



Neil Gaiman | Biography | Early Life and Career: Neil Richard Gaiman was born on November 10, 1960. He is an English author who writes fiction, non-fiction, novels, audio theatre, comic books, graphic novels, and films. Some of his best works include the novels *Stardust*, *Coraline*, *American Gods*, and *The Graveyard Book*, and the popular comic book series *Stardust*. Neil Gaiman has won several remarkable awards including Bram Stoker, Nebula, and Hugo awards. He is the first writer to win both the Carnegie and the Newbery medals for a single work, *The Graveyard Book*.

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Personal Life

Gaiman belongs to a Polish-Jewish family. His grandfather changed his original name from Chaiman to Gaiman. They had a family grocery store and his father David Bernard Gaiman worked in the same chain of family stores. His mother Sheila Gaiman was a pharmacist and he has two younger sisters named Claire and Lizzy. Neil met his first wife Mary McGrath in East Grinstead where Gaiman did his schooling. Gaiman lived there for several years from 1965-80 and again from 1984-87. The couple got married in 1985 and had their first child named Michael. At present, he is in an open marriage relationship with performer and songwriter Amanda Palmer.



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Neil Gaiman – Reading and Influences

Gaiman could read from the age of four. He said he was a reader as it gave him immense pleasure. Neil was good at most subjects because he used to read them beforehand. On his seventh birthday, he received the popular C.S. Lewis series *The Chronicles of Narnia*. At the age of 10, *The Ka of Gifford Hillary* and *The Haunting of Toby Jugg* by Dennis Wheatley left an impact on him. One popular work that made an impact on Gaiman was his read from the school library of *The Lord of the Rings* by J. R. R. Tolkien. His school library had two of the three volumes. Later on, when he won the reading prize and English prize in school, he finally acquired the third volume. His two other popular childhood favorites were Batman comics and *Alice's Adventure in Wonderland*.

At the age of 19-20, Neil contacted his favorite sci-fi writer since age nine, R.A. Lafferty. He asked for his advice on becoming a writer. Lafferty sent an informative and encouraging letter along with literary advice.



Some of the writers that influenced his writing topics and literary style are Samuel R. Delany, Angela Carter, Otta F Swire, and especially Roger Zelazny. Other writers that Gaiman has mentioned for their significant influence on him are Edgar Allan Poe, J. R. R. Tolkien, C.S. Lewis, Mary Shelley, Lewis Carroll, Ursula K. Le Guin, Alan Moore, and more.

Early Career of Neil Gaiman

During the early 1980s, he pursued journalism, writing book reviews, and conducting interviews. His primary goal was to gain knowledge about the world and make connections that would later help him in his literary career. Gaiman wrote and reviews comprehensively for the British Fantasy Society. His first short story was a fantasy story was Featherquest. It was published in May 1984 in Imagine Magazine. Gaiman wrote his first book in 1984. It was a biography of the band Duran Duran. He wrote a quotation book with Kim Newman named Ghastly Beyond Belief. He also wrote articles and interviews for several British magazines including Knave. During this period he used several pseudonyms such as Richard Grey, Gerry Musgrave, and more. He ended his journalism career in 1987 as British newspapers regularly starts to publish false facts.

Popular Novels

Neil Gaiman's first novel Good Omens was published in 2009 in a collaboration with author Terry Pratchett. His 1996 novelization for the BBC mini-series named Neverwhere was his first solo novel. In the year 1999, the first printings of his fantasy novel Stardust were released. A huge inspiration for this book is Victorian culture and fairytales. His 2001 release American Gods is one of his multi-award-winning and best-selling novels. In 2008 he published his best-selling children's book The Graveyard Book. This 2017 released book was hugely inspired by Rudyard Kipling's The Jungle Book.



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Some of his other popular works are *The Ocean at the End of the Lane* and *Norse Mythology*. *The Ocean at the End of the Lane* is about an unnamed man who returns to his hometown to attend a funeral and recalls events that happened forty years ago. It deals with the disconnection between childhood and adulthood and self-identity.

Neil Gaiman - Movies, TV Shows, and Screenplay

Several works of Neil Gaiman have been green-lighted for film adaptation most notably *Stardust*. It premiered in August 2007. It was directed by Matthew Vaughn and starred actors including Robert De Niro, Michelle Pfeiffer, and Charlie Cox. There is also a 2009 stop-motion version of *Coraline* by Henry Selick. *The Graveyard Book* will also turn into a film adaptation by director Ron Howard.

In 2018, he made a guest appearance on the popular TV show *The Big Bang Theory*.



Gaiman wrote the opening of Hellboy II to make it seem more of a fairy tale at the request of Guillermo de Toro. He also wrote an episode for the popular BBC sci-fi series Doctor Who titled “The Doctor’s Wife.” This episode won the Hugo Award for Best Dramatic Presentation. He appeared on The Simpsons as himself in the episode “The Book Job”. In 2020, he received a Hugo Award for the screenplay writer of the miniseries adaptation of Good Omens.

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