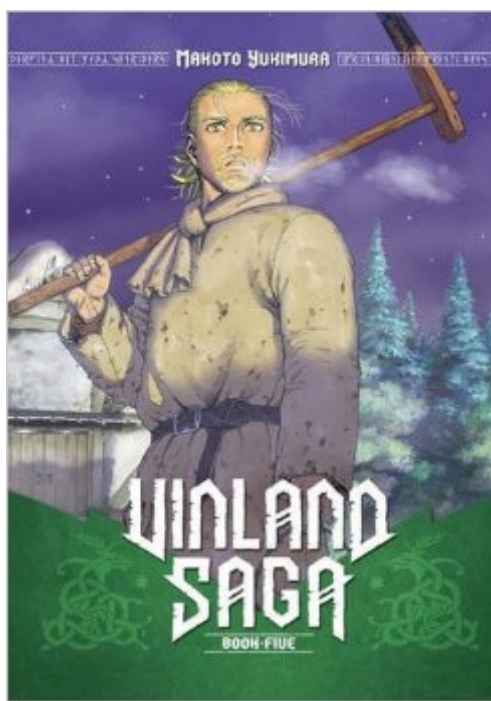


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Vinland Saga 5



Synopsis

A Life Without Purpose After the assassination of King Sweyn and the execution of Askeladd, Thorfinn lost the object of his vengeance, his sense of purpose, and his freedom. Now a broken young man, he labors far from the battlefield, clearing a forest for his slave master's farm alongside the amiable Einar. But a sudden and brutal tragedy will shock Thorfinn out of his apathy, and force him to answer the question, "Do I still want to live?"

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Thankfully this complex manga starts with a brief characters and 'story so far' introduction page. This volume starts with the beginnings of a whole new phase. If it were a TV show, this would be season 2. Without going into too much detail, Thorfinn no longer has his revenge and is working in the fields with his first ever friend. He has some antagonistic moments and reveals his past to this new friend. At first he just wants to die but upon realizing he doesn't really, he starts to ask himself what is it that he should live for. Meanwhile the battle between the Danes and England continues on. The English have a few more Kings but Canute keeps up the battle and has become battle hardened, sly and crafty. He's even grown more manly, looking very different now. We finish Vol. 9 with Canute finally becoming King of England. Then comes the second half of the book, Vol. 10 and OMG! Absolutely fantastic! Thorfinn takes a turn. This is a violent volume but its theme is rebirth; Valhalla is examined against the Christian concept of Hell and oh man, as a Christian myself I found this chapter utterly amazing and full of Christian allegory. I can't wait for the next volume! I also read

the author interview at the end of this book (which I'm usually not interested in) because it started with Yukimura's interest in theology. Intriguing.

Great volume. The main character grows up and the setting changes, and still the story continues to be engaging and very well researched. This whole series is one of the best mangas being published now. Can't wait until the next one comes out

We move away from the battlefield portion of the story and actually let Thorfinn develop as a character. The plotting slows down a little bit, and there isn't any focus on warfare for now, but it's not an unwelcome change. Rather than fighting and destruction, the story now concerns itself with building and growing things. Thorfinn's life gets renewed meaning as he learns to fill the void left after years of living for nothing but revenge and hatred. Previously the story had mainly focused on Askeladd and Canute, while Thorfinn was mainly a static character who did the same things over and over. Both him and Canute have changed drastically and I think it's absolutely terrific how Vinland Saga has maintained such a solid pace throughout.

This latest book in the Vinland Saga series was definitely more of a transition novel in the series. The illustration is still beautiful but the story was less intense than the previous book. Thorfinn was sold off as a slave at the end of Vol 4. He and his first and only friend have been working the fields and dealing with the anger of the fieldhands. Meanwhile Prince Canute continues to solidify his claim to the English throne. Thorfinn has gone through some amazing changes. He is obviously depressed and has lost a lot of his fire and purpose. The book takes an interesting turn towards fantasy in a dream sequence where Thorfinn has to confront his past actions in a very hell-like place. Prince Canute has also changed a lot. He has claimed the Kingship but there are other contenders. Canute slyly and ruthlessly deals with the contenders and solidifies his claim to the throne. His appearance has changed, he is much more manly and cold. The whole thing is interesting given Canute's father's claim that the crown is cursed and will corrupt all who wear it. There is a quick summary of the story so far at the beginning of the book (thank goodness). The illustration continues to be top notch and absolutely beautiful. I also enjoyed Yukimura's comments about his thoughts on Viking society and comments about his life. As I mentioned this is a transition story, we are starting a new phase in the Vinland Saga here and I am incredibly curious to see where it goes from here. Overall another wonderful installment in this historical fiction manga series. I love these books and highly recommend them to adults everywhere. I can't wait to read

volume 6.

This omnibus collects volumes 9 and 10 of Vinland Saga (as originally published). While the story began a new direction at the end of Omnibus 5 and it this wouldn't be a bad jumping on point, Vinland Saga still builds heavily off of earlier events and is best experienced from the beginning. After eight intense volumes of warfare and political intrigue Vinland Saga veers into different aspects of historical life. Ketil's farm is an interesting setting and allows exploration of several themes relating to slavery, class structure, and (of course) farming. As always everything is firmly character driven and the relationships and struggles of the core cast gives amazing depth and heart to this series. The pacing is deliberate, but pitch perfect to compliment and enhance the story. Brief glimpses of the political situation in England help tie things back to what's come before. We end with a striking revelation for a main character that will certainly ripple throughout the rest of the series. Time is passing in the world of Vinland Saga and the new focus of Yukimura epic is just as fascinating and gripping as the first four omnibuses. Highly recommended.

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