6 TOUGH, AREN'T YOU...?

✦✦✦✦ SEVERED ✦✦✦✦

Six years earlier...

LALA LAAAA LALAAA

UM, SO, CHI-HIRO ...

We'll survive, and live together.

LALAAAA LALAAA

Chihiro, age 9

Wanko, age 10

WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY HOW ?

HNA ?

CRUNCH CRUNCH

POTATO CHIPS

CHIHIRO, HOW WOULD YOU LIKE YOUR FIRST KISS TO BE?

CRASH!!

Y... YOU KNOW, THERE'S ALL KINDS, RIGHT ?

LIKE WITH THE OCEAN AT SUNSET IN THE BACKGROUND... OR LIKE WHEN SEPARATING FROM YOUR BELOVED WHEN THEY LEAVE ON A JOURNEY... STUFF LIKE THAT.

HMMM...

EEEEE

SQUOOSH
SLICE
NOOOO

I'VE JUST GOTTA KISS A ZOMBIE GIRL LIKE THIS ONE...

EEEEE

Hyeh Hyeh

I REMEMBER REPLYING TO HER PRETTY VAGUELY...

OR SOME-THING LIKE THAT.

Z... ZOMBIE GIRLS, AGAIN ?!

ARE YOU STUPID OR SOMETHING?! YOU REALLY THINK A GIRL LIKE THAT EXISTS?!

BUT THERE'S NO WAY... FOR THAT...

...HAVE COME TRUE...
FOR THAT...
...TO ACTU-ALLY...

...
WAIT, I MEAN-
WH... WHAT HAVE YOU DONE... REA... YOU...
IS SHE OUT OF IT BECAUSE HER RIGOR MORTIS JUST ENDED ...?!
Nhgg...
...
SQUEEZE
Nnh...
WOOOSH
CRUNCH
OWW !!

...?!
BA-BUMP
BA-BUMP
JUST NOW... MY LIP...
LICK
LICK
BA-BUMP
OOZE...
...SHE BIT IT...?!
GLAZE
BA-BUMP
BA-BUMP
AH...
BA-BUMP

GAAH!

WHAT'S THE MEANING OF ALL THIS, CHIHIRO?!

WH...

GLAZE

AH...?

OH... UMM...

THEY SAID SANKA-SAN RAN AWAY! WH... WHY IS SHE IN YOUR ROOM, CHIHIRO?!

AND ON TOP OF THAT, THIS GIRL IS REALLY HURT... BUT...

...BY ANY CHANCE ...

...IS THIS GIRL...

