



??? XIII [Kuroshitsuji XIII]

Yana Toboso , ? ??

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??? XIII [Kuroshitsuji XIII] Details

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Author : Yana Toboso , ? ??

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<http://theunfortunate.blogfa.com/>

Ladiibug says

#13 Black Butler series - Manga

First read 1/21/15, 4 stars

Superb cover, featuring Elizabeth the formerly hidden warrior with her sword. The always-overjoyed, immature Lizzie has embraced her true self when faced to save her fiancé Ciel's life. Ciel embraces the real, strong, Elizabeth, to her great relief.

The zombie/Titanic storyline ends. In a blockbuster surprise, the true story of how Ciel and Sebastian, the demon butler, met and made a covenant is revealed.

A third surprise Grim Reaper with the Ultimate Deathscythe makes an appearance.

Second reading 10/5/15, 4 stars

Rereading volumes 11-17, prior to the new to me vol. 18, 19 & 20, as the library will only send in ten book sets.

It's been great fun to reread and refresh my memory. I've noticed little things I missed or had forgotten. As fabulous as the story and artwork is, the Translation Notes, Author's Notes, Downstairs with Black Butler, and the back cover, which feature a quick brainstorming-a-possible-storyline with pictures is very entertaining as well.

Vol. 13's Downstairs with Black Butler, Yana reflects on her earlier volumes, and reveals her surprising beginnings as a manga author: "I'd never studied drawing exclusively or went to a pro manga school. My high school was an ordinary school."

Yana says she gets requests "like, please teach me how to draw handsome men." Yana's replies, "I'm still drawing the main character's face by trial and error, people! But I'd like to know how to do that too!"

Yana says "I'd never drawn an original manga until I sent my work to the Square Enix Manga Contest." One of her earliest works a publisher was going to fit into space in a magazine was almost cancelled, as Yana, in her inexperience, had drawn in "the gutter margins" (the part of the pages that, when bound, are not visible). The publisher scolded her, saying it was just common sense, and told her she should at least read a book about drawing manga. Yana shows her embarrassment and how flustered she was in her artwork accompanying this info. She did manage to redraw her story, avoiding the gutter margins, just in time.

Yana confiding this information to her readers touched my heart. With her amazing talents, it would be easy to assume she had been drawing and telling stories since childhood, as gifted as she is. That she reveals her inexperience and early rocky road with manga, makes me feel more affectionate and closer to her.

As I said in one Black Butler review, for the question "Which author would you most like to have dinner

with?" -- I've never been able to come up with any author. Favorites, yes, but to have dinner with? Yana is absolutely an author I'd love to have dinner with. I heart Yana.

Dyanna says

For the ones interesting in Ciel & Lizzy in Modern AU: Dusk till Dawn

Who would have guessed that our little Lizzy is so bad ass!

For the ones interested in the character of Lizzy I discovered a wonderful video that portrays her very clearly!

Despite the revelation of Lizzy, I am happy that she has a deepness that we all thought she didn't have. Lizzy truly loves Ciel despite of what some fans say!

In parallel I loved this volume not only because of Lizzy but also because we saw how the contract was made and in the same time how Ciel and Sebastian became more then strangers and **NO, I AM NOT TALKING ABOUT YAOI!** I remember that when I first started this series I was influenced by the yaoi fans but now that I read at least 60 chapters I can see for myself that between them is nothing romantic .

For the fans that do not know yet:

Lex says

Lizzie is soooooooooo freakin' cool!!! She's the best in sword fighting! She kept it a secret to Ciel cause back when they were kids, Ciel said that Lizzie's mom is scary and that cause she knows how to use the sword. Lizzie kept it cause it's not CUTE for girls to do those things. But in my opinion, it's totally CUTE and COOL!

Kitkat says

I love seeing Sebastian's past but the Grim Reapers were stupid not realizing it's a Scythe. I mean I was like duh isn't obvious. But I love seeing Sebastian angry, it's hilarious.

