



Aldis' lines...

Aldis' Spring heart is filled with serenity and overflowing happiness...



DOST THOU NOT KNOW MY ARSENAL, YULIUS?

LOVE THY ENEMY!

'TIS LOVE AND TRUST...



WITH SUCH AS THESE DO I WAGE WAR.

AND MY SMILE!

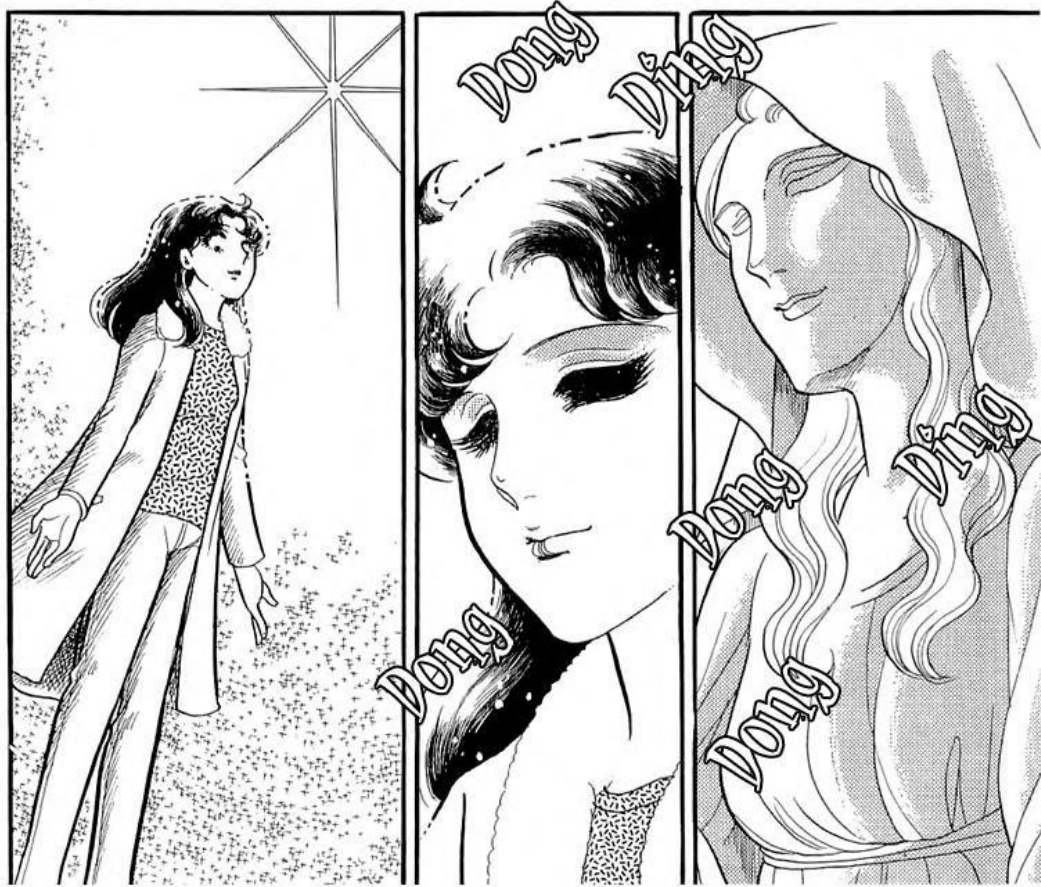
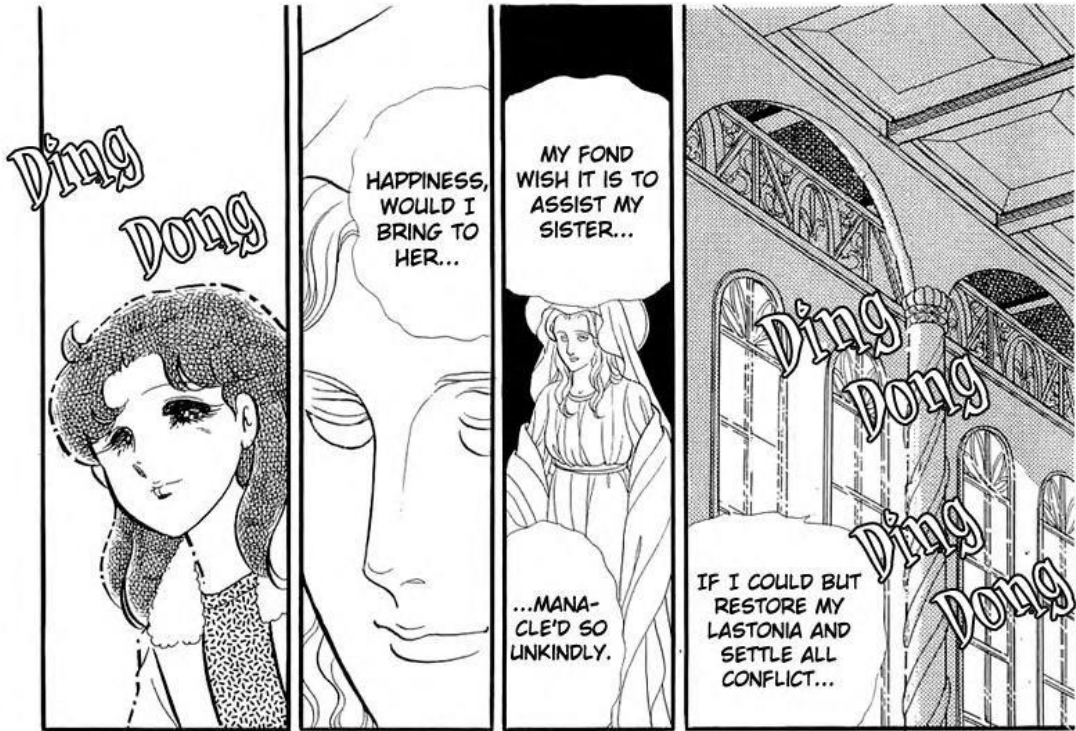
Can a flower garden blossom inside your heart?



A Spring heart...

TRULY, YOUR TENDER DEVOTION BRINGS ME MUCH JOY.

RECEIVE MY HEARTFELT THANKS.





Aldis, pretty
and shining!
Yes! I can
play her!

