

NOW...
AUDITIONS
FOR THE ROLE
OF AURORA
WILL BEGIN.

FIRST ASAGI,
THEN HIJIRI. DO
THE VARIATION.



I'LL WIN!

I WANT TO
BE CHOSEN!



I CAN
FEEL
HER
ENERGY.

I'M AURORA!

JUST WATCH ME,
MASUMI!

YOU WON'T
GIVE THIS ROLE TO
ANYONE ELSE!



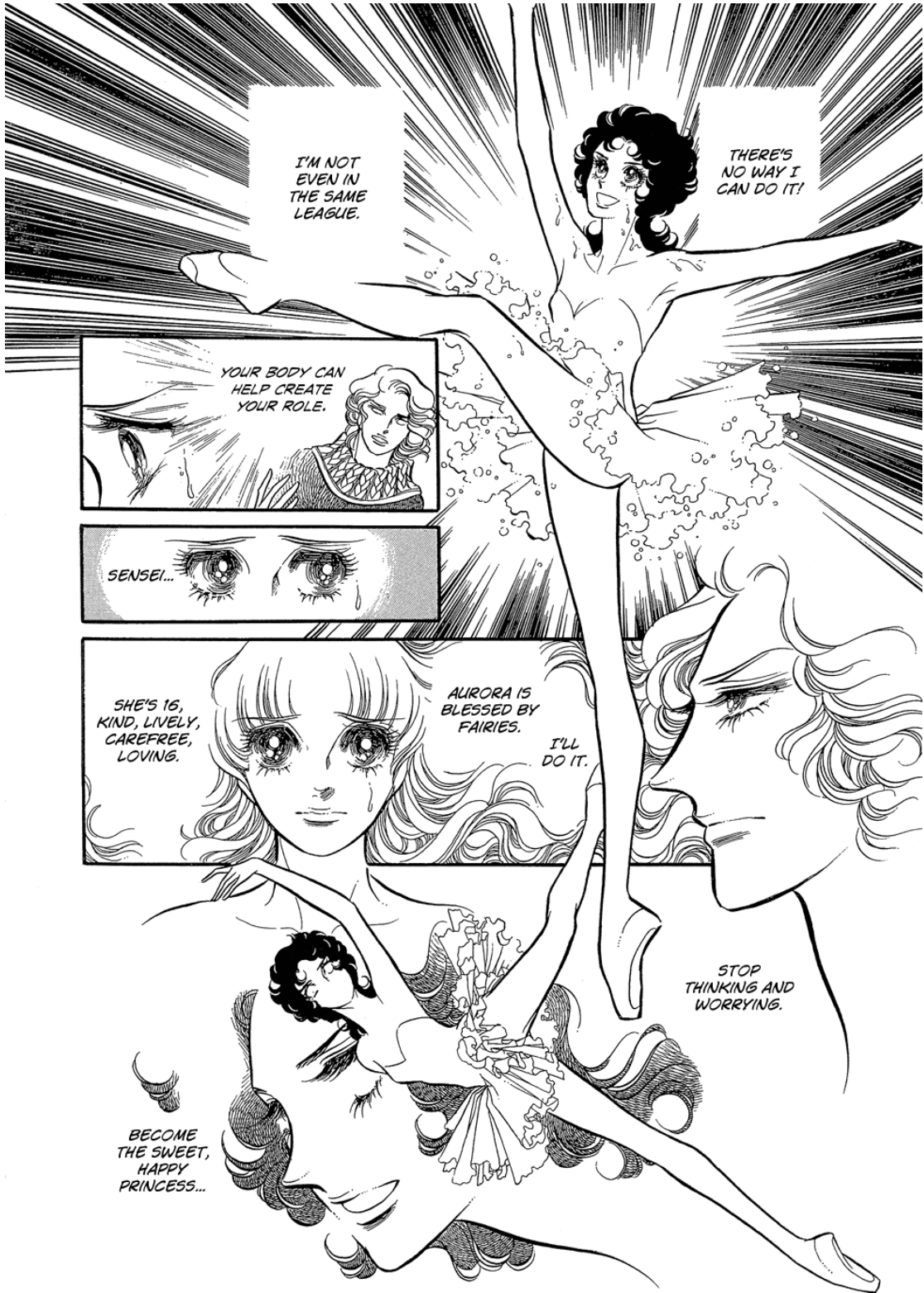


THAT
PASSION!
IT'S LIKE
A FLAME!

SHE'S GOOD!

I CAN'T
DANCE LIKE
THAT!

OH, NO!



I'M NOT
EVEN IN
THE SAME
LEAGUE.

THERE'S
NO WAY I
CAN DO IT!

YOUR BODY CAN
HELP CREATE
YOUR ROLE.

SENSEI...

SHE'S 16,
KIND, LIVELY,
CAREFREE,
LOVING.

AURORA IS
BLESSED BY
FAIRIES.
I'LL
DO IT.

STOP
THINKING AND
WORRYING.

BECOME
THE SWEET,
HAPPY
PRINCESS...

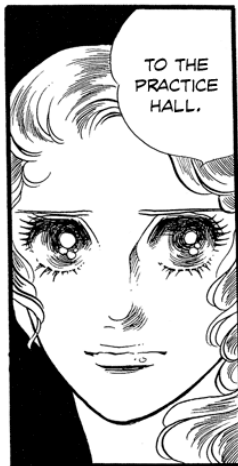


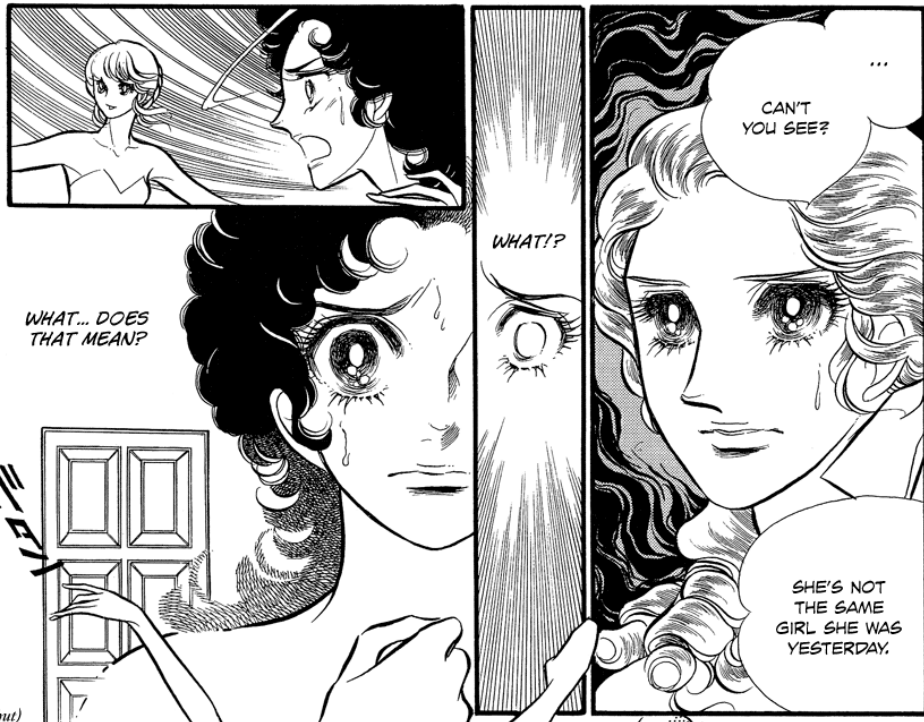


SHE'S DIFFERENT FROM BEFORE!

HER DANCING... HAS CHANGED!

