

Magic Knight Rayearth Anime

OVA

Lucy Robin

Intro

Did you ever wish there was more X in your Rayearth? Well, the Rayearth OVA is happy to deliver!

We're Lucy and Robin, and we'll be your guides through CLAMP's Wonderland!

Check-In

- Stargazing poll results!
- So Lucy, what the hell did we just watch???

Background

- Yeah, ok, so... We swapped rolls this week, so this time I'm giving you an info dump of context, and Robin's gonna deliver on the summary!
- Interestingly, this OVA drops the "magic knights" part of the title, and is called simply Rayearth.
 - That makes sense, in as much as any part of this makes sense.
- Timeline check in!
 - The Rayearth manga ran from 93-96
 - Rayearth anime ran from 94-95
 - This OVA, which comprises three 45-minute episodes, was released in 1997, in July, Sept, and Dec, respectively.
 - It was also re-released as a compiled movie in 1998, with some scenes added, called Wings of Hope. As far as I could find, this version was only released in Japan, and we did not watch it.
 - So those are the basic Rayearth facts, but let's ground ourselves with CLAMP's other works, for just a moment.
 - In terms of manga, X, Wish, and Card Captor Sakura were ongoing, and Clover had just started.
 - In terms of anime, they've had OVAs for RG Veda, Tokyo Babylon, Miyuki-chan, and CLAMP in Wonderland, plus the Tokyo Babylon live action movie, but the only major productions they've had were the X movie, and, of course, the

Rayearth tv run. The CLAMP School Detectives anime would also run 97, the same year as this OVA.

- All that is to say...Card Captor Sakura wasn't an anime yet, so we're still on that side of the CLAMP fence, but I think it's safe to say that the popularity of Rayearth (both manga and anime) had changed their career a lot. We'll get into that more when we look at the manga series that came *after* Rayearth, but it's worth keeping in mind.
- Now, I want to do a very quick refresher on OVAs, especially for newer fans. It stands for Original Video Animation (sometimes OAV - original animation video), and they were very popular in the 80s and early 90s during Japan's bubble economy, when video sales could really bring in the big bucks.
 - They were typically only a couple episodes long, and were usually not broadcast on tv (though occasionally some episodes might be).
 - They usually had higher animation quality and more creator freedom than broadcast shows, so they were especially popular as ways to attract readers to a manga that wasn't quite popular enough to warrant a full series. Sometimes it was a way of testing the waters before creating a tv series, and sometimes this was it.
 - The publisher or even creators might help fund these productions. It was a really important step in developing anime that wasn't just reliant on what could be shown on TV--that is, getting away from stuff that was reliant on toy-tie-ins for funding.
 - However, that's not the case with Rayearth, which obviously already had a very popular anime run. We're also a little late for that bubble economy.
 - Though the late 90s also had a little bump after the big collapse--economics are a wild, horrible ride.
 - We do have some theories about how this came to be, but we'll save speculation for our discussion at the end.
- Yeah tell us more about the actual OVA we watched?
- So, I'm going to level with you and let you know that I couldn't find very many primary sources about this OVA, and the ones I did find still didn't have much information. So a lot of this background info is just, like, broad production stuff.
- Mokona did early character designs for the series, and Okhawa supposedly worked on the concepts, but I could not find a primary source for that. At any rate, CLAMP seems to have only been involved with early development work, at most.
- The OVA was created by the same anime production studio as the anime, then called Tokyo Movie Shinsha, and now called TMS Entertainment. It was directed by two veterans from the Rayearth anime: Toshihiro HIRANO, who had been the series director, and with Keitaro MOTONAGA, who had been an episode director.
 - We talked a bit about Hirano in the anime episodes, but both directors have just a ton of classics to their name. Dr. Slump, Fist of the North Star, Lupin III...just to name a few!
 - Notably, Motonaga also worked under Hirano on the Iczelion (OVA), so the two clearly had a history of working together.

