

What did Tsukikage-sensei find wrong in our performances?



What's not working?

* NITTEI THEATRE WAREHOUSE



A special test?
What's Tsukikage-sensei planning to do?

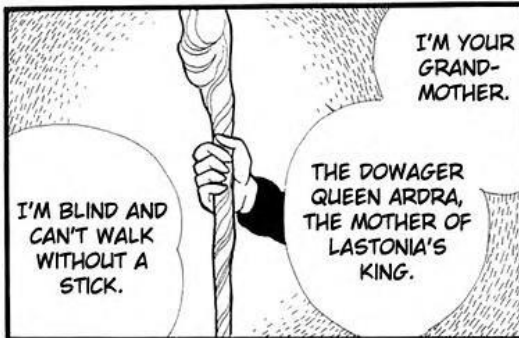




TSUKI-KAGE-SENSEI!



LET'S BEGIN.



I'M BLIND AND CAN'T WALK WITHOUT A STICK.

I'M YOUR GRAND-MOTHER.

THE DOWAGER QUEEN ARDRA, THE MOTHER OF LASTONIA'S KING.



Is this the special test?

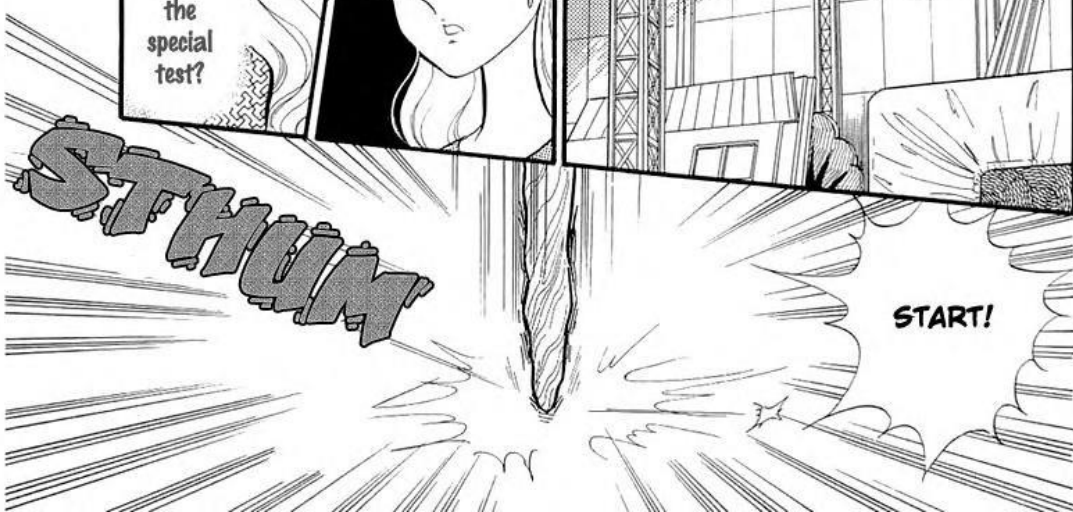


Talking with the Dowager Queen as Aldis?



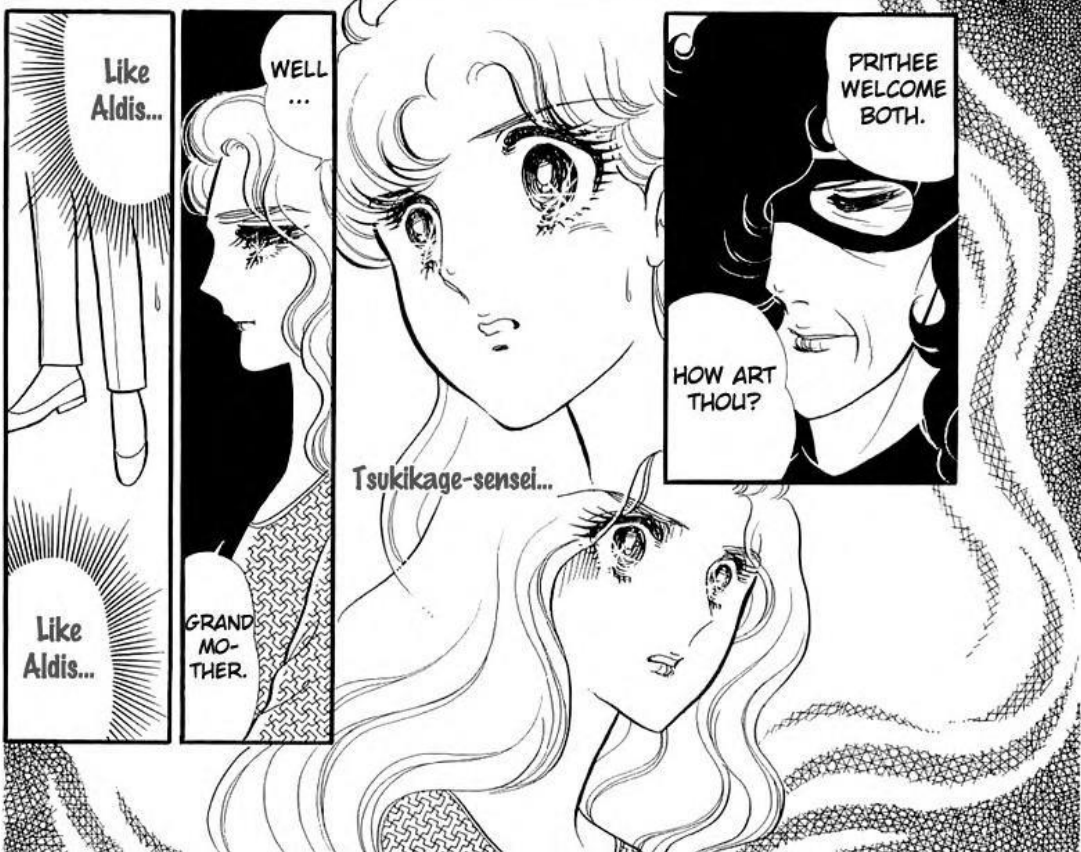
TALK WITH ME AS ALDIS AND ORIGELD WOULD.

LET'S TALK.



STHUN

START!



Like Aldis...

WELL ...

PRITHEE WELCOME BOTH.

HOW ART THOU?

Tsukikage-sensei...

Like Aldis...

GRAND MO-THER.



TOLERABLY GOOD AS ALWAYS!
BY MINE VOICE YOU KNOW IT TRUE, YES?

MY THANKS FOR YOUR CONCERN, GRANDMA.



WELL DO YOU SEEM, GRANDMA.

AS THOU DOST SAY, ALDIS.

Maya!



THIRTEEN SUMMERS, GRANDMA.

AND THOU, ALDIS?

FIFTEEN, GRANDMOTHER.



YES.

