

I WILL LEAVE IT TO YOU TO TAKE THE CHANGE OF CLOTHES TO THE MASTER.

HAVE A SAFE TRIP!

THE CAR IS READY, AYUMI-SAMA.

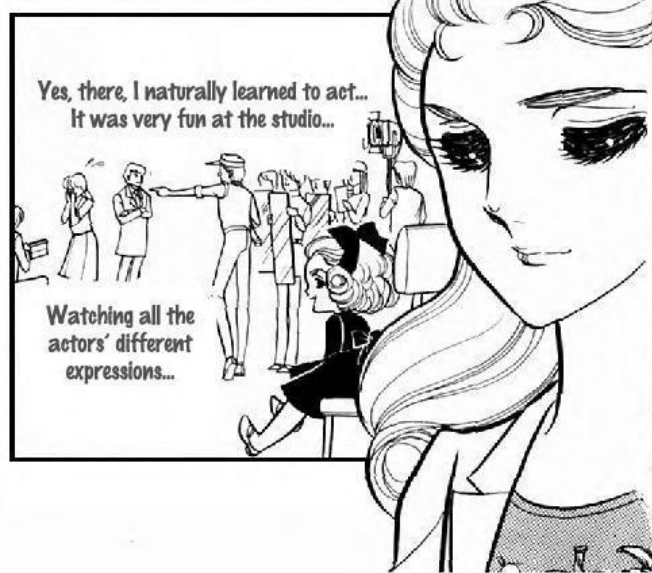
ALEXANDER!  
NO MORE PLAYING!



UNDERS-TOOD.

THAT'S RIGHT.

FIRST TO THE SCHOOL, THEN TO ONDINE THEATRE COMPANY, AND FINALLY TO MASTER'S FILM STUDIO, IS THAT RIGHT?

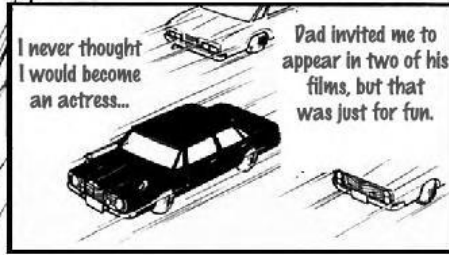


IT'S BEEN A LONG TIME SINCE I VISITED DAD FILMING AT A STUDIO.

WHEN I WAS LITTLE, NANNY WOULD OFTEN TAKE ME THERE TO PLAY...

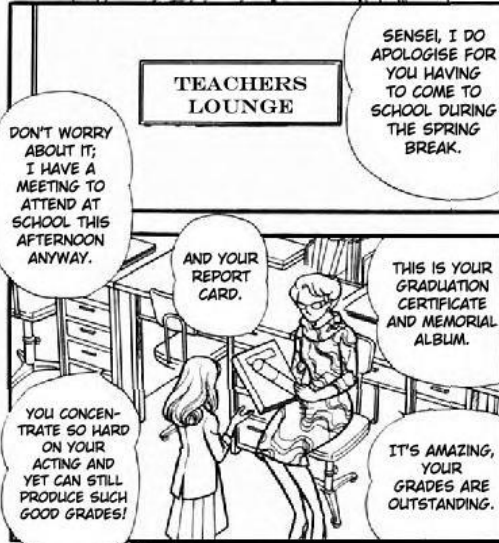


Yes... until that time...



I never thought I would become an actress...

Dad invited me to appear in two of his films, but that was just for fun.



TEACHERS LOUNGE

SENSEI, I DO APOLOGISE FOR YOU HAVING TO COME TO SCHOOL DURING THE SPRING BREAK.

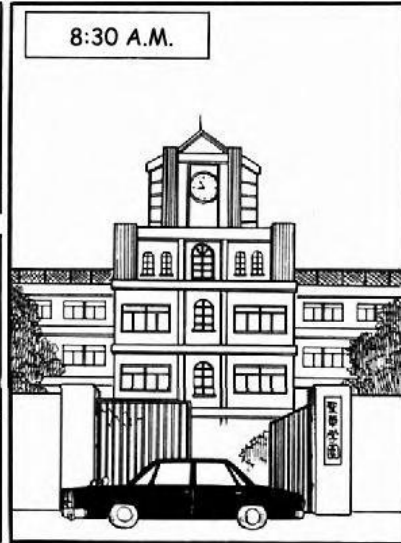
DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT; I HAVE A MEETING TO ATTEND AT SCHOOL THIS AFTERNOON ANYWAY.

AND YOUR REPORT CARD.

THIS IS YOUR GRADUATION CERTIFICATE AND MEMORIAL ALBUM.

YOU CONCENTRATE SO HARD ON YOUR ACTING AND YET CAN STILL PRODUCE SUCH GOOD GRADES!

IT'S AMAZING, YOUR GRADES ARE OUTSTANDING.



8:30 A.M.



I'M SORRY I COULDN'T ATTEND THE GRADUATION CEREMONY,

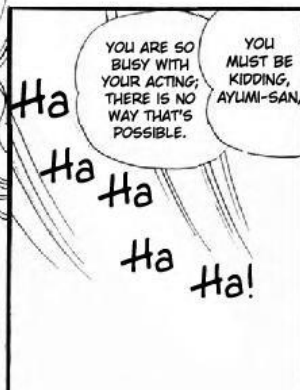
I COULDN'T EVEN GO ON THE GRADUATION TRIP...



WERE YOU BORN WITH A GOOD HEAD...

...OR ARE YOU A BOOKWORM?

1ST, 2ND AND 3RD YEAR, YOU WERE ALWAYS AT THE TOP OF THE CLASS. EVEN FOR THE LAST END OF TERM TEST, YOU GOT NUMBER ONE IN THE SCHOOL.



YOU ARE SO BUSY WITH YOUR ACTING; THERE IS NO WAY THAT'S POSSIBLE.

YOU MUST BE KIDDING, AYUMI-SAN.

Ha Ha Ha Ha!



I MUST BE A BOOKWORM.

YOU SEEM TO BE... I THINK YOU ARE A SPECIAL TYPE OF GIRL.

OH, NOTHING, I JUST THINK YOU ARE DIFFERENT FROM NORMAL GIRLS!

I WAS JUST A LITTLE SURPRISED.

HUH?

HUH, YOU WANTED TO GO ON THE GRADUATION TRIP?

EVEN THE HOMEWORK, SENSEI ONLY PRAISES HERS.

AS SOON AS SHE RAISES HER HAND, SENSEI WILL CALL ON HER.

IN MUSIC LESSONS, ONLY SHE GETS TO PLAY PIANO.

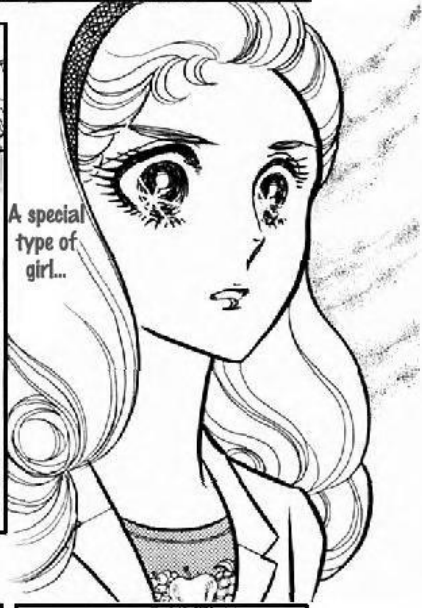
AND THE PICTURES SHE DRAWS ARE ALWAYS PICKED FOR DISPLAY.

That's been said of me in the past too.

That was shortly after I entered elementary school...

SHE'S EVERY SENSEI'S FAVORITE!

SHE REALLY IS SPECIAL.



