



Mars, Volume 01

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A bad boy can change a good girl forever. Rei is the school delinquent. Kira is shy and studious. What they see in each other is a mystery to their friends. What they find in each other is a miracle to themselves. With a style that is artistic and chic, this tale of restless and confused high school love will appeal to young women everywhere.

Kira and Rei might as well be from different planets. She's a shy art student, afraid of boys and hated by her classmates. He's a rebellious motorcycle racer with girls dropping left and right just to talk to him. Their lives become intertwined when Kira asks Rei to model for her and, to everyone's surprise, he agrees. As these two battle their personal demons and the pressures of their classmates, they learn not only to love each other, but themselves.

Mars, Volume 01 Details

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Author : Fuyumi Soryo

Format : Paperback 200 pages

Genre : Sequential Art, Manga, Romance, Graphic Novels, Comics, Shoyo, Young Adult

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From Reader Review Mars, Volume 01 for online ebook

Arminzerella says

Kira is a quiet, shy, artistic girl who never stands up for herself - not that she's needed to. Everyone pretty much ignores her. Until this bad boy on a motorcycle shows up. She hates him on principle, but then is drawn to his beauty and the tenderness that she senses in his character (he asks to keep one of her drawings for sentimental reasons). He is lovely, and he's devoted to protecting her from the sudden burning jealousies that arise in the bosoms of all the other girls in the school once they know that he's spending time with her.

At first they're just friends, wildly opposite, but somehow drawn to one another. She uses him as a model for her drawing, and he takes her for a wild ride on his motorcycle. Although their apparently opposite natures should repel them, instead they are drawn to one another, perhaps by what each keeps hidden inside. By the end of the first volume they've shared their first kiss - although each denies that it means anything.

This manga is full of pretty art and exceptionally pretty people - everyone's gorgeous. Lots of ugly actions, though - so many of the girl characters are willing to cut Kira down and intimidate her physically just because she won't fight back and they want what she, apparently, has. Kira needs to get her butt in gear and fend for herself. It's ridiculous how weak and spineless she is. She allows so much to just happen to her, and then the guy has to rush in and save her. He'd better be teaching her jujitsu in subsequent volumes so she can take out the competition. Now that would be something.

Jillian says

When I was first getting into manga in middle school, this series was always on the shelf, and always advertised in other books I was reading. However, I was focused on collecting other series, and none of my friends had it, so I never got around to it. It's been long gone from store shelves at this point, but I was digging through some of my online manga bookmarks last night/early this morning and saw it there, so here we are.

I think *Mars* has a lot of typical shoujo elements to it, namely the jealous female classmate/bully, which is probably one of the things I hate most about shoujo in a school setting. And we also have the main character being quiet and shy and no one really liking her.

That being said, it differs in a lot of ways, too. It's not common for shoujo to address death the way this one does. Rei talks about it a lot, pretty flippantly. He's not particularly suicidal, but he's a bit indifferent to the fact that his adrenaline-seeking hobbies could end badly, even when his friend is seriously injured.

I didn't intend to read this entire volume when I clicked on it last night. I'm in the middle of several other series that I've been collecting, so I'll probably wait before coming back to *Mars*. But I'm pretty sure I'll come back to it.

Lauren says

I did not know what to make of the characters when I first started reading the series. Overtime I grew to love

them and went through their ups and downs and all the drama they faced. I ended up loving the series!

Summer says

Words cannot describe how much I love Mars. It's your typical bad guy meets shy girl, bad boy helps girl overcome shyness, they fall in love but not without their share of problems. But it's sooo much more than that. The characters heal each other in their relationships and overcome some serious issues. I love this manga so much I have the really cheesy Taiwanese tv drama based on it. Before I nerd out any more over this series I'm just going to end by saying it's one of my favorite manga series. Although, I do warn that the last... 4 or so volumes involving Rei's mother bore me to death. But the majority of it is excellent if you like shoujo.

