

I DON'T EVEN KNOW WHY I GOT AN INVITATION IN THE FIRST PLACE!

NO! I SHOULDN'T EVEN BE HERE!



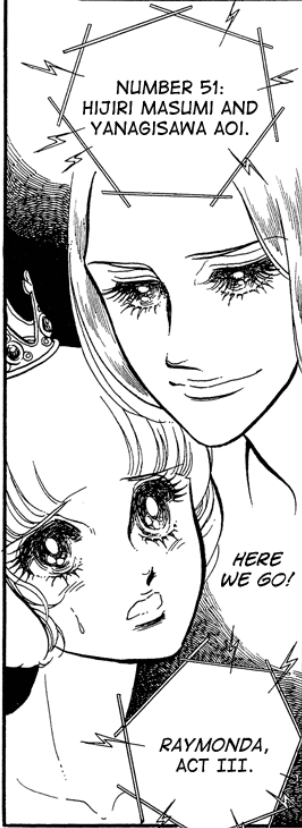
WHAT IF I... FAIL AGAIN LIKE IN REHEARSAL?

THE BEST DANCERS IN JAPAN ARE HERE!



MASUMI-CHAN, WE'RE UP NEXT.

I'M SO SCARED!



NUMBER 51: HIJIRI MASUMI AND YANAGISAWA AOI.

HERE WE GO!

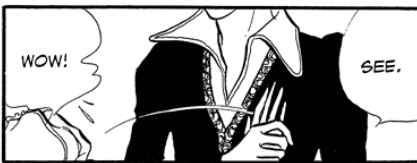
RAYMONDA, ACT III.



EVEN YOU, AOI-SAN!?

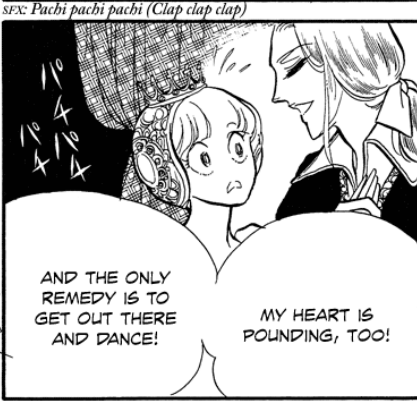
WE'RE ALL SCARED, EVEN ME.

YOU'LL BE FINE.



WOW!

SEE.



AND THE ONLY REMEDY IS TO GET OUT THERE AND DANCE!

MY HEART IS POUNDING, TOO!





AND JUST DANCE LIKE I DO BACK AT HOME...

I'VE GOT TO STOP THINKING SO MUCH...

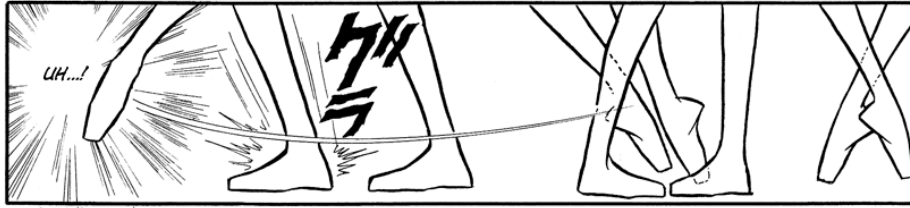


YES... THAT'S IT!



NEXT IS THE PAS GLISSADE INTO THE GRAND JETÉ...

SFX: Goku... (Gulp...)



SFX: Gura (Stumble)





セクシー

SEX: Gura gura gura (Wobble wobble wobble)

Oh...!

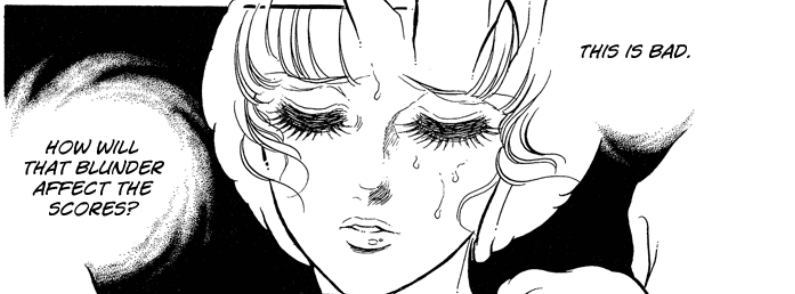
GOOD!
NICE
RECOVERY!



IN ANY CASE...

THANK GOODNESS! AT LEAST SHE DIDN'T FALL OVER.

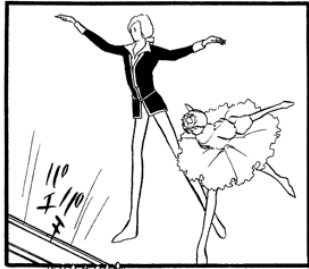
HOW DID SHE MANAGE TO PULL IT OFF?



THIS IS BAD.

HOW WILL THAT BLUNDER AFFECT THE SCORES?



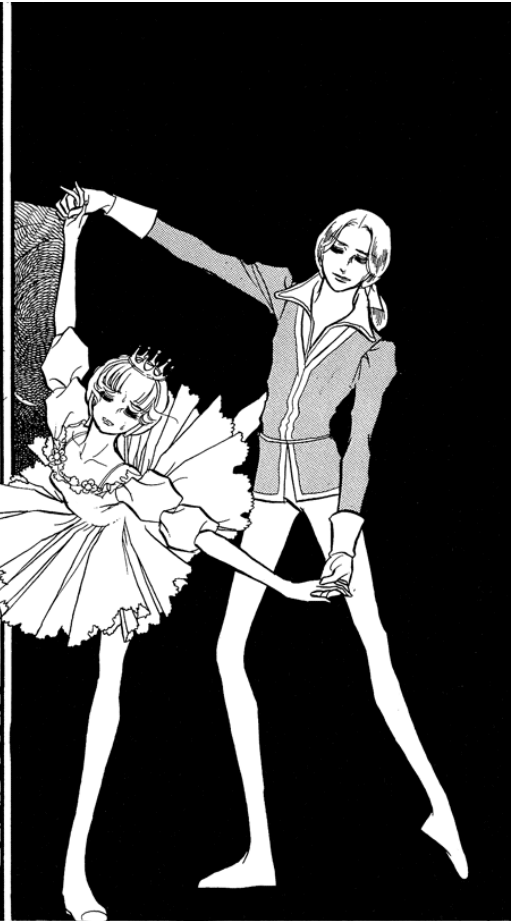


SFX: Pachi pachi (Clap clap)

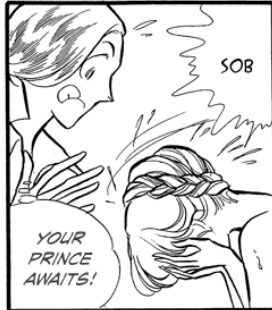


IT'S NOT OVER... YET.

HAVE TO... KEEP GOING... TO THE END.

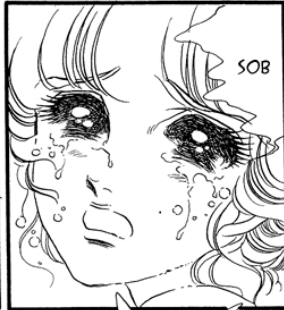


SFX: Biku (Flinch)

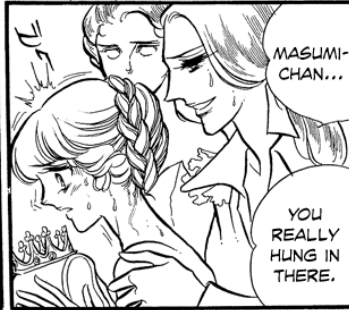


SOB

YOUR PRINCE AWAITS!



SOB



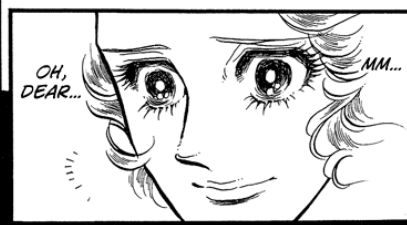
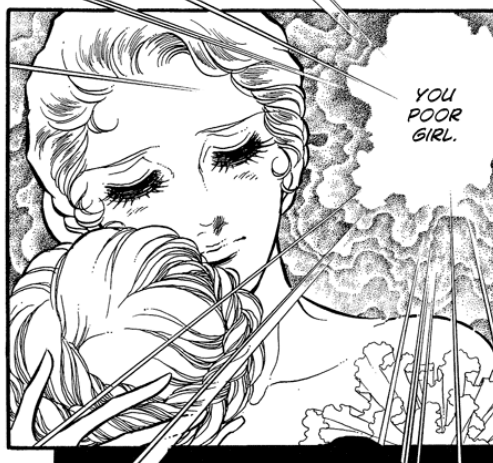
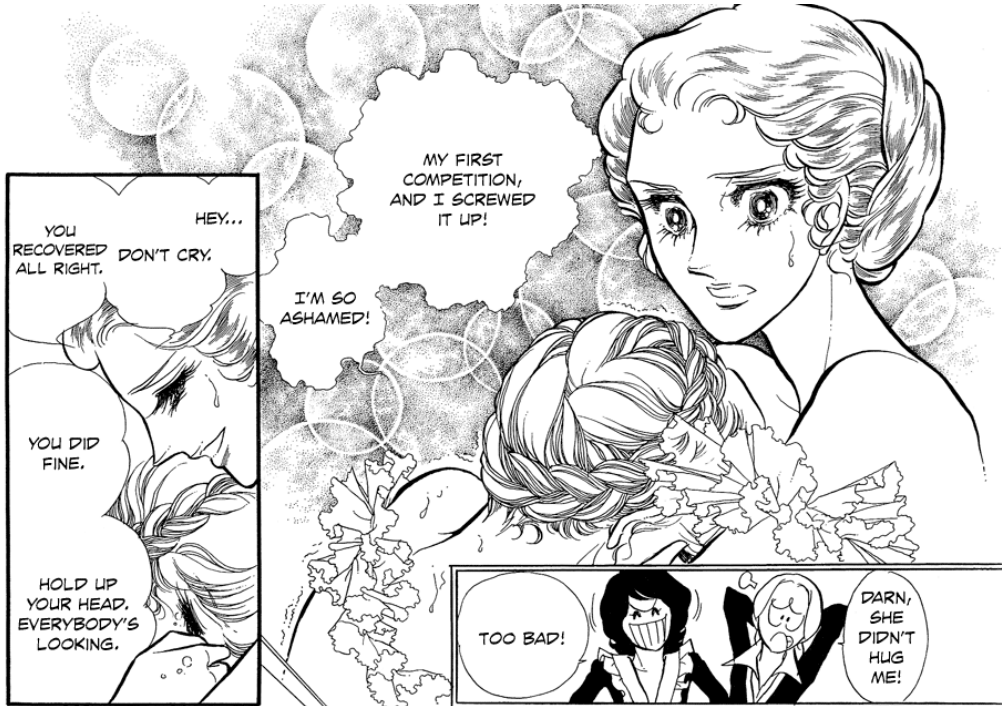
MASUMI-CHAN...

YOU REALLY HUNG IN THERE.



WAAHHH!!

WHAT THE...





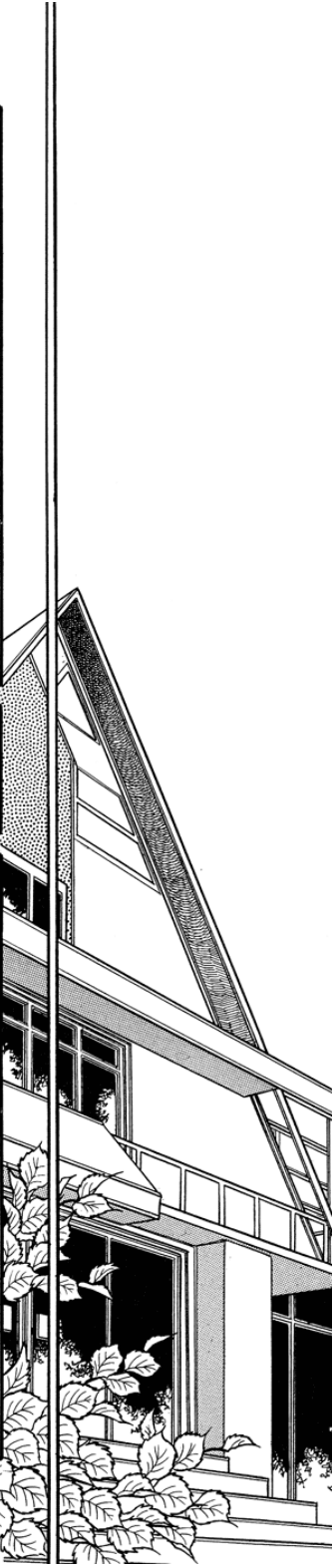
SEX: Kacha (Click)

PRACTICING FOR ROUND 2.

I'VE PROBABLY FAILED ROUND 1.

HOW SILLY OF ME...

PHEW...



I DON'T HAVE THE GRACE OR TALENT OF KYOGOKU-SAN.

BESIDES...

NO WONDER I SCREW UP.

Heh heh.

I JUST DANCE BECAUSE I LOVE IT.

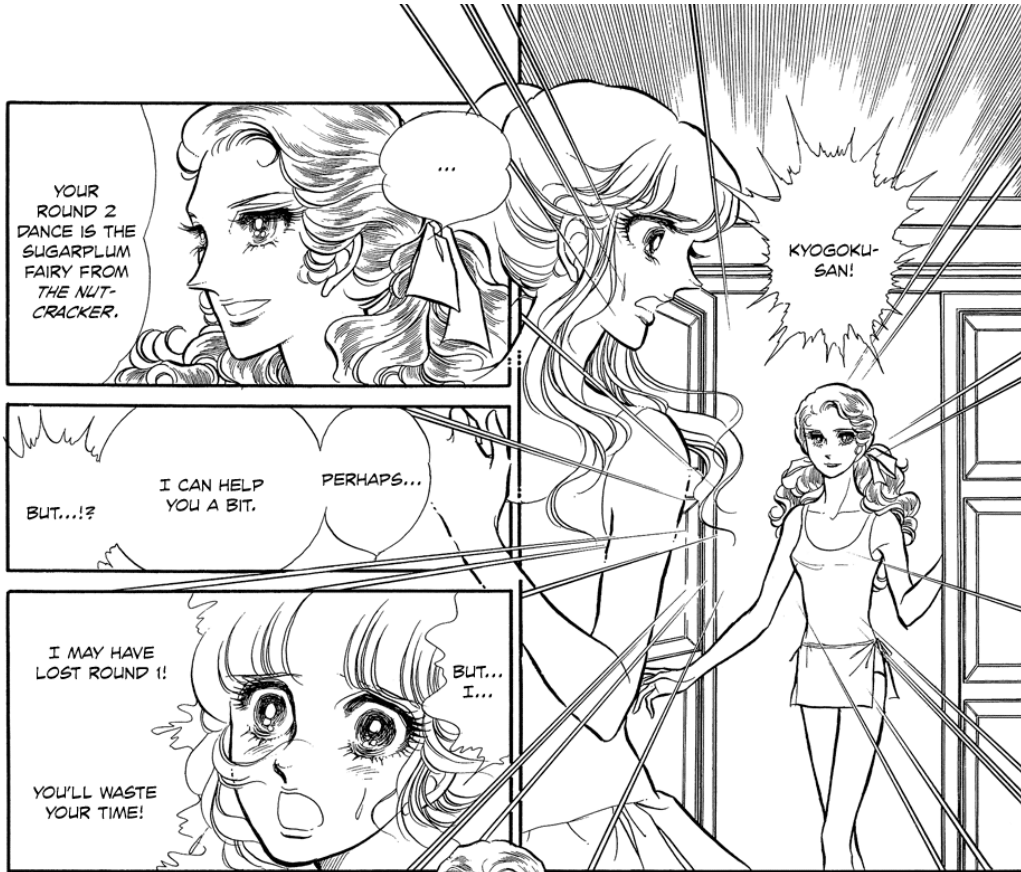
NO! NO TIME FOR SELF-PITY... GOTTA PRACTICE!

