



# Murder Mysteries

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## **Murder Mysteries** Neil Gaiman , P. Craig Russell

A lonely man in Los Angeles is told a unique tale - a passion play that sheds light on the events before the creation of the world! Constructing the Universe is a vast task - and up in Heaven, God has allocated roles to all of his angels, even if the roles of some are more ineffable than others. But when a murder takes place - the first murder - an archangel is assigned to investigate...Teaming a story created by comics legend Neil Gaiman (The Sandman, Miracleman, Harlequin Valentine) with an adaptation by acclaimed, multi-award winning artist P. Craig Russell (The Sandman, The Ring of the Nibelung), this is guaranteed to become an instant classic!

## **Murder Mysteries Details**

Date : Published 2002 by Titan (first published October 1992)

ISBN : 9781840235210

Author : Neil Gaiman , P. Craig Russell

Format : Hardcover 64 pages

Genre : Sequential Art, Graphic Novels, Comics, Fantasy, Fiction, Mystery, Graphic Novels Comics

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# From Reader Review Murder Mysteries for online ebook

## Izlinda says

This is a short graphic novel, so I finished it in less than an hour. However, the story is a wondrous tale of a murder in Paradise and Raguel, the angel made to be the Lord's vengeance, is awoken to find the murderer. It involves the construction of the Universe by various angels and Raguel meeting them and Lucifer. Contrary to what people might expect, Lucifer *didn't* commit this murder.

It's wonderfully drawn and written, and told by an old man. A Brit stuck in L.A. from an unexpected stop over visits an old friend of his, then goes for a walk and offers two cigarettes and a matchbook for an old man. When he won't take money, the old man offers this tale as his payment, a tale of \*his\* past.

It's really short, but so rich. I kind of wished it was longer, just so I had more to read and get absorbed in, but at the same time I wouldn't want it to peter out and kind of lose its greatness.

I definitely recommend this book to Neil Gaiman fans and people who have an open mind about God and his plans.

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## Andrew says

This book puts me in an odd position. I think P. Craig Russell is one of the greatest draftsmen and comic artists. Russell is brilliant in all of his adaptations. I think his Ring of Nibelung is one of the greatest things ever. But I'm not a big fan of Gaiman. Some of Sandman was alright, (what he's doing with the prequel stuff is horrible though).

I guess because Russell is gay it makes sense, but it was weird how off-putting the hetero-sex scene at the start of the book was, but how sexy the scenes with naked angels were.

Ultimately, unfortunately, the story didn't interest me in the least.

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## mark monday says

fascinating. Gaiman's short story (and radio play) about a murder investigation amongst angels before the dawn of time finds a perfect new form in this graphic novel. there are so many balls being juggled here: love, death, vengeance, purpose; the true reason for Lucifer's fall; God's design; murder and memory; the mechanics of Creation. and none of those balls drop - each is given a full measure of thoughtfulness and ambiguity. this graphic novel is a master class in layered storytelling; the whole endeavor is so strange and beautiful.

Gaiman has an ideal partner in acclaimed illustrator P. Craig Russell. his imagery, by turns limpid and shadowy, is always put at service to the narrative. his classic style transforms Gaiman's sinister and disturbing story into a lovely, haunting fairy tale. the last third of this book is an absorbing reconstruction of how Russell and Gaiman devised the illustrations.

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## Razvan Zamfirescu says

Spicuri din recenzia finala care se gaseste pe blogul meu

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*Se vede în fundal cinica umbră a marelui p?pu?ar u?or dezinteresat de absolut orice mai pu?in m?re?ul s?u plan. Bineîn?eles c? asta nu se vede din scriitura lui Gaiman ci dac?-?i pui tu mintea pu?in la contribu?ie. Ce-i cu adev?rat fain la povestire este c?-?i poate da subiecte de discu?ii cu prietenii. Îns? nu este deloc de o profunzime care s? te marcheze. Ba dimpotriv?. Tema abordat? este tratat? simplist, romantic, cu o u?oar? superficialitate care nu se cade s? apar? când laitmotivul este atât de complex, dar care s-ar potrivi de minune pe teme cu arhetipuri din vechile mitologii care ne plac atât la Gaiman, ?i când interpret?rile pot fi atât de diverse.*

