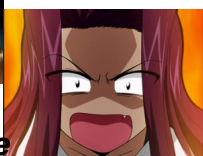




This volume of Ai Yori Aoshi ~Enishi~ brings the series to a close, and a particularly disappointing one at that. While the first season showed some flashes of brilliance in amongst all the harem comedy, those best parts were gutted from the format, leaving a fairly shallow show behind. Was there anything left in ~Enishi~ to make it worth watching..?

### **9 - White**

Kaoru's university professor gives him a gift of two tickets for a hotel stay - as a thank-you for all the help he's given. After a stern warning from Miyabi about inappropriate behaviour, he decides to take Aoi on a date and to see how things develop (the rest of the gang are away from the house on various trips, so no-one will know) - it's the first chance they've had to spend some real quality time together in a long while. But when night-time comes and they end up in the hotel together, it turns out to be a bit awkward for both of them...



### **10 - Bathrobe**

Onsen! Scantly-clad women! Not much else in the way of story! You know the drill - one hot-spring resort, one guy, many women, and many ways for embarrassing things to happen - especially when some mischeivous kids change the sign on Kaoru's private bath from 'occupied' to 'vacant'. Meanwhile, Tina has a heart-to heart chat with Aoi-chan - and it soon becomes apparent that Tina's thinking that it's time to move on...



### **11 - Moonlight**

Mayu's overheard a 'phone conversation, where Tina has said she's going back to the US - but when she confronts Tina about it, she's adamant the 'phonecall was just about a homecoming trip. Is Tina hiding something? Meanwhile, she's just bought herself a new digital camera & is looking for an excuse to make use of it - by roping the rest of the house into cosplaying for her...



### **12 - Bonds**

Tina's back in America, enjoying the time she's now got to spend with her parents but that

means that it's very quiet back at the house now that she's not around to liven the place up. No-one's sure if or when she'll be back, they just know it's not the same without her. However, Tina's finding it difficult to settle without having the gang around...



It's really not good for someone to be as obsessed about something as Aoi is about Kaoru. That said, the Aoi / Kaoru relationship was the one area where the first season of *AYA* really shone - check the first and last volumes of that season for proof. There were many people who watched just those two discs, and were happy with what they got, as the rest of the series was essentially harem 'filler' - and fairly average at that. For

*~Enishi~*

, the producers seemed to take the biggest criticism of the first season to heart - it was too schizophrenic, too unsure of what it wanted to be, and they needed to decide between heartfelt romance or harem comedy.

*AYA*

's real strength was heartfelt romance, so for the second series they decided to stick to... harem comedy.

D'oh!

For that one reason alone, *~Enishi~* has been something of a disappointment - you know all the way through what these characters can produce, but you're stuck with 10 episodes of slapstick. In episode 11, there's finally an attempt to capture some of the old emotion and drama, but by using Tina as the vehicle (a mistake as she's too carefree and over-the-top to make the serious emo stuff believable) and ruining the impact of her departure by having her return the very next episode, they really lose the attempt to grab your heartstrings before they've even started, unless you're a *real fan of Tina's*.

So. Fans of the fringe characters or of the harem aspect of the show will have plenty here to keep them going - but they always seemed to be in the minority compared to those that wanted more of Aoi & Kaoru. Fans of that relationship sadly aren't going to find much here, and will instead have to make do with thinking over what could have been if *~Enishi~* had had a different focus. There had been rumours of a third season a while back which never came to fruition, and that's a shame as an opportunity to "fix" the focus and properly tie up the series was missed - so we're stuck with

*this*

missed opportunity instead. Disappointing.

**Title**

**Ai Yori Aoshi ~Enishi~ #3:  
Destiny**

**Studio**



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**Release Information**

**9 November 2004  
US\$29.98**

**Our Rating**