VOOOOMMM

BAM

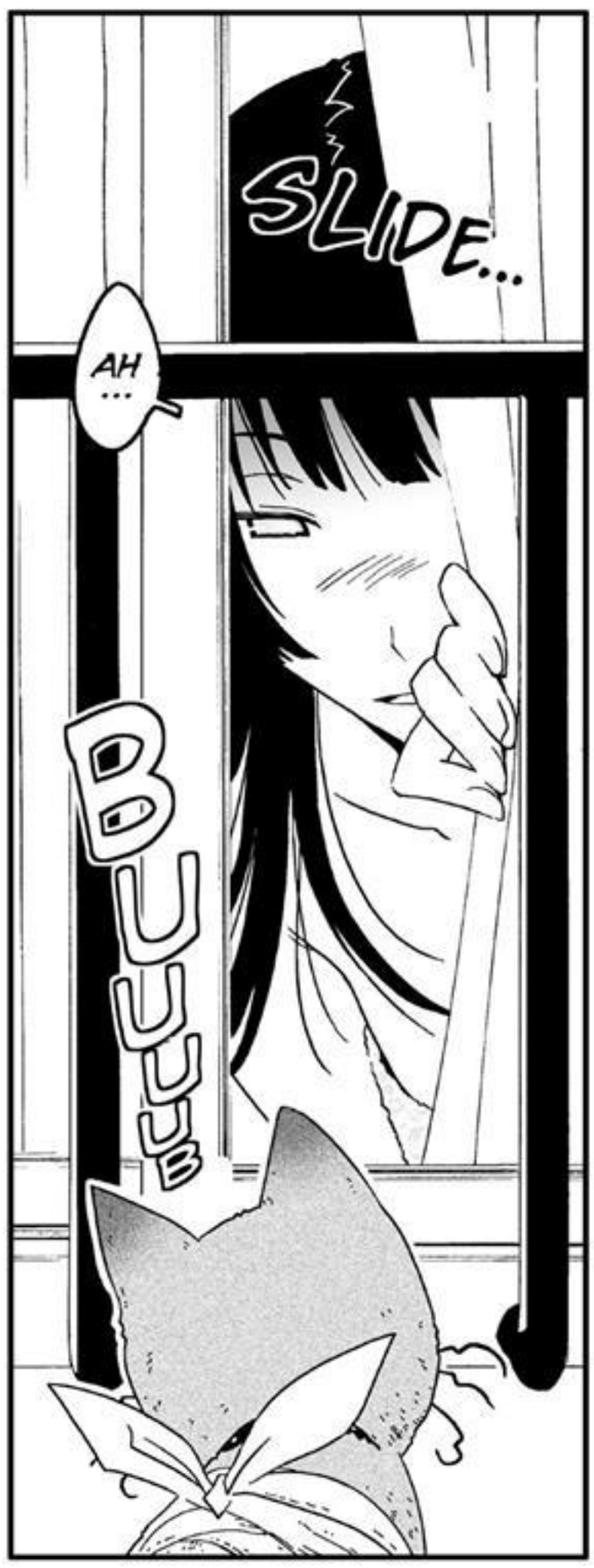
A... ZOMBIE ...?!

...THERE'S A REAAAALLY GOOD REASON FOR ALL OF THIS.

ACTUALLY... WANKO...

MURDERER!!