*Din punct de vedere grafic, Russell o d? în bar? r?u de tot. De?i panoramele sunt foarte faine, personajele sunt fade, lipsite de expresii ?i nu te las? deloc s? empatizezi cu ele. Poate c? este voit dat? fiind natura lor, probabil c? fiind îngeri n-au nici emo?ii, ?tiu eu, dar asta nu înseamn? c?-s stane de piatr?, nu?*

*De ce 2 stele: pentru c? este pe alocuri atât de plictisitoare încât ajungi s? cite?ti mai des decât bulele de dialog num?rul de pagini care ?i-au mai r?mas de citit pân? termini cartea. Gaiman încearc? o mega mi?care, dar nu-i iese nimic, iar Russell îi pune ?i el be?e în roate cu ilustra?iile. S-a vrut o povestire deosebit de inteligent? ?i filosofic? ?i a ie?it, mai degrab?, o lamentare cu puternic iz de roman?? ciripit? de un trubadur udut flea?c? de con?inutul oli?ei de noapte ale vecinului iubitei sale.*

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## Monica says

This review was originally posted on Avid Reviews: [www.avidfantasyreviews.wordpress.com](http://www.avidfantasyreviews.wordpress.com)

I have not read many graphic novels in the past, and I had convinced myself that they were simply not “my thing.” Earlier this year I read a graphic novel that was based on part of Joe Abercrombie’s First Law series, and ever since I have made a promise to give more graphic novels a chance. Neil Gaiman’s Murder Mysteries is beautifully written and stunningly illustrated by P. Craig Russell. After reading it I was convinced that my pledge to experience graphic novels had finally led me to something meaningful as well as picturesque.

The plot of Murder Mysteries revolves around some of Neil Gaiman’s favorite themes: gods, the origins of morality, and the shades of gray between good and evil. The story starts with a lonely man in Los Angeles who shares a cigarette one night with a stranger. The stranger tells the man the story of creation from the perspective of an angel of justice. God has given each angel a task, which falls under either the category of maintaining heaven or being the architects of earth. But when the very first crime in existence is committed, the angels of heaven are shocked. Someone has murdered an angel in paradise, and things will never be the same.

Fans of Neil Gaiman's books will enjoy this graphic novel, as it is one of the most beautiful stories he has ever written. The story is simple, but extremely moving, and the striking artwork makes up for the flowing prose of a traditional novel. This story really struck a chord in me, and made me stand up and take notice more than any other Gaiman story I have ever read.

I do have one note of caution for Gaiman's fans: though the themes are extremely similar to those in his other works, the tone in this story is much more serious. If you are looking for a fun story with a lighthearted feel similar to *American Gods* or *Stardust*, this is probably not the graphic novel for you. This is a serious story full of light and dark, and it leaves the reader feeling slightly melancholy and contemplative. I enjoyed it much more than *The Sandman*, Gaiman's other graphic novels, and found them to be both easier to follow and more profound.

Overall, I would rate *Murder Mysteries* an 8/10, as it touched me in a way that few stories can.

I received a copy of this graphic novel from Netgalley and the publisher in return for an honest review.

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## **Sam Quixote says**

At the beginning of Creation, an angel is murdered and Raguel, the Vengeance of the Lord, is sent to discover the culprit. Meanwhile Lucifer, his presence at the crime scene unaccounted for, walks in the shadows as he contemplates Creation and God's ultimate purpose.

I loved the way Gaiman wrote the character of Lucifer. Here he seems much more compelling and interesting a character with the way he tries to understand God's designs and uses his head, rather than the pure evil version many Christians choose to believe in.

The misdirection as to the murderer's identity is a nice addition to the story and a nod to the genre it is written in. It keeps the reader guessing until the reveal at the end. Even then though, the murder mystery solved, the real mystery - God's plans - remain obscured. It's this that is the true mystery. Why would God create evil? Why would God not destroy Lucifer since he has the power to? We never find out.

The framing device is clever and adds another twist to the ending. It makes you appreciate what an accomplished writer Gaiman is that he never lets up with an ending. Just when you feel that he can stop, that he's tied up the loose ends, he keeps going and takes the story to a different place where you're completely surprised again.