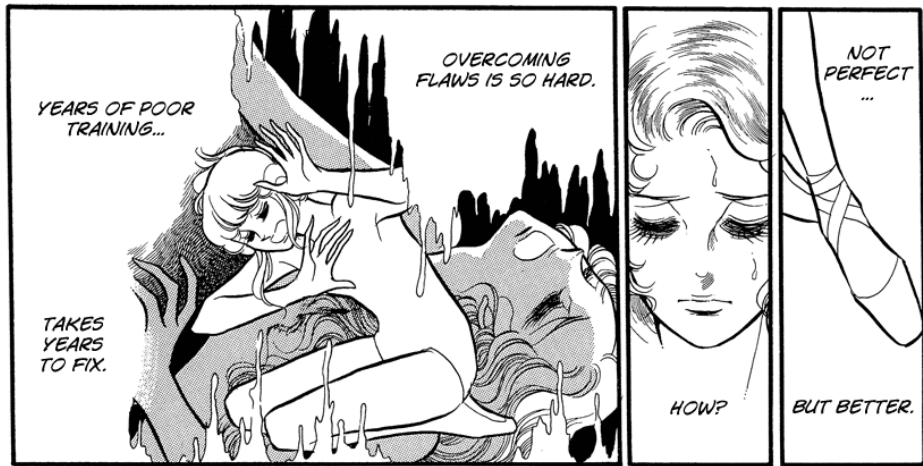
THOSE MOVES...!





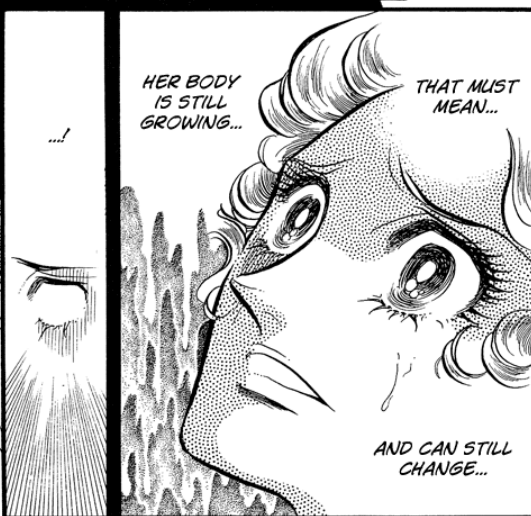
SEX: *Batan (Sbut)*





SHE'S SO SMOOTH.
EVERY DAY SHE IMPROVES.

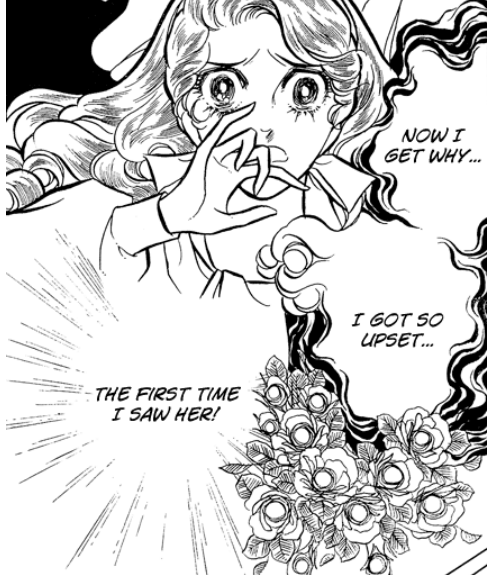
YET, THE
CHANGE IN JUST
TWO WEEKS IS
REMARKABLE.



HER BODY
IS STILL
GROWING...

THAT MUST
MEAN...

AND CAN STILL
CHANGE...



NOW I
GET WHY...

I GOT SO
UPSET...

THE FIRST TIME
I SAW HER!



I FINALLY
UNDERSTAND!

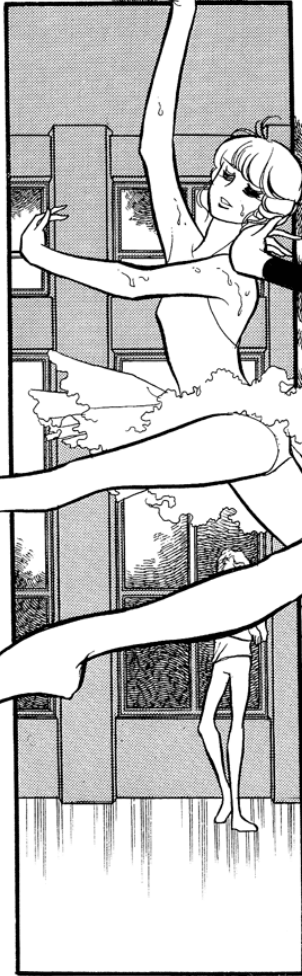


I ALWAYS
KNEW THIS DAY
WOULD COME.

SIGH...



SHE'S GOING
PLACES!



THIS IS
MY FIRST
TIME TO...

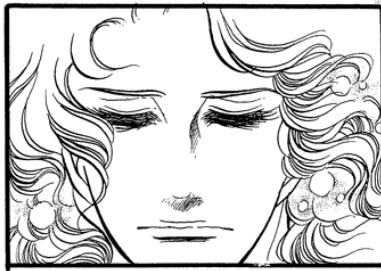


SFX: Ka (Step)

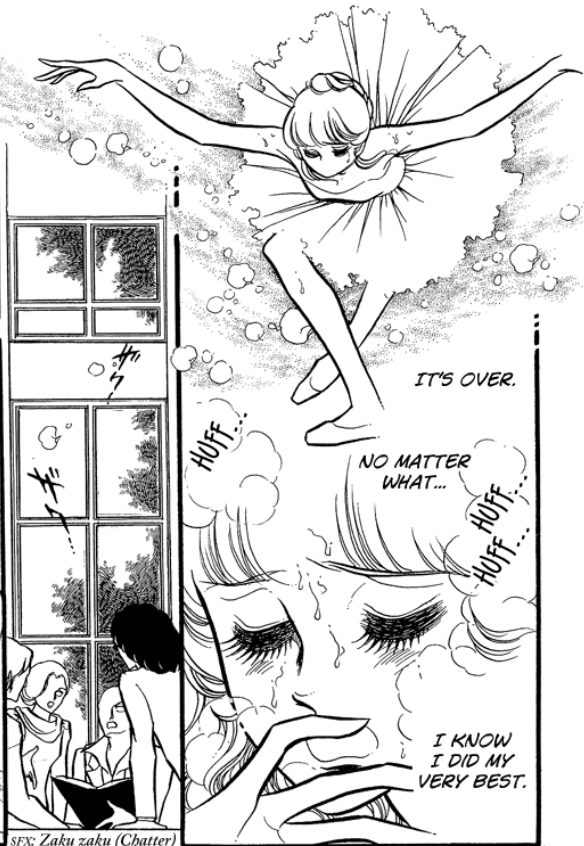
SINCE I
STARTED
DANCING
WHEN I
WAS SIX...

I'VE
FINALLY MET
MY TRUE
MATCH!

TO FEEL
THIS FEAR,
AND THIS
STRANGE
THRILL!



THAT'S ALL FOR TODAY.



IT'S OVER.

NO MATTER WHAT...

HUFF...

HUFF... HUFF...

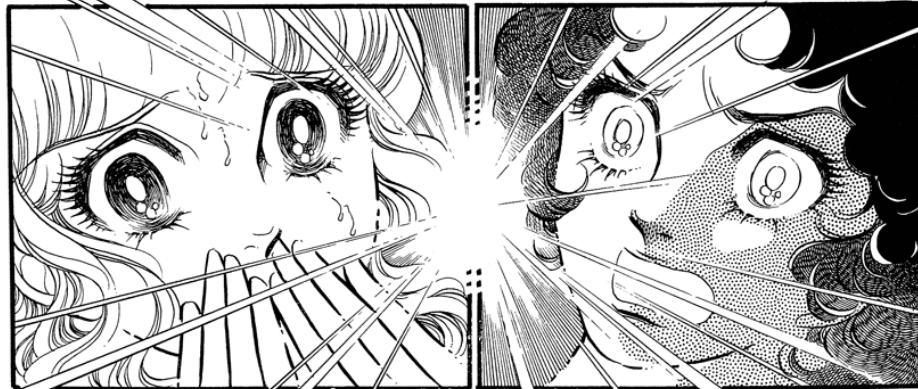
I KNOW I DID MY VERY BEST.

