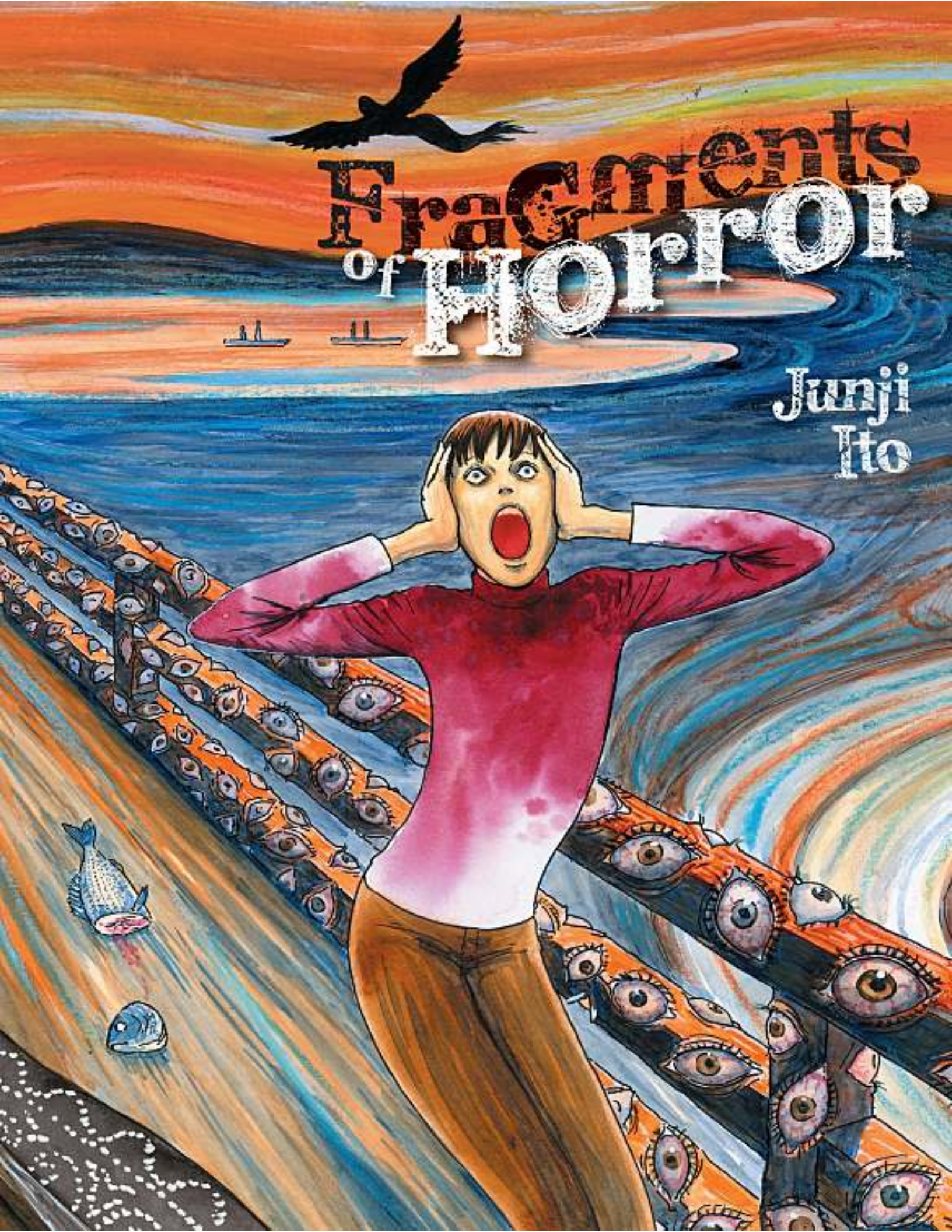


Fragments of Horror

Junji
Ito



Fragments of Horror

Junji
Ito



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FUTON



THE MAN
I ELOPED
WITH AND
CURRENTLY
LIVE WITH...

...IS TERRIFIED
OF SOMETHING
AND HE WON'T
COME OUT
FROM UNDER
THE FUTON.



YOU'RE
FINE
WITH
THIS?!

M-MADOKA
...



WHAT
ARE
YOU SO
AFRAID
OF?

C'MON,
TOMIO...
HONESTLY,
WHAT'S THE
MATTER?



WHAT
ARE YOU
EVEN
TALKING
ABOUT
?!

DARK
NATURE
SPIRITS
...?



THIS WORLD
IS JAM-
PACKED WITH
DARK NATURE
SPIRITS!



THERE...
LOOK,
THEY'RE
THERE TOO!

HURRY AND
HIDE! GET
UNDER THE
FUTON!!

YOU CAN'T
SEE
THEM?!

EVENTUALLY,
HE STOPPED
DOING
EVEN THAT
AND BEGAN
TO WEAR
DIAPERS.

AND OF
COURSE, I
WAS THE ONE
WHO TOOK
CARE OF HIM.



IN THIS STATE,
HE STOPPED
LEAVING THE
APARTMENT
AND REFUSED
TO GO TO THE
PSYCH CLINIC.

AT FIRST, HE
OCCASIONALLY
CAME OUT FROM
UNDER THE
FUTON TO GO TO
THE BATHROOM,
BUT...



I WAS
FAST
APPROACH-
ING MY
MENTAL
AND
PHYSICAL
LIMITS.



THIS
WAS
HOW WE
LIVED.

I
WORKED
ALL DAY,
AND AT
NIGHT
TOOK
CARE OF
TOMIO.



AND
THEN ONE
NIGHT...







AAAAAH!



THERE.
THAT
WOMAN!

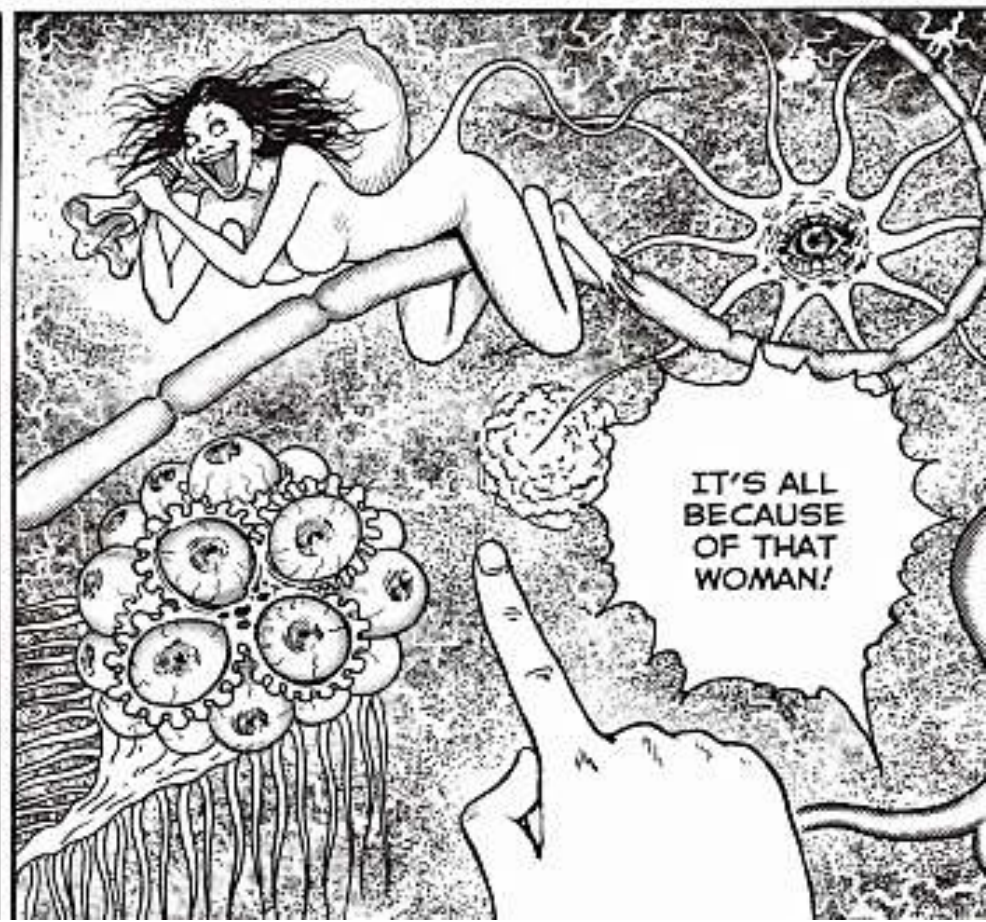


SHE
DID
ALL OF
THIS!

MADOKA...
Y-YOU
GOTTA
FORGIVE
ME!



HEE
HEE
HEE
HEE!



IT'S ALL
BECAUSE
OF THAT
WOMAN!

A WOMAN
I KNEW
NOTHING
ABOUT.

A
WOMAN
WAS
PASSING
BY.

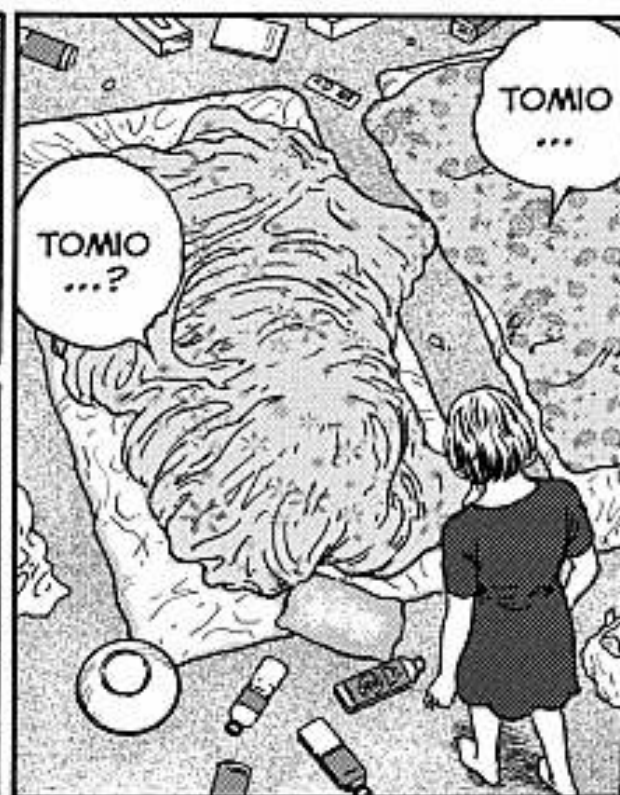
THIS ONE
NIGHT
WHEN YOU
WERE
OUT!

I CONFESS!
I WAS THE
ONE WHO
SUMMONED
HER HERE!



SHE
SAID
SHE
WAS A
WITCH.

IT WAS
CREEPY, SO
I BROKE IT
OFF PRETTY
QUICK, BUT
SHE REALLY
IS A WITCH.



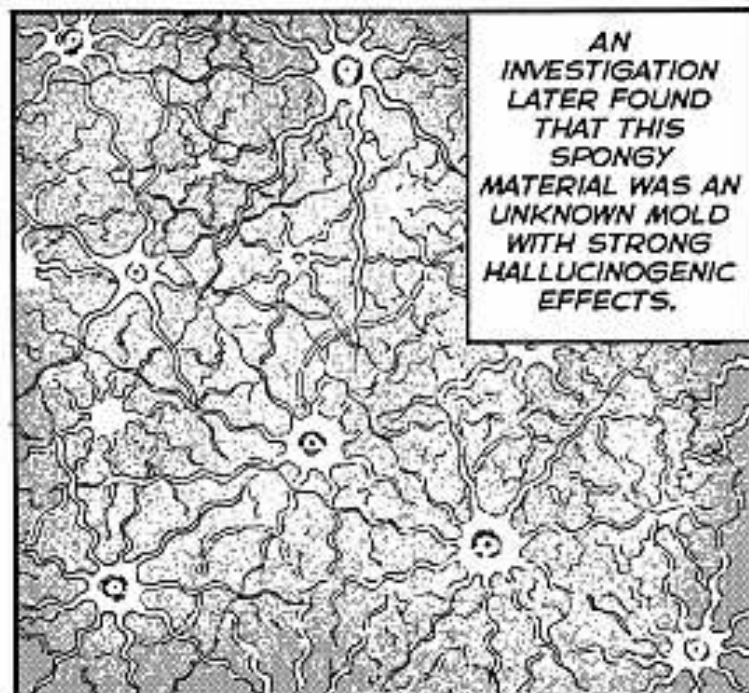
TOMIO
...?

TOMIO
...



I RAN
OUT
OF THE
APART-
MENT.

A MONTH
PASSED
BEFORE I
RETURNED
...



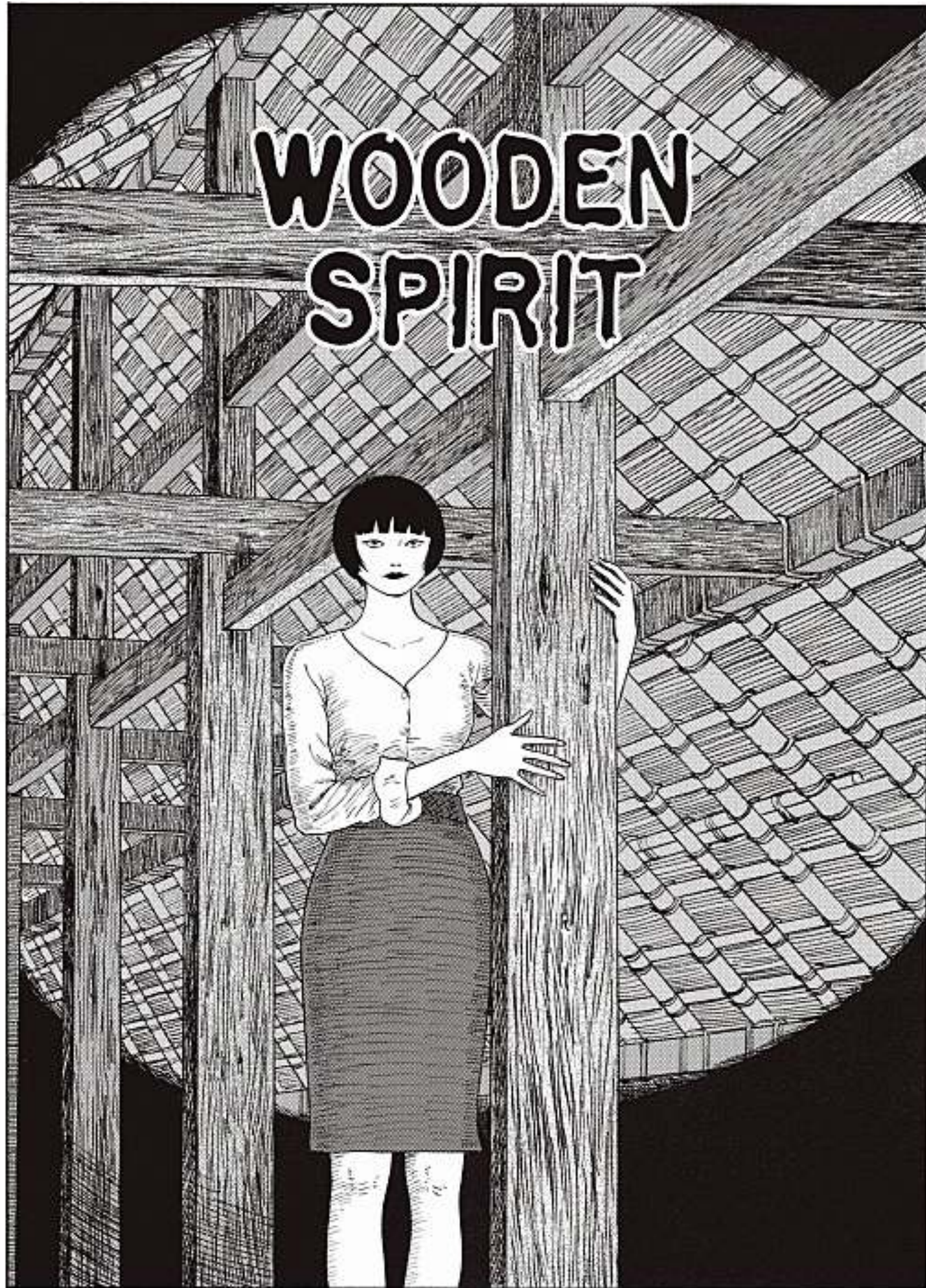
AN
INVESTIGATION
LATER FOUND
THAT THIS
SPONGY
MATERIAL WAS AN
UNKNOWN MOLD
WITH STRONG
HALLUCINOGENIC
EFFECTS.



SOME
SPONGY, UH,
THING THAT
GLOWED
WITH A
BIZARRE
PHOSPHO-
RESCENCE
HAD
COLONIZED
THE FUTON.

TOMIO
WAS
JUST
BARELY
ALIVE.

WOODEN SPIRIT



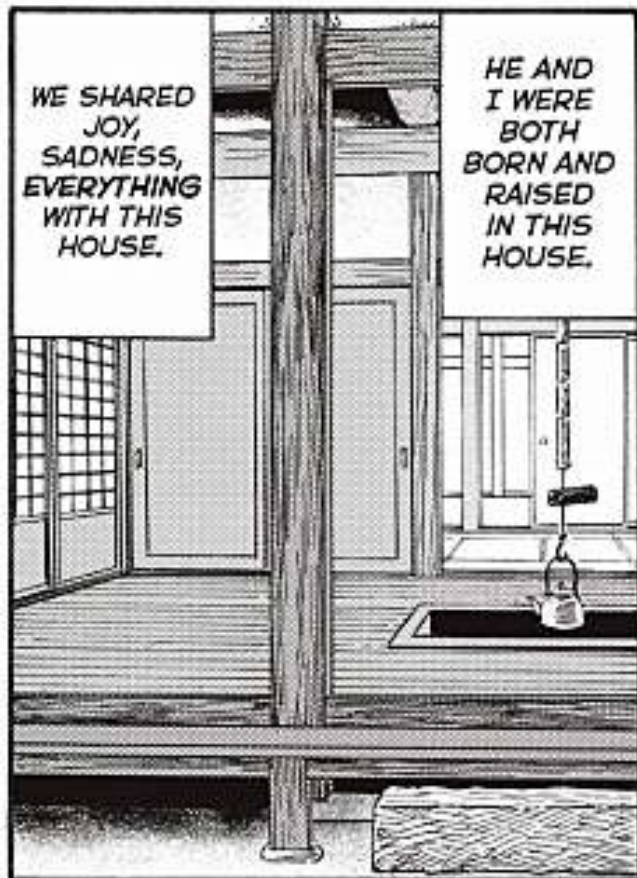
LAST YEAR, IT WAS
SELECTED TO BE
A REGISTERED
NATIONAL TANGIBLE
CULTURAL
PROPERTY.

MY HOUSE HAS
A PEDIGREE;
IT'S BEEN IN
MY FAMILY FOR
GENERATIONS.



WE SHARED
JOY,
SADNESS,
EVERYTHING
WITH THIS
HOUSE.

HE AND
I WERE
BOTH
BORN AND
RAISED
IN THIS
HOUSE.



THE NOBLE
WOODEN
BUILDING
WITH ITS
THATCH
ROOF IS MY
FATHER'S
PRIDE AND
JOY.



THIS IS
WHERE
WE LIVE.

BUT, DAD, TO
BE HONEST,
I DON'T
REALLY WANT
STRANGERS
COMING IN
THE HOUSE.

FLAP FLAP

WE'LL HAVE
REGULAR
VISITORS TOO,
SO WE HAVE
TO KEEP THE
PLACE CLEAN.

WHAT DO
YOU MEAN,
MEGUMI? AS
OWNERS OF A
CULTURAL
PROPERTY,
IT'S OUR DUTY
TO LET THE
PUBLIC SEE
THE HOUSE.

EXCUSE ME!

WHO
IS IT?

YES,
COMING!

OKAY.

WHO'S THAT?
MEGUMI, GO
AND SEE.



WE
DON'T
ALLOW
VISITORS
OUTSIDE
OF THE
TOUR
GROUP.

OH, IF YOU
WANT TO
SEE THE
HOUSE,
THERE'S
A TOUR
GROUP,
SO PLEASE
COME
WITH
THEM.



BUT...

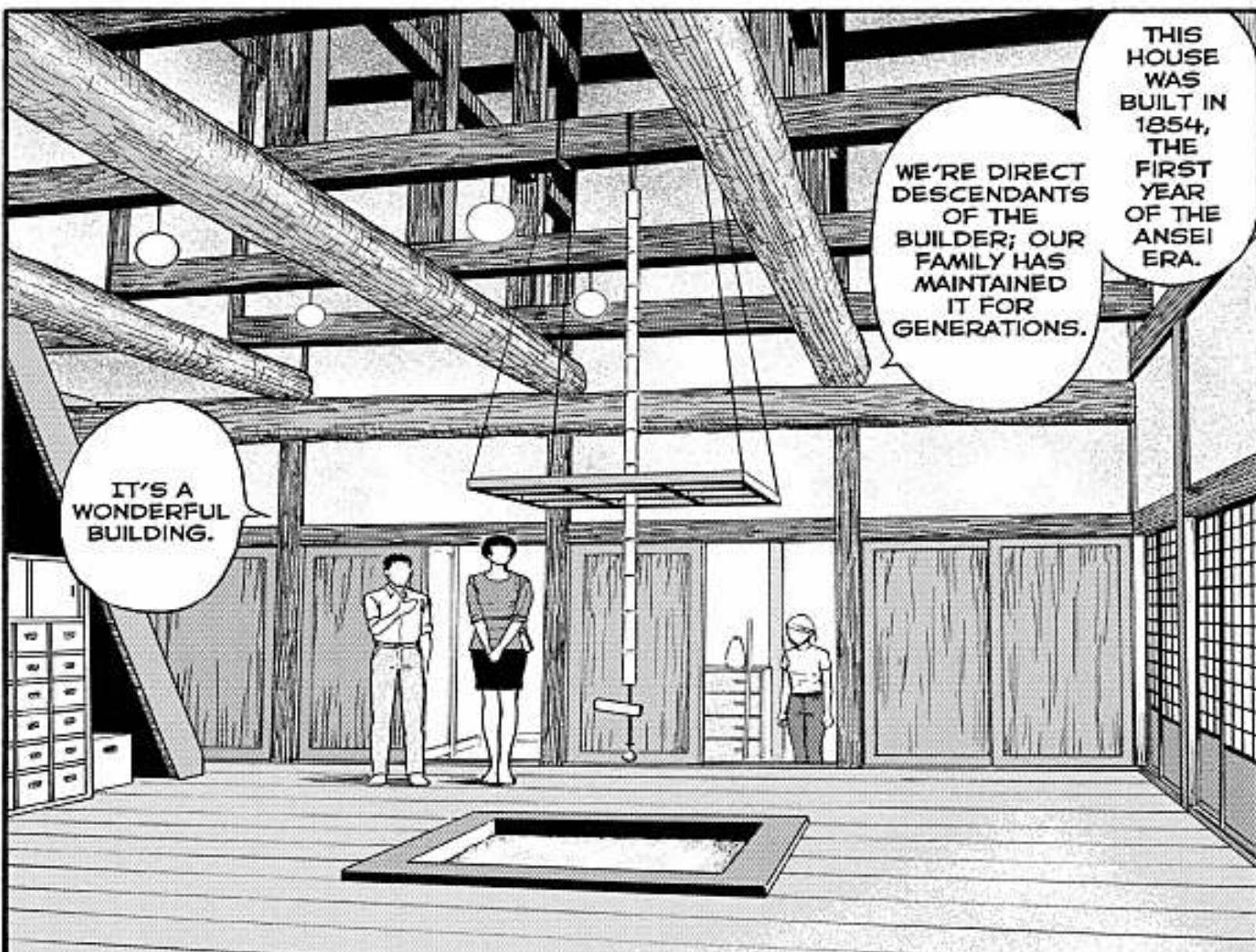
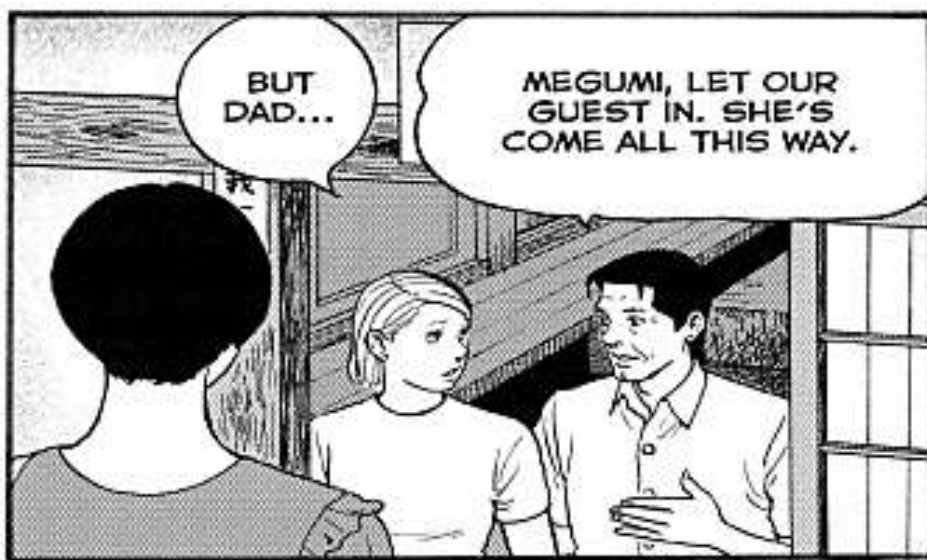


COULDN'T
YOU
MAKE AN
EXCEPTION
?



I'M STUDYING
ARCHITECTURE
AT UNIVERSITY.
I HEARD ABOUT
YOUR WONDERFUL
HOUSE, AND SO I
CAME BY HOPING
YOU MIGHT ALLOW
ME TO TAKE
A LOOK
AT IT.

I'M SORRY
FOR INTRUDING
UPON YOU LIKE
THIS. MY NAME
IS MANAMI KINO.

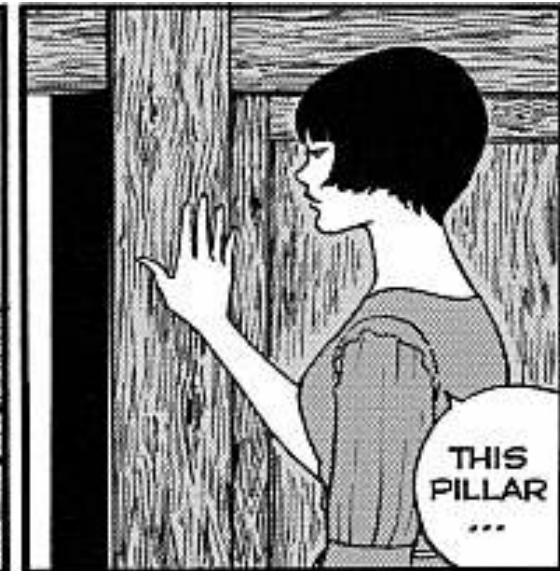




THE FLOOR
...



THE WALLS
...



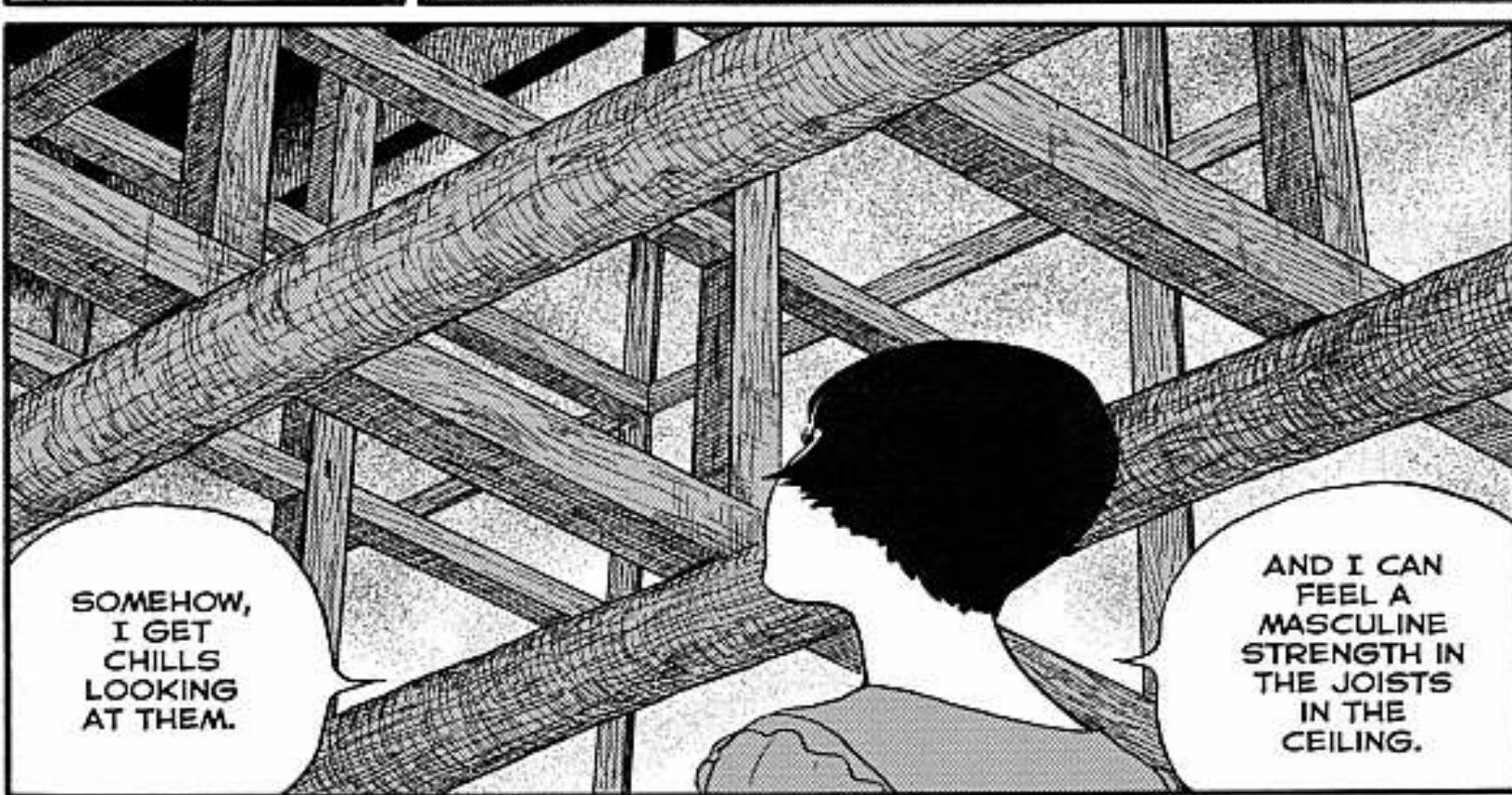
THIS PILLAR
...



...?



THEY'RE
VERY
SEXY.



SOMEHOW,
I GET
CHILLS
LOOKING
AT THEM.

AND I CAN
FEEL A
MASCULINE
STRENGTH IN
THE JOISTS
IN THE
CEILING.



GOOD-
NESS!
WHAT
ABOUT
YOUR
WIFE?



IT'S JUST MY
DAUGHTER
AND MYSELF
LIVING
TOGETHER
HERE.

MY, SO
MANY...
HOW MANY
PEOPLE
ARE IN
YOUR
FAMILY?



ELEVEN
ALTOGETHER.

AND IT'S
SO BIG.
HOW
MANY
ROOMS?



OH,
EXCUSE
ME...I
DIDN'T
MEAN TO
PRY.



AAH...MY
WIFE AND
I SPLIT UP
SEVERAL
YEARS
AGO...



ER...

I REALIZE
IT'S QUITE
SHAMELESS
OF ME TO ASK
YOU THIS SO
SUDDENLY THE
FIRST TIME I
VISIT, BUT...



I THINK IT'S
GOING TO
BE A KEY
ELEMENT IN
PROGRESS-
ING WITH MY
ARCHITEC-
TURE
STUDIES.

IT REALLY IS
EVEN MORE
WONDERFUL
THAN I'D
IMAGINED.



WHAT
IS IT?

HM?

I'M
DELIGHTED
BY YOUR
VERY KIND
WORDS.



YES...I'M
THOROUGHLY
ENAMORED
WITH IT.

WHAT? ...YOU
WANT TO—? IN
THIS HOUSE?!



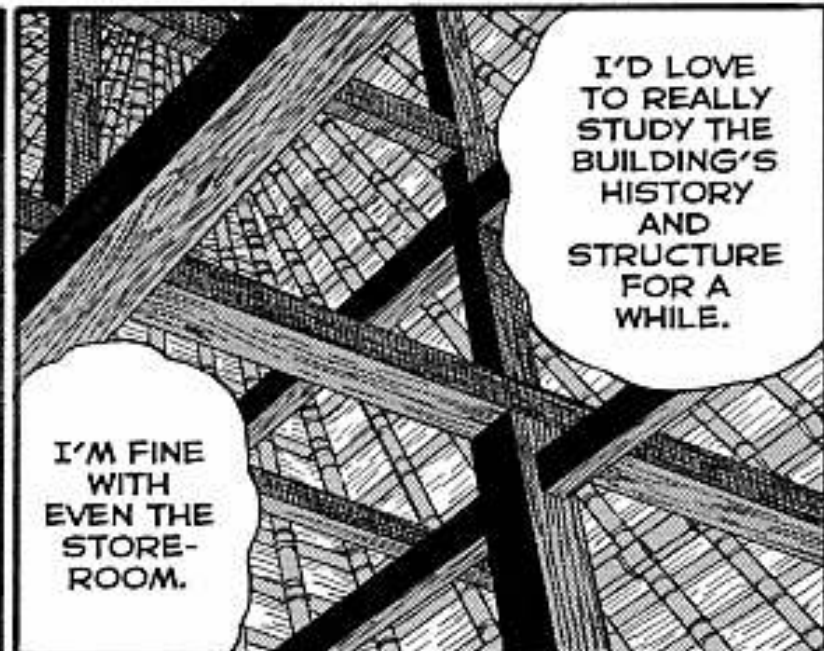
WOULD
YOU
PERHAPS
ALLOW ME
TO BOARD
HERE FOR
A WHILE?



PLEASE!

ER,
BUT—

WHILE I'M
HERE, I'LL
TAKE CARE
OF YOU
AND YOUR
DAUGHTER.



I'D LOVE
TO REALLY
STUDY THE
BUILDING'S
HISTORY
AND
STRUCTURE
FOR A
WHILE.

I'M FINE
WITH
EVEN THE
STORE-
ROOM.



WHAT!
WHAT
DID YOU
SAY?



PLEASE
LET ME
STAY.

PLEASE
...



YOU'RE
REALLY
TWISTING
MY ARM...

HA
HA
HA!



HMM,
TWO OR
THREE
MONTHS
AT
MOST, I
SUPPOSE.

FOR A
WHILE?
HOW
LONG?



IT
DOESN'T
MAKE
ANY
SENSE!

BUT A
BOARDER
ALL
OF A
SUDDEN
...



MM-HMM.
IT'LL BE FINE
FOR A LITTLE
WHILE,
WON'T IT?

YOU JUST
WENT
AHEAD
AND
DECIDED
THAT?!

THAT
WOMAN
IS
GOING
TO LIVE
HERE?



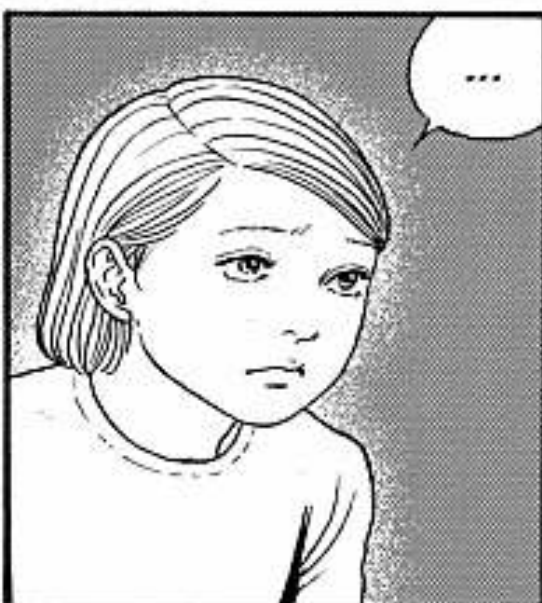
THAT'S
JUST YOUR
IMAGINA-
TION,
MEGUMI.

AND SHE
WAS MAKING
EYES AT
YOU, DAD.
SHE WAS.



GOING AROUND
TO OTHER
PEOPLE'S
HOUSES AND
TALKING ABOUT
HOW SEXY
THEY ARE.

TO START
WITH,
SHE'S
PRETTY
WEIRD.



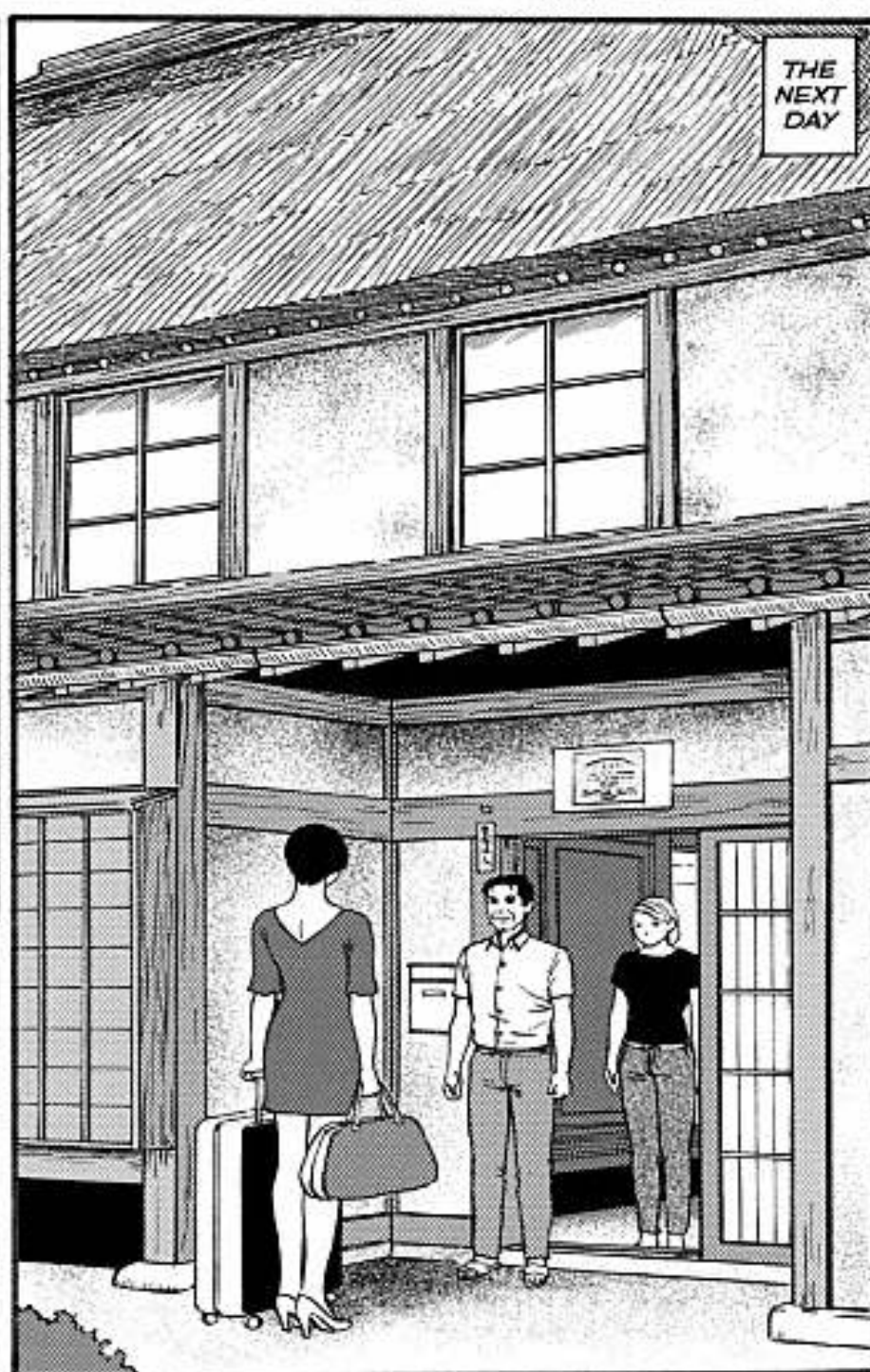
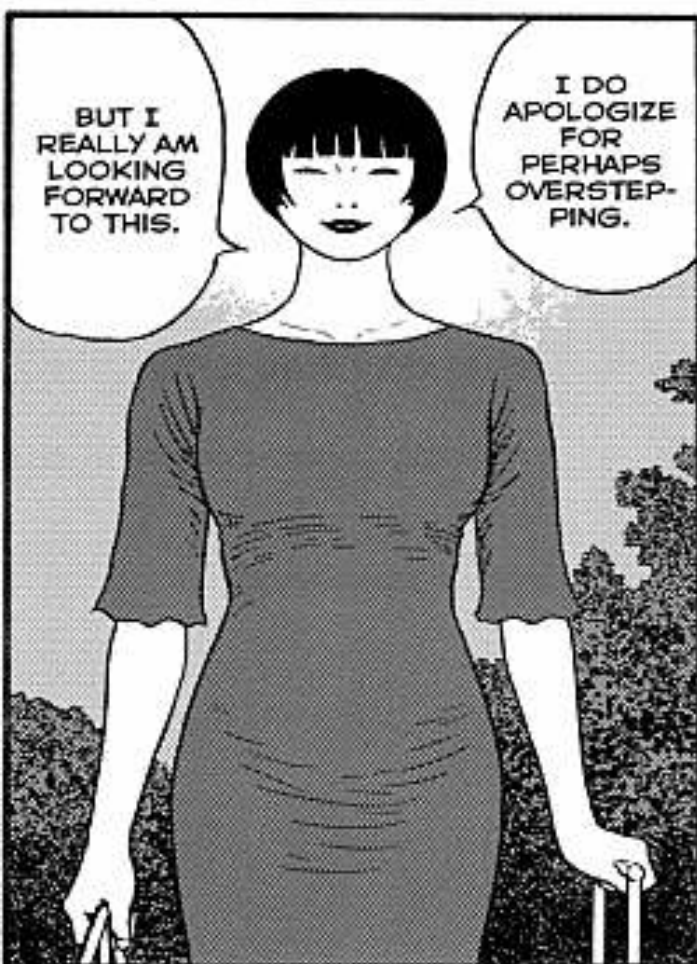
...

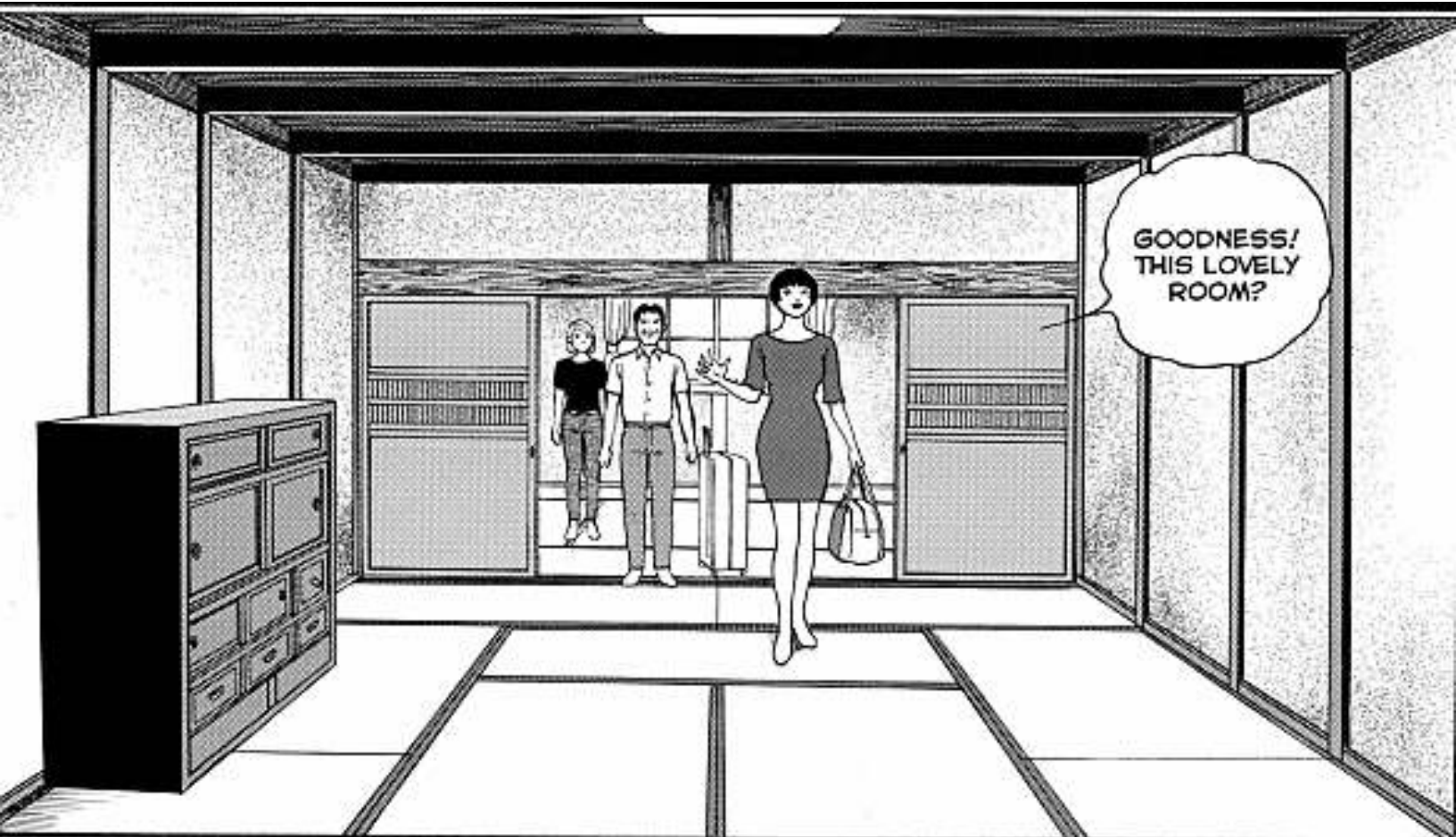


SHE SAYS
SHE'S GOING
TO TAKE
CARE OF US.

SO YOU'LL
BE ABLE TO
CONCENTRATE
ON YOUR
STUDIES.

AND I
DON'T
THINK IT'S
SUCH A
BAD DEAL
FOR YOU
EITHER.







...IT
REALLY
IS.



OH, THIS
IS REALLY
GOOD.



MY
IMPRESSION
OF HER
CHANGED.



IT WAS IN
LIEU OF
RENT, BUT
IT WAS TO
THE POINT
WHERE WE
SHOULD
HAVE BEEN
PAYING
HER.

JUST AS
SHE SAID
SHE WOULD,
MANAMI
KINO TOOK
PERFECT
CARE OF
EVERYTHING
FOR US.



IT DIDN'T
TAKE MUCH
TIME AT ALL
BEFORE
THE TWO OF
THEM MADE
THINGS
OFFICIAL.

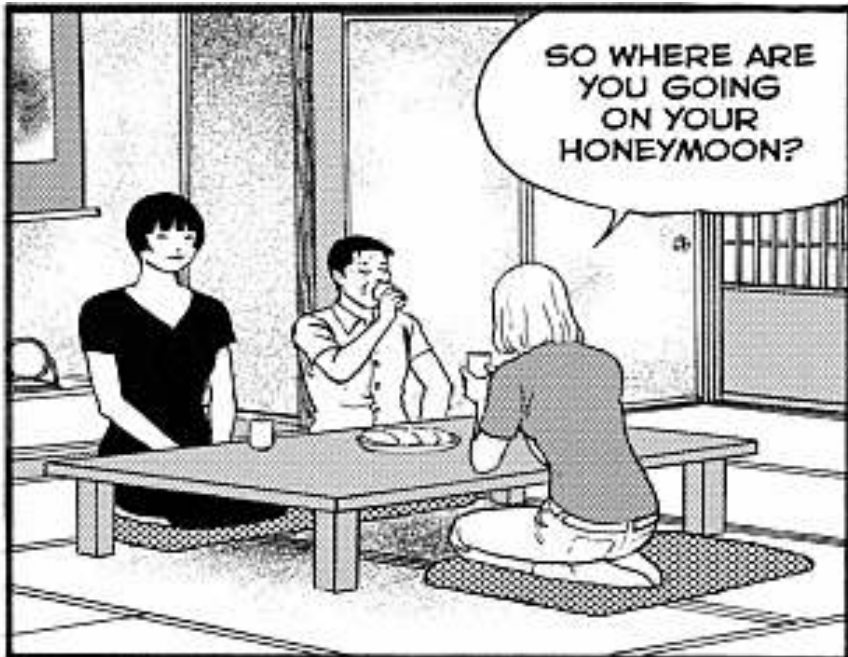
I GUESS
DAD HAD
THE SAME
THOUGHT.



I EVEN WONDERED
WHAT IT WOULD BE
LIKE IF SHE WERE
TO MARRY DAD.

WHAT? ARE
YOU SURE,
MANAMI?