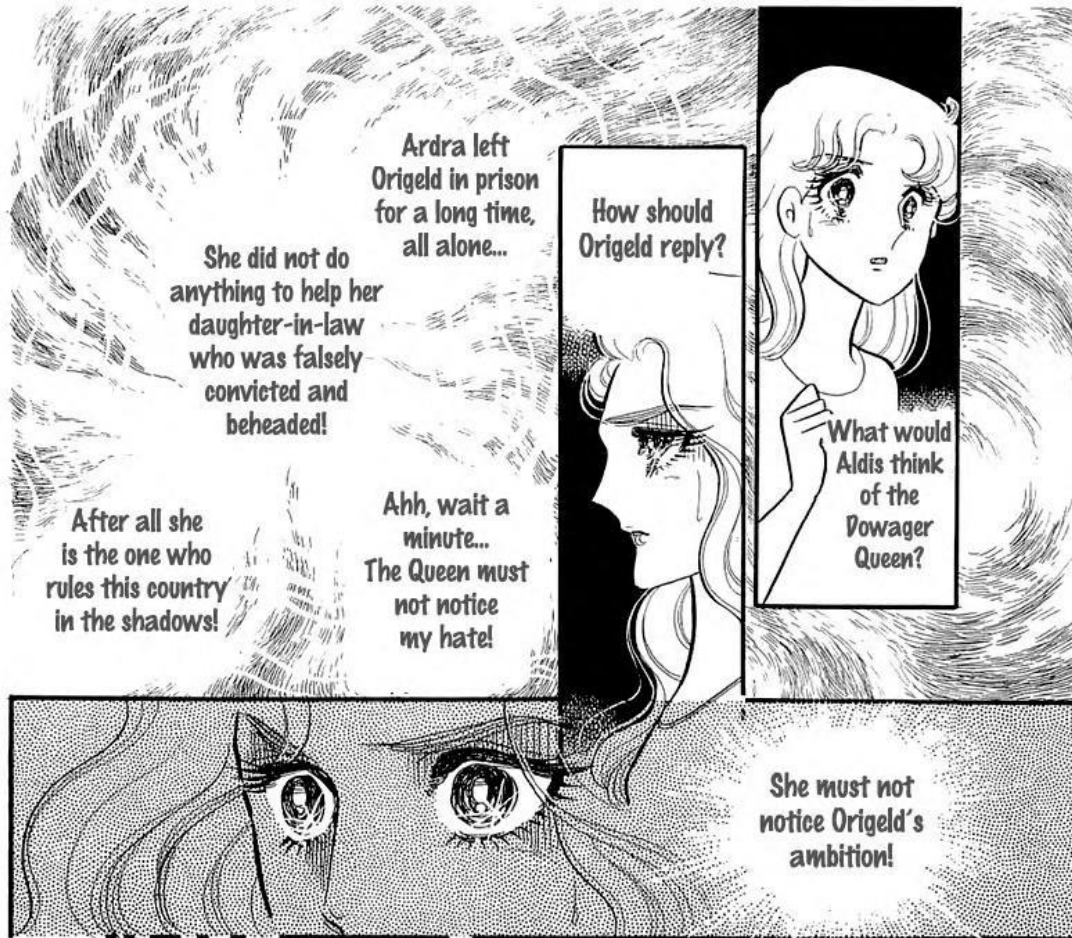
ORI-GELD.

HOW MANY SUMMERS ART THOU?



WHAT BE THINE THOUGHTS OF THE DOWAGER QUEEN, THY GRANDMOTHER?

SPEAK BLIT TRUTH.



Ardra left
Origeld in prison
for a long time,
all alone...

She did not do
anything to help her
daughter-in-law
who was falsely
convicted and
beheaded!

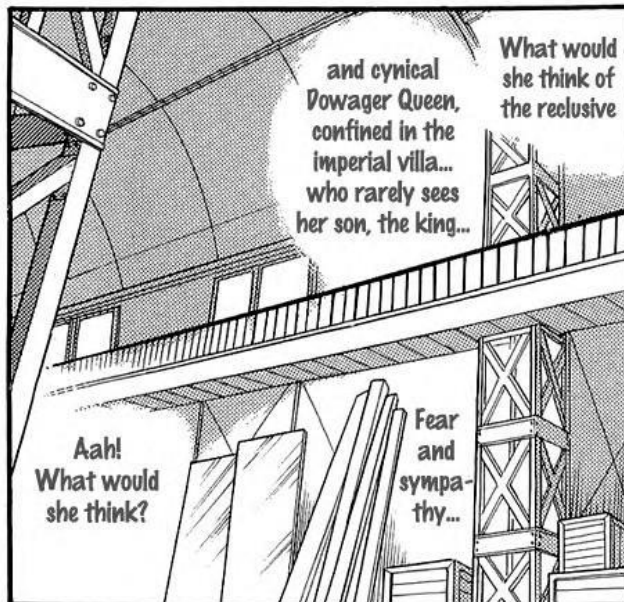
After all she
is the one who
rules this country
in the shadows!

Ahh, wait a
minute...
The Queen must
not notice
my hate!

How should
Origeld reply?

What would
Aldis think
of the
Dowager
Queen?

She must not
notice Origeld's
ambition!



and cynical
Dowager Queen,
confined in the
imperial villa...
who rarely sees
her son, the king...

What would
she think of
the reclusive

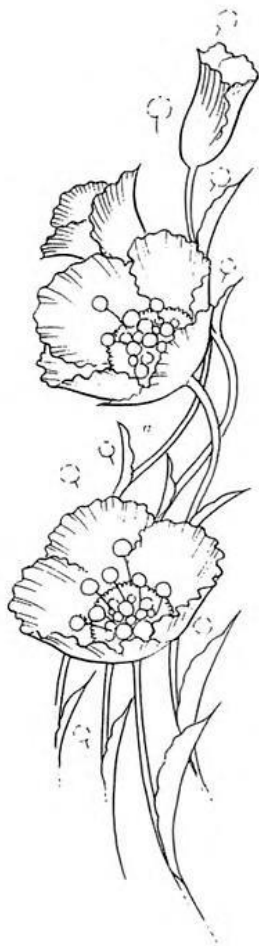
Aah!
What would
she think?

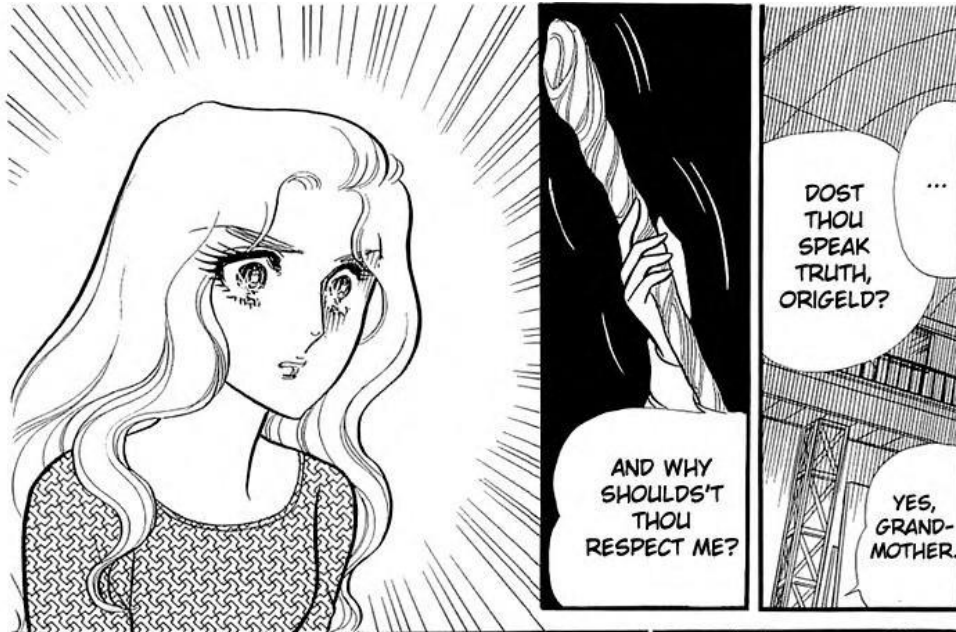
Fear
and sym-
pa-
thy...

What would
Aldis think of
the Queen?

Aldis!

Aldis, loved by
everyone, gentle
with everyone...





...
DOST THOU SPEAK TRUTH, ORIGELD?

AND WHY SHOULDST THOU RESPECT ME?

YES, GRAND-MOTHER.



WHY DOST THOU REGARD ME WITH ESTEEM THOUGH FOR YEARS I HAVE NOT BEEN BEFORE THINE EYES?!

ANSWER, ORIGELD!

WELL...



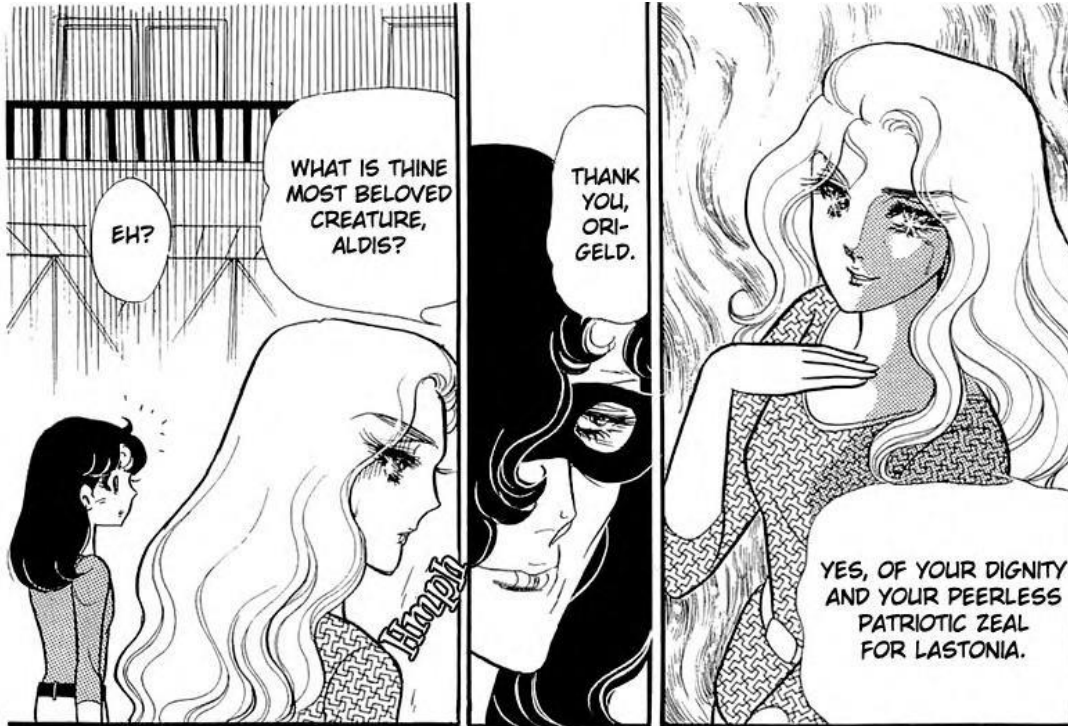
AND OF WHAT DID HE SPEAK OF?!

