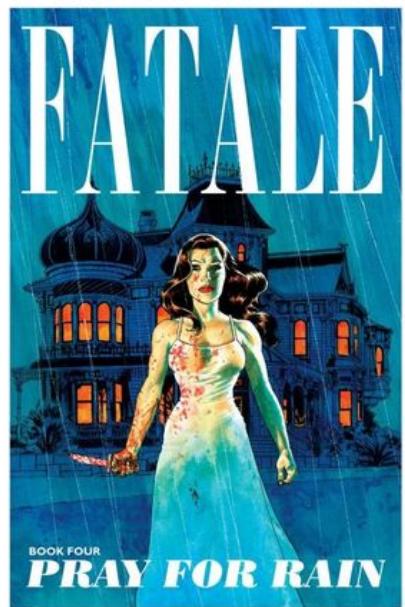


ED BRUBAKER SEAN PHILLIPS



## Fatale, Vol. 4: Pray for Rain

*Ed Brubaker (Writer) , Sean Phillips (Artist, Letterer) , Elizabeth Breitweiser (Colourist)*

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**Fatale, Vol. 4: Pray for Rain** Ed Brubaker (Writer) , Sean Phillips (Artist, Letterer) , Elizabeth Breitweiser (Colourist)

Sex, drugs, rock-n-roll, and ritual killers all collide in the strangest and most exciting volume of *Fatale* yet. A strange woman with no memory stumbles into the lives of a struggling grunge band in mid-'90s Seattle... Is she their muse? Will she save them from "one-hit wonder" status? Or will she be something much worse, especially since there's a psycho killer on her trail?

**Collecting:** *Fatale* 15-19

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## From Reader Review Fatale, Vol. 4: Pray for Rain for online ebook

### C. Varn says

We go back to our Nicholas Lash framing story and a flashback to Josephine in the 1990s and her relationship to a "Satanic" grunge band who also are bank robbers. The confluence of neo-noir, Lovecraftian horror, and a elements of a movie like "True Romance." The treatment of non-Josephine female characters in this book is actually declining and not in a way that really adds to the story.

Nicolas Lash is in jail for the murder of the women who stole the manuscript, and things get ore hairy from there. It also becomes clear despite lack of hints to the time period, that Lash's story line is completely contemporary as it is at least 15 or 20 years after the 1990s plot line. Furthermore, it becomes clear that Josephine has regular bouts of amnesia, although the reasons why aren't really explored.

Philips does wonders with Seattle in 1990s, using the atmospherics to good effect. This seems to have upped the gore from the other volumes.

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### Sesana says

Definitely kicks the story up a notch. I've heard the series will be ending soon, and there's a definite sense that things are coming to a head. The 90s Seattle setting is a welcome change from previous volumes, and I like the way that this storyline manages to flow and hold together, despite being framed by action in the future. I honestly hadn't predicted the turn the ending would take, and it definitely feels like the beginning of the end. Once the next and probably last volume gets released, I'll probably do a complete re-read and see how it all works together as a whole.

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### HFK says

Yes, finally.

And by that I mean *Pray for Rain* finally reached the four stars I thought it is forever doomed to avoid with just being mediocre good, without having that something that makes it eventually stand out from the other supernatural noirs.

Yes, finally.

Fourth volume has a lot going on. The setting is ever awesome Seattle and its famous rainy weather (however, if you happen to read Cynthia Barnett's Rain: A Natural and Cultural History, you just might learn how accurate or not this reputation actually is) in -95, just around the time when God- Cobain's (I want to point out that I was, and still am, Layne Staley girl) suicide still affected the music industry's atmosphere in the city, and due to this, I can't really help noticing one of this arc's male character's rocking the Cobain style and look.

Our leading lady, Josephine, is suffering from amnesia, which makes it possible for her to group up with a former, quite big band that has lost their musical touch. This leads to a lot of music, sex, bank robberies, jealousy, and drama. Not to forget the ritualistic serial killings that are looming in the background.