Starbubbles says

I must have been in a bitter and angsty mood lately because I was expecting there to be more angst in this. This series in almost its entirety has been in my possession for over a couple of years now. I have been avoiding it because I had known from the time I was in high school its premise and that it was more dramatic than *Peach Girl*. In some ways, I would have to disagree. With practically every breath, Momo was facing something else dramatic and torturous. *Mars* did not hold that same intensity. That isn't to say that there wasn't real-life and dramatic happenings that took place. There was, and plenty of them.

I can see the appeal of this series, and how it became so freakishly popular. With the artistic stylings and violent-temperament similar to the other freakishly popular series *Boys over Flowers*, I can see how both would help pull each other into even more popularity. It even had the familial drama of *Kare Kano*. Or maybe it's the other way around?

Anyway- I enjoyed this far and beyond more than I thought I would. I was right to wait to read this one though. It is not one I can or could enjoy over and over again, or at any time I felt like reading. This one requires a particular mood to permeate through your being to be able to fully enjoy.

Fiona says

I'll start off by stating that this is a review of the series, not of this one volume.

I've been out of the manga/anime scene for quite a long time now, but a friend recommended this one to me and I decided to give it a try. I'm so glad that I did. While *Mars* undeniably falls victim to a few of the classic romance manga cliches, I found it quite easy to overlook its flaws. Sure the "shy girl meets bad boy" dynamic is something that has been done before (horridly overdone, really), but it's what Soryo does with this dynamic that makes *Mars* such a special story that stands above the rest.

(view spoiler)

In the end, I found that Mars was less of a romance story and more a story about people having to learn to

live with the horrible things that had happened to them.

On a lighter note, the art—while rather 90's-esque—is beautiful. Each page is treated with love and reverence.

So in short, if you're looking for a beautifully told and rendered story, give Mars a go. I don't think you'll regret it.

Silvia Gutierrez says

5 Stars to all the series.

Read this if you haven't, forget all the Shoujo you have read before. This is a Great Drama/Plot/Romance.

This is not a light read.

Alexis says

My first experiences with sh?jo manga were the likes of Fruits Basket and Hana Kimi. It's no wonder that I dismissed the genre as flippant, cheesy and inherently pointless. Most sh?jo manga consists of impossibly handsome boys who are good at everything, girls who are vanilla wish-fulfilment devices and a plot that revolves around nothing but inexplicable instant romances.

That said, Mars has single-handedly crushed these stereotypes and restored my faith in the genre. I'm eternally grateful to Courtney for the recommendation!

So, despite having the typical good girl meets bad boy headline, why isn't Mars a stereotypical sh?jo manga? There are three reasons;

1) These characters have depth. Our bad boy isn't the generic, typical kind. He's doing badly in school because he's tired from working to pay rent. He can't live at home because his father makes him miserable. He not avoiding a haircut because he's a slob, but because he's too poor to afford one. If you look closely at his clothes, as well, his t-shirt is too small for him and his pants are too baggy. I thought he looked a bit 90's because it was just the drawing style until I noticed that no-one else dresses that way.

Rei's 'bad boy' tag is really only hear-say, because from what we see of him he's actually just a confident, honest, kind-hearted guy. Kira is, well, I'll get to Kira in point three. There's something about her and Rei that I really want to talk about, but I want to do that separately to their personality and character traits.

2) Our heroine grows a backbone. This is vital because I have never in my life read a sh?jo manga where the main female character is ever actually in any real danger, let alone one where the female character stands up for herself without the help of a guy. Granted, the bully in this story isn't a huge threat, but it's nice to see some strength in a female character created for a genre targeted to girls. It's wonderful to read a sh?jo manga which tells you that you may not have a choice in what happens to you, but you do have a choice in what you do about it.

3) This manga looks like it may tackle issues of suicide and sexual abuse. There is no solid promise of this yet, but I've been noticing two recurring themes throughout the volume.

i) Rei mentions dying. He mentions it a lot.

