



## Tokyo Babylon Omnibus Book One

*CLAMP*

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Glamour has two meanings: the modern one of style, and the ancient one of sorcery. Tokyo Babylon is the realm of both! It's 1991, the last days of Japan's bubble economy, and money and elegance run through the streets like rivers of neon. So do the currents of darkness beneath them - obsession, greed, and exploitation, nourishing evil spirits that only the arts of the onmyoji - Japan's legendary occultists - can combat. The two most powerful remaining onmyoji are in the unlikely guises of a handsome young veterinarian, Seishiro, and the teenage heir to the ancient Sumeragi clan, Subaru - just a couple of guys who Subaru's sister Hokuto has decided are destined to be...a couple!

## Tokyo Babylon Omnibus Book One Details

Date : Published March 13th 2013 by Dark Horse Manga

ISBN : 9781616551162

Author : CLAMP

Format : Paperback 560 pages

Genre : Sequential Art, Manga, Fantasy, Comics, Graphic Novels

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## From Reader Review Tokyo Babylon Omnibus Book One for online ebook

### Rebecca says

It took me a while to get into it, but as the story progressed I got hooked! It keeps getting better and better. I'm excited to see the ending.

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### Danni Wiggins says

I have loved this manga since I was sixteen, and I own the Tokyo Pop printing of *Tokyo Babylon*. I will admit that I had some apprehensions at re-reading a newly formatted, newly translated, newly printed edition of one of my all time favorite manga, but I'm beyond happy that I did.

The original translations were good, especially for their time, when manga was still a tepid industry with an uncertain future, but they were dated. You could feel the 90s rolling off of every word. The new translations feel much more timeless. It's cleaner. Smoother. The language transitions well from the pages to your mind. It doesn't feel like there's a barrier between you and the story due to awkward wording from rushed translations.

The dimensions of the book are also bigger, which gives the art more room to breathe. You can see the detail and love that went into each and every panel now, especially since it's on white paper as opposed to the creme colored paper of Tokyo Pop's printings. The addition of new color pages, pages I'd only ever seen online, doesn't hurt either. ;)

All-in-all, the omnibus is something every CLAMP lover should have in their collection. It is worth the price to see something as profound and life-changing as *Tokyo Babylon* given the respect that it deserves. Now...on to volume 2!

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### Heather says

Reviewing this one for LJ, so I'll include more of my personal thoughts here:

I owned this series in Japanese for quite a while, but ended up donating it to a library--the Japanese version doesn't have any furigana (symbols that help you read the kanji, or Chinese characters), so it's pretty difficult to read for someone who doesn't aspire to become a Japanese translator. I was excited that LJ serendipitously sent me this English version to review.

This is a somewhat creepy, fairly intriguing early work by CLAMP, a team of female manga artists. Subaru Sumeragi, a medium from a famous clan, deals with various restless spirits, angry teenagers messing with the occult, etc., while his twin sister Hokuto provides comic relief. Hokuto and their acquaintance Seishiro Sakurazuka have an ongoing joke(?) that Seishiro and Subaru should be a couple. I'm not sure I will ever quite get the Japanese "boy love" genre...I find the thought of a man nearly 10 years past his teenhood hitting on a teenage boy to be uncomfortably too far into the realm of pedophilia. Frankly, it grosses me out. I think

I've touched on this before, though--it seems to have more to do with the Japanese female psyche than it does with actual gay romance.

On top of that, there is something dark about Seishiro anyway, who is likely from a rival clan of mediums and a little less caring than Subaru is about whom he hurts while solving a supernatural crime. I seem to remember some details about the ending from my early days of CLAMP fanhood. Will probably read the second volume. I was always a sucker for ghost stories.

