

HANA TO YUME COMICS

# *Glass Mask*

**SUZUE MIUCHI**

**38**



ACT 12:  
THE CRIMSON GODDESS (5)

HANA TO YUME COMICS

# GLASS MASK

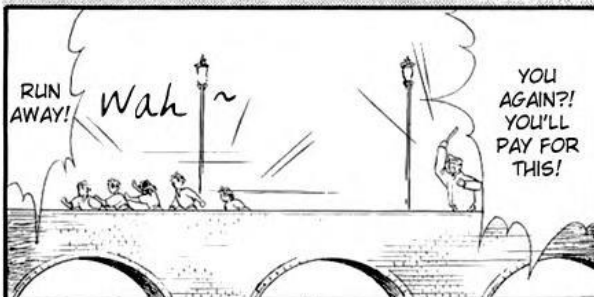
VOLUME 38 THE CRIMSON GODDESS (5)

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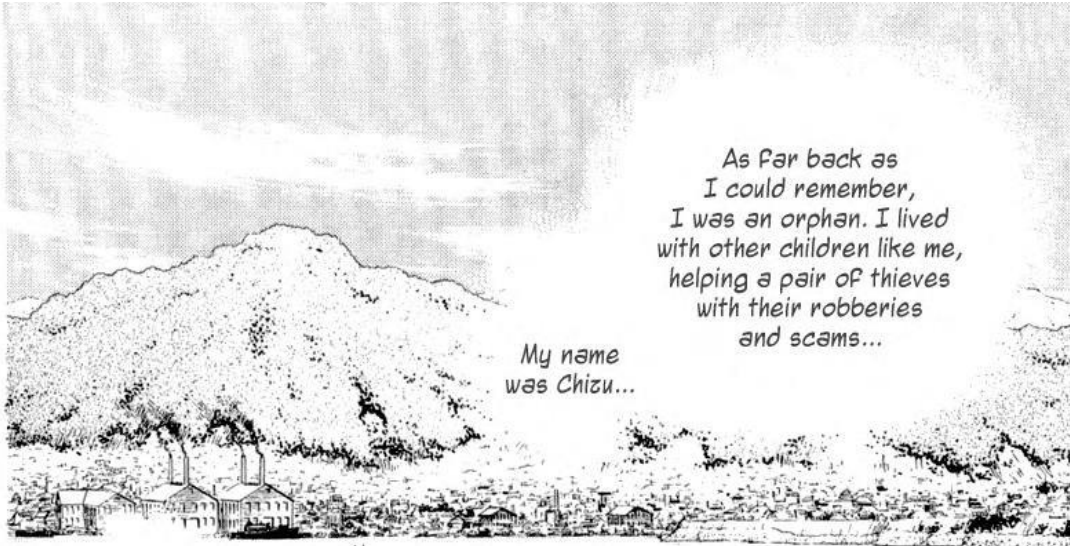






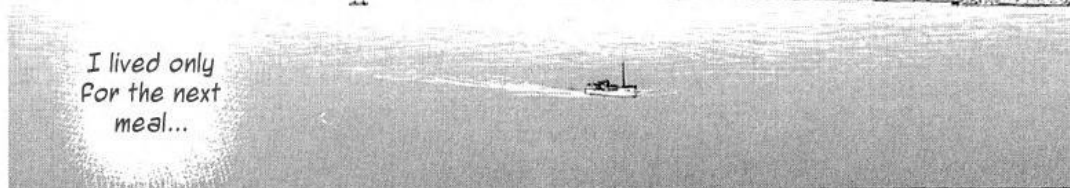






As far back as I could remember, I was an orphan. I lived with other children like me, helping a pair of thieves with their robberies and scams...

My name was Chizu...



I lived only for the next meal...



Then, one day, when I was seven...



I snuck into a theater's dressing room to steal jewelry. Ichiren Ozaki came to my rescue.

LET GO OF HER!

HEY, TELL ME, WHY ARE YOU DOING THIS?



STOP, THIEF!

EEEK! A THIEF!

STOP STRUGGLING, BRAT!

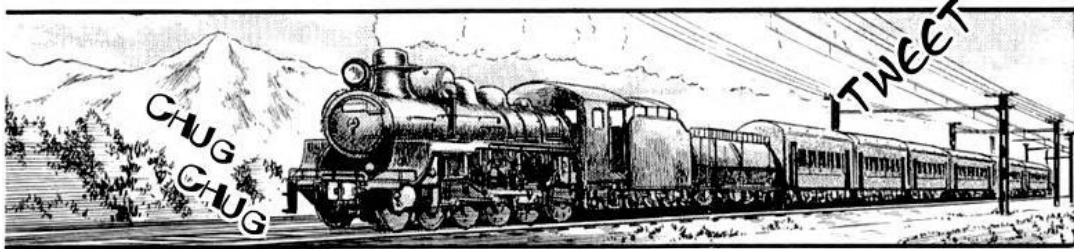


His father was a wealthy man who had invested a large amount of money in the company and thereby had become a close friend of the company's director.

He was that theater's scriptwriter and director.

