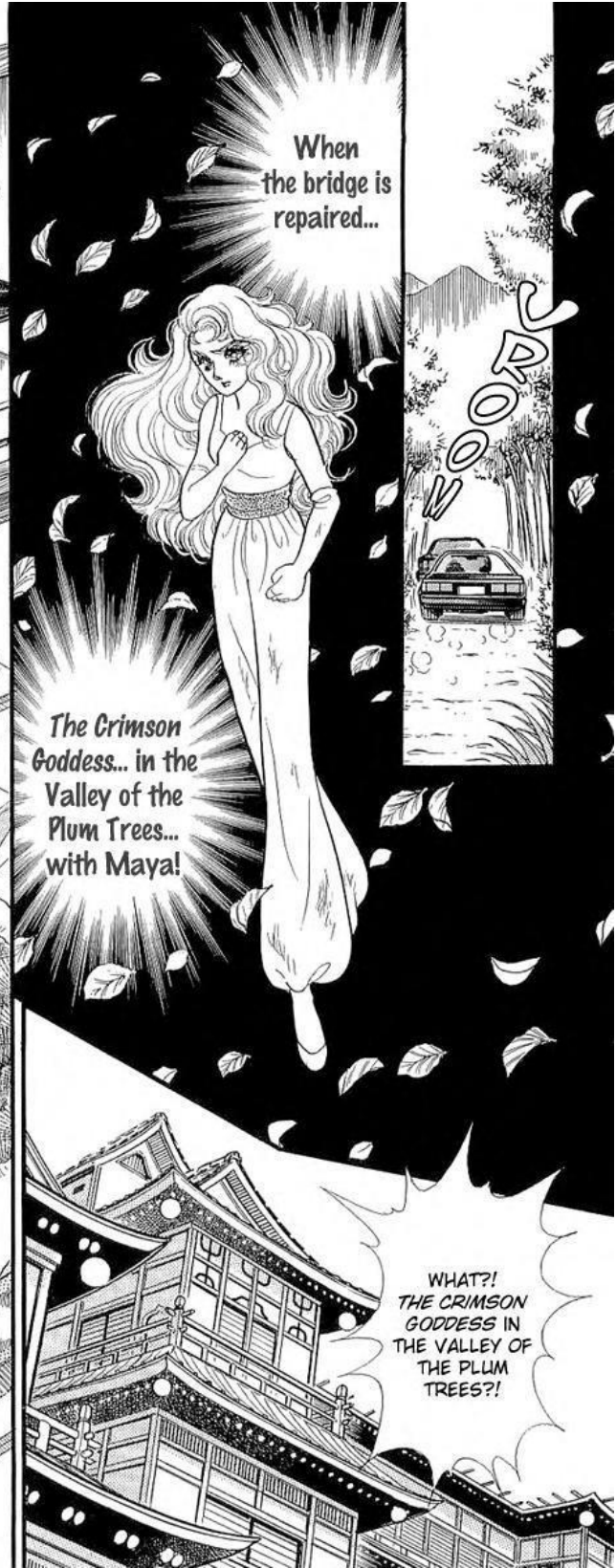




SHE REALLY SAID THAT?

CHIGUSA TSUKIKAGE WILL PERFORM THE TRUE CRIMSON GODDESS?!

PRE... PRESIDENT, YOU MUSTN'T GET SO WORKED UP...

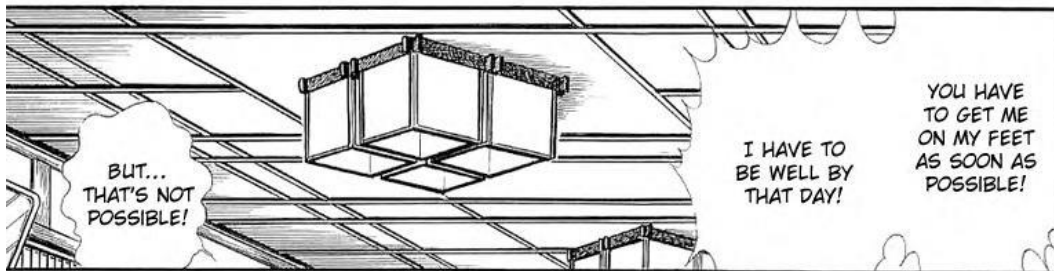
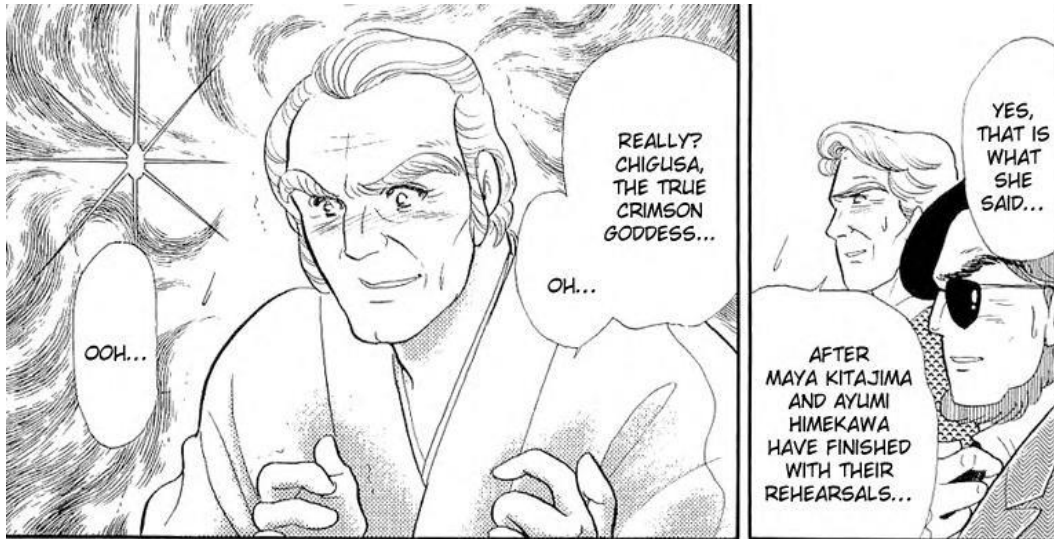


When the bridge is repaired...

The Crimson Goddess... in the Valley of the Plum Trees... with Maya!