Clair says

This is going to be a double whammy, since I got both Black Butler volumes XII and XIII at the same time, and want to make up for the huge amount of time I missed. University kind of does that to you. Whoops.

So without further ado, here's my thoughts on volume XIII of Black Butler.

...I didn't like it. Unfortunately, both of these volumes took a turn for the mediocre, and I was noticing quite a few problems in storyline, characterisation, and heck, even some problems in artwork. Normally when I read Black Butler, I find myself drawn in and enjoying myself enough to acknowledge the problems, but not find them hugely detrimental to my reading experience. Volume XIII, though? Has them in abundance, I'm sad to say.

First of all, I really detest how little time is given to Elizabeth's transformation in character. It's about a chapter and a half. She's put into a perilous situation by Ciel either breaking or twisting his leg, and zombies surrounding her. So, Lizzie pulls out two swords from a conveniently-placed ornament (similar to Elizabeth Swan in *Pirates of the Caribbean: Curse of the Black Pearl*), and starts kicking some zombie backside. While it was nice to see Elizabeth being able to take care of herself and not squealing in fright, it's such a fleeting moment, and almost completely ruined by Elizabeth reverting to shrieking and crying shortly after.

That chapter has this backstory about Elizabeth being subject to two different expectations, from two different people. Her aunt Angelina (Madam Red) tells her this: 'Favour poetry over philosophy, embroidery over cooking, dancing over chess. Be an innocent little angel.' Meanwhile, Elizabeth's mother wants her to carry on the family tradition of swordsmanship, even though Lizzie hates training for it. Even if her mother does push her a bit too hard, it's so that she can protect herself and her husband, apparently.

As I said in my review of volume XII, Ciel remarks that he'd be scared to have a wife like Elizabeth's mother (his fencing instructor), due to her stern personality. Elizabeth takes that to heart as meaning he's frightened of women who are capable of proficiently using swords, I guess. It's a bit stupid, but Elizabeth is very young and naïve at the time. In fact, Elizabeth wears low-heeled shoes so that she won't appear taller than Ciel, even if she's just turned 15 and low-heeled pumps are a bit childish for her to be wearing. What.

This kind of revelation ought to carry a lot more weight to it, and it really doesn't. It's laughed off when Elizabeth tearfully asks Ciel if he still likes her, and Ciel gets all flustered and replies that it doesn't matter. Oh, and when Elizabeth is carried out to the rescue boats, rather than utilising her skills against the zombies, Sebastian karate-chops her in the neck to induce a fainting spell. Since, you know... women can only handle that much excitement in one day.

I'd be happier with this character revelation if it actually meant anything. It really doesn't. It's here today, gone tomorrow. Elizabeth hasn't changed, she's still reverted back to squealing and crowing on about how cute things are. Seriously, read the Easter chapter between the Campania and Weston College arcs. You'd expect this revelation to make her a little more confident, to realise Ciel likes her just the way she is, and to not be afraid of letting her true personality shine through. But nope! It's almost as if this whole thing never happened.

Right, right, enough ranting about the bad character writing in regards to Lizzie. Now to bad character writing in regard to another character: Viscount Druitt. He's a fairly sinister, if incredibly dim villain early on in the manga, and he's used in the anime and manga simply for comic relief.

Here, he's a member of the Aurora Society, a group who have this incredibly silly catchphrase and pose that they have to do in order to prove they're true members, sort of like a Masonic handshake. So long as you don't mind looking like a prat, you can get all the information you want! It's a gag that gets old extremely quickly. It was mildly amusing the first time, and now it's just excruciatingly jarring for the tone that's trying to be set.

No, seriously. Ciel et al do the pose, and Viscount Druitt lets them in on his evil plan. Like any good villain, his speech on why the Aurora Society were involved in creating these zombies comes with with a delusion of grandeur and plans for world domination. This happens in two seconds flat.

