



# a game part five of you

gaiman • mcmanus

talbot • woch

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## the SANDMAN™

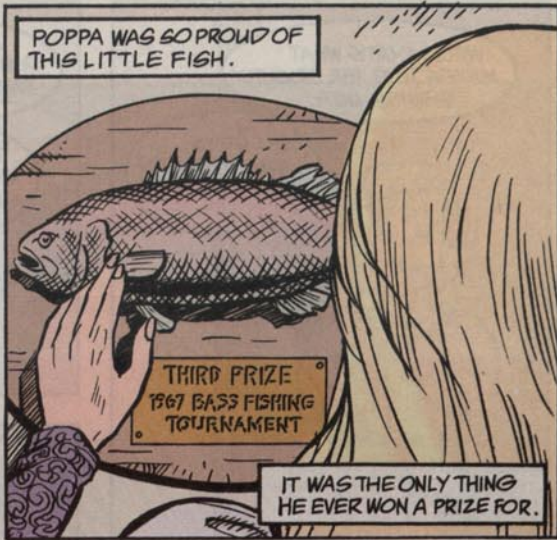
SUGGESTED  
FOR MATURE  
READERS



OBI



THE LAND.



POPPA WAS SO PROUD OF THIS LITTLE FISH.

THIRD PRIZE  
1967 BASS FISHING  
TOURNAMENT

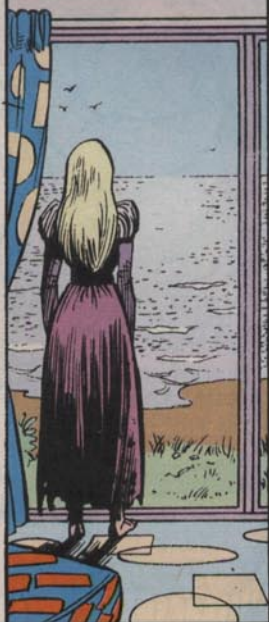
IT WAS THE ONLY THING HE EVER WON A PRIZE FOR.



THIS ISN'T ANY CITADEL OF THE CLUCKOO. THIS IS WHERE I GREW UP. THIS IS OUR OLD HOUSE.

IT'S JUST LIKE I REMEMBER IT, ONLY SMALLER ...

AND THE BRIGHTLY SHINING SEA ISN'T ANY BRIGHTLY SHINING SEA.



IT'S THE ATLANTIC OCEAN, EARLY IN THE MORNING, AFTER THE SUN'S BURNED THE CLOUDS AWAY AND BEFORE IT'S RISEN TOO HIGH IN THE SKY, AT THE MOMENT WHEN THE SUN-LIGHT TURNS THE SEA TO SILVER.



DAPPLED, GLINTING, MAGICAL SILVER ...



AS IF THE LIGHT WASN'T REFLECTED; RATHER AS IF THE SEA SHONE WITH ITS OWN WONDERFUL LIGHT, GLITTERING AND SPARKLING LIKE LIQUID DIAMONDS ...

WHEN I WAS A LITTLE GIRL I USED TO RUN DOWN THE SAND AND INTO THE SEA, AND I'D TRY TO PICK UP THE SHINING SILVER WATER.



I'D CUP MY HANDS AND CATCH IT, BUT IT ALWAYS TURNED BACK INTO DIRTY GRAY-GREEN SEA-WATER ...



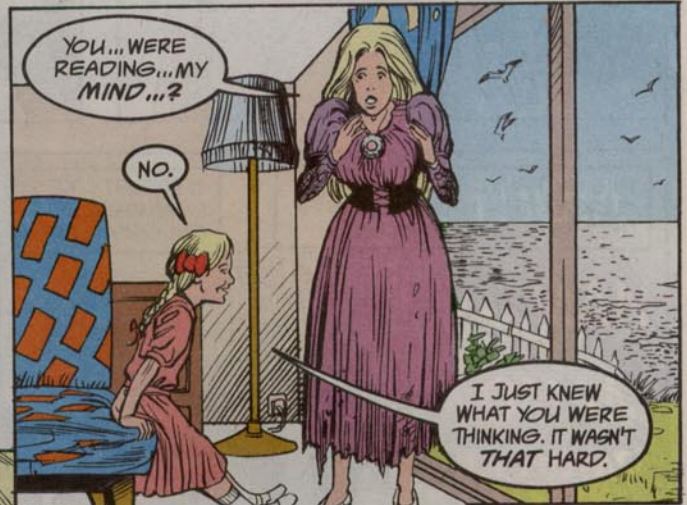
WELL, THAT'S WHAT MAKES THAT THE BRIGHTLY SHINING SEA.

IT STAYS LIQUID DIAMONDS WHEN YOU PICK IT UP.



AND IT DOESN'T TASTE SALTY, EITHER.

IT TASTES KIND OF LIKE GRAPE JUICE.



YOU... WERE READING... MY MIND...?

NO.

I JUST KNEW WHAT YOU WERE THINKING. IT WASN'T THAT HARD.



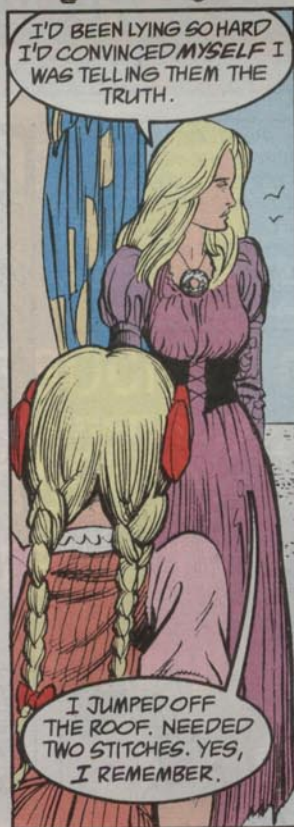
I KNOW YOU...

OF COURSE YOU DO, SILLY.

... WHO ARE YOU?

HMM. I'LL GIVE YOU A CLUE. THE SCAR ON YOUR KNEE.

YOU'D TOLD THE KIDS NEXT DOOR THAT YOU COULD FLY, AND THEY DIDN'T BELIEVE YOU, AND YOU...

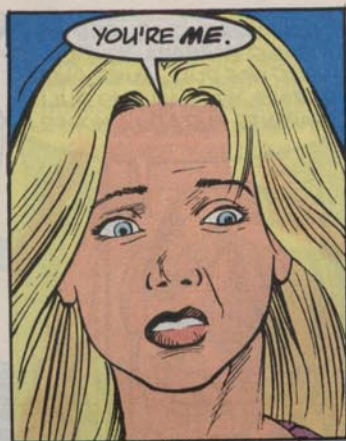


I'D BEEN LYING SO HARD I'D CONVINCED MYSELF I WAS TELLING THEM THE TRUTH.

I JUMPED OFF THE ROOF. NEEDED TWO STITCHES. YES, I REMEMBER.



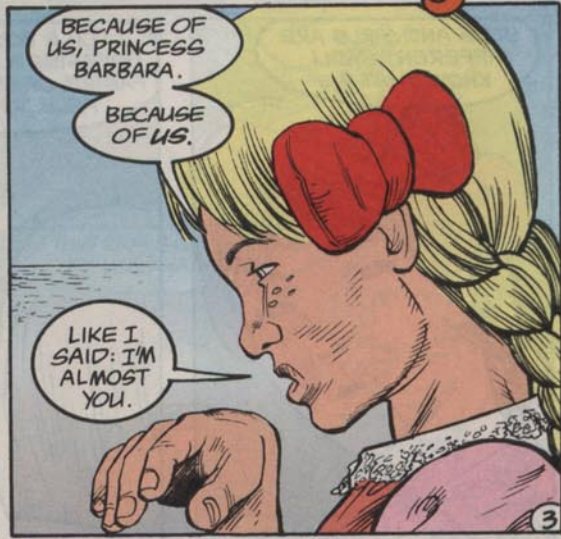
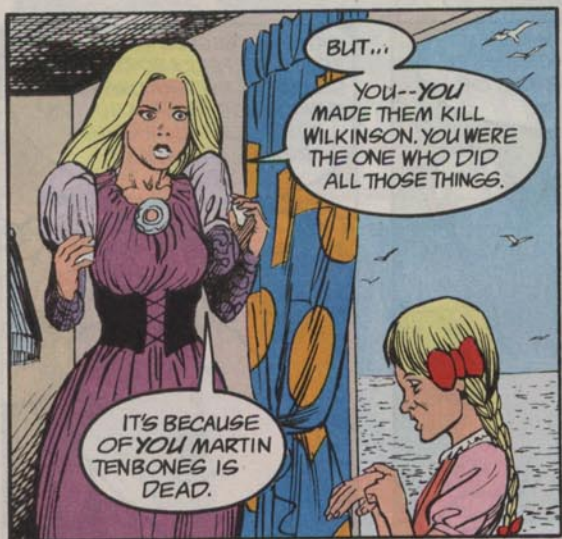
LOOK.

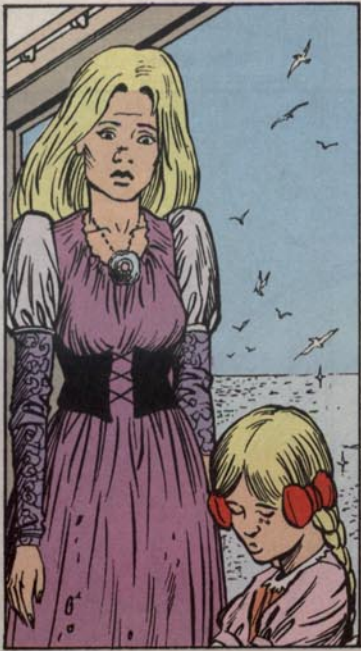


Written by Neil Gaiman, art by Shawn McManus, additional art by Bryan Talbot and Stan Woch, colored by Daniel Vozzo, lettered by Todd Klein, edited by Karen Berger, assisted by Alisa Kwitney.

SANDMAN features characters created by Gaiman, Kieth and Dringberg.

# 5: Over the Sea to Sky





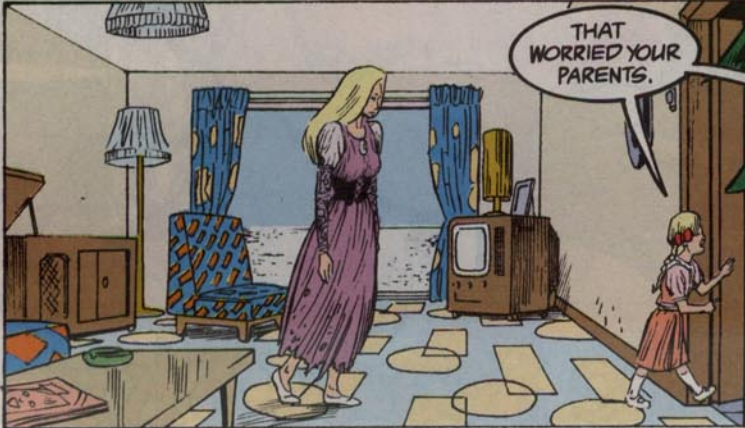
WHAT IS THIS? SOME KIND OF MOMENT OF REVELATION? LIKE IN THE BOOKS?

IS THIS WHERE I FIND OUT I WAS ABUSED AS A CHILD AND I'VE BEEN BLOCKING IT ALL THESE YEARS?

IS THAT WHAT YOU ARE?

YOU WEREN'T ABUSED AS A CHILD, BARBARA. YOUR CHILDHOOD WAS DULL, QUIET AND BORING. YOU HAD TWO DULL PARENTS, AND A DULL HOUSE.

AND AN OVERACTIVE IMAGINATION.



THAT WORRIED YOUR PARENTS.

YOU'D MAKE UP STORIES, SEEK OUT BOOKS OF WITCHES AND GHOSTS--THINGS THAT JUST WEREN'T TRUE. THEY COULDN'T UNDERSTAND WHERE THIS FASCINATION OF YOURS FOR THE FANTASTIC CAME FROM AND IT SCARED THEM.

SO YOU BEGAN TO DEFEND YOURSELF.

BOYS AND GIRLS ARE DIFFERENT, YOU KNOW THAT?

