



## The Sandman, Vol. 2: The Doll's House

*Neil Gaiman , Steve Parkhouse (Illustrator) , Chris Bachalo (Illustrator) , Michael Zulli (Illustrator) , Mike Dringenberg (Illustrator) , Malcolm Jones III (Illustrator) , Todd Klein (Letterer) , Clive Barker (Introduction)*

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A being who has existed since the beginning of the universe, Dream of the Endless rules over the realm of dreams. In *The Doll's House*, after a decades-long imprisonment, the Sandman has returned to find that a few dreams and nightmares have escaped to reality. Looking to recapture his lost possessions, Morpheus ventures to the human plane only to learn that a woman named Rose Walker has inadvertently become a dream vortex and threatens to rip apart his world. Now as Morpheus takes on the last escaped nightmare at a serial killers convention, the Lord of Dreams must mercilessly murder Rose or risk the destruction of his entire kingdom.

Collecting issues #9-16, this new edition of *The Doll's House* features the improved production values and coloring from the Absolute Edition.

## The Sandman, Vol. 2: The Doll's House Details

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Neil Gaiman , Steve Parkhouse (Illustrator) , Chris Bachalo (Illustrator) , Michael Zulli (Illustrator) , Mike Dringenberg (Illustrator) , Malcolm Jones III (Illustrator) , Todd Klein (Letterer) , Clive Barker (Introduction)

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**Download and Read Free Online The Sandman, Vol. 2: The Doll's House** Neil Gaiman , Steve Parkhouse (Illustrator) , Chris Bachalo (Illustrator) , Michael Zulli (Illustrator) , Mike Dringenberg (Illustrator) , Malcolm Jones III (Illustrator) , Todd Klein (Letterer) , Clive Barker (Introduction)

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# From Reader Review The Sandman, Vol. 2: The Doll's House for online ebook

## Zoe's Human says

The trouble is that this is better than the first one, but I don't want to rate the first one less than 5 stars because I love it. Can this one be 5 plus?

The story is darker in this one. Grittier. The first one was easing you into the universe. The real storytelling starts here.

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## Lyn says

The Doll's House, the second installment of Neil Gaiman's The Sandman series, is an entertaining offering of graphic novel collaboration.

Gaiman's imaginative storyline is brought to life by illustrators Steve Parkhouse, Chris Bachalo, Michael Zulli, Mike Dringenberg and Malcolm Jones III. Taking off from the introductory The Sandman, Vol. 1: Preludes and Nocturnes, this volume follows a thematic plot about a "dream vortex" about which Morpheus must contend.

Other vignettes featured continue to expand the Sandman canon and further demonstrates Gaiman's narrative skill.

The serial killer convention is especially noteworthy.

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## Bradley says

The Corinthian and the serial murderer's convention was rather special, and Rose Walker was somewhat interesting the first time reading this, but the second time? I think it was much better.

It's all about how we are shaped and what we shape, from feelings of listlessness (Dream), making a new life (the escaped dreams), or friendship with Hob, the humanity of Death, of Desire's machinations.

All of which touch on something deeper than a single series of comics should ever have a chance to commit.

Very impressive storytelling, and weird, full to the brim with images and sequences that go very deep indeed.

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## Algernon says

short review : WOW !!!

long form : The Sandman series gains in confidence and daring, leaves behind most of the influences from the original DC comic and takes flight on its own with the second volume. The eight issue story arc opens with **Tales in the Sand** : a look at the distant past of the Endless entity known as Dream. Like one of the Greek gods, he falls in love with a mortal - Nada, the queen of a prosperous African tribe. Their union is doomed, and all that remains is a cautionary tale about consorting with supernatural beings. The role of the opening is to show a weakness in Dream's armor - his interest in humans - and soon we will be introduced to **Desire** and **Despair** - younger twins in the Endless family - who plan to use this weakness to bring Dream down. The rest of the issue is about discovering what their plan actually is about, with the exception of no. 13 **Men of Good Fortune** . Like no. 9, it is about another interaction between Dream and a human: in 1389, Dream and his sister Death overhear Hob Gadling boasting that he refuses to accept the possibility of dying. Dream invites him to meet in the same tavern every hundred years, and the issue follows Hob's fortunes and outlook on life until the 20th century.

Cue to contemporary time, England and the narrator of the **Doll House** story. Rose Walker is coming from the States with her mother Miranda at the request of Unity, an old woman from an asylum. Unity is in fact the link to the story arc from the first book and the time when Dream was imprisoned on the mortal plane. While Rose returns to Florida to look for her missing brother Jed, Dream takes stock of his neglected realm and discovers that four of it's inhabitants are missing.

