



Blade of the Immortal, Volume 19: Badger Hole

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The time for reconnaissance, planning, and waiting is over! Rin and Doa, desperate to be reunited with their friends (or even reassured that they're alive), take their first bold steps in penetrating Edo Castle's defenses and foiling Kagimura's foul "immortality" experiments! A trip to an old doctor, a chance encounter with a high-strung peasant, and an appearance by a strange, all-new Itto-ryu warrior combine to make this volume an important series of encounters in persistent Rin's quest to find Manji and Isaku--and in her own growth as a warrior! The "Badger Hole" is a dank passageway that leads to an underground tunnel system beneath Edo Castle. With some new skills and tricks, these two young ladies brave darkness and the promise of death to run headlong towards Kagimura's cruel prisons, where Manji hangs drugged and helpless!

Blade of the Immortal, Volume 19: Badger Hole Details

Date : Published June 24th 2008 by Dark Horse Manga (first published June 30th 2006)

ISBN : 9781593079697

Author : Hiroaki Samura

Format : Paperback 168 pages

Genre : Sequential Art, Manga, Historical, Historical Fiction, Graphic Novels, Comics, Fiction, Seinen, Fantasy

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Shea says

Poor Manji. Getting his ass dissected in a dirty ass dungeon for the past four(?) volumes. That's rough. But all I could think about when scientist man (Burando maybe) started monologging was that he looked like Light — from Death Note — when he goes off.

Matt says

Love it.

The women start to use their different types of power: fighting, ability to take punishment, and crowding and pleading.

I like how they've taken their time in coming to the rescue. The good guys don't immediately win and it makes it more of an uphill climb.

John Wiswell says

It'd been a couple years since I'd read any Blade of the Immortal. Within one chapter, I was dumbstruck. I couldn't be quiet enough, paying silent reverence to how heavy the lives were of the two former assassins discussing an unwanted pregnancy on a riverbank. What a damned series Hiroaki Samura wrote.

One woman, scarred from two dead children, afraid this one is conceived from a rape, from a man she's since killed.

One man, who's never wanted a life for himself, not since his family was annihilated, who offers to raise the child since he knows he can gather resources and wouldn't bother using them on himself.

And both of them are using this discussion as a way of lying around their feelings for each other.

This has come so far from the simple and bloody revenge story it pretended to be in its early volumes. I've missed all of it. I've missed the hectic, pencil-sketch style that's so incredibly evocative in the faces and subtle in people's mannerisms. The way one foot is angled, only its toes on the ground, absolutely colors how a woman's dialogue reads as she address guards who should terrify her and don't. This art can be vivid or abstract the instant you need it to be, bloody or beautiful. And it turns out this is a great book to hop back on during, since Rin and Doa launch their mission to rescue Manji from the surgical abominations he's put through.

Many readers may not remark on her, but Doa is such a great supporting character. She's dower, disappointed when Rin plots to avoid a slaughter - she's every crappy thing Rin wanted to become, but in contrast to the woman Rin's grown into, exposed as entirely immature.

The down side is that even now, Samura doesn't resolve this Manji-in-captivity arc. All of the characters

orbiting it are going through fascinating developments, but the plot itself is in dire need of resolution. It's telling that Manji himself never shows up in this volume; there's so little left to write for him in this arc. It's all got to be about rescuing him, or the shogun actually cracking the secret of his immortality.

Nidah (SleepDreamWrite) says

Good volume.
