



## Fruits Basket, Vol. 1

*Natsuki Takaya, Alethea Nibley (Translator), Athena Nibley (Translator)*

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**Fruits Basket, Vol. 1** Natsuki Takaya , Alethea Nibley (Translator) , Athena Nibley (Translator)  
A family with an ancient curse...

And the girl who will change their lives forever...

Tohru Honda was an orphan with no place to go until the mysterious Sohma family offered her a place to call home. Now her ordinary high school life is turned upside down as she's introduced to the Sohma's world of magical curses and family secrets.

## **Fruits Basket, Vol. 1 Details**

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Author : Natsuki Takaya , Alethea Nibley (Translator) , Athena Nibley (Translator)

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## From Reader Review Fruits Basket, Vol. 1 for online ebook

### **Kat (Lost in Neverland) says**

I just have one thing to say;

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### **Rita says**

Initial thoughts:

1. I felt so nostalgic reading this manga again!
2. Toru is such an adorable, although naive, character. Love her!
3. Shigure and also Hanajima and Uotani are hilarious!
4. The fights between Yuki and Kyo seem to never end.
5. Amazing artwork!

Check out my full review on my blog!

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### **Regan says**

Total impulse read! 4.5

I really just felt like continuing this story! I watched the anime about 5 years ago now, and the ending is still bothering me, and I just need to know what is going to happen next!

Cute, funny, typical rom com anime/manga. However, I hear it gets darker, which should be interesting.

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### **Whitney Atkinson says**

1.5 Stars

This was a boring, hot mess. I never read this as a kid and I definitely haven't watched the anime, but I heard that this was really good from a lot of people. I'm so let down.

None of the characters were named or fleshed out, the plot is nonexistent, there's absolutely no emotion to this, and the scenes skip around so much that I could never tell where we were or what was happening. It genuinely felt like I'd just skipped to the fifth book of a series because I had no idea what was supposed to be happening.

I almost DNF'ed this, and finishing it just secured its status as something that totally isn't my taste. I'll definitely be trying more manga from the library in the future until I figure out what my taste is in the genre, because this is only the third one i've read.

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### **Merb says**

? This volume is Tohru! ?

Living in a tent after the passing of her mother, Tohru Honda soldiers through her adversities with a smile on her face. After a classmate of hers, Yuki Sohma, discovers that Tohru is living in a tent, he offers to let her lodge at his house with his slightly perverted uncle Shigure and cranky cousin Kyo. It is not long until Tohru discovers that the Sohma family have a secret, that they are cursed by the zodiac, and transform into one of the zodiac animals when intimately touched by someone of the opposite sex. Tohru is granted permission by the head of the Sohma family to not have her memory erased, and so Tohru begins what would seem to be a crazy life, but one that she perceives as beautiful.

As I of course would, I loved beginning my third re-read of this series. Being introduced to one of my favourite trios again was so wonderful, and as always, this volume brought me so much joy. Whilst none of the darker content is explored during this volume, we start to already glimpse the effect Tohru's optimistic and happy personality is having on the isolated Yuki and Kyo. Going back to the beginning of this story was as fun as my first time reading this as a thirteen year old. I recommend this story to everyone, even people who harbour no interest in manga. It is such a beautiful story about acceptance, trauma, isolation and love. Tohru still plays a huge part in who I am today, as I learnt so many lessons from her about kindness, and how showing kindness can have a profoundly positive impact on other people. I can't wait to continue on with my third re-read!

? Next volume is Yuki! ?

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### **?????? ????? says**

*[This review only covers volumes 1-12]*

It was last year when I realized that I am so done with shoujo manga stories (especially in a school setting). It wasn't as if it was a constant presence in my life growing up or anything, but after a while I realized that its formulaic sweetness and often predictable climactic moments just doesn't appeal to me anymore.

In fact, there are only three shoujo manga stories I was really into and two of them were adapted to anime which I preferred (*Ouran Kouko Hostabu* and *Kimi ni Todoke*), and one was a manga series I followed and read because I related to the heroine (*Yamato Nadeshiko Shichi Henge*).

