



Hollow Fields: The Complete Collection

Madeleine Rosca

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Forgetting your homework was never *this* dangerous!

Little Lucy Snow was meant to be enjoying her first day at the nice elementary school in town; however a macabre twist of fate sees her enrolled instead at Miss Weaver's Academy for the Scientifically Gifted and Ethically Unfettered--also known as Hollow Fields.

Located on the outskirts of Nullsville and run by the insidious Engineers, the grim boarding school dedicates itself to raising the next generation of mad scientists and evil geniuses! Classes include Live Taxidermy, Cross-Species Body-Part Transplantation and Killer Robot Construction, and for her own survival Lucy has to master them quickly...the student with the lowest grades at the end of each school week is sent to the windmill for detention--and so far, no child has ever returned!

Hollow Fields: The Complete Collection Details

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Author : Madeleine Rosca

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From Reader Review Hollow Fields: The Complete Collection for online ebook

Claire says

This is actually my second time reading this. My first time was in high school, back when I was first starting out with manga. I probably would have rated this four stars back then.

I feel that there are some cool ideas in here, with this nice steampunk/mad scientist aesthetic and just enough whimsy and creepy elements to make it feel like a Roald Dahl children's story (which is definitely a good thing).

Unfortunately, it feels more like the hour and a half premiere of a TV show than an actual complete story. In a longer series, some of the plot holes could have been addressed and/or explained better, and the character development could have been more natural.

Still, it was fun returning to Hollow Fields after all these years and I'll definitely be coming back.

Mackenzie says

I got volume 1 out of a book order when I was in elementary school. I remember searching the catalogs for the rest of the year for volume 2, but it was never there... So imagine my surprise, years later, after I'd forgotten all about it, when I walked into a bookstore and found the complete series.

Overall, this was cute and entertaining. I liked the plot... I just feel like it would have been a little more plausible if the characters had been even just a few years older.

K. O'Bibliophile says

NOTE: for anyone under the age of 12, this is probably fine. Pretend I gave it 3 or 4 stars for that age group.

But I'm not a preteen and it's a ridiculous plot-hole-filled mess.

LET ME EXPOUND ON ALL THE PROBLEMS THIS BOOK HAS, AND IT HAS A LOT.

I'm not going to touch on the obnoxious main characters. Lucy drove me nuts by hitting virtually every cliche in the book (clumsy but cute! Unknowledgeable but determined! Manages to learn an improbable amount of things very quickly even *with* secret help! Believes the best and is nice to everyone!), but so did every other character.

So basically, you have a 9-year-old who's sent to a new school, by herself, and is expected to find the way from the dock she arrives at to the school, which is not in the immediate area. And if you were giving directions to said 9-year-old girl, would you tell her the correct route, then tell her about a shortcut but that she shouldn't take it because the forest is dark and evil?

And then she gets to her school--it's not her new school, of course, it's another secret school for the children of mad scientists! During her introduction, there's a whole lot of "As you know, Bob," exposition. And she signs a contract to live here--before she realizes it's the wrong, school of course AND THIS IS WHY WE DO NOT LET 9-YEAR-OLDS WANDER AROUND EVIL FORESTS ON THEIR OWN--so when the head of the school finds out that a non!scientist's kid is now here, they can't kill her. Because she signed the contract so they can't kill her unless she steps out of line, like all the other kids.

This is so arbitrary. Minors can't sign binding contracts for Pete's sake. Her parents didn't know where she was. The only witness to the signing was the headmistress's right-hand henchgirl. Except for their own obsession with contracts of dubious legality, there is really nothing that actually stopped them from disposing of Lucy before the other students even knew she was there.

Headmistress Weaver and the rest of the teachers are held together by stitches, which makes this even weirder: Weaver's boobs are stitched on. At some point in the past, she had to make a decision and say "Yes, I want these improbably-lifted-and-separated-things reattached. Moreover, I want them put on in a way that thrusts them and my stitches into my prepubescent charges' faces. And I refuse to wear a dress that covers them."

