

TOKYOPOP
PRESENTS

MANGA

漫画

SUMMER 2007

FREE

Vampire Kisses

IT'S A GRAVE
NEW WORLD

UNDERTOWN

BELIEVE IN WHAT'S
UNDER YOUR BED

GOth CORNER

IT'S NOT JUST
LACE AND FRILLS



PLUS

- COSPLAY CROSSPLAY
- TOKYOPOP.COM GETS SCHOOLED
- JAE-HWAN KIM WANTS PEACE ON EARTH

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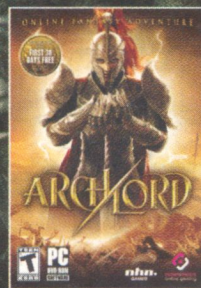
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Vampire Kisses

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TO BUY
manga

We love manga, we love our fans, and we especially love our retailers—and here are a few retailers who love manga as much as we do! We encourage you to buy TOKYOPOP goodies from your favorite bookstore and comic shop—look for manga in the graphic novel or manga section. To find a store near you, visit: www.tokyopop.com/63.html

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Here's some info you should know about sending us your stuff:

All submissions of letters and art must be made via regular mail to:

TOKYOPOP attn: Manga Magazine
5900 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 2000
Los Angeles, CA 90036

Please print your name, your age, and your address clearly on your letter, art, story, etc.

No submissions will be returned to you. Anything you send to us becomes the property of TOKYOPOP Inc. We will have the right to print, reproduce, distribute, or modify the artwork for use in any of our products, royalty-free. We will have the right to print your name, city, and state if we include your work in any of our products.

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On the back of each piece of artwork or each page of a letter submitted, your parent or guardian must give his or her permission.

You acknowledge that all material you send to us is your original creation and does not violate the rights of others. (In other words, it's OK to send us art based on CLAMP's manga, but only if YOU are the artist and NOT if you ripped it off from your little sister or former best friend.)

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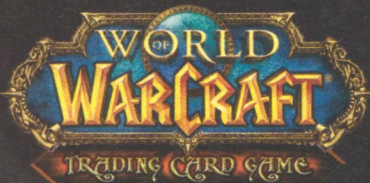
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THEY COULDN'T GIVE
ME MY OWN PAGE IN
THIS ISSUE—YOU'LL
HAVE TO VISIT ME AT
TOKYOPOP.COM/MARCOTING



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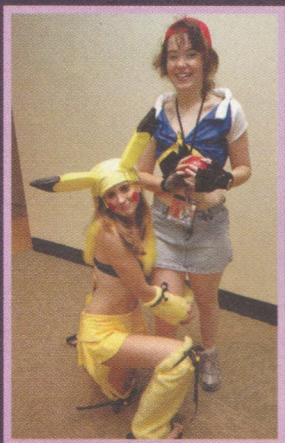
Believe in what's under your bed.

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also in this issue:

- Save lots of \$\$\$ on TOKYOPOP's summer and fall titles—only for Manga Magazine subscribers!

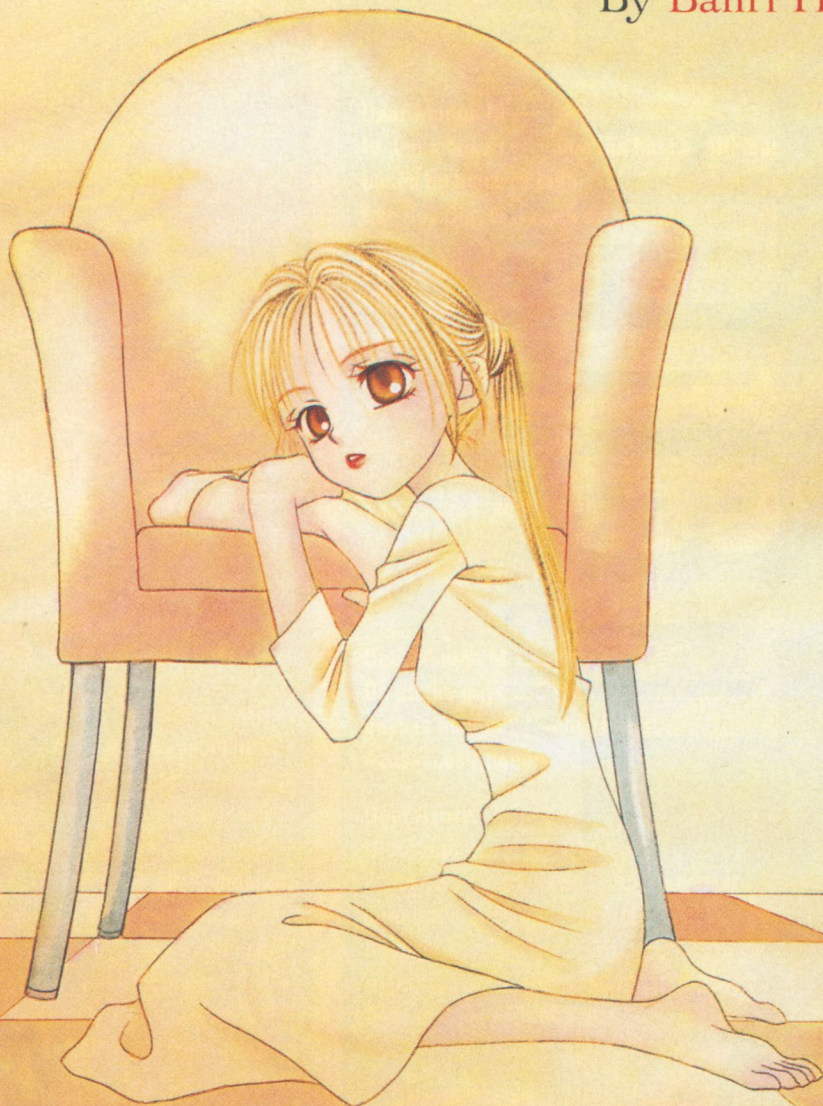


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manga101

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drugs, but
say yes to
manga!

THE DEADLINE
FOR RSOM IS
APPROACHING!



Dear Manga Magazine:

As an aspiring manga-ka, what is the best way possible to make it out there in the business?

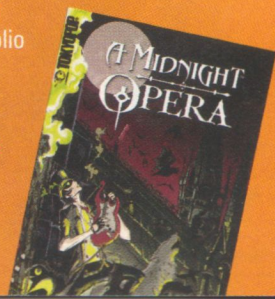
TenshiBu, California

Dear TenshiBu:

TOKYOPOP is proud to be leading the Manga Revolution—but a revolution needs soldiers, and that's where aspiring manga-ka come in. The best way to break into the industry is through the Rising Stars of Manga competition. Here's how it works: submit up to 20 pages of a short manga story, in English, in one of the following genres: Action, Comedy, Drama, Fantasy, Horror, Mystery, Romance, or Sci-Fi. We'll select the best in each category to be printed in an upcoming anthology, as well as award up to \$1,000 cash prize! Pretty sweet, huh? The deadline for Rising Stars 8 is the second week of January. For more rules, check the TOKYOPOP website!

We also have portfolio reviews at many of the big conventions. Here's a list of tips to help you succeed!

1. Bring sequentials. Manga *is* sequential art. It doesn't matter how great your illustration or pin-up work is, we can only publish sequentials.
2. Bring an open mind. We're not passing judgment on you as a person or an artist. We can only give constructive criticism about the pieces you show us and tell you what we're looking for.
3. Bring samples to leave with us. We'll have a lasting memory of you, and your portfolio in our office. Take notes so that you can take something away, too.



Dear Manga Magazine:
 What makes manga addictive? Because
 I can't stop reading, it's like candy!
 Elmoh, The Netherlands

Dear Elmoh:

Good question (from a long way away)! Some people think there is a massive manga industry conspiracy to print manga on paper created with some addictive drug, but this is false. To me, manga is addictive because the story continues from book to book and you HAVE to find out what happens next. Also the fact that there will be an end at some point and you want to see how the story concludes for good. Popular manga does a great job of creating characters that the reader cares about and wants to follow from book to book, and *that* makes it addictive. Say no to drugs, say yes to manga!

Dear Manga Magazine:
 Would TOKYOPOP consider a petition a good reason to license a particular manga? If yes, how many names/signatures would need to be on it to be taken seriously?

Taj in IL

Dear Taj:

Thanks for the question, Taj. Petitions are cool but not really necessary. Just sending us an email or mentioning it on the TOKYOPOP.com forum will be enough to get our attention on to the particular title that you want licensed. We're always accepting of suggestions—so bring them on!



The best way
 to break into
 the industry is
 through the
 Rising Stars
 of Manga
 competition.

Dear Manga Magazine:

Hi, I'm a big video game fan but I heard manga based on games kinda suck. Is this the case?

Cat-Boy Coy, New Jersey

Dear C-BC:

While it is true that there are a lot of video game manga that can be...uh....lacking, there are some winners out there, too! The art in the *Kingdom Heart* books is fantastic, and the series is really popular. Though I hear the story is very similar to the game. Two series I recommend are *Devil May Cry* and *Warcraft: The Sunwell Trilogy*. Those are full of action, and the art is gorgeous!

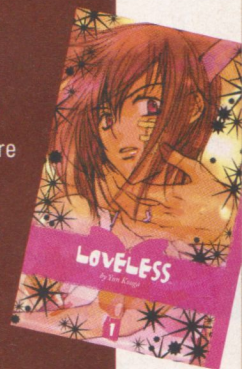
Dear Manga Magazine:

Do all the guys in Japan look like the guys in manga?! Soubi's hawt!

Azusa, Los Angeles

Dear Azusa:

Unfortunately, you'll probably be disappointed if you go to Japan looking for bishonen. I'm sure there are a lot of "hawt" Japanese guys but manga characters aren't exactly drawn realistically. I'm glad to see that you are enjoying *Loveless*, it's a great series!



WRITE TO
 ME-IF I PUBLISH
 YOUR LETTER, YOUR
 FRIENDS WILL THINK
 YOU'RE COOL.



UGC

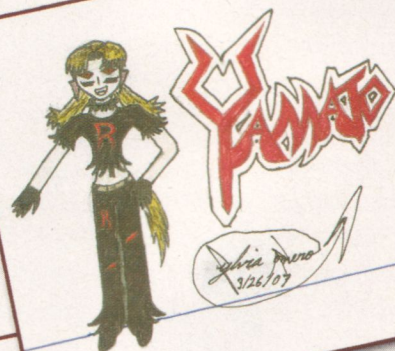
IT'S NOT THE NAME OF A COLLEGE, IT'S WHAT'S
EXPLODING ON TOKYOPOP.COM!

School may be out for the summer, but that doesn't mean that hundreds of thousands of members are learning to hone their craft on the manga lifestyle destination of TOKYOPOP.com. A quick look at UGC—user-generated content—the ever-expanding library of manga and fan art and fiction and photos shows a talented group of artists. Here's a snap shot of what you've been popping:

From WEZ88: "Sakura
—don't give up hope"



Butcher



From ayami:
"This iz not me"



We also had the pleasure of asking Silvia R and Miguel R (no relation), two TP.com members and budding manga-ka from Blessed Sacrament High School in New York, a few questions about what makes them tick and what inspires them. The answers may surprise you!

TOKYOPOP: What got you into art and manga?

SILVIA: I got into it when I started watching anime on TV and reading comics when I was 8 years old.

MIGUEL: Mostly watching anime; also RPG games are very interesting—especially the characters and the background. I like to design my own characters and background that match my interests.

TOKYOPOP: What inspires you?

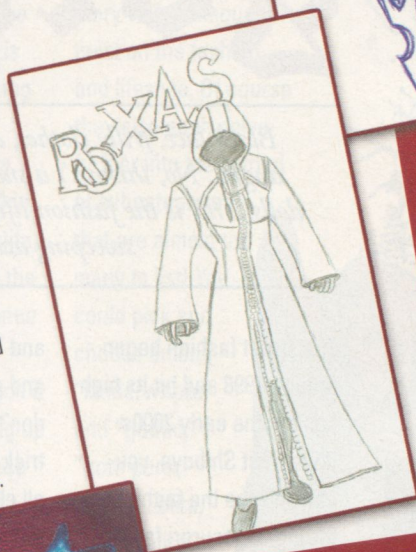
SILVIA: I got inspired by my friend who loves to draw manga—and she gave me free lessons!

MIGUEL: Games such as Kingdom Hearts and Final Fantasy. Also, animals inspire me . . . in some of my drawings I cross-breed animals. For example, a shark and a viper = a vipark.

TOKYOPOP: What are your goals?

SILVIA: My goal is to become a manga artist and make comics!

MIGUEL: I want to perfect my drawing abilities—I want to create the ultimate drawing that represents all of my thoughts.



From
expensive
"punkgirl"



AMERICA'S NEXT TOP MANGA MAGAZINE?

Jessica Ange, editor of Burst, was kind enough to send along a copy of the very first issue of her magazine, which includes a section of manga. She and her "partner in weirdness" Rachel De Leon have created a truly awesome collection of poetry, fiction, art, and, of course, manga.

In Ms. Ange's letter to Manga Magazine, she explained in detail the exhausting process of creating the magazine from A to Z, and even offered an explanation should we find any spelling errors: "I'm an artist." Spoken like a true artist indeed!

Here is the front cover of the first issue—we can't wait to see the next issue.

