

IF ONE OF MY
TRAINEES WERE
ABLE TO PERFORM
"THE CRIMSON
GODDESS", I
WOULDN'T HAVE
REGRETS ABOUT
DYING...

IT'S TRUE
THAT IT'S ALL
MINE...



ALTHOUGH IT
IS NOT
RELATED..

I THINK IT HAS
SOMETHING TO DO
WITH THE RIVALS
OF TSUKIKAGE
ACTING SCHOOL

RIGHT NOW
THEY WILL DO
ANYTHING TO
DESTROY US

THEY ARE
ALSO THE
ENEMY
OF MR.
AOYAGI



THAT SLANDER
WILL ONLY
STAY FOR
ONE DAY!

THE RUMORS
WILL BE
OVER



HAYAMI
MASUMI...

THE ART
DIRECTOR?



HOW ARE
YOU
FEELING,
SENSEI?

CREAK



DON'T
WORRY. I'M
FINE

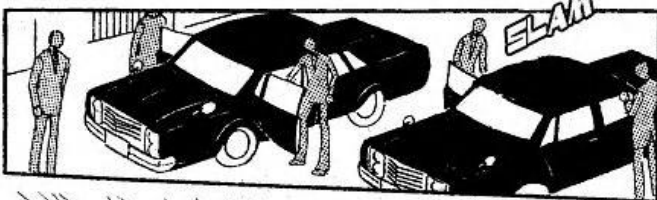


TRY NOT TO
THINK ABOUT
THE ARTICLE

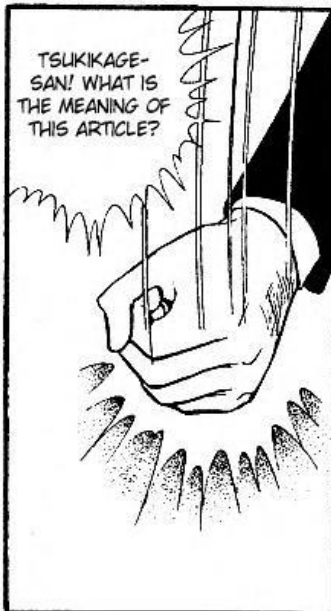
HAYAMI
MASUMI

BRIBED
THE CRITICS
TO WRITE IT

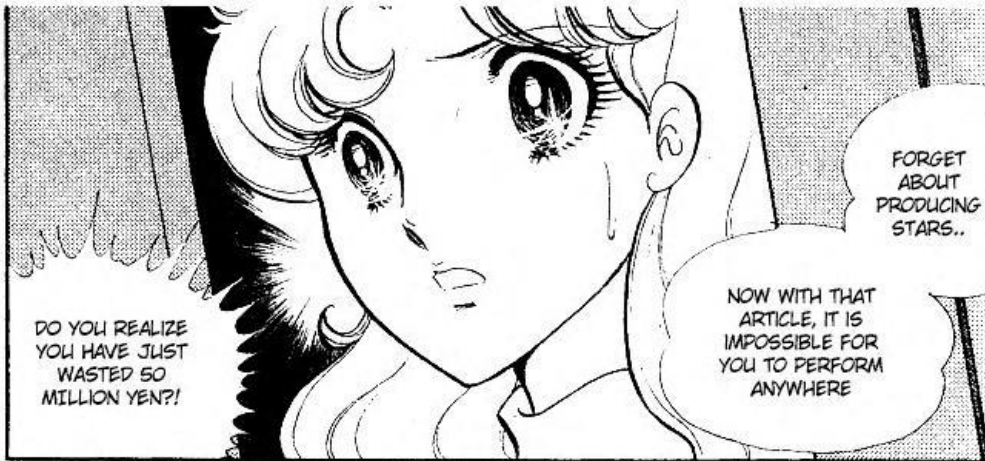
YOUR PERFOR-
MANCE WAS
GREAT











DO YOU REALIZE YOU HAVE JUST WASTED 50 MILLION YEN?!

