Lucifer (DC Comics)

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Lucifer Morningstar is a DC Comics character appearing primarily as a supporting character in the comic book series *The Sandman* and as the title character of a spin-off, both published under the Vertigo imprint.

Though various depictions of Lucifer – the Biblical fallen angel and Devil of the Abrahamic religions – have been presented by DC Comics in their run, this interpretation by Neil Gaiman debuted in *The Sandman* in 1989. Like many modern interpretations of Satan, DC's Lucifer owes much to the character's portrayal in John Milton's epic poem *Paradise Lost*, though Gaiman adapts the character to fit the fictional DC Universe where their comics are set, where the character exists alongside superheroes and deities from multiple religions.

Later, the character acquired an ongoing *Lucifer* spin-off series written by Mike Carey, depicting his adventures on Earth, Heaven, and in the various other realms of his family's creations and in uncreated voids after abandoning Hell in the *Sandman* series.[1] Lucifer also appears as a supporting character in issues of *The Demon*, *The Spectre*, and other DC Universe comics. Two angels, several demons, a human, and briefly Superman[2] have taken his place as ruler of Hell.

In 2010, IGN named Lucifer as the 68th greatest comic book villain of all time.[3]

Lucifer



The title character from the cover of *Lucifer* #16, artist Christopher Moeller.

Publication information	
Publisher	DC Comics
First appearance	*The Sandman* #4 (April 1989)
Created by	Neil Gaiman Sam Kieth
In-story information	
Alter ego	Samael
Species	Fallen angel
Place of origin	Heaven Lucifer's Creation Hell
Team affiliations	The Triumvirate of Hell Host of Heaven Loki Various characters who are willing to strike a deal with him
Partnerships	Mazikeen
Supporting character of	The Lilim, Elaine Belloc, Gaudium, Duma, Spera
Notable aliases	Lucifer Morningstar The Lightbringer Satan Lord of Lies The Devil Prince of the East The Morningstar Sunlighter of God The Adversary
Abilities	Nigh-Omnipotence Nigh-Omniscience Immortality Indomitable Will

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Fictional character biography

Sandman continuity

In the earlier related series *The Sandman*, written by Neil Gaiman, Lucifer abandoned his lordship over Hell. While Lucifer had previously appeared in various stereotypical guises in earlier DC books, Gaiman's version was premised on English poet and prose writer John Milton's *Paradise Lost* (at Gaiman's request of the artist, Lucifer looks like David Bowie at the time).[4] In the *Sandman* series, Lucifer had ruled as Lord of Hell for 10,000,000,000 years after rebelling three seconds after Creation. Over that time, he had manipulated the various demons of Hell against each other, provided a place for dead mortals to be tormented, and led the war against Heaven.

However, at some point during his rule, he had become bored with his existence. He became tired of the various stereotypes and prejudices that mortals held of the Devil, such as the idea that he purchased and traded for souls, which were largely untrue, and that he forced mortals to commit evil acts. He had become tired of his reign over Hell, and felt it an unfair punishment that he should have to rule there forever simply because he once rebelled. In the *Sandman* story "Season of Mists", Lucifer expels all demons and damned souls from Hell before locking Hell's gates and handing over the key to Hell to Dream of the Endless, the title character of the *Sandman* series. Eventually, control of Hell was handed over to two angels, Duma (the angel of silence) and Remiel ("set over those who rise"), while Lucifer simply retired to Earth, initially to Perth, Western Australia[5] and later to Los Angeles, California.[6]

By the end of the series, however, it is revealed that Hell was not a punishment, but a gift: being the furthest possible place from God, Lucifer could theoretically be free from predestination and God's omniscience. However, this turned out to be a lie, as God continued to study both Lucifer and Michael Demiurgos during all of eternity (which partly explains how Lucifer felt cheated by his father and simply left Hell into someone else's care). Lucifer never created the physical features of Hell - Hell created itself around him.

