



Kaoru Mori: Anything and Something

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At times hilarious, at others heartwarming, this collection of short stories penned by one of Japan's most talented artists is a perfect addition to any library! A young girl discovers that new glasses give her a whole new perspective on the world, a bunny-girl waitress learns to cope with her male customers with dignity, an introverted art student inspires her fellow club members even as she takes inspiration from them, and more! Fans of Mori will enjoy seeing concept designs and historical notes from her award-winning series, as well as Mori's own brand of enthusiastic commentary throughout.

Kaoru Mori: Anything and Something Details

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Author : Kaoru Mori , ? ?

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From Reader Review Kaoru Mori: Anything and Something for online ebook

Laura says

An eclectic mix of stories and research all steeped in the lush detail of Kaoru Mori and her appreciation of ladies. Loved a couple of the stories, enjoyed most of the rest.

Anna says

A very random lil collection of one-shots. Some are incredibly sexy, others just bits of comedy covered in usual maid dresses. Most were done for *Fellows!* mag themed collections, so outta context it seems even more random

Most of the book tho - rambling notes on her works and travels, Emma/Bride's Story illustrations & sketches and suddenly pages on Victorian corsets and fireplaces! With very detailed (some tiny!) illustrations crammed into every inch of the page

For what you get content-wise, the book is needlessly harcover & overpriced... but for a Mori-fangirl like myself, it was still worth it

Aravena says

Talenta bercerita dan menggambar yang bersinar terang di balik kumpulan kisah yang awalnya terkesan tidak beraturan dan kurang 'jelas'.

Kalau buku ini murni dianggap sebagai 'Kumpulan Cerita Pendek', rasanya mungkin memang kurang memuaskan. Namun kalau dianggap sebagai 'Kumpulan Cerita Iseng & Ocehan Kaoru Mori', buku ini jadi terasa bagus dan istimewa.

Jadi.....

(•_•)
(•_•)>?■-■
(?■_■)

.....mari pakai kacamata khusus.

Mayoritas cerita yang dipilih (secara asal) masuk ke buku ini rasanya lebih tepat dianggap sebagai abstraksi, 'sketsa', atau kepingan narasi, bukan cerita utuh dengan awal, akhir, dan konflik yang jelas. Gaya penceritaannya seringkali membuat saya merasa bahwa ceritanya memang dirancang untuk jumlah halaman yang terbatas, atau dalam rangka iseng seperti 'ah ayo buat cerita 4 halaman yang setengah dari semua panelnya hanya close-up bokong tokohnya'. Saya pun kadang senang membuat dan membaca abstraksi iseng seperti ini, walau rasanya baru pertama kali melihat yang demikian dalam bentuk komik.

Dari cerita-cerita tersebut, yang terlihat jelas adalah *fetish* kegemaran Kaoru Mori terhadap hal-hal berikut:

1. Pelayan
2. Kacamata
3. Pelayan berkacamata
4. Lekuk-lekuk fitur badan wanita seperti bokong, dada dan pinggul

...dan sejujurnya, semua itu terasa menarik. Bukan karena hal-hal tersebut menarik, tapi karena *cara penyampaiannya* yang menarik. Hal ini juga berlaku untuk bagian ocehan lepas Mori-sensei; saya sama sekali tidak tertarik dengan korset dan perapian zaman kuno, tapi saat membaca penjelasan panjang-lebar (8 halaman!) Mori-sensei yang begitu antusias, entah bagaimana saya jadi tertarik. Sementara untuk cerita komiknya, setelah melepas ekspektasi akan keutuhan narasi, saya jadi dapat menikmati guratan *line work*, desain karakter, dan seni paneling yang amat sangat bagus.