ROAD

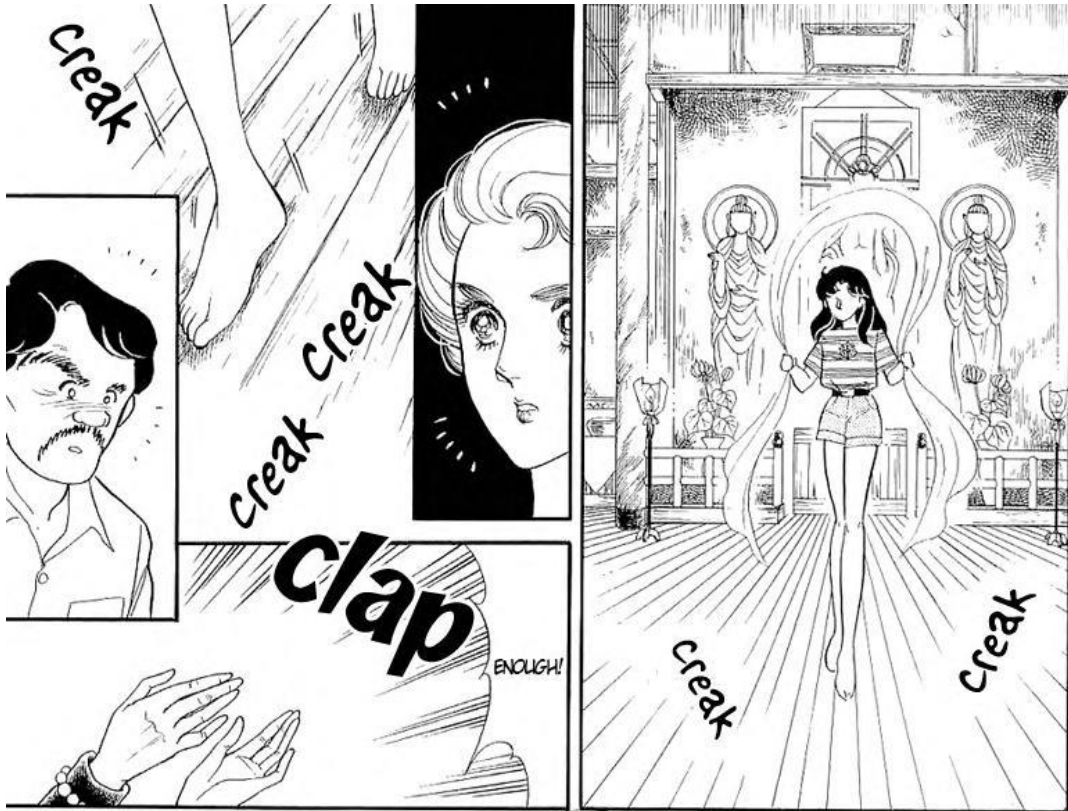
WHAT?! THE CRIMSON GODDESS IN THE VALLEY OF THE PLUM TREES?!

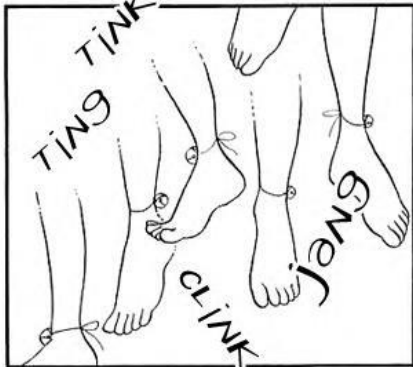




LET'S BEGIN WITH AYUMI.

YES.







A HUMAN WOULD MAKE THE FLOOR CREAK, WHILE A GODDESS WOULD GLIDE ACROSS IT.

THE CRIMSON GODDESS IS NOT HUMAN.
YOU MUST EXPRESS THAT EVEN IN YOUR STEPS.



WHILE MAYA'S IS JARRING.
I THINK IT'S CLEAR THAT AYUMI'S WALK HAS A CERTAIN RHYTHM,



MUST BE UNEARTHLY, UNLIKE ANY HUMAN'S.

YOUR MANNER OF WALKING,
OF MOVING, OF TALKING, BEHAVIOR, EXPRESSION...

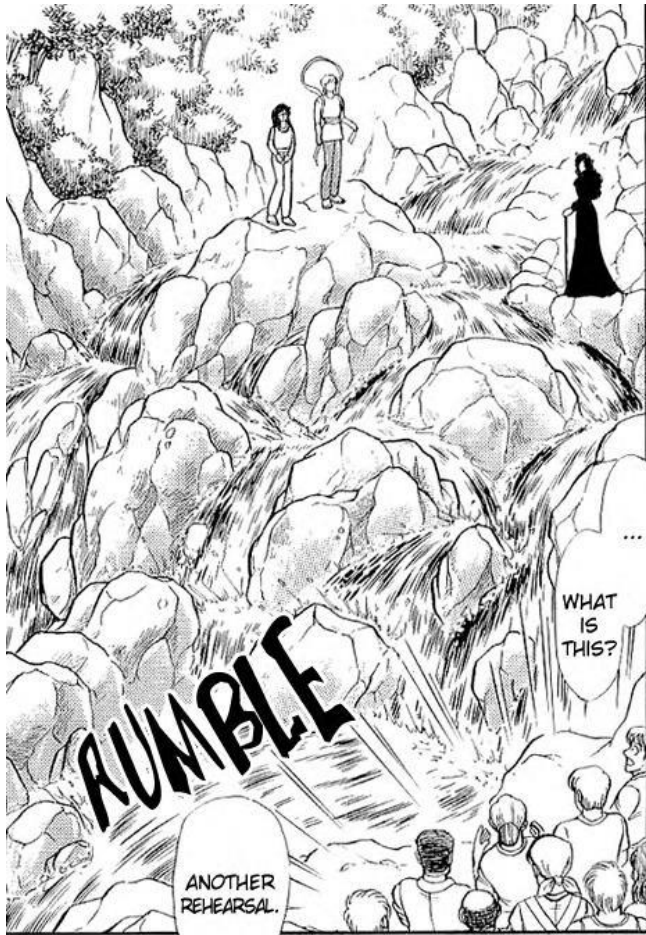
THE AUDIENCE HAS TO KNOW AT FIRST GLANCE THAT THEY ARE LOOKING AT THE SPIRIT OF THE PLUM TREE, A GODDESS.

SO THAT ON THE STAGE, YOU CAN BECOME HER.

YOU'LL HAVE TO UNDERSTAND THE CRIMSON GODDESS WITH YOUR MIND AND HEART,

EVEN THE FLOOR WAS CREAKING ITS COMPLAINTS.





ANOTHER REHEARSAL.

WHAT IS THIS?

