

ListerX

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Title:	Kizuna - Bonds of Love
Volume:	02 (of 05+)
Creator:	Kazuma Kodaka
Format:	Unflipped
Original Publisher:	BIBLOS Co., Ltd
US Publisher:	Be Beautiful
Release Date:	10/27/04
Pages:	200
ISBN:	1586649574
MSRP:	\$15.99
Genre:	Romance/Drama
Rated:	Age 18+ (Explicit Content: Suggested for mature readers)

Description:

"The Origin of Love."

Ranmaru and Kei were not always the perfect couple. There was a time when Ranmaru was an up-and-coming Kendo star and Kei was a shy and timid scholar. What brought these two different souls together, and how did their love grow so strong?

Meanwhile, an enemy of the Yakuza abducts Kei's half-brother, Kai Sagano, and it is up to Masa to rescue him. Will Kai and Masa reveal their true feelings towards one another before it's too late?

Chapters:

05 - You're All...

06 - One Man's Bloom

Review:

Cover -

The front cover is of Ranmaru and Kei dressed in Victorian-style clothing/costumes. Kazuma Kodaka likes to draw a very... eccentric style of fashion sometimes, I guess. And this time, the back cover is much more innocent than Volume 1, with the two of them at least half-naked embracing each other (I want to say in a post-coital sense, but I won't presume anything...) Finally, allow me to note that the blue cover brings out Ranmaru's eyes... seems to be focused on him, doesn't it?

Artwork -

In this volume, we get to see a wider range of Kazuma Kodaka's art, specifically age-wise,



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gender-wise, and emotion-wise. We get to see Ranmaru and Kei when they were younger, Ranmaru's sister, Yuki (there aren't just beautiful guys, but a pretty girl as well!), and despair as this is a darker volume than the first.

Story (Warning: Possible Spoilers) -

This volume opens up with how Ranmaru and Kei first met. It becomes clear that they didn't have a very good start in their relationship... But, Ranmaru acknowledges Kei's potential at their first Kendo match during gym class. In reality, Kei accidentally whacked Ranmaru on the head before they were supposed to begin, and Ranmaru (a Kendo prodigy remember) got... really pissed. Lesson to remember: don't whack a Kendo prodigy on the head before you are supposed to begin.

Wanting to bring out Kei's potential, Ranmaru invites him to his house, where he has a Kendo dojo, to train. Some time later, they both got their first kiss. Ranmaru may have acted like a jerk before, but he's really too cute for words after meeting Kei. After a big time jump, we find that Ranmaru and Kei meet again during college (I believe it is). Kei still meets Ranmaru at his Kendo dojo, but things between them have been very... strained. They solve it quickly enough (with much *more* just than a kiss). And that's how they got together! Happily ever after, the end, and such!

Wrong. It was just the beginning it seems. Going on, you find out more about Kei's background and how he is connected to Kai as well as the Sagano Yakuza Group. And worse yet, Ranmaru gets caught in the middle with the hit-and-run. Heartbreaking... Emotional... Tears flow like crazy. Things turn bleak for a while. Will they be able to pull through?

The second and final chapter once again focuses on Kai and Masa. Incredibly dark as it deals with a jealous, semi-psychotic rapist named Shinji. Apparently, Masa's former "woman" was his older sister, but he left her and of course, Shinji as well. Being so desperately in love with Masa, Shinji cracks. In order to see Masa again, he kidnaps Kai and... takes out his frustrations on him. Then, Masa finds out and all hell breaks loose.

Definitely not for the faint of heart.

Extras/Translations:

Masa and Kai join Ranmaru and Kei in the character biographies. There's a short summary in the beginning as well as Kazuma Kodaka's biography in the back, and there are various messages from her throughout the volume. Other than that, nothing much. Translations of sound effects are again in a similar font as the original, but this time there isn't as much clutter.

Objectionable Content:

Language - Yes (suggestive language)

Violence - Yes (Again, not for the faint of heart.)

Nudity - Yes (male nudity)

Sexual Situations - Yes (the not-so-cuddly end of the spectrum)



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Ratings:

Cover - 10 / 10 (Is odd but I *like* Victorian-styled anything)

Artwork - 10 / 10 (Not picky, nope.)

Story - 10 / 10 (Things start becoming clearer now, don't they?)

Extras/Translations - 8 / 10 (Could go for more.)

OVERALL - 9.5 / 10

