



Avatar: The Last Airbender - Smoke and Shadow

Gene Luen Yang , Michael Dante DiMartino , Bryan Konietzko , Gurihiru (Illustrations)

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The Fire Nation is threatened by a prophecy told by the Kemurikage--mysterious figures thought only to exist in legend: "remove Zuko from the throne or the country will perish!" Unrest is brewing as the New Ozai Society prepares to make its move against the crown, and children begin to go missing from their homes under mysterious circumstances! Avatar Aang and his friends are doing everything in their power to save them--but will it be enough?!

This special, oversized edition of *Smoke and Shadow* features volumes 1-3 with annotations by writer Gene Luen Yang and artists Gurihiru, as well as a sketchbook section with new, behind-the-scenes material!

Collects *Avatar: The Last Airbender - Smoke and Shadow* Volumes 1-3.

Avatar: The Last Airbender - Smoke and Shadow Details

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Author : Gene Luen Yang , Michael Dante DiMartino , Bryan Konietzko , Gurihiru (Illustrations)

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From Reader Review Avatar: The Last Airbender - Smoke and Shadow for online ebook

Taha says

Özlemi?tim:)

Amit Misra says

I always enjoy these Avatar stories. I loved the original series, I enjoyed Korra, and these comics fill the void in my life now that the TV shows seem to be over.

I had a hard time getting into this one, but in the end really liked it. The art, as always, is amazing, perhaps even more so in this one if that's even possible. I appreciated the conflict that Zuko has to go through - what type of ruler does he want to be? What type of person does he want to be? Avatar has always excelled at exploring complex ideas even though it's technically a children's show/comic, and this story is no different.

Colona Public Library says

Yes! I've read the all of them now...except I kinda forgot what had happened in the previous ones. i think next time I'm going to just wait till all are out so I can read them all at once.

I'm so glad that these are being made they are really quality books that have fantastic adventures and illustration. ~Ashley

Luke Hopkins says

Weaker than the other two previous comics.

Sabrina says

One of my favorites of the Avatar series. I adore Mai and the Fire Kingdom is my favourite (post empire dismantlement, of course). Many things unresolved which felt right to me as there were some complicated parental relationships happening. Things that shouldn't be resolved too neatly.

DimitraDmr says

I loved this so much! So glad to be back in the Avatar world! Can't wait for the North and South part one coming in October!!

Laney says

This one was an excellent addition to the world of Avatar Aang. Zuko, Azula and all the characters of the Fire Nation to me represented the best and most complex material for storytelling in this era. This was a fantastic follow-up to The Promise, full of strong character development and a thoughtful (and timely) plot about ruling by fear or by freedom. Zuko particularly comes into his own as the Fire Lord, who sometimes has to make rough decisions.

The one flaw I saw was that I could have used more Ty Lee. :D Her presence as a foil for the dour Mai and the criminally sadistic Azula was one of the highlights of the series, showcasing that friendship comes in all forms, including doing what's best for your friend even if they don't like it.

Ksenia says

This felt like a great multi-episode arc of ATLA. I liked that it focused on the Fire Nation, and we got to see more of Mai and Ty Lee.

Chrysten Lofton says

5.0? The only way this series could've gotten better, would be a flat-out continuation of the show. We're fortunate as fans to get this series.

I'll be brief, this is a very particular fan-base, this isn't just for any graphic novel and comic reader. The Last Airbender comic series is a continuation of the Nickelodeon animated series - pre-Korra, but post AtLAB. It exists to tie up some of those burning questions and loose ends. What happened to Zuko's mother? How does Aang rebuild the Air Nomadic culture? Who are Lin and Suyin's fathers? How was Republic City established after the hundred year war?

The only way this series would be better, is animated and on television with the original actors. It comes out a little slow, but its worth the wait. It never seems to lose steam, and the story arcs always have good follow through. I always wait for the Library Editions, they're the big compendiums of the current story arcs, they're huge hardbacks, and they're beautiful. The writer and artist of the comics also leave a little flavor text on the side to talk about where their influence came from, what they enjoyed, and interesting facts about the scene.

This particular arc was interesting, its very heavy on Zuko & family story line. There's some low key commentary on political discourse and how little rifts of resistance spawned after the defeat of Ozai. This is one of Zuko's first major upsets that he has to face as the new Firelord.

I feel like for the most part, the writers and artists have a good bid on who these characters are, and the direction the show would have taken if it had carried on. The spirit of this series is alive and well. There are glimmers of the future, but it stays on track to tell the remaining story of Team Avatar, and the challenges they faced after their victories. If you loved the show and miss that universe, do yourself a favor and pick up this graphic series.