Despite this being one of Gaiman's best short stories, it's translated very well into comics form by the masterful P. Craig Russell. His beautiful artwork brings the angels to life and gives you breathtaking visions of Creation. He also does a wonderful job of drawing Death. No, not the skeleton in a black cowl with a scythe, but the concept of Death. Very imaginative, Russell's drawing abilities matches Gaiman's writing and imagination perfectly.

One of the finest of this series of Gaiman adapted comic books, and a brilliant standalone comic book for those who are put off by ordinary prose, "*Murder Mysteries*" is a fantastic read and will hold your attention from the first page to the last.

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[illegible]

## **||Swaroop|| says**

"Here. A Quarter. That's a good price."

A short read, and indeed a good one. Of course, it's Neil Gaiman! Right from the beginning, you can "feel" the soul...

"Be an Angel, Give Generously."

We are all here to fulfill a responsibility, and you need to wait until you are called for, and until it's time. And, be aware that the wait could be until the end of time.

Of all, I shall remember the smile, the grin of the Angel. It's beautiful!

"Sure. Sure. Tell me a Story." Hey Neil Gaiman. And, let's make every moment priceless...

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## **Sud666 says**

Neil Gaiman writes a great Angelic tale. I am a fan of anyone who wants to tackle the Higher Powers (from Mike Carey's Lucifer to Hellblazer comics). In Gaiman's wonderful hands we get a wonderful tale.

A strangely disturbed English writer goes out for a walk in LA. He meets an old homeless man who offers to tell him a tale in exchange for two cigarettes. The tale he tells has to do with murder.

Raguel, the Vengeance of the Lord, is awakened by Lucifer to investigate the murder of the angel, Carasel. What follows is not only a murder mystery, but a look into the mind of the Angels. What do they know of emotions? What is love? Death? Throughout the entire story is always Lucifer, though he is not the rogue here, and his questions. Is God truly just? Why does He do what He does? It's a great look at how each angel, in the end, performs their function. I will not give away any more, this is well worth your time to read.

The illustrations are well done, though not spectacular, and the story is a fine one. A very enjoyable tale of murder and love and questions. Any Gaiman fan will like this. Anyone who likes a good tale will like this.

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## **Dan says**

Seeing how the title implies multiple stories...I was disappointed that it was one single story about angels. Seems like so many rated this high just because it is Neil Gaiman...sorry I was not impressed by this.

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## **Jamie says**

This was my first Neil Gaiman comic. It. could debatably by my last. While I do like Neil Gaiman in general

this was trash in my opinion. There is one thing about the thing I liked. That's it. Just one (which I will share down the line). And let me also start off with informing readers-this is NOT for kids!

Let's get the ugly out of the way, shall we? First off, the art. At first, no the city is not too bad. Not good though either. Then, we get into "heaven" and the color choices are atrocious! First the scenes aren't very good but at least good coloring. Then I get blah fading pastels! Take color out altogether would have been better than what was shown. All facial expressions are bland. No emotion was visible, leaving me quite detached from the characters.

Then there is the story. At approx 60 pages for the story, it has no foundation. The first murder in "heaven" and the angel that plays detective.... No character depth, no lessons to be learned, just mystery death and a quest for the vengeance of said death. Included in this story is angel sex. While the angels are "sexless" they are all referred to as male and drawing as men (less the smooth Ken-like nether regions). So I got unexpected m/m relations going on. Not to mention the other sexual scenes and references. While I am very open in my reading, a little warning is nice!

The one thing I like it that after the 60 page story, we get another 50 pages of bonus material! This explains the why and how behind the panels, alternate art and coloring, etc. This was the only reason I don't give it 1 star. Otherwise, this takes the lead for worst graphic novel I have ever read. And I hate saying that being that Neil Gaiman is the creator. I heard this was based on a short story he wrote. I can only hope that was better. While I will still read Neil Gaiman's work, his graphic novels are on the backseat. This might have had potential but there is too much lacking in this to hold my attention.

\*\*I received this as a review eBook from Netgalley. Special Thanks to them, Diamond Book Distributors, and Dark Horse Comics. All opinions expressed are strictly my own.

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## Chris says

*I received a copy of this ebook from NetGalley.*

This was...interesting. It seemed familiar, and I finally realized it had originally been published as a Gaiman short story in one of his collections.