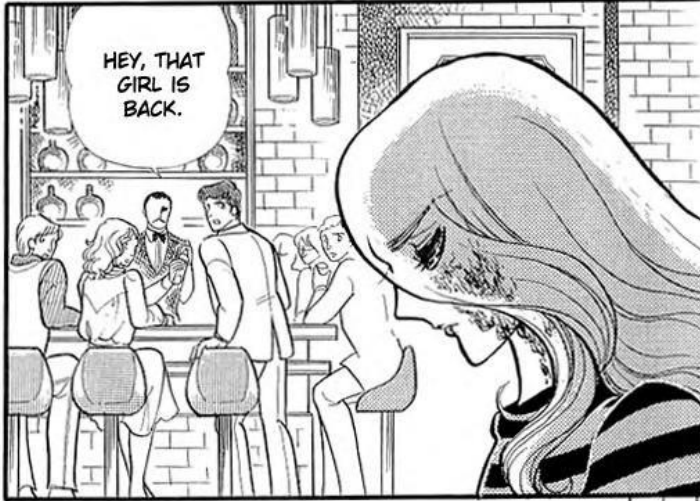
Acting is on
my side!

I'll become a
beautiful
maiden
thanks to
my acting!



I can play
Aldis!

These
are her
feelings!









DOS'T THOU THINK I AM DEFEATED BY THE FICKLENESS OF FATE?!

LORD OF DESTINY!

Smirk

CANS'T THOU SEE MY PRIVATE SMILE?



I WILL BIRTH MYSELF ANEW!

Hu Hu

AEON! MY OWN PATH SHALL I CHOOSE!



WHERE DID YOU GET A WATCH LIKE THAT?

YOU ARE SHOWING OFF.

Hu Hu Hu

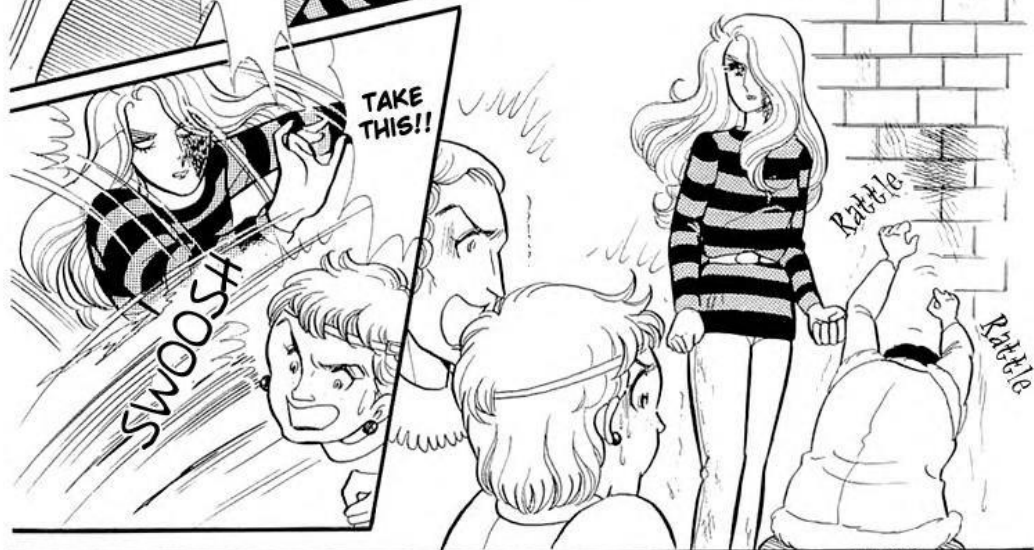
YOU'VE BEEN HANGING AROUND HERE LATELY!

IT'S BRAND-NAME,

IT MUST BE WORTH MORE THAN 20,000 YEN!

Grab









IT SEEMS SHE ISN'T HURT, THANK GOD.

AH! SCARY...

WHAT'S THAT? A FIGHT BETWEEN SUKEBAN*?



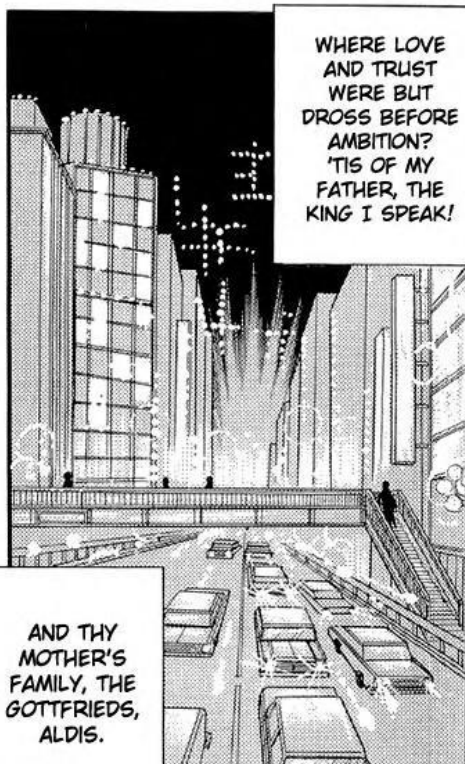
YOU'LL PAY FOR THIS!

WE AREN'T DONE WITH YOU!



"LOVE THY ENEMY", THOU SAYEST?

ALDIS!



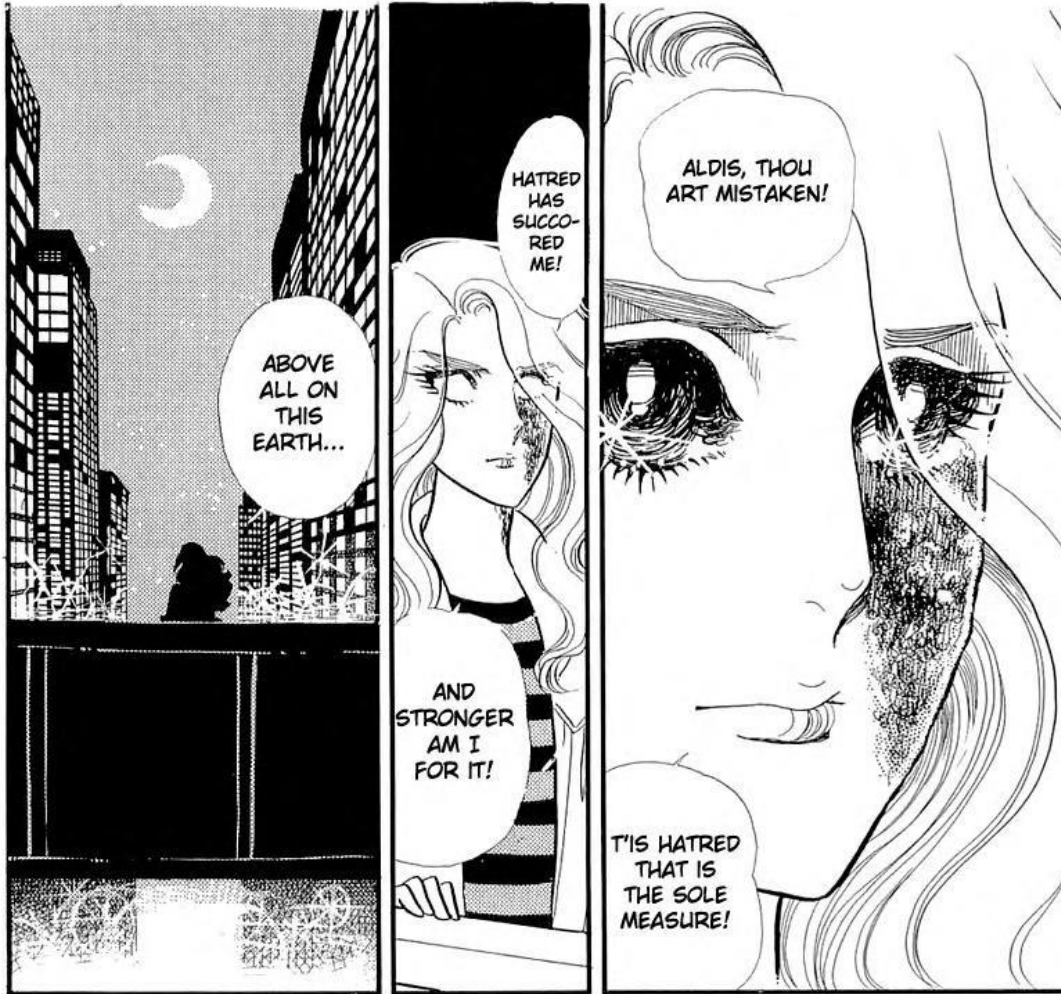
WHERE LOVE AND TRUST WERE BUT DROSS BEFORE AMBITION? 'TIS OF MY FATHER, THE KING I SPEAK!



