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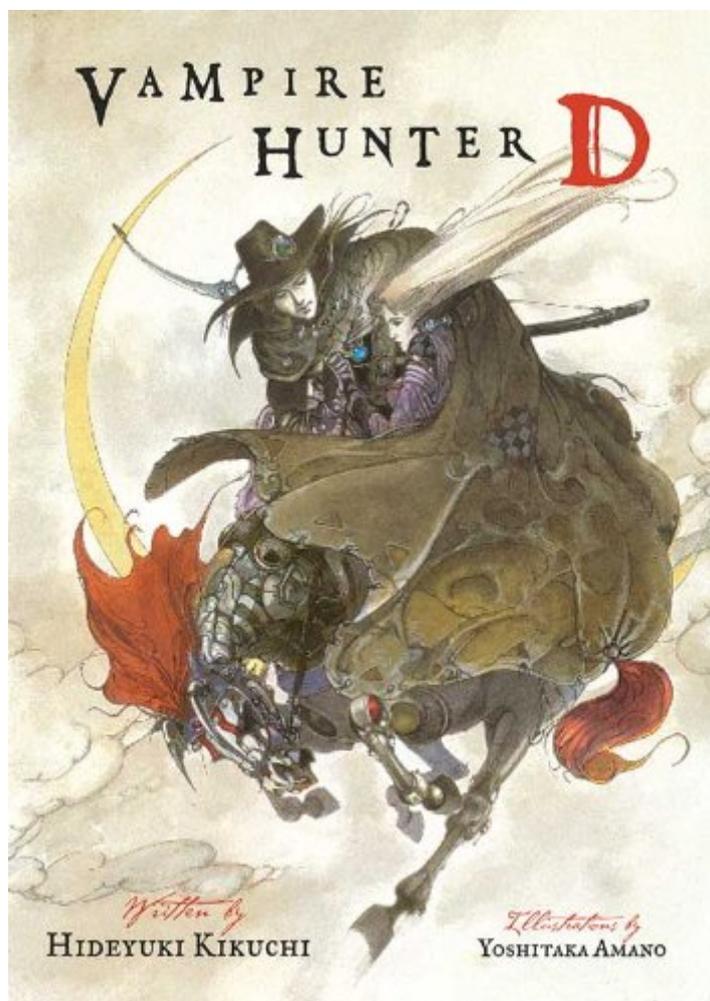
Vampire Hunter D Volume 1

Synopsis

12,090 A.D. It is a dark time for the world. Humanity is just crawling out from under three hundred years of domination by the race of vampires known as the Nobility. The war against the vampires has taken its toll; cities lie in ruin, the countryside is fragmented into small villages and fiefdoms that still struggle against nightly raids by the fallen vampires-and the remnants of their genetically manufactured demons and werewolves. Every village wants a Hunter-one of the warriors who have pledged their laser guns and their swords to the eradication of the Nobility. But some Hunters are better than others, and some bring their own kind of danger with them... From creator Hideyuki Kikuchi, one of Japan's leading horror authors with illustrations by renowned Japanese artist, Yoshitaka Amano, best known for his illustrations in Neil Gaiman's Sandman: The Dream Hunters and the Final Fantasy games.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

While I know many Americans are familiar with the manga "Vampire Hunter D", the popular series of Japanese novels have finally been translated into English and are being published in the US. This novel, set in the year AD 12,090, is an entertaining mix of genres, most importantly post-apocalyptic

futurism and basic horror, with little sword and sorcery thrown in.Vampires have ruled humanity since the 21th century, after humanity initiated the last world war. Now their time is coming to an end, humanity is reasserting itself, and specially trained humans are needed to kill the various monsters, mutants, and vampires that still prey on mankind.D (the only name he is given) is such a hunter. D is a dhampir, the off-spring of a vampire father and a human mother. With his tremendous supernatural powers, D agrees to help young farm girl Doris fend of the ammorous attentions of Count Magnus Lee, one of the few vampires to rule his domain.First, the unpleasant truth. This isn't a particulary well-written book. There is the caveat that this is a _translated_ work. However, I suspect that this was a pretty literal translation. Stylistically, Kikuchi seems to be heavily influenced by 19th century European works as well as early 20th century pulp ficion--many of the turns of phrase, elaborate description of setting, reminded me of an imitation of H.P. Lovecraft imitating Charles Dickens. Kikuchi has an interesting tendency to editorialize about the qualities of his characters: the villains are evil, he states over and over, and the heroes are good. Consequently, the character development is enough to keep the action going.This may sound negative, but it's not meant to be. So the stuff ain't Shakespeare.

After reading the review by Zdenko Juskuv, I feel a few issues about this book should be addressed.First off, criticizing a work of fiction for its lack of use of meter is like criticizing a poem for not having a plot. Since when does prose concern itself with meter?Second, the book's premise is presented upfront: it's a story of a vampire hunter in the far future. To pick up the book after knowing that, read it, and then complain about what you got is nonsensical. If the concept of this book peeks your interest, you will enjoy the plot. Kikuchi does a fantastic job of setting up tension, delivering what was promised, and posing a new crisis for the characters to respond to.Also, Kikuchi does not use Deus Ex Machina in every chapter, and I honestly have no idea where that remark even came from. The characters are always in control of their own destinies. Never does a divine force save them from an undesirable situation.There are times when the narrator does ask a question to the reader. I don't see how this is a negative, though. There is more than one way to tell a story, and more than one type of narrator an author can implore. Kikuchi uses the type of narrator known as "the storyteller." It has a fairytale feeling to it. If you've read any Neil Gaiman, you know the type of narrator I'm talking about.I was very impressed with this book, and I graduated with an English degree. Anytime you criticize a book, you have to do so on its own ground. Vampire Hunter D is presented as a sci-fi/fantasy/horror book that is meant to be a fun read. And that's exactly what it is--it's a page turner. If you're thinking of buying this book because you're intrigued by the concept,

characters, setting, and plot, you will not be disappointed.

I've been a fan of D ever since I was 9 (I'm 23 now) and stumbled across a midnight showing of the original on cartoon network back when space ghost hosted movies. Anyway this has for years been one of my favorite movies, and D may be my favorite literary character. I have also been trying for a long time to get the original novels of which there are around 20 but until recently none were available in English. So when I was at my local store and noticed that these were now available I just about flipped, buying both volumes immediately. In terms of the writing style it is obvious that a lot of attention was paid to giving us an accurate translation. Also the translator has great English grammar and syntax. However this book does not flow, it is written poorly from a literary standpoint. There are places where the text is clunky and disjointed although grammatically flawless. Also there are many times when the writing seems redundant and certain ideas seem to be over explained. Now before we bash this too much, let us take into consideration the fact that this was originally in Japanese and the great differences between the basic structures of that language and our own makes for a difficult translation. My opinion is that the translator did a great job, worked very hard and is very skilled. However my opinion is also that he is not a good writer in his own right and often times leaves things in or over explains things that probably worked great in the original language but when moved to English becomes choppy or redundant. With all that said the story is so interesting, the characters so drawing and the progression so artful that this remains an amazing work of fiction. And since I don't plan on learning Japanese anytime soon I am very grateful for this copy no matter what the faults.

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