



The Unwritten, Vol. 8: Orpheus in the Underworld

Mike Carey (Writer) , Peter Gross (Artist) , Dean Ormston (Artist) , Yuko Shimizu (Illustrator)

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In this eighth volume of the critically-acclaimed new series from the Eisner-nominated creative team, Mike Carey and Peter Gross, Tommy ventures into the land of the dead to find and rescue Lizzie. But the journey through Hades pits Tommy against all kinds of enemies of undead. But none of these encounters prepare him for his meeting with the king -- or for the responsibilities he has to take on for some very familiar damned souls.

Collecting: *The Unwritten* 42-49

The Unwritten, Vol. 8: Orpheus in the Underworld Details

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From Reader Review The Unwritten, Vol. 8: Orpheus in the Underworld for online ebook

Anne says

You know a story is good when it features P & P's Elizabeth Bennet hooking for food.

That's just a small (but memorable) portion of this volume.

As the title suggests, Tom heads to the Underworld, and along the way meets several characters that you didn't think you'd be seeing again!

But while Tom is there searching for Lizzie, Rick is partnering up with the dyslexic Australian detective to figure out why certain people's stories are (maybe) coming to life. He also pairs up with a familiar ghost who turns out to be a bit more solid than he originally thought.

Bow chica wow wow...

The Underworld stuff was my favorite simply because of all the twists and turns the story took, but the biggest twist happened at the end and left me (and I'm assuming everyone else) speechless! I've not been able to get many volumes of this title, but it looks like there's a crossover in the works...

Teresa says

I don't like zombie stories at all (lucky for me zombies appear in only a few of the issues in this volume), but I now know why there are so many of them.

P.S. Don't read this if Austen heroines are sacrosanct to you. (And, no, they don't have anything to do with the zombies.)

Liz B says

New twists & surprises show up in this one--although it still feels like an epilogue to volumes 1-6, rather than a story in its own right. I'd still like to finish reading the series...although I think my library does not have volume 10.

Do I want to finish the series enough to buy the last volume? Not sure.

Emkoshka says

It's disappointing that the two volumes of *The Unwritten* set partly in my home country of Australia are the weakest of the lot. I started out delighted that the protagonists were heading for Hanging Rock, which is an hour away from me and close to the country town where my Dad grew up, but quickly grew disillusioned by Mike Carey's lack of research. Firstly, Hanging Rock is not in the middle of nowhere. It's 10 minutes from a major freeway, an hour from a city of 4 million people, and in an area of rural population growth. Secondly, it's not in New South Wales but in Victoria. Thirdly, it's not in the desert or the outback or whatever back of beyond you stupid Yanks believe Australia is. It's part of a temperate forest area which sees frost and sometimes snow in winter. These poor factual errors spoil the start of this volume for me. Things picked up when the characters got to the Underworld, but I was still left underwhelmed and annoyed.

47Time says

All the previous build-up is wasted on me. I don't seem to have any more interest in this comic. There are too many characters acting on too many planes for the story to be enjoyable. At this point all I want is to get it over with, but each issue was putting me to sleep, so this took some time.

Tom is searching for Lizzie after finding out she is in hell. On the way he meets the story characters that are running away from the destructive wave. There is another, militarized faction led by rabbits who intend to punish the humans for causing the wave. (view spoiler)

In the real world the waning power of the Leviathan is causing strange deaths and even stranger abilities in some people. One of them is a child who willingly gives up his ability to have his brutally deadly writings come true. (view spoiler)

Ashley says

This is only the second volume in *The Unwritten* series to get less than five stars from me, but I think that might be only a preference thing. This is still a great piece of this story. It was just missing a little oomph for me. I've got to save my five star ratings for the oomph.

Which is silly, because this was chock full of unbelievably cool things. Little stuff paid off from some of the very first issues. Everything ties together. Stuff happened that I didn't see coming at all. Didge and Armitage are back! And Tom has to find a way back into storyworld so he can go to the Underworld and rescue Lizzie. And it was fun! And good. But it just wasn't my fave.

