Sunday, February 26, 2017

[Do I Actually Have or Need Diplomatic Immunity?](http://journal.neilgaiman.com/2017/02/do-i-actually-have-or-need-diplomatic.html)

Posted by [Neil Gaiman](https://plus.google.com/109191076471907832672) at [3:20 AM](http://journal.neilgaiman.com/2017/02/do-i-actually-have-or-need-diplomatic.html) [http://img2.blogblog.com/img/icon18_edit_allbkg.gif](https://www.blogger.com/post-edit.g?blogID=3157916&postID=4866813633720257090&from=pencil)

I'm typing this on a plane to Australia where I will hunker down and go back to being a man writing a novel, and life will turn into a long-running battle between man and blank page, between man and what happens next, between man and the people in his book who have other ideas about what they ought to be doing now.

I had a fascinating time on the road, though. I was never not exhausted: Initially I knew that all I had to do was keep going until the second weekend, and then by the time I got to that weekend plans had changed and now I was in Iceland for 36 hours, filming a mini-documentary extra for American Gods. It was wonderful: I love Iceland. But I was tired, and didn't really get to see much Iceland.

(My favourite moment was one where the director asked if I would mind being filmed in an alleyway reading *American Gods*. I suggested we wander into a bookshop instead, if they didn't mind, and have me look at books in there. So I did, and took the opportunity to sign as many books as I could, in the time we had, racing before the last of the February light went.)

Iceland really is beautiful. And if it wasn't for Iceland, there wouldn't be an *American Gods*...  
  
I had some really fun times. The BBC radio interviews were all so different and all so much fun. My Royal Festival Hall event was a delight to do, and that lunchtime I showed up as Children's Laureate Chris Riddell's secret guest on the same stage, and I got to meet Posy Simmonds and turned immediately into a starstruck teen.  
  
Chris stayed and drew while I spoke and was interviewed that night:

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Now I'm in Melbourne, Australia and it's two days later and I'm not really sure where the last 48 hours went. I caught up on my sleep (Amanda and Ash are in Adelaide, where she's performing), started to clamber up the email mountain that was waiting for me, spent time with a sick friend, and, today, actually started to write some more of the novel.

*Norse Mythology* came out on February the 7th and went straight in at Number One on the US, UK and Canadian bestseller lists; in its second week it dropped to Number Two in the US, and has somehow stayed at #1 in the UK and Canada, despite a lot of bookshops running out of copies. The phenomenon of it becoming an incendiary sell-out hit has left me delighted and a bit baffled -- my books always sell, but they usually sell sanely and normally and I'm a bestselling author because they keep on selling in healthy numbers for ever.  It's not usual to see people online talking about visiting five bookshops and getting the last copy (or failing to find any) in whatever town or city they are in. People (friends, family, journalists, even Amanda) tell me that I and the publishers and the bookshops *must* have expected this sort of response, and I reply that if we'd expected this level of enthusiasm and sales, the publishers would have printed a lot more copies to begin with and the booksellers would all have ordered a lot more copies, and for that matter I wouldn't have taken over four years to write the book...

But then, I think it may be that this book happens to be ridiculously popular partly because it is now and this is the right time for it to have been published.

There have been lots of terrific articles about the book and a slew of amazing reviews.  I really enjoyed this article in the Atlantic: <https://www.theatlantic.com/entertainment/archive/2017/02/the-politics-of-retelling-norse-mythology/517422/> and this blog review, which I felt articulately explains what I was trying to do, <https://andrewfindlaywrites.wordpress.com/2017/02/11/gaiman-norse-mythology/>.  
  
I liked this James Lovegrove review from the Financial Times: <https://www.ft.com/content/42fad176-ec96-11e6-ba01-119a44939bb6>  
  
Sarah Lyall interviewed me and came to the New York event for the New York Times:  <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/02/12/books/neil-gaiman-norse-mythology.html>

Here's me talking to the New York Times Book Review Podcast: <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/02/17/books/review/neil-gaimans-myths.html>  
  
Michael Dirda starts  his review of *Norse Mythology* in a way that sent my stomach lurching, and the review itself was something of a roller-coaster ride (but the kind you are glad you have taken):  
<https://www.washingtonpost.com/entertainment/books/neil-gaimans-suspenseful-and-surprising-norse-mythology/2017/02/13/986c0ffe-eef2-11e6-9973-c5efb7ccfb0d_story.html?utm_term=.5b6e58d98428>

And I'm now realising that if I keep linking to reviews, interviews and such on either side of the Atlantic this blog will never end...  
  
So here is the cover of a recent Australian Sunday supplement: do not let its 1977 cover date fool you.

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On public events: If you go and look at [Where's Neil](http://www.neilgaiman.com/where/) you will see the public appearances I'm doing this year.  Of the events in Spring, Seattle is sold out and so is Santa Rosa and Boston, Costa Mesa is almost sold out,  Mesa AZ is going fast, and there are... still lots and lots of tickets in San Diego.  
  
I don't know why this is. However, if you fancy coming to see me talk and read and answer questions and such, and you can't get in to any of the other evenings, San Diego is a two hour train ride from LA and they even have wifi on the train,  andit's less than three hour's flying time from Seattle. And right now, there are seats. ("San Diego. It's not just for ComicCon.")

I have news on the only New York area event, too: it's on April 15th, at Bard College, where I am a professor. It's going to be all about *American Gods*, and I'm going to be interviewed by my special guest, *American Gods*' Executive Producer and co-showrunner Bryan Fuller. We are hoping to show you things on the big screen that night, too. After all, it will only be two weeks before the first episode of *American Gods* goes out.  
  
It's free to the Bard community, $25 a ticket for the rest of the world. Info here: <http://fishercenter.bard.edu/calendar/event.php?eid=132108>

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Which reminds me:  
  
  
AMERICAN GODS now has a broadcast date: the first episode of the first season will be broadcast on Starz on April 30th in the US, and be watchable digitally too, via Starz on Amazon Prime.

Outside of the US, you can watch *American Gods* on Amazon Prime Video, from May 1st.  
  
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And my biggest news of all, even bigger and more exciting than a Number One International Bestseller, or a glorious TV series adapted from my novel launching, is this:  
 [I've been appointed a United Nations Goodwill Ambassador for Refugees](http://www.unhcr.org/en-au/news/press/2017/2/58aa8bee4/neil-gaiman-appointed-unhcr-goodwill-ambassador.html). I even have a certificate. (It is blue and the same size as a passport.) I'm not sure what this means in real terms: I'm going to keep doing the work I've been doing since 2013 to draw attention to refugees, to raise awareness and knowledge, and to help them.  
  
I was disappointed to learn I won't get diplomatic immunity from parking tickets\*.  
  
Here's the Facebook Live interview announcement, in which I am interviewed by Jonathan Ross and answer questions from the people watching. The interview begins about 4 minutes and 30 seconds in.  
  
[https://www.facebook.com/UNHCR/videos/10156047439338438/](https://www.facebook.com/UNHCR/videos/10156047439338438/?hc_ref=PAGES_TIMELINE)

\*Joke. Weak joke.  UN Goodwill Ambassadors pay their own parking tickets, air tickets, hotel bills etc.