However, Druitt is just a pawn in the master plan thought up by... Undertaker, of all people. While Druitt wants to get rich selling the zombies to world militaries, Undertaker simply wanted to experiment and observe what happens when you reanimate the dead. But... for what reason? Just for curiosity's sake? That's it? Oh great. I don't think we are going to get any answers, since the manga then devolves into this big shounen fight scene, with Grell and Ronald in one corner, and Sebastian in the other. Both sides want to take in Undertaker for questioning, and both sides are determined not to lose. Yawn. Wake me up when it's over.

Sebastian fights off Ronald, and whilst Grell is engaged in combat with Undertaker, she notices that he still has his scythe from the days when he was a Reaper. (This reveal was supposed to be a big surprise in the manga, but unfortunately it was ruined by the last few episodes of the anime.) Undertaker grabs Ciel, then stabs Sebastian to reveal his Cinematic Record, because he's always been curious as to why a demon like Sebastian would pretend to be a butler. (Reapers in Black Butler judge who goes to heaven or hell by taking a look at a film strip of the dead's life, after all.)

This poses quite a few questions. Think back to volume 3, when Grell eviscerates Sebastian, because she's curious as to why a 'noxious beast' would pretend to be a butler. All she sees in Sebastian's Cinematic Record is a gag reel of two years' worth of Sebastian having to deal with the incompetent staff in the Phantomhive Manor. If Grell was only able to see the past two years, quite why Undertaker was able to go back even further is a bit confusing. Sure, he's powerful, but that powerful?

What follows next are a series of chapters on Ciel and Sebastian's first few weeks together. Ciel is rescued, is reunited with his aunt, who reinstates him into society, and Sebastian uses his powers to fix up the burned-down Phantomhive manor and help get Ciel back on the right track to exacting his revenge.

However, these flashbacks feel so unnecessary to me. Okay, one could argue that they are relevant, since I did complain about Black Butler's storyline completely veering off course in my previous review, but these flashbacks just feel... lumped in. It's as if Yana and her team (of artists, editors, etc.) were completely bored with writing and drawing the Campania arc, and then went: "Yeah, we're going to shove in some backstory, even though it doesn't quite fit right." I suppose it was either now or never, since we only ever see tidbits of backstory every once in a blue moon throughout the other arcs, but it just wasn't the time.

I will concede that the flashback chapters do have a few funny moments, though. In Volume XIII alone, we find out that the dog-hating Sebastian was indeed named after Ciel's old dog. Since he's bound by contract to be faithful, he can't exactly complain and ask for a new one. Also, Ciel gives him no end of sass, even though this butlering business is completely new to him. The food he serves is too greasy, he can't draw a bath properly, and he's not allowed to use his powers anymore. "Why, that bloody little knave."

Okay, I think that's enough rambling for now, so let's conclude, shall we? Even though this volume did keep me reading, and had some good comedy at points, it's really bogged down by the same problems as Volume XII – a clumsily put together story, along with characters whose motivations are confused. 2/5.

(This review is also available on my blog: <http://nessasky.wordpress.com/2013/06...>)

Fatemeh says

[
??? ??????.*

??? ?????? ?? ????? lol

(hide spoiler)]

Prisca says

With Undertaker becoming a bad ass, the series officially don't have any hero. All are anti-heroes or villains, and the 'legendary shinigami' I knew in the anime version...vanished :(

But still, Undertaker will always be my most favorite character (sorry, Professor Michaelis, you're number two now :p), especially when he reveals his shinigami eyes and saying to his juniors "all shinigamis are near-sighted--certain things can only be seen with other than your own eyes" thing.

Despite of his viciousness, he's a genius; no one in Black Butler's gonna have a thought about modifying cinematic record, or saying, "All living beings instinctively try to fill up whatever they lack. If your body gets wounded, it will close it up. If the spirit feels lonely, one will seek others in order to fill this emptiness. That's why they also instinctively seek what they lack. In order to find a 'soul', they will try and open up the bodies of the living."

Or disarming two powerful shinigamis and one talented demon all at once. Undertaker. Is. Definitely. Powerful.

And who is Claudia P.?

