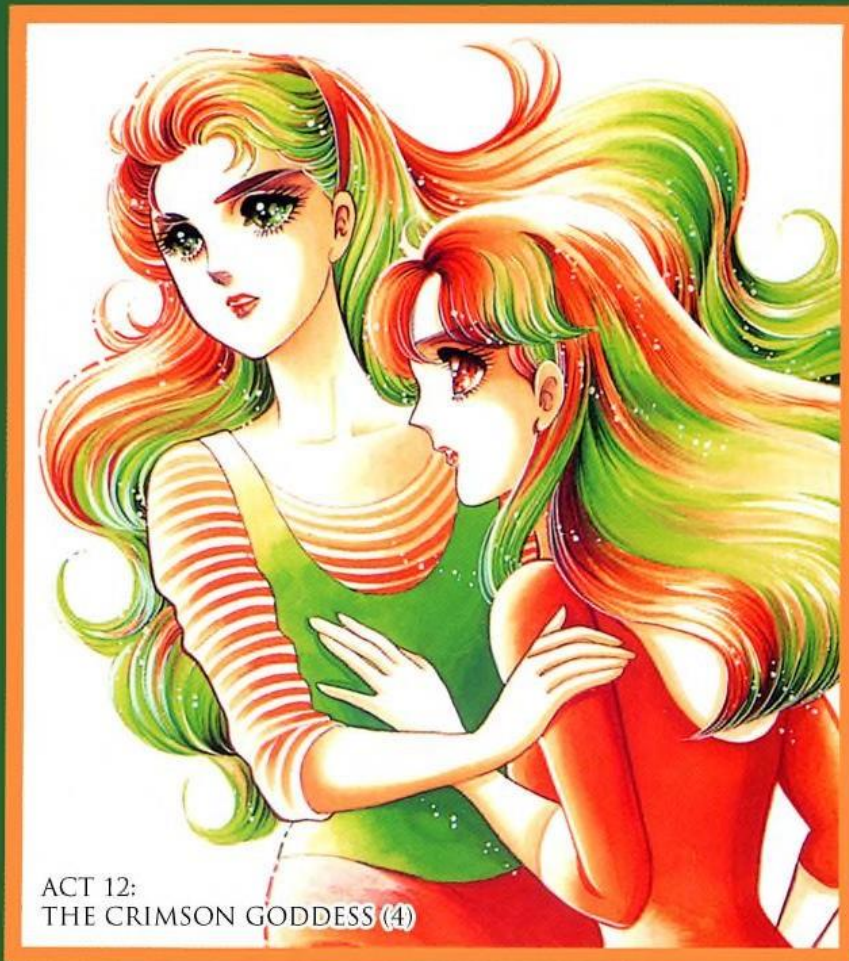


Glass Mask

SUZUE MIUCHI

37



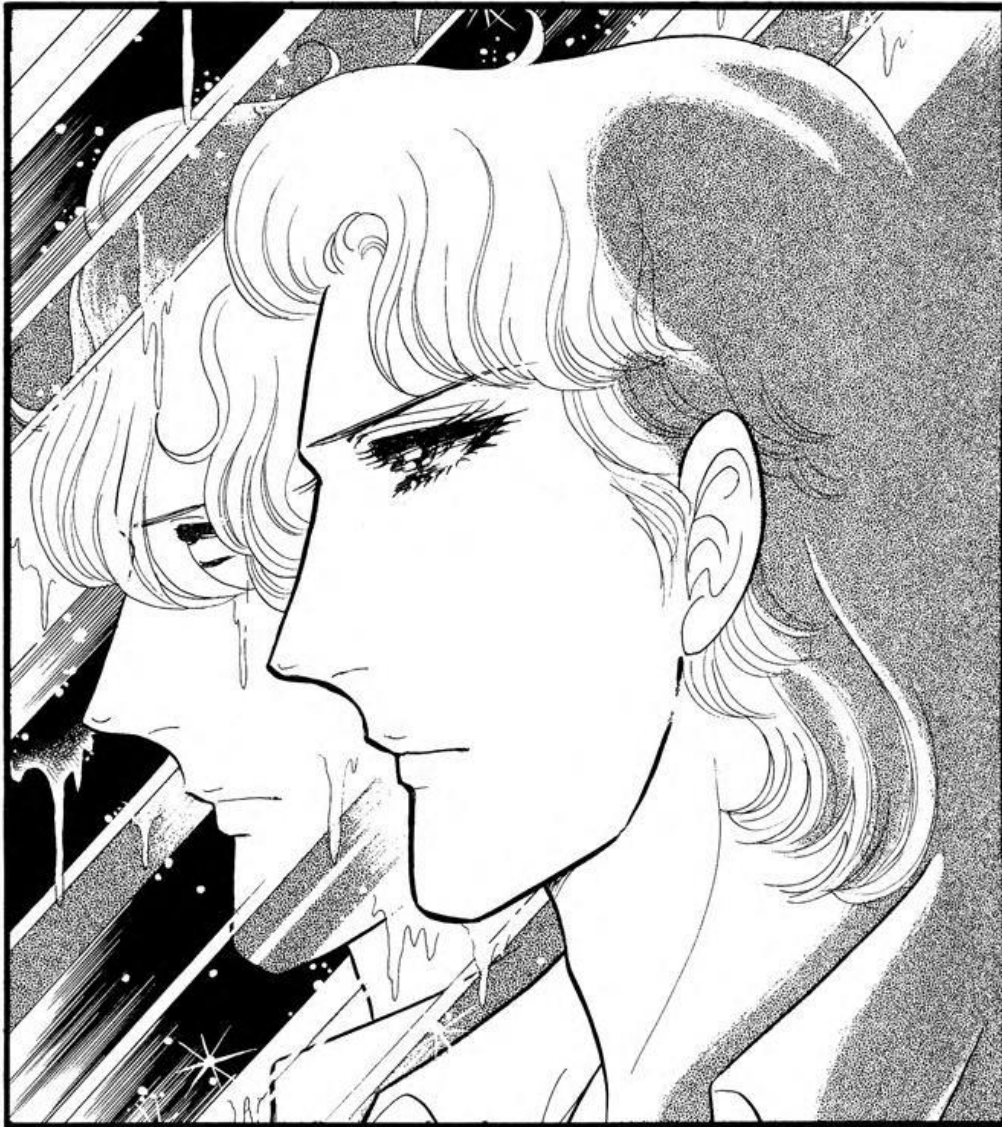
ACT 12:
THE CRIMSON GODDESS (4)