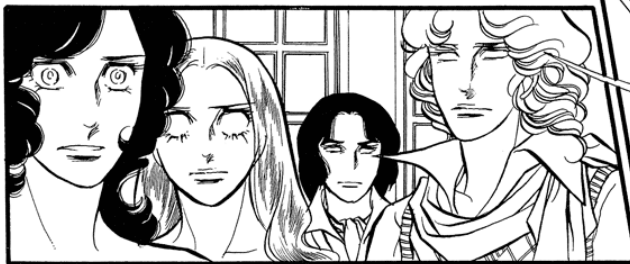
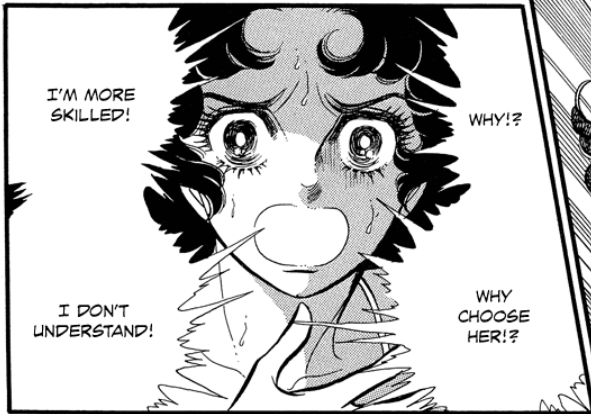
SFX: Zaku zaku (Chatter)



BETWEEN HIJIRI AND KYOGOKU.

WE WILL HAVE A FINAL AUDITION TOMORROW...







WAIT!

PLEASE!

NEXT TIME,
I'LL... I'LL...

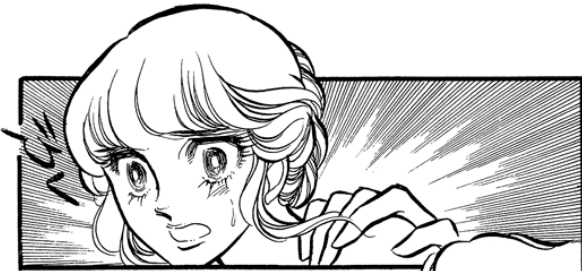
LET ME
TRY AGAIN!

THERE ARE NO
SECOND CHANCES
ON STAGE!

YOU SHOULD
HAVE DONE IT
RIGHT THE
FIRST TIME!

SEX Waaah!

UGH...



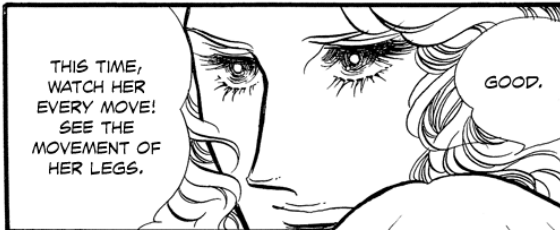
IT'S A SPECIAL PERFORMANCE SPONSORED BY THE AGENCY FOR CULTURAL AFFAIRS.

TOMORROW, MATSUYAMA BALLET COMPANY IS PERFORMING SWAN LAKE.

HAVE YOU SEEN MORISHITA YOKO?

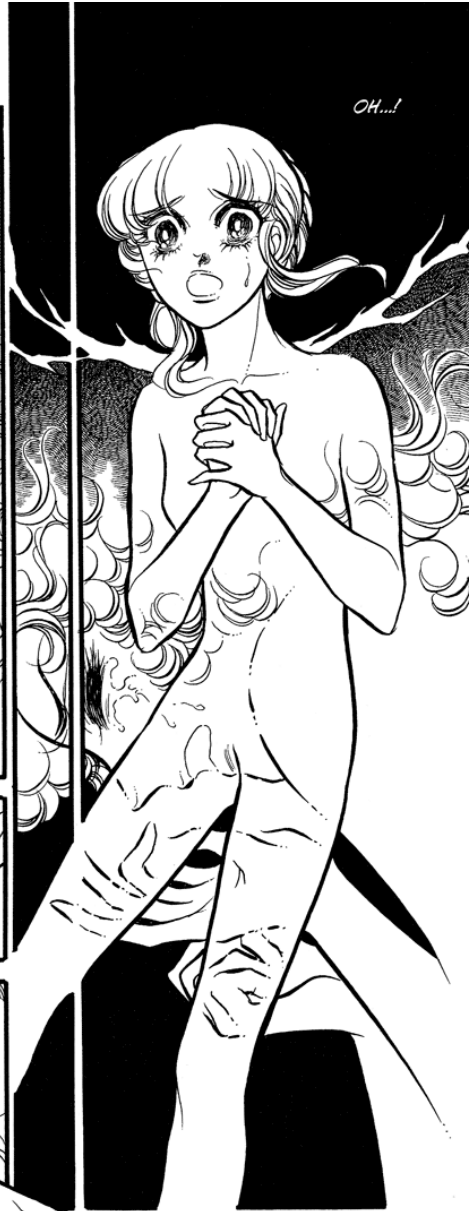


YES, ONCE.

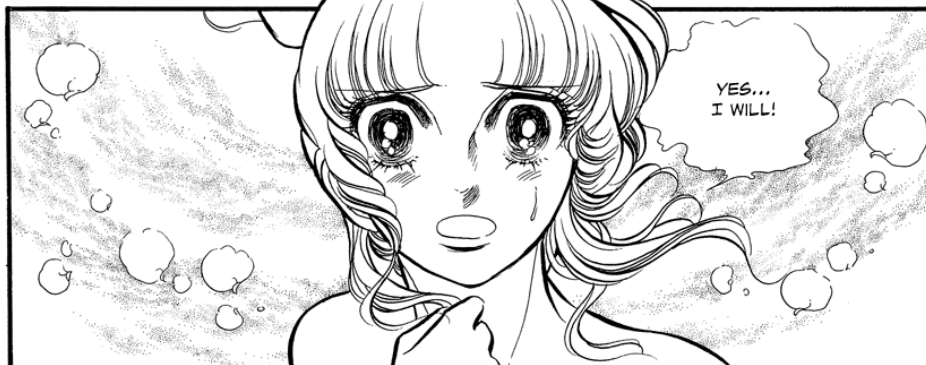


THIS TIME, WATCH HER EVERY MOVE! SEE THE MOVEMENT OF HER LEGS.

GOOD.



OH...!



YES... I WILL!



I'M GIVING HER A BOUQUET OF 30 ROSES!

I'M A HUGE FAN OF MORISHITA YOKO!

THIS IS GREAT!

BALLET DOESN'T HAVE MASS APPEAL IN JAPAN YET.

SO IT'S HARD TO COME UP WITH MONEY FOR EVEN ONE TUTU.

THAT ALL DEPENDS ON HOW WE DO!

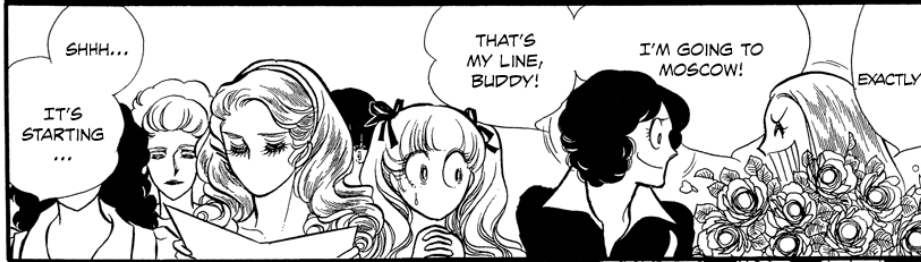
WHY ARE THERE ONLY TWO PERFORMANCES? WHY NOT MORE?