But last year I read a fairly recent and popular one alongside a josei manga (*Sakamichi no Apollon*, baby!). I even forgot its title and NO, I'm not even going to bother googling it. The fact on the matter is that I'm a twenty-six year old woman and, as much as my nerdy inclinations make it seem like I'm not an adult

functioning in my fullest capacity, there are just some stories about teenage relationships that don't click with me at this point in my life. I'm a sucker for coming-of-age stories, true, but the ones that get to me were usually the ones I've come across back when I was also a teenager on the verge of self-discovery and sexuality. So reading a shoujo manga series now at my age presented problems.

That's never to say the shoujo romance genre isn't producing good stuff anymore. In fact, there are two series right now which I adore, but were more or less a parody of the genre (*Gekkan Shoujo Nozaki-kun*), or a change in perspective where the male love interest is the protagonist (*Ore Monogatari*). Those two for me were exceptions. Others are the same formula of girl-meets-boy (girl is bland/clumsy/pure-hearted while boy is popular/bad-boy/pretty-boy/emotionally closed-off) and the entire volumes would stretch out their will-they-won't-they as they get into shenanigans with their oddball friends and the run-in-the-mill bully, etc. You know, that formula. Anyway, enough about me and let's talk about *Fruits Basket*.

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Much like any shoujo romance in a school setting, *Fruits Basket* has those same elements that adhere to its genre's conventions. If you've been reading manga long enough, you'd catch my drift. The reason I chose to read this series was because it was commercially successful and received rave reviews and praises for its story and characterizations of its ensemble cast. It ran for twenty-three volumes, though, and since I have other material to read and review for this month of July, I have to cut down to finishing only twelve of them. I'm probably going to pick up this series again...next year. I have plenty of things scheduled for 2016 and this wasn't that much of a priority. So please keep in mind that my official review for this series is based on the first 12 volumes and only those.

Let's keep it simple: I thoroughly recommend this series. If you're a teen looking for something sweet, earnest and heartbreak, then *Fruits Basket* fits the criteria to the tee. If you're my age, and you could look past genre conventions or don't even have my personal bias, then this manga will tug at your heart-strings as well. Let me break it down for you:

[CLICK FOR LARGER IMAGES]

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## THE STORY

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Tohru Honda is your average nice girl whose mother just passed away so she had to live on her own. She became neighbors with a mysterious family who has a dark secret they keep under wraps. This family belonged to the Souma clan whose members were apparently cursed to transform into the 12 animals of the Chinese Zodiac every time someone of the opposite sex hugs them. It's a pretty quirky premise that could be potentially wacky and entertainingly disastrous which was why you will never see coming the underlying poignancy and emotionally stirring revelations that *Fruits Basket* impressively tackles.

The story is at its most heartfelt whenever it focuses on a character's struggle with self-love, pursuit of acceptance from his or her peers, and courage to stand up for themselves in the face of diversity. As much as there are moments in the volumes that annoy me because it still has those shoujo romance antics that I find grating by now, *Fruits Basket* can be an immense tear-jerker too. I find that it's when I underestimate the series that it finds a way to shine. Sure, a few volumes out of the twelve ones I read made me skim the pages a bit, but there were four or six of them that were solid in both content and substance.

Those were the volumes that got high ratings either because they touched upon a delicate topic and handled with maturity, or they focused on a particularly favorite character and made them evolve as better people. This is definitely one shoujo manga series that may not be always interesting but when it drives home a point, that resonates with a reader, even with someone who can be a tad cynical about PG-13 romances.

Hey, I told you I don't like this genre anymore, so the fact that I'm singing praises for a manga that is beholden to said grating genre should say something!

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## THE CHARACTERS

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In the course of the series, Tohru Honda gets introduced to each new relative from the Souma clan, all the while there are three core male characters she interacts with on a daily basis after she moved in with them. They're the dog, mouse and cat signs of the zodiac: Shigure, Yuki and Kyo respectively. The last two were the ones she has a love triangle with. Tohru is also surrounded by two close female friends whose backstories will be revealed as the manga progresses. Meanwhile, each chapter would feature a new relative from the Souma clan who were also cursed, and their characters and conflicts will be then explored if not resolved just a little through their key interactions with the lead heroine Tohru.

