

Rurouni Kenshin, Vol. 26 by Nobuhiro Watsuki



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Action, romance, and historical intrigue help make Nobuhiro Watsuki's Rurouni Kenshin, the tale of a wandering swordsman set against the backdrop of the Meiji Restoration, one of the most popular Shonen Jump titles among fans to date. Himura Kenshin, once an assassin (or hitokiri) of ferocious power, now fights to protect the honor of those in need.



Reviews of the Rurouni Kenshin, Vol. 26 by Nobuhiro Watsuki

Ανδουβις

I watched and rewatched the anime when i was in my teens..10 years later, feeling nostalgic, i decided to start the manga. I just received vol. 1 today. I'm really glad I bought this. It's a wonderful story with a great main characters. He's just fantastic in my opinion. I've experienced many, many fictions in many forms...books, comics, manga, movies, tv shows, anime..and Kenshin Himura will always be among my favorite main characters. So powerful yet so kind, softhearted, and humble. A wonderful combination, and quite unique for the decade in which this was written...as well as today. The qualities and attributes Himura displays (after he leaves his title of Batosai), the qualities of goodness, kindness, modesty, patience, and humility combined with his courage, strength, and sense of justice, are excellent qualities for young readers (and older readers) to be exposed to and learn from.

Dainris

A few years ago, I began to start watching anime, and decided to try manga. Okay, to be honest, it wasn't entirely that way. I had thought of reading manga before as I had thought of watching anime before, but I just didn't know where to start reading first. A relative, who knows my tastes in fiction, and my beliefs, found a manga of a character that I could enjoy watching.

Rurouni Kenshin: Meiji Swordsman Romantic Story, or plain-old *Rurouni Kenshin* (or *RuroKen* even more so) for short, is a manga about a wandering swordsman named Himura Kenshin, who rescues a young girl from a fight with a hulking killer who claims to be the legendary "Battousai", the deadliest of a group of assassins (known as the Hitokiri) who fought during the recent war inaugurating the Meiji era in Japan.

The girl, a young heir to the dojo of her father, who was slain in the recent war, is named Kamiya Kaoru. She is grateful, though a tad peeved at Kenshin for his goofy ways. She also is a tad prejudiced against him for his "Rurouni" ways. Rurouni means "wanderer" (though it should be noted that is a fake word that the mangaka - Watsuki-sensei - made up), and that is what Kenshin has done lately. This is not exactly considered respectable. Eventually, the reason is revealed why, when she learns that he is, in fact, the *true* Hitokiri Battousai.

In guilt over his past as an assassin, as well as for other reasons, Himura has changed his path, and wanders around, doing good, with his reverse-bladed sword. With this peculiar blade, it is almost impossible to kill someone, which is just how he wants it to be. He can still do so, but prefers to avoid that irrevocable step. Eventually, a lonely and grateful Kaoru invites him to stay with her at her dojo as a boarder. At this point, it should be noted, nothing romantic occurs, he is just her friend.

This manga appealed to me for a number of reasons. First of all, it was unique compared to American comics. It was not filled with super-heroes, or some adaptation of a popular book or movie, for instance. In other words, it wasn't the typical "comic-book" fare. It was a historical drama. Granted the "history" was played with, as the author freely admits. That in itself, I will add, was quite refreshing. All too many authors try to pretend their stories are more accurate than they truly are. The author here does the opposite of this, freely admitting the story is largely fabricated. The premise is also interesting to me, as it centers on the adventures of a former warrior in late-19th century Japan who did his best to fight for justice. He also, as we see in later volumes, seeks to atone for his misdeeds and mistakes and struggles with self-worth. As a veteran, I empathize and identify with this character type.

The other part I liked was that his philosophy was one I agree with entirely. I freely admit that I enjoy it when the hero of a story shares my beliefs instead of trashing them. In this case, this is not beliefs of a religious nature. The author seems to have studiously left out religion for the most part, and, from what I have heard, when there are some Christian bad guys later on, they are made clear to not be typical Christians, but guys who are misusing their faith. In general, the author, Nobuhiro Watsuki, stays away from political and ideological issues of today. That is not to say that politics or religion are not dealt with, but that they are limited to those issues that the characters would have dealt with and discussed *at the time* when the story takes place. This does take the story into condemning later evils like imperialism beginning to rise.