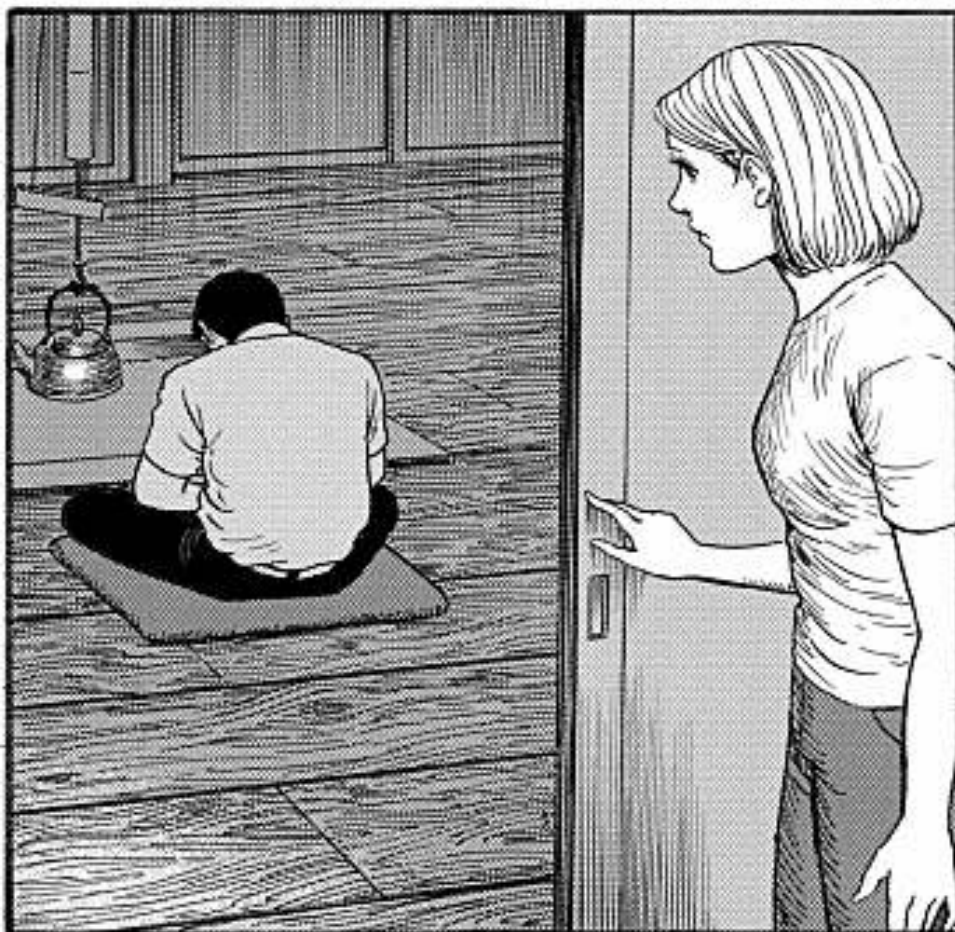
WE'RE NOT.
MANAMI SAYS
SHE WANTS
TO STAY AT
HOME.



SO WHERE ARE
YOU GOING
ON YOUR
HONEYMOON?

HUH.

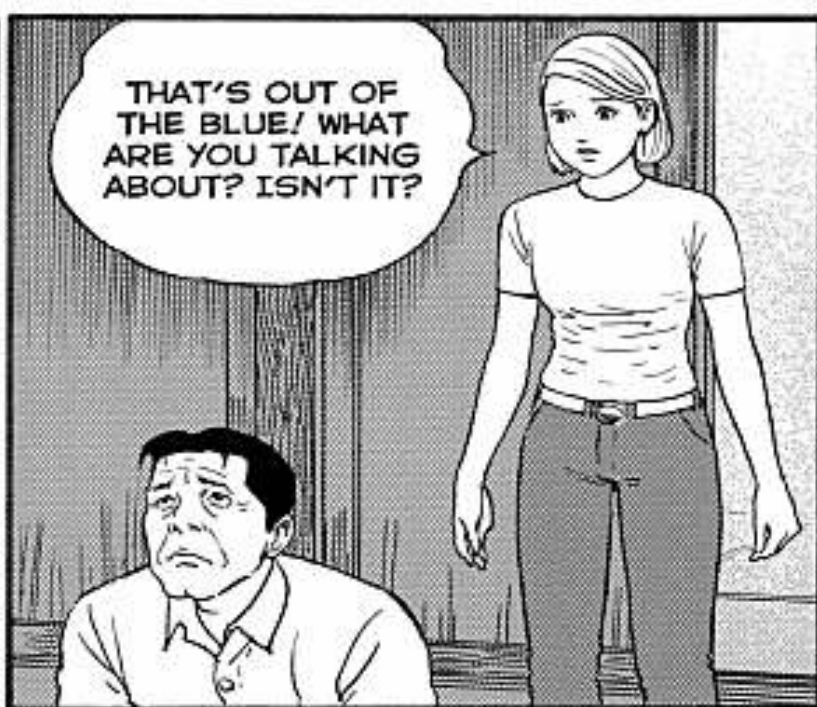
I AM...
I LOVE
BEING
IN THIS
HOUSE.

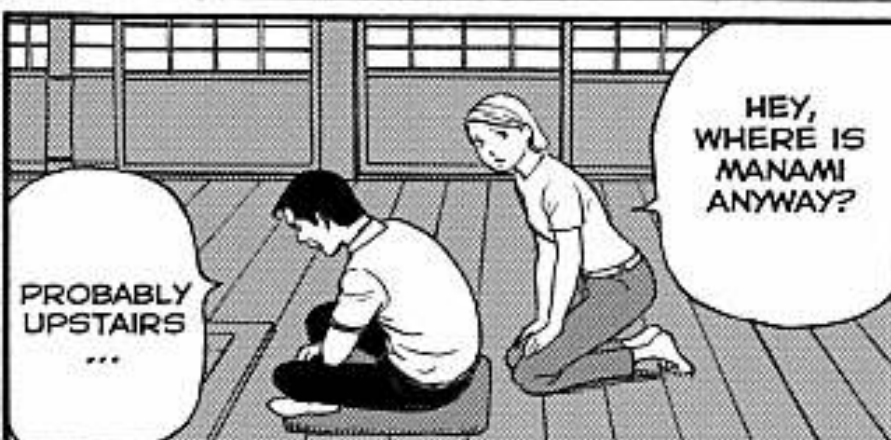


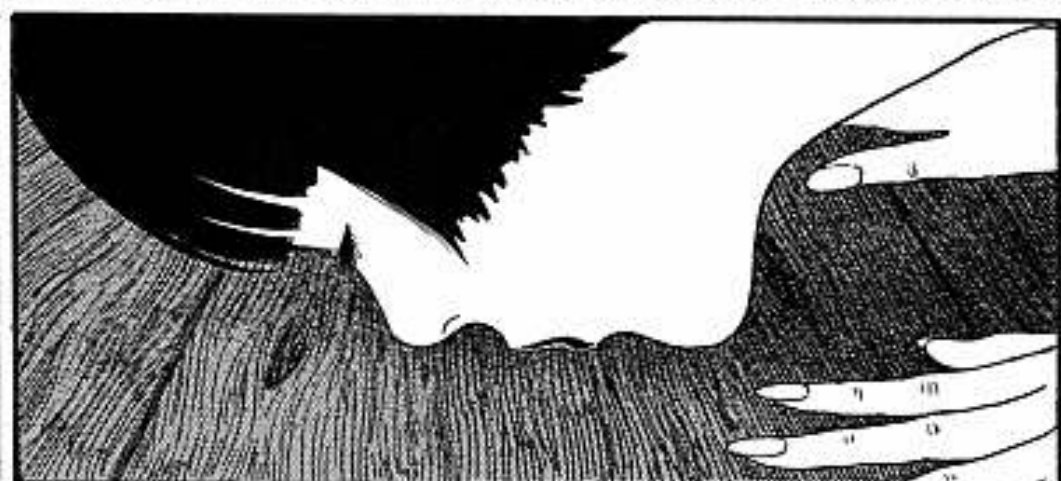
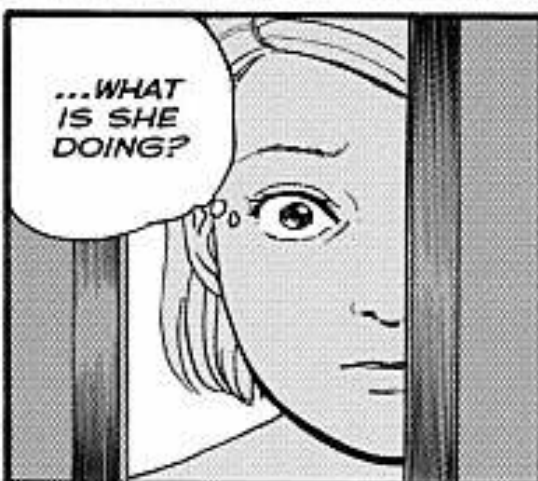
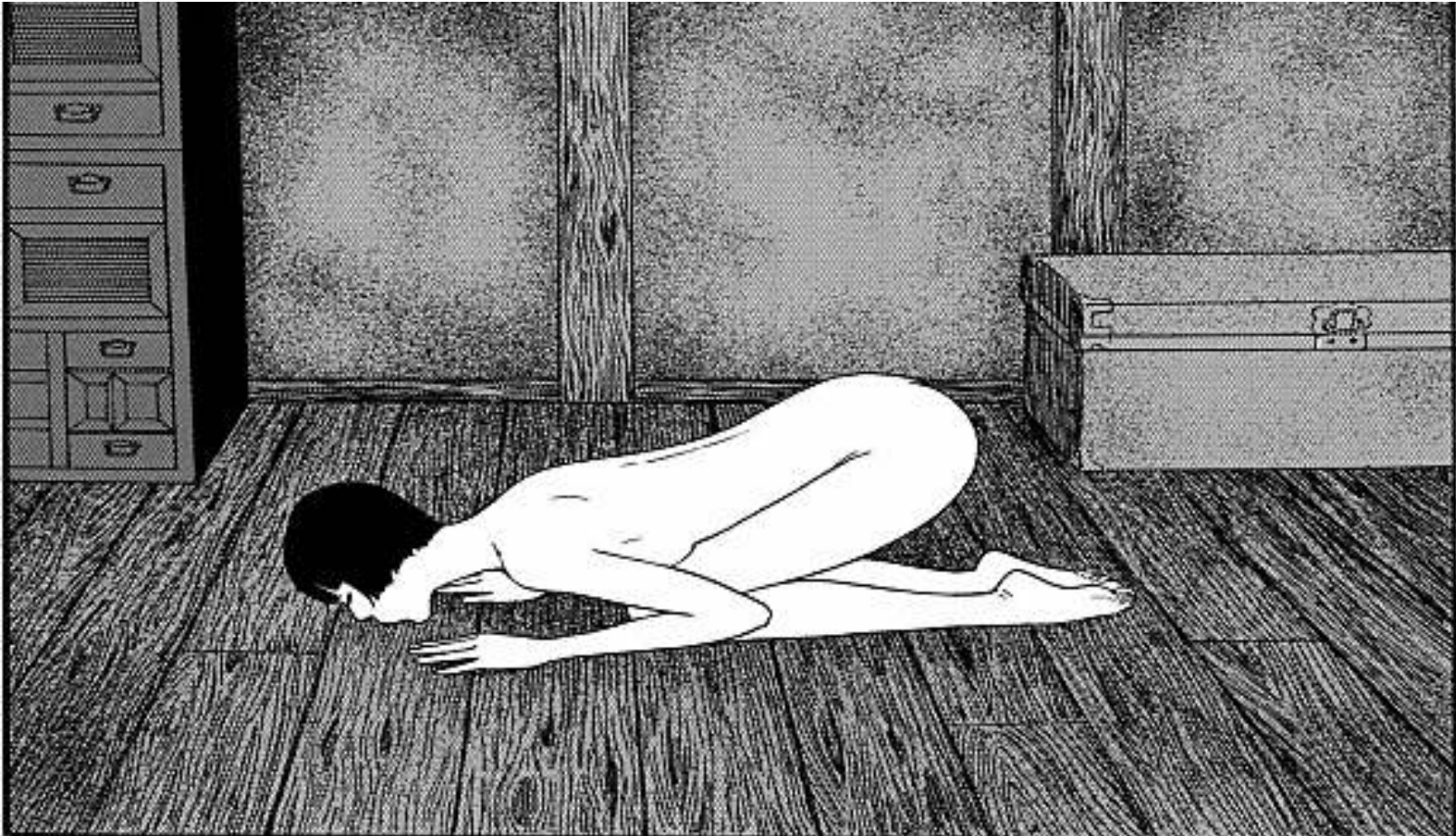
AND
THEN,
ONE
NIGHT...

ANYWAY, AFTER
THAT, FOR SOME
REASON, DAD
SUDDENLY SEEMED
PRETTY DOWN.

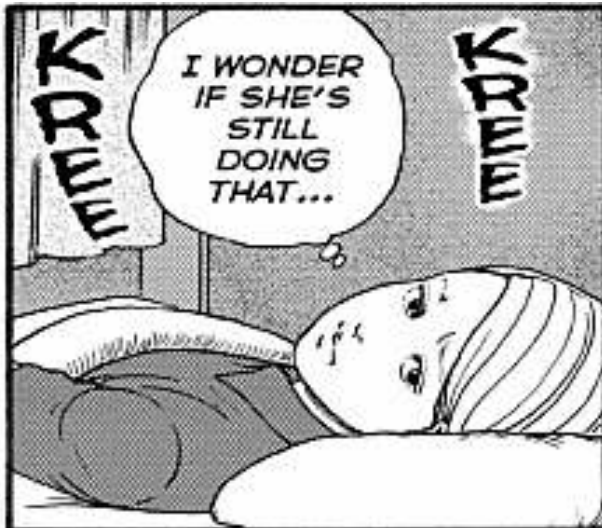


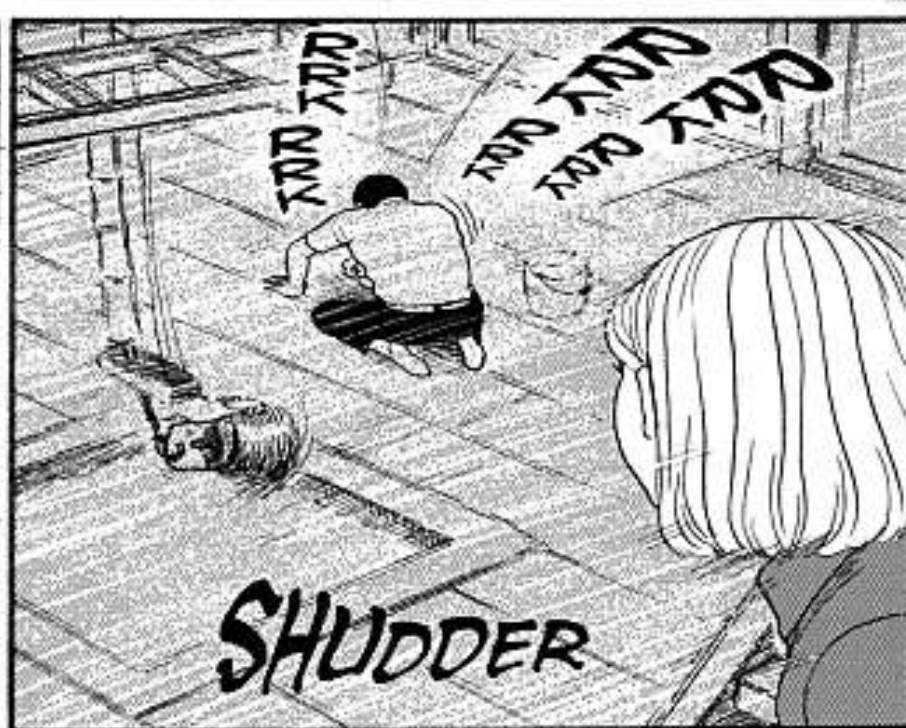


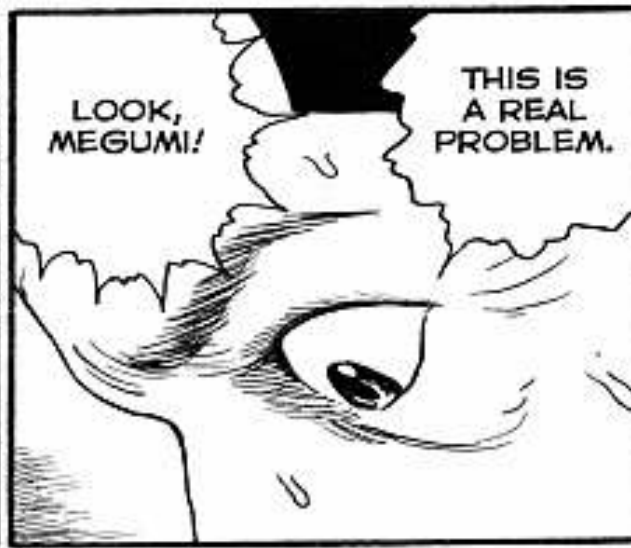
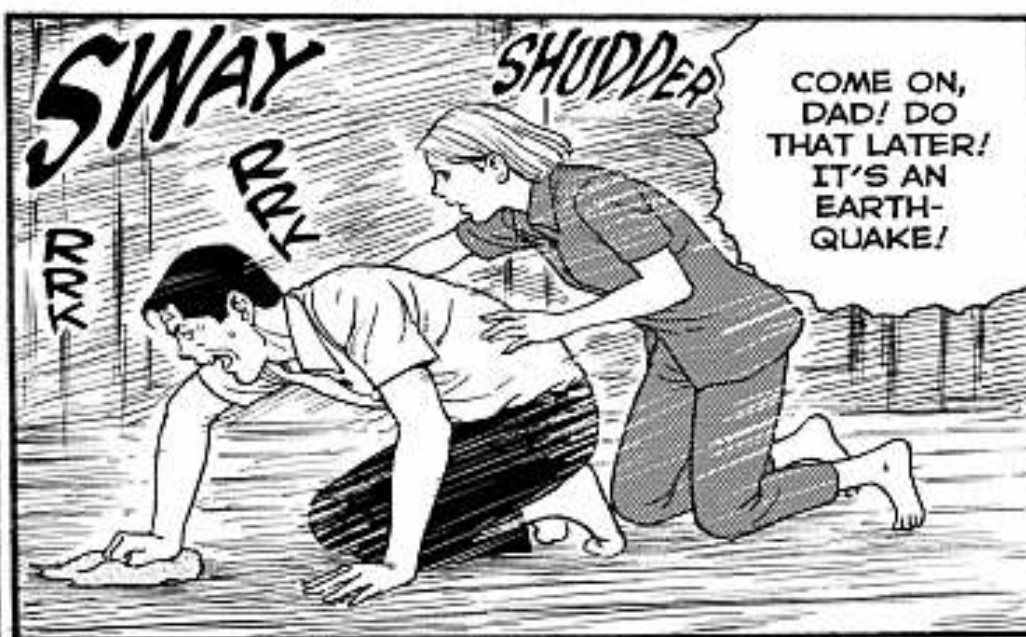


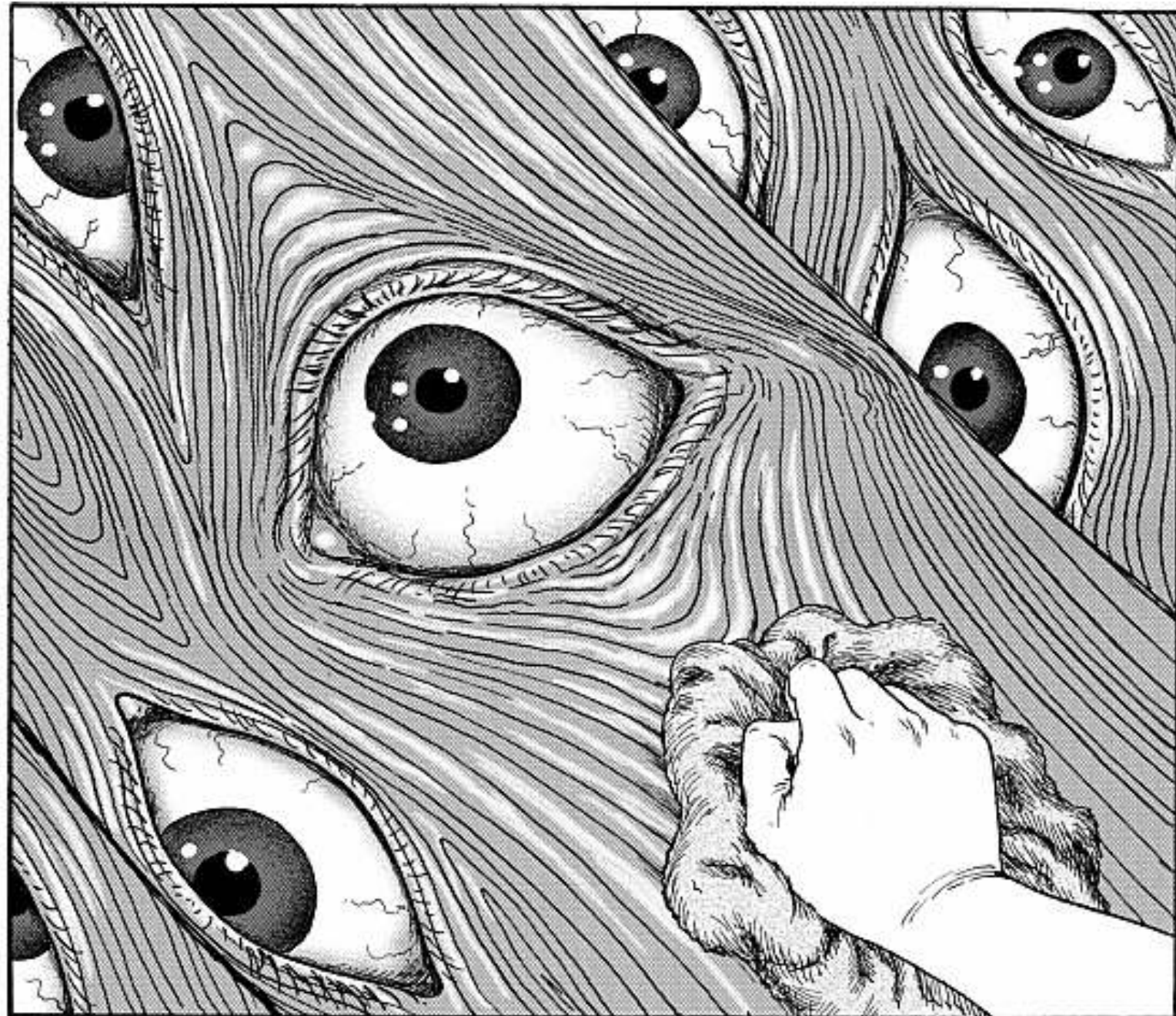


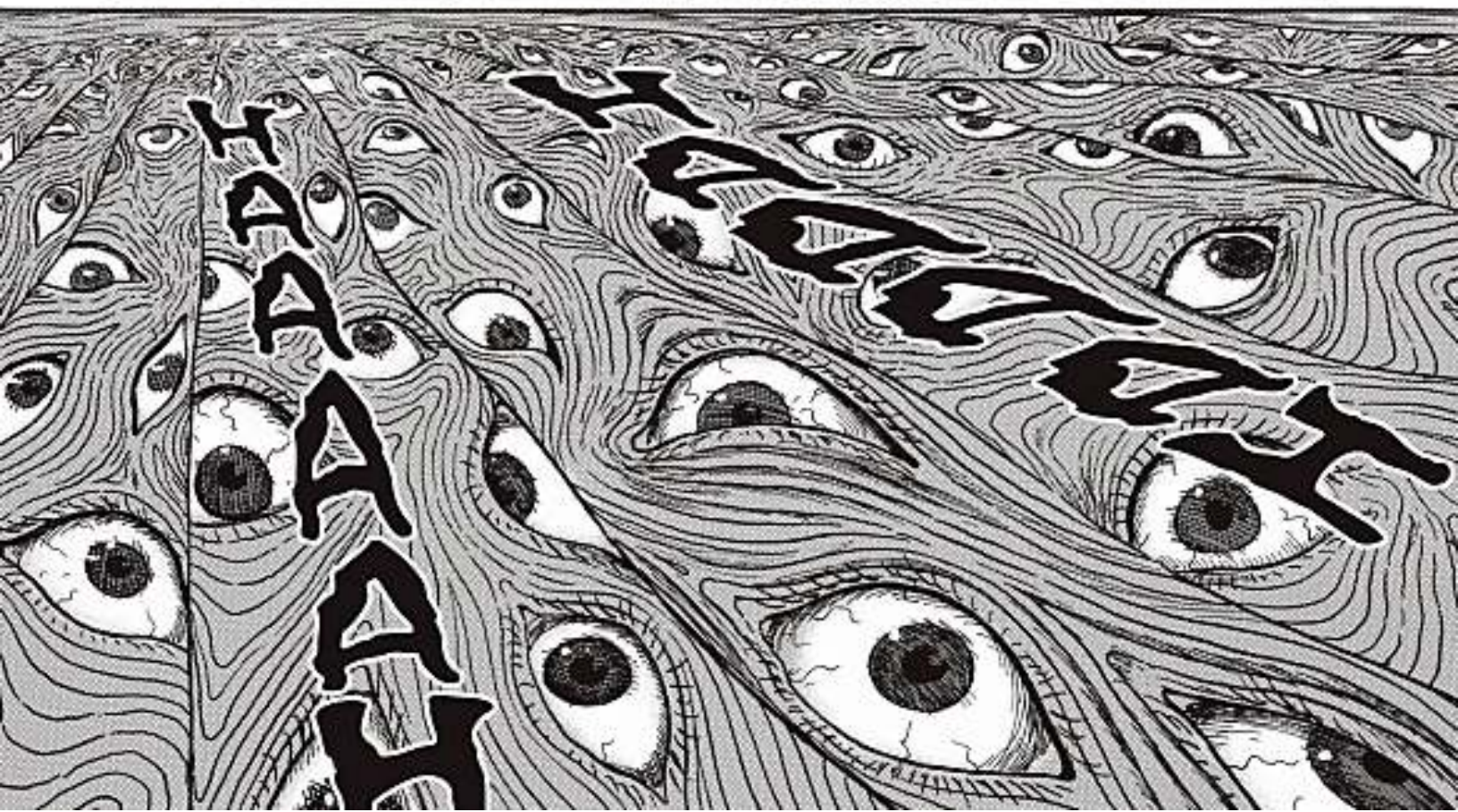
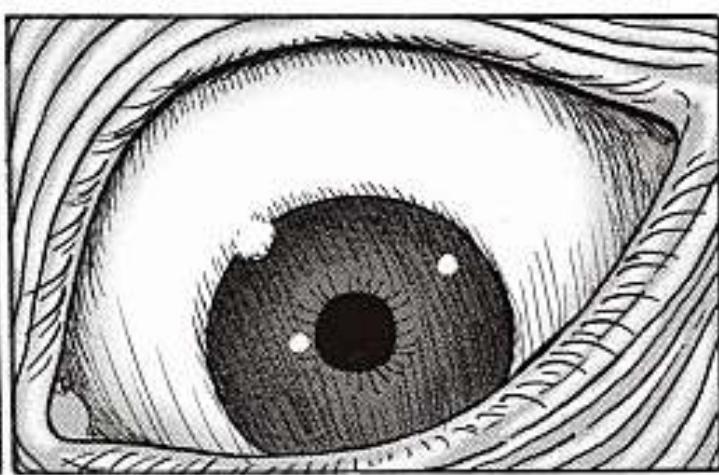
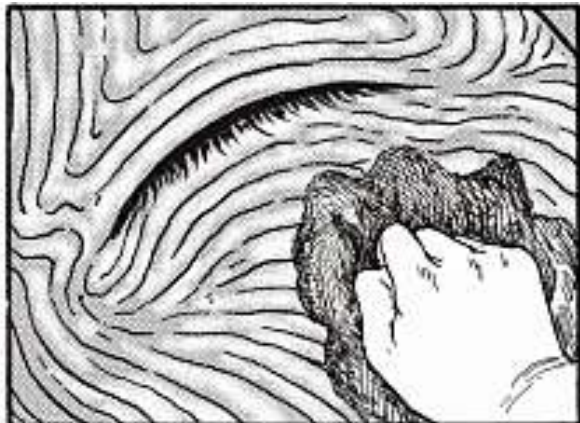
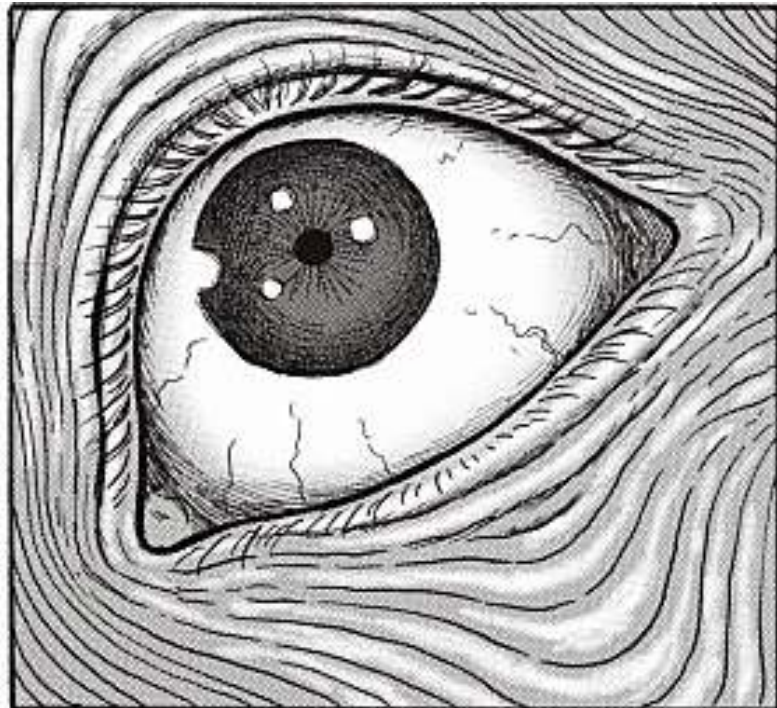




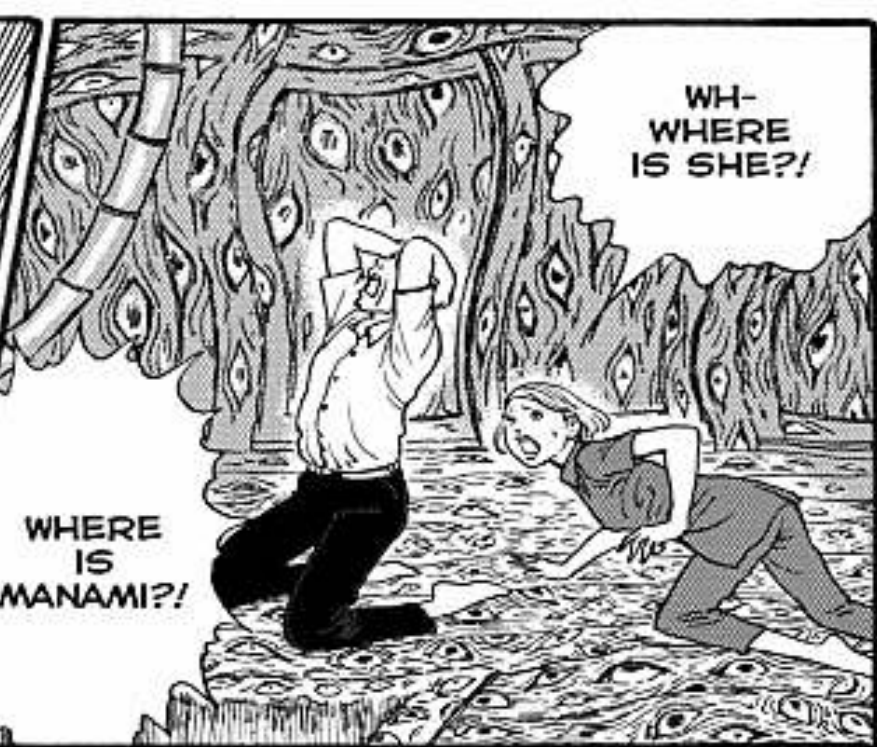
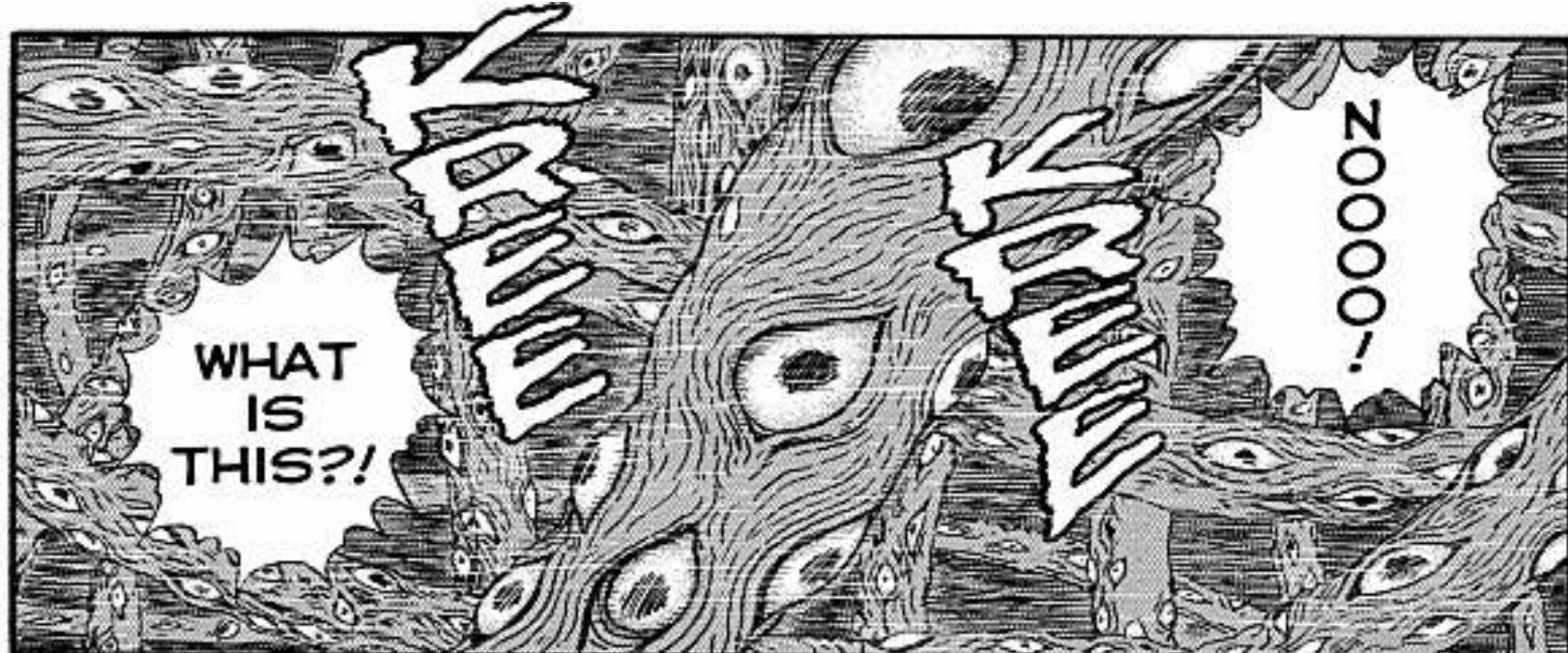








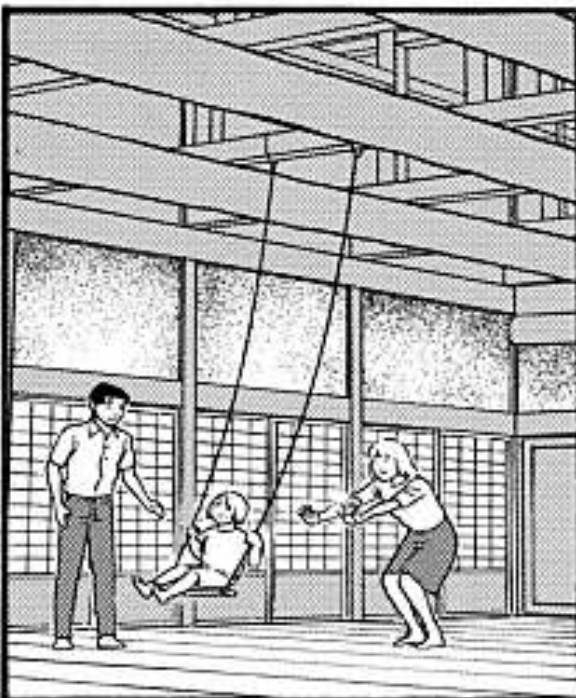


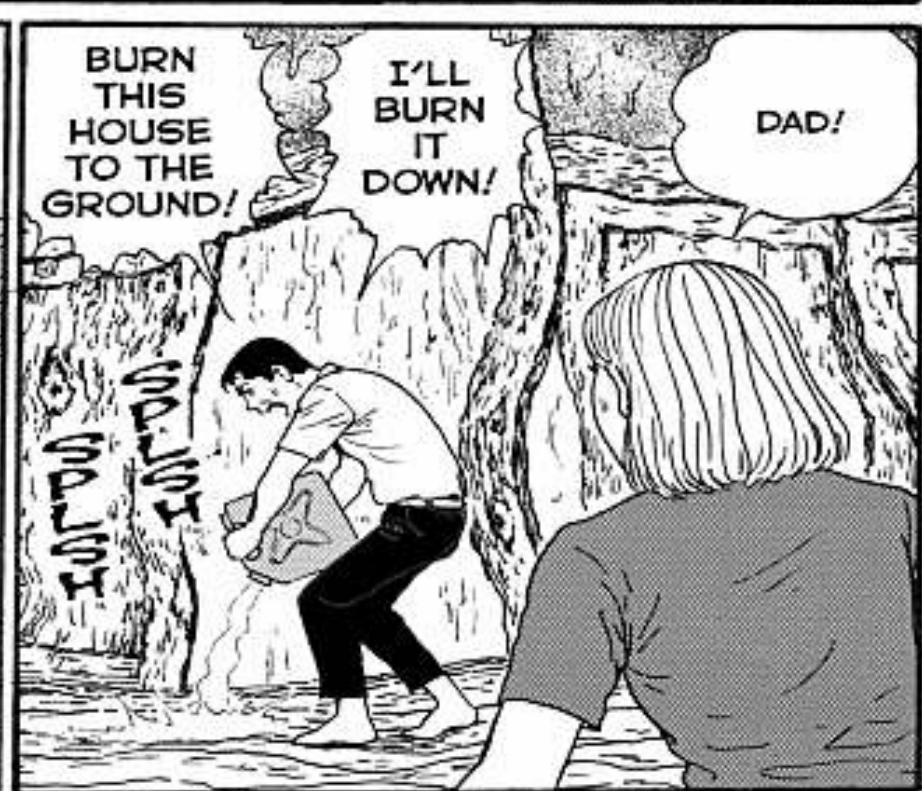
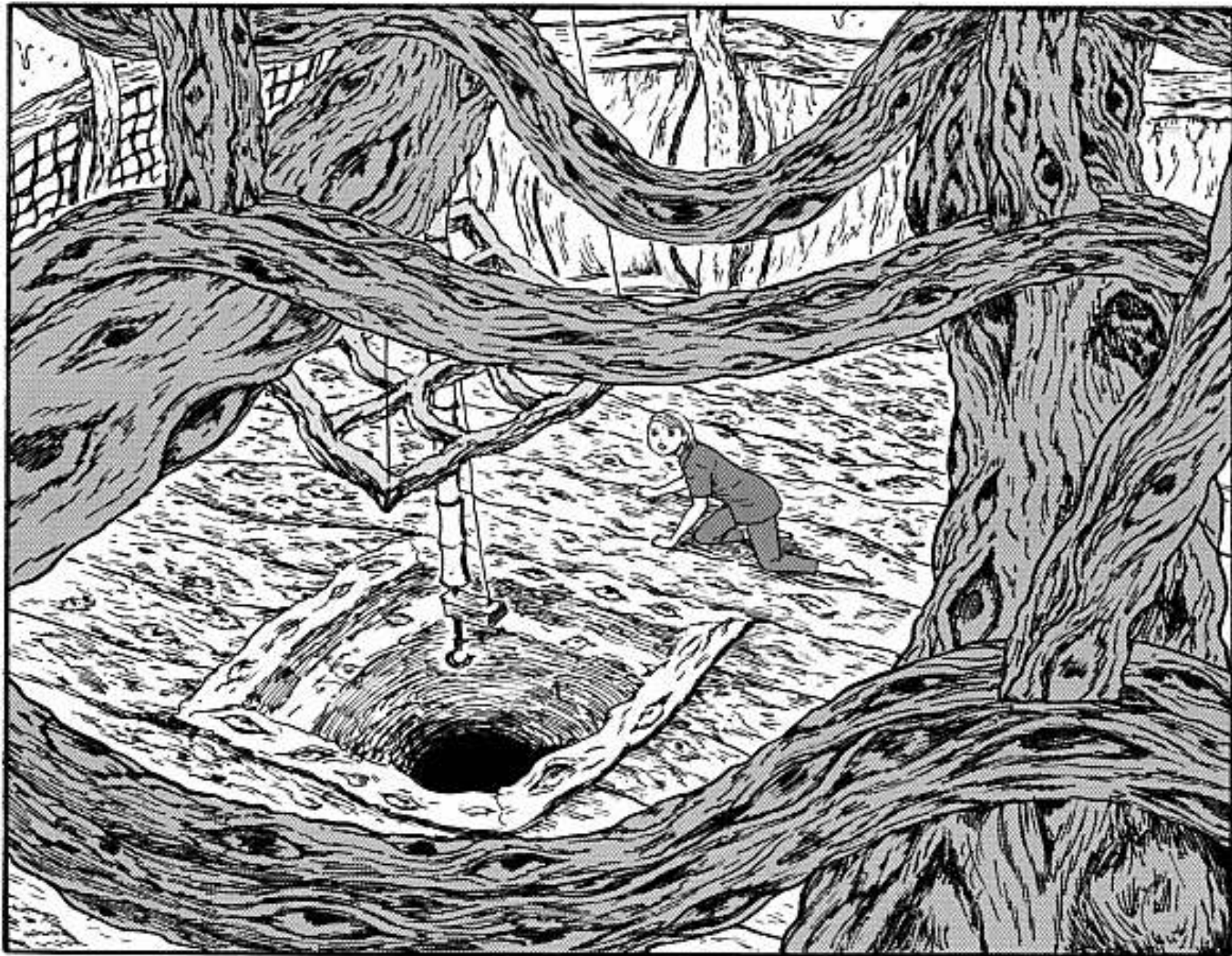


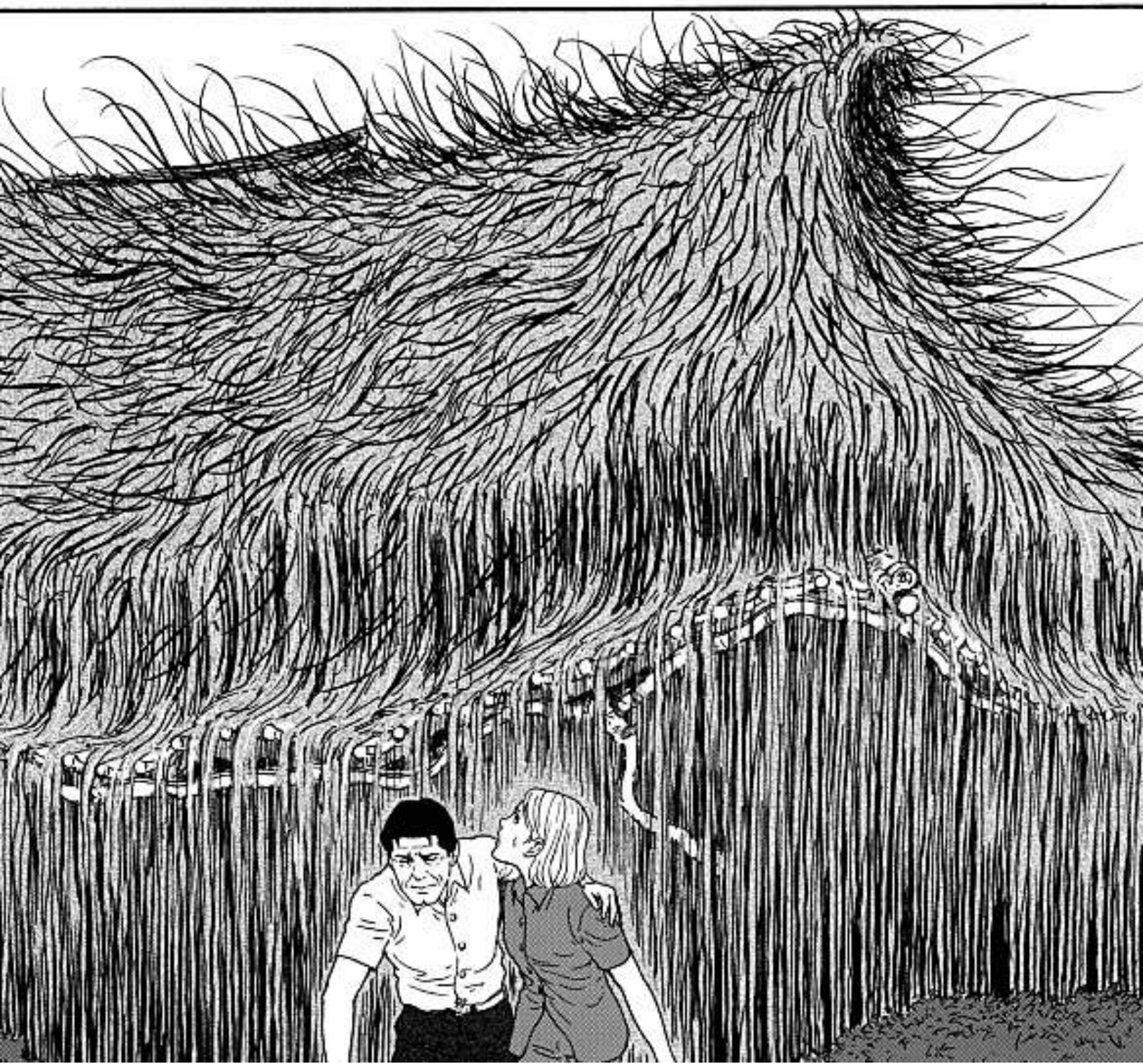


...OF
WHEN
I WAS
LITTLE.

I HAD A
DREAM...







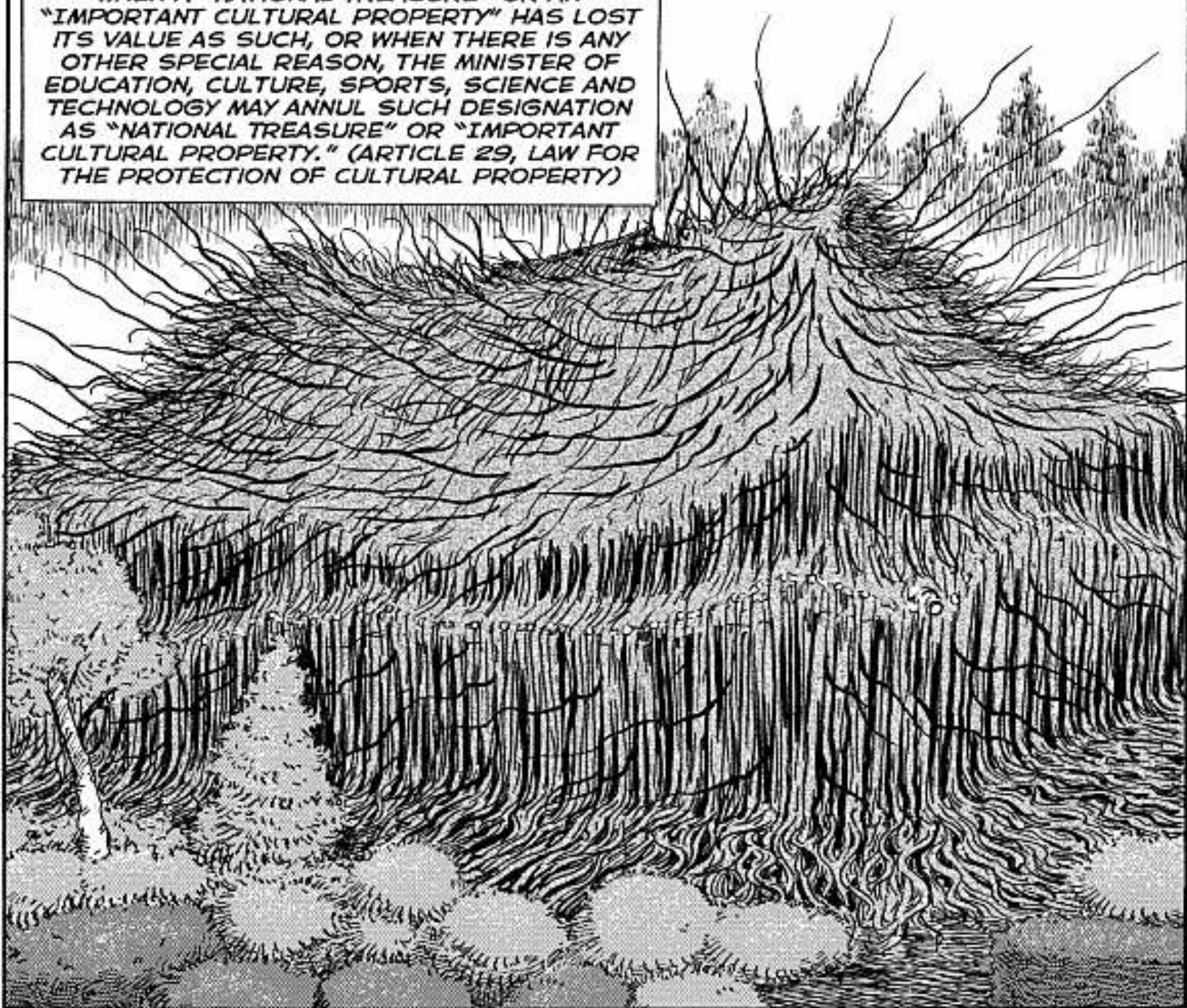
OUR HOUSE
ISN'T OURS
ANYMORE.