Solo series

Lucifer was the main character in an eponymous series that ran for 75 issues and the *Lucifer: Nirvana* one-shot, from June 2000 to August 2006, the entire run of which was written by Mike Carey. (This series was preceded by 1999's Carey-penned *The Sandman Presents: Lucifer* miniseries.) Carey described the book as being "autobiographical", in so much as Lucifer is so much the opposite of the author and all humanity that he "defines [us] in negative": to Carey, the essence of the character was:

> We play safe. Most of us do, most of the time… but Lucifer doesn't know the meaning of safe, and he never bothers to look down at the tramlines. He goes wherever the hell he likes, picks his fights where he finds them and generally wins… following [his] own will and [his] own instincts to the very end of the line, no matter what the obstacles are.[7]

In the series, Lucifer runs a piano bar (an element introduced in the Sandman story "The Kindly Ones") called "Lux" in Los Angeles, with the assistance of his female consort, Mazikeen who is a Lilim, one of the race descended from Lilith. Lucifer is portrayed as a sophisticated and charming man, in accordance with the stereotypical gentleman-devil.[1]

The theme of the *Lucifer* series revolves around the free-will problem. Carey's Lucifer is a figure representing will and individual willpower, who challenges the "tyranny of predestination". While in Heaven's eyes this is blasphemy, Lucifer points out that the rebellion (and indeed all sin) and damnation as consequence were pre-planned by his Creator, God. Lucifer rejects God's rule and moral philosophy as tyrannical and unjust. The violent, aggressive, totalitarian, vengeful, and dictatorial aspects of Heaven's rule are represented mostly by the Archangel Amenadiel, who has a particular hatred of Lucifer and leads attacks of various kinds against him. The attacks include verbal criticism, marshaling the host of Heaven, as well as challenging him to individual combat - almost all of it without the slightest care for the countless innocent, unwilling and unwitting victims he is more than willing to sacrifice for his own pride. For his part, Lucifer disdains Amenadiel, treating the latter's emotional outbursts with contempt, and repeatedly defeats Amenadiel's assaults with well-orchestrated, hidden plans. Ironically, however, it is often difficult to discern when Lucifer acts as a slave to predestination and when he effectively acts according to his own free will.

Elaborate codes of conduct and schemes of entrapment based on these codes are vital elements of the DC\Vertigo magical universe. Lucifer appears as a master of these arts. In an encounter during the first *Sandman* story arc (around issue #5) a weakened Dream outsmarts Lucifer. Lucifer first swears revenge on Dream, but later comes to accept Dream's critique of his role and project as Lord of Hell. This inspires Lucifer's abdication, a vital element of the *Sandman* saga, and the point of departure for the *Lucifer* series.[1]

For Lucifer, his word is bond. As David Easterman, a character who sees himself as a victim of Lucifer, puts it:

> When the Devil wants you to do something, he doesn't lie at all. He tells you the exact, literal truth. And he lets you find your own way to Hell.[8]

Despite his theological title as the "Lord of Lies", refusal to lie is central to the moral position of the character - he sees himself as a neutral or amoral facilitator of forces within individuals, and Lucifer actively and effectively combats what he regards as corrupting moral codes. While he avoids lying, his morality seldom extends to compassion, with Lucifer regarding the sacrifice of millions of souls as unimportant collateral damage, with there being few, if any, beings he respects and even fewer for whom he cares.

As the series opened in 2000, Lucifer's "restful" retirement was disturbed by a series of associates from his past. After various catalytic events, he endeavored to create a universe in competition with (and presumably against the wishes of) his father, Yahweh. This puts him on a collision course with several powerful mystical entities that have a vested interest in the new creation and draws the angelic host into the fray - including his brother, the archangel Michael Demiurgos, and his niece, Elaine Belloc.

The series paralleled *The Sandman* in several ways, with epic fantasy stories being told in arcs separated by one-shot episodes depicting a smaller, more personal tale. Unlike *The Sandman*, the series has had a consistent art team in Peter Gross and Ryan Kelly, with most of the odd issues illustrated by Dean Ormston. The title's 50th issue was penciled by P. Craig Russell, an homage to *The Sandman* #50. Structurally, the series mostly follows its own path. Numerous gods appear, with greater focus on Judeo-Christian religion (as viewed by John Milton in *Paradise Lost*), Japanese, and Nordic mythology than in *Sandman*. As for the Endless themselves, Dream, Death, Delirium, and Destiny appear, but their appearances are small and rare. Destiny, perhaps, plays the biggest role in so far as he represents predestination, which Lucifer of course finds "offensive as a concept," stating that Lucifer knows Destiny is "really just a SIDE effect of [Lucifer's] FATHER, or rather, his deterministic APPROACH to the act of creation."

