



Purple
Rose!

Ah, it feels as
if I'm completely
wrapped in your
universe.

In the warm
universe of
your heart!



"Someday,
I'd like to see
the starry sky
in the realm of
the Crimson
Goddess..."

Hayami-
san...



HOW
WONDER-
FUL, THE
STARRY
SKY.

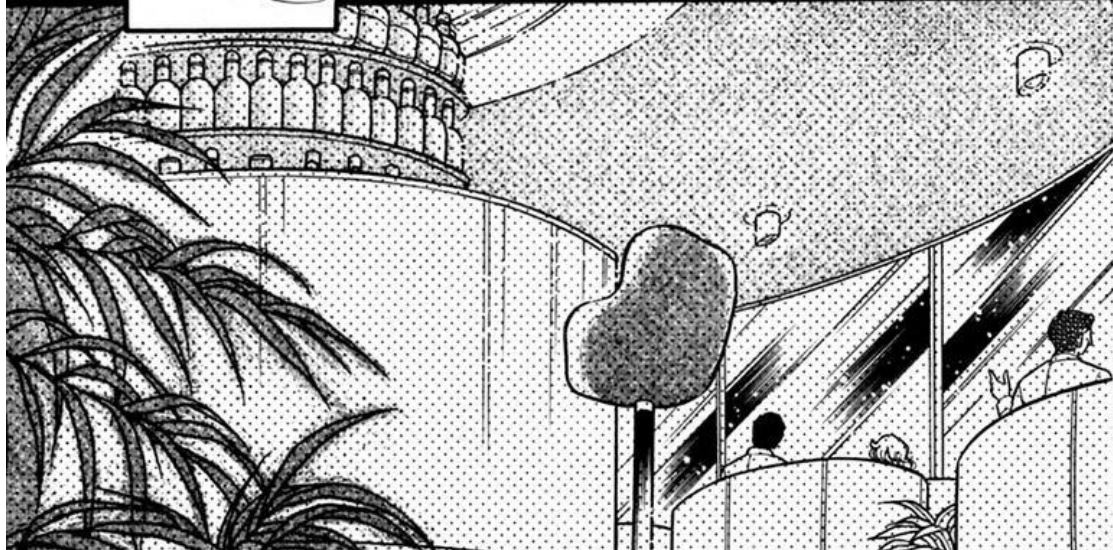
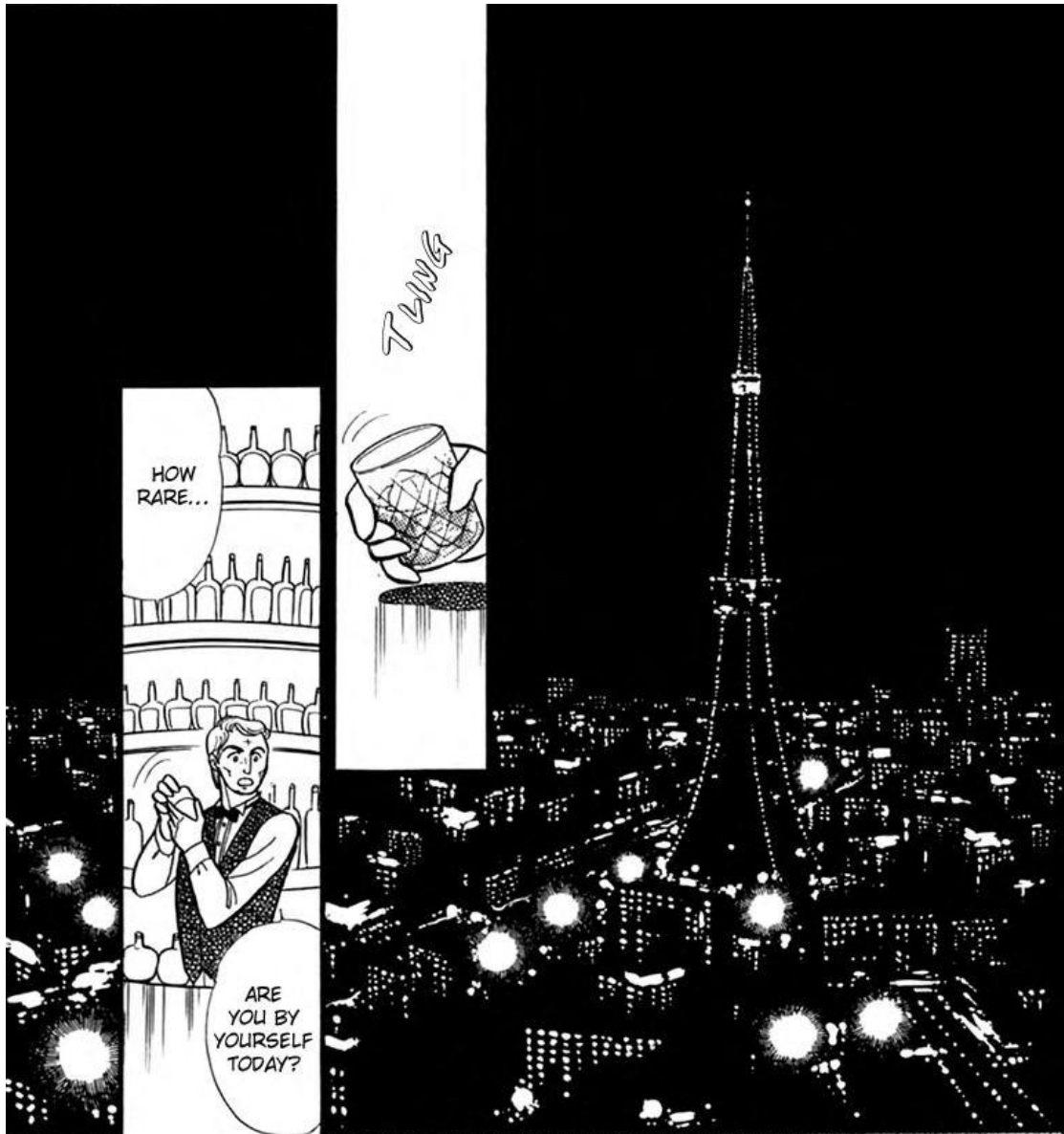
IT LOOKS
LIKE IT'S
FROM
ANOTHER
WORLD...