SHE WAS...A
PERVERT...SHE
LUSTED AFTER
BUILDINGS, AND
THEY LUSTED
AFTER HER...

NO CLUE!! MAYBE
SHE GOT BORED
OF THE HOUSE
AND LEFT...
OR ELSE SHE
BECAME PART
OF IT.

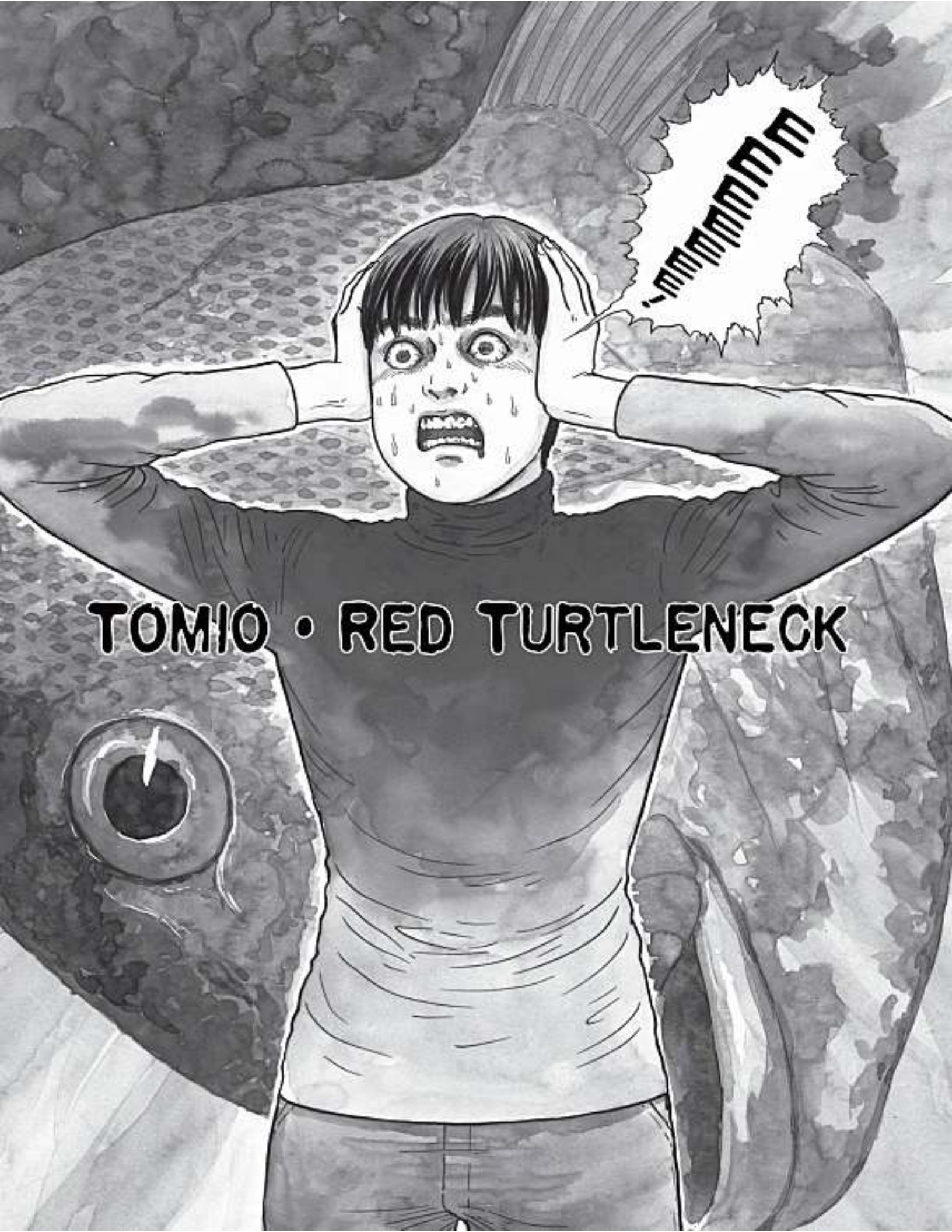
WHERE
DID THAT
WOMAN
GO?

WHEN A "NATIONAL TREASURE" OR AN
"IMPORTANT CULTURAL PROPERTY" HAS LOST
ITS VALUE AS SUCH, OR WHEN THERE IS ANY
OTHER SPECIAL REASON, THE MINISTER OF
EDUCATION, CULTURE, SPORTS, SCIENCE AND
TECHNOLOGY MAY ANNUL SUCH DESIGNATION
AS "NATIONAL TREASURE" OR "IMPORTANT
CULTURAL PROPERTY." (ARTICLE 29, LAW FOR
THE PROTECTION OF CULTURAL PROPERTY)









TOMIO • RED TURTLENECK







YOU CAN
JUST GO
BACK
TO THAT
WOMAN!

I CAN'T
STAND IT
ANYMORE.
WE'RE
THROUGH!
GET OUT!

THREE
DAYS
EARLIER

TOMIO,
I'VE HAD IT
WITH YOUR
CHEATING!

SLAM

LATER!

SHE'S WAY
HOTTER
THAN YOU!
WAY MORE
GLAMOROUS
TOO!

FINE!
I'M
GONE!

THAT
WOMAN...

SHE STOLE
TOMIO'S
HEART...

THE FORTUNE
TELLER WE
MET WHEN WE
WENT TO HAVE
OUR FUTURE
TOGETHER
TOLD...

WH-WHAT DID
YOU SAY?!

AND YOU
WILL SOON
SEPARATE.

YOU ARE
DEEPLY
INCOMPAT-
IBLE.

TOMIO...?

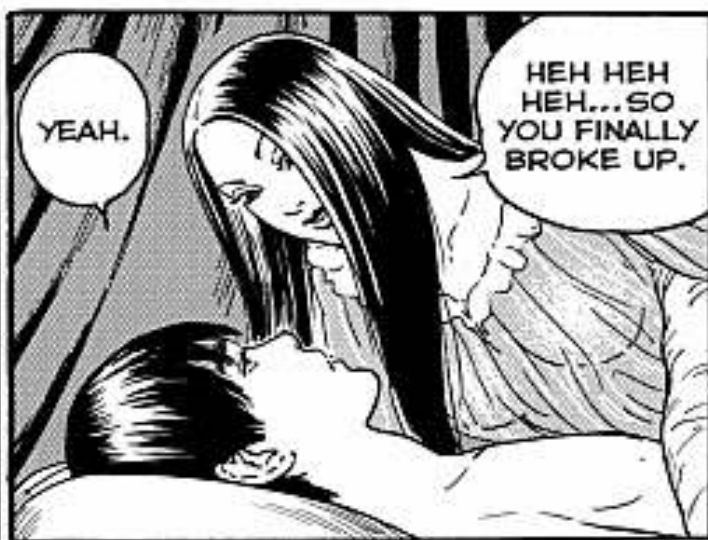
...



ME
TOO.



THE SECOND
I SAW YOU,
I WAS HEAD
OVER HEELS.



YEAH.

HEH HEH
HEH... SO
YOU FINALLY
BROKE UP.



WITH MY
HEAD? ...
YOU SAY THE
STRANGEST
THINGS.

YES... I AM
IN LOVE
WITH YOUR
HEAD.

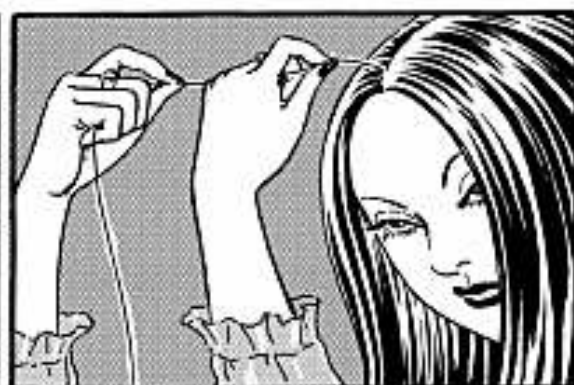
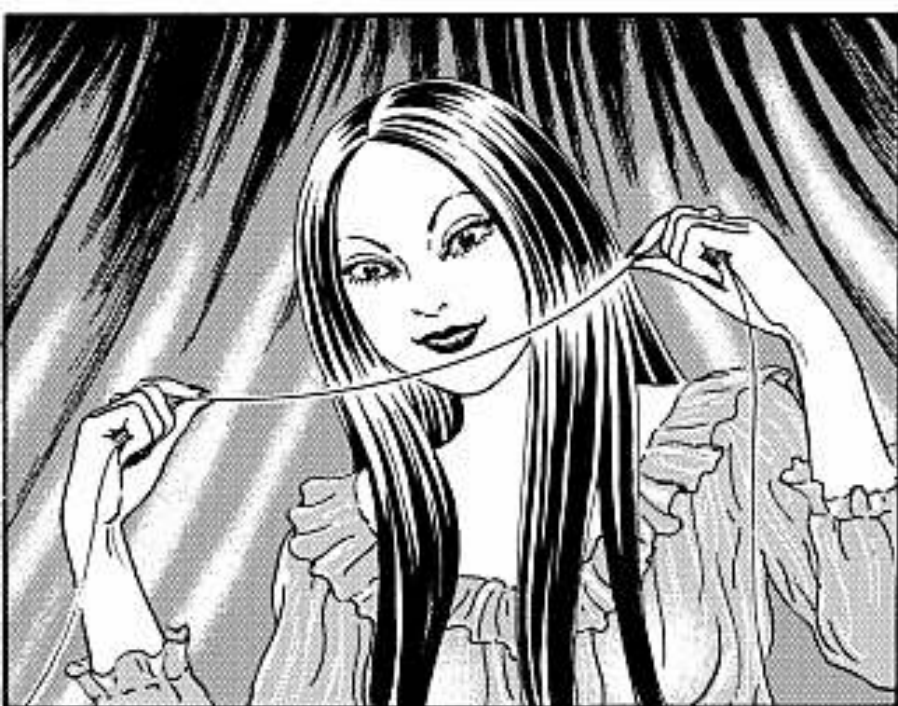


MY
NECK
...?

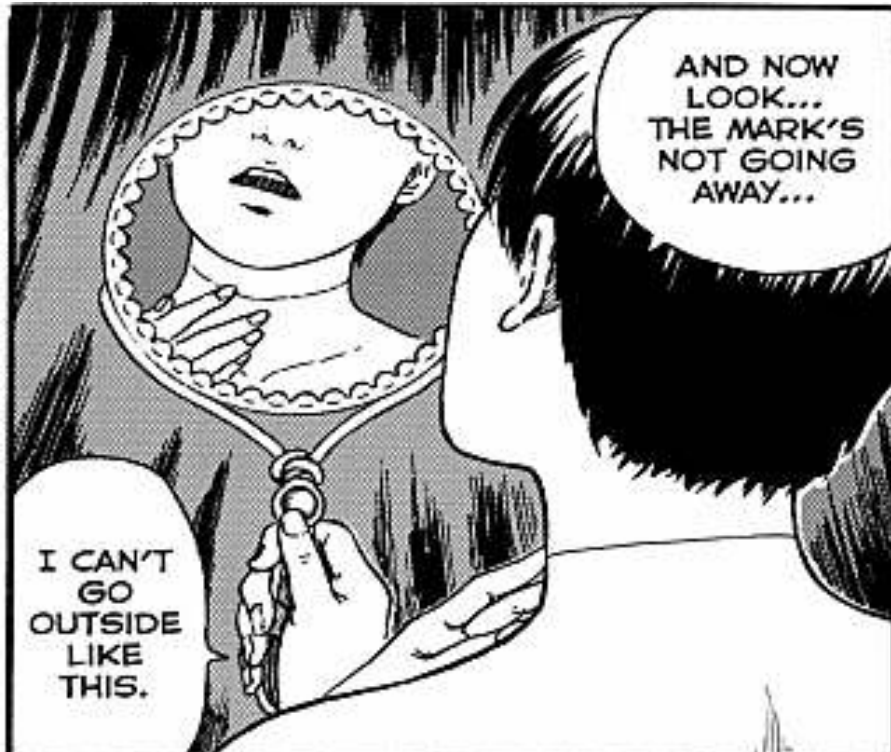


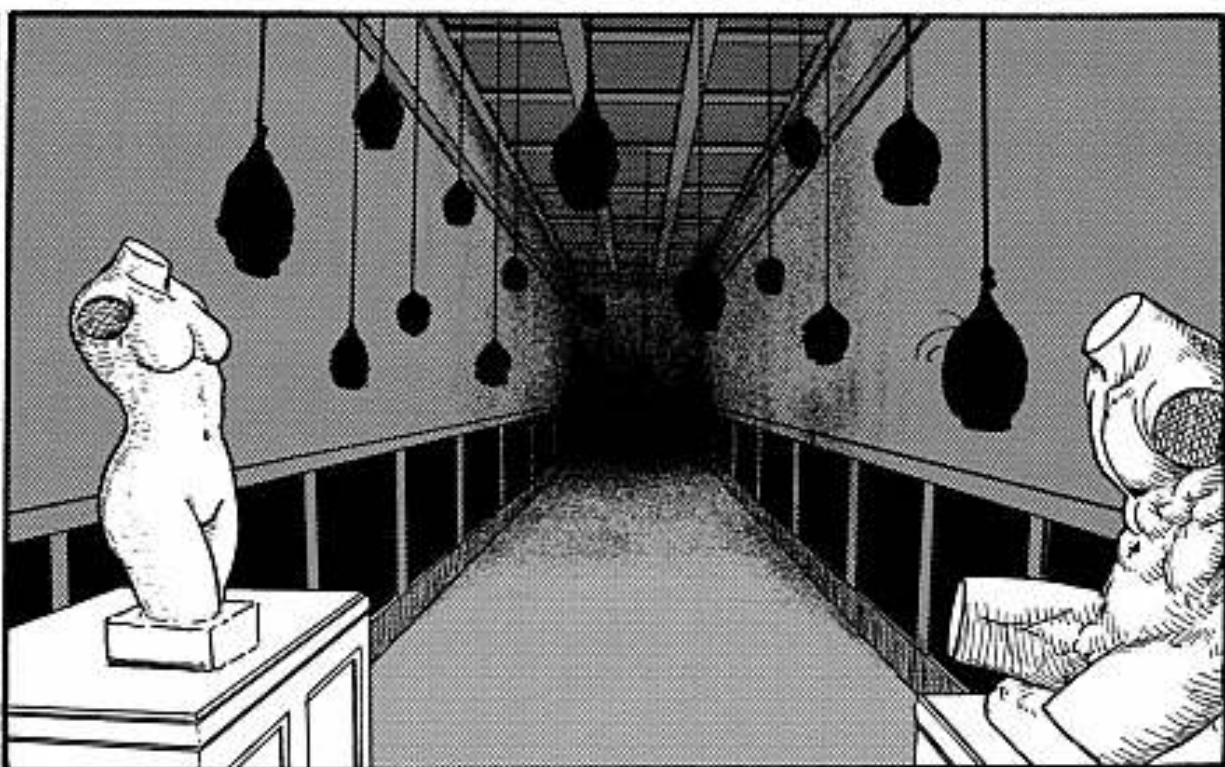
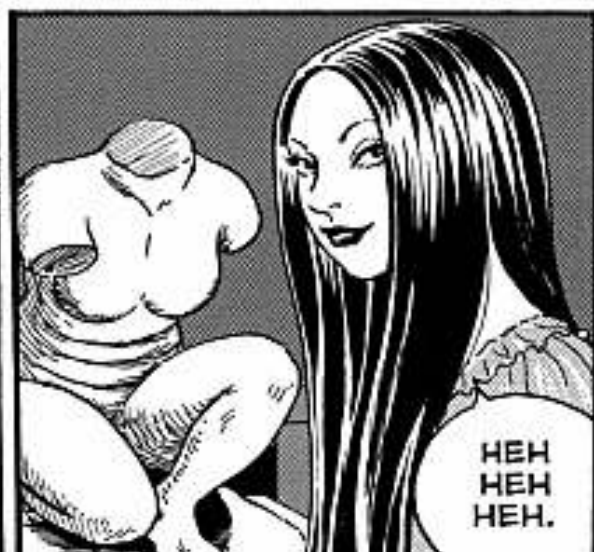
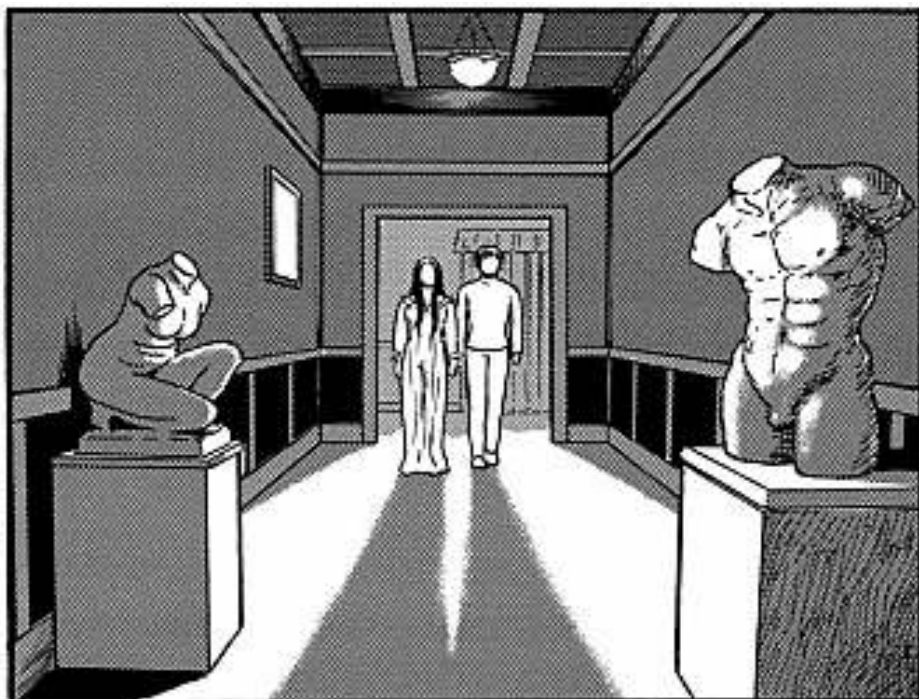
THEY'RE
VERY
BEAUTIFUL.

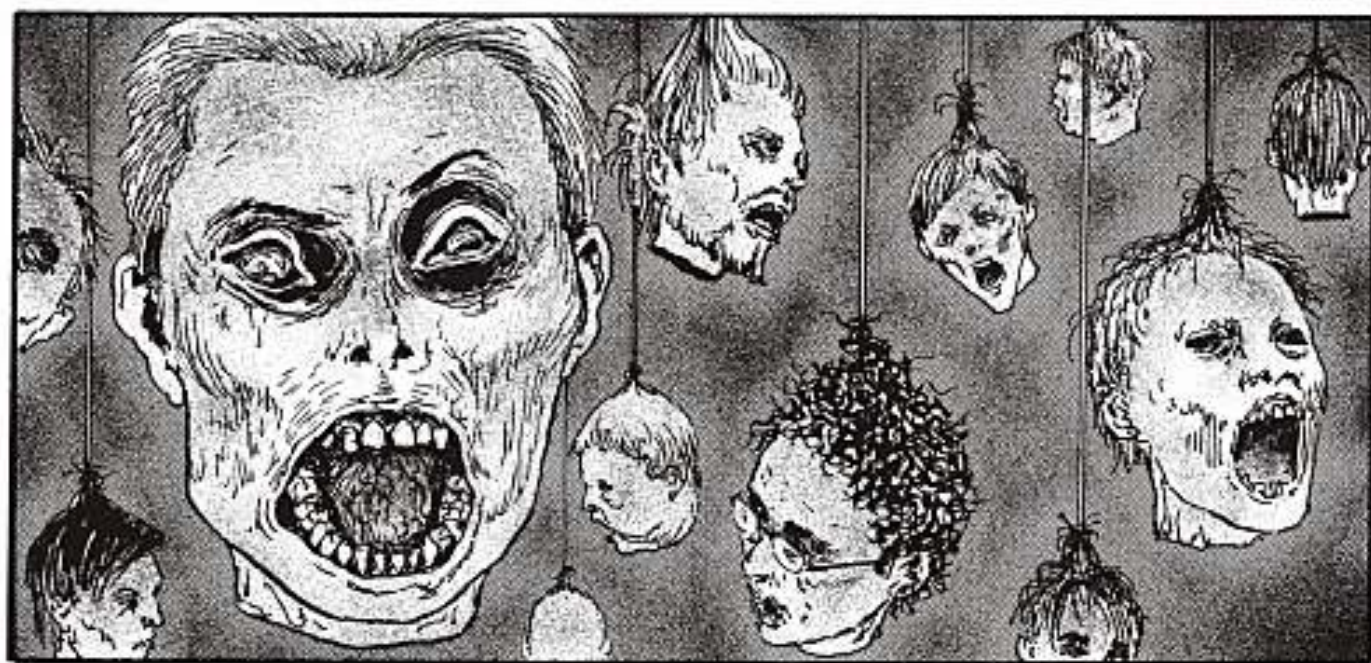
YOUR
NECK,
YOUR
HEAD...













HA HA
HA! YOU
CAN'T
RUN!



UNH.



AH!

AAAHH!



M-MY
NECK
FEELS
WEIRD.



HAAH!

HAAH!



UNH!



HAAH!
HAAH!







IF MY HEAD
SLIPS JUST
A LITTLE
BECAUSE OF
THE SHAKING
IN MY HANDS,
I'LL DIE...

IF I LET
GO...
MY HEAD
WILL
FALL
OFF...



RIGHT
NOW, I'M
HOLDING IT
DOWN WITH
EVERYTHING
I HAVE...

THE FLESH OF THE
CROSS SECTION
OF MY NECK IS
SWELLING, AND
IT FEELS LIKE
THE NERVES AND
BLOOD VESSELS
COULD COME
APART AT ANY
SECOND.



I DON'T
CARE WHAT
KIND OF
TRICKS YOU
PULL. I'M
NOT TAKING
YOU BACK.

...WHAT
KIND OF
BULLSHIT
IS THIS?



...



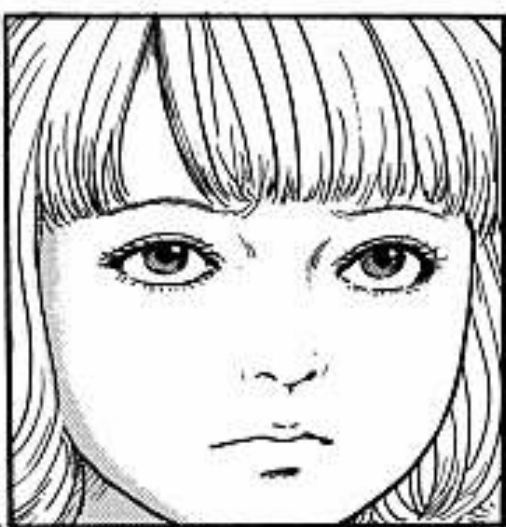
LOOK
AT THE
CUT.

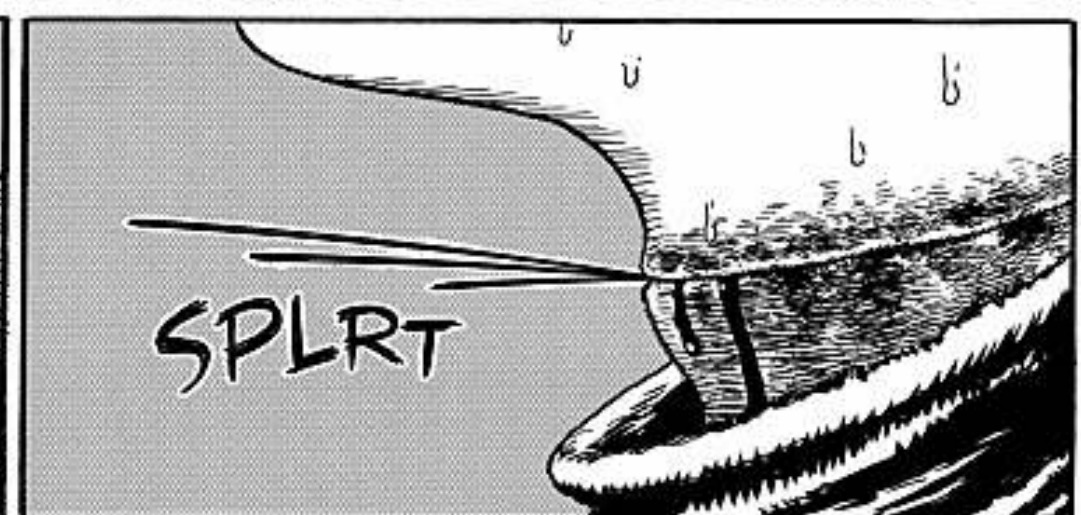
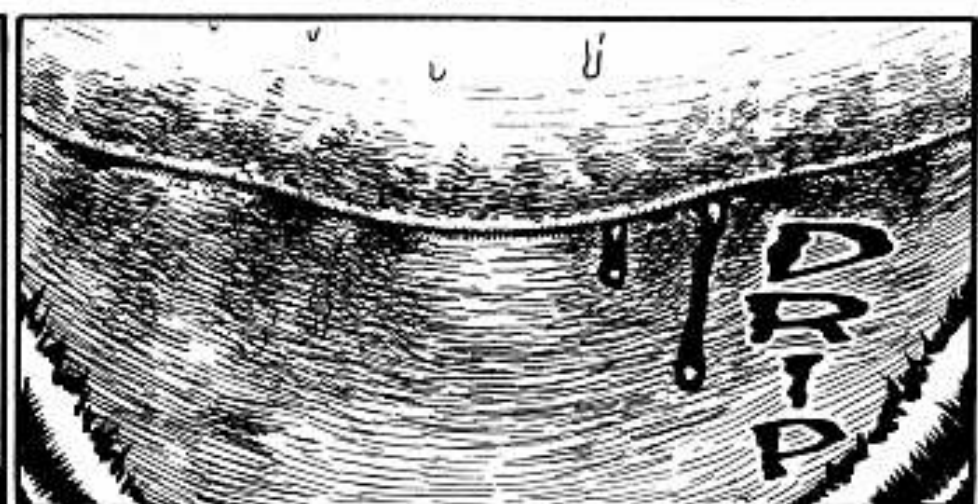
R-RIGHT.
YOU'LL
BELIEVE ME
IF YOU SEE
THE CUT...



PLEASE
BELIEVE
ME...

IT'S
THE
TRUTH.
IT'S
TRUE.









...I
CALLED
AN
AMBU-
LANCE.



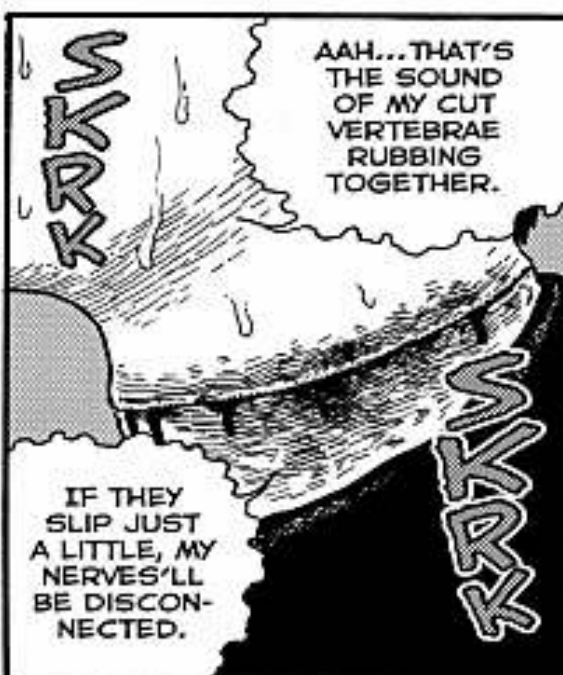
...HELLO?
I NEED
AN AMBU-
LANCE.

HIS HEAD'S
BEEN CUT
OFF!!
PLEASE
HURRY!



AAH...
I CAN'T
FEEL MY
HANDS
ANYMORE.

AND MY
LEGS
ARE
SHAKING.



AAH... THAT'S
THE SOUND
OF MY CUT
VERTEBRAE
RUBBING
TOGETHER.

IF THEY
SLIP JUST
A LITTLE, MY
NERVES'LL
BE DISCON-
NECTED.



SO
HEAVY
...

I CAN'T
BELIEVE
HOW
HEAVY MY
HEAD IS.



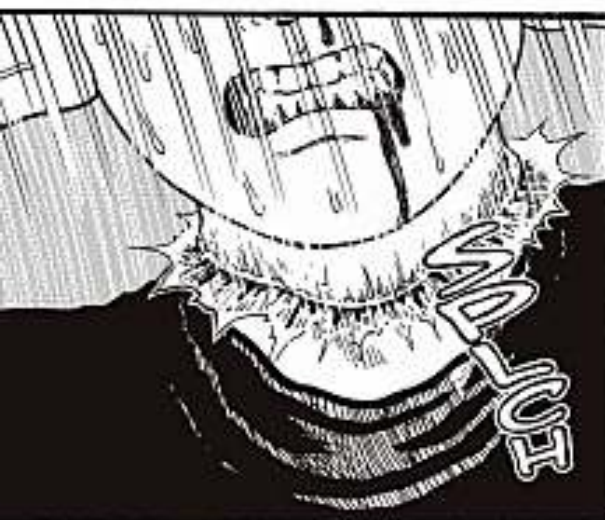
MAYBE
SIT
DOWN?

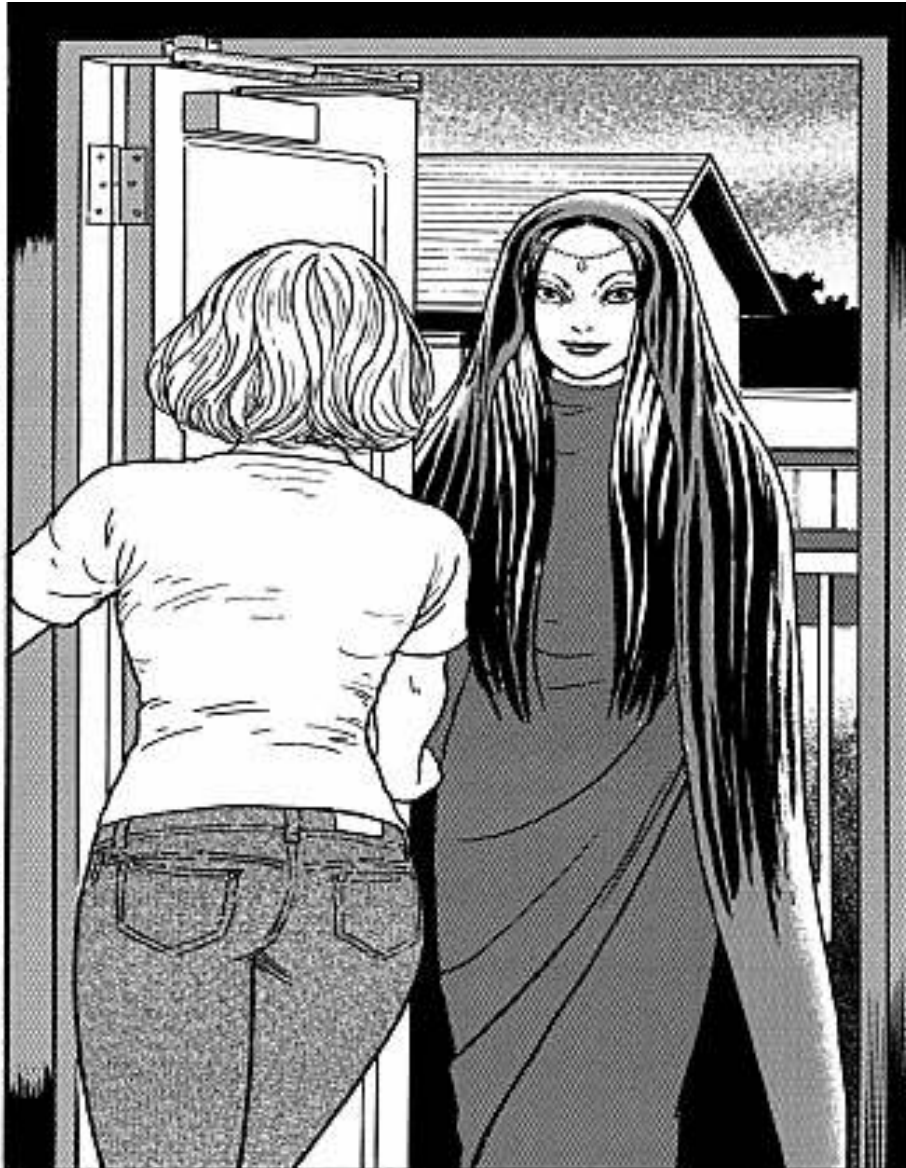
TOMIO
...



YEAH
...

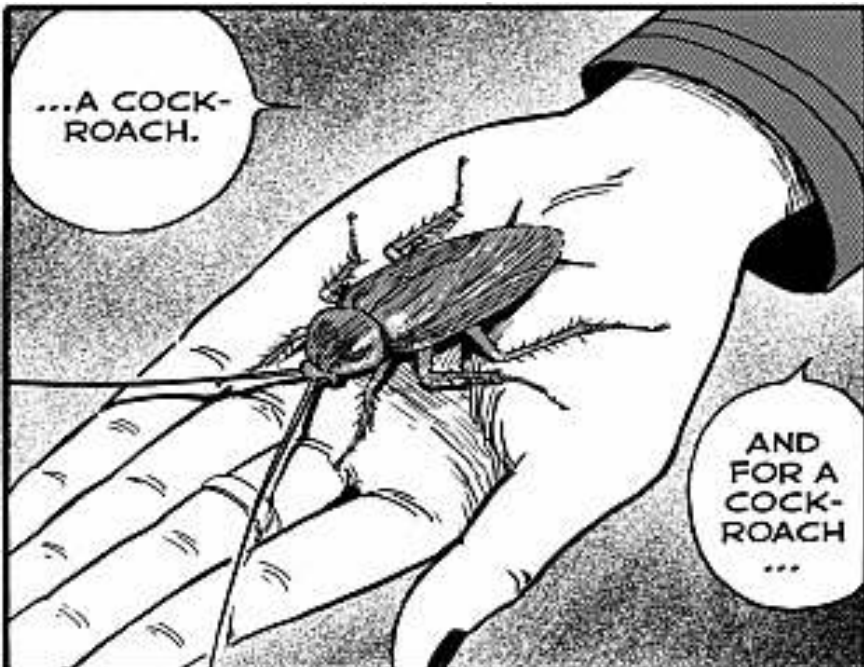
OH.











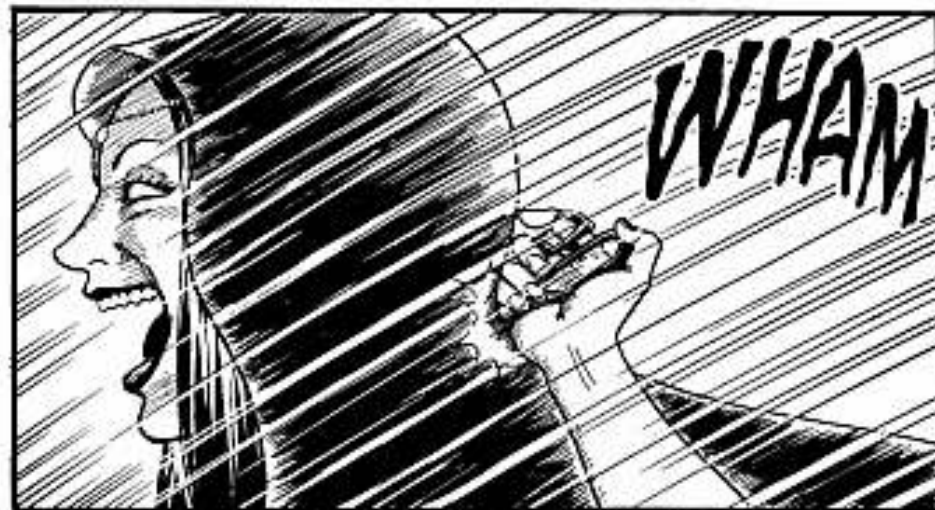
AH HA
HA HA!
THAT'S IT!
WRITHE IN
AGONY!



SHHHHHH...

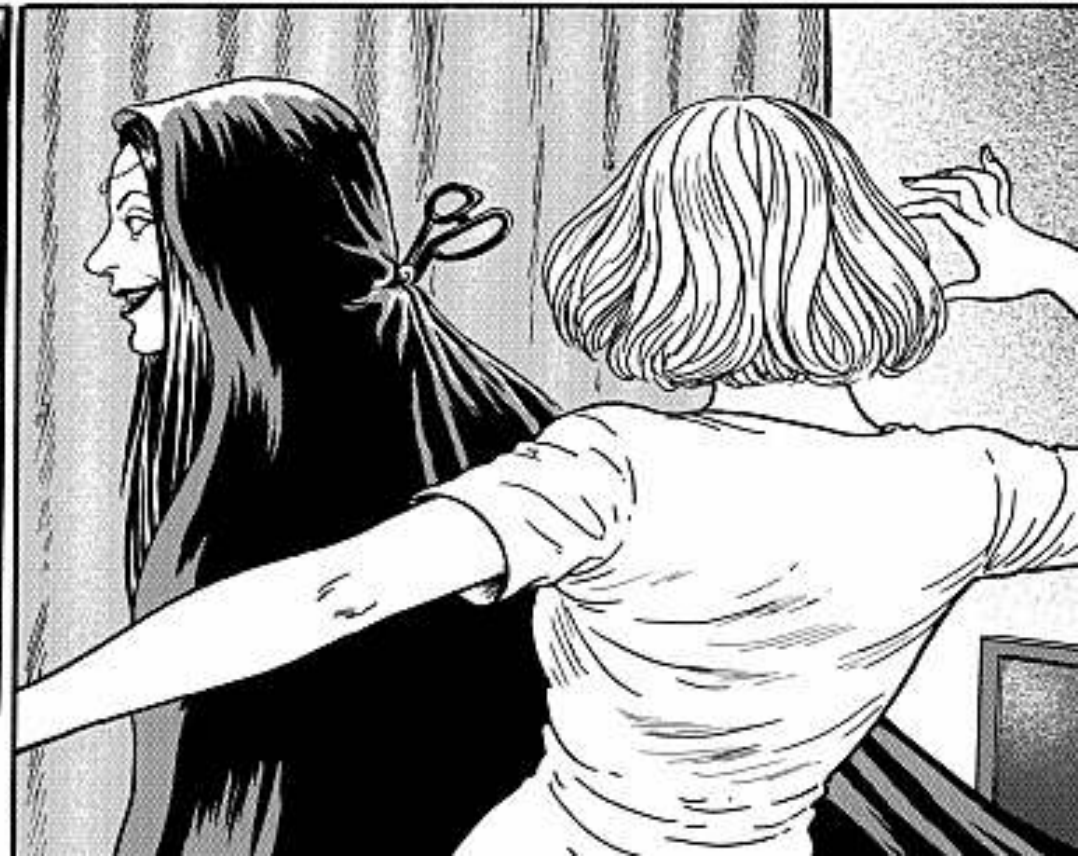


IZOYAKAI...



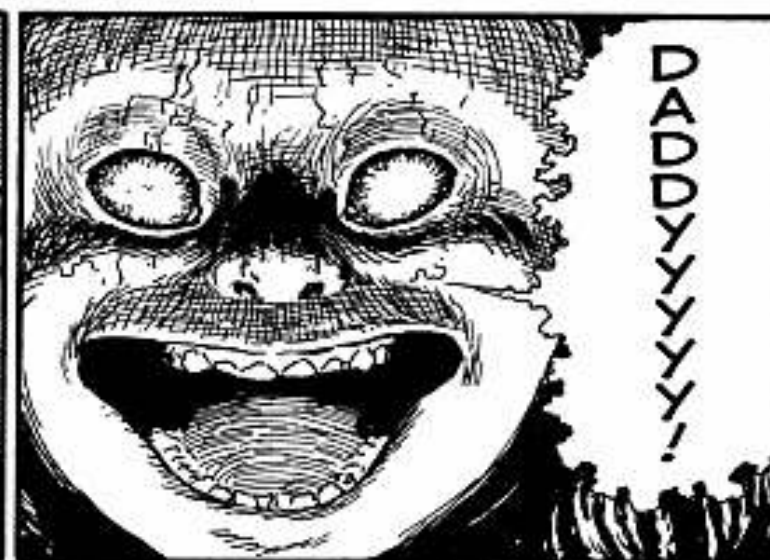
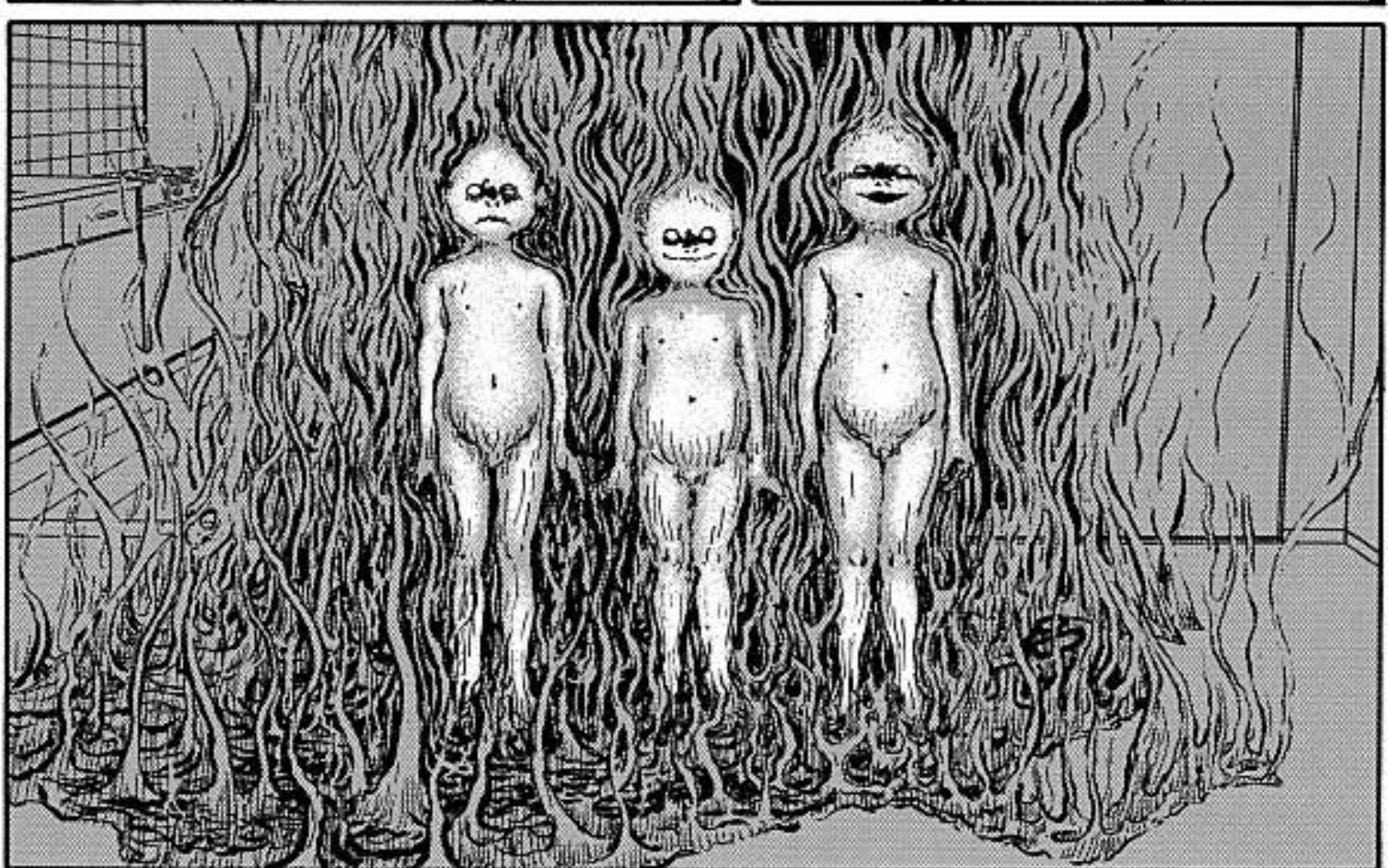
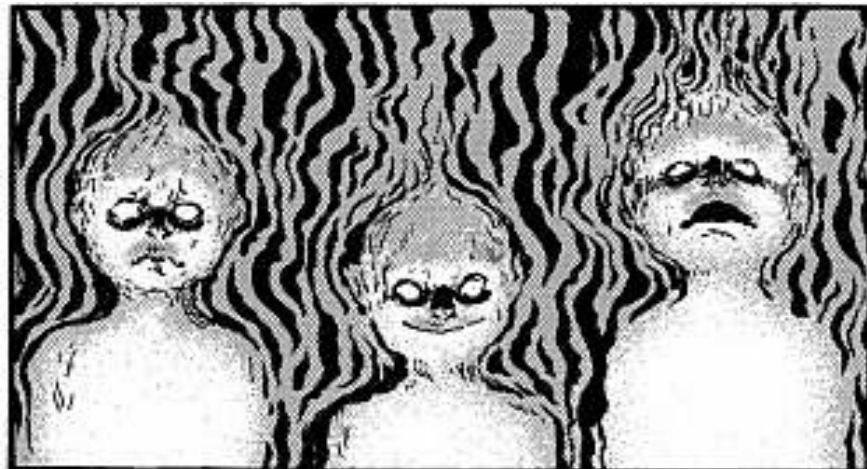
WHAM

KYA HA HA HA HA!