IN HOKKAIDO, THERE AREN'T ENOUGH MALE DANCERS.

SWING THE UPPER BODY FORWARD PAST THE LINE OF THE ANKLE.

THIS IS WHERE I NEED MORE WEIGHT ON THE LEFT LEG FOR STABILITY...

Grand jeté
(Preparation)



YOUR ROUND 2 DANCE IS THE SUGARPLUM FAIRY FROM THE NUT-CRACKER.

...

KYOGOKU-SAN!

BUT...!?

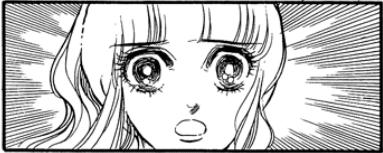
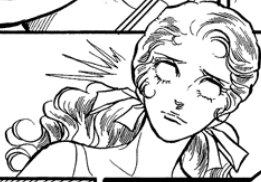
I CAN HELP YOU A BIT.

PERHAPS...

I MAY HAVE LOST ROUND !!

BUT... I...

YOU'LL WASTE YOUR TIME!



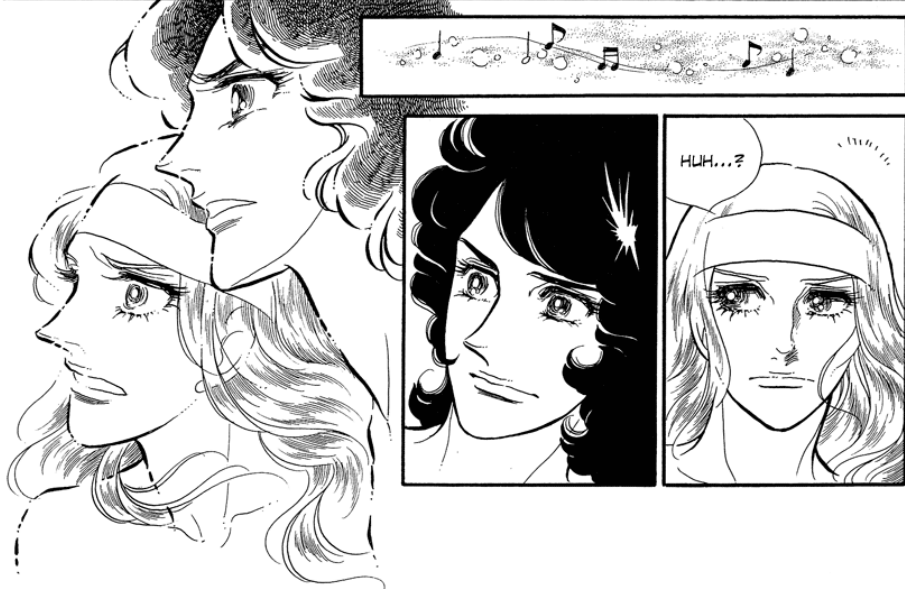
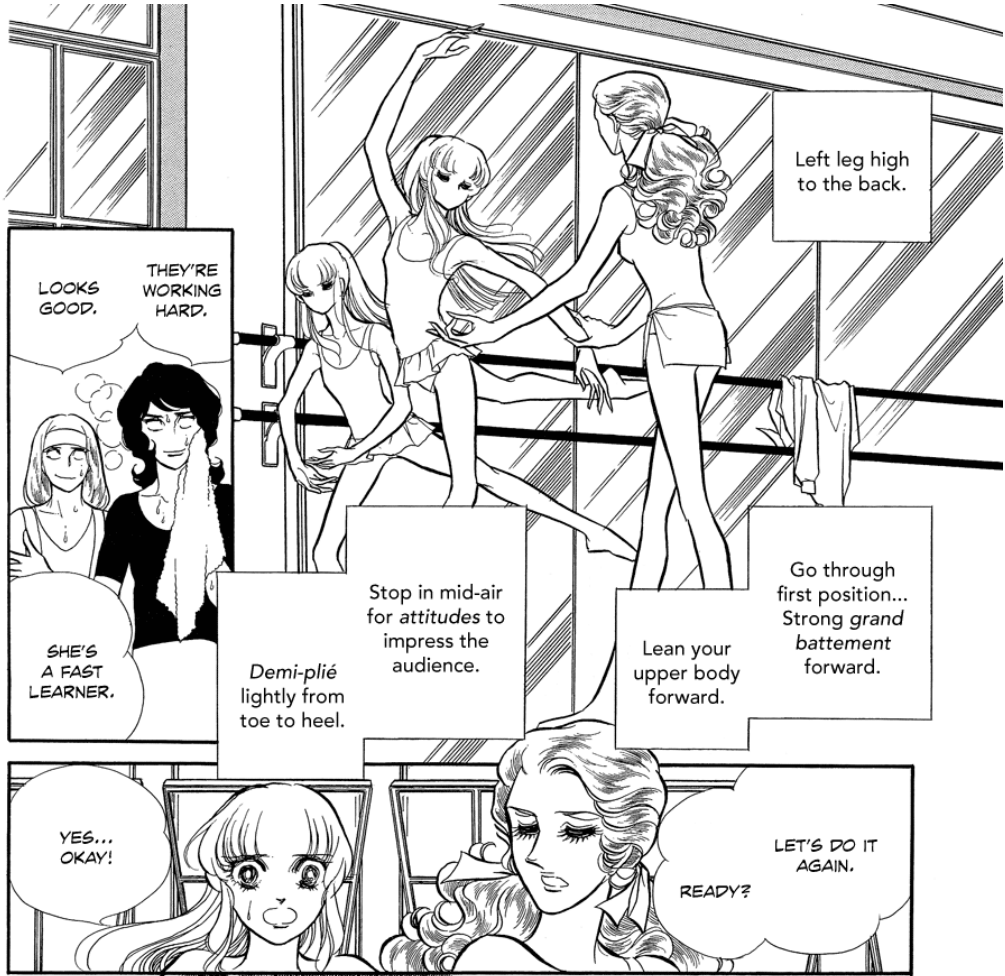
YES! THAT'S RIGHT!

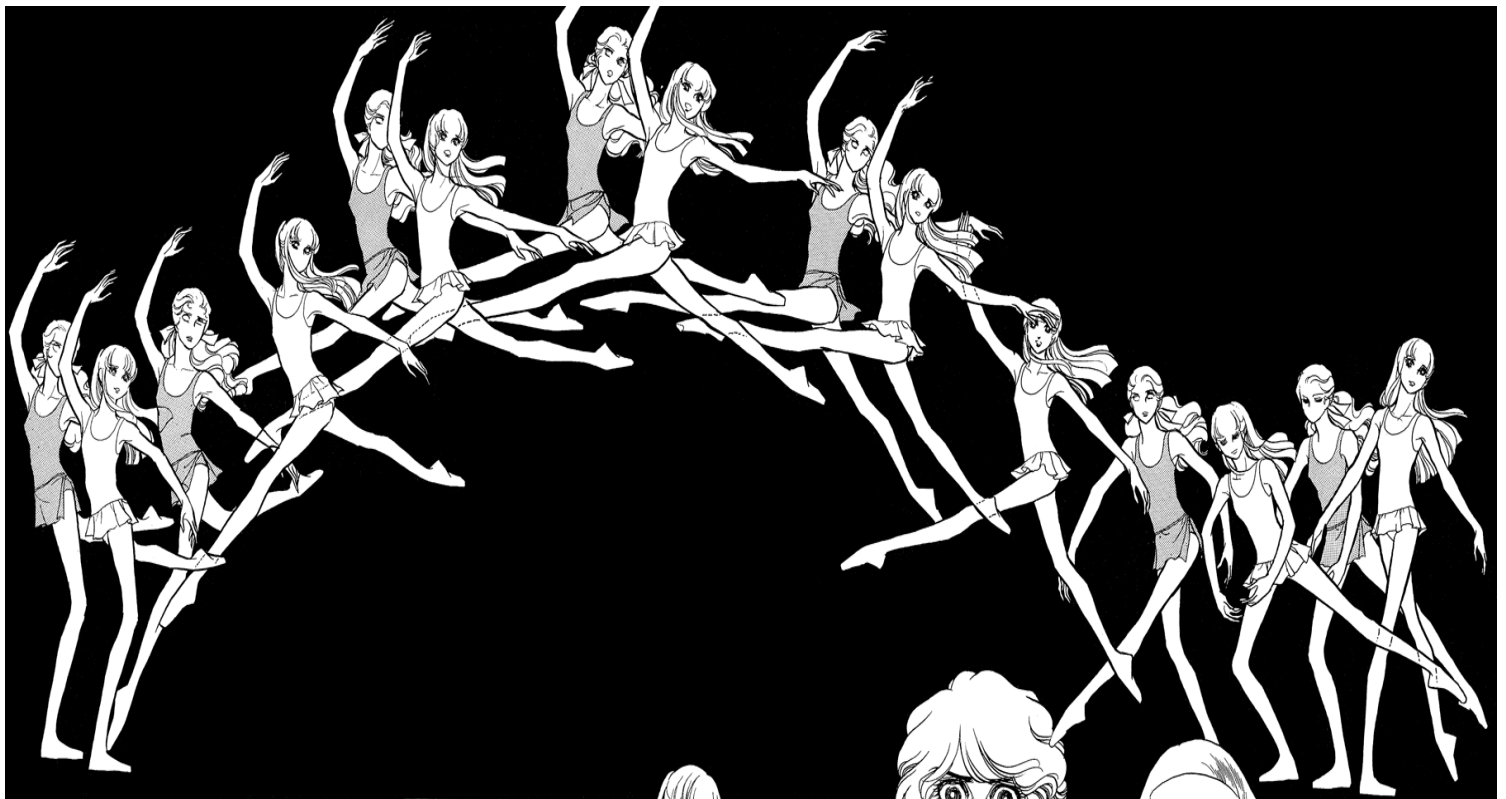
YES...

YOU DON'T KNOW THAT YET.

PRACTICE IS NEVER A WASTE OF TIME.

AND EVEN IF THAT'S SO...





POOR TRAINING IS TO BLAME FOR YESTERDAY.

SHE'S REALLY SOMETHING!

MASUMI SURE LEARNS QUICKLY!



THEN ONCE SHE HAS THE RIGHT TEACHER...

MAYBE ...

SHE ABSORBS EVERYTHING!

SHE WASN'T UNSTABLE TODAY.

NOT MANY CAN DO THAT!

AFTER YESTERDAY, HOW CAN SHE STILL JUMP!?

YEAH! SEE THAT?

SHE CAN JUMP AS HIGH AS PRINCESS SAYOKO!

GEE...

I'M MUCH BETTER TODAY...

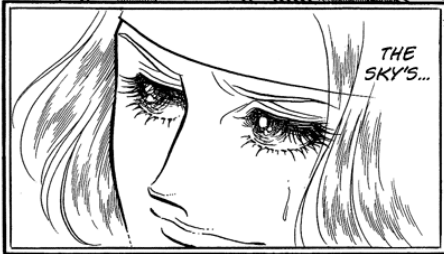
THANKS TO KYOGOKU-SAN!



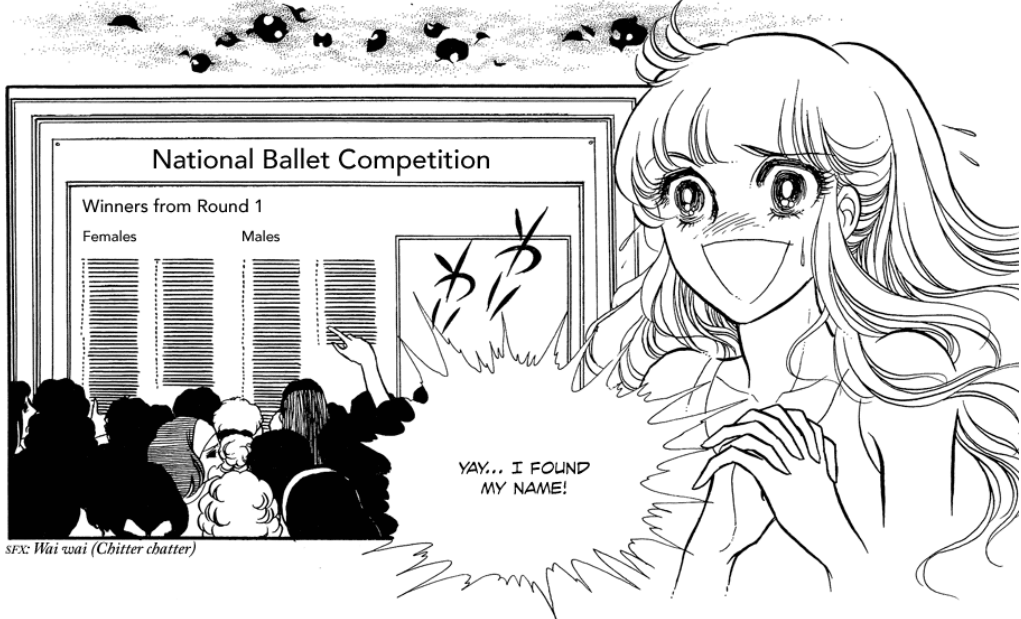
NO TELLING
WHAT SHE'LL
ACCOMPLISH!



THE
LIMIT!



THE
SKY'S...



YAY... I FOUND
MY NAME!

SFX: Wai wai (Chitter chatter)



HA...



OH...

