



Natsume's Book of Friends, Volume 1

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With friends like these, enemies are overkill. R to L (Japanese Style). Takashi Natsume can see the spirits and demons that hide from the rest of humanity. He has always been set apart from other people because of his gift, drifting from relative to relative, never fitting in. Now he is a troubled high school student who has come to live in the small town where his grandmother grew up. And there he discovers that he has inherited more than just the Sight from the mysterious Reiko.

Natsume's Book of Friends, Volume 1 Details

Date : Published January 5th 2010 by VIZ Media LLC (first published June 10th 2003)

ISBN : 9781421532431

Author : Yuki Midorikawa

Format : Paperback 208 pages

Genre : Sequential Art, Manga, Fantasy, Graphic Novels, Comics, Supernatural, Shojo



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From Reader Review Natsume's Book of Friends, Volume 1 for online ebook

Aravena says

Slow.

Repetitive.

Episodic.

And an indescribably beautiful masterpiece.

Elspeth says

LOVE!

Andre says

There isn't much to say about this book.

The art-style takes a bit getting used to in my mind, especially when regarding the Yokai, but for the most part its ok. Emotional ways only one of the stories is really gripping, the other ones not so much. But as it isn't incredibly good it isn't bad either. However, what is a bit annoying are two things:

- 1) The comments of the author at the side of some pages. But you could ignore them usually, as I did eventually.
- 2) At the start of pretty much every chapter we get told the basic premise of the main character. And that was annoying pretty quickly. After all this is one volume respectively even sperately you can count on readers remembering such things so what the hell?

All things considered this book could have been better (e.g. some more Yokai coming along and wanting the "book of friends" to control other Yokai) but it could have been worse as well.

Hilâl says

Ah *Natsume Yuujinchou*... Beni bilenler bilir, tamam burada kimse bilmiyor, çok severim Natsume'yi ben... Önce anime serisiyle tan??m??t?m. 8-10 ay kadar önce de mangan?n bu cildini, ar?ivime eklemi?tim, *fiziksel* olarak diyorum. >.< ^'^ Animenin 5.sezonu gelecekken dedim, ki baya da oldu ö?reneli asl?nda, art?k okuyay?m ?u cildi... Manga olarak da harikayd?.

Asl?nda çok nadiren burada mangalara puan veriyorum, verdiklerimde de tüm seriye binaen yap?yorum bunu, ama bu seride biraz farkl? oldu. Yine de animeden dolay? nas?l bir tarz? oldu?unu biliyorum sonuçta.

Konuya bir de?ineyim. Natsume di?er insanlar?n göremedi?i, *youkai* denen varl?klar? görebilen bir çocuktur, genelde zarars?z olsa da onu psikolojik ve sosyal yönden çok etkilemi?tir bu durum. ?nsanlara güveni filan kalmam??t?r. Bir gün yine böyle *youkai*'ler onu kovalarken büyükannesi Reiko'nun Arkada?l?k Kitab?'ndan haberdar olur. Reiko bu deftere *youkai*'lerin isimlerini yazarak onlar? kendine ba?l? hale getirmi?. Bu seride Natsume'nin defterdeki isimleri sahiplerine da??t?rken bir yandan defteri isteyenlerle (Nyanko Sensei gibi k?h k?h *-*) veya *youkai*'lere yard?m ederken kendisinin de de?i?ti?i bir dizi olay? konu al?yor. (evet hiç iyi özetleyemedim) Midorikawa-san da öyle diyor zaten, *kibarla?maya çal??an bir çocu?un hikayesi* diye.

Bu seriyi tan?mlayacak bir kelime dü?ünüyorum da... O kelime san?r?m *naif* olurdu. Midorikawa-san'?n öyle bir anlat?m ve duyg? i?leme ?ekli var ki... ?nsan kayboluyor bu naiflik ve safl?kta. Karakterinden dolay? bir komedi-tatl? yönü de var serinin ama. (bkz: yine Nyanko Sensei ^^')

?imdi elimde kuzey amerika kopyas? varken bask?ya da bir iki bir ?ey diyeyim hehe. *Hana to Yume*'nin klasik bask?lar?n? uygulam?yor Viz ama bu seride hiç rahats?z olmad?m, yaz?lar?n stili ve kapakta bir ka??t y?rt?l?yormu? gibi bir his veren ho? bir tasar?m kullanm??lar. Ayr?ca *sensei* kelimesini de çevirmemi?ler. :D :D

Belki favori seriniz olmayabilir ama özel bir yere sahip olabilecek kapasiteye sahip bir seridir, herkese tavsiye ederim.(Okursan?z animenin ostlerini dinleyerek okuman?z? öneririm.)Umar?m di?er ciltleri de ar?ivleyip(!) okuyabilirim. ^^' MIDOR?KAWA Yuki'ye böylesine ho? bir seri yazd??? için de ayr?ca te?ekkürler. >.< (Hazukashiiyo~ :D)

Selena says

This was absolutely charming. There is no other way to describe it.

