



## Isola, Vol. 1

*Brenden Fletcher (Writer), Karl Kerschl (Illustrator), Msassyk (Colorist)*

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**Isola, Vol. 1** Brenden Fletcher (Writer) , Karl Kerschl (Illustrator) , Msassyk (Colorist)

An evil spell has been cast on the Queen of Maar and her Captain of the Guard will do anything to reverse it. Their only hope lies on an island half a world away--a place known in myth as Isola, land of the dead.

Gotham Academy creators Brenden Fletcher and Karl Kerschl reunite with series colorist MSASSYK and letterer Aditya Bidikar for a breathtaking fantasy adventure two decades in the making.

Recommended for fans of Studio Ghibli and the work of Hayao Miyazaki.

Collects issues 1 through 5.

## Isola, Vol. 1 Details

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ISBN : 9781534309227

Author : Brenden Fletcher (Writer) , Karl Kerschl (Illustrator) , Msassyk (Colorist)

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## From Reader Review Isola, Vol. 1 for online ebook

### Shannon says

Beautiful art with an engaging story.

Individual issue reviews: #1 | #2 | #3 | #4 | #5

Total review score: **4**

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### The Lost Dreamer says

Definitely one of the comic books I've enjoyed most this year. It has everything I love: addictive and bright colouring, dynamic drawing, some mytery and a subtle but heart-warming romance. This is the kind of American comic that tries to imitate Japanese pieces, like the ones produced by Studio Ghibli. Normally these attempts lack of a good plot or the art necessary to produce any emotion. For me, 'Isola' is not the case: its plot, although quite simple and avoiding of any explanation or worldbuilding, has captured me like few in the last months. What can I say? It's just BEAUTIFUL. Thrilling and full of emotions and beautiful images. Sometimes you don't need anymore than that. Probably any following issues will spoil the magic trying to provide explanations to every single twist or spending too much time building the world that our soldier and our queen inhabit. But, by now, this has been lovely. An easy reading full of imagination that just feels right.

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### James DeSantis says

Isola was a series I kept wanting to read and when I finally saw it up on Hoopla I had to read it. Was it worth the wait? Well...

Isola is about a warrior protecting her queen. You've seen this story a million times before. However, this time her queen is transformed into a tiger. So now they work together to survive in a world hellbent on taking them out. Will they survive or is this the end for our duo?

Good: the art. Just...wow. Art can go a long way to improve a series and this one does. I also thought the struggle of protecting someone you love is great. You feel actual stakes.

Bad: the story sometimes is hard to follow. Creatures and mystical people and beast pop out of nowhere. Also, it does hit one or two cliché moments that make it feel less interesting if it went in a different direction.

Overall this is a stunning book to look out. While I enjoy the characters I do hope for the plotting to become stronger. A 3.5 out of 5.

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### Groovy says

it's so pretty and i like it a lot but wHaT tHe hEcK iS gOiN oN

## Austin says

Gorgeous, but abstruse. We're thrown into the deep end without much - if any - story-telling aid, and while we're a little ways further down the road at the end of volume 1, this fantastical world and the creatures within are still largely obscured.

Kerschl's art excels, as always, and the story has enough bite to intrigue the reader, but if answers and broad sketches don't appear soon, this one will drop.

Obscurity for obscurity's sake only serves to annoy, and readers need to know we're going somewhere eventually.

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## Wing Kee says

Wonderful art, choppy story.

World: The art is fantastic, it looks gorgeous and reminds me of a western take on Ghibli and Miyazaki art. There are hints of Nausicaa in the wall paintings and books and Rook and her journey looks straight ripped from Princess Mononoke so yeah, you know what they say about imitation and flattery. The world building here is choppy at best. There are flash backs but the world is almost constantly dream like and not and the transitions in the art is not clear so when there is no info dumping or context set up reader do feel lost in the world. There are snippets of info here and there and in the end you do work it out a bit but the lost feeling is not a welcome one, I didn't feel swept away into another world I just felt like I was jerked around or the writing wanted to withhold things to make it more interesting but it just lost it's magic more than anything. I had a similar feeling with 'Monstress' also but I felt it was a bit more here. Of course you can say that Ghibli world building is mostly visual and readers and viewers are taken on a journey and the creative team possibly was trying to do the same thing here, but here it felt choppy.

Story: Readers have no idea what's happening until almost midway through the 3rd issue and for the most part the first half of the book seems dreamlike and I know that it's the intention of the creative team but I didn't feel swept away I felt like I was wearing a blindfold forced by the writers to make the story more magical than it needs to be. I don't know how to explain it but the story was already magical enough for me and the art, as beautiful as it was, didn't really transition well between real and fake and the magic was not all hitting home for me. The story when it does finally pick up is very basic and this is more like a prologue in a story more than the journey. This is pretty much like the middle section of Princess Monoke when they are in the forest and Ashitaka is lost there, that's what the book is going for but there is not enough emotional substance for us to care for the characters because we don't get to spend time with them to build a bond before the dreamscape stuff happens. Ashitake had the village and the curse and the monster fight before he left on his journey, I think if we had something similar here than readers would be more invested in the characters moving forward.