- That's the nsfw Iczer1 thing we've mentioned before, that Nova's design is very reminiscent of, by the way.
- The scripts were written by Manabu NAKAMURA
 - Nakamura doesn't have as prolific a career as the other two, and he was *not* staff on the original Rayearth anime.
 - He did, however, do the screenplay for the Iczer Reborn (OVA), also under Hirano, so those Iczer connections continue!
- In another fun connection, the art director, Masaru SATŌ, also did background on *Slayers: The Motion Picture*, which we did our last bonus episode on. Along with like everything else, btw. Sato has a lot of credits to their name, including other personal favorites like *Ranma ½*, *Serial Experiments Lain*, and *Jellyfish Princess*.
- The character designer, Megumi KADONOSONO, would eventually go on to work on *Code Geass: Lelouch of the Rebellion*, which CLAMP did the original character design for. I thought some of you Code Geass fans might get a kick out of that.
- Honestly, doing the background this time showed me just how connected all these shows are through their various staff members, so I could go on...but we do need to save time for the actual show!
- I will add that they managed to keep the same voice cast as the tv anime, which is a really nice touch, especially since they changed *so much* of the show (as we'll get to in a moment).
 - This also led me to discover that our big crush Megumi Ogata (who also voices Sailor Uranus in *Sailor Moon* and Yukito in *Card Captor Sakura*, among other things), voiced both Eagle Vision AND Princess Emeraude. The range on that woman!
 - I'm not sure that any of our swooning over her voice ended up in our Rayearth TV episodes but we should make it clear now that we are both big fans.
- Ok, fangirling aside...Robin, what happened in this OVA?

Summary

- So you know Rayearth? The anime we just watched, based on the manga we just read? Where three girls are summoned to a world supported by one girl's selfless prayers, to kill her before her selfish wish can destroy everything? And then they go back to figure out who the new support for the world will be, meet God, and one of them fixes the system?
 - Slam dunk all that right in the recycle bin of your mind.
 - Sorry for the mixed metaphor
 - It will only get in the way here.
- Like the *Utena* movie, or the *Escaflowne* movie, which came out around this same time, this is mostly the name, the character designs, and the themes of the original all put in a blender.
 - Unlike the two things I just mentioned, which ended up pretty triumphant, this is kind of a mess!

- I say this with love, as I am sure there are folks who saw this first and have a strong love for it--and I can imagine feeling that way if this was my introduction as well, it would definitely made me want to know more about Rayearth, just like the X movie would make someone want to know more about X....unless, of course, it just scared them off.
- We begin in a blasted wasteland under dark skies, the only notable feature a foreboding fortress
 - And who is this standing on a cliff?
 - Seriously who is this, it looks like Clef, but a whole ass man
 - Well, a CLAMP twink but still
 - Lightning strikes—or is it a giant robot touching down! Its that second one.
 - Clef jumps on a summoned bird monster and the very bio-monster-robot attacks him.
 - Where is this? When is this? WHO knows!
- The scene shifts to a subterranean grotto, where the eerie sound of a woman's singing fills the glowing space.
 - A grown emeraude leaves the water, walks over to a seated man who must be Zagato.
 - Behind her, a vision of, well, Eagle Vizion, forms from the water.
 - He reaches out to her saying "we'll arrive soon. On rayearth"
 - I must mention that the background music, aside from Emeraude's singing, is very Swan Lake-ish, a nice creepy touch!
- Next we're in Tokyo!
 - At a school, where we meet our three familiar girls--though they're now in these black and white, almost nun-like outfits
 - My boys rified on these, (Will said they go to Our Lady of Sorrowful Giant Robots for Girls, Nate suggested Saint Seiya's Academy for Armored Sword Girls)
- In the courtyard there is an incredibly fateful and CLAMP-ish cherry tree
 - Each of the girls, at their separate clubs (Hikaru is an acrobat and transfer student from Hokkaido in this for no reason) reaches out to catch a sakura petal
 - You see, they're graduating middle school soon. And each of them has plans to go to a totally separate high school--Fuu's family is being transferred abroad, in fact!
 - But they're made a wish under that cherry tree to be friends forever
 - And they made this wish knowing there was a legend of a fairy in the tree who, if it heard a wish, would remove all obstacles getting in the way of it being granted.
 - That fairy seems to be Mokona, who pops out of the tree and has some of the best animation we've ever had for this ICON, very squashy and stretchy.
 - The girls are hanging out after school, discussing their future plans, taking commemorative photos.
 - They're all somber, but Hikaru most affected by the thought of parting.
 - She sees Mokona across the street and runs after it!
 - We thought she was going to be Isekai-d by a truck here but that is not what happens.