It's actually split into two main storylines. The first is the main one, with Tom journeying down to the Underworld, meeting up with past storyworld characters like Baron Münchhausen and new ones like Elizabeth Bennet (and that's an, er, interesting meeting). He also makes some discoveries about the nature of Leviathan along the way. Meanwhile, Richie is still having his vampire identity crisis, and Didge and Armitage have to deal with a kid who can seemingly make stories come alive, even though Leviathan is gone from the world. His stories feature zombies, and things go where zombie stories usually go, but with an

Unwritten twist.

I've heard the next volume (a crossover with *Fables*) is dodgy, but hopefully it's only a bump in the road to the final two books of the series.

[4.5 stars]

Sesana says

It's been a bit since I read the previous volume, so it took me a moment (or an issue, rather) to get my bearings. There's some good ideas and imaginative uses of existing stories here. And there's also odd digressions and a few scenes that seem to be shocking for the sake of being shocking and are otherwise pointless. Not exactly looking forward to the *Fables* crossover, since I stopped reading that book long, long ago.

Sean Gibson says

3.5 Stars

More so than perhaps any other volume in the series, Vol. 8 served as a microcosm for the story as a whole: tantalizingly full of amazing possibilities and potential, filled with great ideas and great art, but prone to taking detours that derail progress and make you scratch your head a bit.

Of course, then there's the last page...the biggest "What the WHAT?!" moment thus far in the series...how can I NOT be intrigued when we conclude with Tom Taylor dropping in on some of the more magical denizens of what is perhaps my favorite comics series of all time?

I officially have no idea where this is headed, but I'm looking forward to finding out. Onto volume 9...

Patrick says

Fair Warning: Spoilers.

The kids that were killed back in Volume 2 come back from the dead in this book.

Viewed with hindsight, this makes their death a little more understandable/palatable. I don't doubt that Carey knew they would be back, and perhaps that led to him not treating their deaths with the delicacy I'd expect from him.

That said, five entire volumes pass before they come back, and since there's never really any hint they might return, it doesn't really do much to fix the problem I had with Volume 2.

Jenny (Reading Envy) says

One of these days I need to go back and read *The Unwritten* from the beginning, as I seem to read it in pieces. I was offered an opportunity to view Vol. 8 through NetGalley, and I had read Vol. 4 back when it was nominated for a Hugo Award.

The overarching idea is characters that can dip in and out of literary worlds, but in this book many of them are dealing with consequences of earlier experiences - Lizzie is lost in the Underworld, one character has become a pseudo-vampire, and most of this volume takes place in the gateway between Hades and the living. The magic or power or whatever it is that usually allows them to travel seems to have weakened, and the characters are fearful of being able to come back or move forward.

Some of the other reviews have indicated that this is a bridge volume to a crossover volume with the *Fable* series, which could be really interesting (and makes perfect sense, except the differences in the art!). The art in this is nice but I wish every once in a while it was given more focus than the story. Some of the full-page panels give a hint of what could be if there were less words on each page. That was what I liked so much from some of the earlier volumes.

Calista says

I knew this was the 8th volume in the series and it was about Orpheus. I wanted to check it out. This was way more than I thought I was getting. I want to go back to the first one and start from the beginning. This was really good.

What I can gather, this man is able to go into a world where he makes stories real. This land is not a easy land. The opening of the story is a Jane Austin heroine selling her body for food. The stories are real here and they have teeth and knives and all kinds of torture devices. It was not strictly an Orpheus telling, but it followed the outline. Hades had been replaced by a rabbit.

It is like a nightmare that is constantly meshing all these stories together. I actually enjoyed this. There is a lot here.

Pamela says

I'm so close to finishing this series. And I'm so close to giving up.

Looking back at my ratings on Goodreads, I enjoyed this series through volume 6, which is when (I think) the major villain storyarc was resolved(ish). And then it went into this whole "I killed Leviathan, which was a giant whale full of stories ... or something ... I mean, it's like Hobbes ... and, aw, chuck it, man." place and I have no idea what's happening. When Carey was poking gentle fun at Harry Potter and rabid literature fans and so forth, this series was fun.

