

konshuu

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THIS WEEK'S SERIES

► ANIME SHOWING GRIMGAR OF FANTASY AND ASH

(Hai to Gensou no Grimgar)

Imagine being thrust into a far off world with no memories of your past and nothing left to guide you but your own instincts and fighting spirit. Such is the life of the main cast of Grimgar, a diverse set of characters that band together. With their own special MMORPG like classes, they create parties in their quest for survival. Based off of a popular light novel, Grimgar of Fantasy and Ash is, for its kind, a rather unique anime that gives a nice twist to the often overdone fantasy/MMORPG light novel genre. It's filled with an array of bubbly yet realistic characters, a well-defined fantasy setting, and drop-dead gorgeous backdrops. If you're a fan of works like Sword Art Online and Log Horizon, Grimgar is yet another anime that's sure to deliver.



Studio: A-1 Pictures

Original Creator: Ao Jumonji

MANGA RECOMMENDATION



YURU YURU

AUSTIN "COZYKUNS" TAI

Cute girls doing cute things! This simple premise is the core of many a manga in the world today, and Yuru Yuru is no different. Yuru Yuru's setup is simple and elegant: Take three high school girls, each of whom have slightly different personalities and interests, and force them to mesh together, building a tight-knit friendship between them in the process. The work is an absolute artistic masterpiece; all of Yuru Yuru's full colour pages look absolutely gorgeous, illustrated in Takamichi's distinctly realistic yet cute and moe style. The fact that Takamichi is an illustrator first and a mangaka second is also reflected in the manga's lack of general plot. The colors that Takamichi uses are subdued yet bright as he depicts both the coasts and the countryside that are a part of the lives of these three girls.



Warning: Spoilers for Episode 3 ahead.

One of the most genius localizations to ever grace our good earth was the translation gifted to us by Capcom USA's localization team for Ace Attorney: Phoenix Wright. Ace Attorney was a little pet project created in the basement of Capcom that quietly grew in popularity. The premise of the game was simple: Rookie attorney Phoenix Wright, guided by his partner Maya, took on the trials and tribulations of the Japanese court system as they worked against both the police and the prosecution to secure "not guilty" verdicts for their clients.

One thing that's striking about Phoenix Wright is that the setting is very obviously Japanese. Shrine maidens conjuring spirits, Samurai Tokusatsu shows with their own trading cards; many an anime watcher or Japanophile will immediately recognize that all of these are inherently Japanese. Yet, somehow, the localization gives you the power to suspend your disbelief, and imagine, for a brief second, that our spiky-haired protagonist is defending his clients in the courts of Los Angeles. Subtle changes to evidence given in the court cases, English versions of the punny names for each character... Just about everything in the localization is well thought out and flows naturally. The same definitely cannot be said about the localization of the recent ongoing anime adaptation of the series, Ace Attorney.



For example, in this particular scene, Phoenix is shuffling through his once mentor, the recently deceased Mia Fey's, file cabinet of cases and important people. After being handed a photograph of the possible culprit by Mia's old mentor, Phoenix began his search for clues pertaining to the man in the photograph: Redd White, the president of

BlueCorp. With the obvious starting place being Mia's file cabinet, Phoenix notices the missing "W." Perhaps typesetting the actual English letters over the Japanese characters that appear on the folder locators was a little too difficult for the expertly paid subbing team that worked on this episode. But it's not hard to realise that a little bit of effort would've saved their viewers a lot of effort trying to piece together in their mind the correlation between the subtitle text and the scene itself.

Redd White's main tendency in the Japanese version of the game is to occasionally add simple English phrases in his speech, often in an attempt to sound superior to his uncultured "nipponjin" brethren. In the game, this tendency was brilliantly expressed in two ways. Firstly, his English speech was made colourful and snazzy, often showcasing his "splendiferious" vocabulary whenever possible. The other adaptation that was made, is that Redd White (poorly) attempts to throw in Spanish phrases instead of speaking in plain English. You might be inclined to think that the translation given here is trying to throw back to the game's localization methods. Except Redd White doesn't use such extravagant and erudite English words as "furnish" and "personage" in his original line. Instead, a clearly audible "your name" is the only English that's spoken, and the rest of the line is pretty standard Japanese that doesn't have any added air of sophistication whatsoever. Even viewers that don't understand a lick of Japanese would be questioning the prowess of the translation team here.

