

# Wish

## Volume 2

Lucy Robin

### Intro

Love can be complicated, and it can be so hard to understand other people's feelings--but understanding one's own may be even harder.

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

### Check-In

- It is October! Lucy is back in classes, Robin is back in deadlines, and we are back to a much more regular schedule!
- (Max)

### Background

- We're in about 1996 by the time of this volume's original chapter releases.
- I don't have much new information to give you all about Wish for this volume, but since it...is about to come up again...
  - The infamous CLAMP Jojo doujinshi ran in the last volume of CLAMP lab, their like...newsletter/fanzine in 1994, with a follow-up in the booklet they released for the CLAMP in WONDERLAND event that was all about releasing that adorable music video we discussed in our Anniversary episode last year!
    - It really is a wonderful retrospective of their works from RG Veda through Magic Knight Rayearth
    - And those Jojo fan characters showed up in that music video--
      - But since it's 89-94, the Wish characters just missed it!
      - And just...sit with that for a moment. Jojo fan characters ended up in the CLAMP in Wonderland music video, but Wish did not.
      - Time is mind-bending
        - Speaking of which, we get a little time-travel in this volume of Wish, so Lucy, start telling us about what happens in volume 2!

## Summary

- So, this volume opens with Kohaku joyfully watering the garden.
  - Their reverie is quickly interrupted, however, when they learn that Hisui is *making breakfast*.
  - No, this does not sound like a big deal to us (or Shuichiro), but it's a big deal to Kohaku.
    - You'll remember from volume 1, angels are forbidden from taking life, which includes eating anything that was once alive. So obviously meat is off the table, but so are plants, and basically everything else except milk (and honey, which they do mention in this volume!).
  - Anyway, as an angel master, Hisui would be bound by these rules as well...but since they're in exile, they're technically no longer an angel, so they are free to do whatever they please.
    - I have a lot of questions about what "being an angel" actually means...it sounds more like a job than a species? But whatever.
      - We'll get into that in our eventual 'angel lore dump'
  - While Kohaku is having a bit of an existential crisis, Shuichiro joins Hisui and Kokuyo for breakfast (during which they review most of this angel stuff).
  - They also explain that normally devils don't need to eat, either, because they subsist off of human souls (while angels are fueled by sunlight and fresh air).
  - However, Kokuyo has made Hisui a deal: he will eat food instead of human souls, if Hisui will join him for meals.
- Once Shuichiro is caught up on all this angel/devil lore, he joins Kohaku outside, and notices that they seem upset.
  - It's finally really hitting Kohaku that Hisui has left heaven for good.
  - While they're talking about this, Shuichiro points out that Kohaku is floating.
  - Apparently, they do this a lot, and it can happen even when their wings aren't visible. They try not to tread on plants and insects whenever they can.
  - They also kind of have like...a shojo-bubbles moment that is brought on by nothing, but is maybe just Kohaku noticing how close Shuichiro is standing?
    - Yeah that really tripped you up! I think it was drawing attention to a tender moment. But it didn't seem that different from the dialog and actions the characters had been doing so I can see how it didn't feel like as clear of a beat.
    - In romance stories--or anything where a lot of the story beats are internal--it really helps to like...create externalizations for those emotional changes and stuff?
    - And it does feel like Wish is a bit weak about that.
      - This is not the only moment where you felt the story was unclear and the choice of what to have featured in a large panel didn't quite match up to what you'd expect once you puzzled out what was supposed to be happening.

- I don't think we have really encountered as much of this--which I could describe as pacing issues, or paneling issues, since RG Veda.
  - It doesn't ruin it, but it does slow us down when we're reading.
- However, we're distracted from this...moment by Koryu and his minions (currently in cat form), who are watching from the roof and complaining about how sappy everything is.
  - The cats are actually into it, but I think Koryu is a little jealous...
- Shuichiro and Kohaku are also distracted from...whatever is going on, by the doorbell.
- Kohaku answers the door, and is immediately embraced by a rambunctious old man, who has mistaken them for Shuichiro.
  - He discovers his mistake pretty quickly, especially since Kohaku screams, which causes everyone in the house to come running.
- It turns out this man is Shuichiro's grandfather, and he's making a surprise visit all the way from Canada.
  - He looks like...well, Shuichiro but old. And that means he reminds me of a Jojo character but we'll get to that later.
- When Kohaku has a chance to properly introduce himself, we learn that his name is Shinichiro, and Shuichiro's father was his son.
  - They do a cute thing here where they write their names on the other's palm, to show what kanji they use. It's really adorable and I hope people actually do this, because I could also see it being very helpful.
  - Kohaku offers to escort Grandpa around the town, since Shuichiro has to work.
  - And yes, I refuse to have to say both Shuichiro and Shinichiro on the reg, so he's Grandpa.
    - Fair, dude. Another one of those 'it works when you're reading Kanji but is awful in ENGLISH' complains we could have about naming, which Wish is VERY GUILTY OF
- Anyway, this also gives the book a chance to clarify some things re: Kohaku's gender. When Grandpa calls them a young lady, they say in no uncertain terms that they are not a lady, and when he corrects to 'pretty young man' Kohaku asserts they're not a man either...they are an angel!
  - Grandpa just thinks it's a joke that he doesn't quite get, but he's happy to play along and doesn't push it. Actually a very chill way for someone to react to something they don't understand without being a big judgy jerk about it.
  - Watching from afar, Kokuyu is pretty astounded that naive little Kohaku would just tell people they're an angel, but Hisui says that it makes sense from someone like Kohaku, who is incapable of deceit. They tell the truth, or nothing.
  - And Kokuyu says that that's probably why "they" sent Kohaku. And Hisui agrees.

