# EDITORIAL

I am not a morning person. It's really difficult for me to go to bed by 11 and then wake up sometime around 6 or 7 in the morning. I am more of a noon person, and that's probably what makes me salty.

As the day progresses, however, my mood gets a little better. I get to work, meet people, have some good conversations, and my day starts feeling a lot more exciting. But do these things make me less salty and more sweet? Probably. Sadly, no one ever called me sweet, at least not at work, but that's alright. I appreciate that they respect boundaries.

Speaking of boundaries, I realized that every time I don't watch our cricket team play, they win. So for the sake of our cricket, and the combined-sanity of our population, I am going to stop watching cricket, at least the matches Bangladesh plays in. And if that doesn't help, I don't know what will. I have played my part, have you?

– Faisal Bin Iqbal, Sub-Editor & Digital Coordinator, SHOUT

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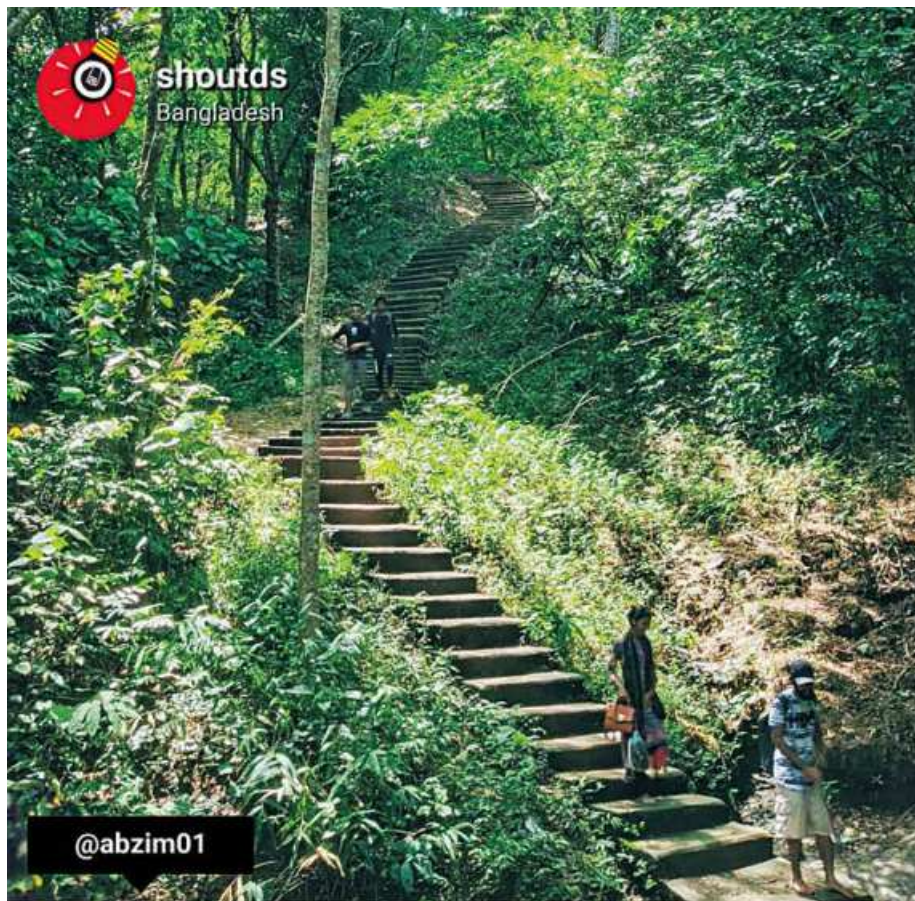
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PLAYWATCH

MUSIC

The Art of Musical Storytelling with YOASOBI

FAISAL BIN IQBAL

Formed in 2019, YOASOBI, consisting of Vocaloid producer and songwriter Ayase and singer-songwriter Ikura, broke into the J-pop scene with their debut single *Yoru ni Kakeru* (Racing Into The Night). And with that, we were introduced to a form of musical storytelling the world had hardly seen before.

The idea of taking a story and turning it into music is not new. However, YOASOBI is currently revolutionising this artform. The duo's ability to take short stories and turn them into lyrical prose with catchy pop verses and upbeat music is awe inspiring. Each song they produce narrates a story, usually something that depicts a human condition or emotion. YOASOBI's approach to such musical storytelling is what bears witness to their musical prowess.

Take *Yoru ni Kakeru* for example. TikTokers danced their hearts out to the track, and why shouldn't they? It's a melodious song with upbeat and catchy music, calling out to its audience to break into dance. Only when you delve into the song's lyrics and origin story do you realise that it tells the tragic tale of a boy who gave in to the temptation of Thanatos unwillingly while pursuing the girl he once thought he had saved from death.

It's not just YOASOBI that merges emotional, often tragic and despairing, lyrics with funky music that give out gleeful vibes. Japanese music, especially the J-pop genre, does so regularly. What makes Ayase and Ikura stand out is the way they manage to create music that complements the lyrics, while making sure that it lets out the inner emotions of the story.

As a Vocaloid producer, Ayase's music is mostly computer generated, along with your usual instruments like guitar riffs, bass and musical keyboards. The responsibility then falls on Ikura, the vocalist, to take the music and emotional lyrics, and create something breathtaking. Needless to say, she does a brilliant job in doing justice to Ayase's compositions, giving us songs that always strike a chord within us.

The music videos that accompany YOASOBI's songs also deserve a lot of praise. Without them, the storytelling would be somewhat incomplete. Mostly animated, the videos are created by independent animators. The colour pops and scene transitions in these videos beautifully depict the various stages of human emotion that the song takes us through. These animated music videos are integral to YOASOBI's musical storytelling.

YOASOBI is by far one of the most exciting Japanese music groups I've seen in a while. The duo of Ayase and Ikura, and their sublime approach to musical storytelling, is sure to turn heads in the coming days. Each song they produce is like a well-orchestrated stage play, something that will appeal to your eyes and ears, and will continue to resonate with you for as long as your heart allows it.

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