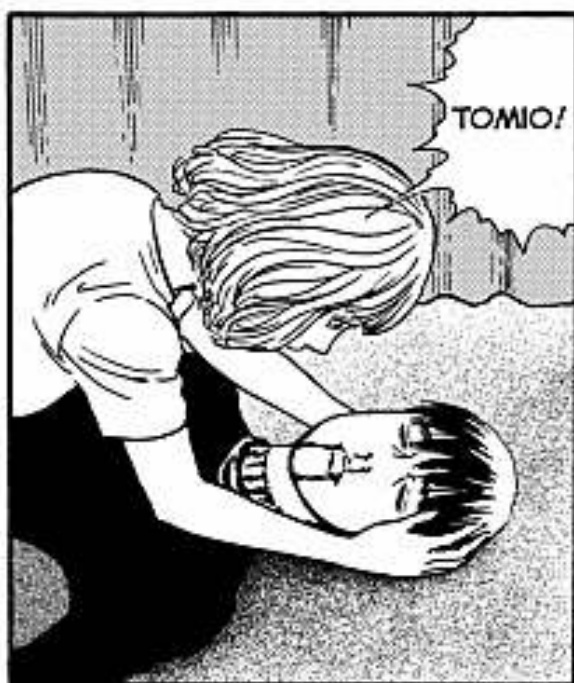
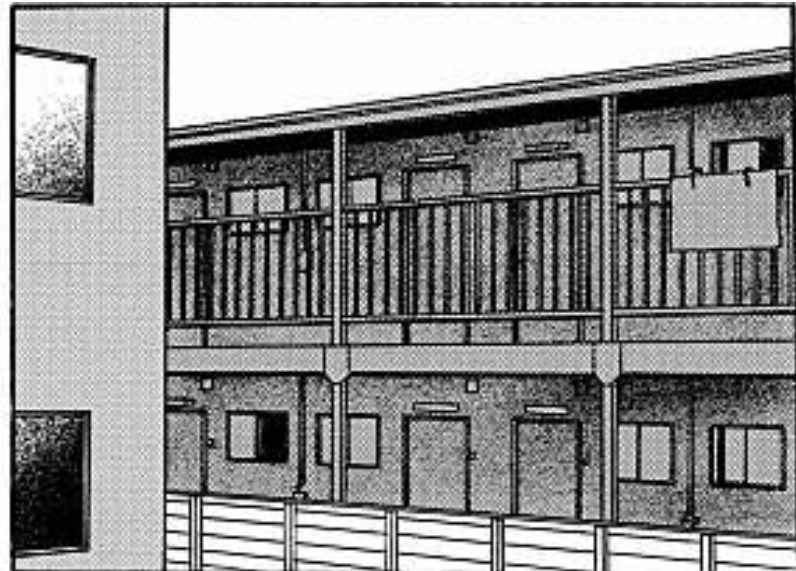


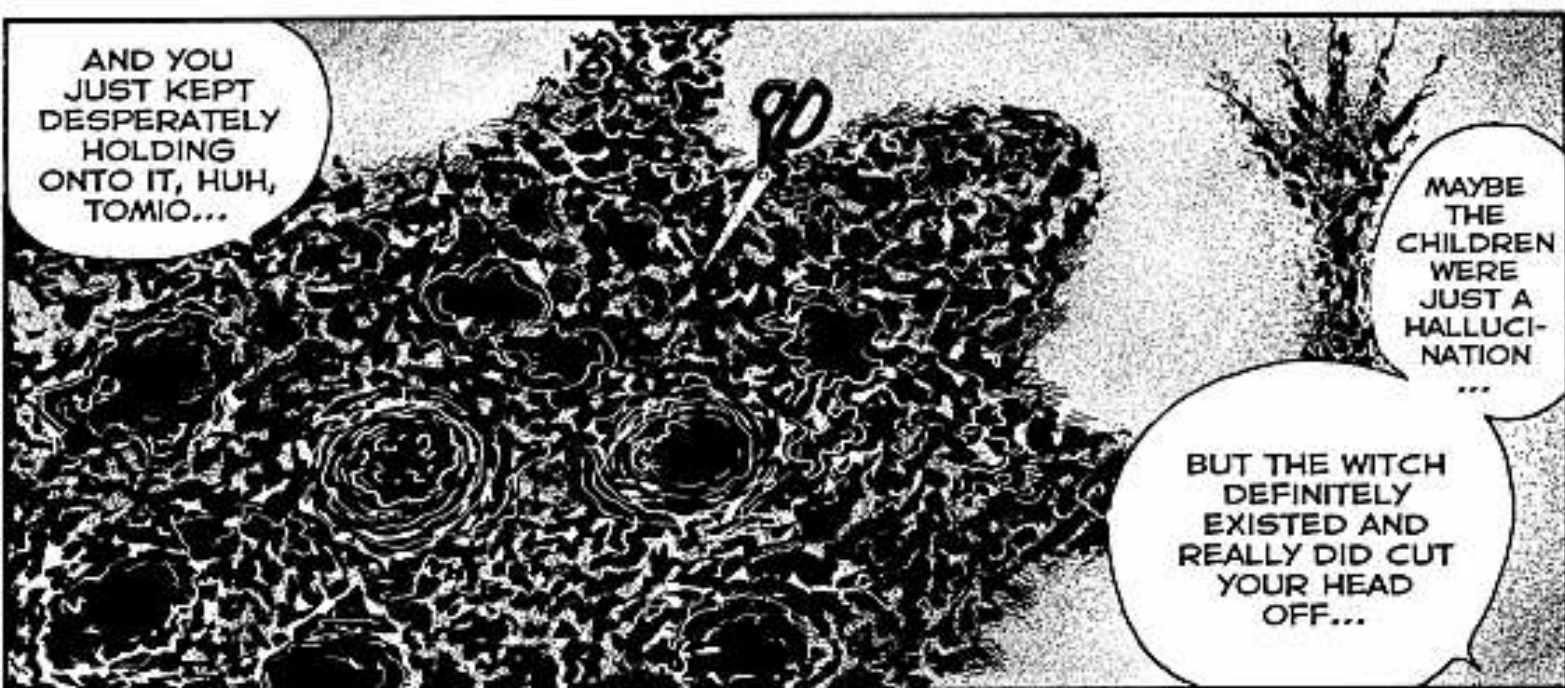


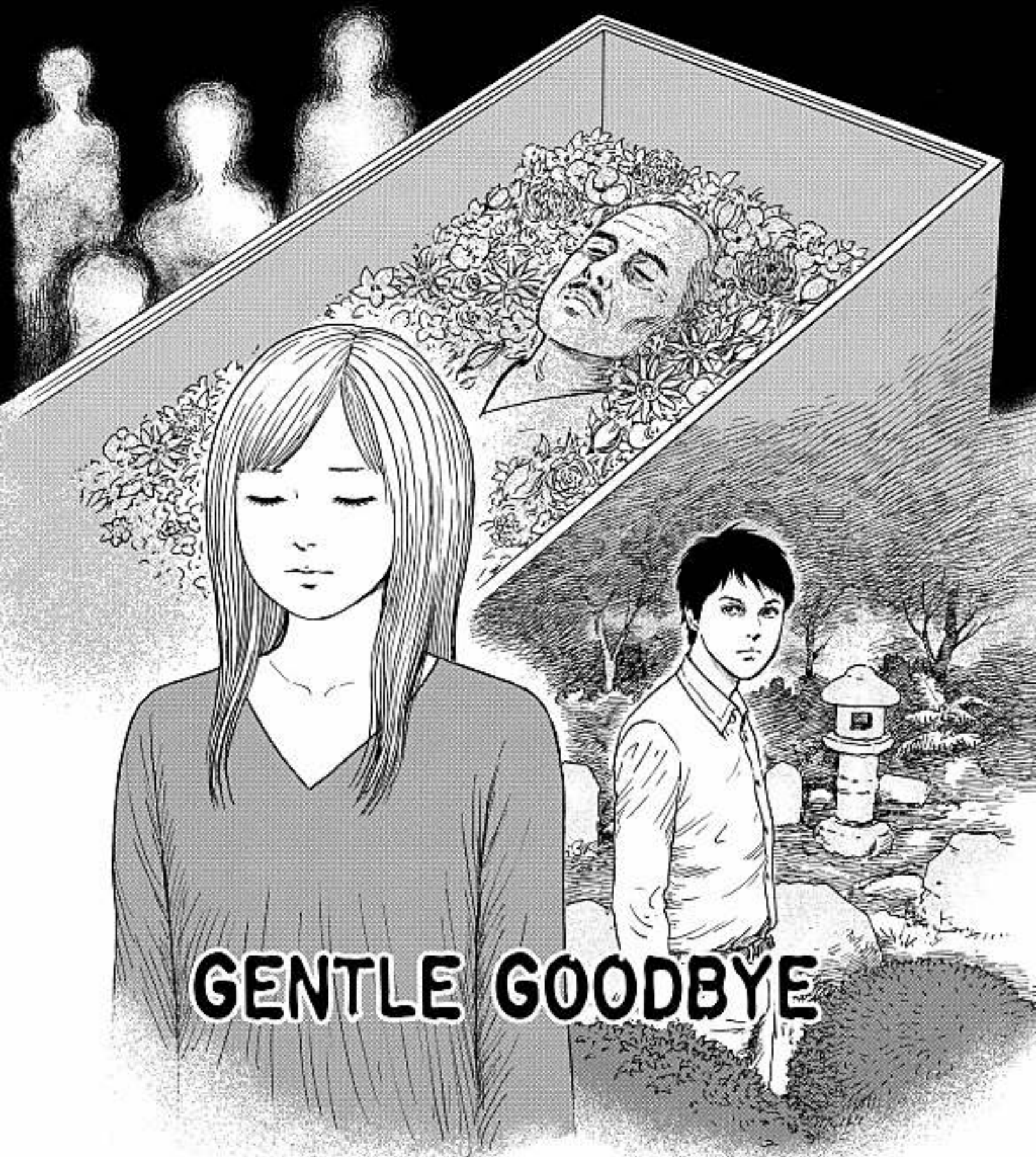












GENTLE GOODBYE

I'VE BEEN
DREAMING OF
MY FATHER
DYING ALL THE
TIME, EVER
SINCE I WAS
LITTLE.

DAAADDYYY,
YOU DIED!

RIKO...

HAVING
LOST MY
MOTHER
EARLY...

THE
SCARIEST
THING IN
THE WORLD
FOR ME
WAS...MY
FATHER'S
DEATH.



EVEN
SO, MY
ANXIETY
DIDN'T
GO AWAY.

YOUR
DADDY'S
NOT GOING
TO DIE,
RIKO.

NYAH NYAH
BAH!



AT FIRST,
I LOVED
IT AND
PLAYED
WITH IT,
BUT...

...IN THE
END, I
LEFT IT
IN THE
DRAWER.

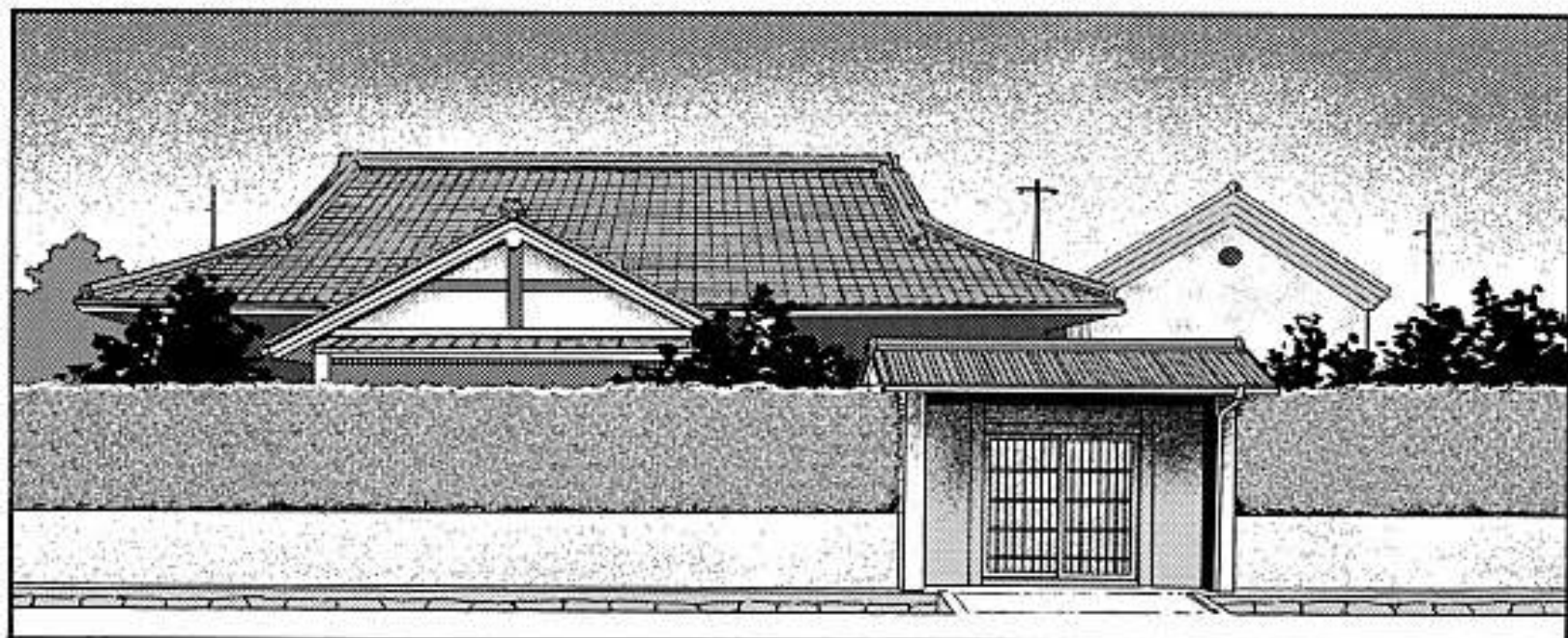
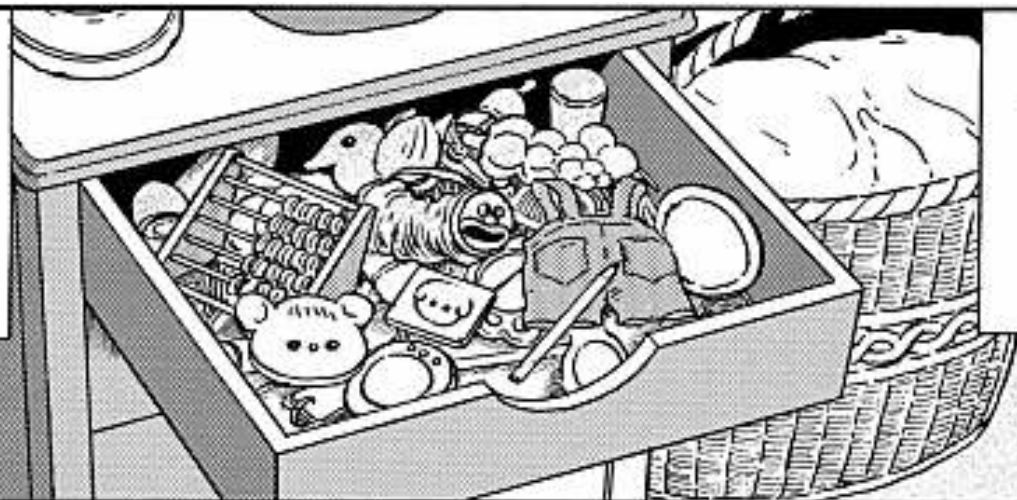
A DREAM
WHERE MY
FATHER
TURNED
INTO A
TOY.

I OFTEN
DREAMED
ANOTHER
DREAM.



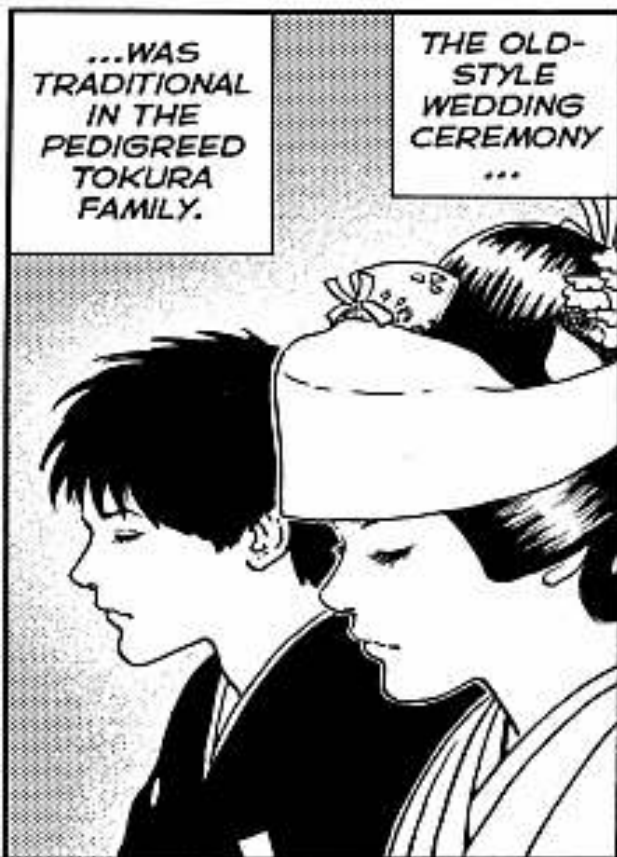
...MY TOY
FATHER
WENT OFF
SOMEWHERE
WITHOUT ME
REALIZING.

AND THEN,
AS THE
LONG
MONTHS
PASSED...



...WAS
TRADITIONAL
IN THE
PEDIGREE
TOKURA
FAMILY.

THE OLD-
STYLE
WEDDING
CEREMONY
...

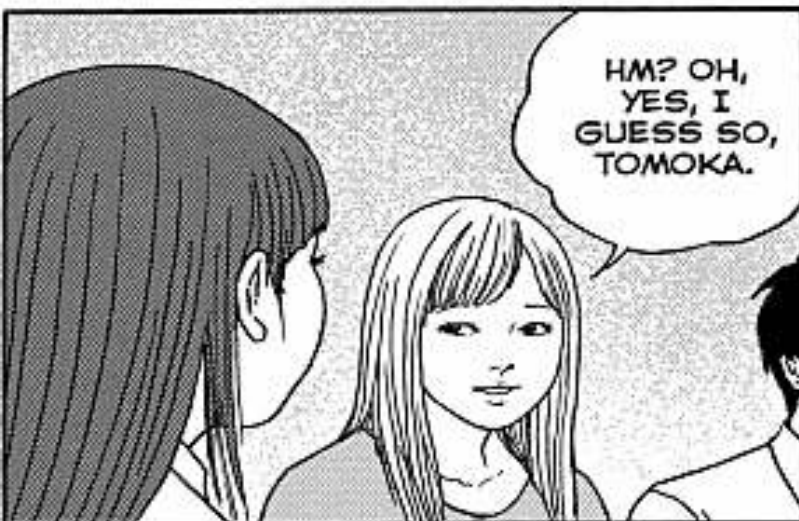
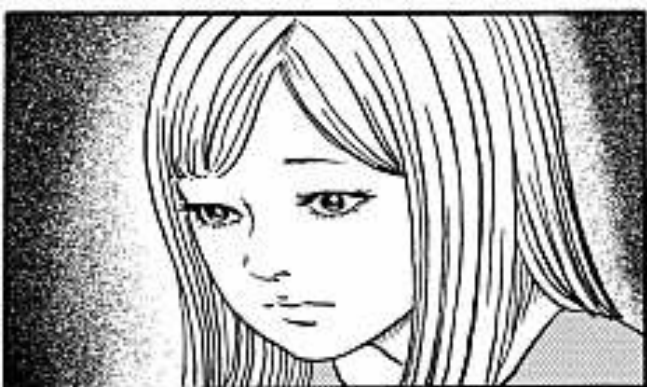
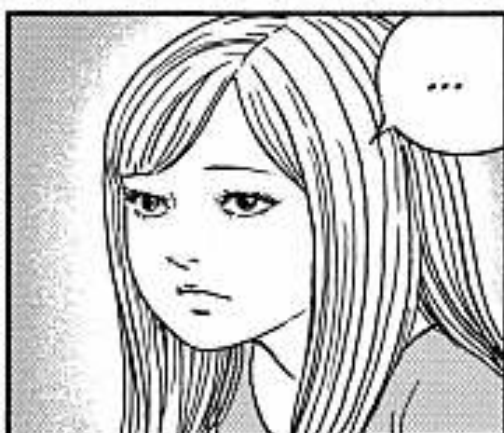


...BUT I
HOPE YOU
WILL GUIDE
ME.

I'M STILL
VERY YOUNG
AND INEXPE-
RIENCED...

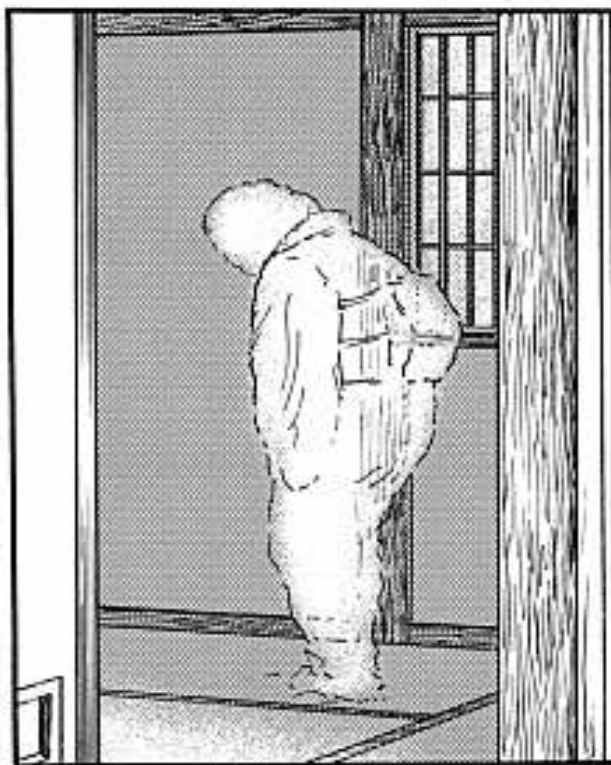
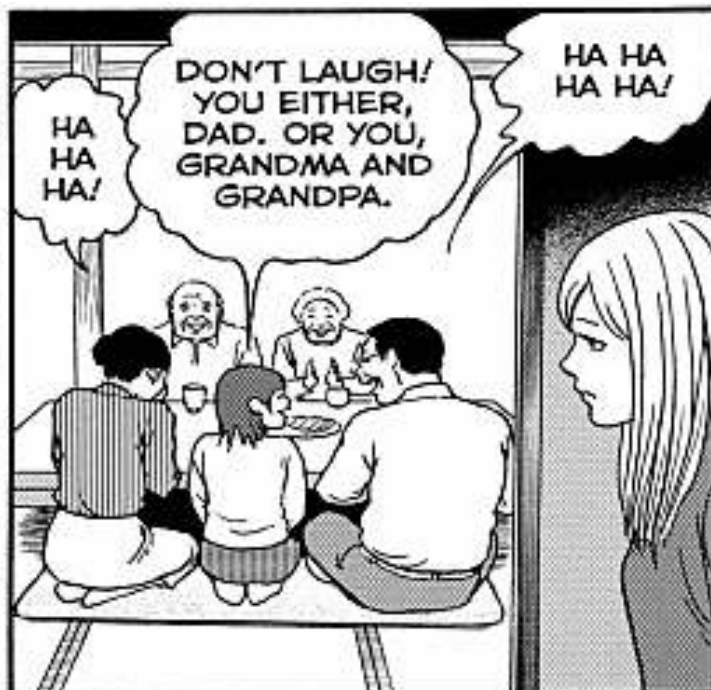
GRANDFATHER,
GRANDMOTHER.

FATHER,
MOTHER.

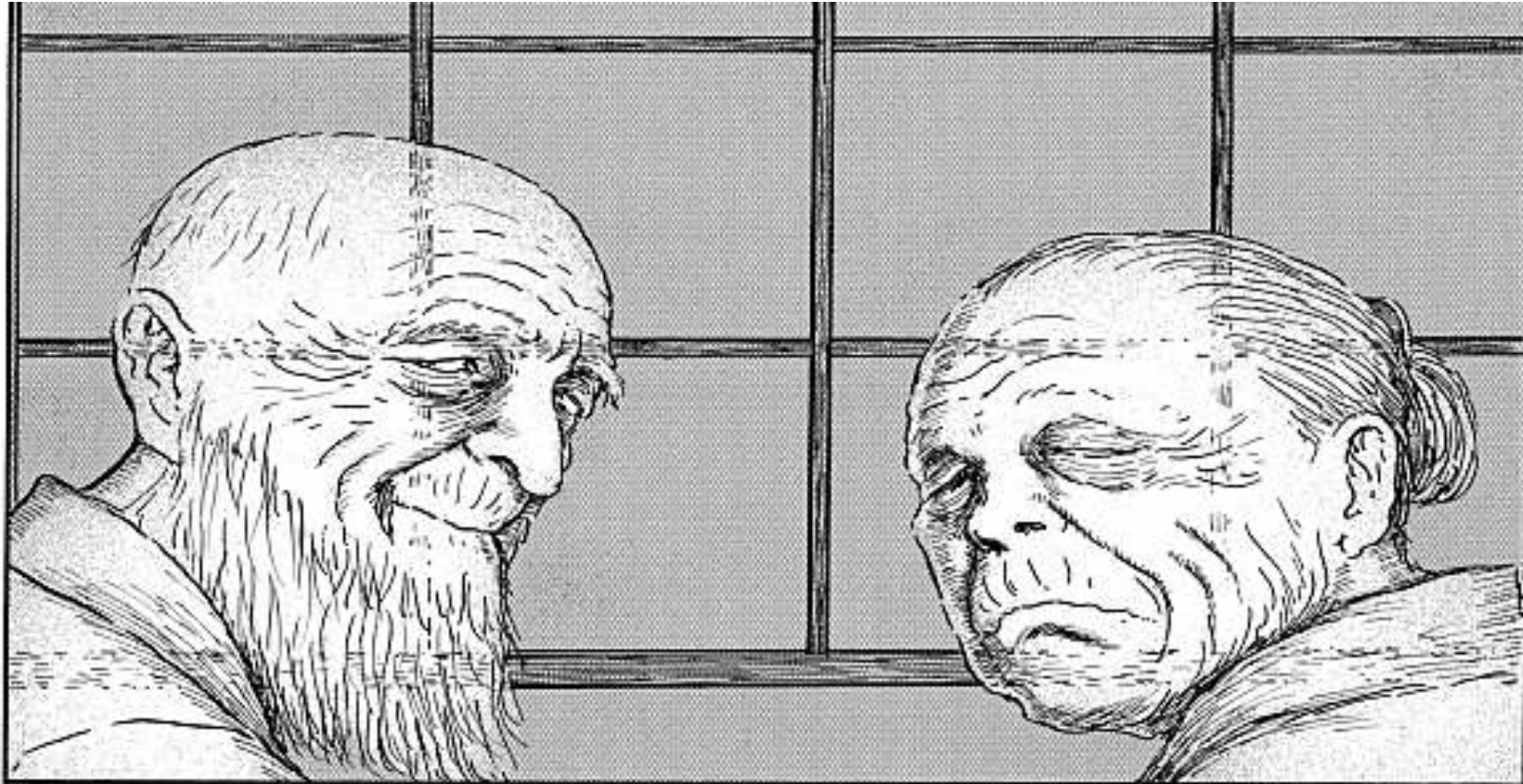












A HUNDRED
AND
TWENTY-
FIVE?!

ONE
HUNDRED
AND
TWENTY-
FIVE.

HOW
OLD IS
SHE?!

YOUR GREAT-
GREAT-
GRANDMOTHER?
SHE'S STILL
ALIVE?!

...IN ADDITION
TO MY GREAT-
GREAT-
GRANDMOTHER,
MY GREAT-AUNT
AND MY GREAT-
UNCLE ARE
ALSO HERE.

AND I
DON'T
THINK
YOU'VE MET
THEM YET,
BUT...

S-SUCH AN
ELDERLY
WOMAN...

TRANSLU-
CENT?!

IF YOU LOOK
FOR THEM,
THOUGH, I
THINK YOU
CAN STILL
FIND THEM.

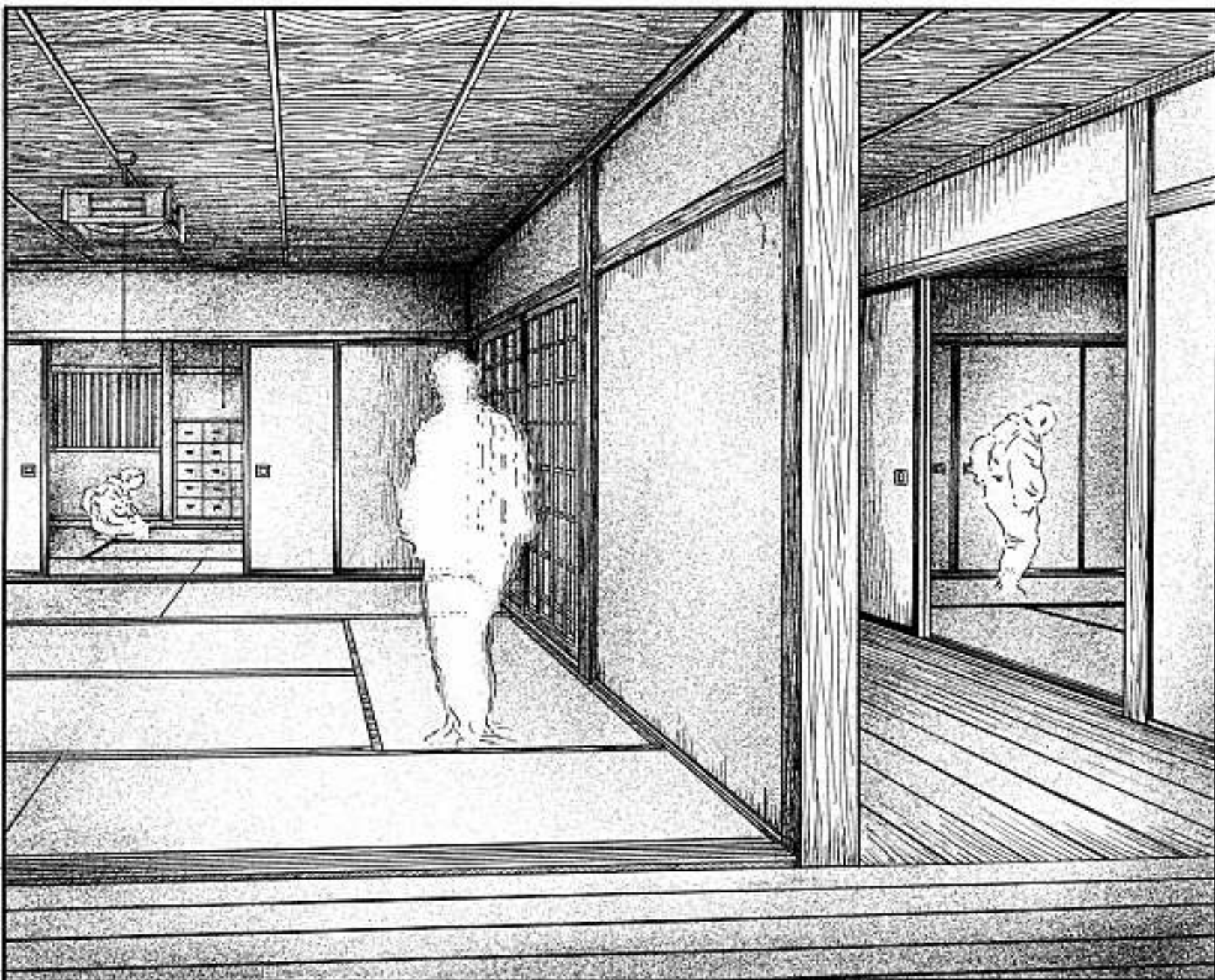
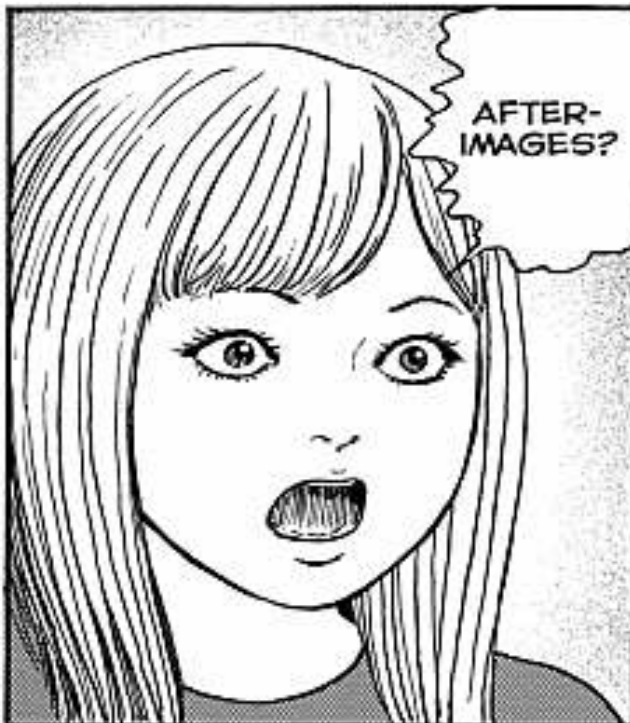
ALTHOUGH
THEY'VE
GOTTEN PRETTY
HAZY NOW;
THEY'RE NEARLY
TRANSLUCENT.

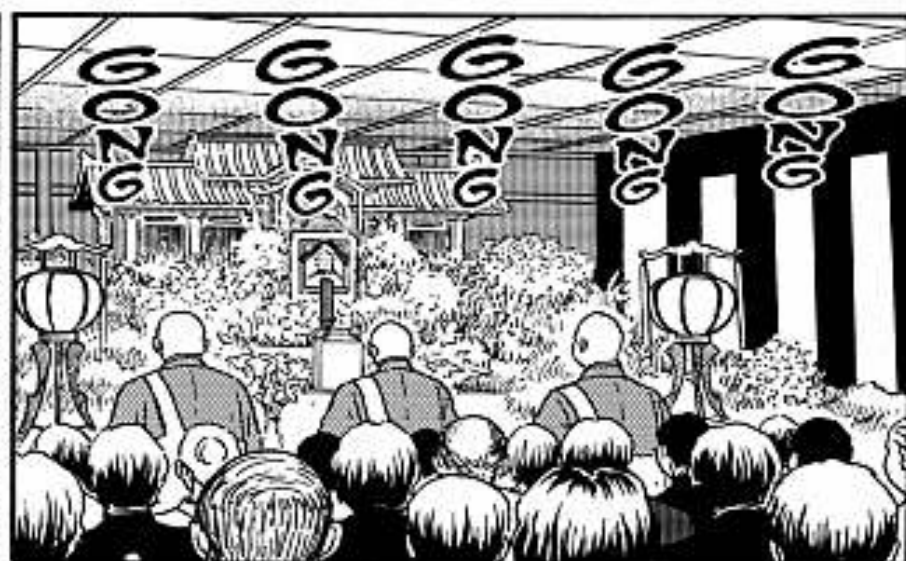
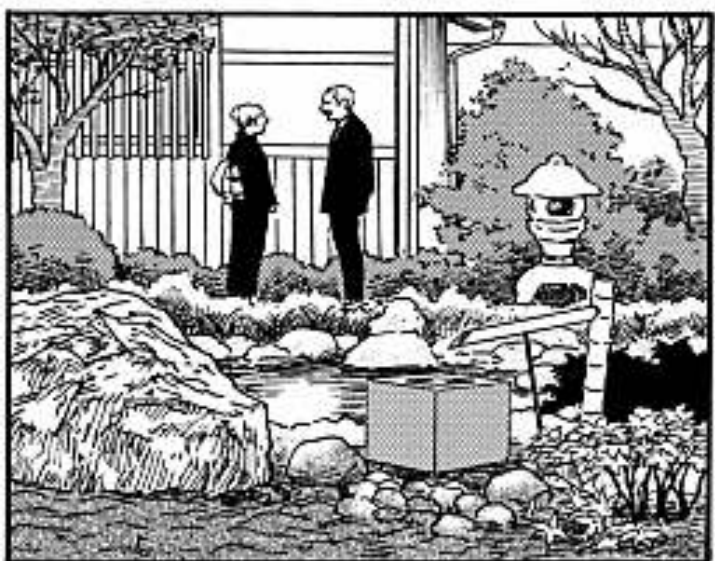
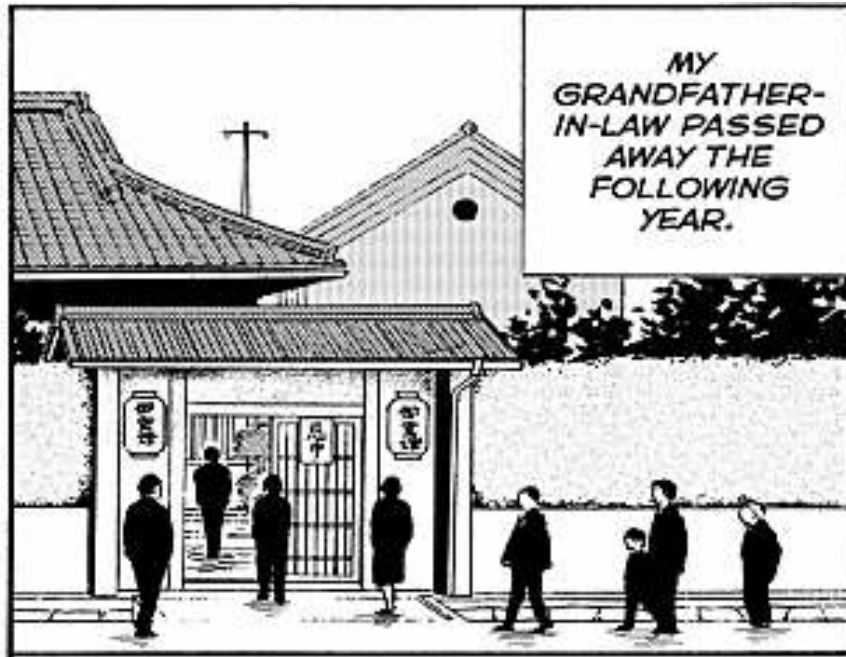
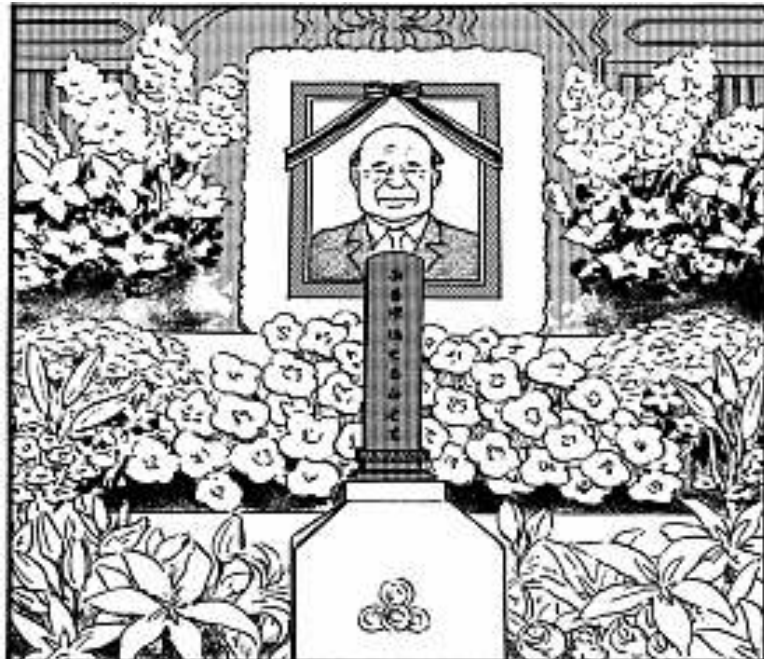
WHY DO
THEY
VANISH?!

WH-WHAT
ARE YOU
TALKING
ABOUT?

...THEY'VE
COM-
PLETELY
VANISHED
NOW.

MY GREAT-
GREAT-
GRANDFATHER
AND HIS
MOTHER ALSO
USED TO BE
HERE, BUT...



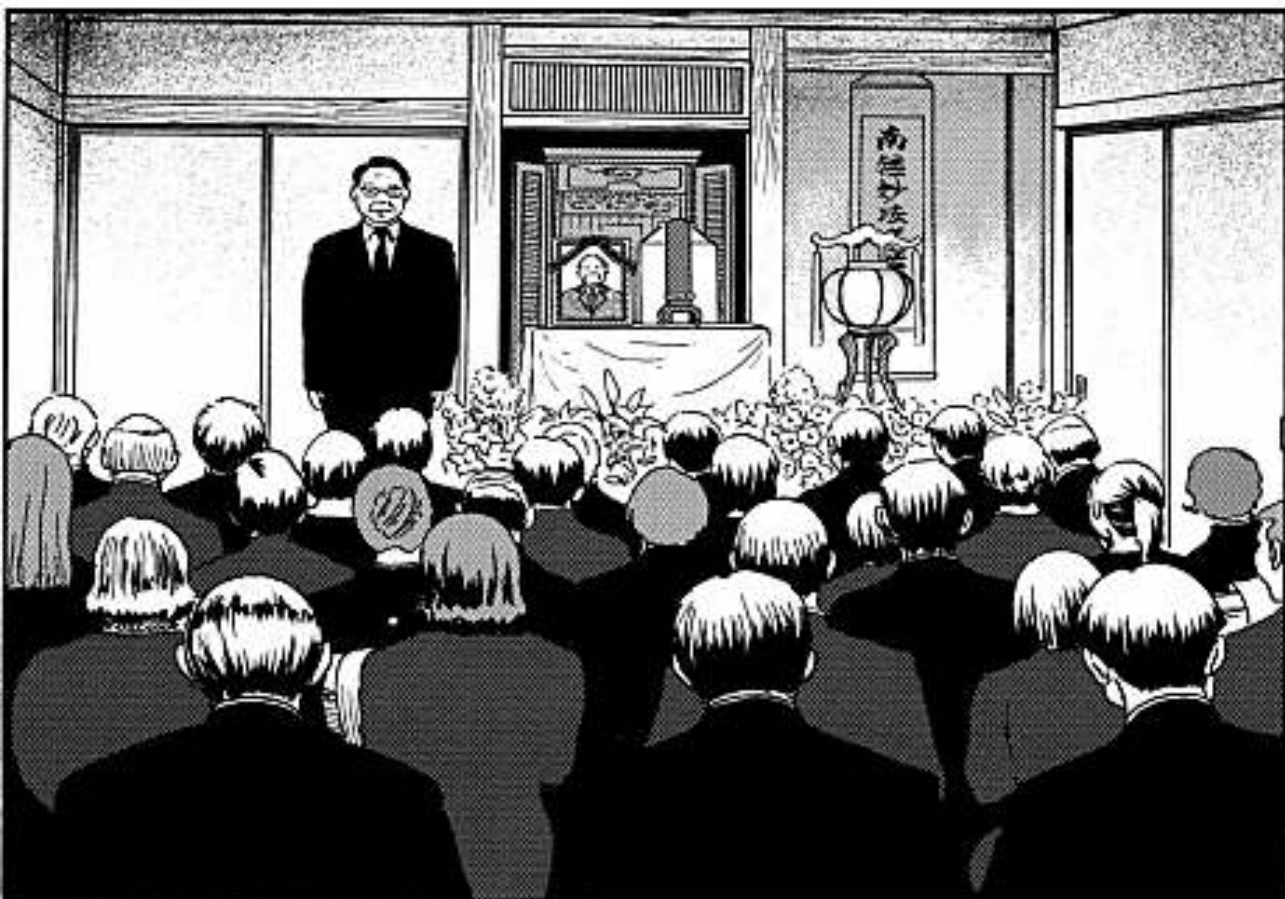
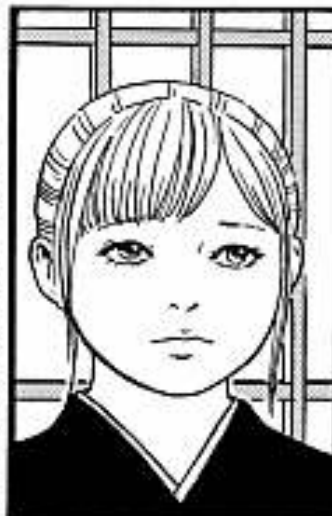


DON'T
WORRY,
FATHER,
I WILL.

WELL THEN,
MAKOTO, PLEASE
TAKE GOOD CARE
OF MY RIKO.



OKAY, RIKO,
THERE'S A
GATHERING OF THE
ENTIRE TOKURA
FAMILY IN THE
LIVING ROOM NOW.



WE'RE
FINALLY
ABOUT
TO
START.

THIS IS
YOUR
FIRST
TIME,
ISN'T IT,
RIKO?

PLEASE PRAY
FERVENTLY,
VERY
FERVENTLY!

EVERYONE!
PLEASE COME
TOGETHER
AND THINK
VERY
STRONGLY
OF RYOZO.

I'D FINALLY
LIKE TO GET
STARTED
NOW.

THE SERVICE
FOR MY
FATHER RYOZO
CONCLUDED
WITHOUT
INCIDENT.

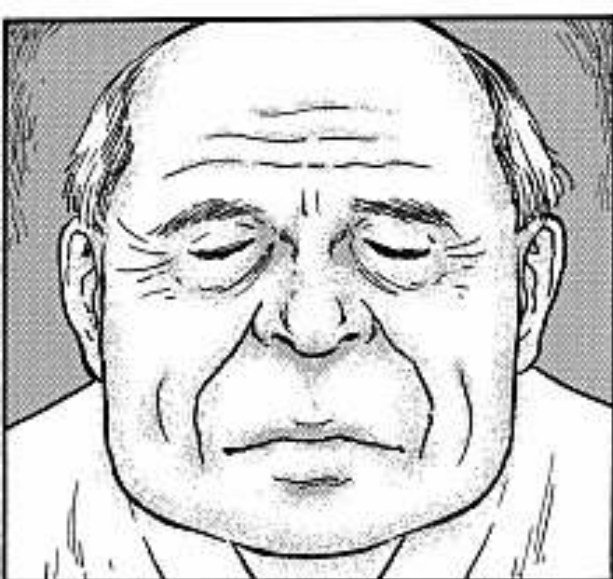
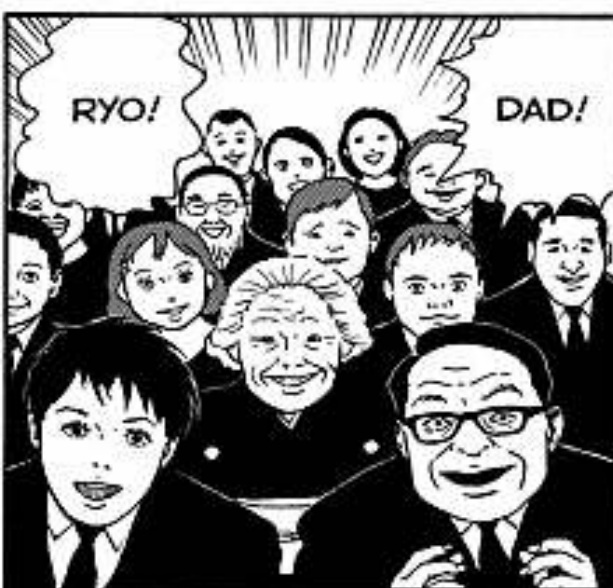
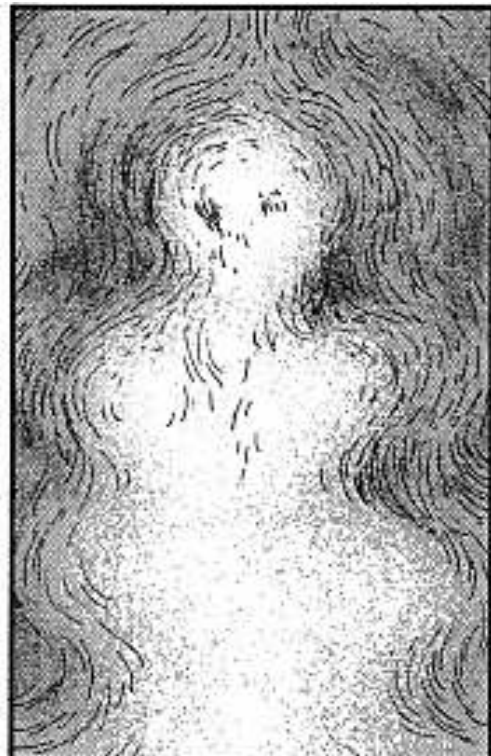
NOW!
EVERYONE!
PRAY
FERVENTLY!
FERVENTLY!!

RYOZO
HAS BEEN
CREMATED,
BUT...

...THE IMAGE
OF RYOZO AS
HE WAS IN LIFE
WILL RETURN
THROUGH THE
PRAYERS OF
HIS KIN!

GRANDPAAA!

DAAAAAD!





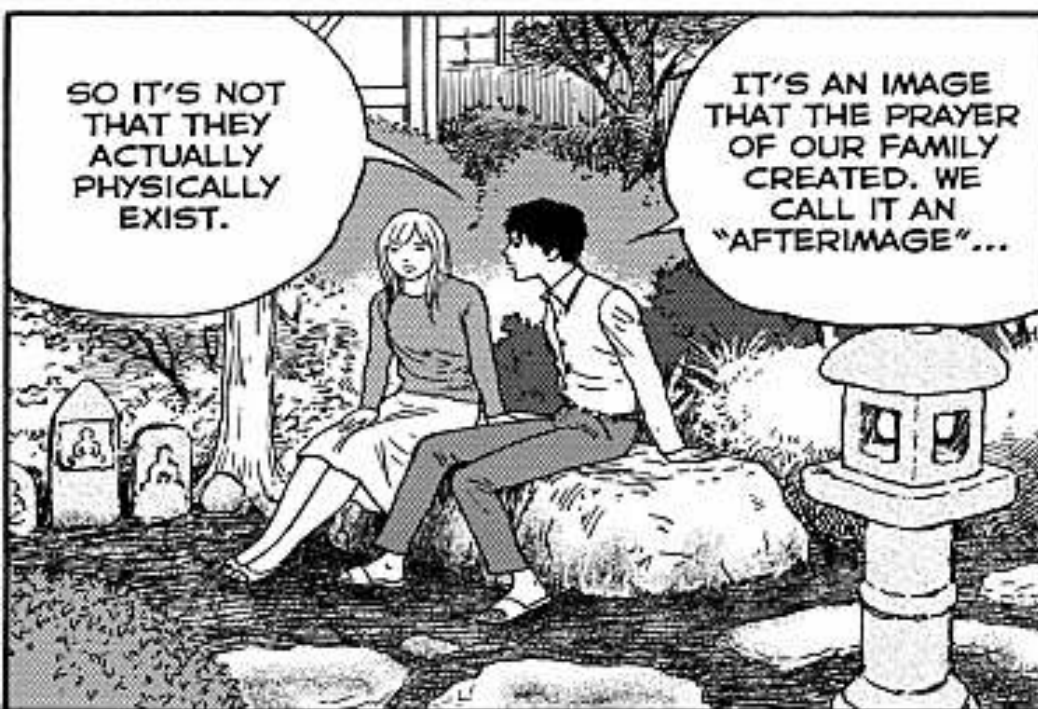
YOU'RE
HERE FOR
US NOW,
RYO.



WELCOME
HOME,
GRANDPA!

DAAAAAD!

SO IT'S NOT
THAT THEY
ACTUALLY
PHYSICALLY
EXIST.



IT'S AN IMAGE
THAT THE PRAYER
OF OUR FAMILY
CREATED. WE
CALL IT AN
"AFTERIMAGE"...

WE TALKED
ABOUT THIS
BEFORE TOO.
GRANDPA
DIDN'T COME
BACK TO LIFE.

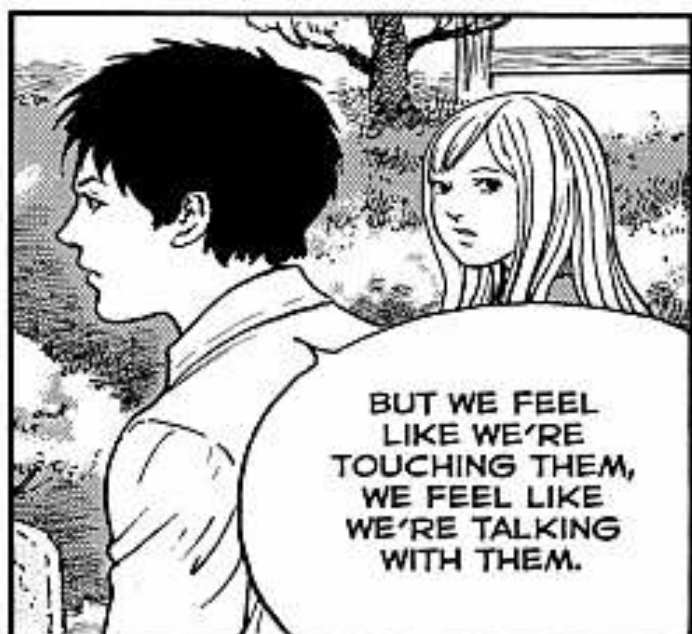


AND IT'S
NOT LIKE
HE TURNED
INTO A
GHOST
EITHER.

