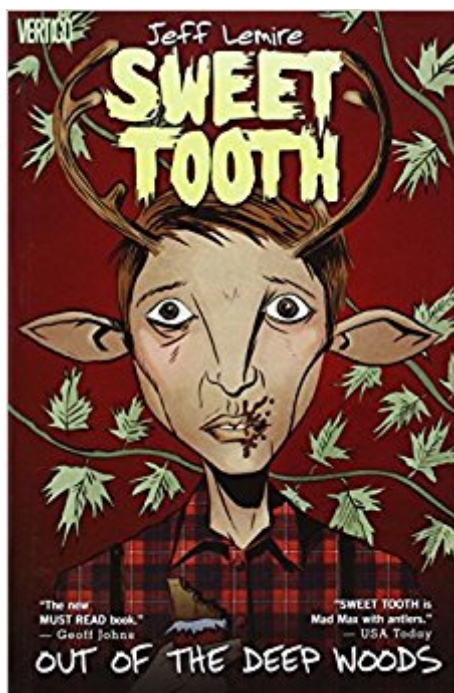


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Sweet Tooth Vol. 1: Out Of The Deep Woods



Synopsis

Following on the heels of *THE NOBODY*, his Vertigo graphic novel debut, writer/artist Jeff Lemire pens his very first ongoing series *SWEET TOOTH*. A cross between Bambi and Cormac McCarthy's *The Road*, *SWEET TOOTH* tells the story of Gus, a rare new breed of human/animal hybrid children, has been raised in isolation following an inexplicable pandemic that struck a decade earlier. Now, with the death of his father he's left to fend for himself . . . until he meets a hulking drifter named Jepperd who promises to help him. Jepperd and Gus set out on a post-apocalyptic journey into the devastated American landscape to find 'The Preserve' a refuge for hybrids. This unique and haunting new series is written and illustrated by Eisner-nominated creator Lemire (*The Essex County Trilogy*) and colored by fellow Eisner nominee Jose Villarubia.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

The latest entry in the postapocalyptic survivalist fantasy stakes has a peculiar sentimental streak in it. Gus, an almost parodically naïve young boy with antlers sprouting from his forehead and a taste for chocolate, is one of the few children born after some kind of manmade catastrophe. Following the death of his Bible-thumping father, the only other person he's ever known, he's rescued from hunters by a hulking, rifle-toting man called Jepperd, who promises to take him to a sanctuary for kids like him (and slaughters the refugees from *Click* and Dialogue University who get in their way en route). But could Jepperd be more than he seems? (One guess.) Lemire's thick, crunching brush strokes can be rawly expressive; he's got a terrific sense of composition and

narrative flow, and the crumbling settings he draws effectively evoke a blasted, forsaken world. Too often, though, his artwork simply comes off as crude. His characters' bodies and features are often distractingly inconsistent from one panel to the next. And Gus's dream vision of a cartoon deer (identified as Dandy) telling him to run away, which should be a dramatic peak of this volume, falls flat because Lemire can't pull off his attempted shift away from his baseline style. (May) Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

Gr 10 Up—Years ago during the Affliction, billions of people died and children were born as human/animal hybrids. Gus, a human/deer hybrid, was raised in isolation for years, but after his father dies hunters come to capture him. He is rescued by a mysterious man who tells him that he will take him to a preserve for hybrid children. While Gus is never sure if he should trust Jepperd, he goes with him because he is lonely. What follows is a voyage through what is left of the country, during which Jepperd gives Gus candy (and the nickname "Sweet Tooth") and fights through all of the obstacles that are in their way, usually with violent methods. While Gus is the protagonist, Jepperd continues to steal the spotlight. Readers know that he has sympathy for Gus and for other characters they meet along the way, and they know that he saves Gus's life multiple times. But they also know that he frequently lies. What isn't clear until the end of the book is just how much he has been lying. Sweet Tooth is often visually stunning and even cinematic. It primarily uses a muted palette that reflects the darkness of this postapocalyptic world, but bright colors burst from the page during moments of violence, and there are quite a few of those in this book. An outstanding choice for most collections. Andrea Lipinski, New York Public Library © Copyright 2010. Library Journals LLC, a wholly owned subsidiary of Media Source, Inc. No redistribution permitted.

