

# CHAPTER 96: NO MATTER HOW MANY LIVES, PART 1



WE LOOK  
NOTHING  
ALIKE!

KRK

I BET WE'RE  
NOT REALLY  
RELATED BY  
BLOOD!

STRENGTH  
WAS ALL  
YOU HAD  
GOING FOR  
YOU! NOW  
YOU HAVE  
NOTHING!

YOU'RE  
USELESS!

YOU'RE  
JUST PLAIN  
UGLY!

HAVING  
LOST THAT,  
YOU HAVE  
NO VALUE  
AT ALL!

I'VE  
HELPED  
YOU  
A LOT!

WITHOUT  
ME YOU'D  
HAVE DIED  
LONG AGO!

AND  
YOU'RE A  
LOSER!

FROM THE  
BOTTOM OF  
MY HEART  
I REGRET  
PROTECTING A  
SHRILL HARPY  
LIKE YOU!

YOU'RE  
THE  
LOSER!

YOU  
WEAKLING!

IT'S ALL  
YOUR  
FAULT!

IF NOT  
FOR YOU,  
MY LIFE  
WOULD'VE  
BEEN  
BETTER!

...  
BORN  
...?

I'D HAVE  
BEEN BETTER  
OFF IF  
YOU'D NEVER  
BEEN...

I ALWAYS  
END UP  
HAVING TO  
WIPE YOUR  
ASS FOR  
YOU!

YOU  
DON'T  
MEAN  
THAT.



IT'S NOT  
TRUE AT  
ALL.

YOU DON'T  
REALLY FEEL  
THAT WAY.



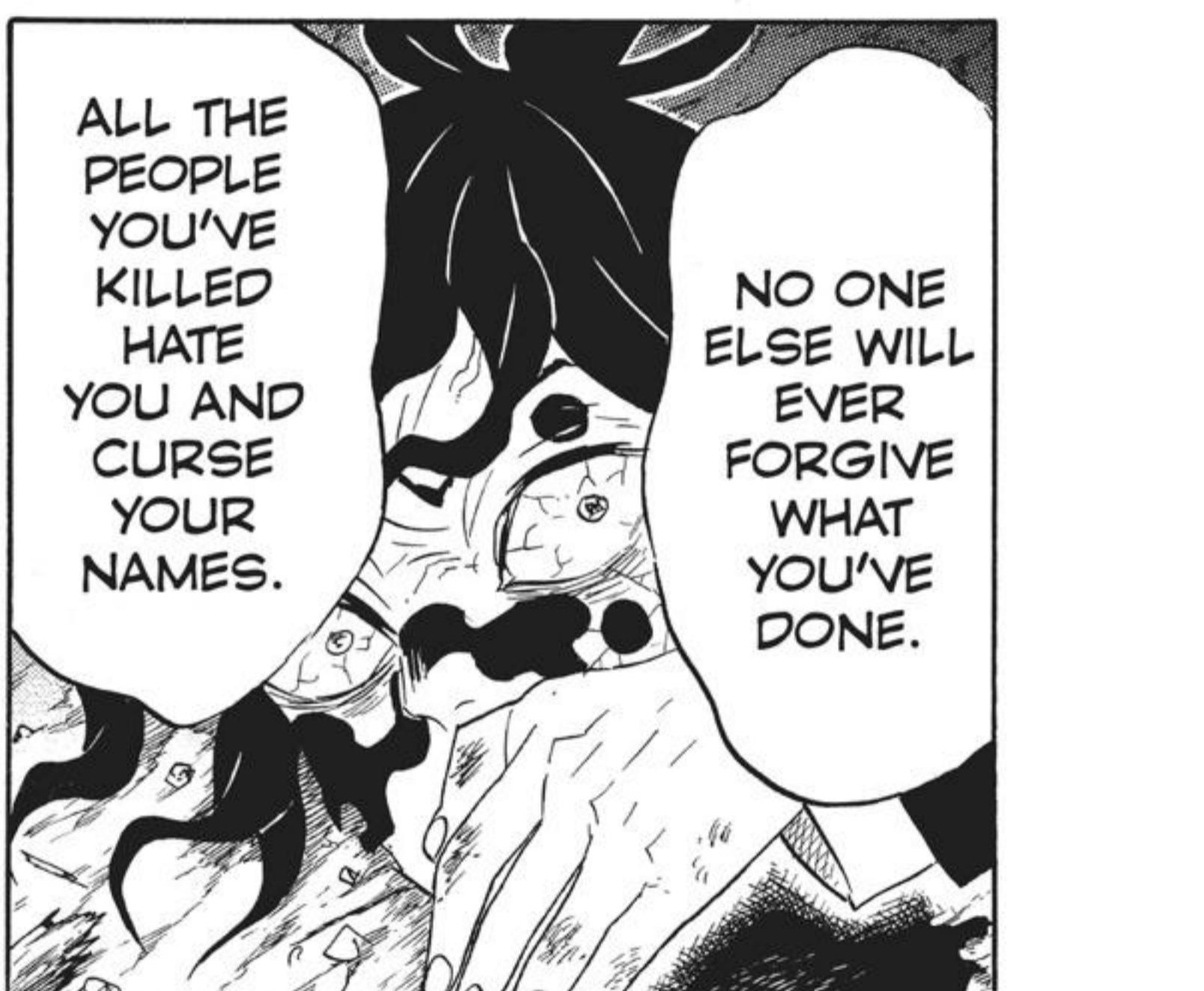
YOU'RE THE  
ONLY FAMILY  
EACH OTHER  
HAS.