NOW WITH THAT ARTICLE, IT IS IMPOSSIBLE FOR YOU TO PERFORM ANYWHERE

FORGET ABOUT PRODUCING STARS..



ONLY THEATRES AND STUDIOS MAY ENTER

FIRST, YOU HAVE TO COMPETE IN TOKYO

IF YOU WIN, YOU HAVE TO COMPETE WITH THE WINNERS FROM THE OTHER REGIONS

THAT'S HOW IT IS



IF THIS THEATRE BECOMES A FAVORITE IN THAT FESTIVAL, IT WILL BE FAMOUS

IT WILL GET MANY INVITATIONS FROM VARIOUS THEATRES

ALSO, THE PLAYS OF THE FIRST, SECOND, AND THIRD PLACE WINNERS WILL BE BROADCASTED ON TV

THEY TOO WILL HAVE THE CHANCE TO BE FAMOUS



SO, WHAT DO YOU WANT?



TSUKIKAGESAN, HAVE YOU HEARD OF THE DRAMA COMPETITION?

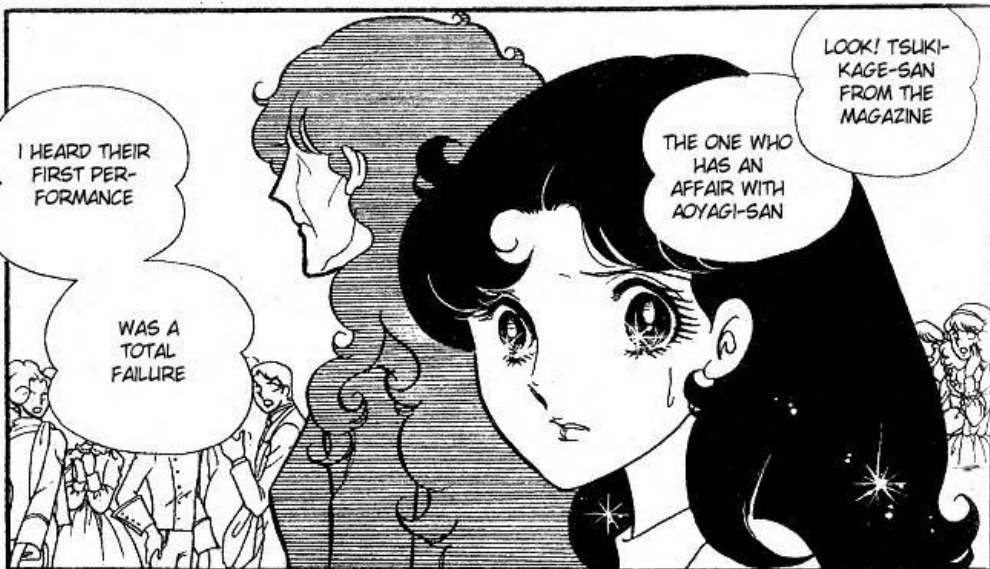
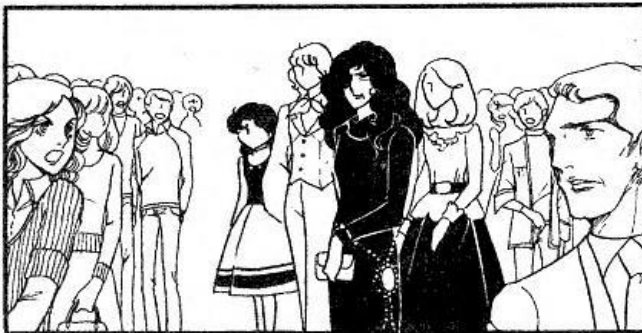
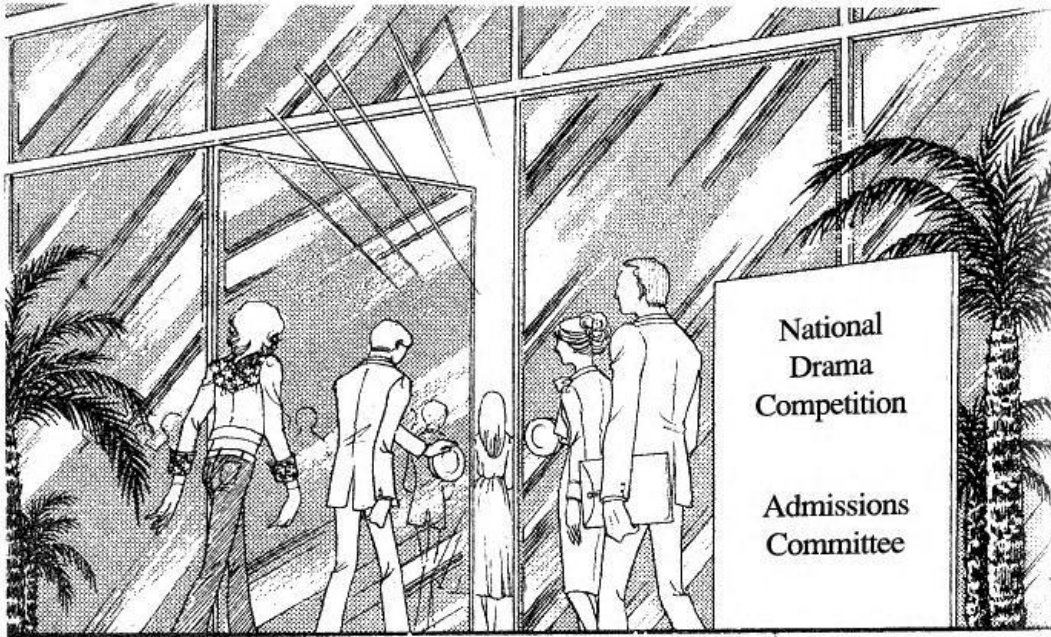


