



THE INTERNATIONAL BESTSELLER

Train Man

THE NOVEL



The Internet-generation love story from Japan

Hitori Nakano



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Hitori Nakano, Bonnie Elliott (Translator)

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An instant bestseller when it was first published in Japan, Train Man became a multimedia sensation, generating a smash-hit TV series, a blockbuster film, and multiple manga series. Now here's the novel that started it all.

Boy—bashful and not overly brave—defends girl from obnoxious drunk on a Tokyo train. Girl sends boy a thank-you pair of pricey Hermès teacups. Boy's a geek and doesn't know what to do next. End of story for most nerds—but this one turns to the world's largest online message board and asks for help, so for him it's just the beginning. This matchless love story is told through a series of Internet chat room threads.

As Train Man, our hero charts his progress and unveils each new crisis—from making conversation to deciding what to wear on a date and beyond—in return, he receives advice, encouragement, warnings, and sympathy from the anonymous netizens. And Train Man discovers the secret to what makes the world go round—and proves we really do live in a universe where anything can happen.

Train Man Details

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From Reader Review Train Man for online ebook

Fiona McCandless says

I (perhaps ironically) started reading this book on a train, but soon had to put it down for I think my stifled laughter was worrying some of the other commuters.

This book, or collection of anonymous forum posts, follows the budding relationship between 'Train man' and 'Hermes'. Train Man - a once hardcore Otaku (japanese-style 'geek'), who spent most of his days watching questionable Anime, and playing computer games - transforms from his geek-dom, and wins the heart of the girl 'Hermes' who he saved from a drunk on a train.

I loved the internet-forum style of this novel. It was incredibly quick and easy to read - also forum humor never fails to have me doubled-up laughing. The range of advice Train Man got from his fellow 'Netziens' proves that the Otaku has no idea when it comes to relationships.

The humor, romance, internet links (yes, I did search for them whilst reading), emoticons and transformation of character made this book a great light-read. This virtual internet-world can be a beautiful thing, no?

But this book also got me worrying... here i am, laptop propped on my knees, listening to the repetitive music of my paused Playstation game, Japanese manga sprawled on the table, the 'Train Man' DVD recently bought and sitting at my feet...

I started thinking...maybe... I need to get myself some Benoist tea?

Hoang says

There are only a few love stories that seem to pop out at me. Most are too fantastic; they seem to take place in a fantasy world, a world that I cannot seem to relate to at all. Fantasies and fairy-tales are just a given. They are so unbelievable; one just has to follow the story along with no significant impact on the human emotion.

Train Man, by Nakano Hitori, is a story of an average Japanese otaku finding the love of his life. The story, however, chronicles a series of long online threads between the main character, Train_Man, and other online users. Train_Man would give daily updates to the thread users on his current love life situation to get advice from others, introducing to the reader an interesting new medium to tell a story. What appealed to me was just the story behind it. An otaku is a Japanese geek, usually one that prefers the anime and manga culture of Japan. They tend to spend more time on computers rather than go outside, which explains why the novel is composed of threads from a website. What truly amazes me is the fact that this book is based on true events of a common day otaku. His life was televised by the Japanese mega-BBS 2channel, and spawned movies, manga, and novels about his account on the train.

The story begins with an anonymous poster retelling his account on the subway train after posting on a thread asking everyone to tell about their problems. Eventually the thread becomes his life story, as no one else seemed to have anything to say. The poster recalls his account with a drunkard harassing a young woman. Irritated, the poster took the gamble of standing up and telling the man to stop. They begin to wrestle, which buys the other passengers enough time to call the conductor to handle the situation. The woman thanks her savior, which shocks him because he has never been thanked in his life. After sharing his experience, other posters begin to call him Train_Man. Days after the incident, Train_Man gets a set of tea cups from the woman he saved. The cup brand was Hermes, which becomes the nickname for Train_Man's

love interest.