- Ominous!
- Before they can elaborate, Kohaku runs over to tell them that they are going out.
  - They are also *clearly* uncomfortable around Kokuyo, and once they've left, Hisui tells him to be less scary.
  - Kokuyo responds by scooping them into an embrace, but Hisui continues, saying that Kohaku doesn't see the same world as everyone else.
  - They hope that Shuichiro will be able to teach them what life is really about.
  - Kokuyo starts to point out that Shuichiro is a human, but Hisui has to run away to deal with tea.
  - Alone, Kokuyo wonders...can an angel and a human be together?
- Meanwhile, Koryu (who's still hanging out on the roof) sees Kohaku leave with Grandpa.
  - The cats catch him up on who this old guy is, and he decides to follow them.
  - Kohaku and Grandpa do some shopping, while Koryu tails them. He finds a cd that he says isn't available in Canada, and then asks if Kohaku knows of a small park in the area.
  - In fact, they do! There's one with a big wisteria tree that they and Shuichiro go to quite a lot.
  - Grandpa looks oddly sad at this news, and even sadder once they're at the tree.
  - He explains that this is the place where Shuichiro's mother disappeared. It happened when he was in high school, and although he was always very self-sufficient and quiet, those traits increased after her disappearance.
  - That's one reason he was so surprised to find Kohaku living with Shuichiro.
    - They are quick to insist that it's not *like that*, and they are just there to grant a wish for him in thanks for helping them. Grandpa says that their presence might be thanks enough.
  - Grandpa didn't know much about Shuichiro's mother, but their little family was so happy, it never seemed to matter. They all lived in the house Shuichiro currently lives in, which belonged to his father.
  - He also explains that the CD he bought has Shuichiro's mother's favorite song on it. Kohaku looks at the cd, and announces that the song is beautiful. Apparently angels can just look at media devices and see what's inside them.
    - They are even able to sing the song, which surprises Grandpa (as you might imagine).
    - As they sing, Kohaku notices that the wisteria tree seems happy.
  - Grandpa goes on to explain that Shuichiro's father also died, one year after his wife disappeared, in a plane crash. Poor Shuichiro was just 15.
  - So...that's a lot. Grandpa apologizes for the sad mood, but says he feels like he can tell Kohaku anything. Kohaku mentioned earlier that Shuichiro said they could ask him anything, and Grandpa marvels at Shuichiro opening up to someone like that.
  - He offers to buy Kohaku a drink, in thanks for their wonderful singing performance.

- It takes some convincing, since Kohaku is still very concerned about people spending hard-earned money on them, but Grandpa eventually runs off to buy milk from a nearby store.
- **Left alone**, Kohaku casts a quick spell to ask the spirits of the wisteria tree if anyone has ever died here. Apparently, no one has, which is good news, but then what happened to Shuichiro's mother?
  - **Koryu appears**, telling Kohaku that if they really want to know...they could go back in time.
  - Although Kohaku thinks time travel is impossible, Koryu explains that's it's totally possible...if they work together. Only very powerful angels and demons can travel to the future, but they should be able to manage a trip to the past.
  - **The cats** are shocked at this--would Koryu actually help Kohaku? But he seems genuine in his offer. He tells them (and Kohaku) that's he just bored, but Kohaku isn't quite convinced.
  - **That is**, until Koryu points out that solving Shuichiro's mother's disappearance just might be the way to give Shuichiro something he can't give himself.
  - With this realization...Kohaku agrees.
- **So**, Kohaku and Koryu cast the spell together. In order to do this, they have to match each other, so both are in chibi form.
  - **Which** my translation called "super-deformed," and man it's been like a DECADE since I've heard anyone use that.
    - I use that term! I use it more than chibi, which feels weird for me to say. Super-deformed or SD is like...more often what manga and anime actually use.
    - **Hmm**, maybe I've just been less in-touch with anime fandom, since I used to use it all the time in middle school, but haven't really encountered it recently. I feel like once "chibi" entered general nerd vernacular, I saw SD drop way off.
  - **ANYWAY** They each draw up what looks like a magic circle, and then move their circles to align, which seems to create a portal. They place it on the tree, using its power to help them travel back into time. And they go through the portal!
- **Back** home, Hisui and Kokuyo both sense the spell, and are interrupted from some, er, personal time.
  - They recognize that it's a time-travel spell, and wonder what the other two are up to.
- **Speaking** of which, Koryu and Kohaku reemerge in the same place...but now we're thirteen years in the past.
  - They observe that the tree's powers are even stronger in this time, and then head off to Shuichiro's house.
  - As they go, Koryu explains that, since they don't technically exist in this time, no one can see them.
    - Seems like a good deal for time travel.
  - They make it to Shuichiro's house, and the garden is even more beautiful than ever, due to his mom's care...but it seems like no one is home.

