

Wish

Volume 3

Lucy Robin

Intro

Sometimes you don't know what you have until you lose it...and sometimes God sends a little bunny to take it away from you.

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

Check-In

- Coming to you live from Happyham studio...by which I mean, I'm recording this from my boyfriend's house, using his fancy ass streaming setup. So my audio may sound different. Hopefully in a good way!
- Shout-out to Karleen on Twitter, who linked us to a thread where they compare the TP and DK versions side by side. They also pointed out that the DH version credits the translators from the TP version, which is why the translations are so similar (as we commented on in our first Wish episode).
 - This is just so interesting to me, because it really highlights how intentional those changes were! Especially the changes around gender.
 - It's a very helpful thread, and it'll be linked in our show notes, so you should all check it out!

Background

- We're in 1997, well into the swing of CLAMP's career
- X was still running, and several new projects had begun--but we'll be getting to those next year!
- Remember, Wish ran in Askua Mystery DX
 - And I couldn't find a lot of other manga that would be super recognizable that also ran in that magazine
 - But it's relevant to us that a few years earlier the same magazine published something by CLAMP
 - CLAMP illustrated a short comic based on Yoshiki Tanaka's Soryuuden novel series, which we didn't cover because it isn't something they wrote, but is prized by hardcore CLAMP collectors!

Summary

- **Alright**, so, I've realized that Wish doesn't really hold up to the kind of hard scrutiny that comes from immediately rereading it to write a very detailed summary.
- It simply does not require (or reward) the kind of close reading that we've done with other works (especially X), so this summary may be a bit briefer than usual.
 - You say that but I'm sure I can derail it with plenty of digressions~
- **The first chapter** follows Kohaku as they go to a human amusement park for the first time!
 - Before we get into the real fun, we do get a cute scene with Kokuyo and Hisui in which we learn that sunlight hurts his right eye, which apparently he quote "gave up" when he chose to be with Hisui.
 - **More on that later, kids!**
 - **On** their way to the amusement park, Kohaku and Shuichiro visit Sango (the cat from the end of the previous volume), and the park with the now-dead wisteria tree, where Kohaku has feelings about Shuichiro having feelings about his dead Tree mom.
 - **Characters** having feelings about other characters having feelings defines this series. And honestly that's a strength of Shoujo manga--that it was conventions, visual idioms, that make that kind of interiority clear! WHICH is HARD TO DO!
 - **Koryu** also catches wind of their plans for the day, and follows them to cause mischief.
 - Said mischief turns out to be in the form of a potion, which turns Kohaku back to chibi mode despite it being the middle of the day.
 - This throws a wrench in their plans, since they are now too short to go on most of the rides at the park.
 - **THE DRAMA! WILL THEY HAVE A FUN DAY AT THE PARK?** Lucy, tell me, I'm on the edge of my seat!
 - **Shuichiro** seems unphased (which is his default setting, really), and utilizes a shopping bag to smuggle Kohaku, Koryu, and the cats onto the one ride with no height restrictions--the ferris wheel.
 - **I love** that this implies they could've been smuggled onto any ride, but they took the size restriction so seriously that we didn't even see that, like, get considered.
 - **Kohaku** is touched, and also has some moments where they confront their feelings for Shuichiro, but ultimately Koryu causes too much trouble for this to really be romantic.
 - **And** by that we mean, Koryu and Kohaku fight so much that the ferris wheel carriage keeps jostling, and poor Shuichiro gets yelled at.
- **Next**, we start on the plotline that takes up pretty much the rest of the volume
 - Once again, Kohaku is visited by God's messenger Ushyagi.
 - It appears right as Shuichiro is thinking about it, in fact.