SHALL I LOVE THE BETRAYER AND MURDERER OF AN INNOCENT SPOUSE?

AND THY MOTHER'S FAMILY, THE GOTTFRIEDS, ALDIS.

THE DISCARDER AND IMPRISONER OF A DAUGHTER, A HINDRANCE SEEN?!





EVERYBODY KNOWS THERE WAS A BIG MISCAST WITH ALDIS AND ORIGELD.

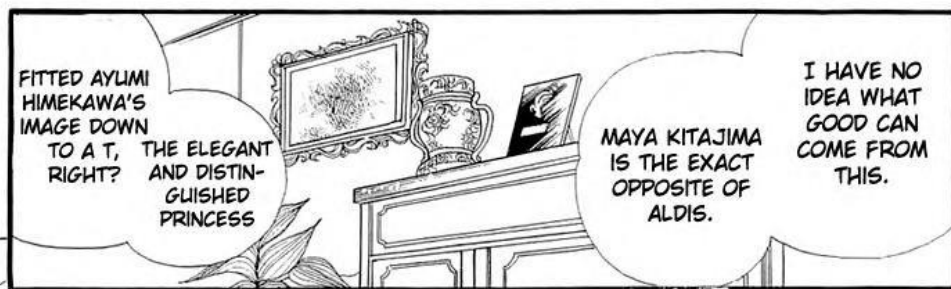
AND IT SEEMS THERE WAS NO TURNING BACK.

IT WAS THAT OLD WOMAN WHO SUGGESTED THE ROLE ASSIGNMENT



I'M HEARING IT FROM YOU FOR THE FIRST TIME, ONODERA-SAN.

I DIDN'T.



FITTED AYUMI HIMEKAWA'S IMAGE DOWN TO A T, THE ELEGANT AND DISTINGUISHED PRINCESS

MAYA KITAJIMA IS THE EXACT OPPOSITE OF ALDIS.

I HAVE NO IDEA WHAT GOOD CAN COME FROM THIS.

IF THE TWO PRINCESSES IS A FIASCO, MAYA KITAJIMA WILL BE BLACKLISTED FROM THE ENTERTAINMENT INDUSTRY, WON'T SHE?

OUT OF THE TWO, AYUMI HIMEKAWA WILL STAND OUT, THAT'S FOR SURE.



THAT'S WHAT THE INSIDERS THINK, RIGHT?

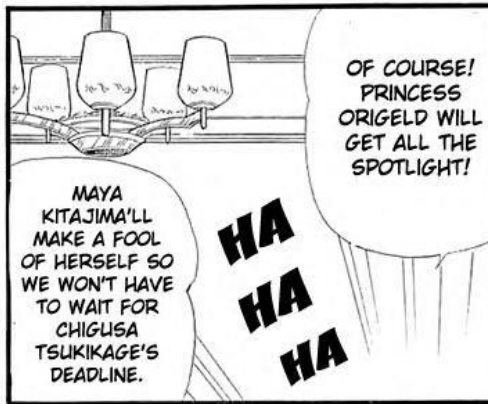
OBVIOUSLY MAYA KITAJIMA CAN'T COMPARE TO AYUMI HIMEKAWA.

THAT WAY IT'LL BE CLEAR TO EVERYBODY THAT AYUMI HIMEKAWA IS A BETTER CHOICE TO PLAY THE CRIMSON GODDESS.

OF COURSE SHE WILL, MASUMI-KUN.



Smile



OF COURSE! PRINCESS ORIGELD WILL GET ALL THE SPOTLIGHT!

MAYA KITAJIMA'LL MAKE A FOOL OF HERSELF SO WE WON'T HAVE TO WAIT FOR CHIGUSA TSUKIKAGE'S DEADLINE.

HA
HA
HA



MMM...

That 1%?



LET'S SEE WHAT HAPPENS.

WE CAN ALWAYS RUIN HER CAREER WHENEVER WE WANT.



IT'S NOTHING ...

WHAT'S WITH YOU, MASUMI-KUN?

BUT IF IT'S ABOUT THAT GIRL, I THINK WE SHOULDN'T JUMP TO CONCLUSIONS.

YOU NEVER KNOW, ANYTHING COULD HAPPEN WITH THAT 1%.

ONE WEEK LATER

NITTEI

ALDIS WILL BE THE FIRST TO ATTEMPT TO OBTAIN THE DOWAGER QUEEN'S ROSARY.

LET'S BEGIN WITH THE TEST.

AND NEXT ORIGELD WILL TAKE IT AWAY FROM HER.

BLAH BLAH



MAYA, YOU HAVE THOUGHT OF HOW ALDIS WOULD OBTAIN THIS ROSARY, HAVEN'T YOU?

AN ACTION IS ALWAYS PRECEDED BY A MOTIVATION.