Annathelle26 says

This was a decent, fun addition to the existing Avatar comics, but, nothing really special.

The writing style was nice, and, along with the humor and the way the plot unfolded, reflected the general style, tone and themes of the series. *Part 1* and *Part 2* were interesting plot-wise, as they built-up the action, raised questions and emphasized the mystery surrounding the new threat the Fire Nation was dealing with. However, *Part 3* left me wanting. I found the "big revelations" and the answers to my questions to be dull and not as thrilling as I had expected. Moreover, Azula's exact motives confused me. Understood, she may have regained some portion of her mental health, but the reasons she decided to cause so much fuss did not satisfy me as a reader. I believe the writers could have come up with something way more interesting than this. Finally, the ending was, for me, too plain. In contrast to the previous comics, in this one, it felt like nothing actually *changed* in the end; and whatever changes did happen seemed forced and not developed enough.

Thus, 3 stars for an enjoyable, but not amazing read.

Lee (Rally the Readers) says

Also posted on Rally the Readers.

I've been rewatching *Avatar: The Last Airbender* on and off lately, so I was totally in the mood to read *Smoke and Shadow*, the fourth graphic novel that follows the continuing adventures of the gAang, post-TV series. I was especially looking forward to this installment because HELLO—ZUKO! He was absent from the previous volume, *The Rift*, and he makes a most welcome return in *Smoke and Shadow*. Returns are a bit of a theme here, as Zuko's mother, Ursa, sets foot in the Fire Nation's Capital City for the first time since viewers of the show watched her leave a young Zuko and Azula behind and disappear. Mai is back for this story as well and features prominently in it, while Katara and Sokka head home to the Southern Water Tribe for the first time since the end of the war.

I know I've lavished heaps of praise on these graphic novels in previous reviews, but it's because every bit of praise is absolutely well-deserved. What I continue to adore about these comics is how extremely well-crafted the stories are and the care that's taken to keep the characters consistent with the characters we originally met in the TV series. The continuity not only between the show and the comics but also between the graphic novels is simply stellar. Thanks to Gene Luen Yang's superb writing and artists Gurihiru's lush, beautifully rendered illustrations, it's like the TV series never signed off.

Although I love every member of Team Avatar, Zuko is my favorite. The transformation of his character is one of the best written arcs EVER. I love that he's not perfect, and in *Smoke and Shadow*, we glimpse some of the impulsiveness that was especially prevalent during the first season of the show. To be fair, though, the New Ozai Society, a group trying to undermine Zuko's authority and restore his father to power, often puts Zuko in a position where he's forced to react to their plotting. AtLA story lines can be pretty intense, as is this one. Creepy spirits are kidnapping Fire Nation children, and the New Ozai Society capitalizes on the ensuing panic to bolster their claim that Zuko is too weak to be Fire Lord. Meanwhile, a subplot finds Zuko's mother, Ursa, struggling with facing the past life she didn't think she'd ever see again. There's also a *brilliant* plot twist that's bound to feature in future graphic novels.

As always happens when reviewing these AtLA comics, I could go on and on about how phenomenal they

are. Before wrapping up, I just have to say how badass Mai is in *Smoke and Shadow*. I really liked seeing her in the spotlight here, and like everyone else in the *Avatar*-verse, she's a wonderfully complex character.

Yet again, Gene Luen Yang and Gurihiru have produced a homerun of a collaboration set in a world that I love so much. There's typically a bit of a wait between graphic novels, but I'd wait forever as long as I knew there'd be another one eventually because they are just. So. *Amazing*.

Lady Clara says

Coming across this in the child's section at the library made my heart race. "Finally, at last!" I could have cried out. Since finishing the series years ago, it is to this day still my favorite. I crave more, always have. So upon finding out this book existed and to actually borrowing it, holding it in my hands... Now they could have written about anything and I would have enjoyed it as much. The storyline was easy enough to follow, given you know the characters. Possibly not as good as I do, but still generally well. What I did not enjoy, was the fact that the personalities were not as in the series, where they appear more two dimensional. Now they were flat and only given their "key personality trait". This fact made my rating fall short of a star. I will not ignore the fact that I will always fancy more, crave more, love more of the Avatar series.

Aaron Toponce says

I've been reading a lot of fantasy lately. While I still have plenty more to go, I think it's fair to say that fantasy falls into some very basic stereotypes:

- * Witches, wizards, warlocks.
- * Gnomes, trolls, elves, orcs, dragons.
- * Magic, potions, talismans, spells.
- * Kings, queens, knights, archers.
- * Etc.