HANA TO YUME COMICS

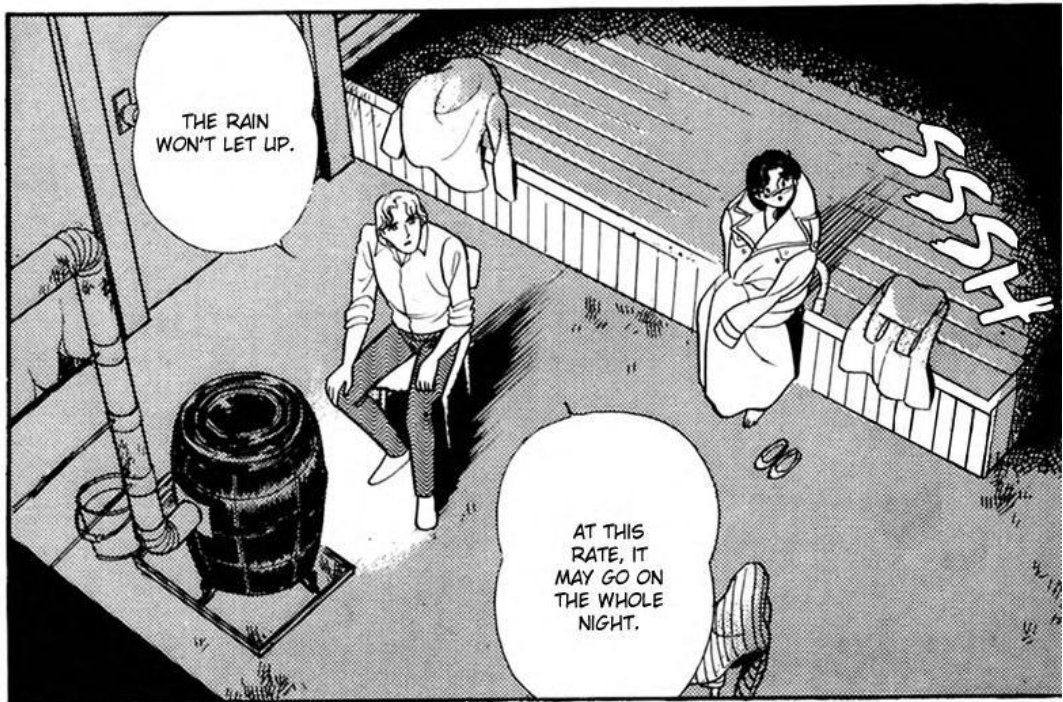
GLASS MASK

VOLUME 37 THE CRIMSON GODDESS (4)

SUZUE MIUCHI









...UNLESS YOU'D RATHER GO OUTSIDE IN THE RAIN.

WELL, I'M SORRY FOR YOU, BUT YOU'LL HAVE TO SPEND THE NIGHT IN THE COMPANY OF THIS HEARTLESS BEING...

WOULD THAT BE ENOUGH TO CHANGE YOUR OPINION ABOUT ME? IF I WAS ACTUALLY ABLE TO UNDERSTAND IT, WOULD YOU STOP THINKING THAT I'M HEARTLESS?

Ha ha ha

YOU... YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND A GIRL'S HEART, HAYAMI-SAN.



WELL, IT'S BETTER THIS WAY.

WHAT'S UP, CHIBI-CHAN?

YOU ARE UNUSUALLY COMPLIANT TONIGHT.

THAT'S JUST FINE...

I ALSO PREFER NOT ARGUING EVERY TIME.

USUALLY YOU WOULDN'T EVEN WANT TO SEE MY FACE.

... HAYAMI-SAN...



And the one who forced him to behave like this is me!

Ah... I get it now. He always has to hide his true feelings just like a moment ago!



NO...

AREN'T YOU COLD?

HOW QUIET YOU ARE...

IS IT THE RAIN THAT MAKES YOU SO LOST IN THOUGHT?



I and none other!

Forgive me, Hayami-san!

I WAS THINKING ON GOING WITH RYUJIN.

RYUJIN?



WATER?

AND WHAT DO YOU PLAN ON DOING?

ARE THE REHEARSALS GOING WELL?

YEAH. NOW WE'RE DOING THE WATER INTERPRETATION.

