

# Wish

## Volume 1

Lucy Robin

### Intro

Sometimes you find an angel in a tree. And sometimes that angel needs a LOT of help. Make a Wish!

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

### Check-In

- I AM NEVER HOME. But soon I will be, because school is starting. Yay?
- Something something convention!

### Background

- Wish ran in Asuka Mystery DX, which you may recall was also the home of CLAMP school detectives!
  - That feels like SO long ago for us, but actually it only ended the year before, in December of 1993.
- Wish ran in installments from November 1994-August 1998
  - and was subsequently republished in 4 collected volumes.
  - Americans first read the Tokyopop releases in 2002
  - and it was recently re-released in English in a very nice omnibus thanks to one of our local Portland-based comics publishers, Darkhorse.
- You might wonder why this angel/demon romance series ran in a mystery manga magazine!
- Apparently CLAMP also wondered, when pitching, if it would be okay, but their editor accepted it (Rayearth was a big hit, I'm sure they were happy to have yet more CLAMP manga) and in their interview in the CLAMP no Kiseki volume that covers Wish, they say something I'll paraphrase as 'apparently what the main character IS is plenty mysterious!'
- This is the first longer serial with Tsubaki (aka Mick) Nekoi as the lead or maybe better to say featured artist.
  - She had never done a 30-page-at-a-time monthly title like this, and her notes at the back and notes in interviews indicate she found it very challenging, which makes sense since it IS.
  - She drew it all the a g-nib pen, very classic manga technique, but pressing very lightly and applying VERY little screen one in order to get a lighter look than ANY of their previous works

- That makes it fit in more with the post Card-Captor Sakura era, but was a big departure for them at the time, and had some fans kind of surprised!
  - Remember that Rayearth had A TON OF TONER and X was heavily inked with lots of black as well as very complex tone.
  - The lightness of Wish both fits the content AND their schedule, most likely!
- Apparently the version of Wish that was made was one of many different paths they could have taken with the story. In that same interview, Ohkawa describes having started out with an idea that was more about the SECONDARY couple in this series, set in Heaven and Hell, with no humans involved at all. It was also going to be more 'adult-oriented', whatever that means in this context! What we have is definitely not super adult-oriented, with a light and comedic touch, though it does have places where it gets a bit dark.
- Wish has never been adapted into a full TV anime or movie, but there is at least one Drama CD and a nice 6-minute animation that was part of CLAMP's CLAMPAZAR dvd, part of their 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary collection in 2007. We'll cover as much of these as we possibly can! But the manga at least is very available in for English-speakers right now, and it's likely possible to still find used copies of other languages editions.
- A note about pronouns! The main character of Wish doesn't identify as either male or female, and different translations handle this differently. In Japanese, 3rd person pronouns (he, she, ello, ella, etc) barely exist and are rarely used outside of very specific contexts, but the language has a lot of other cues to gender that, while not always definitive, are big hints. We're having to do a combo of trusting the Dark Horse translation and going off of things like how traditionally masculine or feminine the word the characters use to refer to themselves ('I') is. Some of the questions of how the characters' sex and gender COME UP in the series, and many of them are INTENDED to be ambiguous, which is easier to do in Japanese (and comics) than ENGLISH. We're opting to use they unless otherwise informed! But English is dumb and doesn't have a natural way to indicate which of two subjects with the same pronouns you're referring to in a sentence, so hopefully we kept things clear.
  - We'll talk about this in more detail during the discussion portion of the episode, but we've mostly followed the Dark Horse translation's example here. We use gendered pronouns for the devils and humans, and non-gendered pronouns for the angels. If future volumes shed new light on this, we will adjust accordingly!

## Summary

- **Shuichiro** Kudo, a stoic gentleman, is walking home from a long day of surgery, when he stumbles upon a strange creature, crying in a tree.
- The creature looks like a child, but with an oversized head, and maybe wings?
  - **Calling** attention to what a reader would recognize as super-deformed or 'chibi' proportions as like...being literally a character's appearance reminds me of the mind-blowing revelation in Elf Quest that like...the humans look pretty realistic so the elves Actually Look Like That.
- **When** the creature is attacked by a crow, Shuichiro protects it, and catches it when it falls out of the tree.
- **T**urns out this creature is actually an angel named Kohaku, and they are very grateful for Shuichiro's kindness. Apparently, the crow was a servant of the devil, and Shuichiro saved their life.