SFX: Pa (Pop)



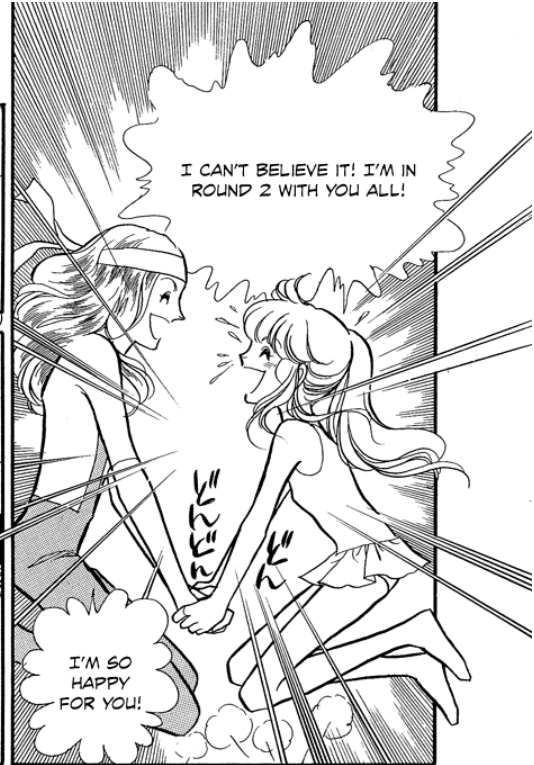
I REALLY WANT TO SEE IT!
YAY!



LET'S ALL GO SEE LA SYLPHIDE!

AFTER CLASS TODAY...

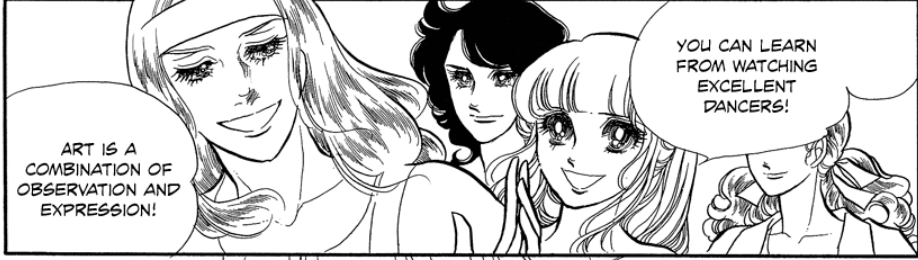
IT'S THE FIRST JAPANESE PERFORMANCE, EVER, PRODUCED BY THE MAKI ASAMI BALLET COMPANY!



I CAN'T BELIEVE IT! I'M IN ROUND 2 WITH YOU ALL!

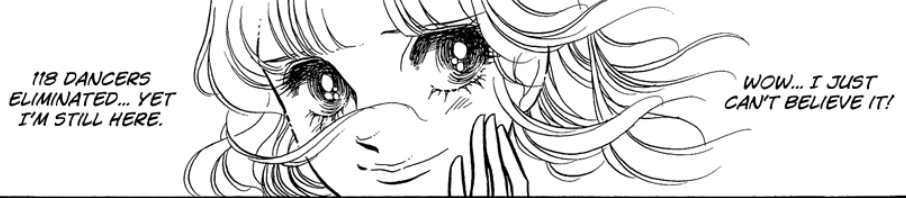
I'M SO HAPPY FOR YOU!

SFX: Don don don (Flop hop hop)



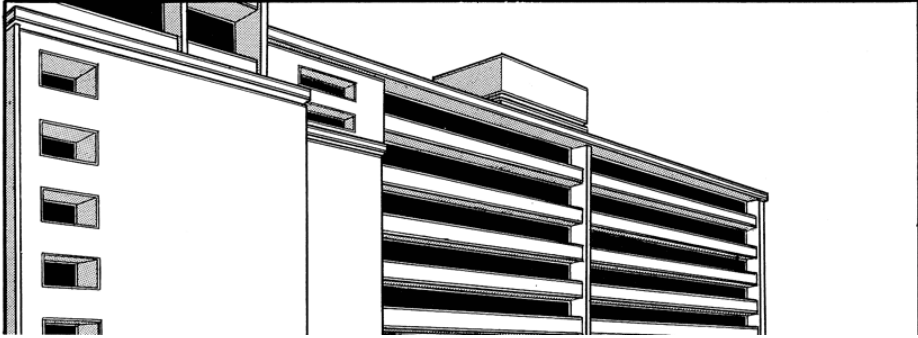
ART IS A COMBINATION OF OBSERVATION AND EXPRESSION!

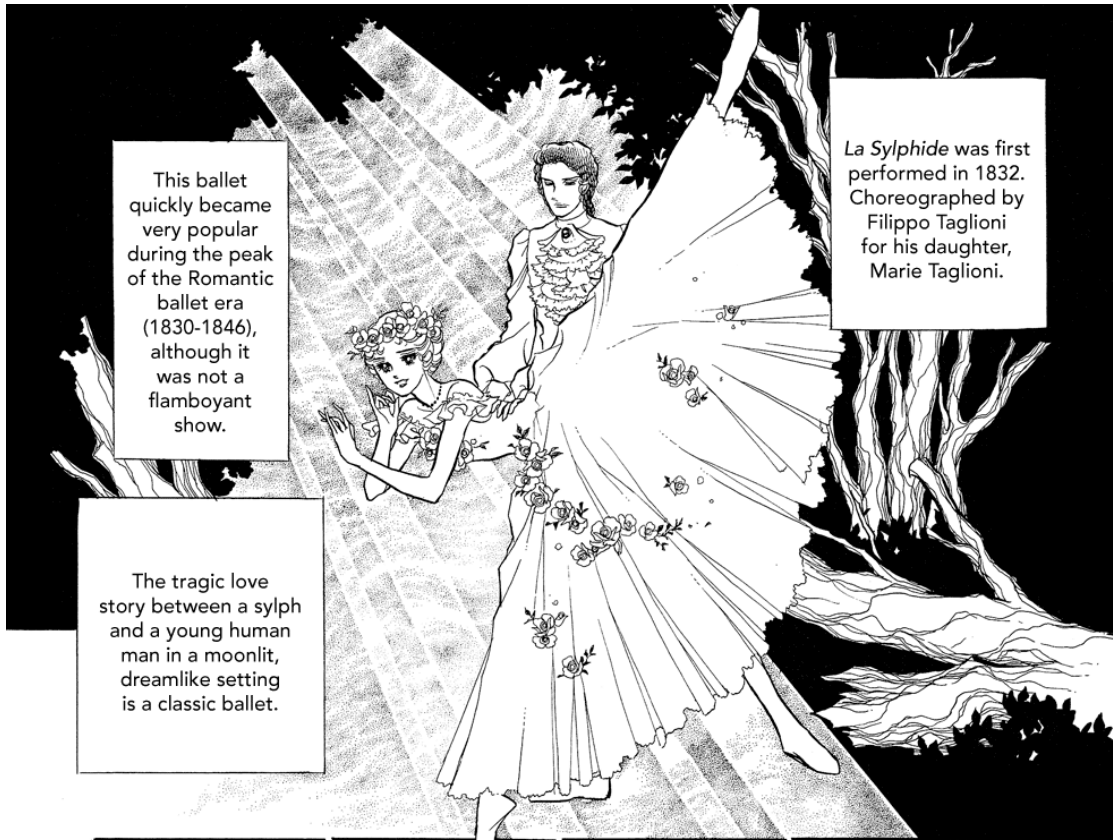
YOU CAN LEARN FROM WATCHING EXCELLENT DANCERS!



118 DANCERS ELIMINATED... YET I'M STILL HERE.

WOW... I JUST CAN'T BELIEVE IT!

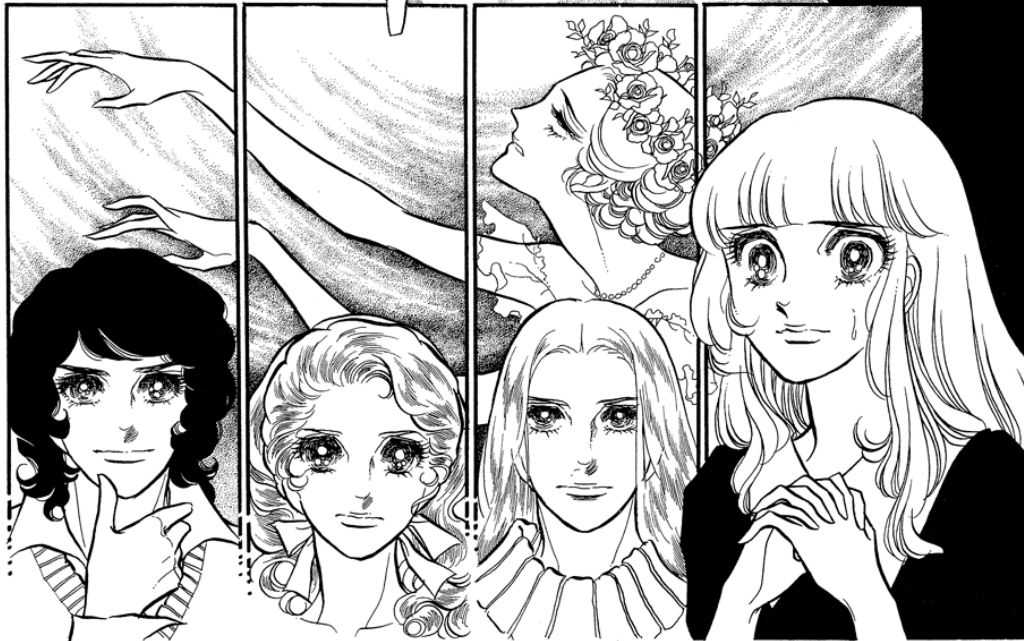


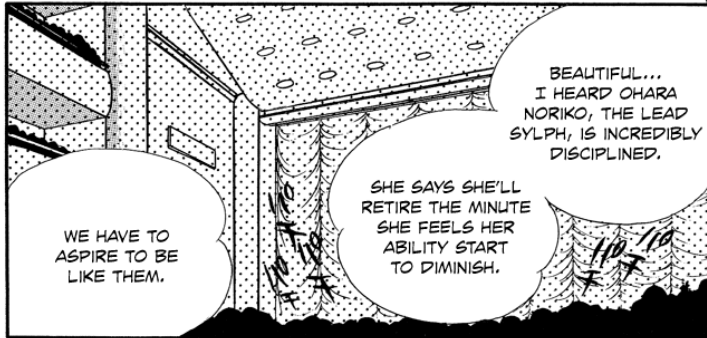


This ballet quickly became very popular during the peak of the Romantic ballet era (1830-1846), although it was not a flamboyant show.

La Sylphide was first performed in 1832. Choreographed by Filippo Taglioni for his daughter, Marie Taglioni.

The tragic love story between a sylph and a young human man in a moonlit, dreamlike setting is a classic ballet.





WE HAVE TO ASPIRE TO BE LIKE THEM.

SHE SAYS SHE'LL RETIRE THE MINUTE SHE FEELS HER ABILITY START TO DIMINISH.

BEAUTIFUL... I HEARD OHARA NORIKO, THE LEAD SYLPH, IS INCREDIBLY DISCIPLINED.

SFX: Pachi pachi pachi pachi pachi (Clap clap clap clap)



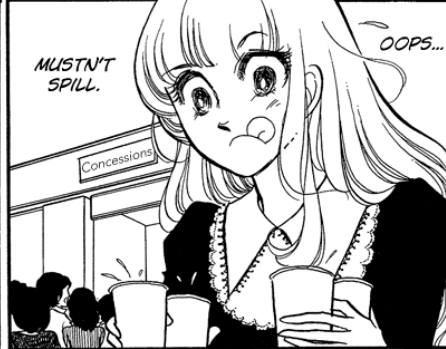
MASUMI-CHAN! I'LL GO GET SOME SODAS!

ALL THE EXCITEMENT HAS MADE ME THIRSTY!

SFX: Don (Whump)

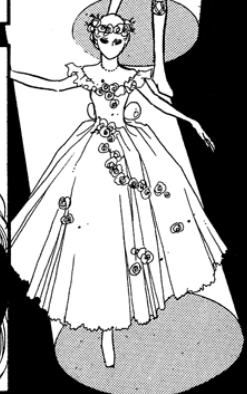


OW!



MUSTN'T SPILL.

OOPS...



HEY! CAREFUL!

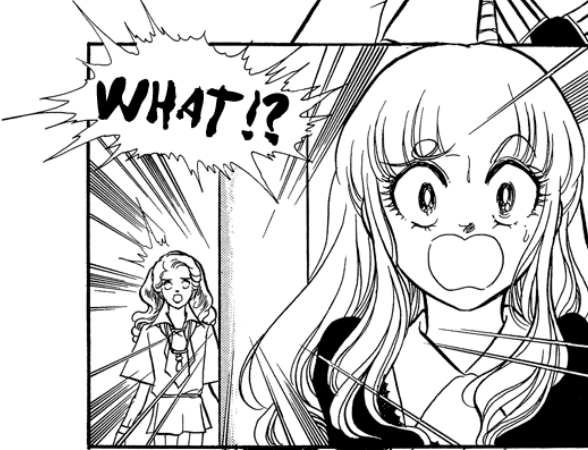


OH!

OH... IT'S YOU!

YOUR NAME IS...?
IN THE COMPETITION.

YOU'RE ...

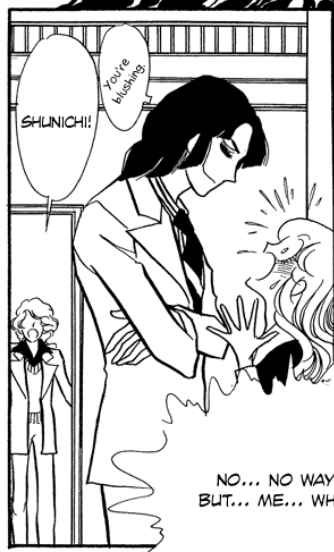


I'M HIJIRI MASUMI ...

MASUMI-CHAN...
HEY!

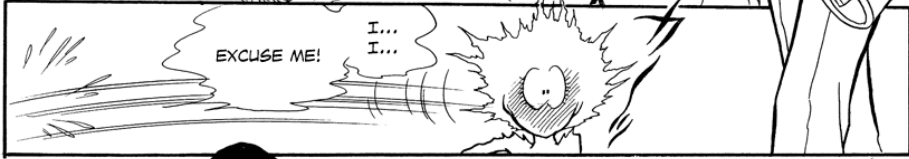
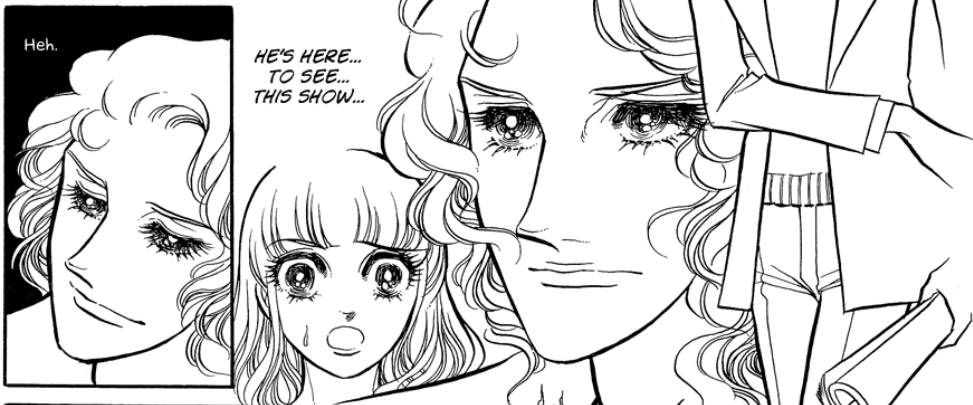
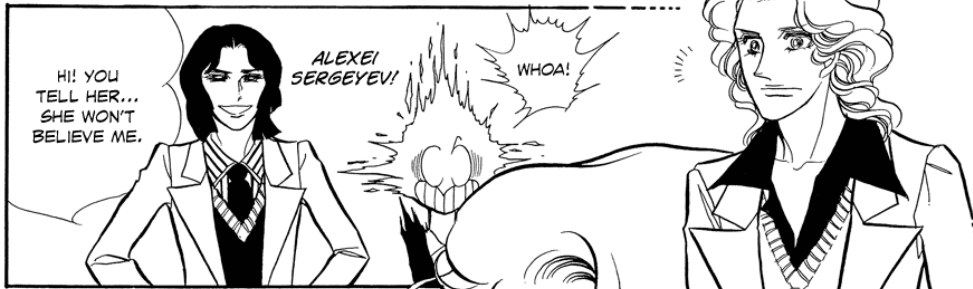
ALEXEI RECOMMENDED YOU.