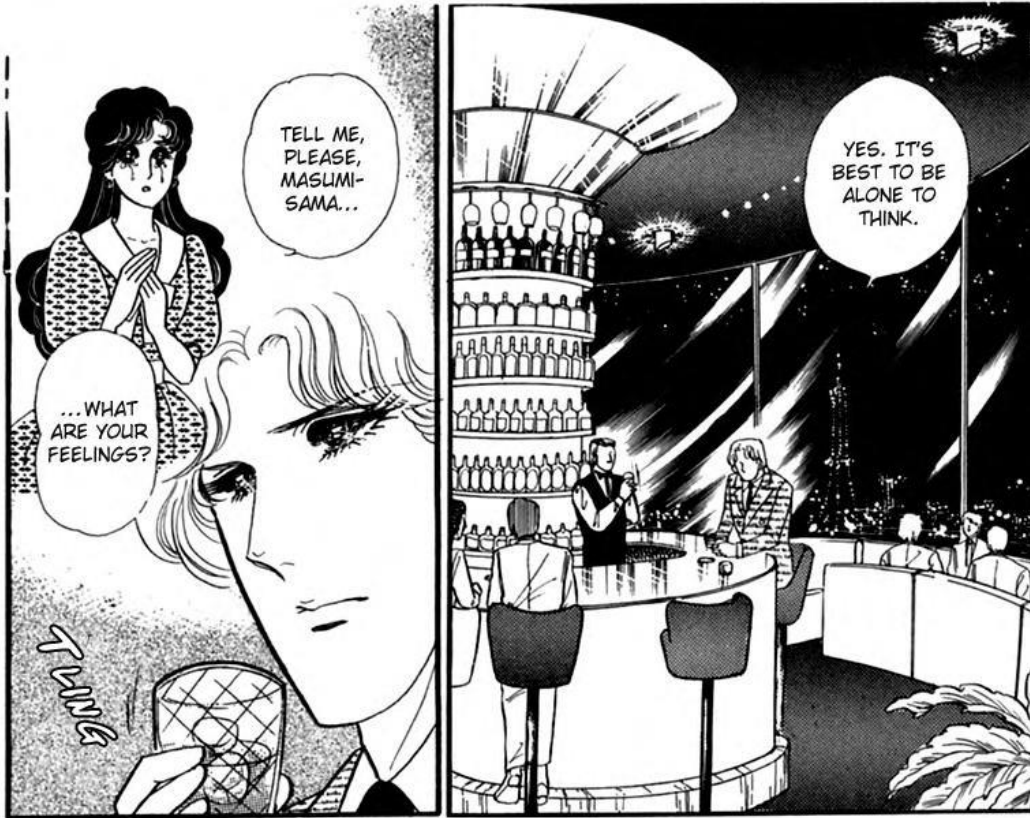


I wasn't
able to see
your true
heart under
the smogged
sky.

Can you
see the
stars in
Tokyo
now?

I didn't
realise the
existence of
thousands of
bright and
beautiful
stars...







AM...
I... NOT
TO YOUR
LIKING
...?

WHAT DO
YOU THINK
OF ME?

WHY
HAVE YOU NOT
ANSWERED
YET?



SHIORI-
SAN...

BEING AT
YOUR SIDE
IS ALL I
NEED TO BE
HAPPY.

CAN YOU
STILL NOT
DECIDE
YOURSELF?

ISN'T
THAT
SUFFI-
CIENT?



IT'S
JUST
THAT
...
I AM NOT
SURE OF
MYSELF
YET.

I AM NOT
SURE I'LL
BE ABLE TO
MAKE YOU
HAPPY...



WHO COULD
FIND YOU UN-
ATTRACTIVE?

YOU ARE
GENTLE,
INTELLIGENT
AND WISE.

SO MUCH
SO THAT
YOU'D BE
WASTED
ON ME.

THAT'S
...NOT
IT...



SHIORI-
SAN!



SHIORI-SAN!

IT FEELS AS THOUGH YOU ARE SEARCHING FOR SUITABLE WORDS TO REJECT ME...

I...I AM EMBARRASSING YOU, RIGHT? GOING ON AND ON WITH ALL MY QUESTIONS...

SHIORI-SAN!

I ran after her as she kept crying, and forcefully took her home but...



The stars of the city, huh?

IT LOOKS AS THOUGH A TREASURE CHEST HAS BEEN OVERTURNED! WOW, HOW WONDERFUL! WHAT A GREAT NIGHTVIEW!

I can't go on like this...





Shiori Takamiya...

She is really gentle... I think she is a good person...

I don't dislike her at all.



She's a mysterious girl...

Maya...

Why does she attract me so?



...in the country of the Crimson Goddess...

Maya... she might be watching them too...



They are but a pale imitation of the stars from the depths of the night...

The city stars...

The sky is dark...

Always seeing the same image, everyone has forgotten about the true stars...



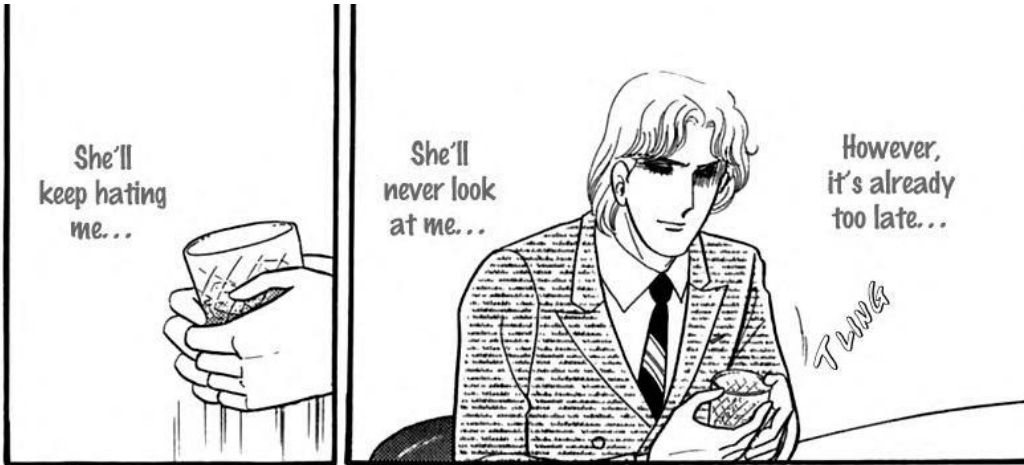
Maybe she is the only one with whom I could be completely sincere...

