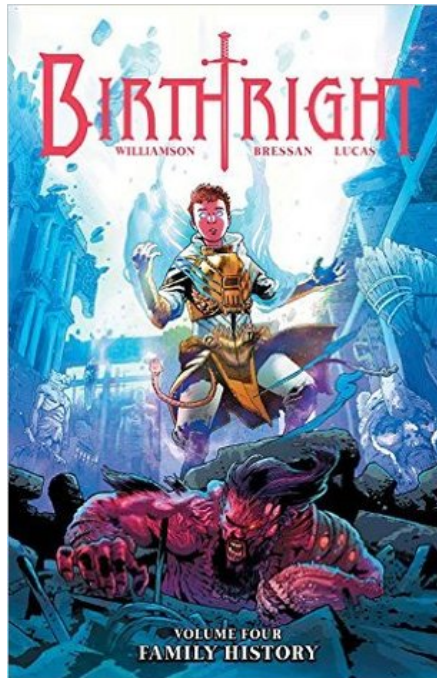




Birthright, Vol. 4: Family History

Joshua Williamson , Andrei Bressan (Artist) , Adriano Lucas (Colourist)

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The longer Mikey Rhodes remains on Earth, the more the evil within him is unleashed. As the remaining mages gather to take him down, a lost member of the Rhodes family returns... but can they recover from the damage already done?

Collecting: *Birthright* 16-20

Birthright, Vol. 4: Family History Details

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From Reader Review Birthright, Vol. 4: Family History for online ebook

Roy says

Really loving this series. Artwork is fun. The world buidling just keeps on expanding. Not sure the story can last much longer though.

Jenna says

I think that this might have been my favorite volume so far. There was a ton of action as well as amazing artwork. I love the characters and some of the revelations. I can't wait to see what happens next!

Matthew Quann says

Birthright returns with what has been its best volume since the first! Everything that works so well in the first volume is brought to the forefront after two volumes that expanded the cast and deepened mysteries. Brennan and Mikey's journey at the conclusion of the third volume saw their grandfather revealed as one of the mages Mikey is out to knock-off. This fourth volume tells the stories of Grandpa Samael in flashback while moving forward the story of Mikey's battle with the Nevermind of God King Lore.

As I said before, this volume works uses the best of *Birthright*: it focuses on the Rhodes family and the world of Terrenos. Williamson is able to land some solid emotional beats here with the intergenerational conflict, while contrasting them with the world-ending stakes of the story. At its heart, *Birthright* seems to be a story about redeeming Mikey. Can he be rehabilitated or will he forever be a servant of Lore? It makes for a compelling tale that is made all the better by having Brennan come into his own in this volume (a bit too bad that it is somewhat spoiled by this volume's cover).

Andrei Bressan continues to impress with his art, and he looks like he's having a lot of fun while doing it! The creatures and environments in this series are adventurous and unique, but they still share genetic material with Tolkien's classic. The backstory provided by Samael clears up a lot of mysteries while also giving a pretty good history of Terrenos. There's some great fantastical spreads here that genuinely impress.

By this volume's end there's a huge revelation, pieces moved on the proverbial chessboard, and conflicts just starting to brew. What I like about *Birthright*, other than all the stuff I've mentioned, is that the volumes always end with a sense of progress. I expect certain things from the series, but I'm continuously surprised by how it rolls out. I'll be following this one in trades through to its conclusion. Recommended!

Bert says

I sometimes feel I'm robbing this series, since the three stars I've been giving each of its TPBs do not convey much enthusiasm. But I cannot rate it four stars; that just feels too high. Perhaps because I lack an emotional connection, unlike, say, *Saga*?

Which is a shame, since there's plenty to admire: good plotting with well-paced reveals, plenty of actions, an impressively thought-through back story, and decent artwork.

David Pain says

A 3.5. Would be a 4 if it were more my genre. More crazy fantasy action. Several plot points are reframed by reveals here. Art continues to be ace. Still has heart and pace. By rights it shouldn't be this enjoyable, given the deeply fantastical / preposterous (delete as appropriate) premise but it's well done. I find myself still wanting more, which is more than I felt for Black Science at this stage. Good.

Aaron says

In my review of Volume 3 I admitted to being hooked now after only giving a relatively generous and unenthusiastic 3 stars to both first volumes. This series art & action scenes are colorful and imaginative, and the story and dialogue continues to improve over time. They appear to be plotting each volume carefully enough to provide one big revelation for the climax of each volume. The parents are underdeveloped compared to the rest of the story-so-far after having anchored the beginning, but at this point they're both caught up in the story and hopefully will get their own moments to shine.