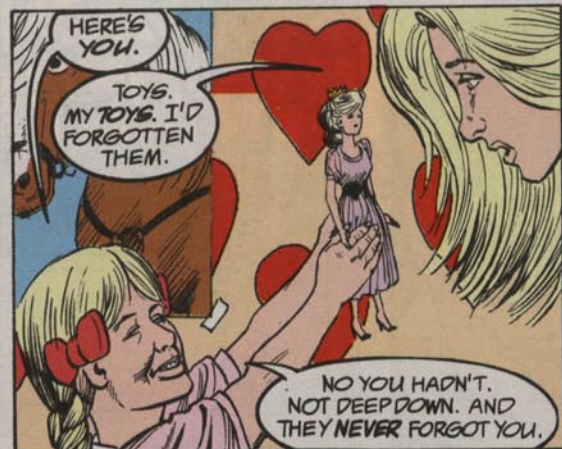
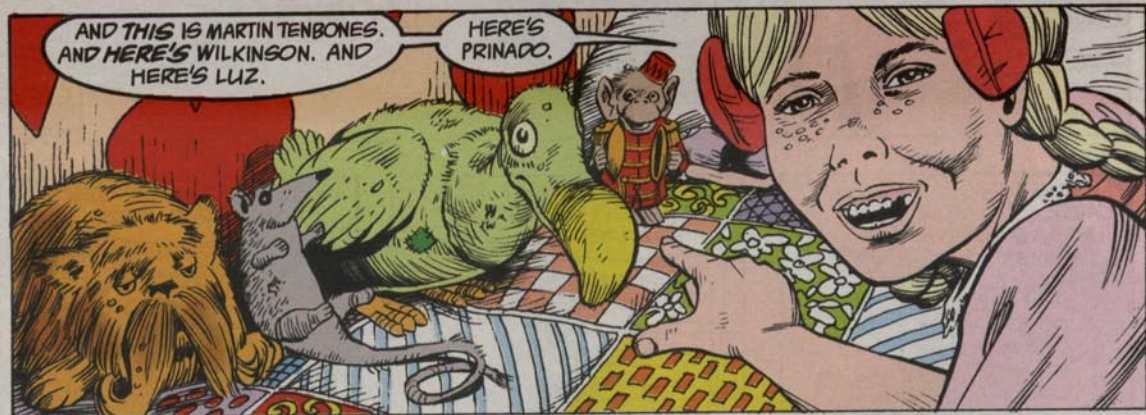
LITTLE BOYS HAVE FANTASIES IN WHICH THEY'RE FASTER, OR SMARTER, OR ABLE TO FLY.

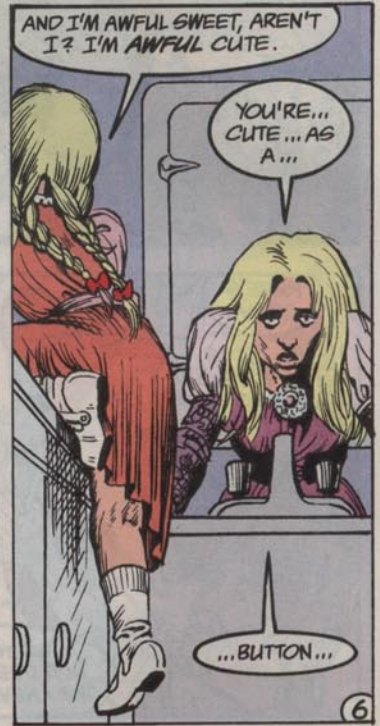
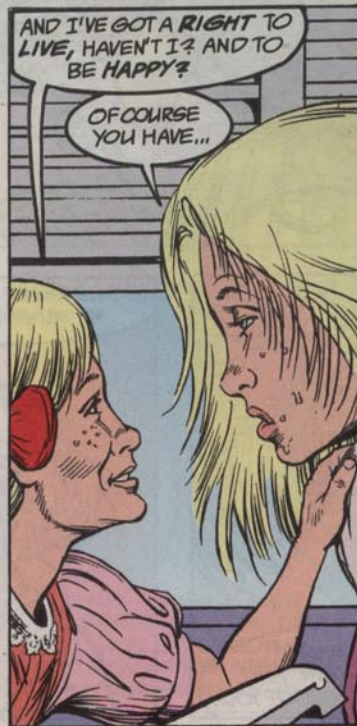
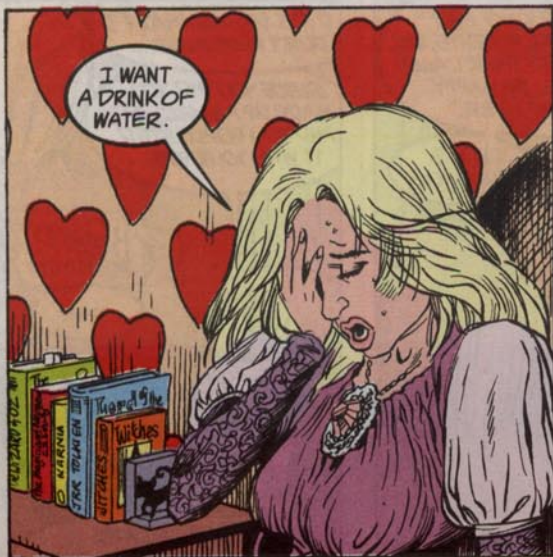
WHERE THEY HIDE THEIR FACES IN SECRET IDENTITIES, AND LISTEN TO THE PEOPLE WHO DESPISE THEM ADMIRING THEIR REMARKABLE DEEDS.

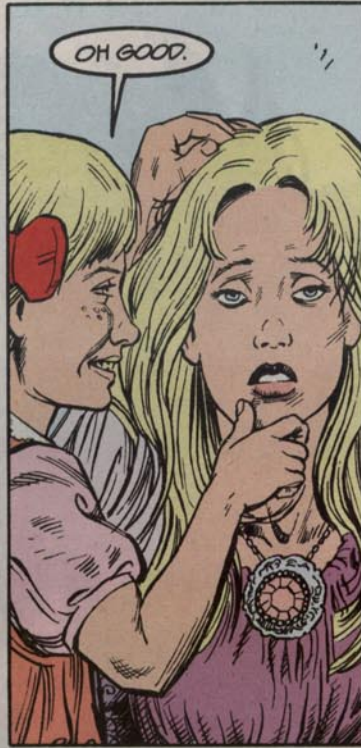
PATHETIC, BESPECTACLED, REJECTED PERRY PORTER IS SECRETLY THE AMAZING SPIDER. GAWKY, BESPECTACLED, UN-LOVED CLINT CLARKE IS REALLY HYPERMAN. YES?

WHAT HAS THIS GOT TO DO WITH--?

SHUSH.









NEW YORK.

THAT WAS THEY MIGHT BE GIANTS WITH "THE NIGHTDOWN OF THE GULLEN MOON," AND THIS IS BARBARA WONG WITH YOU UNTIL DAWN WITH MUSIC, PHONE-IN, NEWS AND WEATHER. HELL, THIS TIME A THE MORNING I DO EVERYTHING AROUND HERE INCLUDING MAKE THE COFFEE.

YOU OUT THERE, NIGHT OWLS? BECAUSE I WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU IF YOU ARE.

TALKING ABOUT COFFEE, I'M GOING TO POUR ME A CUP WHILE I WAIT FOR THE LIGHTS ON THE PHONE TO START FLASHING. BE BACK, RIGHT AFTER THIS MESSAGE...

HEY BILL?

YEAH JERRY.

YOU GOT ANY Q-TIPS ON YA?

NOPE JERRY. NO Q-TIPS.

AW HECK... BUT WHAT'S THAT? ISN'T THAT A PACK OF Q-TIPS?

NOT Q-TIPS, JERRY. WUNDABUDS.

I'LL NEVER USE UNFLAVORED Q-TIPS AGAIN, BILL.

YES JERRY, WUNDABUDS ARE STERILE, ALL-AMERICAN, AND FOR A LIMITED TIME ONLY 99 CENTS A PACK. NEW WUNDABUDS IN FRESHMINT, CINNAMON AND NEW GALSA FLAVORS.

WOW BILL..

NAW WHAT I GOT'S BETTER THAN Q-TIPS. IT'S WUNDABUDS, FROM THE MAKERS OF WUNDAWOOL.

BARBARA WONG LATE NIGHT ON WRAT NEW YORK, 3:47 A.M. AND YOU'RE ON THE LINE, CALLER.

YEAH, BARBARA? I'M DOWN ON THE LOWER EAST SIDE AND I'M CALLIN' TO SAY THAT I DON'T KNOW WHAT THE HEY'S GOING ON DOWN HERE BUT WEGOT WAVES LIKE YOU WOULDN' BELIEVE.

AND WHAT'S YOUR NAME, CALLER?

JIM. JIM MORRISON. NOT THE FAMOUS ONE.

HEY, WOULDN'T THAT BE A COUP FOR MY SHOW IF YOU WERE? SO WHAT'S YOUR POINT, JIM?

I THINK MAYBE IT'S THAT HURRICANE THEY WAS TALKIN' ABOUT ON THE NEWS. I THINK MAYBE IT'S HEADIN' BACK THIS WAY.

--THAT'S WEATHER FORECASTERS TO ALL OUR LISTENERS FROM NEW JERSEY--

--WOULD'VE WARNED US? NO CHANCE. BUT THANKS FOR CALLING...

WELL, MISTER JIM - BUT NOT THE FAMOUS - DEAD - ONE - MORRISON, DON'T YOU THINK THAT IF THERE WERE EVEN THE TEEENIEST CHANCE THAT HURRICANE LISA WAS HEADING BACK THIS WAY THE METEOROLOGISTS --

BARBARA WONG UNTIL 6:00 A.M. ON WRAT.



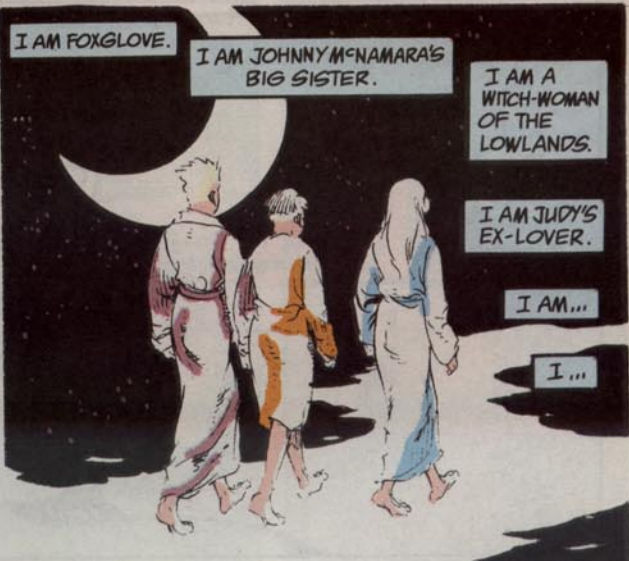
IDENTITY BLURS ON  
THE MOON'S ROAD.



I AM HAZEL  
MCNAMARA.

I AM THESSALY.

I AM DONNA  
CAVANAGH.



I AM FOXGLOVE.

I AM JOHNNY McNAMARA'S  
BIG SISTER.

I AM A  
WITCH-WOMAN  
OF THE  
LOWLANDS.

I AM JUDY'S  
EX-LOVER.

I AM...

I...



IN THE PALE LIGHT OF THE MOON  
I PLAY THE GAME OF YOU.

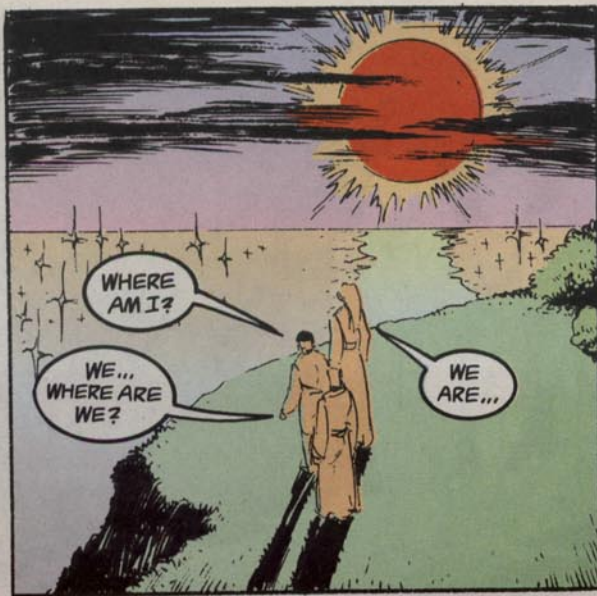
WHOEVER I AM. WHOEVER YOU ARE.



