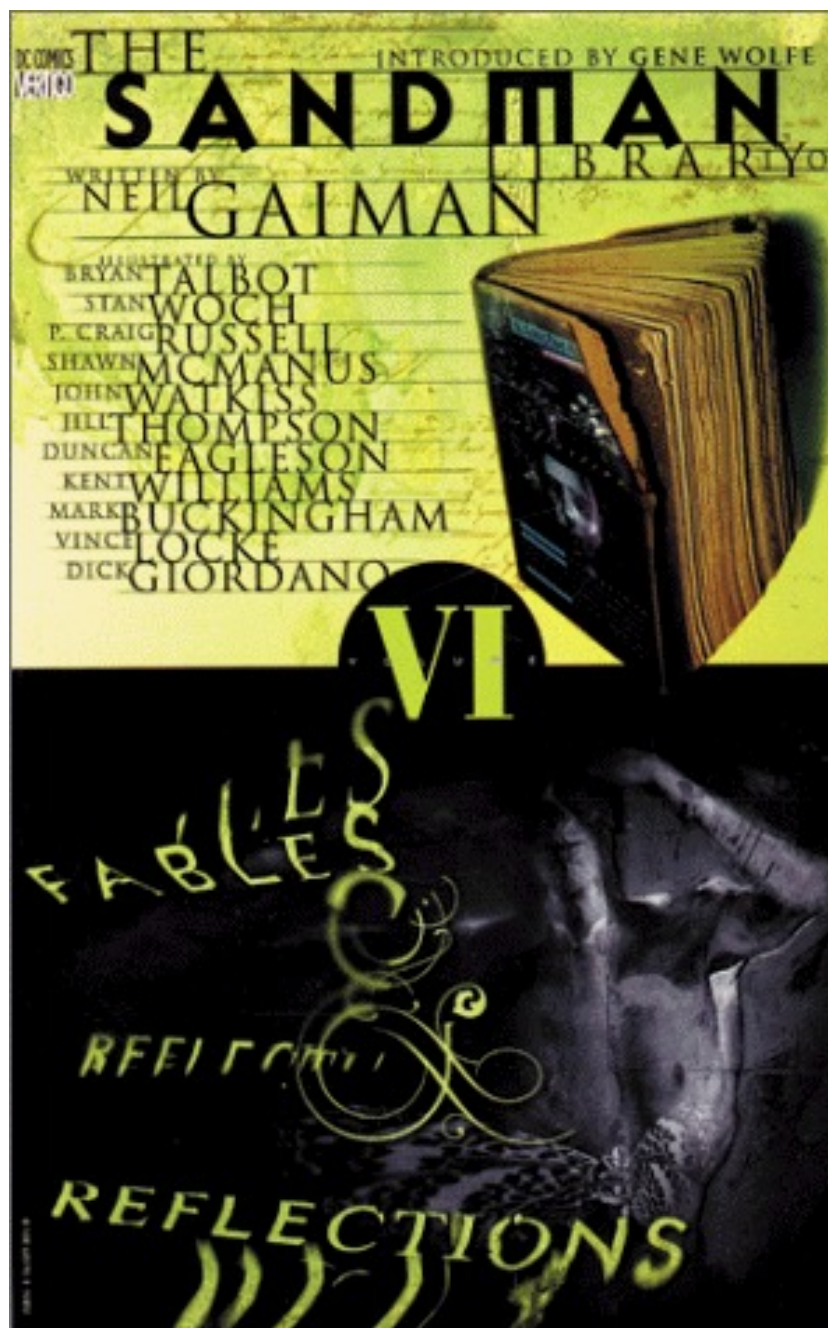


The Sandman, Vol. 6: Fables and Reflections Book PDF Download



By:
Neil Gaiman

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What people Say:

Alejandro

Writer: Neil Gaiman

Illustrators: Shawn McManus, P. Graig Russell, Bryan Talbot, Kent Williams, John Watkiss, Jill Thompson, Duncan Eagleson & Stan Woch

Covers: Dave McKean

Letterer: Todd Klein

In this sixth volume,

, you will find an illustrated short story right in the beginning of it, even before the introduction, written by Gene Wolfe (which by the way, no off

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Brad

I'm really in the swing of my Sandman re-read and loving every second of it, now.