And that last story with the sparrow?

Beautiful. Absolutely stunning.

This is a quirky little story that tugs at your heartstrings one minute and will have you laughing the next. It reminds me a bit of *Mushishi* but with more laughs. It's episodic and follows Nastume as he tries to help yokai and return their names. Speaking of, the "Book of Friends" in the title? It's more of a "Book of Minions" put together by Natsume's grandmother, so I loved the irony in the name of this book.

You can tell a lot of thought was put into the different characters. Episodic manga don't always put that much into it's characters, but this one thrives on it.

Nyanko-sensei is a goofy spirit who's supposed to be "mean" but comes across as more of a... grumpy cat.

Nyanko-sensei's a smart ass, drinks a lot, acts as if he doesn't care (but I suspect he does and doesn't want to

admit it). He's made a deal with Natsume to get the Book of Friends when the kid dies, but despite this and his snarky comments about not rescuing Nastume, he seems like he wants to help and not admit to his soft spot. He truly is a grumpy cat. I just love him because of it (that, and he's a chubby kitty, and I have a thing for chubby cats).

Then we have Natsume, the main character. Natsume's pretty typical of a main character. He genuinely wants to help the yokai he comes into contact with, whether it's by giving back their names or by helping them with other humans. He's been able to see yokai since he was a child and has trouble connecting with people because of it. He's a genuinely nice, goofy character. Have I seen his kind before? Definitely. Doesn't mean I like him any less.

I picked this book up because I'd gotten a little figure of Nyanko-sensei eating cake (as I said, I love chubby kitties) not really knowing what it was about. I'm glad I found this little gem of a manga, even if it *was* just because of the chubby cat (lol)

Estara says

First read in scanlation, then saw the fansubbed anime and now I'm willing to buy anything in a licensed version I can get. This is more episodic youkai-life than most of the series with youkai in them, it's also not as metaphysical as *Mushishi*, but I prefer it for the characters and the slow development and growth of the main character. However, a lot of the episodes are bitter-sweet, so if you're a person who is moved to tears by a story easily (like me) bring tissues and pace your reading.

Jenny Ge says

If I could, I'd give this book, and the rest of the series, a million stars. Having read at least five hundred different series of manga/manhwa of a rainbow of genres, I reach this conclusion: *Natsume Yuujinchou* is my favourite manga out there. Sure, the art's not mainstream, the author isn't too famous--this manga, in my opinion, is amazing (to me, at least). Warning: I say all of this most likely because this manga suits my personal tastes, so I don't know if others feel the same way. But every time I read this manga, I feel like I'm close to enlightenment. The atmosphere in *Natsume Yuujinchou* has such a sweet, soft, melancholic feel to it. The characters are full of depth and personality and emotion. The bonds between characters are gentle, kind, and courageous.

I could go on and on about this. If anything, this manga shifted my world, even if just by the slightest bit.

Sesana says

Natsume can see and talk to yokai (spirits, essentially) that nobody else can see, which makes him seem odd. He isn't terribly surprised to discover that he's not the first person in his family to have this ability. His grandmother could do the same, and bullied the yokai around her by using her strong magical talents to trap their names in a book, the oddly named book of friends from the title. When Natsume discovers the book, he decides to free the spirits trapped in the book by giving their names back.

There's the basic setup, which sounded fairly interesting to me. The execution is even better. Midorikawa gives the yokai varied, interesting, and often sympathetic characterizations. The chapters are somewhat longer than I normally see in a manga (there's only four in this volume) which allows for the situations and guest characters to be given greater depth. The last story in this volume, about the spirit of a sparrow, is sweet and touching. Because Midorikawa wrote each chapter as though it could be the last, there's closure at the end of each story, while leaving Natsume's story open for more.

The art's great, too. The human characters aren't drawn too similarly, and the yokai designs have some good variation, while still looking like they all belong to the same world. I'm especially fond of Natsume's design, and how the way he's drawn subtly conveys his loneliness and exhaustion. (Releasing the names from the book of friends takes a lot of energy.)

I will absolutely be continuing in this series, and I think it has the potential to become a favorite of mine.

Theresia says

I admit that I watched the animated version of this series before I read. At first, I was looking for a lighthearted series that gave a kind of post-reading warm feeling, and *NY* was the answer unexpected.

