

有吉京子

◆愛蔵版

# SWAN

白鳥

ariyoshi kyoko



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1

平凡社

*C O N T E N T S*

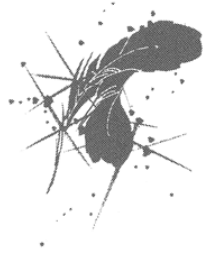
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# SWAN

白鳥



有吉京子





SFX: Kii... (Creak...)

HEY, WAIT!

NO, YOU CAN'T! BESIDES, IT'S ALREADY THE END OF ACT II, SO EVEN IF YOU GO IN NOW...

WHAT? A TICKET?

Swan Lake  
Bolshoi Ballet

SORRY. EVEN THE BALCONY WAS SOLD OUT MONTHS AGO.

HUFF... HUFF...

YOU CAN'T GO IN! STOP!



SEX: Putan... (Shut...)



SEX: You can (stomp stomp)



I CAN'T BELIEVE WE'LL GET TO SEE PLIGETSKAYA PERFORM THE BLACK SWAN!

WE'LL GET TO SEE THE GRAND FOUETTÉ EN TOURNANT, WITH THE 32 TURNS.

AT LAST, THE BLACK SWAN SCENE OF ACT III IS NEXT.

SHHH! IT'S STARTING!



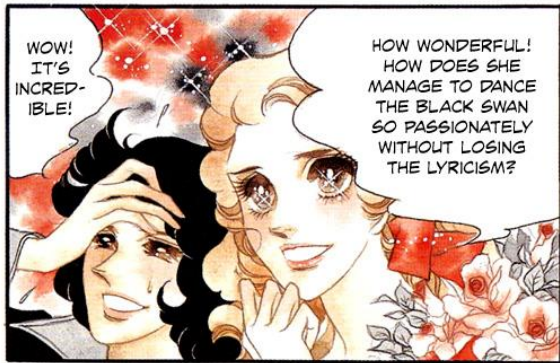
Wow!  
Wow!  
Wow!

SEX: Puchi puchi (Clap clap)



Grand fouetté en tournant

SEX: Ho, Haa (Oob, Abb)



WOW!  
IT'S  
INCRED-  
IBLE!

HOW WONDERFUL!  
HOW DOES SHE  
MANAGE TO DANCE  
THE BLACK SWAN  
SO PASSIONATELY  
WITHOUT LOSING  
THE LYRICISM?



AREN'T  
THEY AMAZING?  
PLISETSKAYA AND  
SERGEYEV ARE THE  
BEST DANCERS IN  
THE SOVIET  
UNION!

I'M SO  
EXCITED, MY  
KNEES ARE  
SHAKING!

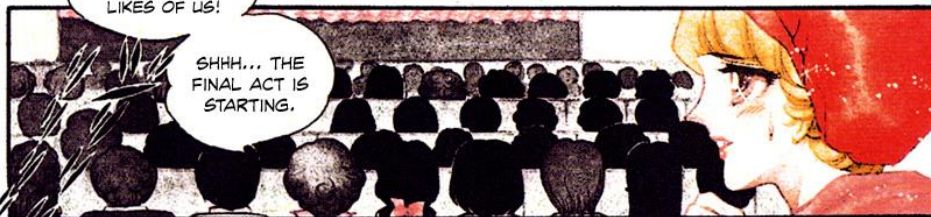
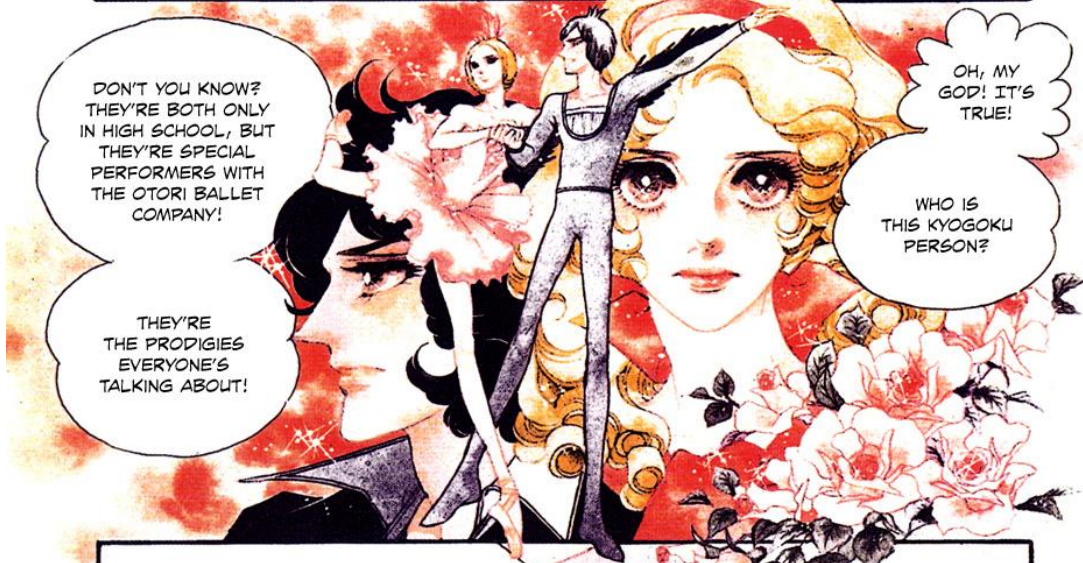
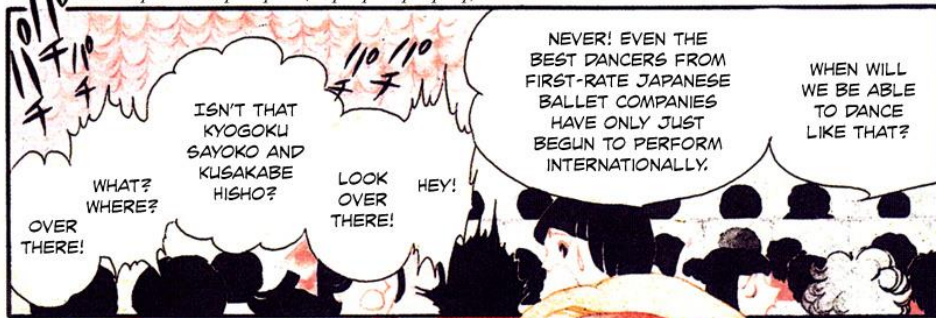
OH, MY  
GOD!



SEX: Wow! Wow!



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



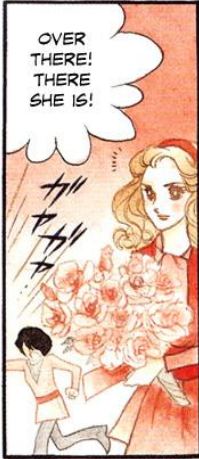
SFX: Jiriririririri (Bzzzzzz)



SFX: Pachi pachi pachi (Clap clap clap)

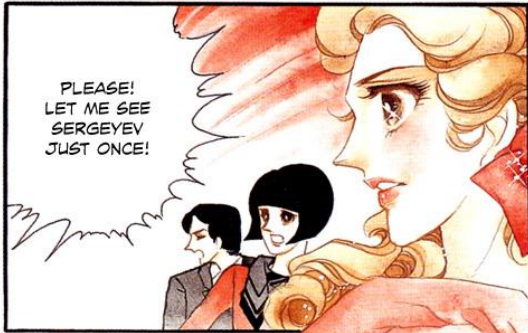


SFX: Wow, wow, wow!

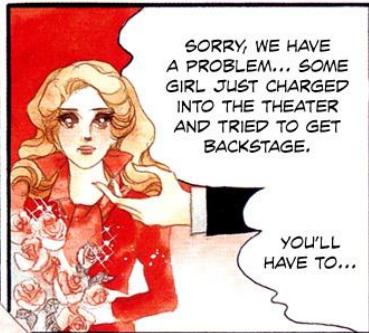


SFX: Kyaa, kyaa





PLEASE!  
LET ME SEE  
SERGEYEV  
JUST ONCE!



SORRY, WE HAVE  
A PROBLEM... SOME  
GIRL JUST CHARGED  
INTO THE THEATER  
AND TRIED TO GET  
BACKSTAGE.

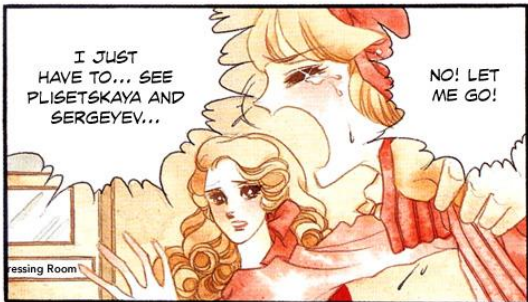
YOU'LL  
HAVE TO...



I CAME ALL THE  
WAY FROM HOKKAIDO!  
I JUST WANTED TO SEE  
THEIR PERFORMANCE!

I BEG  
YOU!

I'LL PAY FOR  
THE TICKET!



I JUST  
HAVE TO... SEE  
PLISETSKAYA AND  
SERGEYEV...

NO! LET  
ME GO!



PLEASE...  
LET HER GO...

Dressing Room



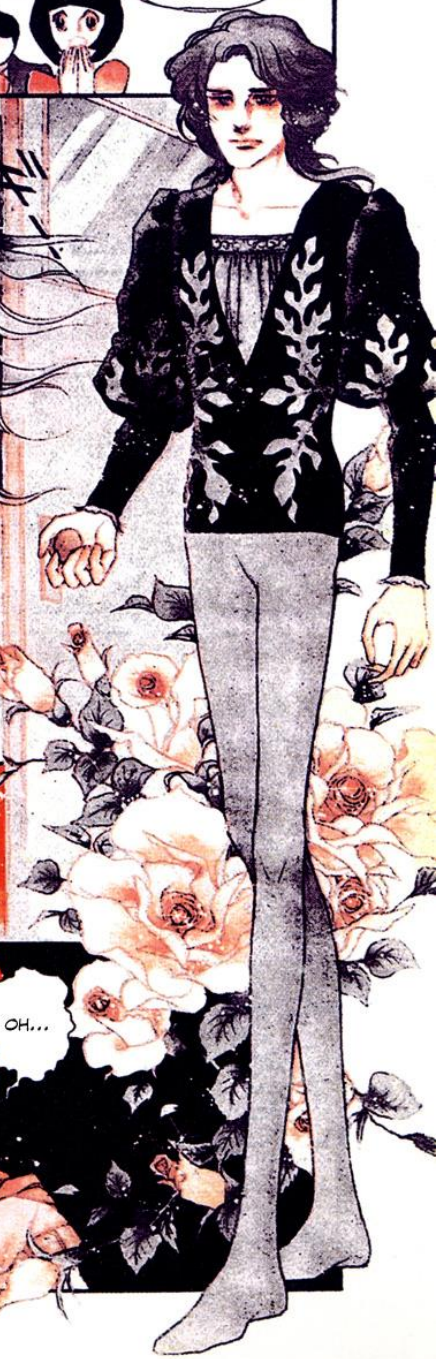
HURRY AND  
TAKE HER  
OUTSIDE!

