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SoRaNoWoTo Did Not Deliver

2010/03/17

I made a [lousy bet](#) when the series first began, hoping it takes a unique approach at character development, one we rarely or never see in anime. I thought the timing was just right for anime as a medium to reinvent itself by rebranding what we like to call moe today, or perhaps showing what moe shows could look like. The series shattered my dreams with this last episode, sealing the deal for me with Noël losing her wits for no good reason. I thought the whole point of cute girls taking up arms was supposed to act as a catalyst for their growth, instead we got the tired formula of girls with sad pasts, which is kind of cool considering they all look very young, but alas nothing we haven't seen before. What can I say, my expectations have got the best of me again, and I'm not sure if I want to lay the blame this time on the limitations posed by the 12-episode TV series format. Granted, I came up with the mentioned theory after episode 5, so I set the bar pretty high by leaving very little room for character development in the first place.

As for the rest of the episode, I kept thinking what else can four girls do to prevent an upcoming war. The Roman army mysteriously resurging in the midst of No Man's Land, the Helvetian army taking over command in Seize, their own leader lost to the world of Helvetian statesmanship, the grim accusation of harboring an enemy combatant and the future that awaits them, the possibility of Noël's progress on the Takemikazuchi betraying her expectations again—the situation looks pretty hopeless. Only one thing can happen to turn the tide of war around at this point, something only a woman can do, and it's something [other bloggers](#) have already pointed out: Rio will have to make peace with Rome, probably through political marriage, sacrificing her self in true Maiden fashion. This doesn't make me happy at all, first because it's highly predictable and second because alternative theories to a happy ending demand an even bigger deus ex machina. Personally, I'm hoping they stick to the long-running theme of a dying world and just let them all slaughter each other. What the series did manage to accomplish was an effective combination of different

themes, imagery and props—such as characters and worldly references—that made it look more interesting than its worth. This approach reminds me of how GONZO experimented with their series, with the very important difference of actually employing intellect behind prop placement in this case. The overall result still doesn't work for me, so I'm already kind of skeptical of what A-1 Pictures will bring to the medium with *Senkou no Night Raid*.

And yeah, I promise to get back on my hiatus ASAP.

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