DON'T  
END YOUR  
LIVES  
FIGHTING  
LIKE THIS.



FAMILY  
IS ALL  
YOU'VE  
GOT  
LEFT.

NO ONE  
WILL  
MISS  
YOU  
WHEN  
YOU'RE  
GONE.



ALL THE  
PEOPLE  
YOU'VE  
KILLED  
HATE  
YOU AND  
CURSE  
YOUR  
NAMES.

NO ONE  
ELSE WILL  
EVER  
FORGIVE  
WHAT  
YOU'VE  
DONE.



YOU  
MUSTN'T  
TURN  
ON EACH  
OTHER.  
STICK  
TOGETHER  
TILL THE  
END.

YOU KEEP  
OUT OF  
THIS!

WAAAHH!

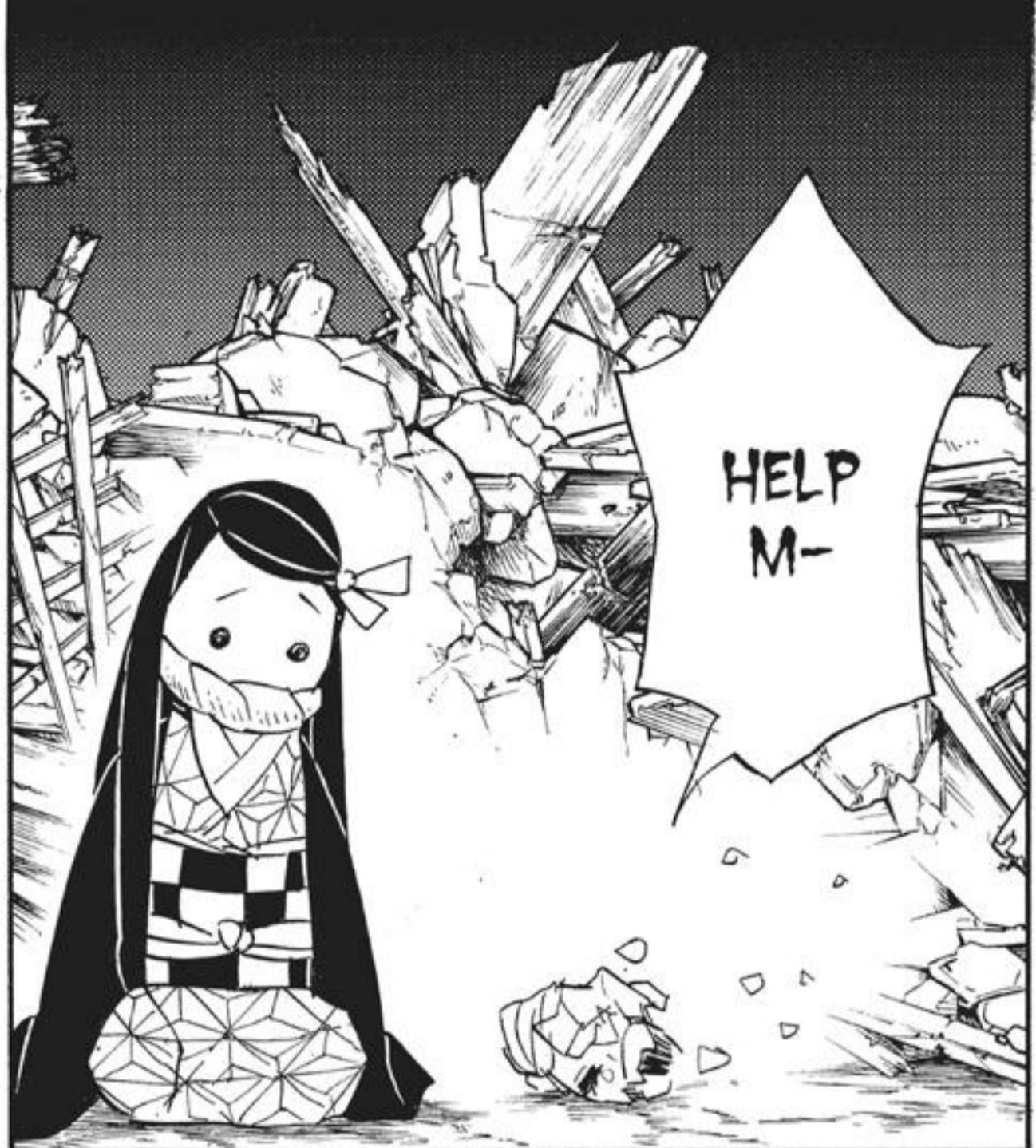
BEAT IT,  
YOU STUPID  
PUNK! GET  
OUTTA HERE!