Brutus and Glob arer a pair of nasty nightmares who, coincidentally, are using Jed's dreams to built their own supernatural enclave. Best part about their story is a look at alternate Sandmans: humans who dream of becoming superheroes and right all the wrongs in the world. The Corinthian is another escaped nightmare that is responsible for the volume's horror part in his guise as a serial killer who gathers around him a host of other deranged individuals in a grotesque convention of the sick minded monsters. Fiddler's Green is the fourth and last escapee and the most elusive of the lot.

The title had a double meaning, referring both to the lodging house where Rose stays and the wacky characters she meets there, and to the morality of toying with the lives of mortals and of gods abusing their powers. A tall order that Gaiman manages very well, mixing the mythical with the modern and often aiming beyond the superficial adventure, at the fundamental questions of existence. The fact that he operates with anthropological avatars of philosophical concepts sure helps him along. Gaiman borrows from a wide variety of sources. For example, the triple nature of womanhood that is found in myths all around the world is seen both in the trio Rose - Miranda - Unity and in the return of the Maiden - Mother - Crone multiple personality character from the first volume (inspired probably by the Greek mythology Fates / Furies and used to good effect in another succesful series: Discworld by Terry Pratchett)

I have grown used to Mike Dringenberg art, it still feels blocky at times, but he is good at conveying motion

and emotion. I actually liked the guest graphic artists (Bachallo, Zulli) better than Mike, and I hope they will return in future issues. The covers by Dave McKean are poster material, works of art all by themselves.

I can't wait to get back into the series with volume 3.

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## Vladimir ?eha says

Sandman, Sandman, how do I rate thee... Ovo je ina?e drugi put da ?itam ovaj strip, prvi put nisam uspeo ni prvi deo da završim. Ne kažem da je loš, daleko od toga, svet snova je sam po sebi izuzetno bogat i zahvalan za istraživanje, ali opet mi utisak kvvari haoti?na naracija i crteži koji izgledaju kao skice. Nastavi?u dalje, ali i dalje se pitam zašto je Sandman na gotovo svim listama proglašen za jedan od najboljih stripova svih vremena. Meni je negde izme?u trojke i ?etvorke.

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## Sean Gibson says

There are, generally speaking\*, two diametrically opposing views held by people who do and don't read Sandman: Loyal Sandman readers tend to believe that people who don't understand the book's greatness are mouth-breathing knuckledraggers, and that the world would be a better place if said knuckledraggers' fathers had expelled the genetic material that resulted in their creation via a round of fellatio rather than implanting it deep within their mothers' wombs. Those who don't read the book tend to believe that even if loyal Sandman readers had the sticks surgically removed from their asses, they would suffer fatal accidents as a result of accidentally wandering into traffic while spending too much time spent staring down their noses at the capes-and-cowls crowd.

I'm somewhere in the middle. On the one hand, I appreciate Gaiman's creative genius; he thinks about the concept of story on a whole other level, and he's often able to apply that thinking in very satisfying ways (see, for example, the story in this book entitled, "Men of Good Fortune," which was brilliant). On the other hand, I have a tendency to get lost in the heavy philosophical frame narrative, which can bog down the pace of the story. On the third hand, I'm having a procedure soon to remove my third hand—please send flowers and chocolate during my convalescence.

On balance, I think this is a series well worth exploring, but, for me, it's not the kind of story I can binge in the same way I can other brilliant vertigo books like Transmetropolitan, Fables, or Preacher—mainly because Sandman makes my brain hurt in a way those other books don't, and it's not as biting satirical (yet hopeful) as Transmet, character-driven as Fables, or viscerally compelling as Preacher. Still, it's good brain pain, and I'm looking forward to diving deeper into Dream's world.

And, no matter how much I like it (or don't like it), I promise not to tell anyone that I wish they had been a blowjob or to offer a discount on ass stick removal.

*\*I'm totally stereotyping here for comedic effect, obviously...most comic readers are wonderful people who, whether they should have been oral ejaculate or struggle with rectal rods, get along famously with each other.*

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## Stuart says

### **The Sandman, Vol 2: The Doll's House - Gaiman hits his stride with a chilling cereal convention**

After reading the first three volumes of Sandman, I decided to re-read them again before moving onto volume 4. That's because you really don't recognize all the subtle hints, foreshadowing, character connections, and thematic elements that run throughout the stories. It's just like visiting a big city such as New York or London for the first time - initially you go to all the most well-known sights and tourist locations, the ones that everyone knows about. You eat the food and do the activities that everyone recommends, and have a good time. But later on you realize you've just touched the surface - there are a million unexplored side alleys, little shops, and interesting people to meet if you step off the beaten path.