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### **usagi ?? says**

If you were a manga fan in the '90s, you knew about CLAMP. CLAMP was just really getting big back then – first with early titles like this one, then its sequel, “X”, and later, “Cardcaptor Sakura” and other series. But if you’re really looking for some 90s nostalgia (pre-bubble), this is definitely the series for you to check out. It’s got pretty much everything you could want – romance, danger, diversity in sexual preferences, all that good stuff. And Dark Horse hasn’t done us wrong with these CLAMP omnibus so far. They’ve released “Clover”, “Chobits”, and are working on “Gate 7”, and “Blood-C” now. Their work has been pretty excellent so far, but this omnibus has caused some worry on my part. Read on for more details.

Because I love this story so much, it’s definitely four stars, and I won’t go much into it because there are a TON (seriously, just check google) of reviews of this series out there. It’s before CLAMP got a little more cautious with its work, and there’s a great edge to this work that some of its later works don’t have. It’s definitely in the classic shoujo manga canon, and a must-read for any fan, or for anyone who’s just dipping their toes into the manga pool to see what they like. And if you find that you’re a fan, I highly suggest you move on to “X” (where Seishirou and Subaru return), see if you can find the short OAV anime, and the live action movie. They’re out there waiting to be rediscovered. This is decadent Tokyo culture at its height, originally published one year before the bubble burst and Japan’s economy went down the crapper – so if you’re going to read it for none of the above reasons? Just look at it for the fashions. I mean, seriously.

Now, I’ve read all of the original volumes (all seven of them) of “Tokyo Babylon”, first when they originally came out through Tokyopop. The translation there was horrendous, but they didn’t seem to censor or leave anything out with their releases. So when I was able, I picked up the bunko editions of the original in Japanese, and found that what Tokyopop released was also in the bunko editions and was able to read the rest of the series that way, since Tokyopop only got to volume 5 before they shut down.

So when I found out that Dark Horse was releasing this in omni format, I couldn’t help wonder how they were going to do it. Seven volumes isn’t easy to split, and this one contains five of seven. At only a little over 500 pages, I paged through everything. Each volume is roughly 150-160 pages. Now multiply that times five. That’s not 500 pages. While I’m not absolutely certain (only because CLAMP keeps repackaging and rereleasing this series every so many years – in fact, in 2012 there was yet another 3 book omnibus format release in Japan), I am starting to wonder if Dark Horse hasn’t cut anything. I don’t know what version they were working from, but some of the stuff later in the omnibus seems shortened.

Then again, I can’t be sure. As I said, there are so many different releases out there even in Japan, one can’t really be sure, because even CLAMP has cut or revised the original source material when rereleasing it. It could be that if they did cut any material from this volume, they might include it in the next one. I hope this is the case if indeed anything was cut.

On the plus side, this series has finally gotten the good translation it deserves. Gustav Horn is a vet in terms of manga and translation, and he's done a fantastic job cleaning up Tokyopop's mess. The translation is absolutely wonderful, and I'm glad that he's worked on this series.

So when it comes to the formatting and release of this omnibus, I'm feeling a little lukewarm. Dark Horse always does a fantastic job with CLAMP's stuff, so it's a bit surprising that things seem a little shortened. However, they do include all of the color plates that have come with the rereleases over the years, and that's definitely a plus if you're a collector. But I'm feeling a little cautious (and a taste disappointed) with this release, which I won't be rating just because I do feel so unsure about it.

Nevertheless, this is a must-own series if you're a CLAMP fan, or a manga fan, period. This first omnibus of "Tokyo Babylon" drops March 13, 2013 in North America, so check it out when you get the chance, and let me know how you feel about this release.

(posted to goodreads, shelfari, and birthofanewwitch.wordpress.com)

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### **Marina says**

I give this 3.5-4 stars. This is a prequel to CLAMP's X. Just a couple of guys who are destined to be...a couple? This series was one of the first BL(boy's love) manga to be published in the west. The story keeps you guessing. Intriguing. Nice classic illustrations.