Then that happened at the school sports day, during the baton relay race.

My team had been overtaken by all the other teams.

I was running the last leg of the race.

AAH  
AAH

No matter what I do, my own efforts are never recognised...

IT'S SO GOOD TO BE THE KID OF FAMOUS PEOPLE.



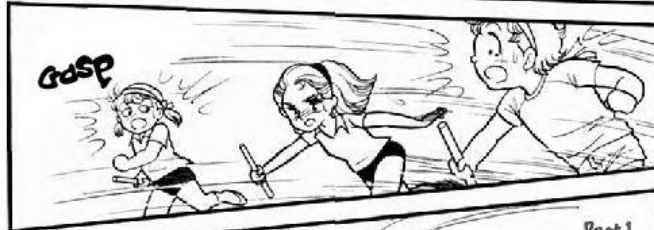
I have to do my very best!

I can't lose!

I must not lose!



Aaaah  
Aaaah



Gasp



3, 4...

Past 1 person, 2 people...



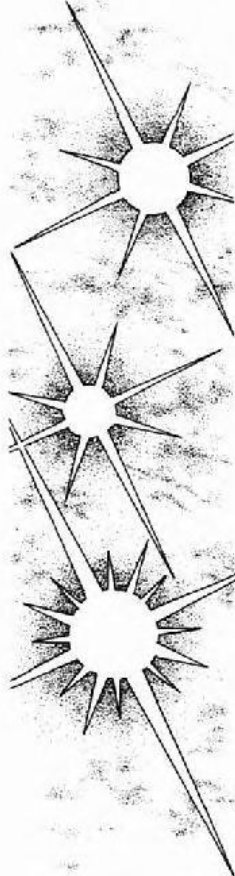
Aaaah Aaaah

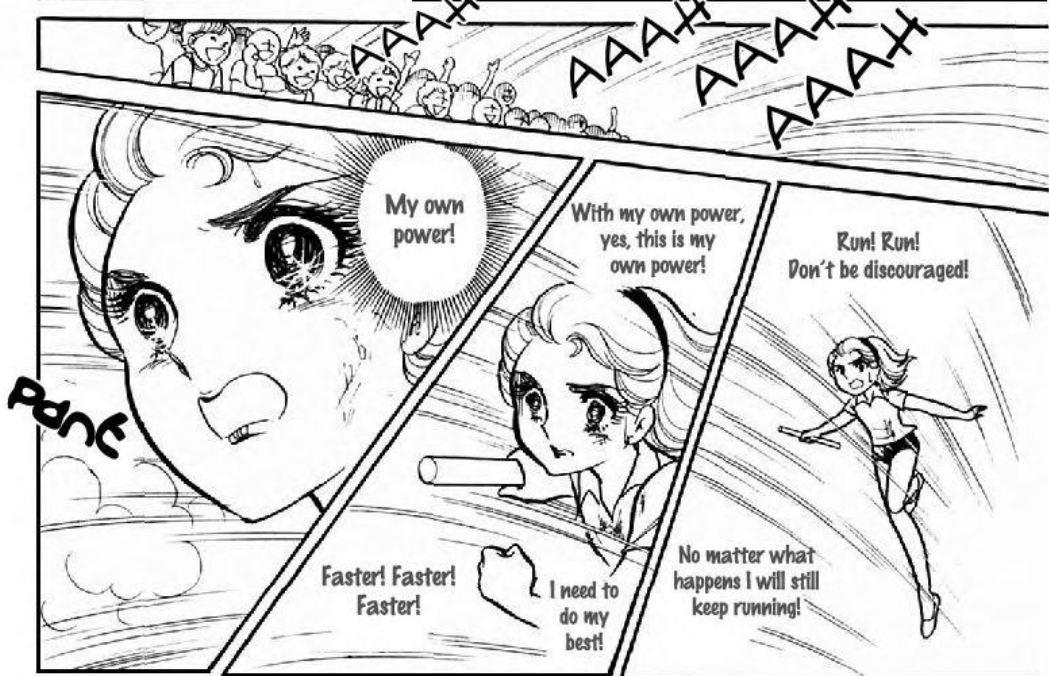
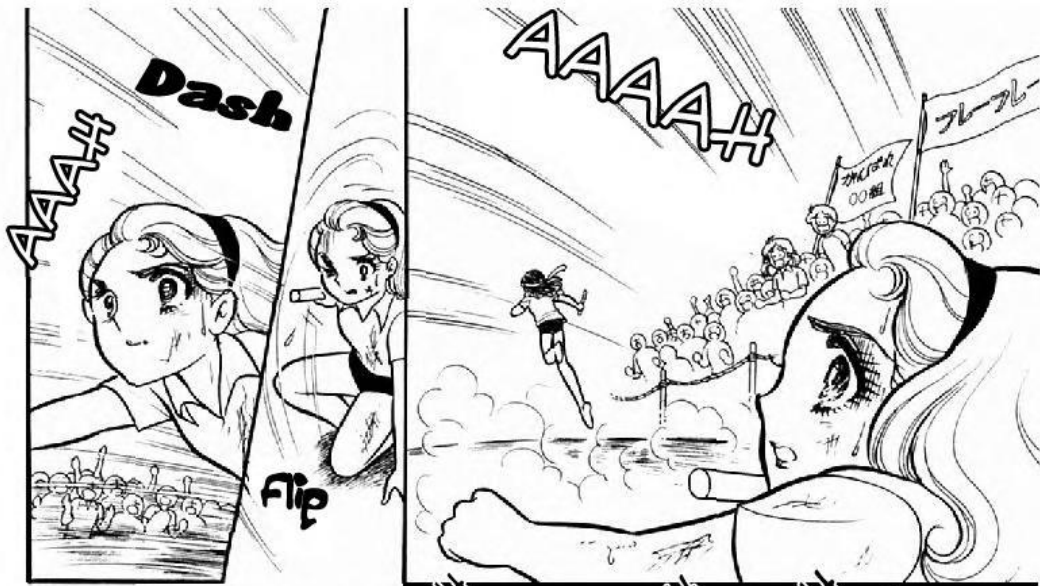
Still one more person!

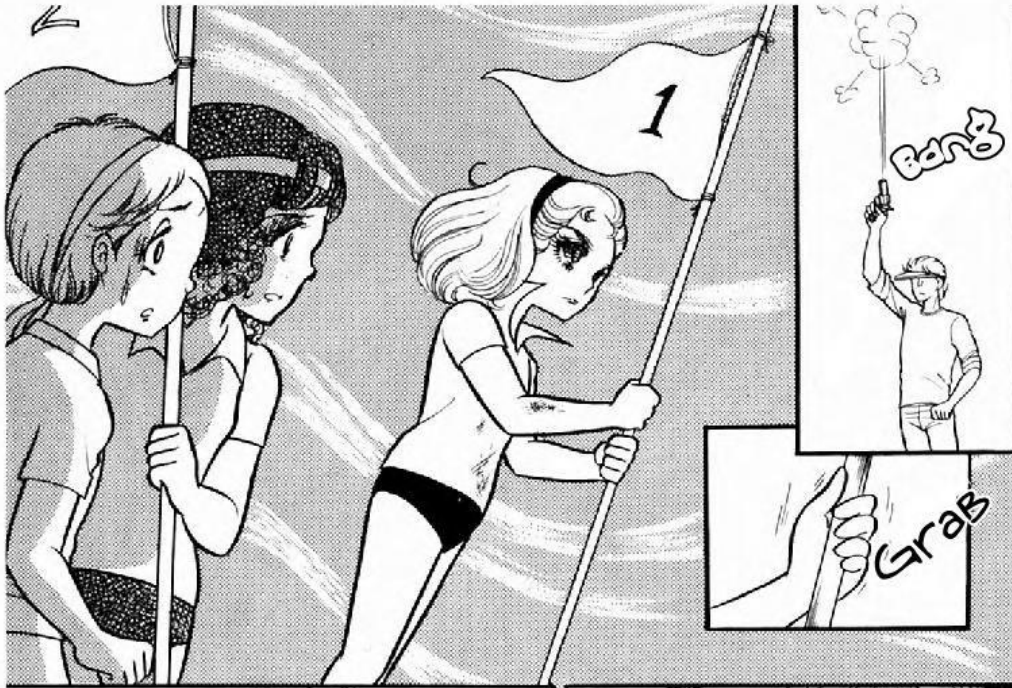
AMAZING! AYUMI-SAN, KEEP IT UP!



