





MONOGATARI AND OUR INNER DEMONS



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Monogatari is like the only demon-related thing I've really ever seen so...

Spoiler Warning

Everyone has their own inner demons; they are something we live and contend with on a daily basis, and often take a lot of strength and help to overcome. *Monogatari* explores inner demons and overcoming them in a unique, yet relatable way. In this article, I wanted to take a closer look at Senjougahara and Hanekawa as examples of battling and overcoming your inner demons.

Let's start with Senjougahara. At a young age, Senjougahara dealt with multiple traumatic experiences involving her mother and her illness. Many of these experiences were so horrible that she wanted to completely forget about her mother and the terrible experiences associated with her mother. In exchange for her weight and emotions, Senjougahara allowed a crab god to completely remove her memories of those times and her mother.

Now, I am sure this is something that many of us can relate to. When terrible things happen, it is often easier to try to forget about them than it is to process and grow from them; the weight of these events is often too much for people to handle immediately. The issue then becomes WHEN you decide to confront those painful memories and try to learn and grow from them. In the case of Senjougahara, her very existence began to fade from the moment that she accepted the deal with the crab god, which is almost equivalent to losing the battle with her inner demons. However, with enough time away from those memories and a little support, Senjougahara confronts the crab god and her past, and accepts her traumatic experiences as things that are simply a part of her that she must live with and learn from. Senjougahara's story is

something anyone can learn from; it's ok to forget about painful memories for a while, but at some point, you must process them because they are a part of you.

Hanekawa's case is a little less relatable, but showcases an extreme way to deal with personal demons like trauma and stress. Rather than forgetting about them, Hanekawa forces herself to only see the positives of every situation, and accepts everything that comes her way. As a result of this choice, Hanekawa becomes a person without any preferences; she simply just lets life wash over her while completely shutting out her inner demons and emotions while letting those demons deal with her negative emotions while she is asleep.

However, since these are demons with the added weight of Hanekawa's stress, anger, and sadness, the way they help Hanekawa deal with these negative feelings ends up hurting bystanders and her loved ones, going against the way that Hanekawa tries to live her life. She becomes a walking contradiction. Fortunately, Hanekawa learns to accept her inner demons and negative emotions as a part of being human, and becomes someone more normal and well-adjusted. The lesson to



Black Hanekawa. Hanekawa's inner demon that helps her deal with negative emotions

be learned from Hanekawa is that while it is ok to rely on others for help during tough times, you must eventually learn to face your inner demons and the hard parts of life directly too.

At the end of the day, our inner demons are things we must all face, but we should face them in ways that are healthy and safe for ourselves and the people around us. *Monogatari* explores this theme in a way that is relatable and impactful through Senjougahara and Hanekawa's character arcs.



Senjougahara meeting the crab god

DORORO AND THE ANTHROPOMORPHISATION OF ILL INTENT



ABEER HOSSAIN

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Welcome to the 50th Volume of Konshuu!

EDITOR-IN -CHIEF

Slight spoilers for Dororo

Throughout history, human characteristics have been given form. These range from gods and heroes to mythical creatures and demons. Their creation differs between societies, civilizations, locations, and writers, historical or epic. The personification and anthropomorphisation of evil, ill intent, and the unknown has also taken up a variety of vessels. Greek, Roman, and Norse gods are gods in name only, as they are driven by fear, prejudice, insecurity, lust, and malice. In similar territory lies Dororo and its twelve demons.

The second adaptation of a 1967 manga of the same name, *Dororo* sets its story in the warring states period during which a regional Lord succumbs to greed and insecurity and forges a pact with demons to guarantee bountiful harvests for his land throughout his life. In exchange, the demon deprive his newborn son of limbs, eyes, ears, nose, and skin while keeping him alive. One would expect a father to be utterly distraught at such a tragic even, knowing that his avarice ruined the life of his one and only child. However, Lord Daigo Kagemitsu is elated at the sight of his skinless son as it signifies the success of his prayers to the demons.

Hyakkimaru, the son, grows into a demon slayer. Throughout the show, Hyakkimaru and Dororo, a young orphaned girl who has resorted to thievery to survive, encounter various characters and situations that are the result of evil. The demons they fight along the way are symbols of the evils they faced during that arc. The deuteragonists of the show encounter bloodthirsty and lustful soldiers who care for nothing but sex, fighting, and military glory. They care not for the innocents in their way, the orphans fighting tooth and nail to survive, nor for their fellow soldiers. War is humanity at its worst, and Dororo instills this thought in every one of its episodes. The psychological fight against the inner demons present in many of the characters culminates in a literal fight between Hyakkimaru and a demon.



