

# If you liked Sandman, you might like these:

## Great Independent Comics for All-Ages Readers

### **Akiko by Mark Crilley – <http://www.markcrilley.com>**

Akiko is one of the finest comics being produced today. If you ever read the original L. Frank Baum Wizard of Oz books, then you'll find yourself in familiar territory with Akiko. She's a smart, brave 4th-grader on an intergalactic mission to save a kidnapped prince! Sky pirates, underwater escapes from giant sea worms, arena battles against dinosaurs and a Lilliputian empire of stunning beauty are just some of the things you'll see in the very first volume.

### **Amelia Rules by Jimmy Gownley -- <http://www.ameliarules.com/>**

Amelia's parents have just gotten divorced, and she and her mom have moved in with her Aunt Tanner. Like many kids, she sees herself as the only normal one, surrounded by crazy friends and relatives. These kids are real-that means that sometimes they're evil, greedy, and self-centered. Sometimes they don't understand or see things that are obvious to us, and when they do notice, it's the biggest thing in the world to them. That vision is an eye-opener for the reader, and Jimmy Gownley is a genius at capturing their perspective.

### **Bone by Jeff Smith – <http://www.boneville.com>**

After being run out of Boneville, the three BONE cousins, Fone Bone, Phoney Bone and Smiley Bone, are separated and lost in a vast, uncharted desert. One by one, they find their way into a deep, forested valley filled with wonderful and terrifying creatures...

### **Castle Waiting by Linda Medley**

What happens after Sleeping Beauty wakes up? This beautifully drawn series takes you inside the everyday lives of storybook characters – princesses on the run, horseheaded knights, witches and bearded nuns – and spins tales to rival those of old.

### **Cynicalman by Matt Feazell – <http://members.aol.com/cynicalman>**

The Amazing Cynicalman, America's Laid-Off Superhero, continues his fight for truth, justice and a second cup of coffee. Matt's minicomics capture more movement and fun than most full-length comics out there – and proves how much you can do with stick figures!

### **Halo and Sprocket by Kerry Callen – <http://www.haloandsprocket.com>**

Halo is an angel assigned to assist Sprocket, in learning about the human condition from Katie. But Sprocket's logic, Halo's metaphysics, and Katie's real-life antics don't always mesh. Frustrating (for Katie) yet comical (for us) misunderstandings, naive curiosity, and ingenuous misadventure abound in this humorous, quirky series about the idiosyncrasies of life.

### **Leave it to Chance: Shaman's Rain – By James Robinson and Paul Smith**

Fourteen-year-old Chance Falconer has the occult in her blood. Her father, Lucas Falconer, is the supernatural defender of the Devil's Echo, an amazing city where the supernatural is an everyday occurrence. This is a family tradition handed down from one generation to the next and so Chance feels it's time for her training to begin. Is she up to the chance? Leave it to Chance.

**Owly: The Way Home by Andy Runton – <http://www.topshelfcomix.com>**

Owly is a kind, yet lonely, little owl who's always on the search for new friends and adventure. The first graphic novel in the series contains two enchanting novellas, "The Way Home" & "The Bittersweet Summer," wherein Owly discovers the meaning of friendship, and that saying goodbye doesn't always mean forever. Relying on a mixture of symbols, icons, and expressions to tell his silent stories, Runton's clean, animated, and heartwarming style makes it a perfect read for anyone who's a fan of Jeff Smith's Bone or Mike Kunkel's Herobear and the Kid.

**Paradise Valley Comics by Pam Bliss – <http://www.paradisevalleycomics.com>**

Hometown all-ages fun featuring everything from time-travelling scientists to a clubhouse full of neighborhood kids. Pam's also a dog person, so expect lots of cameos by her three Welsh Corgis. Many different topics, all of them intelligent and engaging - these book is the visual equivalent of your favorite flannel shirt. It fits just right.