THUD









I will put my all into everything!

Whether it's studying or acting!

Japanese dance, ballet, piano and calligraphy!

Just like when I ran the baton relay, I'll put my all into it!

And like this, everyone will see the true Ayumi!

The world of meritocracy feels good! My true merit has been acknowledged!

The only thing that's been acknowledged is my own merit!

It doesn't matter anymore what Dad and Mom's names are!



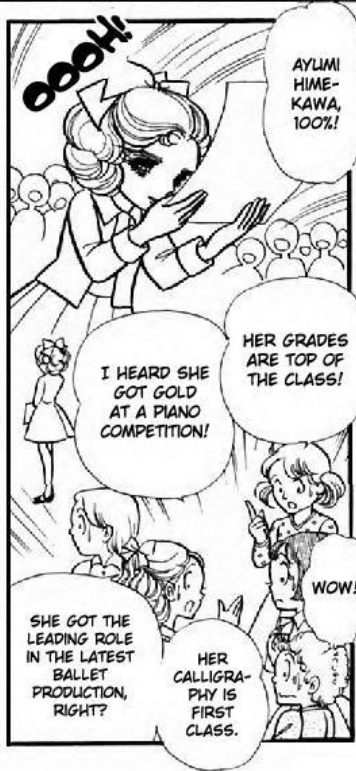
IF I WANT TO ACT IN DRAMA, THEN I NEED TO TRAIN HARDER.

NO, THAT'S NOT IT, DAD.

ONLY THEN WILL MY ACTING IMPROVE, RIGHT?



DO YOU NOT WANT TO ACT IN FILMS ANYMORE, AYUMI?



AYUMI HIMEKAWA, 100%!

I HEARD SHE GOT GOLD AT A PIANO COMPETITION!

HER GRADES ARE TOP OF THE CLASS!



DRAMA CLASS?

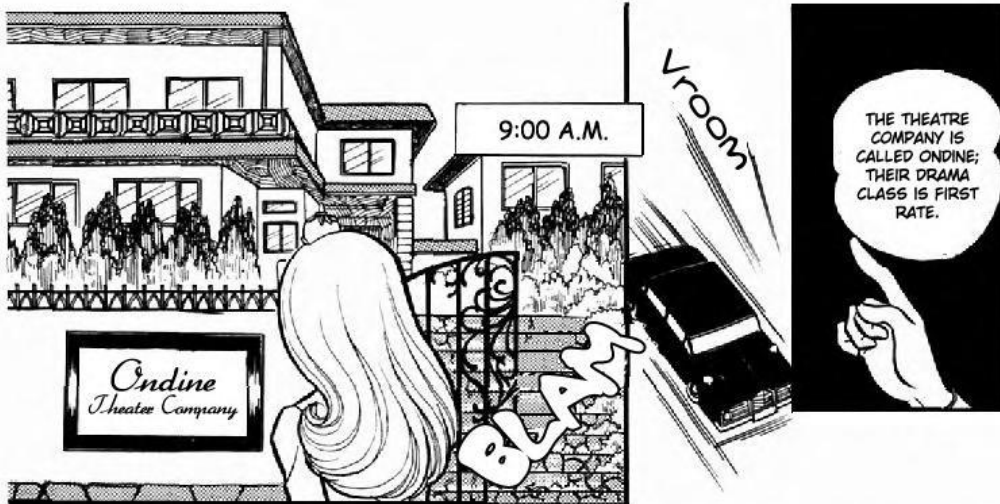
IN THAT CASE, WOULD YOU LIKE TO JOIN A THEATRE COMPANY'S DRAMA CLASS, AYUMI?

A PLACE THAT SPECIALISES IN DRAMATIC TRAINING.

SHE GOT THE LEADING ROLE IN THE LATEST BALLET PRODUCTION, RIGHT?

HER CALLIGRAPHY IS FIRST CLASS.

WOW!



THE THEATRE COMPANY IS CALLED ONDINE; THEIR DRAMA CLASS IS FIRST RATE.



IT'S AYUMI-SAN! AYUMI-SAN IS HERE!

WA! AYUMI-SAN!

AYUMI-ONESAMA!



I STILL WANT TO ACT WITH ONESAMA...

YOU ARE TRANSFERRING TO THE YOUTH CLASS...

I ONLY JOINED THIS THEATRE COMPANY BECAUSE I IDOLISE AYUMI-SAN...

...WE WON'T BE TOGETHER ANYMORE, HOW SAD!

YOU MUST COME BACK TO VISIT US WHENEVER YOU HAVE TIME!

OK.



YES.

PLEASE SIGN HERE,

AND THEN STAMP HERE.



AYUMI-SAN IS HERE ON BUSINESS!

HEY, YOU LOT! BACK TO THE DRAMA STUDIO NOW!



THE FIRST RECITAL... THAT WAS NOT LONG AFTER I JOINED THE COMPANY.

YES.

YOU MUST HAVE MANY MEMORIES OF THIS PLACE.



WHICH PART DID YOU PLAY?

YES, ABOUT HALF A YEAR AFTER.

"RED MANTLE"

WHAT PLAY WAS IT?

AH, AYUMI-KUN, YOU ARE JOINING THE YOUTH CLASS NOW.

CHAIRMAN ONODERA.

FROM TOMORROW ON, YOU WILL BE AT THE TRAINING ACADEMY IN HARAJUKU.

YES.



I WAS A 3RD GRADE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENT.

TIME HAS PASSED BY SO FAST, WHEN YOUR FATHER FIRST BROUGHT YOU HERE...

YES, IT'S BEEN ALMOST TEN YEARS.



WHEN THE CAST WAS ANNOUNCED, THERE WAS MUCH PROTEST FROM EVERYONE.

YES, DO YOU NOT REMEMBER?

YOU PLAYED THE LEAD HALF A YEAR AFTER JOINING THE COMPANY?

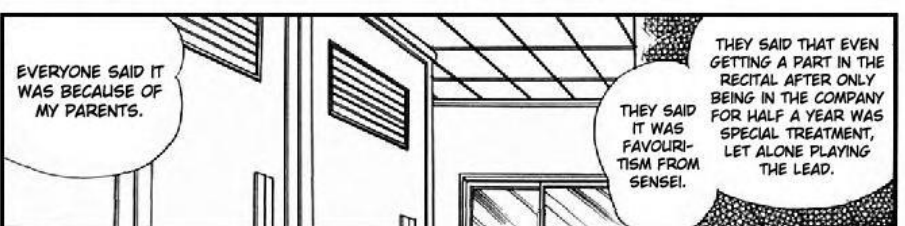


THE LEAD, EMMA.

EVERYONE SAID IT WAS BECAUSE OF MY PARENTS.

THEY SAID IT WAS FAVOURITISM FROM SENSEI.

THEY SAID THAT EVEN GETTING A PART IN THE RECITAL AFTER ONLY BEING IN THE COMPANY FOR HALF A YEAR WAS SPECIAL TREATMENT, LET ALONE PLAYING THE LEAD.