I don't know if this is an actual plot point but I sincerely hope the author isn't just dramatizing the angst. Suicidal feelings are usually something that's closer to sh?nen manga, usually as a result of PTSD (not that I've ever heard it called that outright) after battles. This isn't a bad thing, but it's not really something you usually see in sh?jo manga, and I'm curious to see if and how the author tackles the issue.

ii) Speaking of issues, has Kira been sexually abused in the past? I think she has, and probably by her father (hence why he doesn't live with them, I'm guessing, look I don't know anything don't judge me @__@). I used screencaps to prove this, but the GR comment bar cuts off my photos, so I won't be uploading them here. You can find them on my blog if you want to see the full-fledged review.

If she has been sexually abused, it completely justifies her reactions and her extremely shy persona. While being painfully shy and potentially androphobic aren't good things, they're understandable and realistic reactions for someone coping with sexual abuse. That would elevate Kira from the typical vanilla sh?jo heroine to a believable, three-dimensional character.

Since I've never read a sh?jo manga that handled topics like this, I'm looking forward to seeing such a socially relevant issue be handled with the weight and seriousness it deserves.

There are a few flaws in this volume, but nothing so bad as to make it a deal-breaker. Yes, Kira is still one of those frail, shy-girl types. That said, she actually seems to have a backbone and appears to be developing a personality. I'm curious to see how she grows as the story progresses.

The plot in itself is pretty good as well, but in true sh?jo manga style, it's pretty much guaranteed from the start that Rei and Kira will be together. Sorry, Mars, but your obvious romance is, uh, obvious. Harumi's attempts to get at Rei through hurting Kira just seem tired in comparison. That third time where she threatens her just falls completely flat, since she had failed to scare her twice before. The cheap-shot attempts at a love triangle need to stop immediately because they're completely transparent.

You'll see that I made no complaint about how quickly Kira falls in love with Rei, but that's because I liked him immediately too.

That said, the topics and development promised in this volume are good enough to make me want to keep reading. Hopefully volume 2 handles some of the issues I outlined in my third point!

Miriam says

Not actually anything to do with the planet Mars, and not the sort of manga I normally read. Not my preferred art style, either. I was surprised at how the characters grew on me.

Cory says

Kind of cliched with standard shoujo art, but if you're looking for a light read, this is for you. To tell the truth, I prefer Love Roma, Volume 1. I need humor in my shoujo.

2.5 stars. I want a manga where the girl rides the motorcycle and the guy is the sensitive painter.

Gary Butler says

27th book read in 2017.

Number 186 out of 592 on my all time book list.

Jessica-Robyn says

To get a good idea of what to expect from MARS you can check out my review of the complete series on my blog Reading Robyn It's spoiler free, has images from the manga for those interested in a preview of the art, and gives a good overview of the roller coaster that is this series.

MARS has staying power. With the strength of its plot it's not a manga easily forgotten!

Jenny Clark says

The art is good, and the story is pretty good too. It will be interesting to see the developments in all the characters and their relationships. I do like that there is some mystery, but not enough that nothing makes sense, just enough to make you want to read more.

I also like the fact that Kira is so shy, but yet strong enough to tell Harumi to go ahead and break her right hand, she'll draw with her left, and break that too she'll draw with her feet.

It does seem a little extreme, but girls can be cruel at that age.

Also, yay for a high school with no uniforms!

Spira-Virgo says

Book: Mars Vol 1 (Mars 1#) by Fuyumi Soryo

Genre: Abuse, Coming of Age, Psychological, Coming of Age, Manga, Shojo, Romance and Gothic.

Creatures: Non, just humans it's not a fantasy XDDD

Age: Young Adult, Mature.

Pages: 200 pages.

Format: Paperback

Publication: April 23rd 2002 by Tokyopop

Final Rating: 4/5

"This is the first portrait I drew. The Model was a 17-year old boy. I titled it "*Mars*."

Mars Signify two things-

One is the planet,
The other is a soldier-
THE GOD OF WAR." - *Fuyumi Soryo*

When people ask me why I read manga or comic books, I always say that they are another form of literature. Different *presentation* but written the same way. Hence, why **I recommend** to all of my friends who ask a comic book or some manga to try out if it's their first time. Manga for particular, has tons of genres and thousands of series. You got Fantasy with magnificent take on beasts and magic and whatnot. The Supernatural, ghosts, ghouls, psychic powers everything you probably saw on *the Exorcist*. Horror, yes there is a genre for horrors fan in any media believe it or not. Sh?nen which is the Japanese word for boy, aims for younger boys, offering spectacular adventure of any particular setting and then like its opposite sex, Shojo.