Despite his young age, he was a man with talent and compassion.

Despite this, Ichiren was never arrogant.



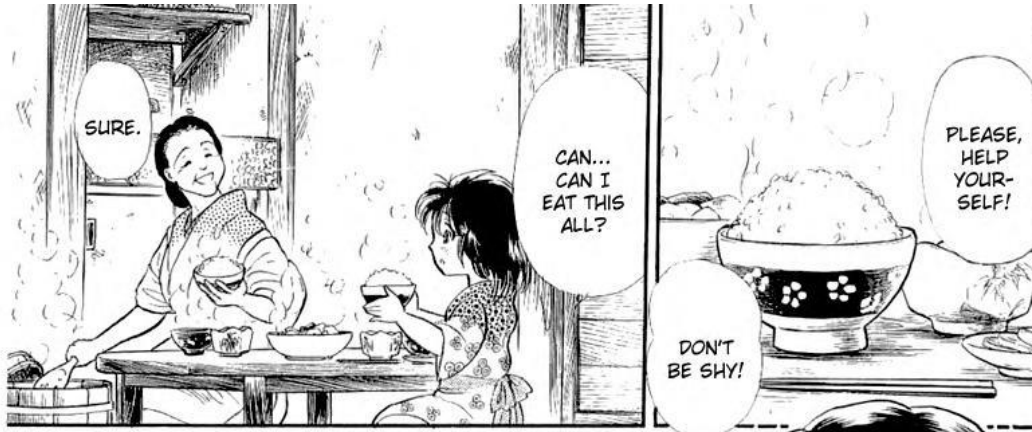
I arrived in Tokyo with Ichiren holding my hand.











SURE.

CAN... CAN I EAT THIS ALL?

PLEASE, HELP YOURSELF!

DON'T BE SHY!

That was the first time I understood the idea of "contentment."

For the first time in my life, I could eat and sleep at peace.

TAKE THESE CANDIES AS A REWARD.

The troupe, who had been suspicious of me at first...

When Ichiren had breaks from work...

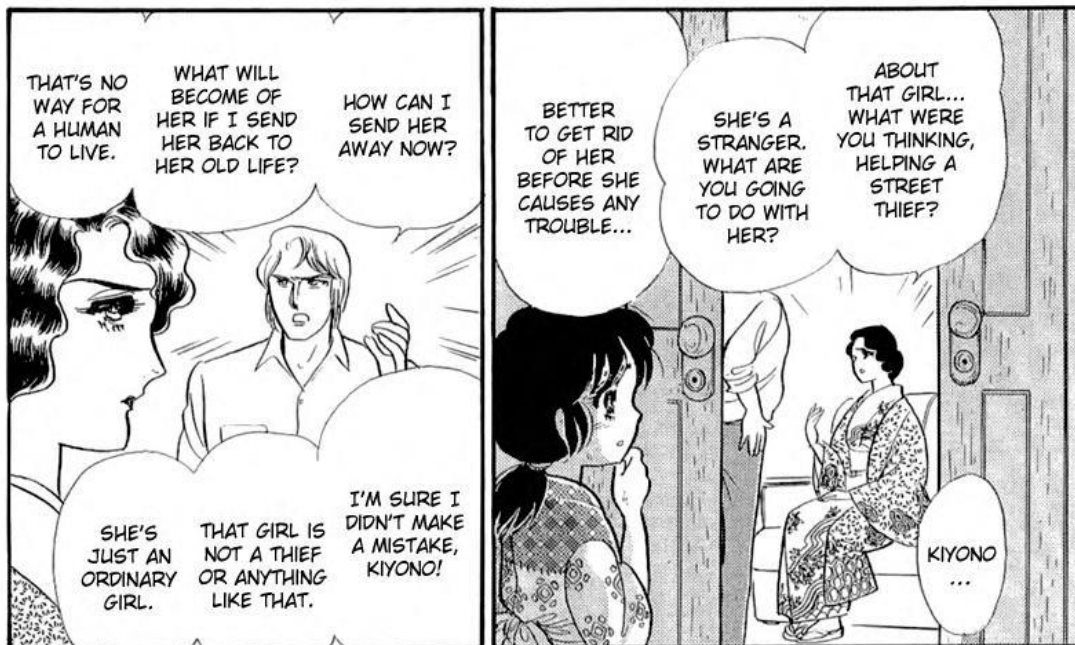
GOOD! WELL DONE, CHIZU!

THAT'S CORRECT! YOU'RE A FAST LEARNER, CHIZU.

Eventually welcomed me into their fold.

CHIZU-CHAN, YOU'RE GOING TO BE A STAR! DON'T FORGET US!

He taught me to read and write.





I won't be a burden. I won't cause trouble...  
I promise.  
So...

Thank you, Sensei...

Please let me stay...

Here at your side...



MOTHER. Before long, I was acting on stage in children's roles.

ARE YOU SAYING YOU'RE MY DAUGHTER?



THIS GIRL'S A NATURAL!

My Friends among the troupe taught me traditional dance and other arts.







Ah, yes, Ichiren...

You created me...