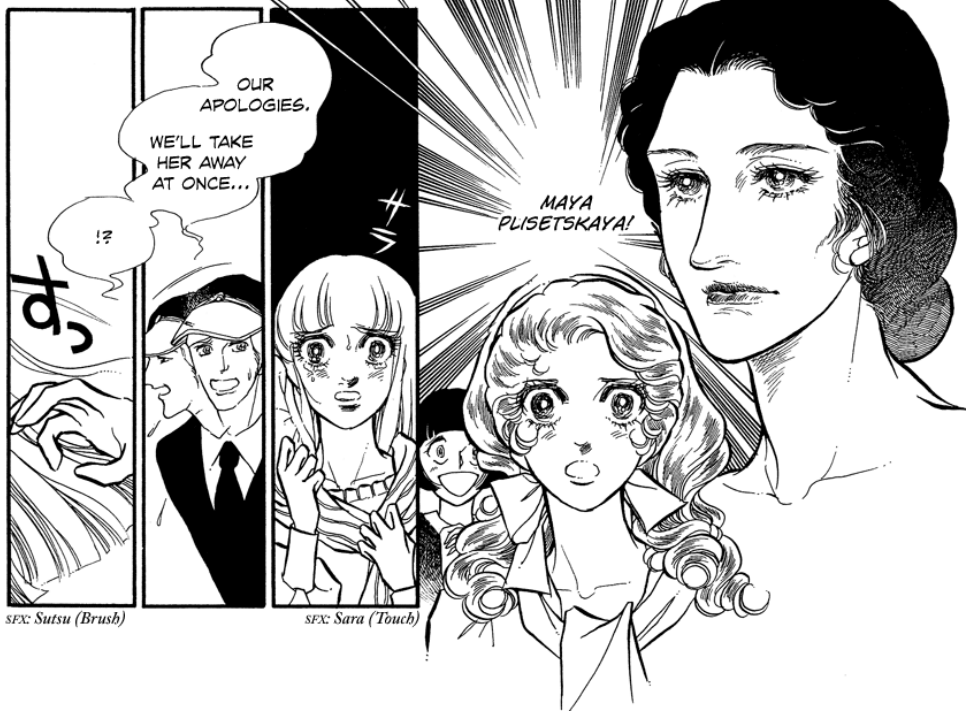
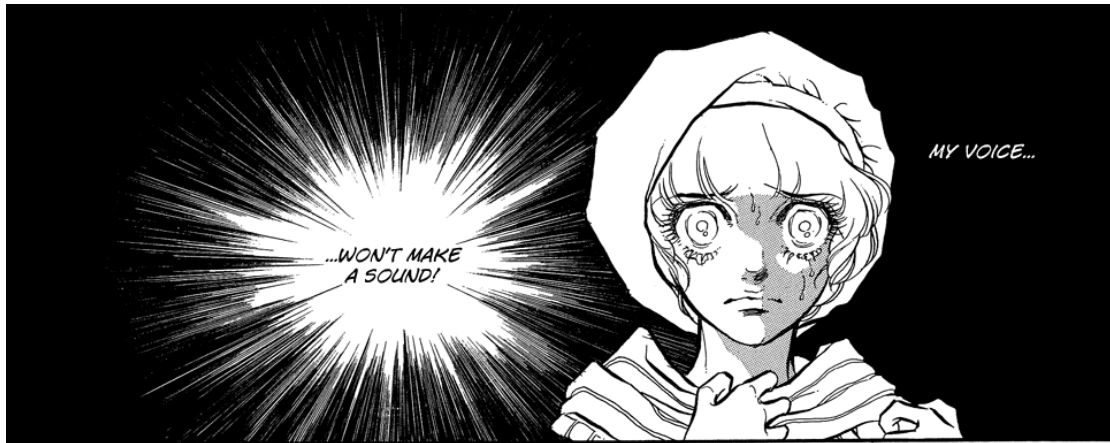
WE CAN'T  
ALLOW  
SPECIAL  
TREATMENT  
JUST FOR  
YOU!

THERE'S A LOT  
OF PEOPLE  
WHO COULDN'T  
GET TICKETS  
FOR TODAY'S  
PERFORMANCE.

SEX: Kachiya (Ker-click)

1  
1





SEX: Sutsu (Brush)

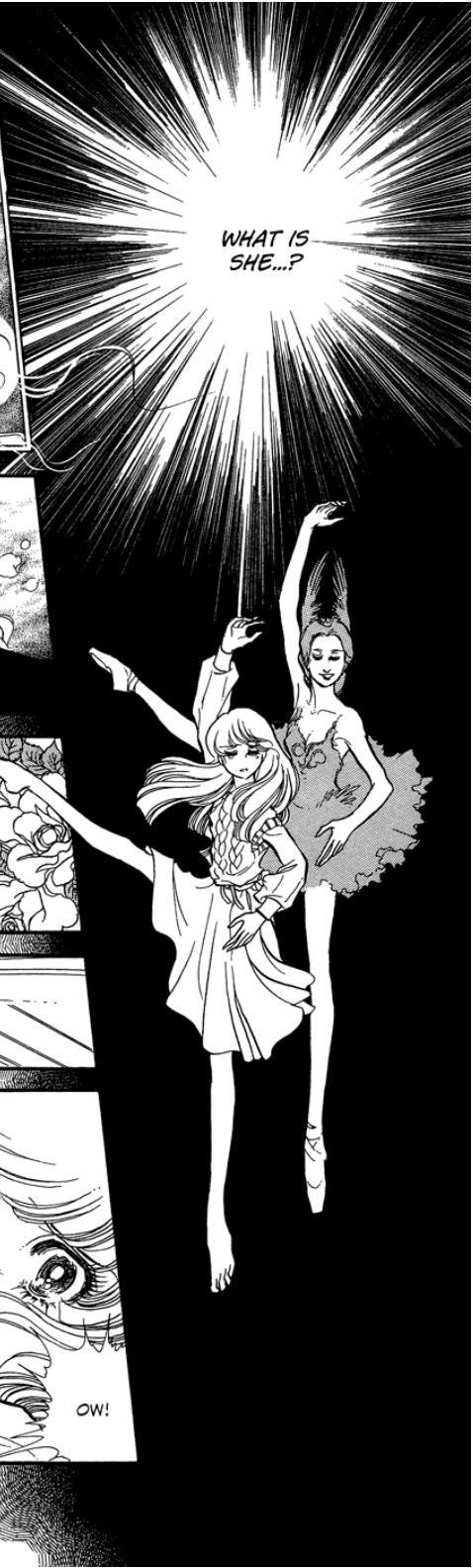
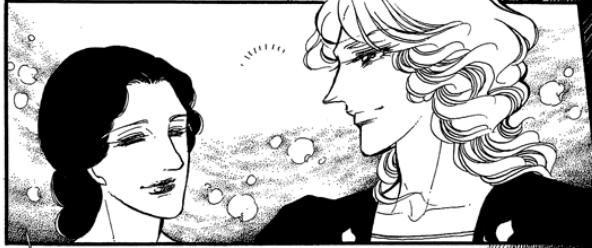
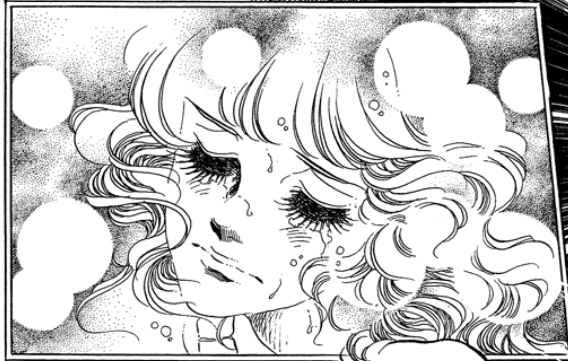
SEX: Sara (Touch)

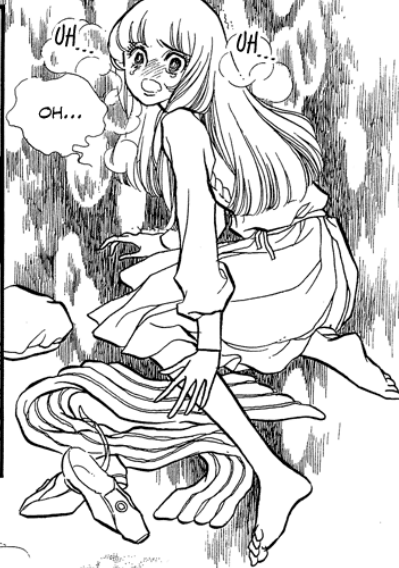
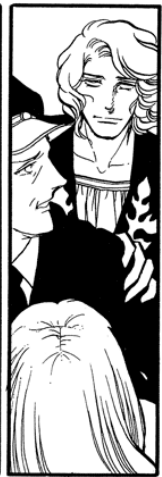


SHE'S DANCING!

IT'S THE BLACK SWAN THAT PLISETSKAYA JUST PERFORMED!

NOT JUST ANY DANCE...

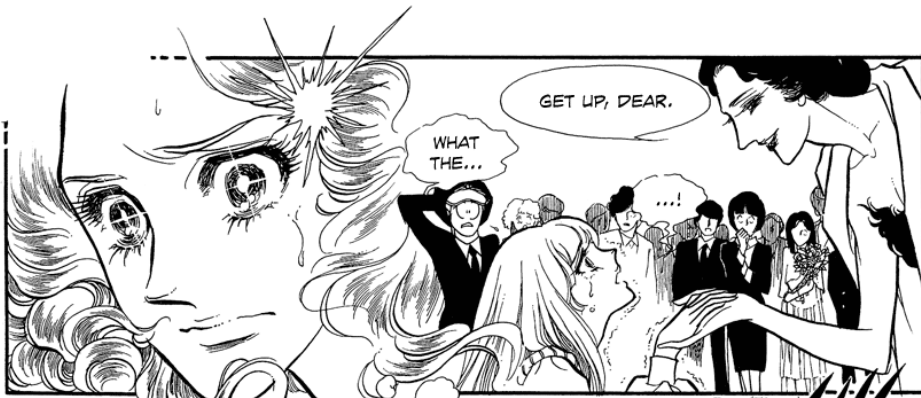




IT DELIGHTS US MORE THAN ANY WORDS OF PRAISE.

THIS YOUNG LADY WAS VERY DEEPLY MOVED BY OUR PERFORMANCE. SHE EXPRESSED THOSE HEARTFELT EMOTIONS THROUGH DANCE.





GET UP, DEAR.

WHAT THE...

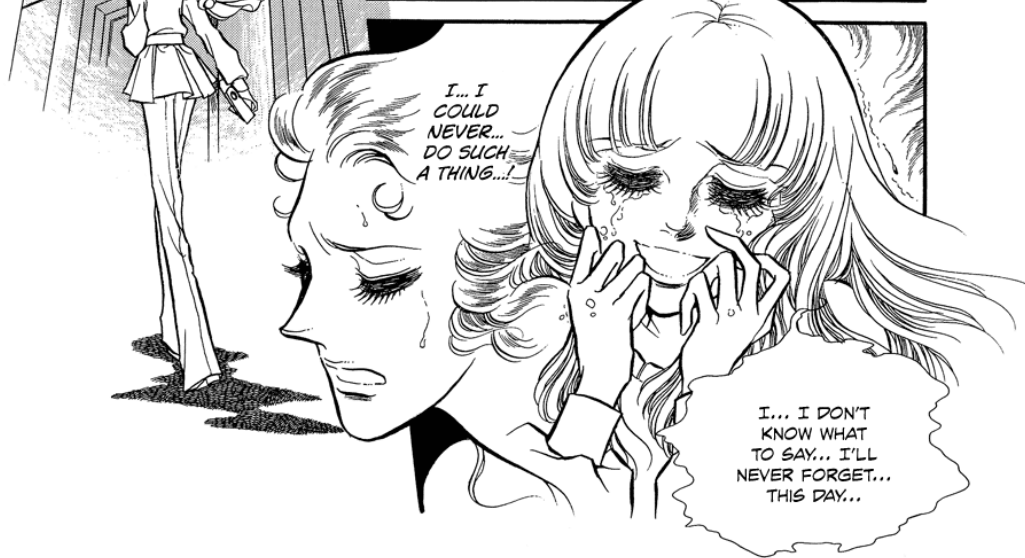
SFX: Pasa (Flomp)



FOR HEAVEN'S SAKE!

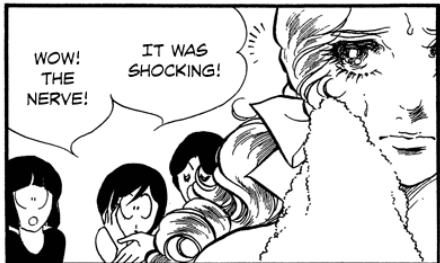
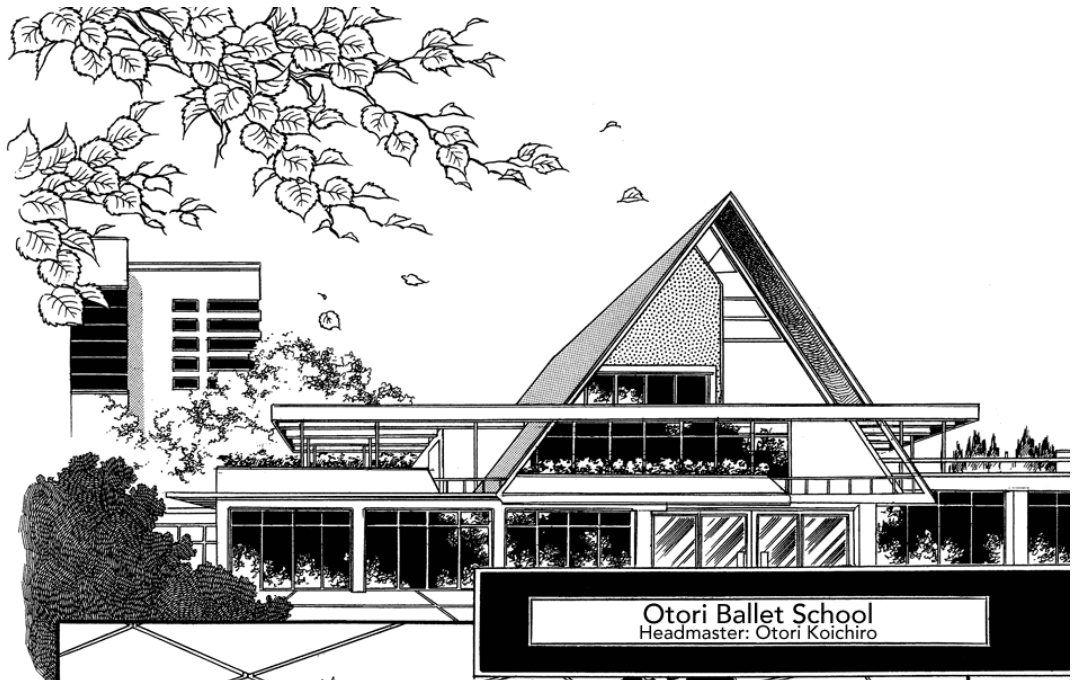
SFX: Zaku zaku (Chitter chatter)

