

THE HALLOWEEN ISSUE

CAL ANIMAGE ALPHA presents

konshuu

Volume XLVIII, Issue IX

TAE YAMADA
Zombieland Saga
Art by Athena Chen

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HALLOWEEN IS A PORÉMON

SHAMIN CHOWDHURY
3RD YEAR, PHYSICS AND MATH

STAFF WRITER

I feel like I'm moving at a snail's pace...

If you haven't heard for the millionth time or something, Halloween has deep origins in European culture. Specifically, it originated in Celtic culture with their new year holiday known as Samhain, on which they believed the spirits of the dead would roam the earth. On this day, the Celtic Druids would also light bonfires, people believed they had better divinations, and they would put on animal heads and skins. It should then be self explanatory where the part about dressing up in costumes comes from for Halloween. By 43 A.D., the Roman Empire conquered Celtic lands and added a little twist to Samhain involving apples to commemorate the Roman goddess Pomona: this explains the Halloween apple bobbing



An artist's conception of Samhain

tradition. Getting into the ninth century, we find Christianity has developed a few holidays, including All Souls Day, All Saints Day, and the preceding day known as All Hallows Eve, which would eventually be called Halloween. These holidays were started to commemorate martyrs, saints and the dead in general, and some say they were meant to phase out the pagan traditions of the Celtic culture. Going into colonial times, Halloween is brought to America, and it incorporates some indigenous American customs like ghost story telling. Approaching the 1900s, we find Halloween has become a rather secular holiday, and some of the contemporary traditions we're used to have been incorporated, including trick-or-treating and costume parties.

So we see that Halloween has undergone lots of changes and evolved into what it is today... just like a *Pokémon* (sorry, the title sounded better when I first came up with it). But seriously, it's interesting that Halloween is drastically different from what it was back then. It makes you wonder what Halloween is becoming now and where it'll end up later. On that note, let me talk about how Halloween is in Japan!

Halloween in Japan is significantly different compared to Halloween in America. The holiday is much newer over there, having come about more popularly in the early 2000s thanks to events from Tokyo Disneyland, Sanrio Puroland, and Universal Studios Japan. One of the more notable traditions they have for Halloween in Japan is this set of street festivals that happen in Roppongi and Shibuya. If you ever look at pictures of these events, you'll find the streets are super densely packed with all these people dressed up in scary costumes enjoying food, music, dancing and the overall scene in general. A couple more important differences include the absence of widespread trick-or-treating and the orange pumpkins we're used to



A Halloween parade in Japan

seeing here in America. Culturally, it makes sense that trick-or-treating hasn't immediately developed in Halloween over there considering its bothersome nature, and orange pumpkins aren't readily available there in Japan so if you wanted one, you'd have to get it imported.

So already, we see Halloween shaping into something different when we see how it has manifested in Japan. From this, we can get some insight on how Halloween might end up elsewhere in the future. In any case, this holiday's not at its final evolution just yet!



ZOMBIELAND SAGA: A DIFFERENT TWIST ON AN OLD CLASSIC

2018年10月より放送開始!

BOGEUN CHOI

STAFF WRITER

4TH, APPLIED MATH AND DATA SCIENCE

Please send help I have no food in my apartment

[Minor Spoiler Warning for Zombieland Saga]

What shows are you watching from this season (if any)? We're fully into the Fall 2018 anime season, but because of school and an internship that just recently ended, I've just started to dive into what this slate of shows has to offer. The shows I have been able to watch, though, have been pretty promising. It's early, but this season already feels better than last season. We'll see if I eat those words in a few months.

Take, for instance, *Seishun Buta Yarou wa Bunny Girl Senpai no Yume wo Minai*, otherwise known as *Rascal Does Not Dream of Bunny Girl Senpai* (or what I seen abbreviated as *AoButa*). A show that I like to describe as a combination of *OreGairu* and the *Monogatari* series, the premise of the show is that there is a "disease" called Adolescence Syndrome that affects some of the main girls in different ways. For example, "disappearing" from people's eyes and minds. This is where the *Monogatari* comparisons come in, because it's up to the main character to help these girls with their affliction, one arc at a time. The character interactions between the main characters are some of the best I've seen in general (not just in anime) and the premise really keeps you gripped through the whole episode. I've recommended this show to everybody and they've all enjoyed it – give it a try if you haven't. It has a chance of being my favorite anime of the year.