**Scary Godmother by Jill Thompson (Sandman Artist!)**

Who can a child count on for the scariest holiday of the year? Why, a Scary Godmother, of course! This is the story of Hannah Marie, a young girl whose rotten older cousin Jimmy is babysitting for Trick or Treats one dark Halloween. Unhappy to be saddled with Hannah, Jimmy cooks up a dastardly scheme to frighten her home early. But his plan backfires when Hannah gets help from the coolest spooks around--including her own personal Scary Godmother! This elegant, hardcover presentation is fully painted by SANDMAN and WONDER WOMAN artist Jill Thompson. A definite all-ages treat in a classy storybook package. Written and illustrated by Jill Thompson--her first creator-owned project.

**Smith Brown Jones: Alien Accountant by Jon "Bean" Hastings**

What would really happen if an alien came to Earth, anyway? Would he be a friendly little green guy, like E.T.? Maybe he'd be a benevolent alien like the one in The Day The Earth Stood Still. Maybe he'd be a Predator. Or maybe, just maybe, he'd look more-or-less human, pick a "bland" name like Smith B. Jones, and get a job. As a reporter. For a supermarket tabloid. Covering the UFO beat.

**Usagi Yojimbo by Stan Sakai – <http://www.darkhorse.com>**

The adventures of a samurai rabbit in feudal Edo Japan. Historically and culturally rigorous, beautifully drawn, and packed with swordfights, adventure and page-spanning battles.

# If you liked Sandman, you might like these: Great Independent Comics for Young Adult Readers (13+)

## **Amy Unbounded by Rachel Hartman – <http://www.amyunbounded.com>**

This is a collection of minicomics that won the Xeric Grant, proving that minis are fast becoming a legitimate means of expression. It won for a reason - these are brilliant, brilliant stories that revolve around a young girl coming into her own during medieval times. Realistic historical consequences paired with a healthy dose of smart, cynical feminism provides readers with a romping pace and a quite intelligent and satisfying (if bittersweet) ending.

## **Battle Angel Alita by Yukito Kishiro – <http://www.viz.com>**

A scientist poring through a huge scrapheap finds the intact head of a beautiful cyborg and outfits her with a new body. Alita quickly becomes one of the fiercest warriors on the planet, and eventually unravels the secrets behind the inhabitants of the mysterious sky-city, Tiphareth.

## **Courtney Crumrin and the Night Things by Ted Naifeh – <http://www.thenightthings.com/>**

Courtney Crumrin and her parents move into the home of their rich uncle, Professor Aloysius Crumrin. Courtney soon discovers that her Uncle has a sinister reputation throughout the district, and his home is shrouded in dark rumor. She quickly finds herself an outcast at her new school -- and if that weren't bad enough, the moldering old mansion seems to house even stranger creatures than Mom and Dad or Uncle Aloysius.

## **A Distant Soil by Colleen Doran – <http://www.adistantsoil.com> (Sandman Artist!)**

Jason and Liana are the children of Aeren, a fugitive from the planet Ovanan, a world of powerful, beautiful and ageless psionics. Both children possess extraordinary powers, and as long as Liana lives, she is a threat to Ovanan, which has sent its massive warship the Siovansin to assassinate her. Rieken, the leader of the Ovanan Resistance movement, and his bodyguard D'mer have also come to Earth in human guise to save her. Warring factions within the Resistance threaten everything Rieken fights for and threaten the future of Earth and Ovanan alike.

## **Fallout by Jim Ottaviani, featuring art by Vince Locke (Sandman Artist!)**

So, you've always wanted to learn how to build an atomic bomb? You're in luck: Jim Ottaviani is not only a comics writer...he also has a master's degree in nuclear engineering! But even though it's not a complete do-it-yourself manual (assembly required, and plutonium is definitely NOT included), FALLOUT will bring you up to speed on the science and politics of the first nuclear gadgets.

