

vol.50 #02
Failure/Lost
Potential

KÔNISUKE



Yakumo and Harima
School Rumble

art by Deborah Lim

IMOIMO

JET SITU

STAFF WRITER

1ST YEAR, ELECTRICAL ENGINEERING AND COMPUTER SCIENCE

This was the worst and most degenerate thing I have ever watched. I watched all 10 episodes + 2 OVAs. Never again.

In the anime *Imouto Sae Ireba Ii*, there is a one minute opening scene designed to troll viewers. However, this opening scene is merely the main character's overly perverted, sister-obsessed, nutjob fantasy portrayed in 2000s era art, with convenient censoring, and is borderline hentai. When the scene ends, the art changes and the real anime begins.

But for *Ore ga Suki nano wa Imouto dakedo Imouto ja nai*, (*Imolmo*), that opening scene never ends. It lasts for the pitifully short-lived runtime of the anime. Produced by NAZ, *Imolmo* follows in the footsteps of other little-sister anime such as *Eromanga Sensei* and *Orelmo*, with little sister Suzuka Nagami and older brother Yuu Nagami as protagonists and the accompanying mixed harem crew.



How bad can you mess up eyes

Yuu is introduced as an unsuccessful light novel author coming off another failed debut. Seeing this, Yuu's sister Suzuka writes her own light novel – a lewd sibling romance – which ends up being highly acclaimed. It turns out that Suzuka submitted it under Yuu's name, forcing Yuu to pretend to be a real author. To not blow his cover, Yuu has to increasingly act like a siscon to not blow his cover, which was all part of Suzuka's plan.

But the plot is the least of this anime's problems. The very first is the animation quality. Not only does the baseline "good" animation look like early 2000s anime, but it progressively degrades throughout the series. Proportions don't exist, people are weird

straight lines, faces are distorted, Suzuka doesn't look like Suzuka, MS Paint would probably do a better job, dear god why is the screen sideways, etc. There do exist brief turnarounds, albeit all short lived. *Imolmo* was intended to be a fanservice anime intended to market the uncensored BD/DVD. The lack of quality rendered this impossible.



How do you mess up a keyboard.png

It's an interesting study into the anime industry to determine why this turned into such a mess. The first issue lies with NAZ's dwindling budget. A smaller studio, NAZ's works were simply not up to quality and their previous anime shared the same financial fate. The other issue was with the animators. They were overworked from episode two, and by episode four, some removed their names from the credits, disavowing the anime. By episode 5, a leak revealed that production of the show began less than a year before airing, a minimum for most production schedules. By episode 7, reports surfaced that the animators wouldn't be paid until the anime's completion. As animators in Japan are typically paid per frame, this incident is essentially worker abuse. The episode was also delayed and once episode 10 aired, the series abruptly ended. As it stands right now, episodes 11 and 12 are only available via the BD/DVD.

Imolmo is a case study of everything that could possibly go wrong in production (with more issues not covered), and unfortunately for NAZ, it appears to be their last. On a good note, the BD/DVD fixed some of the animation and the music and Suzuka's VA are both pretty good. It's hard not to pity the author, but if this genre is your type, I suggest checking out the far better drawn manga and the original LN.

OUMAGADOKI DOUBUTSUEN VS BOKU NO HERO ACADEMIA: GO!



JAMIE YOU

4TH YEAR, COGNITIVE SCIENCE

I read all of *Boku no Hero Academia* just so I could write this article. Not a joke.

STAFF ARTIST/WRITER

Spoiler Warning: This article assumes basic familiarity with *Boku no Hero Academia*.

I'll admit, I'm biased. *Oumagadoki Doubutsu* ("Crazy Zoo") came into my life when it was still being serialized in Weekly Shonen Jump - so, 2010, when I was struggling to keep up with *Naruto* and frustrated with the ongoing Impel Down arc in *One Piece*. To fill the void, I read a lot of one-shots and random upstart shonens, and of the crop, *Oumagadoki Zoo* stuck with me the hardest. A manga about anthropomorphic animals duking it out and not much more, it felt subversive in its goofiness. Alas, it couldn't last - After 38 chapters, *Oumagadoki* was cancelled, and my heart was broken.