DON'T  
LECTURE  
US!

GYUTARO, DO  
SOMETHING!

YOU'RE SO  
ANNOYING!  
I CAN'T  
STAND IT!

I DON'T  
WANT  
TO DIE!



BUT  
THEN, SO  
WAS UME.

"DAKI" WAS  
A HORRIBLE  
NAME.

I ONLY JUST  
REMEMBERED  
THAT MY  
SISTER'S  
NAME WAS  
UME!

WE CAME FROM THE LOWEST CASTE OF THE ENTERTAINMENT DISTRICT.

ON THE RASHO-MON RIVER-BANK.

SHE WAS NAMED FOR THE DISEASE THAT KILLED OUR MOTHER.

KIDS ARE A NUISANCE THERE. IT COSTS SO MUCH JUST TO KEEP THEM ALIVE.

MY BODY WAS WEAK, BUT LIKE A HOLLOW TREE I DESPERATELY CLUNG TO LIFE.

AND AFTER YOUR BIRTH, I WAS JUST IN THE WAY.

BEFORE YOU WERE BORN, THEY ALMOST KILLED ME MANY TIMES.

PEOPLE MOCKED MY VOICE AND MY LOOKS. THEY CALLED ME FILTH AND THREW ROCKS AT ME.

A GOOD-FOR-NOTHING.

A STUPID COWARD.

THEY CALLED ME A WORM. A SIMPLETON.



IT WAS LIKE THE POINT OF MY EXISTENCE WAS TO GIVE THE WHOLE WORLD SOMEONE TO MOCK.

I WAS A MONSTER.

PEOPLE LOATHED ME, ESPECIALLY IN THE ENTERTAINMENT DISTRICT, WHERE BEAUTY WAS PRIZED ABOVE ALL ELSE.



I HAD FLEAS AND I SMELLED AWFUL.



I WAS A MISERABLE, UGLY, DIRTY CREATURE.



ALWAYS COVERED WITH LICE AND DANDRUFF.