In a sense, there is definitely an established formula to how the stories is framed and patterned. It could get a little worn-out in some chapters; even Tohru with her bleeding heart and good intentions can be such a cliché (if not altogether bland), and the pacing and main conflict with the antagonist were both drawn out since that's just how the genre works.

However, they say that the strength of an ensemble cast can make or break the plot of a book or show, and *Fruits Basket* was able to accomplish the former because each secondary character introduced is well-developed with core weaknesses, issues and surprising warmth and humanity. These characters have been cursed to live with shameful secret of transforming into animals, and while the manga does play up on the cuteness factor of those transformations, the trauma and alienation that it entails were still addressed and explored.

I believe what made *Fruits Basket* such an awesome series and why it got such an acclaimed reception is the way the mangaka lovingly crafted each character that instantly makes them personable, sympathetic and gosh-darn endearing. The manga series has 23 volumes, so it does take its time weaving plots and progressing through meaningful climactic moments, but the slow-burn quality of the journey has fantastic

moments of character insights in between that more than makes up for whatever flaws its narrative has. This is still a slice-of-life manga after all. I can't count all the ways so many moments between or among characters have made me tear up, especially when the mangaka delivers emotionally resonant themes about family politic, friendships, self-acceptance and bereavement.

Tohru's role as the protagonist does make it seem like she's often standing still, serving more as an anchor or as someone who merely reacts with a new character in a way that makes it accessible to readers. That being said, she eventually gets some depth and character development later on. Kyo and Yuuki, the lead males, also grow and evolve alongside her. I have a strong preference over the tortured and hot-headed Kyo as her love interest than Yuuki, mostly because I like getting to know Kyo better, and Yuuki just came off flat to me at times (but he's beginning to change too, and that's great).

*This is my ship, yo!*

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## FAVORITE QUOTES

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In a nutshell, *Fruits Basket* is a splendid shoujo manga series that almost breaks the formula every now and then, starring a beautiful and relatable ensemble cast you will easily love, and tackles real-life issues in an earnest way that doesn't pander to the readers, or diminish said issues' seriousness by belittling their message.

**RECOMMENDED: 8/10**

**DO READ MY REVIEWS AT**

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**Rachel (Kalanadi) says**

One of my absolute favorite series... So good to reread it! This gets a 4.5 rating from me now. 5 stars for the nostalgia; 4 stars really for a good beginning, but it comes across as ditzier and more comedic in the early volumes, whereas I think it gets even better later on when things become more serious. On to volume 2!

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### **Anna says**

I know I am writing this as the minority point of view, but I hated *Fruits Basket*. At first, I found it mildly dull, but as the story failed to progress interestingly, I found myself grinding my teeth waiting for the plot to pick up. It's about a cloyingly sweet, kind, selfless, gentle, beautiful high school girl named Tohru Honda. She lives in a tent in the woods (really, Takaya?) because her grandfather can't keep her and her mother died. Sweet, innocent Tohru is wrought with guilt because she's sure it's her fault her mother died, because—are you ready for this?—she forgot to tell her to keep safe. "I always told her to be safe in the morning," sobs Tohru, "but one day I slept late because I was up all night studying for exams and I didn't get to, and that was the day she died. It's all my fault!"

Most people should be able to see why I dislike the series already. It gets even worse. She somehow moves in with her glamorous, sexy classmate, "Prince" Yuki Sohma, and his glamorous, sexy brother, both of whom fall head-over-heels for her. Enter... Kyo Sohma! A martial artist who spent his life training in the mountains, Yuki fells him with one house-shattering blow. He then apologizes to Tohru, who somehow got a small cut in the fight, and she says it's okay and hugs him. He then turns into a cat. Apparently, all of the Sohmas are cursed with the signs of the zodiac, meaning they turn into their animal when hugged by a member of the opposite sex. Yuki is the rat, and his brother, Shigure, is the dog. Slowly, though he is aggressive at first, Kyo falls in love with Tohru (he does this by the end of the second book). Tohru also has two friends, a Yankee gang member and a psychic freak who can \*bleeeeep\* all the mean popular girls with her electro-waves. They approve of Tohru living with the Sohmas. Tohru spends her days volunteering at a hospital (or something) because she's so kind and selfless, and she cooks and cleans for the Sohmas. She's also beautiful, so the jealous girls in her class pick on her.

