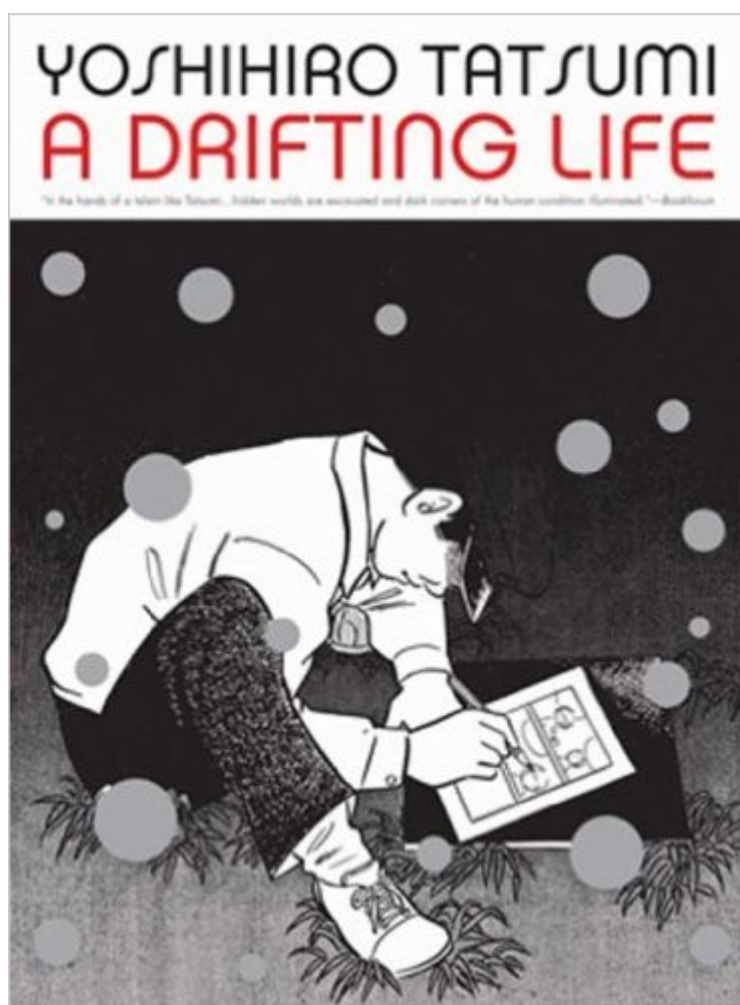


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A Drifting Life



Synopsis

The epic autobiography of a manga master. Acclaimed for his visionary short-story collections *The Push Man and Other Stories*, *Abandon the Old in Tokyo*, and *Good-Bye*—originally created nearly forty years ago, but just as resonant now as ever—the legendary Japanese cartoonist Yoshihiro Tatsumi has come to be recognized in North America as a precursor of today's graphic novel movement. *A Drifting Life* is his monumental memoir eleven years in the making, beginning with his experiences as a child in Osaka, growing up as part of a country burdened by the shadows of World War II. Spanning fifteen years from August 1945 to June 1960, Tatsumi's stand-in protagonist, Hiroshi, faces his father's financial burdens and his parents' failing marriage, his jealous brother's deteriorating health, and the innumerable pitfalls that await him in the competitive manga market of mid-twentieth-century Japan. He dreams of following in the considerable footsteps of his idol, the manga artist Osamu Tezuka (*Astro Boy*, *Apollo's Song*, *Ode to Kirihito*, *Buddha*)—with whom Tatsumi eventually became a peer and, at times, a stylistic rival. As with his short-story collection, *A Drifting Life* is designed by Adrian Tomine.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Manga legend Yoshihiro Tatsumi chronicles his life and career in post-war Japan as an ever struggling artist attempting to rediscover both himself and his craft, intertwining his autobiography with the history of Manga. These two narratives are backdropped by the reconstruction of Japan in the post-war period as it struggles to regain national pride while at once being influenced by foreign

works such as Western films, animation, and later the hard-boiled realism of American detective comics. Tatsumi (who is depicted in the story as Hiroshi Katsumi) begins his career as a Manga artist as early as middle school, where he and his younger brother write postcard Manga everyday for submission in monthly regional Manga magazines. By the time he was in his second year of high school, Tatsumi was already a fairly well known Manga artist who would begin to tip-toe into the same elite social circle as acclaimed Manga artist Osamu Tezuka. Tezuka became Tatsumi's mentor during his formative years in high school and early college and was his lifelong inspiration. The graphic novel traces Tatsumi's early obsession with Manga as a neophyte in middle school and early college through his development and maturity as a renowned and daringly experimental artist. The work starts off slowly and repetitively, as the reader is taken through rejection letter after rejection letter from various publishers as Tatsumi attempts to kick-start his career. The novel is at its strongest when detailing the chronology of these influences on Tatsumi and Japanese culture at large.

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