- It seems like Kohaku's extension is finally up, and like it or not, they need to go back to Heaven. Immediately.
 - This is a great plot development, but it kind of came out of nowhere, with no real build up of tension or count down of a timer, which we'll...probably come back and talk more about later.
- Kohaku gets all emotional, but as Ushagi is turning to go, Shuichiro grabs it right out of the air.
 - Just fucking grabs it.
- Everyone is surprised. I'm not sure if this is impressive because it shouldn't be possible, or just because it's very rude. But either way, they end up keeping Ushagi in a birdcage to buy Kohaku a little more time.
 - It is pathetic and amusing!
- Hisui uses this time to try and coax Kohaku to confront their feelings for Shuichiro, and decide if they really are ok going back to Heaven.
 - Are they hesitant to leave because they still haven't been able to grant a wish for Shuichiro? If Kohaku had been able to fulfill a wish for Kohaku, would they feel at peace, or would they still be feeling this sad?
 - Hisui emphasizes that the hardest thing in the world is to know yourself, and Kohaku is being faced with a big decision. It may be the most important decision they ever make.
- And Kokuyo uses this time to ask Shuichiro if he knows who he really is. He says the angels have no way of knowing, and Koryu and his minions probably don't know either, but Shuichiro is...
- ...well, we don't get to find out, because of course Kokuyo is interrupted.
- Since Ushagi didn't return, Touki, the taciturn angel master of water, has come to fetch Kohaku themself.
- They seem pretty unphased to find Hisui there as well, even in the company of devils.
 - It seems Touki had kiiinda put two and two together, knowing Kokuyo's reputation.
- Fortunately, Touki doesn't consider Hisui their responsibility, so the couple is safe for now...but Kohaku is needed back in Heaven.
- Kohaku is clearly struggling with this reality, and Shuichiro tells them that if they are concerned for his wish, he doesn't really know if he'll ever even have one for them to grant, so they don't need to stay on that account.
 - Of course, Kohaku takes from this that they've failed to be of any use to Shuichiro...and maybe that he also doesn't have any feelings for them.
 - Tearfully, Kohaku agrees to go with Touki.
 - Seeing how upset they are, Shuichiro reaches out to stop them...but is only able to keep one of Kohaku's earrings.
- Because no one here except Hisui and Kokuyo has any awareness of their own feelings, Hisui has to explain to Shuichiro that Kohaku was crying at having to leave him.
- He looks sad...and maybe touched?

- Some time passes, and everything is a little quieter and sadder without Kohaku.
 - Shuichiro is apparently acting kind of out of it at work.
 - Of course, Koryu is bored without Kohaku around.
 - Kokuyo tries to talk to him about who Shuichiro is, but is again interrupted.
 - Poor Kokuyo. He's like the best character. I just want him to be able to finish his damn sentence!
 - I also find myself fond of him, maybe because he's like...the more interesting version of Shuichiro? He's this rough trade goth bar Daddy who's hanging around looking like maybe he moonlights as a bouncer, but like...he just eats food and takes naps and fucks.
 - Lucy, I think he's a cat.
 - The melancholy household is shaken up a little with the return of Grandpa! Who honestly is getting more screentime than I had ever expected.
 - Well Old Joseph was a really important character in Jojo Part 3...
 - He's of course surprised to hear that Kohaku had to leave (they tell him it was a work issue, which is kind of true), and he can tell Shuichiro is feeling the loss.
 - Meanwhile, in heaven, Kohaku reunites with the remaining angel masters. Although it's clear they weren't as close to Kohaku as Hisui, they all seem really fond of Kohaku.
 - Ransho, the angel of earth, who is like...average CLAMP guy-sized and has a ponytail, welcomes them back first.
 - They also reveal that fun-sized, icy-eyed Touki, who seems very serious, is also quite fond of Kohaku. They went to fetch them because they were worried.
 - We also get to meet the angel of fire, Ryuki, who seems very, well...fiery.
 - They also seem to have a big crush on Hisui, and are not taking their disappearance well.
 - Ransho ends up leaving Touki to deal with Ryuki, and gives Kohaku a ride to their job, on the back of a cool winged creature that they summon.
 - I thought it looked a bit like a giant flying Nidoran
 - It TOTALLY does.
- Ransho takes Kohaku to an island, where there is a giant tree that's heavy with what looks kind of like glowing fruit.
 - Apparently, there is a task that only Kohaku, the purest soul in heaven, can do.
 - That isn't us editorializing, that is apparently something important about Kohaku.
 - Kohaku sings--and the things that looked like fruit, but are really eggs, begin to hatch into little cherubs!
 - This is where baby angels come from, apparently.
- Back on earth, everyone is still adjusting to Kohaku being gone.
 - Hisui hopes Shuichiro will realize his feelings for Kohaku, but Kokuyo tries to point out that if it turns out Shuichiro *does* have feelings for Kohaku, they actually have much bigger problems.