I HOPE WE GET NATIONAL FUNDING SOON.

WOW... FIRST ROW SEATS IN THE BALCONY!

COURTESY OF SERGEYEV-SENSEI!

HE WANTS US TO BE INSPIRED!



Swan Lake
(a ballet in four acts)
is a very famous
ballet first
performed in St.
Petersburg, Russia
in 1877. The music
is by Tchaikovsky.

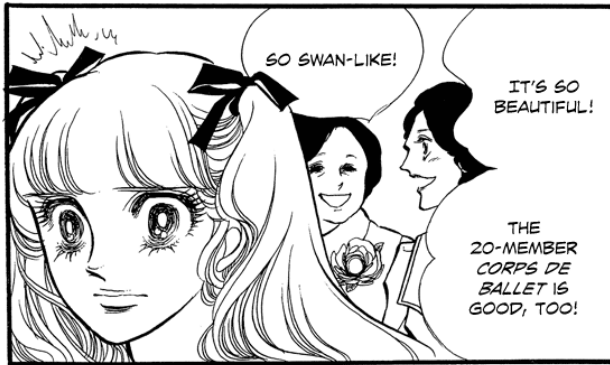
Act I: The forest, with
a castle in the distance.
The village maidens and
friends have a garden party
for Prince Siegfried. The
pas de trois and the dance
of Odette takes place.

Act II: By the lakeshore.
The prince searches for Odette,
who has been turned into a swan
by the evil sorcerer Rothbart.
The dance of the Three Swans,
the Four Swans, Odette's solo,
and her *pas de deux* with
the prince take place.



Because only true
love can break the
spell, the prince
promises to marry
Odette before
leaving the lake.

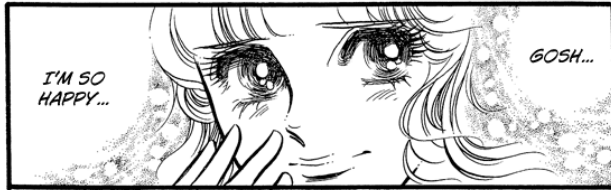




SO SWAN-LIKE!

IT'S SO BEAUTIFUL!

THE 20-MEMBER CORPS DE BALLET IS GOOD, TOO!



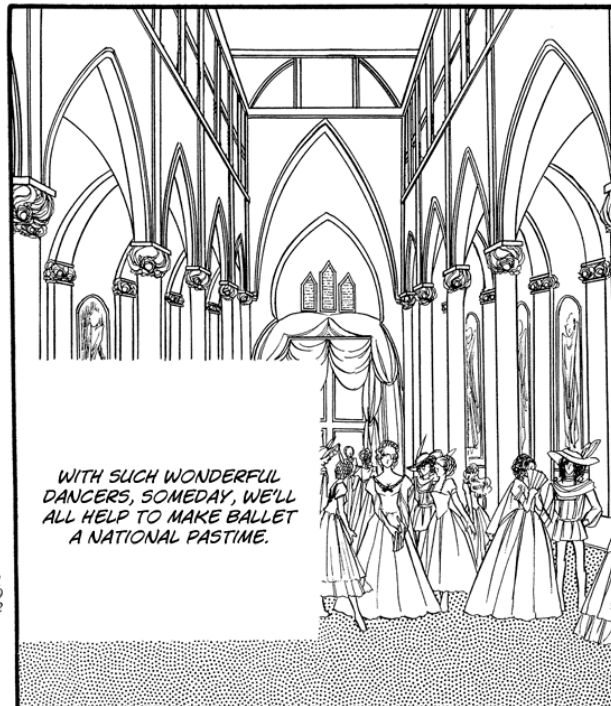
I'M SO HAPPY...

GOSH...

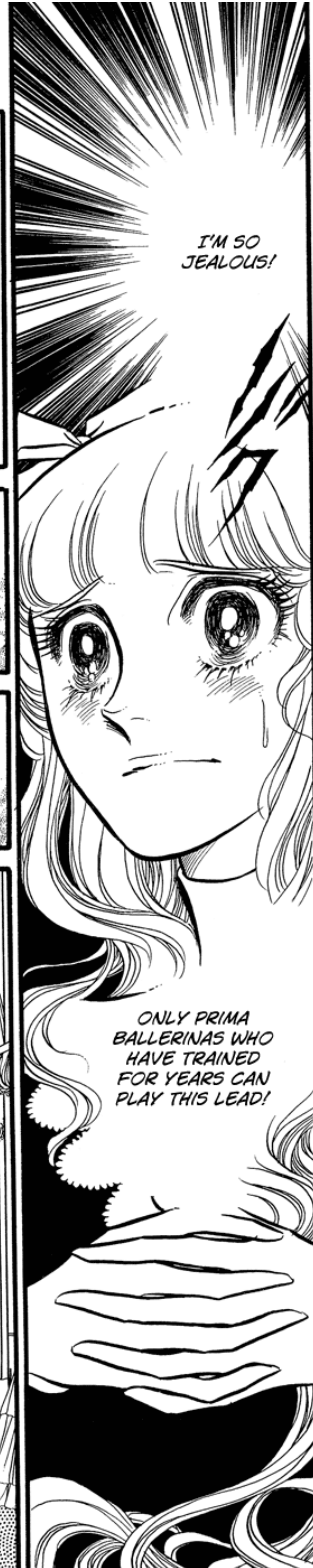


THEY LOVE THE SHOW...

TO HEAR THAT...



WITH SUCH WONDERFUL DANCERS, SOMEDAY, WE'LL ALL HELP TO MAKE BALLET A NATIONAL PASTIME.



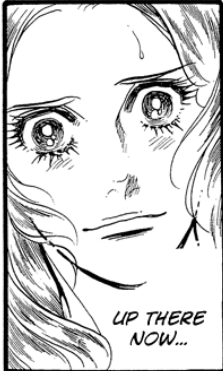
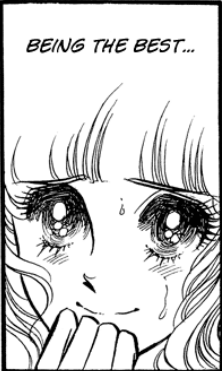
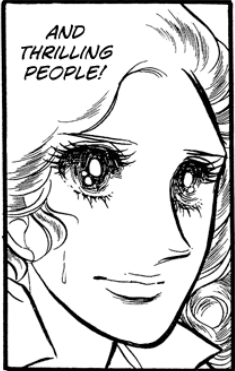
I'M SO JEALOUS!