Maya, a girl eleven years younger than me...

But with Maya I have the feeling that our souls touch each other...



The feeling that there is no need for lies between us...

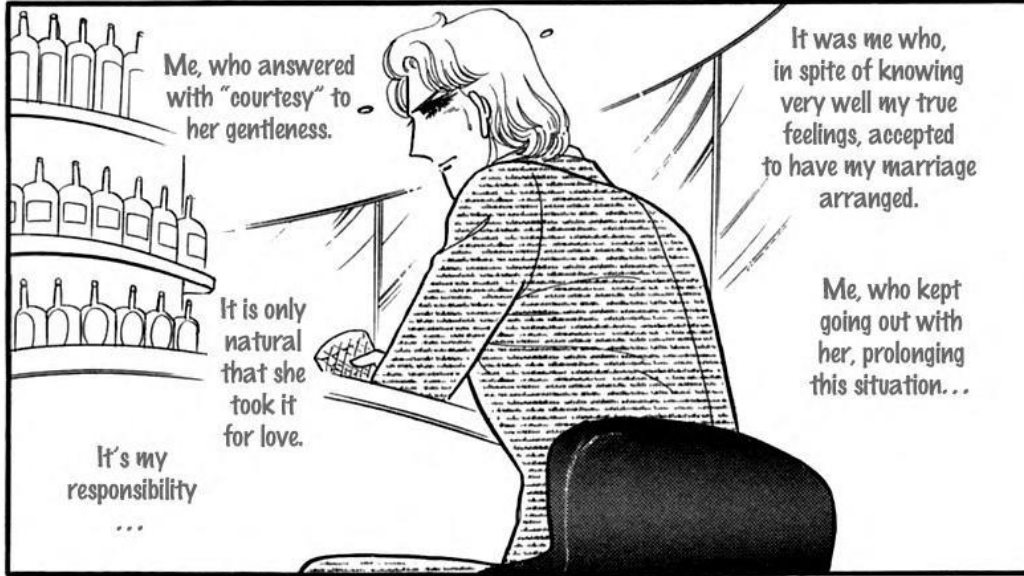


She'll keep hating me...

She'll never look at me...

However, it's already too late...

TWING



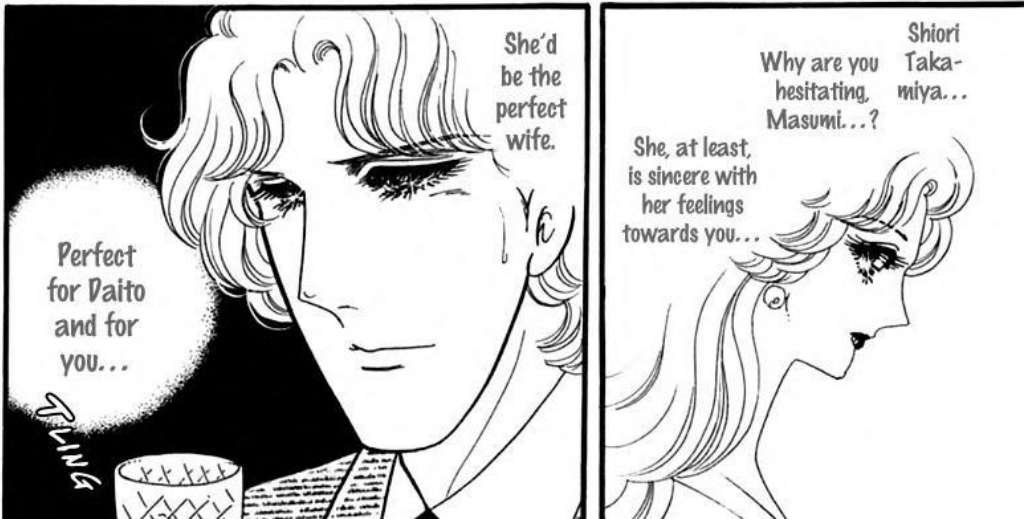
Me, who answered with "courtesy" to her gentleness.

It was me who, in spite of knowing very well my true feelings, accepted to have my marriage arranged.

It is only natural that she took it for love.

Me, who kept going out with her, prolonging this situation...

It's my responsibility
...



Perfect for Daito and for you...

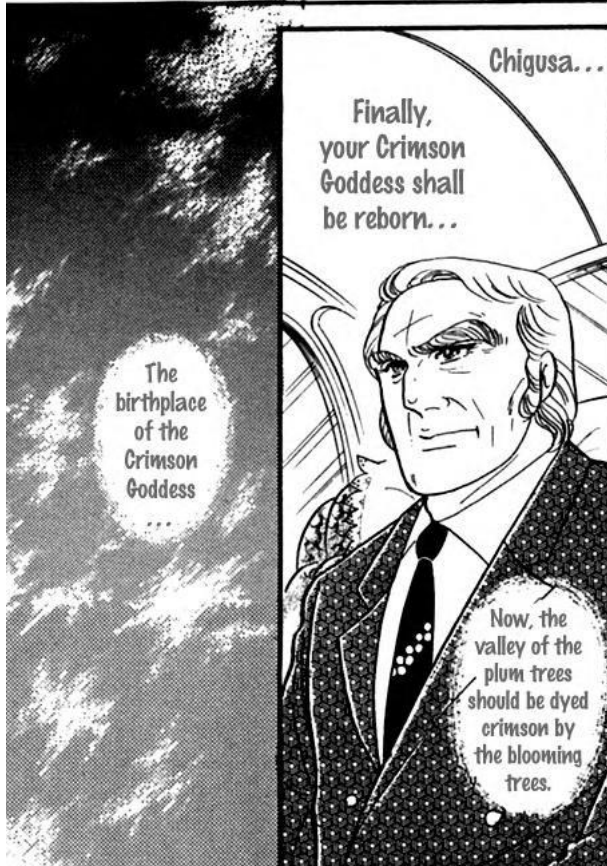
She'd be the perfect wife.

Why are you hesitating, Masumi...?

Shiori Takamiya...

She, at least, is sincere with her feelings towards you...

SPRING







What statue could he have made...?