Generally, Hyakkimaru defeats both types of evils around him, person and demon, and is granted back a stolen piece of his body. The part of his body that he receives in each arc is directly relevant to both the good and evil he faces during it. (*Slight spoilers for Dororo*) During one of the earlier arcs, Dororo confronts both the viewers and Hyakkimaru with two different forms of love in the midst of war, romantic and familial. For Hyakkimaru, it is possibly the very first instance of affection he's experienced, and whether it was romantic or something else entirely, we may never know. However, that source of affection and target of admiration is quickly snatched from his life. This character uses, and ultimately loses, her body for the prosperity of her "family" of orphaned children. Standing opposed to the demons, she may be interpreted as the personification of love. Upon defeating the demon, Hyakkimaru gains one of the main methods through which we portray affection, completing this tragic arc.

Dororo does get much weaker in the second half of its run and strays from its emotionally impactful themes. Despite some shortcomings, the show manages to capture some of the evil within humanity beautifully and bridges a line between inner demons and physical ones.



KIMETSU NO YAIBA IS D.GRAY-MAN'S BABY



SHARREL NARSICO
2ND YEAR, MOLECULAR AND CELL BIOLOGY

ARTIST

Aaaaand nothing can convince me otherwise.

Spoiler Warning

Most of you may have heard of *Kimetsu No Yaiba*, otherwise known as *Demon Slayer*, from its famous faux finale Episode 19 (Yes, it needs a capital) that took US's Twitter by storm. If you haven't watched Episode 19: Hinokami, I strongly recommend jumping into Crunchyroll and consuming all twenty-three minutes and forty seconds of it. I mean it, chug the whole episode down like cold water on a burning summer day—it's that good. Maybe it won't resonate as much if you haven't watched all of the eighteen episodes before it, but it still can pack a punch. It's the episode where countless channel reactions on YouTube have been phenomenal—from tears to screams to awed gasps, or just plain ol' stunned silence. Kamado Tanjiro and Nezuko's desperate grapple to protect each other had forcefully grabbed the attention of the world.

Now why am I spending so much time lavishing so much praise on KNY and its Episode 19? Because as it rose to fame, I was reminded, eerily so, of another anime where demons were just as prevalent. If you haven't guessed from the title of this article already—I'm talking about *D.Gray-Man*. Know it? It's that anime with the white haired boy named Allen Walker whose got a demon-slaying arm, the one with a red-star scar on his left-side that lets him see demon souls?

Don't remember it?



Haven't heard of it before?

No surprise there—*D.Gray-Man* (DGM) aired on 2006 for 103 episodes till 2008 (that's at least a whole decade ago!). The manga would later spend a whopping seven years in hiatus, where *D.Gray-Man* fans like me would eagerly and restlessly spend the rest of our time lying in wait until DGM: Hallows.

Which means I had plenty of time to re-watch and reread every single episode and chapter. This, my friends, is what has led me to this very moment, my fingers flying across the keyboard, back hunched, and most definitely late for the due date of this article! (Sorry, layout editors!) I said it before, and I'll say it again—*Kimetsu No Yaiba* is *D.Gray-Man*'s baby. There is not an inch of doubt in my body. And I'm a meaty person, so that's a whole fortress of certainty there.

As for why—let's start with the basics: Both DGM and KNY are located in the past, and both, obviously, center on demons and the conflicts they create. *D.Gray-Man* is mostly European-centric while KNY is in Japan. Funnily enough, there're odd advances in technology peppered in the two anime—*D.Gray-Man*'s people have flying golems for communication; *Kimetsu no Yaiba* has Japan in the early days of electricity, as shown when Tanjiro and Nezuko get to Tokyo where there's a stark contrast between the darkness that coats villages at night and the shining brilliance of Tokyo streets.

Both have male leads, have at least one cute imouto in the anime, have headquarters, have black uniforms, blah, blah, blah.

The more interesting comparisons, really, start with our main characters: Kamado Tanjiro and Allen Walker. At first glance, the two are very different. Tanjiro's a burgundy-haired teen who wears green-black checkered haori. Allen, in contrast, has white-hair from trauma, a star scar, and rocking his European gentleman vest, collared long-sleeves, a red tie, and fitted black pants. Sure, you could throw in that they both have a red scar on the left side of their faces. That's it, right?

Nope!

Look instead at how they interact with other characters, and their main motivations. When young Allen Walker's quasi-father Mana died, Allen turns to the main antagonist of DGM the Millenium Earl to revive Mana. This turns Mana into a demon, and instead of immediately killing Allen, Mana curses the young boy with the ability to see the trapped soul of a demon. Now, Allen Walker is a young exorcist, a person who slays demons, intent on saving souls from their demon bodies.