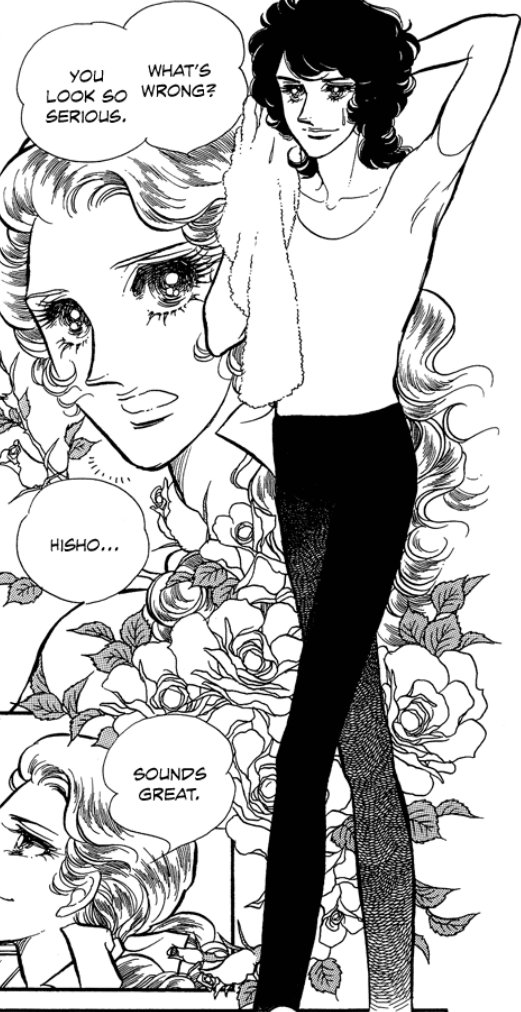
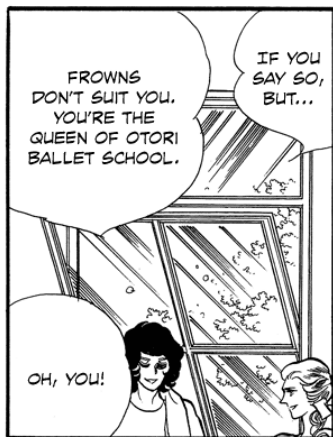
SFX: Wai wai (Wow wow)



I... I  
COULD  
NEVER...  
DO SUCH  
A THING...!

I... I DON'T  
KNOW WHAT  
TO SAY... I'LL  
NEVER FORGET...  
THIS DAY...







WHAT DO YOU EXPECT? AFTER ALL, THEY'RE THE TOP STUDENTS OF THE OTORI BALLET SCHOOL!

I'M JUST FLOORED ANY TIME I SEE THEM PERFORM!

GOSH! SO LOVELY!

IT'S RUMORED THEY'RE ALREADY BEING GROOMED TO JOIN THE OTORI COMPANY AS LEAD DANCERS!



Hoh!



SHE'S BEAUTIFUL...  
GRACEFUL... A LITHE  
BODY... SHE HAS  
EVERYTHING IT  
TAKES TO BECOME A  
PRIMA BALLERINA.



KYOGOKU  
AND KUSAKABE,  
REPORT TO THE  
HEADMASTER'S  
OFFICE  
IMMEDIATELY.

WOW!!

Phew.

?

SFX: Pan pan (Clap Clap)

SFX: Kacha... (Creak...)



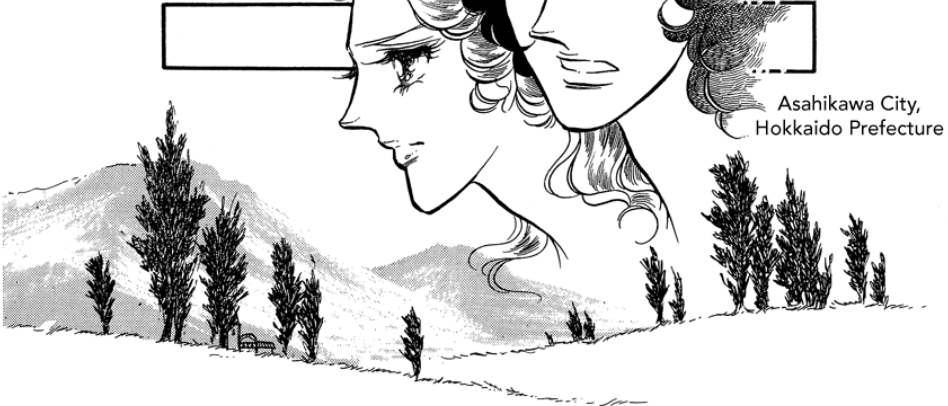
WHAT? BUT THE NEW  
TOKYO NEWSPAPER ONLY  
SPONSORS ONE NATIONAL  
DANCE COMPETITION EACH  
YEAR, AND IT WAS HELD  
THIS PAST APRIL.

A SPECIAL  
NATIONAL  
BALLET  
COMPETITION IS  
GOING TO BE  
HELD NEXT  
MONTH.



FURTHER-  
MORE, THEY  
SAY THAT  
THE REAL  
OBJECTIVE  
FOR THIS  
COMPETITION  
IS...

THIS IS  
COMPLETELY  
DIFFERENT.  
IT'S GOING  
TO BE A  
SPLENDID  
AFFAIR,  
SPONSORED  
BY THE AGENCY  
FOR CULTURAL  
AFFAIRS AND  
JAPAN BALLET  
ASSOCIATION.



Asahikawa City,  
Hokkaido Prefecture

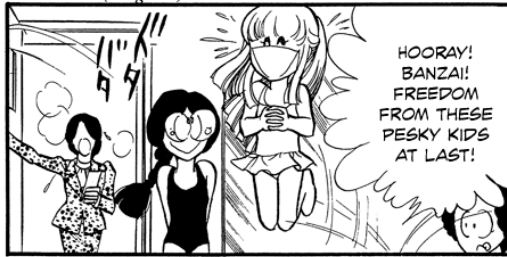


NO, MIKU-CHAN, NO! YOU MUSTN'T FIGHT!

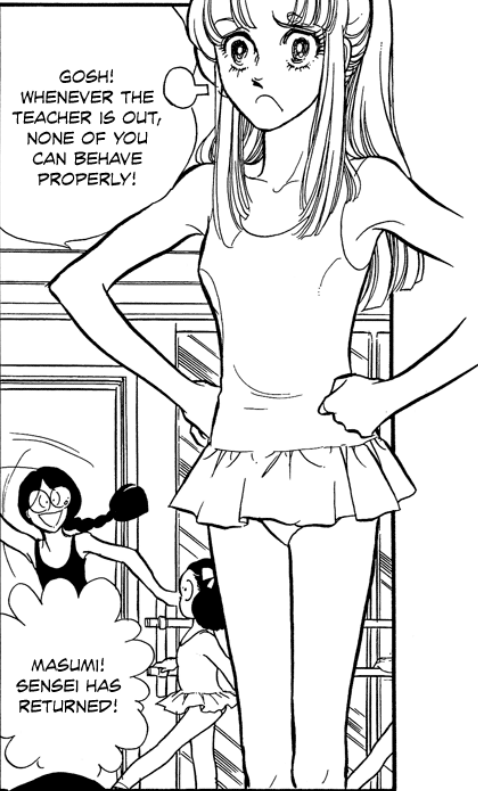
OUCH! HOW DARE YOU HIT ME!

TOKO-CHAN! YOUR LEG IS BENT AGAIN!

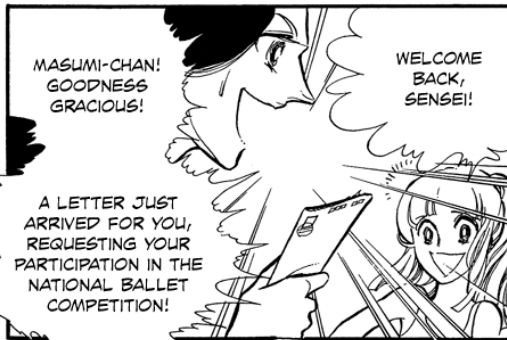
SFX: Dota bata (Bang thud)



HOORAY! BANZAI! FREEDOM FROM THESE PESKY KIDS AT LAST!



GOSH! WHENEVER THE TEACHER IS OUT, NONE OF YOU CAN BEHAVE PROPERLY!



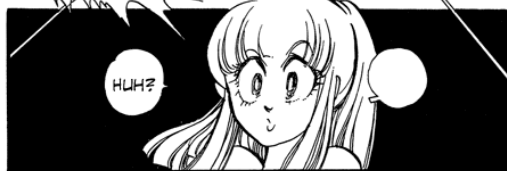
MASUMI-CHAN! GOODNESS GRACIOUS!

WELCOME BACK, SENSEI!

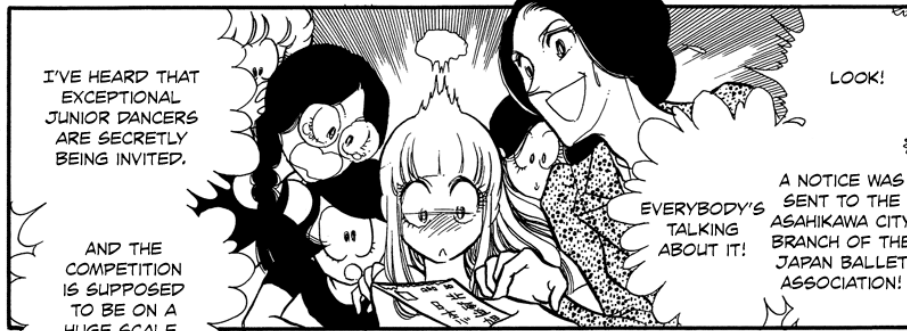
A LETTER JUST ARRIVED FOR YOU, REQUESTING YOUR PARTICIPATION IN THE NATIONAL BALLET COMPETITION!



MASUMI! SENSEI HAS RETURNED!



HUH?



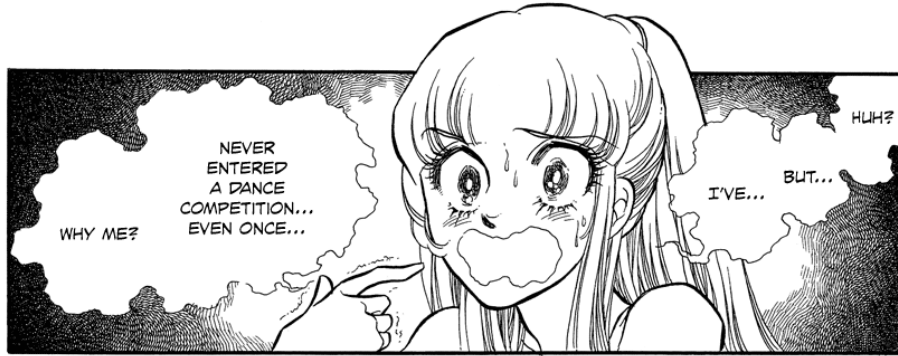
I'VE HEARD THAT EXCEPTIONAL JUNIOR DANCERS ARE SECRETLY BEING INVITED.

AND THE COMPETITION IS SUPPOSED TO BE ON A HUGE SCALE.

LOOK!

EVERYBODY'S TALKING ABOUT IT!

A NOTICE WAS SENT TO THE ASAHIKAWA CITY BRANCH OF THE JAPAN BALLET ASSOCIATION!