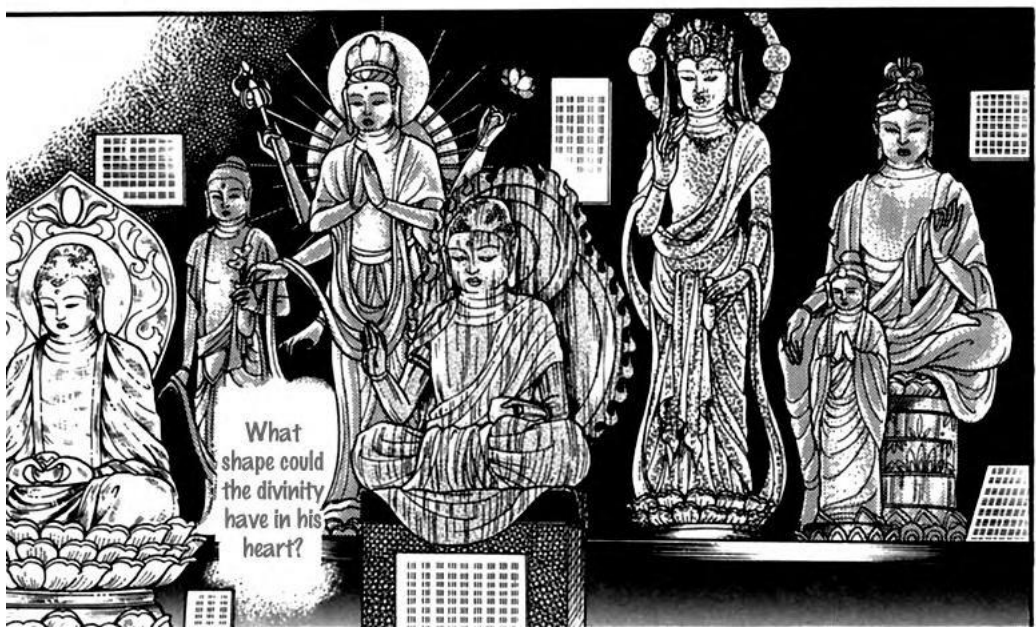


Isshin, the one that, in order to sculpt a statue which would host the soul of the Goddess, went in search of a millenary plum tree...

Isshin, whose dedication to sculpture was so profound it was considered to be close to madness!



The sacred sculptor, Isshin, the one that received the task of making the statue of the Goddess from the Emperor...



What shape could the divinity have in his heart?





NEAR THEM
THE STATUE
OF YAKUSHI**,
FROM THE
SAME PERIOD.

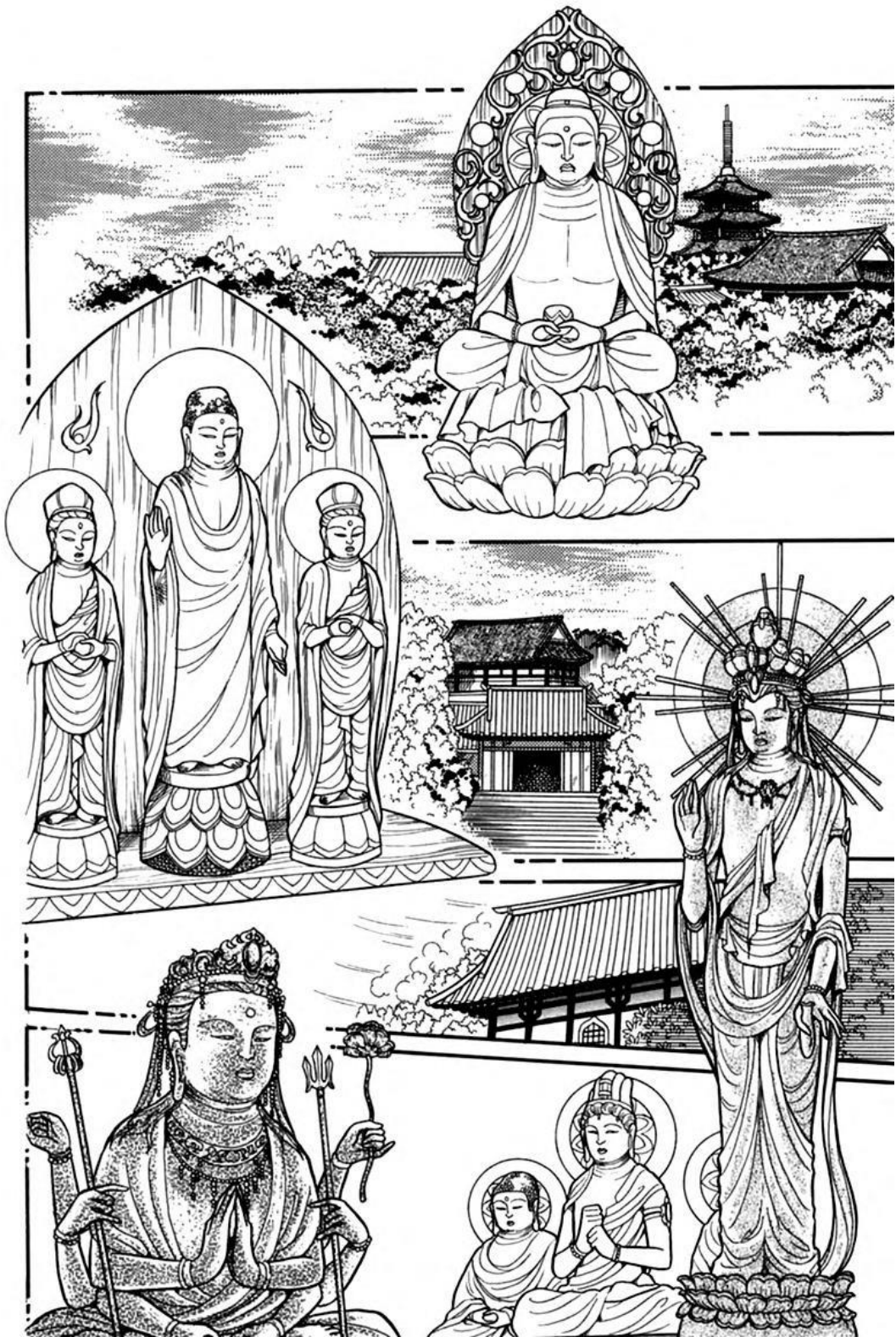
ON THE
EASTERN SIDE
OF THE TEMPLE
THERE ARE THE
STATUES OF
NIKKOU GAKKOU*
DATING BACK
TO THE MIDDLE
OF THE HEIAN
PERIOD.