WHUNK

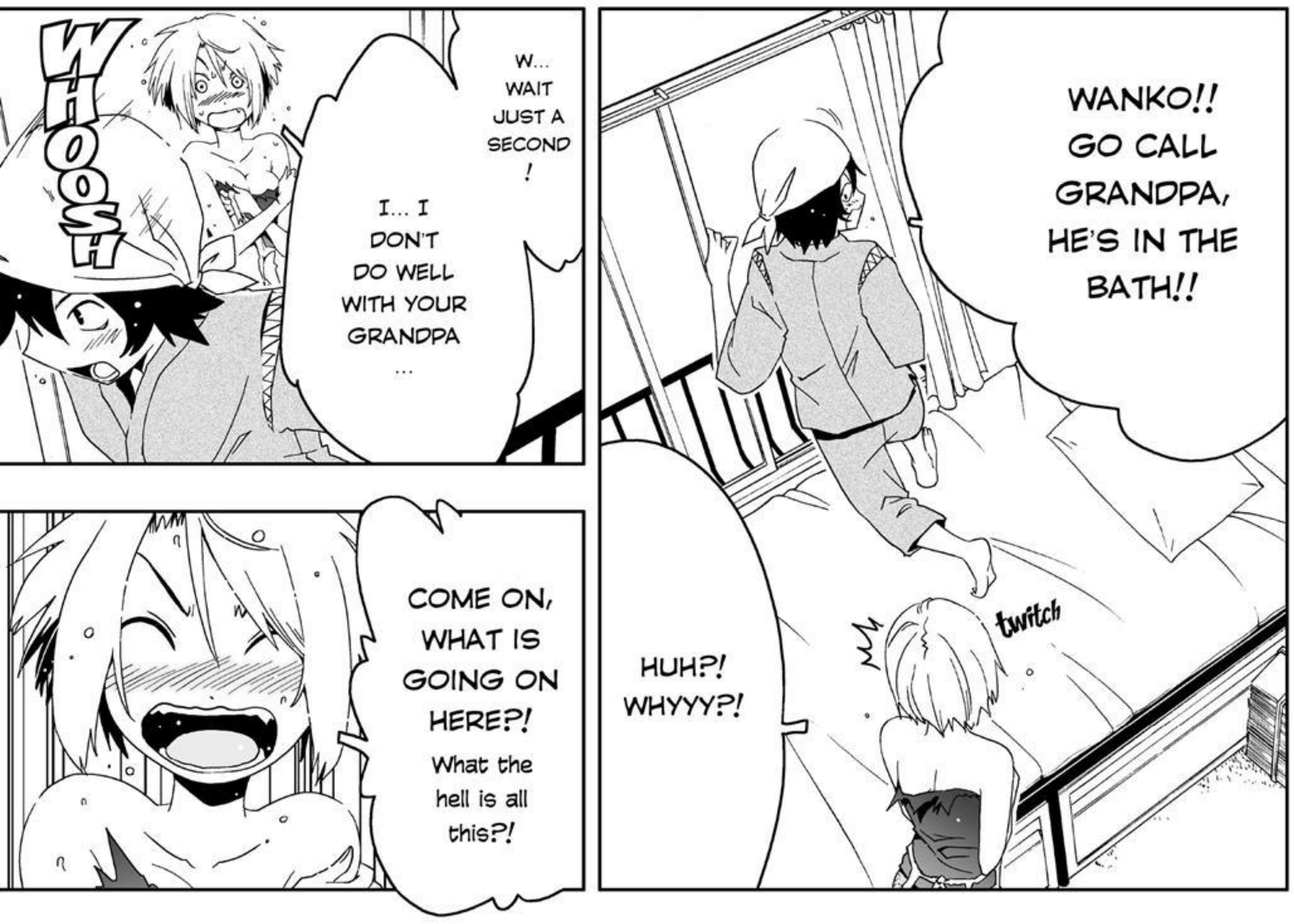

SLIDE...
AH ...
BUUUUB

GAH! WAIT, JUST WAIT, YOU'RE WRONG! LISTEN TO ME, I SAID !!
NNBUUH...
YOU... F-FINALLY KILLED SOMEONE FOR YOUR EXPERI-MENTS...
POLICE!! POLICE!!
THUMP
WHAP
CREAK

HUH ?!
crawl...
MO... MORE IMPORTANTLY, THERE'S SOMETHING WEIRD GOING ON WITH REA RIGHT NOW...
...AND ...AAHH !!

CLATTER...
SQUEEZE
I'M TELLING YOU, IT WAS AN ACCIDENT THAT SHE DRANK THE ELIXIR...

DAMMIT !
BUUUB
AH...
crawl
crawl
W... WAIT, REA!! WHERE ARE YOU GOING ?!


WHOOSH
W... WAIT JUST A SECOND !
I... I DON'T DO WELL WITH YOUR GRANDPA ...
COME ON, WHAT IS GOING ON HERE?!
What the hell is all this?!
WANKO!! GO CALL GRANDPA, HE'S IN THE BATH!!
HUH?! WHYYY?!
twitch

HUH ?
SHE'S GONE ...
WHOA !
HEY, CHIHIRO! WHAT WAS THAT VOICE JUST NOW?
SLIDE...
IS EVERY-THING OKAY?
CZATTER
SCRAPE
AH... NO WAY...
COULD SHE HAVE FALLEN OFF THE ROOF...?
SCRAPE
WOOSH

TURN!
...HUH?
CRUNCH
MUNCH MUNCH
CRUNCH

THEY'RE EATING...
...HYDRANGEA?!

B-BUT WHY...

...

...WHY ARE THEY EATING...

CRUNCH...

...I MEAN ...

...HUH ...?!

PLUCK

CRUNCH CRUNCH

Aahh ...

REA...

whish...

... mh.

GASP...

HUH ...?

I...

HER EYES ARE CHANG-ING COLOR ...!!