And a big P.S. to Mr. Matnner—we think this deserves an A+!



the world according to goth lolí

Black lace, frilly clothes, and miniature crowns delicately set at an angle... No, this isn't a sneak peek of the next line of American Girl dolls. This is the fashion lifestyle craze originating in Japan that's now sweeping across the globe: Gothic Lolita.



The street fashion began around 1998 and hit its high point in the early 2000s. If you visit Shibuya, you can still see the faithful throng of gosurori fans, but surprisingly enough, the style has never really been accepted as typical mainstream attire. I recommend you pick up a FRUiTS book for an eye-opening showcase of Gothic Lolita at its peak for a lesson in pop culture. Intricate threading, ribbons, lace, and silk are the signature marks of Gothic Lolita, and the very title of the fashion comes from the combination of "gothic fashion" (that'd be your dark Victorian-style)

and "Lolita" (the childish and pretty aspect). And don't let the word "Lolita" trick you. The style, above all else, places importance on modesty and elegance, rather than anything sexy or kinky.

So what is the appeal of thick lace and petticoats for Western and Eastern youth alike? As with every youth subculture, there are those who take the fashion to a whole new level as a lifestyle, too. Wearers of the style consider it an expression of elegance, mystery, and coolness. A few clicks around the Internet show just how vast the array of

fans and experts are in the field of Gothic Lolita, but this article hopes to bring attention to the exquisite fashion existing in my more favorable medium: manga.

These days, you can't pick up a manga or anime without seeing some evidence of Gothic Lolita in the art or story.

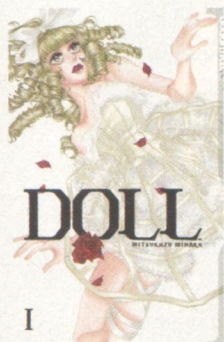


Princess Ai Vol. 1



The Dreaming Vol. 1

Paradise Kiss was probably one of the earliest instances of Gothic Lolita appearing in the public eye. Turn around and you see more influence of it in series such as *Tsukuyomi: Moon Phase*, *Chobits*, *Rozen Maiden*, *Trinity Blood*... the list goes on and on. And let's not forget Mitsukazu Mihara! In addition to giving us a whole line of heart-wrenching stories with



Doll Vol. 1

Gothic Lolita overtones (*Embalmer, IC in a Sunflower, Haunted House*) she was a vision—and a *very special guest*—at Otakon 2005, decked out from head to toe in Gothic Lolita. I also hear she was a treat to talk to. ^_^ The woman is an icon in this fashion world, illustrating the cover for every issue of *Gothic & Lolita Bible*—which is the bible for all things Gothic Lolita, providing the staple in the fashion, wig-maintenance tips, and even helpful sewing patterns. Bet you'd like to see *that* showing up in bookstores across the country?!

Moving on... A lot of TOKYOPOP's OGM

(original global manga), too, are laden with the striking and detailed Gothic Lolita-inspired fashion. *Princess Ai*, *Bizenghast*, *Mark of the Succubus*, and *Gothic Sports* each has a unique story with a unique twist on the fashion and lifestyle. Of course they also each delve further into the myriad of subcategories that are almost too many to list! You could pick and choose among "kinderwhore" and "gothic," "goth punk," "sweet Lolita," "punk Lolita" etc, but the thing they



Bizenghast Vol. 3

the world according to goth loli

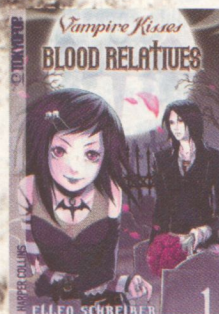


Trinity Blood Vol. 1

all share is an attractive and sharp fashion sense that manga fans just eat up!

And for all you out considering a wardrobe update...look no further! TOKYOPOP's rolling out a whole slew of Gothic Lolita-inspired books later this year! In September, *Dark Moon Diary* takes you to a monster-ridden European town where the heroine, Kitten, learns to survive...in style! And another special treat from the new founded co-pubs between TOKYOPOP and

publishing powerhouse HarperCollins: a tale of forbidden love between a girl and a vampire in... *Vampire Kisses*! (Make sure you check out the *Vampire Kisses* manga preview in this magazine!) The artist for the book, rem, is an expert in the field of Gothic Lolita-inspired fashion and all the subgenres that go along with it. She even went so far as to give every character his or her own specific fashion—"urban" punk goth, biker-chick Lolita, techno-punk goth... rem knows her stuff better than anyone. Check out her awesome website here: <http://www.blackmoontides.com>. Does the website name make it any more obvious?!

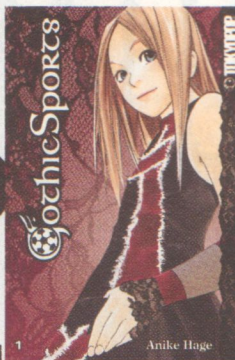


Vampire Kisses Vol. 1

Oh, and remember that really cool *Gothic & Lolita Bible*? ****SURPRISE!**** TOKYOPOP is proud to announce the release for your viewing and purchasing pleasure in February of 2008! So dust off that old sewing machine, check out the nearest vintage shop, and get ready to be a part of the hottest fashion around! -Kathy Schilling



Art: Bizenghast



Gothic Sports Vol. 1



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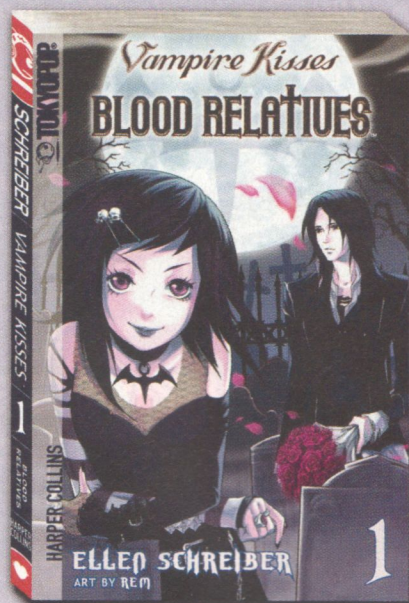
VAMPIRE KISSES: BLOOD RELATIVES

WITH THE LIGHTS ON, IT'S LESS DANGEROUS...



Artist rem is the
very first winner
of the Rising
Stars of Manga
competition!

Before Ellen Schreiber took pen to paper to begin the epic that has become *Vampire Kisses*, she was an actress! She spent a summer in London, England, at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Arts, where she learned the ins and outs about the "Old Bard" from an amazingly talented group of teachers. Check out www.ellenschreiber.com for more info on Ellen Schreiber and the entire *Vampire Kisses* universe!



The absolute last thing Goth girl Raven and her vampire boyfriend Alexander need is *another* hitch in their night-time only romance—but dark trouble hovers on the horizon when Raven and Alexander discover four freshly dug graves filled with empty coffins...

When a crew of dodgy vampires takes up residence in Dullsville's lonely graveyard, Alexander finds this motley bunch is led by his very own blood-sucking cousin, Claude Sterling. Claude and his creepy crew can only spell out more problems for the pair, especially when Raven finds them in daylight attending Dullsville High—shocking!

What could Claude and his invaders be doing—or searching for—in Dullsville? It's all inside this original manga based on the hit novel series.



CHAPTER 1: VAMPIRE PICNIC



**Raven Madison
has a wicked
sense of
gothic style...**

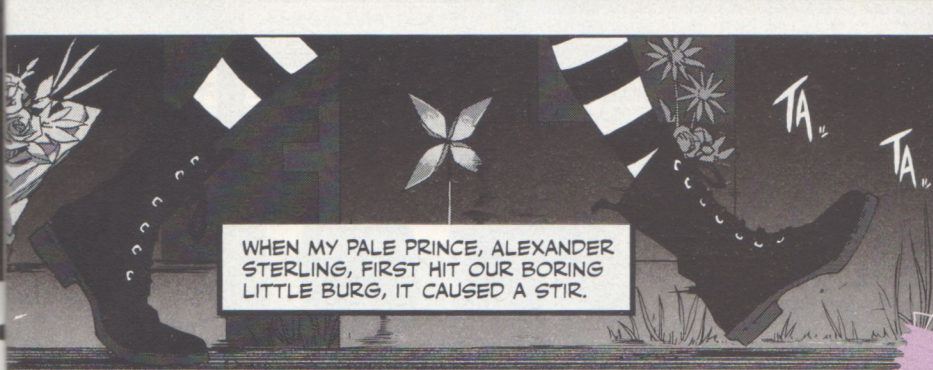
>> Meet Raven Madison, who is acting like...well...a raven! She's perched on a fence and ready to strike. (Actually, she's on her way to a romantic date in the cemetery with her vampire boyfriend.)

Sporting black lipstick, black nail polish, and a sharp wit, Raven is an outcast at conservative Dullsville High.


YOU MIGHT BE WONDERING WHY I'M STANDING OUTSIDE OF A CEMETERY IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT.

IT TOOK ME SIXTEEN YEARS TO FIND THE GUY OF MY DREAMS, I GUESS I CAN WAIT A FEW MORE MINUTES. WHO WOULD EVER BELIEVE THAT MY WILDEST WISH, TO DATE AN ACTUAL VAMPIRE, WOULD COME TRUE?

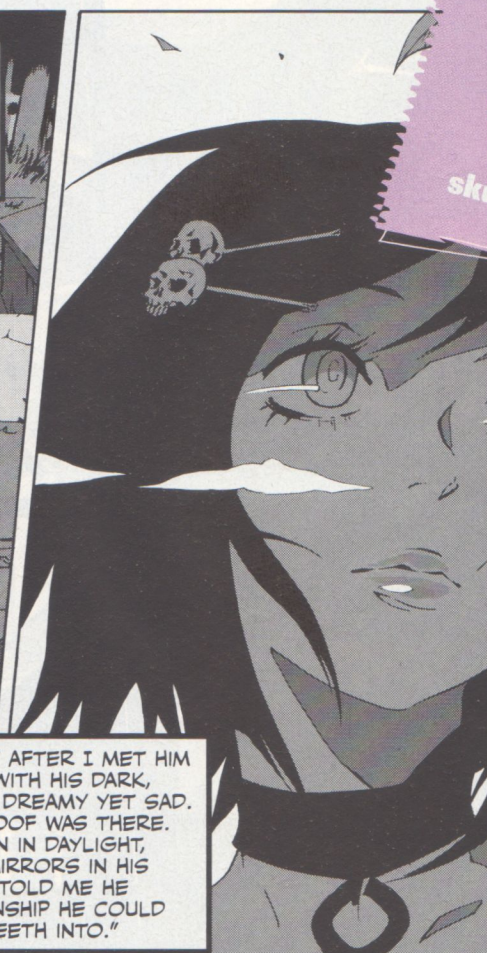
Raven's greatest wish has come true—she's dating a real vampire! The only problem: She has to wait until sundown to see him...and must keep his true identity a secret. >>



WHEN MY PALE PRINCE, ALEXANDER STERLING, FIRST HIT OUR BORING LITTLE BURG, IT CAUSED A STIR.



HIS CREEPY, GOTHIC MANSION ON TOP OF BENSON HILL, BUILT BY HIS GRANDMOTHER, FUELED RUMORS THAT HIS ENTIRE FAMILY WERE CREATURES OF THE NIGHT THAT ESCAPED FROM ROMANIA.



EVEN I BELIEVED IT AFTER I MET HIM AND FELL IN LOVE WITH HIS DARK, SOULFUL EYES, SO DREAMY YET SAD. AFTER ALL, THE PROOF WAS THERE. HE WAS NEVER SEEN IN DAYLIGHT, HE HAD COVERED MIRRORS IN HIS BASEMENT, AND HE TOLD ME HE WANTED A RELATIONSHIP HE COULD "REALLY SINK HIS TEETH INTO."

Check it out:
Raven wears
many stylish
accessories,
such as
skull barrettes.

Curious and fearless,
Raven's not afraid to
take on anyone—from
gossiping girls to even
scarier, nefarious
creatures of the night.

>> Most 16-year-old girls would be afraid to walk around in a cemetery at night. But to Raven, it's the most romantic place there is!

BUT DURING OUR EVENING MOVIE DATES AND ROMANTIC WALKS IN THE DARK, HE REVEALED HIMSELF TO BE A BROODINGLY QUIET AND MYSTERIOUS, BUT VERY HUMAN MATE. WHEN HE FINALLY TOOK ME TO HIS ROOM TO REVEAL HIS SECRETS, I HOPED TO FIND A COFFIN.

BUT JUST AS I BEGAN A RELATIONSHIP WITH THIS SENSITIVE, HOT ARTIST GUY, I WAS IN FOR THE SHOCK OF MY LIFE. ONE NIGHT AT THE MANSION WE SEALED OUR DATE WITH A HEART-MELTINGLY PASSIONATE KISS.

I GLANCED TO CATCH A GLIMPSE OF HIS SWEET SMILE IN MY COMPACT MIRROR. THERE WAS NO REFLECTION. I CHECKED IT AGAIN, THEN A THIRD TIME.

Raven's boyfriend Alexander lived in Romania before moving to town.

INSTEAD I DISCOVERED AMAZING ARTWORK. TURNS OUT IN ADDITION TO HIS GOTHIC CHARM, HE WAS ALSO A FABULOUS PAINTER.

THEN I CHECKED MY MAKEUP.