THE STATUES
FROM THIS TEMPLES'
TREASURE ROOM ARE
ALL ACKNOWLEDGED
AS NATIONAL
MASTERPIECES.

THEY
WERE NAMED
IMPORTANT
CULTURAL
WORKS OF
ART.







Who knows why... even though I've seen wonderful masterpieces...

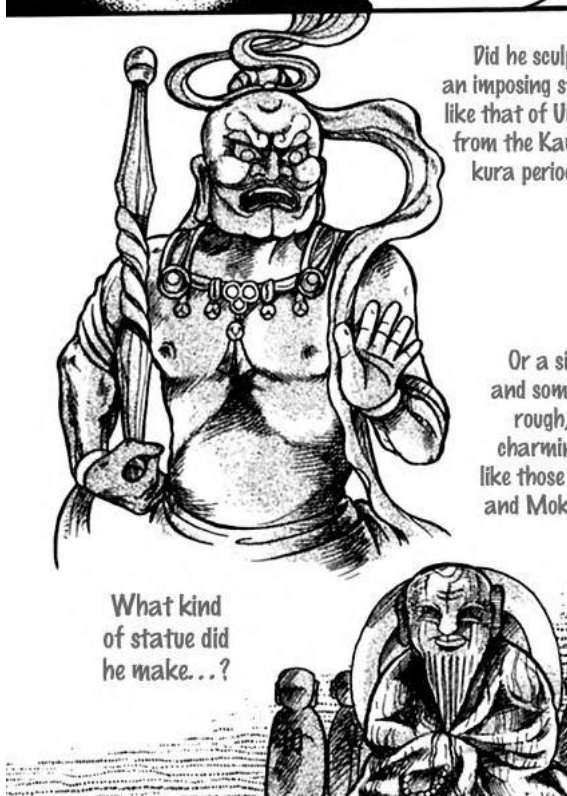
Somewhat none feels right...

...as the statue of Isshin that I am searching for...



NONE OF THEM REALLY INSPIRED ME.

THIS IS THE THIRTY FOURTH TEMPLE ALREADY...



Did he sculpt an imposing statue like that of Unkei* from the Kamakura period?

Or a simple and somewhat rough, but charming one like those of Enku and Mokujiki**?

What kind of statue did he make...?



I've got a feeling that, if I were able to see the image of Isshin's statue, I'll be able to grasp him...

*That statue is actually one of the Nio guardians by sculptor Unkei
<https://eez.uei.edu/clients/sbklein/images/RELIGION/buddhism/images/nio.jpg>
<http://www.onmarkproductions.com/html/nio.shtml>
<http://search.japantimes.co.jp/cgi-bin/taZ0061109a2.html>



I MUST THANK YOU. I FEEL BETTER NOW THANKS TO YOUR HELP.

I WALKED FOR A WHILE UNDER THE SUN AND I MUST HAVE FELT DIZZY.



ARE YOU NOT FEELING WELL?



UH!

SHAKE



THIS IS JUST A LODGE, NOT A HOUSE IN ITSELF.

THIS PLACE IS QUITE CHARMING. ARE YOU LIVING BY YOURSELF IN THIS HOUSE?

THIS IS WHERE I WRITE HAIKU* AND POETRY!



*Short Japanese poems





I want
to meet

...

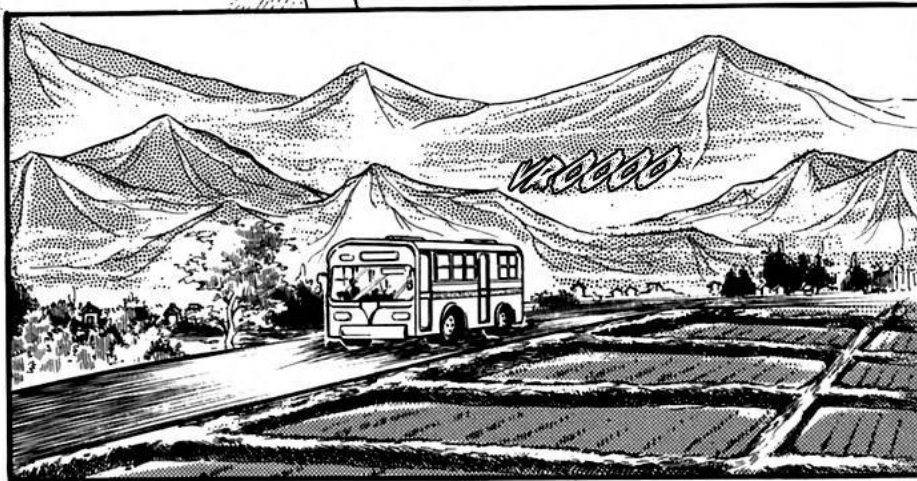
... the
sculptor
Kaikei!



Genzo-san asked me to go into town to get the medicine in his place...

I didn't know that Tsukikage-sensei was still going to the hospital.

Isn't she pushing herself with our arrival?





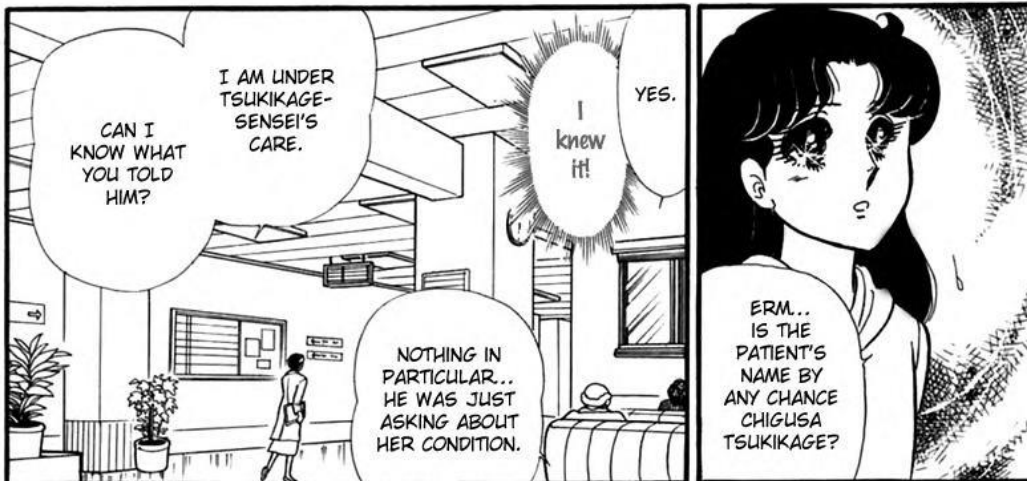


TSUKI-KAGE CHIGUSA-SAN, RIGHT?