WHOOSH
AH... JUST WAIT A SECOND !!
EEEEEEEKKKK!
Why am I outside dressed like this ...?!
TUG
WHEN SHE ATE THE HYDRANGEA, SHE WENT BACK TO HER NORMAL SELF...
TOSS
RUSTLE
PUT THIS ON!!

huff huff
MUNCH MUNCH
IT SEEMS TO PROLONG THE EFFECTS OF THE ELIXIR.
THE MAIN INGREDIENT OF THAT REANIMATION ELIXIR IS THE TOXIN FROM THE HYDRANGEAS.
CRUNCH
CRUNCH
I... I SEE.
HUH ...?
...INTO THEIR BODIES.
TOXINS ...?!
BOTH BUB AND REA...
...HAVE INCORP-ORATED THE HYDRAN-GEA TOXIN...
?!
HMM, JUST AS I EXPECTED FROM A GRANDSON OF MINE.

CHIHIRO, IT WAS YOU WHO GAVE SADA THE REANIMATING MEDICINE AND BROUGHT HER BACK TO LIFE, AFTER ALL.

BY SADA... DO YOU MEAN REA?

I BROUGHT HIM...

Who d'you think she is?

EEEN!

GRANDPA!

MOST OF THAT'S CORRECT.

BAM

IF SOMEONE DRINKS IT JUST ONCE, IF LEFT ALONE THEY WILL GRADUALLY LOSE THEIR SENSES AND PHYSICAL ABILITIES, RETURNING TO THE CORPSE THEY WERE ORIGINALLY.

THE RE-ANIMATING ELIXIR ISN'T PERFECT.

I'M NOT OTOKIIII !!

What the hell is he doing...?

WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT, OTOKI?! WE'RE HUSBAND AND WIFE.

VWOOM

VWOOM

GRANDPA, GET AWAY FROM MEEEE!

WHAT THE HELL? YOU COULD'VE WRITTEN THAT PART IN THE BOOK FOR ME!

TUG

YOU MORON !!

1: AN APPROPRIATE AMOUNT OF EXERCISE.

2: A LOW-TEMPERATURE LIVING SPACE...

...AND FINALLY 3: FREQUENT REPLENISH-MENT OF THE HYDRANGEA TOXIN!!

WOBBLE

WOBBLE

WOBBLE

WOBBLE

IN ORDER TO MAINTAIN THE PHYSICAL HEALTH OF THE REANIMATED PERSON, YOU NEED...

NAH.

B... BUT ANYWAY, AS LONG AS I'VE GOT HYDRANGEAS, THIS MEANS I CAN KEEP THE DECAY IN CHECK, THEN?

WHAT THE HELL KIND OF LOGIC IS THAT ?!

THAT'S THE KIND OF THING THAT YOU SHOULD DISCOVER BY YOURSELF THROUGH CONSISTENT DAILY OBSER-VATION OF THE REANIMATED.

YOU GOT ME.