青春ブタ野郎は
バニーガール先輩の
夢を見ない

Puberty syndrome:
Abnormal experiences during adolescence due to sensitivity and instability.

WATCH IT (it's not ecchi I promise)



Now why did I go into that whole spiel about *AoButa* (other than to plug it)? To sort of prove a point – in a sense, people knew what they were in for when they started watching the show. It was going to be a supernatural rom-com similar to *Monogatari*. Even if they went into the show expecting it to be ecchi because of the title and the promotional art featuring a bunny girl, at least they had some expectations (even if they were very wrong). That's true for pretty much all shows out there: you know what you're getting into. It may or may not differ from those expectations, but at least they're there. Every once in a while, though, there are anime that don't set up these expectations and expect viewers to go in totally blind. For example, *Madoka* and *Gakkou Gurashi*. This season, there's an anime that fits this criteria. Its name is *Zombieland Saga*.

This show was a complete unknown right to the time that it aired. Because it was an original, there was nothing to go off of other than its vague synopsis:

A typical morning. The usual music. Their normal lives. The peace these seven girls experience will suddenly be destroyed. By the living dead... zombies.

A reality that they never wanted a part of, an amazing and terrifying zombie world. They all share one wish: "We want to live." These girls will struggle through this saga, in order to achieve a miracle.



What genre could this be? Nobody knows

Other than the obvious topic of zombies, the show could honestly be about anything. The PV (promotional video) didn't do much to clear matters either. It starts off cheerfully with a girl leaving her home (probably for school) but transitions into zombie killing scenes with some scenes of the anime spliced in with no context. Maybe the Japanese text/voice lines might have provided more context, but as a true American with little-to-no experience in the language of Japanese, I couldn't tell at the time. So imagine everybody's surprise (mine included) when it turned out this show was an idol anime. Just take my friend's Facebook post as an example, where he says "Wait... Did *Zombieland Saga* just get me to watch an Idol Anime". I'm sure many people had the same reaction after finishing the first episode. Yet it seems the general public enjoys the show. Why is this? Let's dive a little deeper into the enigma that is *Zombieland Saga*.

As a self-proclaimed idol trash, I can tell if a show is an idol show or not. And *Zombieland Saga* is definitely a idol show. There's no mistaking it -- from the episode introductions recapping what happened previously to the themes of working together to overcome an obstacle and achieve their goals through the process of idolizing, this is definitely 100% certified idol.

Now as a person who watches anime, I have a confession to make: I don't actually really like idol anime. Blasphemy! How could this be? Well, I never said I was idol anime trash: as somebody who enjoys the other aspects of idol such as music and rhythm games (which was made very clear a few issues ago), the idol anime template isn't really something I enjoy watching. It's along the same reasons why I don't watch shounen shows -- the whole idea of the "power of friendship". As mentioned above, idol anime storylines usually rely on the idea of overcoming obstacles and working together through being idols to achieve goals. Which most of the time

is super cheesy for somebody who isn't exactly the most optimistic person (i.e. me). In fact, my favorite idol-related anime is the currently airing *BanG Dream: Garupa Pico*, which are basically just 3-minute shorts featuring chibi versions of the Bandori characters getting into fun slice of life shenanigans like eating ramen and dying in a tragic skydiving accident. In other words, not following the framework of an idol anime.