Compared to the last three volumes, *Pray for Rain* is filled with sex and brutal violence, which in my book is the best combination to this date in any entertaining work, but also much more structured and whole, too.

I still do not find Josephine an appealing character. She is innocent in many ways, but despite of this, she still manages to allure and destroy men's life's to the degree that it just makes me wish for the ending that she would deserve, which would not be a happy one, but in the spirit of femme fatale and noir, it most likely is something between my desires and reality.

The fifth volume will be the last in the series, looking forward to it.

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### **Tom Mathews says**

More fun and horror from Ed Brubaker and Sean Phillips, this time it's in Seattle in the 1990s and grunge music is the rage.

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### **Gavin says**

Back to the world of reading! Thanks for all the well wishes on my return. Shit happens, and sometimes we don't get to do what we like...

Anyhoo...I started Fatale a year ago, and it's been nearly that long since I read Vol. 3, so this was LONG LONG LONG overdue.

It was worth the wait.

While it somehow spins the wheels on the overall story, there are some important developments. We run into Nic, in prison after his run in with Jo, but he ends up being broken out by someone very unexpected with a connection to the same mystery woman who's turned his life upside down.

We then jump to 90s Seattle, Grunge era (which is awesome, and also scary as hell, since it's a 20yr flashback, and I recall the age vividly, with my flannel shirts, band tees, and jeans with ripped knees...I still have a similar wardrobe to be honest, and I think it's always acceptable, esp. in the Pacific Northwest...Mike, back me up here?)

Anyhow, grunge band is a 1-hit wonder, and they're falling apart at the seams; the main protagonist is singer Lance, who's taken to robbing banks to try and help the band pay for their comeback. Well, of course, who should he come across, naked and bleeding in the rain, than our favourite femme fatale herself? In the throes of amnesia no less, Jo is brought into the band's fold, and we see the (unintentional) havok she wreaks on them. There's also a disturbed cop chasing her, another man looking for her, and a trail of bodies...oh, and that doesn't even include the demonic baddie from earlier in the series, who's been trying to track her for 50+yrs and gets ever so close, only to lose her again...

Forward to the present, and Nic pieces together what some of us readers already have done...Nic's connection to the mystery man is made, but still leaves us with lots of questions, and a pile of poor dead men who did nothing more than fall for the femme fatale...

Brubaker and Phillips 4 life yo. The art and subject matter pair together so well, their noir work alone would ensure they stayed in demand for years, but they also do tons of stuff apart too, which speaks to how talented both men are. This is just like watching one of your favourite movies, or maybe a slightly different one with your favourite actor. It's fun, it's solid, and no matter where it takes you, it was worth the 2 hrs or so.

Recommended, back on track for the series, but PLEASE start at the beginning or this will really make you scratch your head.

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## Forrest says

I graduated high school in '87. After the glam rock of that period (which I despised - I was more on an Anthrax/Motorhead/Metallica kind of guy), the whole grunge scene just seemed pretty flat to me, like it was so anti-poser that it became it's own kind of posing. While I liked that first single by Nirvana (you know the one I'm talking about), I didn't much like anything else they put out. And while Pearl Jam had its moment and Soundgarden made a more lasting impression, with Alice in Chains showing several moments of pure brilliance, I just really didn't get into grunge like many of those around me. In fact, after a short time, I really hated it.

So I naturally recoiled at a story wherein a major part of the plot was centered around, you guessed it, a grunge band in the '90s.

And now you're wondering "why did you give it 5 stars"?

Because my dislike for the whole grunge scene played directly into Brubaker's nefarious plans for me. My sense of internal unease only grew as I read this distressing tale. Josephine, the titular Fatale herself, is stricken with amnesia after being stricken by . . . well, I don't want to give that away. She finds herself at the mansion of a one-hit-wonder grunge band who are down on their luck until she shows up. But what kind of luck does she bring? Good at first, then bad, in spades.