YES ...

ERM... I'VE COME TO PICK UP A PRESCRIPTION.





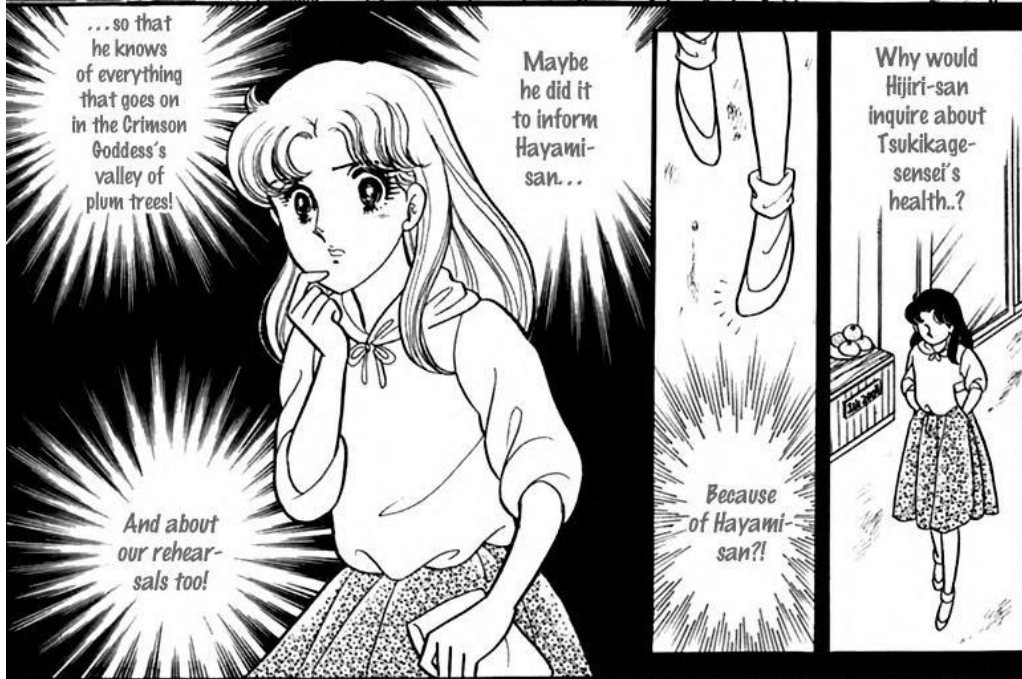


She looks so healthy...

She must have pushed herself

I didn't know...

...that Tsukikage-sensei is still in such bad shape...



...so that he knows of everything that goes on in the Crimson Goddess's valley of plum trees!

Maybe he did it to inform Hayami-san...

Why would Hijiri-san inquire about Tsukikage-sensei's health..?

And about our rehearsals too!

Because of Hayami-san?!



He came to observe Tsukikage-sensei and our actions ...!

...Hijiri-san came to the valley of the plum trees!

That's it! That's definitely the reason as to why...

For which one of them, Hayami-san?

Or for the Purple Rose?

For Daito?

But still, why? For what purpose?



Are you our enemy?

Aah... I still don't get it.

Or our ally?

Why do you need the information...

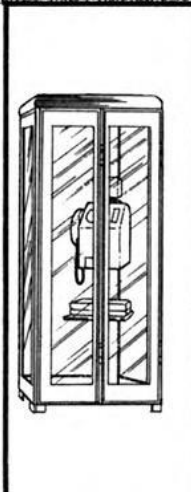
... that Hijiri-san will bring ...?!

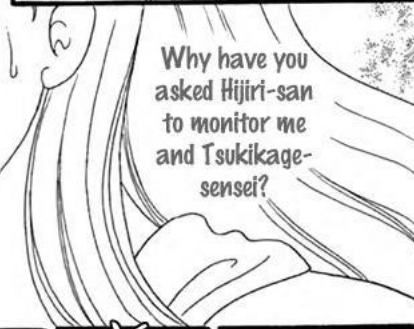


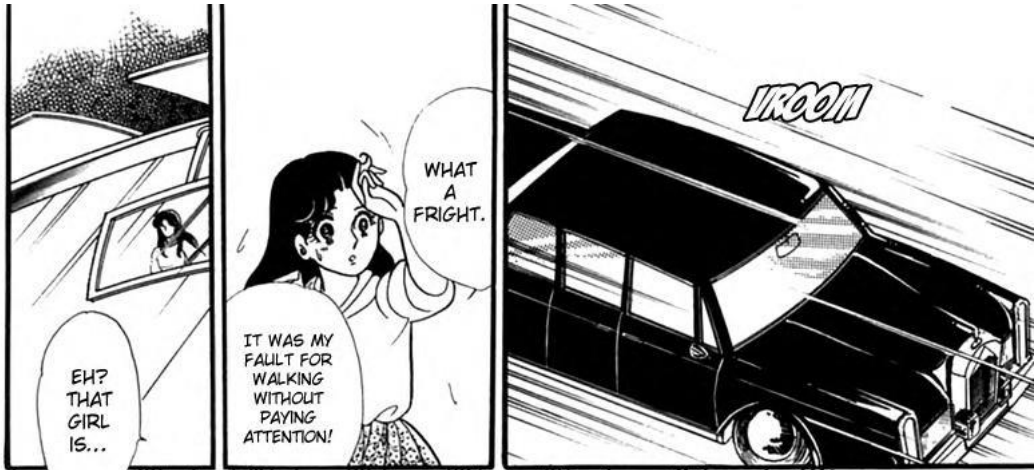
FIVE 100 YEN COINS...

I HAVE ONE, TWO, THREE 10 YEN COINS...

AND NO PHONE CARD...