- In fact, she hears a voice (that we may recognize as her Mashin) asking her why she chases something no one else sees, is she running from a pain that breaks her heart?
 - She's suddenly in some kind of inner space, and holds a bubble in her hands that seems to contain the Earth because I guess this is an X vision now.
 - The voice tells her the future is in danger, and a red gem appears on her hand, like the ones on her armor in the series.
 - She is told this is an 'ovum' and that if it glows for eternity, her dream will be realized.
 - Suddenly she seems to be floating about the city, and she can see a figure--Clef--on the Tokyo Tower.
 - The voice tells her he'll be the one who can grant that wish.
 - He's from another world, but he's stuck here
 - The world's fate rests on the outcome of a test he is undertaking.
 - Then she wakes up, and she's just with Umi and Fuu on the other side of the street--and while they couldn't see Mokona or anything else that happened, they can see the gem on her hand.
 - And when Mokona shows up again, they can see it this time.
 - Clef says the girls are the chosen ones, but he's crestfallen that quote 'it has started already.'
- And things do seem to be popping off, because Alcione beams in! She recognizes Clef is here. She says Cephireo draws closer and he can't stop it.
 - He can do something, at least, though he's not sure the magic he's attempting is the best thing to do. He calls out to the Mashin to help the people of earth, but there's no response we can see.
 - The girls can see the beam he send to the sudden;y very cloudy heavens over the Tokyo Tower, however.
 - And when Alcione does an attack, they feel it like an earthquake.
 - Clef collapses, but not before his beam spreads to encircle the whole earth (kind of like Kamui's kekkai in the anime, though that wouldn't exist for 4 years)
 - The rest is up to the girls.
- Back in the glowing singing grotto, Eagle watches Emeraude smiling vacantly.
 - He says 'keep singing big sister, make your wish'
 - Suddenly Lantis is here! He holds a sword to eagle's throat, saying 'What's the point of this'
 - Eagle says 'do you want me to end Cephireo? I just want to make my sister's wish come true. i envy you. only for you, nothing has changed.'
 - Lantis says 'this is the end for you' but he disappears.
 - Standing around being cryptic seems to be the main mode for all these dudes.
- Back in Tokyo, the effects of Clef's magic become apparent as all the people on the crowded city streets just...fade away, leaving the girls alone in a silent, empty city.
 - Not entirely unlike a kekkai in X
 - Hikaru worries that this is her fault, the fairy getting rid of the obstacles in the way of her wish.
 - no parents to move you away, no problem, I guess?

- Next, Ascot shows up to fight Clef.
 - But a very imperious Ferio gets in his way, telling him they're there to take the divine test. They can leave Alcione to deal with Clef.
 - IS THIS HEEL TURN FERIO?
- The girls can't get around w/o subway, trains, cabs, and can't drive.
 - Hikaru is scared everyone in the world is gone, but Fuu tells her to not think about it so they don't panic in this dangerous situation.
 - Clef's bird leads them to where he's collapsed on the ground.
 - He awakens and asks Hikaru if her Ovum gem is still glowing.
 - Which sounds like a very personal question to me. Not loving the very reproductive word here.
 - He tells them they're being tested.
 - Umi demands info! Fuu politely asks for it, but before they can get much farther than introductions, Alcione's ready to battle again.
 - She has a weird kitty? Actually all of the Cephiro characters have an animal companion with gems and jewelry.
 - She and Clef trade some cryptic barbs, and he lets drop that his presence here has to do with Emeraude's wish. He doesn't want this earth to be destroyed because of the wish. But he's had to imprison all the people of earth in a timewarp to try to protect them.
 - Again, Hikaru is scared her wish actually screwed everything up.
 - Alcione's cat is a spirit beast, and she fuses with it to become a giant furry bio-mecha that I'm pretty sure the show still calls a Mashin.
 - Hikaru falls off of Clef's bird. As she falls, she's sorry she's caused her friends so much pain, aware her wish was selfish since she wasn't the only one hurting. Her gem reacts, and what we know as lion-form-rayearth says she's beginning to figure things out.
 - Why did she make a wish? Why does she have dreams?
 - Hikaru doesn't know, but if her wish dies, everyone will disappear.
 - He says he'll help her.
- Pink lightning hits the Tokyo tower and Alcione says that this will be the door that connects Cephiro to their world...when their castle touches down, their world will be over!
 - But Hikaru and the lion/dog send a flame at her and approach with purpose. Hikaru says like...a power word? (Sinos) and transforms into the LEXUS DEITY (of fire, he says he has the power to burn all evil with fire)
 - So I guess he's Lexus not Rayearth?
 - Apparently they couldn't use this power until Hikaru proved the people of earth had the ability to fight back OR SOMETHING, thanks Clef, but while it's great to hear Hikaru's voice actress say 'fire arrow' again, when her big lion-headed-giant-robot-form gets attacked, we can see that Hikaru (pictured naked in the cockpit, as was the style at the time) is hurt, too.
 - So...not sure what the point of this giant robot armor is but ok
 - She does manage to defeat Alcione, though.
- Before they can feel good about this, Emeraude's eerie singing fills the air, and a cheesy effect warps the Tokyo Tower into the creepy castle!
 - Hikaru begs Lexus to help her figure out what to do about this, but he says its up to her
 - Like a true CLAMP character, even if not written by Ohkawa, Hikaru tries to sacrifice herself to destroy the castle, by powering up to self destruct.

