

Nittei
Theater,
Basement
Training
Hall.





THE ROOTS HATH RAVAGED.

OR PERHAPS OUR SUBTERRANEAN CITIZENS, PECKISH MOLES

'T WAS NOT THEIR FIRST FORAY.



CHILLED TWAS THE BREATH!

THAT HATH COVERED THESE PETALS WITH FROSTED JEWELS.

ALDIS!



BEHOLD, THE BRIGHT ORB AND IT'S CLOUDED CLOAK IS STAINED WITH GUILT.

SHALL WE BRING THEM TO THE HEADMAN'S AXE?

AS THE SIGHTLESS DENIZENS IN THEIR SUBTERRANEAN TUBER RUMINATIONS.



LADY ALDIS!

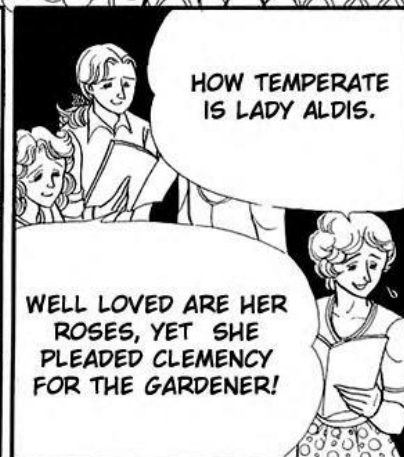
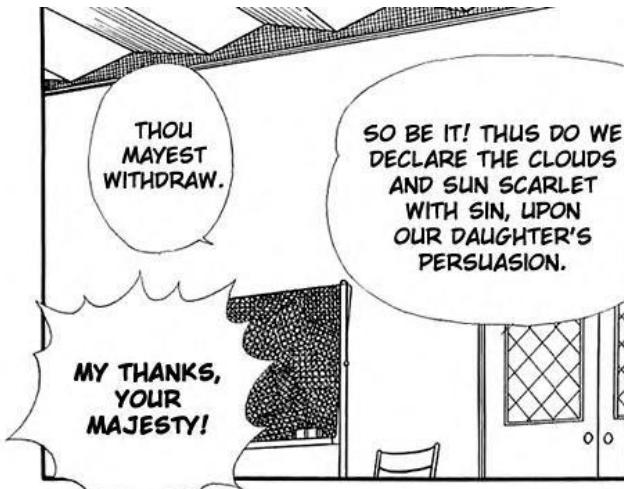


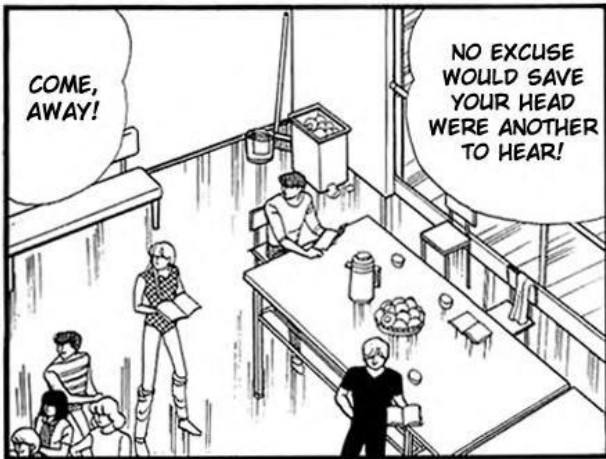
YOUR HIGHNESS!



MY SOVE-REIGN LORD?

RETURN NOT WOULD THE FLOWERS EVEN SHOULD THE SHRUBBERY BE WATERED WITH THE GARDNER'S BLOOD.







THE VICTOR SHALL HAVE A WONDERFUL REWARD!

A GARLAND HAVE I MADE!

ALDIS AM I!

DO THOU TAKEST THIS WREATH FROM ME?

RECALL TO YOURSELF, I SHALL NOT SPEAK OF THIS.

MY FATHER... WILL YOU NOT SPEAK OF MINE SISTER?





ENOUGH!

CLAP

LET'S TAKE A BREAK!



WELL, DO I RECALL, YET PITY DOTH PRICK ME...

COULD I BUT EASE HER...

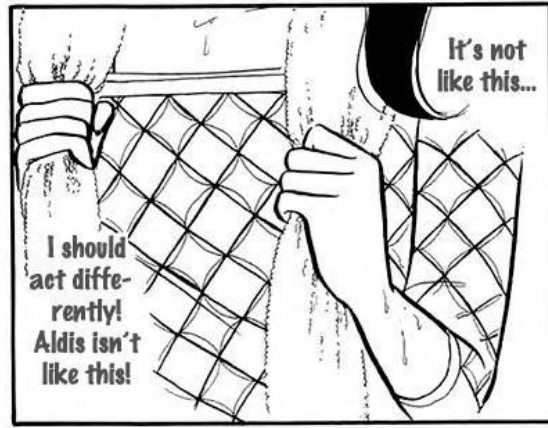
COLD IS HER ABODE, AND LONELY.



BUT HER ACTING IS LACKING.

NOT GOOD NOR BAD.

WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT MAYA KITAJIMA'S ALDIS?



It's not like this...

I should act differently! Aldis isn't like this!