Jo, we find, is a sort of vortex, a center around which death and despondence swirl like bees around a hive. From the band to a cop-turned-serial-killer to a mysterious hell-spawned *someone*, Jo is the center of everyone's attention, whether they want her to be the center of attention or not. This vortex, by the volume's end, has become a maelstrom.

Honestly, I didn't think that Brubaker could throw me for a loop like he has this time around. The previous volumes of Fatale were already so strange and shrouded in mystery, that I was lulled into a sense of jaded security. I thought "okay, we'll just watch how this thing plays out as we approach the last volume. What other surprises can he throw at me that he hasn't already thrown?"

And then . . . "Wha? Who? Really? But . . ."

That's an exact quote.

I'll spare you the full spoiler, but let's just say that while I expect someone to die in every volume, one of the someones who died this volume was most definitely \*not\* someone who I expected to die, especially in the way this person was bumped off. Those who have read the previous volumes will know who I'm talking about, and . . .

OK. I'm getting esoteric. I'll stop. But be warned, if you haven't read Volume 1 and Volume 2, you will be thoroughly confused. If you have read them, you will be thoroughly confused and utterly horrified.

And that's just where Brubaker wants you.

Embrace the dark.

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### **Sr3yas says**

★★★½ Stars

**Brubaker unleashes a fresh bout of** blood, gore, sex and fucked up characters in this volume of Fatale, and the end game seems to be just around the corner.

The story opens with Nash, who finds himself in a rather inconvenient position since the shocking last act of volume two. But if Josephine has taught us anything, It's about how nothing is permanent.

But once again, and probably for the last time, the story's focus is not on the present, but the past. And this time, we are going to *Seattle, 1995!*

That dude who you just saw in above panel is Lance, and he is going to find out what hell is sooner than later! Lance is a member of a not-so-successful band, who are living in a mansion they can't afford, with a songwriter who no longer writes songs. But the moment Lance finds a shell-shocked Josephine in middle of nowhere, it all changes.

This volume is indeed different from previous flashbacks, mainly because Josephine is amnesic (not very original), and do not remember the full extent of her own powers or the demons (*literal and figurative*) that hunts her. The Seattle story arc felt grounded, but the interludes featuring present, as well as the ending of this volume, were fantastic.

Overall, It's a strong installment, but some parts of Seattle story arc felt over-sexualized.

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### **Crystal Starr Light says**

Bullet Review:

I think I'm starting to get tired of this series; this volume seemed pretty long and meandering. I still don't feel like enough questions are being answered and worse, the one other woman besides Josephine/Jane that appears ends up in a girl-fight sorta with Josephine.

Have I ever mentioned that I hate our society wants to pit women against each other? Fighting over men mostly or that one lousy job at work? Yeah, I hate it. I want to dislike a person because they are a jerk, not because we're fighting over a stupid guy.

Anyway, the last half or so picked up and that's why I gave it 4 stars.

I have no clue how this series is going to end - fortunately, I have the final volume 5 at my side!

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### **Patrick says**

I love this series, but I will admit I felt less than completely satisfied with this book.

The storytelling is good, but it's primarily flashbacks and Worldbuilding with very little movement of the main story arc.

And yes, I'm aware of the irony here, me complaining that someone's story is too flashback-y. Me, whose entire trilogy is effectively a 90% flashback.

The other stipulation that I'd like to throw in here is that I usually read comics in big binges, entire stories at a time. 5-6 trades all at once. Part of the reason this single book didn't feel like an entire meal to me is because it isn't.

So... yeah. Still love it. Still reading it. I'm well aware I'm probably just being a whiny little bitch here.