CHATTER



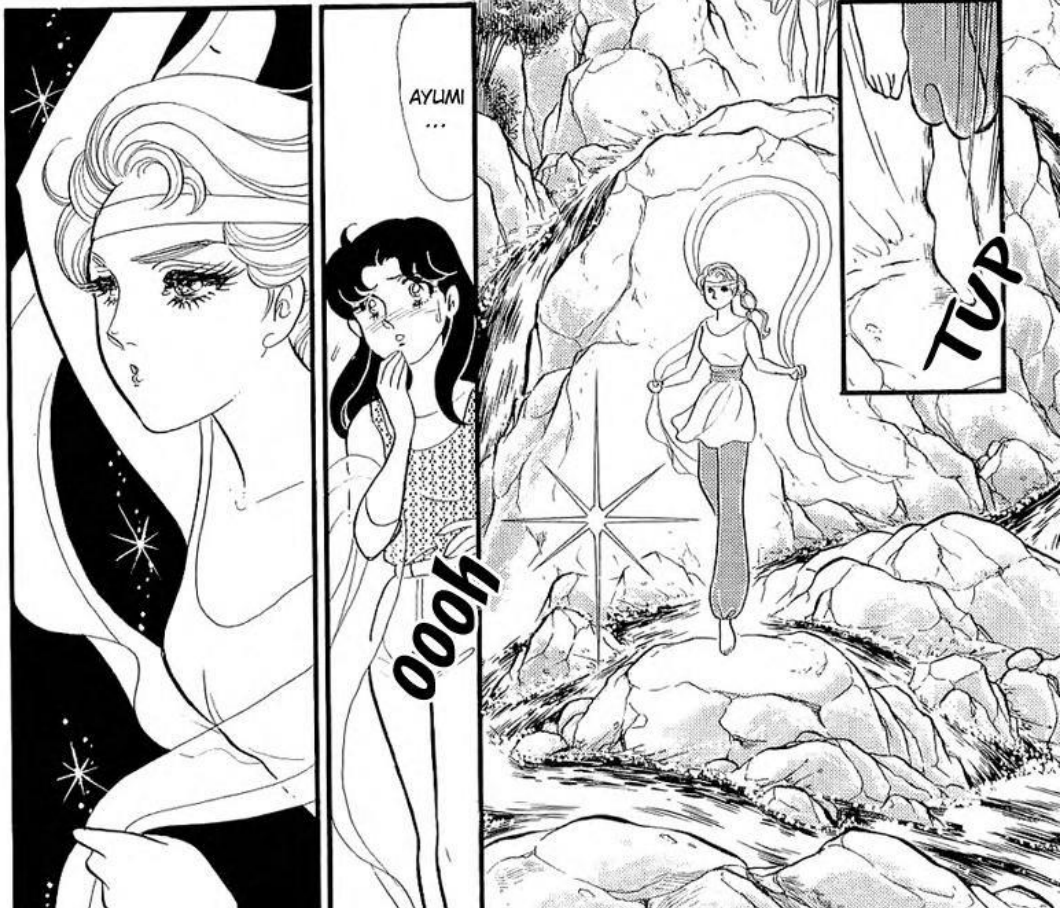
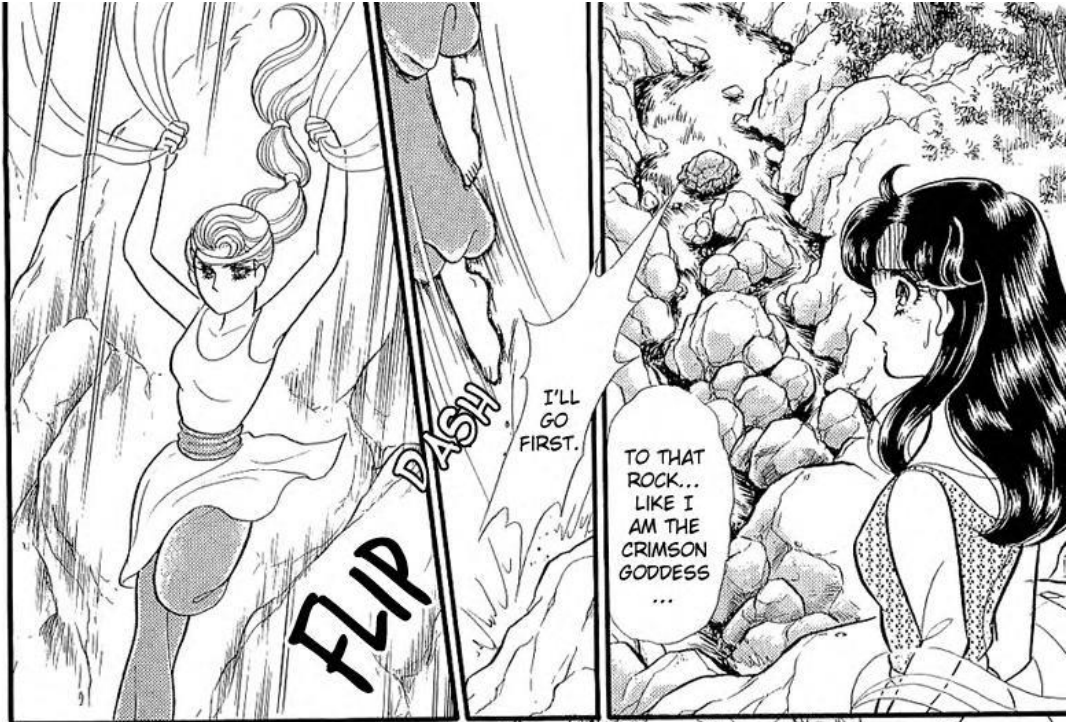
I AGREE.

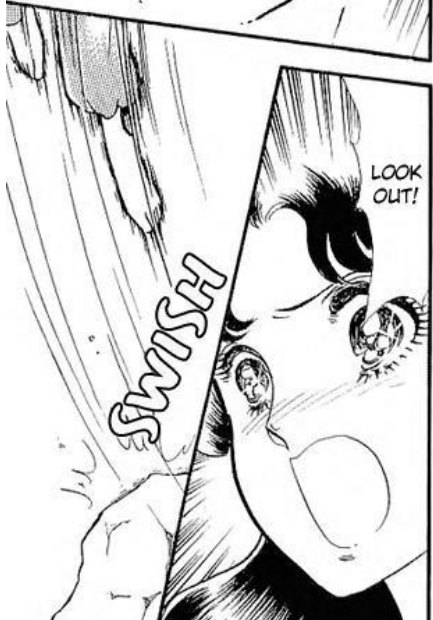
CHATTER



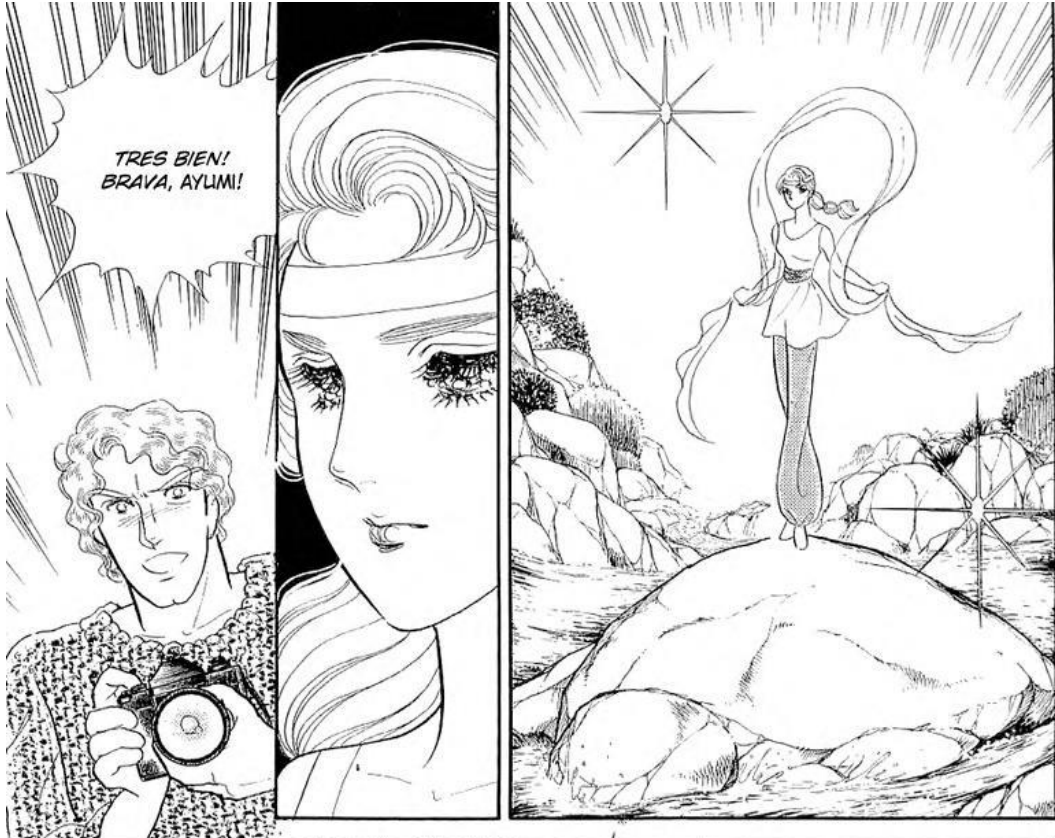
YOU WILL WALK, AS THE CRIMSON GODDESS, TO THAT TURTLE-SHAPED ROCK.











