



Translucent, Volume 1

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Teen-centric, quirky and romantic, Translucent will appeal to shojo fans who like a little twist with their gakuen mono! Shizuka is an introverted girl, dealing with schoolwork, boys, and a medical condition that begins to turn her invisible! She finds support with Mamoru, a boy who is falling for Shizuka despite her condition, and with Keiko, another girl who suffers from this illness and has finally turned completely invisible. The mysterious disease that these teens struggle with becomes a metaphor in the ordinary lives of the students in their classes, as they try to work their way through their friendships and romances. Writer and artist Kazuhiro Okamoto knows how important surfaces are to people, especially at such a pivotal time in one's life - when dreams are meant to be chased, despite all hurdles. Translucent's shifting variables between what people can see, what people think they see, and what people wish to see in themselves and others makes for an emotionally sensitive manga, peppered with moments of surprising humor, heartbreak and drama.

Translucent, Volume 1 Details

Date : Published August 7th 2007 by Dark Horse (first published June 2005)

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Author : Kazuhiro Okamoto

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From Reader Review Translucent, Volume 1 for online ebook

Ashleigh says

Such a cool concept, and it translates so well with the art. I do wish the storylines jumped around a little less. It seems like a lot of big moments keep happening, and her condition could have been eased into a little more, but still--so cool!

Laura (???) says

Nobody ever pays any attention to little introverted Shizuka Shiroyama. Maybe this is because she's so shy; or maybe because she is LITERALLY blending into her surroundings. She has Translucent syndrome; a harmless enough disease, except that it causes a person to become completely translucent. Now Shizuka must learn how to deal with her disease and not let it affect her following her dreams; it will be difficult -- but she'll have the support of some important friends.

This is a sensitive, thoughtful and quirky drama on the life of a young teenage girl who is dealing with a difficult disease. The disease may be made-up and seem silly at first, but once you begin reading this story you will forget the silliness and realize that like any it's just another obstacle one must overcome. That appearance and/or 'lack of appearance' is important to people; and especially at that awkward stage in life. Occasionally the art is a bit inconsistent - but the story is so beautiful that it helps to hide most of the blemishes.

I highly recommend this series.

Johnathan Morris says

What an interesting concept!

The storyline follows the life of Shizuka, a young girl tormented by Translucent Syndrome, a disease with origins and cures unknown to the world. And, whenever Shizuka experiences intense feelings of embarrassment, the rate in which her body becomes completely transparent quickens.

By far one of my favorite pieces of graphic art. Translucent concretely explores the abstract feeling of being invisible. In a world and culture full of young individuals wishing to be noticed and loved for their achievements, Shizuka, a girl who is trying her hardest, can't seem to catch a break. The art of the work is simple, which is to be expected from a manga, but the meaning and tone of the story is not lost because of it.

As a teacher, the Translucent series has a lot to offer the little adolescents a near reflection of their lives, and will come to find that, in time, everything will be all right. There is nothing more outside academics a teacher can do for a student than to make them feel that they are not alone and that they belong. Translucent would be a great first-step helping those struggling achieve that.

All-in-all, a must-read.

Johnathan & Kristin

Moe says

Despite the inappropriateness, this book was jam packed with tons of manga drawings. I had gotten this at a book fair at school. You see, every kid had received a book of their choice that had a value of 3.00 dollars or less. And turns out, I had found this book hidden underneath the book "gamers addition cheat codes 2011". It was love at first sight.

Although, it was pretty inappropriate. I am willing to bet that some little brat has already complained to his mama that it had bad words like damn or hell and a naked girl. This, I think, will cause a big controversy and may result to not have any book fairs. So I am glad to swipe this off the bookshelf before missing my chance. And therefore, I am saving school book fairs nationwide.

Rose Haertl says

Shizuka is a high school girl dealing with a medical condition that causes her to become invisible at times. Throughout the first book she has to deal with small obstacles such as acting in a play, going out for auditions, and even a little romance. The story follows her throughout her life as she tries to overcome her condition and to just become "normal". To be seen and noticed by the other people.

I would recommend this book to young female teens who enjoy romance and drama. As well as mystery and medical themes.

I thought this was a very good book because I felt I could relate to the main character fairly well. The story has many mini plots in it for smaller events instead of one big plot leading up to just one goal. However I did not like some of the events in the story because it was just plain, like you expected it to happen right away and it did.