YES. HE'S SUPPOSED TO BE THE GOD OF WATER...

REALLY? THAT SOUNDS INTERESTING.



YOU'RE WORRIED? THAT'S NEW.

HA HA HA

AH! YOU... YOU'RE RIGHT. SORRY.



WHAT ABOUT THE PRESIDENT, HAYAMI-SAN?

WAS HE FOUND, YOU MEAN?

IF HE HAD BEEN FOUND, I WOULDN'T BE HERE!



EVEN IF I NEVER ONCE THOUGHT THAT THERE IS A FAMILY TIE BETWEEN US...

HIS DISAPPEARANCE WAS SO SUDDEN IT MAKES ME FEEL STRANGE.
EVEN THOUGH HE'S NOT MY BIOLOGICAL FATHER, LEAVING ME BY MYSELF MAKES ME FEEL SOMEWHAT ALONE.

THERE'S NOTHING BETWEEN MY FATHER AND I, BUT...



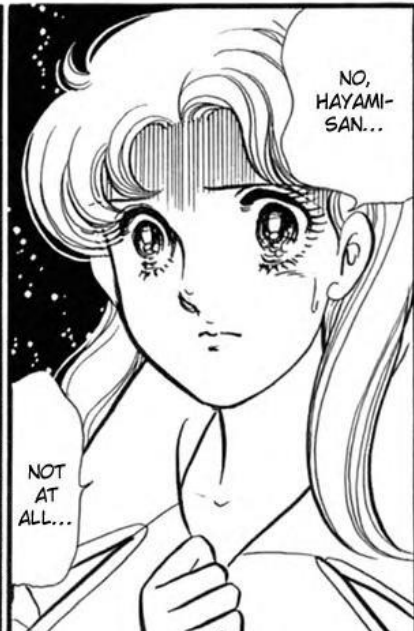
NO!

YOU'RE PROBABLY WONDERING...
...WHY I'M SAYING SOMETHING LIKE THIS.



I DIDN'T THINK THAT THERE WOULD BE ONE LIKE THIS IN THE VALLEY OF THE PLUM TREES.

THIS IS AN ANCIENT SANCTUARY.



NO, HAYAMISAN...

NOT AT ALL...



OH!

IT SEEMS THAT SINCE LONG AGO, THE INHABITANTS OF THESE PARTS BELIEVED THIS PLACE TO BE SACRED.



AH!

THERE'S ITS STORY!



IT SEEMS SO.

WAS THAT THE CRIMSON GODDESS?

ICHIREN OZAKI MUST HAVE BEEN INSPIRED BY THIS STORY WHEN HE WROTE THE PLAY.



Even though the seasons passed, the plum trees still kept their flowers. It was said that if their flowers were taken out of the valley, without the blessing of the goddess, they would wither...

In ancient times, the spirit of a goddess rose from the earth and took the shape of a sacred tree in the depths of the valley where the crimson plums bloomed.



THE CRIMSON PLUM TREE?

THE SPIRIT OF THE GODDESS THAT ROSE FROM THE EARTH?



During the Nanbokuchō period, to pray for the war's end, a sculptor cut the valley's sacred tree in order to make a statue of the goddess. In this place, they built a temple to call upon peace...



I WOULD ALSO LIKE TO BE ABLE TO PORTRAY A CRIMSON GODDESS THAT YOU WOULD ENJOY...



Hayami-san!



IT WOULD SEEM WE ARE ON THE SACRED GROUND OF THE CRIMSON GODDESS...

I WOULD REALLY LIKE TO SEE YOUR CRIMSON GODDESS.



SOMEONE ABLE TO DO THE VILEST THINGS WITHOUT ANY SECOND THOUGHT... AND ALL FOR YOUR BUSINESS...

UNTIL NOW I... I'VE ALWAYS HATED YOU. I THOUGHT YOU WERE A MERCILESS MAN,

I...

THAT'S WHY I...



DIDN'T YOU HATE ME?

I AM SURPRISED TO HEAR YOU SAY THIS...

OR ARE YOU MOCKING ME?



FOR A LONG PERIOD OF TIME, I THOUGHT THAT I HAD BECOME SOMEWHAT OF AN EYESORE...

BUT I FEEL SOMEWHAT RELIEVED...



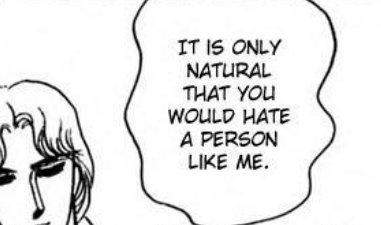
WELL ...



AND WHAT MADE YOU CHANGE YOUR MIND?