I recommend this to fans of *Twilight*.

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### **Inés Izal says**

¿POR QUÉ NADIE ME HABLÓ DE ESTE MANGA?

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### **Artemis says**

I know it's an exaggeration to say that something has changed my life, particularly if it's a story from a book or TV series or movie. Or at least, it has changed me; in shaping my deeply-held beliefs.

'Fruits Basket' was like that for me, however. When I started reading manga and watching anime online at the age of sixteen, I didn't start with *Furuba* for some reason. But when I did, I was hooked. I was blown away. Now I know what it means to have feelings of the darkest depths of human nature, but to also wield the hope we all possess deep inside us. I now understand what it means to deal with these messed-up feelings, to remain good for others, and to stay true to yourself and your life-affirmed values.

'Fruits Basket'; my favourite manga and anime of all time, finally gets a review.

I will try to keep this as brief as possible, since the series is so complex and so full of rich, living, three-

dimensional characters that one could fill a whole Chinese transcript describing them and all the intricacies of this 23-volume series and how they come together towards the conclusion.

I'll start by saying that it is a gross oversimplification to describe 'Fruits Basket' as a slice-of-life drama about an orphan girl and a bunch of family members who turn into the animals of the Chinese Zodiac when held by the opposite sex. 'Fruits Basket' is a tale about people who live the most wretched lives imaginable - full of abuse, neglect, and death; afflicted by irresponsible and uncaring adults. But with the help of one girl who has suffered great loss herself, and who carries her late mother's teachings in her heart in order to keep on going and just be kind to people who are not perfect themselves, maybe life can get better. Maybe the girl could even be so powerfully good - so assertive in her morals and code of ethics, no matter the tragedies - she could break the family's Zodiac curse. She wants to break the curse, and could do so by loving fully again and giving that love to others in turn.

The girl I'm talking about is Tohru Honda, a sixteen-year-old orphan who lived in a tent at the start of the series, and who came to live with the cursed Sohma. She keeps a picture of her mother, Kyoko, whom she loves dearly and talks to like she's still alive. Kyoko died in a car collision, and had had a wayward life of a delinquent - leader of a biker gang called the "Red Butterfly Suicide Squad". So she had wanted to raise her daughter to be a better person and not make the same mistakes she did. As a result, Tohru ended up being the very opposite of her mother - bursting with kindness, ridiculously polite, always wanting to look for the good in others, no matter who they are or how reprehensible they behave. She is the very epitome of a saint.

However, Tohru is not a doormat or weak willed, even though on the surface it's easy to dismiss her as such. She will struggle to search for reasons to keep living, to keep on being good in spite of everything, and to help others by using the very act of kindness and forgiveness. That's not weak, that's courageous. She will stand up for others, asking for nothing in return, other than that people will be happy. Tohru will fight to change the lives of everyone around her through her loving and caring personality alone.

What makes this especially remarkable, at least in manga, is that Tohru really isn't anyone special. She's not a chosen one of a prophecy or any contrived rubbish like that: she is just an ordinary young girl who by chance stumbled across the Sohma and their family curse, and who happens to be exactly what they need.

I was the same age as Tohru when I first started reading 'Fruits Basket', and lord knows I needed guidance and the courage to achieve the things I needed to in that time in my life. I admired Tohru then, and I still do now as an adult; when it's so easy to be cynical about the goodness of human nature. She was like the friend I always wanted, and had wished for there to be more people like her in real life, for no doubt it would be better if that were the case.

For that reason, Tohru Honda is one of my favourite female characters in fiction, period. Sweet, kind, naive, giving, yet also determined, brave, strong and unfaltering in the face of adversity.

The Sohma are also a colourful and varied bunch. Kyo (the reviled, cast-out Cat) and Yuki (the Rat) are opposites who hate each other and always fight for historical, complex reasons. But deep down, in terms of family troubles, they may have more in common than they will ever admit.