- As you can probably imagine, by this point Shuichiro is pretty sure he's asleep in a ditch somewhere and this is all an elaborate hallucination, but he nonetheless allows Kohaku to follow him home.
- The next morning, Shuichiro is shocked to wake up and discover that it wasn't a dream, and there is in fact an adorable little cherub hanging out in his yard.
  - He has a pretty impressive, old-fashioned-style Japanese house, complete with an encased yard, sliding doors, and tatami flooring. Just for the record.
- In the light of day, Kohaku re-introduces themself...complete with a magical-girl-style transformation.
- You see, angels like Kohaku can only sustain their true form during the day. Without the light of the sun, their powers diminish, and they are forced to take chibi form. Hence the cherubic figure.
  - Which, I'm not sure if that's an intentional visual comparison, because this is only VAGUELY drawing on actual Christian structures. But it works either way.
    - Oh don't worry, I'll be deep-diving into angel lore because what else am I gonna do?
- Anyway, Kohaku explains that they are bound by the laws of Heaven or whatever to grant a wish for Shuichiro in thanks for his help against the crow. However, Shuichiro is such a practical guy that he sees no point in this. He makes good money, and is pretty content with his life. Besides, he believes it's up to people to fulfill their own wishes.
  - Kohaku counters that some wishes require a little "divine intervention," but can't actually offer up any examples when pressed...so I guess it's a stalemate for now!
  - Since Kohaku insists they can't go home without granting Shuichiro a wish, they decide to stick around until Shuichiro comes up with a wish. They tell him that sooner or later, everyone has something they can't handle on their own. Quote: "There are some wishes that cannot be fulfilled by oneself."
    - Clearly delivering THE THEME
  - Since he's an oddly chill, easy-going guy, Shuichiro agrees to let them stay with him.
  - In the meantime, Kohaku eagerly helps around the house, watering Shuichiro's garden and doing his laundry.
    - Not to knock the artwork in Wish, but maybe the clearest sequence for my eyes to follow was the pretty good magic garden-watering thing Kohaku did, really dynamic water effects very well executed, I got such a clear understanding of what it would look like to see that 'spell' take effect.
    - Yeah, that scene was great!
  - And, well...that's pretty much the premise for the series!
  - BUT WAIT, THERE'S MORE.
- In the second chapter, or...whatever, we see the beginnings of a routine.
  - Kohaku helps around the house, but can't help with cooking, because Angels are unable to eat any living thing, plant or animal. Kohaku actually gets all woozy at the sight of food.
    - Instead, they are fueled by sunlight and fresh air.

- They can drink milk, though.
- This (the fact that they can't cook for Shuichiro) leaves Kohaku feeling like a failure, since they are also a klutz and struggle with basic magic.
  - There are these little birds that follow Kohaku around trying to encourage them. I'm not entirely sure anyone can hear them except Kohaku (and, well, us), but they make for some great commentary and comedic beats.
- When Shuichiro leaves for the day, he gives Koharu a spare key, so they can come and go as they please.
  - Which...when reading this, I realized that the story in The One I Love that had two characters who we called out for also looking like Jotaru and Kakyoin clones, *also* was about a spare key. That story is titled "Insecure," and the heroine is having nightmares about not being needed by her boyfriend anymore, and then gets panicked when she realizes her key to his place doesn't work. Of course, he just had to have the locks changed and hasn't given her a new key yet.
    - Her boyfriend's house does look like Shuichiro's house, in that it also has a traditional Japanese design to it.
    - I'm not sure what significance this has, if any, but maybe these characters were already in their head, and they just tweaked them a little for that story. That does seem like the kind of insecurity I could see Kohaku having.
- ANYWAY, Kohaku decides to explore and observe human society. They even copy an outfit from a billboard, and obscure their wings.
  - It's a bit of a struggle, since they keep running into food stalls and merchants trying to sell them fish, which turns their stomach and makes them faint.
    - Also, no one can decide what their gender is, but everyone thinks they're adorable.
    - There's a cute scene where Kohaku asks some schoolboys what's going on in a porn magazine and the boys just lose it.
  - Things quickly get worse when they are confronted by a little blackhaired chibi figure that Kohaku recognizes as Koryu.
    - Apparently, he and Kohaku go way back, and Koryu loves tormenting them. He sent the crow to attack Kohaku earlier.
    - After some light bickering, Koryu attacks!
    - Kohaku is able to dodge his lightning powers at first, but they keep ramping up. And, bad luck for Kohaku: night is falling.
    - Kohaku pops back to chibi form, and Koryu summons another lightning bolt...but this one is blocked by Shuichiro, who throws down his umbrella to intercept it.
    - Foiled, Koryu disappears, and Shuichiro comforts Kohaku and carries them home.

