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The Land of the Rising Sun has done wonders for the horror community. From ghost girls to giant lizards, Japan has been scaring us for years with strange stories and bizarre creatures that still haunt many of our nightmares. The rising interest in Japanese comics has brought scores of readers dumping their hard-earned cash on the novel-thick manga, creating an illustrious, second comic movement wholly separate from its mainstream American counterpart. But don't let the idea of Japanese comics fool you; it's not all doe-eyed teenage girls fighting giant robots. It's an industry as diverse as it unique, ranging anywhere from comedy to mystery to sci-fi, even going so far as to aim at a particular reading populace, such as younger girls or older men.

KUROSAGI CORPSE DELIVERY SERVICE (translated by Dark Horse) is a fantastic example of Japanese horror comics; a sweeping look at the Japanese view of death and funeral practices, while tactfully mixing in eerie tales of ghosts, walking corpses, and undead grudges. With lucky volume number 13 dropping in stores this week, the terror is upped another notch as we find ourselves immersed in yet another terrifying set of stories.

While it’s recommended that readers start with the first book, it is definitely not required to enjoy the latest volume, as each work is more or less stand alone. The main story is centers on five recent college graduates who find themselves in the common predicament of needing some money, but not having a much needed skill. But, like Captain Planet, with their powers combined, they manage to start the Kurosagi Corpse Delivery Service. On top of delivering the recently dead to their final resting place, the company also grants them their last earthly wish, thanks to their resident psychic Kuro Karatsu. As they spend their time hanging out at suicide spots and murder sites, they keep finding themselves in strange situations, usually involving some form of ghostly revenge and boundless hate from beyond the grave. Volume 13 continues right along, pitting the team against a girl who mentally controls a slew of men and enjoys tossing them in front of traffic. It’s a murder trail that is more than meets the eye, and a man obsessed with appeasing a prehistoric Earth goddess.

KUROSAGI CORPSE DELIVERY SERVICE is a worthy addition to any fan of horror comics, new to Japanese books, or not. It's not only a solid scary tale, but manages to keep the horror elements as down-to-earth as possible, so even the more wary readers will find themselves

immersed in the story without so much as a flinch at the supernatural aspect. Author Eiji Otsuka—a staple in the Japanese comic world and perhaps best known for penning another Dark Horse title MPD PSYCHO—crafts a beautiful story in which death and spirits are an everyday walk of life. Illustrator Housui Yamazaki, forgoes the usual exaggerated facial expression commonly associated with Japanese comics, and makes the characters rely solely on the surrounding situations to bring about their personalities. With an amazing eye for detail and the human anatomy, Yamazaki brings all the rotten bits and peeling corpse skin into full view. Though some of the sequential art tends to get a bit choppy, it's easily overlooked. At an approximate thirteen bucks, this 200+ page comic is worth every penny.