AH, THAT'S RIGHT.

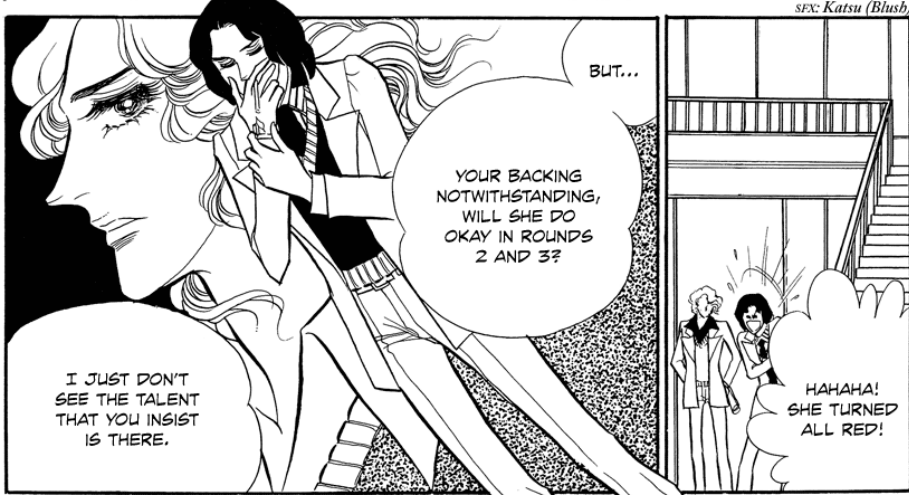


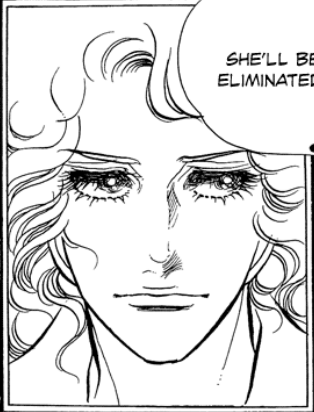
WHAT THE...?

NO... NO WAY!
BUT... ME... WHY?



SFX: Katsu (Blush)





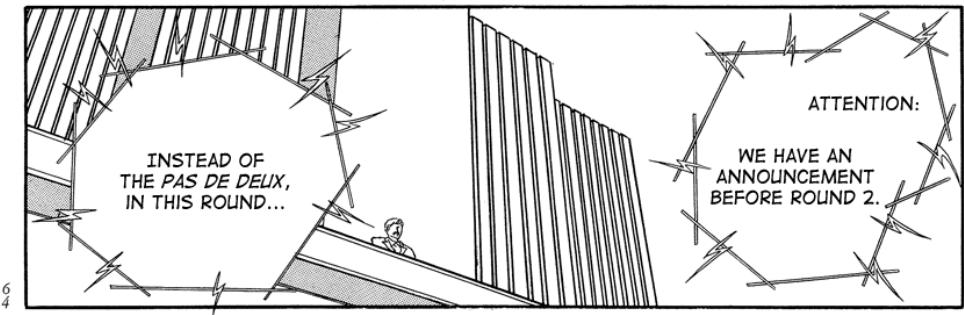
SHE'LL BE ELIMINATED.



IF HER SCORES ARE LOW IN ROUNDS 2 AND 3...

SO WE'RE NOT MAKING ANY MORE EXCEPTIONS!

YOUR GAMBLE COULD AFFECT THE ENTIRE BALLET WORLD OF JAPAN...



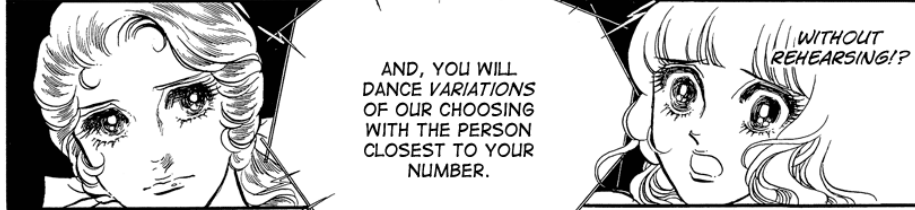
INSTEAD OF THE PAS DE DELUX, IN THIS ROUND...

ATTENTION:
WE HAVE AN ANNOUNCEMENT BEFORE ROUND 2.



YOU WILL BE DANCING SOLOS, TO SHOWCASE YOUR TALENTS.

SFX: Wah!



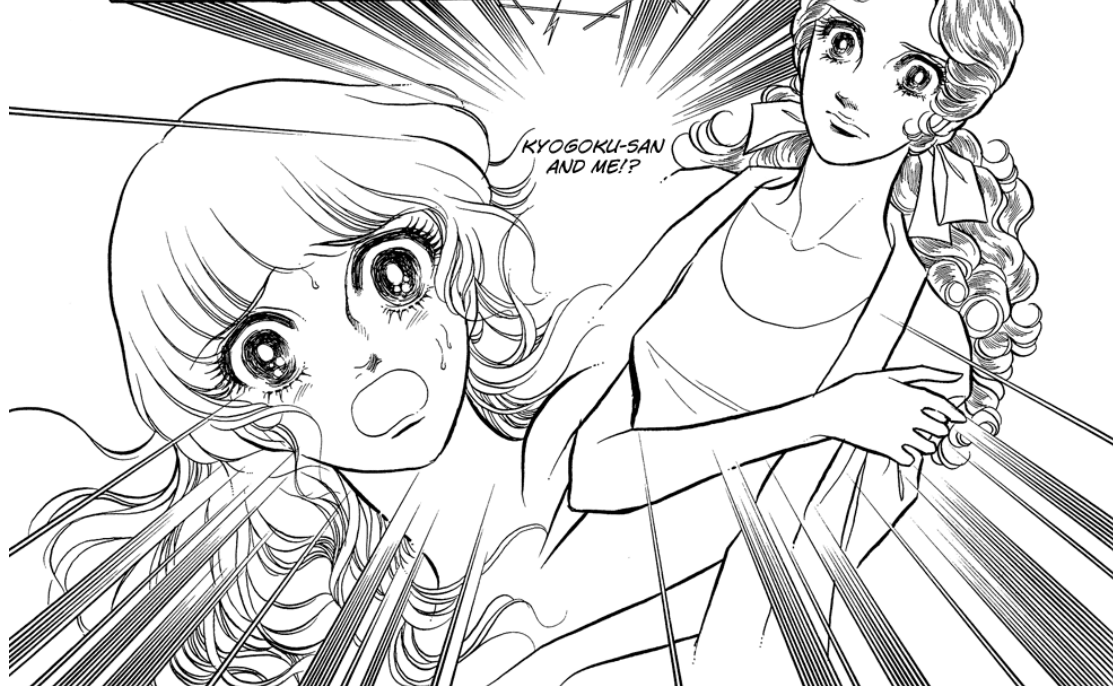
AND, YOU WILL DANCE VARIATIONS OF OUR CHOOSING WITH THE PERSON CLOSEST TO YOUR NUMBER.

WITHOUT REHEARSING!?

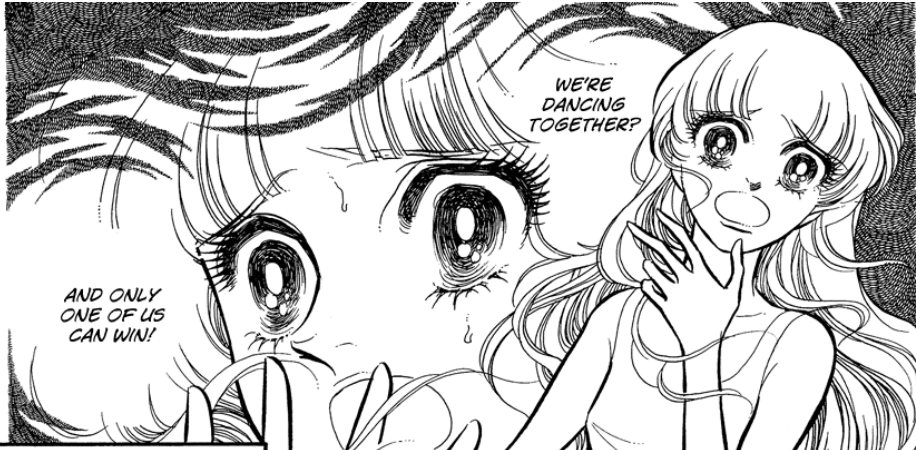


WE WILL BE ELIMINATING ONE IN EACH PAIR.

WHY, THAT MEANS...



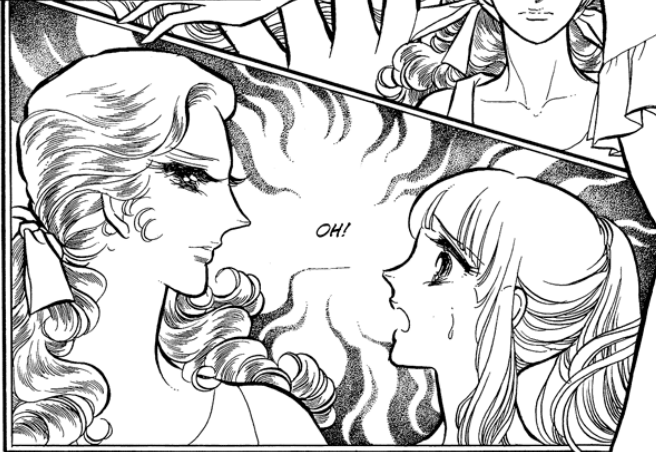
KYOGOKU-SAN AND ME!?



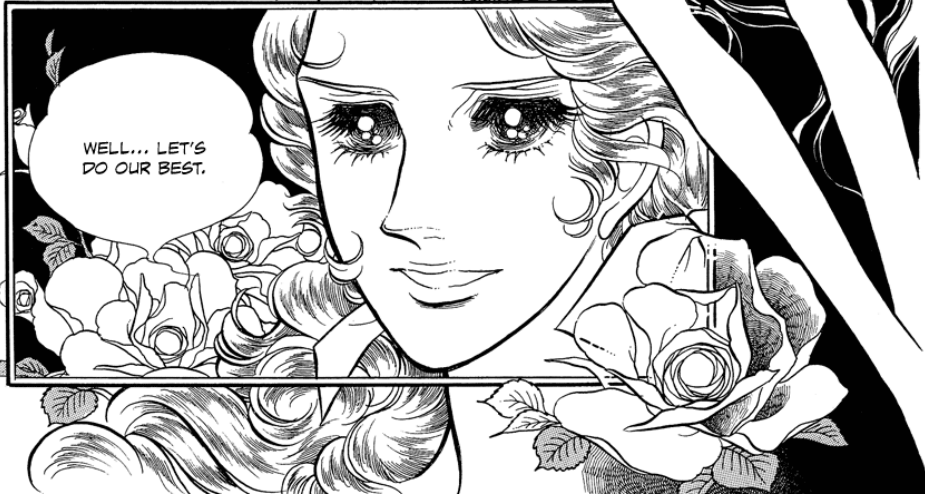
AND ONLY ONE OF US CAN WIN!

WE'RE DANCING TOGETHER?

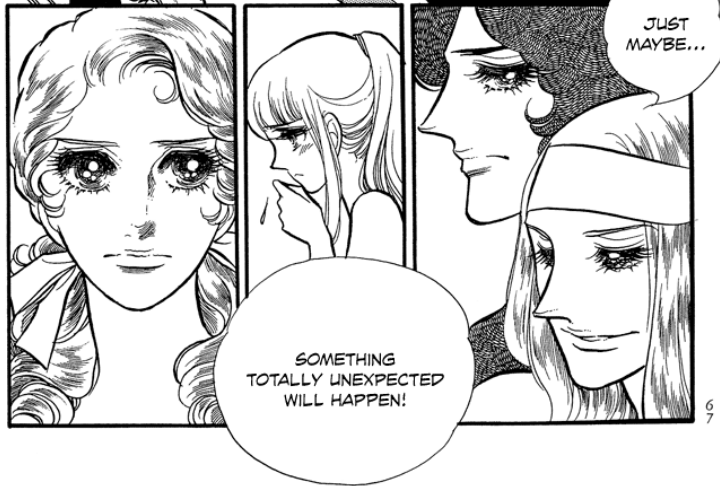
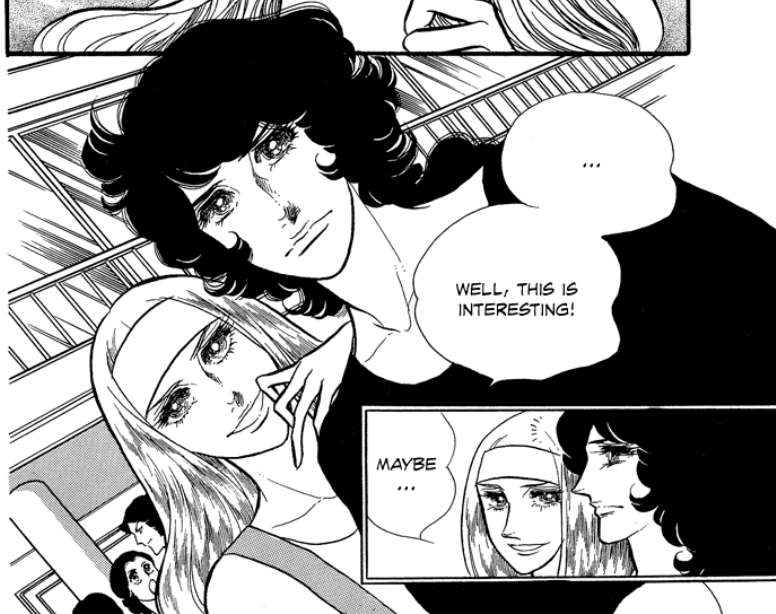
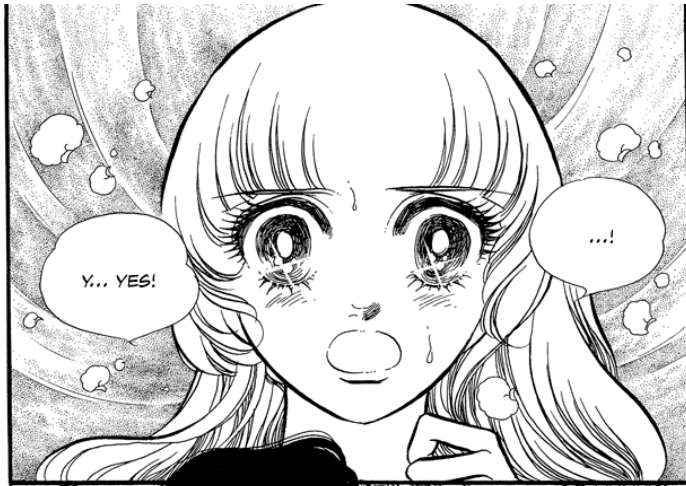
42
47 Kyogoku Sayoko
51 Hijiri Masumi
58



OH!



