

Crime & Mystery

Ashes, Kitakata Kenzo



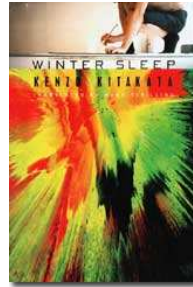
About the Author:

Kenzo Kitakata is the recipient of countless awards for his signature brand of hardboiled yakuza fiction, including the Japan Adventure Writing Association Award (1982), the Yoshikawa Eiji Award for Fiction (1983), the Japan Mystery Writers Association Award (1983, for *The Cage*), the Bungei Award (1985) and the Shiba Ryotaro Award (2005). A perennial bestseller, Kitakata is also a frequent commentator and panel judge for fiction awards.

Book Summary:

Tanaka, the novel's hero, is a middle-aged *yakuza*. Once regarded as the heir to his gang's aging boss, he has fallen out of favor and appears stuck as the head of one of the gang's sub-branches. Tanaka is not your typical gangster, though. Not obsessed with expensive suits, jewelry, or prize women, he is a convincing and heartbreaking study in memory and ambition.

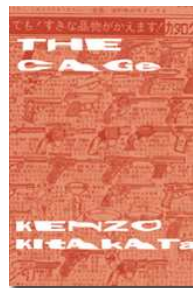
Winter Sleep, Kitakata Kenzo



Book Summary:

Nakagi, an ex-con painter who has sequestered himself in a mountain cabin, is trying to elevate his art. The only thing breaking his solitude are the visits of two women: an art dealer who wants him to produce the sort of paintings that she would like to buy from him, and a young, aspiring, and soulful apprentice. When Nakagi welcomes an escaped felon into the emotionally fraught fold, and begins to teach him to paint as well, *Winter Sleep* awakens to a literally incendiary climax.

The Cage, Kitakata Kenzo



Book Summary:

“Manager Takino” is just trying to live a quiet life running a suburban supermarket when an old yakuza mate convinces him to help two lovers on the run from the mob escape the country. On his tail is Detective Takagi, a smooth noir fixture with a French cigarette always dangling from his mouth. The beast within Takino will chafe against the cage of domesticity in which he's locked himself, and once he busts out there'll be no going back.

The Poison Ape, Osawa Arimasa



About the Author:

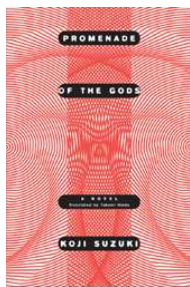
Arimasa Osawa has received the Eiji Yoshikawa New Writer Award, the Japan Mystery Writers Association Award, and the Naoki Prize for his Shinjuku Shark novels. Many of his other hardboiled works have also been awarded prizes and adapted to the screen.

Book Summary:

Shinjuku it's where gangsters—*yakuza*—stake their claims and run operations. They leech onto establishments and demand “protection money.” They run gambling operations and sell paint thinner to huffers. Gangs from Taiwan have recently put down roots in the area, having been flushed from their homeland. Inspector Samejima, known as the Shinjuku Shark, is a lone detective who stalks the *yakuza* in his relentless pursuit of justice.

A dangerous professional hit man is prowling the streets of Shinjuku. He is known only as Du Yuan—the Poison Ape. Will Samejima be able to find the hit man before he wreaks havoc on the gangs in Shinjuku? Can club hostess Nami untangle herself from the twisted string of events before it's too late?

Promenade of the Gods, Suzuki Koji



About the Author:

He is a Japanese writer, who was born in Hamamatsu and currently lives in Tokyo. Suzuki is the author of the *Ring cycle* of novels, which has been adapted into a manga series. His first book, *Ring* (also known as *Ringu*) has been made into a Japanese film, which was remade into a US movie. Fluent in English, he has written several books on the subject of fatherhood.

He is currently on the selection committee for the Japan Fantasy Novel Award.

Considered his most important novel since the famous *Ring* trilogy, *Promenade* shares with it many themes and a character; a guru called Kageyama, mentioned only in passing in *Ring*.

Book Summary:

One evening, a man saunters out after watching television and fails to come home. He calls his wife to tell her that he just can't live with her anymore. Left with a baby daughter and at a loss, Miyuki contacts her husband's childhood friend Shirow for help. As the two investigate the missing man's whereabouts, they come to fear that the disappearance involves more than mere caprice.