- As they walk away, Koryu transforms into his adult form, and wonders about Shuichiro. He think he looks intriguing...and tasty. We've definitely not seen the last from Koryu!
- The next chapter opens with Kohaku frustrated at their own clumsiness, and general lack of ability to help Shuichiro out.
  - However, they notice that Shuichiro has left his large bento behind when he went to work. Finally, a way they can help him!
    - They summon a wind spirit to help them track Shuichiro down, and fly off with the bento. Little do they know, of course, that Koryu is watching.
  - At his hospital, Shuichiro is being mobbed by adorable children who are also his patients. One in particular is a bit set aside from the group. Shuichiro's going to be performing her surgery tomorrow.
    - Kohaku spots Shuichiro from the sky, and goes in to land, but Koryu attacks first, destroying Kohaku's wings and sending them falling through the sky.
    - Shuichiro hears their cry for help, and catches them (and the bento).
    - Of course, the bento didn't survive the fall very well, and the food inside is a mess.
    - Kohaku feels horrible about this, but before Shuichiro can encourage them, he is called away for important doctor things.
  - Kohaku stays behind, and ends up chatting with the little girl, who tells them not to cry. She's sure Shuichiro isn't mad at them. He's quiet, but he's kind, and he knows their intentions were good.
    - Kohaku is just explaining to the little girl that, yes, they are an angel sent from the lord above...when Koryu attacks!
    - Kohaku protects the little girl, and scolds Koryu for endangering her.
      - Koryu says something here, in my translation it's "one more soul for my side," that implies to me that whatever mythos we're using here, it's one where all dead people go to the underworld or whatever...which definitely sets it apart from the modern Christian conception of heaven and hell.
      - BUT, I really don't want to get into the weeds trying to compare this to closely to any real religion. Just...go with it.
    - The two bicker a bit, and Koryu reveals that he was the one that caused Kohaku to fall, but he takes off pretty quickly.
    - Kohaku is left with the unconscious little girl...and maybe heals her? She wakes up, anyway, and says that she's fine.
    - Shuichiro comes back, and Kohaku apologizes for messing up the bento. Shuichiro explains that it was actually a lunch for the little girl, since it'll be awhile after her surgery before she can eat her favorite foods again. But, her surgery has just been postponed anyway, so there's no harm done.
    - He tells Kohaku not to be so hard on themself, but Kohaku worries that Shuichiro really doesn't need them around. Should they really be on Earth at all?

- As they're fretting, Shuichiro asks if they're going home now. He's almost off work, so if Kohaku waits a bit, they can ride together.
    - This instantly cheers Kohaku up.
- In the beginning of the next chapter, Koryu summons two minions to help him.
  - They appear in the form of identical girls in cheongsam-style dresses with hair buns, Ruri and Hari.
    - They are very affectionate, rubbing up on the demon like cats, but Koryu didn't call them here just to fool around--he has an assignment for them.
    - They complain about how long it's been since they tasted Koryu's flesh...and I'm honestly not sure if this is just a sexual thing, or actually kind of cannibalistic...but whatever, as long as it's consensual, who am I to judge?
      - You and cannibalism, Lucy
    - Koryu explains that he wants the two of them to keep an eye on Kohaku, and they all spend some time being utterly confused as to why Kohaku would be assigned to earth. Apparently Kohaku is kind of infamously bad at magic, which, coupled with a lack of knowledge about humans, seems to make them a pretty bad candidate for this kind of thing.
    - They also reject the idea that it could be a simple training mission, and say that Kohaku is apparently one of God's favorites.
    - Naturally, Koryu finds this all very suspicious, and he wants Ruri and Hari to get to the bottom of it.
    - Ruri and Hari turn into actual literal cats, and go off on their mission, while Koryu contemplates an image of Shuichiro with a hungry look in his eyes.
  - Kohaku, in chibi form, is currently folding Shuichiro's laundry. It's a painstaking process, since they are so small, but they look so proud when they are done.
    - Shuichiro thanks them with a cup of hot milk, and asks where they have been sleeping for the last few days.
    - When Kohaku says they've been sleeping in a corner, Shuichiro says they can feel free to take whatever they need from the house in order to make themselves a better bed.
      - Actually, he first offers to buy a kid-sized comforter, but Kohaku is stressed at the idea of him spending hard-earned money on them. It's very cute.
      - And they do end up making a bed out of the laundry basket, just for the record.
    - Shuichiro also says that he wants to make sure they don't get sick (presumably from being too cold), since he'd have no idea how to cure some sort of angelic disease.
    - Kohaku's surprised that he finally believes they are an angel, but Shuichiro says simply that that's what Kohaku told him. He's a very trusting dude.
    - Meanwhile, the cat-minions are watching all this, being utterly disgusted by how cute and sappy the two are.