Cover artists included Duncan Fegredo, Christopher Moeller and Mike Kaluta. The letters are inconsistent, with the first half of the series carrying particularly established fonts of Gaudium, Michael and God, only to drop almost all of them, save Lucifer's, towards the end with numerous changes in the letterers.

The series ended in June 2006 with issue #75 and has thus far been collected in eleven books, with a standalone story (*Lucifer: Nirvana*) published as a smaller graphic novel. The series' parent title, *The Sandman*, also ran for 75 issues.

When Lucifer ventures outside Creation, he sees something resembling the comics pages themselves. In the end of the *Lucifer* story arc, God and the Devil are no longer part of the universe, and a former human (Elaine Belloc) is instead presiding over it. New concepts for Heaven and Hell are created, inspired and influenced by other human or superhuman characters in the story. The new situation is described on several occasions by the fallen cherubs Gaudium and Spera. In essence, it is "growing up", i.e., the need to find one's own truth and values without being directed by parents, elders, teachers, authority figures, etc.

The New 52

The *New 52* reinterpretation of Lucifer is much more influenced by traditional Judeo-Christian theology. He is depicted as a malevolent, sadistic, and cunning fallen angel who is the ruler of Hell and seeks to possess human souls. He is held with great respect and fear by the denizens of Hell, who serve and obey him like a king. Lucifer himself however is mostly bored with his existence when the group known as the Demon Knights are captured by him during the early Middle Ages, and passes the time by finding small amusements, such as watching the struggles and falls of Etrigan the Demon.

Lucifer made a more physical appearance in *I...Vampire #19* after being tipped by John Constantine in destroying Cain. Lucifer immediately sentences Cain and drags him to Hell. Though a being claiming to be him has appeared in the modern age of DC to the hero Deadman, the current whereabouts and status of Lucifer remain unknown.

Powers and abilities

Lucifer possesses nigh-omnipotent supernatural power; he can shape the matter of Creation into anything he can imagine, including matter, energy, and more abstract concepts such as time.[9] However, he does have certain limitations as he is still a creation of God. He cannot create something out of nothing, unlike his father or brother. In some ways, this makes him the most disadvantaged, though not the weakest, of the archangelic host. He needs existing matter (and where that is unavailable, the Demiurgic power of the Archangel Michael) to provide the foundation for him to shape. Only his brother, the archangel Michael Demiurgos, is his equal in power and only God, his creator and father, is his superior. However, in certain dimensions, he is powerless and his mobility is limited without his angelic wings. He may choose to temporarily abandon his powers, including his immortality. In the story titled Lilith, it is implied that God could destroy him at His own whim - which makes Lucifer sometimes wonder why He hasn't dealt with him already.

He is never without the formidable resources of his brilliant, nigh-omniscient intellect and his unbending will or inner strength, which allowed him to defy and confront his father, Almighty God, without fear or doubt. Although Lucifer's overt exercise of power is limited in the books, if he is provoked to violence, his preference seems to be to use fire as a weapon. His original role was as "God's lamplighter", in which he used his will to condense clouds of hydrogen into star-masses and set them alight. As terrifying as they are brief, battles with Lucifer usually begin (and end) with him drawing down the flames of some superheated star and incinerating to ash anything in the immediate area. However, the true reasons why he favors light and fire are partially explained in the story "Lilith" (from "Lucifer: The Wolf Beneath the Tree").

Lucifer possesses the common powers appropriate to an archangel of his position; incalculable physical strength that rivals the likes of cosmic beings such as Asmodel, Eclipso and the Spectre, nigh omnipresence, invulnerability, flight, acidic blood (or, rather, he bleeds will, as depicted in when he reaches Yggdrasil in "Lucifer: The Wolf Beneath the Tree"), a devastating sonic cry, telepathy, and the power to speak to and understand animals. As an archangel, his powers are significantly superior to other angels.

