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Moribito II: Guardian Of The Darkness



Synopsis

Balsa returns to her native Kanbal to clear the name of Jiguro, her dear mentor, who saved her life when she was six years old. But what should be a visit of truth and reconciliation becomes a fight for her life when she learns that Jiguro had been a member of King Rogsam's personal bodyguard. After Jiguro fled Kanbal with her, Rogsam sent the other bodyguards after them one by one--Jiguro's best friends, whom he had to kill to protect Balsa. Now, with the help of two Kanbalese children, Balsa must unwind the conspiracy surrounding Jiguro and the mystery of the Guardians of the Dark.

Book Information

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Series: Moribito (Book 2)

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Age Range: 12 and up

Grade Level: 7 and up

Customer Reviews

Grade 6 Up
• Though a sequel, *Moribito II* stands on its own as an engrossing story of redemption, with seasoned warrior and bodyguard Balsa back in the center of it all. Seeking to relieve the emotional burden she had been carrying since her foster father died more than 20 years earlier, she returns to her native country of Kanbal. Just a few steps into her homeland, she rescues two children and duels a cave-dwelling mountain spirit. This encounter becomes a catalyst for two worlds to eventually mingle: the human one full of political conspiracy and a reawakened

mythological one. Both come alive with the wonderful attention to detail, from descriptions of the geography, food, and social structure to the ceremony where humans come face to face with their gods. Fast-paced action scenes (frenzied but not overly violent) help lessen the weightiness of this epic, where themes like a boy's coming of age, family betrayal, and the consequences of unchecked ambition are also explored. So steeped in anime sensibilities that one could almost imagine commercial breaks between chapters, this series serves as a smooth transition between manga and straight narrative. — Joanna K. Fabicon, Los Angeles Public Library Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

"Having successfully protected young Prince Chagum in 2008's *Moribito: Guardian of the Spirit*, Balsa, a spear-wielding warrior, ventures to her rocky homeland of Kanbal in this sequel. Once again, Uehashi immerses readers in the culture, traditions, mythology—even diet—of the populace, creating a full, captivating world. Upon her return, Balsa rescues a pair of siblings in the area's caves (home to the mysterious hyohlu, the guardians of the darkness). She is soon marked as a fugitive, but with help she still uncovers a wide-ranging plot involving her deceased mentor and a scheme to attack the underground kingdom of the Mountain King. Uehashi explores themes of family and honesty with rich prose and compelling characters. Powerful and loyal, Balsa is the core draw (—Although her hands were bound and she was held captive, Balsa's eyes were filled with a fierce light, like a fighter ready to enter the ring—), but the cast of secondary characters are well developed and intriguing in their own right. Add to that some intense spear battles and a gripping finale, and this growing series has something for everyone." -- Publishers Weekly, starred review—
Though a sequel, *Moribito II* stands on its own as an engrossing story of redemption, with seasoned warrior and bodyguard Balsa back in the center of it all. . . . Both [human and mythological worlds] come alive with the wonderful attention to detail, from descriptions of the geography, food, and social structure to the ceremony where humans come face to face with their gods. . . . [T]his series serves as a smooth transition between manga and straight narrative. —
-- School Library Journal
AWARDS: An ALA Notable Book for Children, 2010
Mildred L. Batchelder Honor for Translation, 2010
USBBY Outstanding International Book, 2010

I have to give kudos to the editorial team that handled the translation of both the *Moribito* books. I find translated books tend to be stilted and clunky in general. Not the case here! You'd never know this wasn't an English book in the first place. I loved the first one, but I have to admit that the second book is even better than the first. More satisfying, more sympathetic, more engrossing - and I loved

the first one! Moribito satisfies with a tremendously rousing story that grips you and keeps you on the edge of your seat, and takes you to a completely different world that feels so original and fascinating. And I have to tell you, I had no clue what to expect in the grand finale. It was so original and impressive - and I tend to be the type of person who guesses everything that is going to happen. They say there is no original ideas - well, when you aren't familiar with another culture, it becomes original to you. And this book is fascinating for that reason. Balsa is also one of the best kickass heroines I've had the pleasure of reading. She was a bit stiffer in the first one, but in this story everything becomes personal for her, and we really get to see her true personality - and she rocks! I honestly can't wait for the next in the series.

My thoughts on this one are pretty similar to the last - its strengths and weaknesses are much the same. Prose is smooth but a touch flat, world building is astounding - although in this one I did think Uehashi got a little carried away with the food. (Food is good! And oft-neglected in fantasy worlds! But geez.) This book had even more political intrigue than the last one, and I was totally hooked by it - for the second half of the story I barely came up for air. I missed Tanda and I hope he'll be in the next book (if, indeed, the next book ever gets translated into English, s-sob). The end of this book seemed to indicate he likely would. Also, this line? "Magic weavers can see spirits, right, Tanda? If I die, I'll come back to you as a spirit." BAWLING, OTP FOREVER GUYS.

I loved the anime and wanted to read more about the the characters next journey. This was a great read! Similar spirit/nature theme as the first story. And we come to know more about Jiguro and Balsas hometown. The writing was very vivid and captivating. I finished the book on a sunday, couldnt keep it down until it was over. I really wish the author would translate all the rest of the books in this series.

It has a good plot and is a good companion to the first book. Clean. I only wish a little bit more at the end.

This is worth including as this series, even in translation, is better than some YA novels out today written by native speakers of English/ American. Hope Scholastic continues to publish the other 8 volumes of this collection."Having successfully protected young Prince Chagum in 2008's Moribito: Guardian of the Spirit, Balsa, a spear-wielding warrior, ventures to her rocky homeland of Kanbal in this sequel. Once again, Uehashi immerses readers in the culture, traditions, mythology--even

diet--of the populace, creating a full, captivating world. Upon her return, Balsa rescues a pair of siblings in the area's caves (home to the mysterious hyohlu, the guardians of the darkness). She is soon marked as a fugitive, but with help she still uncovers a wide-ranging plot involving her deceased mentor and a scheme to attack the underground kingdom of the Mountain King. Uehashi explores themes of family and honesty with rich prose and compelling characters. Powerful and loyal, Balsa is the core draw ("Although her hands were bound and she was held captive, Balsa's eyes were filled with a fierce light, like a fighter ready to enter the ring"), but the cast of secondary characters are well developed and intriguing in their own right. Add to that some intense spear battles and a gripping finale, and this growing series has something for everyone." -- Publishers Weekly, starred review

Perfect followup to the Moribito anime. I never read the first book, but the anime is one of my favorites. I know there are differences between the two, but it didn't affect my pleasure in reading this light novel. I loved it almost as much as I love the anime.

I first saw the anime version of the first book and loved it. I then read the book, and was just as impressed, as the book is excellent and the creators of the anime did a really great job of adapting it to TV. This second book of the series is nice, the surroundings have changed, but there is so much more added to the story and of Balsa's character arc. I found out that really there are more books to the series, they just haven't been translated to English. I really hope the publishers of this second book of the series goes ahead and translates the others as well. It's an excellent world inhabited by well-thought out characters.

Love this book and love the characters in the book. I watched the anime for season one and decided to buy the book. My favorite character is "Balsa", a woman who has the will power of 10 man. It was hard to put the book down. It is a great book and I truly enjoyed reading the book. Read the first book before you buy the sequel!

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