

The Annotated Sandman, Vol. 1

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A NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER

Meet the Endless, a family of immortals that govern all aspects of life and death throughout the universe. However, one of their own lays captured--Dream, the Lord of Sleep. As Dream makes his escape and returns to his duties after 70 years of imprisonment, he encounters countless characters from myth, legend and comics, from Lucifer himself to the tragic Greek hero Orpheus to the HELLBLAZER John Constantine. New York Times best-selling author Neil Gaiman's transcendent series SANDMAN is often hailed as the definitive Vertigo title and one of the finest achievements in graphic storytelling. Gaiman created an unforgettable tale of the forces that exist beyond life and death by weaving ancient mythology, folklore and fairy tales with his own distinct narrative vision.

The Annotated Sandman, Vol. 1 Details

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Author : Neil Gaiman , Leslie S. Klinger (Editor/Annotator)

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From Reader Review *The Annotated Sandman*, Vol. 1 for online ebook

Rick says

When *Sandman*, written by the then-unknown Gaiman with images by Sam Keith and Mike Dringenberg, launched in January 1989, very few comics required annotations. Gaiman, much like his mentor Alan Moore, littered the series with obscure reference and marginalia. The DC title proved to be one of the most popular and endearing of the 90s, running 75 issues and spawning several spin-off series. Eventually *Sandman* garnered three deserved Eisners and is the only comic book to win a World Fantasy Award. DC collected the entire series in ten volumes, which have enjoyed numerous reprints including re-colored and hardcover editions. They were also produced in five over-sized hardcover books as part of DC's Absolute Edition line. And now, almost exactly 23 years after its initial appearance, comes the first of five over-sized annotated editions. The lauded Klinger supplies fascinating annotations alongside the original story art, reproduced in black & white, for the first 20 issues. He employs not only text reference but befitting the subject material uses images when appropriate. When referring to the first appearance of the gates of Hell (*Sandman* #4, page 4, panel 3), Klinger reproduces Auguste Rodin's sculpture *The Gates of Hell*, and later in *Sandman* #11 (page 13, panel 5) the annotations mention that Gilbert physically is based on G.K. Chesterton, a photo of the author is shown. Sadly, the handsome, informative volume lacks a much needed index.

BlurryBug says

This was weird.

Confusing, touching and kinda gross at times, or gory rather.

The Annotations was kinda wasted on me, the write small writing was difficult for me to read so I only looked at it if I was confused by anything.

I might continue this but not with the annotations.

I'm just left wanting more to understand it and not wanting more cause I didnt understand so much of it...

Heather says

To be completely honest, reading *The Annotated Sandman*, Vol. 1 was both brilliant and problematic. The problem, first of all, is it was the only way to read beyond the first compendium; I've had the Annotated one sitting idly by for a while as I thought I'd accrue the rest of the smaller, coloured compendiums - but when you're a student, they're kind of dear, and the second volume was never around when I sporadically bought books.

So, it was more to read more of the story in black and white than view the whole coloured spectacle. On the plus side, it means I can go back and read them all again, and then re-read the annotations here if I fancy. I suppose, in a way, it gives me a gazillion more reasons to read the Sandman.

I would say that I thought there'd be *more* notes. The majority of pages are without anything of consequence other than that the following page in the issue was an ad. But those bits that were highly detailed were super

interesting to see the inspiration and references. There did come a point where I had to be more picky on reading them, as some started to refer forward in the series.

Either way, finally catching up on the Sandman series, which is long overdue, and it's super.

Andrew Sorrentino says

Editorial annotations are mixed with notes from the author's scripts to round out this already full volume. This tome includes the first three storylines of The Sandman; illustrations are in black and white. Many helpful notes indicate where Gaiman pulled ideas from, or references to other literature. A comment or phrase in the story may seem inconsequential but when viewed with the highlights in the margin, the audience can gain insight into the breadth of the tale.

Arctialuna says

All good things end.

But with Sandman I am lucky enough to get editions that make me enjoy the story all over again.

Of course, I know what's going to happen, but reading it in black and white and notes that brings deepness to this masterpiece I can feel it again through a brand new perspective.

After all, I'm reading Sandman. So of course I will enjoy it.