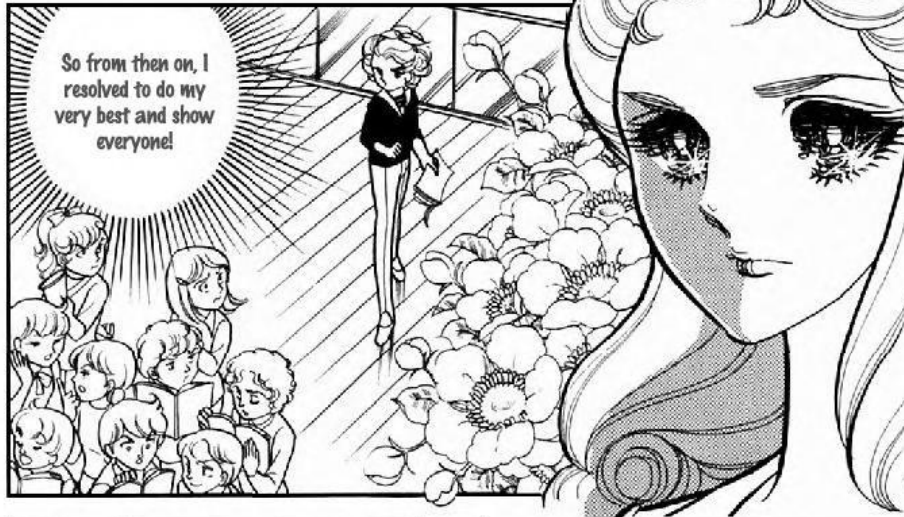


AYUMI-KUN.

EXCEPT FOR DURING REHEARSAL, EVERYONE IGNORED ME AND DID NOT TALK TO ME.

SAND WAS PUT INTO MY LOCKER,

MY TRAINING CLOTHES WERE SPOILT.



So from then on, I resolved to do my very best and show everyone!



...CAN MAGICALLY TURN INTO A STRONG AND HEALTHY GIRL.

Red Mantle

UPON WEARING THE RED MANTLE FROM THE MAGICIAN THE WEAK AND FRAGILE EMMA...

"RED MANTLE" ...

IT'S NOT BECAUSE OF DAD AND MOM!

IT'S BECAUSE SENSEI RECOGNISED MY TALENT THAT I GOT THE LEAD!

IT'S NOT BECAUSE OF DAD AND MOM'S INFLUENCE!

YES!

THE WALK, SPEECH AND INTONATION ALL NEEDS TO BE DIFFERENT, AYUMI-KUN.

A STRONG GIRL AND A WEAK GIRL!

I AM MORE SERIOUS ABOUT ACTING THAN ANYONE ELSE!

YES, IT IS MY TALENT!

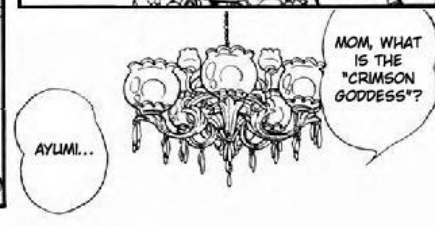








The Crimson Goddess...





If that was the case, then no-one could say it had anything to do with Dad and Mom's influence!

If I could play that role...

If I could play the Crimson Goddess!

I would be able to escape from the shadow of Dad and Mom's celebrity!



I will become the star actress who will play the role of the Crimson Goddess!

I must work hard to become an actress!



11:00 A.M.

Sagan Film Studio

NO. 3



IS THIS HOW YOU'RE ACTING IT? HOW COME YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND EVEN A LITTLE BIT!

NOT LIKE THAT! I'VE SAID THIS HOW MANY TIMES AND YOU STILL DON'T GET IT!

WHERE IS DIRECTOR HIME-KAWA?

IN STUDIO NO. 3.



LIGHTS! ON THE RIGHT! I'VE ALREADY SAID IT'S TOO BRIGHT!

AHH! WHY AREN'T YOU PAYING ATTENTION TO THIS OR THAT!



EEH?  
WHAT?

15 MINUTES?

HURRY UP AND EAT, THEN WE'LL BEGIN AGAIN FROM THE START...

IT'S ALREADY NOON! OK! LET'S TAKE A 15 MINUTE BREAK!



HAVE YOU HAD LUNCH YET? LET'S EAT TOGETHER!

REALLY? YOU'VE BROUGHT ME A CHANGE OF CLOTHES...

OK!

HOW ARE YOU, DAD? I'VE BROUGHT YOU A CHANGE OF CLOTHES.

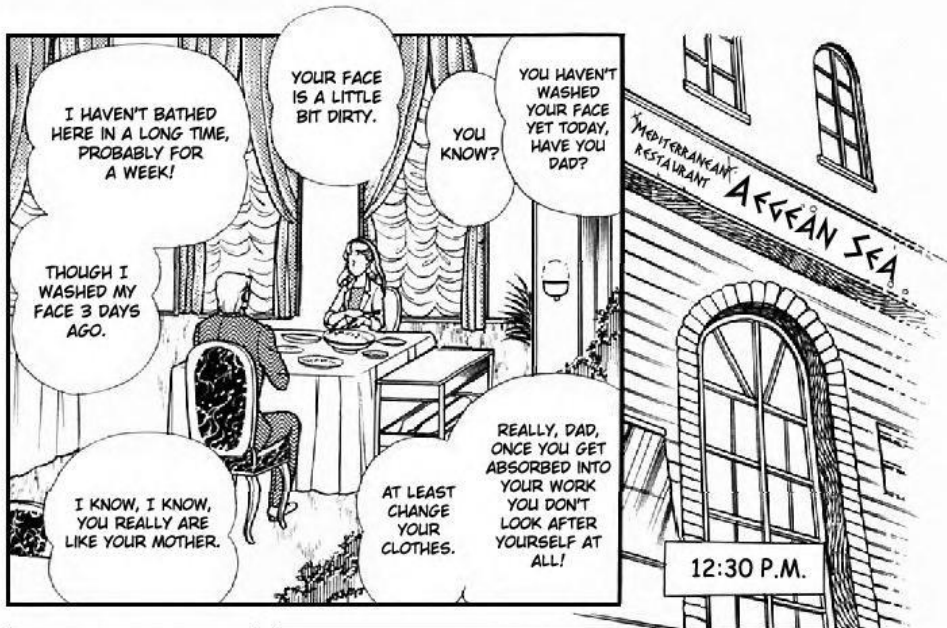
AYUMI!



THUD

BREAK FOR AN HOUR AND A HALF, DISMISSED!





I HAVEN'T BATHED HERE IN A LONG TIME, PROBABLY FOR A WEEK!

YOUR FACE IS A LITTLE BIT DIRTY.

YOU HAVEN'T WASHED YOUR FACE YET TODAY, HAVE YOU DAD?

THOUGH I WASHED MY FACE 3 DAYS AGO.

YOU KNOW?

I KNOW, I KNOW, YOU REALLY ARE LIKE YOUR MOTHER.

AT LEAST CHANGE YOUR CLOTHES.

REALLY, DAD, ONCE YOU GET ABSORBED INTO YOUR WORK YOU DON'T LOOK AFTER YOURSELF AT ALL!

12:30 P.M.



SO, WHAT ARE YOU DOING AFTER THIS?



I WON'T BE ABLE TO GO HOME JUST YET.

YES, I STILL NEED TO FILM THESE NEXT FEW DAYS.

YOU STILL WANT TO STAY AT THE STUDIO?

MIDDLE OF NEXT MONTH.