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Spoiler

Note to Self:1991 Tokyo,Japan

Subaru Sumeragi(16yo,twin bro,13th descendant Sumeragi clan,onmyoji(sorcerer),occultist,future zookeeper,elementary school classmate)+? Seishiro Sakurazuka(25yo,veterinarian,onmyoji(sorcerer),occultist,assassin,heir Sakurazukamori clan),Hokuto Sumeragi(16yo,older twin sis,Sumeragi clan),Grandma(12th generation Master,Sumeragi clan,onmyoji(sorceress)),Mitsuki(H.S. student,rape survivor,elementary school classmate).

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### **Allison says**

This is one of the more unsettling manga that I've ever read, but also one of the most beautiful. The warped core relationship unfolds with such well-paced suspense that it could carry this omnibus on its own. (I do think, as a reader, that Hokuto may be one of the densest characters in fiction for cheering this on, but that's her problem.) However, it's set against a backdrop of striking artwork, gory occult morality plays, and super-90s fashion and technology that really made it stand out for me. Some of the individual stories seemed choppy or missed a few beats in terms of pacing, though, which made me a bit suspicious. It turns out that there's some suspicion that this omnibus has been abridged, which seems a little surprising. If it was abridged, though, the middle of this book suffered the most, with an odd lack of clarity regarding Subaru's visit to his family home and the story about his childhood friend. Regardless, this manga hacked up still beats the OAV for this I saw on Action Channel years back.

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### **Madison says**

Starting from the beginning with CLAMP's first serialized work! I had a ton of fun with Tokyo Babylon. The plots are inventive and neatly fit into a few chapters each, the characters are fun and quirky, and this series even makes sociopolitical commentary on 1990s Japan! That last one is such a rarity for manga, period, much less a first title. It's a shame that this sort of commentary doesn't show up more in CLAMP's works, as it was refreshing to see.

Seishirou is probably my favorite character; he's kind, funny, and often drawn in a meek and reserved style despite his large stature. The foreshadowing in this volume insinuates that he's probably involved in something darker, and some of his actions definitely boost this theory's credibility, but I couldn't make myself dislike him. Every time he does something that could be considered evil, he seems to be doing it for the right reasons, or just getting back at horrible people, and I can't really find fault with the motivation. The methods are a little unsettling, but that doesn't make or break a character in my opinion.

One of the best and worst parts of this manga is how of its time it appears to be. The outfits are not on-par with CLAMP's signature flair, instead looking out-of-place and sometimes downright ugly. It also uses stock photos that are shaded in black and white instead of drawn backgrounds. This just adds to its charm for me, but I could understand if it turns people off to this manga.

Altogether a solid read! A lot of the foreshadowing's pretty obvious, but the mystery itself is vague enough that you might not figure it out on your first read-through. There's a bit of character development as Subaru grows more confident in his powers and we learn more about the protagonists, and it's simply a ton of fun. Definitely recommend to anyone looking for a smart spiritual mystery series. See you in the next volume!

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### **Rosie (Rosie Reads) says**

4.5 stars!

Finally got to reading this one! This is one of CLAMP's earlier works and I love it. Such a dark world and story. I'm excited to see how it ends!

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### **Ana Luisa says**

Es un manga con un inicio lento, que tiene el sello del las CLAMP *before* Tsubasa. Un poco oscuro, con temas de la cultura japonesa (que se agradece se detallen un poco) y en donde se prepara la historia para un evento más grande.

Me gustó y quiero seguir avanzando en la historia, pero no me apasiona tanto como otros mangas de las autoras.

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### **Annette says**

Since I'm re-reading CLAMP I figured I'd start with their earlier works. Tokyo Babylon is the prequel to

X/1999 and focuses on the relationship between Subaru and Seishiro, two of the last remaining onmyoji in Japan. While Subaru and his twin Hokuto are open about Subaru's power, Seishiro avoids confirming their suspicions regarding his family ties. Hokuto and Seishiro tease Subaru relentlessly about seeing the older Sei-chan marry Subaru, which Subaru does his best to play off.

This first volume does well in establishing the trio's relationship and background while slowly bringing in elements that give a nod to the future of this universe.