I HEAR ITS WATERS ARE GOOD FOR RHEUMATISM PAINS.

I CAME TO THE ONSEN WHICH IS CLOSE BY.

WHAT ABOUT YOU YOUNG LADY, WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?



WHAT A COINCIDENCE!

YOU CAME TO SEE ME IN FORGOTTEN WILDERNESS, WHERE I WAS PERFORMING THE WOLF GIRL JANE.

IT'S SUCH A SURPRISE TO SEE YOU AGAIN!



THE PLAY I TOLD YOU ABOUT IS THE CRIMSON GODDESS AND I AM TRAINING WITH TSUKIKAGE-SENSEI, ABOUT WHOM WE TALKED SOME TIME AGO.

I'M REHEARSING FOR A PLAY. I'M STAYING IN A TEMPLE IN A SMALL VILLAGE, IN A VALLEY ABOUT AN HOUR AND A HALF BUS RIDE FROM HERE.

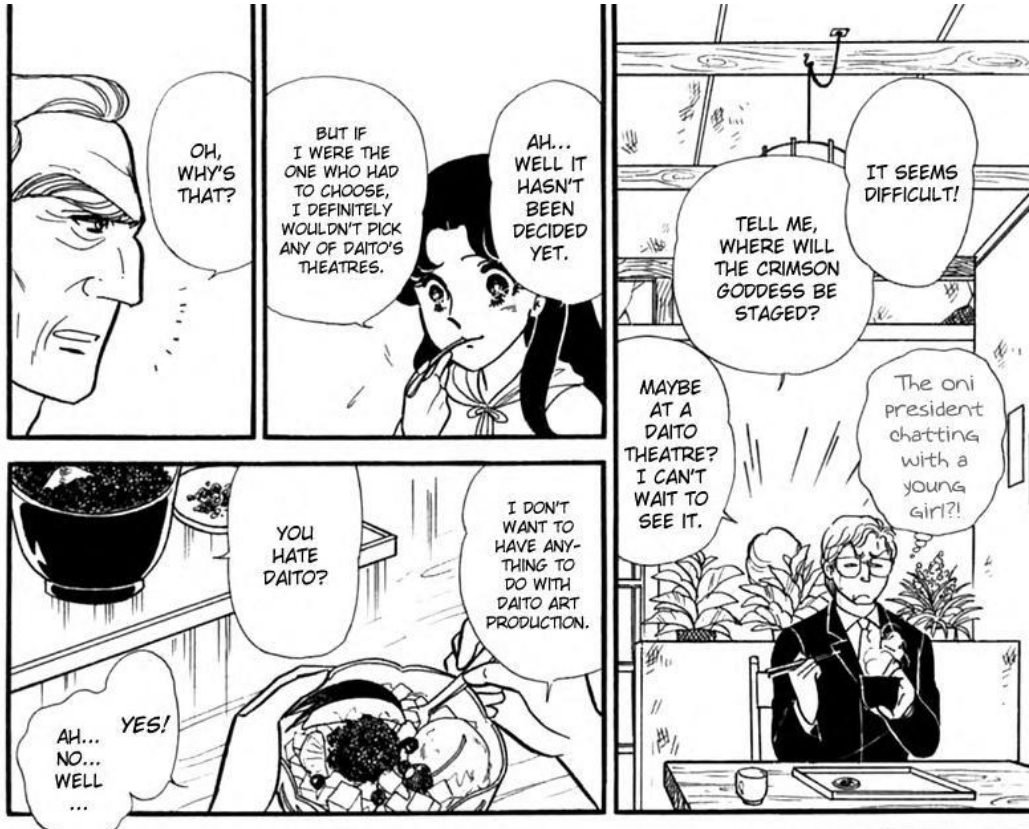


I HAVE TO COMPETE AGAINST ANOTHER CANDIDATE.

NO! I HAVEN'T BEEN CHOSEN YET.

OH! CONGRATULATIONS. SO YOU'LL BE PERFORMING THE CRIMSON GODDESS?

I AM PLEASED TO HEAR THAT.





HE DOESN'T EVEN KNOW THE MEANING OF THE WORD MERCY!

HE WILL DO ANYTHING TO GET WHAT HE WANTS! HE IS A HEARTLESS MAN!

HE IS OVERBEARING, MALICIOUS, ARROGANT AND ALWAYS MAKES FUN OF ME!

I HATE HIM!

I'D LIKE TO MEET THE ONE WHO RAISED HIM TO BE LIKE THIS!

BAM



AH!

I heard nothing.

Silence



PFFF!
HA HA
HA HA!



YEAH. THE MOMENT YOU SEE HIM ALL YOU WANT TO DO IS RUN AWAY, LIKE RUNNING FROM A COCKROACH.

THIS MASUMI HAYAMI FROM DAITO YOU SPOKE OF... ...SEEMS LIKE A TERRIBLE MAN...

WITH THE ONLY DIFFERENCE BEING THAT A COCKROACH IS NOT AS EVIL AS HE IS!

I SEE, I SEE.



IT'S NOTHING YOU HAVE TO APOLOGIZE FOR, MISTER!

WELL, SORRY ABOUT THAT.

HA HA HA

THAT'S TRUE. HA HA HA.



YES, THE CUP JUST SLIPPED.

IS EVERYTHING ALL RIGHT, MISTER?

THAT IS WHY I'D RATHER HAVE NOTHING TO DO WITH DAITO.



AND I HEARD THAT THE PRESIDENT HAYAMI, HIS FATHER, IS EVEN WORSE THAN HE IS.



PORTRAY THE ELEMENTS OF NATURE: WIND, FIRE, WATER AND EARTH...

THEY ARE TOUGH.

SHE MAKES US...

...BUT WHO KNOWS WHICH IS THE BEST WAY TO DO IT...