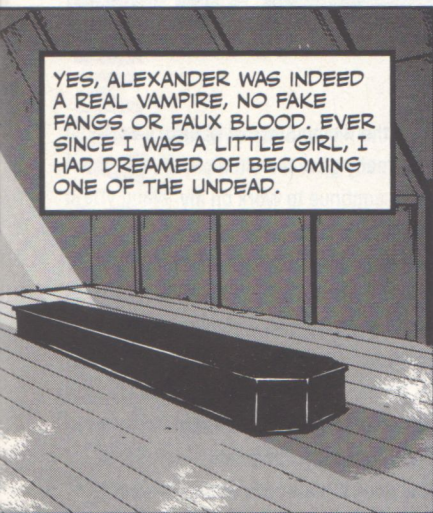
NO ALEXANDER. HE WAS REALLY A VAMPIRE!

One big artistic challenge of this manga was to draw nighttime scenes without making the pages too dark. The artist, rem, skillfully used black and white to create a beautiful contrast. >>

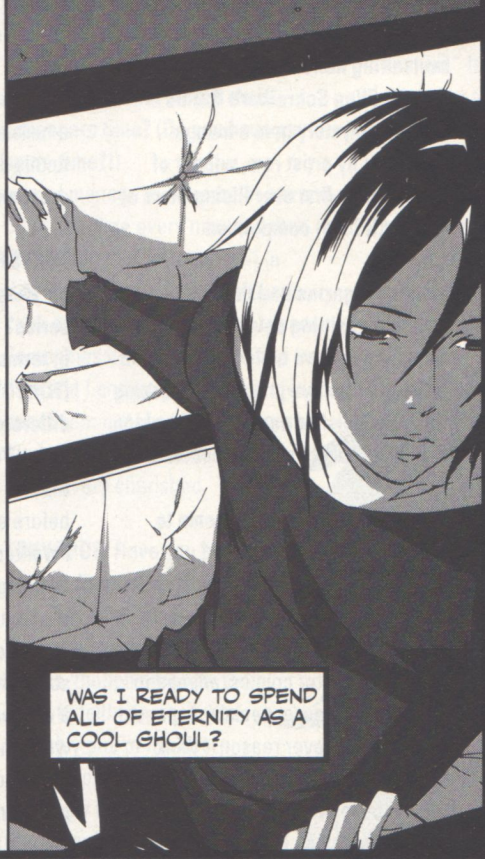
IT WAS MY DARKEST FANTASY COME TRUE! PERHAPS HE DIDN'T REALLY SLEEP ON AN UNMADE MATTRESS IN HIS ATTIC BEDROOM FLOOR LIKE A REGULAR TEEN. INSTEAD, HE SOUGHT DARKER SHELTER DURING THE DAY



YES, ALEXANDER WAS INDEED A REAL VAMPIRE, NO FAKE FANGS OR FAUX BLOOD. EVER SINCE I WAS A LITTLE GIRL, I HAD DREAMED OF BECOMING ONE OF THE UNDEAD.



BUT NOW THAT I WAS FACED WITH THAT REALITY—DID I REALLY WANT TO BARE MY SOUL—AND MY NECK—TO MY NEW LOVE?

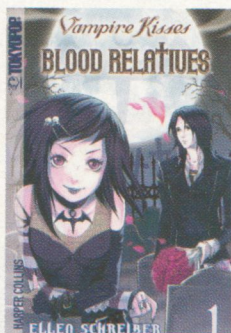


WAS I READY TO SPEND ALL OF ETERNITY AS A COOL GHOUL?



The results are in:
Who *wouldn't* want
vampire kisses
from this hottie?!

>> Alexander isn't the *only* vampire in *Vampire Kisses: Blood Relatives*. Raven will have to deal with Alexander's cousin, Claude, who takes things by force when he doesn't get his way.....



COFFIN

"I'M A HUGE FAN OF
HORROR MOVIES,
MONSTERS, HEAVY
METAL MUSIC, AND
PUNK FASHION. IF
THAT KIND OF STUFF
COUNTS AS GOTH
CULTURE, THEN
SURE, I LOVE IT!"

This Fall's release of *Vampire Kisses: Blood Relatives* brings together a brilliant fusion of two grand art forms: bestselling fiction and cutting-edge manga! Ellen Schreiber's Gothic romantic mystery gets a manga makeover by artist rem, winner of TOKYOPOP's first ever Rising Stars of Manga (RSOM) competition.

Manga Magazine had the virtual pleasure of sitting down with the manga-ka to have a bloody good chat about the creative process of working on an established series, Goth fashion, and how *not* to spy on a musician!

TOKYOPOP: How did you come to become a manga artist?

rem: I've always loved to draw, ever since I was about three years old (according to my mom), and I've always had an affinity for comics, animation and video games, especially Japanese ones for what-ever reason. I think it's because my mom is Asian, so I've been exposed to Korean and Japanese culture ever since I was very little. When I was introduced to manga at the age of 10 or so, it just fit me perfect! I've been in love ever since.

TOKYOPOP: What was your experience after winning RSOM?

rem: Winning the Rising Stars of Manga was super, it really gave me a ton of confidence to continue to work on my various original projects, and publicity that I really didn't expect. I still get fan emails about my entry, "Devil's Candy" to this day! All around it was a really great experience.

TOKYOPOP: How do you find working on *Vampire Kisses*, an established series? How does the process work in terms of a co-published book (TOKYOPOP and HarperCollins) by a different writer?

rem: Well, this is actually something that I'm very comfortable with. Way before and after Rising Stars of Manga, I worked as a freelance illustrator. Working with TOKYOPOP has been the same for me as it has been with any other client I've had, though somewhat more enjoyable. It's always a challenge and a delight for me to work on a project with someone and try to incorporate my own style and preferences into something that both me and the people I'm working with can be really happy with. That way I don't have to feel like a workhorse or anything, and in the case of *Vampire Kisses* I really feel like I'm a part of the whole project (which makes me super happy!) I'd say that it's

AN INTERVIEW WITH REM, ARTIST FOR VAMPIRE KISSES

BREAK

been a surprisingly huge amount of fun for me, though...it does keep me pretty busy!

TOKYOPOP: What are you bringing that's unique to *Vampire Kisses*?

rem: One thing I noticed when I was reading *Vampire Kisses* was that fashion was a really important part of the series. Luckily, I love fashion and felt obligated to contribute! I'm a huge fan of Japanese "harajuku-style" fashion, including elegant gothic, Gothic Lolita, and Goth punk styles. It mostly stems from my love of Japanese Visual Kei style music. I'm so in love with Kera magazine and such labels as H. Naoto, so it really comes natural for me to try to get the characters in *Vampire Kisses* to wear that stuff. Luckily, it fits right in.

TOKYOPOP: Do you like Goth culture?

rem: I'm a huge fan of horror movies, monsters, heavy metal music, and punk fashion. If that kind of stuff counts as Goth culture, then sure, I love it!

TOKYOPOP: What else are you working on?

rem: I've got so many things I do that I can hardly keep up with them all! Right now I'm working on rebuilding my homepage (very slow process), my various original manga stories, and I'm

trying sooo hard to get some ideas for illustrations out of my head and onto paper, so to speak.

TOKYOPOP: What do you do in your spare time? (Do you have any spare time?!!)

rem: I manage to squeeze in a teensy bit of free time every now and then. (Shh!! Don't tell my editors!!) In that time I try to take pictures, sew, cook and spent time with my friends. Sometimes it's really hard to find free time and I end up getting cabin fever but absence makes the heart grow fonder, so what little free time I have is very cherished.

TOKYOPOP: Have you been to Japan? Any stories?

rem: Yes, I have been to Japan (Tokyo) and yes, I do have stories, though probably too many to tell! For me, it was probably one of the best experiences of my life. I guess one of my favorite experiences there was going to a Mucc concert. They're one of my favorite bands, so me and my boyfriend had to go and try to get tickets. In the end we had to stand outside that club for at least two hours in 20-degree weather

waiting for who knows what. We were surrounded by droves of schoolgirls in short skirts muttering, "Okaa-san, samuiiii." It was a great concert, but I think that the band wanted to kill us. We spied their bassist throw an empty bottle of water to hit the head of a girl who was cosplaying him and later he spewed water out of his mouth on all the girls in the front rows (I think he wanted them to get hypothermia). Mucc's cool, though I still love them.



LET'S CROSSPLAY

TWENTY-THREE RANDOM COSPLAYERS; TWELVE *CROSSPLAYERS*—IT'S STRIKING WHEN YOU THINK ABOUT IT BUT THIS IS THE TYPICAL RATIO AT MOST EVENTS.

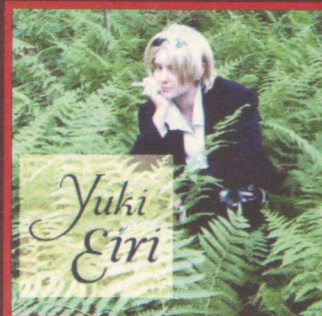
A scream chased me across the Dealers' Room: "Hey, Dr. Black Jack, are you a boy or a girl? 'Cause if you're a boy, I'll totally leave my boyfriend for you!" I almost felt bad answering: "Sorry, I'm a girl." Even then I could tell she considered it a minute before answering, "Oh, well."

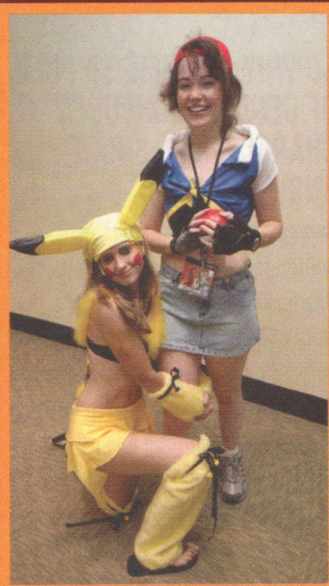
Welcome to the wide world of *crossplay*: cosplaying a character of the opposite sex. These days, as many as fifty percent of the cosplayers you see at any given con are not the same sex as their characters, and it is not uncommon to interact with a cosplayer for hours or even days without being certain of their gender. On the other hand, you may have seen crossplayers whose crossdressing was very conspicuous, such as a female Roy Mustang in a miniskirt, or "Mañ-Faye," a young man infamous for dressing as Faye Valentine, hairy legs and all.

DON'T BE OBVIOUS!

A central issue in crossplay is whether to try to "pass" as the other gender or let your crossdressing be obvious. Some crossplayers go to great lengths to disguise their gender, binding, padding, adjusting their faces with makeup and their voices with laborious practice. Others only pay attention to the character, paying no attention to concealing their gender so long as the costume is accurate and recognizable. A third category intentionally brings attention to the fact that they are crossplaying by wearing a costume which highlights their wrong-gender physical traits, a hulking, hairy-legged sailor scout being the stereotypical example.

Generally one associates this third category most with males dressed as women, but the recent trend of playing "femme" versions of male characters, the Naruto "Sexy no Jutsu" trend being the most popular, is really the reverse of the same thing. So why does it feel so much less strange to see a female Naruto or Gaara than a male Faye Valentine?





A BISHOUNEN EXPLOSION

Putting off the sexuality issues for a moment, one key reason is that the female body-type fits the current anime aesthetic far better than the male. While muscle-bound heroes were common into the early nineties, current anime creators are turning out more and more feminized-looking males, even in shounen series. In Japan, this movement is almost pure marketing, since companies have realized that shows are more profitable when they can be marketed to both genders. The consequence for cosplay is that a woman dressed as a bishounen often looks more like the character than a man would in the same costume, while a male crossplaying as a mahou shojo has to make elaborate

(and often painful) modifications to his figure if he wants to look the part. "Sexy no Jutsu" Gaara may not appear in *Naruto*, but it does look like something which would appear in an anime. It has the right aesthetic, while a male-looking Faye Valentine-type character design would only appear in anime as a comedy character or pervert. If you take pictures of fifty male anime characters and show them to a non anime-watcher, half of them will be mistaken for women; is it any wonder, then, that female variants look right to us while male variants look strange?

One important thing to note is that the category of crossplayers who ignore their gender and neither try to "pass" nor show it off is composed almost entirely of

women, while male crossplayers generally either try to look as female as possible or as male as possible. After all, there is no cultural stigma attached to females wearing male clothes, so female cosplayers dress as male characters very casually, often without ever thinking about the fact that it is crossplay. Males dressed as females, on the other hand, are actively violating social rules, so both the crossplayer and the spectators are far more conscious of the male's choice than they would be of a female's. If you think back over your convention





experiences, you have probably never seen a male crossplay without thinking, "Whoa! That's a guy!" while you've seen hundreds of female crossplays and not thought about it.

Since crossplay has become so common, anime conventions are now a place where men can dress as women relatively freely, and where those who would not dare to cross-dress elsewhere can do so with less fear. These days, everyone knows males who crossplay receive far more encouragement than flak from their fellow otaku, so the number of males who are willing to crossplay females at cons is not limited so much by fear of social retribution as by men's own feelings of discomfort at the thought of cross-dressing.

Perhaps the least frequently discussed reason that women crossplaying males is so much more

common than men crossplaying females is that there are, sadly, more interesting male characters in anime than female. While good shojo series have introduced a lot of strong and striking women into anime, the standard formula of "the main guy, the big guy, the cool guy, the kid and the girl" still only has one girl. While harem shows may make up for that in numbers, they don't make up for the fact that writers still tend to give a lot less depth and development to the "girl" than they do to the guys who rescue her. *Naruto* is currently the most popular cosplay series by far. Last time I counted (in the good old days before the filler) there were more than seventy recognizable characters in *Naruto*, of whom only eleven were women—that makes the odds of anyone's favorite character being female pretty low. Combine that with the fact that there is no stigma to stop them, and a lot of girls will choose to cosplay males without a second thought.