- However, Koryu's senses seem to have tricked him, because someone *is* there. A very beautiful young woman is resting under a tree.
  - She's wearing a kimono and a vacant expression, and gave me big Seishiro's Mom vibes, but maybe that's just me...
  - I can see that!
- Even more surprising than having tricked Koryu's senses, however, is that she knows they are there.
- This should *not* be possible, but she even comments on how small and cute they are, so there's no doubt she's aware of them.
- Koryu's got some understandable stranger-danger, but Kohaku says that she has such a beautiful smile, she can't possibly be a bad person.
  - Koryu says that means *nothing*, but Kohaku introduces herself anyway.
  - The woman also tells them her name: Hotaru.
- Back in normal time, Hisui and Kokuyo are on the case of the mysterious time-travel spell. They take off for the park, fretting because time travel is apparently dangerous and complicated.
- Back in...the past, Hotaru quickly clocks them as time-travelers, and even touches Kohaku's cheek. Again, something that should not be possible.
  - Koryu's having a good rage-filled panic, and wants to attack her, but Kohaku stops him. They can't explain how they know it, but they know she's a good person.
  - Kohaku asks Hotaru about Shuichiro...and she says that, shocker, she is in fact Shuichiro's mother.
  - They are both surprised by this (I mean, she does look hella young to have a teenage son), but they can't ask follow up questions because teen-Shuichiro appears.
  - He can't see them, at least. He chats with his mother, and carries her to her room, while she beckons Kohaku and Koryu to follow them.
  - When they are alone again, Kohaku sings the song from earlier. As Hotaru joins Kohaku in singing, Koryu notices that the trees in the garden are moving in time with the song. Which is definitely not normal.
  - Kohaku can tell from Hotaru's reaction that she must be Shuichiro's mother, but they don't have much time to talk because Shuichiro returns with the wisteria-patterned kimono she'd asked for.
  - She comments on the pattern...and asks if he's surprised she can tell which one it is, even though she's blind.
  - This is news to us, since Koryu points out that she looked straight at him and Kohaku earlier, but Shuichiro just says he's used to it.
  - Hotaru asks if something is troubling Shuichiro, but he says it's nothing. She asks him to help her change into the kimono. Apparently the wisteria pattern on it is his father's favorite, and she wants him to see it on her when he gets home.
  - Shuichiro looks a little put out by this request, but agrees.

- Meanwhile, Kohaku agrees with Koryu that Hotaru looks like she could be the same age as Shuichiro, but Koryu points out that this is the least of their problems...because she's not even human.
- DUN DUN DUN
- Alright, so, why does Koryu think she's not human?
  - Well, aside from the fact that she seems to be able to see--or at least perceive--things despite being blind, and the fact that she can see and touch them, if you look closely her eyes are purple. Besides that, he can sense her power, even though he says she's masking it.
    - Kohaku can't sense anything, but Koryu explains that that's because Hotaru's energy is closer to hell's than heaven's...so of course he can pick up on it, and Kohaku can't.
  - Speaking of Hotaru, she glances at our little time travelers, and then tells Shuichiro something: she's leaving this house today, for good. She's going back to her original form.
    - When Shuichiro asks "why?" (which would not have been my first question, but ok), she explains that she knows her husband will die in a year. She knows because of the string around her finger that links her to him, and without him, there will be nothing tying her to this plane.
      - We don't see a literal string, its metaphorical or spiritual--more on that later!
    - Shuichiro asks why she's going now, when they have a year, but she explains that now that she's aware of his coming death, she won't be able to smile for her husband anymore. And she doesn't want him to see her cry.
    - That's why she wanted to wear his favorite kimono today, so they can have this last day together.
    - She tells Shuichiro to come to her when the crescent moon rises. Her husband will be peacefully asleep, and she and Shuichiro will go to the park, to the place beneath the wisteria.
  - Back in normal time, the cats are watching over the time portal, wondering when Koryu and Kohaku will get back.
    - They're also debating whether or not Koryu's really intending mischief, and they hope he'll bring them back some tasty, aged souls from the past.
    - They are interrupted by Kokuyo, who tells them bringing souls back from the past is strictly forbidden.
    - Neither of the cats are excited to see Kokuyo and Hisui, and they are pretty terrified of Kokuyo in particular.
    - Hisui coaxes them into answering their questions, and they confirm that Koryu and Kohaku went back in time, trying to help Shuichiro somehow.
  - Full of concern (but now pretty convinced Hotaru is not human), Kohaku and Koryu are waiting for Shuichiro and his mother.

