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THE SANDMAN
PRESENTS

NO. 3 OF 3
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\$2.95 US
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Lucifer

THE
MORNINGSTAR
OPTION



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PART THREE

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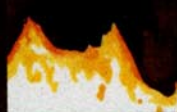
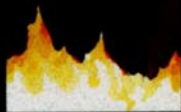
THE STORY THUS FAR...

Lucifer Morningstar, fallen angel and former Lord of Hell, has become Heaven's cleanup man.

When an ancient magical force awakens and starts granting ordinary mortals their hearts' desires, the resultant chaos threatens to consume the world. Unable to act on its own behalf, Heaven calls Lucifer out of retirement to track the magic to its source. He accepts the mission in return for one letter of passage.

A dangerous search for information takes him from his piano bar in L.A. back to the Underworld, where a silent angel confirms Lucifer's suspicions: the wish-granting magic is the handiwork of the Voiceless Gods — entities worshipped by the earliest mortals in First World, the dark birthplace of human creation.

Forging an unlikely alliance with Rachel Begai, a young mortal of mixed Navajo parentage, Lucifer begins a shamanistic journey to First World. Guilt-ridden over a careless wish that caused her brother's death, Rachel has her own reasons for joining Lucifer. She hopes to wash her hands of family blood and bring her brother back from the dead. . .



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Printed in Canada.

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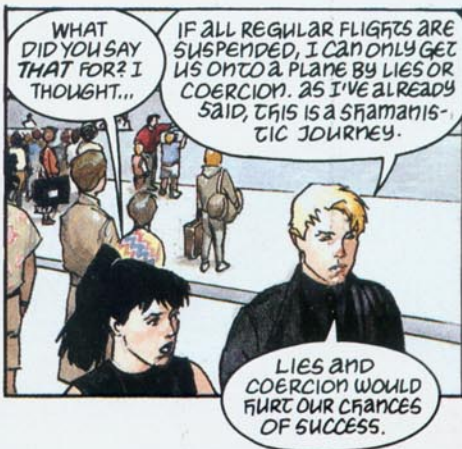




"I'M REALLY SORRY," THE RECEPTIONIST SAID. "UNLESS THERE'S SOME KIND OF EMERGENCY..."

"YEAH, THERE IS," RACHEL WANTED TO SAY. "WE'RE GOING TO SAVE THE WORLD. ME AND LUCIFER HERE. THERE ARE THESE GODS WHO ARE FUCKING WITH PEOPLE'S HEART'S DESIRE AND WE'RE GONNA KILL THEM."

BUT "NO," HE SAID. "IT'S JUST A VISIT. IT CAN WAIT."



WHAT DID YOU SAY THAT FOR? I THOUGHT...

IF ALL REGULAR FLIGHTS ARE SUSPENDED, I CAN ONLY GET US ONTO A PLANE BY LIES OR COERCION. AS I'VE ALREADY SAID, THIS IS A SHAMANISTIC JOURNEY.

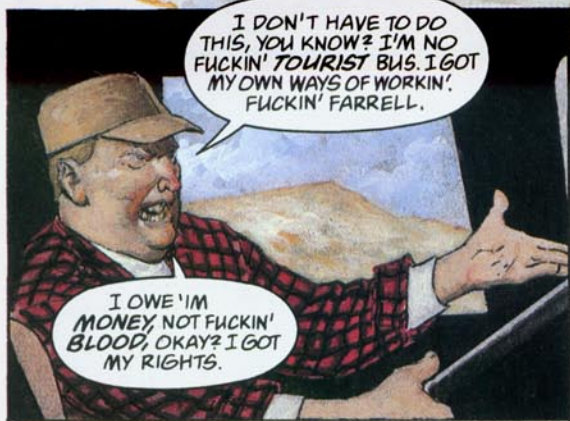
LIES AND COERCION WOULD FURTHER OUR CHANCES OF SUCCESS.

"SO WE'LL DO IT THE HARD WAY," HE SAID, AND PHARAMOND SUPPLIED A TRUCK.

A MIDNIGHT SKATER RUNNING BOOTLEG LIQUOR AND PORNOGRAPHY DOWN TO THE RESERVATIONS.



SOME PILGRIMAGE, RACHEL THOUGHT. SOME SHAMAN.



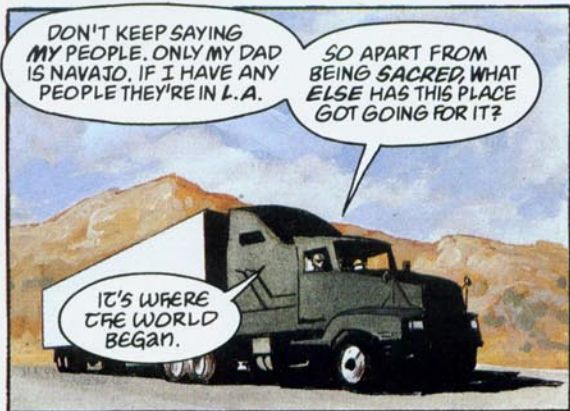
I DON'T HAVE TO DO THIS, YOU KNOW? I'M NO FUCKIN' TOURIST BUS. I GOT MY OWN WAYS OF WORKIN'. FUCKIN' FARRELL.

I OWE 'EM MONEY, NOT FUCKIN' BLOOD, OKAY? I GOT MY RIGHTS.



ARE YOU GONNA TELL ME WHERE WE'RE GOING?

I'VE ALREADY TOLD YOU. TSOODZIL, THE TURQUOISE MOUNTAIN, KNOWN IN THE MUNDANE WORLD AS MOUNT TAYLOR. YOUR PEOPLE'S MOST SACRED PLACE.



DON'T KEEP SAYING MY PEOPLE. ONLY MY DAD IS NAVAJO. IF I HAVE ANY PEOPLE THEY'RE IN L.A.

SO APART FROM BEING SACRED, WHAT ELSE HAS THIS PLACE GOT GOING FOR IT?

IT'S WHERE THE WORLD BEGAN.