TRES BIEN!
BRAVA, AYUMI!



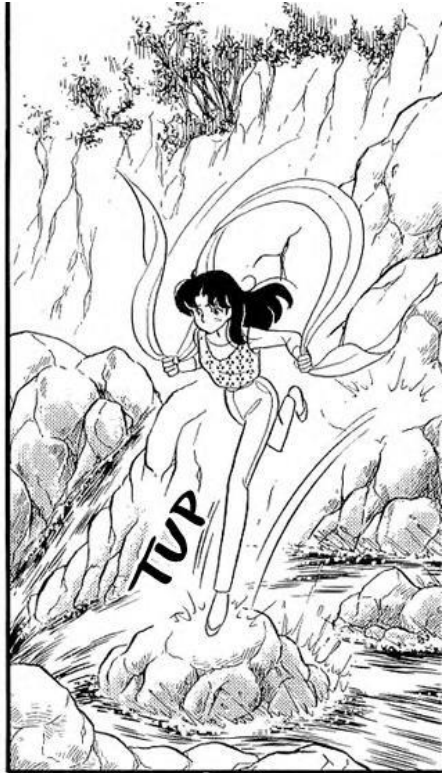
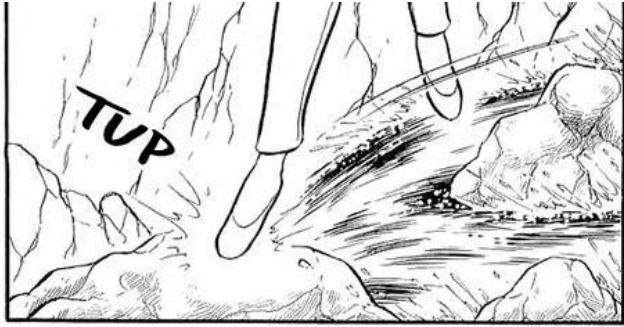
RUMBLE



MAYA!
YOUR
TURN!

Rather than jumping from rock to rock, she seemed to be dancing...
Ayumi is incredible! So beautiful...

I can't do that! I can't do what she just did!





That's right!

I knew it!

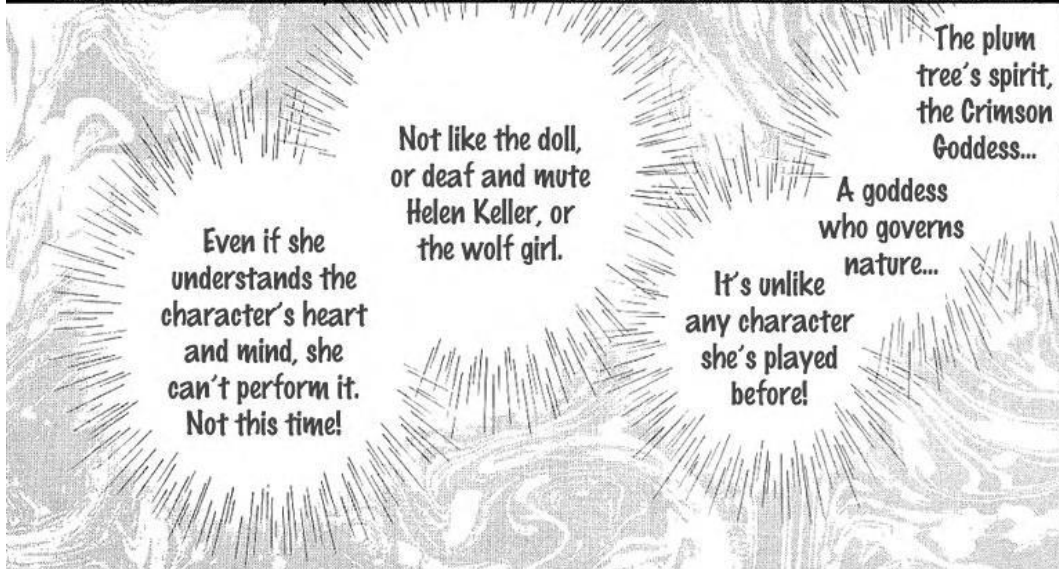
AH!

MAYA!

slip

Her physical ability is nowhere near mine.

Maya may understand the Crimson Goddess, but she can't move like her.



The plum tree's spirit, the Crimson Goddess...

A goddess who governs nature...

It's unlike any character she's played before!

Not like the doll, or deaf and mute Helen Keller, or the wolf girl.

Even if she understands the character's heart and mind, she can't perform it. Not this time!

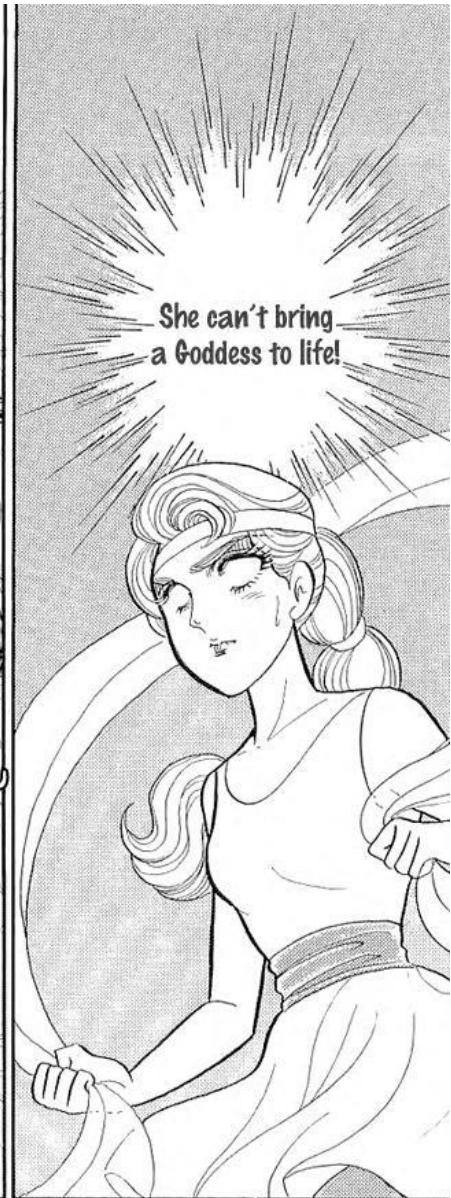


This is Maya's
weak point!