DRAMA COMPETITION?

IT IS SPONSORED BY THE NATIONAL FILM ASSOCIATION

A NATIONAL DRAMA COMPETITION WILL BE HELD NEXT SPRING FOR THREE DAYS

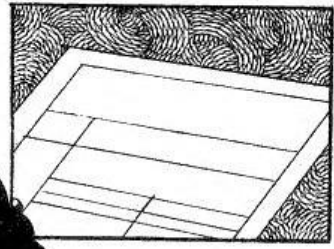






DAMN THAT ARTICLE!

IT'S BETTER NOT TO ENTER THAN TO FAIL AGAIN



WOAH

THIS MAKES ME WANT TO WATCH THEIR PLAY

THEY ARE ENTERING THE COMPETITION!



OH!

TSUKI-KAGE-SAN?



YOU BETTER WAIT IN THE CAR



PLEASE COME BACK IN TWO WEEKS





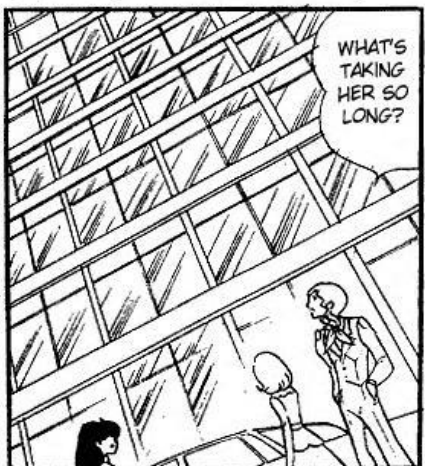
WHAT A
COINCIDENCE

I DON'T
WANT TO
SEE YOU

TSUKIKAGE-SAN
IS PARTICIPATING
IN THIS TOURNA-
MENT

HA HA!
WHAT AN
ATTITUDE

EH?