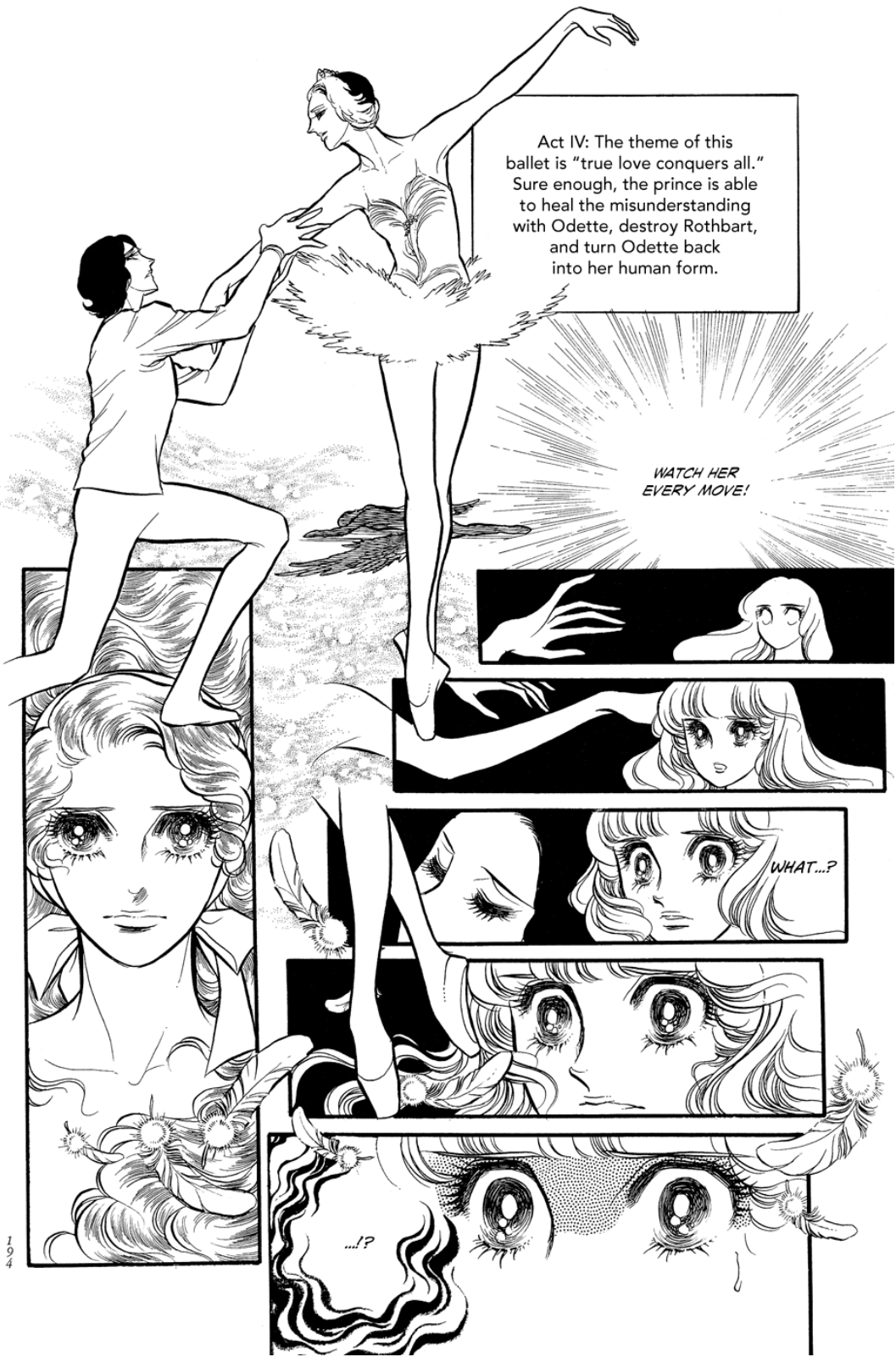
ONLY PRIMA BALLERINAS WHO HAVE TRAINED FOR YEARS CAN PLAY THIS LEAD!

sex-Zoku (Tremble)



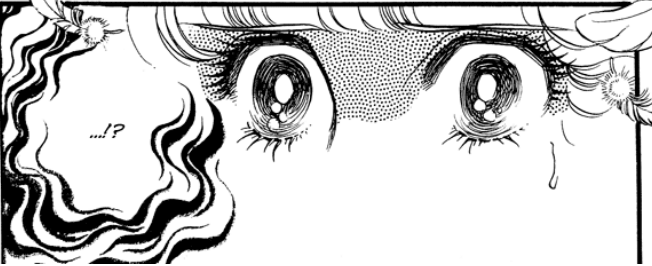
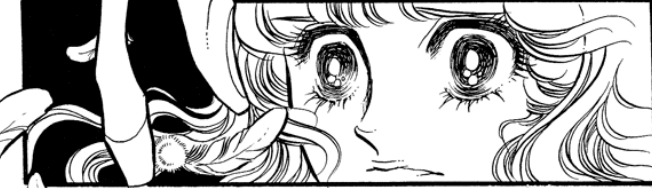
Act III: Rothbart brings Odile, the Black Swan, as an eligible bride. The prince, bewitched by the dark and mysterious charm of Odile, mistakenly chooses her for his bride, thus breaking his promise to Odette.

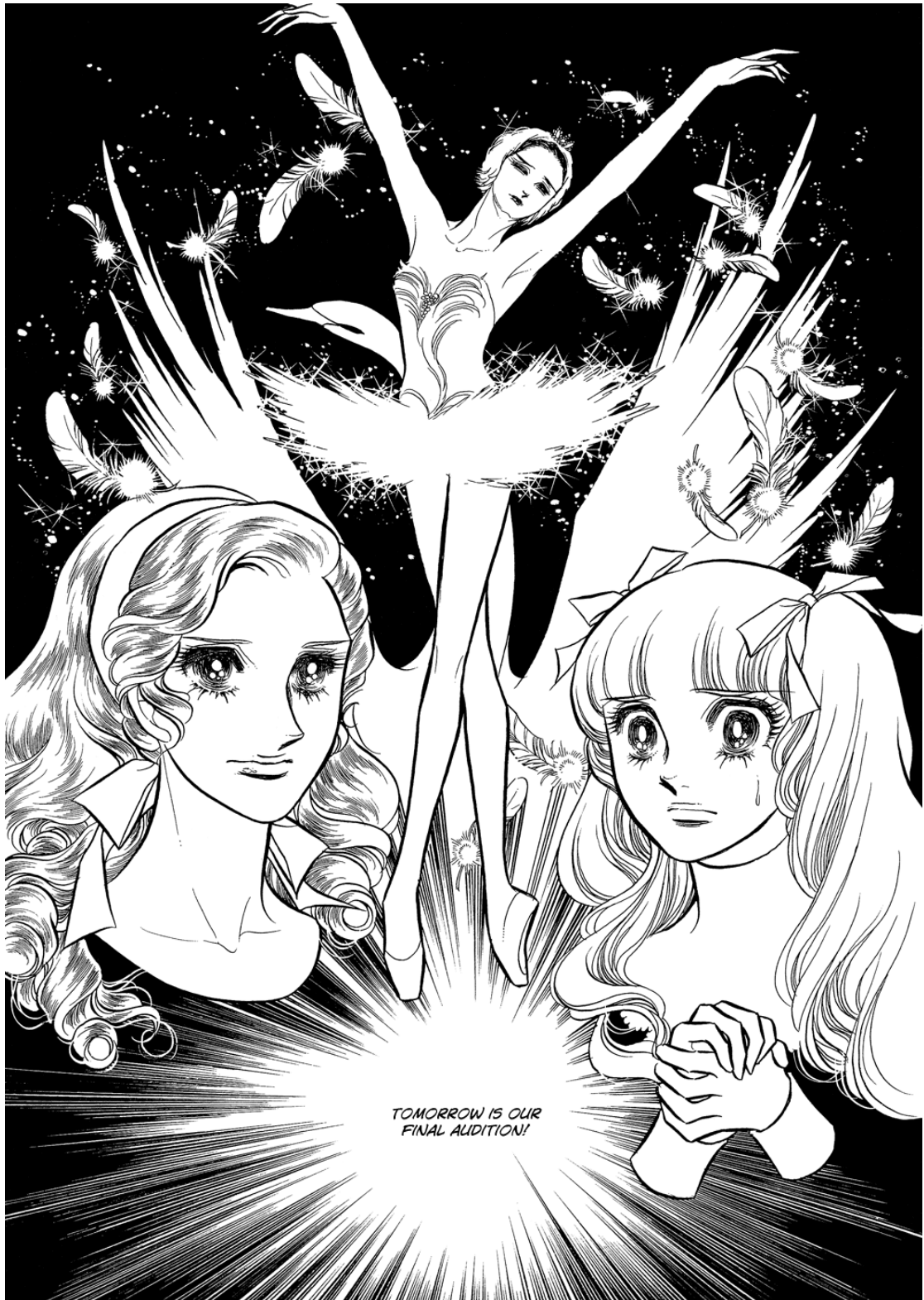




Act IV: The theme of this ballet is "true love conquers all." Sure enough, the prince is able to heal the misunderstanding with Odette, destroy Rothbart, and turn Odette back into her human form.

