

konshuu



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THIS WEEK'S SERIES

► ANIME SHOWING ERASED

(Boku Dake ga Inai Machi)

Satoru Fujinuma is just your average manga artist struggling to make ends meet. However, he possesses an unique and extraordinary power that lets him travel back into the past whenever he has a life threatening experience. This ability, which Satoru calls "Revival," allows Satoru to change anything necessary in the past to make sure the incident will not happen again in the present. This allowed him to save many lives in the past. When his mother was murdered, Satoru was accused of being the murderer, which made Revival send him back far into the past, 18 years ago when he was still in elementary school. It was around this time that three classmates from his school were kidnapped and murdered. Satoru must now prevent the three from being kidnapped and crack the mystery behind all the murders that eventually led to his mother's death.



Studio: A-1 Pictures

Original Creator: Kei Sanbei



Story and Art by: Koharu Sakuraba

MANGA SOCIAL ◀ TODAY IN CLASS 5-2

(Kyou no Go no Ni)

Ryota Satou is a kind and energetic fifth-grader with a growing interest in girls. He is accompanied by several friends in his class of 5-2, including his childhood friend, Chika Koizumi. While Ryota is more relaxed and cool headed, Chika often plays pranks and even beats Ryota up whenever he tries to do something perverted (which is almost always by accident). Even so, she still has a crush on him that he does not realize. Not to mention, everyone else in the class is just as crazy in their own special ways. The story mainly follows through Ryota and his classmates as live their fifth-grade lives, which include stupid and sometimes perverted jokes. They ask the important questions in life, such as whether chalk tastes good. They have huge water fights in the park. Ryota and his classmates go the extra mile to turn the ordinary into something extraordinary and make each day's class of 5-2 more interesting than that of the day before.



Warning: Major spoilers ahead.

"This is a story about a girl named Reki. She was doomed by an unfortunate fate, and even lost the people that she could share her sorrow with. Feeling herself worthless, she called herself Reki, using the letters which meant 'small stone.' However, the letter that expresses her true name is 'The one who was run over and torn apart.'"

-Haibane Renmei, Episode 13

While I've written about this anime many a time before, every time I sit down and watch it, I happen to learn something new about Haibane Renmei. The story begins as a simple slice-of-life, and the setting seems rather mundane and ordinary. Yet behind the cheery scenes of the initial episodes is a brewing storm of emotional distress and discomfort. It also contains some of the strongest, most drawn-to-life characters to have ever appeared in anime history. But in order to understand the depth of the characters produced by the anime, a decent portion of the setting and backstory must be described.

The "Haibane" are a small selection of beings that live in the eerily peaceful floating town known as "Glie". Haibane are characterized by their angel-like appearance; after hatching from their large cocoons, they grow large charcoal wings and are christened with a halo. Each Haibane is named after their cocoon dream; for example, Nemu (to sleep) is named as such since she's such a heavy sleeper that she was asleep during her dream. All Haibane have the feeling that they existed in a past life, but no Haibane is allowed to discover anything about that life. As a result of working hard in various specific jobs dedicated to Haibane, they are offered a peaceful existence in the town of Glie. Glie is sectioned off by a perimeter of tall, sacred walls. These walls, which section off the town of Glie from the rest of the floating world are "absolute;" no regular citizens of Glie, including the Haibane, can venture out

of or even touch the walls. Only the Toga, mysterious beings clothed in strange garments, and the crows, which are said to carry "lost things," may pass in and out of the walls. Communication between the regular citizens of Glie and the Toga is a taboo; only the "Washi," the head communicator of Glie, can communicate with the Toga using special hand signals.



The de facto main character of the anime, Rakka, is a newborn Haibane, desperately searching for her place in the town of Glie and strangely attached to her unknown past. But it is her caretaker Reki, a veteran Haibane in charge of treating the Young Feathers of Old Home, who is the crux of the anime. While initially focused on Rakka's anxieties with finding her place in Glie, the anime slowly turns to shedding light onto Reki's dark and disturbing past. The seemingly caring and kind Reki is later revealed to be a Sin-Bound Haibane. A Sin-Bound Haibane is a special Haibane who is said to have sinned in the past. Donned with jet black feathers, they are unable to receive their "Day of Flight," which is the day when a fully-fledged Haibane leaves with no regrets, going beyond the walls and passing on into the next world.

In Reki's case, she does not look to others for forgiveness, and she is unable to forgive herself, because it is too easy for her to cower inside the shell of her own flaws. The remains of what she perceived as her true nature, as a result of her sin-bound sickness, overcame the many acts of goodness that she selflessly offered. Her elder Haibane Kuramori was a person she duly respected. Yet, once Kuramori passed beyond the walls in her "Day of Flight, Reki felt betrayed, as though she had been abandoned and left alone in the world. She wallowed in her guilt for accidentally harming the Haibane Hyouko, for Hyouko had violated the walls in an attempt to help Reki with her selfish pipe-dreams to chase down Kuramori. After selfishly hurting those around her, Reki began to grow distant. Stubbornly refusing to bother those around her, and desperately searching for her hatching dream, Reki took to painting in solitude. She splattered the walls of her room with whatever mixture of colours lept into her mind, hoping desperately for a miracle while secretly and self-destructively removing all chances of one.