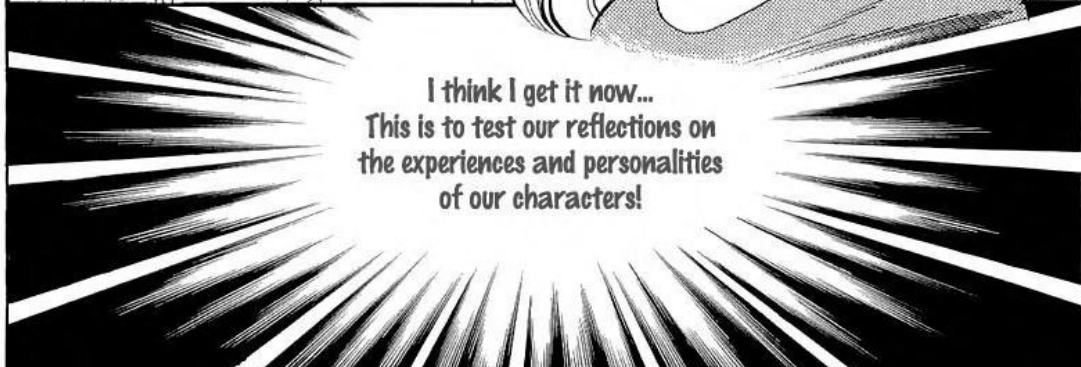
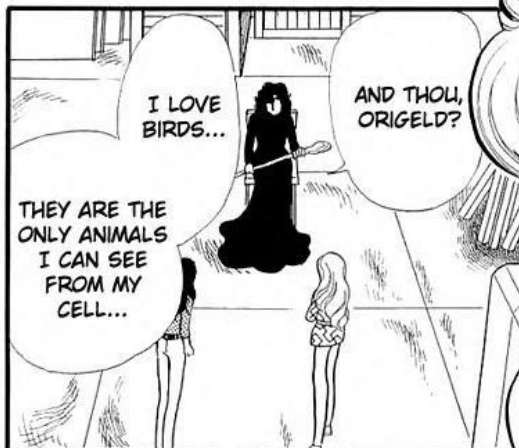
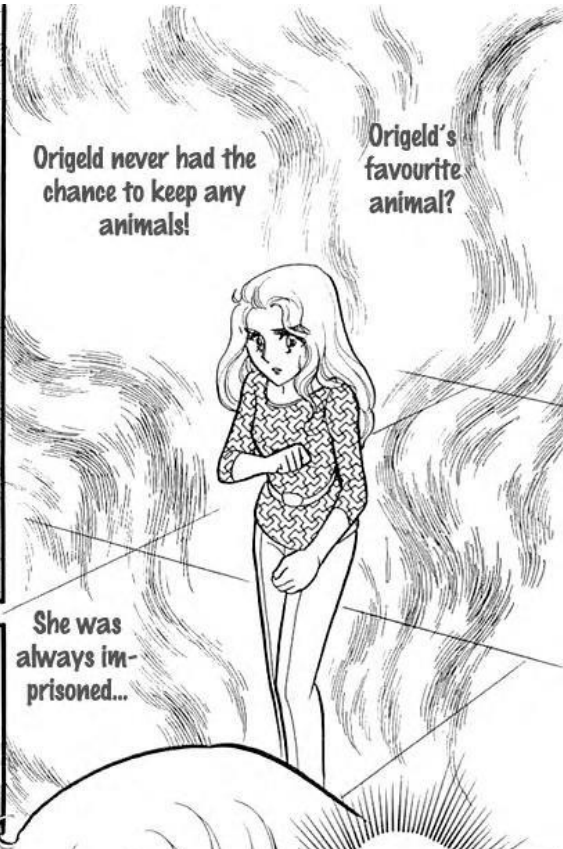
OF HOW WONDR'OUS YOU ARE!

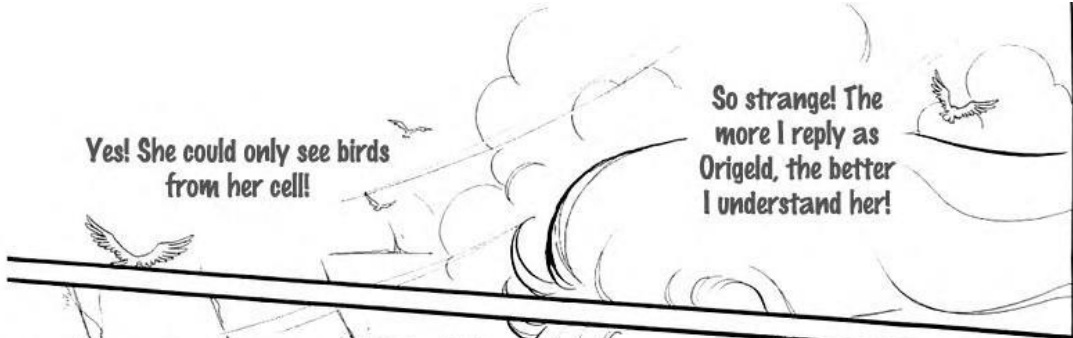
THE BARON BYORNSON, WHOM I GRANT AUDIENCES NOW AND THEN.

HOW DID THIS WHISPER ENTER THINE EAR?

OF WHAT I HAVE HEARD DO I HOLD THIS ESTEEM.







Yes! She could only see birds from her cell!

So strange! The more I reply as Origeld, the better I understand her!



But she could not fly like them...

Birds flying freely in the sky...

I'm sure she envied them...



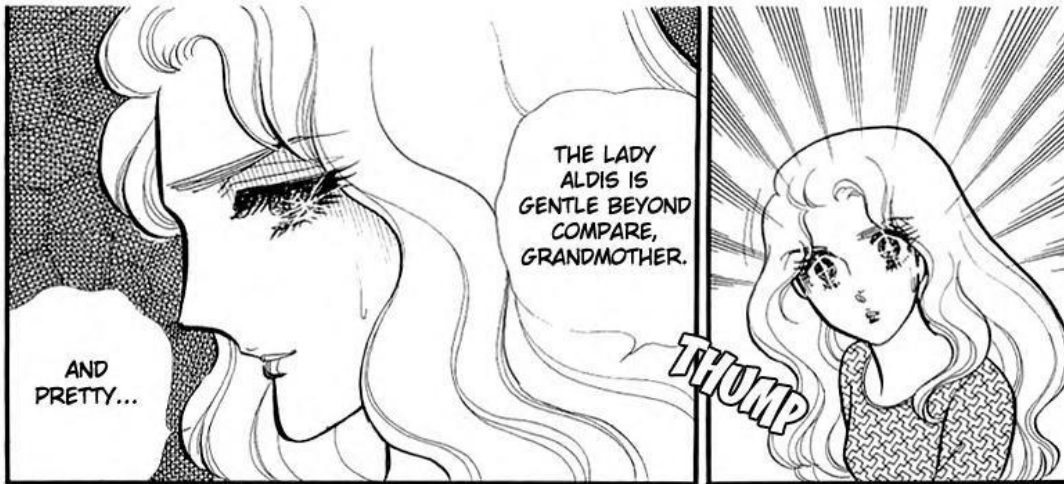
OF WHAT MIND DOST THOU TOWARD THY SIB, ALDIS?