- Of course, he doesn't get a chance to elaborate, and I SWEAR I AM GOING TO CUT SOMEONE.
 - 100% of the tension in this comic, and 200% of the mystery, is us waiting for Kokuyo to finish his sentence.
- Meanwhile, Shuichiro is moping, and Grandpa approaches him about it.
- He tries to convince Shuichiro to go bring Kohaku back, and it seems like Shuichiro wants to, but he has no idea how.
- Grandpa, who I am liking more and more because he is actually SENSIBLE, tries to get more info about Kohaku out of Shuichiro. Of course, Shuichiro doesn't know things like a last name for Kohaku, or where they're from, or how to find them, and Grandpa compares him to his father, who also fell for someone mysterious.
- But, he answers one of our questions from last time, and reveals that Shuichiro is not his father's natural son, either.
 - Apparently, Shuichiro's father just showed up with him one day and declared that Shuichiro was his son.
 - Maybe a clue to our mystery?
- Of course grandpa still considers Shuichiro his grandson, and wants him to be happy.
- So. Apparently at some point, Koryu has also gone back to hell with his catgirls.
- He's managed to avoid or lie his way through any questions about Kokuyo, but time is running out.
 - Eventually, both sides will have to admit that they are missing someone, and given Kokuyo's reputation, it won't take long for people to connect the dots.
- Back in Heaven, Kohaku spots some wisteria trees that were apparently brought to heaven from earth by some other angels, and decides to visit them.
 - The tree reminds Kohaku of Shuichiro, and they think back to Hisui's words, when they tried to get them to really consider their feelings for Shuichiro. Is this sadness really just because they couldn't fulfill a wish for Shuichiro, or is it more than that?
- In another part of heaven, Ransho and Touki have a cute exchange that definitely signals that they're secretly a couple--something that isn't exactly okay, but not as...not okay as what Hisui has done.
- They may be able to turn a blind eye to the relationship between Hisui and Kokuyo, but God will not.
 - Apparently, God plans to tell Satan about Hisui's disappearance at the next bridge meeting...and this can only mean trouble.
 - Since all four angel masters are expected to be in attendance for those meetings, and there will only be 3, they will really have no choice.
 - And they are also both worried for Kohaku, who cried over leaving a human. They don't think God would be too happy about that.
- Back on earth, Shuichiro asks Hisui a few questions about Kohaku. Finally.
 - Like, what do they do in heaven?

