

READER'S GUIDE

The Summer Hikaru Died (Yen Press)

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Filled with creeping dread and fleshed out characters, ***The Summer Hikaru Died*** is a great pick for avid manga enthusiasts and novices alike, as well as fans of spooky season.

CREATOR: Mokumokuren

ABOUT: It has Hikaru's face. It has Hikaru's voice. It even has Hikaru's memories. But whatever came down from the mountains six months ago isn't Yoshiaki's best friend. Whatever it is, it's dangerous. Carrying on at school and hanging out as if nothing has changed—as if Hikaru isn't gone—would be crazy...but when it looks so very like Hikaru...and acts so very like Hikaru...

“

“Easily one of 2023’s best manga, the story oozes eeriness, absolutely grabbing the attention of readers as it toggles between ordinary daily life and unusual phenomena... There is evidence of a possible queer romance, but it is not explored deeply in this first volume. While there is plenty of mystery to go around within this series opener, the title makes sure to emphasize that there’ll be more to dole out in ensuing volumes. The series is off to a great start, cementing itself early as one educators should add to their libraries.”

—School Library Journal, 2023



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Why is Yoshiaki so willing to not only go along with Hikaru's secret, but to overlook his strange behavior, and even disregard the concerns of townsfolk? What does it say about Yoshiaki?
2. Do you think Yoshiaki's actions are motivated more by love or fear?
3. Mokumokuren blends elements of horror with emotion. How effective is this balance in conveying the emotional depth of the story? How does the horror genre influence your perspective of the story?
4. How might the possession of Hikaru symbolize struggles with identity or change in relationships?

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