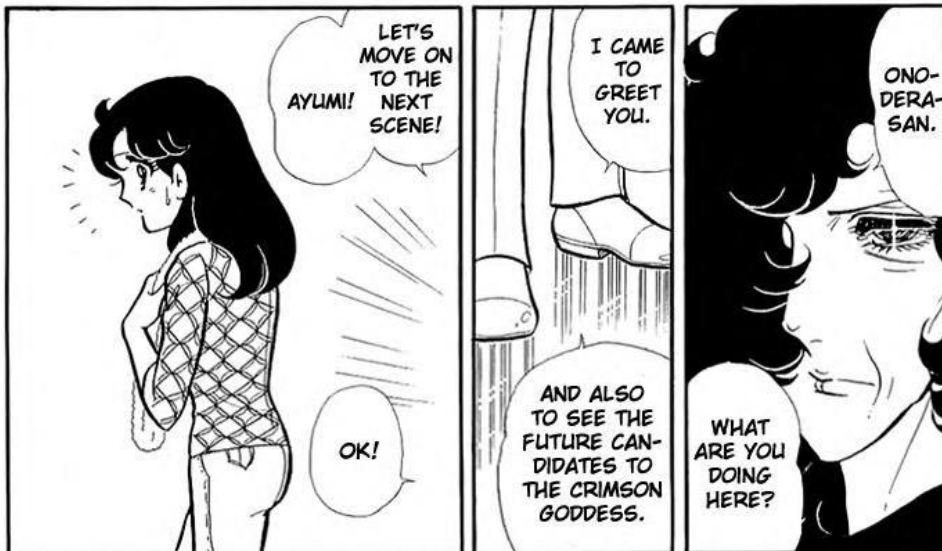


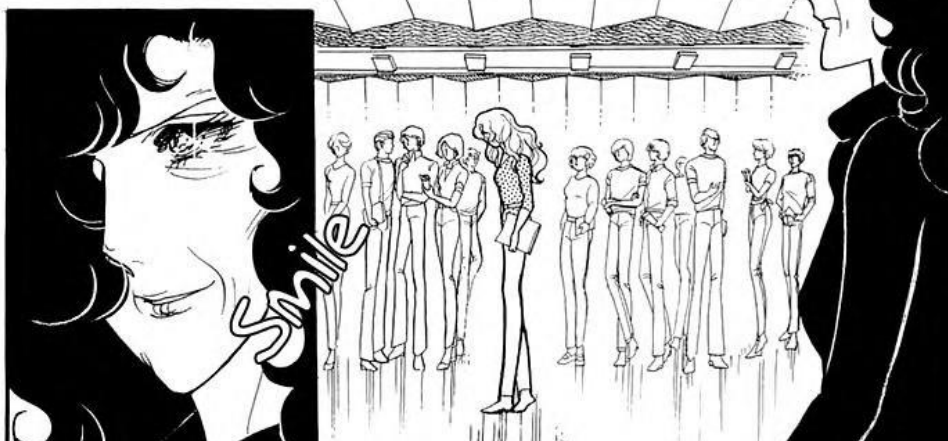
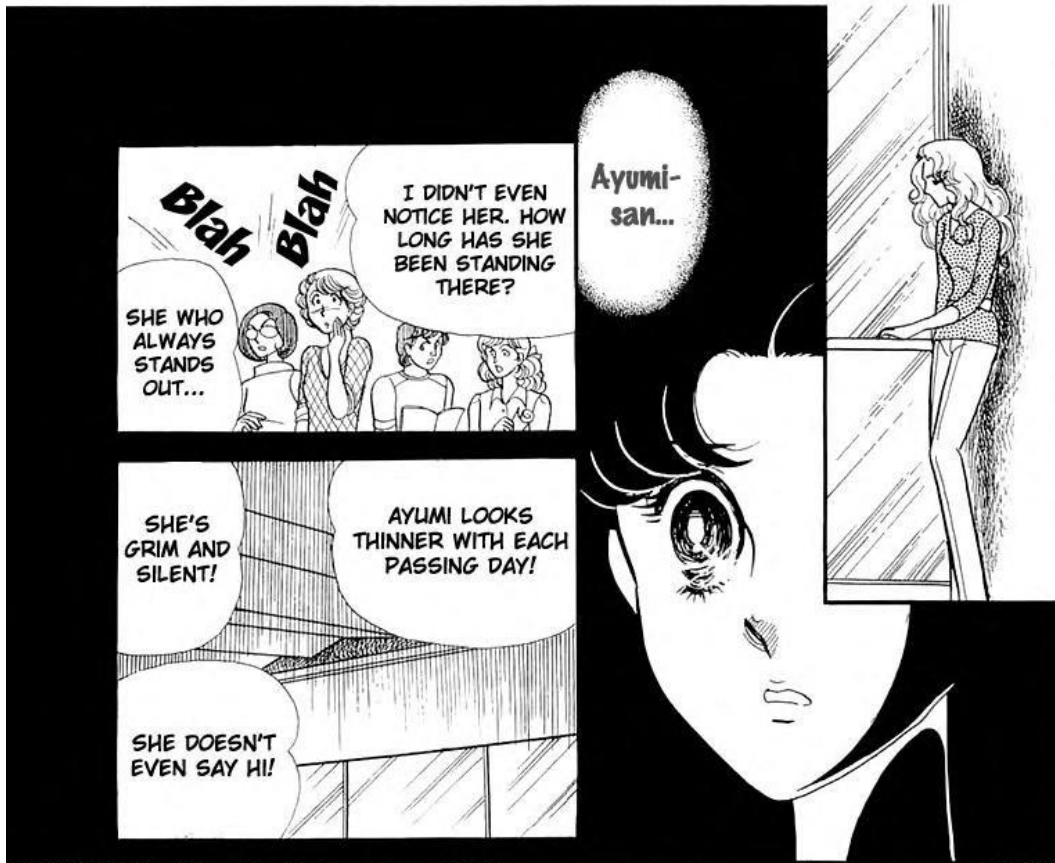
SHE DOESN'T LOOK LIKE ONE.

A BEAUTIFUL AND REFINED PRINCESS?

THERE WAS DEFINITELY A MISCAST!

Blah Blah







MAY GOD'S PROTECTION BE WITH YOU!

THANK YOU, REVEREND...



Her feet!

They are so dirty!

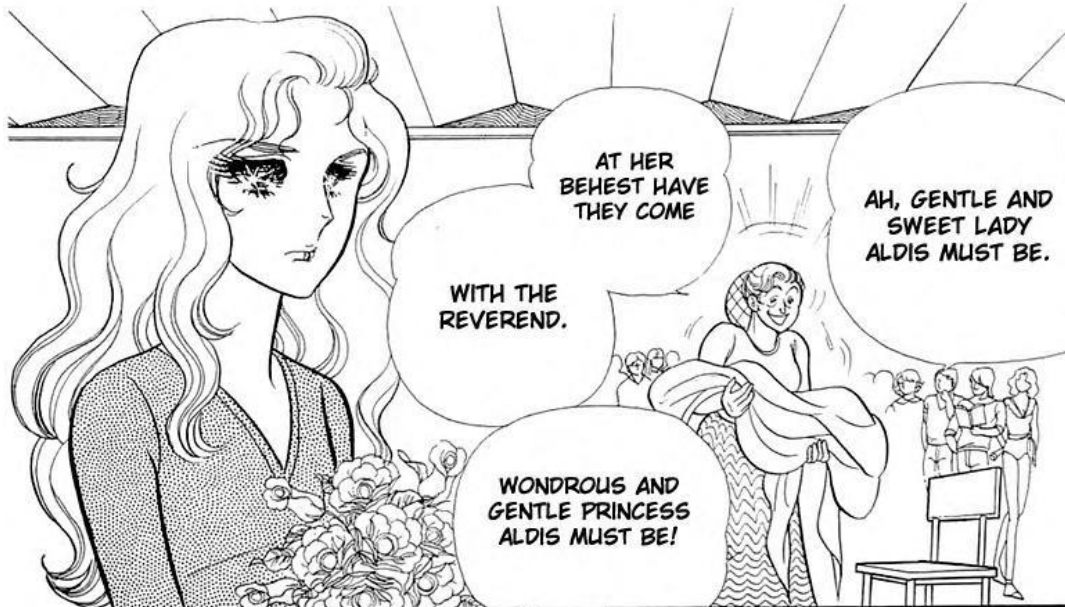
How did she live in the underground theatre?

WE ARE STARTING FROM HERE.



WITH FLOWERS ACCOMPANYING!