In the *New 52* reboot, Lucifer is shown to possess power over the human soul itself. However, he has no power over animal souls. He can open and close magical portals to Earth from Hell and back again. He can use this power to either summon or banish demons, as he does with Etrigan. He is clairvoyant, possessing a heightened perception or knowledge of time, even to the extent of being able to know the future.

Other versions

- *The Unofficial Guide to the DC Universe* lists Lucifer as first having appeared in a dream in *Superman's Pal Jimmy Olsen* #65 (1962).[10] He appears when Jimmy Olsen attempts to memorize a devil's food cake recipe with his alleged photographic memory and dreams that he is in France 300 years in the past. Putting on the clothing of a bandit who has ditched them, Jimmy is arrested and sent to rot in Devil's Island Penal Colony. A bald man known as Lord L offers five years of freedom for people to escape in exchange for their souls. Convinced that the magic the man uses is technological in nature, assuming him to be an ancestor of Lex Luthor, he asks to be returned to from where he came, believing Lord L will be long dead by then and unable to claim him. Lord L shows up at his front door, still bald but now with a goatee, and insists that he is Lucifer and has given him over 300 years extra, but will dine with him before taking him, but disappears when Jimmy serves him cake. Superman wakes Jimmy soon after and reveals that the card he memorized was really for angel food cake, and this is why Lucifer disappeared.
- In *Weird Mystery Tales* #4 (Jan-Feb 1973), a story by Jack Oleck and Ruben Yandoc depicts Lucifer, looking much like his present incarnation, save for a few panels in which he appeared as a more traditional devil, held prisoner by an order of monks. It also presents a prisoner switch trick not unlike the one performed in *The Sandman: Season of Mists*, in addition to being hosted by Destiny, another character later used by Gaiman. In the story, Lucifer gave Philip Burton his form in order to trade places with him and fulfill his wish for immortality. Lucifer walked away in the body of the elderly Burton.
- A character called Lucifer, The Fallen Angel appears in *Blue Devil* #31 (the final issue). He has angelic wings and a halo, and his face includes dark facial hair. He does not have horns. Madame Xanadu recognizes that even with a magic book, he is not the real Lucifer. He is simply a washed-up actor who decides to be a costumed criminal for a living. He is dragged into Hell on a train at the end of the issue.
- *The Unofficial Guide to the DC Universe* lists Lucifer's first genuine pre-Crisis appearance as *DC Special Series* #8.[10] This character has hair and wings like Lucifer as he appears in *Sandman* #4, but he is red-skinned and has a face like a traditional devil, complete with goatee, though his horns may be part of a headband. His appearance in the comic is brief, but he is specifically referred to as "Lucifer," rather than by other epithets. He has an advisory board consisting of Guy Fawkes, Benedict Arnold, Adolf Hitler, Jack the Ripper, Nero, and Bluebeard. He has an operative, Edward Dirkes, set bombs, while using a bronze Batman statue transported by the Easy Company like a voodoo doll.
- Writer Garth Ennis introduced a character intended to be the Devil as an antagonist in his run on the *Hellblazer* comic: however, as the character appeared at the same time as Gaiman's reuse of the Lucifer character, Ennis had to introduce a new back story for his character to distinguish the two: the *Hellblazer* character was named the First of the Fallen, and was ruler of Hell prior to and after Lucifer's reign. How this fits in with the reigns of the angels and Christopher Rudd has not been clarified, although the First of the Fallen mentions Duma and Remiel ruling Hell during Ennis' run. In the Hellblazer film adaption, Constantine, however Lucifer, portrayed by Peter Stormare showed up as an antagonist.

- Satan has appeared as a distinct figure in numerous DC comics.[11]
- In one of DC-Vertigo's *Fables* spinoffs, *Jack of Fables*, the title character made various (unwise) pacts with several devils. One of them is heavily inspired by Milton's *Paradise Lost*.