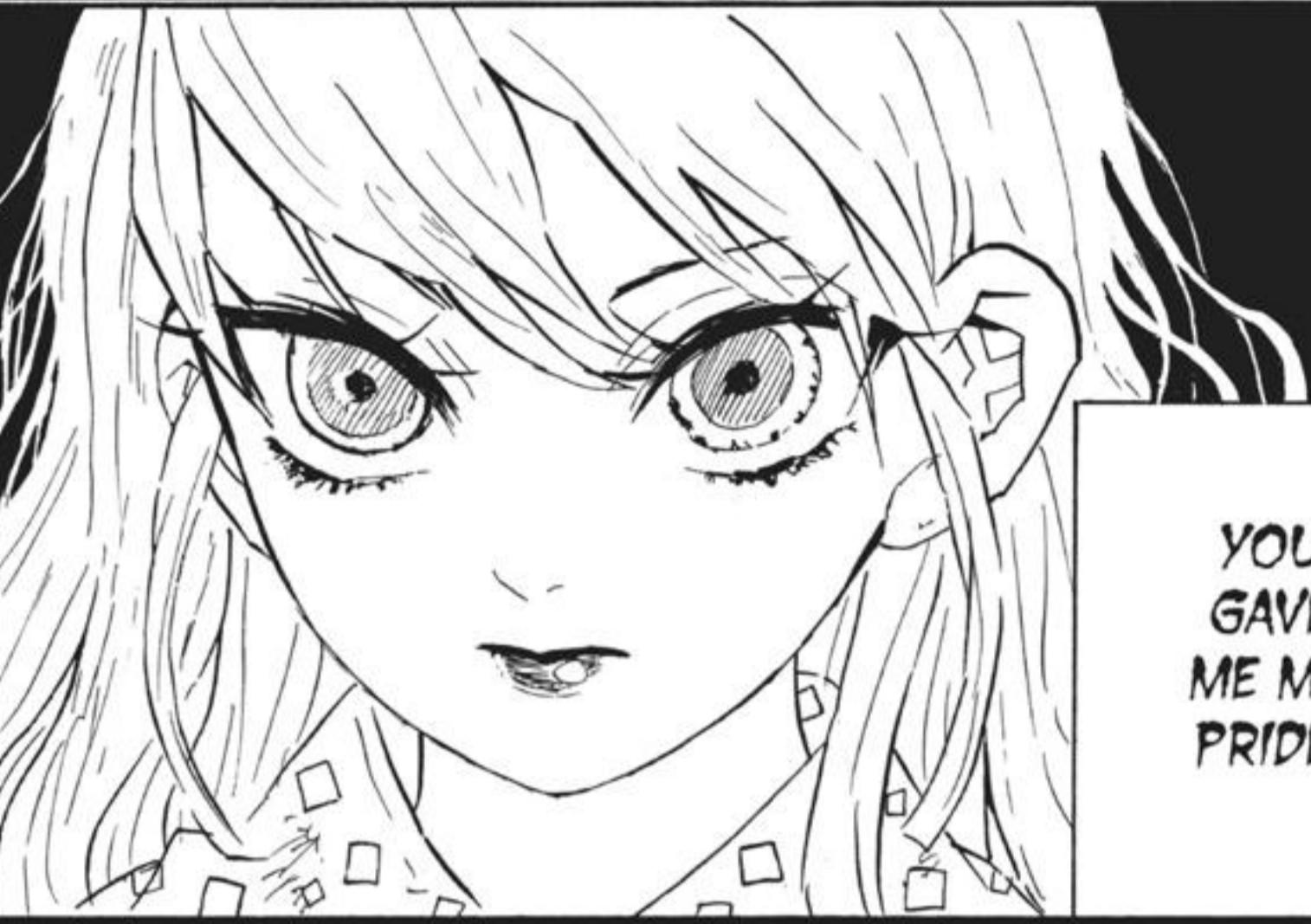
BUT ONCE UME WAS BORN, SOMETHING BEGAN TO CHANGE INSIDE ME.



MY ONLY TOY WAS A SICKLE THAT SOMEONE LEFT BEHIND.



WHEN I WAS HUNGRY, I ATE MICE AND INSECTS.



EVEN WHEN  
YOU WERE  
VERY YOUNG  
YOU HAD SUCH  
A PRETTY  
FACE THAT  
IT STUNNED  
PEOPLE.

UME...

YOU  
GAVE  
ME MY  
PRIDE.



I LIKED  
THAT  
FEELING.

PEOPLE  
FOUND ME  
CREEPY.  
THEY  
FEARED ME.

...AS  
A DEBT  
COLLEC-  
TOR.

IT TURNS  
OUT I WAS  
GOOD AT  
FIGHTING.  
SO I  
WORKED...