I love the retelling of Orpheus. Hell, that entire sequence sent chills down my spine and kept making me think along the original storyline, making fantastic connections. It's not for the faint of heart. My only complaint was the script. It wasn't the easiest to read. Still, what lies underneath is the most important. French-revolution and the Furies, indeed!

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I liked all the stories, really, and even while they don't come with the same kind of kicks I'm used to, quiet reflection isn't exactly a bad outcome. Watching Emperor Augustus play a beggar was priceless, as was the examination of what makes an everlasting empire. But the First and Last Emperor of America was brilliant. Nuff Said. :)

Bill Kerwin

The sixth collection—as its title suggests—is a somewhat random grab-bag of tales, only tenuously connected with the Sandman story. Still, there are a couple of themes present here: 1) the fate of empires and emperors, and 2) the ways in which narrative—in dream and song—can sustain hope and foster illusion.

Four of the stories feature historical rulers—Emperor Caesar Augustus, revolutionary leaders Robespierre and St. Just, Caliph Harun al-Rashid, and San Francisco native Joshua Norton (self-pro

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Four of the stories feature historical rulers—Emperor Caesar Augustus, revolutionary leaders Robespierre and St. Just, Caliph Harun al-Rashid, and San Francisco native Joshua Norton (self-proclaimed Emperor of America)—all of whom led lives profoundly affected by dreams. The best of these four—in fact, the best of the entire collection—is the story of the Caliph of Baghdad and the bargain he makes with the Lord of Dreams. Gaiman wrote it during Operation Desert Storm, and, although the tale is not only filled with magic but also inked in a marvel of colors suited to the

city of the Arabian Nights, it is touched with melancholy and loss rooted in the devastation of war in Iraq.

The second most powerful story in

is the life of the poet and musician Orpheus. In Gaiman's mythology, Orpheus is the son, not of Apollo, but of Morpheus, and Dream's entire family, who attends Orpheus's wedding, are caught up in the tragic events surrounding the death of his wife Eurydice. Gaiman's economic method of connecting Orpheus to the Sandman story is ingenious, but the real attraction here is the straightforward telling of the legend of Orpheus itself and the memorable illustrations of the wedding, the palace of Dream, the cottage of Death, the wraiths of Hades, and the rage of the frightful Maenads.

The other stories here are all enjoyable too (I particularly liked the lycanthrope grandpa telling his "old country" story to an inattentive granddaughter), and each acknowledges "sometimes grimly, sometimes sweetly" the power of narrative both to distort and to transform the world.

Algernon

Volume six is a collection of shorter stories, one-shot issues that may or may not be related to the main story arc, but they offer the author the chance to explore different aspects of the way Dreams shape our world and define our personalities. I actually believe Gaiman is better in this form than in the longer sequences, as he has more creative liberty a

Volume six is a collection of shorter stories, one-shot issues that may or may not be related to the main story arc, but they offer the author the chance to explore different aspects of the way Dreams shape our world and define our personalities. I actually believe Gaiman is better in this form than in the longer sequences, as he has more creative liberty and can concentrate better on the core message he wants to tackle with each issue. Another positive outcome of these innovative experiments is the invitation extended to guest artists to come and try their hand at illustrating the universe Gaiman imagined. The resulting diversity in subjects and visuals is rekindling my interest in the overall series by avoiding routine and predictability. Without further ado, let's look at each issue, in the order from the original run:

- features Lady Johanna Constantine, who has graced the series with her presence previously, and who merits, as far as I am concerned, her own spin-off story arc. Set in the darkest hour of the French Revolution, the story is an adventure romp coupled with a look at how absolute power corrupts, and how the victors are attempting to erase the past and rewrite history in accordance with their own ideology. Despite praising liberty and fraternity, free thinkers and independent spirits are seen as dangerous enemies of the state.

