Unquestionably one of the world's greatest literary masterpieces and the finest achievement of classic Japanese prose narrative, The Tale of Genji, written by Murasaki Shikibu shortly after 1000 A.D., has provided endless inspiration for Japanese painters throughout the centuries. Widely held to be the first novel ever written, its story relates the amorous adventures of the shining prince Genji and the elaborate and highly ordered court culture of the Heian era. Presented here is one of the most exquisite, complete, and beautifully preserved series of paintings illustrating the tale, bringing to life the events of this classic work. The fifty-four images—illustrating one chapter each—date from the mid-seventeenth century and were executed by an artist trained in the traditional Tosa school of painting. Their small dimensions (they measure just over five inches square) and lyrical colors call to mind the illustrated manuscripts of medieval Europe. Roofs are entirely removed from houses to reveal small, doll-like figures within. Delicate flowers and plants suggest the seasons of the year. Surrounded by gilded clouds, these graceful paintings shimmer with uncommon beauty and delicacy. Murase's introduction examines the paintings in detail, providing insight into the uniqueness of this set in particular, exceptional for being one of the most pristine and complete surviving series of illustrations of The Tale of Genji. Commentaries on each of the images describe the scene depicted and summarize, in brief, the key events from the tale. 54 color illustrations, 8 black-and-white illustrations.

My Personal Review:
The book was excellent and the pictures were produced with high quality. The historical detail was technically correct. My daughter will keep this book along with her other art history books. She plans to get a graduate degree in Museum Studies and this will be a great addition to her art library.

For More 5 Star Customer Reviews and Lowest Price:
The Tale of Genji: Legends and Paintings - 5 Star Customer Reviews and Lowest Price!