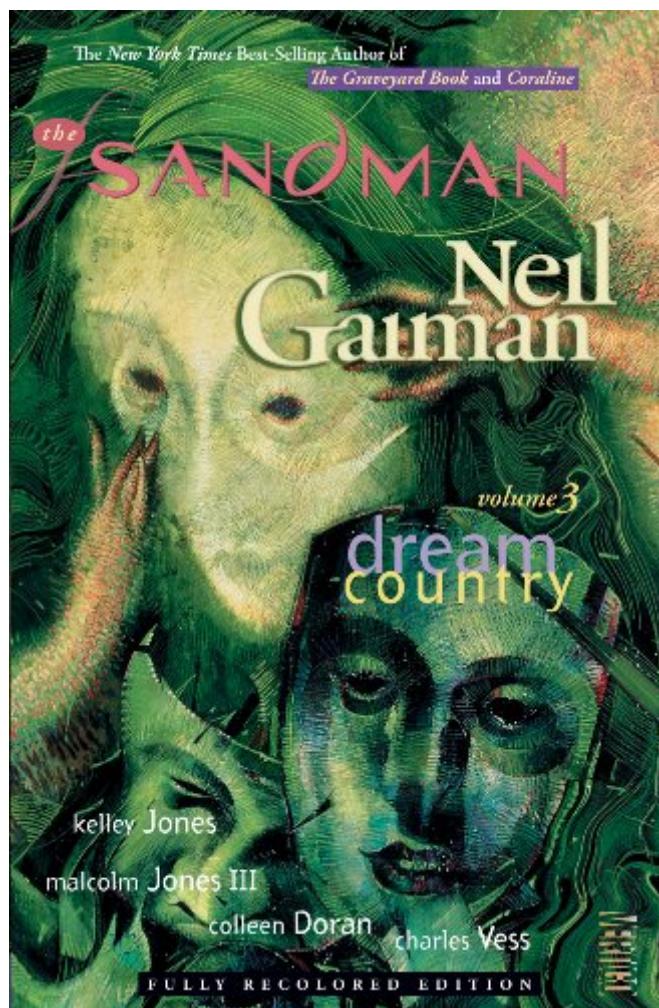


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# The Sandman Vol. 3: Dream Country (New Edition) (The Sandman Series)



## **Synopsis**

NEW YORK TIMES bestselling 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 third book of the Sandman collection, **DREAM COUNTRY** continues the fantastical mythology of Morpheus, the King of Dreams. In these centuries-spanning tales, the powerful entity known as the Sandman interacts with a diverse assortment of humans, fairies, heroes, and animals as he walks the mortal plane. Including an amazing encounter with William Shakespeare and an interesting take on the origin and first performance of "A Midsummer Night's Dream," this book depicts the dreaming world of cats, the tragic life of forgotten super-heroes and the folly of imprisoning and torturing a former lover of the King of Dreams. A new, recolored edition of the classic **SANDMAN** series, **DREAM COUNTRY** collects issues #17-20 including "A Midsummer Night's Dream," which won a World Fantasy Award.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

How many times have you heard a lot of hype about a product, finally buy it, and then am

disappointed? Well, I can honestly say that such is NOT the case here. I've been hearing for years and years how awesome the Sandman series was, how if you didn't read it, you were horribly depriving yourself. How this was some of the best \*fiction\* much less fantasy fiction ever written in any form. How this was a graphical novel series for grown-ups, how it's adult fiction in the best sense of the word. So I finally broke down and started the series. Vol. 1 and 2 were really good, and then I bought Vol. 3 here. Holy cow. "The Dream of a Thousand Cats" ALONE was well worth the price of admission. "Mid-Summer Night's Dream" was award-winning, and worth every accolade Gaiman got. I know you hear lots of hype but in this case it's worth it. There's only one other series out there that can compare to this: Starman by James Robison. If you loved that series, with its well-thought-out characters, extremely intricate plots, foreshadowing and "Easter Eggs" which take years to work out, and storylines which bring you to tears and laughter, then this series is for you.