WELL... LET'S DO OUR BEST.





HMM...

WHAT DANCE... WILL THEY SPRING ON US?

ALL I WANTED TO DO WAS DANCE IN A BIG COMPETITION, JUST ONCE.

sniff

AH, BUT WHAT DID I EXPECT?

THERE'S NO WAY!

Urgh! *

EVEN IF I KNEW ALREADY, IF KYOGOKU-SAN IS MY COMPETITION...

Ack! *



OH!

PHONE CALL FOR HIJIRI-SAN.



AKI?

HELLO?

YES?

WE WERE SO WORRIED!

MASUMI, WHY HAVEN'T YOU CALLED?

Ballet Association Dormitory



WHAT!? YOU MADE IT TO ROUND 2!?

WELL...

USE THIS PHONE.

THAT'S GREAT! WHO'RE YOU DANCING AGAINST?



WHAT!? THAT KYOGOKU!?

FROM OTORI BALLET SCHOOL.

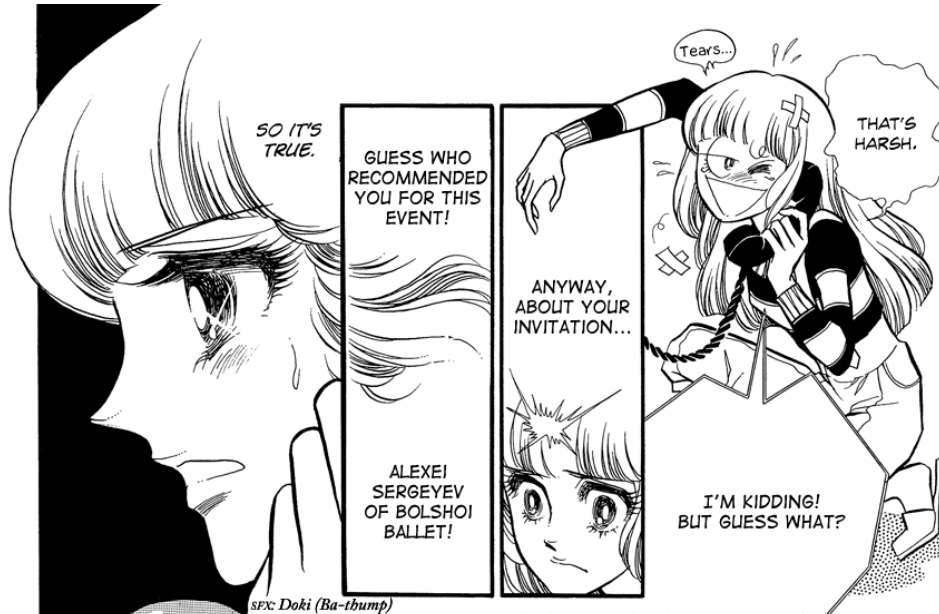
KYOGOKU?

KYOGOKU-SAN...

sfx: Dote (Crumple)



GET HER AUTOGRAPH BEFORE YOU LOSE!



SO IT'S TRUE.

GUESS WHO RECOMMENDED YOU FOR THIS EVENT!

ALEXEI SERGEYEV OF BOLSHOI BALLET!

ANYWAY, ABOUT YOUR INVITATION...

I'M KIDDING! BUT GUESS WHAT?

THAT'S HARSH.

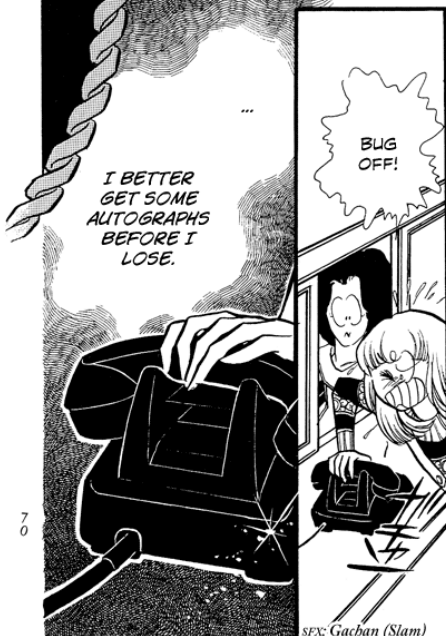
SFX: Doki (Ba-tbump)



HOW DID HE KNOW YOUR NAME OR THAT YOU WERE FROM HOKKAIDO?

THE BALLET ASSOCIATION TOLD SENSEI.

BUT WHY?



I BETTER GET SOME AUTOGRAPHS BEFORE I LOSE.

BUG OFF!

SFX: Gachan (Slam)



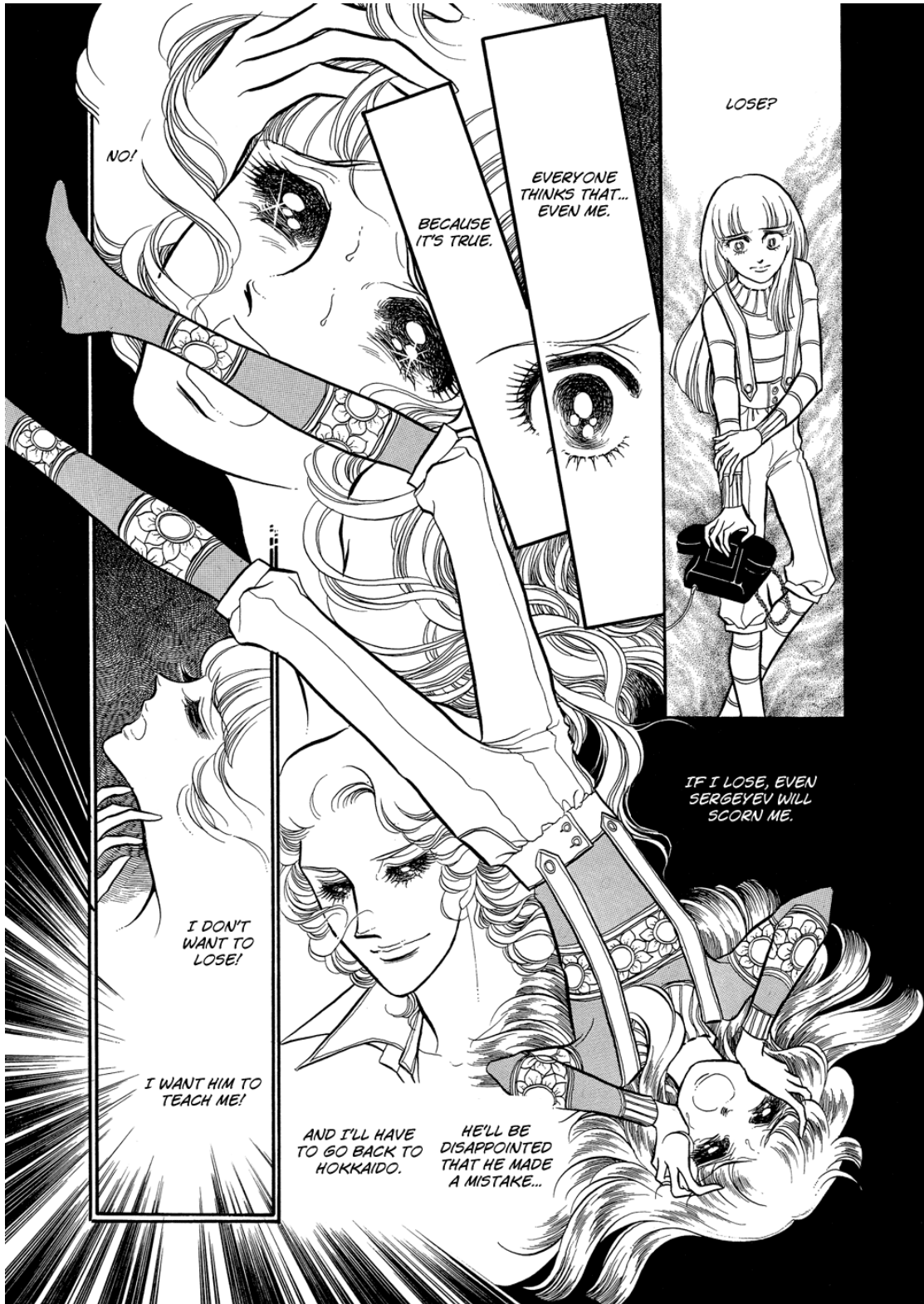
THANKS.

HANG IN THERE... WE'RE LOOKING FORWARD...



TO THOSE AUTOGRAPHS!

SFX: Dote dotetsu (Crumple)

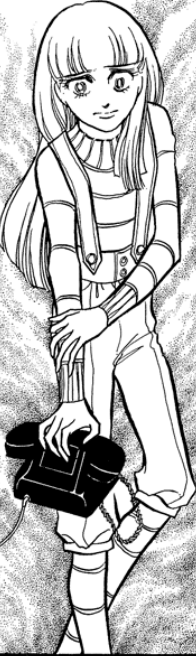


NO!

BECAUSE
IT'S TRUE.

EVERYONE
THINKS THAT...
EVEN ME.

LOSE?



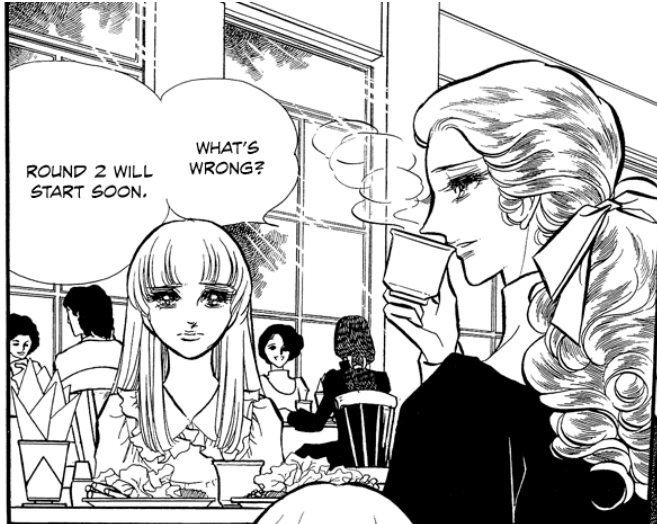
IF I LOSE, EVEN
SERGEYEV WILL
SCORN ME.

I DON'T
WANT TO
LOSE!

I WANT HIM TO
TEACH ME!

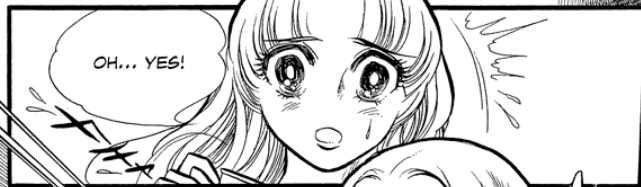
AND I'LL HAVE
TO GO BACK TO
HOKKAIDO.

HE'LL BE
DISAPPOINTED
THAT HE MADE
A MISTAKE...



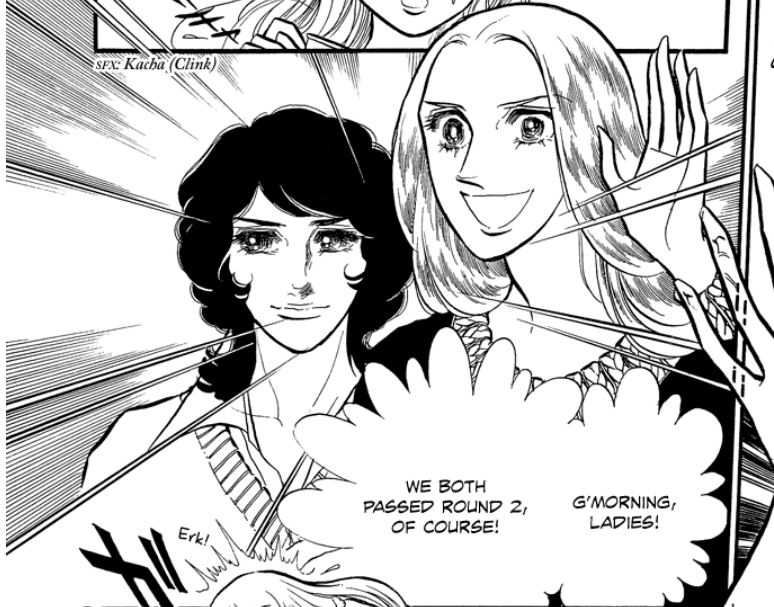
ROUND 2 WILL START SOON.

WHAT'S WRONG?



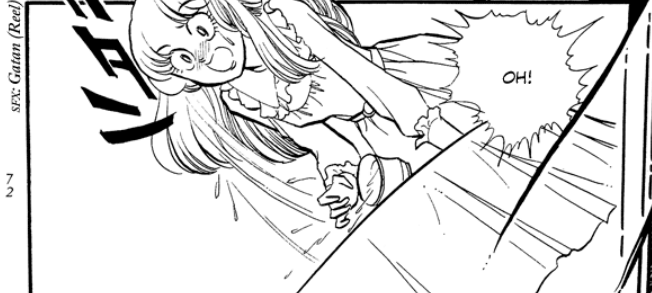
OH... YES!

SFX: Kacha (Clink)



WE BOTH PASSED ROUND 2, OF COURSE! G'MORNING, LADIES!

Erk!