- Ascot combines with his crayfish looking monster and is hilariously an ultraman monster with an eye in the stomach, and attacks.
- As Fuu dashes into the Tokyo Dome, she sees Ferio's bugs everywhere. She puts up a wind barrier to keep him out of the building. 'so this is the power of the final world' he says.
 - On the baseball field, Fuu hears WIndom tell her she's passed her test, and together they blow away all the bugs that have encrusted the dome--and uh, also the dome itself, oops!
 - After this, she asks WIndom to fly her away to an open space so they won't just destroy the whole city.
- Tied up in what could be his basement, Alcyone begs Eagle to give her another chance with just her powers even though she has lost her beast.
 - Instead he just kills her--maybe he absorbs her power to power up, it was not clear, but evil Eagle is a bitch!
 - Evil Eagle is also just as voiced by Megumi Ogata as good Eagle was, and both of us were emotionally compromised by this.
- On her way to make the airport her battlefield, Fuu sees Umi below, blasting at Ferio—and destroying some city!
- Fuu and Ferio make it to the airport and both combine with their animals to become weird furry Mashin and fight!
- From where Hikaru is stuck, she sees a vision of the girls fighting.
 - Lantis tells her to watch to see if the battle has meaning.
 - Okay???
- Facing off against Ascot, Umi calls him a pitiful baby that's never been challenged.
 - She figures out from his boast that Hikaru's alive.
 - Ceres says 'let your arrogant heart be washed away!' and she does a big attack against Ascot, on Hikaru's behalf.
- Apparently Fuu can tell that Ferio is holding back against her, and she asks why.
 - When he hesitates to answer, she manages to get away.
- Finally Hikaru works through the selfishness of her wish, I think, to understand how much her friends are willing to go through for her, and her gem starts glowing again!
- Umi and Fuu have a similarly triumphant moment where it looks like they've defeated their opponents--but then Ascot rises from the Bay and shoots back.
 - It seems as though Eagle is controlling him
 - And Emeraude's eerie singing echoes through the battlefield.
- Finally episode 3!
- This one begins in a verdant forest glade, where cute little pixies (one of which is modelled after Primera) watch Princess Emeraude and High Priest Zagato gaze at each other sappily from afar.
 - The image shifts to our familiar wrecked Cephhiro from the very beginning of the OVA, and a voice (I think its Zagato's?) asks 'Was it our sins that lead to the destruction of our land?
 - Zagato makes a slow, solemn march to the castle, clearly taking responsibility for suggested sins...
 - Lantis runs to the castle to stop him--
 - But it is too late, he's stabbed himself in his own stomach. Eagle looks on weirdly, and Lantis cried out for his big brother
- Back in the present, Umi fights back against the Eagle-possessed Ascot-crayfish-furry-Mashin, but when she takes a hit, Fuu steps in to defend her--only to be hit, herself!