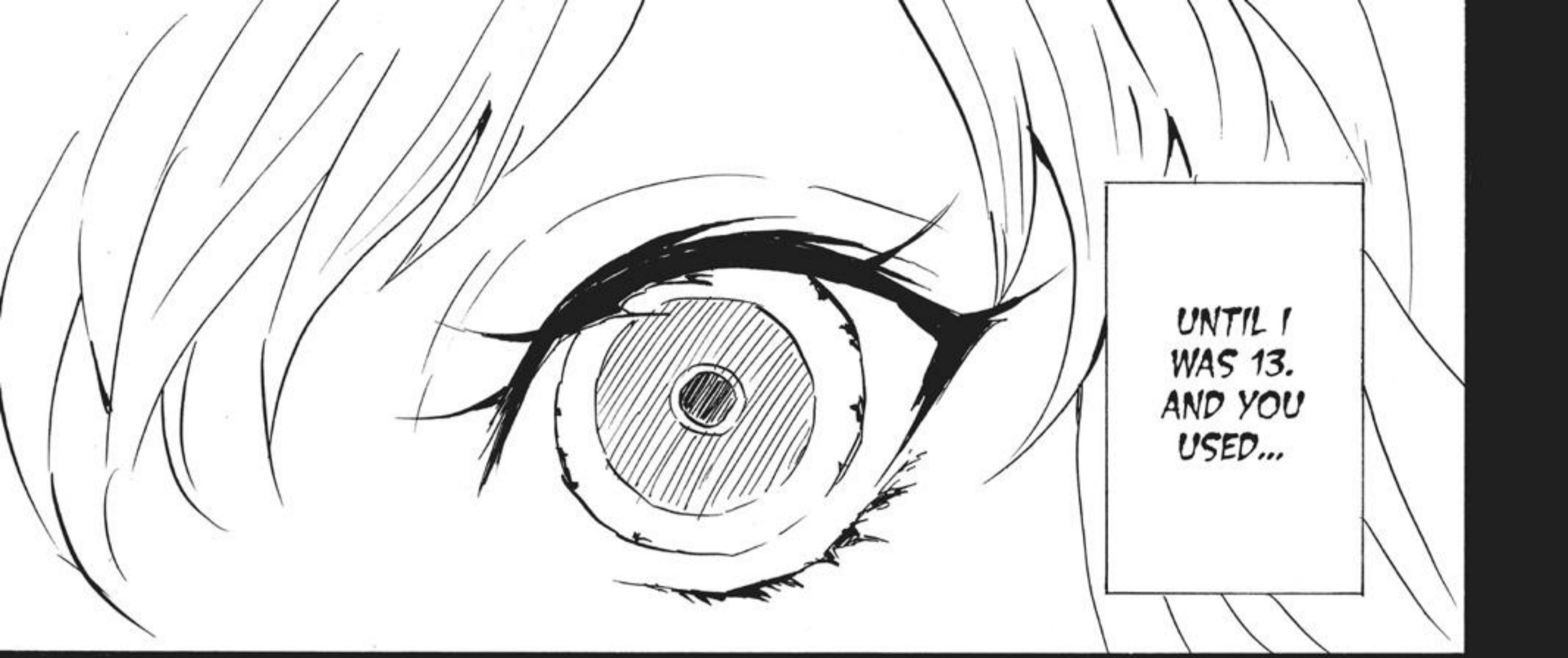


I BECAME  
PROUD  
OF MY  
UGLINESS.



IT FELT LIKE  
OUR LIVES WERE  
FINALLY GOING  
IN A GOOD  
DIRECTION.

AND  
WITH SUCH A  
BEAUTIFUL  
SISTER, I  
BEGAN  
TO LOSE MY  
SENSE OF  
INFERIORITY.



UNTIL I  
WAS 13.  
AND YOU  
USED...



AS  
PUNISHMENT  
THEY TIED YOU  
UP AND BURNED  
YOU ALIVE.

...TO STAB A  
CUSTOMER IN  
THE EYE AND  
BLINDED HIM. HE  
WAS A SAMURAI.

...A  
COMB  
...



DON'T TAKE  
MY BEAUTIFUL  
SISTER AWAY!  
THAT'S TOO  
CRUEL!  
UNFORGIVABLE!  
THE GODS  
CAN'T TREAT  
ME LIKE  
THIS!

NOOOOO!  
IT'S NOT  
FAIR! DON'T  
TAKE HER  
FROM ME!

DO IT OR  
I'LL KILL ALL  
THE GODS  
AND ALL THE  
BUDDHAS!