WHAT'S
TAKING
HER SO
LONG?



STOP
WITH
THE
SWEET
TALK!

YOU ARE THE
ONES WHO
WROTE THAT
ARTICLE!



TRY YOUR
BEST NOT
TO FAIL





THEY READ AND SEE THE CRITICISM

THE MASS MEDIA IS ALWAYS THE TRUTH

THE PUBLIC IS GREATLY INFLUENCED BY IT

HA HA

ANYTHING CAN HAPPEN!

YOU SHOULD KNOW THAT IF YOU GO AGAINST DAITO COMPANY

HUH? THAT GIRL WHO WAS ON THE STAGE BEFORE...



I DIDN'T WANT
HER TO HEAR
THIS CONVER-
SATION!



I CAME
TO PICK
YOU UP,
SENSEI...
SINCE
YOU
TOOK A
WHILE..

MA-
YA...

I DIDN'T WANT
THIS CHILD TO
HEAR IT!







A TREASURE?

PLEASE GIVE IT BACK

IT'S MY TREASURE



BUT I'M REALLY HAPPY...

AFTER THE PERFORMANCE, I GOT A BOUQUET OF PURPLE ROSES

FROM A FAN...

IT IS WEIRD, RIGHT?

THIS IS THE FIRST TIME..

IT GIVES ME MORE COURAGE

SO YOU TREASURE THIS PETAL AS A REMINDER?





YOU SHOULD KNOW THAT IF YOU GO AGAINST THE DAITO COMPANY

ANYTHING CAN HAPPEN

HOW AWFUL!

TO SAY THINGS LIKE THAT!

HOW MEAN!

HE WROTE THAT ARTICLE!

HE'S A WICKED PERSON WHO WILL DO ANYTHING FOR HIS JOB

NOW I UNDERSTAND

HAYAMI MASUMI FROM DAITO COMPANY AND ONODERA HAJIME, THE DIRECTOR OF LINDINE THEATER, ARE THE TWO WE HATE MOST

*note from luchs: fji, daito company is a large corporation that owns many establishments, including the undine theater



WHATEVER
HAPPENS, WE
WILL KEEP
OUR SPIRITS
UP

WE
WON'T
LOSE..



THEY CAN
OBSTRUCT US
AS THEY LIKE

WE
WON'T
LOSE!

NO STORM
CAN DESTROY
US!



KITAJIMA
MAYA AS
THE MAIN
CHARAC-
TER,
MIDORI!



CHATTER

CHATTER



LET ME INTRO-
DUCE THE
ACTORS FOR
THE NATIONAL
DRAMA COMPE-
TITION!

THE TITLE
IS
"GROWING
UP"

AND THE
ACTORS
ARE...



SENSEI.. I REALLY... CAN'T..

DO IT

ESPECIALLY FOR A BIG EVENT LIKE THIS



MORI-KAWA AKIRA AS "SHIN-YO."

WAIT A MINUTE!



ME? AS...

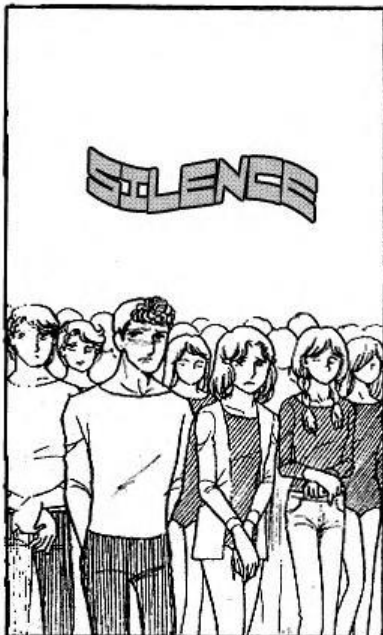
THE MAIN CHARACTER?