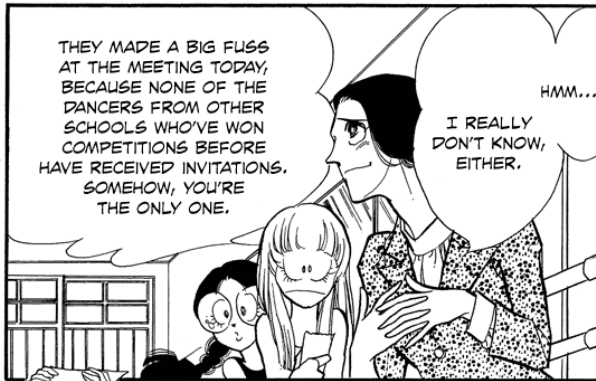
WHY ME?  
NEVER ENTERED A DANCE COMPETITION... EVEN ONCE...

HUH?  
I'VE... BUT...



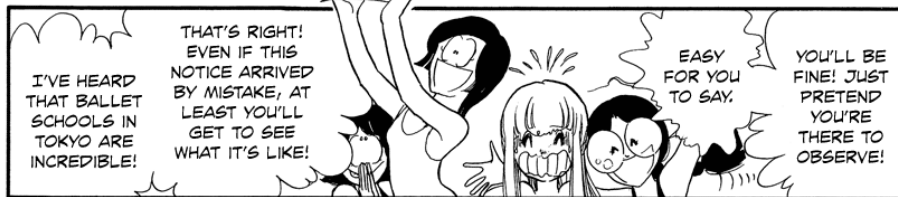
BUT I'VE NEVER DANCED IN A PLACE LIKE THAT!

THAT'S GREAT, MASUMI!



THEY MADE A BIG FUSS AT THE MEETING TODAY, BECAUSE NONE OF THE DANCERS FROM OTHER SCHOOLS WHO'VE WON COMPETITIONS BEFORE HAVE RECEIVED INVITATIONS. SOMEHOW, YOU'RE THE ONLY ONE.

HMM...  
I REALLY DON'T KNOW, EITHER.

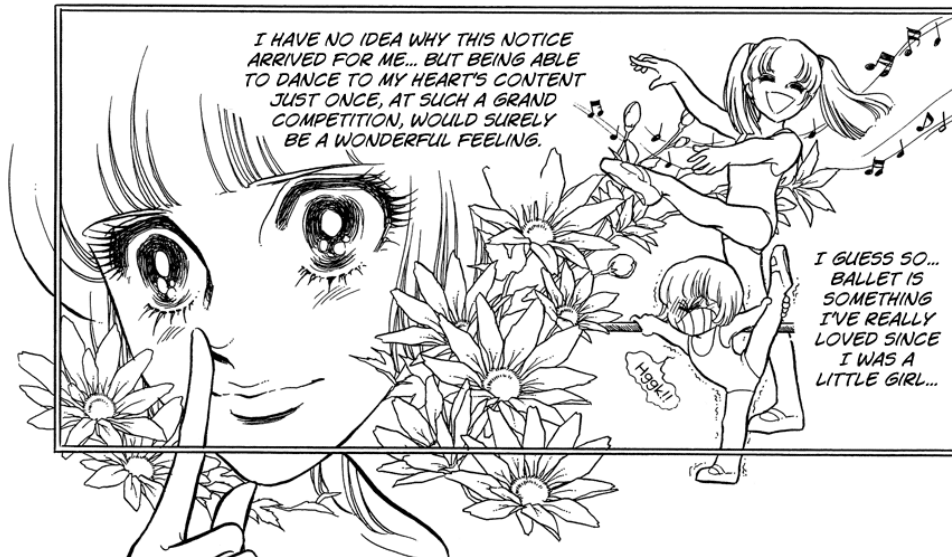


I'VE HEARD THAT BALLET SCHOOLS IN TOKYO ARE INCREDIBLE!

THAT'S RIGHT! EVEN IF THIS NOTICE ARRIVED BY MISTAKE, AT LEAST YOU'LL GET TO SEE WHAT IT'S LIKE!

EASY FOR YOU TO SAY.

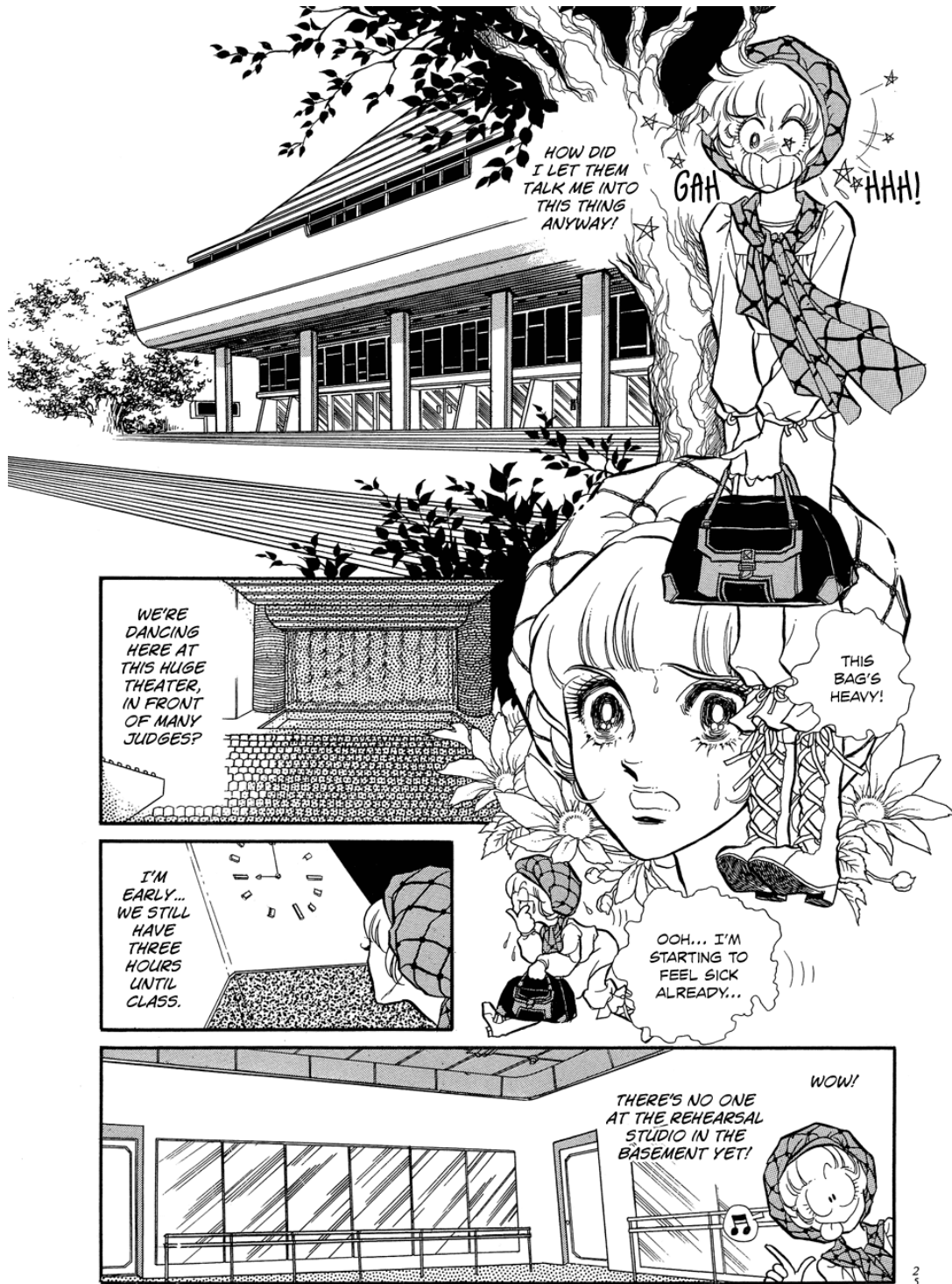
YOU'LL BE FINE! JUST PRETEND YOU'RE THERE TO OBSERVE!



I HAVE NO IDEA WHY THIS NOTICE ARRIVED FOR ME... BUT BEING ABLE TO DANCE TO MY HEART'S CONTENT JUST ONCE, AT SUCH A GRAND COMPETITION, WOULD SURELY BE A WONDERFUL FEELING.

I GUESS SO... BALLET IS SOMETHING I'VE REALLY LOVED SINCE I WAS A LITTLE GIRL...





HOW DID I LET THEM TALK ME INTO THIS THING ANYWAY!

GAA

AAA!

WE'RE DANCING HERE AT THIS HUGE THEATER, IN FRONT OF MANY JUDGES?

THIS BAG'S HEAVY!

I'M EARLY... WE STILL HAVE THREE HOURS UNTIL CLASS.

OOH... I'M STARTING TO FEEL SICK ALREADY...

THERE'S NO ONE AT THE REHEARSAL STUDIO IN THE BASEMENT YET!

WOW!

SFX: Gacha (Click)



SFX: Katsun (Step)



GEE...

YOU'RE  
HERE  
EARLY.

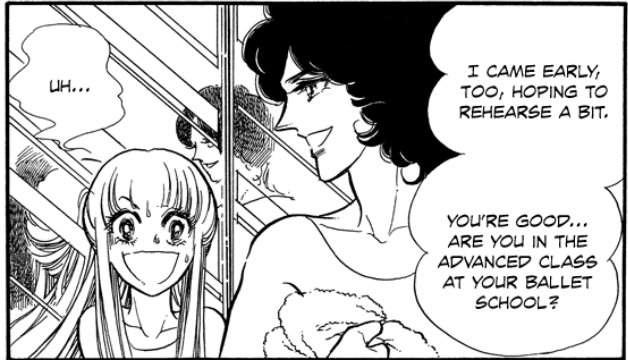
DON'T  
WORRY  
ABOUT IT.

SORRY! I'M  
SO SORRY  
FOR COMING  
IN WITHOUT  
PERMISSION.



AGGH!

YOU  
SCARED  
ME!



UH...

I CAME EARLY,  
TOO, HOPING TO  
REHEARSE A BIT.

YOU'RE GOOD...  
ARE YOU IN THE  
ADVANCED CLASS  
AT YOUR BALLE  
T SCHOOL?

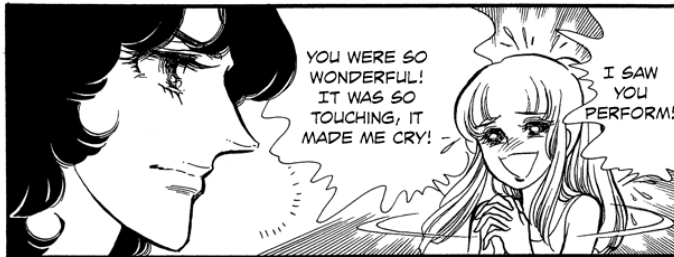




OH?

I'M NOT VERY GOOD. I HAVE NO IDEA WHY I'M EVEN IN THIS COMPETITION!

OH, NO! ABSOLUTELY NOT!



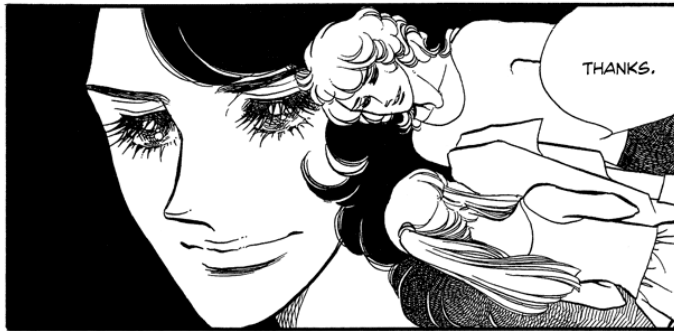
YOU WERE SO WONDERFUL! IT WAS SO TOUCHING, IT MADE ME CRY!

I SAW YOU PERFORM!



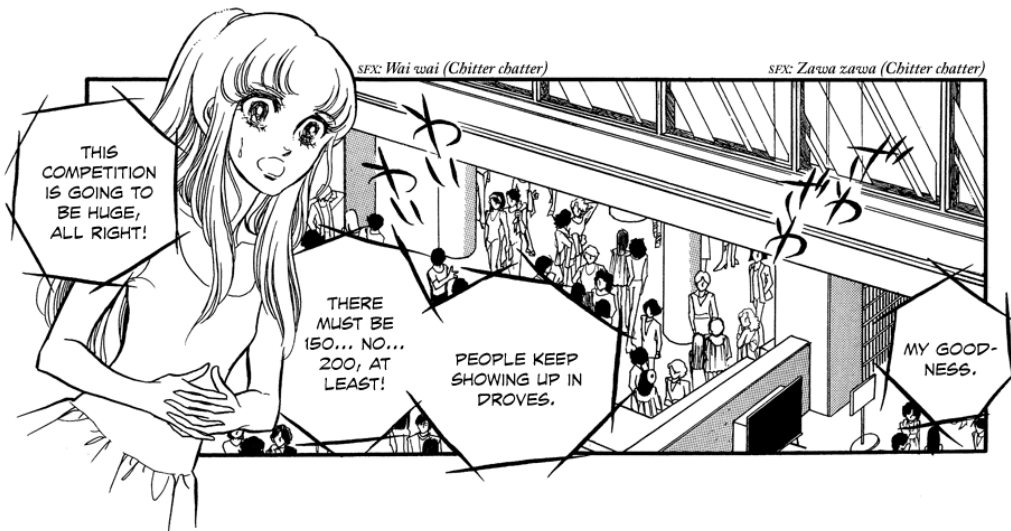
Erk!