Ada satu cerita ('Jadi Terlihat') yang dari awal sudah terasa bagus dan ketika dibaca lagi, jadi semakin bagus. Sejumlah cerita pada awalnya membuat saya berpikir 'hm? Hanya segini?', tapi setelah dibaca ulang dengan kacamata berbeda, jadi terasa menarik. Pada akhirnya, hanya ada satu cerita ('Bunga Sumire') yang rasanya benar-benar gagal untuk saya pahami ataupun apresiasi; ini yang memang terasa beda sendiri dalam buku ini, karena bentuknya yang paling berupa 'narasi utuh' dan ceritanya yang bukan dibuat oleh Mori-sensei.

*"Jadi, apa kalian menyukai buku ini!? Lebih tepatnya, bagaimana? Apakah imejku di mata kalian masih baik-baik saja? (*terutama bagi yang hanya membaca Bride's Story)..... Saat semuanya kujadikan satu buku.... (muncul perasaan) apaan nih? Apaan nih?"*

Bagaimana ya.... saya sangat suka membaca karya-karya iseng dan 'setengah matang' dari seorang penulis. Jenis karya yang cenderung membuat si penulisnya merasa malu saat membacanya di masa depan, tapi mengandung ketulusan, keapaadaan, dan antusiasme yang belum tentu ada di karya-karya penulis tersebut yang lebih 'bagus'. Buku ini pada dasarnya adalah ajakan untuk melihat karya-karya seperti itu dan 'berkenalan' dengan kreatornya.

Tanpa pernah membaca karya beliau sebelumnya, ini kesan pertama yang amat sangat jauh dari kata sempurna. Tapi pada akhirnya, saya tidak bisa untuk tidak menyukai Kaoru Mori.

Y says

This was a fun read! I picked it up not knowing anything about Kaoru Mori, so I can really only blame myself for having no context at all for most of the stuff related to her other work, but even with that it was genuinely interesting and engrossing. She's a fun mangaka to just read the thoughts of, especially on silly things she's really interested in, like Victorian fireplaces. Yes, really.

The collection itself contains a lot of different things-- it's what it says on the package; a lot of work from the ten years she's been making manga. That made it diverse and fun, but easy to read as a collective, and I have to say, this book had me Googling things like "kaoru mori lesbian" and "kaoru mori wife" by the time I got to the third mention of how much she likes maids. And the story about the sexy bunny maid. And the sexy swimsuit lady. And the sexy maids. And the...

(Read this book if you like girls, that's all I'm saying.)

P. says

My introduction to Kaoru Mori was through *A Bride's Story*, which is the book I recommend to people who say they can't get into manga (I was one of those people). This collection of short pieces and ephemera from 10 years of her career so far convinced me that I'd like to read her previous work as well. And it made me wish I knew more about manga magazines. Some of the stories are just cute, some are silly, some fun informative pieces on the history of fireplaces and corsets, and some are really short everyday scenes that are weirdly sexually charged (like a wife trying on an old swimsuit from her honeymoon - nothing explicit, but with a tinge of desire shot through it.) And of course there are the pieces where the author/artist speaks to her audience, and we learn more about her, and how she rolls on the floor when something is too good and she can't take it, which made me more fond of her authorial persona than ever.

Chibineko says

If you're looking for anything other than a rather pleasant mish-mash of various materials, then you'll probably be disappointed with this collection. Rather than have one linear story or several meaty one-shots, this collection is made up of several stories that are only a few pages long and dozens of various illustrations and notes from Mori. If I had to describe it, I'd say it was the "and the kitchen sink" of her work. It's basically all of the things that wouldn't cleanly fit with any other collection, but were interesting enough to warrant releasing. For some this will be a must have, while others will want to skip this or borrow someone else's copy.

That said, this was a charming collection. I wish there was a little more to some of the stories, as some of them felt a little too brief for the story they were trying to tell while others flourished under the short length. I have to say that the description of the bunny girl waitress is pretty far off from what the story is actually about, which is a mysterious waitress going through a daily routine of clients, one of which swears that she's far older than what she seems to be. It's one of the tales that I wish I could read more of, as there's a lot of potential there.