As an actress and as a human being...

HERE!

TSUKI-KAGE-SENSEI!

DOCTOR, HER PULSE!

PREPARE THE INJECTION!



I left behind the children's roles for my first leading role... Diana, the moon goddess.

And then I turned sixteen...

I lived only for you, Ichiren...

...To me, you were a teacher...

WHAT'S GOING ON? WHAT'S EVERYBODY STARING AT?

...a father, a brother...

and...

MUTTER

MUTTER  
MUTTER



I NEVER DREAMT SHE COULD BE SO BEAUTIFUL!

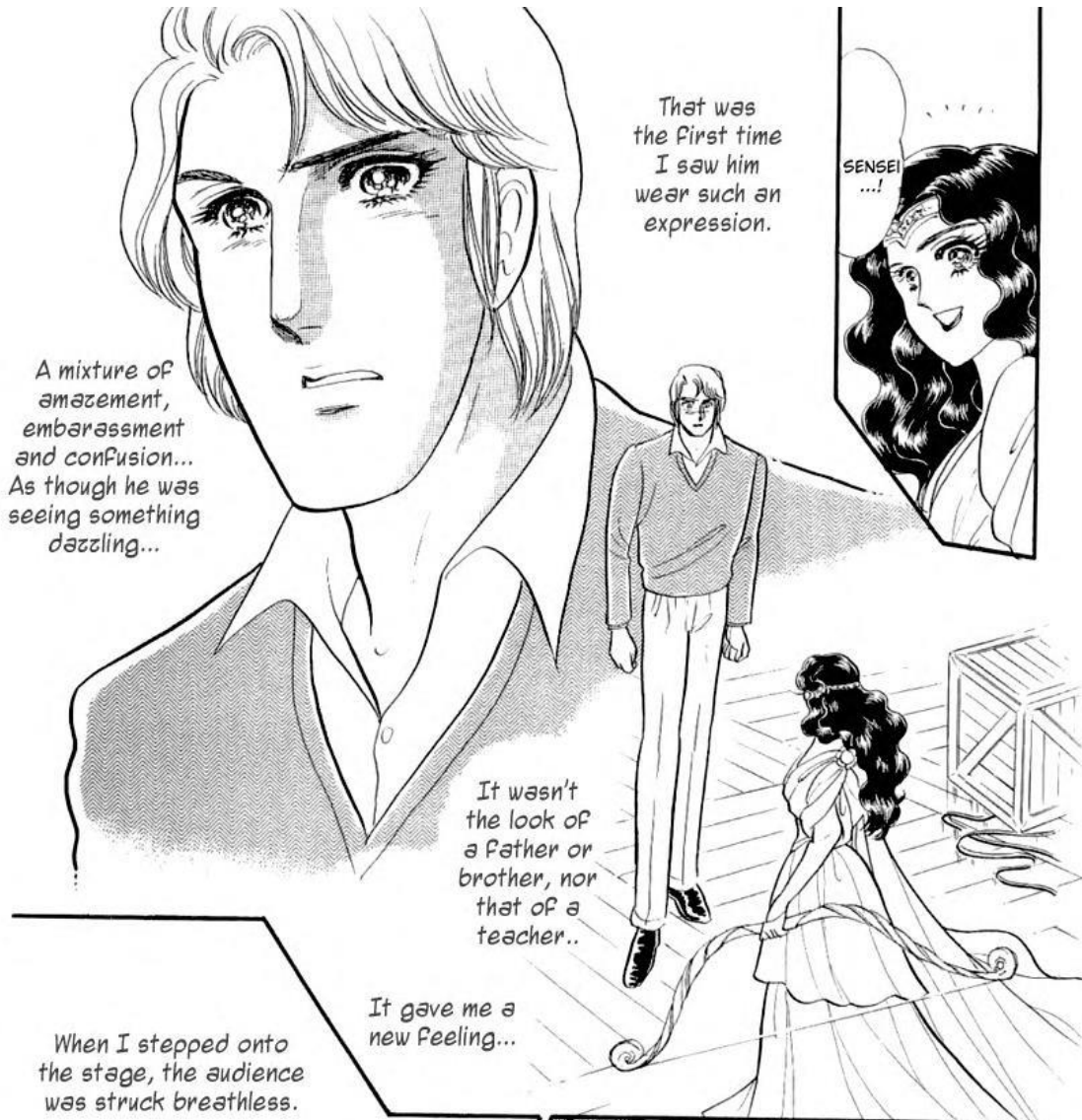
WHAT AN AMAZING BEAUTY!

Whoa

CHIZU ...

WOW

THE BUTTERFLY EMERGED FROM THE CHRYSALIS.



