

BIOMEGA
STORY & ART BY TSUTOMU NIHEI



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Tsutomu Nihei, ???

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BIOMEGA ???? 1 Details

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Author : Tsutomu Nihei , ?? ?

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From Reader Review BIOMEGA ????? 1 for online ebook

Elaine says

It's another zombie apocalypse story that seems to be the hot thing nowadays, except they're called drones in this reincarnation of the we're-all-going-to-die-and-become-reanimated-corpse story. The art is dark and gritty, with explosions, fight scenes and exploding heads. But I found the strangely far-spaced eyes a bit disconcerting. Plot-wise, the reader is pretty much thrown into the midst of things (or onto the back of Zoichi's inky black AI equipped motorcycle if you so wish) and you kind of figure things out on the way. If that wasn't enough to provide a basis for entertaining story, there is also the rifle-touting bear. That talks. Awesome. What zombie apocalypse story is complete without an armed animal amigo?

I also wanna say that this is a dystopian story, but I'm not sure it counts when practically everyone understands that the present world is by no means an utopia. Since this is pretty much an action-packed intro volume, don't expect too much story. Or expect what little story you do get needing to be clarified. Looking forward to picking up the next volumes to see where these hijinks lead.

Oh, did I mention the heat-packing talking bear?

Abdulla says

I didn't like this as much as I thought I would.

Venus Maneater says

Beksinski meets Giger meets Cronenberg. High tech dystopian body horror, on deserted overpasses and zombie riddled ghost towns. Many cartridges of black ink gave their life to bring us this manga, and while I *really* appreciate that, I'm not quite sure if this is one for me.

On one hand, there's a scene where an artificial human rides his oversized, pitch-black motorcycle on a rooftop with a talking bear on the backseat, while the building behind them goes up in flames. That was pretty awesome.

no lie

On the other hand, I needed more dialogue, and more of a story. Right now I know that there is an infection that zombies you, and humanity is on its last legs. There is also a crazy cult that fully embraces the zombie inside you and wants everyone to go undead, pretty please. There's a special snowflake that got infected and *didn't* go the Romero way, but instead got gifted with (among others) the power of regenerating her limbs. She's also pretty chummy with the bear.

And in between all that ^ there's high-speed motorcycle chasing and totally rad killshots by our protagonist, who reminds me of a slighter more badass Ichise from Texhnolyze.

There's also me going "**Why the fuck is no one asking the bear why it can speak?**"

The art is A++, and I'm kind of curious as to what's going to happen to bear-bro, but not gotta-buy-it-asap-curious, more a maybe-I-can-borrow-it-from-a-friend-someday-curious. This one is a meh.

Chad says

If there's anything wrong with this story so far, it's that the first volume might have been too quickly read. It was an absorbing read with surprising depth for the first volume of a manga, but when I finished the first volume I felt like it had gone by too quickly.

I generally like manga with dark themes. It seems like those with darker themes and warnings of mature content are usually the only manga in which the authors give themselves permission to write with depth and thought-provoking ideas, thoughtfully explored. The first volume of *Biomega* is an exemplary case of that, even leaving out the cutesy/comical touches here and there that seem like an irresistible lure for the majority of even the best manga authors, despite the fact they often just distract from the substance of a good story. None of that here.

I've seen the *Blame!* anime based on work by the same author, and I see a trend already: synthetic human man as the certified badass protagonist, slender blonde artificial intelligence woman working with him, and "innocent girl" type with some kind of central role to the story. So far, I have no problem with this repeated pattern (and I have only seen it in two works, one of which was an anime adaptation; I have not read anything by Tsutomu Nihei yet other than this volume). It seems well-handled so far, antagonists are not just tissue paper for the protagonist to brush through with ease, and as long as it serves to carry a good story I'm happy with it.

This seems like the kind of story with mature themes that is actually for readers with some mental maturity, which is really what I'm looking for most of the time in manga, and the characters are pretty comprehensible and understandable given their apparent motivations. The villains of the piece seem especially evil, which often leads to cartoonish, unbelievable motivations, but in this case they tend to make some sense so far. The only thing that seems like it might be out of place in the whole thing is the bear, but I suppose that will make sense in time as well if I keep reading the series (and I certainly intend to keep reading it).

In short, I quite liked this, and look forward to the next book.

