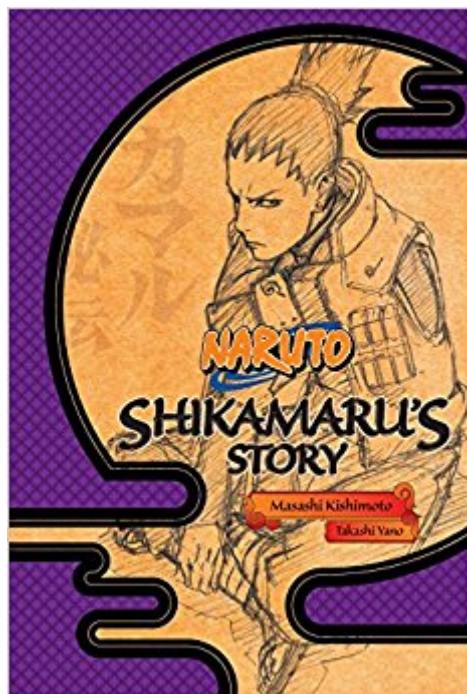


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Naruto: Shikamaru's Story



Synopsis

A new series of prose novels, straight from the worldwide Naruto franchise. Naruto's allies and enemies take center stage in these fast-paced adventures, with each volume focusing on a particular clanmate, ally, team or villain. Two years after the Great Ninja War, Shikamaru spends his days racing around, hands full as one of Konoha's key protectors. Then one day a large number of ninja from every region are reported missing. Even Sai disappears. And the place where the missing shinobi end up is the mysterious empire, the Land of Silence. As a ninja, as an adult, to protect all that he is responsible for, Shikamaru must do battle with the shadow of a new generation.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Masashi Kishimoto made his debut in Weekly Shonen Jump in 1999 with Naruto, which became a big hit with both boys and girls. Kishimoto added a modern flavour to the ancient world of Japanese ninja to make Naruto one of the most popular series in Japan.

This story is set 2 years after the Manga ends focusing on, naturally, Shikamaru. Kakashi has ascended to position of Hokage already, and the alliance of the Great Nations has taken root. This story credibly describes Shikamaru's conflicting desires: to be his lazy self, but still wanting to fulfill his now numerous responsibilities as a ninja and respected veteran from the 4th Great Ninja War.

People have come to rely on his strategic skills and level-headed judgment, pressuring him into feeling he must push aside his childish wants and embrace being an "adult". Of course, a timely villain emerges to test his mettle and challenge his ideals. This story features brief but faithful interactions with Kakashi, Naruto, Sakura, Ino, Choji, Sai, Temari, Gaara and Kurenai, and plants seeds for some of the other novels in this series, making it enjoyable for fans. The translator still goofs on calling his "Shadow Strangulation" jutsu "Suffocating Darkness", and, while I know the anime dub translates his catchphrase as "What a drag," I'm used to subs that always prefer "How troublesome". (Just a personal nitpick.) One other nitpick is that the author incorrectly says Shikamaru became a Chunin because "the examiners handed down top marks for Shikamaru's sportsmanlike admission of defeat." That's such a basic storyline mistake, it's cringeworthy, but oh well. The only other jarring notes are the 2 Anbu characters invented for the story - one is a teenage girl that has an annoying speech pattern and the other a middle aged man who is bad at wordplay and puns. They seem to have been given these traits solely to distinguish themselves from one another, as both are completely dull otherwise and only exist in the story to propel the plot along. (Shikamaru needs 2 comrades [that aren't Ino or Choji] on a mission: hey, presto, it could be any 2 people, it doesn't matter at all who they are). I think it's strange to invent 2 contrived Anbu instead of having an Ino-Shika-Cho focus, but the story believably goes in another direction. I just found the Anbu a tad grating. The story could perhaps have had more Temari x Shikamaru conversation or non-battle related interactions, but I understand that these are not meant to be very long or complicated. Overall, this was much more enjoyable and believable than Kakashi's Story. The characters are depicted faithfully from the manga with no standout clashes in personality, and Shikamaru's struggles are relatable to the everyperson juggling youthful desires while having adulthood responsibilities with sometimes frightening expectations. So, if you are a Shikamaru fan, this is a nice addition to the Naruto-verse.

It was great to read about a secondary, yet a very important character from the Naruto franchise. Shikamaru's always been an intriguing character with side story potential so I'm glad we finally got one. As for the actual story I'm breaking down my ratings into the following categories: Story plot: 4 (not as enjoyable as Kakashi's book, but it showcased Shikamaru's character magnificently) Writing: 5 (I believe these books are direct translations from the Japanese versions so I was very impressed when the book read like it had been written by an English author) Characters: 5 (I LOVE that Naruto, Sasuke, basically all the major characters don't come in to save the day. This is truly Shikamaru's book. That being said it was still nice to see small cameos of the other characters)

While I enjoyed Kakashi's Story, this novel certainly surpassed its predecessor in just about every aspect. If you have to choose between buying one of those two, I recommend this one. No major spoilers: Shikamaru's character in the anime has always bored me a little bit. However, from the start of this novel, I became more and more of a fan while reading his thought process. Where Kakashi's Story felt a bit like fan-fiction with convoluted action sequences that would have been better published as a manga, Shikamaru's Story fully takes advantage of printed word by presenting Shikamaru's philosophies and internal conflicts with satisfying action sequences. It gives a more thorough look on the introspective of one of the Naruto universe's most intellectual characters. The newly introduced side characters aren't all that captivating, but getting the deeper perspective from Shikamaru makes up for that. The main villain is a bit more interesting than the other typical villains in the Naruto universe. Overall, I obviously enjoyed this book and will probably read it again in the future. If you liked Kakashi's Story or you were a bit underwhelmed by it, then you may enjoy this one....and don't worry, he doesn't say, "What a drag," every other line like he does in the anime.

Great addition to the storyline. Shikamaru was always one of my favorite characters for his analytical side.

While it's not great literature, Shikamaru's story is a well written story with a much better translation than Kakashi's story had. It was fun to spend time in the head of the laziest master tactician in the Hidden Leaf Village. His relationship with Tamari was insightful as well. It's great that he could be sent flying so dramatically by his friends and be so phlegmatic about it.

I'm a big fan of Naruto manga. I finish this half a day and enjoy reading it. Shikamaru's story makes me understand his struggle on handling responsibility and grow up from being a kid to adult. I am happy that he got his own adventure and his own battle.

Really GOOD book! I might of finished it in 2-3 days but it was worth my time. I love how it jumps into Shikamaru's personal thoughts, then feelings towards others and certain issues. I really enjoy how they wrote Temari into it and how there basically was a romantic spinoff so we know how things are already when the new series starts. If you wanna know more about Shikamaru read this!

Haven't yet finished it, but I like it so far. Was a big fan of the manga, so when I heard my 3rd

favorite character had his own "Hiden," I jumped on it. A little different reading an actual novel from left to right and not a comic panel from right to left, but you get used to it. Has all the makings of a great filler arc or movie I'd say, along with 2 new Anbu members for our reading pleasure (Hinoko and Ro have a hilarious dynamic). Also interesting to learn more about the post-War state of affairs in the ninja world (I believe everyone's "The Last"-ing at this point).

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