So here we are in volume 8. Lizzie, Tommy's looooooove, has died. For some reason in volume 7 (this was a

relatively long time ago so my apologies for the vagaries), Tommy went to Australia where he started working with some officers from the Brisbane PD. One of the officers discovers that Lizzie is "alive" in Hell, so Tommy, of course, charges off to save her. Tom, sorry. Whatever. The officer tells an "Aboriginal story" (groan) and gets Tommy into storyland, where he reunites with Baron von Munchhausen. BvM, natürlich, knows how to get to Hell, so he and Tommy and Tommy's magical prophesying unicorn (I seriously remember nothing about this) fly off. The unicorn is actually an interesting character, and *we all know what happens to interesting characters in comics*. Yes. Then Elizabeth Bennet, Emma, and one of the Dashwoods make a *delicious stew* in between selling tumblers in the hay in a refugee camp for fictional characters.

While Tom wanders around Hades with two kiddos (at this point I was just like la la la la la), the DI and Savoy, our resident brooding vampire, investigate a series of brutal killings that correspond exactly to the feverish scribbles of a young boy. Surprisingly, neither of them really figures out what is going on, despite having been hanging around Tommy for what feels like ages. Words affect the world, people. That's the whole point of this series and you're stumbling around like, "Hm, messy murder, that. Wonder how the kid did it?" Thankfully, Rausch (who is this extremely elderly woman living in a convent in Switzerland and I kind of forget what she has to do with anything but la-dee-dah) manages to contact the boy and suck out his power and use it for herself. *cue evil laughter*

As it turns out, the king of the Underworld is not Lord Hades, or even Satan, or whomever, but an extremely odd anthropomorphic rabbit with a serious anger management issue. Thankfully, Tommy and Lizzie are united (yay!) but the world of stories is breaking down because of Leviathan's death (boo!). BUT THANKFULLY, there are like ... more Leviathans, or something? So yay? But Tommy and Lizzie have to roleplay Orpheus and Eurydice, and we all know how that went (boo!). So Tommy "tricks" the storyline and ends up ... with our favorite witches, Ozma and Totenkinder.

I have a feeling this entire storyline was a way to initiate the *Fables* crossover, and it wasn't very effective.

Emily says

[Elizabeth Bennet and a unicorn (hide spoiler)]

GrilledCheeseSamurai says

Ummm...YES?

Hells yes!

Lemme see here...

Unicorns.

Flying horses.

Harpies.

time traveling wolves.

Zombie vs. Vampire.

A wide screen HD Genie lamp.

And a whole shit ton more that I can't really talk about unless I throw in some spoiler tags. I'm way too lazy for that so I usually just avoid (most) spoilers in my reviews.

This volume was nuts! Basically, we got two stories in one here. The main story has Tommy looking for the doorway to hell so he can go and find Lizzie! Tommy makes his way to the king of Hell (he had to knock out and steal the ferryman's boat to get there (which is pretty damn badass if you ask me)) only to find out that...well...that would be one of those spoilers I am too lazy to tag.

The other storyline runs two issues and has a whole Zombie theme running through it. Which...well...it's a Zombie story. So fuck yeah!

Of course, both of these storylines have a whole lot more running through them than my simple little descriptions above. We are still very much playing around with the theme of literature and the power of words. We are still very much in the world of The Unwritten. This volume actually brings back a lot of the characters we have met along our long journey here. It's all very cool.

I love this comic to pieces! Just wait until the last panel! It's gonna leave you sitting there with your jaw hanging!

It's all just so fucking wicked!

Devann says

Still an interesting volume but I felt like there were way too many different characters and storylines going on for it to feel really cohesive. Generally I like how Carey starts weaving in all the characters from earlier volumes towards the end of a series, but I felt like it was maybe a little bit too much too fast in this case.