- Kohaku comments on how sad Shuichiro looked when Hotaru told him her plan, and Koryu's surprised, since he says Shuichiro's face didn't even change.
    - Kohaku says he's keeping his pain locked in his heart, which kind of makes Koryu (and me) gag.
  - But, no time for lying around! Shuichiro and his mother are on the move.
  - As they leave, Hotaru thanks the tree in the garden for letting her sleep under it, and then tries to introduce the time travelers to Shuichiro.
  - Shuichiro says he can't see them, which Hotaru says is strange, since they shouldn't be hidden anymore.
  - WHATEVER THAT MEANS
- Meanwhile, Kokuyo and Hisui are inspecting the portal. Kokuyo's impressed by how complex it is, but Hisui says that Kohaku is incredibly strong.
  - Apparently their powers rival those of the four angel masters, but they are held back by being kind of (as Kokuyo puts it) an airhead.
  - However, there is more going on here. They sense energy vibrating from the wisteria.
  - The cats confirm that that's where the door to the past was opened, and just as they're worrying about Kohaku and Koryu, the portal erupts with sudden energy.
- Back in the past, Koryu and Kohaku also sense strange energy from the wisteria.
  - Hotaru has Shuichiro set her down at the base of the tree, but as she thanks him for all his help, Shuichiro suddenly embraces her.
  - He asks why she can only stay for his dad...why not for him?
  - Hotaru explains that the two of them are not attached in the same way...the invisible string around his finger is for someone else.
  - Shuichiro insists that Hotaru is the only one he'll need, but Hotaru says that when he meets that person, that will all change.
  - Hotaru then begins to transform. She is enveloped in wind, and her clothes disappear, until she's standing (or maybe floating) naked before Shuichiro.
  - He calls out her name, and she says that's she's always loved the name Hotaru. Her husband gave her that name. He found her here, and gave her that name, and made her his wife.
  - She goes on to say that Shuichiro is not her real child, but she loves him. He is only second in her heart to her husband,
    - Whose name is Shusuke, for the record, but I just can't with all these names.
  - Shuichiro then asks if things would have been different if he'd found her first, before his dad did.
  - But Hotaru simply says that his love will come soon. There's someone waiting for him on the other end of that string around his finger.
  - And with that, she shifts back into the tree, once again returned to her true form.
  - Kohaku and Koryu understand now: Hotaru was a wisteria fairy, which is why she couldn't see or walk, and also explains her immense power.
  - Shuichiro is looking pretty devastated.