BRING  
BACK MY  
SISTER! MY  
BEAUTIFUL  
LITTLE  
SISTER!



YES, I'M  
SURE.

YOU'RE  
CERTAIN  
THAT WAS  
HIM?

HE BEATS UP HIS MARKS WHETHER THEY PAY OR NOT. LATELY EVEN HIS BOSSSES HAVEN'T BEEN ABLE TO KEEP HIM IN LINE.

HE WAS A VIOLENT BRUTE!

GOOD! IT'S ABOUT TIME WE GOT RID OF THAT NUISANCE.

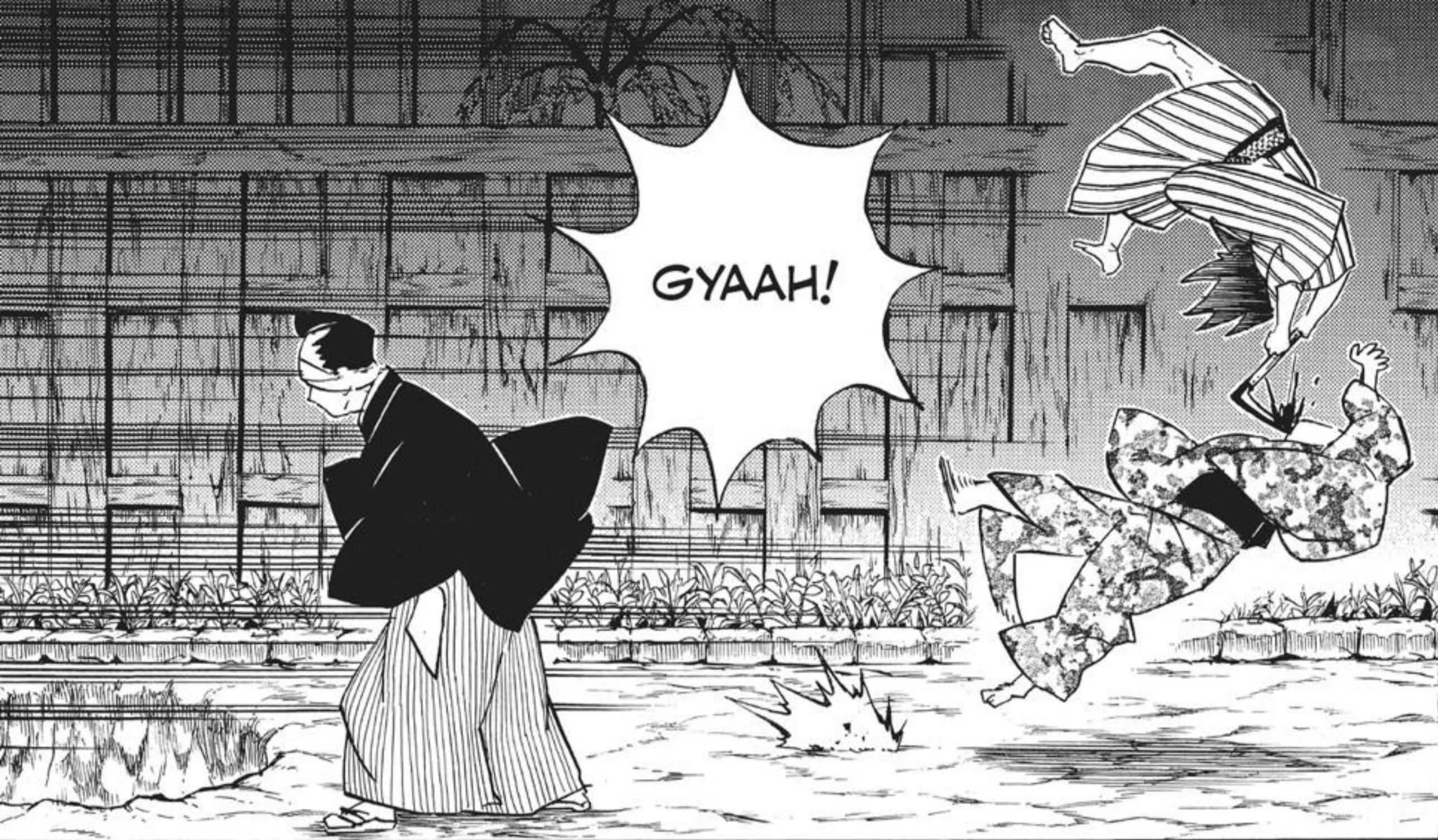
UMM...  
YOU STILL OWE ME...