Train_Man has a man versus himself conflict; the protagonist has to deal with changes within himself to be able to love Hermes. He changes his habits, clothes, outlook, and personality to become a more interesting person. The theme would be no matter how bad a situation is to start; if one works hard enough it will become a blessing. *Train_Man* never stopped pursuing Hermes, not even after going through many minor setbacks.

I would recommend this book to anyone. I believe there is a little bit of geek in everyone. People have different obsessions and interests; some are anime geeks, game geeks, food geeks, book geeks, and so on, and because of this, everyone can relate to it. *Train Man* is a novel about an average everyday man stumbling into a situation that proves to be life changing. It is realistic; *Train_Man* had to try to win his love's heart, not like the fairy-tales I mentioned earlier, where two people are destined for each other. I found this novel to be an enjoyable and interesting read, and everyone should give it a chance.

O says

Let me say this outright: **Train Man is definitely not a book for everyone.**

It's one of the geekiest books I've ever read, as it deals with a guy who meets a girl and tells people about it on an online forum. The aforementioned guy isn't the normal drop-dead gorgeous male lead you usually find in books, but rather, he's a normal otaku (or geek, in English) who is shy and awkward and seems to spend an abnormally large amount of time telling his woes to the internet. **This person is me**

Train Man is told in the form of an online forum where people comment, usually a line or two, one after the other. You have no clue who these people are. There aren't really any names since, well, this forum deals with anonymous people talking to each other. The story revolves around this guy who is fondly called Train Man by the commenters, because he defends a girl from a drunken idiot on a train and receives a pricey gift as a thank you. Because he's awkward and clueless, he proceeds to run to the internet for help on how to deal with this.

Every time our hero posts an update, people comment and give advice or sympathy. With each update comes a barrage of comments. Some are trolls, some warn him to be cautious, but a lot of people offer advice and encouragement and sympathize with our hero.

I can see why most people dislike this book. If you're not familiar with forums, it can be very confusing to read. If you're not a person who spends a lot of time on the internet (aside from Facebook), you might find it strange that people communicate this way. Why would people even talk to complete strangers, let alone trust their advice, about their problems? They don't even know each other. There are barely any names (if any). If you want to respond to a comment, you refer to the comment's number (Comment #525, for example). It probably seems really silly to most people. XD

But that, I guess, is the beauty of the internet. It gives us the bravery to say and do things we wouldn't dare in real life. It gives us the power to be something more than we could ever dare or hope to be in real life. Sure, there are terrible people on the internet (people far worse than trolls, definitely), but *Train Man* gives us an excellent view of how people communicate and help each other out despite knowing virtually nothing about each other.

I find Train Man quite humorous and entertaining because I've been on several online forums myself. I've met many people online and retained friendships with them, some for years now. It's amazing how a common interest or cause can unite people and cause a bond between them, no matter how far apart they are. It probably sounds silly to say that some of the best or most interesting people I've ever met are people I've never seen or met. I only know them by their usernames and avatars and the way they express themselves on the internet.

Sure, I could be talking to some creepy old fat white guy who lives in a basement (or, maybe I am one of those creepy men and you have no clue about it! OOO:) but no one would ever know. Unless I started stalking people, I guess. (Don't worry, I never would I'm too lazy anyway lol) I do think it's interesting that how you look doesn't matter at all when you're on the internet discussing games or books or whatever. It's the way you think and how you share stories and interact with other people, and I find that a very wonderful thing.

Train Man is the story of the internet. Of geeks, of awkward introverted people like myself who like the anonymity and can openly share things without the fear of being judged your whole life. Train Man is also a love story, but what speaks the loudest to me is the kindness and compassion of people in the story. In a world where I am constantly annoyed and frustrated by how horrible people are to each other, this book serves as a reminder that not everyone is horrible/apathetic. That there are people out there who care, or will care if you share your story with them. These are the same people who will defend you against trolls and bullies and other idiots. It really is amazing.

You can also read this review on my blog, [Lambent Lights](#).