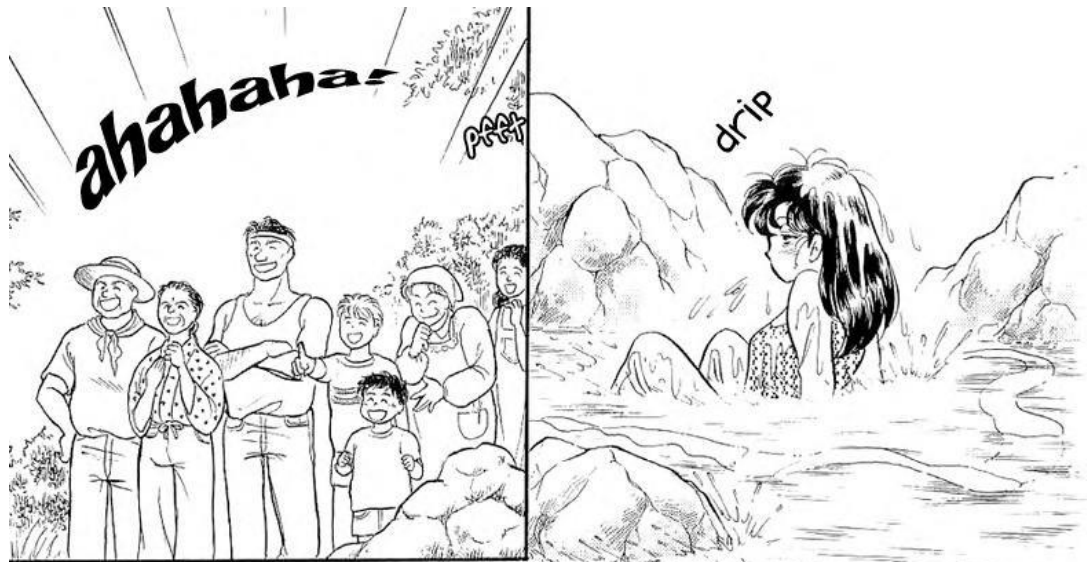
That requires
technique!

Artistic
training!



She can't bring
a Goddess to life!







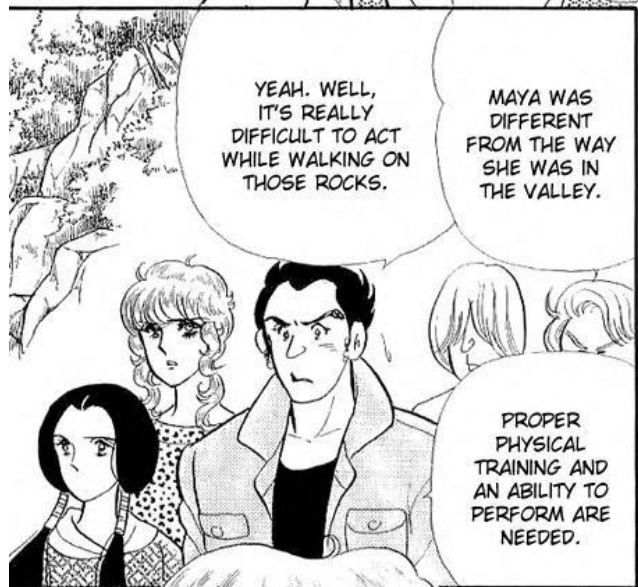


I'm so embarrassed!

I can't believe I fell in front of Ayumi!



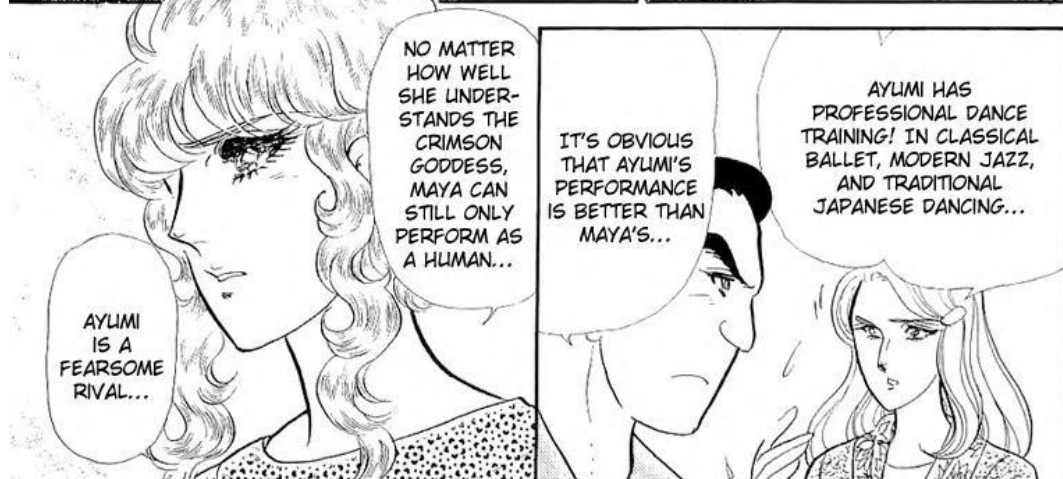
MAYA!



YEAH. WELL, IT'S REALLY DIFFICULT TO ACT WHILE WALKING ON THOSE ROCKS.

MAYA WAS DIFFERENT FROM THE WAY SHE WAS IN THE VALLEY.

PROPER PHYSICAL TRAINING AND AN ABILITY TO PERFORM ARE NEEDED.

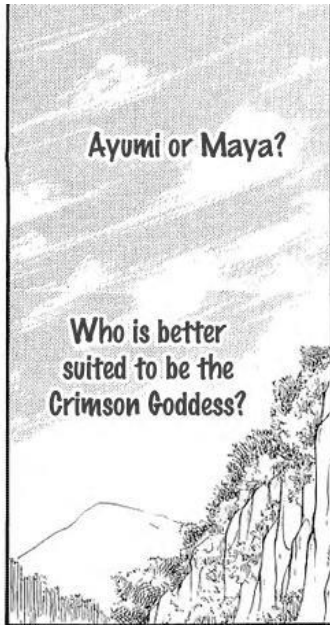


AYUMI IS A FEARSOME RIVAL...

NO MATTER HOW WELL SHE UNDERSTANDS THE CRIMSON GODDESS, MAYA CAN STILL ONLY PERFORM AS A HUMAN...

IT'S OBVIOUS THAT AYUMI'S PERFORMANCE IS BETTER THAN MAYA'S...

AYUMI HAS PROFESSIONAL DANCE TRAINING! IN CLASSICAL BALLET, MODERN JAZZ, AND TRADITIONAL JAPANESE DANCING...



Ayumi or Maya?

Who is better suited to be the Crimson Goddess?

Even though Maya understands the heart of the Crimson Goddess, her performance is still lacking...



Chigusa-san, is this what you meant when you said Ayumi is in the lead?



I wonder why?

Ayumi asked if we could both do that exercise...

Did she want to get a better idea of my abilities?