ZUM-TUM



THAT'S EXACTLY WHY SHE CHOSE YOU



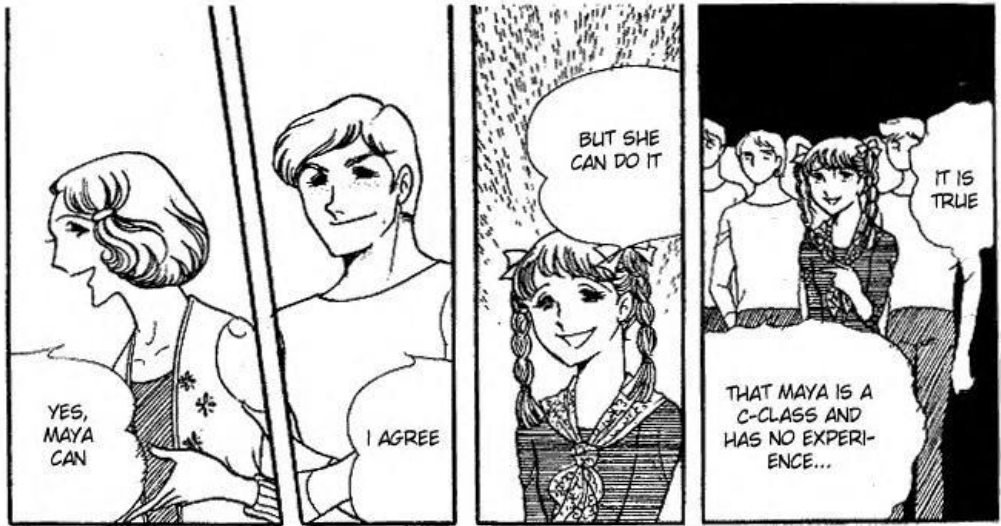
SILENCE



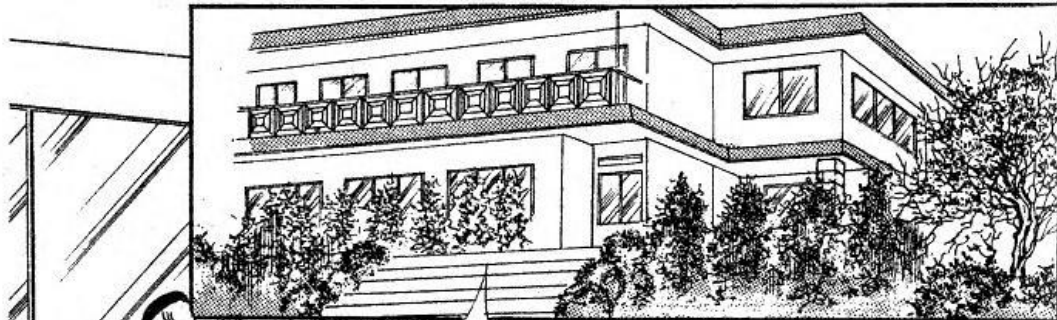
ANYONE HAS ANY OBJECTIONS?



BUT, I'M A C CLASS AND NOT EXPERIENCED!











A PART IN
"GROWING
UP"...

WHATEVER
HAPPENS, WE
CAN'T LOSE....

I ONLY HAVE
THIS PATH..

ONLY IN
THEATER!



"GROWING UP" IS A STORY DURING THE EDO ERA, IN THE BEGINNING OF YOSHIBARA MEIJI TIME

THERE WERE TWO CLASSMATES WHO WERE OF DIFFERENT SOCIAL CLASSES, ONE BELONGED TO THE UPPER, THE OTHER TO THE LOWER. THE TWO SOCIAL CLASSES DID NOT GET ALONG

