



Book Girl and the Captive Fool

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When Tohko learns that someone is vandalizing books in the school library, she immediately launches an investigation. After all, there is hardly a more serious crime imaginable to a literature-eating goblin! Of course, Konoha is pulled (reluctantly) into his capricious club president's latest obsession, and when the culprit is caught, his penance is to participate in a play that Tohko has decided to organize for the school's cultural festival. Just as Oscar Wilde posited that "Life imitates Art far more than Art imitates Life," Konoha begins to notice similarities emerging between the circumstances that led to the vandalism of the library books and the relationships borne out in the literature club's play. The sometimes-frightening ties between people force Konoha to reexamine his understanding of true friendship...but will Konoha's newfound openness only leave him more vulnerable to betrayal?

Book Girl and the Captive Fool Details

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Chibineko says

This entry was a little confusing at times, but ultimately this volume continued the high quality of storytelling that I've come to expect from this series.

First let me go into what I found occasionally confusing about *Captive Fool*. I think that this was the first volume where I could tell that this was first published chapter by chapter in a magazine. Why? Because each chapter had a cliffhanger/teaser element to it that didn't entirely illuminate what had been previously mentioned. I'd probably chalk this up to the letters by Akutagawa more than anything else. This isn't really a spoiler, as the book makes it very clear early on that these are written by him, but I'll refrain from commenting overly much on their content.

The problem is that while the letters do a very good job of showing how scattered, manic, and occasionally depressive his thoughts are, they're also confusing. This might have been done on purpose at times, but occasionally I thought that they sort of took more away from the story than they added to it.

In the end I think that this volume was more of a way to begin the introduction of Miu, the girl that has haunted Konoha for so long. She isn't introduced here, but the elements here make Konoha think of her more than ever- which didn't go unnoticed by the people around him. It reinforces that I think that Nanase is ultimately the best girl for him as opposed to Tohko. Our Book Girl might be better for him writing-wise, but Nanase is the person who I think would really support him emotionally in the long run.

I'd definitely recommend this for fans of light novels and the series, although I would say that they start with the first volume. You can read this without really losing out on much from the previous volumes, as those were mostly just there to introduce the main cast of characters and overlying plot arc of Konoha's past. However at the same time, there are small subtle things that readers might miss out on that would make a fairly big difference in how this book plays out for them.

Vi?t Nga says

Akutagawa và Konoha th?t quá ?áng th??ng.

T?p này có liên quan ??n "Qu? quýt" c?a Akutagawa Ryunosuke và "Tình b?n" c?a Mushanokouji Saneatsu.

D??ng nh? Asakura Miu ?ang chi ph?i t?t c?, nh?ng Amano Tooko chính là ?i?m ??t phá.

L?i hành v?n c?a Nomura Mizuki quá ??i d?u dàng.

Thích nh?t là khi Nanase t?ng bán quy cho Konoha. S? k?t h?p c?a các tác ph?m v?n h?c n?i ti?ng vào *Slice of Life* c?a nh?ng h?c sinh "bình th??ng" ? cao trung Seijou th?t quá ?n t??ng.

Sarina says

Yet another good installment in one of my favorite series! I liked the angle on friendship that this book deals with. I also like the relationship between Akutagawa and Konoha, as well as with Tohko, that is developing.

Out of all the tragedies that have been presented in this series, the one in this novel feels the most real. Just people refusing to deal with the past out of guilt, but with the promise of hope in the future. The mystery in this book was the easiest to follow so far, and it had some genuinely chilling moments as well. Good characters, though I do think Nanase is the least interesting out of all of them. Even Takeda from the first novel comes back, and there's some really heartwrenching call-backs to her psyche, reminding the reader of the masks that each character wears throughout the series. I think the ending in this novel was the best one of the series so far, in that it actually tries to be hopeful about the future, while also hinting at an unsettling character return in a later episode. I actually cried at the end! All in all, a very good third installment to an intriguing series.

Jenna says

The third book of the Bungaku Shoujo series keep the plot going and going. As stated in the first book, Konoha was a famous author and a girl presuming it's his girlfriend, committed suicide. The back story of Konoha made me realize that this was going to be very important in the future books. If you read the epilogue, you will UNDERSTAND why. The ending makes you want to read the fourth book. If you watch the movie, you know you HAVE to read the fifth book. The supporting characters of the third book stole the show. Well, Tohko is always amazing but the play made her even more of the bungaku shoujo she is.

