

# EDITORIAL

As a weekly publication, we always have opinions about the dates on which our magazine comes out. This week's SHOUT gives us the opportunity to celebrate with our readers the end of 2020, a year that is unique in so many ways. I consider this to be a privilege.

2020 has been hard to summarise. In this week's issue, we went with an approach that's not serious, because taking 2020 seriously would open up a can of worms that could easily eat up 8 pages. This week's SHOUT attempts to do a rewind of the whirlwind that this year has been, and hopes to spread some laughter along the way.

The worst thing 2020 did was to make us choose between the basic necessities of good health and being close to the people we love. It hasn't been fair, but it has been a wake up call for us, the young generation, to a world that is increasingly less fair. We always knew things would get bad, but being denied the love of close ones is not something anyone can work with. I wish you a happy new year, dear reader, and hope that the future does bring a world that we can work with.

— Azmin Azran, Sub-editor, SHOUT



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## PLAYWATCH

### ANIME REVIEW



# Fruits Basket

*The slice of life you need*

**SYEDA TASNIM ISLAM**

*Fruits Basket*, released in 2019, is the anime adaptation of a shoujo manga written by Natsuki Takaya. It already had a very successful series run back in 2001, but the storyline strayed from the original plot. The revival aims to stick to the plot of the manga entirely, and is supposed to be spanning three seasons. So far with two completed seasons out, it has, once again, become a fan favourite — and understandably so.

It's a feel-good comedy with romance, friendship and love in all forms, wrapped within the darkness that looms around in the characters' lives. The story revolves around the life of a high school girl, Tohru Honda whose mother recently passed away, and due to her family (or lack thereof) and their financial issues, she is living in a tent on the outskirts of the huge Soma estate.

She is then discovered by the two Soma family members that live nearby, one of whom is her very own classmate Yuki Soma, who also happens to be the school heartthrob. They make a deal for Tohru to live with them, in exchange for her doing all the housework. However, she discovers their bizarre yet adorable family secret — they are all members of the Chinese zodiac and transform into their respective zodiac animal whenever they make contact with members of the opposite gender.

At first glance you would expect this anime to be just another rom-com/slice of life anime, where a love triangle is

mindlessly thrown in to complete the formula. However, Tohru Honda is the epitome of kindness. That kindness, although may come off as clichéd to some, can also be inspiring. Her warmth and ability to love is a major factor in the development of the characters and ultimately the plot itself.

Even beyond that, as a viewer, her personality inspired me to be kinder and thankful for the people I have in my life. I found myself deeply invested in the story and genuinely interested in the characters themselves. Almost every character has a solid backstory tied to a common denominator (no spoilers) and actively tries to become a better version of themselves.

To be more specific, Tohru's two best friends are one of the main reasons the anime is so dear to me now. They are not only absolutely hilarious, but also are incredibly loving and protective of Tohru, basically being the maternal figures in her life. Despite being supporting characters, their strong personalities make you want to know more about them. Again, proof of good storytelling. They reminded me of the kind of friends I have in my life and it was heart-warming to be able to relate.

*Fruits Basket* is the perfect anime to watch if you are in the mood for something light-hearted with good storytelling. It indulges you in all the warm, fuzzy feels with the perfect balance of drama and suspense. It shows you love that is beyond romantic, highlighting friendships, familial bonds, and even toxic attachment at times.