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From the fertile mind and nimble fingers of writer Grant Morrison and artist Philip Bond comes the latest in multiculturalist spectacle! Color, song and cosmic violence collide in VIMANARAMA, collecting the 3-issue Vertigo miniseries that fuses East and West together into a transcendental delight of romance and danger.

Feel the Earth tremble as 19-year-old grocer's son Ali and his beautiful arranged bride Sofia accidentally unleash an ancient race of unimaginable evil from beneath Bradford, England, then summon the equally powerful Prince Ben Rama and his Ultrahadeen to do battle against them. Shudder as Ben Rama reveals his love for Sofia, the reincarnation of his immortal soul mate, only to lose all his power at her hesitation. And thrill to the final battle between good and evil, played out over the ancient land of Atlantis together with the consummation of the ultimate end-of-the-world love story. All this and more awaits you in VIMANARAMA, the best of all worlds!

Vimanarama Details

Date : Published January 1st 2006 by Vertigo (first published June 2005)

ISBN : 9781401204969

Author : Grant Morrison , Philip Bond (Illustrator)

Format : Paperback 104 pages

Genre : Sequential Art, Comics, Graphic Novels, Fantasy, Fiction, Graphic Novels Comics

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Ill D says

Vimanarama is Grant Morrison's bizarre-o take on a modern day apocalyptic tale set in England with a definitely Eastern religion influenced veneer.

Starts off predictably enough with the appearance (presumably enough) of a Bollywood flick. In similar fashion the story careens forth with all the color and bombast such a film would entail. The initially believable plot swiftly alters from the profane toward the cosmic.

Humongous nephilim-esque figures quickly take the fore after their foil bad guys (who look like Darkseid with tuning forks for horns) are reborn as well. The protagonist's personal problems are subsumed by a crisis of cosmic proportions. Toss in the Legend of Atlantis and a pre-modern space station and the story just gets more and more bizarre.

The application of Hindu ethos/beliefs becomes all the more bizarre (as revealed in the final issue) that the family is Muslim. No matter the slightest shred of logic, Morrison (with his penchant for the heavenly) tosses us a truncheon of Orientalized glints and glimmers of an Oriental mythos. Truly imaginative in scope, the narrative and the illustrations thinly border on the LSD-influenced psychedelia of the 60's.

Messy sure but you can't expect much less from a Morrison work, nonetheless from a one-shot. The three issues will dazzle your eyes but your brain will (uselessly) stretch to make the slightest sense. Who needs substance when you've got groovy style?

One hallucinatory thumb up.

Stephen says

I'm trying to figure out where this fits in on the Grant Morrison scoring chart. Essentially, it's fine - fairly amusing, some good character interactions (particularly between Ali, his brother and their father) and great visuals. A short, diverting read.

But the plot just feels rushed and half-baked, and that really rankles with me for some reason. It's like Morrison lost interest in it halfway through. Possibly sooner. Lots of cosmic out-there-ness to camouflage the lack of coherence. A deus ex machina here (but the actual mechanics of the story were so confused it's not even clear that it was necessary), a Morrisonesque breaking of the fourth wall there (ditto - to be uncharitable Morrison is papering over the obvious cracks with a veneer of his go-to tricks, in an effort to distract us); but you're left scrabbling to find the sum of its parts.

The Indian/Pakistani background quickly becomes superfluous to the story (again to be uncharitable, the main relevance seems to be that the family owns a corner shop), which is fine, except that such a lot is made of the background in the packaging of the book. And there's a very odd blend of Hindu and Muslim cultures used in the book. Its name, the font used in its logo, the poses of the characters on the cover, the demigods (the Ultrahadeen) are all rooted in Hindu culture (i.e., a culture which is predominantly Indian); but the characters are of Pakistani origin and are Muslim. There's no reason why these two different cultures couldn't be utilised in the same book, but there is no reason in this book why they are. They are presented here

without distinction, which just seems lazy.

The best thing about the book is Philip Bond's charming art - for that alone the book probably deserves 3 stars. I would like to read a story illustrated by Bond, with the same characters, but without all the mythic, supernatural and superheroic elements. While he does carry off the Demigods, battleships, demons etc. just fine, it's in the smaller things that his art really comes to life.

So on the Morrison scale of things - the book is short (generally a good sign for a Morrison work); it has few pretensions, and is not trying to carry A Bigger Message (again, normally in its favour); unfortunately, through lack of time or interest, Morrison didn't seem to care enough about the story to make it cohere (kinda fatal in the Morrison canon). And that makes it very minor Morrison - a shame, as Philip Bond (not to mention the readers, and Southern Asian culture as a whole) deserved better.

Nick says

I get the impression that Grant Morrison once read Roger Zelazny's "Lord of Light" and said to himself, "Hey, I could do that...but as a graphic novel."

Seriously, this was a frustrating book. Some of it was clever, in the ways that the new Dr. Who is clever...the interactions between the cosmic and the mundane worked well.

What didn't work well for me was the main character, who is remarkably self-centered and whiny. The "suicide" sequence, in particular, made too little sense, but the character had a good excuse to be somewhat irrational by then.