OH, MY GOSH!



THANKS.

I KNEW YOU LOOKED FAMILIAR! YOU'RE KUSAKABESAN, THE ONE WHO PLACED FIRST IN THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION AWARD AT THE NATIONAL DANCE COMPETITION!



SEX: Wai wai (Chitter chatter)

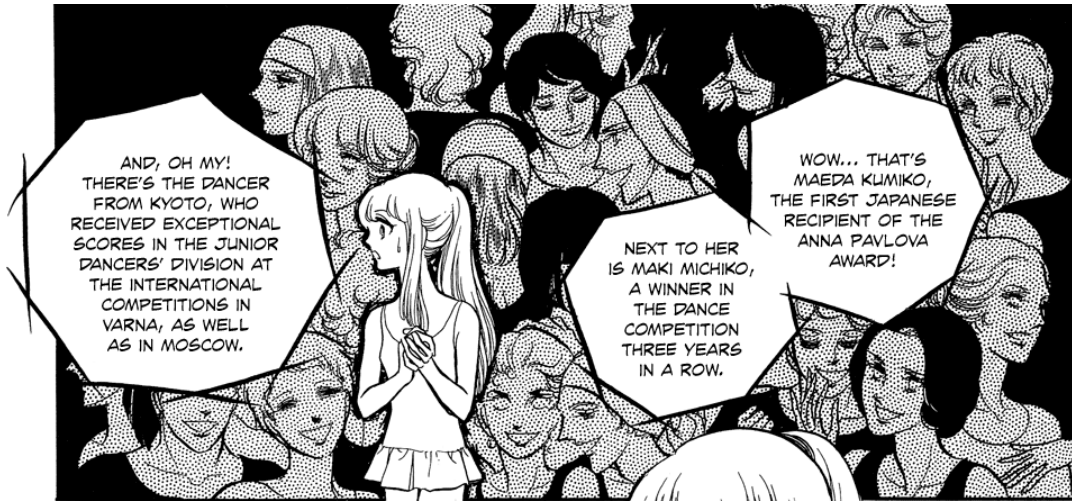
SEX: Zawa zawa (Chitter chatter)

THIS COMPETITION IS GOING TO BE HUGE, ALL RIGHT!

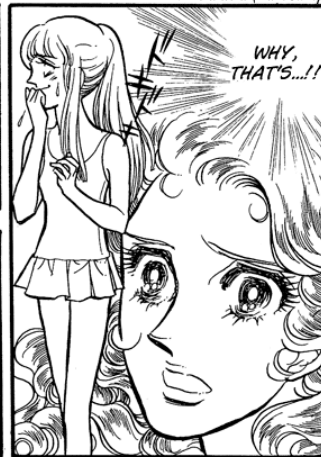
THERE MUST BE 150... NO... 200, AT LEAST!

PEOPLE KEEP SHOWING UP IN DROVES.

MY GOODNESS.

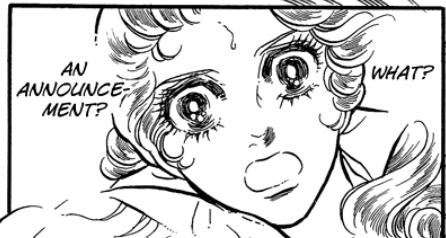
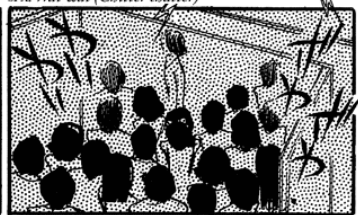


SFX: Doki doki (Ba-thump)



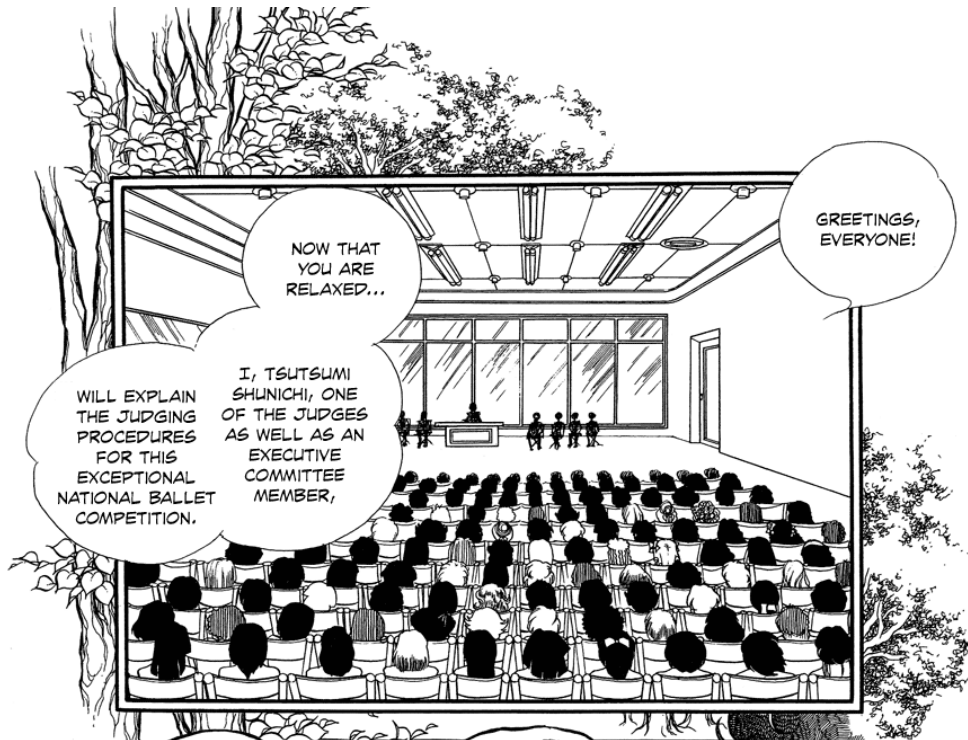


SFX: Wai wai (Chitter chatter)



ALEXEI SERGEYEV!!



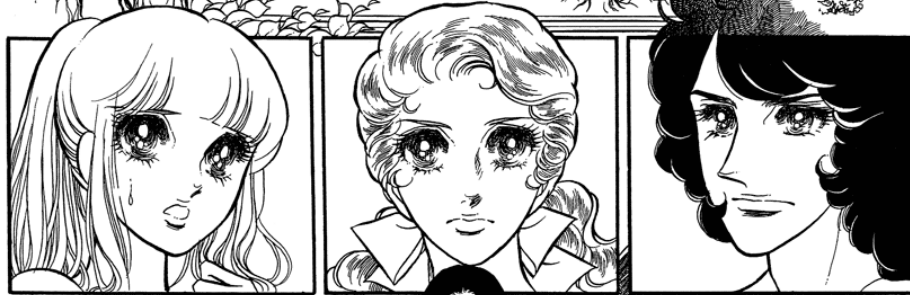


NOW THAT YOU ARE RELAXED...

GREETINGS, EVERYONE!

WILL EXPLAIN THE JUDGING PROCEDURES FOR THIS EXCEPTIONAL NATIONAL BALLET COMPETITION.

I, TSUTSUMI SHUNICHI, ONE OF THE JUDGES AS WELL AS AN EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBER,



WE WOULD LIKE ALL OF YOU TO SHOW US YOUR PASSION FOR THE BALLET!

EVERYONE!



BUT THE PURPOSE OF THIS COMPETITION IS TOTALLY DIFFERENT FROM THAT OF THE TRADITIONAL CONTEST.

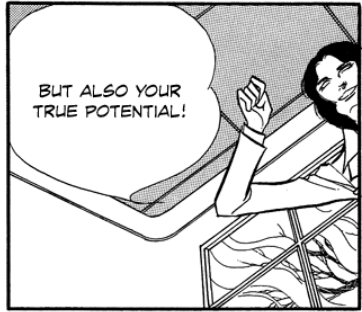
SOME OF YOU MAY HAVE ALREADY HEARD...

PERHAPS ...

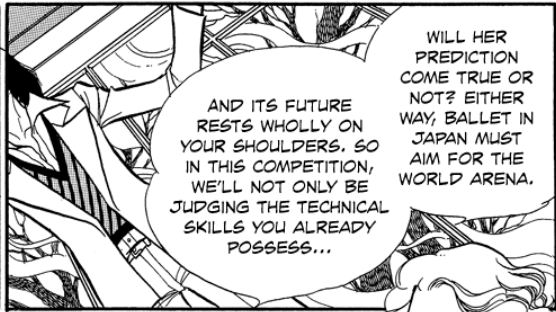


SHE SAID, "JAPAN WILL MOST LIKELY BECOME THE FOCAL POINT OF BALLET IN THE WORLD, AFTER FRANCE AND THE SOVIET UNION."

HOW MANY OF YOU CAN REMEMBER THE WORDS OF MARGOT FONTEYN WHEN SHE VISITED JAPAN?



BUT ALSO YOUR TRUE POTENTIAL!



AND ITS FUTURE RESTS WHOLLY ON YOUR SHOULDERS. SO IN THIS COMPETITION, WE'LL NOT ONLY BE JUDGING THE TECHNICAL SKILLS YOU ALREADY POSSESS...

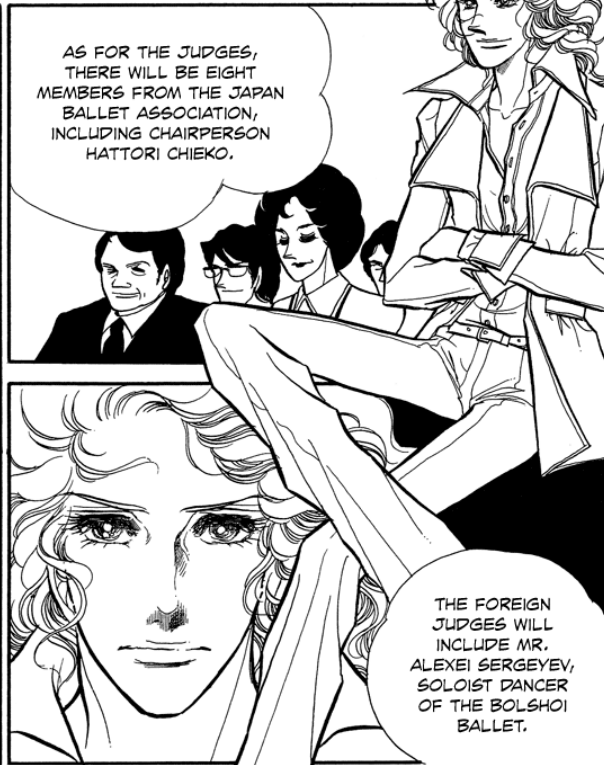
WILL HER PREDICTION COME TRUE OR NOT? EITHER WAY, BALLET IN JAPAN MUST AIM FOR THE WORLD ARENA.



THEIR NAMES WILL BE ANNOUNCED AT THE OPENING CEREMONY TWO WEEKS FROM TODAY.

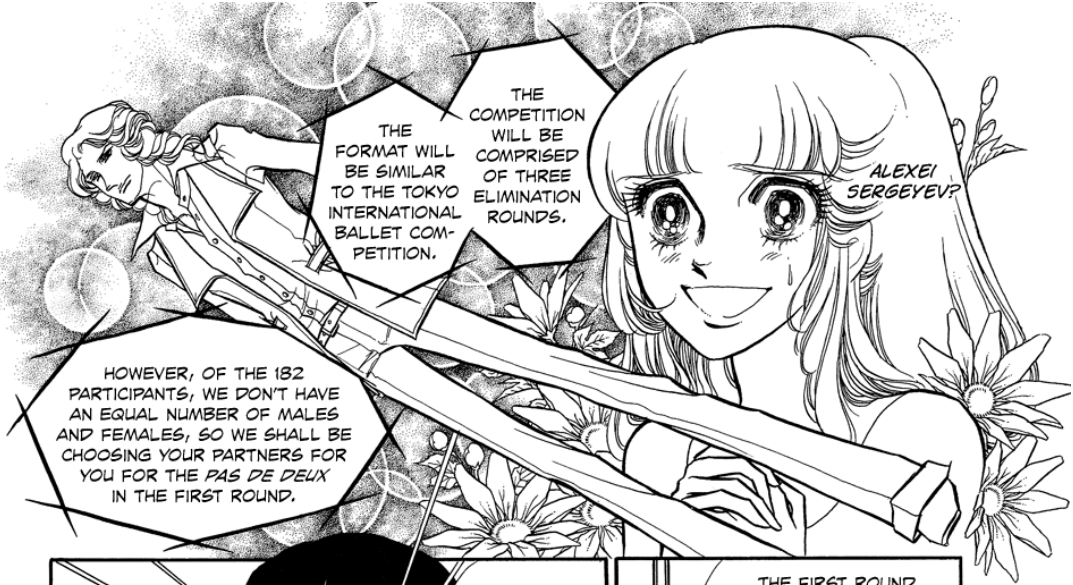
SIX OTHER JUDGES HAVE ARRIVED IN JAPAN, ALL WORLD-RENOWNED DANCERS AND CHOREOGRAPHERS.