To read SANDMAN is definitely to step off the beaten path of conventional comics. It eschews fist-fight action, superhero antics, conventional linear narrative, and revels in flitting between the dream world and the real world. Even the world of The Dreaming is infinitely varied, with demons both frightening and playful. And of course Morpheus, one of the Endless, is a very subtle and brooding character. Despite his powers, he is bound to manage the orderly dreaming of mortals, which is a pretty big job.

Vol 2 begins in unexpected fashion with an African fable, "Tales in the Sand", which initially makes you wonder, "Is this the same series? Where is Morpheus?" Of course on reflection you will see the implications and hints, but initially I wasn't sure what it was all about. As Brad has pointed out in his detailed review, Gaiman is drawn to storytelling and mythology like a honeybee to flowers - he can't resist sampling them in every shape and flavor. Reading SANDMAN, you get the feeling that Gaiman has read a very wide range of stories in his time, and loves to both practice and depict the art of story-telling in as many ways as his imagination will take him.

The bulk of Vol 2 consists of "The Doll's House", a very strange and often harrowing story that still is centered on a positive and innocent young woman named Rose Walker. Although Dream does appear in the fringes of the story, the narrative is centered on her, which makes sense since she is a 'vortex', attracting all manner of strange and supernatural beings. Morpheus takes an intense interest in young Rose, for reasons I will not reveal.

The story begins with Rose and her mother being summoned by a mysterious letter and free plane tickets to visit a woman in England named Unity Kinkaid, which should ring a bell for readers of Vol 1. Throughout this story arc, I started recognizing all the little connections with characters from the previous Vol 1, and realized just how intricate the larger story is. Knowing that there are 8 more volumes makes it exciting to imagine how things will develop, especially knowing that Gaiman avoids conventional stories and enjoys flitting between horror, fantasy, dreamland, and the mundane world.

There is a very strange and amusing story about an ersatz Sandman who inhabits the dreamworld, but there is a very sinister subtext lurking behind his bluster, and this ties in with some characters briefly mentioned in Vol 1 as well the main mission of Rose in Florida. She moves into a large old house with a number of VERY strange residents. I can't believe she doesn't completely freak out.

Then the story segues into "Men of Good Fortune", set in the Middle Ages of England. Once again we are treated to a new tale that doesn't appear to be directly connected to the main narrative, but actually ties in thematically with the art of storytelling, as well as an exploration of mortality and immortality that I really didn't appreciate until my second reading. You will encounter two familiar characters in the story, and it's

fun to see how their attire changes as the story moves through the centuries.

In “The Collectors”, we finally are returned to the “real” world, in which Rose Walker finds herself staying at a motel that is hosting a “Cereal Convention”. This whole arc is really a masterpiece of subversive humor and horror in equal parts, both lampooning comic/SF conventions and also exploring some of humanity’s darkest urges. It’s a balancing act that Gaiman seems to excel at. More than any other part, I did not catch all the wonderfully creepy details of this story until the second time round, especially in the brilliantly twisted dialogue among the convention-goers.

It is only in this story that I gradually recognized all the different story threads and how Rose, her travel companion Gilbert, the Corinthian, and Dream are all connected. It’s a very impressive piece of narrative storytelling, and the writing is very evocative. I’m starting to catch on now why SANDMAN is so highly praised.

Finally we see Morpheus become more directly involved with Rose in “Into the Night” and “Lost Hearts”. Their relationship is clarified a bit more and her nature as a ‘vortex’ brings them into a dramatic confrontation with an unexpected conclusion. At the end we see that one of Dream’s siblings has been meddling in his affairs, suggesting future possibilities. It’s an impressive and finely-detailed story arc, and I’ve only just begun the journey.

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## Alejandro says

### **An extraordinary masterpiece!**

#### Creative Team:

Writer: Neil Gaiman

Illustrators: Mike Dringenberg, Malcolm Jones III, Michael Zulli, Steve Parkhouse & Chris Bachalo

Letterer: Todd Klein

### **dOLLS & dREAMS**

*So, this is no man, no god, but something else.*

You know that this TPB is something else when Clive Barker does the introduction!

While I only read (so far) four of the first TPBs of *The Sandman*, at least in this moment I have to say that this is the strongest storyline.