ALL SENSE OF WHERE  
I AM, OF WHO I AM  
AND WHERE I'M GOING,  
HAS BEEN SWALLOWED  
BY THE DARK.

AND I WALK  
THROUGH THE  
STARS AND SKY...

A TRINITY OF  
DREAMS BENEATH  
THE MOON.



WHERE AM I?

WE... WHERE ARE WE?

WE ARE...

WE ARE.  
WE ARE IN A DREAM.

AN OLD DREAM, I'D SAY--IT'S VERY SOLID.



WE'RE IN BARBIE'S DREAM?

I SUPPOSE...

IT'S MUCH OLDER THAN BARBIE, THOUGH. MY GUESS IS THAT IT'S SOMEWHERE SHE COMES TO DREAM, BUT I DOUBT SHE CREATED IT.



HOW DO YOU KNOW ALL THIS STUFF, THESSALY?

YEAH? HOW OLD ARE YOU?

I'M OLDER THAN I LOOK, FOXGLOVE. YOU PICK STUFF UP AS YOU GO ALONG. YOU KNOW.

I'M REALLY PRETTY OLD. LET'S LEAVE IT THERE, HUH?



SO, WELL, NOW WE'RE HERE, WE'D BETTER START LOOKING FOR BARBIE.

THE CUCKOO. WE FIND THE CUCKOO. BUT BARBIE...

BARBIE DIDN'T TRY TO HURT ME. THE CUCKOO DID. I'M HERE TO FIND THE CUCKOO.



I'M SURE WE'LL RUN INTO BARBIE ALONG THE WAY. THAT'S HOW THESE THINGS USUALLY SEEM TO WORK OUT. BUT I'M LOOKING FOR THE CUCKOO.

IT NEEDS TO BE TAUGHT A LESSON.



BUT, THESSALY...

WE DON'T NEED TO KNOW WHERE WE'RE GOING. THIS IS A DREAM-WORLD, FOXGLOVE. IT HAS ITS OWN LAWS, ITS OWN LOGIC. IT NEEDS TO BRING US TOGETHER.



UH-UH.

BUT THERE'S SOMETHING ELSE...

HAZEL? WHAT'S THE MATTER?



IT'S A BODY. SOME SORT OF GIANT RAT, IN A... UH. RAINCOAT.



IT'S NOT BEEN DEAD LONG.

GOOD.

IT CAN GIVE US DIRECTIONS.

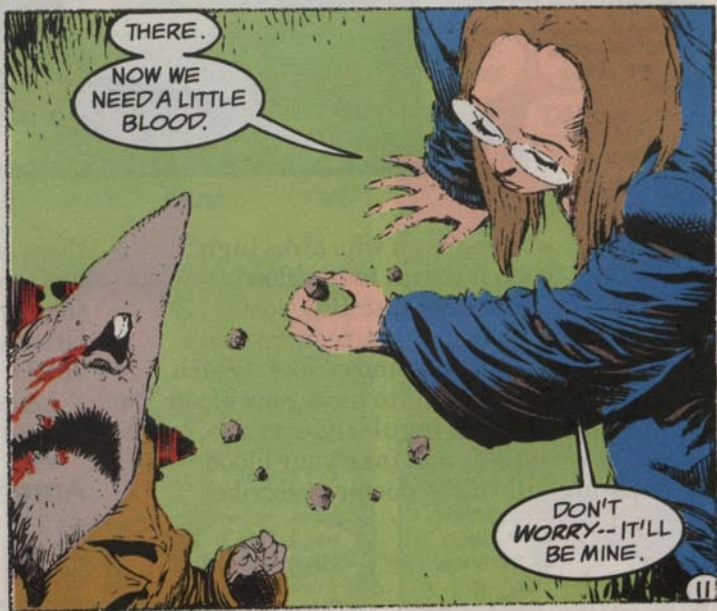


YOU--YOU AREN'T GOING TO CUT ITS FACE OFF, ARE YOU?

NO. NO NEED. BUT I'LL NEED SOME PEBBLES.

PEBBLES?

MM-HM. ROUNDISH ONES.



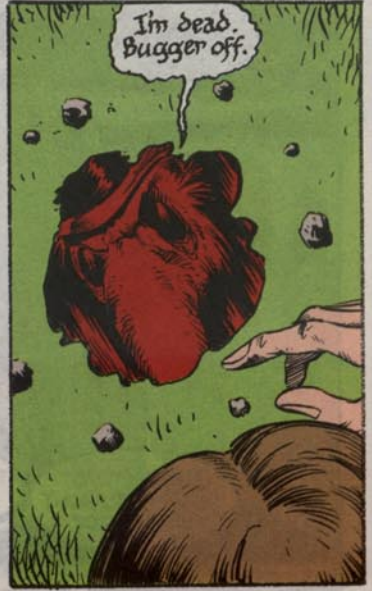
THERE.

NOW WE NEED A LITTLE BLOOD.

DON'T WORRY-- IT'LL BE MINE.



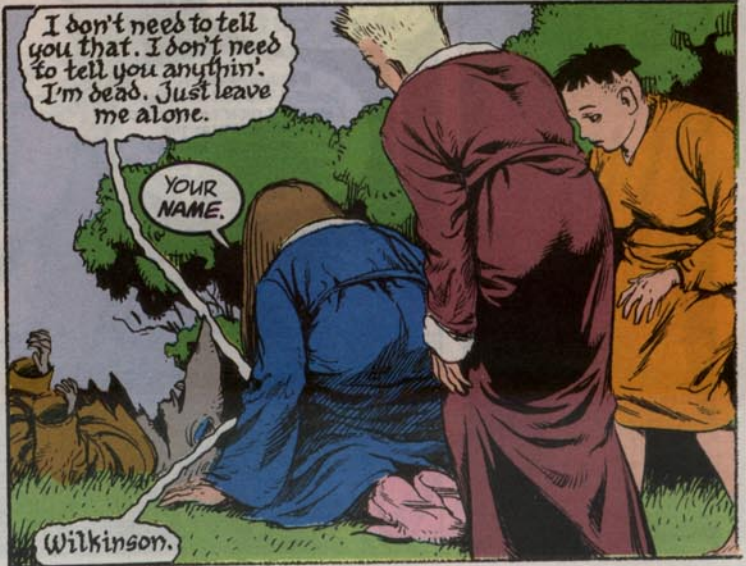
HELLO?



I'm dead. Bigger off.



WHAT WAS YOUR NAME?



I don't need to tell you that. I don't need to tell you anything. I'm dead. Just leave me alone.

YOUR NAME.

Wilkinson.



WHERE'S THE CUCKOO, WILKINSON?

She's down there. That's where her Palace is. In the city...



UM, EXCUSE ME, MR. WILKINSON. DO YOU KNOW WHERE BARBIE IS?

Barbie? I failed her.

I failed her. I did everything I could...



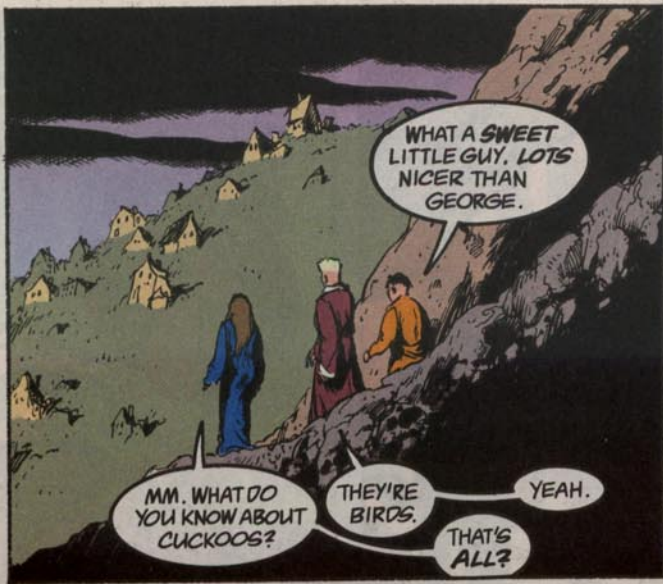
WHERE IS SHE?

The Cuckoo took her.

Tell her... tell her Wilkinson said sorry...

Now leave me be.

YES, YOU CAN GO.



WHAT A SWEET LITTLE GUY, LOTS NICER THAN GEORGE.

MM. WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT CUCKOOS?

THEY'RE BIRDS.

YEAH.

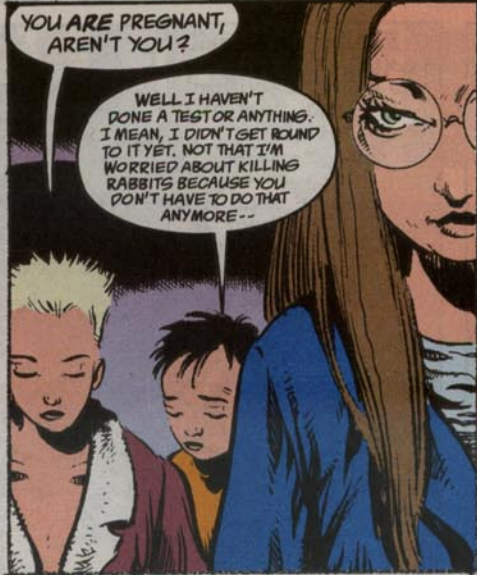
THAT'S ALL?



SO?

SOME CUCKOOS LAY THEIR EGGS IN OTHER BIRDS' NESTS.

THEY JUST DO. THAT'S ALL.



YOU ARE PREGNANT, AREN'T YOU?

WELL I HAVEN'T DONE A TEST OR ANYTHING. I MEAN, I DIDN'T GET ROUND TO IT YET, NOT THAT I'M WORRIED ABOUT KILLING RABBITS BECAUSE YOU DON'T HAVE TO DO THAT ANYMORE--

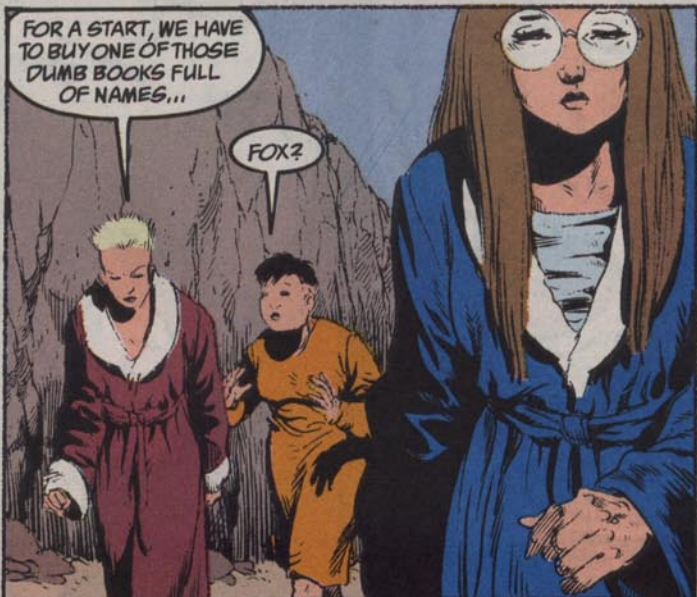
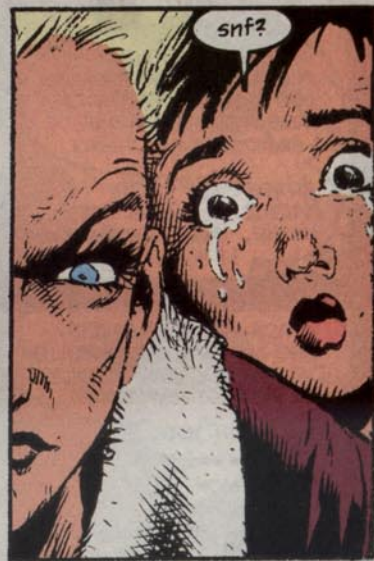


HAZEL. SHUT THE HELL UP.

SORRY.



SHITHEAD.









WHAT THE HELL WAS THAT?

UH IT CAME FROM OUTSIDE.



THERE'S A PERSON DOWN THERE.

I THINK SHE'S HURT.



HEY! LADY!

ARE YOU OKAY?



I'VE GOT TO DO SOMETHING.

GEORGE, KEEP AN EYE ON BARBIE. DON'T GO ANYWHERE.

UH OH VERY FUNNY I UH DON'T THINK. MY JOKE WAS UH FUNNIER.



SHIT.



HEY! ARE YOU OKAY?

I TWISTED MY LEG WHEN I FELL. IT HURTS.