STOP



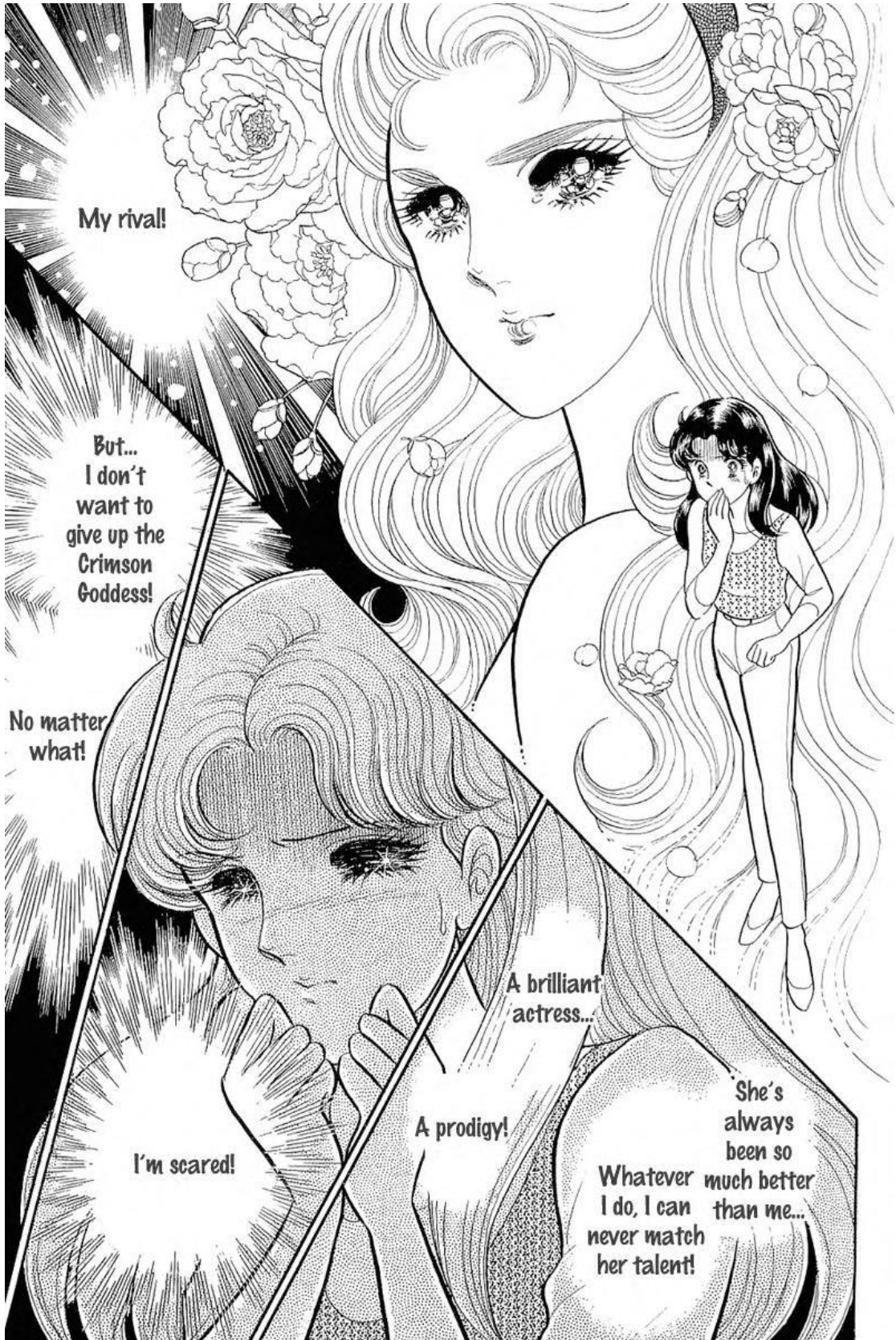
Against such a rival, it's hopeless...

I can never be her equal.



UHM...

Ayumi grew up in the world of showbusiness. She was specially trained, since she's so gifted...



My rival!

But...
I don't
want to
give up the
Crimson
Goddess!

No matter
what!

A brilliant
actress...

I'm scared!

A prodigy!

She's
always
been so
much better
than me...
Whatever
I do, I can
never match
her talent!

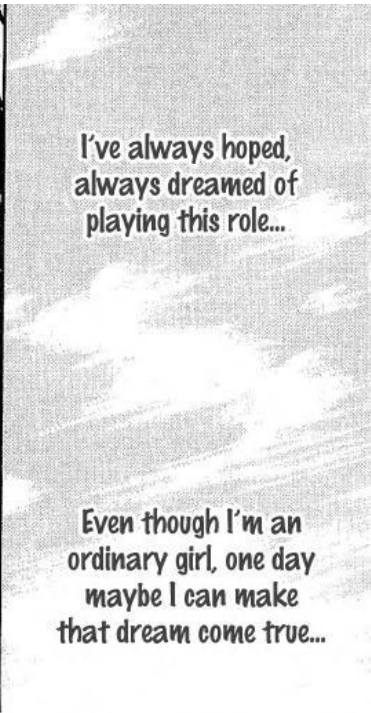


My
Crimson
Goddess
has to be
somewhere!

I must not
lose hope!

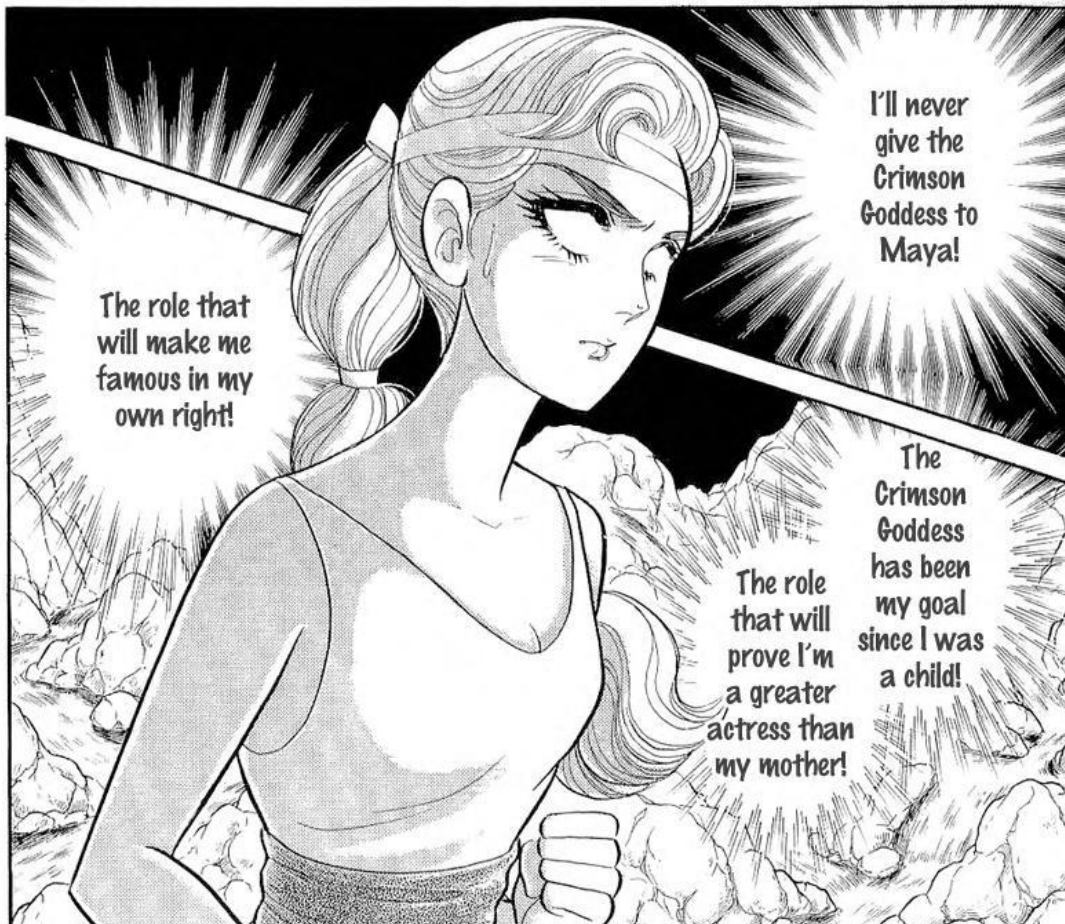


Because
all I have
is acting...