The first time that I started to read it, when I reach the part of the “cereal convention”, I had an odd Déjà vu. I knew that I have heard about this concept before. An instant later, I realized where I thought I had heard it before and I couldn’t believe it. I had to check it out. I looked into my comic book collection and I found my TPBs of *Swamp Thing* and there it was! In one of the TPBs of the iconic run by Alan Moore in *Swamp Thing*

there was a story developed in a single issue about a serial killer and there he did a casual mention about the intention of serial killers around the United States about organizing a convention. And even the nickname of that serial killer plays a pivotal role in *The Sandman*'s story. But neither of them put any reference to the story of the other, because it's the reader who has to make the connection...

**...Priceless!!!**

Morpheus, the King of the realm of the Dreams, the very embodiment of Dream, is now back in business. He already got back his tools of office and possess all his power at full.

*Tall he was, and dressed all in black; flames danced in the blackness of his robe, and his eyes were stars in deep pools of dark water.*

Now, he is doing a census in his realm and disturbing news are found. Four of the major arcana big beings are nowhere in the realm of dreams. This isn't good for anybody. Those four beings are very powerful and they can do a lot of damage in other realms, specially in our realm, Earth. But in the middle of that something quite unusual appears, a Dream Vortex and it's a woman!

*For love is no part of the Dreamworld. Love belongs to Desire, and Desire is always cruel.*

Four powerful dream creatures are in the loose on Earth.

A Dream Vortex is in the rising.

A family is in the process of getting reunited.

A guest house has a very particular community.

A convention is held like no other before.

Another member of the Endless comes to stage and *desires* to play.

And everything is interconnected since coincidences are only for those who can't see the big picture.

Neil Gaiman shows his expertise as storyteller not only with the powerful story arc of *The Doll's House* but also in between with wonderful short stories taking us to the very beginnings of humanity showing cursed love affairs and through millennial dates of unlikely friends.

*The Sandman* at its prime, but beware because Dream is angry and this is not for the faint of *heart*.

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## **James DeSantis says**

Sandman feels like a heavy read. Sometimes when I see writers come from novels to comics I just don't think they get it. However, Neil Gaiman somehow crosses that line with ease, not too wordy, yet wordy enough to get me hooked.

Doll's House is a very different beast than the last story. This is one big continuous storyline. Rose walker is the hero of this story. She is able to see things others can't in dream world. On top of that though she is also on the search for her little brother who she was separated from 7 years prior. This leads us to multiple storylines all eventually connecting. We also get a short story in here about a man who escapes death thanks to Sandman and his sister deciding to let him live through hundreds of years.

Good: The art is pretty amazing. Filled with darkness, heart, and soul, it's all there. I also really enjoyed the Doll's House storyline for the most part. It starts off simple enough but the complexity keeps coming and by the end, when we end up in a killer convention, it all comes to something amazing and sad. Also love the cliffhanger. I also thought the short story here was well done and shows life can really be what you make it.

Bad: Sometimes the start got me a little bored. A lot of build up, some stuff in the end not paying off tbh, but that's about it.

Overall this was fantastic once more. A 4.5 easy and the 2nd half near flawless for me. I really am glad to finally check out this kickass series.

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## **Andrew says**

I used to stubbornly think that graphic novels had no intellectual merits other than for amateur entertainment (I know, pedestal). This series not only blew me away visually, but caused me to see graphic novels in a new light. Everyone should read this series.

Here's what i want to say, but someone else said it first and better than i could:

"Erudite, allusive, complex and ambitious, SANDMAN is undoubtedly the finest writing the mainstream comic book industry has ever seen. It dares to tell the story of Morpheus, also known as Dream, the Prince of Stories, one of the seven Endless who are not gods, because gods die when men stop believing in them. The Endless are older and larger than gods. Creating his own mythology, Gaiman incorporates all past mythology into his own - some specifically and explicitly, the rest by implication."

You don't even need to read them in order! (Although I did) I refuse to let anyone borrow and potentially destroy my copies.

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## **Shelby \*trains flying monkeys\* says**

I'm sorry Neil Gaiman..That first book in this series was kinda bland.

I think you way stepped it up in this book.

Yes, I know..you has some fangirls..err Kelly and Synesthesia..might want to send those to some fan mail..they got your back.

This one featured Dream guy but it actually made some sense..or did I drink the kool-aid?? Am I dreaming now..Now I'm paranoid.

I hate to give much away because these books aren't very long. So you gonna have to read these suckers.

Oh! Wait! I will tell you. If you check into a hotel with a "Cereal Convention" going on..you might just want to keep chucking on down the road.

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## **Bill Kerwin says**

The first volume of the Sandman was a fascinating experiment that enlarged the borders of the comic book world; this second volume is a fulfillment, a wildly imaginative narrative which is also a disciplined example of the story-teller's art.

