

Forum:[Hack Forums](#)

Thread: [Samaritans Anime Reviews: Kakegurui xx - Episode 1](#)

Soulmate~?? - January 29, 2019, 8:20 pm

Written by [Soulmate~??](#)

Contains minor spoilers for Kakegurui, Major spoilers for Episode 1 of Season 2 xx
Kakegurui xx - Episode 1

For those of you who have not watched Kakegurui, it is a school anime unlike any other. The students' grades, social status, finances, and other factors are all determined by gambling. As someone that loves the art of gambling I was interested in this story right away. I have both read the entire manga (as far as is translated) and watched the first season, which in my opinion was quite good. Many fans of the classic gambling anime Kaiji argue that Kakegurui is not actually a gambling anime but a farce behind tons of fan service and that the anime is actually an ecchi. I agree to some extent, there are definitely some of those elements in the show which ruin the more serious "feel" of the atmosphere. In Kaiji, the characters seem like they could lose their life at any time which builds up a lot of tension. In Kakegurui it is mostly just for show, money, and status in the school. Also there is the question of the main heroine of the show, Yumeko Jabami, which I will discuss later. I read in another review that in these shows like Kaiji/Kakegurui you always know that the main character is going to win, you just want to see how they do it.

Now I do have some issues with the first season, and there were a few things that I found odd. For example, the first few episodes are followed very closely 1:1 to the manga chapters, but after a few episodes they started to cram more chapters into a single episode, and some episodes also had random content from several chapters which made it confusing to someone that read the manga. Moreover, at the end of Season 1 (about halfway through the manga) the plot completely splits from the original material and we are shown an arc that was not yet seen. I thought this was interesting but it was an unfulfilling ending for sure. However, I want to review the first episode of the second season, not the entire show.

Now Season 2 is supposed to pick off where both the anime and the manga are at the halfway point. The cover for the show (which I have placed below) shows a still from a very important arc in the manga, The Tower of Doors. However, S2 instead starts off closer to the 3/4ths point of the manga in a random gambling showdown between the characters, which I will also now present.

Tower of Doors - Kakegurui xx Preview Art

Tower of Doors - Kakegurui Manga

Characters

Suzui Ryouta - Who is supposed to be the "main hero" of this show, but he barely says any lines in this episode. Therefore, he is just as useless in this episode as every other part of the show.

Jabami Yumeko - The main heroine of the anime, and who I consider to be the sole protagonist of the series. Early on in the anime you find out that she wins nearly every gamble not only because she is smarter, but because she doesn't care if she loses. She does not really gamble for money. In fact, the thought of despair where you could lose it all is a point of excitement for her. However, she still tries her best to outwit her opponents, most of whom are cheating and often beats them at their own game while taking gigantic risks. This is definitely questionable, as I don't know if it's possible for a real person to actually not fear losing everything in gambling. However the anime wants you to believe it is realistic and the entire premise of the series is built on her character.

Ikishima Midari - Another student of the school, and a compulsive gambler like Yumeko. She gets pleasure from losing and lost her eye in a gamble. Herself and Yumeko may seem alike but it's quite the contrary, Yumeko despises her because she does not take gambling seriously and wants to throw the games on purpose just so she can feel the despair of losing for herself.

Random Judge/Dealer - With the student council election underway and with the votes being decided by tokens obtained from gambling, each official match must have a judge and this is what they look like. They can also act as the dealer if required.

Erimi Mushibami - A really annoying and rude character. She challenged Yumeko to the finger cutting guillotine and Midari decided to join in.

Kikari Momobami - Current student council president, ruthless gambler.

Synopsis

As I said earlier, the episode starts off after the events of the first season, in the middle of a gambling game called the "Finger Cutting Guillotine", where each player sticks their finger into a hole and takes turns cutting threads. At any moment, the thread could snap and chop the fingers of the players clean off. The players that remove their fingers from the hole lose and the last one standing wins the gamble.

After a brief introduction, we are presented with the new OP (opening) of the second season which is nothing short of stunning. I loved the first OP and the second one is just as good. I recommend that everybody listen to it or watch it. I linked the S1 OP first then S2 for reference.

This is probably one of my favorite parts of the episode. Just in the opening alone the art style is reminiscent of Masaaki Yuasa, director of such series as Devilman: Crybaby and Tatami Galaxy. The colors in the OP are vibrant, it's just a shame it ends there because most of the show is grim in contrast due to the black and red uniforms of the students, which take up most of the color pallet

in the faded art style of the show.

Now that we are back to the game, Midari, Yumeko, and Mushibami are all taking turns cutting threads (Note that Suzui does not partake in the gambles, mostly because he's a bitch). With less and less threads left, there is an immense amount of tension as the next thread cut could sever a finger. However, in an inner monologue we hear that the owner of the guillotine, Mushibami has actually installed a safeguard which prevents the guillotine from falling no matter which piece is cut. Knowing this information she can calmly leave her finger there without any consequence. However, her plans are interrupted when Yumeko asks the judge "you did set up the guillotine properly right?", to which the judge responds yes. Of course this makes Mushibami nervous as she considers dropping out of the game. This part ends on a sort of cliffhanger, it's not really a cliffhanger because you know what will probably happen, and those who read the manga definitely will.

Between cuts of the characters playing the game, we are also being introduced to new characters from Season 2, Mushibami being one of them. As I said earlier in the character description there is currently an election for the next student council president. During official gambles the students can bet tokens which they can then use to vote. Whoever has the most tokens at the end of the election period wins. Of course a lot of students want to take the current president's spot which is why there are a lot of competitors. The vast majority of the new characters introduced come from the Momobami extended family, who were invited by Ririka to compete for the presidency to make things more interesting. Of course Mushibami comes from this family also and is the first one in the family to challenge Yumeko due to her infamy in the school.