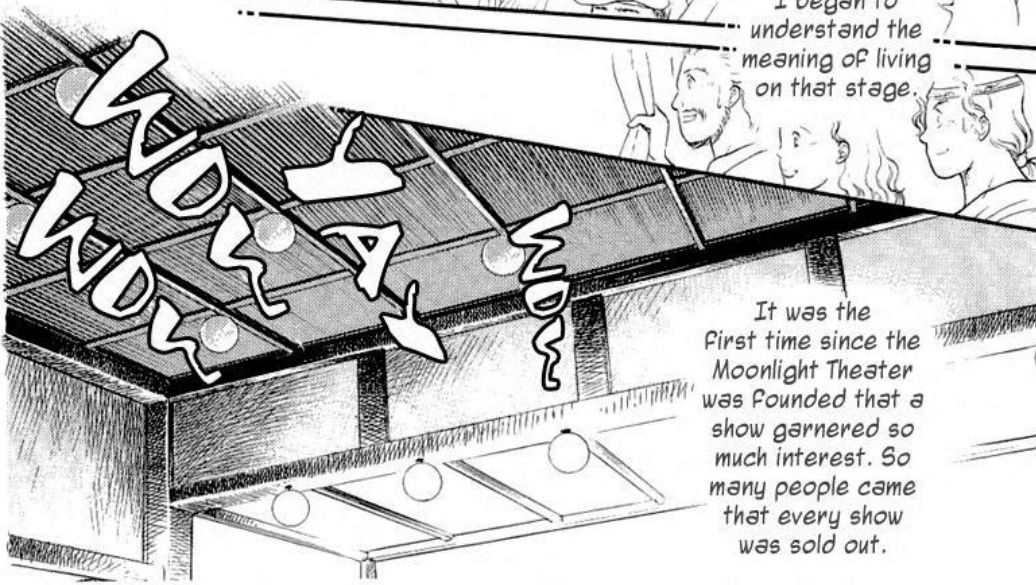


Enthusiasm  
and excitement  
resounded  
throughout the  
auditorium...

I sensed an  
invisible energy  
moving the  
audience's  
hearts.



I began to  
understand the  
meaning of living  
on that stage.



It was the  
first time since the  
Moonlight Theater  
was founded that a  
show garnered so  
much interest. So  
many people came  
that every show  
was sold out.





Sensei!

I FEEL FORTUNATE TO HAVE MET YOU... AND BROUGHT YOU HERE TO TOKYO THOSE NINE YEARS AGO.

CHIZU...

GOOD SHOW.



THIS HAND WAS ALWAYS THERE TO GUIDE ME.

NINE YEARS AGO, WHEN I CAME TO TOKYO, THIS HAND MEANT EVERYTHING TO ME.

YOU SAVED ME FROM THAT WRETCHED WAY OF LIFE.

...I SHOULD BE THE ONE TO BE THANKFUL THAT WE MET NINE YEARS AGO.

SENSEI! I...

CHIZU ...!

SUB

CHIZU ...!

EVEN NOW... AND IN THE FUTURE...

IF I HADN'T MET YOU, I WOULDN'T BE WHAT I AM TODAY.



YOU'VE BECOME A BEAUTIFUL GIRL, CHIZU.

THE MOONLIGHT SUITS YOU WELL.

ICHIREN-SENSEI...

I'M GLAD I CAST YOU AS THE MOON GODDESS DIANA.



YOU'RE STILL A CHILD, CHIZU.

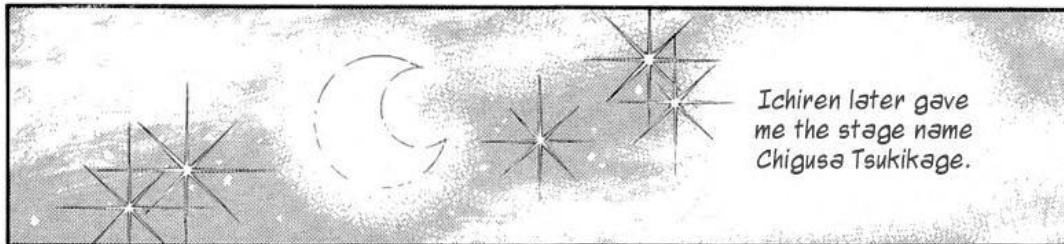
Ha ha ha



SENSEI...!

THE DAY WILL SOON COME WHEN YOU'LL BE READY TO LET GO OF THIS HAND!

Ha ha ha



Ichiren later gave me the stage name Chigusa Tsukikage.



Am I just like any other young actor to him?

Maybe I'm a burden to him?

Am I not special?



One day I'll want to let go of Sensei's hand? How absurd! That won't ever happen!

I can't even imagine life without him!