SO WHY IS ANIME SO FULL OF GENDER-CONFUSED CHARACTERS? SHORT ANSWER: SHOJO.

Remember, the first manga ever written for a female audience was Osamu Tezuka's *Princess Knight*, the story of Sapphire, a prince who was born with both a male and female heart and is caught between the two gender roles of prince and princess. Shojo has repeated these themes ever since, both in series directly based on *Princess Knight*, such as *Princess Prince*, *Revolutionary Girl Utena*, *Le Chevalier D'Eon* and most famously *Rose of Versailles*, but also in shojo in general, everything from the *Sailor Stars* and the androgynous cast of *Angel Sanctuary* to *Fruits Basket*, whose gender issues only become more complex the more you watch and read. These manga and anime are more than stories about cross-dressers, but really address the issues of gender roles, separate spheres, homosexual attraction and shifting gender types, all of which are major questions in current culture in Japan, the US and the rest of the world. For young girls (and young guys) beginning to mature and explore their gender roles and self-identity, these stories are a lot more accessible, and more enjoyable, than standard feminist literature with its post-modern rhetoric and strong political ties. Adult readers, too, may find interesting, intelligent and approachable treatments of gender in more mature shounen ai titles like *MW* or *Jousei* titles like *Tramps Like Us* (*Jousei* meaning series aimed at

adult women while shojo is written for young women).

Remember, Shojo manga has brought girls back into American comic shops after several decades' absence, and it is certainly not just because shojo is romantic—there is plenty of romance between the galactic conflicts in your standard X-men title, and there were many romance titles around in the fifties and sixties before women's comics died out in the US. What shojo, even bad shojo, does that American comics never did is address gender issues and gender identity directly. For example, Marvel comics' famous shape-shifters, Morph and Mystique, never deal with how their abilities to switch gender affect their identities, and female X-men don't discuss how they feel being called X-"men" (or at least they never did until recently when they found themselves competing with manga.)

Recently, shounen has taken up the gender question, as Japanese marketers have discovered that series sell better if you aim them at both sexes. Keep an eye out and you will find effeminate bishounen, tomboys, crossdressers and homosexuals even in such staple shounen titles as Kenshin, Naruto and the Gundam franchise. Try to think of ten anime series which never have a character cross dress; on average it will take you more than three minutes, and most of the shows you think of will be old school or hard-core shounen. You can probably think of ten American

TV dramas which have no cross-dressing in about twenty seconds.

SHOJO YOUR MOJO

If shojo has lured American girls back into the comic shops, it is largely because shojo manga are finally exploring the gender issues which are key for young women in a society where gender roles are evolving so rapidly.

For shojo fans, crossplay is a way of exploring self-identity, but also an invitation to the spectator to think about the subject or engage the crossplayer in a discussion of variant sexuality. Clothing is communication, and crossplay is a way of weighing in on the ongoing dialogue on gender which has drawn so many into the manga world.

So why do otaku crossplay? There are girls who crossplay as males without thinking about it—this kind of cosplay is exclusive to women because a man can't put on a skirt lightly. There are men who crossplay as females in order to get attention, in the same vein as guys dressing in drag for Halloween or frat parties—this kind of cosplay is exclusive to men because a woman doesn't get any attention just for wearing pants. The third category, then—the only category which is the same for men and women—is the category of shojo readers who, even if they are not cosplaying shojo characters, are otaku in part because of an interest in the very open and accessible treatments of gender which shojo offers. Cosplayers build giant

weapons because we like the way warriors in anime explore the nature of violence and individual strength; we build mecha because we like what mecha says about warfare; wings because we like the theology debated through anime's angels and demons; cyborg body parts because we are interested in the future potential of technology.

Crossplay is just like these, a way of engaging in one of the oldest, most widespread, and most interesting themes of shoujo and of anime and manga as a whole, and if seeing a male Catgirl Nuku Nuku walk by makes you think about the fact that strap-on breasts are more unsettling than strap-on cat ears, then that kind of question is itself what crossplayers love most about anime.

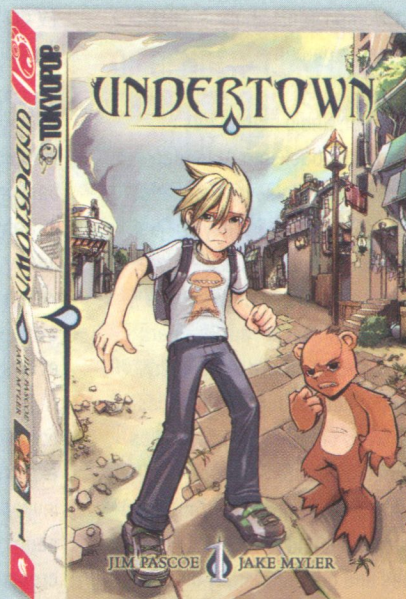
-Adapted from Ada Palmer's TOKYOPOP.com column. To read more about the Manga Lifestyle, visit www.TOKYOPOP.com



UNDERTOWN

BELIEVE IN WHAT'S UNDER YOUR BED

Writer/Creator Jim Pascoe won an Emmy for his work in creating the interactive TV show "JETIX Cards Live!" In addition, he's an accomplished novelist (*Five Shots and a Funeral*, *By the Balls: A Bowling Alley Murder Mystery*) and prolific comic book writer (*Hellboy: Weird Tales*, *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, *Star Wars Tales*). Artist Jake Myler earned a degree in animation from Woodbury University. He has illustrated issues of Phantom Rock Entertainment's *Dark Butterfly* series, issues of Ta-Su's *Tasumono* series, and collector cards for Lucasfilm and Topps.



In the depths of a dark and mysterious land, a young boy searches for a secret that can lead to salvation....and more.

Sama is so sad that tears have literally stained his cheeks. His father has fallen gravely ill... and doctors only give him a month to live. With nowhere to turn, Sama grabs his teddy bear and crawls under his bed—magically entering a portal to a fantastic realm called Undertown!

Sama looks for the Sugar Stone: a "secret something" that might be able to heal his dad. But The Cloud—the wicked leader of the Insect Insurgents—hunts for the Stone, as well...

~Paul Morrissey



Pascoe loves
big empty
black spaces
and vast open
white spaces
in comics.

Artist Jake Myler

admits to being a

"big fan of Katsuhiro

Otomo's use of empty

space to show isolation

around a character."

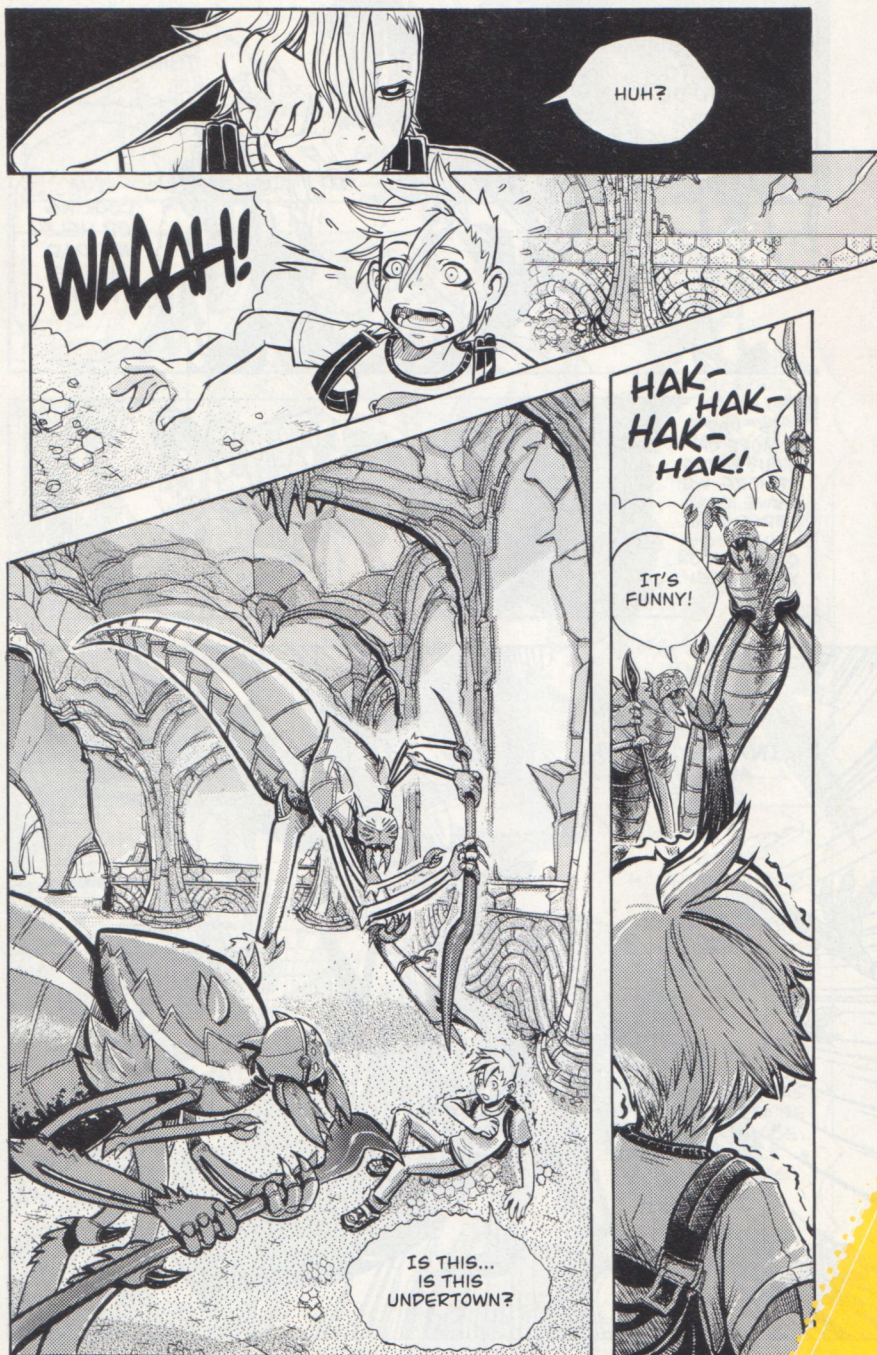
>> Artist and writer simpatico: Jake Myler explains: "This page let me use lots of space to show that Sama is alone when he gets to *Undertown*. Jim's script totally called for this scene, so, thank you, Jim, for writing it this way!"

Writer Jim Pascoe conceived of the spear-like weapon. It's called a Stinger Stick, and when not using it as a hand weapon, insects can store this in their lower body and use it like a bee stinger.



This was the very first page that the artist drew for Undertown.

This page probably had the most edits and re-do's out of any page in the book. Artist Myler couldn't get that background to stop looking really flat. He admits it's not perfect, but hopefully it's a lot better than it used to be! >>

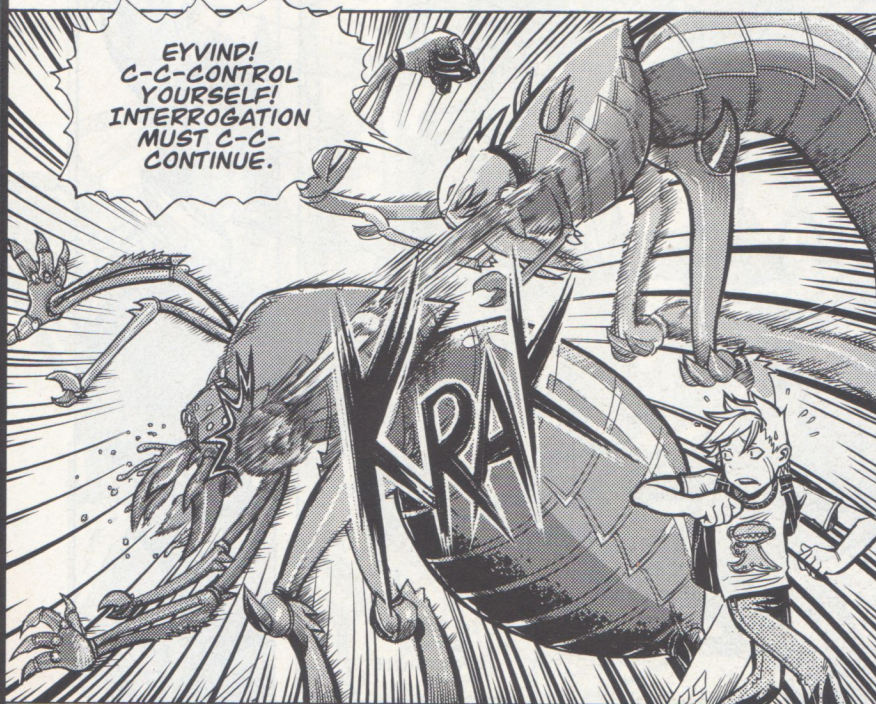
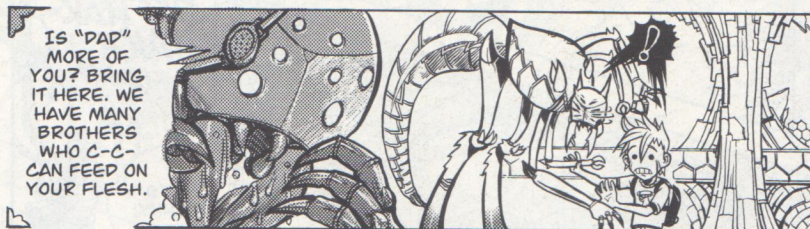


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"Hak-Hak-Hak" is how insects laugh.