The illustrations and artwork in general are gorgeous. It's Kaoru Mori, so you know you're going to get good quality, but some of these are stunning even by her standards. Emma fans will probably want to get this book in particular, as there are quite a few illustrations that are specifically Emma oriented. They were nice and made me long to re-read the series as a whole, which I suppose is part of the reason they were included.

I can't say that I'd recommend this for every reader. I enjoyed it and will probably flip through it again enough in the future to justify its purchase, but for some this will be something that they'll only read once. I recommend it, but with caution.

Estara says

Well. I can't call it a guilty pleasure because I don't feel too guilty. But this collection of various odds and ends that Mori has drawn for the seinen magazine she works for does celebrate the female form first and foremost.

I like looking at Michelangelo's David, too - or the guy in da Vinci's anatomic drawing circle - whatever that is called. I appreciate looking at beautiful men and women, though I don't collect swimwear issues or magazines, etc.

What Mori brings to it for me is not just beauty but loving deliberation in her detailed shading of curves - and her female beauty is almost classic, if you see Marilyn Monroe as classic. While she does draw to please the eye, the women and girls that are drawn are always treated with respect.

Celebrating the power of their beauty - and in one blatant and subversively subtuned story about Playboy Bunnies that never seem to grow old, exploiting the power of their beauty. That story does play to the femme fatale trope, I'd say. Hmmm, but maybe the short about the wife wearing an old one-piece swimsuit in her own house to inveigle her husband into going on holiday with her shows the power even more so. She's just delectable and Mori leads the eye along the curves.

Mori also does moe her way, a girl getting her first glasses (and because she sees more clearly now, realising that a boy in her class is probably interested in her) just celebrates the opening of possibilities, much like the story about a girl whose mom buys her a high school uniform much too large for her, so she can grow into it - and she doesn't for years, and then she suddenly fits it perfectly.

While there's also truly tiny comedies about a mercenary butler and maid who basically force a young man into being their master, the most page time seems to go to a truly dark story of two outsider girls in high school, one a driven, unsuccessful artist and one who so far has successfully hidden her inner emptiness by being outrageous. They rub each other the wrong way and the story turns quite dark and dangerous, but in the end they find a strange sort of friendship, each giving something to the other that brings out some revelation. It's not a lesbian love story, no.

If you've read Mori before, you'll love the afterwords, well here are middlewords and explanations and bits she drew extra for the Emma DVD booklets, amongst them an incredibly detailed history of the female corset! There are four-koma bits about the Emma and Shirley universe, or one/two-page short vignettes which weren't in the manga or the anime. There's an ode to Agatha Christie and her characters, there are various drawings showing A Bride's Story details - among them the drawing of Amir that Mori did in 45 minutes real-time for a Japanese website (which I linked to her page here on GR).

And loads of Maid stuff.

Mike says

I was previously only familiar with Kaoru Mori from the first volume of A Bride's Story, which is incredible and has some of the most detailed and beautiful art I've ever seen. This collection gave an opportunity to check out more of her work and, since the contents were pulled from a ten year period, see how it has evolved.

Anything and Something is part short fiction, part artbook/sketchbook (125 pages and 75 pages, respectively). A major part of why I was interested in this is Mori's art and I enjoy side information and notes, so I was happy with this, but it is worth mentioning in case anyone is expecting a full 200 pages of shorts. The artbook portion contains a variety of designs, promotional materials and sketch comics.

I wasn't sure what to expect from Mori's stories once I saw the cover for this volume. Most prominent on the cover is an adult, regal looking maid. Then we have a provocatively posed bunny girl, and finally a young

girl in formal school attire. It turns out the cover is quite representative - maids, fanservice and school are the subject matter of all the included stories (and combined in a couple).

The stories are very odd, in subject matter, pacing and approach. This isn't a criticism, as I found most of them interesting, but it does make it hard to describe them and it is worth noting that these are rather unique and might be too weird for some readers. The focus is very tight. For example - one story revolves simply around getting a pair of glasses for the first time. Another is about trying on an old swimsuit. A particularly amusing story is about growing into too-large formal school uniforms. And so on...