Mike says

This is the worst manga I've ever read. I think most of the book's problems can be chalked up to Okamoto's decision to make every chapter a standalone story, rather than having one continuous story. The result is that the pacing is rushed, the dialogue is robotic, and every plotline is predictable and played-out. Scenes often ended abruptly, mid-page, with no transition into the next one, making the story feel extremely choppy and amateur-ish. And none of the characters were at all developed. The protagonist is bland, and her best friend is a one-note caricature who reads way younger than he's intended to. Every theme Okamoto intends to include lands with a flat thud, because the themes are so cliched, and he doesn't have enough space in the story to back up the ideas. The idea for this book wasn't bad - essentially, the protagonist being translucent serves as a metaphor for living with a chronic illness - and there was potential for good to come out of it. But even the brief spots of good dialogue were ruined by baffling writing decisions. The scene where the protagonist's dad explains to MC's friend why he won't let her audition for a play was well-written, but it was ruined by ridiculous artwork, in which the dad and the friend literally start wrestling in a public park because Okamoto couldn't think of a better way to impart their animosity towards each other.

But the real thing that pushes this into worst-manga-ever territory for me was how obvious it was that this was written by a man. This manifests itself in a few ways, but the absolute worst came in a scene where the protagonist is translucent and worries that everybody will forget her, and that she isn't even real. To fix this existential crisis, she *takes off her shirt and asks her friend to touch her breasts*. I mean, she's invisible, so you don't actually see anything, but still, this wasn't the only uncomfortable time that she was sexualized, in this manga written by an adult man about an eighth grade girl. I would give Okamoto the benefit of the doubt and assume that he didn't intend to sexualize her, except that there's no other possible reason for that scene to be there, because the action is so ridiculously, blatantly unrealistic. The scene makes me more than a little uncomfortable, and even if it didn't, it's some of the most abysmal writing I've ever seen.

This really was an awful, awful manga. I'm not exactly an expert on the form, so maybe you shouldn't take too much stock in my opinion that this is the worst I've ever read. (Although I did find it significantly worse than Black Bird and Vampire Knight, the two mangas that seem to be voted the worst.) But I still don't recommend this at all to anybody.

Megan M says

Easily five stars for one of the sweetest and most genuine manga I've read all year!

Shiroyama has a rare condition - Translucent Syndrome - which causes her to turn invisible, usually when she is stressed or nervous. And it's really affecting her dream of becoming an actress. Tadami is hyperactive and ADD and all he wants in the world is to make Shiroyama happy. Their incredibly sweet relationship is at the heart of this manga, but the story also uses the Translucent Syndrome to talk about that feeling of just wanting to disappear and brings Shiroyama's struggle right to you.'

This is an incredibly fast read with large panels and not too much dialogue. But it hits all the right notes for me.

Jessica says

Translucent vol 1

Information:

Publisher: Dark horse Manga

Year published: 2005-2007

story and art by: Kazuhiro Okamoto

My thoughts: Okay, my thoughts about this manga, is that it is very well done and is a very good coming of age story.

I also get the feeling that the creator wanted to make the reader feel, when they were reading the story the same way that some children feel when they are going through a phase in their life feeling invisible like they are not being heard, which also explains that some find it as a curse where others might find it as a blessing and so on. but unfortunately when I read this story, I never really got that feeling. not to mention it reminds

me of a few other stories that I have read as well.

Art, however, Best I can say, and it shames me to say this because I normally don't like commenting on others artwork like this, but the artwork was not very well done, I mean while reading the story the artwork on the characters was pretty distracting I mean I did not exactly know if this was directed at 12-year-olds or younger than that. I mean to be extremely seriously honest it looks as though they left the story at the manuscript sketching stages which did not make it at all look professional in my opinion, but though I will admit that I have seen worse,

all in all, I think the concept of the story was very good but again just in my opinion it was poorly planned out, hopefully, the others will turn out better

Synopsis; the story is about Eighth grader Shizuka Shiroyama, who is an introvert, dealing with school woes, bossy peers and a medical condition known to everyone as Translucent Syndrome which causes her to periodically turn semi-transparent or completely invisible. Though one of her classmates. the hyperactive Mamoru Tadami is falling in love with her despite her problem and has dogged determination and unconditional support to bring hope into Shizuka's life, as she struggles to overcome her difficulties, as her illness becomes a metaphor in the ordinary lives of her classmates and friends, as they try to work their way through life and relationships.

