



American Gods

By Neil Gaiman

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The storm was coming....

Shadow spent three years in prison, keeping his head down, doing his time. All he wanted was to get back to the loving arms of his wife and to stay out of trouble for the rest of his life. But days before his scheduled release, he learns that his wife has been killed in an accident, and his world becomes a colder place.

On the plane ride home to the funeral, Shadow meets a grizzled man who calls himself Mr. Wednesday. A self-styled grifter and rogue, Wednesday offers Shadow a job. And Shadow, a man with nothing to lose, accepts.

But working for the enigmatic Wednesday is not without its price, and Shadow soon learns that his role in Wednesday's schemes will be far more dangerous than he ever could have imagined. Entangled in a world of secrets, he embarks on a wild road trip and encounters, among others, the murderous Czernobog, the impish Mr. Nancy, and the beautiful Easter -- all of whom seem to know more about Shadow than he himself does.

Shadow will learn that the past does not die, that everyone, including his late wife, had secrets, and that the stakes are higher than anyone could have imagined.

All around them a storm of epic proportions threatens to break. Soon Shadow and Wednesday will be swept up into a conflict as old as humanity itself. For beneath the placid surface of everyday life a war is being fought -- and the prize is the very soul of America.

As unsettling as it is exhilarating, *American Gods* is a dark and kaleidoscopic journey deep into myth and across an America at once eerily familiar and utterly alien. Magnificently told, this work of literary magic will haunt the reader far beyond the final page.

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

American Gods is Neil Gaiman's best and most ambitious novel yet, a scary, strange, and hallucinogenic road-trip story wrapped around a deep examination of the American spirit. Gaiman tackles everything from the onslaught of the information age to the meaning of death, but he doesn't sacrifice the razor-sharp plotting and narrative style he's been delivering since his *Sandman* days.

Shadow gets out of prison early when his wife is killed in a car crash. At a loss, he takes up with a mysterious character called Wednesday, who is much more than he appears. In fact, Wednesday is an old god, once known as Odin the All-father, who is roaming America rounding up his forgotten fellows in preparation for an epic battle against the upstart deities of the Internet, credit cards, television, and all that is wired. Shadow agrees to help Wednesday, and they whirl through a psycho-spiritual storm that becomes all too real in its manifestations. For instance, Shadow's dead wife Laura keeps showing up, and not just as a ghost--the difficulty of their continuing relationship is by turns grim and darkly funny, just like the rest of the book.

Armed only with some coin tricks and a sense of purpose, Shadow travels through, around, and underneath the visible surface of things, digging up all the powerful myths Americans brought with them in their journeys to this land as well as the ones that were already here. Shadow's road story is the heart of the novel, and it's here that Gaiman offers up the details that make this such a cinematic book--the distinctly American foods and diversions, the bizarre roadside attractions, the decrepit gods reduced to shell games and prostitution. "This is a bad land for Gods," says Shadow.

More than a tourist in America, but not a native, Neil Gaiman offers an outside-in and inside-out perspective on the soul and spirituality of the country--our obsessions with money and power, our jumbled religious heritage and its societal outcomes, and the millennial decisions we face about what's real and what's not. --
Therese Littleton

From Publishers Weekly

Titans clash, but with more fuss than fury in this fantasy demi-epic from the author of *Neverwhere*. The intriguing premise of Gaiman's tale is that the gods of European yore, who came to North America with their immigrant believers, are squaring off for a rumble with new indigenous deities: "gods of credit card and freeway, of Internet and telephone, of radio and hospital and television, gods of plastic and of beeper and of neon." They all walk around in mufti, disguised as ordinary people, which causes no end of trouble for 32-year-old protagonist Shadow Moon, who can't turn around without bumping into a minor divinity. Released from prison the day after his beloved wife dies in a car accident, Shadow takes a job as emissary for Mr. Wednesday, avatar of the Norse god Grimnir, unaware that his boss's recruiting trip across the American heartland will subject him to repeat visits from the reanimated corpse of his dead wife and brutal roughing up by the goons of Wednesday's adversary, Mr. World. At last Shadow must reevaluate his own deeply held beliefs in order to determine his crucial role in the final showdown. Gaiman tries to keep the magical and the mundane evenly balanced, but he is clearly more interested in the activities of his human protagonists: Shadow's poignant personal moments and the tale's affectionate slices of smalltown life are much better developed than the aimless plot, which bounces Shadow from one episodic encounter to another in a design only the gods seem to know. Mere mortal readers will enjoy the tale's wit, but puzzle over its strained mythopoeia. (One-day laydown, June 19) Forecast: Even when he isn't in top form, Gaiman, creator of the acclaimed *Sandman* comics series, trumps many storytellers. Momentously titled, and allotted a dramatic

one-day laydown with a 12-city author tour, his latest will appeal to fans and attract mainstream review coverage for better or for worse because of the rich possibilities of its premise.

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From Library Journal

In his latest novel, Gaiman (Neverwhere) explores the vast and bloody landscape of myths and legends where the gods of yore and the neoteric gods of now conflict in modern-day America. The antihero, a man of unusually acute intellect through whose eyes we witness the behind-the-scenes dynamics of human religion and faith, is a convict called Shadow. He is flung into the midst of a supernatural fray of gods such as Odin, Anansi, Loki One-Eye, Thor, and a multitude of other ancient divinities as they struggle for survival in an America beset by trends, fads, and constant upheaval an environment not good for gods. They are joined in this struggle by such contemporary deities as the geek-boy god Internet and the goddess Media. There's a nice plot twist in the end, and the fascinating subject matter and impressive mythic scope are handled creatively and expertly. Gaiman is an exemplary short story writer, but his ventures into novels are also compellingly imaginative. Highly recommended for all libraries. Ann Kim, "Library Journal"

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Users Review

From reader reviews:

Madeline Pastrana:

Do you have favorite book? If you have, what is your favorite's book? E-book is very important thing for us to be aware of everything in the world. Each publication has different aim or perhaps goal; it means that guide has different type. Some people experience enjoy to spend their the perfect time to read a book. They may be reading whatever they consider because their hobby is usually reading a book. How about the person who don't like examining a book? Sometime, person feel need book if they found difficult problem or exercise. Well, probably you will want this American Gods.

Arthur Johnson:

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Caroline Gonzalez:

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