Shojo is the Japanese word for *girl*, originally from the Chinese dialect. Shojo unlike the other genres has far more vast series comparing to the others. You will find many of them in any book store if you search hard enough. Shojo mostly is romance but some also has fantastical and supernatural and other elements in it. Now what does this has to do with **Mars**? Well Mars is one of the special little pearls hiding among the endless piles of books on that genre. Manga can be a good read as long as it offering you something to *care* about while flipping the page. And if you haven't seen my reader status on this read, you know that I wouldn't use in pages and quotes if it wasn't **that good**.

Then let me explain my reason why this book is sooooooo good with a little review of Mars~

STORY:

Kira Aso is your typical shy girl. She is living her own little world, minding her herself and she draws. She just living her days by, alienating herself from everyone in her class, has no friends or boyfriend, she just draw and goes back home to her mother. Her life is pretty okay, nothing major. But that everyday routine is about to change when she meets **Rei Kashino**, a motorcycle racer and girl crazy. Rei is basically your stereotypical bad-boy you see in many *cliché* romance novels. You could probably guess where this is going, but **wait, hold on**, let me finish. Kira then, after realizing that Rei isn't as he appears to be, ask him to model for her. Rei then accept very, well, as any person would and from there the plot goes its way.

Pretty simple right? Because that's how some stories work and some are not. Sometimes you just need an easy story to go with. Something that is both realistic and easier to relate to and Mars is no different. We are introduce to Kira and Rei from the very beginning, see their live, their voice and instantly fall to the story. Reading about Kira first dislike of Rei seemed very legit to me. I wouldn't befriend someone like that in real life but sometimes you become friends with the people you'd least expected. Their school life and personal live are also a good take to highlight why this Manga is so good. It's like you are watching one of your mother's **Soap Drama or a CW Drama show** and it is so good. You get invested right away.

Since we only have 200 pages you can't overcrowd the entire plot into one volume, so for now we get some little glances and cryptic messages floating around our main duo. I honestly didn't expected for this manga to be so... **dark**. Like there's this never ending atmosphere that keeps looming above Kira and Rei. Appearing for an instance when we see Rei express some of his inner desire of *dying, suicide* and watch the whole world *burn* and Kira well, some sort of I

think (view spoiler) It's not so clear but it is hinted there if you can read between the words. I love when the story isn't showing that at you, like there are leaving those small clues and hidden Easter Eggs to find out while reading. It really makes the story even feel bigger in a way.

Fuyumi Soryo, the author aka the mangaka did a fantastic job with this manga. You might say it's not an original plot line, but believe me, the story may seem *predictable* but the characters. **OH BOY, WILL YOU BE SUPRISE.**

CHARACTERS:

"In the 16 years I've been alive, I have never said... "I want you to model for me." ...Anything so bold."

Kira Aso was a surprise. I usually find her types of character to be the least interesting leads in any shojo setting. They are always preserved on a pedestal like they are this special snowflake that you got to hold and protect. Sure, she does share a *few* similarities but what makes Kira different is because she *choose* to act that way. She does not *draws* herself attention despite her good looks. She isn't bragging about her *amazing* talent in art and she is such a *soft* and *timid* girl that she just can't bring herself to befriend anyone.

Now before you hit the comment section and say, but Spira, clearly Kira sounds like a Mary Sue character to me from the looks of it. **NO.** She is not a Mary Sue. Kira develops throughout the story. She is not afraid to express her feeling, sure it took time, but the way that it was pace it was, god amazing. And she even stood up for herself. But despite showing some strength, you can also see her weakness, and that is her nature. There is just something... wrong about her that I cannot put into words. Just as i stated above me, I don't want to spoil anything but honestly, Kira is a very layered person just as Rei is.