Other family members such as Kagura (the Boar), Momiji (the Rabbit), Kisa (the Tiger), Hatsuhiro (the Ox), Ayame (the Snake), Hiro (the Goat), Ritsu (the Monkey), and Rin (the Horse) are an entertaining mix of likable and unlikable traits; and they appear more alive for it. Hell, Kagura manages to not be the Clingy Jealous Girl stereotype (my most hated anime cliche) by being friends with Tohru, even when she knows that Kyo and Tohru are falling in love with each other. There isn't anything to hate about Tohru anyway; she isn't

even that stupid or naive as the reader will come to see.

I adore the poor, tragic hero Rin (and yes she is beautiful and sexy, but not in a fetishized, cheap way). Even the twisted, abusive bastard Akito, the head of the Sohma and the Zodiac curse, is miraculously revealed to be capable of receiving sympathy much later in the manga series.

I came to love Kyo, violent bad boy as he is. His story is one of the most heartbreakingly tragic. His relationship with Tohru is of a 'Beauty and the Beast' kind - taken to extremes, but it has so much heart and hope to it that I nearly cried at the resolution of them realizing their feelings and finally getting together.

When the princely, sensitive and shy Yuki doesn't have a chance of winning Tohru's heart, he will find love in the most unlikely of places - at the high school council, with a girl who is as lost and alone as he is...

Tohru's best friends, Arisa Uotani and Saki Hanajima, are also worth mentioning. They are polar opposites - Arisa the tough "yankee", and Saki the psychic, Gothic "witch" - yet they both care deeply for Tohru and are extremely protective of her, in the wake of the tragedy of Kyoko's sudden death. They never find out the truth about the Sohma and their curse - Tohru is the only human outside of the family to know about it and keep her memories - but they still come to trust the family to look after their beloved friend. The kindness of Tohru and Kyoko helped to change the difficulties of Arisa's and Saki's lives, and they want to return the gesture out of the goodness of their not-so-empty hearts.

I don't think there is a single character - and there are hundreds of them - that I dislike in 'Fruits Basket'; for it shows that anyone, child or adult, can change. Anyone can find love and be kind. That's the core message in this whole spider web series in my view. That and the importance of family, but never cling to the toxic, abusive members. Rather, stay with those who make you feel good about yourself, who tell you that you are worth it, and that you have the right to exist.

The series is a sweet drama, with a combined bittersweetness and poison lurking in its pages. The artwork - like the themes and characters - is wonderfully detailed, varied and lovely. Everything is strange; a perfect side-by-side reflection and collaboration between light and dark. Between melancholy and hope.

Natsuki Takaya is a genius, and 'Fruits Basket' is her magnum opus. It is as close to being perfect as any manga I've read. While the anime may not be perfect, with it ending before the manga, it is still my favourite.

Also, I do love the animals. Though in the midst of all the angst and dramatics they are not seen frequently, and less so as the series progresses. It contains a lot of funny moments in the beginning: Furuba has something for everyone, hence the universal appeal and popularity, I think.

'Fruits Basket' showed me what it means to change lives for the better. And this is not an exaggeration; manga or anime, I will never forget this amazing, beautiful series. After all the years since I've finished it, I still haven't.

Highly loved. Highly recommended.

Final Score: 5/5, although scores are redundant by this point. Just try it out for yourself, no matter who you are, where you came from, and where you are going.

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## **Steph Sinclair says**

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I LOVE this series. It's really cute! This was one of the first manga series I've read. I own a few of them. As always, I won't add all of the books to my self. Way too many.

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## **Corinna says**

I don't know what to do with this rating. One of my 2018 Reading Challenges included "A Graphic Novel." I've never actually read a graphic novel before so I have absolutely no basis for comparison. This was...different? Weird? Interesting in bizarre ways?

I'm not throwing in the towel yet, but I spent the first quarter of the book just trying to figure out how to read the darn thing. I finally got the hang of it, and it was a pretty quick read from that point forward. The plot is fluff, and the dialogue hokey, but I think that's the charm of Manga. I'm certainly not an expert, so I think I need to research this more thoroughly...with more books. Since this series comes highly recommended by an awesome friend, I'm going to keep going with it for now!