It is the very same Rakka that Reki had coddled and raised to her present state who would promise a miracle to Reki. But, unbeknownst to Rakka, she ends up instead revealing to Reki the unavoidable destiny she was given. Rakka is given a box by the Washi containing Reki's true name, and he instructs Rakka to give the box to Reki when she feels that Reki is ready. In a dimly lit room, a determined Rakka confronts Reki and presents her the box, and Reki's true name is revealed to be the character 「轢」 —literally, "one who has been run down." And then, in what may be the most dramatic climax in all of anime, Reki completely snaps. Rakka, the young Haibane whom she had dedicated herself to saving, was somehow cured of her Sin-Bound nature.

For Rakka was also originally a Sin-Bound Haibane, but with the help of a bird who crossed the walls to show Rakka that she was cared for in her past life, she was eventually forgiven and cured of her Sin-Bound nature. It's no stretch to say that, after seeing that Rakka had been saved, Reki felt pure and utter despair. But it was this jealousy and despair that could not break through her facade; she was unable to confide in others or look for help, as this would ruin the image of strength and independence she had built up for herself. So she quietly kept to herself, while the rest of the Haibane all worriedly looked on. In doing so, she forced herself to reject Rakka, the Haibane who gave her false hope. She reveals that her altruism towards Rakka and the rest of the young feathers was but a ploy—a simple means to an ends—in an attempt to restore the sanctity of her soul and atone for her sins.

But it was the Rakka that Reki was so jealous of, and the Rakka that Reki abandoned who was unable to give up on Reki. Rakka would be the bird to save her, grant her forgiveness, and ultimately salvation. In spite of the various lies that Reki had spun, and in spite of Reki's perverse solidarity and inability to trust in others, Rakka chose to keep to her steadfast belief in Reki's goodness. Rakka pleaded for Reki to accept her help, and in her final moments, it is the stubborn, untrusting Reki who is able to reach out to Rakka. With Rakka's forgiveness, Reki is cured from her Sin-Bound sickness becomes able to pass on with her Day of Flight.



We all tell a gross story about ourselves: that we are sinful, hateful, unable to be loved. But then someone comes and tells us a new story, one in which we are good, lovable, and valuable. We are saved by the freedom to believe the best about ourselves, and thus to be our best selves. So sometimes we help, and sometimes we are helped. In the case of Reki and Rakka, sometimes these actions are mutual. All of us need this, and none of us can consistently grant it to ourselves, but it can be the most liberating feeling in the world to receive it.



ERASING THE PAST

ANDREW "ARCHED" OEUNG

Warning: Spoilers ahead.

Boku Dake ga Inai Machi, also known as Erased, is certainly shaping up to be Winter's anime of the season. Erased innovatively mixes fantasy elements together with an alluring serial killer mystery to create an extremely suspenseful story. The protagonist, Satoru Fujinuma, is equipped with a special power called "Revival" that enables him to travel back in time in order to prevent tragedies. However, the author utilizes Satoru's cliché power as a novel way for the viewers to explore Satoru's past and background. As Satoru travels back into the past in order to save his dear classmate, the same questions that run through his mind run through ours: Who is the serial killer? Who is this girl? How can she live? Erased's plot resembles the tense second half of Steins;Gate. However, Erased avoids the boring first half of exposition that Steins;Gate had by developing characters and establishing exposition while the plot quickly progressed. Every single episode ends on a cliffhanger with urgent music in the background, leaving you thirsting for more content! I would know, because it happened to me. I told myself I would only watch a few episodes, but at the end of the day, I was caught up with the whole series. I'm sure you've all had that feeling before.

One of Erased's best strengths is conveying the emotions of each character through facial expressions. As the main character falls in love with his old classmate, Kayo Hinazuki, we can see her open up slowly but surely as their innocent love comes to fruition. Similarly, the protagonist appears forlorn and aged in the prologue, but as he finds meaning in his existence, he becomes quite expressive and animated during his adventure. Even the absence of emotions ironically holds significance in this fantasy thriller by hinting towards possible suspects in the case.



The author of Erased does a brilliant job of masking the culprit of the murders. Although the murderer kills characters over the course of eighteen years, his identity is completely unknown. Unfortunately, the short length of the anime greatly narrows down the list of suspects, and the structure of the plot itself also narrows down possible suspects, because certain characters appear in the present but not in the past. Regardless, the author does not give away the killer's identity to the viewers, which is a nice change of pace.