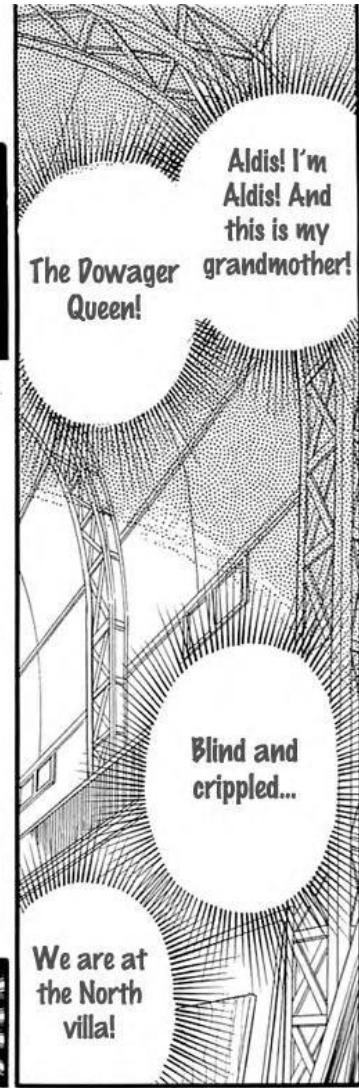
THAT'S THE TEST.







Maya!



Aldis! I'm Aldis! And this is my grandmother!
The Dowager Queen!

Blind and crippled...

We are at the North villa!



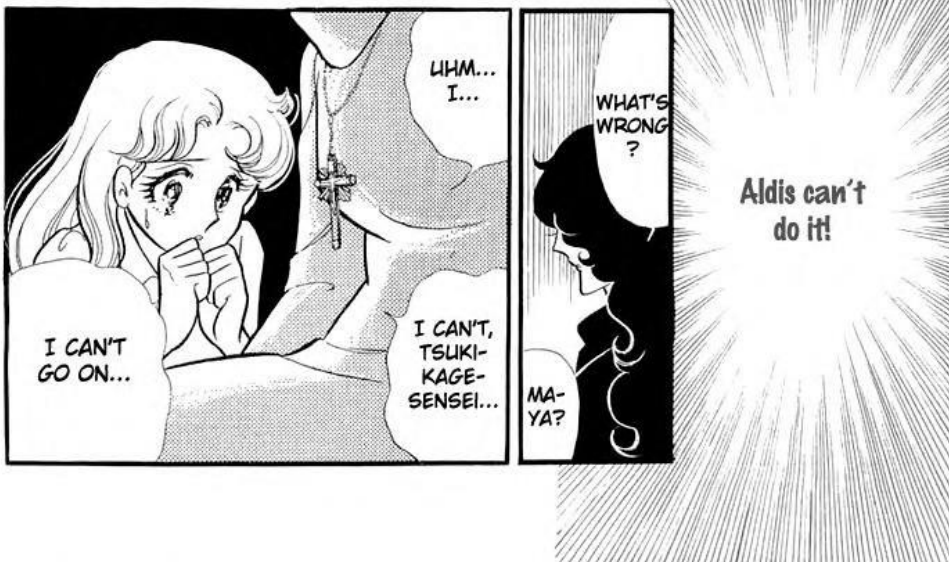
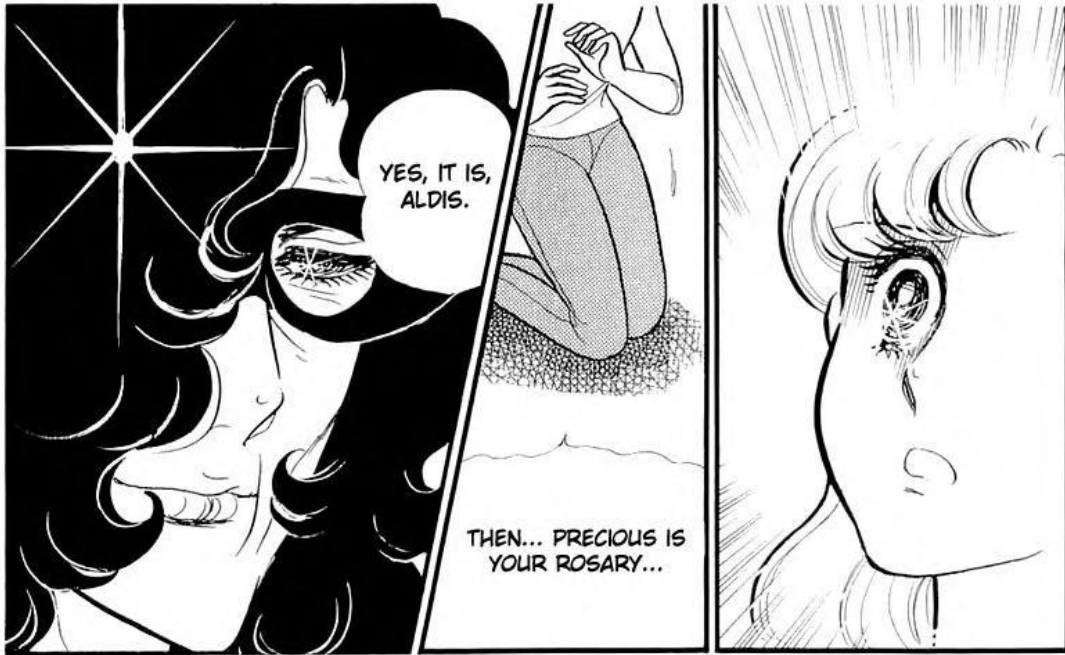
IT'S ALDIS, GRANDMA!

CAN YOU FEEL ME?



WHO IS IT?! WHO...







IT'D BE TAKING AN IMPORTANT MEMORY AWAY FROM GRANDMA, AND THAT'S TOO MUCH...

TAKING THE DOWAGER QUEEN'S ROSARY AWAY FROM HER...

I PLANNED TO OBTAIN IT THROUGH FLATTERY, BUT AFTER HEARING THOSE WORDS I CAN'T...



Ah!