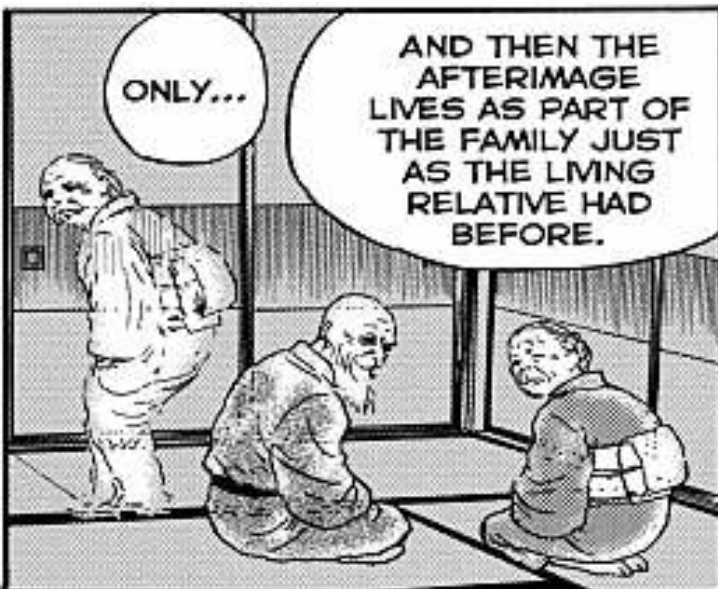


IT'S
PROBABLY
JUST
OUR OWN
DELUSION,
THOUGH.

YOU TALK TO
THEM, BUT
NO ANSWER
EVER COMES
BACK THAT
SURPASSES THE
EXPECTATIONS
OF THE LIVING.

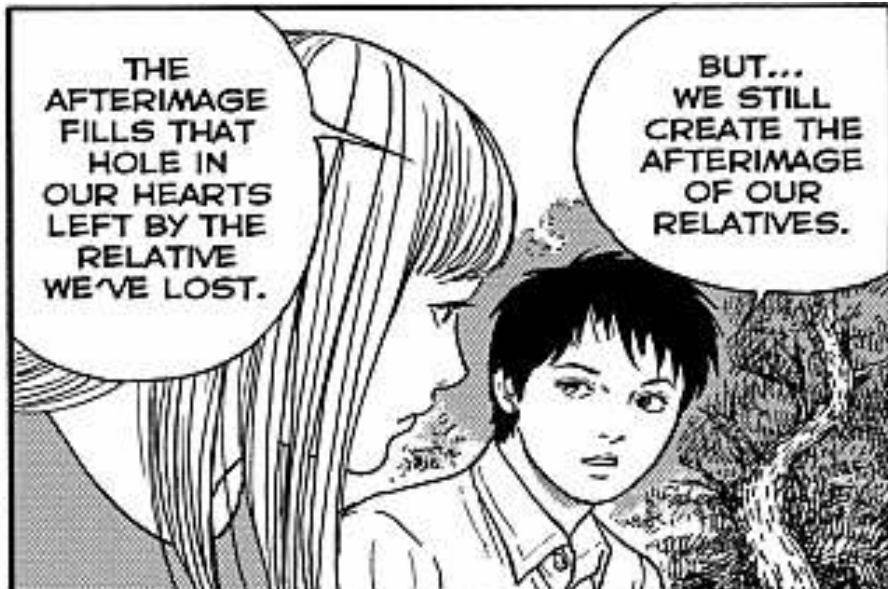


BUT WE FEEL
LIKE WE'RE
TOUCHING THEM,
WE FEEL LIKE
WE'RE TALKING
WITH THEM.



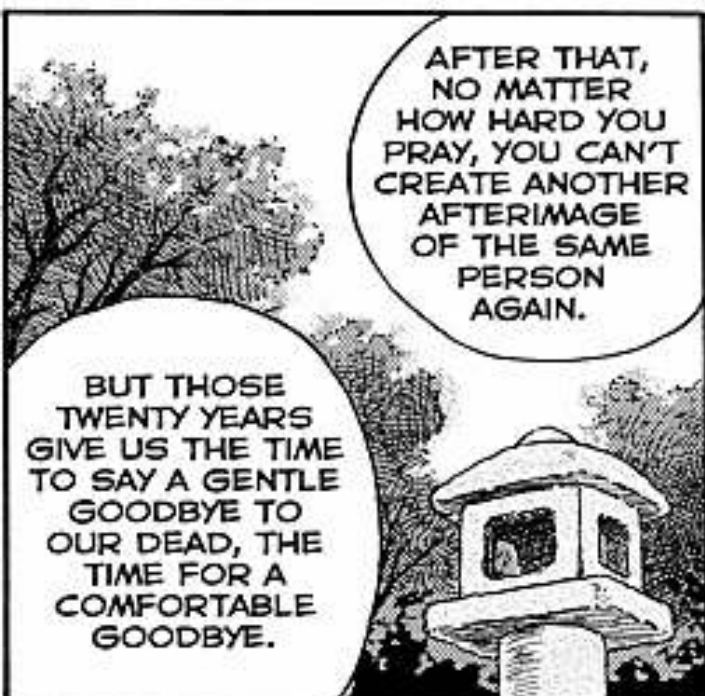
ONLY...

AND THEN THE
AFTERIMAGE
LIVES AS PART OF
THE FAMILY JUST
AS THE LIVING
RELATIVE HAD
BEFORE.



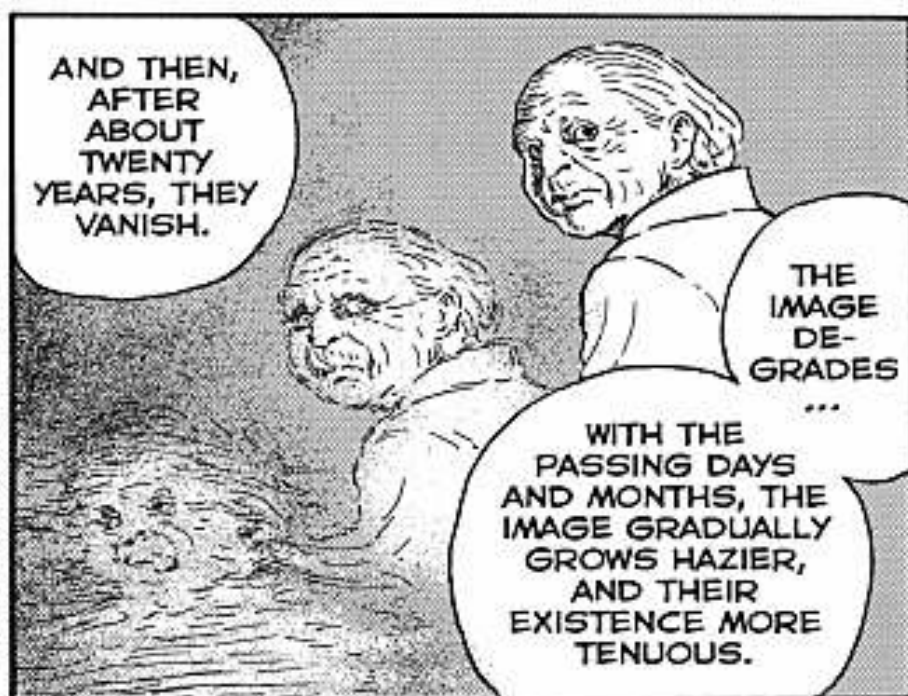
THE
AFTERIMAGE
FILLS THAT
HOLE IN
OUR HEARTS
LEFT BY THE
RELATIVE
WE'VE LOST.

BUT...
WE STILL
CREATE THE
AFTERIMAGE
OF OUR
RELATIVES.



AFTER THAT,
NO MATTER
HOW HARD YOU
PRAY, YOU CAN'T
CREATE ANOTHER
AFTERIMAGE
OF THE SAME
PERSON
AGAIN.

BUT THOSE
TWENTY YEARS
GIVE US THE TIME
TO SAY A GENTLE
GOODBYE TO
OUR DEAD, THE
TIME FOR A
COMFORTABLE
GOODBYE.



AND THEN,
AFTER
ABOUT
TWENTY
YEARS, THEY
VANISH.

THE
IMAGE
DE-
GRADES
...

WITH THE
PASSING DAYS
AND MONTHS, THE
IMAGE GRADUALLY
GROWS HAZIER,
AND THEIR
EXISTENCE MORE
TENUOUS.



THEY'VE HAD
PLENTY OF TIME
FOR THEIR
GOODBYES OVER
THESE TWENTY-
TWO YEARS!



IT'S NEARLY TWENTY-
TWO YEARS SINCE
MY GREAT-GREAT-
GRANDMOTHER BECAME
AN AFTERIMAGE. IF SHE
WERE ALIVE, SHE'D BE A
HUNDRED AND TWENTY-
FIVE... SHE'LL PROBABLY
VANISH SOON.



I DIDN'T FROM THE
START, BUT NOW MY
DAD AND MY GRANDMA
DON'T NEED MY
GREAT-GREAT-
GRANDMOTHER
ANYMORE.



HEY,
MAKOTO
...

CAN I
ASK
YOU A
FAVOR?



...WILL YOU
MAKE HIS
AFTERIMAGE?

WHEN MY
FATHER
DIES IN THE
FUTURE...



I MEAN, YOU
ESPECIALLY
WOULD
NEED THE
AFTERIMAGE
OF YOUR
DAD.

I THOUGHT
YOU MIGHT
ASK THAT.



I'LL TALK
TO MY DAD
TONIGHT. BUT
DON'T GET
YOUR HOPES
TOO HIGH,
OKAY?

...BUT I
CAN'T DO
ANYTHING ALL
BY MYSELF.

TO MAKE THE
AFTERIMAGE,
YOU NEED THE
CONCERTED
EFFORT OF THE
ENTIRE FAMILY.

EXACTLY! WE
SHOULDN'T
EVEN BE
TALKING ABOUT
THIS!

WHY ARE YOU
BRINGING
THIS UP,
MAKOTO?



SISTER.

UNH...
UNH
UNH
UNH.

UNH
UNH
UNH...

I'LL
APOLOGIZE
TO MOTHER
AND FATHER
AGAIN
TOMORROW.

I KNOW.
IT WAS
ME BEING
SELFISH,
TOMOKA.

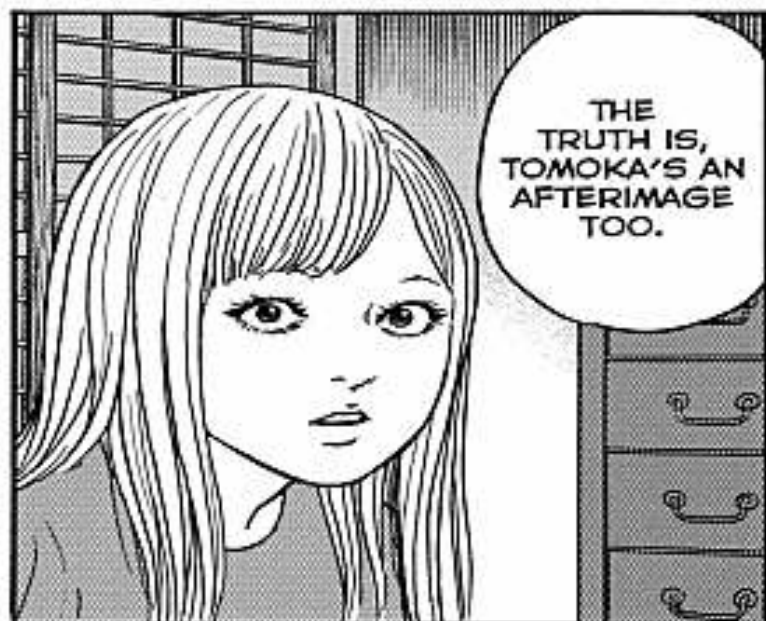
DESPITE ALL
OF THAT,
THEY REALLY
ARE KIND
PEOPLE.

DON'T
THINK
POORLY OF
MOTHER
AND
FATHER.

THANKS.
I LOVE
YOU TOO,
TOMOKA.

THANKS
FOR
ALWAYS
WATCHING
OUT FOR
ME.

WELL, I
MEAN, I
LOVE YOU
AND ALL.



PLEASE
FORGIVE
RIKO.

WHAT,
TOMOKA?

SHE'S
A GOOD
DAUGHTER-
IN-LAW, YOU
KNOW.

HEY,
MOM.

I'M NOT
GONNA
GET
MARRIED.

THAT'S
OKAY,
RIGHT?

MOM...
I LOVE
YOU,
MOM.

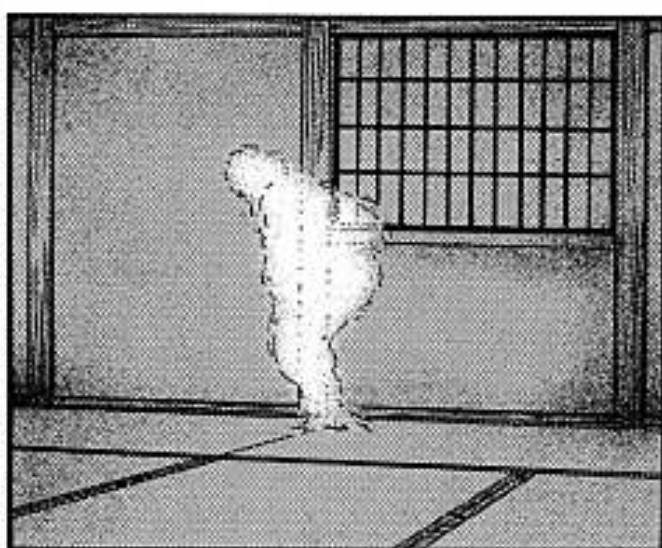
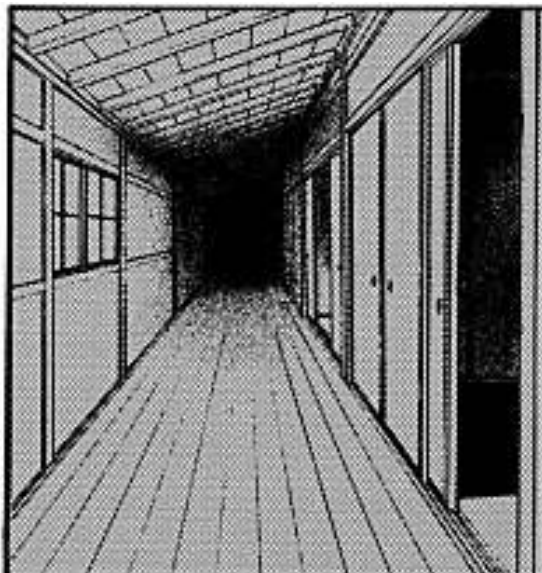
I WISH
I COULD
JUST LIVE
LIKE THIS
WITH YOU.

I KNOW
SHE IS,
BUT,
WELL...

YOU CAN
STAY WITH
YOUR MOM
FOREVER.
DON'T
LEAVE
ME...

MMM,
I THINK
THAT'S
OKAY.

DON'T
DISAP-
PEAR.
PLEASE.



HAVING ALREADY
BEEN THROUGH
SEVERAL
FUNERALS, I
ALSO PRAYED
WITH ALL MY
HEART AS A
MEMBER OF THE
TOKURA FAMILY.

THERE WAS A
FUNERAL THE
OTHER DAY AT A
BRANCH FAMILY,
AND AS A FAMILY,
WE PERFORMED THE
RITUAL OF CALLING
THE AFTERIMAGE.



TIME PASSED AND
GREAT-GREAT-
GRANDMOTHER
DISAPPEARED,
ALONG WITH THE
GREAT-AUNT AND
THE GREAT-UNCLE.

THE GREAT-
GRANDMOTHER
AND GREAT-
GRANDFATHER
ALSO
GRADUALLY
FADED INTO
SOMETHING
LIKE MIST.



A black and white illustration of a waitress with short, wavy hair, wearing a light-colored short-sleeved shirt and a dark apron. She is walking towards the left, carrying a tray with her right hand. On the tray is a bottle and several stacks of plates. The background is a simple, textured grey.

...MY
MOTHER-
AND
FATHER-
IN-LAW
REMAINED
COLD AS
USUAL.

BUT EVEN THOUGH EIGHT YEARS HAVE PASSED SINCE WE GOT MARRIED...

I JUST WANTED TO SEE YOU NOW.

HMM? DIDN'T I SAY TO MEET AT THE STATION?

HMM?
DIDN'T
I SAY
TO MEET
AT THE
STATION?

AND OF COURSE FOR MY HUSBAND
...

HONEY!
YOUR LUNCH!

AND OF COURSE FOR MY HUSBAND
...

HONEY!
YOUR LUNCH!





HAVE
YOU TWO
GOTTEN
CLOSE?

THE
WOMAN
THIS
MORNING...
THAT WAS
MS. MORI
FROM YOUR
OFFICE,
WASN'T
IT?



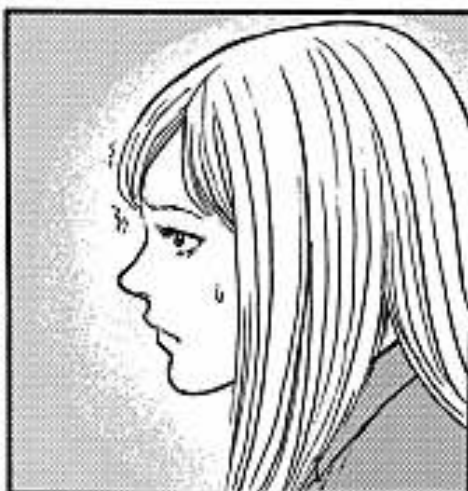
HONEY.

I NEED
TO TALK
TO YOU.



WHAT
ARE YOU
PLANNING
TO DO?

SO...



YEAH...

...



THERE'S
NO WAY
YOU'RE
LEAVING
ME!!

N-NO!
I—



I'M
GOING
TO
MARRY
HER AT
SOME
POINT.

WHAT
AM I
PLANNING
TO DO...



WHAT
DID YOU
SAY?!

WH...

YOU'RE
TALKING
NONSENSE!

WHAT ARE
YOU TALKING
ABOUT? HOW
CAN YOU
MARRY HER
WITHOUT
LEAVING ME?

I'M
MARRIED
TO YOU
FOR LIFE.
I HAVE A
RESPON-
SIBILITY.

RIKO,
DON'T
WORRY...
I'M NOT
GOING
TO LEAVE
YOU OR
ANYTHING.

I SAID
DON'T!

AAH!

GIVE ME
YOUR
CELL
PHONE!

DON'T!

I'M GOING
TO GO
AND TALK
WITH HER
MYSELF!

I-I'M
SORRY,
RIKO...

I'M
SORRY
FOR NOT
TELLING
YOU
BEFORE
NOW...

I'M
SORRY
...

WHAT?



YOU WERE
IN A CAR
ACCIDENT.

TEN YEARS
AGO...
RIGHT
BEFORE
WE GOT
MARRIED.

THE DAY
BEFORE
THE
ENGAGE-
MENT
CEREMONY
...

YOU DIED
IMMEDI-
ATELY.

TO PLEASE
CREATE YOUR
AFTERIMAGE!

I BEGGED
MY FATHER.

IT WAS JUST SO
INCREDIBLY SAD...
I GOT SPECIAL
PERMISSION.

AND SO
WE GOT
MARRIED...

OF COURSE
HE SAID NO.
BUT I WENT
AROUND AND
BOWED MY
HEAD TO EACH
MEMBER OF
THE TOKURA
FAMILY.

STUCK
IN THERE
BEHIND THE
TOMBSTONE
SHOULD
BE YOUR
OWN NAME
TABLET.

IKEDA
FAMILY
TOMB

IF YOU
THINK
I'M LYING,
THEN GO
AND TAKE
A LOOK
AT YOUR
FAMILY
TOMB.

YOU'RE
LYING...

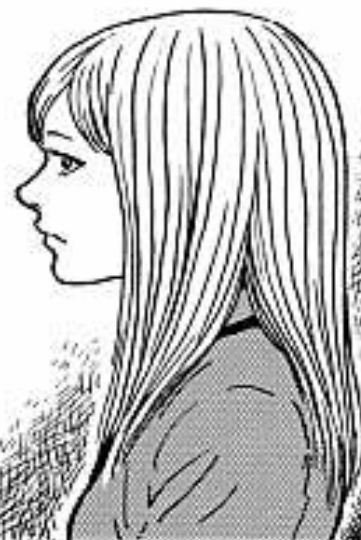
YOU'RE
LYING...

I...

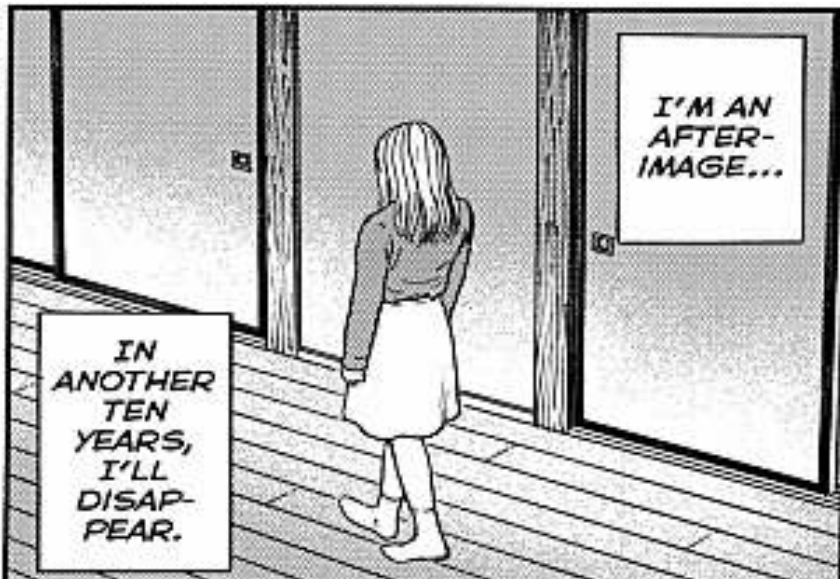
SO
THEN...

YES...
YOU'RE...

...AN
AFTER-
IMAGE.



I FELT
STRANGELY
LIGHT
WHEN I
THOUGHT
ABOUT IT.



I'M AN
AFTER-
IMAGE...

IN
ANOTHER
TEN
YEARS,
I'LL
DISAP-
PEAR.



SISTER!



THE NEXT
DAY, I
LEFT THE
TOKURA
HOUSE.

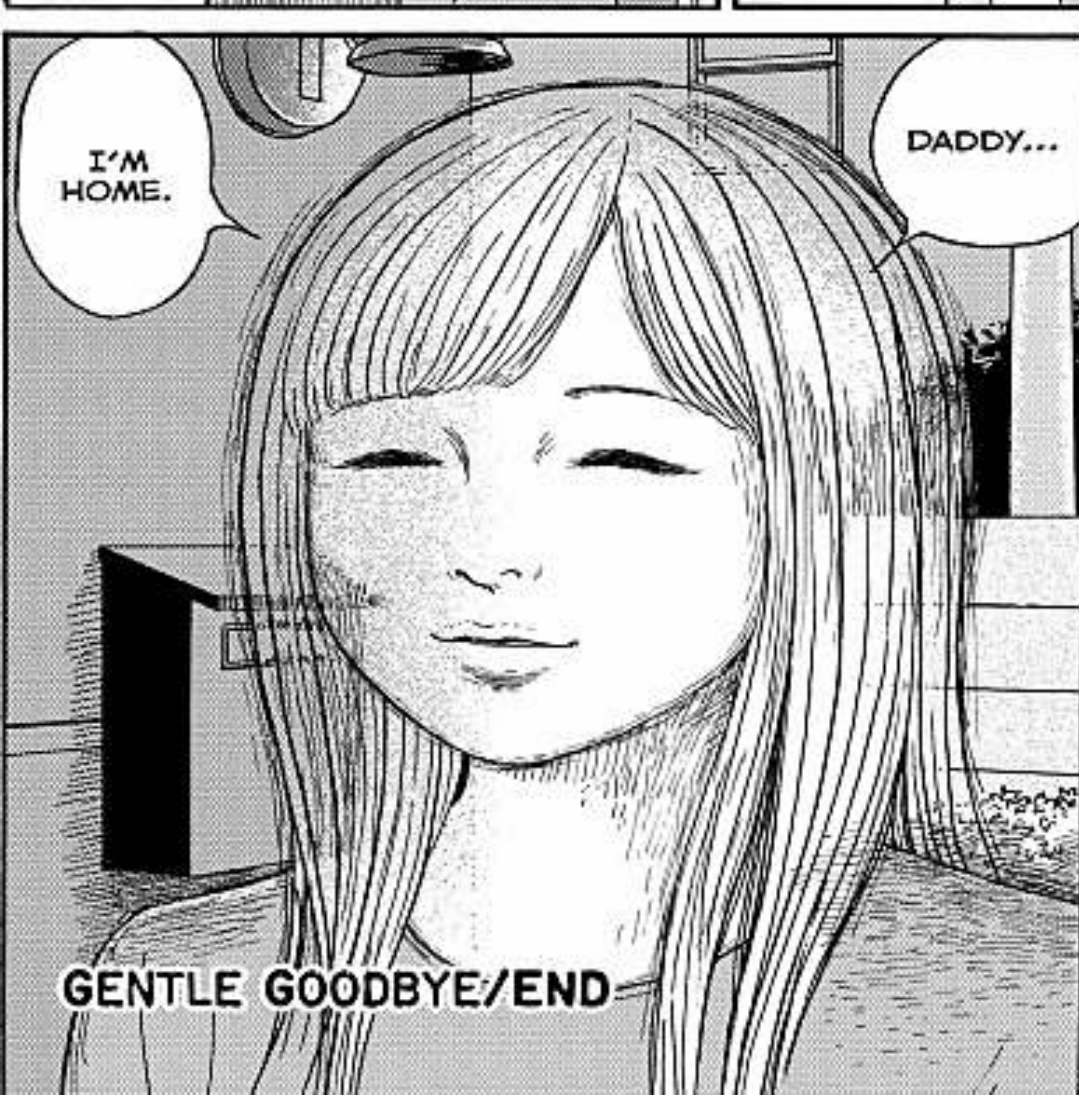
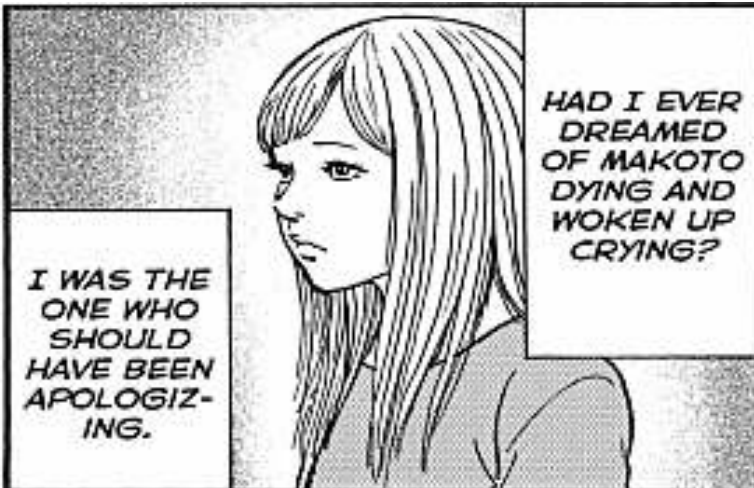


I BOWED
OVER AND
OVER AND
SAID MY
GOODBYE TO
MY SISTER-
IN-LAW.

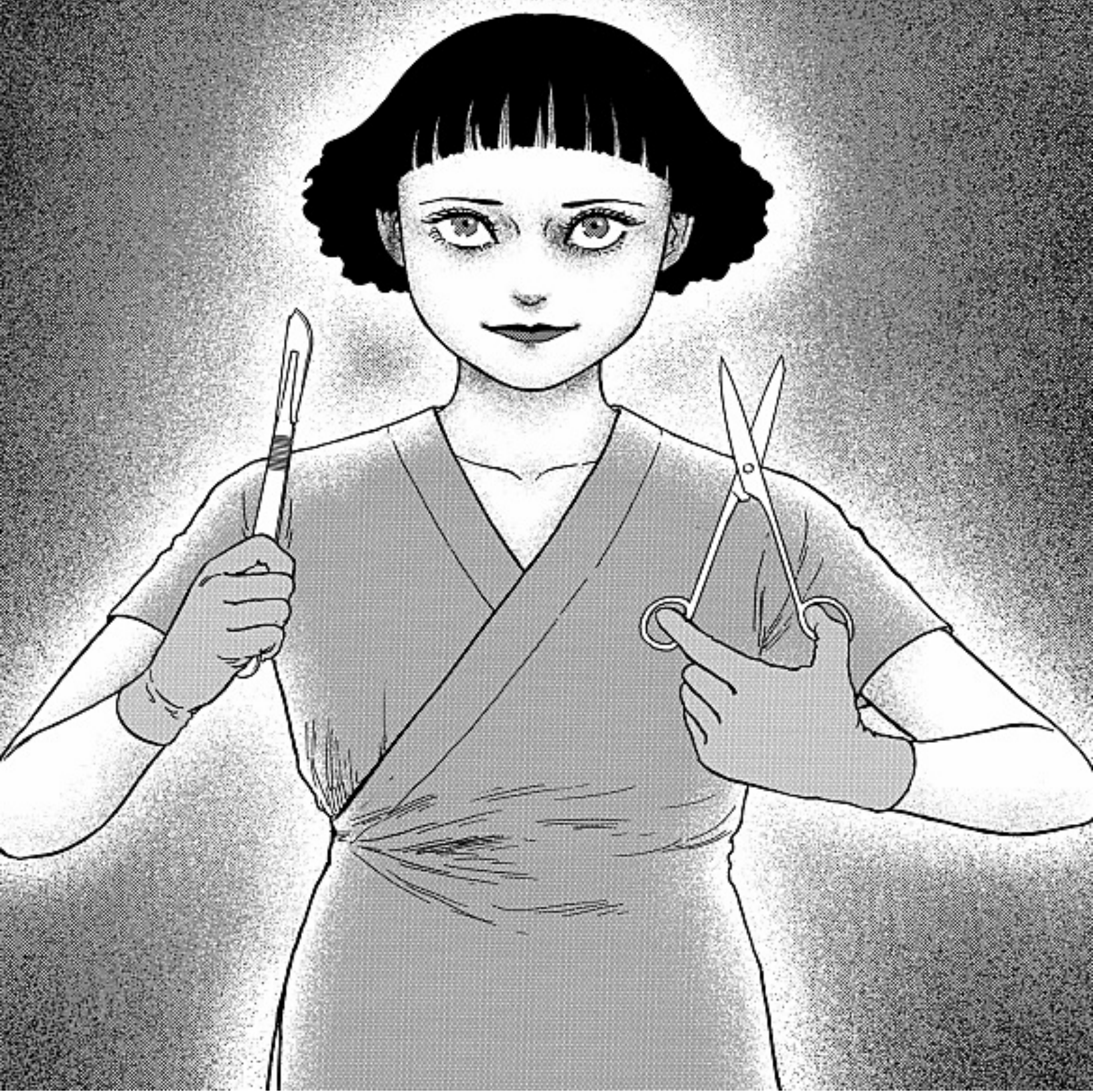


SISTER...

WHERE
ARE
YOU
GOING?



DISSECTION-CHAN



DISSECTION ROOM

NOW THEN,
YOU MEDICAL
STUDENTS WILL
START YOUR
DISSECTION
TRAINING
TODAY.

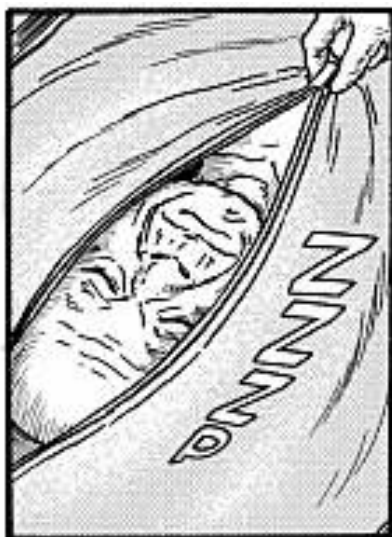
CHUO MEDICAL UNIVERSITY

AS STUDENTS OF
MEDICINE, YOU
MUST BURN THE
STRUCTURE OF THE
HUMAN BODY INTO
YOUR BRAINS.

OVER THE
NEXT THREE
MONTHS, YOU
WILL WORK IN
GROUPS OF
FOUR WITH
ONE CADAVER
FOR EACH
GROUP.

PRAY!

FIRST OF ALL,
A MOMENT OF
SILENT PRAYER
FOR THESE NOBLE
CADAVERS.



PLEASE
TAKE
OUT THE
CADAVERS.

...NOW,
LET'S
BEGIN.



RIGHT
...

HEY,
TATSURO!
YOU OPEN
IT...



AND HER
COLOR'S
REALLY
GOOD?

ALMOST
LIKE
SHE'S
ALIVE,
HUH?



THIS
DONOR'S
PRETTY
YOUNG.

SHE'S
REALLY
CUTE!



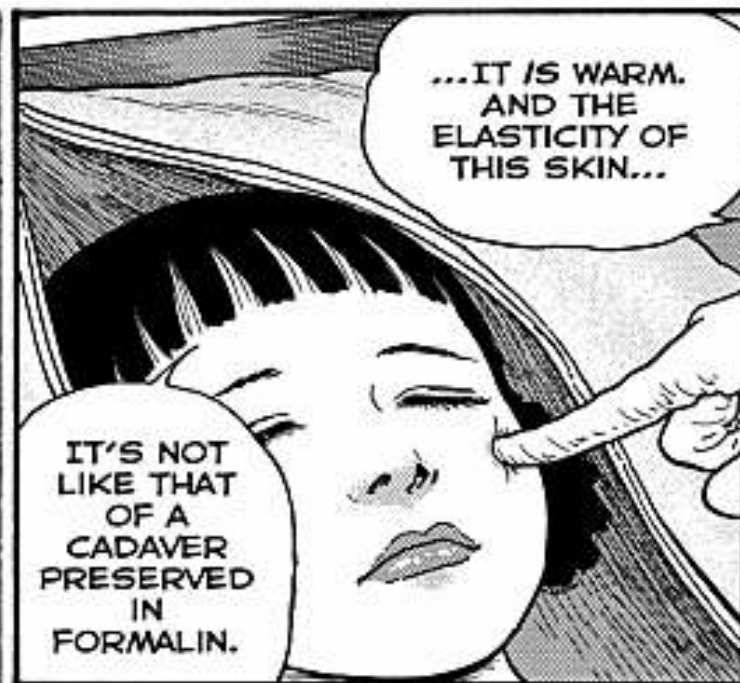


BUT...
THE BODY
TEMPERA-
TURE —



PROFESSOR?
THIS DONOR
BODY IS STILL
ALIVE!

WHAT?
DON'T BE
RIDICULOUS!



...IT IS WARM.
AND THE
ELASTICITY OF
THIS SKIN...

IT'S NOT
LIKE THAT
OF A
CADAVER
PRESERVED
IN
FORMALIN.



HMM...

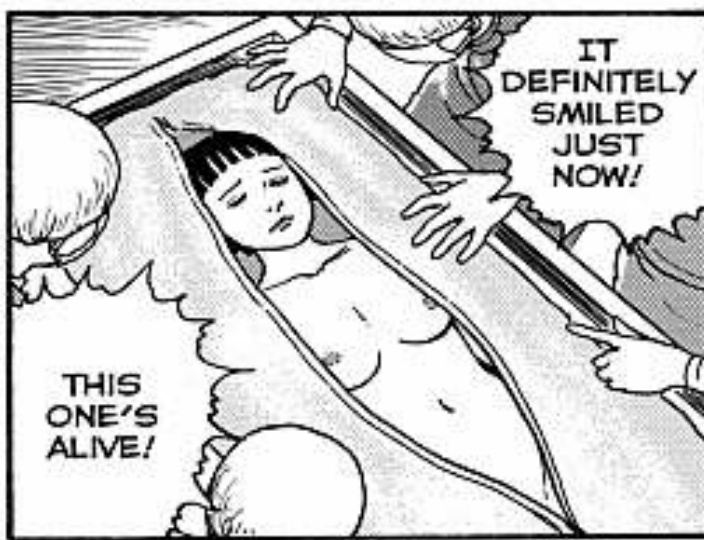


HEY, YOU!
OPEN
YOUR
EYES!

HEY!

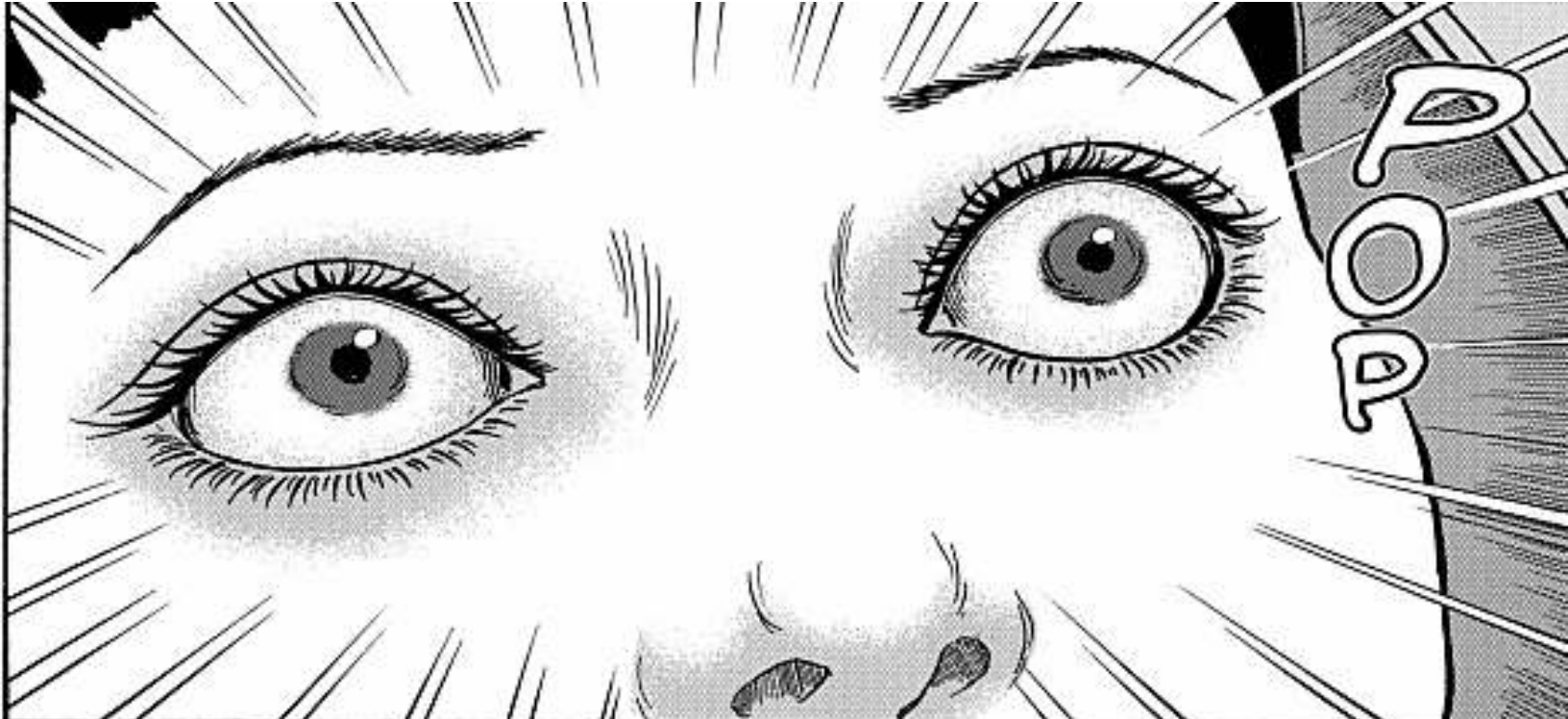


HM?!



IT
DEFINITELY
SMILED
JUST
NOW!

THIS
ONE'S
ALIVE!



WHAT—? WHO
ARE YOU?!
WHAT ARE
YOU DOING
HERE?!

HOW
DID YOU
GET IN
WITH THE
CADAVERS?



HOW
DID YOU
FIGURE IT
OUT?



WHAT?!

WH—



I WANT
TO BE
DISSECTED!

WELL, THIS IS
WHERE YOU
COME TO BE
DISSECTED,
RIGHT?





NEW
KIND OF
PERVERT,
I GUESS.

DEFINITELY
NOT SANE.



HEY, YOU HEAR?
THAT WOMAN
SHOWED UP
AT ANOTHER
MEDICAL
SCHOOL,
PRETENDING TO
BE A CORPSE!

APPAR-
ENTLY,
SHE WAS
SHOUTING,
"DISSECT
ME."



WE DID SEE
HER WITH OUR
OWN EYES,
THOUGH.

SHE'S
ALREADY
AN URBAN
LEGEND.



I HEARD
SHE'S
SHOWING
UP ON
STREET
CORNERS
TOO.

SHE
ACCOSTS
PASSERS-
BY AND
DEMANDS
THEY
DISSECT
HER.



THAT WOMAN...
THE MORE I
THINK ABOUT
HER, THE MORE
I'M SURE I
KNOW THAT
FACE...

IT'S
DEFINITELY
RURIKO
TAMIYA!



RIGHT,
TATSURO?

HUH? ...
RIGHT.



OH...
NAH, IT'S
NOTHING.

WHAT
ARE YOU
SPACING
OUT
ABOUT?



DOCTOR?



LET'S PLAY
DOCTOR.

HEY,
TATSURO.



YEAH.
MY DAD
TOLD ME
TO BE A
DOCTOR.



I MEAN, WHEN
YOU GROW
UP, YOU'RE
GONNA BE
A DOCTOR,
RIGHT?



LET'S
TAKE A
LOOK.

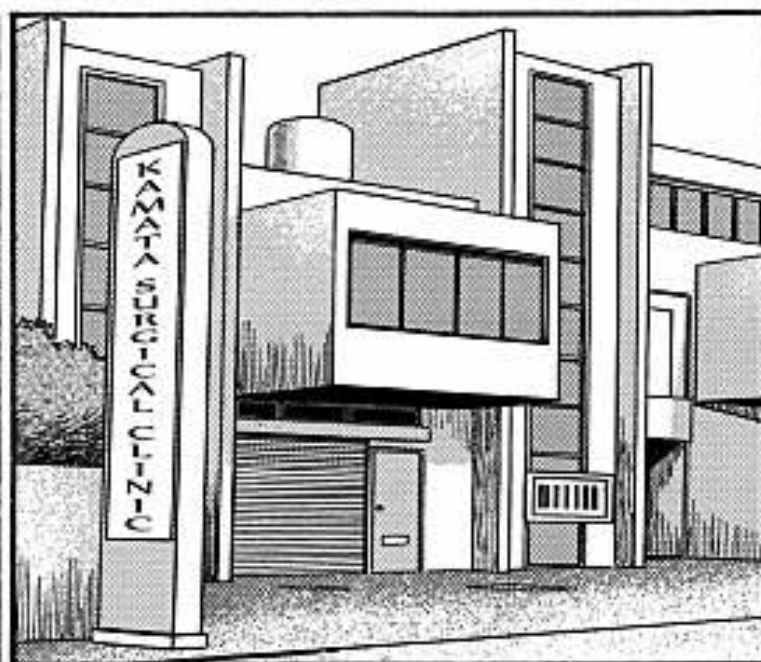
DOCTOR,
MY
STOMACH
HURTS.

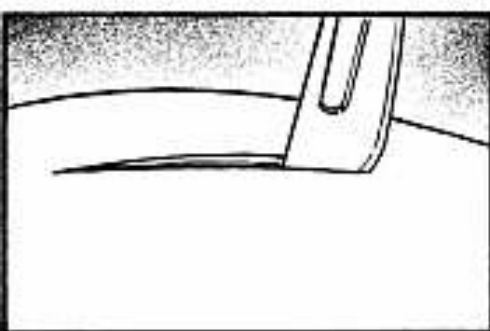
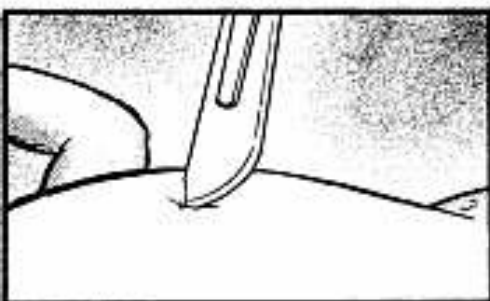


MY DAD
GAVE IT
TO ME.

THAT'S
REAL,
ISN'T IT?
WOW!



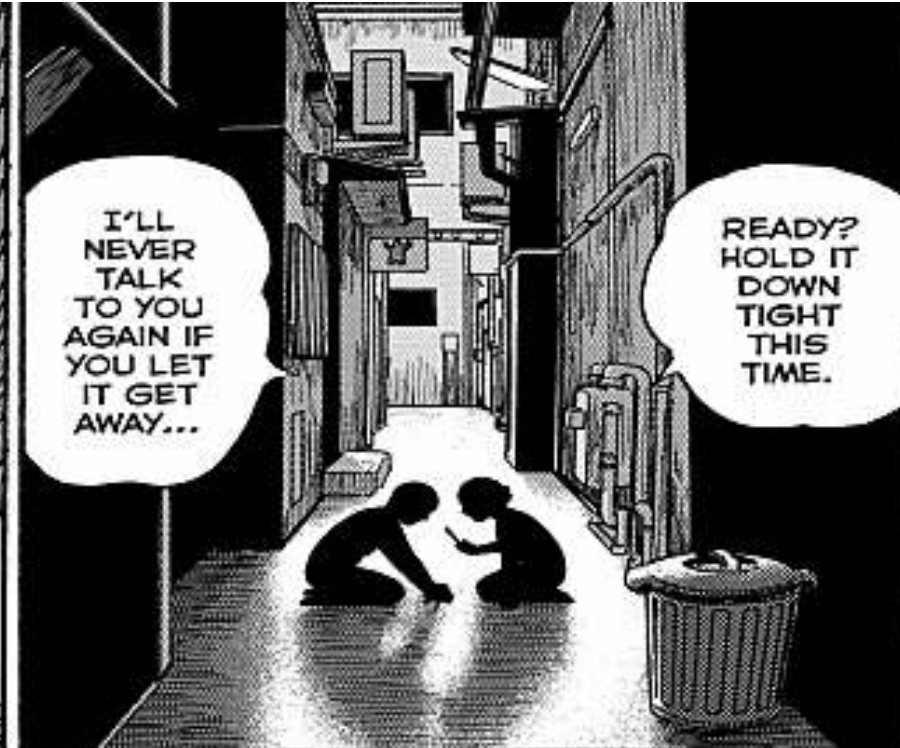








HNGAAH!



I'LL NEVER TALK TO YOU AGAIN IF YOU LET IT GET AWAY...

READY? HOLD IT DOWN TIGHT THIS TIME.



YOU DO SERIOUSLY SICK THINGS!

YOU GUYS DISSECTED A HAMSTER, RIGHT?



HEY, TATSURO! WHAT ARE YOU AND RURIKO ALWAYS SNEAKING ABOUT?

WE SAW YOU, YOU KNOW.



AND YOU'RE "DISSECTION-KUN"! HAAAH!

EVERYONE'S TALKING ABOUT IT AT SCHOOL! THEY'RE CALLING RURIKO "DISSECTION-CHAN"!



RURIKO'S THE ONE WHO DISSECTS THEM!

I-I DON'T!



YOU'RE IN IT WITH HER.

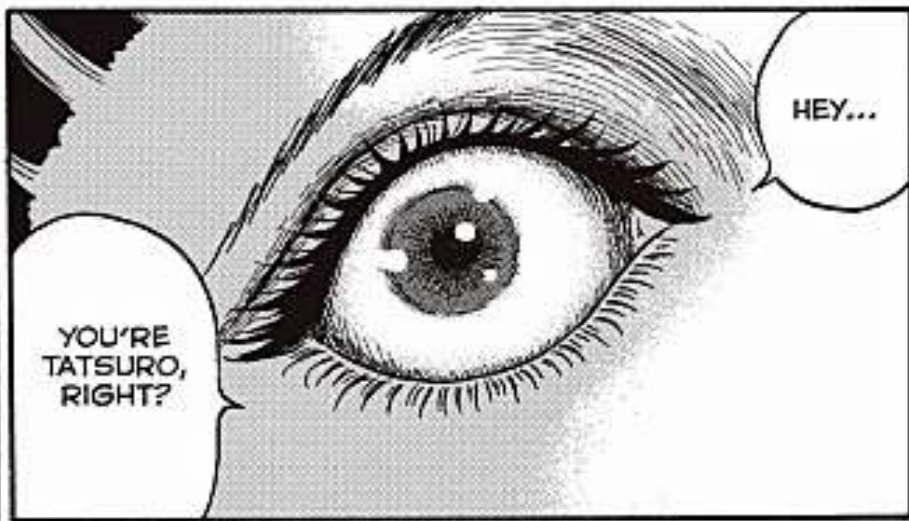
BUT YOU HOLD 'EM DOWN.













I MEAN, THAT TIME, MY STOMACH REALLY DID HURT. I WAS SUFFERING AND YOU DIDN'T HELP ME.

BUT I THINK YOU WERE A LITTLE TERRIBLE TOO...



I MEAN, YOU SWITCHED SCHOOLS RIGHT AFTER THAT.

I DID A SERIOUSLY TERRIBLE THING TO YOU...I'VE ALWAYS WANTED TO APOLOGIZE.