In an excellent introduction by Clive Barker—one of the masters of modern horror—the author distinguishes between two types of fantastic fiction: 1) the most common form, in which “a reality that resembles our own” is invaded by the fantastic, which is eventually “accommodated or exiled,” and 2) the less frequent form in which there is “no solid status quo, only a series of relative realities.” Barker suggests that this second variety—of which Poe is an acknowledged master—is the more interesting of the two, and poses a question: “is it perhaps freedom from critical and academic scrutiny that has made the medium of the comic book so rich an earth in which to nurture this second kind of fiction?” I answer “yes,” along with Mr. Barker, and believe Neil Gaiman's “The Doll's House” to be one of the finest exotic plants produced by this rich soil.

The plot is based on the premise that occasionally a “dream vortex” is born who may unite the dreams of others into herself, becoming in the process a danger not only to our shared—and our separate—realities but even to the existence of the great Lord of Dreams. After a prologue, in which an old man of a desert aboriginal cultural tells a young initiate a story about the dire consequences of the love between Dream and the “dream-vortex” Queen Nada, we are introduced to New Jersey girl Rose Walker who is flying to England to meet her grandmother for the first time. During her week in London, and later, when she moves into her new rooming house, peopled with eccentrics, near her Florida campus, we begin to suspect that she may be one of those dream-vortices too, and we fear for her, and for our world also.

My favorite things about this narrative were the folk-tale purity of the old man's initiation story (“Tales in the Sand,” Prologue), the interlude which chronicles Dream's periodic meetings with a man who cannot die (“Men of Good Fortune,” Part 4), and the exciting and surprising conclusion in which an endearing fat Englishman with a sword cane—who is called Gilbert and looks suspiciously like G.K. Chesterton—does his utmost to save Rose Walker from what seems an inevitable fate.

This is a masterpiece of the genre. It is self-contained, and can be read with pleasure without knowing anything of the first volume. Then again, the first volume is very good too. Perhaps you should do what I am

doing: start at the beginning, and read them all.

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## Sam Quixote says

What do you do when you encounter a run of bad comics? Return to the ones you've read and loved before for a re-read! So it's doubly disappointing when a comic you thought you enjoyed way back when turns out to be kinda crappy – even more so when it's an acknowledged classic like *The Sandman*!

Morpheus has returned to the Dreamtime after being imprisoned for 70 years (see the first volume for how that came to be and how he escaped). He begins putting things to rights and sets off to round up his Nightmares who have escaped to Earth – among them is his most lethal creation, The Corinthian. Meanwhile, young Rose Walker discovers her grandmother is Unity Kincaid, the woman who slept most of her life in a side story from the first book. What Rose doesn't know is that she's also the Vortex – a being that could potentially destroy Morpheus' Dream kingdom. And, to save his world, Morpheus must kill the Vortex...

The first chapter sets the tone of this book, ie. rambling and overlong. A pair of African tribesmen go into the desert where the younger of the two is told the story of Morpheus' forbidden love with an African queen. It does have a point but, my goodness, does Neil Gaiman take his sweet time in getting there! In the meantime we're told a very banal fairy tale to fill the void.

From there the story plods its way through, primarily focusing on Rose Walker. Rose isn't a particularly interesting character but we spend an inordinate amount of time with her anyway. Rose goes back to America to look for her long-lost brother, Jed. She rents a room in a house that feels like a prototype for the house Gaiman will use in his later book, *Coraline*. Rose meets Gilbert aka Fiddler's Green and they bizarrely team up. Her whole storyline was so boring and it takes up so much of the book!

Morpheus and the Nightmares' storyline seems straightforward but it's teased out to be extra-long because that's Gaiman's style. The Corinthian repeatedly kills young boys and pulls out their eyes, and there's way too many sequences where Rose's brother Jed is abused in the basement of a house. That's the other thing that really bothered me about this book: how utterly dark it was. Gaiman in this book is still doing the Alan Moore thing of "dark = art" and I hate it.

I do understand why it's there: to show the dark side of Dream's world presenting a more rounded view of it, while also highlighting humanity's savage side. The Endless are, after all, there to serve living beings like humans, not influence them to do anything (though they sometimes do regardless!). This aspect of the book just comes down to a matter of personal taste – seeing mutilated dead young boys felt like a bit too far, especially in an otherwise whimsical comic.

After too many chapters Morpheus rounds up the Nightmares except the Corinthian who he eventually gets around to during the Cereal Convention, which is a disguised serial killers' convention - which seems like a funny idea at first but makes no sense when you think about it. Why would serial killers have a convention?! They're all loners by nature – that's part of what made them serial killers to begin with! Even this concept is run into the ground by Gaiman and FINALLY the Corinthian gets his when Morpheus appears.