- But we may have bigger problems! Koryu reveals that he does in fact have mischief on his mind. He jumps back through the portal, taunting Kohaku, and telling them not to worry: in 13 years time, everything will be back to normal.
- And he takes the portal away with him, stranding Kohaku in the past.
- Trapped and alone, Kohaku is overwhelmed with sadness, and has to confront where those feelings are coming from.
  - They conclude that it's not just because they're seeing how sad Shuichiro is...it's because they will have to wait 13 years before Shuichiro will be able to see them.
  - As Kohaku is crying, Hotaru in tree form discusses this with them.
    - Kohaku explains that they can't return to their own time, but that's not why they are so sad.
    - It's knowing that they will be so close to Shuichiro, and yet he will never even know they are there. They'll be together, but he'll have no idea.
    - Hotaru asks why that makes Kohaku sadder than being stuck in the past, and Kohaku explains that it's because Shuichiro is such a good person. He was so kind to them, and they were just trying to return the favor.
    - But, Hotaru points out that Shuichiro is not the only nice person in the world. There are many others.
    - And it seems like Kohaku is on the verge of a breakthrough about why Shuichiro matters to them, but they are interrupted...because Shuichiro can hear them.
  - Meanwhile, Koryu returns to the present, feeling pretty proud of himself and his prank...until he runs smack dab into Kokuyo, that is.
    - He reluctantly admits that he left Kohaku behind, and Hisui says that they can't leave Kohaku in the past.
    - But, Kokuyo points out that it's forbidden to retrieve things from the past.
    - That doesn't matter to Hisui, though. They gave up their wings; they're no longer governed by such laws.
    - But, even setting those laws aside, this is apparently going to be tricky. They're determined to try anyway, despite the risks, but before they can, the wisteria tree starts reacting.
    - Koryu screams "it's the tree that did it! It's Shuichiro's mom."
      - Which just...is the best line ever, I gotta say.
    - Anyway, everyone's surprised/concerned, as you can imagine.
  - Back in the past, it turns out Shuichiro still can't see Kohaku, but he can hear them.
    - However, he can't hear Hotaru, because...she's a tree.
    - Kohaku's still pretty weepy at the idea that Shuichiro can't see them, but Hotaru has a solution. She's going to send Kohaku back to their own time.
    - Kohaku is very concerned by this. Such actions are forbidden, and Hotaru will not be able to do this without being punished.
    - But Hotaru says she doesn't mind. She'll be able to see her husband's last days on earth, and watch Shuichiro grow. And she'll even be able to see Kohaku come into his life before her actions catch up with her.

- Energy from the tree swells, and before they are sucked BACK TO THE FUTURE, Kohaku calls out to Shuichiro.
  - They tell him that, in 13 years, if he sees an angel being attacked by a crow, he has to save that angel. Otherwise, they'll never get to meet.
- Through blinding light and energy, Kohaku is returned to the present.
  - They immediately turn to the tree, and Hotaru thanks them for sharing her song with her.
  - Kohaku feels so bad that Hotaru gave up her life for them, but Hotaru says she's happy. Her husband has been waiting for her, and they can finally be together.
  - She thanks both Kohaku and Koryu, and asks them to watch over Shuichiro.
  - And then the tree explodes, as if hit by lightning.
- Hisui comforts Kohaku, while Kokuyo shuffles Koryu and the cats away.
- When grandpa returns, with Shuichiro in tow, he finds the two angels huddled under the destroyed tree.
  - Shuichiro recognizes the tree--in his mind, he calls it "Hotaru."
  - When Kohaku sees Shuichiro, they instantly ask if he can see them. When he says he can, Kohaku embraces him, still crying.
- Back home, it's time to say goodbye to Grandpa, who has to get on with his important business stuff or...something.
  - He promises to warn before he visits next time, as long as he can be promised a home-cooked meal.
  - And--like Hotaru--he asks Kohaku to take care of Shuichiro for him.
  - Kohaku follows him as he leaves, offering to walk him to the station, but Shuichiro stops them, saying there's already a cab waiting.
  - Kohaku looks at Shuichiro's hand on their arm...and blushes profusely.
- Hisui and Kokuyo are watching, and Hisui comments on how cute the two are together. They are glad Kohaku's feelings have been revealed, even if they're still not fully understood.
  - Kokuyo is surprised by this--could an angel really be with a human?
  - But he gets cut off, by Hisui simply saying "yes." When Kokuyo tries to emphasise the "human," part, Hisui runs off to check on the rice they're making.
  - THIS IS NOT OMINOUS AT ALL
- Later, Kohaku (now in chibi form) goes to tell Shuichiro that tea is ready.
  - They find Shuichiro looking at the tree in the garden...the same tree that Hotaru used to sit under.
  - Kohaku remembers Shuichiro's words, that Hotaru was the only one for him...and wonders why their heart hurts.
  - When Shuichiro notices them, they ask him a question. When they first met, he said he preferred reality to dreaming because it wasn't as strange. What did he mean by that?

