



Fullmetal Alchemist, Vol. 4

Hiromu Arakawa , Akira Watanabe (Translator)

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Trapped and injured in a secret alchemical laboratory, Edward Elric is at the mercy of his enemies, Lust and Envy. But they don't want him dead...they have other plans for him. As the laboratory goes up in flames, the brothers find themselves back at square one, with only an inkling of the massive scale of the Philosopher's Stone conspiracy. But then, Lieutenant Colonel Maes Hughes uncovers a shocking secret...

Fullmetal Alchemist, Vol. 4 Details

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Author : Hiromu Arakawa , Akira Watanabe (Translator)

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It seems that whenever the brothers get close to solving something, something happens that sends them to square one. Of course, this should happen, or how else can the manga continue. I absolutely loved the extra omakes at the end of this volume. Also, this manga is making me sympathize with some of the bad guys.

good job on the characterization and story building.

Jedi JC Daquis says

So I was very much ready to give this volume 3 or 4 stars, because seriously, Al is being such a huge metal jack*ss for believing what the enemy says, but the emotional buildup that leads to that end was so much for me.

Damn you Arakawa for being a great writer!

Kogiopsis says

[That Hughes's death can hurt so much to read/watch after such a short period of time is truly amazing, but much as I respect the skill that went into it, I still wish it hadn't happened. In fact, eventually I'm going to plot out and perhaps write a Doctor Who/FMA crossover to change that and see what happens. (hi

Mal says

it's a terrible day for rain.

Lizet says

Hum. No me esperaba sentir tantas cosas con este volumen. Me agarraron totalmente desprevenida.

daisy says

Maes ?

Celine says

Oh my god. This one won me over. There is this one heartbreaking scene in this manga - I'm sure other readers will know what I'm talking about - that is just *so good*. Absolutely fantastic panelling. I'm glad we get to see some more brother dynamics in this volume.

Aleksandra says

I really like it so far, and I could've rate it 5/5, but I'm anxious and I'd prefer to leave the 5 star rating for the toms that will blow me out of my socks.

Mary says

This volume was *so good* (Maes Hughes!! And I thought I was prepared after what happened with Nina and Alexander), and the wait for volume 5 from my library was *so long* that I gave up and watched the anime (Brotherhood, not the first version)....and now I have no way to coherently speak about this series, I love it so much. The family relationship! Ed and his absolute devotion to getting Al his body back! Al and his conviction that he won't let others suffer in his quest to get back to normal! Colonel Mustang and his ambition and his loyalty to his men! Hawkeye and her awesome sniper skills and her loyalty and strength and ability to keep Colonel Mustang from doing too many stupid things! Winry, who is a fantastic automail mechanic and the best kind of friend and not afraid to use force to knock some sense into her reckless childhood friends! The romance, which feels natural because it's centered on such a strong friendship, and which builds naturally over a long series of significant events (that I can't give away without spoilers, although seriously, they're awesome), and which is naturally an understated subplot, because the characters are so focused on the terrible doings happening in the main plot! Not to mention Scar and the truth about the Ishbal Rebellion and Von Hohenheim (!!!) and Greed and Lin and Pride (who is so freaking scary) and the truth of the philosopher's stone...

Umm, basically, if you took every character and every event and every world-building detail and added a few sparkly hearts and exclamation points before and after them, that's how I feel about this story. Give me a few weeks and I might be capable of a more rational analysis.

If anyone in the neighborhood is interested, I have since found the Westerville library has the whole manga series; I've spent about the last week devouring it. (Maybe for me March is just a month meant for light--yet very awesome--book series? I seem to remember devouring the Alex Rider series in a similar fashion during spring break one year. Although Fullmetal Alchemist > Alex Rider by a billion points or so; they're not even on the same level of enjoyment, here.)

One side note: I have so, so, so many good things to say about this series, but it is worth noting one thing that truly baffled and then somewhat offended me when I read through: (minor plot point spoiler) later in the series, Winry becomes an apprentice to Garfiel, an automail mechanic who is gay. Japanese culture tends to portray gay men as cross-dressing, hyper-feminine individuals, and the mangaka keeps with this stereotype.

It was confusing when I first encountered Garfiel, because to me and my American cultural assumptions, his appearance and actions weren't coded gay; they were coded as a man who cross-dresses (no sexual orientation implied) or someone who, perhaps, is transgender. Research was helpful in clearing up what the mangaka was actually trying to convey to the reader. For what it's worth, no one in-text shames Garfiel or treats him negatively or thinks he's less of an automail mechanic. (Well, Ed runs away when Garfiel flirts with him, but Ed also freaks out and does pretty much the same anytime anyone implies he has a thing for Winry.) The mangaka tends to use Garfiel for humorous purposes, which is an unfortunate stereotypical way to treat the only identified gay character in the series, but he's a very minor character in the story who only appears in only a handful of scenes, and ultimately, my dislike for his portrayal didn't ruin my enjoyment of the series as a whole. Obviously. YMMV, of course.

Caroline says

WELL this volume made me sad oh wow! There is a lot of stuff that happens in this one and I have to say I was really surprised and upset by some of it :((the art is absolutely awesome- seriously, the way the panelling is used in certain important moments is clever and helps those scenes to REALLY pack a punch. I'm so invested in this series and the characters now!!

Artemy says

Ah, and here's the volume where the typical Japanese manga weirdness starts to show. There's a creepy guy who's obsessed with mini-skirts and who wants to hire only women in his military to make it his personal harem (and that's almost a direct quote). There's another creepy guy who can't shut up about his daughter and his family, and who basically kidnaps one of the female characters and makes her live at his home. And finally, there's the side-story about another character who adopts a puppy and then shoots the gun in the puppy's direction to potty-train him! And that's supposed to be funny! WHAT THE ACTUAL FUCK WAS THAT. And these are not the villains, mind you! These are the supporting cast of the book who you are supposed to like and care about!

The worst part is, there wasn't really a lot of story in this volume otherwise. It keeps stalling for two volumes already, and if something doesn't start to happen soon, I'm afraid I might lose interest in this series completely.

Maria Kaye says

For some reason I've always felt bad when the slicer brothers died :/

Grace says

I am literally an emotional wreck right now. This volume has all the feels, so prepare with some tissues!!! A great, heart wrenching volume with this one ???

Ashley *Hufflepuff Kitten* says

Maes <3

and on a brighter note, Black Hayate!

Marzy Nighthunter says

Lieutenant Colonel Hughes... T-T