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### **Caitlin says**

**3.5 stars, rounded up. This volume wraps up Jo's past and finally brings everything full circle with Nicolas Lash.**

Present Day - Nicolas Lash is in jail awaiting trial for the murder of the woman who stole the manuscript from him in volume two. Then the book appears in his jail cell, apparently having been published since it was stolen from him. But then he realizes pieces are missing from it and is on a mad hunt to figure out what the hell is going on. A hunt that will bring him into the path of an unbalanced man who appears likely to become fully insane at the drop of a hat.

Seattle, 1995 – Lance, a member of a one-hit-wonder band, Amsterdam, finds a young amnesiac woman wandering along the road. He takes her to the mansion he can now barely afford so that she can recover both her health and her memory. The entire band plus one of the bandmate's girlfriends lives in this mansion while they try to make sure they don't stay a one hit wonder. Meanwhile, a psychotic killer learns that the

woman he had finally captured after years of pursuing her has escaped. It quickly becomes clear to the band members that the woman Lance rescued is unusual to say the least. And her allure sets more than one against another at the same time that she's acting as muse to their song writer as well as their singer. Things spin out of control quickly and *finally* Jo's memories are brought full circle back to the present day and Nicolas Lash.

At this point so many men have come through Jo's life and been destroyed by contact with her that's it hard to still feel a connection with or empathy for them. But it was really interesting to see just how much her influence affects the men around her. I liked that this one focused more on the long lasting effects rather than just the immediate "Let's have sex until you go crazy and/or kill yourself" effect that she seems to have on them.

I especially love that we finally get to see the loose ends being connected. The suspense has been building throughout this series to get to the point where Nicolas Lash finally finds out why Jo involved herself with him and I can't wait to see what unfolds.

**I didn't love this one quite as much as volume three but I liked seeing the full force of Jo's effect on the men that come into her life and I'm very curious to see how Brubaker and Phillips will bring this awesome series to a close.**

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### **Jan Philipzig says**

Wait a minute, did the story just jump from the sleazy 1970's straight to the grungy 90's? What about the wavy 80's - my time?! Okay, I get it, the neon clothing and the big hair wouldn't look very noirish... Oh well, I actually enjoyed the grunge setting quite a bit (even though I was never into grunge music), and this volume generally felt more organic than the two previous ones. Glad I stuck with the series - it may still not be Brubaker's best, but who else is gonna deliver a noir comic of this quality?

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### **Dave says**

Volume four in the graphic novel saga of Josephine, the immortal femme fatale, has a bit of a different pace than the other volumes. Set in grunge nineties Seattle, it features an amnesiac Josephine, a struggling rock band who robs banks to make ends meet. In some ways, it's almost an interlude from the main storyline.

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### **Jaqueline Miguel says**

Brevemente...

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### **Afro Madonna says**

What a hypnotic yet confusing book . Sigh.

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### **Brandon says**

Suffering from amnesia, Jo stumbles into the lives of a struggling grunge band in mid-1990s Seattle. Initially unaware of her power over the opposite sex, the musicians become inspired and begin writing new, powerful music that could break their status as “one-hit wonders”. Unfortunately, these flannel-wearing rockers are not the first men who have fallen under Jo’s spell as a figure from her past threatens their newfound success.

When I finished the final page of *Pray for Rain*, I had to go back and check out my thoughts on trades two and three to make sure I was reading the same series! This was a huge step in the right direction and could easily be considered the best of the four so far. I never doubted Brubaker and Phillips but I did feel like something just wasn’t clicking. However, the dynamic duo is back in fine form and have given me several reasons to stay tuned in.

Phillips is just stellar here creating the gloomy, rainy atmosphere of Seattle which in turn fits well with Brubaker’s hopeless story. Not taking anything away from the narrative but Phillips’ work is probably the best reason to check this series out. As far as the story goes, there’s a lot of twists and turns involved that keep things interesting. The series established a weird Lovecraftian tone early on so when things take a turn to the supernatural, you’re never questioning the direction.

I’m excited for where they go from here. I may have to make this a monthly read rather than waiting until the trades are out.

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