Any other graphic novel recommendations? I'm interested in checking out this genre a bit more, actually.

For now, I'm giving it a two star rating, but that's probably more to do with my confusion and figuring-it-out-as-I-go more than the book.

I'd rate this a PG.

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## **Yesy (The Book Vagrant) says**

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Rereading this old favorite. I love it so much!

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## **Ferdy says**

### **Spoilers**

This is the second manga I've read, the first being *Deathnote*. I didn't enjoy this quite as much as *Deathnote* but it was still pretty brilliant.

I found the premise a little odd but not in a bad way. The heroine, Tohru, lives in a tent (her mum died and her granddad sort of threw her out)... She doesn't want to be a burden on anyone so she works hard supporting herself and keeps all her misery to herself. Yes, she's a huge Mary Sue. Anyway, Tohru finds out that her tent is on Sohma grounds... The Sohma's are of course a bunch of hot, mysterious, attractive guys that live together and share a not so sexy secret... And guess what? They just so happen to need someone to cook and clean for them... Yay! So Tohru ends up staying with them in exchange for housework. Yes, it's a sexist as it sounds. Anyway, Tohru finds out the Sohma secret — they're all possessed by the twelve zodiacs and if they're ever hugged by the opposite sex they turn into their zodiac animal. It was rather funny seeing the guys turn into cats and rats whenever Tohru touched them.

Even though Tohru and the Sohma guys (Kyo and Yuki) were stereotypes, I still loved their characters. I hate Mary Sue's but for some reason Tohru with her optimism and perfect attitude didn't annoy me. I'm guessing by the time I've finished the 20 something volume series, I'll hate her with a passion.

Tohru's potential love interests were also likeable even though they were cliched - Kyo was the dark, moody, tortured one and Yuki was the charming, friendly one with hidden depths. I loved Kyo and Tohru's interactions — they were really cute.

*Fruits Basket* was a funny, light and entertaining read - I'd recommend it to anyone wanting to dip their toes in manga. The artwork was good, the characters were decent and the plot was fun and unique.

I did find the dialogue a bit dodgy at times — it didn't flow very well... Maybe that was due to the translation?

I also noticed that some of the illustrations didn't make sense — they felt random at times and I didn't understand what was going on.

One thing I found absolutely hilarious was Tohru claiming that a girl's biggest dream was to marry. Just the way it was delivered in such a sincere way made it almost seem satirical — it was probably my favourite part.

Also, I loved the rivalry between Kyo and Yuki.

I'll definitely be reading the next volume when I get a chance.

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### **Jenny says**

This really was an adorable book! I hadn't read manga before this one, and I only picked this up based on some of my friends' reviews with no expectations. But it really didn't disappoint! I fell in love with the characters and the story from the beginning.

-There's Tohru, who is very cute, but also awkward with a lot of things, and that resulted into some very hilarious moments. And if there are guys like Kyo and Yuki, I don't need anything else!

-There's a secret of Sohma family, in which the members have a curse of turning into an animal of one of the animals of zodiac. Which was really interesting and funny at times. The graphics were just too cute!<3

And for me, the plot was very refreshing and unique because I hadn't come across anything like this until now so I really enjoyed it.

-If you still aren't convinced to read it, here's another reason: it has naked men too.

I loved it and I am definitely continuing with the series. However, the only reason for giving it 3 stars is that I kind of struggled with this one, and I can't blame the book because it was me who wasn't familiar with the genre, so there's that.

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### **Cath says**

5/5 Stars.

This was a reread for me and it was just as good as the first time I read it!

I love this story so much, it melts my heart.  
A great introduction to manga in my opinion.

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### **Shinjini says**

I started reading manga a couple of years back and this series was on my radar since then. I decided to pick this up on a whim, on a slow day, when I couldn't decide what to read. On the same day, I picked up 3 books from different genres to figure out the kind of book I was craving. I didn't even know I was even in the mood for a manga, but it was perfect!