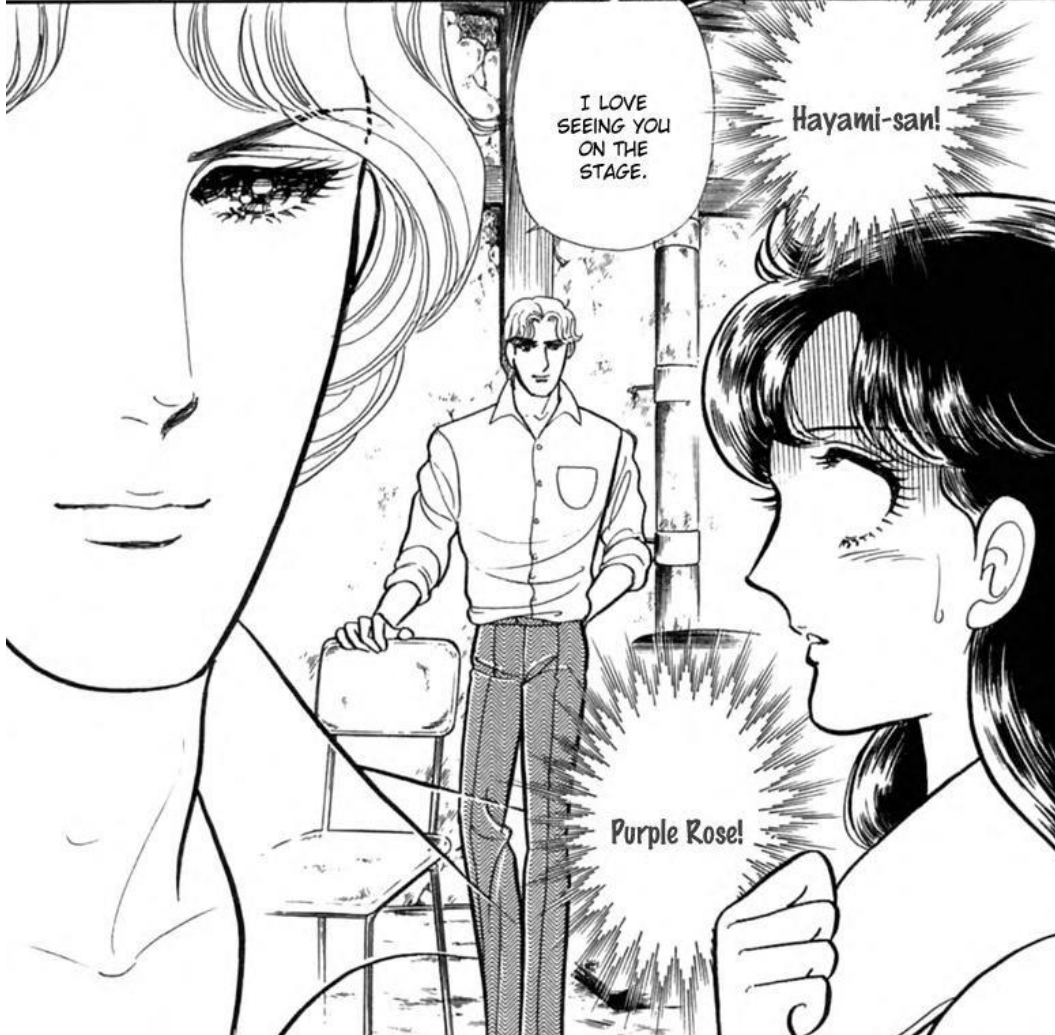
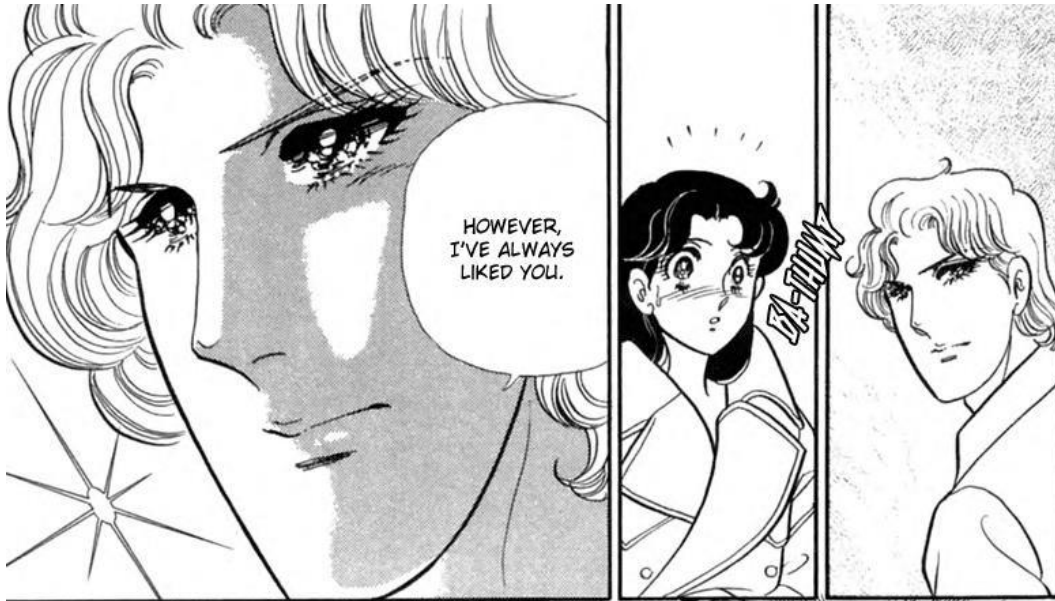


THERE'S NOTHING SURPRISING ABOUT IT.



IT IS ONLY NATURAL THAT YOU WOULD HATE A PERSON LIKE ME.







Hayami-san!



THE SECOND TIME I SAW YOU, YOU WERE PLAYING MIDORI IN GROWING UP.



THE FIRST TIME I SAW YOU...
...WAS IN THE ROLE OF BETH FROM LITTLE WOMEN...

YOU WERE SO GRACEFUL!