Kamado Tanjiro became a demon slayer also because of his past—his family gets killed, but his younger sister survives and becomes a demon because the main antagonist, Micheal Jackson, turns her into one. Now Tanjiro is a young man who hunts demons to hopefully turn his younger sister back to human.

Allen and Tanjiro, because of this kind of past are able to humanize demons. Where common folk and even most demon slayers and exorcists have a grudge against every demon they come across, Tanjiro and Allen are a nice fusion of sadness and anger. Anger at their respective antagonists for ruining the lives of others, sadness for those who were hurt, and compassion for the demons who are suffering in their own way. Rui's episode was a big example of this for Tanjiro as when the child demon who'd almost killed him and hurt Nezuko gave off grief, our gentle otouto tried to give the child comfort in its last moments. Tanjiro even went so far as to tell Giyuu, a powerful and respectable demon slayer, off for stepping on the clothes of the child.



In DGM, Allen has always wished well to the parting souls of the demons, despite the trouble that they've caused in their time as the Millennium Earl's puppet. But what truly took the cake was Allen carrying Alma, a deteriorating demon who loved a human who was still living, to the person the demon loved—despite said person being an overall douchebag, and definitely in spite of Alma nearly murdering Allen's friends.

There's something beautiful and awe-inspiring in these two characters who care enough to do these for demons. For them to be able to show kindness to killers who'd have given no thought to the pain they've caused, in a real life context, it implies that there's something forgivable in all of us. It's a nice reminder, after all, that being "bad" and not perfectly good all the time does not mean that we're not human, that we don't deserve kindness. Their care and tenderness tugs at heartstrings because these characters, these boys, can accept us, flawed human beings.



I personally believe that that's half the reason why audiences tend to like kind-hearted characters.

Jumping over to the opposing forces, DGM and KNY both have a main antagonist which have around 12-13 members, and both have mental trauma. Micheal Jackson has a hatred for hanafuda earrings because of one man, and the Millennium Earl has a personality split because (?) of one man.

On a lighter note (now that I realize I'm running out of words) Tanjiro and Allen are both polite young men, even when dealing with less... polite characters in their world. Tanjiro offers more of his food to Inosuke instead of getting mad when the blue-haired boy steals Tanjiro's portions. Allen Walker's passive aggressive when dealing with the blue-haired swordsman Kanda, for example when he asked Kanda to play catch the conversation ball in the Ark when Kanda didn't answer. One of these two is definitely nicer when facing coarser people. (XD)

Even though I consider all these similar concepts and characteristics of characters between DGM and KNY damning evidence of their kinship, this doesn't mean I think they're almost one and the same. The beauty of anime is its ability to recreate a core concept in its own way.

Do you know of more similarities between DGM and KNY?

THIS WEEK IN ANIME ?

Premiering in the U.S. last Anime Expo (July 7, 2019), us non-congoers (or peeps who got pushed out in their 4-hour wait in line) finally have a chance to watch the acclaimed first feature length movie of studio Trigger, *Promare*, this September 17. The movie stars Galo, a newbie assigned to the "Burning Rescue," a fire squad tasked to put out the flames of the newly mutated pyrokinetic humans called "Burnish". Galo encounters the leader of the "Mad Burnish," Lio and the two set on a quest to discover the secret behind the Burnish flames (hint: aliens) and save the world from another Trigger mecha.

BREAKING NEWS

Promare? More like, Bromare

HEADLINES

Lio x Galo is Marc's OTP!? An unsurprising twist!

DATE A LIVE FRAGMENT

A lot of new anime have been announced but of particular note to those watching seasonal anime may be the second season of *Fruits Basket*. While this was already known by fans due to the content covered in the first season, an official confirmation this past week can let all fans eagerly await the 2nd season in 2020. Also getting more seasons is *The Rising of the Shield Hero* which had not only a second season announced but a third season as well. And finally, *Date a Bullet* was announced and will focus on Kurumi Tokisaki from the *Date a Live* franchise. The dates for these have not been announced.

BREAKING NEWS

New Seasons of Everything...

HEADLINES

... except NGNL. Also, *Shield Hero* is a disappointment.

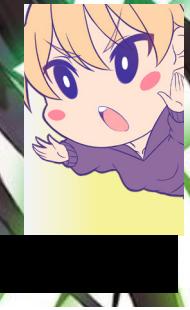


LIVE



DATE
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LIVE



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INUGAMI AND MAKAMI
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