Leigh says

Fast, funny and cute. Geek-ness overload! And full of positive vibes and hope and love. Ah... the beauty of first love. _|-|o

Sooraya Evans says

cute.

Trang says

Tr?i ?i ?áng yêú g?n ch?t :((((((?c mà c? ng?i c??i m?t mìn? không ng?ng ???c
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Gi? thì ch?c khó mua ???c b?n c?ng, nh?ng 500 anh em, nh?t là h?i ??c thán mu?n tìm g?i ?ó t??i sáng vui v?
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Intan Hurulaini says

I watch the drama long before i bought this book. The book format is simple and easy to read, as almost all are chatting log. Tho i know the direction of this story, it still make me excited when i read the development. And to think it is base on real chatting make it feel surreal. The people on the thread are really heart-warming people, and their support for Train Man is incredible. This book also proof of hardwork of people who making big illustration by typing, long before the emoji enter our life ?

Dennis says

Kann ein Buch gut sein, dass im Grunde nur aus einem Mitschnitt aus einem Internetforum besteht? Nun, in theoretisch-literarischer Hinsicht vielleicht nicht. Nichtsdestotrotz ist die (angeblich tatsächlich wahre) Geschichte vom Densha Otoko (= Train Man, warum man den Originaltitel nicht beibehalten hat, weiß der Geier), der sich mit Rückendeckung des kompletten Forums auf die Jagd nach dem Herzen seiner Hermes-San macht, sehr unterhaltsam - und enthält ganz nebenbei zwei Botschaften, die durchaus mal ausgesprochen werden dürfen:

1. Das Internet muss nicht nur eine Flucht vor der Welt "draußen" sein, sondern kann in entsprechenden Konstellationen durchaus auch eine Lebenshilfe sein.
 2. Selbst der größte Nerd..., obwohl, das will ich gar nicht spoilern. Also: Selber lesen, wie das ganze ausgeht - zumindest ich hab natürlich mal wieder die eine oder andere Träne in den Augen gehabt.
-

Gusfina says

--- Train Man ---

Plot: Lurus, ringan dan menyenangkan.

Penokohan: -

Gaya bercerita: Ala box chatting tetapi tetap mudah dimengerti.

*" Tangan semua orang gemetar pada awalnya.
Aku juga pernah gemetar. Tapi kau tahu apa? Apa?
Itu cuma pada saat pertama.
Pada kesempatan berikutnya, tanganmu tidak akan gemetar lagi.
Kamu akan bisa naik satu tahap "
- Train Man / Naka no Hitoru.*

Sebenarnya saya tidak begitu berminat dengan Train Man. Maksudku-- mungkin saya berminat, tapi tidak untuk pembelian buku segel, melainkan untuk membaca ilegal *oops. Tapi demi memenuhi berat buku yang saya beli secara online dan mengingat review teman saya dan (lagi) mengingat banyaknya adaptasi Train Man, saya pun memasukkan buku ini di keranjang. *Apa salahnya membaca tulisan orisinal awal yang*

mengawali segala adaptasi? Toh komik dan anime selalu saya nonton yang orisinal (yang dijadikan landasan adaptasi) lebih dulu-- pikirku seperti itu.

Novel ini berisi sekumpulan chat di chatbox. Alurnya telah disusun rapih dan semuanya berjalan maju. Tulisan-tulisannya sangat menyenangkan lho. Seakan-- menyatakan sifat ^^ ada yang penuh dengan semangat dan bertebaran kaomoji (ASCI art), ada yang penuh dengan masukan, ada yang berani terjun ke lapangan dan ada yang sekedar memberi semangat.

Saya dibuat tertawa guling-guling saking manisnya mereka semua XD.

Keluhan saya cuma ada di bagian translasi (yang disengajakan "aneh" (padahal sebaiknya menggunakan bahasa yang baik dan benar saja)) dan bagian akhir. Itu pun bukan salah ceritanya. Yah pokoknya saya sudah kapok dengan novel yang isinya bukan berupa kisah paragraf, tapi kurasa kali ini ada pengecualian^^.