I've always hoped,
always dreamed of
playing this role...

Even though I'm an
ordinary girl, one day
maybe I can make
that dream come true...

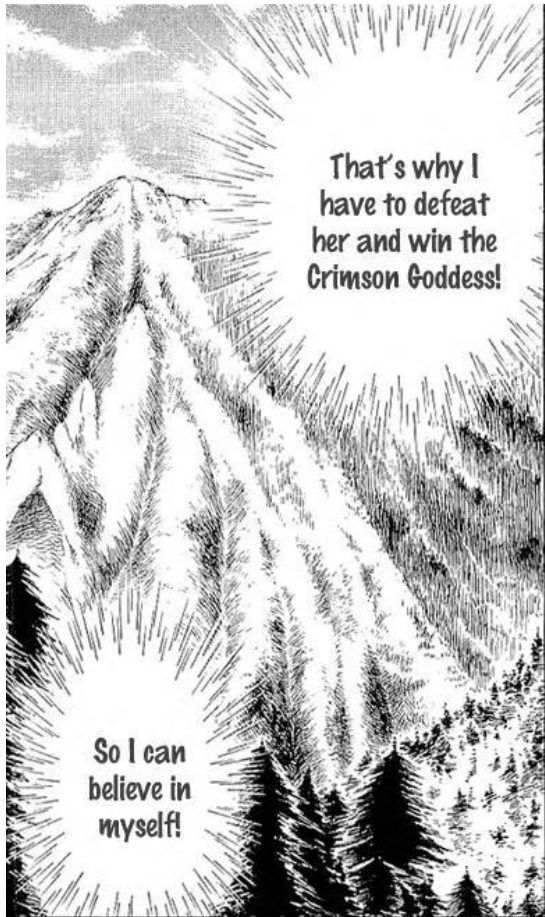


The role that
will make me
famous in my
own right!

I'll never
give the
Crimson
Goddess to
Maya!

The
Crimson
Goddess
has been
my goal
since I was
a child!

The role
that will
prove I'm
a greater
actress than
my mother!



That's why I
have to defeat
her and win the
Crimson Goddess!

So I can
believe in
myself!



But now
that I've met
Maya,

I've learned
that hard
work is not
true genius...

This is
what I've
worked so
hard for!

She's
the real
prodigy!

Since I was
a child, people
called me a
prodigy, but no
one knew my
true abilities...



What
must I do
to defeat
Ayumi?

What
must
I do?



I shall bring
my Crimson
Goddess to
life!

She will be
different from
Maya's!
Better!



I won't be
defeated by
Maya!

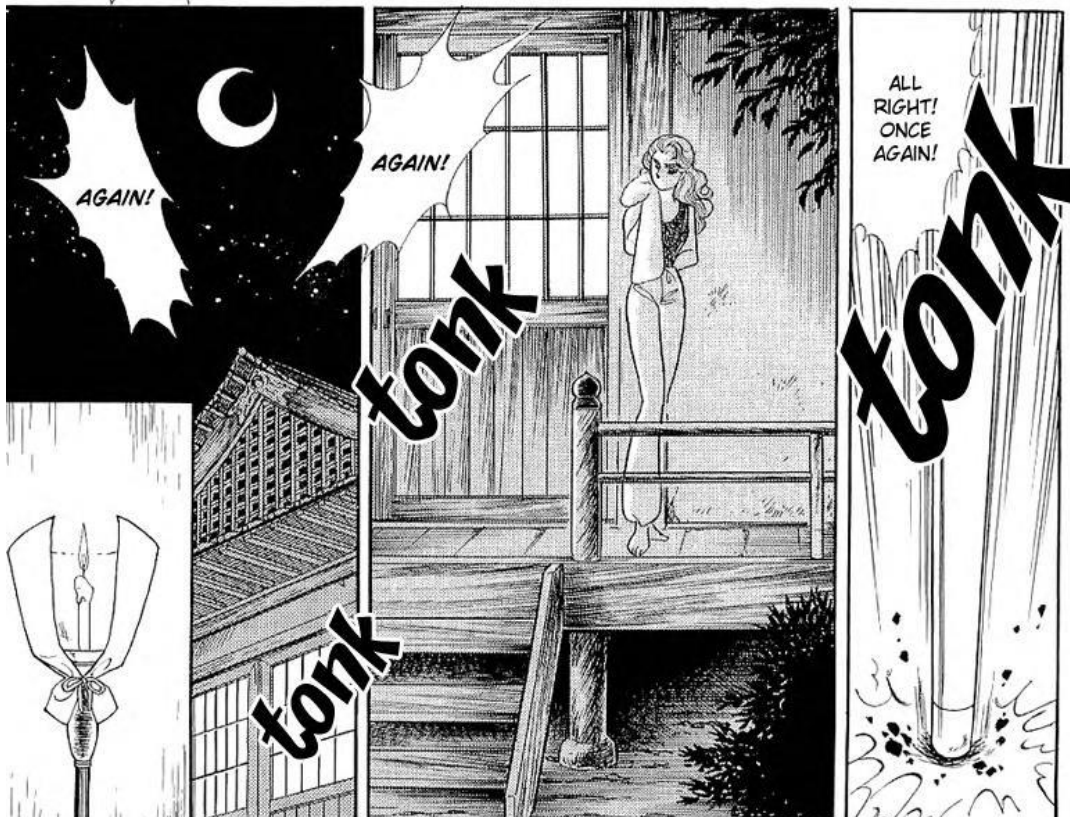
I won't be
defeated by
Ayumi!



The Crimson
Goddess is mine!









DO THEY NOT HEAR THE CRY OF THE EARTH?

DO THEY NOT HEAR THE VOICE OF THE HEAVENS?



DO THEY NOT HEAR THE VOICE OF THE HEAVENS?

DO THEY NOT HEAR THE CRY OF THE EARTH?



WHY CAN THEY NOT SEE?

THEY BRING NAUGHT BUT EVIL INTO THE WORLD.

HOW CAN THEY NOT UNDERSTAND THAT BY ALLOWING EVIL TO TAINT THEIR THOUGHTS, THEY SEAL THEIR OWN FATE?