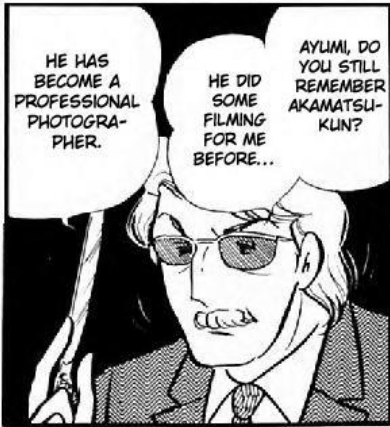
WHEN WILL YOU GO ON LOCATION?



HE IS NOW HOLDING A PHOTOGRAPHY EXHIBITION AT THE Q GALLERY IN GINZA.

I UNDERSTAND, I WILL GO ON YOUR BEHALF.

HE INVITED ME BUT I CAN'T GET AWAY.



HE HAS BECOME A PROFESSIONAL PHOTOGRAPHER.

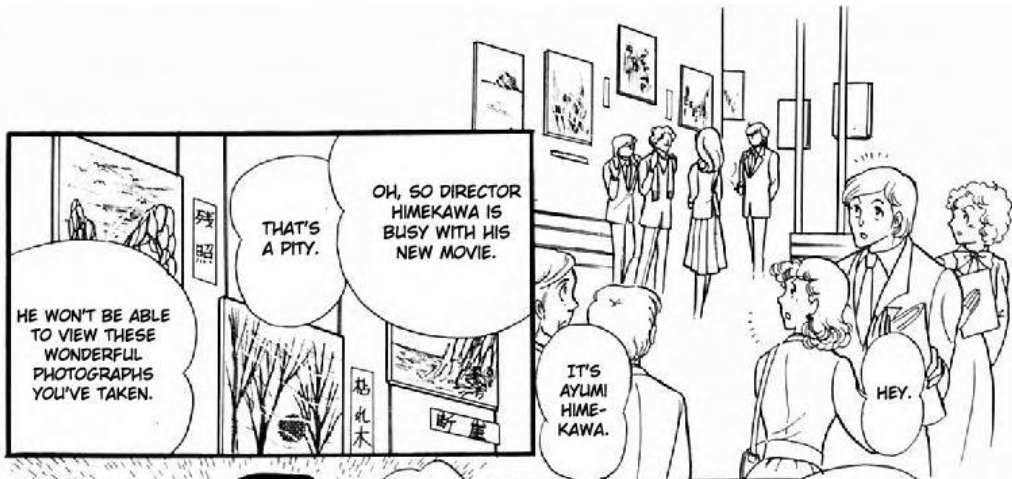
HE DID SOME FILMING FOR ME BEFORE...

AYUMI, DO YOU STILL REMEMBER AKAMATSU-KUN?



IN THE AFTERNOON I PLAN TO GO WATCH MOM'S REHEARSAL.





HE WON'T BE ABLE TO VIEW THESE WONDERFUL PHOTOGRAPHS YOU'VE TAKEN.

THAT'S A PITY.

OH, SO DIRECTOR HIMEKAWA IS BUSY WITH HIS NEW MOVIE.

IT'S AYUMI HIMEKAWA.

HEY.



HARIGUCHI-SAN!

OH, ISN'T THAT AYUMI-SAN?

HAVING SUCH A BEAUTIFUL GIRL AS YOU COME HERE, AYUMI-SAN, HAS GIVEN THE GALLERY A TOUCH OF GLAMOUR.

IN A MOMENT THERE WILL BE A PHOTO COLLECTION PRESENTATION.

NOT AT ALL, PLEASE TAKE YOUR TIME TO LOOK AROUND.

YOU LOOK VERY WELL; YOU ARE ATTENDING UNIVERSITY NOW?

HEY, ISN'T THAT THE ACTOR TAKESHI HARIGUCHI?

THIS EXHIBITION HAS GATHERED TOGETHER MANY FRIENDS FROM THE ENTERTAINMENT WORLD; IT'S LIKE GOING BACK TO THE GOOD OLD TIMES.



AH, THAT FILM WAS CALLED "THE EXTREME ESCAPE".

YES.

TIME REALLY DOES FLY BY, I REMEMBER WHEN I FIRST ACTED WITH YOU, AND YOU WERE ONLY 11 YEARS OLD.



SHE WAS THE RICH LITTLE GIRL HOSTAGE.

I WAS THE LEAD PLAYING A KIDNAPPER.

YES, THAT WAS THE FILM.



Ha, you often get kids of famous people appearing in TV or film to promote publicity.

I'll bet she's just the same.

It is only because of her parents' fame that she's become a talking point!

When we were first introduced, what I saw was a radiant, beautiful and extremely well-mannered girl.



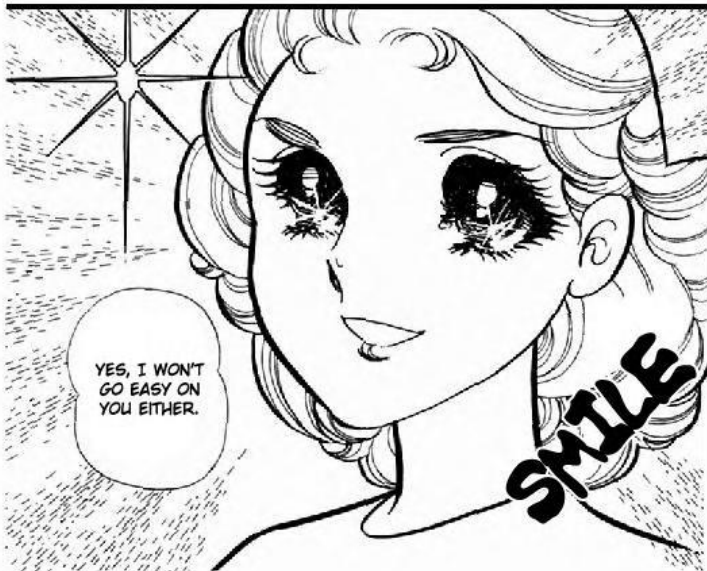
PLEASE LOOK AFTER ME.



WHEN FILMING BEGINS I WON'T GO EASY ON YOU.

I PLAY THE ROLE OF THE KIDNAPPER.

EVEN FOR A CELEBRITY'S DAUGHTER, HER FACE WAS VERY PRETTY.



YES, I WON'T GO EASY ON YOU EITHER.



BUT STILL I WASN'T HAPPY TO HAVE TO ACT WITH SOMEONE WITH ABSOLUTELY NO ACTING EXPERIENCE.



I'LL TIE YOU UP!

YOU FOOL!  
YOU THINK  
YOU CAN  
ESCAPE?

It happened  
not long  
after we  
started  
filming.

After she said that,  
I still did not quite  
understand her  
meaning.



It was a scene where  
a struggle arose from  
the girl hostage  
trying to escape.



At that time, she  
actually fiercely  
bit my leg.

What a scary  
expression!





This...!

This girl is an amazing actress!



Her eyes!

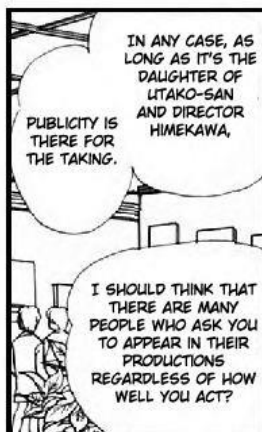
Like the eyes of a little savage.



All the feelings of a girl taken hostage were expressed completely.

The eyes that hated me, the expression of fear, the anxious attitude...

Right up till the end of filming I was completely and utterly overwhelmed by her.



PUBLICITY IS THERE FOR THE TAKING.

IN ANY CASE, AS LONG AS IT'S THE DAUGHTER OF UTAKO-SAN AND DIRECTOR HIMEKAWA,

I SHOULD THINK THAT THERE ARE MANY PEOPLE WHO ASK YOU TO APPEAR IN THEIR PRODUCTIONS REGARDLESS OF HOW WELL YOU ACT?