Collected editions

Paperback

Lucifer, including the *Sandman Presents* miniseries and the *Nirvana* one-shot, has been collected together into eleven trade paperbacks:

#	Title	Publisher	Year	ISBN	Reprints
1	***Devil in the Gateway***	Vertigo	2001	ISBN 1840232994	**Collects** The reprinted material is, in whole or in part, from: ▪ *The Sandman Presents: Lucifer* #1–3 ▪ *Lucifer* #1–4
	Credits and full notes **Writer(s)** Mike Carey **Penciller(s)** Scott Hampton · Chris Weston · James Hodgkins · Warren Pleece · Dean Ormston				
2	***Children and Monsters***	Vertigo	2001	ISBN 1840233915	**Collects** The reprinted material is, in whole or in part, from: ▪ *Lucifer* #5–13
	Credits and full notes **Writer(s)** Mike Carey **Penciller(s)** Peter Gross · Ryan Kelly · Dean Ormston				
3	***A Dalliance with the Damned***	Vertigo	2002	ISBN 1840234709	**Collects** The reprinted material is, in whole or in part, from: ▪ *Lucifer* #14–20
	Credits and full notes **Writer(s)** Mike Carey **Penciller(s)** Peter Gross · Ryan Kelly · Dean Ormston				
4	***The Divine Comedy***	Vertigo	2003	ISBN 1840236930	**Collects** The reprinted material is, in whole or in part, from: ▪ *Lucifer* #21–28
	Credits and full notes **Writer(s)** Mike Carey **Penciller(s)** Peter Gross · Ryan Kelly · Dean Ormston				
5	***Inferno***	Vertigo	2004	ISBN 1401202101	**Collects** The reprinted material is, in whole or in part, from: ▪ *Lucifer* #29–35
	Credits and full notes **Writer(s)** Mike Carey **Penciller(s)** Peter Gross · Ryan Kelly · Dean Ormston · Craig Hamilton				
6	***Mansions of the Silence***	Vertigo	2004	ISBN 1401202497	**Collects** The reprinted material is, in whole or in part, from: ▪ *Lucifer* #36–41
	Credits and full notes **Writer(s)** Mike Carey **Penciller(s)** Peter Gross · Ryan Kelly · Dean Ormston · David Hahn				
7	***Exodus***	Vertigo	2005	ISBN 1401204910	**Collects** The reprinted material is, in whole or in part, from: ▪ *Lucifer* #42–44 & #46–49
	Credits and full notes **Writer(s)** Mike Carey **Penciller(s)** Peter Gross · Ryan Kelly				
8	***The Wolf Beneath the Tree***	Vertigo	2005	ISBN 140120502X	**Collects** The reprinted material is, in whole or in part, from: ▪ *Lucifer* #45 & #50–54
	Credits and full notes **Writer(s)** Mike Carey **Penciller(s)** Peter Gross · Ryan Kelly · P. Craig Russell · Ted Naifeh #50 "Lilith" is an extended 40-page story				
9	***Crux***	Vertigo	2006	ISBN 1401210058	**Collects** The reprinted material is, in whole or in part, from: ▪ *Lucifer* #55–61
	Credits and full notes **Writer(s)** Mike Carey **Penciller(s)** Peter Gross · Ryan Kelly · Marc Hempel · Ronald Wimberly				
10	***Morningstar***	Vertigo	2006	ISBN 1401210066	**Collects** The reprinted material is, in whole or in part, from: ▪ *Lucifer* #62–69
	Credits and full notes **Writer(s)** Mike Carey **Penciller(s)** Peter Gross · Ryan Kelly · Colleen Doran · Michael Wm. Kaluta				
11	***Evensong***	Vertigo	2007	ISBN 140121200X	**Collects** The reprinted material is, in whole or in part, from: ▪ *Lucifer* #70–75 ▪ the *Lucifer: Nirvana* 48-page one-shot
	Credits and full notes **Writer(s)** Mike Carey **Penciller(s)** Peter Gross · Ryan Kelly · John J. Muth · Zander Cannon · Dean Ormston · Aaron Alexovich Series ends here.				

Note: The full title of all volumes listed here start with "*Lucifer:* ".