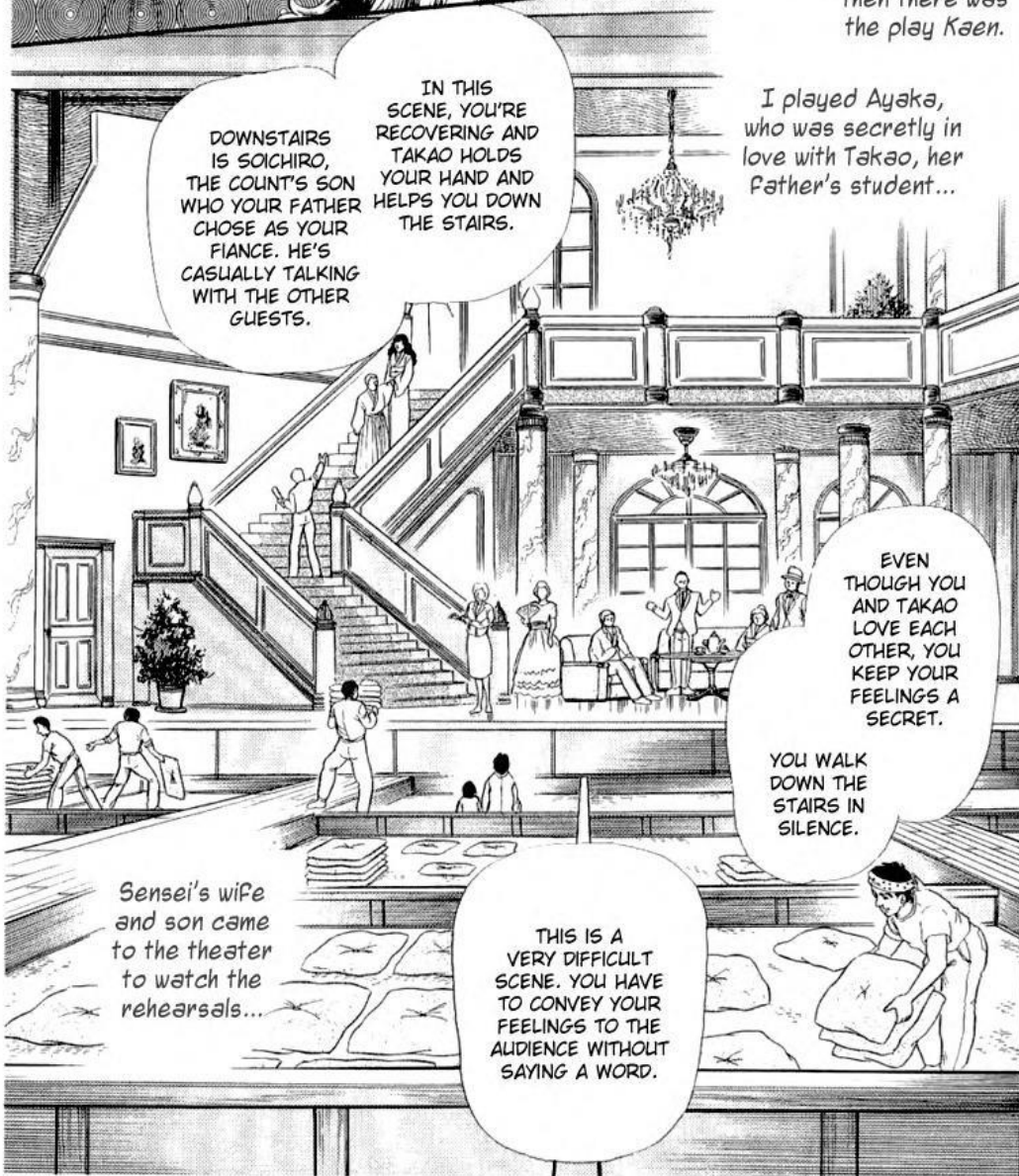
Ichiren-sensei!

Just because he took care of me since I was a little girl?

Was I deceiving myself?

Am I not close to him?

Then there was the play *Kaen*.



DOWNSTAIRS IS SOICHIRO, THE COUNT'S SON WHO YOUR FATHER CHOSE AS YOUR FIANCE. HE'S CASUALLY TALKING WITH THE OTHER GUESTS.

IN THIS SCENE, YOU'RE RECOVERING AND TAKAO HOLDS YOUR HAND AND HELPS YOU DOWN THE STAIRS.

I played Ayaka, who was secretly in love with Takao, her father's student...

EVEN THOUGH YOU AND TAKAO LOVE EACH OTHER, YOU KEEP YOUR FEELINGS A SECRET.

YOU WALK DOWN THE STAIRS IN SILENCE.

Sensei's wife and son came to the theater to watch the rehearsals...

THIS IS A VERY DIFFICULT SCENE. YOU HAVE TO CONVEY YOUR FEELINGS TO THE AUDIENCE WITHOUT SAYING A WORD.









I'm in love with you!

YES, CHIGUSA!

THAT'S JUST THE RIGHT EXPRESSION!

THAT'S AYAKA'S EXPRESSION!

DON'T FORGET THAT!



Ah! My hand is still holding Sensei's hand!

Ichiren-sensei!



Love for Ichiren-sensei!

This is my love!

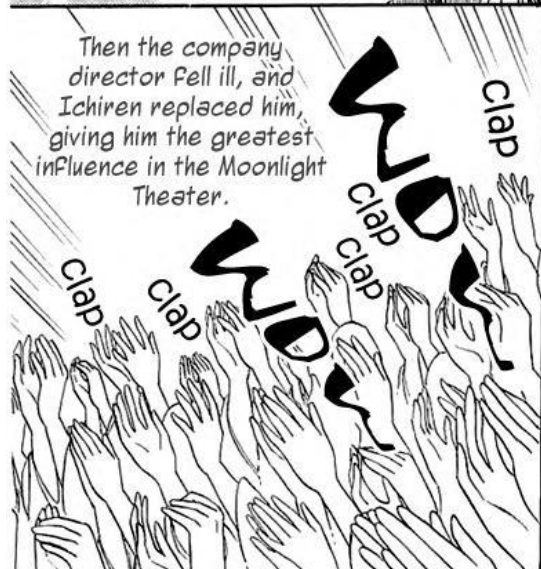
My...