Hailanchau says

C?t truy?n c?m ??ng, n?i tâm các nhân v?t chính khá ph?c t?p.

Mike says

The stories in each volume of Book Girl are self-contained, fill the reader in on important character traits and could stand alone fairly well, but this story really gains dimensions by building off of established characters and plotlines in the previous books, so I really recommend starting at the beginning.

Our usual protagonists are at the center of Book Girl and the Captive Fool - the self-styled "book girl" (who happens to be a literature loving and eating goblin in schoolgirl form) Tohko and her force recruited book club junior Konoha (whose responsibilities revolve around writing Tohko snacks). They often get caught up in mysterious happenings involving other students.

As I've warned before, providing an accurate summary of the series' premise and its main characters is a bit misleading in that it makes the books sound much different in approach and tone than they are. The stories do not much deal with Tohko's "unusual" appetite nor explain it. Her love of literature is much more relevant. And the weirdness of the premise seems to point towards light, happy-go-lucky stories. This could not be farther from the truth. The Book Girl series is VERY dark and addresses extremely heavy themes. They are great reads featuring compelling characters and are laced with bits of humor here and there, but know going in that this is much more psychological thriller territory than madcap adventures.

This third book features Konoha getting dragged into Tohko's outrage driven investigation into a recent string of book vandalism presented in parallel with horrific letters written by someone having urges to

perform mutilations beyond paper. After *Famished Spirit* I wasn't sure the series could get creepier or more intense. I was wrong. *Captive Fool* escalates things several notches, keeping the reader guessing about who knows and is responsible for what as the character barrel closer and closer towards tragedy. As usual there is a thematic literary tie-in, which is exquisitely used and integrated into unfolding events.

Everything came together beautifully and this is easily my favorite of the series so far. We have several recurring characters show up along with some strong new ones introduced and all of them have distinct personalities and motivations. There were no easy answers to the things that trouble them and they get scared, make wrong decisions sometimes, struggle to deal with the consequences of their pasts, etc. The author is excellent at dropping in little hints and retelling things we already know something about in a slightly different way that gives more information. It adds a lot of depth and intrigue because the reader is effortlessly learning more about the overarching plots and the characters' long term problems while being firmly engaged with the current story.

And *Captive Fool* is a fantastic one. A tense, chilling atmosphere is kept throughout, the writing and translation are as impressive as ever, and I ended every chapter dying to know what was going to happen next. The climax of the unfolded in a wonderfully unique way that did justice to the all the preceding build up. Then just as my emotions were calming down the epilogue floored me with major developments that are likely to be felt throughout the rest of the series.

I will admit that it quite often wasn't an easy read, and I don't mean from a technical perspective (the writing flows wonderfully) but rather because of the subject matter. At the risk of repeating myself too much the story goes to dark, unsettling places and our characters are in for a lot of angst and emotional and mental turmoil. So fair warning - this is a brutal ride.

If you can handle it though *Captive Fool* is simply phenomenal and it's well worth accompanying the characters through their suffering.

Highest possible recommendation.

Peter says

I was quite happy with the third installment of the series. The characters seems to be developing at a good pace (though this book has makes me want to know how the whole series will end.) Quite an unexpected twist at the end.

Sean O'Hara says

What will be the plot of the third *Book Girl* novel? Let's spin the Wheel of Tropes to find out. Could it be a class trip? Or a beach episode? Maybe Tanabata? No, looks like we're going to have a school festival.

It's like a law of nature -- as a Japanese light novel (anime, manga) series grows longer, the probability of a school festival occurring approaches 1. And sure enough, we only needed three volumes for *Book Girl* to reach that point. (I suppose Haruhi Suzumiya has this beat since they filmed "*The Adventures of Mikuru*

Asahina Episode 00" in the second book, but we didn't actually get to the festival until volume 6.)

So the story opens with Tohko deciding the Literature Club should put on a play for the school festival. Great idea, except for the part where the club only has two members, herself and Konoha. But Tohko is undaunted, and she quickly rounds up a cast -- the world's most adorable sociopath, Chia Takeda, champion tsundere Nanase Kotobuki, and the stalwart cardboard cutout Kazushi Akutagawa.

Up until this point in the series, Akutagawa hasn't been given much to do but be Konoha's stalwart friend. Except Konoha reminds us at the start of the book that he's too emo to have friends, and Akutagawa is just this guy he talks to in class so no one will notice his many mental problems. Which is too bad because Akutagawa could really use a friend to help him through ... well, that'd be spoiling too much, but this is a Book Girl novel, so you know there's going to be darkness and twisted psychology and catharsis through literature.