The entire series is about mad scientists, but I'm still not sure what the point is. There are a *lot* of kids at this school, if all their parents were bent on wreaking havoc the world should have noticed by now.

So, theoretically this story has its [in-story] roots "80 years ago," which is when the foundation for all this stuff was laid and oooh mysterious backstory. See, it seems that (view spoiler) First, 80 years ago is portrayed as Victorian or Edwardian--but that would place the story earlier than current day--which is when the story seems to be set, and the manga was first published in 2007.

And the clothes they were wearing in those scenes? Implausible and distracting.

Also, at the end, (view spoiler)

Also: Miss Weaver's hands. Where did those come from? We know that originally (view spoiler) Artistically, though, they add a lot to her imposing image and look cool, but logically I'm not sure what the point would be.

Let's talk contracts again before I get to their consequences: what parent is okay with the whole "the kid with the most academic problems gets taken to be a lab rat and never seen again" scenario? There's a throwaway line near the end that "of course you're here because your parents don't care about you," but that's such a plot device. Really, every single child in the entire school is just an unwanted nuisance and their parents don't care anything for them? Although it would explain why the school hasn't been destroyed by angry relatives in its decades of existence.

Now, for the consequences and detention and WHAT REALLY GOES ON: (view spoiler)

Speaking of which: WHY CAN THEY FLY? We're told that the process of (view spoiler)

And after all that, the ending. For one thing, the number of students seems to have dropped drastically. For another (and another, and another), (view spoiler)

Also: the 4-panel cartoons in the back were cute, but with Lucy writing to her parents, all I could think was THEY DON'T KNOW WHERE YOU ARE, LUCY. Either they will send things/write back to the wrong address and discover you aren't at your intended destination, or they will notice right away you aren't at your intended destination. You should not have lasted long without them claiming you.

Starbubbles says

i finally finished this puppy. it took almost a year for me to do so. yes, you heard correctly, a year! i got about half-way through it, and my interest waned. i can't say that the interest level ever recovered. it's an interesting concept, but i still fail to believe that there wasn't a single kid who didn't leave the school after it collapsed. i mean, i would leave if given the oportunity, esp from a place that would have experiemented on me. geez! it's as if they all suffer from extensive abuse, and cannot go back to everyday life. what a story...

Chasity Nicole says

It's been a while since I've read a manga. Hollow Fields is an absolutely amazing read. The artwork is phenomenal and the storyline is just amazing.

It is hard to believe that these young genius go to a school for mad science. It's even harder to believe that none of them question what occurs in the windmill. But all of these questions make for a great story and a wonderful adventure.

Every question I had while reading Hollow Fields was eventually answered. I was on the edge of my seat as I read this marvelous story crafted by Madeleine Rosca. And it definitely reminds me of The Nightmare Before Christmas, which was my final push to get me to read this book. I highly recommend this book to anyone that wants to read a wonderful adventure of a girl who gets in a little over her head.

Sara Thompson says

Hollowfields is such a cute story with so much action that it should please most readers. This is my 14 year old son's favorite story so far.

Nine year old Lucy Snow is going to boarding school for the first time in the middle of the year. She gets lost and finds herself at a school. It's been raining and she is so hungry that she signs the school's contract just to stay inside. It doesn't take long for her to discover she has just joined a school for future mad scientists.

Each Friday, a student with the lowest grades is sent to detention in the Windmill where they are never heard from again. Lucy wants to avoid the Windmill and sneaks out at night to find a dictionary in the library.

What she finds is Dr Bleak, a speaking metal cube. Dr Bleak helps her with her assignments and help keeps her out of detention (but just barely because there are forces working against her).

Through the course of the story, Lucy matures (as much as a nine year old can) and finds herself plotting to save the children from the Windmill and free all the students from HollowFields.