- Hisui explains that angel's eggs can't hatch on their own...they need to hear the singing of someone with the purest heart. At the moment, the only one god has entrusted with that roll is Kohaku, so they really are necessary in heaven.
- Since they're chatting, Hisui takes the opportunity to ask Shuichiro about his own feelings for Kohaku.
- They know he's a kind person, and he cares for many people, but they want to know if Kohaku is special to him.
- Meanwhile, Kokuyo is pouting about how no one will let him finish a damn sentence about Shuichiro (IT DOES SEEM STRANGE DOESN'T IT), when Koryu returns from Hell.
 - He's come bearing news: with the bridge meeting coming up, Satan will be forced to tell God about Kokuyo's disappearance.
 - Apparently, they are sure this will lead to war.
 - Kokuyo isn't worried about this aside from how it might affect Hisui, but he is concerned about Shuichiro...
 - He'll never be able to explain why, though, as Hisui announces it's time for some cake, and everyone is distracted.
 - Speaking of questions left unanswered, apparently Shuichiro never clarified his feelings to Hisui, but he does thank them for making him think.
 - And Kokuyo is still just thinking about Shuichiro, and how things will be very bad if God finds out about him, and especially if he finds out Kohaku is in love with him.
 - Shockingly, Koryu does actually ask Kokuyo a follow up question about Shuichiro, so maybe the curse is lifting...but we still don't get to see him answer.
- Kohaku meanwhile is still hanging out with the wisteria trees in heaven, pining over Shuichiro.
 - They decide to try a viewing spell, which they've never done before, and it actually works pretty well.
 - They conjure a vortex that quickly turns into, like, a round screen, through which they can see what's happening to their friends on earth. There doesn't seem to be sound, but Kohaku feels better just seeing earth again.
 - Koryu's there, of course, and that annoys them, but Kohaku is glad to see that Hisui and Kokuyo are still there, as well. That means Touki didn't reveal their secret.
 - When they see Shuichiro, however, their heart hurts, and they almost lose concentration on the spell.
 - When the screen clears again, they see Grandpa. He's escorting a lady into the house, and when she sees Shuichiro, she collapses into his arms.
 - This causes Kohaku a surprising twist of pain, and they lose control of the spell, collapsing to their knees as well.
- Back on earth, we learn that this new woman is a stranger Grandpa met on the street. She seemed sickly, so he got her back to the house where Shuichiro could hopefully help her.
 - Hence the fainting into his arms.

- Of course, Kohaku doesn't know all this, and is just crying.
- Once the girl leaves with her husband, Grandpa asks Shuichiro how he feels. He helped this girl when she was in trouble, not unlike how he helped Kohaku...but does it feel at all like he felt when Kohaku left?
- This does actually seem to make sense to Shuichiro, and Grandpa says that it's clear Kohaku is different to him. He hopes Kohaku either returns, or that Shuichiro brings them back.
- Shuichiro looks at Kohaku's earring, which he still has, and thinks of Kohaku...as Kohaku cries, missing him and hurting from seeing him with someone else.
- And, well, that's it for the volume proper, but we get two little bonus stories in this one.
- Both take place in the past. The first follows Koryu as he joins Kokuyo for one of the bridge meetings.
 - Ho doesn't wanna wake up at first, until his minions remind him that Kohaku will be there, and then he's raring to go torture his favorite victim.
 - You're not fooling anyone, Koryu...except maybe yourself?
 - He rides to the bridge with Kokuyo, on his slightly awkwardly drawn black pegasus, but once he spots Kohaku, Koryu splits off.
 - Kohaku is hanging out with Hisui, until Hisui leaves with the other angel masters, and Kohaku is left alone...until Koryu shows up, of course.
 - Koryu torments them a bit (he puts a creepy critter down the back of their shirt), and wonders why he gets this warm fuzzy feeling from tormenting Kohaku...
 - A little while later, Koryu is on earth looking for some tasty souls (as you do). He's finding it pretty boring, overall, until his crow tells him that Kohaku is on earth. How exciting!
- The second bonus follows Kokuyo after he and Koryu part ways. He's riding to the meeting when he spots Hisui, who has stopped to heal the broken branch of a tree.
 - Intrigued, Kokuyo approaches them, and when their eyes meet, both of them seem to be drawn to the other.
 - Kokuyo asks Hisui to meet him here after the meeting, but he doesn't yet know anything about them. Besides that they're a cute angel, I guess.
 - He has a quick conversation with Koryu, where we learn why this is possible: apparently it's only Satan who meets directly with God and his four angel masters, and everyone else just kinda hangs around until the proceedings are over.
 - Also, apparently Hisui is new to their position, so not everyone knows them by sight yet.
 - After the meeting, Kokuyo is somewhat surprised when Hisui shows up, but it soon becomes a pattern.
 - On one fateful day, before one of the bridge meetings, Kokuyo is complaining about having to leave, and Hisui says that the meetings are necessary for Heaven and Hell to coexist peacefully. Kokuyo points out that they're managing to coexist pretty well themselves, and Hisui leans into him. When he asks them if they want to sleep with him (though not in so many words), they say a resounding "yes."