I also didn't like the opening sequence, which involved a baby learning to walk getting conned into initiating the end of the world. That just seemed wrong, even for a vast, unstoppable evil...

Danger says

Weird and fast, though not really fleshed out, still enjoyable for what it was.

Ed says

It had interesting enough characters, but the plot was somewhat less enthralling. Oh, the stuff was there...from the very mundane to the supra-supernatural...but it somehow didn't add up to a full meal.

Vidura Barrios says

This book was a bit of a hit mess. I did not enjoy it.

Aaron says

A surprisingly funny entry from Morrison, who I've never really seen do anything bordering on "comedy" with any success. This still has a lot of his specific creativity behind it (big crazy gods, different realities colliding, exploration of death and emotion via extremely weird metaphors), but somehow feels different from his other stuff I've read.

Part of it is the characterizations. Morrison often just kind of makes everyone in his books extremely weird, and in this case we've got some real life human beings on the page. This is actually great, and really grounds the book when it needs it. Philip Bond's art is also a great fit for this style, and brings the whole story to life in amazing ways.

But, it's far from perfect. I think the biggest problem with this is how rushed it feels. This story, which features some pretty huge, wild ideas based on Indian folklore and a full, three-act style romance, is only about 100 pages long. You can read it in about 20 minutes. It just doesn't give any of its content enough time to breathe or grow. It leaps forward at a lightning pace, and as such sacrifices a lot of its uniqueness. If this thing had been about twice as long telling the same story and exploring the same ideas, I think I would've liked it a lot more. As it stands, though, it's just a quick, fun romp that reads like a pitch for a larger series.

Martin says

*«It's the end of the world and I'm only **eighteen**, Ali! What are we going to do about it?»*

One of the three 3-issue Vertigo mini-series from the mid-2000's by Grant Morrison (the other 2 being the equally excellent *We3* and *Seaguy*), **Vimanarama** is a wonderful blend of East & West, of comedy & drama, and of light & darkness. Don't let the 'potential End of the World' storyline fool you: this book is a light-hearted break from all of Morrison's serious/edgy/WTF stuff, with endearing characters and colourful, eye-popping art. I liked how some (if not all) of the characters were more concerned with their own problems than with the impending destruction of the world.

The only thing I regret is that it took me so long to actually get around to reading it! The fact that it's out of print* certainly makes finding a copy that much harder, but should you have the chance to read this book, don't pass it up.

Fun, charming, witty, colourful. Comic book gold.

I loved this book!

* March 2016: This book was reprinted in *Kill Your Boyfriend/Vimanarama Deluxe*.

M.H. says

This could have been fun, given its unique characters and milieu, but I felt it had a serious tone problem when it came to the issue of suicide.

Michael says

I'm not sure what happened, but Grant Morrison is a much funnier writer than he generally gets credit for being. Lots of great lines in this book had me laughing out loud. The plot seemed to hinge on an Eastern belief system with which I am unfamiliar (religion of any sort not being my forte), but I was able to follow the basics of evil demigods come to destroy humanity easily enough.

Fun stuff, although I'm not sure if there were many of Morrison's analogy-laden narratives and ideas beneath the surface.

Mark says

Probably needed one or two more issues to actually flesh out the characters and make the resolution a bit more... resolved. But still enjoyable.

Christoph says

Grafisch und erzählersch auf hohem Niveau, nur die Geschichte hat mich nicht interessiert ... von den Charakteren ganz zu schweigen.

Liegt vielleicht an mir.

Sam Quixote says

Ancient Indian space gods return to wreak havoc on London just as Ali, a young British-Indian man, is about to find out what his betrothed wife-to-be will look like. As Ali discovers he is somehow tied into the chaos happening around him, he and his bride-to-be set off on a mystical adventure to save the world!

Vimanarama is Grant Morrison writing what he does best - crazy superhero stories with spiritual-ish elements liberally mixed in. It's also a much lighter, funnier story than we usually see from him and the humour and jokes are the best quality in this book.

Philip Bond's artwork is pretty good - I wouldn't say I was blown away by anything I saw but the line work is strong and the designs for the Ultrahadeen (the good Indian space gods) were great even if the bad guys bore a heavy resemblance to Kirby's Darkseid.

Maybe because it was such a short read (it's a 3 issue mini-series) and as a result the story and characters don't really feel fully fleshed out, but I didn't connect with this one as strongly as I usually do with Morrison's work. Vimanarama is a quirky, fun read in places but compared to the other high quality stuff he usually writes, it's all too forgettable and brief to make a strong impression.

Artemy says

An absolutely delightful and bonkers mixture of sci-fi, love story and existential drama focused on a regular British Pakistani family who run their own grocery store. On paper, it's a pretty standard Morrison fare, what

with the insane world-ending threat, psychedelic visuals and all that. But it's surprisingly easy to follow, the characters are rich and vibrant and the dialogues are sharp and witty, and that gives the book its unique flavor that feels different enough from Morrison's other works to make it stand out. Phillip Bond's artwork is quite nice, too. Overall, Vimanarama is a lot of fun, and one of the more lighthearted and playful Grant Morrison books, which was a pleasant surprise.

Laura says

Really enjoyed this short graphic novel combining Pakistani England, superheroes. Enjoyed the drawing style.
