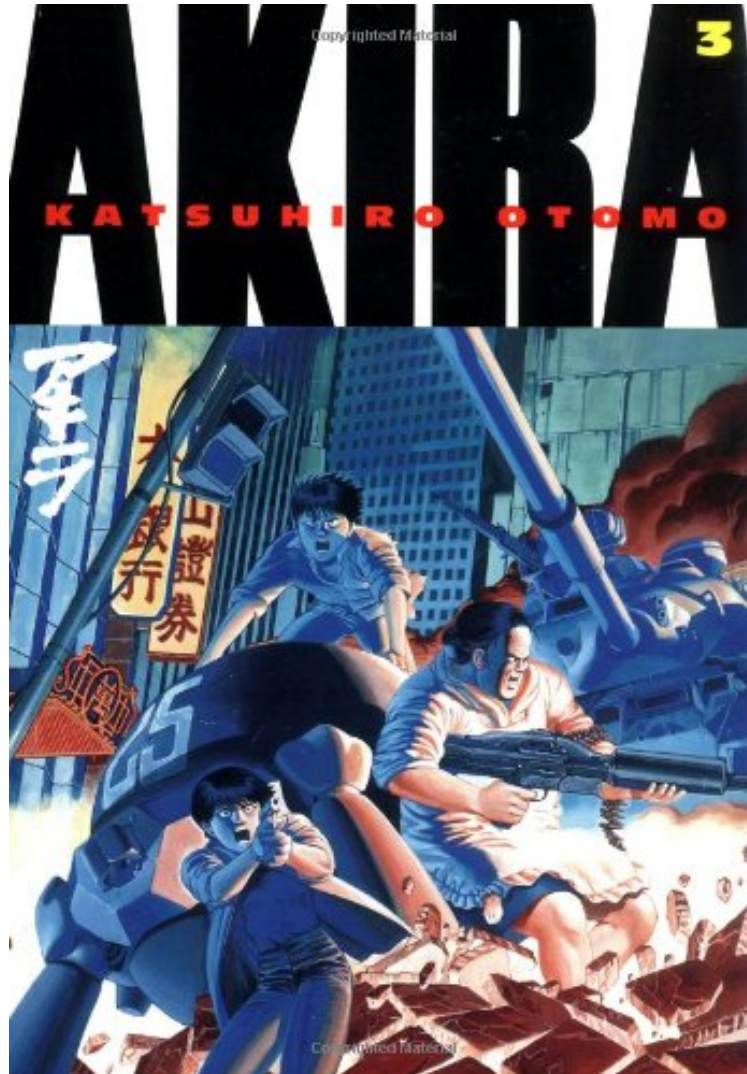


## Akira, Vol. 3

*Katsuhiro Otomo*

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**Katsuhiro Otomo : Akira, Vol. 3** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Akira, Vol. 3:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Action-packed rollercoaster with a terrific endingBy BrasVol. 3 is virtually a non-stop sequence of kidnappings, pursuits, comings and goings, including caretaker robots, soldiers, cars and even a tank. Regarding the latter, we get some occasional humorous gags involving Kaneda. Here he finally comes alive as a clumsy yet hard-headed anti-hero of sorts. His down-to-earth, naughty but ultimately honest nature is depicted in great detail along the volume, adding up to what we had already seen in volumes 1 and 2. We also get to see more of Chiyoko, a character who appeared in the previous volume and who becomes more and more relevant as