But wait, there's MORE! Honestly, this book goes on and on! The "real" ending follows when Morpheus has to kill Rose Walker - what a cop out! I was expecting a tough decision to be made that would change the

character but a deus ex machina takes Morpheus off the hook.

There was one chapter in the book I liked when we're introduced to Hob Gadling. As we already know about Death and Dream, they're both kinda playful at times despite being Endless and they overhear Hob boasting that he doesn't believe in Death therefore he'll live forever. An unspoken agreement is made between Death and Dream as she allows Hob to live an eternal life and Dream meets up with Hob in the same pub in the same spot every 100 years. Seeing the ups and downs of history mirrored through Hob's extended life is fun and I like that it opens up Dream's character more – that someone of the Endless could be friends with a human.

One good chapter though out of many – that's not a great ratio! So much of this book is padding that it makes for the most laborious of reads. The storylines could've been tighter and Gaiman's numerous ramblings curtailed to much better effect.

I had it in my head that the first book was mediocre but the second book was where the series began to take off – but that idea is at least 10 years old. Re-reading it now, I found the second book much less driven than the first – and the first didn't feel that fast-moving either – nor is it as engaging. A Doll's House is Gaiman at his overindulgent worst.

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## **Brad says**

One of my favourite lines in film is from Bull Durham. Annie Savoy (Susan Sarandon) asks Millie how the sex was with Ebby Calvin LaLoosh (Tim Robbins), and Millie says, "He kind of fucks like he throws, sorta all over the place." And that is EXACTLY how Neil Gaiman writes.

He has mad creative talent. There is no denying it. But too often that talent is uncontrolled, chaotic and even bafflingly silly. The Doll's House, written back when he was just becoming Neil Gaiman (and probably had editors forcing his work to be more restrained, which is a scary thought), is packed full of brilliant stuff.

The "cereal" convention that turns out to be a convention of serial killers is wicked genius. The cast of characters who make up one of the titular Doll Houses -- Ken and Barbie, the Spider Women, flamboyant Hal, Sandman's missing Fiddler's Green (a landscape of mountains and rivers and foothills turned man), and Rose, the Vortex of Dream -- is fascinating and rich. And then there's Rose's brother, the foster boy imprisoned in a basement dungeon for seven years only to be liberated by the nightmare Corinthian; it is a truly chilling scenario (and deserved much more of Gaiman's time). But that's not all ... there's also a brief journey through time to visit an immortal man who rejects death, so he meets Morpheus in a pub that stands on the same spot every hundred years. In all of these we see Gaiman's imaginative brilliance. But it is way too much. So much that nothing spooky remains and Gaiman's ability to horrify dissipates with every clever and half-developed new idea he throws at us.

Any one of these ideas would have been enough to sustain a seven chapter comic book arc. Perhaps Gaiman could have used two of the ideas in tandem without things getting out of control, but all of them together is as wild as a mascot dropping, Nuke LaLoosh fastball.

Every time I read Gaiman, I hope I am going to love what I am reading, and there are parts I adore (in The Doll's House those things are Dream's little family war with Desire, the Collectors and "Men of Good Fortune"), but I always close the cover frustrated.

Control, control, you must learn control!

Oops, I think I just referenced too many movies. Sorry, but I was reading Gaiman, after all ;) I couldn't help myself.

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## Anne says

2.5 stars...possibly 3?

I had forgotten why I stopped after volume 1.

Now I remember.

I see why everyone loves and reveres this title, I really do. It's just not my cuppa. It's just too dark and trippy for me, and the art isn't something that I actually enjoy looking at.

*I'm not saying it's awful...I just don't like it!*

I *really* wish I could say that I *got* all the deep introspective stuff that Gaiman was saying, but...

Truth?

I'm a few tiny steps away from being completely shallow and silly.

Especially when it comes to reading material.

Although, I figure that it has to count for something that at least I'm self-awareish enough to know it, and honestish enough to admit it.

Or that's what I tell myself.

Anyway, Dream is hunting the vortex, who in turn is hunting for her little brother. Her little brother is being kept in a basement by hillbilly relatives who only want to collect a check.

The Corinthian is a serial killer that Dream...well, dreamed up. And he's currently en route to a convention being held by like-minded individuals. All the while there are all of these little side stories about other crazy people/things playing in the background.

Death (the only character I really liked) wasn't in this one, so that was a bit of a downer.

I already have volume 3 sitting beside me right now, and I'm sort of curious to see how things progress, but I'm just not sure if I'll end up reading it.