IT WAS IMPOSSIBLE TO TELL YOU HAD A 40 DEGREE FEVER AT ALL...

I FOUND OUT LATER THAT YOU STAYED IN THE RAIN ALL NIGHT SO THAT YOU COULD UNDERSTAND THE SCENE IN WHICH BETH DIED FROM ILLNESS...

I WAS IMPRESSED BY THE THOUGHT OF SUCH A SMALL GIRL WITH SUCH A FIERY PASSION.

THAT'S WHY I...



I COULDN'T
HELP BUT
FEEL TOUCHED
BY THIS
SCENE...

I HAD
NEVER
FELT
SOMETHING
LIKE THAT
BEFORE...

THE OUTGOING
MIDORI, TOTALLY
DIFFERENT FROM BETH,
CHARMED ME BEFORE
I COULD NOTICE.

THE SCENE IN WHICH
SHE THREW THE SHOE
LACE TO SHINNYO,
YOU WERE ABLE TO
CONVEY THE INNOCENT
FEELINGS OF MIDORI.

WHEN I SAW
YOU GO ON THE
STAGE ALONE...

...I FELT
GUILTY...

THEN
THERE WAS
GINA AND
THE BLUE
POTS...

YOUR
CATHY IN
WUTHERING
HEIGHTS
WITH HER
PASSIONATE
LOVE...

...MADE ME ENVY
THE HEATHCLIFF ON
THE STAGE.



CRACKLE

I STAYED UNTIL THE END.



Sakurakoji!

I TOLD HIM THAT IF HE LOVED YOU HE HAD TO STAY UNTIL THE END!

YOUR BOYFRIEND COULDN'T STAND IT AND LEFT IN THE MIDDLE OF THE SHOW.



WHAT ABOUT YOU, HAYAMI-SAN?

AND YOU...



FOR SHANGRI LA I OWE YOU SOME APOLOGIES...

...AND IN THE STORY OF YASHA-HIME YOU WORRIED ME SICK...

I CAN STILL SEE THE SCENE IN WHICH, PLAYING TOKI, YOU ATE THE MUD CAKES ON STAGE...



HSSSH

Hayami-san...

I COULD HAVE WATCHED HER ALL DAY.

YOUR HELEN WAS REALLY MOVING!

IN THE MIRACLE WORKER,

FLASH



Say it,
please.
Just one
sentence...

THE
PRINCESS
ALDIS IN
THE TWO
PRINCESSES
...

THE FAIRY
PUCK IN A
MIDSLIMMER
NIGHT'S
DREAM...

Hayami-san!

I DON'T KNOW
IF YOU COULD
EVER FORGIVE
ME, BUT I HAVE
ALWAYS WANTED
TO APOLOGIZE
TO YOU.

Purple
Rose!

Tell me you
are the
Purple Rose!

...THE WOLF
GIRL JANE IN
FORGOTTEN
WILDERNESS
...

I LOVED
ALL OF YOUR
CHARACTERS
...

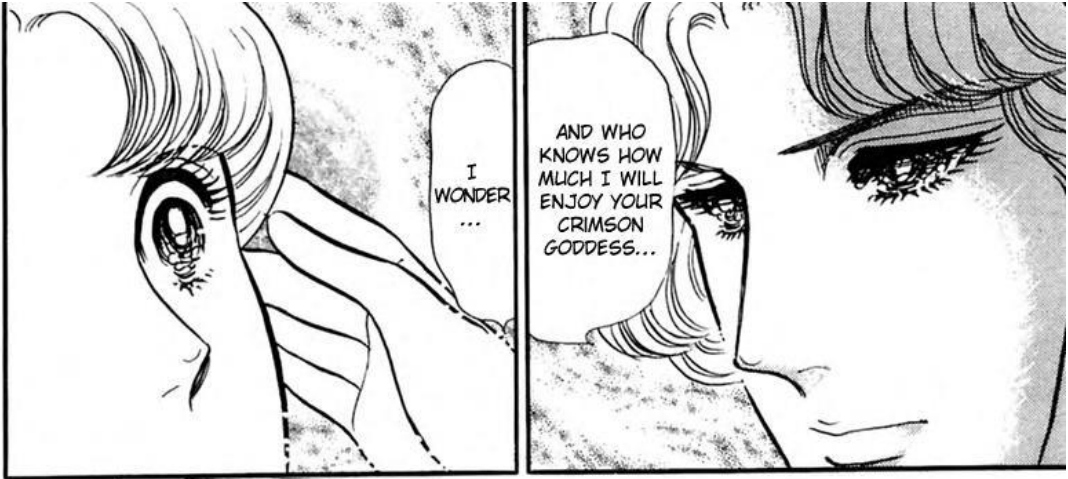
I WOULD HAVE
LIKED TO SEE
YOUR PLAYS...

...THAT YOU
ORGANIZED IN
SCHOOL...

It's just
one sentence!
Please!

Hayami-san!

If you will,
I'll run into
your arms!









SOON, IT'S GOING TO BE FREEZING COLD HERE.

THE WOOD IS ALREADY FINISHED. THE FIRE WILL GO OUT.



SHIVER



NO! HAYAMI-SAN! IT'S RAINING OUTSIDE. IF YOU ARE DOING THIS FOR ME, THEN YOU SHOULDN'T BOTHER!

WAIT HERE. I'LL GO LOOK FOR SOMETHING TO KEEP THE FIRE BURNING.