- Yay explicit consent!)
- It's not until after they've slept together that Kokuyo actually asks Hisui their name...and only then that he learns they are *that Hisui*.
- His response is immediate. He asks Hisui to come to earth with him.
- They agree immediately, and Kokuyo takes out his left eye, telling Hisui that it's tradition for members of the royal family to give that eye to their beholden. He's giving them half of his power. And he attaches it to Hisui's ear, like an earring.
 - It's just like...the iris, or something? It looks kind of like a sliver of obsidian.
- In response, Hisui says that they'll go anywhere with him.

Discussion

- Kinda nice to see those scenes, though I'm not sure there was really any new info...but they had the loving care of like...pages that the creators wanted to draw..
 - Honestly, that last one about Hisui and Kokuyo was my favorite part of this volume...though I agree it wasn't strictly necessary. I just kind of love their love, ok?
- But we kind need to go back to that conversation about like...the stakes.
- Stakes? What stakes?
 - Ok, so, there are actually some established stakes...but somehow none of them feels very dire?
 - Yeah. It's the struggle I have with Wish. The elements are all sweet, and they could work. But the structure is just...not there.
 - And that mostly manifests in the lack of stakes.
 - But some things we mentioned at the end of vol 2 have progressed!
 - The stakes of the angel/devil relationship being found out are WAR.
 - They *did* mention this offhandedly in volume 1, when Kokuyo and Hisui first show up...but I was never sure if Kokuyo was exaggerating. I guess not!
 - And We suspect something is keeping Kokuyo from telling Shuichiro--or anyone else--the truth about what or who Shuichiro is, which has ramifications for his future happiness with Kohaku.
 - And these things are weighted about equally, which is actually fine for a romance-forward story--but....
 - They're not weighted very...much
 - I dunno about you, Lucy, but when Kohaku was ordered back to Heaven, I felt like our heroes were all just so dumb they never bothered to come up with a plan for that eventuality.

- It just...I was flabbergasted with how little they'd done to solve this looming problem
- And how that meant we just...forgot it was a looming problem?
- So then we were just bumbling around and we literally needed a deus ex machina--or well, bunny-china--to move the plot along.
 - And this could be because they had to have the middle just...left open to being as long or short as the magazine's schedule called for?
- But all I could think of was how much Wish could use, like, a more on-the-nose structural element. OR maybe clearer rules.
 - Like...Kohaku has to save a soul each day to stay on earth, and Koryu has to eat one?
 - Or they only have so many days before Kohaku has to report back and we're counting down (which, easily could have been in there considering the bridge meeting is suddenly important and coming up.)
- But any kind of rules or limiting factor or anything like that could have really helped the cute moments feel more cute, because they didn't have to carry the whole story.
- Yeah, the lack of a sense of the ticking clock also really makes it unclear how much time has passed. Which yeah, I guess strong feelings can happen suddenly sometimes, but I'm way more invested in their love if Kohaku's been with Shuichiro for six months rather than, like...a month.
 - And you're right, I was really left wondering why no one was making *any* sort of plans for this.
 - I buy it of Kohaku, since they are depicted as being kind of a ditz, and poor Shuichiro has no idea what is even really going on as far as all the angels and devils stuff goes...but like, Hisui and Kokuyo seem like fully responsible adults.
 - Hisui seems like they've been trying to help Kohaku sort out their feelings...did they just never consider that Kohaku would have to go back?
 - I expect better of Hisui, at least!
- That's not to say we're not intrigued by any of this...we are interested in some of these questions! Like...
 - So who is Shuichiro?
 - Yeah! Good question! We know he's not half-wisteria fairy, and he's not related to his dad, either.
 - So he could be not human?
 - He looks like Kokuyo AND Kokuyo knows him, so maybe he's...a devil?
 - But he might just be a human.
 - Will there be some horrible, possibly fatal, consequence to Kohaku falling in love with a human? Or with whatever Shuichiro is?