the story progresses. Kei also gets rounded up as an atypical heroine ('anti-heroine', maybe?), thus straying off from the 'damsel-in-distress' female character so common in shounen manga and American comic-books alike. Three characters make a brief yet crucial appearance in this volume: Sakaki, Miki and Mozu (a bunch of girls trained by Lady Miyako to develop a small amount of psychic power). Sakaki in particular plays an important role throughout the volume, right until its conclusion. But the character that really shines in this part of Otomo's long work is Nezu, the leader of the Kohmin political party, who is constantly plotting against the Colonel, the government, Lady Miyako, and practically everyone, and who is obsessed with gaining power by using Akira as a weapon. Storywise, the world of motorbikes and teenager gangs has disappeared completely, which means we will have no Kaisuke, no Joker, no Clowns... The tone for most of the volume is, admittedly, a bit lighter than the oppressive atmosphere we encountered in the previous volume, making it look more like an action/gangsters/conspiracy story than a proper futuristic cyberpunk one. Paradoxically, instead of focusing on troublesome teenager angst and gang fights the plot seems to deal with more adult-oriented themes than those displayed in volume 1, thus diversifying the change of direction that had already started in volume 2. This, however, isn't distracting in the least, and I believe Otomo manages to develop this segment of his masterpiece with just as much brilliancy as he did with the impressive sewers/laboratory/secret base sequences in volume 2. The detail in the depiction of each panel is nothing short of amazing. Indoors or outdoors, every ambiance is rendered with a rarely-seen accuracy: we get to see the inside of Chiyoko's and Kei's small shelter, Nezu's grand mansion, government offices, or even the inside of a luxury boat. Everything exhales a feeling of verisimilitude that pushes you into the story and makes the reading flow easily. The inking is brilliant, and the handling of screentones is really solid too. The black and white printing is excellent in this edition, even though the paper could certainly be better--probably a glossy paper would work wonders with this kind of printing. Technically speaking, Kodansha Comics' edition of Akira is far superior than the former coloured edition by Epic Comics (which, by the way, is just terribly hand-coloured in the part where Kei, Chiyoko and Kaneda are held in the boat). A non-flipped edition would also probably be better, even though it might be harder to read for a western reader. At any rate, it should be black and white. In summary, this is a very worthy purchase: the story has a more down-to-earth tone, there are no motorbikes, gang fights, psychic fights or supernatural elements, yet it countermeasures the lack of those elements with a non-stop action flow, and the depiction of very diverse environments and surroundings is simply masterful. Although this volume does not end in as strong a cliffhanger as the one in volume 2, its ending just makes the term 'epic' sound like an understatement, and will certainly leave you dumbstruck. Highly recommended.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. This series is killing me...By PriPriI'm not even sure what to say about this... It's still complete insanity. Everyone is fighting everyone. I'm not sure if anyone knows whose side they're on. Tetsuo is completely bonkers, Kaneda is back and apparently Kei is a powerful medium. The power is overwhelming Tetsuo, and still mostly nothing from Akira. I'm seriously starting to wonder if he's actually a threat. One more to go and I guess I'll find out.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. As a fan of the film adaptation since childhood, ...By LukeAs a fan of the film adaptation since childhood, I HAD to read the manga....and I am so stoked to finish out this series.

In the 21st century, the glittering Neo-Tokyo has risen from the rubble of a Tokyo destroyed by an apocalyptic telekinetic blast from a young boy called Akira -- the subject of a covert government experiment gone wrong now imprisoned in frozen stasis. But Tetsuo, an angry young man with immense and rapidly growing psychic abilities, has done the unthinkable: he has released Akira and set into motion a chain of events that could once destroy the city and drag the world to the brink of Armageddon. Resistance agents and an armada of government forces race against the clock to find the child with godlike powers before his unthinkable destructive abilities are unleashed! One of the true international classics of graphic fiction and unavailable for nearly a decade in America, Akira has once again taken America by storm, its first Dark Horse volume selling out almost overnight in comic shops and bookstores across the country!

From the PublisherIn 1982, manga modernist Katshuhiro Otomo created a worldwide literary sensation when Japan's Kodansha Publications released the first volume of his 3000 page sci-fi fable of the apocalypse, Akira. Few westerners had experienced manga (Japanese comics) before Akira, and its rocketing ascent through cultural divides helped impress a cynical world that had long been convinced that pictures in books should be relegated to children's stories. Now pictures were being used to tell one of man's most explosive and harrowing tales. Since his groundbreaking work on Akira, Mr. Otomo has completed a number of inspired manga classics, including the powerful post-apocalyptic Legend of Mother Sarah and the dark study of a child's dreams, Domu. Otomo's mastery of the manga artform was recognized with a top Japanese book award, the Grand Prix, awarded to him in honor of Domu in 1989. Dark Horse Comics published the first English-language versions of The Legend of Mother Sarah and Domu, and is currently publishing a true-to-its-original-form, black-and-white, six-volume re-issue of Akira.