MILADY! DRESSES BEFITTING YOUR STATION HAVE COME!



AT HER BEHEST HAVE THEY COME

AH, GENTLE AND SWEET LADY ALDIS MUST BE.

WITH THE REVEREND.

WONDRIOUS AND GENTLE PRINCESS ALDIS MUST BE!



BELOVED BY HER SUBJECTS ALL, AS A DULCET ANGEL FROM HEAVEN BORN...
BELOVED OF ZEUS. EVERY WHIM IS GRANTED.



LIKE PERSEPHONE, INFUSED ARE THOSE AROUND HER BY LIGHT AND WARMTH...



MY SISTER ALDIS, WHOM I KNOW NOT...



STARE



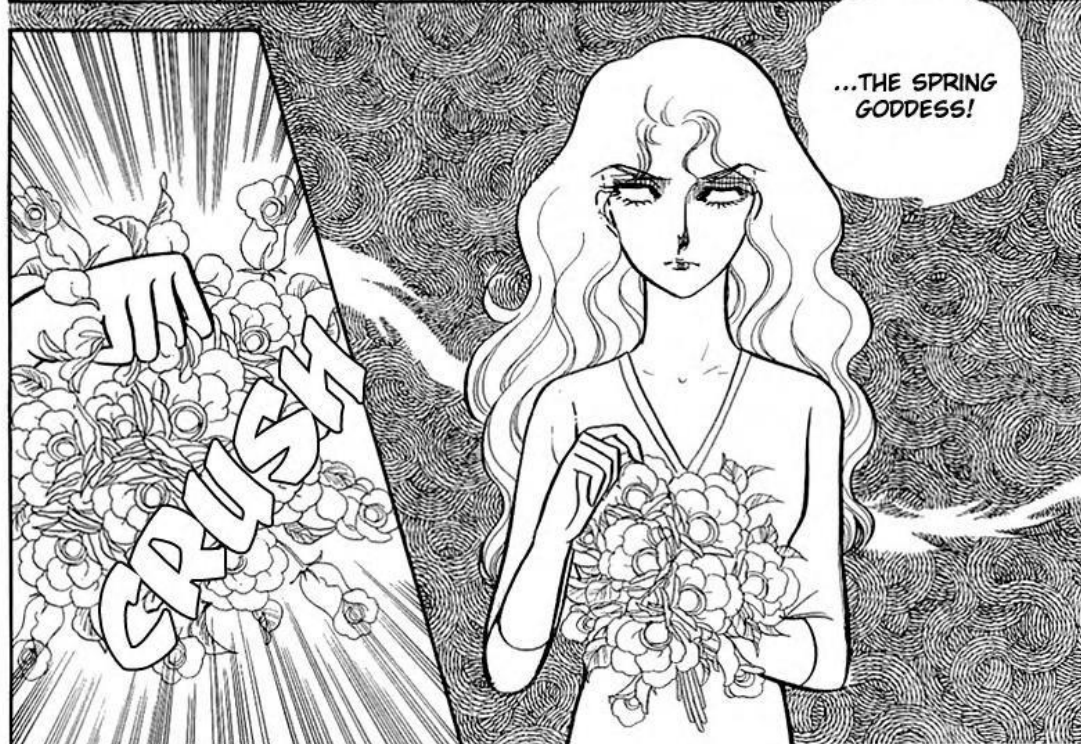
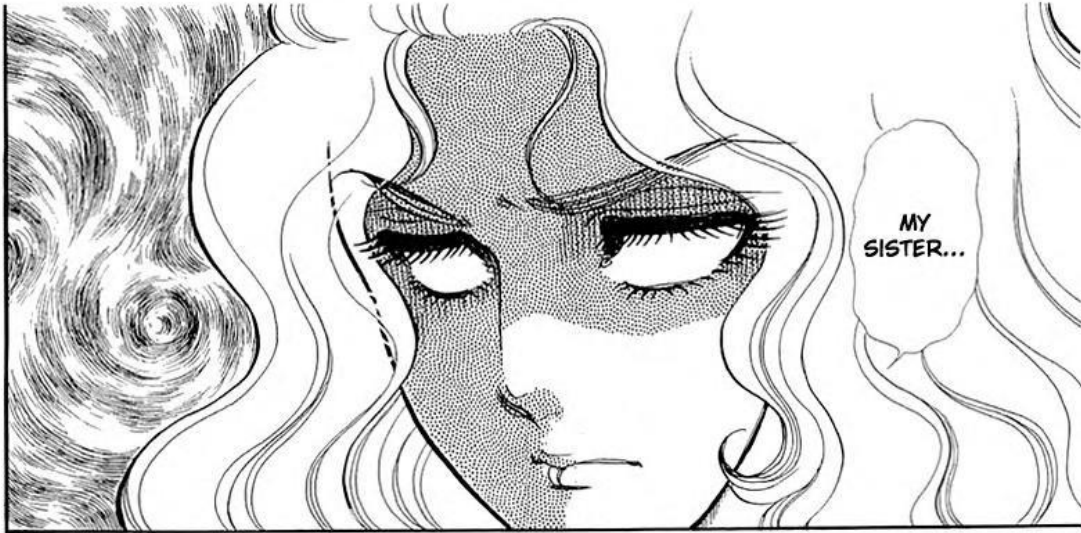
ALDIS ...
MY SISTER...