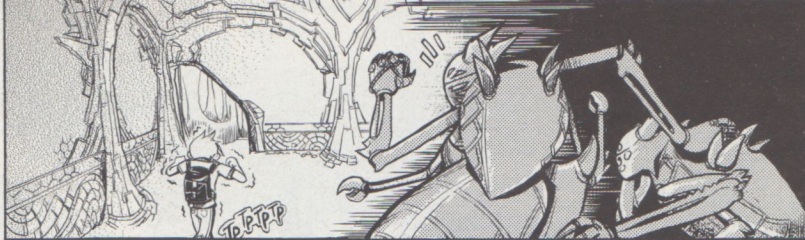
>> What would you do if you woke up to see two towering insect creatures brandishing weapons at you? "I think I'd have a much stronger reaction if I were in Sama's shoes," artist Jake Myler says with a cautious laugh.

Undertown has a wide array of environments that the characters must travel through...

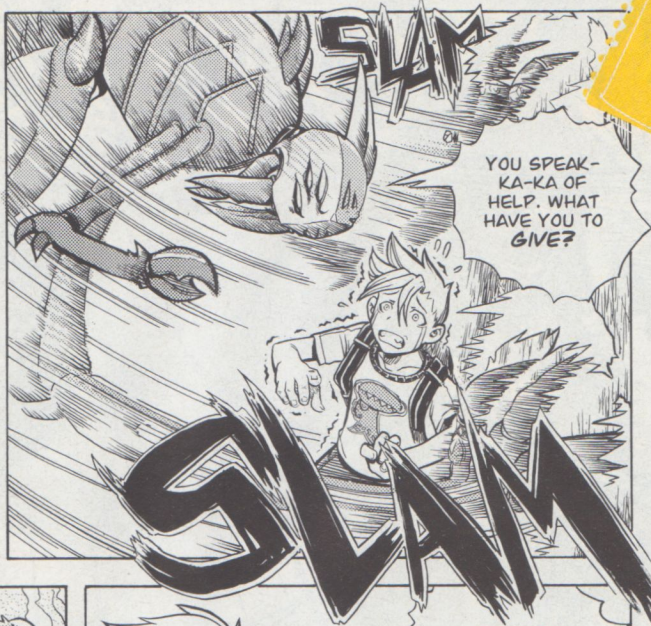


A confession from Jake Myler: "The fatter, slobbery insect is Eyvind, and the first time I drew him, he was missing an eye and had a scar across his face. Both Jim (writer) and Paul (editor) thought I was drawing him with an eye patch when they saw these pages. Well, I quickly realized that was a *better* idea, so I drew it that way from then on. And I never told a soul!"

Jim Pascoe wants to make something perfectly clear: "Insects totally creep me out. Somehow the thought of a hungry insect with a wet mouth makes my skin crawl—in the best way." >>



The first mysterious setting: How big are these caves—if they are caves.



YOU SPEAK-KA-KA OF HELP. WHAT HAVE YOU TO GIVE?



I DON'T HAVE ANYTHING! I DON'T EVEN KNOW WHERE I AM!

WHY DO I ALWAYS HAVE TO GIVE? THIS WAS SUPPOSED TO BE A HAPPY PLACE, A FRIENDLY PLACE. I WAS SUPPOSED TO FIND THE SUGAR STONE AND THEN EVERYTHING WOULD BE ALL--



>> More confessions from the writer: "When I first wrote this page, it had even *more* panels! I wanted to see how Jake would deal with a lot of panels on a page. It made superstar editor Paul's eyes spin around in his head!"

When Jim Pascoe
saw this splash page,
he knew Jake Myler
was the right artist to
bring Jim's written word
to a visual manga
world...and beyond.

The artist—
not the
writer—added
Sama saying
"Ouch!"



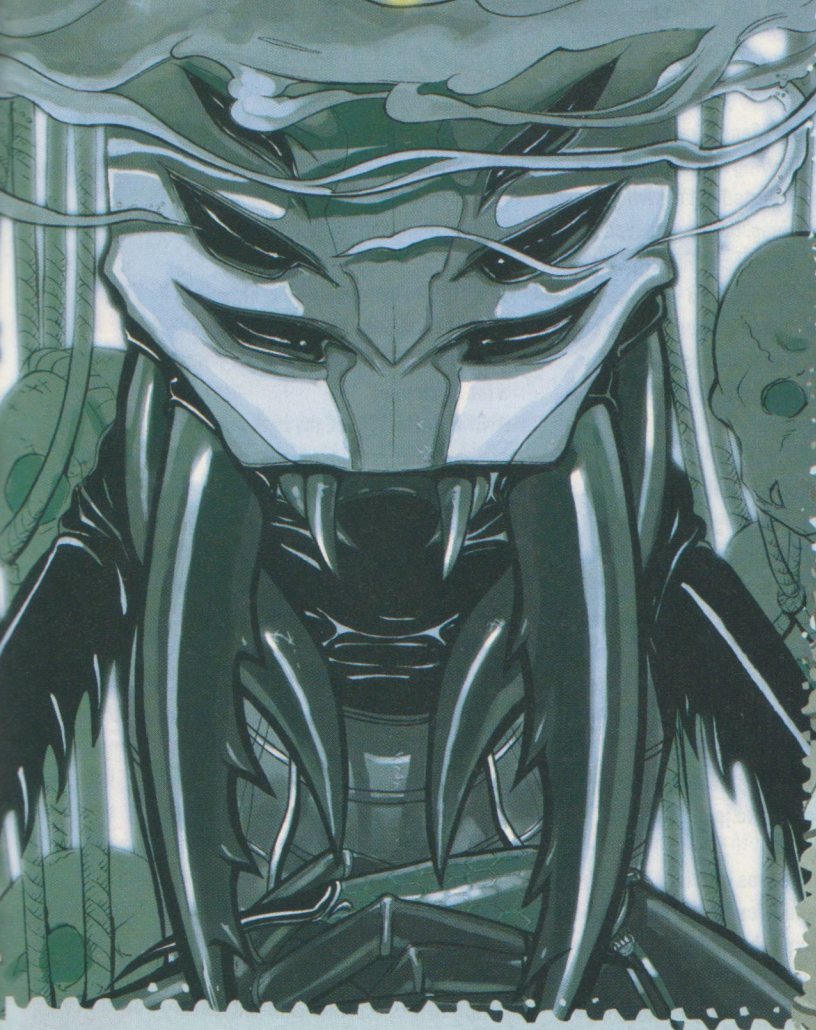
**WHERE IS
THE SUGAR
STONE?**

The creative process at work: Artist Jake Myler actually added in a bunch of extra dialog bits throughout the manga. >>

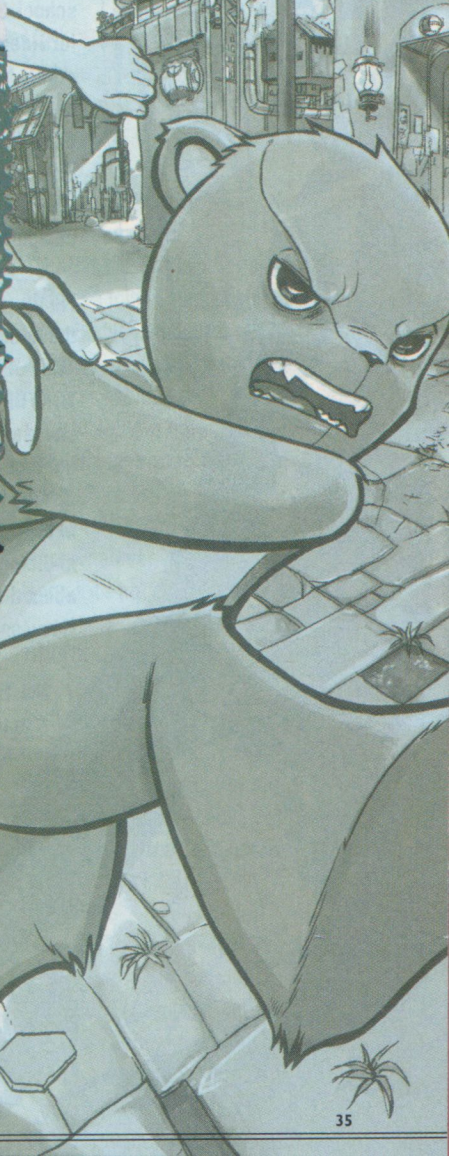


UNDERTOWN

*Undertown will
be available
in August
everywhere
books are sold.*



>> After Jake Myler reviewed these preview pages for *Manga Magazine*, he pointed out, "There are so many battles in this book, I only wish there was more room in this preview to see the fight that follows!"





HERR

INTERVIEW WITH GOTHIC SPORTS CREATOR ANIKE HAGE

AN

German-born Manga-ka Anike Hage has been drawing since elementary school. She started out drawing fan art for video games, but soon moved on to create her own work. Her big break came in 2004 when she won second place in a manga contest at the Leipzig Book Fair. She was then tapped to work on the poster for the 2005 Leipzig competition.

Finally, after her inclusion in the anthology *Manga Fever* from TOKYOPOP Germany—similar to TOKYOPOP's *Rising Stars of Manga*—she was offered the chance to create her first graphic novel series, *Gothic Sports!* Her artwork has also appeared in the popular German dojinshi anthology *Kappa Maki*. For more info about the artist, please visit <http://www.snow-flake.jp.pn>

Ms. Hage was gracious enough to take a few moments from her busy schedule to answer some questions about her high school experience, what Goth culture means to her, and how rabbits have influenced her artistic choices.

Read on!

TOKYOPOP: Are you a soccer (football) fan?

ANIKE HAGE: Yes I am. But I more like playing than watching!

TOKYOPOP: What was your high school experience like? Were there school clubs? Did you hang out with a lot of friends?

ANIKE HAGE: I hated my high school for not having any regular clubs. For a short time we had some clubs but there was absolutely no discipline and so it never could exist for too much time during the school year... I had my five or six friends I hung around with and more or less ignored everybody else, I must confess. During the last years of school I counted the minutes until I was relieved from this more or less self-imposed obligation. Now I think it wasn't a bad time at all and I would not be sad about still being a pupil. (:

TOKYOPOP: How did you come up with the idea for the manga series *Gothic Sports*?

ANIKE HAGE: I crafted different ideas for stories for my debut but most of them were not really good choices to create for my first big project. One of the more suitable ideas was this school-story, and because I wanted to draw some action—although schools are not really the right place to find it,



MANGA-KA!

there needed to be a plot into which I could write action. I think there is no better way than using sports. So the idea of *Gothic Sports* was born!

TOKYOPOP: When creating a manga series, how much of the story is invented and how much is pulled from your personal experience?

ANIKE HAGE: Most things are invented, but some aspects I took from my friends' and family's experiences, as well as from my own. But everything is crafted with a lot of fantasy, so there is no way to find real-life counterparts to the characters in the story.

TOKYOPOP: Is it common for sports teams in German high schools to be coached by students?

ANIKE HAGE: I don't know if it's too common; the country does not offer much money for teachers and especially not for such "unnecessary" things like sports or music! Students had to plan and handle those things more or less by themselves. I was in a basketball-club in which there was no teacher but a student. She did it in her free time. I used this experience for creating the coach in *Gothic Sports*.

TOKYOPOP: Is it common for multiple teams in the same sport, which might compete against each other, to come

from a single high school?

ANIKE HAGE: Just for fun it is! And it always depends on the sort of competition. I only know competitions between the schools teams but there are also competitions between different schools.

TOKYOPOP: As an artist, what attracts you to manga?

ANIKE HAGE: It is the well-told story with a beautiful artwork and dynamic lines. Manga often contain these things!

TOKYOPOP: What is your favorite manga? And what was your first manga that made you like the art form?

ANIKE HAGE: My favorite manga is *Blade of the Immortal* by Hiroaki Samura. When I was a child I saw the first manga-illustration in a videogame magazine and loved the style... Years later a friend showed me *Sailor Moon* and I loved it.

TOKYOPOP: Do you do other art?

ANIKE HAGE: I play the piano as a hobby. I do paintings as well if I get a commission or just feel like painting (mostly rabbits) but in most cases I'm not keen on doing it if it does not belong to a comic project (or contains rabbits).

TOKYOPOP: When you are not creating manga, what do you like to do?

ANIKE HAGE: I play videogames, piano or do sports and take care of my rabbits.

TOKYOPOP: What does Goth culture mean to you?

ANIKE HAGE: I like some of the clothes and in some cases I like the music.

TOKYOPOP: How did you get involved with Goth culture?

ANIKE HAGE: My brother and his friends belonged to this culture and so it was unavoidable to meet those people—in small towns you just can't escape!

TOKYOPOP: Are there dress codes in German high schools that prohibit Goth fashion?

ANIKE HAGE: No, you can wear or not wear whatever you want at school—as long as it's not against the law!

TOKYOPOP: Are you working on any new series?

ANIKE HAGE: I always do projects besides the work on *Gothic Sports*, but they progress very slowly and are more or less just for fun—and I have to focus on *Gothic Sports*! So, to answer the question, yes I do!