The start was a bit weird. It didn't exactly match the blurb and I was pretty confused by it. I'm glad I continued reading though. This book was so cute! The plot seemed intriguing when I first read the blurb. The main character, Tohru, is an orphan studying in high school. One day, on her way to school, she meets Shigure Sohma and becomes friendly with him. She also meets his cousins, Yuki and Kyo Sohma and they eventually become friends too. She also moves into their home after a while. When she finds out the Sohma family secret, she assures them and promises to never speak about it to anyone.

The artwork was adorable and the introduction of the main characters and their big secret was done very well. The read was fast-paced and I couldn't even put it down. I read the entire volume in one sitting. The character development was also very good. The introductory scenes of the main characters and their progression through the volume was quite interesting. I did not expect this to happen in a cutesy Shoujo manga. I couldn't pick a favorite character in this volume, I liked them all equally.

I couldn't wait to get into the next volume so I picked it up... and finished it too. Haha! Gosh, I'm loving these books so much!

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### **Theresa ? says**

ALRIGHT! I am redoing this review!

I wrote a review for this long, long ago, but I really want to redo it, mostly because . . . . . I'm trying to read the whole series again.

It's just that I watched the whole series of the ANIME, and

1. They don't show all of the characters.
2. Anime is WAY WAY SHORTER than the manga.
3. I just WANT TO KNOW WHAT COMES NEXT!

I forgot most of the story . . . I only know up to the point where the anime stopped, but I just want to know MORE. Besides, the first time reading the whole series, I didn't exactly understand most of it, but I REALLY WANT TO.

So here is my mission. To spend this summer rereading all of Fruits Basket! (Mwah ha ha!)

Besides, once school starts again, I won't be able to finish all of it!

Alright, so Fruits Basket is a very famous shoujo manga that is known by many manga fanatics/crazies ALL AROUND THE WORLD.

It seems girly at first. There are lots of boys in this story, the story revolves around a girl, and when the girl hugs one of the boys, they turn into a super cute animal.

THAT IS SUPPOSEDLY CUTE.

**HOWEVER** ..... there is more meaning behind it.

Let's just explain volume one.

TOHRU . . . is a very adorable, likable creature who I FIND very huggable. She's sweet. COMPLETELY SELFLESS, always worrying about other people rather than herself . . . do you find many girls like that in the world?

Her mom died in an accident. Her dad already died. She wants to move into a tent so that she wouldn't have to burden anyone, and she can still smile and be happy and thankful for all kinds of things. And the rest of the characters are sitting by either calling her a fool or being amazed at how she can be **SO STRONG** and happy, even when she's gone through so many horrible things.

Okay.

So pretend you were holding some super delicious ice cream. SUPER SUPER SUPER DELICIOUS ICE CREAM. It just looks so, so, so delicious. IMAGINE.

It has the right amount of sprinkles. Some chocolate syrup (unless you're allergic to chocolate syrup! Then it's . . . I dunno. Cherries. Or fruit. Or nuts. Anything **SUPER DELICIOUS TO YOU**).

And you're just about to take a bite of that ice cream and then

SPLAT.

It falls on the floor.

And you're standing there . . . and you're probably thinking

You probably start attacking people.

Or screaming until your guts burn out.

But Tohru can just look at the ice cream and go, "Ahhhh! I'm such a klutz, why did I do that?" Then a second later, she'll shrug her shoulders and say, "Oh well. It's my own fault I dropped that ice cream. Well, I don't have any more money to spend on ice cream. I hope someone doesn't . . . slip on my spilt ice cream . . . ."

She's just strong and selfless, and people can learn something from this girl, even though she doesn't seem like much.

I remember long ago, I used to have the tiniest crush on Yuki. (I had a bigger crush on Kyou, but . . . anyway.)

I loved the story about how Tohru got herself lost, and a boy saw her and led her back home. That part got cut out of the anime for some reason, but I liked that story.

**THE MAIN POINT IS:** This story just teaches lots of emotional lessons. Even in the first volume, you learn a thing or two.

Most of my friends are guys and they don't really like Fruits Basket because they assume it's a girly girly manga, but it makes me want to slap a hand across their faces because **THEY CAN LEARN A THING OR TWO FROM THIS BOOK!!!**

It touches your soul, okay?