Michael says

Zombies und Apokalypse haben Hochkonjunktur, BIOMEGA liegt also voll im Trend. Warum hat mir der Band dann nicht wirklich gefallen? Die Zeichnungen sind überwiegend ansprechend und gelegentlich auch einfalls-bzw. detailreich, aber Mangas sind anscheinend wirklich nicht mein Ding (richtig, BIOMEGA ist auch meine Manga-Premiere gewesen). Ich hatte häufiger Probleme, mir aus der Bilderfolge die Handlung zusammen zu reimen - und ja, doch, ich habe die Mangalesefolge beachtet. Es gibt wenig Text, was nicht unbedingt nachteilig sein muss, aber mich hier manchmal doch ratlos zurück ließ. Der entscheidende Knapckpunkt aber ist: die Handlung hat mich einfach nicht mitgenommen. Da mir für Mangas die Kriterien fehlen, abschließend nur noch einmal der deutliche Hinweis, dass diese Rezension nur eine sehr subjektive

Bewertung darstellt.

Jeff says

A science fiction zombie apocalypse. Very pretty artwork and a universe that operates by Rule of Cool, but there's not much substance there, and what there is I've seen before.

Karl Fischer says

A very intriguing first volume, fast-paced, and visually stunning.

Ingenue says

I can't even comment on this book because all my impressions of it are overwhelmed by the talking Russian bipedal bear with a shotgun. Whose presence is never explained. Despite being a TALKING BEAR WITH A SHOTGUN.

Erin says

Note: I've read the english translated books, not the Japanese editions like the one pictured.

Biomega is one of the best New manga series out there. Zoichi is one kick-but synthetic human! But it gets super confusing, especially after the second book, so read carefully! (I had to reread all the books just to understand it fully.)

The drawing style is unique, but it can get very graphic and just down right grotesque at times (nothing inappropriate, but it's a post-apocalyptic(sp?) zombie pandemic based story, what do you expect?). My suggestion for people thinking about reading this particular manga is to read the rating and content warnings BEFORE you begin reading. Just to see if the story is stuff you can handle.

Personally I love Tsutomu Nihei's drawing style. Her character's faces bugged me at first (especially around the eyes) but I've gotten over that, and the settings and characters are drawn in extremely impressive detail! In my opinion, a good read!

Tom Ewing says

Some comics are great because they do one thing extremely well. You're not going to read Biomega for the ideas (zombies), or the dialogue (sparse), or the characterisation (sparser), or the plot (sparsest). You might read it for the action - high-speed, sometimes thrilling, sometimes murky and chaotic. And you might read it if you're a fan of bikes, bears and ballistics. But mostly you should read Biomega, as with any Tsutomu Nihei manga, for the architecture.

Nihei is the master of space, scale, and conveying enormity within the confines of the small comics page. His cyclopean buildings and colossal structures are less extreme (and less the main character) than in his earlier *Blame!* but there are still double-page spreads in *Biomega* that are beautifully dizzying and alienating, like a cyberpunk *Gormenghast*. Sometimes they interlace with the action, but they don't always need to. Vertiginous, and unlike anything else I've read.

Janelle Dazzlepants says

I won't pretend I'm any sort of manga expert because I'm not, so I'm just going to offer my very amateur opinions on the storyline and the artwork.

Plot: Most of the human population have been turned into zombies thanks to the wonderful N5S virus. The Public Health Service sends Compulsory Execution Units (CEU) into infected areas to kill off said zombies, which are referred to as "drones". These drones look like your typical zombies, but with elongated limbs and torsos - no word on if they eat brains though. The protagonist is some "synthetic human" dude (you can tell I've been paying attention!) on a motorbike, who completes missions in infected areas under the guidance of a little hologram lady in his bike computer, for a company called Toha Industries - rival of the Public Health Service and CEU.

As with most zombie-virus-apocalyptic texts, there are a select few humans that are immune to the virus. In the *Biomega* world they're called Accommodators, and are essentially infected with the N5S virus but retain their human appearance. It seems like motorbike dude just goes into infected areas to do the job of the CEU, but receives orders to recover a young Accommodator girl called Eon Green. It turns out the Public Health Service is out to capture these so-called Accommodators and experiment on them, in hopes of wiping out the drones and starting over with humanity. Or something like that.