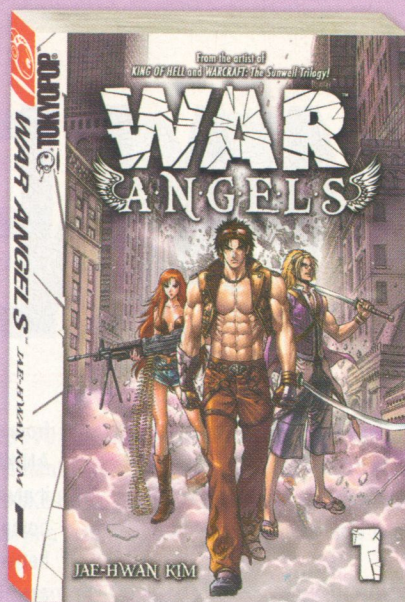
TOKYOPOP: Thanks for answering our questions—and a special thanks to TOKYOPOP-Germany for making this interview happen!

WAR ANGELS

THE FIGHT TO PROTECT HUMANITY'S LAST HOPE BEGINS HERE

In *War Angels*, Jae-Hwan brings us a chilling tale with an intriguing post-apocalyptic version of Christianity.

Due to the passage of time (and more than a few mushroom clouds), the religion we know gets twisted...but not unrecognizably so. And, of course, Jae-Hwan doesn't disappoint when it comes to action.

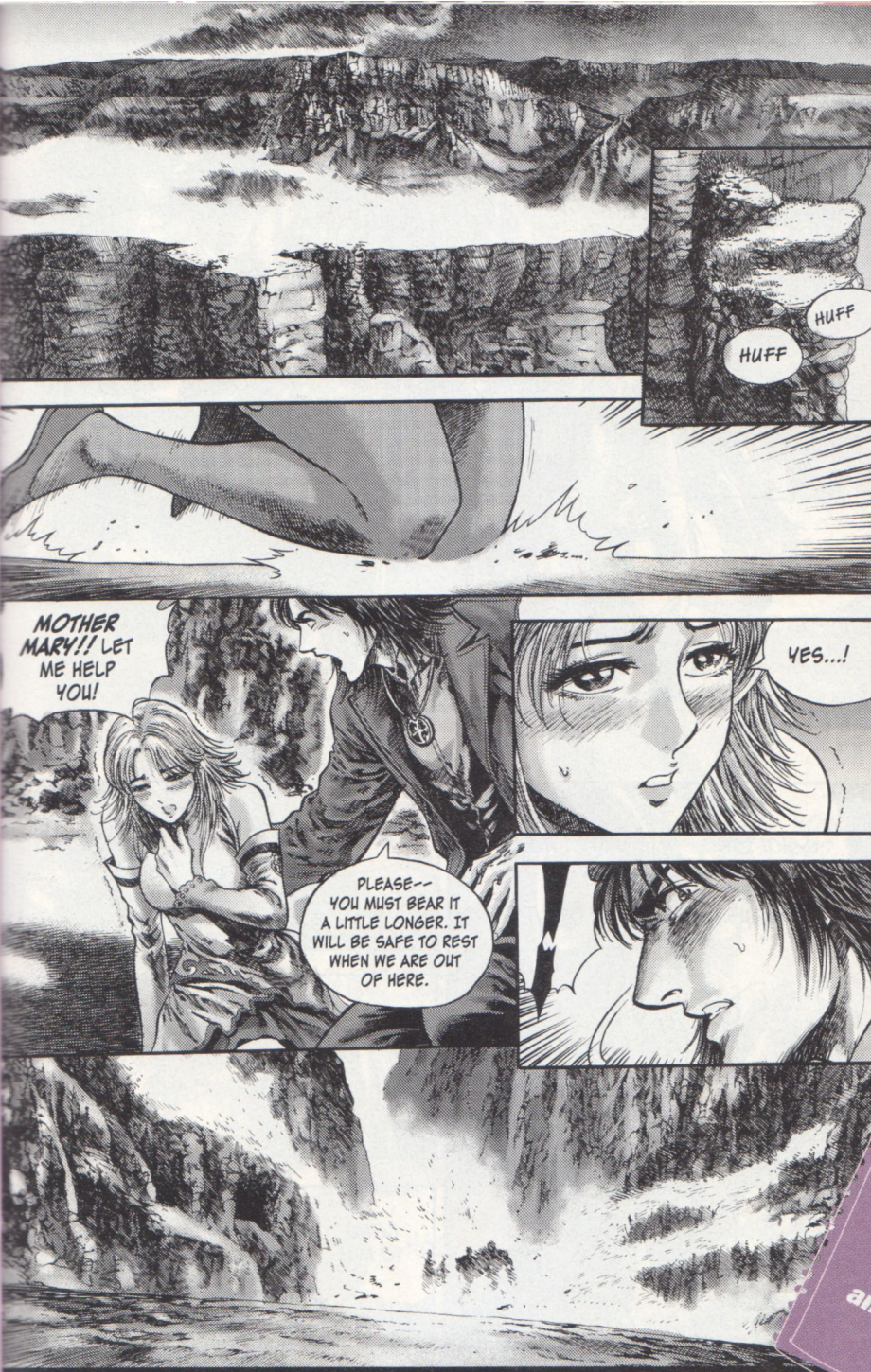


Stunning! Gorgeous! Awe-Inspiring! Whenever I show Jae-Hwan Kim's work to people, these words inevitably follow. And for good reason: his work is all that and more. Anyone who has seen *Warcraft: The Sunwell Trilogy* knows that Jae-Hwan's work is a visual treat that is not to be missed. His storytelling is both clear and exciting. His characters are unique and attractive. His backgrounds set the scene so well that you can't help but feel like you're right there with the characters. And he's a real pro, to boot. (I guess he's got so much talent that it doesn't leave any room for attitude.) And that's just the art!

If I sound like I'm gushing, it's only because I'm not just the editor—I'm also a fan. So stop reading my shameless geek-fest and get to the good stuff already!



~Rob Tokar



Jae-Hwan Kim is also
the artist for the popular
multivolume series
King of Hell.

Welcome
to the year
2504, and the
aftermath of
an apocalyptic
war...

>> Jae-Hwan Kim's artwork is intricately layered, with virtually every panel packed with detail. His landscapes evoke the emotional and physical struggle of the characters in this opening page.

Beasterians:
A mix of human
and animal
genes.



A key feature of Kim's work is the well-thought-out battle scenes, which are energetic and evocative without being overzealous.



N-NO! IT'S
TOO LATE--
THEY'VE
FOUND US!



HOLY
MOTHER!



COME
TO ME!

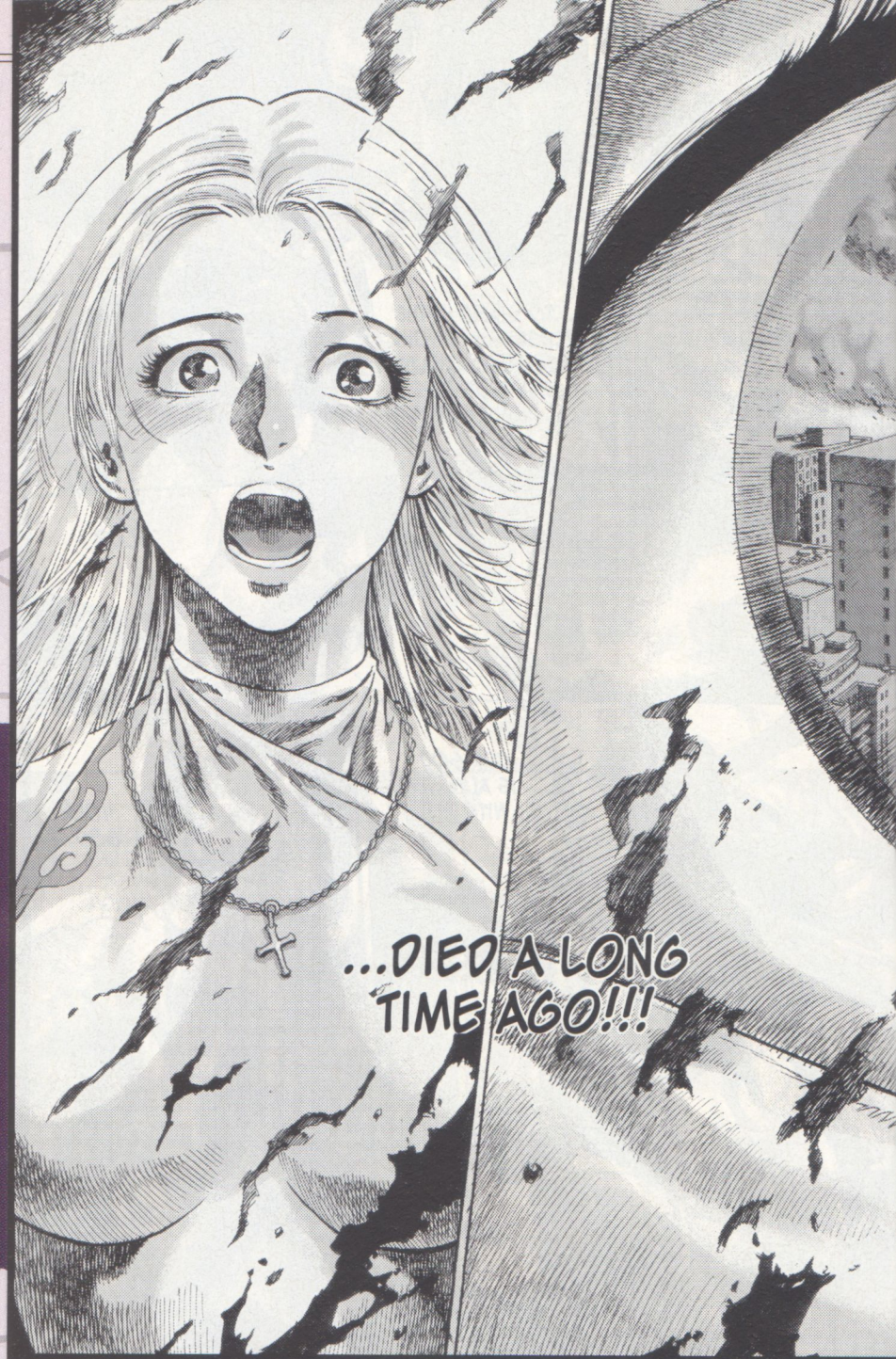
In this oppressive future, humanity is under the rule of the Beasterians, animal-human hybrids who were created to be humanity's soldiers—but instead became its rulers. >>



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>> Doomed to extinction, humanity's one hope is the savior whose birth is foretold by the Post-Testament, a post-apocalyptic bible.

When asked who his favorite comic creators are, Jae-Hwan Kim immediately pointed to the work of Hayao Miyazaki, *Priest* creator Min-Woo Hyun and Katsuhiro Otomo's work on *Akira*.



Jae-Hwan Kim studied Tae Kwon Do while in the South Korean Army, and uses that experience to plot out the fight scenes in his work, many of which grace the intense pages of this manga series. >>



BOOK I: MAY PEACE BE WITH YOU...

>> In this stunning prelude, observe the awesome wreckage of post-apocalyptic Earth in the background. Fear, chaos, misery, and hopelessness are all present—in the blink of an eye.

A SNEAK PEEK AT NEW SERIES COMING THIS SUMMER FROM TOKYOPOP!



KINGDOM HEARTS II

The Kingdom Hearts adventure continues! Our new story takes place sometime later, in the quiet little burb called Twilight Town, a place nestled between night and day. Sora, Donald, and Goofy awaken after a long slumber with clouded memories—and continue their search for their friends!



A BRAND NEW KINGDOM HEARTS SERIES BASED ON THE MEGA-POPULAR VIDEO GAME!



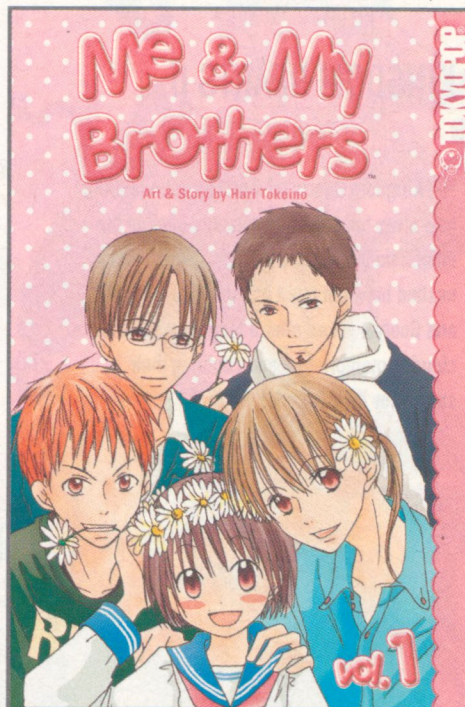
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ME & MY BROTHERS

Shojo fans: this is one series you will not want to miss! Sakura had lived with her grandma ever since her parents died in a car accident, but when she turned fourteen, her grandma also passed away, leaving her alone. Just when she was about to give up hope on having a family, out of nowhere, four guys claim to be her older step-brothers. Sakura's world becomes filled with wackiness and angst as they all strive to get along together under the same roof!



T
TEEN
AGE 13+

COMEDY

DRAMA

INCLUDES AN EXCLUSIVE
PREVIEW OF FRUITS
BASKET VOLUME 17!

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ME2

The art in this original TOKYOPOP shojo will absolutely amaze you! Aki is a shy, introverted teen mourning the mysterious recent death of her older brother Ken. The pressures of dealing with his death, coupled with parents that don't know she exists—and bullies she wishes didn't—lead to her having mysterious blackouts. Nearly entire days begin to be unaccounted for, and Aki finds strange clothing in her closet. Adding to her confusion is that the cutest boy in school is suddenly taking an interest in her...it is all very bizzare!

