

Vibrator: A Novel

By Mari Akasaka

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Rei Hayakawa, a lonely, bulimic freelance writer with a drinking problem, wanders into a convenience store. She's swaddled in her coat and scarf, while her thoughts – of alienation, of hunger, of the need for gin and white wine – drift in via stream-of-consciousness. A trucker named Okabe walks in, deliberately grazes her behind, and at the same time, Rei's cell phone, set on vibrate, goes off over her heart. Rei impulsively gets into Okabe's truck with him – and stays. Suddenly she finds herself embarking on a road journey across the wintry landscape of Japan with a complete, and possibly dangerous, stranger. Can the physical relationship that develops between them give Rei what she needs, and can she ever free herself from her self-destructive tendencies? Both parties are wounded, guarded and distant — can they learn to trust each other? Author Mari Akasaka brings her trademark wordplay and vivid imagery to this compelling story of an unlikely pairing set against the bleak backdrop of Japan's highways. Adapted for the screen in 2003, *Vibrator* has also been made into a film.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

A 31-year old Japanese journalist finds refuge from her self-destructive impulses with a long-distance trucker in Akasaka's American debut. (She has published three novels in Japan.) Narrator Rei Hayakawa—bulimic, alcoholic, with voices in her head—intends to drink herself into a stupor after a humiliating appearance on a televised panel on juvenile delinquency, but instead, she has a mild freak-out in a convenience store and meets truck driver Okabe Takakoshi, a former gangster, pimp and delinquent of the very type she has just tried to analyze on the panel. Rei instantly (and nearly without thought) abandons her life to accompany Okabe on the road. They, of course, become lovers, and though romantic clichés are sometimes a hairbreadth away, everything familiar is made strange through the lens of Rei's jumbled consciousness. (Kudos to Emmerich for a translation that impressively conveys the subtleties of Rei's self-loathing.) For a novel about sex and escape narrated by (arguably) a nutcase, the author's restraint and clarity of vision is most impressive: solutions are not easily realized, and the "love story" trashes the traditional mold. (*June*)

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About the Author

Mari Akasaka lives in Japan. Winner of the Noma Literature Prize for best new writer in 2000, she is the author of three novels, of which the highly acclaimed *Vibrator* was made into a film in 2003.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Cameron Keller:

The experience that you get from *Vibrator: A Novel* may be the more deep you rooting the information that hide inside the words the more you get serious about reading it. It doesn't mean that this book is hard to comprehend but *Vibrator: A Novel* giving you excitement feeling of reading. The author conveys their point in a number of way that can be understood by means of anyone who read it because the author of this book is well-known enough. This book also makes your own personal vocabulary increase well. That makes it easy to understand then can go to you, both in printed or e-book style are available. We recommend you for having that *Vibrator: A Novel* instantly.

Carolyn Wilson:

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Eric Rodriguez:

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Jennifer Powell:

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