## **Hopeless Savages by Van Meter, Norrie, & Clugston-Major – <http://www.onipress.com>**

How do you rebel when your parents are original punk rock stars Dirk Hopeless and Nikki Savage? For Rat Hopeless-Savage, the answer is to leave home and start a new life somewhere, become a normal citizen with a nine-to-five job. It's going pretty well, too, until Dirk and Nikki are kidnapped, and suddenly the family he tried so hard to deny needs him more than ever.

## **Little White Mouse by Paul Sizer – <http://www.littlewhitemouse.com>**

Imagine Red Dwarf done manga-style, with a sixteen-year-old heroine. Loo Lay P'heng survives a spaceship crash on an abandoned mining satellite and has to escape – and make her way back to earth.

**Lone Wolf and Cub by Kazuo Koike & Goseki Kojima – <http://www.darkhorse.com>**

An epic samurai adventure of staggering proportions -- over 7000 pages -- Lone Wolf and Cub (Kozure Okami in Japan) is acknowledged worldwide for the brilliant writing of series creator Kazuo Koike and the groundbreaking cinematic visuals of the late Goseki Kojima, creating unforgettable imagery of stark beauty, kinetic fury, and visceral thematic power that influenced a generation of visual storytellers both in Japan and in the West.

**Nausicaa of the Valley of the Wind by Hayao Miyazaki - <http://www.nausicaa.net>**

You may know Miyazaki's other anime work: He's the fine gentleman who brought you My Neighbor Totoro and Kiki's Delivery Service, and Princess Mononoke. This collection represents 13 years of his life, and is a true magnum opus. Miyazaki creates an immensely believable world populated with all-too-real characters and struggles. I'm dumbfounded that so few people have read this series - it's one of the best works of fiction ever written, illustrated or otherwise.

**The Ring of the Nibelung by P. Craig Russell (Sandman Artist!)**

There are so many beautiful works by P. Craig Russell that it's hard to pick just one. This two-volume set, an amazing, elaborate and faithful adaptation of Richard Wagner's Ring Cycle, is some of his best work, and makes an excellent jumping-in place for his wide-ranging library of work. In this massive undertaking, P. Craig Russell has created a living, breathing version of the Ring Cycle that Richard Wagner could only have dreamed of executing in his day.

**Rose By Jeff Smith and Charles Vess – <http://www.boneville.com> (Sandman Artist!)**

In the old days, when BONE'S Gran'ma Ben was a teenager, a terrifying dragon laid siege to the small towns of the Northern Valley. Unknown to Princess Rose (young Gran'ma Ben), the strange dragon is actually the minion of the Ancient Enemy called the Lord of the Locust. Rose seeks the advice of her advisor, who tells the young princess how to destroy the dragon - - - but at a terrible cost.

**The Tale of One Bad Rat by Brian Talbot (Sandman Artist!)**

Helen Potter lived a happy life until she got lost in a nightmare of sexual abuse. Now she's traveling through urban and rural England on a journey that is remarkably similar to the one Beatrix Potter once took. Bryan Talbot's inspirational story of young Helen Potter and her journey of healing won numerous awards and unending acclaim for the British writer/artist . . . even letters of commendation from Judy Taylor, the chair of the Beatrix Potter Society. This book is yet another example of a touching story that transcends the misperceptions that comics are disposable, juvenile pap.

**Thieves and Kings by Mark Oakley – <http://www.iboxpublishing.com>**

A young boy, Rubel, leaves his contract on sailing ship to return to his childhood home, only to find everything was not as he left it. As he is thrown back into his duties as the princess' thief, he finds himself embroiled in a generation-spanning battle for the kingdom's throne. Drawing in a deceptively simple Miyazaki-esque style, M'Oak manages to cram more emotion into a single page than most artists can hope for in a year's worth of work.

