



Demeter

Becky Cloonan

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A fisherman's wife tends the garden and animals while her husband is at sea, but secrets buried under the waves begin to bubble to the surface revealing a secret treachery and forgotten truth. The third and final book in a trilogy of critically acclaimed stand-alone stories by award winning creator Becky Cloonan.

Demeter Details

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Author : Becky Cloonan

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From Reader Review *Demeter* for online ebook

John Wiswell says

An intersection of great art and a rushed story. A hot boy washes up half-dead on the beach, and our girl Anna rescues him. They fall in love, but Anna always fears he'll be dragged away. Why? Well, the story's too short to make it a rational fear, so instead she just looks nervously out the window a bunch until it turns into another selkie story. *Demeter* is very scant as a comic book, and has the traditional flash fiction problem of telling an ending rather a story. It's worth reading for Cloonan's art, which particularly renders the girl expressive. There are also a few neat ideas, like word bubbles appearing on the other side of bars that might be keeping night horrors outside.

Gina says

More clarity than *Wolves*, and in a way less bad intent on anyone's part, but still a tremendous amount of pain.

David says

in the vein of classic Irish folklore

Sam Quixote says

Demeter is the latest addition to Becky Cloonan's Ink and Thunder series of black and white digital comics and though this is the third in the series, after 2011's *Wolves* and 2012's *The Mire*, each is a standalone one-shot so even if you haven't read the previous two, you can still jump straight into *Demeter*.

Set in an indeterminate time in the past (definitely pre-Industrial Revolution), Anna and Colin are young lovers living in a small cottage on the coast. Colin is a fisherman and Anna the housekeeper/farmer of their small land, and the two are very much in love (lotta sex!). But a strange figure haunts Anna in the night, looking in through the windows and watching them as they sleep. Anna holds a dark secret at the heart of her seemingly perfect romance, and their idyllic love is anything but...

Cloonan's Ink and Thunder comics have this wonderful fairy-tale quality to them, set in a fantasy land where werewolves, ghosts, and this time, magic and spirits of nature, exist alongside ridiculously beautiful humans. Maybe it's because of the doomed romance angle and the fact that magic and the sea are central to the tale that I kept thinking *Demeter* read like a comic Samuel Taylor Coleridge would've created if he were a comic book artist today. It's got a very lyrical narrative tone alongside the haunting imagery that makes it really attractive to read as well as ambiguous in all the right places to keep the story lovely and mysterious.

Though the comic is 30 pages, its peculiarly complex storytelling structure where Cloonan leaps about at different points in the story and leaves on an open-ended note means that this is a comic you'll want to flick

back and re-read to tease out its puzzling meaning. And, like all of the Ink and Thunder series, Demeter is available only digitally though the price is far cheaper than most digital comics, longer too at 30 pages compared to 22, and of a much higher quality, so it's excellent value for money.

Cloonan's art is absolutely gorgeous, there's no other description for it. I love her mainstream work on books like Batman, Killjoys, and, most recently, Harley Quinn #0, but her art in her own comics is the best it is and is so good, it's unreal. Her manga influences are still there in her human characters' faces, but her layouts and designs are distinctly her own. There are fantastical elements to the comic, and they look amazing, but even domestic scenes are rendered in breath-taking ways.

Demeter is another triumph for Becky Cloonan and a fine addition to her amazing series. Wonderful art coupled with a haunting tale of love, lost and found, Demeter is a brilliant fantasy/romance/supernatural/Cloonan comic, well worth a read.

Stephanie Cooke says

Despite it's name being derived from the Greek goddess of the harvest, Demeter, Becky Cloonan's mini-comic which debuted at TCAF last weekend, really has very little to do with the presence of higher beings. Instead it's the story of two lovers who have been torn apart by the sea. After one lover, Anna, makes a deal with the ocean, her Colin is returned to her, but not before the ocean names its price.

Demeter is a short story that's written and illustrated by Cloonan and is the second mini after The Mire, which gained much praise from critics and fans alike. Demeter is a simple story that makes its mark and stays with you after you've finished it. The story won't take you more than 15-20 minutes to get through but that allows you so much more time to go back and read it through again and again.

The story may be short, but that doesn't take away from the beauty of it. Even if there were no words to coincide with it, Cloonan would do a pretty damn good job of telling the story without them. The images are all in black and white but her anime-ish style and attention to detail draw your eyes, and your being right into the book. It makes Demeter feel like the book you've been waiting to read.

The narrative is reminiscent of old tales of wives waiting for their fishermen husbands to come home from trips out to sea, but with a supernatural twist. I feel like the supernatural element is always implied in those stories but never really comes to fruition. Cloonan's tale takes those dark turns and does a wonderful job of exploring, albeit briefly, one such "ghost" story.