NUTS.



OKAY. EASY NOW.

I GOT GARBAGE ALL OVER ME. ALL OVER, STINKING GARBAGE.

ALL OVER ME.



WELL, LET'S JUST GET YOU OUT OF THE WIND UNTIL WE CAN GET YOU TO A DOCTOR.

OKAY, NOW, CAREFUL UP THESE STEPS.

LEAN INTO THE WIND, OKAY? OR ELSE WE'LL BOTH BLOW OVER...



LOOK, MAYBE I SHOULD LEAVE YOU HERE. IT'LL BE REALLY TOUGH ON YOU GOING UPSTAIRS IF YOUR LEG IS HURT.

IS YOUR CALL, LADY. YOU'RE THE GOOD SAMARITAN.

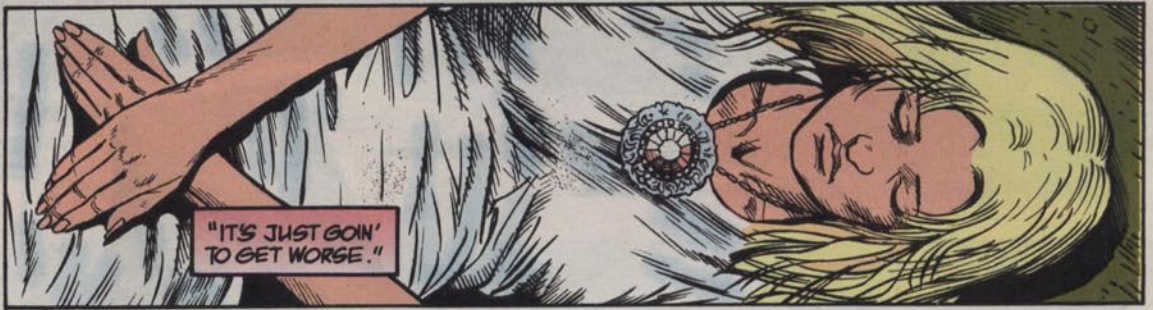
THIS IS A CITY OF CRAZIES. YOU KNOW THAT?



JESUS. YOU REALLY DO STINK.

I'D LET YOU USE GEORGE'S SHOWER, BUT THERE'S A CORPSE IN THE BATHTUB WITH ITS FACE CUT OFF. I DON'T BELIEVE I JUST SAID THAT.

THAT MEAN WIND OUT THERE. IT'S ONLY JUST BEGUN. YOU KNOW THAT?



"IT'S JUST GOIN' TO GET WORSE."



"WELL, LUZ, NOT MUCH LONGER NOW."

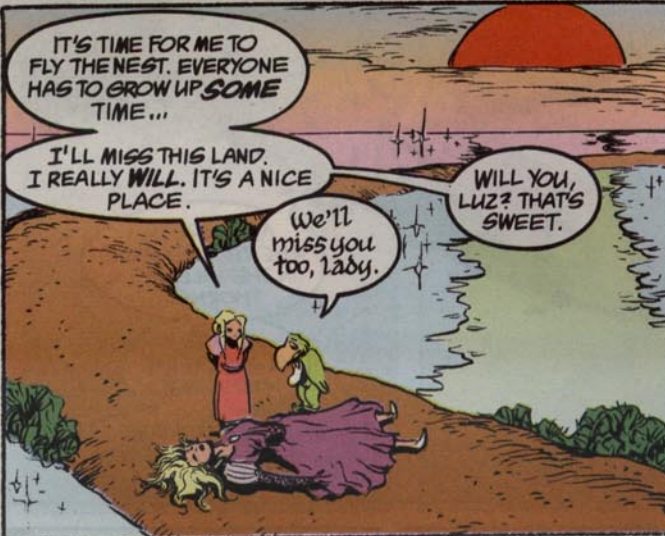
"No, my lady."

"DOES THAT MAKE YOU HAPPY?"

"Very happy, my lady."

"BECAUSE YOU WANT TO PROTECT ME. YOU WANT TO HELP ME. YOU WANT TO MAKE ME HAPPY."

"Yes, lady."



IT'S TIME FOR ME TO FLY THE NEST. EVERYONE HAS TO GROW UP SOME TIME ...

I'LL MISS THIS LAND. I REALLY WILL. IT'S A NICE PLACE.

We'll miss you too, lady.

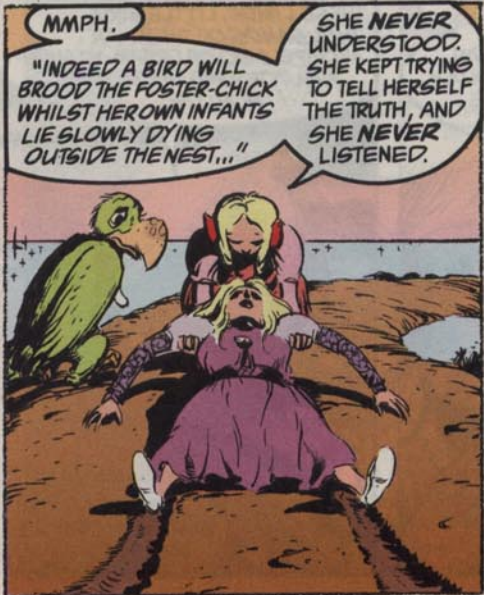
WILL YOU, LUZ? THAT'S SWEET.



ESPECIALLY SINCE YOU'VE SPENT THE LAST HALF DOZEN YEARS PLOTTING MY DOWNFALL...

I was misguised, lady.

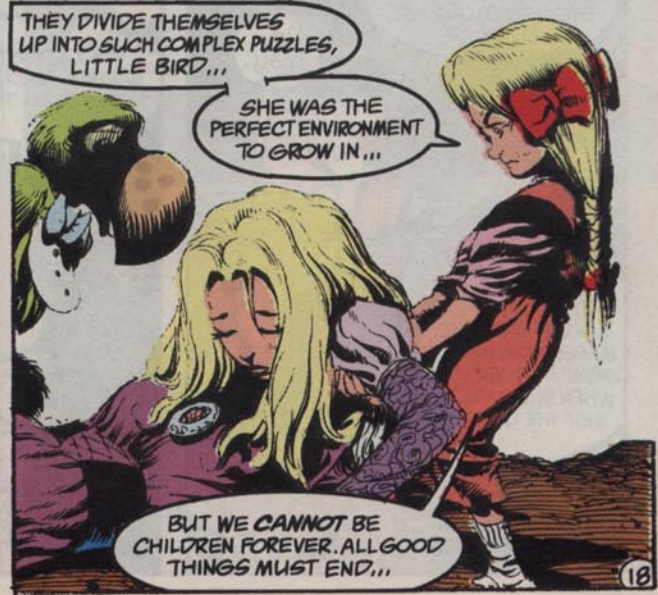
OF COURSE YOU WERE. AND IT JUST TOOK A LITTLE TALK TO SHOW YOU THE ERROR OF YOUR WAYS.



MMPH.

"INDEED A BIRD WILL BROOD THE FOSTER-CHICK WHILST HER OWN INFANTS LIE SLOWLY DYING OUTSIDE THE NEST..."

SHE NEVER UNDERSTOOD. SHE KEPT TRYING TO TELL HERSELF THE TRUTH, AND SHE NEVER LISTENED.



THEY DIVIDE THEMSELVES UP INTO SUCH COMPLEX PUZZLES, LITTLE BIRD...

SHE WAS THE PERFECT ENVIRONMENT TO GROW IN...

BUT WE CANNOT BE CHILDREN FOREVER. ALL GOOD THINGS MUST END...



AND HERE IS  
WHERE THEY STOP,  
IN THE ISLE OF  
THORNS...

AT THE  
PLACE OF THE  
HIEROGRAM.

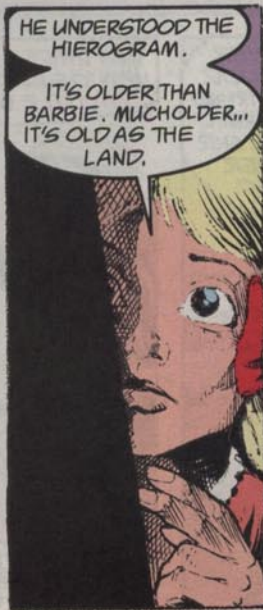
AT MOONRISE.  
VERY VERY SOON.



DID YOU EVER MEET  
THE HIEROMANCER,  
LUZ?

No,  
lady.

SWEET OLD  
GUY. I THINK  
BARBIE MAY HAVE  
BASED HIM ON HER  
GRANDFATHER,  
WHEN SHE POPULA-  
TED THE LAND.



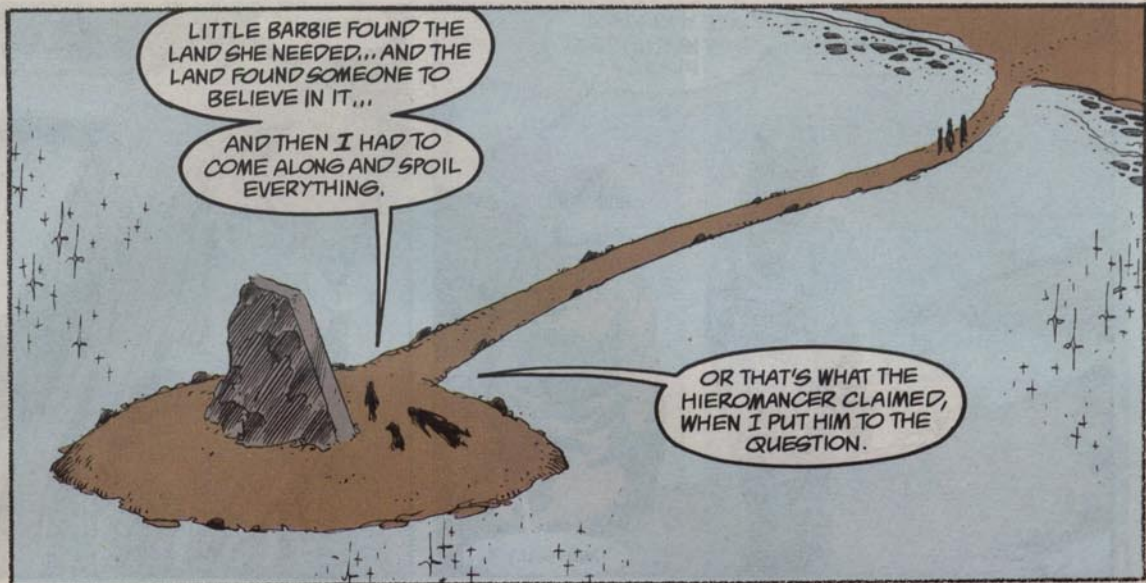
HE UNDERSTOOD THE  
HIEROGRAM.

IT'S OLDER THAN  
BARBIE. MUCH OLDER...  
IT'S OLD AS THE  
LAND.



THERE MUST BE HUNDREDS OF  
THESE LANDS, LITTLE BIRD.  
THOUSANDS OF THEM. AN  
ARCHIPELAGO OF DREAM-ISLANDS--  
A GLITTERING SHOAL OF  
WORLDS.

COME ON,  
COME ON... SET,  
DAMN YOU...



LITTLE BARBIE FOUND THE LAND SHE NEEDED... AND THE LAND FOUND SOMEONE TO BELIEVE IN IT...

AND THEN I HAD TO COME ALONG AND SPOIL EVERYTHING.

OR THAT'S WHAT THE HIEROMANCER CLAIMED, WHEN I PUT HIM TO THE QUESTION.



BUT IT'S NOT IMPORTANT WHAT THE LAND IS. ONLY HOW TO LEAVE IT.

I'M READY TO LEAVE THE NEST.

YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT IT'S LIKE TO BE PHYSICALLY CONFINED TO ONE TINY PLACE WHEN THERE ARE SO MANY OTHER PLACES I COULD BE...



THERE ARE REAL WORLDS OUT THERE: LITTLE ONES, LIKE THE ONE BARBIE INHABITS WHEN SHE'S AWAKE, AND HUGE, MARVELOUS WORLDS BEYOND THEM...

I'M CONSTRICTED HERE, LUZ.

I NEED TO FLY.



BUT I'M STUCK HERE, UNTIL THE END OF THIS WORLD.

IN A WAY, I'M PLEASED THAT THE GEORGE AND THE SENDINGS FAILED SO MISERABLY.