"So, do I get undressed? My Heart was pounding cause I thought you wanted a *nude* model"

Rei Kashino, he is not what you'd think. Sure he is a ladies man, he smokes, he is rude and tactless but he is **smart, confident and caring** once you get to know him. I know, sounds like your *typical* bad boy but he isn't the guy to fight for your battles, especially Kira's. He won't cuddle you like many other romantic interests do. Instead, he will be there to lift you up when you need it, find ways to make you laugh and like in our story, model for Kira.

He also has love for motor racing, despite how dangerous it might be, god just ask his poor friend. Rei is defiantly strange guy. There's not much yet to understand both him and Kira and that's fine but as i said there are a few references and moments when you know something is wrong with the guy. There are some familial problems as I can sense from the dialog but I don't know, as I stated about Kira, something is just... *off*.

Besides our maid leads, the supporting cast are also important to be mention, like Rei's friend, **Tatsuya**. He has a crush for Kira and is a pretty good person and I have no idea how he can be friends with Rei. It's one of those odd friendships that you got no idea how they can really be friends you know? But you can see that like Kira that was developed Tatsuya also get this. I appreciate it when characters are developing with the plot. I would like to mention the other

cast but honestly, we don't have enough to go with since this is just the first volume so for first time introduction it's very good.

"Is this what they mean by becoming "A Slave to Love?"

*I don't know what lies ahead, but I want to **keep going forever.**"*

I haven't spoken about the romance, but clearly it is just developing for now. You can tell from the artwork and the dialog that both parties are drawn for one another but yet not labeling what they are. Are they **just** friends? Friends with benefits? *Lovers*? That's what I find appealing about it. It's fresh, like real life romance. It just started, like volume one, and just like the characters themselves we will have to see for ourselves where this will be leading.

DRAWING, WRITING & PACING:

I think from my throughout explanation with this review, and the images i provided alongside the quotes, you can tell that **Fuyumi Soryo** did one of a hell of a job on this manga. She took a cliché story and use it for her own idea. She established **good characters**, that are still developed, and with her writing and pacing she managed to craft this *beautiful plot* that will keep surprising you in each flip of a page. It isn't progressing fast on to your face like many Shojo mangas I know do but it is just steady. From the way Kira and Rei meet, to Kira's hesitant reaction to Rei, to Rei's interest in Kira, it all been presented very good. The pacing just know where to work and where to lead, and Fuyumi Soryo is rolling with it. Like us, a watcher anticipating for the next volume to come.

As for her artwork, aka the big reason we are all here, *my god*, what is this? This is just marvelous. Her artwork reminds me of bit of other good shojo mangas I know in terms of characters portraits especially the boys like, **Boys Over Flowers and Ouran High School Host Club**. Fuyumi biggest strength is through her more, serious and grimmer scenes, such as I mention before above, but also in her gentler moments and romantic ones. She has this way to make the characters come to life, each expression is never the same, it always a new one you not expecting to see. It's so wonderful to see that in a new manga. I always enjoy a good artwork, and god her close up faces are killing me. Look at this-

THIS IS ART PORN AT IT'S BEST PEOPLE! OAO

OVERALL:

So is Mars worth your time? YES. Absolutely. If you are a fan of good shojo/romantic manga this is the one for you. Mars was completed years ago and has 16 volumes. Plenty to read, if you are a completionist just like myself you are so going to enjoy this series. It has good characters, amazing artwork, the romance isn't bad, and there's a lot of room to cover. I will be reading the next volume when I could buy it, but in the meantime, I got my copy of Mars Vol 1. And I am going to keep it close to my heart for now on. I recommend you do the same ;)

Clair says

So... How about them bad boys?

Yes, bad boys. From what I've seen and read over the years, bad boys tend to go a little something like this:

They are aloof, coldhearted yet incredibly interested in this one girl. Authors of certain hackneyed works make their bad boys undeniably what Hollywood considers 'bad'. They smoke, they drive motorcycles, they get into fights a lot (Travis Maddox from Beautiful Disaster), they gamble (Patch Cipriano from Hush, Hush), and they consider stalking to be a perfectly legitimate hobby (Edward Cullen from Twilight). Also, they aren't forthright with their emotions or motives, so it provides a perfect excuse for our heroine to start looking into this mysterious boy who suddenly seems to like her after some contrivance brought them together.