# If you liked Sandman, you might like these:

## Great Independent Comics for Mature Readers (16+)

### **Age of Bronze by Eric Shanower – <http://www.age-of-bronze.com>**

Daring heroes, breathtaking women, betrayals, love and death--the most spectacular war story ever told: The Trojan War. When a lustful Trojan prince abducts the beautiful Queen Helen of Sparta, Helen's husband vows to recover her no matter the cost. So begins the Trojan War. From far and wide the ancient kings of Greece bring their ships to join the massive force to pledge their allegiance to High King Agamemnon. Featuring the greatest of the Greek heroes: Achilles, Odysseus, and Herakles, along with a cast of thousands.

### **Ballads and Sagas by Charles Vess (Sandman Artist!)**

Charles Vess' beautiful black and white illustrations, along with an all-star cast of some of the greatest fantasy and mystery writers of today, lovingly adapt many of the popular old traditional Scottish, English, and Irish ballads into timeless stories with their unique contemporary visions and styles.

### **Blankets by Craig Thompson – <http://www.topshelf.com>**

Wrapped in the landscape of a blustery Wisconsin winter, Blankets explores the sibling rivalry of two brothers growing up in the isolated country, and the budding romance of two coming-of-age lovers. A tale of security and discovery, of playfulness and tragedy, of a fall from grace and the origins of faith. A profound and utterly beautiful work from Craig Thompson. Also, don't miss Craig Thompson's stunning debut book, "Goodbye, Chunky Rice."

### **Cerebus by Dave Sim and Gerhard**

Cerebus follows the life of a barbarian aardvark, who begins as a warrior, becomes Prime Minister, then Pope. Say what you will about his politics, Dave Sim has achieved what no one else has – a single story that spans nearly thirty years. Recently concluded, this 6000-page epic story is now available in fifteen "phone book" graphic novels, and is considered among the most important self-published comic series.

### **Fade From Blue by Myatt Murphy and Scott Dalrymple <http://www.secondtosomestudios.com>**

Follow the lives of four young women brought together through tragedy and held together through love. Four women. One missing father. Bonded by his blood. Sisters through his sins.

### **Finder by Carla Speed McNeil – <http://www.lightspeedpress.com>**

Finder is so encompassing and intricate that it's hard to describe. The main story (though it often tangents to tell stories about other characters) follows Jaeger, a Sin-Eater and 'aboriginal detective' as he passes in and out of other people's lives and problems. Stunning art, deeply detailed story, mesmerizing ideas.

### **Gloomcookie by Serena Valentino, Ted Naifeh, et al**

The Gloomcookie comic book series is a goth soap opera set in the San Francisco club scene.

### **Jimmy Corrigan: The Smartest Kid on Earth by Chris Ware**

This first book from Chicago author Chris Ware is a pleasantly-decorated view at a lonely and emotionally-impaired "everyman" who is provided, at age 36, the opportunity to meet his father for the first time. An improvisatory romance which gingerly departs itself between 1890's Chicago and 1980's small town Michigan, the reader is helped along by thousands of colored illustrations and diagrams, which, when read rapidly in sequence, provide a convincing illusion of life and movement. The bulk of the work is supported by fold-out instructions, an index, paper cut-outs, and a brief apology, all of which concrete to form a rich portrait of a man stunted by a paralyzing fear of being disliked.

### **Lenore by Roman Dirge**

Lenore is a romp into the dark, surreal world of a little dead girl. Featuring stories about limbless cannibals, clock monsters, cursed vampire dolls, taxidermied friends and obsessed would be lover and more fuzzy animal mutilations than should be legal. Lenore is one of the funniest, darkest comic books on the marketplace today.

### **Johnny the Homicidal Maniac by Jhonen Vasquez**

Mayhem and violence rule Jhonen Vasquez's Johnny the Homicidal Maniac. Dark and disturbingly funny, JTHM follows the adventures of Johnny (you can call him Nny), who lives with a pair of styrofoam doughboys that encourage his madness, a wall that constantly needs a fresh coat of blood, and--oh, yeah--his victims in various states of torture. Join Nny as he frightens the little boy next door (Todd, known to fans of Vasquez's work as Squee), thirsts for Cherry Brain Freezies, attempts suicide, draws Happy Noodle Boy, and tries to uncover the meaning of his homicidal existence.