...I'VE STARTED THINKING THAT RATHER THAN DISSECTING, I'D LIKE TO BE DISSECTED.

BUT AFTER A WHILE, I GOT TIRED OF DISSECTING THINGS. IT WASN'T ENOUGH, AND NOW...



ALTHOUGH I DIDN'T STOP DISSECTING THINGS.

I GOT A LOT OF STOMACH ACHES AFTER THAT. MY CHILDHOOD WAS REALLY HARD.



AAAAAH! I GET TURNED ON JUST IMAGINING IT!

BEING DISSECTED... DON'T YOU THINK IT'S SO MUCH MORE EXCITING THAN DISSECTING?



AND
TO BE
DISSECTED
BY MY
FIRST
LOVE!



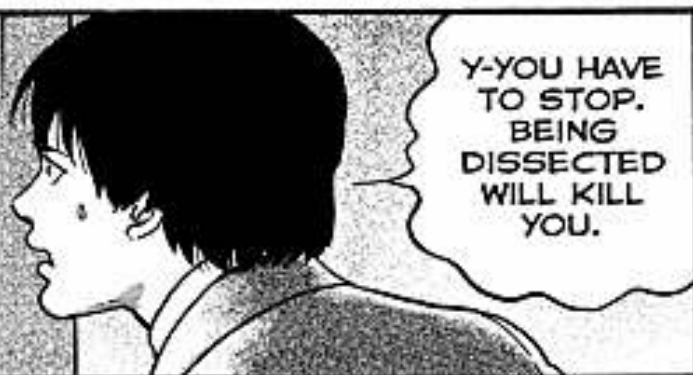
AAH!
NOW I'M
EXCITED!



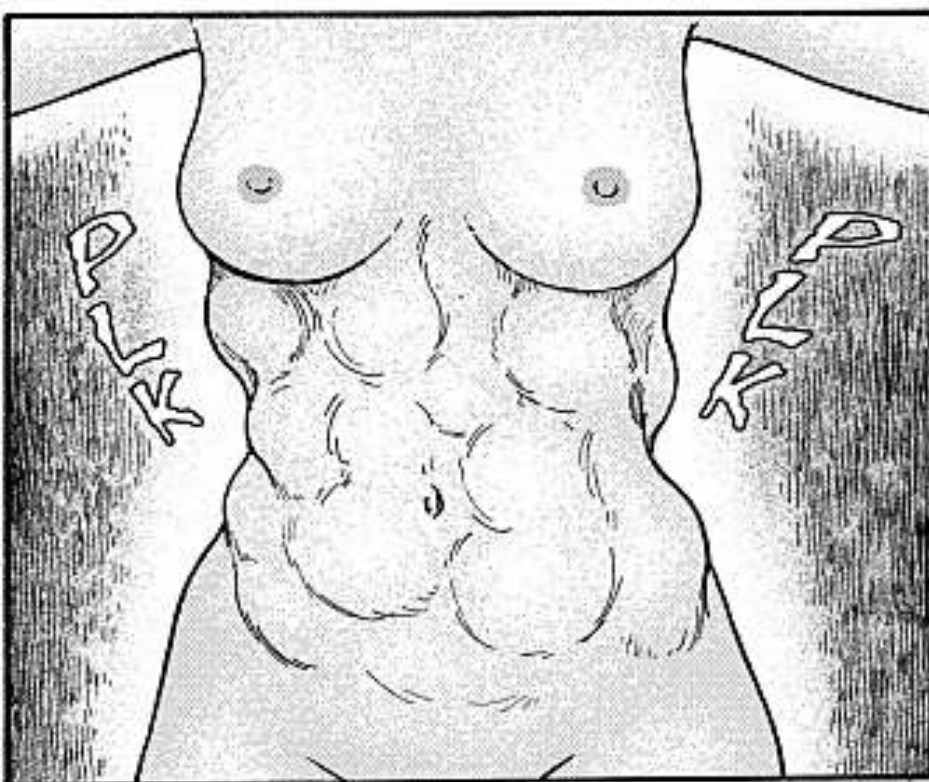
AND
YOU'LL DO
A GOOD
JOB.
YOU'RE
IN MED
SCHOOL.



I DON'T
CARE.



Y-YOU HAVE
TO STOP.
BEING
DISSECTED
WILL KILL
YOU.



OKAY
THEN...
OPEN MY
STOMACH
WITH THIS.



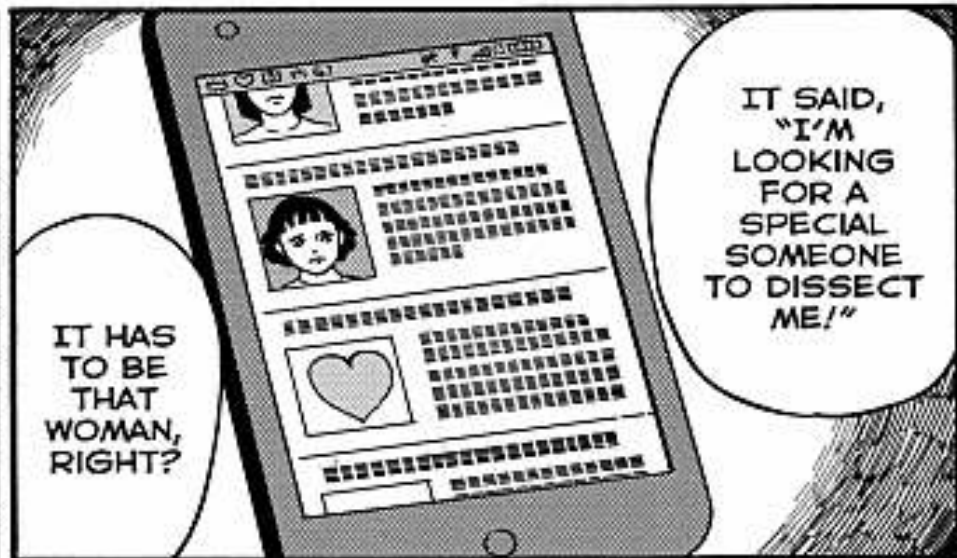
HUH?!

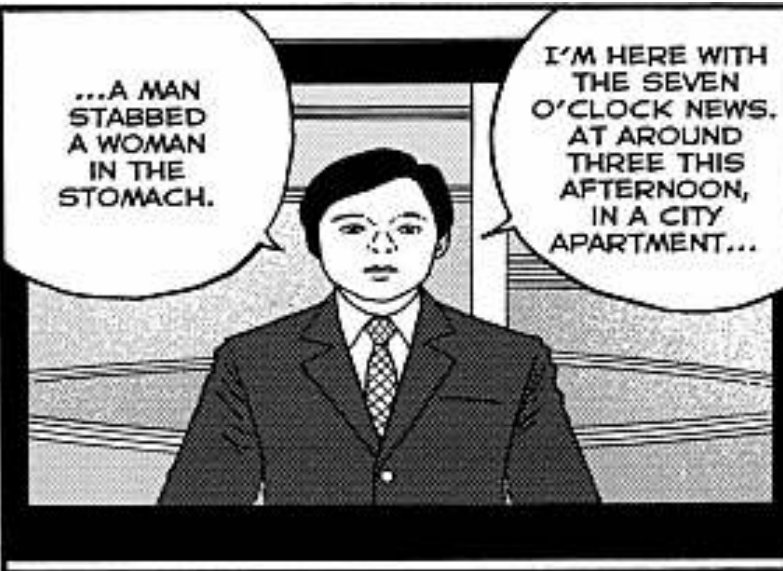


AND THEN
OBSERVE
THEM
OH SO
CAREFULLY!!

PULL MY
INTERNAL
ORGANS
OUT!!








NEIGHBORS CALLED THE POLICE, AND A SERIOUSLY INJURED WOMAN WAS DISCOVERED IN HIS APARTMENT.

THE MAN LIVED IN THE BUILDING WHERE THE STABBING OCCURRED, AND WAS FLAILING AND SCREAMING INCOMPREHENSIBLY.

...A MAN STABBED A WOMAN IN THE STOMACH.

I'M HERE WITH THE SEVEN O'CLOCK NEWS. AT AROUND THREE THIS AFTERNOON, IN A CITY APARTMENT...



POLICE ARE QUESTIONING HIM FOR FURTHER DETAILS.

THE MAN TOLD INVESTIGATORS THAT THE WOMAN ASKED HIM TO DISSECT HER, SO HE DID.

IT APPEARS THE INJURY WAS NOT LIFE THREATENING.

AN AMBULANCE BROUGHT THE WOMAN TO HOSPITAL WHERE SHE UNDERWENT EMERGENCY SURGERY.



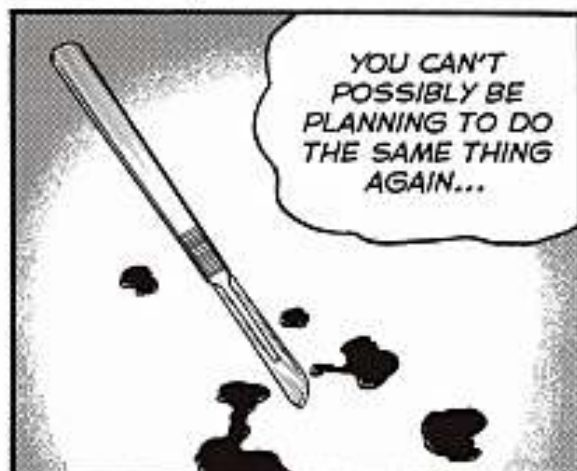
THE WOMAN BROKE FREE FROM HOSPITAL STAFF IMMEDIATELY AFTER SURGERY AND EXITED THE BUILDING.

...ACCORDING TO A REPORT THAT JUST CAME IN, THE VICTIM HAS DISAPPEARED FROM THE HOSPITAL.



IN RELATION TO LAST MONTH'S INCIDENT IN WHICH A WOMAN ENTERED THE DISSECTION LAB AT CHUO MEDICAL UNIVERSITY...

THE POLICE ARE CONTINUING TO INVESTIGATE HER WHEREABOUTS.





TWENTY
OR SO
YEARS
LATER



PRAY!

AFTER A MOMENT
OF SILENT
PRAYER, PLEASE
TAKE THE
CADAVERS OUT
OF THE DONOR
BAGS.



NOW, FOR THE
NEXT THREE
MONTHS, WE'LL
BE DOING
DISSECTIONS.



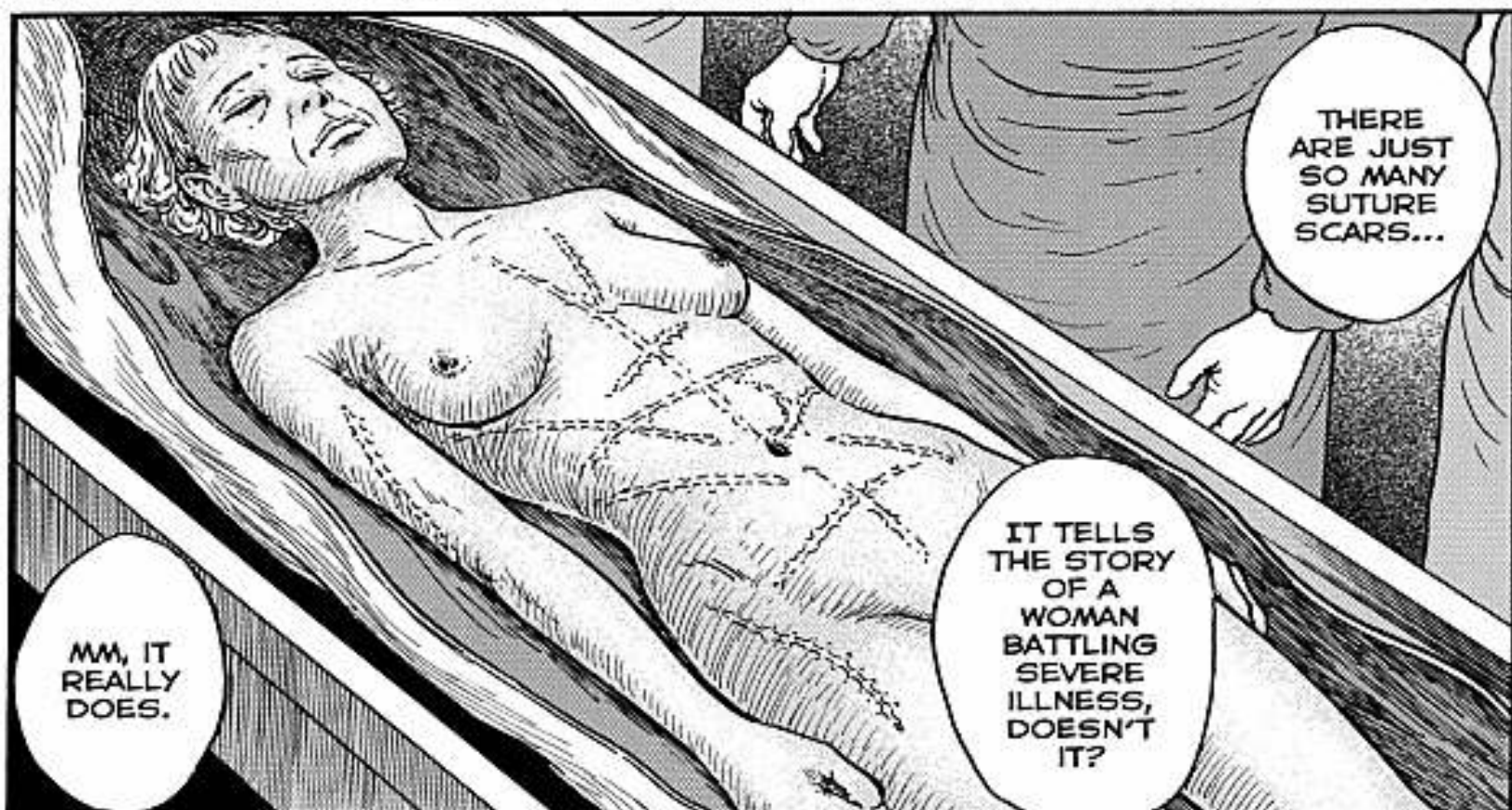
NNNN

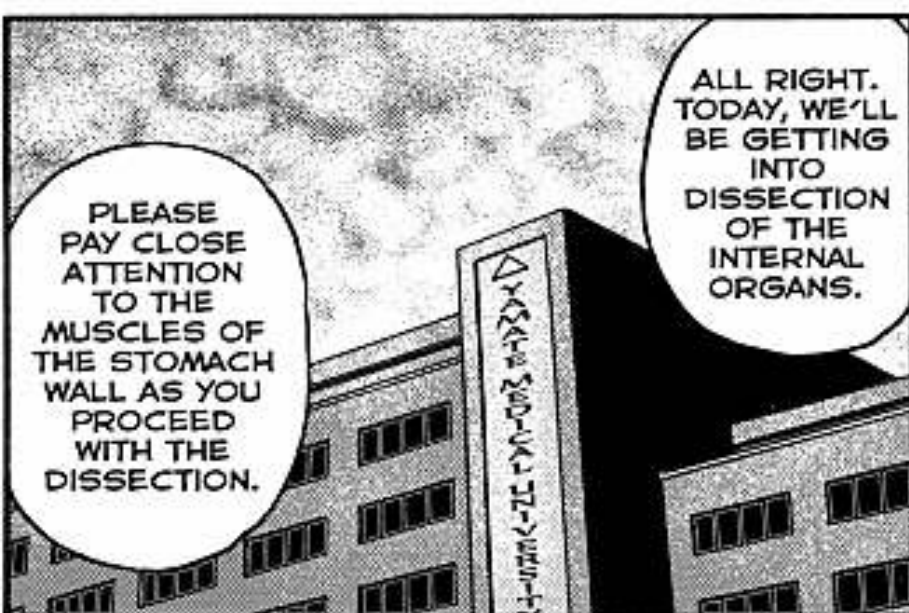


NNNN



NNNN





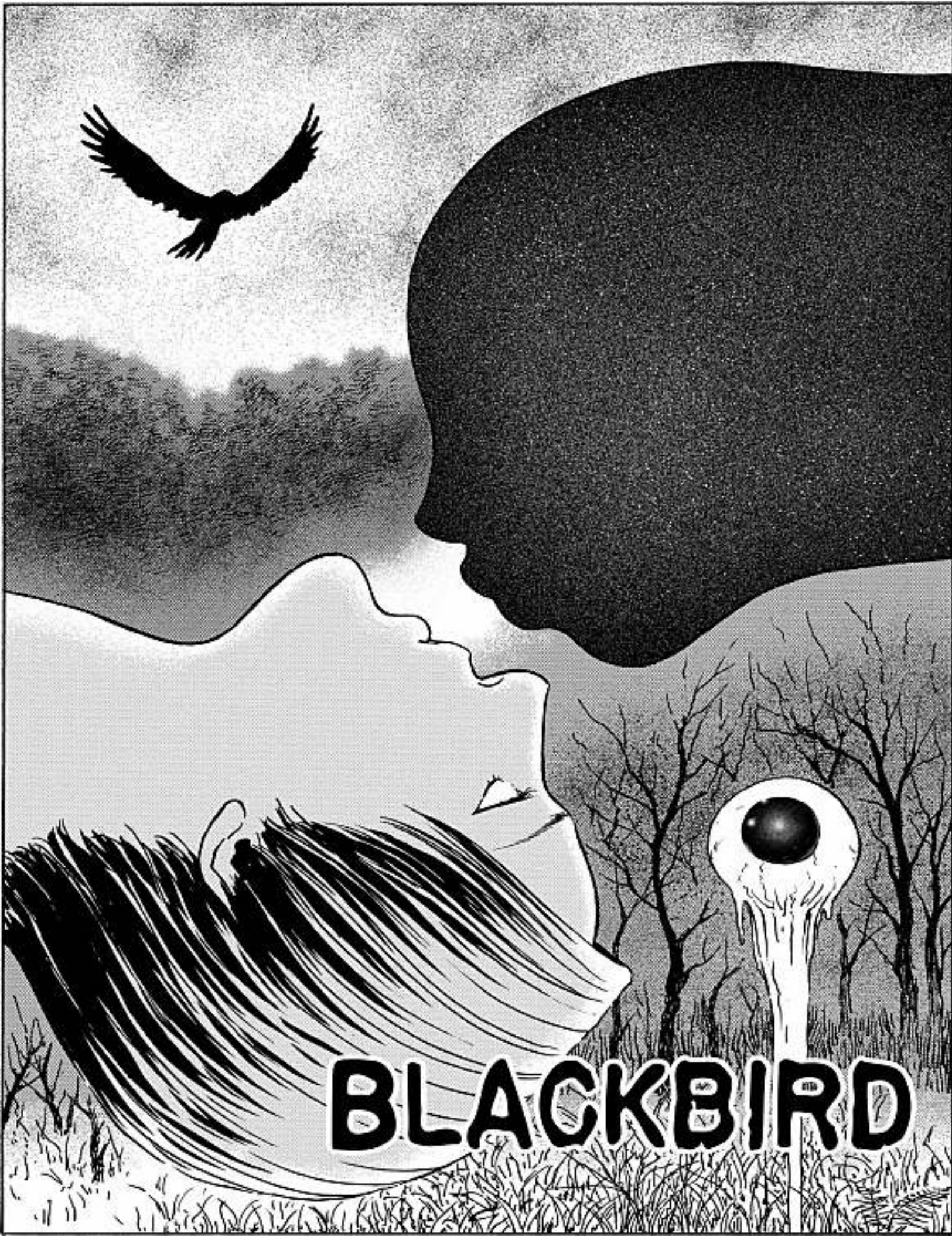


THIS ISN'T
IN OUR
GROSS
ANATOMY
TEXT!



TH-THE
INTERNAL
ORGANS...
WHAT ON
EARTH...?!





BLACKBIRD

IT...HAPPENED
WHEN I WENT OUT
BIRD WATCHING
FOR THE FIRST
TIME IN A WHILE.





WHAT?
THIS IS
SERIOUS!



THANK
YOU
SO
MUCH.

KUME ...



WE'LL BE
AT THE
HOSPITAL
SOON!
HANG ON!



NO, I
JUST LIVE
IN THE
AREA.

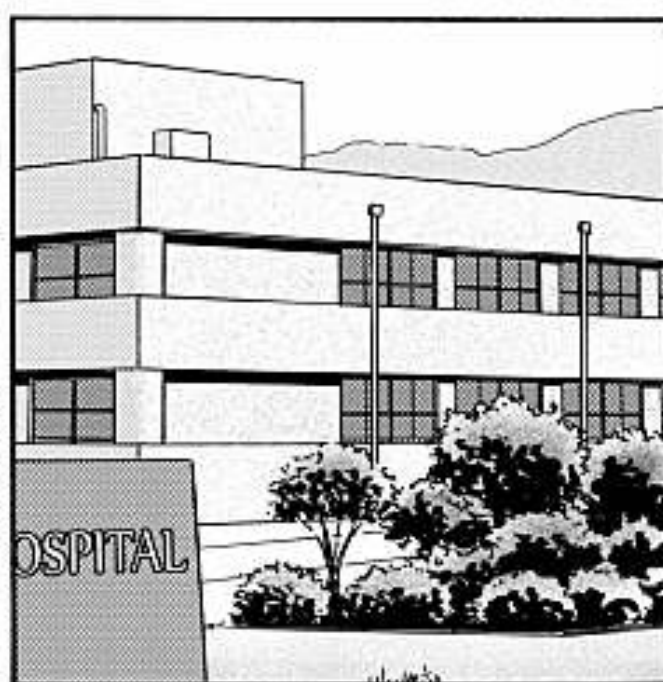
YOU SAID
YOUR NAME
WAS KUME,
YES?

DO YOU
KNOW
THIS
MAN?

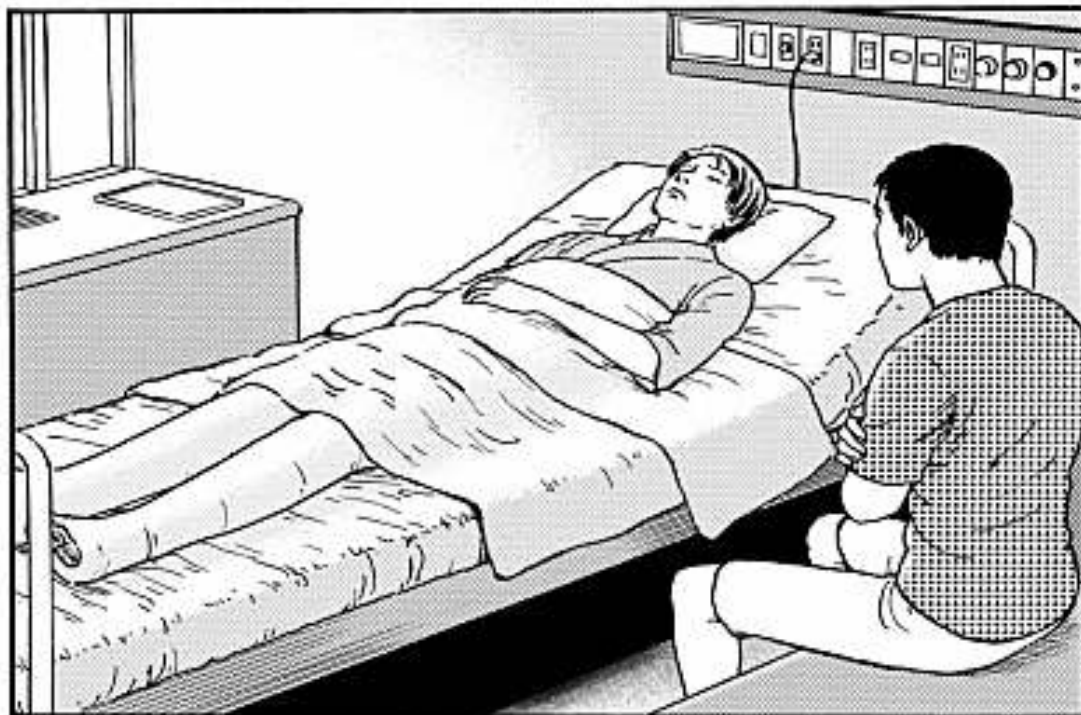
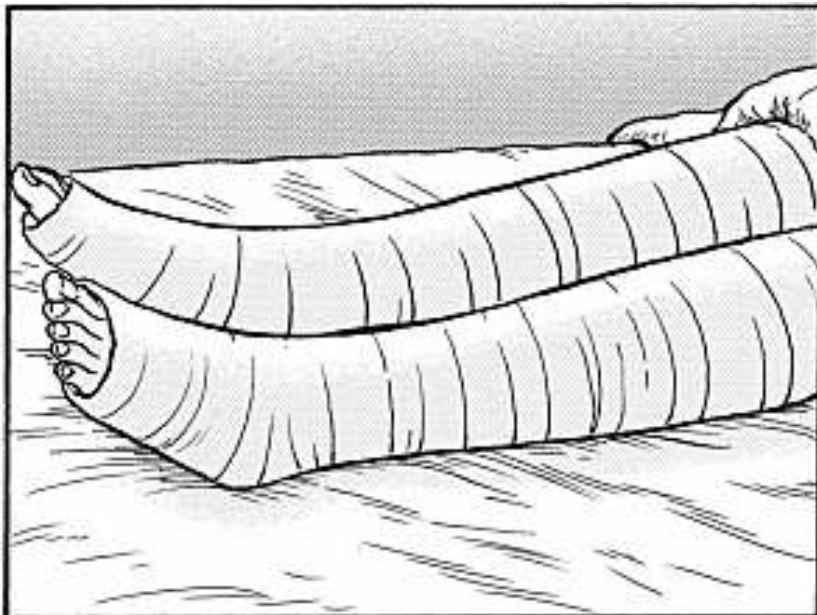


SOME TIME
MUST HAVE
PASSED
SINCE THE
BREAKS.

YOUR LEGS
ARE BROKEN,
BUT THE
BONES HAVE
ALREADY
FUSED.











I'M
ALMOST
OUT OF
SAVINGS.

ONCE I
LEAVE HERE,
I'LL HAVE
TO GET A
JOB...



MY LONE
HOBBY
IS SOLO
HIKING
IN THE
MOUNTAINS.

I WASN'T
CAREFUL,
AND THIS
HAPPENED.



NO ONE
I'M
REALLY
CLOSE
WITH.

BUT YOU
MUST
HAVE
FRIENDS?
A GIRL?



ANYWAY, IT'S
LIGHTS OUT,
SO LET'S GO
TO SLEEP.



YOU CAN
TALK TO ME
ABOUT YOUR
TROUBLES.
WE HAVE A
CONNECTION
NOW.



NGH
NGH
NGH!

UWA

HZZZT!



HZZZT!

UNH!

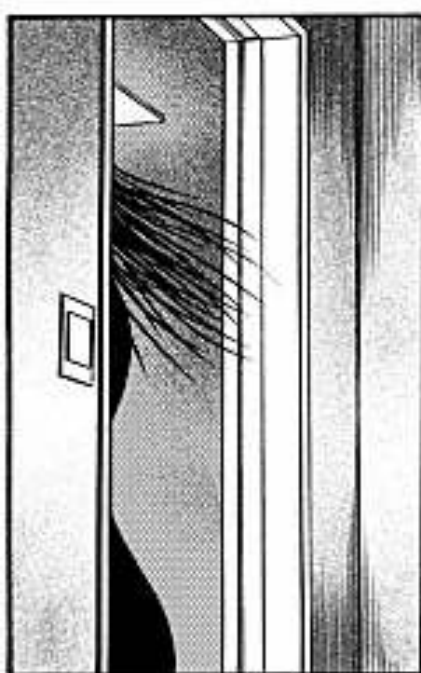
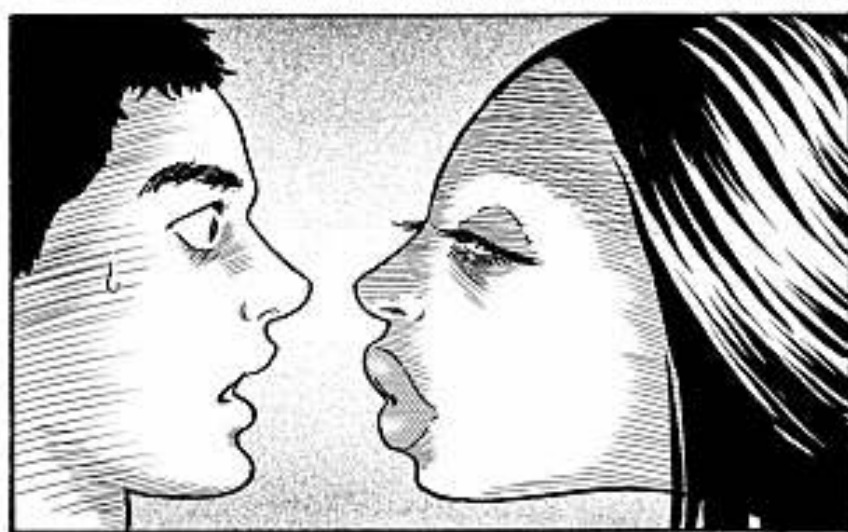


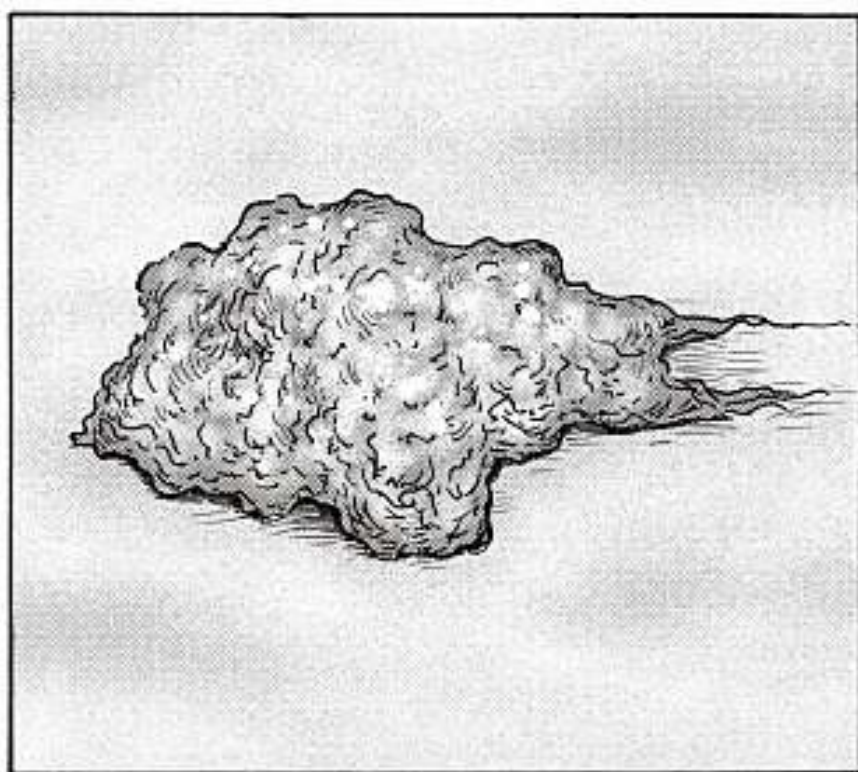
HM?

~IZZZZC

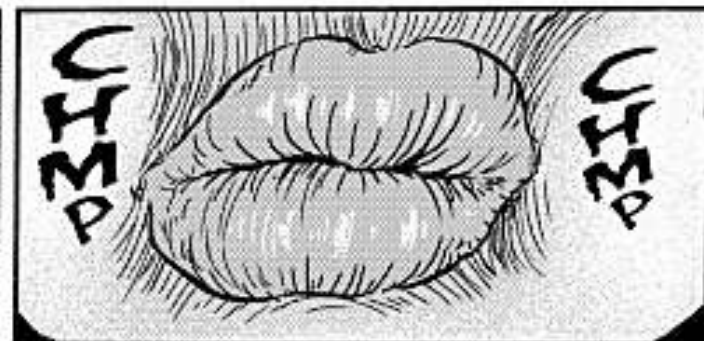














HO
HO
HO!



THE MOST
WONDERFUL
FLAVOR
FILLED MY
STARVING
MOUTH. IT
SIZZLED.

SHE
PUSHED
CHEWED-UP
RAW MEAT
FROM HER
MOUTH
INTO MINE.



WHO
WAS
THAT
WOMAN...

SHE'S
GONE...



AH! HEY!
...PLEASE
STOP!



HO
HO
HO!



HUNGER
SWEEP
OVER ME
ONCE AGAIN
AND I WAS
TORTURED
WITH THIRST.

HAAH.

HAAH.

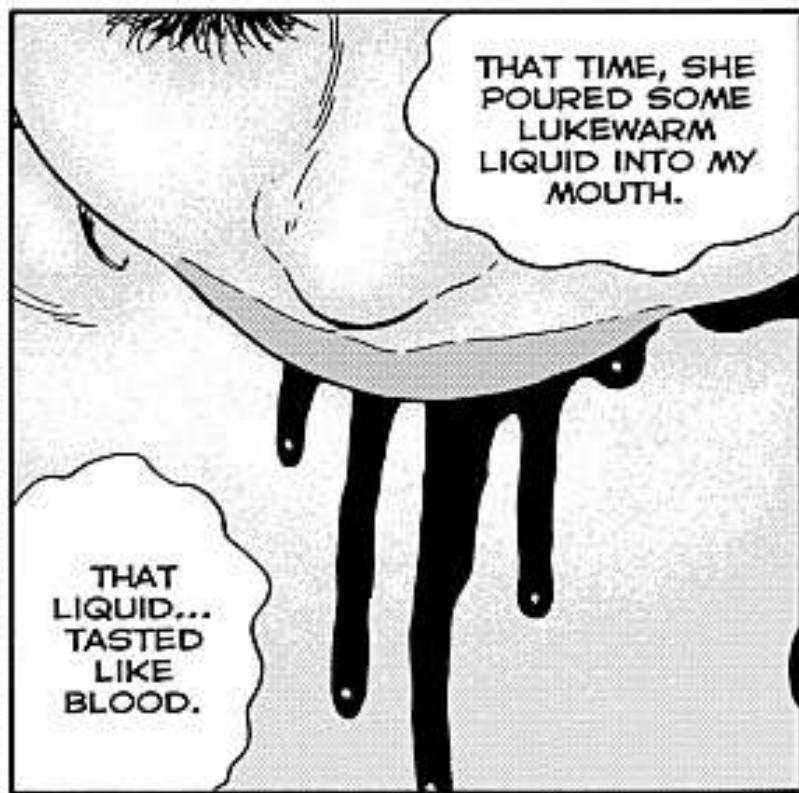


AND
THEN,
THE
NEXT
DAY...



I ASSUMED
SHE
WOULDN'T
COME AGAIN.

I THOUGHT
I WAS
SAVED, BUT
REALIZED
THAT I
WASN'T.





I OWE
HER MY
LIFE...

I REALLY
NEED TO
THANK
HER.

AFTER THAT
TOO, SHE CAME
ALMOST EVERY
DAY AND FED
ME BLOOD OR
MEAT FROM
HER MOUTH.

IT'S
THANKS
TO HER
THAT I'M
STILL
ALIVE.



AND...THIS
MEAT, IT
TASTED SO
INCREDIBLE
WHEN I WAS
STARVING...

BUT
NOW IT'S
DISGUSTING
...



IT'S
STARTING
TO FEEL
CREEPIER
AND
CREEPIER.

BUT...EVEN NOW
THAT I'VE BEEN
RESCUED, SHE
COMES AT NIGHT
TO FEED ME...



...



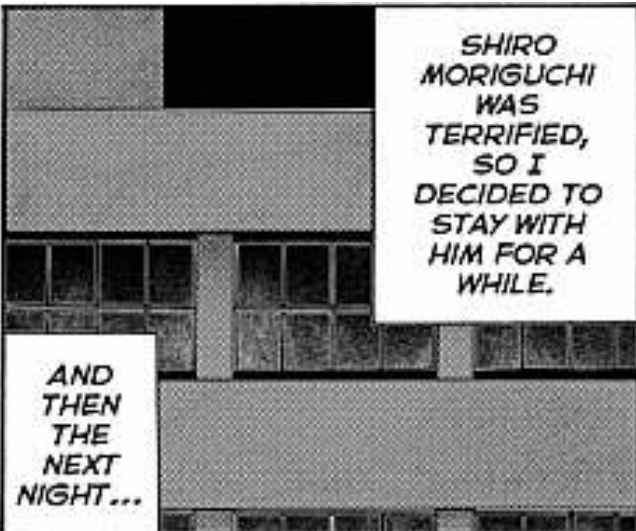
I DON'T
KNOW...
JUST...

I FEEL
LIKE IT'S
SOMETHING
I SHOULDN'T
BE EATING...



I WONDER
WHAT KIND
OF MEAT
IT IS?

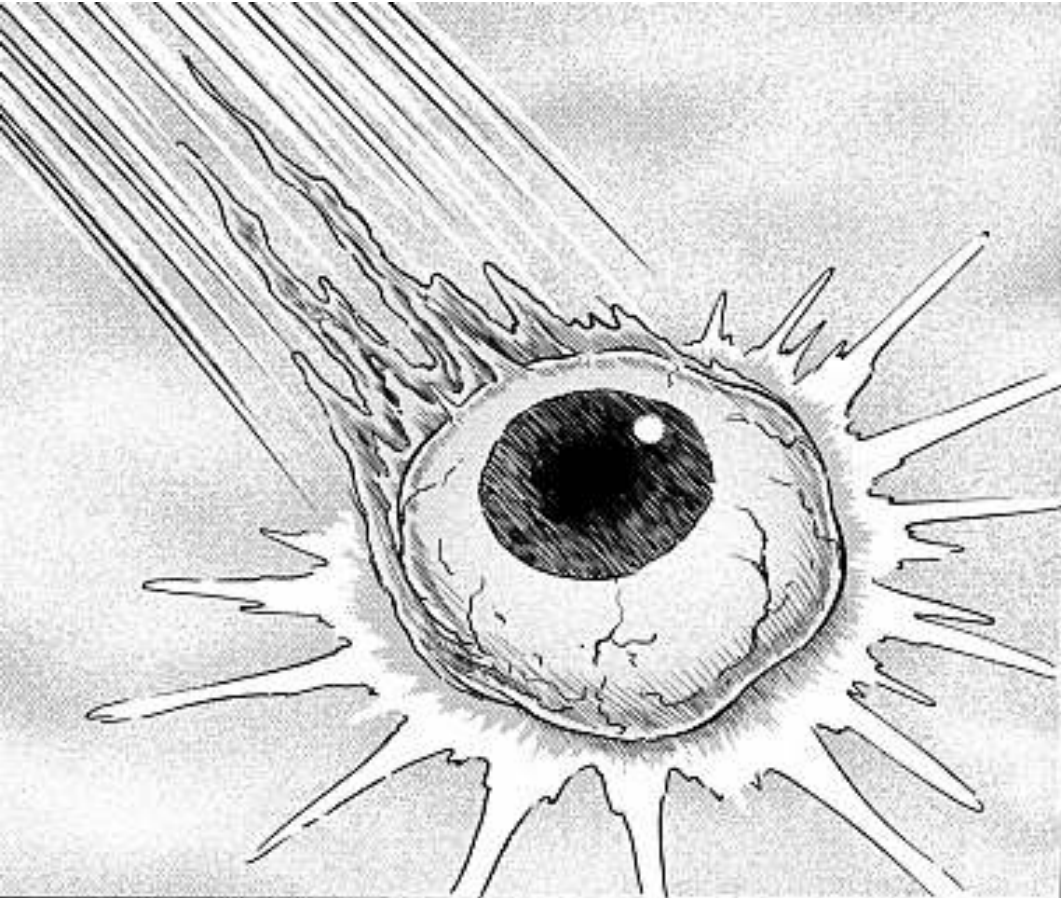
WELL, YEAH.
A STRANGE
WOMAN FEEDING
YOU FROM HER
MOUTH IS KIND
OF DISGUSTING.



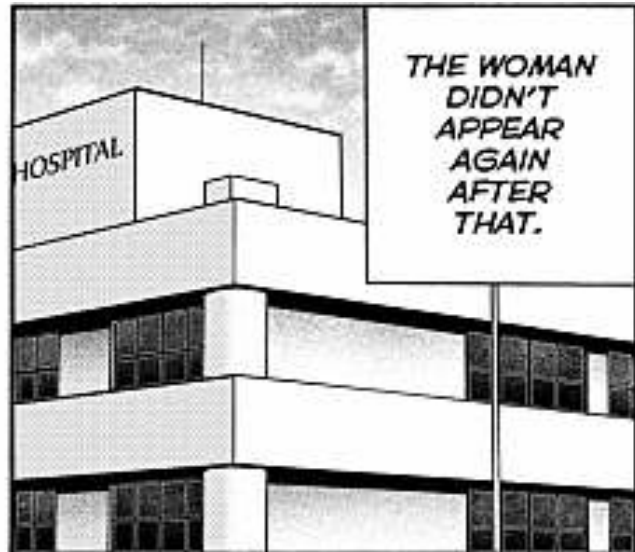
SHIRO
MORIGUCHI
WAS
TERRIFIED,
SO I
DECIDED TO
STAY WITH
HIM FOR A
WHILE.

AND
THEN
THE
NEXT
NIGHT...









THE WOMAN
DIDN'T
APPEAR
AGAIN
AFTER
THAT.



I LEFT
OUT THE
PART
WHERE
SHE
FLEW
OFF
INTO THE
NIGHT
SKY...

THE NEXT
DAY, I
FILED A
POLICE
REPORT
ABOUT THE
WOMAN.
ALONG
WITH THE
"MEAT"...



DON'T
WORRY.
SHE'S NOT
COMING
BACK!



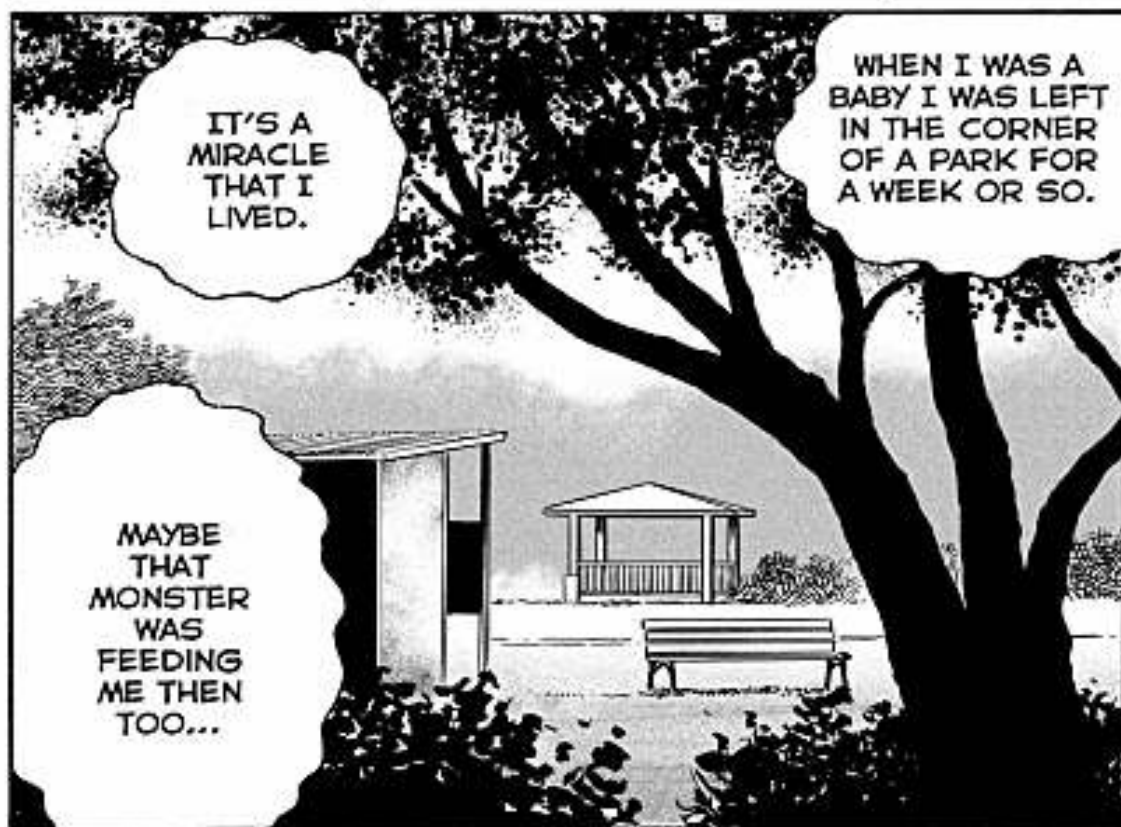
SHE
THOUGHT
I WAS
HER
CHICK...

SHE WAS
FEEDING
HER
CHICK.



SHE'S
A BIRD-
MONSTER...

I'M SCARED!
THAT WOMAN IS
A MONSTER!



IT'S A
MIRACLE
THAT I
LIVED.

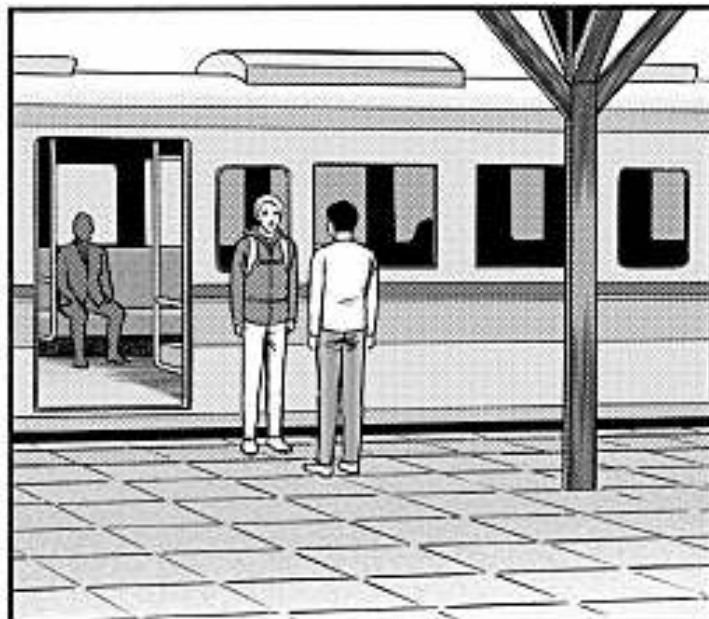
MAYBE
THAT
MONSTER
WAS
FEEDING
ME THEN
TOO...

WHEN I WAS A
BABY I WAS LEFT
IN THE CORNER
OF A PARK FOR
A WEEK OR SO.



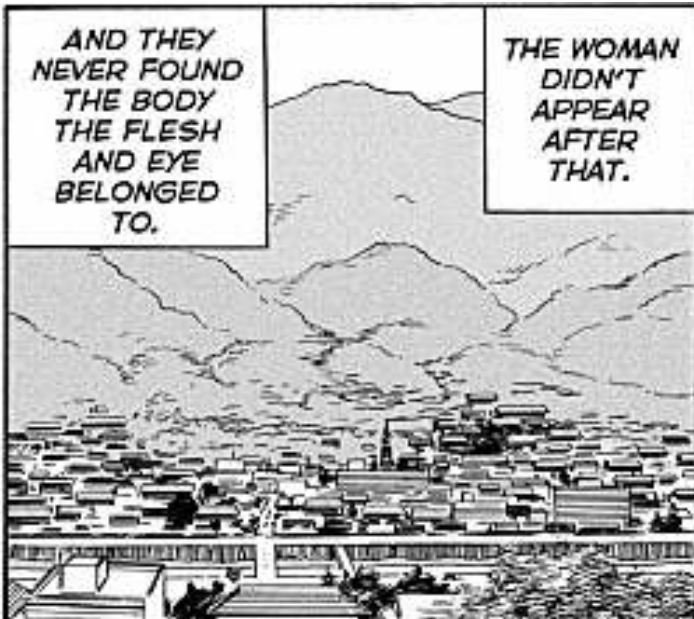
KUME...
I WAS
ABANDONED...





AND THEY
NEVER FOUND
THE BODY
THE FLESH
AND EYE
BELONGED
TO.

THE WOMAN
DIDN'T
APPEAR
AFTER
THAT.



...I WANT
TO GET
AWAY
FROM THE
SHADOW
OF THAT
WOMAN.

I'M
SORRY. I
APPRECIATE
THE
THOUGHT,
BUT...



TOO BAD
YOU DON'T
LIVE HERE.
I COULD
INTRODUCE
YOU TO
SOME
PEOPLE.

ARE YOU
GOING TO
LOOK FOR
WORK BACK
IN TOKYO?



THANK
YOU FOR
EVERYTHING
YOU'VE DONE
FOR ME.

MORIGUCHI,
CONGRATS
ON YOUR
RECOVERY.



WELL,
TAKE
CARE!

RIGHT
...



I WILL.



THE CARD
SAID
NOTHING OF
THE WOMAN,
SO I WAS
RELIEVED.

A MONTH
LATER, I GOT
A POSTCARD
FROM SHIRO
MORIGUCHI —
HE HAD FOUND
A NEW JOB.

A FEW YEARS
LATER, SHIRO
MORIGUCHI'S
CORPSE WAS
DISCOVERED...

...IN A
FROZEN
HOLLOW
ON THE
SUMMIT
OF MOUNT
FUJI.

SHIRO'S
POSSES-
SIONS
WERE
FOUND
NEAR THE
BODY...

AND DNA
TESTING
CONFIRMED
THAT
IT WAS
INDEED
HIM.