- Ferio, no longer in his Mashin, stumbles forward, confused that Ascot could do what he couldn't--last another round against the girls, that is.
 - Lantis shows up to converse with him--'are you beginning to see things how they really are?'
 - IS HE? I AM NOT SURE WE ARE!
 - Ferio accuses Lantis of defying emeraude!
 - Lantis asks if he thinks what's going on with Ascot right now is what Emeraude would have wanted.
 - Lantis says he was manipulated, that's why he's gone to the dark side.
 - What dark side? Asks Ferio
 - Lantis replies 'The final world!'
 - And we are left wondering what that means.
- Hikaru shows back up in Lexus! She understands that their strength comes from hope, and she's here to keep that up!
 - The girls fight together and overcome Ascot's mech!
 - Unfortunately, Eagle leaves him so he's the one who suffers the defeat, and he blows up, leaving just his silly hat drifting to the ground.
 - Umi wanted to stop him, but there was nothing she could do.
 - Lantis sounds weirdly sinister when he tells Ferio that there's nothing that can oppose them now--does he want to know the truth?
 - Ferio figures why not?
 - We're left in the dark, however.
- Instead we cut to Eagle gloating and approaching a stony, silvery dragon somewhere in his lair.
- But enough of that. The girls are together again, and they tend to Clef, who has spent the whole OVA dispensing small amounts of info and then collapsing.
 - Now he says its full disclosure time.
 - He says that Cephiro was blessed, a beautiful paradise that relied on the power of spirits (I think these are like, the pixies we saw?)
 - But the people of Cephiro destroyed the balance of nature so the spirits numbers dwindled.
 - And this makes some sense, right? Kind of shades of the Autozam story (and X's environmentalism)
 - But then he goes on to say that Zagato, the high priest and liaison to the master of the spirits, Emeraude, sacrificed his power and life for a wish.
 - Okay. Sacrificing for wishes is kinda what Rayearth is about
 - Clef says that they shouldn't have depended solely on the spirits, but then goes on to explain that love between spirits and people was a sin--and this universes' Zagato and Emeraude also fell in forbidden love, oops.
 - Somehow this means that the people of cephiro died for princess emeraude, maybe the balance of nature was destroyed by this forbidden love (though it was weirdly not as clear about that as it could have been?) Instead of some other environmentally threatening actions?
 - Then, apropos of nothing we could easily follow, Hikaru says 'the world of legends..rayearth'
 - Umi says 'why does our world have to be sacrificed because of one person's wishes!'
 - Ferio remembers Lantis telling him earlier that he's just a sacrifice. Is this what he meant, or just a parallel?

- Somehow understanding these revelations much more thoroughly than your hosts, Hikaru asks to meet emeraude. Maybe if they could just talk to her...
- But Eagle shows up to say it's impossible.
 - He has sent his spirit bird, which informs them that his sister's wish has been realized. Everything will begin now.
 - I'm not sure what changed to indicate that her wish has come true? But we'll take Eagle's word for it.
 - He then appears himself--in the giant robot that blasted Hikaru away towards the beginning, when she was trying to sacrifice herself.
 - Clef tells us that belonged to Zagato--but Zagato is dead so this should be impossible!
 - Lantis is enraged by this, which seems fair.
- Hikaru wants to show Emeraude the hopelessness of this situation, and the girls are all beamed away, leaving Clef and Mokona to worry about the outcome, which we just wonder what is happening.
- The girls sleep in a sort of black, unconscious space, like where they've heard their Mashin's voices before.
 - When they awake, they're basically in Eagle's attic
 - He says they cannot summon their Mashin here--and then sucks up the power from their gems into a crystal sphere he's holding.
 - As if we were in a vision from X, the three colors--R G B, the additive color model by the way--form an Earth--then the whole globe shatters!
 - A light that perhaps Eage didn't anticipate flares from his hand now.
 - Below them, in the grotto, Emeraude drops her flower crown and screams up at the light.
 - Hikaru sees herself down with Emeraude, watches her walk over to Zagato's seated corpse as if in a trance.
 - Our heroine recognizes that Emeraude is living in a dream where she can believe Zagato is alive so her heart won't be broken.
 - How many CLAMP characters are we reminded of? All of them???
 - Hikaru finds that the other two girls also saw this vision
 - And Eagle explains he's protecting her in this dream.
 - And if they want him to stop it, they'll have to kill him.
 - And he sends scary ghosts to attack them!
 - Luckily Lantis shows up to help fight them off with his glowing sword--which has the same kind of light as Zagato's mech, by the way.
 - He transports them all to the roof of the castle, where ghosts continue to attack.
 - These are the ghosts of Cephire's dead
 - Which makes Fuu worry about Ferio.
 - Lantis asks the girls if they'll entrust their future to his sword!
 - What choice do they really have?
 - He beams them away, and Hikaru realizes that when he was rude about her attempted sacrifice earlier, it was because he was thinking about what his elder brother did.
 - But Fuu stayed behind to help Lantis...!

