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Comics & Graphic Novels

Children of the Sea
Daisuke Igarashi
VIZ Media
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A star in Japan, Daisuke makes his English language debut with volume one of *Children of the Sea*. The story revolves around Ruka, a girl whose summer vacation is dashed when she's kicked off the handball team for excessive and repeated violence. Footloose, she finds herself drawn to the aquarium where her father works—and where she once saw a ghost. But Umi is not a ghost; he's a kind of Mowgli of the sea, and in fact was raised by dungos, a manatee-like creature. How much cooler than wolves is that!

This is traditional fantasy, mixed with some spiritual/nature themes, in this case, the power and meaning of the sea. Daisuke's storytelling through images is anything but traditional. Magical would be a better word. In an interview at Viz Signature, he says, "My style originated from a certain experience I had. I was standing in a small, old forest near my house. As I stood in this forest, with the sun filtering through the trees and the breeze blowing, I suddenly noticed how beautiful this world is. Since then, my most important concern has been to show the beauty of this world. When I draw *Children of the Sea*, I try to be conscious of the rhythm of the waves. For example, as I draw quiet, gentle scenes, I want the readers to feel as though they're walking along the beach as the sun sets in a clear sky."

Children of the Sea is a beautifully produced volume that will delight teenagers.

Heather Shaw