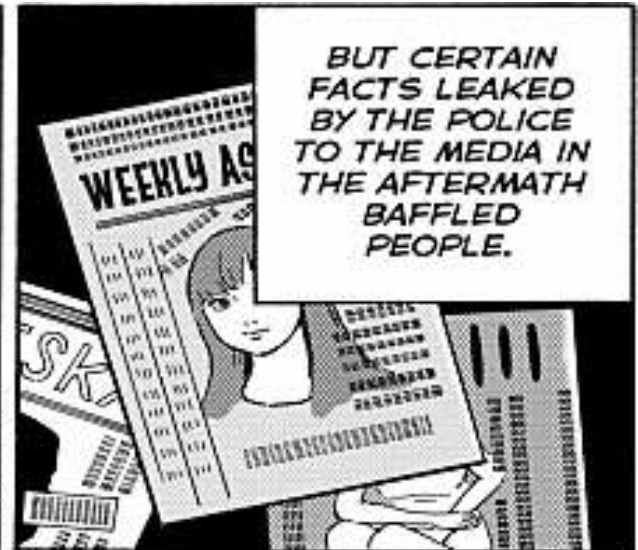
THEY SAY THAT
WHEN HE WAS
FOUND, A HUGE
BLACK BIRD WAS
PECKING AT THE
CORPSE, BUT THE
TRUTH OF THAT IS
UNCONFIRMED.



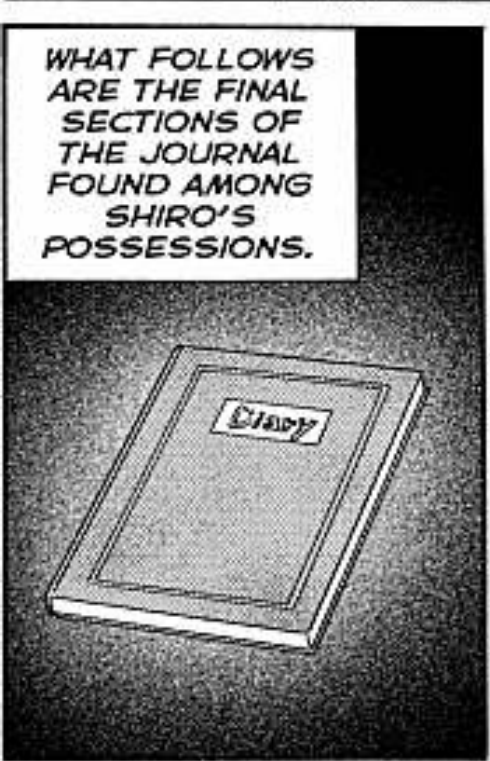


...WAS A
PERFECT
MATCH FOR
SHIRO'S
OWN DNA.

APPARENTLY,
THE DNA
FROM THE
MEAT THE
WOMAN HAD
FED SHIRO A
FEW YEARS
EARLIER...

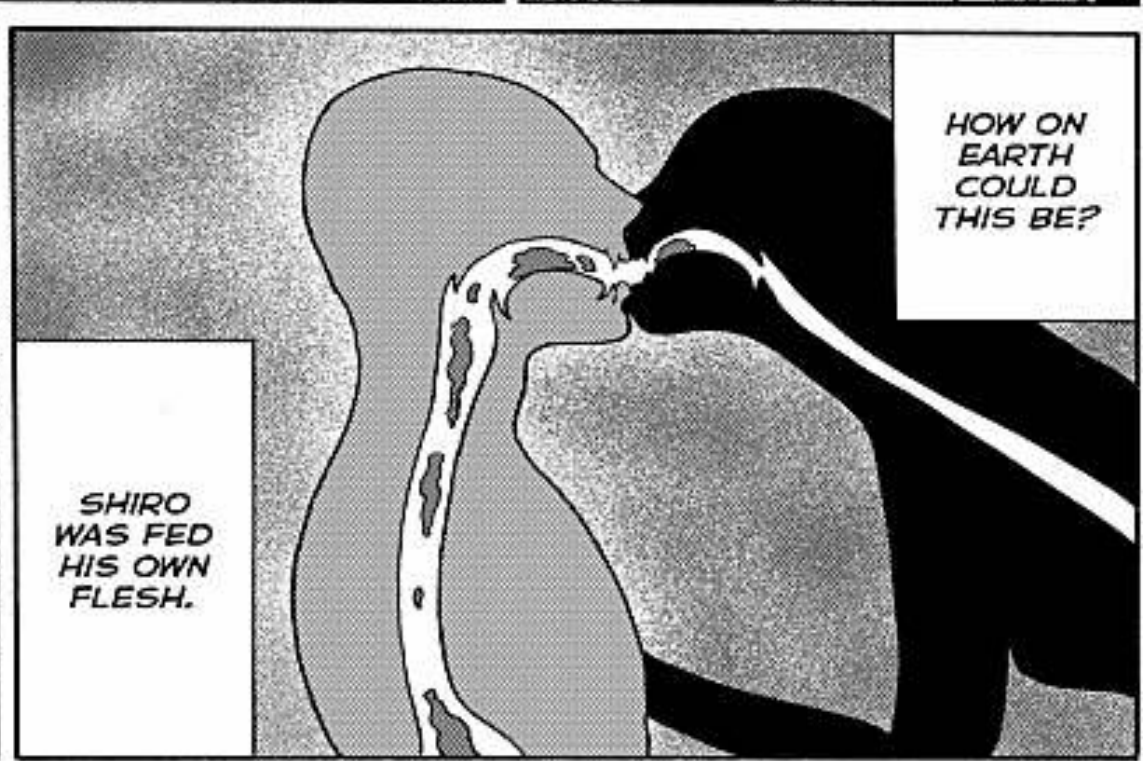


BUT CERTAIN
FACTS LEAKED
BY THE POLICE
TO THE MEDIA IN
THE AFTERMATH
BAFFLED
PEOPLE.



WHAT FOLLOWS
ARE THE FINAL
SECTIONS OF
THE JOURNAL
FOUND AMONG
SHIRO'S
POSSESSIONS.

SHIRO
WAS FED
HIS OWN
FLESH.




HOW ON
EARTH
COULD
THIS BE?



"SHE GOT
INTO MY
LOCKED
ROOM.

"HOW ON
EARTH
DID SHE
GET IN?!"



August 8
That woman showed up!
I thought she wouldn't
and yet...
into my locked room
How?!
in?!

"AUGUST 8.
THAT WOMAN
SHOWED
UP!! I
THOUGHT
SHE
WOULDN'T,
AND YET...



DON'T
FEED ME
ANYMORE.

I'M NOT
STARVING.



"I'VE
DECIDED
TO FLEE
OVERSEAS!!"

"AUGUST 9.
WHY?! THE
WOMAN
TORE INTO
MY FLESH!!

"IF I DON'T
ESCAPE,
SHE'LL KILL
ME!! BUT
WHERE CAN
I GO?!"





"SHE RIPPED
THE FLESH
OF MY LEFT
THIGH WITH
HER SHARP
TEETH!! I
CAN'T WALK
ANYMORE..."

"AUGUST 10.
AAH, I NEED
HELP!! THAT
MONSTER'S
CAPTURED ME
AND BROUGHT
ME UP TO A
CRATER ON
MOUNT FUJI!!

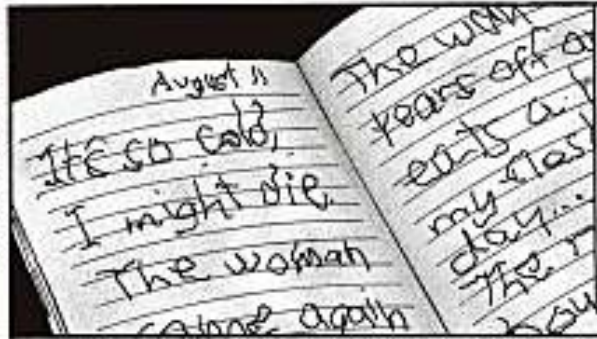


...THE
JOURNAL
ENDS
THERE.



"THE
WOMAN
TEARS OFF
AND EATS
A BIT OF
MY FLESH
EVERY
DAY..."

"AUGUST 11.
IT'S SO
COLD, I
MIGHT DIE.
THE WOMAN
CAME AGAIN
TODAY.



August 11
It's so cold,
I might die.
The woman
came again
The woman
tears off a
piece of
my flesh
every day.
The re-
verse of how
she fed me

"THE
REVERSE
OF HOW SHE
FED ME A
LITTLE FLESH
EVERY DAY A
FEW YEARS
AGO."





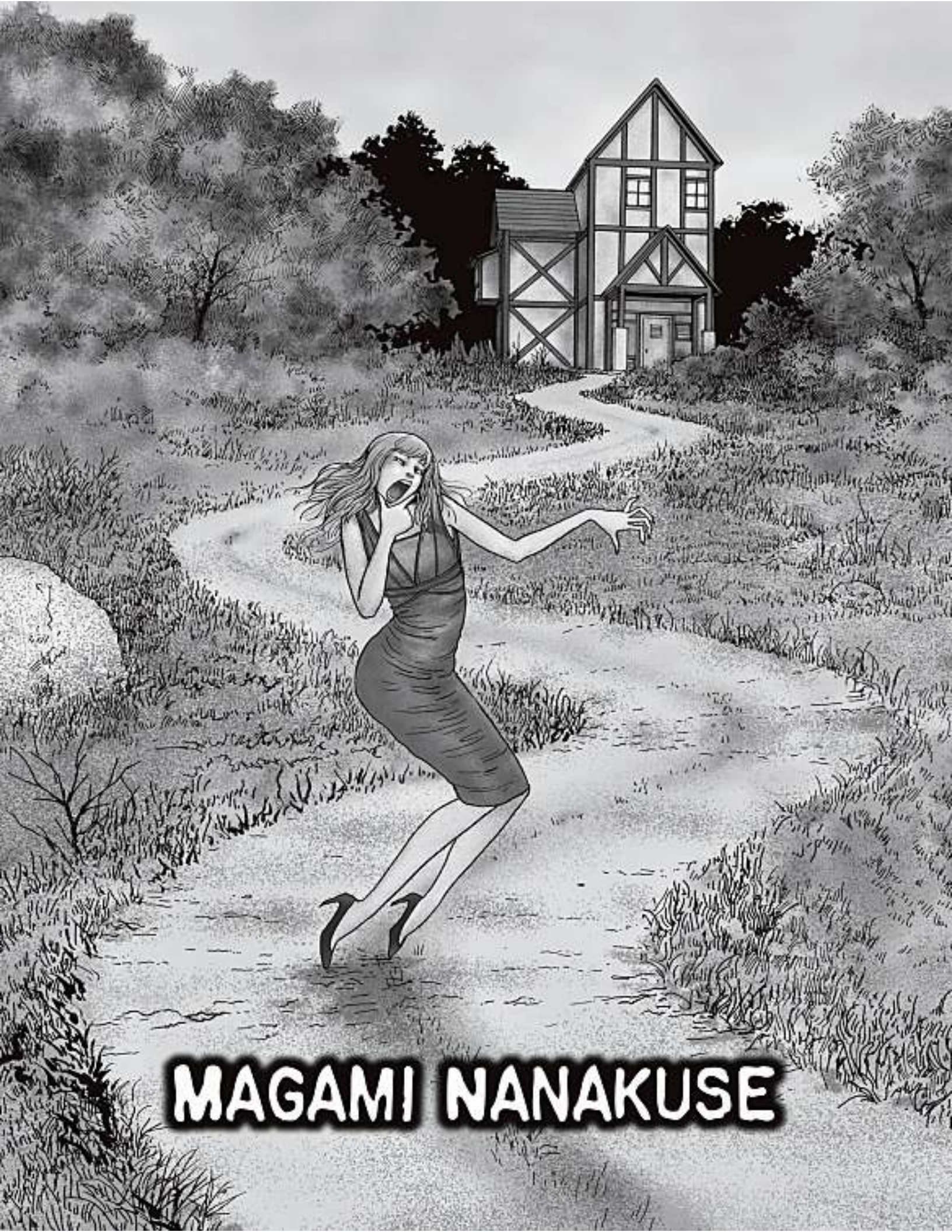




...MEAT
HAD A VERY
UNPLEASANT
TASTE...

THE...

BLACKBIRD/END



MAGAMI NANAKUSE



WITH THEIR
ADDICTIVE
STYLE,
NANAKUSE'S
NOVELS
SELECT THEIR
READERS.



THOSE IN
THE KNOW
ARE AWARE
THAT MAGAMI
NANAKUSE IS
A BRILLIANT
NOVELIST.

RECENT
AUTHOR
PHOTO-
GRAPH

I'M A
QUIRKY
WOMAN
WHO LOVES
SOLITUDE
AND WANTS
TO WRITE.



I'M ONE OF
HER FANS.
MY NAME'S
KAORU
KOKETSU.

I CAN'T
EVEN STAND
IT. SHE
REALLY
IS HABIT-
FORMING.

NANAKUSE
BELONGS
JUST TO
ME.



LUCKILY,
THERE'S NOT
A SINGLE
NANAKUSE
FAN AROUND.

DRINKING
HABITS

Magami
Nanakuse

Magami Nanakuse's
intense debut work!

MAGAMI
ITCHING
FOR A MAN
NANAKUSE

SOLITUDE
HABITS
Magami
Nanakuse

MAGAMI
NANAKUSE
STICKY
FINGERS

Magami
Nanakuse
CLEANLINESS

For Kiyono
cleanliness was
an obsession.

DRINKING
HABITS,
STICKY
FINGERS,
ITCHING
FOR A MAN,
CLEANLINESS
AND MANY
MORE.

48 AGAINST 7
MAGAMI NANAKUSE



IF I WASN'T
SO OBSESSED
WITH MAGAMI
NANAKUSE, I'D
HAVE A MORE
WHOLESOME
ADOLESCENCE.



NO USE
NOW!

AFTER I
READ ONE OF
HER BOOKS
I TALK AND
ACT LIKE HER
CHARACTERS
FOR A WHILE.



IT'S NOT JUST
NANAKUSE'S
WRITING THAT'S
GOT ITS LITTLE
QUIRKS—THE
CHARACTERS
THEMSELVES
ALSO HAVE
WEIRD TICS.

QUITE
ABSDURD!

HOW DID
MAGAMI
NANAKUSE
SO THOR-
OUGHLY
TURN
MY LIFE
UPSIDE
DOWN?!



...I'VE
BEEN
PRETTY
HOPELESS
UP TO
NOW.

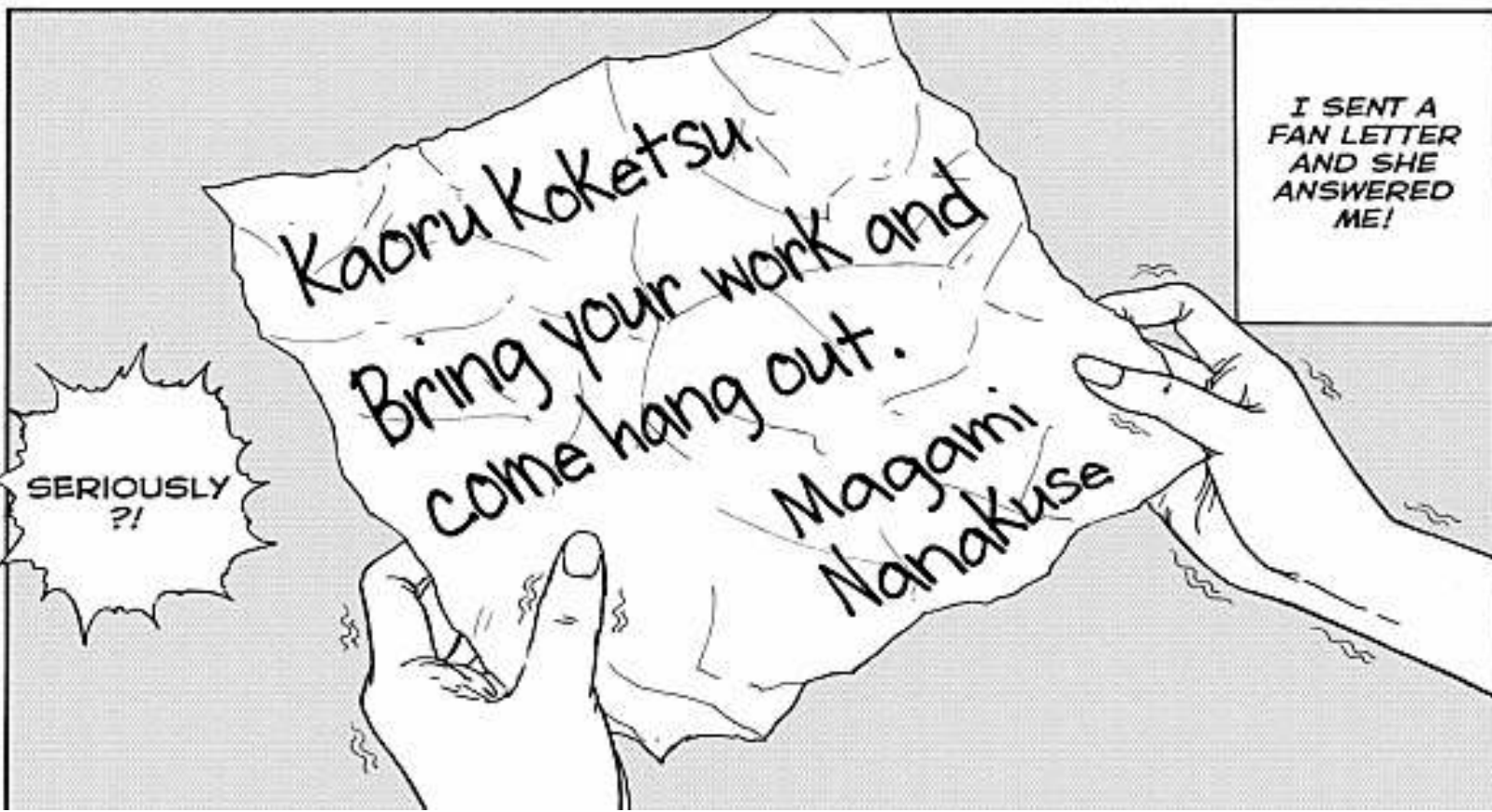


INSPIRED BY
NANAKUSE,
I'M TRYING
TO BE A
WRITER,
BUT...

Kaoru Koketsu
Bring your work and
come hang out.
Magami
Nanakuse

I SENT A
FAN LETTER
AND SHE
ANSWERED
ME!

SERIOUSLY
?!





AND NO
ONE KNEW
THAT I
WAS GOING
TO MEET
NANAKUSE.
TAKE THAT!

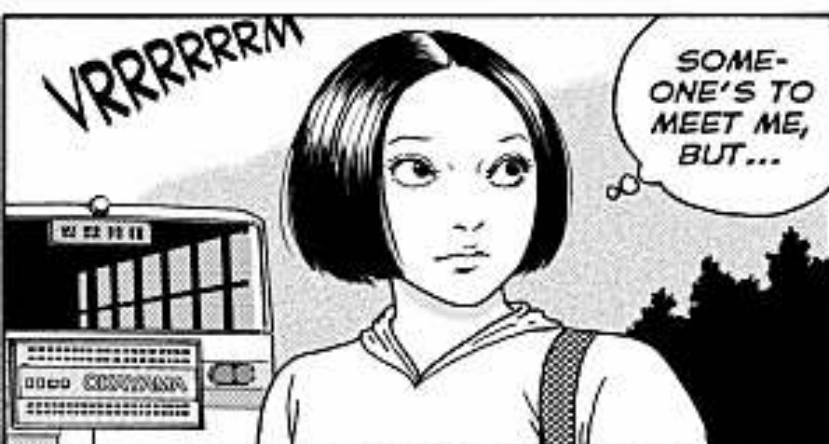


WEIRD THAT
SHE LIVES
FAR UP IN THE
MOUNTAINS
THOUGH.



I CAN'T
BELIEVE
I'M GONNA
MEET
MAGAMI
NANAKUSE!

AAH, MY
HEART'S
BEATING
SO FAST!



SOME-
ONE'S TO
MEET ME,
BUT...











ALL THE
WAY TO A
KUSECHI.

KAORU,
RIGHT?
THANKS
FOR
COMING.

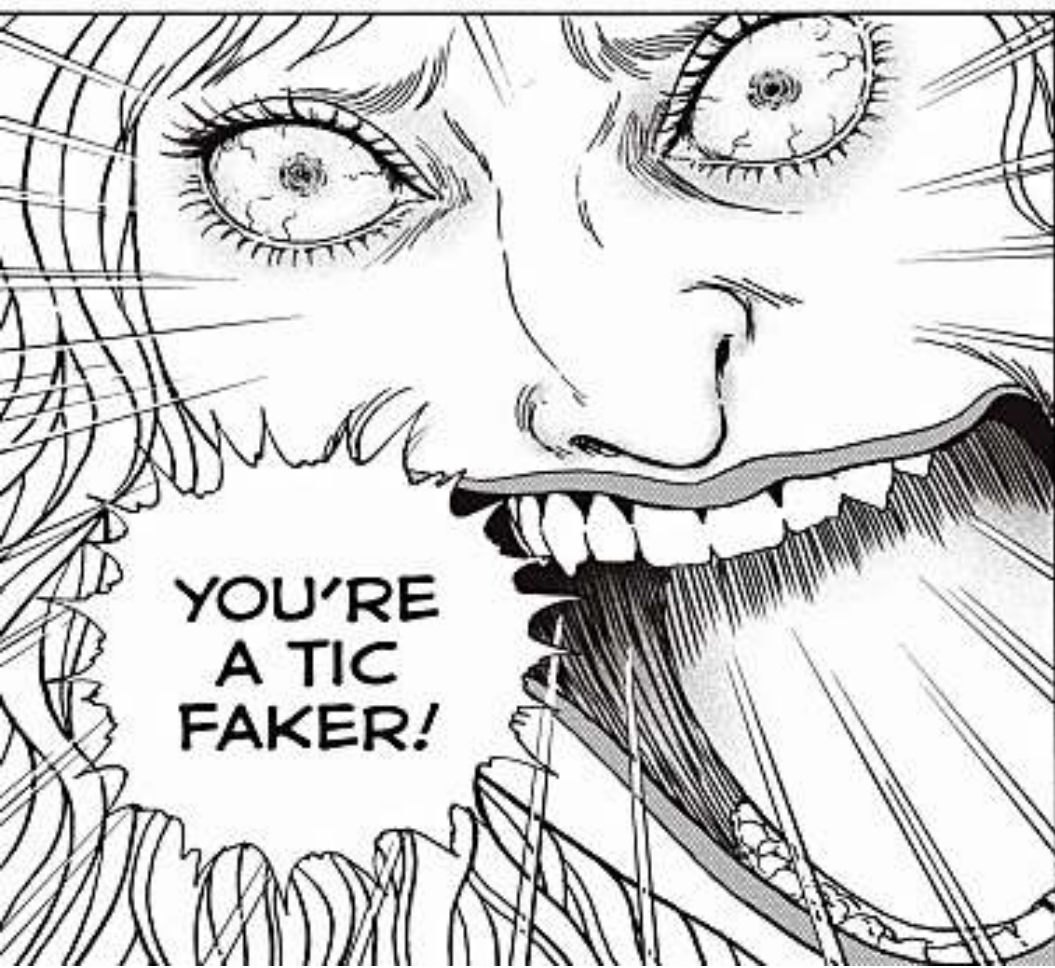
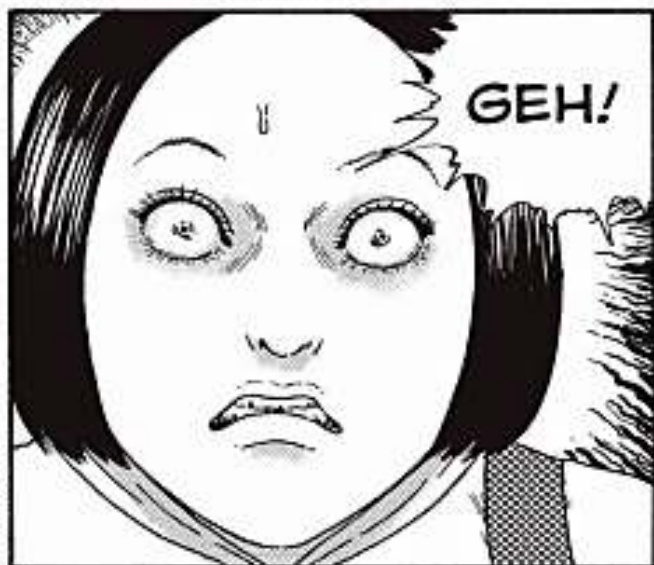


I NEVER
THOUGHT I'D
GET TO MEET
YOU. IT'S A
DREAM!

OH...OHHH!
UM, YES, I'M
KOKETSU.
THANK YOU
SO MUCH FOR
INVITING ME.



AND ON
TOP OF
THAT,
THAT YOU
WOULD
LOOK AT
MY WORK!







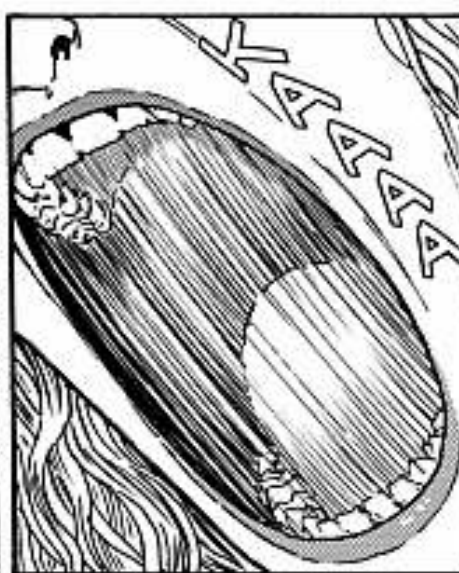
HO! HO! HO!



UUNH!
UUNH!



SHAKE SHAKE



KAAAA



UZOKU

UZOKU



AAAAH...

UUNH!
UUNH!



NEGISHI,
RUB MY
SHOULDERS.

AAH!
SHOULDER
TIC! TIC-Y
SHOULDER!

YES,
SENSEI.



WELL,
LET'S
HEAD
OVER
TO THE
BAR.



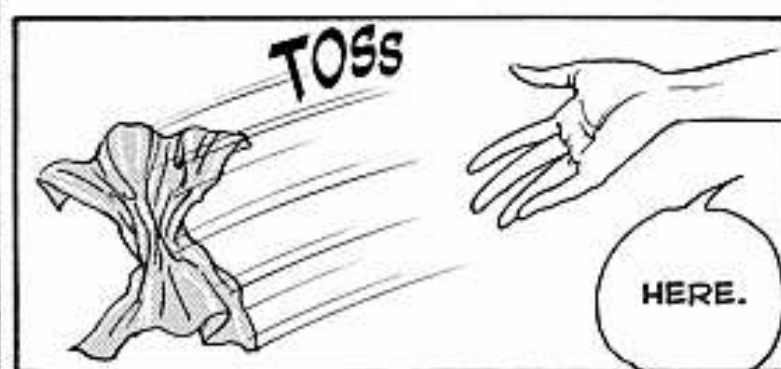
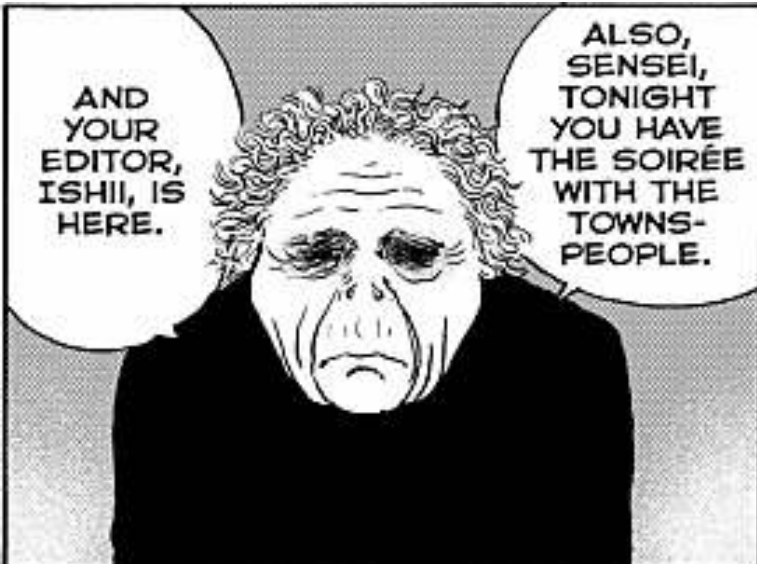
KAORU,
HOW
ABOUT A
DRINK?

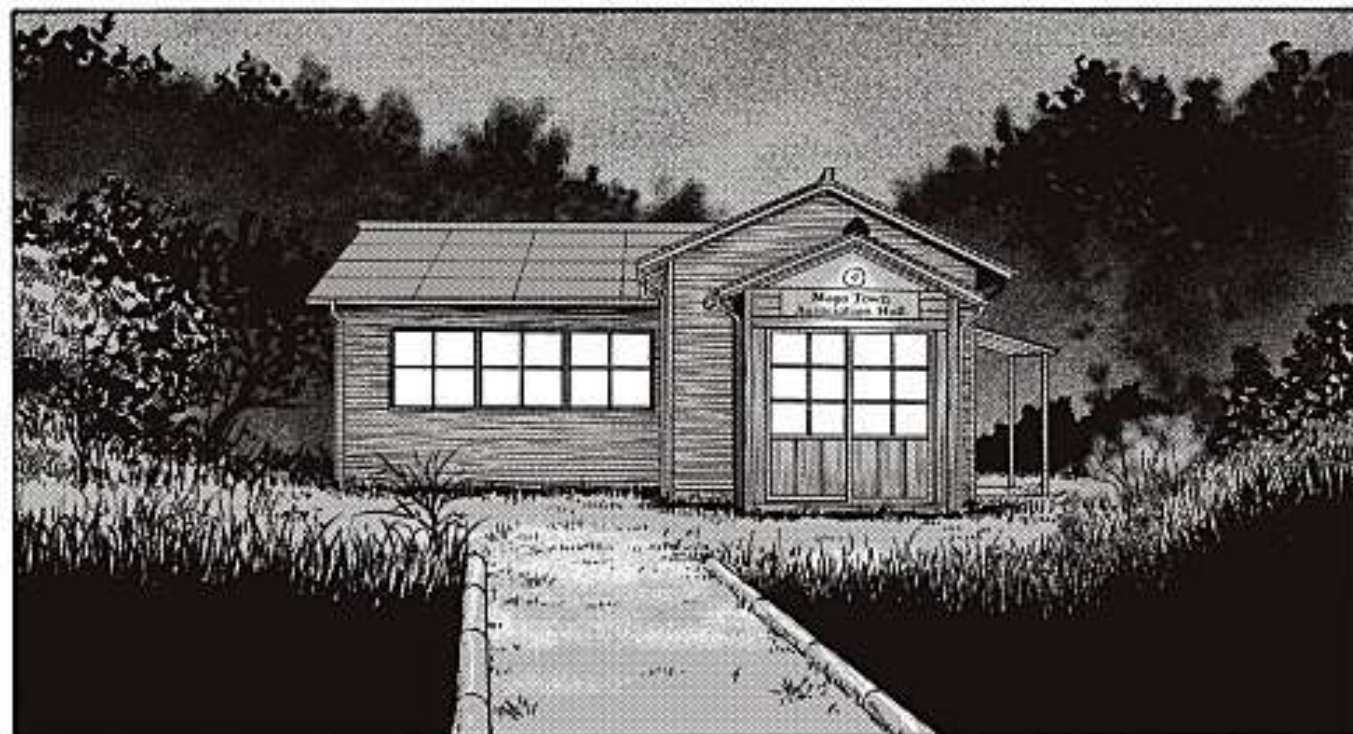


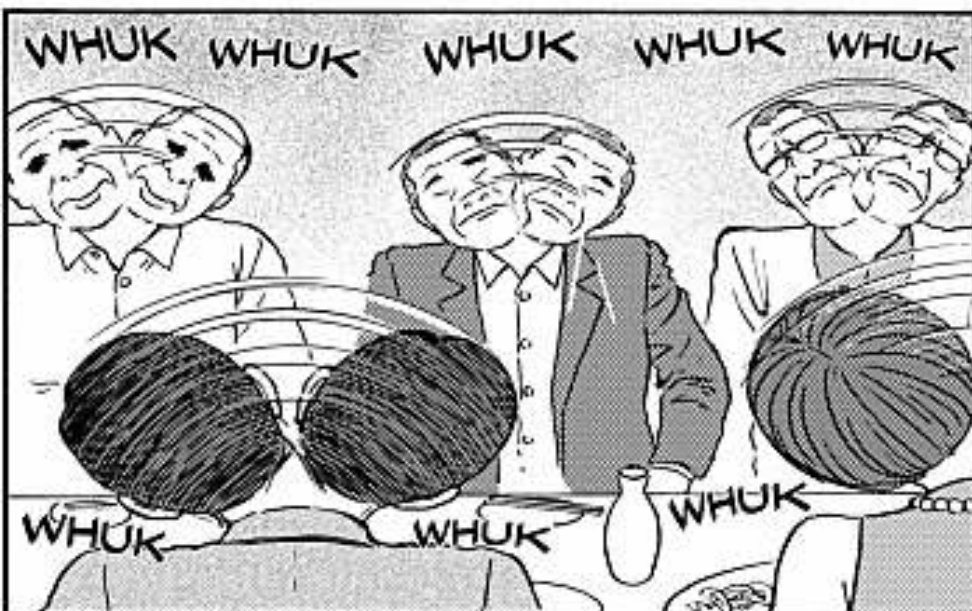




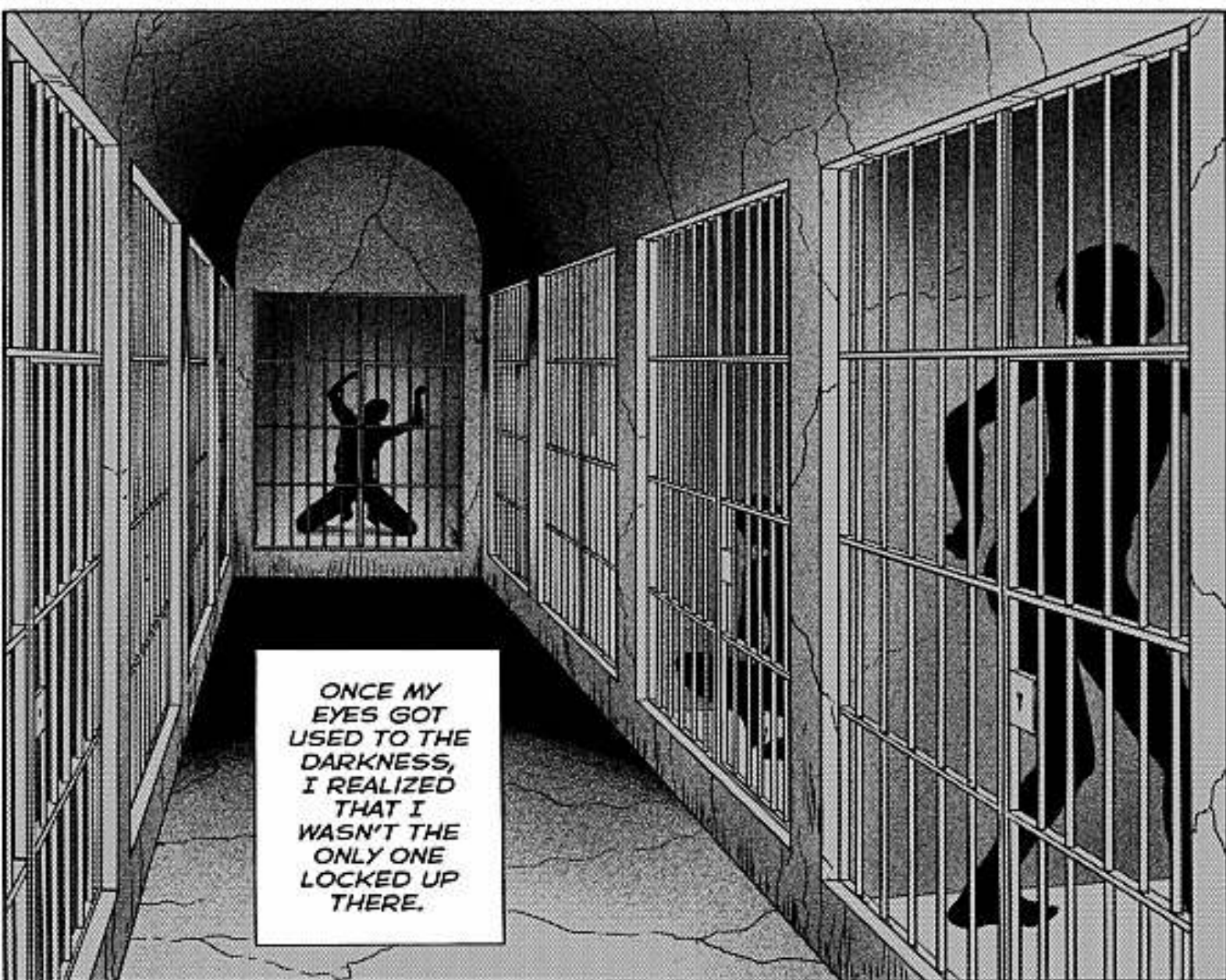


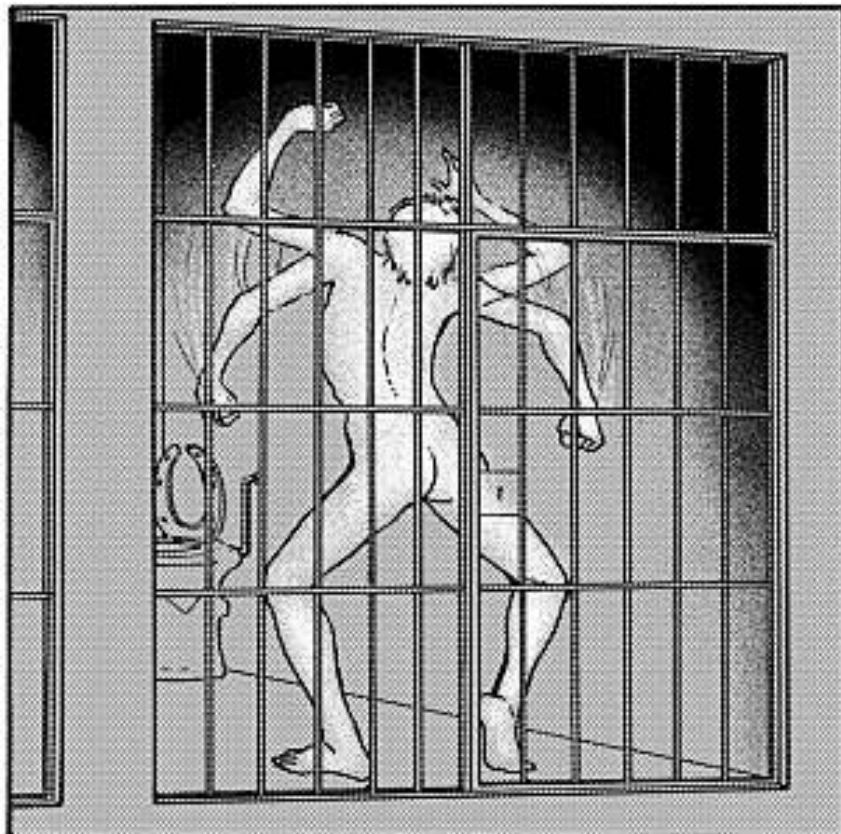






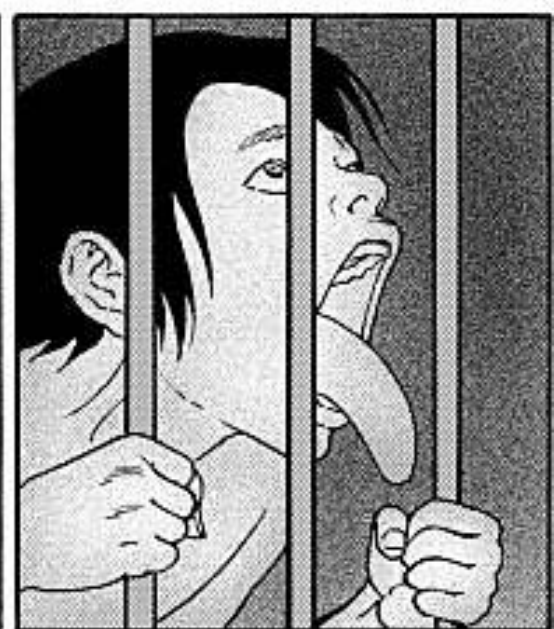
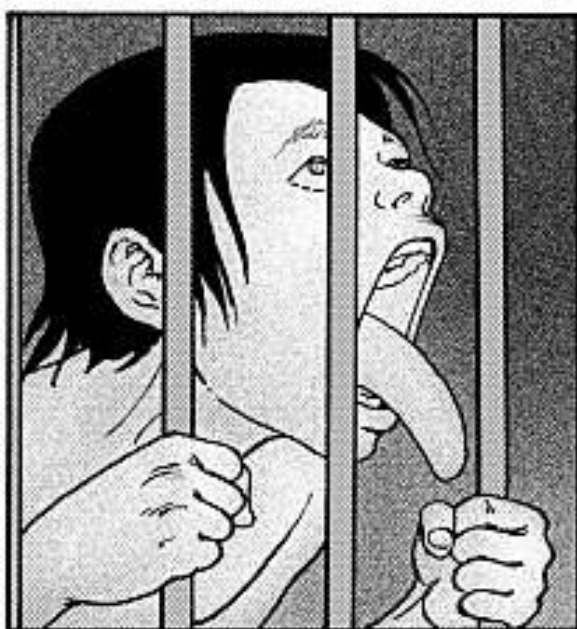






THE
SAME
MOTION
OVER
AND
OVER.

THEY WERE
ALL MOVING
REPETITIVELY.







I DON'T
UNDERSTAND
WHAT YOU'RE
TALKING
ABOUT!




I'VE GOT
HIGH HOPES
FOR YOU...
THAT A
UNIQUE TIC,
SOMETHING
NO ONE'S
EVER SEEN
BEFORE,
WILL REVEAL
ITSELF.

BUT YOU, HOWEVER,
HAVE A FAIR BIT OF
PROMISE. PERHAPS
A SPECIAL ABILITY
WILL BLOSSOM
WHILE YOU'RE
IMPRISONED.




PLEASE
LET ME
OUT OF
HERE!

PLEASE
STOP
KIDDING
WITH ME!



AND THEN,
MY NEW
NOVEL WILL
BE BORN.

I'LL GET MY
INSPIRATION
FROM YOUR
SPECIAL
TIC.

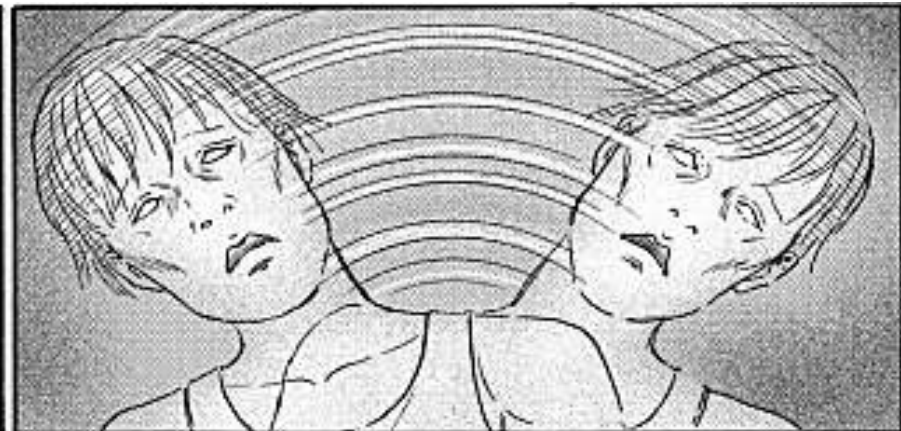


BE HAPPY!
YOU'LL BE
ABLE TO LIVE
ON FOREVER
IN MY NOVEL!



IN MY
GREATEST
MASTER-
PIECE!!





WEIRD
THINGS
STARTED
HAPPENING
TO MY
BODY.



AS IF
I'M
GONNA
MOVE!

YOU
CAN'T
MAKE ME
TWITCH!

YOU CAN'T
MAKE
SOME
BIZARRE
TIC
BLOOM...

YOU
CAN'T
MAKE ME
MOVE...

B-BUT IT'S
WEIRD.
SOMETHING'S
HAPPENING IN
MY BODY...



SOME-
THING'S
WEIRD.

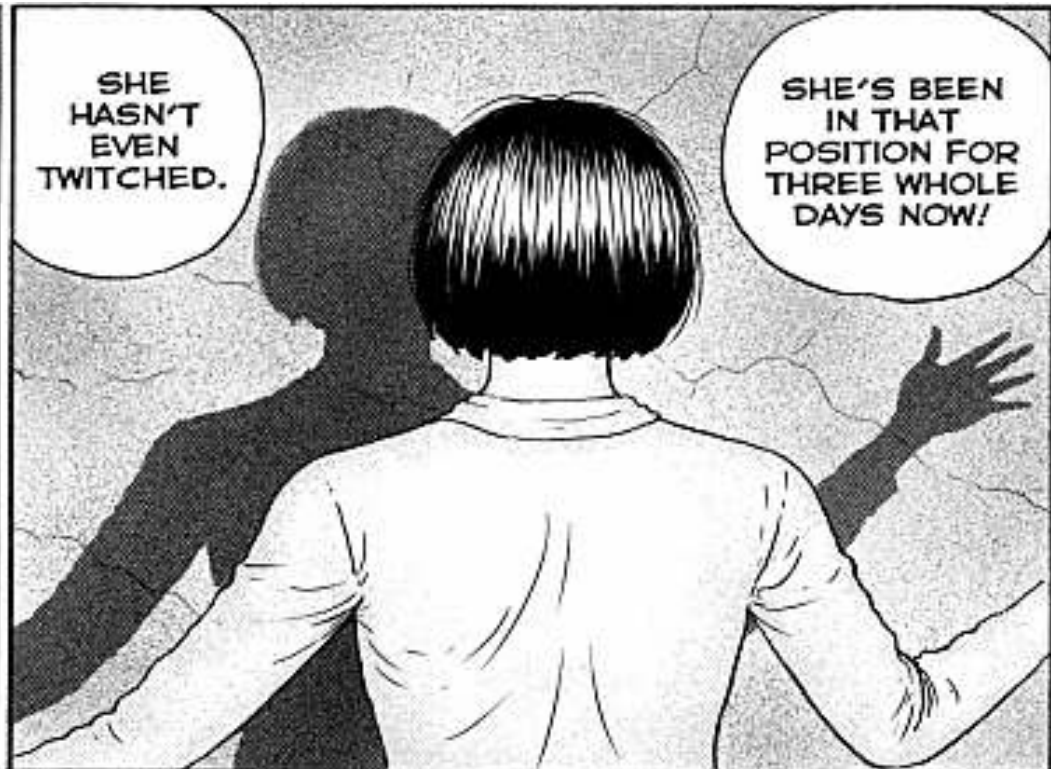
AND
MY
FACE...

IT'S LIKE...
I FEEL
LIKE IT'S
STIFFENING
UP.

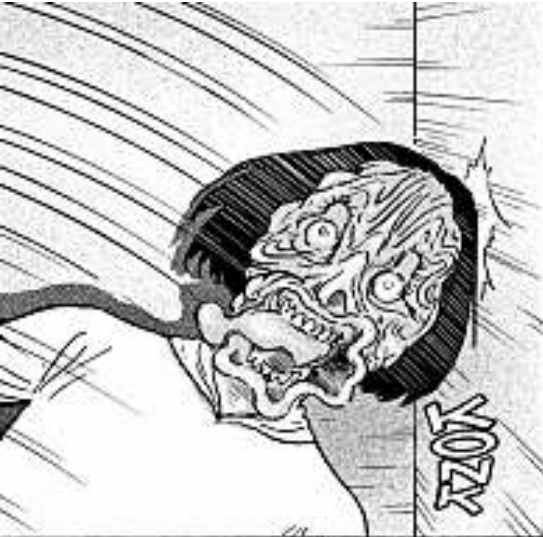
AAAH!

AAH!









ONCE MAGAMI
NANAKUSE HAD
ACCEPTED THE
SPIRIT OF HER
MUSE...AND
WRITTEN HER
MASTERPIECE,
ULTIMATE TIC...



HEEEEEEE!

I'VE GOT MY
INSPIRATION!

...AND I WAS
DONATED TO
THE TOWN
ASSOCIATION
HALL.

...SHE HAD
NO MORE
USE FOR
ME...





WHISPERING WOMAN

HERE?
OR OVER
THERE...?

RIGHT?
...LEFT?

WHAT
SHOULD
I DO?

WHICH
WAY
SHOULD
I GO...?

MAYUMI,
THE ONLY
CHILD
OF THE
WEALTHY
SHIGEKI
SANTO...

...WAS
POS-
SESSED
OF A
UNIQUE
DISPO-
SITION.

I'M
RESIGNING,
EFFECTIVE
IMMEDIATELY.

SIR, I CAN NO
LONGER TAKE
CARE OF HER!

P-
PLEASE
RECON-
SIDER.

WHAT
SHOULD I
DO AFTER
THIS?!

AAAAH!

MAYUMI...
...

SHOULD I EAT
SUPPER? OR
SHOULD I GET
IN THE BATH?

SHOULD
I RUN?

SHOULD
I WALK?

SHOULD
I SIT?

CAN I
BLINK?

IS IT
OKAY TO
STAND?

SHOULD I START
WASHING AT
MY ARMS? SHOULD
I START
AT MY
LEGS?

