

NEIL GAIMAN'S

Murder Mysteries



ADAPTED FOR COMICS

by
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OP. 51

THE REGULARITY OF THE ROADS,
THE REPETITION OF STRUCTURE
AND FORM, MEAN THAT WHEN I
TRY TO REMEMBER IT AS AN
ENTITY, ALL I HAVE IS THE BOUND-
LESS PROFUSION OF TINY LIGHTS
I SAW ONE NIGHT ON MY FIRST
TRIP TO THE CITY, FROM THE HILL
OF GRIFFITH PARK. IT WAS ONE OF
THE MOST BEAUTIFUL THINGS I HAD
EVER SEEN, FROM THAT DISTANCE.

HEY!

JACK THE
RIPPER.

SEE THAT
BUILDING?

THE
RED ONE?

YES?

BUILT IN THE 1930s.
HARD TO BELIEVE IT'S STILL
HERE TODAY, HUH? WISH I'D
BEEN AROUND BACK THEN.

1930s?

GOH.

YOU'VE NEVER
BEEN TO ENGLAND,
HAVE YOU?

NO.
WHY?

I SAID SOMETHING
POLITE, TRYING TO COM-
PREHEND A CITY IN
WHICH SIXTY YEARS
COULD BE CONSIDERED
A LONG TIME.

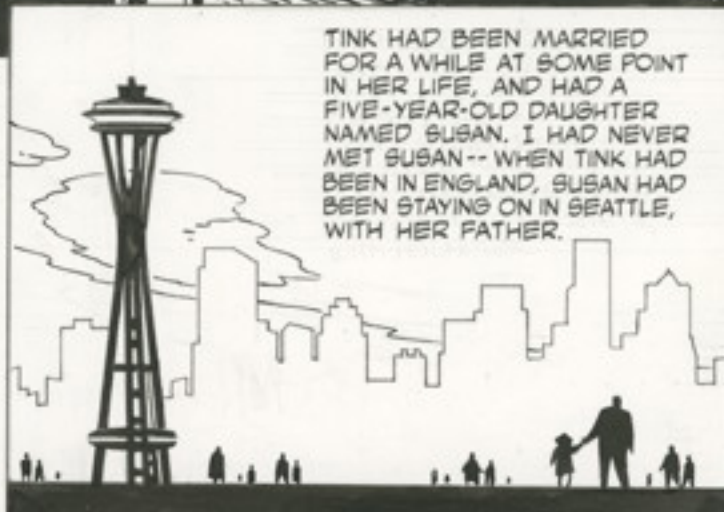
THAT ONE THERE,
THAT'S ONE OF MY
FAVORITES. IT'S THE
ORIGINAL BROWN DERBY
BUILDING.

IT'S
SHAPED
LIKE A
HAT.

HOW FAR
TO TINK'S
FROM HERE?



TINK WAS TEN YEARS OLDER THAN ME, IN HER EARLY THIRTIES. SHE HAD GLOSSY BLACK HAIR AND RED, PUZZLED LIPS, AND VERY WHITE SKIN, LIKE SNOW WHITE IN THE FAIRY STORIES. THE FIRST TIME I MET HER I THOUGHT SHE WAS THE MOST BEAUTIFUL WOMAN IN THE WORLD.



PEOPLE NAMED TINKERBELL NAME THEIR DAUGHTERS SUSAN.



MEMORY IS THE GREAT DECEIVER. PERHAPS THERE ARE SOME INDIVIDUALS WHOSE MEMORIES ACT LIKE TAPE RECORDINGS, DAILY RECORDS OF THEIR LIVES COMPLETE IN EVERY DETAIL, BUT I AM NOT ONE OF THEM. MY MEMORY IS A PATCHWORK OF OCCURRENCES. SOME SECTIONS SEEM TO HAVE VANISHED COMPLETELY.

I DO NOT REMEMBER ARRIVING AT TINK'S HOUSE...



...NOR WHERE HER FLATMATE WENT.