Ah!

ORI-GELD.



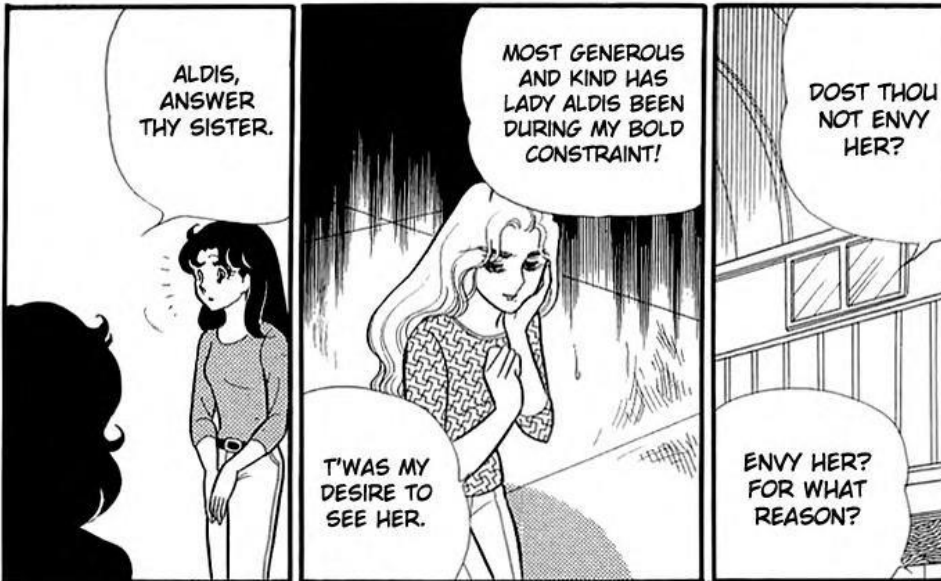
ALDIS?



AND
PRETTY...

THE LADY
ALDIS IS
GENTLE BEYOND
COMPARE,
GRANDMOTHER.

THUMP



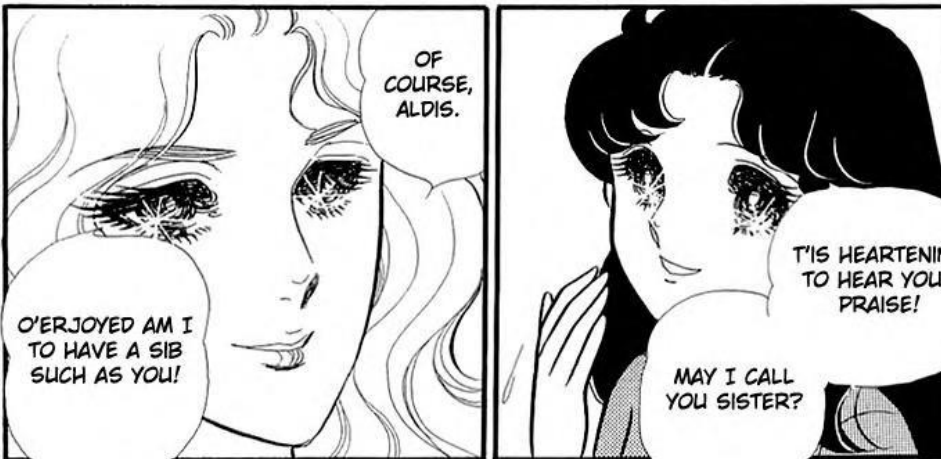
ALDIS,
ANSWER
THY SISTER.

MOST GENEROUS
AND KIND HAS
LADY ALDIS BEEN
DURING MY BOLD
CONSTRAINT!

DOST THOU
NOT ENVY
HER?

T'WAS MY
DESIRE TO
SEE HER.

ENVY HER?
FOR WHAT
REASON?

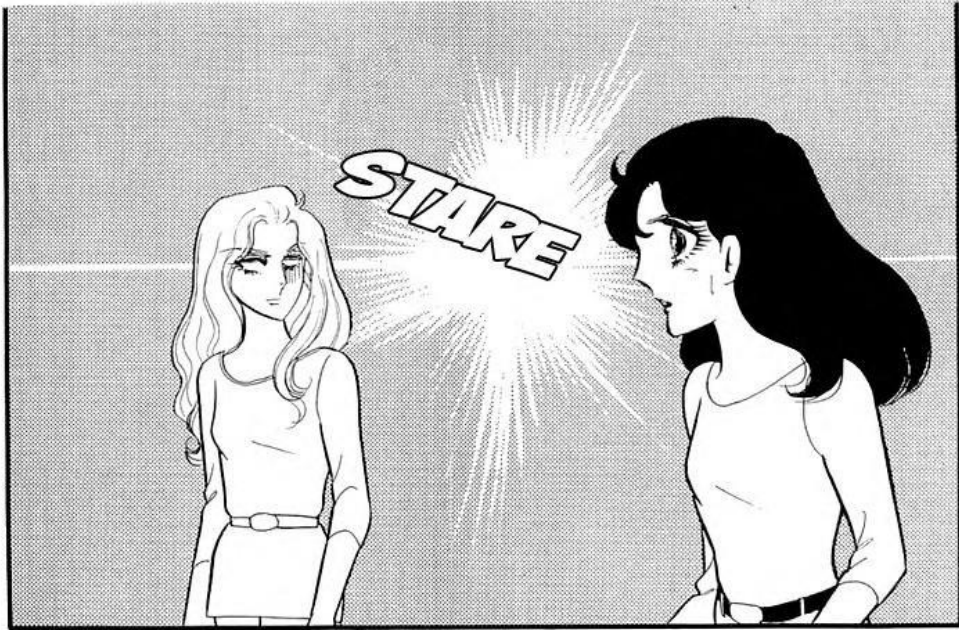


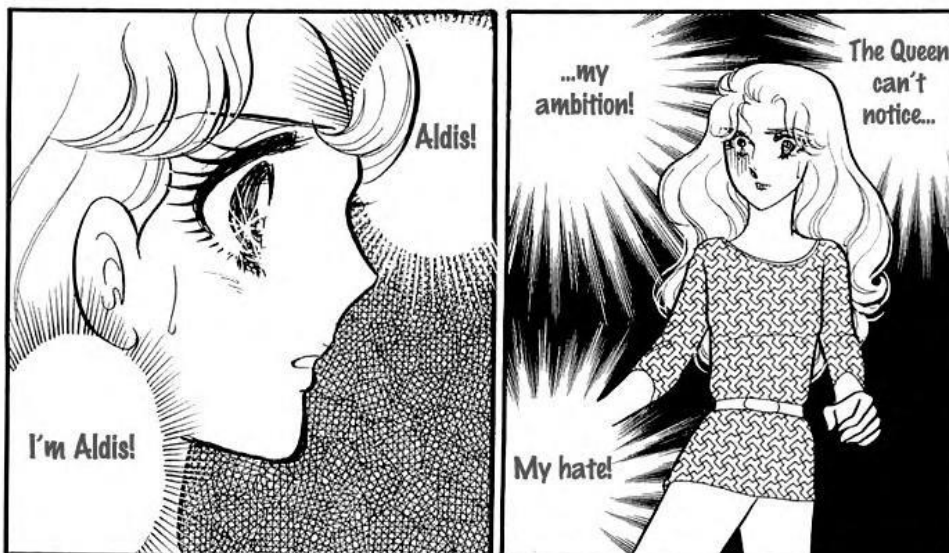
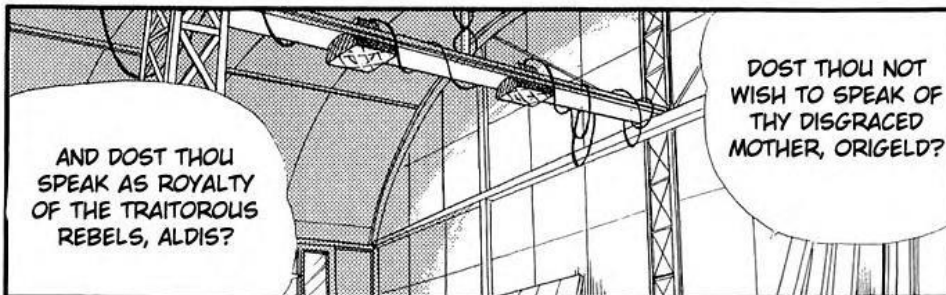
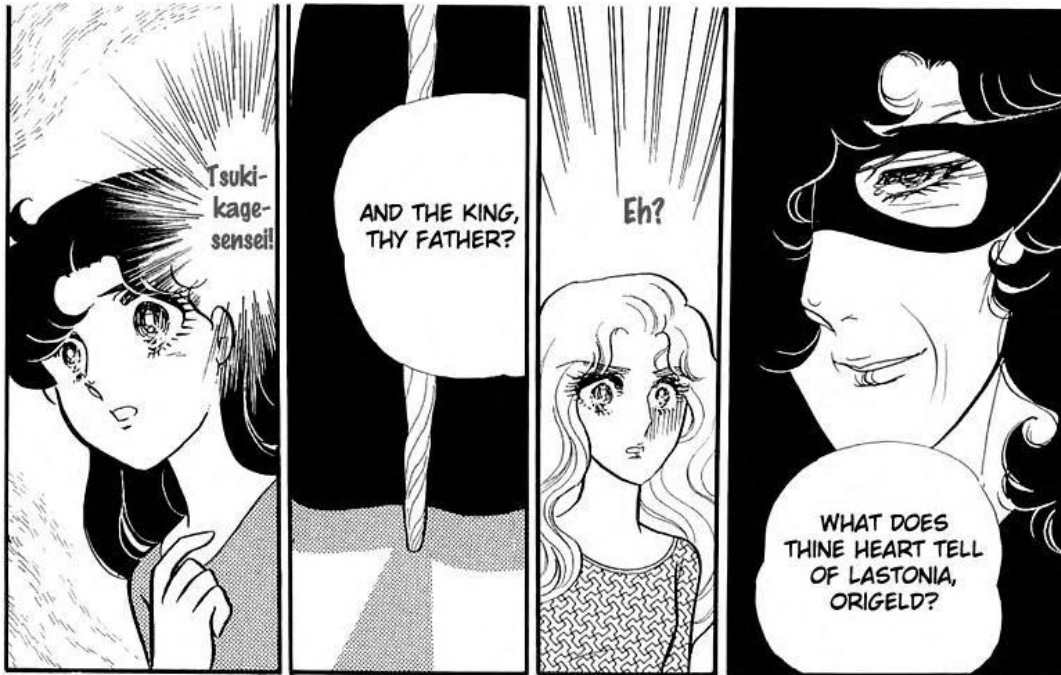
OF
COURSE,
ALDIS.