Put your hand on your heart and close your eyes, okay? Feel that?

Now open your eyes and read through Vol. 1 and then put your hand back on your heart and close your eyes again.

Feel that now?

That's Fruits Basket. **TOUCHING YOUR HEART.**

**AUGUST 22, 2011** (My old review . . . that only took like 30 seconds to write because I was super lazy back then.)

I've read the entire series of Fruits Basket from Volume 1 to Volume 23, so I'll review the series in Volume One--just in case any of you are curious about what Fruits Basket is like.

Fruits Basket is ranked as one of my favorite shoujo mangas that I've ever read! It's amazingly amazing!

The story begins with a young, high school girl named Tohru Honda who lives in a tent in the woods because of the passing of her mother and her grandfather's house renovation. She is discovered by one of her classmates, Yuki Sohma. The Sohmas that live in the house not too far away from Tohru's tent invite Tohru to stay in their household. Though while living in their household, Tohru learns about the Sohma family's biggest secret: 13 members of the Sohma family are possessed by the animals of the Zodiac.

It's an adorable manga that teaches very important life lessons. I'm very addicted to this manga--so if you're in search for a story with a well built theme and a kind of story that leaves you pondering even after you

close the book, I recommend Fruits Basket.

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### **Raeleen Lemay says**

2nd book read for BTAT2017 "read a book entirely outdoors"!

This manga has an enjoyable enough storyline and characters, but the art style really doesn't work for me. I might read a couple more volumes to give it a chance, but I may just watch the anime instead.

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### **Christina (A Reader of Fictions) says**

Fruits Basket is probably my very favorite manga that I have read to date. Now, I wholeheartedly admit that the premise is weird and unlikely, but, hey, it's fantasy. Anyway, if you can get past the initial outlandishness, you discover a story full of heart and darkness. This is my fourth or fifth time through the series, and I just love it more every time.

Having read through a few reviews on Goodreads, I know that this series, and the character of Tohru especially, gets a lot of flak for being too cutesy. It seems that some people did not buy Tohru's consistently positive attitude or her naivete. For me, it worked. Tohru has her painful past, and she does occasionally struggle to put forward that happy face. In fact, I think that she's an incredibly strong character, because she tries so hard and does her best to be happy no matter what life throws her way.

Also criticized is the zodiac curse. Yes, it's crazy and not likely. Who cares? The least popular aspect seems to be the fact that one of the side effects of the curse is that hugging a member of the opposite sex will turn them into their animal. It sounds so arbitrary and like it was solely introduced for hijinks and humor. Actually, I think that there's more to it. This part of the curse is what really separates the Sohma's from other people. They are drawn more into the family and unable to mingle in society for fear of discovery. Their curse is being stuck together.

What really makes me love this story so much though is the way that it grows and changes. In most series, there isn't too much of a marking of time, but in Fruits Basket, the characters change a lot in both personality and appearance. I love that you can literally see the characters growing up from children to adults. Additionally, I really appreciate the level of depth in pretty much all of the rather extensive set of main characters. Each one gets at least one chapter focusing on their own issues.

If you don't believe me about the depth of the story, here's a quote, which pretty much perfectly sums up being young: "It's good to be young, without experience in how to live, struggling desperately as if you were going to drown, even though you could float if you just drew on your own strength." I just love that. Above and beyond the fantasy plot, this is really just a touching story of a lot of broken people coming together and trying to find the courage to believe in themselves and to really love.

Not only that, but the art is gorgeous. It takes a couple of volumes for Takaya to get into the swing of things, but after that I occasionally find myself pausing and just staring at a particular frame to admire the beauty therein. Of course, manga art gets criticized a lot for being ridiculous, so if you don't like it, then you won't like the art here either, since it's got the standards (like big eyes versus narrow ones to indicate degrees of

masculinity/femininity).

Do not be fooled by the pretty shoujo artwork and cutesy opening chapters, though. *Fruits Basket* is very dark and tackled a lot of painful issues, such as parental abuse. However, it does so with heart and hope. This will always be one of my very favorite works of literature.

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