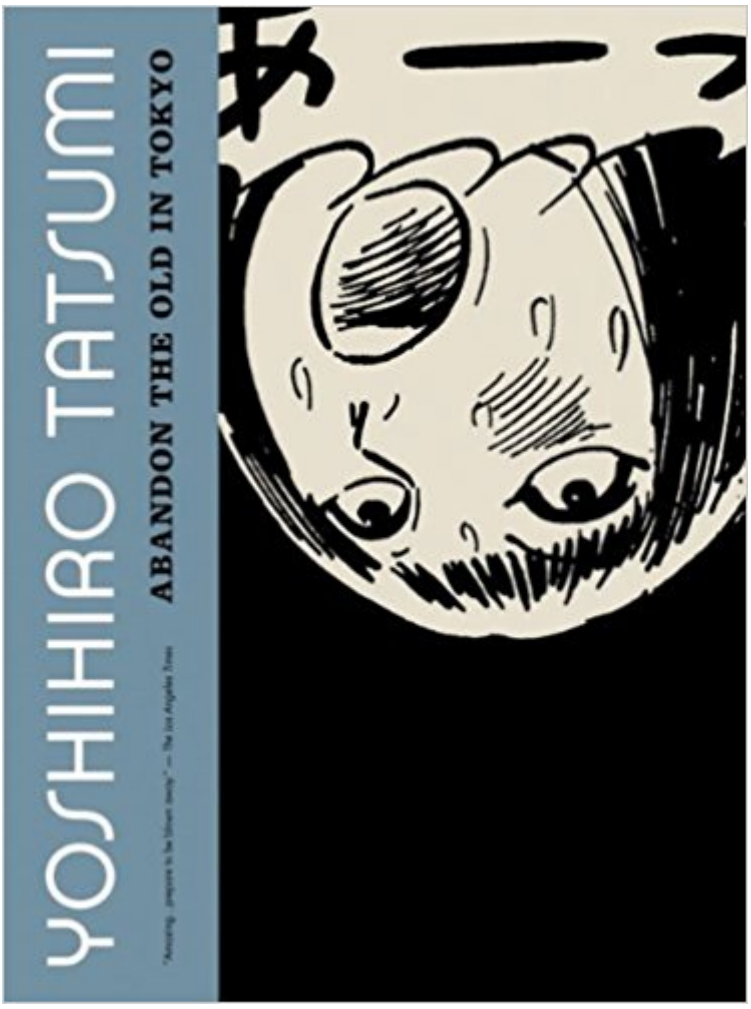
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Abandon The Old In Tokyo



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Synopsis

Abandon the Old in Tokyo continues to delve into the urban underbelly of 1960s Tokyo, exposing not only the seedy dealings of the Japanese everyman but Yoshihiro Tatsumi's maturation as a storyteller. Many of the stories deal with the economic hardships of the time and the strained relationships between men and women, but do so by means of dark allegorical twists and turns. A young sewer cleaner's girlfriend has a miscarriage and leaves him when he proves incapable of finding higher-paying work. When a factory worker loses his hand on the job, the parallels between him and his pet monkey prove startling and significant.

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Customer Reviews

Starred Review. The second volume of Drawn and Quarterly's ambitious reprinting of selected works by manga master Tatsumi picks up where the first left off. This outing once again showcases Tatsumi's pitch-perfect psychodramas, but this time with stories that are a bit more ambitious and sure-footed. Tatsumi more or less invented his own genre, making compelling manga out of everyday moments that otherwise pass unnoticed. His characters are anonymous faces we pass on the street, and he gives them an unsuspected inner life. In the opening story an artist for children's stories discovers a new, sinister vocation until he's found out. In another story a man is held captive by a woman who blames all men for her own psychological (and physical) scars. And in still another, an old man, once a proud business owner, returns to his derelict office day after day, despite the end of his company. Tatsumi lends all of these characters sympathetic voices through his minimal dialogue and deft line work. No one captures urban Japan quite like TatsumiÃ¢â ¬â •even the