And these two examples barely begin to scratch the surface of how jarring the localization of the anime can be. Hearing "Naruhodo" and "Mitsurugi" while reading "Phoenix" and "Edgeworth" has been one of my biggest peeves while watching the anime. Of course, localizing a game where basically everything can be changed gives much more power and flexibility than simply subtitling an anime. And yes, I understand that Crunchyroll, being a simulcast team, is often stressed for time to create their scripts and typeset their subs. But still, a professional-quality localization group should not be making any of these amateur mistakes. The anime is still watchable, but this is one of the few times I'd advise all fans of the game to wait for a revised English release before watching.

"ERASE THAT ENDING, PLEASE."

JOSH "BUBEEZ" ROQUE

Warning: Spoilers ahead.

Let me preface this daunting article by saying that I rode the Erased hype train to the end of the line, just like all of you. We saw all the same sights and landscapes, watched all the same relationships unfold, and experienced the same end to the most popular mystery anime in years. The hype train never made it to the last station, folks. We all crashed and burned into incendiary chunks fit for the stomachs of wild African dogs, right around the intersection of Episode 10 and Episode 11; and so we are doomed to ride the now-spectral train of hype for eternity.



To be frank, I dislike Erased, now. I think the majority of people share the sentiment that, prior to the disastrous event I like to call "The Coma Heard Around the World for Its Cheap Plot Element," the anime was looking to be the savior of the season. Instead, we got a show that chose the nuclear option and decimated all hopes it had to be well-received to the end.

The first question I'd like to ask is why. Here are a series of why's, just for Erased:

- Why did Revival not factor into the mystery aspect of the story? Why would you compartmentalize parts of the show like that, and in such a crappy way?
- Why did you not go for the Satoru-Kayo vanilla happy ending, especially when nothing else in the ending complicated their relationship by the time Kayo was saved?
- Why did you go for the coma? Why did you go for the coma? Why. Did. You. Go. For. The. Coma?

- Why would the killer be the most obvious culprit, without a sensible twist to justify surprise? Why does Satoru appear so smart, but is a complete idiot when faced with the one adult male in the entire town?
- Why would you end the series like THAT, with such blatant disregard for good storytelling, cohesion, passion, and quality?

So many questions, so little answers; the failure of Erased is more of a mystery than the ragtag series of events they call a mystery plot. Imagine someone walking around an abandoned minefield called "the mystery genre," and over the years, this area has been slowly removed of mines so that more people can safely cross. Well, Erased nearly made it to the other side, if only it didn't turn around and manage to hit each and every little metal object it could find.

Okay, let's take a magnifying glass to this ending, examining exactly when and where Erased became objectively bad. Everything before Kayo was saved was just fine; the mysteries were incomplete, and it would be in bad taste to blame the elements of the story that seemed good before they were ruined.



But the show limped on, moving to the other potential murder victims who, frankly, no one gave a crap about. The first mistake in the two final episodes was losing the interest of the viewers. Kayo saved, looking out to the protagonist as she drives away to a better home, every character safe and accounted for; what else could you ask for? Well, the producers of Erased never seemed to figure out that removing the central conflict of the plot also means

dwindling interest in the setting. I think it's a mistake to call it "the Kayo arc" just because it offered a false ending. An arc does not use over 75% of a show's runtime to explain the overall conflict. What happened was, frankly, a cutting of all emotional ties and plot-driven interests with a knife as fine as a stick of butter. With the finesse of a gorilla chasing a butterfly. No, don't just remove the central plot point, please, remove the charm of the characters too.

Satoru, Satoru, Satoru. When did you become so gullible? So, I don't know, oblivious to the facts dangling over your face? Here is where a large cleave in the thematic setting is ruined; isn't this supposed to be about a competent, 29-year-old man whose mother's life depends on finding a killer? I concede that Satoru tends to get lost in his childish thoughts, but never when a fact pertaining to the murder crops up. Specifically, the moment where Satoru totally drops the possibility that his teacher is a killer, when the candy fell out of his car. This, I think, was just a foreshadowing that nobody wanted. The moment was painfully significant and insignificant at the time; significant because, well, it was actually Yashiro. Insignificant because it doesn't actually point to the killer at all, yet points out the killer completely. I know that the candy may or may not have been directly related to the murders, but when Satoru should be an alert and worried crimestopper, he should not just drop this detail.