Pallida says

5 stars really. Why don't I give it 5 then? I think my head is averaging out story arcs. Sandman as a concept character, realised character, the Endless- all their D names, the inclusion of myth and archetypes and multi-cultural Pantheons, (also DC back-catalogue, which is where annotations came in handy, me being raised on Marvel), the look of Death (brilliant) and Dream (Robert Smith and the Crow's lovechild) and then Gaiman's pathos, humour, wisdom, classical, cult and goth leanings. Gorgeous. Brilliant. Clever.

But there is a bit of ick and aimlessness that keeps me from clicking that last star. Some Sandman is gloriously worthy of 5 unreserved shiners but, speaking only from my own tastes as outlined above, these tend to be the stand alones.

Dave Logghe says

I'd been wanting to get into Gaiman's Sandman for quite a while so I was really excited to see that the university library had a copy of the annotated volume 1 (Issues 1-20). The annotations were really helpful in keeping me from getting lost. Gaiman draws from so many different sources of inspiration that without this little road map, I don't know that I would have felt the full effect of the writing. I really loved the first 16 or so issues, the continuing stories were really interesting and there was some great suspense. However, when I got to the latter section of the book, they become one-off stories that didn't really interest me very much. I definitely want to continue and read more, but if it continues to just be one-offs, I don't know how much

longer it can keep my interest.

Michael Benavidez says

This is a thing of beauty. The info, the art, the black and white, everything. If you loved the comics, you'll love this. Enough said, enjoy it.

Stewart Tame says

Okay, I'm going to assume that anyone reading this is already familiar with Sandman. I mean, no point in reading annotations if you're clueless about what they're annotating, right? This volume contains issues #1 - #20 of Neil Gaiman's classic series, reprinted in black and white, along with copious notes about people and places and other references that readers may not have picked up on.

As is typical with annotated volumes, it's a mixed bag, ranging from, "Oh yeah. I knew that already," to, "Holy smokes! That's fascinating." There's one note that reprints Gaiman's essay, "The Origin of the Comic You Are Now Holding," from Sandman #4, which is cool, except that the entire essay already appears as part of the text piece, "The Context of the Sandman," that precedes the reprints. Not sure why the editor felt the need to include it twice like that ...

The book is well worth reading. It's not the ideal way to read the series--that would be the Absolute volumes--but it's worth it for all of the insights that the notes convey. The book is a little unwieldy. I found that having a small folding table to support it helped the reading experience immensely. A lectern would probably have been even better. Highly recommended!

Randall says

Essentially, graphic novels/comic books are somewhat lost on me. I am awful at slowing to appreciate the artwork and its contribution to the story.

I'd long been curious about Gaiman's Sandman due to it having long been lauded as an exemplary piece of the art form.

I don't get it.

"It" not being whether Sandman is a major milestone in its genre's lifespan, rather the entire endeavor altogether. I kept getting the idea in my head that were this same story being related in the form of a novel, I'd be enjoying it immensely. I'm just the wrong audience.

Further proof of that would be that after getting through the Sandman stuff only, I went back for a second read-through taking in the annotations. I enjoyed it a LOT more with the annotations, even when Neil Gaiman told me I was stupid and should be reading something else. Though, all the reference to all these various stories and comic books were a bit much for someone who doesn't read them. It's definitely the sort of thing one would appreciate as an avid reader who has been through all the connected stories, but without

the annotations, it would be impossible for a below-average reader to appreciate all the depth.

For those who got a lot out of this piece of work, I'm glad. It definitely seems to have a lot on offer for the right mind. That's simply not me.

Angela says

There are things I absolutely love about *The Annotated Sandman*, and things I am enormously disappointed with.

I am hugely disappointed with the lack of commentary on most pages, especially as this was sold as Gaiman's way of jotting down his reasons for writing *The Sandman*, and his driving inspirations for the stories. Given what a landmark series *The Sandman* was and what an influence it continues to be, I expected more profound notes than the history of British rock bands or song lyrics to show tunes. I would much rather have had in-depth commentaries from Gaiman, the artists and the rest of the creative team. Instead, we are left with an enormous amount of blank pages with no comments whatsoever. There are also a plethora of pages where "In Issue --, this page was followed by an ad page" is the only commentary listed.