### **Infinite Kung Fu by Kagan McLeod – <http://www.infinitekungfu.com>**

If you like martial arts films, then you must check this book out. In a future world, mankind's technology has become its downfall: more souls were killed than Hell could hold, and now the living dead walk the earth. Only highly trained martial artists stand a chance to stop the zombies, and the race is on to find the students of the Eight Immortals who can cast the demons back to hell. C'mon, zombies and Kung Fu! How can you go wrong?

### **Maus : A Survivor's Tale by Art Spiegelman**

Spiegelman, a stalwart of the underground comics scene of the 1960s and '70s, interviewed his father, Vladek, a Holocaust survivor living outside New York City, about his experiences. The artist then deftly translated that story into a graphic novel. By portraying a true story of the Holocaust in comic form--the Jews are mice, the Germans cats, the Poles pigs, the French frogs, and the Americans dogs--Spiegelman compels the reader to imagine the action, to fill in the blanks that are so often shied away from. Reading Maus, you are forced to examine the Holocaust anew.

### **Persepolis: The Story of A Childhood by MarJane Satrapi**

Originally published to wide critical acclaim in France, where it elicited comparisons to Art Spiegelman's Maus, Persepolis is Marjane Satrapi's wise, funny, and heartbreaking memoir of growing up in Iran during the Islamic Revolution. In powerful black-and-white comic strip images, Satrapi tells the story of her life in Tehran from ages six to fourteen, years that saw the overthrow of the Shah's regime, the triumph of the Islamic Revolution, and the devastating effects of war with Iraq. The intelligent and outspoken only child of committed Marxists and the great-granddaughter of one of Iran's last emperors, Marjane bears witness to a childhood uniquely entwined with the history of her country.

### **The Replacement God by Zander Cannon**

Zander Cannon garnered a Harvey Award nomination for his work on this series, before going on to win an Eisner along with Alan Moore and Gene Ha for Top Ten. Many of these issues are out of print, and this collection is the best introduction to Zander's work. It will especially appeal to fans of fantasy books and good old-fashioned adventure tales.

### **True Story Swear to God by Tom Beland – <http://www.astronautsintrouble.com>**

Life is about chances. What are the chances of going to a theme park, on the other side of the coast... and meeting a person who will change your life as you know it? What are the chances of this person living on the island of San Juan, Puerto Rico, some 9,000 miles from your home in Napa Valley, California? What are the chances of a long-distance relationship such as this lasting very long?

### **Raven's Children by Layla Lawlor – <http://www.ravenschildren.com>**

Raven's Children tells the story of a complex tribal society, consisting of several different peoples, each with their own rich history and well-defined culture.

### **Strangers In Paradise by Terry Moore – <http://www.strangersinparadise.com>**

Terry Moore is a man, ladies and gentlemen. What I don't get is how he manages to write such believable female characters. Gets right inside my head, he does.

### **Stinz by Donna Barr – <http://www.stinz.com>**

Stinz follows the story of a Centaur stallion who first gets drafted and fights in a war, then returns to his hometown where he is drafted again – as their mayor! Also check out Donna's excellent series "The Desert Peach", following the adventures of Erwin Rommel's fictitious gay brother.

### **Whiteout by Greg Rucka and Steve Leiber**

You can't get any further down than the bottom of the world - Antarctica. Cold, desolate, nothing but ice and snow for miles and miles. Carrie Stetko is a U.S. Marshal, and she's made The Ice her home. In its vastness, she has found a place where she can forget her troubled past and feel at peace... Until someone commits a murder in her jurisdiction and that peace is shattered.