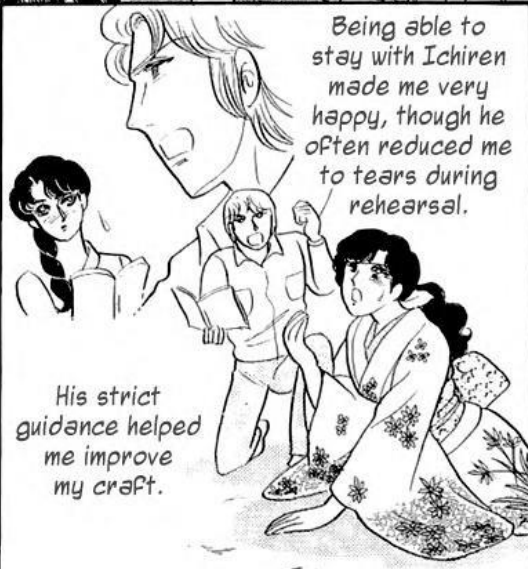
The play's success opened new opportunities for me.

I received great acclaim for my performance of Ayaka in Kaen.

And those opportunities led the way to still more.



Then the company director fell ill, and Ichiren replaced him, giving him the greatest influence in the Moonlight Theater.



Being able to stay with Ichiren made me very happy, though he often reduced me to tears during rehearsal.

His strict guidance helped me improve my craft.







Then, following Ichiren's advice, I starred in a movie.

Despite my being a mostly unknown actress at the time, my first movie became a big hit.

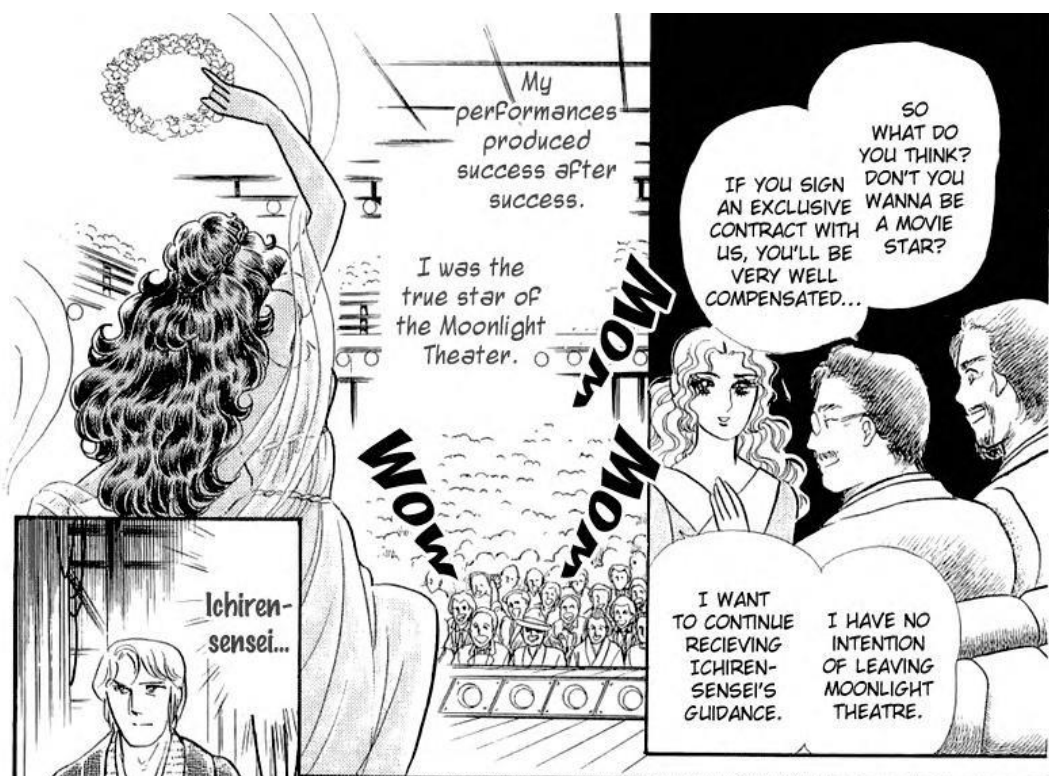


After my second movie, I became a real celebrity.



At the same time, the Moonlight Theater was playing to sold out crowds.

There was always a long line at their box office.



My performances produced success after success.

I was the true star of the Moonlight Theater.

SO WHAT DO YOU THINK? DON'T YOU WANNA BE A MOVIE STAR? IF YOU SIGN AN EXCLUSIVE CONTRACT WITH US, YOU'LL BE VERY WELL COMPENSATED...

