

Fallen Words

Yoshihiro Tatsumi

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YOSHIHIRO TATSUMI
FALLEN WORDS
EIGHT MORAL COMEDIES BY THE CREATOR OF A DRIFTING LIFE

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Yoshihiro Tatsumi : Fallen Words before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Fallen Words:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Pick Up Fallen Words By Steven Autry A great selection of Rakugo stories presented in Manga form. What is really excellent about this collection is the last page or two of each story really conveys the irony, humor, or otherwise enlightening aspect seen in performances of Rakugo at the storyteller's closing. There is a clean and direct well timed feel to the storytelling and art throughout the book. Stories included are "The End Keeper's Fortune", "New Year Festival", "Escape Of The Sparrows", "Fiery Spirits", "Making The Rounds", "The Rooster Crows", "The God Of Death" (Front Cover Art Is From This Story), and "Shibihama". "Shibihama" in particular is one of the best stories and has historically been one of the most well known. Closing the book with this story was an excellent idea because it literally illustrates many of the aspects of historically good Rakugo. These

aspects include entertainment, hilarity, distinct character gestures, character driven circumstances throughout, wordplay flow, and precise interpretation with sage like advice at the end. 9 of 10 people found the following review helpful. "The pleasures of rakugo emerge from this universal, mutable quality" By Rob "Fallen Words," or rakugo, as the Japanese call them, are stories handed down throughout the generations to be molded and kindled to the ways of contemporary life. This is Tatsumi at his nicest, as he notes in the afterword saying that most gekiga of the past eschewed humor. True, this has nothing of the grief of "Hell" or "Push Man" but those looking for something lighter will find this mostly enjoyable. The little boy in "New Years Festival," the moment of art transcending mimicry in "Escape of the Sparrows," the final scene with the Reaper in "The God of Death," and a man sharing a kiss with his ex-wife's spirit through a tobacco pipe in "Fiery Spirits" are all memorable. But where's the humor? Sadly, my fat white American body and small mind are not familiar with the "rakugo" of past, so something is sort of lost between cultures. Many of the stories are thirty page build ups to one punch line, and sometimes it works, but sometimes it sits like cold sake. Listen, the dude is a legend in comix and even the worst story here is worth your time, but expect nothing of the tragic characters or moral ennui of the past gekiga works. DQ rarely picks a flub, and this is no different. Recommended for the initiated. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A little too predictable ... By Echezona Udeze Tatsumi's A Drifting Life was brilliant ... astounding ... but the stories here fail to either entertain or enlighten me ... I believe he is talented but needs to try something maybe a bit different ...

A NEW COLLECTION OF STORIES FROM THE FOREFATHER OF THE JAPANESE LITERARY COMICS MOVEMENT In *Fallen Words*, Yoshihiro Tatsumi takes up the oral tradition of rakugo and breathes new life into it by shifting the format from spoken word to manga. Each of the eight stories in the collection is lifted from the Edo-era Japanese storytelling form. As Tatsumi notes in the afterword, the world of rakugo, filled with mystery, emotion, revenge, hope, and, of course, love, overlaps perfectly with the world of Gekiga that he has spent the better part of his life developing. These slice-of-life stories resonate with modern readers thanks to their comedic elements and familiarity with human idiosyncrasies. In one, a father finds his son too bookish and arranges for two workers to take the young man to a brothel on the pretext of visiting a new shrine. In another particularly beloved rakugo tale, a married man falls in love with a prostitute. When his wife finds out, she is enraged and sets a curse on the other woman. The prostitute responds by cursing the wife, and the two escalate in a spiral of voodoo doll cursing. Soon both are dead, but even death can't extinguish their jealousy. Tatsumi's love of wordplay shines through in the telling of these whimsical stories, and yet he still offers timeless insight into human nature.

From *Booklist* Manga legend Tatsumi is renowned for his grim gekiga stories depicting buffeted souls struggling to survive in harsh post-WWII Japanese society. Here he's inspired by a far earlier tradition, the performance-based oral storytelling technique of rakugo. Set in Edo-period Japan, these eight simple tales deal in archetypical situations: deadbeat guests hoodwink credulous innkeepers, a merchant tries to balance a wife and a mistress, a popular prostitute creates havoc at her brothel, a nebbish befriends and then tries to outwit the Grim Reaper, a shrewd wife teaches her spendthrift husband a lesson. The humor infusing these yarns is uncharacteristic of Tatsumi, but his fans will recognize the portrayals of ineffectual working-class men striving for a bit of pleasure. In their unstinting depiction of human foibles as well as their starkly effective visual simplicity, these tales aren't as far from Tatsumi's groundbreaking gekiga work as one would expect. While it lacks the dramatic impact of his best-known work, this collection attests that at 75, Tatsumi remains committed to exploring new styles within the manga format. --Gordon Flagg One of Japan's most important visual artists. *The New York Times* on *A Drifting Life* *A Drifting Life* is as involving and thorough as any prose memoir, while remaining as immediate and concise as the best comics. It is, honestly, one of the most significant works the medium has ever produced. *The Onion*, *The A.V. Club* on *A Drifting Life* About the Author Born in 1935, Yoshihiro Tatsumi began writing and drawing comics for a sophisticated adult readership in a realistic style he called Gekiga. He has influenced generations of cartoonists and lives in Japan.