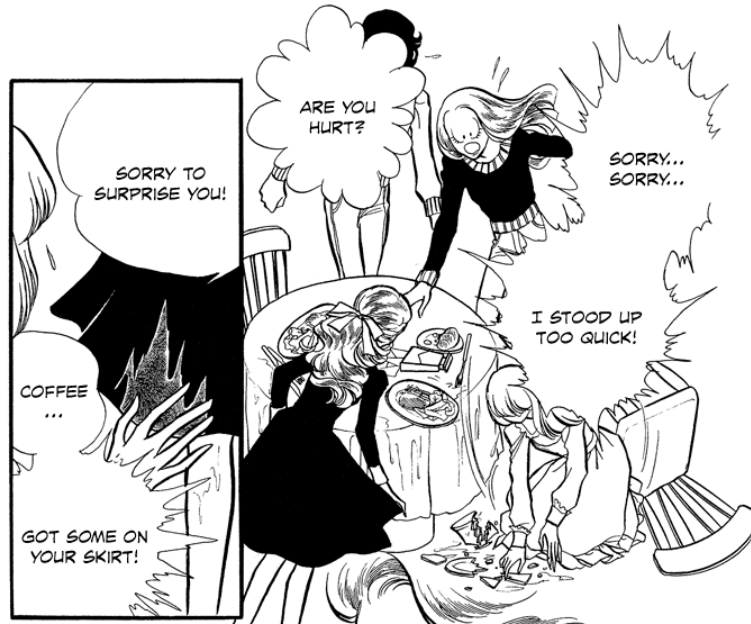
OH!

SFX: Gatan (Reel)



HE HELPED ME UP BACKSTAGE THAT TIME...

PLEASE RAISE ME UP ONCE AGAIN!



SORRY TO SURPRISE YOU!

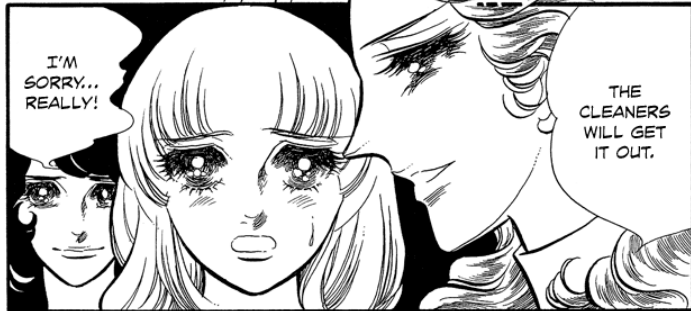
COFFEE ...

GOT SOME ON YOUR SKIRT!

ARE YOU HURT?

SORRY... SORRY...

I STOOD UP TOO QUICK!



I'M SORRY... REALLY!

THE CLEANERS WILL GET IT OUT.



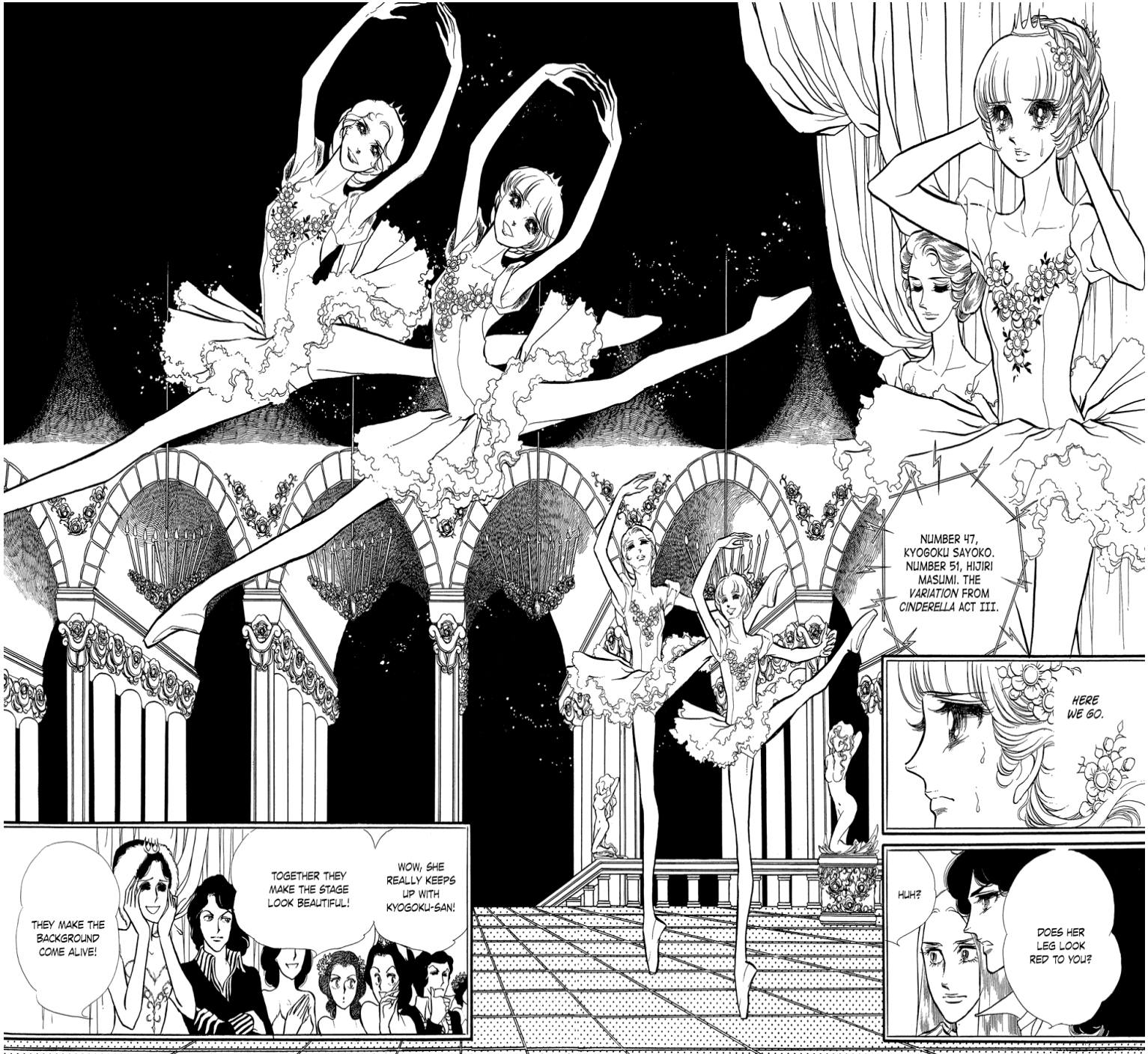
OH, YES... CONGRATULATIONS!

HAHAHA!
HA...

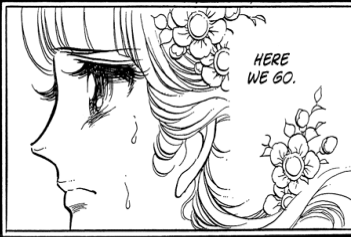
LET'S HURRY. WE HAVE TO PREPARE, AFTER THEY ANNOUNCE THE VARIATION!

AREN'T YOU FORGETTING SOMETHING?

42 Cinderella - Variation from Act III
 47 Kyogoku Sayoko
 51 Hijiri Masumi
 The Fountain of Bakhchisarai
 57



NUMBER 47, KYOGOKU SAYOKO. NUMBER 51, HIJIRI MASUMI. THE VARIATION FROM CINDERELLA ACT III.



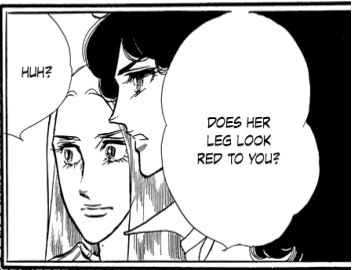
HERE WE GO.



THEY MAKE THE BACKGROUND COME ALIVE!

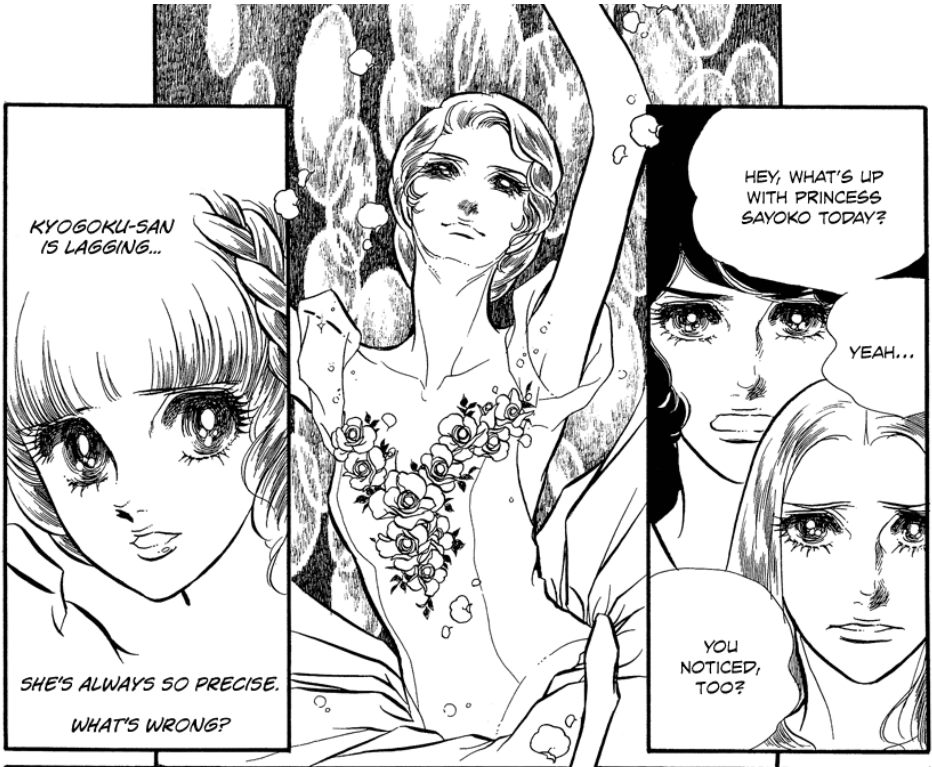
TOGETHER THEY MAKE THE STAGE LOOK BEAUTIFUL!

WOW, SHE REALLY KEEPS UP WITH KYOGOKU-SAN!



HUH?

DOES HER LEG LOOK RED TO YOU?



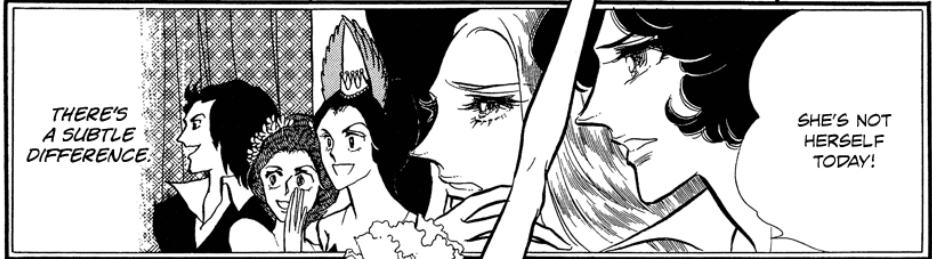
KYOGOKU-SAN IS LAGGING...

HEY, WHAT'S UP WITH PRINCESS SAYOKO TODAY?

YEAH...

SHE'S ALWAYS SO PRECISE.
WHAT'S WRONG?

YOU NOTICED, TOO?



THERE'S A SUBTLE DIFFERENCE

SHE'S NOT HERSELF TODAY!



SHE WOBBLLED!



HER LEG IS...

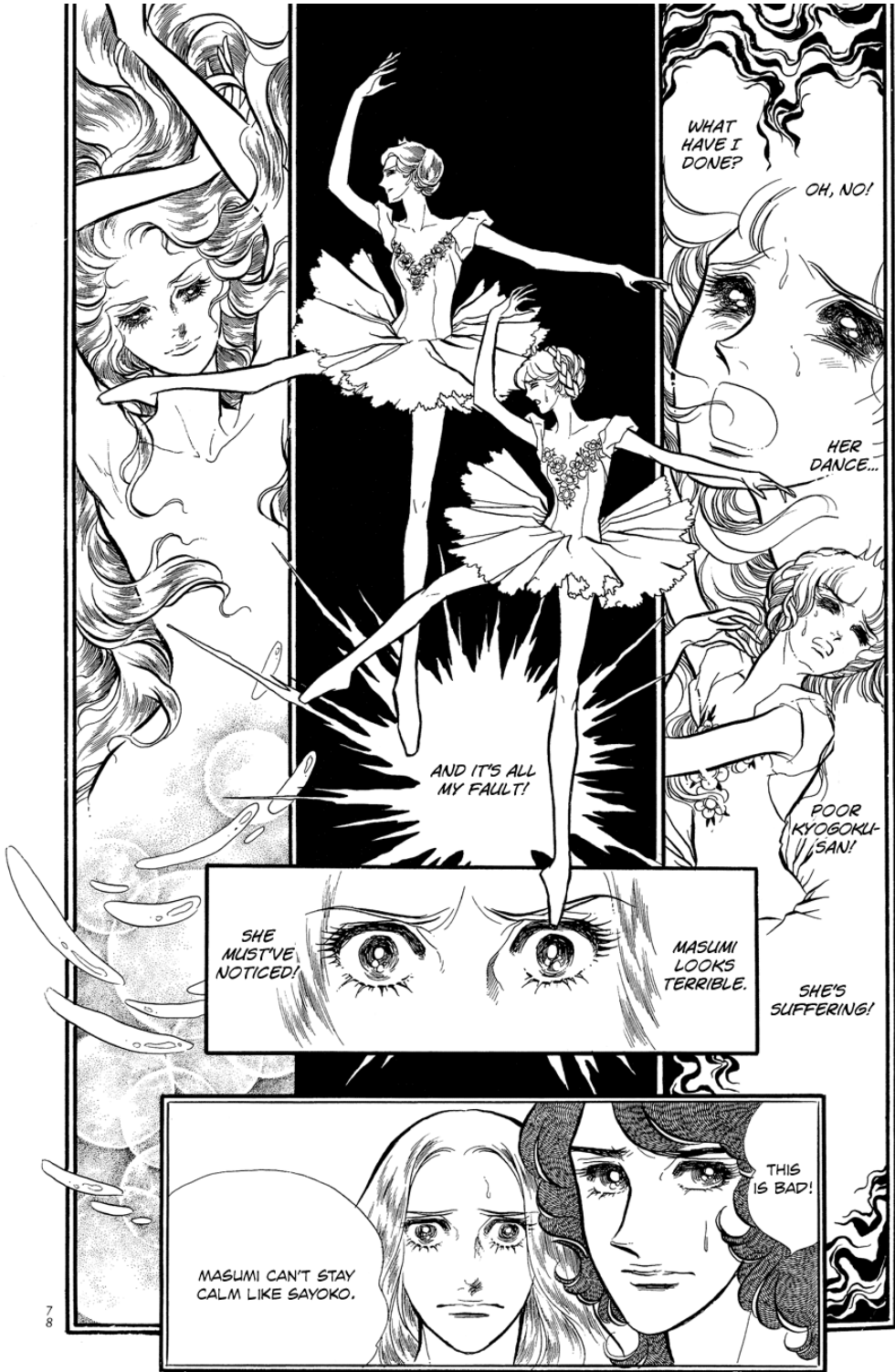
HER LEG!

BURNED!

IT BURNED
HER LEGS!

AT BREAKFAST, WHEN
I SPILLED THE COFFEE...

Judges



WHAT
HAVE I
DONE?

OH, NO!

HER
DANCE...

AND IT'S ALL
MY FAULT!

POOR
KYOGOKI-
SAN!