YES! SINCE THAT TIME THE FLOOD OF PERFORMANCE REQUESTS HAS BEEN ENDLESS.

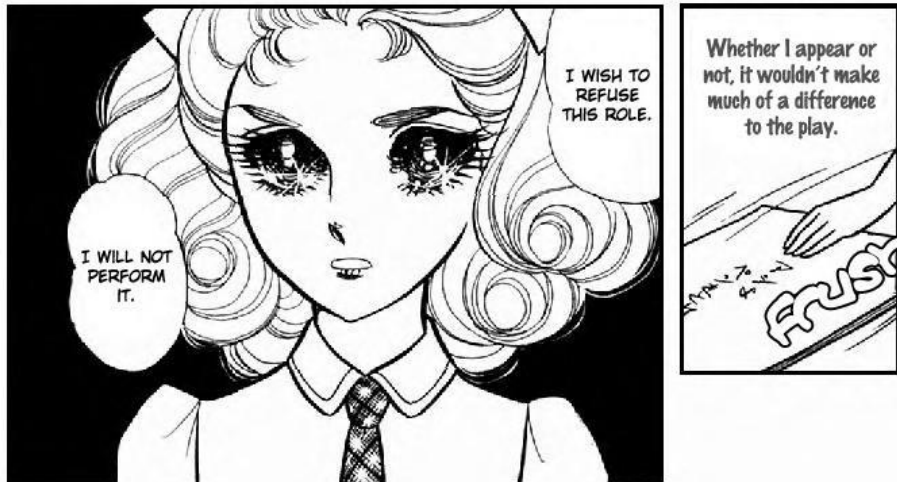
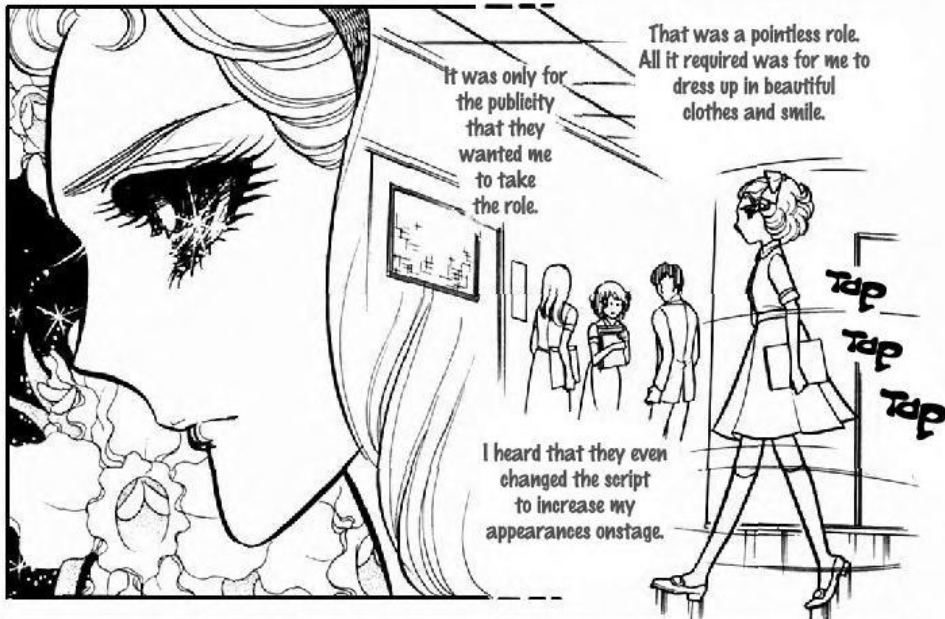
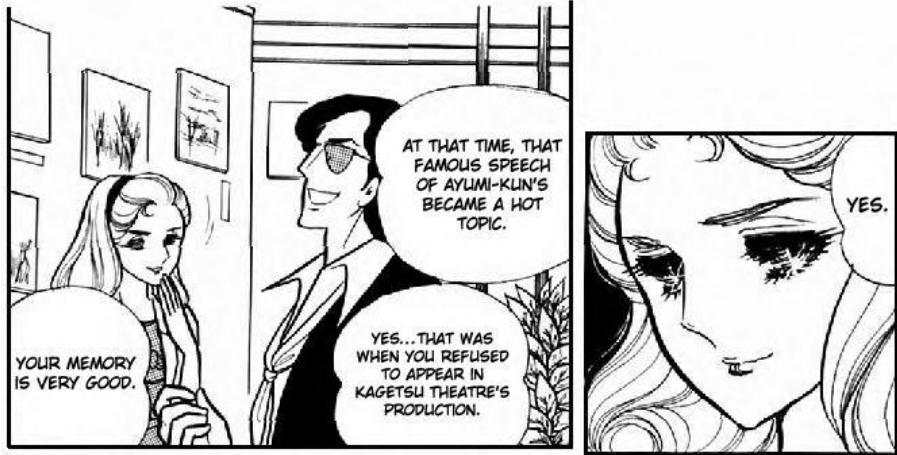
YOU'VE PRACTICALLY ENTERED THE HALL OF FAME.



AND IN ONE BIG LEAP AYUMI-KUN BECAME A CHILD STAR! YOUR REPUTATION BEGAN FROM THEN.

I GOT A SPECIAL AWARD.

IT WAS FOR THAT FILM THAT YOU WERE AWARDED BEST ACTOR.





SCHOOL ARTS FESTIVAL?

OOOH!

...SO I WILL NOT BE IN YOUR PLAY.

I NEED TO PERFORM IN MY UPCOMING SCHOOL ARTS FESTIVAL...

MANAGER!

WHY? WHAT IS IT THAT DOESN'T SATISFY YOU?

CHILD STAR AYUMI HIMEKAWA REFUSES TO PERFORM FOR THE KAGETSU THEATRE.

SHE'S VERY AMUSING, THIS KID! LET'S MAKE A NOTE OF IT!



DO YOU ACTUALLY THINK A SCHOOL ARTS FESTIVAL IS BETTER THAN THE KAGETSU THEATRE?

MANAGER! YOU WERE THE ONE WHO SAID IT WOULD CREATE PUBLICITY IF WE WERE TO INVITE HER TO PERFORM!



IT STILL REQUIRES A SERIOUS PERFORMANCE.

EVEN THOUGH IT IS A SCHOOL FESTIVAL, A PLAY IS A PLAY.

I DON'T WANT TO TAKE PART IN A PLAY PURELY FOR THE PUBLICITY.

AND I PLAY THE LEAD.

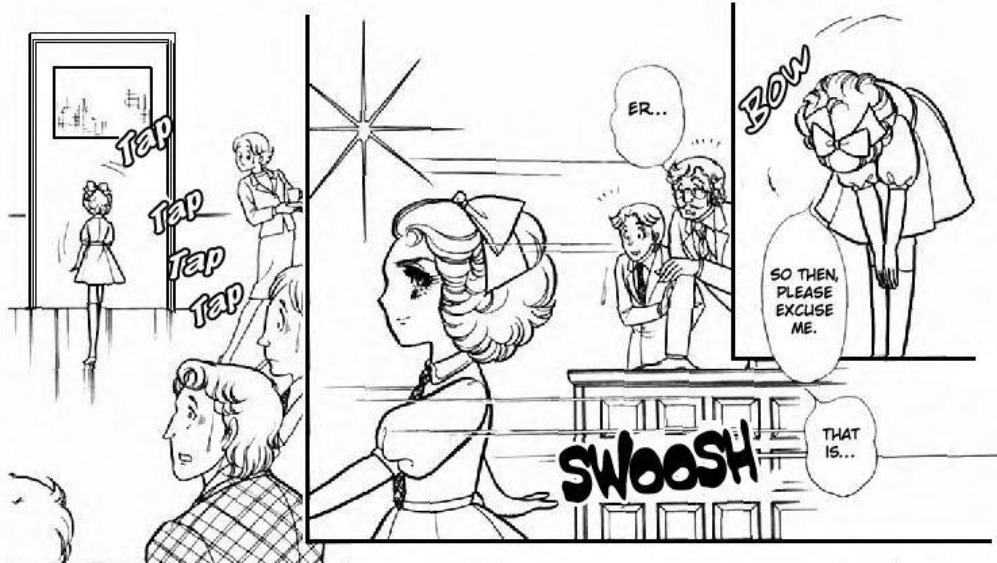
THAT'S BECAUSE THE SCHOOL PLAY IS MORE INTERESTING.