O'ERJOYED AM I
TO HAVE A SIB
SUCH AS YOU!

T'IS HEARTENING
TO HEAR YOUR
PRAISE!

MAY I CALL
YOU SISTER?







...about the kingdom, the people...

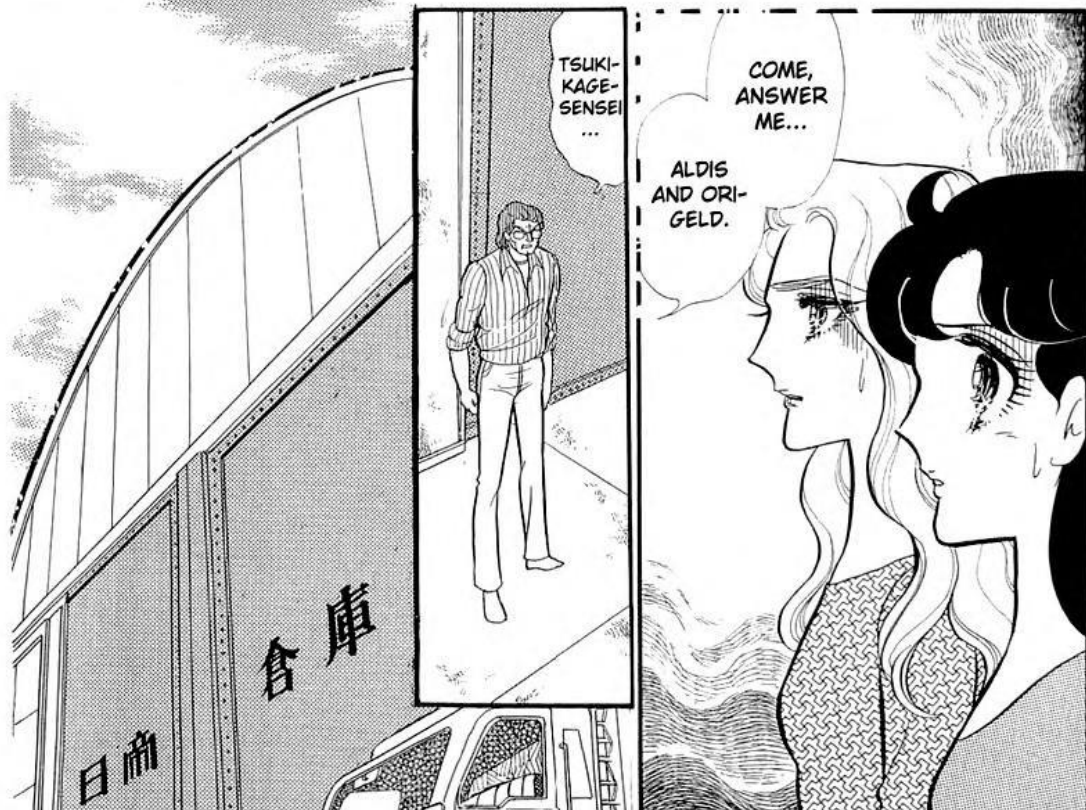
Aldis and Origeld's thoughts aren't written in the script!

I don't know what Aldis would think...

...or the plotters.



Ah! Aldis!



TSUKI-KAGE-SENSEI ...

COME, ANSWER ME...

ALDIS AND ORIGELD.

日商 倉庫



That she was a girl with those kinds of emotions and opinions!

I did not know... that Origeld possessed such experiences and so many thoughts!

It was like I was turning into another person as I talked!



YOU DON'T KNOW ALDIS AND ORIGELD'S PERSONALITIES, FEELINGS, THOUGHTS

YOU HAVEN'T FULLY UNDERSTOOD YOUR CHARACTERS YET!

OR INTERESTS.

YOU DIDN'T GRASP YOUR CHARACTERS, THAT'S WHY YOUR PERFORMANCES WERE MEDIOCRE!

THEY WERE AS FRAGILE AS A SAND CASTLE!



I had the feeling another person was born inside me...

Aldis...



Tsukikage-sensei!



LEAVING THEM UNDER MY CARE FOR A WHILE? WHAT ABOUT

EH?

I WANT YOU TO ENTRUST THESE TWO GIRLS' PRACTICES TO ME.



I...

WHAT DO YOU THINK, FUMASAN?

WELL, THEY SEEM MORE LIVELY THAN BEFORE!



I'LL KEEP DIRECTING THE REHEARSALS WITH THE REST OF THE CAST.

ALRIGHT, TSUKIKAGE-SENSEI.



IT WON'T BE FOR LONG...

I WANT TO AWAKE THE ALDIS AND ORIGELD WHO SLEEP INSIDE THEM.

Tsukikage-sensei will
direct our acting...

Where is she taking us?



OKAY.

SEN-
SEI...

WELL...

SINCE FUMA-SAN
GAVE HIS
PERMISSION,
FOLLOW ME.



I'LL WAIT
FOR YOU AT
THE SERVICE
DOOR.

I WANT TO
TAKE YOU
TO SOME
PLACE.
HURRY
UP AND
CHANGE.