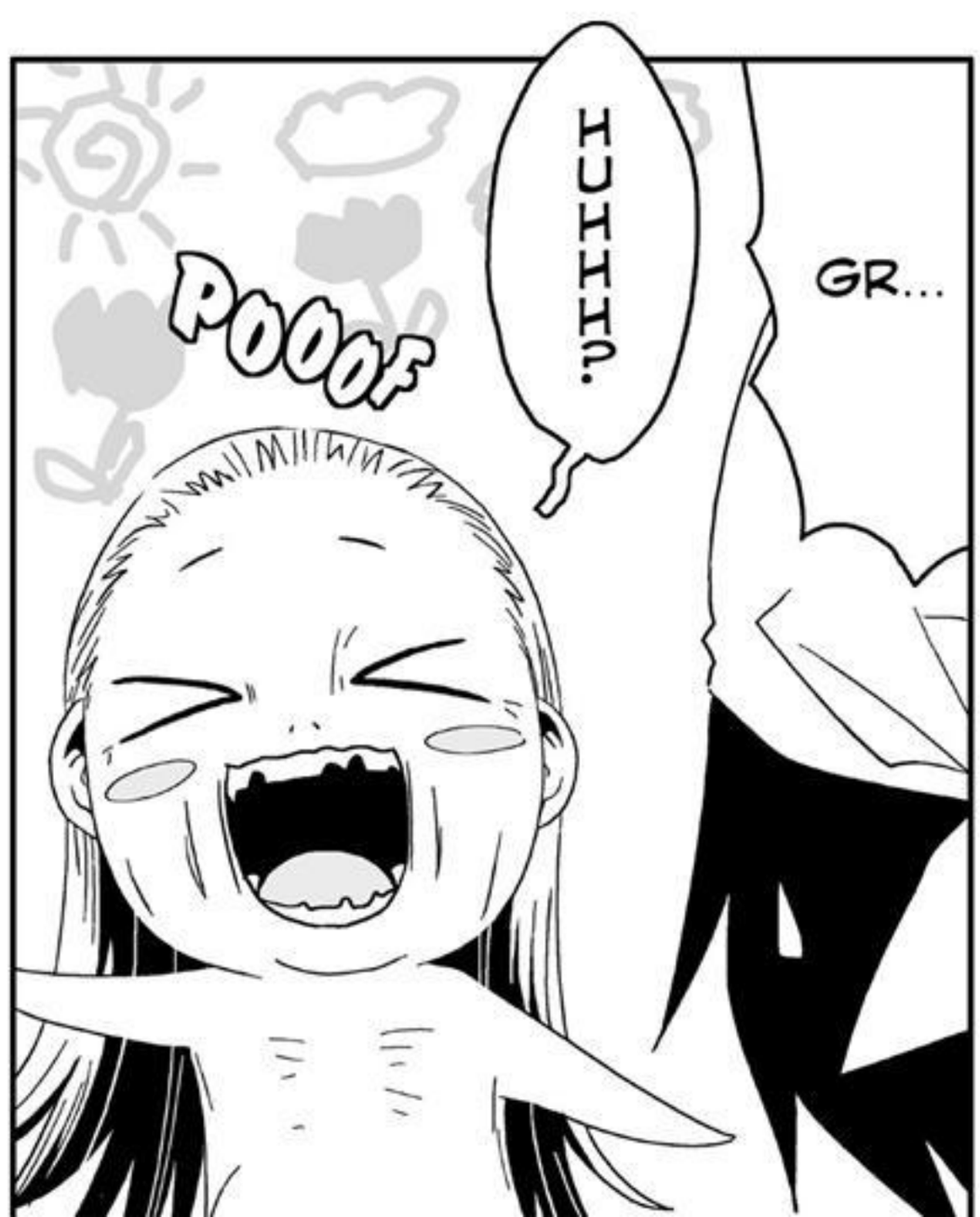
WHAT ARE THEY TALKING ABOUT?

...YOU MIGHT BE ABLE TO SLOW THE PROGRESSION, BUT YOU CAN'T STOP IT...

THAT'S WHAT I'M TELLING YOU. IT'S NOT PERFECT ...

THUNK

THAT'S WHY I...



I'M SORRYYY! I DIDN'T ACTUALLY MEAN TO HIT HIM...

He was in such a rare state of lucidity, too...

Come on, let's go in the house.

CALTROP

OH, HE WENT INTO SENILE MODE AGAIN.

GA HA HA HA

WHAT A SPLENDI-FEROUS DAY IT IS TODAY...

BY THE WAY, CHIHIRO, WHO IS THAT GIRL?

TWITCH

HUH ?!