THE WORLD BEGAN IN ALBUQUERQUE?

THIS COULD KICKSTART A WHOLE NEW RELIGION.

I NEED A FUCKING SMOKE. YOU PEOPLE TALK TOO MUCH. EXCUSE ME.



OKAY. I'M SORRY. BAD JOKE.

SO TELL ME ABOUT TSOODZIL.



IT'S NOT ABOUT TSOODZIL, GIRL. IT'S ABOUT YOU.

ME?

HUMANITY.



ALL THE RACES OF MAN TELL THE STORY OF THEIR OWN ORIGINS, BUT THEY ALL DISAGREE ON THE DETAILS.

DO THE DETAILS MATTER?

THE DETAILS ARE ALL THAT MATTERS.



THE BIBLE TELLS THAT STORY IN TERMS OF TIME--ONE THING AFTER ANOTHER. FIRST THERE WAS DARKNESS, THEN THERE WAS LIGHT.

YOUR PEOPLE REMEMBER IT DIFFERENTLY.



THEY SEE THE DARKNESS AS A TUNNEL THAT THEY CRAWLED THROUGH TO REACH THE LIGHT. A VERTICAL TUNNEL. THE LIGHT WAS IN ANOTHER PLACE, FAR ABOVE. THIS MEANS NOTHING TO YOU, DOES IT?

UMM...NOT A LOT. IS IT A BIRTH METAPHOR?

NO. IT'S THE THING FOR WHICH BIRTH IS A METAPHOR.



IN ANY CASE, THE DINEH TELL THE STORY AS A JOURNEY. A HARD AND TERRIBLE JOURNEY. THE PLACE THEY STARTED FROM WAS FIRST WORLD.

WHERE THE DARKNESS WAS. WHERE IT STILL IS.

"UNDERSTAND ME. WHAT-
EVER LIVED THERE THEN
LIVES THERE STILL, THOUGH
YOUR KIND ABANDONED
THIS PLACE HALF A MILLION
YEARS AGO. THERE ARE
FORESTS OF BLACK OAKS, A
HUNDRED FEET TALL,
STANDING INVISIBLE IN THE
DARK. THERE ARE CREATURES
... PREDATORS... THAT
HAVE NOT EATEN IN
GEOLOGICAL AGES."

"YOU HAVE FORGOTTEN
THE VOICELESS, BUT THEY
HAVE NOT FORGOTTEN
YOU. THEY WANT YOU TO
COME HOME. WANT THE
FEEL OF YOUR FEAR AND
YOUR WORSHIP. BUT WHILE
THE DARKNESS IS A HOME
FOR THEM, FOR YOU IT
WAS ONLY A WOMB."



"YOU BETRAYED THEM WHEN YOU
WERE BORN INTO THE LIGHT. AND I
DON'T IMAGINE FOR A MOMENT THAT
THEY'VE LEARNED TO LET GO."

KILLED A
BIRD. WELCOME
BACK.

MORNING-
TOWN, KIDDIES.
END OF THE FUCKIN'
LINE.

WHAT... WHAT WAS
THAT? WAS THERE A
BUMP?



HAVE YERSELVES
A NICE CAMP-OUT,
EH?

AND GET
'ER BACK TO
SCHOOL WHEN
YOU'RE DONE
WITH 'ER.



YOU WORK FOR PFARAMOND,
SO YOU'RE NOT MINE TO
CRASTISE.

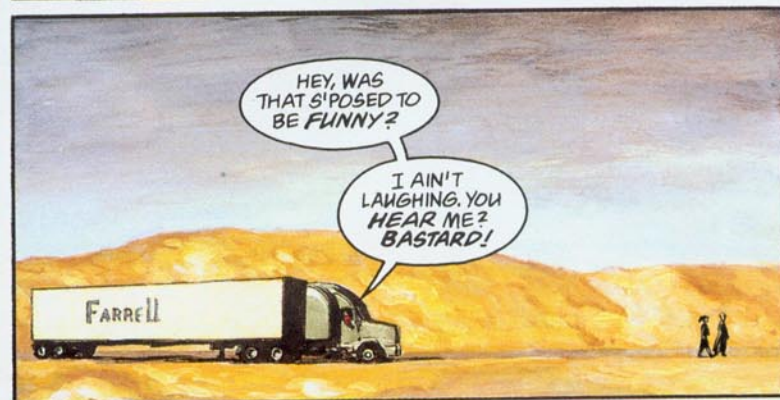
ALL THE SAME, FOR YOUR
LACK OF RESPECT SOME PUNISH-
MENT IS DUE. SAY... THE PERMA-
NENT LOSS OF SEXUAL POTENCY.