As for Kotobuki, she's not given much to do this time -- Nomura even apologizes in the afterword and promises she'll play a bigger role in the next book. By the end of the last book she had mellowed towards Konoha, but she's back to full tsun-tsun mode when this volume opens, though she does manage to have a conversation with him that doesn't end with calling him a jerk. We even get an idea of why she gets mad at him so easily, though it sadly indicates that she doesn't realize what she's dealing with in him.

Takeda likewise doesn't have a big role, but she's quite memorable. At first I was worried she was being flanderized as she seemed like a perfectly normal and happy teenage girl in her first few appearances, but then she gets a moment alone with Konoha and says, "No, still a sociopath. But I've gotten better at faking emotions." She's so cuuuute!

For a Book Girl novel, this is almost light and fluffy. By which I mean, there's (view spoiler). Hey, by Mizuki Nomura standards, this is practically a Judy Garland musical.

Giang Nguyen says

N?i ti?p truy?n th?ng vi?t review t? t?p tr??c, mình quy?t ??nh d?ng l?i vi?t comment v? n?a ??u c?a câu chuy?n ? t?p 3. Có l? n?i dung v? tình yêu cu?ng nhi?t nên ??n gi? Konoha không ngh? v? hình ?nh tr??c khi ch?t c?a Miu n?a, thay vào ó là m?t "th?ng ng?c ?ang yêu chính hi?u". Thêm vào ó hành vi ?óng k?ch ??m ch?t hài c?a Tooko nên b?u không khí v?n còn vui v? d? ch?u. Kotobuki thì v?n khi?n mình khó ch?u v?i thái ?? làm vi?c này vi?c n? vi?c kia không ph?i là vì Konoha ?âu nhé. Haiz, thích thì c? nói ??i là thích ?i cho r?i! Ch? có ?o?n Kotobuki nói nh? v?i Konoha v? phán ?oán Akutagawa thích Tooko là mình th?y ch?p nh?n ???c vì thân thi?n h?n thôi. Tuy nhiên s? th?t là mình m?i ?i qua 1/3 ch?ng ???ng, không khí x?u ?i là ?i?u có th? tiên ?oán ?? chu?n b? tinh th?n.

Và r?i c?nh này xu?t hi?n:

Trong bóng t?i l? m? b? thiêu ???t b?i ánh n?ng cháy r?c c?a bu?i chi?u tà, hình ?nh Akutagawa qu? g?i, trán gí sát xu?ng th?m c? trông ch?ng khác gì c?nh Chúa Giesu b? óng

Đỉnh lên th?p t? giá.

[...] Sarashina khu?u ng??i xu?ng, m?t dán vào l?ng c?a Akutagawa và b?t khóc n?c n?.

Cho ??n khi m?t tr?i ?ã l?n và màn ?êm l?nh l?o bao ph? l?y bóng dáng c?a hai ng??i, Akutagawa v?n cúi g?p ??u xu?ng th?m c? không h? nhúc nhích.

Mình s?ng s?. S?ng s? nh? Konoha và Takeda khi ch?ng ki?n c?nh ?ó. Mình bi?t là chuy?n c?a Akutagawa s? có ph?n gi?ng v?i chuy?n tình tay ba trong tác ph?m "Tình B?n" c?a Mushanokouji Saneatsu nh?ng trong lòng thì v?n luôn t? ph?n bác mong là ??ng nh? v?y. M?t ph?n là mình không thích ki?u ti?u th? y?u ?u?i nh? Sarashina nên không mong Akutagawa vì cô nàng này mà hi sinh tình b?n.

? thì ?úng là ?ã chuy?n b? tình th?n r?i ?ó, nh?ng mà đi?n bi?n ti?p theo v?n khi?n mình ng?c nhiên quá ??.

Tr??c khi k?t thúc vài trang, mình v?n m?t m?c ?ình ninh r?ng nh?ng ?o?n th? trích đ?n trong truy?n quá d? hi?u ?i. Ai c?ng rõ ai là ng??i vi?t, ng??i ???c vi?t ??n là ai và ng??i nh?n là ai, không có n?a úp n?a m?, tranh t?i tranh sáng cho ng??i ??c ?oán mò nh? hai t?p tr??c. Ng? ?âu ch? là mình t? huy?n ho?c b?n thân th? thôi. ?i?u không th? ng? nh?t chính là ?i t?ng Akutagawa vi?t th? cho và yêu hi?n gi? l?i là Miu t? t? ch?a ch?t.