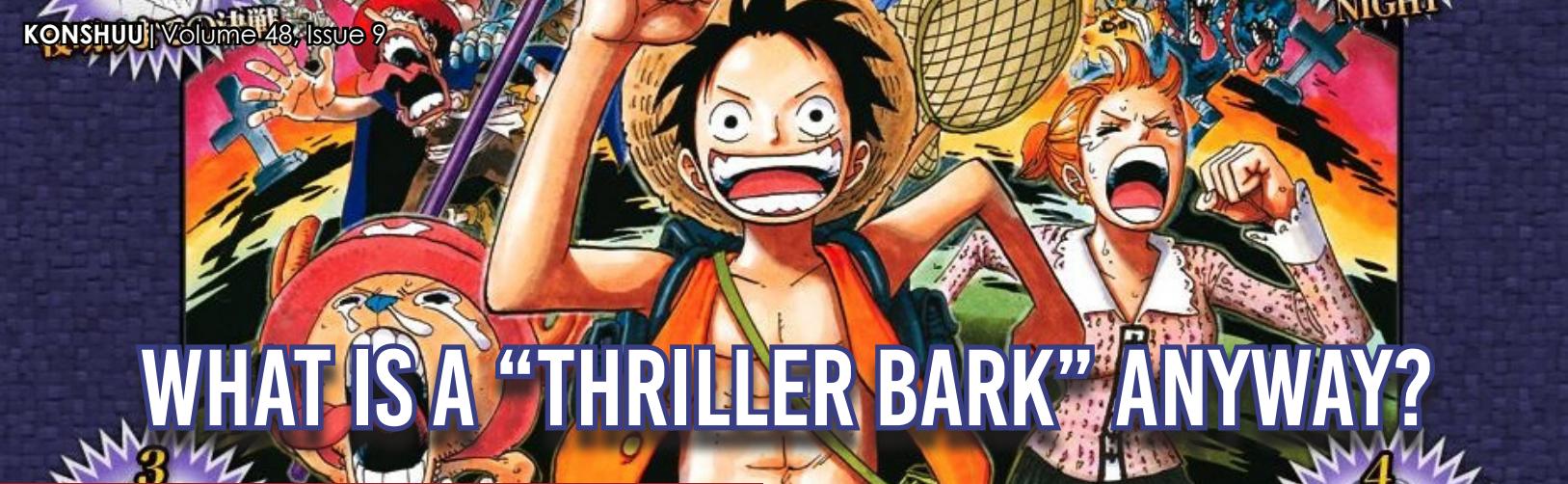


Top 10 Photos Taken Before Death

Having said all that, I (along with the general populace) am really enjoying *Zombieland Saga*. The reason? It does enough to differentiate itself from its label as an idol show. While the show explicitly states the zombies will become idols from the get go, the show starts off with a death metal scene and a rap battle in its first two episodes. Even with recent episodes leaning more towards its idol identity, the idea of zombies being idols adds enough to give it a different take from the standard show from its genre. The show may even have some self-awareness: in the third episode, the group finally performs their first live, complete with CGI dancing. And holy moly, was the CGI bad. As somebody who couldn't watch the opening of the first season of *Love Live* because of the CGI dancing, I can say that *Zombieland Saga* had it worse. Trust me: I compared both and realized *Love Live*'s CGI isn't actually that bad. Then I realized that was 5 years ago.

Yet there are people out there who believe this was done on purpose to pay homage/make fun of past idol shows' usage of terrible CGI. Honestly, with how this show is, I wouldn't be surprised, though I am still a bit skeptical of this theory. If anything, though, the CGI sequence the next episode was definitely better, so take it for what it is.

CGI aside, *Zombieland Saga* has definitely left an impact for many viewers as a different take on the idol anime genre. Time will tell whether it can keep its momentum through the rest of the season: will it be the next *Pop Team Epic* or the next *Mahou Shoujo Ore* in its status as a meme show? Either way, if you haven't watched it, give it a shot. Who knows, maybe you might find yourself stuck in the world that is idol hell.



WHAT IS A “THRILLER BARK” ANYWAY?



ABEER HOSSAIN

2ND YEAR, MECHANICAL ENGINEERING AND ASTROPHYSICS

I've never dressed up for Halloween and that's sad.