There are some scenes that give you the history of the school and how it came to be. It's a rather predictable story but so engaging. Lucy is cute and animated but she's surrounded by all these gruesome experiments.

She keeps a very Pollyanna attitude and becomes the hero at the end. There is some animated violence but it's done in such a way that it's not scary. There's a lot of humor and silly cartoon antics.

Jason says

I DID IT! 1000 BOOKS LOGGED IN 2016!! With 5 days to spare, too!

My son gave me this as a present LAST Christmas, and I didn't want book 1000 to be any old book, so I picked this one to read and enjoyed it very much.

This was surprisingly dark and complex for an all ages book! But not in an inappropriate way at all. The art is fantastic and while Lucy is a childish 9 1/2 year old, she seems unexpectedly adept at handling the challenging situations she gets herself into. And for such a high concept fantasy world, I didn't feel that I was doing too much suspending of disbelief.

Sarah says

A unique and creative short manga that blurs the traditional lines between sci-fi and fantasy, between girls manga and science, and manages to have plenty of action and plenty of fascinating characters. And its short. This omnibus collects all three volumes in one which is a great way to read this story. Highly recommended for manga fans.

Susan says

The first day of school can be rough on a kid. The first day of school at an institute for future mad scientists can be downright hazardous to the health. That's what our heroine Lucy Snow discovers when she mistakenly enrolls at the wrong school and ends up locked into a life-sealing contract with the Dr. Frankenstein-esque headmistress. At this school it's scheme, or be schemed-against as the student with the lowest grades at the week's end is escorted to a detention no one ever returns from. Mystery and suspense looms large as Lucy can't be sure whom she should fear more: the decrepit re-engineered ghouls that pass for a faculty or her fellow students, all sons and daughters of schemers and villains themselves.

Rosca cites Lemony Snicket as an inspiration but there's also some similarities to some of Baum's Oz tales with the clockwork contraptions and a spunky, down-to-earth heroine lost in a world very different from her own. The Gothic-steampunk feel of the art will rate high with fans of Tim Burton (*The Nightmare Before Christmas* in particular). Rosca's child characters with their chibi-esque doll-like cuteness are a perfect complement to the macabre atmosphere (and the gruesome teachers).

Anyone who liked Catherine Jinks' *Evil Genius* might want to give this a try to see what a manga take on the story feels like.

Mature themes: Totally dependent on the scareability factor, but for kids who like a good creepy adventure tale, this is a pretty darn good one. There's a potential for wide-appeal for 10 year-olds as well as adults. No fan service--just a solid story and appealing art.

Iryna *Book and Sword* says

This was one of the first graphic novels/anime I have read. It was a while ago, but I still remember liking it a whole lot.

The artwork is great. The main character is adorable. And the plot is packed with action and secrets.

And now, as I find myself reading more graphic novels and anime than ever, I feel like giving this one a re-read.

Christopher Rush says

Despite the cover saying "All Ages," this is not really a kids' story. We really should get past the idea of "if kids are in it, it's okay for kids to read/see it." That is not true. Hogfather used to be under the "Kids" section of Netflix, but that is definitely not a children's movie. Similarly, while this is definitely a much tamer manga story than others with like-aged characters, it's not really for "all ages," especially younger readers (perhaps 10+?). The basic idea is clever: what happens to the children of mad scientists? They go to Hollow Fields to learn how to be the next generation of mad scientists, of course! Clever idea, especially when coupled with the general technological setting (clockwork machines + steam-powered machines). I'm not a fan at all of "steampunk," (I don't consider FFVI "steampunk"), but this "clockwork vs. steam" technology undercurrent (so to speak) was a neat aspect - I wish it had more of that.

