

The British Red Cross are running a [Japan Appeal](#) at the moment - please consider donating a few pounds. If you're in the UK, don't forget to gift-aid the donation - the Red Cross can then claim tax back on the donation, which gives it a significant increase at no cost to you.

As you'll all probably know by now, Japan was hit by an earthquake on 11 March. The tremor was centred off the coast of Sendai, and measured 9.0 on the richter scale - the 5th most powerful quake on record, [according to Wikipedia](#). If that weren't bad enough, the quake triggered a 10-metre-high tsunami that devastated large stretches of Japan's east coast - for some nightmare fuel on that, watch [this ground-level video recording](#)

of the tsunami hitting - and triggered emergency situations at three nuclear power plants, with at least a partial meltdown believed to have occurred at the Fukushima Daiichi plant. In the port town of Minami Sanriku, 10,000 of the town's 18,000 residents are listed missing, possibly killed when the tsunami hit. It also seems that the quake

[shifted Japan](#) en masse by 8 feet, altered the Earth's axial tilt by 4 inches, and correspondingly shortened the Earth's day by around 1 microsecond - changes that won't be quite so noticeable to you and me, but when you consider how much the Earth "weighs"

[1](#)
(5.9736×10^{24}

kilograms) and how much force would be needed to make those moves you realise that this quake was, even by the standards of natural disasters, a Big Fucking Deal.

No surprise, then, that most of the anime scheduled to be broadcast this weekend has been pulled, and the corresponding simulcast releases postponed. The Japanese have other things to worry about than late-night cartoons. As soon as Crunchyroll confirmed the delays, though, I had a gut feeling that at least some corners of fandom would respond badly - while I'd like to *think*

that the common interest anime & manga fans have in Japan would lead to an outpouring of support, I've been around the scene for a while and am more cynical than that. To be fair, there have been highlights - there are collaborative efforts going on to track well-know personalities from the anime and manga scene and record who's safe and who's unaccounted for (check [Anime News Network](#) for that), there have been fundraising drives in several locations, and in many cases there's genuine shock and horror at what has happened.

But then we have certain websites charting 'otaku devastation' at the cancellation of events; 'growing annoyance' at the ever-present tsunami warning map on the shows that *have* been broadcast; forum threads with complaint after complaint - none of which I'm going to link to, as frankly the people concerned don't deserve the oxygen of publicity. The dark side of fandom, who think only of themselves, is clearly having a field day with this, and I find it very, very wrong (and yet very, very predictable) that people feel somehow moved to write these things and

make these comments. Fandom isn't alone in this, of course - and those who claim the quake is somehow divine retribution for the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor are rightly awarded [Cunts of the Day](#)

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Humanity is supposed to come together in a crisis, to help and support those affected. It's a time for people to show their best, and to put aside past differences in the name of saving lives *now*

. If you're mean-spirited enough not to support those aims, or find pleasure in the devastation suffered by others, then please: just shut the hell up.

Rant over.

¹ The Earth's "weight" is immeasurable - it's an object in freefall, and strictly speaking has no weight (although the gravitational pull of the sun and other objects in the vicinity will be measurable, that's not really what we're looking for here). It has *mass*, though.