My favorite was the longest, titled Sumire's Flowers. This was a good four times the length of any other story and correspondingly more complex. While it still could've used a little more explanation in parts, it was a strong, emotional story about two competing art students.

The art is surprisingly different from story to story, even given the long time frame. Not only does Mori's style change over time, but her designs vary by subject matter. There is also a big difference to the art when she does her own screen tones (something she points out for certain stories in the afterward notes). Put together there's huge variety in the art here. And ALL of it is wonderful, which is extremely impressive.

Equally impressive is the deft touch everything is done with. Even in the stories that seem to be primarily for fanservice (and there are several) there is a sense of grace to the art and interesting emotional slants to the context. The Swimsuit Bought Long Ago is a good example, as despite being seven pages devoted to an attractive woman trying on a swimsuit it is a nicely done, complete story.

Anything and Something is a pretty good self description of this collection. Definitely off the beaten path and not for everyone, but very good stuff if you can take it for what it is. Recommended.

Kuroi says

Extremely pretty, as usual, this is Kaoru Mori's work after all. I particularly liked the swimsuit story and the information sections at the end. Definitely recommended.

Guguk says

Aku cuma suka gambar-2 sketsanya + cerita-2nya tentang ini-itu, sementara kumpulan komiknya sendiri...aku suka cerita cewek berkacamata itu (^,^) ceritanya manis~ Tapi untuk yang lainnya, aku kurang suka sama ceritanya... ε===(??ω?)?

Anna says

A collection of short stories, doodles and sketches from the last decade of Kaoru Mori's career as a manga artist. For anyone interested in her work and other little projects she has done before her debut with Emma: Victorian Romance. Although the stories in here are short and experimental with an entertaining and throw-away quality, her artwork remains breath-takingly detailed and beautiful. Her funny afterwords are written in a comic-style diary and shows how hard she works and how humble she is towards her work, making her an

instantly like-able character. Recommended for fans of her work and anyone else with an appreciation of highly detailed manga-ish styled drawings (I say manga-ish as her work does draw some influences from other sources apart from Japan).

Sasha Boersma says

I liked the demonstration of Kaoru's range of manga style talent. Book was a collection of short stories, snippets. And art samples. Nothing deep, but interesting.

Lexie says

Prelim Review: I'm really glad that Yen Press decided to translate this little treasure trove of work from Kaoru Mori. Very few publishers deem collections like these to be worth translating since it doesn't fit in with established series. In fact though this collection of short comics, editorial notes, illustrations, sketches and whacky doodles is quite an insight into Mori.

Her trademark love of maids is ever-present in several tales, however there's also a comic about a woman explaining why she never got rid of a bathing suit she'll never wear again, a young girl's growing pains, a hostess assurance that things will never change, how to capture an elusive 'master' and much more.

Full review to be published at Poisoned Rationality

Miss says

Kaoru Mori is one of the few authors I know capable of drawing fanservice that doesn't alienate me. I just find myself really charmed by how enthusiastic she is about it. I can't summon up feminist frowns in the face of so much maid love. It comes off as more sweet than gross somehow? Idk. I'm rambling because this book isn't actually a full story I can assess, it's bits and pieces of Mori's work collected from all over. The only real unifying theme is her love of drawing sexy women, particularly maids. xD Basically if you like the glimpses of Mori's personality you get in the afterwards to *Emma* and *A Bride's Story* you'll probably enjoy this too. 3.5 stars

Ravenhats says

One half short story collection, the other half art book *Anything and Something* is a wonder collection. The art is outstanding, and the stories have a variety of styles and range in tone. I would give it another star, but the short length of the stories and the fact that a great deal of this book is just artwork rather than story (though very excellent and well researched art) prevents me from doing so. 4.5 stars