- So she's around to hear Eagle taunt Lantis about how he's using said brother's powers himself now.
 - He explains that he's brought Cephireo to Earth to destroy everything.
 - In a leap of logic, he says that's how he'll make everything eternal and save everyone--by ending things.
 - Maybe there's a cycle of rebirth here, but it hasn't really come up so this feels pretty confusing!
 - Ferio shows up to help fight the ghosts, turning to Fuu and Lantis' side!
 - He exchanges names with Fuu, building a connection--
- But Eagle sends an attack so strong that it seems to blow all the girls back into that dark space again.
 - They aren't dead yet!
 - They begin to glow as they try to summon hope.
 - Their Mashin speak to them, telling them to unite their hearts--
 - YOU KNOW WHAT THAT MEANS!
 - And for once we DID know what that meant, the combined-form Mashin descends from a hole in the clouds to fight Eagle's Mashin!
 - And THIS form is called Rayearth--but also the Earth plus Cephireo world is Rayearth!
 - Which...maybe makes sense with Eagle saying 'We'll arrive soon...on Rayearth'??
 - They fight Eagle, and it looks like they've defeated him--but then we hear Emeraude's creepy singing again.
 - Hikaru begs her to open her eyes to this charade!
 - But Eagle says there's no end to his sister's curse...
- And he's back in a Mashin, only now it has become much more twisted and creepy, more of a monstrous face.
 - Back on the roof, Lantis is mortally wounded, but hands Ferio his sword to 'help the girls bury his brother.'
 - He disintegrates into shinies that...maybe merge with the sword?
- Eagle says 'sounds like this world is giving its last cry' and says that empty dreams and lack of hope is what destroyed Cephireo. Maybe he's been changed by that world.
 - I mean, maybe he has! We have no frame of reference for what he was like before, so we have to just shrug!
- Hikaru hears Lantis call out to her--but it's just Ferio tossing Rayearth the sword.
 - She understands he's died to give her this last hope.
 - And she sends out one last attack!
 - Emeraude looks up at the light, and everything comes back to her. She says Zagato's name, finally aware.
- Rayearth has defeated Eagle's Mashin. All of the Mashin and the sword disintegrate.
 - Their gems are cracked.
- But Eagle isn't dead. He's making some very incoherent speech about seeing everything from the perspective of an immortal, and what does the contents of mortals' hearts matter to him?
 - But before the girls have to actually fight his spirit bird, Emeraude intercedes.

- She orders Eagle to stop. They'll begin again.
 - 'Begin again?' He demands. 'WHY now? I'm the shadow you hated!'
 - She tells him they must believe in hope again, as the girls have shown them. 'Happiness and sadness are as one.'
 - Eagle and the corpse of Zagato are subsumed by her light...
 - Finally the girls stand on a cliff overlooking the ruined city
 - They hear their Mashin speak to them one last time.
 - 'You saved the world because you're blessed. Never lose trust, we're with you'
 - And their gems kind of peel away.
 - Clef and Ferio, who are the only other survivors, thank them for their help.
 - They promise they'll begin Cephiro again, to build a future the girls hoped for.
 - The girls are sad to see them go...
 - We see the castle turn back into the Tokyo Tower--
 - But the whole area around it is still in shambles!
 - We hear on the news that it was the Roppongi district that was mysteriously destroyed--chalked up to supernatural causes--but there were almost no casualties.
 - In the wake of this, things go back to normal, the city rebuilds...
 - And the girls graduate. We see them under the cherry tree one last time before they all part and walk away.
 - At the very end, Mokona pops out to caper for us.
 - THE END

Discussion

- SO THERE WE GO
- Was that...coherent?
 - I'm not sure the elements came together
 - The backstory was a little convoluted and had to be info dumped on us because it was so disconnected from the action
 - I am not sure that every cryptic statement was resolved?
 - What was the test Clef was being put through?
 - Did Hikaru's wish cause any of that or was that just the thing she had to work through like the other two had a personality flaw?
 - How did Emeraude's wish have anything to do with...bringing Cephiro to Earth?
 - Why did Eagle think he needed to destroy everything?
 - Did the messages about self-sacrifice...come through at all?
 - Is it interesting that Eagle went from the one who was dying young to a heartless immortal?
- Man, cherry trees hit different after X, don't they?
 - We definitely expected/hoped to see Seishiro lean out from the behind the tree at some point and vamp for the audience.
 - That did not happen.