VERDICT:

This is a must buy. I'm not sure if it'll be available at any of your local comic book shops but I would keep an eye out for it. Certain stores tend to bring in sketchbooks, mini-comics and such if they can score them at conventions, so ask around. This is a brand-new comic though and if you aren't going to be at a show to buy it directly from Becky Cloonan, you'll likely be able to pick it up from her online store in the near future.

Bob says

Rating: 4/5 – How far are you willing to go for the one you love?

<http://www.comixology.com/Demeter/dig...>

Over the last several years Becky Cloonan has done mainstream comics work (Conan the Barbarian, Northlanders, Batman, The True Lives of the Fabulous Killjoys) along with self-publishing mini-comics. Demeter follows the loose trilogy of self-published books that started in 2011 with Wolves and continued in 2012 with The Mire. (Note: reading Wolves or The Mire is not necessary to understand Demeter)

Demeter, written and illustrated by Cloonan, is a haunting tale of love and what some are willing to do to hold onto it. Set on a hill overlooking the ocean, Demeter tells the tale of Anna and Colin, a young couple in love. The comic is written mostly from Anna's point of view as she recounts the story of what happened to her and Colin several months prior.

Read more: <http://comicspectrumdigital.wordpress...>

Marina says

Historia corta. Muy simple. El dibujo de Becky es maravilloso ?

Anna says

Becky Cloonan is a talented artist, no doubt about it. Her works are sooo beautiful, detailed and well-thought-out overall.

As for the story, however, I'm not it love. It's good, don't get me wrong. Intriguing, sometimes creepy and dark (well, almost always creepy and pretty dark). But... (oh, why always this "but"???) I need more. It's not as caprivating as I hoped and I'm left underwhelmed in 2 cases out of 3 (I mean Becky's self-published works -mini-series- here, if you wanna know). And maybe even in all 3 cases...

Anyway,

I hope that she won't stop publishing her works (seriously, that art..) and will develope and blossom. So, good luck Becks! I'll keep my eye on you.=)

P.S. Couple of last pages were freegin' cweeepy! Don't read it at night if you're at least a little like me.

Liz Janet says

Becky Cloonan's art is fantastic, and her atmospheric writing leads me wanting more. I wish this were a full on graphic novel, or 8-issue limited series, instead of a one-shot.

~ says

(Originally posted by me at: deerinthexenonarcights.com/demeter)

Comics are a strange and almost mercurial medium, mixing together elements from those more traditional

and truly defined forms of art in ratio's of their creator's choosing. The superhero comics of the big two tend towards the cinematic, their panels playing out like storyboards of an action sequence we have to animate in our mind; some eschew sentence and story near altogether, allowing their ambiguous but suggestive art to awe us, akin to a gallery held in one hand; others, like those of Alan Moore, lean towards the literary, long layered stories that earn the title 'graphic novel'. What Becky Cloonan has done with *Demeter* - what she began back with *Wolves*, her first self-published short in this sequence of sorts - is twist the comic form in another, new direction: poetry, particularly that of the Romantic period.

Demeter tells a rather simple story so I could easily offer a synopsis, but I fear that even a summary description would spoil the engrossing experience of reading this sinister and romantic short about the undoing of a cursed seaside couple for yourself. Though the tale is not necessarily a new one what makes it work so very well here is the way in which Cloonan constructs it. The opening salvo of introductions alone set a stronger tone than most whole books do: you cut from the detail of the compelling colored cover to the sparse expanse of the title page, to the eerie image of two bare legs floating in a pitch black, veiny sea of the credits page before heading back to blank white where three timid lines potent poetry sit. The combination stirring in your mind a whole mess of menace and magic before you've even seen the first scene.

That introductory sequence serves well as a primer for what the rest of the book delivers, both in terms of colour palette and plot content. Driven more by dueling streams of poetic personal narration - one in black boxes, the other in white - than dialogue Cloonan's script sweeps you across a vast expanse of story in a way that would, if told in any other way, feel rushed or segmented; the whole book feels like a montage of only the most evocative moments in the haunted, seaside life of this loving couple. Cloonan mentioned during an interview - with *NonCanonical*, check it out - that with these works she was attempting to ape the structure of a story-driven song and that really shines through; the book a series of swift verses and a recurring chorus whose meaning is never quite clear until the conclusion, clearer still after a second listen when new clues start to emerge from what earlier seemed innocuous moments.

That she tells the story in this sweeping style is vital to its success, because broken down into individual elements the book mightn't have worked at all. There is an image in *Demeter* of near literal bodice-ripping, the romantic side of the story occasionally swaying into that Mills & Boon territory, which mixed with the wrought-iron, baroque nature of the narration might, if seen out of context, serve to scare off some readers (namely, Men). Thankfully then the book's constant creepy tone and scenes of terror serve to temper this side of things; the two sides of the story clashing but never undercutting one another proving why this is now a classic combination of genre's.

