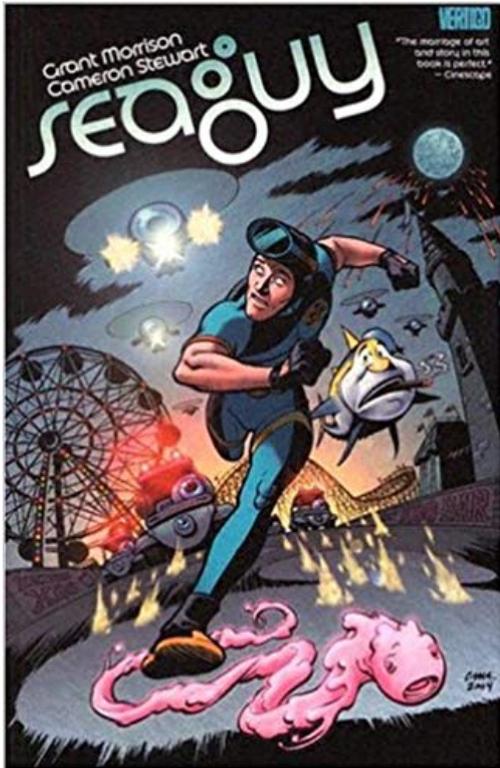


Seaguy (DC Comics Vertigo) by Grant Morrison



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Author: Grant Morrison

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"Aye, aye, Seaguy!" Straight from the brow of one of comics' most remarkable creators, Grant Morrison, comes Seaguy, a hero without purpose in a World, Without Evil! Seaguy follows the strange adventure of would-be hero Seaguy and his faithful companion Chubby Da Choona as they try to decipher the mystery of Xoo, a ubiquitous new food that seems to have evolved into a brand-new conscious life form! Quirky and heart-wrenching at the same time, Seaguy is something utterly and completely new.



Reviews of the **Seaguy (DC Comics Vertigo)** by Grant Morrison

Cozius

So much craziness and so many ideas packed into so small a book... If anything, I wish it was longer so that Grant Morrison would have more room to tell his story.

Pruster

I'm a fan of Grant Morrison and this was a pretty cool story.

There was a lot of neat sci-fi stuff and it had a anti-hollywood ending. The characters were beyond bizarre and there were some good jabs towards the establishment. But, the only thing that really blew me away was the two page splash, best art in the whole story. I would have liked to have read that story.

EXIBUZYW

Seaguy, an ordinary bloke in diving gear, lives in a world which used to have superheroes but doesn't need them anymore - they simply go to the amusement park and ride the rides forever (literally!). Meanwhile, Seaguy himself is dissatisfied with his own life and wants some adventure. He can't stand watching TV shows every night, eating processed dinner meals every evening, living a homogenised, safe life without trouble - he wants to be a hero and do heroic things! And then a bizarre new food called XOO comes to life and bricks with hieroglyphs begin raining down on Seaguy's idyllic seaside town. Is this Seaguy's chance to save the world?

Seaguy is Grant Morrison's tribute to the classic 60s TV show, *The Prisoner*. If you've never seen the show, it's a trippy, paranoid series about a man who is abducted and wakes up on a strange island, unable to leave. Seaguy is similar in that he's living in a brainwashed, tightly controlled environment that's designed to divert rather than force anyone to think for themselves - just consume, consume, consume! And when Seaguy tries to leave in his boat, he encounters the dark chocolate sea, stopping him from going any further.

The surreal and absurdist tone to the story means Morrison can do the kind of zany, imaginative things critics of the writer don't like - things like going to the moon in a basket and playing chess with a gondolier skeleton and too many more to list, all in the space of three issues. The superheroes he creates for this book are also similarly brilliant inventions - Seaguy is just a dude in a wetsuit and it's amazing! - and Seaguy's sidekick, Chubby da Choona, who's a giant floating, talking tuna fish with a face is awesome!

The whacky flavour of the story also gives artist Cameron Stewart the chance to draw some of the weirdest scenes I've ever seen him draw, and some of the coolest character designs ever, with the colours in the book accentuating the feeling of a manufactured world by being overly bright and too intensely cartoonish to be real. And yet despite the colourful, imaginative landscape, there is a feeling that the world Seaguy lives in is far more dangerous than he knows - even the ending has an Orwellian tone to it.

