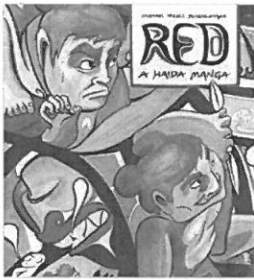


Comics and Graphic Novels about Folklore and Mythology

By Alice Albarda

Folk tales and myths are full of action, metamorphoses, humour, fantastic creatures, and beauty, which can make them ideally suited to the graphic novel or comic format. The following books tell traditional tales from Canada and around the world through the vibrant and dramatic medium of the graphic novel.



Red: A Haida Manga by Michael Nicoll Yahgulanaas (Douglas & MacIntyre, 2010).

Red: A Haida Manga is a graphic interpretation of a tragic oral narrative of the Haida people from the Northwest coast of North America. After Red's sister Jaada is taken away by raiders, Red is consumed by the need to retrieve his sister and exact revenge on the raiders. This tragic tale of anger and revenge is told through vibrant illustrations inspired by traditional Haida artwork. The 108 illustrated pages of *Red* combine to form a 13-foot-long Haida image. This is a complex and intense story that will challenge young adult and adult readers alike, and which presents iconic Haida imagery in a new and exciting light.



The Odyssey: A Graphic Novel illustrated by Gareth Hinds (Candlewick Press, 2010).

This stunningly illustrated book retells the *Odyssey*, a well-known myth from Ancient Greece, over 18 centuries after it was first written by Homer. The *Odyssey* is a story that has remained a part of Western culture for centuries and has influenced many books, movies, and TV shows. Hinds' retelling and accompanying watercolour illustrations give teens an opportunity to read the original myth in a beautifully executed new format.



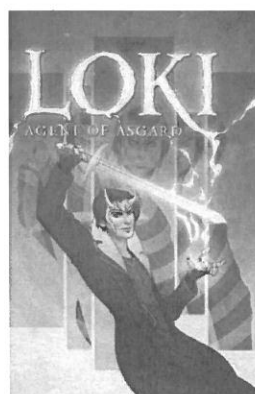
Arctic Comics by Michael Kusugak, Germaine Arnaktauyok, Jose Kusugak, Susan Shirley, George Freeman, and

Nicholas Burns (Renegade Arts Entertainment, 2016).

Arctic Comics contains five stories by authors and illustrators from northern Canada, inspired by the culture and lifestyle of the Inuit. The stories range from humorous tales set in the modern era to adventurous stories from the mythical past. Jose Kusugak and Germaine Arnaktauyok's "Kiviuq vs Big Bee" recounts a story about Kiviuq, a figure in Inuit mythology. *Arctic Comics* showcases a range of talent from Canada's north, not to mention stories that recall Inuit storytelling traditions while representing the present-day lives of Inuit people.

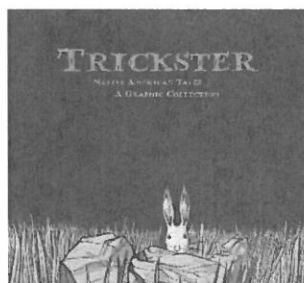
Loki, Agent of Asgard by Al Ewing and Lee Garbett (Marvel, 2014-2016).

This Marvel comic book series centres around everyone's favourite trickster, the Norse god Loki. Loki has appeared



in several other comic series, as well as the Avengers and Thor movies. There are 17 volumes in this series, which follows Loki

fighting for Asgard and completing mission from the All-Mother. Older teens who are fans of the Marvel Universe will enjoy this series that combines Norse mythology and superhero action.



Trickster: Native American Tales edited by Matt Dembicki (Fulcrum

Publishing, 2010).

Trickster figures are a common occurrence in folklore, and Native American folklore is no exception. *Trickster: Native American Tales* is an anthology of 21 trickster tales from across North America, told through comics. Characters such as the coyote, the raven, or the rabbit use their cunning to cause problems for others or occasionally for themselves. Each story

is told by a different Native American storyteller and is illustrated by a different artist, culminating in a diverse collection of comics that showcases Native American folklore and the titular trickster.



Fables created by Bill Willingham and Lad Medina (Vertigo, 2002-2015).

Fables is a comic book series about a community of characters from folk tales and fairy tales who have been exiled from their homelands. Characters such as Bigby (AKA “Big Bad”) Wolf, Snow White, and the ever-present Jack hide in plain sight in Fabletown, a hidden community in New York City, and the Farm, a community for non-human Fables in upstate New York. The 150 issues of this comic contain many different story arcs that play on the tropes and themes of fables. *Fables* contains plenty of action, drama, and mystery that will keep older teen readers entertained.



Moonshot: The Indigenous Comics Collection, Volume 1 edited by Hope Nicholson

Moonshot is a collection of Indigenous stories from Canada and the United States, told in comic form and created by dozens of artists and storytellers. An important feature of this collection is that elders from indigenous communities were asked for permission before using traditional stories, ensuring that the book is both respectful and accurate. This book was not specifically created for teens, but its exceptional execution means that readers of all ages will have something to gain from it.