IT WILL BE MORNING SOON AND I'LL MAKE IT UNTIL THEN.



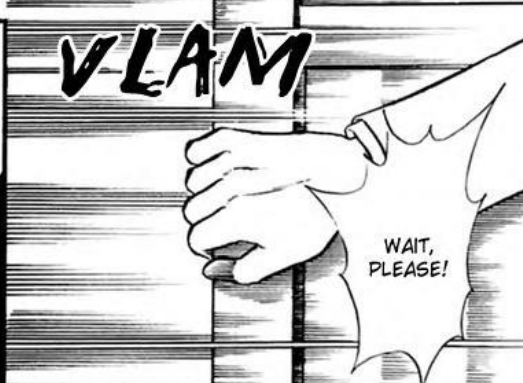
CRACKLE



A product!



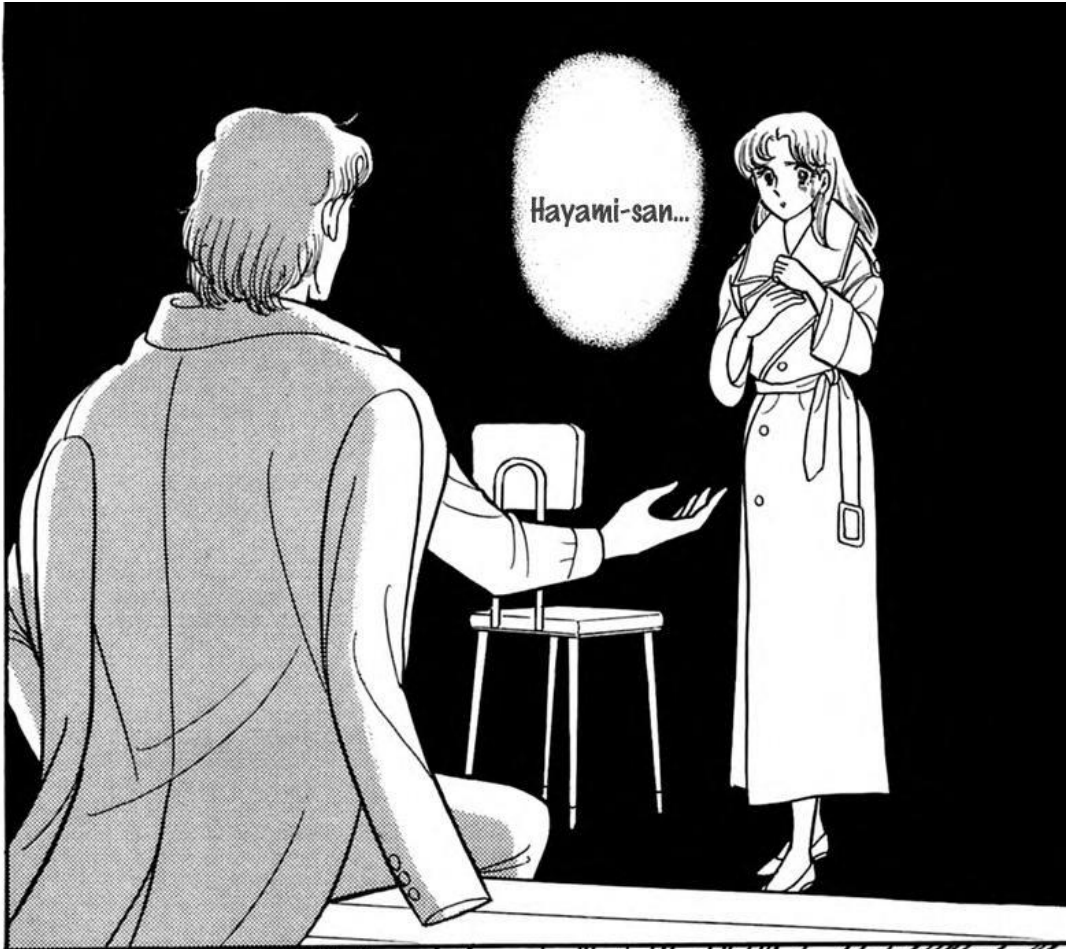
NO, I CAN'T LET AN IMPORTANT PRODUCT LIKE YOU CATCH A COLD...