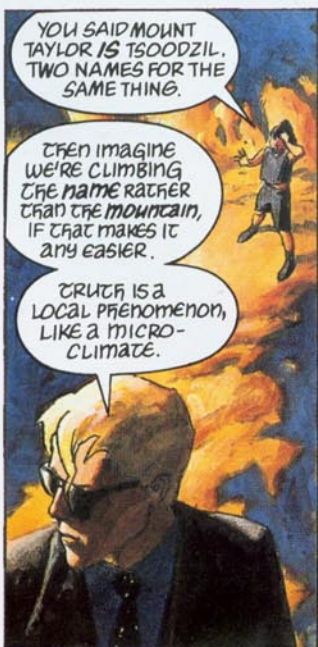
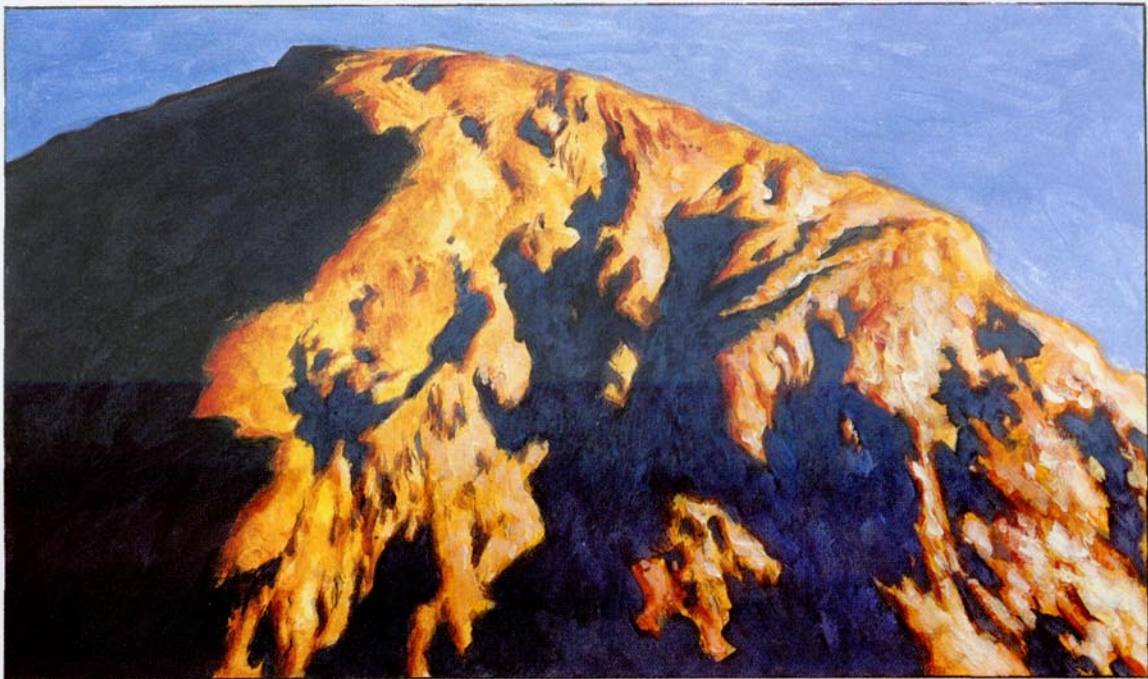
HEY! WHADDYA...?
WHADDYA MEAN?



HEY, WAS
THAT S'POSED TO
BE FUNNY?

I AIN'T
LAUGHING. YOU
HEAR ME?
BASTARD!







PHARAMOND SAID WE COULD COME UP HERE BECAUSE I'M NAVAJO. IS THAT THE ONLY REASON YOU BROUGHT ME? BECAUSE YOU COULDN'T GET IN BY YOURSELF?



NO. NOT THE ONLY REASON. ARE YOU RESTED NOW?



IT SOUNDS PLAUSIBLE ENOUGH, IN THIS PLACE AND AT THIS TIME. SHE PLAYS WITH THE IDEA. A DREAM-RACHEL CARRYING OUT A DREAM-QUEST. A FIGURE OUT OF FANTASY TO GUARD AND SAVE HER...

DREAMS HAVE THEIR OWN LOGIC, OF COURSE, AND THEIR OWN AGENDAS.



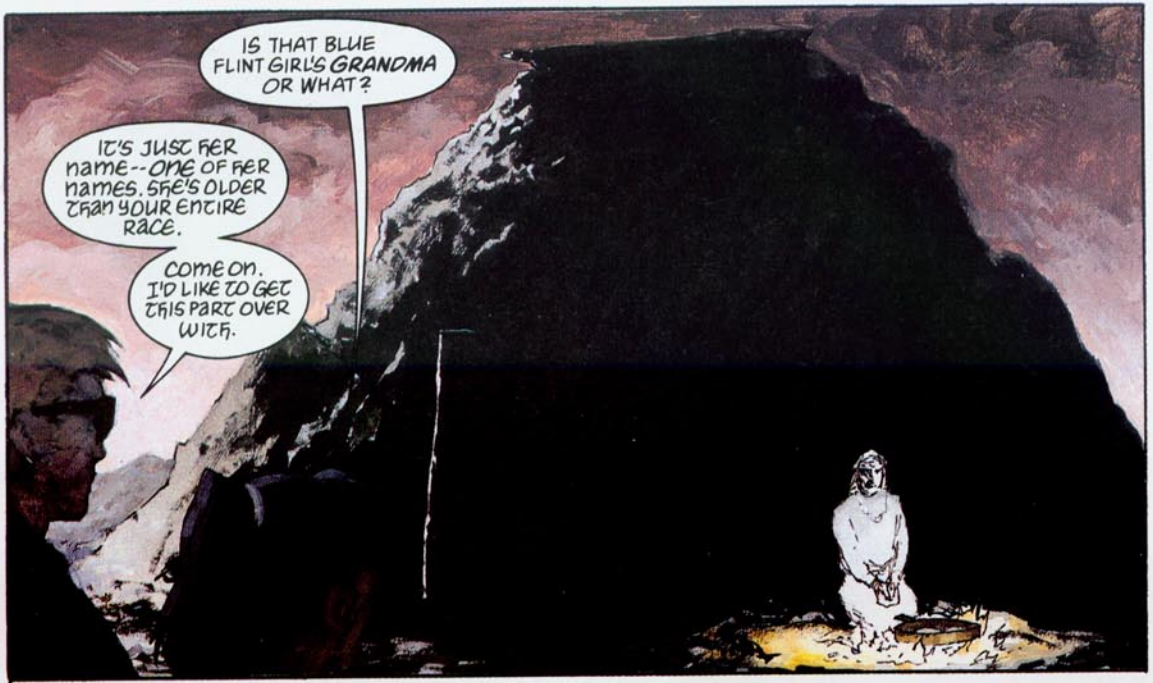
WHOA.



WE'RE NOT GOING DOWN THERE...

ARE WE?

NOT YET. WE HAVE TO SPEAK TO BLUE FLINT GIRL FIRST. THIS IS WHERE SHE LIVES.



IS THAT BLUE FLINT GIRL'S GRANDMA OR WHAT?

IT'S JUST FER NAME-- ONE OF FER NAMES. SHE'S OLDER THAN YOUR ENTIRE RACE.

COME ON. I'D LIKE TO GET THIS PART OVER WITH.