STAFF WRITER

Major Spoilers for *One Piece*

It's honestly surprisingly to check back on the list of *One Piece* sagas and see that the Thriller Bark Arc appeared in the anime a decade ago. The eighteenth in the series, Thriller Bark takes place entirely on a ship of the same name, belonging to one of the seven pirates who have allied themselves with the World Government, the Shichibukai Gekko Moriah. Moriah transports the Straw Hats to his ship as they enter the *One Piece* world's equivalent of the Bermuda Triangle and subsequently steals their shadows, without which the crew is destined to perish upon sunrise. A typical horror mystery setup for a surprisingly quirky and colorful arc that has all the makings of a *One Piece* storyline: outrageous designs, fleshed-out characters, and a wonderfully sad backstory for the newest member of the Straw Hat crew, Brook the skeleton.



The previous Shichibukai before the famous Marineford Arc.

But of course the article's focus on Thriller Bark is not because of its great story, fight scenes, or how it sets up the rest of the *One Piece* universe but rather due to its spook factor. The entire forty-five episode arc consists of zombies, orcs, monsters,

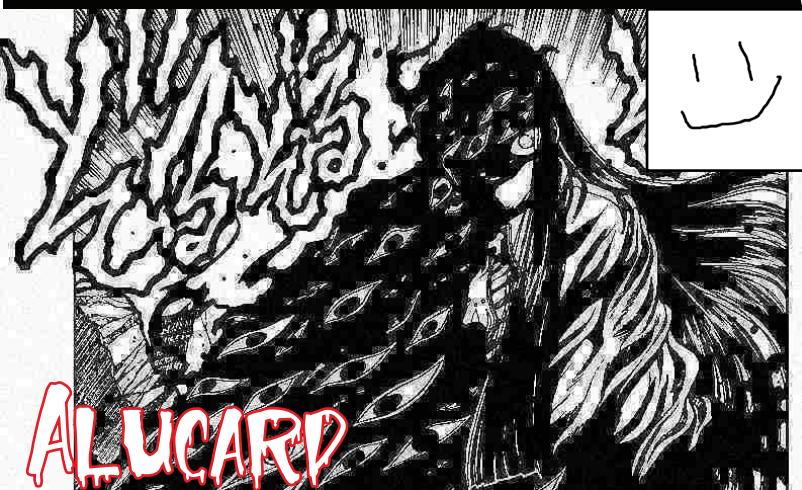
multi-headed dogs, and all the supernatural tropes you could possibly think of. The soul of the Straw Hats' soon-to-be crew member is just the start of the spooks, and once he leads them to his long since decayed body at the crash of his crew's ship from hundreds of years ago, viewers know that the entire arc is going to be one full of delightful dread.



You can't have a spooky arc without a giant orc.

Despite being the big bad of the arc, Moriah himself has quite an endearing and morbid backstory in which all his crew members once on the Thriller Bark died, leading him to abandon living creatures and pursue only undead crew members including zombies, ghosts, unkillable monsters, and Frankensteins of his own. Having lost all of his humanity, Moriah wouldn't hesitate to kill any living soul, but a mention of his previous crew will still bring him to tears. The arc handles the meaning of life and death as well as the purpose of existence quite well through the humor and action sequences scattered throughout. It is also a great example of the different kind of shonen that *One Piece* is: one less focused on fights and power levels and more on world and character building. The Straw Hat crew sails from island to island with each arc, but each island is more of a complete different world than simply another piece of land within the same stretch of the sea. Thriller Bark just happens to be an island-sized ship with hundreds of thousands of zombies and monsters on it as well as a powerful pirate who can take away people's shadows at will. Honestly, it's nothing out of the ordinary.

FAVORITE MONSTERS



ALUCARD



MOKONA



CELTY



KYUBEY



MIGI



WHISPER



LUSAMINE



TOTORO

VOLUME XLVIII, ISSUE 9 — NOVEMBER 1, 2018

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CELTY STURLUSON
Durarara!!
Art by Elliot Lu