IF I FIND ANOTHER CUTE GIRL I'LL SEND HER YOUR WAY.

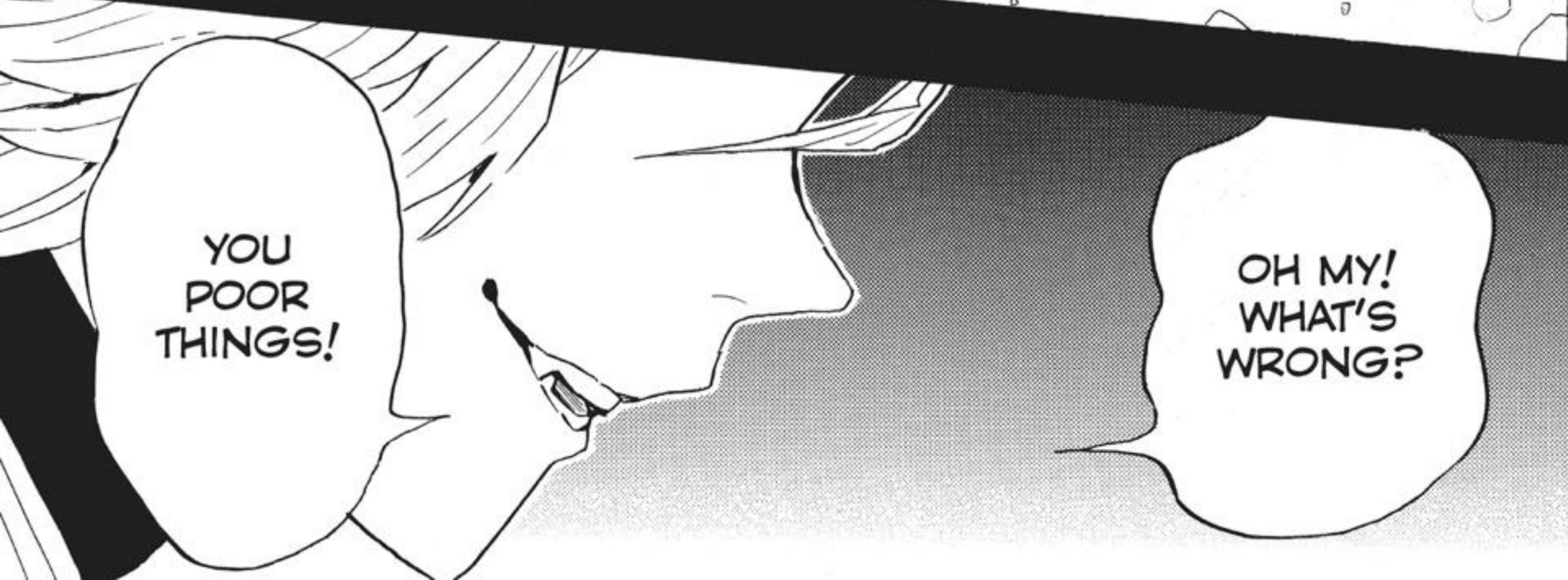
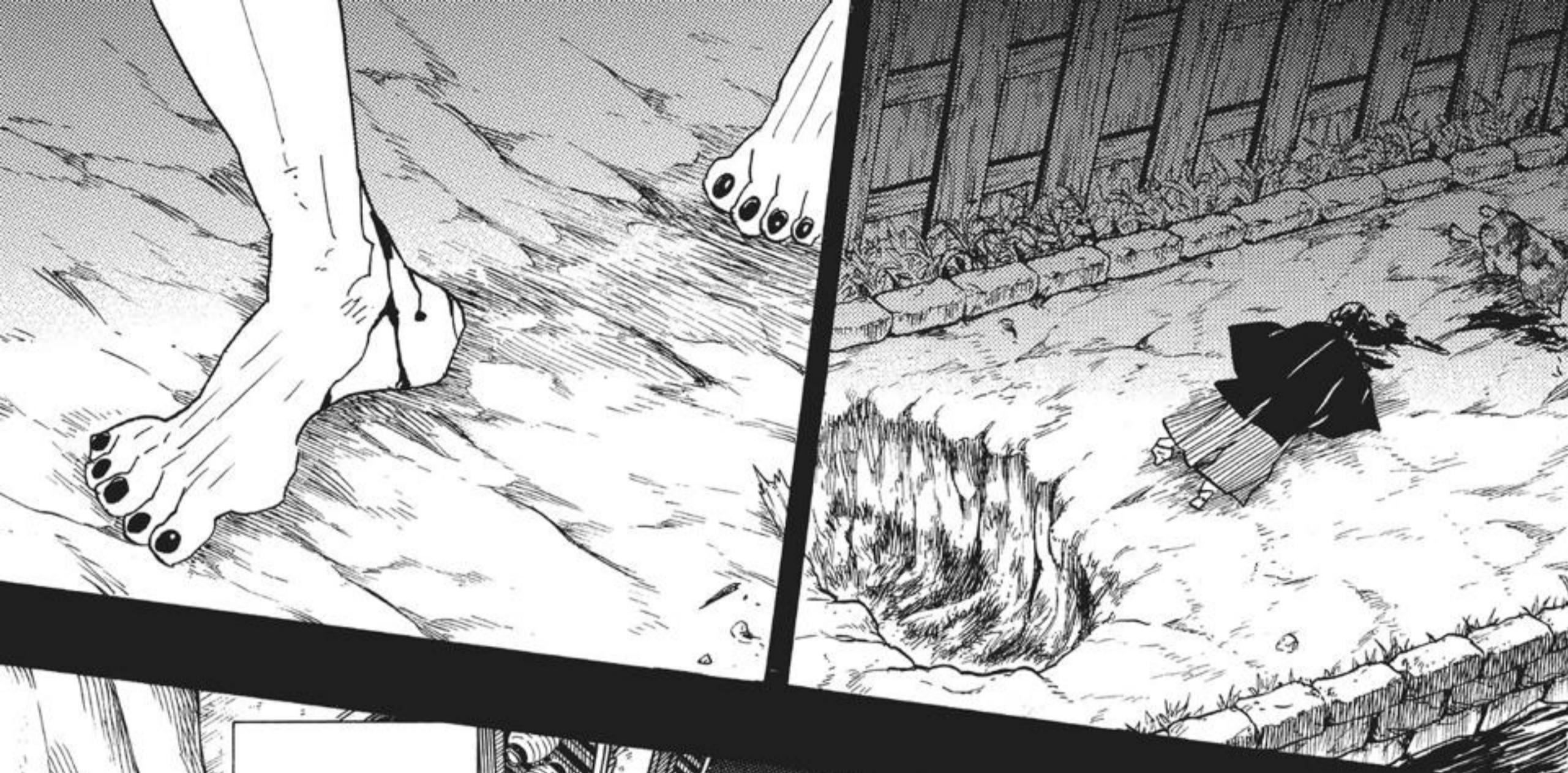
IT'S TOO BAD ABOUT UME THOUGH.