- Shuichiro explains that things in the real world have real solutions; they are things he can control. But things beyond the laws of science or nature are beyond his control, and he can't cope with those.
    - Kohaku almost asks if he's talking about Hotaru, but Shuichiro doesn't quite hear what them.
    - Instead, Shuichiro throws his jacket over them, saying it's getting cold, and Kohaku looks very happy when they say "thank you."
  - Koryu is watching all of this, and swears to use this new knowledge to his advantage. He knows about Shuichiro's relationship with a tree spirit, and he knows Kohaku has feelings for him, too. He's got plans for Shuichiro...
- Ok, so, after all that, the last chapter of this volume is kind of it's own little short story...I mean, it's about all the same characters, but it doesn't really build on anything else that happened in this volume.
  - One evening, Kohaku (in night-mode) offers to go buy Shuichiro his cigarettes from a vending machine.
    - When they try to insert the coins Shuichiro gave them, a cat darts in front of them, batting the money to the ground.
    - It's a beautiful white cat with golden eyes, and after they two stare each other down for a moment, the cat advances on Kohaku.
  - Meanwhile, Koryu has seized this moment to hit on Shuichiro while Kohaku is gone. He drapes himself all over Shuichiro, who seems completely oblivious to his intentions.
    - Everyone is watching this--Koryu's two minions, as well as Hisui and Kokuyo--but no one really sees a need to intervene (although Hisui does suggest that they should maybe say something).
    - Koryu's about to get kind of bitey, when suddenly there is a scream, and Kohaku flies back from the vending machine. The cat has apparently chased them all this way, and since they're tiny, they can't do much to fight back.
    - Koryu gives them a bad time for being such a wimp, but Kohaku insists there's something strange about the cat.
    - But, strange cat or not...it looks like Kohaku forgot to get the cigarettes.
  - The next day, after some coaxing from those little birds that give Kohaku commentary, Kohaku decides to return to the vending machine and see if they can find out the true identity of the cat.
    - The vending machines are outside a little store, and in that store, Kohaku finds another cat. This one is also white, but it's very calm, and it's eyes are silver.
    - Kohaku asks the cat if it's seen another white cat, and it tells them that the other cat only comes around at night.
    - They fret about this, since they don't want to return when they're in chibi form, but the cat assures them that it shouldn't be a problem, and so Kohaku decides to come back that evening.

- Shuichiro ends up accompanying Kohaku back to the area that night, but the shop is closed now. Kohaku frets, since they promised to meet the cat...but sure enough, it appears anyway, and immediately attacks Shuichiro.
  - Kohaku can communicate with this one as well, and it says something that makes them very flustered.
  - We don't have to wonder about this for long, though, because Koryu shows up to translate.
  - Apparently this cat has "a love for Kohaku that is most unnatural." In fact, the cat wants to marry them.
  - The cat believes it was love at first sight, and when it chased Kohaku, it was just trying to tell them it's feelings.
  - Kohaku still doesn't buy that this is an ordinary cat...which the cat apparently confirms. It turns out it has a split personality. The cat they met that day, with the silver eyes, was the day-time version of this golden-eyed cat.
  - Koryu finds this all hilarious, of course.
  - The cat again attacks Shuichiro, but Kohaku scolds it. And then the cat asks Kohaku to give it a name.
  - It's daytime personality has a name--Sango--but it's night-time personality doesn't have one yet.
  - Kohaku picks the name "Shinju," which means "pearl," for it's beautiful color.
- After this event, Kohaku apparently becomes friends with the cat (in both it's forms), but Shinju still likes to attack Shuichiro.
- And that's it for volume 2!

### Discussion

- Full disclosure, I had to read this one aloud to make myself focus, which may be more because my life is a mess rather than the quality of the book, but I now have specific voices for everyone that are like, my emulating the style of english language dubs in the 90s.
- How did this one work for you, Lucy? I know you texted me saying you felt like it got going and had stuff actually HAPPENING faster.
- Yeah, I felt like I was much more engaged in this volume. It just moved along faster. I think it helped that most of the volume was focused on a continuous story: the time-travel adventure.
- I did notice some pacing issues, like we mentioned. In general you can really tell that Mick is still figuring out how to do pacing, much like Mokona was in RG Veda. Just some growing pains.
  - Specifically, around when Grandpa arrives, there was some like whip-lash scene changes that didn't seem super necessary.
  - Like, they weren't jumping between scenes with Grandpa and scenes with Koryu plotting something, they were just jumping slightly forward in time in

the Grandpa stuff. There were scenes that were, like, two pages long, and it just felt a little rushed.

