



The Sword, Vol. 4: Air

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The Sword: Air v. 4 Three powerful siblings entered Dara Brighton's home and brutally murdered her family right before her eyes. With the help of a powerful sword and her two friends, she has vowed to exact revenge on the three.

The Sword, Vol. 4: Air Details

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Pilamin says

No spoilers! Not even a hint of things to come. This review is more of a review of the series, directed at potential newcomers, but still centered on Volume 4.

I wish the previous two volumes had been like this. Old secrets come to light, the once-shallow mythology of the backstory is given more weight, and it all climaxes with a fantastic twist. Also, the ending brought a sobering tear to my eye.

The ending alone is worth the admission to reading The Sword. Or maybe I'm just a sucker for melodrama.

Now, this is an imperfect series. Sure, perfection is abstract, but The Sword is very rough around the edges. The artwork consistently looks like something you'd see on an above-average art student's DeviantArt. Sorry, Lunas. People are stiff robots, and their faces all appear to be the same age; yes, even children and babies. This isn't a criticism of personal style. This is a criticism of unclear intent. It's clear the artist could stand to develop his skills. Also: not a fan of filtering, like blur. It has its uses, but the Lunas abuse it.

One last criticism. While the dialog is occasionally Whedon-esque, Joshua is no Joss. The characters talk like crazy. They all like to talk their heads off. Panels are littered with overripe word balloons waiting to burst. Sometimes it's clever and funny. But more often it's overdone and says too much. It could use a bit of pruning. Just because you can have your characters speak in paragraphs does not mean they should. They often say three things when they could have said one; they speak more than they emote. Joshua, less is more.

Now...

The first volume was a novel introduction. It benefited from the reader's sympathy: tragedy after tragedy laid itself on thick for this poor girl. We were wrenching along and taken for a ride. I feel that the first volume is, in retrospect, the second-best one in the series. It was all sound and fury, so to speak, but it was thrilling while it lasted.

Again, no spoilers. The next two volumes I didn't enjoy as much. I still liked them...but only because I liked the characters and wanted to see them through. The plotting and the characters of Zakros and Knossos as antagonists...they were dull stereotypes. Sure, short vignettes are thrown in to shock you. But let's be honest: volumes two and three are long, drawn out action scenes, punctuated (rather predictably) by convenient flashbacks so the Luna Brothers can provide "character development." Action has its place, but the strength of The Sword is rooted in tragedy and irony. This is the core of any tale of revenge.

Volumes two and three only marginally provide tragedy and irony. The Lunas use second-rate action as a filler. For example, plot-less set pieces are stretched out to three issues. For what it's worth, volume three provides a welcome, if subtle, change of pace from the formula established in two, involving Knossos' illegal enterprise. But overall they were both routine, tiresome, and often rather juvenile. It's not why I started reading the series.

Onto volume four. It restored my faith in the series and ended on a high emotional note. Less mindless action, more real-time character development, much irony, and a rather nice twist at the climax. The writing still feels a tad amateurish and likely will not hold up to close scrutiny, but what can I say? I really

sympathized with Dara in the last panel that you see her.

In the end, The Sword exemplifies why I love stories. Any story. It's all about someone making tough choices, and--if not sympathizing--at least understanding why they choose to go that route. That's certainly one type of story. The other one is rooted in metaphor and how we understand the world/reality/society. And the last type of story is meant to captivate by means of proxy, rather than strictly through drama or theme. *Romance novels.*

Anyway... There were times when I wanted to dismiss The Sword for being so flawed and so in need of a good editor. In the end, I'm glad I stuck with it. I'd also like to point out that this is my first outing with the Luna Brothers.

Zedsdead says

Dara faces off against the final elemental-god-sibling. Malia manipulates the easily fooled masses into believing that Dara is a psycho super-nutter and that she, Malia, is humanity's only hope. Dara has the entire population of Earth to contend with in addition to the power-mad air goddess.

The final volume is as simplistic as the rest. The characters are all about as canny as your average fourth grader, right down to the general in charge of keeping the superhumans under control. This would be a clear YA title if it weren't for the violence. The Luna brothers never met a compound fracture they didn't want to draw in close-up.

I did quite like the dark ending, and the mixed in flashbacks they used to tie it together.

Matt Sautman says

A strong finish to the Luna Brothers' mythology, the twists within this volume are likely to catch any reader off guard without disappointment. This meditation upon godhood, existentialism, and perception culminate rather nicely. There are profound things waiting to be uncovered within this volume. Ultimately, I feel as if this series would function better as one singular collection as opposed to four smaller volumes.

Peacegal says

The storyline, as well as the final, epic battle, were real treats. Expect lots of unexpected twists to blindside you. In fact #4 might even rise to the heights of the excellent first installment, if it weren't for one plot point that had me knocking it down a star.

The evil sister-goddess Dara faces in this story is all-powerful, able to manipulate the wind itself. Yet, as a god, she cannot reproduce, and Dara uses this fact as a verbal weapon against the woman. It is the first time her battle armor seems to crack. She "gets back" at Dara for this transgression by ripping out her girly parts, promising she, too, will be unable to have children. And this is supposed to be a horror upon horror, no matter that Dara has had everything else done to her by now. This kind of stuff always gets my goat. We are more than the sum of our organs and secretions, and we are no less of a person because some of us do not

have children, by choice or by circumstance. There has to be more to life. There has to be.