Mình c?ng ch?ng bi?t đi?n t? c?m giác lúc g?p l?i quy?n sách th? nào. Lúc ??y ?ang ? trên máy bay nên ch? bi?t ng?i th?n th? trong khi ??u óc c?ng nh? dây ?àn mà không bi?t phát ti?t ?i ?âu. N?u mà ?ang ? nhà ch?c mình s? ph?i l?n l?n vài vòng r?i h?ng h?c tâm tr?ng vi?t review r?i. Nói chung là bí ?n l?ng nh?ng c?ng hay nh?ng mình h?i th?t v?ng khi Miu còn s?ng. Bao lâu nay cái th?ng Konoha tâm h?n m?ng manh y?u ?u?i, lúc nào c?ng tâm tr?ng này n? ??n m?c khó th? ch?ng ph?i là vì chuy?n c?a Miu sao. Gi? thì tuy b? th?ng t?t nh?ng con bé v?n s?ng s? s? ra làm m?t h?t c? ý ngh?a. R?i thì còn ??nh qua Akutagawa lên k? ho?ch tr? thù. Haizzzz...

Tuy mình r?t chán ghét vi?c Akutagawa yêu Miu nh?ng ít nh?t th?ng nhóc v?n ch?a m?t lý trí ??n ?? h?i b?n mình. Mà c?ng ch? là t?m th?i t?i th?i ?i?m này thôi, t?ng lai thì ch?ng bi?t ???c, hint rõ ràng ngay trong l?i nói c?a Akutagawa: "*Tôi v?n còn có chuy?n gi?u ông, Inoue. Có l? m?t ngày nào ?ó, tôi s? khi?n ông b? t?n th?ng.*"

Lúc ??u mình c?ng th?y Akutagawa hay hay nh?ng gi? thì thôi r?i, ch? có th? trách em nó ch?n nh?m ng??i ?? yêu. Các ??i t?ng mà em ?y thích toàn ng??i vô ??i, toàn ki?u mình không th? ?a n?i, h?t Sarashina l?i ??n Miu. Rõ là em ?y là M chính hi?u r?i còn gì. Nhân v?t nam ch?n nh?m ng??i ?? yêu, nhân v?t n? cùng toàn ?âm ??u vào Konoha :facepalm: Mình lo l?m ?y, ai thích Konoha thì c?ng ???c ?i nh?ng mình khá thích Tooko nên hi v?ng Tooko và Konoha ch? ? m?c ch? em thôi. C?u tr?i trong vô v?ng :-<

Hai t?p tr??c dù u ám ??n ?âu thì k?t thúc v?n ???c coi là tr?n v?n, nh? ánh sáng phía cu?i ???ng h?m. Riêng t?p này cái k?t l?i khi?n mình b?c b?i vì s? xu?t hi?n c?a Miu. Cu?i cùng mình c?ng nh?n ra tình c?m c?a mình v?i Cô gái v?n ch??ng: v?a thích v?a ghét, v?a yêu v?a h?n, rõ là ??y ?i?m không thích nh?ng không ki?m ???c mà ?âm ??u vào ??c.

Tuy nhiên ?i?m sáng c?a t?p này là l?i tho?i c?a các nhân v?t ?úng là toàn các câu nói hay mà mình th?c s? th?y tâm ??c. Ví d? ?i?n hình:

Oomiya an ?i Nojima khi tác ph?m c?a anh b? ch? trích: "**?ây ch? là s? tr? thù s?m dành cho c?u mà thôi.**"

???? says

This book talks about the meaning of friendship, though in a way only readers who are very familiar with Japanese culture will understand. It might not be as heart-grIPPING as the last book (Book Two was such a... shock), but I really liked the new cast present in this book as well as Konoha's character development: he's slowly but surely becoming a real man.

MC says

I had heard some comments about the irony of how *Book Girl and the Captive Fool* was still really dark but yet was the most light-hearted of the series so far. I read it and I have to agree. Despite the pain and heartache characters suffer, it was still the most cheerful ending, which kinda says something about what type of series this is.

I normally don't like this type of angsty series, yet author Mizuki Nomura just somehow makes it work and I ended up really enjoying the series. Maybe it's how the characters really seem more "real" than in other books, or maybe it's the magical realism angle. It could be just that the two main characters, Konoha and Tohko, the titular "Book Girl" (a goblin who eats books), are so fascinating. I'm not entirely sure.