Powerful stuff, I know. If you are buying this edition for stellar commentary and insight into the creative process, the characters and the world itself, you will be highly disappointed.

What I LOVE about this volume, is that it is presented entirely in black and white. The uncolored pages are absolutely gorgeous and add a whole new layer of depth and emotion to the story. I find it interesting that so many of the reviews I have read elsewhere are put off more by the lack of colorization than the trivial (and often absent) annotations.

I could never get the hang of the late-80's/ early 90's style of coloring and always considered it a bit of an eyesore. (I know this is how things were done in that age due to printing limitations, etc, but it has still always been a turnoff for me personally). Seeing the Endless, especially Dream and Death, rendered this way, almost makes it feel as though this is how the stories should've been presented in the first place. It is beautiful, and it is haunting in a way that the bold, stark colors are not. I can't wait to see future issues (*Season of Mists*, *The Kindly Ones* and Michael Zulli's visually stunning *The Wake*, in particular) rendered in this stark style.

On a side note: Readers may want to be careful with the pages when thumbing through this book. The black paper is highly absorbent and shows fingertip oils very very easily.

Heidi The Hippie Reader says

In *Sandman*, a powerful group of mortals is trying to trap Death itself. Instead, they catch another important figure, the Lord of Dream. This volume details the Lord of Dream's struggle to reassert his power after being locked away for so many years.

He's lost his symbols of authority, which are literally pieces of his power. So, he needs to get those back.

Also, the denizens of the realm of Dream have gone off the rails since their lord has been missing. Some of these are nightmare creatures- fatal to humankind. This isn't going to be simple.

Sandman, Vol. 1 was very dark. Neil Gaiman is known for his dark fantasy, but there are usually moments of light. In *Neverwhere* or *The Ocean at the End of the Lane*, there is darkness, but nothing like this.

Within these pages, there's serial killers, child abusers, psychotic mental ward escapees, kidnapping rapists- one after another in a seemingly endless parade. It's a lot to take.

I found I wasn't a fan of the Lord of Dream himself. His immortal nature has made him unable to understand emotions or even desire to. I suspect that subsequent volumes deal with this exact issue. But, he's rather unlikeable in Vol. 1.

I really disliked the way he treated women- in multiple relationships. The worst being Nada. Again, I'm guessing that this is a story of redemption. But in that one moment, no spoilers but readers know what I'm talking about... his behavior was unforgivable.

Honestly, I liked *Watchmen* more. So far. The characters in that tale weren't necessarily likeable either. I suppose we'll have to see how the story develops in the next volume.

Recommended for graphic novel readers who like their stories gothic, mythical and with a sprawling storyline.

Marcy says

"We of the endless are the servants of the living--we are NOT their masters. We exist because they know, deep in their hearts, that we exist."

I was kind of iffy on reading this book/graphic novel, but so so glad i did! I would've never picked it up, this was a buddy read for a readathon I'm participating in. First let me start by saying that this graphic novel is extremely gorey, not at all times but there were some parts that woah, were INTENSE!! The first few issues were extremely confusing, but it works itself out after. Though i must admit there is an issue i still don't understand nor do i get the point of (issue 13). Other than that I very much enjoyed Dream, though i wish there was more of him! His character is enthralling, witty, dark, and kind (towards the latter issues). Will definitely be reading the rest! Definitely recommend!

Paul Bonamy says

This is an excellent collection, presenting all sorts of tidbits about the history of the Sandman, and, more interesting in my mind, clues about many of the allusions built into the series. There are also little asides dealing with inspiration for the art, or other little details. For example, in Issue 13 - Men of Good Fortune - the exchanges between Shakespeare, Marlowe, and the Sandman are all in Iambic Pentameter. There's plenty here to fascinate the fan of the Sandman.

The first volume provides some background information about how the series started, covers the first twenty issues of the series - from the very beginning through the end of Dream Country. It should be noted that, while the issues are presented in full, they are not presented in color. Most pages are presented in literal black and white, though some panels are grayscale, instead. I would recommend having a color copy (compilation or Absolute edition) on hand as well.

Lára Arnarsdóttir says

I've seen this one in my bookstore and gonna buy it next week. So happy tho.