Though, it seemed like it was better as a Gaiman story. This seemed more like an adaptation of a Gaiman story. That is, one of his stories that got adapted by someone who is Not-Gaiman. I believe that is the case, though Gaiman's name is on the cover.

So it brings up one question. First, why does Gaiman need someone *else* to adapt his stories into comics? Ummm. *Sandman* ring any bells? Neil Gaiman does comics. He does them well. He always has. ***Don't fix something that isn't broken.***

The art was pretty meh in this. And wouldn't you know it, it turns out the same guy that's Not-Gaiman is also Not-Dave-McKean. Yes, he adapted the story and was the artist. Way to get the double-tap on that one, P. Craig Russell. As I look it up, I see that he's adapted other Gaiman stories into graphic novels too. Wow. Hold me back.



The story ended up falling flat and rather boring. Not horrible, but it did not have that magic Gaiman is known for. This wasn't bad, it just wasn't all that good. And it certainly wasn't Gaiman.

Oh yes. I'm aware that I keep saying "Gaiman" in my review. You might even say there's more "Gaiman" in this review than there is in the graphic novel I'm reviewing.

At least I'm not making people think Gaiman wrote this review...

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### **Bandit says**

Well, never let it be said the man didn't spin a good yarn. This is, in fact, a good yarn, though maybe not a sweater worth. How to describe this...a celestial homoerotic mystery? a morality tale? a murder investigation? Thing is you don't even have to love the mystery aspect to appreciate the stunningly imaginative world brought to life by a strikingly talented artist. This is one gorgeous book. Brief, a short story adaptation after all, less than an hour worth of entertainment, but well worth the time. Recommended.

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### **Calista says**

I loved this story. A man stuck in LA waiting for his grounded flight happens upon a man asking to borrow a cigarette. In exchange the man tells him a story. The story is of the angels as they were preparing the universe before it was spoken into existence. There is a murder to be solved. This is the kind of thing Neil is so brilliant at. You truly feel Neil has knowledge of this he is sharing. It feels so real. Raguel is the angel telling the story we are lead to believe. How this is set up is astonishing. It feels so real. I enjoyed this fun little story.

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### **Gabrielle says**

"Murder Mysteries" is probably my favorite short story by Neil Gaiman. I read it for the first time in the "Smoke and Mirrors" collection and I couldn't stop thinking about it for days. I was disturbed, enchanted, heartbroken. This little story haunted me and I told everyone that they just HAD to read it, but when they asked me what it was about, I was at a lost to explain or summarize the story for them. It's about angels, murder (obviously), love, revenge, justice, the creation of the Universe... Only a writer of Gaiman's caliber can take so many complex concepts and weave them together as finely as if they were light gossamer strands, then pack it all into a story that is less than a hundred pages.

When I heard that Gaiman had teamed up with P. Craig Russell to make a graphic novel out of it, I had to have a copy. The story is cinematic enough to be beautifully translated into the illustrated format. While the art can't hope to compete with the ethereal images my imagination had conjured, Mr. Russell's work plays on light and darkness and it's beautiful, subtle and evocative. His pen is perfectly aligned with Gaiman's imagination (as I have seen in many "Sandman" stories) and he brings his words to life perfectly.

The second part of the book is about the adaptation of the short story into a graphic novel. You can skip it if you want, but I always find that process very interesting and I was curious as to how Russell had processed

Gaiman's ideas and turned them in those luminous illustrations. It also made me want to see what he did with "The Graveyard Book".

This story is ambiguous, unsettling, rich, moving and unforgettable. Fans of the short story will love it, and people who have only know Gaiman via his "Sandman" series are in for a treat... and maybe a gateway drug to his prose.

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### **Samantha Trillium ? says**

Not exactly the story I was anticipating from reading the title, but this story left me thinking long after I finished it.

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### **Gieliza says**

4 stars!

Neil Gaiman's Murder Mysteries tells of the first murder committed in heaven and the angel Raguel's (who was woken for this very purpose) subsequent investigation to find the murderer. But this is just the outer layer of this tale. It also raises questions about divine will versus free will, love and duty, obedience and rebellion. For such a short tale, this manages to pack in several themes and you're left thinking about the questions and the answers long after you finished reading. Gaiman's prose is poetic and suits the story well and Craig Russell's art is gorgeous. A short yet meaningful read..

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