

Creator Interviews February - Reed Hinckley-Barnes

1. Tell the readers a little about yourself.

My name is Reed Hinckley-Barnes, and I'm a comic writer and letterer. I live in San Francisco, and outside of comics, I work as a Special Education teacher in a local middle school. I successfully funded my graphic novel Into the Deep, on kickstarter last summer, and am in the final stages of putting that together for print. I'm probably better known as a letterer in the indie comics community, and have worked on so many awesome kickstarter projects that it feels hard to name any specifically.

2. Describe your artistic decisions with your upcoming comic and your process.

My upcoming comic is a fantasy webcomic inspired by mostly by The Legend of Zelda called Hero of Legend. This is a book that's been floating around in my brain for a long time, at least since Breath of the Wild came out, but probably longer than that. It's a story about what happens to the world when the destined hero fails. But its also about cycles, stories, the ones we tell ourselves and the ones we're forced to become a part of. Oh, and it's also about cool fantasy creatures, fun action, and a world where the magic of life has wormed its way into everything.

What finally made it click for me was figuring out how to tell it in a webcomic format. I have a real hard time reading most webcomics, because I don't feel like a lot of them are built to be read one page at a time, even if that's how they're released. My memory just isn't good enough to remember what happened from one week to a next. So then I say I'll wait to read it until there's a good chunk, and then I forget to read it at all.

What has worked for me is some of the stuff being put out by Jonathan Hickman, Mike Huddleston and Mike Del Mundo on 3 Worlds 3 Moons. I realized that, instead of putting things out one page at a time, I could take the time to break my story down into satisfying chunks and put them out less frequently. Once I had that in my brain, I got started breaking the story down. I think, hopefully, I've made it so that the book reads well both in the 10ish page chunks I'll be releasing on my website, the full issues that will eventually come to Kickstarter, and as a whole big thing once it's all done. Who knows if this is a good strategy or not, but at least it makes me happy!

3. Who or what are your influences and inspirations?

Hero of Legend is inspired by the Zelda series, Breath of the Wild in particular. But it's also inspired by movies like Princess Mononoke or Nausicaa, and books like A Wizard of Earthsea. As for me, I think there are too many comic inspirations for me to count. A few, off the top of my head, Brian K. Vaughn, Mariko Tamaki, Jonathan Hickman, Alan Moore, Mike Mignola, and Hannah Templar. I don't know if any of these folks has

anything in common other than "makes comics" and "is on my shelf" so who knows what that means as far as my own personal writing style goes. But what I can say is that they're the writers I go to when I need to get myself excited about writing comics.

4. What are you currently reading, playing, watching, and/or listening to?

Currently re-watching Avatar: The Last Airbender, so that I can be properly mad when the live action show comes out. I've been reading a book called The Archive Undying, which is about terrible AI gods and giant robots. I listen to a ton of podcasts, but the one I always look forward to the most is the actual play podcast Friends at the Table. And I've been playing Prince of Persia: The Lost Crown, which is a great Metroidvania game if you like those (I do!).