its greatest writers such as Bendis, Hickman and Aaron swallowed their own--destroying universes such as the Ultimate, Squadron Supreme and New Universe to mine and consolidate their latent IP into the grand corporate narrative.

Then the walls came tumbling down--it was a full crisis and all sorts of ideas, concepts and sacred cows came bleeding through. Scott Snyder was given much more of a lease than Grant Morrison ever was and he ran with it. Gerard Way was invited to bring back the weird and quirky with Doom Patrol and Kirby Dots with Yong Animal. Warren Ellis was plyed with Whiskey to reinvent the the Wild Storm universe (albiet lacking the sensationalist that made it so great).

Metal made all things permissible. Daniel (of the Endless) was revealed to be part of the regular DC Universe and what dreams did he see..

The New Age of Heroes was largely a failure that tried to emphasize artist over the writer. Instead, it was revealed the vastness of the Dark Multiverse was...overly familiar. The Terrifics found Tom Strong. Sideways found himself on the Seven Soldiers. Steve Orlando Unexpectedly resurrected Promethea, Aztek, and everyone from Grant Morrison and Warren Ellis' tenure. Who knew the Dark Universe was run on hypertime and nostalgia?

The DC Universe is swirling around with creative energy, but energy often siphoned of dead or underpaid giants. There are exciting things coming up to be sure--so that leaves us with the two most interesting initiatives-- the DC Black Label and as oft mentioned, returned Vertigo Universe.

Vertigo was a pinnacle of comics (in addition to the Wildstorm Universe and Nu Marvel, imo). But it was heavily rooted in the 80s and 90s. It looks very silly now. While part of the relaunched like is very progressively bent (which I like)--I feel the weight and emphasis on the Sandman Universe is misplaced, and the center will not hold for long. Gaiman is only marginally involved and his effort feels like ideas written onto the back of napkins and light tacit consent.

It will soon slip back into the void, and bubble up again in some other universe. It just doesn't feel like any of this matters. There's whispers of the Milestone Universe (M2) coming back, but it's been quite for a while.

My only hope is that the Black Label creates some genuine evergreen stories that feature important character studies and some fine art.

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## Heider Carlos says

This is a showcase for the upcoming comic books based on Neil Gaiman's Sandman. So we don't have

anything near an ending here. We got a lot of character or situations being introduced. And four new comic books where they'll unfold in the next months.

We knew that Sandman wouldn't be left alone for long. Too much money involved. And we already had quite a few comic books based on it, four of which are coming back: Books of Magic is one of my favorite Vertigo titles, and Lucifer one of my favorite Vertigo characters. I was never a big fan of The Dreaming myself, and we got a new House: the House of Whispers.

I'm not sure I can withstand Tim Hunter being introduced to the mysteries of magic again. I've seen it three times already. The Dreaming was never my thing. The House of Whispers might have an interesting story, but so far it did not catch my attention (but I liked the scenario).

The best thing seems to be Lucifer. More Bowie and self-centered, less Supernatural. The art is amazing, the tone pitch-perfect.

Sandman Universe feels cheaper than I thought it would feel. More like a comic book universe and less like our universe. Too many rules and formulas and expectations? I'm not sure DC can beat Image in new stories. They just don't give the same freedom. Sandman was big because Gaiman could make (almost) anything of it. And Sandman Universe reminded me of Sandman more than excited me with new possibilities.

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### **Sam Quixote says**

Like DC Universe Rebirth #1 a couple years ago, The Sandman Universe #1 is a one-shot sizzle reel showcasing the upcoming line's titles. And, like DC Universe Rebirth #1, The Sandman Universe #1 buh-looooooows!

There are four new Sandman spin-off comics on the way for any emo goffs still moping around to get their jizz in a tizz: The Dreaming and House of Whispers in September, Lucifer and The Books of Magic in October. This issue gives us a peek into what to expect from those titles: there's a rift in The Dreaming and Morpheus is missing; Tim Hunter's teacher is a witch; voodoo shenanigans abound in New Orleans (can you get more cliched?!); Lucifer's standing around somewhere looking at something.

Uh... no. Not a single one of these storylines looks remotely interesting. Ponderous, self-important writing, unimpressive art, boring, boring stories - this comic has ensured that I won't be reading any of this Sandman Universe crap. All this issue reminded me of was how bad all the previous Sandman spin-offs were. And, years later, nothing's changed!

I suppose it's apt that if you're looking for a sleep aid, this is the comic for you - The Blandman Universe #1 is one helluva snoozeworthy read!

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### **Michelle says**

Goosebumps! So happy to be back in The Dreaming. Artwork is amazing!

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## Al Young says

I regretted the book the moment I arrived home.

Damn you DC!

Why the buyer's remorse? Well, I saw something with Gaiman's name on it, and my Pavlovian instinct to pick it up kicked in. But, this is Gaiman "at the helm" on a book which is a jumping on point for some new Vertigo books.

Hell, I even fell for that. I usually complain about the way Vertigo is ran, but this actually sounded like a cool relaunch. This was an intro for four Gaiman-themed relauches- books that have potential for continued storylines like The Books of Magic, the Dreaming, and Lucifer.

But you can't count on DC and in their true recent post-Karen Berger style, they threw a bunch of nobodies on these titles and threw them into the lake to sink or hope that the Sandman logo will sell them.

Hey, I could be wrong, but I barely recognize this bunch. The only one I have heard of is Si Spurrier and he has, to date, not impressed me. I don't know the other names, and although recent years the comics industry has seen respected novelists make the jump; I don't seem to be pulling up anything with these guys.

So, again, DC is your local club that only lets cover bands play. Yes, if they let original bands play, they might be successful but they might bomb- better to go for expected lower but consistent returns. Vertigo is an important part of Comics History because Dc took a chance on innovative titles like Invisibles, Transmetropolitan, Preacher, Y: The Last Man, 100 Bullets, Fables and Scalped. If these comics were launched in 2018, DC wouldn't even touch them.

So it's Sandman Infintum, The Watchmen: The Medicare Years and Dark Knight Returns Once Again: DK222 (Though I am told if you didn't read DK221, you might be lost), because DC is only interested in letting play cover bands play at the club on the weekend.

The comic?

Forgettable. Having an overarching story would be a great idea if there was some payoff, but there does not seem to be. The art is mostly great (a couple of Mignolaverse artists got poached for the project I am told), but the story reads like a writing exercise.

This might not be the writers fault (I mean it might well be) that they cannot connect to the reader, since this is not a standard anthology and they seemingly get even less pages than the few they would get in an anthology setting.

Why isn't this an anthology? I don't know, though it probably helps sell more if it is dressed up like a Gaiman book. Also, I will say it has a lot pages. I am impressed they can stretch so much of a nothing into something that takes 10 minutes to read. That's surely some kind of sorcery.

This shouldn't have been \$5, it should have been a giveaway to get people to buy the new series. It's an ad. They \*maybe\* could have sold it for a buck. Hopefully, my local comic shop owner (a friend for the best

part of two decades, and a respected small business owner for the last 7 years) made a few cents off my purchase, because otherwise, I am at a loss for positives.

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## **Monsour says**

I'm giving this a 4 because reasons..

I have fix feelings on the ending. Actually I have mix feeling everything they introduce in this.

They didn't promise a Sandman Universe issue 2. They just introduce multiple series that some I care and some I dont.

Is this an:

Expansion.

World building.

Introducing us to the wider universe of DC after the Dark Knights Metal.

Fleshing Out.

A final farewell?!

Cash grabs???

Not sure.

Im gonna edit this thing after I figure it out.

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