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### **Rachel says**

Tokyo, 1991. The young onmyouji Subaru works hard to save those that are affected by the occult. With his supportive, and enthusiastic sister, and the mysterious Seishiro by his side, he is able to help people on many levels. His own life is not simple. He works, so has little time for school, or to fulfill his own dreams, and there is also the matter of Seishiro. Due to the ambiguous nature of their relationship, Clamp tantalizes us with the possibilities. Does Seishiro really love Subaru? Not to mention is he really on his side? Does Subaru love Seishiro in that way at all? For those aware of the sequel X: 1999, this comes with a small sense of trepidation, and we can only pray that things turn out better for these characters. Any scenes featuring the boys love aspect are subtle, in both context and art. The read is a little slow because of the amount of text used to explain spiritual terms, describe cultural or historical items, and explore the psyche and emotions of mankind. As one of Clamp's middle period works, the art is slightly dated (although like in their other works, Japanese landmarks are drawn down to the minutiae), but the story is much more straightforward. True to the Clamp style, Tokyo Babylon is sprinkled with humour, deep thought, and a fascinating set of unusual characters. They witness the prelude to humanities destruction.

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### **Miriam says**

[not as gross here because it is both less physical and also more relevant to the plot, gosh, what ARE Sei's actual feelings toward Subaru and what is he plotting?! (hide spoiler)]

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### **Marialena I. says**

Firstly, i read X, another manga series of Clamp and the story concerning Subaru, was so so interesting. So, i wanted to read Tokyo Babylon as it focuses on the past of Subaru and finally we learn what really happened to him!!!! It was an amazing read!!!!

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### **kerrycat says**

this is not the Seishiro we know from TRC, that's for sure . . . or is it?

the romantic tension/teasing between Seishiro and Subaru (helped along by Hokuto) is hilarious - I know this is destined to get darker (there's some dark stuff in this volume but I know Seishiro hasn't even started to show his other side yet, not even close) and can't wait to get my hands on the next omnibus volume.

the problems Subaru is called to handle between interludes with his sister and Seishiro reminded me of *xxxholic*, and the customers with their myriad issues showing up at Yuko's shop. (cue many tears)

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## ???? ???? #BookDiet2019 says

**Full disclosure:** Slowly yet surely, I'm now reading most of CLAMP's manga since I've been an avid fan of their works in anime (*Magic Knight Rayearth*, *Cardcaptor Sakura*, *Chobits* and *Kobato*), not failing to mention that my all-time favorite manga (and certainly one that is close to my heart and soul) is probably the frustratingly tragic and punishingly intricate series *xxxHoLic*. I'm also finally completing my readings for *Tsubasa Chronicle* on the side because this is supposedly CLAMP's magnus opus and with its flexible narrative concerning alternate worlds, many characters from CLAMP's other works have made appearances in every volume--and the most unforgettable of them is probably Seishirou who was first introduced as Syaoran's mentor from childhood who then stole one of Sakura's memory feathers so he can use it to find a certain pair of vampire twins.

In any case, I was curious about him so I asked some friends in fandom who can help me find more about this character and I was then directed to this manga--and experience the pairing of Seishirou and Subaru which caused the very devastation that left a permanent mark on CLAMP's subsequent shounen-ai inclinations in other pairings like my personal favorite Doumeki and Watanuki of *xxxHoLic*.

SeiSub (their fandom-agreed portmanteau) also makes a final appearance in *X/1999*, an apocalyptic urban fantasy manga that essentially broke apart every SS shipper's heart due to that confrontation between the said men which concluded their very unhealthy yet intense and powerful connection/non-relationship. I was spoiled early on before I even started reading this manga, and I was glad I was because I most definitely need all kinds of preparation to endure what is to come once I do start reading *X/1999*. Look, I'm a Charles/Erik (Professor X/Magneto) fanatic so intricately depressing pairings between stubborn yet admirable men are my cup of tea already, so I know I am more than equipped to handle Seishirou and Subaru's own sadomasochistic tango, but I never could have anticipated the level in which their own music plays.