- Emperor Augustus spends one day each year disguised as a beggar, in the company of a dwarf actor / jester. More than trying to understand the lives of his subjects, Augustus is attempting to exorcise demons of his youth (Dreams as nightmares) and also decide about the benefits of absolute imperial power : is it a force of progress or a path to corruption, decadence, dissolution?

- is the clear winner for me of this sixth volume, because it deals with a real character from late XIX century in San Francisco, not a prime mover of the wheels of History, but an oddball nobody whose only importance came from the yellow pages of scandal sheets looking for an unusual story. What's so special about Joshua Abraham Norton - the first, last and only Emperor of the USA? Gaiman answers the question by making him the subject of a wager with his fellow Endless, proving that our Dreams are stronger than Despair, Desire, Delirium and even Death. The Endless fight it out over the soul of Norton in a fashion that reminded me of the myth of Dr. Faustus, with each immortal trying to trick him, to steal his sanity, his amiable disposition. More than the battle between the Endless, the story of the Emperor of San Francisco is the story of his contemporaries, who instead of cruelly mocking him or locking him up in a mental asylum, played along with his delusions, offered him free meals and drinks, and proudly showed him off to visitors from out of town. Sometimes kindness is more important than sanity. For more about Joshua Norton, check out the great portrait of him in the fiction of Christopher Moore, which I read without knowing the character was based on a real person.

- Harun al-Rashid, another ruler who likes to wander in disguise among his subjects, reflects on the transience of beauty, and makes an appeal to Morpheus to preserve the most magnificent city in all history (Baghdad) by moving it into his realm of Dream, becoming the stuff of legends and myths, the only form of beauty that transcends Time. I liked in particular the colour palette and the Oriental scrollwork of this anniversary issue (no. 50)

- goes for inspiration to the Russian endless forests (

) and touches on the legends of Koschei the Deathless and Baba Yaga, as well as a variant of Sleeping Beauty. The story has a personal appeal to me, as I grew up reading some of these Slavic fairytales, and recently the same subject came up in Deathless by Catherynne Valente. Gaiman explores here family relations, the call of the unknown (a princess in a tower, an adventure in far off lands, a magical artefact), the importance of traditions and of living among your own kin.

- has Marco Polo as a protagonist and is set in a desert, where it is very easy to cross the border between Reality and Dream. It ties up with previous stories featuring Fiddler's Green and the initial

imprisonment of Morpheus at the start of the series. This is the one issue where the artwork was below the high quality I have come to expect from the series, and it had the curious effect of making me less interested in the actual story told.

- follows the toddler Daniel Hall, who can cross into Morpheus Realm at will, as a consequence of being born there (his story is told in one of the previous volumes) . Daniel gets to play with the tiny gargoyle while Eve, Cain, Abel and Matthew are telling him stories. Gaiman is at his best at these stories within stories, subtly altering the familiar ones and inventing weird new ones, like the myth of the three wives of Adam. As a bonus, I loved seeing the denizens of Dream, and the endless portrayed as children. I understand Daniel will play an important role later in the series, so probably this issue is part of his build-up, training for what is to come.

Sh3lly â€œ Bring on the Weird â€œ

I feel bad every time I don't love a Neil Gaiman book (which seems to be a lot). He's a genius, if you didn't know. So I know my cool factor is pretty low, but especially when I rate one of his books poorly. So I'm sure it's just me. I am unable to see the brilliance. I know.

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This was a longer volume, and there were a few stories I liked. However, I admit, I skimmed most of it because I can never get into the stories based in different time periods. They just seem to ramble on. Sometimes I really don't even like Morpheus/Dream. This one just wasn't my thing, I guess.