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Spice And Wolf, Vol. 1 - Light Novel



Synopsis

The life of a traveling merchant is a lonely one, a fact with which Kraft Lawrence is well acquainted. Wandering from town to town with just his horse, cart, and whatever wares have come his way, the peddler has pretty well settled into his routine—that is, until the night Lawrence finds a wolf goddess asleep in his cart. Taking the form of a fetching girl with wolf ears and a tail, Holo has wearied of tending to harvests in the countryside and strikes up a bargain with the merchant to lend him the cunning of "Holo the Wisewolf" to increase his profits in exchange for taking her along on his travels. What kind of businessman could turn down such an offer? Lawrence soon learns, though, that having an ancient goddess as a traveling companion can be a bit of a mixed blessing. Will this wolf girl turn out to be too wild to tame?

Book Information

Paperback: 240 pages

Publisher: Yen Press (December 15, 2009)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0759531048

ISBN-13: 978-0759531048

Product Dimensions: 5.5 x 0.8 x 8.2 inches

Shipping Weight: 8 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.8 out of 5 stars 161 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #27,343 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #53 in [Books > Science Fiction & Fantasy > Fantasy > Myths & Legends > Asian](#) #53 in [Books > Comics & Graphic Novels > Manga > Science Fiction](#) #98 in [Books > Comics & Graphic Novels > Manga > Fantasy](#)

Customer Reviews

Isuna Hasekura's debut novel, *SPICE AND WOLF*, earned the Silver Prize in the 2005 Dengeki Novel Prize with the series going on to total seventeen novels and both manga and anime adaptations.

Lawrence is a traveling merchant that is very trusted throughout the land, even though that land is very heavily controlled by the church, who will do anything to make sure the gods from the past are no longer worshiped. This doesn't affect Lawrence what-so-ever, until he finds one of these old gods sleeping in his wagon cart after a Pagan harvest festival. The adorable god he finds is Holo, a wolf god! She can shift between forms, even though it's not the most convenient of ways, but in

human form she is still left with cute little wolf ears and a tail. Her life depends on a sheaf of wheat that Lawrence has in his cart. Obviously, Lawrence's new travel friend would cause a problem if anyone found out that she's really a Pagan god, so Horo is constantly hiding her "special additions". Lawrence agrees to help Horo get north, while Horo promises to help his sales to earn her keep. This book heavily focuses on economics, but it isn't overwhelming. The main sub-plot surrounds the coin system and silver purity. Lawrence and Horo get wrapped up with two companies, with very similar names might I add, that have much more power than they do. This will not be the last time we see these two companies or the church, I'm sure. This is a romance, but it's the definition of slow-burn romance. Lawrence and Horo are both such lonely creatures that truly do not deserve to be. I think I want to continue on with this series mostly just to see their happy ending (they better get a happy ending). This book was much longer and much more thought provoking than I thought it would be. When I saw it only had a prologue, six chapters and then an epilogue, I thought it would only take me about an hour to read. Boy was I wrong. This was actually very meaty, and took me two nights to read. There was a lot to the story and plot, and the character development (as slow as it might be) was also exceptional. This story read very beautifully, and I feel like it was translated well. I think fantasy lovers would really enjoy this, and it would be a nice place to start if you want to get into light-novels and manga.

This is a great story. If you like light novels, love anime, I'd be shocked to hear you've never heard of this series. It's considered a classic by thousands, and it really is a cool story. The premise is original and interesting, and it's just so well written. Not a lot of light novels are third person, and very few of them are 100% original. This is one of them, and it's great. I love light novels, and anime and all that crap, as I think it's a great way to tell a story, but I do see the faults with quite a few of them. This one has almost none. The first volume is worth picking up and placing on your shelf. It's an interesting fantasy tale not about knights and kings, but about merchants, and I just love it. Technically, overall, the series is a rom-com, but hey, I like a good rom-com. If you like romance, comedy, quick wit, interesting original stories, or just overall good writing, then this is worth your time. Personally, I think the whole series is worth the time, as the light novel series ended in 2011 with 17 volumes, which is actually a strange number for light novels. Most end in the 20s, and others end around 12. Anyways, Isuna Hasekura's a cool dude, and he can tell a cool story.

I'll keep this short and sweet. Fans of the anime will love reading the original story and will gain a greater understanding of Lawrence & Holo. Little gestures you may not have even noticed the first

time you watched the series, become clear and meaningful after finishing the book. If you haven't heard of Spice & Wolf before, then either this book or the anime series are good places to start. You'll get more life out of the series, but the book is a bit easier on the wallet. Despite the unusual premise this is a slower-paced and more dialogue heavy story, suited for an older audience. A healthy interest in economics isn't needed, but it'd be a plus. EDIT: I just have to update this after completing Volume 5 of the Spice & Wolf...everything I originally said about the rocky translation was just wrong. Paul Starr is doing an AMAZING job, this is by far one of the best translated light novels I have read to date, it perfectly captures the tone of the series. Five volumes down and I am even more in love with this series than before, here's hoping we get to see the rest brought over!

I'm sure there are plenty of reviews about the story, so I won't get too much into that. I will say that it's a very cute story that's worth a look at. Whether you read this light novel, the manga adaptation or the anime, they all have pluses and minuses. While the art of the Light novel is rather plain in comparison to some of the stunning spreads found in the manga, it is far from bad, and does a decent job conveying emotions. The translation is pretty good with only a few strangely worded bits, and the technical aspect of the writing isn't poetry, but for what it is, no complaints here. The only issue that I have is with the hideous dust jacket, which, thankfully, Yen Press never attempted again. Although it can just be slipped off and thrown away, I can't help but wonder why anybody thought it would be a wise decision. It doesn't match the tone of the series at all and makes it look massively cheap. If I saw this on a shelf and didn't know anything about the series, I wouldn't even consider buying it. If they wanted to make a dust jacket with a different design, why didn't they use photography of European Countrysides?

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