It's so unbelievably hurtful because on one hand, this is a 'non-relationship' (Oh, CLAMP is the motherfucker of such pairings, trust me) that is ill-advised and unhealthy and yet on the other hand it's also rendered so consummate and beautifully broken that it's unavoidable not to wish that circumstances were different for these two.

I will make this review as spoiler-free as possible for anyone interested in picking it up but I would also like to touch upon its selling points which make it worth reading enough to follow through with the indirect sequel *X/1999* once a reader becomes invested in SeiSub as characters and a pairing. I will indicate where the spoilers are though which I must warn all of you NOT TO READ if you really want to pick up this manga. If not--and you are curious of the situation and why I'm nearly frothing in the mouth about it--then do read through. I'll be discussing HOW THE STORY ENDS for SeiSub in the spoilers because it is a necessary evil, for the sake of any pedantic completist attitude that I have.

~\*~\*~

**WHAT IS TOKYO BABYLON:** This is a story about a sixteen-year-old *onmyoji* (Ying Yang Master) named

Subaru Sumeragi who is thirteenth in the line of his clan. He investigates supernatural cases while also balancing school work. He has an outgoing and fashionable twin sister named Hokuto who also happens to actively ship him (I shit you not) with a kind and handsome veterinarian named Seishirou Sakurazuka who is gosh-darned smitten with said sixteen-year-old even though Seishirou is nine years his senior. As Subaru unravels the underlying pain and suffering in Tokyo where hauntings are more symbolic than simply paranormal, he also has to deal with Seishirou's affections which he does not necessarily discourage, as well as uncover a repressed memory from childhood concerning a mysterious stranger which turns out to be a key event that will change his life from then on.

~\*~\*~

**WHO ARE THE CHARACTERS:** The aforementioned three characters themselves have enough personality to keep readers interested and there is fluff and sweetness shared among them in the beginning volumes--that was until we reach the inevitable despair and heartbreak by the later installments which will shock readers because it's almost a dissonance to what was established in their dynamics. However, there are some clues regarding to Seishirou's apparently questionable persona where he would swoop in during moments when Subaru is in danger and would cast a spell to render him unconscious so he can deal with the case of the week using his own methods that are not as, shall we say, compassionate as Subaru's. Basically, readers will pretty much take the hint that they should NOT TRUST SEISHIROU.

Individually speaking: Hokuto at first would strike readers as someone who is shallow and bubbly and sort of aggressive and controlling because she always picks Subaru's outfit to match with her sense of fashion, and would keep pushing her brother to hook up with the twenty-five year old hot vet who is lurking around the twins very suspiciously. It's creepy yet also endearing because Hokuto cares deeply about Subaru that she overcompensates for his sake. More intuitive and courageous, Hokuto feels protective about Subaru even though she is worried that he rarely comes out of his shell that he barely has any real friendships and relationships outside his calling as an onmyoji. She acts as the big sister in their siblingship, and her constant fawning over a possible romantic relationship between her brother and Seishirou stemmed from an insecurity that she will one day lose Subaru to their family's occupation; that one day he will find no comfort or consolation being in her company and leave her. Matchmaking him with Seishirou has her believing it would anchor Subaru to a normal life because her brother is honestly living a life rife with extraordinary moments that normalcy is not something readily available to him. What she fears the most is that she may be right after all.

Meanwhile, Subaru as the main protagonist is just goddamn adorbs. At first I found him a little naive and innocent but this was actually an unsettling contrast to the kind of second life he lives as a dutiful exorcist at the ripe age of sixteen. He is filled with kindness and brimming with compassion, yes, but he also has very strong convictions that are somewhat surprising because I initially mistook his seeming naivety as a fixed thing when he is clearly more mature than he lets on, considering the kind of vices and cruelty that he is exposed to daily, and that is bound to mess up someone to a degree. We only see this later on when he uncovered his memory from childhood.

