= Planet Ladder =

Planet Ladder (Japanese : ????? · ??? , Hepburn : Puranetto Rad?) is a science fantasy sh?jo (targeted towards girls) manga written and illustrated by Yuri Narushima . Appearing as a serial in the Japanese manga magazine Crimson from the March 1998 issue to the May 2003 issue , the chapters of Planet Ladder were published by Sobisha / Shueisha in seven tank?bon volumes from December 1998 to May 2004 . Based on the Japanese folktale The Tale of the Bamboo Cutter in which a girl is discovered to be the princess of the moon , the story focuses on a teenager named Kaguya , who is prophesied to save only one of the nine parallel worlds , and her quest to bring peace to a waring universe while finding her true identity .

Planet Ladder was licensed for an English @-@ language translation in North America by Tokyopop , and released from April 2002 to March 2005 after being serialized in Tokyopop 's manga anthology Smile . Planet Ladder was part of Tokyopop 's line @-@ up of manga in its original right @-@ to @-@ left format ; previously , the majority of manga licensed in the United States was " flopped " to read left @-@ to @-@ right for a Western audience . Planet Ladder was positively received by English @-@ language readers , with two volumes placing in ICv2 's list of best @-@ selling graphic novels . The series received generally positive reviews from English @-@ language critics . On April 2 , 2007 , it went out of print in North America .

= = Plot = =

The series focuses on Kaguya Haruyama , a teenager who has lived with a Japanese foster family since she was found as an abandoned , amnesiac four @-@ year @-@ old . One night , two men ? Idou , a monk , and Seeu , an emotionless prince ? appear in her home and fight over her . Gold , Seeu 's robot modeled after Kaguya 's deceased brother Kagami , brings her to a world parallel to Earth on Seeu 's orders . After exploring the world with Gold , she encounters Shiina Mol Bamvivrie who believes Kaguya is the " Girl of Ananai " , destined to save only one of the nine parallel worlds from collision . Shiina explains that nine worlds exist : Ancient , the first civilized world that was mysteriously destroyed ; Asu , Seeu 's disintegrated world ; Eden , present @-@ day Earth ; Telene , a small world allied with Geo ; Fifth World , a politically neutral world ; Geus , a peaceful world under the control of Geo ; Geo , the most powerful of the worlds ; Asuraitsu , Geo 's rival ; and the Ninth World , destroyed before the start of the series .

Shiina and Waseda , a Tokyo University student trapped in the body of a giant rooster , join her and Gold in traveling across Telene . After learning that Seeu watched his people die from an incurable virus spread around Asu , Kaguya decides to change the fate of the worlds by confronting Kura , Geo 's indulgent emperor who ordered her kidnapping . Instead , while en route to Geo , Gold brings her to Seeu 's floating castle in Asu and Kura captures and recruits Shiina into his army .

Kaguya later makes an interplanetary broadcast , announcing her refusal to save only one world . Instead , she plans to find a person to help her save most of the worlds and people . Kura begins to destroy other worlds to increase Geo 's survival chances . Deciding to use Kaguya as a political figurehead , Kura sends Shiina to abduct her ; once there , Kaguya refuses to help him . Angered , Kura divulges that the " Girl of Ananai " legend is a myth elaborated on and spread around by him and Kagami . After a brief battle with Shiina , Seeu arrives to rescue Kaguya and she realizes her love for him . Transforming into a dragon , Gold teleports everyone to Ancient ; there Idou , Seeu , Kura , and Shiina are persuaded to combine their magical weapons with Gold to fix the rift in the universe , the cause of the eventual collision between the worlds . The series ends with an epilogue seven years later ; Kaguya explains the fate of everyone and meets Seeu and their young son with a picnic basket .

= = Production = =

According to manga artist Yuri Narushima , she began the manga with " a dramatic feeling in mind " and wanted to " start off with a comic book for young girls (sh?jo manga) . " Narushima planned to

have the plot progress quickly so the reader remembers the events and can " ' digest ' the foreshadowed events " . Planet Ladder was based on the Japanese folktale The Tale of the Bamboo Cutter , which focuses on a girl named Kaguya @-@ Hime who is discovered to be the princess of the moon . Additionally , the protagonist takes her name from the folktale .

After discovering that a North American version of Planet Ladder was being simultaneously released , Narushima designed the cover of volume 6 to be " export friendly " , describing it as " like Japanese style , but slightly off " . Additionally , she considered serializing Planet Ladder in another magazine , but decided against it since the series was close to ending .

= = Release = =

Written and illustrated by Yuri Narushima , Planet Ladder appeared as a serial in the Japanese manga magazine Crimson from the March 1998 issue to the May 2003 issue . Sobisha / Shueisha later published the chapters in seven tank?bon volumes from December 1998 to May 2004 . Shueisha re @-@ released Planet Ladder in four bunkoban volumes from July 18 , to August 8 , 2008 .

Tokyopop licensed Planet Ladder for an English @-@ language release in North America and serialized it in its manga magazine Smile . The first volume was released on April 23 , 2002 ; the final volume was published on March 8 , 2005 . Planet Ladder belonged to Tokyopop 's line @-@ up of manga in its original right @-@ to @-@ left format ; previously , the majority of manga licensed in the United States was " flopped " to read left @-@ to @-@ right for a Western audience . As a result , it was displayed in a case with the eight other " unflopped " manga ? Chobits , Dragon Knights , Marmalade Boy , GTO , Real Bout High School , The Skull Man , Mars and Cowboy Bebop ? and heavily advertised in anime magazines and on fan sites . Planet Ladder went out of print on April 2 , 2007 in North America .

Only the last two volumes were given titles in the English @-@ language release : The Fate of the Dark Planet for volume six and Ananai of the Puzzled Star for the seventh volume .

= = = Volume list = = =

= = Reception = =

Planet Ladder was positively received by English @-@ language readers . The fifth volume placed in the 44th spot on the list of the 50 best @-@ selling graphic novels of February 2003 , with an estimated 1 @,@ 176 copies sold . The sixth volume reached the 71st place on the list of the 100 best @-@ selling graphic novels of February 2004 , with an estimated 984 copies sold .

Critical reaction to Planet Ladder was generally positive . In Manga : The Complete Guide , Jason Thompson wrote that the manga reminded him of " prose science fiction " , citing A Wrinkle in Time by Madeleine L 'Engle (1962) and Nine Princes in Amber by Roger Zelazny (1970) as examples . His criticism of the series centered on Narushima 's " inconsistent designs , crude faces , and too much greasy looking screentone " . While stating that Planet Ladder is a " difficult title to warm to , since it feels like we 're in the middle of the story , rather than the beginning " , Mike Dungan of Mania Entertainment considered the effort " worthy " , and wrote that it made Kaguya more sympathetic at the cost of the other characters . Dungan enjoyed the " pleasant though not especially unique " art , the " attractively designed and well @-@ drawn " characters , the occasional humor , and the overall adaptation , especially the " natural sounding dialogue " . However , he criticized Tokyopop 's inconsistent handling of the sound effects . Sequential Tart 's Sheena McNeil praised the plot as original and noted elements from fairytales and fantasy in the series . In follow @-@ up reviews , she praised the manga as " turning out to be one of the best fantasy manga out there ; it stands apart from the rest with its uniqueness " but expressed her surprise that Sheena 's name changed to Shiina halfway through the series with no explanation .