R says

SO interesting! What a unique and original story! I love this series and the moments of strong feeling among the characters. It us beautifullly done!

ElsaIcySnowflake says

Review coming.:P Loved it just as much the second time.

Sarah says

This story follows a girl with a rare disease that turns her translucent (hence the title) and the boy who 'just wants her to be happy'. Super cute but not mind blowing.

Sam says

It was a deep, funny story. Even though I'm American, this book had me hooked. I loved it so much, I read it in a day! I would definetly recommend for many ages.

Francine says

I like the premise (invisibility as a disease) and I like the characters (energetic Mamoru as a mirror to shy Shizuka). Super intrigued.

Kelly says

I rarely give the first volume of a series 5 stars. Even if I really, really liked it, I will still give it 4, because there is only so much you can do in one volume. However, Translucent became one of my exceptions, and I was in love with it by the end of the second chapter. What shocked me more than that, is that this is shojo series written by a guy. Sure, that's not unheard of. But most of those that I have tried end up being on the goofy-side of hentai or seem to lack "the human condition." Congrats, Okamoto, I will read anything of yours in the future.

Now for the story! Translucent follows Shizuka, a girl with Translucent Syndrome, which causes her body to slowly vanish throughout the month before becoming completely invisible. She recovers over time, but every time she begins to disappear, it takes its toll on her sanity. When she makes a friend in Mamoru Tadami, it seems her life has finally found a bright spot, and her troubles start to put the whole world into perspective as others try to relate to her situation.

Mamoru Tadami is a character that should be in every story. No lie. I wish I knew someone like him. Sure, he's kind of a derp, but an incredibly lovable derp. It's likely no coincidence that his name is the verb "to protect." I suppose this isn't a spoiler, but a shining moment for the story is during one of Shizuka's more trying times. She has gone nearly translucent, you can only see an outline of her face besides her clothes, and she doesn't think it'll come back this time. So, she rips open her shirt and asks Tadami to touch her, to prove she exists. Tadami reaches forward, and touches her face instead. I was a grinning fool at that point. So cute and touching! (no pun intended)

So, read Translucent, a wonderful mix of shojo, drama, and light humor, with a brilliant twist.

Faith W. says

Judging this book by the cover and short summary on the back, I summed this manga to be fairly serious and a bit sad, and picked it up at the Dark Horse booth at Anime Expo 2013. Boy, was I in for a surprise; granted, there are serious moments, nothing more. The rest is rather quirky, cute, and romantic.

Our main character is an eighth grader named Shizuka Shiroyama, she is introverted and rather unnoticeable. She has something called Translucent Syndrome: over time parts of her body become completely invisible. It seems the severity of her disease is connected to her emotions somehow (i.e. when she is comforted after being upset/nervous/sad she becomes visible.)

One of Shiroyama's classmates turns out to be the one she turns to for comfort, the hyperactive and dependable Mamoru Tadami. It is quite obvious that they like each other, and I foresee a romantic-relationship blooming in future volumes. Shiroyama also runs into trouble with another classmate, Okouchi (I never caught her last name,) the school's most popular girl. Turns out Okouchi doesn't understand why so many people admire her, and actually resents the attention she receives. She confronts Shiroyama, asking her to give Okouchi the disease, because she thinks she would prefer being translucent. Bluntly put, Okouchi gets over herself, and the trio of characters become friends.

This manga is pretty refreshing, the art isn't excellent nor is it bad... Characters are a little lacking, so is the story.

Story: 3/5 - Takes a cliche setting (introverted girl meets friendly guy, gets into fight with popular girl) and puts a twist on it.

Art: 2.5/5 - Could be much better, though it isn't the worst I've seen.

Characters: 3/5 - They crack me up most of the time. Could use some work. Personality-wise they're a little unoriginal.

Overall: 3/5 - Not bad. A quick, cute read with average artwork.

Thank you for reading, I hope it helps! I give my honest opinion as detailed as I wish and hope to influence your chances of purchasing the subject under review, whether it is positive or negative.