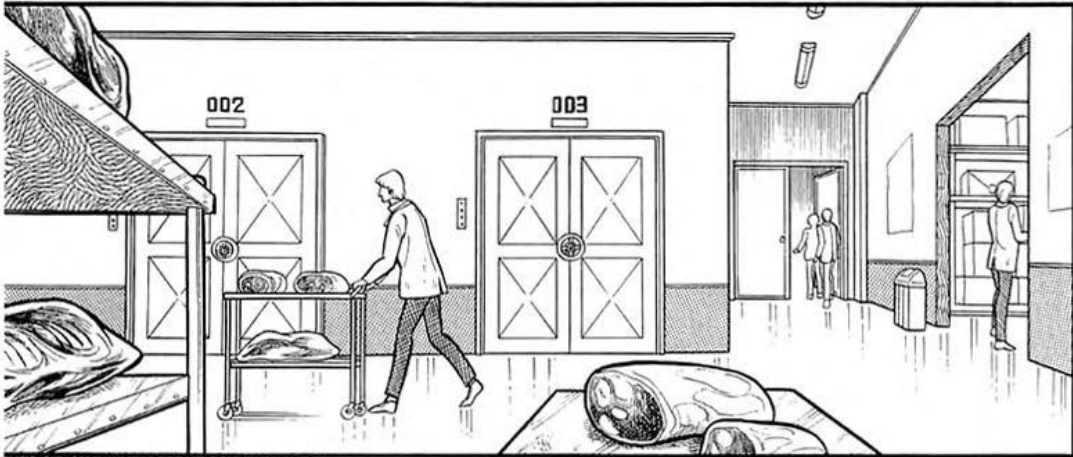
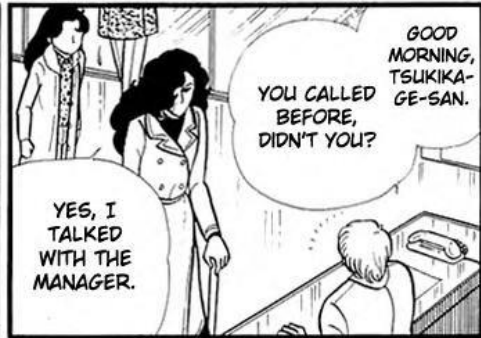
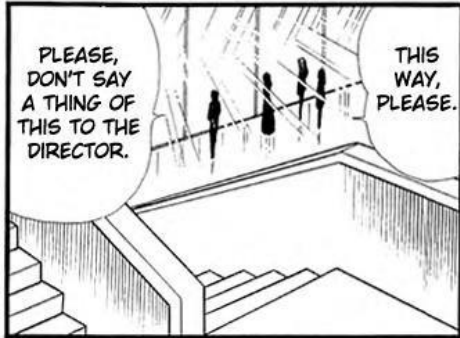
Y-YES!

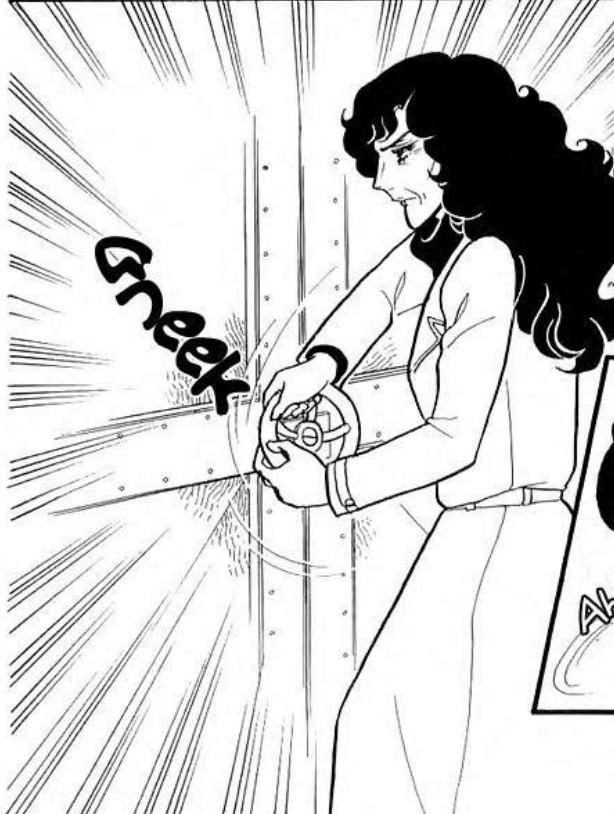
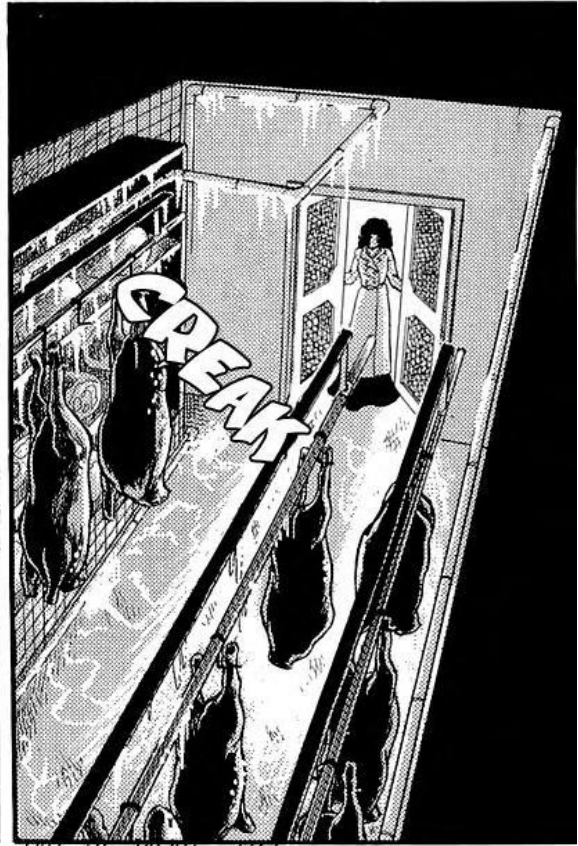


Why
here?

Whole-
sale
meat..

SKRECK







SENSEI!
WHAT ARE
YOU DOING?!
OPEN THE
DOOR, PLEASE!



IT LACKS
TEMPERA-
TURE!

MAYA, AYUMI, LISTEN
TO ME! THERE'S
SOMETHING MISSING
IN YOU ACTING!



YOU CAN'T
IMAGINE THE
INTENSE
COLDNESS OF
NORTHERN
EUROPE IN A
WARM CITY
LIKE TOKYO!

IT SOMETIMES
REACHES
-40°C!

TEMPERA-
TURES GO
DOWN TO
-20°C OR
-30°C
THERE!



YES!
LASTONIA IS A
NORTHERN
COUNTRY IN
EUROPE!

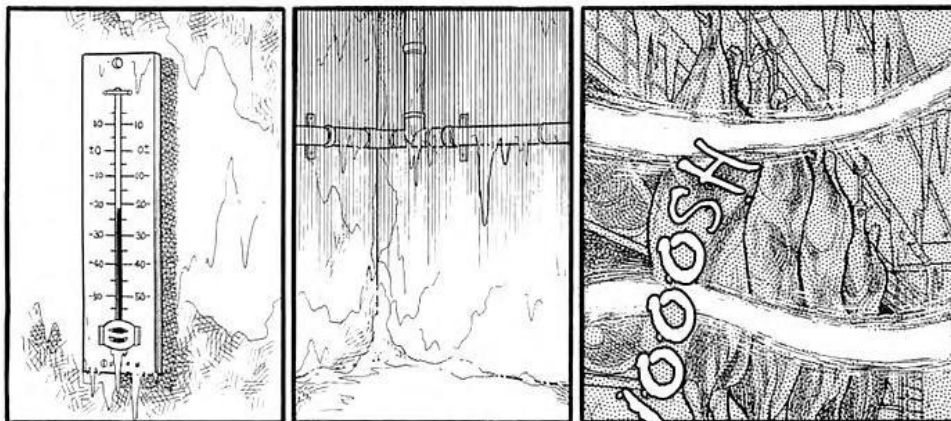
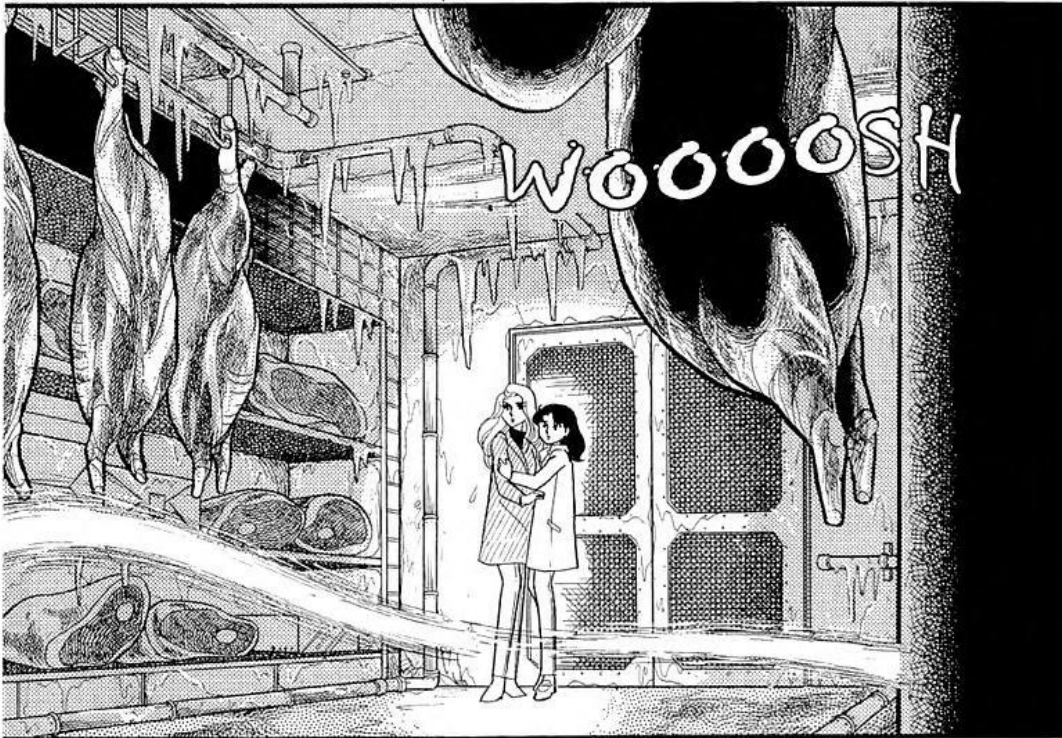
TEM-
PERA-
TURE?