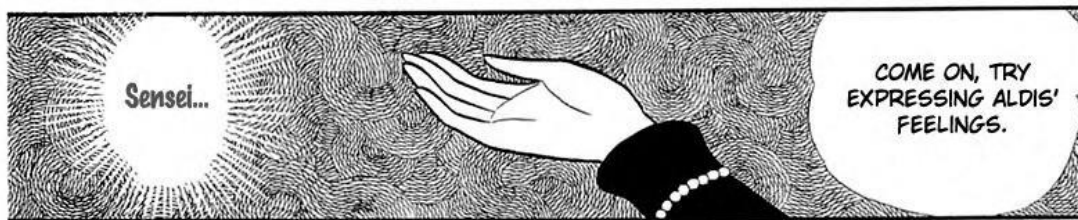
Smirk

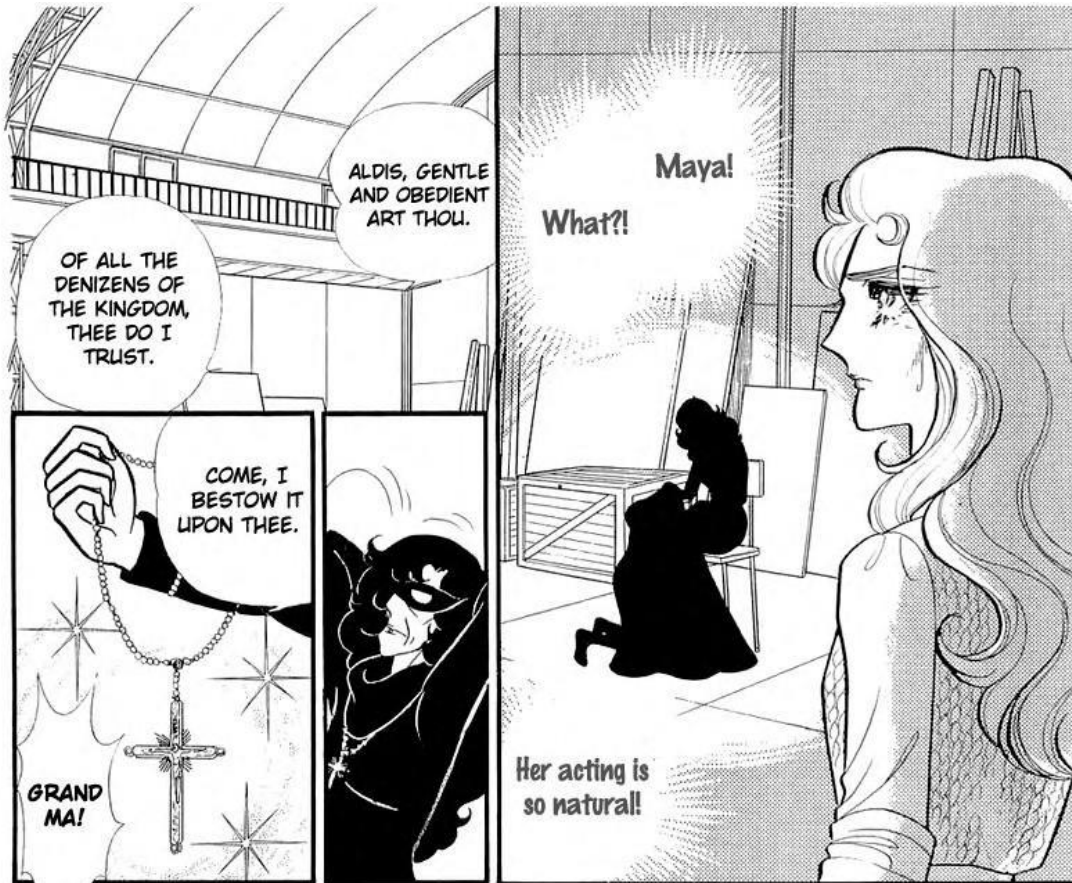


ALDIS IS A VERY SENSITIVE GIRL...
ISN'T SHE, MAYA?

TSUKI KAGE-SEN-SEI!

I'M SURE ALDIS WOULD HAVE THOUGHT THE SAME.





OF ALL THE DENIZENS OF THE KINGDOM, THEE DO I TRUST.

ALDIS, GENTLE AND OBEDIENT ART THOU.

COME, I BESTOW IT UPON THEE.

GRAND MA!

Maya!
What?!

Her acting is so natural!

THANK YOU, PRECIOUS IT WILL BE.

AS IT T'WAS YOURS...

GRANDMA...

GRANDMA, DO NOT SAY IT SO!

IT WILL NOT BE MINE FOR LONG.

TREASURE IT AS I HAVE, ALDIS.

Now is Origeld's turn...
My turn!

OH! ALDIS GOT THE ROSARY!

AND SO NATU-RALLY...



I must take the rosary away from Aldis!

I must act according to Origeld's heart!

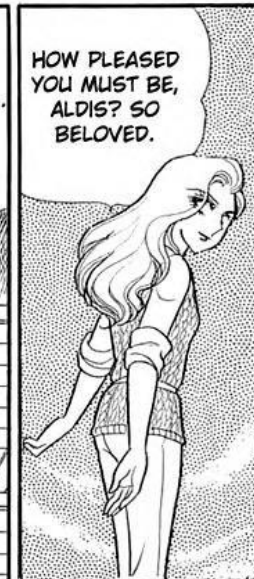
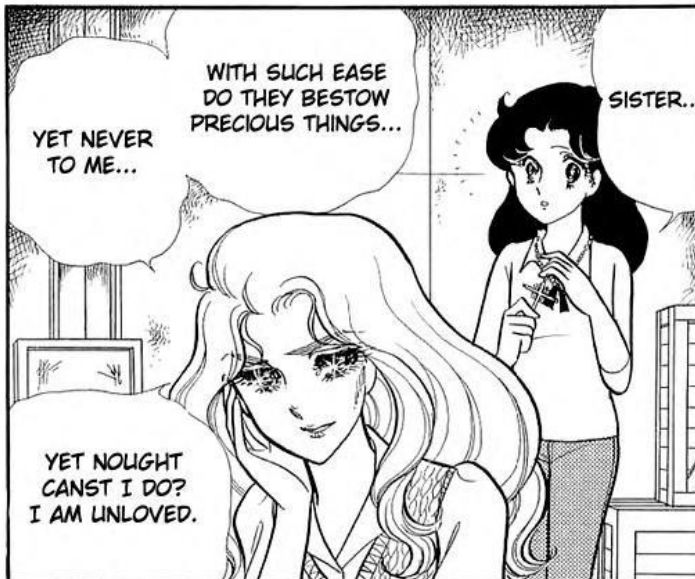
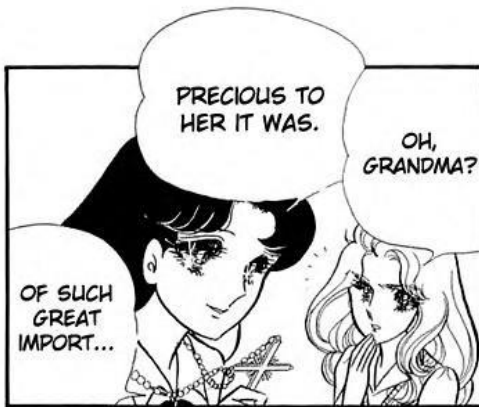
Like Origeld would!

I'm dying of envy...

TAP



Aldis...





BUT
SISTER...
THAT IS...



THEN...

