



## **Ex Machina: The Deluxe Edition, Vol. 2**

*Brian K. Vaughan (Scriptwriter) , Tony Harris (Penciller) , Chris Sprouse (Penciller) , Tom Feister (Inker) , Karl Story (Inker) , J.D. Mettler (Colorist) , Jared K. Fletcher (Letterer)*

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Award-winning writer Brian K. Vaughan (PRIDE OF BAGHDAD, Y-THE LAST MAN) deftly combines big city politics and superheroes in this much lauded series.

Now, the entire critically acclaimed series written by Brian K. Vaughan, one of the writers of LOST, is collected into a series of oversized, hardcover editions. In this second volume, Mayor Mitchell Hundred must make a difficult decision about his own future, becomes part of a shocking trial complicated by the unexpected arrival of an all-new superhero, and leaves New York City for the first time since his election to embark on a strange adventure. Plus, shocking tragedy strikes an Iraq War protest in downtown Manhattan.

### Ex Machina: The Deluxe Edition, Vol. 2 Details

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Author : Brian K. Vaughan (Scriptwriter) , Tony Harris (Penciller) , Chris Sprouse (Penciller) , Tom Feister (Inker) , Karl Story (Inker) , J.D. Mettler (Colorist) , Jared K. Fletcher (Letterer)

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# From Reader Review *Ex Machina: The Deluxe Edition, Vol. 2* for online ebook

## David Dalton says

### Well paced story

This is a very well written and drawn series. Part sci fi, soap opera, and plenty of oddball super hero action!

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## Abigail Pankau says

A continuing exploration of super heroes and politics in the post-9/11 world. Continues to be an interesting series, and still interesting to look back at the politics of 15 years ago.

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## A.j. Garner says

Reading this series for a second time, well at least the first four volumes. I still love it and I think *Hundred* speaks, story pun intended, to me more now than in college. I wish we all wanted to make a difference.

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## Dopeimmortalsoul says

*Hundred* is being a major but his city gets attacked and everyone thinks that is a terrorist job. He also gets visited by some past memory of a guy who talks to animals, and then back in 2003 (present) there is a hint that he is back. So, lets see in book 3. Lots of drama and political views.

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## Martin says

### (1) Fact Vs. Fiction

A new super-hero is sighted in NYC – the Automaton, who claims to have been created by ‘the engineer’ and will continue to operate until his ‘return’. The police commissioner suspects Mitchell, but the mayor denies any involvement. He then tasks Bradbury to find out who this mystery person is. Meanwhile, Mitchell serves jury duty and has to deal with a hostage situation in the jury deliberation room (while himself being a hostage and seemingly having no way of contacting ‘the outside world’). This arc was one of the best ones of the entire series.

### (2) Off The Grid

Mitchell takes some personal time off and visits his recovering alcoholic mother. He learns from her that his father did not die in a cave-in (as she'd told him years ago), but rather from a fatal blow to the head that she'd given him in self-defense.

These two stories are some of the strongest of the series. Their overall theme is an exploration of what we consider to be "The Truth": we believe what we're told because we have no reason to doubt, but it doesn't necessarily mean that we're being told the truth. If a lie is plausible enough, convincing enough, who's to say it's not true?

### (3) March To War

There is an anti-war protest being organised in NYC and Journal, one of the mayor's former interns and now a junior member of the cabinet, decides to attend. The mayor tells her she cannot participate while she still works for the mayor's office, so she resigns. Things turn sour at the protest when some protesters fall victim to a ricin attack, including Journal, who ends up in a coma, then dies. This marks the first time (in this series) where an arguably main character dies. She will be replaced by her sister (sounds like something you'd see on cable TV) who will be holding a grudge against Mitchell, blaming him for her sister's death.

While Journal was, at best, a prominent *supporting* character, her being «killed off» showed us that Vaughan is willing to change things up and throw his readers a curve ball or two. Her being replaced by her own sister (who looks almost just like her - except mostly for the hair) might seem like a cheap tactic on the writer's part but, knowing what's coming up in the next volumes, my guess is Vaughan needed a «spy» and Journal really had no motive to become one.

### (4) Life & Death

A story arc spread over the first 2 of 4 Special issues, we are introduced to Pherson, the Great Machine's 'arch-nemesis' and we're treated to his origin story, which goes something like this: Working as a sound engineer for direct-to-DVD porn, Pherson hears about the new vigilante and attempts to isolate the frequency the Great Machine uses to 'speak' to machines, patent it and then sell it and become rich. Of course, something goes wrong and instead he ends up acquiring powers of his own, the ability to communicate with animals.

The whole mystery with Mitchell's powers, where they're from (and perhaps more importantly: what they're FOR) deepens in this 2-parter.

[Click here for the review of Ex Machina: The Deluxe Edition, Vol. 3.](#)

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## **Jake McIntosh says**

If you liked Superman reversing the Earth's rotation in order to turn back time, then you'll \*love\* this.