IT WILL BE SO MUCH MORE SATISFYING TO DESTROY THE PORPENTINE MYSELF. AND THIS IS THE PLACE TO DO IT...

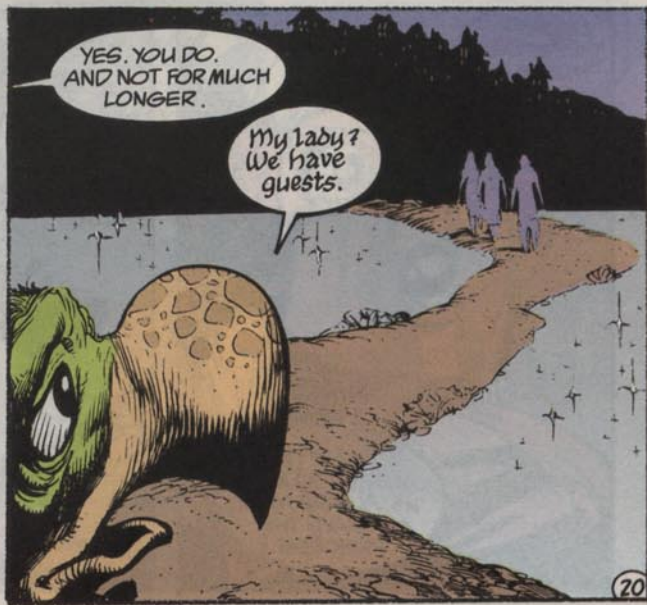


THE HIEROMANCER KNEW. KNEW A LITTLE.

AND HE TOLD ME EVERYTHING HE KNEW, BEFORE HE DIED...

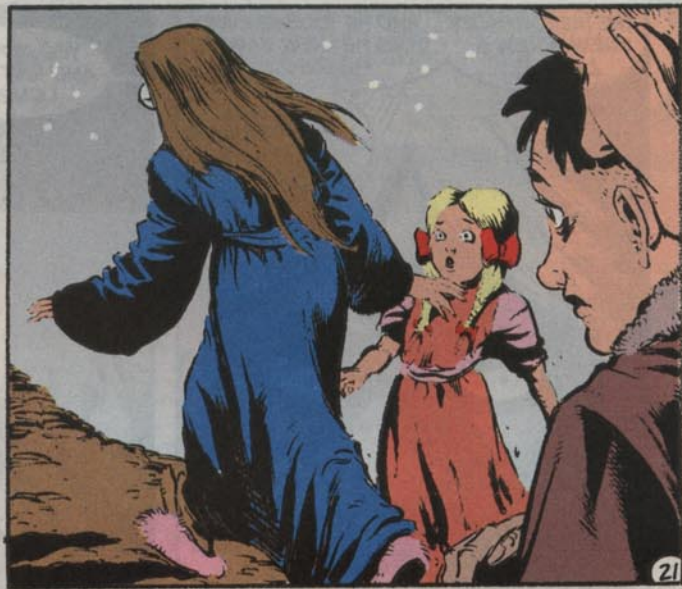
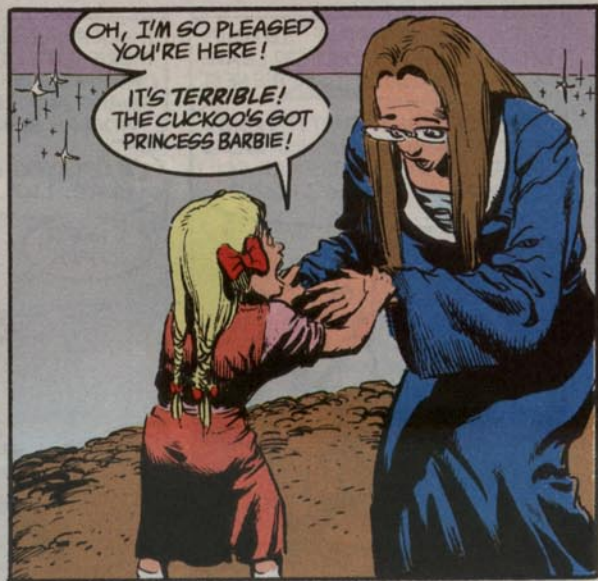
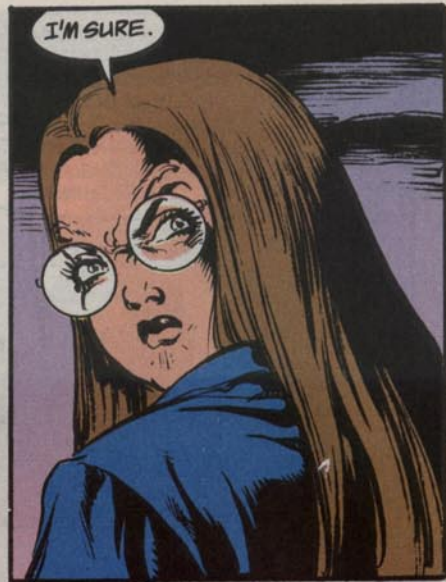
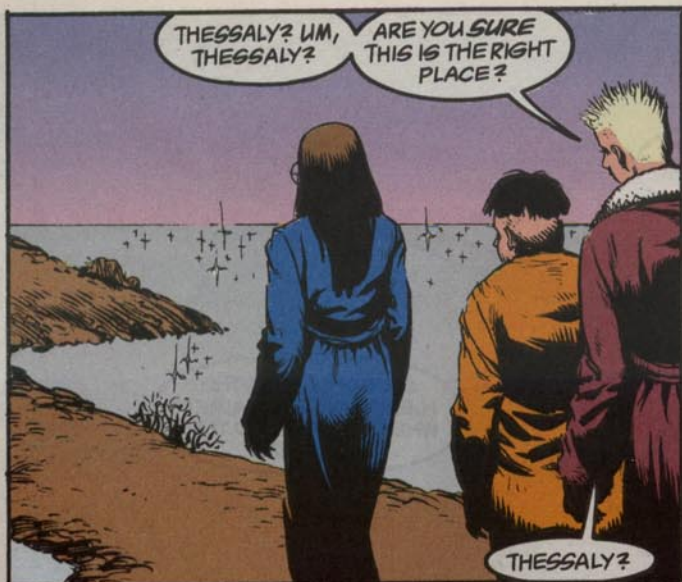
WELL, NOW IT'S JUST YOU AND ME, LITTLE BIRD LUZ.

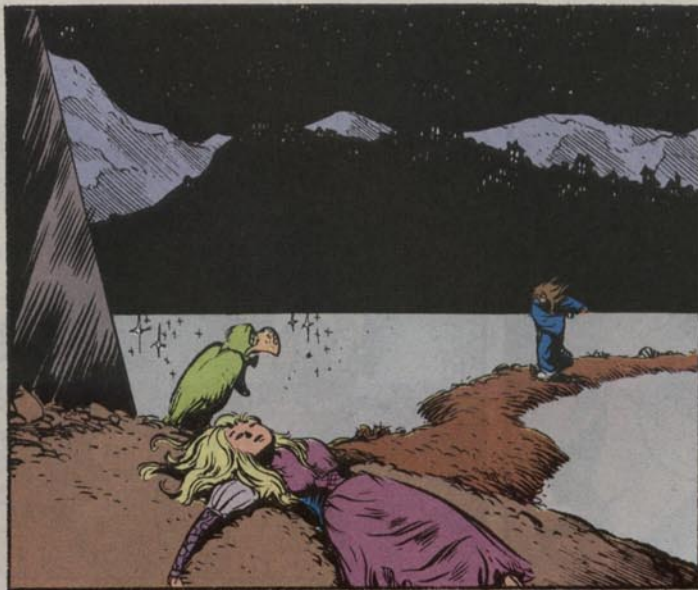
MURPHY BE PRAISED, LADY-- I ONLY LIVE TO SERVE YOU.

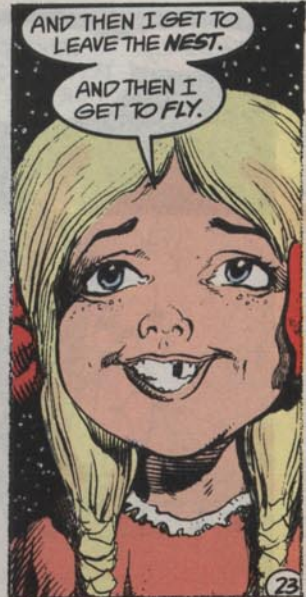
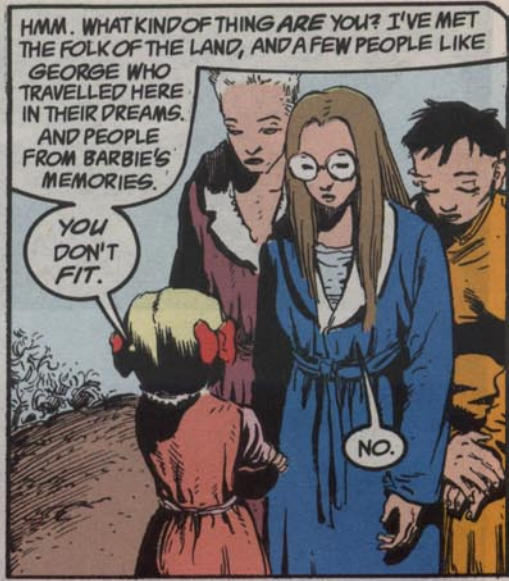


YES. YOU DO. AND NOT FOR MUCH LONGER.

My lady? We have guests.

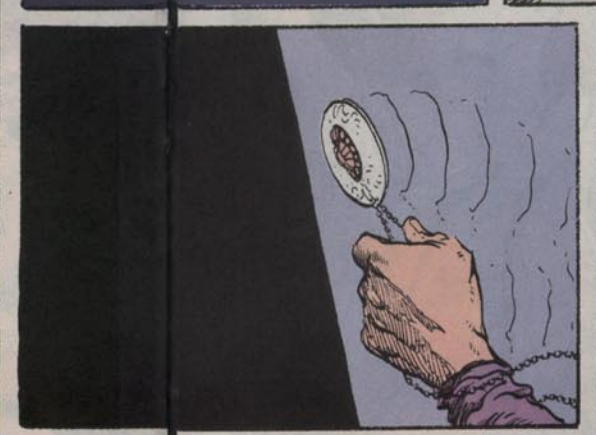
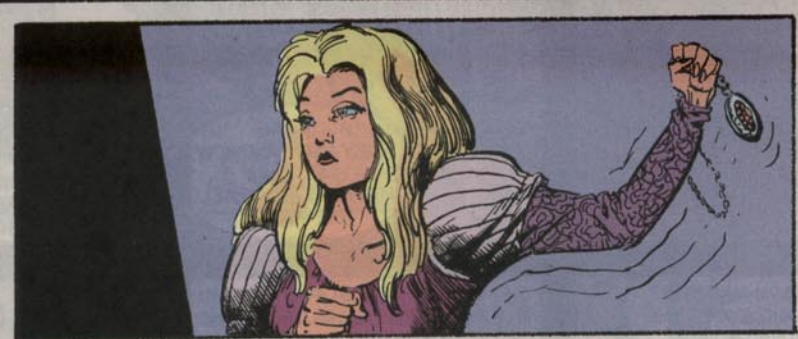
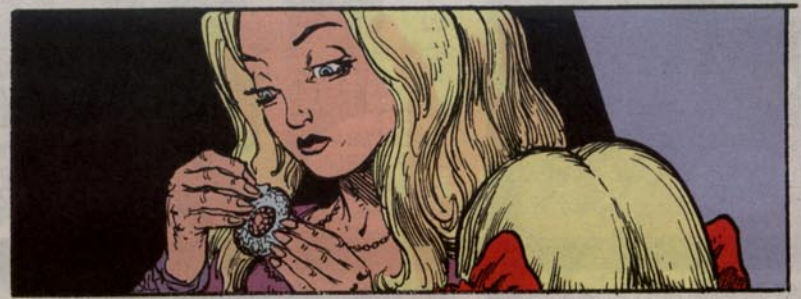
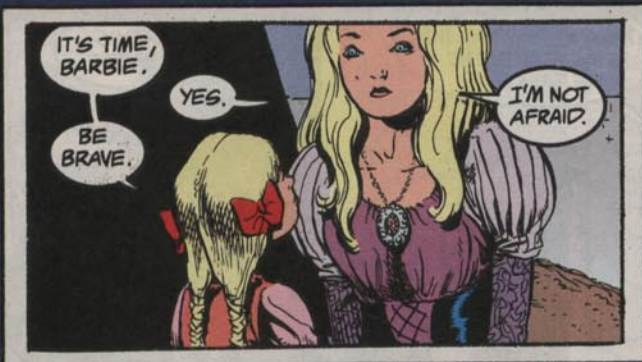
















THAT WAS NEW YORK'S OWN LOU REED WITH "SATELLITE OF LOVE," BRINGING US TO A QUARTER OF FIVE IN THE MORNING.