- Yeah like I said earlier, it doesn't make it bad. It isn't a 'wow CLAMP aren't perfect lets drag them' thing, its mostly just interesting to be able to pinpoint the places where things aren't as smooth as usual, and kinda helps us connect with the humanity of these creators who honestly made so much astonishingly beautiful comics in such a short time--even they could fumble little things!
- But, I think once we got to the wisteria thing, everything evened out again.
  - That part was really beautifully drawn and definitely had a slight horror tinge to it that felt like it brought together a lot of their other works.
- However, I am having some trouble with these time-travel laws... Like yeah, I get why you shouldn't bring something from the past into the future. But Kohaku is not *from* the past. I don't get why they can't just open *another portal* like five minutes (or even hours) later, and retrieve them. If anything, you'd think it would be more forbidden to *leave* something (or someone) in the past than to return them to their proper timeline.
  - Yeah time travel plot lines are always fraught, they're either super contrived or sloppy or like...don't do what a less hard-sci-fi-driven writer wants them to do.
- I can *imagine* how this might work: maybe you're only supposed to return from the past in the same portal you arrived through; or once you've spent more than a certain amount of time in the past, you're stuck for good. Or maybe Hisui and Kokuyo can't do the matching-thing that Koryu and Kohaku did for their spell, because Kokuyo is a big honking CLAMP man and Hisui...is not.
  - Or their powers won't access the heaven/hell energies they'd need anymore or something?
- But the story didn't establish any of this. They just started acting like it was suddenly a very big deal, when Koryu and Kohaku literally just did it.
- I don't know, plot issues usually don't bug me, but maybe I've been watching too much Star Trek. The Temporal Prime Direction exists for a reason, ok?
- LUCY IT REALLY DID SPAWN OUT OF A FANFIC RIGHT?
  - I mean..."what if Kakyoin was an angel and also had a completely different personality" does sound like a pretty plausible plot for a fanfic...
    - That completely different personality is very much like the one they did interpret for him in their doujinshi though!
- I'm JUST SAYING Like...grandpa Jojo cinched it?
  - For non Jojo-fans, the...not-very-used premise of that series is that it follows members of the Joestar family and their descendants, and notably the main Himbo in part 2, Joseph, comes back as an old man in part 3 because he's the hero, Jotaro's, grandfather.

- That character, by the time of Part 3, is an extremely wealthy Indiana Jones-looking dude with a private plane and like, I think he even moved from England to America (not Canada but--CLOSE??)
  - So. Yeah.
    - So we don't know what the heck business Shinichiro runs
    - But Joseph Jostar's money comes from, well, being best friends with, uh....Robert Edwards O'Speedwagon who struck oil in Texas oh god I'm going to stop talking about Jojo's Bizarre Adventure now.
- Yeah, and I do want to take a moment to say that when we say something is basically fanfic...that doesn't mean it's *bad*. There's fanfic out there that is incredibly well written and literary, that goes above and beyond the original canon. There's also some delightful fluff that is *also* well written.
  - But, since we know that CLAMP has an affinity for these characters, it does seem pretty obvious (and they are also not being very subtle about it).
  - Again, this isn't necessarily a bad thing. But I think it might account for why the two main characters feel a little flat to me.
  - One benefit of writing fanfic is that you can rely on the audience already being aware of the characters. You still have to do some character building leg-work, especially on a longer fic, but you know that your readers already have an affinity for and a certain perception of these characters, and that means you don't have to do the same kind of character-building that you have to do for an original piece.
  - Now, I'd argue that if you're writing an AU (alternative universe) story like this, you're basically recreating the characters from scratch, so you still have a lot of work to do.
    - Yeah, though you still have like...a template/Platonic ideal you're kinda aiming for?
  - Like, if we assume Kohaku is Kakyoin...yeah, it does make sense that his personality would be changed if he was an angel, instead of having experienced all the trauma or whatever that Kakyoin actually experienced. I'm sorry, I don't remember his backstory other than he was SECRETLY SAD THE WHOLE TIME.
  - BUT, you could still rely on the audience knowing his underlying characteristics. Or even the "fanon," or fan-canon, versions of this character. So you don't have to worry about making your readers care about these characters; they already do, or they wouldn't be reading.
  - Anyway, the main characters in *Wish* do feel a little short on character development to me, especially if you take them as original characters. Their main characteristics are very basic, and very laid out:
    - Kohaku is naive and doesn't understand their own feelings.
    - Shuichiro is quiet and self-sufficient almost to a fault. But he's nice.
  - Yes, we are getting deeper as the series goes, but it feels like the early set-up for these characters just kind of lacks...something.