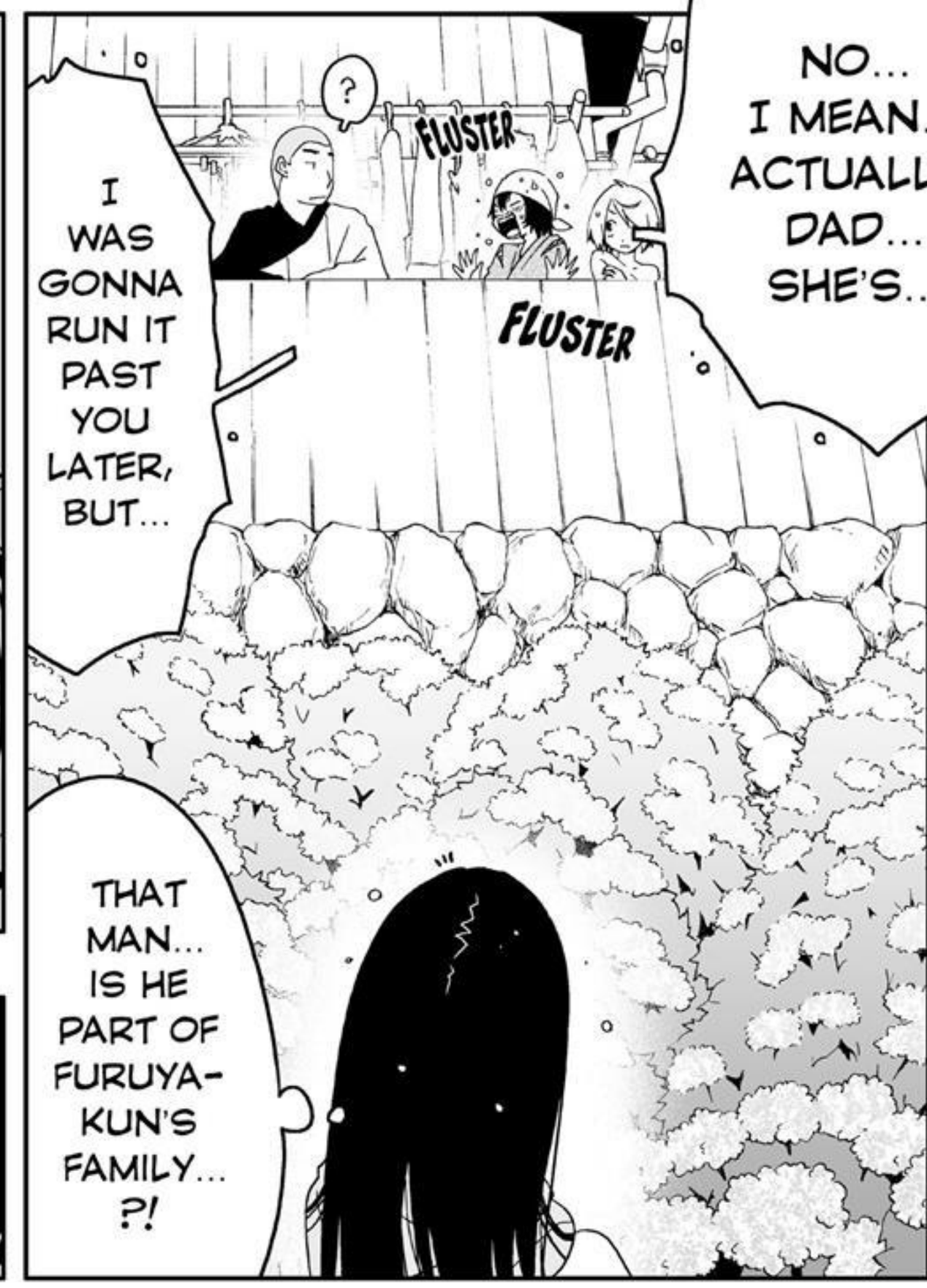
nnbuu...

ALL THESE INSIGHTS... I GUESS I'VE GOT TO SEARCH FOR A WAY TO PROTECT REA'S BODY MYSELF, THEN.

STILL, WE DID LEARN A LOT OF IMPORTANT THINGS.

T... THIS IS NO GOOD. I'VE BEEN CAUGHT.

I PRO-BABLY CAN'T STAY HERE ANY-MORE...



I MEAN ...

Huh ...?

I CAN'T TELL YOU ALL THE DETAILS, BUT SHE... DOESN'T HAVE ANYWHERE ELSE TO GO...

...AND ON TOP OF THAT, I...

...I... HAVE TO TAKE RESPON-SIBILITY FOR HER.

hmmm...
TWIRL
UM... AH... YEAH...
I DON'T KNOW WHAT'S HAPPENED, BUT... WELL, OUR TEMPLE, SHIRYOHJI, WAS ORIGINALLY USED TO HOUSE REFUGEES AS WELL.
ALTHOUGH THIS ALSO INVOLVES ZOMBIES...