As far as the storyline goes, *Biomega* hits all the right spots: apocalyptic storyline, zombies, viruses, synthetic humans/robots, shadow organisation and a precious few humans that are immune to said zombie virus. It's by no means an original premise, but I love me some dystopian/apocalyptic fiction and am likely to keep reading it as long as people write it.

There were a few original things I really liked about the story though. For one, there was a talking bear! It was completely random and incongruent with the story, but it added a bit of LOLWAT to an otherwise srs bsns text. I also found the drones really creepy and fascinating, wondering what it is about the virus that causes their limbs to stretch and appearance to change. And the Accommodators are damn creepy! I'm guessing they're intended to look creepy, because the motorbike dude doesn't look quite as soulless. I was left wondering if they look like that because they're actually infected with the virus, rather than being totally immune to it (a part of the mythology that I really enjoyed!)

I also find the Compulsory Execution Unit ~creatures to be equally creepy and fascinating. I have to admit I'm a bit confused about the main antagonist CEU guy, but I love the murderous butcher garb!

You can probably tell I don't have any problems with the storyline itself, but I actually found *Biomega* #1 to be strangely lacking in story and dialogue. Again, I'm no manga expert so I'm unsure about what is "normal" when it comes to manga and graphic novels, but this text felt like it was 90% dude-riding-his-motorbike and 10% story and dialogue. I feel like I could rip out at least 20 pages of this text without affecting any of the story. I would've preferred a text with fewer pages and a heavier concentration of story, rather than a big long

manga with little story and a million useless panels. I didn't purchase this manga (I borrowed it off a friend) but I'd feel a little ripped off if I had.

I also have a little problem with the artwork - sometimes I just didn't have a fucking clue what was happening. Most of the time I could figure it out by looking at the panels before/after, but sometimes I just had no clue what the image was supposed to be. I don't think it affected my overall comprehension of the story, but I found it to be quite jarring. I know those few panels are going to bug the crap out of me until I figure them out! The artist's style is also very rushed and scribbly, which suits the story but doesn't help my case.

Overall: I love the premise of Biomega, but found it strangely lacking in story and often had no clue what went on in certain panels. It's unnecessarily long, so unless you're a collector I'd suggest borrowing rather than buying this one. That being said, I'm really excited to ~~borrow~~ start the next one!

Nicola Mansfield says

Reason for Reading: Apocalypse? Virus? Zombies? How could I *not* want to read it?

Comments: First off this book is a little larger in length and width than the usual manga which really enhances the superb artwork. Done in very detailed black ink the artwork tells the story for much of the book. There are a lot of wordless panels, especially in the first half where words are very seldom used and only sparsely when needed. There are many scenes which look down upon a city or place and these are truly stunning, some of the best artwork I've seen in a manga. There is a lot of violence but it's all of the kind you'd expect to see when zombies are being shot at and blown to pieces plus a small bit of language, thus the manga has an "M" rating.

The story in this first volume is brief. The outline of what is going on and who our main characters are is introduced and one gets a bit of a feel for them. By the end of the book slight revelations have been made and we know the end of the world is imminent. There is one character whom not much information has been given and I found, shall we say, quite interesting, by the name of Kozlov who is a large talking grizzly bear who seems to be trying to protect Eon Green and I find myself most compelled by him at the moment.

I definitely have a sense of the story here but I'm not big on wordless graphics, even though this does contain enough bubbles to tell some story. I personally do need more. At this point, I'm going to wait for Volume 2 before deciding whether this is a series I want to follow. If you like Apocalyptic stories, lots of zombie and motorcycle action with a grizzly bear thrown in for good measure you may want to give this one a try.

Devastatingwildness says

6/6 Historia completa.

Hay elementos comunes con Blame!, y en cierta parte de la historia podría incluso haberse convertido en la precuela (muy en el pasado) de Blame! Acaba tomando otro camino.

No me gusta el apelativo de 'distopía de zombies' para este manga, aunque quizá sea por el prejuicio hacia el

género (o no) de estúpido en general. Ciertamente hay los equivalentes a zombies, pero la historia no toma el camino de una difícil supervivencia entre miles y miles de zombies ya que esto no tendría sentido frente a la relevancia y las capacidades del personaje central del manga.