AND WHILE IT WAS PLAYING A WEATHER FLASH CAME THROUGH, HERE ON WRAT. SEEMS I OWE AN EARLIER CALLER AN APOLOGY.

HURRICANE LISA--THAT'S LISA WITH AN "S"--IS INDEED HEADING BACK THIS WAY. THE FLASH DESCRIBES THE HURRICANE'S CHANGE OF DIRECTION AS "INEXPLICABLE."

SAYS HERE THE HURRICANE'S CHANGE OF DIRECTION MAY BE DUE IN PART TO SOME PERTURBATIONS IN THE UPPER ATMOSPHERE. METEOROLOGISTS ALSO POINT TO A POSSIBLE HIGH ALTITUDE DUST STORM WHICH HID THE FACE OF THE MOON EARLIER THIS MORNING...

MY ADVICE? STAY HOME.  
BARBARA WONG, WRAT.

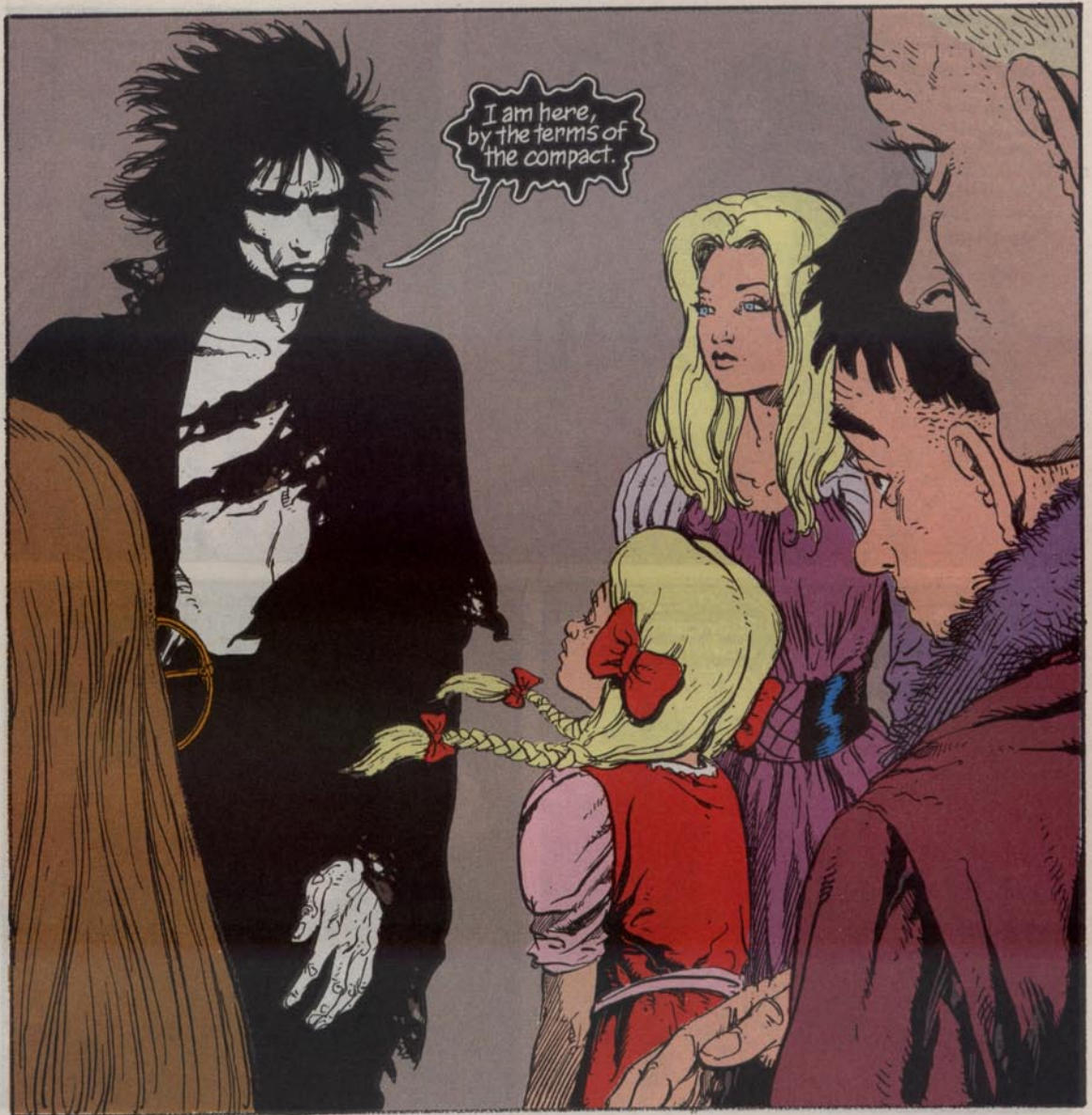
HEY BILL?

YEAH JERRY.

YOU GOT ANY Q-TIPS ON YA?





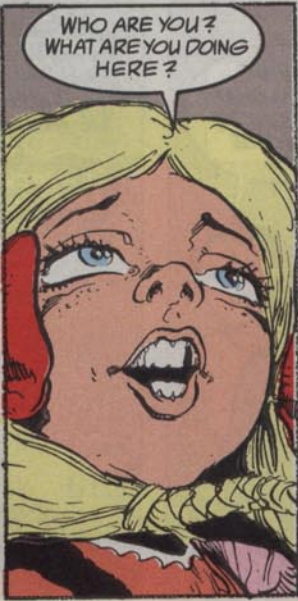


I am here,  
by the terms of  
the compact.



Who summoned me? Who  
calls this skerry to it's  
final judgment?

Who seeks  
my boon?

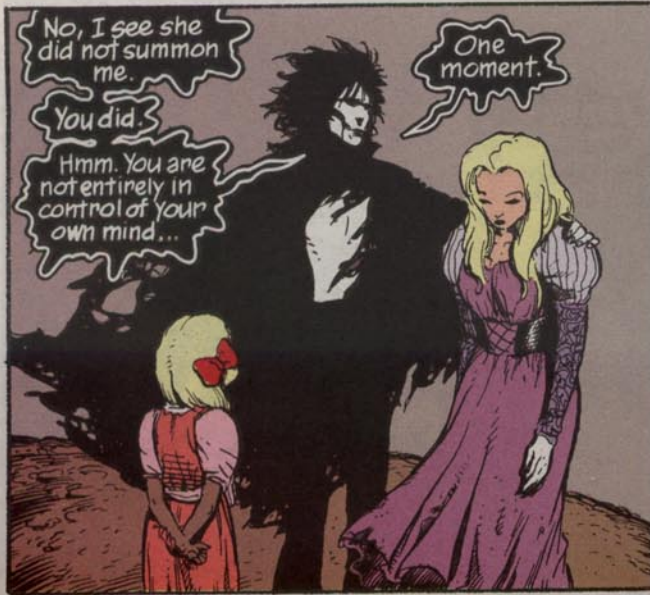


WHO ARE YOU?  
WHAT ARE YOU DOING  
HERE?



A strange question-- did you  
not call me, young lady?

I was your  
land's creator.

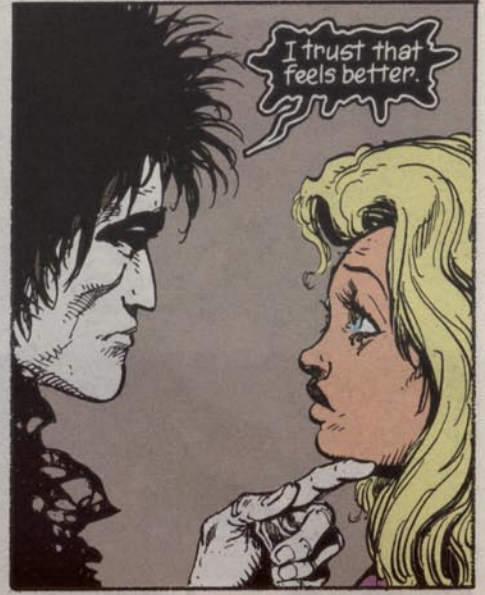


No, I see she did not summon me.

One moment.

You did.

Hmm. You are not entirely in control of your own mind...



I trust that feels better.

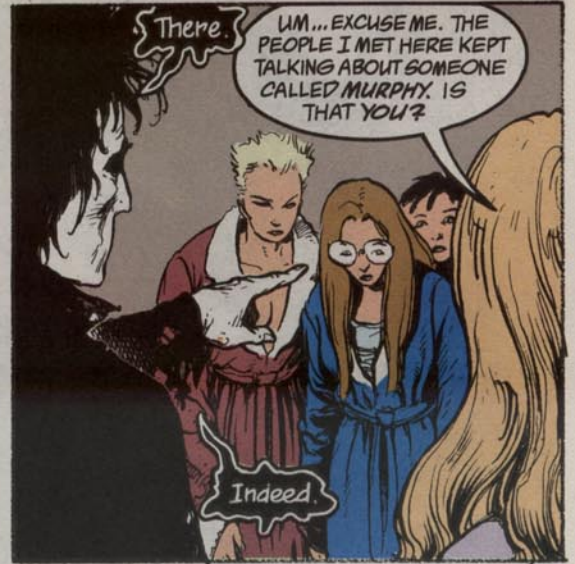


FOX?  
HAZEL?

THESSALY?

WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?

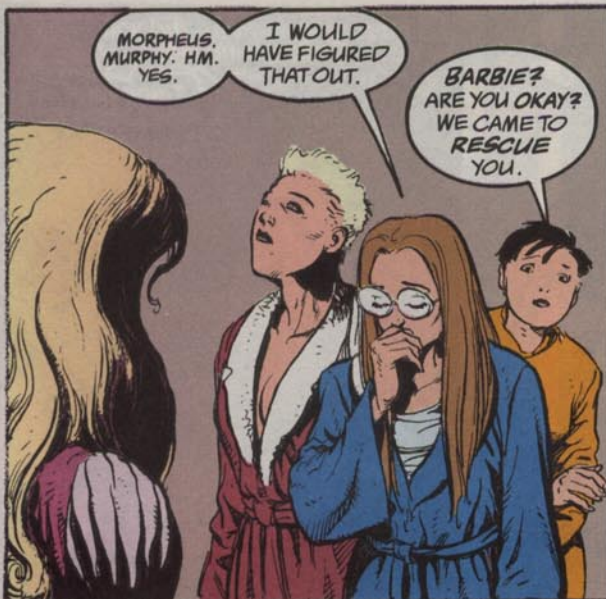
They cannot answer you.



There.

UM... EXCUSE ME. THE PEOPLE I MET HERE KEPT TALKING ABOUT SOMEONE CALLED MURPHY. IS THAT YOU?

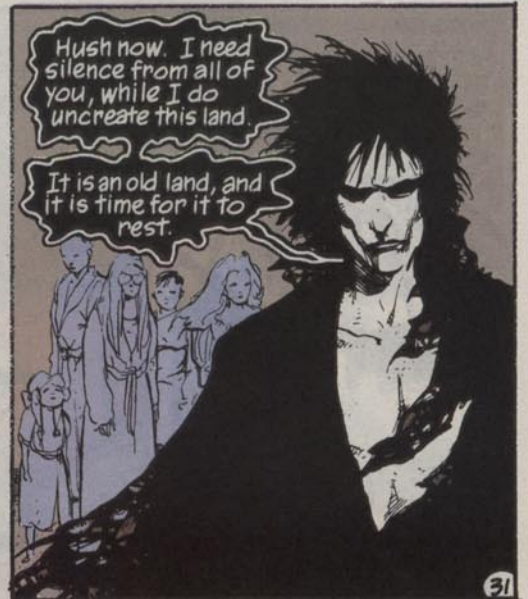
Indeed.



MORPHEUS,  
MURPHY: HM.  
YES.

I WOULD HAVE FIGURED THAT OUT.

BARBIE?  
ARE YOU OKAY?  
WE CAME TO RESCUE YOU.



