



Yamada Monogatari: To Break the Demon Gate

Richard Parks

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Yamada no Goji is a minor nobleman of ancient Japan who has lost everything -- except a single purpose: keep a promise to the woman he loved. In order to fulfill his vow, all he has to do is fight a horde of demons and monsters, bargain with a few ghosts, outwit the sinister schemers of the emperor's court, find a way to defeat an assassin who cannot be seen, heard, or touched -- and change the course of history. Fortunately, Yamada specializes in achieving the seemingly impossible, so he is sure in some way to succeed...if he doesn't drink himself into oblivion first.

Yamada Monogatari: To Break the Demon Gate Details

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Author : Richard Parks

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From Reader Review Yamada Monogatari: To Break the Demon Gate for online ebook

Raven Stromdans says

Although I truly enjoyed Parks' previous work with Yamada no Goji, I was a bit disappointed by his first outing in a full novel. Building off of one of the short stories in the anthology of Yamada-san's adventures, this story again expands upon Yamada's background and plays heavily against his personal investment into the Imperial court that he wisely tries to avoid but seems continually dragged back to by his allies and enemies therein in equal measure.

I did enjoy the story, mostly because I like Yamada no Goji himself and enjoy his interactions with his landlady, his priestly friend Kenji and his various connections with both the mundane and supernatural underworlds.

Truly, I think Parks' may have moved out of his comfort zone by turning a Yamada story into a full novel, but perhaps this will spur him to other efforts of the same nature and perhaps honing the craft of novel writing.

Time will tell.

Robert D says

I think this is Mr. Parks first endeavor at a full length novel. It starts off by repeating word for word one of the longer short stories in his first book (the first book was a collection of short stories). It's needed because the information in that story is central to the whole plot of the book.

It takes place in the Heian period (794–1185) of Japan. This is a mythic time, when demons, ogres, oni, ghosts, and the like are intertwined in the lives of the story. Combined with some aspects of Japanese court intrigues and it makes for a good story. Yamada No Goji is a minor nobleman that gave up life at court and when not drunk on saki makes sort of a living confronting and combating the supernatural, for a fee.

The story is sometimes a little disjointed. I think that is because it's inherently a longer work and Park's has to work at bridging some of the subplots to make everything work together. It's still a great book. And if you're a fan of the old D&D Oriental Adventures, well this book is what that system should have been shooting for.

Matthew says

I received this book via Netgalley in exchange for an honest review.

Blurb -

Yamada no Goji is a minor nobleman of ancient Japan who has lost everything — except a single purpose: keep a promise to the woman he loved.

In order to fulfill his vow, all he has to do is fight a horde of demons and monsters, bargain with a few ghosts, outwit the sinister schemers of the emperor's court, find a way to defeat an assassin who cannot be seen, heard, or touched — and change the course of history.

Fortunately, Yamada specializes in achieving the seemingly impossible, so he is sure in some way to succeed...if he doesn't drink himself into oblivion first.

Review -

In its entirety To Break the Demon Gate is a solid read. It is well written, full of intrigue and action that is set in a medieval Japanese like world. Yamada is an interesting character, disgraced from the courts and demoted to being a supernatural investigator. The world building displayed by Parks is impressive, and I found it refreshing to read another fantasy set in an alternative world to that of medieval Europe. What let this story down though was that I found myself not really connecting with the other characters in this story. I just could not emotionally involve myself with their motivations, actions, or plights. Perhaps Parks will be able to draw me in further with future releases in this series. It certainly has potential.

3 out of 5 Stars.

smashdragons.blogspot.com.au

Aelvana says

Yamada no Goji is a minor nobleman with a keen mind and a tolerable blade, but he has little influence at court. So when the conspiracies of the nobility reach out to ensnare him again, he's reluctant to get involved. But for the sake of an old friend, he agrees---and finds himself confronted by a silent killer who is leaving dead bodies around the city. If he can't solve the mystery fast enough, he's bound to lose more of the few people dear to him.

I'm reading these incredibly out of order, I suppose, but it didn't make much difference as far as I could tell. The story is good about introducing characters, places, customs and so on as needed, without assuming too much knowledge beforehand. I liked the historical Japanese setting, and how naturally the supernatural intersects everyone's lives. Yamada is smart but not impossible to follow, and the layers of mystery generally work well.

I wasn't as fond of the alcoholism, or the way the story breaks between its first segment and everything that comes after (largely because Yamada spends four months drinking his life away). It's a little harder to sympathize with his poverty when he's wasting multiple opportunities to stay farther out of it.

All in all, though, it worked far more than it didn't, and I would be interested to read more in this series. This story is fairly self-contained, so it doesn't hurt to read out of order or as a standalone. I rate this book Recommended.

See my reviews and more at <https://offtheshelfreviews.wordpress....>

Roy says

I have become a fan of Richard Parks and greatly enjoy his Yamada series. Set in Heian Japan with all the supernatural elements one could want from that period, the stories read a little like court intrigue, part supernatural, and part crime mystery. Very enjoyable. This book unlike others I have read is a single novel instead of short stories.