But Avatar is different. First, it's certainly a fantasy, because it has a magic system based on the four elements- earth, air, water, and fire. It also vastly separates itself, in that although an American cartoon, it's clearly influenced by Chinese, Japanese, Indian, and Inuit cultures. When you think about it, it's broken every fantasy stereotype, and made its own fantasy. To me, this is spectacular. It's such a different fantasy, that it doesn't feel like a fantasy at all.

But, more important than just being an exceptionally creative fantasy, it also addresses so many modern-day issues, emotions, and activities. As such, this is, in my opinion, what makes the Avatar: The Last Airbender such a spectacular universe. It's creative, and we can relate to it.

So, as expected, this comic delivers. In every episode, season, series, and book by the creators, an overall theme is being addressed, whether it's internal conflict, political unrest, moral and ethical boundaries, or family dynamics. What really made this book stand apart for me, was the fact that the authors were able to address all of these nuances in this single trilogy, while still being entertaining.

The main overarching theme in this book is fear. It's an emotion that many of the characters show throughout the book:

1. (view spoiler)

2. (view spoiler)

3. **Aang**- He quickly becomes fearful that Zuko is making the wrong decisions as Fire Lord, when trying to deal with some political unrest in the Fire Nation. It's quickly abated, however, as you would expect with the level-headed Aang, but nevertheless, it's clear he confronts it a few times in the book.

4. **Zuko**- I always love Zuko's internal turmoil and conflict that he seems to struggle with almost daily. It's clear that being Fire Lord while trying not to live in his father Ozai's shadow, is his biggest hurdle, and what he will always struggle with. Here, Zuko still fears making the decisions his father would make, while also fearing that he'll lose control of his people due to an immediate threat on the Fire Nation families. Unfortunately, I feel that Zuko's story ended a bit weak as the book wrapped up.

5. **Mai**- I love Mai. She's a strong, independent, non-nonsense girl, who knows what she wants and how to get it. In this book, she addresses fear through (view spoiler). This is an interesting plot device, because Mai isn't one you would normally think of showing any sort of emotion. She does here.

However, she also addresses fear of her relationship with Kei-Lo. It felt to me that Mai hasn't fully closed off her relationship with Zuko, and perhaps is rebounding a bit too quickly. Her ending in the book was a bit too predictable.

6. **Ukano**- Finally, Mai's father faces some very real fears in this story. First, if you remember from the animated television series, he was appointed the first governor of New Ozai, formerly Omashu by Ozai. He made very poor decisions and was a weak governor. He politically aligns with Ozai, and not Zuko. Eventually, he was removed from power. So, the story starts off by giving Ukano a chance to redeem himself. However, the tactic used to spur Ukano into action, is fear.

Second, at the end of the book, Ukano (view spoiler). It's interesting, because this is the same tactic used in the animated series to spur Ukano into action. Ultimately, he makes the right decision, but at the the cost of another fear: (view spoiler).

Wrap-up- I did find it interesting that in the beginning of part two, Katara and Sokka leave for the South Pole to be with the southern water tribe and their family. This was a long time coming, and in hindsight, it's interesting that we haven't really seen much of the water tribes since *Book One: Water* in the animated series, but we've had plenty of Earth Kingdom and Fire Nation stories. At any event, they say their goodbyes, and aren't seen for the rest of the book.

Despite the serious tone of the plot, Iroh is as entertaining as ever. Because Sokka is out so early in part two,

however, a lot of our standard comedic relief is missing. But some other characters, such as Sage Shiyu, Aang, Mai, Ty-Lee, and others offer some great one-liners to keep the book somewhat light and freely entertaining.

So, this story contains:

- * Family dynamics with several characters.
- * Political unrest with Ukano, the New Ozai Society, and Zuko.
- * Pushing moral and ethical boundaries.
- * Complex romantic relationships.
- * Comedic banter.

Although the book ends a bit on the weak side, it was still a fantastic read. I'll be eagerly looking forward to the next trilogy installment. Highly recommended.

Richard Knight says

Surprisingly bland and even boring, out of the four graphic novel sets, this collection is by far the weakest. It concentrates on Fire Nation lore, which you would think would be interesting, but it's not. I guess I'm just not all that into a story centering around Zuko that doesn't concern the rest of the cast. Aang is kind of an afterthought here, and Toph is nowhere to be found. Less of this next time, please.

Jon Jakob says

The first Avatar comic to not have the word "The" in the title. Despite my niche need to keep things symmetrical this is nonetheless another fantastic read filled with questions about the lengths leaders should go to keep their citizens safe.

Zuko returns to the Fire Nation with his mother and her family as they try to reconnect after the disappearance of Zuko's sister, Azula, in *The Search*.