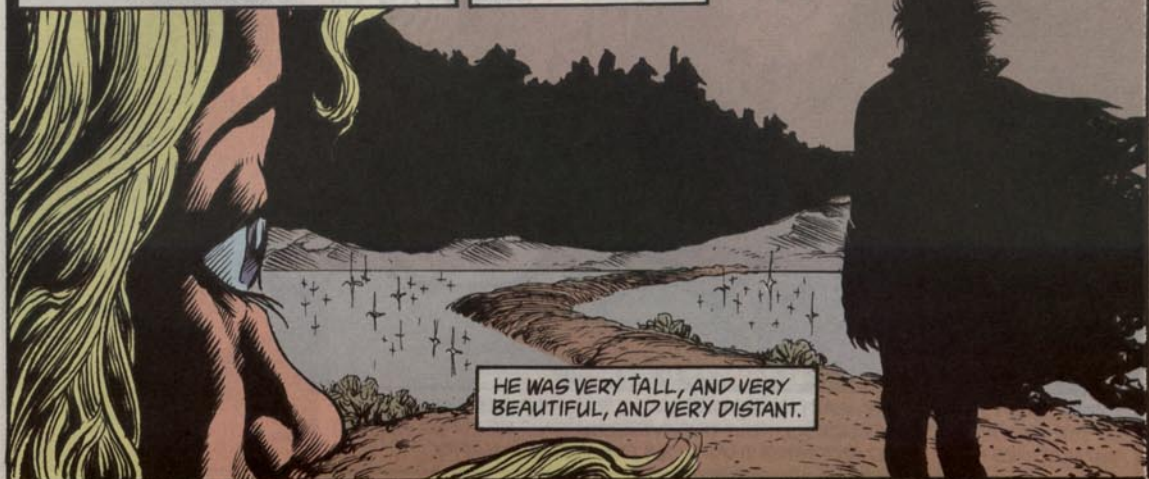
Hush now. I need silence from all of you, while I do uncreate this land.

It is an old land, and it is time for it to rest.

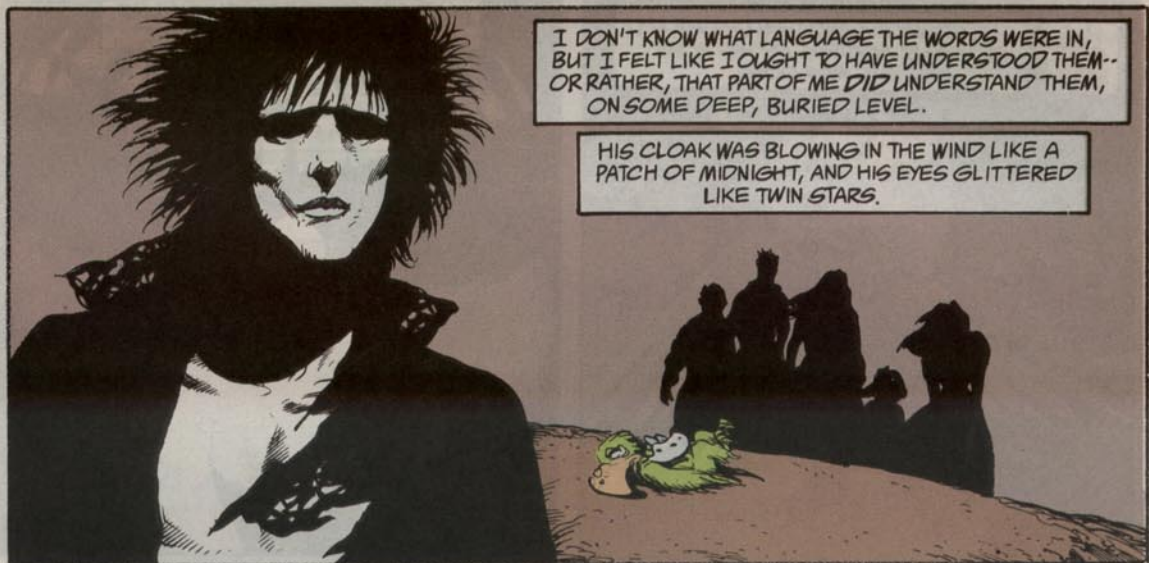
HE BEGAN TO TALK, VERY QUIETLY, IN THAT STRANGE VOICE OF HIS, THAT SOUNDED LIKE YOU WERE HEARING IT IN THE BACK OF YOUR HEAD.

I'D HEARD THE PEOPLE TALK ABOUT MURPHY BEFORE, BUT I'D NEVER IMAGINED HE EXISTED.

IT WAS LIKE MEETING GOD, OR SOMEONE LIKE THAT. YOU DON'T FIGURE THEY'RE EVER ACTUALLY GOING TO SHOW UP.

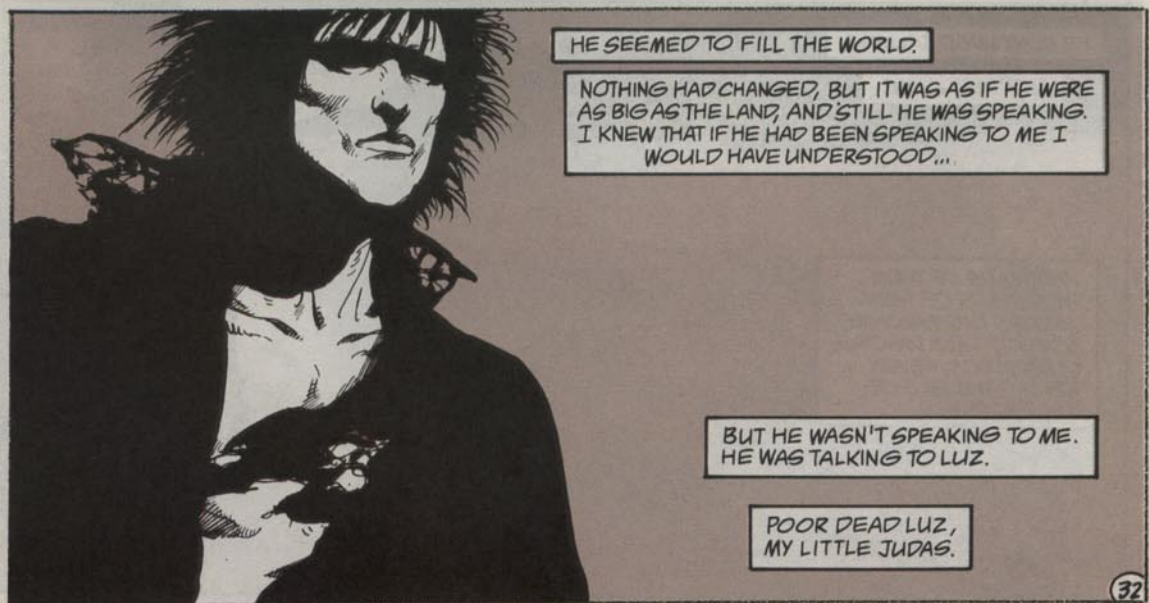


HE WAS VERY TALL, AND VERY BEAUTIFUL, AND VERY DISTANT.



I DON'T KNOW WHAT LANGUAGE THE WORDS WERE IN, BUT I FELT LIKE I OUGHT TO HAVE UNDERSTOOD THEM-- OR RATHER, THAT PART OF ME DID UNDERSTAND THEM, ON SOME DEEP, BURIED LEVEL.

HIS CLOAK WAS BLOWING IN THE WIND LIKE A PATCH OF MIDNIGHT, AND HIS EYES GLITTERED LIKE TWIN STARS.



HE SEEMED TO FILL THE WORLD.

NOTHING HAD CHANGED, BUT IT WAS AS IF HE WERE AS BIG AS THE LAND, AND STILL HE WAS SPEAKING. I KNEW THAT IF HE HAD BEEN SPEAKING TO ME I WOULD HAVE UNDERSTOOD...

BUT HE WASN'T SPEAKING TO ME. HE WAS TALKING TO LUZ.

POOR DEAD LUZ,  
MY LITTLE JUDAS.

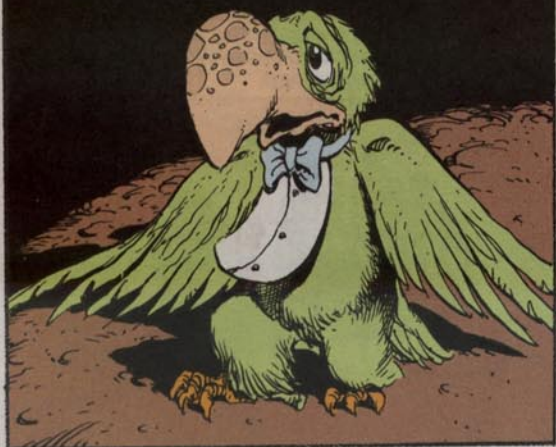




I COULD NOT FIND IT IN MY HEART TO BLAME HER: I, TOO, HAD BEEN ONE OF THE SERVANTS OF THE CUCKOO, FELT THE OVERPOWERING NEED TO PROTECT AND NURTURE HER; TO DO ANYTHING THAT WOULD MAKE HER HAPPY.

LUZ GOT UP.

SHE STUMBLED, AND THEN SHE WALKED INTO THE BLACKNESS OF HIS ROBE AND SHE WAS GONE.



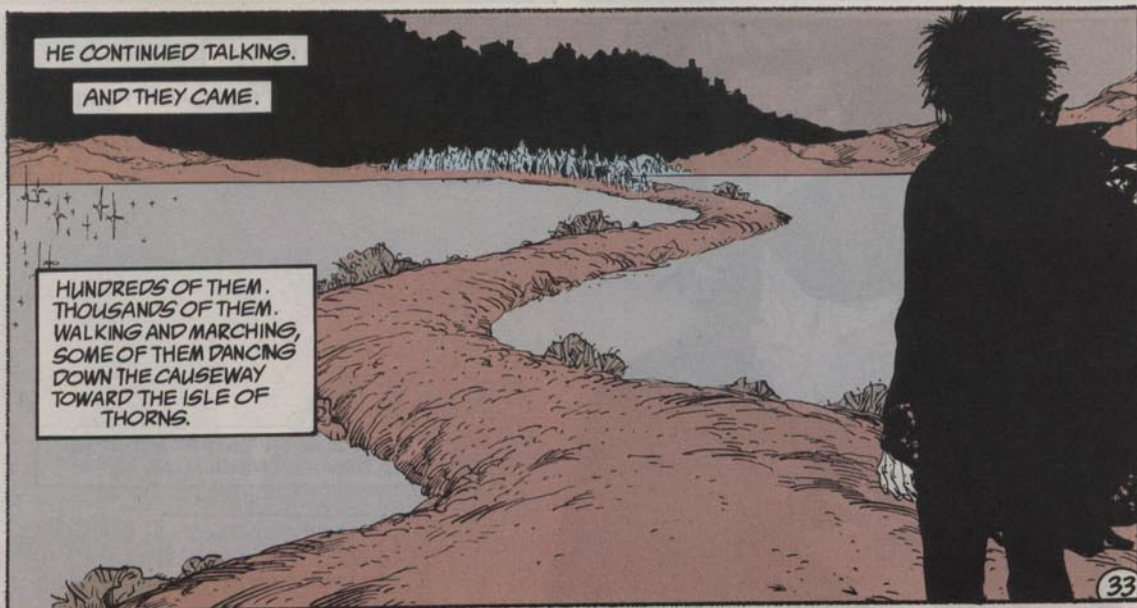
MURPHY'S PEACE BE WITH YOU, LUZ. IF HE HAS PEACE TO GIVE.



HE CONTINUED TALKING.

AND THEY CAME.

HUNDREDS OF THEM. THOUSANDS OF THEM. WALKING AND MARCHING, SOME OF THEM DANCING DOWN THE CAUSEWAY TOWARD THE ISLE OF THORNS.



THERE WERE GIANTS AND CENTAURS AND WITCHES AND FAUNS; BEARS AND TROLLS; EVEN A HANDFUL OF GIANT SPIDERS. I SAW WILKINSON AND PRINADO, WALKING TOGETHER. THEY WAVED WHEN THEY SAW ME.



THEY WALKED PAST ME, THE LIVING AND THE DEAD, AND ONE BY ONE THEY VANISHED INTO THE DARKNESS OF HIS CLOAK.

THEN THERE WERE OTHERS WALKING PAST. DIFFERENT WONDERFUL CHARACTERS -- SOLDIERS AND COURTIERS, YOUNGEST SONS AND CATS-IN-BOOTS: THESE WEREN'T THE INHABITANTS OF MY LAND.