Free_dreamer says

This book was an enjoyable mix of historical novel (Kyoto in the 10th or 11th century), crime (mysterious deaths) and Japanese mythology (demons, ghosts, will-o'-wisps and many more).

When I read the blurb, I knew I had to have this book. I'm a huge fan of Japan and I love fantasy novels that aren't set in the Western world. And I was not disappointed by this book.

Yamada is not exactly your average fantasy hero. He's very fond of sake, only works when he needs to pay the rent and has some rather questionable friends. I thought that made a very interesting protagonist.

While the setting of ancient Japan was always present, it's not what this novel is about. Thanks to lots of small details, like secret messages hidden in confusing haikus, or the way everybody got paid in rice and not money, the setting felt very authentic and tangible. The author didn't need to explain every single detail to make this a highly intriguing setting. There's a glossary explaining the Japanese words that keep coming up at the end of the book. Unfortunately, I only realized that when I'd already finished the book and sent a whole barrage of texts to my best friend who speaks a bit of Japanese.

I really liked that the supernatural beings in the book were taken from Japanese mythology.

The author's style is very formal, which fits the era and the noble protagonists, but never feels stiff or forced. It felt perfectly natural. This book was a quite challenging read for me and it took me unusually long to finish it, even though I very much enjoyed it.

The plot was never predictable. I did have an idea about some minor details, but the ending could've gone anywhere from happily ever after to the tragic deaths of everybody involved. That made for a very gripping read.

I loved how subtle the love story was. Sure, Yamada's love is the reason for his actions, but the romance itself remained a minor sub-plot. The author handled this aspect very well.

To sum it up, "Yamada Monogatari: To Break the Demon Gate" is a slightly unusual fantasy novel. The setting of Kyoto in the 10th or 11th century felt very authentic and was thoroughly intriguing. I loved how the author used lots of Japanese mythology in the book.

I'm looking forward to the next book about Lord Yamada, which is supposed to be published sometime next year.

Karl says

This is copy 61 of 100 signed and numbered copies, signed by Richard Parks.

Koeur says

<http://koeur.wordpress.com/2014/12/02...>

Publisher: Prime

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ISBN: 9781607014355

Genre: Fantasy

Rating: 3.6/5

Publisher Description: Yamada no Goji is a minor nobleman of ancient Japan who has lost everything — except a single purpose: keep a promise to the woman he loved. In order to fulfill his vow, all he has to do is fight a horde of demons and monsters, bargain with a few ghosts, outwit the sinister schemers of the emperor's court, find a way to defeat an assassin who cannot be seen, heard, or touched — and change the course of history. Fortunately, Yamada specializes in achieving the seemingly impossible, so he is sure in some way to succeed...if he doesn't drink himself into oblivion first.

Review: This was a very entertaining read. Yamada was an engaging character and moved well within the story line. The characters are thinly developed as a means to promote plot tension and emphasize the intertwined mysteries. The ghost world that is built is inventive and curiously fun. There is an undercurrent of humor that persists throughout the novel that I can't quite put my finger on. Perhaps it is Yamada's commentary and able glibness that enjoins that perspective.

While most reviewers stated that the novel, while written well, was not compelling enough mainly due to the lack of character development, I thought it fit well with the stories that were being told. Sometimes you have to sacrifice character depth for the broader tapestry and focus on the one.

Laurie says

This is a great book. Lord Yamada is a minor nobleman in ancient Japan. He talks to ghosts and fights demons while trying to protect his loved ones and the city he lives in. This book combines many ancient Japanese mythologies and creates a wonderful story of magic and lore.

Ben Rowe says

Very satisfying expansion of a Yamada story into a novel. I am a big fan of Parks' short fiction in general and the Yamada stories in particular so I was eagerly awaiting this one and actually preordered it.

I very much enjoyed reading it and whilst I didnt love the novel as much as the short stories I still thought it was a very satisfying tale and I look forward to reading the next novel in the series in due course.

Daniel says

Well I lost this book, found it the other day, and finished it. This was a great Chinese fantasy novel and a joy to read. The characters are strong and deep, and there is just enough to drag you into the intrigue. There are a couple of moments that you don't expect, which blindside you.

There is a lot to take in here. I believe there are more in this line, and I will definitely seek them out.

Danny

Prashant says

was bit disappointed in the beginning cause this book was not filled with short stories like its predecessor but was a big single story. But, now that i have finished the book, i have no regrets and infact i even enjoyed the book more than the previous one. Good work.

Ginny says

Not as strong as the earlier book in the series. This installment is a full-fledged novel rather than a collection of related short stories, as in the previous installment. The author seems to do better with the short story format. The plot has the feel of a short story dragged out, though I still enjoyed the characters and setting.

Ian says

As with the previous one I got this for free in a grab bag of books for backing a Kickstarter.

Alexander Páez says

Abandonado a la mitad. Menudo truño. Y mira que lo sabía, que iba a ser malo, pero ya que en NetGalley me ofrecieron el ejemplar...

Nunca más.
