Artwork from *Tonoharu: Part Two*. Available in digital format at ***pliantpress.com/media***

THE MIDWEST MYSTIQUE
Dating in the Land of the Rising Sun

MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA – How favorable is the dating scene in Japan for Americans? It depends on your gender.

"It's a lot easier for men than it is for women," says Lars Martinson, a cartoonist who's lived in Japan for five years. His latest graphic novel, *Tonoharu: Part Two*, explores aspects of the international relationship dynamic.

"Japanese men still expect to be treated as the proverbial 'master of the house'. This makes it tough for American women who are looking for equal partnerships," Lars said. "Conversely, it makes American men seem chivalrous in comparison, elevating their status in the eyes of Japanese women."

One of the main characters in *Tonoharu: Part Two*, an American named Steve, takes advantage of the favorable cultural preconceptions about American men, and acts like a modern-day Casanova. The character represents a familiar type, Lars says.

"It's not often that a guy from, say, Wisconsin can be perceived as exotic and mysterious, but in Japan they can. Some guys become intoxicated by their elevated status, and act like kids in a candy store."

Tonoharu: Part Two will be out this December. The preceding volume, *Tonoharu: Part One*, is available now. For further details, visit Lars' website at http://larsmartinson.com

BOOK INFORMATION

TITLE	Tonoharu: Part Two
AUTHOR	Lars Martinson
CATEGORY	Graphic Novel / Fiction
LIST PRICE	$19.95 USD
PAGES	160
SPECS	Hardcover w/ full color jacket, Two-color text pages, 5½"×8¼"
ISBN-13	978-0-9801023-3-8
PUBLISHER	Pliant Press
PUB. DATE	December 1, 2010
DISTRIBUTION	Top Shelf Productions / Diamond Book Distributors

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