Igualmente que en *Blame!* hay elementos de ciberpunk como las IA, los humanos sintéticos, ciencia muy avanzada que permite grandes modificaciones biológicas, etc. Encaja perfectamente en el género distópico. En cuanto a escenarios, los que conozcan *Blame!* encontrarán también grandes escenarios arquitectónicos, aunque de distinta forma. En ciertas partes también grandes estructuras orgánicas que me recordaron a Nausicaä. Aunque yo preferí los de *Blame!* (Y seguramente la obra en general también)

Hay muchos más diálogos, y no hay ningún problema en un manga largo que se hace esperar en cuanto a la trama; y *Blame!* lo hace bien. Aquí son 6 tomos frente a 10 de la otra obra. La trama se desarrolla más rápido necesariamente, porque también deben suceder muchas cosas. De hecho podría haberse extendido el manga en la parte final o, lo que habría sido alucinante para mí, una posible unión de *Biomega* y *Blame!* que necesitaría de muchos cambios en la historia claro.

Y la historia, pues creo que podría mejorarse también. Hay de nuevo algunos saltos temporales, no demasiados, y un poco de dejar al entendimiento del lector. Con *Blame!* disfruté más con la relectura, sobre todo los tomos finales y en general al reconstruir la historia completa en mi mente. Aquí creo que puede pasar un poco lo mismo sobre ciertas cosas que se dejan a la interpretación.

En definitiva es un buen manga para mi gusto en cuanto a ambiciones de la historia, estética y personajes. Algo centrada en el avance de la historia y la acción, cuando podría también haberse tomado sus momentos de calma para mostrar lo que le está sucediendo al mundo y a los personajes más en detalle.

III D says

I'm not sure what I've just read. But I definitely enjoyed it and I'm quite sure that you will too. Why you ask? Because there's just something unexplainably enjoyable about seeing an anthropomorphized bear chosen as a man character; did I mention he packs heat too? And as odd as it sounds it's oddities such as such that not only pepper the comic with eye candy but coalesce for a deeply memorable reading experience due to its unusually idiosyncratic nature. These highly personal manifestations allow BioMega to stand out amongst its thematic peers and predecessors whose markets (while far from stale) are becoming increasingly oversaturated: *Zombies and Manga*.

We('ve) got some dystopia going on here (+1k years in the future to be exact). With Romero's undead hooligan's appropriated once again, the author made the judicious decision to expand the vision of their environs. Not caged in my a forest or an island, *Biomega*'s flesh-rotting zombies perform their sole biological ritual with an ever unceasing fervor in an enormously vast metropolis that is only exceeded in length by its dilapidation.

And it is within this (effectively enough) necropolis of corroded wires and faded concrete that our narrative ties in a small but, effective panoply of characters to tell it's story. With an energy that powers its internal magnetic apparatus – the decisions and conflicts between a seeker, a damsel, and that gun toting bear (again) are whirled together with tints and tones of suspense, horror, and adrenaline fueled action.

Unsurprisingly however, these spates of artery bursting violence are illustrated with a typically excessive style that Anime/Manga (in)famously employs. Coupled with a brutality simplistic pallet and a relatively

static approach to the penciling, BioMega can be something of a grind to read. Eventually everything all melts together, which lip-swishingly disappointingly enough includes the fights themselves. Topping all this off is a murky atmosphere, that while perfectly befitting of the series, often leaves too much enshrouded in its own opacity.

All in all, some 10 issues later, enlightenment wasn't found at the bottom of the rabbit hole but, neither was I expecting it. High(er) Expectations will be somewhat unfulfilled due to unclear development and muddy artwork. Those of a lower variety will quickly draw parallels with other connectables in pop culture such as the Resident Evil Series, for example. Strictly un-intertextualized Biomega seeks out its own vision with little in the way of tributaries of influence to water itself down. In fact it deserves to be read and judged on its own merit's alone.

V.M. says

Short on story, long on atmosphere, art and sheer cyberpunk kickassery, this volume is off to a great start. Kudos to Tsutomu Nihei for execution! I don't know what it means but I can practically hear every sound effect of this manga.

Not to mention this volume ends with our motorcycle Kaneda-styled hero *spoilers* shooting down freaking missiles!!*spoilers*

My teenaged self thanks you, Biomega.