It's no coincidence that Cloonan's name appears alongside Bram Stoker's on the cover of some new editions of *Dracula*; this story proves that she would have sat well alongside him and Shelley as contemporaries. Cloonan obviously didn't co-write *Dracula* though, she simply illustrated a version of it and similarly it is her artwork that she is best known for, so I would be remiss not to mention it here. She has clearly come a long way since the Manga-days of *Demo* - though her art there is terrific - and this is arguably her most mature work yet; both stylistically and literally. The characters of *Demeter* are adult in the true sense, though still distinctly her in every way they are fully defined figures which is important because their faces have a lot to convey during the more dramatic scenes of the story.

It is her work on the settings that most struck me however; from the forced perspective work with the cottage's fences and furniture, through the layered way that Cloonan constructs images inside the windows through to the constant chaos of the grand, greyscale sea that sweeps across every page. My favorite touch though was the way that she fades the stark black and white art to grey during flashbacks, it's a subtle technique that dramatically changes how the story reads and one that lead to some great revelations during

my second read through. It is one of those things that can only occur when the writer and artist of a book are one and another bit of evidence that those people who refuse to read Black and White comics because 'the form is limited' are only limiting themselves; a great artist like Cloonan can convey anything without colour.

So although by virtue of its form Demeter will likely not be for everyone - the number of people who are both willing to read comics and wanting to read some with serious, literary content is far too small - it will without a doubt have dramatic effect on those bold enough to buy it. Becky Cloonan's comics are unlike anything else out there - small-scale, short-form stories with style and emotional strength far larger than they have any right to bear - and Demeter is their pinnacle... thus far. It makes one wonder what amount of blood Becky must have sacrificed, and to whom?

Maggie Gordon says

Demeter is an eerie book about consequences. When you try to keep what isn't yours, you may find yourself in a terrible situation like the protagonist... Cloonan has produced an exceptionally beautiful zine comic. The printing is wonderful, the illustrations gorgeous, and the story is haunting and unnerving. It ends on a chilling note, letting readers' imaginations fill in the rest of what probably happened when the pages ran out. Definitely recommend for fans of cool indie comics and horrifying ocean tales.

Minna says

I bought this a while back on comiXology and this is my second time reading it. It's gorgeously drawn and very atmospheric, and selkies ALWAYS interest me (due in part to a beautifully-written version of the story I encountered years ago). But I actually have no idea what's going on. Part of my confusion - both times reading - is that the narration is done by both main characters, differentiated only by the background of the little rectangles it's in (Anna's narration goes on white rectangles; Colin's on black). I'm not sure if that's intentional or not. I'm also not sure if it's intentional that it's so...vague? I'm honestly not entirely sure what the ending revealed. I THINK that Colin was originally a human, that they met in a market, that seven months ago he died in a shipwreck and in desperation Anna, somehow inspired by the sea, performed a magical ritual that would resurrect Colin, for seven months. The story takes place at the end of that seven months, and it seems like, with time up, Colin now becomes a selkie and is drawn into the sea. But that doesn't really make sense of why Anna has the seal skin locked away. Also, why is it called Demeter? This is the kind of story where you have to read between the lines to understand, and I suck at that. I'm never really sure if I think that it's poor storytelling or that I'm just bad at analysis. I did really enjoy the experience of reading this; I'm just not really sure whether I enjoyed the story.

Nicolo Yu says

When Comixology made available several dozens of its Comixology Submit books to coincide with the epic weekend of Free Comic Book Day 2014. If one was into pop culture and comic books, it was indeed an epic weekend, a perfect storm formed by the convergence of The Amazing Spider-Man 2 opening weekend, Free Comic Book Day and Star Wars Day or May the Fourth.

Demeter was the final book of comic book creator Becky Cloonan's trilogy of acclaimed mini-comics. It continued the recurring book found in the last two books of a supernatural mystery, a forbidden love and the price paid for said love.

This was the book of the trilogy. I was just immersed in it much more than the two other books. Maybe because it had a better ending but it was still as open ended as the last two.

Saga Norén says

El arte es divino, muy profundo y sensuales. Estoy como cuando leo algo que me tranporta a sentir lo que los personajes sienten en ese momento, como envidiándolos, por querer vivir algo así...

Bruce M says

I really enjoyed this mini-comic. It still feels weird to call it a mini-comic, though. I mean, it's 30 pages without ads. Most comics today are maybe 30ish pages, with ads, right? Oh well, it's not as large as a comic book in page size, so I guess it still fits.

Anyway, this book was a great one-shot story. It has some wiggle room in the narrative for interpretation, which is always interesting. It's well written, and very enjoyable.

The book really is well crafted. The panels flow together nicely, making it a very smooth read. The water and scenery are fantastic, they have a real feeling of depth when you look at them. The characters's faces show great ranges of emotion. Anna's cold and vacant on the cover is amazing. Cloonan is rapidly becoming one of my favourite artists in comics.