AH, YOU'RE HERE AT LAST. YOU MUST BE TIRED. SIT, AND EAT WITH ME.



ACTUALLY, MOTHER OF WHIRLWINDS, OUR BUSINESS IS FAIRLY PRESSING. WE'D LIKE TO GO STRAIGHT--

BE QUIET, ATSE'HASHKE. I WAS SPEAKING TO MY GRAND-DAUGHTER.



WHO? ME?

COME DOWN HERE, CHILD. SIT WITH ME ON THE GROUND. I WANT TO TALK TO YOU.



UMM. HI. HOW'S IT GOING?

NOT WELL. NOT WELL AT ALL. YOUR SPIRIT CRIES OUT LIKE AN ANIMAL IN A TRAP. IT HURTS ME TO SEE YOU IN SUCH PAIN.



YEAH, EVERYTHING'S PRETTY FUCKED UP RIGHT NOW. I DID SOMETHING TERRIBLE AND I'M... I'M TRYING TO MAKE IT OKAY AGAIN. LUCIFER'S HELPING ME.



I'VE COOKED CORN PANCAKES IN BEAR'S GREASE. EAT. THEY'LL GIVE YOU STRENGTH.

ATSE'HASHKE, I HAVEN'T MADE ENOUGH PANCAKES FOR YOU. GO FILL THE JUG WITH WATER AND I'LL MAKE SOME MORE.

YOU JUST LOVE TO TWIST THE KNIFE, DON'T YOU?



THEY'RE GOOD?

THEY'RE...THE WORST THING I'VE EVER TASTED IN MY WHOLE LIFE.

BUT STILL THEY'RE GOOD. EAT THEM ALL.



GRANDDAUGHTER, HE IS **NOT** HELPING YOU. BE SURE OF THAT. ATSE'-HASHKE HAS HIS OWN REASONS FOR EVERYTHING HE DOES.

BUT HE SAID IF I CAME WITH HIM I'D GET MY BROTHER BACK.



THAT IS NOT WHAT HE SAID. THE CRYING OF YOUR OWN SPIRIT MADE YOU DEAF TO HIS WORDS.

AND NOW HE HAS WALKED IN YOUR FOOTPRINTS TO THIS HOLY PLACE.



I WALKED IN HIS FOOTPRINTS, OKAY? HE GOT ME HERE, AND HE'S GIVING ME A CHANCE TO DO WHAT I NEED TO DO.

NO--WHAT HE NEEDS TO DO. BUT NO MATTER YOU'LL REMEMBER THE WAY HERE ANOTHER TIME, AND YOU'LL BE WELCOME --IF YOU COME ALONE.



LOOK, I'M STAYING WITH HIM. HE PULLED ME OUT OF A LOT OF SHIT ALREADY.

CHRIST, MY STOMACH! THOSE WERE JUST CORN PANCAKES, RIGHT?

YES. BUT THE GREASE OF A BEAR GIVES STRENGTH TO THE HEART AND MIND. YOU WILL NEED THAT.



ONE JUG OF WATER. IF YOU'RE REALLY GOING TO MAKE ME EAT THOSE THINGS, GO LIGHT ON THE BEAR'S GREASE. VERY LIGHT.

TCH. THIS IS NO TIME TO SIT AND FILL YOUR STOMACH, ATSE'-HASHKE. I THOUGHT YOU WERE IN A HURRY.

HERE, GRANDDAUGHTER. I HAVE A GIFT FOR YOU.

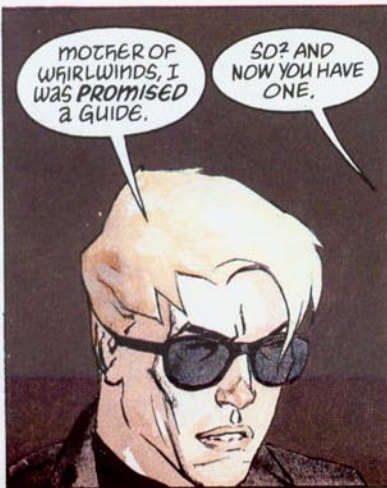


WHAT IS IT?

A JISH.

WHAT'S A JISH?

A MEDICINE POUCH. IT WILL TAKE YOU WHERE YOU HAVE TO GO, AND IT WILL BRING YOU BACK.



MOTHER OF WHIRLWINDS, I WAS PROMISED A GUIDE.

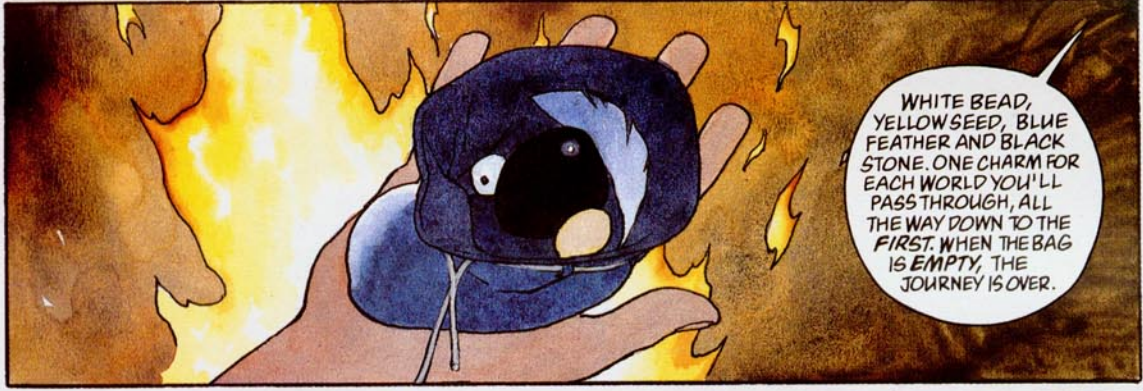
SO? AND NOW YOU HAVE ONE.



THIS GIRL? HOW CAN SHE GUIDE ME WHEN SHE DOESN'T KNOW THE WAY HERSELF? THIS IS ABSURD.