WHAT I REMEMBER NEXT IS SITTING IN TINK'S LOUNGE, WITH THE LIGHTS LOW. THE TWO OF US NEXT TO EACH OTHER, ON THE SOFA.



WE MADE SMALL TALK. BUT A TWENTY-ONE-YEAR-OLD HAS LITTLE TO SAY TO A THIRTY-TWO-YEAR-OLD WOMAN...

...AND SOON, HAVING NOTHING IN COMMON, I PULLED HER TO ME. IN THE HALF-LIGHT HER LIPS WERE BLACK.

WE KISSED FOR A WHILE, AND THEN SHE SAID--



I NODDED ASSENT, AND SHE UNZIPPED MY JEANS, AND LOWERED HER HEAD TO MY LAP.

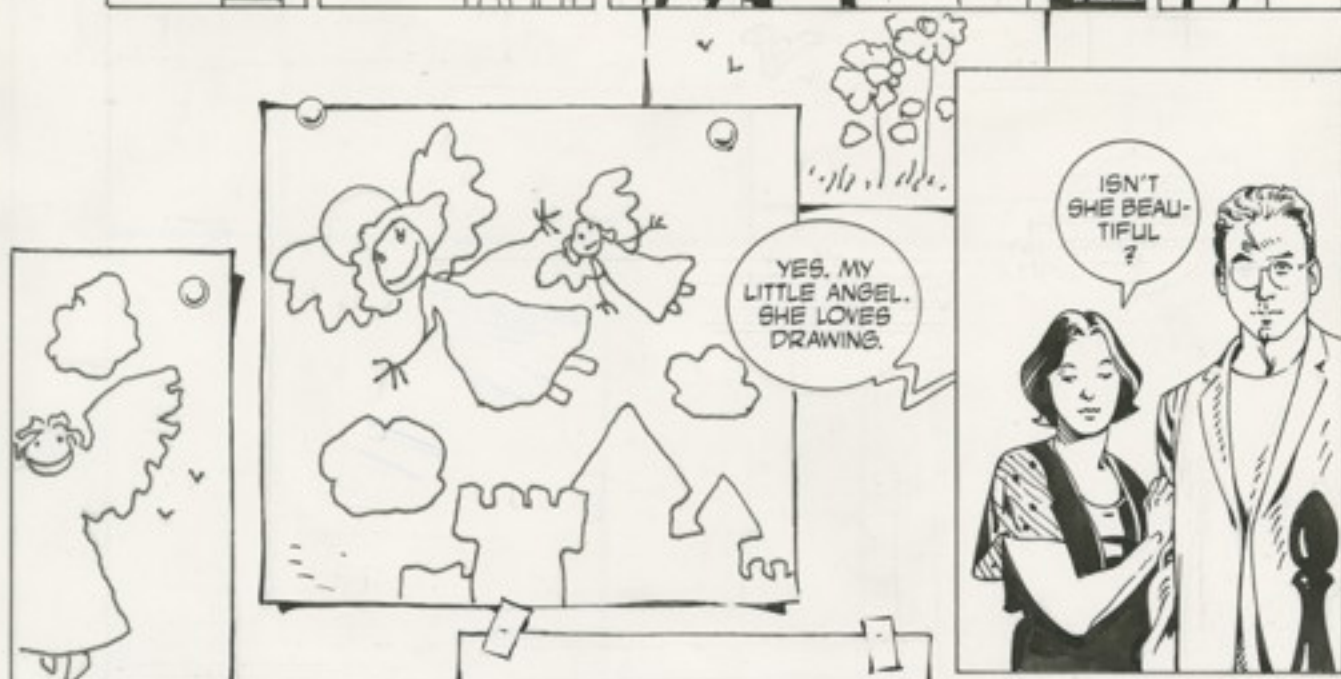


AFTER I HAD COME, SHE GOT UP AND RAN INTO THE KITCHEN.

I HEARD HER SPITTING INTO THE SINK, AND THE SOUND OF WATER RUNNING.