Midorikawa-sensei's simple artwork definitely works to build the right atmosphere. It's series that makes me sympathize with youkai (Japanese for evil spirit, to put it simply)--imagine that. Forget fierce, man-hunting youkai in Takahashi-sensei's *Inuyasha* or Tanabe-sensei's *Kekkaishi*. And more to that, I enjoy Natsume's short temper, be it Reiko's or Takashi's, in the manga more than in the anime. *NY* is just one shoujo manga that would just make you want to read and read.

Eric Seal says

A delightful premise, the kind that makes you wish you'd thought of it yourself, and even if you did, could not have pulled off half so well as Midorikawa has in *Natsume's Book of Friends*. Heartwarming one moment, heartbreakening the next, the story of *Natsume* explores themes of friendship, loneliness, the real and the unreal, and making a difference - and with gorgeous art to boot!

Maija says

3.5 stars

A manga about a boy who can see yokai (spirits and demons). Even though the book consists of calm stories mostly about kindness, I liked that they had this almost melancholic atmosphere.

The stories were episodic in nature, and I would've liked there to also be a longer storyline present. But out of the episodes my favourites were "The Dew God", which was about this spirit of a shrine who is only remembered by one person, and "Natsume vs. Human", because I thought that the two yokai following the protagonist around were absolutely hilarious.

The art style wasn't my favourite, I prefer more well-defined, darker linework. The "wispiness" worked with

the subject matter of spirits, but I think there's also room for improvement in further volumes.

Julie (Manga Maniac Cafe) says

4 stars

This is a re-read. Since the library had the first 14 volumes on the shelf, I decided to take them home :) I do own a few volumes of the series, but they are scattered all over my bookshelves, so it was easier to just grab what was available at the library.

This is a cute volume of episodic stories, featuring Natsume, a teen who can see yokai. Natsume's grandmother also had strong supernatural powers, but she used hers to bully and terrorize the spirits she encountered. Collecting their names in her Book of Friends after beating them up, she gained control over them, and made them promise to come to her when she called. Since Reiko was more interested in collecting names than calling on the subdued spirits, they quickly began to resent her. Now, years after her death, they are chasing Natsume to get their names back.

Natsume is kind hearted, and he wants to make up for his grandmother's actions. With the help of a cat demon, who is more interested in eating Natsume and taking the powerful Book of Friends for himself, Natsume begins tracking down the spirits so he can right Reiko's wrongs. At times extremely touching, Natsume's Book of Friends is a fun diversion.

Lois Bujold says

A gentle sort of supernatural crossed with slice-of life tale. I began, as usual, with the anime, and have followed it through all six currently extant 13-episode seasons. My local library had the e-manga, so I've just read Volume One for compare-and-contrast. As is not-uncommon, the anime follows the manga closely in the beginning; I don't know if it diverges later. If it does not, or if the manga doesn't have a lot of material not found in the anime, I'd say go with the anime, which is frequently visually lovely. (Though I suspect the manga artist's style may evolve with ensuing volumes -- the series appears to be up to 21 or so of them.)

Natsume, an orphan boy who can see yokai (invisible traditional Japanese monsters that come in an enormous variety, for good or ill, tiny to large, from nasty ones that will eat you up to protective mountain gods), and has had a troubled childhood therefore, ends up with a better foster family in a small rural Japanese town. There he inherits from his grandmother something called "The Book of Friends", which turns out to contain pages with the true names of a lot of yokai which she'd obtained in her youth, subjugating them. The yokai naturally want them back. Episodic, as he solves different yokai problems each chapter or so, with a gradually developing story arc as he finally starts to make friends both human and other. There is also a very interesting if uneasy acquaintance with a charming exorcist, Natori: part mentor, part older friend, part maybe with conflicting goals and certainly with conflicting methods.

I'd be interested to know if there is much story material additionally or beyond the anime in the manga, to make it worth plowing through.

Ta, L.

Susan ...so many books and so little time says

This was my first time to read a manga series...and I have to say I loved it!!! Totally addicted...and will be reading more in the series!!!...it did take me a while to get used to reading in the Japanese style of a manga book. All in all...this first book...has led to an amazing experience!!!...on to the next...

Siobhan says

I'm going to be honest: I have never completed a manga before this one.

It's shocking, I know. They're such short reads, I should have been able to complete one by now. Somehow, however, I have never managed. Therefore, the fact I managed this one says volumes about how fun it is. It also means I'm not the kind of person to ask how it ranks in comparison to others out there.

The art was great. The story was fun. I was left wanting more. That's what you're looking for, right? My only problem was the way the details were retold at the start of every chapter, but it wasn't enough to leave me disliking it.

All in all, I'd be happy to see where this is going.