BUT THESE ARE STRANGE TIMES, ATSE'HASHKE--THE WISEST ARE LOST. AND YOUR LITTLE TRICK WITH THE KNIFE WILL ONLY TELL YOU WHEN YOU'VE ARRIVED. OPEN THE POUCH, CHILD.

I CAN'T UNTIE THE... OH YEAH. OKAY.

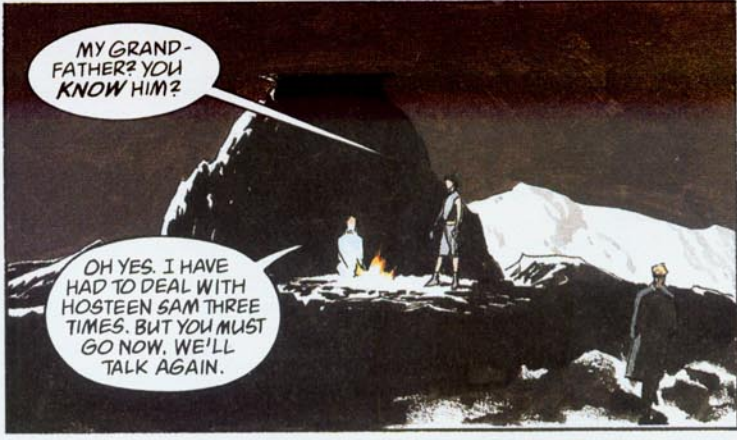


WHITE BEAD, YELLOW SEED, BLUE FEATHER AND BLACK STONE. ONE CHARM FOR EACH WORLD YOU'LL PASS THROUGH, ALL THE WAY DOWN TO THE FIRST. WHEN THE BAG IS EMPTY, THE JOURNEY IS OVER.



THANKS. THANK YOU. BUT... I MEAN... IS THIS GONNA WORK? AM I GONNA SEE PAUL AGAIN?

SOMETIMES THE TRUTH IS FALSER THAN ANY LIE. I CAN'T ANSWER THOSE QUESTIONS. WHEN THIS IS OVER, GO TO YOUR GRANDFATHER. ASK HIM TO SING A BLESSING WAY FOR YOU.



MY GRANDFATHER? YOU KNOW HIM?

OH YES. I HAVE HAD TO DEAL WITH HOSTEEN SAM THREE TIMES. BUT YOU MUST GO NOW. WE'LL TALK AGAIN.



SA'AH NAAGHAI BIK'EH HOZHO, RACHEL.

AND WHILE YOU OPEN THE WAY FOR HIM, KEEP YOUR EYES AT YOUR BACK.

WORDS TO LIVE BY, RACHEL. I HOPE YOU'RE WRITING THEM DOWN.



THIS IS GETTING TOO WEIRD FOR ME. HOW COME SHE KNOWS ME? HOW COME SHE'S MET MY GRANDAD?

SHE KNOWS ALL THE DINER--EVEN THE HALF-BREEDS. AND A STRONG SHAMAN WILL SOMETIMES GET TO MEET HER FACE-TO-FACE.

AFTER YOU.

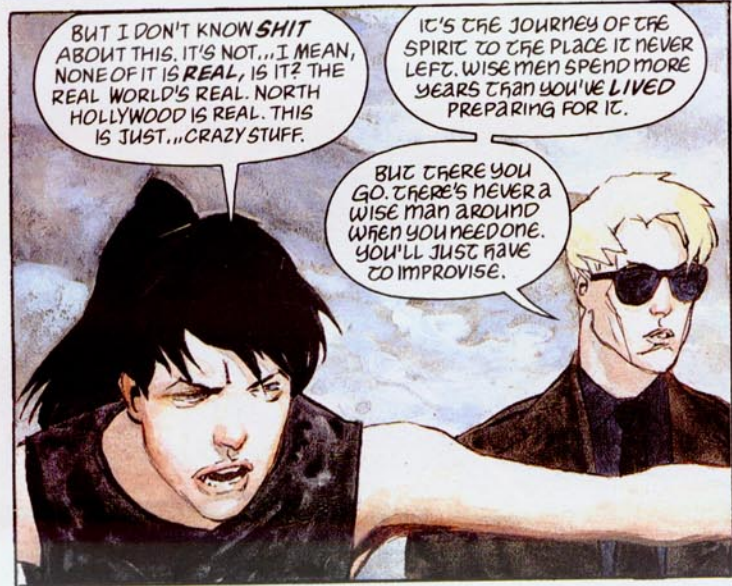


AFTER ME? YOU MEAN, I GO DOWN THERE FIRST?

YOU'RE MY GUIDE, AREN'T YOU?

UMM. YEAH, BUT I DON'T...

THEN GUIDE ME.



BUT I DON'T KNOW SHIT ABOUT THIS. IT'S NOT... I MEAN, NONE OF IT IS REAL, IS IT? THE REAL WORLD'S REAL. NORTH HOLLYWOOD IS REAL. THIS IS JUST... CRAZY STUFF.

IT'S THE JOURNEY OF THE SPIRIT TO THE PLACE IT NEVER LEFT. WISE MEN SPEND MORE YEARS THAN YOU'VE LIVED PREPARING FOR IT.

BUT THERE YOU GO. THERE'S NEVER A WISE MAN AROUND WHEN YOU NEED ONE. YOU'LL JUST HAVE TO IMPROVISE.



OKAY, THEN I'M GONNA LEAVE THE WHITE BEAD RIGHT HERE IN THE MUD.

IT STANDS FOR ME, UP TO MY NECK IN SHIT AS USUAL.



THOSE LOOK LIKE FISH SKELETONS.

THEY ARE FISH SKELETONS.

THERE WAS A FLOOD HERE IN THE DAWN AGE THAT KILLED MANY OF YOUR PEOPLE.

PLEASE. KEEP YOUR EYES ON THE PATH.





RACHEL...

YOU STOLE MY BARBIE DREAM 'VETTE. YOU KNOW YOU DID.



EWWW!