MIDORI, 14 YEARS OLD, WAS A BEAUTIFUL, YET STUBBORN GIRL. HER OLDER SISTER, OIRAN TAMAKI, WAS A FAMOUS GEISHA IN EDO

SHE HAD POWER, WEALTH, AND MANY NOBLE FRIENDS

RYOGE SHINYO, 15 YEARS OLD, QUIET AND SMART. HE WAS THE SON OF RYOGE TEMPLE'S PRIEST

CHOKICHI, 16 YEARS OLD, THE SON OF A YAKUZA BOSS

SHOTA, 13 YEARS OLD, ONE OF MIDORI'S FRIENDS. HIS FAMILY WORKS AS MONEY LENDERS. HE WAS WELL KNOWN BECAUSE OF HIS GOOD LOOKS



DURING THE NIGHT OF SUMMER FESTIVAL, CHOKICHI WHO WAS IN A FIGHT SUDDENLY THREW HIS SANDALS AT CHIDORI WHO JUST ENTERED THE PLACE

TAKE THIS!
YOU'RE TRASH, JUST LIKE YOUR SISTER!



(BOTH)
I HATE THIS TYPE OF PERSON!

THEY THINK THEY'VE GOT EVERYTHING

(CHOKICHI)
TRASHY GEISHA GIRLS..

(MIDORI)
HE'S SHINYO'S FRIEND..
THEY THINK ALIKE



IF THEIR EYES MET, HE WOULD ALWAYS TURN HIS HEAD AWAY. HE WOULD ALWAYS AVOID HER

MIDORI AND SHINYO WENT TO THE SAME SCHOOL...

SHINYO WAS NEVER FRIENDLY WITH MIDORI

SHINYO, WHY ARE YOU SO COLD? DO YOU HATE ME..?



MIDORI WAS ABOUT TO HELP, BUT WHEN SHE PEEKED FROM THE FRONT DOOR, SHE FOUND SHINYO..