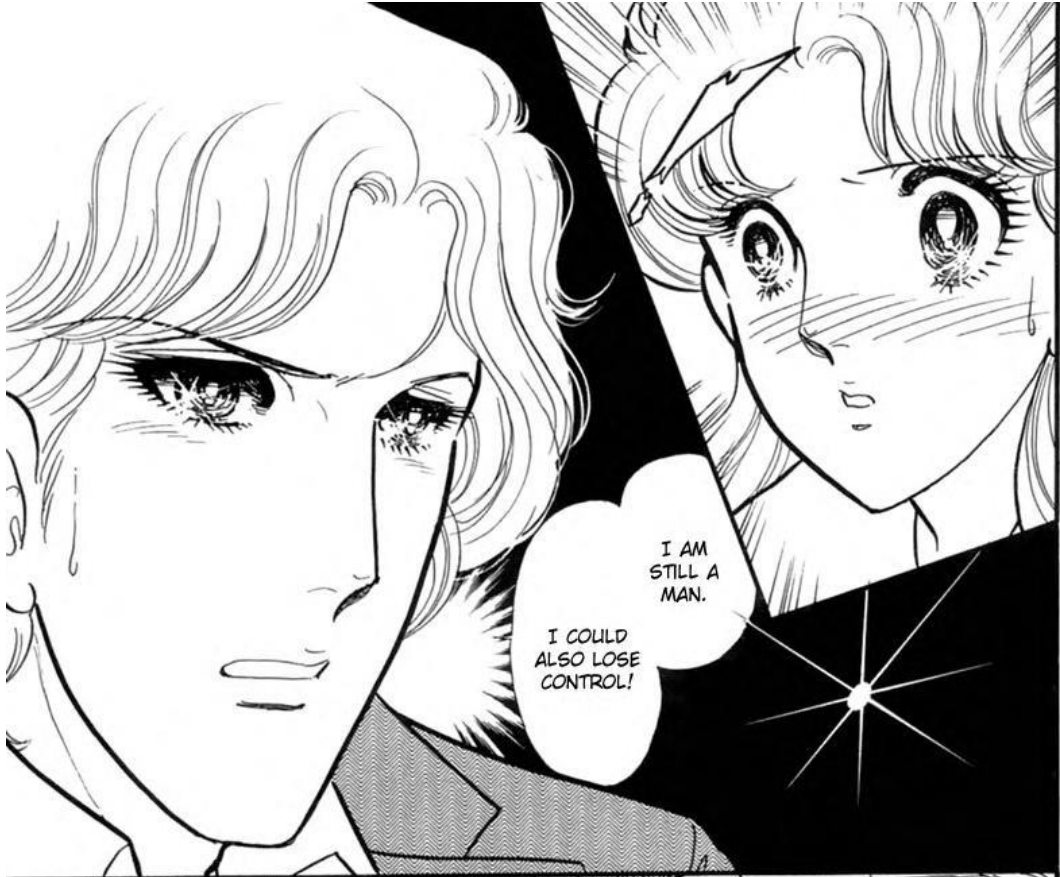






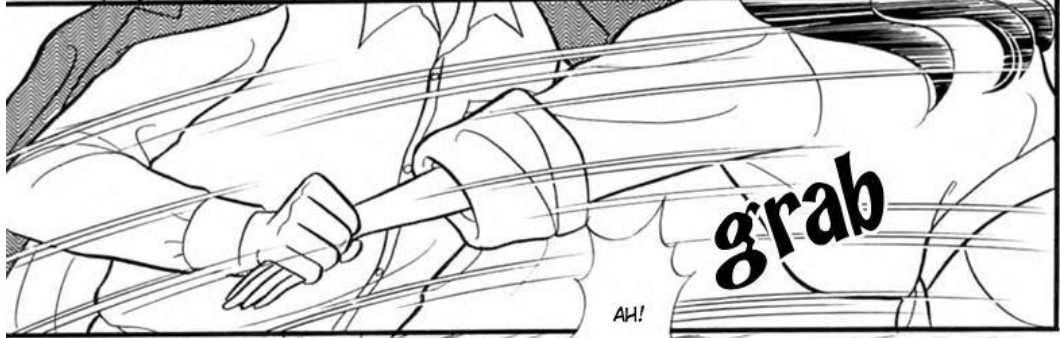






I COULD
ALSO LOSE
CONTROL!

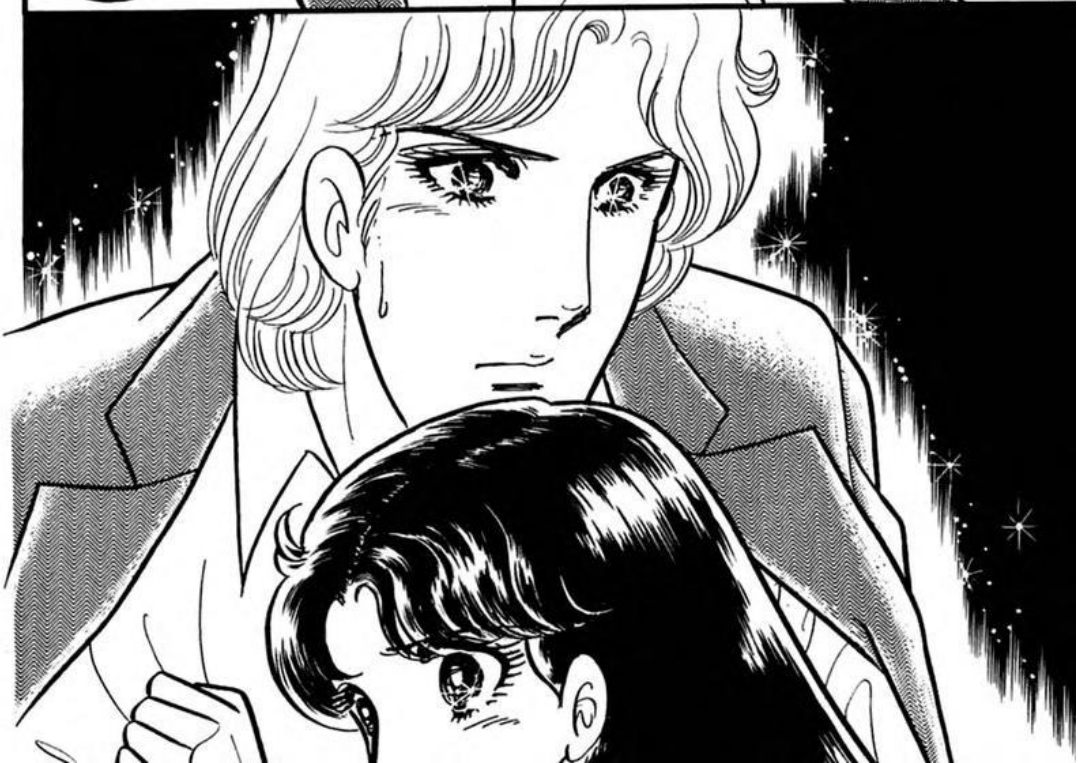
I AM
STILL A
MAN.