- They do, however, appreciate how hunky Shuichiro is.
    - He also reminds them of someone, though they can't quite figure out who.
  - As Kohaku is assembling their bed, they explain a bit about angels and magic to Shuichiro.
  - We've covered some of this already, but apparently angels draw power from the sun, whereas devils draw power from the moon. Those who have mastered all their spells can stay in grown-up form 24-7, but angels and devils like Kohaku and Koryu are stuck in chibi form in their off hours. By spells, they mostly mean controlling the elements, and it can take the form of healing, assistance, or even attack spells.
    - Kohaku's apparently pretty good at the healing and assistance stuff, but not so much the attack stuff, which fits with what Koryu was saying earlier.
  - Kohaku also asks about Shuichiro and his life, and he ends up telling them about his motorcycle, his favorite "thing."
  - As they are admiring it, and the cats are watching them (and being frustrated at Kohaku's general naivety), a strange bunny carrying a flower appears in front of Kohaku.
  - Kohaku freaks out...and so do the cats.
  - Apparently this is "Ushagi," one of God's personal messengers.
  - The flower is a message for Kohaku, and once they receive it, they freak out even more, begging to have more time.
  - They create their own flower/message for Usagi to take back to God, and once it's gone, they cling to Shuichiro, crying.
  - They say "it's Hisui-same...the powers that be are demanding my expulsion."
  - What does this mean? Well, fortunately, we just have to head to the next chapter to find out.
- After some comforting, Kohaku explains to Shuichiro--and the spying cats--that Hisui-same is one of the four Angel Masters that serve God directly. Each is a master of one of the four elements (fire, water, wind, earth), and Hisui is the master of wind.
    - They are beautiful, strong, and kind. They helped teach Kohaku wind spells, and have looked after them.
    - But, they disappeared three months ago. Kohaku last saw them at the bridge between Heaven and Hell, which opens once each season, and serves a neutral territory where representatives of the two realms meet to discuss issues.
    - Kohaku came to earth to look for Hisui. It's the first time an angel master has ever disappeared, and since Hisui was very calm and peaceful, it's very out of character for them.
    - The cats, listening in secret, are surprised because this is the first they've heard about an angel master disappearing. But, they figure that makes sense--it wouldn't look very good for Heaven if one of their top angels disappeared.

- Before meeting Shuichiro, Kohaku had already searched everywhere, with no success. And they continue to search; angel's wings emit a certain light, and once Kohaku sees that light, they should be able to find Hisui anywhere on earth.
- But for some reason, they haven't seen a glimpse of it in all this time.
- And now, they are running out of time. God wants them back, and they have tasks to perform in Heaven. They can't stay on earth for much longer, but if they give up, Hisui may be gone for good.
  - There's also a time limit for how long Hisui can stay gone: after a full season, they will lose their status as an angel master, and after a year, they will be banished from Heaven forever.
- Shuichiro listens patiently to Kohaku's troubles, and then recommends they get a good night's sleep, since there's nothing else they can really do at the moment. Kohaku agrees, and does seem to feel better after being able to share their concerns.
  - The cats, of course, feel very accomplished, and head off to tell Koryu what they've learned.
- That night, Kohaku has a dream of the last time they saw Hisui. They find Hisui on the bridge between Heaven and Hell, and ask what they are doing out here all alone.
  - Hisui says that they have taught Kohaku many things, and Kohaku agrees...but nevertheless, Hisui says that they still have much to learn themselves.
  - They may be smart...but sometimes that means knowing how much you *don't* know. Hisui tells Kohaku that there are some wishes that cannot be fulfilled by oneself.
  - Then, as Kohaku calls their name, Hisui disappears.
- Kohaku wakes up, and mulls over Hisui's words, but then hurries out to catch up on their chores.
  - Shuichiro is waiting for them, and before they can launch into chore mode, he takes them over to his motorcycle.
  - He has the day off, and figures that the best way for Kohaku to find Hisui is to cover a lot of ground. The motorcycle will be perfect for that. And there is a time crunch, after all.
  - The two head out, and Shuichiro asks if there are any leads, but unfortunately, no.
  - All Kohaku knows is that Hisui can't be in Hell, since it's impossible for angels or devils to set foot in the other's realm. Their bodies would literally disintegrate if they even tried it.
  - They drive around all day, but there is no sign of an angel's light.
  - Just as the sun is about to set, they are attacked by a bolt of lightning.
  - Yep, it's Koryu and his minions!
  - Kohaku is determined to protect Shuichiro, but is looking pretty outgunned. Koryu taunts them, revealing that he knows why Kohaku has come to earth. He knows about Hisui.