WOULDST YOU
GIVE ME THE
ROSARY?



SUCH A THING YOU
COULDST NOT PART
WITH FOR ME!

'TIS
TRUE!

NO, YOU
MUSTN'T
THINK LIKE
THAT, SISTER!



AS BEAUTEIOUS
IT IS, MUCH
TO YOUR
DELIGHT!

I'LL GIVE YOU MY
NECKLACE!



NO...

NO,
ALDIS...



FORGIVE ANY DIS-COMFORT ENGEN-DERED.

NO, NO, ALDIS.

IS THERE OUGHT ELSE YOU DESIRE...

LIPON MY HONOUR DID I VOW TO KEEP IT SAFE...

GRANDMA BEQUEATHED HER TREASURE LIPON ME...



I HAVE YEARNED FOR SUCH LOVE.

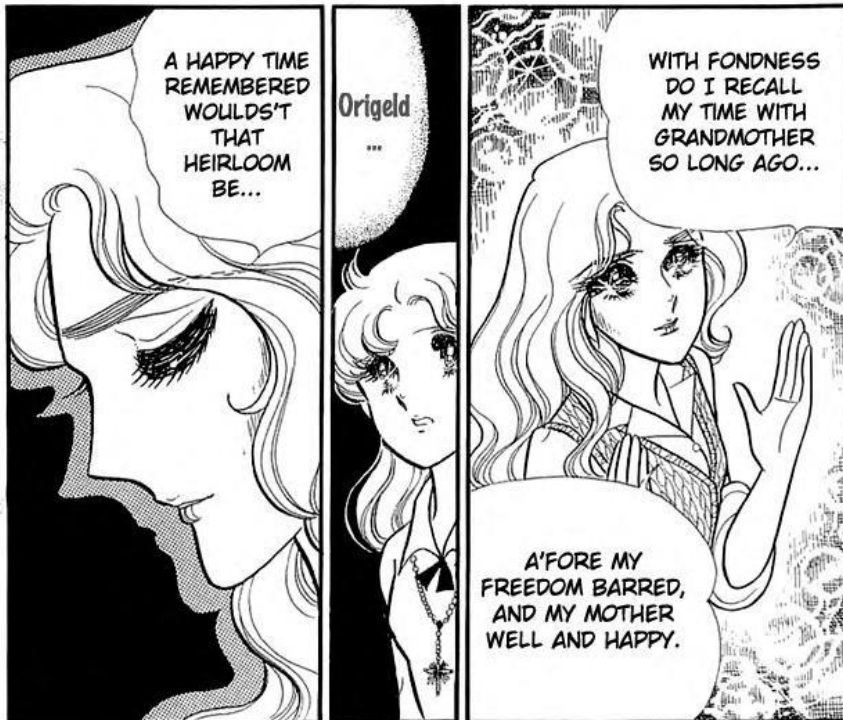
EVEN OUR TRUCULENT AND UNCTUOUS GRANDMOTHER BESTOWS HER TREASURES TO YOU.

SO DOTED ON BY YOUR KIN...

YET DO I YEARN FOR YOUR SITUATION.



Sister...



A HAPPY TIME REMEMBERED WOULD'S'T THAT HEIRLOOM BE...

Origeld

...

WITH FONDNESS DO I RECALL MY TIME WITH GRANDMOTHER SO LONG AGO...

A'FORE MY FREEDOM BARRED, AND MY MOTHER WELL AND HAPPY.



It's a memory
of her grand-
mother...

How weird...
Why do I feel
like this?

I feel
sorry for
Origeld...



MANY THANKS,
ALDIS.
SO TEMPERATE
ARE YOU.

AND LET IT
BE WELL
ATTENDED.

BE OF EASE,
I SHALL
TREASURE IT.



ALDIS
!

WELL, DO
BESTOW IT
ON YOU,
ORIGELD.

GRANDMA IS
SURE TO
APPROVE.