My favorite moment from Subaru has to be in volume 4 where he stood up against a school teacher/cult leader who advises her followers to accomplish things using the power of prayer (which does not work when said follower in question is being brutally bullied). Subaru definitely shows his maturity when he claimed:

**"No one can understand someone else's pain. You can never pretend to know what they are going through, or imagine their suffering. You cannot save anyone."**

This was a revelatory moment about his character because he is not deluded at all by idealism and schoolboy heroics. Subaru knows what he is getting into and he acknowledges that there are limitations to what he can do for other people. I find it such an admirable quality that he would not judge, condemn or pretend to understand someone's experiences with the simple acknowledgement that everyone is different and perhaps no one will ever truly understand anyone. This will serve as his unraveling later on.

And then there is Seishirou Sakurazuka. How do I even begin to describe the hot, hot, HOT and complex Seishirou Sakurazuka? You know what, I won't. I'll discuss about him in the spoiler-y parts instead and let your imagination run wild in this portion of the review instead.

~\*~\*~

**WHAT ARE THE WEAKNESSES OF THE MANGA:** With a monster of the week scenario, this manga is composed of a set of stories where Subaru solves mysteries and exorcises evil spirits. I'm going to be perfectly honest with you: I didn't think there was anything special to this manga until the last two volumes which is finally centered on the conflict between SeiSub (and their stupid and heartbreaking 'Bet') and the revelation of Seishirou's real identity plus betrayal. I will maintain that as I read through the first three volumes, *Tokyo Babylon* struck me as an unrefined nineties version of *xxxHolic*, since both deal with social pathologies metaphorically represented by a supernatural element. That being said, their difference is that *Tokyo Babylon* tends to be uneven in tonality, shifting from light-hearted shounen-ai material to disturbing paranormal cases that relate to the metropolitan lifestyle of Tokyo and its harmful effects. Meanwhile, *xxxHolic* has a more consistent narrative, perfectly mixing the horrific and mundane seamlessly into characterizations and dialogue.

But I digress. The best way I can summarize its weak points is that it tends to be a slow burn during the first two or three volumes. The cases are interesting themselves but sometimes feel too drawn out and uncomfortably dark. There are notable ones that really appeal to me, however, mostly because they serve to reveal facets about Subaru and Seishirou respectively. It's deceptively cheesy sometimes but if you keep reading long enough, the pay-off regarding SeiSub will be worth it.

~\*~\*~

**WHAT ARE THE STRENGTHS:** *Tokyo Babylon* does have its merits, though. For one thing, like most CLAMP works, it gets better with each installment. From something completely formulaic where we get a series of unrelated cases, the manga finally divulges from that into something more character-driven, providing us with important backstories for Subaru and Seishirou. This happens somewhere between the fifth volume and continues to get exciting by the sixth and seventh. These two characters, after all, are the heart and guts of *Tokyo Babylon*. As I've mentioned, there are shounen-ai elements. CLAMP operates on a pansexual level where characters in their works tend to fall in love with one another regardless of age and gender. With TB, there is a small acknowledgment, however, that Subaru is feeling self-conscious about the affection Seishirou shows simply because they are both males which Seishirou casually and deliberately brushes off (and hilariously at that, I may add). Hokuto doesn't mind trying to matchmake them although she did threaten Seishirou one time that if he hurts her brother, she will kill him.

So when you pick up this manga, expect some shounen-ai moments sprinkled between pages for comic relief, which are still mild compared to anything else. What was so interesting about this pairing was that there is more to Seichirou's constant pining over Subaru (something...dark), and Subaru's very late realization that he has feelings for Seichirou himself has to be one of the most badly-timed epiphany ever with the most shockingly disheartening consequences!