- After declaring that he'll spread the info all over Hell, he launches another attack.
    - Shuichiro pulls Kohaku in to protect them, but a cyclone of wind dispels the attack instead, and we see...Hisui!
- Hisui diffuses things a bit. Koryu throws out some more verbal barbs, but he seems pretty disarmed by Hisui's appearance.
  - (And the fact that Hisui doesn't take Koryu remotely seriously.)
  - Shuichiro asks Kohaku if this is the angel master they were looking for, and they confirm that it is...but for some reason, Kohaku can't see the light emitting from Hisui's wings.
  - Hisui comes over to Kohaku, and asks why they have come to earth. When Kohaku tells Hisui that they came to find them, Hisui tells them to go back to Heaven before they are expelled.
  - Hisui says that Kohaku still has plenty of time to be a real angel...but their own time in Heaven is over.
  - Annoyed that everyone seems to be ignoring them, Koryu launches a new attack. Everyone braces for impact...but this one is stopped by a circle of fire.
  - A new person enters the scene, one dressed all in black...who looks a great deal like Shuichiro.
  - Koryu recognized him immediately, and so does Kohaku. This is Kokuyo, the son of Satan and the second in command of Hell.
    - Kohaku has only seen him before on the bridge between heaven and hell, and they could never forget his jet-black eyes...only now, one of his eyes is white.
      - WHICH IS VERY SEISHIROU HUH???? LIKE, COME ON CLAMP HOW IS THIS A TYPE
  - Koryu's minions are pretty excited, expecting Kokuyo to join their side in the fight (and also probably because of how hunky Kokuyo is), but Kokuyo just says that it looks like Satan hasn't sent anyone after him yet.
    - While everyone is mulling this over, the minions also realize why Shuichiro looked so familiar...he really is the spitting image of Kokuyo.
    - He's just got, like...Dark Fuuma hair instead of Jotaro hair, or something.
  - Anyway, everyone agrees they look alike, but Kohaku begs Kokuyo not to harm Shuichiro.
    - Instead of attacking, Kokuyo asks Hisui if Kohaku is the angel they'd mentioned.
    - Hisui tells him not to look so scary, and then addresses Kohaku again, telling them to return to Heaven and tell God that they could not be found.
    - Kohaku tries to convince Hisui to return to Heaven and explain everything to God, but Hisui says that God would not understand, and Kokuyo adds that Kohaku should be careful, lest they start a war between Heaven and Hell.
    - The two start to leave, but Shuichiro stops them, saying that they owe Kohaku an explanation, at least, for risking so much to find them.