- The art looks good, but the animation is...hit or miss?
 - Like, some of the fight scenes look great.
 - But then there are scenes that are literal still shots, not even with a panning camera or anything.
 - Like it feels kind of..unfinished?
 - But, the art itself looks great. The girls are so pretty, and Mokona is just adorable, and lovingly animated.
 - The color palette is much darker, to go with the tone, so the girls have hair colors that look more realistic--if people actually had blue hair.
 - The big shiny eyes on everyone are just so emotive, you could almost be fooled into caring!
- So...how did this thing happen?
 - Since there's not much information out, we can only really theorize about why this OVA was made the way it was. And if we do find more interviews or the like, we may do a follow up. Any additional info will be linked in the show notes!
 - So...as we mentioned at the top, this OVA came out about a year after the X movie (that was August of 96, and the first episode of the OVA was July of 97).
 - This OVA really felt like it was trying to appeal to that fanbase, or at least general audience, brought in by the X movie (and the continuing manga).
 - Maybe it was meant as a contrast to the CLAMP Campus Detectives tv show that also came out in 97.
 - Given all of the parallels--the cherry tree, the Earth in a bubble, the trapped-in-a-dream state of Emeraude--I think it's safe to say that X had a huge influence on this.
 - Now, whether that was CLAMP's plan, or a decision made by the director or the studio or some other Powers That Be, we can't even really speculate.
 - Some of the influences definitely come from Hirano and his Iczer legacy.
 - We do also think some of the dark themes may have to do with the industry-shaking mega hit that was Evangelian, which ran from 95 to 96.
 - Maybe they wanted to place Rayearth in the same discussion as Eva. Rayearth also had dark themes, but it predated Eva by a couple years, so naturally it handled them differently than a mecha series would *after* Eva.
 - Whether that was a conscious factor in the direction this went, I think it definitely was a factor in how it turned out. Even if that was just, like, incidental and caused by the general direction anime (specifically mech anime) was going at the time.
 - However it happened, I got to say...this was not what I was imagining. I mean, I knew that the OVA was supposed to be really different, and I knew it was visually darker (I've seen art, and it's much muted and murkier than previous versions, though not in a bad way), but I had not expected...this.

- I had really imagined that this was somehow their chance to do something closer to the manga ending, since they were no longer worried about spoiling it.
 - But it was definitely not that!
 - It almost feels like...a thought experiment about what might have happened if the knights *hadn't* been summoned, and Emeraude and Zagato's relationship had carried Cephireo into a state of chaos and destruction.
 - But, it wasn't even really *that*. It was so far removed from the original that I think it actually makes more sense if you *haven't* encountered Rayearth before.
 - Honestly, part of me wonders if this was something they'd contracted for when they did the anime, because I'm not sure what else would have been the *point* of it. It's aimed at such a weird audience: people who liked X and maybe wanted something darker from them that wasn't X, but would also maybe be interested in Rayearth, even though Rayearth isn't much like this.
 - I kind of just wish they'd made another RG Veda OVA instead.
- According to our friend Ian, an anime journalist and the author behind the CLAMPdown book that is currently seeking a publisher, for many years the dub of this OVA was the only version of a Rayearth anime that they had in the UK.
 - Man, this would have been an interesting first exposure to Rayearth. Like I said, I think it might have made more sense if you didn't know the source material, because I think a lot of my preconceptions got in the way of some of their explanations or the assumptions they expected the viewer to make.
 - But, if you did see this, and it intrigued you...I can't imagine where you would go from there. To X, I guess, ideally, because the Rayearth manga is so far removed from this, that I think you might be disappointed in it.
 - I do also have to give Ian credit for pointing out that this is an early example of a "reverse isekai," where the fantasy world comes to *you*.
 - And I have to point out that's an invasion XD
 - Fair
- Ok, so...final thoughts time.
 - Personally, I didn't hate this OVA, but it felt somehow both too long AND too short. It dragged in places, and since I had trouble telling what was going on (due partially to preconceptions about the show, and partially to a general lack of information being given), it was hard for me to stay invested through the whole thing.
 - But, I think if it had had more time to actually go into things and maybe clarify a few points, it could have been really interesting. If there's an alternate timeline where this OVA is like 13 episodes, and I'd be interested in seeing that.
 - (Robin final thoughts?)

Outro (edit for flavor)

In our next episode, we'll be discussing....

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Thanks for coming with us on our journey through CLAMP's Wonderland!

Until next time, remember that everything will be alright—

—and try not to lose an eye!