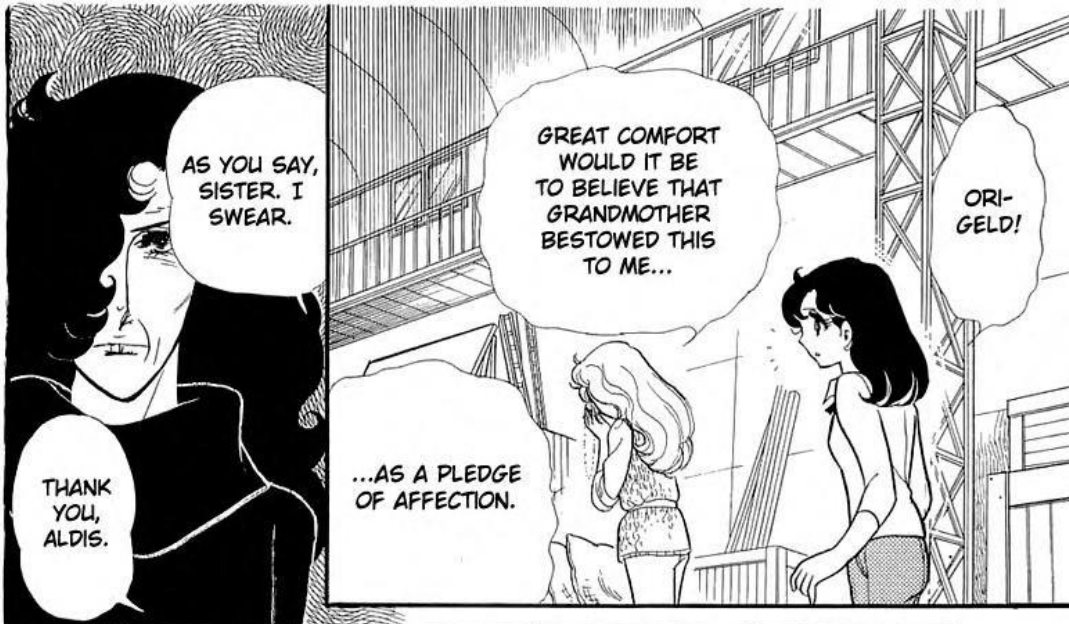


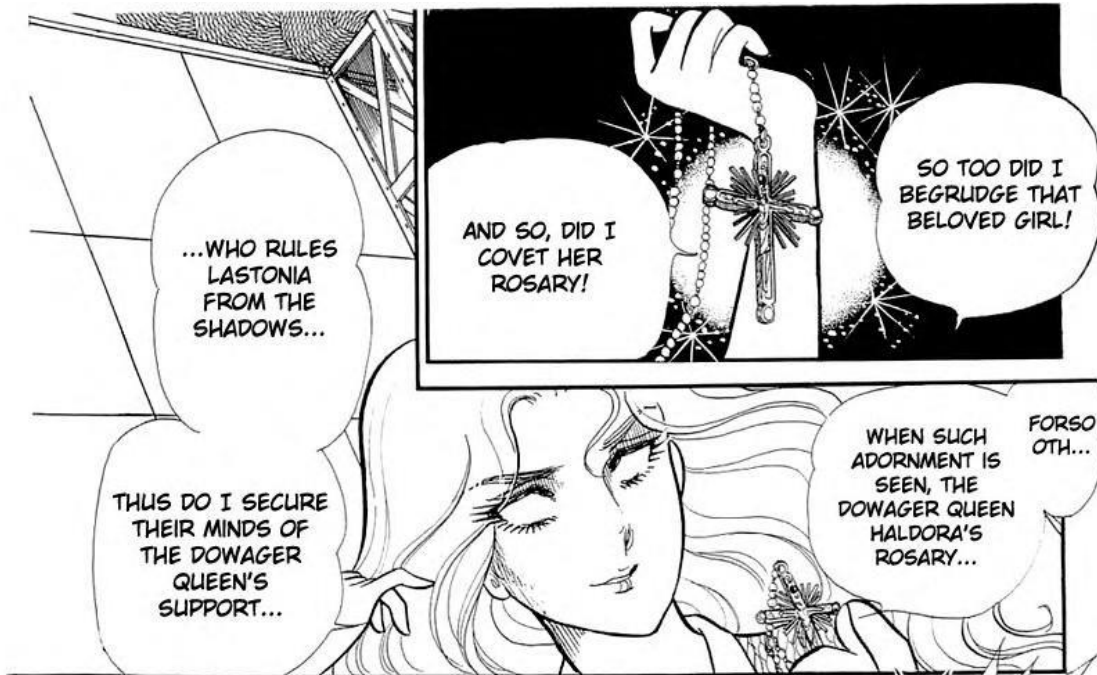
ALDIS...



PLEDGE ME
THIS.

YET, MAY THIS BE A
CONFIDENCE BETWIXT US?





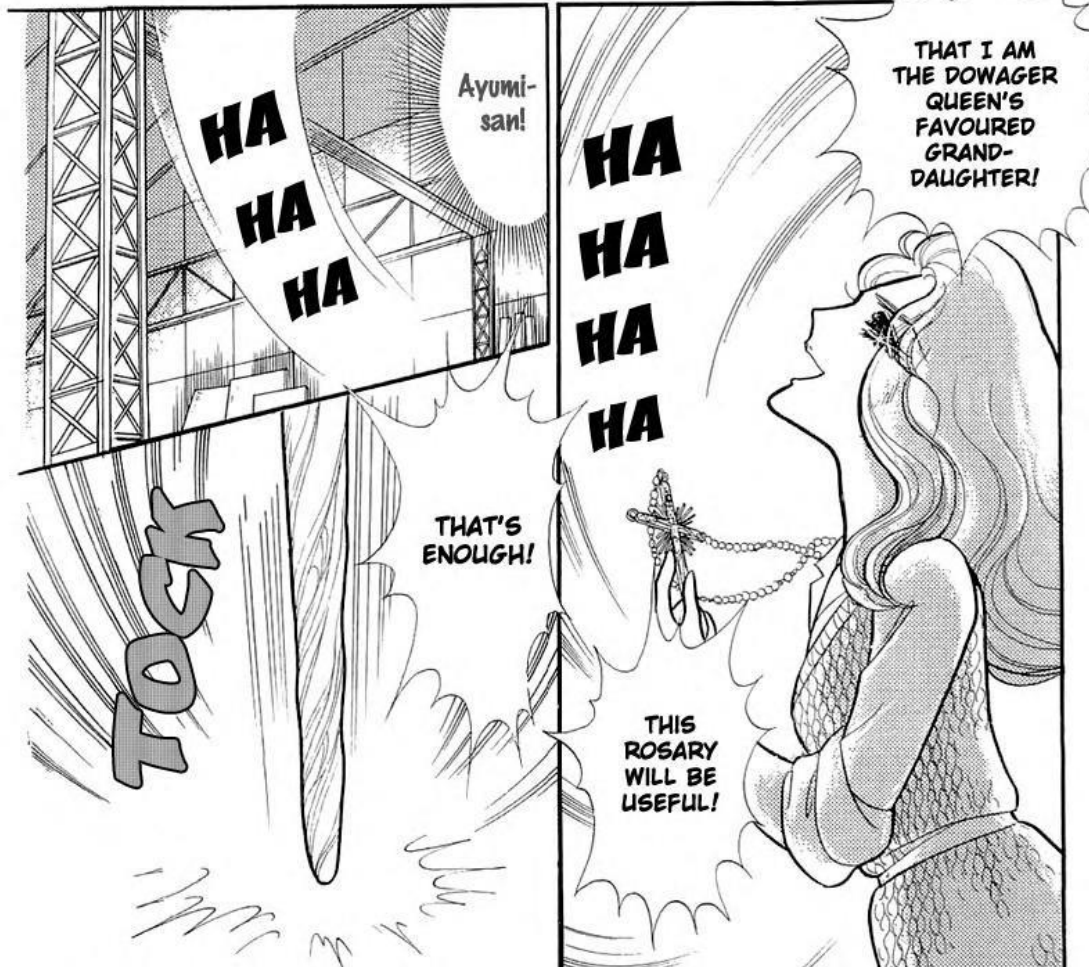
...WHO RULES LASTONIA FROM THE SHADOWS...

AND SO, DID I COVET HER ROSARY!

SO TOO DID I BEGRUDGE THAT BELOVED GIRL!

THUS DO I SECURE THEIR MINDS OF THE DOWAGER QUEEN'S SUPPORT...

WHEN SUCH ADORNMENT IS SEEN, THE DOWAGER QUEEN HALDORA'S ROSARY...
FORSO OTH...



HA
HA
HA

Ayumi-san!