streets feel nuanced. This collection of seminal work by a comics master is essential reading for anyone interested in the artistic development of the medium. (Aug.) Copyright Ã Â© Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Starred Review The stories in editor Tomine’s second collection of this groundbreaking comics creator originally appeared in 1970, when Japan had recovered from the psychic setback of World War II and embarked on its "economic miracle." Tatsumi reveals, however, a segment of Japanese society that remained defeated, made up of weary, emasculated, working-class men, often paired with resentful women. In the title story, a frustrated truck driver taking care of his decrepit, demanding mother reaches his limit. In others, a disgraced businessman returns to his deserted office every day, long after the company has gone under, and a burned-out children’s manga artist turns his talents to more disreputable pursuits. It’s hard not to read an autobiographical element into that last one, related to the fact that Tatsumi combined the words for drama and art to coin a term,gekiga, for his work to set it apart from comics aimed at children. His powerful drawing style depicts the characters with a starkness and simplicity that matches what is presented of their lives and conjures a convincing urban milieu through detailed backdrops. These decades-old tales are unlike anything published in the U.S. before or since, and it’s gratifying that America is now finally catching up with Tatsumi’s genius. Gordon FlaggCopyright Ã Â© American Library Association. All rights reserved --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Comics. Traditionally, that word conjured up puerile images of fuzzy bunnies or birdies bouncing into harmless cute mischief. Many thought that only children should read such banalities. Few, especially in the Unites States, where comics "grew up" relatively late, could imagine that this often simply drawn art form had the capability of dealing with deep existential or even starkly morbid topics. Cute comics definitely have their place, but they do not exhaust the entire medium. Enter "gekiga," a term coined by Japanese artist Yoshihiro Tatsumi to describe a comic genre aimed largely at adults, or at least at mature audiences. This untrodden path led to murky unexplored corners of human society and psychology drawn in unforgettable imagery that provides an often disturbing portrayal of the alienation of modern life. Never extremely popular, perhaps for obvious reasons, the stories nonetheless made their way into print in mid-20th century Japan. For decades they remained nearly unknown and ignored until comics around the world evolved and others realized that a certain artist in Japan may have actually foreshadowed the future. By the first decade

of the 21st century, collections of "gekiga" appeared in comic stores, compliments of "Drawn and Quarterly," who published many never before seen classics in English. Three volumes in particular celebrated the work of Tatsumi. This series' second volume, "Abandon the Old in Tokyo," though its stories were written around 1970, still resonate in today's industrial workaday world, in which many people find themselves lost, abandoned or simply confused. Tatsumi's work doesn't offer any consolation or answers, but, merely by acknowledging this less visible side of "civilization," readers may find themselves attaining some kind of emotional catharsis. These stories will stick in the consciousness. Maybe in the way they push extremes they manage to offer some type of release.The very first page of the book's very first story, "Occupied," outright defies expectations. Here a man sits on a public toilet, looking suspiciously over his shoulder as if he knows someone watches him. This man soon finds out that his career in children's manga has run dry and that his now former publisher's promise that "we'll contact you again soon" rings hollow. His hopeless situation leads him to vomit, again in a public toilet and he discovers some extremely salacious artwork scrawled inside the stall, prompting another vomiting. A quick but slightly naughty encounter with a "hostess" leaves him extremely cold. Finally, another publisher offers him a spot in "Rude Magazine" drawing adult comics. The idea slowly grows on him and he decides to make his own contributions to the bathroom stall. Unfortunately, someone catches him in his artistic pursuits. Someone else yells "call the cops." He seems trapped by his own salvation. The sting of the word "pervert" in Japan fully comes to life in this story's final panels. Unforgettable."Abandon the Old in Tokyo," the second story, tells the grim tale of a young betrothed man caring for an old sick nagging mother. After his fiancee shows a passionate interest in "staying over," he finds inspiration in a news article about senior citizens found long dead in their apartments. After implementing his plan he has horrified second thoughts, but his mother may have decided to take things into her own debilitated hands. This story's brilliant ending wafts in that ineffable part of the brain that contemplates the temptingly unthinkable and its consequences. "The Washer" finds a window washer spying on a woman, a secretary, having an affair with a company president. His co-worker thinks the man has "a thing" for the secretary, but he's not aware of their very special relationship. Then one day he sees her moaning with pain and clutching her stomach through the window. "Beloved Monkey" explores society as horror. Those who seem like friends and compatriots may in fact rip you to pieces when encountered in numbers. A man makes this grisly discovery after releasing his pet monkey into a zoo exhibit. Another chilling ending. "Unpaid" features a completely washed up businessman in fervent denial. He still shows up to his drafty office. Seven million yen stand between him and his dignity. The book's most uncomfortably shocking scene comes when he seeks solace in a "Dog