This was never supposed to be an actual "which one's better" article. Creator Kohei Horikoshi clearly leveled up in the 3 year gap between *Oumagadoki* and its successor *Boku no Hero Academia* (*BNHA*). Put side by side, *Oumagadoki*'s art is capable but not stunning. Its scope is narrow, its writing orders of magnitude less intricate, its emotional punches weak and widely spaced. The pace feels rushed and slow at the same time, and we don't get any side plots or much explanation of the overall logic of the world.

story, and little of her screentime is wasted on fanservice. Personality-wise, she feels like a fusion between Deku and Ochaco-- or perhaps I should say, Deku and Ochaco are the de-fusion of Hana. (The way Horikoshi treats Ochaco in *BNHA*'s more recent chapters, she might as well be an extension of Deku.)

Hana's afforded a surprising amount of agency, buffoonery, and expertise - Deku gets his obsessive information hoarding from her - and though her design is generic, she stands out in my mind on account of her plainness. Hana's just an ordinary high schooler who happens to love animals. Her tenacity and compassion are enough to revitalize the zoo and kickstart the main plot, and while *Oumagadoki* is also about zoo director Shiina's attempts to regain human form, it's mainly about Hana trying to do something with her life.



Zoo director Shiina faces off against aquarium director Isana



Hana challenges Sakamata, who some of you may recognize as Gang Orca (*BNHA*)

Yet, though the misogyny that plagues *BNHA* has precedent in *Oumagadoki*, protagonist Hana Aoi is somehow largely exempt from the BS. Despite her lack of combat ability, Hana's present throughout the

Oumagadoki is that simple. It isn't wide, sprawling, or over-involved like *BNHA* is, and that's precisely why I like it. Maybe if *Oumagadoki* had been allowed to run for longer, things would've deteriorated and I would've left disappointed. The character designs are hit or miss. In the winner's corner, Isana and Sakamata from the aquarium are so iconic that Horikoshi decided to reuse them wholesale in *BNHA*. Several other characters are clear predecessors to *BNHA* fan favorites. But aside from that handful, Horikoshi seems to have given up, either slapping animal traits on human women or human traits on animal males.

I almost can't blame him. Compared to *BNHA*, which Horikoshi publishes with the help of 7 whole assistants, *Oumagadoki* seems to have been a solo endeavor, which is insane considering its amount of scenery and action sequences.

Overall, *Oumagadoki* is a lovable romp through shonen cliches. It's lighthearted without being saccharine, intense without being too serious. It's sad that it got cut short, but maybe that was for the better. If you're looking for more *BNHA*, you won't get it - *Oumagadoki*'s pretty much the total opposite, tonally. But hey, if that's your game, it'll do.

RECENTLY IN ANIME: PROMARE REVIEW



ABEER HOSSAIN

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

3RD YEAR, MECHANICAL ENGINEERING/ASTROPHYSICS

KISS KISS KISS KISS KISS KISS

Slight Spoilers for *Promare*

After sitting in Hall B of Los Angeles Convention Center for hours and hours, through four other panels, my friends and I sat front row for TRIGGER's US premier of *Promare*. I honestly didn't know what to expect. I hadn't seen any trailers or previews and my only exposure to the movie was its poster and people saying, "You know that *Fire Force* anime coming out? Yea it's like that but not really." Still, I had to see what the studio that's given us *Kill la Kill*, *Little Witch Academia*, and the mediocrities that are *Darling in the Franxx* and *Kiznaiver* had to offer us this time. The room was filled with thousands of people and the premier began with its outstanding soundtrack blasting from the speakers. After a short introduction, the movie was on its way.

There's a lot to tackle for this movie, so let's take things one at a time. The music in this movie is chilling. When it needs

to sit back and let what's on the screen speak for itself, it does. When it needs to accentuate the emotions and thoughts of the characters, it does. And when it needs to blow the viewer away with bombastic vocals and a blaring orchestra, it does. "Inferno" is catchy and enthralling and had all of Hall B hyped before and especially after the movie. The piece makes sure its energy is felt by its listeners. My personal favorite (and many others') is Lio Fotia's theme, "Kakusei." The song starts off slow and unassuming with a smooth, lilting voice as if this were a lullaby. Thirty seconds in, the song hits you with exploding drums, a chanting chorus, and a smooth guitar riff. The song is as dynamic as the character it was made for and was on repeat for weeks after seeing the movie.