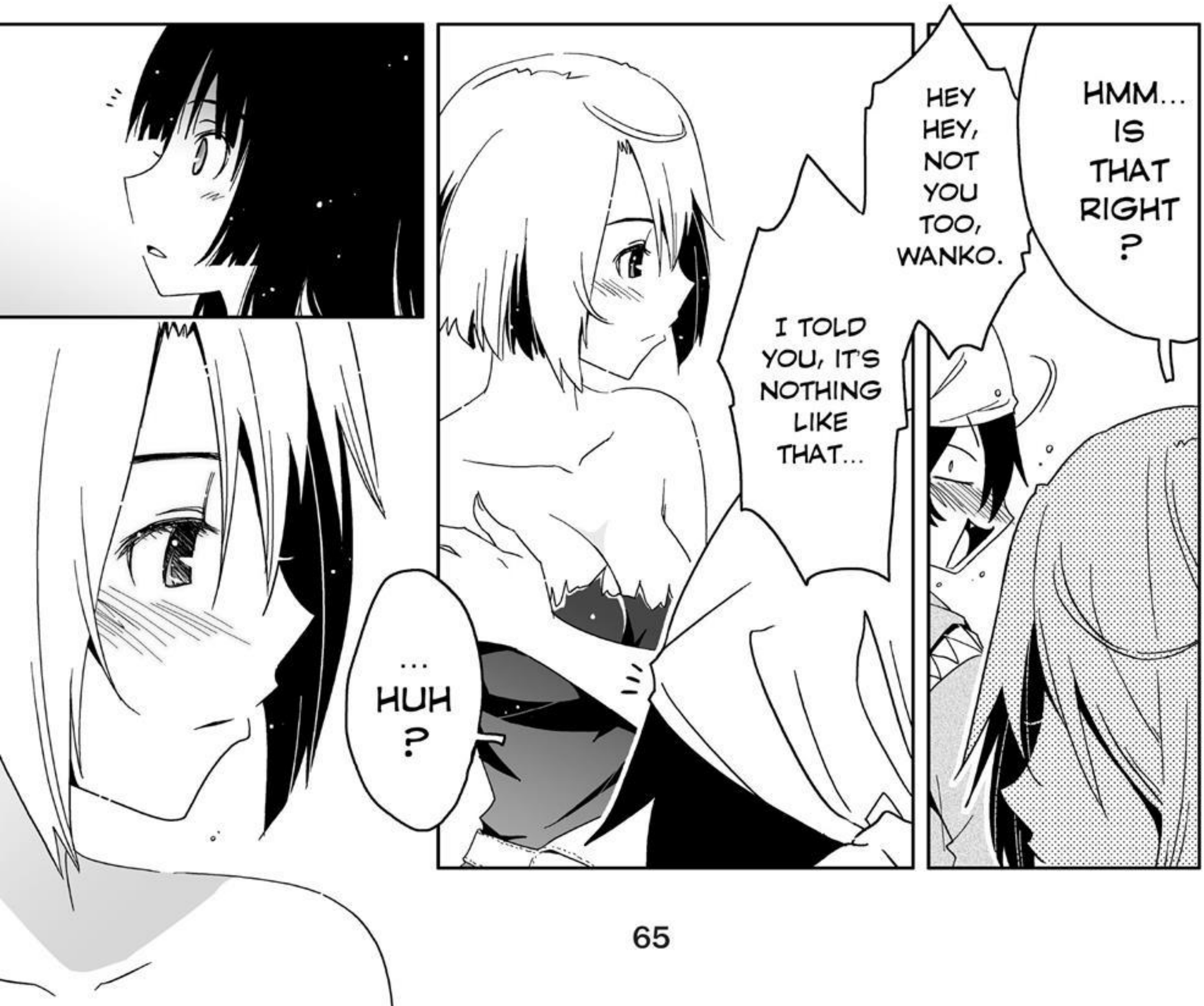
IT SOME-HOW SEEMS UNUSUAL FOR YOU...
...TO LOOK SO SERIOUS ABOUT SOMETHING OTHER THAN ZOM-BIES...

BA-BUMP
WHY NOT ?
THANKS, DAD!!