AH!

YOUR ACTING
DOESN'T REFLECT
THE SEVERITY OF
WINTER OR THE
WARMTH OF
SPRING!

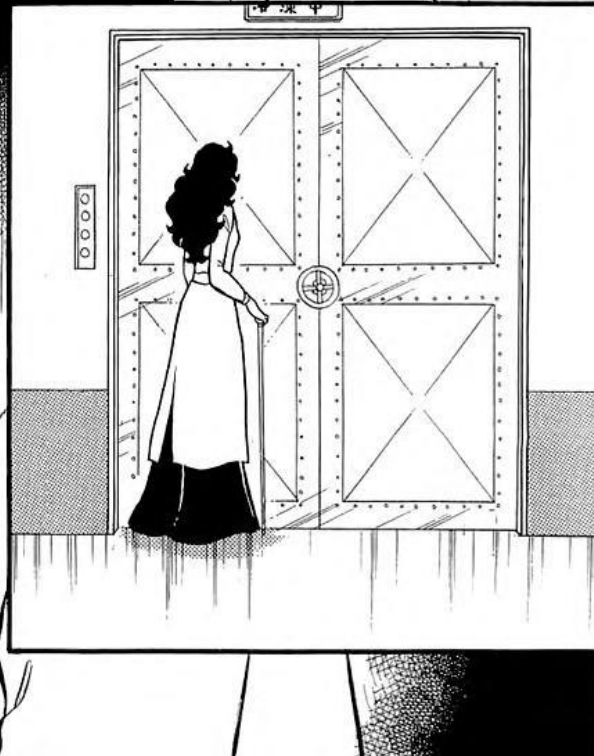
- * -68°F OR -86°F
- * -104°F







* -71.60°F





DON'T CRY
EVEN
WHEN
SHOVED!

OSHIKURA
MANJU

WHAT ABOUT
PLAYING
OSHIKURA
MANJU*,
AYUMI-SAN?

WE CAN'T
STAY STILL
WITH THIS
TEMPE-
RATURE.

OKAY!

Tremble



DON'T CRY
EVEN
WHEN
SHOVED!

OSHIKURA
MANJU



DON'T CRY
EVEN
WHEN
SHOVED!

OSHIKURA
MANJU

PANT



L-LET'S
RUN NOW.
COME ON!



COME ON,
AYUMI-SAN!
TRY WALKING
FORWARD
SAYING THOSE
WORDS!

EACH HALF
YEAR IN THE
COLD EMBRACE
OF THE FORCES
OF WINTER!

LASTONIA!
MY HOME-
LAND!

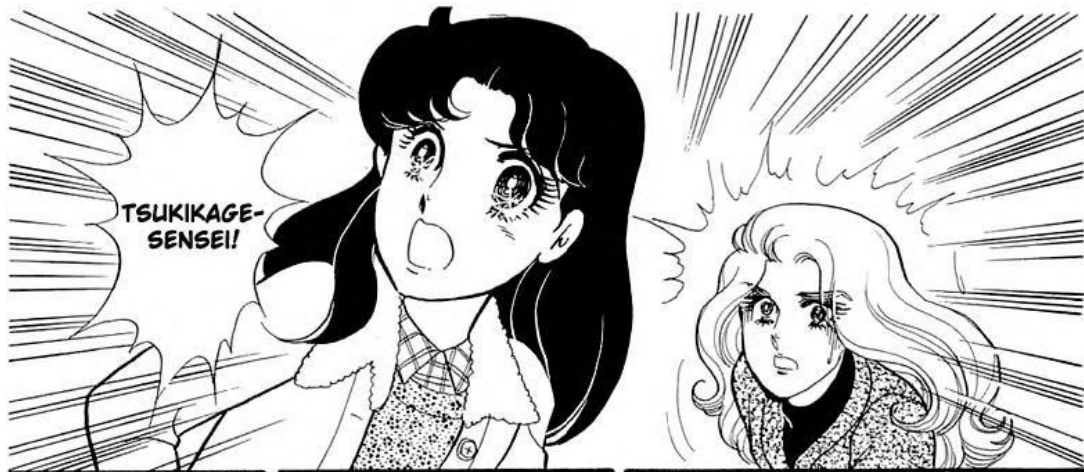
RUNNING IS
WORSE! THE
FROZEN AIR
ENTERS MY
LUNGS...

AYUMI-
SAN!

I'M
TOTALLY
FROZEN,
I CAN'T
MOVE!

I CAN'T
FEEL MY
HANDS
AND FEET.

PANT!



TSUKIKAGE-SENSEI!



Lastonia in winter!

Bite



WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR?

THE TEMPERATURE IN LASTONIA'S KINGDOM DURING WINTER IS THE SAME!



LASTONIA, MY HOMETOWN...

EACH HALF YEAR IN THE COLD EMBRACE OF THE FORCES OF WINTER.

PANT

PANT



COLD...

SO COLD... THIS IS MY DEMISE!

H-HANDS, FEET...

PANT

EVEN... HAIR...

PANT



ECHOES
THROUGH THE
RECESSES OF
MY THOUGHTS...

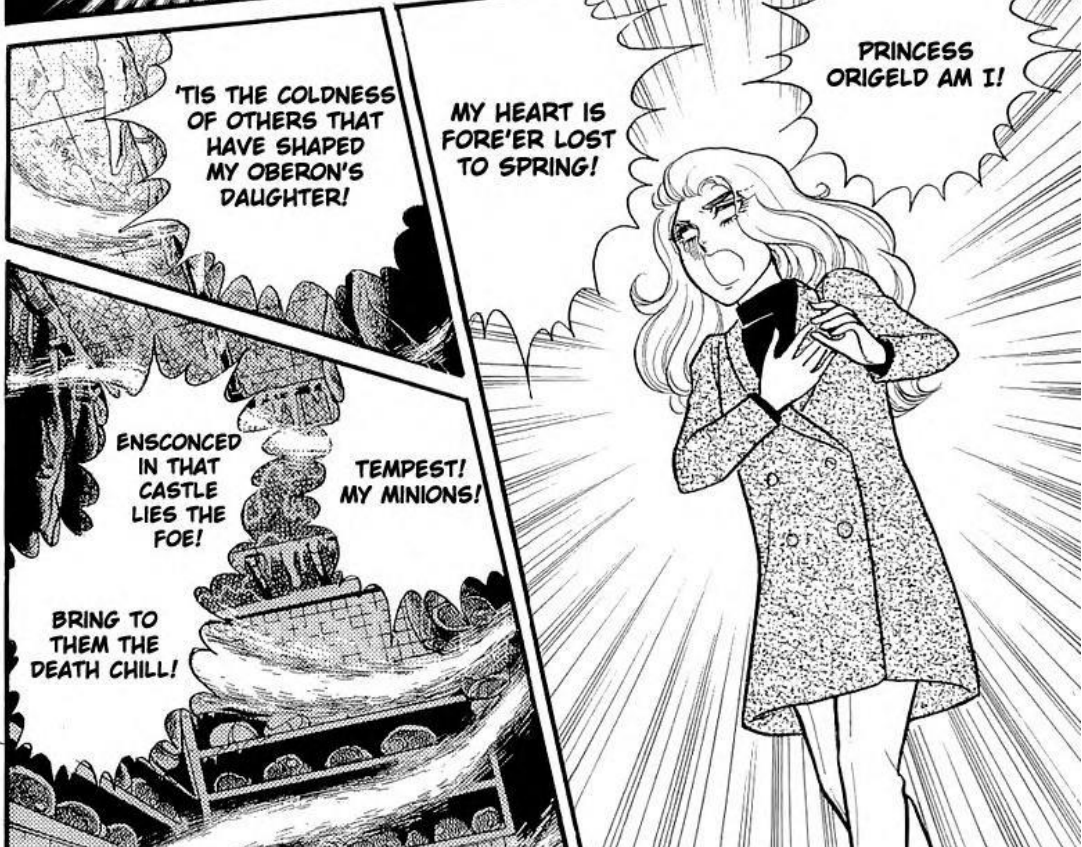
THE
WINTRY
BLAST...