AMAZING!



AS FOR THE JUDGES, THERE WILL BE EIGHT MEMBERS FROM THE JAPAN BALLET ASSOCIATION, INCLUDING CHAIRPERSON HATTORI CHIEKO.

THE FOREIGN JUDGES WILL INCLUDE MR. ALEXEI SERGEYEV, SOLOIST DANCER OF THE BOLSHOI BALLET.



THE COMPETITION WILL BE COMPRISED OF THREE ELIMINATION ROUNDS.

ALEXEI SERGEYEV?

HOWEVER, OF THE 132 PARTICIPANTS, WE DON'T HAVE AN EQUAL NUMBER OF MALES AND FEMALES, SO WE SHALL BE CHOOSING YOUR PARTNERS FOR YOU FOR THE PAS DE DEUX IN THE FIRST ROUND.



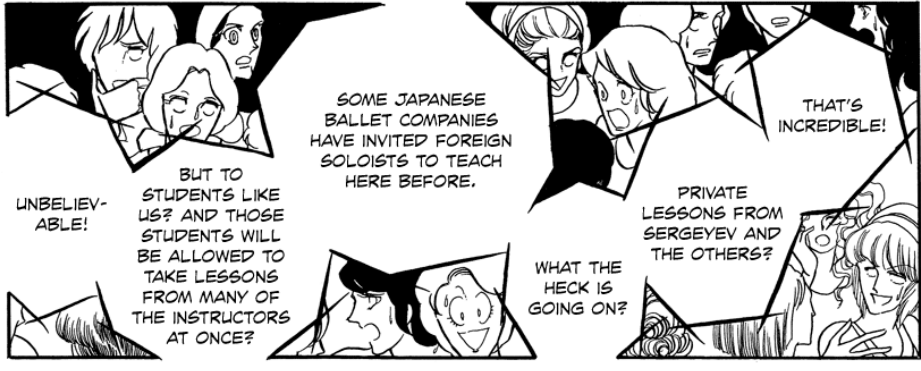
FROM MR. ALEXEI SERGEYEV AND OUR OTHER ILLUSTRIOUS JUDGES.

WILL BE RECEIVING PRIVATE LESSONS FOR SIX MONTHS...

THE FIRST ROUND WILL TAKE PLACE OVER FIVE DAYS. THE SECOND ROUND, THREE DAYS. AND THE THIRD ROUND, TWO DAYS, FOR A TOTAL OF TEN COMPETITION DAYS.  
ONCE THE FINAL JUDGING HAS BEEN COMPLETED, THE HIGHEST-SCORING PARTICIPANT...



SFX: Waah!



UNBELIEVABLE!  
BUT TO STUDENTS LIKE US? AND THOSE STUDENTS WILL BE ALLOWED TO TAKE LESSONS FROM MANY OF THE INSTRUCTORS AT ONCE?

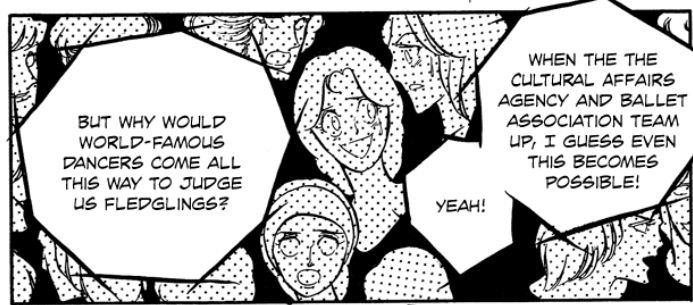
SOME JAPANESE BALLET COMPANIES HAVE INVITED FOREIGN SOLOISTS TO TEACH HERE BEFORE.

WHAT THE HECK IS GOING ON?

THAT'S INCREDIBLE!

PRIVATE LESSONS FROM SERGEYEV AND THE OTHERS?

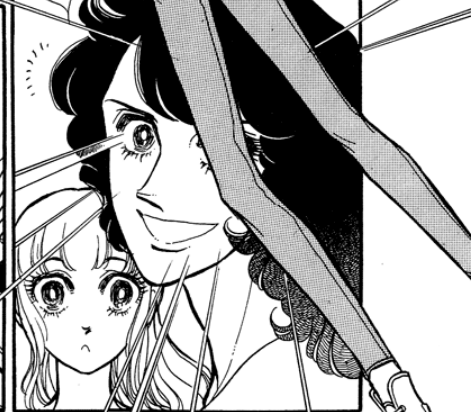
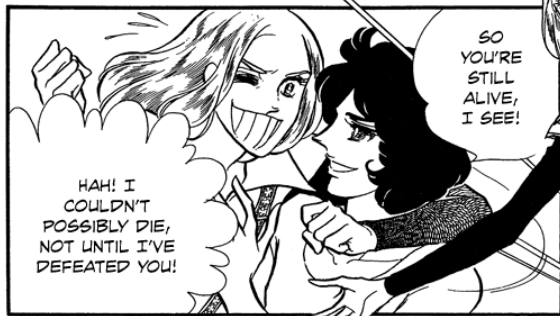
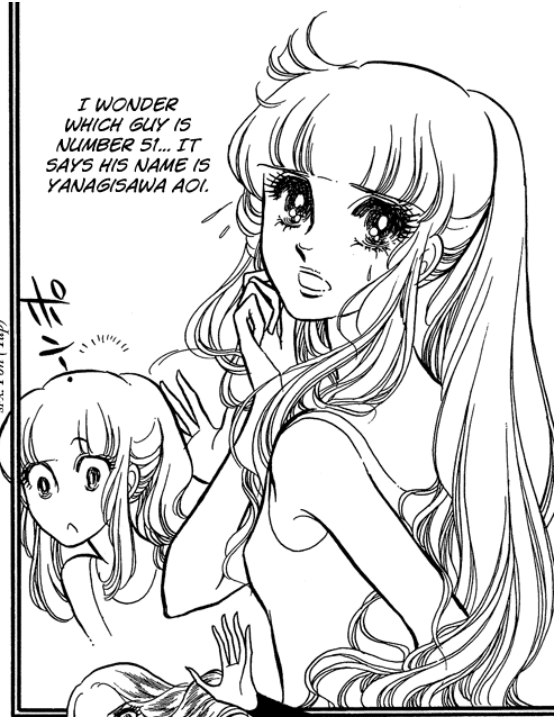


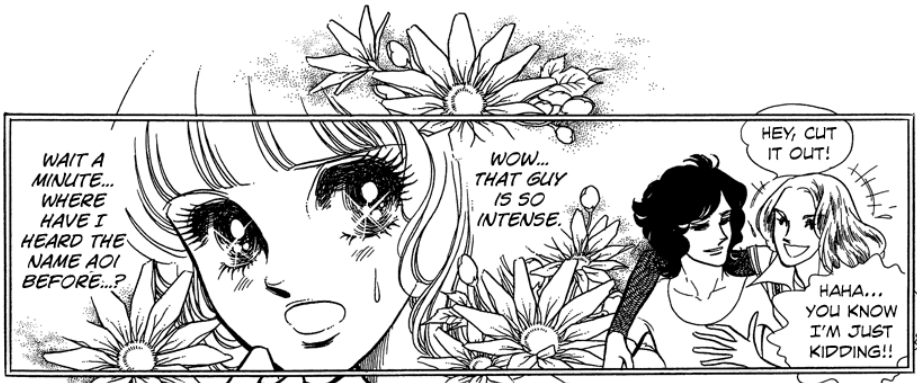


SFX: Wai wai (Chitter chatter)



SFX: Zawa zawa (Chitter chatter)





WAIT A MINUTE... WHERE HAVE I HEARD THE NAME AOI BEFORE...?

WOW... THAT GUY IS SO INTENSE.

HEY, CUT IT OUT!

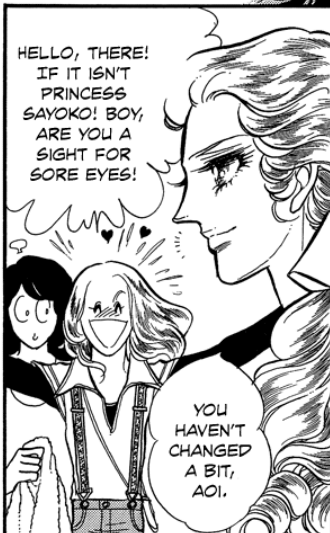
HAHA... YOU KNOW I'M JUST KIDDING!!



THE INCREDIBLE LINE-UP... INCLUDING OUR JUDGES?

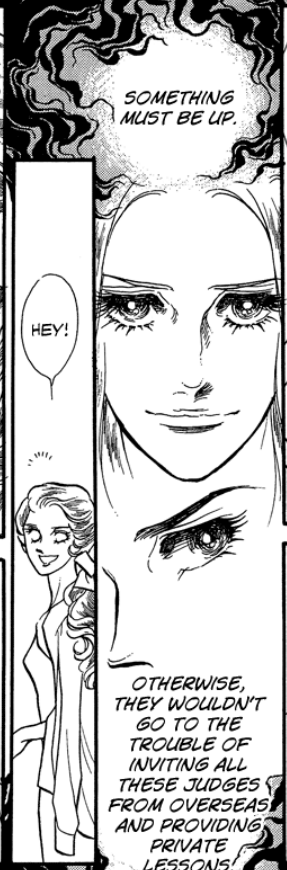
DID YOU NOTICE IT?

BY THE WAY...



HELLO, THERE! IF IT ISN'T PRINCESS SAYOKO! BOY, ARE YOU A SIGHT FOR SORE EYES!

YOU HAVEN'T CHANGED A BIT, AOI.



SOMETHING MUST BE UP.

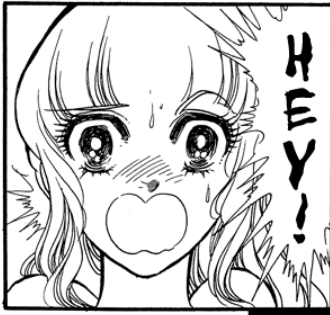
HEY!

OTHERWISE, THEY WOULDN'T GO TO THE TROUBLE OF INVITING ALL THESE JUDGES FROM OVERSEAS AND PROVIDING PRIVATE LESSONS.



I'D HEARD THAT WE'D BE ALLOWED TO TAKE LESSONS FROM FIRST-RATE DANCERS FROM ABROAD.

I HEARD THAT, TOO, BACK AT MY SCHOOL.

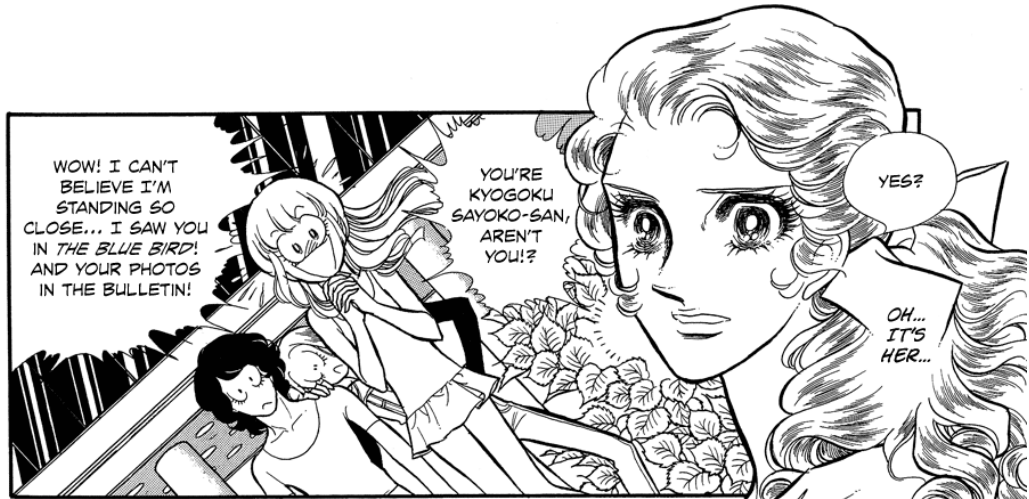


HEY!