I REMEMBER WONDERING WHY SHE DID IT, IF SHE HATED THE TASTE OF IT SO MUCH.





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WHAT REMAINS TO BE TOLD IS VERY BRIEF, AND MAY BE FAMILIAR TO YOU FROM THE NEWSPAPER ACCOUNTS. THE POLICE HEARD A SHOT IN THE OLD TILLINGHAST HOUSE AND FOUND US THERE--

TILLINGHAST DEAD AND ME UNCONSCIOUS.

THEY ARRESTED ME BECAUSE THE REVOLVER WAS IN MY HAND...

BUT RELEASED ME IN THREE HOURS...

AFTER THEY FOUND IT WAS APOPLEXY WHICH HAD FINISHED TILLINGHAST...



AND SAW THAT MY SHOT HAD BEEN DIRECTED AT THE NOXIOUS MACHINE WHICH NOW LAY SHATTERED ON THE LABORATORY FLOOR.



I DID NOT TELL VERY MUCH OF WHAT I HAD SEEN; BUT FROM THE EVASIVE OUTLINE I DID GIVE, THE DOCTOR TOLD ME THAT I HAD UNDOUBTEDLY BEEN HYPNOTISED BY A VINDICTIVE AND HOMICIDAL MADMAN.

I WISH I COULD BELIEVE THAT DOCTOR. IT WOULD HELP MY SHAKY NERVES IF I COULD DISMISS WHAT I NOW HAVE TO THINK OF THE AIR AND SKY ABOUT AND ABOVE ME.

I NEVER FEEL ALONE OR COMFORTABLE...



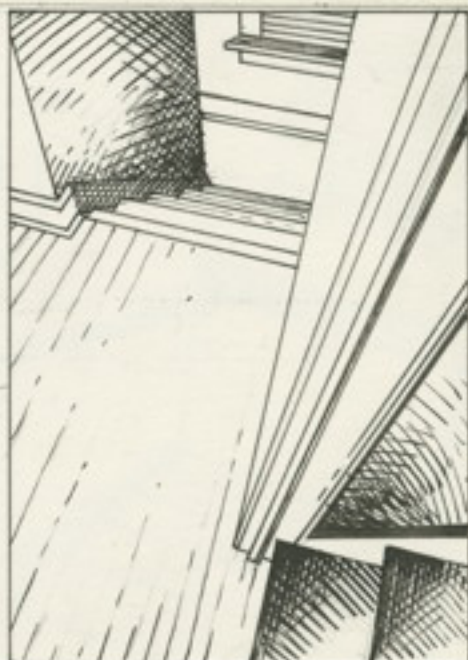
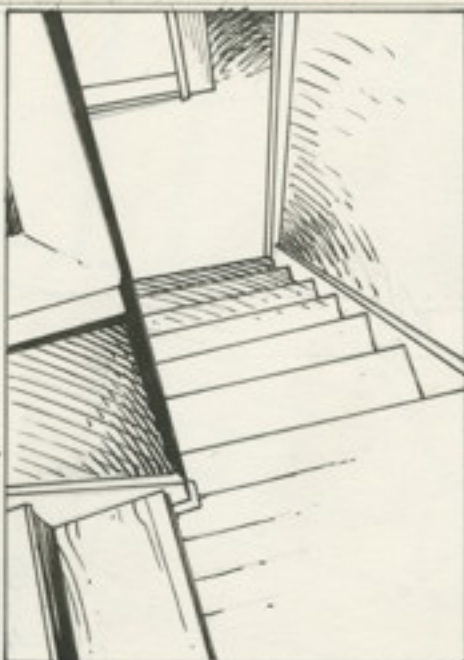
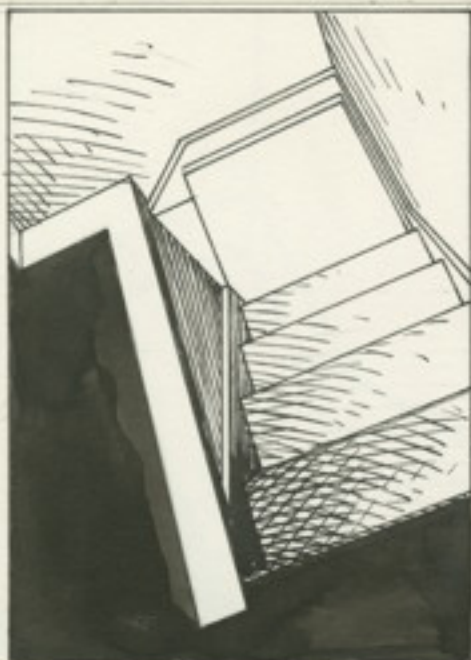
...AND A HIDEOUS SENSE OF PURSUIT SOMETIMES COMES CHILLINGLY ON ME WHEN I AM WEARY.