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## **Wade says**

A good continuation of the story, the pace is beginning to pick up a little and he is tackling some issues like weighing what is legal vs what is right, and who gets to decide? I still am quite taken with the whole idea this story and BKV continues to play with it in fascinating ways, though I am still somewhat reserved about his characters here.

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## **Jamie Sigal says**

Simple review for Book Two - I love where this is going and I'm completely hooked.

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## **Jay says**

To me, no one is better at writing character dialogue than Vaughan. He just really understands people and how they interact. Ex Machina might be gods best example of this. By the way - Saga, Ex Machina, Y The Last Man, Paper Girls... who's had a better batting average over the past 10-15 years?

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## **Kurt Pankau says**

Artfully done, but the series never really explores the villains but has no problem pausing everything to go on and on about libertarian "post-political" platitudes that it's pretty sure you haven't heard a dozen times already. It's definitely not BAD, but I had a hard time engaging with it.

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## **Brandon Bellm says**

Finally the story is picking up a bit. I really whipped the archnemesis in this volume.

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## **Bassie says**

Again, excellent stories and art. Also really liked the background story of Hundred's nemesis, hinted at in the first book. Can't wait to read the next book!

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## **Jedi JC Daquis says**

I really, really envy the majority who have read this second deluxe volume of Ex Machina and liked it. I believe that this is an "it's not you, it's me" type of issue. I mean, Brian Vaughan totally slayed it in Saga and for most parts of Y: The Last Man, so why can't I see through the goodness of Ex Machina?

Maybe because I see the story of the series as two things which try to meld into one cohesive literary material - the political views and issues that engulf post-9/11 NY City, and the whole of America and Hundred's exploits as the Great Machine prior to his election as the Big Apple's mayor. Sometimes they work, like the brilliant storytelling in the ricin poison mini-arc, but sometimes they do not, like in that very underwhelming story about Pherson, a sound engineer turned villain who can talk to animals as Hundred can talk to machines. That flashback about Pherson was so vague and unnecessarily long, though it managed to reveal a little bit of information about this superhuman power of communication.

The right mindset will definitely let you experience some level of entertainment reading it.

Moreover, I also do not share many of Hundred's (and ultimately Brian Vaughan's) patriotic political views. Even sometimes, the story doesn't give a sh\*t about balance of views and just throws in arab terrorism and white supremacy stuff, though in very minute doses. At least, journalist Spider Jerusalem of Transmetropolitan as much as possible presents the opposing views of warring ideas and "sees" beyond the surface to uncover what is really happening in the world of politics.

But like I say, this low rating is more of an "it's not you, it's me" issue. Once you get the right mindset and dig the political viewpoints presented in the story there's no doubt that you'll experience some level of entertainment reading Ex Machina.

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### **James Lawner says**

This installment was better than the last, I felt that the story was more focused and the flashbacks didn't disrupt the main story too much, and I actually liked the story that explained Pherson. I will say that these deluxe editions aren't great for me because they mesh all the issues together and sometimes you don't know which issue begins and ends, and the way sections of the book are organized into "chapters" rather than "parts" seems kinda lazy to me. Also, this book has a foreword from The Wachowskis and they're credited as, "The Wachowski Brothers", and that seems a bit shortsighted on Vertigo's part to not change that.

Overall, this was good, but I don't think I'm as obsessed with this series as I was with Vaughan's other works.

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### **James DeSantis says**

I can't believe I waited so many years to read this book. It's fan-fucking-tastic.

So Hundred is trying to balance his political campaign with his superhero past. It's not so easy running for Mayor when you used to be a superhero. It's hard enough when the media twist your words, people believe every little thing they hear and read, but when you have the power to control Machines by talking to them? Yeah...it only gets harder.

What I love about Ex machina is that it's a big political campaign storyline but it feels like a lot of shorter stories all equaling into one big adventure. So we have one where Hundred goes to Jury Duty. That already sucks, right? What happens when a crazy guy in there starts making demands by holding someone hostage? Then we deal with a protesting march that goes really wrong. Last but not least it ends with a super villain story of sorts but not a big old traditional one. Which was refreshing.

Good: I loved it all to be honest. Each story tries to balance superheroism, political moments, and human feelings. Even the weakest stuff about Hundred's dad was still pretty interesting. But then we get into things like Jury duty case, the protest march, and our very first super-villain story? Yeah, Brain is the king of making stories captivating throughout. On top of that the art is great and the feel of each character, the emotion, and the overall tone is amazing.

Bad: I can't think of much. Maybe a LITTLE long-winded at times.

Another fantastic look into the political superhero world of Ex Machina. Really reading it slow so it never ends. I have a feeling this will be in top 10 comics along with Saga and Y the Last Man in the end. A 5 out of 5.

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