Darren says

Definitely had some momentum coming in from volume 3. Hit some plot quagmires around the 2/3 mark, in my view. It may be because the story is getting a little stretched or it may be setup for what's to come.

Here's hoping for the latter, not the former. Definitely an interesting ending.

Relstuart says

The story continues to be engaging and one of the best modern comics in this genre.

Andrew Sorrentino says

I wouldn't have gotten this far into the series if I was reading the single issues before they were collected. Cliffhangers at the end of the collections were enough of a tease at first but I won't read any more. I don't care for the dialogue and the character interactions are poor. The illustrations however are superb; very imaginative.

Kenny says

The dark fantasy of two world continues as the dark world teeters at the brink of entering the mundane one.

Jeff Raymond says

This review is for the first four trade volumes

It doesn't take a lot for me to be into an alternate universe tale, and this one is unique and cool in which a missing child returns a year later, but a) as an adult b) who is effectively the conquering warrior of another realm. Of course, there's a lot more to it with that, including evil corruption and a "primary" world unable to understand or control him.

The subplots about family and loyalty and such give the story the emotional weight it needs to matter, so the whole thing is constructed well on a whole. I'm really into everything going on here, but the way this is put together has a derivative quality and I never quite feel like they're opting to pull the trigger on the big issue surrounding the story four volumes in.

This is solid with a lot of potential to be great, and at this point I'm ultimately looking forward to the payoff.

Chris Lemmerman says

Grandpa Samael makes his mark on this fourth volume of Birthright as the machinations of the mages become clear, and both Mikey and Brennan move forward on their hero's journey while their mother and Rya run afoul of one of the other mages, before everything explodes and goes even more wrong.

Birthright's a very easy book to pick up and read in trade form. Within a few pages I'd remembered everything that had happened up to this point, despite not having read the series for six months, which is a very good sign.

The character work here is top notch; Joshua Williamson is fast becoming one of those writers I'm keeping an eye on. Brennan and Aaron's relationship, as well as Aaron and Samael's, are the hinge points of this volume and they hold it all up very well. We also get some exploration of Samael and Enoch's backstory, and whilst the ladies' plotline takes the back seat, there's a lot of potential for everything to explode (again) in the next volume.

Andrei Bressan's artwork remains highly detailed and great to look at. I love Image's approach to comics, allowing artists to get the most lead time and doing their best work as a result.

There are a lot of sword-and-sorcery books out there, but Birthright makes its claim by being a very character-driven, gorgeous-looking entry into the genre.

Josh says

A bit better than the 3 previous books. The story is finally getting more interesting (what's going on outside of the Rhodes family drama ~ which is still my least favorite part). Seriously, I'd enjoy this series far more if it was just competing factions attempting to save Earth from Terrenos without all the manufactured drama of

"but he's family" or "you were a bad father" or "I have to save my ---". Give me a solid Lore vs. Mages story with Mikey as the pivot without all of the family stuff that detracts from the main story, and I'd be thrilled.

Adam Fisher says

3.5 Stars

This Volume is full of action. Grandpa (who gets revealed as Sameal, a Mage from Terranos) takes his son and grandkids back to his secret lair so that Mikey can have time to heal. Enoch and Sameal reveal an elaborate backstory about how and why they came to our world and the forces of the other mages launch an assault. The real gem of this Volume is Brennan coming into his own as a mage. A "Healing spirit" is attached to him and helps him to learn and control his power, healing his brother (somewhat as Lore is still attached) and assisting in the battle.

This book has phenomenal art and is great for character driven stories, but the time between 2 Volumes is ridiculous and leads me to vote it down a bit. Still recommend, but wish they'd come faster.

Will Robinson Jr. says

Joshua Williamson and artist Andrei Bressan continues to be one of my favorite series being published by Image. Williamson is definitely growing to become one of the best new talents writing comics today. His run on the DC Comics character the Flash is not to be missed. Just read The Flash, Vol. 1: Lightning Strikes Twice. This story is filled with layer upon layer of secrets and surprises all throughout. In this volume of Birthright the Rhodes family has been separated and are being hunted by some powerful mages from the fantasy realm of Terrenos. We find that the grandfather of our main hero or antagonist depends on how you look at the story is actually originally from Terrenos. Mikey may be the chosen one or maybe he isn't as Williamson pulls the rug from underneath readers and drops an expected reveal before this volume ends. Pacing in the story is well done as Williamson slowly jumps readers between our world the past of the Terrenos. The artwork is really top notch and some of the best in the business. I mean a dragon shows up in the middle of this volume and I have to say it was one of the best moments in the series thus far. At the heart of all the amazing action scenes is a story about a family trying to stay together in the most extraordinary circumstances. I can not wait to read where Williamson will take the Rhodes next.