I have to say I didn't *hate* it, and I'm trying really hard to step outside of my box this year...

Maybe?

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## Panagiotis says

Απ? τον δε?τερο κι?λας τ?μο η προσδοκ?ες που ?χουν καλλιεργ?σει τα σχ?λια του Γκ?ιμαν και του συντ?κτη, πως ο πρ?τος ?ταν μια ?γουρη αρχ? και η συν?χεια θα ε?ναι λαμπρ?, επαληθε?ονται.

Ο Γκ?ιμαν με μεγαλ?τερη αυτοπεπο?θηση αποτιν?ζει τις συμβ?σεις του DC σ?μπαντος και παρασ?ρει τον αναγν?στη στον δικ? του κ?σμο. Δεν ε?ναι τυχα?ο που οι αναγν?στες αυτ?ς της σειρ?ς ε?ναι ετερ?κλητοι. Με τον τρ?που του το ?ργο απευθ?νεται σε ?λους ?σοι λαχταρ?νε μια καλ? ιστορ?α. Δε νομ?ζω πως υπ?ρχει ?μοι? του στον χ?ρο των κ?μικς. Η αφ?γηση και οι χαρακτ?ρες εκτοξε?ουν το ?ργο σε υψηλ? λογοτεχνικ? επ?πεδα και ?σοι γνωρ?ζουν το μετ?πειτα

ήργο του Γκίμαν θα αναγνωρ?σουν πολλ?ς εμμον?ς και γνωρ?σματα του Βρετανο?: οι θε?τητες με τις αδυναμ?ες και τα π?θη τους, οι συμβατικο?, αδ?ναμοι ήρωες αντιμ?τωποι με κ?τι τιτ?νιο που δυσανασχετο?ν με την μο?ρα τους αλλ? τελικ? ανταπεξ?ρχονται π?ρα απ? κ?θε προσδοκ?α, οι καρικατο?ρες, οι τρελο? και οι επικ?νδυνοι που παρελα?νουν σαν εφιαλτικ?ς θ?ασος, βασαν?ζοντας τους ήρωες της ιστορ?ας.

Εδ? ο Γκίμαν, συνοδε?α του καλλιτεχνικ? επιτελε?ου, λ?μπει. Ε?ναι τα πρ?τα μεγ?λα β?ματα εν?ς συγγραφ?α που ?μελε να γ?νει κ?τι ξεχωριστ? μεταξ? των συγγραφ?ων. Διαβ?στε ?ναν σ?γχρονο, μοναδικ? παραμυθ?.

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## Obsidian says

So this is the great Sandman I have been hearing about for years. I liked it. But can't say I was blown away by it though. Probably because for the most part I found the colors muddled and it was hard to read sometimes what characters were saying. And when I had to turn the graphic novel sideways to continue reading it that got annoying. Since thought bubbles tended to go over their individual panels I sometimes read things out of order too and had to go back a few times.

I am going to have to read Volume 1 next though. My friend mistakenly told me this was the first one to start with, but I hate reading things out of order.

This starts off with an introduction by Clive Barker. And then Neil Gaiman takes over and from there we hear of Morpheus (the Sandman) and how he ended up entrapped. Then it transitions to an older African village and a father telling his son a story about a city made of glass. I loved the imagery it evoked and could picture the city in my mind, as well as the Queen, Nada. I will say though we get the beginning of Morpheus's cruelty when the story tells us sort of what happened to her when she refused to marry Morpheus. I wish we heard about her more in this volume, but my friend tells me we do hear of her again.

From there it is 'present day' with Morpheus trying to stop a vortex (Rose Walker). And Rose Walker is giving warnings about what is coming for her if she doesn't stay vigilant. The first few issues of Rose going back to the states to find her missing brother Jed were interesting. But once again here's where I got confused, how did she and her mother lose him? Also how the heck did Rose's grandmother just magically find them through investigators like that. I had a hard time with her mother letting her go while she stayed with Rose's grandmother, but I let that go.

Once Rose moves in and meets her new housemates I was just resigned to everyone being quirky. I wanted the story to get moving and found parts to be slow. Why I am glad I got a volume so I didn't read this issue by issue.

I found things more smooth when we followed Morpheus around. I started to find myself bored by Rose. I didn't get the serial (cereal) killer guy at all (yes even after his reveal) and the eyes thing is going to haunt me.

And the ending was kind of a cheat I thought. Don't ask me how that whole thing worked, but I guess Gaiman wanted a happy ending. This graphic novel hints at something larger with regards to Rose and her family, so I'm curious enough to keep reading.