WHAT PREVENTS ME FROM
BELIEVING THE DOCTOR...

...IS ONE SIMPLE FACT...

...THAT THE POLICE NEVER FOUND
THE BODIES OF THOSE SERVANTS...



...WHOM THEY SAY CRAWFORD TILLINGHAST...

...MURDERED.



END



IT WAS THE BIRTHDAY OF THE INFANTA SHE WAS JUST TWELVE YEARS OF AGE, AND THE SUN WAS SHINING BRIGHTLY IN THE GARDENS OF THE PALACE.



ALTHOUGH SHE WAS A REAL PRINCESS AND THE INFANTA OF SPAIN, SHE HAD ONLY ONE BIRTHDAY EVERY YEAR JUST LIKE THE CHILDREN OF QUITE POOR PEOPLE, SO IT WAS NATURALLY A MATTER OF GREAT IMPORTANCE TO THE WHOLE COUNTRY THAT SHE SHOULD HAVE A REALLY FINE DAY FOR THE OCCASION.

AND A REALLY FINE DAY IT CERTAINLY WAS, THE TALL STRIPED TULIPS LOOKED DEFINITELY ACROSS THE GRASS AT THE ROSES AND SAID:

WE ARE QUITE AS SPLENDID AS YOU ARE NOW.



THE PURPLE BUTTERFLIES FLUTTERED ABOUT WITH GOLD DUST ON THEIR WINGS; THE LITTLE LIZARDS CREEPT OUT OF THE CREVICES OF THE WALL AND LAY BASKING IN THE WHITE GLARE; AND THE POMEGRANATES SPLIT AND CRACKED WITH THE HEAT, AND SHOWED THEIR BLEEDING RED HEARTS.



THE LITTLE PRINCESS WALKED UP AND DOWN THE TERRACE WITH HER COMPANIONS, AND PLAYED HIDE AND SEEK ROUND THE STONE VASES.

ON ORDINARY DAYS SHE WAS ONLY ALLOWED TO PLAY WITH CHILDREN OF HER OWN RANK...

SO SHE PLAYED ALONE.

BUT HER BIRTHDAY WAS AN EXCEPTION.

THERE WAS A STATELY GRACE ABOUT THESE SLIM SPANISH CHILDREN AS THEY GUIDED ABOUT. BUT THE INFANTA WAS THE MOST GRACEFUL OF ALL, AND THE MOST TASTERFULLY ATTIRED.

TWO TINY SLIPPERS WITH BIG PINK ROSETTES PEEPED OUT BENEATH HER DRESS AS SHE WALKED.

THE WIDE PUFFED SLEEVES OF HER DRESS WERE HEAVILY EMBROIDERED WITH SILVER...

... PINK AND PEARL WAS HER GREAT GAUZE FAN.

AND IN HER HAIR...

... WHICH LIKE AN AUREOLE OF FADED GOLD STOOD OUT STIFFLY ROUND HER PALE LITTLE FACE...

... SHE HAD A BEAUTIFUL WHITE ROSE.