Philosophically, Kenshin is someone who is mostly a pacifist, but *WILL* fight when the need arises. Even then, he will not kill normally, but he will do so if he has no other choice. He just tries to avoid each step of the way, and when he does have to do what he would rather not, he takes no pleasure in doing so.

The dynamic for the character is sort of similar to that for Superman in his stories, where there are some bad guys who can pose a physical threat to Big Blue, but it is much more a story of Superman's personal and moral struggles. Here too, few can defeat Kenshin, but there are enough people who are good enough to challenge him to the point that he has to fight hard enough that he risks killing them. It is the personal struggle at heart here that makes the tale so interesting.

Most people may not care for the philosophy quite as much as I do, because they might not share it, or might even find it weird and absurd. In our darker and edgier age of movies with guys that freely kill, a highly moralistic and extremely pacifistic character is not welcome to most, but he is to me. I can't recommend this enough.

You see, I can sympathize with Kenshin, because I feel the same way for similar reasons. I didn't assassinate folks like the fictional Kenshin (based, as all the characters are, *very loosely* on an actual historical figure) did, but I was affected by a recent war, and I do hate violence, but if it is necessary to be violent, I hate any and all sadistic enjoyment thereof. I am a lot like the character in that regard, though certainly not similar in actual fighting prowess (obviously!).

For those who also like insights into the author's thoughts, there are character sketches and tidbits from the author about the work in progress. This is an incredible manga and I really can't recommend it enough.

blodrayne

Out of Print as of writing (may 15th 2018). Fantastic series, Vizbig editions are always a treat with nice quality paper, 1 or 2 chapters in color per book and a nice condensed way to collect some of the longer manga series.

Art is clean crisp and easy to follow combat. Fun characters and despite it being about a samurai called "The Man Slayer" this series is family friendly as it isn't gory and is about him redeeming himself by vowing to never take another life and fighting with a reversed blade sword after the atrocities he had seen and committed in the war.

I would like to give a special acknowledgment to Seattle Goodwill, who sold it used "good" condition for 11 shipped (not the OoP prices some are asking) and it honestly looks "Like new" as any dmg (maybe a corner isn't 100% straight) is from it merely existing as a book for years. I am extremely happy with my order as they had quick turn around and shipped it out same business day. Would buy from them again :]

Lonesome Orange Kid

Rurouni Kenshin has long been considered a classic Shonen Jump manga and after finally reading this volume I can see why.

The story tells the story of Kenshin, a samurai who wanders the countryside in a time where only those who are part of the government are aloud to have a sword. Kenshin's life is changed when he meets Oro, a young woman who is trying her best to keep her family dojo alive. As a whole volume 1 does a nice job of introducing characters and the world of Kenshin. It has a nice mix of comedy and serious moments. With a nice cast of charming characters.

An odd note for the kindle version is in the last chapter, they accidentally added part of the first chapter in it. Which was a bit confusing at first. And a word of caution for those who care, Kenshin does get gory in a few times.

GYBYXOH

I was originally skeptical when I heard about this series, but I picked up volume 1 and fell in love and volume 2 is no different. The art is gorgeous. The story is fun and full of nostalgia that makes you want to read through the original series rapid-fire.

This is the second and last volume of "Restoration", a reboot/parallel universe AU of Watsuki's "Rurouni Kenshin" manga. In this volume we once again meet Jin-e, Saito, Tsubame, the onmitsu, Kuroko, Megumi and the gang. Watsuki also has some very good notes about his writing, art and research processes in making these books and the original series that you should definitely check out. His notes are always interesting and if you have "Busou Renkin" or the original "Rurouni Kenshin" manga, you should also check those out.

The book arrived on time and in good condition.

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