A large part of Satoru's charm, I feel, was his ability to be a go-getter and a child at the same time. Satoru always implied forward motion, because he is an adult with knowledge of the future; of course each action would drive the plot forward. Yet his activities outside of the Kayo arc fit better in a Scooby Doo adventure; reconnaissance work involving sticking your head past a corner many, many times. Look at Satoru in the (for lack of a better phrase) Kayo arc: going out there, asking questions, planning ahead, noticing footprints and details. Now look at Satoru post-Kayo arc: watching little kids playing for over a week, getting his friends to help, sneaking around and getting stopped by a female-only bathroom. These are not the signs of an adult in a kid's body trying to

prevent a murder! Without that intuitive part of Satoru, he's just another character who has no idea what's going on. Considering that his time-traveller status is the only terribly interesting about him, Satoru honestly sucks without it.

The next lashing that Erased received from its creator was something called "magic babble." These range from monologues about the fate of humanity to small personal conversations about wanting to be like water. In this case, Satoru's bubbly love monologue to Yashiro on the roof of the hospital. I think we all get that Satoru and Yashiro are these great rivals and all. Why does this conversation about spider threads have to happen? I'm not sure about you, but evil monologues are only funny, and never serious. And it always has to be about some default value like hard work and friendship. Sure, the allusion to ancient myth is nice, but it has no place in this show or any other semi-realistic mystery. They might as well read dialogue from Naruto.



Next, the obnoxious way they made Yashiro a dislikeable psychopath. I have no problem with Yashiro being the killer, but his unveiling was handled so badly. Let's look at some possibilities here.

1. Make Yashiro an unlikeable character with no redeeming qualities. Well, that would be a fine hypothesis, if the final episode didn't try so hard to generate sympathy or logic from Yashiro. He's a psychopath. Why would we accept the reason he kept Satoru alive, or that magic babble about how Satoru was some missing piece of a puzzle? Why would his speech about life have any meaning to the viewers, and why would we be interested in Satoru repeating it? It makes no sense to make a bad character do oddly good things without a reason.

2. Make Yashiro evil with some qualities or past that complicate who he is. Well, that would work too, if he did not have a completely irreversible and horrific past that DEFINITELY makes him evil. Drowning small animals? A classic cliff dive into the diabolical generator of hatred. There is no coming back from that; his evil is just too evil for the sympathy showered upon him. For curiosity's sake, let's say that Yashiro is a complicated but understandable character. Well that would be great, if the show actually went somewhere with it. Yashiro poisons a little girl but cries on the rooftop, he saves Satoru but is still the killer,

he has some inspiring speech about life but is too evil to be inspired by; what is the point? There was no revival involved, no tongue-in-cheek message, no redemption in the words; Yashiro is a complex character for no reason, like they were trying to justify some point we were already sold on. It makes the final, seemingly-intense moments fall completely flat, and into “magic babble” about spider threads and fate.

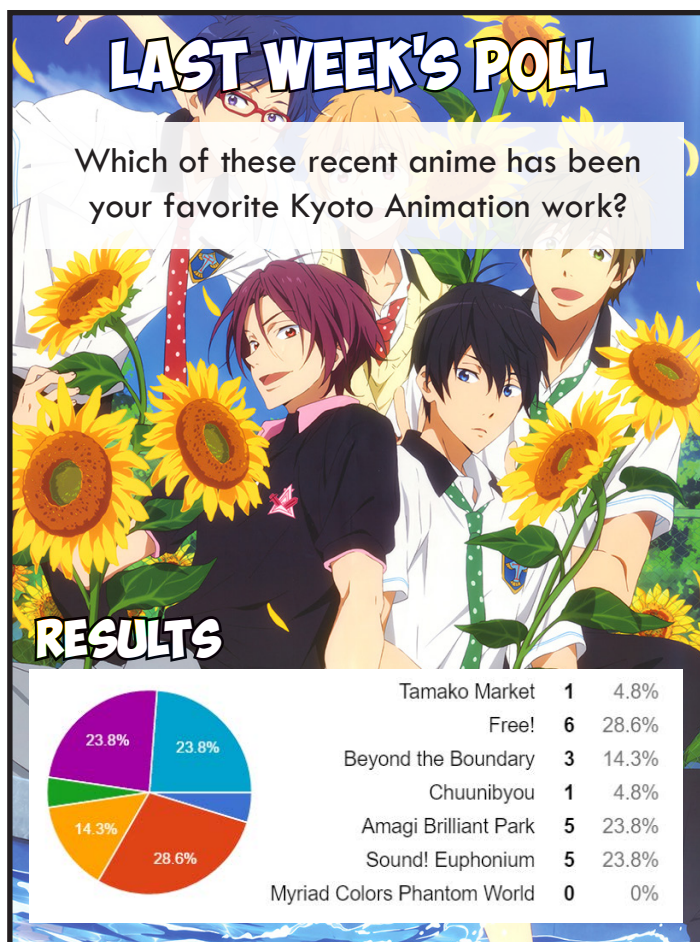
I wouldn't have such a problem with this interaction between Satoru and Yashiro if it was not the center of the plot, with such a shoddy set-up that makes no sense. So, Yashiro refuses to kill any children over the time of the coma but poisons a little girl in the hospital as a bargaining chip? Just look at how this is even resolved: off the camera, told in conversation, just an inconvenient few seconds wasted to imply tension.