The last side plot is about two other characters which I have not mentioned yet and I don't want to reveal it because there would be a huge spoiler for the end of the first season. if you are curious you can watch the show for yourself to find out and if there is anyone that has seen it you know what I'm talking about.

Now the ED (ending) is also one of my favorite parts of the episode. Beautiful art once again with a nice violin instrumental and soulful singing. You can listen to it below.

My Review

If you have read this far, you can see that I have given my opinion about a lot of the show's weak points and some things that I also love about it. In my opinion this episode was quite disappointing, it deviated and skipped far ahead of the manga and there were a lot of things that bugged me in this episode a lot more compared to when it happened in other episodes. For example, 99% of the time when Yumeko wins her gambles it's because of something she picked up on during the game. However, to the audience member it's always something random that no one would have ever guessed. Imagine you're playing iSpy looking for an object, when the whole time the object wasn't in that room to begin with. It's the same concept, and I found it paraphrased better in another review: "the hero figures out the tricks that the antagonist is employing only through sheer intuition or something off-screen that's impossible to pick up on by the audience, you might enjoy this".

Honestly I was surprised that when this episode came out it had a higher MAL rating (of 7.88) compared to Kakegurui S1 (7.55). However it now looks like the second season is at a 7.65 so seeing that it dropped I am not sure that I'm going to continue this.

Something else I saw a lot was some of the really ugly shots of the characters. This happened a lot in Season 1, and it's a signature of the manga as well but for the tons of fan service and ecchi this show has it feels wrong to see the characters in such an unflattering light. If you're interested to see what I'm talking about, some of those shots can be found in this [imgur album](#). (SPOILRS)

<https://imgur.com/a/ITzpV>

Other than that I don't really have anything to say about this episode or the show in general. Let me know what you thought of the review and the episode in general if you watched it. If you haven't and it seems interesting you should watch the first season of the show first, or better yet read the manga. Don't take it seriously, for me it's kind of like a guilty pleasure with some elements of the gambling thrill mixed in.

Happeh - January 30, 2019, 6:23 pm

Much better in terms of a review as opposed to some of the other recent ones, but to be expected for yourself. Throwbacks to the source material, references to the episodes previously in detail, nods to directors art styles, and even taking the time to read other reviews to split that potential bias opinion into a critical one. Point the rest of the group to this review as this is how it should be done.

The conclusion could have been stronger, the point of a review is you have thoughts on it, but according to yourself: "...I don't really have anything to say about this episode or the show in general." Just a strange summary after having opinions and thoughts dripped into the review throughout.

RedCupcake - January 30, 2019, 7:05 pm

Very well written Soulmate I enjoyed the read, I look forward to reading more threads from you.

Soulmate~?? - January 30, 2019, 7:47 pm

(Jan 30, 2019 07:23 PM)Happeh Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) Much better in terms of a review as opposed to some of the other recent ones, but to be expected for yourself. Throwbacks to the source material, references to the episodes previously in detail, nods to directors art styles, and even taking the time to read other reviews to split that potential bias opinion into a critical one. Point the rest of the group to this review as this is how it should be done.

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Thanks for the feedback, to be honest I did see some of your comments on the other review threads and noted it as something I could try to improve on.

I agree with what you said about the conclusion though, I sort of ran out of steam for what to say at that point. However what I said was "Other than that I don't really have anything to say about this episode or the show in general." Other than that being everything I just mentioned. The wording of that phrase was pretty bad and I could have done a better conclusion for sure if I spent more time on it but English is not my main language and I'm not really interested in any sort of writing classes. I'm glad you enjoyed the review though, thanks again for the critique.

Happeh - January 30, 2019, 10:50 pm

(Jan 30, 2019 08:47 PM)Soulmate~?? Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) Thanks for the feedback, to be honest I did see some of your comments on the other review threads and noted it as something I could try to improve on.

I agree with what you said about the conclusion though, I sort of ran out of steam for what to say at that point. However what I said was "Other than that I don't really have anything to say about this episode or the show in general." Other than that being everything I just mentioned. The wording of that phrase was pretty bad and I could have done a better conclusion for sure if I spent more time on it but English is not my main language and I'm not really interested in any sort of writing classes.

I'm glad you enjoyed the review though, thanks again for the critique.

That's fair, considering English is not your first language this was an excellent review. I always understand that lack of steam; the feeling of just wanting to be finished. The thing I liked the most was the fact you displayed in-depth knowledge of previous episodes/other anime and linked it back to this episode. When someone reads reviews they want a feeling that they're reading it from someone who has actually seen the anime and is knowledgeable and you articulated this well. The biggest issue I have is format but that's more of a limitation with MyBB than it is with your review and something I always hated working on when I was doing similar stuff.

Anywho, good luck with future tasks if you do any. Cool seeing a little activity here for a change of pace from the "I watched Naruto now what."

Jiren - February 1, 2019, 2:45 am

(Jan 30, 2019 07:23 PM)Happeh Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) Much better in terms of a review as opposed to some of the other recent ones, but to be expected for yourself. Throwbacks to the source material, references to the episodes previously in detail, nods to directors art styles, and even taking the time to read other reviews to split that potential bias opinion into a critical one. Point the rest of the group to this review as this is how it should be done.

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Imagine caring that much on a public hacking forum

Happeh - February 1, 2019, 8:07 am

(Feb 1, 2019 03:45 AM)Jiren Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) Imagine caring that much on a public hacking forum Mad salty just because someone actually wrote a review without saying "good" 4 times lmao. Besides, I ain't the one caring so much that I wrote a review on cartoons tasked by me from a random group on a public hacking forum.