WATCH HER EVERY MOVE!





TOMORROW IS OUR
FINAL AUDITION!

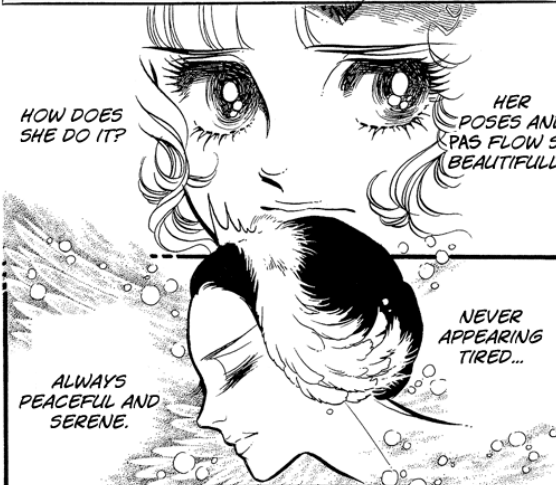


I CAN'T HELP
WONDERING...



MORISHITA'S DANCE WAS...

SO VIVID AND PASSIONATE.

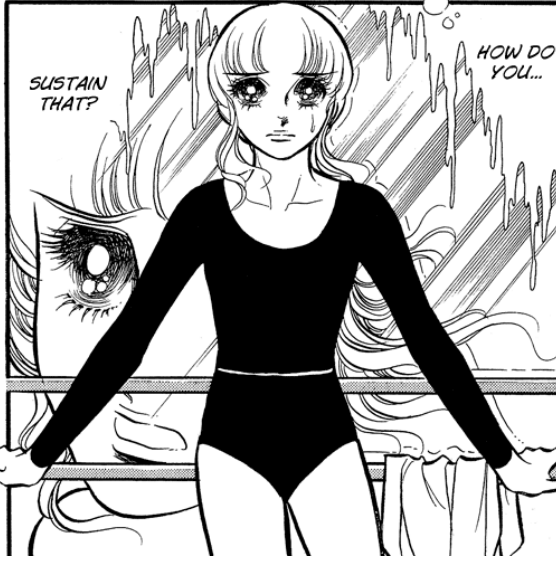


HOW DOES SHE DO IT?

HER POSES AND PAS FLOW SO BEAUTIFULLY.

ALWAYS PEACEFUL AND SERENE.

NEVER APPEARING TIRED...



SUSTAIN THAT?

HOW DO YOU...

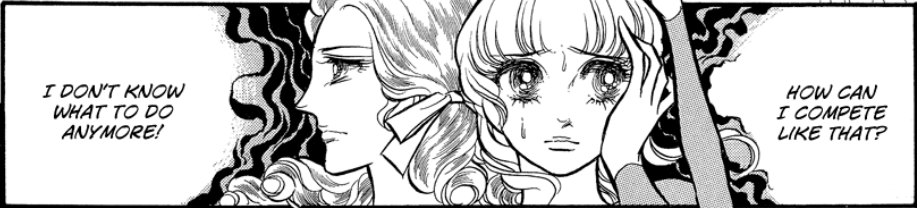


SCENE: Kai (Step)



IT'S ALL SO CONFUSING!

I CAN'T FIGURE IT OUT!



I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO ANYMORE!

HOW CAN I COMPETE LIKE THAT?



AND DANCE WITHOUT DISTRACTIONS!

I WANT TO IMPROVE!

BUT I HAVE TO TRY!

I WANT TO GET BETTER!

MUCH BETTER!



DO IT AGAIN!

YES!

THINK "CLEAN FLOW."

LEAN BACK INTO THAT ATTITUDE.

YES.

SENSEI!

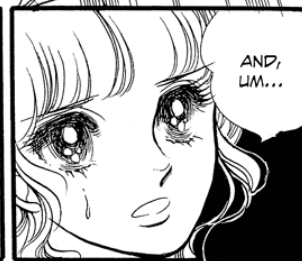
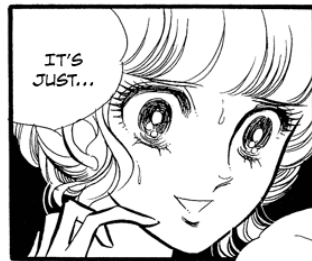
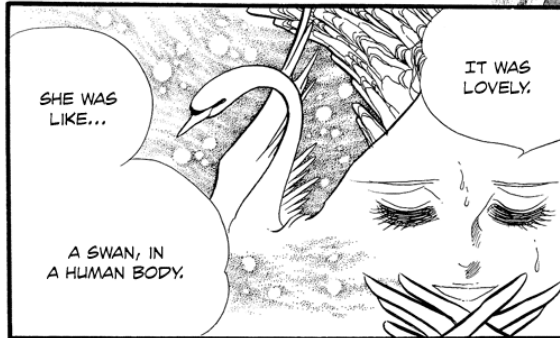
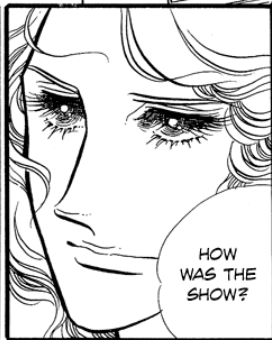
LET GO OF THE UPPER BODY. TENSE UP THE LOWER HALF.

AGAIN!

RELAX THE SHOULDERS.

HUFF...

HUFF...



THAT'S ALL
RIGHT, HIJIRI.
GOOD CATCH!

THANK
YOU VERY
MUCH!

OH,
SORRY!

YOU'RE
USING THIS
ROOM!

USE YOUR MIND,
AND IT WILL BENEFIT
YOUR DANCING!

YOU ALWAYS
LEARN MORE
WHEN YOU THINK!

EVEN THE
HALLWAY IS
COLD AT NIGHT...
GOTTA KEEP MY
LEGS WARM!

IT'S
FREEZING!

I'LL
REHEARSE
EARLY
TOMORROW...

SNOW!



IT'S LIKE BEING BACK HOME! IT ALWAYS SNOWS IN HOKKAIDO.

WOW!

IT'S THE FIRST I'VE EVER SEEN IN TOKYO!

SNOW! SNOW!

トトト...

SFX: Da da da ('Thump thump thump')



WHO COULD BE OUT ON THE ROOF IN THIS WEATHER... BESIDES ME?

HMM?

HAHA!

WHO ELSE WOULD BE THIS CRAZY?

SFX: Kacha (Click)

KUSAKABE-SAN AND AOI-SAN!

WHOA!

IF IT ISN'T MASUMI! WELCOME!

WELL...



YEAH...
ME, TOO!
SOMEONE HAS TO...

ENCHANTED BY THE SNOW?
IT REMINDS ME OF HOME!

KEEP THIS CRAZY GUY COMPANY!

I'M NO MATCH FOR KYOGOKU-SAN.

OH, ME? TERRIBLE!

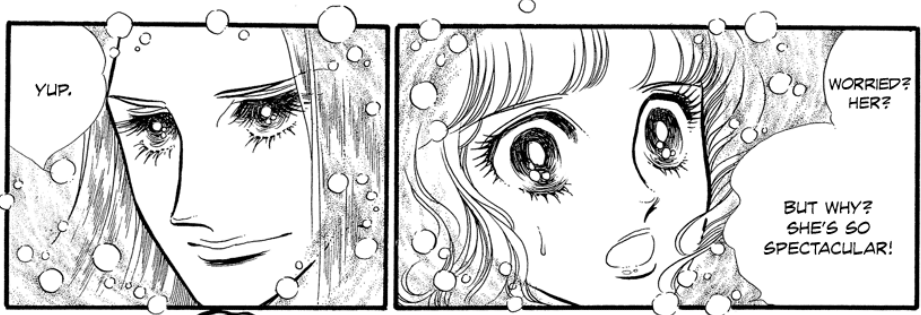
HOW ARE THINGS WITH YOU?