Characters: The characters look interesting that's for sure. Moro however looks too similar to the clansman and the art did no favours to differentiate them. Rook is an interesting character but there is not a lot of depth there and there is no reason for her devotion to the Queen and it's barely touched upon by the writers but readers are expected to accept it and feel emotions. The Queen also has little to no development save the one scene in the throne when she turns and once again we are suppose to feel for them. The rest of the cast are

there to bulk up the story much like Moro is suppose to be the interesting weird guide that we see a lot of in literature and anime/manga. Shallow.

An interesting prologue of a first book that looks gorgeous but is shallow and empty inside. I'm sad.

Onward to the next book!

\*read individual issues\*

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### **Imogene says**

Glorious art, strong female leads, unfortunately weak story.

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### **Alex B says**

Art - Beautiful, gorgeous, stunning, incredible, colourful, smart, and jaw-dropping.

Story - Beautiful, gorgeous, stunning, incredible, colourful, smart, and jaw-dropping.

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### **Dan says**

review- <https://youtu.be/CBKEMdOL3ho>

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### **Dani - Perspective of a Writer says**

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The Queen of Maar, Olwyn, has had a transformation spell cast on her, a curse that her Captain of the Guard, Rook, is desperate to reverse. It is said that half a world away there is hope, in a place known as Isola, land of the dead... if they can get there alive, without anyone realizing who the cat is!

We begin at the start of a potentially long, long journey. The Captain of a queen is on a quest and we learn through the blurb or through the course of the 5 collected issues (if you forgot the blurb before reading it like I did) that her queen is cursed. How we learn eventually and it is all due to family, of course. The journey is fraught with danger as the Captain works to stay at her queen's side. It's a fascinating beginning. I'm not sure that I'm clear of everything that happened, especially about the curse but I want to know more. I've been hooked with this start.

I found the introduced characters quite fascinating. Rook, the Captain, seems to have feelings beyond that of a guard for her queen, so we are looking at a F/F relationship here. It's shown us in a rather lovely, and subtle way that I found the most enjoyable and heartfelt. The queen introduces us to her family and boy is it a rocky relationship! I found this the most confusing because I didn't understand the motivation but that may have

been the point too, just that Olwyn was betrayed by someone she should have been able to trust. I ADORE Pring, a crazy old dude that has had a rather twisted life up to this point and adds a bit of a twist to Rook's life as well! I enjoyed his role and how mysterious he was as we slowly learned more.

The art is gorgeous! I love how the light changed the base colors of scenes to green, blue, orange... It just really worked for me. I also adored how things were framed, this can be quite a dynamic part of the art and that is the case for Isola vol 1 as well. Sometimes I wished they'd focus on the bigger scene more often, but that is a minor complaint really. It feels very much like an anime as you read and the frames help showcase what is happening moment by moment. In this case the art really supported the story, rather than the story being an excuse for the art. And I really appreciated that depth!

Honestly the tension was probably the biggest let down for me. I kept reading as a feverish pace because I wanted to understand what was going on. It was a big puzzle at first, so there really wasn't enough information for me to be tense. There is a dream sequence right at the beginning that was confusing more than tense. There was this little skip because I was too clueless to understand. Despite this hiccup I really enjoyed the plot and was totally committed to Olwyn and Rook succeeding in their mission.

Isola vol 1 is a fascinating start to a diverse fantasy graphic novel series. I am captured by Rook's dedication to Olwyn as well as the puzzle of what caused Olwyn to find herself transformed into a tiger. The characters we've met long the way have also intrigued me, populating this supernatural world with compelling conflict and obstacles for our pair.

? ??? Authenticity

? ??? Tension

???? Plot

???? Art

*Thanks to Edelweiss and Diamond Books for providing me with a copy in exchange for an honest review. It has not influenced my opinions.*

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*Please like this review if you enjoyed it! \*bow\* \*bow\* It helps me out a ton!!*

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## **Jakub Kvíz says**

Tohle je spis 3,5\*, na 4\* to uplne neni, protoze se priznam ze se v deji dost ztracim. Nevim jestli mi pro uplny pochopeni chybi ty kratky pribehy, ktery vychazel ve Fletcherove predchozi serii Motor Crush, ale moudrej z toho nejsem.

Nicmene vizualne je to absolutni vrchol. Nadherna kresba, super atmosferickej coloring a kreativni lettering. Celkovej design jednotlivych sesitu je absolutni vrchol toho, co se da z "papiru" vymackat.

Treba na druhy precteni to do sebe vic zapadne, ale zatim tomu nemuzu dat s cistym svedomi vic :).

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### **Relstuart says**

Brilliant art. Still lots of questions about the story but that is part of the style of the telling. Will read the next volume.

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### **Brandon St Mark says**

I liked the art but that was about it. Not really what I was expecting, which I guess is my fault. Won't continue with this series.

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### **Devann says**

Definitely an interesting concept and a solid beginning, although there wasn't really a lot of explanation so I was a bit confused at times. Still, the art is absolutely gorgeous and I'm sure we'll get more into the mechanics of the plot in the next volume so I'm looking forward to continuing with this.

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### **Roy says**

The art in this blew me away. Such amazing colours and art. The story doesn't give a lot away until middle of the book. It provided enough to stem my interest for future novels. It had a weird Studio Ghibli final fantasy vibe mixed with Pocahontas.

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