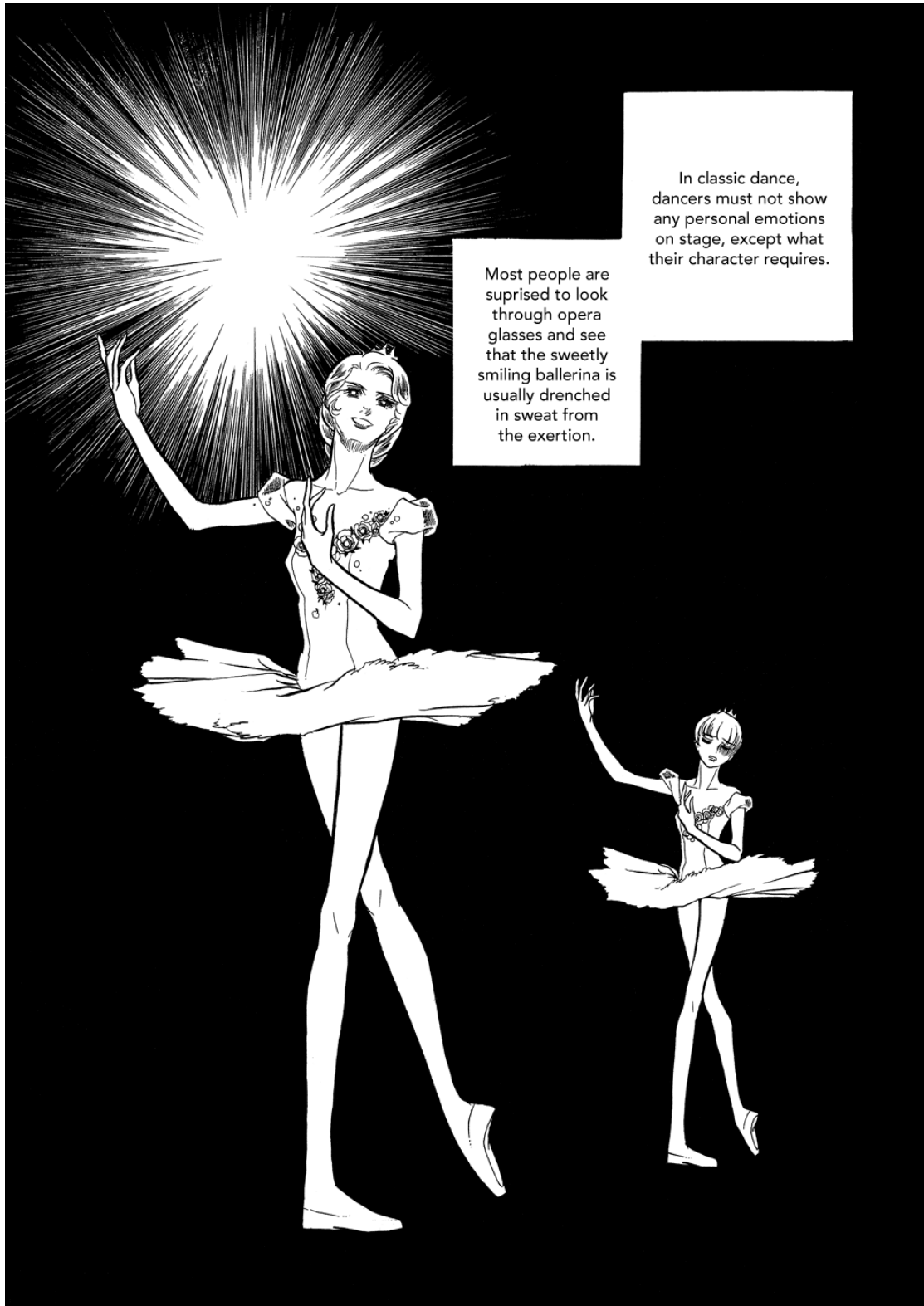
SHE
MUST'VE
NOTICED!

MASUMI
LOOKS
TERRIBLE.

SHE'S
SUFFERING!

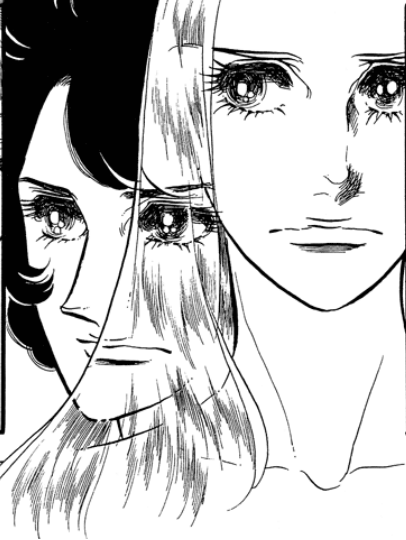
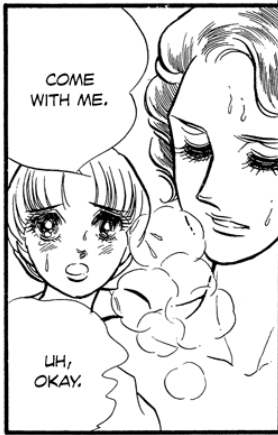
MASUMI CAN'T STAY
CALM LIKE SAYOKO.

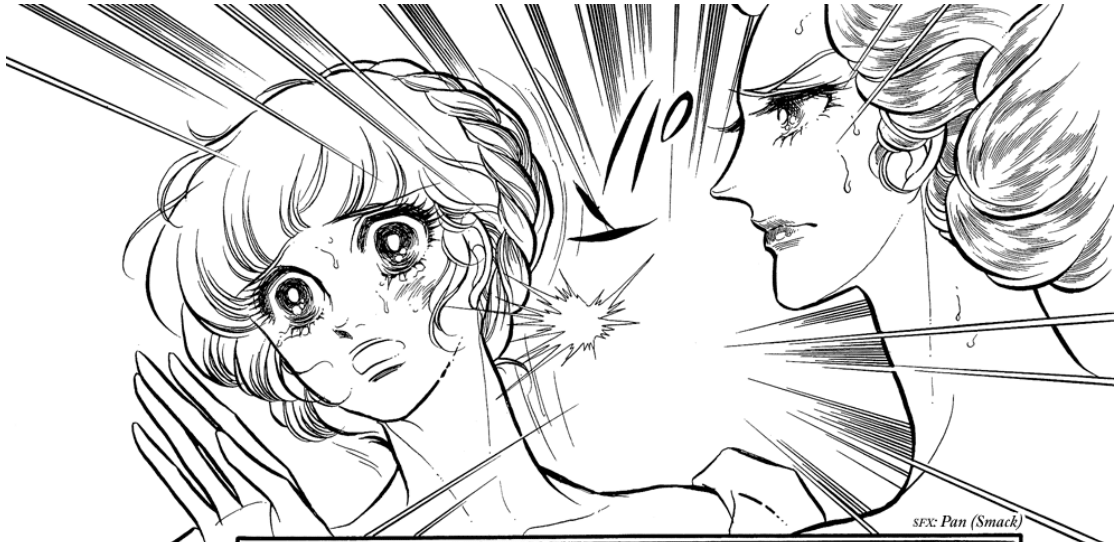
THIS
IS BAD!



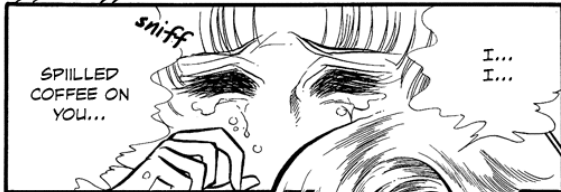
In classic dance, dancers must not show any personal emotions on stage, except what their character requires.

Most people are surprised to look through opera glasses and see that the sweetly smiling ballerina is usually drenched in sweat from the exertion.



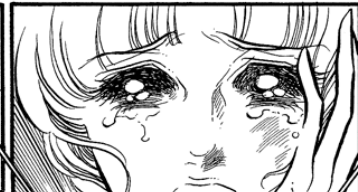


SFX: *Pan (Smack)*



sniff
SPILLED COFFEE ON YOU...

I...
I...



AH...!



SO? THAT'S YOUR EXCUSE FOR NOT DANCING YOUR BEST?

YOU'RE INSULTING ME!



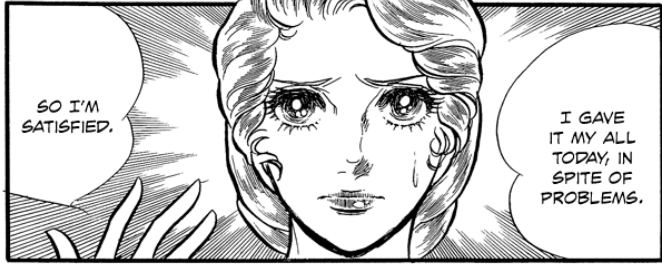
THIS IS A SERIOUS COMPETITION!

WHAT WERE YOU THINKING?



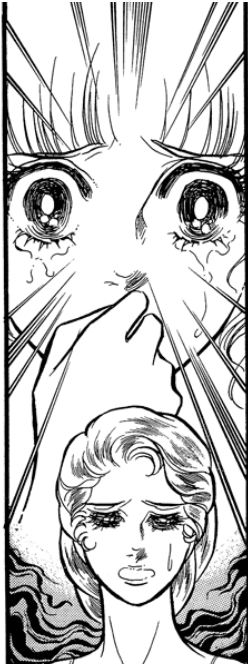
BECAUSE THE AUDIENCE WILL NOT TOLERATE EXCUSES!

BUT NO MATTER WHAT THE PROBLEM IS, WE MUST USE OUR ABILITY TO MAKE UP FOR IT.



SO I'M SATISFIED.

I GAVE IT MY ALL TODAY, IN SPITE OF PROBLEMS.



ARE YOU PROUD OF YOURSELF?

BUT CAN YOU SAY THE SAME?



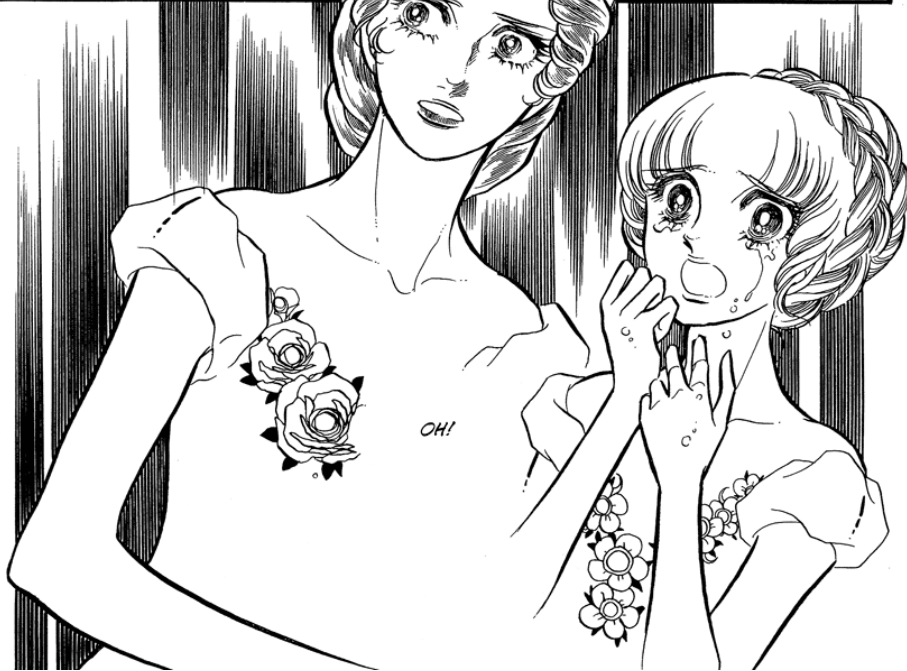
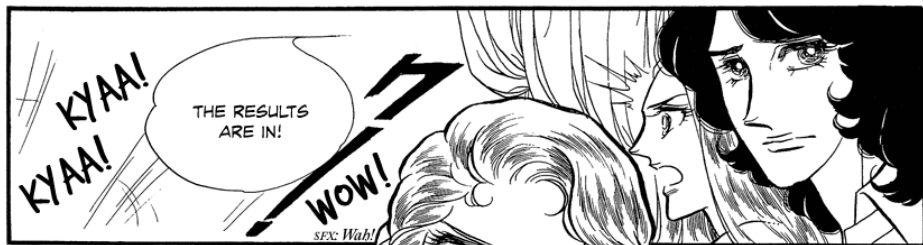
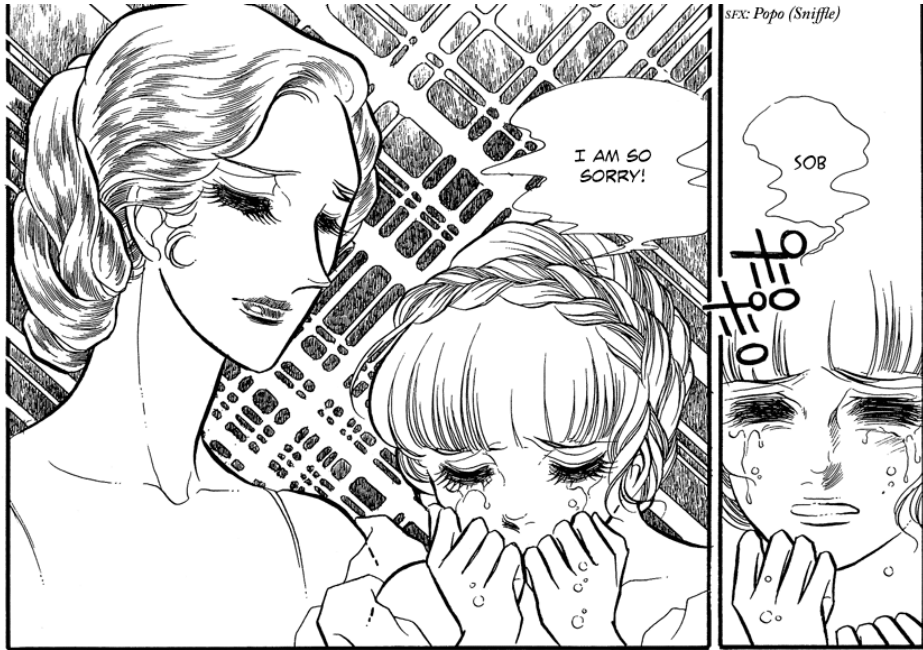
YES...

THE COFFEE YOU SPILLED DID AFFECT MY DANCING TODAY.