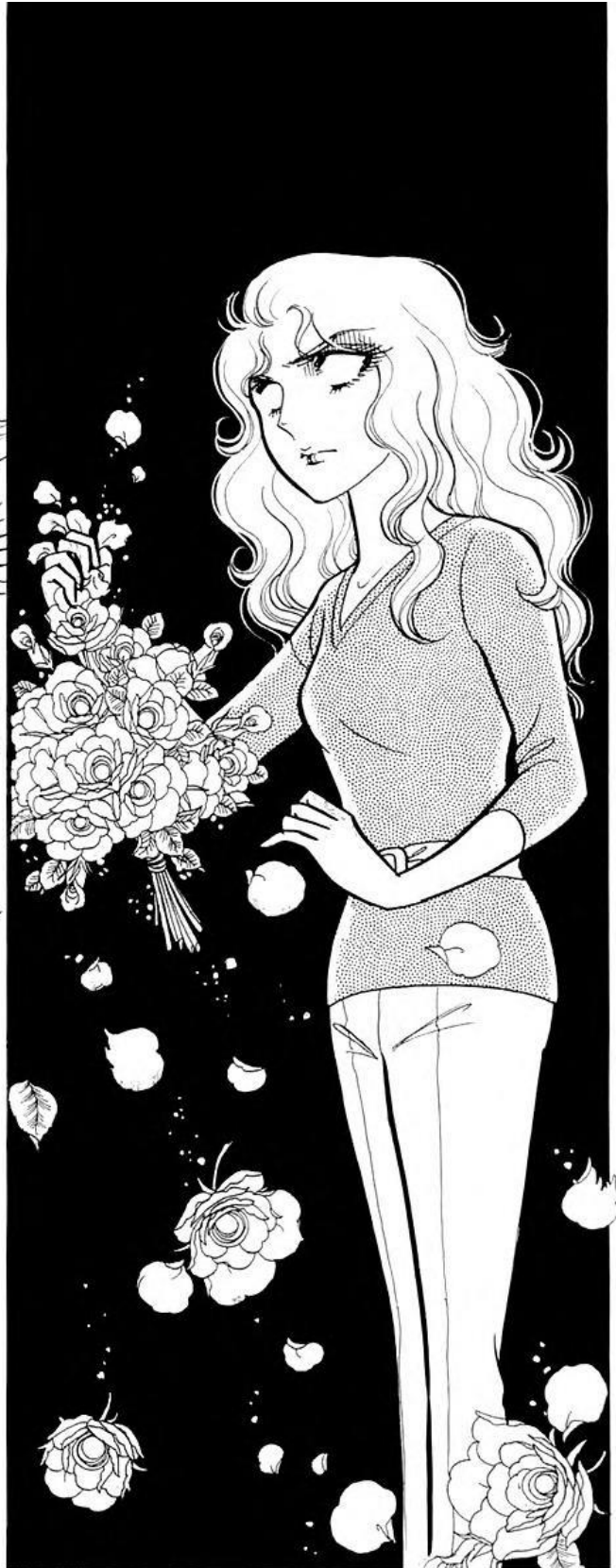


MY SISTER ALDIS...



LOVELY AND TEMPERATE THE WHISPERS SAY.



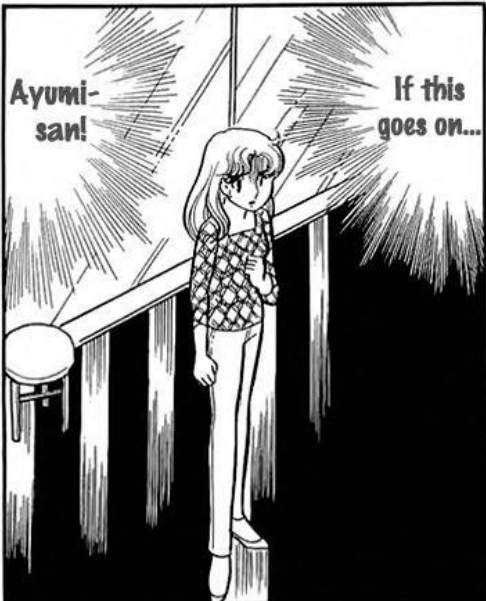




In front of a performance like this, my Aldis will disappear!



How cold!
It's scary...



Ayumi-san!

If this goes on...



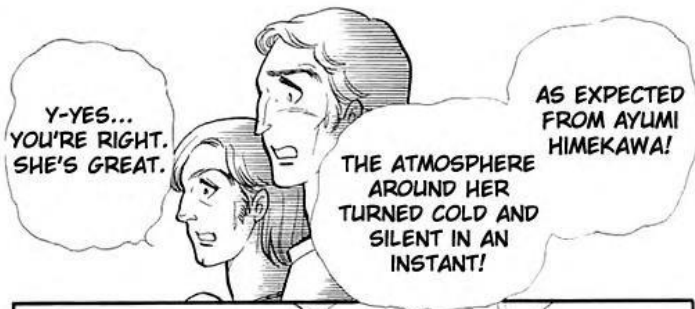
Ah!

PRINCESS ORIGELD WILL BECOME THE MAIN CHARACTER OF THE PLAY.



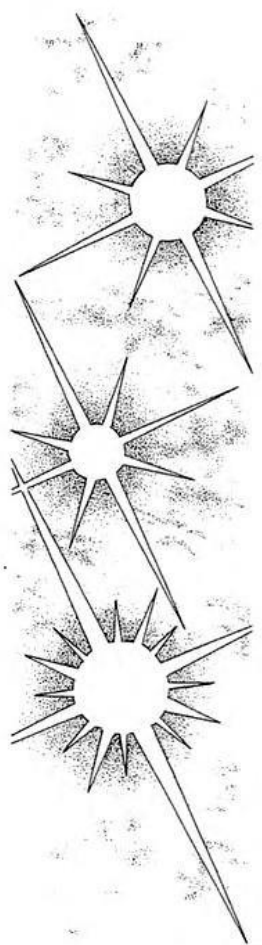
If this goes on...

It's hard to admit, but Masumi Hayami was right!



Y-YES...
YOU'RE RIGHT.
SHE'S GREAT.

AS EXPECTED
FROM AYUMI
HIMEKAWA!
THE ATMOSPHERE
AROUND HER
TURNED COLD AND
SILENT IN AN
INSTANT!



TSUKIKAGE-SENSEI, WHO
INSISTED ON CHANGING
THE ROLES WHICH WERE
ALREADY ASSIGNED.

ANYWAY
IT WAS
YOU,

EXPLAIN WHY
YOU ASSIGNED
THE ROLE OF
ALDIS TO THE
INSIPID MAYA
KITAJIMA.



THE
AUDIENCE
WILL BE THE
ONE TO
CHOOSE...

Ha
Ha
Ha
...WHICH OF THE
TWO CANDIDATES
IS THE MOST
SUITABLE TO PLAY
THE CRIMSON
GODDESS.





IT'S CLEAR YOUR DECISION WAS WRONG.

Ha
Ha
Ha

TSUKI-KAGE-SENSEI, YOU MADE A GREAT MISTAKE.

Tsukikage-sensei...



WAIT! WAIT, PLEASE!

TSUKI-KAGE-SENSEI!!



WHY?! WHY DID YOU CHOOSE ME TO PLAY ALDIS?!

IS IT TRUE?

BECAUSE I THINK YOU HAVE THE POTENTIAL TO PLAY HER!



WHY THEN?

AYUMI WOULD BE PERFECT IN THAT ROLE!

BUT...

BUT I'M NOT AS PRETTY OR ELEGANT OR REFINED AS ALDIS!



KITAJIMA-SAN, TSUKIKAGE-SENSEI STATED THAT YOU HAVE THE ABILITY TO PLAY ALDIS.

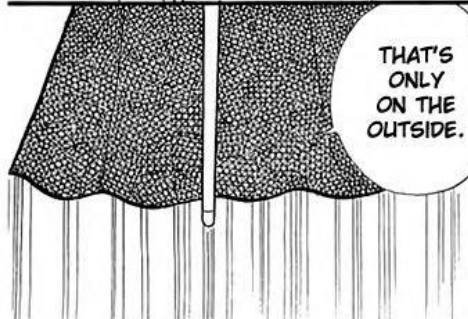


FUMA-SAN, WOULD YOU CARE TO EXPLAIN IT TO HER?



BUT... BUT EVERYBODY THINKS I'M NOT SUITABLE FOR THE ROLE...

