

EDITORIAL

I like to believe my parents are rational, logical beings which they (mostly) are. They haven't tried making us do breathing exercises, or sitting outside in the sun to fight corona, although my mom did try making us drink ginger tea.

No matter how many times I tell her, citing credible news reports, that the virus won't spread from objects brought into the house several days ago, she refuses to agree. This all culminated in me, in a frenzy of washing everything I brought back home from a shopping trip, letting loose my inner Gopi Bahu and furiously washing packs of sticky note pads. That was an intellectual low point.

I have since recovered but sadly the stacks of paper have not.

On a more serious note, while we blame our parents for not having enough digital literacy, it is time schools too teach kids how to process and filter information in the digital age. The kind of information we are presented with in the real world has changed, but somehow education regarding it has not.

— **Mrittika Anan Rahman**, Sub-editor, SHOUT



PLAYWATCH

TV SHOW REVIEW



Murder, Mystery and Girl Power

MRITTIKA ANAN RAHMAN

If you're looking for a good murder mystery, this is it. *The Flight Attendant* (2020) is the story of Cassie Bowden who, after a work flight to Bangkok, wakes up with a passenger in his hotel room. The man is now dead and while Cassie knows she didn't do it, she has no recollection of the past night.

Terrified, stuck in a foreign land with foreign laws and guilty of meeting a passenger personally in the first place, Cassie has to piece together the previous night and clear her name to the FBI agents breathing down her neck, all while hopping across borders as part of her job.

Kaley Cuoco can *act*. As Cassie Bowden, Kaley embodies a troubled woman doing everything possible to keep her sanity and life together. The story never leaves Cassie -- each day and each night in her life is recounted. The series spans only a few days and the audience rarely parts with Cassie for a moment throughout.

This also allows for a deep dive into her psyche. The show explores why people grow up to be who they become. As the story unravels, so does Cassie's relationship with her family members. It's not cheesy or forced; it's rather a satisfying feeling of filling in the blanks. Excerpts from her childhood explain her life choices as an adult.

A particular scene of Cassie sprawled on a hotel floor trying her best to pull herself together, then crawling to the

mirror in front of her to roll herself up to the hotel bed with the effort and hurt pride of a wounded animal, will forever remain etched in my brain as an example of fine acting.

Cassie has what can be best described as a *Sherlock*-style mind palace which the dead passenger himself inhabits to help her solve his death. It's visually pleasing to see this mind palace be decorated with whatever Cassie is struggling with at the moment, from heaps of shredded paper to funeral flowers.

The show never explicitly pushes any agenda. It took me a moment to realise how subtly moving the series was. Zosia Mamet as Cassie's best friend and tough lawyer Annie, Michelle Gomez as the villain Miranda and Merle Dandridge as FBI agent Kim Hammond are all women who excel at their jobs and women who you do not want to mess with.

When Kim's male work partner plays things unsafe and follows leads based on hunches, Kim, over lunch from a hot dog cart by the side of the road, schools him on how he's too "male, pale and Yale" (read: male, white and socially privileged) to be able to afford risks in his career she never can. As a black woman, she can simply never get away with the same things. Cuoco, also an executive producer on the show, said in an interview that she pursued the rights to the novel by Chris Bohjalian as soon as she started reading it. I'm really glad she did. The story becomes a little predictable by the end but it's still a good journey throughout.



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