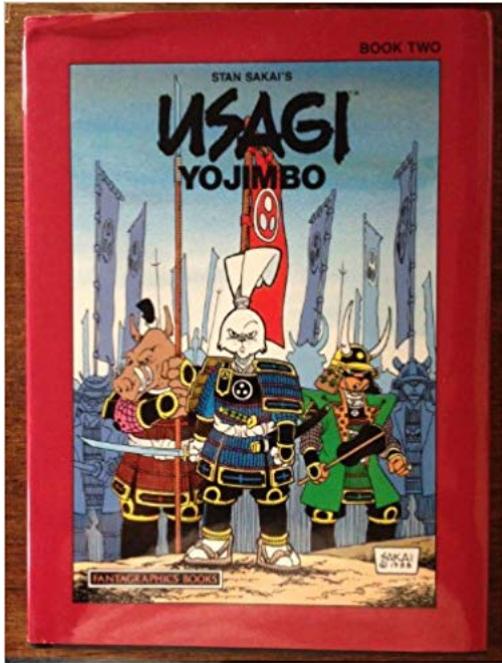


Usagi Yojimbo Vook 2: Samurai *by* Stan Sakai



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Reviews of the **Usagi Yojimbo Vook 2: Samurai** *by* Stan Sakai

GoodLike

If you like graphic novels you will like this. No super heroes. I recognize Japanese folk tales scattered throughout the series. A note: This is set in feudal Japan. Lots of sword play and death (although no blood and guts). Supernatural events and slices of ordinary life. This book is the background on how a samurai bodyguard to his lord became a ronin (masterless samurai). (A central theme to the series). The use of animals as characters makes it easy for the reader to identify the different characters. If you read one you will want to read more. I cannot recommend Usagi Yojimbo high enough.

Sinredeemer

Usagi Yojimbo is the kind of quality work that transcends time, genres, demographics, and even age groups. It crafts a delicate and beautiful balance between honor and savagery, cute innocence and dark brutality, simple heart-warming stories and multi-part epics that shape a dense continuity. Whether or not you've ever been a fan of feudal Japanese culture, furry anthro characters, or

independent, non-superhero comics, Usagi Yojimbo is a comic that can't help but impress even the harshest critic.

Though this is volume 2 in the Usagi series, this is really the volume where Sakai's masterpiece begins to take shape. "Samurai," which begins with Usagi's classic four part origin story, weaves an almost mythological tale of a young, reckless child growing into a serious adult and becoming burdened by the weight of his honor. We see young Usagi dream, struggle, succeed, fail, love, lose, achieve his greatest honor, face his darkest day, and gradually come to terms with the cards that fate has dealt him. This is a powerful, character-building tale that makes you truly care for the character of Miyamoto Usagi with far more emotional investment than you might care for the more serious looking characters found in those other, non-furry comics.

The volume also includes several other stories from the two issues that followed the four part "Samurai" epic. "The Test" is a truly disappointing story, written by Peter Laird as an attempt to help promote Usagi by including a beloved Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtle, but the story is largely self-serving and makes Usagi look like an utter chump. The rest of the stories are stand-alone adventures that do little to further any sense of continuity or character development, but they are quite fun, action-packed, and often heart-warming. I particularly enjoyed "The Silk Fair" as a story in which Usagi's heroics truly make a difference in the lives of an entire community.

In short, this is a great starting point for anyone new to Usagi. It provides a great entry point in the form of Usagi's four part origin story, does much to develop the character from how he appeared in Volume 1, and provides a few classic stand-alone stories as well. I highly suggest beginning here with volume 2. It will definitely leave you hungering for the next installment.

Rocky Basilisk

The second of the books put together from the Usagi Yojimbo comics is fun and entertaining from the humorous foreword to the good feeling the reader is left with at the last panel.

This book mostly details the important events of Miyamoto Usagi's life under the premise of telling Gensuke why he killed a man. When the tale is eventually wound up and at least four bottles of sake have been finished off the reader is left with more knowledge of Usagi himself and a little bit of food for thought on the subject of Samurai honor.

After this long story line the book is finished up with a couple of little stories that will entertain the reader.

Personally I'm a reader of novels and regular books, I'm really not too fond of pictures when I read and that includes comics, but Sakai's art is refreshing and simplistic, often including small gestures that make me laugh without overloading the reader with details and color the way some of the major publishers do. His stories are interesting and often thought provoking. I highly recommend this volume.

Dark-Light

After I read the first book in the series I became hooked so I purchased several others including this one. It is in many ways superior to the first due to the fact that in the latter we are only given a small glimpse at Miyamoto Usagi's past. This volume elaborates on many of the aspects of his past including how he met his sensei, His relationship with Kenichi and a rather detailed story about the battle that would make him a Ronin. It's all told in a manner that is extremely entertaining and gives usagi a lot more depth aside from the Bushido code. The only thing I found somewhat pathetic was one of the following stories which gives origins for Godzilla but it didn't cost the book any stars so you know it isn't all that bad. The rest of them are just as entertaining I recommend this highly. Buy

it especially if you've read the first one.

Eigeni

Usagi is always a great read!

Wiliniett

It begins with Usagi in a duel with another samurai, and once it's finished (decisive victory for Usagi) Gen reveals himself. He saw the whole thing. Gen asks just what the fight was all about. In order to adequately explain Usagi basically tells his life story: from leaving his hometown to his training with mountain hermit Katsuichi to his employ with Lord Mifune to the military defeat which found Usagi masterless.

It is with this volume that Stan Sakai really kicks in the world building after a few years of doing Usagi stories for various anthology comics (collected in Book 1). This paperback collects the beginning of the ongoing Usagi comic book which still runs today. Building up on the facts established in the earlier stories, Sakai fleshes out Usagi's back story and starts the transition from the somewhat boring hero of Book 1 into the very human character we know today. Perhaps the biggest addition in this book is the introduction of Usagi's sensei Katsuichi, one of the best characters in the series. This story gives a brief overview of Usagi's training with the master swordsman, but Sakai goes back to this time period many times in future books and fills in the blanks with all sorts of lessons and adventures young Usagi had while in training, a very rich vein of stories.

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