And that's the only real drawback to this series: it's set up like a 110-minute not-really-kids' movie (like The Witches). Too little, too fast. After the initial "rough start at a new school" beginning, we get the typical jump to "better acclimated at school" middle, but most of the tantalized details of school life are glossed over and suddenly we are in the slam-bang finale. But ... what happens to Simon? What happens to Francine? Claude's sister? Virtually nothing is wrapped up - in fact, it's like a 110-minute pilot movie, with the New Hollow Fields as the series. It comes to a resolution in a way, but so many characters and conflicts are just abandoned - this is certainly not fit for a children's book either, since they are usually pretty good at remembering details and threads abandoned by authors.

Still, it's a clever idea, with some of the character interactions (though, again, since it's such a short series, we get it sort of force-fed and rather predictable) and character revelations, and while there are definite moments that lend credence to the "this is a moral lesson for the kids" kind of series, the general optimism of our fish-out-of-water protagonist buoys it the rapid story along nicely.

Mimi says

Not only was the art super cute but the story was great too. I read in someone else's review that it's kinda like Harry Potter + steampunk + Frankenstein, and I think that's a pretty accurate description. I think I could've gone for more story in general (I mean I could've used some more details here and there, but it was nothing I couldn't live with and I don't mind saying I loved it anyway).

Throughout the story I had the feeling that we were building up to something either really big, really cool, or both. I am often disappointed in these cases, but this time I very pleasantly was not. It's an easy read and

honestly if you like steampunk and cute things (errr.... Maybe if you're not into "cute" I would definitely say it's alternatively "awesome", if that helps) then this should be in your library somewhere. But not if you're not really into comics or graphic novels, in which case, idk why you're even on this page.

Jody Mena says

This is great! It's like Harry Potter meets Steampunk Frankenstein! Hollow Fields manages to be both cute and creepy at the same time. The artwork was beautiful, if a little cartoonish, and it was pretty short, all three volumes in one book. Lucy Snow, the main character is a very believable and relatable character. I liked how clumsy, gullible, immature and occasionally hot-headed she is, it makes her a much better protagonist than one that never makes any mistakes, yet she is also determined, loyal and kind, which brings her round to a great main character. The setting is original and eye-catching. The full-metal steampunk setting, with barely any greenery or living things that aren't grotesquely mutated or mutilated, really gives the feel of an alien landscape that is cut off from the safe and normal world - and it's safe and normal rules. The horror of the Windmill and the sinister experimentation of the Engineers, mixed with the everyday problems of being the new girl in school, bullying and making new friends, made for a really interesting set of conflicts for Lucy to overcome. I think the character that stuck with me the most was Simon - the one thing that left me dissatisfied about the story is that I wonder what ever happened to him after he helped Lucy and Claude escape the Windmill children. The battle amongst the engineers at the end was more comical than anything else, but got kind of old after a while - it might have been more entertaining if any of the combatants had been introduced earlier in the story. I really liked the fate of Principal Weaver, its a much more fitting punishment than merely dying - now she's the lab rat! All told, this was an excellent manga, I think anyone would enjoy it, so go find yourself a copy and enjoy!

Ashley LeRette says

This is a cute story that I think is good for children around 10-13ish years old and those of us who enjoy stories meant for that age group. It is kinda creepy and if I was under 10, it would probably give me nightmares.

Jessica says

A creepy-cute story where 9 year old Lucy Snow stumbles upon a special advanced science school which employs some brutal tactics. At just three volumes it's the perfect length to create a full setting and tell a fun adventure story within it. It's very cutesy and silly at points, and it's certainly not a plot that stands up to close scrutiny - but does it really need to? As a short manga for elementary or middle schoolers, it's full of plenty of action, humor, scares, and twists and turns to keep it's audience interested. I'd call this story steampunk over science fiction, and there are a lot of cool details added in throughout.

I'd recommended it for maybe 5th grade through early high school, as it is a bit immature. Manga fans will be able to devour it in one or two sittings, which is pretty satisfying. There are some dark bits and characters don't necessarily make it through the story alive. The teachers are cyborg-y bad guys who aren't very dimensional, but that isn't why I picked up a 3-volume kids steampunk manga, anyway.