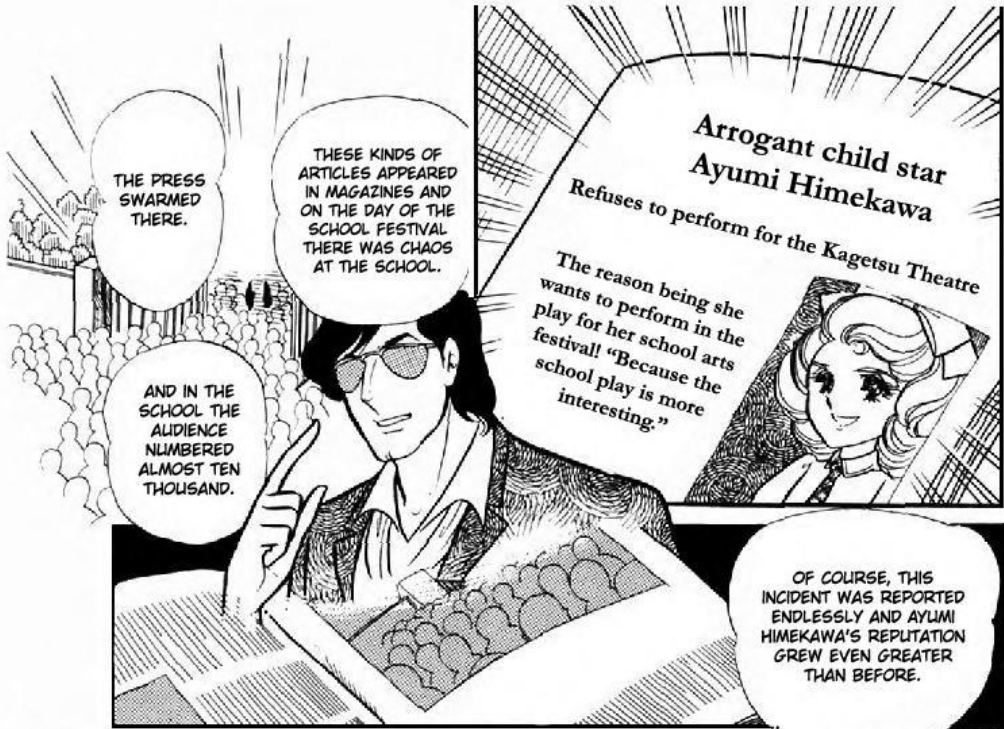
SO OF COURSE I WILL CHOOSE A ROLE WORTH PERFORMING.

SMILE

I WANT TO TAKE THIS CHANCE TO PLAY A FAIRY.







THE PRESS SWARMED THERE.

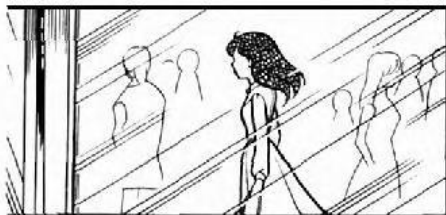
THESE KINDS OF ARTICLES APPEARED IN MAGAZINES AND ON THE DAY OF THE SCHOOL FESTIVAL THERE WAS CHAOS AT THE SCHOOL.

AND IN THE SCHOOL THE AUDIENCE NUMBERED ALMOST TEN THOUSAND.

**Arrogant child star  
Ayumi Himekawa**  
Refuses to perform for the Kagetsu Theatre

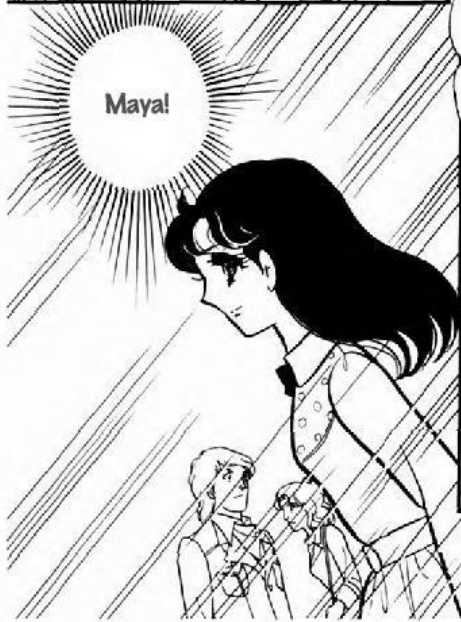
The reason being she wants to perform in the festival! "Because the school play is more interesting."

OF COURSE, THIS INCIDENT WAS REPORTED ENDLESSLY AND AYUMI HIMEKAWA'S REPUTATION GREW EVEN GREATER THAN BEFORE.



EVEN NOW, AYUMI HIMEKAWA'S PERFORMANCES HAVE NEVER RECEIVED BAD REVIEWS.

REQUESTS TO APPEAR IN FILMS, TV AND PLAYS INCREASED.



Maya!

ALL THE REVIEWS HAVE BEEN OF THE HIGHEST PRAISE.

BUT, SHE WOULD NOT CHOOSE JUST ANY ROLE.



IT REALLY IS AMAZING.

YOU CAN CALL IT PERFECTION.

HOWEVER, WHICHEVER ROLE SHE DID PLAY, SHE ACTED TO PERFECTION.



YOU IN FRONT THERE, PLEASE WAIT!

WAIT!

Maya!



SORRY, PLEASE EXCUSE ME FOR A WHILE!

BLAM



WHAT IS IT?

WAIT!



THAT'S OK, I'M VERY HAPPY!

MAY I PLEASE HAVE YOUR AUTO-GRAPH?

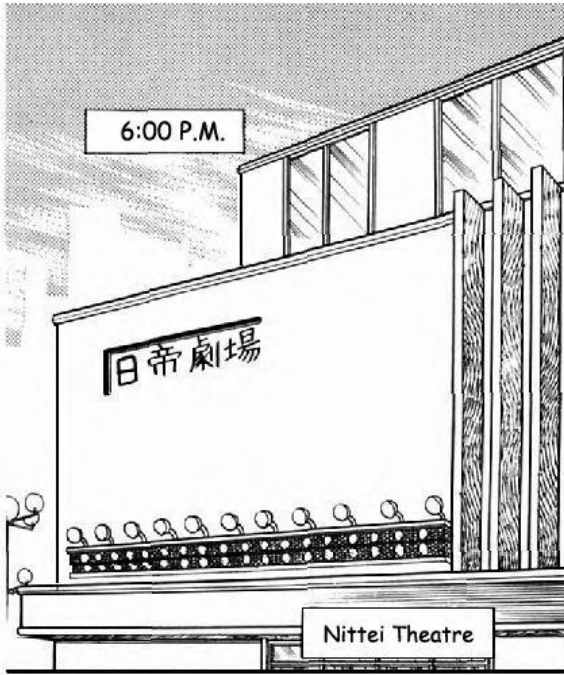
SORRY, I MISTOOK YOU FOR SOMEONE ELSE...

Wow! I'll be able to tell all my friends after this!



OH! AYUMI HIMEKAWA!

It's not her!



6:00 P.M.