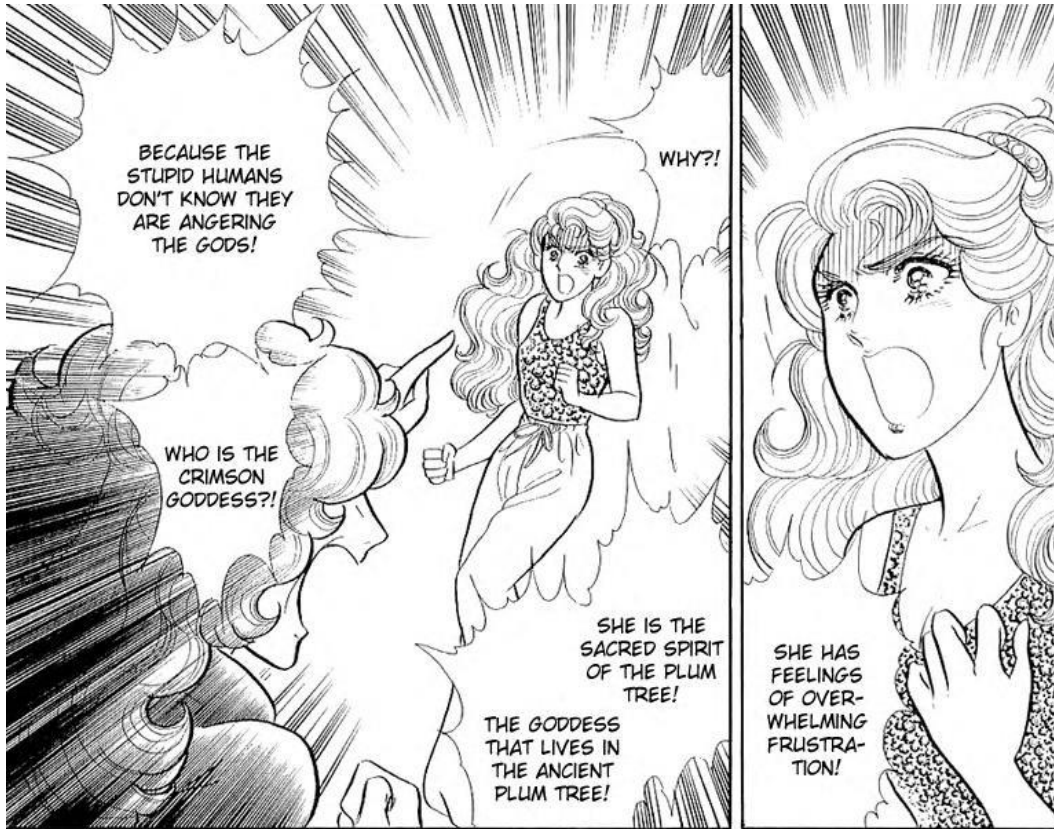
WHY CAN THEY NOT SEE?

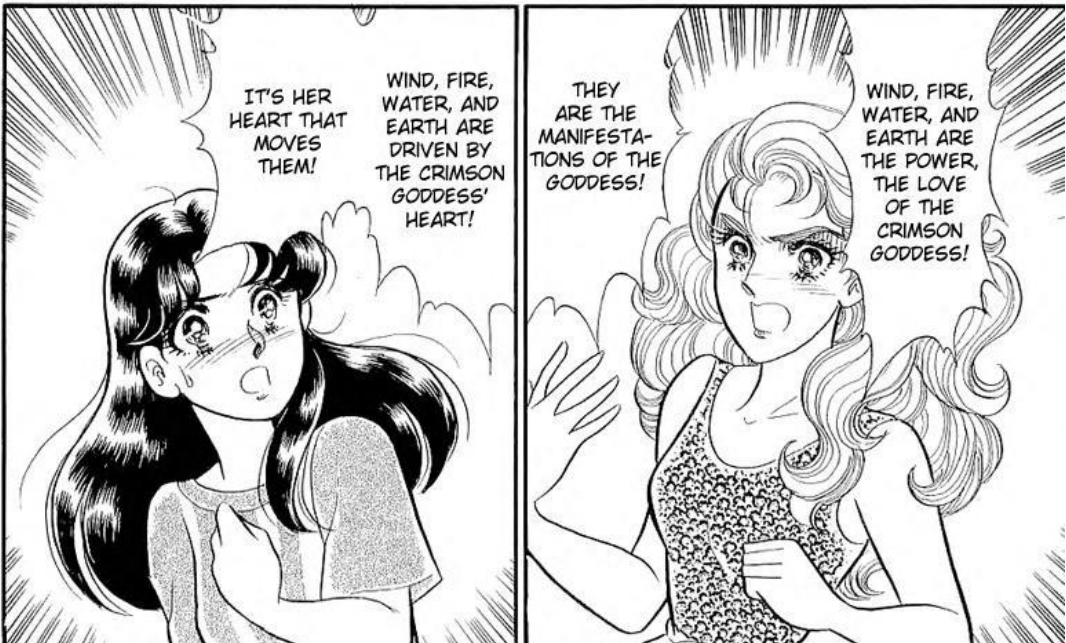
THEY BRING NAUGHT BUT EVIL INTO THE WORLD.

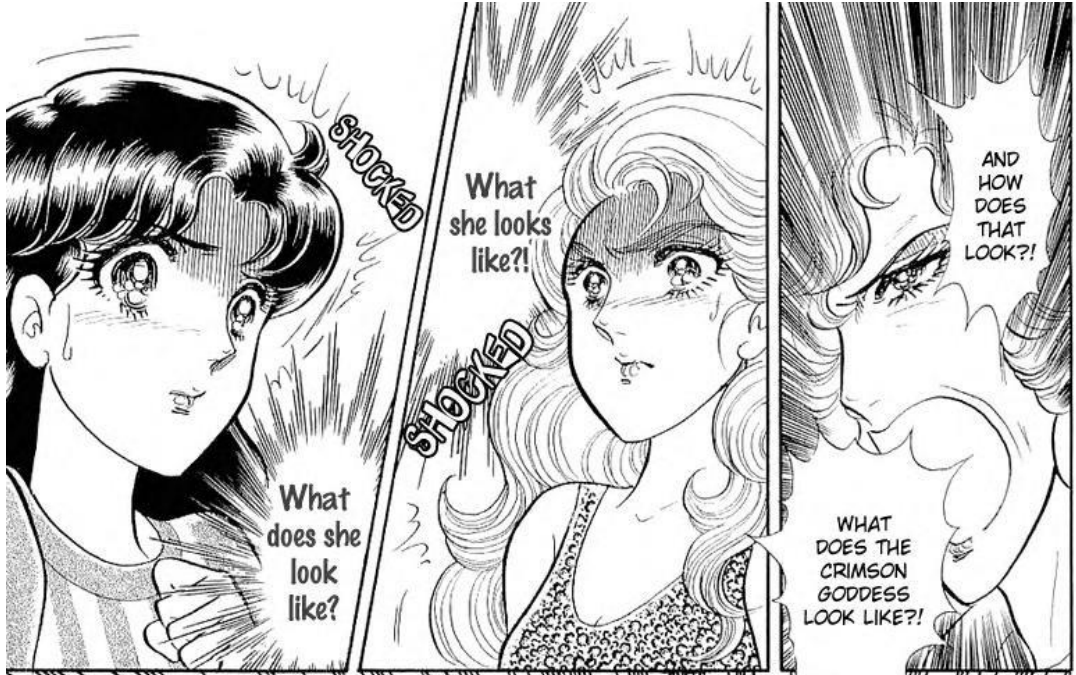
HOW CAN THEY NOT UNDERSTAND THAT BY ALLOWING EVIL TO TAINT THEIR THOUGHTS, THEY SEAL THEIR OWN FATE?



WHAT IS THE CRIMSON GODDESS FEELING?!







SHOCKED

What she looks like?!

AND HOW DOES THAT LOOK?!

What does she look like?

SHOCKED

WHAT DOES THE CRIMSON GODDESS LOOK LIKE?!



COME ON!

YOU HAVE TO BE ABLE TO EXPRESS IT, GIRLS!