Out of The Deep Woods (Sweet Tooth, Vol. 1) is a really freaking weird novel, even for a post apocalyptic, dystopian. Featuring animal/human hybrid children and the world going to crap I don't hope that would be the only reason animal/human hybrid children exist - after a disease known as the Affliction (ominous right!) killed off billions people. So, a new species is fabricated known as animal-hybrid children. However, these children are hunted, by hunters, to be hunted. hehe. The story follows the journey of a sweet, deer animal-hybrid kid named Gus, aka Sweet Tooth, and his mountain-like savior Jeppard, after saving Gus from the aforementioned hunters. Along the journey to the safe haven for hybrid children like Gus called The Preserve, we don't meet a copious group characters, but we do encounter a few: mock animal-hybrid prostitutes, hunters, and savage freaky-looking

murderers. This novel being so short didn't leave much room for development of any kind. Since this is Volume one I kind of expected to learn a bit more about the characters or story line, however, I didn't learn anything. The only storyish foreshadow is that animal-hybrid children exist because of a disease, which hasn't been explained, killed most of the people. There's a few fighting scenes that, I guess, shed light on both Gus and Jeppard's characters. Mainly we got the emotional impact of a world without rules, morals and ethics, through the eyes of this boy who's the foil of this whole world in a way. He's sweet, innocent and compassionate in a world that's done away with all those things. The end is also unsatisfying but that's due to there being a Volume two. Plus, if I'm being honest, it's bit too obvious for me - the disease is probably zombies or something and a bit overly post-apocalyptic.

This is a promising and intriguing start to a series by Lemire, one of the most interesting people working in the genre today. The comparison to Cormac McCarthy's "The Road" is apt. Gus and his father live alone in the woods in what used to be Nebraska, several years after a catastrophe killed off most of the world's population and created a generation of mutated children who seem to be immune to the ensuing plague. Gus's father keeps his son close to protect him, with the result that when he dies, Gus is utterly unprepared for life in a harsh world. When a man named Jeppard arrives and offers to escort Gus to a safe place, the wary boy takes a chance, setting off on a journey. This is an introductory volume, and it ends on a cliffhanger. Little about Gus's world beyond the cabin is examined, which makes sense since the protagonist is new to the broader world.

"Sweet Tooth", written and drawn by Jeff Lemire, delivers on its promise of being Bambi mixed with the road, although it does somewhat rely on various apocalyptic cliches. The main character's naivety is both endearing and helpful to the story, but the world seems slightly underdeveloped and the kinds of characters Gus encounters are fairly stock. In other words, it's not Cormac McCarthy. Furthermore, Lemire has a gift for writing families, but we see none of that in this book. Lemire's expressionistic and simple artwork does excellently complement the story though, and the premise is fascinating. That said, some of the praise for this book against writing by Garth Ennis and Brian Vaughn seems to be predicated on not really appreciating the non-comic apocalyptic cliches that this otherwise original book builds most of its plot on. The limits of the perspective of Gus really does limit what we can see in the larger world, and this leaves a lot open for the book to develop in an interesting matter. Given Lemire's other work, there is plenty to be excited about despite a lot of

somewhat overused tropes holding it together.

I actually liked this more than I thought I would. I really want to see what is going to happen next. I will be reading book two!

My only qualm with this book is that the pages aren't glossy; they are like newspaper pages.

When a Vertigo monthly lasts more than a few of said months, I sit up and take notice. Sweet Tooth is a moving, idiosyncratic, deeply felt post-apocalyptic fable.

I wish there was some way I could register a "neutral" review, but I will have to make do with three stars. I hated this book, but my reaction was purely a matter of personal taste and not a comment on the ability of the creator. If you like crapsack worlds filled with ugly, brutal characters, contrasted by a naive victim as the main character, you will probably love this book. I have to say that there is great potential for growth in the main character, but as depicted in this first volume, he make ME want to curb-stomp him.

This on-going written and drawn by the awesome Jeff Lemire is a must read. First, to describe the art one word springs to mind....MOODY. Lemire isn't the most refined artist but it conveys a sense of hopelessness which is the mood of the book. Lemire's writing is wonderful and he really gives each person their own voice and develops it. What stops this book from getting a Five is that it ends too quick!!! This is a very fast read and makes you want to know what happens next! This book along with American Vamp are the two best books vertigo puts out end of story.

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