Aktifkan suara imajinasi kalian saat membaca novel ini ya (haha)!

[9/10]

Ghyna Amanda Putri says

Waktu pertama kali nonton dorama Densha Otoko, saya udah tau sih kalau ceritanya diambil dari novel (berjudul sama), cuma saya nggak tau kalau ternyata kisah dalam utas 2ch itu bener-bener nyata dan nama Hitori Nakano diambil dari (penyatuan kanji?) orang-orang anonim di 2ch. Sebagai sebuah cerita ini emang keren, nggak aneh sih kalau Hermes sampai bilang 'kayak cerita novel' ya. Tapi di review ini marilah kita bahas seputar novel terjemahan Indonesianya #dor...

Buat nerjemahin buku kayak gini saya udah kebayang kok SUSAHnya kayak apa. Pertama, ragam bahasa yang dipake sama orang-orang di utas itu pasti macem-macem; mulai dari bahasa paling gaul, paling sonkei (baku), sampai bahasa paling ajaib. Belum lagi emoticon yang ngebentuk kata sesuatu (aslinya pasti huruf kana/kanji) makanya sampai ada note perubahan ini dan itu. Jadi saya ingin bilang salut sama penerjemah dan editornya *aplause*. Tapi... tapi ternyata jadi sulit dipahami ya, beberapa penulisan kata kayak 'kelyan' atau 'berjowang' atau 'enyak' macem itu kalau di bahasa Indonesia kan kesannya anak alay pun nggak ada yang pake. Terus karena sebagian besar isinya tentang si Densha yang otaku, jadi banyak juga istilah otaku (yang pastinya hanya bisa dimengerti otaku), ini pasti bikin pembaca awam bingung (what's the problem with otaku man?). Kalau saya sih bisa ngerti (karena saya otaku), tapi buat yang bukan otaku dan jauh dari kehidupan itu pasti bingung juga. Mungkin enaknya di buku bagian catatan editor juga diceritakan segimana 'anu'nya sih hidup para otaku?

Tapi dari segi cerita buku ini keren banget. Yah, mayan bikin doki-doki lah... bacanya juga nggak usah buru-buru, macam baca log utas di internet aja, step by step, one by one, kalau lagi bosen dibaca, kalau udah agak mumet berhenti. Nanti begitu booooms---bagian perang-perangan---baru deh hebring.

Btw, salut sama orang Jepang yang (walau di utas internet gitu) tapi sebegitu niatnya bikin emoticon sampai menyerupai Chiyo (Azumanga Daioh) atau Asuka (NG Evangelion), dan segambreng emot yang bikin ngakak lainnya.

Yue says

Way too cute. Did not fail to move me all over again. The part where the netizens were cheering and congratulating him made me laugh like a maniac but with misty eyes. (((;????)))

The beginning of the book is not really a beginning; it is a continuation of a thread, and just out of the blue, this guy Train Man starts to tell his little adventure. The support he gets is amazing. Here we have a lonely, shy geek who has the chance to have his first relationship with a woman, and all these geeks (some of them who had zero experience as he has) cheer on him and give him advice. And every little step forward he makes is celebrated as a victory.

Although in this book I did not fall for Train and Hermes as I did on the manga, I did love the netizens as much or more as in the manga. It is impossible not to, especially the fervor they put in some things, like the Benoist tea! They are really into Train's story, it is very moving.

Although it is obvious it has to end, I also felt sad like they did when the thread was near the end. They felt very real (much more than Train, who likes to write so flowery he seemed fake some times).

Recommended to anyone who likes to laugh out loud and cry a little bit over sweet things. And for people who likes ASCII.. some were extremely witty and hilarious.