ON ONE RAINY DAY, A MAN STOPPED IN FRONT OF MIDORI'S HOUSE TO FIX HIS BROKEN SANDAL

AFTER THE FESTIVAL, MIDORI ALWAYS GRUMBLED WHENEVER HER FRIENDS MENTIONED SHINYO

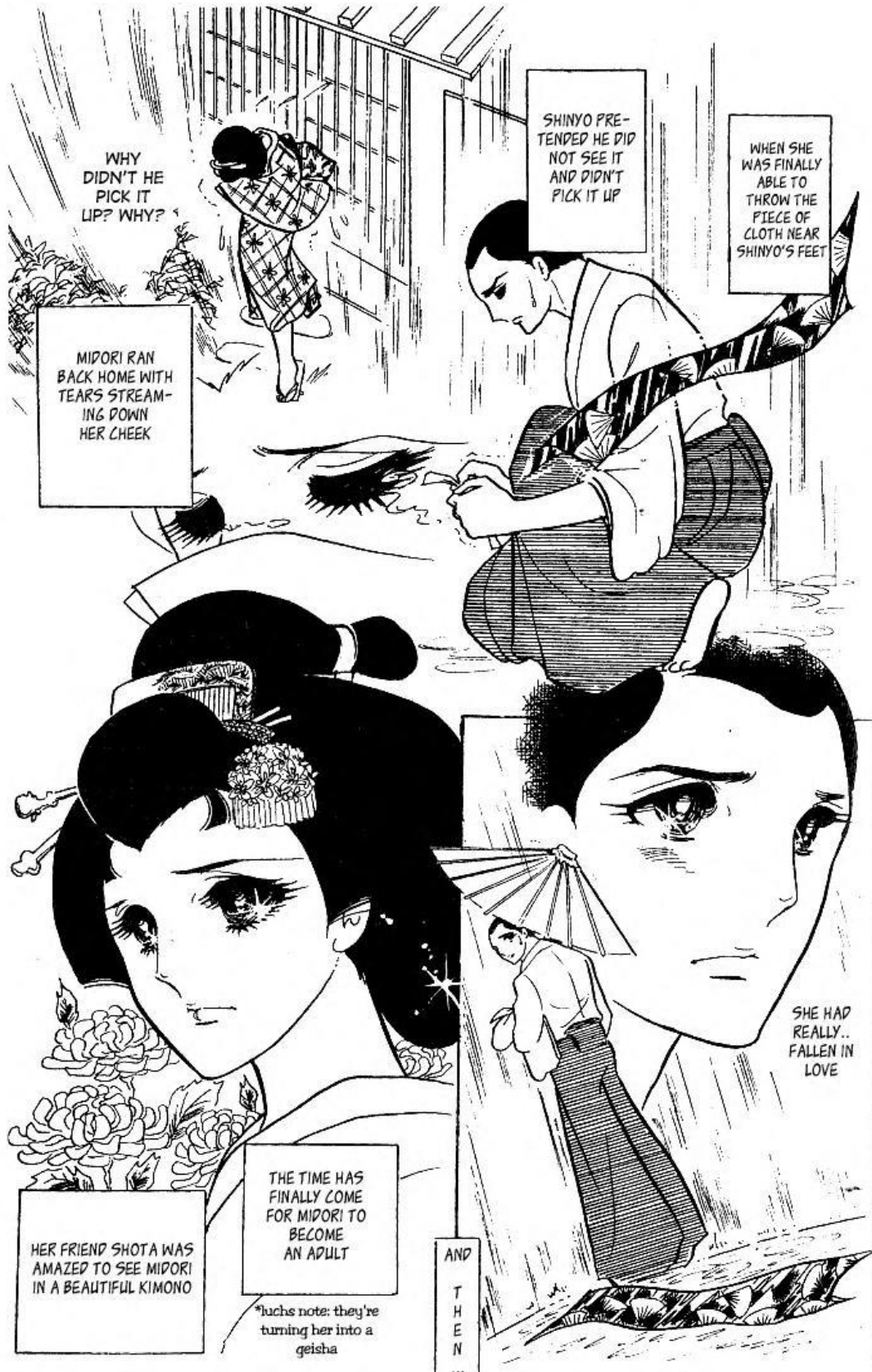
SHE DESPERATELY WANTED TO GIVE HIM A PIECE OF CLOTH, YET HER FEET WOULDN'T MOVE AND HER LIPS WERE SHUT

SHE COULD ONLY STARE AT HIM

SHINYO WHO NEVER DID ANYTHING AFTER ALL THE HORRIBLE THINGS SHE SAID ABOUT HIM DURING THE SUMMER FESTIVAL..

THE STUBBORN MIDORI COULD ONLY STAND MOTIONLESS UNDER THE RAIN

SHINYO'S HANDS WERE FIDDLING, TRYING TO MAKE A KNOT



WHY DIDN'T HE PICK IT UP? WHY?

SHINYO PRE-
TENDED HE DID
NOT SEE IT
AND DIDN'T
PICK IT UP

WHEN SHE
WAS FINALLY
ABLE TO
THROW THE
PIECE OF
CLOTH NEAR
SHINYO'S FEET

MIDORI RAN
BACK HOME WITH
TEARS STREAM-
ING DOWN
HER CHEEK

HER FRIEND SHOTA WAS
AMAZED TO SEE MIDORI
IN A BEAUTIFUL KIMONO

THE TIME HAS
FINALLY COME
FOR MIDORI TO
BECOME
AN ADULT

*luchs note: they're
turning her into a
geisha

AND
T
H
E
N
...

SHE HAD
REALLY..
FALLEN IN
LOVE



I WANT TO GO
BACK TO MY
CHILDHOOD!

I WANT TO GO
BACK, EVEN IF IT'S
ONLY SEVEN
MONTHS, TEN
MONTHS, OR A
YEAR

WHAT WILL HAPPEN
IF YOU KEEP
PLAYING WITH
DOLLS?

NO! I DON'T
WANT TO BE
A WOMAN!
WHY DO WE
HAVE TO
GROW UP?