THESE WERE SOMEONE ELSE'S PEOPLE-- SOME EARLIER PRINCESS'S ESCAPE FROM REALITY...



DID HE BECOME HUGE?

OR DID THEY BECOME TINY AS THEY REACHED HIM?

DID SUCH CONCEPTS EVEN APPLY?

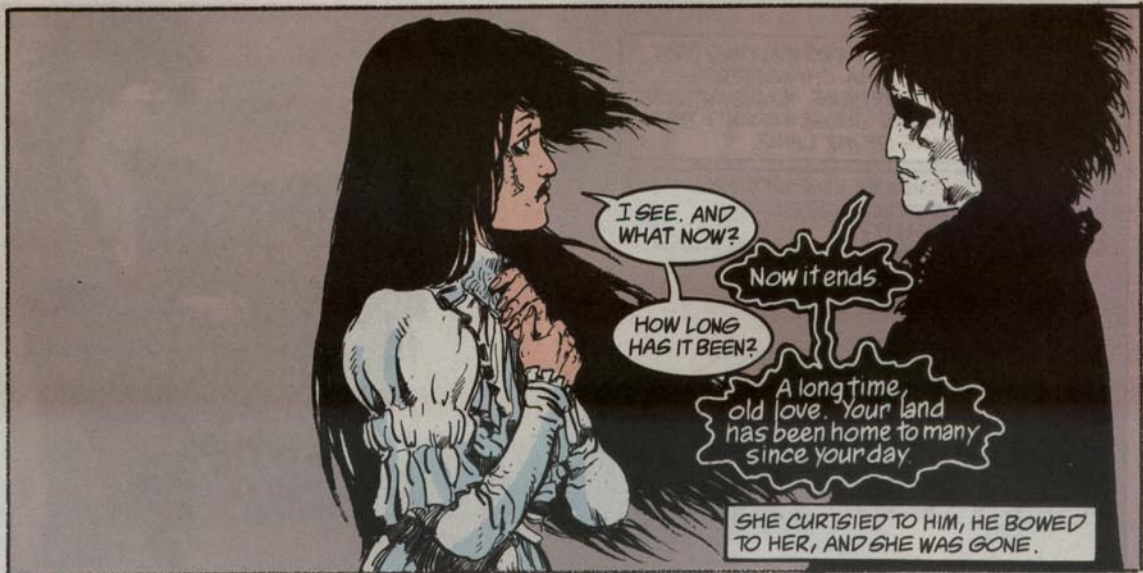


THE LAST ONE WAS THE SADDEST.

SHE WAS MAGNIFICENT. SHE LOOKED VERY PROUD AND VERY SAD. AND WHEN SHE GOT TO HIM, SHE HESITATED.



I am here, Alianora. By the terms of the compact.



I SEE. AND WHAT NOW?

Now it ends

HOW LONG HAS IT BEEN?

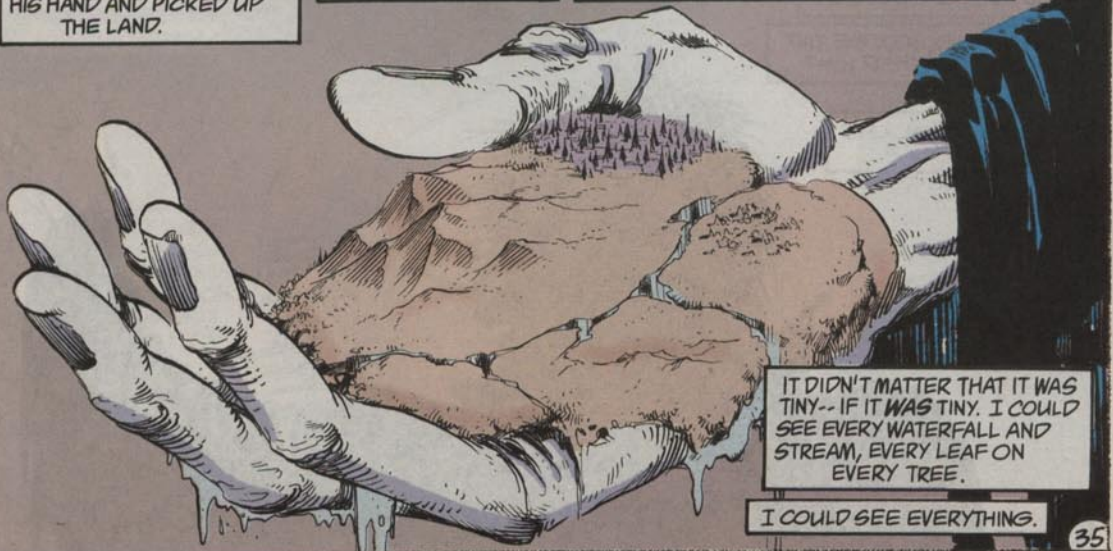
A long time old love. Your land has been home to many since your day

SHE CURTSIED TO HIM, HE BOWED TO HER, AND SHE WAS GONE.

AND THEN HE REACHED OUT HIS HAND AND PICKED UP THE LAND.

I DON'T KNOW HOW...

IT WAS LIKE A LITTLE JEWELLED WORLD.



IT DIDN'T MATTER THAT IT WAS TINY-- IF IT WAS TINY. I COULD SEE EVERY WATERFALL AND STREAM, EVERY LEAF ON EVERY TREE.

I COULD SEE EVERYTHING.

AND THEN IT CRUMBLED  
IN HIS HAND.

IT WAS  
JUST DUST...

SAND...

A GLITTERING, MULTICOLORED  
SAND THAT FELL AWAY INTO THE  
CHILLY WIND AT THE END OF  
THE WORLD.

THERE WAS NOTHING LEFT OF MY LAND  
ANYMORE-- A DEAD SKY WENT ON FOREVER  
ABOVE US AND BELOW.

IT WAS  
OVER.

HE STOOD THERE IN SILENCE,  
LOOKING VERY TIRED, VERY ALONE.  
I FELT REALLY SORRY FOR HIM  
AND I DIDN'T KNOW WHY.

UM.  
ARE YOU  
OKAY?

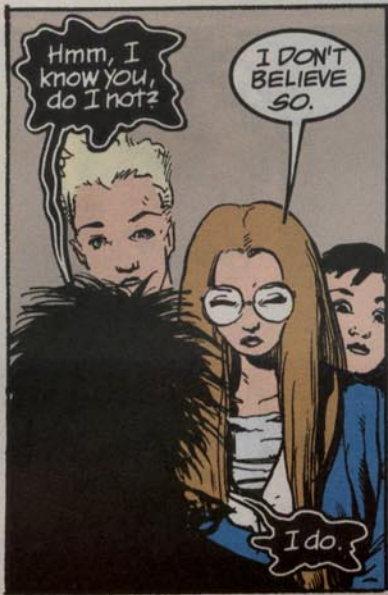
Endings are mixed  
blessings, Princess  
Barbara.

But, yes, I am  
okay. I thank  
you for asking.

There. Half the compact  
is discharged.

Now.

I wonder if you  
three know the trouble  
you've caused.



Hmm, I know you, do I not?

I DON'T BELIEVE SO.

I do.



Yes. We have met before, witch woman.

IT WAS A LONG TIME AGO, DREAM KING. I'M SURPRISED YOU REMEMBER.

There were more of you then.

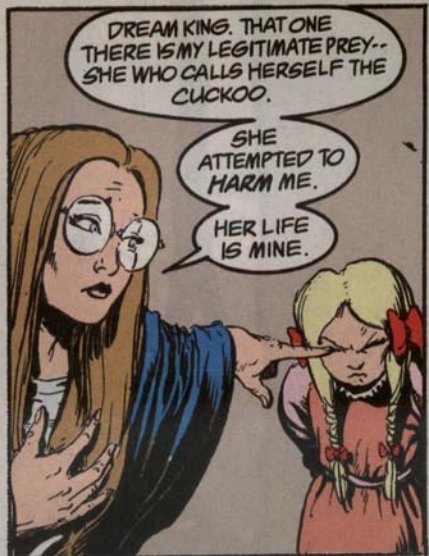
YES. NOW IT'S ONLY ME.



Why aren't you dead?

OH, LOOK, DON'T YOU START. IT'S A LONG STORY, AND I DON'T REALLY WANT TO GO INTO IT.

I see.



DREAM KING. THAT ONE THERE IS MY LEGITIMATE PREY-- SHE WHO CALLS HERSELF THE CUCKOO.

SHE ATTEMPTED TO HARM ME.

HER LIFE IS MINE.



No, her life is her own.

SHE WOULD HAVE HARMED ME, MORPHEUS. I DEMAND MY RIGHTS.

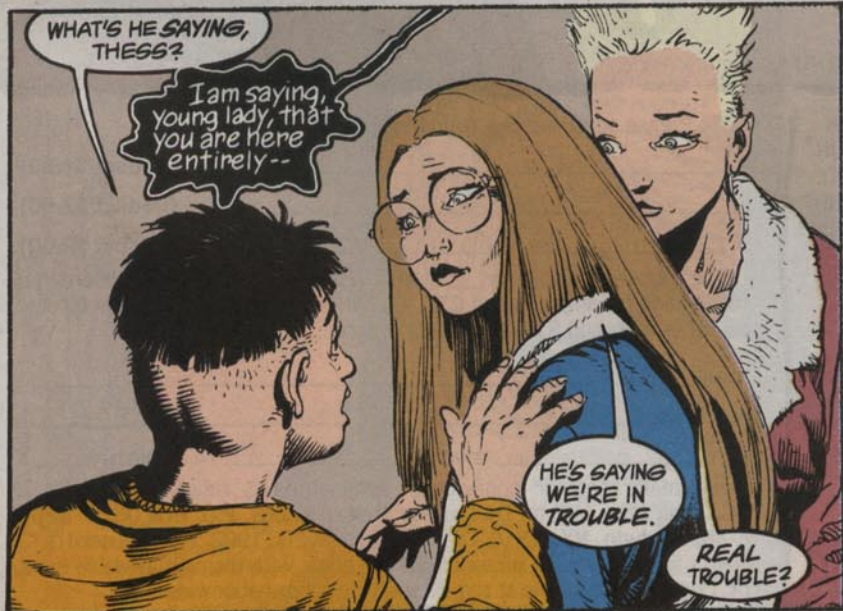


You DEMAND?

Thessalian. The moon has tumbled into the sea, in this place. It cannot take you or your followers back to the waking world.

You are a trespasser, here without my consent.

I am very displeased.



WHAT'S HE SAYING, THESS?

I am saying, young lady, that you are here entirely--

HE'S SAYING WE'RE IN TROUBLE.

REAL TROUBLE?



Yes. Real Trouble

But then, you are far from alone in that...



UH MISS WANDA?



HI GEORGE, YOU'RE TALKING AGAIN, THEN?

YOU MAKE HIM HOLD HIS TONGUE, LADY. HE AIN'T A NATURAL THING.



IF SHE UH WANTED ME TO UH HOLD MY TONGUE THEN SHE'D HAVE TO DO IT FOR ME BECAUSE I DON'T HAVE ANY HANDS.

THAT'S KIND OF MY UH SORT OF JOKE.



THAT'S RIGHT, GEORGE.

IT DIFFERS FROM THE USUAL KIND OF JOKE ONLY IN THE VAST GULF BETWEEN IT AND ANY KIND OF A SENSE OF HUMOR.

SO WHAT'S HAPPENING?



IF YOU'RE UH GOING TO BE UH MEAN TO ME I UH WON'T TELL YOU.

I'M SORRY, GEORGE. TELL US WHAT?

UH WELL, ABOUT THE REALLY HEAVY STUFF. IT'S UH ALL REALLY GETTING BAD NOW.



I UH CAN'T FEEL THE LAND ANY MORE. OR THE UH CUCKOO. IT'S ALL MOVED AWAY.

WHAT ABOUT BARBIE? AND FOX AND HAZEL?

MAYBE THEY'RE DEAD. I UH DON'T REALLY KNOW. THEY'VE UH GONE.

JESUS WEPT. YEAH. THAT'S BAD STUFF, ALL RIGHT.



THAT'S UH NOT THE REALLY BAD STUFF.

THE REALLY BAD STUFF IS THE UH STORM. IT'S NOT JUST A STORM ANY MORE.

AND UH THIS IS A PRETTY OLD BUILDING.

GEORGE, WHAT ARE YOU TRYING TO SAY?



LADY!!!

End of Chapter Five