

■ ANIME ■

# UZUMAKI

## A faithful but flawed adaptation of Junji Ito's classic manga

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Junji Ito's *Uzumaki* is widely regarded as one of the most iconic horror stories, not only within the realm of manga but across the entire horror genre. After years of anticipation, the long-awaited anime adaptation has finally arrived. While it largely adheres to the unsettling source material, it unfortunately carries some notable flaws.

*Uzumaki* follows high school student Kirie Goshima and her boyfriend, Shuichi Saito, as they witness strange and terrifying events linked to spirals consuming their small coastal town, Kurouzu-cho. As the story progresses, the pair try to survive as the town spirals, both literally and figuratively, into a Lovecraftian hellscape.

The best thing about the show is how faithfully it adapts the mangaka's iconic art style. The black-and-white aesthetic complements the eerie atmosphere, perfectly capturing the tone of the original work. It is no overstatement to say that the presentation is ripped straight from the pages of the manga. From the grotesque body horror to the unsettling environmental storytelling, the show does a great job of displaying how the simple concept of a



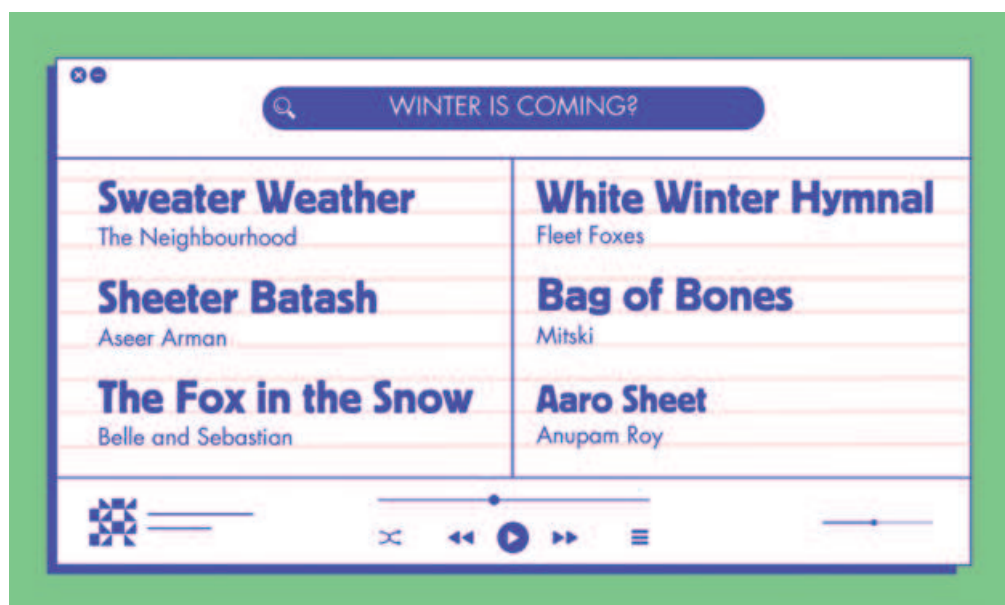
spiral can bring unexpected horrors.

These positives aside, there are some major issues with the adaptation. The biggest problem with the anime is its pacing, as it condenses 19 chapters of the manga into only four episodes. The key to a compelling horror story lies in the gradual build-up of suspense, leading to an impactful payoff. The series, however, portrays several of the spiral events as occurring simultaneously, and thus loses that sense of suspense.

Another problem is the very noticeable dip in animation quality from the second

episode onwards. While it still does capture the essence of the art style, it is obvious that the first episode had a much bigger budget compared to the rest of the series.

Though the pacing detracts from much of the suspense, the sheer intensity of the literal spiralling events evokes a different kind of unsettling feeling. As a fan of the manga and Junji Ito's works, I still think *Uzumaki* is enjoyable and worth watching despite its glaring flaws as it remains largely faithful to the source material and serves as a solid introduction to Junji Ito's haunting universe for newcomers.



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