

Rarely does an anime come along and change the way that you look at your own life in the real world. Making you want to have a moment of self reflection in order to realize what it is that you want do and who you ultimately want to end up becoming. Helping you to see how blessed you truly are. All the while giving you a main character who so many of us can relate to on such a deep level because she herself is going on this same journey as well.

'The Ancient Magus's Bride' is a whimsical fantasy/romance/slice of life/shounen genre anime that showcases the brightest and darkest corners of the magical realm. Delving into familiar lore from fables and legends from many different cultures while building a strong, captivating and breathtaking narrative around those legends. Each episode flaunts an array of creatures, monsters, environments and characters for us to fall in love with. Never once losing itself in fast paced, oversharing episodes. It is so refreshing when an anime can give you so much material to chew on while never seeming to give you too much at once. With stories like the one presented in this visual, the pacing always seems to run too fast for the viewers to retain everything that is being given to them. But this one does not seem to have that problem.

So just what is this anime about exactly? The 'Wit Studio' made production introduces us to a young girl named Chise. She is a girl who like most young adults, is struggling to find her way. Struggling to find her purpose for living essentially. With no family or friends to love and guide her, she has opted to surrender her life to slavery, just so she can have a place to call home. She is broken in every sense of the word, life means very little for her at this stage in her life. We come to find out that her new owner is a powerful mage. His name is Elias and he is not a man or anything human for that fact. It turns out that he is a beast of some sort striving to learn how to become more human. His sole purpose for buying Chise is to train her to become a mage, learn more about how to become a functioning human and to make her his wife eventually.

Now that premise alone may seem weird or even creepy to some first time viewers. But with the story building that we have gotten over the past 16 episodes, we are starting to see Elias explore his new found emotions and pull more towards the human side because of having Chise in his life. Now you may be asking "how can Chise become a mage if she is just a regular, depressed girl?" Well, Chise is what they call a 'Sleigh Beggy' which are rare, highly powerful magic users. If trained and raised with the proper care, they can become some of the most powerful and most sought after magical beings. That power alone would explain why Chise saw strange creatures her entire life and was casted out because she was so different. Even by her own mother, whom she still loves very much.

Through out the course of the series we see Chise grow in every single episode. Learning more about the world Elias lives in, the one that is now her home. We are treated with breath taking

views of the London country side, as well as Scotland and Iceland as well. The art is so beautifully done, it is one of the best things about this anime. It is something that brings everything to life, letting it breath and become more vibrant with each passing frame. As she trains and becomes more powerful, Chise and Elias travel to the 'Land of the Fae' which happens to be where Elias's mother, Queen Titania lives. They also visit the 'Land of the Dragons', where Chise builds her magic wand with Elias's teacher Lindel resides and cares for the remaining dragons in the world.

Not only does this 15 year old girl get to see and experience things that begin to break her out her shell, she also has a stable and loving home now. Her residence consists of herself, Elias, Silky the maid and her familiar/magic protector Ruth. Other than Chise I have to say that Ruth is my favorite character in the series. His life is bound to Chise's as he swore to protect her as long they should live. He loves her so much and thinks of her as a little sister of sorts. Those connections help bring Chise back to life. You can see how she is growing from wanting to die and not caring about her life, to actually wanting to fight for not only her life and future, but for those she now loves and cherishes as well. Through the straining battles with enemies, to the near death moments, Chise is truly fighting to see the next day every episode and you cannot help but love and root for her.

From magical dogs, fairies, vampires, dragons, alchemists, spriggans, chimera's and dozens of other magical creatures from fairy tales and ancient lore. 'The Ancient Magus's Bride' delivers an enchanting story, with a fresh perspective on what it means to truly live. Making you realize that the world around you is filled with all of the magic you need. In your loved ones, the bonds and connections you make and most importantly in your heart. As long as you can find the will to fight, the future is wide open. You just have to take its hand and hold on tight.

So if you are interested in this type of genre or enjoy the lore of the magical realm, then this anime is definitely something to add to your watchlist. From the plot, to the wonderful, mystical soundtrack, everything is so well done with the utmost care and love. If you are also interested enough, go back and read the original source material for this series. That being the Manga, which is still going and is ahead of the anime right now. It offers more detail in some areas that the anime does not go into very much.

'The Ancient Magus's Bride' airs every Saturday, on Crunchyroll. Watch for free with ads or subscribe from \$6.95 for a month, \$19.95 for 3 months or \$59.95 for an entire of all the anime you can watch, the day it airs in Japan. With full SUBS and no ads you get access to the entire CR library stocked with over 200+ titles. So please support the industry that we love and pay for your content!