Appreciation Club." Here stands a man very near the bottom. The ending doesn't provide a lot of hope that he possesses the will to turn his life around. Whoosh."The Hole" presents a very bleak picture of a woman seeking revenge for the expectations of men. Traps await for men who wander unknowingly into her wilderness cabin. These traps seem to give the disfigured woman extreme pleasure. But perhaps the man who finds himself trapped has dug his own hole? "Forked Road," a coming of age story of sorts, takes place partially in the past. In the fleeting flash of an electric tram, a boy catches a glimpse of adults making love and never quite seems to recover. After a night of heavy drinking, he contemplates the forked tracks of the tram yawning into the distance. "The Eel" delves into a place Tatsumi has depicted before: the sewers. In this extremely inhospitable environment, a pair of eels manages to survive. But when his pregnant wife falls down the stairs and leaves him, while calling him "a loser," he performs a painfully symbolic act that only a single eel survives. He either attempts to restore what he sees as an unjust balance or he seeks revenge on those who can make it even in the worst of times. On some vaguely diffuse level it somehow makes sense, which few would probably want to admit.Tatsumi's stories feature the timeless and nameless everyman. He looks almost identical from story to story, but he serves as a symbol not as a continuous character. He seems to symbolize the mass. The mass of people who society, through circumstance or through intention, have deemed as unremarkable or possibly as unworthy. Though devalued and in some ways exiled, they nonetheless live complicated and remarkable lives full of drama, decisions and consequences. In some ways Tatsumi's stories demand that we not forget these people, these faces that glow from alleys or peek from under manhole covers. They contribute to society and hold unique places not always filled with distinction or prestige, but unique places nonetheless. The places they hold also shape their lives, for better or worse, and possibly lead to poor decisions or just a penchant for being in the wrong place at the wrong time. Perhaps most people who inhabit the modern world fall into Tatsumi's categories? Perhaps the majority of people today can identify in some way with the people in these stories? Similar to his other work, this book contains complicated stratifications of interpretation. Everyone will likely come away with something slightly different. But everyone will come away with something, which makes "Abandon the Old in Tokyo" yet another testament to the power and insight of "gekiga" and its founder.

An interesting series of vignettes that seem to be more connected than one might think. All of the stories contained were disturbing in one way or another, which I didn't expect - I had just bought this on someone's recommendation.

Thanks to the dedicated individuals that brought the work of Yoshihiro Tatsumi. You have done the English-reading public a great service in bringing such fine narrative artistry to the audience outside Japan. These are poignant stories that stay with you visually and emotionally in memory.

After a remarkable, if imperfect and monotone, first volume, this second anthology of Yoshihiro Tatsumi short stories, compiling material originally published in 1970, delivers the goods in spades. This is Tatsumi at his prime, in full gear, no holds barred. These eight stories are the work of a master of the short story form at the peak of his art.The presentation is a thing of beauty. A gorgeous hardcover volume, with excellent design and lettering by editor Adrian Tomine. Plus an introduction by Koji Suzuki and an interview with the author. Sadly, D&Q botches another nearly perfect job by re-arranging the panels into a western left-to-right reading order edition, thus damaging the author's original page layout.Recommendation: Buy 2. One for yourself, another to give as a gift to someone with good taste that you want to lure into reading Gekiga.

A short book of comics that says more about Japanese life in the 70s, or maybe 60s or 50s, than anything else I've ever read. It's introspective and dark, with a lot of characters who just seem lost and wandering through existence. It's a little bleak, but not overly depressing, there's some humor in the way the characters make mistakes, sometimes they just get embarrassed, run off, and the story ends. There are a handful of sad moments as well, so this isn't like some drama or comedy book, it's more like a capsule of life from the time in Japan, in ways that are universal to anyone.

Abandon the Old in Tokyo is a collection of dark stories of the ghosts that can haunt "ordinary" city life. The people and situations seem entirely familiar in spite of the unfamiliar Tokyo surroundings and desperate, often obsessively fetishistic relationships. Tatsumi's art seems limited at first glance (many characters share the same "inexpressive" face), but he brings out an amazing array of emotions and keen observations. More than once I was reminded of Poe -- self-absorbed people caught in their own private hells. Not for the easily offended, but if you like David Lynch or Chuck Palahnuik, you'll feel uncomfortably at home.

Great stuff! Am I the only one who thinks Will Eisner may have been an influence? Some of the city scenes reminded me a lot of Will Eisner's artwork.

To anyone new to Tatsumi's work (I was one a few months back) start reading any of his books that

are available - Push Man, Good-bye or Abandon the old in Tokyo. He essentially captures the framework of short stories in the medium of comics. Some of his best pieces read like great short stories in literature do. His subjects often deal with jealousy, insecurity and other darker sides of human nature. There's often an undercurrent of violence (sexual or otherwise). But it's well worth the trip and so much more!

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