Roxanne Walls says

I am an internet addict, as well as a former forum lurker. It's never been new to see people ask for help with their lovelife on the boards. Train Man's case was quite different. It wasn't just a one-time question-and-answer on the boards. It helped solidify all the forum members into a cohesive community. I really enjoyed the story because it was so current. It highlighted one of the better parts of the internet community, as well as the advantages of having online "friends" to help you out.

The only thing that stopped me from giving this book five stars was the wording. Some of the narration parts were awkward to read. Maybe it's just me, but I thought that the syntax was kinda off. Also, the substitution of Japanese terms like Yen and otaku to the British equivalents was not doing well for me. It's quite awkward to read "anorak" when you know that the correct word is "otaku", or seeing "(Pound sign)x" while expecting "(Yen sign)x".

All in all, I thought this book was a lovely read. It's definitely for the generation that grew up with computers who still believe in the power of love.

BONUS: ASCII art and Japanese emoticons, called 'emoji' make the forum format more interesting.

Aiya says

So cute and so sweet, it's the kind of book that leaves you smiling and just feeling good about the world. It's

a fast, light and easy read, and the perfect cure for whenever you're feeling down.

Donna says

This book contains a very small subset of internet forum posts by a 23 year old virgin man and his fellow members, most of them single geeks, on a geeky singles forum. The original posts appeared in 2004 on the Japanese forum 2channels.

When 'Train Man' witnesses a drunk man harassing a group of women on a train and decides to intervene, he turns to the forum for relationship advice when one of the young women sends him a Hermès tea set as a thank-you gift.

Over a two month period Train Man asks for advice and later, details his progress as he attempts to woo 'Hermès'. In return, his fellow geeks speculate, laugh, post elaborate and hilarious Shift_JIS art and generally treat Train Man's 'betrayal' of the singles forum as a wartime battle. Each time he reveals something about Hermès, his fellow posters react as if they've been bombed. 'Another new bomb! We need to evacuate everybody within a 10-mile radius of the thread!' It may sound completely childish, but I know many geeky men who would say such things and I find it endearing! But anyway...

Train Man's story seems like an elaborate hoax, and speculated to be a publicity stunt for Benoist tea, which he mentions as the tea they both share. And when it all comes to a head, he simply stopped posting on the forum, which does seem a little unbelievable, given his propensity for over-sharing in the past. Still, his identity has never been revealed and he is so innocent and pathetic sometimes, 'age = how long I've been without a girlfriend', that it didn't seem to matter. Teamed with the ghost written commentaries and the other funny posters, I pretty much smiled throughout this entire book.

If the posts were not real, it would have been completely lame but the fact that hundreds of genuine posters responded to Train Man, makes for a very interesting glimpse into the geeky subculture (sans bawdy posts, no doubt). I do hope Train Man and Hermès are living happily together.

Phoebe Andamo says

The novel basically consists of forum posts with ASCII characters by geeks. It was from 2????? 2channel, the anonymous bulletin board. The thread was for singles who were posting about their common woes and mundane lives.

One day, a geek shared his story on how he worked up the courage to stand against a drunk man in train, and saved women from harassment. Thereafter, a lady sent him Hermes tea cups as a thank you gift. He asked for advices from his fellow geeks on what to do next, and he was called Train Man. The geeks brainstormed and rooted for Train Man and Hermes.

Nakano Hitori is a collective pseudonym for the geeks. Naka no Hitori (??????) is a Japanese word pun that means "one among many" or "one of us".

Dudes. The past two months' worth of expended energy and might, in yer face!
www.geocities.co.jp/Milkyway-Aquarius...

A certain 'Nakano Hitori' consolidated their posts and made a flash site. It was said that the site was clean because the original thread has some dirty and pervy stuff that they won't share (Train Man shared it to Hermes though). They still maintained their anonymity.

Train Man loves animés like Keroro, Sailormoon, and Pretty Cure. He looks like the guitarist of ELT while Hermes looks like Ogawa Tamaki and Nakatani Miki.

I really like the book because I'm a geek. I live on the internet, and I also like animés (but Pretty Cure? No).