- But like, I love all the other characters, and they somehow feel more interesting and alive than our main couple.
- Which isn't to say that I *don't like* the two of them, but...I feel like we're missing something somehow.
- **SO ABOUT THAT OEDIPUS COMPLEX**
  - **Look**, I don't actually mind, I love me some Greek Tragedy-level bullshit. Bring on the incest and cannibalism!
    - **Lucy** is the one with the lit background, all about the Greek Tragedy and Shakespeare XD
  - **I'm** actually much more grossed out that Shuichiro smokes. I mean he's a *doctor*.
    - **HAAA!** Man, we're just so firmly in the don't smoke generation huh? It's so widespread in some cultures still, like, just ubiquitous in many places, and we have such a visceral reaction to that.
  - **I** lied about not talking about Jojo any more because actually Joseph had a big plot point about an Oedipus complex too, in part 2.
    - **Wait**, really? I apparently remember nothing from Jojo...
  - **My** question is--did she imply he wasn't her biological child?
    - **I** mean, I don't think it's just implied!
    - In the Darkhorse version, she says "Shuichiro...you are not my real child."
    - The Japanese is: "anata wa watashi no kodomo janai keredo..." which is basically "even though you're not my real child..."
    - **Yeah**, so the question is like...when he said 'what if i found you before my dad did' --does that mean he was like, alive already when dad found a wisteria fairy? Was he adopted by the two of them after they got married?
      - Did she actually give birth to him but he's not part-wisteria-fairy so he's not her 'true child' or something???? Like, she...hosted a clone of his dad or something??? I'm thinking about this too much.
      - **I** hadn't even considered half of those options! I really do wonder, though...like this series is really setting up a "one true love" thing, so it's hard to imagine his dad having been with someone else. Maybe he's completely adopted? Maybe he's the result of a one-night stand? We'll see if they ever answer this question...
    - **So** yeah, it is less about being in love with his biological mom and more that the woman his dad is married to, who looks younger than him, was his childhood crush.
      - Still upsetting! And confusing! And clearly part of why he's so messed up!
  - **We** have this term we've been using in my household since we all watched Madoka a billion years ago, which is 'same-age mom' (because the super moe art in Madoka, which is a masterpiece, kinda....means that the middle school girl and the hot-shot business mom look...like the same aged cat babies.)
    - And in this case we actually have a looks-younger-than-you-mom, which is a whole other level of anime!

- Wisteria fairies! We've met one (well, a girl coded as one) before, Nagisa in CLAMP school detectives was associated with Wisteria and was tragic and fairylike and had purple hair (in the anime, at least.)
  - I have this impression they are A Thing but had a HELL of a time coming up with anything that actually gave me, like, LORE.
  - I enlisted CJ Joughin, we tore out our hair trying to find anything.
    - The thing we found first and easiest drove us wild. Because there is a Kabuki dance called Fuji-musume (wisteria maiden) that used to be performed as like...the girl holding wisteria from a classical painting motif fell in love with a cute boy and when he didn't notice her she had to go back to the painting. But in the 30s it was reinterpreted as her turning into a wisteria spirit.
      - So...wisteria spirits are a thing.
      - But it was also just like...a DEAD END.
      - But they show up in stuff, yo!
      - So. There is a chance that they're not like...a codified specific legendary creature but just...there can be spirits/yousei associated with any nature, especially beautiful and long-lived trees like wisteria, and they just come up as a matter of course.
      - But please, if you have the lore I crave, help me out. I'm going nuts.
- LUCKILY I CAN MAKE UP FOR THIS LAPSE by discussing the invisible thread Hotaru brought up!
  - This is such a classic part of East Asian folklore! It almost certainly began in CHina, and was spread to Korea and Japan.
  - The red thread of fate connects soul mates--and can be associated with the matchmaker god Yue Lao, who could be thought of as in charge of these invisible connections between people who are destined to fall in love.
    - These days the thread is usually envisioned as connecting lovers' fingers--though it was ankles in CHina for a long time and sometimes still
    - Folks may remember the red thread imagery in Makoto Shinkai's recent film Kimi no Na wa (Your Name) used to great effect!
      - That one is also concerning time travel hmmmmm
- Lucy why is that cat story here. Like, help me understand where that's coming from.
  - I mean...it's got to be a foil for Kohaku, or something, right? Or maybe the angels and demons in general? Like, it changes with night and day, and it's two extremes...
  - Maybe it's to...foreshadow the Kohaku/Koryu dualism? It feels awfully on the nose though.
  - I thought it was a cute short story, but really the only thing it kind of followed up on was Koryu's goal to "take a bite" out of Shuichiro, or whatever. But it was barely a part of this.
    - You did a little research and we were reminded that like..the sun-is-chill and moon-is-a-jerk dichotomy can be traced back to Sun Goddess

Amaterasu and her brother Tsukiyomi, so that's a cool thing to keep in mind with Wish's mythology. We'll try to keep that in mind with the up-coming like....short comparative religions/world mythology course I'm accidentally putting together OH NO.

- I am so excited!
- And that was the second volume of Wish! We're halfway through. There are some stakes! Namely, that Hisui and Kokuyo have given up a lot and being discovered could go badly for them and anyone helping them, though we don't really know...what that entails, other than maybe Kohaku being thrown out, too? That seems like not at all an outcome Kohaku wants. But Kohaku has already had to give up one thing they want, which was for Hisui to come back to their position in Heaven; it seems like Kohaku is moving from that 'wish' to their connection with Shuichiro being the most important thing in their life. So the romance is moving forward! There are also hints from Kokuyo that said romance isn't going to be smooth sailing either, though we don't really know why. Are there rules about relationships between humans and angels in this setting? We'll have to keep reading to find out!

Outro (edit for flavor)

In our next episode, we'll be discussing the third volume of Wish! I hope you're enjoying this journey with us.

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!