While I think that more than anything Seaguy is definitely Morrison's version of *The Prisoner*, you could argue that it's subtext includes a critique on 21st century consumer culture and Western governments' increasingly militaristic approach to its own citizens. It could also be enjoyed as a celebration of Golden/Silver Age superheroes where creators were allowed to make any kind of crazy superhero and give them their own (often short lived - like Seaguy!) series. It's definitely not his best comic or the most engaging book but it's enjoyable enough and shows once again that more than anything Grant Morrison is a true original comics visionary.

Dellevar

The story of Seaguy, written by Grant Morrison and illustrated by Cameron Stewart, introduces a brilliant new hero (Seaguy, naturally) who yearns for love and adventure. His partner-in-arms is a flying cigar-smoking Tuna, aptly named Chubby Da Choona. Their quirky, surrealistic world is part fairy tale and part paranoid nightmare. The story and art mesh perfectly in creating a subversive childlike wonderland. The concept and approach are innovative and new, making this story of high adventure exciting and instantly memorable. Seaguy wears his heart on his sleeve, and his colorful, vibrant, and hyperintelligent surrealistic story will likely touch yours.

Grant Morrison has been one of the most creative and inventive writers working in the field of graphic storytelling for the past 20 years. I dare to suggest that *Seaguy* might be both his and Cameron Stewart's finest work. (This original work was published by Vertigo a few years ago; Morrison and Stewart are currently releasing a new *Seaguy* miniseries sequel.)

Imagine a world where social reality is "perfect"--there is no poverty, conflict, social unrest, or disorder, only harmony and contentment. Freedom and choice are defined in relation to entertainment, play, and consumption. Everyday life is peaceful and everyone is special. There is no struggle, no strife. The superhero types no longer exist simply because there is no longer any need for them. Sure, they're still around, but all they do now is go to the amusement parks like everyone else. Television is a central part of life. It functions to simultaneously enthrall, numb, and divert attention vis-à-vis cartoon worlds and mindless repetition. What appears on the nightly "news" is strictly limited because information is carefully managed. The boundaries of the expressible are very tightly drawn. People live in "comfort zones" surrounded by theme parks, but they are invariably lonely, alienated, and self-absorbed, thinking and acting as they are expected to.

The story opens with *Seaguy* playing a game of chess with Death on the boardwalk. Shortly thereafter, *Seaguy* happens to see a beautiful bearded woman, She-Beard, with whom he instantly falls in love. Overcome with feelings of longing and realizing that his existence has been devoid of both love and real meaning, *Seaguy* sets out to find adventure in the hopes of somehow setting himself apart from the pack, hoping this will make She-Beard see him, take notice of him. Important discoveries quickly ensue. Somehow everything is being subtly and covertly controlled behind the scenes, much like in the classic TV show *The Prisoner*. XOO, the type of food offered by the grocery stores, while quite cheap to produce, hence extremely profitable, is actually a form of sentient life. And Mickey Eye, the seemingly friendly face of prosperity and social order, is also panoptic--everywhere, all the time, much like Big Brother.

Seaguy is charming, sweet, funny, and romantic. It is also original, new, fresh, and instantly cool. Cameron Stewart's artwork is outstanding. Vibrant, crisp, and beautiful, the art perfectly suits the story, which may be read on multiple levels: as a straight-up superhero story or as subversive social and political commentary. Morrison has described *Seaguy* as a surreal and whimsical story "about the 'big brothering' of society, omnipresent surveillance and global disinformation. It's about the dumbing down of culture, the creation of capitalist 'comfort zones' in the midst of social decay, about a world tranquilized and satisfied and quite unaware of the dark glue that holds it all together." Like Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*, *Seaguy* is a captivating, subversive social satire. Among the themes addressed here are surveillance, pacification, social engineering, power, social control, and cultural decay. These thematic elements are wedded into an emotionally resonant story of love and adventure on the high seas, which features, among other things, an octopus shepherd and a mummy on the moon. So if you expect wildly inventive and creative from Grant Morrison, you'll not be disappointed by *Seaguy*. Stewart's mastery of craft is evidenced in every panel he draws; his character designs and layouts are brilliant. Peter Doherty's colors throughout are exemplary, as is Todd Klein's deft lettering.

Seaguy is an exciting and radically different take on superheroes. You owe it to yourself to experience this lovely and thought-provoking masterpiece, which has been something of a sleeper hit since its initial publication.

-- Jeffery Klaehn

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