INCLUDING ME.



THAT'S ONLY ON THE OUTSIDE.



I HAVE THE ABILITY TO PLAY ALDIS?



Talent!



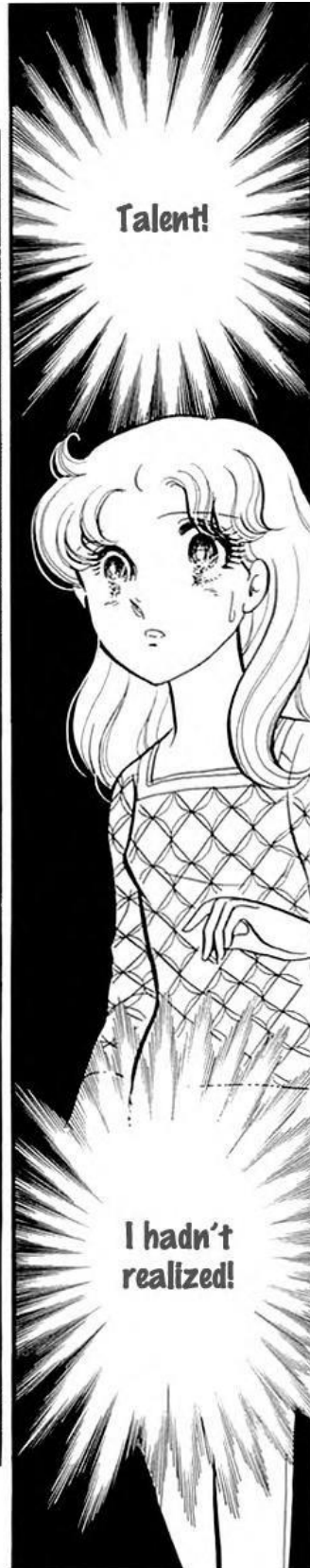
I'M TALKING ABOUT TALENT.

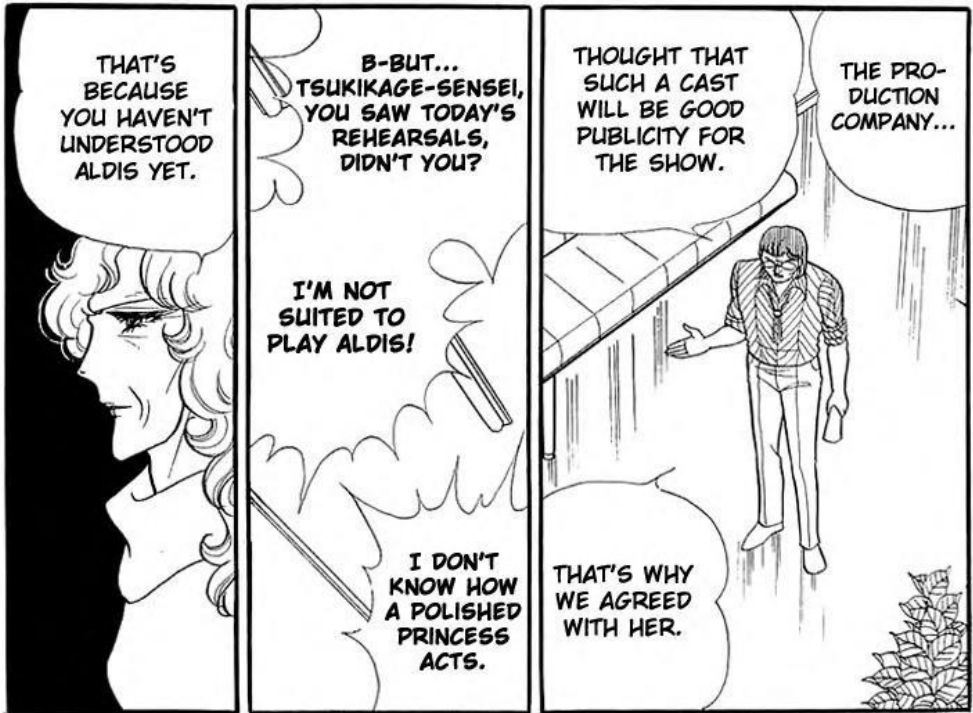


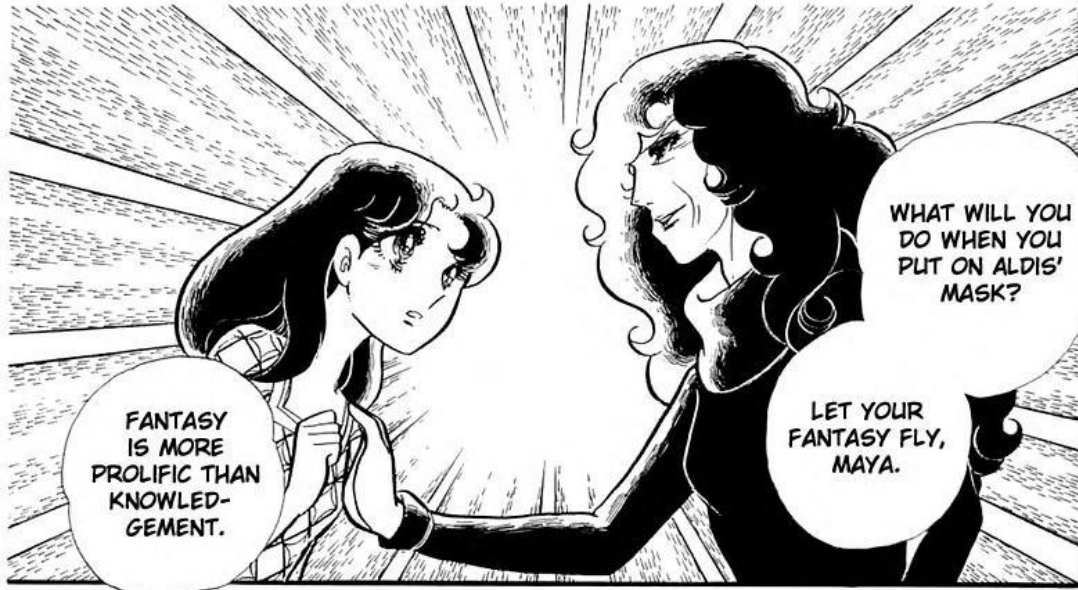
BUT, MISLEAD BY APPEARANCES, YOU HAVEN'T REALIZED IT YET!

AYUMI HAS THE TALENT TO PLAY ORIGELD...

AND YOU HAVE THE TALENT TO PLAY ALDIS.







FANTASY IS MORE PROLIFIC THAN KNOWLEDGE.