First up, all of the 10 volumes of The Sandman novels deserve 5 stars. They are a phenomenal achievement in not only graphic novels but in storytelling itself. The story is complex and cerebral and the characters so well developed that Sandman is one of my favorite stories period. The novels are intensely violent and often disturbing but everything that happens serves a purpose, and nothing happens by chance or just for the sake of things happening. Something that happens in one volume may become vitally important 3 or 4 volumes later. By the end of the 10th volume everything has come full circle with an appropriate and satisfying end. With regards to Volume 3 itself it is exceptionally good, with some clever takes on historical events. This volume consists of 4 different, unrelated short stories. While Morpheus plays a role in 3 of the 4 he is more of a minor character than the primary focus. The first story focuses on Calliope, a former lover of Morpheus, who has been imprisoned by a writer to be used for inspiration. The second story concerns a cat whose kittens were killed by humans. She seeks out Morpheus who shows her an alternate reality where cats are the dominant lifeform. The third story concerns Morpheus' involvement in Shakespeare's A Midsummer's Night Dream. This story won a World Fantasy Award, the first comic to do so. The final story is about a minor DC superhero, Element Girl, who is retired and ashamed of her appearance. She wants to die but cannot because she is invulnerable. She meets Death and asks her to speak to the sun god Ra and allow her to die. As far as the volume's content on the Kindle Fire - I was hesitant to abandon the volumes in print worried that the Kindle Fire might provide a more difficult viewing experience. That hasn't turned out to be the case. The novel is easy to read, you can scan in to specific boxes, and the colors are vibrant.

A collection of one shot stories between the Doll's House, and Season of the Mists story arch, you can really get a sense of Gaiman playing with his now iconic character here. From the dream of a heartbroken cat, to the very first production of A Midsummer Night's Dream, the tales weave through time and space as we get to see new sides and aspects of the Lord of Dreams, discovering new facets of him as the author himself discovered them. While there is very little to be lost plot wise by skipping this volume, there is everything to be gained in reading it.

First off, this probably isn't the best volume (Dream Country - issues #17-20) to just pick up and read if you haven't read the past 2 volumes. There's some characters (Death) and story lines (Shakespeare) that rely on volumes 1 and 2 respectively. You could read this one if you really wanted but I'd suspect the gravity and history of the stories would be lost on new readers. As far as the stories go in this volume they are mostly one shots and aren't continuing - much like volume 2 was with A Doll's House - so it's a nice change of pace if you are coming straight out of volume 2 into this one. Each story has a beginning, middle, and end without having to read the entire volume to get the full story. With that said each story has its own message and meaning so be prepared to read each one twice or more to really get a handle on the art and dialogue to better understand its purpose. As such, it is this book that, in my opinion, makes it the reason why many consider the Sandman series to be the "intellectual's graphic novel". We learn a little history about Morpheus and really see him evolve as a character in this book. If you've read this volume along with the first 2 and still don't like the series then this is probably a good stopping point. The book itself is just like the previous two; great paper quality, nice size, recolored artwork and contains a script at the end from Gaiman concerning one of stories, Calliope (if that interests you). It also contains the World Fantasy Award winning short story, A Midsummer Night's Dream. A quick summary of the 4 issues inside: Calliope: A man imprisons one of the Muses and uses her to spur his creativity which attracts the scorn of Morpheus. A Dream of a Thousand Cats: Even animals can venture into Dream's domain as we learn of the rule of cats and humans rise over them. A Midsummer Night's Dream: Shakespeare must pay well on his debt to Dream and perform his famous play to an unnatural audience. Facade: An immortal woman wishes for death.

Gaiman is a master. His mind functions in a way no other person's does, and in this series he takes you on the grand tour of it. I will warn you, this volume has a script in the back which constitutes about the last quarter of the book. This script is an earlier version of the story "Calliope" and gives you a look into the creative process. It's very interesting as an inside look at the art of making

comics, but may be dull to some who want more story.

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