HEYYY, REA! COME ON UP!

LIVING TOGETHER ...?! IT'S NOTHING LIKE THAT!!
WHAT, WERE YOU ALREADY SECRETLY LIVING TOGETHER, THEN?!
BLUSH

I GOT DAD'S PERMI-SSION!
STARTING TODAY, YOU CAN STAY HERE WITHOUT HIDING.
HUH ...?!


HMM... IS THAT RIGHT?
HEY HEY, NOT YOU TOO, WANKO.
I TOLD YOU, IT'S NOTHING LIKE THAT...
... HUH?

...
I SEE ...
RUSTLE
SHE'S TOUGH, ISN'T SHE...?

Gweh.

YOU DOG, YOU !!

TUG

HUH ?!

WELL, SEE YOU LATER!! OH, YOU TOO, SANKA-SAN.

...THAT GIRL JUST NOW...

...

?

AWW, MY APRON'S ALREADY ALL RIPPED...

I'M GONNA GET CHEWED OUT BY MOM FOR ALL THIS.

I'm borrowing a shirt before I go, okay ?

OH, THAT'S RIGHT. I WAS IN THE MIDDLE OF HELPING OUT MY FAMILY!!

TAP TAP

A little while later...

I'M SO SOR-RY.

WHAM

BAM

SCRTCH SCRTCH

WOBBLE...

NAH.

I GUESS I CAUSED ANOTHER STRING OF PROBLEMS FOR YOU, FURUYA-KUN...

WELL, AS A RESULT, I DID LEARN A BIT ABOUT THE CHAR-ACTERISTICS OF ZOMBIES.

SWIK

...

...I STILL ENDED UP NOT KNOWING HOW TO KEEP THE DECAY IN CHECK...

BUT EVEN THOUGH I ASKED GRANDPA...

THUNK

U... UM...

ISN'T THERE... ANOTHER WAY?

IS IT REALLY OKAY FOR ME TO HAVE YOUR ROOM ALL TO MYSELF, FURUYA-KUN?

HM ?

...STAYING WITH YOU LIKE THIS EITHER, FURUYA-KUN...

STARE

UM... I WOULDN'T MIND...

GASP

!!

IS IT EVEN POSSIBLE TO KEEP IT COMPLETELY AT BAY, ANYWAY ...?!

IS THERE A WAY TO FULFILL REA'S WISHES WHILE MAINTAINING HER BODY?

EVEN MORE IMPORTANTLY, WHAT DO WE DO WHEN THE HYDRANGEAS STOP BLOOMING...

K... KISS ?!

EVEN THAT KISS GOT PRETTY RISKY. IF WE STAY TOGETHER, WE COULD LOSE ALL SENSE OF REASON...

mutter mutter

SCRITCH

... NO... THAT'S ...

HUH ?!

WOOM

WHAT DO YOU MEAN, KISS ?!

...DOESN'T REMEMBER WHAT HAPPENED THEN?!

BA-BOOM

HUH... SHE...

WHA... IS IT POSSIBLE THAT YOU KISSED ME BEFORE WHILE MY MEMORY WAS ALL FOGGY...?

WRONG!! YOU KISSED ME... OH, I MEAN NO...

STARE

BROTHER IS ENJOYING HIS YOUTH AT LAST.

Mero's room

NO, IT'S NOTHING, JUST MY IMAGINATION. A MISUNDERSTANDING!

WHAT'RE YOU TALKING ABOUT?!

TWIRL

WELL... ANYWAY, FOR THE TIME BEING, AT LEAST YOU'RE ALLOWED TO LIVE HERE...

SO FROM NOW ON, UM...

...!

...I'LL TAKE PROPER CARE OF YOU...

...

IN THAT CASE...

FLUFF

PLEASE TREAT MY BODY CAREFULLY FROM NOW ON.

FURUYA-KUN...

DUMB BUT

WHEN REA BIT ME THAT TIME...

HEY ...

...THAT PHRASING...

HUH ?

DID IT SOUND WEIRD OR SOMETHING...?!

WAS IT AN ACCIDENT...? OR...