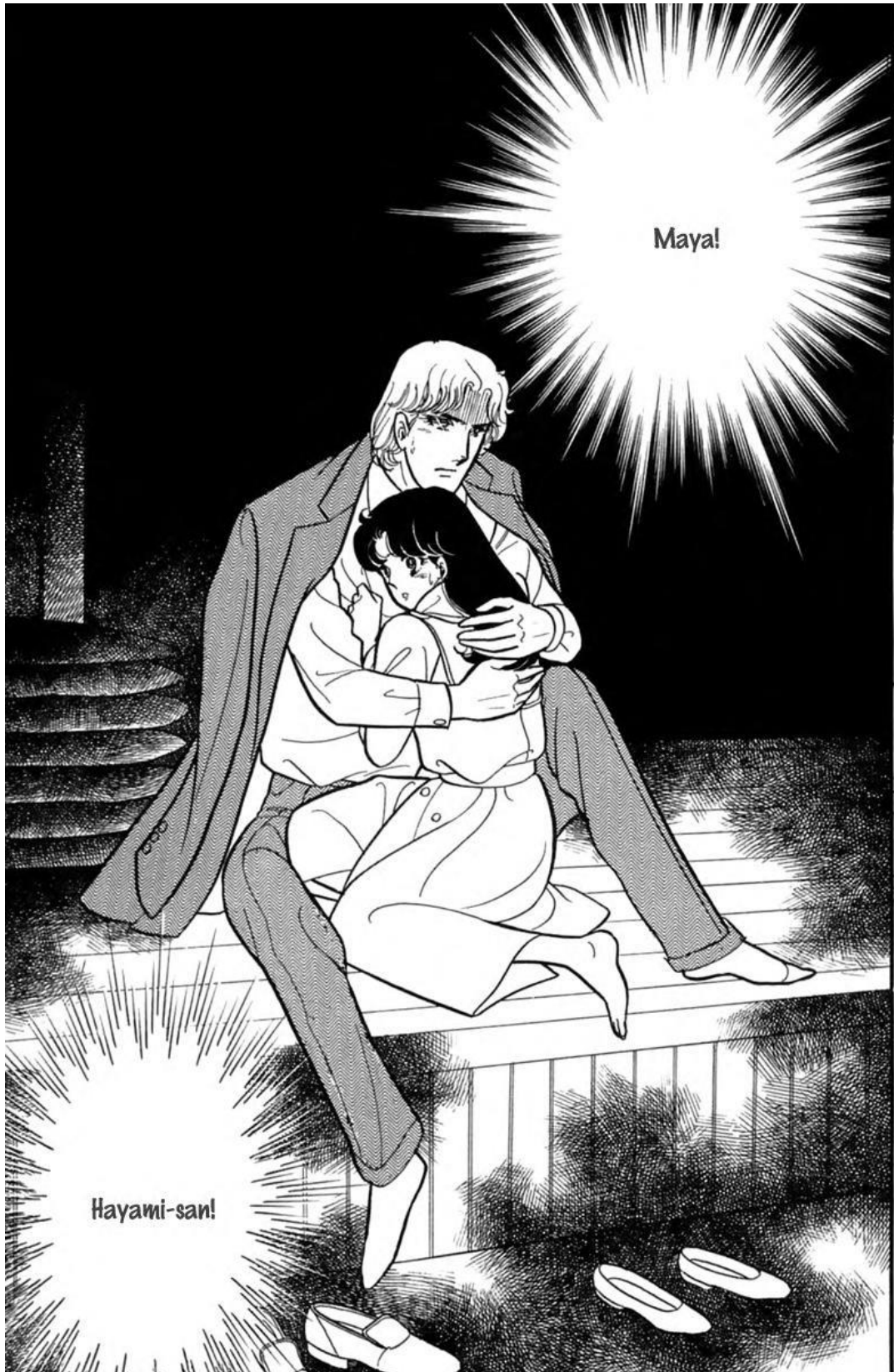


grab

AH!









Hayami-san...
Purple Rose!

Let me
treasure this
moment!

In the
morning I
shall wake
from my
dreams!

I too will
become the
one I was
before.

That's why...
Let me have
this moment!

Let me dream until
morning comes!



For now this moment is enough...

It doesn't matter if you think of me as a product...



Maya!

Hayami-san!



Maya!

Hayami-san!

FLAP



TONIGHT
WE ARE NOT
OURSELVES.

GO TO
SLEEP,
CHIBI-
CHAN...

...BEFORE
I LOSE MY
REASON...



Hmf...

WHEN YOU
WAKE UP
EVERYTHING
WILL JUST
HAVE BEEN
A DREAM.



Hayami-san!

SLEEP...



...leaving me with
a bitter-sweet dream...

A night so
long and yet
so short...