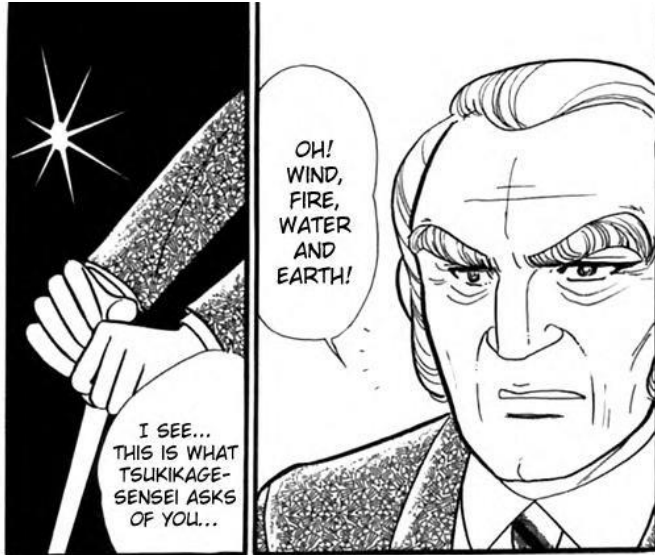


HOW ARE THE REHEARSALS WITH TSUKIKAGE-SENSEI?



That's right! I hate him, that Hayami-san!

So, how come you are the Purple Rose?



OH!
WIND,
FIRE,
WATER
AND
EARTH!

I SEE...
THIS IS WHAT
TSUKIKAGE-
SENSEI ASKS
OF YOU...



NOW, WE ARE AT THE
FIRE ELEMENT. BUT I
AM WONDERING HOW TO
EXPRESS IT. I CAN'T
SEEM TO UNDERSTAND
IT AND I AM SOMEHOW
IN A TIGHT SPOT.



YAOYA
OSHICHI?

I DON'T KNOW IF
THIS COULD HELP YOU,
BUT HAVE YOU HEARD
ABOUT A PLAY CALLED
YAOYA OSHICHI?

YOUNG
LADY...

IT IS OFTEN
DEPICTED IN
THE KABUKI
THEATRE AND
IN MARIONETTE
SHOWS.



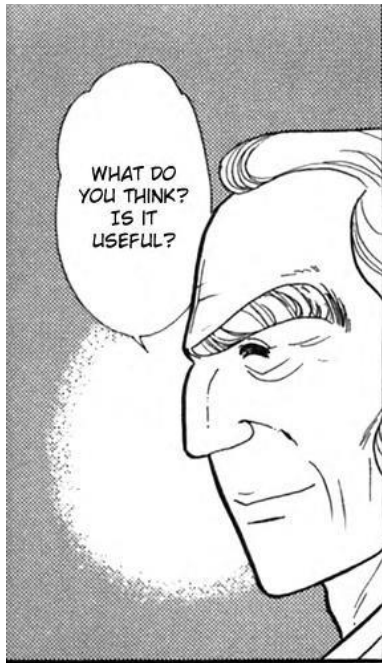
OSHICHI, THE DAUGHTER OF A GREENGROCER, LOOSES HER HOUSE IN THE MIDST OF THE FIRE THAT BURNED THROUGH THE CITY OF EDO AND SEEKS REFUGE IN A TEMPLE.

THERE SHE FALLS IN LOVE WITH A SERVANT, KICHIZA.

HOWEVER, OSHICHI WAS SO OBSESSED WITH KICHIZA THAT SHE THOUGHT A FIRE WOULD MAKE THEM SEE EACH OTHER AGAIN.

AT THE TIME, ARSON WAS A CRIME PUNISHABLE BY DEATH.

EVER SINCE THE FIRE ENDED, SHE WANTED TO SEE KICHIZA SO BADLY... IN THE END SHE COMMITTED ARSON HERSELF.



WHAT DO YOU THINK?
IS IT USEFUL?



I IMAGINE IT WAS AS STRONG AS THE ONE THAT BURNED IN THE HEART OF OSHICHI.

A FIRE SO STRONG THAT IT BURNED THE WHOLE CITY OF EDO TO ASHES.

THAT FIRE THAT IN THE END ALSO BURNED HER.

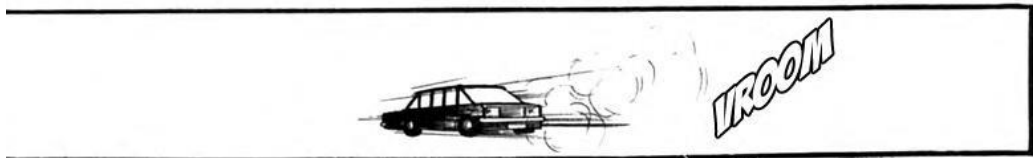


Yaoya Oshichi ...



GOODBYE, AND THANK YOU.

WELL THEN, SEE YOU AGAIN YOUNG LADY.



VROOM



Yaoya Oshichi...





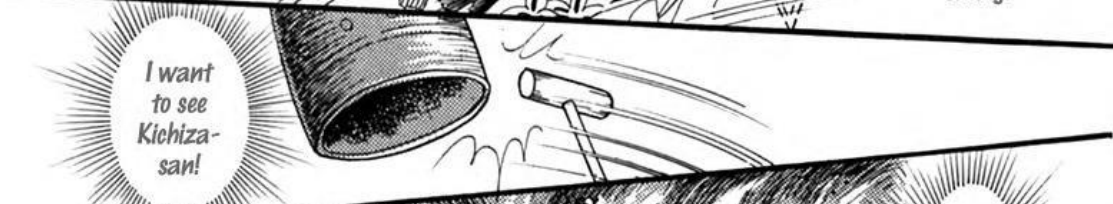
Just a glimpse would be enough ...

I long to see Kichiza-san...

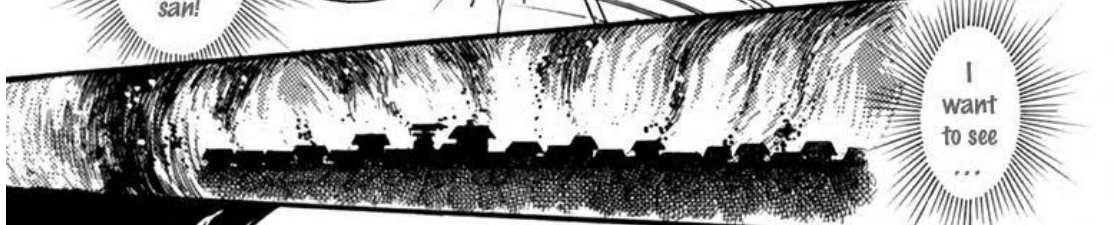
I want to see Kichiza-san...



To see him I am ready to do anything!



I want to see Kichiza-san!



I want to see ...



Kichiza-san!



花とゆめ発売中

花とゆめ

Oshichi!