~\*~\*~

**WHY YOU MUST READ:** This is an indirect prequel to the more compelling manga *X/1999* where Seishirou and Subaru reprise their roles once more. When *X/1999* started, nine years have already passed since *Tokyo Babylon*, and a Subaru in his mid-twenties has found himself on the opposing side against Seichirou. The mythos for *X/1999* is interesting so I think my recommendation for *Tokyo Babylon* is closely tied to the sequel that it spawns later on, and this manga is simply a required reading if you want to get into *X/1999* afterwards. As for its own series, TB has interesting cases of the paranormal and insights regarding the cosmopolitan side of Tokyo which include its vices, indulgences and corruption. Last but not the least, the selling point is SeiSub as characters and as a 'non-relationship' because TB reveals the history they have with one another whereas *X/1999* is its inevitably painful conclusion.

#### **SPOILER ALERT! DON'T READ FORWARD UNLESS YOU WANT THE SPOILERS**

(view spoiler)

This is a noteworthy characterization. Subaru, as it turns out, does not own up to his emotions because he has experienced so much residual feelings of other people that his own emotions tend to be hidden to him. Now, keeping that in mind, when a breaking point happens for SeiSub in which Seishirou places himself in physical danger when he gets stabbed in the eye to protect Subaru from an attack, this was also the beginning of the sudden shift in their dynamics.

It was a delicate situation because this is when Subaru's feelings began to express themselves unconsciously. Hokuto was there to put him back together and ease his guilt because of what Seishirou has done for his sake. Ultimately Subaru only learned about the truth of how he feels about Seishirou when he conversed with a blind man. This blind man was someone he helped before, and they got to talk about Seishirou after a while and it was in that scene that the blind man pointed out that he can hear the love in Subaru's voice when he talks about Seishirou. Subaru was shocked and as he walked away to go visit Seishirou in his room at the

hospital, we get this inner monologue.

*"I was afraid... you would hate me. That's right... I was... afraid Seishirou-san would hate me. I've met many people in my life. And I've had many happy moments and sad times. But I never thought about... what I wanted them to do, or how I wanted them to feel about me. It's impossible to control another person's feelings. But in the end, if someone hates me or I cause them trouble... I have no one to blame but myself. I may be useless, and there isn't much to like about me... but still, I... That day, as I was banging on Seishirou's operating room door... I was crying... because I was afraid. I was so afraid that he would hate me... and that I might never see him again. I--"*

This was so...heartbreaking in so many levels. Take note of how Subaru admitted that he never even thought about how people could feel about him because, as mentioned before, he doesn't believe people can understand one another fully and know their pain and suffering so Subaru, as a result, has never bothered to get emotionally close with someone and aspire for someone to feel something special for him. He reasoned that another person's feelings are out of his control anyway which is true in itself. But now Subaru realized that for the first time in his life he wants something for himself--someone--and it was a terrifying realization. It has made him suddenly vulnerable and exposed, so aware that with such a desire comes the possibility of rejection and pain. But Subaru soldiers on after tearfully admitting that he is in love with Seishirou and so opens the door--only to come face-to-face with the real Seishirou: a man who belongs to the infamous Sakurazukamori assassin clan--and he is determined to win the 'bet' and kill Subaru. And so begins their abusive tango.

When he was a child, Subaru stumbles upon one of Seishirou's assassination assignments. This fateful meeting happened under the sakura tree. The Sakurazukamori's method of killing requires them to bury their victims under sakura trees and that they must kill any witness in sight. It was indeed peculiar then for Seishirou to spare Subaru's life with this ominous promise:

*"If you and I should ever meet again... let us live together for one year. My heart is the direct inverse of yours. You are kind, and pure, and honest. And I'm sure that is how you will continue to grow up. Your heart will remain pure. So, if we should ever meet again... I will try my hardest to learn to love you. Just for one year. And after that year... if I can consider you "special"... you will have won and I will not kill you. But if I decide... that I cannot consider you special to me... if I cannot distinguish between you and that corpse... then... I will kill you. And so today... I will let you go."*

*To know more about how the story ends for Seishirou and Subaru, please proceed with caution by clicking this link*

(hide spoiler)]

**RECOMMENDED: 8/10**

**DO READ MY REVIEWS AT**

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