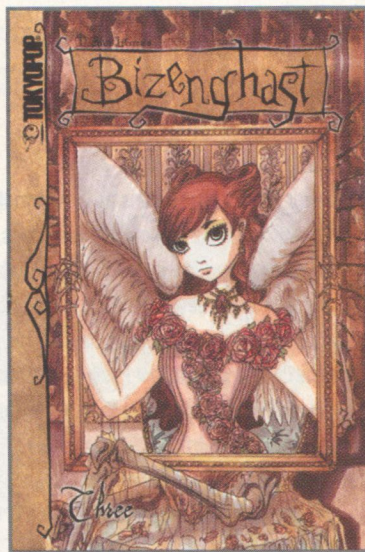
IS SHE GOING CRAZY? OR IS IT SOMETHING EVEN MORE SHOCKING...?

OT
TEEN
AGE 13+

OT
TEEN
AGE 13+

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BIZENGHAST VOLUME 3

In volume 3 of Bizenghast, Edrear joins Dinah's team of ghost hunters and proves to be a valuable ally. More of the secrets of the Mausoleum are revealed, and the ghost of Addie Clark, the former governess of St. Lyman's School for Boys, has an important message for Dinah. Personal problems threaten to tear the friends apart, but not before some carnivorous plants get to them first!

FOLLOW DINAH AND VINCENT AS THEY TRY TO SOLVE THE REST OF THE MAUSOLEUM'S RIDDLES!

T
TEEN
AGE 13+

T
TEEN
AGE 13+

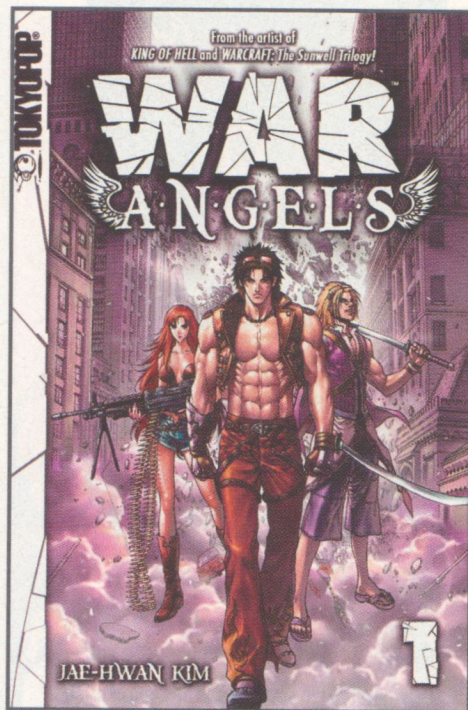
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AGE 13+

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WAR ANGELS

In the year 2504, humankind is an ever-shrinking minority under the rule of the Beasterians, animal-human hybrids who were created to be soldiers but instead became rulers. Doomed to extinction, humanity's one hope is the savior whose birth is foretold by the Post-Testament (a post-apocalyptic bible). This is the story of the Archangels: the powerful people entrusted to protect the mother of the unborn messiah!



THE NEW MANGA FROM
JAE-HWAN KIM, ARTIST OF
WARCRAFT AND CREATOR
OF KING OF HELL!



OT
OLDER TEEN
AGE 13+

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TRINITY BLOOD—REBORN ON THE MARS: THE STAR OF SORROW

Now you can get the entire Trinity Blood story—including the source material for the manga and anime—with this release of the second Trinity Blood novel series. Reborn of the Mars (R.O.M.) follows the events in Rage Against the Moons (R.A.M.) as Abel and his love interest, Estel, get caught up in the brutal war between the New Human Empire and Vatican!



THE TRINITY BLOOD
STORY JUST GOT A
WHOLE LOT BIGGER...



ACTION



SCI-FI

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PEACE MAKER

Tetsunosuke and Tatsunosuke are two sons of a murdered diplomat, who sought to bring peace and prosperity to the newly opened Japan during the early Meiji Restoration (1863). Tatsu is hired as an accountant for the Shinsengumi, the unofficial police and guardians of the Emperor in Kyoto, and, lured by the prospect of becoming a powerful warrior, Tetsu seeks to actually join their ranks. He succeeds and is taken on as a page, meeting the odd assortment of characters in the organization (most of whom are historical)... but is getting revenge for his slain parents worth the price of sacrificing his own humanity?



THE ACTION-PACKED
PREQUEL TO PEACE
MAKER KUROGANE.



ACTION



SHOUNEN

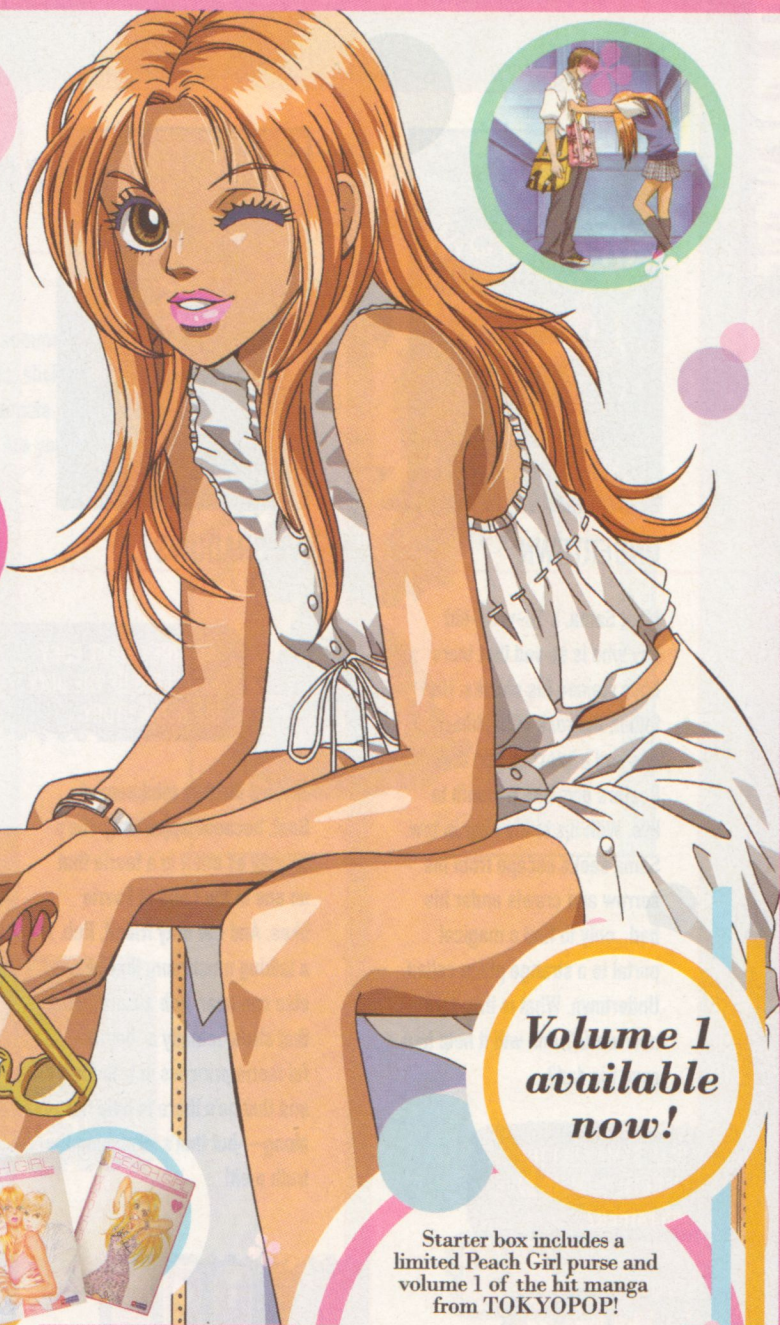
OLDER TEEN
AGE 13+

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REAL. LOVE. BITTER. SWEET.



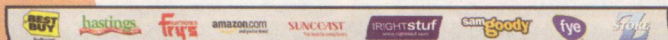
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available
now!**

Starter box includes a
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volume 1 of the hit manga
from TOKYOPOP!

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PEACH GIRL

SUPER POP LOVE HURRICANE

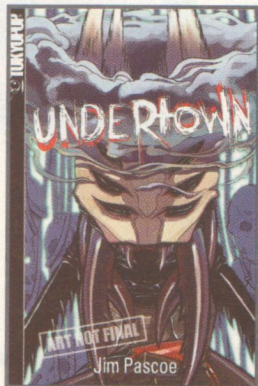


Based on the manga "Peach Girl" by Mwe Ueda originally serialized in the monthly Basasuo Friend published by Kodansha Ltd. ©Mwe Ueda / KODANSHA
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UNDERTOWN

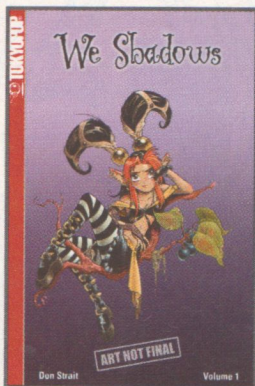
Meet Sama, a 10-year-old boy who is so sad that tears have stained his cheeks. His father, the rock of his life, has had a heart attack, and Doctors give him a month to live. With his teddy bear in tow, Sama seeks escape from his sorrow and crawls under his bed...only to find a magical portal to a strange place called Undertown. What is this dark new world? And will it help him save his dad?

WILL SAMA FIND THE MAGICAL CURE TO SAVE HIS FATHER?



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WE SHADOWS

AN IRREVERENT, EDGY RETELLING OF THE UGLY DUCKLING STORY.

Jaybird Birches (nicknamed Goat, because apparently she's as ugly as one!) is a faerie that no one in the Land of Faerie likes. And her only friend, Rob, is a talking mushroom that no one else can hear. Rob assures Goat that she's actually a "beautiful faerie princess in training" and that he's there to help her along—but that's stretching the truth a bit!



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BOMBOS VS. EVERYTHING

What's standing between Bombos, the most totally awesome paperboy ever, and his one-way ticket out of his provincial backwater town? An editor-in-chief whose bizarre challenges could either help him or get him killed, a hyper-competitive loser named Veng, a giant potato-like creature with indiscriminate eating habits, his complete inability to be on time for anything, his weird best friend Addy, and the mysterious and formidable Qualifiers. In other words, it's Bombos versus Everything!

SOUTH PARK—STYLE HUMOR WITH NARUTO-LIKE ACTION!



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FRUITS BASKET FAN BOOK NEKO -CAT-

Furuba fans—it's all here! Story summaries, character bio, color pages, quizzes, stickers, and a whole more—this is the ultimate Fruits Basket fan book! The question is: Are you the ultimate fan?!



**THE MUST-HAVE FAN
BOOK FROM THE WORLD'S
#1 SHOJO MANGA SERIES!**

T
TEEN
AGE 13+

C
COMEDY

R
ROMANCE

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CHOBITS ART BOOK: YOUR EYES ONLY

Luscious illustrations fill this stunningly beautiful art book, featuring the work of the world's most popular manga studio, CLAMP. Filled with illustrations of Chi from Chobits that feature her lovely dresses, unforgettable poses, and her alternate personality! It's Chobits ... It's CLAMP... It's just for you!



IT'S THE GORGEOUS FULL-COLOR ARTWORK FROM CLAMP'S MEGA-HIT!



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DEMON FLOWERS: KURUIZAKI NO HANA

From Mizuki Hakase, the brilliant mind behind *The Demon Ororon*, comes a grand tale about the Oni, who have eaten Japan's gods and now hold everyone's lives in the palms of their hands. The Oni are searching for the "Out-of-season Flowers": children born from the union of Gods and humans. In the midst of this, an Oni called Ushitoru saves the life of one such child, Masata, and steals him from his family. Now 11 years have passed, and Ushitoru, Masata, and a young human girl have become one unusual family!

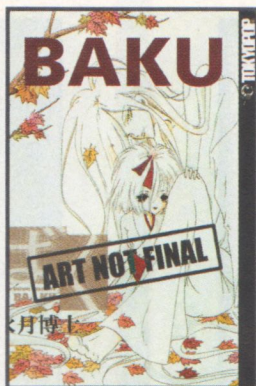
A DEMON-LIKE CREATURE, A HUMAN-GOD CHILD, AND A YOUNG GIRL MAKE FOR ONE UNUSUAL ALLIANCE.



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BAKU

In this collection of paranormal short stories from Hakase-sensei, manga-ka behind *The Demon Ororon*, Takeshi Uesugi finds out that he is the reincarnation of the Baku, a spirit that devours people's nightmares, while Mephist helps ghosts, demons, and other supernatural spirits. Everyone has a past or memory they can't forget...

TERRIFYING TALES OF THE
SUPERNATURAL.



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ASIAN BEAT

A negligent mother, an affair, a broken family, domestic abuse, and drugs are among the subjects in these Gothic short stories that revolve around the lives of teenagers with complicated problems.

ANGST-RIDDEN, GOTH-INSPIRED
STORIES FROM THE CREATOR OF
THE DEMON ORORON.



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FULL METAL PANIC!

Sagara Sosuke is an elite soldier employed by the independent mercenary special force Mithril to fight terrorism across the globe. His newest assignment is to protect a Japanese high-school girl, Chidori Kaname, and to do that he goes undercover as a student. What's tougher than trying to protect Chidori from a massive plot to kidnap her? Fitting in and not blowing his cover!

THE HILARIOUS ACTION-ADVENTURE NOVELS THAT INSPIRED THE HUGELY POPULAR MANGA AND ANIME.