HER KIND OF TALENT IS RARE...
ESPECIALLY IN THE JAPANESE BALLET WORLD.

SHE REALLY STANDS APART.
APART?
PRINCESS SAYOKO ...

...

EVEN BY HER TEACHERS.
BEING AT THE TOP OF HER CLASS...
SHE'S BOTH RESPECTED AND ENVIED...
NOT EVEN THE BEST STUDENTS COULD SURPASS HER BEFORE.
BUT THAT'S WHY SHE'S WORRIED.



YUP.

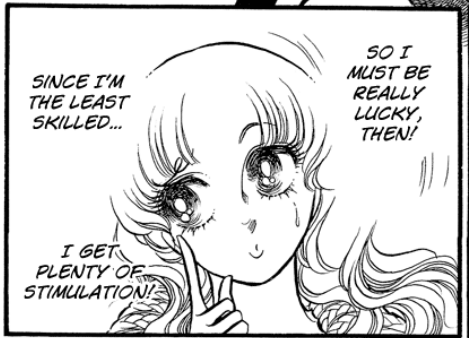
WORRIED?
HER?

BUT WHY?
SHE'S SO
SPECTACULAR!



HOWEVER,
HAVING NO ONE
THAT REALLY
CHALLENGES
YOU...

IS NOT THE
BLESSING IT
SEEMS TO BE.



SINCE I'M
THE LEAST
SKILLED...

SO I
MUST BE
REALLY
LUCKY,
THEN!

I GET
PLENTY OF
STIMULATION!

OH!

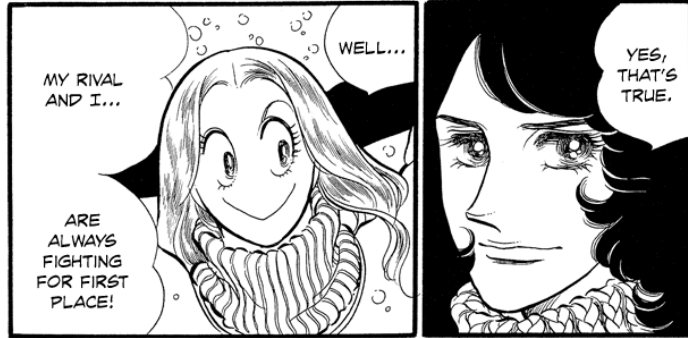


SOMEONE
WHO COULD
BE A THREAT TO
HER MUST HAVE
ENORMOUS
TALENT!

BUT...

YOU GET
COMPLACENT
AND STOP
GROWING.

BECAUSE
WITHOUT RIVALS
TO STIMULATE
YOU...



MY RIVAL
AND I...

WELL...

YES,
THAT'S
TRUE.

ARE
ALWAYS
FIGHTING
FOR FIRST
PLACE!



YEAH? WHO
WON FIRST PLACE
LAST TIME?

BUT YOU
GIVE ME A
RUN FOR MY
MONEY!

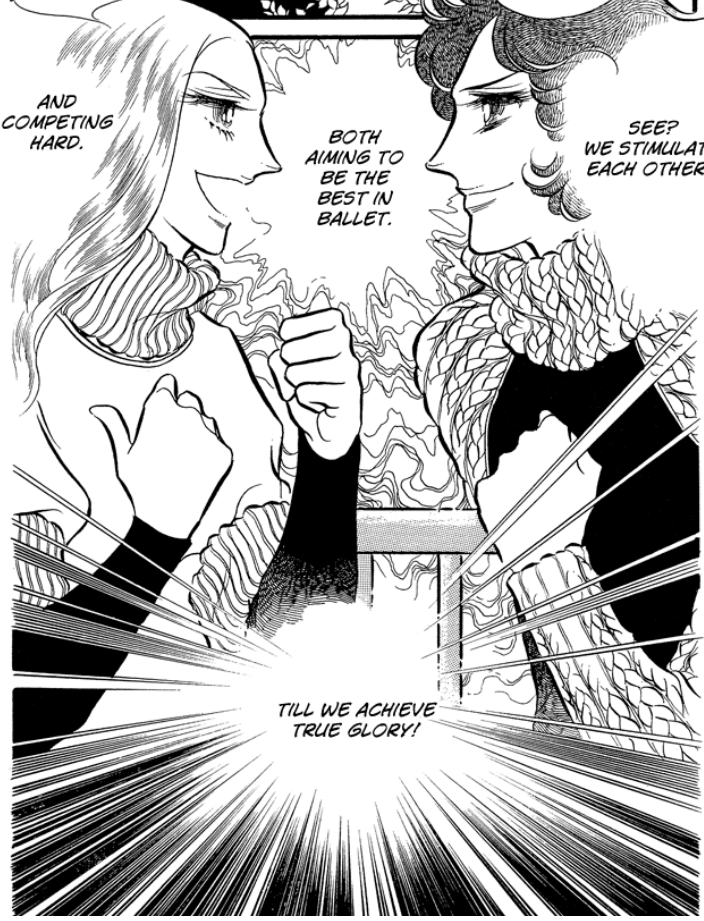
THERE AREN'T
MANY OTHER
GUYS AT THE
TOP OF BALLET
IN JAPAN.

YEAH.

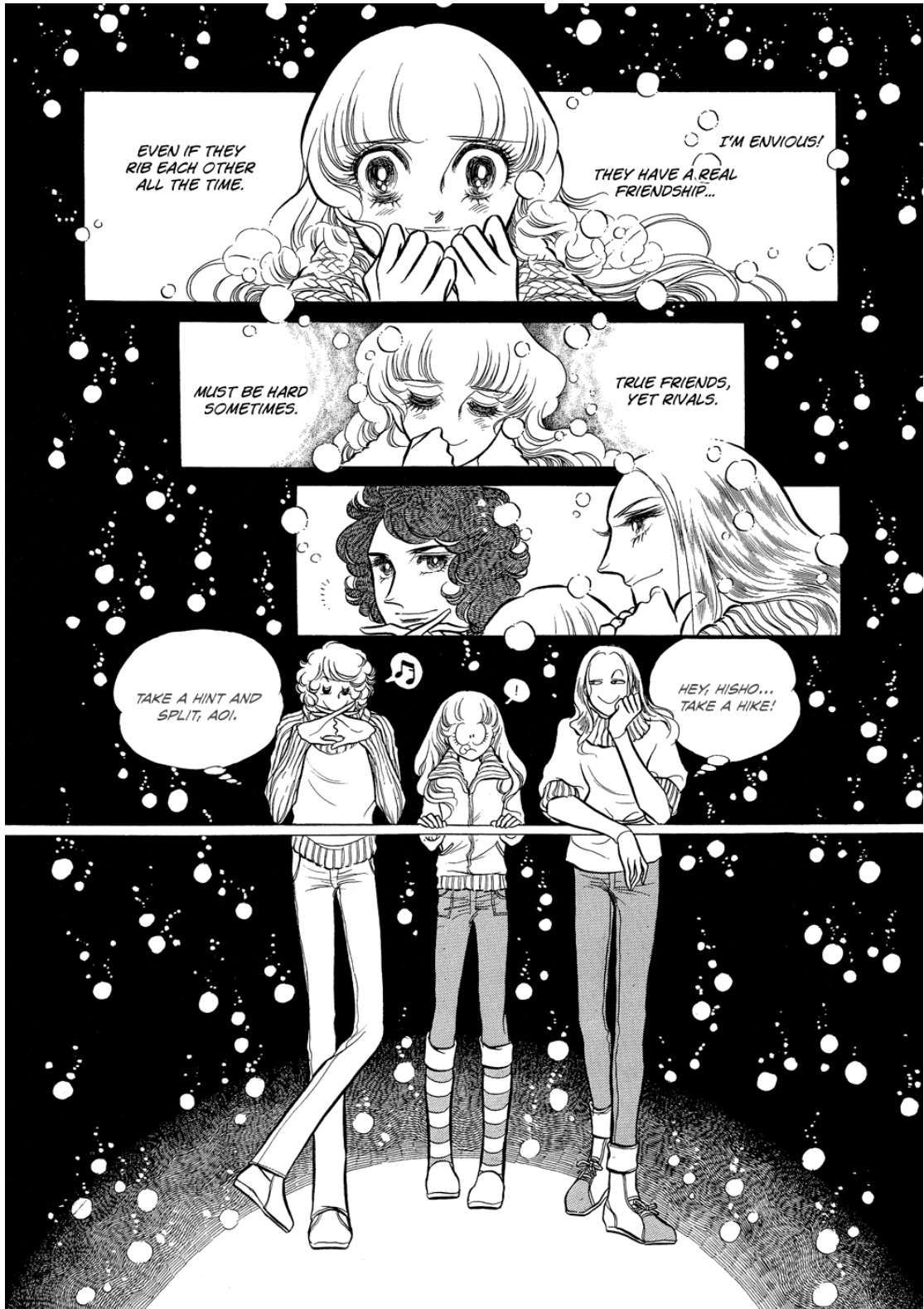
AND
COMPETING
HARD.