RACHEL, YOU SHOULDN'T HAVE LAUGHED AT MY BRACE.

RACHEL, THIS IS YOUR MOTHER. WHY DO YOU NEVER WRITE TO ME, DARLING?

DON'T LEAVE ME, RACHEL.

WHY DID YOU KILL ME, RACHEL?



WHAT THE HELL IS THIS?

FOURTH WORLD. THE SALT WASTE LEFT BY THE FLOOD. WHERE NO SEED GROWS.

AS FOR THE FISH... THEY'RE SPEAKING TO YOU, NOT ME, SO I CAN'T COMMENT.



SO THEY'RE THE VOICES OF MY SUBCONSCIOUS GUILT OR SOMETHING, RIGHT?

PERHAPS. I'M NOT BIG ON PSYCHO-ANALYSIS.

IN WHICH CASE THEY CAN GO SCREW THEMSELVES. ENOUGH IS ENOUGH!



IF THIS IS A SPIRIT JOURNEY, EVERYTHING'S GONNA TURN OUT TO BE SOME HOKEY SYMBOL.

LIKE THIS IS A BARREN LAND WHERE SEEDS DON'T GROW...

...AND I JUST HAPPEN TO HAVE A SEED RIGHT HERE IN THE POUCH.



OKAY. THERE WE GO.

LET'S MAKE THE DESERT BLOOM, WHY DON'T WE?

PLISH!



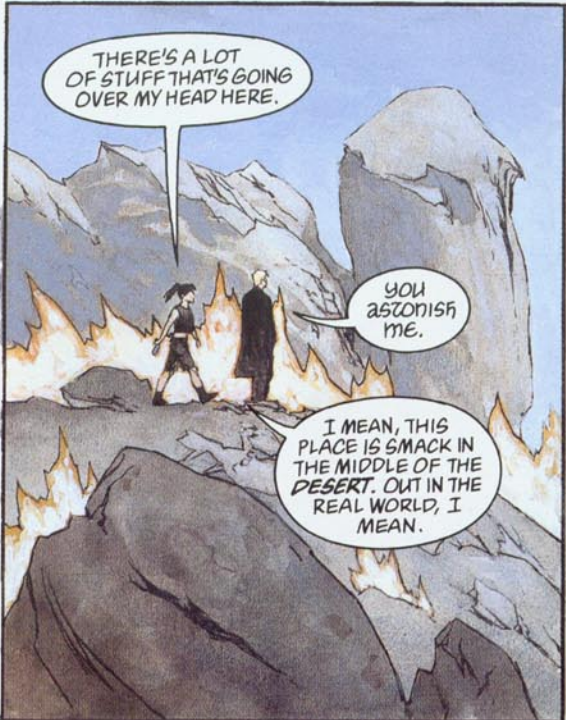


TRY BREATHING.
YOU'LL BE AMAZED HOW
MUCH MORE COMFORTABLE
YOU'LL FIND IT.



IT'S BACK UP
IN THE SKY, WHERE
IT WAS. YOU SAVED
US. YOU HIT THE
REWIND BUTTON.

NO. IT ALLOWED
US TO PASS THROUGH
IT. WE'RE IN THIRD
WORLD NOW, *BENEATH*
THE FLOOD.



THERE'S A LOT
OF STUFF THAT'S GOING
OVER MY HEAD HERE.

YOU
ASTONISH
ME.

I MEAN, THIS
PLACE IS SMACK IN
THE MIDDLE OF THE
DESERT. OUT IN THE
REAL WORLD, I
MEAN.



THE REAL
WORLD?

YOU KNOW WHAT
I MEAN. SO WHERE
DID ALL THE WATER
COME FROM? HOW
COME THERE WAS
A FLOOD?



THE USUAL REASONS-- THE EVIL OF THE PEOPLE MADE THE ELEMENTS MOVE FROM THEIR PROPER ORDER. BE CAREFUL HERE. THIS WORLD IS STILL FULL OF THE RESIDUE OF THAT EVIL.



MAYBE IT'S TIME FOR SOME MORE MEDICINE MAN STUFF.

I'VE JUST GOT THE FEATHER AND THE STONE LEFT NOW. WHICH ONE D'YOU RECKON COMES NEXT? I'M THINKING MAYBE THE FEATHER...



BRING IT HERE, RACHEL. I'LL SHOW YOU WHAT TO DO.

HUH?



IT'S EASY. GIVE ME THE JISH AND I'LL SHOW YOU. I'LL TEACH YOU HOW TO BE A SKINWALKER AND CHANGE YOUR SHAPE.

PAUL! OH MY GOD! WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?



THIS IS CRAZY. YOU'RE TALKING. YOU'RE TALKING LIKE THERE WAS NEVER ANYTHING WRONG WITH YOU.