There was also the odd justification about Yashiro killing adults: It is seemingly okay to let adults get murdered over the course of a decade because Revival deems them unworthy. What was the point of leaving this so unsolved?










The final gravestone is, you guessed it, the coma. Sometimes, I wake up in a cold sweat just thinking about the horror, and half of me hopes that the last two episodes were just a nightmare. The coma may be the cheapest way to unite the two different areas of the show: the past and the future, poked through by some random loophole. This would be a much less egregious waste of time if not for the fact that a form of time travel already exists in the show! Revival! Do something with that, or else you'll make it “magic babble.” The worst part of the coma is that it trivializes the mystery of Revival; it was no mission to save a girl or stop a murderer. It was just a cheap plot point to bring Satoru from Point A to Point B, covered with sprinkles like Kayo's cameo and seeing Airi again. The coma is a black hole from which no light escapes, and all notions of a nuanced mystery and worldbuilding get sucked in, turned into dust.

In conclusion, the Erased ending sucks and you know it.



THE NINE ALIGNMENTS

Most people have heard of the Alignment system introduced by Dungeons&Dragons back in the day, and have since applied it to nearly everything. Below are short descriptions of each type, each accompanied by a befitting anime quote by an individual of that alignment. Which type are you?

 <p>LAWFUL GOOD</p> <p>"Maybe I got something wrong, but it doesn't matter because the thought of wanting to help others definitely isn't wrong."</p> <p>EMIYA SHIROU Fate/Stay Night</p>	 <p>NEUTRAL GOOD</p> <p>"I'm not a hero because I want your approval. I do it because I want to!"</p> <p>SAITAMA One Punch Man</p>	 <p>CHAOTIC GOOD</p> <p>"Huh? In a real war, what fool waits for their enemy's 'turn'?"</p> <p>SORA No Game No Life</p>
 <p>LAWFUL NEUTRAL</p> <p>"Being indebted to someone is nothing to be ashamed of. Not repaying that debt is."</p> <p>YUUKI KAZAMI The Fruit of Grisaia</p>	 <p>TRUE NEUTRAL</p> <p>"There's no point in being interested in things you can't see. People don't even look properly at things they can see."</p> <p>MARE Hoshizora no Memoria</p>	 <p>CHAOTIC NEUTRAL</p> <p>"I'm neither a soldier nor a brave man. Not to mention that running away isn't the same as losing. You only truly lose by dying. So as long you're alive, you win!"</p> <p>SENATOR FIGARO Valvrave the Liberator</p>
 <p>LAWFUL EVIL</p> <p>"Justice will prevail, you say? But of course it will! Whoever wins this war becomes justice!"</p> <p>DONQUIXOTE DOFLAMINGO One Piece</p>	 <p>NEUTRAL EVIL</p> <p>"In my eyes, there is no difference between wiping away one speck of dust or two."</p> <p>SOUSUKE AIZEN Bleach</p>	 <p>CHAOTIC EVIL</p> <p>"What, exactly, waits for me after this battle? Peace? I've never wished for such a thing."</p> <p>KAGETANE HIRUKO Black Bullet</p>

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WEEKLY EVENTS

Anime Showings and Socials

9 Evans

Mondays, 7:00 - 10:00pm

Manga Socials

106 Dwinelle

Thursdays, 5:30 - 6:30pm

Game Nights

2030 VLSB

Thursdays, 7:30 - 10:00pm

WEEKLY SHOWINGS

Dimension W

Himouto! Umaru-chan

NEXT WEEK'S SHOWING: **ENCORE**