I WANT TO CONTINUE RECEIVING ICHIREN-SENSEI'S GUIDANCE.

I HAVE NO INTENTION OF LEAVING MOONLIGHT THEATRE.

Wow  
Wow  
Wow



Ichiren-sensei...

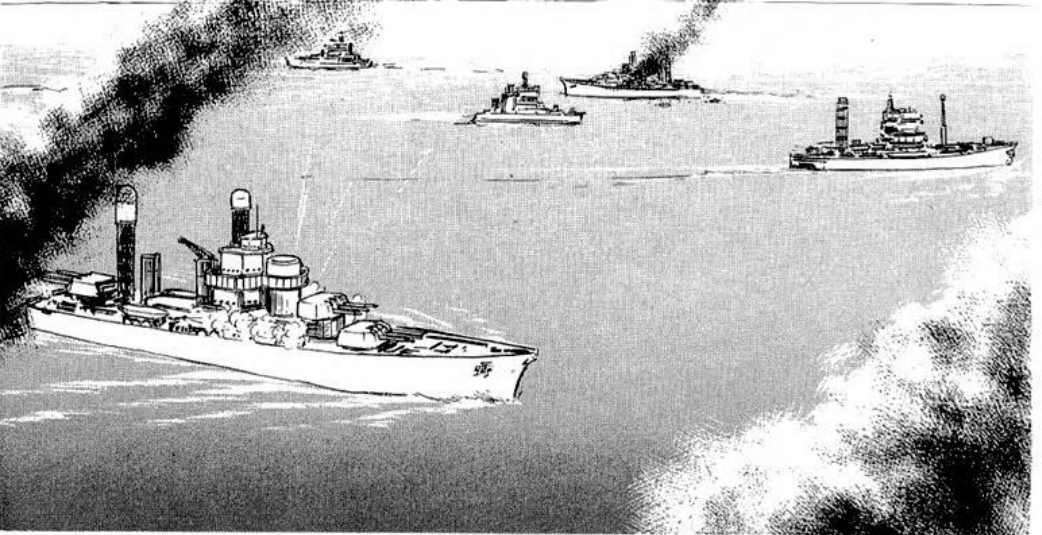
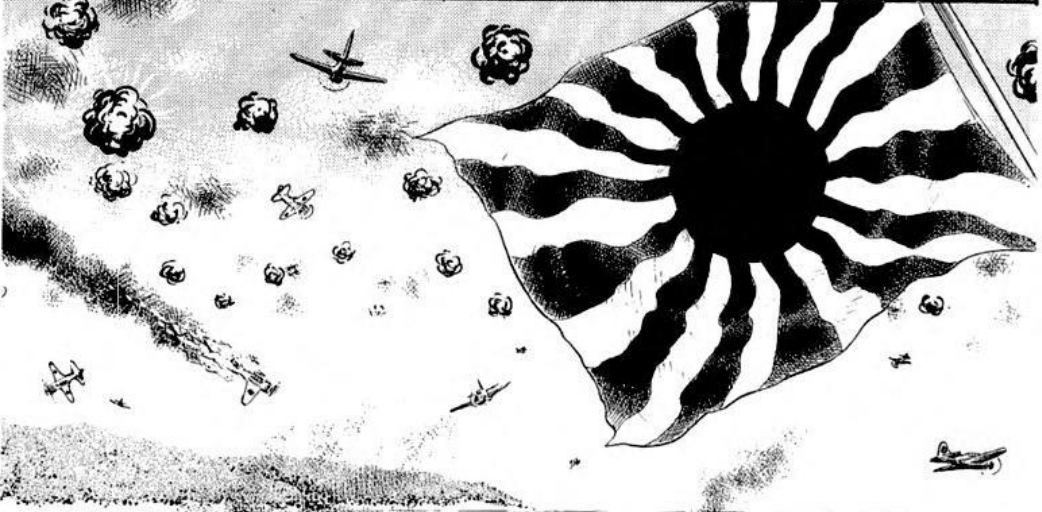
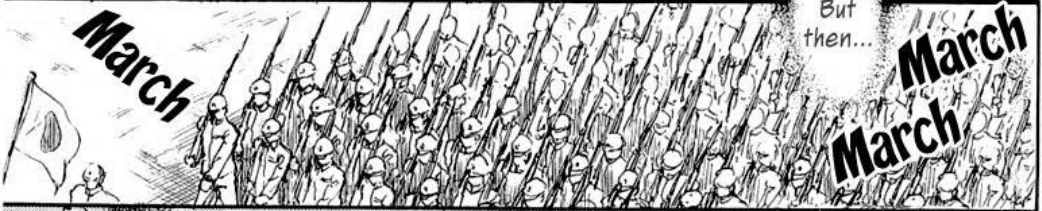


