

ANIME REVIEW

Love, loss, and letters



MAYABEE ARANNYA

Violet Evergarden is an anime that explores human emotions, both basic and complex, in a way that makes you step back and think about why you feel the way you feel.

Based on the light novels written by Kana Akatsuki, the anime follows the story of 14-year old Violet, an orphan found by a navy officer and later raised by a major in the military to work as a super soldier. She served under Major Gilbert, who taught her how to read and write. The anime is set post-war, with Violet finding a new job as an "Auto Memory Doll" i.e. a letter writer. She uses a typewriter to type out letters for people who do not know how to write.

Violet is described as a doll by most characters in the anime and she kind of is one, in the sense that she finds it difficult to understand most emotions. Because of her job, she meets various people requesting specific kinds of letters. They all lead different lives and have unique problems, and each character opens up a new emotion to her. Compassion, empathy, grief — these are just some of the themes explored. These characters are brilliantly written, and all play an important role in helping her reach her end goal, to understand the meaning behind the Major's last words to her.

While most anime have storylines that induce different emotions, Violet Evergarden is unique in the sense that the storyline is based entirely around emotions themselves. Each episode is a deep analysis of a specific emotion. It tries to show that sometimes the best way to convey feelings is through a letter. Violet's character development

in just 13 episodes is highly impressive. Some might argue that a robotic character with no feelings trying to understand humans is an overdone plot line. However, this anime successfully portrays this in a more subtle, realistic way. She is shaped by all the incidents that occur during and after the war, and the change we see in her does not feel forced.

Kyoto Animation has done a stellar job when it comes to the stunning visuals. The anime has more of a Victorian setting, and each location Violet visits is a treat to the eyes. However, the soundtrack is nothing special in my opinion. It complements the anime, but isn't something you'd want to listen to afterwards.

Violet Evergarden also caters to people who enjoy war stories. War tactics make up a huge part of this anime, but the fighting is somewhat boring since Violet seems to always overpower the soldiers.

The anime does, however, have some plot holes. Violet's mechanical arms during the time of typewriters and her inhuman strength go unexplained. Unless you're a skeptic, these issues should not affect your experience since the anime is mainly intended to move you, to make you feel things, and it does that perfectly.

Violet Evergarden has its pros and cons, but I would recommend it to anyone wishing to watch a short anime that packs a big punch emotionally. Seriously, if you're not crying by the end of it, you're just as much of a doll as Violet.

Mayabee Arannya is a confused soul still searching for a purpose. Give her advice on life at facebook.com/mayabee.arannya

How to deal with friends who always crack bad puns

VERONICA GOMES

There's always that one friend, or if you're unlucky, a bunch of them, who has this unshakable urge to come up with mind-numbingly bad jokes on a daily basis. To them, the world is a playground consisting of an abundance of words with different forms of available wordplay opening doors to countless possibilities.

Their way of thinking, however, gets annoying when the jokes are turned vocal with even more cringeworthy deliveries. Now, to preserve your sanity all the while continuing to hang out with them, here are few ways you can cope.

BARGAIN

If you've been friends with one for a long time, you have probably figured out by now the zero effect that the "shut up" and "seriously?" stares have on them. Enter the power of bargaining. This is when you need to lawyer up and reach a settlement with your friend in question. Offer something like agreeing to buy them coffee for the entire week in exchange for them not making puns in that time span. It may be a small price to pay for the greater good. Moreover, you can use this well achieved week off to gather your sanity and brace yourself for the puns that await you.

DISPERSE

While running from your problems has always been ill advised, running away from *punny* friends is oddly effective. If you know them well enough, you can almost always sense the joke is coming your way just in time to be able to avoid it. So the next time your pun detector lights up -- disperse, run, regroup. Not only will this help you avoid the

scarring PTSD of the joke stabbing holes in your sense of humour, but you also get done with a little exercise in the process.

LAUGH AT THEIR JOKE

Believe it or not, this always works. The thing about puns is that its sole purpose is to trigger all the annoying fibres of your body whenever you stumble upon one. So the whole point of it gets ruined with every fit of laughter that you express. Thus it is definitely the kryptonite of all puns, disabling its maker and leaving them with a sense of lost purpose. Moreover, the rarity with which their jokes get greeted with cheers ensures the element of surprise which further leaves them shocked and quite often scarred enough to know better than to continue making similar jokes in the near future.

REPLY WITH A PUN

This is the last straw, and so this has to be the most effective one. Spending so much time around these people will inevitably make you a low-key "punmaster" yourself. So it is better to embrace your lamer side and join in to form united forces in spreading the epidemic further because God knows, you've already been compromised. This not only gives you the satisfaction of making people feel as scarred as you once used to feel, but also solidifies your friendship to one that lasts for life.

However, if none of these seem to work, there's always the option of locking them up in a pun-geon for life. Hah hah.

Veronica Gomes is a socially awkward sophomore. Feel free to trigger awkward encounters by reaching out to her at gomesveronica1997@gmail.com