AFTER THAT DAY, MIDORI
NEVER HUNG AROUND
WITH HER FRIENDS
ANYMORE. SHE BECAME
QUIET



SOMEHOW,
MIDORI FELT A
DEEP LONGING
FROM
WITHIN

ON A FOGGY MORNING,
ON THE FRONT DOOR
OF MIDORI'S HOUSE,
THERE WAS A
BOUQUET OF SUISEN*
FLOWERS

*suisen =
daffodil

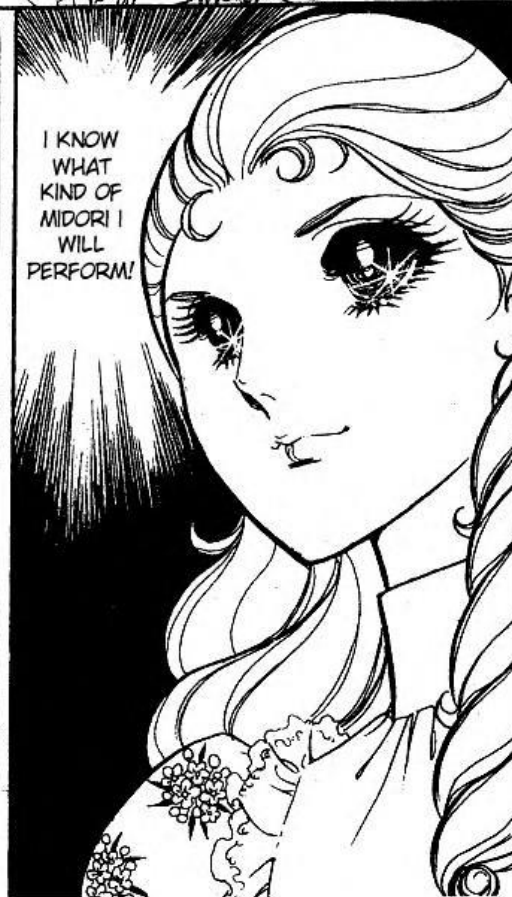
SHE FELT
PAIN IN
HER
HEART

WHO DID
THIS?

THAT MORNING,
SHINYO LEFT ON A
DISTANT
JOURNEY..









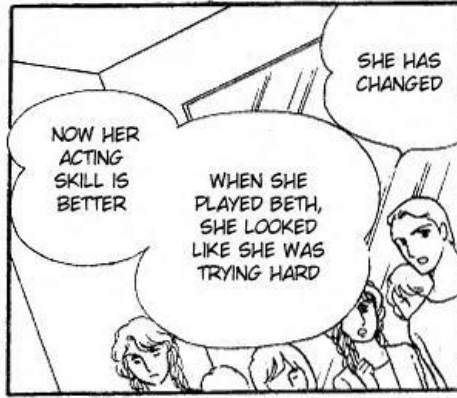
OR OUR FAVORITE PENS AND TOYS FROM THE STORE?

WILL YOU BUY US THIS BALL?



YES! LET'S BUILD SOMETHING, MIDORI!!

HEY, ON THE 20TH THERE WILL BE A FESTIVAL. HOW ABOUT IF WE COME UP WITH SOMETHING, MIDORI?



SHE HAS CHANGED

NOW HER ACTING SKILL IS BETTER

WHEN SHE PLAYED BETH, SHE LOOKED LIKE SHE WAS TRYING HARD



TAKE 3 STEPS FORWARD, ACT LIKE YOU ARE THINKING OF SOMETHING

MAYA, WRONG NUMBER OF STEPS!

ONE MORE TIME!



YES, LET'S MAKE PEOPLE HAPPY

COUNT ME IN! HOW MUCH...

WHAT-EVER IDEA YOU COME UP WITH...



IN HERE, TILT YAMAMOTO'S HEAD MORE, AS IF HE'S TRYING TO CATCH A GLIMPSE OF MIDORI'S FACE!