A discussion of the movie's visuals would be the most logical transition after its audio but I want to save the best for last. I'll instead focus on the characters. The main character of *Promare*, Galo Thymos, is definitely the weakest part of the film. It's hard to firmly say that he brings the movie down as the movie is a parody of itself and of TRIGGER, so this empty Kamina replica may be somewhat excusable. He definitely isn't the most complex, intricately woven character, but something more than a screaming machine would have been nice. I may be nit-picking here as in the bigger picture, the movie is perfectly fine with a loud, bull-headed MC and while a deeper character could elevate the movie further, it certainly isn't a necessity. The side characters around Galo are just okay. None of them are particularly special and they all fulfill their roles in the movie. Not much to say there. Same goes for the main antagonist. His motivations and character aren't anything special but they don't detract from the movie. The shining start of this movie is Lio Fotia. He is basically everything the main character is not (which further adds to the list of reasons I can excuse MC's lack of depth). He is caring, cunning, highly intelligent, and a great leader. I don't want to go too far into his character development as it would involve some pretty strong spoilers but I will say that his changes throughout the movie are handled spectacularly. While we don't see the world from his eyes in the movie, he has certainly earned his place on all the promotional material. I know it's a bit of a letdown to say he's the best

Cover art for the *Promare* OST



Look at best boi

character and not go too far into why, but if you haven't seen the movie already, his character has enough reason.

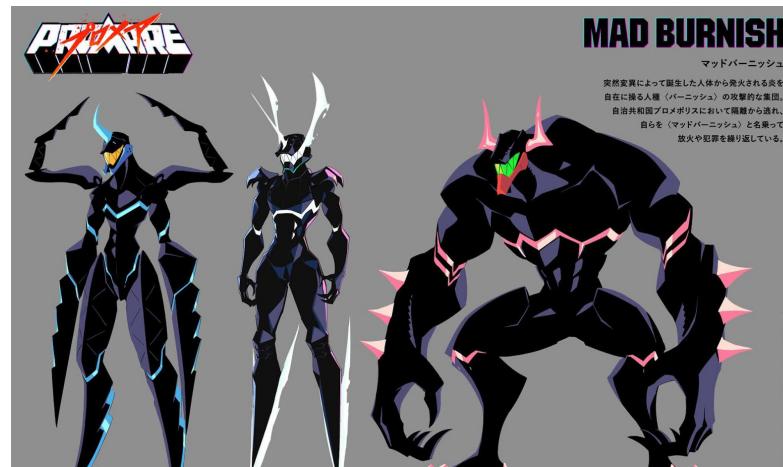
Promare's story is definitely a strong point. It isn't incredibly layered and complex, and it doesn't need to be. While deeper and more intricate themes can be parsed together with a bit of analysis, *Promare's* plot succeeds without them. It is a simple story of oppression and control. Going further, you could say it's a story of racism, prejudice, fear, and a commentary on totalitarian governments. The Burnish are a race of mutant humans capable of manipulating fire. Due to the possible destruction that can be caused with these powers, intentional or not, the Burnish are persecuted by the rest of society. While the plot gets a bit more fantastical than this, that basic premise of oppression holds true throughout. Personally, the simplicity of the story is quite endearing and the splattering of various other themes throughout only adds to the plot rather than diverting attention towards missed potential.

In connection with *Promare's* story are its unyielding self-parodies. While the movie has been in production for years, it feels as if the studio took the complaints from *Darling in the Franxx* and its utterly nonsensical ending and turned it on the audience. *Promare*, like *Kill la Kill* and *Gurren Lagann*, takes the action and plot to eleven. There is no sense of being grounded in reality. Where *DitF* attempted to create a somewhat realistic world (despite the existence of monsters and mechas), it abandoned what made it great by launching the story into space. *Promare*, on the other hand, breaks logic and "realism" from its initial scenes. Additionally, with names like "Deus Ex Machina" and a giant city-wide spaceship, we can safely say this is TRIGGER fully embracing their crazy selves and pointing the middle finger to their critics.