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WELCOME TO THE NHK

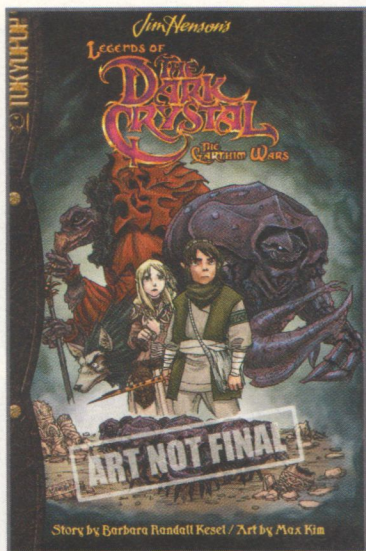
Satou is a 22-year-old college dropout who has become a hikikomori, a paranoid recluse. That is, until he meets Misaki, a mysterious young girl who invites him to join her special "project." Slowly Satou comes out of his reclusive shell, and his hilarious journey begins, filled with mistaken identity, Lolita complexes, and an over-protective mother!

THE NOVEL THAT INSPIRED THE HILARIOUS AND RAUNCHY MANGA ABOUT A PARANOID RECLUSE WHO FINALLY CRAWLS OUT OF HIS SHELL.



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LEGENDS OF THE DARK CRYSTAL

This original prequel to Jim Henson's fantasy masterpiece is set 100 years before *The Dark Crystal*, the groundbreaking film that won the hearts and minds of fans all over the world and set the stage for the new age of puppet-making.

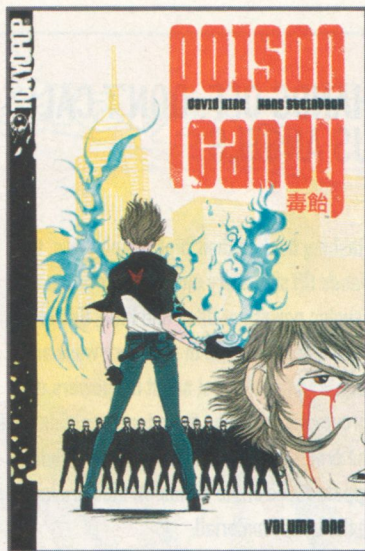


THE HIGHLY ANTICIPATED
MANGA PREQUEL TO JIM
HENSON'S MASTERPIECE!



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POISON CANDY

In this futuristic sci-fi adventure, a disease that afflicts adolescents but gives them powers beyond anyone's imagination becomes the center of a struggle between the government and corporations. Enter Sam Chance, who must deal with his burgeoning adolescence while keeping the world from being gobbled up by corporate interests. From Hans Steinbach, creator of *A Midnight Opera*, and comic book vet David Hine, comes a visually arresting adventure that will haunt you long after the last page of the manga is turned.

EVIL CORPORATIONS ARE THREAT-
ENING TO DESTROY THE WORLD,
AND ONE SUPERPOWERED TEEN-
AGER IS DESTINED TO STOP THEM...



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HANDS OFF: DON'T CALL US ANGELS

Flashing back to their high school days, this *Hands Off* side story unveils more about the psychic powers of Udou and Kiba. Udou has been using his skills in unsavory ways and Kiba is in deep denial about his powers until circumstances bring them together to deal with the problems going on around them. Cameo appearances of the *Hands Off* kids are included in the bonus material!



NEW STORIES FROM
THE POPULAR HANDS
OFF UNIVERSE.

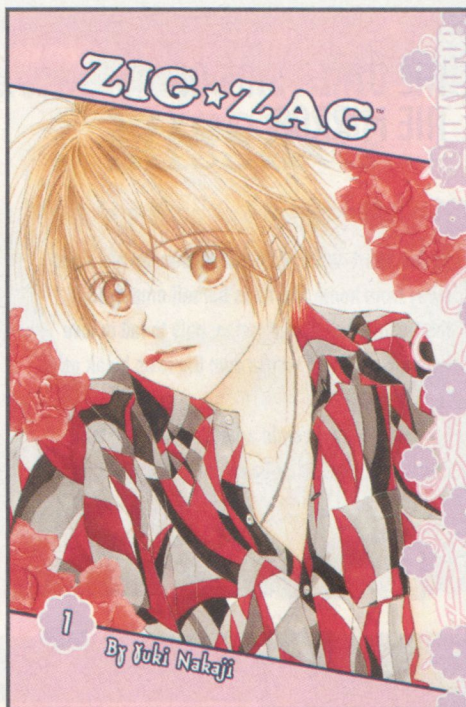
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ZIG*ZAG

In a private school only recently open to girls, flower-lovin' Takaaki is a breath of fresh (and gender-blurred) air! Having to room with the stone cold Sonoh Takahara has certainly caused him some angst, but don't fear. Sonoh's twin is his complete opposite, making for a whole mess of fun filled with cute boys and silly misunderstandings.



T
TEEN
AGE 13+

C
COMEDY

R
ROMANCE

IT'S A FLOWER-
ARRANGING BISHONEN
EXPLOSION!

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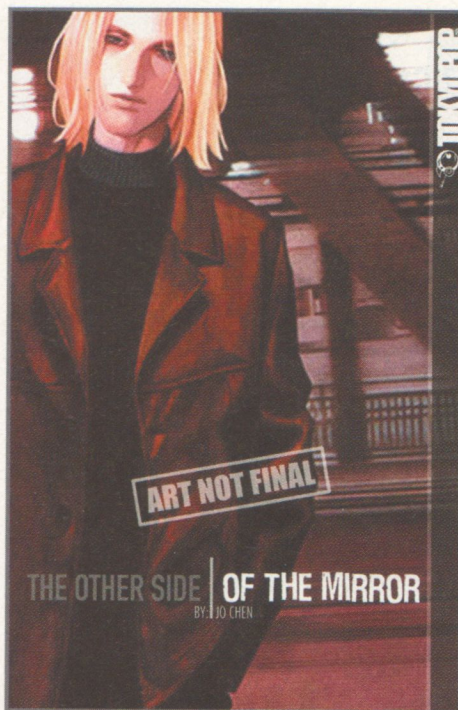
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THE OTHER SIDE OF THE MIRROR

In this heart-wrenching tale, a teenage girl runs away from home and finds herself employed in the world's oldest profession, only to fall in love with a young man whose own life is as bleak as hers is.

From celebrated comic artist Jo Chen comes a touching look at what lies beyond our reflection.



ROMANCE

OT
ALL AGES
AGE 15+



"JO CHEN'S WORK IS DYNAMIC YET DELICATE, REAL YET FANTASTICAL, AND GENUINELY MESMERIZING. SHE'S ONE OF THE BEST IN THE BUSINESS."

—JOSS WHEDON

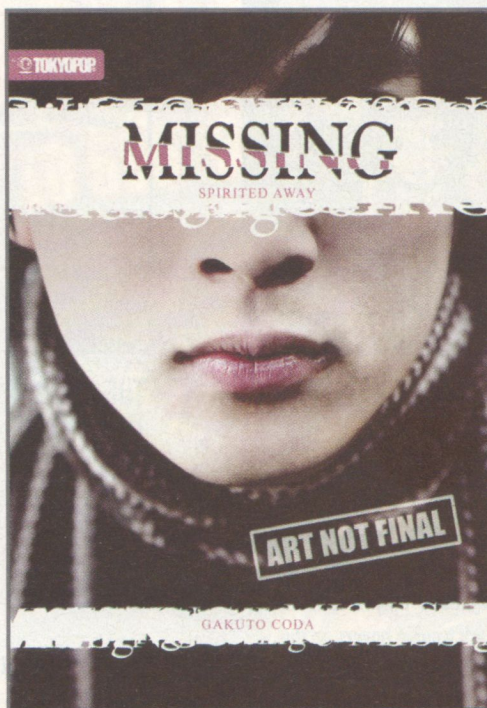
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MISSING

Cruel and cold, Utsume is a very strange boy. When he shows up to school one day with a girlfriend, his friends are shocked! But it turns out that she is more than just a girlfriend—she may hold the key to the disappearance of his brother, who many years ago was “spirited away” by a strange and frightening monster. Will they find him before they get sucked into the monster world forever?



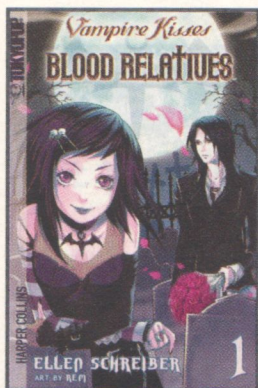
AN ALOOF HIGH SCHOOLER FINDS HIMSELF IN A BIZARRE WORLD AS HE SEARCHES FOR THE TRUTH BEHIND THE DISAPPEARANCE OF A HIS BROTHER.

POP
FICTION

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VAMPIRE KISSES

The absolute last thing Goth-girl Raven and her vampire boyfriend, Alexander, need is another hitch in their nighttime-only romance. But dark trouble hovers on the horizon when they discover that Alexander's cousin is raiding graves with a motley crew of hooligans! Is there something behind their sudden interest in Dullsville?

AN ACTION-FILLED GOTHIC VAMPIRE ROMANCE SET IN THE POPULAR VAMPIRE KISSES UNIVERSE.



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THE GOOD WITCH OF THE WEST

THE SHOJO CINDERELLA STORY THAT INSPIRED THE POPULAR MANGA

A young, innocent girl grows up motherless in the countryside in this inspiring girl-power story. Invited to a fancy ball, Firiell discovers that her past is more complicated than she thought—her dead mother's necklace may mean she is heir to a throne!

POP FICTION



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DARK MOON DIARY

When 15-year-old Priscilla's parents die, she has nowhere to go except to her last "living" relatives in the European town of Nachtwald...and they've got a little more than skeletons in their closet!

VAMPIRES MAY BE THIS ORPHAN GIRL'S ONLY CHANCE AT A REAL FAMILY!



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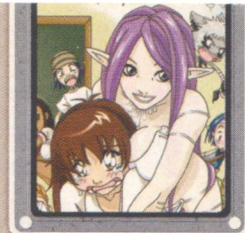
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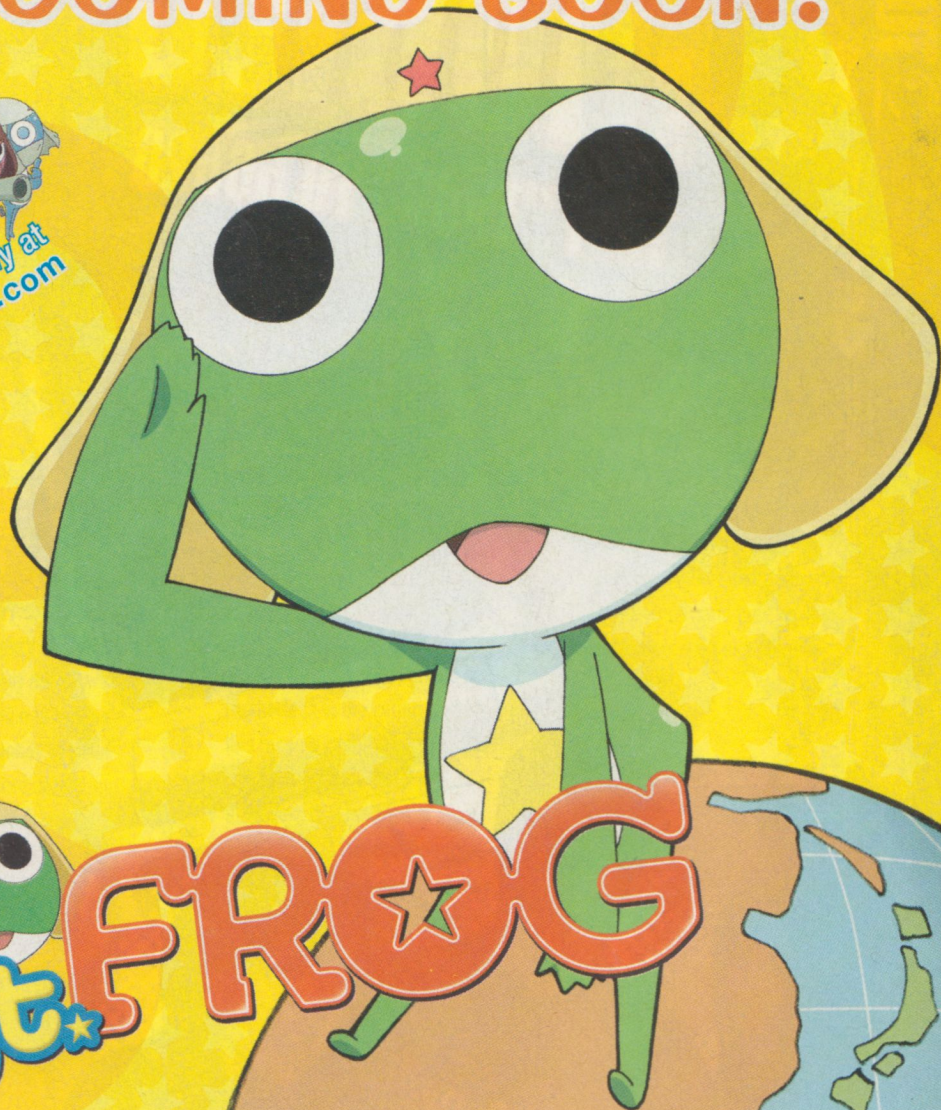


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THE ANIME INVASION IS COMING SOON!



!! Watch out folks.
This frog could conquer
America just as easily
as he conquered Japan! !!

-Anime Insider



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