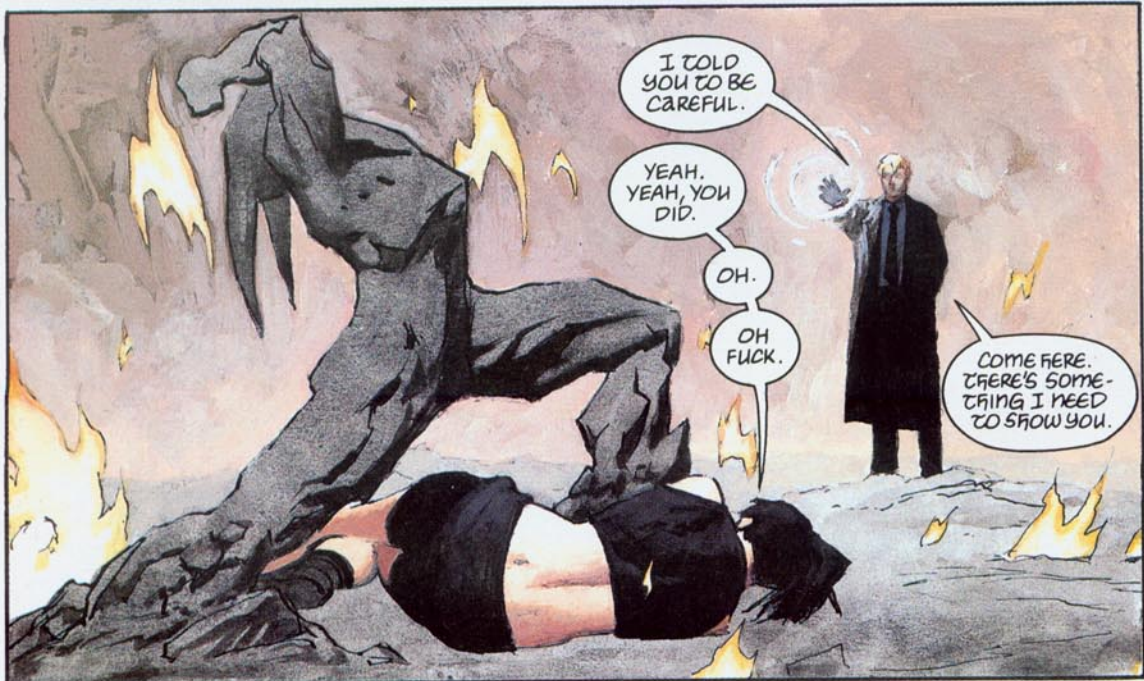
THERE'S STRONG MAGIC HERE. GIVE ME THE JISH.

YOU KNOW I NEVER WANTED TO HURT YOU, PAUL. IT WAS AN ACCIDENT. IT JUST...



NOW, WHORE, LET ME SHOW YOU WHAT HURT IS. LET ME TEACH YOU ALL THE WAYS OF IT.

UUUUH!





THIS GULF IS SECOND WORLD, AND AT THE BOTTOM IS FIRST WORLD.

WE CAN'T GO ANY FURTHER-- UNLESS YOU CAN FIND US A WAY DOWN.

FINE. LET'S TRY THE MAGIC FEATHER. IT WORKED FOR DUMBO.



OKAY. WE CAME. WE SAW. WE ALMOST GOT RAPED BY A ROCK. NOW CAN WE...



WHOOOAAA!

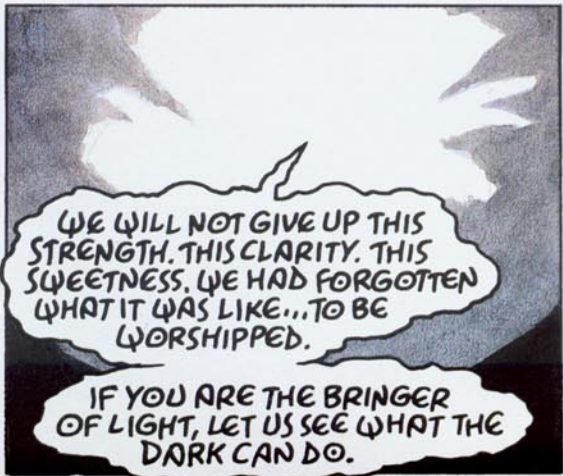






OF, WE HAVE ARRIVED, HAVEN'T WE? VOICES. A PLACE OF POWER. A CAR IN THE GARAGE. HOW DISMAYINGLY BOURGEOIS YOUR ASPIRATIONS ARE.

THE MAGIC YOU'VE MADE TURNS FAITH INTO POISON. THE EARTH WILL DROWN IN IT-- AND SO WILL YOU, YOU ECTOPLASMIC FOSSILS.



WE WILL NOT GIVE UP THIS STRENGTH. THIS CLARITY. THIS SWEETNESS. WE HAD FORGOTTEN WHAT IT WAS LIKE... TO BE WORSHIPPED.

IF YOU ARE THE BRINGER OF LIGHT, LET US SEE WHAT THE DARK CAN DO.



LUCIFER, WHAT'S THAT NOISE?

AND JESUS! THE SMELL. WHAT'S HAPPENING?

I TOLD YOU THERE WERE THINGS THAT LIVED HERE.



THEY'RE COMING.

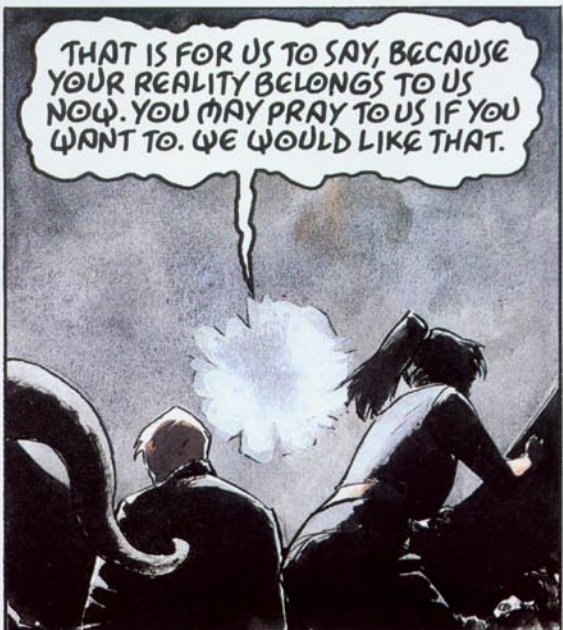


THE NOISE ATTRACTS THEM-- THAT AND THE SMELL OF LIVING THINGS. THEY'RE COMING TO EAT US.

JESUS.

JESUS CHRIST.

THIS CAN'T BE REAL.



THAT IS FOR US TO SAY, BECAUSE YOUR REALITY BELONGS TO US NOW. YOU MAY PRAY TO US IF YOU WANT TO. WE WOULD LIKE THAT.





THAT'S THAT, I THINK. TIME TO GO HOME.

I... I DON'T GET IT. WHERE DID THEY GO? WHAT HAPPENED?

YOU HAPPENED.



THE VELLEITY WAS DESIGNED TO SATISFY DESIRE. IT'S A COMMODITY I'M SHORT ON, BUT YOURS DID WELL ENOUGH.

