

## Golden Cain

Author/Artist: You Asagiri

Published by: Central Park Media / Be Beautiful

184 pages, Rating: 18+

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Genre: Romance/Drama

The focus of this story is Shun, a young man who is haunted by the memory of his perfect older brother Keiichi. Blaming himself for the tragedy that befell Keiichi, Shun spends his life trying to live up to Keiichi's standards, doing his best to be a 'good boy' and to mold himself into Keiichi's likeness to please his bitter parents. However, Shun secretly wishes he could escape from the pressure and guilt he feels over what happened. Shun's life is turned upside down by the appearance of Cain, a mysterious stranger (and, of course, hot fashion model) who is intent on seducing him. With Cain, Shun can explore facets of himself that he didn't know existed, and find a love he didn't think possible.

Golden Cain is one of the first books in a new line of yaoi (boys love) manga being released by Central Park Media through their Anime 18 division under the Imprint name Be Beautiful. I am very happy to see a company releasing yaoi manga here in the US. It is a genre that has been largely ignored by all the other companies, yet it is hugely popular with girls and women in Japan and is growing in popularity with girls (and even some guys) in the US. Of course, Be Beautiful did do some minor changing of the story by aging Shun to make him a university student. It's obvious to anyone who knows anything about Japan, or has read a decent amount of manga before, that Shun is wearing a high school uniform, and that he is actually a 2nd year high school student, but as with many hentai anime releases, I guess they figure it's best to make everyone US age-legal. This line of books is intended for older audiences, and each volume carries a "18+" rating and a warning about explicit material. And the material can get explicit indeed. This is yaoi here, which in general is more graphic than the related genre called shounen ai, so parents really shouldn't be buying these books for their kids.

Story: 8

This is a one-volume story by You Asagiri, a well-known manga artist with over 20 years of manga work under her belt. She originally did a lot of general shoujo series (I particularly enjoyed her shoujo series called "Kon na Panic!") and even some shounen series, but for the last several years she has focused on yaoi stories.



Art: 9

Her art style is very attractive. Cain is very sexy, and there are plenty of close-ups on him for us to admire. While there are several sex scenes, there is a good amount of actual plot and romance to lift it out of the 'plot? what plot?' pit that many yaoi series can fall into. Shun is a very angsty character, but he certainly has reason to be, especially late in the volume when a surprise plot twist happens. Cain is also an interesting character with his own back story and motivations for chasing after Shun. It is a shame that this is only a one-shot story. I would have liked to see what happens next. The author herself speculates in an author's note at the end about what could happen in future volumes, and I think things would have been very interesting! I hope Be Beautiful publishes more series by this great author.

Presentation: 8

Be Beautiful has done a good job with the printing of this book. The cover artwork is attractive, and the paper quality is not far off from what you would get in Japan. Sometimes it seems like the artwork is a little faded, like I am reading a photocopy, but I can't really be sure if that is an issue with this book, or a characteristic of the original Japanese artwork without a copy of the Japanese edition to compare it with. The editing of the artwork to accommodate the English dialogue can get a bit sloppy in places but I have certainly seen a lot worse. For sound effects, Be Beautiful has chosen to lay down English versions of the effects next to the original Japanese ones instead of editing them into the artwork. I am still trying to decide if I like this method or not. It certainly is a faster way to handle effects, and they do use a nice selection of fonts appropriate with the effect being conveyed.

Overall: 8

Overall I am very pleased with this volume. I look forward to seeing more manga released from Be Beautiful. Golden Cain is a great start!

by Emi

by Emi-chan