BUT I HAD NO IDEA IT WOULD BE ALEXEI SERGEYEV! YEAH...

AND THE OTHER JUDGES SHOULD BE MAGNIFICENT, TOO!

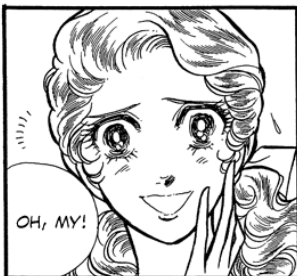


WOW! I CAN'T BELIEVE I'M STANDING SO CLOSE... I SAW YOU IN THE BLUE BIRD! AND YOUR PHOTOS IN THE BULLETIN!

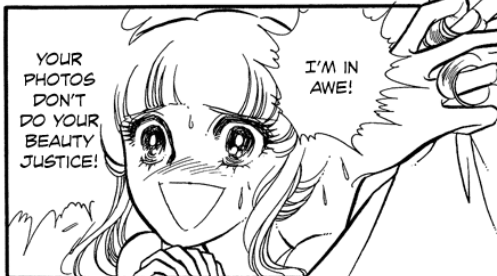
YOU'RE KYOGOKU SAYOKO-SAN, AREN'T YOU!?

YES?

OH... IT'S HER...



OH, MY!



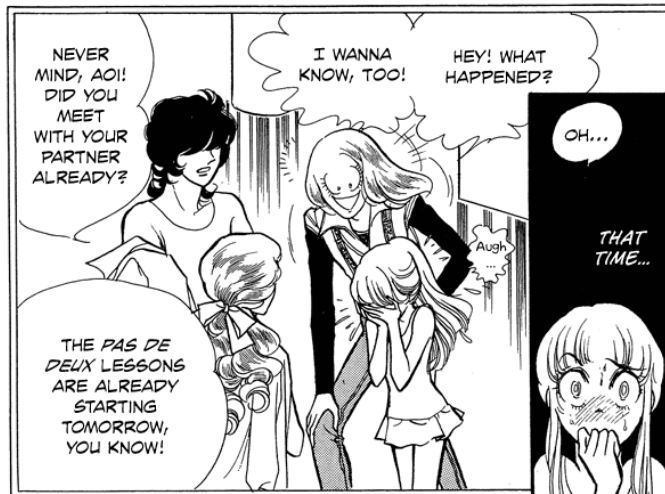
YOUR PHOTOS DON'T DO YOUR BEAUTY JUSTICE!

I'M IN AWE!



BUT ACTUALLY, WE'VE MET BEFORE.

THANKS.



NEVER MIND, AOI! DID YOU MEET WITH YOUR PARTNER ALREADY?

THE PAS DE DEUX LESSONS ARE ALREADY STARTING TOMORROW, YOU KNOW!

I WANNA KNOW, TOO!

HEY! WHAT HAPPENED?



OH...

THAT TIME...



BY THE BACKSTAGE ENTRANCE AT THE BOLSHOI PERFORMANCE.

...

I KNOW I'M GOING TO END UP WITH ANOTHER ABYSMAL PARTNER, SO WHY EVEN BOTHER?  
I'M CURSED, I TELL YOU.

I JUST WISH THAT, ONCE IN A WHILE, THEY'D LET ME PARTNER WITH SOMEONE AS GOOD AS PRINCESS SAYOKO... YOU KNOW?

HMPH ...  
YOU TWO ARE GOING TO END UP PARTNERING AGAIN, ANYWAY.

SO WHAT NUMBER ARE YOU?

UH... 51. SOME GAL NAMED HIJIRI MASUMI. NEVER HEARD OF HER, RIGHT?

BECAUSE THE ASSOCIATION KNOWS THAT YOU ALWAYS PAIR UP TOGETHER.

YAA!

HMM?

UMM...

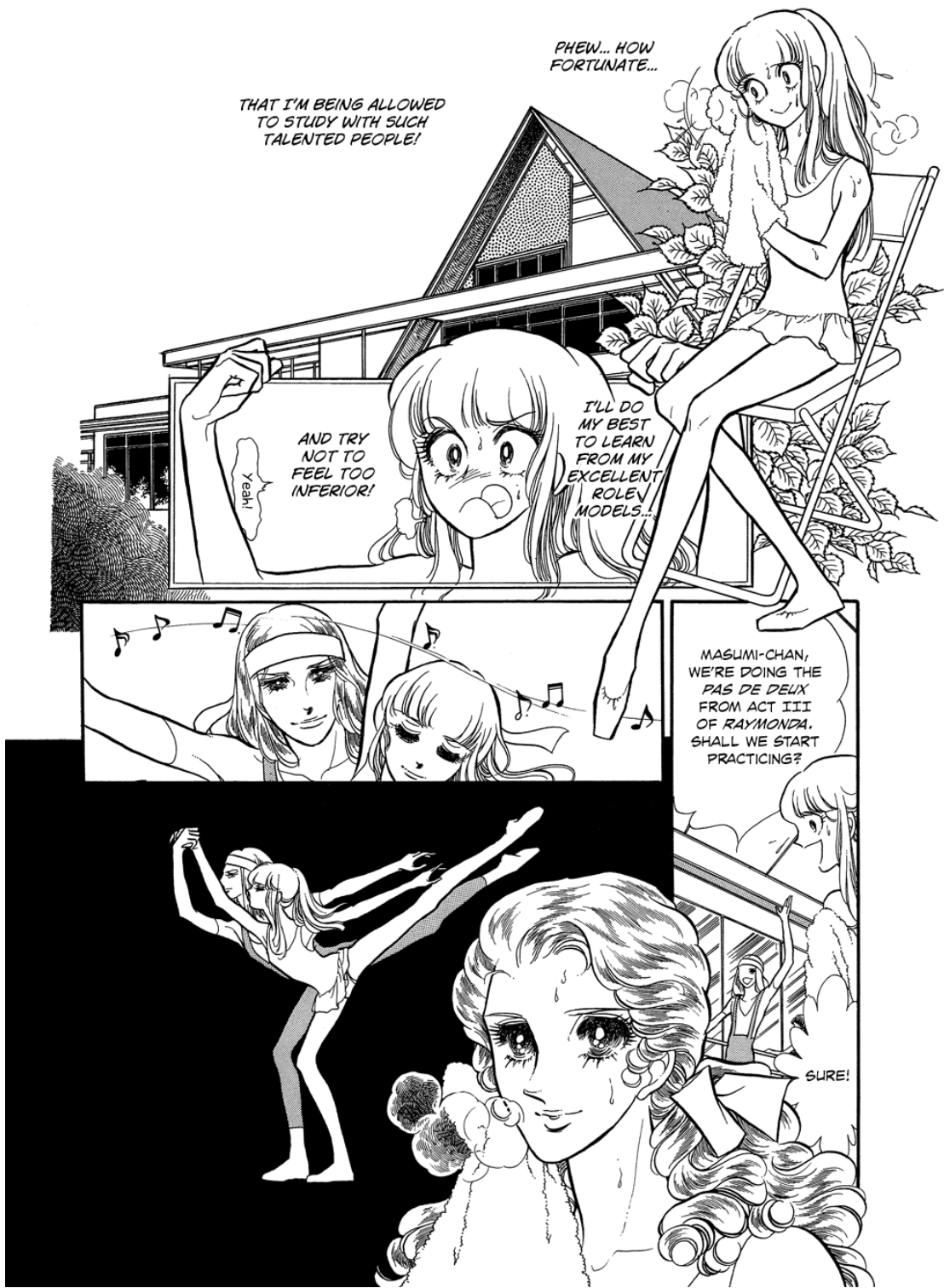
SEX: Eh? (Hub!?)



HAHAHA... SO IT'S YOU!

UH... NO... I'M SORRY!

WHAT!? YOU!?



PHEW... HOW FORTUNATE...

THAT I'M BEING ALLOWED TO STUDY WITH SUCH TALENTED PEOPLE!

AND TRY NOT TO FEEL TOO INFERIOR!

Yeah!

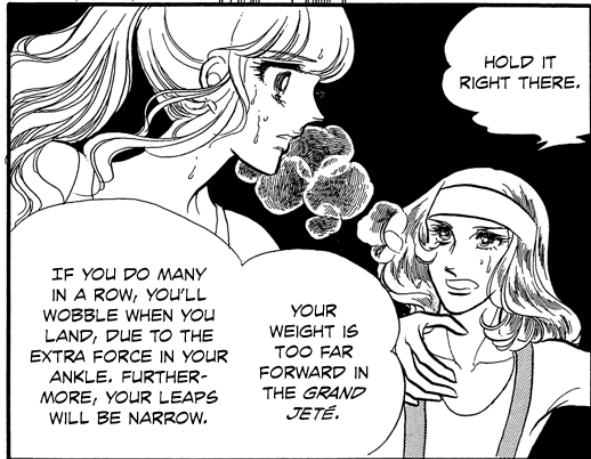
I'LL DO MY BEST TO LEARN FROM MY EXCELLENT ROLE MODELS...

MASUMI-CHAN, WE'RE DOING THE PAS DE DEUX FROM ACT III OF RAYMONDA. SHALL WE START PRACTICING?

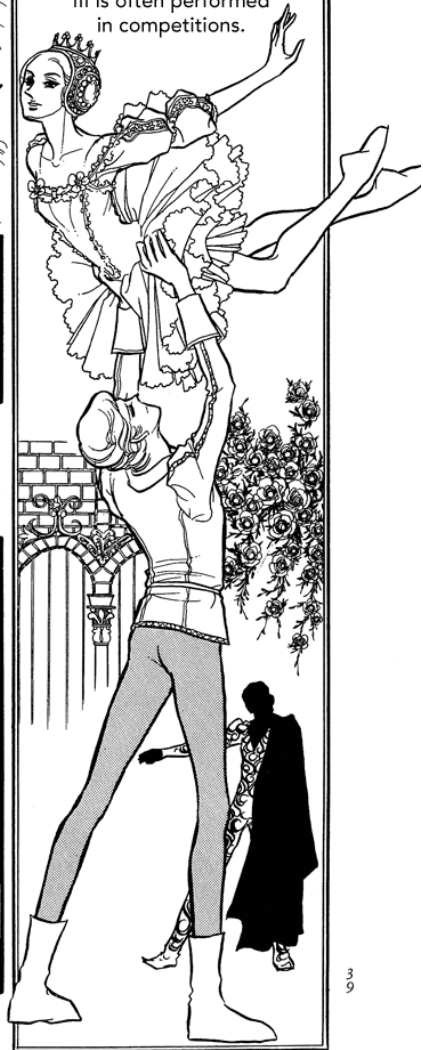
SURE!



SFX: Gura (Stumble)



Raymonda is a famous Russian ballet first performed at the Mariinsky Theatre in St. Petersburg, Russia in 1898. Raymonda is betrothed to Jean de Brienne, but a Saracen knight, Abderakhman, also falls in love with her. Raymonda's fiancé rescues her from abduction by the knight. The *pas de deux* from their wedding in Act III is often performed in competitions.



THEN IT WOULD BE ALL OVER!

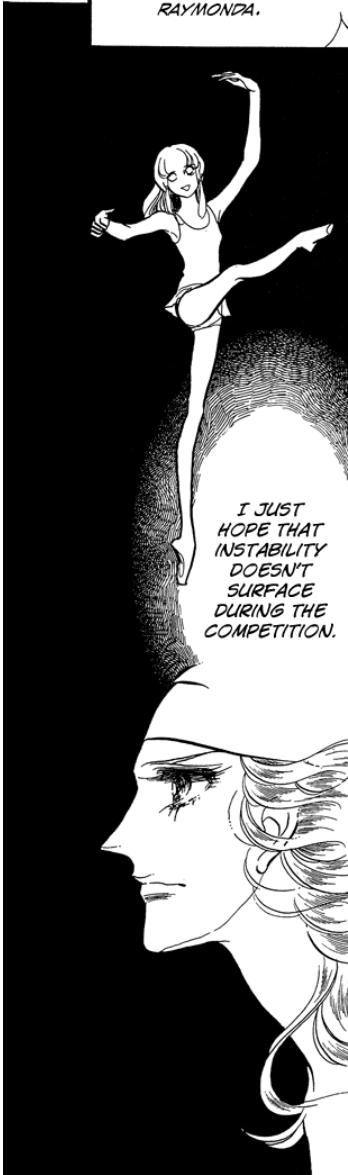
OTHERWISE, YOU WON'T ACHIEVE THE APPEARANCE OF LIGHTNESS, AND YOU MIGHT EVEN FALL ON STAGE.

THAT'S IT.