- With some hesitation, Hisui agrees...but first, some tea!
- Everyone gathers at Shuichiro's house. Again, Kohaku asks Hisui to come back to Heaven...but they say that they can't do that, since they are no longer an angel.
  - Sure enough, the light of their wings isn't just obscured from Kohaku, it's gone completely.
  - Kohaku asks how that happened, but it's Kokuyo who answers. It's because he and Hisui made love.
  - Apparently this happened (or at least started) before Kokuyo knew that Hisui was an angel master, but they were both very into it.
  - Everyone is pretty shocked, of course...except for Kohaku, who asks what "made love" means.
  - After a scene change for comedic effect, Hisui talks to Kohaku alone, explaining that they want to stay with Kokuyo forever, no matter what happens.
  - There are a lot of tears--mostly Kohaku's--but in the end, Kohaku swears not to tell God about Hisui, even if it gets them in trouble. They know Hisui must really love Kokuyo, and they want them to be happy.
  - Kohaku intends to return to Heaven, but first they have to grant a wish for Shuichiro...but since Shuichiro has no wish, they ask for Hisui's advice.
  - They ask about Hisui's words when they last saw them, about the wish that cannot be fulfilled by oneself.
  - However, Hisui says that that's something they must discover for themselves.
- Meanwhile, the devils are talking. Koryu's giving Kokuyo some flack for being a major player, and some credit for sleeping with an angel master, but Kokuyo explains that he hasn't been with anyone since Hisui.
  - Koryu counters, in a bit of rage, that *he's* been with Kokuyo...but Kokuyo shushes him.
    - I thought that was more of a 'why settle on one person when you've been with everyone including me' thing, not a 'we hooked up since you got together with hisui' thing?
    - Yeah...that would make a lot more sense. I guess we'll see if it ever comes up again!
- Further meanwhile, Shuichiro is waiting and chilling with Ruri and Hari, who have turned back into cats.
  - When the others return, Shuichiro asks Hisui if they and Kokuyo have anywhere to stay, since they can't go to Heaven and Hell.
  - Hisui says that they do not, and when he asks, confirms that they are also in some danger...it's going to get kind of dicey once word of their relationship gets around.
  - Shuichiro says they should stay at his place, in that case. He has plenty of room, and he thinks Kohaku would enjoy the company.

- Kohaku is overjoyed, and once Shuichiro leaves the room, Hisui wonders aloud of he will be able to teach Kohaku about that wish that can't be fulfilled by oneself.
- This goes over Kohaku's head, of course, but they sure are happy!
- The cats are also pretty happy, perched on Shuichiro's shoulders.
- And that's it for volume 1!

## Discussion

- I am not sure how we found out about Wish before it was released, CLAMP fan-sites from back in the year 2000 I'm sure, but I remember that I was aware that the main character was a-gendered and wondered how they would handle that if it were ever translated. Just having anything color outside the gender binary at all felt SPICY back then (and we craved it so much) so I remember really anticipating this comic, even though I was and still am a bit allergic to angel motifs.
- I can't remember what I thought about this before I read it...I may have just known the characters existed, but no real details, since I don't remember having a special drive to find it. I did love it once it came out in English, though! And I did pick up copies of the Japanese version, but I did that after having already read it, not, like, in a desperate attempt to get my hands on it before it was translated.
- I was starved for queer content at the time, and this really spoke to me. I think the fact that the angels were a-gender was less clear to me, and I read it more as a gay love story. Like, I knew Kohaku wasn't a girl, but I didn't quite process that they also were not a boy. Now, of course, that is one of my favorite parts of the series!
  - I had a similar thing with Ashura, in RG Veda, which was not helped by the translation. I'm gonna blame my own ignorance here, but I think there was less awareness in general about folks outside the gender binary, even in our very queer circle of friends.
- Though boy, we sure could have used the awareness and terms that are more available now!
- So I promised an 'angels and demons' deep-dive but I think that'll wait till the end because it's,,it's a long discussion. Both about what we even mean when we say angels and demons and also how/why they'd show up the way they do in this manga.
- But I do want to say that so far it is definitely their own mythos and not very directly related to biblical angels, and I think it combines some eastern and western ideas into something that is not particularly familiar to a modern Christian in any meaningful way.
- Fun fact! The angels and demons are all named after precious stones, both minerals and not, that are usually also the characters; eye-colors!
  - Kohaku is 'amber' and has amber eyes, Kouryu is garnet and has garnet-colored eyes, etc.
  - I'm trying to figure out whether there's a tradition of naming angels/demons after gemstones, but it seems to just be like...new age 70s stuff associating guardian angels and birthstones
  - Which....might have influenced CLAMP since that kind fo stuff was popular in Japan?
  - But they always have fun naming schemes so this may just be that.