日帝劇場

Nittei Theatre

Maya Kitajima...

Where are you right now?  
What are you doing?

My rival...

You are my one and only rival...



I HAD SOME SANDWICHES JUST NOW.

YOU'RE AFRAID I'LL GET HUNGRY?

I WILL DINE AT HOME IF YOU COULD PREPARE IT FOR ME PLEASE.

I WILL RETURN AT EIGHT O'CLOCK THIS EVENING.

I'VE JUST ARRIVED AT NITTEI THEATRE'S BASEMENT REHEARSAL STUDIO.

HELLO, NANNY?

YES, IT'S AYUMI.

YES, MOM HAS BEEN REHEARSING ALL THIS TIME.



GOODBYE THEN, NANNY.

YOU MUST PREPARE SOME DELICIOUS TEA.

YES, QUEEN MARY'S GOOD.

Click

I WILL BUY SOME CHEESECAKE FROM ASUNARO;

YOU LIKE THEM DON'T YOU, NANNY?

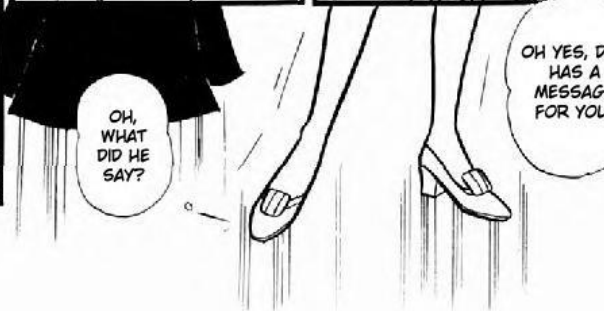
THAT WON'T BE NECESSARY, MOM SAID SHE WILL BE REHEARSING LATE AGAIN TONIGHT.

AND DAD MIGHT STAY AT THE SHIBUYA APARTMENT.

It is because they trust one another that they can both work peacefully without worrying about each other.

Even though often separated...

...the feelings Dad and Mom hold for each other are very strong.





WHAT IS IT, MOM?

OH, AYUMI!

THANK YOU FOR USING THE MUSIC BOX TO WAKE ME UP THIS MORNING.

Hmph

TELL HIM FOR ME THAT EVEN IF HE DOESN'T SAY IT, I KNOW, OK?



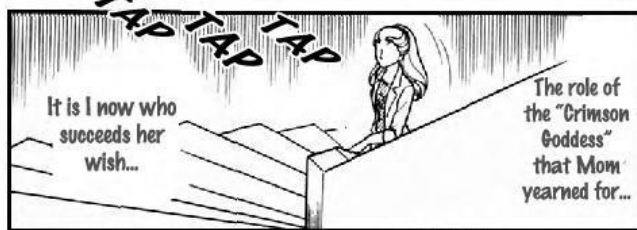
THANKS FOR THE HARD WORK.

THANKS FOR THE HARD WORK!



BYE, MOM!

BYE.



TAP TAP TAP

It is I now who succeeds her wish...

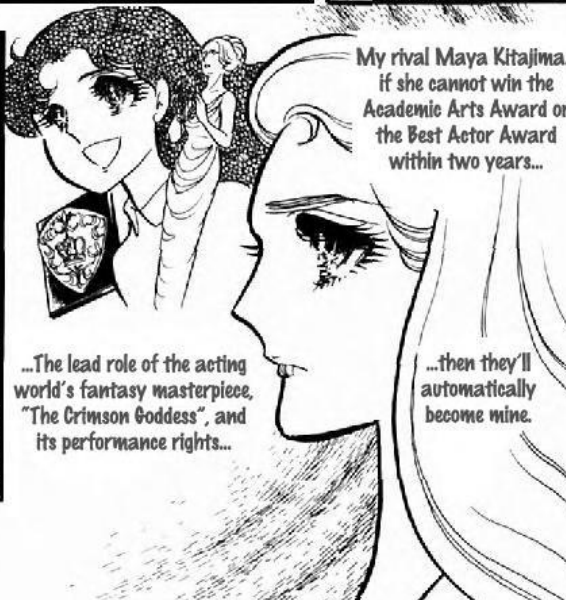
The role of the "Crimson Goddess" that Mom yearned for...



If she wins an award in these two years, then she will compete with me again for the "Crimson Goddess"...

TAP TAP

OH! IT'S AYUMI-SAN!



My rival Maya Kitajima... if she cannot win the Academic Arts Award or the Best Actor Award within two years...

...The lead role of the acting world's fantasy masterpiece, "The Crimson Goddess", and its performance rights...

...then they'll automatically become mine.



ooh!

NO MATTER WHEN YOU SEE HER, SHE'S A BEAUTY.

YOU'RE RIGHT; SHE'S EVEN MORE BEAUTIFUL THAN HER MOTHER!



SUCH A FORTUNATE GIRL!

SHE REALLY IS THE PRODIGAL GIRL SMILED UPON BY THE HEAVENS...

REALLY, HOW CAN SUCH A PERSON EXIST.



WOW!

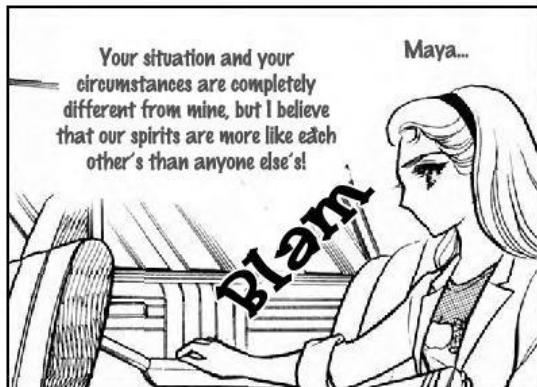
TAP TAP TAP TAP

SHE'S GOOD AT IT ALL, YOU CAN SAY EVEN TO A PROFESSIONAL LEVEL.

JAPANESE DANCE, BALLET, PIANO, CALLIGRAPHY...

HER SCHOOL WORK IS GOOD.

AND HER ACTING SKILLS CAN BE SAID TO BE GENIUS.



Your situation and your circumstances are completely different from mine, but I believe that our spirits are more like each other's than anyone else's!

Maya...

BIAM!



Maya! I'm waiting for you! Waiting for the day when I will compete with you for "The Crimson Goddess"! My rival!

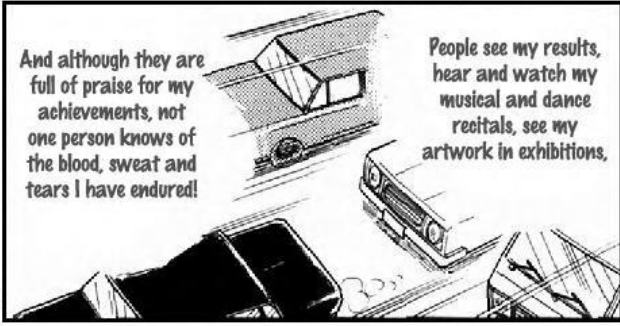


Be it studying or other arts!

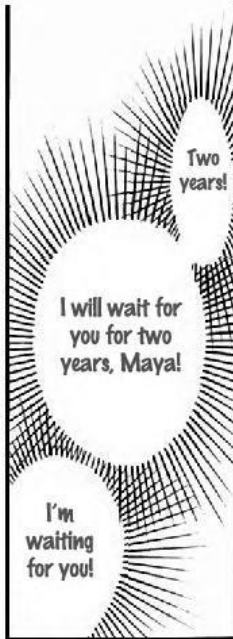
WROOM

7:05 P.M.

I started working hard from a long time ago!







That is why I want to compete with her for the role of the "Crimson Goddess"!

No matter what, I want to win against her!



If it isn't like this, then there is no point to the "Crimson Goddess"!

