

EDITORIAL

It is a blessing to have been born a 90s kid. I grew up in the height of MTV's success, when music was largely accepted as a lifestyle and not just a form of art. I've had the Walkman, and still remember the day I bought my first (and only) mp3 player. No cassette, no disc, all technology.

The spectrum of our experiences is a vast one, no doubt. And with music, we've seen some real changes. Gone are the days of "underground" music we enjoyed as teenagers. Our kind was attracted by sparsely lit warehouses and halls, baggy denims and black tees, the smell from the smoke machine, and flash photography on VGA cameras. Our music came out on mixed albums. Artists you've never heard of; artists probably your fourth cousin or that senior at school.

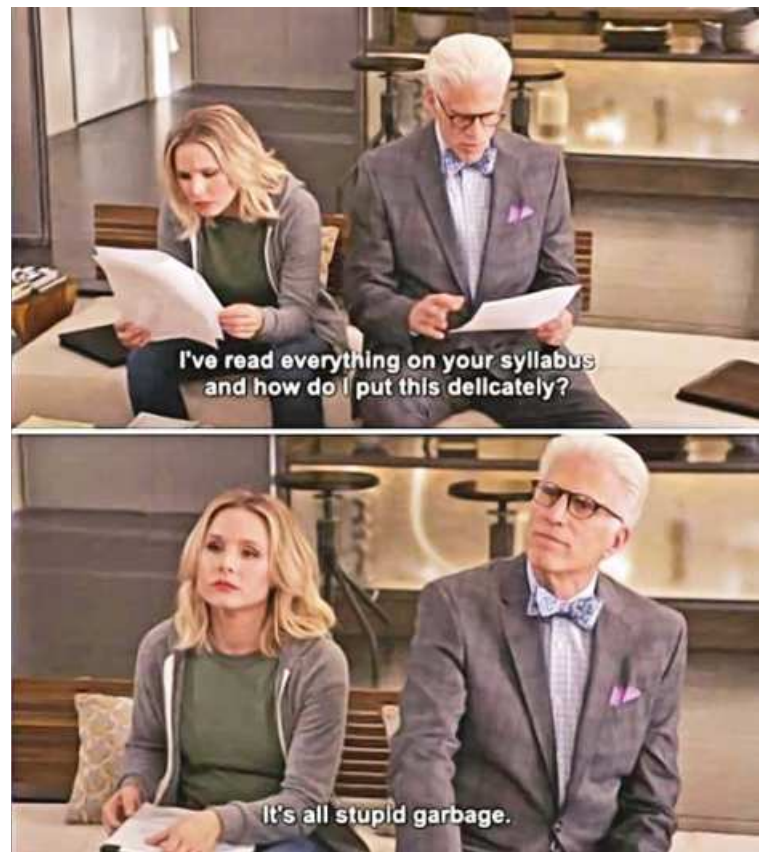
And now we live in the age of singles and EPs and digital albums. New genres and sub-genres. I don't complain, however.

Music is the food of my generation, so I play on.

-- Kazi Akib Bin Asad, In-charge, SHOUT



PLAYWATCH TV SHOW REVIEW



WHAT'S SO GOOD ABOUT *THE GOOD PLACE*?

FARNAZ FAWAD HASAN

What comes after death and what would life be like if we never died? This harrowing thought has plagued the human mind for ages. The concept of heaven and hell, good and bad has somehow given meaning to this fear of death. *The Good Place* is one of Michael Schur's bests; a light-hearted comedy with a profound underlying moral lesson, to be good.

It starts with the protagonist Eleanor Shellstrop (Kristen Bell) arriving at a heaven-like place, designed by the celestial architect Michael, after dying a humiliating death on Earth. Michael (Ted Danson) congratulates Eleanor on her wonderful philanthropic works on Earth which brought her to The Good Place but she instantly realises that there has been a mix-up since her unscrupulous and indecorous life on Earth doesn't make her fit for The Good Place.

Eleanor, with the help of Chidi (William Jackson Harper), a devout Philosophy professor and her "chosen" soulmate, tries learning about ethics to keep herself away from the hellish Bad Place. Tahani (Jameela Jamil) and Jianyu (Manny Jacinto), the neighbours of this misfit couple, have earned their place in The Good Place by racking up points on the scoreboard. The story takes a huge turn when the actual truth about The Good Place surfaces (no spoilers!).

The show is primarily based on six main characters, four of which are the

embodiment of some of our bad traits. Each character has their own baggage, Eleanor caught up with her impudence, Chidi struggling with his indecisiveness, Tahani engrossed in people-pleasing and Jason... well, ignorant. But as the story progresses we get to see their better sides as they team up to become one. Goodwill, conscience, kindness and empathy are what brings totality to a moral person. The show portrays altruism in such a way that it ignites the desire to act virtuously. Everyone has good and bad sides to them. And each of our good traits are the missing pieces to the puzzle of righteousness.

In spite of being set in a rather grim premise of the afterlife, this show truly packs a punch in delivering messages of morality and ethics. It takes the audience on a fulfilling journey to self-improvement and self-discovery. Schur throws in nuanced questions like "What would we do if there were no consequences to our actions?" and "What do we owe to each other?" which really makes us think about the life we are living. It makes us more aware of the choices we make. Metaethics is the foundation of *The Good Place* which makes this show entertaining yet educational and thought-provoking.

Oh, did I mention Janet? Janet is not a girl and definitely not a robot.

If you ask Janet she'll tell you to reach Farnaz Fawad Hasan at farnazfawadhasan@gmail.com