These insane plotlines and fights are accompanied with epilepsy-inducing animation. *Promare's* fight scenes are spectacles like no other and had thousands of viewers in Hall B brimming with energy and pure hype. Every character is uniquely designed and so are their mechas, cars, firefighter trucks, etc. The in-your-face pastel-neon color scheme



screams for attention and the fluid, explosive animation makes sure you give it. *Promare* is unapologetically an assault on your eyes in the most beautiful of ways and I would see the movie five more times just to marvel at its artistic design and animation.



If I were to sum up *Promare* in one simple word, it would be "fun." The movie is simply one of the most fun experiences I've ever had. Being in a room with thousands of other die-hard weebz probably added to that experience but the movie itself was just amazing. Watch *Promare*, not to dissect its plot and its characters, but to sit back and enjoy what it has to offer.

STAFF PICKS

FAVORITE ANIME FAILURES

Fate Apocrypha



Jonathan Qian

Every explosion sounded like a bass drop, and the best characters were ignored for a boring self-insert MC. Also, the art and animation quality were inconsistent throughout the series.

Blue Exorcist



Aidan Keesing

Blue Exorcist's anime adaptation fell victim to the classic blunder of trying to manufacture an ending to an ongoing and popular series. Colorful enemy designs, unique and varied fighting styles, and a potentially interesting take on the "Demons vs. Religion" trope were all wasted by shoddy pacing and character development as the show's writers scrambled to wrap everything up in a clichéd feel-good bow in only 25 episodes. Unfortunately, that bow came in the form of an ending which not only spoiled major plot points later in the manga, but also made so little sense in the context of the overall story arc that they were forced to retcon the whole thing and pretend it never happened when they released the Kyoto Saga arc six years later.

Bakugan Battle Brawlers



Neil Frydental

While season 1 had a cohesive narrative that followed 6 compelling main characters as they took part in gripping and often heart-wrenching Bakugan battles that adhered to the game's power level rules, season 2 began by abandoning its 3 female leads and replacing them with new characters. Soon after, battles suddenly stopped tracking power levels, meaning the winner was decided by essentially whoever played the last card, ruining any tension the battles once had. The writing also took a permanent dive with inconsistent characters and unsatisfying conclusions. The later seasons were even worse. Their new characters were extremely bland, and their writing lacked the heartfelt quality that had been present in the first and even second season. The show became a lifeless shell of what it had once been. However, the series was rebooted last year with *Bakugan Battle Planet*, but I haven't had the chance to check it out yet. I hope it's good. Please be good.

Fate/Prototype



Marc Castillo

Unlike other animes in this category, *Fate/Prototype* failed not because it went on weird tangents or had bad animation but because it failed to even get off the ground. The progenitor of all things fate, the one episode *Fate/Prototype* features what the original draft of the fate series might look like—an ungender-bent Arthur, a female protagonist and a bunch of eligible Heroic spirit bachelors. As a draft, Nasu never intended to explore this series, meaning I will never get to see the possible steamy Heroic spirit action (Just a reminder but *Fate/Prototype* was suppose to be an eroge, just like the *Fate* we all know and love). In the end, it failed in a way that it probably will never see the light of day.

Darling in the Franxx



Abeer Hossain

Spoilers for Darling in the Franxx

DitF began with a generic, self-insert main character but was placed within a captivating world with attention drawing mysteries. The mecha fights and character development early in the series were solid foundations to build upon and millions of weebz were excited to see the conclusion of this incredibly popular show. Then studio TRIGGER introduced aliens, space battles, and everyone's favorite waifu turned into a literal spaceship and died.

Tokyo Ghoul:re



Shao-Lon Yeh

The original *Tokyo Ghoul* anime was pretty disappointing because it diverged from the manga and also left out important details, but it was still enjoyable as a standalone anime if you ignored the source material. *Tokyo Ghoul:re*, however, was a whole new level of disappointment. They tried to compress 181 chapters of manga into 24 episodes of anime, which is about 7.5 chapters per episode, which caused each episode to be confusing and borderline chaotic. Every time I watched an episode, I felt like I skipped 5 because I had no idea what was going on.

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KONOsubA! MOVIE TRIP

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Bay Street

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