- Time to address the Jotaro and Kakyoin in the room.
  - OK, so, at this point I have seen through Stardust Crusaders of the Jojo anime, so I know who these characters are...but Robin, can you explain them briefly for the audience? Also, I have...questions.
    - Yeah I mean...We have covered this before but we kinda have to do it again here. So at this point Jojo's Bizarre adventure, a classic (and still-running) manga by Hirokiko Araki and now anime, is globally established and I don't need to explain it much, right?
    - Right!
    - Jotaro Kujo is the protagonist of Stardust Crusaders, he's one of the most Tom of Finland-looking himbos in all of Jojo, with his vintage chain-through-the-collar Yanki-ed up school uniform and weird tattered hat. His trademark is being almost silently stoic and having a really dark glare, which comes off as like...Billy Idol-esque rock-and-roll sneering. Noriaki Kakyoin is another high school boy but just as huge and ripped and glam as Jotaro, and he has a buckwild hairstyle that is very 80s, mostly short and wolflike but with an often out-of-control curl or tendril of hair that's like, side-parted bangs maybe? The general vibes of these characters might just sound familiar to someone who has just read Wish...
      - Jotaro and Kakyoin barely talk to each other in the manga, but because of their closeness at the VERY END and the fandom principle of Two Guys Standing Next to Each Other equaling sexual tension, they're one of the most enduring ships of the series.
        - In infamously, CLAMP wrote that doujin where Kakyoin ~maybe~ lays an egg and the baby that hatches is basically a mini Jotaro so yeah. This is clearly a big thing for them.
        - When we covered X we joked about how most couples in that couple be boiled down to 'who is the Jotaro and who is the Kakyoin'
          - Though that's honestly not a perfect method or anything
        - And even how it kind of brings up a common BL trope of the light-haired character being exoticized as having attributes that are seen as more foreign or even negative?
          - Which I like to relate to the main dynamic between Akira and Ryo in Devilman
        - In the case of this, CLAMP...you could say 'feminized' Kakyoin to being the literal mother-figure in the family dynamic, and being quiet and gentle and doing domestic tasks, while Jotaro was strong and quiet and driven by manly emotions like anger and...eyebrows or something.

- It feels like Wish is basically an angel-and-demon domestic AU Jotaro-Kakyoin fanfic, right? I'm not the only one thinking that?
    - You are definitely not the only one!
- So like...there's a particular kind of story that focuses on...like, this kind of juvenile (and I don't mean that in a bad way) fantasy of a relationship, whereby characters end up in the trappings of a relationship...before actually having the messy and complicated feelings behind a relationship.
  - It's kind of like playing house. I think it's often easier to imagine and fantasize about the, like, patterns and habits of being with someone, but avoid how people actually get to that point.
  - I think this is why the "magical girlfriend" trope is so popular. Through crazy circumstances, you get a girl who is living in your house and basically acting like a wife/maid (sometimes literally *being a maid*), but also being somewhat off-limits because of the weirdness of the relationship.
  - I think there's also a lot of sexism and power issues with this, of course. But it's interesting that Wish kind of follows this...but Kohaku isn't a girl, and Shuichiro isn't a pubescent boy who doesn't know how to talk to women. They are not your typical pairing for this setup.
  - Examples of this are obviously Oh My Goddess, Tenchi to some extent (things keep coming back to Tenchi), and countless series in the 90s and 00s. More recently, Miss Kobayashi's Dragon Maid also plays with this trope.
    - I could maybe even argue Ranma fits into this, just because they are living together and there's a lot of embarrassment and awkwardness around that.
    - I HAVE A LOT OF THEORIES ABOUT THIS and I think you're describing it as 'juvenile' is a great start, because it speaks to an inexperienced person's fantasies, and those fantasies can easily persist once someone HAS experience and knows how hard relationships and feelings can be!
      - I honestly think part of why there are so many light incesty anime (aside from the taboo-equals-pushing-the-envelope-equals-fetish-material-for-the-anhedonic aspect)
        - Is that like, having a GIRL IN YOUR HOUSE is a good set-up for intimate moments that are hard to engineer with schoolmates or kids in another club or just that-girl-you-saw-in-the-bus.
          - A contrivance to get characters INTO a situation where rom com ro sex comedy things can happen
      - I think in something like Wish, it's to fast-track the intimacy that is why the thing exists in the first place.
      - It's a romance. The romance isn't part of a bigger plot, the plot is second to the relationship drama. But the drama isn't just a 'will they won't they'--its a 'will their forced relationship evolve into a

real one?' and maybe even 'what is a real relationship'? We'll see how that unfolds!