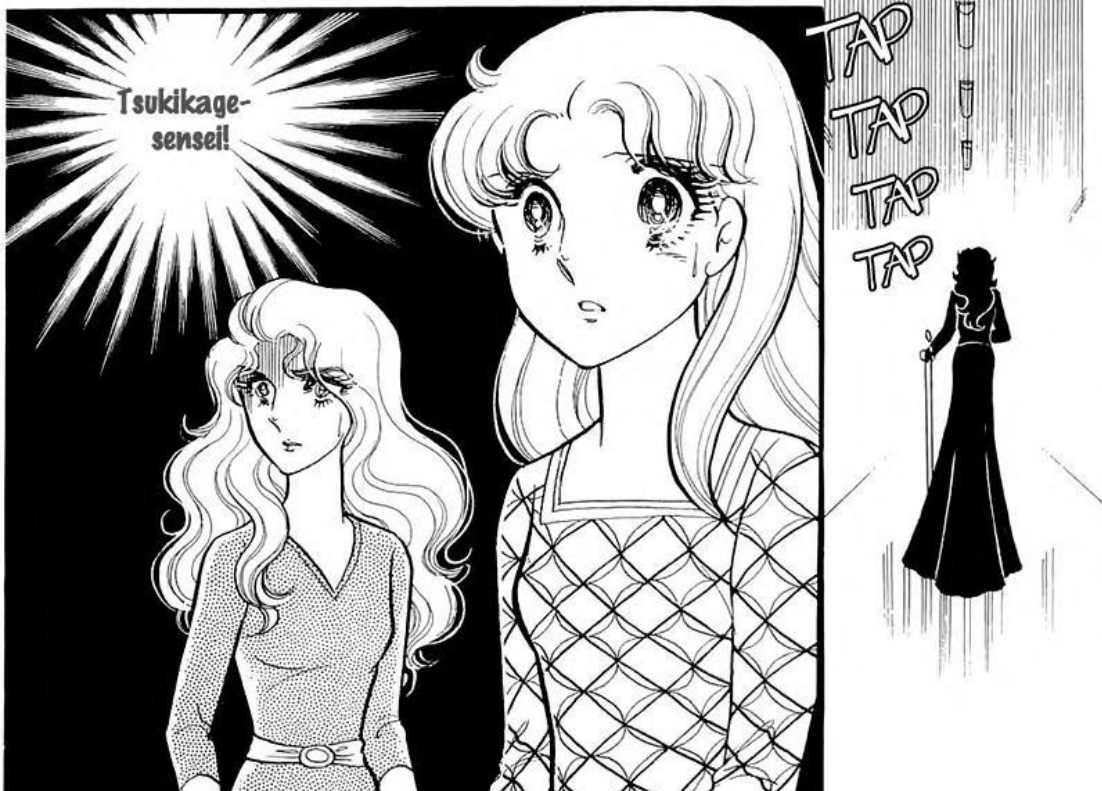
WHAT WILL YOU DO WHEN YOU PUT ON ALDIS' MASK?

LET YOUR FANTASY FLY, MAYA.



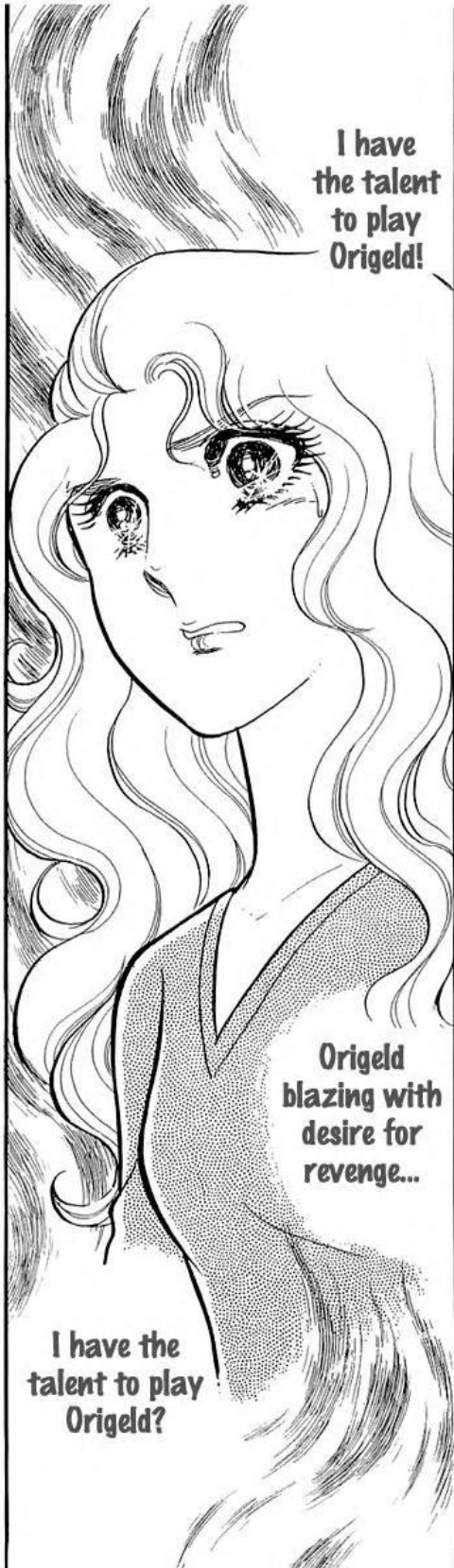
AND YOU TOO, AYUMI.

I THINK YOU ARE SUITABLE FOR THE ROLE, MAYA.



Tsukikage-sensei!

TAP
TAP
TAP
TAP



**I have
the talent
to play
Origeld!**

**Origeld
blazing with
desire for
revenge...**

**I have the
talent to play
Origeld?**

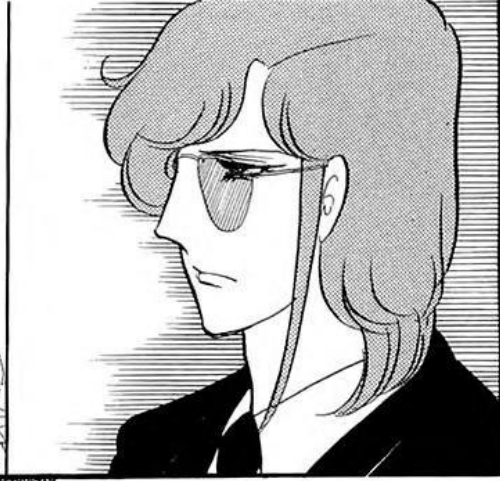


**Suitable for
the role...**

**I... I have
the talent
to play
Aldis?**

**I can't
believe
it...**

**I have the
talent to play
the gorgeous
Aldis!**



She isn't aware
of her talent yet?



THE TALENT
TO PLAY
ALDIS?