Reprint editions

#	Title	ISBN	Release date	Collected material
1	*Lucifer: Book One*	9781401240264 (tel:9781401240264)	29 May 2013	*The Sandman Presents: Lucifer* #1-3 and *Lucifer* #1-13 [12]
2	*Lucifer: Book Two*	9781401242602 (tel:9781401242602)	15 October 2013	*Lucifer* #14-28 and *Lucifer: Nirvana* one-shot [13]
3	*Lucifer: Book Three*	9781401246044 (tel:9781401246044)	18 March 2014	*Lucifer* #29-45 [14]
4	*Lucifer: Book Four*	9781401246051 (tel:9781401246051)	20 August 2014	*Lucifer* #46-61 [15]
5	*Lucifer: Book Five*	9781401249458 (tel:9781401249458)	24 December 2014	*Lucifer* #62-75 [16]

TV Adaptation

DC and Fox are developing a TV series based on the *Sandman* character Lucifer.[17] In February 2015, FOX ordered the pilot for Lucifer.[18] According to The Hollywood Reporter, the series will focus on Lucifer, "who is bored and unhappy as the Lord of Hell and resigns his throne and abandons his kingdom for the beauty of Los Angeles, where he gets his kicks helping the LAPD punish criminals."[19] Californication creator Tom Kapinos will pen the script and executive producing the pilot and Len Wiseman will direct the pilot as well. Jerry Bruckheimer and Jonathan Littman will also serve as executive producers. Jerry Bruckheimer Television's KristAnne Reed is on board as a co-executive producer, as well. It was announced that Tom Ellis will portray the main character in the series, Lucifer Morningstar.[20][21] In March 2015, Lauren German was cast as the female lead on the series, described as an LAPD homicide detective who is "repulsed and fascinated" by Lucifer as they work together to solve a murder.[22] FOX officially picked up the series on May 8 and scheduled it for a 2016 premiere date. [23]

References

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2. *Superman* #666
3. *Lucifer is number 68*, 2010: IGN comics — Lucifer is number 68 (http://comics.ign.com/top-100-villains/68.html)
4. "...Neil was adamant that the Devil was David Bowie. He just said, 'He is. You *must* draw David Bowie. Find David Bowie, or I'll send you David Bowie. Because if it isn't David Bowie, you're going to have to redo it until it *is* David Bowie.' So I said, 'Okay, it's David Bowie.'..." Kelley Jones, from *Hanging out with the Dream King* (a book consisting of interviews with Gaiman's collaborators)
5. *Sandman* #28, July 1991: "Season of Mists" part 7
6. *Sandman* #57, February 1994, p21: "The Kindly Ones" part 1
7. Carey, Mike (July 2000), *On The Ledge*, DC Comics / Vertigo
8. *Lucifer* Vol 1. Issue #11
9. *Lucifer* #16

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13. "Lucifer Book Two Solicitation" (http://www.vertigocomics.com/graphic-novels/lucifer-book-two). *Vertigo*. DC Comics. Retrieved 16 October 2013.
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21. Ausiello, Michael (February 27, 2015). "Pilot Scoop: Once Alum Tom Ellis Lands Satanic Title Role In Fox's Lucifer" (http://tvline.com/2015/02/27/lucifer-tom-ellis-tv-show-fox-cast-dc-coomics/). TV Line.
22. "Lucifer TV Show Casts Female Lead" (http://renegadecinema.com/36314/lucifer-tv-show-casts-female-lead). *Renegade Cinema*. Retrieved March 12, 2015.
23. "Vertigo's 'Lucifer' Hitting Fox in 2016" (http://renegadecinema.com/36757/lucifer-fox-new-tv-series). *Renegade Cinema*. Retrieved May 11, 2015.

- Lucifer Samael Morningstar (http://comicbookdb.com/character.php?ID=2157) at the Comic Book DB
- Lucifer (http://comicbookdb.com/title.php?ID=652) at the Comic Book DB

External links

- Lucifer mini-site (http://web.archive.org/web/20061009202404/http://www.dccomics.com/features/lucifer/) (cached) at DC Comics.com
- Rauch, Stephen. Review: Lucifer (http://www.popmatters.com/pm/comics/reviews/lucifer), PopMatters, September 1, 2006

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