HOLD ON...

THUMP  
... AFTER I'VE FINISHED HIM OFF.



HUSH  
NOW.  
DON'T  
MAKE A  
FUSS.





I CAN'T  
JUST LET  
THAT  
HAPPEN.  
I'LL GIVE  
HER...

THAT  
GIRL...  
SHE'S  
ABOUT TO  
DIE, ISN'T  
SHE?

...IF MY  
MASTER  
AGREES,  
YOU'LL  
BOTH BE  
DEMONS.

...MY  
BLOOD.  
I'LL GIVE  
IT TO  
YOU TOO.  
AND...

LIFE IS  
PRECIOUS.  
YOU MUST  
TREASURE  
IT.

...AND  
MAYBE RISE  
TO JOIN THE  
RANKS OF  
THE TWELVE  
KIZUKI?

SO DO YOU  
WANT TO  
BECOME A  
DEMON LIKE  
ME...

I CAN'T STAND  
HAPPY PEOPLE.  
I'D ALWAYS  
WANT TO BE  
GYUTARO  
THE DEBT  
COLLECTOR.

NO MATTER  
HOW MANY  
LIVES I HAD,  
I'D ALWAYS  
CHOOSE TO  
BE A DEMON.

Technique  
is different  
from  
strength.

Yeah.  
That's  
right.

You say  
arm-wrestling  
matches aren't  
about strength.

Hmm?