- **It kinda** feels like that's where they're going, huh? But then...why would only Kokuyo be bringing it up?
 - **Yeah...**if there is this big taboo about dating humans...I feel like they needed to established the better.
 - Honestly, I'm surprised by how vague and amorphous the world still is. It's implied that all romance is kind of a no-no in Heaven, but I really did not get that feeling until Touki and Ransho were being weird about it.
 - **We** may have slightly glossed over that, but there really was this conversation between the two of them that like...they were keeping their relationship on the DL and they were afraid the Hisui/Kokuyo thing might ruin things for everyone?
 - **Again...**those relationship stakes could have been more clearly defined.
 - And it's still not clear what would happen to Kohaku if they stayed on earth. It sounds like couldn't return to Heaven...but so what? I mean yes their life would change, and it would be big, but they are already *not returning to Heaven*...so the penalty for not returning to Heaven is that you can't return to Heaven?
- **Will** there be a war?
 - I would guess not, but WHO KNOWS, after all, Bilbo was unconscious for like, the entirety of the Battle of Five Armies. SO maybe a whole Heaven-and-Hell war will be crammed into one book!
- **The m**ost tension actually comes from the question: will Kohaku and Shuichiro ever realize their feelings for each other?
- And just...I don't *care*.
- One issue for me is that it's very hard to even remember what Shuichiro did to make Kohaku owe him a wish.
 - Like, yes, he saved Kohaku when they were being attacked by a crow...but since we know that crow belonged to Koryu, and it's hard to see Koryu actually, like, *killing* Kohaku, there's really no bite to that attack.
 - **Yeah**, it feels like it's so obvious to the reader that they're in love, and it means the characters come across as...well...
- **Why** is everyone so dumb???
- THEY REALLY ARE THOUGH--they did nothing to solve their problem! They didn't hide, they didn't plan, they didn't do anything but play house!
 - **And** yeah, making friends and doing laundry and baking cookies are important parts of life! Life is made up of the nice little things, too--but I'm supposed to be reading this for a reason, and I have no reason to want to watch them be fluffy. I just don't. So it's...it's a struggle.
- **So** like, maybe this is a very unfair comparison that is prejudicing my feelings...but I keep being reminded of *Good Omens*.

- That book (and tv show) has such a CLEAR set of stakes. You feel the tension constantly. True, it is not a love story, per se, but there is still plenty of romantic tension between Aziraphale and Crowley. And it's all woven in *around* this very strong ticking clock.
- *Good Omens* has a very different goal than *Wish*, so it does feel a little unfair to compare *Wish* to it...but man, it just keeps highlighting for me all the things I wish (heh no pun included) were happening in this series.
- Like, I want to know how heaven and hell work, and how earth fits into all this.
- I want to know how much time has passed and how much time we have.
- I want to know what the worse-case scenario is. What are we afraid of? What do we want to keep from happening?
- But more than anything...I want one of the main two characters to actually *do* something. So far they are both kind of passive. The most active thing they did was kidnap Ushagi, and that barely had repercussions.
 - I did love that though ha haaaa
- **Almost** all of the plot is being moved by the other characters. Koryu pushed them together by attacking Kohaku initially, and then he was also the one who revealed the whole Wisteria Mom thing by pressuring Kohaku to go back in time.
- All the tension around Shuichiro is being built up by cryptic things Kokuyo says, and he and Hisui are basically the only ones making any steps to solve anything.
- And the most impactful thing Kohaku has done is *choose not to act*. They aren't telling people about Hisui. They didn't go back to Heaven when they were supposed to.
- I know we're building up for this to be "the most important decision" they have to make or whatever, but like...I need it to actually happen.
- So...I guess next time we'll find out if any of that gets resolved!
- **CLAMP** works always look a little different when you gaze back at them from the end rather than gaze forward from the beginning, so I'm really looking forward to having that experience with *Wish*! And for all our critiques, I'll miss these dumbasses when we reach the end.

Outro (edit for flavor)

In our next episode, we'll be discussing volume 4 of *Wish*! We will probably do a separate wrap-up episode, but it depends on how much we have to say. We do also want to talk about the short music video or whatever, and there's a little extra chapter in the artbook that I remember liking. So...we'll see!

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!

U Until next time, remember that everything will be alright—

—and try not to lose an eye!