WHEN YOU'RE GAINING MOMENTUM USING THE *PAS GLISSADE*, TRY PUTTING ALL YOUR WEIGHT ON YOUR LEFT LEG, AND KEEP YOUR HEEL FIRMLY ON THE FLOOR TO ACCUMULATE FORCE.

THEN MOVE ON TO THE *VARIATION FROM RAYMONDA*.

LET'S TRY THAT AGAIN...



I JUST HOPE THAT INSTABILITY DOESN'T SURFACE DURING THE COMPETITION.

WHAT IS THAT SUPPOSED TO MEAN?

SOMETHING WRONG?

WELL... IT'S STRANGE.

DON'T KNOW...

HMM...

HOW IS SHE?

HOW... DO I EXPLAIN?

INCREDIBLY LIGHT! SHE'S JUST...

BUT IT'S NOT ALWAYS THERE. WHEN SHE'S GAINING FORCE OR MOMENTUM, LIKE BEFORE A *JETÉ*, THE OPPOSITE OFTEN HAPPENS.

BEFORE MY ARM EVEN SUPPORTS HER... IT'S AS IF SHE'S ALREADY BEING SUPPORTED BY THE AIR...

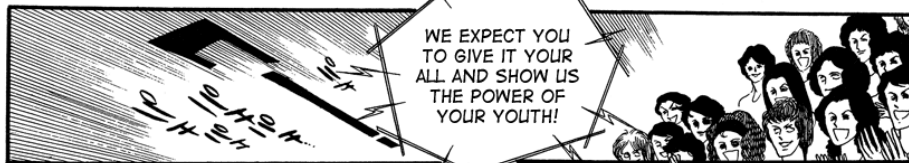
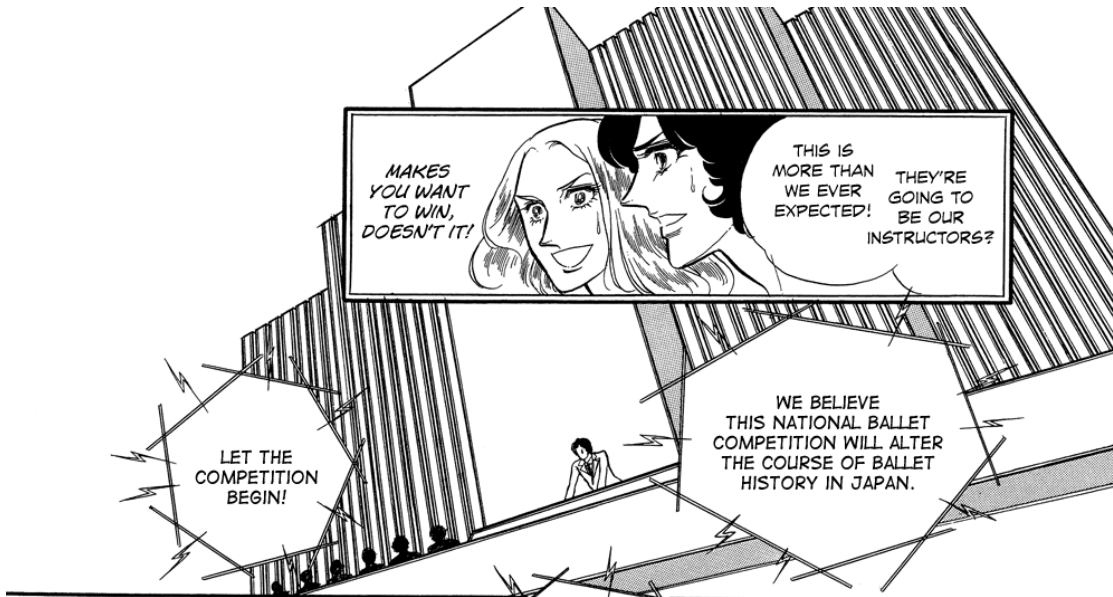
SHE HAS AN INNATE LIGHTNESS.



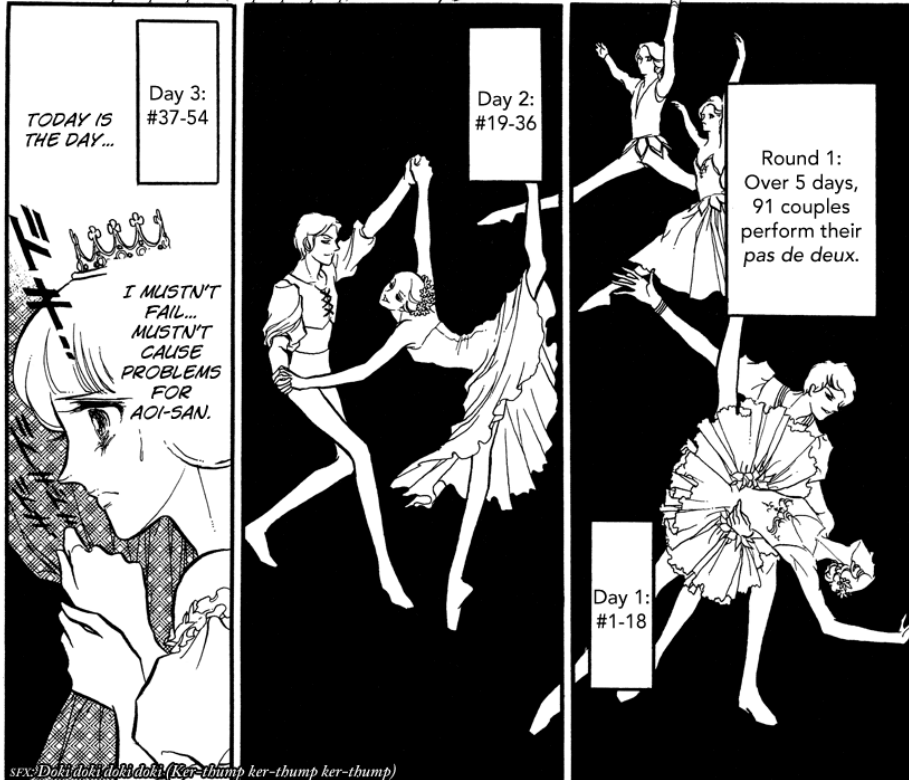


SFX: Oob!

SFX: Waab!



SFX: Wah!, Pachi pachi pachi pachi (Clap clap clap clap)



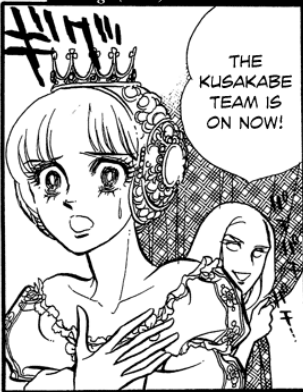
SFX: Doi doo doo doo (Ker-thump ker-thump ker-thump)



KUSAKABE-SAN'S  
 TEAM IS NEXT AT  
 NUMBER 47... AND  
 AFTER THREE  
 MORE COUPLES...  
 WE'RE UP!  
 THEY'RE  
 NUMBER 46.

SFX: Gigu (Shock)

SFX: Doki doki doki doki (Ker-thump ker-thump)

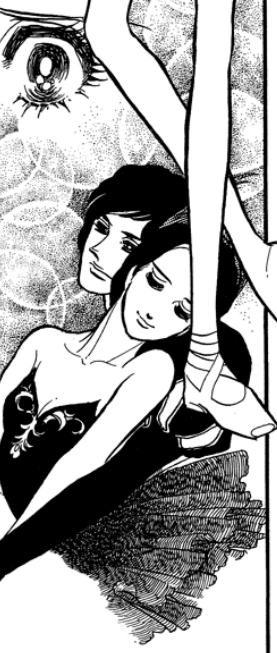


THE  
 KUSAKABE  
 TEAM IS  
 ON NOW!

SFX: Pachi pachi pachi (Clap clap clap)

SOB.  
 THERE'S  
 NO WAY.  
 THEY'RE  
 ALL TOO  
 GOOD.

IF ONLY I  
 COULD WIN...  
 AND TAKE  
 LESSONS,  
 TOO...

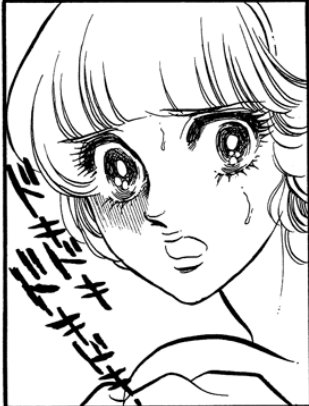


HOW I WISH...

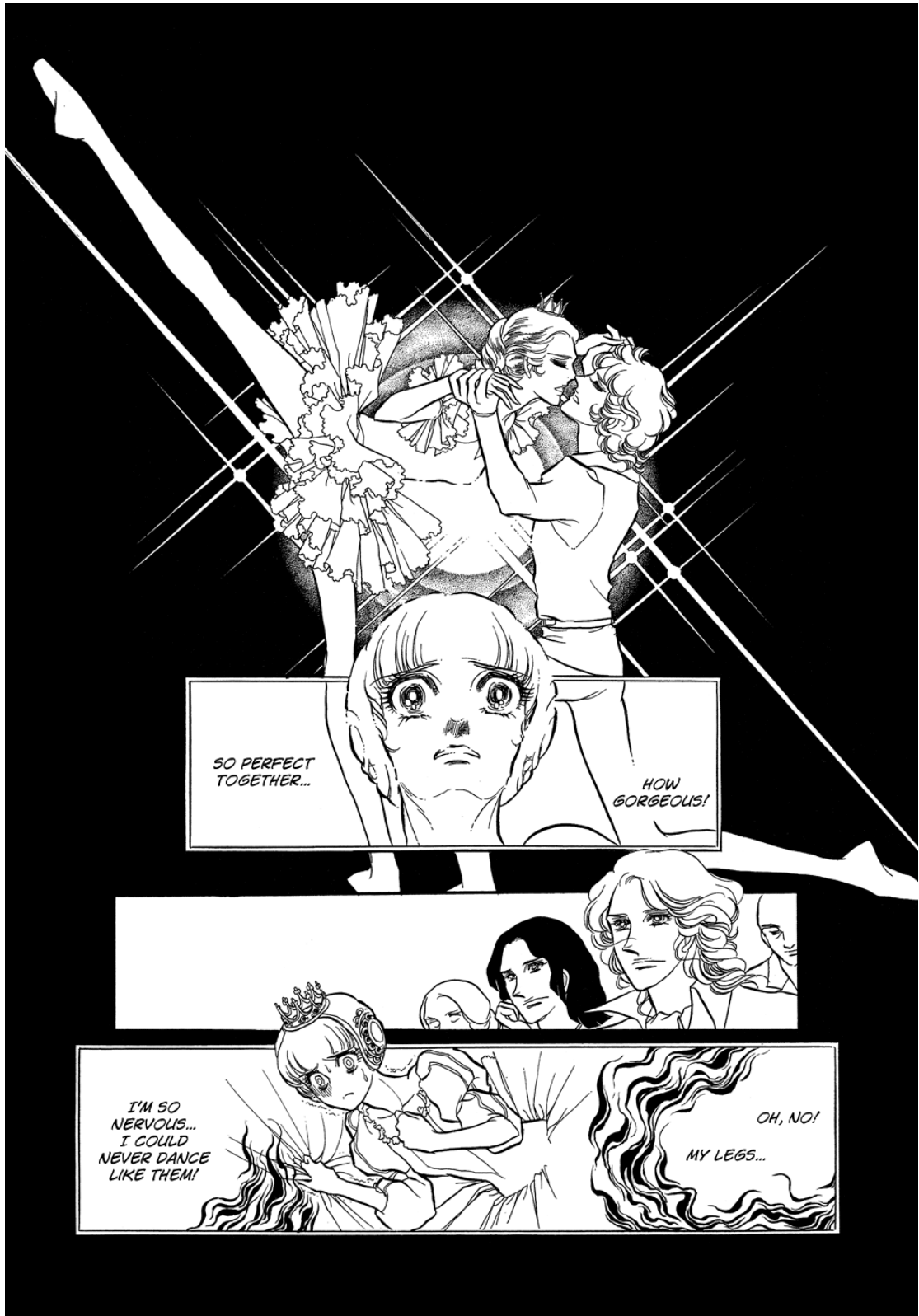
AN  
 IMPOSSIBLE  
 DREAM...

WOW... EVERYONE IS  
 SO BEAUTIFUL...

THEY'RE SO GOOD.



SFX: Doki doki doki doki (Ker-thump ker-thump)



SO PERFECT TOGETHER...

HOW GORGEOUS!



I'M SO NERVOUS... I COULD NEVER DANCE LIKE THEM!

OH, NO! MY LEGS...