SHOULD I
SLEEP?

IS IT
GOOD
TO SMILE
NOW?
GOOD
TO GET
ANGRY?
GOOD
TO CRY?

ORANGE
JUICE?
APPLE
JUICE?
GRAPE
JUICE?
WHICH ONE
SHOULD I
DRINK?

BETTER
TO GO
TO THE
TOILET?
BETTER
NOT TO?

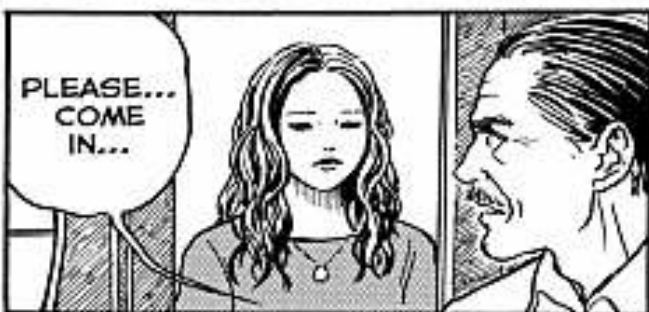
IS IT
OKAY TO
BREATHE?

CAN I
BLINK?

WHAT
SHOULD
I DO
AFTER
THIS?

SHOULD I
BE AWAKE?

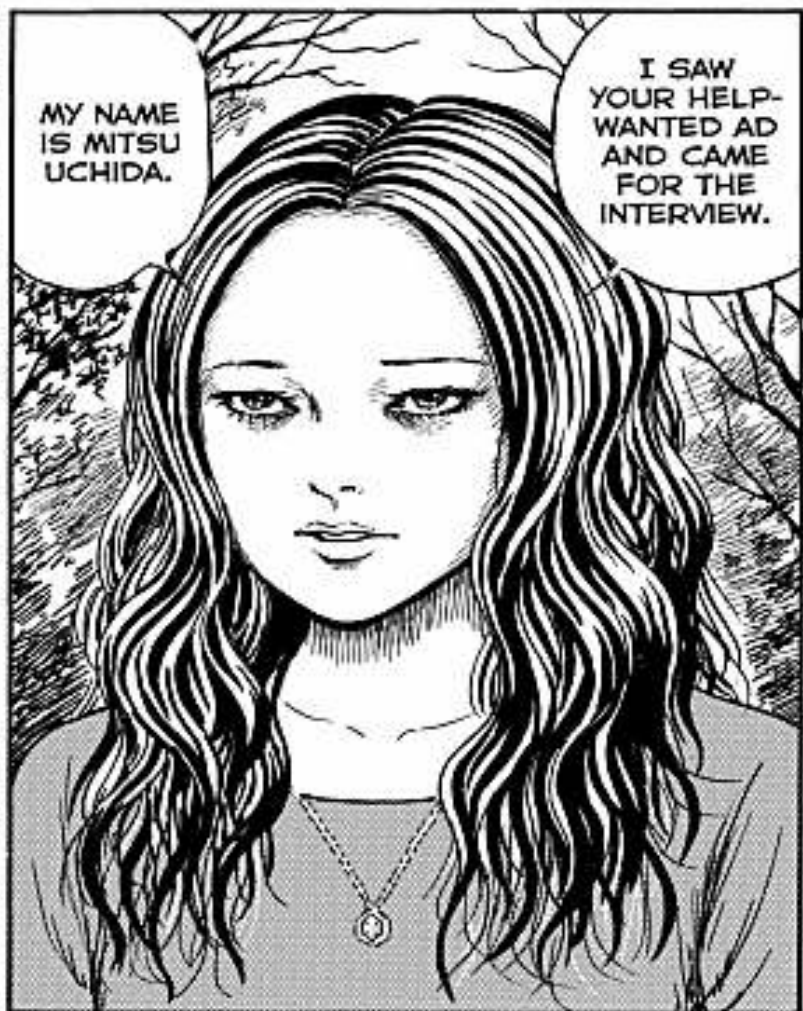
WHAT
SHOULD
I WEAR
TODAY?



PLEASE...
COME
IN...

MY NAME
IS MITSU
UCHIDA.

I SAW
YOUR HELP-
WANTED AD
AND CAME
FOR THE
INTERVIEW.



IF SOMEONE
DOESN'T
GIVE HER
CONSTANT
INSTRUCTION,
SHE
PANICS...

AS YOU
KNOW,
MAYUMI CAN'T
DECIDE WHAT
TO DO BY
HERSELF...

YES...

DO YOU
UNDERSTAND
THE BASIC
IDEA OF THE
JOB?

NONE OF
THEM COULD
ENDURE
MAYUMI'S
BARRAGE OF
QUESTIONS.
THEY ALL
QUIT.

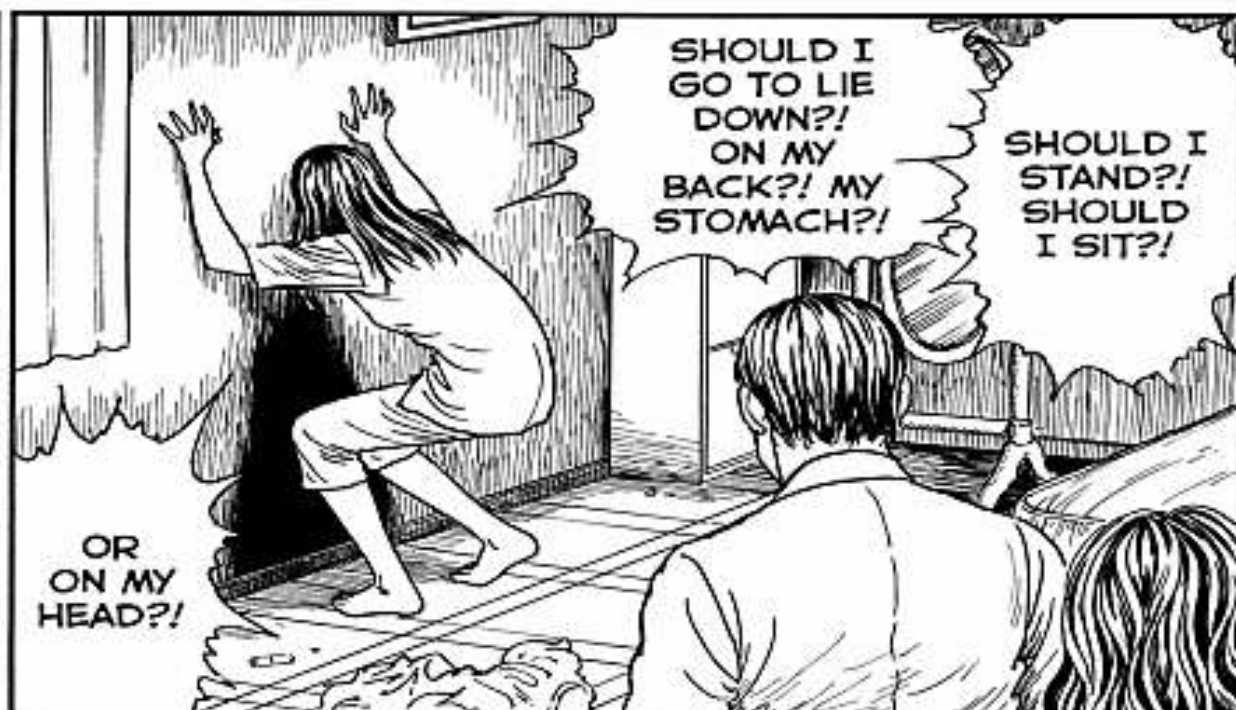
HOWEVER,
NONE OF THE
ATTENDANTS
I'VE HIRED
UP TO NOW
HAS LASTED
VERY LONG.

AT ANY
RATE...
PLEASE
COME AND
MEET MY
DAUGHTER
NOW.

HER MOTHER
DIED WHEN
SHE WAS
YOUNG, SO
FOR MAYUMI,
TRUSTING
PEOPLE IS
CRITICAL.

I TRIED A
ROTATING
SYSTEM OF
HELPERS,
BUT IT
DIDN'T
GO WELL.

SHE NEEDS
TO HAVE
THE SOLID
SUPPORT
OF A SINGLE
ATTENDANT.



THE BED?
HOW? ON
MY KNEES?!
CROSS-
LEGGED?!
HOLDING MY
KNEES?!

MAYUMI...
SIT ON THE
BED OVER
THERE.

YES
SIR...

YE—

AND
SLOWLY
LOWER
YOUR
BUM.

THAT'S
IT...

WALK
TO THE
BED...

THAT'S
IT...

NO... JUST
LOWER YOUR
BUM ONTO
THE BED... AS
YOU WOULD
SIT IN A
CHAIR.

NOW,
TAKE
YOUR
HANDS
OFF THE
WALL.

UNTIL
YOU
CALM
DOWN...

BREATHE
FOR A
WHILE...

OKAY
...

R-
RIGHT.

NOW
WHAT
SHOULD
I DO?!

I-I SAT
DOWN...

KEEP
GOING!

FOO!
HAA



THERE
WE GO,
STAND
UP...

OH RIGHT...
OKAY, WE'LL
GO FOR A
WALK IN THE
GARDEN
NOW...



WHAT
NEXT?

...

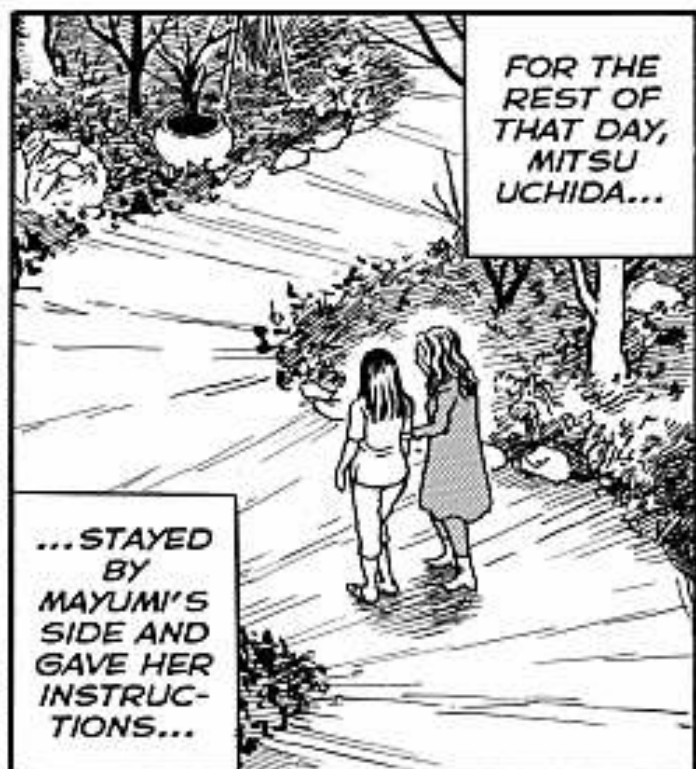


FOO!
HAA!

FOO!
HAA!



...AND
THAT
NIGHT, SHE
STAYED
WITH HER
UNTIL
SHE FELL
ASLEEP.



FOR THE
REST OF
THAT DAY,
MITSU
UCHIDA...

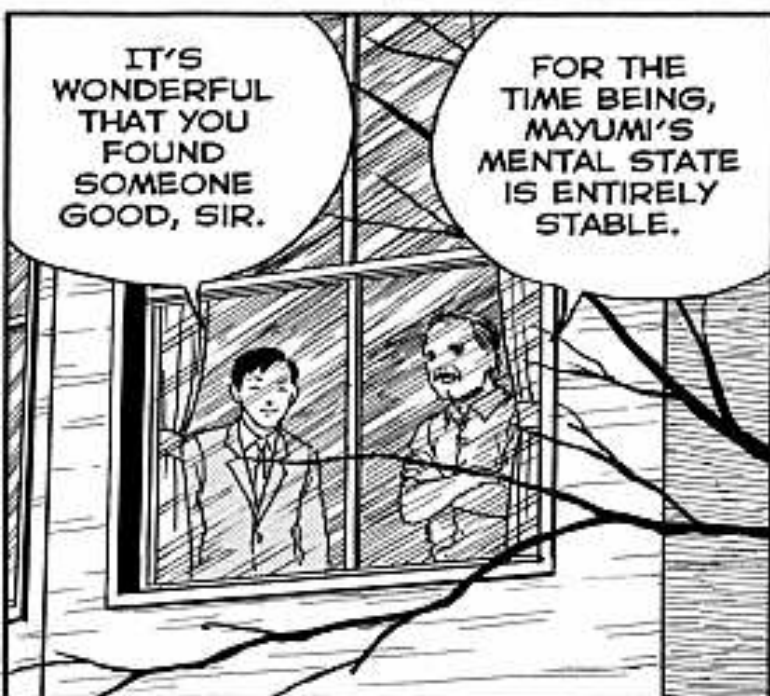
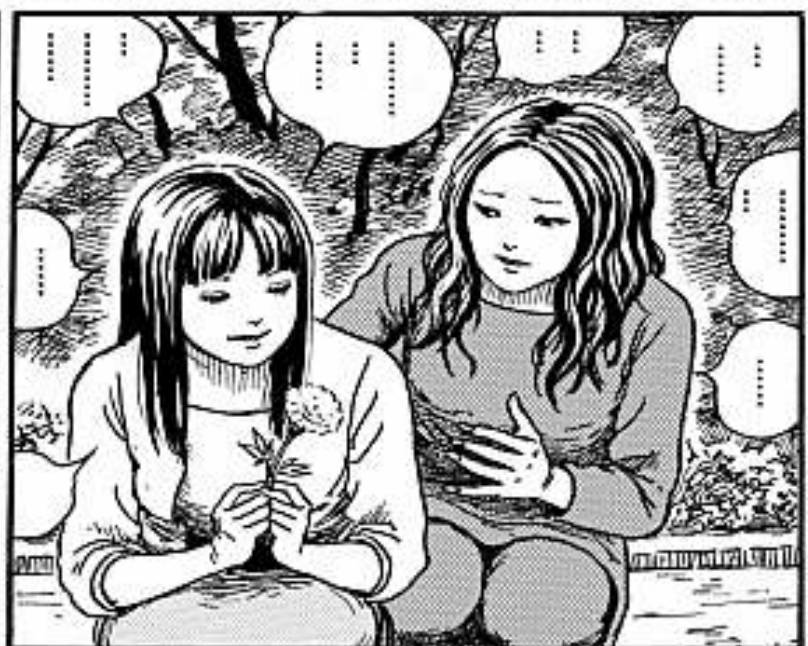
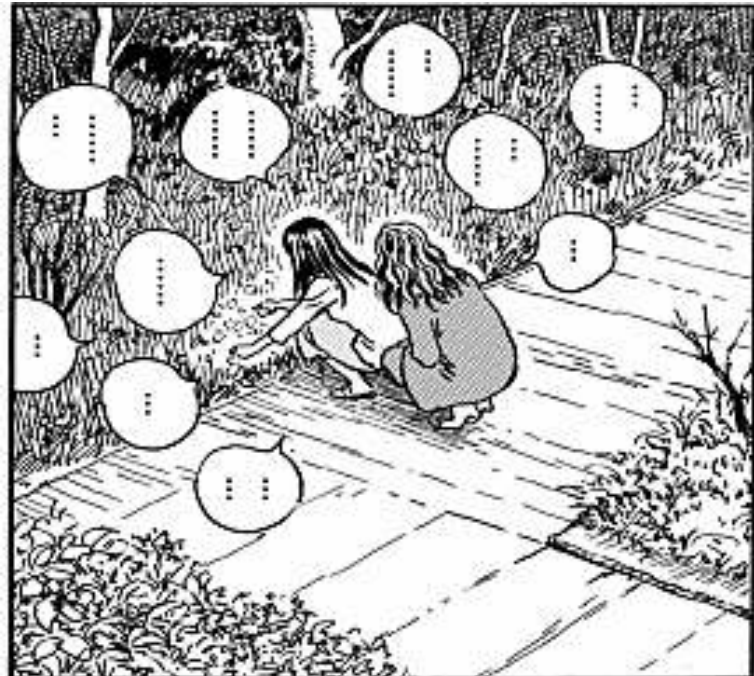
...STAYED
BY
MAYUMI'S
SIDE AND
GAVE HER
INSTRUC-
TIONS...



ALL
RIGHT...
THEN I'LL
SEE YOU
TOMORROW
AT EIGHT
A.M....

BUT THANKS TO
YOU, MAYUMI HAD A
STABLE DAY... COULD
I ASK YOU TO KEEP
COMING, STARTING
TOMORROW?

MS. UCHIDA,
I'M SORRY
FOR
THROWING YOU
INTO IT ON
YOUR FIRST
DAY...



IT'S
WONDERFUL
THAT YOU
FOUND
SOMEONE
GOOD, SIR.

FOR THE
TIME BEING,
MAYUMI'S
MENTAL STATE
IS ENTIRELY
STABLE.



LOOKING AT THE
SURVEILLANCE
FOOTAGE FROM
THE CAMERAS IN
THE HOUSE, SHE
NEVER NEGLECTS
HER DUTIES.

IT'S BEEN
A MONTH...
SHE'S THE
FIRST TO
HAVE EVER
STAYED THIS
LONG...

MITSU UCHIDA'S THE FIRST ONE WHO'S BEEN ABLE TO ACCOMPLISH THAT.

MAYUMI IS GOING OUT AND GOING SHOPPING OR HAVING DINNER WITHOUT ANY PROBLEMS...

MITSU UCHIDA'S THE FIRST ONE WHO'S BEEN ABLE TO ACCOMPLISH THAT.

MAYUMI IS GOING OUT AND GOING SHOPPING OR HAVING DINNER WITHOUT ANY PROBLEMS...

HER INSTRUCTIONS ARE DETAILED AND PRECISE.

IT'S TRUE SHE HAS REALLY DONE A GREAT JOB THIS MONTH.

HER INSTRUCTIONS ARE DETAILED AND PRECISE.

IT'S TRUE SHE HAS REALLY DONE A GREAT JOB THIS MONTH.

CONVERSELY, THERE'S ALSO SOMETHING CREEPY ABOUT IT...

BUT...


CONVERSELY, THERE'S ALSO SOMETHING CREEPY ABOUT IT...

BUT...

OF COURSE, MITSU IS CONSTANTLY ATTENDING HER THE WHOLE TIME...

...SHE MUST BE INCREDIBLY MENTALLY STRONG TO BE ABLE TO SUSTAIN THIS EXTREMELY DIFFICULT WORK.


THANKS TO HER, MAYUMI CAN DO THE THINGS SHE COULDN'T DO BY HERSELF.



OF COURSE, MITSU IS CONSTANTLY ATTENDING HER THE WHOLE TIME...

...SHE MUST BE INCREDIBLY MENTALLY STRONG TO BE ABLE TO SUSTAIN THIS EXTREMELY DIFFICULT WORK.


THANKS TO HER, MAYUMI CAN DO THE THINGS SHE COULDN'T DO BY HERSELF.



OF COURSE, MITSU IS CONSTANTLY ATTENDING HER THE WHOLE TIME...

...SHE MUST BE INCREDIBLY MENTALLY STRONG TO BE ABLE TO SUSTAIN THIS EXTREMELY DIFFICULT WORK.

THANKS TO HER, MAYUMI CAN DO THE THINGS SHE COULDN'T DO BY HERSELF.



...IN A CERTAIN SENSE, ITSELF AN ABNORMALITY.

BEING ABLE TO PUT UP WITH MAYUMI'S ABNORMAL DISPOSITION IS...

...IN A CERTAIN SENSE, ITSELF AN ABNORMALITY.

BEING ABLE TO PUT UP WITH MAYUMI'S ABNORMAL DISPOSITION IS...

SHE CONTINUALLY GAVE INSTRUCTIONS WITHOUT A BREAK FOR THE SIXTEEN OR SO HOURS MAYUMI WAS AWAKE.

THERE WAS INDEED SOMETHING ABNORMAL ABOUT MITSU UCHIDA'S WORK.



...MITSU DREW EVEN CLOSER TO MAYUMI'S EAR TO GIVE HER EVER MORE DETAILED INSTRUCTIONS.

AND ALTHOUGH SHE HAD BEEN GOING LIKE THIS FOR MORE THAN A MONTH, RATHER THAN EASING UP...

SHE STAGGERED HOME IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT.



IF YOU
KEEP THIS
UP, YOU'LL
RUIN YOUR
HEALTH.

NO, MITSU,
YOU'RE
EXHAUSTED...
TAKE
TOMORROW
OFF.

YES, SIR...
ALL RIGHT
THEN, I'LL
COME AGAIN
TOMORROW
MORNING AT
EIGHT.

MITSU,
THANK YOU
AGAIN FOR
ALL YOUR
HARD WORK
TODAY.

IS THAT
SO? WELL,
PLEASE
DON'T PUSH
YOURSELF
TOO HARD.

YOUR
ESSENTIAL
SELF...?

I FEEL LIKE THIS
WORK IS BRINGING
ME BACK TO MY
ESSENTIAL SELF...
THROUGH YOUR
DAUGHTER'S
HAPPINESS, I ALSO
FIND HAPPINESS...

I...
I LIKE
THIS
JOB...

NO...
I'M
FINE...

NO...IT'S
NOTHING...

GOOD
NIGHT.

WHAT?

SOMETIMES,
YOU SEEM TO
GET THESE
BRUISES ON
YOUR FACE.
IS ANYTHING
WRONG...?

THERE'S
ALSO...

OH, THAT
REMINDS
ME...

OH IT'S
YOU?
COME
IN.

SIR.

TWO
MONTHS
LATER

MM...

HOW HAS
MITSU BEEN
RECENTLY?

PROBABLY
TAKING A
WALK AS
USUAL.

HMM...

HOW ARE
YOUR
DAUGHTER
AND MITSU
TODAY?

WHAT
DO YOU
MEAN?

TO THE POINT
WHERE I GET
A SLIGHT
CHILL SEEING
HER THERE.

IN THE LAST
TWO MONTHS,
HER WORK
HAS REALLY
EXCEEDED THAT
OF A NORMAL
PERSON.

...NOT
NORMAL
...

MITSU'S
DEFI-
NITELY...

THAT'S RIGHT...THE
DETAILED CHOICES
OF EVERYDAY LIFE...
FOR INSTANCE,
WHETHER TO PUT
JAM ON YOUR BREAD
AT BREAKFAST OR
BUTTER...

GOOD
LUCK
...?

IN FACT,
SHE EVEN
BRINGS
MAYUMI
GOOD
LUCK.

EXHAUSTED AS
SHE IS, MITSU
CARRIES OUT
HER DUTIES
PERFECTLY...

TO PUT TWO
FLOWERS FROM
THE GARDEN IN
THE VASE OR
THREE...

NO...SHE
ACTUALLY
BRINGS
HER GOOD
LUCK.

IN OTHER
WORDS, IT'S
A FRAME OF
MIND. IS
THAT IT?

THANKS
TO HER,
MAYUMI
SEEMS
TO HAVE
GOOD
LUCK.

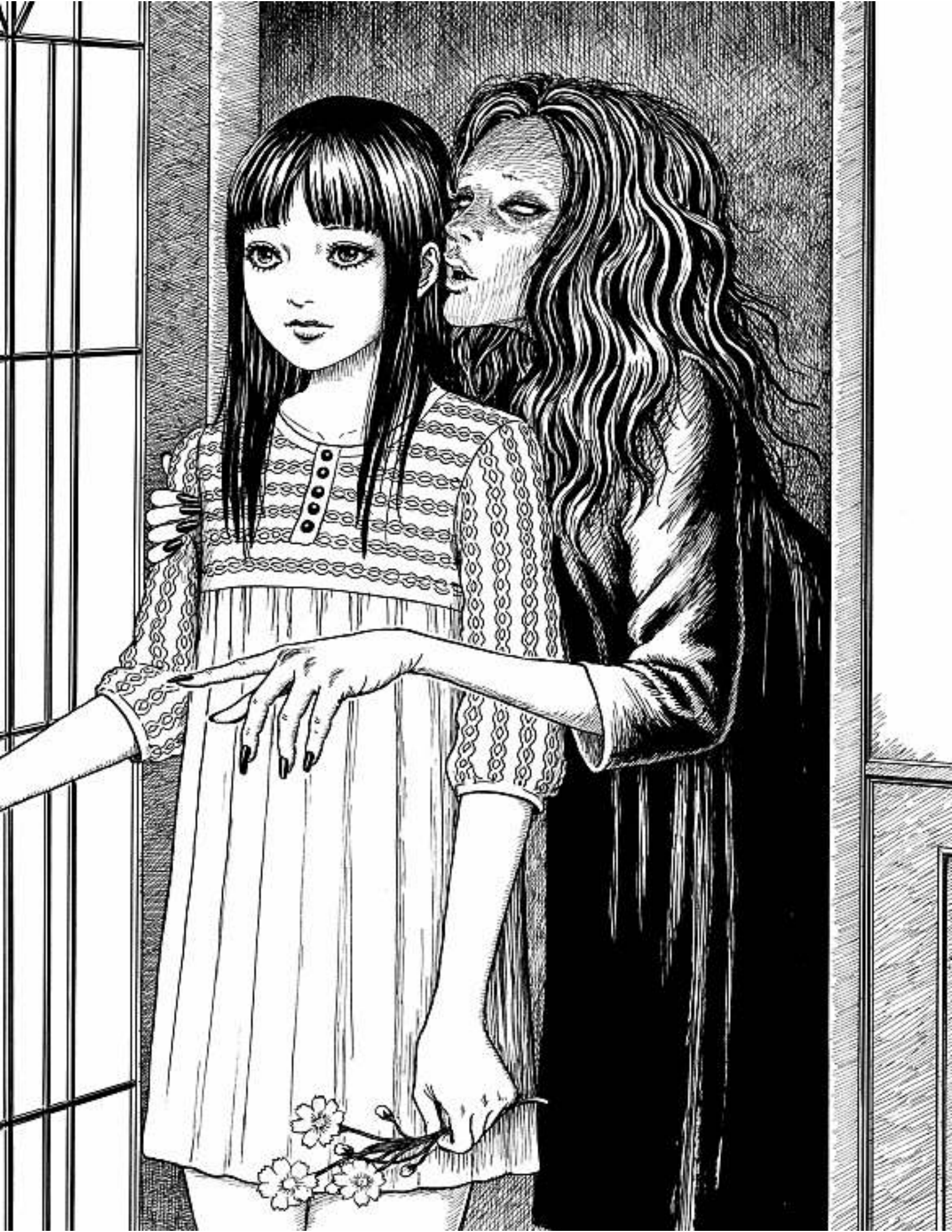
SHE WORKS
TO ADD THE
RESULTS OF
ALL THESE
CHOICES TO
MAYUMI.

AND THE TRUTH
IS, THE WALKING
ROUTE THE
GIRLS USUALLY
TAKE WOULD
HAVE BROUGHT
THEM TO THAT
LOCATION.

FOR INSTANCE,
LOOK. THAT TRUCK
ACCIDENT THE
OTHER DAY...MANY
OF THE PEOPLE
ON THE SIDEWALK
WERE KILLED OR
INJURED...

THAT DAY, MITSU
HAPPENED TO
CHANGE THEIR
ROUTE AND SO
THEY ESCAPED
WITHOUT
INCIDENT.









R-
RIGHT...



WHAT
DID I
TELL YOU,
SANNAN?



SLAM



WELL,
LET'S
HEAR
IT.

MM...I
DID HIRE
THEM TO
TRACE
HER,
DIDN'T
I?



THE RESULTS
OF THE
INVESTIGATION
INTO MITSU
UCHIDA HAVE
COME FROM
THE DETECTIVE
AGENCY.

INCIDENTALLY,
SIR...



HIS NAME IS
RYOICHI AGA.
HE'S UNEMPLOYED
AND SIMPLY LIES
AROUND MITSU'S
APARTMENT...A
KEPT MAN, IN
OTHER WORDS.

MITSU UCHIDA
IS SINGLE,
BUT SHE
APPARENTLY
LIVES WITH A
MAN...

FIRST
OF
ALL...



MITSU DOES
ANYTHING AGA
SAYS, AND HE
BEATS HER
BASICALLY
EVERY DAY.

EVERYTHING
SHE DOES
COMES
DOWN TO
AGA.

AGA IS QUITE
THE PLAYBOY,
AND HE
DEMANDS
MONEY FROM
MITSU FOR HIS
ENTERTAINMENT
EXPENSES.

HE SEEMS TO
SPEND PRETTY
MUCH ALL OF
THE MONEY
MITSU EARNES.

MITSU
WORKING LIKE
SHE'S BEING
FORCED
TO RUN IS
BECAUSE OF
HIM, IS IT?

I
SEE...

IT SEEMS
THE TRUTH
IS, HE
FORCED
MITSU
INTO IT.

HE'S THE ONE
WHO CAME
ACROSS THE
AD FOR AN
ATTENDANT
FOR YOUR
DAUGHTER,
AND THE
HIGH PAY.

IT IS
STRANGE
...

...DOES
THE
OPPOSITE
IN HER
PERSONAL
LIFE,
OBEYING
WHATEVER
THIS MAN
SAYS.

IT'S A STRANGE
THING...THIS
WOMAN WHO
GIVES MAYUMI
SUCH WISE
AND ACCURATE
INSTRUCTIONS...

YES...

AFTER
ALL, YOUR
DAUGHTER'S
ATTENDANT IS
SUFFERING.

AT ANY
RATE, SIR...
THIS ISN'T
A PROBLEM
WE CAN
SIMPLY
IGNORE.

...YOU COULD SAY
THAT MITSU'S BEEN
ABLE TO WORK WITH
SUCH FOCUS UP TO
NOW BECAUSE OF
THIS MAN, AGA.

BUT WE CAN'T DO
ANYTHING ABOUT
HER PRIVATE
LIFE...AND...





THE POLICE SUSPECTED THE MAN SHE LIVED WITH, AGA, HAD BEATEN HER TO DEATH. HE WAS PUT ON THE NATIONAL WANTED LIST.

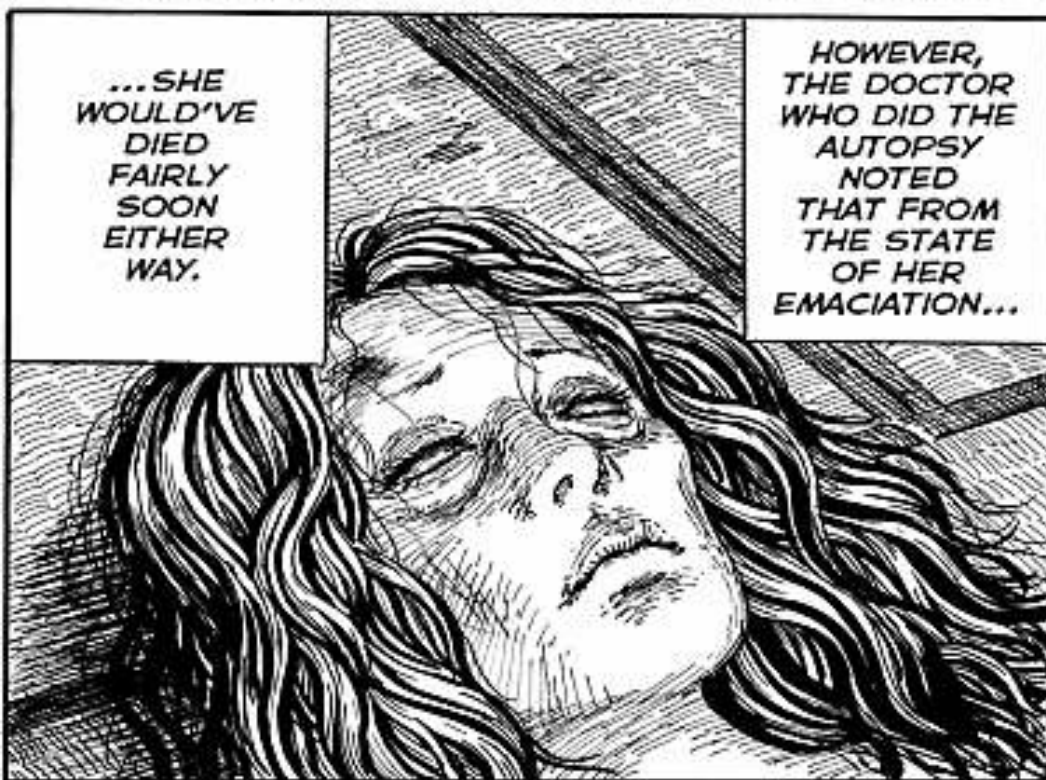
THERE WERE EXTERNAL INJURIES ON HER BODY, AND THESE WERE DETERMINED TO BE THE DIRECT CAUSE OF DEATH.



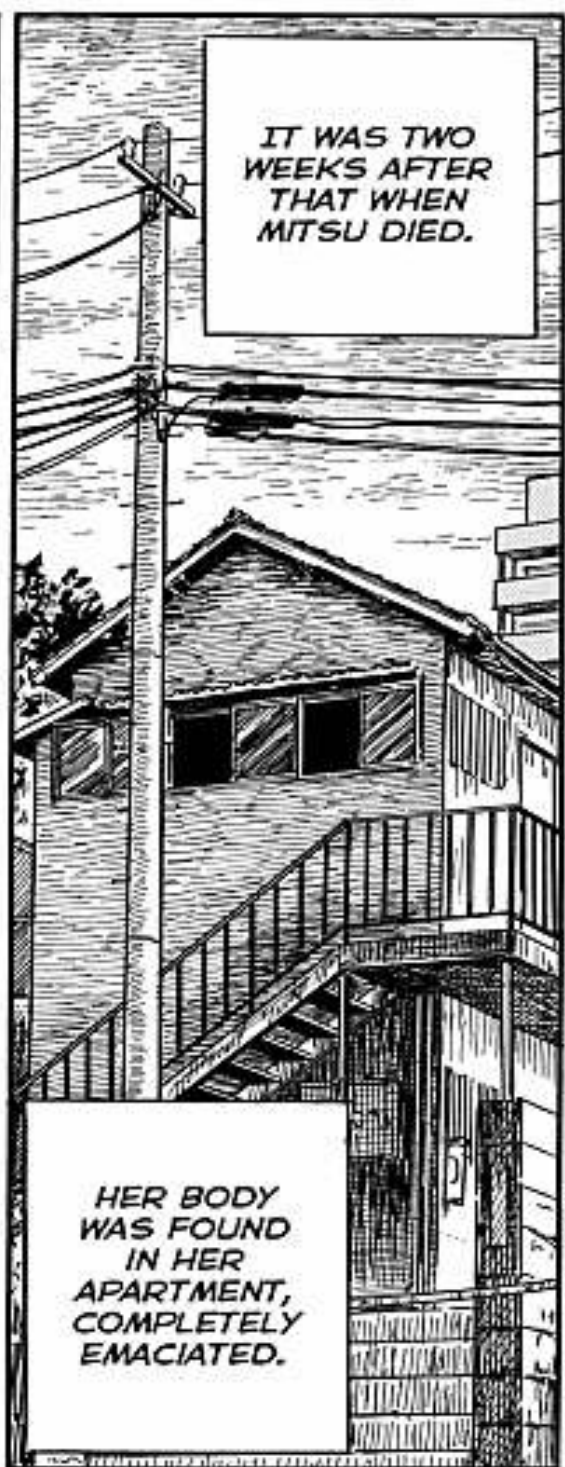
IT WAS TWO WEEKS AFTER THAT WHEN MITSU DIED.

...SHE WOULD'VE DIED FAIRLY SOON EITHER WAY.

HOWEVER, THE DOCTOR WHO DID THE AUTOPSY NOTED THAT FROM THE STATE OF HER EMACIATION...



HER BODY WAS FOUND IN HER APARTMENT, COMPLETELY EMACIATED.



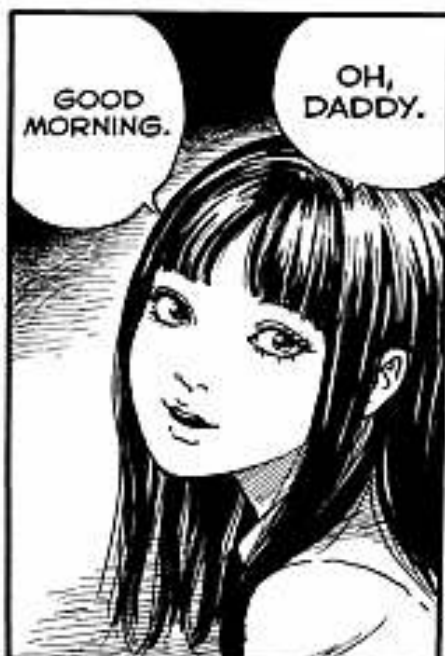


KACHAK



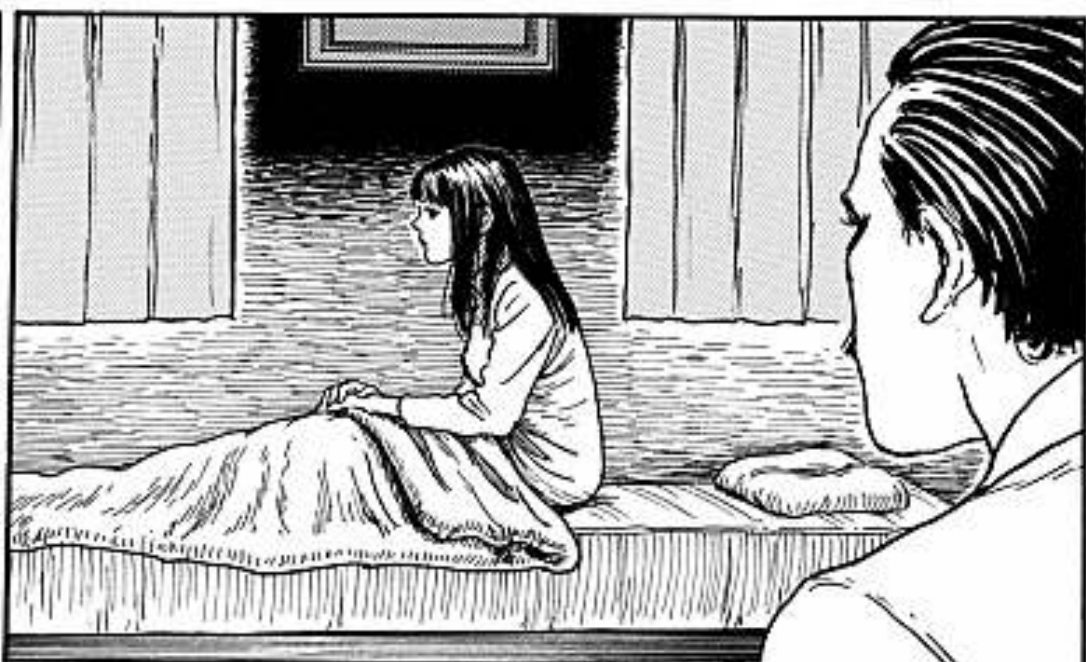
THIS IS
TERRIBLE!!

WHAT WILL
HAPPEN
TO MAYUMI
WITHOUT
MITSU?!



GOOD
MORNING.

OH,
DADDY.



THAT
TICKLES
...

HEE
HEE!



WHAT?!



IF YOU'RE
LOOKING FOR
MITSU, SHE'S
RIGHT HERE.



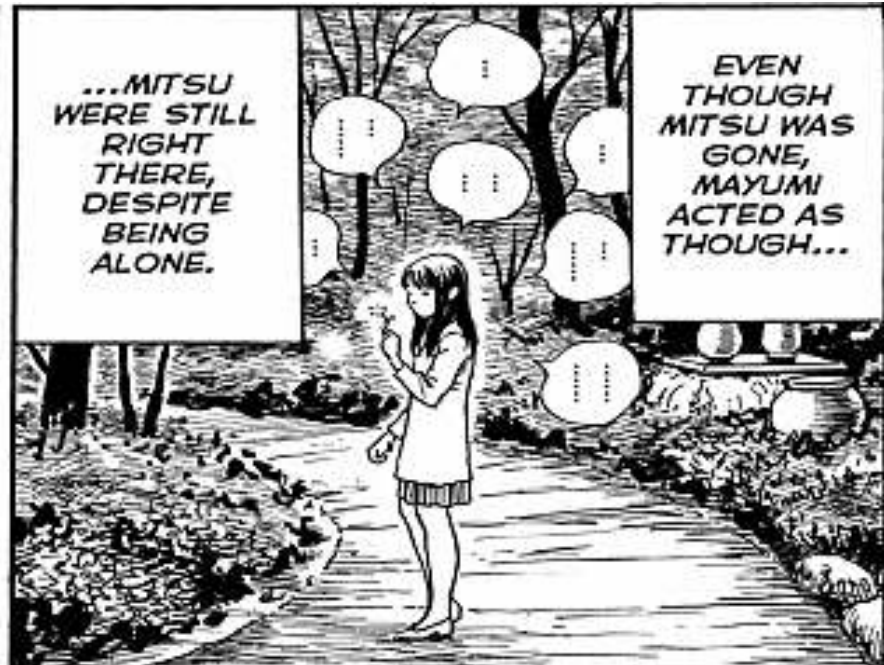
MAYUMI...
THE
TRUTH IS,
MITSU...

OR MAYBE
MITSU'S
GHOST
REALLY WAS
THERE...

PERHAPS
IT WAS A
DELUSION
OF MAYUMI'S
THAT MITSU
WAS STILL
THERE...

...MITSU
WERE STILL
RIGHT
THERE,
DESPITE
BEING
ALONE.

EVEN
THOUGH
MITSU WAS
GONE,
MAYUMI
ACTED AS
THOUGH...



...MR. SANTO
FELT LIKE HE
COULD ALSO
HEAR MITSU'S
WHISPERING.



WHISPER
WHISPER
WHISPER
WHISPER

OCCA-
SIONALLY,
WHEN HE
LISTENED
CLOSELY
...

HAVING BEEN
COMPLETELY
AGA'S
PUPPET IN
HER PRIVATE
LIFE...

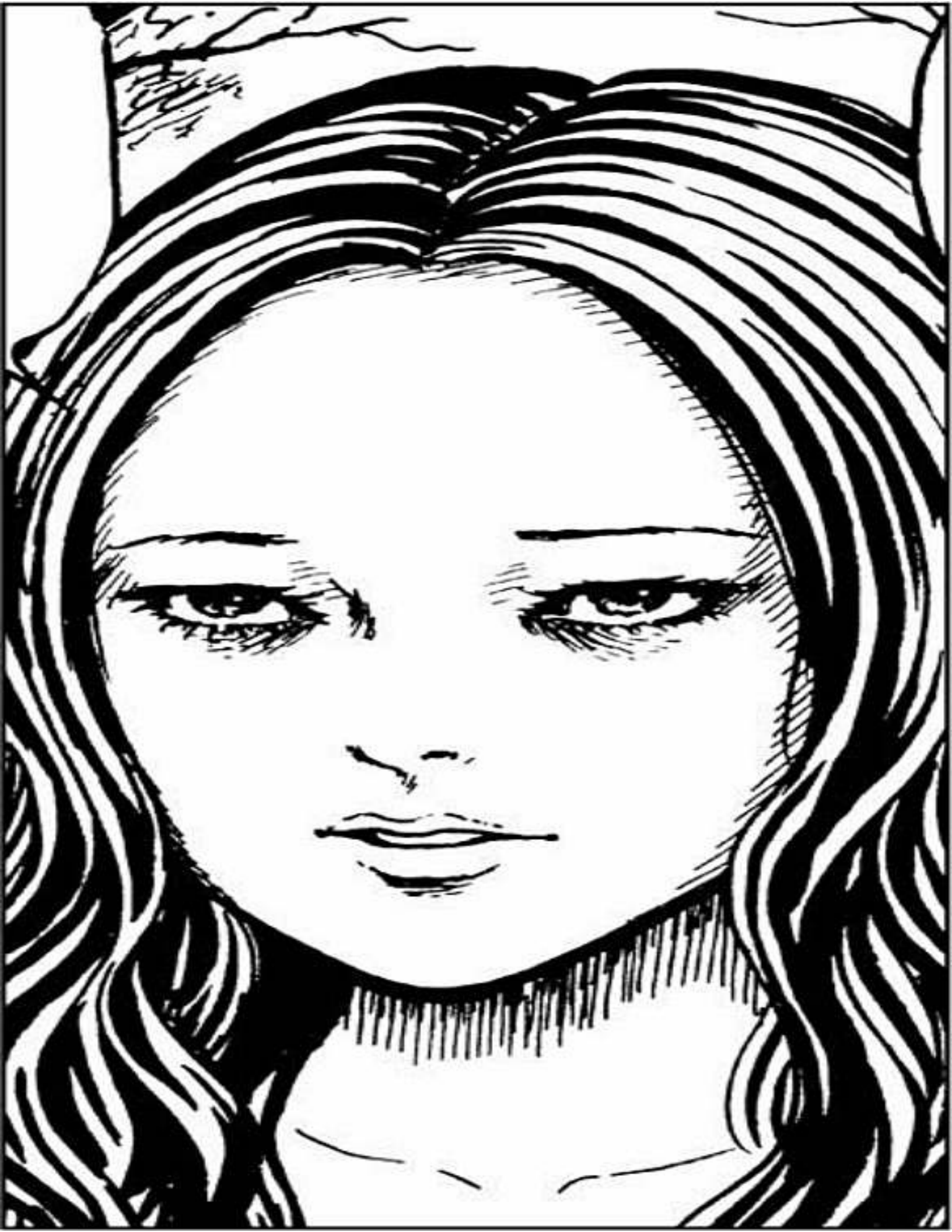
...MAYBE
THE WORK
LET MITSU
START OVER
IN ANOTHER
LIFE
THROUGH
MAYUMI.

WHEN SHE WAS
ALIVE, MITSU
SAID SHE FELT
LIKE THIS JOB
WAS GIVING
HER BACK HER
ESSENTIAL
SELF.









AFTERWORD

SO THIS IS MY FIRST COLLECTION OF HORROR STORIES IN EIGHT YEARS. EVER SINCE I PUT OUT *SHIN YAMI NO KOE KAI DAN* IN 2006.

DURING THOSE EIGHT YEARS, I WAS DOING PLENTY OF WORK ON ILLUSTRATIONS AND MANGA ABOUT CATS OR ABOUT SOCIETY, BUT EVEN TAKING THAT INTO ACCOUNT, THE TIME SEEMS TOO EMPTY SOMEHOW. WHAT ON EARTH WAS I DOING ALL THAT TIME? WELL, I DO REMEMBER A BUNCH OF THINGS—LIKE SOME REALLY DETAILED WORK AND A BUSY PRIVATE LIFE—BUT EVEN STILL, EIGHT YEARS?! IT IS TRUE THAT I'M NOT AS STRONG AS I USED TO BE AND I COULDN'T WORK ANY FASTER THAN I WAS, BUT I FEEL LIKE I WASTED A WHOLE LOT OF TIME. DURING THIS PERIOD, MR. TOSHIYASU HARADA, MY EDITOR, A MAN WHO HAD BEEN SO GOOD TO ME FOR SO MANY YEARS AT ASAHI SONORAMA, PASSED AWAY. I HAD WANTED TO WORK WITH MR. HARADA AGAIN, SO WHEN HE PASSED AWAY, HE LEFT A GAPING HOLE IN MY HEART. OH, AND A FEW HOURS AFTER MR. HARADA LEFT US, OUR CAT YONSUKE ALSO DIED (THE MODEL FOR THE MONSTER CAT YON THAT SHOWS UP IN MY CAT MANGA). IT MIGHT BE A COINCIDENCE, BUT I EXPERIENCED IT AS A MYSTERIOUS SORT OF CONNECTION.

AND SO, A COLLECTION OF HORROR STORIES AFTER EIGHT YEARS. WHEN HE SAW MY FIRST STORYBOARD FOR THE FIRST STORY, "FUTON," MY EDITOR MR. YOSHIDA GOT WORRIED AND CALLED ME. HE FELT THAT MY INSTINCTS FOR HORROR HADN'T RETURNED. I DON'T KNOW IF IT WAS BECAUSE I HADN'T DRAWN HORROR IN SUCH A LONG TIME, BUT IT WAS INDEED A SUB-PAR STORYBOARD. I REDID THE WHOLE THING, BUT IT STILL DIDN'T QUITE COME TOGETHER FOR ME; IT WAS A RELUCTANT START TO MY FIRST HORROR SERIALIZATION IN SOME TIME. I WENT ON TO DRAW SIX MORE STORIES AFTER THAT, SO MAYBE IN THE END MY HORROR INSTINCTS HAVE RETURNED...?

AT ANY RATE, I'M VERY HAPPY TO HAVE THIS COLLECTION PUBLISHED. I WANT TO OFFER MY SINCEREST GRATITUDE TO EVERYONE IN THE *NEMUKI+* EDITORIAL DIVISION WHO GAVE ME THIS OPPORTUNITY, STARTING WITH MY EDITORS MIKIO YOSHIDA AND MAKIKO HARA, AND TO KEISUKE MINOHARA OF ROCKET BOMB WHO DID THE COVER DESIGN.

JUNJI ITO
APRIL 30, 2014



About the Author

Junji Ito made his professional manga debut in 1987 and since then has gone on to be recognized as one of the greatest contemporary artists working in the horror genre. His titles include *Tomie* and *Uzumaki*, which have been adapted into live-action films, and *Gyo*, which was adapted into an animated film. Ito's influences include classic horror manga artists Kazuo Umezu and Hideshi Hino, as well as authors Yasutaka Tsutsui and H.P. Lovecraft.



Fragments of Horror

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FRAGMENTS OF HORROR is rated T+ for Older Teen
and is recommended for ages 16 and up. This volume
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