ENSHRINED
IN ICE, MY
PETRIFIED
HEART IS
IMPALED...

Ayumi-
san...

It hurts! My body
feels stone cold!

BY
WINTER'S
SWORD...



'TIS THE COLDNESS
OF OTHERS THAT
HAVE SHAPED
MY OBERON'S
DAUGHTER!

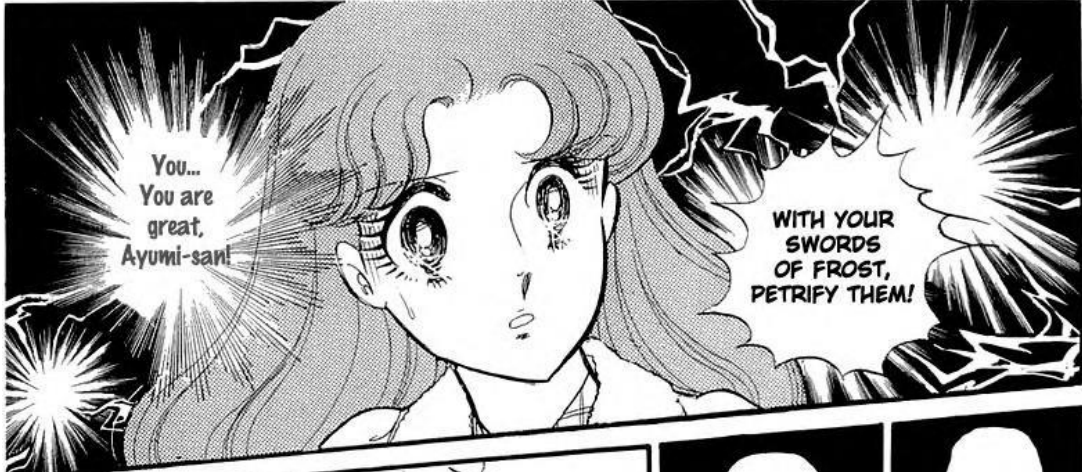
MY HEART IS
FORE'ER LOST
TO SPRING!

PRINCESS
ORIGELD AM I!

ENSCONCED
IN THAT
CASTLE
LIES THE
FOE!

TEMPEST!
MY MINIONS!

BRING TO
THEM THE
DEATH CHILL!



You...
You are
great,
Ayumi-san!

WITH YOUR
SWORDS
OF FROST,
PETRIFY THEM!



FIGHT!
INTO THE
BREACH MY
MINIONS!



ON...
WARD...



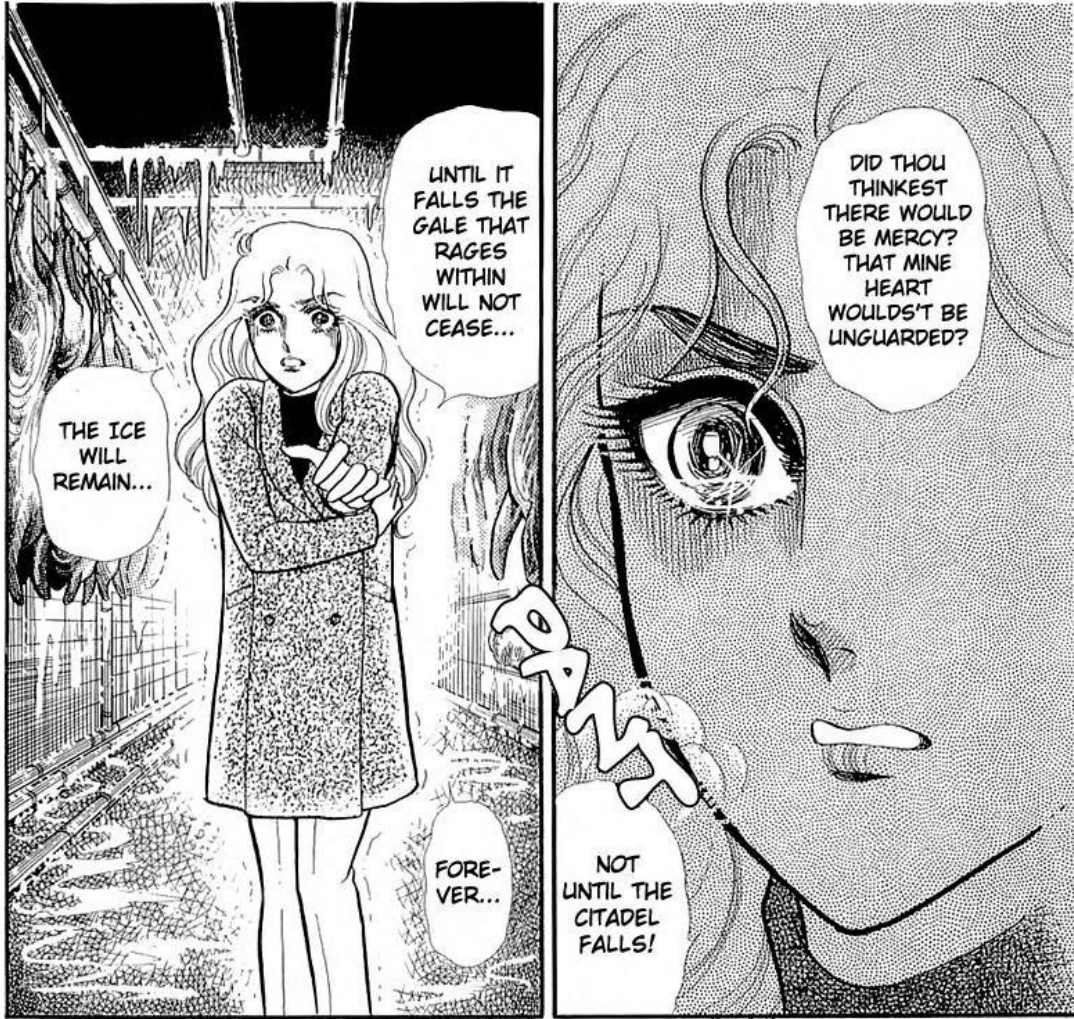
ON...
WARD...



BY MY OWN
HAND I
STRIKE IT
DOWN!

THE KEEP
WILL
FALL!

DOOMED
BE THE
BAILEY





Yes! This is the coldness of Lastonia kingdom!

AYUMI-SAN!

Ah!

My nose is frozen!

M-my eyebrows too!

SOME NOTES ABOUT THIS CHAPTER

By Nikkou

Oshikura Manju

Oshikura Manju (押しくらまんじゅう) is a very simple Japanese game that is played on cold days in order to get warm. The players first gather around in a circle, as close to each other as possible. When the game starts, the players powerfully shove backwards, pressing their backs towards other players' backs as they chant this song aloud. "Oshikura manju osarete nakuna" (Oshikura Manju don't cry even when shoved). This is the most famous part of the song, and many people are familiar with only this part. However, the proper song continues. "Nakuko wa dare yowamushi kemushi hasannde sutero" (Who is crying? Pinch the coward and caterpillar, and throw them away.) There is no accurate end to this game. The word "Oshikura" in the name of this game is thought to have the meaning of "oshikurabe" (shoving competition), but originally, it is not a game to compete.



Japanese children playing Oshikura Manju.