BOTH
AIMING TO
BE THE
BEST IN
BALLET.

SEE?
WE STIMULATE
EACH OTHER...



TILL WE ACHIEVE
TRUE GLORY!





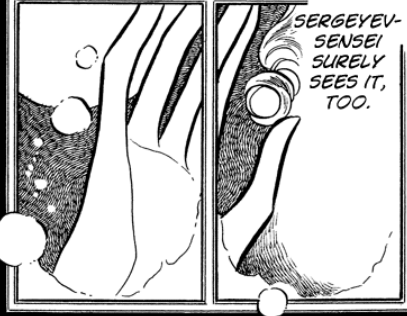
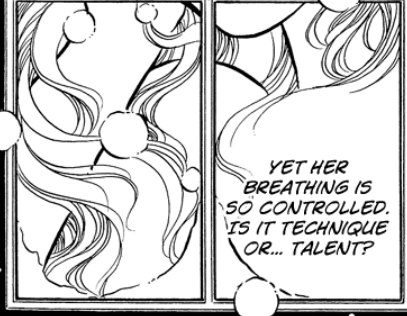
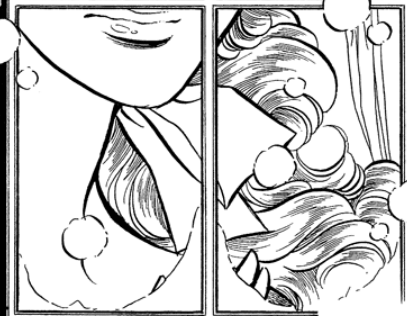
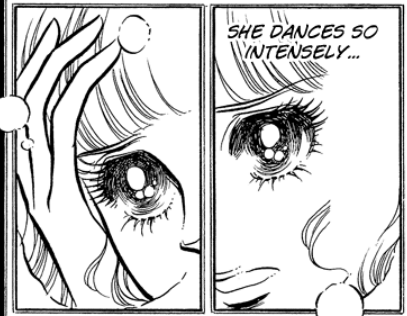
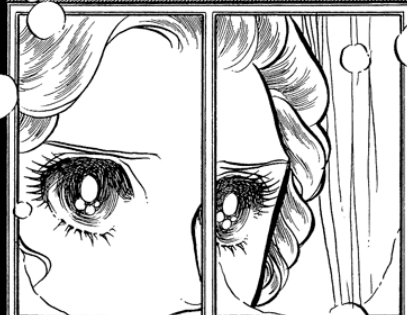
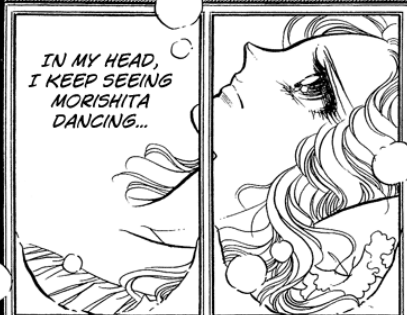
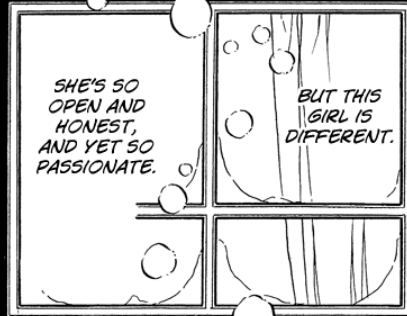


Irina
Kolpakova
in *The
Sleeping
Beauty*

A/V
Room

WERE A
REAL THREAT
IN THE
PAST.

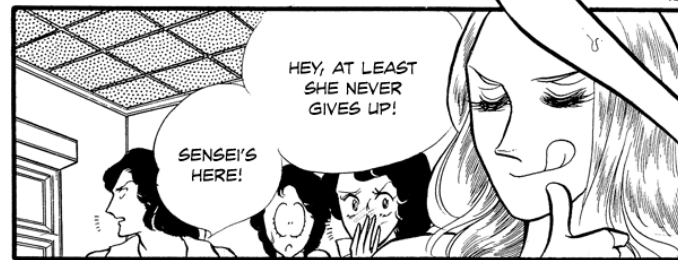
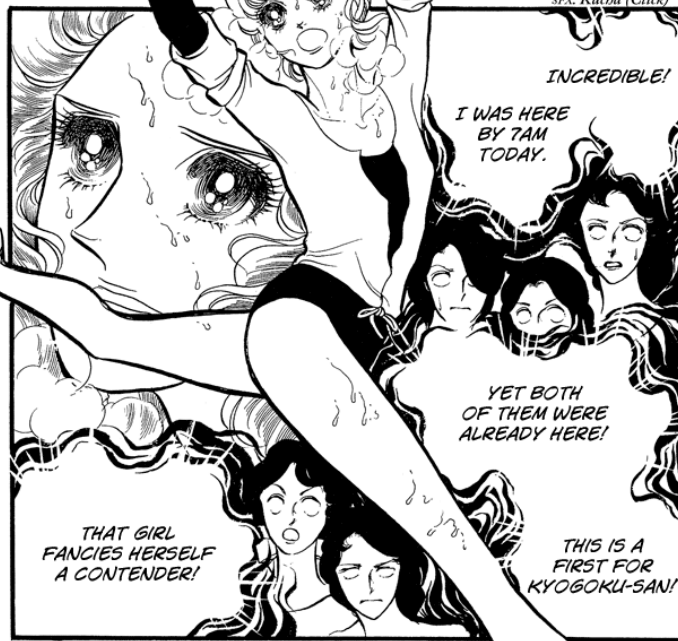
NONE
OF MY
POTENTIAL
RIVALS...





see: Chuu-dan (Chop, chop)

see: Kaba (Click)



SERGEYEV-SENSEI WILL PARTNER WITH BOTH HIJIRI AND KYOGOKU IN THE GRAND PAS DE DEUX.

TODAY IS THE FINAL AUDITION FOR PRINCESS AURORA.

PARTNERING WITH SENSEI!

THANK YOU, SIR!

MY HEART IS POUNDING!

GEEZ... I'M A BUNDLE OF NERVES!

SFX: Doki doki doki (Ba-thump ba-thump ba-thump)

YES!

HIJIRI MASUMI, COME TO THE CENTER.

WINNING MEANS GOING TO MOSCOW!

CALM DOWN!
MUSTN'T GET NERVOUS!