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## HFK says

Oh, shoot me a second asshole because I am about to rate a Neil Gaiman work with just two stars, I deserve all the wrath that is coming to me, I take full responsibility of my heartless actions that has no justification other than that *The Doll's House* kind of really sucks ass, and there is hardly any tongue action at play.

*The Sandman* really reminded me of other series I struggle with; *Hellblazer*. Both series I am planning to fully go through with, but both are also series that may be the end of me unless they do a comprehensive turn around for the better. Everyone says they do, so I am putting a lot of trust in my fellow readers whose taste I have grown to appreciate.

Like with *Hellblazer*, the second volume of *The Sandman* was such a slow paced bore fest that most of the time I was wondering should I actually dnf a graphic novel, or how many percent I have still to go, or can my delicate snowflake mind really handle this at all.

And this brings me to the main point. Both series hold so much creativity, imagination and talent that most can only dream of. But sometimes the problem with so much talent is that it floats freely, without any strings attached. The release of creativity is rather frenetic as there is nothing to hold it back, but there is also nothing to guide it, nothing to keep it together, just an atomic bomb going off with a massive boom, scattering pieces and toxic all over the place.

Such outcome is *The Doll's House*, too. Gaiman feels lost most of the time, even when there is times when he is on top of his craft; immortal friendship and cereal killers convention. But at any time, Gaiman is ready to fall and let his creativity take the better of him, and then the mess starts or returns, depending on the point of view.

*The Sandman* will be a long, long journey, and I hope to see it getting a grip of itself, there is simply no room to have too many new assholes in me. Hoping for the best, being prepared to a painful star-fuckery.

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## Bookdragon Sean says

Every time I try to write a review for a Sandman comic, it just sounds like an outpouring of positive emotions and generic statements about what makes a good story good. I literally love this series, and to try and review it in a conventional way is rather difficult. So instead I'm going to show you some images and do my best to explain why this comic is so incredible.

### **Morpheus, Dream of the endless night.**

Dream is a character, a concept and a force of nature. He is one of the defining pillars of the human psyche, and this is his story. This is the story of how, after he was restored to his full power in Sandman volume one,

he regains the control of the remainder of his weird minions that went rogue. And I say weird because his creations are very strange. He has created them from the dreamscape with the sole purpose of being a means of creating dreams for a human sleeper. They are ideals and entities both. It's hard to explain if you haven't read it, but in Gaiman's world dreaming is a powerful tool. And the creatures involved are dangerous if not controlled properly by their lord and master.

## **The Corinthian**

And this is one of the creatures in question. He was specifically designed to combat nightmares, to use fear against fear itself; however, in Morpheus' absence he has been doing whatever he pleases. And what pleases him is eyes, eating them and biting them out with his own teeth-socket eyes. So Morpheus' actual presence in his own realm is vital in controlling such evil things so he may do some good with them. Indeed, because what the Corinthian does here is inspire an entire generation of serial killers to go and collect the body parts of other humans.

## **Shakespeare?**

Now this image isn't in this volume, I couldn't find the scene online for this one, but it works nonetheless. Dream meets Shakespeare who is dreaming of becoming a wonderful playwright. He is in awe of Christopher Marlowe's work, and wants to be able to write with the same degree of artistry. He makes a deal with Morpheus, a dream in exchange for something yet to be revealed. And for me this becomes one of the best things about this comic. It sits oddly at place with the real world. It's almost like Gaiman has cleverly devised these characters that could actually exist. It may sound slightly irrational, but the point is the real world has been used to demonstrate that there are concepts and powers that will always be beyond human recognition. Despite advances in science, we will never be able to define such vague and ungraspable ideas such as emotions and dreams. Instead we have art, and in this case a comic, to attempt to express such things so eloquently.

I feel ill-equipped to review this in such a way that demonstrates the sheer intelligence of this story. It's like I'm trying to talk about a masterful piece of music, but I know nothing about the formalities of music so I can't put my feelings into precise language. Perhaps that's a poor allegory because I do know a fair bit about books and stories, though trying to capture how creative and innovative this is still rather difficult. All I can suggest is that you go read this series and see it for yourself.

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## **Patrick says**

Note: This is part two of a rambling multi-volume re-read of the series. It will probably make better sense in context of other reviews...

In this volume, we get several cool stand-alone stories and our first longer story arc with a non-sandman character. It's good stuff. Clever and fun and smart. Everything you'd expect from Gaiman.



When I first read it, it wowed me. It was cool and real and mythic all at once.

Reading it now, I look back on my first-read-through self and smile fondly, thinking. "Oh you sweet boy, you have no idea what cool is yet. Just wait... just wait...."

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