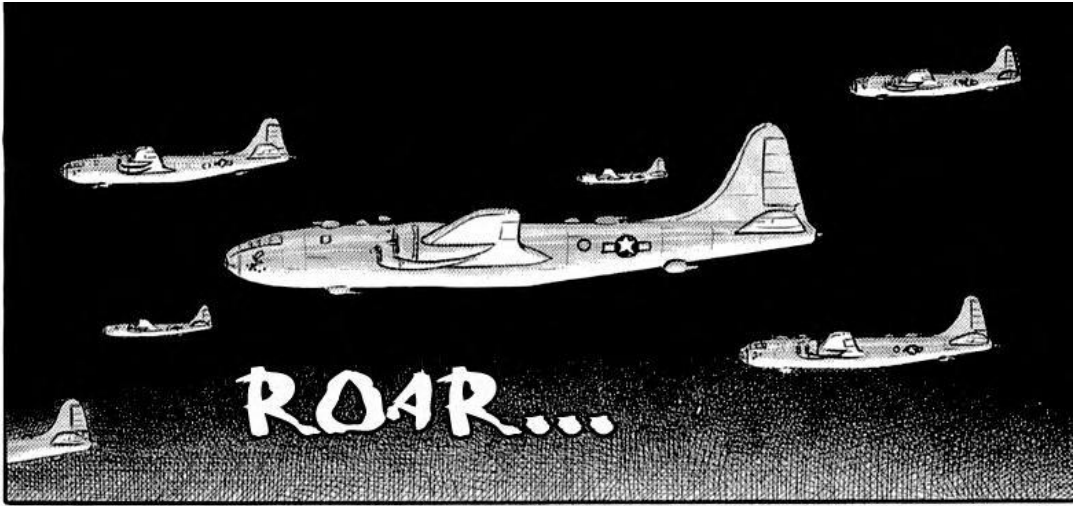
I was born just to meet you.

To be brought up by you, because you make me feel alive!

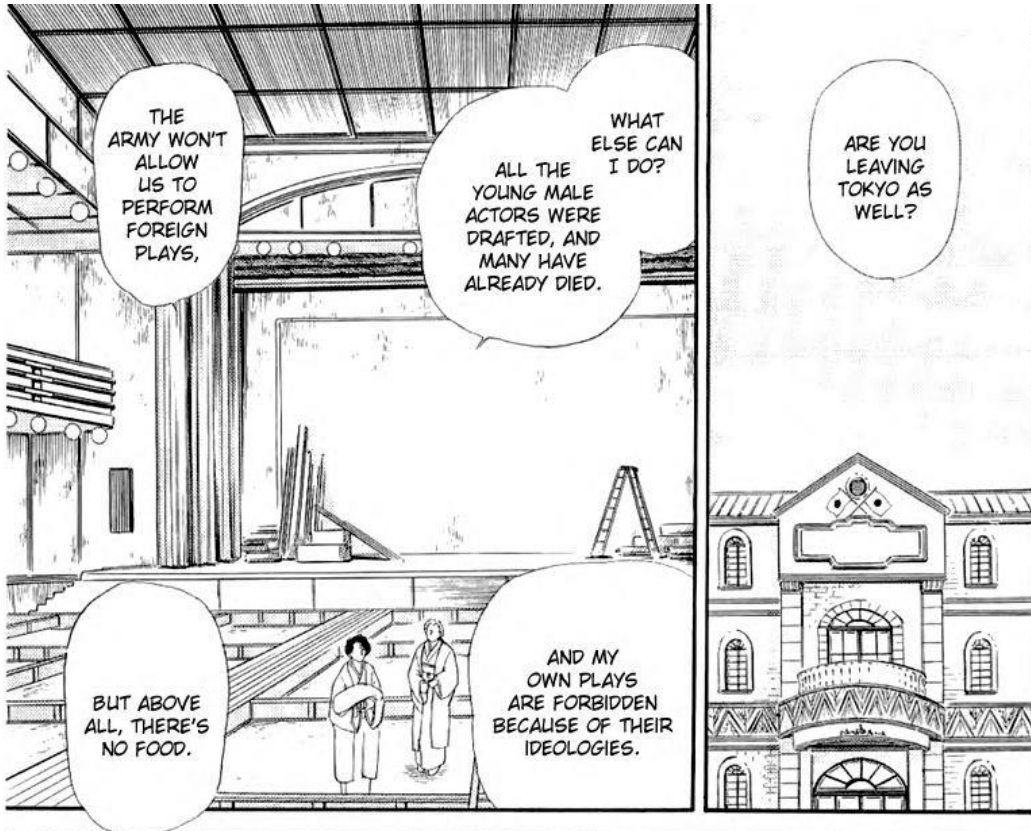
To speak the lines you write, to express your soul on the stage!

Sensei!











SENSEI,  
THE THIRD  
DISTRICT IS  
A SEA OF  
FIRE!

THE FLAMES  
ARE GETTING  
CLOSER!

RUN  
AWAY,  
SENSEI,  
PLEASE!



ROAR

YAY  
WALT



SENSEI!

ICHIREN-  
SENSEI!

WHAT  
ARE YOU  
STILL  
DOING  
HERE,  
CHIGUSA?

GET  
OUT OF  
HERE!

KA-BLAN!

UGH!

I HAVE  
TO PROTECT  
MOONLIGHT  
THEATER!