Bravo, Yana. Great villains you created :)

Rachel Joy says

Glad the zombie thing is over.
That was not the most interesting of subplots so far.

Nerdish Mum says

[OMGoodness Lizzie (Elizabeth) is a badass, I absolutely loved that reveal. (hide spoiler)]

MissAnnThrope says

16 May 2013

Rating: * * * * 1/2

Well...HOT DAYUMMMMMM!

Who knew there was such a badass hottie hiding under that ginormous top hat? Plus, the guy *loves* to laugh.
swoon

Those eye(s)!

And a shinigami to boot?! *UNF!!!*

Black Butler, Vol. 13 begins with a surprisingly sweet backstory on Lizzie. I have to admit that I initially despised her when she broke Ciel's ring, but after the unexpected twist in the last volume plus seeing how much she truly cares about Ciel, I'm quite digging her. She isn't the silly little girl she comes across to be. Lizzie is rather kick-ass and has her man's back at any cost.

I thought it was so amusing to see Lizzie make Ciel blush and Sebastian razz him for it.

To be honest, the rest of the volume becomes a blur once Undertaker's true intentions are revealed.

Hey now...

Hawwwwt!

I enjoy watching Sebastian battle it out with all of the shinigami. This demon's got mad ninja skills and looks to have the upper-hand until Undertaker pulls out the big ~~guns~~ blade.

Death Scythe!

As much as I take great pleasure in seeing Sebastian and Undertaker battle it out, the cliffhanger ending made my heart stop. Granted, logically, I know that he is an immortal demon but seeing Sebastian gutted is a sight I'd rather not ever see again.

Thank goodness there is an entertaining backstory that immediately follows this tragic ending to distract your mind from Sebastian's possible demise. The origin of the contract between Sebastian and Ciel is told with eerie suspense sprinkled in with wonderful snarky humor.

My favorite scene is seeing Sebastian's subtle transformation from demon to butler.

I love that Sebastian is named after Ciel's dog. What a punk.

I found it strangely hot when Sebastian gets assertive and stops taking Ciel's shit.

I have such a weakness when there is food in manga. I dare you not to drool.

The last page summarizes their relationship perfectly.

The artwork is breathtaking as usual. There is so much painstaking detail in the costumes and surroundings in every single scene. I especially love the scenes with the flowing cinematic records. The fluidity and darkness in these illustrations add to the macabre. I also love how Yana Toboso draws shoes. It almost makes me wish she would design a shoe line.

Seeing Grell playing footsies with Sebastian is hilarious!

At the end, Yana Toboso explains her venture into becoming a mangaka. It amazes me that she didn't have years of experience in the manga world before *Black Butler*. All of her illustrations are impeccably drawn that one would guess only a seasoned professional could possibly have this skill. It just goes to show how much natural talent oozes out of this phenomenal artist. I don't know if she's won any awards yet, but she certainly deserves the accolades.

The inside cover of the black and white image with a splash of vibrant color is so beautiful.

Just gorgeous.

This series gets better and better with each volume. I cannot wait to find out what happens to Sebastian and what role Undertaker will play in future volumes. I surely hope he will stick around indefinitely.

There is officially some new eye candy to give Sebastian a run for his money!
I ? Undertaker.

Lanie says

LOVED LOVED LOVED!!!!

I adore Sebastian & Ciel! :) & finally, after a dozen fun enstallments we get to learn how exactly Sebastian became Ciel's butler! Awesome sauce!

We also get to see Lizzie get some backstory & character development, which is great, cause the girls been pretty annoying up until this point.

Loads of blood & guts & grim reaper/devil awesomeness fighting.

& see?! I knew something was seriously wrong with the undertaker. I do NOT like him. He's creepy and crazy, and it's not in a fun way either. ?

Beautiful artwork too. :) definitely worth the read. My most favorite manga of all time!

Aliaa says

Who knew the Undertaker was this handsome? ???

also a bit about Sebastian's past! he is amazing ??

and finally Ciel really is a brat ?