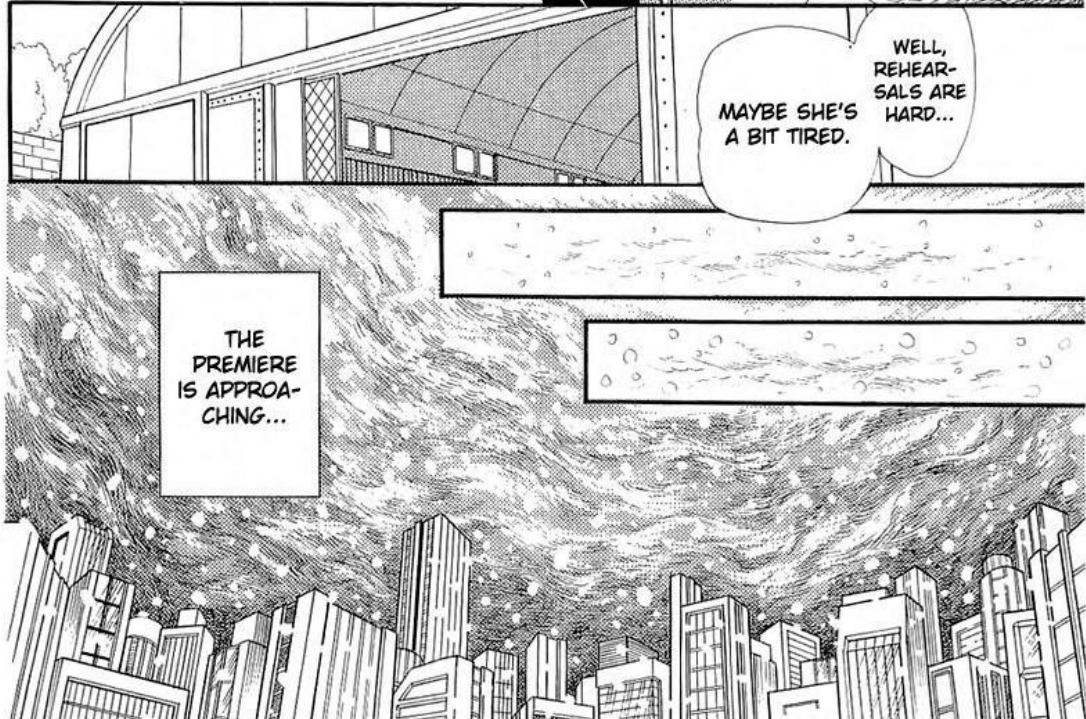
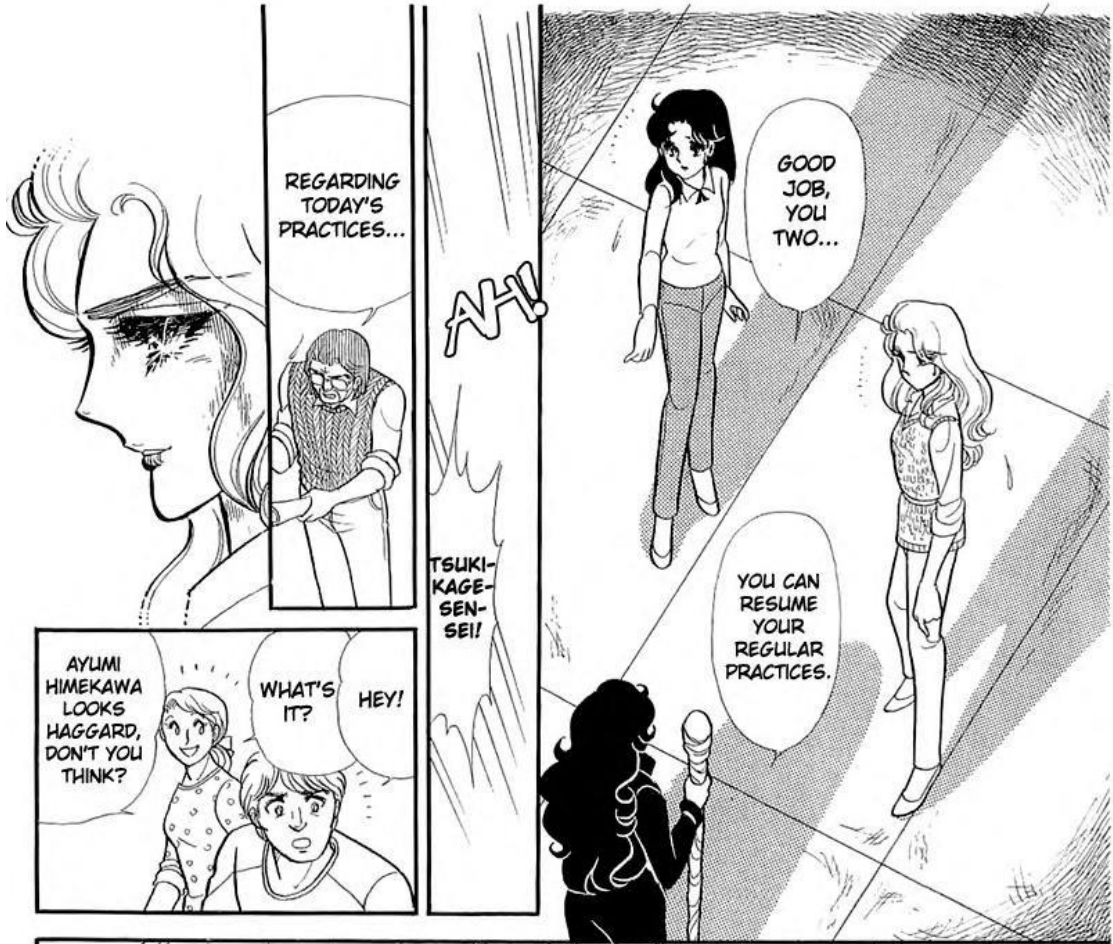
HA
HA
HA
HA

THAT I AM THE DOWAGER QUEEN'S FAVOURED GRAND-DAUGHTER!

TOCK

THAT'S ENOUGH!

THIS ROSARY WILL BE USEFUL!



SOME NOTES ABOUT THIS CHAPTER

By Nikkou

The Rosary

Wearing of a Rosary that one actually uses to pray is neither uncommon nor sacrilegious in various Catholic-adherent cultures, and was a common practice in the Medieval and Renaissance periods. In the 15th and 16th centuries it appears to have been quite normal and fashionable to wear rosaries around the neck, at least among the nobility. Rosaries are also worn hanging from or looped over a belt, particularly with some religious habits, pinned to and hanging from a shoulder or neckline, or wrapped around a wrist or arm as a bracelet.



"Portrait of a Lady in White"
by Moretto da Brescia

Sukeban

Sukeban (スケバン) means Teenage female delinquent or Boss Girl in Japanese, equivalent to the male Banchō. The common signifiers of sukeban (described by the Japanese police in 1980s pamphlets as "omens of downfall") include brightly-dyed or permed hair, and modifications of the school uniform such as wearing coloured socks, rolling up the sleeves and lengthening the skirt. Sukeban may engage in activities such as stimulant use, shoplifting, theft, prostitution and violence, but if arrested, they can be charged with the lesser offence of "pre-delinquency". Sukeban characters can be found in titles such as Fruits Basket, Sailor Moon or Shimotsuma Monogatari (Kamikaze Girls) a novel that was later made into a movie and manga.