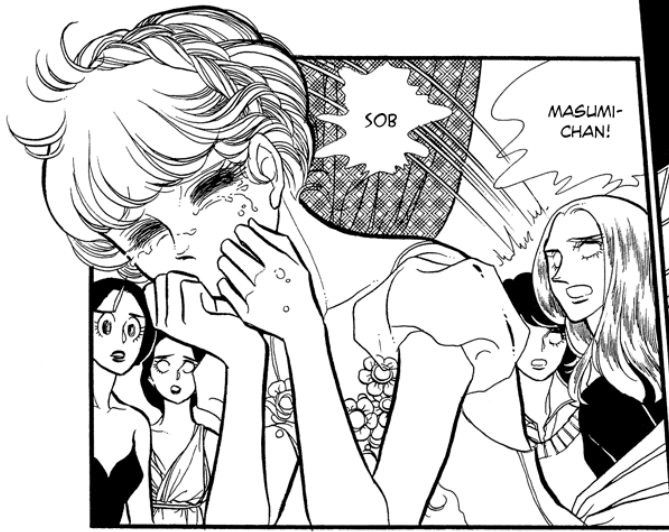


OH!

CINDERELLA IS SUPPOSED TO BE HAPPY IN THIS JOYFUL BALLROOM SCENE, BUT YOUR DOUBTS MADE YOU SEEM DARK AND GLOOMY!



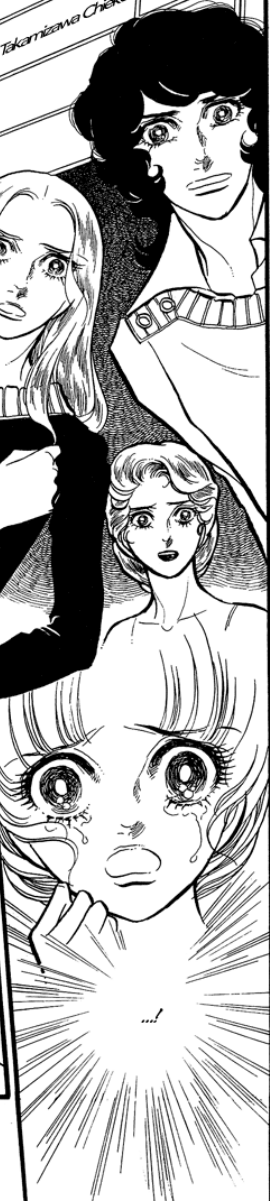
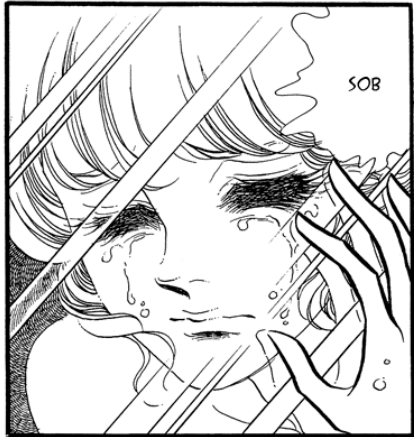
SEX: Paha (Tu-du)

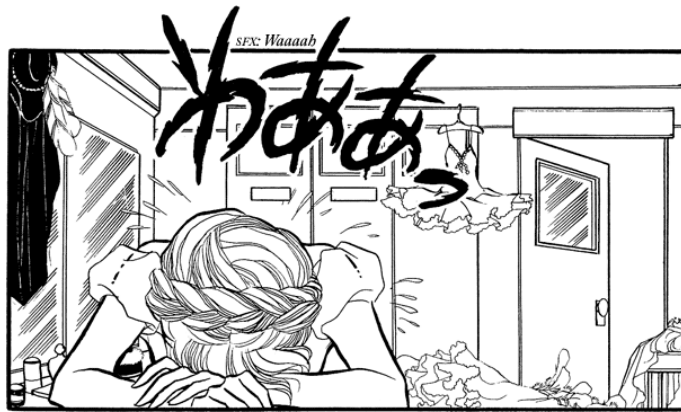


8.60	38 Seki Makoto	8.50
7.95	42 Ishi Michiko	8.75
7.45	47 Kyogoku Sayoko	9.15
	51 Hijiri Masumi	8.25
	59 Takamizawa Chieko	---



SEX: Gatan (Slam)

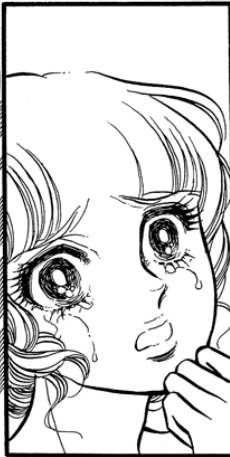






IS BASED ON GRUELING DAILY LESSONS AND MENTAL DISCIPLINE.

BALLET ...



IT DOESN'T MEAN YOU DIDN'T DO A FINE JOB.

THAT'S WHY SHE STILL SCORED SO HIGH,

THAT'S THE BEAUTY OF IT.

EVEN WITH A LEG INJURY.



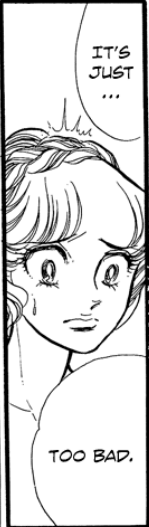
I'M NOT CRYING BECAUSE I LOST.

THAT'S NOT IT.

I'M CRYING BECAUSE I KNOW THAT I'M NO MATCH FOR KYOGOKU-SAN.

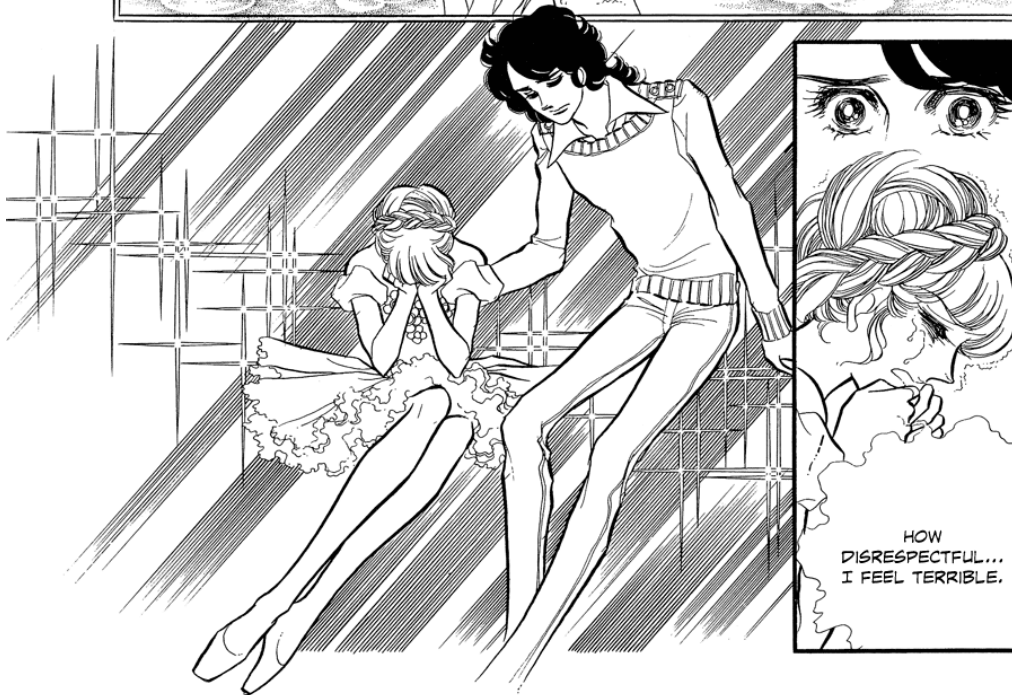
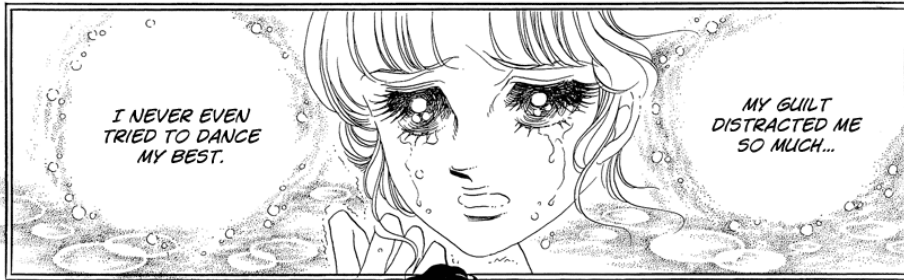
NO.

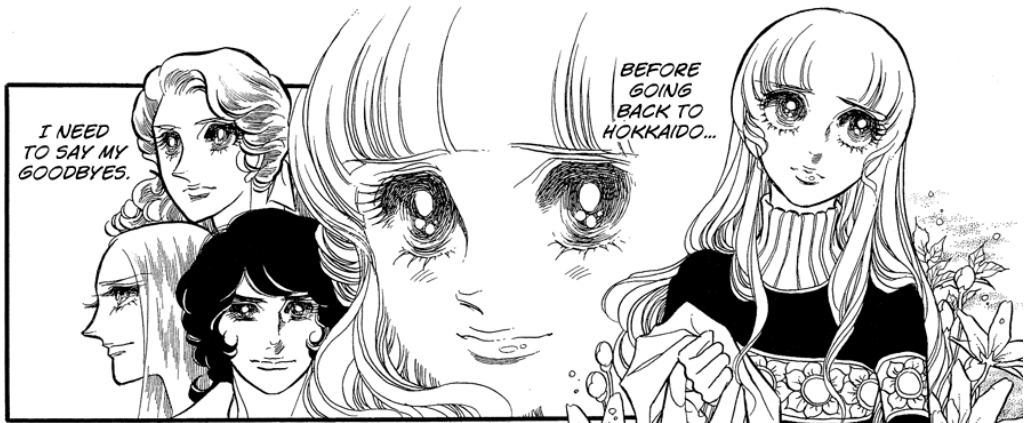
NO.



IT'S JUST ...

TOO BAD.

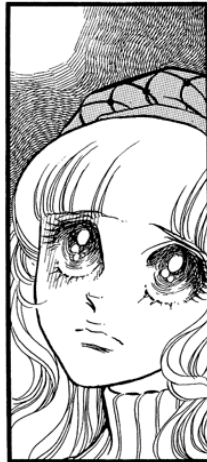




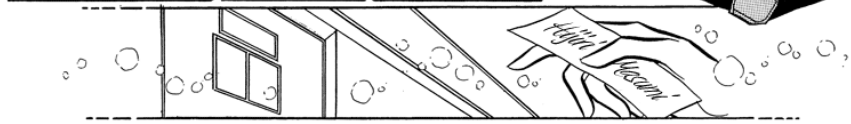
I NEED TO SAY MY GOODBYES.

BEFORE GOING BACK TO HOKKAIDO...

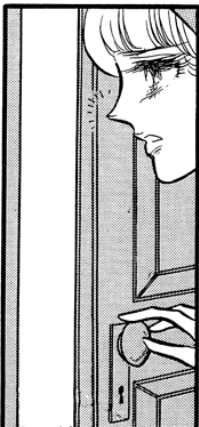
SFX: Gacha (Click)



THEY HELPED ME SO MUCH.

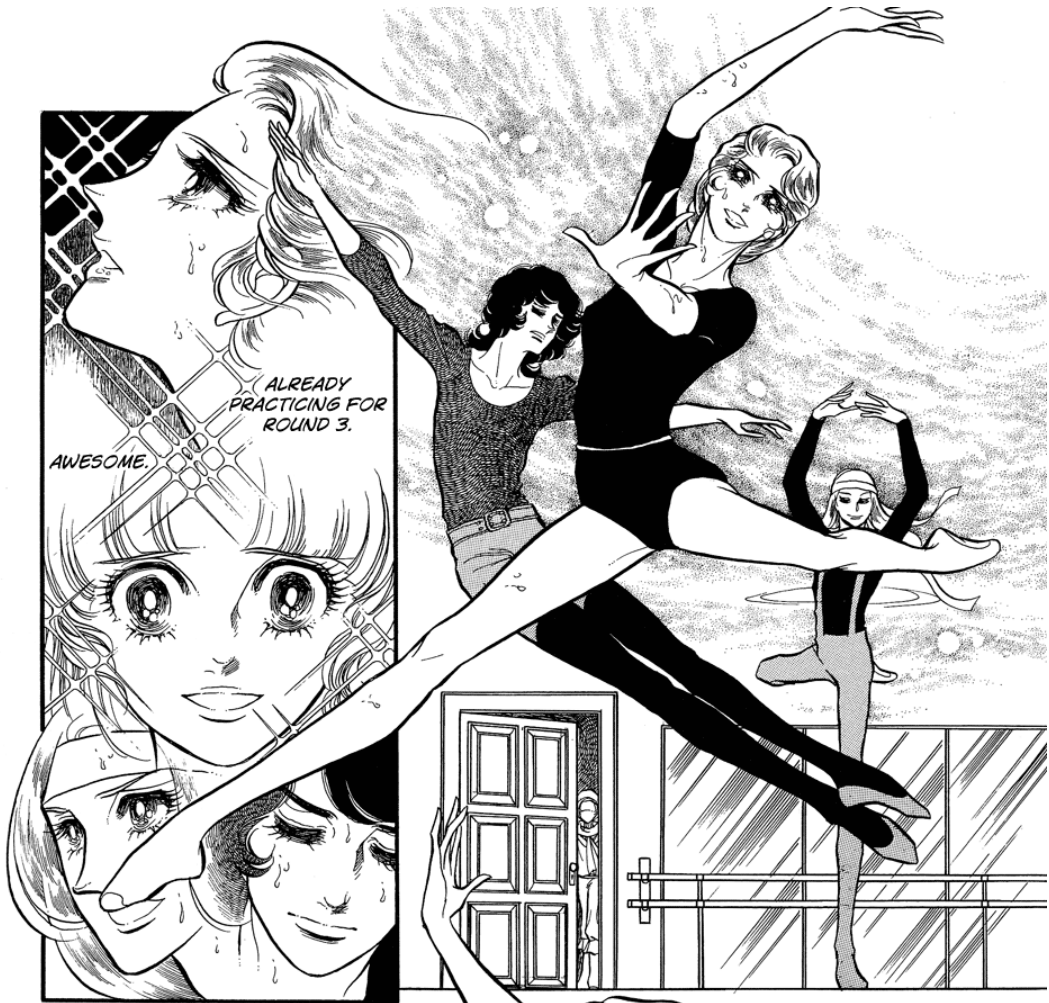


OH!



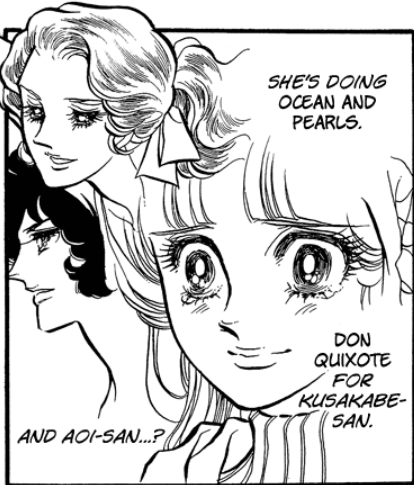
WHERE'S KYOGOKU-SAN?

REHEARSING IN THE BASEMENT.



AWESOME.

ALREADY
PRACTICING FOR
ROUND 3.



SHE'S DOING
OCEAN AND
PEARLS.

DON
QUIXOTE
FOR
KUSAKABE-
SAN.
AND AOI-SAN...?