- Those pronouns though, huh?
  - My version, the omnibus released by Dark Horse in 2019, does a very careful job of avoiding using pronouns at all. I was honestly pretty impressed by how successful they were at making it sound natural.
  - For the devils, they do use gendered pronouns occasionally, and we pretty much followed their lead in our description.
  - For the angels, they use "it" to refer to the angels when pronouns can't be avoided. At first this kind of rubbed me the wrong way, since it can sound very dehumanizing. But I know that some people do use "it" as their proper pronoun, and it grew on me as I read.
  - Personally, I would have preferred they use "they/them" because I think it's becoming pretty common when referring to people whose gender you don't know, or who do not fit within the gender binary.
  - But, I'm just happy that they are not actively misgendering them.
    - Which got really distracting in the old TokyoPop translation.
      - I salute Ray Yoshimoto and Jamie S Rich for the very cute and, like, idiosyncratic translation? Is has a very strong voice, maintaining lightness and trying to get jokes to land, while also getting a lot of different, cartoony personalities across
      - But it is still kind of hard for me to read for various reasons.
  - Yeah, I can imagine. I will say that I own both translations, so I was comparing the two, and aside from pronoun choices they are pretty close, so I can tell they were both trying to be authentic to the original.
- We've both read this one before...how did it hold up this time?
  - I haven't reread this for probably a decade at least, but it was one of my favorites back in high school.
  - As to now: I enjoyed this volume, but it's wasn't quite as...deep as some of their other works. I think I texted you and called it "delightful popcorn" which was maybe a little mean, since it did start to get meatier in the second half of the volume. I have a feeling we're going to get even deeper into things, but at its heart, Wish is a sweet love story, and that is completely valid and pretty wonderful.
    - I struggled with it more, honestly. Some of it is the translation, which is a little precious (as I said, I'm glad it has such a strong voice but I don't love the voice) and some of it is that....I don't really....buy any of these characters? It doesn't have a whole lot for me to hold onto, I think.
    - Yeah, I honestly had a bit of trouble getting into it, too. The first part is a little slow, and a little light on content. But, by the time Hisui and Kokuyo were introduced, things got more interesting. I'm very curious to see where things go next...I mean, I have a general memory, but I don't remember how it all shakes out!
    - Yeah! It did feel like it got into its swing by the end.

- But there's SO MUCH DRAMA!
  - There is! This is primarily about relationships, and I'm struggling with them, so maybe you can help bring me into this narrative! Talk to me about what's jumping out at you, Lucy?
  - Well...I guess it's mostly the stuff between Hisui and Kokuyo. They ran away together! It's so romantic!
  - They are also a good foil for Kohaku and Shuichiro, who are clearly set up as the "main couple" in this series.
  - But, there's this enemies-to-lovers energy between Kohaku and Koryu, too. Or at least...Koryu seems like he has kind of a crush on Kohaku, doesn't he? Maybe that's just me?
    - Def not just you! I do NOT buy the 'you're so fun to bully'--that feels like a jerk having feelings. Still a jerk though.
    - Hey, did it bother you that they kept calling each other fat as insults?
      - I know their super-deformed bodies are little potatoes, but their tall forms are like, notably rail-thin to the point where they have no ass--and CLAMP character usually have no ass, but this is like, negative ass!
      - Yeah, it bothered me a lot, actually. I left it out of the summary because it did not seem relevant, but it definitely bugged me. I mean, I know it's referencing they're chibi forms, but...can we not fat-shame, please?
  - Also, there seems to be some past (or ongoing?) stuff between Koryu and Kokuyo. Who knows what that means, but he didn't want Hisui to find out, so it could matter later, maybe?
    - Yes that was maybe my fave moment in the whole thing, I don't even understand why, it just...maybe felt like a mask slipping?
    - It was interesting to see SO much physical affection between characters in a CLAMP manga, though it is drawn a liiiiittle bit stiffly.
    - Yeah, I liked how frankly sexual some of the characters were. It was kind of refreshing. But, it was mostly the devils, so...I guess we'll circle back to that later.
  - In general, I am left with, like, tabloid-headline questions.
  - Who's sleeping with who? Who do we want to sleep with who? Or 'whom'???
  - Will Shuichiro and Kohaku fall in love? Will Kohaku have to go back to Heaven before they learn about that wish one can't fulfill for oneself? Will Hisui and Kokuyo end up in trouble???
  - We'll have to wait to find out...

## Outro

In our next episode, we'll be discussing Wish volume 2! I am pumped.

Until then, you can follow us on twitter, Tumblr, and Instagram @Clampcastpod, on Facebook as Clampcast in Wonderland, and on our website clampcastinwonderland.com.

You can support us on Patreon, by making purchases through our Bookshop.org store, or just by writing a review or sharing this podcast with your friends.

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!