One part I know I like is the way that Tohko always sticks her nose into other peoples' business to help them, out of a wierd mix of reasons. She's not entirely selfless OR selfish. She is a complex character that is always bratty, a little bossy and insufferable, yet ultimately sweet and someone the reader can't help but like. By this volume, Konoha is finally starting to care more and want to help others under Tohko's influence and friendship.

Yup, this is definitely part of it. Watching a supernatural creature go around eating books but otherwise doing mundane things and using a brilliant intellect to solve mysteries to help folks psychologically is just such a mish-mash of genres that I just find myself fascinated.

This time, Tohko ropes Konoha's classmate and uncertain friend, Akutagawa, into helping with the play she wants the "Book Club" of their high school to put on at the culture festival. Such clubs and festivals are a big thing in Japan, by the by. Unfortunately, since only her and Konoha are in the BC, she needs more people. Helping out are Kotobuki, Konoha's tsundere classmate, and Takeda, someone they helped in the first book when she was in the depths of despair.

At first, things seem normal enough, at least for this bunch. Hmmm. Maybe that should have been the first clue for Konoha that *something* had to happen. But slowly a mystery unfolds around harmful actions that Akutagawa is taking in his life and an emotional crisis that is spiraling out of control. There could be real, and fatal, consequence if Tohko and Konoha can't find a way to help him in time.

For those who like the darker tone of the series, don't worry, it's still plenty dark. But sometimes you need your bittersweet endings to be, perhaps, a *tad bit* less bitter and more sweet. That would be the case here.

The only problem I had with the story is something that the author herself admits in the Afterword, which is the treatment of Nanase Kotobuki as a character. The author built up some major stuff for her part of the storyline (and from what she said in the afterword and I know from spoilers since this series is completed,

Nomura had the storyline planned out), and then just let it fizzle out for now. I can understand that this is likely due to length, but it is quite frustrating.

Other than that, no real complaints. This was a dark, but quite fun and ultimately happy, story. I quite Highly Recommend it.

Jang Nguy?n says

Các nhân v?t ph?c t?p, h?i khó hi?u

Linh says

Cu?n này nhi?u hint 8-}

Selena says

This book.

This book was fantastic.

There is no other way to describe this book.

The Book Girl series has always had mystery and psychological thriller elements. This book just ramped it up. I didn't think it could get anymore spine tingling, hair raising, or shock inducing after that last volume. I was wrong.

Captive Fool took this to a whole new level.

There were many points in this book that I seriously felt like this:

and yet I couldn't look away.

I love psychological thrillers. The problem is that they tend to get too gory for my taste. This one abstained from excessive gore and truly freaked me out just from suspense alone. The way information was doled out was brilliant. You were always told *just* what you needed to know at that point, no more, no less, but you always know that something just doesn't feel *right*.

And the description. Mizuki Nomura's writing is practically *art*. The pictures she paints with words are

almost tangible. The way she described characters and events made them feel real, and really terrifying.

And here I want to take a moment to say that this is a not a horror story. It really is a psychological thriller. It's not nightmare inducing, but you will get freaked out.

In this story, we see our dynamic duo Konoha and Tohko once again getting into trouble. This time, it all starts with Tohko trying to track down the vandal damaging her favorite library books. One thing leads to another, and Tohko enlists the vandal's help in the play the book club is putting on for the Cultural Festival. Characters from previous stories return, and new ones are introduced, leading to the ultimate conclusion (which I won't tell you because spoilers).

So far, each book in the series has drawn a parallel to a book, usually one that is somehow central to the plot. In this case, the book is a Japanese classic called *Friendship*. And even though I've never read *Friendship*, the parallels are subtly explained so even American readers can get it.

As always, things are wrapped up nicely by the end, and while I wouldn't say "Happily Ever After," *Captive Fool* ends, for the most part, on a much lighter note than did *Famished Spirit*. I say "for the most part" because of the epilogue. That last paragraph. Oh my god.

Did not see that coming. Did not. No way. That both made me angry (and a good way) and had me going, "NO!!!! NO NO NO NO NO!!!! BUT YOU SAID-- THAT'S NOT POSSIBLE!!!!"

Anyway, I highly recommend this. Especially to other Book Girls (and Guys) out there. I would, however, recommend starting at the beginning with *Book Girl* and the *Suicidal Mime* so you understand some of the recurring characters.
