

Boys on Boys on Film

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Golden Cain

Reviewer: SummerQueen [[website](#)] [[email](#)]

Overall grade: A

Created by: Asagiri You

Released by: Be Beautiful

Volumes: 1



Asagiri Yuu got her start in shoujo manga, has drawn shounen (the racy *Midnight Panther*, also available in English) and eventually found her way to Boys Love (BL), where she's settled in nicely, producing a handful of gorgeous manga for Biblos and a veritable cornucopia of BL novels involving her manga characters. *Golden Cain* (Kin no Kain in the original Japanese) is one of her more recent titles, originally published in 2003, and is her first BL title to be translated into English.

Publisher Be Beautiful has opted to keep the original tankoubon cover of the main characters, Shun and Cain, saturating the colors so they're bolder and less washed out than before. The color frontispiece has been moved to the back cover, paired with the book's teaser. No one will ever mistake this volume as something for kiddies, as there are no less than three content warnings on the two covers. Inside, preceding the story, are character profiles not provided in the original, a nice touch.

Asagiri's Cain is a veritable golden god, a sexy blond Vietnamese model who seems to fall by chance into Shun's life. Shun is a college student (although astute readers will recognize a high school uniform and class number when they see them ? the ages have been changed to protect the innocent) living in the shadow of his accomplished older brother Keiichi. He's desperate to distinguish himself: to live up to Keiichi's promise and yet become his own man.

Enter Cain, all dangerous sex appeal, to take over Shun's entire existence, snaring the younger man, heart, soul ... and body. Shun is drawn into an incendiary spiral of love and lust, anchored only by the apparent steadfastness of Cain's devotion to him. There's the usual relationship bumps along the way to a happy ending (adolescent misunderstandings, a failed blackmail attempt and so on), but nothing ever so dire that Cain can't come to Shun's rescue ? or make all better with sex (the more public, the better). And there's a key plot twist involving Keiichi that drives the latter portion of the manga.

High literature this is not, but seriously sexy fun it is. Asagiri's art is simply gorgeous, and I think you'd have to be made of stone to not get drawn in along with Shun as he falls under Cain's spell and has his world turned topsy-turvy. Plus let's not forget that there's copious hot sex scenes to spice up the plot.

I have to admit, I'm a long time Asagiri Yuu fan. Have been ever since I had a subscription to BexBoy and stumbled across her *Hitomi* series (*Hitomi no Honne*, *Hitomi no Giwaku*). Her men are amazingly beautiful ... and all extraordinarily dirty, even as they protest innocence. Cain was sexy as hell when I couldn't understand what he was saying, so now that I can and I realized how willfully wanton he was, he's just that much sexier. Shun is uncertain of himself, and prone to bouts of tearful insecurity, but still manages to be an appealing uke. Keiichi is somewhat annoying, but vital to the story.

I've been told by a native speaker Be Beautiful has changed the dialogue slightly, toning down a bit of raunchiness on Cain's part. I personally don't mind, as the translation seems to fit the art and story very well, though others may prefer a precise translation. I heartily applaud leaving Cain's frequently repeated endearment to Shun in its original Vietnamese. They also opted to cut a short side story at the end, involving Shun and Keiichi. It's a pity, as the snippet is rather delightfully racy, but it's probably better to err on the side of caution, as American book sellers are undoubtedly not quite yet prepared for incestuous boys love. On the plus side, they did translate the postscript, in which Asagiri-sensei proves a tease, as she says she'd like to write more about Shun, Cain and Keiichi ? though she hasn't yet in manga form.

I'm keeping the Japanese version, for the KeiichiXShun story, but I couldn't be more pleased with the translated version. An excellent introduction to Asagiri-sensei for the uninitiated!

