



## Ex Machina, Vol. 5: Smoke, Smoke

*Brian K. Vaughan , Tony Harris (Illustrator) , Tom Feister (Illustrator) , J.D. Mettler (Illustrator)*

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Set in the modern-day real world, Ex Machina tells the story of civil engineer Mitchell Hundred, who becomes America's first living, breathing superhero after a strange accident gives him amazing powers. Recommended for mature readers.

## Ex Machina, Vol. 5: Smoke, Smoke Details

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## **From Reader Review Ex Machina, Vol. 5: Smoke, Smoke for online ebook**

### **Jimmy Williams says**

Grown man topics is something you gotta deal with, No matter how many super powers you love it ain't gonna equal up to this real shit....

Let me just start by saying this is the best "Graphic Novel" I have ever read. I wouldn't even call this a comic. I know that there is a difference between a comic and a graphic novel but I've also seen the terms use interchangeably but this piece of work is too great to be called anything else. I read "Y The Last Man" so I was a fan of Brian K Vaughn (Although Under The Dome is terrible). Ex Machina exceeded my expectations.

I love reading about super powers and the fight between good and evil and all that good shit but I also love seeing real issues discussed. Ex Machina does this perfectly. The parallel NYC was amazing and Mitchell Hundred is one of the most interesting characters I've seen.

Vol 5 was a little crazy with a criminal dressing up as a fireman and using the gas mask for something I didn't know was possible. It also discusses how marijuana is criminalized. I don't want to give anything away so I'll just say that I highly recommend Ex Machina

FYI: I'll leave a review for all ten volumes but only change the last paragraph because the first three paragraphs were so powerful that they are relevant to all ten volumes.. LOL

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### **RB says**

Mayor Hundred takes up, a colleague is working against him, and a man posing as a firefighter is slaughtering people and in all this is the theme, this go round, and that is drug legalization, in particular, marijuana - yes I am lucky to be a Canadian right now, for even doing drugs as light as weed when illegal still makes people feel like criminals when they are not and that, and many other points are brought up in the pages of Brian k. Vaughan's reliably consistent series "Ex Machina" and the artwork only improves as a bonus. Great work that can be consumed quickly but leaves a lasting impression and you will not regret reading it.

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### **Jessie Hausmann says**

I am a HUGE Brian K. Vaughan fan, but... I don't know. I'm just not feeling this series so far. Still seeing it through to the end though.

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### **Griffin Youngstrum says**

I love this series so much. It continues to impress me.

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### **Donovan says**

This series is killing it. Marijuana, terrorism, psychopathy, gay marriage, assassination, capital punishment. It's comic book violent while tackling serious issues. And wonderfully illustrated. A fantastic series.

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### **Adrian says**

Another fun volume in this series. Maybe I liked it better than the last one? I don't remember. I think I need to settle down and just read the series to get through it. I think it's more enjoyable to read this in one setting instead of how I do it – whenever I randomly have time...

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### **Alex Lawless says**

I don't think I'll be continuing this series. I just find it quite dull and am very ambivalent about it. Usually within the first 5 volumes you can tell if a series is good and this just isn't it for me. Like my reviews of the previous volumes, there's a lot of potential here, but it never really gets developed. I'm quite disappointed.

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### **Robert Beveridge says**

Brian K. Vaughan, **Ex Machina: Smoke, Smoke** (DC Comics, 2007)

Vaughan continues to impress with everything he puts out. The most recent Ex Machina collection takes on the thorny (well, where legislators are concerned) topic of drug legalization. A new character pops up: January Moore, the departed Journal's sister, who Hundred appoints to step into Journal's shoes. As usual, there's a relatively dismissable mystery arc, but they're starting to tie in much better with the overarching themes found in each book. I wasn't entirely sure about this series to start, but it's getting better with each release. \*\*\*\*

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### **Licha says**

Vol. 5 of 10

This one was all about weed, smoking it and making it legal.

Recap to remind me what this was about. \*\*\*\*Possible spoilers ahead\*\*\*\*:

--Mayor Hundred is considering legalizing smoking weed.

--A mother of a criminal The Great Machine once helped put in jail, self-immolates on the steps of city hall.

--Journal's sister, January, joins the team but seems to have ulterior motives.

--There's an FDNY impostor going around the city knocking on people's doors and killing them when they open the door.

--Something is going haywire in Mitch's head and he's starts getting painfu headaches.

--A little glimpse of Bradbury's story but not much.

A bit of nudity going on in this one.

What hot issue will they tackle next volume? That's what this series has been so far and how I'm afraid it will continue.

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### **Neville Ridley-smith says**

It was ok but nothing special. That is all.

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### **Mike says**

All the chickens...

All the subplots are finally coming to a head. The weird one about some dirty secret, the Russian frenemy who wants Hundred to fly again, even the "what will he do after mayor?" will-he-or-won't-he silliness. And what happened to that ranting dude from an alternate timeline?

Doesn't matter. Good ending. Not great, but good. Like we went through something together, got a little dirty, maybe learned more than we wanted to about each other, and won't be able to look them in the eye squarely any more. Like it said, good.

There's a like somewhere in this last collection about superheroes and primary colours, and that the most respectable ones are dressed that way - that the Hulk wore purple and green.

And then I notice this cover and it clicks into place:

Vaughan didn't want to write about a "good" guy, a superficial Boy Scout.

Something about this reminds me of the anti-hero hero worship we got out of Preacher. A stand up guy who doesn't deserve to stand tall, exactly, but who we need to count among us because they seem a little more like us, flawed and puzzling hairless apes.

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### **Punk says**

Graphic Novel. Mayor Hundred takes on marijuana. At this rate we'll be having a very special episode about abortion next. I just don't feel like Vaughan's *saying* anything with these hot button topics of his, though he did make a few nods to past events in the series, so there was a hint of continuity. Also some intrigue as he sets things up for the next big conflict. Still, Vaughan seems to be having trouble striking a balance between stories about being a mayor and stories about being a superhero, and he's really falling short in the areas they intersect. The things I loved about the first trade -- the consequences involved with being a superhero -- have mostly dribbled away. There are still consequences, but they're trivial to the story. They don't serve to advance anything but Hundred's manpain. This series is really suffering for having no cohesive mytharc. Bring back the mysterious chip-thingy, Vaughan! You got some splainin' to do.

Three stars. I'll keep reading, but the things that made this title special are slipping away, and we're left with a mayor with superpowers and no attempt to explain them. This trade was short on awesome women, too.

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### **Nadine Jones says**

Another great volume in the Ex Machina series. This one felt a little less multi-dimensional. Mayor Hundred lets slip that he has, in his past, smoked pot once or twice. Then a woman immolates herself on City Hall steps. Then a guy dressed as a fireman is breaking, entering, assaulting, and robbing. In the midst of all this, a new team member appears, January (Journal's sister), and she may not have Mayor Hundred's best interests in mind. A lot of stuff is happening, but I didn't feel a lot of character growth or story progression in this book. And where is his mom?

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### **David Schaafsma says**

Eh, okay collection, this one: faux firefighter breaking into homes, legalization of marijuana stuff, a standalone on the deputy mayor... okay.

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### **Chad Jordahl says**

I continue to like this title much more than I originally expected to. For a book with super-powered characters, it's very real, down-to-earth. The characters react believably to generally plausible situations. Smart dialog. The realistic art fits very well and is quite well done.

(Now that I think of it, I could say the same for Saga, BKV's current ongoing series. Although it's full-on

Sci-Fi with all the crazy characters and settings that you could imagine, emotionally it's deeply real.)

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