Now, I'm not going to say that the bad boy archetype is the worst thing ever and that I hate it, but... yeah, I kind of do. I just don't see the point of this kind of thing. I may have once swooned over Edward Cullen, being a naïve fourteen year old, but now I just find it laughable. I like men of mystery, sure, but not miserable, insulting bastards who make a show of how badass they are.

I bring this up because I am now a twenty one year old girl, and I have fallen for a manga 'bad boy'. Hook, line and sinker. Why was I not reading this before?

I also love the art in this manga. It's gorgeous. Everyone has nice, expressive eyes and fluid movements. My only complaint with the art is that the characters can look a little bit spaced out from time to time, but that's not really a big issue. Fuyumi Soryo communicates a vast array of emotions through the simplest things, such as Kira haphazardly pulling away from this one boy whose hand brushed against hers, Kira's mother hesitating before she shakes Rei's hand, etc. It leaves you wanting more, because we just don't know that much about the characters yet, nor why they act this way.

So, what's the story? Kira is an extremely shy girl who has barely ever spoken a word to anyone in her class. She has a passion and a talent for art, however. She first meets Rei, her new classmate and the 'bad boy' I was talking about, and she talks to her mother about how she doesn't like him at all. Not because of anything he's done to her, per se. She just doesn't like his smoking habit, or how he seems to be quite a lady's man.

I... kind of didn't understand this to begin with, but as you get further in the manga, the underlying implications of Kira's behaviour becomes crystal clear, and when the penny drops, it's quite harrowing.

To begin with, Kira is a bit of a blatant wish fulfilment device. She's quiet, and she's easily flustered. She voices our desires, basically. She asks Rei to model for her, and he returns the favour, having rescued her from the slimy grasp of a teacher who seemed nice but was actually a creep. But she develops a lot more personality throughout the manga, even though she doesn't ever really stand up for herself.

Rei is really quite fascinating. He's so emotionally distant, and though he's quite confident he can charm any lady who comes into his periphery, he sees something completely different with Kira, which is quite refreshing. He's a very unclear character, with details of his background only given to us quite sparsely throughout the story. Plus he's very nice to look at, so that helps.

If there's one thing that annoyed me about this manga, it was the bullying subplot that comes in just about

halfway through. It turns out that Rei had a girlfriend when he first met Kira, but they broke up because she needed to study for university entrance exams.

The next most popular girl in school, Harumi, assumes she'll be next in line to be his girlfriend. When Rei starts turning his attention to Kira, however, Harumi and her friends start viciously bullying Kira. They come up to her and say they don't like her attitude, they threaten her to stay away from Rei, or else they'll burn her arm with a cigarette. Near the end of this volume, Harumi and her friends threaten Kira by saying they'll smash all the bones in her drawing hand and ruin her burgeoning art career. Kudos to Kira for looking up at them and saying she'll just learn to draw with her left hand if they do, but seriously?

In two instances, Rei goes over to Harumi after she's finished threatening Kira, and tells her to stop it. And each time she just gets mildly upset over Rei's attitude towards her. That's it. Harumi doesn't really learn anything or realise she should move on. The ending even has this cliffhanger where Harumi outright tells Kira she will kill her if she gets any closer to Rei. Since Harumi is thwarted each and every time and never goes through with what she says, I kind of tired of the bullying scenes quickly. I have heard that Harumi becomes a good friend of Kira's later in the series, but for now she's just a cheap villain in a barely-there love triangle that clearly supports the idea of Kira and Rei being together. Just move the hell on, already, Harumi.

Normally, the description 'fluffy shoujo romance manga' makes me jump a mile backwards, but here, everything works together so nicely. There's a great cast of believable characters whose story you will want to follow, as well as a compelling burgeoning romance. It's a shame the bullying subplot was kind of weak, but I suspect it'll improve over subsequent volumes. 4.5/5.

(This review is also available on my blog: <http://nessasky.wordpress.com/2013/03...>)
