

TELEVISION



The COULD'VE-GONE-ALL-the-WAY COMMITTEE – As we age, the time we're afforded to spend with the people we care about shrinks and becomes precious. Passing glances or specific turns of phrase from a friend or a crush that might have seemed insignificant in adolescence become all the more meaningful and worthy of scrutiny; at least, if you're like me.

The Could've-Gone-All-the-Way Committee, based on the manga by Takashi Yoshida, is an eight-episode series on Netflix in which the three member panel listens to a story from a client about a chance romantic encounter and judge whether or not the storyteller had the potential to have sex with that person. The oddball group consists of a martial artist, a musician and a businesswoman. Their po-faced stoicism at the judge's table melds with the ludicrous premise to fabricate the show's comedic veil, one that each episode is yanked away to humbly deliver some quaint truism about life and the beauty of the moment.

These small stories land because even if you can't directly relate to the details, everyone knows too well the feeling of desperately wishing to form an instant connection with someone which might forge a lengthier

relationship, only to have that connection slip away when your back is turned or you couldn't quite muster up the courage to speak truth to the heart's yearning. You're left wondering. Some clients go to obsessive lengths to track down that person only to turn up nothing; others just have a faint curiosity. All are strung along by something powerful enough to lead them to the committee's tribunal.

Many scenarios are light-hearted: a shy teenager becomes the life of a dull party and dances with a woman; a boy and his drunken coworkers perform karaoke at a private lounge and are approached by women from another room to join them. Others are melancholic: a woman is engaged but randomly meets somebody else she springs a deep connection with, though it's far too late to act on beyond a passing kiss. In some way, you can't help but mourn what didn't happen to these people, whether in that lustful moment or the morning after. But each client is left with the same heartfelt, earnest reminder by the committee: they got to feel something alongside somebody else who felt it too. What greater privilege is there?

– DEVIN RAPOSO