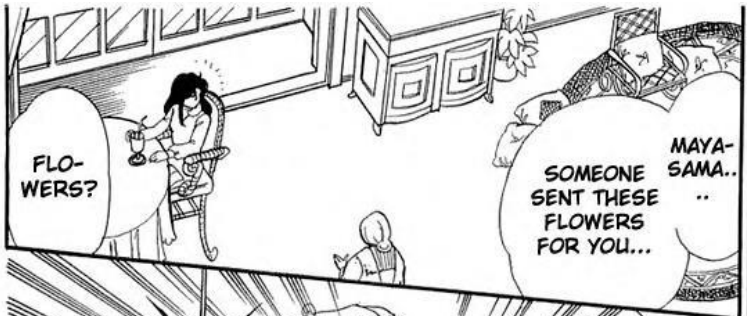
DID
TSUKIKAGE-
SENSEI SAY
THAT?



THAT MAYA
ISN'T AWARE
OF HER
TALENT YET?



OK, WE'LL
TALK
LATER.



FLOWERS?



MAYA-SAMA.. ..
SOMEONE SENT THESE FLOWERS FOR YOU...

The talent to play Aldis...



PURPLE ROSES!

AND A BUNCH OF PRESENTS!



I have no idea what it's about...



PURSES, SHOES...

UNDERWEAR, BLOUSES, SKIRTS...

...AND SO MANY OF THEM!

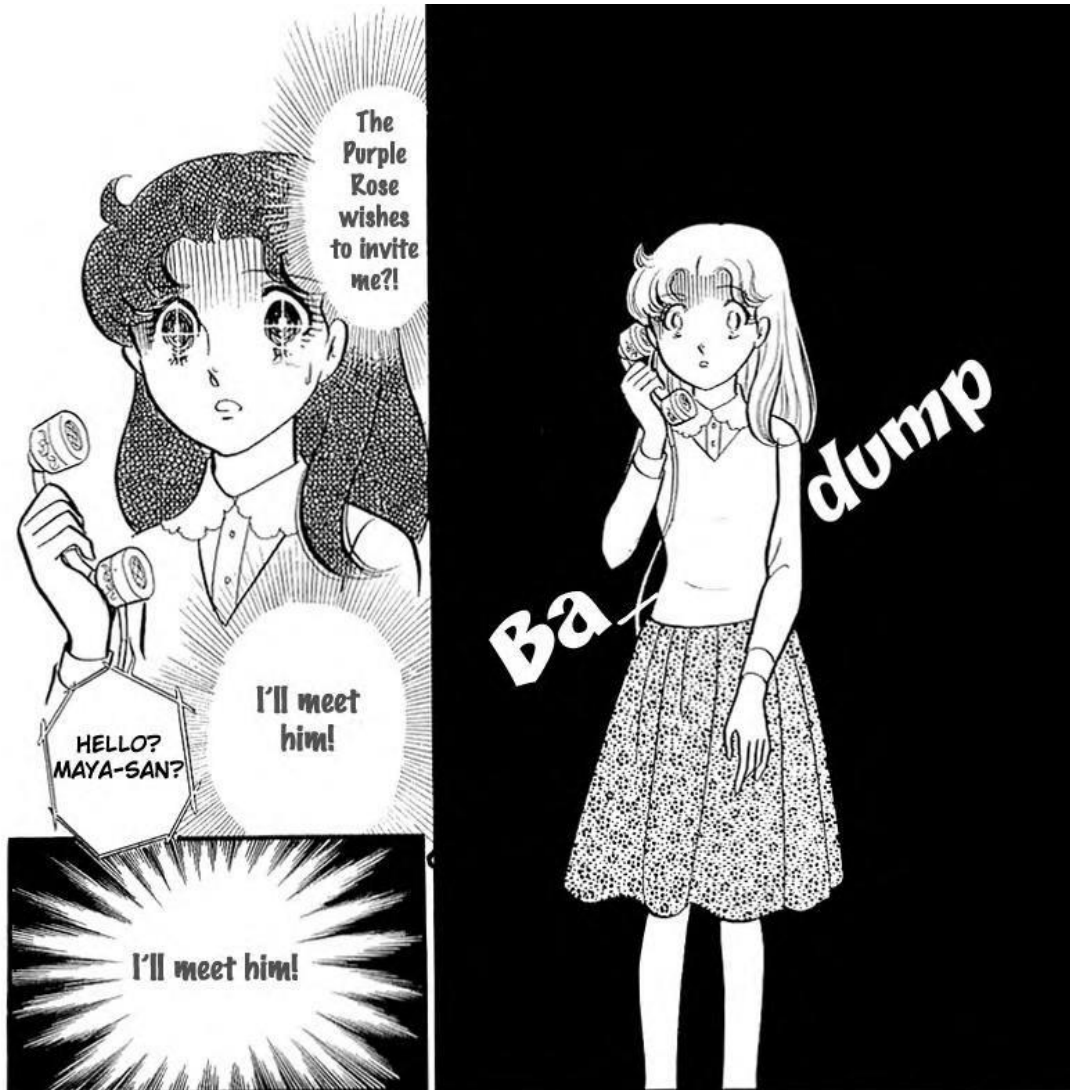


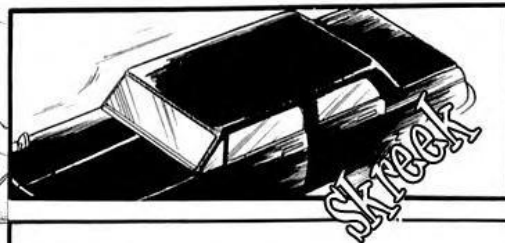
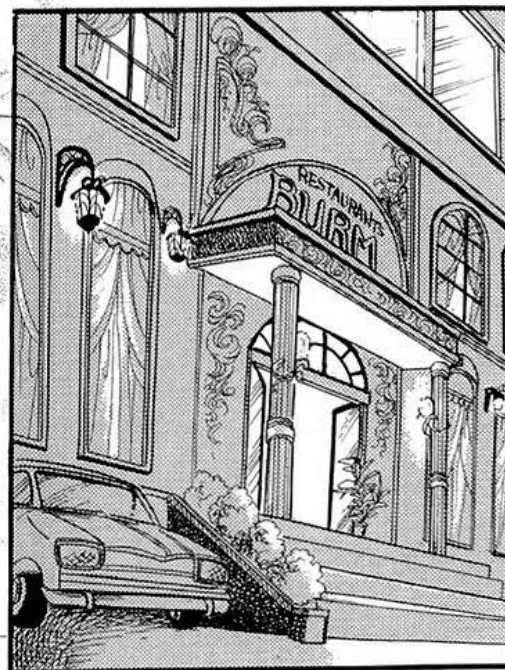
WOW! SO MANY DRESSES!

OH, THEY ARE SO PRETTY!

D
R
I
N
G









PUR-
PLE
RO-
SE?
OF
COURSE.

THIS WAY,
PLEASE.

Thump
Thump

...if I wear
the dress he
bought for
me...



Maybe the
Purple Rose will
be happy...