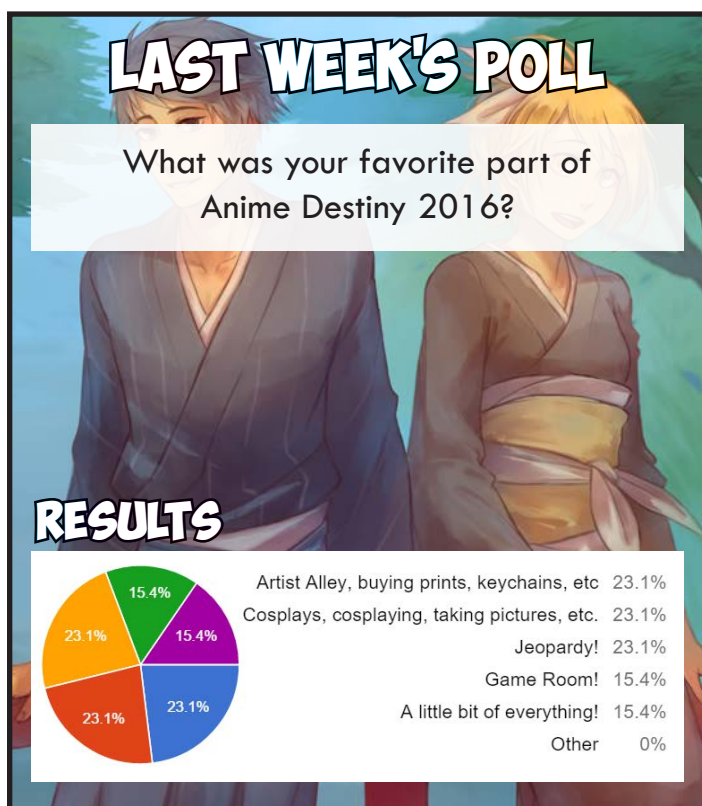




filter out any of his thoughts, leading to hilarious and adorable situations. The existence of a forward anime protagonist who actually tries to approach and court a girl in this show also comes as a pleasant surprise to me. Harem protagonists with the mind of a brick have become so typical as of late that I was starting to question life itself!



Overall, *Erased* is definitely a show you should check out this season. If you're looking for action, suspense, or romance, *Erased* has it all and more. As soon as you start watching an episode, you won't be able to take your eyes off of Satoru's intense adventure through his mystical power known as "Revival."





THIS WEEK'S ACTIVITY

ARRAY PUZZLE: LUNAR INVASION!

Following the events of Legacy of Lunatic Kingdom, Yukari has decided that the time is ripe for a third and final invasion of the Lunar Capital. She has prepared 9 legions of youkai arranged in a 3x3 fashion, and each group will be led by one of the following:

Aya, Iku, Mamizou, Nazrin, Nitori, Suika, Tenshi, Utsuho, and Yuugi

However, due to certain preferences and conditions, there is only ONE FORMATION that will work. Given the following clues, determine a composition that satisfies all of the following conditions. The solution can be found on the back cover of this issue.

CLUES

1. Nazrin's group is operating as scouts, which must be in the front row. From there, she can convey information to Aya's group, which is adjacent to hers.
2. As members of the Big Four, Suika and Yuugi are powerhouses that operate best when separate, and thus cannot be adjacent or diagonal to one another.
3. Yuugi prefers to be in the brunt of things, and has positioned herself somewhere in the middle column.
4. Historically, the tengu were subservient to the oni. As such, Aya is directly in front of either Suika or Yuugi.
5. The tengu and kappa populations both occupy Youkai Mountain, and therefore have a reasonable but not too close relationship. In a similar fashion, Aya and Nitori are diagonal to one another.
6. After what happened in Bhava-Agra, Tenshi is somewhat hesitant to be near Suika. As such, she has positioned herself in a row that is closer to the front than Suika's.
7. Concerned as usual, Iku makes sure that she can keep an eye on Tenshi from an adjacent position, but not from the leftmost row.
8. Mamizou would like to see more from her position, but it is difficult when someone as big as Yuugi is directly in front of her.
9. Acting as support, Nitori must be able to access the other groups quickly. She is adjacent to more groups than the more unsociable Nazrin and Tenshi.
10. No invasion is complete without a superweapon, and in this case, it's Utsuho. Superweapons are typically kept secret, therefore she cannot be in the front row or middle column.

FORMATION

Solution: Row 1: Nazrin, Yuugi, Tenshi; Row 2: Aya, Mamizou, Iku; Row 3: Suika, Nitori, Utsuho

Konshuu proudly accepts
guest submissions from club members!
If you'd like to have content featured,
please submit to:
J.MP/KONSUB

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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: HOW TO RAISE A BORING GIRLFRIEND



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