Joseph R. says

Last sibling standing Malia makes her bid not to get killed by Dara Brighton and the sword when Malia goes public as a savior who can defeat Dara (who, let's admit it, does look like a menace on television). Malia is in Times Square, on the jumbotrons and every news media outlet there is. Her promise to protect the world infuriates Dara, who hijacks a plane to fly to New York City with her friend Julie and tagalong Justin. On the plane, they discover that the sword's healing effects don't last forever. Julie's bullet wound (healed in volume two) starts bleeding. Julie refuses to hold the sword and be temporarily healed again. She'd rather tough it out till New York and get proper medical care. She hates the effect the sword has had on Dara, making her a cold-blooded killer. Dara hems and haws about it. They make it to New York. Julie escapes to medical care while Dara and Justin go downtown to confront Malia. So there's another big battle and more backstory.

This final volume has some nice twists in the story and still more character development for the whole cast. The violence is still over-the-top but not as ridiculous as the last issue. The melodrama becomes a bit too preposterous even for a fantasy story but the ending wraps up things nicely. The series as a whole is good, not great.

Devon Munn says

Another solid series from the Luna Brothers, i really enjoyed the finale (and the series overall) but there definitely was problems. Like there was something that happened around halfway through that felt too easy and there was a w

twist they threw near the end that felt unnecessary (along with a long monologue filled with exposition explaining it

) but the rest of ending was decent.

Final verdict: a pretty solid fantasy series i really enjoyed, definitely recommend this one to fans of the Luna brothers who haven't read this or people who like fantasy stories

Jake says

This was an interesting end to a fun series. It was light and quick, though there was a tendency, especially in this volume, for the dialogue to read like a '90s action flick.

Corinna says

[Il colpo di scena mi ha sinceramente colto di sorpresa, proprio non me l'aspettavo.. (hide spoiler)]

Arminzerella says

Dara tracks down and kills Malia (who can manipulate air), but not before Malia tries to make the case to humans that she is on *their* side, and has only ever had good intentions toward people. After Dara stabs Malia in the face, her friend Justin (the one who claims to have taken classes with Dara's dad, where he told them stories about his past – loosely disguised as fiction), crawls out of the wreckage of the helicopter that Malia blasted out of the sky and reveals that he is Phaistos – Malia's brother (thought to be dead). He has been consumed with his vengeance since his siblings turned against him thousands of years ago. He tells Dara his story – what really happened – and then falls upon the sword and takes his own life. Dara, who knows something of vengeance herself, returns home to her family's burnt home and allows all of her wounds and injuries to return (she's lost the sword), which kill her. Ew. A gruesome, but fitting end to this story arc. Lots of violence (par for the course with the Luna brothers), lots of revenge, lots of loss. Somewhat tragic. The only question lingering in my mind is why Dara's father never went back to Malia (they were lovers). They definitely weren't *right* for one another, and I can see how he might not be interested in having a relationship that spanned thousands of years (that's a long, long time to be together), but one never gets to know his thoughts on it. When did he realize that they weren't a good fit? When he leaves Malia, they're still very much connected, and in love. So, something happens on the way. Or Malia believes that there was more to it than there really was.

Chris L Rowan says

I liked this one a little better than volume 3. The twist at the end was a surprise until the helicopter crash. Over all, the entire 4 volumes just seemed rushed with overly convenient plot lines. Not horrible, but not the best thing the Luna Brothers put out.

J. Dru says

Underwhelming, eyeroll inducing plot lines, glad someone finally mentioned Dara's negative personality change. It was pretty sexist to have two women fight by each casting shade at the other so that they lose control of their emotions and their powers. Felt catty. Still ableist and the plot twist surprised me but was not enough to save the volume. This series was a downward spiral with a disappointing finish.

Nicole Bunge says

Well, finally the epic battle. Lot of secrets come out, and a heck of an ending I didn't see coming (which is rare.)

Like Vol. 3, they play fast and loose with biology- or rather, geology, which kind of ruins an otherwise credible story. I can't talk about it without ruining one of the big twists, but it's fair to say that it once again wrecks 'suspension of disbelief' for me. I can accept 4000 year old 'gods' but not messing with 5th grade science, sorry.

Flying? I'm fine with. Magical wound healing? Great. But don't mess with how volcanoes erupt.

Otherwise, good series. Worth getting at the library. I don't know that it has enough story to fill a trilogy of

movies. Admittedly, one movie would be a lot, but going Kate Beckinsale/Underworld with it? It's going to be kinda thin.

Jeff Raymond says

The conclusion of what has ended up as one of my favorite series isn't quite what you might expect given the first three trades, but the finale still delivered in a lot of great ways, from some really solid storytelling to some fun twists and tying off the obvious loose ends.

I don't hear much about this series at all these days, but it was still a solid ride from start to finish, and I definitely recommend it.

Leonard Becker III says

5 out of 5 stars

A brilliant end to an amazing series.

As a whole, The Sword, series I would give it a 4.5 out of 5 star rating. Though the back story was absolutely amazing, the current characters and plot had a lot of plot holes. Though in the end it was all so amazing.
THAT ENDING THOUGH!!!!!!

Elisa The-Bookie-Monster says

The best book of this series. Dara has to face off against Malia, who controls air. What I really love about this series is that it reads like a novel. You don't feel like you're reading a comic book. The story line engulfs you and you feel as though you are battling alongside Dara. I feel like Jonathan Luna did a great job of tying everything together. There is a huuuuuge plot twist though, and ultimately I'm pretty satisfied with the end. At first I was shocked, but now that I'm thinking about it, I can't think of a better way for the series to end.