WHEN YOU WISHED IT GONE, IT HAD NO CHOICE BUT TO DESTROY ITSELF. BY THE WAY, YOU'LL BE NEEDING THIS.



WAIT. WAIT A MINUTE. THAT WAS THE THING THAT WAS GRANTING WISHES, RIGHT?

AND NOW IT'S GONE. SO HOW DO I GET PAUL BACK?

YOU DON'T. IT'S TOO LATE NOW.



BUT YOU... YOU SAID...

I SAID I'D GIVE YOU AN OPPORTUNITY.

NOT STEP-BY-STEP INSTRUCTIONS.



YOU TRICKED ME! YOU LIED TO ME!

PERHAPS. BUT IF YOU REALLY WANTED HIM BACK, IT WOULD HAVE HAPPENED.

I SUSPECT THAT WHAT YOU ACTUALLY WANTED WAS AN EXCUSE TO FORGIVE YOURSELF.



I'VE STILL GOT THE JISH, LUCIFER. I'M NOT TAKING YOU BACK WITH ME. I'M GOING TO LEAVE YOU HERE TO ROT, YOU BASTARD!

YES, I THOUGHT WE MIGHT GET TO THAT.

I SAID YOU NEEDED IT, NOT ME. NOW THAT THE WEATHERS CLEARED, I THINK I'LL JUST WALK.



IN ANY CASE, YOU SHOULD BE GRATEFUL THAT YOU'RE LEAVING HERE IN ONE PIECE. I SAVED YOUR LIFE AND YOUR MAIDENHEAD AND I CONSIDER US WELL QUIT.

CONSUMMATUM EST.



I'LL FIND YOU SOMEDAY. I WILL, I MEAN IT. WHEN I'M STRONG ENOUGH TO TAKE YOU ON.

THAT'S A PITY. YOU'D MANAGED TO KEEP YOUR HEAD UP ABOVE THE MELO-DRAMA UNTIL NOW.

GOODBYE, RACHEL.



"The general opinion is that you did well, Lucifer Morningstar."

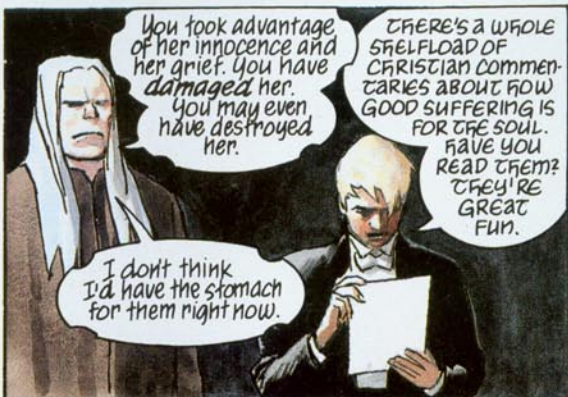
"It's not an opinion that I share."



"This is what you asked for, I believe."

"Thank you, Amenadiel. Grudging praise is the most flattering of all."

"And the girl?"



"You took advantage of her innocence and her grief. You have damaged her. You may even have destroyed her."

"THERE'S A WHOLE STEEL FLOOD OF CHRISTIAN COMMENTARIES ABOUT HOW GOOD SUFFERING IS FOR THE SOUL. HAVE YOU READ THEM? THEY'RE GREAT FUN."

"I don't think I'd have the stomach for them right now."



"YOU FIRED ME, AMENADIEL. YOU GAVE ME FREE REIN AND TOTAL ABSOLUTION."

"I carried out my..."

"YES, OF COURSE YOU DID. NOW OFF YOU GO AND WASH YOUR HANDS--"

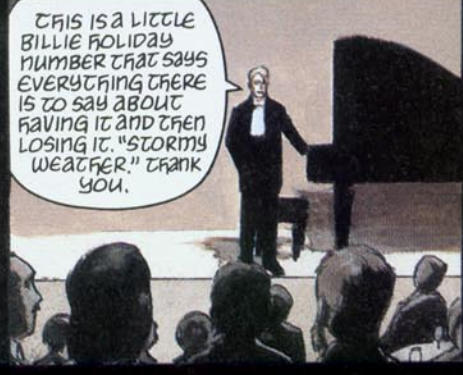
--I SUGGEST STEEL WOOL."



THEY CHOSE THE RIGHT TARGET, DIDN'T THEY? NOTHING IS SO PLENTIFUL AS DESIRE, OR SO CONCENTRATEDLY TOXIC.

THANK YOU, MAZIKEEN. LET IT BREATHE A LITTLE WHILE, THEN BRING IT OVER TO THE PIANO FOR ME.

PERHAPS I'LL PLAY A FEW TORCH SONGS. GOD KNOWS, THE BASTARDS DESERVE IT.



THIS IS A LITTLE BILLIE HOLIDAY NUMBER THAT SAYS EVERYTHING THERE IS TO SAY ABOUT HAVING IT AND THEN LOSING IT. "STORMY WEATHER." THANK YOU.



AND HE COUNTS THEM OFF IN HIS MIND AS HE PLAYS, DESIRE'S SLAVES. MAHU OF THE LILIM, SHIPWRECKED ON THE VAST INLAND SEA OF HIS OWN RAGE.



FRANK BEGAI, WAITING FOR THE PHONE TO TELL HIM WHETHER OR NOT HE CAN LIVE AGAIN.



AND RACHEL, HEADING ON WEST FROM GRANTS INTO THE RESERVATION LAND, LOOKING FOR A BLESSING THAT SHE WON'T ACCEPT WHEN IT COMES.

BECAUSE ALL THE WATERS OF THE OCEAN WON'T FILL A BUCKET WITH A HOLE IN IT.

AND THAT'S THEIR FALL, AND THAT'S THEIR FELLOWSHIP. DESIRE. THE HOLE IN THE BUCKET: THE GULF OF YEARNING INTO WHICH THE SOUL EMPTIES ITSELF.



HE DROPS A NOTE.



THE DISCORD IS HIS TRIBUTE TO THEM.

END.



3.11.11 11:24