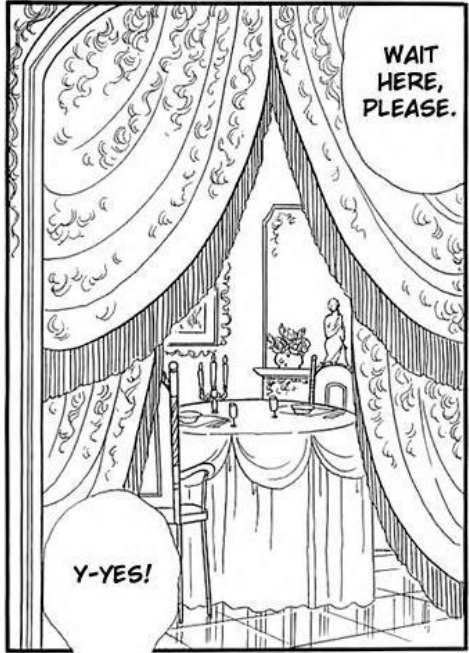
WHO
IS THAT
GIRL?



What will
he look
like?
The Purple
Rose...

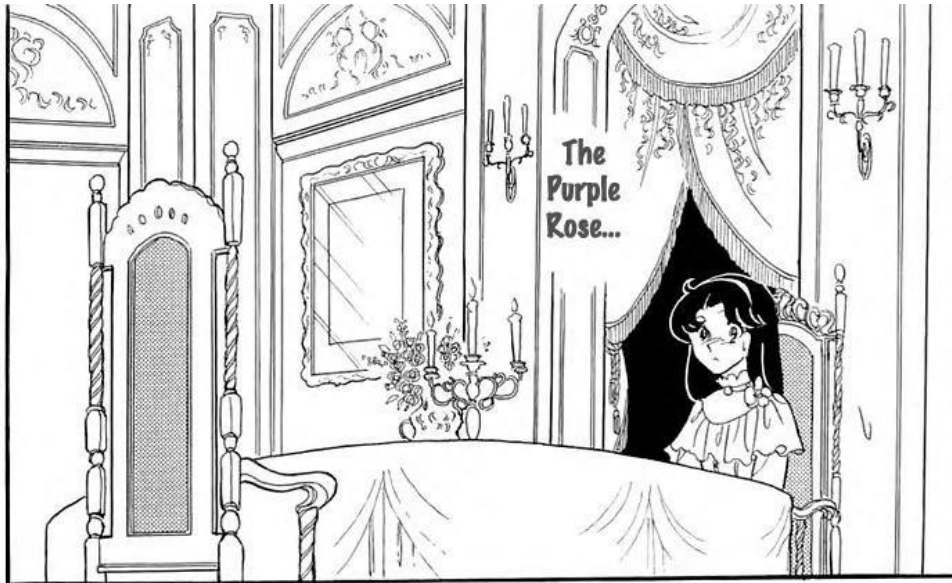
Thump
Thump

I must be
more proper...
I've got to be
careful to not
make a fool
of myself.



WAIT
HERE,
PLEASE.

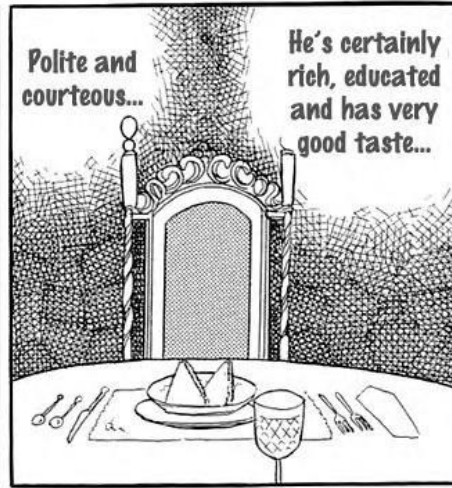
Y-YES!



...and use formal and polite speech.

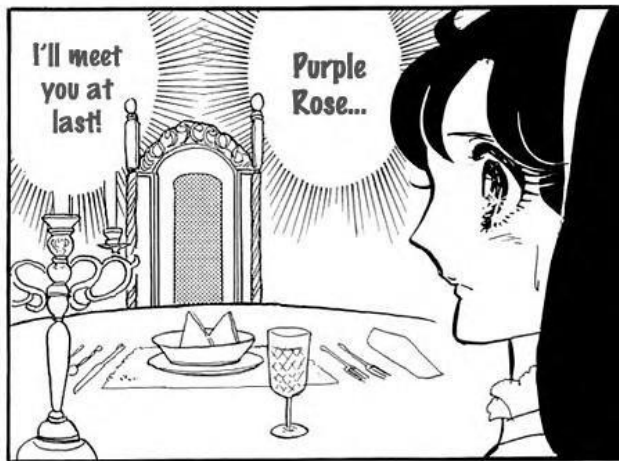
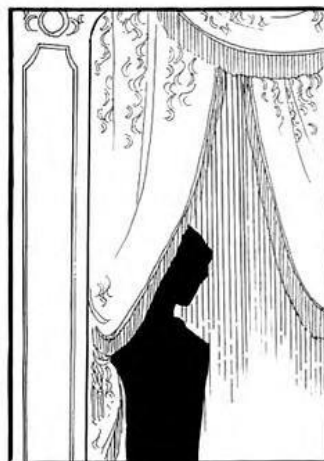
I...must be well behaved...

W-will I make it?



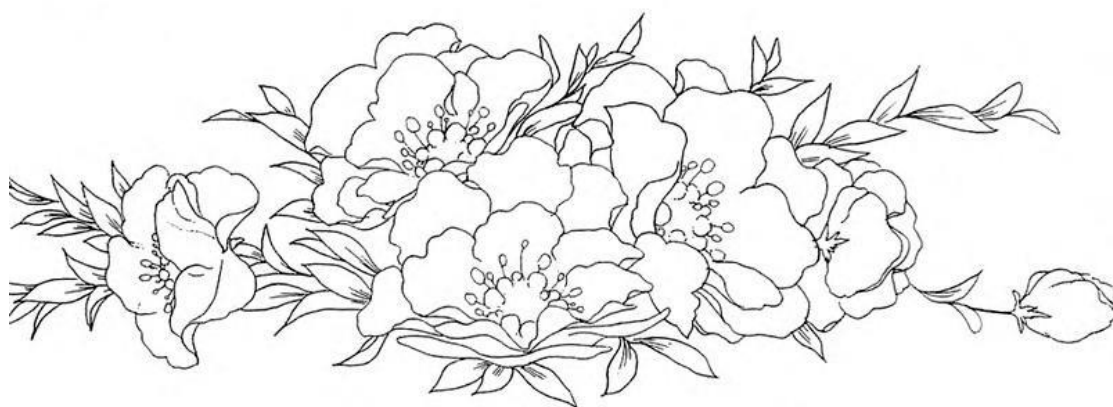
Polite and courteous...

He's certainly rich, educated and has very good taste...



I'll meet you at last!

Purple Rose...



GLASS MASK <END OF VOLUME 24>